

THE EUROPEAN BOOK MARKET 2025/26

Frankfurt Book Fair
7 October 2026

Sonia Draga – President, FEP
Enrico Turrin – Deputy Director, FEP

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

About FEP



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

Who we are

- FEP is an independent, non-commercial umbrella association representing 31 national associations of publishers of books, learned journals and educational materials from all over Europe
- Founded in 1967, FEP deals with European legislation and advises publishers associations on copyright and other legislative issues
- 6,000+ individual publishers represented (>80% of the book market in Europe)
- Based in Brussels, Belgium

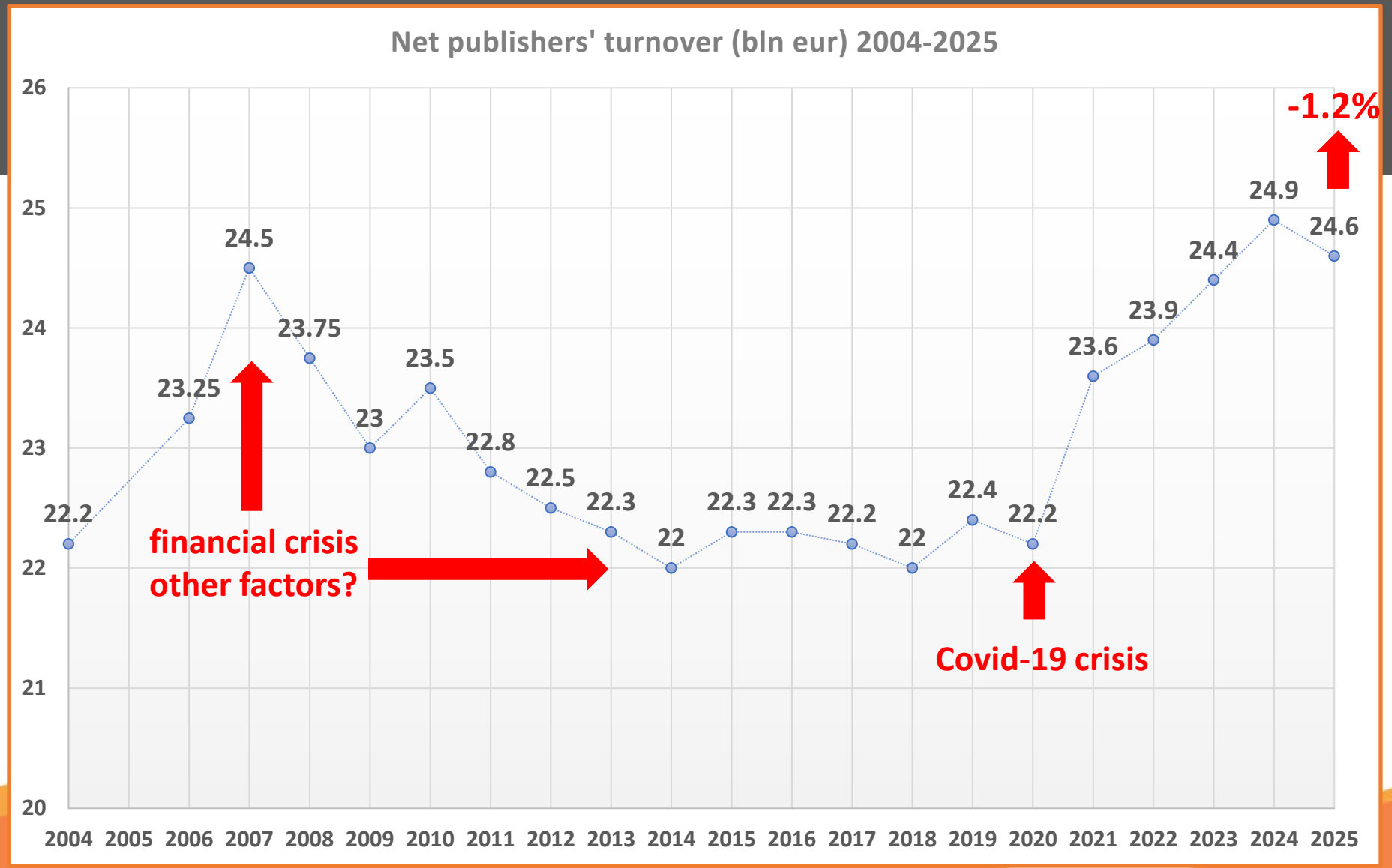


FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The core data



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

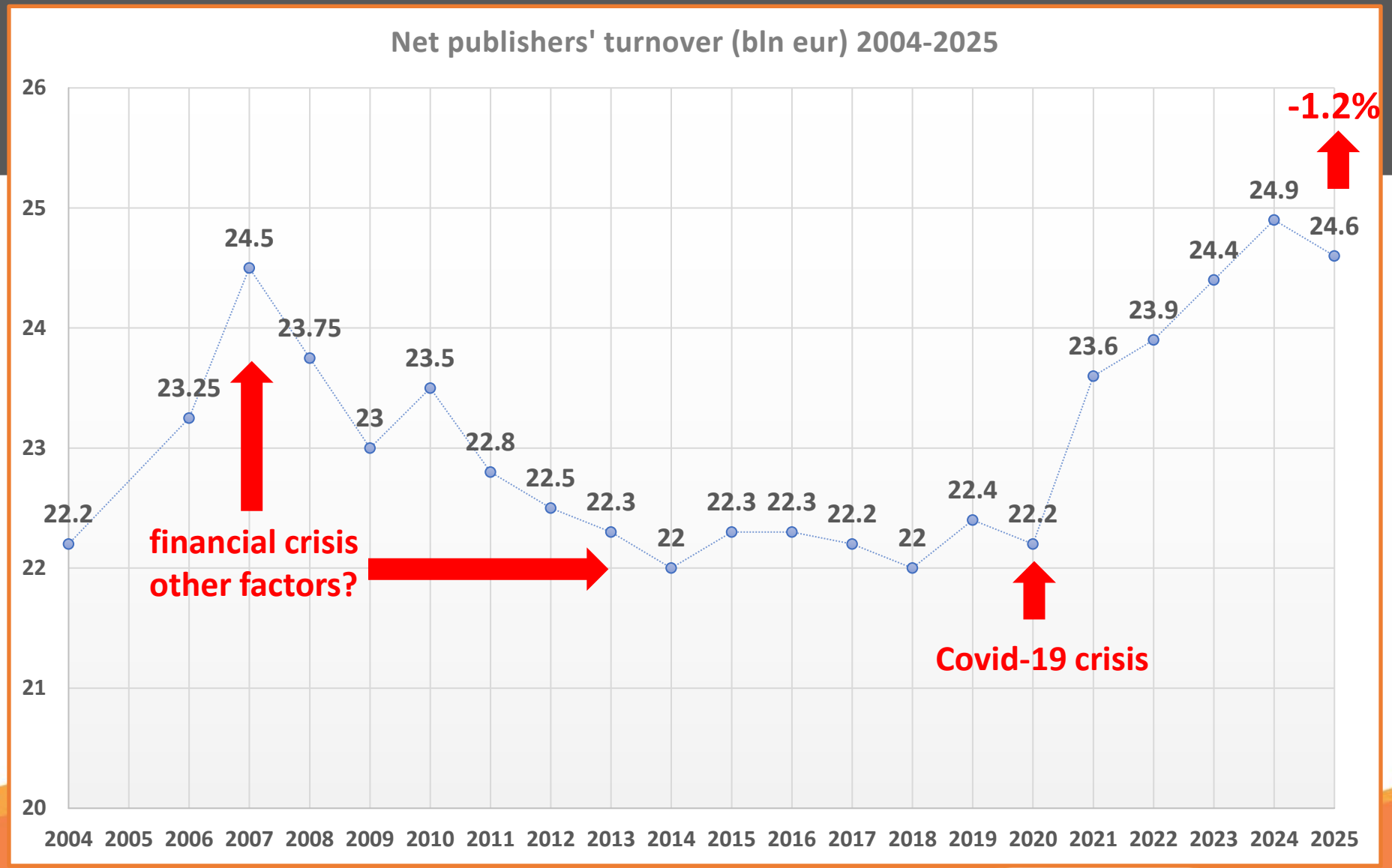


Largest cultural industry in Europe

Back to and beyond peak level (**not in real terms**)

Past 4 years: mostly **value up**, **volume down**, **price as driver**

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



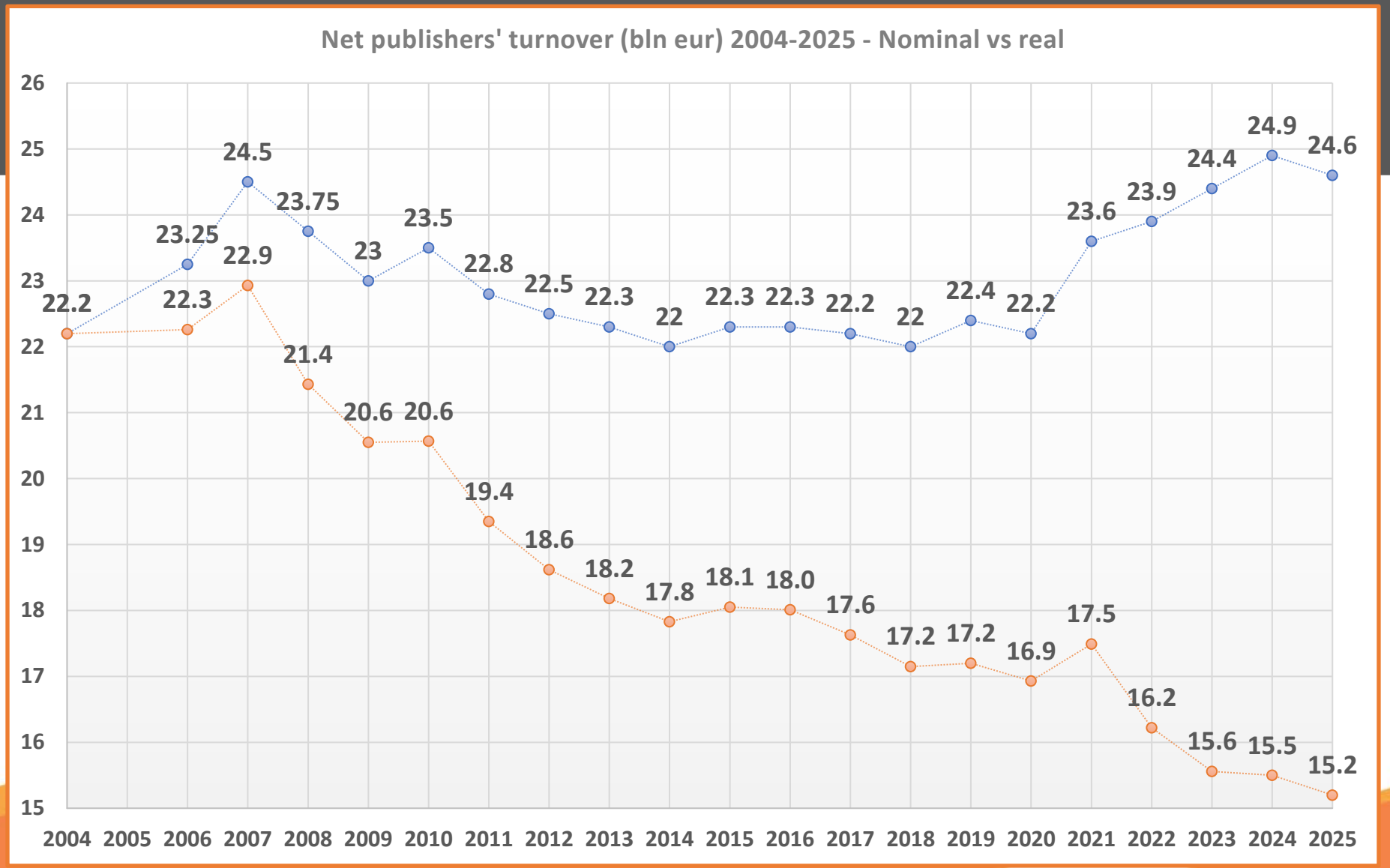
WARNING

Largest cultural industry in Europe

Back to and beyond peak level (**not in real terms**)

Past 4 years: mostly **value up**, **volume down**, **price as driver**

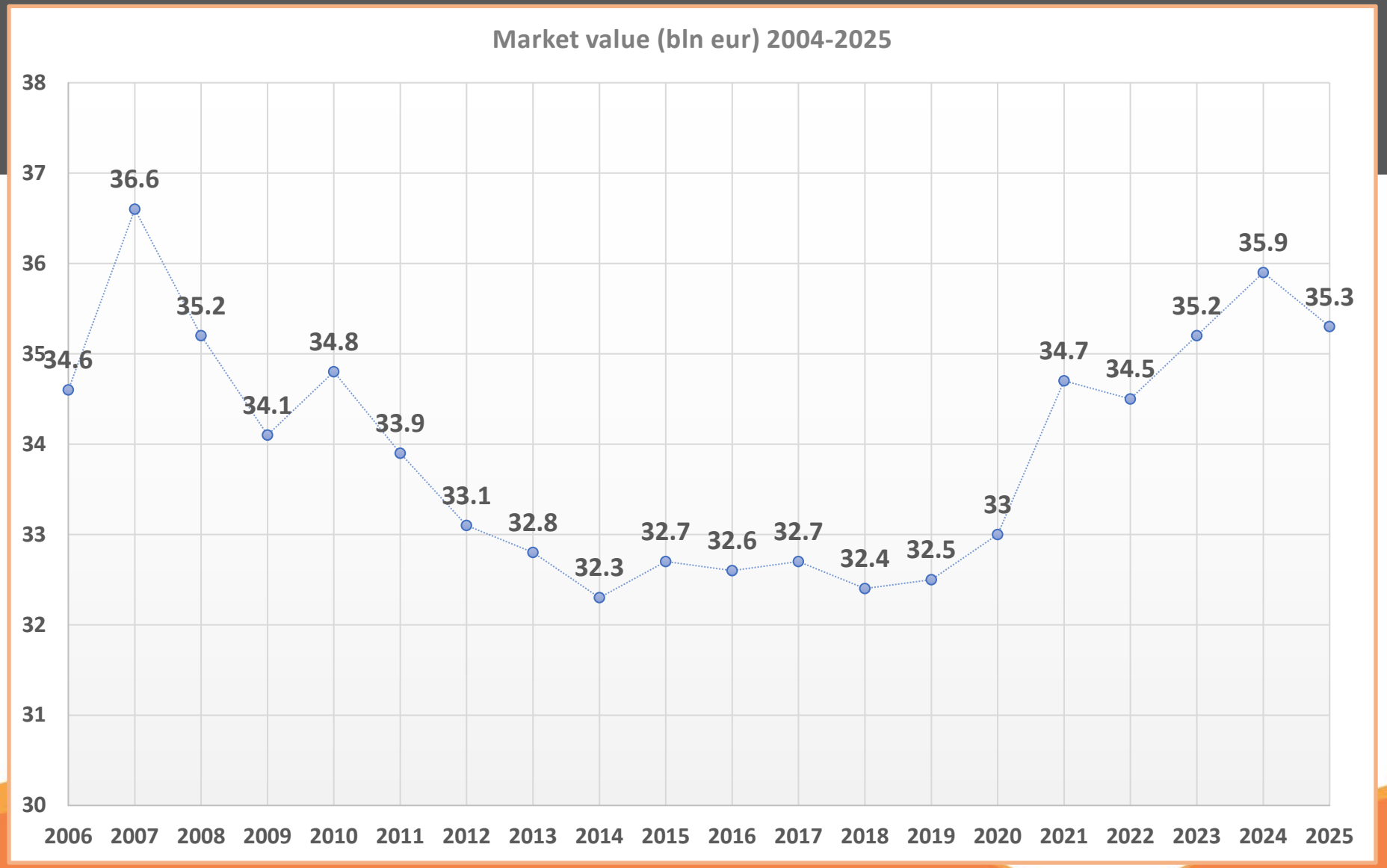
FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



