

CISION®

CISION'S 2018 GLOBAL **STATE OF THE MEDIA** REPORT

NORDIC EDITION



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INTRODUCTION

The past year has been both extraordinary and challenging for journalism, to say the least. On the one hand, the profession has never been under more pressure. Constant accusations of fake news, hostility towards the media from many of the world's politicians, all while having to produce a constant stream of content, has made it a challenging year for journalists. Yet while the media is being forced to deal with these difficulties, there are several indications that the public is giving its support to journalistic institutions once more. In February 2018 *The New York Times* reported a profit increase of over 10 % for the fourth quarter and an increase of 7.7 % for the year – a turnaround for an industry that has been in a downward spiral in recent years. According to the Poynter Institute,

The Times now has over 2.6 million digital subscribers, 3.6 million if the print edition is included. What is the future of journalism? Which challenges are most evident and what is the best way to overcome them? We have studied Nordic journalists' views on these issues and compiled their opinions in this report.

Cision Nordics has published an annual report where we study the relationship between journalists and communications professionals, how they view future challenges and the nature of their daily work; since 2011.

We broadened our research to journalists throughout the Nordic countries for the first time, including responses from Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The survey was sent to contacts from Cision's media database.

**The
New York
Times**

Subscribers

2.6
million



DENMARK



NORWAY



SWEDEN



FINLAND

ABOUT THE STUDY

Cision's Nordic journalists study was performed in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The questions are drawn from Cision's global State of the Media study and the surveys were conducted in spring 2018. The same questionnaire was translated into each participating country's language.

In this 2018 report you can read about journalists' working methods, trends and challenges in the Nordic countries:

Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Public trust in journalism is a global issue, which we also discuss in this study. The report also examines the media's actions during the #Metoo movement, and how journalists and PR professionals can ensure they have a great working relationship. We hope that this report will provide important insights that you can use in your professional role.



ABOUT CISION

Cision is a world-leading company with offices in numerous countries in several continents. The company delivers comms solutions in both IR and PR. Our customers use Cision to manage all parts of their communications, everything from identifying important media and influencers to getting their message out, monitoring media and measuring the impact of their communications. Cision's Nordic office currently has a staff of 85 people who cover the whole region.



JOURNALISM CHALLENGES

HOW ARE THEY DEALING WITH IT?

Major challenges are nothing new for journalists, nor are they necessarily geographically-restricted. There are challenges that many journalists share across national borders, while global phenomena such as the debate about fake news has rippled all the way to the Nordic region.

In recent years the Finnish Council for Mass Media has introduced numerous decisions on hidden advertising, as well as directives on how to indicate that content is advertising. This is shown in the survey's responses, where Finnish journalists see the blurring of the

lines between editorial content and advertising as the major challenge, to a greater extent than the other markets do.

However it is clear that the largest challenge, regardless of country, is the concern over staffing and lack of resources. An ever smaller number of people are expected to produce more content at an ever faster pace.



Finnish Council for Mass Media has introduced decisions on hidden advertising.

The problem is perceived to be most evident in Denmark, where 16% of the journalists depict the fake news debate as the greatest journalistic challenge of the last year, while fewer than 10% highlight it as the most evident problem in Sweden, Norway and Finland.

What was the biggest challenge for journalism in the last 12 months?

▶ Ongoing conversation on "fake news"



▶ Attacks on freedom of the press



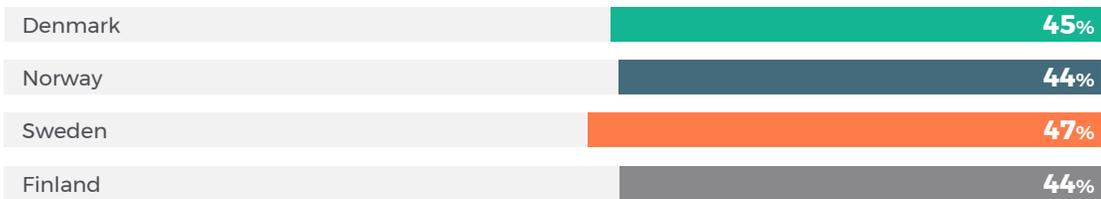
▶ Blurring lines between editorial and advertising



