DistriPress

DistriPress Congress

ROTTERDAM
04-07 October 2026
Save the date!

Welcome to the latest edition of the DistriPress newsletter.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Croatia's distribution reset** – and the implications for international press supply
- **Strengthening trust in print** through the Love Paper campaign
- **Risk Intelligence and leadership under pressure:** A preview of Congress 2026
- **EUDR update:** What's changed and what remains in scope.

Croatia's foreign press freeze:

An industry perspective

A state-led overhaul of Croatia's distribution system has left international publications off-sale nationwide. DistriEst Director Maja Curić outlines how the new framework has disrupted the economics of international press supply.

Since 1 October 2025, foreign newspapers and magazines have disappeared from newsstands across Croatia – an unprecedented situation in a major European tourist market.

The disruption followed the withdrawal of Tisak, the country's long-standing private distributor, and the subsequent appointment of Croatian Post as sole national distributor under a new government-subsidised framework.

For Maja Curić, Director of DistriEst – the authorised supplier of international press across the former Yugoslav markets – the impact has been immediate and severe. Croatia is her largest and most important market within the region.

“In our business, Croatia is extremely seasonal,” she explains. “Sales multiply hundreds of times between June and September because of tourism. Around 70% of annual sales happen in the summer months.”

That seasonality makes advance planning critical. “In March, you have to know what will happen in July,” she says. “If you lose the distribution window, the financial impact is very serious.”

“They are charging per distributed copy... It shifts all the risk onto the publisher.”

Why the model broke

Following Tisak’s withdrawal in early 2025, the Croatian government designated press distribution a service of general economic interest and appointed Croatian Post as the sole distributor through a public tender. The model now splits responsibilities – Croatian Post handles logistics, while a newly formed private company, DTM (originating from Tisak’s former administrative department), manages orders, invoicing and commercial services.

The core issue lies in how publishers are charged.

“In our industry, everyone earns per copy sold,” says Maja. “The margin is retained only on what is actually sold.”

Under the new framework, however, Croatian Post charges publishers per distributed copy, not per copy sold - a fundamental shift in risk.

“They are charging per distributed copy. That is not practised elsewhere in Europe,” she says. “It shifts all the risk onto the publisher. It simply doesn’t work.”

For Croatian publishers, the logistics fee is €0.15 per daily newspaper and €0.25 per magazine. Foreign publications, which are not eligible for subsidised rates because they are not registered in the Croatian Publisher Register, are quoted rates up to four times higher.

“For us, they calculated around one euro per distributed copy of a magazine,” she says. “No publisher can afford paying one euro per distributed copy. It is impossible.”

The model also leaves publishers paying DTM’s retained margin per copy sold, meaning both systems operate in parallel. While DTM’s margins are now slightly lower and aligned with those charged to Croatian publishers, the additional per-distributed-copy fee significantly increases the overall cost. Even assuming an ideal unsold rate, the economics remain unsustainable.

“If you don’t want to have international press in your country, this is how you do it,” she says.

“Without equal conditions, distribution is economically impossible.”

Negotiations and deadlines

Maja says DistriEst and the publishers it represents repeatedly sought intervention from the Ministry of Culture and Media.

“We turned to the Ministry many times asking them to take into consideration that Croatia would be the first tourist country in Europe to remain without foreign press,” she says.

After what she describes as unsuccessful negotiations with Croatian Post, the Ministry responded once in August 2025, advising them to seek agreement directly with the Post. A meeting followed in October after media attention intensified, but no concrete solution emerged.

“Without equal conditions, distribution is economically impossible,” Maja says.

Meanwhile, planning deadlines are fast approaching. Summer print runs are planned months in advance, with many publishers finalising orders by March.

“If a solution is not in place before March, even if something changes in April, it may already be too late for summer,” she warns.

What needs to change

For Maja, the solution is straightforward and mirrors established European practice.

“Like elsewhere in Europe, we need a pricing model that charges per copy sold,” she says. “Conditions must be identical for Croatian and international publications.”

A modest delivery surcharge could be workable, she adds, but not a per-distributed-copy model that decouples cost from sales performance.

Croatia remains a significant market for German, Italian, French and UK publishers, particularly during peak tourism months. Without a nationwide, professional distribution service, alternative solutions would be limited in scope.

“We are exploring smaller alternatives,” Maja says, “but only a professional nationwide distribution service can meet the needs of most publishers.”

A new national media law is expected later this spring and may address the issue. Until then, Croatia stands as the only major European tourist destination without foreign press on sale – a development with clear implications for the broader distribution ecosystem.

Timeline: How Croatia’s distribution crisis unfolded

- **December 2024:** Tisak announces withdrawal from press distribution
- **January 2025:** Government intervenes, designates distribution a service of general economic interest
- **April 2025:** Croatian Post appointed sole national distributor
- **August 2025:** Ministry responds to concerns but advises negotiation with Post
- **1 October 2025:** Foreign press distribution suspended
- **Spring 2026 (expected):** New national media law under preparation

Love Paper:

Telling a positive sustainability story

It's Love Paper Week – a perfect moment to speak up for print using facts, not assumptions. Here's how the campaign helps publishers and distributors shine a light on the sustainability of print

Why is it needed?

