

# Adaptations in audiovisual fiction production in Europe - 2023 figures

Agnes Schneeberger  
May 2025

A publication of the European Audiovisual Observatory



- Introduction and key findings 3
- Production volume and formats of European audiovisual fiction adaptations 7
- Origin of European audiovisual fiction adaptations 16
- Methodology 29
- List of tables and figures 32

# Introduction and key findings

**This report analyses adaptations in European audiovisual fiction production between 2015 and 2023. Its aim is to provide figures and context on the production of audiovisual content in Europe.**

Adaptations have become a staple of European audiovisual fiction production. They are popular because they are a safe bet for creators and a comfort zone for audiences. They are stories people love, remixed just enough to feel new. Adaptations benefit from broad cross-format appeal, attracting both readers of the original books and viewers of the TV adaptations.

## **Key findings:**

- Over 160 titles\* and more than 1 400 hours of audiovisual fiction adaptations are produced in Europe each year.
- 14% of all audiovisual fiction works produced in Europe between 2015-2023 were adaptations.
- Compared to broadcasters, streamers rely more on adaptations. Between 2021 and 2023, their share of adaptations among their original fiction production was higher (20%) than that of private (15%) and public (11%) broadcasters.
- Public service broadcasters in major markets and Netflix are the top commissioners of audiovisual fiction adaptations. The BBC, ZDF, Netflix, ARD and France Télévisions have each commissioned more than 100 adaptations between 2015 and 2023.
- Most audiovisual fiction adaptations are either high-end TV series with 13-episodes-or-less-per-season (54%) or TV films (36%).

\*In this report, the term “title” refers to either a TV film or a TV season. Each TV season of a series counts as one title.

- Adaptations make up 16% of all European TV films and 15% of TV series with 13-episodes-or-less-per-season.
- The United Kingdom has the highest share of adaptations of audiovisual fiction works produced in the country (25%).
- Most audiovisual fiction adaptations are based on books (74%) and TV series (19%).
- Between 2022 and 2023, the number of book adaptations has declined more (minus 13%) than the total amount of European audiovisual fiction production (minus 6 percent).
- 88% of European TV and SVOD fiction adaptations are based on original works from Europe. More than half of them come from the United Kingdom (23%), Germany (17%), France (10%), and Spain (7%).
- Around one in ten (12%) of all European audiovisual fiction adaptations are based on non-European works, 6% of which originate from the US.
- Books used for audiovisual fiction adaptations are mainly national (82%), while TV series are mainly international (92%).
- British and German audiovisual fiction adaptations favour books as their principal source. Dutch and Czech audiovisual fiction adaptations are based equally on books and TV series.
- The majority of audiovisual fiction adaptations based on books are works first published after the year 2000 (68%).
- It takes an average of 12 years for an original TV series to become a remake.

- The Norwegian series "SKAM" and the British series "Liar" have the most remakes in six European countries each.
- The most frequently adapted books are detective or crime novels, with Britain's Agatha Christie and Austria's Claudia Rossbacher in the lead with ten adaptations each.
- The share of adaptations in audiovisual fiction co-productions is significantly higher (23%) than in non co-productions (13%).

# **Production volume and formats of European audiovisual fiction adaptations**

**14% of all audiovisual fiction works produced in Europe between 2015 and 2023 were adaptations.**

- A total of 1 524 TV films and TV series adaptations were produced in Europe between 2015 and 2023.

Share of audiovisual fiction adaptations titles produced in Europe (2015-2023)

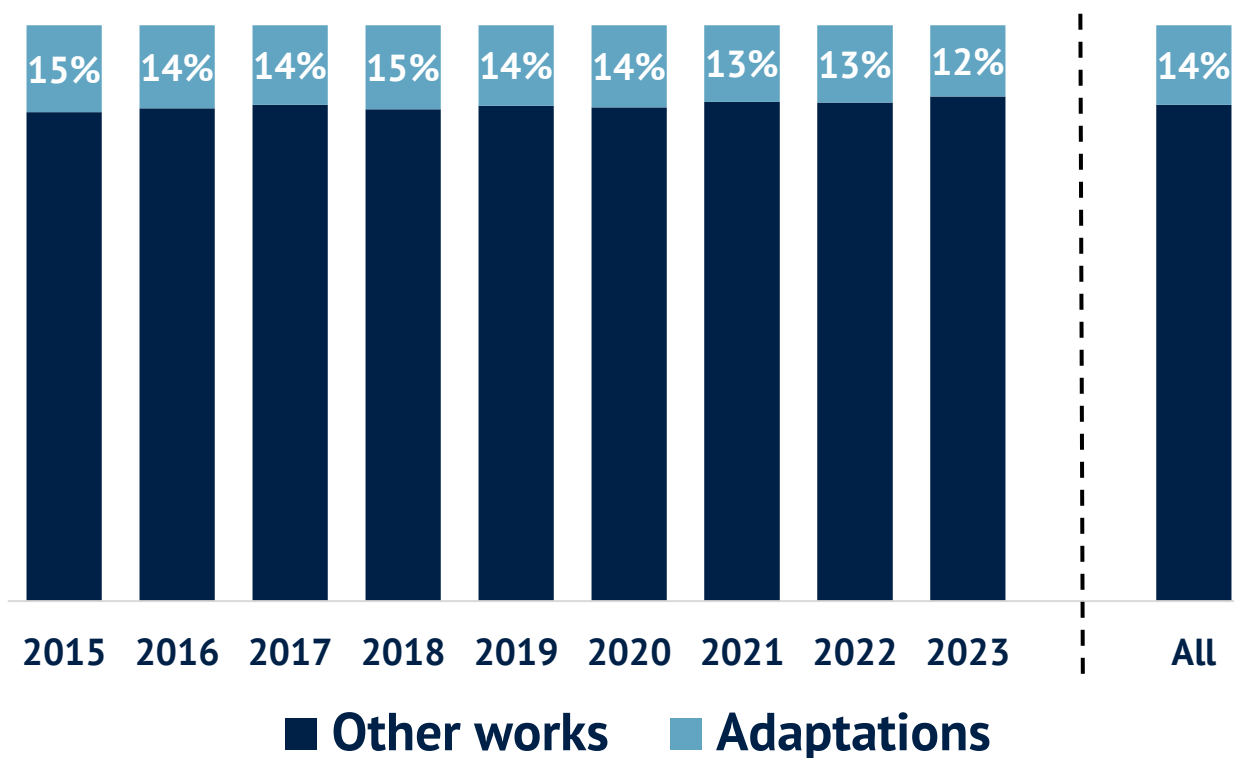




## Adaptations are an established part of European audiovisual fiction production.

- The share of adaptations within the total European audiovisual fiction production remained stable between 2015 and 2023.

