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The Nordic countries top the European Commission’s digital index of 2019. Finland is the EU’s best-performing country in digitisation, while Sweden ranks second and Denmark fourth. Norway, not included in the ranking, is at the same level as the other Nordic countries.

The Nordic countries are at the forefront of digital development. This is according to the European Commission’s annual Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), a tool for assessing EU Member States’ digital development.

Each country is assessed on five dimensions:

- **Connectivity**, dealing with access to and use of broadband (fixed, mobile, fast and ultra fast).
- **Human capital**, including citizens’ digital skills and the proportion of ICT specialists among professionals.
- **Use of internet services**, referring to citizens’ use of the Internet, including a variety of online activities such as news, social media, music and video.
- **Integration of digital technology** by businesses, including e-commerce, cloud services, big data, etc.
- **Digital public services**, dealing with eGovernment services, e-prescriptions, open data, etc.

The index combines 34 indicators and uses a weighting system to rank each country based on its digital performance. DESI 2019 is based on data mainly from 2018.

**Nordic region tops four of five areas**

Finland and Sweden take first and second place in the overall index. Denmark ranks fourth, after the Netherlands. Moreover, the Nordic region leads in four out of five sub-areas: Denmark is best in the EU in terms of connectivity and use of internet services, while Finland ranks first in human capital (Internet skills) and in the level of digital public services in the community. See the matrix below.
DESI Index 2019: The Nordic EU members rank among 28 EU countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DESI Index, total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Five dimensions:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Connectivity</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Capital</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Internet Services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of Digital Technology</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Public Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DESI Index 2019 (European Commission)

Norway scores equally high as its Nordic neighbours, and would have ranked fifth in the overall index if included in the ranking. (Norway is monitored by the DESI indicators, but the ranking includes EU member states only. For Iceland, also not an EU member, the latest DESI country report is from 2015.)

**Read more:** DESI, Digital Economy and Society Index, 2019
Country reports 2019: Denmark | Finland | Norway | Sweden
Explore more: Digital Scoreboard – DESI visualisations

**More about the Digital Economy and Society Index:** The annual DESI aims to measure the progress of EU member states towards a digital economy and society. The results are reported both in country profiles and in thematic chapters presenting a European-level analysis. The country reports combine detailed results for the indicators included across the five dimensions of the index with country-specific policy insights (e.g. about digitisation strategies and action plans) and best practices. For more information on the method: DESI Fact Sheet 2019.

**Digital News Report 2019**
Media Use | Nordic June 2019 | EH

Norway leads the world in paying for online news, while Finland has the most trusted news media. These are some of the findings in the Digital News Report 2019, which compares online news consumption in 38 countries.

The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism published its eighth annual report, tracking and comparing online news consumption in 38 markets across six continents. Below, we present a few of the results, focusing on the four Nordic countries included in the survey.

Important to note is that the results refer to online populations who use news at least once a month. [1]

**Norway world leader in paying for online news**
In Norway, 34 per cent paid for online news in the past year, which puts Norway at the top of international comparisons. Sweden (27 per cent), Finland (16 per cent) and Denmark (15 per cent) have among the highest level of payment for online news as well.
Proportion that paid for online news 2016-2019 (per cent)

Still, this result means the majority of readers are reluctant to pay. Despite efforts of the news industry to boost the number paying for online content, the past year saw only a slight increase. Among the handful of countries with growth were Norway and Sweden (+4 and +1 percentage points, respectively), while in Finland and Denmark, payment declined or remained at the same level (see graph above).

Smartphone the most popular device for news

The majority of Nordic citizens use online news weekly, from 80 per cent in Denmark to 84-85 per cent in Finland, Norway and Sweden. For several years, the smartphone has been the number one device to access online news in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, where seven of ten news consumers use their smartphones to access news. As for other mobile devices, around one-third use a tablet to access news.

In Finland, accessing news via mobile devices is lower than in the neighbouring countries. Six of ten Finns use a smartphone for news, the same number use a computer, and one-quarter use a tablet. The computer stayed the most widely used device for news until 2019, when the smartphone gained equal footing.
News media most trusted in Finland

Overall trust in the news is down from 44 to 42 per cent (all market average); however, at a country level there are stark differences. Despite a small decline, Finland remains the country with the broadest trust in media (down 3 percentage points from last year, 59 per cent say they trust most news most of the time). Denmark ranks third with 57 per cent (after Portugal in second place with 58 per cent). In Norway, 46 per cent of news consumers trust the news (+1 percentage point), while in Sweden, 39 per cent (-2 percentage points) express a general trust in the news.

More key findings

Read the full report to learn more about gateways to news; podcast listening; the younger generation’s consumption of news; the rise of populism and the consequences for news; and much more. Moreover, three country reports for Denmark, Finland and Norway deeply examine the news consumption in each country (in national languages, see below).

The Digital News Report 2019: Full report online
The Digital News Report 2019: Analysis by country (online)

Country reports in national languages:

   Denmark: Danskernes brug av nyhedsmedier 2019  
   Authors: Kim Christian Schröder, Mark Ørsten and Mads Kæmsgaard Eberholst,  
   RUC Roskilde University

   Finland: Uutismedia verkossa 2019 – Suomen maaraportti  
   Author: Esa Reunanen, Tampere University

   Norway: Bruksmønstre for digitale nyheter  
   Authors: Hallvard Moe and Janne Bjørgan, University of Bergen

[1] Important to note about the survey sample: Because this survey deals with news consumption, anyone indicating they had not consumed any news during the past month was filtered out (this category averaged around three per cent). The report is based on an online survey, and as such the results will underrepresent the consumption habits of people who are not online (typically older, less affluent, and with limited formal education). In this sense, it is better to think of results as representative of online populations who use news at least once a month. In a country like Norway, this is almost everyone (99 per cent). Read more: Survey methodology for the 2019 Digital News Report
Changes in Finns' use of media
Media Use | Finland July 2019 | EH

In a recent article, Statistics Finland examines the changes in Finns' ways of watching TV, listening to radio, and reading newspapers and magazines over the last decades. The developments in online and social media use are also analysed.

