

**Gender Equality**

**in the Nordic Media**

Fact sheet from Nordic Gender & Media Forum 2014

► Fact sheet from NIKK

# Time to step up

## Towards Gender Equality in the Nordic Media

**There is an increasing pressure on media to step up and take measures to ensure women's access to the media industry and to combat gender stereotypes. The UN member states committed to this already in 1995 in the Beijing Platform for Action, but how gender equal is the media?**

The Nordic region is well known for having gender equality as a hallmark in society. In the media sector, however, the male dominance persists in many areas, both in the industry itself and in the output.

In 2014, Nordicom – a knowledge centre for media and communication research – initiated the project *Nordic Gender & Media Forum*, a platform for discussion on gender equality in media. The platform is compiling sex-disaggregated statistics for the Nordic media industry (film, journalism, advertising and computer games). These data serve as a knowledge base for discussion on good gender practices in the media in the Nordic countries.

### Early findings

Men still dominate many of the media sectors in the Nordic countries. Whether there is progress towards gender equality is difficult to say, due to a lack of consistent, reliable and comparative data about the gender equality situation in Nordic media. In the context of the old saying, "We measure what we treasure", it becomes evident that gender-based media statistics are seldom prioritised in the Nordic countries. In order to get an idea of the situation, the project has compiled statistics from many different sources and initiated small pilot studies.

The film industry seems to be the sector with the most consistent work on gender equality, partly owing to its structural regulations including requirements to keep

track of who obtains funding and to set gender equality goals when supporting projects. However, lead roles are still dominated by men.

The Nordic gaming industry is a fast growing sector of the media industry and many of the Nordic game producers are reaching a global audience. The players are more or less gender balanced, with women playing more on their phones and men playing on stationary devices.

The game developers are still mostly men. For example, in Sweden the gender ratio is 85/15 (2012).

Journalism is a sector where the newsrooms seem to be more gender equal than the content that they produce. Most sources and experts involved are still men.

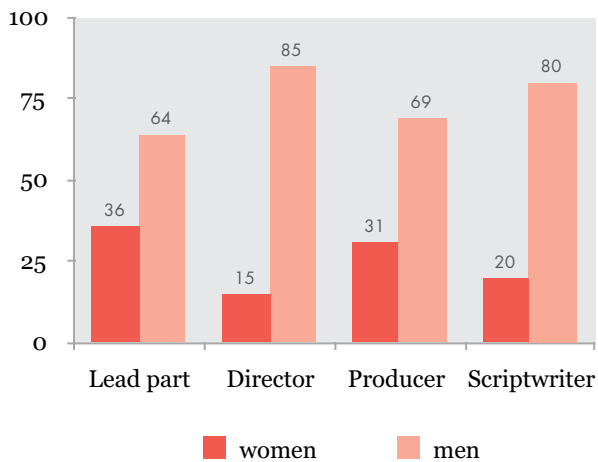
The advertising industry seems to be similar to the journalism sector, with gender balance among workers but male dominance at the top, an exception is Finland where 40 per cent of the board members in the top four advertising agencies are women. The Swedish Association of Communication Agencies recently added a paragraph in their charter that they should actively support their members in creating a gender equal work environment.

### Want to know more?

The full compilation of data can be found at the Nordicom website, *Media trends*.

*Nordic Gender & Media Forum* is also about collecting good practices and broadening the meaning of gender equality by connecting with other Nordic projects on gender, such as Queering Sapmi and the work on combating sexualised hate speech conducted by a Norwegian resource centre for men, Reform. About 30 examples of good practices from the Nordic region are included in an anthology (December 2014).

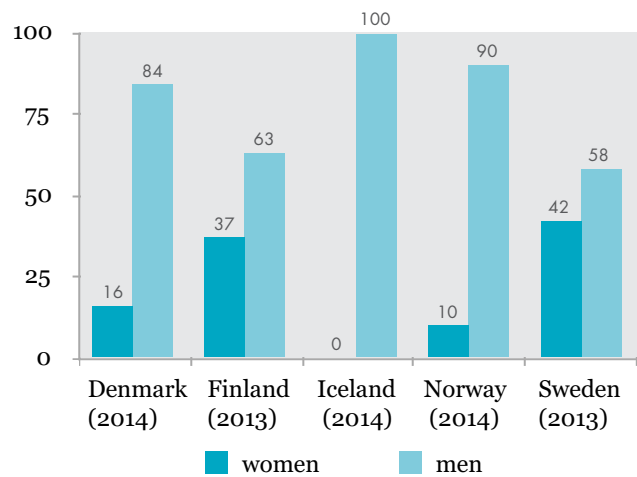
## Women and men in lead part and key position in Nordic domestic premiere feature films 2012 (per cent)



Data based on 98 domestic feature films with cinema release on its domestic market in Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Sweden, 2012.

