



ROOTS IN THE FUTURE

ITALY
GUEST
OF HONOUR

FRANKFURT
BOOK FAIR 2024





FRANK FURT BOOK FAIR 2024

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ITALY GUEST OF HONOUR 2024

WIDENING THE SCOPE OF ITALIAN CULTURE

GENNARO SANGIULIANO

Minister of Culture



Italy, as the Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair after a gap of 36 years, is a historic occasion for our editorial team, who will be able to showcase its vitality at the most important and prestigious book fair in Europe.

The ideas, values and content of the Italian imagination, which play a central role in our nation's reputation worldwide, will be presented most excellently on this stage. Thanks to the work of the Extraordinary Government Commissioner Mauro Mazza, I am confident that we will be able to make the most of this great opportunity. The title chosen, *Roots in the Future*, truly symbolises the innovative nature of Italy's participation in

The ideas and values of the Italian imagination

next year's edition: the need to widen our scope of reference to include a broader range of the multiple voices found in our fiction and non-fiction; to anchor firmly all that was produced in our celebrated past; and to focus on new types of creativity and rediscover long neglected themes such as spirituality and religion.

We currently have the task of bringing the best of our culture into the future, enriched with new contributions to make it even stronger, more open and more creative. Frankfurt 2024 will be a valuable stepping stone to achieving this aim, and one of which Italy will take full advantage.

ROOTS IN THE FUTURE

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THE BEAUTY OF DIALOGUE

MAURO MAZZA

Extraordinary Commissioner



In the presentation video for the Frankfurt Book Fair 2024 (16-20 October), which will include Italy as the Guest of Honour, there is an old black and white television image: the 1967 meeting in Venice between Pier Paolo Pasolini and Ezra Pound.

The two thinkers conversed in the name of culture and, above all, of poetry. Although they were very different and, in many ways, almost the polar opposites of each other, they were mutually curious and intrigued by the distance between them, which motivated them to explore it and bridge it together. It would be great if Italy approached the remarkable showcase of the Book Fair with that same willingness: from the Italian Pavilion created by the architect Boeri, to cultural events where we will present our one hundred writers, and the musical performances and

**We will introduce
a culture with multiple
voices and with a smile**

art exhibitions we will organise. We would like to show you the image and elements of a culture which is a fruitful dialogue, not only between different sensibilities but also between the past and the future. Too often biases and subversion, intolerance and assumptions harm dialogue and discussion, blocking the surprise and beauty that can be experienced in such an encounter. To those who have asked me to define in five adjectives how Italian culture will be presented at Frankfurt 2024, I would say with respect, determination, multiple voices, confidence and – above all – with a smile.

OUR WEALTH

*There are loves to cultivate
to unearth truth and beauty everywhere...*

*It is on the shoulders of giants that we have grown over the centuries,
on a journey that encompasses our essence...*

*Because we were not made to live as brutes,
but to follow virtue and knowledge...*

*It is a history written in marble and bronze,
with water and fire, from the Tiber to the Isonzo...*

*Passing from the hills to interminable spaces
that evoke the Eternal...*

*We know it was our good fortune
to find ourselves in the cradle of history...*

*That's why, when reading, we are often not looking for
new ideas but thoughts we've already thought...*

*Yet there is an unease within us,
in some way related to beauty...*

*And with the desire to take flight and leave,
for after all, life is either lived or written about!*

*My Italy, you are infinite in your creation and reading,
supporting yourself with knowledge*

*Your roots are eternal and new,
your past appears gigantic – and yet it moves!*

OUR

ITALY GUEST OF HONOUR

Italy's previous appearance as Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt International Book Fair dates back to 1988, when the Berlin Wall was still standing.

That edition, dedicated to the theme of Italian cultural production, opened the highly successful annual edition of the event, which assigns a special place in the programme to a country or linguistic region.