▶ Social networks and search engines bypassing traditional media



▶ Staffing and Resources



It is clear that different markets struggle with local challenges, but all of them are minor compared to the more alarming struggle related to staffing and resources. This lack of resources affects all other aspects of journalism.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- All countries rates Staffing and Resources as the most alarming challenge.
- There is a consensus among Nordic countries that social networks and search engines bypassing traditional media is the second biggest challenge for journalism.
- The ongoing conversation on “fake news” does not seem that alarming in Norway, Finland and Sweden where less than one out of ten rate it as the main journalistic challenge.

How are they dealing with this challenge? (As answered in question 3)

“

We use social media to track clicks on our digital news sites but that extends the risk of other people stealing the news our customers are paying for.

Quality and resources are intertwined – the fewer resources, the lower quality and less scrutiny in content. It all depends on speed and clicks.

”

DENMARK

“

Working harder and more hours, you have to be online 24/7.

Being active on social media...trying to benefit from it instead of “resisting”.

”

NORWAY

“

We make sure we get the news out fast before it has spread around on social media with inaccuracies. But, being fast can't come at the cost of accuracy.

We're working on our content to try to find what digital readers are willing to pay for.

”

SWEDEN

“

By being ethical, by doing quality journalism.

We develop web and content in interaction with the audience.

”

FINLAND

There is a correlation between staffing and resources being the major challenge and the voices from the industry. Working harder and longer hours, creating lower quality content, provides less scrutiny

due to lack off resources. This illustrates that journalists are fighting to keep up with the speed with fewer staff members, meaning quality suffers.

JOURNALISM AND TRUST IN THE NORDICS

One of the most important assets for journalists is the trust of the people who consume their content. Without trust, the entire premise that journalism is built upon, that what is being communicated is truthful and accurate, crumbles. Today access to information is essentially unlimited due to the internet and social media. This has created scepticism towards media outlets that were previously trusted, given rise to

contemporary expressions such as "fake news" and "alternative facts."

The declining level of trust in journalism may be a global issue, but we can see that there are discernible differences, even among the Nordic countries.

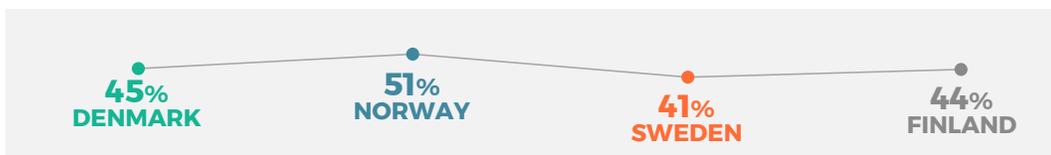
It is notable that very few feel trust from the public towards the media increased over the last year. On the contrary, all countries **except Norway have a majority of journalists believing the public has lost trust in media.**

Has the public lost or gained trust in the media over the last year?

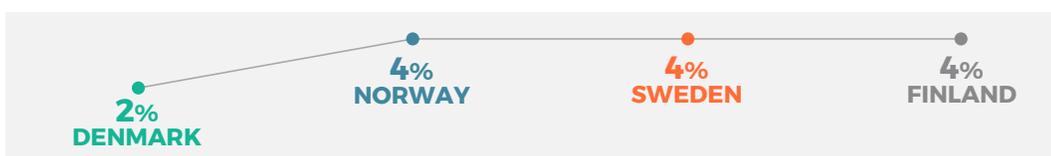
▶ The public has lost trust in the media



▶ Trust in the media has not substantially changed



▶ The public has gained trust in the media



In Denmark, Sweden and Finland, the majority of respondents feel that the public has lost faith in the media in the last year. This leaves Norway, where a majority perceives that public trust is unchanged, as an outlier. How will this affect relationships with the PR sector? One in four Norwegian respondents feels that the relationship between journalists

and communications professionals is becoming less important.

The need for expanded cooperation with the PR sector is notable by its absence, with only Finnish journalists – and then only 13 % of them – believing that communications professionals can help build public trust, as the following graphs indicate.