Source: Martinsson, Terese *Beyond the habitual*, bachelor thesis, University of Gothenburg, 2014.

## Women and men as editor-in-chief of daily paid-for newspapers in the Nordic countries 2013/2014 (per cent)



Note: When the title editor-in-chief is not in use, publisher has been included.

There are two daily newspapers in Iceland.

Denmark based on the 12 largest daily paid-for newspapers (nearly 80 per cent of daily circulation).

Sources: Newspaper websites; 2014; The Finnish Newspapers Association/*Suomen Lehdistö 7/2013*; Jóhannsdóttir, Valgerður, 2014 (forthcoming); Høst, Sigurd *Avisåret 2012*, Høgskulen i Volda; Nordicom.



### Film:

Men still dominate the key roles in film production, but there is an increase of women directors and producers. 85 per cent of the domestic feature films that premiered in 2012 in the Nordic region were made by male directors. The lead parts were also more likely to be played by men.

One key factor for change seems to be whether there is a gender equality commitment within national film institutes. The Norwegian and Swedish film institutes have carried out systematic work on gender equality, including compilation of statistics and annual reviews, they also have directives on gender when it comes to funding. The current National Film Agreement in Sweden for 2013-2015 includes an equality directive stating that "the funding shall be divided equally between women and men" in the key positions of director, screenwriter and producer in projects that receive funding from the Film Institute.



### Journalism:

Many newsrooms seem to have a decent gender balance in terms of numbers. However, men still dominate in top positions. Board members and CEOs are most likely to be men. Sometimes the male presence is even bigger than in the business sector, which is often accused of topping the list of being the most male-dominated occupational domains. On the editorial side, there is greater variety between the countries. 42 per cent of Swedish editors-in-chief are women (2013), and in Finland the share is 37 per cent (2013). In Iceland, the two daily newspapers have men as editors-in-chief.

When it comes to the journalistic field work, there seems to be a quantitative gender balance. Finland has the highest share of female journalists with 57 per cent, and Iceland the lowest with 44 per cent.

Iceland has taken structural measures to learn more about gender equality in the media, by demanding monitoring of the output through their Media Act from 2011.

# Nordic Agencies for Gender Equality in the Media



**WHO MAKES THE DECISIONS** about what you see on television? Which questions are of importance, and who gets to speak their mind in the news? How are women and men featured in texts, photographs, computer games, advertising and movies?

Questions like these are of great importance when it comes to gender equality in society, and therefore the media is a relevant sector to reach with gender mainstreaming efforts. The media can both hinder and accelerate the development towards gender equality. The sector can communicate results of gender equality efforts, but it can also participate in producing gender stereotypes. Therefore it risks maintaining, or emphasising, inequalities based on gender.

The Nordic Council of Ministers has a 40-year history of gender equality cooperation in the Nordic

region. Now it has assigned Nordicom to intensify the work with media through the project *Nordic Gender & Media Forum*.

The *Nordic Gender & Media Forum* project compiles and disseminates comparative data about gender equality in several areas of the media sector (film, journalism, advertising and computer games) and collects good media practices within the Nordic region.

**THIS FACT SHEET** is produced by Nordic Information on Gender, NIKK, who works with the broader assignment from the Nordic Council of Ministers to gather and share knowledge about gender equality in politics, practice and research. NIKK and Nordicom cooperate in their efforts to distribute knowledge about gender equality in the media.

## Nordic Gender & Media Forum



**JOIN US !**

[www.nordicgenderandmediaforum.se](http://www.nordicgenderandmediaforum.se)

#equalnordic – the official twitter hashtag of the Nordic Gender Equality cooperation

### NORDICOM

Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research

**Nordicom** is a knowledge centre in the field of media and communication. Starting from academic research, Nordicom collects and adapts knowledge, mediating it to various user groups in the Nordic region, Europe and elsewhere in the world.

[www.nordicom.gu.se](http://www.nordicom.gu.se)

### NIKK

NORDIC INFORMATION ON GENDER

**NIKK** is a knowledge and resource centre in the field of gender equality. By disseminating comparative information in the Nordic region, NIKK works in line with its mission statement: "Sharing knowledge makes a difference. We are convinced that Nordic gender equality work improves when we learn from each other. That's what NIKK is for." [www.nikk.no](http://www.nikk.no)