



# THE BUYING AND SELLING OF TRANSLATION RIGHTS IN EUROPE

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# Who we are

- FEP is an independent, non-commercial umbrella association representing 29 national associations of publishers of books, learned journals and educational materials from 28 countries all over Europe
- Founded in 1967, FEP deals with European legislation and advises publishers associations on copyright and other legislative issues
- 6,000+ individual publishers represented (>80% of the book market in Europe)
- Based in Brussels, Belgium



# Aldus Up – Survey on purchase and sale of translation rights

## 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

- **The importance of data on translation rights**: Translation rights are a key part of the publishing industry: nevertheless, there is a chronic lack of information concerning this aspect in Europe.
- **Data comparable in Europe**: The aim of Aldus Up is, on the one hand, to make data from existing national surveys comparable, and on the other hand to provide a tool for those countries that want to start collecting data.
- **Analysis of the state of the art**: European publishers associations were contacted in order to gather information about their surveys on buying and selling translation rights.
- **Synthesis of best practices**: A new questionnaire was designed by the Italian Publishers Association (AIE) – who leads the Aldus Up Survey – based on the existing ones.
- **Creation of an infrastructure**: Designing the questionnaire is not enough. The survey was made available online to participating countries and the Aldus Up team at AIE provided support to data collection and elaboration.



# How the Aldus Up pilot survey was conducted

- **Objective**: Data on sales and purchase of translation rights in calendar year 2022
- **Publisher associations involved**: A total of 8 countries. 2 of them (France, Germany) already run their own survey, 6 of them (Austria, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania) joined the Aldus Up pilot to start collecting data. In this 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Italy and Romania participated for the first time.
- **Methodology**: The survey was circulated via the SurveyMonkey platform to publisher associations between July and September 2023; publisher associations involved their respective members. Meanwhile, countries that already run their own survey shared with Aldus Up their main data concerning sales of translation rights and co-editions.
- **Data elaboration**: All data have been gathered and elaborated by the AIE research department.
- **Limitations**: Not full comparability with existing surveys. Sample size.

# Countries and publishing houses involved



Austria

14

+ 12

Aldus Up pilot survey



France

200 (ca)

(n/a)



Germany

163

- 1

National Survey



Italy

151

(n/a)



Latvia

4

- 1



Lithuania

2

- 13



Portugal

16

- 1



Romania

5

(n/a)

