

# Diversity Report 2010

## Diversity Report 2010

Literary Translation in Current European Book Markets.  
An analysis of authors, languages, and flows.

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## Executive Summary

The Diversity Report 2010, building on previous research presented in the respective reports of 2008 and 2009, surveys and analyzes 187 mostly European authors of contemporary fiction concerning translations of their works in 14 European languages and book markets.

The goal of this study is to develop a more structured, data-based understanding of the patterns and driving forces of the translation markets across Europe.

The key questions include the following: What characterizes the writers who succeed particularly well at being picked up by scouts, agents, and publishers for translation? Are patterns recognizable in the writers' working biographies or their cultural background, the language in which a work is initially written, or the target languages most open for new voices? What forces shape a well-established literary career internationally? What channels and platforms are most helpful, or critical, for starting a path in translation? How do translations spread?

The Diversity Report 2010 argues that translated books reflect a broad diversity of authors and styles, languages and career paths. We have confirmed, as a trend with great momentum, that the few authors and books at the very top, in terms of sales and recognition, expand their share of the overall reading markets with remarkable vigor. Not only are the real global stars to be counted on not very many fingers. Even those strongly represented in more than just one or two languages are few in number.

Those at the top who write in English however, amount altogether to roughly one third, far below the expected threshold, contradicting assumptions of a globally homogenized best-seller literature flatly dominated by Anglo-Saxon serial authors. However, the group of strong languages from which an international career can reasonably be started is limited to mostly half a dozen West European idioms, including notably English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. All Asian and African languages, or even those of Central and Southeast Europe, are significantly underrepresented.

Contrasting the role models of the older generations of writers, the study identifies how recently a new type of author and book has emerged, taking advantage of new dynamics of aggressive and highly volatile market forces and powerful drivers. Instead of patiently building a lifelong writing career, these authors, often with a biography that is global, or at least multi-cultural, hit the international scene with great fanfare of one smashing hit book, sometimes additionally propelled by one of the very few awards with impact on the international rights markets, namely, the Man Booker or, to a slightly lesser degree, the Prix Goncourt.

While the globalization of publishing markets (and those of culture more broadly) as reflected in the formation of huge transnational publishing and media corporations has a role as an accelerator, as do internationally acting literary agents, the study finds a remarkable number among the most widely, and best-selling translated authors, for whom small- or medium-sized independent publishing houses are the key forces for international success, and agents are not always involved in representing these authors.

The findings also reflect that the spheres of new talent for a potentially wider international readership are clearly underexplored, notably in those markets and languages traditionally underrepresented in the translation charts of the West European main markets. Tools and strategies as presented in this Diversity Report will allow to identify thus far only locally thriving talent for future translations, and hence for a much broader, international reading audience.

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## Introduction

Browsing a well-stocked bookshop in any city or town in Europe is not only a delightful adventure for any avid reader. The selection of works presented on the tables and shelves quickly bring the curious mind on a journey across times and cultures, as books, and notably fiction, are to this day the most powerful vehicles by which ideas can travel.

While literary translation is at the core of exchanging stories and ideas across political and linguistic boundaries, and hence of cultural diversity, little systematic analysis is available for a solid understanding of this topic.

As we have already argued in the Diversity Reports 2008 and 2009, even the most general statistical data on the number of translated works are missing for most parts of Europe, and those data that are available, such as the UNESCO Index Translationum, are difficult to compare to the book market.

The goal of this report is to develop a structured overview of a number of contemporary literary authors and their translated works across a representative selection of languages and markets.

In fact, we want to better understand what characterizes the writers who succeed particularly well at being picked up for translation by scouts, agents, and publishers. Are patterns recognizable in the writers' working biographies or their cultural background, the language in which a work is initially written, or the target languages most open to new voices? However, we also want to ask what forces shape the international aspect of a well-established literary career.

What are the channels and platforms that are most helpful, or critical, to start a path in translation? How do translations spread? What is the role of transfer languages, which not only cater to their own readership but also are crucial for editors in third languages to identify and further spread new talent?

Often enough, answers to such questions are at best anecdotal, as some argue that it was all about 'talent,' or the 'power of the agents,' or the preferences of an unpredictable, fickle reading audience.

However, even a cursory look at translations on a best-seller list, or on the title list of any significant trade publisher, or the author lineup at one of the many thriving literary festivals will quickly discover a rich diversity in styles and stories, cultures and backgrounds represented by a highly varied author community. Thus, any shortcut answer will fall short of this reality.

However, the many different voices can also be seen as forming a complexity with no underlying patterns at all, claiming for a methodology that duly accounts for every single aspect, from an author's

biography to the literary tradition that a work is based upon to all the accidental events of an artistic career, so that no overarching analysis seems possible in the first place.

Between such extremes, we opt for a pragmatic approach, centered on a sample of almost 200 authors, characterized by a number of parameters that make the sample fit to represent what we would call the European literary mainstream, at least from a reader's point of view. This corpus of authors and their works was tracked across a broad selection of European languages and book markets, in terms of a number of factors:

- Which authors are translated into which languages, and how many of their works?
- What is the distribution between languages, as originating and target languages?
- What are exemplary channels and platforms boosting translations, such as awards, and what portion do translations occupy in the top segment of reader appreciation, such as best-seller lists?
- What types of author role models can be identified, and which forces and which market actors shape the career paths of the translated authors?

Our pragmatic approach to these questions is based on various empirical data, and centered on the author. We focused very strictly on the author as he or she carries the 'brand' in the landscapes of books and reading. And we learned to follow authors across languages by mimicking a reader's perspective and selecting her or his reading.

Researching via online bookshops and their lists, and library catalogues if an author has been translated, and with how many works, in a broad set of languages produces a basic grid that allows framing of each author systematically and from various perspectives.

The approach in this research is strongly crafted by the aims of the questions that we want to pursue.

Just as in the previous Diversity Reports, we want to map cultural diversity as it is reflected by a segment of authors and their literary works that currently have a notable presence for readers, by being easily available, or even by being displayed more prominently through best-seller lists, awards, or, as a result of the latter, mirrored in the general media.

But going one step further in this edition of our reporting, we want to compare the actual translation market, as it is, with potentially new talent, and authors, who have not been identified and allowed to reach all the readers and languages ready for their welcome.



As a piece of applied research, this report aims to open minds and pathways to encourage more literary translation, notably at a moment when translation and diversity often tend to be seen, by many market actors, as particularly risky and costly to launch.

## On the selected authors and the applied methodology

At the core of our report is a list of 187 writers of contemporary fiction from a wide variety of national, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, representing diverse literary ambitions and career paths, styles, and profiles.

The goal in building this list of authors was to develop a corpus representing in as many ways as possible the general preferences of European readers and book markets in current literary fiction. As no standard definition is available for such a selection of writers and works, we decided in the first step to select the names to list through many objective parameters.

We wanted to develop a list reflecting as broadly as reasonably possible linguistic and biographical diversity among authors from various backgrounds, with a special emphasis on European authors originating in many different countries (however, we decided to not specifically highlight authors writing in minority languages), but adding a number of non-European writers, notably when they fell in one of the other categories that we drew upon.

In this perspective, we chose the following:

- The winners of well-known literary awards of broad recognition in their country of origin, and beyond, from the past 5 to 10 years, namely
- Büchnerpreis
  - Deutscher Buchpreis
  - European Union Prize for Literature
  - Großer österreichischer Staatspreis für europäische Literatur
  - Man Booker
  - Nobel Prize for Literature
  - Premio Fundación Lara
  - Premio Strega
  - Prince of Asturias Prize
  - Prix Femina

- Prix Femina étranger
- Prix Goncourt;
- Fiction authors writing in languages other than English, with a particularly strong performance on various European best-seller lists in 2009, as these successful books might have received particularly strong visibility in the trade for translation rights;
- To this, we added, specifically for countries and languages less represented in the international literature and translation markets, additional names that we identified as having a strong presence in their domestic markets and cultures, either by having been well represented on their respective domestic best-seller lists or by having a significant degree of visibility in recent years at international literary festivals, or fairs, or awards other than the ones listed above.

This produced a draft list that we sent to about 30 experts from cultural and literary organizations who were already familiar with the earlier Diversity Reports and their approaches and findings, to complete the selections for better representativeness, based on these experts' judgment.

In the end, this selection process resulted in a list of authors from about 40 different countries, writing in roughly the same number of languages.

We are perfectly aware that, despite all our scrutiny, this author list could be criticized for being arbitrary or not evenly balanced, or representative according to various criteria, but it was the best we could come up with for our pragmatic approach.

With this list, we started a mapping process, trying to identify which of these authors are currently available to readers in a broad selection of European countries, namely in the following:

- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- France
- Germany (and Austria)
- Hungary
- Italy
- The Netherlands
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia

- Spain
- Sweden
- The United Kingdom

This selection of countries was meant to represent markets according to many parameters, namely the market size and number of readers in the countries' main languages, countries from all European regions, including old and new members of the European Union plus one candidate country for membership (Croatia), as well as countries with various reading and publishing traditions.

For some steps of the subsequent analysis, we decided, as we did in the Diversity Report 2009, to group countries into two distinct regional entities, namely

- EUWest, which includes countries of various sizes, which were market economies before 1989, and
- Central and Southeast Europe, or CSEE, which includes countries that became market economies only after 1989.

Technically, the mapping was meant to check for titles available in the original language that they had been written in; for translations, one author at a time, in at least one leading online bookshop per country from the above defined list; and, in addition, cross-referencing findings with online resources with transnational and multilingual title catalogues, namely Amazon's sites in France, Germany, Italy, and the UK. We based this tracking on previous exercises we had undertaken for earlier research, notably the Diversity Report 2009.

For practical reasons, our ambition was to count translations per language only up to five titles per author. If we identified more than five available titles of an author in a market, in original editions or translations, we understood this as a specifically strong presence of an author in a given language and market, and flagged the author with a separate identifier (represented, in the research table in the Annex, by the value '50'—instead of a title count between 0 and 5).

The author team of this report checked the findings for plausibility, resulting in additional corrections.

Independently of this tracking of book 'market' resources, we then undertook one additional check for notable authors with particularly few results, in the form of library research with the help of the Karlsruhe Virtual Catalogue (KVK) and, for Slovenia, the COBISS catalogue.<sup>1</sup>

Despite all this scrutiny in the tracking and mapping, we cannot deny that we might have missed

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de/kvk.html> and <http://www.cobiss.si/>.

translations. On the contrary, we still discovered, notably on dedicated author or title websites, mentions of translations into additional languages, though we could not track them in our other resources.

But as already underlined in the introduction, our goal is not to establish an academic bibliography of translations but a grid of books that the average, normally interested, and informed reader may be able to find and access.

If a title has been translated into and published in a language, and yet escapes research such as we undertook, the title most likely has only limited visibility (and hence impact with readers) in its market.

However, assessing such a presence and the resulting visibility and impact with readers is the focus of this study, as we want to understand, in the end, how authors and their works travel across countries and languages to readers.

## The broad flows of translations in Europe. Summaries of relevant findings from the Diversity Report 2008

In the Diversity Report 2008, we started our research by developing the broadest possible picture of flows of translation across Europe, mainly with the help of data from the UNESCO Index Translationum, a database fed mostly by legal deposit entries provided to UNESCO by national libraries since the 1930s. While these data are certainly not perfect in every detail, they allowed us to reliably chart general trends and developments over a longer period.

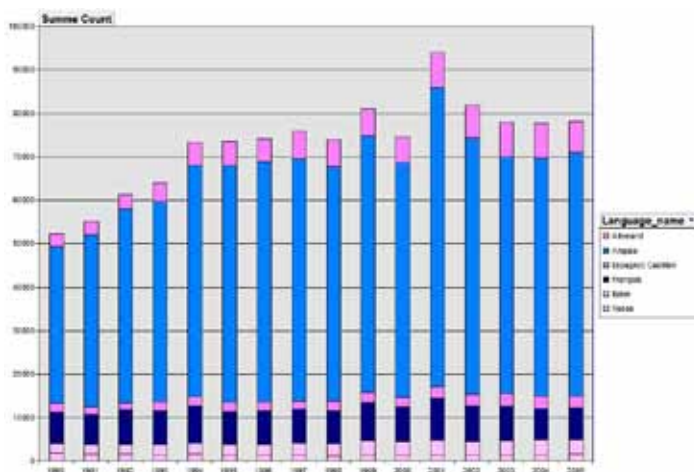


Figure 1: Development of translations from the main original languages German, English, Spanish, French, and Italian in all European countries, 1990 to 2005. Source UNESCO.

We can therefore show very clearly the uneven distribution of languages in general, with translations from English representing roughly two out of every three translated books, and with French and German well behind second and third, leaving a mere 20 percent for all the other languages combined.

The overview for Central and Eastern Europe, was quite telling, as expected, as it showed the continuous increase in translations from English in the formerly Soviet-dominated region.

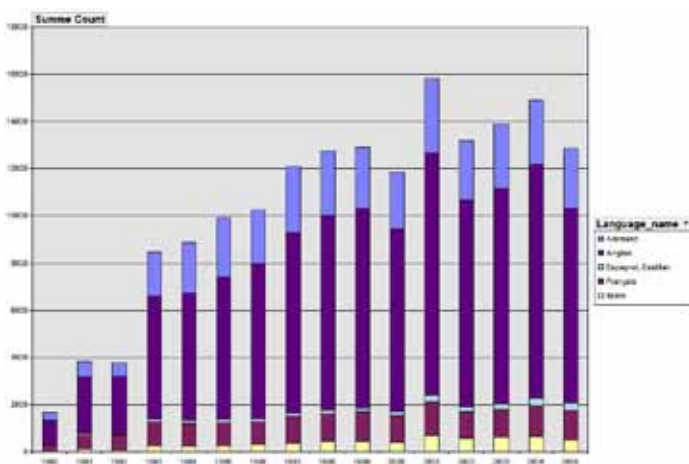


Figure 2: Translations from German, English, Spanish, French, and Italian in Central and Southeast Europe, 1990 to 2005. Source: UNESCO.