This new analysis gives a broad and long-term picture of Finns’ media use and households’ spending on different media. The results are mainly based on Statistic Finland’s Leisure and Household Budget Surveys.

Some notable media trends

- **The amount of money** households spend on pay TV and video on demand (VOD) services has nearly doubled between 2012 and 2016. Fees for pay TV and VOD services has become the third largest media consumption expenditure after computers and other equipment and newspapers for households. This is mainly explained by the fees for VOD services, particularly Netflix fees.

- **Household spending** on newspapers has decreased markedly, especially among single person households aged under 65 and single parent households.

- **Pay TV consumption** has increased during the 2010s, and especially popular are TV channels and services focusing on sports, such as ice hockey and football. As for VOD services, the two most popular streaming services are Yle Areena and Netflix.

- **Among schoolchildren** aged under 15, less than half (43 per cent) watch TV or streaming TV daily. In 2002, around 80 per cent of schoolchildren watched TV programmes daily.

- **TV newscasts** have lost much of their appeal. For decades, newscasts were the most popular programmes among Finns, but in 2017, the most watched programme categories were TV series and movies.

- **Eight of ten Finns follow news** online. Two of three Finns watch YouTube and other videos on the Internet, and nearly as many watch TV programmes, listen to music, and read newspaper content online.

- **Reading newspapers** has declined most in the young age groups. Among teenagers, newspapers are read only sporadically. More than a third (36 per cent) of young people read newspapers occasionally or never. Of those aged over 75, only three per cent do not read newspapers at all.

Download the article in English or Finnish (PDF):
Changes in Finns’ use of media – results from Leisure and Household Budget Surveys (PDF, 223 KB)
Muutokset suomalaisten median käytössä – vapaa-aika- ja kulutustutkimusten tuloksia (PDF, 202 KB)

Find the article in Statistic Finland’s media statistics service in English (Reviews) | in Finnish (Katsaukset)

For those wanting to supplement the reading with more data, the article links to the underlying tables in Statistics Finland’s media statistics database.

About the surveys used in the article: The analysis is based on Statistics Finland’s Household Budget Survey and Leisure Survey, the current ones conducted in 2016 and 2017, respectively. The latter of these describe, for example, how Finns aged over ten years use media, and the former how much money Finnish households use on different media categories. The results from the surveys are complemented by data collected in Statistic Finland’s media statistics on the media industry structure and economic outlook, as well as research results published by other data producers.
Fewer people in Norway are reading newspapers. TV viewing is also dropping – and radio listening is the lowest ever. Meanwhile, video and audio media use holds its place. These are some of the results from the Norwegian Media Barometer 2018.

Statistics Norway has published its annual Media Barometer report, analysing the media use among the Norwegian population.

**Downward trend for newspapers**
The fall for print newspapers is no news; but now, online editions are also losing readers. Since 2016, the daily reach of newspapers’ online versions on an average day has decreased from 56 to 51 per cent. Looking at all newspapers (print and/or online editions), daily reach decreased from 68 to 64 per cent last year (see figure below).

Newspaper reading an average day in 2002-2018 (share of population 9-79 years, per cent)


**TV continues down**
Fewer people are watching linear TV, i.e. programmes on a TV set or simultaneous broadcasts on the Internet. In 2018, six of ten Norwegians watched linear TV broadcasts on a daily basis, down two percentage points since 2017 (see figure on the next page). Young people are the least eager viewers. Among 20-24-year-olds, only one-third watch linear television, a decrease of ten percentage points from 2017. Meanwhile, TV is still popular among the older population: almost nine of ten (86 per cent) of 67-79-year-olds watch TV on a regular day.
TV viewing, radio listening, and use of audio and video media an average day in 2000-2018 (share of population 9-79 years, per cent)


Never before has radio listening been so low
Listening to linear radio has been decreasing for several years, and in 2018 only half of Norwegians listened to radio (DAB, FM, online) on an average day. This is the lowest radio listening ever noted in the Media Barometer survey (see figure above).

As of 2018, Norway’s nationwide radio is digital only (DAB and online), while local radio is still transmitting on FM. The decline in radio listening is mainly related to the national channels, while a slight increase is noted for local radio.

Audio and video media: Streaming is the thing
Half of Norwegians listen to audio media[1] on an average day. Of those who listen to audio media, seven of ten stream audio files, and eight of ten listen via mobile phone, on a daily basis. In both cases, the number has doubled in six to seven years. Sixteen per cent of listeners listen to a podcast, while two years ago the corresponding figure was 6 per cent. Almost four of ten Norwegians watch video[2] content on a daily basis. Content from subscribed streaming services (SVOD) is the most popular, followed by streamed archive programmes.

In 2017, an increased use of streaming audio and video services led to a sharp increase in the use of audio media and video media categories. In 2018, the growth has levelled out, with audio media increasing by only one percentage point, and video media holding stable (see figure above).

