

Press release

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2020 international book markets with a strong comeback after lockdown; France staging a very strong rally

Baden-Baden, October 14, 2020 – European booksellers recorded an increase in demand in the last few months and can reduce their losses made in Spring.

Since the end of the lockdown, booksellers in many countries have recorded a significant increase in demand, thus enabling them to reduce their revenue losses made in Spring. This is the conclusion of a special analysis of eight countries conducted by GfK Entertainment at the start of this year's Frankfurt Book Fair. The French book market, for example, recorded a drop in sales of 7.2 per cent after the first three quarters compared to the same period last year. During the lockdown, the losses amounted to 66.8 per cent but there was a noticeable uptick in the figures compared with the beginning of the year (up 0.8 per cent) and, especially, after the reopening of the shops (up 10.0 per cent).

Spain, Switzerland, Belgium's Wallonia region and Portugal also reported increases in the first weeks of 2020, with the rise even reaching a remarkable 2.9 per cent in Spain. During the initial curfew restrictions, revenues then collapsed by more than half in some cases and were not able to fully recover in Wallonia (down 1.0 per cent) and Portugal (down 15.8 per cent) even in the post-lockdown phase. In Switzerland, on the other hand, revenues have made up considerable ground in recent months and overall losses now only amount to 2.9 per cent. In Spain and Italy, too, the losses of the first nine months have now shrunk to 11.0 per cent and 3.8 per cent respectively following the efforts made in the summer to make up lost ground.

Netherlands and Flanders get off lightly

The book markets in the Netherlands and Belgium's Flanders region have come through the coronavirus lockdown relatively unscathed and – as of the end of September – have even posted a rise of 5.8 and 4.4 per cent respectively. Brazil is currently the only non-European country in the

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analysis with a lockdown-induced decrease of 37.6 per cent and a current post-lockdown increase of 9.0 per cent, with overall falls of 6.1 per cent.

Most popular post-lockdown novel by Joël Dicker

The most popular novel in Western or Southern Europe is currently Joël Dicker's *The Enigma of Room 622*, which has ranked first (France and Spain), second (Italy and Wallonia) and third (Portugal) in the bestseller book lists since the end of the lockdowns. Also much in demand are such best-selling authors as Lucinda Riley (*The Seven Sisters*), Stephenie Meyer (*Midnight Sun*), Elena Ferrante (*The Lying Life of Adults*) and Suzanne Collins (*The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*).

In addition to the fiction segment, a number of nonfiction books are very popular, for example Yuval Noah Harari's *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* and Rutger Bregman's *Humankind: A Hopeful History*, as well as cooking/dieting titles like Pascale Naessen's *The Keto Cure*, life-management guides such as Mark Manson's *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck* and children's books like Ingrid and Dieter Schubert's *Wild Will*.

About the study

The analysis is based on the physical book market figures for the first three quarters of 2020 for Belgium (Flanders/Wallonia), Brazil, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland. If you are interested in further information or in receiving the complete study, just send an email to senta.wolf@gfk.com.

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