In the same 15-year period, the number of translations within Central and Southeast Europe grew steadily. However, this development took place on a much more modest scope in terms of the absolute numbers of translations, with a peak of

16.000 translations from the EUWEST languages into regional languages, and only one tenth of this number occurring between the regional languages.

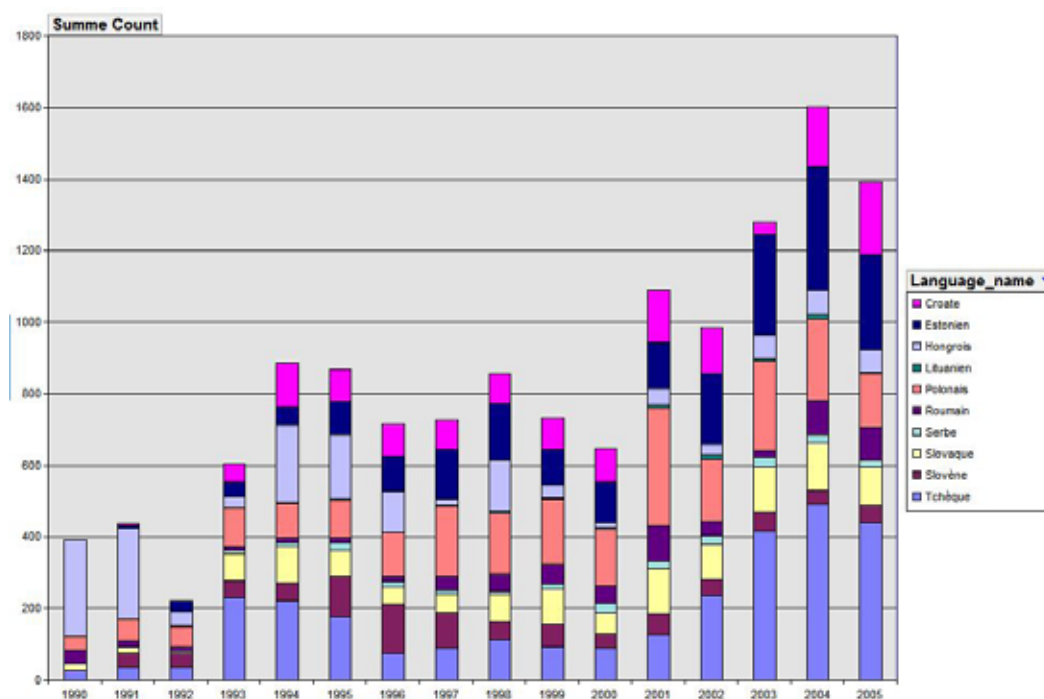


Figure 3: Translations from CSEE languages in CSEE countries, 1990 to 2005.

Source UNESCO. Attention needs to be paid to the absolute numbers, between a few hundred and up to 1600 items at the peak—against 10 times as many translations from EUWest into CSEE.

The flow of translations from Central and Southeast Europe into Germany and Austria, as the region's closest neighbors, and German serving as the preeminent transfer language for the region developed strongly in the 1990s, peaking at the end of the decade in highly successful promotion of Hungarian and Polish literary works as guests of honor at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 1999 and 2000, respectively, but thereafter declining.

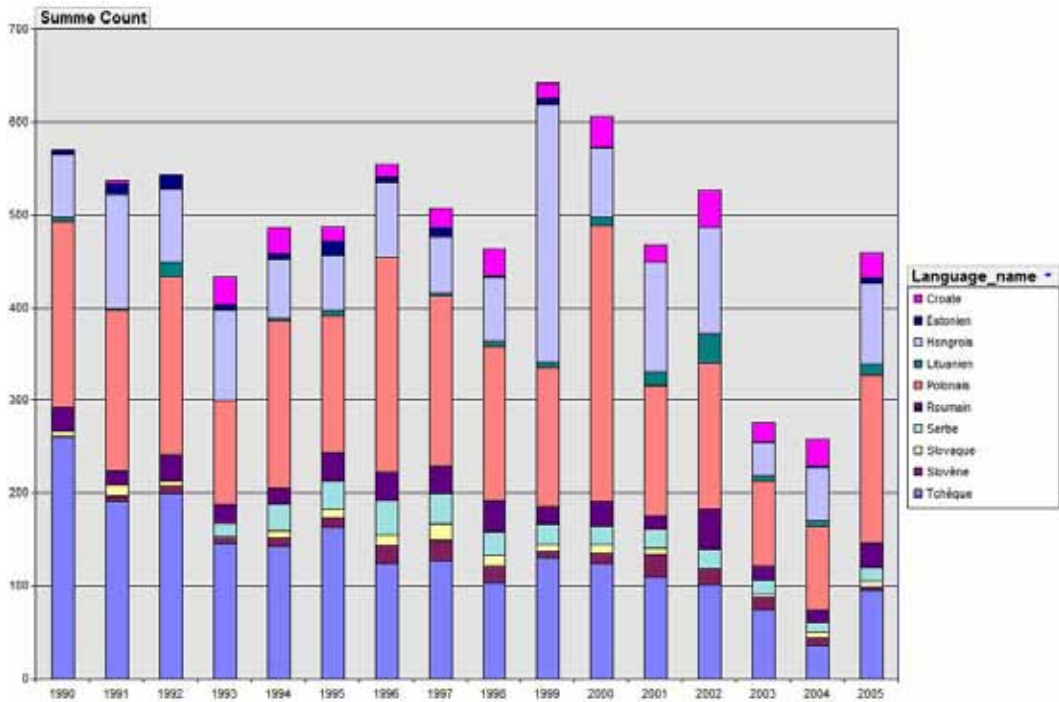


Figure 4: Translations from selected CSEE languages into German, 1990 to 2005. Source UNESCO.

Attention needs to be paid again to the absolute numbers that, during the 1990s, are roughly at the same level as all of the inter-regional translations in CSEE in this same period. Only after 2000, while the number of inter-regional translations grew significantly, did the flow into German decline.

Most interesting is, for a comparison, the parallel development of translations from CSEE into French. Here we see a robust overall situation, with continuous change in ranking of the individual languages.

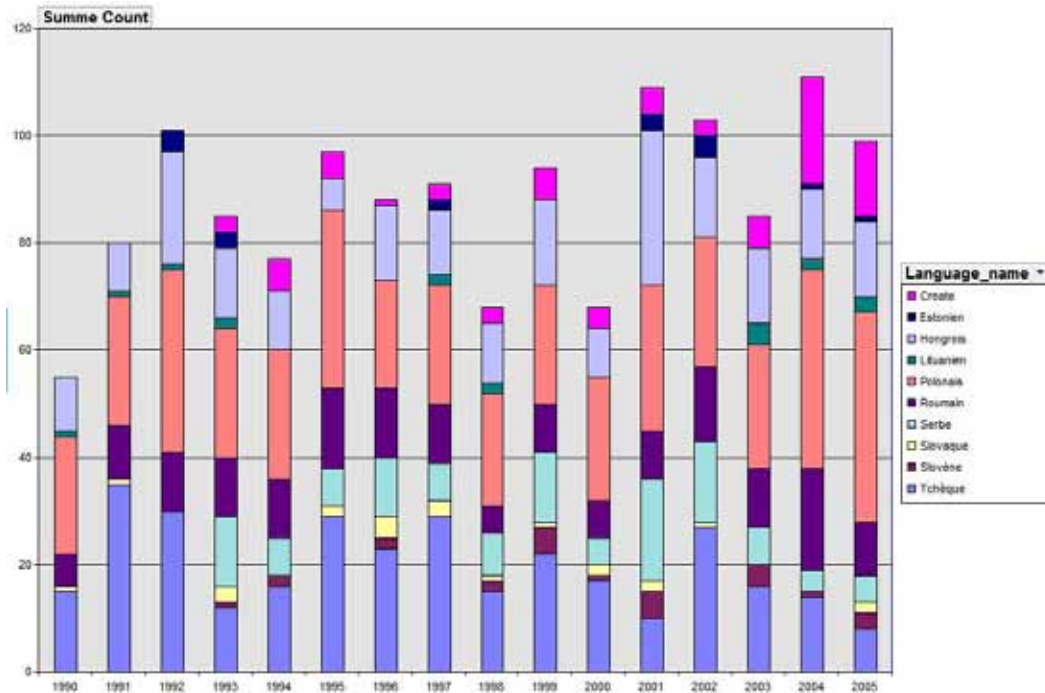


Figure 5: CSEE languages into French, 1990 to 2005. Source UNESCO.

The absolute numbers of translations from CSEE into French are, compared to German, of course modest, which underlines the still crucial relationship between Germany and the CSEE region. But overall, looking at translations from all languages into French well illustrates the rise of France as probably Europe’s premier hub for translating books (while a respective view on Germany plus Austria mirrors a slight, yet continuous, decrease, a development that we confirmed when comparing UNESCO data with data from the book markets).



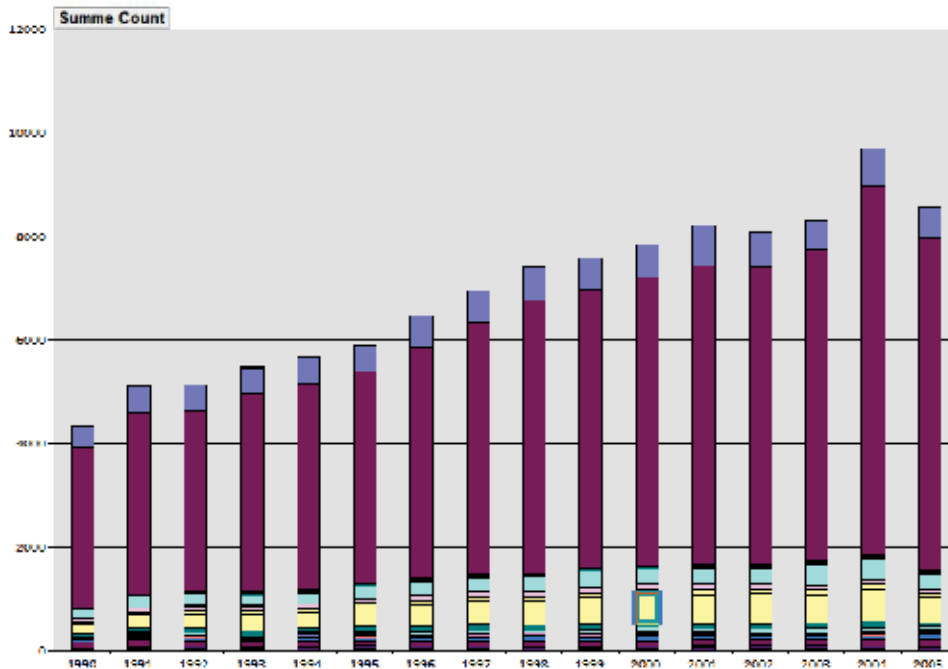


Figure 6: All languages into French, 1990 to 2005. Source: UNESCO.  
 Top languages are English (dark-red), German (blue), Italian (yellow) and Spanish (turquoise).

## Mapping languages and markets

At first glance, the universe of literature looks exactly as one would expect, as it mirrors a pantheon of big names who are all familiar to the cultured reader, populated by clearly more men than women, from various backgrounds, and a clear advantage to writers from Europe and North America, with the occasional Japanese, Israeli, South African, or Turkish author in between.

Among the top three or four dozen names for which we could effectively track the highest numbers of works translated (a ranking that must be taken with all due caution for methodological reasons, as explained already), we find the expected line-up of Nobel laureates (such as Günter Grass, Orhan Pamuk, Imre Kertész, and José Saramago), winners of other particularly recognized awards (such as Peter Esterházy and Amos Oz for the German Peace Prize), and the jet set of the most renowned festivals and media appearances (such as Milan Kundera, Haruki Murakami, and Salman Rushdie).

Represented by powerful international literary agents, these authors have every new book instantly translated into dozens of languages immediately, if they are not, in a recently evolving habit, newly released simultaneously in several languages, with carefully orchestrated international promotion campaigns.

Normally, a publisher is keen to keep such an author, even at high cost, on its lists, and these books will not go out of print. And even if one such member of this elite group initially decides against being translated, as Arturo Pérez-Reverte did<sup>2</sup> (at first allowing his work to be published, aside from Spanish, only in French), over time he will be omnipresent nevertheless.

However, not every author who is highly regarded—and translated—in some languages will automatically be picked up for further dissemination. The most staggering case in our corpus of study is A. F. Th. van der Heijden, a Dutch author born in 1951, who started publishing novels in 1978 and has been awarded many prizes in his own country. His work has been translated into German—and according to some sources, selected titles have also been translated into Russian, Finnish, Swedish, Spanish, and Bulgarian.<sup>3</sup> However, obviously this did not give him a more permanent presence outside the Netherlands and Germany. And yet, “A. F. Th.,” as he is known to his community of fans, has true followers, as can be seen from certain reviews of his books in more specialized literary journals.

Another good example of such highly individual trajectories is Matthias Zschokke, a Swiss-German writer born in 1954, who has won German-language awards since 1981, and yet even in his home country is a little-known “stealth author.” However, surprisingly, he landed the influential French Prix Femina Etranger in 2009 for the French translation of “Maurice mit Huhn” (“Maurice With Chicken,” initially released in Switzerland in 2006).<sup>4</sup> Yet we could not trace any other translations of his work, until today.

