



# How Do Children Receive Swedish Film?

Analysis of the audience for  
18 Swedish films for children



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# Summary

This report analyses the predominant reasons for watching film among children in Sweden today, and how successful 18 Swedish films were with the children. The report is based on a survey conducted by market research company YouGov on behalf of the Swedish Film Institute. During the period 12 August – 2 September 2015, a total of 1,011 online interviews were conducted with boys and girls aged 6-14 years. An invitation to take part in the survey was sent out to parents with children of these ages. The selection of parents is representative of the Swedish population in terms of gender, age and region.

In summary, the report shows that:

- Children find Swedish children's film to be of high quality. On the whole, Swedish children's film has had a broad reach among children aged 6 to 14. The overwhelming majority, 88%, have seen at least one of the 18 Swedish films in the study. But half of the Swedish films have been watched by less than 10% of the respondents.
- Generally speaking, most children think the best thing about watching film is that it is exciting and makes them laugh. If more Swedish films for children were perceived as exciting and funny, the appeal of Swedish children's film would probably increase.
- Based on the results of the survey, we have identified seven different audience profiles pertaining to different children's attitudes towards film. We have named these profiles Thrill, Laughter, Tears, Company, Fantasy, Knowledge and Fear.
- Somewhat more respondents in the audience profile Knowledge have seen at least one of the Swedish films. In addition, a number of the Swedish films have been seen to a greater extent in the audience profiles Company, Fear and Tears.
- The older children (10-14 years) have to a greater extent seen more films. Only three of the Swedish films have been seen to a greater extent by the younger children; Two of them are animated. There is a need for more films for children aged between 6 and 9. Animated films have great potential to attract this group, since younger children prefer animated films to live-action films.
- Of the films that have been seen by less than 10% of the respondents, most were seen to a greater extent by children aged between 10 and 14. Since friends comprise the most important source of information for this age group, efforts targeting this particular group ought to have the greatest effect. Reaching out to children aged 10-14 calls for innovative marketing, for example focusing on online search and social media.

- In total, audience profiles had an effect on who has seen the film for 9 out of the 18 Swedish films. Age had an effect in 15 cases, and gender in 1 case. The child's consumption patterns had an effect in 5 cases. The level of household income had an impact in only 2 cases. The child's home region has had no effect for any of the films. This means that age and audience profile are the most important parameters to consider when positioning Swedish films for children.
- 49% of the children said that they watch film at the cinema. This can be compared to 79% saying that they watch film on TV, 47% on a tablet and 37% on a computer. There are more children who go to the cinema in the age group 10-14 and in the Laughter, Fear and Company profiles.
- Relatively few children said that they watch film at school. If more children saw film at school, Swedish films for children and young people could gain a far wider audience, particularly when it comes to older films and festival films.

# Introduction

How broadly do Swedish films reach out to children aged 6-14 years? What are the differences in film consumption between different children? What is their primary reason for watching film? How do they access information about films? How can Swedish children's film be made more appealing?

A previous study presented in the Swedish Film Institute's report entitled *Vem såg filmen*<sup>1</sup> asked questions about several Swedish films for children. Since the study only encompassed people aged between 15 and 74, it was hard to gather any relevant information from the results for these films. It did, however, show that our knowledge of film viewing among children is very limited. We also saw that several of the most viewed Swedish films in cinemas in 2014 were children's films. Knowledge of children's film-viewing habits are becoming increasingly important for the film industry. At the same time, children and young people are a prioritised group in cultural policy.

As in the report entitled *Vem såg filmen*, this report also analyses the reasons behind the decision to watch a film, and differences between people in how they relate to film. As in *Vem såg filmen*, the report also contains an analysis of the viewing for specific film titles. In an age when audiences are becoming increasingly hard to reach, knowledge about what drives different groups is needed. This report is part of a more long-term process of describing and categorising audiences for Swedish film. The aim is to increase knowledge of what guides audiences' choices, and what film means in different people's lives. In the long term, the goal is to help increase the audience for Swedish film, and to strengthen the role of film in society.

Our aim with this report is partly to look at the predominant reasons for watching film among children in Sweden today, and partly to gauge how successful specific films are among children. The report can be used by those interested in a specific film, but also to obtain an idea of the driving forces behind film consumption more generally among children and young people.

