

Introduction

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The conference NordMedia 2017, held in Tampere August 17–19, was the 23rd conference in a row. The national media and communication research associations in the Nordic countries have, in cooperation with Nordicom, arranged the conference every second year since 1973. The conference migrates between the Nordic countries, meaning that Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden host the conference every tenth year. Since 1979, all conferences have been documented by Nordicom.

The field of media and communication science, as well as the NordMedia conference, have changed over time.

A conference with a history

Media and communication science is a young academic field. In 1973, when the first conference was held in Norway, media and communication science could not even be characterized as a field. Scholars came from history, sociology, political science, linguistics, literature, psychology and other subjects. However, for many years now, media and communication studies has been a research field of its own, even though scholars sometimes regard the boundaries with other fields as blurred.

NordMedia, as a conference, has grown over time (see Figure 1), in terms of both the number of participants and the number of papers. At the last conference, in Tampere in 2017, 287 papers were presented by 357 participants.

Compared to, for example, ECREA or ICA, NordMedia is a rather small, informal and familiar conference, but despite that, it has a breadth of divisions and working groups. The papers varied widely regarding subject, theoretical perspectives and methodologies.

The planning work that took place between the conferences in Helsinki (2007) and Karlstad (2009) represent a turning point concerning the number of divisions. In Helsinki in 2007, there were 24 divisions, compared to 12 in Karlstad in 2009. On the other hand, the number of temporary working groups (TWGs) has grown. In Akureyri (2011), there were no TWGs, compared to four in Oslo (2013), six in Copenhagen (2015) and eight in Tampere (2017). For the organization committee, it is a challenge to balance the demands from scholars who feel their research doesn't fit anywhere with the wish to construct a decent schedule for the whole conference, with not too many divisions and working groups.

Not only the structure of divisions and TWGs has changed, but the language used in the conference has also shifted over time. Until the turn of the century, the Nordic languages were totally dominant. At the beginning of the 21st century, both Nordic

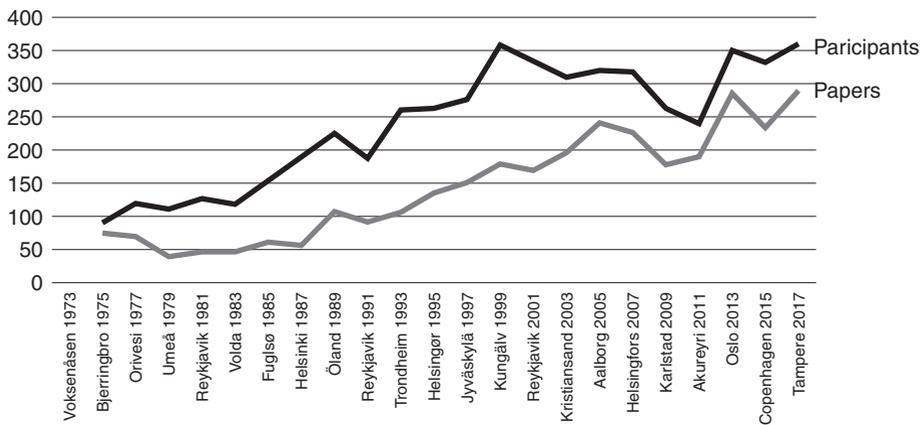


Figure 1. Number of participants and papers at NordMedia, 1973–2017

Note: Information about the conference in Voksenåsen is missing.

Source: Nordicom.

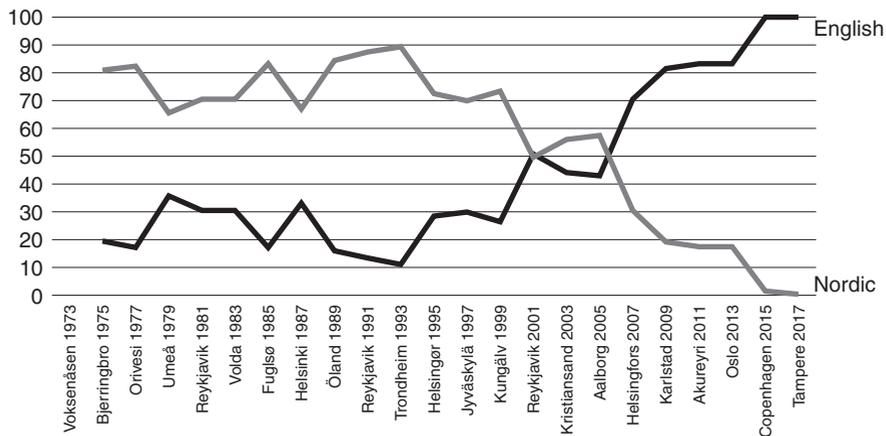


Figure 2. Languages of NordMedia papers, 1973–2017 (per cent)

Note: Information about the conference in Voksenåsen is missing.

Source: Nordicom.

languages and English were used, but during the last ten years, English has become the overall conference language. In Tampere (2017), no papers were written in another language than English.

