Which mangas are popular in Luxembourg?

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Embassy of Japan in Luxembourg

Dear readers,

The Embassy of Japan in Luxembourg will present to you this short introduction to the most popular manga in the country. This article will be the first part in an upcoming series which will explain the relationships between Luxembourg and manga as a whole. This whole series will try to show you the strong connection between Luxembourg and manga, animation and local manga artists. There are even jobs, careers and lives that have been affected strongly and positively by these beautiful Japanese stories.

We would be glad if you follow and read all the articles in this set, to give you a concrete and a global view on these important relationships. Even in such a small country like Luxembourg, mangas are very popular. This surge in popularity started in the 90s, but intensified in the 2000s and 2010s.

Based on the data given to us by Fantasy Box, the 4 most popular mangas are:
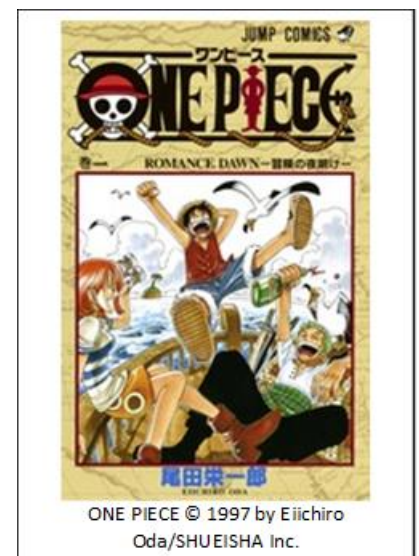
1. One Piece

One Piece is without a doubt the most popular manga worldwide right now. In Luxembourg, One Piece is also very popular! The series already spans 98 volumes, but the end is not in sight yet, according to the author[1]. Since its first publication in 1997, it has sold over 480 million copies. (For a reference, the Asterix comics have sold about 370 million copies worldwide since 1959, and Lucky Luke about 300 million copies since 1946!)

This manga is about the era of pirates! Luffy, the protagonist, dreams of becoming the Pirate King, by finding the legendary treasure "One Piece". One day, Luffy eats a magical "devil fruit", that turns him into a rubber human. From this day onward, he can stretch and twist his body in all directions, but also use it to fight enemies. But unfortunately, he can't swim anymore due to this new power!

Over the course of his adventure, Luffy invites more and more colourful characters into his pirate crew and forms new friendships with all sorts of people he meets – while also fighting extraordinary villains. There are many different islands they sail to, completely different worlds, and even cities in the sky.

"One Piece", with its colourful, complex world and larger than life characters, makes for a fun and thoughtful road movie, which takes the reader along for a ride. What begins as a simple pirate adventure, slowly transforms into a grand story of politics, alliances, tragedies and victories.

ONE PIECE © 1997 by Eiichiro Oda/SHUEISHA Inc.

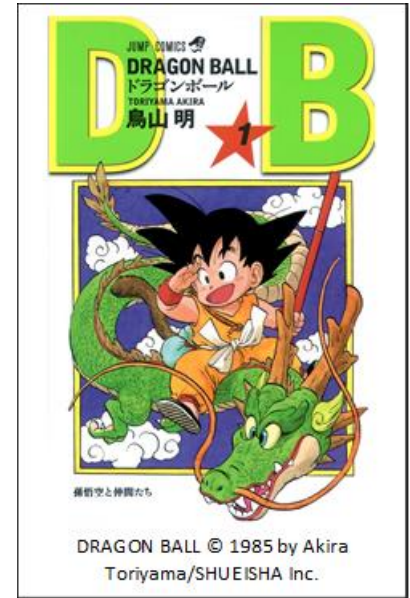[1] https://lesitedujapon.com/la-fin-de-one-piece/

2. Dragon Ball

Dragon Ball is a manga series created by Akira Toriyama. It is inspired by Wu Cheng'en's epic "Journey to the West". The famous manga, which had a popular anime adaptation split in two parts, "Dragon Ball" and "Dragon Ball Z", was published from 1984-1995, and sold overall 250-300 million books worldwide[2]. (That's more than the Tintin comics, which sold about 200 million copies worldwide!)

Dragon Ball tells the story of Son-Goku, from his days as a child up to his time as a grandfather. Son-Goku meets many different characters, from allies, to masters, to aliens, to gods over to angels and even people from other universes.