The report is based on a survey conducted by market research company YouGov on behalf of the Swedish Film Institute. During the period 12 August – 2 September 2015, a total of 1,011 online interviews were conducted with boys and girls aged 6-14 years. An invitation to take part in the survey was sent out by e-mail to parents with children of these ages. The selection of parents is representative of the Swedish population in terms of gender, age and region.

The survey asked questions regarding film viewing and attitudes to film generally, as well as questions about 18 Swedish feature-length films. Of these, nine are films for children from 2013-2015. Three are films for young people from 2013-2015. The other six films are older films for children/young people, the oldest one being from 1999. In addition to the 18 Swedish films, one foreign film, *Frozen*, was included for comparison purposes.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Who saw the film?' – not available in English.

Firstly, consumption patterns are described: in what screening platforms children watch film, and how they access information about film. The subsequent chapter focuses on attitudes towards film and different audience profiles. Following that is a chapter which analyses the audience of the 18 Swedish feature-length films. For each film, the most prominent sub-groups are outlined, i.e. those with a higher proportion of viewers than the average. The report finishes off with some conclusions about the analysis.

To provide perspective and perhaps answer any questions that arise, it may also be of interest to compare the results of this questionnaire survey to actual cinema statistics, which can be found in the Swedish Film Institute publication *Facts and figures*, among other places<sup>2</sup>.

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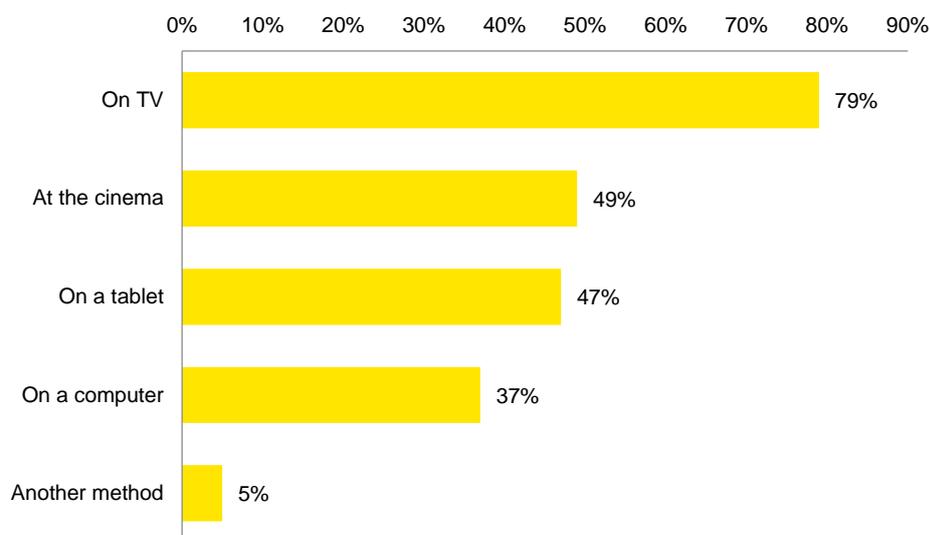
<sup>2</sup> The page <http://www.sfi.se/en-GB/Statistics/> contains reports as well as a dynamic statistical tool that enables searches relating to the audience for different films.

# Consumption patterns

To obtain an idea of children’s consumption patterns, the survey asked where the children generally see film, in what contexts they see film, and how they generally hear about films. This chapter analyses the answers to these questions.

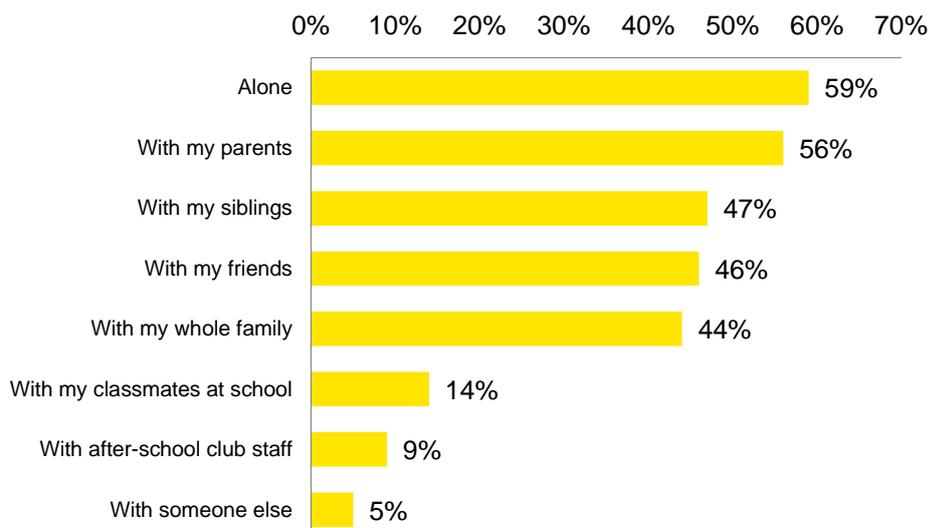
The most common film-viewing medium among children between the ages of 6 and 14 is television. Almost 80% said that they watch film on TV. Almost half said that they watch film at the cinema. Roughly as many said that they watch film on a tablet. 37% watch film on a computer.

