

# AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF SWEDISH CINEMA

## FINANCIAL VIABILITY AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES (1965 - 2024)



Kulturbyggen  
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By: Simon Kölle



FrameSage

# Financial Viability and Investment Potential of Swedish Cinema (1965–2024): An In-Depth ROI Analysis and Strategic Outlook

*Author:* Simon Kölle

## **Abstract**

This study offers a detailed exploration of the financial performance, audience alignment, and cultural impact of Swedish theatrical film releases between 1965 and 2024. Analyzing 1,000 commercially targeted films out of a total of 2,123 releases, it examines return on investment (ROI) trends, genre dynamics, and global market comparisons to uncover actionable insights for industry growth.

Key findings highlight a misalignment between audience demand and production trends, with underproduced genres such as Mystery, Action, Satire, Thriller, Fantasy (and more) demonstrating consistently higher ROI. Conversely, dominant genres like Drama and Comedy reveal market saturation and lower financial returns. By drawing lessons from the U.S. and European industries, the study identifies opportunities for genre diversification, enhanced marketing strategies, and innovative financing models, such as slate financing.

With a balanced focus on cultural integrity and commercial viability, the study presents a roadmap for sustainable growth and international competitiveness in Swedish cinema. It serves as a resource for investors, filmmakers, and policymakers, equipping them with strategies to better align production with audience preferences and ensure financial sustainability.

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## Introduction

This study seeks to bridge the gap between cultural preservation and commercial viability by addressing a fundamental question: Is Swedish film a commercially successful endeavor for investors? By critically examining return on investment (ROI), production trends, and audience demand, the study explores whether Swedish cinema aligns with market opportunities while maintaining its artistic and cultural legacy.

Swedish cinema holds a distinct place on the global stage, renowned for its storytelling, cultural depth, and artistic vision. Landmark successes such as *A Man Called Ove* and *Searching for Sugar Man* have demonstrated the industry's ability to achieve both critical acclaim and international recognition. Directors like Ingmar Bergman, Ruben Östlund, Roy Andersson, Tomas Alfredson, Charlotte Brändström and Lasse Hallström have shaped Swedish cinema's reputation, while the *Millennium* trilogy, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, *The Girl Who Played with Fire*, and *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets' Nest*, became global phenomena, adapted from Stieg Larsson's best-selling novels. These films captivated audiences worldwide, showcasing the appeal of Swedish stories on the international market.

Swedes have also excelled on the global stage by earning no less than 27 Academy Awards, spanning nearly all major categories. This remarkable achievement underscores the outsized influence of a relatively small country in the global film industry. Beyond cinema, Swedish TV series, such as those rooted in the Nordic Noir tradition, have gained international acclaim, going viral and becoming global phenomena that continue to capture audiences around the world.

In addition to acclaimed filmmakers, Swedish actors and creators have made significant international contributions. Alicia Vikander, Ingrid Bergman, Max von Sydow, Lena Endre and Stellan Skarsgård (and his sons) are among the performers who have achieved global prominence, while creatives like Ludwig Göransson and Hoyte van Hoytema have excelled behind the scenes. Their successes highlight Sweden's impact on both independent cinema and Hollywood blockbusters.

However, Swedish cinema faces mounting challenges, including rising production costs, increasing competition from global studios, and a reliance on genres that often struggle to attract broad audiences. This duality offers an opportunity to reshape the future of Swedish filmmaking, balancing cultural integrity with a renewed focus on financial sustainability and global appeal.

Swedish cinema has established a distinct identity, balancing cultural values with commercial viability, a dynamic that this study explores through funding models, ROI trends, and underreported success stories.

This study, through an ROI-focused lens, examines the commercial and cultural landscape of Swedish cinema, including films across various genres and narrative focuses. With support from entities such as the Swedish Film Institute (SFI), regional film funds, and distributors, Swedish cinema has maintained steady output. Despite the challenges, this study identifies viable paths forward, including slate financing, enhanced PR investment, and an industry alignment with genres that reflect audience demand.

One of the objectives of this study is to provide actionable insights that align Swedish cinema with audience demand while ensuring its financial sustainability. By analyzing trends in genre performance, funding structures, and audience preferences, the study aims to equip industry stakeholders with strategies to foster innovation, diversify production, and achieve a sustainable balance between cultural depth and commercial success.

The question this study tries to answer is if Swedish film is commercially successful for an Investor?

# Methodology

Understanding the financial and cultural impact of Swedish cinema requires a robust methodological framework. This chapter explains the study's scope, data sources, and analytical methods.

## Scope of Analysis

This study focuses exclusively on **theatrically released Swedish feature films** from 1965 to 2024, excluding other formats such as TV series, mini-series, TV movies, direct-to-DVD films, and short films. By narrowing the scope to feature films, the analysis emphasizes productions intended for broad audience engagement in theatrical settings.

## Data Collection and Sources

The analysis is grounded in comprehensive data collected from a variety of reputable sources and methodologies:

### Official Reports and Databases:

- **The Swedish Film Institute (SFI):** Annual reviews (*årsredovisning*), audience surveys, strategic policy documents, and public data on funding and performance metrics.
- **Government Publications:** Studies released by the Swedish Ministry of Culture and other relevant bodies.
- **Industry Archives:** Historical data, records, and archived documents related to Swedish cinema, cross-referenced for accuracy.
- **The Numbers** (Nash Information Services): International box office and budget tracking, providing a global context for the financial performance of specific genres.
- **International Comparisons:** Research such as Stephen Follows and Bruce Nash's work on genre popularity to benchmark Swedish cinema against global trends.

## **Expert Insights and Industry Interviews:**

Qualitative data was gathered through **interviews with industry professionals**, including producers, distributors, and investors, as well as informal discussions with key stakeholders in Swedish cinema. These insights enriched the analysis by providing firsthand accounts of market dynamics, production challenges, and funding practices.

## **Academic Literature:**

A systematic review of available public academic studies on Swedish film science, accessed online and through institutional databases.

## **Additional Sources:**

- **Svensk Filmdatabas** and **Filmladet**: Film-specific information, including genre classifications. Budget data was included when available but was not consistently documented for all films.
- **Regional Film Fund Records**: Data on funding allocations and regional production trends.

The data combines quantitative metrics, such as ROI percentages and genre-specific revenue, with qualitative insights derived from expert interviews and case studies.

## **Rationale for the 1,000-Film Focus**

Among the **2,123 theatrical releases** identified, **677 films were excluded** due to their primarily non-commercial intent, often shaped by public funding or cultural objectives. While these films contribute to Sweden's artistic and cultural heritage, they fall outside the commercial scope of this Study.

Of the remaining **1,446 commercially targeted films**, **446 were further excluded** (reduced to 1,000 by refining the focus and excluding seven borderline cases). These films, despite some commercial intent, relied heavily on public or TV channel funding, shaping their production and distribution strategies toward less market-oriented goals.

The **1,000 films** analyzed represent the core of Swedish cinema's **genuinely commercial output**, providing a robust basis for understanding investment trends and financial performance.

Understanding the distinction between commercial and non-commercial films provides a vital foundation for evaluating ROI trends. Films classified as "commercial" are purposefully designed to generate revenue through broad audience appeal and robust marketing efforts. However, the performance of these films depends not only on their intent but also on factors like genre, budget allocation, and audience alignment.

As this study defines commercial intent and analyzes ROI, it highlights key sub-questions: Are Swedish films with clear commercial objectives meeting their financial potential? How do genre and market strategies impact the ROI of these films? The following sections delve into these dynamics, offering insights into how commercial intent translates into profitability and how strategic adjustments can bridge gaps between audience demand and production trends.

## **Genre Classification**

Genres were classified based on information from official marketing materials, plot descriptions, and critical reviews. Films spanning multiple genres were accounted for in all relevant categories. To ensure consistency, this data was cross-referenced with sources such as Svensk Filmdatabas, Filmbladet, and archival records. Films were categorized into sixteen primary genres, including Drama, Comedy, Thriller, and Action, among others. Sub-genres were also considered where relevant, such as differentiating psychological thrillers from action-based thrillers. This classification system ensures consistency in analysis while acknowledging the nuances of genre blending often seen in Swedish cinema. Genre classification was informed by official film descriptions, marketing materials, and expert opinions.

## **Analytical Framework and Correlation Analysis**

This study employs a multi-faceted analytical approach to evaluate the financial performance of Swedish feature films, focusing on correlations between genre production frequency and ROI outcomes. Return on Investment (ROI) measures the profitability of a project relative to its cost. A 0% ROI indicates that the project broke even, earning back exactly what was invested. Positive percentages reflect profit (e.g.,



100% ROI means the returns were double the investment), while negative percentages indicate a loss. Films are categorized into three ROI groups to structure the analysis:

- **High ROI (100%+):** Films delivering substantial financial returns, representing high-reward opportunities for investors.
- **Moderate ROI (10%-99%):** Films providing stable returns when supported by effective marketing and distribution strategies.
- **Break-Even or Minimal ROI (0-10%):** Films that recover their investment but yield minimal profits, often benefiting from structured funding models that reduce investor risk.
- **Negative ROI (-1 to -100%):** Films that have not proven to generate enough revenue or support (which is added as revenue to make things streamlined and simple to follow) to cover the cost

## Key Analytical Methods

### Success Rate Analysis:

The proportion of films within each genre achieving ROI categories of 10%+ and 100%+ was calculated to identify high-performing genres and potential investment opportunities.

### Comparative Studies:

Cross-territory comparisons were conducted using global data, such as Stephen Follows and Bruce Nash's genre popularity research, to contextualize Swedish trends within an international framework. This provided insights into underproduced genres and their performance potential.

### Audience Alignment:

Data from **SFI's audience surveys** were analyzed to compare genre production trends with audience preferences, highlighting gaps between supply and demand in the Swedish film market.

## Broader Insights

By examining funding structures, marketing campaigns, and distribution models, the analysis identifies the **market forces shaping profitability** in Swedish cinema. Trends across **the production genre, budgets, and marketing investments** are also evaluated to provide actionable insights for investors and industry stakeholders.

## Strategic Investment Analysis

The strategic investment section synthesizes data from multiple sources to identify patterns in investor returns and break-even points:

**Budget and Revenue Analysis:** Public and private funding sources were reviewed, focusing on estimating private investment outside of public funds and pre-sales. Where precise data was unavailable, approximate values were carefully calculated using cross-referenced sources and informed estimates to maintain reliability.

**Cross-Referencing Box Office Data:** Box office revenues were compared with production budgets to approximate profitability. Films with inconsistent data were categorized conservatively as non-commercial or borderline cases.

**Expert Input:** Industry interviews provided qualitative insights into investment strategies, funding challenges, and the impact of marketing on profitability.

## Archival Research

The method also involved examining **archival data** from Swedish film organizations and regional film funds. This approach uncovered historical patterns in funding and production that complemented contemporary data, offering a longitudinal view of trends in Swedish cinema.

## Limitations of Methodology

While this Study presents a thorough analysis, several limitations should be noted:

- **Incomplete Data:** Budget and investment figures are occasionally inconsistent or unavailable across sources.

- **Categorization Assumptions:** Films with conflicting or limited data were conservatively categorized, potentially underestimating their commercial outcomes.
- **Exclusion of Non-Feature Formats:** By focusing solely on feature films, the analysis excludes insights into the broader audiovisual landscape, such as TV series and short films.

## Background

### Sweden's Film Financing Ecosystem

Swedish films are primarily financed through a combination of public funding, regional incentives, private investment, pre-sales, and international co-productions.

- **Public Funding:** The Swedish Film Institute (SFI) remains the backbone of Swedish cinema financing, offering Automatstöd (automatic funding) and selective grants. SFI reduces financial risk for producers by covering up to 25% of production costs, ensuring sustainability for both cultural and commercial films.
- **Regional Funding:** Regional funds such as Film i Väst, FilmPool Nord, and Film i Skåne provide essential support, fostering regional productions and attracting international collaborations. These incentives enhance local economies and contribute to higher ROI through efficient, location-based storytelling.
- **Private and International Investment:** While private investment remains low at total budgets, international co-productions and EU-backed funds, such as Nordisk Film & TV Fond, provide crucial financial resources. These collaborations expand markets, increase visibility, and enhance the profitability of Swedish films.
- **Pre-Sales and Other Revenue Sources:** A critical financing mechanism, pre-sales to TV networks, streaming platforms (e.g., Netflix, Viaplay), and distributors secure a portion of a film's revenue before its release. This minimizes financial risk for producers while ensuring the project's market

viability. Pre-sales have grown increasingly significant as platforms compete for exclusive rights to Swedish content.

## Revenue Streams

Swedish films generate revenue through diverse channels, each contributing to their financial lifecycle:

- **Domestic Box Office:** Revenue from local cinema attendance remains a cornerstone of profitability.
- **International Box Office:** Strong titles with global appeal, such as thrillers and family films, perform well internationally.
- **Streaming Rights and Television Licensing:** Streaming platforms have reshaped the market, offering significant revenue opportunities through licensing deals. TV networks provide steady revenue streams through exclusive broadcasting rights.
- **Merchandise and Home Entertainment:** Sales from **DVDs** and **Video on Demand (VOD)** platforms continue to contribute, particularly for established films. Family films adapted from popular stories often capitalize on merchandise sales.

The increasing dominance of **streaming platforms** has significantly transformed revenue models, with digital rights becoming a critical factor in achieving profitability.

## ROI Trends: Production Costs vs. Revenue

Balancing low budgets with commercial ambition is a key challenge in Swedish filmmaking. Genres such as horror, thrillers, and comedies consistently achieve higher ROI, as they require smaller budgets while appealing to broad audiences. Films with 100%+ ROI often have production budgets significantly lower than those of underperforming or moderate-ROI films. This underscores the importance of budget discipline in ensuring profitability. Cost-effective storytelling in genres like *Searching for Sugar Man* and *Jalla! Jalla!* demonstrates how strategic budgeting aligns with strong financial outcomes.

## **The Role of Private Investment**

Private investment contributes just 20% of the total budgets for Swedish films, with the majority sourced from **regional and national film funds**, pre-sales, and producers' own investments. This heavy reliance on public funding highlights the need to diversify financing sources, particularly through innovative partnerships and private-sector engagement.

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

Swedish cinema faces both hurdles and growth potential within its current funding and production landscape. High ROI genres remain underproduced in favor of drama and documentary films, which are often less commercially viable.

Current funding systems tend to favor culturally significant or arthouse projects, which may not align with audience demand for commercial storytelling. Data-driven strategies and market-aligned funding decisions can bridge this gap. By prioritizing genres with demonstrated ROI potential and leveraging audience insights, Swedish cinema can achieve both cultural impact and financial growth.

# Analysis

## Defining "Commercial Intent"

In Swedish cinema, understanding the distinction between commercial and non-commercial films is essential to grasp the diversity of the industry.

### Commercially Targeted Films

- Designed for mass appeal with clear theatrical marketing campaigns.
- Backed by significant PR or distribution resources.
- Often intended to generate substantial box office revenue.

### Non-Commercial Films

- Cater to a limited or niche target audience.
- Lack extensive theatrical marketing or promotional efforts.
- Rely on art-house circuits, festivals, or cultural funding for exposure.
- May perform better on TV or streaming platforms than in theaters.

Some films labeled as non-commercial may still garner critical acclaim or niche popularity. Winning awards (e.g., *Syndaboken* and *Veranda för en Tenor*) does not necessarily indicate commercial success, as both fall among the non-commercial categories. Similarly, films marketed as "art-house" but with robust PR campaigns (e.g., *Dyke Hard*) should be considered commercial and among the 1000.

## Examples of Non-Commercial Films

Below are selected examples that illustrate non-commercial filmmaking in Swedish cinema:

### Min faster i Sarajevo (2016)

- *Director:* Goran Kapetanović
- *Description:* A drama about a man confronting past traumas in Sarajevo with his daughter.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in festivals.

- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's intimate narrative and limited reach make it representative of niche filmmaking.

### **Tvärbalk (1969)**

- *Director:* Åke Falck
- *Description:* An experimental narrative exploring complex themes in an art-house style.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Artistic focus and limited distribution underline its niche appeal.

### **Nigger (1965)**

- *Director:* Mats Helge Olsson
- *Description:* A drama addressing racial tensions and societal prejudices in Sweden during the 1960s.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; faced controversy due to its provocative title and subject matter.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's challenging themes and limited distribution indicate it was not intended for mainstream audiences.

### **Transnistra (2019)**

- *Director:* Anna Eborn
- *Description:* A documentary portraying the lives of teenagers in the unrecognized state of Transnistria.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its regional specificity and documentary format targeted a niche audience.

For a list of around fifty non-commercial films, refer to the **Appendix**.

This framework for defining commercial and non-commercial films lays the groundwork for understanding ROI performance in Swedish cinema. The data demonstrates that while films with clear commercial goals often outperform their non-commercial

counterparts, significant variations exist across genres. By identifying the factors that drive ROI success within commercial films, such as genre alignment, marketing investment, and production scale, this study aims to provide actionable insights into optimizing financial outcomes.

## Genre Trends and ROI in Swedish Cinema (1965-2024)

### **Balancing Tradition and Opportunity in Genre Production**

Swedish cinema's genre landscape has evolved significantly over the past six decades, with **Drama** and **Comedy** dominating production volumes. However, an analysis of Return on Investment (ROI) reveals a clear **disconnect between production trends and financial success**. Underproduced genres demonstrate a notably higher potential for financial success, achieving strong ROI despite limited production numbers.