The development of the conference reflects a general trend in the research community: internationalization. Research in media and communication science has, during the last decade, become international: it is nowadays obvious to conduct research and present it for an international readership. The number of scholars in the field has grown, and it is clear that NordMedia attracts scholars from countries other than the Nordic. A few participants from outside the Nordic countries were registered in Akureyri (2011) and Oslo (2013). That number grew to 28 in Copenhagen (2015) and to 41 in Tampere

(2017). Even though NordMedia still is a regional conference with a Nordic core, it is on its way to becoming a more international one.

Mediated realities – global challenges

The overall theme for the NordMedia conference in Tampere was *Mediated realities – global challenges*. As already mentioned, over 350 scholars gathered at the conference to discuss current research and findings. The conference proceedings included two keynote speakers and one panel in addition to the divisions and temporary working groups. The participants also enjoyed a number of social events.

The two keynote speakers were Lilie Chouliaraki from the London School of Economics and Jackie Stacey from the University of Manchester. Abstracts from their speeches are presented in this documentation. Lilie Chouliaraki spoke on the topic of selfies and the ethic of selfies in relation to refugee self-representation. Jackie Stacey's speech was about feminism, cultural studies and queer theory.

The panel was composed of four scholars: Maria Edström (SE), Stig Hjarvard (DK), Risto Kunelius (FI) and Kristin Skare Orgeret (NO). The overall theme for the panelists was *Media scholars facing global challenges – advocates or outsiders*, and their introductions to the panel can also be found in this documentation.

Furthermore, a pre-conference for doctoral students was held the day before NordMedia started. Twenty-three doctoral students participated in the pre-conference, organized by Eliisa Vainikka and Anna Rantasila. A short description of the pre-conference is presented in this documentation.

However, most of the business at the conference took place in the different divisions and working groups. Almost 290 papers were presented in the ten divisions and eight TWGs. These were as follows (with the number of papers given in parenthesis):

- Division 1. Environment, science and risk communication (16)
- Division 2. Journalism studies (49)
- Division 3. Media and communication history (12)
- Division 4. Media, globalization and social change (24)
- Division 5. Media literacy and media education (15)
- Division 6. Media management, policy, and economy (9)
- Division 7. Organization, communication and society (18)
- Division 8. Political communication (25)
- Division 9. Theory, philosophy and ethics of communication (9)
- Division 10. Television and film studies (19)
- TWG1. Media & religion (3)
- TWG2. Digital games & playful media (6)
- TWG3. Gender and the media (7)
- TWG4. Media & celebrity culture (4)
- TWG5. Onlife: Digital media sociology in a digital cross-platform world (23)
- TWG6. Media across the life course (15)
- TWG7. Visual communication and culture (11)
- TWG8. Audience studies (22)

For several years, papers from the different divisions and groups have been revised and edited for publication in *Nordicom Review*, the international scholarly journal at Nordicom. This was, however, not the case for the conference in Tampere.

The documentation of NordMedia 2017

The documentation of NordMedia 2017 is somewhat different compared to the documentation of the previous conferences. Over the last decades, the conference documentation has included all aspects of the conference, as well as articles based on papers from the different divisions and working groups. The documentation of NordMedia 2017 does not include any papers, but it does include all other documentation. There are several reasons for that.

It takes much time, money and effort to edit and produce an issue of *Nordicom Review*. If the documentation of the conference can be separated from the journal, it can be published in the same year that the conference is held. Furthermore, all scholars who are interested in publishing their work in *Nordicom Review*, are, of course, most welcome to submit their manuscripts to an ordinary issue of the journal. Last, but not least, *Nordicom Review* will, besides the ordinary issues – and in a not too distant future with an increased frequency – invest more in special issues, with specific themes. It is Nordicom's belief that both the journal and the scholars will benefit from such an alignment of the journal.

It is a pleasure to present texts from all keynote speakers and panellists from NordMedia 2017 in this Supplement to *Nordicom-Information* no. 2/2017.

The compilation of paper titles and participant lists is conducted by the Nordic research officers at Nordicom: Mogens Vestergaard Kjeldsen from Denmark, Eija Poteri from Finland, Balder Holm from Norway and Karin Hellingwerf from Sweden.

The organizing of NordMedia

The responsibility for arranging the conferences is divided into two parts. General questions, such as the theme, keynote speakers, working groups and fees, are discussed and decided by the Nordic Planning Committee, whose members are appointed by the national media and communication research associations and Nordicom. A local Planning Committee at Tampere University was responsible for the arrangements and details for the 2017 conference.

Members of the committee that planned NordMedia 2017 were Aske Kammer from SMiD (Denmark), Eliisa Vainikka and Sinikka Torkkola from Mevi ry (Finland); Lisbeth Morlandstø, Ragnhild Mølster and Lin Prøitz from NML (Norway); Margareta Melin from FSMK (Sweden); and Ingela Wadbring from Nordicom, along with the local committee from Tampere University, namely, Ilmari Hiltunen, Johanna Lehto, Anna Rantasila and Aino Sarenmaa. Sinikka Torkkola acted as conference general. Thanks to everyone, and also to Tampere university, especially the conference centre for excellent service, and Radio Moreeni for broadcasting parts of the conference.

The next NordMedia conference is to be held in Malmö, 21–23 August 2019. It will be the 24th NordMedia conference. Most welcome!