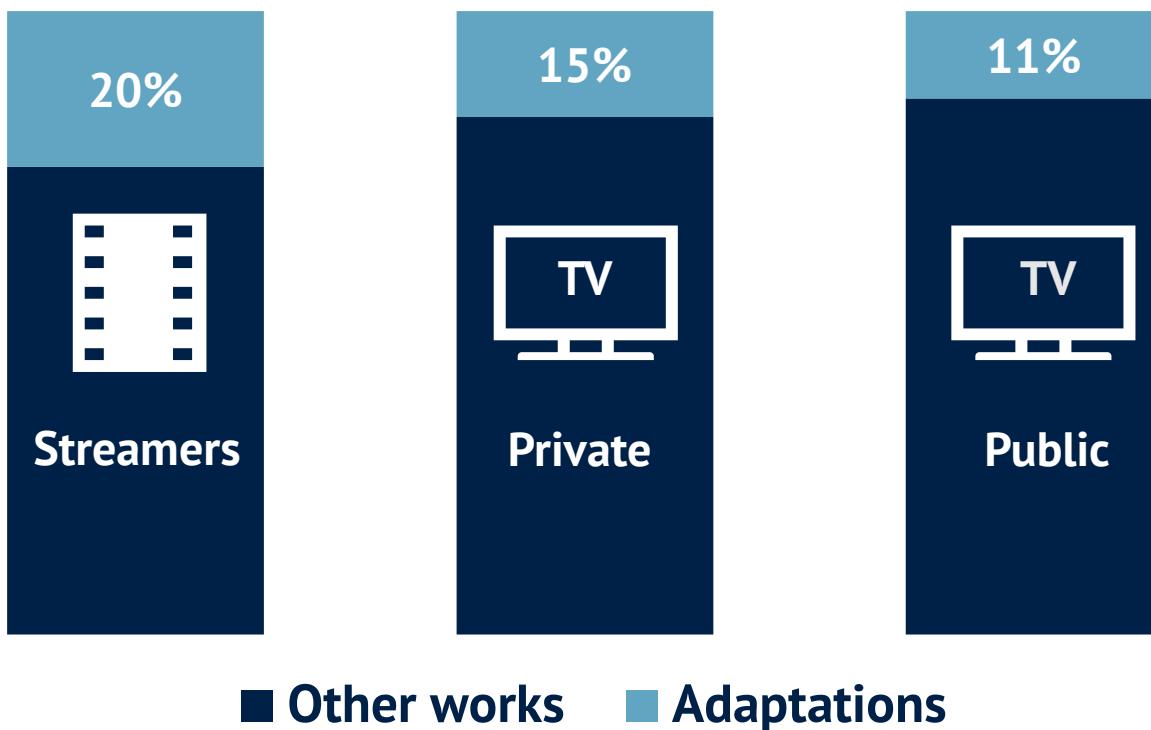
Share of audiovisual fiction adaptations produced in Europe (2015-2023)



## Compared to broadcasters, streamers rely more on adaptations.

- Between 2021 and 2023, their share of adaptations among their original fiction production was higher (20%) than that of private (15%) and public broadcasters (11%).

Breakdown of audiovisual fiction adaptations by players (2021-2023)



## Public service broadcasters in major markets and Netflix are the top commissioners of AV fiction adaptations.

- ITV had the highest share of adaptations (39%) , followed by TF1 (29%), Atresmedia (26%), Comcast (24%), the BBC (24%), Netflix (23%) and Telefónica (22%), all of which had a share of adaptations of more than 20% of their audiovisual fiction works commissioned between 2015 and 2023.

### Top commissioners of AV fiction adaptations ranked by number of titles, plus share of adaptations (2015-2023)

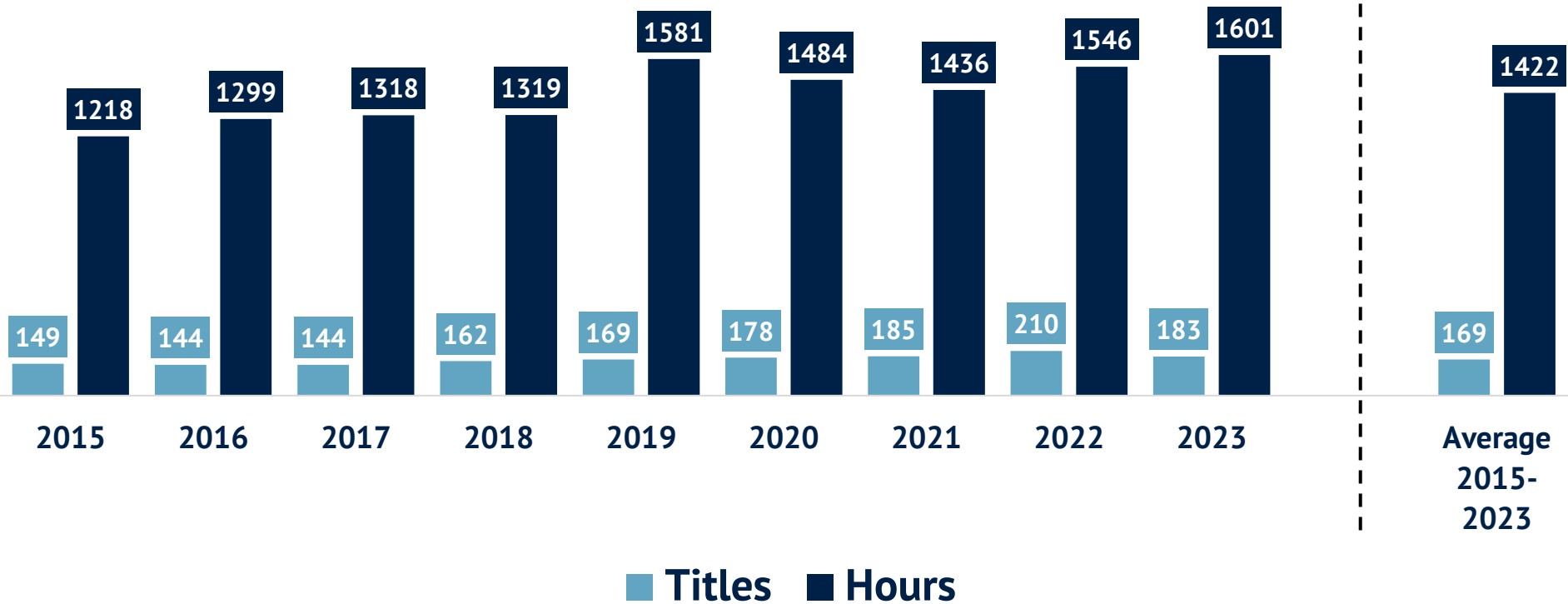
Rank	Company	% share adaptations	Titles
1	BBC (UK)	24%	166
2	ZDF (DE)	16%	148
3	Netflix (US)	23%	117
4	ARD (DE)	8%	109
5	France Télévisions (FR)	17%	106
6	ITV (UK)	39%	96
7	RTL Group (LU)/Bertelsmann (DE)	19%	74
8	TF1/Bouygues (FR)	29%	56
9	RAI (IT)	19%	55
10	Comcast (US)	24%	51

Rank	Company	% share adaptations	Titles
11	Arte (DE/FR)	18%	40
12	Warner Bros. Discovery (US)	16%	39
13	Telia Company (SE)	19%	33
14	ORF (AT)	15%	25
15	Amazon (US)	17%	23
16	NPO (NL)	8%	23
17	TVP (PL)	16%	22
18	Atresmedia (ES)	26%	21
19	Sveriges Television (SE)	11%	20
20	Telefónica (ES)	22%	18

Over 160 titles and more than 1 400 hours of audiovisual fiction adaptations are produced in Europe each year.

➤ The volume of audiovisual fiction adaptations has increased moderately between 2015 and 2023, as has the number of hours produced.