This chapter identifies key trends, explores genre-specific performance, and highlights opportunities to better align production strategies with audience demand and financial outcomes.

One of the key barriers to expanding genre production in Sweden is the persistent belief that films like Action, Thriller, Adventure, Mystery, Sci-fi and Fantasy demand unattainable budgets. However, as the following analysis demonstrates, these misconceptions can be dismantled with data-driven insights, unlocking new avenues for financial and creative innovation.

The Swedish Film Institute (SFI) has historically approached funding for genres such as thriller, action, fantasy, and adventure with caution, often citing economic constraints. This perspective was reiterated on December 5, 2024, during the Union Scen & Film's *Branschdag för film och tv* (Industry Day for Film and TV), when SFI CEO Anna Croneman remarked, "I honestly don't know how many incredibly cool ideas are flying under the radar... But I absolutely believe we need to develop filmmaking, and that naturally includes a wider range of genres, where historical production levels have been limited." She also highlighted the challenges of competing with American productions in genre filmmaking, stating, "We haven't had the budgets required, and so we've continued making the kind of films we've done quite well historically."



While Croneman acknowledged a shift, noting a recent meeting featuring several genre projects, her comments underscore the enduring perception that producing successful genre films demands "unattainable budgets." However, this study's findings challenge that notion.

By reframing the conversation from budgetary constraints to strategic investment and resourceful production, the Swedish film industry can unlock the potential of genre filmmaking. This shift would not only meet growing audience demand but also diversify Sweden's cinematic output, paving the way for greater commercial and cultural success.

By reframing these perceptions, the Swedish film industry can harness the untapped potential of genre films, particularly those with proven ROI stability, and meet growing audience demand for diverse cinematic experiences.

This re-evaluation of production costs not only addresses barriers to genre diversification but also highlights the broader successes of Swedish cinema. As the next section explores, even beyond the top-performing 120 films, Swedish cinema boasts a wealth of commercially and culturally impactful projects.

## **Exploring Untapped Commercial Success Stories**

While the 120 high-ROI films represent a cornerstone of Swedish cinema's commercial viability, the industry's successes extend beyond these well-documented examples. Examining additional success stories provides a more comprehensive understanding of Swedish cinema's potential.

This study highlights Swedish films with proven ROI exceeding 100% and the total of 120 films that had an ROI of more than 10%, a testament to the commercial potential of Swedish cinema. However, it is equally important to acknowledge a broader pool of successful productions whose impact financially, while significant, remains less precisely documented. These films underscore Swedish cinema's ability to produce globally resonant and commercially viable content, even beyond the rigid criteria used for this analysis.

While the study focuses on films with verifiable ROI data, it must be noted that certain productions with demonstrable box office and cultural success could not be included due to incomplete financial records. This subset of approximately 100 films, many of which hold iconic status in Swedish cinema, suggests that the actual success rate for high-ROI films is likely higher than the figures currently proved.

These successes underscore the importance of capturing and analyzing more comprehensive data, which could reveal even greater opportunities to align Swedish cinema with audience demand and international trends.

By recognizing the full spectrum of successes within Swedish cinema, the industry can develop a more nuanced approach to aligning production strategies with audience expectations and market dynamics.

Challenging long-held misconceptions and shedding light on underreported successes are pivotal steps in reshaping Swedish cinema's financial and creative trajectory. By addressing myths surrounding genre costs and celebrating the breadth of achievements beyond the top-performing films, the industry can unlock new avenues for growth and innovation.

Below, a few notable examples of these successes, showcasing the cultural and financial depth of Swedish filmmaking:

### **Searching for Sugar Man (2012)**

- **Genre:** Documentary
- **Synopsis:** Directed by Malik Bendjelloul, *Searching for Sugar Man* tells the story of musician Sixto Rodriguez, whose music unknowingly inspired a movement in South Africa. The film's universal appeal and engaging narrative captured hearts worldwide.
- **Indicators of Success:** Winner of the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature, the film grossed \$12.9 million globally and generated an estimated \$3.9 million in domestic video sales. Though its budget is disputed, ranging from \$1 million to slightly higher, its ROI likely exceeded 1400%, making it one of the most commercially successful Swedish films of all time.

- **Significance:** This documentary exemplifies the potential for Swedish cinema to create globally impactful narratives that transcend borders and genres.

### **Utvandrarna (The Emigrants) (1971)**

- **Genre:** Historical Drama
- **Synopsis:** Directed by Jan Troell and based on Vilhelm Moberg's classic novels, this film chronicles the arduous journey of Swedish emigrants seeking a new life in America.
- **Indicators of Success:** Nominated for multiple Academy Awards, including Best Picture, the film captivated over 20% of Sweden's population through theater attendance. Though complete ROI data is unavailable, its enduring legacy and critical acclaim underscore its monumental success.
- **Significance:** *Utvandrarna* demonstrates how Swedish cinema can merge cultural depth with mass appeal, achieving both domestic and international acclaim.

### **Äppelkriget (The Apple War) (1971)**

- **Genre:** Comedy/Fantasy
- **Synopsis:** A satirical take on urbanization and environmental issues, this film by Tage Danielsson combines humor with a meaningful message, making it a beloved classic.
- **Indicators of Success:** Nearly 20% of Swedes saw the film in theaters. While estimated ROI is +30%, incomplete financial data suggests the actual figure is likely much higher.
- **Significance:** *Äppelkriget* highlights the enduring power of culturally specific narratives that resonate with local audiences while tackling universal themes.

### **Micke & Veronica (2014)**

- **Genre:** Romantic Comedy

- **Synopsis:** This film, directed by Staffan Lindberg, is a light-hearted exploration of cultural and class collisions through the lens of romance. Its relatable themes and humor appealed to a wide audience.
- **Indicators of Success:** Though budget discrepancies exist, ROI is estimated to range from +4% to +30%, marking it as moderate financial success. Its popularity highlights the commercial viability of Swedish romantic comedies.
- **Significance:** *Micke & Veronica* demonstrates the potential for mainstream Swedish films to secure steady returns through relatable, entertaining narratives.

These examples, alongside others listed in the Appendix, underscore an essential insight: the actual success rate of Swedish cinema exceeds the parameters of this study. The rigid inclusion criteria focus on proven financial returns, but many films achieve significant cultural or commercial impact despite incomplete data.

Recognizing these achievements reinforces the credibility of Swedish cinema's broader potential and highlights the importance of continued exploration into underreported success stories.

By showcasing these examples, this study not only acknowledges the depth of Swedish cinema but also illustrates the opportunities that arise when storytelling aligns with audience demand and global trends.

## Observations and Decade Analysis of Genres

Below are tables showing Swedish, commercially targeted, theatrical films releases between 1965 and 2024 where factual data have been pulled which makes it possible to analyze the genres of the movies, see the budgets, what the ROI been in medium, minimum and maximum, the Private equity's ROI and amount (in percent) of the budgets.

Another table show the genres throughout the years, how the movies have faired, the budget levels (not: it's important to remember that budgets 1965 differed from more recent), ROI for Private Equity and it's participation in the movies financial structure.

Clarification: The data shows a clear picture of what's been produced and how the movies fared. However, a genre like animation is for sure lucrative with several very successful theatrical runs several of those the data is lacking.

Decade	Genre	Title	Budget (MSEK)		Budget		ROI		ROI		PE ROI		PE ROI		Private investments (% of budget)	
			Count	Median	Min	Max	Median	Min	Max	Median	Min	Max	Median	Min	Max	
1960	comedy		4	4	1	8	40	-75	125	40	-60	155	17.5	15	29	
	crime		2	11	7	15	-27.5	-40	-15	-12.5	-25	0	17.5	15	20	
	drama		19	7	2	15	-30	-75	1000	0	-70	1000	15	5	30	
	family		1	10	10	10	40	40	40	40	40	40	30	30	30	
	historical		1	3	3	3	66.67	66.67	66.67	70	70	70	5	5	5	
	horror		1	2.5	2.5	2.5	900	900	900	900	900	900	25	25	25	
	mystery		5	7	2.5	9	-25	-45	900	15	0	900	18	10	25	
	romance		2	6	6	6	-50	-75	-25	-35	-70	0	16.5	10	23	
1970	action		1	4	4	4	169	169	169	169	169	169	20	20	20	
	animation		2	1.25	1	1.5	245	0	490	245	0	490	20	10	30	
	comedy		10	6.5	0.15	10	-10	-45	393	0	-25	393	20	10	60	
	drama		45	9	0.15	50	-20	-75	216	0	-60	320	20	10	60	
	family		5	5.5	1	8	100	-50	490	100	-50	490	20	10	30	
	fantasy/scifi		1	12	12	12	-40	-40	-40	-20	-20	-20	20	20	20	
	historical		5	15	10	50	0	-25	50	5	-25	150	25	20	30	
	music/musical		4	8.5	3	10	-47	-60	393	-12.5	-50	393	15	10	20	
	mystery		3	7	7	10	0	-30	9	50	5	85	20	15	45	
	romance		4	10.5	2	12	-19.5	-25	75	2.5	-25	75	22.5	18	35	
	thriller		4	7.5	4	22	22.5	-60	169	50	-60	169	20	15	29	
1980	adventure		4	16.5	6	22.5	81	-30	174	81	-2	174	20	10	25	
	animation		2	13.65	4.8	22.5	61	12	110	60	12	108	12.5	10	15	
	comedy		12	12	4.5	36	29	-85	500	36.5	-55	500	20	15	30	
	comingofage		2	7	2	12	405	10	800	405	10	800	22.5	20	25	
	crime		7	8	0.5	36	63	-50	2900	63	-50	2900	20	10	25	
	drama		56	8	0.5	40	-30	-80	800	0	-50	800	15	5	50	
	family		6	5.5	4	12	10	-55	150	10	-55	150	20	10	20	
	fantasy/scifi		2	13	8	18	67	-40	174	88.5	3	174	12.5	5	20	
	historical		3	25	12	40	100	-10	200	100	0	200	30	25	50	
	horror		2	6.25	3	9.5	-25.5	-30	-21	-8	-21	5	62.5	25	100	
	romance		3	14	10	15	-15	-25	85	-10	-25	-4	25	20	25	
	thriller		8	7.5	0.5	16	-25.5	-75	2900	0	-40	2900	20	10	100	
1990	adventure		2	11	6	16	-27	-54	0	8.5	7	10	17.5	15	20	
	comedy		23	12	0.25	30	25	-45	1100	15	-45	1100	20	10	75	
	comingofage		3	10	9	15	10	-5	500	10	0	500	20	12	20	
	crime		13	17.5	3	25	30	-40	300	30	-30	300	20	10	90	
	drama		92	10	3	70	-20	-70	500	0	-70	500	20	1	90	
	family		8	15	5	30	25	-40	102	37.5	-15	102	20	10	25	
	fantasy/scifi		2	10	8	12	-32.5	-50	-15	7.5	0	15	25	20	30	
	historical		6	19	10	70	15	-25	50	27.5	-25	50	27.5	20	30	
	horror		2	5.125	0.25	10	535	-30	1100	550	0	1100	47.5	20	75	
	music/musical		2	16.5	15	18	222	44	400	230	60	400	22.5	20	25	
	mystery		2	22.5	10	35	-5	-10	0	27.5	25	30	22.5	20	25	
	romance		11	10	5	30	0	-45	110	5	-45	135	20	10	30	
	satire		2	12.75	10.5	15	58.5	25	92	88	84	92	35	20	50	
	thriller		17	17.5	7	35	0	-65	300	15	-65	300	20	1	28	
2000	action		3	22	14	25	70	-25	164	70	0	164	20	20	30	
	adventure		1	14	14	14	-35	-35	-35	-35	-35	-35	15	15	15	
	animation		2	19	4	34	20	0	40	20	0	40	22.5	20	25	
	comedy		42	12	0.48	32	-15	-75	771	5	-75	771	20	5	85	
	comingofage		5	12	9	18	-10	-30	30	5	0	30	25	15	30	
	crime		17	25	8	130	30	-70	1425	30	-70	1425	20	15	40	
	drama		134	10	3.5	50	-20	-75	873	0	-75	873	20	4	40	
	family		3	18	4	23	40	20	85	40	27	85	20	20	25	
	fantasy/scifi		2	22.5	5	40	76	-28	180	108	36	180	15	15	15	
	historical		5	15	6	50	-5	-30	57	50	-10	144	25	15	40	
	horror		4	13	2.5	40	-5	-10	180	0	0	180	20	15	85	
	music/musical		1	20	20	20	-15	-15	-15	150	150	150	30	30	30	
	mystery		4	12.5	1.3	16	15	-5	20	22.5	0	433	22.5	15	35	
	romance		20	12.5	7	40	0	-30	873	5	-20	873	22.5	8	40	
	satire		2	13.5	7	20	5	-40	50	21	-8	50	21	17	25	
	thriller		32	13	1.3	130	-6.5	-75	1425	20	-70	1425	20	5	40	
2010	action		6	38.5	7	60	23.5	-45	400	23.5	-14	400	17.5	10	20	
	adventure		4	36.5	10	63	145	-13	442	152.5	0	442	20	5	32	
	animation		1	20.1	20.1	20.1	25	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	
	comedy		41	20	2	100	0	-93	1200	10	-93	1350	20	3	70	
	comingofage		1	8	8	8	50	50	50	50	50	50	45	45	45	
	crime		10	14.75	8	44	0	-55	75	2.5	-28	150	20	15	30	
	drama		166	11	4	100	-10	-79	1200	0	-75	1350	20	1	70	
	family		9	10	6	26.5	-25	-70	25	-2.5	-38	25	19	5	30	
	fantasy/scifi		9	20	10	85	20	-82	221	8	-5	221	20	5	35	
	historical		8	20.5	12	78	7.5	-75	105	12.5	-75	100	30	20	40	
	horror		6	12.5	7	190	-17.5	-60	600	2.5	-45	600	25	10	40	
	music/musical		4	19	15	25	5	0	25	10	0	25	28.5	10	35	
	mystery		4	35.5	10	900	5	-20	157	17.5	10	157	15	10	20	
	romance		14	20	8	45	-12.5	-93	116	-4.5	-93	207	20	10	40	
	satire		2	47	39	55	107	50	164	112.5	50	175	34	18	50	
	thriller		34	15	7	900	7.5	-70	400	17.5	-70	400	20	10	35	
2020	action		1	3	3	3	10	10	10	11.76	11.76	11.76	85	85	85	
	adventure		2	16.7	3.4	30	-20	-40	0	-20	-40	0	15	10	20	
	comedy		12	13.5	5	156	-19	-70	700	19	-60	700	20	12	30	
	crime		4	11	3	30	30	-50	140	11.76	-34	50	27.5	7	85	
	drama		45	10	3	136	-15	-70	700	0	-60	700	20	7	35	
	family		1	30	30	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	20	
	fantasy/scifi		2	23	12	34	-42.5	-55	-30	-27.5	-55	0	20	20	20	
	historical		2	118	100	136	10	-5	25	25	15	35	30	25	35	
	horror		1	12	12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	
	romance		4	10	10	15	-5	-10	47	0	0	47	19	15	35	
	satire		1	156	156	156	111	111	111	111	111	111	25	25	25	
	thriller		6	13.5	3.4	50	-11	-65	0	0	-40	45	25	10	100	

## **Genre-Specific ROI Patterns Across Decades (as seen in table above)**

### **High ROI Performers Across Time:**

**Adventure, Animation, Horror, and Satire** consistently yield notable returns over multiple decades:

**Horror** in the 1960s achieved a standout ROI of 900%, reflecting its ability to yield blockbuster successes despite modest budgets.

**Satire** in the 2010s boasts a remarkable median ROI of 107%, with its top-performing films achieving up to 164%, making it an untapped niche with high potential for profitability.

**Adventure** in the 2010s shows a median ROI of 145%, with a maximum ROI of 442%, indicating the genre's capacity for substantial audience appeal and financial return.

### **Steady Performers with Moderate Returns:**

**Action, Crime, and Thriller** deliver steady, moderate returns across decades. Notable examples include:

**Crime** films in the 1980s and 1990s, with median ROIs of 63% and 30%, respectively, highlighting their reliability for investors.

**Thriller** in the 2000s, with a maximum ROI of 1,425%, underscoring its occasional blockbuster potential.

## **Risk Analysis by Genre**

### **High Risk, High Reward:**

Genres like **Horror** and **Adventure** demonstrate high variability in ROI:

**Horror** shows extreme cases, such as the 1100% ROI in the 1990s, contrasted with periods of negative returns, underscoring its high-risk nature.

**Adventure** similarly oscillates, with the 2010s showing strong ROI performance but earlier decades presenting inconsistent results.

## **Stable but Low Returns:**

**Drama** remains a staple of Swedish cinema but consistently underperforms financially:

From the 1960s to the 2020s, Drama shows median ROIs ranging from -30% to 0%, with occasional outliers. While it dominates production, its financial returns rarely justify the investment.

## **Decade-Specific Trends**

### **1960s:**

Modest production volumes, with standout performers in genres like **Horror** and **Historical** (900% and 67%, respectively).

Early experimentation in niche genres yielded blockbuster returns, highlighting untapped potential.

### **1980s-1990s:**

A diversification in genre production, with the emergence of high-return films in **Comedy** (500%), **Crime** (2900%), and **Coming-of-Age** (800%).

Introduction of private equity funding led to more consistent high ROI films.

### **2010s-2020s:**

Increased emphasis on commercial viability, particularly in **Satire**, **Adventure**, and **Action**, with high median ROIs and standout performers.

