

# MAPPING DIGITAL MEDIA: FINLAND



# Mapping Digital Media: Finland

**A REPORT BY THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS**

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# Mapping Digital Media

The values that underpin good journalism, the need of citizens for reliable and abundant information, and the importance of such information for a healthy society and a robust democracy: these are perennial, and provide compass-bearings for anyone trying to make sense of current changes across the media landscape.

The standards in the profession are in the process of being set. Most of the effects on journalism imposed by new technology are shaped in the most developed societies, but these changes are equally influencing the media in less developed societies.

The **Mapping Digital Media** project, which examines the changes in-depth, aims to build bridges between researchers and policymakers, activists, academics and standard-setters across the world. It also builds policy capacity in countries where this is less developed, encouraging stakeholders to participate in and influence change. At the same time, this research creates a knowledge base, laying foundations for advocacy work, building capacity and enhancing debate.

The Media Program of the Open Society Foundations has seen how changes and continuity affect the media in different places, redefining the way they can operate sustainably while staying true to values of pluralism and diversity, transparency and accountability, editorial independence, freedom of expression and information, public service, and high professional standards.

The Mapping Digital Media project assesses, in the light of these values, the global opportunities and risks that are created for media by the following developments:

- the switch-over from analog broadcasting to digital broadcasting;
- growth of new media platforms as sources of news;
- convergence of traditional broadcasting with telecommunications.

Covering 60 countries, the project examines how these changes affect the core democratic service that any media system should provide—news about political, economic and social affairs.

The **Mapping Digital Media** reports are produced by local researchers and partner organizations in each country. Cumulatively, these reports will provide a much-needed resource on the democratic role of digital media.

In addition to the country reports, the Open Society Media Program has commissioned research papers on a range of topics related to digital media. These papers are published as the **MDM Reference Series**.



# Mapping Digital Media: Finland

## Executive Summary

Traditional media, news platforms, and public service media have maintained their historically strong position in the digital era in Finland. Traditional media also dominate the news offering on digital platforms and social media. Digitization has, however, increased the number of television channels and competition for audiences, and online news media use has grown rapidly. While ways of accessing news content have changed, traditional news usage is still common and a large proportion of the population watches scheduled television news at least once a week. Newspaper circulation figures are also still high, despite the trend of decline.

Yle (Yleisradio), the public service medium, has been—and still remains—highly appreciated and plays an important part in the everyday lives of Finns. One of the biggest changes concerning public service media has been the recently introduced tax-based funding model. Yle’s website is among the most popular in the country and its online television service is also widely used. Commercial media have argued that Yle’s strong online presence and wide program listing distort the media market and reduce the revenue for other players.

Many Finns are occasional commentators on news websites and social networks, and user-generated content (UGC) is commonplace. Search engines, online news sites, and international social networks led by Facebook and YouTube dominate the list of top-ranking websites. In most cases, UGC is private and most digital activism is somewhat apolitical, light, and entertainment-oriented. Digital mobilizations have been able to gather support online, but in practice have not mobilized many people. However, digital platforms have definitely facilitated the process of mobilizing citizens for civil action.

Digitization has led to various changes in newsrooms, producing fierce competition, fast publishing, expanding online operations, and demands for cost efficiency. Time pressures and the aim to save money through redundancies have had negative impacts on news quality and staff morale in newsrooms. Social media are used increasingly by journalists, and the most common purpose is to search for raw material and ideas for stories. Investigative journalism does not have a very strong tradition. Digitization has thus far not increased investigative journalism dramatically, but some long, investigative pieces published online have

been noticed widely in other media and have had a high societal impact. However, there are not many new platforms publishing investigative stories online. Information gathering and dissemination of content have become easier due to digitization, and data-driven journalism has gained prominence.

The internet has become an important source of information on elections. Voting advice applications are popular digital campaign tools. Social media have thus far not played a very important role in political communications.

The digitization of television was initialized in the late 1990s. By 2005, the digital television network covered practically all of the country, and in 2007 the digital switch-over of television broadcasting was finalized. Radio has not been permanently digitized and there are no active plans to switch off analog signals. Decisions about the development of digital television have in general been characterized by consensus-seeking cooperation between stakeholders. During the short period of digital radio there has been some disagreement over which technology should be used, as the commercial radio sector is more interested in DVB than DAB.

Companies in telecommunications and cable markets provide a wide variety of foreign news channels for viewers, but they are not directly involved in the domestic news market. Must-carry rules apply for agents who provide services over the cable television network. Authorities are obliged to consider multiple criteria to ensure the needs of citizens and of all society before granting program and network licenses. Licensing processes have so far mostly been “beauty contests,” but the auction model of allocating frequencies has also been tried; one such auction was ongoing at the time of writing.

The media are very much in the hands of domestic owners. Ownership consolidation does exist in the news market, but there are no media monopolies. Media companies face economic challenges as the market changes. It has proved troublesome for media companies to adapt their business models to the digital era. Subscription fees and advertising income have generally decreased, but the amount spent on television and online advertising overall has increased.

Communications policies, laws, and regulations have thus far not altered radically due to digitization, although new developments and issues have been considered in the overall framework and in self-regulation. A harmonizing regulatory update, the Information Society Code, is currently being drafted by the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

There is a strong culture of media self-regulation in Finland. Free-market arguments have gained more prominence in recent times, and in particular pressures from the European Union to abolish the barriers to free-market competition in the media have reoriented communications policy to favor private business and the market more than before. Official public consultation has not increased significantly in the digital era, but in the public sphere there has been debate about such issues as copyright and the editorial legal liability of public commentary published in the discussion forums of media websites.



Looking ahead, ways of consuming and relating to media products are changing. Journalistic work is also becoming more and more interactive and dialogic, and journalists must be able to utilize new digital platforms. The regulation of electronic communications will be rationalized and clarified under the Information Society Code. Network competition in television may increase.

Public service media will most likely maintain their strong position in the near future, but they may have to reconsider what kind of content they provide and how strong their online presence can be due to external pressures. Commercial media companies will have to find ways to better adapt their business to the digital era. Paywalls and the like may provide one answer, but more profound innovations will be needed for generating profit and also for quality journalism in the future as well.

*Research for the Finnish report was supported by the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation.*

# Context

Finland (“Suomi” in Finnish) is a small and wealthy country, the northernmost country on the European continent,<sup>1</sup> with a population of 5.4 million. The population density is low, at only 17.9 people per km<sup>2</sup>, whereas the average population density in the EU is 117 people per km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>2</sup> Most of the population is concentrated in the south. Around 84 percent of the population lives in the urban areas.

Finland is ethnically homogenous. Less than 5 percent of the population is born outside the country, but this situation is gradually changing. In 2012, the number of people whose native language is foreign grew by 22,122 individuals, which represented 87 percent of Finland’s population growth.<sup>3</sup>

There are two official languages in Finland. Finnish is spoken by 90 percent of the population and Swedish by 6 percent.<sup>4</sup> In addition, there is also a third language with a legal status.<sup>5</sup> Sámi is spoken in the Sámi region of northern Finland. The Sámi are the only indigenous people in the European Union area and they also reside in Sweden, Norway, and Russia. The Sámi people have a right to use their own language before the courts and other public authorities.<sup>6</sup> Around 5 percent of the population speaks some other languages, the biggest proportion of which is Russian.<sup>7</sup>

Most Finns (approximately 76.4 percent) belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Finns are fairly secular in their views and religion does not play a big part in everyday life; 21.1 percent of the population has no religious affiliation.

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1. U.S. Library of Congress Country Studies, at <http://countrystudies.us/finland/27.htm> (accessed 13 May 2013).
  2. Local Finland, “Kuntien pinta-alat ja asukastiheydet” (Municipalities’ surface areas and population density), at <http://www.kunnat.net/fi/tietopankit/tilastot/aluejaot/kuntien-pinta-alat-ja-asukastiheydet/Sivut/default.aspx> (accessed 14 May 2013).
  3. Official Statistics of Finland, “Population structure,” at [http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/vaerak/2012/vaerak\\_2012\\_2013-03-22\\_tie\\_001\\_en.html](http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/vaerak/2012/vaerak_2012_2013-03-22_tie_001_en.html) (accessed 8 May 2013) (hereafter, Official Statistics of Finland, “Population structure”).
  4. Statistics Finland, “Population,” at [http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk\\_vaesto\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_vaesto_en.html) (accessed 8 May 2013) (hereafter, Statistics Finland, “Population”).
  5. Finlex, “Suomen perustuslaki” (The Finnish Constitution), 731/1999, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1999/19990731> (accessed 9 May 2013).
  6. Saami Parliament, “Sámi in Finland,” at [http://www.samediggi.fi/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=blogcategory&id=105&Itemid=104](http://www.samediggi.fi/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=105&Itemid=104) (accessed 8 May 2013).
  7. Official Statistics of Finland, “Population structure.”

Finland is a highly industrialized free-market economy for which foreign trade is important. The economic crises have hit the country, but the consequences have not been extreme. During the crises, Finland has managed to obtain its AAA rating in bond credit ratings.<sup>8</sup>

Finland declared independence from the Russian empire in 1917. A Nordic welfare state started to be built in the 1940s. Urbanization, industrialization, and the creation of a service economy happened quickly. The economy opened up in the 1980s and investment from abroad became possible. Finland acceded to the EU in 1995.

Finland is a parliamentary democracy with a president as the head of state. Parliament is unicameral with 200 members. Parliamentary elections are held every four years, most recently in 2011. It is rare for one party to win an absolute majority and coalition governments are typical.

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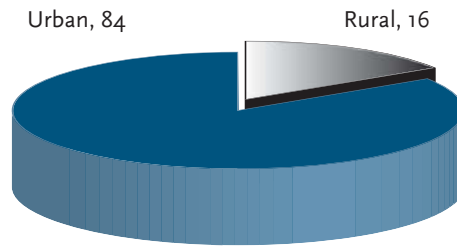
8. Moody's Investors Service, "Finland's AAA reflects a track record of reform and policy formation," 9 May 2013, at [http://www.moody's.com/research/Moodys-Finlands-Aaa-reflects-track-record-of-reform-and-policy--PR\\_274264](http://www.moody's.com/research/Moodys-Finlands-Aaa-reflects-track-record-of-reform-and-policy--PR_274264) (accessed 13 May 2013).

# Social Indicators

Population: 5.43 million (2012)<sup>9</sup>

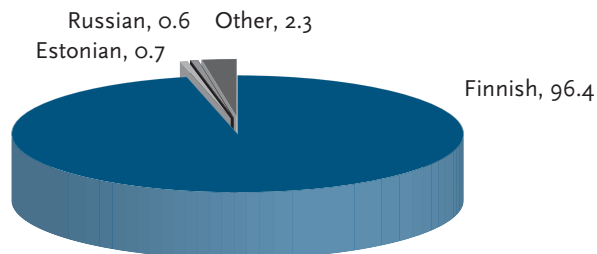
Number of households: 2.6 million (2012)<sup>10</sup>

*Figure 1.*  
Rural–urban breakdown (% of total population), 2011



Source: World Bank, “Finland”<sup>11</sup>

*Figure 2.*  
Ethnic composition (% of total population), 2012



Note: “Other” includes Swedish, Somali, and Chinese

Source: Statistics Finland, “Population”<sup>12</sup>

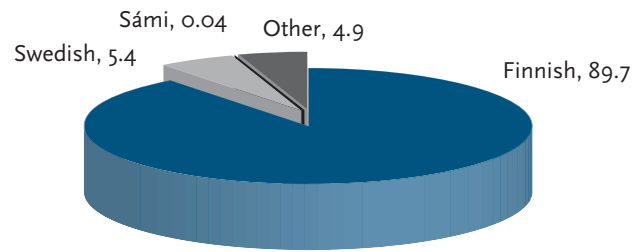
9. Statistics Finland, “Population.”

10. Official Statistics of Finland, “Tulonjakotilasto” (Income distribution statistics), at [http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tjt/index\\_en.html](http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tjt/index_en.html) (accessed 8 May 2013).

11. World Bank, “Finland,” at <http://data.worldbank.org/country/finland> (accessed 9 May 2013).

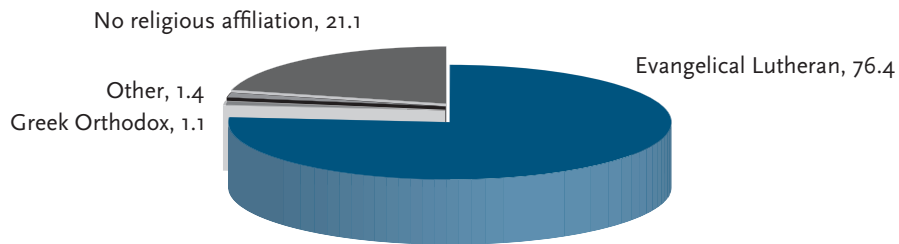
12. See [http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk\\_vaesto\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_vaesto_en.html) (accessed 9 May 2013).

*Figure 3.*  
Linguistic composition (% of total population), 2012



Source: Statistics Finland, “Population”<sup>13</sup>

*Figure 4.*  
Religious composition (% of total population), 2012



Note: “Other” includes the religious groups Jehovah’s Witnesses, Roman Catholics, Muslims, Pentecostalists, Seventh-day Adventists, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), Jews, and members of the Free Church of Finland. There are approximately 50,000–60,000 Muslims<sup>14</sup>

Source: Statistics Finland, “Population”<sup>15</sup>

13. See [http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk\\_vaesto\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_vaesto_en.html) (accessed 8 May 2013).

14. U.S. State Department data, “International Religious Freedom Report for 2012,” at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm#wrapper> (accessed 8 May 2013).

15. See [http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk\\_vaesto\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_vaesto_en.html) (accessed 8 May 2013).

# Economic Indicators

Table 1.  
Economic indicators, 2005–2012

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
GDP (current prices, US\$ billion)*	196.1	208.1	246.5	273.3	240.0	237.2	263.7	250.1
GDP (current prices, US\$), per head**	37,316	39,443	46,501	51,302	44,848	44,136	48,813	46,098 <sup>f</sup>
Gross National Income (GNI), (current US\$), per head	30,850	33,410	36,160	38,240	36,110	36,570	37,660	n/a
Unemployment (% of total labor force)***	8.4	7.7	6.9	6.4	8.2	8.4	7.8	7.7
Inflation (average annual rate, % against previous year)****	0.9	1.6	2.5	4.1	0.0	1.2	3.4	2.8

Notes: f: forecast; n/a: not available

Sources: \* International Monetary Fund (IMF);<sup>16</sup> \*\* World Bank;<sup>17</sup> \*\*\* Statistics Finland (Labor market);<sup>18</sup> \*\*\*\* Statistics Finland (Prices and costs)<sup>19</sup>

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16. IMF, World Economic Outlook Database, at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2013/01/weodata/weorept.aspx?pr.x=43&pr.y=12&sy=2005&ey=2012&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=172&s=NGDPD%2CNGDPDPC&grp=0&a=#cs1> (accessed 9 May 2013).
17. World Bank, “GNI per capita, PPP (current international \$),” at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.PPCD> (accessed 9 May 2013).
18. Statistics Finland, “Työmarkkinat” (Labor market), at [http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk\\_tyolama.html#tyottomuus](http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_tyolama.html#tyottomuus) (accessed 9 May 2013).
19. Statistics Finland, “Hinnat ja kustannukset” (Prices and costs), at [http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk\\_hinnat.html#inflaatio](http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_hinnat.html#inflaatio) (accessed 9 May 2013).

# 1. Media Consumption: The Digital Factor

## 1.1 Digital Take-up

### 1.1.1 Digital Equipment

Around 90 percent of Finnish households have a television set (see Table 2). The available statistics show a slight decline in households owning a television set, which might be at least partly explained by the recent, fast-paced diversification of receiving equipment and ways to watch digital television by other means than television sets (e.g. via computer, tablet, or even mobile phone).<sup>20</sup> There are no nationwide statistics for households owning a radio set, but data from reliable separate surveys in 2010 and 2012 showed that practically every household had a radio set (see Table 2); according to audience measurement specialists, average households own as many as six radio sets each.<sup>21</sup> There is a high level of computer use, with 89 percent of the population having access to a personal computer in 2011 (see Table 2); 90 percent of the population access the internet, 78 percent on a daily basis. Youngsters and young adults are the most active users but usage is increasing only among the elderly (65–74 years old), due to the fact that practically every Finn under the age of 45 is already online.<sup>22</sup>

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20. Sonera, “Tutkimus: Lähes puolet katsoo televisiota myös kannettavalla” (Survey: Nearly half watch television also by laptop), 29 August 2012, at <http://uutishuone.sonera.fi/media/2012/08/28/tutkimus-lhes-puolet-katsoo-televisiota-myos-kannettavalla/880f6371-62d3-40f0-9661-b4da5891d7cf> (accessed 15 May 2013); Statistics Finland, “Joukkoviestimet 2011” (Finnish Mass Media 2011), 2012, at [http://www.stat.fi/tup/julkaisut/tiedostot/julkaisuluettelo/yklt\\_jvie\\_201100\\_2012\\_4884\\_net.pdf](http://www.stat.fi/tup/julkaisut/tiedostot/julkaisuluettelo/yklt_jvie_201100_2012_4884_net.pdf) (accessed 15 May 2013) (hereafter, Statistics Finland, “Finnish Mass Media 2011”).

21. Personal communication with Finnpanel, a company which measures TV viewing and radio listening in Finland.

22. Official Statistics of Finland, “Use of information and communications technology by individuals 2012,” 2012, at [http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2012/sutivi\\_2012\\_2012-11-07\\_fi.pdf](http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2012/sutivi_2012_2012-11-07_fi.pdf) (accessed 7 November 2013) (hereafter, Official Statistics of Finland, “Use of information and communications technology by individuals 2012”).

Table 2.

## Households owning equipment, 2005–2012

	2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
	No. of HH* ('000)	% of THH**	No. of HH ('000)	% of THH	No. of HH ('000)	% of THH	No. of HH ('000)	% of THH	No. of HH ('000)	% of THH	No. of HH ('000)	% of THH	No. of HH ('000)	% of THH	No. of HH ('000)	% of THH
TV set	2,265	93	2,240	92	2,335	94	2,313	92	2,329	92	2,321	91	2,262	88	n/a	n/a
Radio set	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,539	99.6	n/a	n/a	n/a	99.8
PC	1,631	67	1,743	71	1,863	75	1,986	79	2,102	83	2,168	85	2,228	89	n/a	n/a

Notes: \* HH: households owning the equipment; \*\* THH: total number of households; n/a: not available

Source: Authors' calculations, based on data from Statistics Finland<sup>23</sup>

The digitization of television was initialized in the late 1990s and digital broadcasts started in the year 2000 from the metropolitan areas of Greater Helsinki, Tampere, and Turku. In these first stages, channels were broadcast both digitally and analogically. Digital television covered 99.9 percent of Finland by 2005, and switch-over was completed in 2007.<sup>24</sup>

There are no active plans for the digitization of radio broadcasting. Private radio stations are satisfied with the current FM-radio network which is easy to use, reliable, and has a wide reach. Although it is likely that radio will be digitized in the long run, at the moment Finland has chosen to follow what happens in other countries—especially in Europe—and make choices only when other countries' experiences are available for evaluation.<sup>25</sup>

### 1.1.2 Platforms

As Table 3 shows, the dominant platforms for television reception are terrestrial and cable. Satellite reception is highly uncommon—and declining—with only 5 percent of television households having a satellite connection in 2010.

23. Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011."

24. Digita, "Digitaalisen television kehitysvaiheet Suomessa" (The phases of digital television in Finland), at [http://www.digita.fi/kuluttajat/tv/vastaanottotavat/digi-tv\\_n\\_kehitysvaiheet](http://www.digita.fi/kuluttajat/tv/vastaanottotavat/digi-tv_n_kehitysvaiheet) (accessed 15 May 2013).

25. Ministry of Transport and Communications, "Sähköisen median viestintäpoliittinen ohjelma" (Policy program for electronic media in Finland), 2012, at [http://www.lvm.fi/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?folderId=1985455&name=DLFE-15840.pdf&title=Sahkoisen+m](http://www.lvm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=1985455&name=DLFE-15840.pdf&title=Sahkoisen+m) (accessed 15 May 2013).



Table 3.

Platforms for the main television reception and digital take-up, 2005–2011

	2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
	No. of HH* ('000)	% of TVHH**	No. of HH ('000)	% of TVHH	No. of HH ('000)	% of TVHH	No. of HH ('000)	% of TVHH	No. of HH ('000)	% of TVHH	No. of HH ('000)	% of TVHH	No. of HH ('000)	% of TVHH
Terrestrial reception	1,096	45	1,105	45	1,167	47	1,257	50	1,266	50	1,275	50	n/a	n/a
Cable reception	1,120	46	1,154	47	1,143	46	1,207	48	1,215	48	1,275	50	n/a	n/a
Satellite reception***	268	11	245	10	174	7	151	6	152	6	127	5	n/a	n/a
IPTV	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	101,280	4	127,550	5	n/a	9

*Notes:* The figures refer to the main TV set in multi-TV households; \* HH: total number of households owning the equipment; \*\* TVHH: total number of TV households in the country (number of households based on authors' calculations); \*\*\* direct-to-home (DTH) and satellite master antenna television (SMATV); n/a: not available

*Sources:* Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011" (TV households by type of connection 2000–2010); IPTV data from Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011" (Penetration of selected household equipment 2001–2011)<sup>26</sup>

Internet protocol television (IPTV) has gained in popularity as a mode of reception in recent years. As IPTV basically requires a fast broadband connection, its rise in popularity also has to do with the increase of fast broadband connections (10 Mbit/s or higher) from 10 percent to 50 percent between mid-2009 and mid-2012.<sup>27</sup>

Total mobile penetration has been very high for a long time, with 90 percent of households owning a mobile phone in 2001. For the past five years, the total mobile penetration rate has been around 99 percent.<sup>28</sup> Notably, the number of WAP/GPRS/3G subscriptions, which make the use of mobile internet possible, has been high for many years, with 38 percent of households having this type of service subscription already in 2005, increasing to 55 percent in 2010.

Notably, the penetration of mobile broadband has increased so rapidly that by the end of 2010 the number of connections exceeded the number of regular broadband connections.<sup>29</sup> The rapid increase of mobile broadband connections is at least partly explained by the fact that they are cheaper than regular broadband connections, especially outside big cities. In rural areas, mobile broadband can cost half the price of a regular broadband connection.<sup>30</sup>

26. See Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011."

27. Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority (Viestintävirasto, FICORA), "Markkinakatsaus 6/2012. Laajakaista- ja puhelinpalvelut. Tilastokatsaus tammi–kesäkuu 2012" (Market review 6/2012: Broadband and telephone services—A statistics review January–June 2012), 2012, at [http://www.ficora.fi/attachments/suomimq/6BBFvbwCn/Markkinakatsaus\\_6\\_2012.pdf](http://www.ficora.fi/attachments/suomimq/6BBFvbwCn/Markkinakatsaus_6_2012.pdf) (accessed 17 May 2013).

28. Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011."

29. Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority, "Viestintämarkkinat Suomessa 2010" (Communications market in Finland—Annual Review 2010), 2011, at [http://www.ficora.fi/attachments/suomimq/5xam7PDL3/Markkinakatsaus\\_1\\_\\_\\_2011.pdf](http://www.ficora.fi/attachments/suomimq/5xam7PDL3/Markkinakatsaus_1___2011.pdf) (accessed 17 May 2013).

30. Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority, "Markkinakatsaus 1/2012. Kotitalouksien internetyhteydet" (Market review 1/2012: Internet connections of Finnish households), 2012, at [http://www.ficora.fi/attachments/suomimq/65H1aJmvo/Markkinakatsaus\\_1\\_2012.pdf](http://www.ficora.fi/attachments/suomimq/65H1aJmvo/Markkinakatsaus_1_2012.pdf) (accessed 17 May 2013).

*Table 4.*  
Internet and mobile penetration rate (% of households), 2005–2011

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Internet	58	65	70	76	n/a	n/a	n/a
– of which broadband	47	58	62	68	73	76	79
Mobile telephony	95	97	98	98	99	99	99
Mobile phones (WAP/GPRS/3G) (as % of the total number of mobile phones)	38	43	48	54	54	55	n/a

*Note:* n/a: not available

*Source:* Statistics Finland, “Finnish Mass Media 2011”<sup>31</sup>

## 1.2 Media Preferences

### 1.2.1 Main Shifts in News Consumption

Television is the most popular Finnish medium. The shifts in daily mass media reach between different media have mostly been minor, except that the daily reach and use of the internet have increased significantly since 2005, and by 2011 it was the second most used platform in Finland (see Table 5).

*Table 5.*  
Daily mass media reach (% of population), 2005–2009

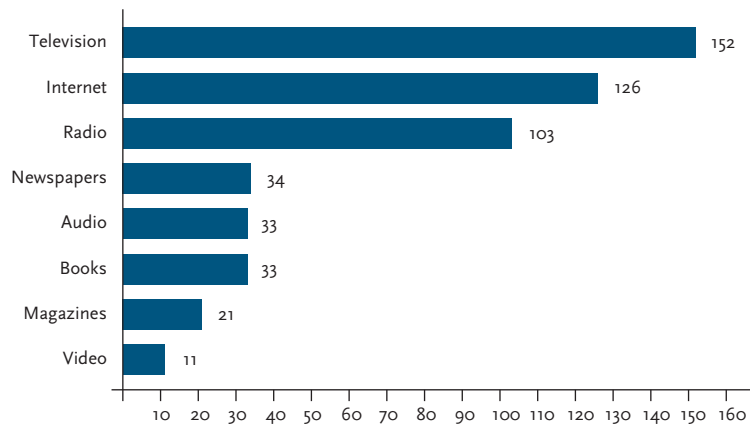
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Radio	76	75	74	74	73
Television	93	93	92	90	90
Newspapers	81	81	79	78	75
Internet	47	52	56	60	64

*Source:* Data (from a telephone survey involving around 20,000 persons aged 10+ years) provided by TNS Atlas Intermedia/TNS Gallup (as reported in Statistics Finland, “Finnish Mass Media 2011”)

31. Statistics Finland, “Finnish Mass Media 2011.”

Figure 5.

Average daily time (minutes) used on mass communication, 2011



Note: Based on data provided by TNS Gallup

Source: Kaarle Nordenstreng and Osmo A. Wiio, “Viestintäjärjestelmä” (Communication system), in K. Nordenstreng and O.A. Wiio (eds.), *Suomen mediamaisema* (“Finnish Media Landscape”) <sup>32</sup>

### 1.2.2 Availability of a Diverse Range of News Sources

Although there is a wide range of traditional news sources—with television, many newspapers, and public and private radio stations providing news—the rise of online news media has certainly added news sources. In addition to traditional players, there are also niche news sites and news aggregation services. The internet has made it easier and more popular to read news content provided online by foreign news providers, such as the BBC. Many media organizations have also optimized their online news services for mobile devices, while it has become more and more popular to read news using mobile phones or tablet computers.

However, traditional media companies have invested significantly in developing their online presence, and as a result have come to dominate the online news sphere (see Table 5). So, notwithstanding the emergence of news aggregators and niche services, the shift in platforms has not translated into a radical diversification of news sources.

32. K. Nordenstreng and O.A. Wiio, “Viestintäjärjestelmä” (Communication system), in K. Nordenstreng and O.A. Wiio (eds.), *Suomen mediamaisema* (Finnish Media Landscape), Vastapaino, Tampere, 2012 (hereafter, Nordenstreng and Wiio, *Suomen mediamaisema*)

## 1.3 News Providers

### 1.3.1 Leading Sources of News

#### 1.3.1.1 Print Media

Historically, there is a strong tradition of reading newspapers in Finland. Newspapers played an important role in the nation-building process in the 19th century.<sup>33</sup> Continuous subscriptions to daily morning newspapers have been and to some extent remain popular, as does the diversity of available newspapers. Newspaper circulations are among the highest per capita in the world.<sup>34</sup>

However, a declining trend is observable in paid circulation figures of the top-ranking newspapers (see Table 6), although it is hard to say what the effect of this trend is on actual readership, since newspapers are also read by many people who do not subscribe to or buy them.<sup>35</sup>

Table 6.  
Top five ranking newspapers (paid circulation), 2005–2012

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i> (M)	430,785	426,177	419,791	412,421	397,838	383,361	365,994	337,962
<i>Ilta-Sanomat</i> (T)	195,673	186,462	176,531	161,615	152,948	150,351	143,321	132,253
<i>Aamulehti</i> (M)	136,743	138,258	139,165	139,130	135,293	131,539	130,081	121,135
<i>Turun Sanomat</i> (M)	111,547	112,360	112,419	111,845	109,504	107,199	103,314	99,220
<i>Iltalehti</i> (T)	130,290	133,007	131,150	122,548	112,778	107,052	102,124	91,219

Notes: T: tabloid; M: morning daily

Source: Finnish Audit Bureau of Circulations (*Levikintarkastus*)<sup>36</sup>

*Helsingin Sanomat* is clearly the dominant newspaper in print. Two of the top-ranking newspapers, *Ilta-Sanomat* and *Iltalehti*, may be categorized as tabloids. However, while the general content of these tabloids might be slightly more sensational or entertainment-oriented than the morning dailies, they do also contain serious and good-quality news content, and thus are important print news providers nationally.

33. E. Sirkkunen, "Finland: Legacy dominates," in E. Sirkkunen and C. Cook (eds.), *Chasing Sustainability on the Net: International Research on 69 Journalistic Pure Players and their Business Models*, Tampereen yliopisto, Tampere Research Centre for Journalism, Media and Communication (COMET), Tampere, 2012, at [http://tampub.uta.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/66378/chasing\\_sustainability\\_on\\_the\\_net\\_2012.pdf?sequence=1](http://tampub.uta.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/66378/chasing_sustainability_on_the_net_2012.pdf?sequence=1) (accessed 17 May 2013).

34. Statistics Finland, "Sanomalehdet pystyvät vastaamaan ajan haasteisiin" (Newspapers able to respond to recent challenges), 2007, at [http://tilastokeskus.fi/artikkelit/2007/art\\_2007-06-15\\_003.html?s=1](http://tilastokeskus.fi/artikkelit/2007/art_2007-06-15_003.html?s=1) (accessed 17 May 2013) (hereafter, Statistics Finland, "Sanomalehdet pystyvät vastaamaan ajan").

35. Statistics Finland, "Sanomalehdet pystyvät vastaamaan ajan."

36. See <http://www.levikintarkastus.fi/levikkitietokanta/index.php> (accessed 17 May 2013).

### 1.3.1.2 Radio

Yle (Yleisradio), the public service medium, is the main provider of radio news. Yle Radio Suomi is the top-ranking radio channel in terms of reach, and many other Yle channels also have a wide reach: the top 10 ranking radio channels include no fewer than five Yle channels (see Table 7). Yle has national and regional radio stations, the latter providing regional news in addition to national news.

Table 7.  
Top 10 radio channels, by daily reach of radio (% of population aged 9+), 2005–2010

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Yle Radio Suomi (public)	31	31	32	31	29	29
Radio Nova (private)	16	16	15	15	15	15
Yle Radio 1 (public)	11	12	11	10	9	9
SBS-Iskelmä (private)	10	10	10	11	10	9
SuomiPOP (private)	4	4	7	7	8	8
Radio Rock (private)	n/a	n/a	7	7	7	7
NRJ (private)	7	7	6	5	6	7
YleX (public)	9	9	8	7	6	6
Yle Radio Vega and X3M (public)	1	1	1	1	3	3
Yle Puhe (public)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	2

Note: n/a: not available

Source: Finnpanel, as reported in Statistics Finland, *Finnish Mass Media 2011*<sup>37</sup>

While public service radio dominates the radio news, commercial or private radio stations, such as the national station Radio Nova, but also many smaller private radio stations, such as Radio Rock or SuomiPOP, also provide radio news. Radio news in private stations is often co-produced with other media belonging to the same media corporation. Such is the case with *Ilta-Sanomat*, a popular tabloid newspaper that provides news for Radio Rock, Radio Aalto, SuomiPOP, Metro FM, and Groove FM. Together, these stations reach 1.9 million Finns per week.<sup>38</sup>

### 1.3.1.3 Television

Of all mass media, television has the widest daily reach. Of the top five ranking television channels all but Sub, which is owned by MTV, provide news content. Sub broadcasts more entertainment-oriented content than the other top-ranking channels, which all provide a wide range of output. Private channels provide more entertainment-oriented programs, but also a high number of factual programs, with a ratio of 59 percent : 38

37. See [http://www.stat.fi/tup/julkaisut/tiedostot/julkaisuluettelo/yklt\\_jvie\\_201100\\_2012\\_4884\\_net.pdf](http://www.stat.fi/tup/julkaisut/tiedostot/julkaisuluettelo/yklt_jvie_201100_2012_4884_net.pdf) (accessed 20 May 2013).

38. Nelonen Media, "Nelonen Median radiokanaville Ilta-Sanomien uutiset" (*Ilta-Sanomat* to provide news to Nelonen Media radio channels), 2013, at <http://www.nelonenmedia.fi/2013/01/nelonen-median-radiokanaville-ilta-sanomien-uitiset> (accessed 20 May 2013).

percent, respectively, in 2010. For public channels, this ratio was 41 percent : 53 percent in favor of factual programming.<sup>39</sup>

Table 8.  
Top five ranking television channels (audience shares, %), 2005–2012

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Yle TV1 (public)	25.0	23.8	23.8	24.1	21.9	22.2	23.3	24.8
MTV3 (private)	33.0	29.0	25.7	22.9	22.8	21.6	21.8	20.0
Yle TV2 (public)	19.0	20.0	17.4	16.8	17.7	18.9	16.9	13.2
Nelonen (private)	11.0	11.9	10.2	10.0	9.9	9.3	9.2	9.0
Sub (private)	4.0	4.6	6.0	6.0	6.7	6.5	6.1	5.7

Source: Finnpanel, “Results from the TV audience measurement”<sup>40</sup>

As Table 8 shows, the audience shares of Yle TV2, Nelonen, and MTV3 have declined since 2005, while the share of Yle TV1 has remained stable, and it is still the top-ranking television channel. The audience share of Sub, which is the newest of the top-ranking channels and was founded in 2001,<sup>41</sup> has increased slightly since 2005 and has remained at around 6 percent. This demonstrates that there is no clear division in changes in audience shares between the top-ranking public and private television channels. What has happened, however, is that the digitization of television has gradually resulted in an increase in the number of channels and the competition for audiences between channels. New channels also differ from older channels in their content profiles (and costs), and are usually either thematic channels tailored for special audience groups or pay channels. New channels often fill their program profile with archived material, reruns or infomercials, thus being able to survive with cheaper costs compared with older, traditional channels.<sup>42</sup>

### 1.3.1.4 Online

The use of online news media has increased rapidly, as can be seen from the number of unique visitors to the top five online news sites (see Table 9). Since 2005—but especially in the last two or three years—the online sites of *Iltalehti* and *Ilta-Sanomat* have been successful in attracting critical mass traffic to their websites. Apparently, this is connected to the fact that their online content is obviously more entertainment-oriented than some of the other top five online news media, such as *Helsingin Sanomat* or Yle, with their provocative and sensational headlines. On the other hand, hard news and serious topics are also read online, although the style of writing can be more entertaining and the headlines can be more sensational than they would be in the print versions.<sup>43</sup>

39. J. Wiio and I. Uronen, “Televisio” (Television), 2012, in Nordenstreng and Wiio, *Suomen mediamaisema*.

40. Finnpanel, “TV-mittaritutkimuksen tuloksia” (Results from the TV audience measurement), at <http://www.finnpanel.fi/en/tulokset/tv/kk/ohjkan/viimeisin> (accessed 8 May 2013).

41. See [http://www.sub.fi/info/#scroll\\_mika\\_sub](http://www.sub.fi/info/#scroll_mika_sub) (accessed 10 May 2013).

42. P. Näränen, “Digitaalinen televisio. Analyysijä alkuperästä, viestintäpoliittisista haasteista ja tv-järjestelmän muuttamisesta” (Digital television. Analyses of early history, challenges to communication policy, and transformation of television), *Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 1132*, Tampere, 2006, at <http://urn.fi/urn:isbn:951-44-6540-7> (accessed 16 May 2013) (hereafter, Näränen, “Digitaalinen televisio”).

43. I. Pernu, “Klikkiä mä metsästän” (Hunting for the click), 2012, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2012/22/artikkelit/klikkia-ma-metsastan> (accessed 10 May 2013) (hereafter, Pernu, “Klikkiä mä metsästän”).

Table 9.

Top five ranking online news media (unique visitors), 2005–2012

Week 39	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Ilta-Sanomat	793,819	755,091	1,119,117	1,724,034	1,721,254	1,657,423	2,214,836	2,412,970
Helsingin Sanomat	413,205	507,039	762,451	1,237,196	1,158,014	1,175,359	n/a	1,385,613
Ilta-lehti	803,719	768,613	1,087,734	1,850,482	1,829,453	1,887,545	2,455,211	n/a
MTV3	1,352,284	1,149,924	1,226,827	1,499,408	1,628,506	1,432,067	1,748,032	n/a
Yle	688,263	743,814	898,864	1,325,750	1,129,255	1,138,267	1,222,942	n/a

Notes: Week 39 is the last week of September; n/a: data not published for week 39

Source: TNS Gallup<sup>44</sup>

### 1.3.2 Television News Programs

Despite certain changes caused by the digitization of television, 87 percent of Finns still follow scheduled television news programs, and these are the most popular programs in linear broadcasting. Even among Finns under the age of 20, 63 percent follow scheduled television news at least once a week, and in the over 55 age group almost everyone does (98–99 percent).<sup>45</sup> Yle TV1 evening news at 8.30 p.m. is the most watched news program in Finland, and it also ranks among the top 10 most regularly watched programs, with 714,000 regular viewers in 2012.<sup>46</sup> Also among private channels, news attracts a large number of viewers in comparison with other program strands, especially the 10 p.m. evening news on MTV3.<sup>47</sup> These figures demonstrate a strong television news-watching tradition despite the increased number of different channels and programs following digitization, and amid a generally changing news landscape.

### 1.3.3 Impact of Digital Media on Good-quality News

In television, there have been no major effects on general news quality that can be attributed to digitization. All the major channels providing news are incumbents from the analog era, and there is little to no news content on channels that have been launched since digitization. While some new channels, such as Fox, do provide short television news, their television news programs are not produced by Fox, but by STT-Lehtikuva, a major news agency owned by some of the biggest media companies in Finland.

While the use of online news media has increased rapidly, maintaining the profitability of good-quality news and analysis has proved difficult, as in many other countries, due at least in part to the vast amount of

44. TNS Gallup, “Suomen web-sivustojen viikkoluvut” (Weekly user numbers of Finnish web pages), at <http://tnsmatrix.tns-gallup.fi/public> (accessed 9 May 2013).

45. Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority (FICORA) and TNS Gallup, “AV-sisältöpalvelujen kuluttajatutkimus 2012” (Consumer survey on audiovisual content services 2012), 2012, at [http://www.ficora.fi/attachments/suomial/6BhFVrky0/AV\\_sisaltopalvelujen\\_kuluttajatutkimus\\_2012.pdf](http://www.ficora.fi/attachments/suomial/6BhFVrky0/AV_sisaltopalvelujen_kuluttajatutkimus_2012.pdf) (accessed 10 May 2013).

46. L. Sandell, “Television katselu Suomessa 2012” (TV watching in Finland in 2012), Finnpanel, 2012, at [http://www.finnpanel.fi/lataukset/tv\\_vuosi\\_2013.pdf](http://www.finnpanel.fi/lataukset/tv_vuosi_2013.pdf) (accessed 10 May 2013).

47. Finnpanel, “Results from the TV audience measurement: Top programs by genre,” at <http://www.finnpanel.fi/en/tulokset/tv/kk/ohjryh/2013/4/uutiset.html> (accessed 10 May 2013).

free news content on the web. Thus, most of the content offered by some of the leading online news media in Finland is basic news. However, one major daily newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*, recently introduced a paywall for its online news service, announcing a simultaneous increase in the number of articles providing background information and analysis.<sup>48</sup>

The increased use of the internet has also made it possible for more people to access good-quality news content provided by foreign media. However, while many foreign media companies provide basic news content free to some extent, they also often utilize paywalls or try to make a profit by keeping analysis articles or high-quality news pieces chargeable.

The development of digital media has also contributed to declining standards in newsrooms. While editors and online journalists do recognize the importance of reliability in online news, in practice there is considerable pressure to publish unconfirmed information online due to the need for speed in the highly competitive online news environment.<sup>49</sup> Media companies have also become increasingly concerned with “counting clicks,” that is, analyzing which stories are clicked on the web and how many times (although such data may have nothing to do with which stories are really read or considered significant). According to Johannes Koponen, a founder of the news aggregation service Scoopinon, the click-counting culture may also encourage media companies to put pressure on individual journalists to write shorter news pieces in a bid to attract online advertising revenue based on clicks.<sup>50</sup>

However, opposite trends have also been made possible by digital media, such as Long Play, an online publication dedicated to publishing long-form, “slow” journalism online.<sup>51</sup> No reliable numbers for the site’s traffic are publicly available. However, based on Facebook likes and social media followers, it appears to be quite popular. The site’s popularity and its traffic may not, however, be the most crucial factor here, as the stories published in this publication have also been picked up by mainstream media. (See section 4.2.3.)

## 1.4 Assessments

Digitization has increased the amount of channels and competition for audiences in television. Due to the increase in broadband internet connections, especially mobile broadband, Finland has a very high total internet penetration with many households subscribing to several broadband connections. Many households own several types of digital media-receiving devices, including tablets and smartphones. Recent years have

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48. “HS.fi:n maksumuuri sallii viisi ilmaista artikkelia viikossa” (HS.fi paywall allows five free articles per week to be read), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 16 October 2012, at <http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/Hsfin+maksumuuri+sallii+viisi+ilmaista+artikkelia+viikossa/a1305607329923> (accessed 10 May 2013).

49. L. Juntunen, “Explaining the need for speed: Speed and competition as challenges for journalism ethics,” in S. Cushion and J. Lewis (eds.), *The Rise of 24-hour News Television: Global Perspectives*, Peter Lang, New York, 2009 (hereafter, Juntunen, “Explaining the need for speed”).

50. Pernu, “Klikkiä mä metsästän.”

51. Long Play, “Miksi pitkä journalismi kukoistaa verkossa” (Why long journalism flourishes online), at <http://longplay.fi/miksi-pitka-journalismi-kukoistaa-verkossa> (accessed 10 May 2013).



seen a substantial shift for news and information toward online platforms and away from conventional media, especially newspapers and radio. However, traditional patterns still prevail to some extent, as reflected in the enduring popularity of scheduled television news programs and high newspaper circulation figures, despite the declining trend.

The internet has made it possible to access an even wider range of news provided by Finnish and foreign media companies, although there is a wide range of traditional news media providers. Established news media groups have also put significant effort into developing their online services and optimizing them for mobile devices. However, providing online news has proved difficult for the commercial media, with consequences that may exacerbate certain somewhat unhealthy developments in news quality. These include the click-counting culture in newsrooms and a general tabloidizing trend favoring sensational, provocative headlines over hard news stories. On the other hand, the internet has also enabled opposite trends, such as the development of long-form journalism online.

Yle has maintained its traditionally strong position after the digitization of television and on the internet, ranking among the top five online news sites, while Yle TV1 ranks as the top channel in audience share, while the shares of other top channels have declined in the digital era.

## 2. Digital Media and Public or State-administered Broadcasters

### 2.1 Public Service and State Institutions

#### 2.1.1 Overview of Public Service Media; News and Current Affairs Output

The national public service broadcasting company Yle (Yleisradio) was founded in 1926. Yle operates both television and radio channels. Advertising and sponsorship on Yle are not permitted.

According to law, Yle should support democracy and everyone's opportunity to participate by providing a wide variety of information, opinions, and debates as well as opportunities to interact. Yle must also produce content for Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking citizens on equal grounds, and also produce services in the Sámi, Romany, and sign languages, as the constitution guarantees opportunities for the Sámi and Roma to uphold and develop their cultures and languages. Yle has a duty to support tolerance and multiculturalism and provide programming for minorities and special groups. Yle is also tasked with nourishing Finnish culture. Yle broadcasts official announcements and makes provision for state-run broadcasting in exceptional circumstances.<sup>52, 53</sup>

Yle is supervised by Parliament but is politically and economically independent of it. Its highest decision-making body is the Administrative Council, which consists of 23 members. Of these, 21 are selected by Members of Parliament during the first session of a new parliamentary term. The remaining two members represent Yle's staff and are non-voting. The Administrative Council decides on the company's operational and financial guidelines and supervises its administration and financial management. The Administrative Council is also responsible for ensuring that Yle fulfills its public service obligations.<sup>54</sup>

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52. Finlex, "Laki Yleisradio Oys:ta" (Act on Yleisradio Ltd. (Finnish broadcasting company)), 1380/1993, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1993/19931380> (accessed 20 May 2013).

53. Finlex, "Suomen perustuslaki" (The Finnish Constitution), 731/1999, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1999/19990731> (accessed 7 June 2013).

54. Yle, "Yleisradion hallintoneuvoston kertomus eduskunnalle vuosilta 2011 ja 2012" (Yleisradio's administrative council's annual report from years 2011 and 2012 to the parliament), 2013, at [http://yle.fi/yleisradio/sites/default/files/attachments/yle\\_kertomuseduskunnalle.pdf](http://yle.fi/yleisradio/sites/default/files/attachments/yle_kertomuseduskunnalle.pdf) (accessed 21 May 2013) (hereafter, Yle, "Yleisradio's administrative council's annual report from years 2011 and 2012 to the parliament").

Yle's language mix is broad but it broadcasts content mostly in Finnish and Swedish. Table 10 shows Yle's broadcasting hours between 2008 and 2012. In 2012, Yle transmitted nearly 18,500 hours on television and over 100,000 hours on radio. Several bank holidays during the year made the broadcasting drop a little compared with previous years.<sup>55</sup> Yle broadcasts on four national television channels and on six nationwide radio channels, as well as a network of regional radio stations. National news is broadcast every hour. All regional editorial offices have their own online news sites. Eight of these editorial offices broadcast regional televised news on week days. Yle's various channels' combined reach was 99 percent of total population in 2012 (see Tables 7 and 8).

