

News media monitoring 2008

'News Media Monitoring 2008' is an examination of the front pages of Finnish newspapers and of the content of TV and radio main news based on systematic content analysis. Media researched include 19 news suppliers, from each of which fourteen days' material covering the period October 2007– March 2008 was analysed. Newspapers accounted for 38% of the material, radio and TV news for 21% and the Internet pages of these media for 41%. Overall the material included 3,008 items or clusters of items.

The findings suggest that the front pages and main news broadcasts dealt mostly with subjects relating to leisure and family life (sport, entertainment and culture, human relationships and hobbies). Other major subject areas were politics, the economy and security (predominantly news about crimes and accidents). When the findings were compared to a comparable study conducted on the material of 2006, an increase was seen in the items pertaining to the economy at the expense of politics. There was also an increase in crime and accident reporting, which was particularly plentiful on the Internet pages examined.

Those most prominently involved and given most voice were public figures, although less so than in 2006. Figures in sports, entertainment, culture and in the economy were likewise prominent. In relation to others, public administration figures were more likely to be given voice in the items.

The material of front pages and other main news was decidedly male dominated. Of all individualised actors as main informants and prominent voices over half (53%) were men and less than one fifth women. Over 90% of the actors and speakers in the news examined were of working age. Children, young people and senior citizens accounted for only a few percent of the actors noted in the material.

Violence as a subject and material portraying it accounted for some ten percent of the data. The evening papers and the Internet pages examined contained most material on violence, but in the evening papers the share of such material has clearly diminished. Material concerning sexuality or what might be deemed erotic appeared in a total of three percent of the entire data. This is half of the amount reported in the corresponding survey of 2006. Such items were found almost without exception in the evening papers, in their Internet pages and in the MTV3 Internet pages.

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