A notable dip in the financial performance of traditional staples like **Drama** and **Romance**, highlighting a shift in audience preferences.

## **Private Equity as a Stabilizing Factor:**

Genres like **Mystery** and **Animation** benefit significantly from private equity, with increased median ROIs and reduced downside risks.

For example, **Animation** in the 2000s achieved a private equity ROI of 40%, doubling its overall median ROI.



## Genres with High Private Equity Dependency:

**Historical** and **Family** films, while less commercially viable on their own, show marked improvement in financial performance when supported by private investments, with consistent positive returns.

## Median ROI and Budget Insights

Low-budget genres like **Comedy**, **Crime**, and **Thriller** frequently outperform in terms of ROI, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, where maximum ROIs reached 500%, 2900%, and 1425%, respectively.

**Adventure** and **Satire**, though produced less frequently, deliver consistent high returns, with median ROIs of 145% and 107% in the 2010s, emphasizing their potential as low-risk, high-reward investments. Adventure films for grown ups seem to be highly unusual genre in Swedish cinema.

## ROI per genre:

Genre	number of films	under 0	0 to 10	10 to 100	over 100
adventure	13	53.8%	0.0%	7.7%	38.5%
satire	7	14.3%	0.0%	57.1%	28.6%
animation	7	28.6%	0.0%	42.9%	28.6%
action	11	27.3%	9.1%	36.4%	27.3%
horror	16	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
comedy	144	53.5%	4.2%	20.1%	22.2%
comingofage	11	36.4%	18.2%	27.3%	18.2%
music/musical	11	54.5%	9.1%	18.2%	18.2%
crime	53	41.5%	7.5%	34.0%	17.0%
fantasy/scifi	18	61.1%	0.0%	22.2%	16.7%
family	33	48.5%	3.0%	33.3%	15.2%
thriller	101	58.4%	5.0%	23.8%	12.9%
mystery	18	61.1%	11.1%	16.7%	11.1%
romance	58	65.5%	5.2%	19.0%	10.3%
drama	557	74.5%	4.5%	14.0%	7.0%
historical	30	43.3%	10.0%	40.0%	6.7%

## ROI private equity:

Genre	number of films	under 0	0 to 10	10 to 100	over 100
adventure	13	38.5%	15.4%	7.7%	38.5%
satire	7	14.3%	0.0%	57.1%	28.6%
animation	7	28.6%	0.0%	42.9%	28.6%
music/musical	11	36.4%	18.2%	18.2%	27.3%
action	11	27.3%	0.0%	45.5%	27.3%
horror	16	50.0%	18.8%	0.0%	25.0%
comedy	144	46.5%	6.3%	22.9%	24.3%
comingofage	11	27.3%	27.3%	27.3%	18.2%
crime	53	34.0%	7.5%	39.6%	17.0%
fantasy/scifi	18	38.9%	16.7%	27.8%	16.7%
mystery	18	11.1%	16.7%	55.6%	16.7%
family	33	42.4%	6.1%	36.4%	15.2%
thriller	101	43.6%	5.9%	36.6%	13.9%
romance	58	58.6%	6.9%	22.4%	12.1%
historical	30	33.3%	10.0%	46.7%	10.0%
drama	557	62.1%	7.7%	21.2%	8.1%

## Genre stats summary:

genre	Budget (MSEK)			Rol			PE Rol			Private investments (% of budget)		
	median	min	max	median2	min3	max4	median5	min6	max7	median8	min9	max10
satire	20	7	156	50	-40	164	84	-8	175	25	17	50
action	25	3	60	32	-45	400	32	-14	400	20	10	85
crime	15	0.5	130	20	-70	2900	30	-70	2900	20	7	90
animation	4.8	1	34	25	0	490	25	0	490	20	10	30
mystery	10	1.3	900	0	-45	900	25	0	900	20	10	45
historical	19	3	136	10	-75	200	17.5	-75	200	25	5	50
family	8	1	30	10	-70	490	15	-55	490	20	5	30
thriller	14	0.5	900	-3	-75	2900	12	-70	2900	20	1	100
comingofage	10	2	18	10	-30	800	10	0	800	25	12	45
adventure	15	3.4	63	0	-54	442	10	-40	442	20	5	32
music/musical	15	3	25	0	-60	400	10	-50	400	20	10	35
comedy	12	0.15	156	0	-93	1200	10	-93	1350	20	3	85
fantasy/scifi	15	5	85	-24	-62	221	5.5	-55	221	20	5	35
romance	12	2	45	-5	-93	873	0	-93	873	20	8	40
horror	10	0.25	100	-7.5	-60	1100	0	-45	1100	25	10	100
drama	10	0.15	136	-20	-80	1200	0	-75	1350	20	1	90

# Underutilized Genres and the Role of Popular Categories

## Insights and Preliminary Conclusions

### ROI Trends Across Genres

#### High ROI Genres:

Genres such as **Adventure** (38.5%) and **Satire** (28.6%) show a higher proportion of films yielding over 100% ROI. These genres, although less frequently produced, demonstrate strong profitability, making them attractive for private equity investment.

**Action**, **Animation**, and **Mystery** also perform well in the over 100% ROI category (27.3%, 28.6%, and 16.7%, respectively), particularly in private equity scenarios.

**Mystery**, in particular, stands out for its significant proportion of films achieving between 10% and 100% ROI (55.6%), highlighting its consistent performance as a mid-to-high-range return genre.

#### Low ROI Genres:

**Drama** consistently yields the lowest proportion of films with over 100% ROI (7.0% overall, 8.1% private equity). However, it dominates production volume (557 films), indicating that while this genre is frequently produced, its financial returns are comparatively limited.

**Horror** and **Romance** similarly show low returns in the over 100% ROI category (25.0% and 10.3%, respectively).

### Risk Analysis by Genre

Genres like **Horror** (75.0% under 0 ROI) and **Drama** (74.5%) have the highest proportions of films failing to recoup their investments, highlighting the risk associated with these categories.

Conversely, **Satire**, **Action**, and **Mystery** show lower risks. **Mystery**, in particular, has only 11.1% of films underperforming (under 0 ROI), underscoring its reliability as a safer investment.

## Genre Diversity and Production Strategy

Despite their profitability, genres like **Satire**, **Adventure**, and **Mystery** have limited production numbers. This suggests untapped potential and a strategic opportunity for investors and producers to explore these less saturated markets.

**Mystery**, with its consistent returns and relatively low risk, represents a standout opportunity for production and investment. Expanding its production could offer consistent mid-level returns while occasionally yielding high ROI outliers.

## Private Equity ROI Observations

Private equity appears to mitigate risks for genres like **Action** and **Mystery**, with increased proportions of films achieving over 100% ROI (27.3% and 16.7%, respectively). **Mystery**, in particular, benefits from a strong showing in the 10%–100% ROI range, reinforcing its appeal for calculated investments.

This suggests that targeted investments in commercially viable genres can yield superior financial outcomes, especially when backed by strategic private equity funding.

## Median ROI and Extremes

The median ROI figures highlight that **Satire**, **Action**, and **Mystery** deliver strong average returns. **Mystery**, while having a modest median ROI, also showcases fewer losses and stable performance compared to riskier genres like **Horror** and **Drama**.

Extreme outliers in **Crime** and **Thriller** genres suggest these categories occasionally yield blockbuster successes, warranting further investigation into the factors driving such results.

## Institutional and Funding Support

The financial stability of these genres often relies on public and institutional backing. Regional funds and incentives significantly mitigate risks for private investors, ensuring steady production even when market-driven profits are modest.

## **Economical Production Costs**

Drama and Comedy films have historically been produced on modest budgets, enabling them to break even or turn small profits. However, when given larger budgets, these genres have delivered exceptional results, as seen in films like *En man som heter Ove*.

## **Franchise and IP Advantages**

Comedy franchises such as *Sällskapsresan* and *Jönssonligan* have demonstrated their commercial viability, consistently attracted audiences and delivered strong results. Similarly, Drama adaptations of popular books have shown promise, leveraging established fan bases to enhance financial outcomes.

## **Opportunities for Further Research**

The impact of book adaptations, franchise development, and intellectual properties on ROI warrants further exploration. Future studies could delve deeper into these factors to provide actionable insights for producers and investors.

## **The Broader Implications**

The dynamics of underutilized genres and popular categories emphasize the need for a balanced approach to production and funding. While Drama and Comedy provide a stable foundation, their reliance on institutional support and modest budgets suggests room for innovation and diversification. Unlocking the potential of underutilized genres like Mystery, Thriller, and Action could help Swedish cinema address audience demand more effectively, achieve greater profitability, and align with evolving global trends. By embracing these opportunities, the industry can position itself for long-term sustainability and creative growth.

## Implications for the Industry

- Institutional funding remains vital for the financial ecosystem, but addressing inefficiencies in the allocation of resources could yield better returns.
- Diversifying production by investing in underutilized genres such as Mystery, Thriller, and Action could unlock new opportunities and expand audience appeal.

## Breaking Barriers in Genre Production: Costs, Alignment, and Demand

### Genre Alignment with Audience Demand

Swedish cinema's ability to meet audience demand is shaped not only by the genres it produces but also by how authentically these films fulfill audience expectations. While current trends such as horror demonstrate the industry's ability to respond to market shifts, it is essential to acknowledge that trends can evolve quickly. Staying ahead requires not only observing audience preferences but actively participating in creating and shaping trends.

Horror's recent global popularity exemplifies the dynamic nature of audience demand. However, relying too heavily on such trend's risks losing relevance as tastes evolve. To remain competitive, Swedish cinema could approach genres strategically, anticipating shifts in preferences and positioning itself as a trendsetter.

Audiences demand truthfulness in storytelling, which means adhering to (examples) the core elements of each genre:

- **Horror Films:** Must elicit genuine fear and tension.
- **Drama Films:** Require engaging narratives that provoke thought or evoke deep emotional responses.
- **Adventure and Thriller Films:** Should maintain a gripping pace with sustained excitement.

- **Action Films:** Must offer consistent, high-impact sequences rather than sporadic action elements in predominantly dramatic stories.
- **Fantasy Films:** Should inspire wonder and imagination, build immersive worlds and compelling characters.

When genre expectations are unmet, films risk alienating viewers and diminishing their trust in the marketed product. Authenticity is not optional; it is fundamental to sustaining audience engagement.

### **Industry Dynamics and Genre Support**

Meeting audience demand is not solely the responsibility of producers. The broader ecosystem, including film funds, the Swedish Film Institute (SFI), broadcasters, and distributors, plays a critical role in shaping genre production. While producers may have the vision to address demographic gaps or innovate within genres, their efforts require:

**Targeted Funding:** SFI and regional film funds must allocate resources to underrepresented genres, such as thrillers, action, and fantasy.

**Broadcaster and Distributor Support:** Platforms must recognize the commercial potential of genre films and actively promote them to audiences.

**Strategic Market Alignment:** By utilizing audience insights, industry stakeholders can better align their strategies to reflect current demand while fostering emerging trends.

## **Global ROI Insights for Swedish Cinema**

Positioning Swedish cinema in a global context, this chapter examines the financial and cultural performance of films in Europe and the U.S. It highlights key lessons from global trends, such as the success of underproduced genres and the importance of aligning production with audience preferences to boost ROI.

### **Global Insights: Lessons from Europe and the U.S.**

The Swedish film industry operates within a unique intersection of cultural storytelling and global market dynamics. While it is renowned for its artistic achievements and

socially conscious narratives, Swedish cinema also faces growing competition from internationally dominant film industries like Hollywood and thriving regional markets in Europe and Asia. To remain competitive, understanding how Sweden's production trends, genre focus, and financial outcomes compare with these global benchmarks is essential.

This section explores lessons from the U.S., a global leader in commercial cinema, and Europe, known for its diverse and culturally rich film landscape. By analyzing genre-specific trends, audience preferences, and financial performance across these regions, it becomes possible to identify areas where Swedish cinema aligns with or diverges from global best practices. The aim is to uncover actionable strategies that can enhance Sweden's global competitiveness while preserving its cultural distinctiveness.

Over the decades, the U.S. and European film industries have exhibited distinct preferences in genre production and financial outcomes.

***See the appendix for the data from each decade and more.***

## **United States: Trends and ROI Performance**

### **Most Popular Genres (1965–2024):**

1. **Action/Adventure:** Consistently led the U.S. box office, especially post-1970s, with blockbusters like *Star Wars* and superhero franchises driving audience turnout.
2. **Drama:** Maintained a steady output across all decades, with a focus on socially relevant and character-driven narratives.
3. **Comedy:** Universal appeal ensured consistent production, particularly lighthearted narratives blending humor and relatability.



4. **Science Fiction/Fantasy:** Gained significant traction from the 1980s onward, with IP-based franchises like *Harry Potter* and *Marvel Cinematic Universe* ensuring global success.
5. **Horror:** A niche yet consistently profitable genre, often excelling in ROI due to low production costs

### Highest ROI Genres:

1. **Horror:** Across all decades, horror films like *Paranormal Activity* have delivered extraordinary returns relative to their budgets. While the genre's typically smaller budgets often result in exceptionally high ROI percentages, this also introduces anomalies where certain outliers disproportionately influence overall averages.
2. **Action/Adventure:** High-budget blockbusters have consistently yielded substantial profits, particularly in international markets. Unlike some other genres and popular myths, Action/Adventure has demonstrated strong ROI performance across a spectrum of budget levels, including smaller, mid-range, and high-budget productions, solidifying its status as a reliable commercial powerhouse.
3. **Comedy:** Reliable ROI through low production costs and universal appeal.
4. **Science Fiction/Fantasy:** Franchise-driven titles often recouped massive budgets due to global scalability.
5. **Thriller:** Engaging plots with modest budgets often secured strong box office and ROI.

### Key Correlations in the U.S.:

- **Popularity Drives ROI:** Action and Fantasy franchises achieved high ROI by leveraging global audiences, especially when linked to established intellectual properties.
- **Low-Cost, High-Return Outliers:** Horror consistently combined niche appeal with financial success, showcasing the efficiency of low-budget storytelling.

## Europe: Trends and ROI Performance

### Most Popular Genres (1965–2024):

1. **Drama:** Dominated production, reflecting Europe's focus on rich storytelling and festival-oriented narratives.
2. **Comedy:** Popular across countries like Italy and France, with enduring domestic appeal.
3. **Action/Adventure:** Grew steadily, particularly with European adaptations of American-style blockbusters.
4. **Documentary:** Increased production in the 2000s and 2010s, highlighting cultural depth and audience interest in real-life stories.
5. **Romance:** Frequently blended with Drama or Comedy, resonating with emotional narratives.

### Highest ROI Genres:

1. **Action/Adventure:** Co-productions and cross-border adaptations drove significant profits, particularly in later decades.
2. **Horror:** Low-budget titles like those from Spain capitalized on niche appeal for strong returns.
3. **Documentary:** Consistent profitability through low costs and targeted audience engagement.
4. **Comedy:** Reliable financial performance, especially in domestic markets.
5. **Thriller:** High ROI potential due to modest budgets and universal intrigue.

### Key Correlations in Europe:

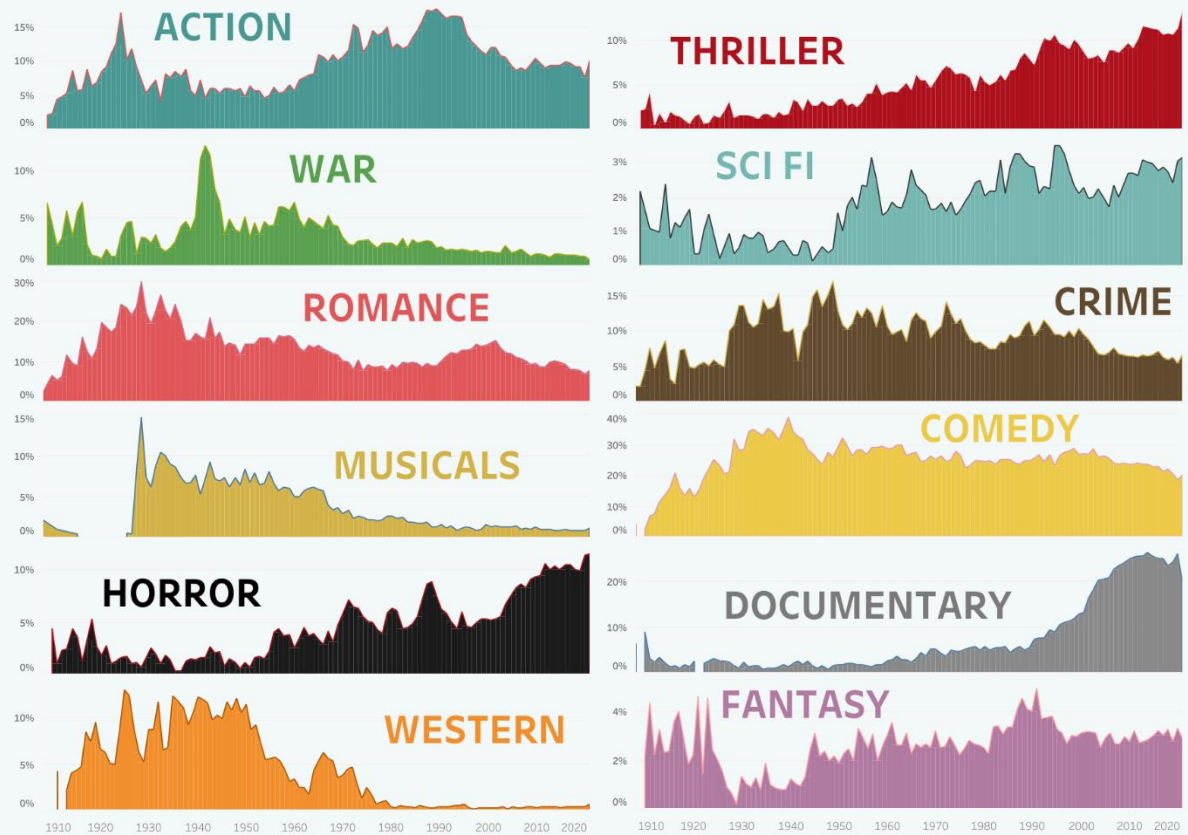
- **Popularity-ROI Divergence:** Drama and Comedy dominate production but often underperform in ROI due to limited scalability and oversaturation.
- **Cultural Depth Meets Profitability:** Documentaries and Thrillers blend cultural storytelling with cost efficiency, delivering steady returns.