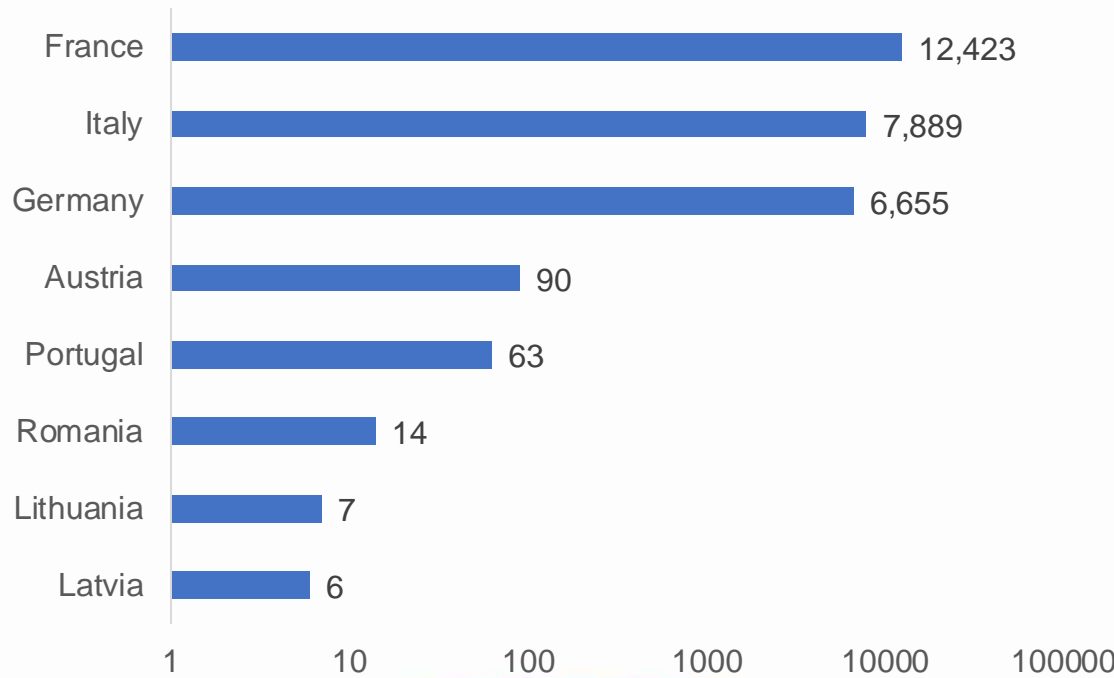
Respondents

$\Delta$   
Respondents  
(2022/2021)

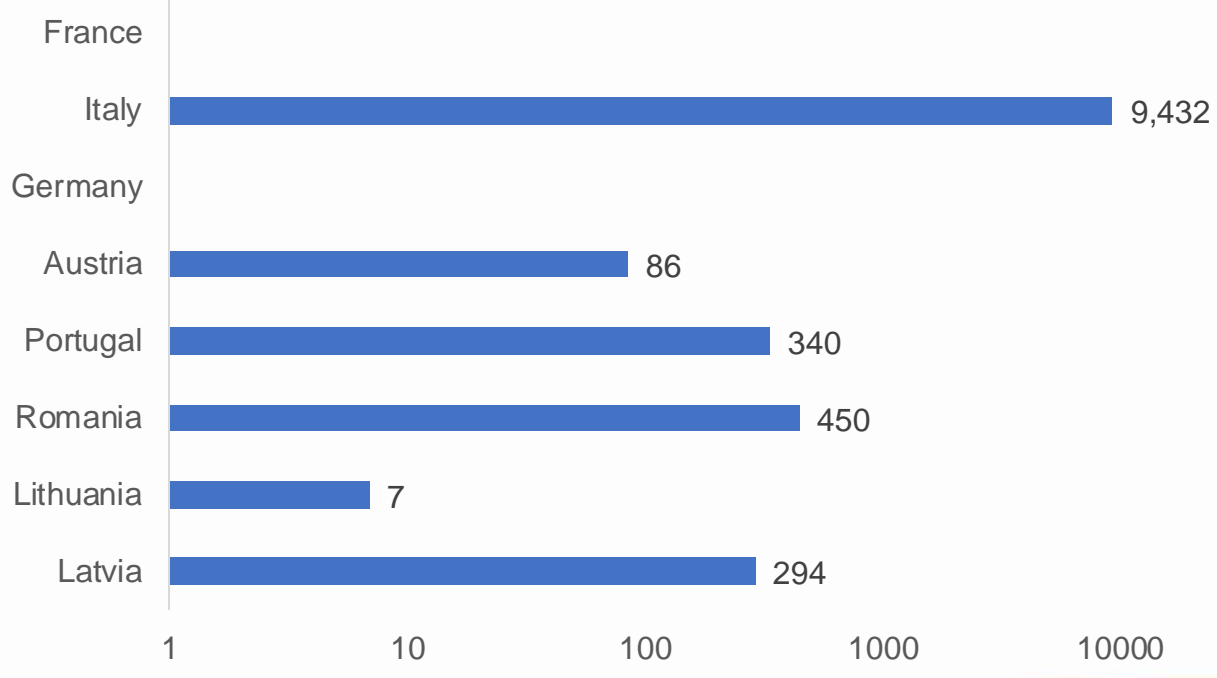
# Sale and purchase of translation rights by country

