



Media Report

Media Reporting

Sustainable Governance Indicators 2018

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Indicator Media Reporting

Question To what extent do media provide substantive in-depth information on decision-making by the government?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = A clear majority of mass media brands focus on high-quality information content analyzing government decisions.
- 8-6 = About one-half of the mass media brands focus on high-quality information content analyzing government decisions. The rest produces a mix of infotainment and quality information content.
- 5-3 = A clear minority of mass media brands focuses on high-quality information content analyzing government decisions. Several mass media brands produce superficial infotainment content only.
- 2-1 = All mass media brands are dominated by superficial infotainment content.

Finland

Score 9 By providing a continuous flow of information and background analysis, the main print media, TV and radio stations in Finland offer substantive in-depth information on government decisions. This provision takes different forms, such as inserts in regular news programs, special features, debates between proponents of conflicting views, debates between representatives of the government and opposition parties, regular broadcasts of government hearings in parliament, and so on. Empirical information about program volume is not available, but subtracting for “infotainment programs,” between five and seven hours a week of television and radio programming is dedicated to governmental issues. Although declining, daily newspaper circulation numbers remain reasonably high, with most newspapers often providing high-quality political reporting.

Citation:

Lauri Karvonen, Heikki Paloheimo and Tapio Raunio, *Evolution of Political Power in Finland*, pp. 335-344 in Lauri Karvonen, Heikki Paloheimo and Tapio Raunio, eds. *The Changing Balance of Political Power in Finland*, Stockholm: Santérus Förlag, 2016.

Ireland

Score 9 The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) aims to ensure that “the democratic values enshrined in the constitution, especially those relating to rightful liberty of expression, are upheld,” and that broadcasting services are “open and pluralistic.”

The largest TV and radio stations in Ireland are operated by RTÉ, a state-owned public-service broadcaster financed by revenue from the mandatory TV license, as

well as by advertising. Since 1988, RTÉ has faced competition from privately owned radio and television stations. RTÉ devotes a significant proportion of TV and radio air time to news and commentary on current affairs and political issues. It also undertakes original investigative journalism. The privately owned TV and radio stations have to devote specified proportions of airtime to current affairs and public-service programs. However, in terms of listener hours, music and entertainment outweigh current affairs and analysis.

The main stations produce high-quality information programs and programs devoted to in-depth analysis of government policy and decisions. They provide forums for discussions of current affairs, as well as outlets for opinions and grievances. These programs elicit reactions and responses from politicians. The two largest-circulation daily newspapers provide ample information on and analysis of government decisions.

The Press Council of Ireland provides an independent forum for resolving complaints about the press. In 2012, the United Kingdom's Leveson inquiry mentioned the Irish Press Council as a model.

Irish newspaper circulation (print and electronic versions combined) continued to fall over the review period, but the main newspapers are devoting additional resources to improved electronic dissemination of news and analysis.

Norway

Score 9

The mass media's treatment of government decisions and policy is fairly accurate and informative. The two largest broadcast-television channels, NRK and TV2, both produce broad-ranging evening news programs that typically devote considerable space and time to governmental and political affairs. Both channels also regularly (almost daily) broadcast debates and discussions on current affairs.

Statistics show news programs and political debates to have a high number of viewers. Both large television organizations have, over time, maintained and to some extent strengthened their news coverage, in TV2's case by having a new news channel, and in NRK's case by developing a strong brand for news, documentaries and public debate. Political news is frequently featured on popular televised infotainment shows on Friday nights. The leading radio channels, NRK and to a lesser extent P4, also devote considerable time to political news.

Changes to the media economy – including digitalization, the need for new funding mechanisms and the increasing domination of Facebook and Google – has posed massive challenges to many Norwegian media outlets. Staff cuts have resulted in a reduction of news production, which will likely undermine reporting quality and the media's role as the fourth pillar. At the same time, social media has become a key

source of news. Powers and resources have therefore also shifted from the professionally edited media, to new digital media actors and to a more complex mix of edited and unedited news.

Sweden

Score 9 Together with Norway, Japan and Finland, Sweden ranks very high regarding news consumption. The overall quality of the political coverage provided by Swedish media is good, if not extremely good.