Looking at **real terms** paints a very different picture

Maybe we have a problem

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



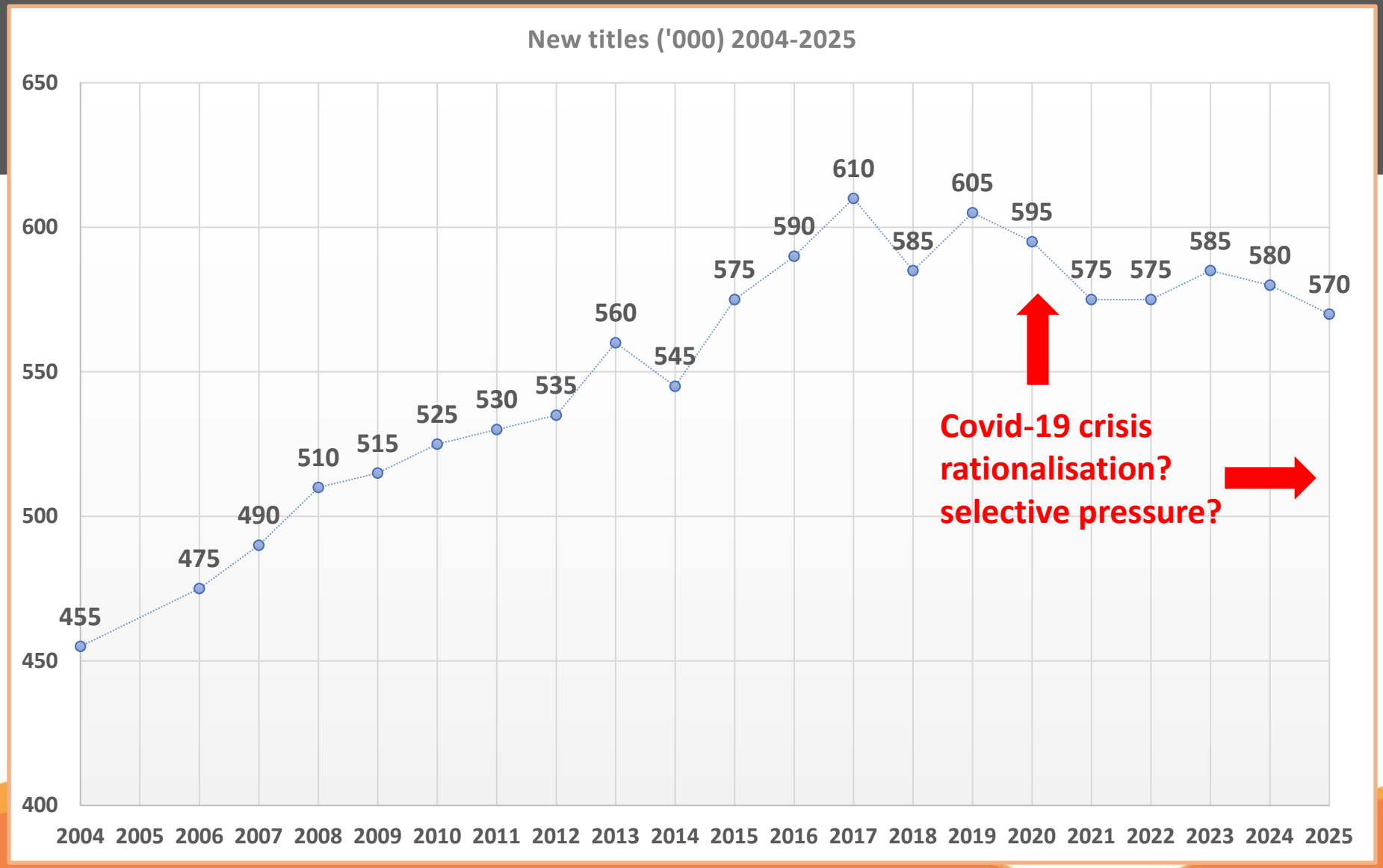
Sales at cover price follow similar trend as net turnover

Between 32 and 37 billion € per year

Not pictured: exports by European publishers and sales of imported books, self-publishing

Total market value likely **36-39 billion**

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

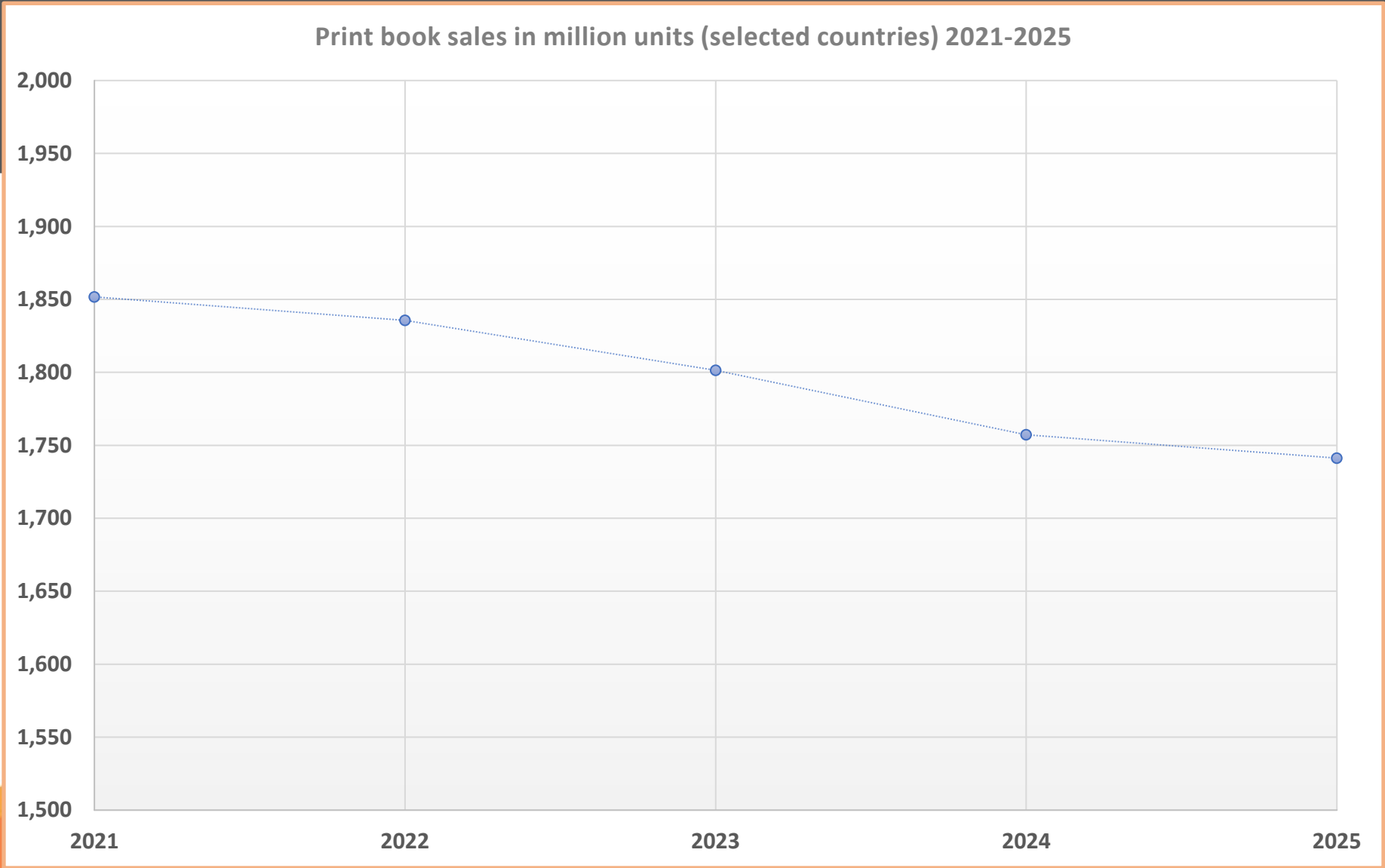


First editions in print, all categories

Mixed picture in major markets

Recent **downward trend**

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



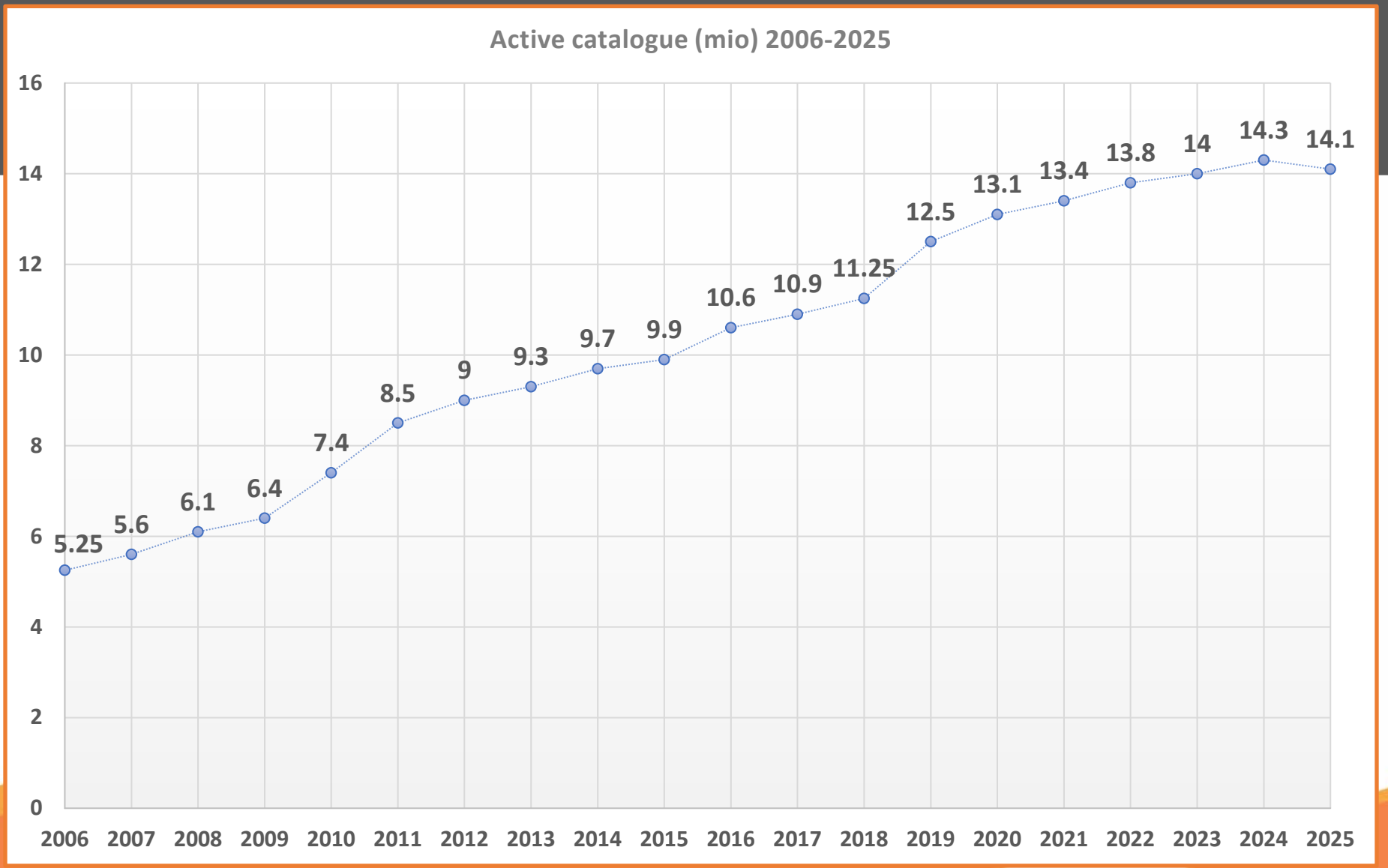
Total copies sold in 2025 about **2.4 billion**

Our sample (75% of turnover):