No increase for Facebook
Almost all (91 per cent) Norwegians use the Internet an average day, and time spent online is still increasing. Among Internet users, 73 per cent state that they use Facebook, a share that has remained the same for the past three years. Sixty-three per cent say they use other social media (up from 57 per cent in 2017).
About the survey: The Norwegian Media Barometer survey provides data on people’s access to and use of different media types and platforms. The media covered are newspapers, magazines & periodicals, books, sound media, video/film media, radio, TV, Internet, digital games, and cinema. The survey is conducted through telephone interviews with a representative sample of the total population aged 9-79 years. The first Norwegian Media Barometer was conducted in 1991, and the report is published every year in the spring (open access). Statistics from the surveys are also available from medianorway’s database.

The Swedish Media Barometer 2018
Media Use | Sweden May 2019 | KH

Nordicom’s Swedish Media Barometer analyses daily media use among the Swedish population aged 9-79 years. This annual survey was first conducted in 1979, making it the oldest study of its kind in the world. Below are some of the results from the 2018 survey, including media use trends over time.

The main purpose of the Media Barometer study is to describe the long-term tendencies and changes in people’s use of different media. It includes all kinds of media and is used as a resource for understanding the Swedish media system. In recent years, the Media Barometer has made important contributions to the knowledge of how digitisation influences our use of media.

Some of the trends
Since 2009, the proportion of users of media on traditional media platforms has decreased. This decline is particularly noticeable in recent years, which is largely due to the possibility for TV, radio, and newspapers to now be consumed on different digital services. However, despite the success of digital technology, traditional radio and television are still big media platforms.

The total use of TV has remained stable despite the platform shift. The Media Barometer 2018 shows that 82 per cent watch TV on any platform on an average day. The TV audience on traditional platforms has been in decline since 2014, however. Between 2014 and 2018, the audience for scheduled/linear TV programmes declined from 77 per cent to 57 per cent. The yearly average for TV on digital platforms increased from 9 per cent 2014 to 36 per cent in 2018.

Reading newspapers was very widespread in the Swedish population for a long time, with the morning newspapers having the highest proportion of readers. In 2000, 74 per cent of the population
aged 9 to 79 years read a morning newspaper on an average day; in 2018, however, this share had decreased to 43 per cent. The figures include reading both on paper and digitally.

When it comes to evening papers, the situation looks different. Today, the reading of evening newspapers is primarily done digitally. In 2000, 24 per cent read the evening news on paper on an average day, while in 2018 this proportion was 9 per cent. The reading of digital evening papers increased from 4 per cent to 20 per cent between 2000 and 2018, and since 2010 the evening press has more readers in digital form than on paper.

Radio listening in Sweden was at its highest during the second half of the 1990s. At that time, 80 per cent of the population listened to radio on an average day. Listening has since decreased, though, and in 2018 a total of 61 per cent listened to the radio on any platform on an average day. Most people listen to regular FM radio. The proportion of listeners on streaming radio, i.e. live radio via the Internet and podcasts, has increased in recent years. In 2018, the share was 18 per cent.

The use of social media has increased very rapidly over time. Ten years ago, every fourth Swede used social media on an average day, while in 2018 just over 70 per cent did. Use of the major social media brands/services varies depending on different factors, such as gender and age. Women are more active than men on social media, and young people are more active than older people. Facebook is widely used, regardless of age. The exception is children, among whom Snapchat is the largest platform. Among senior citizens, Facebook is the platform that is mainly used.

The “digital generation” is growing older
Since 1979, the Media Barometer has shown that media use differs among the various age groups. During the 1980s and 1990s, media use was relatively stable in all age groups. In 2018, digital was the most dominant media platform among people aged 9 to 44; they watched TV on digital platforms, read digital newspapers, and listened to music on digital platforms. Still, traditional radio has not lost the majority of its listeners among people aged 25 to 44.

The digital options do not attract everyone. Most of today’s 65- to 79-year-olds, born between 1939 and 1953, accepted the Internet in the early 2000s. Today, this group of pensioners is increasingly resembling the general population when it comes to access to digital technology. However, while most people aged 65 to 79 have access to the Internet, television, radio, and newspapers in traditional formats dominate their media use. In 2018, 78 per cent of 65- to 79-year-olds consumed traditional TV on an average day, 65 per cent listened to FM radio, and 61 per cent read the morning news on paper.

When pensioners looked for digital platforms to consume media, 17 per cent chose a morning newspaper, 17 per cent an evening newspaper (tabloid), and 14 per cent streaming television; additionally, almost 40 per cent of 65 to 79 year olds were on social media on an average day.

Some basic tables (in English)
Download the full Media Barometer 2018 here (in Swedish)
Read the press release here (in Swedish)
Download data from the Media Barometer 2018 via Nordicom’s table database (mainly in Swedish, but a selection of Media Barometer data in English are available among the Nordic tables)
Young consumers are increasingly accessing media through digital channels, and age gaps between generations are growing. At the same time, otherwise rather stable cultural habits are gradually changing. These are some of the findings from three recent studies of media and cultural consumption in Sweden.

Three new reports, published between July and September, reveal the consumption of media and culture in Sweden and trends over time. Behind the reports are the Swedish Press and Broadcasting Authority, the Swedish Media Council and the Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis.

The reports are published in Swedish. For statistics in English, see the links at the bottom of this article.

**Media Consumption 2019 [Swedish Press and Broadcasting Authority]**
The report *Mediekonsumtion 2019*, published annually, shows how media use continues to change. As the younger population’s media consumption is becoming more digital, older consumers still prefer traditional media, and age gaps are increasing. The conclusions are based on statistics from Nordicom’s Mediabarometer survey, MMS, Kantar Sifo, the Internet Foundation and IRM.