Are your relationships with PR professionals more or less valuable as a result?

More valuable



Less valuable



Neutral



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Norway is the only country where a majority of journalists believe trust has remained the same as last year, with one quarter saying that relationships with PR have become less valuable.
- Overall, journalists believe that trust in the media has declined, but it doesn't affect relationships with PR.

While other markets believe that the public has lost trust in the media, only 45 % of the Norwegian journalists agree. Instead, they say that trust has not substantially changed.

Looking at whether relationships with PR professionals have become more or less valuable as a result of this, one out of four Norwegian journalists believe it has become less valuable.

#METOO MOVEMENT IN THE NEWS

No one could have missed the #MeToo wave that swept over the world in the fall of 2017, least of all how the media played a major role in the scrutiny. Testimony and accusations on social media were highlighted in traditional media, where the identities of public figures were linked with assault claims. Journalists in the Nordic countries disagree about whether these cases, which happened before there any form of court case, has affected the perception of journalism.

Some feel that the power of the movement encouraged crime victims to dare to hold those in power to account, with the media justified to publish stories about the accused.

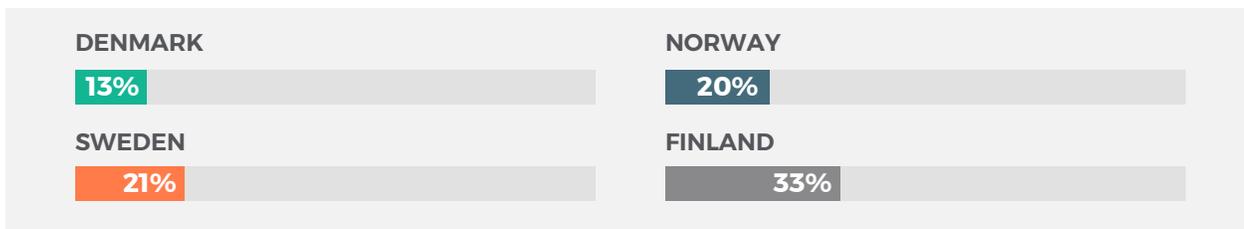
Others assert that the media abandoned its ethics when they published accusations that had not yet gone through a legal process, thereby damaging their credibility. We asked the journalists for their opinions on how this affected the public perception of journalism.

According to a third of the Finnish journalists, the reporting on #MeToo has strengthened the role of journalists. This is compared with the 22% who feel that it has damaged the reputation of journalism.

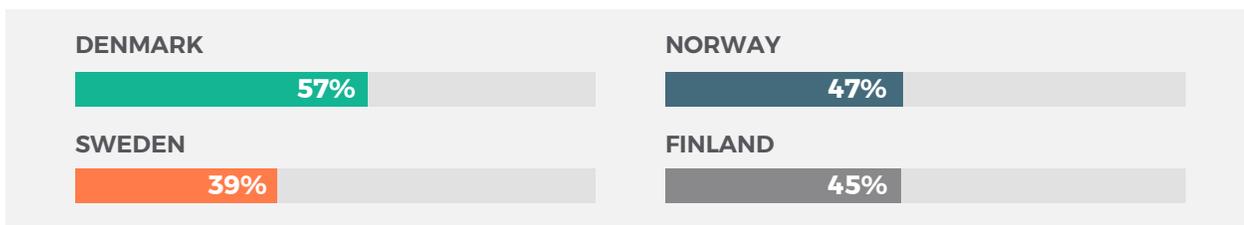
However, a majority believe that it has not affected journalism's reputation, just as in Norway and Denmark. Sweden is the only country where the majority felt that the reporting on #MeToo has actually damaged journalist's reputation.

Do you think having movements like #MeToo and #TimesUp play out in media before cases go to a court of law help or hurt the perception of journalism?