Volume of audiovisual fiction adaptations produced in Europe (2015-2023)

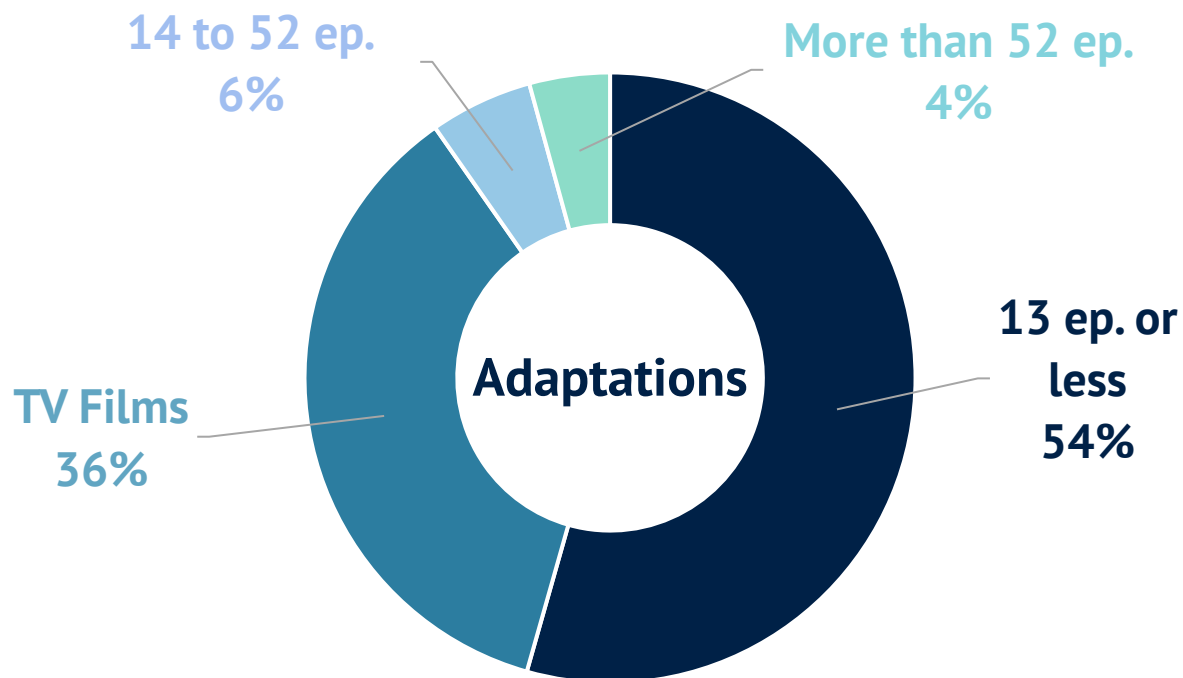


Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

**Most audiovisual fiction adaptations are either high-end TV series with 13-episodes-or-less-per-season or TV films.**

- TV series with 13-episodes-or-less-per-season together with TV films account for 90% of audiovisual fiction adaptations.

Breakdown of audiovisual fiction adaptation titles by format (2015-2023)

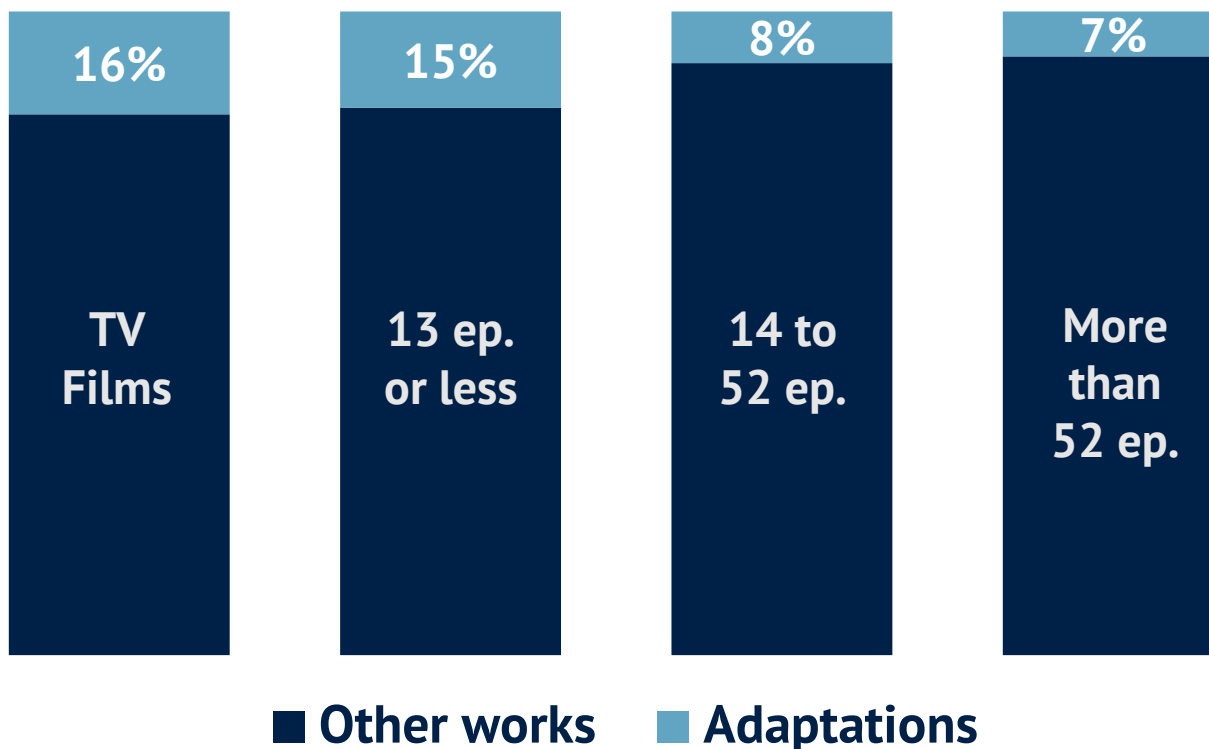


Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

**TV films and high-end TV series with 13-episodes-or-less-per-season are the preferred format for adaptations.**

- Adaptations make up 16% of all European TV films and 15% of TV series with 13-episodes-or-less-per-season.

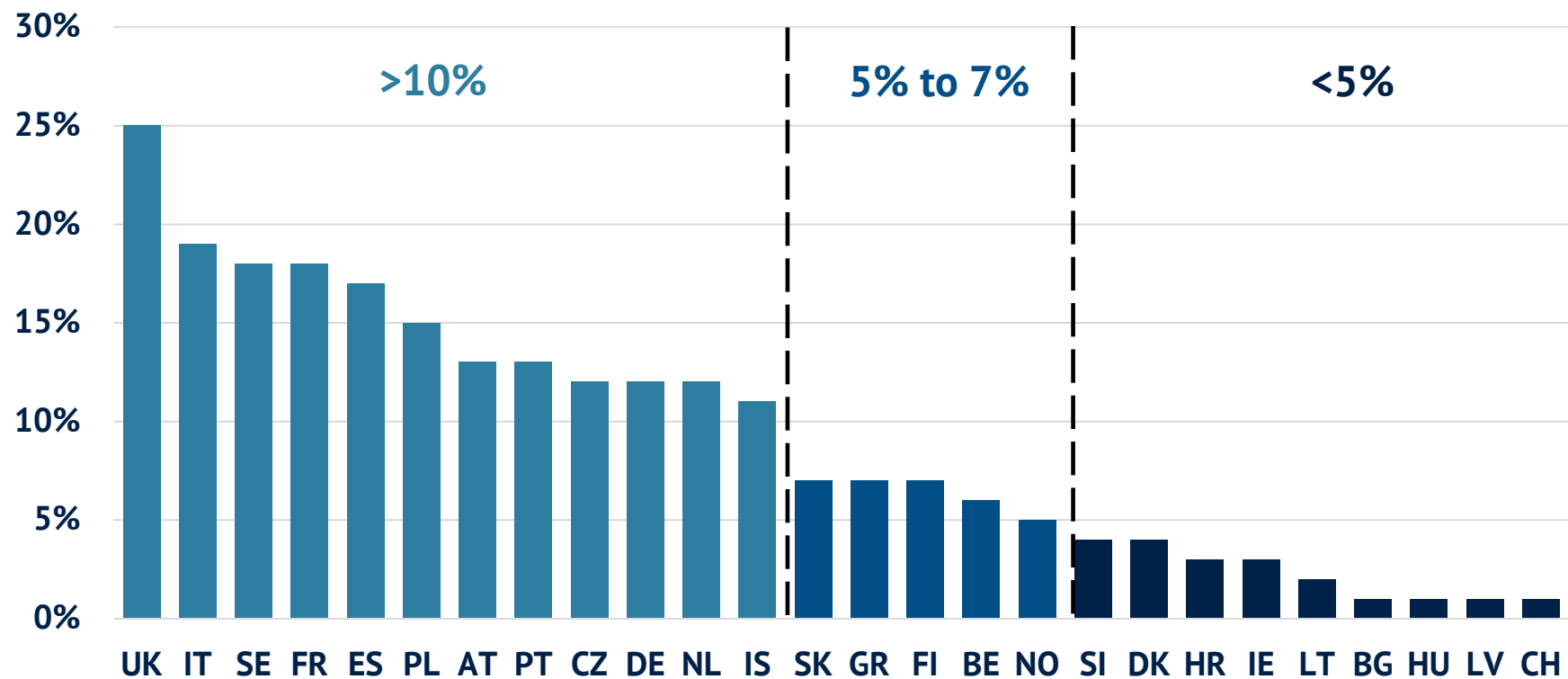
Share of audiovisual fiction adaptation titles by format (2015-2023)