The 1988 Frankfurt International Book Fair marked the pinnacle of a golden era for Italian literature, leading to increased international interest in contemporary writers and the growth of Italian translations. German literary critics called Italian literature the 'best Europe has to offer' and the unprecedented queues for the presentation of the *Foucault's Pendulum* by Umberto Eco symbolised the public's love of books.

To this day, the magnificence of the scenography created by Mario Garbuglia, a citadel to the Italian book in the pavilion to honour its history from the XVI century onwards, has not been forgotten in Frankfurt.

The strategic importance of Italy's participation in the edition was also demonstrated by the Fair's opening by the two foreign ministers at the time, Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Giulio Andreotti. More than thirty years later, a lot has changed, but Italy, with its literature and culture in general, remains – as the then Managing Director Peter Weidhaas said – 'the country of Germany's dreams.'

PAST 1988



Images from Stefano Rolando's collection from the 1988 Fair.

Top left:
Umberto Eco with Stefano Rolando, General Manager and Head of the Information and Publishing Department at the Presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers.

Upper right:
Minister of Cultural Heritage Vincenza Bono Parrino, Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti and his German counterpart Hans-Dietrich Genscher visit the Italian Pavilion, accompanied by Peter Weidhaas, the Fair's Managing Director.

Bottom left:
President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Richard von Weizsäcker with the General Manager and Stefano Rolando, Head of the Information and Publishing Department of the Presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers.



FUTURE 2024

Pride in the past with a focus on the future: this will be Italy's approach to celebrating the role of Guest of Honour Country at the Frankfurt International Book Fair 2024.

The title *Roots in the Future* fully expresses the intention behind Italy's participation. It represents an image that is not static – roots indicate attachment and steadfastness, but at the same time, the tree draws sap from them. And without these roots, we wouldn't have fruits and flowers, the elements that ensure the tree's future. We will find these values – alongside sustainability – in the pavilion created by Stefano Boeri, the prestigious business card of the 2024 Guest of Honour Country. Italy 'disembarks' in Frankfurt determined to celebrate a non-stereotypical image of its national culture. This starts by acknowledging the German public's love of and interest in everything Italian (and they are not the only ones). How to harness the power of tradition is our challenge as we start out on the road that will lead us to the week of the Fair in October 2024. This is because as Italian culture heads towards the future, our identity is an essential piece of luggage to carry on this journey.

STEFANO BOERI

Architect



This new dialogue between tradition and innovation provides Stefano Boeri Interiors with an opportunity to design the pavilion for Italy as the Guest of Honour Country at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2024.

It is a creative process that aims to build a fluid, dynamic exhibition space, designed to promote news in the publishing world and the history of the 'Bel Paese'.

Visitors will be able to walk freely through spaces designed as an expression of Italian creativity and the most typical aspects of the country's culture, through a completely innovative exhibition, capable of introducing international visitors to the latest publishing news and more.

The exhibition will be designed in the form of areas and themed routes: squares that will host a special programme of meetings and talks with key players from the contemporary cultural and creative fields and areas dedicated to young people, food, music and much more. The focus will be on circularity and sustainability, from the choice of materials and technology used for interior design to the po-

tential discussion of these topics which are more relevant than ever before.



'They will live in the woods'
An idea by Stefano Boeri
2018

CLOSE TO HOME, CLOSE TO CULTURE

ITALY/SLOVENIA

PASSING THE BATON

The end of the year dedicated to Slovenian literature will be recognised with a ceremonial passing of the baton to Italy, the 2024 Guest of Honour.

The event will be attended by representatives from the 2023 and 2024 Guest of Honour Countries. The succession will be symbolically represented by the handing over of the Guest Scroll, the parchment engraved with the texts of guests from previous editions, which is testament to the appeal of this venerable tradition. The handover will take place following a discussion moderated by Shila Behjat between two authors, Slovenian Dušan Jelinčič and Italian Ilaria Tuti. This will be an opportunity to compare the features that literature from both countries has in common, which are not only geographically but also culturally neighbours.