Number of translation rights exchanged. Logarithmic scales

Sales of translation rights to foreign publishers



Purchase of translation rights from foreign publishers

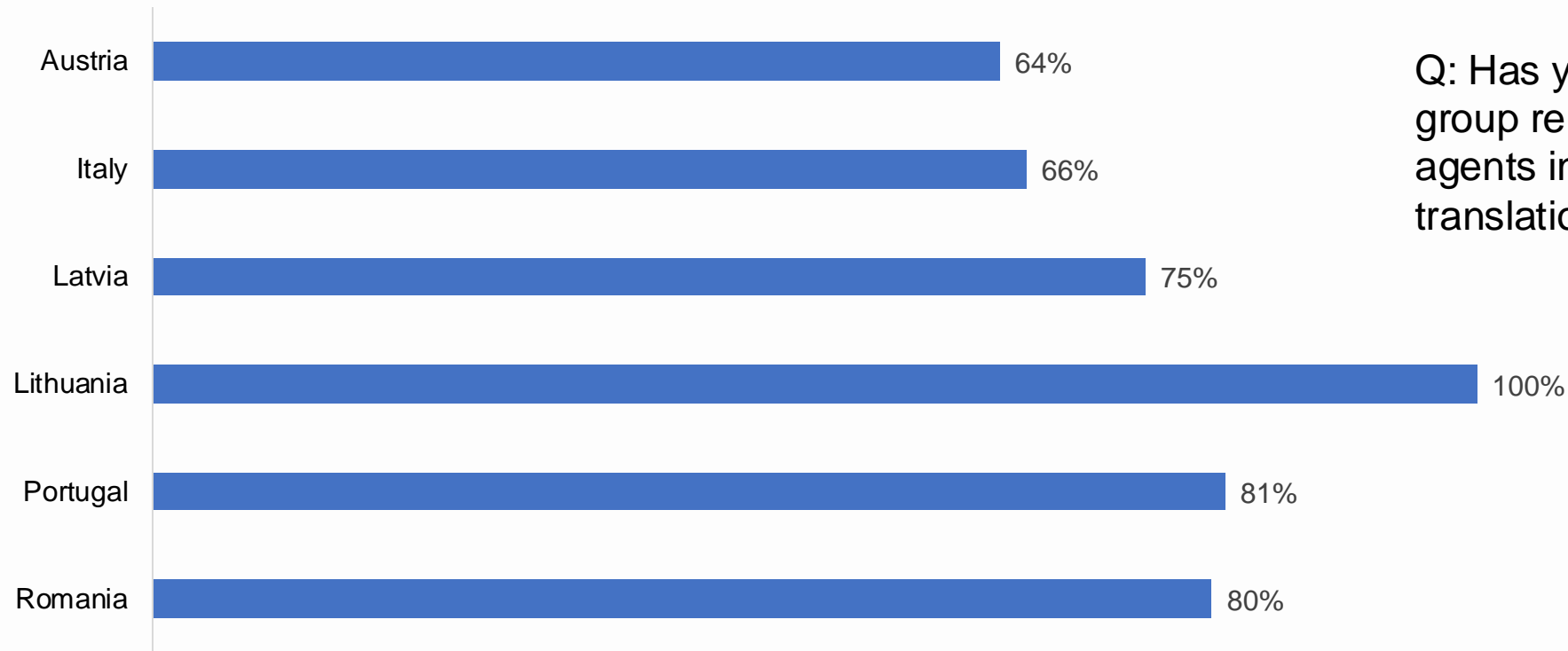


# Average number of transactions conducted

Average number of rights purchased or sold per publisher

Country	Responding Publishers	Average sales/responding publisher	Average purchases/responding publisher
Austria	14	6	6
France	200 (ca)	62	N.A.
Germany	163	41	N.A.
Italy	151	52	62
Latvia	4	2	74
Lithuania	2	4	4
Portugal	16	4	21
Romania	5	3	90