The United Kingdom is the leading European country in the production of audiovisual fiction adaptations.

- The United Kingdom has the highest share of adaptations of audiovisual fiction works produced in the country (25%). Italy (19%), Sweden and France (18% each) are coming in second and third place, closely followed by Spain (17%) and Poland (15%).

Countries ranked by share of audiovisual fiction adaptations (2015-2023)



Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

# Origin of European audiovisual fiction adaptations



**Most audiovisual fiction adaptations are based on books and TV series.**

- Books and TV series account for 93% of original works for audiovisual fiction adaptations.

Breakdown of audiovisual fiction adaptations by original work (2015-2023)

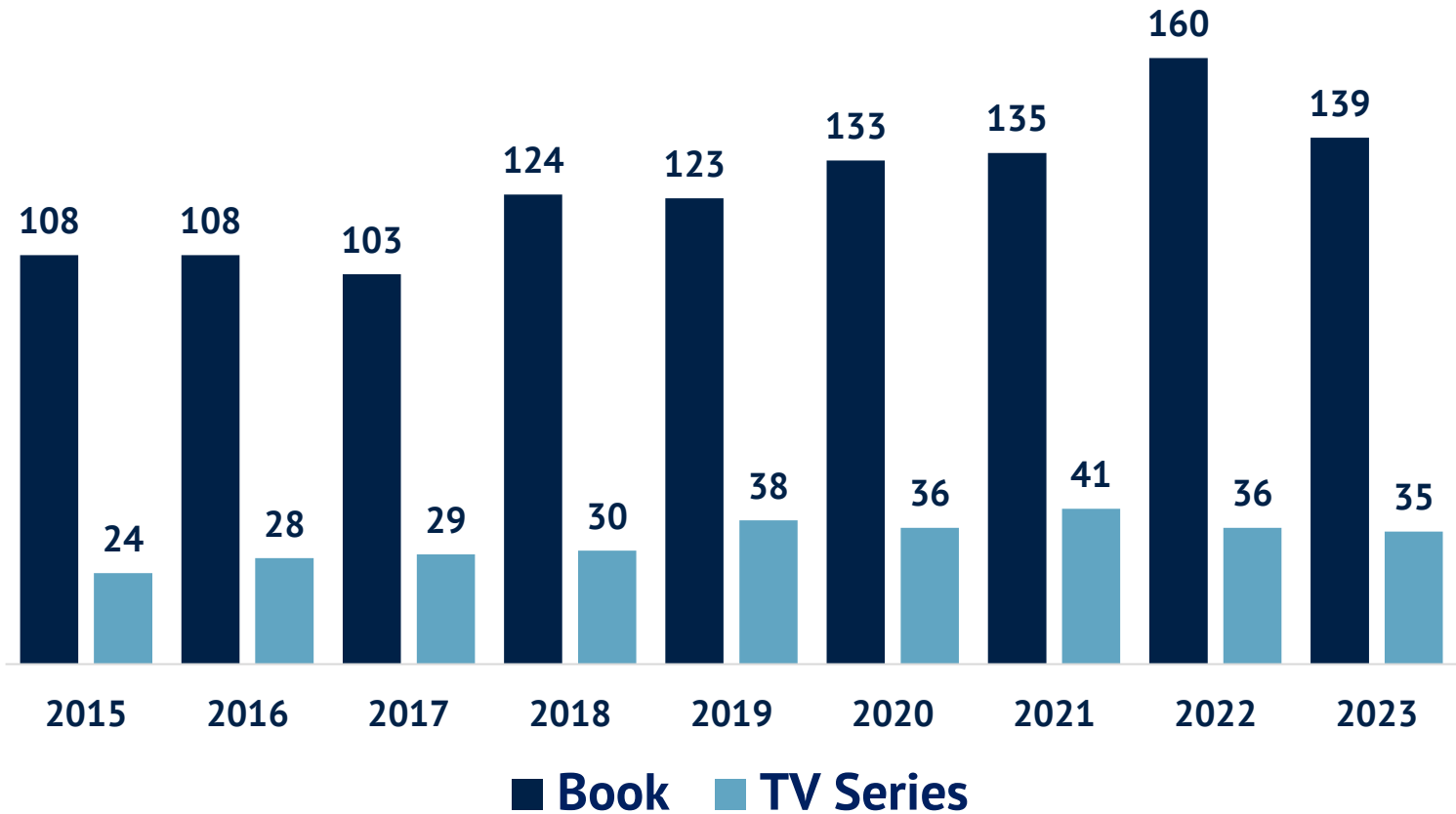


Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

The number of book adaptations has declined more than the total amount of European audiovisual fiction production.

- The number of book adaptations decreased by minus 13% from 2022 to 2023. This decrease is mainly driven by the overall decrease in European audiovisual fiction production of minus 6 percent.