-6% in 5 years after 2020

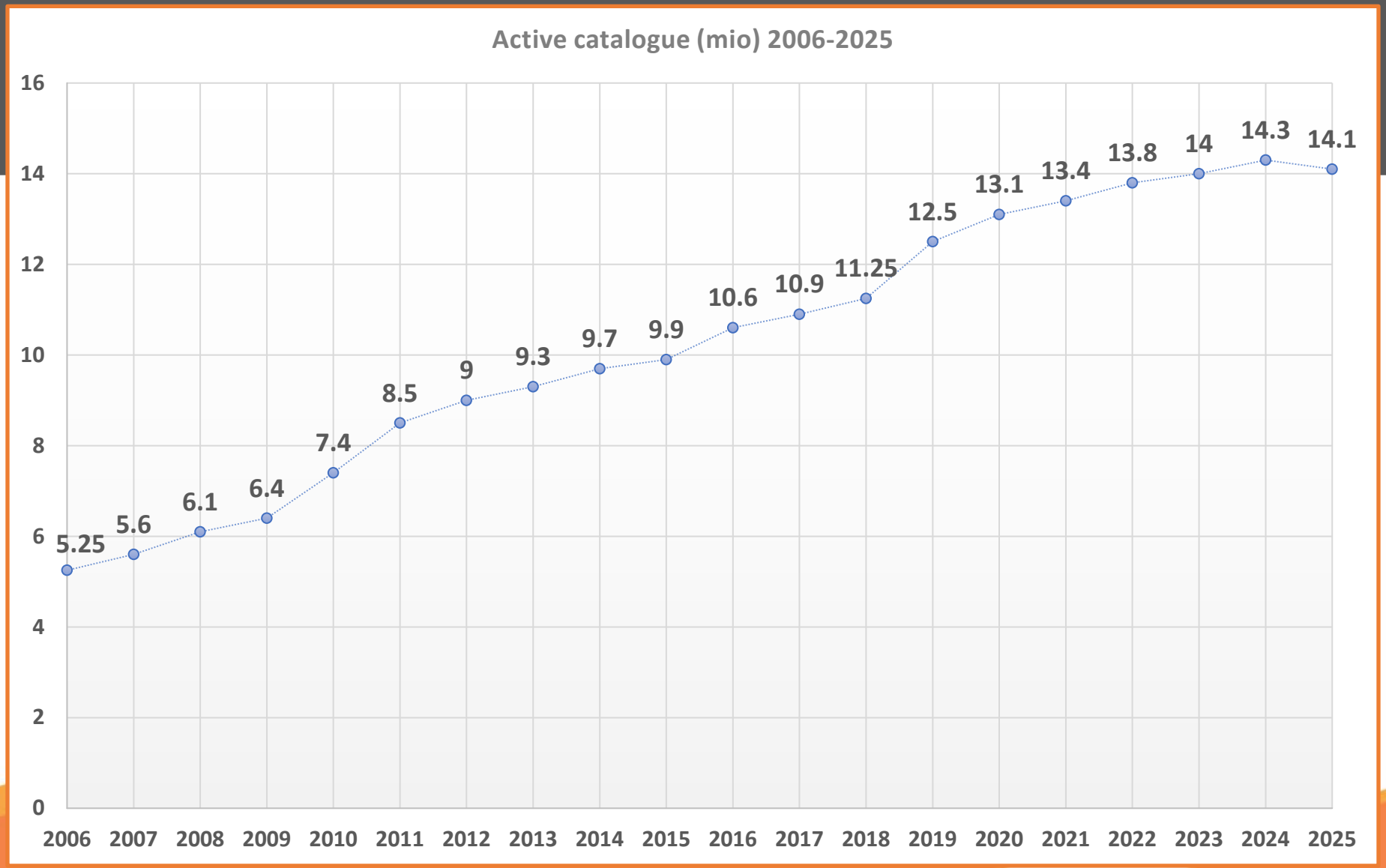
About **110 million fewer** books sold

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



Of which some **3.4 million** in **digital/audio** format

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



WARNING

Of which some **3.4 million** in **digital/audio** format

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

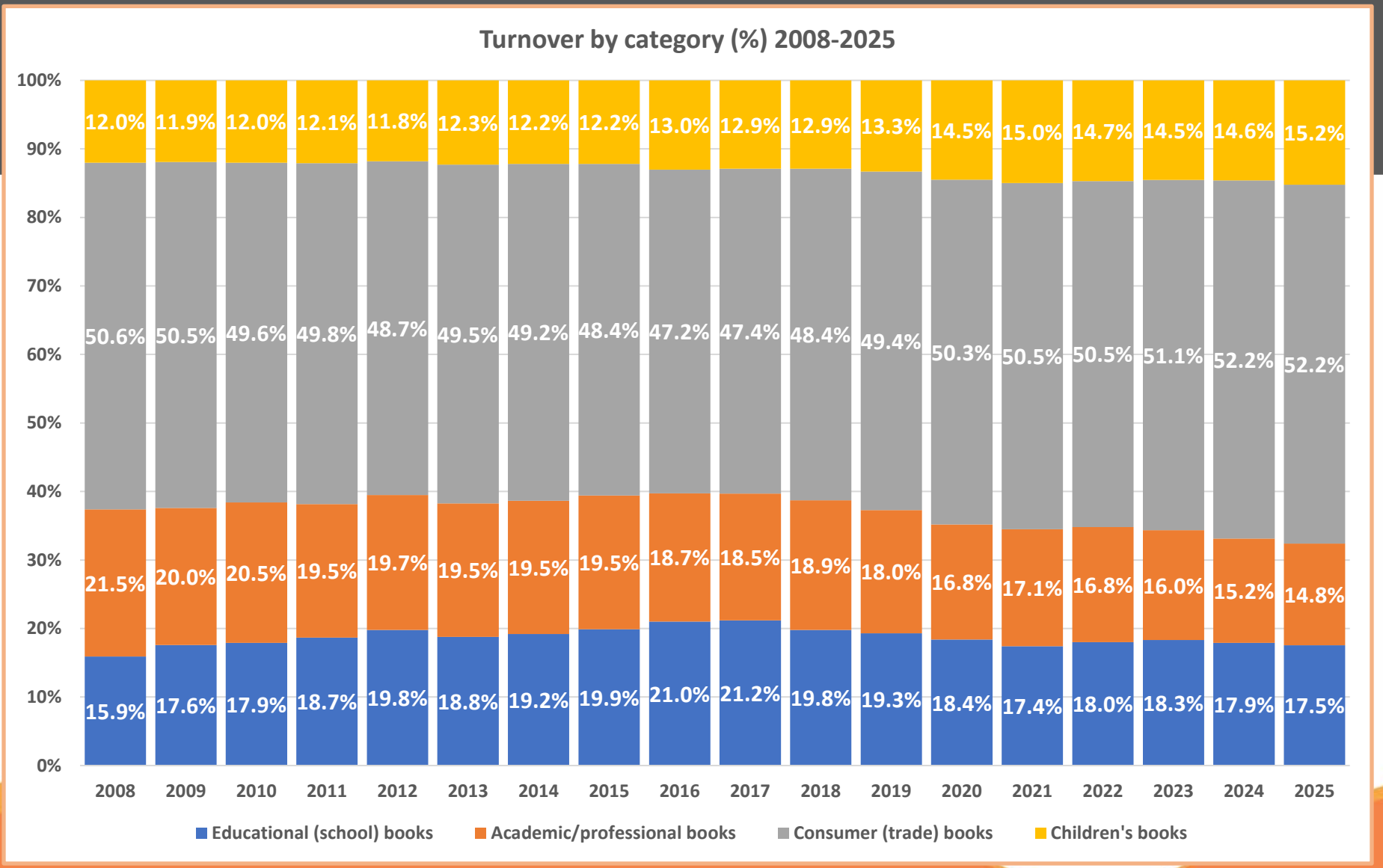
The main markets

Turnover

1. Germany
2. UK
3. France
4. Spain
5. Italy
6. Netherlands

New titles

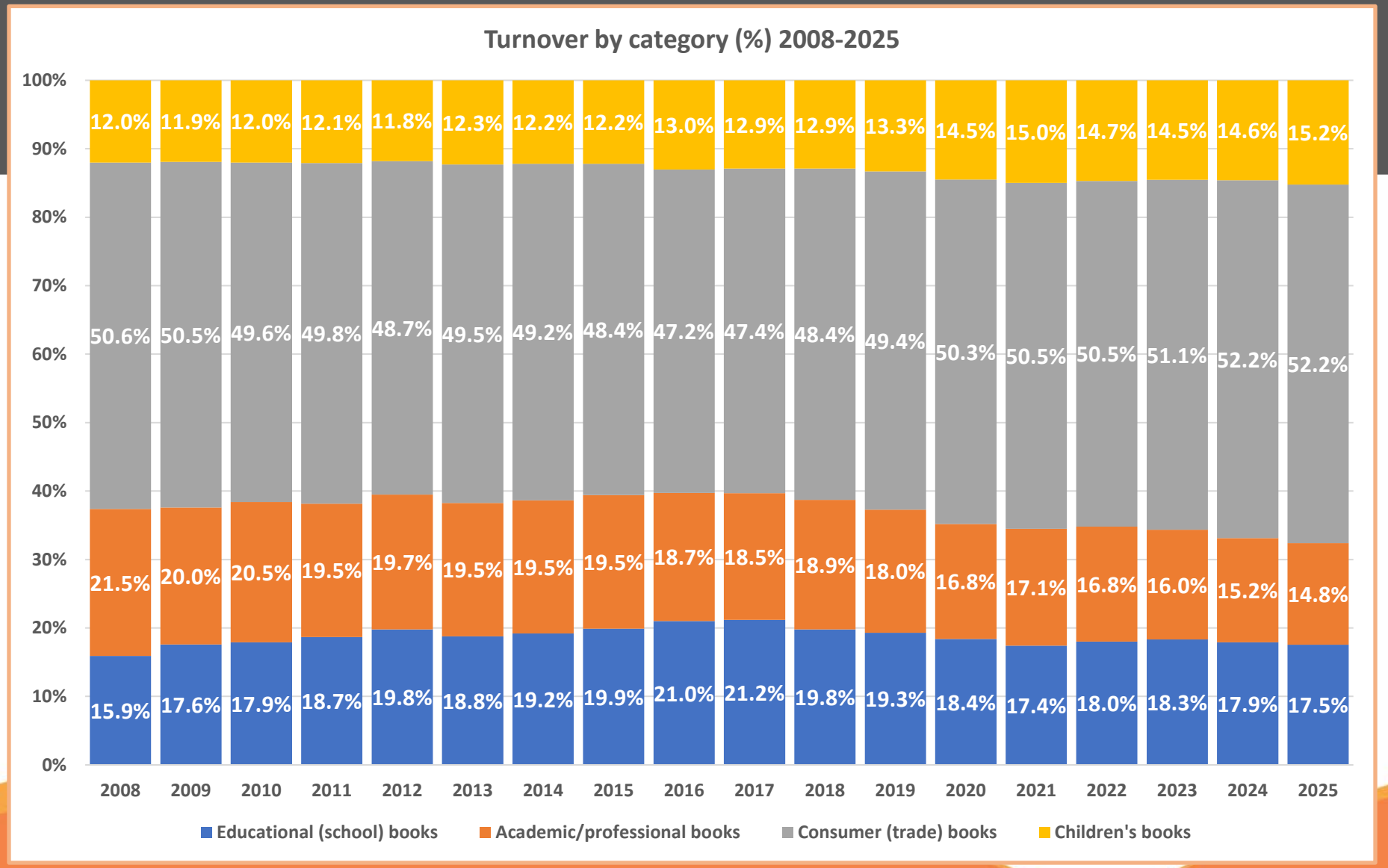
1. UK
2. Spain
3. Germany
4. Italy
5. France
6. Poland



Children's books up again (after slowing down)

Decline of **academic/ professional**

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

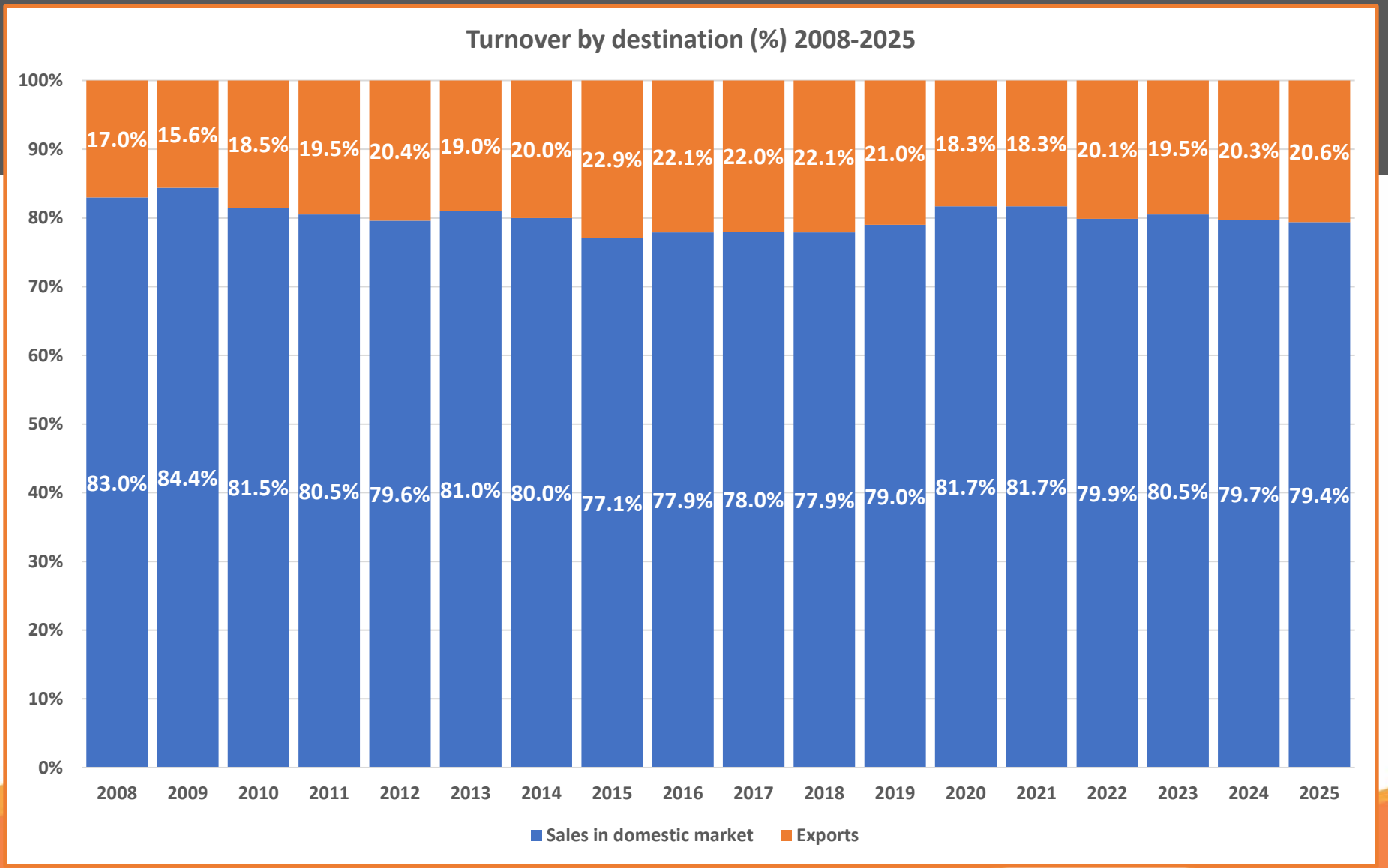


WARNING

Children's books up again (after slowing down)

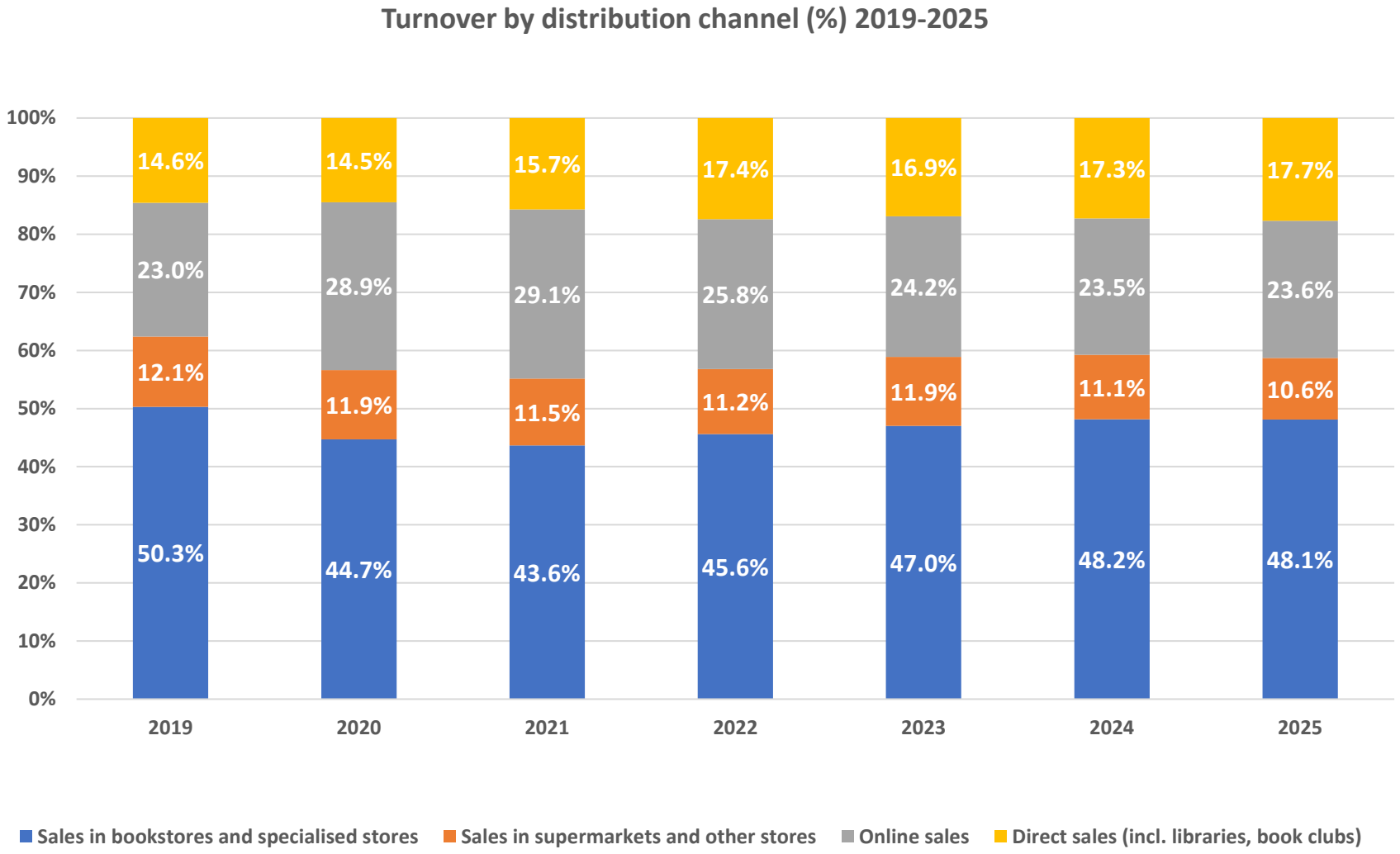
Decline of **academic/ professional**

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



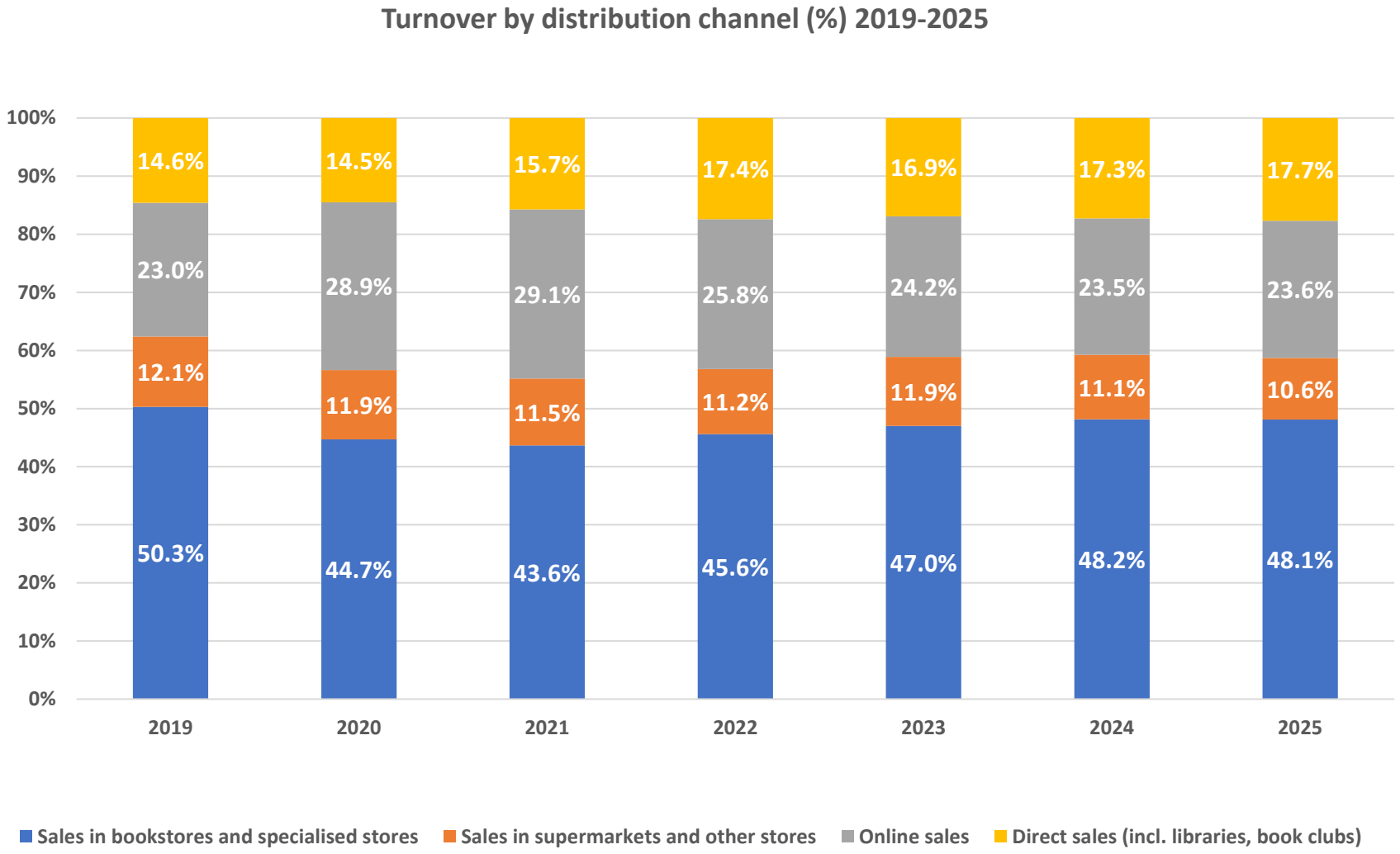
Exports recovered after Covid, remain around one fifth of turnover

