

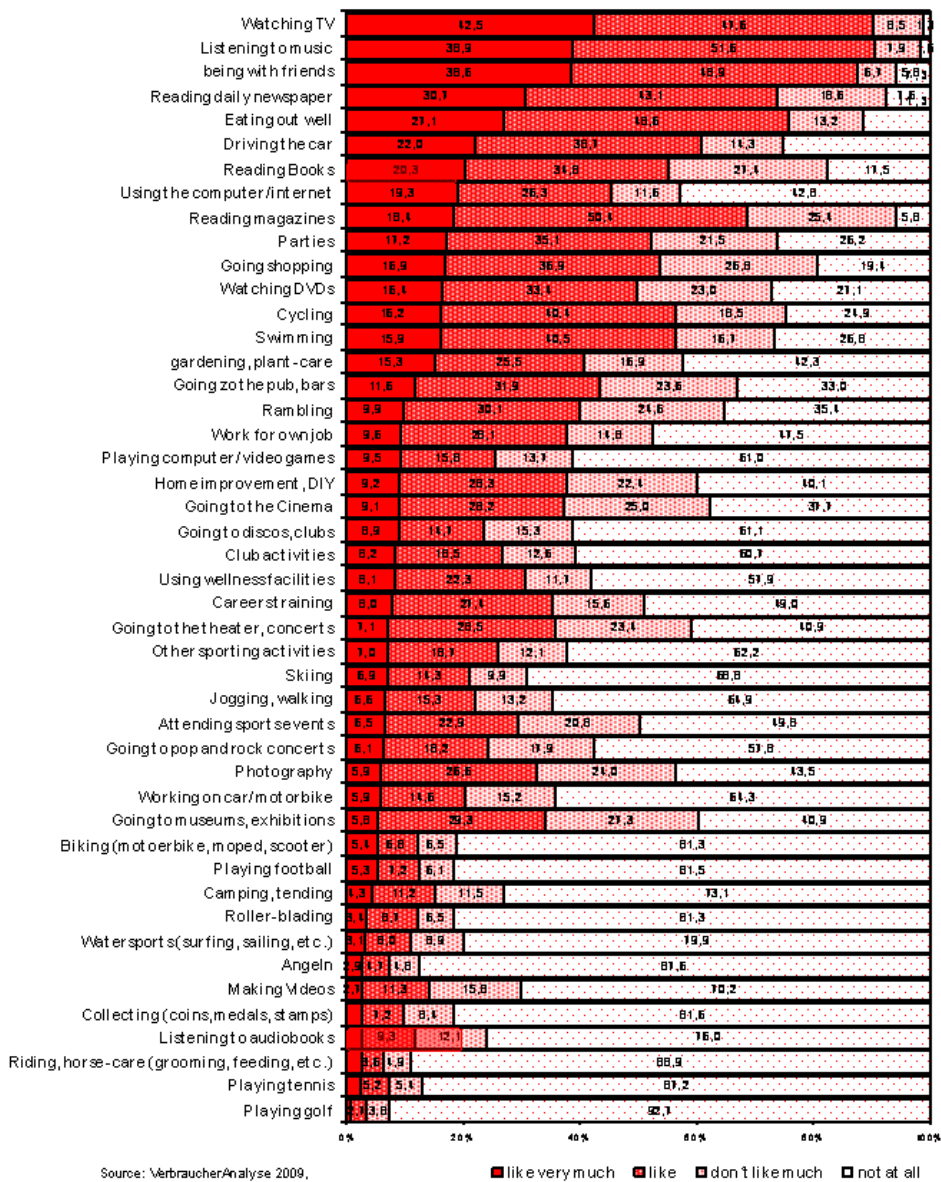
**Books and the book trade - the figures 2009**

**The importance of books in Germany**

Books have managed to retain their seventh place in the order of most popular leisure activities. Watching TV, listening to music, being with friends, reading the newspaper, eating out and driving the car are more popular than reading a book. Compared to last year, reading a daily paper has dropped down to fourth place, with Germans preferring in 2008 "to be together with friends".