Read more about: Mediekonsumtion 2019
About the Press and Broadcasting Authority (in English)

**Children and the Media 2019 [Swedish Media Council]**
Every second year, the Swedish Media Council highlights the use and attitudes of children and adolescents (0–18 years) in a study called *Ungar och medier* [Children and the Media]. The 2019 report show, among other things, that children and young people use the Internet more and that almost all of them have their own smartphone. Among teenagers, almost all use a smartphone daily, and among younger children mobile usage is steadily increasing. At the same time, many young people are self-critical about how much time they spend using their smartphone, social media and YouTube. Among the 17–18-year-olds, almost half (46 per cent) say they spend too much time on the mobile.

Read more about: Ungar och medier 2019
About the Swedish Media Council (in English)

This statistical report, published annually, identifies Swedes as eager consumers of cultural activities. Among the most common cultural activities are watching movies, reading books, and going to the cinema. The cultural habits are rather stable, but slow changes over time can be identified. There is, for example, a gradual increase in cinema visits and listening to audio books, while library visits show a slow decline. At the same time, book reading remains at a steady level.

Other results reveal variations in cultural habits related to diverse groups in society and different parts of the country. Moreover, individuals’ well-being is identified as a variable affecting participation in cultural life. The report is based on data from the SOM Institute, covering 16–85-year-olds.

Read more about Kulturvanor 1989-2008 | About the Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis

Statistical sources in English:

The SOM Institute surveys Swedes’ habits, opinions and values regarding society, politics and the media. Reports are mainly in Swedish, but main trends presented in English can be found in Swedish Trends 1986-2018.

Nordicom’s Media Barometer is an annual survey that analyses daily media use in Sweden. Reports are mainly in Swedish, but basic data in English can be found here.

Nordicom’s table database provides Nordic media statistics in English, including data on Sweden from Nordicom, MMS, Kantar Sifo, etc. Search for statistics here (choose Nordic and Media Use).

The Media Market and Media Policy

Five recommendations for better access to Nordic TV
Media Market, Media Policy | Nordic August 2019 | EH

Reduce geoblocking for Nordic public service TV online. This is suggested in a report examining how people in the Nordics could get access to more Nordic TV programmes. The report Nordisk tv på tværs af grænser [Nordic TV across the borders], in Danish, was published by the Nordic Council of Ministers in May.

Geoblocking is a common obstacle for Nordic TV viewers wanting to watch online TV services from neighbouring Nordic countries. This entails that a programme can be watched only in a certain country, while it is blocked in others.

Throughout the Nordic region, streamed TV and film content is increasing at the expense of linear television. Behind this growth are mainly global streaming platforms, Netflix especially. Against this background, the Nordic Council of Ministers commissioned a study on how to increase access to streamed TV programmes from all Nordic public service companies, across Nordic borders. The hope is that the growth of streamed
content will not come at the expense of the Nordic TV and film offering, but rather alongside an increased Nordic offering of quality TV.

The report shows that, among the Nordic public service companies, RÚV has the largest share (65 per cent) of geoblocked content, followed by SVT (43 per cent), Yle (40 per cent), and NRK (34 per cent). DR has the smallest proportion (26 per cent) of blocked content.

The report’s main recommendation is that public service companies block programmes only when absolutely necessary.

Other suggestions for improving accessibility to Nordic TV
In addition to the suggestion of reduced geoblocking, the report makes four more recommendations for increasing access to digital TV content throughout the Nordic region:

- Continued development of cooperation within Nordvision (including Nordic 12); that is, co-production and exchange of programmes between the Nordic public service companies.
- Continued development of TV distributors’ range of programming from neighbouring countries.
- Establishment of a copyright framework regulating the redistribution of TV-on-demand services across the Nordic countries.
- Implementation of the amendment to the EU satellite and cable directive, approved by the European Parliament in March 2019 (see also EUR-lex database).

The entire report can be downloaded via NordPub
Norden.org, May 27, 2019: New report: Nordic TV across borders

More about the report: The Nordic TV across borders report describes the television markets in the Nordic countries, the accessibility to Nordic television today, and current copyright rules. The Nordic statistics on the TV market come from Nordicom's statistical database.

The report was written by Lauritzen Consulting, Oxford Research, and Martin Gormsen Consulting, on commission by the Nordic Council of Ministers for Culture. The decision to initiate the study was made following Nordic Council recommendation 31/2017, “Abolition of geoblocking”.
The Nordics Replace License Fee with Public Service Tax

Media Policy | Nordic September 2019 | EH

This is an updated version of an article published 13 May 2019.

In June, the Storting (Norway’s parliament) voted for replacing the country’s radio and TV licence fee with a public service tax. This means that all the Nordic countries now have – or are on their way to having – shifted to tax-based funding of public service media. Still, the models chosen are not totally alike.

Over the course of just a decade, all Nordic countries have chosen to replace the licence fee with a tax model. The aim has been formulated as that of creating a long-term and technology-neutral financing for public service media.

The first country to shift was Iceland, introducing a public service tax in 2009, followed by Finland in 2013. And now, the other countries are following suit: Sweden switched to tax financing at the beginning of this year; while Denmark will gradually shift from licence fees to tax funding during the period 2019-2021, ending with full tax funding from 2022 forward. The Norwegian proposal entails tax funding from 2020.