Thus, at first, differences seem to be more prevalent than similarities.

However, inverting the list, to highlight not the strongest performers in translation but those with few or no translations at all, tells a clearer story.

Almost two out of three of the least translated authors on our list write in a Central or Southeast European language, and while, due to tracking problems, we may have missed a translation of a work, the overall finding is obvious: When it comes to entering major (‘old’ or ‘Western’) European Union book markets, some original languages and cultural backgrounds seem to confront a structural disadvantage.

But again, one must be cautiously aware of the difference between ‘new entrants’ to these markets and those authors who form the above-mentioned elite group, and who, in the case of the formerly socialist bloc countries, still owe much of their reputation and penetration of translation channels to

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2 See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arturo\\_Pérez-Reverte](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arturo_Pérez-Reverte) , looked up on 02-08-2011.

3 See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A.\\_F.\\_Th.\\_van\\_der\\_Heijden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._F._Th._van_der_Heijden) , looked up on 02-08-2011.

4 See [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthias\\_Zschokke](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthias_Zschokke) , looked up on 02-08-2011.

their long-time presence, from before the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, more than two decades past, and a status of legitimacy usually labelled as a “dissident.”

This label of moral nobility applies to authors as different as Péter Esterházy, Ismail Kadare, and Milan Kundera. Kundera, born in 1929 in Brno (then Czechoslovakia), was partly involved in the anti-socialist reform communist movement of 1968 but went into exile in Paris, becoming a French citizen and, since 1993, writing in French. Kadare, born in 1936 in Albania, was closely associated with the communist regime and held high-ranking government positions, yet has chosen to live predominantly in Paris since 1991. Esterházy, born in Hungary in 1950, was recognized at home and abroad as an independent, yet not openly political, voice even before 1989. In literary terms, these writers stand for three highly different literary styles and approaches. Kundera is part of a cosmopolitan elite; Esterházy has always embedded his writing in the immediate context of his native country and his family, yet with a baroque ironic distance. Kadare instead became famous for painting his rural Albania in exotic colors, far from any urban or modernist sense of irony.

Each writer became a literary icon for his country, a status developed over decades of publishing works continually, with translations—for Kundera and Kadare in French, for Esterházy in German—playing arguably a more prominent role in the authors’ international status and impact than the original language publications in, respectively, Czech, Albanian, or Hungarian.

Literary life seems to be entirely different for the new entrants to the market today.

Among the three dozen least-translated authors, two categories from our selections are particularly strongly represented: Authors who, in 2009, had a strong presence on their respective national fiction best-seller charts and writers who, again in 2009, were picked by their national authors, publishers, and booksellers associations for the European Union Prize for Literature (EUPL).

The groups seem to reflect the same basic pattern: The authors high up on domestic national charts are clearly the favorites of domestic readerships, and of course, fiction charts in most countries incorporate a significant portion of local talent, which is usually distributed between truly local literature, often enough in the sense of telling their stories to their local choir, and authors who are strongly appreciated by their domestic readership, yet write absolutely in sync with broader fancies.

This last quality is taken up, in programmatic ways, by the selections for the newly created European Union Prize for Literature (EUPL), as juries from the relevant professional associations tend to pick a writer who, in their view, could have a future on the more prominent European stage.

<b>Awards</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Author's Name</b>
EULitPrize 2009	CRO	Mila Pavićević
Bestseller2009	PL	Monika Szawaja
	NL	A. F. Th. Van der Heijden
Bestseller2009	PL	Bernard Nowaczyk
EULitPrize 2009	NOR	Carl Frode Tille
	HU	Csernus Imre
	CZ	Dana Čermáková
EULitPrize 2009	PT	Dulce Maria Cardoso
	SLO	Goran Vojnović
EULitPrize 2009	PL	Jacek Dukaj
	CZ	Jaroslav Kmenta
Bestseller2009	PL	Krzysztof Daukszewicz
EULitPrize 2009	LIT	Laura Sintija Cerniauskaitė
	CZ	Lenka Lanczová
Bestseller2009	PL	Małgorzata Kalicińska
	CZ	Marie Poledňáková
Deutscher Buchpreis 2010	CH	Melinda Nadj Abonji
EULitPrize 2009	HU	Noémi Szécsi
	NL	Suzanne Vermeer
	CZ	Vlastimil Vondruška
Büchnerpreis 2009	AT	Walter Kappacher
	PL	Wojciech Cejrowski
Femina 2009	FR	Gwenaëlle Aubry
Bestseller2009	PL	Jacek Hugo-Bader
Bestseller2009	PL	Jan M. Ciechanowski
	NL	Jeroen Smit
EULitPrize 2009	IRL	Karen Gillece
	PL	Malgorzata Musierowicz
	SP/CAT	Manuel de Pedrolo
	SP	María Dueñas
	SRB	Marija Jovanovic
Femina étranger 2009	DE	Matthias Zschokke
	HU	Moldova György
	PL	Wiktór Suworow
	NL	Cees Noteboom
EULitPrize 2009	FR	Emmanuelle Pagano

Table 1: The 36 least translated authors from the 'author list' of this report.

*Note that Melinda Nadj Abonji and María Dueñas were debut novelists in 2010 whose works hardly could have been translated in time for this survey, but since they are a winner of the German Book Price (Nadj Abonji) and a top best-selling author in Spain (Dueñas), it will be relevant to track their future development.*

Obviously, as our data show, neither the strong presence of an author on the best-seller charts of a less represented market nor the well-intentioned promotion of such authors by the awards is much appreciated by the gatekeepers of the translation market—with a few yet powerful exceptions, as we shall see.

For a more in-depth understanding of these patterns, and the various shaping forces, we must therefore develop a more systematic approach to a set of drivers and parameters.

## Author role models

The most translated, the newly translated, the ‘non-translated,’ and the establishment forming the ‘middle class.’

As has already been specified in chapter 2 on the methodology of this report, we identified and tracked authors as they correspond to a variety of parameters, by being awarded prizes with specifically broad and transnational recognition and visibility, or by having had an outstanding presence recently on fiction best-seller lists in several countries and languages, or, notably for authors from less represented languages and literature, by having a title with outstanding success in their domestic market, yet with no further dissemination through translations into other languages.

In an effort to screen in detail to what degree authors from this total corpus of almost 200 names are strongly or less prominently represented in translations across Europe, we identified at least four different patterns, or role models, that can be applied to the mapped authors:

### **Group A:**

Branded authors with a paramount and long-term presence of many books.

The first group can be reasonably formed with authors having more than five translated titles in more than five book markets, plus a significant presence in additional markets. These authors have each grown to their current status as ‘big’ authors, with a lasting and paramount presence in usually all of Europe’s markets for at least two or, more frequently, even several decades.

**Group B:**

Branded authors with fewer titles, yet paramount presence and impact.

In the second group, we find authors who have published five or fewer titles in their original market, and from this initial appearance, succeed at once, by leveraging all sorts of market drivers and opportunities for getting status and presence, from winning awards to getting on best-seller lists and developing a presence in cultural media and at significant festivals, to quickly and dynamically grow their impact on markets and readers in the majority of the European book markets.

**Group C:**

The 'middle class,' well represented, but of limited impact on markets and readers.

For this third group, we identified authors who had published more than five titles, have more than five translations published in at least one market, and are present with at least one published work in the majority of the analyzed markets.

This group accounts for the largest number of members on our list, forming a kind of a well-established 'middle class' among the analyzed contemporary fiction writers, who are certainly recognized by the avid European reader, yet lacking the status of group A and the dynamism of group B.

**Group D:**

Locally successful authors, limited internationally to only a few or hardly any translations at all.

In the fourth group are authors who are predominantly present in their home market, with only a few translations available thus far, and only slowly, if at all, present abroad.

The authors belonging to this group are probably thus-far unrecognized talent with realistic potential for successful translations into more languages.

## Close-up on authors and author role models.

A more in-depth analysis of our data shows how, in addition to the number of available translations, each highlighted group of authors is characterized by additional cultural as well as social traits that its members have in common.

The authors with the highest number of translations and the longest presence in the market share two striking biographical elements: They were born before 1950 (with Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk, born in 1952, the only exception), and they all received important prizes.

Most are winners of the Nobel Prize (Lessing, Grass, Coetzee, Kertesz, Pamuk, and Saramago), followed by the Prince of Asturias and Man Booker award winners (Coetzee, Atwood, Rushdie, and McEwan).

The moment in their respective careers when these writers are awarded with such a prominent prize underlines a clear pattern: While the Man Booker often boosts a writing career at the relatively early stages, when an author has published only a few titles, the Nobel Prize and the Prince of Asturias materialize only once a significant opus has evolved, establishing and sharply profiling—and thereby branding—a writer in sustainable ways, at least within the literary community that he or she caters to.

The role of the Man Booker as the main force in triggering translations is even more obvious for those younger authors who, born in the 1960s and 1970s, saw their work spread quickly throughout Europe after they received the award. Impressive examples of this mechanism are Yann Martell (\*1963), Aravind Adiga (\*1974), DBC Pierre (\*1962), and Kiran Desai (\*1971).

Additionally interesting patterns can be observed with regard to the languages these authors write in, and the national backgrounds of the most-translated authors. The oldest and most translated authors write in the language that they grew up in, and most reside, for the better part of their careers and so to this present day, in the country of their parents.

Günter Grass and Bernhard Schlink write in German and were born in Germany, Ian McEwan was born in Great Britain and writes in English, Haruki Murakami was born in Japan and writes in Japanese, Imre Kertesz was born in Hungary and writes in Hungarian, and Jose Saramago was born in Portugal and wrote in Portuguese.

Only two look back at biographies that have seen major transcultural changes: Salman Rushdie and J. M. Coetzee, who both moved between cultures, yet within the geographical and cultural realm of the former British Empire; both write in English. J. M. Coetzee was born in South Africa and lives in Australia, and Rushdie, born in India, migrated first to London yet spends much of his time now in New York City.

Only Milan Kundera set out initially to write in Czech, and switched to French as the language of his new country of residence, France.

This is all different when it comes to the younger authors of group B, with the highest number of translations. Among these authors, hardly anyone lives and writes in the country and language of his or her birth.

Only a few developed largely straight-forward biographies, in the sense of a continuity of working language as well as country of origin and residence: Ildefonso Falcones, Roberto Saviano, Lars Kepler

(a Swedish couple writes under this pseudonym), and the late Stieg Larsson wrote their works in their mother tongue and live(d) in their country of birth.

In the wider and transnational context of global English, we find DBC Pierre (an Australian living in Ireland and writing in English) and Yann Martell (a Canadian born in Spain writing in English and living in Canada).

More and more often, living patterns and working routines seem to form complex and multifaceted puzzles for authors who emerged only recently, in the past decade or less, and who—as defined for group B—have managed to project themselves on high-speed and important international, or even truly global, literary trajectories.

Muriel Barbery is French, writing in French, yet was born in Morocco and currently lives in Japan. Carlos Ruiz Zafón is of Spanish origin and writes in Spanish, but has lived in Los Angeles for the past twenty years. Aravind Adiga and Kiran Desai are continuing the tradition of writers born in India, writing in English, and finding success in the West, as had been the case earlier with Salman Rushdie and Arundathi Roy. Atiq Rahimi is an Afghan who writes in French and resides in France, while Chinese Dai Sijie writes and lives in France. English-born Charlotte Roche writes in German.

Clearly the most translated Man Booker winners are cultural migrants such as Aravind Adiga, Yann Martell, and Kiran Desai, while Atiq Rahimi is the most translated winner of the French Goncourt.

Among the recently rising-star authors, Sofi Oksanen, of Finnish-Estonian origin, writing in Finnish and living in Finland, is one of the rare exceptions to this pattern.

In short, while the first group of the most translated authors consists largely of “cultural residents,” in the second, “cultural migrants” are prevalent, as they move from one culture to another. They are, or become over time, largely bilingual, or have even given up on writing in their mother tongue altogether.

Günter Grass, Imre Kertész, and Jose Saramago had the opportunity to patiently build their reputations step-by-step, winning a broad readership and a following of readers, and critics, in their own country first, and then, slowly, finding their way into other cultures with the help of translations.

Atiq Rahimi, Dai Sijie, and Aravind Adiga did not have such leisure. On the move from one culture to another, following in the tracks prepared by the international elites of business and academia, these authors found themselves instantly in those global circuits, with their first or second book already translated abundantly.



The number of cultural migrants is particularly significant not only in group B but also in group C, which, for the purpose of this study, we labeled the 'middle class.'

Twenty-two out of the 65 analyzed authors could be considered cultural migrants as far as they commute between different cultures and languages due to a variety of biographical, political, or cultural reasons.

Agota Kristof (\*1935), for example, is a Hungarian-born author writing in French and living in Switzerland; Amin Maalouf (\*1949) is a Lebanese-born author writing in French and living in Paris; Antonio Munoz Molina (\*1956) is a Spanish-born and Spanish-writing author living in New York; Boris Pahor (\*1913) is a member of the Slovene minority in Italy; Feridun Zaimoglu (\*1964) is the son of Turkish labor emigrants to Germany and writes in German; Colleen McCullough (\*1937) was born in New Zealand but spent her life in the UK and the USA, and now resides in Australia; Elif Shafak (\*1971) is an author of Turkish background, born in France, writing in Turkish and English; Harry Mulisch (1927-2010) was Jewish, living in the Netherlands and writing in Dutch; Hertha Müller (\*1953) grew up in the German minority in Romania, writing in German and now residing in Germany; and Hugo Hamilton (\*1953), an Irish writer of German-Irish origin, grew up in three languages (Irish, German, and English) and now writes in English.

