Reading books

The vast majority of Poles (62%) like reading books. We registered a similar percentage of avid readers in previous years.

The willingness to read is related to the gender of respondents. Women are much more interested in reading: as many as 72% of them admit that they like reading, while only 50% of men say the same. Education is important: 86% of respondents with higher education like reading, 70% with secondary and only 37% of respondents with primary, lower secondary or basic vocational education.

**Do you like reading books?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VIII 1998</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V 2011</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII 2021</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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</table>
According to the declarations, in the 30 days preceding the survey, nearly two-fifths of respondents (38%) read a book for pleasure. The percentage of people reading for their own pleasure within 30 days prior to the survey is higher than recorded in previous years, when the proportions were: 36% in 1998, 32% in 2001 and 2011, and 28% in 2007. This increase may be related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on social life and significant restrictions in the ways of spending free time.

The vast majority of respondents (65%) prefer reading books in print. However, as the digitization progresses, alternatives to traditional books are beginning to appear on the market. One of them is e-books, indicated by 7% of respondents (including one-fifth aged 18 to 24). Audiobooks (3%), which allow users to listen to the content of a book, instead of reading it, are slightly less popular.

**In what form do you prefer books?**

Poles' reading preferences are constantly changing. This is evidenced by the differences between the number of respondents pointing to particular literary genres over the years. In 2007 and 2011, the most popular among readers were adventure and travel books, while in 2021 their popularity decreased significantly by 8 percentage points compared to 2011 and by 12 points compared to 2007. The genre currently indicated by the respondents most often (25%) is crime fiction. As the years go by, readership of guidebooks or handbooks declines: they are currently selected by only 12% of respondents, compared to 24% in 2007.
The least frequently indicated genres are still poetry (5%), contemporary fiction (5%) and comics (only 3%).

**What books do you read most often?**
*5 answers possible.*

- **Mystery novels, crime fiction**: 22% (2007), 19% (2011), 25% (2021)
- **Historical**: 26% (2007), 21% (2011), 24% (2021)
- **Adventure, travel**: 34% (2007), 30% (2011), 22% (2021)
- **Biographies, journals, diaries, memories, letters**: 17% (2007), 19% (2011), 20% (2021)
- **Romances**: 19% (2007), 15% (2011), 18% (2021)
- **Popular science**: 14% (2007), 14% (2011), 16% (2021)
- **Fantasy or science fiction**: 9% (2007), 10% (2011), 13% (2021)
- **Guidebooks or handbooks**: 24% (2007), 19% (2011), 12% (2021)
- **Thrillers, horror literature**: 8% (2007), 8% (2011), 11% (2021)
- **Non-fiction (reports, interviews, columns)**: 16% (2007), 11% (2011), 10% (2021)
- **Specialist, scientific or professional literature, textbooks**: 13% (2007), 14% (2011), 10% (2021)
What books do you read most often?
5 answers possible.

Comedies, humorous works: 11%, 8%, 9%
Classical fiction: 11%, 10%, 8%
Religious: 1%, 9%, 7%
Poetry: 8%, 7%, 5%
Contemporary fiction: 8%, 7%, 5%
Comics: 6%, 5%, 3%
Another: 1%, 3%, 3%
I don't read books at all: 32%, 26%, 28%

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: “Poles and Books”, September 2021. Fieldwork for national sample: August 2021, N=1167. The random sample is representative for adult population of Poland.