Throughout all the countries, the public service tax is platform-neutral. There is also an age limit: in Iceland, the tax is paid by people aged 16-70 years and in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, by people aged 18+; while in Norway, the limit will be 17 years. The tax replaces the previous household licence fee, linked to the possession of a TV set (in Denmark, the media licence also includes computers, smartphones and tablets with internet access).

Despite the similarities, there are differences between the models. The tax can be designed as a special public service tax, as a regular tax or as a reduction of the basic deduction. As for the tax level, Iceland and Denmark have a model which is independent of income, while the other countries have chosen an income-related tax. Another difference is whether the fee is included or kept outside the annual state budget negotiations.

More about the models in the different countries:

- **The Icelandic** public service tax, introduced in 2009, is a special tax, included in the annual state budget. The level of the tax is fixed; that is, everyone with an income above a certain level pays the same sum, currently ISK 17,500 or about EUR 130 per person and year. The tax contributes to two-thirds of RÚV's revenues, while advertising accounts for the rest.

- Since 2013, the Finnish public service company Yle is funded through a special public broadcasting tax: the Yle tax. This tax, outside the state budget, is income-based and corresponds to 2.5 per cent of a person’s taxable income. At most, one person pays EUR 163 per year. By law, the Yle tax is to be adjusted annually in line with changes in cost-of-living indexes. But already in 2015 an exception was made from the annual increase, and after a working group’s proposal in 2016, the index adjustment was frozen for the years 2017-2019.
Nevertheless, for 2018, Finland’s parliament raised both the tax rate (from 2 to 2.5 per cent) and the free amount that determines when no tax has to be paid.

- **In Denmark**, the licence will be phased out gradually over three years. From 2022, the allocations to public service media are included in the state budget, and financed by reducing the basic tax deduction for all Danes aged 18+. At the same time, the allocation to DR is to be gradually reduced by 20 per cent over five years. The decision on the new model was taken in March 2018 (in Danish), and was followed up in the media policy agreement for 2019-2023. Following the elections to Folketinget (Denmark’s parliament) in June 2019, there is no longer a political majority supporting the media agreement, and negotiations for a new agreement are expected in spring 2020.

- **In Sweden**, the public service media companies – SVT, SR and UR – have tax-based funding since January 1, 2019, following a decision by the Riksdag (Sweden’s parliament) in 2018. As in Finland, it is a special public service fee, kept outside the state budget. The fee corresponds to one per cent of a person’s taxable income, with a ceiling of SEK 1,347 (approximately EUR 130) per person and year. The Riksdag decides on the allocation of fees to the programme companies for the whole licence period, which replaces the previous annual assessments. (In June 2019, the Government presented its proposal on the conditions for a new broadcasting remit for SVT, SR and UR for the period 2020-2025.)

- **For Norway**, a public service tax will replace the licence fee from 2020. The tax will be income-related and, as in Denmark, financed by a reduction of the basic deduction. The deduction corresponds to a real tax of NOK 1,700 (approximately EUR 175) per person per year – as a ceiling. The NRK budget is included in the state budget, but will be stretched to cover four years at a time. The new financing model was suggested in the Government’s media proposal in March 2019 and was adopted by the Storting on 11 June (both links in Norwegian).

Download matrixes/tables from Nordicom’s table database (Excel):
- Public service organisations and their main funding systems in the Nordic countries 2019 (Jan.)
- Annual public service license fee and/or tax fee in the Nordic countries 2002-2019 (in local currencies and euro)

**Note:** This text is about individual taxes. In Finland and Iceland legal entities are also covered by a tax liability, while the systems in Denmark and Sweden are based on individuals only.

**NATIONAL DOCUMENTS**

**DENMARK**
Government 16.03.2018 – agreement between the Government and Dansk Folkeparti about abolishing the licence fee and reducing DR’s financing:
- News: Licensen afskaffes og DR slankes
- Agreement: Aftale om fokusering af DR og afskaffelse af medielicensen

The Ministry of Culture: Medieaftaler i Danmark [Media Agreements]
Nordicom 04.07.2018: Det danska medieavtalet 2019-2023 är klart
FINLAND
The tax-based funding of the Finnish public service broadcaster Yle, by Marina Österlund-Karinkanta. Article published by the European Audiovisual Observatory as a third-party publication (16.08.2016).
The Finnish Tax Administration: Public Broadcasting Tax
Lag om statens televisions- och radiofond [Act on the State Television and Radio Fund]

ICELAND
Act on the Icelandic National Broadcasting Service, a public-service medium, No 23/2013 (PDF) – or download via the Media Commission's (Fjölmiðlanefnd) website
Public Service Financing in the Nordic Countries, by Lars-Åke Engblom, in Public Service Media from a Nordic Horizon, pp. 93-106 (Nordicom, 2013)

NORWAY
Government press release 29.03.2019: Regjeringa vil endre mediestøtta for å sikre langsiktig og føreseieleg finansiering [Government wants to change media support to ensure long-term and predictable funding]

SWEDEN
The Government: New financing of public service adopted
Lag (2018:1893) om finansiering av radio och tv i allmänhetens tjänst
The Swedish Tax Agency: Public service-avgift [Public service fee]

NORDIC OVERVIEWS – in Norwegian and Swedish
Examples of national reports describing public service financing models in the Nordic countries:
Meld. St. 17 (2018–2019): Mangfald og armlengds avstand — Mediepolitikk for ei ny tid: 3.5 Mediestøtte i andre europeiske land (sid 38 ff); 4.5 Forholdet til EØS-avtalen sine reglar om offentlig støtte (sid 54); 8.2.2 Fastsetjing av økonomiske rammer i andre land (sid 81 ff).
Rimmereid-rapporten: Finansiering av @NRK. Alternative fremtidige modeller for offentlig finansiering av NRK (2016): 5. Internasjonale avtaler og andre land (sid 36 ff)

The Government's proposal for Swedish public service 2020-2025

The Swedish public service media companies should be up to date and in close connection to the audience. They are also a common good that should work in a media system with a free and functioning commercial media market.