**Percentage that watch film in different viewing media**



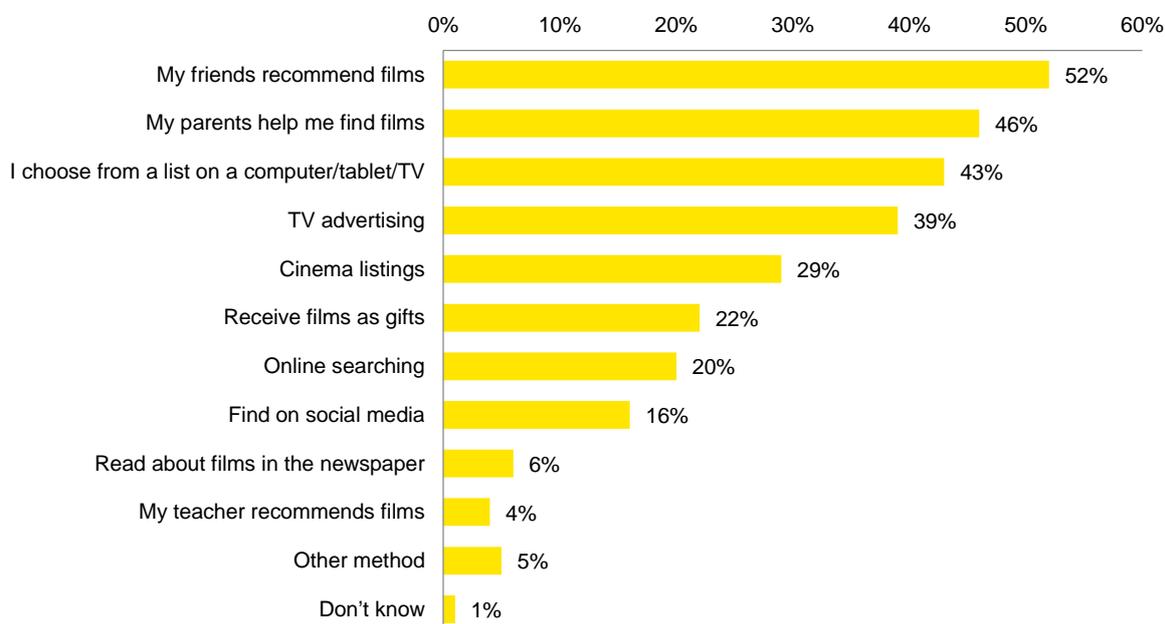
When it comes to social context, it is most common that children watch film alone. Almost as many watch film with their parents. Just under half watch film with siblings and friends. Only 14% said that they watch film with their classmates at school. 9% said that they watch film at their after-school club.

### Percentage that watch film in different contexts



The two most common ways children hear about films are word-of-mouth from friends and assistance from parents in finding a film. Other common information paths are charts on a computer/tablet/TV and TV advertising. Somewhat less common are cinema listings, receiving films as gifts, and searching online and on social media. Few tend to read about films in the newspaper or get recommendations from a teacher.

### Percentage hearing about films in different ways



Interest in animated films is roughly the same as interest in live-action. 43% prefer to see animated film, and 51% prefer to see live-action. 40% said that they often watch films in another language where they have to read the subtitles. A further 42% said they do this occasionally. 66% said that they have wanted to see a film but that their parents did not allow it.