Table 10.  
Yle's broadcasting hours, 2008–2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Yle TV</b>					
– broadcasts	19,866	19,825	20,146	19,669	18,432
– Swedish-language broadcasts	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,827
<b>Yle Radio</b>					
– nationwide broadcasts	41,039	41,407	49,715	49,961	45,278
– local broadcasts	45,356	43,501	45,792	40,602	32,531
– Swedish-language broadcasts	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	17,863
– Sámi-language broadcasts	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,574
Special services	28,594	28,565	28,560	19,800	n/a

Notes: Swedish-language TV broadcasts are included in TV broadcasts; special services include Swedish-language broadcasts and Sámi-language broadcasts; n/a: not available

Source: Yle, "Annual Reports"

Yle also caters for Sámi-language groups, broadcasting in all three Sámi languages spoken in Finland. The Sámi-language television news broadcast, "*Oddasat*" (News), is produced in cooperation with national broadcasting companies from Sweden and Norway. Yle also produces children's programs in Sámi.<sup>56</sup> Outside the Sámi homeland "*Oddasat*" is aired around 12 a.m. The deputy ombudsman of Finland stated in 2012 that the late broadcasting time was inhumane and the program should be transferred to a more popular time slot.<sup>57</sup> Yle replied that it would pay more attention in future to "*Oddasat*" broadcasting hours, and that in addition to the Nordic "*Oddasat*" broadcast, Yle would produce a Sámi-language news broadcast of its own from December 2013.<sup>58</sup>

55. Yle, "Yleisradio's administrative council's annual report from years 2011 and 2012 to the parliament."

56. Yle, "Yleisradio's administrative council's annual report from years 2011 and 2012 to the parliament."

57. Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland, "Saamenkielisille tv-uutisille parempi lähetyisaika" (A better time slot for Sámi-language news), 2013, at <http://www.oikeusasiamies.fi/Resource.phx/coa/tiedotteet/tiedotteet.htx?templateId=2.htx&id=936&titlenro=2012&sort=2012> (accessed 10 June 2013).

58. Yle, "Ylen vastaus selvityspyntöön koskien saamenkielisen Oddasat-lähetyksen esitysaikoja" (Yle's answer regarding Sámi language news broadcast Oddasat's broadcasting time), 2013, at <http://yle.fi/yleisradio/ajankohtaista/ylen-vastaus-selvityspyntoon-koskien-saamenkielisen-oddasat-lahetyksen-esitysaikoja> (accessed 4 December 2013).

Yle's "*Nuntii Latini*" news service broadcasts news in Latin on Yle Radio Channel 1. It is a weekly review of world news in classical Latin, the only international broadcast of this kind in the world.<sup>59</sup> In spring 2013, Yle also launched a Russian-language television news program.<sup>60</sup> Prior to this, it had broadcast Russian-language content on Yle "*Novosti Po-russki Radio*", which it still does. Yle also produces news in English for radio and television. All these languages have their own online news sites, and news in sign language is broadcast once every weekday.<sup>61</sup>

Culture and entertainment are the most common program strands on Yle (see Table 11). The quantity of culture and entertainment output is approximately the same on radio and television; radio has slightly more news and current affairs. In 2012, approximately a third of radio programs consisted of news or current affairs. On television, the equivalent share of news and current affairs was about one-fifth.

Table 11.

Yle's program types (% of total broadcast), 2009–2012

	2009		2010		2011		2012	
	Television	Radio	Television	Radio	Television	Radio	Television	Radio
News	14	21	16	27	17	27	7	7
Current affairs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	11	23
Sports	6	2	7	2	6	2	8	4
Documentary	23	9	23	12	24	12	28	7
Drama	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	27	1
Culture and entertainment	57	68	54	59	53	58	10	58
Children and young people	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	9	0.03

Notes: The news share for 2009, 2010, and 2011 included both news and current affairs, while drama, culture and entertainment, and programs for children and young people were bundled into one category (see the "Culture and entertainment" row); n/a: not available

Source: Yle, "Annual Reports"

During recent years, digitization has not triggered any major changes. The apparent sharp fall in television cultural and entertainment programming in 2012 is attributable to a change in Yle's categorization of genres rather than to an actual decline in those strands.

### 2.1.2 Digitization and Services

Yle had a monopoly in both television and radio broadcasting until the mid-1980s. Local commercial radio stations were permitted in 1985. A year later, the first commercial television channel, MTV3, was permitted.

59. Yle, "*Nuntii Latini*," at [http://yle.fi/radio1/tiede/nuntii\\_latini/nuntii\\_latini\\_-\\_in\\_english\\_24554.html](http://yle.fi/radio1/tiede/nuntii_latini/nuntii_latini_-_in_english_24554.html) (in English) (accessed 10 June 2013).

60. Yle, "Yle aloittaa uutiset venäjäksi" (Yle will broadcast Russian news on television), 2013, at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/yle\\_aloittaa\\_tv-uutiset\\_venajaksi/6618500](http://yle.fi/uutiset/yle_aloittaa_tv-uutiset_venajaksi/6618500) (accessed 10 June 2013).

61. Yle, "Yleisradio's administrative council's annual report from years 2011 and 2012 to the parliament."

MTV3 had a monopoly in commercial television broadcasting for over a decade until a terrestrial commercial competitor, Nelonen, was launched in 1997.<sup>62</sup>

The digitization process has not caused significant upheavals in Yle's operations, and the latter stages have not resulted in the launch of any new channels. Currently, Yle broadcasts television programs on four different channels. TV1 broadcasts mainly news, current affairs, magazine programs, and entertainment and is the most watched television channel (see Table 8). Launched in 1958, it was followed in 1965 by Yle TV2, which focusses on sports, children, young people, and young adults. Yle has also had a Swedish-language television channel since 1988, which is now called Yle Fem (Yle Five). The television channel Yle Teema (Yle Theme), founded in 2001, is the newest one, dedicated to culture, science, and learning.

In addition to these four, Yle has a high-definition channel, Yle HD, which became available in May 2011. This channel offers a compilation of programs from Yle TV1 and Yle TV2 and does not broadcast any original content. Yle aims to launch another HD channel in 2014. The plan is that in 2016 all broadcasts will be in HD, but SD broadcasts will continue at least until then.<sup>63</sup>

Even though Yle has not launched any new channels, the existing ones have gone through changes and renewals, which began early in 2012. A clear objective was to create explicit profiles for every channel. Yle also aims for every Finn to find something interesting and useful on its selection of channels. The origin of this reform was a response to research, which indicated that Yle did not provide content and services for young adults and people under the age of 45 years as much as it did for older age groups.<sup>64</sup> The renewal process did not cause any drastic changes in Yle's audience shares (see Table 7). Yle Klassinen (Yle Classic) is a digital classical music channel that operates 24 hours a day. It can be listened to over the internet and is also available on digital television.<sup>65</sup>

Yle's online presence has been the biggest change attributable to digitization. Its website Yle.fi is one of the most visited sites in Finland.<sup>66</sup> Yle has followed and reacted to the spread of broadband by transferring a significant degree of resources to online and away from traditional broadcasting.<sup>67</sup>

In 2007 Yle launched the on-demand service called Yle Areena, from which a large part of Yle's programs can be viewed. Radio and television programs become available in Yle Areena after they have premiered and are accessible for 7 to 30 days for listening or viewing. The service includes some exclusive content and is accessible by various receivers such as computers and mobile phones. Currently, there are Yle Areena applications for

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62. J. Wiio and I. Uronen, "Televisio" (Television), in Nordenstreng and Wiio, *Suomen medianaisema*.

63. Yle, "Mikä on Yle HD?" (What is Yle HD?), at <http://yle.fi/yleisradio/faq/teravapiirto-hd/mika-yle-hd> (accessed 12 June 2013).

64. Yle, "Mikä kanavauudistus?" (What is channel renewal?), at <http://yle.fi/yleisradio/faq/kanavauudistukset/mika-kanavauudistus> (accessed 12 June 2013).

65. Yle "Klassinen" (Yle Classical), at <http://yle.fi/musiikki/klassinen/radio> (accessed 12 June 2013).

66. Alexa, "Top sites in Finland," at <http://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries;1/Fi> (accessed 19 June 2013).

67. Yle, "Yleisradio's administrative council's annual report from years 2011 and 2012 to the parliament."

mobile devices such as iPads, iPhones, Android phones, and Nokia Lumia phones.<sup>68</sup> In addition to these, some television models like LG and Samsung stream Yle Areena content on television sets via a special app. However, Yle has no part in making these apps.<sup>69</sup> Yle Areena has replaced Yle’s satellite services for Finns living abroad. The satellite radio channels were discontinued in 2012<sup>70</sup> and satellite television in 2013.<sup>71</sup>

All radio channels can be accessed online and by mobile connections. In 2013, Yle became the first Finnish broadcaster to stream all its television programs online at the same time as scheduled broadcasts on television.

A selection of Yle’s archive material is also available online. In 2006, it launched a web service called Elävä arkisto (Living archives), whose goal is to bring the Finnish cultural heritage into everyone’s reach and its material consists of radio and television content from previous decades. The oldest material dates back to the beginning of the 20th century. Table 12 shows how Yle Areena’s and Elävä arkisto’s contents have increased.

*Table 12.*  
Yle Areena’s and Yle Elävä arkisto’s content, 2009–2012

	2009		2010		2011		2012	
	Items	Hours	Items	Hours	Items	Hours	Items	Hours
<b>Yle Areena</b>								
Video	2,800	854	n/a	n/a	n/a	11,882	24,041	21,517
Audio	4,330	1,078	n/a	n/a	n/a	20,520	25,960	33,200
<b>Yle Elävä arkisto</b>								
Background articles	8,350	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10,551	n/a
Video	11,640	1,320	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	19,629	2,650
Audio	4,500	980	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5,573	1,299

*Note:* For 2011, the figures include both Yle Areena and Yle Elävä arkisto; n/a: not available

*Source:* Yle, “Annual Reports”

68. Yle, “Näillä laitteilla käytät Areenaa” (You can use Areena with these devices), 2013, at <http://blogit.yle.fi/yle-areena/nailla-laitteilla-kaytat-areenaa> (accessed 12 June 2013).

69. Yle, “Yle Areenan saatavuus mobiililaitteisiin laajenee: odotettu iPad-sovellus on nyt saatavilla” (Yle Areena can now be accessed by more mobile devices. Long-awaited iPad application is now available), 2012, at <http://yle.fi/yleisradio/ajankohtaista/yle-areenan-saatavuus-mobiililaitteisiin-laajenee-odotettu-ipad-sovellus-nyt> (accessed 23 May 2013).

70. Yle, “Yle siirtää radiokanavien ulkomaanjakelun satelliitista internetiin” (Yle will transfer the distribution of radio channels to abroad from satellite to internet, 2012, at <http://yle.fi/yleisradio/ajankohtaista/yle-siirtaa-radiokanavien-ulkomaan-jakelun-satelliitista-internettiin> (accessed 23 May 2013).

71. Yle, “Yle Areena palvelee jatkossa yhä paremmin ulkomailla asuvia suomalaisia. TV Finlandin satelliittijakelu päättyy kesällä” (In the future Yle Areena will serve Finns living abroad. Distribution by satellite of TV Finland will come to an end in the summer), 2013, at <http://yle.fi/yleisradio/ajankohtaista/yle-areena-palvelee-jatkossa-yha-paremmiin-ulkomailla-asuvia-suomalaisia-tv-finlandin> (accessed 23 May 2013).

### 2.1.3 Government Support

There has been no state support for digitization of public service media. Yle decided to incorporate its transmitting operations into an affiliated company in 1998, from which Yle purchases all transmitting services. The affiliated company, called Digita, was sold to the foreign TDF group in 2005.<sup>72</sup> The money received was used to finance Yle's digitization.<sup>73</sup> Digita is now owned by an international investment company.<sup>74</sup>

### 2.1.4 Public Service Media and Digital Switch-over

All Finnish television broadcasts were digitized in 2007. The digitization of television has not led to major changes in the reach and market shares of public broadcasting. Yle's television and radio channels' reach has remained steady over recent years (see Table 8).

Recently, Yle has created new program concepts in current affairs. The focus is on issues that are popular and current and being discussed in online forums. The aim is to guarantee that the public can participate in the discussion and provide new perspectives. This is also in accordance with Yle's duties imposed by law to support people's opportunities to participate.<sup>75</sup>

## 2.2 Public Service Provision

### 2.2.1 Perception of Public Service Media

Finns appreciate and rely on Yle and believe it is a trustworthy news and current affairs organization. Over half of the respondents in one survey<sup>76</sup> considered Yle to be Finland's first-ranking player in the news market. Yle is also an important part of everyday life for Finns. When asked what their most preferred news source was, 43 percent named Yle's news broadcast on television.<sup>77</sup> Yle's various channels combined reached 99 percent of the total population in 2012 (see Table 13).

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72. Digita, "Historia" (Company history), at <http://www.digita.fi/yritykset/yhtio/historia> (accessed 13 June 2013).

73. Interview with Hannu Nieminen, professor of communication studies, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, 3 June 2013.

74. Digita, "Ownership," at [http://www.digita.fi/in\\_english/company/ownership](http://www.digita.fi/in_english/company/ownership) (accessed 13 June 2013).

75. Yle, "Yleisradio's administrative council's annual report from years 2011 and 2012 to the parliament."

76. Yle, "Uutisarvostukset 2010" (Appreciation of news in the year 2010), 2010, at [http://www.yle.fi/tvuutiset/uutiset/upics/liitetiedostot/uutisarvostukset\\_2010.pdf](http://www.yle.fi/tvuutiset/uutiset/upics/liitetiedostot/uutisarvostukset_2010.pdf) (accessed 22 May 2013) (hereafter, Yle, "Uutisarvostukset 2010"). This survey, commissioned by Yle, examines how Finns see Yle as a Finnish news operator. Data were collected through individual interviews with 977 interviewees over the age of 15. The same exercise was also conducted in 2008.

77. Yle, "Uutisarvostukset 2010."

Table 13.

Trust in news organizations

(% of population that considers outlet to be at least a fairly trusted news source), 2010

Yle	89
STT-Lehtikuva (news agency)	84
MTV3 (TV channel, private)	75
Regional newspapers	74
<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i> (newspaper)	68
Nelonen (TV channel, private)	55
Tabloids	15

Source: Yle, “Uutisarvostukset 2010” (Appreciation of news in the year 2010)<sup>78</sup>

Almost half of the population considers Yle to be the most significant news source for their personal use. And around 64 percent of the public<sup>79</sup> and 97 percent of policymakers consider that Yle has a significant role in society.<sup>80</sup>

Until the end of 2012, Yle was funded by a license fee attached to television sets, but this model came under pressure in the early 2000s as evasion became more widespread.<sup>81</sup> In 2012, Parliament approved legislation that changed Yle’s financing to a public broadcasting tax collected by the Tax Administration (as of January 2013). The tax is collected from everyone over the age of 18 and the rate varies from €50 to €140 (US\$68–US\$ 190) depending on yearly taxed income. People with incomes below €7,352 (US\$ 9,993) are exempt.<sup>82</sup> The tax is also collected from businesses operating in Finland. The corporation rate varies from €140 to €3,000 (US\$ 190–US\$ 4,078).<sup>83</sup> About half the population is satisfied with the new funding model.<sup>84</sup>

There is considerable public debate about Yle’s role in the media market, and whether some of its activities threaten commercial competition. One line of criticism is that Yle is spending money on entertainment and broadcasting entertainment that is luring audiences away from the commercial channels. Concerns were particularly raised following Yle’s joint venture with Home Box Office (HBO) in the United States, agreed in 2007.<sup>85</sup>

78. Yle, “Uutisarvostukset 2010.”

79. Yle, “Yleisradio’s administrative council’s annual report from years 2011 and 2012 to the parliament.”

80. Yle, “Yleisökertomus” (Yle audience description 2012), at [http://yle.fi/yleisradio/sites/default/files/attachments/yle\\_yleisokertomus\\_2012\\_1.pdf](http://yle.fi/yleisradio/sites/default/files/attachments/yle_yleisokertomus_2012_1.pdf) (accessed 14 June 2013) (hereafter, Yle, “Yleisökertomus”).

81. Yle, “Yleisökertomus.”

82. Ministry of Communication and Transport, “Yle-vero” (Yle tax), at <http://www.lvm.fi/web/hanke/yle-vero> (accessed 7 June 2013).

83. Finnish Tax Administration, “Yle-vero – yhteisöt” (Yle tax for corporations), at [https://www.vero.fi/fi-FI/Yritys\\_ja\\_yhteisoasiakkaat/Yhdistys\\_ja\\_saatio/Maksaminen/Ylevero](https://www.vero.fi/fi-FI/Yritys_ja_yhteisoasiakkaat/Yhdistys_ja_saatio/Maksaminen/Ylevero) (accessed 11 November 2013).

84. Yle, “Yleisökertomus.”

85. Yle, “Ylelle merkittävä ostosopimus HBO:n kanssa” (Yle has made a significant purchase contract with HBO), 2008, at <http://yle.fi/yleisradio/ajankohtaista/ylelle-merkittava-ostosopimus-hbon-kanssa> (accessed 14 June 2013).



Yle's strong online presence in the news market is also criticized by commercial players for making it difficult to sell the news and earn revenue.

### 2.2.2 Public Service Provision in Commercial Media

According to the law on television and radio broadcasting, commercially funded media are obliged to broadcast emergency announcements issued by authorities, for which they are not compensated.<sup>86</sup> There has been no change in these demands due to digitization.

## 2.3 Assessments

Despite a fair amount of post-digitization upheaval in the media landscape, Yle has managed to maintain stable audiences and strong public value.

The major change has been a shift in the funding mechanism in 2013, when public service media became funded through a direct tax rather than a license fee. While the public seems more or less satisfied with the new funding model, commercial players feel it is unfair. The commercial and private media also feel that Yle's strong online presence and wide program listing distort the media market and reduce revenue for other players. Yle is also guaranteed a yearly income by law, whereas commercial players must compete for revenue.

Digitization has not led to the creation of significant new content in public service media, but it has provided new ways to disseminate content, especially online. Yle's website is among the most visited websites in the country, and its online television service is very popular. New demands or duties have not been imposed on Yle as a result of digitization.

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86. Finlex, "Laki televisio- ja radiotoiminnasta" (Act on television and radio broadcasting), 744/1998, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1998/19980744> (accessed 14 June 2013).

## 3. Digital Media and Society

### 3.1 User-Generated Content (UGC)

#### 3.1.1 UGC Overview

Most of the top-ranking websites in June 2013 were search engines, online news sites, and international social networks. Among these sites, only YouTube and Wikipedia can be considered pure UGC websites (see Table 14).

Table 14.  
Top 10 websites, June 2013

Website	Type of site
Google Suomi (Google Finland)	Search
Facebook	Social network
YouTube	Video-sharing website
Google	Search
Iltalehti	News
Amazon.com	Online retailer
Iltta-Sanomat	News
Wikipedia	Collaboratively edited, free online encyclopedia
Yle	Public broadcasting company
Windows live	Portal

Source: Alexa.com<sup>87</sup>

However, there is also a lot of *commentary* on online news websites—e.g. at the online sites of *Iltalehti* and *Iltta-Sanomat*, which are the major tabloids in Finland—and stories often generate lengthy discussion among users. Some newspapers, such as the free paper *Metro*, publish small news stories online written by readers.

87. Alexa, “Top sites in Finland,” at <http://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries;0/FI> (accessed 19 June 2013) (hereafter, Alexa, “Top sites in Finland”).

Nevertheless, interactive online features have not generally prompted journalists to consider users as partners in the core journalistic tasks of editorial content production.<sup>88</sup>

Young people and young adults (16–35 years old) are the most active in creating UGC, most commonly by writing or commenting in discussion forums, blogs, social networks, or elsewhere on the internet: 49 percent of the population was engaged in some kind of UGC during a three-month sampling period in 2012. Self-publishing is the next most popular UGC activity, with 30 percent of the population engaged in uploading self-produced content during the same period. Only 7 percent of the population was engaged in keeping up a website or a blog during the sampling period in 2012.<sup>89</sup>

On some occasions, UGC has proved profitable for users. For instance, some food bloggers got a publishing contract for writing a cookbook.<sup>90</sup> UGC has also led back to the printed press: for instance, *Costume*, a fashion magazine from the Swedish media company Bonnier, was launched in 2012. The magazine has a strong digital presence and the website attracts users for participation in co-creation.<sup>91</sup> Bonnier's monthly magazine for Finnish women, called *Olivia*, uses crowd-sourcing in the production process.<sup>92</sup>

### 3.1.2 Social Networks

As can be seen from Table 15, Facebook and YouTube are the most popular social networks in Finland and social networking is dominated by international brands. However, some national social networking sites, such as Blogspot.fi or Suomi24.fi, do also have a significant number of users.

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88. L. Ahva, *Making News with Citizens: Public Journalism and Professional Reflexivity in Finnish Newspapers*, academic dissertation, Tampere University Press, Tampere, 2010, at <http://urn.fi/urn:isbn:978-951-44-8288-5> (accessed 3 June 2013).

89. Official Statistics of Finland, "Use of information and communications technology by individuals 2012."

90. "Muotibloggaaja kituuttaa, ruokablogi lyö leiville" (Fashion blogger is scraping by, food bloggers are earning a lot), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 1 November 2012, at <http://www.hs.fi/talous/a1305611758629> (accessed 19 June 2013).

91. Bonnier Publications, "Bonnier Publications Ltd.," at <http://www.bonnierpublications.fi/bonnier-publications> (accessed 19 June 2013).

92. Oma Olivia, "Oma Olivia," at <http://www.omaolivia.fi> (accessed 19 June 2013).

Table 15.  
Top 10 social networks, June 2013

Social network	Ranking	Type of site	Users
Facebook	2	International social networking service	2,073,900*
YouTube	3	International video-sharing website	n/a
Wikipedia	8	Collaboratively edited, free online encyclopedia	n/a
Blogspot.fi	11	Blog-publishing service	n/a
Suomiz4.fi	13	Finnish online social networking website	1,301,564**
LinkedIn	23	International social networking website	440,000***
Twitter	25	Microblogging service	60,000–300,000****
Tumblr	35	Microblogging platform and social networking website	n/a
Wordpress.com	37	Bloggng platform	n/a
Imgur	46	Online image hosting service	n/a

Notes: \* Expert estimate;<sup>93</sup> \*\* unique visitors;<sup>94</sup> \*\*\* expert estimate;<sup>95</sup> \*\*\*\* expert estimate;<sup>96</sup> n/a: not available

Source: Alexa.com<sup>97</sup>

In spring 2012, half of the Finnish population (16–74 years old) were registered on at least one social network, and almost all of those who were registered also followed what was going on in social networks. Not surprisingly, young people and young adults were more active users of social networks than older people. There is also a gender difference, with women more active as users of social networks in all age groups over a three-month sampling period in 2012. Of those using social networks, 42 percent consider themselves as occasional commentators, 37 percent as followers, and 20 percent as active contributors.<sup>98</sup>

There are no systematic, reliable national statistics about the number of users of different social networking services, but some estimates and data (see Table 15) indicate that there are approximately 2 million, that is approximately 37 percent of the population, on Facebook, while the equivalent estimate for Twitter users varies between 60,000 and 300,000.