This is what the Swedish Minister of Culture, Amanda Lind, said in June 2019 when she presented the Government's proposal on the conditions for a new broadcasting remit for the public service media companies Sveriges Radio (SR), Sveriges Television (SVT) and Utbildningsradion (UR).

The conditions for the public service media rarely undergo drastic changes from one permit period to the next. In the upcoming period (2020–2025) the most noticeable change, in the eye of the Swedish public, lies within another decision from January 2019, when a new model for the collection of funding of the public service media was launched.
**Need for technology-neutral regulation**

In accordance with a previous parliamentary inquiry (June 2018), the current proposal points to the need for a technology-neutral regulation for the public service media companies. This is not possible today, however, as the constitution does not allow it. The Government has appointed an inquiry on constitutional reform, which is also working on a solution to allow for technology-neutral public service media. In the fall of 2020, the constitutional inquiry’s conclusions will be presented.

In the meantime, the current proposal suggests that the public service media companies be able to include the content they publish online when they give their yearly accounts regarding their implementation of the various demands on their content output.

**Digital platforms**

Although public service media companies should prioritise content dissemination on their own digital platforms, there are certain exceptions that allow them to meet the requirement of reaching their audience.

**A broad content assignment**

The proposal suggests that public service media continue with its broad content assignment, as well as the assignment to reflect the whole of Sweden – i.e., public service media content should reflect Sweden's population, for example with regard to geography, ethnicity, age, and gender. In their capacity as large media content purchasers, SR and SVT should also strengthen the production market throughout the country.

SR and SVT should also strengthen their news coverage, especially journalism in ‘blank spots’, i.e. municipalities that lack news coverage. At the same time, the public service media companies must consider commercial local media’s opportunities to operate in the local market. Like the inquiry, the Government’s proposal states that SR and SVT should focus on audio and audiovisual content. The Minister of Culture clarified that written text will not be banned, but ought to be regarded as a complement to audio and visual content, especially as a support for persons with disabilities. However, the text-based communication must not be the primary one.

Broadcasters’ funds will increase by 2 per cent each year during the period. In addition, SEK 166 million per annum will be distributed among the companies. This sum corresponds to the cost for Radiotjänst i Kiruna, which previously collected the radio and TV fee but was closed down in 2019.

The proposed permit period runs from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2025. Parliament will decide on the bill during the fall of 2019.

Read the proposal on a new public service broadcasting period (in Swedish only).

Read the parliamentary inquiry on a new public service broadcasting period (in Swedish only) or, read a brief summary of the inquiry, written by Nordicom: Proposals for public service broadcasting remit 2020–2029 (in English)
New EU rules for streaming services

In a recent report on media policy, the Swedish Press and Broadcasting Authority describes, among other things, the new EU rules for TV and streaming services. The Directive is to be implemented in the EU countries, plus Iceland and Norway.

Each year, the Swedish Press and Broadcasting Authority reviews the EU regulatory framework in the media field, as well as Swedish laws and regulations, and current investigations and decisions.

New EU rules for TV and streaming services

The report starts with the EU's Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD); that is, the common European rules for audiovisual media. In November 2018, the EU decided on a number of amendments to the Directive. These will be transposed into the member states' national legislation by September 2020. Iceland and Norway will also implement the Directive.

The changes mean that the rules for on-demand TV become more similar to those for linear TV, as for protection of minors and promoting European works. The advertising rules are to be more equivalent, as well. In addition, basic content and advertising rules are introduced for video-sharing platforms such as YouTube.

Media policy in Sweden

Further, the report by the Press and Broadcasting Authority describes the Swedish regulatory framework for media issues: relevant authorities and their assignments, the Freedom of the Press Act, the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression, and the Radio and Television Act. The Swedish system for newspaper and media subsidies is also described.

An inventory of current Swedish investigations, assignments and political decisions in the media field is also included. Currently, a review of the Radio and Television Act is under way to implement the changes in the EU AVMS Directive, an investigation of issues relating to freedom of the press and freedom of expression, and a national initiative to increase media and information literacy.

Read about and download Mediepolitik 2019 (in Swedish)

Report series: Mediepolitik [Media Policy] is part of the authority's report series Medieutveckling [Media Development], in which annual reports on media consumption and media economics are also published.

[1] Update August 2019: Sweden

On 16 August 2019, the 2018 Audiovisual Media Inquiry presented its report, proposing legislative changes and other actions needed to implement the revised AVMS Directive. It relates mainly to changes to the Radio and TV Act. During autumn 2019, the report is on referral. A Government Bill is planned for spring 2020.

The report includes an extensive summary in English.

Welcome to a new issue of our European Media Policy newsletter. The newsletter provides an update on policy developments at the European level, concentrating on news from the European Union.

Some of the contents in this year’s second issue:

- Now the “techlash” has spread to the United States. Many policymakers want to reign in the power of the tech giants.
- There was a great deal of disinformation activity by Russian and other sources during the EU elections. Internet companies should do more to prevent it, says the EU Commission. The era of self-regulation may well soon be over.
- Digital platforms have long been protected from liability for the content users post on their networks. Maybe not for much longer.
- The controversial EU copyright directive has now been adopted. But the fight over these rules may not be over yet.
- There is concern about growing “digital gaps” between rich and poor. The more technology develops the greater these gaps seem to get.