There is a distinct difference in consumption patterns among children aged 6-9 and those aged 10-14. 6-9 year-olds see film at the cinema and on a computer to a lesser extent. They see film to a greater extent with siblings and at their after-school club. They more rarely watch films in another language. They have a clear preference for animated films above live-action. It is more common that their parents recommend films and that they receive films as gifts.

### **Differences in consumption between younger and older children**

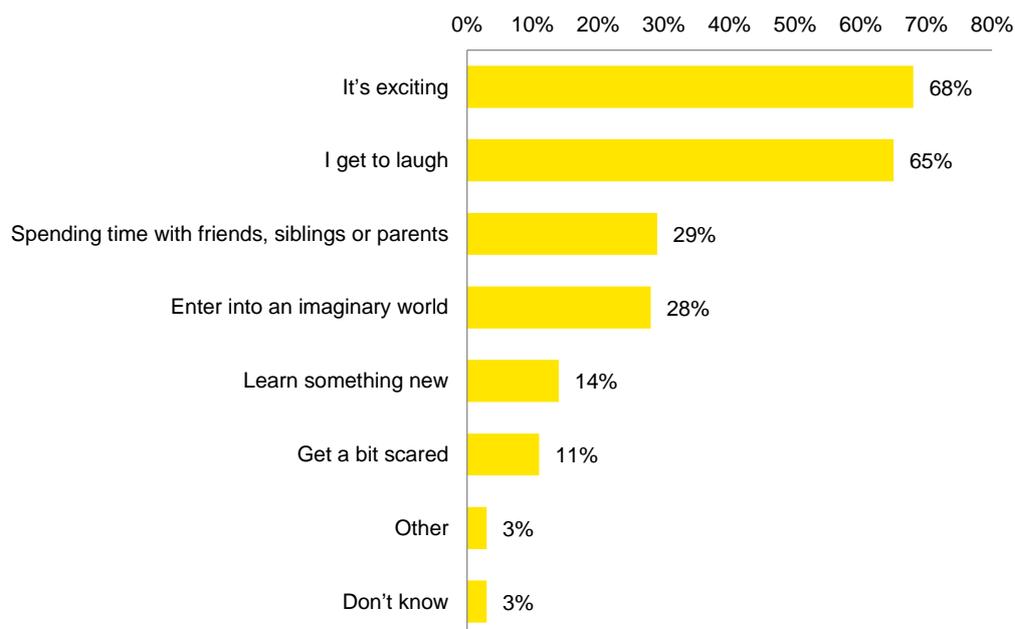
6-9 years	10-14 years
TV and tablet	Cinema and computer
Watch film with siblings/after-school club staff	Watch film with friends
Parents recommend, get films as gifts	Friends recommend, cinema listings, social media, online, newspapers
Animated film	Live-action film
Films in Swedish	Films in a language other than Swedish

10-14 year-olds see film at the cinema and on a computer to a greater extent. They see film to a greater extent with friends. It is also more common that they obtain information about films through friends. In addition, it is more common that they obtain information from cinema listings, online search, social media and newspapers. It is also more common in this age group to watch films in a language other than Swedish. They have a clear preference for live-action above animated films.

# Audience profiles

The survey asked what the best thing is about watching film. The children in the survey think the best thing about film is that it is exciting and makes them laugh. Around one-third said that the best thing about watching film is that they get to spend time with friends, siblings or parents. Roughly the same number think the best thing is being able to enter into a fantasy world. Fewer think that the best thing about watching film is that they learn something new and that the best thing is getting a bit scared. Since each respondent was able to choose several possible answers, the sum of the different options is more than 100%.

## Percentage that think certain aspects are the best thing about watching film



The responses to this question reflect quite well the predominant reasons among the population aged between 15 and 74 years. In this group too, joy/laughter and thrill are the two most common responses. One difference, however, is that the percentage specifying a particular reason is generally lower among the children. For example, 91% of those aged 15-74 said they watch feature-length films that evoke joy/laughter.

Another question in the survey was whether the children have cried when watching a film. Based on the answers to this question, and the question on the best thing about watching film, we have identified seven different audience profiles pertaining to different children's attitudes towards film. The seven audience profiles overlap, so an individual may be included in more than one profile. These audience profiles are outlined below.

## **Thrill**

68% of the children said that they watch film because it is exciting. This is a broad group which does not stand out in any of the survey questions.