## FILM GENRE POPULARITY 1910-2021

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Bo McCready @boknowsdata

This graphic shows film genre popularity over time, represented as the percentage of all films released that year with the specified genre tagged on IMDB. Each genre has a different axis range, so these lines show popularity relative to other years, not necessarily relative to other genres.



## Practical Pathways for Industry Growth

This section focuses on actionable insights and proposed solutions to address the challenges identified in the analysis.

### Optimizing Genre Strategies

This chapter focuses on the potential of genre diversification to enhance Swedish cinema's profitability and appeal. It examines high-ROI genres like Action and Thriller, identifies gaps in production priorities, and highlights opportunities for alignment with global trends and audience demand.

Swedish cinema has long excelled in family films and dramas, but as Per Mårtensson, booking director at Filmstaden, highlighted, there is a glaring gap in genres like action, adventure, and thriller: "The genre most demanded by our audience is action. We don't make action films. It's very disappointing. I've spoken to producers who say there's no

point in applying for genre films at SFI. That's a major issue." This gap reflects a missed opportunity to align production priorities with audience demand, a sentiment echoed by Jakob Abrahamsson, CEO of NonStop Entertainment: "We need to work on director-driven, ambitious genre storytelling. I believe there is room for this in feature films."

Even within the current framework, Swedish cinema often fails to capture transitional age groups. As Mårtensson noted, "We're very good at family films, but for viewers aged 12-15, there's almost nothing. And then when audiences are 35-40, we have a lot of Swedish dramas. But in between, we lose the audience completely." This highlights the importance of bridging gaps to serve broader demographics, especially younger audiences who are often underserved by existing offerings.

Christian Wikander, a senior executive producer with extensive experience across major production houses, also pointed to the need for innovation: "We need material that is boundary-breaking and evolving. It's not just about making commercial films packaged in the same way; audiences will stop watching if we do that. It's self-generating; we don't need to be overly worried about losing artistic integrity." His perspective underscores the value of creating diverse, authentic narratives that push creative boundaries while maintaining commercial appeal.

### **Lessons from Regional and Global Data**

- **Action Films:** While Action underperforms in Europe compared to Asia, Swedish demand for the genre remains high despite limited production.
- **Comedy:** Sweden mirrors Italy's high output of Comedy, but its global struggle for ROI underscores the need for diversification.
- **Horror:** Success in markets like Mexico and South Korea highlights the global potential for well-executed Swedish Horror.
- **Historical Trends:** Global popularity trends for Action and Thriller validate their potential for Swedish production.

## Demographic Gaps in Swedish Cinema

The analysis highlights a significant underserved demographic: viewers aged 12–15. This age group is consistently overlooked, despite their clear demand for films that reflect their experiences and aspirations. Similarly, the broader 16–34 demographic, which gravitates toward action, thriller, fantasy, and horror genres, remains underserved.

Swedish cinema excels in producing family films and dramas aimed at older audiences, but the absence of content for adolescents and young adults creates a gap during formative years when audience loyalty could be cultivated. This is an area of opportunity for producers to explore themes and genres that resonate with these demographics.

## Addressing Financial Complexities

- **Drama and Documentary Dominance:** Public funding has long prioritized these genres, sidelining high-demand ones like Action and Thriller.
- **Art House Films:** Over 90% of Art House films fail commercially, with a few exceptions. This reinforces the need for selective funding.
- **Policy Misalignment:** Despite the audience's demand for entertaining genres, funding focuses heavily on niche and socially driven themes.

Public funding has been instrumental in shaping Swedish cinema, but private investment is increasingly critical to sustain growth. This chapter examines the challenges and opportunities in Swedish film funding, emphasizing the need for innovative financing models, such as loans and slate financing, to attract private capital.

Public funding has long been the backbone of Swedish cinema, enabling the production of films that reflect the nation's cultural values, societal challenges, and artistic ambitions. These films, though not always commercially viable, are invaluable for preserving Sweden's cultural legacy, fostering innovation, and addressing critical social issues.

However, an over-reliance on culturally focused genres risks limiting the industry's broader potential. Balancing the support of cultural and experimental films with increased investment in commercially viable genres can create a more sustainable ecosystem. By doing so, Swedish cinema can continue to excel as a cultural ambassador while expanding its global reach and financial resilience. Diversification is not about compromising on cultural depth but about complementing it with strategies that reflect audience demand and market realities.

Public funding remains integral to Swedish cinema, with various regional film funds playing pivotal roles in supporting diverse storytelling across the country. Each regional fund contributes uniquely to the industry, fostering culturally specific narratives while providing a foundation for commercially viable projects. For example:

- **Film i Skåne** supports projects that capture regional narratives in southern Sweden, often contributing to films that reflect the area's unique cultural landscape.
- **FilmPool Nord**, operating in northern Sweden, offers support for films that highlight northern perspectives, enabling regional stories to reach a broader audience.
- **Other regional entities**, such as Film i Västernorrland, Film i Dalarna, and Filmregion Sydost, contribute to regional diversity, ensuring that local stories and cultural themes receive funding alongside commercially viable projects.

This ecosystem allows Swedish cinema to reflect the nation's cultural diversity while providing the economic stability needed to produce projects with both artistic and commercial appeal.

#### **Swedish Film Institute and Automatstöd:**

SFI provides essential support for Swedish cinema, covering about **25% of production costs**. The Automatstöd program, which granted funds based on audience numbers, aims to balance cultural and commercial goals. This model supports not only feature films but also assists local theaters and distributors, ensuring broad access to Swedish films throughout the country.

### **Big Regional Film Funds:**

Regional film funds, notably Film i Väst, complement SFI's efforts by supporting local productions and fostering economic growth in specific regions. This model allows regions to invest in films that may benefit their local economies, promoting cultural and financial sustainability. However, as noted in *Public Film Funding at a Crossroads II*, these funds often emphasize quality and artistic merit, which may not always align with commercial profitability.

### **Reliance on Pre-Sales and the Limitations on Profit Potential:**

Many Swedish films rely on pre-sales to broadcasters and distributors, securing immediate funding but sometimes limiting profit potential in additional distribution windows. A shift towards models that retain more distribution rights and extended release periods could increase total revenue potential. This aligns with insights from *Streaming Giants and Public Film Funding*, which emphasize the need for flexible distribution models in a streaming-dominated market.

### **Market Dynamics and International Competition:**

Swedish cinema competes with international streaming giants, which have changed audience expectations. Reports like *All That is Solid Melts into Air* highlight that while cinema attendance declines, streaming viewership grows, creating a dual challenge and opportunity for Swedish films to adapt to hybrid distribution strategies.

### **Navigating Revenue Complexities: Strategic Approaches for Investors**

To effectively navigate these complexities and maximize returns, investors should adopt a proactive and informed approach when engaging in film financing.

While it is tempting to view a film's financial success solely through the lens of ROI, it's crucial to understand that the timing and structure of revenue flows can significantly impact an investor's returns. Film revenue streams are often determined by contracts that stipulate whether investors receive returns based on gross revenue (before costs) or net revenue (after costs). However, there are also hybrid models and other variations that fall between these two categories, further complicating the revenue landscape. Gross revenue participation typically ensures investors receive returns sooner and in larger amounts, as deductions for distribution fees, marketing expenses, and other

costs are bypassed. Net revenue participation often leaves investors waiting for distributors, sales agents, and other intermediaries to recoup their expenses first, delaying the revenue cycle, a particular challenge for smaller investors or those new to the film industry. Hybrid models, such as modified gross or first-dollar gross, offer investors a compromise between rapid returns and exposure to production and distribution costs.

The following strategies can help investors align their expectations with the realities of film revenue structures and mitigate potential risks:

### **Conduct Thorough Due Diligence**

Before committing to a project, investors should delve into the specifics of the revenue-sharing model outlined in the contract. Key areas to evaluate include:

**Revenue Flow Projections:** Assess the expected timeline and size of payouts under different models (e.g., gross, net, modified gross).

**Cost Deductions:** Gain clarity on which expenses will be deducted before payouts. For example, marketing and distribution costs can significantly impact net revenues.

**Performance Benchmarks:** For back-end participation, understand the financial milestones that must be achieved before payouts are initiated.

### **Negotiate Favorable Terms**

Investors can negotiate contract terms to ensure a fair and predictable return structure. Considerations include:

**Inclusion in First-Dollar Gross Agreements:** While rare, negotiating for inclusion in first-dollar gross participation provides a secure and early return on investment.

**Modified Gross Clauses:** Requesting modified gross revenue terms can offer a balanced compromise, allowing reasonable deductions while ensuring timely payouts.

**Cap on Deductions:** Negotiate a limit on specific cost deductions (e.g., marketing) to prevent disproportionate reductions in payout amounts.

### **Leverage Financial Simulations and Data Analytics**

Tools such as FrameSage and other data-driven platforms can provide detailed



simulations of potential revenue flows based on historical data and market trends.

Investors can use these insights to:

Compare the financial performance of similar films under varying revenue models.

Identify risks associated with specific distribution strategies or cost structures.

### **Build a Diversified Portfolio**

To mitigate risks inherent in individual projects, investors should consider spreading their capital across a slate of films. Diversification reduces reliance on the success of any single project and balances high-risk, high-reward investments with more stable projects.

### **Engage with Experienced Advisors**

Working with legal and financial advisors experienced in film financing can help investors navigate the nuances of revenue structures. Advisors can:

Ensure contractual clarity and fairness, provide insights into industry-standard practices and advocate for investor interests during negotiations.

### **Monitor Performance and Adapt Strategies**

Post-investment, investors should stay informed about a film's performance and maintain open communication with producers and distributors. Monitoring key metrics, such as box office earnings and distribution expenses, enables investors to:

Assess the likelihood of meeting revenue benchmarks for back-end participation.

Identify opportunities for renegotiation or secondary market exploitation (e.g., streaming deals).

### **Foster Collaborative Relationships**

Building strong partnerships with production teams, distributors, and sales agents ensures greater transparency and alignment of goals. Collaborative relationships can:

Provide early insights into revenue challenges or opportunities.

Enable joint efforts to maximize secondary and tertiary revenue streams, such as merchandising or international licensing.

By adopting these strategies, investors can better navigate the complexities of revenue structures, minimize risks, and optimize their financial returns. Ultimately, a proactive and informed approach positions investors to thrive in the dynamic and often unpredictable landscape of film financing.

To successfully address these various aspects of the business, producers and production companies could consider collaborating and working together on joint slates.

### **Brief Explanations of Key Terms**

Understanding industry-specific financial terms is essential for navigating the complexities of film revenue. Below are simplified explanations of some key terms:

- **First-Dollar Gross:** A payment model where certain stakeholders, such as investors or talent, receive a share of the film's revenue from the very first dollar earned, without deductions for production or marketing expenses. This structure ensures faster and more predictable returns but is typically offered to high-value collaborators or key investors.
- **Net Revenue:** A model where profits are calculated after deducting all expenses, including production, marketing, and distribution costs. While common, this model often delays returns and reduces the share for stakeholders lower in the payment hierarchy.
- **Modified Gross Revenue:** A middle-ground approach where certain basic costs, like distribution fees, are deducted before calculating revenue shares. This structure balances faster returns with reasonable cost recovery for distributors and producers.
- **Back-End Participation:** A deferred payment system where profits are shared only after the film surpasses a predefined financial milestone. Often seen in performance-based contracts, it aligns incentives across stakeholders but can delay returns significantly.

Each of these structures impacts the timing and amount of financial returns, making it crucial for stakeholders to clearly define terms in contracts and align expectations from the outset.

## **Enhancing Collaboration and Market Appeal**

Distributors frequently position themselves as the "first line" in the revenue stream, insisting on recouping their investments before other stakeholders. While distributors often provide essential funding for marketing and theatrical releases, their financial agreements can sometimes disadvantage producers and investors. For instance:

- **Access to Support Funds:** Distributors in Sweden may receive financial support from the Swedish Film Institute (SFI) to release movies, even during seasons like the summer when cinema attendance traditionally dips. While this funding may help sustain the distributor's operations, it can inadvertently harm investors and production companies by prioritizing the distributor's recoupment, especially if the film's box office performance underperforms during these periods.
- **Criticism of Practice:** This creates a paradox where public funds, meant to support the industry, sometimes work against the interests of the producers and investors who financed the project. The system risks becoming counterproductive when distributors use public support to prioritize their own interests over the broader health of the film's financial ecosystem.

From the distributor's point of view, these financial structures reflect the significant risks they take. Distributors often invest in marketing campaigns, publicity, and logistical coordination for theatrical releases. They also manage a portfolio of films, with the success of a few needing to cover the losses of many.

By recouping their investments first, distributors argue they will create a sustainable model that allows them to fund future films. Without these safety nets, they claim, many films would never see a theatrical release at all.

Adding to the complexity, sales agents and some film funds also demand to recoup their investments before investors and producers see profits. Sales agents, who represent films in international markets, often require upfront fees or percentages of

gross sales to cover their efforts and risks. Similarly, film funds, which often blend public and private financing, may expect priority repayment to satisfy their stakeholders.

This hierarchy of recoupment creates a long line of intermediaries, each taking a share before reaching the investors and producers who carried much of the film's initial financial risk.

### **Collaboration: The Key to Success and Strategic Recommendations**

Collaboration remains a cornerstone of financial and critical success in the film industry. Open communication and equitable agreements among investors, producers, distributors, sales agents, and funds can streamline the recoupment process, foster trust, and ensure long-term sustainability for all parties involved.

Beyond financial structures, collaboration also enhances a film's visibility and impact. Films that integrate strong PR campaigns, partnerships with cultural institutions, or social impact initiatives tend to perform better. These "attached values", such as environmental themes, celebrity endorsements, or festival recognition, add layers of appeal that help films stand out in competitive markets.

By aligning the interests of all stakeholders and pooling collective resources, the film industry can foster an ecosystem where risks are shared, returns are equitable, and creative visions are fully realized. Collaboration is not just an ethical imperative but a pragmatic strategy for thriving in an increasingly competitive market.

### **Strategic Recommendations**

- **Rebalancing Production Priorities:** Shift investment toward underproduced, high-demand genres (e.g., Action, Thriller, Horror) to better align with audience preferences and enhance ROI.
- **Learning from International Success:** Emulate global best practices from markets excelling in specific genres, such as South Korea's innovative approach to Horror or Mexico's success with Action films.

- **Enhancing Marketing and Distribution:** Tackle perceptions of Swedish films being “less entertaining” by allocating more resources to robust promotional campaigns that emphasize audience engagement and global appeal.
- **Targeting Younger Audiences:** Develop content that resonates with younger demographics, particularly through genre films that cater to their preferences, to build long-term audience loyalty.
- **Dare More, Fear Less:** Pursue bold, unapologetic storytelling that explores morally complex themes. A horror film should evoke genuine fear, a comedy must deliver consistent laughter, and an action or thriller must keep audiences on the edge of their seats. By pushing boundaries, Swedish cinema can break free from stereotypes and capture both local and international markets.

## Genre Preferences and Audience Demand

### ROI Insights and Evolving Genre Dynamics

The analysis of commercial theatrical releases in Sweden from 1965 to 2024 reveals notable shifts in genre preferences and their financial performance, offering a comprehensive view of how audience tastes, production strategies, and market dynamics have evolved over time.

Swedish cinema has shown clear patterns in genre performance and audience demand, with certain genres demonstrating strong financial viability while others lag behind:

#### High-ROI, Underproduced Genres

Genres such as **Adventure**, **Satire**, and **Mystery** consistently show strong ROI potential and attract consistent audience engagement. Despite this, they remain underproduced, presenting untapped opportunities for higher returns. Similarly, niche genres like **Historical** and **Horror** display sporadic but significant financial performance, particularly when supported by private equity funding.

#### Overproduced, Low-Return Genres

Overproduced genres like **Drama** and **Romance** frequently yield low and inconsistent ROIs. These genres dominate production volume but fail to align with financial

expectations, indicating a mismatch between audience preferences and production strategies.

### **Genre Performance by Decade**

The 2010s and 2020s have seen commercially proven success in genres like **Action**, **Adventure**, and **Satire**, reflecting their alignment with shifting audience demands. These genres have consistently performed well, delivering reliable returns.

### **Mystery as a Consistent Performer**

The **Mystery** genre stands out for its stable performance and occasional high returns. It provides mid-range ROI stability and has the potential to yield even greater profitability if its production volume is increased to meet latent audience demand.

### **Success in Outlier Films**

Certain films in genres like **Crime**, **Comedy**, and **Thriller** have achieved extreme financial success. These blockbuster performances highlight the importance of identifying and replicating the specific factors that drive such results, whether through unique storytelling, marketing strategies, or audience-targeted content.