Ismail Kadare (\*1936), as already mentioned, is an Albanian author living in France; Jamaica Kincaid (\*1949) is an American writer born in Antigua and Barbuda; Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clezio (\*1940) is a French writer and has French and Mauritian citizenship; Juan Goytisolo (\*1931) is a Catalan writer living in Marrakech; Lisa Marklund (\*1962) is a Swedish writer living in Spain; Marie NDiaye (\*1967) is a French writer of Senegalese descent; Michel Houellebecq (\*1958) is a French writer, born in Réunion and living in Spain; Nancy Huston (\*1958) is a Canadian-born writer living in Paris, writing in French, and translating her works into English (she is married to Bulgarian Tzvetan Todorov); Peter Carey (\*1943) is an Australian novelist living in the USA; Jonathan Littel (\*1967) is a dual American and French citizen, living in Barcelona and writing in French and English; Katherine Pancol (\*1954) is a Moroccan-born French novelist who spent more than a decade living in New York; Mathias Zschokke (\*1954) is a Swiss-German writer living in Berlin; Nuala O'Faolain (1940-2008) was an Irish writer who lived in New York for the last decade of her life; Paul Nizon (\*1929) is a Swiss-German writer living in Paris; and V.S. Naipaul (\*1932) is a British-Caribbean writer originally from Trinidad.

In this group of cultural migrants, a generation gap becomes apparent: Most authors from the older generation (born before 1955) moved between cultures and countries mostly because they were members of minorities (such as Hertha Müller and Boris Pahor) or because they (or their parents, as is

the case for Harry Mulisch) had to leave their homelands due to political discrimination or persecution (Kadare, Kundera, and Dai Sijie). Meanwhile, those of the younger generation followed a more personal liberty in their decision to become cultural migrants and chose their preferences and orientations among a globally mobile elite: Carlos Ruiz Zafon, Jonathan Littel, Muriel Barbery, Nancy Huston, Lisa Marklund, Antonio Munoz Molina, and others seem to have opted for cultures and an environment mostly out of their free will, and out of personal or creative preferences.

Taking note specifically of the significant number of cultural migrants among the winners of top awards, notably the French Goncourt and the British Man Booker, one can reasonably see this as a reflex of juries favoring either this type of globally traveling authors or the stories that the authors' movements and whereabouts allow these authors to tell. This taste may also be shared by a reading audience used to such panoramic cultural views from other culture and media content that the readers routinely consume.

## **Publishers and translation**

### **The role of transnationals and of independent publishing houses.**

Our research has shown that, in Western Europe, fiction publishing is dominated by two basic types of publishing organizations, large groups—often transnational conglomerates with holdings not only in books but in other media as well—and 'independents,' that is, small- and medium-sized companies, specializing in book publishing and occasionally in retail, and remarkably often family owned.

Lacking respective detailed information for Central and Southeast Europe, we had to focus here on EUWest.

The biggest players in the field are undoubtedly publishing conglomerates such as Hachette, Random House/Bertelsmann, RCS, Editis, Bonnier, Grupo Planeta, Mondadori, and Holtzbrinck, which are all well represented in the "Global Ranking" of the 50 largest publishing groups worldwide.<sup>5</sup> All own a variety of publishing houses and imprints all around Europe, or even beyond, in the USA, even as some—such as Editis and Holtzbrinck—sail mostly under the brands of their imprints, and not that of the group.

These conglomerates can be divided into two groups according to the markets in which the companies operate: in the first group are the ones operating either in their domestic markets only or in regions of a similar linguistic and cultural background (for example, Bonnier is important player in Scandinavia and Germany, and RCS in Italy and France).

The second group consists of organizations that became truly global players over the past decade or so, with holdings and activities in a variety of different languages and continents, such as Random

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<sup>5</sup>"The Global Ranking of the Publishing Industry." See [www.wischenbart.com/publishing](http://www.wischenbart.com/publishing).

House/Bertelsmann (primarily in Germany, the UK, and the USA, plus related activities in France, Spain et al.) and Hachette Livre (France, the UK, the USA). Planeta has been by far the market leader in the Spanish-language world, operating in Spain and in Latin America, and recently expanded further by acquiring Eeditis in France.

As for the 'independents,' we can identify again two generic types, that is, those with a long history and track record as prestigious platforms for literature and writers in their original national culture and a few newcomers that were founded only recently, and most often in direct response to the recent dynamics of the changing book and media market.

Among the houses of long tradition, Gallimard is probably the defining example, deeply anchored in its founding family for a century, as a treasure passed on from one generation to the next. The current president of the company (and of the French Publishers Association), Antoine Gallimard, is the grandson of the founder of the company that in past decades published more Nobel and Goncourt winners than any other French publishing house.

Among the more recently established mid-sized houses, French Actes Sud and British Quercus (with the recently added MacLehose imprint) are probably best qualified to serve as examples of ventures that saw new opportunities between the traditional players and the recently consolidated corporations. In a slightly different variation, La Martinière re-invigorated its ambitions and acquired the old and well-established quality brand of Le Seuil, probably driven by similar strategic considerations that drive the new houses. Each new challenger succeeded particularly well in grooming trademark authors in original editions and in translation, for a highly volatile, yet novelty-hungry, book market.

For our specific context, it must be noted that Swedish Stieg Larsson, as the most successful author by far globally in the past decade, has had a huge impact on the lucky development of Actes Sud and Quercus/MacLehose—in similar ways as the seven volumes of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series did for its original publisher, Bloomsbury, which also falls nicely into this category of fairly new houses.

We find similar ventures in a number of countries, notably Sellerio, the original publisher of Andrea Camilleri in Italy, Dilletante with Anna Gavalda in France, and the Swedish Piratförlaget, the home of several current Nordic crime writers, including Liza Marklund.



## The literary masters and some oddities of the Long Tail.

Oddly enough, in some cases even highly reputed books in translation, in some parts of Europe, just tend to disappear.

More than five-year-old books of Nobel Prize winners are most commonly still available in bookshops in West European markets, but in some smaller book cultures such as Slovenia, translations of such books can be found only in public libraries, while the books have disappeared from online and brick-and-mortar bookshops.

Quite obviously, this is at first a technical book industry issue, yet with broader cultural implications: It is very likely that Slovenian book publishers will not keep such titles in print because there is little or no economic reason for reprinting them or even keeping unsold copies in stock for four or five years after publication. Due to the low sales of backlist titles, the cost of keeping books in print seems to be higher than the cost of eliminating the unsold stock—a reasonable consequence of the fact that backlist sales in a market of two million inhabitants are by definition drastically smaller than in a market of many more millions of consumers.

While in Germany and France translations of Nobel Prize winners qualify as backlist, in some parts of CSEE they do not, and go out of print. The question is, however, if a decrease in backlist titles can occur in larger markets, such as Germany or France, or if, in reverse, digital stock management—as eBooks or print on demand—will detour such developments in the future, and eventually open new windows of opportunity.

### Who publishes whom in translation?

At least in the EUWest markets, it was quite common that, when an author had reached a level of significant international recognition, this usually resulted in a long-term business relationship with the publisher not only in the original language edition but also for the translations, and often cooperation far beyond business, in order to grow the author's place in the public sphere with the readers. In return, the publisher of such a 'major' author would be committed to publishing each major new work of the writer, to grow the writer's impact as a strategic asset of the house.

While such continuity may still be the case, at least for a short period of two to three titles and a few years, publishers readily discontinue their involvement with an author if his or her book(s) do not find a good readership imminently. However, such 'mid-list' authors, with uncertain perspectives, are being dealt with much more nervously, and those at the top of the list have become items of an entirely different kind altogether.

Times and patterns seem to have changed significantly.

Most recently, the rumor of 2010 Nobel laureate Mario Vargas Llosa's new novel "El sueño del celta" not being prepared for the German translation by the author's long-time ally, Suhrkamp, but at Rowohlt (which ultimately seems to have resulted in a quagmire for all parties involved, including the author's high-betting agent), caused a considerable stir in German literary pages.<sup>6</sup>

This as well as many similar anecdotes, usually referring to authors of lesser media attention than the latest Nobel Prize winner, tend to be interpreted as proof of the role of literary agents in raising the bar for those authors in the headlines and at the top of the charts.

Beyond any doubt, agents have shaped the markets of literary translations—or, more precisely, that of a number of 'top authors'—radically over the past two decades. However, the impact of agents is primarily driving the market presence of authors of either Anglo-Saxon origins or those who write in English, plus probably a number of the newly successful authors of 'Nordic crime' who are also often represented by Scandinavian agencies. Furthermore, we have witnessed the emergence of a number of thriving agencies in continental Europe, notably in Germany, that foster, in addition their domestic top writers, some of the top Central European names. However, it seems to us that the majority of those well-translated authors writing in languages other than English act without the management support of a professional intermediary, such as an agency.<sup>7</sup>

With accelerated dynamics in the money involved in rights auctions in general and the prices paid for the top of the (assumed) rank, the presence of agents may broaden beyond the current scope. However, it is still much too easy to single out 'the agent factor' when it comes to explaining the current tides, and how they seem to change.

Anyone familiar with the—much hyped, for being so 'secretive'—workings in the "literary agent's centers" at the Frankfurt and London book fairs, at the closely tied-in 'hotel bar trades' and, perhaps more and more significantly, with the auctions behind such sumptuous scenery knows that a strange competition takes place, over and over again, confronting highly unequal parties. However, this inequality does not at all refer to a showdown between almighty agents and roughly similar bidders.

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<sup>6</sup> See "Der Verlag als Lebensabschnittspartner". In: Die Welt, November 11, 2010. ([http://www.welt.de/print/die\\_welt/kultur/article10744291/Der-Verlag-als-Lebensabschnittspartner.html](http://www.welt.de/print/die_welt/kultur/article10744291/Der-Verlag-als-Lebensabschnittspartner.html)). The confusion regarding the German translation rights for Vargas Llosa's new book even widened when, in early 2011, a new turnabout was rumored, so that at the moment of the writing of this report, it is still unclear which publisher will in fact release the German translation and when.

<sup>7</sup> Two prominent examples of authors who also figure prominently in this report are Muriel Barbery and Tatiana de Rosnay. However, it is beyond the reach of our research to systematically track authors and their eventual agents, which again illustrates how scarce precise market information is in this field.

Quite the opposite is the case. In the bidding, opponents of hugely different weights stand up, at least for the rights of translation into the few main languages—aside from English, this is mostly German and French, and, albeit to a lesser degree, to Italian, Spanish, and Swedish.

Particularly for a freshly launched ‘big debut manuscript,’ the stakes are really high. The envoys of the handful of global corporations in trade publishing—the likes of Random House/Bertelsmann, Hachette, Simon & Schuster, and Penguin/Pearson (each with supposedly deep pockets as if without a bottom)—bid against medium-sized houses—such as Actes Sud, Bloomsbury, and Hanser, and even much smaller new entrants with a taste for risk—and in the realistic anticipation that only a very few top titles will occupy the lion’s share of what can be won in the next book season.

The stakes are high, given the critical time span of just a few months to decide whether a book becomes big or not. The market share of the new titles and, among them, the few real top sellers is constantly increasing. In a typical EUWest market such as Austria, the combined fiction and non-fiction titles in hardcover, which reflect most new releases, have a market share of 70 percent of all retail sales.<sup>8</sup>

In theory, the conglomerates would win every single battle, not only because of their available funds but also by offering their synergies in releasing and promoting a title in all the territories where the companies have holdings or strategic partnerships.

In principle, such a tendency toward globalization can be seen, when book releases, more and more often, are synchronized to the effect that the original and strategically valuable translations are published at the same time. This is the case for authors who are, by themselves or through their agents, successfully developing their brands, such as Paulo Coelho, or for the publication of translations in languages with a readership that has a particularly strong appreciation for reading in English, like those in the Netherlands or Scandinavia, so that ideally a domestic translation can even anticipate the English edition of a book.

However, such transnational and multilingual strategizing does not necessarily go along the lines of corporate publishing organizations.

An overview of three recently and newly successful authors and their international publishers illustrates the case well: Hardly any conglomerate publishing group orchestrated its potentially far reach, and a few ‘independent’ or strong local players were decisive in developing major markets for a specific new author:

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<sup>8</sup> Buchhandelspanel Dezember 2010. A monthly survey of key market parameters, researched by ‘media control GfK, on behalf of Hauptverband des österreichischen Buchhandels, or the Austrian publishers and booksellers association.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Publisher (Mother company)</b>	<b>Imprint</b>
Stieg Larsson	Spain	Grupo Planeta	Destino
	NL	A.W.Bruna	Signatuur
	Italy	RCS Libri	Marsilio
	France	Actes Sud	Actes Sud
	UK	Quercus	MacLehose
	German	Bertelsmann	Heyne
	Sweden	Nordstedts	Norstedts
Carlos Ruiz Zafón	Spain	Grupo Planeta	Planeta
	NL	A.W.Bruna	Signatuur
	Italy	Mondadori	Mondadori
	France	Editis	Robert Laffont
	UK	Hachette Livre	Weidenfeld
	German	Holtzbrinck	S.Fischer
	Sweden	Bonnier	Albert Bonniers Förlag
Muriel Barbery	Spain	Grupo Planeta	Seix Barral
	Italy	Independent	E/O
	France	Groupe Gallimard	Gallimard
	German	Independent	dtv premium
	Sweden	Independent	Sekwa förlag

*Table 2: Three recently highly successful authors in major EUWest markets and their publishers in translations.*

The unlikely success story has been covered so often that, for our purposes here, it is enough to mention that Larsson's three crime novels focusing on journalist Mikael Kalle Blomquist and the computer hacker punk girl Lisbeth Salander at first enthused an extraordinarily wide readership in Sweden and were sold for translation into several languages, but only the French translation at independent publisher Actes Sud triggered a frenzy that had been unanticipated. The third step in the saga of the trilogy going globally through the roof came with the launch of the UK edition by Quercus, another independent publisher.