## **Laughter**

65% said that they watch film to get a good laugh. Within this group, more than average watch film at the cinema. They see film to a greater extent with parents, friends and the whole family. They obtain information about film to a greater extent via their parents and by finding films in the cinema listings.

## **Tears**

47% said that they have cried when watching a film. They watch films in a language other than Swedish to a greater extent. They prefer live-action films above animated films. They obtain information about film via friends' recommendations and social media. They are to a greater extent girls and aged 10-14.

## **Company**

29% said that they watch film to spend time with friends, siblings or parents. They see film at the cinema and on a computer to a greater extent. They see film to a greater extent with others, whether parents, siblings, friends, the whole family or classmates at school. There are more children in this group who often watch films in a language other than Swedish, where they have to read the subtitles. They prefer live-action films above animated films. They obtain information about film to a greater extent by choosing from a list on a computer/tablet/TV, by finding films in the cinema listings, by searching online and via social media. They are to a greater extent girls and aged 10-14.

## **Fantasy**

28% said that they watch film to enter into a fantasy world. They see film to a greater extent with their parents, friends, the whole family or their school class. They obtain information about film to a greater extent via friends' recommendations, TV advertising, receiving films as gifts and searching online.

## **Knowledge**

14% said that they watch film to learn something new. The children in this group generally watch film on a tablet to a greater extent. They also see film to a greater extent with parents, siblings, friends, the whole family or classmates at school. More obtain information from a list on a computer/tablet/TV, via TV advertising, cinema listings, and by receiving films as gifts.

## **Fear**

11% said that they watch film to get a bit scared. Children in this group see film at the cinema and on a tablet or computer to a greater extent, and alone to a greater extent. More said that they have wanted to see a film but that their parents did not allow it. They have seen films in a language other than Swedish to a greater extent. They prefer live-action films above animated films. They obtain information about film via friends' recommendations, lists on a computer/tablet/TV, cinema listings and social media. More children in this group are girls, and more are aged 10-14.

**Links between audience profiles and different information paths**

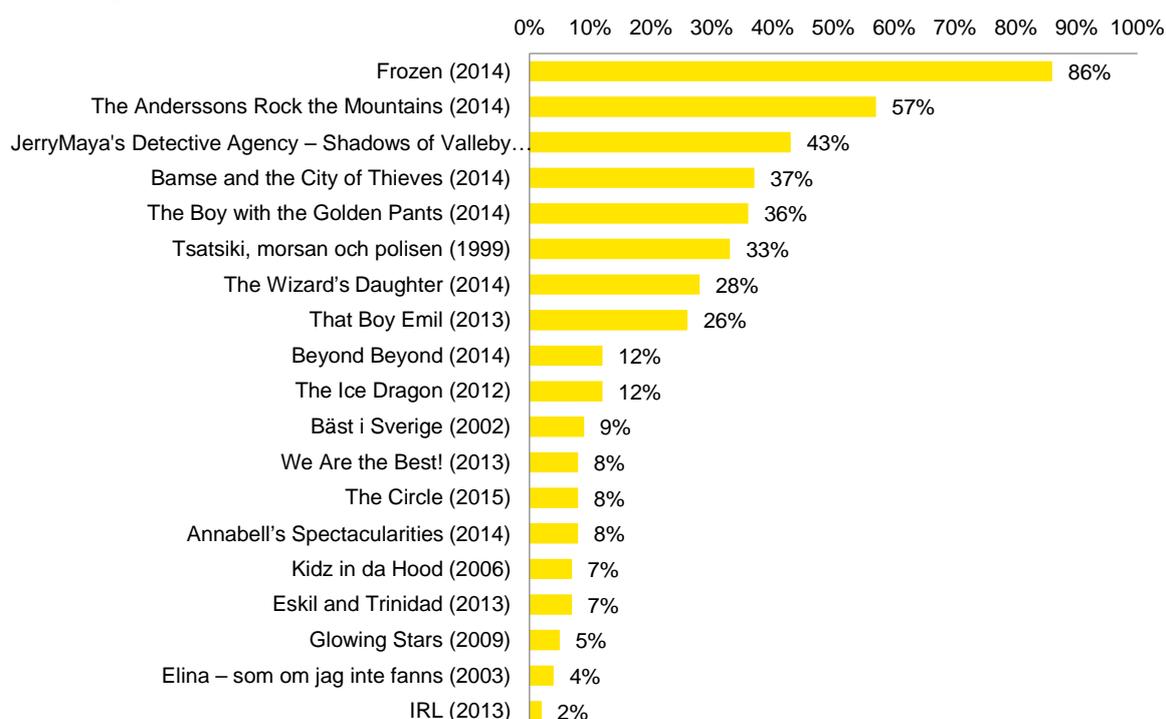
	Laughter	Tears	Company	Fantasy	Knowledge	Fear
Friends' recommendations		X	X	X		X
Parents' help	X					
List on computer/tablet/TV			X		X	X
TV advertising				X	X	
Cinema listings	X		X		X	X
Films as gifts				X	X	
Search online			X	X		
Social media		X	X			X