### **Private Equity Impact**

Private equity funding has proven effective in enhancing the ROI potential of underperforming but culturally significant genres. Genres like **Action**, **Mystery**, and **Family** show marked improvement when private equity is utilized, making them more financially viable while reducing associated risks.

These patterns illustrate the importance of aligning production efforts with audience demand and investing in genres with proven profitability, ensuring Swedish cinema achieves both cultural and financial success in a competitive global market.

While Drama and Comedy remain integral to Swedish cinema, the potential of underrepresented genres like Thriller and Action highlights a path for innovation and diversification. By strategically expanding production in these areas, the industry could tap into untapped audience demand and drive long-term growth.

Swedish cinema has earned acclaim for its cultural and social depth, often showcased through art-house productions and niche dramas that form the backbone of its artistic

identity. However, industry reports and observations highlight a disconnect between the genres that dominate Swedish film production and those that audiences actively seek. Comedy, thriller, crime, action, and family films, genres with widespread and lasting appeal, consistently attract larger audiences both in Sweden and on the international stage.

In *Filmåret 2022*, the Swedish Film Institute (SFI) acknowledged this imbalance, noting that a majority of the films they supported fell into narrowly focused genres, often with limited viewership potential. This trend presents a clear opportunity: by combining the cultural and artistic excellence that Swedish films are known for with insights into commercial viability, the industry can produce films that are both critically acclaimed and widely popular. High-performing films such as *Snabba Cash* (crime), *Ondskan* (psychological drama), *Monica Z* (biopic), *Jägarna* (thriller), *Hundraåringen som klev ut genom fönstret och försvann* (comedy-adventure), *En man som heter Ove* (comedy-drama), and *Flickan som lekte med elden* (thriller) demonstrate the potential success of films that balance artistic merit with audience appeal.

Understanding and adapting to audience demand requires a nuanced and data-driven approach. As trends shift over time, consistent analysis is essential to staying ahead of changing preferences. Director Anders Hazelius, speaking on a *Radio Sweden* program, criticized Swedish cinema's tendency to be "either very dark or very bright" in its storytelling, calling for richer, more layered films that blend genres to evoke a range of emotions. This approach, exemplified by the global success of franchises like Marvel, could be adapted to the Swedish context to create films that are emotionally engaging and broadly appealing.

Per Mårtensson, Filmstaden's booking director, also emphasized the lack of genre variety in Swedish cinema, pointing out the absence of action, thriller, and adventure films. This sentiment was echoed by Helena Simonsson, Head of Distribution and Screenings at SFI, who noted in the same *Radio Sweden* program that international blockbusters have dominated Swedish cinemas in recent years, underscoring the need for Swedish films to compete on a similar level.

Fredrik Wikström Nicastro, a producer behind multiple high-performing films such as *A Man Called Otto*, *Snabba Cash*, and *En man som heter Ove*, spoke at Sime conference 2023 and similarly argued for a balanced approach that leverages Sweden's artistic expertise while incorporating commercial insights. His views are shared by other leading figures in the industry, including Patrick Nebout (*Hundraåringen som klev ut genom fönstret och försvann*) and Christian Wikander, a seasoned executive with roles at SVT, HBO Nordic, and Banijay. Together, they highlight the importance of embracing a broader range of genres while maintaining the high standards of storytelling and production value that Swedish cinema is known for.

The challenge lies in keeping track of audience preferences as they evolve. Reliable tools such as box office and streaming data, audience surveys, and social media analysis can provide valuable insights into what resonates with viewers. Importantly, these preferences must be assessed over time to identify genuine shifts rather than fleeting trends. Films like *Jägarna* and *Monica Z* illustrate that even genres traditionally perceived as niche or risky can succeed when executed with precision and in relation to their budgets.

By embracing a more diverse range of genres and combining Sweden's cultural and artistic strengths with commercial sensibilities, the Swedish film industry can not only attract larger audiences but also secure its place on the global cinematic stage.

## **Strategic Analysis of Swedish Cinema**

Building on insights into genre preferences and audience demand, this section delves into the financial dynamics of Swedish cinema. It explores how strategic investments, targeted PR, and optimized distribution strategies can enhance ROI while addressing the delicate balance between artistic integrity and commercial viability. By examining these factors, this chapter provides actionable recommendations to foster both creative innovation and sustainable growth within the industry

## **Future ROI Potential of Commercial Swedish Films**

The return on investment (ROI) of Swedish films reflects the complex dynamics of balancing artistic, cultural, and commercial goals. While Swedish cinema has seen a



relatively small percentage of high-ROI films, examining the factors that contribute to these successes reveals actionable insights for future productions. Recent findings, indicate a key trend: Swedish films that align with popular genres and receive significant PR investment tend to perform better than those that prioritize niche or socially oriented themes. However, many films supported by SFI are in genres that historically attract lower viewership, potentially missing commercial opportunities that could benefit the industry's overall sustainability. They could be of cultural significance and relevant nonetheless but to attract investors outside of the film industry the ROI is of importance in most cases.

## **The Role of PR Investment**

A critical factor in achieving high ROI is the level of investment in PR and marketing. Data from recent studies indicate that 92% of high-ROI Swedish films benefited from robust marketing campaigns, encompassing targeted outreach, trailers, social media, and strategic partnerships with cinemas and distributors. For instance, *En man som heter Ove* achieved significant ROI not only due to its relatable narrative but also because of a comprehensive campaign that positioned the film internationally, leveraging trailers, festival buzz, and social media engagement. Similarly, *Så som i Himmelen*, with an ROI of approximately 873%, owed much of its success to sustained promotional efforts that extended its reach well beyond core Swedish audiences.

The importance of marketing lies in its ability to connect films with their intended audience. Without sufficient visibility, even high-quality films can struggle to find traction, as limited marketing budgets often result in reduced audience engagement and box office returns. This highlights the necessity of allocating substantial resources to marketing efforts, particularly for genres with broad appeal. Effective PR and marketing enable Swedish productions to compete more effectively in a crowded marketplace, ensuring that films achieve their financial and cultural potential.

Industry experts echo this sentiment. Mikael Fellenius, CEO of Film i Väst, emphasized the importance of understanding audience demographics, stating on *Filmbranschpodden*: "Something positive happening now is the industry's focus on the intended audience, how do they look? How old are they? This discussion is developing

in a very positive way.” Targeting specific audience segments is essential for creating films that resonate both domestically and internationally.

Mattias Lundin, Marketing and Publicity Manager at SF Studios, underscored the importance of refining marketing materials: “We’ve started testing things like posters with focus groups.” This type of strategic approach can significantly expand a film’s reach. Films such as *En man som heter Ove* and *Så som i Himmelen* stand as testaments to the power of comprehensive campaigns, transforming them into must-see events for diverse audiences.

However, as Daniel Lägersten, CEO of Gothenburg Film Studios, cautioned: “Too many projects sit on shelves due to a lack of marketing. Without visibility, even high-quality films struggle to find their audience.” Marketing is often expensive, but as Producer and Script Writer Filip Hammarström observed, it is critical to strike the right balance: “It’s crucial to have commercial projects that look commercial but have depth behind them, the best of both worlds.”

### **Balancing Cultural Depth and Commercial Appeal**

The interplay between commercial viability and cultural depth has often been mischaracterized as a trade-off. Mikael Newihl dispelled this myth, stating, “Commercial doesn’t exclude artistic, it means many people watch and like what you create. In 2013-2014, being commercial was seen as something negative, but today it’s self-evident. Commercial simply means reaching a wide audience.” This sentiment aligns with Executive Producer and former head of Film Capital Stockholm, Anette Mattssons, observation that fear and conservatism sometimes hold the industry back: “We shouldn’t be driven by fear, fear of standing out politically or playing the wrong cards. Instead, we need stories that move us. That’s where we find true breadth.”

### **Collaborative Approaches and Sustainable Financing**

Collaboration is another key to unlocking Swedish cinema’s potential. Christian Wikander emphasized the value of co-productions: “Co-productions are in our DNA. Working together and sharing experiences is how we’ve always operated.” This model not only spreads financial risk but also fosters creative innovation across borders.

Mikael Fellenius highlighted the potential of creative financing: “Investing in film is risky, but new opportunities are emerging. For those considering film investment, it’s about asking the right questions, what are the risks? What’s the likelihood of a return or profit?” By incorporating robust financial analyses and simulations, Swedish cinema can attract private investors who might otherwise shy away from the perceived risks of filmmaking.

### **Industry Implications**

The findings highlight a disconnect between production trends and audience preferences. For instance, genres like thrillers, action, and horror, which show strong ROI potential, are consistently underproduced in favor of drama and documentary films. This gap between production and audience demand offers clear opportunities for growth, as addressing this gap could align Swedish cinema more closely with audience demand while maintaining cultural depth.

### **Cultural Context**

As noted in *The Film Encyclopedia*, Sweden’s contribution to global cinema is significant given its small population:

*"Considering the small size of its population, this Scandinavian kingdom's contribution to the art of cinema has been astounding."*

This Study, while focusing on commercial performance, acknowledges the broader cultural and artistic legacy of Swedish cinema, emphasizing the need for strategies that balance economic and cultural goals.

### **Looking Ahead**

By embracing a more diverse range of genres, investing in targeted marketing, and fostering collaboration, Swedish cinema can position itself as a global leader that marries cultural and artistic excellence with commercial success. As Mikael Fellenius aptly put it, “We need films that succeed both artistically and with audiences. These goals are not mutually exclusive.” With the right strategies and a commitment to innovation, Swedish cinema can ensure a vibrant and sustainable future.

## Attracting Investors: FrameSage's Role

FrameSage is poised to revolutionize film financing by connecting creative projects with private investors, professional investors, and asset managers. Supported by the Swedish Arts Grants Committee (Kulturbryggan) and in partnership with Opus Data, the parent company of *The Numbers* and Nash Entertainment, globally recognized leaders in film data analytics, FrameSage leverages cutting-edge methodologies to transform how film projects are evaluated and funded.

### The FrameSage Approach

#### Addressing Private Investment Challenges

FrameSage directly tackles the core obstacles deterring investment in Swedish cinema:

- **Low Private Investment Participation:** Few Swedish film budgets are mainly sourced from private investors, a direct result of the absence of commercial viability assessments.
- **Gaps in Traditional Film Pitches:** Critical elements such as financial forecasting, sales strategy, and target audience analysis are frequently overlooked in traditional film pitches.
- **Bias in Current Market Players:** Many existing assessment models are aligned either with producers or investors, leading to compromised evaluations that undermine investor confidence.

#### Independent and Transparent Evaluations

FrameSage's unique positioning as an independent third-party assessor ensures that its evaluations are unbiased, rigorous, and data driven. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative analysis, FrameSage instils trust and credibility among investors, offering them the clarity and assurance needed to confidently engage in film financing.

#### Key Services Offered by FrameSage

##### Quantitative Analysis:

Using proprietary models, FrameSage evaluates film projects by comparing them with historical data on similar projects. This includes simulating potential outcomes and

calculating risk and return estimates to provide a robust foundation for investment decisions.

### **Qualitative Assessment:**

A panel of industry experts reviews pitch materials, focusing on commercial viability factors such as narrative quality, character development, and alignment with cultural and market trends. Only projects that pass this rigorous evaluation advance to the next stage.

### **Investment Slate Models:**

FrameSage offers a pooled investment approach, combining as an example five projects from different production companies (or the same) into a single slate. This reduces individual project risk and provides a diversified portfolio for investors, maximizing overall ROI potential.

### **Why FrameSage Matters**

FrameSage not only addresses current deficiencies in the film investment landscape but also introduces a forward-thinking model that could reshape the industry's funding paradigm. By fostering transparency and aligning creative projects with investor expectations, FrameSage empowers both filmmakers and financiers, unlocking new avenues for sustainable growth in the Swedish film industry.

This initiative, supported by Kulturbryggan a branch of The Swedish Arts Grants Committee, international partnerships and cutting-edge analytics, has the potential to create a ripple effect, setting a precedent for independent film financing models worldwide.

## **Vision for Swedish Cinema: Insights and Actions**

### **Investment Opportunities: Slate Financing and Risk Diversification**

Investing in slate financing remains a prudent strategy for independent investors. While 87% of the investor-funded portion of Swedish commercial film budgets breaks even or achieves profitability, it is important to note that some of these films, as a whole, have

incurred losses. Slate financing provides a diversified portfolio approach, balancing high-reward opportunities with stable, lower-risk returns, making it an attractive option for stakeholders seeking consistent outcomes.

Historically, independent investors have seen their contributions bolstered by institutional support, but these projects have often prioritized cultural or niche themes over commercial viability. Pre-sales have played a significant role, accounting for approximately 70% of financing strategies. However, reliance on pre-sales and traditional sales agents has its drawbacks. Many sales agents operate within the production chain and are not fully independent, raising questions about potential biases in their market projections and estimates.

To unlock the full revenue potential of Swedish cinema, a shift toward rigorous, data-driven methodologies is essential. This includes holistic project evaluations, simulations based on comparable data, and thorough assessments of target audiences. Such approaches would provide a clearer, unbiased picture of a film's commercial potential, offering independent investors greater confidence in their decisions while paving the way for more profitable and sustainable projects.

### **Strengthening Swedish Cinema's Competitive Edge**

Studies indicate that **92% of high-performing films** benefited from strong marketing investments. A significant marketing budget not only enhances visibility but also builds anticipation and engagement among audiences, crucial factors in achieving high returns. Expanding marketing for commercially promising genres can improve Swedish cinema's profitability and competitive edge.

Moving away from a heavy reliance on pre-sales allows filmmakers to retain more control over distribution rights, opening doors for flexible, multi-platform releases. This shift can increase revenue potential from streaming and other channels, especially given the rising global demand for Swedish content on streaming platforms. Strategic distribution aligns well with insights from *Streaming Giants and Public Film Funding*, highlighting ways to adapt Swedish cinema to a global, digital-first market.

The analysis of commercial theatrical releases in Sweden from 1965 to 2024 reveals notable shifts in genre preferences and their financial performance, offering a comprehensive view of how audience tastes, production strategies, and market dynamics have evolved over time.

Underutilized genres demonstrate remarkable ROI potential despite their relatively low production numbers. These genres also exhibit strong break-even rates. This reliability underscores their viability as investment opportunities, particularly in a landscape that increasingly values genre diversification.

While Drama and Comedy remain integral to Swedish cinema, the potential of underrepresented genres highlights a path for innovation and diversification. By strategically expanding production in these areas, the industry could tap into untapped audience demand and drive long-term growth.

## Conclusion: A Balanced Investment Opportunity in Swedish Cinema

Swedish cinema offers significant investment potential. Public funding ensures diverse content, while strategic shifts toward slate financing, targeted marketing, and flexible distribution can maximize financial returns.

Balancing genre production with market-driven strategies could enhance Swedish cinema's global reach, supported by a strong foundation of cultural values. With the right approach, Swedish cinema offers investors both cultural influence and economic returns.

The data reveal Swedish cinema as a balanced investment opportunity, particularly for investors willing to adopt strategic financing and marketing approaches. The following investment recommendations can help maximize returns:

**Focus on Popular Genres:** Comedy, thriller, action, and family-oriented films consistently demonstrate broad audience appeal and strong ROI, highlighting their profitability. While other genres may also offer potential, projects within these popular categories align closely with audience demand and could be of particular interest to investors seeking commercially viable opportunities.

**Implement Slate Financing:** Slate financing, which spreads risk across multiple films, can leverage the stable returns. This approach allows for a portfolio that balances low-risk projects with higher-reward potential.

**Increase Marketing Investment:** Data indicates that films with significant marketing budgets have outperformed those with minimal campaigns. An investment in robust marketing campaigns especially for high-demand genres can enhance visibility and audience engagement, driving box office success.

**Reduce Reliance on Pre-Sales:** By limiting pre-sales to specific territories, filmmakers can retain distribution rights for broader multi-platform releases, increasing revenue potential. This approach aligns with the growing demand for Swedish content on global streaming platforms, where long-term profitability can be maximized.

## **Bridging Gaps and Expanding Horizons**

### **Public Funding, Viewer Habits, and Market Impact on Swedish Cinema**

Public funding has played a critical role in shaping Swedish cinema, influencing both the types of films produced and the viewing habits of Swedish audiences. Since the 1974 cultural policy reforms, public and regional support has served as a key mechanism for ensuring diversity, accessibility, and artistic freedom within the film industry. However, recent studies and reports suggest that this support structure, while well-intentioned, may have inadvertently contributed to a genre conformity that does not fully align with audience demand. Additionally, the way Swedish audiences engage with cinema, shaped by demographics, geography, and socio-economic factors, offers insights into how well current film offerings meet public expectations.

### **Audience Preferences and Viewing Habits**

According to the 2024 report *Film- och biovanor* by the Agency for Cultural Analysis, **75% of Swedes are interested in film**, with around 80% watching films at least once a month. Cinema-going habits, however, vary widely by age, socio-economic status, and location:

**Demographic Differences:** Young people (ages 16–29) demonstrate the highest interest in film, with 79% expressing interest, compared to only 65% among those over



65. However, younger audiences also display polarized viewing habits, with a substantial portion either extremely interested or largely indifferent to film. This polarized interest suggests that younger viewers are either highly selective about the genres they consume or may prefer alternative media platforms.