The following chart illustrates this process over the past five years, between 2006 and 2010:

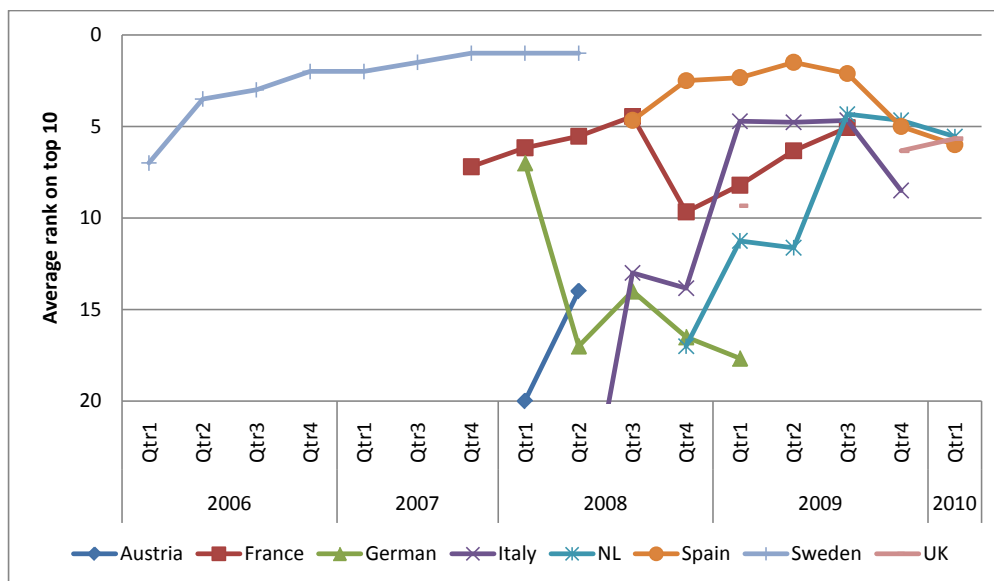


Figure 7: The presence of Stieg Larsson's Millennium on international best-seller lists, in various countries and translations, 2007 to 2010.

The really stunning—and reasonably telling—thing about Stieg Larsson's global success curve, which we have followed for quite some time, is twofold: It originates in a really small language, Swedish, with some 10 million speakers, does not succeed terribly well with the German translation (with only one appearance in hardcover on the Spiegel Top 10 list), but then goes crazy in France, a terra almost incognita for Nordic crime (as opposed to Mankell savoring Germany). This French frenzy is first picked up in Italy and Spain, and then—most unlikely—picked up by a British house for 'global English,' which in this case includes even the USA.

Second, most of this success is driven by relatively small, independent publishers (Actes Sud, Quercus/MacLehose), yet by those who make their killing routinely among the best-seller (author) prey, followed—to maintain the metaphor—by prominent scavengers in Italy (Marsilio/RCS Libri) and Spain (Destino/Planeta), and outsmarting their corporate challengers.

In a broader perspective, and looking at a larger sample of authors, as presented in the complete table from which we draw these data (for details, see the Annex and our source tables online),<sup>9</sup> the analysis will visualize a clearer pattern within a basically chaotic environment. While this goes beyond the scope of this report, we can already formulate our first assumptions with regard to the overall panel.

<sup>9</sup> See the complete table of authors and their publishers in translation in our sources, at [www.wischenbart.com/DiversityReport2010](http://www.wischenbart.com/DiversityReport2010)



What we tend to see is the outcome of a predatory scheme, with agents offering authors—and especially debut authors, who ideally don't have a track record for checking assumptions—in private auctions, with only tightly controlled information on the targets available to the bidders, and under a tightly controlled time frame available for bidding.

This setting requires that ideally one side, the agents, have all of the information in their hands, while the bidding side is basically reacting to what is offered by the tenderer.

It is remarkable though that, in such a closed setup, the bidders do not tend to reduce their risk, notably by increasing their level of information.

Obviously in the past, getting hold of more decisive information was assumed to have been too complex, too volatile, and hence too costly and not viable. Scouts, hired by one publisher for one specific market, were a custom solution that could at least prove its efficiency by the number of acquired rights from that territory, and the resulting sales.

In the present, and ever more in the near future, much more dynamic forces seem to take over, resulting in a shakeup of the entire situation.

Certain books can suddenly and literally take off, like a rocket, with little warning. Authors or their—first, or second, or late—books are born, or made, at once, when leveraged with a powerful stick.

But not every stick is good enough to make a magic flying broom.

## The impact (and the limits) of awards

### Introduction and general remarks

Cultural awards have already been mentioned in this report as dynamic, yet complex, drivers, and for good reason. Cultural awards have performed a particularly vigorous expansion over the course of the late 20th century. The primary purpose of prizes and awards in the arts is often assumed to reside in recognizing merit and conferring prestige, but awards also have a range of other impacts, including, notably, increasing promotional opportunities and heightening the visibility of winners and short listees in the media sphere.

The field of literature has also been a fertile ground for awards. This 'wild proliferation,' as one prize expert has phrased it, has surpassed the production of literature itself.

For this study, we will look at three national awards—The Man Booker (UK), the Prix Goncourt (France), and Deutscher Buchpreis (“German Book Prize”)—and one multinational award, the European Union Prize for Literature (EUPL). Among the many existing literature awards, the ones chosen serve the purpose of this study best for the following reasons:

- The Man Booker and the Prix Goncourt are two of the highest-profile literary prizes in the world. The decisions reverberate well beyond their national boundaries
- Deutscher Buchpreis, established only in 2005, has set out to replicate for Germany what the Man Booker and the Prix Goncourt have accomplished over decades, i.e., bringing the maximum media attention and market exposure to the winners
- The EUPL, launched in 2009, aims to reach beyond national literary scenes by getting young talents from the EU member states off the shelves and across European book markets

We did not include the Nobel in these close ups as it is highlighting the life time achievement of a writer, and normally not meant launch a literary career that has not, at least in some respect, found recognition among the literati in one way or another.

## The Man Booker

The Man Booker was successful, over the decades of its existence, in establishing a particularly high impact, in terms of commercial success, promotional appeal, and as a signifier of cultural merit. University courses are based on the Booker Prize and its prize winners, and these authors are given long-term career boosts. The name ‘Booker’ has become synonymous with success for its winners as well as for success for literary prizes.

Tracking translations of Man Booker winners in all the surveyed markets for the past 10 years, we recognize that all are significantly well represented in translations, in EUWest and in the usually less represented markets of Central and Southeast Europe.

The winners’ books widely differ in genre and style, as does their representation in the region. To take just two of the more extreme examples, we see Aravind Adiga as the most successful, followed by Hilary Mantel and her novel “Wolf Hall.”

Adiga’s “White Tiger” meanwhile was a debut novel, allowing a witty glimpse of the minds of people in India and China who struggle to find their place in the currently most challenging and innovative societies on this planet. The contrast could hardly be sharper with “Wolf Hall,” the extraordinary account

of Henry VIII's long battle against Rome in order to marry Anne Boleyn and his right-hand man Thomas Cromwell. Mantel is a well-known novelist in the UK, and her 11th book, a best seller at home, is available in seven of the 12 observed foreign markets.

The label "Man Booker" seems to work as an effective identifier for enhancing the impact for a writer's perception as the number of available translations demonstrate for Peter Carey, Margaret Atwood, Yann Martell, Aravind Adiga, Hilary Mantel, and Kiran Desai. (The 2010 winner, Howard Jacobson, cannot be taken as a valid example since it is too early to have data on the translations available.)

## Le Prix Goncourt

Regarding the Prix Goncourt in the past decade (2000 to 2010), the picture is only slightly different.

Michel Houellebecq was widely recognized and published before winning the prize. Since the publication of his debut novel "Les particules élémentaires" ("The Elementary Particles") in 1998, he has been solidly grounded in the big EUWest markets, as well as in CSEE (as was the case with Margaret Atwood, when she was awarded the Man Booker in 2000).

Most of the Goncourt winners are regularly and successfully introduced to big Western European markets. Atiq Rahimi and Marie NDiaye perform successfully in Western Europe, and each has had editions published in three Central European markets.

However, we cannot find an author whose career was instantly kick-started all over Europe, as was the case with Aravind Adiga and his "White Tiger" and Yann Martel and his novel "Life of Pi" after winning the Man Booker.

## Der Deutsche Buchpreis

The German Book Prize (Deutscher Buchpreis), launched in 2005 based on the Man Booker, has not yet helped one of the German winners gain recognition on an international scale.

However, the intention of the award's founder, the Association of German Publishers and Booksellers, to create an award reaching beyond literary elitist circles to the broader readership of the public has met the task for Germany. Awarded for the seventh time in 2011, the German Book Prize is accepted as a hallmark of quality, and is of high significance for domestic sales and publicity.

Observing and comparing various European best-seller charts and their top 10 over a period of 36 months (January 2008–December 2010) well illustrates the significant impact of the prize on the authors' performance in the German market. By contrast, the same data reflect the authors' absence in the broader European market.

Measuring with tracking points the presence of an author's work in the top 10 ranking of best-seller lists in EUWest for the winners between 2007 and 2009 produces the following picture:

<b>Author.Name</b>	<b>Title_local</b>	<b>Ergebnis</b>
Uwe Tellkamp	Der Turm	378
Julia Franck	Die Mittagsfrau	160
Kathrin Schmidt	Du stirbst nicht	88

*Table 3: Three winners of the German Book Prize and their domestic performance on the top 10 best-seller charts in Germany (2007 to 2010)*

A comparison with the impact of selected other best-selling authors in Germany for the same period shows that at least Uwe Tellkamp had a presence that jump-started him into the top segment of quality fiction (yet well behind the segment of superstars).

<b>Author Name</b>	<b>Title_local</b>	<b>Points</b>
Cornelia Funke	Reckless. Steinernes Fleisch	187
	Tintenblut	287
	Tintenherz	238
	Tintenherz. Tintenwelt 01	78
	Tintentod	126
	Tintentod. Tintenwelt 03	83
Jussi Adler-Olsen	Erbarmen	669
	Schändung	188
Charlotte Roche	Feuchtgebiete	791
Martin Suter	Der Koch	221
	Der letzte Weynfeldt	211
Henning Mankell	Daisy Sisters	42
	Der Chinese	165
	Der Feind im Schatten	138
	Die italienischen Schuhe	69
Daniel Kehlmann	Ruhm	300

*Table 4: Selected authors and their performance in Germany on the top 10 best-seller charts (2007 to 2010)*

Not one of the winners of the German Book Prize found similar appreciation internationally.

Looking at all the translations and the number of translations for the six winners, the same conclusion must be drawn: The German Book Prize is still far from having the international appeal of the prize's British and French equivalents. The total number of translations account for 29 for 12 book markets (all surveyed markets), falling clearly short of the respective marks for the Man Booker and the Goncourt.

Julia Franck (with seven translations) has the most translations in the EUWest markets, but the overall picture for her and her fellow winners is that of a minor representation, and only a very limited presence for CSEE countries. The Czech Republic (with three titles translated) and Hungary (with four titles translated) are the exceptions.

## The European Union Prize for Literature (EUPL)

The European Union Prize for Literature is awarded to promote locally well-known authors of fine literature beyond their domestic realm.

In 2009, a concerted effort by the European Union and professional writers, publishers, and booksellers associations<sup>10</sup> resulted in a new and ambitious literary award that aims to help the winners to receive recognition across Europe because of their outstanding talent.

To date, 23 authors have received the prize, after being selected by national committees, consisting of experts and professionals from the book industry and the literary sector.

An examination of the twelve 2009 winners demonstrates that one can speak indeed of a very diverse range in the field of fiction, starting with the authors' age differences. Ranging from 23-year-old Croatian Mila Pavičević to Swedish Helena Henschen, who recently, after having received the prize, died at the age of 71, and more than 50 percent well into their forties and older, a high degree of diversity exists among the authors labeled "emerging talents in contemporary writing."

Likewise varying are the topics of the 12 books. The list includes Irish Karen Gillece's "Longhore Drift," a book promoted by her German publisher with a comparison to the hugely popular Irish best-selling author Maeve Binchy, as well as Croatian Mila Pavičević's "Djevojčica od leda i druge bajke" ("Ice Girl and Other Fairy Tales") and Polish Jacek Dukaj's "LÓD" ("ICE"), who experiment with the supernatural and virtual reality, respectively. Furthermore, we find three novels centered on political and historical events, notably Slovak writer Pavel Rankov, who uses his three protagonists—a Hungarian, a Jew, and

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<sup>10</sup>The European Booksellers Federation (EBF), the European Writers' Council (EWC), and the Federation of European Publishers (FEP).

a Czech—to depict the history of Central Europe between 1938 and 1969 in his novel “Stalo sa prvého septembra alebo inokedy” (“It Happened on September the First—or whenever”).

Besides being a historical novel and a saga of a family, Noemi Sceczy’s “Communist Monte Cristo” is an artistic interpretation of the history of a communist idea in Hungary, ironically turning upside down the elements of the original Monte Cristo story only to reveal the impact of blunt political stupidity as a driving force behind the unfolding events. In the book “I skuggan av ett brott” (“The Shadow of a Crime”), Helena Henschen not only has displayed a family scandal that shook Swedish society in 1932 but also has coped with her own tragic family background. Hjalmar von Sydow, chairman of the Swedish Employers’ Federation, and two maids of the household were brutally murdered by his son Frederic, the brother of Helena Henschen’s mother. When the police came to arrest him, Frederic shot himself and his young wife.