This year's event will also strengthen friendships and cooperation between the two countries as the preparation phase for the start of a shared journey that will see Nova Gorica and Gorizia become the 2025 European Cultural Capital.

From these initiatives comes a lesson in peace and unity among populations which, as hopes the President of the Italian Republic Sergio Mattarella, will help 'to surpass forever the most tragic pages of the past and pave the way for a shared future.'

The ceremony will evoke the spirit of respect and shared experience that defines the Fair and will provide a wonderful moment to celebrate the richness of the two cultures in all fields.

The handover between neighbouring countries such as Slovenia and Italy provides an opportunity to celebrate the value of proximity. We find this value in literature and, more generally, in the art of people from both countries.

The event, scheduled for the last day of the Fair's 75th edition, will give impetus to other events in 2024 which, given Italy's participation at Frankfurt as the Guest of Honour, will be organised to promote the cultural heritage of the borders that join Italy and Slovenia.

Date: 22 October 2023

Time: 4pm

Place: GoH Pavilion/Forum 1



2024 PREVIEWS

PROGRAMME

AGENDA 2023-2024

The opening of the Italy Guest of Honour pavilion of the Frankfurt Book Fair 2024 will be the crowning glory of a one-year journey.

The 2023-2024 agenda will be enriched with cultural activities in both Germany and Italy that will help raise public awareness of the importance of the October 2024 event and be published periodically on the official website www.italiafrancoforte2024.com.

The Guest of Honour status at the 75th edition of the Fair will provide a key opportunity to highlight the huge versatility of the Italian publishing sector, which finds new readers on the international market thanks to the quality of its non-fiction, fiction, classics, comic books and books for young people.

Italy will be at the forefront of Frankfurt, not only in terms of literature, but all its cultural industries: from music to cinema, theatre, dance, figurative arts and architecture.

GUESTS

WONDER, SCIENCE, BEAUTY

Susanna Tamaro, Carlo Rovelli and Stefano Zecchi are the first three names we want to announce. This choice underlines our willingness to recognize how fiction and non fiction contribute in equal measure to making our national publishing industry remarkable. The three speakers testify to an appeal beyond the boundaries of contemporary Italian works and the symbiotic relationship between literary imagination and scientific knowledge.

Additionally, an Italian delegation of around one hundred and twenty people, including authors and professional stakeholders, will be present in Frankfurt during the Fair week. Two arenas in the pavilion will be used to host readings, presentations, meetings and debates – all in the name of universal values like freedom, which books have always symbolised.

SUSANNA TAMARO



In the beginning, there was cinema. Susanna Tamaro, born in Trieste and a distant relative of Italo Svevo, was destined to write one of the most cherished Italian novels: *Va' dove ti porta il cuore* [translated as: *Go where your heart takes you*], which sold 16 million copies,

including ten million copies abroad, following its translation in 45 countries. Tamaro graduated from the Experimental Cinematography Centre with the short film *The origin of day and night* and approaches writing from a visual point of view.

She debuted in bookstores in 1989 with *La testa fra le nuvole* (Marsilio) [*Head in the Clouds*] while 1994 was the year that *Va' dove ti porta il cuore* (Baldini&Castoldi) came out. A literary phenomenon, it was adapted immediately into film by Cristina Comencini, with Virna Lisi and Margherita Buy. The novel was included in the 2011 list of '150 Great Books' produced as part of the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy. Susanna Tamaro's literary journey continues today on a very broad creative spectrum, ranging from novels to short stories, spiritual reflections, memoirs, a childhood narrative (*Salta, Bart!* [*Jump, Bart*] published by Giunti, which won the Strega Girls and Boys Award in 2016), to *Lessons in nature in Invisible Meraviglia*, Solferino, 2021 [*Invisible Wonders*], a loveable journey among the creatures living in meadows and forests, documented with photos and notes on the author's website.