Public service radio and TV in Sweden is still central to the media system. There have been discussions and Commissions concerning the future of public service but so far no major changes have been put on the agenda.

Compared to many other countries, the coverage is presented by journalists who are experts on Swedish politics. The level of analysis is good and, for the most part, balanced. There is obviously sometimes less professional coverage, too, but taken together, the quality of Swedish newspapers is very good.

Citation:

Olsson, J., H. Ekengren Oscarsson and M. Solevid (eds.) (2016), *Equilibrium* (Gothenburg: The SOM Institute).

Switzerland

Score 9 Radio and TV programs are of high quality in Switzerland. With very few exceptions, radio reports are reliable and analyses performed on an independent basis in a professional way. Some television programs are trending toward infotainment and the personalization of politics.

Canada

Score 8 Canada's main TV and radio stations produce a mix of infotainment and high-quality information programs. Public broadcasters, including the CBC and provincial TV channels such as TV Ontario (TVO), provide extensive and often high-quality coverage of politics and news, with a minimum of five to seven hours per week of in-depth information on government decisions, and often more. Examples of such programs include TVO's *The Agenda* and CBC's *The House*. A 2013 study comparing news coverage in 11 countries found that the share of news content as a percentage of total broadcast time was highest in Canada, both for domestic and international news coverage. The Canadian media coverage is further enhanced by international news channels such as CNN, BBC World News and Al Jazeera, which are readily available through cable networks. One caveat is that there is little

competition among public broadcasters; on the other hand, private broadcasters (with the exception of the Canadian Parliamentary Access Channel) are generally focused primarily on infotainment. Private broadcasters, especially the Canadian Parliamentary Access Channel (CPAC), also provide analysis of government decisions. Certain print media, such as the *Globe and Mail*, provide comparatively high-quality and comprehensive analysis of public policy. Others, such as *La Presse*, the *National Post* and other Postmedia publications, provide good coverage of public-policy issues.

As part of their ambitious agenda, the Liberal government promised to make government more open and transparent by revamping the Access to Information Act. A recent report from the information commissioner criticized the proposed legislative amendment (Bill C-58), arguing that the planned changes would curtail of existing rights and restrict media outlets' ability to provide in-depth political coverage.

Citation:

Aalberg et al (2013). International TV News, Foreign Affairs Interest, and Public Knowledge, *Journalism Studies*, 14:3, 387-406.

Information Commissioner of Canada, "Failing to Strike the Right Balance for Transparency Recommendations to improve Bill C-58: An Act to Amend the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act and to Make Consequential Amendments to Other Acts" posted at http://www.ci-oic.gc.ca/eng/rapport-special-c-58_special-report-c-58.aspx

Denmark

Score 8

As in other democracies, the media plays an important role in Denmark. Some have argued that the media constitutes a fourth power, next to the legislative, executive and judiciary powers in modern democracies; and that journalists play the role of citizen advocates vis-à-vis public authorities. The media partly have power, through editorial decisions. Like media outlets elsewhere, the Danish media shows a tendency to make the news easier for the public to relate to by simplifying or personalizing the stories reported, and emphasizing an element of conflict. In editorial decisions about who or what is covered, there appears to be a tendency to favor top politicians and government representatives. Weaker actors, such as immigrant representatives or ethnic minorities, get less coverage, although immigration stories have become important in recent years and now form part of daily news coverage.

Apart from daily news programs, some television and radio stations offer more analytical programs where issues can be analyzed in depth. Some of these programs can be quite informative. It is worth mentioning that the education of journalists has improved in recent years.

Overall, the Danish media tend to focus more attention on national news than international news, including issues regarding the European Union. Traditional

media face increasing competition from alternative news sources (e.g., news websites and social media) and their financing is declining due to falling advertisement revenue. Policymakers are increasingly using social media (e.g., Twitter) to make policy statements.

Media access to internal government documents has been a sensitive issue because of changed legislation regarding the access to such documents (offentlighedsloven). The new law entered into force 1 January 2014. The two aspects of the new law most criticized were the possibility of the government denying access to internal documents exchanged between a minister and experts (Art. 24) and between a minister and a member of the parliament (art. 27). The law will be evaluated after its third year.

