FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

EUROPEAN BOOK PUBLISHING STATISTICS

13 November 2024

The Federation of European Publishers (FEP) represents 30 national associations of publishers of books, learned journals and educational materials, in all formats, in Europe. The present survey is based on reports from the national book publishing associations, and on further analysis and refining of data, for the year **2022**. Since 2019, the survey is based on a **new questionnaire**, which in the short term will entail limited comparability with some older data and a greater degree of uncertainty on some figures, but that in the long term will ensure the information is both clearer and more relevant.

Figures on the overall economic significance of the publishing industry refer to net publishers' turnover, i.e. the publishers' total revenues from the sales of books, not the total market for books (margin of booksellers or other retailers). They also do not account for revenues in terms of selling rights for translation, audiovisual adaptation, etc. In some cases, only data on market value was available; in such cases, average discount rates were applied to calculate an approximation of net turnover. Figures were rounded conservatively.

The **total annual sales revenue** of book publishers in Europe in 2023 was approximately **€ 24.4 billion**, according to the survey conducted by FEP. This represents a small increase from 2022 (23.9), the result of mixed outcomes across countries. The largest markets in terms of publishers' turnover were Germany, the UK, France, Italy and Spain. While total turnover is back to the peak level of 2007, this is only in nominal terms: considering inflation, there has been a loss of turnover in the same period of more than 30%. **Total market value is estimated at € 35.3 billion** (from sales of European publishers' books), for a total consumer expenditure of some 36-39 billion €.

A total of about **585,000 new titles** were issued by publishers in 2023, a small increase on 2022, also the result of different situations in each country. The figure was taken from different sources, some of which included new editions or non-commercial titles, and was rounded conservatively. European publishers held about 14 million different titles in stock (some 3.3 million in digital format), the countries reporting the largest availability being the UK, Germany, Italy, France and Spain; this figure has been spiked by the surge in digital publishing, the digitisation of back catalogues, the growth of print-on-demand services and the surge in self-published titles, as well as other phenomena. The countries reporting the largest new titles output were the UK, Germany, Spain, Italy and France.

Employment remains an area where it is difficult to gather reliable data. The entire book value chain (including authors, booksellers, printers, designers, etc.) is estimated to **employ more than half a million people**.

Looking at longer-term trends, up to 2007 there was steady growth both in revenues and titles. The 2008 economic crisis had less of an impact on publishing when compared to most other sectors, but revenues still mostly decreased or stagnated until 2014. After 2010, the ebook market grew fast and **exports** performed well, becoming **even stronger** from 2015 to 2017. If 2018 marked a trend reversal in the recovery process started in 2015, 2019 confirmed the **positive trend**. 2020, the year of the pandemic, saw first a very negative impact of the health crisis, but closed with a result **only moderately negative**, albeit this was the result of many different situations and factors. The pandemic also pushed digital sales up. 2021, while witnessing an impressive – though uneven – recovery, was also the year in which a **paper crisis** began. In 2022-23, turnover grew overall, but at a much slower pace and driven by prices, with the impact of the paper crisis and geopolitical instability being felt. The **ebook market** (now around **13%** of the total) **showed signs of stagnation for the 5 years before Covid** (but it could be a matter of capturing the right data), whereas **audiobook sales** exploded in 2019, giving new impetus to digital sales; they reached **3.5%** of the total in 2023 (but the figure is largely underestimated).

For further information: Enrico Turrin, +32 2 776 84 64 - eturrin@fep-fee.eu

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European Book Publishing Statistics 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Publishers' revenue from sales of books (bln)	24.4	23.9	23.6	22.2	22.4
Educational (school) books	18.3%	18.0%	17.4%	18.4%	19.3%
Academic/Professional books	16.0%	16.8%	17.1%	16.3%	18.0%
Consumer (trade) books	51.1%	50.5%	50.5%	50.3%	49.4%
Children's books	14.5%	14.7%	15.0%	14.5%	13.3%
Turnover by area					
Sales in the domestic market	80.5%	79.9%	81.7%	81.7%	79.0%
Exports	19.5%	20.1%	18.3%	18.3%	21.0%
Turnover by distribution channels[1]					
Sales in bookstores and specialised stores	47.0%	45.6%	43.6%	44.7%	50.3%
Sales in supermarkets and other stores	11.9%	11.2%	11.5%	11.9%	12.1%
Online sales	24.2%	25.8%	29.1%	28.9%	23.0%
Direct sales (incl. libraries and book clubs)	16.9%	17.4%	15.7%	14.5%	14.6%
Turnover by format[3]					
Print	83.9%	83.9%	84.8%		
Digital	12.7%	12.9%	12.6%		
Audio	3.5%	3.2%	2.5%		
Sales at market value[4] (bln)	35.3	34.7	34.75	33.2	32.6
Number of titles published in period					
New titles	585,000	575,000	575,000	595,000	605,000
Number of titles in print (active catalogue)[2]	14,000,000	13,800,000	13,400,000	13,100,000	12,250,000

Estimates, all figures rounded
[1] This section has been reviewed and its data, not comparable to those of previous years, will need time to become more reliable
[2] This series of data was reintroduced in a corrected form in 2019; figures do not correspond to those in previous issues
[3] This series of data was introduced in 2022; „digital" means ebooks and other text-based digital products, „audio" indicates audiobooks in all formats; data should be taken as broad estimates
[4] This series of data, introduced in 2024 (data 2023) and estimated retrospectively for previous years, indicates the value of sales in European markets at cover price or the equivalent thereof, for books published by European publishers

29, Chaussée d'Ixelles – 1050 Brussels
Email info@fep-fee.eu - Website www.fep-fee.eu