In Germany, *Go where your heart takes you* was released by Diogenes in 1995 under the title *Geh, wherein dein Herz dich trägt*, and over the years her works have been acquired by numerous publishers, including Goldmann, Piper, Bertelsmann and btb. Among the latest translations is *Bart*, published by Hanser in 2017 and *Geschichte einer großen Liebe* (HarperCollins Deutschland, 2022).

CARLO ROVELLI



Carlo Rovelli, born in Verona in 1956 and professor of theoretical physics at the University of Aix-Marseille, is one of the world's most authoritative physicists and co-creator of the theory of quantum-loop gravity. But for millions of readers, he is also, above all, a master of disseminating scientific knowledge, someone who can explain the most complex ideas and models in a language that everyone understands. Starting with *Che cos'è la scienza. La rivoluzione di Anassimandro* (Mondadori, 2011) [translated as *The First Scientist: Anaximander and his legacy*] and *La realtà non è come ci appare* (Raffaello Cortina, 2014) [*Reality is not what it seems*], this journey accelerated in 2014 with *Sette brevi lezioni di fisica* (Adelphi) [*Seven brief lessons on physics*], a world bestseller translated into 43 languages and which sold over two million copies. From 2017 onwards, however, it was for *L'ordine del tempo* (Adelphi) [*The order of time*] which the Venetian scientist was named in the list of top 100 'global thinkers' by the US magazine *Foreign Policy* and from which Liliana Cavani produced the film of the same name, presented at the Venice International Film Festival in 2023. Rovelli, always true to the idea that science is based on doubt, the need to confirm the truth and discover the wonder that surrounds us – which grows with knowledge – was back in bookshops in 2023 with *Buchi bianchi* (Adelphi) [*White holes*], this time inspired by Dante and looking at the stars, the cosmos and the mystery of black holes. All his books have been translated into German by Rowohlt, including *Sieben kurze Lektionen über Physik* (2015), *Die Ordnung der Zeit* (2018) and *Weißer Löcher* (2023).

STEFANO ZECCHI



What if beauty will really save the world? One of Fëdor Dostoevskij's happiest insights can be used to tell Stefano Zecchi's entire academic, authorial and political journey. Born in Venice in 1945, the philosopher has taught at universities for more than 40 years: first as a professor of theoretical philosophy in Padua, then – from 1984 to 2013 – of aesthetics in Milan. However, his pursuit of our sense and value of beauty – understood as a proactive, constructive, traditionally rooted and future – orientated force – is also key in all his other work: from rich non-fiction, including *La bellezza* (Bollati Boringhieri, 1990) and *L'artista armata* (Mondadori, 1998) alongside novels, frequent media interventions, the creation of new cultural movements (Mitomodernism, founded with the poet Giuseppe Conte), and his training work (the International Academy of Beauty Science, where he is chairman), to his political and public service (he is former Chairman of the Academy of Fine Arts in Brera, Milan). Zecchi is still a cultural advisor in Milan, a representative of the Ministry of Public Education at UNESCO and has recently been named delegate for "City of Venice, culture: future project". *Phänomenologie in Italien* (published in Italy by Il Mulino, 1991) was released in Germany in 1995 by Königshausen & Neumann.

ITALIAN PUBLI SHING

A GROWING INDUSTRY, TURNING ITS ATTENTION ABROAD

KEY STATISTICS FROM THE SECTOR

The Italian publishing industry is one of the largest in Europe in terms of turnover – it is fourth in terms of the value of sales (3.388 million Euros) after Germany, the United Kingdom, and France – and its ability to make its writers, stories and opinion leaders known abroad in all sectors: fiction and non-fiction, books for children and young people, comic books and many more. In 2010, Italy sold the translation rights for 4217 titles and bought the rights for 9009 titles. Since then, the book industry has grown, taking on a key role on the national and international stage. In 2022, some 9432 foreign rights for books were purchased, while 7889 were sold. This is because while Italian publishing is historically cosmopolitan and open to different cultures, it is also increasingly capable of creating phenomena, stories and imagery that conquer first Italian readers, and then go on to win over readers around the world.