# How the films were received

This chapter looks at how the films were received with regard to how many of the respondents have seen the films, how the films were rated by those who saw them, and who has seen each film. The survey asked if a person had seen a particular film or not generally, regardless of viewing platform.

Of the 19 films included in the survey, *Frozen* is the one that most said they have seen; a full 86% of the studied age group have seen this film. Of the Swedish films, *The Anderssons Rock the Mountains* was seen by most, followed by *JerryMaya's Detective Agency – Shadows of Valleby*, *Bamse and the City of Thieves* and *The Boy with the Golden Pants*. Half of the Swedish films have been watched by less than 10% of the children. Meanwhile the overwhelming majority, 88%, have seen at least one of the Swedish films. On the whole, Swedish children's film has had a broad reach among children aged 6 to 14. The 12% who have not seen any of the films are represented equally in all the sub-groups studied in the survey. However, somewhat more respondents have seen at least one of the Swedish films in the audience profile Knowledge.

## Percentage who have seen the studied films



Generally speaking, the films recently launched widely at the cinema have been seen by most. Of the older films, *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* (no English title) stands out with the most viewers. The difference in cinema admissions between *Frozen* and the most seen Swedish film, *The Anderssons Rock the Mountains*, is less than the difference apparent here. This could be due to two factors. Firstly, *Frozen* appears to have had more success on the domestic market than *The Anderssons*, considering physical sales at least. Secondly, it is possible that *Frozen* had more of an impact specifically in the age group 6-14 years.

Some of the films had age limits, which may partly explain how broad their reach was among the children. This is particularly true of *The Boy with the Golden Pants*, *The Ice Dragon*, *The Circle* and *IRL*, which had an age rating of 11. Age limit may have had less of an influence for *Frozen*, *The Wizard's Daughter*, *Beyond Beyond*, *Best i Sverige*, *Kidz in da Hood* and *Eskil and Trinidad*, which were given an age rating of 7.

The respondents were also asked to rate the films they had seen on a scale of 1 to 5. Several of the most viewed films are among those with the highest scores. There are, however, a few exceptions; films that have been given a very high score yet few children have seen them. This applies particularly to *The Circle*, *IRL*, *Annabell's Spectacularities* and *Beyond Beyond*.

#### **The children's average score compared to the score index from Swedish film reviews**

Title	Average score	Score index <sup>3</sup>	% who have seen the film
<i>Frozen</i>	4.38	3.60	86%
<i>The Circle</i>	4.35	3.52	8%
<i>The Anderssons Rock the Mountains</i>	4.23	1.98	57%
<i>JerryMaya's Detective Agency – Shadows of Valleby</i>	4.17	3.03	43%
<i>The Boy with the Golden Pants</i>	4.09	2.96	36%
<i>The Wizard's Daughter</i>	4.06	2.95	28%
<i>IRL</i>	3.95	2.75	2%
<i>Annabell's Spectacularities</i>	3.95	3.32	8%
<i>Beyond Beyond</i>	3.92	2.90	12%
<i>The Ice Dragon</i>	3.92	3.26	12%
<i>Kidz in da Hood</i>	3.91	3.21	7%
<i>Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen (No English title)</i>	3.90	-	33%
<i>Best i Sverige</i>	3.90	-	9%
<i>Bamse and the City of Thieves</i>	3.90	3.54	37%
<i>Glowing Stars</i>	3.81	3.47	5%
<i>That Boy Emil</i>	3.71	3.11	26%
<i>Eskil and Trinidad</i>	3.68	3.26	7%
<i>Elina – som om jag inte fanns (No English title)</i>	3.60	-	4%

<sup>3</sup> The score index is based on an average from newspapers Dagens Nyheter, Svenska Dagbladet, Göteborgsposten, Sydsvenskan, Metro, Aftonbladet, Expressen, Helsingborgs Dagblad and Upsala Nya Tidning, and TV4 Nyhetsmorgon, SVT morgon, moviezine.se, TT Spektra, SR P4 Filmprojektet/SR P4 radio Stockholm. Scores on a scale other than 0-5 have been adjusted accordingly. At least five sources are needed to be included. Measurements began in 2006, so there is no score index for films released before then.