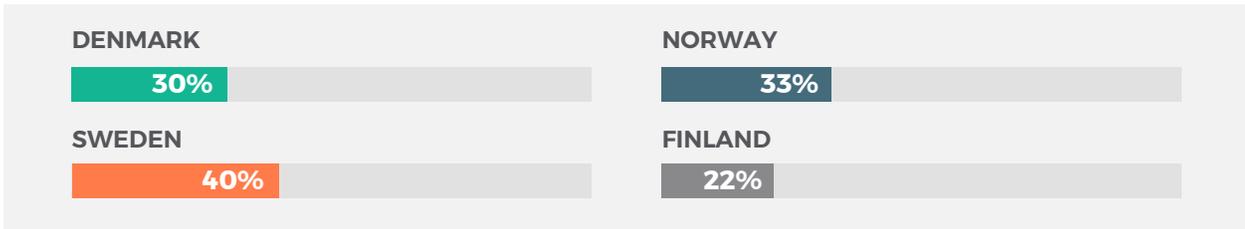
▶ Strongly enforces journalism's role



▶ Didn't make a difference



▶ Hurt journalism's image



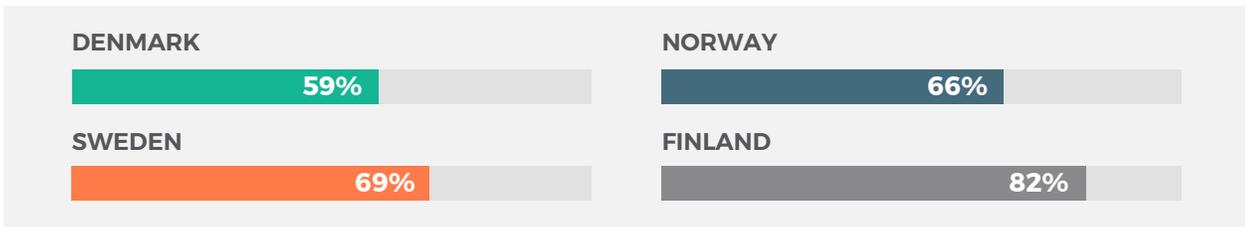
Considering the public discourse on fake news and the drama around #MeToo perhaps it's not surprising that the majority of the journalists consider that content being reviewed for quality and accuracy to be the most important consideration for their organization, regardless of which country they come from.

Meanwhile more than eight out of ten journalists from Finland consider reviewing for factual accuracy to be the most important consideration, compared with the 59% from Denmark.

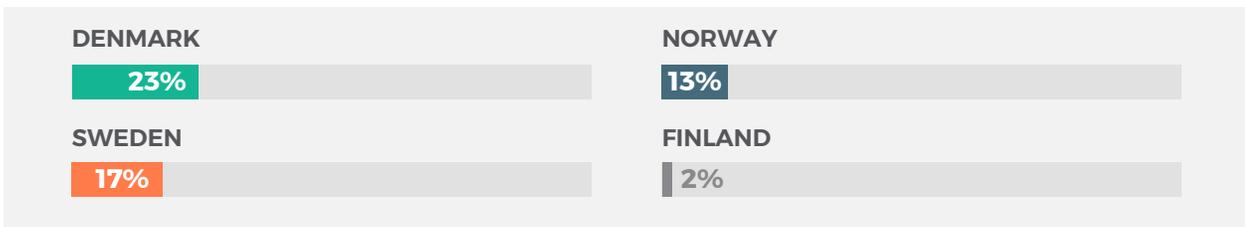
The promise of exclusivity in reporting is important to Danes, with 23% viewing it as the most important consideration for their organization.

Which is more important to your organization?

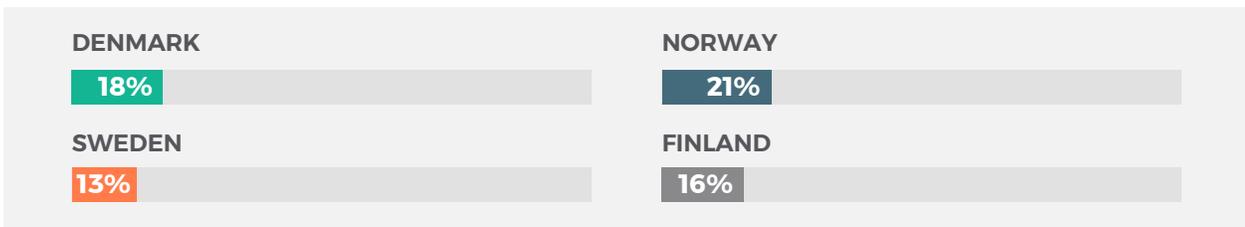
▶ Ensuring content is 100 percent accurate