Between 2010 and 2022, translated books published in Italy remained stable at around 9000 titles, while the translations of Italian writers grew by 45% (corresponding to 65,321 titles in 2022).

The growth of Italian authors is driving a cultural industry that has been able to restart following the pandemic by increasing its economic weight and importance in the country, with sales in 2022 totalling over 300 million euro more than in 2019.

These figures go hand in hand with very strong growth in supply: in 2022, some 83,950 titles were published, while thanks to the possibilities offered by e-commerce, the catalogue of available works is now at 1,393 million titles.

Behind these figures, there is a network of over 5,000 publishers: made up of large groups, medium-sized publishers specialising in specific sectors, and small publishers on the hunt for new talent. Together they form a rich landscape which provides offerings for a reading public which, according to surveys by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) represents 39.3% of Italian citizens over the age of six. And yet, according to a survey by the AIE, if we factor in the readers of books other than fiction and non-fiction – such as cookery books, travel guides, and manuals, even if only partially read – the reading rate in the 15-74 age group is in fact much higher, reaching 71% – a three point percentage rise compared to prepandemic levels in 2019.

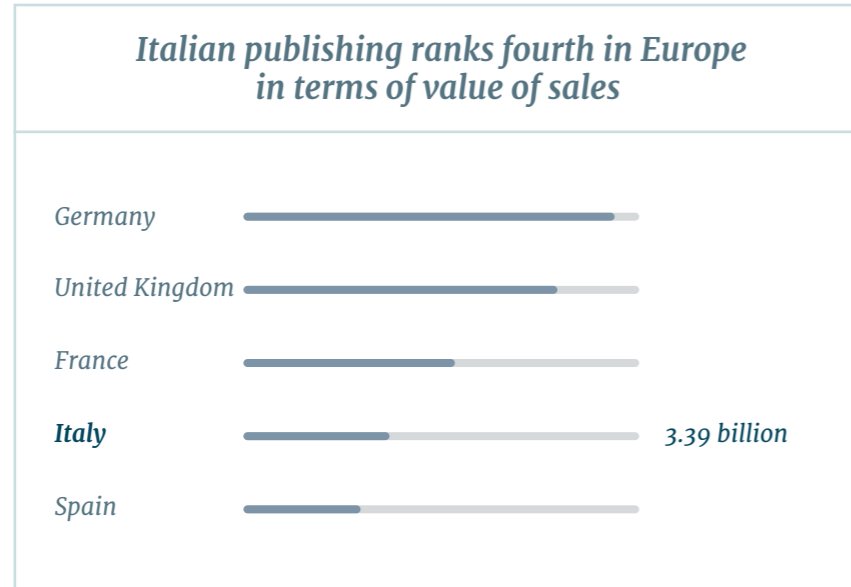
INTERNATIONALISATION



The attention of foreign countries towards Italian authors is mainly focused on books for children and young people (35%) – it is important to point out that the most important professional event in the world in this field, the Bologna Children's Book Fair, takes place in Bologna, Italy. Other important sectors include popular non-fiction (20%), fiction for adults (19%), manuals (9%), comics (5%), illustrated books (2%) and others (9%).

