



April 2021

Covid-19 changed the Nordic news media (p.3)

Brand quality most crucial trust factor (p.4)

Report shows duopoly in danish ad market (p.5)

Nordic countries top index for press freedom (p.6)

Norway: Vast support for controversial cartoons (p.7)

Denmark: Continued decline for media-spending (p.8)

Podcast growth in Norway slows down (p.9)

# Covid-19 changed the Nordic news media

A new report from Nordicom shines a light on the consequences of the pandemic on nordic news media.

[Download the report](#) (in Swedish).

## Three main findings

### **1. Accelerated digitalization of ad revenue**

The pandemic has accelerated the shift of advertising investments from national to global advertising platforms and news websites to platforms without traditional news.

### **2. More interest and trust**

The pandemic has generated a significant increase in interest and trust among Nordic citizens in content produced by professional news media.

### **3. Increased willingness to pay**

The increased news interest during the pandemic has increased the willingness to pay for digital news in all the Nordic countries. The pandemic has shown that commercial news media can expand online despite public service advancing its positions.

# Brand quality most crucial trust factor

Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism has examined how people in Brazil, India, the UK and the US view news media. Thus huge differences between the four countries, there were also many similarities.

[Download the report.](#)

Four main findings:

## **1. Brand quality = trust**

Familiarity with news brands and their reputations offline often shaped how people thought about news content online as well. Most had low trust in the information they saw on platforms. The judgment of individual news outlets often depended on how strongly people already felt toward the brands they encountered there.

## **2. Diverse perception of trust**

Editorial processes and practices of journalism were rarely central to how people thought about trust. Disinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic is not a significant factor in how people evaluated the trustworthiness of news sources.

## **3. Individual journalists less important**

In contrast to presenters on television, the work of individual journalists was often far less visible, and many of the prominent media personalities who stood out to people were often polarising figures – thus playing a lesser or even negative role for the users' assessments of trust.

## **4. Bias and hidden agendas**

Perceptions of bias and hidden agendas in news coverage were prevalent, but what people meant often reflected differences in their own political or social identities.

# Report shows duopoly in danish ad market

The Danish government has commissioned a report looking into the Danish advertising market. The final report was delivered to the government in January and made public in April.

[Read the report](#) (in Danish).

Three main findings:

## **1. A true duopoly**

Google (50%) and Facebook (14%) control 64 percent of Denmark's total digital ad spending. But: This number does not include Facebook's and Google's share of the revenue from display ads and is probably far greater. In contrast, the media sector (both news, magazines and TV) gets 15 percent of the total digital ad revenue.

## **2. Continued growth**

Google and Facebook will probably continue their growth due to their dominant position within search engines, display advertising, video and social media.

## **3. Problematic infrastructure**

Google's technology is used both when the owner of a site wants to sell advertising space and when a company, organization or others want to buy advertising space. Conflicts of interest may thus arise where Google acts on behalf of the buyer and seller in the same transaction.

# Nordic countries top index for press freedom

Reporters Without Borders have published the World Press Freedom Index, which assesses freedom of the press and expression in 180 countries. The annual index was first published in 2002.

[See the index and read more here.](#)

Four findings:

## **1. Norway tops the index**

Norway tops the World Press Freedom Index for the fifth year in a row. Finland is again the runner-up, followed by Sweden and Denmark.

## **2. Not perfect**

Although the Nordic countries are leading the way, the lack of transparency about decisions during the pandemic and politicians' practice of closed political meetings are among several negative aspects highlighted.

## **3. Negative development**

Reporters Without Borders has not registered less press freedom in the world before, and only 12 out of 180 countries (7%) can boast a good environment for journalism.

## **4. Eritrea at the bottom**

At the bottom, we find Eritrea (180), North Korea (179), Turkmenistan (178) and China (177).

# Norway: Vast support for controversial cartoons

A new report from Institute for Social Research and Fritt Ord looks into Norwegians perception of freedom of expression.

[Download the report](#) (in Norwegian).

Three main findings:

**1. Only 13 percent opposes controversial cartoons**

44 percent of Norwegians want news media to publish controversial cartoons (political/religious) even if the cartoons are perceived as offensive. 37 percent believe news media should show restraint when considering publishing such cartoons, while only 13 percent think news media definitely should not publish controversial cartoons.

**2. 26 percent accepts public racism**

26 percent think it is okay for a person to express racist opinions in public as long as they do not encourage violence. 60 percent find racist opinions in public unacceptable.

**3. Support for punishment for hate speech**

Norwegians overwhelmingly oppose hate speech on social media. People who express hate speech should be punished with a social reaction (57%), be banned from Facebook (52%), lose their job (33%), be fined (22%) or be imprisoned (8%).

# Denmark: Continued decline for media-spending

While the supply of new media services and platforms is snowballing, the average household spending on media-related items decreases in Denmark.

[Download the report](#) (in Danish).

Three main findings:

## **1. A falling trend since 2011**

In 2019 the average household in Denmark used DKK18.219 (€2.450) on media-related items (5,7% of their income). The average is DKK4.891 (€658) less than in 2011.

## **2. Less reading**

The average consumption of media primarily for reading (newspapers, books, magazines etc.) is less than half of the average consumption in 1994. The consumption of media primarily for watching/listening has had slight growth in the same period. The average spending on newspapers was DKK992 (€133) in 2019.

## **3. TV and streaming are growing**

The average spending on TV and streaming subscriptions is still growing – and has skyrocketed by 185 percent since 1994.

# Podcast growth in Norway slows down

The growth of podcasts in Norway is slowing down, but the potential is still enormous, concludes a Norwegian report from Norstat, Bauer Media, NRK and Schibsted.

[Download the report](#) (in Norwegian).

## Four main findings:

### **1. 32 percent listen to podcasts every week**

32 percent of Norwegians listen to a podcast at least weekly. 17 percent listens daily. Podcast listening's share of total audio consumption has stagnated (11%) and is at the same level as 2020.

### **2. Great potential**

45 percent of those who do not listen to podcasts today believe that they will start to consume podcasts in the future. 36 percent are willing to pay for access to an ad-free podcast, increasing from 33 percent last year.

### **3. Age gap**

People under the age of 40 listen significantly more to podcasts than those over the age of 40. Norwegians between 20 and 29 years of age, 59 percent listen weekly (33 percent listen daily).

### **4. Still an urban phenomenon**

In Oslo, one in four listens to podcasts every day. In (what the survey calls) 'the countryside', only eight percent listen daily.