▶ Exclusivity



▶ Being the first to publish content/break news



TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE IN MEDIA

Ever faster technological advances mean that journalists must constantly review their work methods and approach. The technical keys to success quickly become irrelevant when the locks are changed by new technology created by tech companies. However, continual advances in technology also provide opportunities for journalists to streamline their processes and handle the challenges they face. Journalists are divided over which new technology will help them the most.

In Norway and Denmark the updated algorithms in social media are considered to have the greatest potential, making it easier for journalists to optimise their content to reach relevant target groups. Meanwhile Finnish journalists feel that improved and cheaper video production

is most important. These resources make it easier for journalists to produce different types of content themselves, saving time.

Better and more cost-effective video production goes hand-in-hand with the primary challenge facing journalism according to the respondents – staffing and resources. Journalists must optimize how they work: a job that used to mean writing an article in the past now also includes video and photo production.

Swedish journalists believed that social media algorithms and AI for analysis of traffic and content are the most important technical advances which will affect journalism.

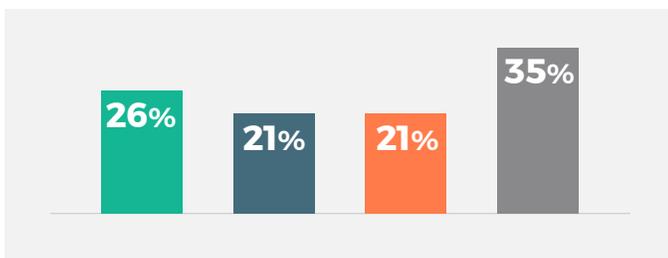


FINLAND

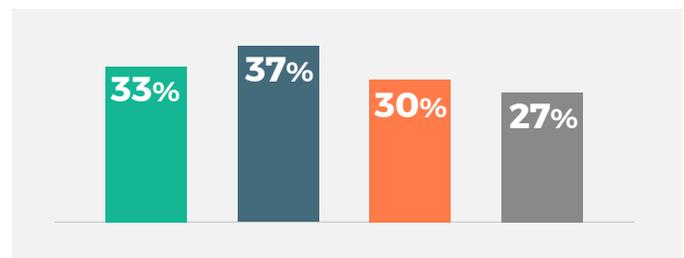
35% of Finnish journalists rank better and cheaper video production technology as having the greatest potential benefits, most likely due to the main challenge concerning staffing and resources.

What new technology, and its application and potential benefits for journalism will change the way you work the most?

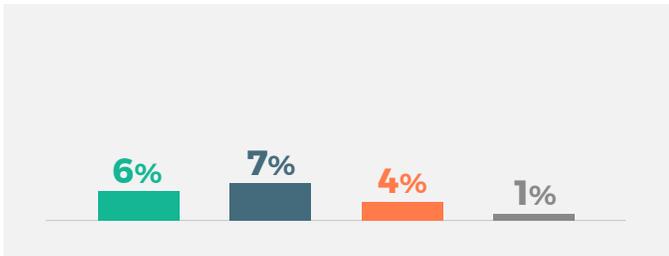
▶ Better and cheaper video production technology (drones, cameras, etc.)