# The importance of literary agents: over 60% of publishers relied on them in 2022

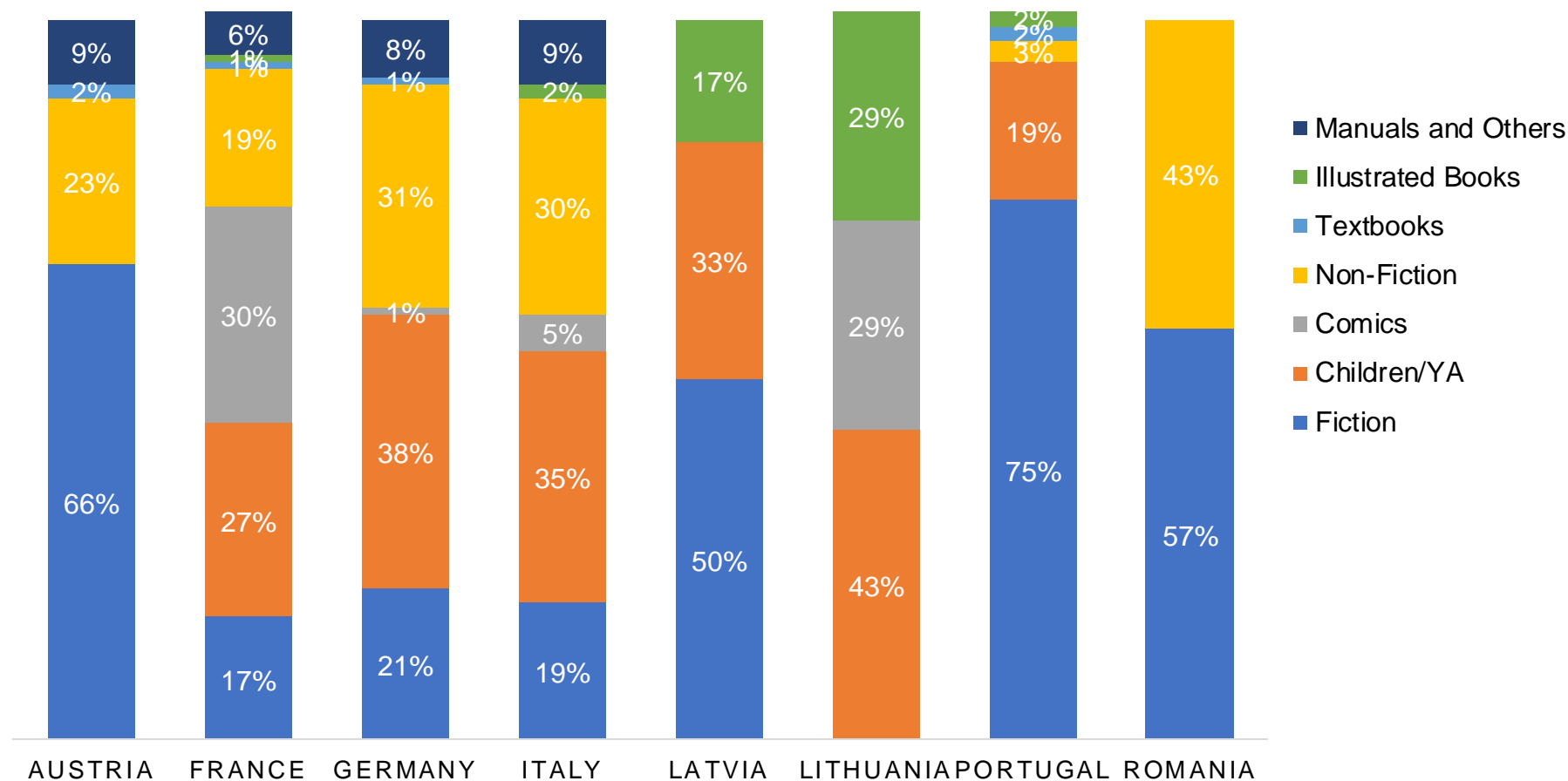


Q: Has your publishing house or group relied on literary agencies/agents in 2022, in order to buy/sell translation rights?



