


 NORDICOM

Surveys of media habits in the Nordic countries

This factsheet lists a number of surveys on media habits and Internet use in the Nordic countries. The focus is on publicly funded regularly recurring surveys based on representative samples of the population. All links go to freely available statistics sources or reports.

In most Nordic countries, publicly funded surveys of media habits are carried out regularly with a representative sample of the population in each country. The main purpose of this factsheet is to briefly describe the surveys and show where the statistics are available online. We also describe the problematic nature of comparing data from different surveys and countries, and give tips on some European surveys with comparable data for several Nordic countries.

Finally, the factsheet also links to other organisations with publicly funded assignments, in order to document media development and compile media statistics from various producers, which are accessible in publicly available databases and reports, including statistics on media use.

Media consumption in the Nordics

The Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – have traditionally had high media consumption. The Nordics are diligent newspaper readers, television viewers and radio listeners. The Nordic countries are also at the forefront of digital development. Through an almost total connection to the Internet and extensive digital competence, the Nordics have experienced strong growth towards digital media. Media companies are on new platforms and the population's media habits are becoming increasingly digital. At the same time, the consumption of media on traditional platforms is declining. Social networking services claim an increasing share of media consumption in the Nordic region.

The gap between the youngest and the oldest generation's media use is clear. Young people are abandoning traditional media (print newspapers, radio and linear TV), but even the older generation is becoming increasingly digital in their media habits, though they do so without abandoning the media behaviour they established before the media was digitised.

Surveys on media habits

Comparative analyses of media habits between countries are complex and require recurring clarifications. There is no joint study of media habits in the Nordics, and the fairly extensive national data available are seldom completely statistically comparable. Questions asked to the respondents are often similar, but selection, collection method, question formulations and answer alternatives vary, which rarely gives statistically satisfactory comparison opportunities. In addition, in direct comparisons between the countries, one must keep in mind that media structures in the Nordic countries are not uniform.

However, there are surveys that provide opportunities for comparisons between different Nordic countries and also vis-à-vis other countries. Within the European Statistical Cooperation (EEA) in the EU, for example, surveys are conducted on media use and on trust in the media. These are the Standard Eurobarometer and Eurostat's surveys on IT use in the population. The latter are carried out by national statistical authorities, including in the five Nordic countries (see under each country heading below). In addition, the Reuters Institute for

Nordicom is a centre for Nordic media research at the University of Gothenburg, supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

More factsheets about media and media use can be found on our website: www.nordicom.gu.se

the Study of Journalism conducts annual surveys of how news are consumed in a number of countries around the world.

This factsheet presents surveys that are both publicly funded and conducted by independent organisations, or both, and which in some way concern news media (daily press, radio, television and Internet) in a representative part of the population, and which collect their data via web surveys, telephone interviews or postal surveys. This means that studies on cultural habits (for example, books, films and series, cinema and music) are not included, nor are studies on special groups of the population (for example, children and young people). Furthermore, the factsheet does not link to surveys that only measure one medium (for example, TV viewing) or to media measurements that only provide data based on web tracking or other types of technical data.

National surveys

The links below go to a selection of data sources and reports in the Nordic countries.



Denmark

Survey on IT use from Statistics Denmark

ICT Usage in Households and by Individuals is an annual survey of Danes' access to and use of the Internet. Data collection is carried out in the spring with the help of telephone interviews or online surveys. The statistics have been compiled since 2001 and since 2016, for the population aged 15–89. Results are reported by sex, age, employment, family type, income and geographical regions. In their current form, they are comparable from 2008. Statistics from the survey are reported to Eurostat, which then publishes the statistics on their website together with data from other EU countries, candidate countries and some EEA countries. Data from the survey are also published in the database Statbank. Statistics are available in English and Danish.

- [ICT Usage in Households and by Individuals](#)
- [Statbank](#)

Survey on cultural and media habits at Statistics Denmark

Cultural Habits Survey sheds light on cultural, media and leisure activities in the population 4 years old and up. Data is collected via either a web survey or a telephone interview. The most recent survey was conducted July 2018–June 2020. Media habits that are included are news consumption, watching movies and series, going to the cinema, listening to music, playing digital games, reading books and visiting libraries. The statistics have been collected on nine occasions since 1964; however, comparability over time is limited.