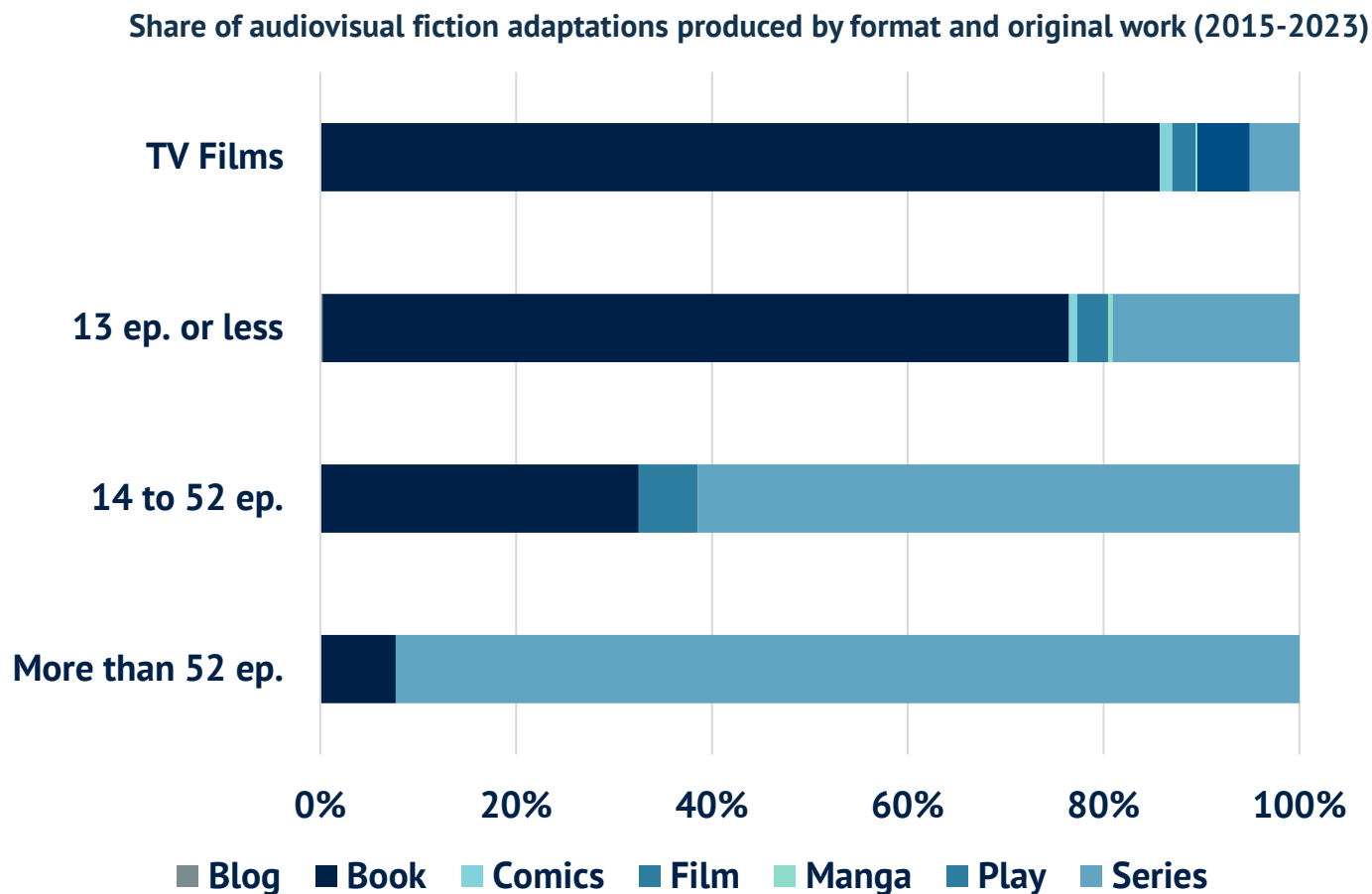
Number of audiovisual fiction titles based on books and TV series (2015-2023)



Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

The original works used for audiovisual fiction adaptations vary between formats.

- TV film adaptations are mostly based on books (86%), as are series adaptations with 13-episodes-or-less-per-season (76%). Series adaptations with 14 to 52 episodes are mostly based on other TV series. Series adaptations with more than 52 episodes are mostly based on other TV series.

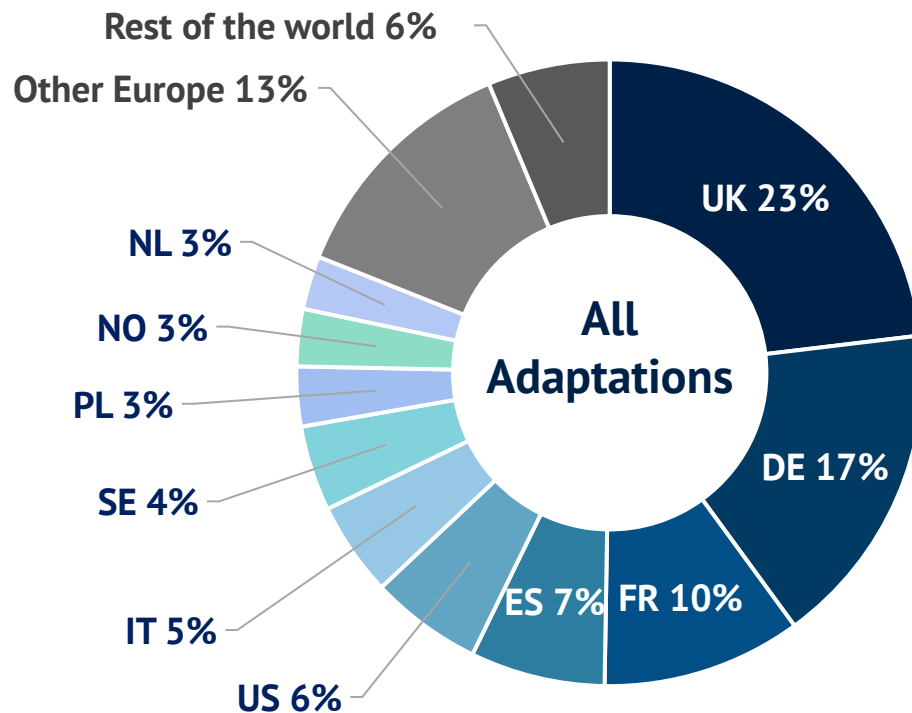


Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

**Over a fifth of audiovisual fiction adaptations are based on original works from the United Kingdom.**

- Half of audiovisual fiction adaptations produced in Europe are based on original works from the United Kingdom (23%), Germany (17%) and France (10%). Around one in ten (12%) of all audiovisual fiction adaptations produced in Europe are based on a work originating from outside Europe.