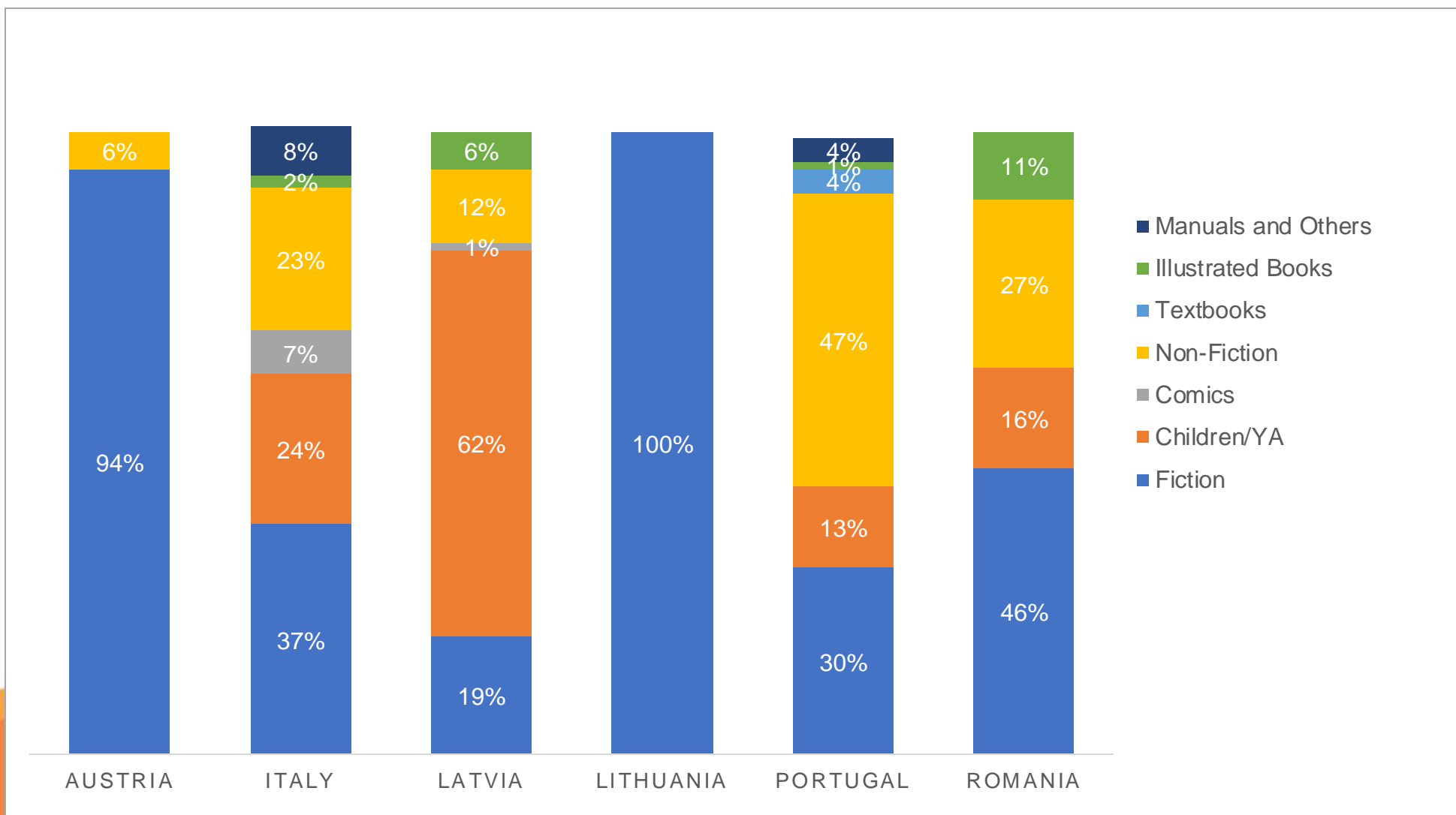
# Sales of translation rights to foreign publishers by genre