93. H. Pönkä, “Arvio suomalaisten Facebook-käyttäjien todellisesta määrästä + ikäpyramidi” (An estimation of the number of Finnish Facebook users and an age pyramid), Blogpost, 27 February 2013, at <http://harto.wordpress.com/2013/02/27/arvio-suomalaisten-facebook-kayttajien-todellisesta-maarasta-ikapyramidi> (accessed 15 May 2013).

94. TNS Gallup, “Suomen web-sivustojen viikkoluvut” (Weekly user numbers of Finnish web pages), data from week 22/2013, at <http://tnsmatrix.tns-gallup.fi/public> (accessed 10 June 2013).

95. A. Hirvonen, T. Tebest, and J. Rissanen, “Täällä somelaiset elävät—lista historiallisesta Facebookista avattu Pheediin” (This is where the social media users dwell – check out a list from the historical Facebook to the newly-established Pheed), Yle, March 2013, at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/taalla\\_somelaiset\\_elavat\\_-\\_katso\\_lista\\_historiallisesta\\_facebookista\\_juuri\\_avattuun\\_pheediin/6518189](http://yle.fi/uutiset/taalla_somelaiset_elavat_-_katso_lista_historiallisesta_facebookista_juuri_avattuun_pheediin/6518189) (accessed 15 May 2013) (hereafter, Hirvonen et al., “Täällä somelaiset elävät”).

96. S. Saarikoski, “Suomen Twitter on matkalla massamediaksi” (Twitter in Finland is on its way to mass media), *Helsingin sanomat*, 5 May 2013, at <http://www.hs.fi/kuukausiliite/Suomen+Twitter+on+matkalla+massamediaksi/a1305674718013> (accessed 16 May 2013); Hirvonen et al., “Täällä somelaiset elävät.”

97. Alexa, “Top sites in Finland.”

98. Official Statistics of Finland, “Use of information and communications technology by individuals 2012.”

### 3.1.3 News in Social Media

Although news consumption is not the main purpose of social media usage, traditional media companies have been concerned for some time about audience migration from traditional news sources in favor of social media. However, such fears have not been realized, and traditional media sources are still very popular, even among young people, and are also more trusted than social networks.<sup>99, 100</sup>

According to a recent study,<sup>101</sup> even among active internet and social media users, the mainstream media constitute the main news sources for 48 percent, and only 19 percent get interesting news via Facebook and Twitter. However, in the same study 62 percent of active internet users stated that discussion on social media about news is more interesting than the news itself. This indicates, at least among active internet users, that social media may have certain effects on users' ways of relating to the actual news stories.<sup>102</sup>

## 3.2 Digital Activism

### 3.2.1 Digital Platforms and Civil Society Activism

Historically, social movements have functioned very much within the political and administrative framework and have tried to negotiate with the authorities, although new forms of citizen activism and new agents have emerged in recent decades.<sup>103</sup> Despite various kinds of civil action taking place on digital platforms, the impact on public policy or official attitudes has remained low, and there are few examples of effective campaigns. Thus, most digital activism could be described as apolitical, entertainment-oriented, or light, such as circulating memes of a political or societal nature.<sup>104, 105</sup>

Still, there certainly are examples of digital mobilizations that have also attracted mainstream media attention. One was in October 2010, when a Facebook group against increasing MPs' salaries attracted over 100,000 supporters. The stated aim was to gather people for an actual demonstration. However, despite the huge

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99. J. Matikainen, "Uudet mediamuodot" (New media), 2012, in Nordenstreng and Wiio, *Suomen mediamaisema*.

100. J. Matikainen, "Sosiaalisen ja perinteisen median rajalla" (On the borderline of traditional and social media), Research report, Communication Research Centre (CRC), Department of Communication, University of Helsinki, 2009 (hereafter, Matikainen, "Sosiaalisen ja perinteisen median rajalla").

101. E. Vainikka, E. Noppari, A. Heinonen, and J. Huhtamäki, "Twiiteryhmiä ja uutispäivittelyä—oimittajana sosiaalisessa mediassa" (Twitter groups and news updating—as journalist in social media), Research report, Tampere Research Centre for Journalism, Media, and Communication (COMET), Tampere, 2013 (hereafter, Vainikka et al., "Twiiteryhmiä ja uutispäivittelyä").

102. Vainikka et al., "Twiiteryhmiä ja uutispäivittelyä."

103. A. Rasimus, "Uudet liikkeet. Radikaali kansalaisaktivismi 1990-luvun Suomessa" (New movements. Radicalism and citizens' activism in Finland in the 1990s), academic dissertation, *Acta Electronica Universitatis Tampereensis* 565, Tampere University Press, Tampere, 2006, at <http://tampub.uta.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/67650/951-44-6758-2.pdf?sequence=1> (accessed 5 June 2013).

104. L. Stranius and L. Laaksonen, "Verkkovaikuttamista 2010-luvulla—Selvitys verkossa pääosin tai kokonaan tapahtuvan yhdistystoiminnan mahdollistamisesta" (Digital activism in the 2010s—A report on the possibilities of facilitating internet-based organized civil action), Ministry of Justice Publication Series, 1/2011, Helsinki, 2011, at <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-259-099-2> (accessed 4 June 2013) (hereafter, Stranius and Laaksonen, "Verkkovaikuttamista 2010-luvulla")

105. Matikainen, "Sosiaalisen ja perinteisen median rajalla."

number of online supporters only a few people showed up at the actual demonstration in front of the Parliament building.<sup>106, 107</sup>

Leo Stranius and Lasse Laaksonen give another telling account of Facebook activism. The technical board of Valkeakoski, a small town in the Pirkanmaa region, decided in early 2010 to turn the street lights off during the night. A Facebook group was set up demanding that the street lights be turned back on. In a short period of time the group gathered hundreds of supporters, a significant number in a small Finnish town. However, when a journalist from *Aamulehti*, a major daily news newspaper, asked the office manager of municipal engineering in Valkeakoski whether they had received any feedback about the decision, the manager said practically none—only one email. When asked about the Facebook group, he replied: “Facebook is a forum which we do not use. It practically doesn’t matter what kind of groups are initiated there.” This example points out that digital activism has no impact if it does not reach the target group.<sup>108</sup>

There would seem to be no clear dichotomy between digital and “live” activism in the Finnish context, as in many cases—and especially in the more successful ones—these types of civil activism are deeply intertwined.

### 3.2.2 The Importance of Digital Mobilizations

The huge number of people supporting certain causes in social media, such as the Facebook group against MPs’ salary increases, shows that through digital platforms it is potentially possible, easier, cheaper, and quicker to mobilize large crowds, although actual mobilization through social media alone seems to be difficult. And while it has proved difficult to have a significant impact on public policy or official attitudes by means of digital activism, it might still be easier to communicate with civil servants using social media services or other kinds of unofficial digital services.<sup>109</sup>

## 3.3 Assessments

Search engines, online news sites, and international social networks dominate the top-ranking websites, but there are only two UGC sites among them. However, there is a lot of user commentary, including on online news sites run by established media. Uploading self-produced material to the web is also a fairly common form of UGC activity. Facebook and YouTube are the top-ranking social networks, followed by two Finnish social networks that have also attracted a critical mass of users.

Traditional news media are an important news source even among active internet users, although the main function of social networking is not related to news consumption, but to social interaction. Also, much

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106. Stranius and Laaksonen, “Verkkovaikuttamista 2010-luvulla.”

107. Yle, “Facebook-mielenosoitus latistui—osallistujia vain kourallinen” (Facebook demonstration was flattened—only a handful of people were present), 15 October 2010, at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/facebook-mielenosoitus\\_latistui\\_-\\_osallistujia\\_vain\\_kourallinen/5651908](http://yle.fi/uutiset/facebook-mielenosoitus_latistui_-_osallistujia_vain_kourallinen/5651908) (accessed 19 June 2013).

108. Stranius and Laaksonen, “Verkkovaikuttamista 2010-luvulla.”

109. Stranius and Laaksonen, “Verkkovaikuttamista 2010-luvulla.”

of UGC content concerns consumer interest topics, alongside content of a political or social character. Traditional media sources do still remain popular and trusted, and they dominate the news offering on digital platforms.

Various types of civil action take place on digital platforms in Finland. However, it is mostly somewhat apolitical, light, entertainment-oriented, and unable to influence public policy or official attitudes in a significant way. Digital mobilizations have gathered support online but not offline. However, digital platforms clearly have facilitated the process of—and hence the potential for—mobilizing citizens for civil action.

# 4. Digital Media and Journalism

## 4.1 Impact on Journalists and Newsrooms

### 4.1.1 Journalists

The Union of Journalists in Finland (*Suomen Journalistiliitto*), a trade union, has approximately 16,000 members.<sup>110</sup> In addition, there are freelance journalists and journalists who do not belong to the trade union who work in journalistic positions.

Digitization has led to many changes in Finland's newsrooms, including intensifying competition and increased speed of news cycles, expanding online operations, and growing demands for cost efficiencies catalyzed by new technologies of production. This has resulted in significant numbers of redundancies, which have affected newsroom morale and caused a deterioration in news quality in some respects. Newsrooms have become smaller and the workload of individual journalists has grown as news stories are published on multiple platforms, requiring them to adapt versions of their stories accordingly.<sup>111</sup>

There are clear distinctions between print and digital or online newspapers. In general, the printed and digital editions of newspapers offer more in-depth and analytical content than the newspapers' online pages. News about politics and economics are found more often in printed or digital papers than in online newspapers. Over 10,000 news stories written between 2007 and 2012 were analyzed in a study whose findings suggest that Finnish journalism has remained largely factual. News still tends to follow and reflect events in society. For example, two elections were held in 2012 and the volume of political coverage increased, making politics the most popular topic of the year.<sup>112</sup>

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110. Union of Journalists in Finland, "UJF in brief," at <https://journalistiliitto-fi.directo.fi/en/union> (accessed 22 July 2013).

111. K. Nikunen, "Enemmän vähemmällä. Laman ja teknologian murroksen vaikutukset suomalaisissa toimituksissa 2009–2010" (More with less. How depression and technological changes have affected Finnish newsrooms 2009–2010), Tampere Research Centre for Journalism, Media and Communication (COMET), Tampere, 2011 (hereafter, Nikunen, "Enemmän vähemmällä").

112. R. Suikkanen, A. Holma, and P. Raittila, "Muuttumaton uutinen? Suomalaisen uutismedian vuosiseuranta 2007–2012 Loppuraportti" (All quiet on the news front? Final Report of the Annual Finnish Media Monitoring Study 2007–2012), Tampere, Tampere Research Centre for Journalism, Media and Communication (COMET), 2012, at <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-44-8993-8> (accessed 23 July 2013).



A related problem is that journalists are increasingly writing news based on PR material. Approximately 36 percent of published news articles were traced back to PR material, according to a 2011 survey.<sup>113</sup> The news agency STT-Lehtikuva uses PR material and press releases the most, with over half of its output based closely on this. Printed tabloids use PR material the least, which is attributable to the competitive drive for exclusivity that is most prominent in this sector.

Quoting and copying topics from other news organizations is also commonplace. Approximately one-fifth of news output in 2010 was based on news published by some other media.<sup>114</sup> Online editions are more prone to this practice than printed papers and television outlets. According to Finnish journalism guidelines, sources must be mentioned in the news when information has already been published by some other outlet.<sup>115</sup> The Council for Mass Media in Finland (*Julkisen sanan neuvosto*, CMM) issued a long-awaited policy statement on this in 2010. The statement makes clear that if a news item is mainly based on research by other media, the original source must be mentioned clearly.<sup>116</sup> Finnish newspapers manage to do this rather well. The original source is mentioned in 75 percent of the cases when the source is domestic and 65 percent when the source is foreign.<sup>117</sup> However, even when stories are duly attributed to other publishers, there is concern that the practice of this kind of second-hand journalism dilutes the principle of verification. Instead of confirming the story from a reliable primary source, journalists often seem to rely on the accuracy of the original publisher.<sup>118</sup> There are also some concerns regarding the exploitation of original news-gathering organizations by third-party outlets. Tuomo Pietiläinen, a long-term career journalist and visiting professor of journalism at the University of Tampere, has suggested that when reprinting news and scoops exposed by other media, the original publisher should be compensated.<sup>119</sup>

Amid cuts to operational journalism, newspapers rely heavily on news agencies, especially for non-editorial content. Online news outlets tend to be even more dependent on agency material. A total of 34 percent of online news stories were from news agencies or based on news agency material in 2010, compared with 12 percent in print news and 17 percent in television.<sup>120</sup>

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113. L. Juntunen, "Leikkaa-liimaa-journalismia. Tutkimus uutismedia lähdekäytännöistä" (Cut and paste journalism. A research about news media's source practices), Communication Research Centre (CRC), Department of Social Research, University of Helsinki, 2011, at [http://www.helsinki.fi/crc/julkaisut/leikkaaliimaa\\_raportti.pdf](http://www.helsinki.fi/crc/julkaisut/leikkaaliimaa_raportti.pdf) (accessed 23 July 2013) (hereafter, Juntunen "Leikkaa-liimaa-journalismia").

114. Juntunen "Leikkaa-liimaa-journalismia."

115. Council for Mass Media (CMM), "Guidelines for Journalists and an Annex," at [http://www.jsn.fi/en/guidelines\\_for\\_journalists](http://www.jsn.fi/en/guidelines_for_journalists) (accessed 22 July 2013) (hereafter, CMM, "Guidelines for Journalists").

116. CMM, "Periaatelausuma lainaamisesta" (Decision on quoting), 4279/L/10, 6 May 2010, at <http://www.jsn.fi/periaatelausumat/lainaminen> (accessed 22 July 2013) (hereafter, CMM, "Periaatelausuma lainaamisesta").

117. Juntunen, "Leikkaa-liimaa-journalismia."

118. Juntunen, "Leikkaa-liimaa-journalismia."

119. "Pietiläinen: tutkiva journalismi kannattavaksi" (Pietiläinen: Investigative journalism should be made profitable), *Journalisti*, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2012/15/debatti/tutkiva-journalismi-kannattavaks> (accessed 23 July 2013).

120. Juntunen, "Leikkaa-liimaa-journalismia."

### 4.1.2 Ethics

Recent research indicates that journalists are among the least trusted professionals in Finland, along with politicians and financial advisors.<sup>121</sup>

Speed and competition pose challenges for journalistic ethics. Guidelines stipulate that hidden advertising must be avoided.<sup>122</sup> The CMM processes complaints about hidden advertising quite frequently, of which there are usually about 10 a year. The same guidelines are applied to both printed papers and online publishing, but preventing hidden advertising online may require special attention. Readers are quite accustomed to recognizing advertisements from printed papers, but online papers have quite different layouts and variable formats.<sup>123</sup> Interestingly, hidden advertising in private blogs raises a lot more discussion than hidden advertising in established news media. This may be because blogging and advertising on blogs are rather new phenomena and readers are not familiar with them.<sup>124</sup>

There have been some recent incidents where news media have published stories without adequate verification. An infamous case is the nationwide phenomenon of Enkeli-Elisa (Angel Elisa), which told the heartbreaking story of a 15-year-old schoolgirl who had been bullied in school and committed suicide. But the story turned out to be fictional. The news originated from a Facebook page dedicated to the girl and the page received a huge amount of “likes,” so traditional media started to write about the case, propelled by what appeared to be a hugely popular story.<sup>125</sup>

Originally, the author behind the Facebook page claimed that she had spoken with Elisa’s parents because they did not want to appear in public. The author also said that the parents had given Elisa’s diaries to her. Besides the Facebook group, the author had created an online page where material from Elisa’s diaries was shared. After the question of authenticity was raised, the author was questioned by the police and she confessed that neither Elisa’s parents nor the diaries were real. When asked about the identity of the parents, the author answered that they are parents whose children have committed suicide or been bullied at school. When asked if the girl was real, the author said that the story was based on true events, but she could not give any accurate details. The author also argued that the authenticity of this girl was not the point; the most important thing was to raise awareness that children are being bullied in school.<sup>126</sup>

Some news organizations have admitted that it was a mistake to publish the story without thorough research, and that the hugely popular Facebook page clouded their judgment. Some are less apologetic, saying that it

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121. Valitut Palat, “Tutkimus: Suomalainen luottaa eniten palomieheen, vähiten poliitikkoon” (Research: Finns trust firemen the most, politicians the least), *Readers’ Digest*, 2013, at <http://www.rd.fi/tutkimus-suomalainen-luottaa-eniten-palomieheen-vahiten-poliitikkoon> (accessed 22 July 2013).

122. CMM, “Guidelines for Journalists.”

123. T. Lammassaari, “Piilomainonta ja julkisen sanan neuvosto” (Subliminal advertising and the Council for Mass Media), Tampere Research Centre for Journalism, Media and Communication (COMET), 2012, at <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-44-9002-6> (accessed 22 July 2013).

124. “Blogimainos ei aina näytä mainokselta” (A blog advertisement does not always look like an advertisement), *Kuningaskuluttaja*, 27 February 2013, at <http://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2013/02/27/blogissa-mainos-ei-aina-nayta-mainokselta> (accessed 22 July 2013).

125. P. Sallinen, “Enkeli-Elisa näpäytti toimituksia” (Angel Elisa put journalists in their place), 2012, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2012/13/uutiset/enkeli-elisa-napaytti-toimituksi> (accessed 23 July 2013) (hereafter, Sallinen, “Enkeli-Elisa näpäytti toimituksia”).

126. “Vettenterä myönsi poliisille esiintyneensä itse Enkeli-Elisan isänä” (Vettenterä admitted to police that she had imposed as Angel-Elisa’s father), *Helsingin Sanomat*, at <http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/a1305593127677> (accessed 11 November 2013).

doesn't matter if this particular story is fictional, as the phenomenon—kids being bullied—is real. However, as to the question whether there are any real cases where kids have committed suicide after bullying, there is no clear answer.<sup>127</sup>

Under certain very rare circumstances, media have refrained from reporting newsworthy situations. In these cases, journalistic ethics carried more weight than guaranteed income from sales. One example that has been handled in the press is the case of a Finnish married couple who were kidnapped in Yemen in December 2012. Even though the kidnapping itself was reported widely in the press, any personal details were not released. After the couple was freed, media representatives explained their reasons for keeping quiet. In a situation like this, safety came first and releasing information came second.<sup>128</sup>

In recent years, two of the biggest stories in the press were the school shootings in Jokela in 2007 and Kauhajoki in 2008. The Jokela shooting marked a turning point in online news production. For the first time all major media groups systematically published their news first online.<sup>129</sup> The ethical behavior of journalists was discussed afterwards, and a majority were criticized for approaching the survivors and victims' families intrusively. Local young people drew up a petition criticizing the behavior and practices of journalists covering the case and received widespread attention. Journalists legitimized their actions by referring to journalistic values and ideals, meaning in practice that they had a journalistic duty to provide information, although both the established practices of newsrooms as well as growing competitive pressures were clearly factors at play.<sup>130</sup> Nevertheless, a year later in 2008, journalists were more discreet when gathering information.<sup>131</sup>

Social media are used increasingly in newsrooms and by journalists, and some ethical challenges have arisen as a result. In particular, there have been occasional concerns expressed on social media platforms that journalists are exploiting users by stealing ideas and material for stories without attribution.<sup>132</sup>

## 4.2 Investigative Journalism

Investigative journalism has not had a long history or strong tradition in Finland. It was not until the mid-1990s that current affairs surfaced in earnest. In 1996, Yle launched its flagship investigative journalism program “*MOT*” (*MOT* is an acronym from the Finnish words “*Mikä oli tutkittava*,” which mean “What had to be investigated”), which is still running today. In addition, Yle defines two more of its programs as current

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127. Sallinen, “Enkeli-Elisa näpäytti toimituksia.”

128. “Miksi media vaiken?” (Why did the media remain silent?), *Iltä-Sanomat*, at <http://www.iltasanomat.fi/ulkomaat/art-1288564107382.html> (accessed 25 July 2013).

129. P. Raittila, K. Koljonen, and J. Väliverronen, “*Journalism and School Shootings in Finland 2007–2008*,” Tampere University Press, Tampere, 2010, at <http://tampub.uta.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/65342/978-951-44-8257-1.pdf?sequence=1> (accessed 24 July 2013) (hereafter, Raittila et al., “*Journalism and School Shootings in Finland*”).

130. Juntunen, “Explaining the need for speed.”

131. Raittila et al., “*Journalism and School Shootings in Finland*.”

132. Vainikka et al., “*Twitteriymii ja uutispäivittelyä*.”

affairs output: “*Kuningaskuluttaja*” (Consumer is the King) deals with consumer issues, and “*Spotlight*” is a current affairs program in Swedish. Yle also had a third investigative journalism program, a crime magazine program “*Poliisi-TV*” (Police TV), but it was discontinued in October 2013.<sup>133</sup> MTV3 also has its own investigative journalism program, “*45 Minuuttia*” (45 Minutes), which airs weekly until the end of 2013. In October 2013, it was announced that “*45 Minuuttia*” would be discontinued at the beginning of 2014. An investigative journalism work group would be established at the news and current affairs desk.<sup>134</sup>

The Association for Investigative Journalism in Finland was founded in 1992, providing training and inspiration for journalists working in both printed and audiovisual media.<sup>135</sup> Since its foundation, the association has recognized outstanding investigative journalism through annual awards. To date, the association has not paid much attention to online platforms as it considers the nature of digital publishing to be at odds with investigative journalism. The award, called “*Lumilapio*” (meaning “snow shovel” in Finnish to symbolize digging), is not, however, limited to news.<sup>136</sup> A satirical piece of theater about the Finnish Parliament was a recipient of the award in 2012.<sup>137</sup>

There are signs that attitudes may be changing in online investigative journalism. Johanna Vehkoo is an editor at Long Play, an exclusively online publisher of long-form feature-based journalism, and she believes that the digital domain can function as a platform for both real-time round-the-clock news and slow and timeless journalism (see section 4.2.3). The proliferation of tablet devices in particular is thought to be favorable to the latter kind of journalism, given that they are designed for in-depth reading.<sup>138</sup>

#### 4.2.1 Opportunities

Data-driven journalism has recently become a widely acknowledged practice. The largest national newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*, has produced several investigative journalism pieces based on the analysis and display of open-source data. The newspaper also founded a special work group for data journalism in 2012.<sup>139</sup> Other titles engaging in this kind of journalism include the weekly news magazine, *Suomen Kuvalehti*.

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133. Yle, “*Tutkiva journalism*” (Investigative journalism), at <http://yle.fi/aihe/mot/tutkiva-journalismi> (accessed 25 July 2013).