Run by the not-for-profit organisation Two Sides, Love Paper is a global campaign created to address common misconceptions about print, and replace them with clear, accessible facts. Research shows that many consumers still believe forests are shrinking and that paper recycling rates are low, despite European forests continuing to grow and paper achieving some of the highest recycling rates of any material worldwide.

So what is Love Paper?

The campaign focuses on what makes paper unique: it is renewable, recyclable, and sourced from responsibly managed forests. It also highlights the broader benefits of print, from supporting learning and creativity to contributing positively to mental wellbeing – messages that resonate strongly at a time of digital fatigue.

How can we help?

For the industry, Love Paper provides practical tools as well as messaging. Brands and organisations can register to use the Love Paper logo on paper-based marketing materials, publications and packaging, signalling that those products are made using sustainable materials and supported by robust data. The logo is designed to complement – not replace – existing certifications and recycling labels, strengthening credibility rather than adding noise.

Publishers and distributors are also encouraged to place Love Paper adverts where space allows, helping reinforce positive, consistent messages about print at the point of engagement with readers and customers.

Find out more about the campaign here

Risk Intelligence:

Futureproofing print through people

As print and distribution businesses face ongoing disruption, leadership is increasingly tested by uncertainty. In this Q&A, Distripress Congress 2026 keynote speaker Dr Aarti Anhal introduces Risk Intelligence and why it matters

Risk Intelligence isn't a term many people in print or distribution will be familiar with. How would you explain it to someone navigating change?

Dr Aarti Anhal: The first thing to say is that we all have Risk Intelligence. It's how we move through life and business thinking about, perceiving and then acting in relation to risk.

We make risk-based decisions every day – often without thinking about it. Most people think about risk purely as threat, as what might go wrong, but in reality risk always has an upside as well. We take risks because we want to get somewhere faster, do something better or gain something new.

In business, particularly in industries facing disruption, Risk Intelligence shapes how people think about both threats and opportunities, and how they act on them.

Why does this matter so much at the moment for the print and distribution industry?
Because organisations are asking people to think differently under pressure. What "good" looks like is changing, and that's uncomfortable. Leaders and teams are being asked to come up with new ideas, new products, new services, new ways of working, and sometimes even new business models.

What I see again and again is that the tensions people experience in meetings about change are actually risk-based conversations. One person might be very comfortable moving quickly and going for it, while another wants more analysis, more reassurance and more certainty before acting.

Neither of those approaches is right or wrong. But unless people recognise that these differences come down to how they use their Risk Intelligence, those tensions can slow progress or create frustration.

"Development isn't about changing who you are. It's about becoming more flexible."

So it's about understanding people?
Exactly. It's about understanding yourself and the people around you.We need diverse teams. Risk Intelligence gives leaders a way of understanding why people respond differently to change, and how to bring those differences together so they become a strength rather than a barrier.
Can Risk Intelligence be developed?
Absolutely. It includes things like emotional intelligence, the skills and strengths you bring to decision-making, and also your values and motivations – what really drives you as a person. All of that influences when you feel comfortable taking risks and when you don't.

Development isn't about changing who you are. It's about becoming more flexible – recognising your natural tendencies and learning when to dial them up or down depending on what the situation requires.

"I want leaders to recognise the role they play in shaping culture."

How does this work at a business or leadership-team level?
It helps leaders understand how their teams are currently operating and what needs to shift behaviourally to deliver strategy. It also helps them think more carefully about how they communicate change, how they support teams when things go wrong, and how they balance protecting existing value with creating new value.

What do you hope Distripress delegates will take away from your presentation at Congress 2026?
I hope they recognise themselves – particularly if they sit at either end of the risk spectrum. That moment of recognition is often where the biggest learning happens.

Most of all, I want leaders to recognise the role they play in shaping culture. The way a leader thinks about risk, threat and opportunity creates a behavioural footprint across the business. In times of uncertainty, that footprint can either build confidence or hold people back.

Click here for more information about the Congress and Rotterdam

EUDR UPDATE:

What's changed, and what still matters

The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) has moved on again – and this time the changes are significant for parts of the print supply chain. While finished printed products are now excluded, paper sourcing and due diligence obligations haven't gone away.

Here's a quick snapshot of where things stand in 2026.

- Printed materials (eg books, magazines, newspapers) are now excluded from EUDR scope, following agreement in late 2025
- This removes a major compliance concern for publishers and distributors of finished print
- Paper, pulp and paper-based inputs are still covered, meaning printers and paper suppliers remain affected
- Implementation has been delayed by one year:

- This removes a major compliance concern for publishers and distributors of finished print
- Paper, pulp and paper-based inputs are still covered, meaning printers and paper suppliers remain affected
- Implementation has been delayed by one year:
  - Medium & large operators: from 30 December 2026
  - Micro & small enterprises: from 30 June 2027
- A formal EU review is scheduled for April 2026, focusing on administrative burden and remaining supply-chain impacts

Read more here

World Association of News Publishers

WAN-IFRA
World Association of News Publishers
Pariser Straße 1
60486 Frankfurt am Main
Germany
Phone: +49.69.240063-0

CEO: Stig Ørskov
CH-170.6.000.007-8
170.6.000.007-8
HR des Kantons Zug