Fiction, Children/YA and Comics represent more than half of the total

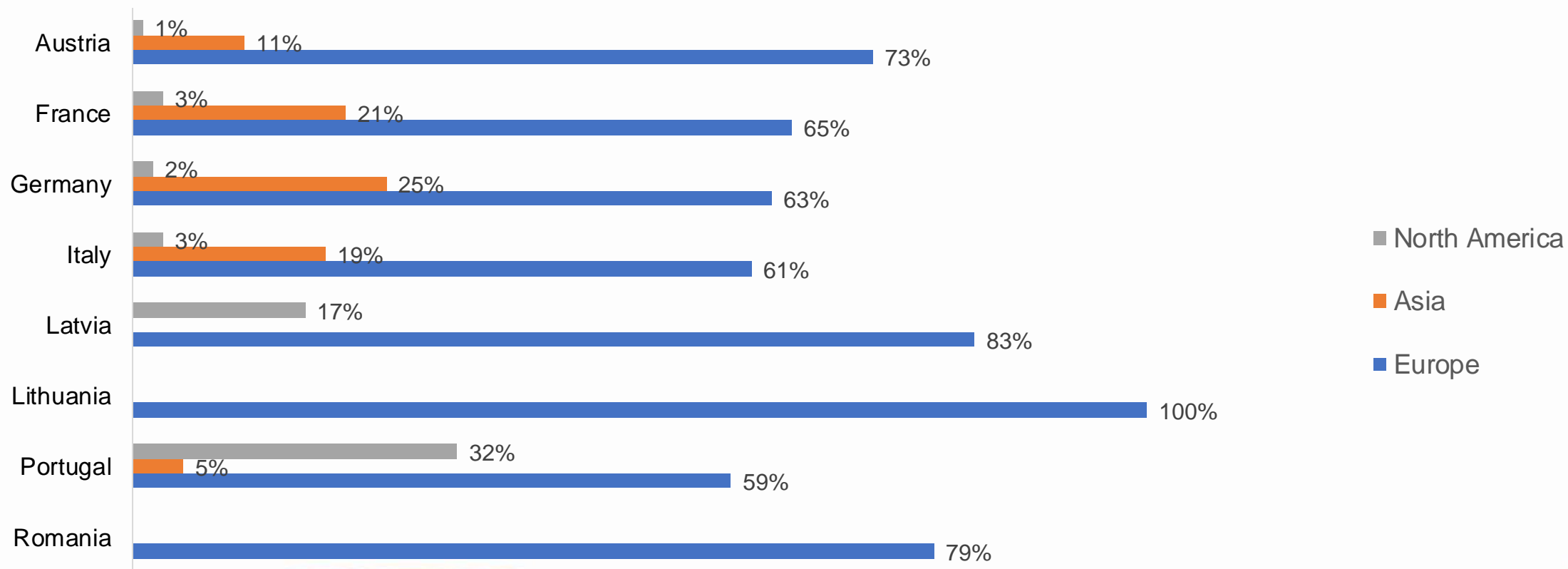


# Purchases of translation rights to foreign publishers by genre

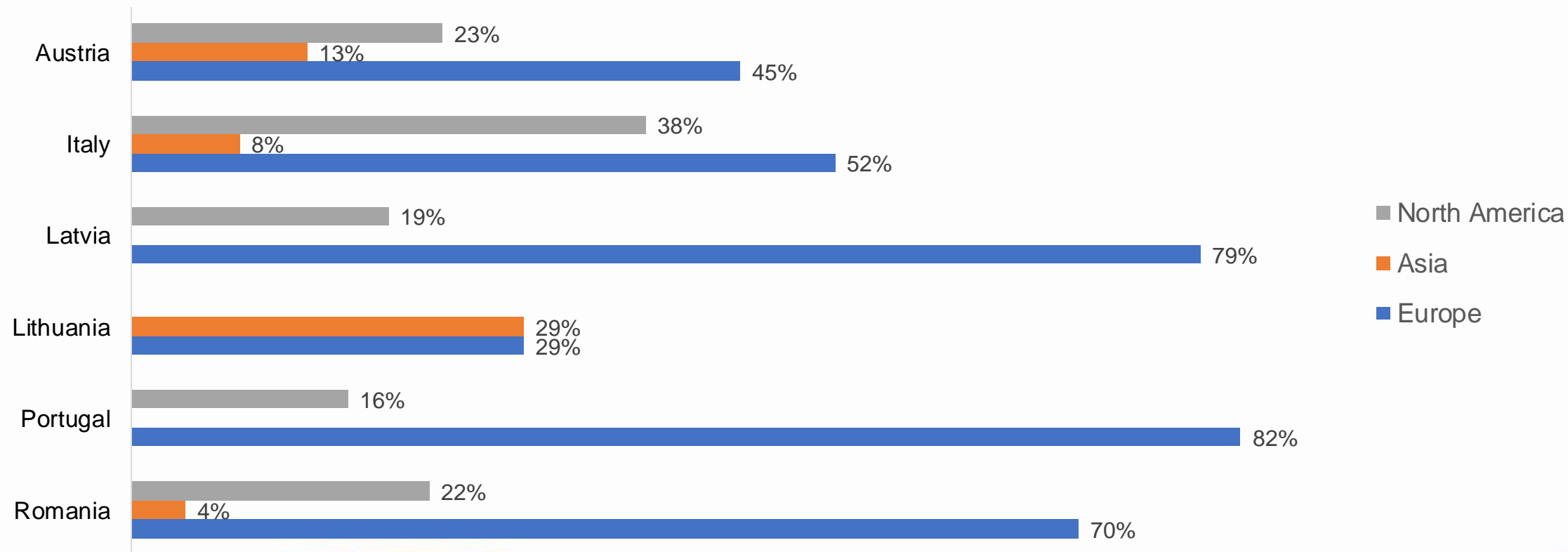
## Fiction and Children/YA are the main genres