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



Gradual return to **bookstores** seems to dwindle

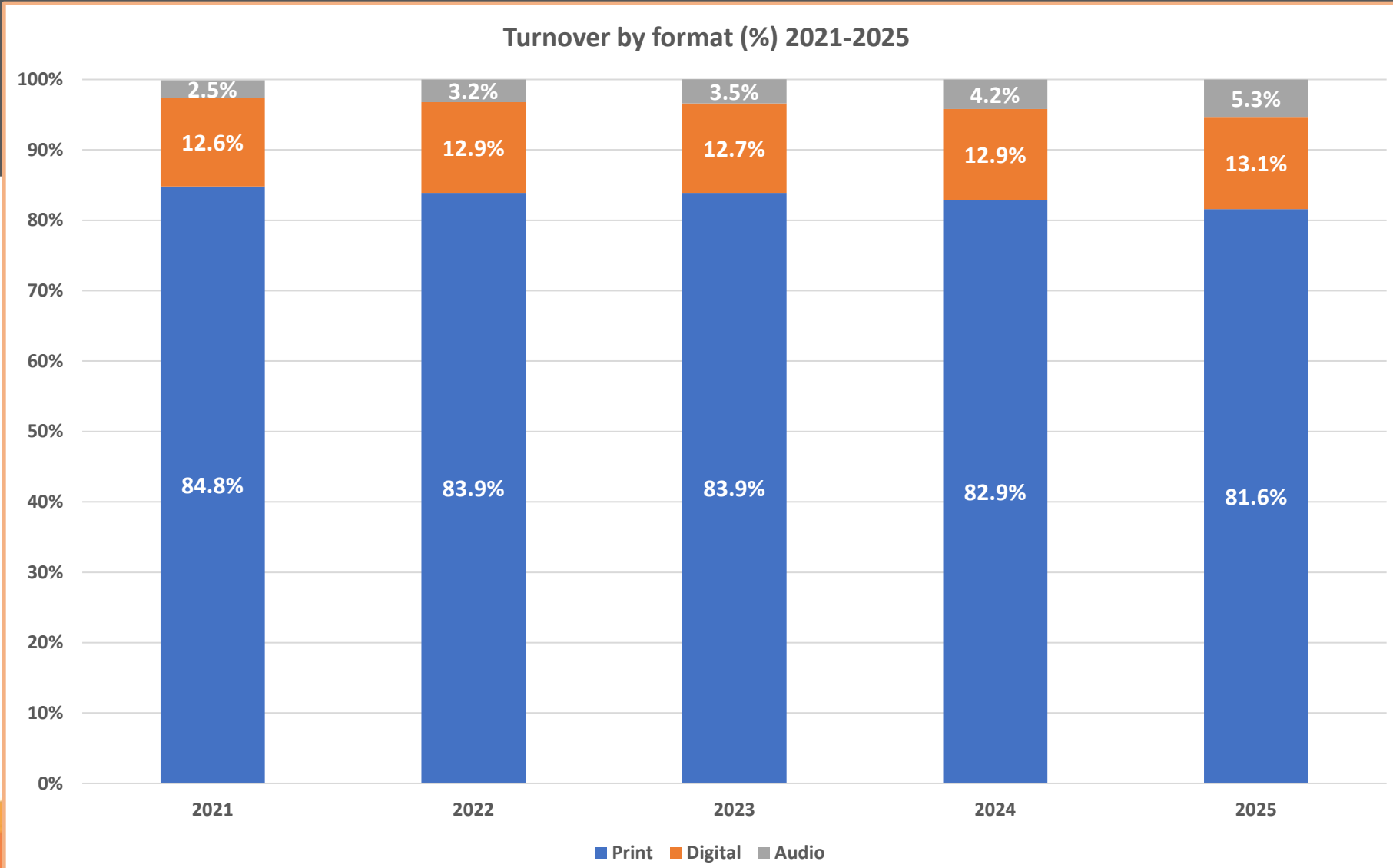
FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



WARNING

Gradual return to **bookstores** seems to dwindle

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

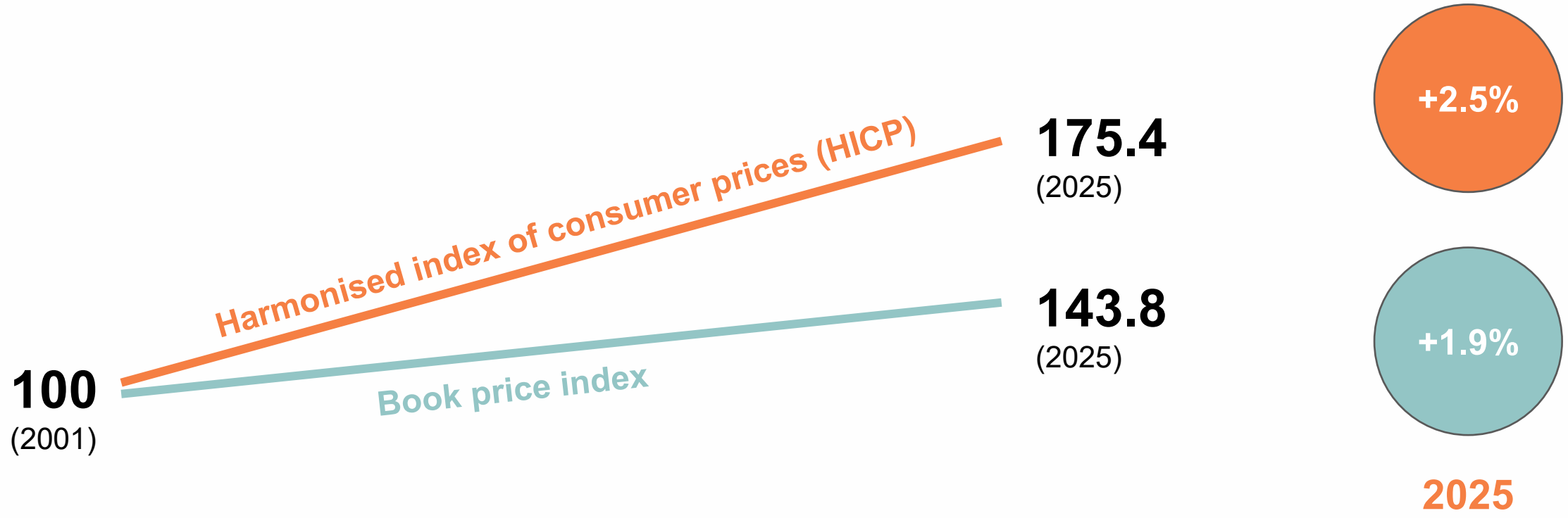


Print books by far largest share

The rise of **audiobooks** (but we are already **losing track**)

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

Book prices grow below inflation



Source: EUROSTAT

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

Profitability

- For many years titles up, revenue stagnant
- Prices not keeping up with inflation
- Shift to digital, audio, subscriptions
- The rise of the second-hand market
- The rise of reading in original language (mainly English)



© Image by FREEPIK

Reading



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

Reading decline

American students' reading skills drop to record lows

Axios, 29/01/25

Les Français lisent de moins en moins, selon le baromètre 2025 « Les Français et la lecture »

Livres Hebdo, 08/04/25

Calano i lettori e il tempo per la lettura, al Sud il 30% in meno di librerie rispetto alla media

Il Sole 24 Ore, 05/12/25

Report finds 'shocking and dispiriting' fall in children reading for pleasure

The Guardian, 05/11/24

Pledges for action in Europe as PISA results show drop in child reading and maths skills

Euronews, 09/09/26

Books sales rise in Germany, but trade frets over declining readers

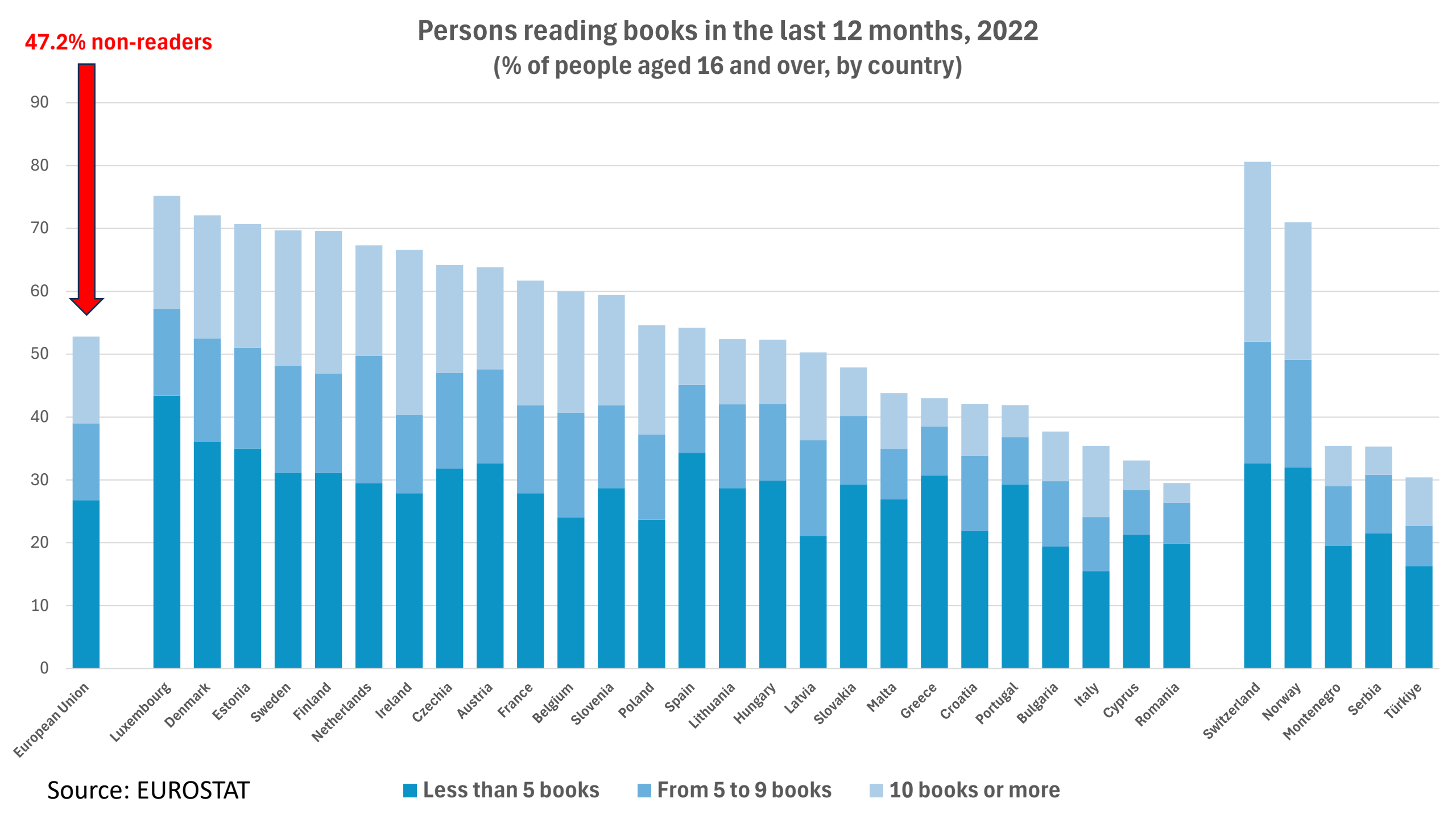
The Bookseller, 08/07/24

A major problem: measuring

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

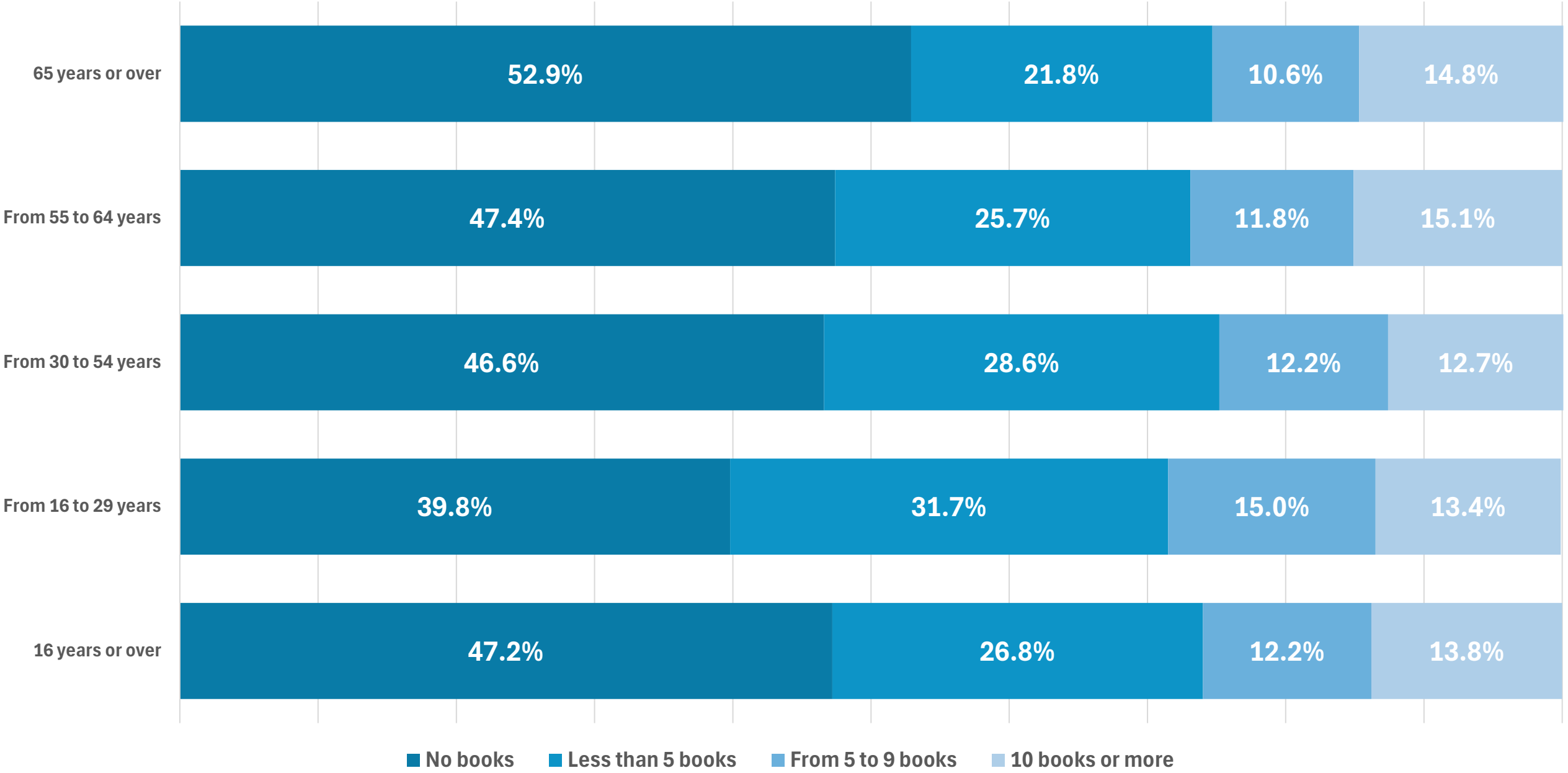
Persons reading books in the last 12 months, 2022