The protagonist is searching for the seven Dragon Balls. These seven artifacts are magical crystal balls that allow the user, once all seven are together and a secret summoning spell is spoken, to summon the mythical dragon Shenlong, who can grant one wish. Therefore, many people, good and bad, want to collect and own them all – either to do good or to do evil. During his whole life, Son-Goku will fight strong adversaries of all kinds.

DRAGON BALL © 1985 by Akira Toriyama/SHUEISHA Inc.

The characters in these mangas are very well developed, most notably ancient villains who become allies (like Piccolo and Vegeta) due to Son-Goku's positive influence on their lives. These characters can show to the reader that it is possible to overcome and solve conflicts, and change for the better, if you have a good reason to do so (family, friends, etc…). Son-Goku is a character who tries to see the good in everything, even if it causes trouble sometimes, for example when the evil Freeza arrives on Earth.

Dragon Ball is a wholesome but thrilling read, that has a core of lovable characters anyone can enjoy.
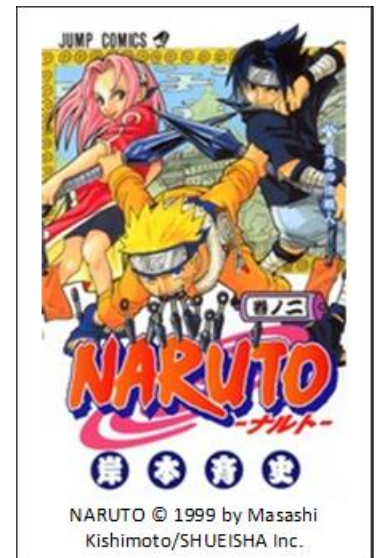
3. Naruto

With more than 250 million sold copies, Naruto is one of the most sold manga in the whole world[3].

Naruto Uzumaki is the main character, but also Sakura Haruno, Sasuke Uchiha and their sensei Kakashi Hatake are important characters. The world of Naruto is based on Ninja clans, who live in different big "villages", in many different regions, for example in the forest, the mountains, and the desert. The chiefs of these villages are "Kages", the highest Ninja rank possible, and it is Naruto's ambition to become the "Hokage" of his village.

NARUTO © 1999 by Masashi Kishimoto/SHUEISHA Inc.

Naruto has a big evil fox demon sealed inside him, Kyubei, who once threatened to destroy his entire village. Therefore he is being treated as an outsider, but soon, he will notice that he can use these evil powers inside him for good. Together with his friends and his mentor, he will embark onto a personal journey, which soon becomes entangled in politics, family drama and ancient grudges between people of all backgrounds.

Later on, all main characters have more intense and complex relationships with the other ninja villages. When the 4th Ninja War begins, and even necromancy is used to revive fallen

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[2] https://bleachmx.fr/le-manga-dragon-ball-dakira-toriyama-a-ete-imprime-a-plus-de-250-millions-dexemplaires/

[3] https://www.mangazenkan.com/ranking/books-circulation.html

heroes and foes, some more detailed information is revealed about the villages and the protagonists we have followed.

In 2020, Naruto is still the most-sold manga in France, with over 1,2 million sold books[4]. The sequel series about Naruto's son, "Boruto", is currently being published and is also popular among young and new fans.

4. My Hero Academia

My Hero Academia is one of the more recent manga, but has already gained a lot of fans and even more popularity. In 2021, just 7 years after its debut, it has sold over 50 million books.

My Hero Academia portrays a world where 80% of the population have super-powers, so called "quirks". These people can then either become "Heroes" or "Villains", depending on how they use their powers – either for good or for selfish reasons.

The manga follows the adventures of Izuku Midoria, nicknamed "Deku", one of the rare humans who has no power. He dreams of being a hero and to join the famous U.A. Highschool for heroes. His ambition is to become one of the mightiest heroes, and his inspiration is the powerful and kind All Might. But since he lacks any superpower, it seems like a futile dream. One day, when he saves his classmate and bully Bakugo from a terrible villain attack, All Might sees him and grants Deku a piece of his super strength.

Now the once weak Deku with a courageous heart can enter the fabled U.A Highschool, where many adventures and fights await him!

Yes, it is true that there are other very popular manga out there, for example Jujutsu Kaisen (45 million books sold), Haikyuu (50 million books sold) and Kimetsu no Yaiba (150 million books sold). Please comment what series you love, and if you agree with this list on the most popular manga in Luxembourg. Let us have an interesting discussion!

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[4] https://www.bfmtv.com/people/naruto-est-le-manga-le-plus-vendu-en-france-en-2020_AN-202101160062.html