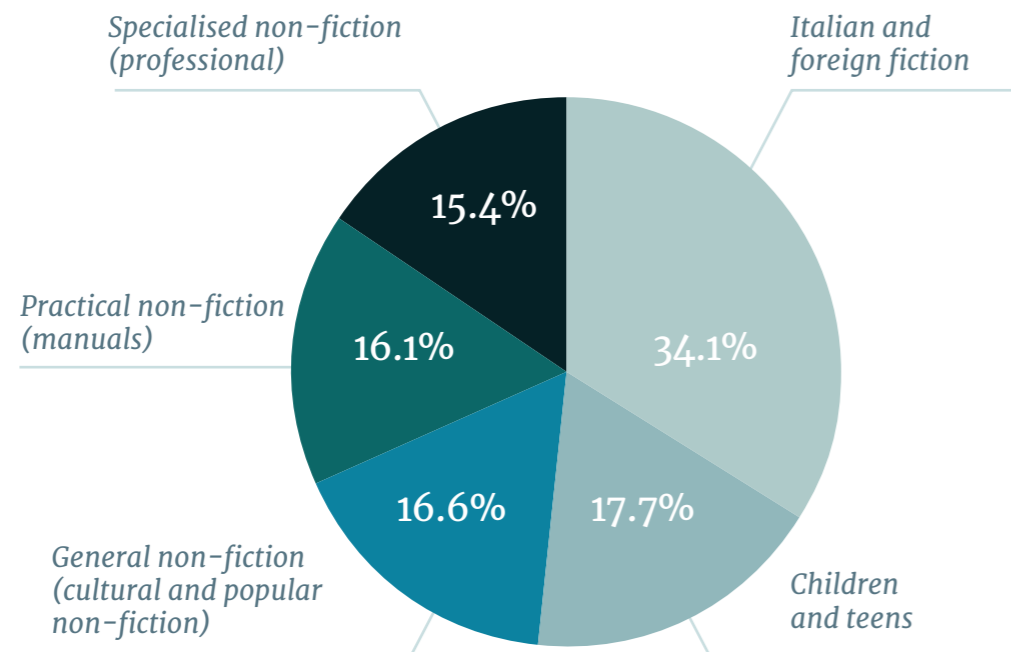
Europe is the leading market for translation rights sales with a 61% share. It is followed by Asia (18%), South and Central America (6%), the Middle East (5%), Africa (4%) and North America (3%). The main European countries where Italy exported translation rights in 2022 are Spain, France, Poland, Greece, Germany, Portugal, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

THE MARKET

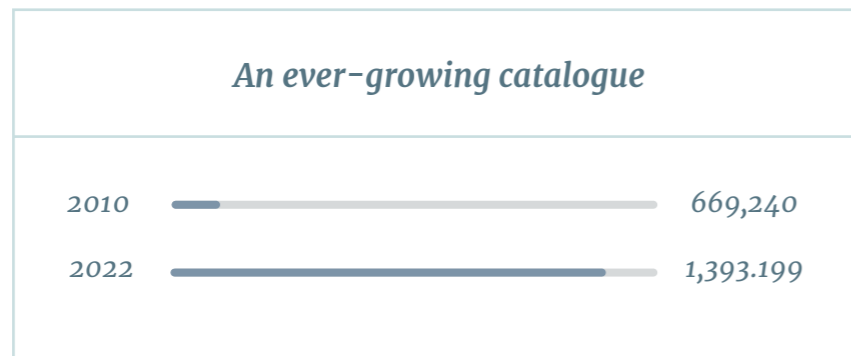


Italian publishing sales increased by more than 300 million compared to prepandemic levels in 2019. The 3.39 billion euro total market share includes the trade market (non-fiction and fiction sold in physical and online bookshops and supermarkets, e-books, audiobooks) worth 1.88 billion euro, educational publishing worth 776 million euro, databases and Internet services worth 340 million euro, 226 million euro in instalments, 81 million euro in library sales, 50 million euro in Italian book exports and 34 million euro in B2B sales.

