

Contraceptive use in the Nordic countries

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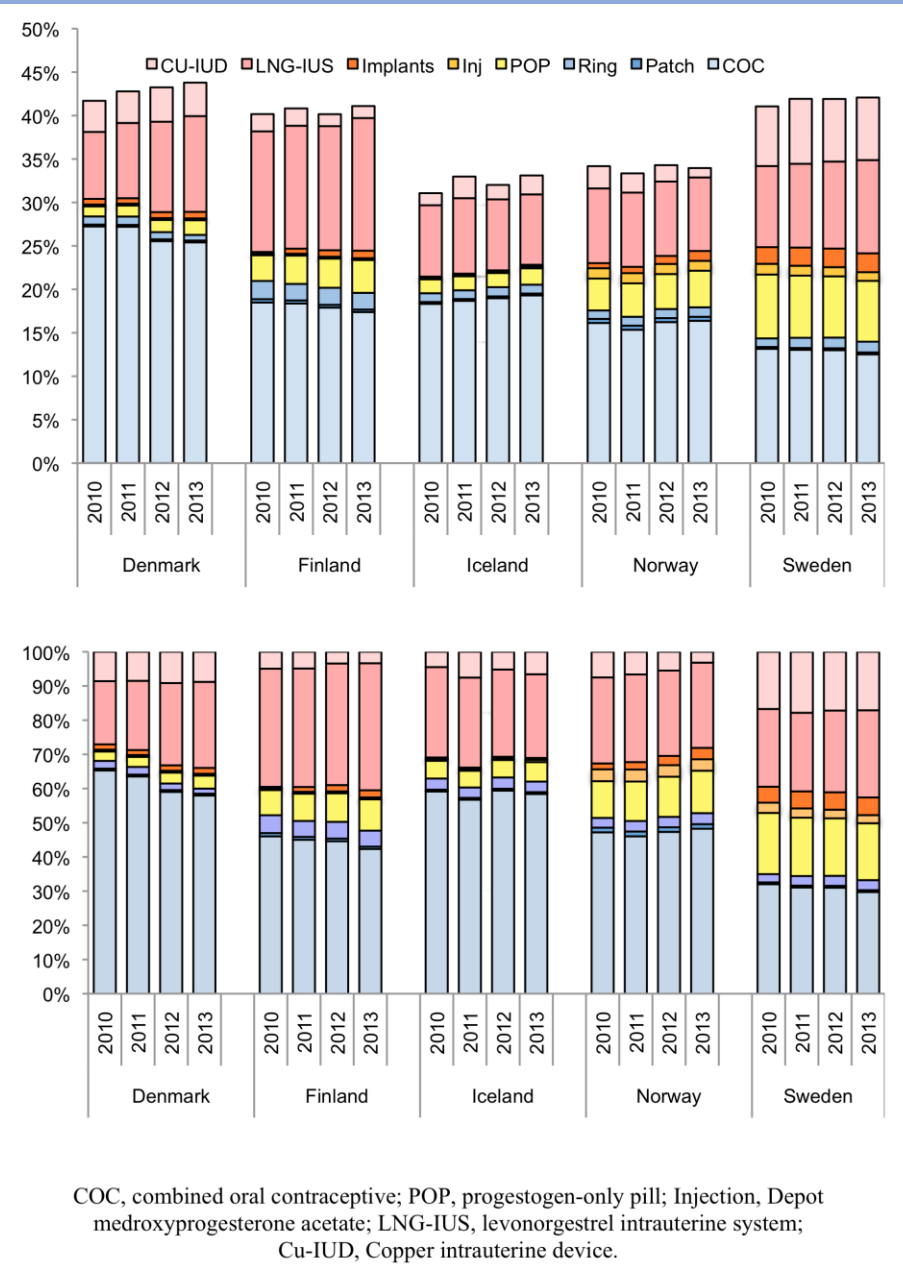
The aim of the study

- To describe and compare contraceptive use in the Nordic countries and compare usage by age in the three countries, Denmark, Norway and Sweden.
- To assess prescribing patterns in relation to the recommendations from the European Medicines Agency (EMA).
- To compare infrastructure parameters which may influence contraceptive use.

Possible factors influencing contraceptive use

- Sex education and education in contraceptive methods were provided in all five countries but only as an obligation in school according to law in Denmark, Finland and Iceland
- In Sweden 80% of all contraceptive prescriptions were provided by midwives.
- In Norway, midwives/public health nurses were allowed to prescribe some contraceptives to teenagers during the study period
- Some degree of financial assistance regarding the cost of contraception is provided in Finland, Norway and Sweden. Denmark and Iceland have no subvention at all with regard to contraception.