There is currently a debate about the funding of public TV and radio – through a near-universal license fee, irrespective of public TV and radio consumption. Some actors argue that this public service should be paid through taxes, while others argue that the main operator, Danmarks Radio, goes well beyond public service and that its support should be reduced.

Citation:

Peter Munk Christiansen og Lise Tøgeby, *Magten i Danmark*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal.

“Fakta om ny offentlighedslov,” <http://www.politiko.dk/nyheder/fakta-om-ny-offentlighedslov> (accessed 23 October 2014).

“Ny offentlighedslov – ny praksis for journalister,” <http://www.aabenhedstinget.dk/ny-offentlighedslov-ny-praksis-for-journalister-2/> (accessed 23 October 2014).

Jørgen Grønnegård Christiansen and Jørgen Elklit (eds.), *Det demokratiske system*. 4. udg. Chapter 7. Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2016.

Estonia

Score 8

By providing a continuous flow of information and background analysis, the main daily newspapers, TV and radio stations offer substantive information on government plans and policies. There are three national daily newspapers, two main weeklies, two online news portals, four TV channels and three public-radio channels. Together, these comprise the majority of the entire domestic media market (except for radio broadcasting, where music stations account for the largest market share) and provide adequate information and some analysis of government policy. Policy-related information takes different forms, including inserts in regular news programs, interviews with experts, debates between proponents of conflicting views, debates between representatives of government and opposition, regular broadcasts of parliament sessions and government press conferences.

However, two shortcomings are evident here. First, the media tends to pay more attention to the performance of political parties as organizations than to the parties' positions on various policy issues. Secondly, information on government activities is typically provided not in advance of decisions, but only after decisions have already been made.

United Kingdom

Score 8

The main TV and radio stations in the United Kingdom – especially those like the BBC that operate under a public charter – provide an extensive array of high-quality news services. Government decisions feature prominently in this programming, and information and analysis on government decisions are both extensive and held to a high standard. There is substantial competition for viewers, in particular between the BBC, ITV, Sky and Channel 4. In addition to news programs, all provide in-depth analysis programs on politics and policy in a variety of formats. The Today Programme on BBC Radio 4 is well known for its highbrow political analysis and scrutiny, and often sets the tone for political debates. Newsnight is the flagship political-news program on TV.

The style of interview on these programs is often explicitly not deferential, and even quite confrontational – especially toward ministers. This is justified by the need to hold politicians and especially government ministers to account. Local radio and press also have a tangible influence within their localities and an increasing number of people resort to online services, most notably BBC Online, as a source of information on government.

Scandals both in the private sector (News of the World) and the public sector (BBC) may have cost some credibility but have so far had no recognizable influence on the functioning of the media system as a whole. Despite political pressure, The Guardian newspaper played a crucial role in the global surveillance disclosures of 2013 and was awarded the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for its efforts.

Germany

Score 7

Public TV and radio broadcasters generally offer in-depth reports on political processes. Competition between the two main public television broadcasters, ARD and ZDF, has forced them to copy the private channels' successful infotainment and politainment formats. Nevertheless, by international standards, ARD and ZDF, in particular, offer citizens the opportunity to obtain a relatively deep knowledge of political decision-making and their market share has stabilized in recent years. Recently, criticism of the allegedly biased reporting by these channels has increased (e.g., Kepplinger 2018; faz.net 2018a and 2018b). The plurality of the country's television broadcast market is enhanced by the availability of programming from international broadcasters such as CNN, BBC World, CNBC Europe and Al-Jazeera. Trust in media is high in Germany by international standards according to some surveys (Handelsblatt 2017).

Citation:

faz.net (2018a)Wo zeigt der Kompass denn hin?, faz.net 03.01.2018
<http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/medien/nachrichtenredaktion-von-ard-aktuell-feiert-jubilaem-15370727.html>

faz.net (2018b): Stimmungsmache, faz.net 29.01.2018 <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/bei-der-ard-gibt-es-buhs-fuer-trump-und-jubel-fuer-die-gruenen-15423125.html>

Handelsblatt (2017): Yougov survey, In Media We Trust, Say Germans, Handelsblatt global, January 4, 2017
<https://global.handelsblatt.com/politics/in-media-we-trust-say-germans-672316>

Kepplinger, Hans-Matthias (2018): Die Mediatisierung der Migrationspolitik und Angela Merkels Entscheidungspraxis, in: Thomas Saalfeld/Reimut Zohlnhöfer (eds.): Bilanz der Regierung Merkel, 2013-2017 (forthcoming).