**Geographical and Socioeconomic Factors:** Film interest and cinema attendance are highest among urban dwellers, individuals with higher incomes, and those with higher education levels. People in urban areas tend to watch films more frequently than rural residents, indicating a need to consider regional viewing preferences when planning distribution and marketing strategies for Swedish films.

**Ticket Sales Trends:** Historical ticket sales data reveals peaks in cinema attendance in 2009, 2012, and 2016, with the increase in 2016 indicating a broader audience interest. This spike aligns with a period when a more diverse range of genres, particularly action and comedy, was available in cinemas, suggesting that genre diversity and marketing might drive attendance among non-regular cinemagoers.

Private investors, by contrast, focus on ROI and audience engagement, which often aligns with commercially viable genres. Key factors driving private investment include:

**Genre Alignment:** Prioritizing genres with proven box office success, such as action, thriller, comedy, and family films.

**Marketing Potential:** Leveraging significant PR budgets to enhance visibility and maximize returns.

**Global Appeal:** Targeting genres and stories that resonate beyond Sweden, increasing the likelihood of international sales.

**Brand Awareness:** Supporting films that can elevate the profile of production companies, filmmakers, and Swedish cinema on the global stage.

While these objectives address audience demand and profitability, they may overlook the broader cultural and societal goals central to public funding initiatives.

## **Beyond ROI: The Broader Value of Cinema**

While ROI is a critical metric for private investors, films offer additional intangible benefits that justify public funding:

**Cultural Diplomacy:** Swedish films can promote the nation's culture and values on an international stage, fostering goodwill and soft power.

**Regional Branding:** Films set in specific locations can enhance tourism and local identity, as seen with *Så som i Himmelen* and *Ronja Rövardotter*.

**Social Impact:** Films addressing societal issues can drive awareness and inspire change, as demonstrated by documentaries and socially focused dramas.

**Cultural Legacy:** Supporting unique artistic voices ensures a lasting cultural heritage, even if these films do not achieve commercial success.

## **Collaboration as a Solution**

The path forward lies in fostering collaboration between public and private stakeholders. Key strategies include:

**Hybrid Funding Models:** Combining public support with private investment to balance cultural and commercial goals. For example, co-producing action or thriller films that incorporate social themes could appeal to both parties.

**Audience Research Integration:** Utilizing data from surveys and reports to align genre production with audience preferences, ensuring a broader appeal.

**Slate Financing:** Distributing risks across a portfolio of films, including both high-ROI projects and culturally significant works.

**Shared Marketing Efforts:** Pooling resources to promote films with both cultural and commercial potential, amplifying their reach and impact.

## Bridging the Gap – Audience Demand vs. Genre Focus in Swedish Cinema

### Introduction: The Discrepancy in Swedish Cinema

Swedish audiences have consistently demonstrated a preference for entertaining and thrilling genres like Action, Thriller, and Horror. However, as highlighted in *Filmåret i siffror 2023* and *Filminstitutets publikundersökning hösten 2022*, Swedish film production prioritizes Drama, Art House, and Documentaries, genres that frequently underperform in terms of audience engagement and ROI. This chapter explores the imbalance between demand and supply, highlighting potential strategies to align Swedish cinema with audience preferences without compromising cultural depth.

### Audience Preferences vs. Genre Supply in Sweden

**Audience Demand for Thrilling Genres:** Swedish audiences increasingly prefer Action, Horror, Sci-Fi, and Fantasy, particularly among younger viewers. However, these genres remain underrepresented.

**Overproduction of Drama and Documentary:** Swedish films often fail to match the entertaining qualities of international blockbusters, leading to a perception of being less exciting.

**Generational Divide:** Younger audiences lean toward Horror, Sci-Fi, and Action, while older demographics favor Drama and Thriller. Funding trends have catered to the latter, leaving younger audiences underserved.

### Insights from Global Genre Popularity

Drawing on Stephen Follows and Bruce Nash's data, we compare genre preferences globally with Swedish trends:

- **Action Films:** Globally underperforming in Europe, Action thrives in Asia. Swedish cinema could address this gap locally by exploring mid-budget Action films.
- **Comedy:** Dominant in Sweden, but global data suggests limited cross-border appeal. Italian audiences, however, show exceptional engagement with Comedy.

- **Horror and Sci-Fi:** High popularity in markets like Mexico and South Korea could inform strategies to make Swedish Horror globally appealing.
- **Documentaries:** While documentaries dominate in the US and Canada, they lack similar traction in Europe, including Sweden.

## Future Opportunities for Swedish Cinema

### Attracting Investors: Observations and Recommendations

Investment in Swedish cinema is hindered by a lack of transparency, limited financial incentives, and a narrow focus on genres that do not always align with audience demand. To attract investors, structural changes and strategic initiatives are required to address these barriers.

Tax incentives are a critical factor in encouraging private investment. Expanding Sweden's tax incentive framework to include a broader range of productions, such as smaller projects or those led by first-time filmmakers, could attract a more diverse pool of investors. By introducing tiered incentives and increasing funding availability, Sweden would become a more competitive destination for both domestic and international productions. Clearer financial benefits would provide investors with stronger motivation to back film projects.

Aligning production strategies with market demand is a crucial avenue for growth. Thrillers, fantasy, action, horror, satire, and adventure films, despite their reputation for high costs, have shown strong ROI in Sweden when produced with moderate budgets. Shifting greater focus to these genres could challenge the long-standing myth that such films require extravagant budgets to succeed, opening up opportunities for private investors to fund projects with proven audience appeal. At the same time, a well-rounded slate could benefit from the inclusion of relevant dramas, biopics, animated films, and family-oriented productions, ensuring a diverse portfolio that appeals to a broad spectrum of audiences.

A transformative approach to connecting creative teams with private investors is essential. By offering data-driven insights into a project's commercial viability, sales

strategies, and financial forecasts, it can empower investors to make informed and confident decisions.

Collaborative slate financing presents another compelling opportunity to attract private investment. By pooling resources, production companies can showcase diversified film portfolios, reducing individual project risk while appealing to investors seeking consistent and predictable returns. This model, proven successful internationally, has the potential to significantly bolster the financial resilience and competitiveness of Swedish cinema.

By implementing these strategies, Sweden can foster an environment that not only supports creative innovation but also attracts the private capital necessary to sustain a thriving and globally competitive film industry.

A bold and intriguing proposal to consider, particularly during challenging times, is the integration of a loan-based financing model into the Swedish Film Institute's (SFI) strategy. Such an approach could serve as a transformative solution to address funding gaps within the Swedish film industry. Below is an analysis of how this system could operate, its potential benefits, and the key elements required for its successful implementation:

#### **SFI as a Loan Guarantor:**

- SFI could partner with banks, credit institutions, or international film funds to create a dedicated financing pool.
- Rather than offering grants, SFI could act as a guarantor, ensuring partial or full repayment of loans in case of default. This would de-risk investments for lenders while allowing filmmakers access to larger sums.

#### **Loan Structures:**

- **Bridge Loans:** Short-term loans to cover pre-production or post-production costs, repaid after sales or distribution deals are secured.

- **Revenue-Linked Loans:** Repayments could be tied to the film's box office or distribution revenue, with a flexible schedule based on performance.
- **Equity-Backed Loans:** Films with high potential ROI could receive loans in exchange for equity participation by the SFI or the lender.

#### **Eligibility:**

- Loans could prioritize market-driven genres (Action, Thriller, Family), which have demonstrated higher ROI potential, or filmmakers with a proven track record.
- Projects that have secured partial funding through SFI, Regional funds, pre-sales, private investment, projects evaluated and ranked by a legit well-structured third party or international co-production deals could also be prioritized to reduce risk.

#### **Benefits of the Loan Model**

Filmmakers could access more substantial budgets, enabling higher production quality and global competitiveness.

#### **Self-Sustaining Model:**

Unlike grants, loans generate a return that can be reinvested in future projects, creating a self-sustaining funding ecosystem.

#### **Private Sector Engagement:**

By involving banks and private funds, this model encourages broader financial support for the Swedish film industry, reducing reliance on public funding.

**Market Discipline:**

Filmmakers would need to present commercially viable projects and detailed business plans, fostering a more professional approach to film financing.

**What Would Be Needed?****Partnership Agreements:**

SFI would need to establish formal partnerships with financial institutions, both national and international, to set up the loan facilities.

Agreements should include competitive interest rates, flexible repayment terms, and predefined conditions for defaults or delays.

**Risk Mitigation Measures:**

A reserve fund could be established by SFI to cover defaults. Insurance schemes or completion bonds could be mandated for loan recipients to minimize risks.

**Comprehensive Data Infrastructure:**

SFI would need to strengthen its data collection and analysis capabilities to evaluate the commercial potential of projects effectively, collaboration with third party could be beneficial. Loan decisions would rely on ROI forecasts, audience demand analysis, and comparative studies of similar projects.

**Filmmaker Training and Support:**

Many filmmakers may not be familiar with the business and legal aspects of loan agreements. SFI could offer workshops or partner with organizations like FrameSage to provide training on creating strong financial plans and investor pitches.

**International Collaboration:**

Sweden could collaborate with global film markets and funds, such as Eurimages or the Nordic Film Fund, to secure co-financing agreements and reduce risk.

**Policy Adjustments:**

Legislative changes or government backing might be needed to formalize SFI's role as a guarantor and enable cross-border financial agreements. The tax incentive scheme could be tied to the loan program to enhance its appeal and ensure repayment through predictable revenue streams.

**Potential Challenges****Risk of Defaults:**

Filmmaking is inherently risky, and some projects may fail to generate the anticipated revenue. A robust risk mitigation framework is essential.

**Administrative Overhead:**

Managing loan applications, disbursements, and repayments would require additional staffing and resources.

**Balancing Cultural and Commercial Goals:**

There could be concerns about the SFI focusing too heavily on market-driven projects at the expense of cultural or experimental films.

**Conclusion (Loan)**

A loan-based financing system led or guaranteed by the Swedish Film Institute could revolutionize Swedish cinema by making it more self-reliant and commercially viable. While this model would require significant planning, risk management, and collaboration with financial institutions, the long-term benefits, such as increased private investment, higher-quality productions, and a more globally competitive industry, make it a compelling strategy.



## The Missing Link – Data Transparency, Infrastructure, and Investment in Swedish Cinema

### **The Data Gap: Challenges in Transparency and Accessibility**

While this Study might represent the most comprehensive collection of data on Swedish commercial cinema to date, it only scratches the surface of the information required for a truly robust analysis. It focuses exclusively on theatrical releases, leaving significant gaps in understanding the performance of other categories, such as straight-to-DVD films, digital releases, and TV movies. Additionally, the Study identifies around 100 films that likely performed well commercially but were excluded from this analysis due to incomplete data, underscoring the challenges of evaluating the full scope of Swedish cinema.

Moreover, despite access to extensive data sources, the exact reasons behind production costs remain elusive. While some factors, such as minimum wages and blanket orders established in agreements between the Film & TV Producers and unions, are known, others remain opaque. This lack of transparency is particularly challenging for investors seeking to understand where their money is going and why certain projects exceed or stay within budget. This Study, despite its depth, highlights the urgent need for a centralized database that includes not just box office figures but also production budgets, ROI metrics, and cost breakdowns.

### **The Production Company Predicament**

Production companies in Sweden navigate a challenging environment, marked by volatile income streams and a lack of comprehensive systemic support. A critical issue lies in the production incentive scheme, which, despite becoming a permanent measure in 2022, has a yearly budget of just 100 million SEK. These funds are typically depleted within minutes of release, disproportionately benefiting a small group of established companies and sidelining smaller, innovative players. This structure not only reinforces existing industry hierarchies but also limits opportunities for new entrants.

The incentive covers up to 25% of eligible costs, including salaries for tax-paying individuals in Sweden and services or goods purchased from Swedish companies. However, strict requirements, such as minimum budget thresholds and the necessity to meet cultural product classifications, create barriers for smaller projects that could otherwise drive innovation. The rapid exhaustion of funds underscores a fundamental flaw in the program's structure, highlighting the need for a more inclusive and sustainable approach.

Breaking into the film industry remains notoriously difficult. While nurturing emerging talents is essential, Sweden must also prioritize its seasoned creatives, directors, screenwriters, and producers with proven track records, who have the capacity to scale their successes and elevate the industry. Radical solutions, such as introducing randomized funding distributions, could disrupt entrenched power dynamics and provide opportunities for those outside traditional networks.

A holistic approach is essential to foster sustainable growth. Beyond revising production incentives, Sweden's film industry needs robust business development resources for production companies, targeted training programs for freelancers, and platforms that encourage collaboration between experienced professionals and new voices. A dynamic and inclusive support framework would empower Swedish cinema to innovate, compete on a global scale, and build a resilient ecosystem.

To strengthen the financial foundation of Swedish cinema, it is critical to attract more private equity and engage funds that have historically not invested in films. Diversifying funding sources would inject much-needed capital into the industry while fostering accountability and innovation. Private investors, with their strategic oversight and focus on commercial viability, could bridge the gap between creative ambition and financial sustainability, ensuring a competitive and thriving sector.

Politicians have a key role to play in facilitating this transformation. The establishment of government-supported and overseen forums for filmmakers and production companies to meet with potential investors is a vital step. These forums should prioritize transparency and accountability, with credible third-party experts evaluating project viability. By creating structured, well-organized platforms for pitches, the

government can foster trust between investors and the film industry, encourage private equity participation, and bridge the gap between public support and private capital. Such initiatives would provide a significant boost to the industry, ensuring that promising projects secure the funding they need while maintaining exact standards of quality and professionalism.

### **Strategic Vision for the Industry**

The Swedish Film Institute (SFI) has recently highlighted several challenges facing the industry, including rising production costs, inflation, and evolving business models that have diminished traditional revenue streams. In their communication to the government, SFI emphasized that investors and distributors increasingly prefer acquiring completed films over engaging in pre-sales, further complicating the financing landscape.

To address these challenges, SFI proposes higher support levels for selecting projects to attract additional financing earlier, strengthen production companies' negotiating positions over rights, and promote continuity in the industry. They also highlight sustainability requirements, now a standard for European funding bodies, as a factor increasing production costs.

While these observations are valid, some conclusions warrant further examination. For instance, the notion that combining financing sources has become inherently more difficult and overlooks the potential of structured collaborations. Transparent, third party-evaluated projects and joint funding initiatives have proven effective in bridging financial gaps, fostering trust, and aligning creative ambitions with financial viability.

SFI also notes the risks faced by Swedish films in competing against international productions with significantly larger marketing budgets. However, this challenge underscores the importance of creating films that combine cultural richness with audience appeal. A more collaborative and inclusive approach, emphasizing transparency, new funding models, and strategic partnerships, can ensure Swedish cinema remains competitive while preserving its artistic integrity.

By facilitating cross-industry collaboration, supporting diverse filmmakers, and fostering sustainable production models, Swedish cinema can not only adapt to the

current challenges but also position itself for long-term growth in an increasingly competitive global market. Potential alternative routes for SFI could involve:

### **Alternative Approaches for SFI**

**Loan Program Partnerships:** SFI could collaborate with financial institutions to offer low-interest loans or guarantee funds, encouraging private capital to co-invest in Swedish films. By serving as an intermediary, SFI could leverage its expertise to assess risk and facilitate loans.

**Slate Financing Models:** Partner with entities like FrameSage to pool projects into diversified investment vehicles, balancing risk and return for investors.

**Data and Transparency Initiatives:** Establish centralized databases for film budgets, ROI performance, and audience data to provide a clear picture for all stakeholders.

### **Academic Perspectives and Film Science**

Swedish film science has established itself as a critical discipline that examines the intersection of culture, society, and cinema. Through an analysis of publicly available studies, research papers, and articles, it is evident that this field has made significant contributions to understanding the role of film in shaping identity, addressing societal challenges, and promoting inclusivity. These studies often focus on key areas such as:

- **Swedish Cinema and National Identity:** The evolution of Swedish cinema, including iconic movements like the Bergman era, and its role in portraying societal values and cultural heritage.
- **Film and Social Issues:** Exploring themes of gender, diversity, migration, and inclusion, reflecting Sweden's progressive societal values.
- **Documentaries and Realism:** Analyzing Sweden's strong tradition in documentary filmmaking, particularly its use in activism and cultural storytelling.
- **Film Aesthetics and Narratives:** Investigating cinematic styles, narrative structures, and innovations in Swedish and international filmmaking.

- **Scandinavian Genre Studies:** While there is some research into Nordic Noir, crime, and other popular genres, these studies remain relatively limited compared to the broader focus on socially conscious and art-house films.

This work has enriched the cultural and societal understanding of cinema, but there remains an opportunity to expand research into areas that align more closely with evolving industry needs and global audience preferences.

## **Expanding the Lens: Opportunities for Swedish Film Science**

While Scandinavian genre studies exist, particularly in crime and Nordic Noir, the focus has not sufficiently extended to exploring the full commercial potential of Swedish genre cinema. By broadening the scope, Swedish film science can uncover new insights into how these genres can both enhance cultural representation and drive economic success. Key areas for further exploration include:

### **Genre Studies with a Commercial Lens:**

Expanding the analysis of underrepresented genres like action, thriller, horror, and fantasy in Swedish cinema. Research could explore their financial viability, audience demand, and potential for global success, offering a roadmap for increasing production in these high-ROI genres.

### **Audience Engagement in Genre Films:**

Investigating how Swedish films in commercially viable genres resonate with domestic and international audiences. Studies could examine viewing habits, marketing effectiveness, and the cultural impact of such films.