134. MTV Media, “*MTV MEDIA:n yt-neuvottelut päättyivät*” (MTV MEDIA’s employee co-operation negotiations came to an end), at <http://www.mtv.fi/yritys/medialle/index.shtml/130147> (accessed 12 November 2013).

135. Association for Investigative Journalism in Finland, at <http://www.tutkiva.fi/content/association-investigative-journalism-finland> (accessed 25 July 2013).

136. Association for Investigative Journalism in Finland, “*Tutkivan journalismin vuosikymmen*” (The decade of investigative journalism), at <http://www.tutkiva.fi/content/tutkivan-journalismin-vuosikymmen> (accessed 25 July 2013).

137. Association for Investigative Journalism in Finland, “*Lumilapio-palkinnot Eduskunta II-näytelmälle ja Talvivaara-jutuille*” (Snow shovel awards to Eduskunta II play and Talvivaara coverage), at <http://www.tutkiva.fi/content/lumilapio-palkinnot-eduskunta-ii-naytelmalle-ja-talvivaara-jutuille> (accessed 25 July 2013).

138. J. Vehkoo, “*Painokoneet seis. Kertomuksia uuden journalismin ajasta*” (Stop the press. Stories about the new era of journalism), 2011, Teos, Helsinki, 2011.

139. “*HS perustaa datajournalismin ryhmän*” (HS will found a work group dedicated to data-driven journalism), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 2012, at <http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/a1305567392362> (accessed 25 July 2013).

Digitization has lowered the barriers of communication between journalists and sources. MTV3's "45 Minuuttia" receives nearly 200 tips from viewers weekly. According to the program's staff, this figure increased significantly after the program opened up channels through social media.<sup>140</sup> It is believed that in the future audiences will engage in producing investigative journalism, and crowd-sourcing is increasingly used in news stories.<sup>141</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Threats

Investigative journalism is acutely affected by the general pressures experienced in newsrooms (see section 4.1.1), not least because it is the most time- and resource-intensive form of journalism. There is also a risk that hacking and surveillance might endanger the anonymity of sources, but no such incident has been reported publicly.

#### 4.2.3 New Platforms

So far, there have not been any prominent blogs that publish investigative journalism. The newest player in the field of investigative journalism is the news service Long Play, which publishes e-singles stories.<sup>142</sup> E-singles are considered a new form of online publishing in Finland, distinct from blogs. They are online-only in-depth articles, generally between 5,000 and 30,000 words.

Though the founders of Long Play hope to make the initiative profitable in the long run, it is currently reliant on voluntary input from journalists.<sup>143</sup> Since its launch in January 2013, the website had published six investigative pieces by the summer of 2013, and these have been picked up by the mainstream media.

In its short existence, Long Play has managed to create something of a political buzz. In this respect, one particular investigation is worth mentioning. The story focussed on Pekka Himanen, a philosopher and writer, and concerned the government's awarding of contracts under its information society policy.<sup>144</sup> Among other things, the article criticized the way in which funding was granted for the project. It sparked a public debate over whether the prime minister had been guilty of cronyism, using undue influence in a bid to steer the funds toward his personally favored recipients. The prime minister was subsequently forced to explain his role in front of the Constitutional Law Committee.<sup>145</sup>

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140. MTV3, "Hämyisiä kuppiloita, uhkailua ja uutisvoittoja—tätä on tutkiva journalismi" (Shady cafés, threats and news win—this is what investigative journalism is), at <http://www.mtv3.fi/uutiset/kotimaa.shtml/hamyisia-kuppiloita-uhkailua-ja-uutisvoittoja---tata-on-tutkiva-journalismi/2011/08/1380430> (accessed 26 July 2013).

141. M. Valkama, "Taloustoimittajasta pätkäprofessoriksi" (From economic journalist to a short-term professor), 2012, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2012/5-2012/artikkelit/taloustoimittajasta-patkaprofess> (accessed 26 July 2013).

142. Long Play, at <http://www.longplay.fi> (accessed 26 July 2013).

143. J. Salomaa, "Long Play yrittää tehdä tutkivasta journalismista kannattavaa" (Long Play is trying to make investigative journalism profitable), 2013, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2013/01/uutiset/long-play-yrittaa-tehda-tutkivas> (accessed 26 July 2013).

144. Long Play, "Himänen etiikka" (Himänen's ethics), at [http://longplay.fi/himansen\\_etiikka](http://longplay.fi/himansen_etiikka) (accessed 26 July 2013).

145. "Parliament lets Katainen off the hook," *Helsinki Times*, 2012, at <http://www.helsinkitimes.fi/finland/finland-news/politics/6792-parliament-lets-katainen-off-the-hook.html> (accessed 26 July 2013).

#### 4.2.4 Dissemination and Impact

The spread of digital cameras has made it possible for private citizens and activists to produce high-quality pictures and video material for news and current affairs. There have been notable examples of animal rights activists who have been producing material for investigative journalism stories, which have then been widely disseminated by the traditional media. In one example, two activists trespassed on pig farms and shot video material documenting the animals' poor living conditions. The material was published on the activists' online sites and traditional media referred heavily to these and used the material as a source for reporting. For the professional news media, such cooperation with activists is a cost-effective means to acquire public-interest investigative news material. However, the relationship between professional news organizations and activists is a complex one. The first problem relates to accuracy and whether professional journalists are able to adequately verify source material through such cooperation. The second problem relates to legal liability. This was exemplified by the pig farms story, when activists were sued by the farm owners for defamation and trespassing. In spite of their critical role in bringing the story to public attention, professional news organizations were absolved of responsibility for the story and the activists faced charges in court.

Digitization is also helping the traditional media to disseminate their investigative journalism content more widely and to a wider audience. While "MOT" publishes the full transcripts of programs online, other vehicles for current affairs have a more dynamic and interactive online presence. Newspapers and magazines have also started to republish archive investigative stories dating back to the early 1990s, and titles such as *Helsingin Sanomat* are taking advantage of the larger space and possibilities of online publishing to offer additional and supplementary materials relating to their investigative stories.

### 4.3 Social and Cultural Diversity

#### 4.3.1 Sensitive Issues

Although Finland is a fairly secular and homogenous country (see Context), there are sensitive issues that journalists have to grapple with, as outlined in a recent article in *Journalisti*, the publication of the Union of Journalists in Finland. According to the piece, the five most difficult topics are immigration, a political party called True Finns, cannabis and other drugs, protecting interviewees, and religion.<sup>146</sup>

Compared with other European countries, the number of immigrants is low, with less than 5 percent of the Finnish population born outside the country.<sup>147</sup> However, since the 1990s the immigration rate has risen steadily and a right-wing populist party called True Finns received significant support in the 2011 elections, becoming the third-biggest party in Parliament. The party platform is based on work, entrepreneurship, welfare, and social, Christian values. The party has attracted significant media attention, but this has not

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146. J. Aro, "Vaietut aiheet" (Silent topics), *Journalisti*, November 2011, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2011/11/artikkelit/vaietut-aiheet> (accessed 14 August 2013)".

147. Statistics Finland, "Database. Immigration," at [http://193.166.171.75/database/StatFin/vrm/muutl/muutl\\_fi.asp](http://193.166.171.75/database/StatFin/vrm/muutl/muutl_fi.asp) (accessed 8 August 2013).

always been beneficial. Some figures of the party appear to lack experience and skills in dealing with the media, and there have also been occasions when the coverage has appeared to distort some of the views and policies associated with the party.

Most religious coverage is focussed on domestic issues and on Christianity. According to a recent study, around half of all coverage of religion concerns Christianity, and 30 percent relates to Islam. The findings also indicate that different papers cover religion differently. The national newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* is the only newspaper which publishes more news about Islam than Christianity, a significant proportion of which is in the foreign news section and is broadly related to global politics, conflicts, and so on. When Muslims living in Finland are interviewed, they mostly talk about their religious customs and culture. Regional papers seem to focus on local religious communities and events in the congregation and parish.<sup>148</sup> Despite journalists considering religion to be sensitive, this does not appear to result in self-censorship or the avoidance of difficult topics. For example, the newspaper *Kaleva* wrote about the sexual abuse of children in Conservative Laestadianism, a Lutheran revival movement. After publishing the story, the paper received many angry messages and about 200 subscribers cancelled their subscriptions.<sup>149</sup>

About 6 percent of Finnish people speak Swedish as their mother language and they constitute the largest minority in the country. In spite of the long shared history between the two nations, some tensions persist and have been manifest in hostile attitudes among a very small group of Finns toward the Swedish-speaking population and anyone sympathizing with it. For example, some journalists have received threats following coverage of hate speech targeted at this population.<sup>150</sup>

#### 4.3.2 Coverage of Sensitive Issues

There are no specific legal restrictions on journalists covering sensitive issues.

Both journalists and citizens in Finland enjoy relatively unrestricted freedom of speech, although the Finnish penal code does contain some limits. It is illegal, for example, to slander, blaspheme, incite racial hatred, or spread information that is offensive to someone's private life.<sup>151</sup> The law does not state any examples of these, as it is the courts that rule in these cases. Even though the internet is not directly regulated, the penal code in effect covers online posts and publishing, and there have been some recent cases where individual users have been prosecuted for breaching the penal code.

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148. J. Hokka, K. Valaskivi, J. Sumiala, and S. Laakso, “Suomalaiset sanomalehdet uskonnollisen maiseman tuottajina. Uskontojournalismi Helsingin Sanomissa, Ilkassa, Kalevassa ja Karjalaisessa vuosina 2007–2011” (Finnish newspapers as producers of religious landscape. Religious journalism in *Helsingin Sanomat*, *Ilkka*, *Karjalainen*, and *Kaleva* between 2007 and 2011), *Media & viestintä* 36(2) (2013), pp. 6–21.

149. “Lestadiolaiset suuttuivat sanomalehti Kalevalle” (Laestadians got angry with *Kaleva* newspaper), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 2011, at <http://www.hs.fi/kulttuuri/artikkeli/Lestadiolaiset+suuttuivat+sanomalehti+Kalevalle/1135267634065> (accessed 14 August 2013).

150. P. Salovaara, “Uhkailu ei ole kriittistä keskustelua” (Threats are not critical discussion), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 15 June 2013, at <http://www.hs.fi/paakirjoitukset/Uhkailu+ei+ole+kriittist%C3%A4+keskustelua/a1371191117663> (accessed 8 August 2013).

151. Finlex, “Rikoslaki” (Penal code), 39/1889, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1889/18890039001> (accessed 15 August 2013).



### 4.3.3 Space for Public Expression

There are public subsidies for minority media (see section 6.2.1), and Yle offers programming in official minority languages as well as news broadcasts in English and Russian (see section 2.1.1). It does not, however, cater to other minority languages. Likewise, there are public subsidies for newspapers and online magazines in official minority languages but not in other minority-language publications.<sup>152</sup> There are also some examples of self-sustaining minority-language titles, including the monthly *Spektr* in Russian, the weekly English-language newspaper *Helsinki Times*, and *SixDegrees*, a monthly free English-language magazine. All these titles are available online.

Findings in a recent study exploring the media consumption habits of immigrants suggest a significant variance between individuals. One common feature, however, is that almost all immigrants follow news from their country of origin.<sup>153</sup> Digitization is facilitating this, and in turn helps immigrants to maintain and develop their cultural identity.<sup>154</sup>

The findings also suggest that while immigrants do use Finnish media, they tend to prefer international sources of news. This in turn suggests that the mainstream media in Finland are not adequately addressing the issues and concerns of minorities.<sup>155</sup> Digitization of television has further marginalized immigrant audiences, whose viewing of television has since declined. Survey data suggest that many immigrants did not consider that the benefits of upgrading to digital television sets or set-top boxes would outweigh the costs.<sup>156</sup>

It is difficult for immigrants to pursue a career in journalism in Finland, even when they have been competent journalists in their homeland. This is mainly because they do not have adequate Finnish language skills. Therefore, news about immigrants is usually written by others. In addition, immigrants have been rather voiceless in the Finnish media. Very often, it is someone else in the news who is talking about immigrants. The situation is improving slightly, and immigrants are being interviewed and have started to appear in the news in other roles than just as immigrants.<sup>157</sup>

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152. Finlex, "Valtioneuvoston asetus sanomalehdistön tuesta" (The government statute on press subsidies), 389/2008, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2008/20080389> (accessed 6 August 2013).

153. M. Maasilta, A. Simola, and H. af Heurlin, "Maahanmuuttaja mediankäyttäjänä" (Immigrant as a media user), Journalism Research and Development Centre, University of Tampere, 2008, at <http://tampub.uta.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/65408/978-951-44-7529-0.pdf?sequence=1> (accessed 6 August 2013).

154. P. Raittila, K. Nikunen, R. Pöyhkäri, and A. Hiltunen, "Yhteenvetoa—miten eteenpäin etnisyyttä koskevien mediatekstien tutkimisessä" (Conclusion: How to proceed in research of ethnic media texts), in P. Raittila (ed.), *Keskusteluja etnisyydestä mediassa. Suomalaisen, maahanmuuttajien ja tutkijoiden tulkintoja* (Discussions about Ethnicity in Media. Interpretations of Finns, Immigrants and Researchers), Journalism Research and Development Centre, University of Tampere, 2007, at <http://tampub.uta.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/65364/978-951-44-6926-8.pdf?sequence=1> (accessed 6 August 2013) (hereafter Raittila et al., "Yhteenvetoa—miten eteenpäin etnisyyttä koskevien mediatekstien tutkimisessä").

155. H. Luostarinen, "Tietoa, terapiaa ja turbaaneja? Suomalaisen journalismin reaktiot kasvavaan maahanmuuttoon" (Knowledge, therapy, and turbaans? Reactions of Finnish journalism towards increasing immigration), in H. Luostarinen, H. Eskonen, K. Horsti, K. Nikunen, and R. Pöyhkäri (eds.), *Maahanmuutto ja media. Eurooppalaista tutkimusta ja kotimaisia ennusteita* (Immigration and Media. European Research and Domestic Predictions), Tampere Research Centre for Journalism, Media and Communication (COMET), Tampere, 2007 (hereafter, Luostarinen, "Tietoa, terapiaa ja turbaaneja?").

156. Raittila et al., "Yhteenvetoa—miten eteenpäin etnisyyttä koskevien mediatekstien tutkimisessä."

157. Luostarinen, "Tietoa, terapiaa ja turbaaneja?"



Digitization has extended the space for public expression by offering new platforms in which to publish and follow ideas and opinions. However, as general attitudes have tightened it may become more difficult for minorities to express themselves publically. Hate speech relating to minorities is an example of the new atmosphere. Journalists have also become more cautious about what topics they cover and how.

## 4.4 Political Diversity

### 4.4.1 Elections and Political Coverage

The Act on Political Parties states that all public institutions, including the national broadcasting company, should treat all parties equally.<sup>158</sup> Digitization has not brought about any changes in media regulations for covering politics and elections. Indeed, there are no legal regulations concerning elections and political coverage. However, good practices are generally adopted through self-regulation mechanisms and convention, especially for elections. For instance, conventional media abstain from publishing opinion polls on the eve of the elections as well as campaign coverage on election day, and political parties generally compete on a level playing field when it comes to advertising.<sup>159</sup> In 2013, some Members of Parliament introduced a bill to ban publishing opinion polls two weeks before an election day under the threat of financial penalty or imprisonment.<sup>160</sup> The initiative was heavily criticized by the media, politicians, and political scientists.<sup>161, 162, 163</sup>

There are in total 16 registered parties, eight of which have seats in Parliament. The non-parliamentary parties are comparatively marginal in terms of both members and votes received. In the parliamentary elections of 2011, they collectively received 1.5 percent of votes.<sup>164</sup> Their publicity strategies are focussed online, given the lack of mainstream media attention. Sampo Terho, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for the True Finns party, believes that without social media the party would not be as successful as it is.<sup>165</sup>

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158. Finlex, "Puoluelaki" (Act on Political Parties), 10/1969, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1969/19690010> (accessed 8 August 2013).

159. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), "Election Assessment Mission Report. Republic of Finland Parliamentary Elections 17 April 2011," at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/81121> (accessed 7 August 2013) (hereafter, OSCE and ODIHR, "Election Assessment Mission Report. Republic of Finland").

160. P. Tiinanen, "Gallupeista vankeutta? 41 kansanedustajaa kannattaa" (Should publishing straw polls be condemned with prison sentence? Members of parliament back the motion), 2013, at [http://www.iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2013071617268585\\_uu.shtml](http://www.iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2013071617268585_uu.shtml) (accessed 8 August 2013).

161. S. Koski, "Politiikan tutkija pitää gallupien kieltämistä turhana" (Fobidding gallups is useless, says a political reasearcher), 2013, at [http://iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2013071617269880\\_uu.shtml](http://iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2013071617269880_uu.shtml) (accessed 8 August 2013).

162. S. Koski, "Keskustan Laaninen gallupien kieltämisestä: Kuolleena syntynyt idea" (Laaninen from Center party of Finland: Forbidding gallups is a stillborn idea), 2013, at [http://www.iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2013071617269326\\_uu.shtml](http://www.iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2013071617269326_uu.shtml) (accessed 8 August 2013).

163. Satakunnan Kansa, "Gallupien kieltäminen on kuolleena syntynyt ajatus" (Forbidding gallups is a stillborn idea), 2013, at <http://www.satakunnankansa.fi/Paakirjoitukset/1194827319710/artikkeli/gallupien-kieltaminen+on+kuolleena+syntynyt+ajatus.html> (accessed 8 August 2013).

164. Statistics Finland. Based on author searches on "Data series of Parliament elections," at [http://193.166.171.75/Database/StatFin/vaa/evaa/evaa\\_as/evaa\\_as\\_fi.asp](http://193.166.171.75/Database/StatFin/vaa/evaa/evaa_as/evaa_as_fi.asp) (accessed 8 August 2013).

165. N. Ranta, "Perussuomalaisten Terho: Ilman sosiaalista mediaa emme olisi näin vahvoja" (Mr Terho of the True Finns [We would not be this strong without social media]), 2013, at <http://www.mtv3.fi/uutiset/kotimaa.shtml/perussuomalaisten-terho-ilman-sosiaalista-mediaa-emme-olisi-nain-vahvoja/2013/07/1781982> (accessed 8 August 2013).

Nevertheless, non-parliamentary parties have complained about limited access to the media and lack of opportunities to present their case to the public.<sup>166</sup> For instance, during the parliamentary elections in 2011 Yle excluded non-parliamentary parties from debates with parties represented in Parliament. Election monitors noted that Yle should make sure that smaller and new parties are also able to present their views.<sup>167</sup> In the municipal elections of 2012, Yle arranged a political debate in which all parties were included, not just those with seats in Parliament.<sup>168</sup>

The political views of journalists have been a recurring topic of debate, especially in business circles. Matti Apunen, director of the Finnish Business and Policy Forum EVA, suggested in 2010 that the party affiliations of journalists should be made public. Mr Apunen was interested in how the newsrooms are affiliated, rather than in the political leanings of individual journalists.<sup>169</sup> Even though the proposal did not receive a particularly warm welcome, the trade union publication *Journalisti* conducted a survey. The results showed that two-thirds of respondents were without a fixed political affiliation.<sup>170</sup>

#### 4.4.2 Digital Political Communications

The internet has become an important source of information regarding elections. Around half (49 percent) of those aged 16–74 had searched for information about the parties and candidates online before the parliamentary elections in the spring of 2011. Information was most often researched on the parties' and candidates' home pages and blogs. The use of the internet as an information source for elections is age-linked, as is the use of the internet more broadly. Persons aged 25–34 are most likely to look for information about elections online, and those over the age of 65 are least likely to do so.<sup>171</sup>

One of the most used digital campaign tools are the voting advice applications, which are online-based tools in which voters can compare their views with those of candidates by answering a set of questions. The results indicate which candidates are most in line with the voter's views and interests, and 45 percent of persons aged 18–64 used a voting advice application in the last parliamentary elections. Although only 5 percent felt that the voting advice application had affected their choice of party, the percentage was bigger for selecting individual candidates.<sup>172</sup>

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166. T. Uitto, "Pienpuolueen on vaikea saada ääntään kuuluville" (It is difficult for small parties to be heard), 2012, at <http://www.turkulainen.fi/artikkeli/163511-%E2%80%9Dpienpuolueen-on-vaikea-saada-aantaan-kuuluville%E2%80%9D> (accessed 8 August 2013).

167. OSCE and ODIHR, "Election Assessment Mission Report. Republic of Finland."

168. A. Hirvonen, "Mistä puute, mistä puhe?" (What is lacking, what is talked about?), 2012, at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/mista\\_puute\\_mista\\_puhe/6303583](http://yle.fi/uutiset/mista_puute_mista_puhe/6303583) (accessed 8 August 2013).

169. "Business group wants to ascertain political affiliations of Finnish journalists," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 2010, at <http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Business+group+wants+to+ascertain+political+affiliations+of+Finnish+journalists/1135260801718> (accessed 7 August 2013).

170. K. Poirtinen, "Kantojen selvitys vaikeuttaisi työtä" (Stating political views would make work more difficult), *Journalisti*, 2010, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2010/18/artikkelit/kantojen-selvitys-vaikeuttaisi-t> (accessed 7 August 2013).

171. Official Statistics of Finland, "Use of information and communications technology by individuals 2011," at [http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2011/sutivi\\_2011\\_2011-11-02\\_fi.pdf](http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2011/sutivi_2011_2011-11-02_fi.pdf) (accessed 7 August 2013) (hereafter, Official Statistics of Finland, "Use of information and communications technology by individuals 2011").

172. Statistics Finland, "Tiedonhaku internetistä vaaleissa" (Gathering election information online), 2012, at [http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/sutivi/2011/sutivi\\_2011\\_2011-11-02\\_kat\\_003\\_fi.html](http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/sutivi/2011/sutivi_2011_2011-11-02_kat_003_fi.html) (accessed 7 August 2013).

The voting advice applications were used for the first time in 1996, and by the beginning of the 2000s they had already become commonplace.<sup>173</sup> They had originated in the news media, but over the years other organizations launched voting advice applications dealing with issues that are significant to the particular organization. About 30 variants were produced for the latest municipal elections, in 2012.<sup>174</sup> For candidates, the multiplying number of applications means more work. Different applications have their own focus and questions, so by using a variety of applications, voters can get an all-round perspective of candidates' views.

There are high hopes that social media will foster greater civic participation and engage politicians in two-way communication with the electorate. However, thus far there has been no radical shift in the dynamic of political communications more generally. Some MPs use social media to interact with people, but most use it more as a one-way broadcasting mechanism to get their message out. It also seems that social media are most used during campaigns.<sup>175</sup> As Finns are using the internet and social media more and more, it is likely that both will increase their relevance in political communication. It just might take longer than expected. In addition, Finns have not yet taken on social media as a source for political information. One survey indicates that social network services were not a popular source of information in the 2011 parliamentary elections.<sup>176</sup>

The government for its part is increasingly using social media as part of its communication strategy.<sup>177</sup> But again, this tends to be a one-way means of publishing the message, rather than engaging in dialog with citizens.