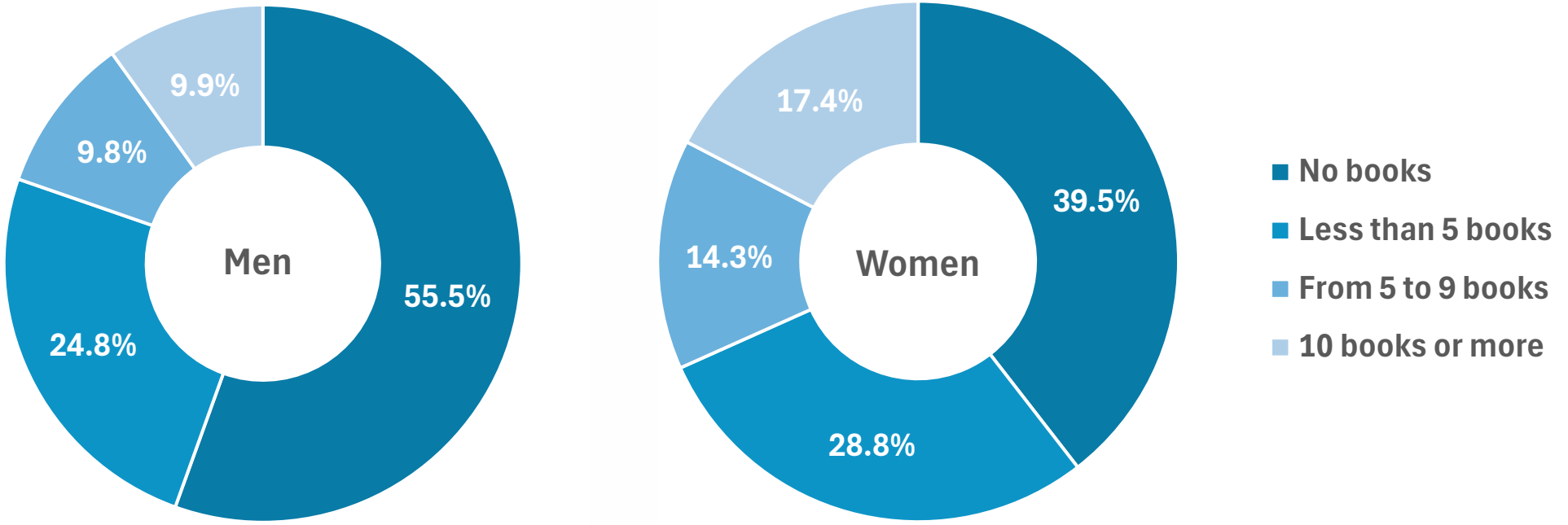
(% of people aged 16 and over, by country)



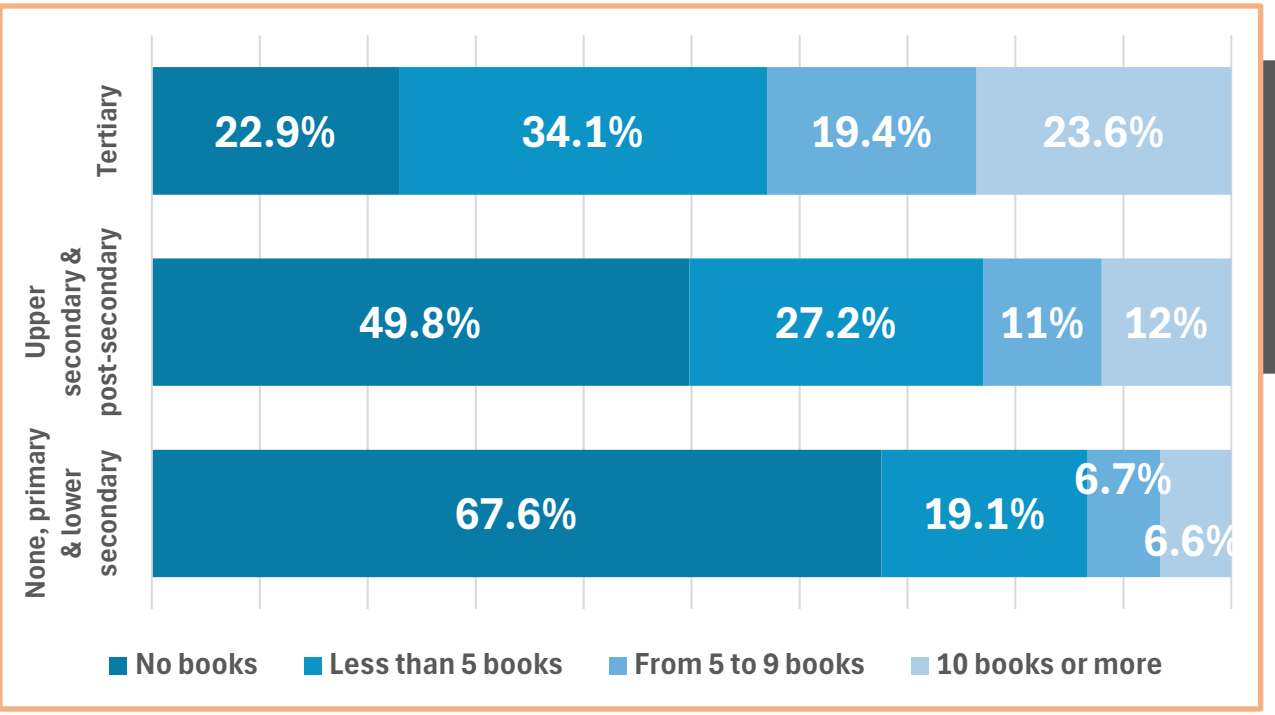
Source: EUROSTAT

Persons reading books in the last 12 months, 2022
(% of people aged 16 and over, by age)

