

## Book production and reading in Italy

Year 2017

### Book production in Italy

In 2017 about 85% of the 1,459 active publishers published no more than 50 titles per year; more than half (54.0%) were "small" publishers, producing at most 10 works per year, and 30.9% were "medium" publishers, producing from 11 to 50 works per year (Table 1). On the contrary, the "big" publishers, i.e. those with a book production of more than 50 works per year, although representing only 15.1% of the publishing operators, covered more than 80% of production as regards the titles and about 90% with reference to the number of printed copies.

The Italian publishing sector was strongly polarized also from a geographical point of view: over 50% of active publishers was based in Northern Italy. The cities with the largest number of publishers were Milano and Roma. The city of Milano alone hosted more than a quarter of the "big" publishers.

TABLE 1. ACTIVE PUBLISHERS, PUBLISHED WORKS AND PRINTED COPIES BY TYPE OF PUBLISHER. Year 2017 (a)

TYPE OF PUBLISHER	Active publishers		Published works		Printed copies		Average number of published works per publisher	Average number of printed copies per publisher
	N.	%	N.	%	(in thousand)	%		
Small publishers	788	54.0	3,295	4.7	4,742	2.9	4.2	6,018
Medium publishers	451	30.9	10,614	15.1	11,272	7.0	23.5	24,994
Big publishers	220	15.1	56,250	80.2	145,074	90.1	255.7	659,428
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,459</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>70,159</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>161,088</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>110,411</b>

(a) Values refer to "active" publishers, i.e. those who have published at least one book during the year; those who have published up until 10 works were defined as "small"; "medium" from 11 to 50 works; "big" over 50 works.

In 2017, the 1,459 active publishers published 70,159 titles and printed more than 161 million of copies; on average, just over 2,000 copies were printed for each published title.

In 2017 the publishing sector showed a high increase in publishing production: compared to the previous year, the number of titles increased by 9.3% and the number of printed copies increased by 14.5%.

In 2017, 38.3% of the books published in Italy (about 27,000 titles) were also offered to the public in the e-book format. E-books were mainly available for adventure books and mystery books (for which e-books reach 83.2% of printed works). The digital version was available for more than 70% for the school books.

As regards the distribution tools, determining factor in the publishing sector, publishers considered the role of independent libraries to be strategic in intercepting the audience of actual and potential readers.

In 2017 almost a quarter of respondents (24.7%) were part of an association of publishers. The main reason for joining a publishers' association was the possibility of being informed and updated on the regulatory and commercial news of the sector.

For about 40% of publishers the main factors that determined the modest propensity to reading in our country were the low cultural level of the Italian population (42.6%) and the lack of effective educational policies for reading education (38.4%).

To encourage the development of the publishing sector, about 40% of active operators identified the need to increase readership initiatives and campaigns aimed to improve reading education.

## Reading in Italy

In 2017, 41.0% of people aged 6 and over (23 million est.) read at least one book in the 12 months preceding the interview, for purposes other than school or work. The figure was steady as compared with 2016, after the decline started in 2011.

Women showed a higher familiarity with books: 47.1% of them were estimated to be book readers, vs 34.5% of men. Book readers' share was over 50% among those aged 11 to 19 and the age group that read the most was the one composed by people aged 11-14 (55.9%). The percentage of book readers decreased in later age groups.

School is not enough. Family is a key factor: 80.0% of youngsters aged 11 to 14 with both parents reading books were book readers too, vs. only 39.8% of those whose parents did not read books.

Book reading was still less frequent in Southern Italy, where fewer than one out of three (28.9%) read at least one book. In the North-East area, readers were 49.0%.

In metropolitan centers the estimated percentage of book readers was 49.1%, vs. 37.0% in areas with fewer than 2,000 inhabitants.

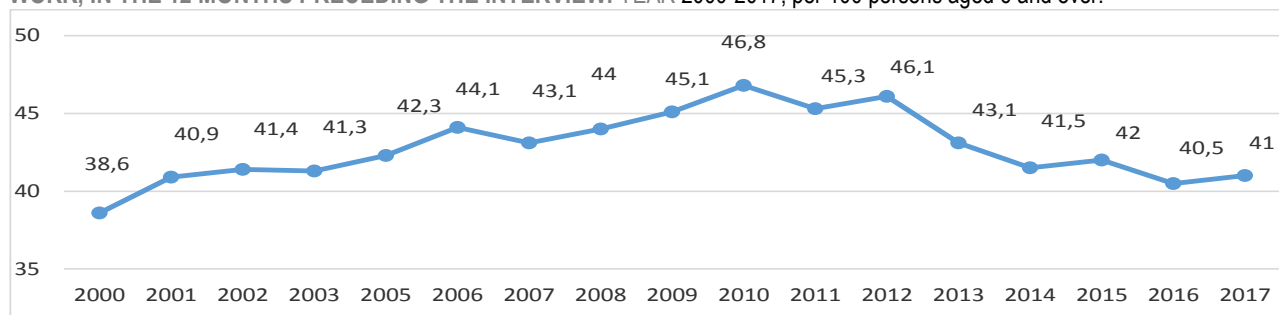
"Strong" readers, i.e. people who read on average at least one book per month, were 13.4% of the readers (14.1% in 2016). Data confirmed that nearly one reader out of two (47.6%) was a "weak" one, having read no more than three books in one year (+2.5%).

In 2017, 10.8% of people aged 6 years and over (about 6.2 million) read or downloaded e-books or online books. These were common activities especially among young people (24.1% among people aged 15-17).

The main reasons for non-reading were boredom and lack of passion (35.4%), little free time available (30.0%) and preference for other leisure activities (23.7%).

"Reading and the Internet" confirmed to be a consolidated partnership: over 70% of readers were "always connected" and used different tools to access the Internet.

**PERSONS AGED 6 AND OVER WHO HAVE READ AT LEAST ONE BOOK FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN SCHOOL OR WORK, IN THE 12 MONTHS PRECEDING THE INTERVIEW. YEAR 2000-2017, per 100 persons aged 6 and over.**



## For more details please refer to the Italian version

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