This year too, women continued to show more interest in books than men do. The correlation between levels of education and income is still apparent. But young people are beginning to use their media budget slightly differently. At 42 per cent, the proportion of those who use books daily or more than once a week is lower than in the previous year (44 per cent).

**Fig. 1: Popularity of leisure activities 2008 (in percentages)**



Source: VerbraucherAnalyse 2009, Bauer Media KG, Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen 2009

**The economic development of the German book market**

The industry's sales turnover rose in 2008 by 0.4 per cent to just over 9.6 billion euros, following on from an increase of 3.4 per cent in 2007. The traditional retail book trade had to field a loss of 1.5 per cent in 2008, after still achieving growth in 2007. At 18 per cent, department stores suffered yet another noticeable drop in sales. Book clubs also noted a further decline of 1.8 per cent, after a drop of 1.4 per cent in 2007. The big winner has again been the mail order book trade which was able to increase its sales by 11.1 per cent. But this boost is entirely down to online book sales which are estimated to have risen by around 20 per cent.

The revenue earned by German book publishing companies rose only slightly by 0.6 per cent in 2008. Growth had been at 2.6 per cent in 2007.

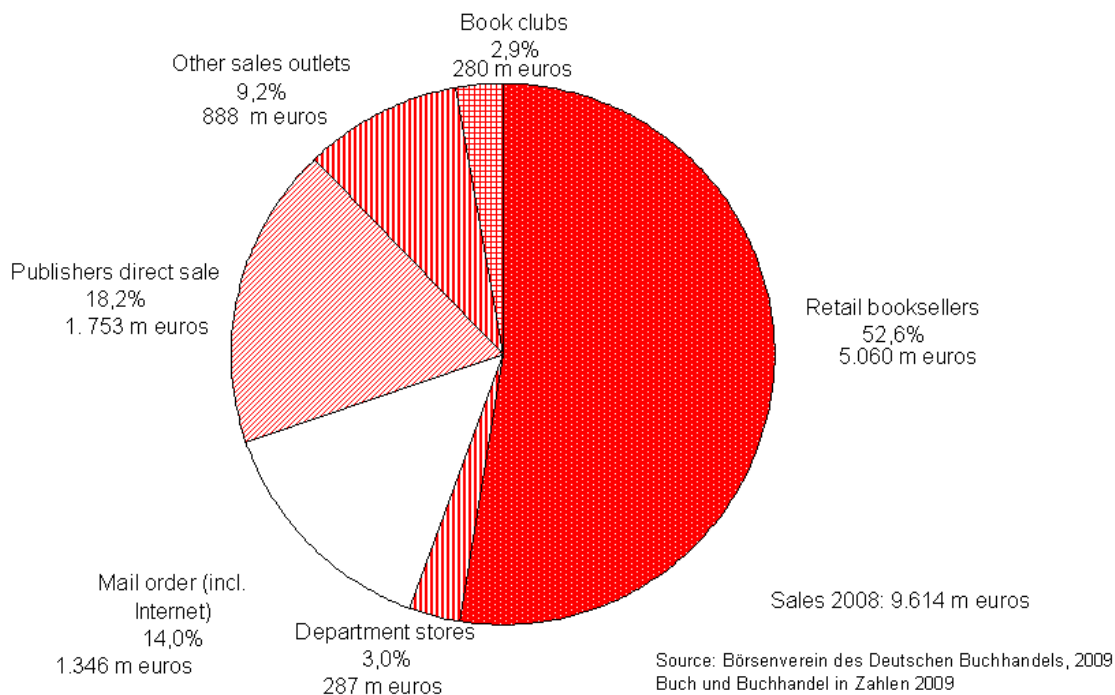
**Market structures**

For 2009, the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels - German Publishers & Booksellers Association - had 5,812 members, made up of 1,777 publishing companies and 3,925 bookselling businesses.