- [Cultural Habits Survey](#)



Finland

Survey on IT use from Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus)

Use of information and communications technology by individuals is an annual survey of the population's use of information and communication technology. There are demographic breakdowns by gender and age group. In 2013, the age limit for the survey sample was changed from 16–74 years to 16–89 years. The survey was conducted until 2015 by telephone interviews. Since 2016, the survey has been conducted using a mixed collection method where respondents can choose to answer in a web form or by telephone. Statistics from the survey are reported to Eurostat, which then publishes the statistics on their website together with data from other EU countries, candidate countries and some EEA countries.

The main results are presented in Swedish and English, while more detailed statistics are published in Finnish. Data from the survey are also published in Statistics Finland's table database for media statistics in English and Finnish.

- [Use of information and communications technology by individuals](#)
- [Statistics Finland's database for media statistics: The Internet, social media and gaming](#)

Statistics on media habits from Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus)

Statistics Finland conducts two surveys that include questions about the population's media habits: one about participation in leisure activities and one about time use. These surveys are conducted approximately every ten years.

The most recent leisure survey was conducted in 2017, and the latest study on time use was conducted in 2009, but new data collection has been ongoing since September 2020.

The leisure survey reaches the population aged 10 and up. It was conducted until 2016 with visitor interviews. In 2017, it was conducted with a mixed collection method: the age groups between 15 and 74 years old responded either online or by a postal survey, while the 10–14 and 74+ age groups responded to the survey through visitor interviews.

In the survey on time use, a household sample is used, where the households and the persons in the household who have reached the age of 10 constitute survey units. The survey is conducted with a mixed collection method where the participants keep a record of their time use for two days and through telephone interviews. The data collection lasts 12 months.

Data on media habits from the surveys are reported in Statistics Finland's table database for media statistics in English and Finnish.

- [Survey on participation in leisure activities](#)
- [Survey on time use \(tables are available on the English and Finnish pages\)](#)
- [Statistics Finland's database for media statistics: Mass media statistics' table service](#)



Iceland

Survey on IT use from Statistics Iceland (Hagstofa Íslands)

Hagstofa Íslands, the Icelandic statistics centre, annually surveys the population's Internet use. The tables are in the Science and Technology database, which contains statistics on the information society, including access to and use of the Internet. The survey on Internet use (ICT usage by individuals) covers the population between 16 and 74 years old. The database contains demographic divisions by gender, age, education and geographical affiliation. Statistics from the survey are reported to Eurostat, which then publishes the statistics on their website together with data from other EU countries, candidate countries and some EEA countries.

- [ICT usage by individuals](#)



Norway

Statistics on media habits from Statistics Norway

The Norwegian Media Barometer is an annual survey on media habits with a focus on how the Norwegian population uses media on traditional and digital platforms on an average day. The data collection was carried out until 2021 for a whole year with the help of telephone interviews. From 2022, the Norwegian Media Barometer will switch to a mixed collection method with the option of responding via a web survey or by telephone. Until 2021, the statistics covered the population aged 9–79. As of 2022, the survey covers the population aged 9 and older. The report contains a number of demographic divisions, including gender, age, education and geographical affiliation. The statistics have been compiled since 1991. The entire report is in Norwegian, but statistics and summaries are available in English. Time series from the survey are also published in medianorway's database. Statistics are available in English and Norwegian.

- [Norwegian Media Barometer](#)
- [medianorway's statistics database](#)

Survey on IT use from Statistics Norway

ICT usage in households is an annual survey of Norwegians' access to and use of the Internet. The data collection was carried out in the years 2003 to 2019 with the help of telephone interviews. In 2020, it was also possible to answer the survey via a web form. Since 2021, an online survey with the possibility of answering by telephone has been used. The tables from the study can be found in Statistics Norway's database under "Technology and innovation". The statistics are calculated for the population aged 16–79, and by sex and age. Statistics from the survey are reported to Eurostat, which then publishes the statistics on their website together with data from other EU countries, candidate countries and some EEA countries.