Israel

Score 7

Israel's media industry is adapting to the global trend of decreased consumption of print and radio news media and the increased dominance of television, the internet and social-media websites. While the Israeli media sector has been bolstered in recent years by the creation of strong independent investigatory websites and blogs that have gained considerable attention in professional and public circles, other new popular outlets such as the free daily Israel Ha'yom often fail to deliver in-depth news coverage.

Despite a frequent tendency to focus on prominent and popular topics of the hour, the Israeli press, public television channels and radio shows do offer interpretative and investigatory journalism that informs the public regarding policy decisions and long-term strategies. Nonetheless, the growing rate of news consumption through social-media websites, the decline in citizens' exposure to print media and TV, and the shallow nature of coverage in new media all significantly reduce the percentage of civilians exposed to in-depth journalistic information.

Citation:

Goldenberg, Roi, "'The seventh eye' website won the Israeli prize for critical media," Globes 28.1.2013:
<http://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1000817765> (Hebrew)

Mann, Rafi and Lev-on, Azi, "Annual report: Media in Israel 2016 – agendas, uses and trends," Ariel University School of Communication: https://store.ariel.ac.il/downloadable/download/sample/sample_id/6/ (Hebrew)

Persisco, Oren, "Restraint and prudence," The seventh eye website: <http://www.the7eye.org.il/9774> (Hebrew).

"Freedom of the Press: Israel 2017," Freedom House, 2017 <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2017/israel>

Italy

Score 7

The space allocated to political themes in Italian media is quite significant in the 10 most important mass media brands (the three main national newspapers, Corriere della Sera, la Repubblica and Il Sole 24 Ore, which have print and online versions;

the three state television channels RAI1, RAI2 and RAI3; the two Mediaset channels Canale 5 and Rete 4; and two other private TV channels – Skynews and La7). Television time (both public and private) allocated to political themes is substantial throughout the year, averaging more than seven hours per week. A large part of this time is devoted to debates and talk shows involving politicians, journalists and experts, and to covering the most important aspects of current political controversies.

However, detailed, in-depth analysis of government decisions is much rarer, and debates tend to focus on the personality-driven dimensions of power politics. National newspapers provide more in-depth coverage of government decisions, often providing detailed dossiers on their content. Some radio and internet programming gives high-quality information in advance. The broader public has no access or does not seek access to these media.

Luxembourg

Score 7

Luxembourg's media outlets offer quality reporting on public affairs. All parliamentary debates are conducted in Luxembourgish and in public. Parliamentary meetings are broadcasted on Chamber TV (also available online) and debates of the country's four largest local councils (Luxembourg City and Esch/ Alzette, Differdange, Dudelange) can be followed online. Furthermore, the Ministers' irregular public press briefings are given more importance than under the previous administration.

In daily and weekly papers, articles are written in the three official languages (Luxembourgish, French and German) and sometimes in English as well. Certain newspapers are printed only in French; although an English-language monthly journal is also published. Moreover, the government is reforming the press subsidy system to include online media in recognition of the shifting media landscape.

Media coverage is often reactive, when issues have already reached the public in the form of draft legislation or through parliamentary debate. Furthermore, media outlets are quite often used as instruments by interest groups or lobbyists seeking to influence government decision-making in its early stages. Such procedures often have a strong influence on government thinking, as political actors need to take into account views and opinions that are published in the media. In addition, since the 2013 general election, social media has become more important due to the increasing number of social media users, and potential for disseminating information easily and rapidly.

Reporting has lost some of its partisan bias. Most media outlets, especially newspapers, have adopted more balanced reporting to preserve or enlarge their audience. The media does play an important role in uncovering information behind government scandals or issues. One example is the extensive media coverage of the

so-called Bommeleer affair (a series of bombings of public infrastructure in the 1980s) that was finally brought to court. Allegations of dubious activities of the State Secret Service (SREL) also received extensive media coverage and were subsequently the subject of a special parliamentary inquiry. In these two events, media outlets played an crucial role in bringing light to issues that were not made clear by public prosecutors.

