



The Swedish Media Barometer 2020: Summary

Photo: Scandinav bildbyrå

The Swedish Media Barometer 2020 illustrates media use in the Swedish population aged 9–85 years old on an average day in 2020. The results of the survey can be summarised as follows:

Nine out of ten watched moving images – eight out of ten used social media networking services

Of all the different media types, the moving image was most shared in 2020. On an average day, no less than 92 per cent of the population looked at moving images in some form. This includes traditional and streamed television, web-TV and video clips as well as DVD or Blu-ray movies. A little less, 83 per cent, used social networking services. The social networking services had a higher daily reach than radio and the daily newspaper, which, when included in online use, had a reach of 75 and 68 per cent, respectively.

Total time spent with media was almost seven hours per day

Media of various kinds fill a large part of people's waking day. In 2020, the total daily media usage time was 418 minutes, or almost seven hours. It also includes the simultaneous use of media, that is, media can very well be used in parallel (e.g., someone listening to music while reading a book). The largest proportion of usage time was given to audio media, such as radio and recorded music, with 35 per cent. This was followed by the moving image with 34 per cent, text media with 16 per cent and social networking services with 14 per cent.

Listening to radio in the car is still the most common way to listen to radio

In 2020, 50 per cent of the population listened to radio in the car an average day. Car radio was thus the most common way to listen to radio. About one-third, or 32 per cent, listened to radio on a traditional radio. In terms of the population as a whole, listening via the Internet was significantly less widespread: 22 per cent listened to podcasting and 20 per cent listened to live web radio.

Six out of ten watched traditional television and five out of ten watched streamed television

Traditional television was still the most popular way to watch television in the population as a whole. But streamed television, or video-on-demand, was not far behind. The daily reach for traditional television

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was 57 per cent, and for streamed television 55 per cent. At the same time, the video-sharing platform YouTube had a daily reach of 43 per cent. In all cases, the differences in daily reach between different age groups were large.

Two out of three read the daily newspaper on an average day – digital reading dominated

68 per cent of the population read a daily newspaper on an average day in 2020. 55 per cent read the newspaper digitally and 28 per cent on paper. Most readers – 53 per cent – had the morning newspaper. Most – 53 per cent – read the morning paper on a digital platform. 26 per cent read the paper newspaper. For evening newspapers, the daily reach was 44 per cent. Here, readers of digital newspapers were in a clear majority.

One third of the population read a magazine or periodical – reading on paper dominated

On an average day in 2020, 36 per cent of the population read a magazine or periodical. 25 per cent read on paper and 15 per cent read digitally. When increasing the time interval for reading to a weekly basis, the reach of the magazine or periodical increased to 58 per cent. The largest proportion of readers, an average of 20 per cent, read weekly and monthly magazines.

The printed book remains the most popular

In 2020, the average daily readership of printed books was 45 per cent. Fiction was the most commonly read genre, followed by educational and specialist books. 34 per cent of the population read a printed book, 12 per cent listened to an audiobook and only 7 per cent read an e-book. However, the average usage time was longest for audiobooks.

Facebook was the most widely used social networking service – but not among younger users

The daily reach of Facebook was 64 percent in 2020 in the population as a whole. This made Facebook the most widespread social networking service. Facebook was the most popular platform among those between 45 and 85 years old, while the younger ones were more likely to use Snapchat and Instagram. Among the youngest, 9 to 14 years old, Tiktok was very popular.

SVT was the most used news service in 2020

53 per cent received news from SVT, the Swedish national public television broadcaster, on an average day in 2020. SVT was thus the most widely used news communicator in the population as a whole. 41 per cent received news from Swedish Radio (SR) and 39 per cent from TV4. For the news coverage from SVT – and SR and TV4 – the reach was significantly higher in the older part of the population than in the younger.

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Three out of ten consumed news via Facebook

29 per cent of the population consumed news via Facebook. That made Facebook the most used social networking service for news. In this case, the variation between different age groups was considerable. Among 9 to 14-year-olds, Instagram and Youtube were the most used sources of news among social networking services. Among 15 to 24-year-olds, Instagram was the dominant news source.

Access to smartphone almost total – except among the oldest

In 2020, 95 per cent of the population had access to a smartphone. With that, the smartphone was the most widely used media technology in Sweden, before both television and laptops. However, the dominance of the smartphone did not apply to the oldest age group, 65–85 years. In this age group, it was still a fifth that did not have a smartphone, while almost all had a television. 68 per cent of the population also had access to a tablet and 61 per cent to a media player (e.g., Apple TV or Chromecast).

Half of the population had a subscribed daily newspaper

In 2020, 49 per cent of the population had access to a subscribed daily newspaper in their household. 47 per cent had access to a subscribed morning newspaper. Most, 36 per cent, had a digital subscription and 29 percent had access to a subscribed newspaper on paper. 7 percent of the population had access to a subscription to a digital plus service from an evening newspaper.

Streaming services for television and music equally widespread

In 2020, two-thirds of the population, or 69 per cent, had access to a subscribed streaming service for television (e.g., Netflix). 68 per cent had access to a subscribed streaming service for music or podcasts (eg Spotify). In both cases, the availability was highest in the age group 9 to 14 years and lowest in the age group 65 to 85 years. 57 per cent of the population had access to a channel package for television. Here the differences between the age groups were somewhat less noticeable.

More information

- [Read the press release](#) (in Swedish)
- [Some basic tables](#) (in English)
- [Download data from the Swedish Media Barometer via Nordicom's table database](#)
- [Download The Swedish Media Barometer 2020](#)
- The Swedish Media Barometer can be ordered in print format (price SEK 275)