**Breakdown of audiovisual fiction adaptations by country of original work (2015-2023)**

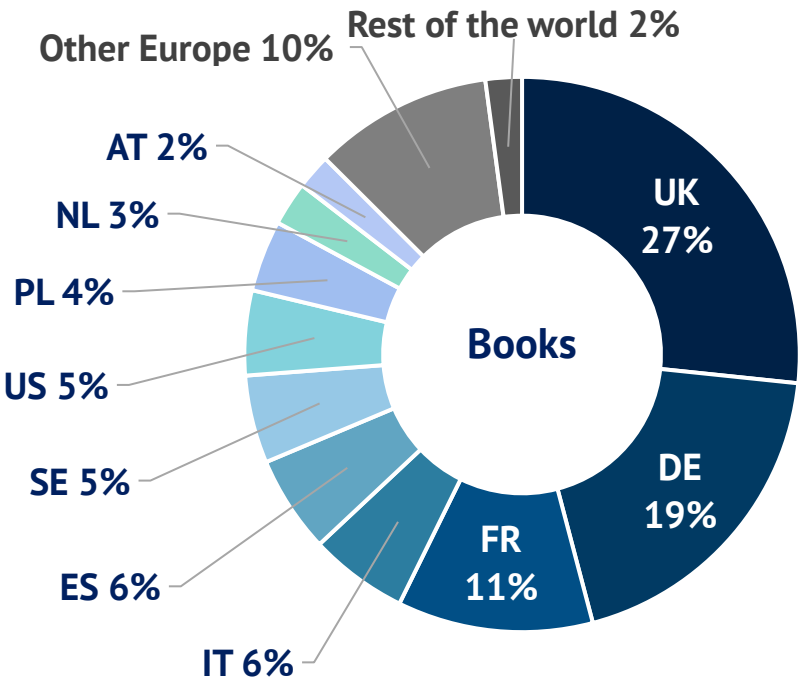


Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

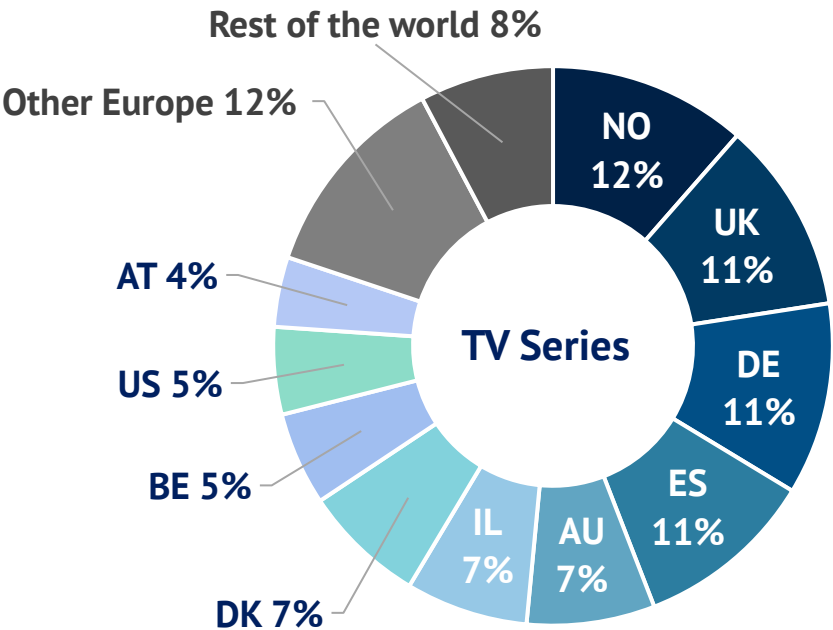
The origin of books used in audiovisual fiction adaptations is more concentrated than that of TV series.

➤ Non-European books account for 7%, while non-European TV series account for 27%.

Breakdown of books used for audiovisual fiction adaptations by country of origin (2015-2023)



Breakdown of TV series used for audiovisual fiction adaptations by country of origin (2015-2023)



Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

**Books used for audiovisual fiction adaptations are mainly national, while TV series are mainly international.**

- **Books:** In four out of five cases, the country of origin is the same as the country of production (82%).
- **TV series:** In nine out of ten cases, the country of origin is different from the country of production (92%).

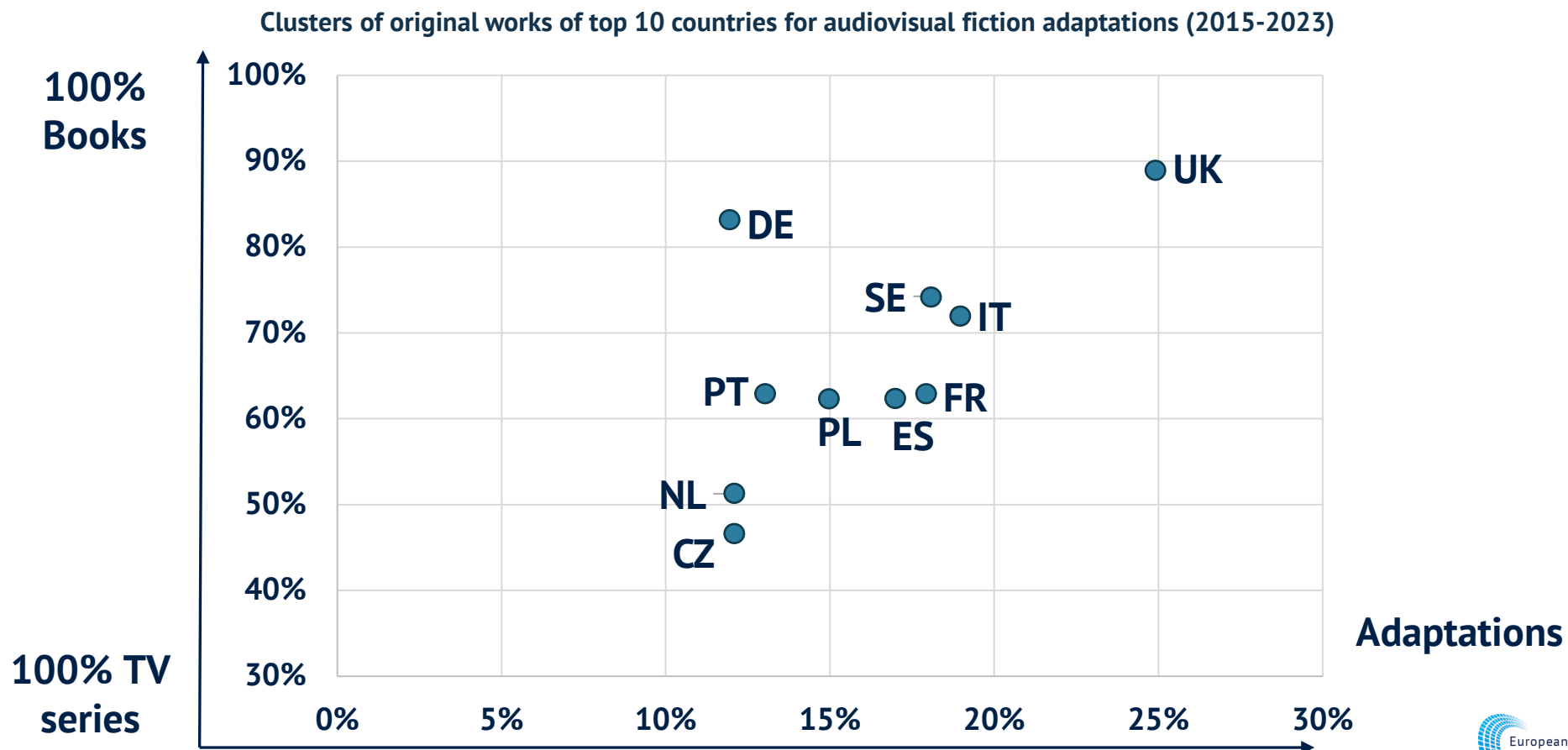
Breakdown of books and TV series adapted for audiovisual fiction by country of origin (2015-2023)



■ Adaptation from same country ■ Adaptation from another country

The emphasis on the type of original works varies between the top ten producing countries for AV fiction adaptations.

- British and German audiovisual fiction adaptations favour books as their principal source.
- Dutch and Czech audiovisual fiction adaptations are based equally on books and TV series.