World Press Freedom Index 2019
Freedom of Expression | April 2019 | EH

Reporters Without Borders has published its annual Press Freedom Index, with three Nordic countries topping it: Norway, Finland, and Sweden. However, the number of countries regarded as safe for journalists continues to decline.

Each year, Reporters Without Borders measures the situation for press freedom in 180 countries. According to this year’s Index, the number of countries where journalists can work in safety is decreasing.

Only a quarter of the countries are classified as “good” or “fairly good” in terms of freedom of the press (a decrease from 26 to 24 per cent). In the five Nordic countries, the situation is defined as “good”.

Four Nordic countries among the top five

Norway is ranked first in the 2019 Index for the third year running, followed by Finland and Sweden. Denmark is fifth (after the Netherlands), while Iceland is ranked 14th. Finland has stepped up two places after standing up for press freedom and against hate speech [1].
Finland's improvement comes after two years of scandals having nudged the country down the list. In 2016, Finland fell from the top down to third place, due to Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's political pressure on the public service company Yle (read more in Anu Koivunen's article on #Sipilägate, from 2017). In 2017, the country fell to fourth place due to the police search of a newspaper journalist’s home.

Due to increasing online harassment, Sweden is down one place in the 2019 Index; and Iceland has also fallen one place. Meanwhile, Denmark's fifth place is a recovery after last year's fall from fourth to ninth place, caused by the murder of the journalist Kim Wall.

A worsening media climate
Europe is still the world's safest region for journalists to work in. Nonetheless, threats to press freedom are increasing. Serious threats to journalists are more common, and journalists have been murdered in Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Malta.

In the United States (48th), press freedom is under attack. An increasingly hostile climate towards journalists, including death threats, has made the country fall three places in the Index, and the media climate is now classified as “problematic”.

Russia (149th) and Turkey (157th) continue to persecute independent media outlets, and Turkey is referred to as "the world’s biggest jailer of professional journalists". At the bottom of the Press Freedom Index is Turkmenistan, in company with North Korea and Eritrea.

Read more on Reporters Without Borders’ website:
The World Press Freedom Index 2019 – ranking
General Analysis: 2019 World Press Freedom Index – A cycle of fear
Regional Analyses
More about the methodology

[1] See the Union of Journalists in Finland’s news feed:
• Suomi nousi lehdistönvapausvertailussa toiseksi – Taustalla tuomiot vihapuheesta
• Finland steg i pressfrihetsindexet – domarna mot hatretorik förbättrade placeringen

READ MORE: The Assault on Journalism
Building Knowledge to Protect Freedom of Expression

To support joint efforts to protect journalism, there is a growing need for research-based knowledge. Acknowledging this need, the aim of this publication is to highlight and fuel journalist safety as a field of research, to encourage worldwide participation, as well as to inspire further dialogues and new research initiatives.

Read more: The Assault on Journalism (Nordicom, 2017)

Since 2019, a translation into Turkish is available, free of charge: Gazetecilik Saldırı Altında: Ifade Özgürlüğünü Korumak için Bilgi Üretimi
Nordicom News:
Research Platform and Research Journals

NordMedia Network: A new platform for Nordic media researchers
Research | Nordic August 2019 | KA

At the NordMedia conference in August 2019, Nordicom launched a new digital platform dedicated to Nordic media researchers. On the platform, media and communication researchers are able to present themselves and their research, find partners and keep up to date with the latest in Nordic media research, in a completely new Nordic context.

NordMedia Network is a new digital platform devoted to the community of researchers that for the past four decades has grown out of the NordMedia conference. We hope it will serve as a source for inspiration, information and interaction for media and communication researchers from, or with a research interest in, the Nordic region.

NordMedia Network is operated by Nordicom at the University of Gothenburg in collaboration with the Department of Information Science and Media Studies at the University of Bergen. NordMedia Network is funded with support from the Nordic Council of Ministers.

NordMedia Network’s features include:

- **A new researcher database.** NordMedia Network offers a searchable and freely accessible database of Nordic media researchers based on self-recruitment, which means that the researchers themselves are responsible for registering and updating their personal profiles. This makes it easy to keep track of researchers in the field and for journalists and others to find experts within different areas.

- **A researcher’s toolbox.** NordMedia Network also provides dedicated news, information and resources for the Nordic media research community. Researchers and institutions are encouraged to contribute ideas and suggest new content.

- **A permanent home for the biennial NordMedia conference.** Nordmedia Network will also host the NordMedia conference, which takes place every two years and is dedicated to Nordic media and communication research. It is organised by the national associations for media researchers, in collaboration with Nordicom.

The platform is still under construction. Help us out by creating your profile today! We also welcome your feedback as our work progresses.

Visit NordMedia Network
FAQ about NordMedia Network
Introducing the Nordic Journal of Media Studies
Research Journal | Nordic June 2019 | MJL

The first issue of a new Open Access journal, *Nordic Journal of Media Studies*, has been published. The issue editors, Kirsten Frandsen and Hanne Bruun, hope that it will contribute to the field by addressing current research topics and explore issues that are not yet fully mature. The journal is published by Nordicom and the first issue is titled *Disrupting Media Infrastructures*.

The Nordic Journal of Media Studies is a new journal that has been added to Nordicom’s portfolio of scientific publications. It is published as Open Access, which was an important aspect for the editorial committee in the decision to move to Nordicom and set up the new journal.