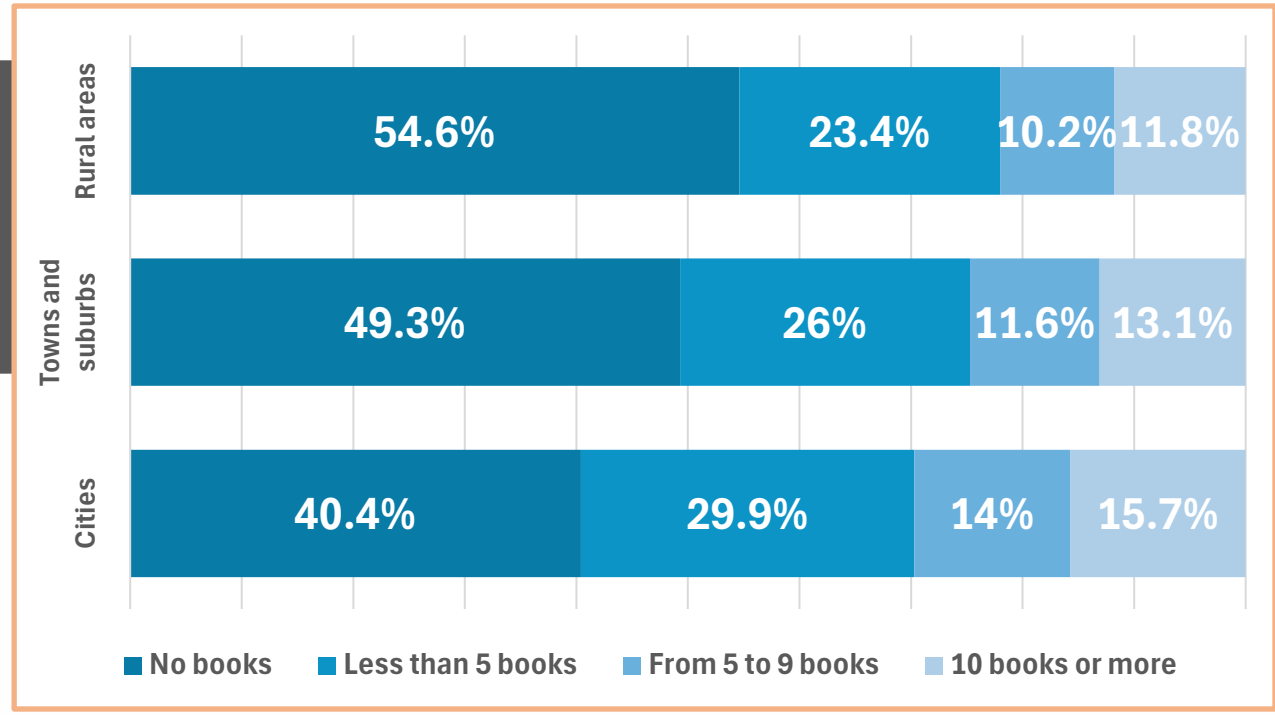




FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

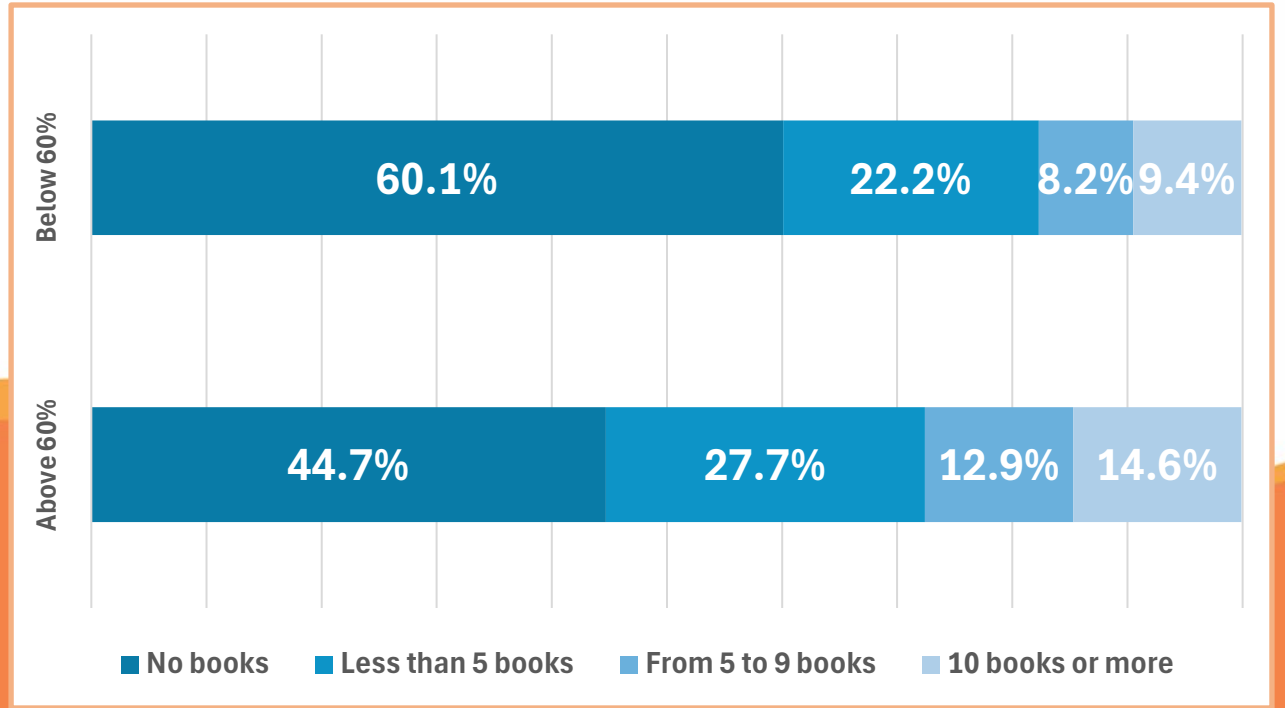


education



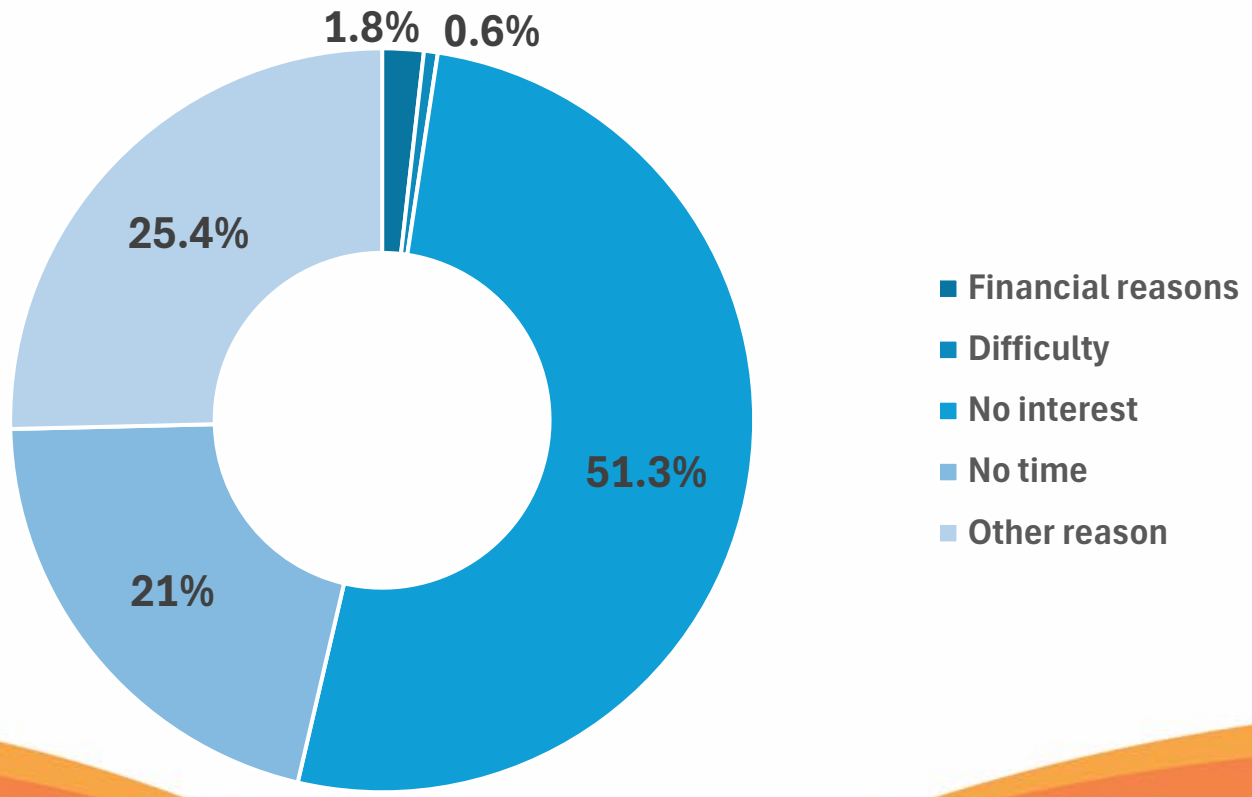
urbanisation

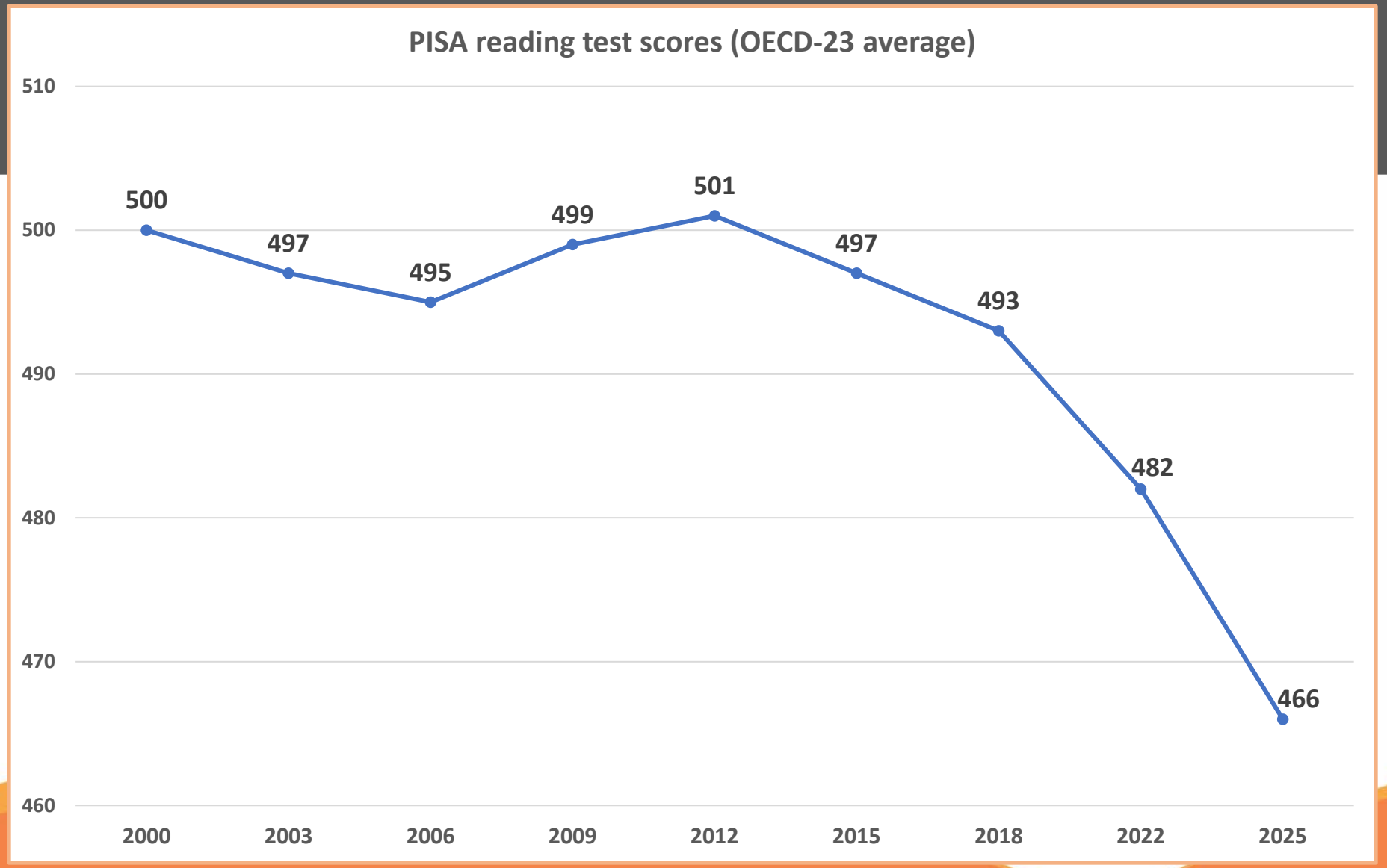
risk of poverty



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

People not reading books: reasons (%)





OECD Programme for International Student Assessment

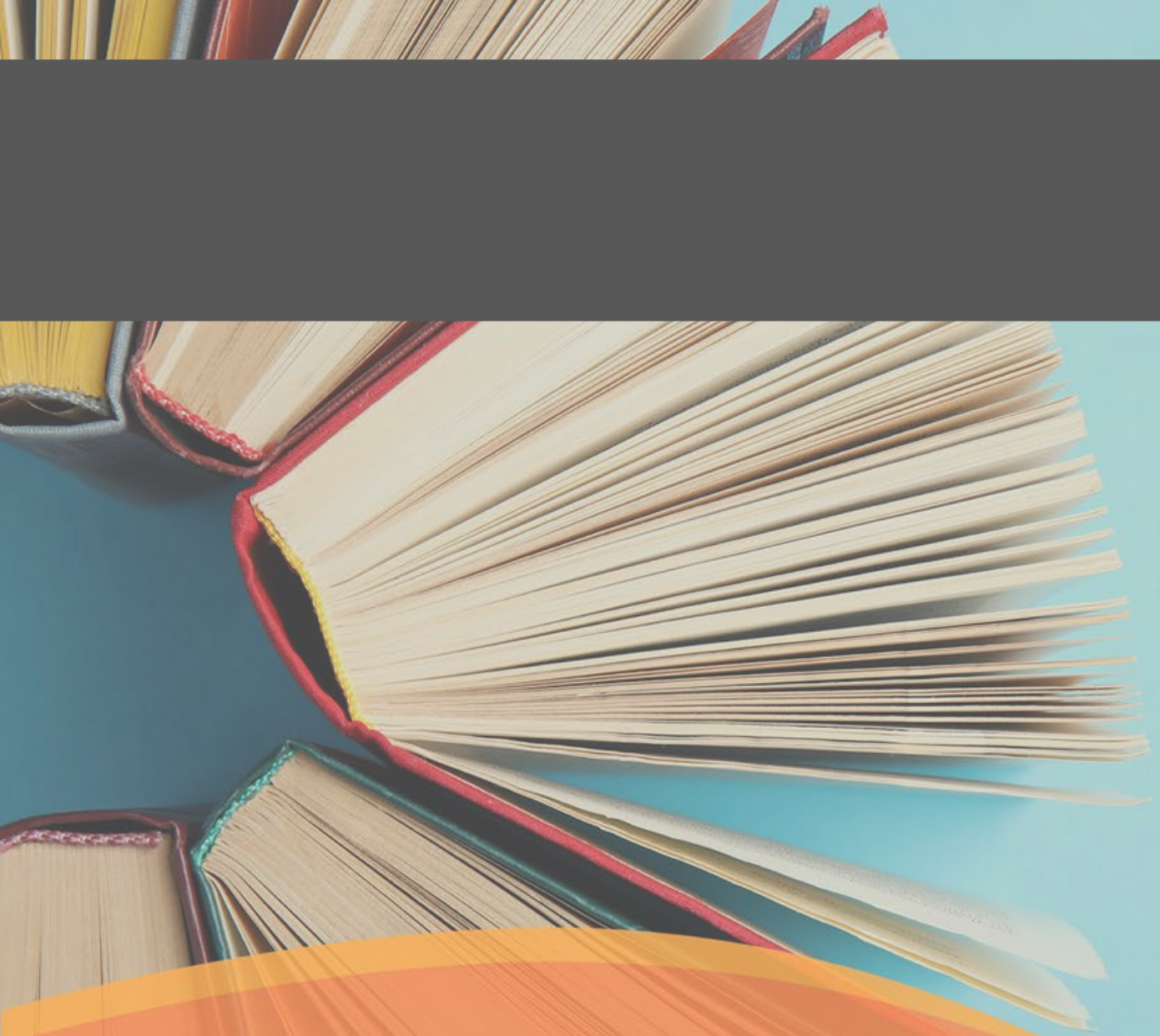
Sharp drop in reading skills 2018-2025

A 20-to-25-point drop corresponds roughly to **one full school year of learning**

Source: OECD

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

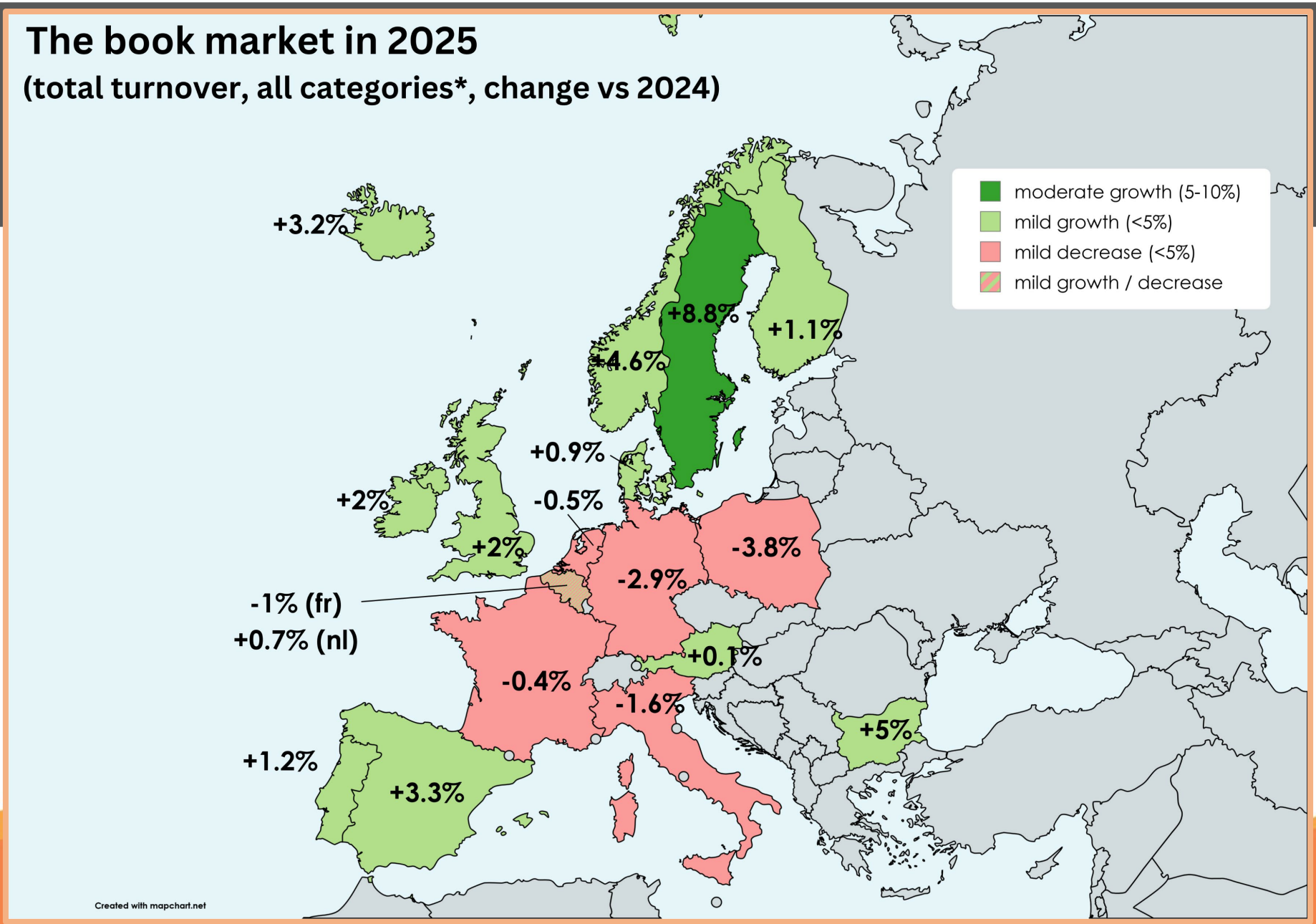
The markets in 2025



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The book market in 2025

(total turnover, all categories*, change vs 2024)



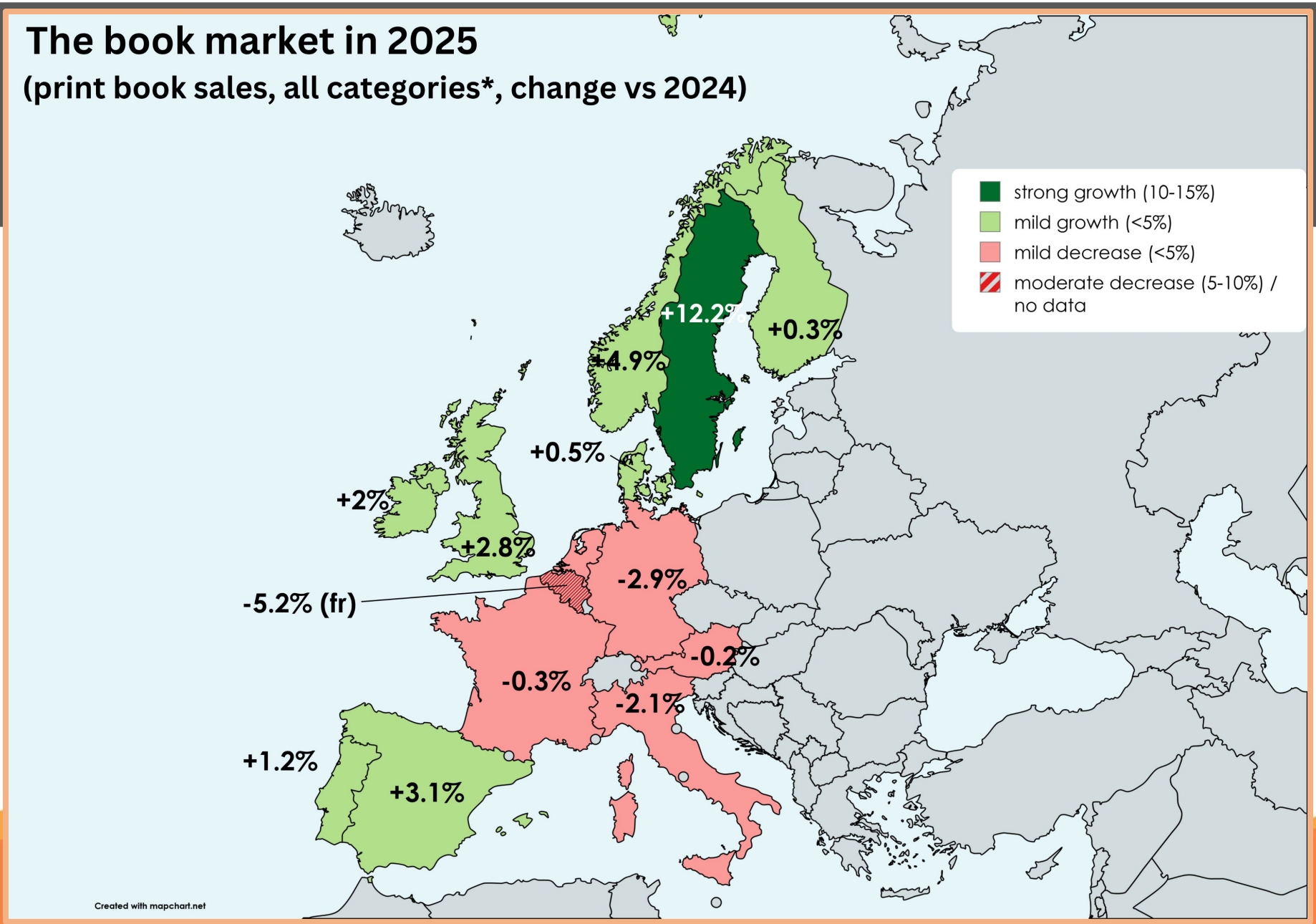
Total -1.2%

In most cases, **value marginally up** or **down**, **volume down**, **prices up** (increase of costs, inflation)

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The book market in 2025

(print book sales, all categories*, change vs 2024)



Ebooks

- Denmark -5.1%
- Finland -4.8%
- Germany +29.1%
- Italy +2.4%
- France +4%
- Sweden +4.2%
- Norway + 18.2%