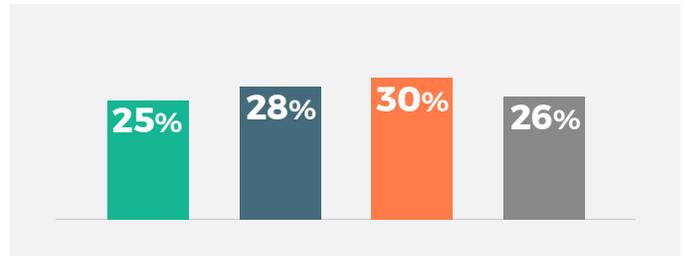
▶ Updated social media algorithms (e.g. Facebook's updates)



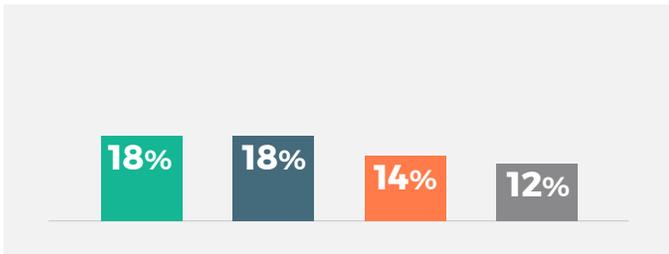
▶ Voice recognition/ activated technology and assistants



▶ AI/ machine learning on the back end (ie., to analyze traffic/ content performance and predict trends in readership/viewership)



▶ AI/ machine learning on the front end (ie, to automate the creation of articles, videos using interview footage)



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Updated social media algorithms are ranked highest in all countries except Finland where it is ranked second.
- As exciting as voice recognition may seem, it is note likely to affect the way journalists work in the near future

Overall, how satisfied are you with PR pros you work with in your area of expertise?



How much do journalists appreciate PR and communications professionals? Quite a lot, at least if you work in Finland, where the communications professionals receive an impressive grade of 3.46 out of five. This is much higher than in Norway, where the grade was 2.83 out of five.

Finnish journalists rate the relationship with local PR professionals highest of all countries, with an average of 3.46 out of 5.

THE RELATIONSHIP WITH PRs

The press release is considered the most reliable information source from communications professionals, at least in Sweden, Finland and Norway. It provides journalists with news in well packaged form with attached multimedia and a relevant contact person for additional information.

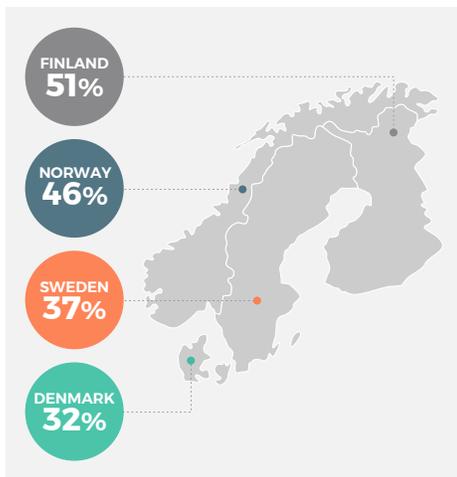
However, the Danish journalists highlight spokespeople as the most reliable information source, where one person who is designated by the organization can be quoted and also held accountable for their statements later on.



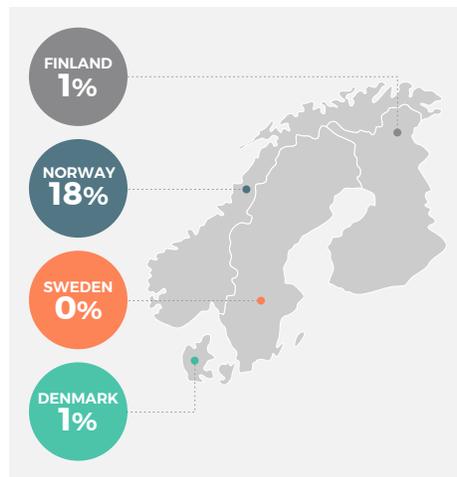
Press releases ranked as most trustworthy brand source in **Norway, Sweden and Finland.**

Which brand source do you consider the most trustworthy?