Citation:

“Das Bommeleer-Dossier.” Luxemburger Wort, www.wort.lu/de/lokales/das-bommeleer-dossier-5092c3a9e4b0fe37043e8be8. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

Esch.tv, esch.tv. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

Hilgert, Romain. “Unter dem Tresen des CSV-Staats.” Land.lu, 26 Apr. 2013, www.land.lu/2013/04/26/unter-dem-tresen-des-csv-staats/. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

“Länderporträt Luxemburg.” Mediandatenbank, www.mediadb.eu/de/europa/luxemburg.html. Accessed 21 Feb. 2017.

“Luxemburger gründen neues Webmagazin.” Tageblatt, 17 Oct. 2017, www.tageblatt.lu/headlines/luxemburger-journalisten-gruenden-web-magazin/. Accessed 30 Jan. 2018.

Netherlands

Score 7

In the digital sphere, viewers and consumers clearly have more choices. The past decade has seen a large expansion of digital radio and television programming. This has resulted in a richer supply of broadcasters, bundled in so-called “plus packages” for viewers, which serve their own target groups with theme-specific broadcasts.

Dutch public television and radio stations produce high-quality information programs analyzing government decisions on a daily basis. Of the 13 national public broadcasters in the Netherlands, eight may be said to consider it their task to inform the public about governmental affairs and decision-making. The main public TV news channel, NPO, is required to provide 15 hours of reporting on political issues every week. On the radio, the First Channel is primarily tasked with providing information. In recent years, the outreach of the First Channel within society has been decreasing. This is not surprising since new media (i.e., the internet) have grown at the expense of more traditional media and are becoming more influential in the provision of news. NPO broadcasts Politiek 24, a digital television channel on the internet that contains live streams of public debates, analyses, background information and a daily political show. As noted under the “Media Freedom” section, recent policy has pushed for a merger between public media organizations, as well as for limiting their broadcasts to issues of information and culture, leaving entertainment largely to commercial media.

In 2015, a majority of Dutch citizens (55%) still read a newspaper or listen to the radio every day. Newspaper readers are to be found increasingly among the older and more highly educated population segment; digital subscriptions are on the rise.

Younger people actually spend more time listening, watching and communicating on online platforms than older people. Social media platforms have become sources of news, even for journalists. Regional and local newspapers in particular are experiencing severe financial troubles, leading to strong consolidation and concentration tendencies, and a significant increase in one-paper and even no-paper cities. The internet is used daily by 86% of Dutch citizens.

The Commissariat for the Media, tasked with monitoring the diversity and accuracy of media information about government and public policy issues, has expressed concern about the fragmentation of information sources and the “news snacking” habits of media audiences. This fragmentation, continuing commercialization and “infotainment” may have resulted in a situation where media-logic disregards its social and political responsibility to timely and accurately inform citizens about governmental and public affairs.

Citation:

Raad voor Cultuur, Advies Meerjarenbegroting 2009-2013 Nederlandse publieke omroep. Politici en journalisten willen te vaak scoren.

Media monitor, Jaarverslag 2015 (mediamonitor.nl, consulted 10 November 2016)

Commissariaat voor de Media, 15 jaar Mediamonitor, 20 July, 2017 (mediamonitor.nl, consulted 3 November 2017)

Spain

Score 7

The main print periodicals (El País, El Mundo, ABC, La Vanguardia) provide a fairly significant amount of in-depth analyses of the Spanish policy process and sophisticated op-ed analyses of government decisions, despite their partisan preferences. The print-media readership is declining, and the impact of these publications is thus limited, but a growing number of readers have begun following online newspapers (either electronic versions of the mainstream print publications or standalone online publications such as El Confidencial or eldiario.es) and politics-themed blogs (such as Agenda Pública).

TV is the most important source of political information for the average citizen, since almost 70% of Spaniards watch TV news every day. However, a large portion of the time devoted to political information is given over to news and talk shows. News programs, which are generally objective and balanced, are aired on a twice-daily basis (from 14:00 to 15:00 and from 20:30 to 21:30) on all major TV channels. In addition, several infotainment-style debate shows are aired during workday mornings and on some evenings (on weekends) but these are often superficial, focusing on polarized arguments with limited contextualized analysis.