Purchases made by Italians in bookshops, online stores and supermarkets (market trade 2022)



PRODUCTION



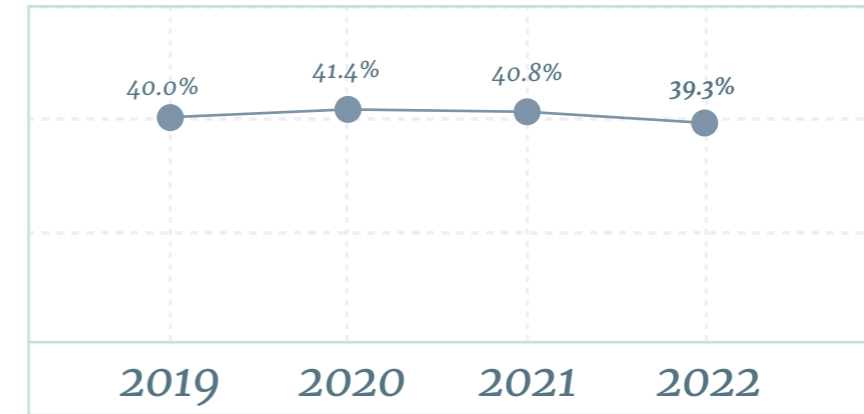
Italian publishing houses are known for their huge range of titles, with over 80,000 published every year, ranging from literary fiction to genre fiction, non-fiction, educational books, university and professional publishing, comic books, manuals, illustrated books, cookbooks, travel guides and much more. Such a high volume of production is possible thanks to a market made up of 5184 publishers. The first four publishing groups in the country – Gruppo Mondadori, Gruppo editoriale Mauri Spagnol, Gruppo Giunti, Gruppo Feltrinelli – own 52.6% of the trade market in terms of value of sales. The rest of the market is shared between the other publishers.

READING LEVELS

Italy has inherited low schooling, and therefore reading levels, from the twentieth century, with large territorial disparities. However, the landscape is now changing: while the survey conducted by ISTAT, the national statistical agency, identifies just below 40% of the population as readers by focusing on a classic definition of reading – primarily non-fiction and novels – surveys conducted by Pepe Research for AIE records 71%, with a sharp rise in reading in the post-pandemic period. The reason for this disparity is that the two surveys measure different data, with AIE, explicitly, including discontinuous readers (i.e., those who only read part of a book) and books outside the scope of the most traditional standards, such as travel guides, manuals and cookbooks.

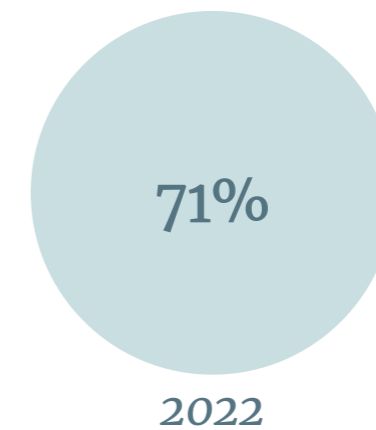
Reading in Italy, ISTAT data

Have you read any books (paper, e-books, online books or audiobooks) in the past 12 months? The data only takes into account books that are read for non-educational or non-professional reasons (Italians over six years of age).