### **ROI and Financial Dynamics in Genre Production:**

Delving into the economic models of genre films, including production budgets, funding structures, and distribution strategies. Research could identify best practices for maximizing returns while maintaining cultural depth.

### **Expanding Nordic Noir and Beyond:**

Building on the existing body of work in Nordic Noir, research could explore how other genres, such as psychological thrillers, action, and fantasy, can build on the Scandinavian aesthetic to reach wider audiences.

### **Emerging Technologies and Storytelling:**

Analyzing how new technologies, like AI, VR, and AR, can be used to innovate within genre filmmaking. This could include exploring the potential of immersive storytelling techniques in Swedish genre films.

### **Marketing Strategies for Genre Films:**

Investigating how strategic marketing and branding could elevate Swedish genre films in the global market. Case studies of successful campaigns could provide actionable insights for the industry.

### **Genre Hybridity and Cultural Narratives:**

Examining how blending genres (e.g., fantasy with historical narratives, or thrillers with cultural themes) can create unique cinematic experiences that resonate with both Swedish and international audiences.

#### ➤ **Tax Incentives, Production Budgets, and Loan Structures:**

Research into the financial frameworks supporting Swedish cinema is crucial for understanding its competitive position on the global stage. Studies could explore the impact of tax incentives, the availability and structure of production loans, and the detailed budgeting processes in Nordic filmmaking. Insights into why major international productions, such as *Game of Thrones*, initially scouted Swedish locations but ultimately chose other countries, could help refine Sweden's offerings to attract high-budget projects. This would also provide a clearer picture of how Sweden could position its vast, stunning natural landscapes and skilled domestic talents to compete with other nations in the global production market.

#### ➤ **Comparative Studies on Cultural Exports:**

Cross-cultural research could examine why Sweden excels in certain creative industries, such as music production, which boasts global success and substantial exports, while film struggles to achieve comparable international acclaim. These studies could identify systemic or cultural differences that account for this disparity and propose strategies to replicate the music industry's success in the film sector.

➤ **TV Series vs. Movies:**

Sweden has gained recognition for internationally successful TV series (e.g., Nordic Noir), yet Swedish feature films often struggle to achieve the same level of global impact. Research could explore the differences in production models, storytelling approaches, and market dynamics between Swedish TV series and feature films, shedding light on why one thrives internationally while the other lags behind. Identifying lessons from TV series success and applying them to feature film production could pave the way for more competitive Swedish cinema.

## **Dominance of Drama and Comedy**

Drama and Comedy together account for more than half of all commercial theatrical releases, underscoring their centrality to Swedish cinema. Drama's dominance reflects Sweden's tradition of producing socially conscious, emotionally resonant films that explore complex human experiences. This genre's prevalence aligns with the nation's cultural identity, which values storytelling steeped in societal reflection.

Comedy, while secondary in prominence, has steadily grown over the decades. Its broad appeal stems from its capacity to connect with audiences through humor and relatability. Comedy's incremental rise suggests filmmakers' awareness of its ability to draw audiences, even as the genre remains overshadowed by Drama.

## **Diversification and Global Influence**

Swedish cinema has evolved significantly, moving from an early focus on Drama and traditional narrative styles to embracing a wider range of genres. Action, Horror, and Fantasy films have shown incremental growth in production, influenced by globalization and changing audience expectations. This diversification signals an increased willingness among Swedish filmmakers to explore underrepresented genres and cater to broader, more varied audience tastes.

Key underproduced genres such as Thriller, Crime, and Action have demonstrated strong success rates, suggesting untapped potential for future exploration. Their

performance highlights opportunities for Swedish cinema to align production with demand and expand its commercial appeal.

## Patterns and Correlations

### **High ROI Stability and Underproduction:**

- Genres such as Thriller, Crime, and Action, despite being underproduced, exhibit high ROI stability, supporting the hypothesis that overlooked genres perform better commercially.

### **Market Fatigue in Saturated Genres:**

- Drama and Comedy, though the most produced genres, consistently underperform in ROI rates, suggesting market saturation and diminishing returns for these categories.

### **Niche Genres with High ROI Potential:**

- Fantasy and Animation, though less frequently produced, achieve comparatively higher ROI success rates, indicating promising opportunities for growth in these areas.

The analysis highlights Swedish cinema's balancing act between tradition and innovation. Drama and Comedy remain foundational to the nation's cinematic identity but face saturation and diminishing returns. Meanwhile, underproduced genres like Thriller, Action, and Fantasy present significant opportunities for growth, both domestically and internationally.

This evolving landscape demonstrates the importance of aligning production strategies with audience demand and investing in underrepresented yet commercially viable genres. Swedish cinema stands poised to embrace both its cultural roots and a globalized cinematic future, fostering an industry that is both artistically rich and economically sustainable.

Achieving consistently high ROI in Swedish cinema is not solely a matter of producing films in popular genres. While aligning genres with audience demand is a critical factor,



the road to success is more nuanced and requires a multi-faceted strategy that addresses every stage of film production, marketing, and distribution.

To enhance ROI, Swedish cinema must go beyond simply choosing commercially viable genres like comedy, thriller, and family films. While these genres do tend to resonate more broadly with both domestic and international audiences, success also depends on the following elements:

- **PR and Marketing Excellence:** Films must be supported by comprehensive PR and marketing strategies that create excitement before and during their release. A "marketing-first" approach ensures that even smaller productions can compete in crowded markets by leveraging digital campaigns, influencer partnerships, and targeted outreach.
- **Budget Alignment with Outcomes:** Budgets must realistically reflect the probable market outcome for each film. Overspending on productions that lack strong distribution plans or audience pull is a risk that can be mitigated by careful financial planning and simulations of potential returns.
- **Slate Funding and Risk Diversification:** Collaborative slate funding, where multiple films are funded and marketed as a package, can reduce individual project risk while increasing overall chances of success. This approach encourages a balance of high-risk, high-reward projects with smaller, stable investments.
- **Working Closely with Distributors:** Distributors play a crucial role in determining a film's reach and profitability. Swedish producers could benefit from deeper collaboration with distributors or even jointly owning distribution companies, giving them greater control over how their films are marketed and released.
- **Leveraging Tax and Production Incentives:** Restructuring tax incentives to attract more private investment and international productions is critical. By creating competitive incentive packages, Sweden can draw more large-scale projects and retain domestic talent that might otherwise work abroad.

- **Emphasizing Genre Authenticity:** Films must deliver on the expectations of their chosen genres. Horror films need to be genuinely scary, comedies should consistently entertain, and thrillers must maintain tension. Authenticity builds trust with audiences, which in turn increases long-term loyalty and repeat viewership.
- **Boldness in Creative Choices:** Swedish cinema needs to be more daring in the types of films it produces. This includes embracing genres that have been underexplored domestically, such as action and fantasy, while maintaining the high production values and storytelling standards Sweden is known for.
- **Entry-Level Opportunities:** Introducing more trainee positions and entry-level roles can cultivate a new generation of filmmakers who are adept at blending artistic and commercial priorities. This approach strengthens the talent pipeline and fosters innovation within the industry.

## Appendix

This appendix provides insights into Swedish theatrical releases, focusing on trends in commercial success and the potential for high ROI (100%+) films within the industry. By examining the performance of 1,000 commercially oriented movies, the analysis identifies key factors driving profitability and opportunities for strategic growth.

### **Swedish Box Office Highlights and Audience Preferences in 2023 and 2024**

While 2024 wasn't a standout year for Swedish cinema overall, a few domestic films achieved notable success amid fierce competition from international blockbusters.

#### **Standout Swedish Films of 2024**

- *Den Sista Resan*: This documentary by Fredrik Wikingsson and Filip Hammar became the highest-grossing Swedish film of the year, securing the ninth spot among all movies at the Swedish box office.
- *Håkan Bråkan 2*: A family-friendly comedy sequel that charmed audiences, finishing as the tenth most-seen film of the year.

These films, though successful, are not part of the 80 films analyzed for high ROI (100%+) as their complete financial data is not yet available. Their inclusion would highlight the potential for local films to achieve broader success.

Swedish audiences continued to favor animated family films, action-adventures, and nostalgic comedies:

- In 2023, titles like *Barbie*, *Oppenheimer*, and *The Super Mario Bros. Film* dominated.
- In 2024, animated hits like *Inside Out 2* and *Despicable Me 4* led the charts, alongside epics such as *Dune: Part Two* and *Gladiator 2*.

While international productions continue to dominate, the successes of *Den Sista Resan* and *Håkan Bråkan 2* underscore the value of audience-friendly, relatable Swedish stories, offering hope for a more competitive future in the local market.

## Sub-Genres Disclaimer

Sub-genres, while distinct in style and narrative approach, originate from broader main genres. For instance, Coming-of-Age is rooted in Drama due to its focus on personal growth and emotional depth. Historical films are typically classified as Drama or Adventure, though they can occasionally align with other genres depending on their storytelling approach. Mystery naturally falls under Thriller, given its emphasis on suspense and plot twists, while Satire is an extension of Comedy, utilizing humor and irony to critique societal or cultural themes.

## Highlights of High-ROI Swedish Films

These examples showcase the diversity and potential profitability of Swedish cinema when aligned with effective marketing and audience demand:

### 1. Mannen från Mallorca

- **ROI:** Approximately 2900%

This thriller,

### 2. Flickan som lekte med elden

- **ROI:** Approximately 1,418%
- This thriller, part of the Millennium trilogy based on Stieg Larsson's novels, captured international attention and delivered remarkable returns. Its success exemplifies the global appeal of Swedish crime thrillers.

### 3. En man som heter Ove

- **ROI:** Approximately 1,200%
- This comedy-drama, based on Fredrik Backman's popular novel, became one of the highest-grossing Swedish films, appealing to audiences worldwide with its heartwarming story and universal themes.

#### 4. Jag är nyfiken – en film i gult

- **ROI:** Estimated over 1,000%
- This 1967 film directed by Vilgot Sjöman was highly controversial and widely discussed. Its examination of political and social issues resonated both in Sweden and abroad, especially in the United States, where it became a commercial hit.

#### 5. Så som i Himmelen

- **ROI:** Approximately 900%
- This 2004 film, directed by Kay Pollak, combined drama and musical elements to capture both local and international audiences. Its popularity even inspired a musical adaptation, contributing to its enduring profitability.

#### 6. Mitt liv som hund

- **ROI:** Estimated around 800%
- Directed by Lasse Hallström, this 1985 coming-of-age film was both critically acclaimed and commercially successful. Its universal themes and strong storytelling helped it achieve impressive returns and brought Swedish cinema recognition on the global stage.

#### 7. Hundraåringen som klev ut genom fönstret och försvann

- **ROI:** Approximately 442%
- Adapted from Jonas Jonasson's novel, this dark comedy gained popularity for its quirky humor and international appeal. Its cross-generational storytelling helped it perform well in various markets, especially in Europe.

## 8. Sällskapsresan II

- **ROI:** Approximately 500%
- As a sequel to a well-loved Swedish comedy, this film capitalized on the popularity of the original and solidified its status as one of the top-grossing comedies in Swedish cinema history.

## 9. Jalla! Jalla!

- **ROI:** Approximately 771%
- This romantic comedy by Josef Fares blended humor with social commentary, drawing large audiences and achieving high profitability domestically and in limited international markets.

## 10. Ronja Rövardotter

- **ROI:** Approximately 150%
- Based on the beloved children's book by Astrid Lindgren, this family adventure captured audiences both in Sweden and internationally, proving that adaptations of popular literature can achieve high returns.

## 11. Ondskan

- **ROI:** Approximately 300%
- This 2003 drama, based on Jan Guillou's novel, was a critical and commercial success. Its appeal to both Swedish audiences and international viewers contributed to its substantial ROI, highlighting the commercial potential of well-executed dramas.

These examples (out of all the movies with ROI over 100%) illustrate how diverse genres, from thrillers and comedies to dramas and family films, can achieve significant financial success within Swedish cinema, especially when they resonate with both local and international audiences. Another, fun example, is the 900% ROI movie **The Ninja Mission**. A B movie that made an international hit.

## Trends and Observations

- **Production Growth:** Swedish cinema has maintained a stable output, with increased production consistency from 2006 onwards.
- **High ROI Trends:** High-ROI films (100%+) have shown a steady presence, with a slight increase in recent years, indicating improved market alignment for certain productions.
- **Market Stability:** The consistency of releases with moderate ROI suggests a stable, low-risk environment in slate financing, where break-even or slightly profitable films can support higher-risk projects.

## Funding Structures and Regional Support

Swedish cinema has long been supported by various regional film funds, fostering a diverse production environment across the country. In addition to the Swedish Film Institute (SFI) and Film i Väst, multiple regional funds contribute significantly to the financial structure of Swedish film. Here's an expanded overview of these entities:

### Swedish Film Institute (SFI):

SFI is the primary source of public funding for Swedish cinema, contributing roughly 25% of production costs. Through programs like Automatstöd, SFI provides vital resources for filmmakers aiming for commercial release and audience engagement. The Automatstöd program has proven crucial for many films within the break-even category, sustaining their market viability.

### Regional Film Funds and Organizations:

Swedish cinema benefits from a network of regional funds and film organizations, each supporting projects that enrich local culture and contribute to regional economic growth. Notable funds include:

- **Film i Väst:** Located in western Sweden, Film i Väst is one of Europe's largest regional film funds, supporting numerous high-profile Swedish and international productions.

- **FilmPool Nord** and **Film i Skåne**: Both funds are instrumental in promoting regional storytelling and creating job opportunities within the local film industry.
- **Nordisk Film & TV Fond**: Although not exclusively Swedish, this Nordic fund supports collaborative projects across the region, with Sweden being a prominent beneficiary.
- Other regional funds, such as **Film Capital Stockholm**, **Norrköpings Filmfond**, **Film Västernorrland**, **Film i Dalarna**, **Filmregion Sydost**, and **Film i Västerbotten**, have also contributed significantly to Swedish cinema, offering development and production support.
- **Swedish Production Incentive**: Introduced to attract international productions and encourage domestic filming, this incentive offers a 25% cash rebate on eligible production costs. Administered by the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket), it aims to make Sweden a competitive filming location.

#### **Smaller Regional and Cultural Funds:**

Numerous smaller funds, such as **Film i Öst**, **Film i Västerbotten**, **Region Gävleborg – Kulturutveckling** and **Region Örebro län – Film**, provide project-specific funding. They focus on cultural engagement, promoting local narratives and industry training within specific regions. These funds are particularly important for smaller-scale productions that may not attract larger investors but are vital for regional storytelling and cultural representation.

This extensive funding ecosystem enables a diverse film industry, supporting projects ranging from art-house films to commercial ventures.



## Example of Non-commercial movies

### Sven Klangs kvintett (1976)

- *Directors:* Stellan Olsson and Henric Holmberg
- *Description:* A drama about a jazz band navigating ambition and artistic struggles in the 1950s.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its focus on jazz culture and limited appeal targeted a specific audience.

### Tragedi på en lantkyrkogård (2013)

- *Directors:* Christian Eklöv and Christopher Panov
- *Description:* A rural murder mystery based on Maria Lang's novel.
- *Release:* Direct-to-DVD release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its release method and specific audience reflect niche appeal.

### Faro (2013)

- *Director:* Fredrik Edfeldt
- *Description:* A drama about a father and daughter fleeing societal pressures.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its niche story and minimal distribution align with art-house cinema.

### Brusten himmel (1982)

- *Director:* Stig Björkman
- *Description:* A drama about a woman's emotional self-discovery.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release.

- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its character focus and limited distribution suggest it targeted a niche audience.

### **Tillbaka till Ararat (1988)**

- *Directors:* Göran Gunér and Suzanne Khardalian
- *Description:* A documentary about the Armenian genocide and its enduring effects.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown at international festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its historical depth and specific audience highlight niche filmmaking.

### **Gud, lukt och henne (2008)**

- *Director:* Maria Hedman Hvitfeldt
- *Description:* A short film exploring sensory experiences and memories.
- *Release:* Primarily shown at festivals; no theatrical release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The movie is described as “God, Smell and Her” is both a feature film and a documentary, or neither. A flow of thoughts, a journey, a wonder of us humans, life and the world, of the bodily and that which cannot be seen, but which exists.” Its limited reach reflects niche appeal.

### **Fotbollens sista proletärer (2011)**

- *Directors:* Carl Pontus Hjorthén and Martin Jönsson
- *Description:* A documentary on IFK Göteborg’s football success in the 1980s.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown at cultural events and festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its niche sports theme and limited reach targeted specific audiences.

### **H:r Landshövding (2008)**

- *Director:* Måns Månsson

- *Description:* A documentary about a Swedish county governor's daily life.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown at film festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its specific subject matter and limited distribution targeted a niche audience.

### **Tvärbalk (1969)**

- *Director:* Åke Falck
- *Description:* An experimental narrative exploring complex themes in an art-house style.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Artistic focus and limited distribution underline its niche appeal.

### **Den vita sporten (1968)**

- *Director:* Bo Widerberg
- *Description:* A politically charged documentary about a Davis Cup match in Sweden.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its historical subject matter and limited reach targeted a specific audience.

### **Min faster i Sarajevo (2016)**

- *Director:* Goran Kapetanović
- *Description:* A drama about Zlatan, who fled Bosnia during the war, and his daughter Anja, who persuades him to return to Sarajevo after many years.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's personal narrative and limited distribution suggest it was aimed at a niche audience.

### **Transnistra (2019)**

- *Director:* Anna Eborn
- *Description:* A documentary portraying the lives of teenagers in the unrecognized state of Transnistria.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its regional specificity and documentary format targeted a niche audience.