A third of Spaniards also follow political news via radio stations, which devote many hours a week to political information. All main stations have early-morning and afternoon programs combining both background news and political debate, as well as

a late-night news program. Privately owned radio stations are more ideologically biased than the major TV stations (with participants in the radio debates blatantly biased in favor of or against the government). There are also daily radio programs of reasonable quality focused on business, and therefore on economic policymaking.

Citation:

Noviembre 2017, Evolución de audiencia OJD de eldiario.es <https://www.ojdinteractiva.es/medios-digitales/eldiario-evolucion-audiencia/totales/anual/3896/trafico-global/>

Austria

Score 6

The freedom of the press in Austria is guaranteed by European and national law. Nevertheless, two problems are relevant:

- The Austrian media lack pluralism. The publicly owned Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (ORF) dominates the radio and television broadcast markets, although competition by foreign and privately owned media is growing. In response to criticism of this dominance, the ORF offers guarantees of internal independence and internal political pluralism. The ORF is impartial by law and fulfills its mandate reasonably well, making up for deficits existing elsewhere in the media environment. The increasing significance of social media is a deepening challenge because it is not bound by the rules of impartiality as the ORF is.
- The country's print-media market is highly concentrated. One daily paper, Die Kronen Zeitung, serves more than a third of the country's readership, and increasingly uses this dominant position to issue biased political information, often in a simplified manner. Moreover, the expanding role of freely distributed print media, more or less dependent on funds for commercial or political promotion is problematic insofar as it makes it more difficult for readers to distinguish propaganda from information. High-quality political information is available from daily and weekly papers with more limited circulation, but high-quality media face considerable financial difficulties.

The new government will have an impact on media reporting, especially concerning the ORF. The ORF faces ever more criticism from the right-wing – now in government – for its independent reports. It can be expected that the law which defines structure, functions and finances of the ORF will be rewritten, but to what extent is unclear.

Belgium

Score 6

Television-news programs provide a relatively reasonable level of information, with a greater share of high-quality content and less focus on personalities than in Italy or France, for example. However, the economic crisis in the media sector is

accelerating a trend toward sensational, lower-quality information, as well as a growing inability to conduct in-depth investigations or monitor policymaking. As a consequence, public perception of media quality is on a downward trend.

Bucking the trend, however, a spate of national and international scandals emerged during the review period. These ranged from abuse of public office to international tax evasion. This stimulated popular attention to the news, and induced newspapers and other media to improve the depth of their information on specific political and policy matters. But their capacity to maintain attention to specific issues over time and to explain complex policies effectively remains weak.

Citation:

<http://www.institut-solidaris.be/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/LaConfianceDansLesMedias.pdf>

France

Score 6

Mass media, notably morning (radio) and evening programs, offer quality information concerning government decisions. As for print media, the crucial issue is the division between local and national media. A few quality daily papers and weekly papers provide in-depth information, but their circulation is low and on the decline. In many instances, the depth and magnitude of information is dependent upon the level of polarization of the government policy. Instead, in local newspapers, information is often superficial and inadequate. The same division applies to private and public audiovisual channels (some private channels offer only limited, superficial and polemical information), and to the emerging online media (only some of which offer quality information and analysis). On the whole, economic information is rather poor. Social media networks tend to substitute for traditional media and usually offer a very poor alternative. Mobilization is becoming more important at the expense of providing fair and checked information. This tough competition contributes to a deterioration in the quality of traditional media.

Iceland

Score 6

Iceland's main TV and radio stations provide fairly substantive in-depth information on government decisions. Radio analysis typically tends to be deeper than that found on television since the small size of the market limits the financial resources of TV stations. However, in-depth analysis on TV increased significantly when the private TV station Hringbraut increased such analyses in their program in 2016. Critical analysis of government policies by independent observers, experts, and journalists is a fairly recent phenomenon in Iceland.

The Special Investigation Committee report had a separate chapter on the media before and during the 2008 economic collapse. The report criticizes the media for not

having been critical enough in their coverage of the Icelandic banks and other financial institutions before the 2008 economic collapse. The report argues, on the basis of content analyses of media coverage of the banks, that the media was too biased toward the banks. This bias, well known in the United States during the 1920s for example, was associated with overlapping ownership of the banks and media companies.