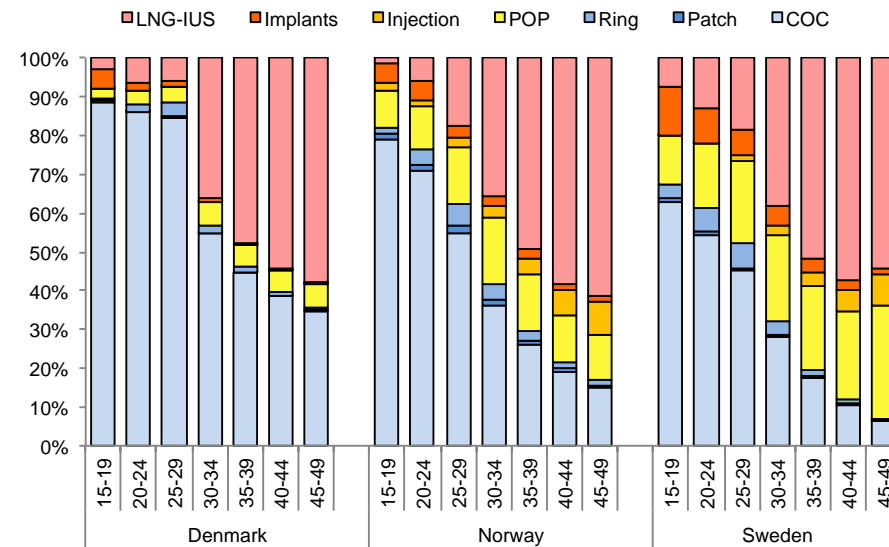
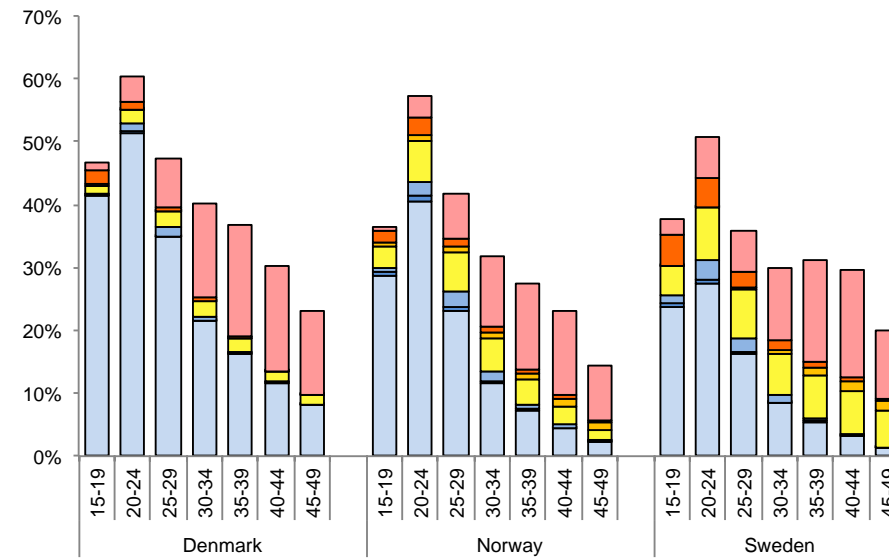
Contraceptive use among women 15-49 years in the Nordic countries 2010-2013 (*upper*) and distribution among users (*lower*).



Results

- Contraceptive use was highest in Denmark (42%) and Sweden (41%), followed by Finland (40%).
- Combined oral contraceptives (COC) were the most used method in all countries with the highest use in Denmark (26%).
- The second most used method was the levonorgestrel-releasing intrauterine system (LNG-IUS) with highest use in Finland (15%) and $\approx 10\%$ in the other countries.
- Cu-IUDs (7%) and the progestin-only pill (7%) were most often used in Sweden.

Hormonal contraceptive use among women in Denmark, Norway and Sweden 2013 grouped (*upper*) and distribution among users (*lower*) both grouped according to age.



COC, combined oral contraceptive; POP, progestogen-only pill; Injection, Depot medroxyprogesterone acetate; LNG-IUS, levonorgestrel intrauterine system;

The COC use decreased gradually by the age of 30 and later while the use of LNG-IUS increased to become the dominant contraceptive method

Guidelines

- The highest distribution of European Medicines Agency recommended COC was in Denmark, increasing from 13 - 50% between 2010 - 2013. In Finland the recommended COC remained below one per cent.

*Contraceptive use was highest in **Denmark** and **Sweden**.*

*Combined oral contraceptives was the most used method in all countries, with the highest use in **Denmark**.*

*LNG-IUS use was highest in **Finland** and all long-acting methods were most common in **Sweden**.*

*The highest use of combined oral contraceptives recommended by the European Medicines Agency was in **Denmark**.*