A new form of direct democracy is the citizens' initiative, which is actually grounded in the constitution. A citizens' initiative is either a bill for Parliament or a proposal on which a bill drafting process can be started. If the initiative gains support from 50,000 people it will be sent to Parliament for processing. Signatures for support can be either handwritten or collected online. The internet has proved useful in gathering support and encouraging participation. A dedicated online service for citizens' initiatives was launched by the Ministry of Justice in December 2012.<sup>178</sup>

So far, one initiative on the banning of fur farming has proceeded to a parliamentary hearing. An initiative on adjustments to copyright law has also been put before Parliament. Initiatives on allowing same-sex marriages, changing the requirements for residential houses' energy sufficiency certifications, and changing Swedish from being a mandatory school subject to a voluntary subject have also gained the required amount of support, but these have not yet proceeded to Parliament.<sup>179</sup>

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173. U. Hämäläinen, "Maanantai 19.2.2007/32" (Monday 19th February 2007/32nd post), 2007, at <http://blogit.hs.fi/unski/2007/02/19/maanantai-192200732merkinta> (accessed 7 August 2013).

174. "Vaalikoneita" (Voting advice applications), Vaalit.fi (Election website of the Ministry of Justice), at <http://www.vaalit.fi/38488.htm> (accessed 7 August 2013).

175. I. Khaldarova, S.-M. Laaksonen, and J. Matikainen, "The use of social media in the Finnish Parliament Elections 2011," Communication Research Centre (CRC), Department of Social Research, University of Helsinki, 2012, at [http://www.helsinki.fi/crc/Julkaisut/SoMe\\_Elections.pdf](http://www.helsinki.fi/crc/Julkaisut/SoMe_Elections.pdf) (accessed 7 August 2013).

176. Official Statistics of Finland, "Use of information and communications technology by individuals 2011."

177. Prime minister's office, "Social Media," at <http://vnk.fi/toiminta/viestinta/sosiaalinen-media/en.jsp> (accessed 7 August 2013).

178. Kansalaisaloite.fi (Citizens' initiatives in Finland), at <https://www.kansalaisaloite.fi/fi/tietoa/briefly-in-english> (accessed 7 August 2013).

179. See <http://www.kansalaisaloite.fi>.

## 4.5 Assessments

There have been significant changes and developments in recent years affecting both journalism and political communications. However, not all changes have been triggered by digitization and not all can be considered positive or progressive.

There are concerns about the future of journalism and especially about the future of news organizations. Editorial staff have been cut across the board and surviving journalists are expected to be multi-skilled and produce news for different platforms. In short, they are under pressure to do more with less.

As a result, in order to meet tight deadlines newsrooms are using PR material and are increasingly recycling second-hand stories from other outlets, at the expense of original news-gathering. Writing news based on PR material, news agency pieces, and quotes from other sources provide economically sustainable news time- and cost-efficiently. But such trends are having a negative impact on both the quality and diversity of the overall news offer.

Digitization has provided a plethora of platforms for political communications. While traditional media focus on incumbent parties during election campaigns, marginal parties have found their voice using online communications and social media channels.

Both incumbent parties and state authorities have also made use of new digital channels to disseminate their messages, but in general they have not exploited opportunities to engage in dialog with citizens. The voting advice applications have become the most used and most meaningful form of civic participation in the online sphere.

Investigative journalism is still rare and digitization has not revolutionized this situation. But the development of data journalism has been promising and offers new opportunities for both the practice and dissemination of investigative reporting.

# 5. Digital Media and Technology

## 5.1 Broadcasting Spectrum

### 5.1.1 Spectrum Allocation Policy

The Finnish government makes decisions about spectrum allocation. The Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority (*Viestintävirasto*, FICORA), a regulatory authority operating under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, is responsible for plans and administers the use of frequencies. A broadcasting license is needed in Finland for terrestrial television and radio operations. The Finnish government is responsible for issuing a call for operating license applications and grants the licenses on the proposal of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. However, short-term operating licenses are issued by FICORA.<sup>180, 181</sup>

For television frequencies, one multiplex is reserved exclusively for Yle, and another is reserved for regional television broadcasting, which covers the extended metropolitan area of Helsinki. There is also one multiplex reserved for regional television broadcasting in the Vaasa area and another in the Seinäjoki area, which are both located in western Finland in the region of Pohjanmaa. There is a “one-card” law in Finland, which stipulates that all pay-TV channels should be available for users by using one program card.<sup>182</sup>

For license applications, the authorities are obliged to consider what kind of television or radio programs already exist in the region, to promote freedom of speech and ensure a plurality of programs on offer. The needs of minority audience groups should also be considered, as well as the potential threat of the kind of media convergence that might harm freedom of speech. Yle is allowed to provide public service television and radio operations without a license, but its radio and television operations are governed by specific laws and regulations. A network license is also required for broadcasting in the antenna network and in public telecoms

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180. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Communications policy,” at [http://www.lvm.fi/web/en/communications\\_policy](http://www.lvm.fi/web/en/communications_policy) (accessed 15 July 2013).

181. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Sähköisen median viestintäpoliittinen ohjelma—Valtioneuvoston selonteko eduskunnalle 2012” (The policy programme for electronic media—The account of the Finnish government to the Finnish Parliament 2012), 2012, at [http://www.lvm.fi/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?folderId=2347831&name=DLFE-17532.pdf](http://www.lvm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=2347831&name=DLFE-17532.pdf) (accessed 15 July 2013) (hereafter, Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Sähköisen median viestintäpoliittinen ohjelma”).

182. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Sähköisen median viestintäpoliittinen ohjelma.”

for second-generation GSM mobile networks and third-generation Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS) mobile networks.

For network licenses the authorities are obliged to ensure that communication networks and services are available to all telecoms companies and users nationwide on reasonable conditions. The aim of the network licensing process is also to ensure that for telecoms offers are suited to the needs of users and are competitive, technically advanced, good-quality, operationally reliable, secure, and cheap. In short, the broadcast license and network license processes are “beauty contests,” in which the applications are reviewed according to the above-mentioned criteria. However, the auction model of admitting frequencies was tried in 2009 and another frequency auction, which began in early 2013, ended on 30 October 2013. In the 2013 auction, the explicit aims were, for example the effective use of frequencies and to extend the availability of mobile broadband (especially beyond urban areas).<sup>183, 184, 185, 186</sup>

### 5.1.2 Transparency

Spectrum allocation processes are transparent and non-biassed.

### 5.1.3 Competition for Spectrum

After the process of digitization of television started in the early 2000s, more multiplexes became available for television operations as extra frequencies were agreed in international negotiations. There are three commercial network operators involved in television operations. Until the summer of 2009, when two terrestrial network licenses were granted to DNA in the VHF-frequency range, Digita was effectively a monopoly television network operator. For programming licenses, there is frequency capacity still unused in terrestrial television, so technically there is room for more channels. Generally speaking, network competition in the television broadcasting market does exist, but competition is still small-scale, and could be considered to be in its infancy. Market competition has also been hindered by the fact that each program license granted has been tied to one specified multiplex, which has prevented agents operating in the program market to invite competition from different network operators.<sup>187</sup>

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183. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Sähköisen median viestintäpoliittinen ohjelma.”

184. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Verkkotoimiluvat” (Network licenses), at <http://www.lvm.fi/verkkotoimiluvat> (accessed 15 July 2013).

185. The Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority, “Taajuusalueen 791–821 MHz/832–862 MHz huutokauppa” (791–821 MHz/832–862 MHz spectrum auction), at <https://www.viestintavirasto.fi/taajuudet/radiotaajuuksienkaytto/taajuushuutokauppa.html> (accessed 6 November 2013).

186. Finnish Government, “Valtioneuvoston taajuuspoliittinen periaatepäätös” (Government decision for frequency policy), 29 March 2012, at <http://valtioneuvosto.fi/toiminta/periaatepaatokset/periaatepaatos/fi.jsp?oid=354456> (accessed 15 July 2013).

187. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Sähköisen median viestintäpoliittinen ohjelma.”

## 5.2 Digital Gatekeeping

### 5.2.1 Technical Standards

As mentioned earlier (see section 1.1.1), radio has not been permanently digitized, as private radio stations are generally satisfied with the current FM radio network. However, in 1996 a decision was made that the public radio broadcasting network would be digitized, and Yle started its first digital radio channel in 1998 using DAB technology. At the time, it was believed that DAB would develop faster than digital DVB television, which required greater investment. However, as time passed it became obvious that the private radio sector was unwilling to invest in DAB technology, and it managed to convince politicians and the authorities that DAB radio licenses should not be granted for the time being. Yle decided to stop DAB broadcasting in 2005, as DAB receivers were not being sold in large numbers and the public broadcaster was under financial pressure due to the digitization of television. In general, the commercial radio sector was more interested in DVB technology, and the first radio licenses for the digital television network were granted in 2003. Nokia also tested DVB-H-technology in cooperation with commercial radio companies. But demand for these types of services was so small that the network was closed in 2012. At the moment, Finland has chosen to follow what happens in other countries—especially in Europe—with regard to digital radio.<sup>188, 189</sup>

DVB is the current digital television standard used, and the first DVB-T2 broadcasts started in 2011.<sup>190</sup> Technical standards were not widely debated, as the development of digital television has in general been characterized by consensus-seeking cooperation between the authorities and non-commercial and commercial stakeholders. This type of cooperation in television generally has a long history in Finland. In 1998, the Digi-TV-Forum was formed as an unofficial forum to promote cooperation. In 1999, it recommended that digital television technology should be based on open, international standards instead of closed commercial ones. In 2000, a new cooperation forum (*Suomen maanpäälliset digi-tv-toimijat*, SMDTV) was formed, which recommended in 2000 that the standards to be used should be DVB and Multimedia Home Platform (MHP) and Nordic NorDig2. Noticeably, Finland was a forerunner when adopting the open MHP standard, which enables more interactive digital television. However, not many interactive services utilizing MHP were developed, and MHP receivers did not sell in significant numbers. Commercial players decided to stop providing MHP services in 2005, and a technical failure in 2007 finally ended MHP services when Yle withdrew its services.<sup>191, 192, 193, 194</sup>

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188. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Sähköisen median viestintäpoliittinen ohjelma.”

189. T. Hujanen and M. Ala-Fossi, “Radio,” 2012, in Nordenstreng and Wiio, *Suomen mediamaisema*.

190. Yle, “Yle Tekniikka” (Yle Technology), at <http://yle.fi/teknikka/?ID=114&group=114> (accessed 16 July 2013).

191. P. Näränen, “Digitaalinen televisio” (accessed 16 July 2013).

192. S. Kangaspunta, “Yhteisöllinen digi-tv. Digitaalisen television uusi yhteisöllisyys, yhteisöllisyyden tuotteistaminen ja yhteisötelevision vaihtoehto” (Communal digital television. The new communality of digital television, the marketization of communality and the alternative of community TV), *Acta Electronica Universitatis Tamperensis* 560, 2006, at <http://urn.fi/urn:isbn:951-44-6744-2> (accessed 16 July 2013).

193. J. Miettinen, “Havainnot digitv:n ensimmäiseltä 10-vuotiskaudelta Suomessa” (Observations from the first 10-year period of digital television in Finland), Department of Communication research reports 1/2006, University of Helsinki, 2006, at <http://www.helsinki.fi/viestinta/tutkimus/julkaisut/tutkraportti1.pdf> (accessed 30 July 2013) (hereafter, Miettinen, “Havainnot digitv:n ensimmäiseltä 10-vuotiskaudelta Suomessa”).

194. P. Järvinen, “Sinullekin oma tv-kanava” (An own TV-channel for you too), 2008, at <http://www.talouselama.fi/kolumni/sinullekin+oma+tvkanava/a2054653> (accessed 17 July 2013).



## 5.2.2 Gatekeepers

There are no significant digital gatekeeping concerns. Many channels providing high-quality factual and entertainment programs can be viewed free. Sports broadcasting, however, has increasingly migrated to pay-TV channels, away from public and free-to-air television. This has triggered public debate, as it is generally considered important that citizens can view certain sports events, and indeed these are specified in the statutes.<sup>195</sup> Nevertheless, some gatekeeping problems have emerged as companies have sought to increase profits by moving sports content to pay channels or to their own internet sites behind a paywall. The Competition and Consumer Authority has also received a lot of complaints from consumers about channel packages. Sometimes channels are removed from a package without adequate notification provided, and there have also been concerns that the duration of the contract is not made clear to prospective customers prior to signing up for a package.<sup>196, 197</sup>

A more serious gatekeeping problem has been the violation of the legally defined one-card principle, so that in practice all pay-TV channels in the terrestrial network were not necessarily available using one program card, and consumers had to change the program card if they want to view the channels of different operators. The Competition and Consumer Authority has sought to enforce the rule consistently and across the board.<sup>198</sup>

## 5.2.3 Transmission Networks

Given that the government maintains overall authority over the distribution of spectrum resources (see section 5.1.1), transmission network operators have not—and cannot—intervene.

Several television companies have complained in the past about the high channel fees charged by the multiplex operator Digita, which previously had a monopoly in the network transmission market (see section 5.1.3), and Yle has also complained about its pricing for radio broadcasting. However, the Supreme Administrative Court has dismissed all these complaints.<sup>199</sup>

## 5.3 Telecommunications

There are four major players in the telecoms and cable market: TeliaSonera, DNA, Elisa, and the Finnet Group (a consortium of 24 independent regional telecoms and other independent telecoms companies). In

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195. Finlex, “Valtioneuvoston asetus yhteiskunnallisesti merkittävien tapahtumien televisioinnista” (Government statute on broadcasting societally important events), 199/2007, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2007/20070199> (accessed 16 July 2013).

196. M. Tiittula, “Penkkiurheilijat työllistävät Kuluttajavirastoa” (Sports viewers keep the Competition and Consumer Authority busy), 2012, at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/penkkiurheilijat\\_tyollistavat\\_kuluttajavirastoa/6263426](http://yle.fi/uutiset/penkkiurheilijat_tyollistavat_kuluttajavirastoa/6263426) (accessed 16 July 2013).

197. K. Nikulainen, “Kuluttajavirasto: Maksullisista tv-palveluista harhaanjohtavia tietoja” (The Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority: Companies provide misleading information to consumers about pay-TV services), *Digitoday*, 2008, at <http://www.digitoday.fi/viihde/2008/10/21/kuluttajavirasto-maksullisista-tv-palveluista-harhaanjohtavia-tietoja/200827374/66> (accessed 17 July 2013).

198. Talouselämä, “Viestintävirasto määräsi kaikki maksu-tv-palvelut yhden kortin alle lokakuuhun mennessä” (The Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority obliged all pay-TV services to be available using one program card by October), 2012, at <http://www.talouselama.fi/uutiset/viestintavirasto-maaraasi-kaikki-maksutv-palvelut-yhden-kortin-alle-lokakuuhun-mennessa/a2098926> (accessed 17 July 2013).



addition to telecoms and mobile services, telecoms companies may also provide television and radio services, such as pay-TV channels via the cable television network or IPTV services.<sup>200</sup>

### 5.3.1 Telecoms and News

The major players in the telecoms and cable market provide a wide variety of broadcasting content, including news. Consumers often purchase these services by subscribing to different channel packages, which can be more or less tailored. However, most of the content offered is entertainment-oriented. While Finnish telecoms companies are not directly involved in the news market, a wide variety of foreign news channels, such as BBC, CNN, France 24, Al-Jazeera, NHK, CNBC, and Euronews can be accessed through their channel packages or other services.<sup>201</sup>

According to communications market legislation, must-carry rules apply for all providers, such as telecoms or other IPTV service providers that offer services over the cable television network. Yle's public channels, and other free channels, which serve the common interest and have a national program license (in practice MTV3, Nelonen, and Fox), must be provided free under must-carry rules. So in effect, all domestic news provision is included under must-carry rules.<sup>202</sup>

### 5.3.2 Pressure of Telecoms on News Providers

Telecoms companies have not exerted pressures on news providers and are not directly competing in the news market with domestic news providers.

## 5.4 Assessments

Although the government makes decisions about spectrum allocation, the decision process is not politicized, and the authorities are obliged to consider multiple criteria to ensure that people's needs are met before granting program and network licenses. Licensing processes have so far mostly been "beauty contests," but the auction model of admitting frequencies has also been tried and another frequency auction has recently taken place. Network competition in television broadcasting is still in its infancy.

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199. A. Blencove, "KHO hylkäsi tv-yhtiöiden valituksen Digitan hinnoittelusta" (The Supreme Administrative Court defeated television companies' complaint about Digita's pricing), 2012, at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/kho\\_hylkasi\\_tv-yhtioiden\\_valituksen\\_digitan\\_hinnoittelusta/6084883](http://yle.fi/uutiset/kho_hylkasi_tv-yhtioiden_valituksen_digitan_hinnoittelusta/6084883) (accessed 17 July 2013).

200. The Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority, "Markkinakatsaus 4/2012. Teletointa Suomessa. Teleyritysten tulot ja investoinnit 2011" (Market Review 4/2012: Telecommunication in Finland: Telecom companies revenues and investments in 2011), 2012, at [https://www.viestintavirasto.fi/attachments/Markkinakatsaus\\_4\\_2012.pdf](https://www.viestintavirasto.fi/attachments/Markkinakatsaus_4_2012.pdf) (accessed 1 August 2013).

201. DNA, "Kanavalista" (Channel list), at <http://www2.dna.fi/kanavalista> (accessed 1 August 2013); Elisa, "Kanavapaketit" (Channel packages), at <http://elisa.fi/viihde/sisallot/kanavapaketit> (accessed 1 August 2013); and Sonera, "Kanavapaketit" (Channel packages), at <http://www.sonera.fi/tv+ja+viihde/kaapeli+tv/kanavapaketit> (accessed 1 August 2013).

202. The Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority, "Velvollisuus ohjelmistojen ja palvelujen siirtämiseen (must carry)" (Must carry-rules), at <https://www.viestintavirasto.fi/tvradio/jakelujavastaanotto/Kaapeli-tv/mustcarryelisiirtovelvoite.html> (accessed 30 July 2013).

The short period of digital radio ended in failure, and during that time there was also some disagreement over which technology should be used, as the commercial radio sector was more interested in DVB than DAB technology. In contrast, the technical standards of digital television were not widely debated, as decisions have in general been arrived at through consensus between cooperating stakeholders.

Companies in telecoms and cable markets do provide media content, but they are not directly involved in the domestic news market. They offer a wide variety of foreign news channels for viewers and are subject to must-carry rules.

# 6. Digital Business

## 6.1 Ownership

### 6.1.1 Legal Developments in Media Ownership

There are no specific laws or regulations pertaining to media ownership concentration. There are some restrictions in general anti-trust laws and EU competition rules are also in force.

There has been no public debate about media ownership law or regulation.

### 6.1.2 New Entrants in the News Market

Finland is a small linguistic area and a small market. These factors offer protection against the threat of competition from international players, who have mostly stayed away from the domestic markets.<sup>203</sup> Of all newspapers sold in 2010, 99.8 percent were domestic.<sup>204</sup>

The media market is fairly stable and new entrants, even domestic ones, are quite rare. In recent years, two players contributing news have entered the market. First, in 2007 a national online-only daily called *Uusi Suomi* (New Finland) was launched. It is privately owned by Niklas Herlin and is published without any affiliation to other publishing companies.<sup>205</sup> However, Mr Herlin owns approximately 10 percent of the media company Alma Media, and he is closely related to media company Sanoma Group's chairman of the board. Since its launch, *Uusi Suomi* has been running at a loss.<sup>206</sup>

The second new entrant was a television channel called SuomiTV, which acquired an operating license in June 2009 and started broadcasting in December of that year. SuomiTV was owned by Canadian Ontario and Finnish small owners, profiling itself as a responsible channel for the whole family, promoting Christian

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203. K. Lehtisaari, K. Karppinen, T. Harjuniemi, M. Grönlund, C. Lindén, H. Nieminen, and A. Viljakainen, *Media Convergence and Business Models: Responses of Finnish Daily Newspapers*, Communication Research Centre (CRC), Department of Social Research, University of Helsinki, 2012, at [http://www.helsinki.fi/crc/Julkaisut/Media\\_Convergence.pdf](http://www.helsinki.fi/crc/Julkaisut/Media_Convergence.pdf) (accessed 17 June 2013) (hereafter, Lehtisaari et al., *Media Convergence*).

204. Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011."

205. "Niklas Herlin: Olen Alma Median tuore suuromistaja" (Niklas Herlin: I am Alma Media's new major owner), *Uusi Suomi*, 2012, at <http://www.uusisuomi.fi/yritys/mariatorp> (accessed 17 June 2013).

206. Lehtisaari et al., *Media Convergence*.

values. However, the channel proved unprofitable and its operations came to an end within three years.<sup>207</sup> It was announced in March 2012 that a new commercial free-to-air channel, Fox International, would enter the television market by taking over SuomiTV's operating license.<sup>208</sup> Usually, it is not permitted to sell or pass on an operating license but on this occasion the government made an exception.<sup>209</sup> Fox began broadcasting in April 2012 and within a year it had doubled SuomiTV's audience share, reaching 3.5 percent in April 2013.<sup>210, 211</sup> The format is entertainment, with daily news broadcasts of two minutes purchased from the news agency STT-Lehtikuva. The channel has come under criticism from competitors for fulfilling its license obligations to provide news with minimal and low-quality output.<sup>212</sup>

### 6.1.3 Ownership Consolidation

The media market is rather small and concentrated due to the small population and distinct language.<sup>213</sup> The four biggest newspaper companies (Sanoma, Alma Media, TS Group, and Keskisuomalainen) control 75 percent of the newspaper circulation.<sup>214</sup> The remaining 25 percent is split between nearly a 100 different publishing companies.

Finnish newspapers can be divided into three categories: national, regional, and local. The newspaper scene is characterized by a strong provincial and regional press. Traditionally, the competition between regional newspapers has been low. Regional papers tend to be monopolies controlling a clear market area of distribution.<sup>215</sup>

*Helsingin Sanomat* is the largest daily newspaper in Finland. It is published by Sanoma News, which is a subsidiary of the Sanoma Group. Sanoma is Finland's leading media group, and the second-largest media company in the Nordic region. Besides *Helsingin Sanomat*, Sanoma publishes nine newspapers, including the tabloid *Ilta-Sanomat*, the free sheet *Metro*, the economics online daily *Taloussanomat*, and 49 regional papers. In addition, the Sanoma Group owns eight television channels (of which three are free-to-air) and six radio

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207. "SuomiTV aloitti lähetykset runsaat kaksi vuotta sitten" (SuomiTV started broadcasting two years ago), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 2012, at <http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/SuomiTV+aloitti+l%C3%A4hetykset+runsaat+kaksi+vuotta+sitten/a1305559399050> (accessed 18 June 2013).

208. H. Römpötti, "Fox tulee Suomen tv-ruutuun ilmaiskanavana" (Fox will enter Finnish television screens as a free-to-watch channel), 2012, at <http://www.hs.fi/kulttuuri/Fox+tulee+Suomen+tv-ruutuun+ilmaiskanavana/a1305559982745> (accessed 17 June 2013).

209. A. Juvonen, "Foxin SuomiTV-kauppa ei toimitiluvan jälleenmyyntiä" (Fox's SuomiTV deal isn't reselling), 2012, at <http://www.marmai.fi/uutiset/foxin+suomitykauppa+ei+toimitiluvan+jalleenmyyntia/a2122050> (accessed 17 June 2013).