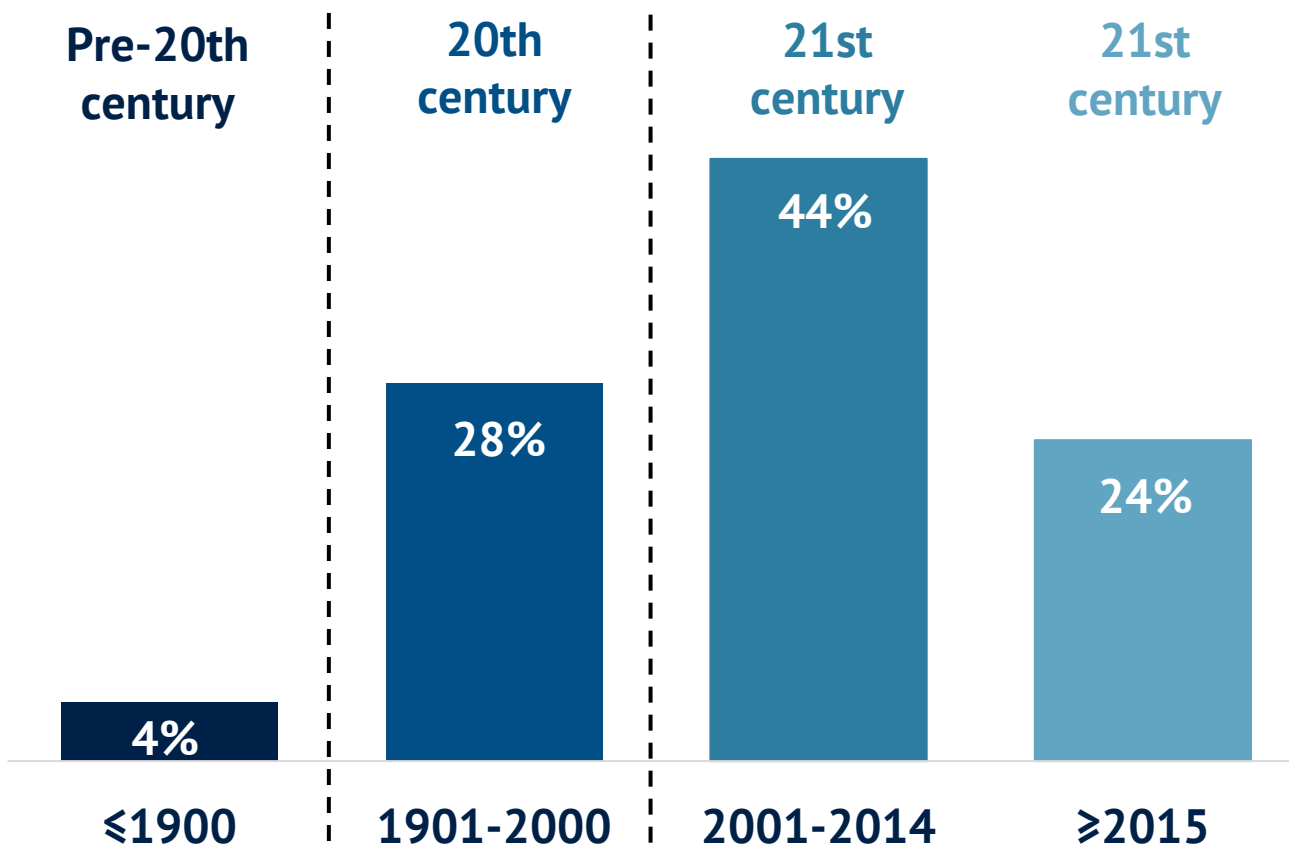


Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

**Most audiovisual fiction adaptations based on books are works first published in the 21st century.**

- More than two thirds of the books used in audiovisual fiction adaptations were first published after 2000 (68%).

Number and share of books used for audiovisual fiction adaptations by year of first publication (2015-2023)



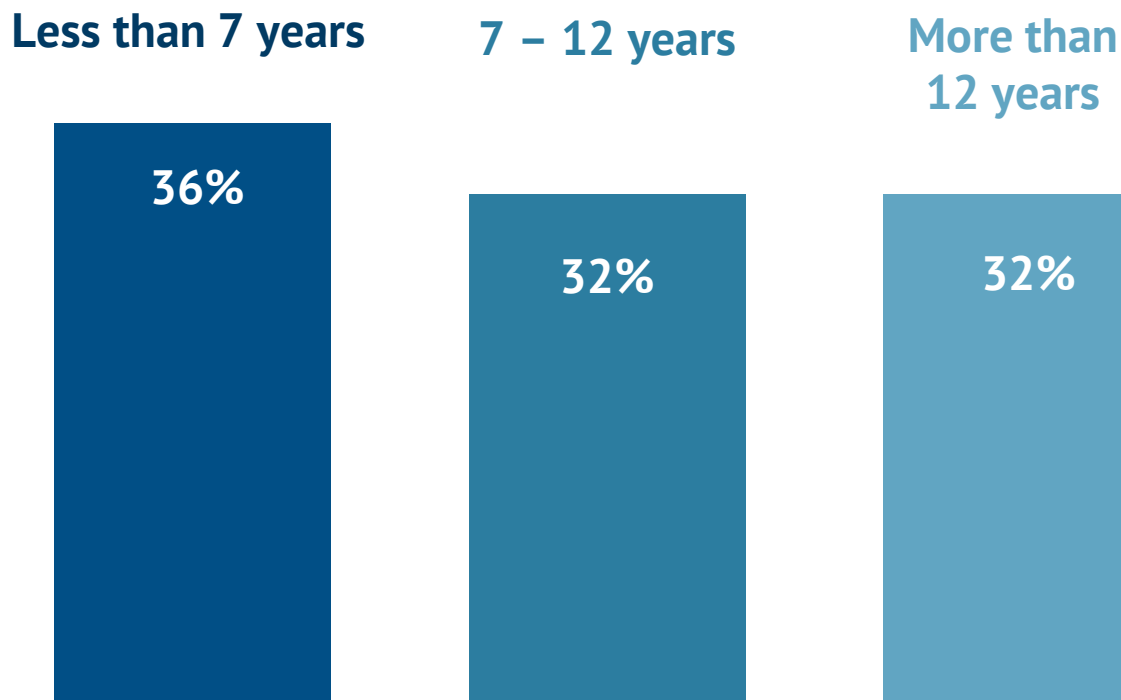
Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data



**It takes an average of 12 years for an original TV series to become a remake.**




- Most TV series remakes (36%) take less than seven years to be broadcast for the first time and 68% take 12 years or less.

**Share of the difference in the number of years between first year of broadcast of original TV series and remakes (2015-2023)**


















Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

## Top TV series by country of origin (2015-2023)

Rank	Original Title + Year of 1st Broadcast		Country of Origin - Original		Country of Origin - Remake	
1.	SKAM	2015	 NO	BE, FR, DE, ES, IT, NL	Σ 6	
	Liar	2017	 UK	DE, ES, FR, GR, IT, SK		
2.	בטיפול / BeTipul / In Therapy	2005	 IL	CZ, FR, HU, IT, PT	Σ 5	
3.	Professor T.	2015	 BE	CZ, DE, FR, UK	Σ 4	
4.	Amar después de amar / Love After Loving	2017	 AR	ES, GR, PT	Σ 3	
	Bron / Broen / The Bridge	2011	 SE	DE, GR, UK		
5.	The Restless Years	1977	 AU	DE, NL	Σ 2	
	Mother	2010	 JP	ES, FR		
	Merlí	2015	 ES	FR, IT		
	Gran Hotel / Grand Hotel	2011	 ES	FR, IT		
	Son / The End	2012	 TR	ES, NL		

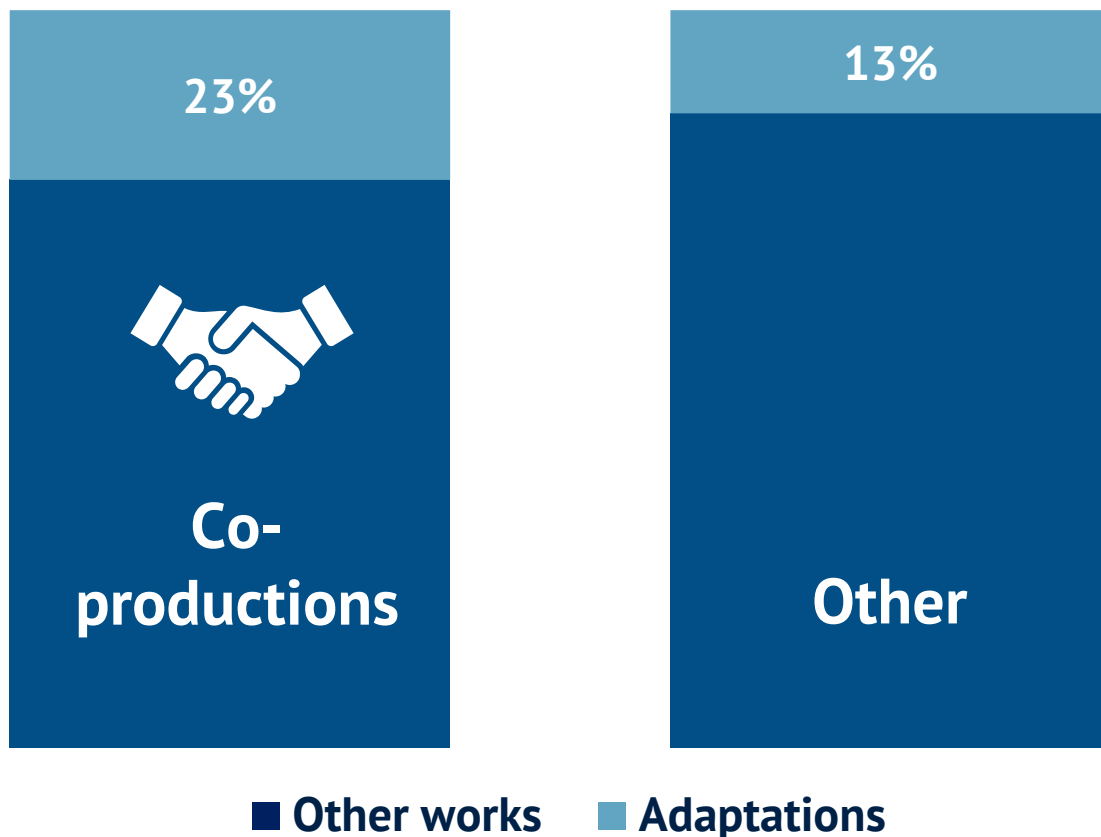
## Top book authors by country of origin (2015-2023)

