

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00:01 MONDAY 5 OCTOBER 2026

Press Release

International Book Market 2026: Mixed first-half results as Adult Fiction continues to grow, Graphic Novels surge and Non-Fiction remains in decline

London/Baden-Baden, 5 October: NielsenIQ BookData and GfK Entertainment have presented their 2026 half-year International Book Market analysis ahead of the Frankfurt Book Fair. The results show revenue growth in 11 of the 19 territories surveyed. Adult Fiction remains the key growth driver and now accounts for more than one-third of all printed books sold. In contrast, the Non-Fiction segment continues to decline.

International book markets delivered mixed results during the first half of 2026, shaped by the continued expansion of Adult Fiction, booming genres such as Graphic Novels, and declining demand for Non-Fiction titles. According to the representative data, 11 of the 19 territories analyzed reported year-on-year revenue growth. The strongest performers included the growth markets of India (+16.7%) and Brazil (+12.6%), Oceania with Australia (+5.6%) and New Zealand (+7.2%), as well as major European markets such as Italy (+5.1%), Spain (+3.9%), and the United Kingdom (+1.5%). Significant declines were recorded in Poland (-11.7%) and France (-5.4%), among others.

In terms of unit sales – the total number of books sold – nine territories recorded growth. Brazil (+10.5%) and India (+8.3%) once again stood out. Many European countries, however, reported declines, including Poland (-11.3%), Belgium's Wallonia region (-4.9%), and France (-6.2%). France remains the largest market covered by NielsenIQ BookData, with 124 million books sold, followed by the United Kingdom, where volume sales fell by -1.1% to 82 million units.

Average prices increased in 11 of the 19 territories, although often below IMF's projected global headline inflation of +4.7% for 2026.

Adult Fiction accounts for more than one-third of all printed books sold

Adult Fiction remains the primary engine of growth, continuing the upward trajectory seen in recent years. Three quarters of the territories analyzed reported revenue increases for Adult Fiction titles, often in double-digit percentages. On average across all countries, Adult Fiction now accounts for more than one-third of all printed books sold. Crime and Thriller novels continue to perform particularly well, including Freida McFadden's *The Housemaid* series. The US author appeared in the top 20 bestselling books of the half-year period in 13 territories and even secured multiple top 10 positions in many markets, including eight appearances in Belgium's Wallonia region and six each in France and French-speaking Switzerland (Romandy).

Alongside traditional suspense novels, Science Fiction and Fantasy titles remain very popular. In particular, Romantasy books by authors such as Rebecca Yarros (*Empyrean* series) and Sarah J. Maas (*Throne of Glass* series) are among the trade's strongest growth drivers. Their

success is fueled in part by the BookTok community, which continues to introduce genre fiction to younger and increasingly international audiences, playing a growing role in content discovery and promotion. Among the fastest-growing categories in numerous markets ranks the Graphic Novel segment, as value growth rates exceeded 30% in many countries.

Shift from Non-Fiction to Fiction

While fiction publishing continues to thrive, the Non-Fiction market remains under pressure, with only four countries reporting value growth. In many territories, a shift towards fiction can be observed. Brazil provides a clear example: five years ago, non-fiction titles accounted for more than half of all books sold, whereas that share has now fallen to 40%.

Substantial declines have been recorded in the Personal Development category. Books such as James Clear's *Atomic Habits* and Mel and Sawyer Robbins' *The Let Them Theory* continue to rank among international bestsellers; nevertheless, the category has lost momentum. Except for New Zealand, the genre is declining across all territories surveyed.

Children's and Young Adult Books: Ten out of 19 territories report growth

The Children's and Young Adult book market also posted mixed results in the first half of 2026, with ten territories recording revenue growth. At the same time, bestseller rankings show that successful series and established brands continue to enjoy enormous reach. Alongside well-known children's book characters; comics and serialised formats continue to play an important role. Particularly in markets, such as the United Kingdom, where the impact of events and special children's publishing initiatives, including activities surrounding World Book Day, is clearly evident.

About the research: The analysis is based on point-of-sale data on printed books for the first six months 2026 for the following territories: Australia, Belgium (Flanders/Wallonia), Brazil, Colombia, France, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland (German-speaking and Romandy regions), and the UK. Market coverage and included genres may vary from country to country.

Notes to Editor:

For more information email: mediabookresearch@nielseniq.com

NielsenIQ BookData will be taking part in the following presentations as part of the Frankfurt Book Fair Conference Programme:

- From Manga to Graphic Novels: Understanding the Global Comics Opportunity – Wednesday 7 October at 10.00 – Inspiration Stage Hall 3.0
- Why India Matters? Shaping the future of Global Publishing by 2030 – Wednesday 7 October at 15.00 – Global Stage (Foyer 5.1/6.1)
- Brazil Book Market – Wednesday 7 October at 15.00 – Expedition Frankfurt by MVB (Hall 3.1 Stand F120)
- NielsenIQ BookData and Skeelo – Thursday 8 October at 10.00 – LATAM Stage

About NielsenIQ BookData

NielsenIQ BookData offers a comprehensive range of services to the international book industry, supporting the discovery, purchase, distribution, and sales measurement of books. We proudly manage the ISBN and SAN Agencies for the UK & Ireland, providing publishers with a suite of services, from assigning ISBNs to adding metadata to our database, along with promotional tools to help market your book effectively.

For booksellers and libraries, we offer access to our database of over 54 million book records for title look-up, enriching websites, and managing internal systems. Our research services deliver retail sales analysis for both print and e-books across 19 territories, complemented by insights from our Books and Consumers Survey, as well as Country and Genre-specific reports.

For more information: nielseniq.com/bookdata

About GfK Entertainment

GfK Entertainment is a supplier of charts and market research data to the Books, Games, Music, and Video industries. It works closely with the relevant industry bodies and currently carries out market research in over 30 countries. For more information, visit: gfk-entertainment.com

Both companies are wholly owned by NielsenIQ.

About NIQ

NIQ (NYSE: NIQ) is a leading consumer intelligence company, delivering the most complete and trusted understanding of consumer buying behavior and revealing new pathways to growth. By combining an unmatched global data footprint and granular consumer and retail measurement with decades of AI modeling expertise, NIQ builds decision systems that help companies turn complex data into confident action.

With operations in more than 90 countries, NIQ covers approximately 82% of the world's population and more than \$7.4 trillion in global consumer spend. Through cloud-based platforms, advanced analytics and AI-driven insights, NIQ delivers The Full View™—helping brands and retailers understand what consumers buy, why they buy it, and what to do next.

For more information, please visit niq.com

Forward Looking Statement for Press Release

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