As well as the Börsenverein's membership statistics, the number of businesses operating in the book industry and trade can also be based on the sales tax figures from the National Statistics Office (Destatis). These cover all bookshops and book publishing companies with annual sales of more than 17,500 euros and with different defining criteria, produce a slightly different result. According to the sales tax definition, there were precisely 2,836 publishing companies in 2007, including publishers of directories and music publishers. The number of businesses engaged in the sale and distribution of books decreased slightly to 5,028 companies (previous year: 5,049).

Although the retail book trade is still by far the most important sales outlet for books, accounting for 52.6 per cent of total book sales, long-term decline in the traditional specialist retail trade's share is apparent. In 1997, bookshops still registered 59.3 per cent of sales, and as much as 64 per cent in 1985. Compared to 2007, there was a 1 per cent loss in the book trade's share of sales.

**Fig. 2: Estimated book trade sales at consumer prices 2008**



The sales breakdown for 2008 according to subject groups and type of edition puts belle-lettres (= Belletristik) in first place for hardback editions with a 19.4 per cent share, followed by how-to manuals ranking second with 17.6 per cent and children's and teen books third with a 15.7 per cent share of sales. For paperbacks, 68.8 per cent of sales came from belle-lettres titles, with other subject groups taking only single-figure percentage shares. This also applied to the how-to manuals (7.9 per cent). Audiobook sales are also based primarily on belle-lettres titles which account for 39.9 per cent of sales. But at 33.3 per cent, children's and teen books are also an important source for sales of "talking books".

Within the belle-lettres subject group, narrative literature dominates for all types of edition. Its share of sales in hardback editions is 52.1 per cent and 46.1 per cent in the case of audiobooks, and indeed 51.7 per cent in the case of paperbacks. But crime fiction (thrillers) is also very popular with readers, especially in paperback (31.5 per cent), or in audiobook format. In comparison to narrative literature and crime fiction, the other genres categorised as "belle-lettres" are of very little significance. Other important sales sources in hardback editions are gift books (14.1 per cent), as well as humour/cartoons/comics/satire (7.7 per cent). Food and drink lead the field for hardback how-to manuals (24.2 per cent), followed by books categorised as self-help/everyday living (17 per cent) and health (16.5 per cent). In paperback format, 43.6 per cent of sales come from self-help/everyday living titles. Books in the health category rank second (16.9 per cent), with spirituality in third place (15.9 per cent). Sales of how-to audiobooks come predominantly from titles on hobbies, house and home at 45.6 per cent of sales. For non-fiction, the grouping politics/society/business leads the hardcover rankings with 24.6 per cent, followed by dictionaries/reference books with 23.6 per cent and history with 15.6 per cent.

### **Literary diversity in Germany**

The number of titles produced by German book publishing companies declined by 2.3 per cent in 2008 to just under 94,300.

Taken together, the subject groups belle-lettres (17.7 per cent) and German literature (12.6 per cent) accounted for almost a third of all first editions published in 2008. Children's and teen books made up 8.8 per cent of the new production/first edition titles, travel/geography only 3.2 per cent of titles registered - so that they were still behind books on religion (6.8 per cent), or those in the medicine and health category (5.1 per cent).

At 8,570, the number of first edition paperback titles was higher in 2008 than in 2007 with its total of 8,423 titles. According to the 2008 statistics, the proportion of paperback titles out of all first edition books produced by German publishing companies was 10.3 per cent.

Paperback title production is still dominated by the belle-lettres category which makes up 48.5 per cent, or almost half of all paperback first editions. If the other literature titles are added, the total of 60.2 per cent accounts for almost two-thirds of paperback production. With 9.3 per cent of paperback first editions, children's and teen books also make up a considerable proportion.

The belle-lettres group is still strongest when compared to hardback books. Of the year's new novels in 2008, 28.1 per cent were published in paperback format. In the overall category of literature, the paperback share of all first editions was 16.5 per cent in 2008.

## Business with other countries

The number of translations rose in 2008 from 6,160 to 7,342. English still dominated as the language of origin for translations into German, with a total share of 66.9 per cent.