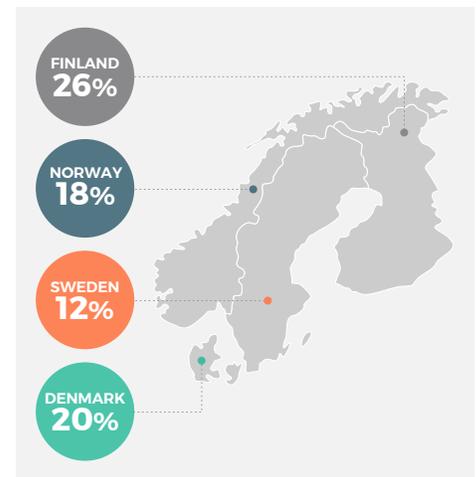
▶ Press releases



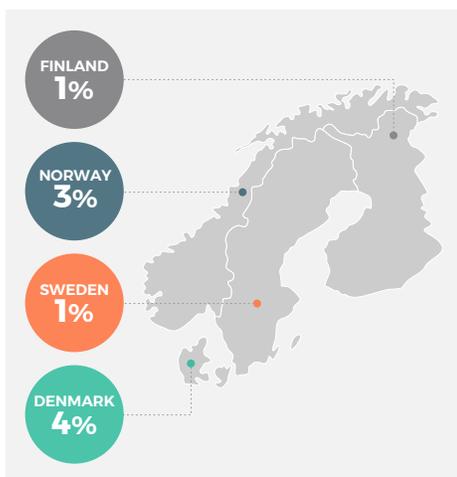
▶ Company blog



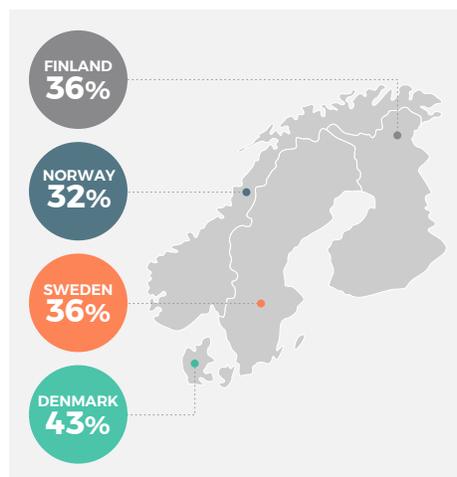
▶ Company website



▶ Company and social media channels



▶ Spokesperson



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Given the current debate on Fake News, the press release still play a vital role in modern journalism
- Spokespersons are also believed to be trustworthy, this goes hand in hand with the need for data and expert sources from PR pros

HOW CAN PR HELP?

When we gave the journalists the chance to provide constructive feedback to the PR sector, their answers were remarkably varied depending on the country where they operated. The most common demand was for data and expert statements, but this only tells half the story. In Finland, 70 % of those surveyed shared this opinion, while countries such as Sweden and Norway had a much lower rate of agreement (40% and 32% respectively). In these countries the responses were more evenly distributed, covering

personalised mailings, research to understand the areas covered by journalists and fewer mass mailings.

A clear correlation with previous responses in the report can also be seen here. Journalists are satisfied with communications professionals, as long as they don't spam them and press releases are perceived to be valuable. Given they value content that is 100% accurate, it's no surprise that they want communications professionals to provide data and expert statements when needed.



"Provide me with data and expert sources when I need them" is ranked as most valuable task from PRs in all countries

What is the No. 1 thing that PR professionals can do to help you?

► Stop spamming me



► Research/ understand my media outlet



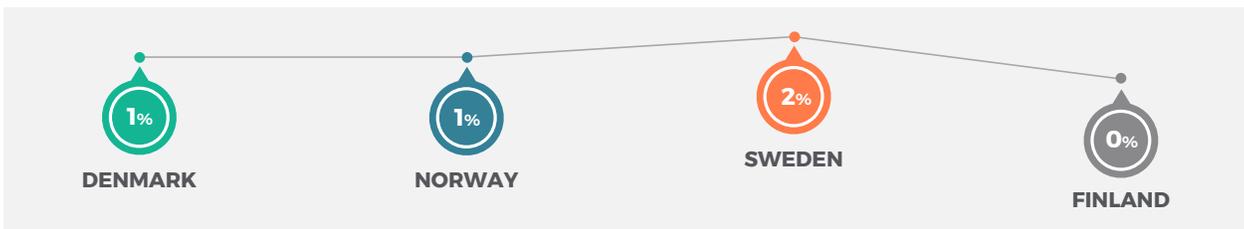
▶ Tailor the pitch to suit my beat(s)/ coverage