210. Finnpanel, "TV-mittaritutkimuksen tuloksia" (Results from the TV audience measurement, year 2012), at <http://www.finnpanel.fi/tulokset/tv/vuosi/share/2012> (accessed 17 June 2013) (hereafter, Finnpanel, "TV audience measurement 2012").

211. Finnpanel, "Results from the TV audience measurement. April 2013," at <http://www.finnpanel.fi/en/tulokset/tv/kk/share/2013/4>.

212. P. Mervola, "Fox luistelee miniuutisilla" (Fox is sliding by with mininews), 2012, at <http://www.ksml.fi/miilipide/kolumnit/fox-luistelee-miniuutisilla/1258403> (accessed 17 June 2013).

213. Lehtisaari et al., *Media Convergence*.

214. Nikunen, "Enemmän vähemmällä."

215. Lehtisaari et al., *Media Convergence*.

stations.<sup>216</sup> Although the group is the biggest media company by turnover,<sup>217</sup> it is not the leading player in television. Its main television channel Nelonen ranks fourth in viewing share.<sup>218</sup>

There has been considerable centralization in news provision over recent years in the Sanoma Group. In 2011, it was announced that Nelonen and *Helsingin Sanomat* would merge their newsrooms.<sup>219</sup> The fusion epitomizes convergence, as the same news-gathering process serves distinct platforms. The merger was not a long-term solution. In the fall of 2013, Sanoma announced Nelonen's plans to discontinue the current form of the television news produced by *Helsingin Sanomat*, and instead Sanoma is planning a new, online-driven news concept.<sup>220</sup>

The second-largest media conglomerate is Alma Media, which publishes 32 newspapers, including *Aamulehti*, the second-largest non-tabloid daily. Alma Media also owns the other national tabloid *Iltalehti* and publishes the only printed business newspaper, *Kauppalehti*. The remaining 29 newspapers published by Alma Media are local titles.<sup>221</sup> Sanoma and Alma Media's regional newspapers are spread quite evenly throughout the country. Other groups with several regional newspapers tend to be concentrated in particular areas.

The top 10 newspapers in Finland are listed in Table 16. It can be seen that five of the top 10 titles belong to Sanoma Group or Alma Media. *Turun Sanomat* is published by the TS Group, which owns 10 newspapers. Keski-suomalainen publishes 22 different newspapers, and Kaleva publishes three.<sup>222</sup> All three, the TS Group, Keski-suomalainen, and Kaleva, are located in different parts of Finland and are leading players in their respective areas.

There were 12 Swedish-language newspapers published in 2012 and the combined circulation of these newspapers was 122,258 copies.<sup>223</sup> The Swedish-language newspapers have also concentrated on two newspaper chains. The Swedish-language newspapers are published in the coastal area where the Swedish speaking population resides.

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216. Sanoma, "Sanoma view 2012. Get the world," 2013, at <http://www.sanoma.com/sites/default/files/reports/sanoma-view-2012-fi.pdf> (accessed 17 June 2013).

217. Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011."

218. Finnpanel, "TV audience measurement 2012."

219. "Helsingin Sanomien ja Nelosen uutisten toimitukset yhteen" (*Helsingin Sanomat's* and Nelonen's news will be joined together), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 2011, at <http://www.hs.fi/kulttuuri/a1305548535924> (accessed 17 June 2013).

220. Sanoma, "Sanoma merges operations in Finland to focus on the growth areas of future media," at <https://www.sanoma.com/en/news/sanoma-merges-operations-finland-focus-growth-areas-future-media> (accessed 12 November 2013).

221. Alma Media, "About us," at <http://www.almamedia.com/about-us> (accessed 17 June 2013).

222. Finnish Newspapers Association, "Vuosikertomus 2012" (Annual review 2012), 2012, at [http://www.sanomalehdet.fi/sanomalehtien\\_liitto/vuosikertomus\\_2012](http://www.sanomalehdet.fi/sanomalehtien_liitto/vuosikertomus_2012) (accessed 18 June 2013).

223. Finnish Audit Bureau of Circulations. Based on author searches on Levikkihaku (circulation database), at <http://www.levikintarkastus.fi/levikitietokanta/index.php> (accessed 18 June 2013).

Table 16.

Top 10 newspapers by circulation (owner in brackets), 2012

<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i> (Sanoma)	337,962
<i>Ilta-Sanomat</i> (Sanoma)	132,253
<i>Aamulehti</i> (Alma Media)	121,135
<i>Turun Sanomat</i> (TS Group)	99,220
<i>Iltalehti</i> (Alma Media)	91,219
<i>Maaseudun tulevaisuus</i> (Viestilehdet)	81,774
<i>Kaleva</i> (Kaleva)	72,107
<i>Keskisuomalainen</i> (Keskisuomalainen)	65,327
<i>Kauppalehti</i> (Alma Media)	63,471
<i>Savon Sanomat</i> (Keskisuomalainen)	59,289

Source: Finnish Audit Bureau of Circulations (*Levikintarkastus*)

Consolidation in the news sector transcends ownership boundaries. For example, eight regional newspapers formed a joint foreign news desk, which led to redundancies. What is interesting about this operational model is that these three newspapers belong to different publishing companies. However, since they are published in different parts of the country they are not in direct competition. When considering the impact on quality, joint operations might be beneficial if they allow journalists to focus on specific topics, such as foreign news. Overall, however, the main rationale for this kind of convergence is to rationalize costs and the main effect is to reduce the diversity of published news, which journalists have expressed concern about in recent years.<sup>224, 225</sup>

Another feature that somewhat diminishes news diversity is the dominance of STT-Lehtikuva, the centralized news agency owned by the largest news companies, including Sanoma (33.1 percent of shares), Alma Media (20.6 percent of shares), and TS Group (17.8 percent of shares).<sup>226</sup> Although STT-Lehtikuva has its own staff producing news, its owners double up as clients, giving it a significant influence over the media agenda. The national broadcasting company, Yle, used STT-Lehtikuva's services until 2007.<sup>227</sup>

The commercial radio sector is also highly concentrated. The largest private radio channels are mostly owned by supranational media groups (see Table 17). In addition to Radio Rock and Radio Aalto, Sanoma Group owns several local radio chains throughout the country.<sup>228</sup> However, Yle has a high share of radio listening.

224. M. Lappalainen, "Monokulttuuri uhkaa" (Threads of monoculture), 2009, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2009/17/paakirjoitus> (accessed 19 June 2013).

225. J. Pohjola, "Perhe petti" (Let down by family), 2012, at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2012/21/artikkelit/perhe-petti> (accessed 19 June 2013).

226. STT-Lehtikuva, "Johto ja omistajat" (Management and owners), at <http://www.stt.fi/content/johto-ja-omistajat+> (accessed 19 June 2013).

227. Yle, "Yle luopuu Suomen Tietotoimiston palveluista" (Yle will give up using STT's services), 2006, at <http://yle.fi/yleisradio/ajankohtaista/yle-luopuu-suomen-tietotoimiston-palveluista> (accessed 19 June 2013).

228. Sanoma, "Consumer media," at <http://www.sanoma.com/en/investors/in-brief/consumer-media> (accessed 20 June 2013).

In 2010, the combined daily reach of all its stations was 44 percent.<sup>229</sup> The net sales for commercial radio stations were €55 million (US\$75 million) in 2010, whereas the annual costs for national broadcasting company Yle's radio operations were €67 million (US\$91 million).<sup>230</sup>

Table 17.

Largest private radio channels and networks, 2010

	Coverage (% of population aged 9+)	Market share (% of listening)	Owner
Radio Nova	99	11	Bonnier (74%), MTG (26%)
SBS-Iskelmä	92	7	SBS Broadcasting and others
SuomiPOP	87	5	Communicorp Group
Radio Rock	85	5	Sanoma
NRJ	87	4	NRJ
The Voice	99	3	SBS Broadcasting and others
Radio Aalto	73	1	Sanoma
Groove FM	62	1	Communicorp Group
Rondo Classic	68	n/a	Classicus
Radio Dei	78	n/a	Kristillinen Media
Radio Sputnik	28	n/a	Radio Satellite Finland

Note: n/a: not available

Source: Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011"

Alongside consolidation, there has been some fragmentation in media ownership. Alma Media used to own the MTV3 television channel, but in 2007 it was sold to the Swedish media group, Bonnier.<sup>231</sup> In addition to MTV3, Bonnier owns two more free-to-air television channels (Sub and Ava), several pay-TV channels, a national radio station, and magazines.

#### 6.1.4 Telecoms Business and the Media

Telecoms companies have little to do with media markets directly, since the major ones are not affiliated with media groups. Sanoma Group owned a cable television operator Welho, which operated in the metropolitan area of Helsinki. In 2010, Sanoma agreed to sell its Welho business to DNA telecommunications group. As part of the transaction Sanoma became DNA's second largest owner,<sup>232</sup> but it sold its stake in 2012.<sup>233</sup>

229. Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011."

230. Statistics Finland, "Finnish Mass Media 2011."

231. MTV Media, "Historia" (History), at <http://www.mtvmedia.fi/historia/tarina> (accessed 20 June 2013).

232. Sanoma, "Welho to be merged into DNA," 2010, at <http://www.sanoma.com/en/news/welho-be-merged-dna> (accessed 29 July 2013).

233. Sanoma, "Sanoma sells its stake in the Finnish telecommunications group DNA," 2012, at <http://www.sanoma.com/en/news/sanoma-sells-its-stake-finnish-telecommunications-group-dna> (accessed 29 July 2013).

## 6.1.5 Transparency of Media Ownership

In general, media ownership is transparent to the extent that the major features of media ownership consolidation—such as the cross-media activities of Sanoma Group and Alma Media—are widely known and understood. It can also be assumed that readers are generally aware of who owns the newspaper they are reading.

## 6.2 Media Funding

### 6.2.1 Public and Private Funding

The public media in Finland consist of the national broadcasting company, Yle, which operates both television and radio channels (see section 2). Up until 2013, Yle was financed by license fees collected from households owning a television set. In practice, the household notified the authorities if they owned a television and were sent an invoice after the notification. The fee imposed on households was raised yearly, and therefore the total amount of license fees increased even though the number of households paying it declined (see Table 18).<sup>234</sup> In 2012, Parliament decided that as of 2013 the license fee would be abolished and Yle would be financed by a public broadcasting tax. The estimated revenue from this tax annually is €500 million.<sup>235</sup>

Table 18.

Television license fees and revenues, 2005–2012

Year	Television notifications	Television fee per year per HH* owning a TV set (€)	Total revenue from television fees (€ million)
2005	2,003,769	193.95	392.8
2006	2,001,633	200.70	405.2
2007	1,947,044	208.15	414.0
2008	1,916,256	215.45	416.8
2009	1,901,789	224.30	430.1
2010	1,895,940	231.05	441.7
2011	1,882,319	244.90	464.0
2012	1,852,624	252.25	379.9

Notes: In 2012, television fees were reduced during the year; HH: household

Sources: FICORA (TV fee);<sup>236</sup> personal communication with FICORA

234. Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority, “Statistics on television notifications,” at <http://www.tv-maksu.fi/en/index/tietoa/tilastot.html> (accessed 8 July 2013).

235. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Parliament reaches consensus on Yle reform,” at <http://www.lvm.fi/web/en/pressreleases/-/view/4114935> (accessed 8 July 2013).

236. See <http://www.tv-maksu.fi/en/index/tietoa/tilastot.html> (accessed 8 July 2013).



Public subsidies to the media in general have been historically high,<sup>237</sup> but this has changed notably in recent years (see Table 19). The government used to grant money to subsidize transport, delivery, and other costs for newspapers; under EU regulations, however, this type of subsidy was found to be illegal under state aid rules and was therefore discontinued.<sup>238</sup> Nowadays, discretionary subsidies are granted to newspapers published in national minority languages and to corresponding online publications, as well as to supplements of existing papers in minority languages; they are also granted to Swedish-language news services.<sup>239</sup>

*Table 19.*  
Government subsidies to newspapers (€ million), 2005–2011

Year	Granted by state council*	Discretionary subsidies
2005	5.9	n/g
2006	5.9	n/g
2007	6.1	n/g
2008	n/g	0.5
2009	n/g	0.5
2010	n/g	0.5
2011	n/g	0.5

*Notes:* \* Subsidies for transport, delivery, and other costs; n/g: not granted in the respective year

*Source:* Statistics Finland, “Finnish Mass Media 2011”

Up until 2012, Finnish newspapers also enjoyed indirect support in the form of VAT exemption on subscription sales, advertising, newsprint, composition, and machinery. In 2012, the exemption was cancelled and a VAT rate of 9 percent was imposed. The media’s online operations continued to be taxed at a regular VAT rate of 24 percent. The VAT imposition was part of the state’s monetary and fiscal adjustments following the global recession. But the VAT decision was widely criticized by publishing companies, who argued that the newly imposed tax contributed to a decline in circulation. There are also fears that the implementation of VAT will divide people into two groups: those who are satisfied with the printed paper and those who require the features and quality of a printed paper in an online format. Advertising and subscription fees are the main sources of income for newspapers. Currently, each makes up around half of the newspapers’ net sales, with some fluctuation on an annual basis. The overall trend, however, is that media advertising is declining at a steeper rate than the decline in subscription fees.

Media advertising declined again in 2012 after a few years’ recovery from the intense drop in 2009. Table 20 shows how media advertising has developed over recent years. Online advertising is the only sector that has grown substantively and consistently. Information about how this funding is spread among online players—aggregators, social networks, and online news portals—is not available. In 2011, the subscription fees for

237. R. Nielsen and G. Linnebank, “Public support for the media: A six country overview of direct and indirect subsidies,” RISJ, Oxford, 2001, at [http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/Publications/Working\\_Papers/Public\\_support\\_for\\_Media.pdf](http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/Publications/Working_Papers/Public_support_for_Media.pdf) (accessed 8 July 2013).

238. Sirkkunen, “Finland: Legacy dominates.”

239. Ministry of Transport and Communications, “Press subsidies,” at <http://www.lvm.fi/web/en/press> (accessed 8 July 2013).

newspapers were about €510 million (US\$ 690 million) and advertising income was €516 million (US\$ 699 million).<sup>240</sup>

*Table 20.*  
Media advertising (€ million), 2005–2012

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Newspapers	575	592	622	605	474	486	503	462
Television	231	243	262	268	237	266	283	280
Radio	47	47	47	51	50	52	57	55
Online advertising	68	90	113	149	180	206	219	240
Outdoor	36	37	42	44	36	39	44	43
Other advertising	518	495	468	401	324	298	287	273
Total	1,475	1,504	1,554	1,518	1,301	1,347	1,393	1,353

Sources: Statistics Finland, “Finnish Mass Media 2011;” Finnish Advertising Council 2012<sup>241</sup>

Despite declining advertising in newspapers, they still account for the majority share of the total advertising spend. Television accounts for the second largest share; this actually increased from 16.6 percent in the year 2000 to 22.9 percent in 2010. Over the same period, the share attributed to online advertising grew from 0.3 percent to 5 percent.<sup>242</sup>

The enduring dominance of traditional media in this respect is partly explained by the fact that Finland has always been a newspaper country. Newspapers played an important role in the nation-making process during the 1800s and even now, in this challenging market, newspapers have been able to hold their position relatively well. A special feature in Finland is that most newspapers are bought on subscription and delivered to subscribers early in the morning. The early-morning home delivery system pleases the retail sector, which is a large advertiser.<sup>243</sup> Although declining circulations have resulted in 40 newspaper closures since 2000, there were still around 200 different titles in circulation in 2012 with a combined reach of 2.52 million.

## 6.2.2 Other Sources of Funding

There are some alternative sources of funding such as sponsoring television programs, but there are no new notable alternative funding mechanism innovations. Sponsoring is allowed only for commercial players, and sponsoring news and current affairs programs is forbidden by law.<sup>244</sup>

240. Finnish Newspapers Association, “Luettelonumero 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012” (Catalogue magazines from years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012).

241. Finnish Advertising Council, “Mediamainonta laski vuonna 2012 verkkomainonnan jatkaessa kuitenkin kasvuaan” (Media advertising declined in 2012 and online advertising kept on growing), at [http://files.kotisivukone.com/mnk.kotisivukone.com/tiedostot/mediamainonnan\\_maara\\_2012\\_29.1.2013.pdf](http://files.kotisivukone.com/mnk.kotisivukone.com/tiedostot/mediamainonnan_maara_2012_29.1.2013.pdf) (accessed 18 June 2013).

242. Statistics Finland, “Finnish Mass Media 2011.”

243. Lehtisaari et al., *Media Convergence*.

244. Finlex, “Laki televisio- ja radiotoiminnasta” (Act on television and radio broadcasting), 744/1998, at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1998/19980744> (accessed 14 June 2013).

Sponsoring can also be found on the editorial pages of magazines. There has been much discussion of this issue and concerns raised that such sponsoring might harm journalistic integrity. The guidelines for journalists emphasize that a clear demarcation must be kept between advertising and editorial content,<sup>245</sup> but this is not always the case in practice. The CMM has received many complaints about subliminal advertising, especially on commercial radio channels.<sup>246</sup>

In the future, alternative funding models might emerge, particularly as publishers look to diversify their services online to include digital applications and online retail. There is also the possibility that non-profit foundations might take a more active role in media funding, particularly for minority media. However, the non-profit sector is only ever likely to play a marginal role in this respect.<sup>247</sup>

## 6.3 Media Business Models

### 6.3.1 Changes in Media Business Models

The Sanoma group took its first steps in the online newspaper market in 2007 when the company's economics-oriented newspaper in print form was discontinued and was to be published only online.<sup>248</sup> Alma Media's business newspaper *Kauppalehti* was the first to launch a paywall in 2012, and Sanoma Group's *Helsingin Sanomat* soon followed. The paywall allows users to read free each month only a limited amount of news.

The majority of newspapers publish a digital version of the printed paper, which can be purchased according to different tailored product packages.

Online news providers are also seeking additional revenue streams extraneous to their core business. In this respect, Alma Media's revenue from digital consumer services grew in 2012 and the outlook is positive, but it is still too early to assess long-term trends in this respect.<sup>249</sup>

What seems certain is that the relationship between journalism and advertising is changing, and media companies are increasingly looking at ways in which content can leverage additional advertising revenue. In this respect, Sanoma began training the first commercial content providers in 2013, initially in food and beauty. According to Sanoma, there is not enough know-how in creating the right kind of content for attracting advertising revenue online.<sup>250</sup>

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245. CMM, "Guidelines for Journalists."

246. CMM, "Radiomedia kitkemään piilomainontaa" (Radiomedia will get rid of subliminal advertising), at <http://www.jsn.fi/uutiset/radiomedia-kitkemaan-piilomainontaa> (accessed 14 June 2013).

247. Lehtisaari et al., *Media Convergence*.

248. "Taloussanommat siirtyy kokonaan verkkoon" (Taloussanommat will shift to be only an online paper), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 6 November 2006, at <http://www.hs.fi/talous/artikkeli/Taloussanomien+ilmestyminen+lakkaa+vuoden+lopussa/1135231583824?ref=rss> (accessed 17 June 2013).

249. Alma Media, "Financial Statements 2012," 2013, at [http://almamedia.studio.crasman.fi/file/dl/i/-t7StA/9pYY3GQDc5ktIZGkIQf2Yw/Alma\\_Media\\_Tilinpaatos\\_2012\\_EN.pdf](http://almamedia.studio.crasman.fi/file/dl/i/-t7StA/9pYY3GQDc5ktIZGkIQf2Yw/Alma_Media_Tilinpaatos_2012_EN.pdf) (accessed 19 June 2013).

250. Sanoma, "Sanoma Magazines aloittaa kaupallisten sisällöntuottajien kouluttamisen—ensimmäiset toimialat ruoka ja kauneus" (Sanoma Magazines will start training commercial content providers. First fields are food and beauty), 2013, at <http://www.sanomamagazines.fi/yritysinfo/mediamateriaali/tiedotteet/art1984-Sanoma-Magazines-aloittaa-kaupallisten-sisallontuottajien-kouluttamisen---ensimmaiset-toimialat-ruoka-ja-kauneus-.html> (accessed 17 June 2013).

Overall, publishers appear to have mixed feelings about the state and the future of the newspaper market. Circulation is declining and the economics are uncertain, and although news providers have on the whole managed to preserve their profitability to date, this has not been without considerable cost-cutting in operational journalism, including redundancies.<sup>251</sup>

## 6.4 Assessments

Although there are still many newspaper titles in Finland, circulation is dominated by a handful of media groups, which also have considerable cross-media holdings. Digitization has not had a noticeable impact on consolidation in respect of ownership, but it has resulted in considerable centralization of news-gathering both within and among media groups, with potentially negative implications for news diversity. The independent performance of the Finnish media has remained consistent, since digitization and transparency of ownership is not a significant issue. But there are concerns that economic uncertainty and the changing dynamics threaten to blur the boundaries between editorial and advertising content. So far, however, new revenue models have not been groundbreaking and the primary response to uncertainty has been cuts in operational journalism. However, the effects of uncertainty in news publishing are counterbalanced by stability in broadcasting. Advertising spend on radio has remained consistent in recent years and has increased steadily in television. Yle also now has a more sustainable funding footing as a result of the switch from license fees to direct tax revenues in 2013. Nevertheless, newspapers retain a dominant share of the overall spend, in keeping with their enduring place in Finnish culture.

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251. Lehtisaari et al., *Media Convergence*.

# 7. Policies, Laws, and Regulators

## 7.1 Policies and Laws

### 7.1.1 Digital Switch-over of Terrestrial Transmission

#### 7.1.1.1 Access and Affordability

The first political decisions about digitization of terrestrial television were made by the government in 1996.<sup>252</sup> By 2007, the digital switch-over was complete (see section *1.1.1*), following a period of transition.<sup>253</sup>

The essential criterion to be fulfilled before the switch-over with regard to access and affordability was that all citizens, regardless of where they lived or how wealthy they were, should be able to access digital television services relatively easily and at a reasonable cost, and well before the proposed switch-over date.<sup>254</sup> There was a strong and unanimous political will that the switch-over should be finalized by 2007; accordingly, it was essential that the digital terrestrial transmission network covered all of Finland by the end of 2005. This and all other related targets were successfully met.<sup>255</sup>

#### 7.1.1.2 Subsidies for Equipment

There was no general scheme for subsidizing digital television set-top boxes or digital television sets. Affordability of equipment has not been a major problem, as most households could purchase some sort of digital television receiver. Local municipalities have not generally provided assistance for the purchase of digital set-top boxes or television sets when requested by citizens.

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252. Miettinen, “Havaintoja digitv:n ensimmäiseltä 10-vuotiskaudelta Suomessa.”

253. “Liki 800 000 kotitaloutta voi jättää digiboksin ostamisen myöhemmäksi” (Nearly 800,000 households can buy digital television box later), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 2007, at <http://www.hs.fi/artikkeli/1135229652114> (accessed 6 August 2013).