- [ICT usage in households](#)



Sweden

Statistics on media habits from Nordicom

The Media Barometer is an annual survey on media habits with a focus on how the Swedish population uses media on traditional and digital platforms on an average day. The data collection is carried out for a whole year. The study was conducted from 1979 to 2018 by telephone interviews. Since 2019, an online survey has been used, but with the option of answering by telephone. The statistics covered the population 9–79 years old up to and including 2019. In 2020, the age range was expanded to 9–85. The report contains demographic breakdowns by gender, age, education and geographical affiliation. The statistics have been compiled since 1979. The entire report is in Swedish, but statistics are also available in English.

- [The Media Barometer](#)

Survey on IT use by Statistics Sweden (SCB)

Statistics Sweden conducts an annual survey of the population's use of IT, *ICT usage in households and by individuals*. The statistics show private individuals' access to and use of IT, such as computers and the Internet at home. Data collection is carried out in the spring with the help of telephone interviews or online surveys. The statistics are calculated for the population aged 16–85. Data are presented based on gender, age, employment, family type, income and geographical regions. Statistics from the survey are reported to Eurostat, which then publishes the statistics on their website together with data from other EU countries, candidate countries and some EEA countries.

- [ICT usage in households and by individuals](#)

Statistics on media habits, news habits and media trust from the SOM Institute

The SOM Institute at the University of Gothenburg conducts annual surveys of Swedes' habits, behaviours, opinions and values regarding society, politics and the media. In the statistical report *Swedish Media Trends*, the SOM Institute annually updates data on news habits and media confidence. Data collection takes place via mail or web surveys, or both, during the autumn. The statistics are calculated for the population aged 16–85, and comparable statistics have been available since 1995. The *Swedish Trends* report is in Swedish, but contains some time series on media use in English.

- [Svenska medietrender](#)
- [Swedish Trends](#)

Survey on IT use from the Internet Foundation (IIS)

The Internet Foundation conducts the annual survey *The Swedes and the Internet*. Data collection takes place in the spring via a web panel. The statistics on Swedes' Internet use are calculated on the population aged 16 years old and up. Data are presented based on gender, age, education, employment, income and city/countryside. The statistics have been collected since 2000 and are available as a report and as an interactive web tool in Swedish, with summaries in English.

- [The Swedes and the Internet](#)

International surveys

It can be difficult to compare statistics from different countries because both the understanding of concepts and collection methods often differ between the countries. Below are two surveys conducted by the EU and one survey conducted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Questionnaires and data collection techniques may vary, but the organisations work to achieve comparability between the questionnaires and methods for collecting statistics. Method reports are available in connection with the statistics.

Statistics on media use and media confidence in EU countries (Eurobarometer)

The European Commission's Standard Eurobarometer survey is conducted and published twice a year. Data on media use and media trust are normally included in the autumn report. The survey is usually conducted in November by home interviews. Since the autumn of 2004, the Standard Eurobarometer has been coordinated by TNS Opinion. Data for Denmark, Finland and Sweden are included in all statistics. Iceland and Norway are included in the statistics on media trust. The statistics are calculated on the population 15 years old and up. The results are presented in national reports and in a comparative statistics report (follow the link below, select surveys from autumn/winter and go to the annex).

In the autumn of 2020, no report was published, as the survey could not be conducted due to Covid-19. Instead, the fieldwork was carried out February–March 2021, and the report was published in April. Due to the pandemic, it was impossible to conduct interviews at home in a number of countries; in these countries, a web form was used instead. The change of method affects the ability to make comparisons over time.

- [Standard Eurobarometer surveys](#)

Statistics on IT use in Europe from Eurostat

Eurostat, the European Union's statistical office, conducts an annual survey on IT use in cooperation with national statistical authorities within the EU, as well as candidate countries and certain EEA countries. The survey is normally conducted during the first quarter, but the collection period and collection methods vary between countries. Data can be collected via personal interviews as well as telephone interviews, postal surveys and web surveys. Data are presented in the Digital Economy and Society database. It contains statistics on the information society, including access to and use of the Internet. The statistics are calculated for the population between 16 and 74 years old. Data for Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden are included (read more about the IT surveys under each country earlier in the factsheet).