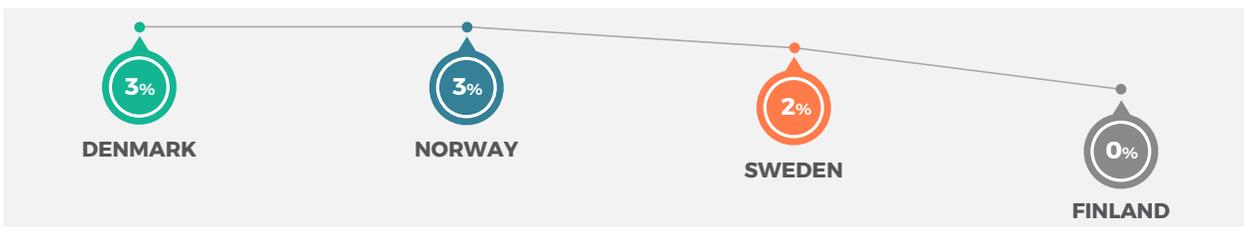
▶ Provide me with data and expert sources when I need them



▶ Include multimedia assets with your pitch



▶ Other (please describe)



While the Finnish journalists resoundingly rank “data and expert sources when they need them” as the most valuable help PR’s can provide, Danish and Swedish journalists are a lot more fragmented.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

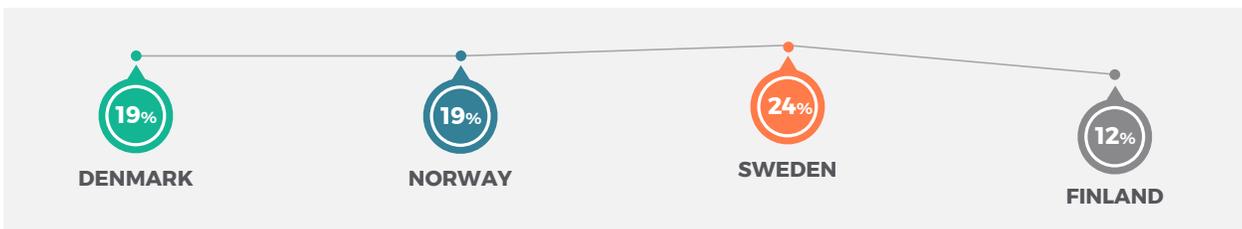
- All countries rate access to data and expert sources when they need them as the main way PR pros can help them.
- All four countries believe that including multimedia assets in the pitch is not the main priority.

How can press releases be more effective?

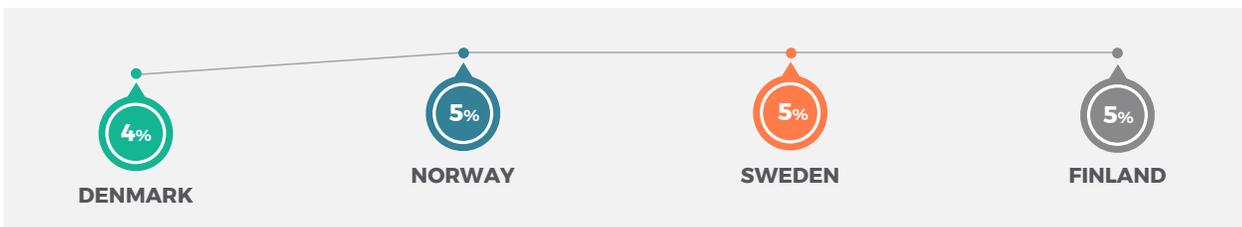
▶ News hook clearly stated



▶ Tells a story conversationally; avoids standard press release template and jargon



▶ Include more multimedia elements



▶ Add quality quotes that add depth to the story



The Nordic countries are united when it comes to the most important improvement regarding press releases. A clearly stated news hook is most important in all markets, just as

staffing and resources are seen as the major challenge in each country. Getting a clearly stated news hook not only improves articles, it also saves a lot of time for the journalists.