*We Are the Best! (Vi är bäst!)* 3.50 3.64 8%

Comparing the children’s scores from the survey to those of Swedish film critics, there are some clear differences. To begin with, the children have consistently given higher scores, averaging 3.94 out of 5 compared to the critics’ 3.16. In one case only have the critics given a higher score – for *We Are the Best!* The greatest differences between the children’s scores and the critics’ can be seen in *The Anderssons*, *IRL*, *JerryMaya*, *The Boy with the Golden Pants* and *The Wizard’s Daughter*.

A summary of who has seen the various films to a greater extent is given in the table below. The summary is based on four parameters: audience profile, age, gender and consumption patterns with regard to different viewing media.

**Summary of who has seen the various films to a greater extent**

Title	Film type	Audience profile	Age/gender	Consumption patterns
<i>Frozen</i>	Animated	Tears		
<i>The Anderssons Rock the Mountains</i>	Live-action		10-14 years	
<i>JerryMaya's Detective Agency – Shadows of Valleby</i>	Live-action	Company		Tablet
<i>Bamse and the City of Thieves</i>	Animated		6-9 years	
<i>The Boy with the Golden Pants</i>	Live-action	Company	10-14 years	Cinema
<i>Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen (No English title)</i>	Live-action	Fantasy, Company	10-14 years	
<i>The Wizard’s Daughter</i>	Live-action	Fear, Company		Tablet
<i>That Boy Emil</i>	Animated	Knowledge	6-9 years	
<i>Beyond Beyond</i>	Animated			
<i>The Ice Dragon</i>	Live-action		10-14 years	
<i>Best i Sverige</i>	Live-action	Company	10-14 years	
<i>We Are the Best!</i>	Live-action	Tears	10-14 years	
<i>The Circle</i>	Live-action	Tears, Fear	10-14 years, Girl	
<i>Annabell's Spectacularities</i>	Live-action		6-9 years	
<i>Kidz in da Hood</i>	Live-action		10-14 years	Computer
<i>Eskil and Trinidad</i>	Live-action		10-14 years	
<i>Glowing Stars</i>	Live-action	Tears	10-14 years	Computer
<i>Elina – som om jag inte fanns (No English title)</i>	Live-action		10-14 years	
<i>IRL</i>	Both types		10-14 years	

Five films have been seen to a greater extent by children in the Company audience profile. Three of the films have been seen to a greater extent by children in the Tears profile, or four counting *Frozen*. Two films have been seen to a greater extent in the Fear audience profile. One film has been seen to a greater extent by those in the Fantasy audience profile and those in the Knowledge profile. None of the films have been seen to a greater extent in the Thrill and Laughter audience profiles.

12 of the films have been seen to a greater extent by 10-14 year-olds. Only 3 of the films have been seen to a greater extent by children aged 6-9. Two of them are animated. In addition one film was given a higher score by 6-9 year-olds (*JerryMaya*), or two counting *Frozen*.

Most of the films have been seen by girls and boys to an equal extent. The only exception is *The Circle*, which has been seen by girls to a greater extent. In addition one film was given a higher score by girls (*JerryMaya*), or two films counting *Frozen*.

Two films were seen to a greater extent by children who watch film on a tablet, and two were seen to a greater extent by children who watch film on a computer. Only one film was seen to a greater extent by those who watch film at the cinema (*The Boy with the Golden Pants*).

One example of a film seen or liked by a specific group is *JerryMaya*. It has been seen or liked to a greater extent by children in the Company audience profile, 6-9 year-olds, girls, and children who watch film on a tablet. Another example is *Glowing Stars*. It has been seen/liked to a greater extent by children in the Tears audience profile, 10-14 year-olds and children who watch film on a computer.