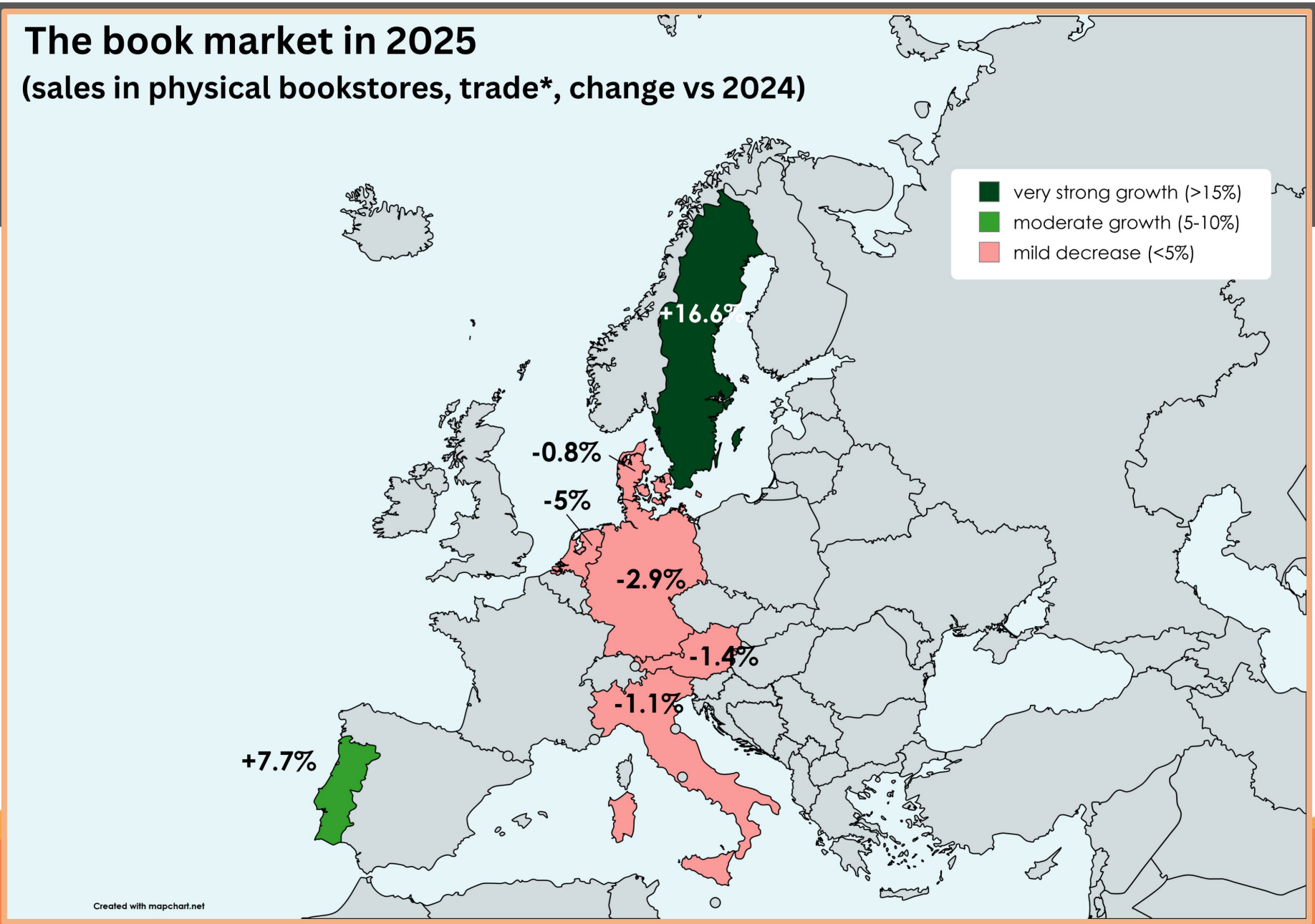
Audiobooks

- Denmark +0.2%
- Finland -1.3%
- Spain +53.3%
- Italy +13.3%
- Sweden +4%
- Norway +7.6%

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The book market in 2025

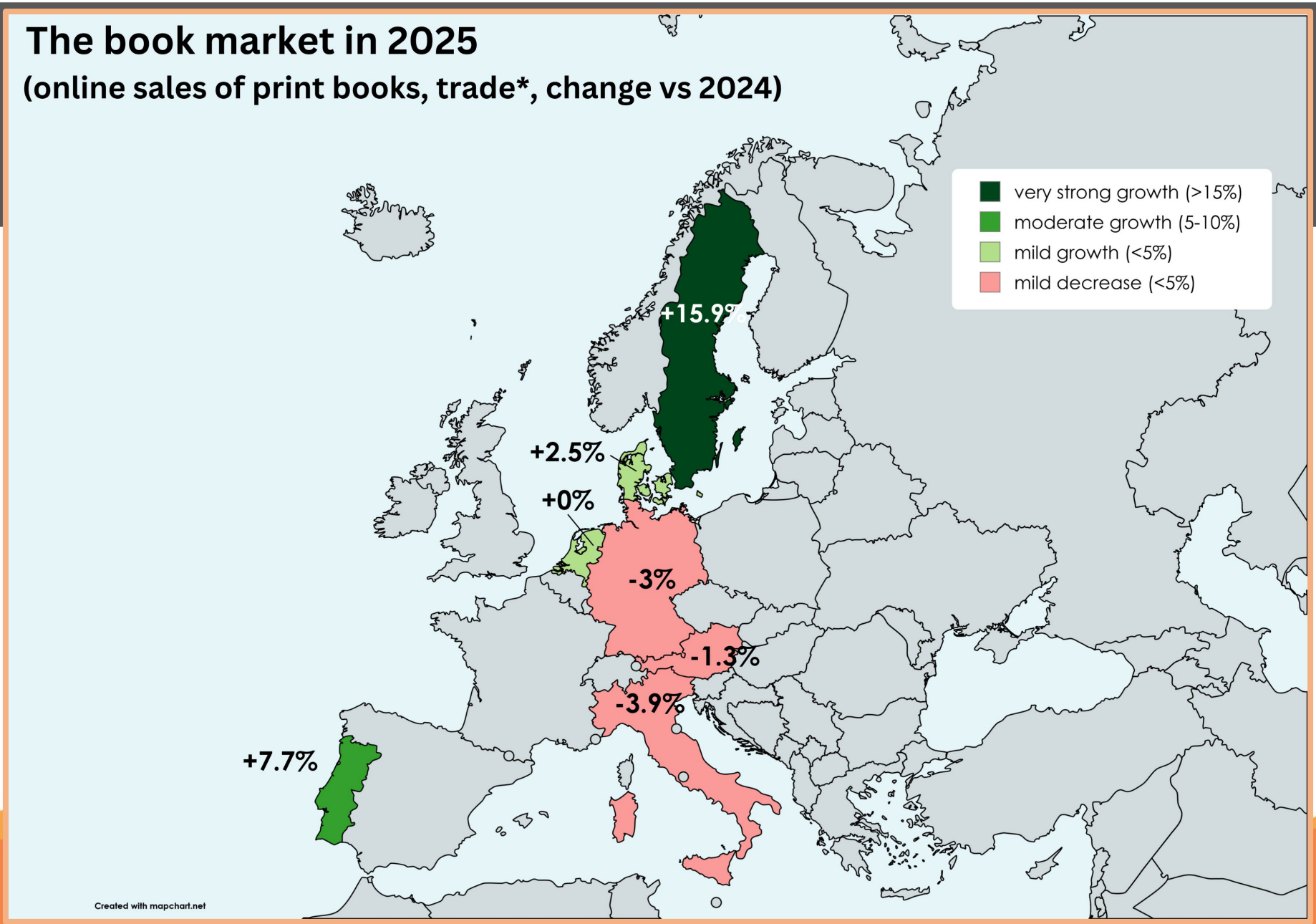
(sales in physical bookstores, trade*, change vs 2024)



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The book market in 2025

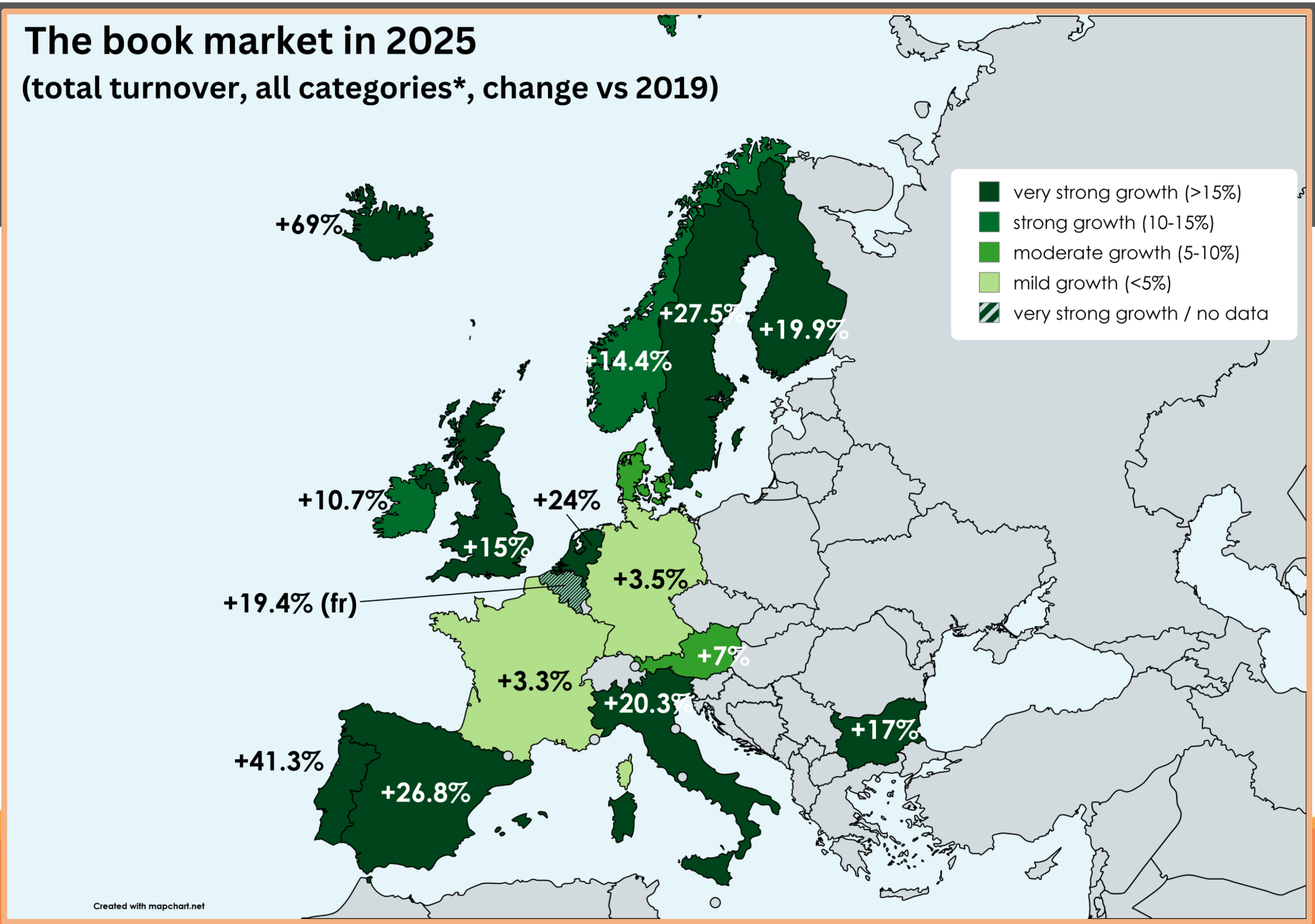
(online sales of print books, trade*, change vs 2024)



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The book market in 2025

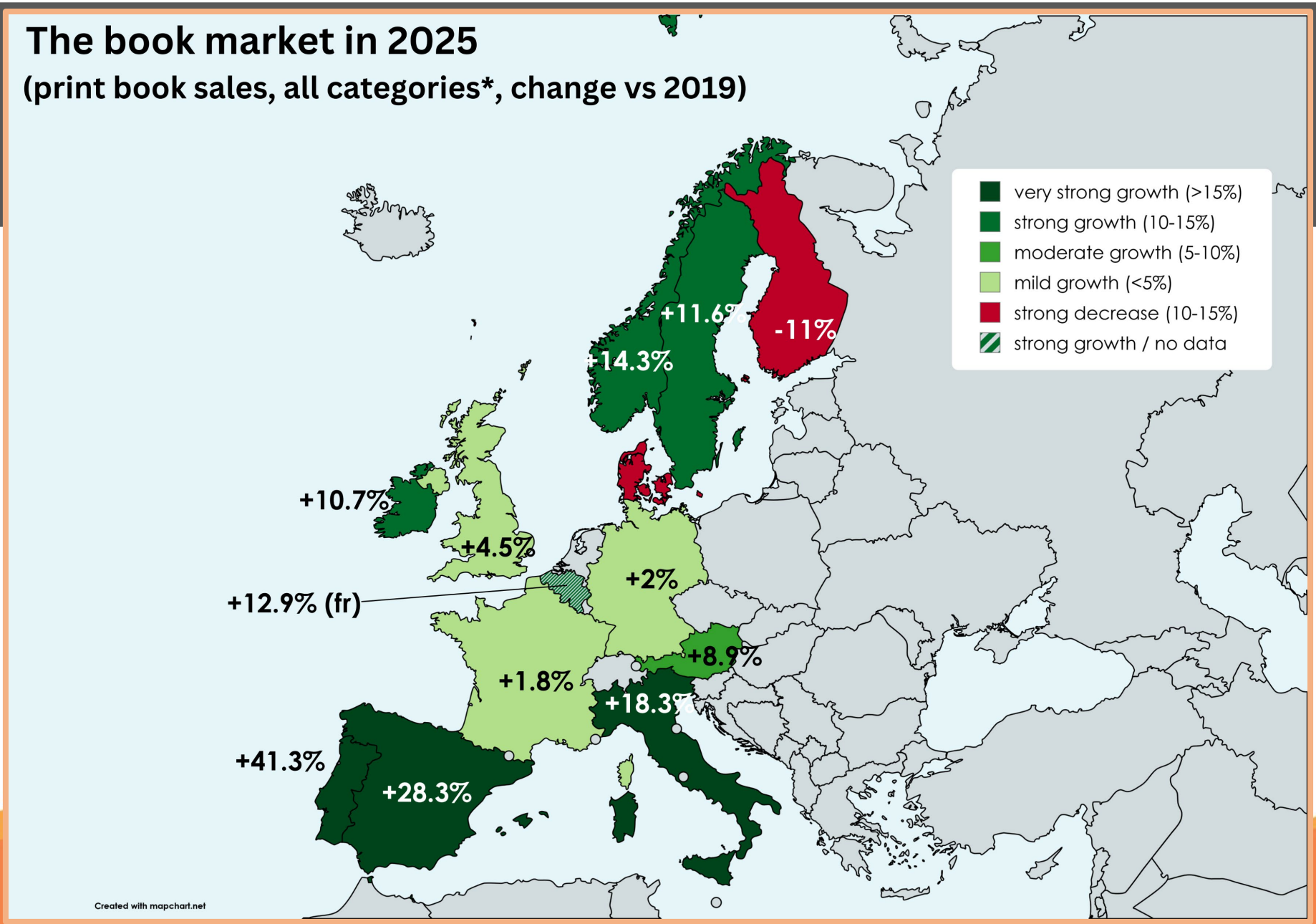
(total turnover, all categories*, change vs 2019)



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The book market in 2025

(print book sales, all categories*, change vs 2019)