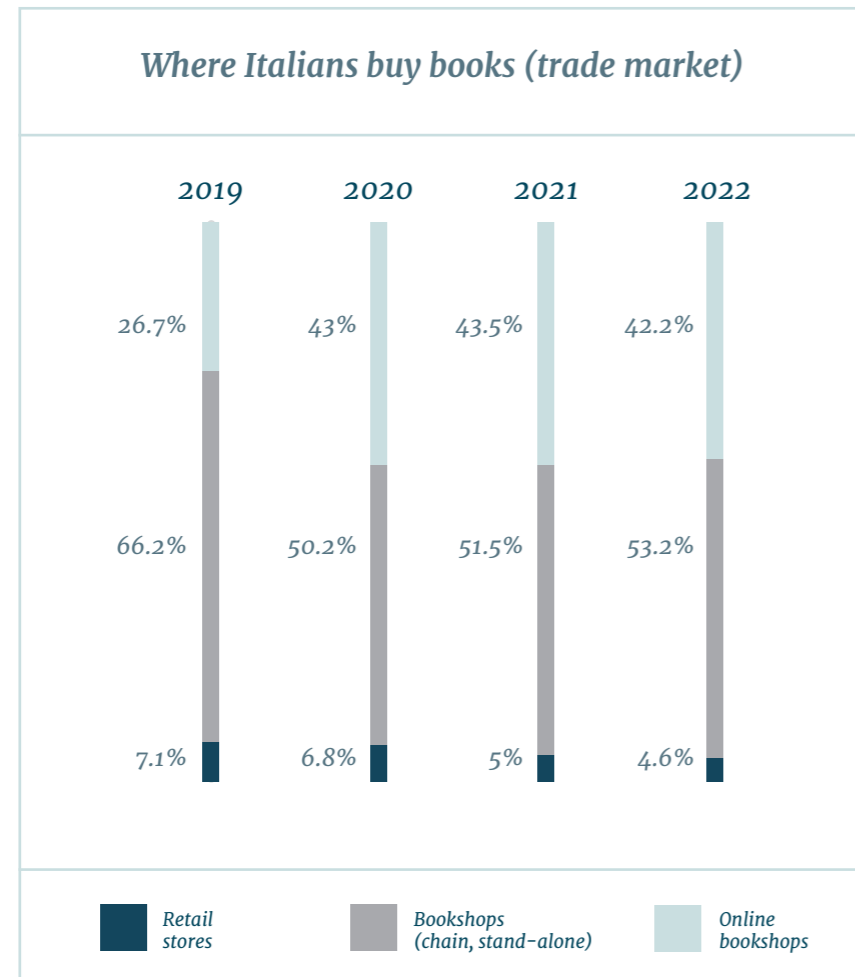


Reading in Italy, AIE data from Pepe Research

In the past 12 months, have you read a book of any kind, even partially, and not only fiction (e.g. a novel, detective fiction, a comic, a fantasy, etc.), but also non-fiction, a manual, a travel or cooking guide, etc. on paper or in digital format such as an e-book, or listened to in audio format? (Italians aged 15 - 74).



BUYING BEHAVIOUR



The pandemic was the driving force behind the growth of e-commerce in the Italian book market. The share of the online market rose to over 40% with the temporary closure of bookshops in 2020, and this level has been maintained over subsequent years. Physical bookshops, on the other hand, remain the primary sales channel, with a share of more than 50%, thus confirming their importance to readers. Sales from large retailers, on the other hand, account for under 5%.

ONE MILLION EURO TO BRING ITALIAN PUBLISHING TO THE WORLD

TRANSLATION GRANTS

Italy promotes translations abroad with two grant programmes provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Centre for Books and Reading, an independent institute of the Ministry of Culture, respectively.

Together, the two programmes contribute around one million euro to the sector.

Grants and the awards of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

The Ministry promotes the dissemination of Italian publishing and cinematographic works abroad through grants for translation and dubbing/subtitling of two types:

- **grants** for the translation of an Italian work not yet published abroad and for the production, dubbing and subtitling of short and long films and television series;
- **awards** for Italian works already translated abroad.

Applications must be submitted each year to the Italian Institutes of Culture and the Italian diplomatic and consular representations abroad, following the procedures set out in the annual call to tender. Read more <http://bit.ly/3Rt6mcN>

The Book and Reading Centre grants

The Book and Reading Centre's calls for tenders are aimed at Italian publishers interested in promoting the international translation and dissemination of books and the reading of works by Italian authors, including through or in collaboration with Italian schools and the network of Italian Culture Institutes and their libraries. All types of works already published in Italian at the time of the call to tender are permitted, with the exception of publishing for the educational sector. The current call, expiring on 31 October 2023, prioritises translations into English, French, Spanish and German. Read more www.cepell.it

PROJECT PARTNER





ROOTS IN THE FUTURE