- [Database: Digital economy and society](#)
- [Eurostat information on the ICT usage survey in households and by individuals](#)

Research on news consumption from the Reuters Institute (Digital News Report)

The Digital News Report is an annual survey on news habits in different countries from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford. The report contains country comparisons of news consumption and confidence in the media. Data collection takes place at the end of January and the beginning of February via a web panel. The statistics are calculated on the population aged 16 years old and up. Data are presented based on gender, age, education, employment, income and city/countryside. The study is presented both as a report and in an interactive web tool. The fieldwork is performed by YouGov using a web form. Data from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden are included. In Denmark, Finland and Norway, media researchers also publish national analyses with data from the Digital News Report (links below):

- [Digital News Report](#)
- [Center for News Research at Roskilde University: Danskernes brug af nyhedsmedier 2020 \(in Danish\)](#)
- [COMET Research Center at the University of Tampere: Reuters Institute Digital News Report – Key Findings in Finland \(in Finnish\)](#)
- [Media use group at the University of Bergen: News use. Nordmenns bruk av digitale nyheter \(in Norwegian\)](#)

Surveys on media habits in Greenland and Åland

The following surveys shed light on media use in Greenland and Åland, respectively. As they do not fully fall under the criteria for this factsheet (i.e., publicly funded and regularly recurring) they are presented separately.

Statistics on the use of television, radio and social media from Greenland's public service company, KNR (Kalaallit Nunaata Radioa)

KNR regularly presents a survey on television and radio and social media habits. Data collection is carried out during December and January with the help of telephone interviews. The statistics cover the population aged 18 years old and up. The report contains demographic divisions by age and geographical affiliation, and the statistics have been compiled annually since 2015. Both the data collection and the report have been carried out by an external survey company. The report is available from KNR in Greenlandic and Danish.

- [KNR Seer- og lytterundersøgelse \(in Danish\)](#)

Statistics on media habits from Åland's Statistics and Investigation Bureau (ÅSUB)

In 2020, Åland's Statistics and Investigation Bureau conducted a survey on media habits on Åland, *Media Habits on Åland 2020*. The data collection was carried out using a mixed method approach where everyone in the sample received a paper survey but was also given the opportunity to respond via the web. The statistics cover the population aged 13–80. There are also demographic divisions according to age groups, individual issues and also by gender, education and place of residence. There are no fixed plans for regular studies of media habits on Åland.

- [Medievanor på Åland 2020 \(in Swedish\)](#)

Find more Nordic statistics

Different authorities, universities and national statistical offices in the Nordic countries collect statistics from different statistical producers in reports or their own databases that are openly available online.

Below are links to organisations that present data on media use in reports and databases and which are part of Nordicom's statistical network (the network also includes Statistics Iceland, whose Internet survey was presented earlier in the factsheet). All organisations have publicly funded assignments to document and analyse media development and compile media statistics for their respective countries. Statistics on media use are obtained both from public surveys on media habits and from various industry surveys.

Nordic

Nordicom's table database contains Nordic media statistics. The statistics are presented in English.

- [Nordicom's statistics database](#)

Denmark

The Ministry of Culture's annual reporting on media development in Denmark follows three main themes: media use, media content and the media industry. The reports are in Danish, with English summaries.

- [The Ministry of Culture's reporting on media development in Denmark](#)

Finland

Statistics Finland's table database Mass media statistics' table service contains media statistics as well as articles that analyse media development and media use in Finland (see “Reviews” under each media tab). Statistics and analyses are presented in English and Finnish.

- [Statistics Finland's database: Mass media statistics' table service](#)

Norway

Media Norway at the University of Bergen has a unique compilation of data on Norwegian media from several different sources. Here are, among other things, long time series from the Norwegian Media Barometer. The information is presented in a database on medianorway's website, but also via newsletters and in various publications.

- [medianorway's statistics database](#)

Sweden

Nordicom processes and presents statistics on Swedish media development from a number of different sources in the publication *MedieSverige*, which is published every two years. The statistical data is also published separately in an Excel document. The report and the Excel document are in Swedish.

- [MedieSverige](#)

Karin Hellingwerf

Email: karin.hellingwerf@nordicom.gu.se

Published: December 2021