Rank	Original Author + Genre + Number of adaptations		Country of Origin - Author	Country of Origin - Adaptation
1.	Christie, Agatha (detective novels)	Σ 10	 UK	FR, SE, UK
	Rossbacher, Claudia (crime novels)		 AT	AT
2.	Wolf, Klaus-Peter (crime novels)	Σ 9	 DE	DE
3.	The Brothers Grimm (folk tales)	Σ 7	 DE	DE
4.	Simenon, Georges (detective novels)	Σ 6	 BE	FR, UK
	Herrmann, Elisabeth (crime novels)		 DE	DE
5.	Worth, Jennifer (memoir)	Σ 5	 CA	UK
	Espinosa, Albert (memoir)		 ES	DE, FR, IT, SK
	Sýkora, Michal (detective novels)		 CZ	CZ
	Link, Charlotte (detective novels)		 DE	DE
	Neuhaus, Nele (crime novels)		 DE	DE
	Held, Annegret (contemporary novels)		 DE	DE
	Coben, Harlan (thrillers/mystery novels)		 US	ES, FR, PL, UK
	Camilleri, Andrea (crime novels)		 IT	IT
6.	MacDonald, Patricia (detective novels)	Σ 4	 US	FR
	Prosková, Hana (detective novels)		CZ	CZ
	Lenz, Siegfried (post-war novels)		DE	DE

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data. Flag icons © Copyright Showeet.com.

The share of adaptations in audiovisual fiction co-productions is significantly higher than in non co-productions.

Share of adaptations among audiovisual fiction co-productions and non-co-productions (2015-2023)



Source: European Audiovisual Observatory analysis of The European Metadata Group data

# Methodology

**This report provides an analysis of adaptations in audiovisual fiction production in Europe\* in the period 2015-2023. Adaptations refer to fiction works based on books, TV series, theatre plays, films, comics, blogs, video games and Mangas. Audiovisual fiction is defined as live-action fiction television films and series that are commissioned by broadcasters or on-demand services.**

## The data

- The underlying data used in this report were provided by the European Metadata Group. The European Metadata Group systematically reviewed the programming schedules of over 200 TV channels and on-demand services to identify original European fiction. The selected services are the respective TV and SVOD audience leaders in the tracked countries. Although some minor channels may also produce some original fiction, most of them are dedicated to reruns or imported programming.
- The data provided by the European Metadata Group were complemented by the European Audiovisual Observatory.
- Other sources used for this report include IMDb, to identify audiovisual fiction adaptations.
- Information on adaptations, including medium, origin and year of publication of original works were added by the European Audiovisual Observatory through desk research.

## Definitions

- In this report, the term “title” refers to either a TV film or a TV season. Each TV season of a series counts as one title.
- In this report, “streamers” refer to global and national streaming services.

\* EU27, the United Kingdom, Norway, Switzerland and Iceland.

- In this report, original work refers to the earliest original medium a film or TV series is based on.
- In case a TV series has at least one episode based on another original work, it is counted as an adaptation.
- If an adaptation is based on several books by the same author, the publication year of the first edition is used as a reference.
- Titles have been broken down by **format**: TV films/collections, series with 13-episodes-or-less-per-season, series with 14-to-52-episodes-per-season, and series with more-than-52-episodes-per-season. A limited number of TV films have two episodes; they are nevertheless considered as TV films. Some TV films belong to **collections** (e.g. Germany's "Tatort" or France's "Meutres à...") with several episodes produced each year. They are either counted as TV films (if different production companies are involved) or TV series (if the same production company produces all episodes). Some data in the previous editions of this report have been restated, as we have converted TV series into collections.
- The **country of origin** of an audiovisual fiction programme is the country of the main commissioner of the programme. In the case of programmes commissioned by a pan-European SVOD service, the country of origin is determined by the production company.
- **International co-productions** are analysed following a broad definition (any programme with at least two producing countries) or a stricter definition, excluding "linguistic co-productions" between neighbouring countries (DE - AT, FR - BE, FR - CH, GR - CY, BE - NL, DE - CH, CZ - SK, GB - IE).
- In this report, "**Europe**" refers to the 27 member states of the European Union, the United Kingdom, Norway, Switzerland and Iceland.

Please quote this report as: "Adaptations in audiovisual fiction production in Europe", European Audiovisual Observatory. If you wish to reproduce tables or graphs contained in this publication please contact the European Audiovisual Observatory for prior approval.

Opinions expressed in this publication are personal and do not necessarily represent the view of the European Audiovisual Observatory, its Members, or the Council of Europe.

## List of tables and figures



## Production volume and formats of European audiovisual fiction adaptations

<a href="#"><u>Share of audiovisual fiction adaptations titles produced in Europe (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>8</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Share of audiovisual fiction adaptations produced in Europe (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>9</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Breakdown of audiovisual fiction adaptations by players (2021-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>10</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Top commissioners of AV fiction adaptations ranked by number of titles, plus share of adaptations (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>11</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Volume of audiovisual fiction adaptations produced in Europe (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>12</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Breakdown of audiovisual fiction adaptation titles by format (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>13</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Share of audiovisual fiction adaptation titles by format (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>14</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Countries ranked by share of audiovisual fiction adaptations (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>15</u></a>

## Origin of European audiovisual fiction adaptations

<a href="#"><u>Breakdown of audiovisual fiction adaptations by original work (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>17</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Number of audiovisual fiction titles based on books and TV series (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>18</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Share of audiovisual fiction adaptations produced by format and original work (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>19</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Breakdown of audiovisual fiction adaptations by country of original work (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>20</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Breakdown of books used for audiovisual fiction adaptations by country of origin (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>21</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Breakdown of TV series used for audiovisual fiction adaptations by country of origin (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>21</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Breakdown of books and TV series adapted for audiovisual fiction by country of origin (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>22</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Clusters of original works of top 10 countries for audiovisual fiction adaptations (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>23</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Number and share of books used for audiovisual fiction adaptations by year of first publication (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>24</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Share of the difference in the number of years between first year of broadcast of original TV series and remakes (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>25</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Top TV series by country of origin (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>26</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Top book authors by country of origin (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>27</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Share of adaptations among audiovisual fiction co-productions and non-co-productions (2015-2023)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>28</u></a>

**More information:**  
**[www.obs.coe.int](http://www.obs.coe.int)**  
**[agnes.schneeberger@coe.int](mailto:agnes.schneeberger@coe.int)**