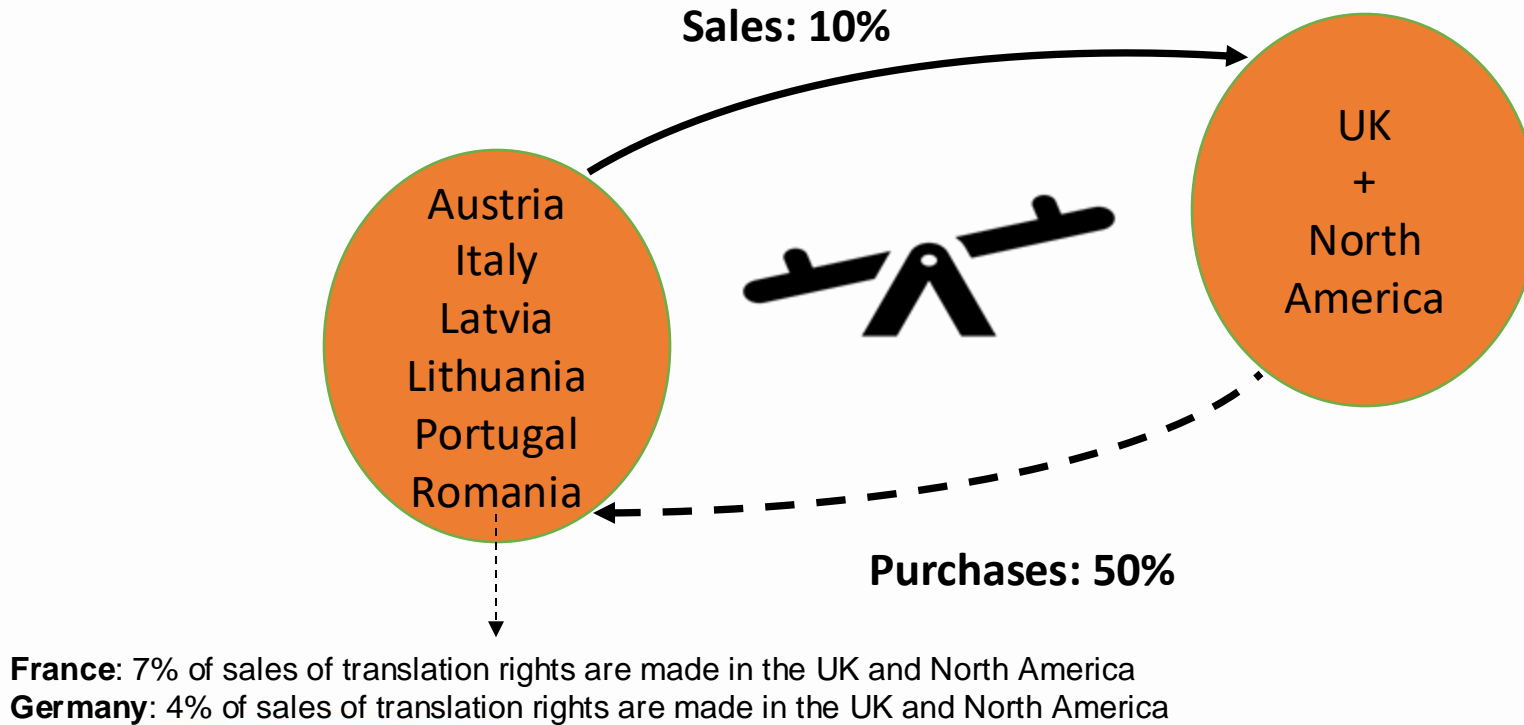
# Sales of translation rights in Europe, North America and Asia