The share accounted for by French was 11.5 per cent, ranking second as in the past. All other languages follow some way behind and there have been only slight changes in the make-up of the most important translated languages over the last five years. The big proportion of Scandinavian languages is still striking. World language Spanish continues at a stable level.

All in all, the lively exchange of translations over the years presents the image of an industry that develops within the protective boundaries of its own language region, but always remains aware of the international aspect and in the process, has long since anticipated globalisation.

This image also emerges when considering rights and licences sold abroad. The opening up of the Far East to the global economy has been an everyday fact of life for German book publishing companies for some time now. Formerly top of the list, the languages Chinese and Korean were overtaken in 2005 by Polish and Czech and in 2008, by Polish and Russian. In 2008, Korean ranked sixth, Chinese fourth.

Among countries acquiring rights and licences, Poland and China led the field in 2008. 780 titles were licensed to Poland in 2008, compared to only 294 in 2001. 558 rights and licences were acquired last year by publishing companies in the Czech Republic. There had been a total of 693 licensed titles in 2006.

Two Eastern European language regions are among the ten languages with the highest demand, namely Polish (10.1 per cent) and Russian (7.5 per cent). Rights and licence sales for the languages of the traditional big western trading partners, English (6.2 per cent compared to 10.2 per cent in 1994), French (4.6 per cent compared to 8.1 per cent in 1994) and Italian (6 per cent compared to 7.8 per cent in 1994), have been in long-term decline.

The willingness of USA publishing companies to buy rights or licences for German books has fluctuated at a medium level in recent years, with a figure of 143 titles last year (1.9 per cent).

In terms of rights and licence sales by subject group, it stands out that as in recent years, German children's and teen literature is the most sought-after rights option in non-German-speaking countries. Its share of rights and licence title sales was 25 per cent, compared to only 11.9 per cent in 1994. Once again in 2008, the rights or licences for the most children's books went to China. The belle-lettres group was not quite able to maintain its share of rights and licences sold and now accounts for 10.5 per cent (still at 12.6 per cent in 2007). It should be taken into consideration, however, that a restructuring of subject group breakdowns in 2005 has made it difficult to make comparisons with earlier figures. The category of belle-lettres (= Belleletristik) was further subdivided into literature, entertainment and poetry, alongside the new division of non-fiction into separate sections and the addition of different areas in the category STM and academic books.

Imports of book trade products rose again in 2007 to just under 1,102 million euros, or plus 8.6 per cent. This was primarily down to increased book imports, but other products - with the exception of newspapers - also showed positive development.

Among the most important countries of origin for the import of books, there was a change at the top in 2007 compared to 2006. The UK ranks at number one with China following in second place, having pushed the USA into third. But there continues to be a noticeable gap between the first two. Changes in international sales structures can create movement in the rankings, however, as the example of Ireland goes to show. In what was previously a totally insignificant publishing company location, several international computer corporations set up their European headquarters in the eighties, and the manuals issued with their hardware and software products

came to be included in foreign trade statistics. In this process, they are therefore classified as books, although they are not classical book trade products. But since 2004, there has been a noticeable decline in the import of these licences. The Czech Republic has made its way back into the Top 10, whilst Spain has dropped out.

The 105 million euros-worth of book imports from the UK in 2006 rose to 128 million in 2007. This means that with a share of around 20 per cent, the UK continues to lead the listing of top 10 sources of imports. Imports from the USA continued to fall in 2007, from 79 million to 75 million. This took it down to third place behind China whose supplies have shown a sharp upward movement, from 53 million to 84 million euros. Italy continues in fourth place.

As part of a common language region, Austria and Switzerland are unshakeably and by far the leading countries taking exports of German books and periodicals. This did not change in 2007 either. For books, Austria's increase of 16 per cent put it ahead of Switzerland again, with the latter showing a slight decline.

As importers of magazines and periodicals, Austria and Switzerland are equally dominant. Together, these two countries represent an export volume of 352 million. Here too, Austria is slightly ahead, taking exports worth 202 million euros.