254. Finnish Government, “Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös siirtymisestä kokonaan digitaaliseen televisio toimintaan ja siihen liittyvistä toimenpiteistä 4.3.2004” (Finnish Government decision on transition to fully digital television operations and actions required 4 March 2004), 2004, at <http://www.lvm.fi/fileserver/upl641-Periaatepaatos.pdf> (accessed 6 August 2013).

255. Miettinen, “Havaintoja digitv:n ensimmäiseltä 10-vuotiskaudelta Suomessa.”

However, in 2007 the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health issued a press release stating that in some cases, such as in low-income households or people with disabilities, it may be possible for citizens to receive social assistance for the purpose of buying digital television equipment.<sup>256, 257</sup> The amount provided is unknown.

### 7.1.1.3 Legal Provisions on Public Interest

References to the public interest have been added to communication legislation, as the Communication Market Act and the Act on Television and Radio Operations were updated after digitization. This was primarily for television channels for which must-carry rules apply, and which are obliged to provide text and voice services for the deaf and visually impaired. While the legal definition of such public interest channels is clear, in policy documents the definitions of public interest channels have been broader and ambiguous, creating some uncertainty over the aims of regulation in the television market.<sup>258</sup> In addition, the legal framework obliges authorities to consider several criteria to ensure the public interest is served when granting spectrum licenses (see section 5.1.2).

### 7.1.1.4 Public Consultation

As described in section 5.2.1, digital television policy has been shaped through a process of consensus between policymakers and industry stakeholders. It could be argued, however, that citizens and civil society groups have not been sufficiently integrated into this network or otherwise directly consulted, although during the digitization process the Digi-TV Forum maintained some engagement with broader stakeholders and the general public.

Industry players formed a separate working group that dealt with the digitization of terrestrial transmissions. This working group did not operate in public and made influential recommendations. In the public sphere, citizens were vocal about negative experiences and problems that they had experienced with image, sound, or text when using a digital receiver, and academics and other experts also presented critiques, especially about the unfulfilled promises of interactive digital television. In addition to the malfunction of digital television receivers, the government's approach was also criticized as coercive.<sup>259</sup> Much of the public critique was presented after the decisions had already been made. So, although the decisions were publicly and openly communicated, a wider and more direct public consultation beforehand might have been democratically appropriate. However, the relative lack of public consultation can by no means be considered as a unique feature of switch-over policy, but rather reflects the democratic-corporatist nature of the Finnish media system.<sup>260</sup>

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256. Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, *Toimeentulotuki. Opas toimeentulotukilain soveltajille* (Social Assistance. Handbook for the Application of the Act on Social Assistance), 6th revised edn, Publications of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Helsinki, 2007, at <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-2335-5> (accessed 6 August 2013).

257. Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, "Digisovittimeen voi saada täydentävää toimeentulotukea" (Supplementary income support can be granted to buy a digital television receiver), at <http://www.stm.fi/tiedotteet/tiedote/-/view/1193531> (accessed 6 August 2013).

258. H. Hellman, "Julkinen palvelu, rasvaton versio" (Public service, the light version), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 5 August 2012, at <http://www.hs.fi/paakirjoitukset/a1344050187685> (accessed 6 August 2013).

259. Miettinen, "Havaintoja digitv:n ensimmäiseltä 10-vuotiskaudelta Suomessa."

260. D.C. Hallin and P. Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004.

## 7.1.2 The Internet

### 7.1.2.1 Regulation of News Content on the Internet

There is no separate, internet-specific regulation of news. The constitution and freedom of expression legislation that applies for news delivery in the traditional media also applies for internet news delivery. However, the most recent Guidelines for Journalists, a code of ethics for Finnish journalists drawn up by the CMM, includes an annex with guidelines for editors specifically in relation to UGC online (see section 7.2.4).<sup>261</sup>

### 7.1.2.2 Legal Liability for Internet Content

Traditionally, the editor-in-chief has been liable for all content published, giving confidence to ordinary journalists in their work. The freedom of expression legislation that came into force in 2004 did, however, change this traditional setting by shifting the burden of legal liability from the editor-in-chief to the editor who made, or is actually responsible for, the content. This shift of burden has had real-world implications, as cases have been handled in courts where ordinary journalists and managers have been sued, and the editor-in-chief has been freed from liability.<sup>262, 263</sup>

Mostly, the editorial legal liability is the same for traditional media content as online media content. There has been some debate about liability in respect of user commentary published in the discussion forums of media websites. However, while in principle it is possible that the editor-in-chief, or other persons in the editorial office, could be legally liable for such commentary, in practice the discussion forum has to be considered as a web publication, or a part of one. Even if a discussion forum is moderated, it does not make it a web publication, unless it produces a regular diet of edited content.<sup>264, 265</sup>

## 7.2 Regulators

### 7.2.1 Changes in Content Regulation

Finnish legislation, such as freedom of expression legislation, constitutes the legal core of media content regulation. However, self-regulation is a major mechanism of media content regulation. In recent years, the overall regulatory framework has changed very little, but some changes have been implemented or are on the way (see sections 7.1.2.1, 7.2.4, and the end of this section, 7.2.1).

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261. CMM, "Guidelines for Journalists."

262. E. Ranta, "Sananvapauslaki testataan pian tuomioistuimissa" (The freedom of expression in Mass Media Act tested in courts soon), *Journalisti*, 7 December 2007, at [http://kotisivukone.fi/files/journalistiliitto.kotisivukone.com/kuvat/2107/journalisti\\_0712\\_2007\\_04.pdf](http://kotisivukone.fi/files/journalistiliitto.kotisivukone.com/kuvat/2107/journalisti_0712_2007_04.pdf) (accessed 6 August 2013).

263. R. Mäkinen, "Lottoa lakituvassa: Tilastoja" (Lottery in the court: Statistics), *Journalisti.fi*, May 2009, at [http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2009/05/artikkelit/lottoa\\_lakituvassa/tilastoja](http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/journalisti/lehti/2009/05/artikkelit/lottoa_lakituvassa/tilastoja) (accessed 6 August 2013).

264. P. Tiilikka, "Päätoimittajan vastuu yleisön tuottamasta verkkosisällöstä" (The liability of editor-in-chief on behalf of web material generated by the public), *Lakimies: suomalaisen lakimiesyhdistyksen aikakauskirja* 110(1) (2012), pp. 53–78.

265. J. Töyrylä, "Päätoimittaja ei vastaa keskustelupalstoista?" (Editor-in-chief is not responsible for discussion forums?), 23 June 2011, at <http://www.jsn.fi/blog/paatoimittaja-ei-vastaa-keskustelupalstoista-> (accessed 6 August 2013).

Some new *issues* have emerged, however, in content regulation as a consequence of digitization and as internet use has become everyday practice for most citizens. According to Professor Hannu Nieminen and Professor Emeritus Kaarle Nordenstreng, regulation concerning harm and offense has proven to be difficult in the online environment, in particular the balance between protecting freedom of expression and preventing harm and offense, including hate speech. They also point out that copyright—and especially copyright infringements—has also been a difficult and much debated issue in the online environment, as traditional means of regulation and control have been powerless in dealing with them. Commercial players have thus taken the initiative in anti-piracy matters. Individuals have been sued for piracy, for instance by copyright and anti-piracy organizations, and the amounts of indemnity have in some cases been high.<sup>266</sup> Recently, a citizens' initiative made its way into Parliament, seeking to limit the amounts of indemnity claimed from individual citizens and to ensure that the law is implemented fairly and reasonably.<sup>267</sup>

As a major regulatory update, the Ministry of Transport and Communications is drafting the Information Society Code, which aims to harmonize, reduce, and clarify the overall regulation of electronic communications, as there are now 450 relevant clauses in more than 10 different legislative acts.<sup>268</sup>

### 7.2.2 Regulatory Independence

FICORA is a public bureau under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The task of FICORA is to control and advance communication markets and services, and to ensure a diverse, functioning, and secure communication infrastructure.<sup>269</sup> In short, this regulatory authority is a separate bureau under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, and is not directly dependent on the government or any political parties. Broadcasting and internet regulation is, then, highly independent and relatively autonomous in practice.

### 7.2.3 Digital Licensing

There have been no significant shifts in licensing after the digital era began. Licensing is generally fair, and the licensing process and criteria for admitting licenses are clear and transparent, as discussed in sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2. The general public might not be fully aware of the details of the licensing process and the criteria for awarding licenses, but all such information is publicly available.

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266. H. Nieminen and K. Nordenstreng, "Säätely ja viestintäpolitiikka" (Regulation and communications policy), in Nordenstreng and Wiio, *Suomen mediamaisema* (hereafter, Nieminen and Nordenstreng, "Säätely ja viestintäpolitiikka").

267. H. Hanhinen, "Järkeä tekijänoikeuslakiin—kansalaisaloitteella yli 50,000 kannattajaa" (Reasonableness in the copyright act—citizens' initiative has over 50,000 supporters), at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/jarkea\\_tekijanoikeuslakiin\\_kansalaisaloitteella\\_yli\\_50\\_000\\_kannattajaa/6743796](http://yle.fi/uutiset/jarkea_tekijanoikeuslakiin_kansalaisaloitteella_yli_50_000_kannattajaa/6743796) (accessed 7 August 2013).

268. Ministry of Transport and Communications, "Tietoyhteiskuntakaari" (The Information Society Code), at <http://www.lvm.fi/web/hanke/tietoyhteiskuntakaari> (accessed 7 August 2013).

269. FICORA, "Viraston esittely ja tehtävät" (Introduction of the bureau and its tasks), at <https://www.viestintavirasto.fi/viestintavirasto/virastone-sittelyjatehtavat.html> (accessed 7 August 2013).



#### 7.2.4 Role of Self-regulatory Mechanisms

The Council for Mass Media in Finland (CMM) is the primary self-regulatory body for the media, established in 1968 by journalists and publishers with a view to promoting good professional practice and defending freedom of speech and publication. It does not, however, exercise any sort of legal jurisdiction. Anyone can make a complaint to the CMM about violations of good journalistic practice, but complaints submitted anonymously, or complaints where more than three months have elapsed since publication, are not investigated. Complainants do not have to pay a fee in order for the CMM to investigate their claim. In cases where good journalistic practice is found to have been violated, the CMM issues a notice, which the offending outlet has to publish within a short period of time. The CMM can also issue policy statements regarding questions of professional ethics. It has a chairman and 13 members whose term of office is three years. Eight are media experts, and five represent the public.<sup>270</sup> The distinct feature of this body is that it covers all media sectors rather than just the press.<sup>271</sup>

The Guidelines for Journalists provide the central code of ethics for news producers. The first version was issued by the Union of Journalists in 1957.<sup>272</sup> The CMM is responsible for ensuring that journalists follow the guidelines and interprets them when needed. The Guidelines apply for all journalistic work in Finland, including online journalism. The most recent update to the guidelines was made in 2011: it included an obligation to publish corrections online immediately following a CMM ruling.

An annex concerning material generated by the public on a media website was also added, aiming to clarify the legal status of UGC, which is not considered in the annex as editorial content. The annex stipulates that editorial offices should monitor their websites and try to prevent the publication of content that violates human dignity or privacy, such that this sort of content should be promptly deleted by the editorial office. It is further stressed that online forums directed at children or young people must be monitored particularly carefully. Future revisions can be made to the annex on an ongoing basis in response to digital developments, without having to redraft the main guidelines.<sup>273</sup> In 2010, the CMM also issued advice about good quoting practices online, stipulating that a link to the original source should be added, if possible, in addition to mentioning the original source.<sup>274</sup>

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270. CMM, "Self-regulation by publishers and journalists," at [http://www.jsn.fi/en/Council\\_for\\_Mass\\_Media/the-council-for-mass-media-in-finland](http://www.jsn.fi/en/Council_for_Mass_Media/the-council-for-mass-media-in-finland) (accessed 6 November 2013).

271. Nieminen and Nordenstreng, "Sääntely ja viestintäpolitiikka."

272. CMM, "Ohjeet kautta aikain" (Guidelines for Journalists through the ages), at [http://www.jsn.fi/ohjeet\\_kautta\\_aikain](http://www.jsn.fi/ohjeet_kautta_aikain) (accessed 7 August 2013).

273. "Journalistin ohjeet ja liite 2011" (Guidelines for Journalists and an Annex 2011), at <http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/pelisaannot/journalistinohjeet> (accessed 9 August 2013).

274. CMM, "Periaatelausuma lainaamisesta."

## 7.3 Government Interference

### 7.3.1 The Market

As discussed in section 2.2.1, there has been a lot of criticism, predominantly from commercial players, suggesting that Yle is distorting the media market through its expanding activities. The critique is particularly focussed on the internet, where groups like Sanoma have long argued that Yle's online presence is inhibiting commercial competition.<sup>275</sup>

On the other hand, the position of commercial media players has considerably strengthened in Finland over recent decades, brought about by pressure from the EU to abolish barriers to free-market competition. In response, media and communications policy has been oriented in favor of commercial players and the market generally.<sup>276</sup>

### 7.3.2 The Regulator

There are no examples of state interference in the media through regulatory bodies, and in general this type of interference is not very likely to happen, as the regulator is not directly dependent on the government, as discussed in section 7.2.2.

### 7.3.3 Other Forms of Interference

There are no examples of other forms of interference by state authorities.

## 7.4 Assessments

Overall, the framework of policy, law, and regulation has not shifted radically due to digitization. New developments and issues have definitely been considered in the overall framework—as well as in self-regulation—but generally, traditional and digital modes of communication and media are viewed as requiring more continuous than distinctive forms in legislation and regulation. Some specific issues have been given extra attention. A harmonizing regulatory update, the Information Society Code, is being drafted by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, which should also clarify and reduce the regulation of electronic communications in Finland.

There has been debate in the public sphere about the scope of content and services that Yle should provide, and commercial players have argued that Yle distorts the media market, especially online. Communications policy has been reoriented to favor the market and commercial players, in part due to pressure exerted by the EU.

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275. "Sanomien konkari kutistaisi Yleisradion—viihde ja urheilu pois" (Sanoma veteran would shrink Yle—no entertainment and sports), Uusi Suomi, 2013, at <http://www.uusisuomi.fi/raha/58158-hs-sanoma-konkarilta-tyly-yle-vesti-300-milj-eu-eli-viihde-ja-urheilu-leikattava> (accessed 9 August 2013).

276. Nieminen and Nordenstreng, "Sääntely ja viestintäpolitiikka."

Official public consultation has not significantly increased in the digital era, but in the public sphere there has been debate about such issues as copyright and editorial legal liability of user commentary published in the discussion forums of media websites.

Safeguarding pluralism and diversity have traditionally been—and have continued to be—important values in communications policy, law, and regulation, and such issues are considered in many ways, including digital spectrum licensing (as described in section 5.1.1). According to Hannu Nieminen and Kaarle Nordenstreng there is a danger, however, that too market-oriented thinking might focus communications policy development on technical and economic preconditions of media production and distribution, rather than on the public interest. They point out that under the conditions of highly market-oriented communications policy, the cultural-political content of the media only reaches the policy agenda with regard to problematic cases. Furthermore, they argue that content-neutral communications policy is insufficient to protect and promote freedom of expression. Ensuring pluralism and diversity is integral to promoting the freedom of expression.<sup>277</sup>

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277. Nieminen and Nordenstreng, “Sääntely ja viestintäpolitiikka.”

# 8. Conclusions

## 8.1 Media Today

Finland has a high internet penetration rate, and a rapidly increasing mobile broadband take-up. Alongside growing internet use, online news consumption has been on a steep and sustained upward trend in recent years, although this has not been entirely at the expense of traditional news media platforms. Digitization and the internet have made it possible for the average citizen to access a wider range of news content provided by both domestic and foreign media. The public service media broadcaster, Yle, has maintained its traditionally strong position in the digital environment. This has provoked criticism from commercial players, especially in the online news market, who argue that Yle's expanding presence inhibits the development of competitive markets in the digital domain.

The media market is changing rapidly and digitization is related to many of these changes. Several media groups have struggled to adapt their business models to the digital environment in order to maintain profitability. Digitization has led to changes in the newsrooms as well. Redundancies have become commonplace and demands for cost efficiency and time pressures on journalists have increased. These developments have had negative effects on the working conditions in newsrooms and on news quality. The use of PR material, second-hand stories, and quoting and copying—especially in the online environment—is a serious threat to the quality and diversity of news content and the independent performance of the news media. However, the internet has also enabled emerging positive journalistic developments, such as long-form and investigative journalism exclusively tailored to the online environment.

Most UGC in Finland is personal and occasionally has a considerable cultural impact. Social and political commentary through UGC does also exist, but it is marginal in both online forums and social networks. Most digital activism could be described as entertainment-oriented, light, or even apolitical and has been unable to influence public policy or official attitudes. Traditional news media sources retain their importance even on social media platforms and among active internet users. Still, social media and new digital platforms have certainly made it possible for more people to express their views and opinions and get their voices heard. They have also facilitated mobilization and activism, although actual mobilizations for civil action through digital channels alone have proved elusive.

Policy to safeguard pluralism and diversity in both regulation and communications has traditionally been—and still is—important, and is taken into consideration in digital licensing, among other things. Ownership consolidation exists in the news market, but there are no media monopolies as such. The diversity of news has decreased to some extent, as the same content is increasingly recycled by different channels and editorial work has sometimes also been combined among different newsrooms.

## 8.2 Media Tomorrow

While traditional media platforms, such as newspapers, will retain their dominance for some time to come, ways of consuming media products will continue to evolve as devices develop and proliferate, and as mobile broadband connections continue to spread. Furthermore, ways of relating to media content are clearly changing, as UGC enables citizens to critically discuss and reflect on the mainstream media. Journalists' work will also further change due to digitization, as they will have to be able to use new platforms, be more interactive, and increasingly engage in dialog with citizens and stakeholders.

The amount of regulation of electronic communications will be reduced and become clearer, as different acts are consolidated under the Information Society Code. Network competition in television might increase in the future. Digital activism might become more effective, as social movements increasingly focus on digital platforms in their operations and mobilization efforts, but it is likely that the most successful mobilizations and forms of activism will utilize digital and traditional means in concert.

Media companies will have to adapt their business models and diversify their activities in the online environment in order to maintain profitability. This might mean that there will be more paywalls, but other types of innovations are also needed. Public service media will likely continue to play a significant role in the media landscape for some time, but their activities in entertainment programming and their online presence might be curtailed if commercial players continue their lobbying pressure.

# 9. Recommendations

## 9.1 Journalism

### 9.1.1 Investments and Resources to Facilitate Media Innovations

#### *Issue*

In general, there have not been many major innovations in Finland that would help media to adapt their business models to the digital environment, or facilitate the emergence of new forms of journalism, communication, or digital storytelling. The quest for profitable business models in the digital environment is relevant for avoiding further redundancies in newsrooms and maintaining news quality.

#### *Recommendation*

Financiers, such as foundations that fund media research and development, as well as media companies, should invest more in R&D that deals with the aforementioned issues and might generate new innovations.

### 9.1.2 Providing Training for Journalists and Other Staff Working in Media Companies

#### *Issue*

Journalistic work is changing due to digitization. However, some journalists may not keep up with all the changes by themselves. Furthermore, separate specialists might be needed to develop the overall digital presence, audience understanding and so on.

#### *Recommendation*

Media companies should provide comprehensive and good-quality training for journalists and other staff in order to help them keep up with the changes caused by digitization. Separate specialists should also be trained or hired to deal with more complex issues caused by digitization.

# List of Abbreviations, Figures, Tables, and Companies

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

3G	Third-generation mobile telecommunications
BBC	British Broadcasting Company
CMM	Council for Mass Media ( <i>Julkisen sanan neuvosto</i> )
CNBC	Consumer News and Business Channel (until 1991)
CNN	Cable News Network
DAB	Digital Audio Broadcasting
DTH	Direct-to-home
DVB	Digital Video Broadcasting
DVB-H	Digital Video Broadcasting-Handheld
DVB-T2	Digital Video Broadcasting-Second Generation Terrestrial
EU	European Union
FICORA	Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority ( <i>Viestintävirasto</i> )
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GPRS	General Packet Radio Service
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
HBO	Home Box Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPTV	Internet Protocol Television
JSN	Council for Mass Media in Finland ( <i>Julkisen sanan neuvosto</i> )
Mbit	Megabit
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MHP	Multimedia Home Platform
MP	Member of Parliament
NHK	Japan Broadcasting Corporation
Nordic NorDig	Common platform for Digital Television to be used within the Nordic region

ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSF	Official Statistics of Finland
SMATV	Satellite master antenna television
SMDTV	Terrestrial Digi-TV operators in Finland ( <i>Suomen maanpäälliset digi-tv-toimijat</i> )
UGC	User-generated content
UMTS	Universal Mobile Telecommunications System
VAT	Value-added tax
VHF	Very high frequency
WAP	Wireless Application Protocol
Yle	Yleisradio (Finnish broadcasting company)

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## Companies

Alma Media	MTV
Bonnier	Nokia
Canadian Ontario	Sanoma Group
Classicus	SBS Broadcasting
Digita	Scoopinion
DNA	STT-Lehtikuva
Elisa	SuomiTV
Finnet Group	TDF Group
Finnpanel	TeliaSonera
Fox	TS Group
Ilkka Group	Uusi Suomi
Kaleva	Viestilehdet
Kristillinen Media	Welho
MTG	

## Mapping Digital Media: Country Reports (published in English)

1. Romania
2. Thailand
3. Mexico
4. Morocco
5. United Kingdom
6. Sweden
7. Russia
8. Lithuania
9. Italy
10. Germany
11. United States
12. Latvia
13. Serbia
14. Netherlands
15. Albania
16. Hungary
17. Moldova
18. Japan
19. Argentina
20. South Africa
21. Turkey
22. Lebanon
23. Macedonia
24. Bosnia and Herzegovina
25. Poland
26. Montenegro
27. Georgia
28. Nigeria
29. Colombia
30. Croatia
31. Slovenia
32. China
33. Peru
34. Chile
35. Spain
36. Kenya
37. Bulgaria
38. India
39. France
40. Estonia
41. Kazakhstan
42. Malaysia
43. Pakistan
44. Slovakia
45. Czech Republic
46. Egypt
47. Singapore
48. Armenia
49. Brazil
50. Jordan
51. Uruguay

**Mapping Digital Media** is a project of the **Open Society Media Program** and the **Open Society Information Program**.

## Open Society Media Program

The Media Program works globally to support independent and professional media as crucial players for informing citizens and allowing for their democratic participation in debate. The program provides operational and developmental support to independent media outlets and networks around the world, proposes engaging media policies, and engages in efforts towards improving media laws and creating an enabling legal environment for good, brave and enterprising journalism to flourish. In order to promote transparency and accountability, and tackle issues of organized crime and corruption the Program also fosters quality investigative journalism.

## Open Society Information Program

The Open Society Information Program works to increase public access to knowledge, facilitate civil society communication, and protect civil liberties and the freedom to communicate in the digital environment. The Program pays particular attention to the information needs of disadvantaged groups and people in less developed parts of the world. The Program also uses new tools and techniques to empower civil society groups in their various international, national, and local efforts to promote open society.

## Open Society Foundations

The Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. Working with local communities in more than 70 countries, the Open Society Foundations support justice and human rights, freedom of expression, and access to public health and education.

For more information:

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