Ebooks

- Finland +93.1%
- Italy +22.5%
- Sweden +115.7%
- Norway +42.6%

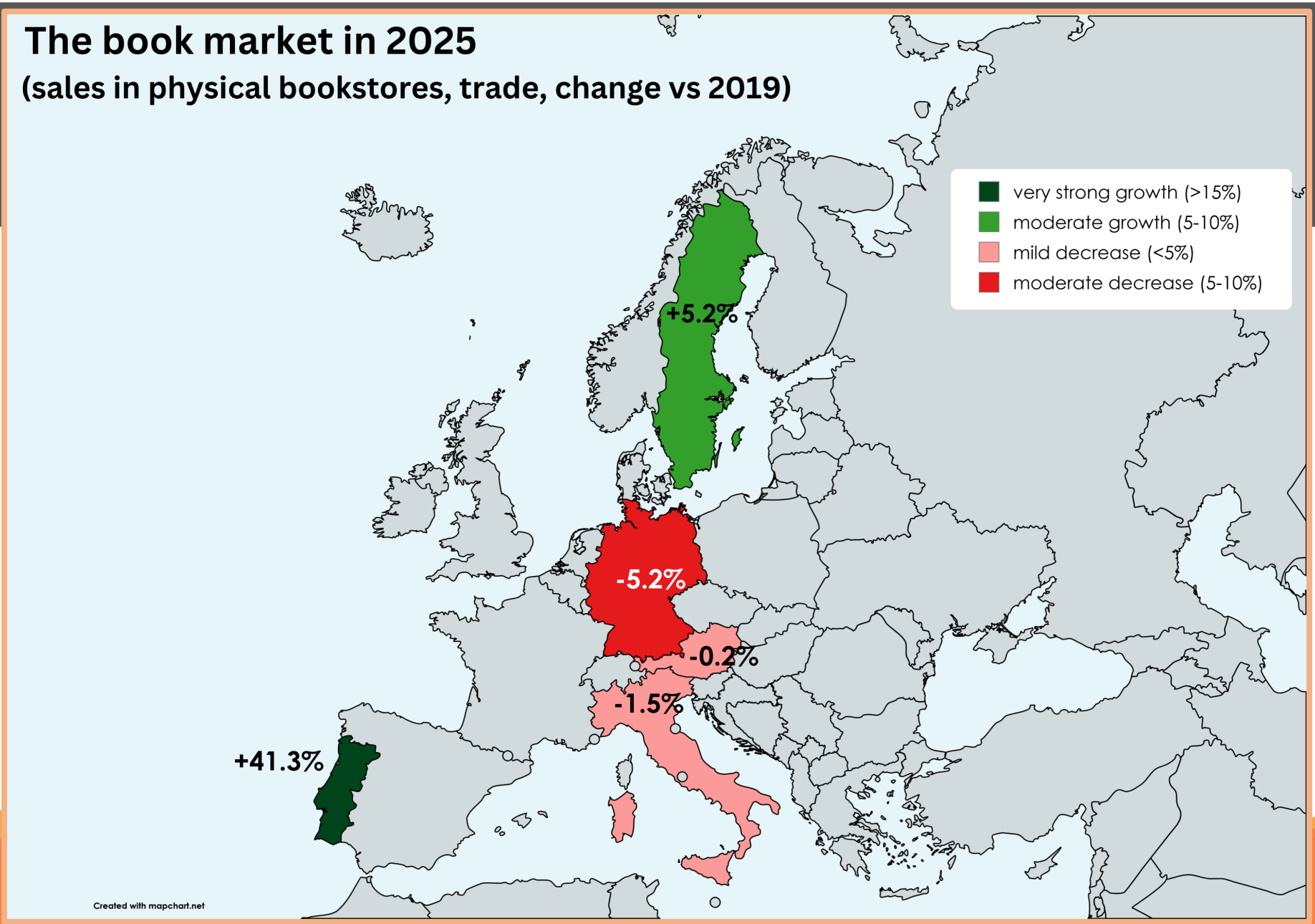
Audiobooks

- Finland +238.4%
- Italy +277.8%
- Sweden +145.2%
- Norway +57.1%

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The book market in 2025

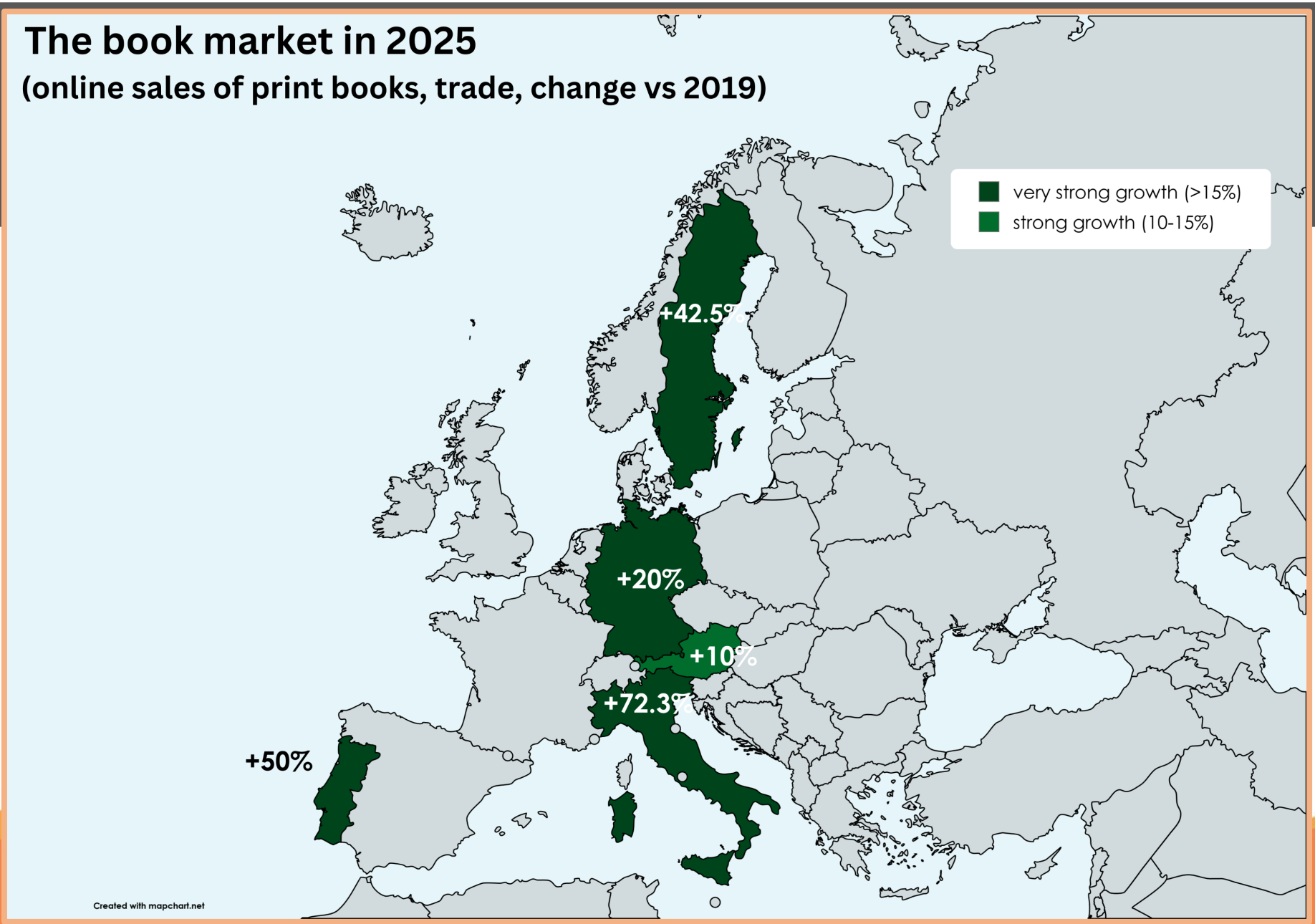
(sales in physical bookstores, trade, change vs 2019)



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

The book market in 2025

(online sales of print books, trade, change vs 2019)



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

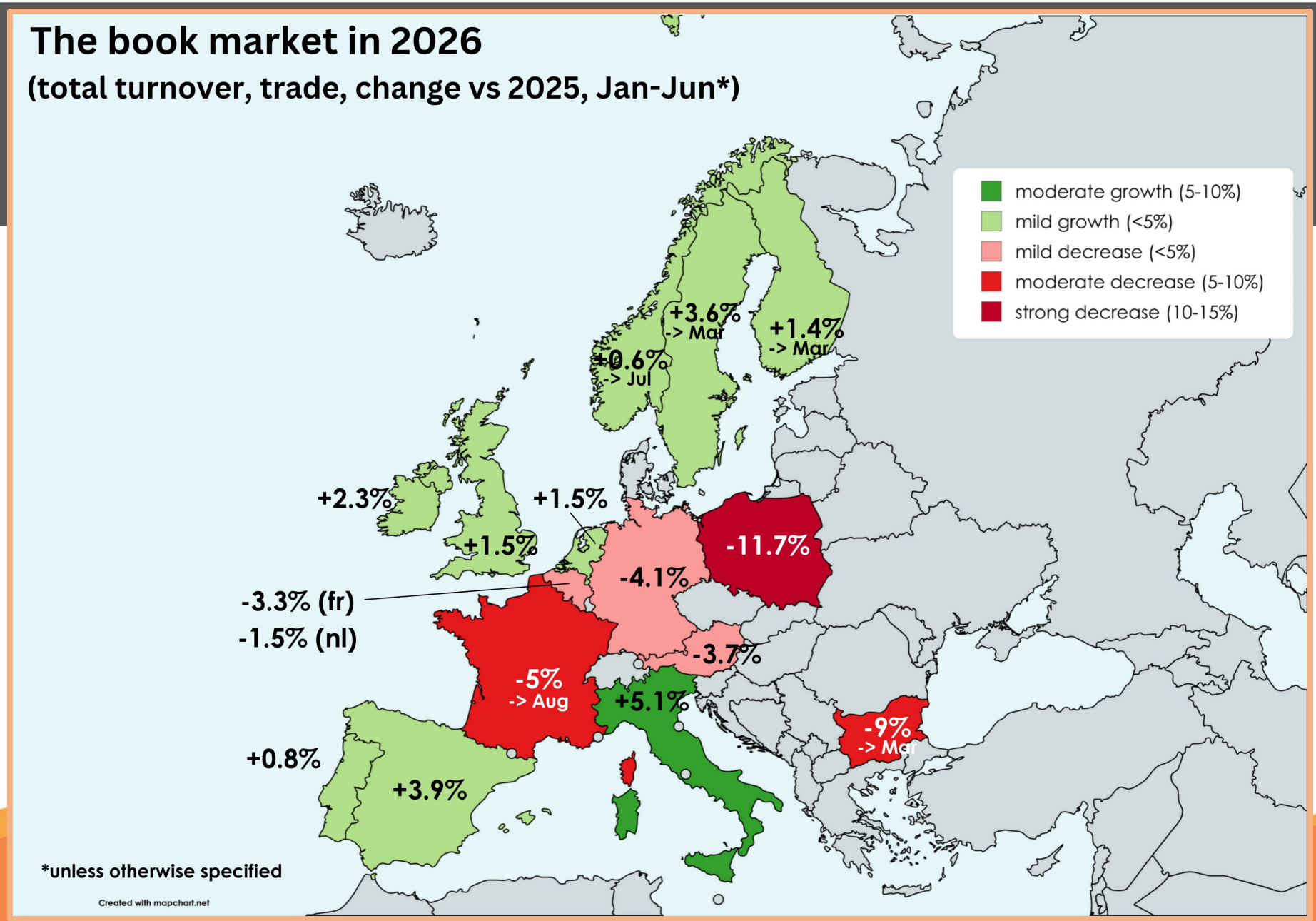
The markets in 2026



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

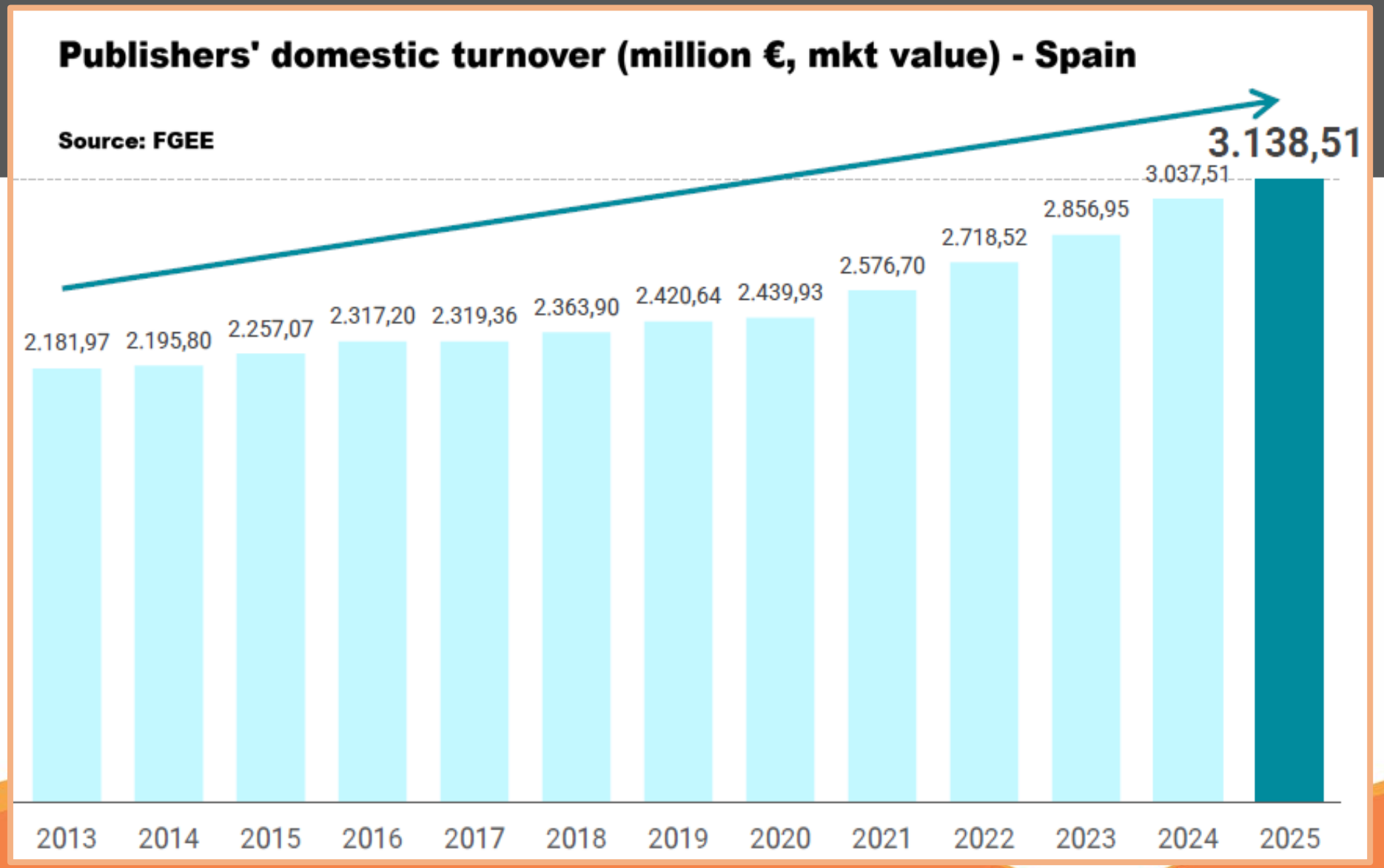
The book market in 2026

(total turnover, trade, change vs 2025, Jan-Jun*)



Mixed picture; in many markets same trend as previous few years: **value marginally up**, **volume down**, **prices up**; some **negative starts**

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS



S1 2026: +3.9%

The only European market on a 12-year **growth stretch**

The **Spanish phenomenon**

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

Estos datos se traducen en 11 años consecutivos de crecimiento del mercado, con una subida acumulada del 39,2% desde 2014 (equivalente a 855 millones de euros). Un fenómeno que ha hecho que otros países europeos se refieran a esta evolución como el "fenómeno español", según palabras de Daniel Fernández, presidente de la FGEE. "Estas cifras son un reflejo también del interés creciente por la lectura que observamos cada año en el Barómetro de Hábitos de Lectura", ha apuntado Fernández.



Estos datos se traducen en 11 años consecutivos de crecimiento del mercado, con una subida acumulada del 39,2% desde 2014 (equivalente a 855 millones de euros). Un fenómeno que ha hecho que otros países europeos se refieran a esta evolución como el "fenómeno español", según palabras de Daniel Fernández, presidente de la FGEE. "Estas cifras son un reflejo también del interés creciente por la lectura que observamos cada año en el Barómetro de Hábitos de Lectura", ha apuntado Fernández.

Quiz: The EU's international trade in books

Partner	Imports	Exports
All world countries	1,839.8	1,752.2
?	607.2	296.8
?	237.4	285.1
?	567.2	45.7
?	27.2	97.8
?	8.5	89.8

2024 – Books, million €

Quiz: The EU's international trade in books

Partner	Imports	Exports
All world countries	1,839.8	1,752.2
UK	607.2	296.8
?	237.4	285.1
?	567.2	45.7
?	27.2	97.8
?	8.5	89.8

2024 – Books, million €

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS

Quiz: The EU's international trade in books

Partner	Imports	Exports
All world countries	1,839.8	1,752.2
UK	607.2	296.8
US	237.4	285.1
?	567.2	45.7
?	27.2	97.8
?	8.5	89.8

2024 – Books, million €

Quiz: The EU's international trade in books

Partner	Imports	Exports
All world countries	1,839.8	1,752.2
UK	607.2	296.8
US	237.4	285.1
China	567.2	45.7
?	27.2	97.8
?	8.5	89.8

2024 – Books, million €

Quiz: The EU's international trade in books

Partner	Imports	Exports
All world countries	1,839.8	1,752.2
UK	607.2	296.8
US	237.4	285.1
China	567.2	45.7
Canada	27.2	97.8
?	8.5	89.8

2024 – Books, million €

Quiz: The EU's international trade in books

Partner	Imports	Exports
All world countries	1,839.8	1,752.2
UK	607.2	296.8
US	237.4	285.1
China	567.2	45.7
Canada	27.2	97.8
Mexico	8.5	89.8

2024 – Books, million €

Quiz: The EU's international trade in books



Partner	Imports	Exports
All world countries	1,839.8	1,752.2
UK	607.2	296.8
US	237.4	285.1
China	567.2	45.7
Canada	27.2	97.8
Mexico	8.5	89.8

2024 – Books, million €



THANK YOU! ANY QUESTIONS?

ETURRIN@FEP-FEE.EU

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PUBLISHERS
FÉDÉRATION DES ÉDITEURS EUROPÉENS