### **Tiden har inget namn (1989)**

- *Director:* Stefan Jarl
- *Description:* A documentary exploring rural Swedish life and small-scale farming.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Observational style and focus on a disappearing lifestyle targeted a specific audience.

### **Tong Tana (1990)**

- *Directors:* Jan Röed and André Singer
- *Description:* A documentary highlighting the Penan people's struggles in Borneo.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its environmental focus and specific audience indicate specialized intent.

### **Hebriana (1990)**

- *Director:* Erik Kiviniemi
- *Description:* A drama based on Lars Norén's play, delving into complex family dynamics and existential themes.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown in art-house cinemas.

- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's theatrical origins and introspective narrative suggest it was aimed at a niche audience.

### **Nigger (1965)**

- *Director:* Mats Helge Olsson
- *Description:* A drama addressing racial tensions and societal prejudices in Sweden during the 1960s.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; faced controversy due to its provocative title and subject matter.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's challenging themes and limited distribution indicate it was not intended for mainstream audiences.

### **Dyningar (1985)**

- *Director:* Solveig Nordlund
- *Description:* A drama exploring the emotional aftermath of a woman's disappearance and its impact on her family.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in film festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's introspective narrative and limited distribution suggest it was aimed at a specialized audience.

### **Carl G. Johansson, porträtt av en vagabond (1991)**

- *Director:* Magnus Gertten
- *Description:* A documentary profiling Carl G. Johansson, a Swedish vagabond and poet, exploring his life and works.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown at film festivals and cultural events.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's biographical focus on a lesser-known figure suggests it was intended for a niche audience.

### **Kärlekens himmelska helvete (1993)**

- *Director:* Åke Sandgren
- *Description:* A drama exploring the complexities of love and relationships, delving into themes of passion and betrayal.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in art-house cinemas.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's thematic depth and limited distribution indicate it was aimed at a specialized audience.

### **Drömmar från skogen (2009)**

- *Director:* Karin Ekberg
- *Description:* A documentary exploring the lives of individuals connected to the Swedish forest industry.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The documentary's specific subject matter and limited screenings indicate a focus on a specialized audience.

### **Hoppets hamn (2011)**

- *Director:* Magnus Gertten
- *Description:* A documentary recounting the arrival of concentration camp survivors to the Swedish port of Malmö in 1945.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The historical subject matter and documentary format indicate a focus on educational and niche audiences.

### **Kokvinnorna (2011)**

- *Directors:* Peter Gerdehag and Tell Aulin
- *Description:* A documentary about two sisters running a small dairy farm in rural Sweden.

- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its rural focus and specific target audience reflect its niche intent.

### **Blue Karma Tiger (2006)**

- *Directors:* Sophie Vuković and Ester Martin Bergsmark
- *Description:* A documentary exploring graffiti through the perspectives of three female artists.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in art-house cinemas.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The film's niche subject matter and focus on a specific subculture highlights its specialized intent.

### **Brännvin och fågelholkar: Söderkåkar reser västerut (2007)**

- *Director:* Anders Albien
- *Description:* A comedy based on a Swedish play, exploring family feuds and humorous situations in a rural setting.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown in regional theaters.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its regional appeal and limited distribution make it a niche production.

### **Färgklang (2006)**

- *Director:* Nina Hedenius
- *Description:* A documentary observing the changes in nature's colors over the seasons.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown in art-house cinemas.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its observational approach and focus on natural aesthetics make it niche focused.

### **Naturens Gång (2008)**

- *Director:* Nina Hedenius
- *Description:* A documentary portraying life on a Swedish farm over a year.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown in art-house cinemas.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its rural focus and observational style indicate niche appeal.

### **Döden – en film om livet (2002)**

- *Directors:* Magnus Gertten and Stefan Berg
- *Description:* A documentary exploring diverse cultural perspectives on death.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its contemplative theme and limited screenings targeted a niche audience.

### **Gå på vatten (2000)**

- *Director:* Bengt Johansen
- *Description:* A drama about a man confronting his past and seeking redemption.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The introspective narrative and minimal distribution reflect a specialized audience.

### **Min mamma hade fjorton barn (2002)**

- *Director:* Lars Lennart Forsberg
- *Description:* A documentary recounting the director's experiences growing up in a large family.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown on television and at festivals.



- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its personal subject matter and limited release indicate a niche focus.

### **Plastpappan (1995)**

- *Director:* Jonas Cornell
- *Description:* A drama exploring family dynamics and the concept of fatherhood.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in art-house cinemas.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its introspective nature and limited distribution suggest a niche audience.

### **Bror min (2002)**

- *Director:* Daniel Bergman
- *Description:* A drama exploring the relationship between two brothers.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured in festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its intimate narrative and specialized release indicate it was aimed at a niche audience.

### **Barnaskrik och jäkelskap (1993)**

- *Director:* Jonas Cornell
- *Description:* A comedy-drama exploring the struggles of parenthood.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown primarily on television.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its distribution and thematic focus highlight its niche appeal.

### **Ett hål i mitt hjärta (2004)**

- *Director:* Lukas Moodysson
- *Description:* A drama exploring the lives of individuals involved in amateur pornography.
- *Release:* Theatrical release in Sweden.

- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its explicit content and challenging themes targeted a niche audience.

### **Men så en dag om morgonen (1965)**

- *Director:* Göran Gentele
- *Description:* A drama about a woman who decides to change her life unexpectedly.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release in Sweden.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its introspective focus and limited release align with niche filmmaking.

### **Hundarnas morgon (1981)**

- *Director:* Stellan Olsson
- *Description:* A drama about small-town life, focusing on individual struggles.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release in Sweden.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its character-driven narrative and minimal reach indicate a niche audience.

### **Skapelsens Krona (1981)**

- *Director:* Åke Sandgren
- *Description:* A drama exploring human nature and societal expectations.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its thematic depth and limited distribution reflect niche appeal.

### **Brusten himmel (1982)**

- *Director:* Stig Björkman
- *Description:* A drama about a woman's emotional journey and self-discovery.

- *Release:* Limited theatrical release in Sweden.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its introspective narrative and limited reach highlight its niche intent.

### **Spårvagn till havet (1987)**

- *Director:* Stig Björkman
- *Description:* A drama delving into human relationships and personal introspection.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. The narrative focus and minimal distribution indicate niche appeal.

### **Tillbaka till Ararat (1988)**

- *Directors:* Göran Gunér and Suzanne Khardalian
- *Description:* A documentary about the Armenian genocide and its effects on survivors.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; featured at international festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its historical focus and limited reach targeted a specialized audience.

### **Sova räv (1982)**

- *Director:* Gun Jönsson
- *Description:* A TV drama about teenagers navigating societal and personal challenges.
- *Release:* Premiered on Swedish television; no theatrical release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its medium and limited audience suggest a niche focus.

### **Människan och jorden (1984)**

- *Director:* Stefan Jarl
- *Description:* A documentary exploring the relationship between humans and the environment.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; primarily shown at festivals.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its ecological themes and distribution indicate niche appeal.

### **Den frusna leoparden (1986)**

- *Director:* Lárus Óskarsson
- *Description:* A drama about two brothers navigating crime and redemption.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its character-driven narrative and limited reach reflect niche filmmaking.

### **Sent om hösten – en dag i Sverige (1988)**

- *Director:* Johan Bergenstråhle
- *Description:* A documentary capturing a day in Swedish life during late autumn.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown at cultural events.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its observational style and focus on culture targeted a specific audience.

### **Lindas längtan (1995)**

- *Director:* Kjell-Åke Andersson
- *Description:* A drama about a young woman's search for personal fulfillment.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release; shown in art-house cinemas.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its introspective narrative and limited reach indicate a niche audience.

## **Sven Klangs kvintett (1976)**

- *Directors:* Stellan Olsson and Henric Holmberg
- *Description:* A drama about a jazz band navigating ambition and artistic struggles in the 1950s.
- *Release:* Limited theatrical release.
- *Commercial Intent:* Non-commercial. Its focus on jazz culture and limited appeal targeted a specific audience.

## **ROI and Popularity USA and Europe 1965-2024**

### **United States**

#### **1960s:**

##### **Most Popular Genres:**

- **Western:** Dominated early '60s, reflecting America's fascination with frontier tales.
- **Musical:** Gained prominence with films like *The Sound of Music*.
- **Drama:** Consistently popular, addressing contemporary social issues.
- **Comedy:** Maintained a steady presence with lighthearted narratives.
- **War:** Films depicting World War II experiences were prevalent.

##### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- **Western:** High audience demand led to substantial returns.
- **Musical:** Successful soundtracks and performances boosted profitability.
- **Comedy:** Low production costs often resulted in higher profit margins.
- **Horror:** Emerging genre with low budgets yielding significant returns.
- **Thriller:** Engaging plots attracted audiences, ensuring good ROI.

## 1970s:

### Most Popular Genres:

- Drama: Explored complex narratives and character studies.
- Action/Adventure: Emerged with blockbusters like Jaws and Star Wars.
- Horror: Gained traction with films like The Exorcist.
- Comedy: Continued to entertain with diverse themes.
- Science Fiction: Sparked interest with futuristic concepts.

### Highest ROI Genres:

- Horror: Low-budget films like Halloween achieved massive profits.
- Action/Adventure: High audience turnout for blockbusters ensured substantial returns.
- Science Fiction: Innovative storytelling attracted large audiences.
- Comedy: Consistent audience appeal-maintained profitability.
- Drama: Critical acclaim often translated to box office success.

## 1980s:

### Most Popular Genres:

- Action: Became a staple with franchises like Die Hard.
- Comedy: Rose in popularity with films like Ghostbusters.
- Science Fiction: Flourished with titles like E.T. and Blade Runner.
- Horror: Continued to captivate audiences with new sub-genres.
- Drama: Maintained a strong presence with compelling stories.

### Highest ROI Genres:

- Horror: Franchises like A Nightmare on Elm Street delivered high returns.
- Action: Blockbusters with international appeal boosted profits.
- Comedy: Universal themes attracted diverse audiences.
- Science Fiction: Special effects and storytelling drew large crowds.
- Animated: Family-friendly films saw significant box office success.

## **1990s:**

### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Drama: Continued to be a dominant genre.
- Comedy: Maintained strong production numbers.
- Thriller: Saw increased interest with films like *The Silence of the Lambs*.
- Action: High-energy films attracted wide audiences.
- Romantic Comedy: Blended humour and romance to great effect.

### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Horror: Films like *The Blair Witch Project* achieved unprecedented returns.
- Romantic Comedy: Low budgets with high audience appeal ensured profitability.
- Thriller: Engaging plots led to strong office performance.
- Action: International markets contributed to high returns.
- Drama: Critical success often led to financial gain.

## **2000s:**

### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Action: Led by superhero franchises like *Spider-Man*.
- Comedy: Remained a significant genre.
- Drama: Continued strong production.
- Fantasy: Gained prominence with series like *Harry Potter*.
- Animation: Family-friendly films saw increased production.

### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Horror: Low-budget films like *Paranormal Activity* yielded massive profits.
- Animation: High box office returns from family audiences.
- Fantasy: Franchise loyalty ensured substantial returns.
- Action: Blockbusters continued to dominate earnings.
- Comedy: Consistent audience turnout-maintained profitability.

## **2010s:**

### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Action/Adventure: Dominated by Marvel and DC films.
- Animation: Increased with studios like Pixar and DreamWorks.
- Horror: Resurgence with films like Get Out.
- Drama: Continued to produce critically acclaimed films.
- Science Fiction: Gained popularity with technological advancements.

### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Horror: Films like Get Out achieved high returns relative to budget.
- Animation: Consistent box office success with family audiences.
- Action/Adventure: Franchise films ensured substantial profits.
- Science Fiction: Innovative concepts attracted large audiences.
- Comedy: Maintained steady profitability.

## **2020s:**

### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Action/Adventure: Continues to lead, especially with superhero films.
- Science Fiction: Gaining prominence with technological advancements.
- Horror: Maintains a steady production rate.
- Drama: Focused on streaming platforms and limited releases.
- Comedy: Adapted to changing audience preferences.

### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Horror: Low-budget films continue to yield high returns.
- Action/Adventure: Blockbusters dominate box office earnings.
- Science Fiction: High-concept films attract global audiences.
- Animation: Family-friendly content remains profitable.
- Thriller: Engaging narratives ensure steady returns.



## **Europe**

### **1970s:**

#### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Drama: Continued dominance across European cinema, exploring socio-political themes.
- Comedy: Still widely popular, especially in countries like Italy and France.
- Thriller: Gained traction with political thrillers and psychological narratives.
- Romance: Began growing as a significant genre during this decade.
- Documentary: Emerged as an important genre, particularly in Western and Northern Europe.

#### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Thriller: High demand for political and psychological thrillers.
- Comedy: Commercially viable with enduring popularity.
- Action/Adventure: European adaptations of action films found notable success.
- Romance: Increased audience interest led to strong financial performance.
- Drama: Remained reliable for ROI due to critical and festival acclaim.

### **1980s (Europe):**

#### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Drama: Dominated film festivals and arthouse cinemas.
- Comedy: Maintained strong audience appeal.
- Action: Continued growth, influenced by American action trends but with a European flair.
- Historical: Revived interest with period epics.
- Documentary: Continued steady growth.

### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Action/Adventure: Rapid growth in popularity boosted financial returns.
- Comedy: Consistently strong ROI.
- Thriller: High demand for psychological and political thrillers.
- Drama: Certain titles achieved strong ROI, though less reliably than lighter genres.
- Romance: Maintained steady profitability.

### **1990s (Europe):**

#### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Drama: Continued as the leading genre.
- Comedy: Sustained popularity with diverse subgenres.
- Romance: Further growth in production, often blended with Comedy.
- Action: Increased European contributions to the genre.
- Fantasy: Gained popularity, especially in adaptations of folklore and fairy tales.

#### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Action/Adventure: Continued as a strong performer.
- Romance/Comedy: Blended subgenres achieved reliable financial returns.
- Drama: Certain prestige projects achieved high ROI.
- Horror: Niche, but profitable titles emerged.
- Fantasy: Gained financial traction, often due to adaptations.

### **2000s (Europe):**

#### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Drama: Continued dominance, particularly in arthouse circuits.
- Comedy: Maintained strong production numbers.
- Documentary: Saw a surge in interest.
- Action/Adventure: Gained momentum with co-productions and European franchises.

- Fantasy/Science Fiction: Grew with technological advancements and popular adaptations.

### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Action/Adventure: Significant increase in profitability.
- Fantasy/Science Fiction: Strong returns on innovative and franchise projects.
- Comedy: Consistently high ROI.
- Horror: Resurgence with low-budget successes.
- Documentary: Often achieved strong financial returns.

### **2010s (Europe):**

#### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Drama: Continued as the predominant genre.
- Comedy: Remained highly popular among all audiences.
- Documentary: Became a major focus of production.
- Action/Adventure: Continued steady production.
- Horror: Niche growth in certain countries, like Spain.

#### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Action/Adventure: Dominated ROI rankings with big successes.
- Horror: Continued profitability in niche markets.
- Comedy: Reliable returns for light-hearted films.
- Fantasy/Science Fiction: Continued strong financial performance.
- Documentary: Maintained profitability with a steady audience.

### **2020s (Europe, up to 2024):**

#### **Most Popular Genres:**

- Drama: Retains dominance, particularly in arthouse and festival settings.
- Comedy: Still a staple of European cinema.
- Documentary: Gained significant traction, with increased interest in real-life stories.
- Action/Adventure: Continues with major co-productions and adaptations.

- Romance: Revival in popularity, often blended with Drama.

### **Highest ROI Genres:**

- Action/Adventure: Remains the top performer for financial returns.
- Horror: Low-budget successes continue to yield high ROI.
- Documentary: High audience engagement with limited budgets ensures profitability.
- Comedy: Reliable commercial performance.
- Romance: Gaining traction as audiences seek emotional narratives.

### **High Popularity, Low ROI:**

- Drama (Both U.S. and Europe): Frequently overproduced, leading to saturation. High-budget dramas often fail to justify their costs unless tied to awards or critical acclaim.
- Comedy (Europe): Popular but often limited to domestic markets, restricting scalability.

### **Moderate Popularity, High ROI:**

- Horror (U.S. and Europe): Consistently delivers high ROI despite niche popularity.
- Thriller (Europe): Strong ROI potential for smaller budgets targeting universal intrigue.

### **High Popularity, High ROI:**

- Action/Adventure (U.S.): A key driver of box office growth, with strong franchise opportunities.
- Fantasy/Sci-Fi (U.S.): High production budgets are mitigated by massive returns when tied to successful IP.

### **Niche Popularity, High ROI:**

- Horror (Both): A rare combination of niche appeal and financial success.

- Documentary (Europe): Modest but consistent returns for small-budget productions.

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## Contact Information

For further inquiries or collaboration opportunities, please contact:

### Simon Kölle

CEO, Tulpa Creatives AB

Chairman, FrameSage

Email: [simon@tulpa.nu](mailto:simon@tulpa.nu), [simon.kolle@framesage.com](mailto:simon.kolle@framesage.com)

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/simonkölle77](https://www.linkedin.com/in/simonkölle77)

Personal Website: [www.simonkolle.com](http://www.simonkolle.com)

FrameSage: [www.framesage.com](http://www.framesage.com)

Tulpa Creatives: [www.tulpacreatives.com](http://www.tulpacreatives.com)



Simon Kölle  
FILM PRODUCER & COMPOSER