However, Henschen’s book can also be seen as a psychoanalytical plot with additional elements of a thriller, like the novels of Paulus Hochgatterer. A writer and child therapist, Hochgatterer in his work unveils what lies behind so-called normality: trauma, violence, and disturbed individuals. Emmanuelle Pagano from France and Laura Sintija Černiauskaite from Lithuania follow a similar path. Černiauskaite tells the story of a young family and their adopted child who turns into a murderer because of his inability to put down roots in his foster family. Pagano’s narrator and protagonist Adèle was born with a male body but subsequently underwent surgery to become the woman she now is.

Not surprisingly, most of these winners of the EUPL had already won praise in their home countries, where they have each received a multitude of national awards. Those still young enough are described as being among the most innovative and promising new voices of their country. Where the label “young” is no longer appropriate, the writers are lauded for being an extraordinary debutant, as was the case for Helena Henschen, who was in her early sixties when she published her book about the Sydow murderer that became a best seller in Sweden.

However, behind such shared qualities and similarities in domestic recognition, a set of distinctions can be found.

All the winning authors had books, narratives, plays, or essays published well before the award-winning year of 2009, but the number of translations is low for all of these authors. The EUWest authors have at least managed a few translations in other Western European markets. However, the Central and Southeast European colleagues have so far barely been received beyond their home market.

Of course, since the award was launched only in 2009, it is far too early for a conclusive assessment of the EUPL's long-term impact on encouraging translation. Many of the Central and Southeast European winners are regularly invited to theatre/literary festivals, regional and international, to read from their award-winning novels extracts in English. And in the case of Hungarian writer Noemi Sceczi, even one of the most influential literary agents, Andrew Nuremberg, throws himself as an ardent advocate into the battle, when he describes Sceczi, as can be seen on his Hungarian homepage, as one of the most talented writers of the 21st century. What consequences such promotion will have remains to be seen over the coming years, provided the prize is continued after the initial financed and secured three-year period.

## Translations and best sellers

Translations occupy not only a major part of what are generally called 'mid-list' authors, as they are represented strongly in our basic corpus of tracked authors, but also in the top-selling segment as reflected in fiction best-seller lists.

While these charts have a reputation of offering mostly much of the same, namely, populist fiction written by Anglo-Saxon authors specialized in this genre, and supposedly crafting one best seller after the other, the realities of hugely popular authors and their books are much more complex and need to be differentiated.

As the Diversity Report 2009 and related research have shown, best-selling authors are much more diverse in their literary styles and their biographical backgrounds than one may expect, as particularly the top rankings in best-seller charts highlight only the most popular reading.

To analyze best-seller lists to identify and understand the inherent patterns, developments, and trends that they reflect, a long-term view turned out to be the best approach. Normally, a work first appears in the original language that the author used, and only in subsequent steps is the work then offered in the rights and licenses markets in order to be translated into additional languages for an international readership. Only then, ideally, the work eventually turns out to be successful with the new, expanded readership just as the work was domestically. This process takes at least a few years to evolve.

In the best case, subsequent translations create feedback loops so that every new translation and its readership open wider circles of dissemination, re-enforcing the reputation of a book and its author

where it has already an audience. Then, a movie adaptation can create additional impact, and again cross-fertilize the number of book copies sold.

One of the most staggering examples of such a buildup, which was not foreseen by the book's initial success in its domestic market, is the already broadly quoted "Millennium" trilogy of the late Swedish author Stieg Larsson.

Yet applying this same methodology of tracking the presence of a number of authors on various best-seller lists over time and attributing points to represent the overall impact of a writer<sup>11</sup> provides an opportunity for a bird's-eye perspective on the segment.

## Basic patterns of distribution by best-selling authors and languages

Mapping the respective top 10 fiction best sellers of eight main book markets of EUWest (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the UK) on a monthly basis over three years, from January 2008 to December 2010, we identified 451 different authors who have had a presence at one point among the top 10 on one of these charts.

The leading 20 authors, those with the highest score in impact points, come with a pattern already very familiar from similar surveys that we did earlier:

	Language	Author	Points	% of Top 20
1	Swedish	Stieg Larsson	7767	24%
2	English	Stephenie Meyer	4394	13%
3	English	Khaled Hosseini	3053	9%
4	English	Dan Brown	2222	7%
5	Spanish	Carlos Ruiz Zafón	1759	5%
6	French	Muriel Barbery	1497	5%
7	Italian	Paolo Giordano	1324	4%
8	English	Ken Follett	1109	3%
9	Italian	Roberto Saviano	1107	3%
10	Swedish	Henning Mankell	916	3%

<sup>11</sup> This analysis is a computation from authors' performances over the past 11 months, between January and November 2010, based on monthly compilations of the top 10 best-seller lists (fiction) of The Bookseller, buchreport/Spiegel Bestsellerliste, El Cultural, Livres Hebdo/Ipsos, Svensk Bokhandel, and a combined top 20 fiction and non-fiction list for Italy provided by Informazioni Editoriali, and of the Netherlands by GfK/CPNB De Bestseller. To assess and compare the impact of an author's books, we attributed points for each month that a book stays in a given market in the top 10 (with 50 points for a #1 rank, 49 for a #2, etc.). This system allows realistic calibration of larger and smaller countries and book markets across Europe.



11	Italian	Andrea Camilleri	890	3%
12	French	Anna Gavalda	874	3%
13	German	Charlotte Roche	846	3%
14	Swedish	Camilla Läckberg	822	3%
15	English	John Grisham	778	2%
16	English	Cecilia Ahern	773	2%
17	English	John Boyne	718	2%
18	English	James Patterson	654	2%
19	Dutch	Jeroen Smit	613	2%
20	French	Marc Levy	611	2%

Table 5: The strongest-performing fiction authors across the top 10 best-seller lists in Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the UK for the 36-month period of January 2008 to December 2010.

Only eight out of the strongest 20 titles were written in English, and 12 in other languages, which is a significant deviation from the overall distribution of original languages in translated books. As a rule of thumb, two out of three translated books are from English originals, with German and French well behind at 7 or 8 percent each, and all other languages falling far behind.

English	8	13701	42%
Other	12	19026	58%
Total top 10		25148	
Total top 20		32727	
Top 10 of top 20			77%

Table 6: Breakdown of authors in table 5 by original language of the surveyed works.

In our best-sellers segment, we find a clearly different distribution in languages, with English, of course, in the lead, but totaling less than half, followed by Swedish, Italian, and French.

Language			%
English	8	13701	42%
Swedish	3	9505	29%
Italian	3	3321	10%
French	3	2982	9%
Other	3	3218	10%

Table 7: Representation of languages among the 20 best-performing authors (as in table 6)

### Distribution among the 20 best performing authors by languages in %

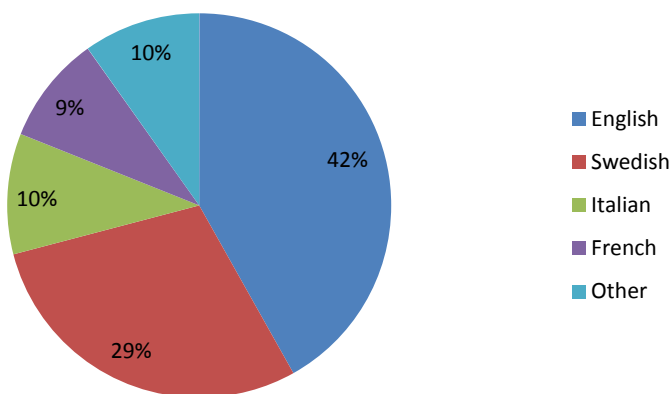


Figure 8: Representation of languages among the 20 best-performing authors (as in table 7)

Remarkably, the respective breakdown by languages for all 451 authors represented on the top 10 charts for the surveyed 36 months (2008 to 2010) brings up a more balanced distribution of languages, with English at the origin of only one out of three translations, and the other main original languages represented more evenly.

Language	Number of authors
EN	159
Other	61
SE	60
FR	52
IT	46
DE	42
SP	31

Table 8: Original language of all surveyed 451 authors from top 10 charts (2008-2010)

### Original language of all survey 451 authors from top 10 charts (2008-2010)

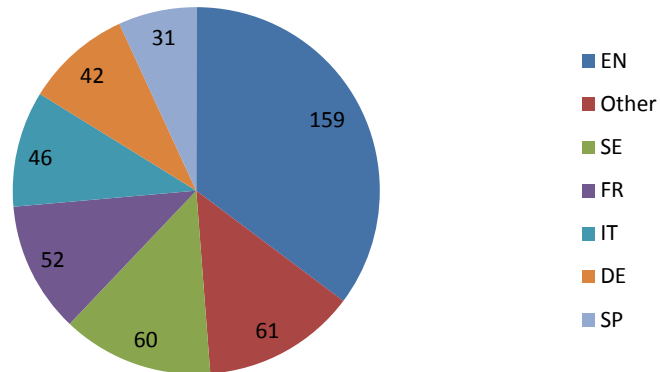


Figure 9: Original language of all surveyed 451 authors from the top 10 charts (2008-2010)

A second key aspect is the uneven distribution of the top authors.

### The distribution of impact points among the 20 best performing authors in %

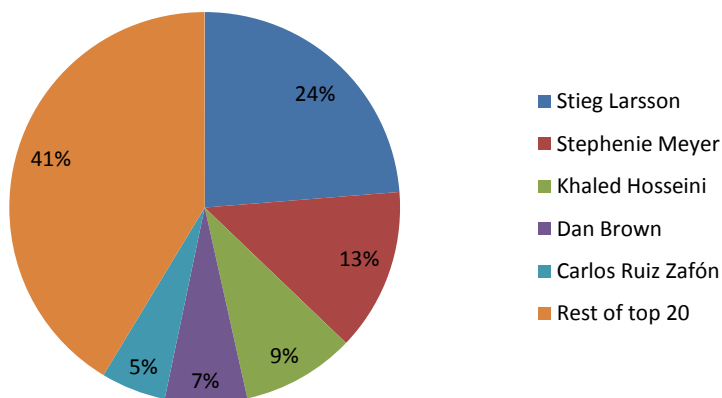


Figure 10: Selected authors and their impact from the 20 best-performing authors (2008 to 2010)

Stieg Larsson alone collected almost one fourth of all impact points for his extraordinary predominance on best-seller lists in the surveyed three-year period, and together with the second- to the fifth-ranked authors, almost 60 percent of the top 20 scores are consolidated.

This high and potent group of the top of the top authors realistically hints at the enormous market share that a few authors hold in today's book markets.

As a third characteristic pattern, among the top-performing authors, only a very few succeed in having a presence in the top 10 charts of more than just two or three markets.

Altogether, a mere 29 of the 452 authors represented in the top 10 in 2008 to 2010 have such a presence in three or more markets. Thirteen of those write in English, and the remaining 16 in other languages.

<b>Authors with presence in 3 or more markets</b>	<b>29</b>
Of which EN	13
SE	3
Other	3
FR	3
SP	3
DE	2
IT	2

*Table 9: Breakdown of 29 authors with a presence in the top 10 in three or more markets, by original language of their works.*

As one direct consequence from the fact that only a few authors produce such an overwhelmingly powerful impact (and thus predominant visibility and market share), the “long tail” consisting of the many less prevalent authors and their titles is in a very fragile balance to the top segment. The ‘mid-list’ authors on whom the main attention of this study is focused are caught in the delicate middle position of the sky-rocketing top and the long tail.

## Best sellers in translation, and the ‘Long Tail’

In the initial group of 187 authors whose works and translations we surveyed for the wider range of more than a dozen languages in both EUWest and Central and Southeast Europe, these ‘mid-list authors’ have a great majority, as they still represent what generally is understood as the diversity in books and literature, and form the core of the publishers’ programs. The authors’ names—as brands—and reputation give a profile to their publishing companies, and the cost of the rights to these writers’

works, while of course much lower than for the very few at the very top, are still significant for a publisher's budget. Thus, for most publishers, and notably for 'independent' houses, those not part of a transnational and multi-media group, these authors' relative success, or failure, with their audiences is critical.

of the 187 authors in our group, 107 have been at one moment or another, and as far as we overlook the relevant data, on a national best-seller list.<sup>12</sup> Sixty of these have been listed only in their country of original appearance. A mere 25 have been listed in at least three countries, including the authors' domestic market.

This distribution is largely consistent with related research that we conducted earlier, showing that only a tiny number of writers succeed in occupying best-seller positions in more than just a few countries, while most have a genuinely strong readership in just their domestic market, plus eventually one or two additional languages.

However, here, regional specificities emerge. Twenty-three of the 60 authors listed in their own countries alone are writers born in CSEE, including seven each from Poland and the Czech Republic, four Hungarians, and two writers each from Serbia and Slovenia.

In comparison, we found 12 French authors who had been listed at the very top in France alone and five Italians.

Overall, certain countries seem to have a stronger tendency to foster such 'local heroes,' notably Austria, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, and Poland, which could point to works characteristically catering primarily to these countries' domestic audiences, which are then less appreciated abroad. In the case of Austria, the popularity of works catering to a domestic audience can be understood as a factor highlighting the cultural difference with Germany.

By contrast, the UK and Sweden produced a variety of authors with multiple authors having best-selling titles in a larger number of countries and languages, followed to a lesser degree by Italy, Spain, and to a certain extent France—which, most interestingly, and forming hereby a unique position, can apparently foster strictly local writers and others whose works travel well.

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<sup>12</sup> Again, we must underline the limits of our data when it comes to authors' representation on best-seller lists beyond the solid core of the EUWest markets of Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the UK. For 2009, we conducted some exemplary research for Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, and Romania, focusing on either representative market data (in the Czech Republic) or charts from major book chains (for all the other markets – see the Diversity Report 2009 for more details). However, for those CSEE markets, we lack the continuity of observation that we have for EUWest.