“Research that is funded by tax money should be openly available. It’s an ethical commitment to ensure that the public can benefit from the research that they have helped funding”, says editor Kirsten Frandsen.

*Disrupting Media Infrastructures*

The overall theme of this first issue, titled *Disrupting Media Infrastructures*, is the current changes that the media industry is going through. Due to digitalization, production networks are now possible across the world, making new ways of distributing content and building business models.

Accidentally, the theme reflects the situation the editorial committee were in when they decided to start a new open access journal.

“We were seeking to utilize options provided by digitalization, like Open Access publishing. However, we were disrupted by the infrastructures of old business models which required readers to pay in order to access research”, Kirsten Frandsen says.

*Thematic issues*

In comparison to most journal in the field, the Nordic Journal of Media Studies will be themed, meaning that the editors define the overall theme of each issue. The hope is, says Kirsten Frandsen, for the journal to address current issues and be at the forefront when it comes to exploring new research topics.

“The theme for this first issue will include articles where researchers reflect on what they think the future will look like. Our aim is to be ahead of time and make researchers write on issues that are not yet fully mature as research topics”.

"The journal will be a meeting place for Nordic, European, and global perspectives on media. Nordic media scholars have much to offer the international research community, but we also have much to learn from our international colleagues. The journal will ensure a continuous dialogue with researchers from other parts of the world”, says chief editor Stig Hjarvard.

*Part of the Nordicom portfolio of scientific publications*

As publisher, Nordicom will be in charge of producing, disseminating and marketing the new journal. Publishing Open Access is an important part of Nordicom’s mission and when being approached by the editors of Nordic Journal of Media Studies it seemed like a good match.
“Nordicom has for a long time been devoted to publishing high-quality media research of relevance for the Nordic societies. A thematic journal like The Nordic Journal of Media Studies will be a good complement to our existing journal Nordicom Review, which has a somewhat broader scope. We are very excited about the opportunity to collaborate with such a distinguished group of editors and media scholars”, says Nordicoms’ director Jonas Ohlsson.

Read the first issue of Nordic Journal of Media Studies – Disrupting Media Infrastructures
Read more about the Nordic Journal of Media Studies

Nordicom Review 1/2019
Nordicom Review | Nordic May 2019 | EH

Nordicom’s journal Nordicom Review is a traditional scientific journal in English, applying double-blind peer-review. This year’s first issue, which includes eight research articles (and book reviews), is available for download via Nordicom’s website (open access).

Some examples of the articles in Nordicom Review 1/2019 (links to PDF documents):
• Covering Regional Blind spots: Commentary Journalism in the Regional Public Sphere [Birgit Røe Mathisen & Lisbeth Morlandstø]
• Picturing Two Modernities: Ecological Modernisation and the Media Imagery of Climate Change [Jarkko Kangas]
• Crowning moments: Transformative populist use of the media and the case of Carl I. Hagen [Hilmar Mjelde]

Find all the articles in Nordic Review 1/2019

ONLINE FIRST: The articles in Nordicom Review are published online first – see the latest articles about big differences in Swedish and Danish media coverage of #MeToo, and about cultural journalism playing an important role in the Swedish reporting of the terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015. Latest articles | Press releases

Making Sense of Small and Big Data as Onlife Traces
Nordicom Review Special Issue | Nordic July 2019 | MJL

This special issue of Nordicom Review discusses how we create meaning in, and make sense of, big and small data as traces of intrinsically interwoven offline and online lives, also known as onlife traces. All articles are available as Open Access.

The articles study the onlife empirically and discuss the methods used to infer meaning from data traces to usage or users. Rather than solving the ‘meaning’ problem, some articles apply big and small data methods to the onlife while others explicitly discuss issues of sense-making in various empirical contexts that suggest further directions in the field of digital sociology.
Editors are Anja Bechmann, Kjetil Sandvik and Karin Zelano

Read the special issue 1/2019 of Nordicom Review here
Calls for papers: Nordicom Review Special Issues
Research Journals | Nordic 2019

Media Systems in the Other Nordic Countries and Autonomous Regions
Full title: Media Systems in the other Nordic countries and autonomous regions: Studies of News Media, Journalism and Democracy in Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, Samiland and Åland
Special issue editors: Ida Willig (Roskilde University & Ilisimatusarfik), Lars Nord (Mid Sweden University). Deadline for submission of full abstracts: 25 September 2019

Struggling with Technology
Special issue editors: Stine Liv Johansen (Aarhus University), Maja Sonne Damkjær (Aarhus University), Martina Skrubbeltrang Mahnke (University of Copenhagen), Ane Kathrine Lolholm Gammelby (Aarhus University). Deadline for submission of abstracts: 1 October 2019.

Class in/and the Media
Special issue editors: Johan Lindell (Karlstad University), Peter Jakobsson (Södertörn University), Fredrik Stiernstedt (Södertörn University). Deadline for abstract submissions: 15 November 2019

Stay updated with current calls for papers from Nordicom
Current calls for papers are presented at Nordicom’s website.

About the journal: Nordicom Review is an international peer-reviewed open access journal published by Nordicom at the University of Gothenburg. The publication of Nordicom Review is supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Nordicom Review is indexed by SCOPUS. Read more about Nordicom Review.
Media Trends in the Nordic Countries

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Nordicom is a co-operative body of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Nordicom follows the Nordic media development with the aim to document and spread knowledge about media trends within, and about, the Nordic region within a European and global perspective. The newsletter Media Trends in the Nordic Countries covers issues such as media consumption, structure and policy, and reports on the latest developments and current research in the field.

The newsletter is scheduled to come out three times a year.

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