# Purchase of translation rights from Europe, North America and Asia



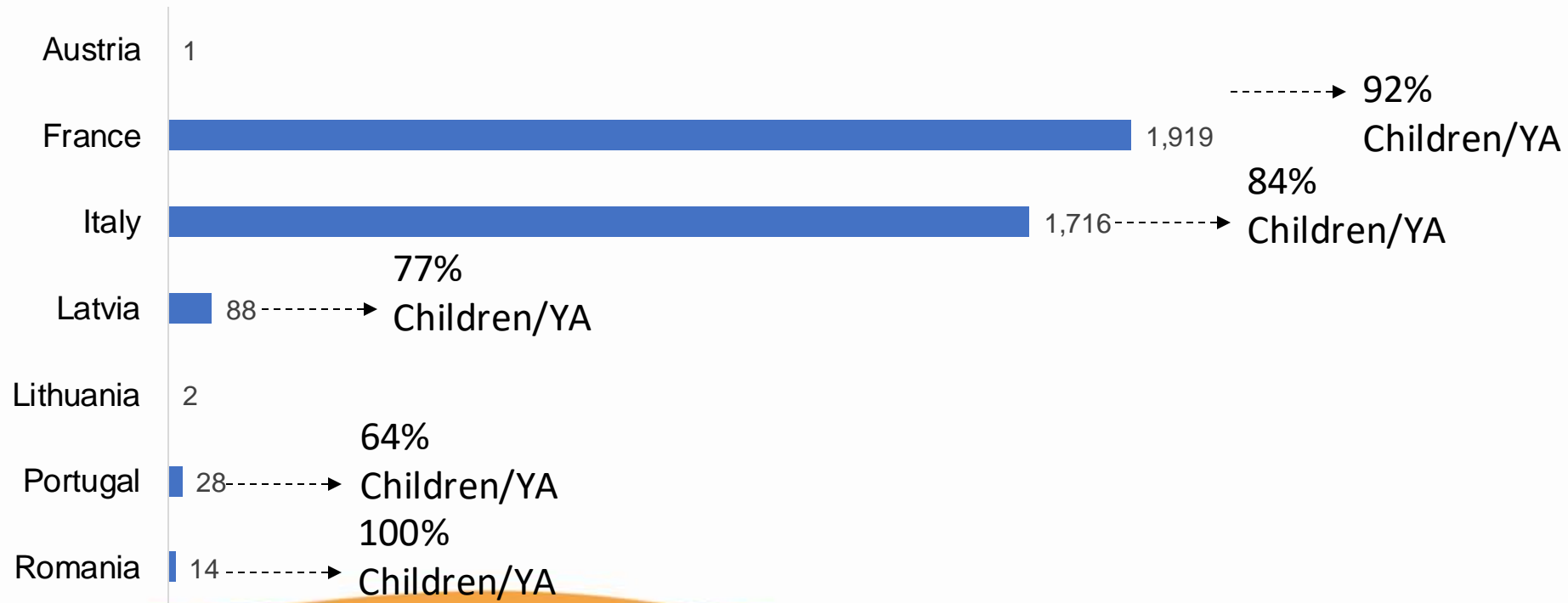
# Translation rights flows with English-speaking countries





# Co-editions by country

Number of titles and %



# Why is this data relevant?

- **There's a huge gap between the biggest industries and the other ones**: The smallest industries struggle to access other markets (especially English-speaking ones). This entails a lack of visibility for books of smaller countries **and reduces diversity in Europe**.
- **Dominance of the UK and American titles**: Approximately 50% of translation rights purchases in Europe originate in the UK and the US. This highlights **the need for translation grants** to help other countries to promote their titles in Europe.
- **Diversification of the markets**: Even if Europe remains the main rights area for all publishing industries, many countries are trying to reach Asian markets. It is important to monitor this phenomenon, and detect other potentially strategic areas, in order to **design the best policies to support these efforts**.
- **Importance of the data (despite its limitations)**: Each publisher has its own niche. More responses mean a more accurate representation of these peculiarities. Data are certainly underestimated, also because of the role of literary agencies. **More accurate data will lead to a better tailored service for publishers and for policy makers.**



THANK YOU! ANY QUESTIONS?  
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