## Close-up of selected author and market profiles

The data and analysis developed for this report allow us to examine a wide variety of topics in depth. The following case studies are meant to provide some examples of such enhanced usage of our findings.

### France: Dynamics and complexities of a premier translation market

As already mentioned, France has recently shown a particularly strong performance with regard to best sellers and translations, as a receiving market fond of its status as a key environment for the international launch of authors and with particularly strong performances of its own authors in translations internationally.

Over the past decade, France witnessed continuous growth in the number of incoming translations, to the point of catching up with Germany as Europe's most active and attractive market for translations.

While the absolute number of translations in France (9088 in 2009) is still lower than that for Germany (11.800 in 2009), their share of 14,3 percent of the overall production has overtaken the German ratio of 12,7 percent.<sup>13</sup>

More specifically, France arguably outmatched Germany as the key transfer market where Nordic crime writers are groomed for a wider international career.

In the past, this part used to be played by German publishers that, with Swedish Henning Mankell in the 1990s, provided the first harbor with a large readership for the cruel, yet psychologically well-made, pieces from Scandinavia. The ground had been well prepared long before, by appreciation for the specifics of Nordic ambiance, be it through Astrid Lindgren's anarchic children's books or Ingmar Bergman's psychologically dense movies since the 1960s. With apartments full of bookshelves and beds in clear pine wood from Ikea, a few decades on, German readers were ready to form real-life and virtual communities (such as [www.schwedenkrimi.de](http://www.schwedenkrimi.de)) specializing in Scandinavian style and folklore.

However, the roles and role models were radically reversed with the advent of Stieg Larsson, who had a relatively poor initial start at his Munich-based publisher Heyne, an imprint of Random House, with only a short stay on the Spiegel best-seller list (which, in the meantime, surely has changed, with the paperback edition going wild, and inspired the French boost in the meantime).

Now, the French publisher of Larsson, Actes Sud, has successfully managed to place Swedish Camilla

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<sup>13</sup> The number of new and reprinted editions, with Germany producing 93.124 new titles in 2009 and France 66.595.

Läckberg to follow in Stieg's oversized footsteps. In our 36-month ranking, Läckberg is placed 14th, across the eight surveyed European markets, one rank ahead of John Grisham.

Two places ahead of Läckberg is French Anna Galvada, a domestic French author whose books do really well, aside from France, in Spain, Germany—and Sweden.

The most powerful French export of recent years, however, was Muriel Barbery, ranked sixth in our tracking across the board. With "Le Gourmet" (initially published in 2000 by Gallimard), she already had an internationally recognized book. However, with "L'élégance du hérisson" (2006), it was all different. By February 2007, the book was on the French best-seller list, nine months later in Italy. German and Spanish versions had smashing launches in 2008, and in 2009, Swedish and Czech translations were available.

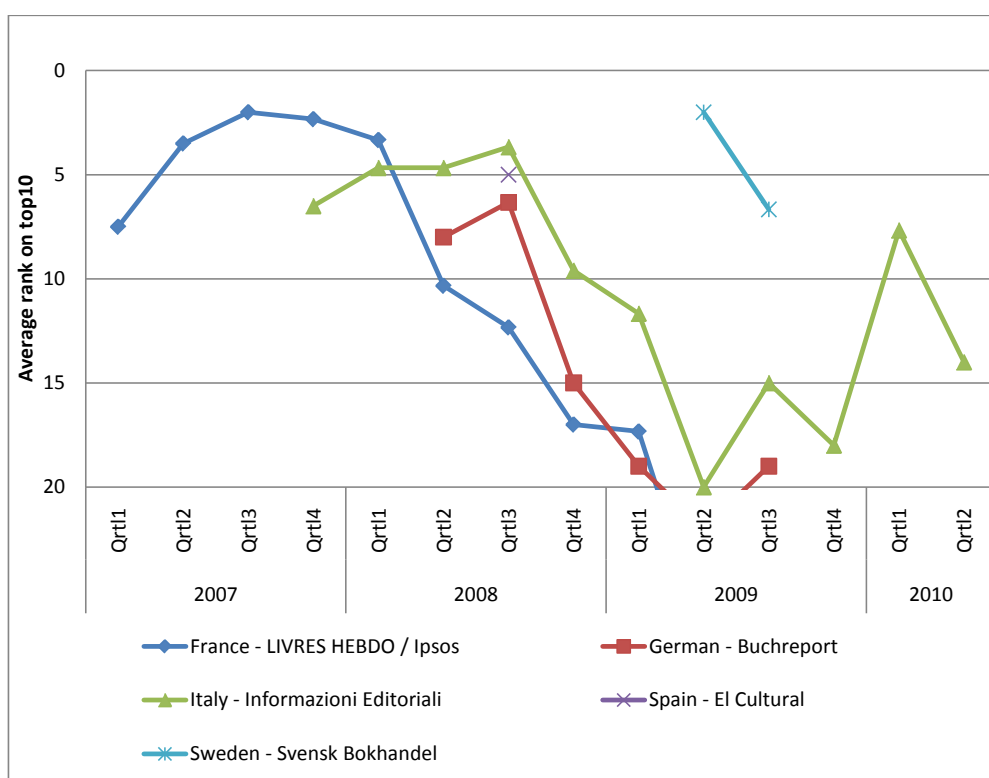


Figure 11: The performance of Muriel Barbery's "L'élégance du hérisson" on the top 10 fiction best-seller charts in selected markets, 2006 to 2010.

Most significantly, the book was discovered and 'made' in most markets, with the exception of Grupo Planeta in Spain, by independent, medium-sized houses, and not by some of the dominant corporate groups.

Author	Country	Title_(local)	Publisher (Group)	Publisher (imprint)	Year	Points
Muriel Barbery	Austria	Die Eleganz des Igel	Independent	dtv premium	2008	168
	Czech	S eleganci ježka		Host	2009	98
	France	L'élégance du hérisson	Groupe Gallimard	Gallimard	2009	175
					2008	449
					2007	426
	German	Die Eleganz des Igel	Independent	dtv premium	2009	93
					2008	292
	Italy	Estasi culinaria	Independent	E/O	2008	80
		L'eleganza del riccio	Independent	E/O	2009	560
					2008	1094
					2007	178
					2010	408
	Serbia	Otmenost ježa			2009	32
	Spain	La elegancia del erizo	Grupo Planeta	Seix Barral	2008	138
Sweden	Igelkottens elegans	Independent	Sekwa förlag	2009	182	

Table 10: Muriel Barbery's "L'élégance du hérisson" and its publishers in selected markets.

Yet in the surveyed period since 2006, Muriel Barbery was not the only stunning French export in fiction.

At least two more (female) writers, Tatiana de Rosnay and Katherine Pancol, saw their international recognition go up and up, and both fit well into the more general patterns we have already identified in this report.

Tatiana de Rosnay, born in 1961 in Paris, is—in her own words—of “English, French, and Russian descent,” and grew up in several countries, following her father’s moves in international academia. She worked as a journalist for French magazines, started her writing career in French, and had her works published by major Paris houses such as Plon and Fayard.

However, with her first novel that she decided to write in English, “Sarah’s Key,” which brought her international fame, translations in 38 countries, and four million copies sold, she moved to a tiny independent publisher, Héroïse d’Ormesson, which, since its creation in 2005, has released a mere 20



titles per year. To our knowledge, Tatiana de Rosnay is not represented by an agent, but by her French publisher. Her English-language books are published by St. Martin's Press of the Holtzbrinck Group.

Katherine Pancol is certainly at an earlier stage of her international career. She was born in Morocco in 1954, lived for some time in New York City, and taught creative writing at Columbia University before going back to France, where she worked mostly as a magazine journalist, just like de Rosnay.

Pancol has a long track record in book publishing, as she started publishing books in 1979; her debut "Moi d'abord" was a significant success and translated into several languages, including German, published mostly by L ubbe. However, the publishing relationship seems to have been discontinued around 2000. Pancol moved to New York and taught creative writing at Columbia University.

In 2006, her novel "Les Yeux jaunes des crocodiles" ("The Yellow Eyes of Crocodiles"), according to the author a "novel full of laughter and tears," was a big surprise, selling more than a million copies in France alone, and was quickly followed by "The Turtles' Slow Waltz" in 2008, and "Central Park's Squirrels Are Sad on Mondays" in 2010.

These recent books were translated into several languages, according to correspondence with the author in March 2010, "from China to Iceland," but not into English and German.<sup>14</sup> Her former German publisher L ubbe, when approached in February 2011 for this report, had no plans for a translation.

In 2010, the Spanish translation of her "Crocodiles" got on the top 10 charts, and in January 2011, "The Turtles' Slow Waltz" entered the Spanish charts ranked fifth.

Author	Country	Local title	Publisher (Mother company)	Imprint	Year	Points
Katherine Pancol	France	La valse lente des tortues	Albin Michel	Albin Michel	2009	22
					2008	310
		Les �cureuils de Central Park sont tristes le lundi	Albin Michel	Albin Michel	2010	287
		Les yeux jaunes des crocodiles	Albin Michel	Albin Michel	2006	41
	Spain	Los ojos amarillos de los cocodrilos	RCS Libri	Esfera de los Libros	2010	403

Table 11: Katherine Pancol on selected top 10 best-seller charts.

<sup>14</sup> E-mail from Katherine Pancol, March 3, 2010.

## Best sellers and translations from Central and Southeast Europe

Overall, a marked imbalance has to be noted in the representation of younger authors writing in the languages of Central and Southeast Europe in the EUWest markets. Of course, there was an initial surge of interest in the decade after the Iron Curtain came down in 1989. Since the turn of the millennium, and with the exception of those writers from our “group A,” who biographically have their roots clearly in the era before the political transition in the region, the attention paid to literary developments in Central and Southeast Europe seems to have somewhat faded.

The distinction gets even sharper when looking at the sales statistics reflected by the best-seller lists that we surveyed notably in EUWest. Over the past four years, only one writer from CSEE has had a presence on one of these charts, Boris Pahor in Italy from March to May 2008. However, Pahor, writing in Slovenian, is in fact an Italian citizen, yet from the tiny Slovenian minority in and around Trieste.

The Nobel Prize nominee was born in 1913 in Trieste where he spent all of his life. A concentration camp survivor, he is most noted for “Nekropola” (Pilgrim Among the Shadows), a novel in which he remembers his internment. After 1990, Pahor gained recognition in Slovenia and Italy. In the last decade, his works has been translated into other languages with “Nekropola” leading the way.

From a younger or middle-aged generation of authors whose literary careers did not take full shape before 1989, we can identify many writers who, in their own country of origin, look back on a prolific working biography, often well recognized by cultural institutions such as prize committees in their countries, and embraced by their domestic reading audiences. Yet in translation, in other languages of CSEE as well in EUWest, these authors are largely underrepresented. This barrier seems to work not only against the dissemination of the exponents of fine literature, such as Romanian Mircea Cărtărescu or Polish Andrzej Stasiuk. They often find their books welcomed at least in a few markets such as Germany or France. The linguistic and market barrier is tighter for other writers whose work aims less at literary recognition than entertainment, as is the case for Czech Michal Viewegh.

Being represented prominently on the writers’ respective domestic charts, these writers face tough competition, or more bluntly, sheer ignorance abroad.

To be fair, such indifference from the translation rights market regularly greets comparable authors from EUWest languages and backgrounds as well, with the hugely successful Dutch Susanne Vermeer, an entertainment author with high qualifications, a good example, just as the above-mentioned lack of a German or English translation of the recent books of French Katherine Pancol.

Sometimes, an author expected to get stuck in this pattern suddenly overcomes this rule, such as Austrian Daniel Glattauer, whose e-mail novel “Gut gegen Nordwind” (“Good Against Northwind”, 2006) was at first considered basically ineligible for translation, and yet sold in the end in 30 languages, very much unexpectedly.

## Conclusions

Obviously, the international markets for translation rights, notably in fiction, do not obey any simple set of rules or forces. Governed mostly by anecdotal evidence and the professional experience of the actors, with little empirical data openly available, and many assumptions shaping a business culture of great sophistication but also secrecy, the decisions about which authors and works get translated, and into which languages, are driven by factors of remarkable complexity, and sometimes obscurity.

And yet, as our analysis clearly indicates, these markets develop patterns and preferred channels, in which the literary transfers flow with relative ease, while other possible routes in the European reading landscape confront substantial barriers that are difficult to overcome.

Digging up and modeling data as the starting point for our assessment allowed us to identify a number of general patterns and orientation, and to put question marks on what seems to be dearly disseminated myths with regard to books—as an industry and as a culture.

As we have already illustrated in the Diversity Reports 2008 and 2009, translated books reflect a broad diversity of authors and styles, languages, and career paths. We have confirmed, as a trend with great momentum, that the few authors and books at the very top, in terms of sales and recognition, expand their share of the overall reading markets with remarkable vigor. Not only are the real global stars counted on not very many fingers. Even those strongly represented in more than just one or two languages are few in number.

Those at the top who write in English however, amount altogether to roughly one third, far below the expected threshold, if the outcries about a globally homogenized best-seller literature flatly dominated by Anglo-Saxon serial authors truthfully corresponded to the facts of the markets. However, the group of strong languages from which an international career can reasonably be started is limited to mostly half a dozen West European idioms, including notably English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. All Asian or African languages, or even those of Central and Southeast Europe, are significantly underrepresented.

However, below the sales statistics, and by looking at which authors are translated really broadly, even if

their books are hardly ever found on the best-seller charts, we seem to find a much more diverse choice, yet again with some complexities hinting at a structural shift in the markets.