In total, audience profiles had an effect on who has seen the film for 9 out of the 18 Swedish films. Age had an effect in 15 cases, and gender in 1 case. The child's consumption patterns had an effect in 5 cases. The level of household income had an impact in only 2 cases. *JerryMaya* has been seen to a lesser extent by children in households with a low income, and *Kidz in da Hood* has on the contrary been seen to a greater extent by the same category. The child's home region has had no effect for any of the films.

# Conclusions

The survey results show that the children find Swedish children's film to be of high quality. On the whole, Swedish children's film has had a broad reach among children aged 6 to 14. The overwhelming majority, 88%, have seen at least one of the 18 Swedish films in the study. The American film *Frozen is*, however, both the most seen and the one given the best score in the survey. *The Anderssons Rock the Mountains* is the Swedish film that most of the respondents have seen and, after *The Circle*, the Swedish film with the highest score.

The 12% who have not seen any of the Swedish films are represented equally in all the sub-groups studied in the survey. Somewhat more respondents in the audience profile Knowledge have, however, seen at least one of the Swedish films. In addition, several of the Swedish films have been seen to a greater extent by the children in the audience profiles Company, Fear and Tears.

Generally speaking, most children think the best thing about watching film is that it is exciting and makes them laugh. However, none of the films have been seen to a greater extent by those who think the best thing about film is the chance to laugh, or that it is exciting. If more Swedish films for children were perceived as exciting and funny, the appeal of Swedish children's film would probably increase. One strategy might also be to market the films more towards these groups. The Thrill audience profile is a broad group not distinguished by anything in particular. But those in the Laughter audience profile are distinguished by the fact that they obtain information about film to a greater extent via their parents and by finding films in the cinema listings. PR via conventional media and advertising at cinemas may therefore be relevant for this group.

In total, audience profiles had an effect on who has seen the film for 9 out of the 18 Swedish films. Age had an effect in 15 cases, and gender in 1 case. The child's consumption patterns had an effect in 5 cases. The level of household income had an impact in only 2 cases. The child's home region has had no effect for any of the films. This means that age and audience profile are the most important parameters to consider when positioning Swedish films for children.

The older children (10-14 years) have to a greater extent seen more films. Only three of the Swedish films have been seen to a greater extent by the younger children; Two of them are animated. There is a need for more films for children aged between 6 and 9. Animated films have great potential to attract this group, since younger children prefer animated films to live-action films. The parents are the principal channel in this age group when it comes to choosing a film. It is less common to see film to socialise in this group.

The older children see film to a greater extent to socialise. They see film with friends more often than the younger ones. It is mainly friends who recommend films in this group. There are also more in this group who watch film at the cinema. They prefer to see live-action films.

Half of the Swedish films have been watched by less than 10% of the children. These include films for young people and older films that may have been seen by more respondents in higher age groups. However, newer films for children that have won acclaim at international film festivals can also be found here. None of the films have been awarded a consistently low score by those who have seen them. This suggests that the audience for Swedish films for children could be significantly larger. Of these films, most have been seen to a greater extent by children aged between 10 and 14. Since friends comprise the most important source of information for this age group, efforts targeting the children directly ought to have the greatest effect for this particular group. Marketing directed at the parents is more appropriate for the films intended for younger children. The former may be regarded as more complicated than the latter, which could be one reason why many of the films for older children have not been as successful. Getting the attention of children aged 10-14 calls for innovative marketing, for example focusing on online search and social media.

Generally speaking, the films recently launched widely at the cinema have been seen by most. Of the older films, *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* (no English title) stands out with the most viewers. This despite the fact that this title is not currently available on any VoD service in Sweden. This affirms the statement that children's films have a long life, as they can be rediscovered and gain a new audience with new generations. Having said that, probably both this film and the other older films may have been able to gain more viewers had they been marketed and made available on new platforms to a greater extent.

49% of the children said that they watch film at the cinema. This can be compared to 79% saying that they watch film on TV, 47% on a tablet and 37% on a computer. There are more who go to the cinema in the age group 10-14 and in the Laughter, Fear and Company profiles.

Relatively few children said that they watch film at school. If more children saw film at school, Swedish films for children and young people could gain a far wider audience, particularly when it comes to older films and festival films. There are signs that parents prevent children from seeing certain films. Two out of three children have been forbidden by their parents from seeing a film they wanted to see. School may contribute to children having access to a wider diversity of films.