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Arts, Culture and AI

A Study of Experiences with and Understanding of Artificial Intelligence among Norwegian Authors and Musicians





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Summary

The aim of this report has been to provide an insight into a small sample of Norwegian writers' and musicians' experiences with artificial intelligence (AI), and how they understand this technology today. To explore this, we have conducted qualitative interviews with writers, musicians, and representatives from trade unions that organise these groups of workers. We have prioritised presenting their perspectives and have sought to convey their experiences and viewpoints. The report is best understood as a study of how AI is perceived and interpreted within the Norwegian arts and culture sector at a time when this technology is still in an early phase of adoption.

The findings show that the use of AI among Norwegian writers and musicians appears relatively limited, though with some differences between and within these groups. The writers we interviewed generally expressed that AI cannot be meaningfully integrated into the writing process. The musicians, for their part, reported limited use of AI for music creation. At the same time, writers noted that AI can be useful for research and support tasks, while musicians described using AI for sound editing. The relatively limited use of AI to create text and music is partly due to AI-generated content being perceived as of too poor quality, and partly due to concerns that AI-models are trained on the creative work of other artists, and to uncertainty related to crediting and compensation.

We find that assessments of whether and to what extent it is acceptable to use AI in creative processes remain unclear and unsettled. Whether AI can produce creative work of genuine artistic interest is a recurring theme throughout the report. Most informants expressed that this is currently not the case, though some noted that AI-generated text or music may be usable in certain segments, genres, or for smaller jobs.

The informants' evaluations of and reflections on AI were often linked to broader developments and characteristics of their sector, such as challenges related to power concentration and intense competition. In the music industry, participants highlighted that AI tools have, on the one hand, made creating and sharing music more accessible, while on the other hand increasing competition between musicians. Few had, however, experienced loss of income or jobs to AI.

Copyright also emerges as a recurring topic, both in terms of the challenges AI poses for the cultural sector and how these challenges might be addressed through clearer frameworks and regulation. The copyright discussion concerns both the training of AI models on existing artwork and the need for transparency regarding artists' own AI use. We find examples of contract appendices regulating AI and copyright between contractors and workers, but also uncertainty about how copyright should be governed and enforced in the context of asymmetric power relations. The informants pointed out that while there is room for negotiation and development of guidelines at the national and local levels, the Norwegian arts and culture sector is in a weak bargaining position vis-à-vis the international actors driving technological development.

Given the rapid pace of technological change, the writers and musicians expressed significant uncertainty about how AI will affect the sector in the coming years. Several

were unsure whether AI will be able to create and produce work of interest in the future. As a result of this uncertainty, some worried that AI may be capable of performing more of artists' tasks going forward, and how contractors may address, or exploit, this possibility. For these reasons, it will be important to continue monitoring this topic in the years ahead.

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