We could model four groups of authors who follow different 'role models':

First, the great old names of world literature, the banner carriers of an elitist cultural spirit that ignores borders and barriers, born before 1960, looking back at a broad opus that can be found in most (European) languages that we surveyed.

Not only by their age are these branded authors an echo of a past that may be hard to prolong into the future. The paramount and long-term presence of their many books was fostered by a type of publisher that would not buy just one title but committed itself to following a writer with continuity for decades, regardless of short-term expectations for sales.

This group contrasts radically with a younger and more volatile type of author who, often with a biography that in itself is global, or at least multi-cultural, hit the international scenery with great fanfare of one smashing hit book, sometimes additionally propelled by one of the very few awards with impact on the international rights markets, namely the Man Booker, or, to a slightly lesser degree, the Prix Goncourt.

These authors represent a much more modern kind of a brand, and these authors do not wait to patiently build a broad opus. They tend to rise to stardom quickly. But it is doubtful if a publisher would accompany their work beyond the curve of the initial success.

The third group is what we called the "middle class," a highly diverse reservoir out of which one star or another for the second group might coincidentally emerge. However, many will not develop a readership beyond passionate readers, and so in just a few languages, making it again unlikely these writers will find publishers in all languages for every new work.

The fourth group is made up of authors well known only in their domestic environment.

With the exception of the first group, we see how the often aggressive volatility of markets, and hence of trends and completion, more than the patient continuity of cultural evolution are shaping the translation markets stronger than just a decade ago.

Oddly enough, this does not mean that most of the success stories among the younger generation of authors are driven by those transnational groups of corporate publishing that emerged in this same period, and based on the same economic and social trends of globalization and consolidation. The opposite is the case.

Comparably smaller, or even newly founded, or re-oriented publishing houses seem to have by far more clout, and a more precise grasp on identifying authors who could eventually 'work internationally'.

Agents do play an important role, but we found strong evidence that their impact, aside from the English language, may be overstated, as many authors from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds find their initial access to the international stage not with agents but with the authors' original (small- to medium-sized) publisher, and through the early mouth-to-ear appreciation of their readership.

Together, these characteristics open powerful perspectives in a radically changing environment of future publishing, with more flexible, more dynamic, and certainly also faster, reader-driven authors and their helping hands.

In this context, we also recognize the tight limits of influencing these dynamics, and the rights markets, with the well-intentioned tools of cultural promotion, by providing grants and ever-new awards, whose reach turns out to be limited at best to a domestic arena of media and local readership.

Perhaps the most fascinating finding is the confirmed assumption that the spheres of new talent for a potentially wider international readership are clearly underexplored.

The conventional gospel has it that whether an author 'works' in a country, or not, and that most 'good books' will find their way into this arena, is quite unpredictable. However, this gospel is strictly tautological, assuming that everything that is relevant would be known, and the unknown is only exceptionally of relevance.

The long catalogues of authors from—in our classification—the third and fourth groups, the broad and diverse 'middle class' and the barely translated 'local heroes,' notably of less represented languages hardly ever attract the attention, and then the enthusiasm, that is necessary to be adopted for the second group of upstart international stars.

Tools for identifying talent early on and across many different markets and linguistic and thematic backgrounds, as we have introduced for this report, may help to open the gates. The fact that authors from languages other than English have more modest expectations in terms of up-front royalty payments may be a further incentive to test the waters in the perspective of more diversity in the authors and the stories for a growingly internationally oriented readership. The third factor may come from the digital revolution that has started to shape and thoroughly change books and reading, as books can travel seamlessly across any distance. With many more people than ever before reading in English, in addition to their domestic vernacular, the perspectives of translation and the play between languages will certainly change as well.

# Annex

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Our approach to analysing translations and their relationship with regard to other cultural as well as market parameters would not have been possible without a wide network of colleagues and friends willing to always respond to our queries, critically discuss our assumptions and give input in various ways. These helping minds include notably Alexandra Buchler, Yana Genova, Péter Inkei, Dana Kalinová, Albrecht Lempp, Sandrine Paccher, Claire Squires, Carles Torner, and Marius Tukaj.

In our team, and in addition to the co-authors of this report, Julia Coufal added valuable painstaking fact checking, and Philipp Minarik, as so often, had the intuition and the technical skills to organize our data.

We owe them all, and many others, our gratefulness in finding our ways around the many challenges that we had to confront.

## Sources and data

As the tables with all the detailed information about authors and their translations which we could track and identify would hardly fit in a reasonably layout format for print, we opted for a digital archive, and made all data and additional resources freely accessible at [www.wischenbart.com/DiversityReport2010](http://www.wischenbart.com/DiversityReport2010), and we will add further material and resources at this page in the future.

The previous Diversity Reports 2008 and 2009 are freely accessible for download at [www.wischenbart.com/translation](http://www.wischenbart.com/translation).

## Surveyed markets and authors

At the core of this report is, of course, the selection of authors which we checked for translations in the following markets and their (main) languages:

- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Italy

- Netherlands
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom

## The author list

Language	Name	Awards
ALB	Ismail Kadare	Prinz Asturien Preis 2009
AT	Arno Geiger	Deutscher Buchpreis 2005
AT	Daniel Glattauer	
AT	Elfriede Jelinek	Nobel
AT	Josef Winkler	Büchnerpreis 2008
AT	Michael Köhlmeier	
AT	Paulus Hochgatterer	EULitPrize 2009
AT	Thomas Glavinic	
AT	Walter Kappacher	Büchnerpreis 2009
AUS	DBC Pierre	ManBooker 2003
AUS	Peter Carey	ManBooker 2001
BG/DE	Ilija Trojanow	
BiH/CRO	Miljenko Jergović	
BR	Nélida Piñón	Prinz Asturien Preis 2005
CAN	Margaret Atwood	Prinz Asturien Preis 2008
CAN	Yann Martel	ManBooker 2002
CAN/FR	Jonathan Littell	
CH	Melinda Nadj Abonji	Deutscher Buchpreis 2010
CH	Thomas Hürlimann	
CRO	Mila Pavičević	EULitPrize 2009
CZ	Dana Čermáková	
CZ	Jáchym Topol	
CZ	Jaroslav Kmenta	
CZ	Lenka Lanczová	
CZ	Marie Poledňáková	
CZ	Michal Ajvaz	
CZ	Michal Viewegh	
CZ	Vlastimil Vondruška	
CZ	Zdeněk Svěrák	Bestseller2009
CZ/FR	Milan Kundera	
DE	Bernhard Schlink	

DE	Charlotte Roche	
DE	Feridun Zaimoglu	
DE	Günter Grass	Nobel
DE	Ingo Schulze	
DE	John von Düffel	
DE	Julia Franck	Deutscher Buchpreis 2007
DE	Katharina Hacker	Deutscher Buchpreis 2006
DE	Kathrin Schmidt	Deutscher Buchpreis 2009
DE	Martin Mosebach	Büchnerpreis 2007
DE	Matthias Zschokke	Femina étranger 2009
DE	Reinhard Jirgl	Büchnerpreis 2010
DE	Uwe Tellkamp	Deutscher Buchpreis 2008
DE	Uwe Timm	
DE/AT	Daniel Kehlmann	
DE/FR	Paul Nizon	Gr Österr Staatspreis Europ Lit
DE/HU	Terézia Mora	
DE/RO	Herta Müller	Nobel
DK	Per Olov Enquist	Gr Österr Staatspreis Europ Lit
FI	Sofi Oksanen	Femina étranger 2010
FR	Anna Gavalda	
FR	Atiq Rahimi	Goncourt 2008
FR	Camille Laurens	Femina 2000
FR	Chantal Thomas	Femina 2002
FR	Dai Sijie	Femina 2003
FR	Emmanuelle Pagano	EULitPrize 2009
FR	Éric Fottorino	Femina 2007
FR	François Weyergans	Goncourt 2005
FR	Gilles Leroy	Goncourt 2007
FR	Gwenaëlle Aubry	Femina 2009
FR	Jacques-Pierre Amette	Goncourt 2003
FR	Jean-Christophe Rufin	Goncourt 2001
FR	Jean-Jacques Schuhl	Goncourt 2000
FR	Jean-Louis Fournier	Femina 2008
FR	Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio	Nobel
FR	Jean-Paul Dubois	Femina 2004
FR	Katherine Pancol	
FR	Laurent Gaudé	Goncourt 2004
FR	Marie Ndiaye	Femina 2001
FR	Michel Houellebecq	Goncourt 2010



FR	Muriel Barbery	
FR	Nancy Huston	Femina 2006
FR	Pascal Quignard	Goncourt 2002
FR	Patrick Lapeyre	Femina 2010
FR	Régis Jauffret	Femina 2005
FR/LEB	Amin Maalouf	Prinz Asturien Preis 2010
GT	Augusto Monterroso	Prinz Asturien Preis 2000
HU	Agota Kristof	Gr Österr Staatspreis Europ Lit
HU	Csernus Imre	
HU	György Dalos	
HU	Imre Kertész	Nobel
HU	Lőrincz L. László (Leslie Lawrence)	
HU	Magda Szabó	Femina étranger 2003
HU	Moldova György	
HU	Noémi Szécsi	EULitPrize 2009
HU	Peter Esterházy	
HU	Peter Nadás	
HU	Spiró György	
IND	Aravind Adiga	ManBooker 2008
IND	Kiran Desai	ManBooker 2006
IRE	Anne Enright	ManBooker 2007
IRE	Hugo Hamilton	Femina étranger 2004
IRE	John Banville	ManBooker 2005
IRE	Keith Ridgway	Femina étranger 2001
IRE	Nuala O'Faolain	Femina étranger 2006
IRL	Karen Gillece	EULitPrize 2009
ISR	Amos Oz	Prinz Asturien Preis 2007
IT	Alessandro Baricco	
IT	Andrea Camilleri	
IT	Antonio Pennacchi	Premio Strega 2010
IT	Claudio Magris	Prinz Asturien Preis 2004
IT	Dacia Maraini	Premio Strega 1999
IT	Daniele Del Giudice	EULitPrize 2009
IT	Niccolò Ammaniti	Premio Strega 2007
IT	Paolo Giordano	Premio Strega 2008
IT	Roberto Saviano	
IT	Sandro Veronesi	Femina étranger 2008
IT	Tiziano Scarpa	Premio Strega 2009
ITA	Erri De Luca	Femina étranger 2002

JP	Haruki Murakami	
LIT	Laura Sintija Cerniauskaitė	EULitPrize 2009
MA	Fatima Mernissi	Prinz Asturien Preis 2003
NL	A.F.Th. Van der Heijden	
NL	Cees Noteboom	
NL	Harry Mulisch	
NL	Herman Koch	
NL	Hugo Claus	
NL	Jeroen Smit	
NL	Leon de Winter	
NL	Raymond Kluun	
NL	Suzanne Vermeer	
NOR	Carl Frode Tille	EULitPrize 2009
PL	Andrzej Stasiuk	
PL	Bernard Nowaczyk	Bestseller2009
PL	Jacek Dukaj	EULitPrize 2009
PL	Jacek Hugo-Bader	Bestseller2009
PL	Jan M. Ciechanowski	Bestseller2009
PL	Katarzyna Grochola	
PL	Krzysztof Daukszewicz	Bestseller2009
PL	Leszek Kołakowski	Bestseller2009
PL	Małgorzata Kalicińska	Bestseller2009
PL	Małgorzata Musierowicz	
PL	Marek Krajewski	
PL	Monika Szawaja	Bestseller2009
PL	Wiktor Suworow	
PL	Wojciech Cejrowski	
PT	Dulce Maria Cardoso	EULitPrize 2009
PT	José Saramago	Nobel
RO	Andrei Plesu	
RO	Mircea Cartarescu	
RO	Mircea Dinescu	
RO	Norman Manea	
SA	J. M. Coetzee	Nobel
SE	Åsa Larsson	
SE	Camilla Läckberg	
SE	Helena Henschen	EULitPrize 2009
SE	Lars Kepler	
SE	Liza Marklund	

SE	Stieg Larsson	
SK	Pavol Rankov	EULitPrize 2009
SLO	Boris Pahor	
SLO	Brina Svit	
SLO	Drago Jančar	
SLO	Goran Vojnović	
SLO	Tone Pavček	
SP	Antonio Munoz Molina	
SP	Arturo Pérez-Reverte	
SP	Carlos Ruiz Zafón	
SP	Ildefonso Falcones	
SP	Javier Marías	
SP	Jorge Semprún	Gr Österr Staatspreis Europ Lit
SP	Juan Goytisolo	
SP	María Dueñas	
SP/CAT	Eduardo Mendoza	Premio Fundacion Lara
SP/CAT	Enrique Vila-Matas	Premio Fundacion Lara
SP/CAT	Manuel de Pedrolo	
SP/CAT	Mercè Rodoreda	
SRB	Marija Jovanović	
SRB	Vladimir Pištalo	
TR	Elif Shafak	
TR	Orhan Pamuk	Nobel
UK	Alan Hollinghurst	ManBooker 2004
UK	Doris Lessing	Nobel
UK	Edward St Aubyn	Femina etranger 2007
UK	Emma Donoghue	RWCC BoMonth
UK	Hilary Mantel	ManBooker 2009
UK	Howard Jacobson	ManBooker 2010
UK	Ian McEwan	
UK	Salman Rushdie	
UK	V.S. Naipaul	Nobel
UK	Zadie Smith	
US	Arthur Miller	Prinz Asturien Preis 2002
US	Barbara Delinsky	
US	Colleen McCullough	
US	Joyce Carol Oates	Femina etranger 2005
US	Paul Auster	Prinz Asturien Preis 2006
US/AG	Jamaica Kincaid	Femina etranger 2000