Japan

Score 6

The Japanese media system is dominated by five major TV networks, including public broadcaster NHK, as well as a handful of major national newspapers. These publications are widely read, though their circulation is declining, and provide information in a sober style. However, because of their close personal links to political figures, which finds its institutionalized expression in the journalist club system, these newspapers rarely expose major scandals. Nonetheless, their editorials can be quite critical of government policy. Investigative journalism is typically undertaken by weekly or monthly publications. While some of these are of high quality, others are more sensationalist in character. Another source for exposing scandals is the international press.

The 3/11 disaster undermined public trust in leading media organizations. Personnel changes at NHK after the Abe-led government took power, resulting in a leadership that openly declared its intention to steer a pro-government course, have further reduced faith in the established media. The government's assertive approach, which is also evident in other media areas, may result in relatively low-quality information in major media channels. A UN Human Rights Council report strongly criticized the government's approach to the media in 2017.

In part as a reflection of these trends, new social media such as YouTube, Line, Twitter and Facebook, along with the news channels based on them, have gained a considerable following. This also holds true for new online publications such as BuzzFeed Japan and Huffington Post. However, their impact on the overall quality of information is unclear.

Citation:

Tomohiro Osaki, Academics, TV journalists slam minister's threat against 'biased' programming, fear media self-censorship, *The Japan Times*, 2 March 2016, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/02/national/tv-journalists-slam-ministers-threat-biased-programs-fear-media-self-censorship/>

Philip Brasor, Sticky bonds of the media and government, *The Japan Times*, 24 June 2017, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/06/24/national/media-national/sticky-bonds-media-government/>

Portugal

Score 6 There continues to be a lack of systematic in-depth policy analysis. Policy analysis is usually delegated to expert commentators, with little or no journalistic work performed on policy issues.

In an earlier SGI report, we noted the large amount of commentary time allotted to former politicians, particularly on television, a pattern that generates potential conflict-of-interest questions and does not seem to have contributed to improving the quality of policy analysis. Perhaps the most salient example of the confluence between politicians and television was provided by Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, a former leader of the PSD and Portugal's most popular TV commentator, who was elected president of Portugal in January 2016.

Citation:

Corinne Deloy, "Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa wins the presidential election in Portugal in the first round," Foundation Robert Schuman 24 January 2016.

Slovenia

Score 6 In Slovenia, the majority of both electronic and print mass media fail to provide high-quality information on government decisions and mostly focus on superficial subjects. However, there is a clear distinction to be made between the private and public media here. Whereas the private media, especially private electronic media, tend to focus on non-political information and infotainment, the public media, especially television and radio broadcasters, put more emphasis on providing high-quality information about government decisions. They even devote some attention to the debates preceding these decisions. This particularly applies when debates are initiated by the government.

South Korea

Score 6 South Korea's main media-related problem is the low quality of many outlets, rendering them unable to serve as facilitators of public debate or civic culture. Part of the problem here is the country's strong commercialism and associated weakness in political journalism. While the most prominent TV stations produce a mix of infotainment and quality information about government policies, the last four years have seen TV and radio organizations further shift their programming in the direction of entertainment and infotainment. Political programs have either been replaced or their teams shuffled. Information on international events in particular receives little coverage in the Korean news media. Moreover, some mass media outlets produce strongly politically biased reports, distorting the facts and obscuring the truth.

Nevertheless, the media played an important role in uncovering and reporting on the recent political scandals involving Choi Soon-sil and President Park Geun-hye. Several new-media organizations, including JTBC and the Chosun Broadcasting Company, investigated the case and helped uncover the evidence of corruption. The public movement that led to Park's impeachment could not have been achieved without media reporting on the government's abuses of power.

Citation:

Sang-young Rhyu, "McCarthyism in South Korea: The Naked Truth and History of Color Politics," East Asia Foundation Policy Debates, No.68 (March 28, 2017).

United States

Score 6

For the interested citizen, it is easy to find a large volume of serious, high-quality reporting on government and policy, with balanced, reasonably objective treatment of issues – in print, on the internet or on television. But such qualities do not describe the majority of major news outlets, nor the outlets used by the largest audiences. A majority of citizens obtain most of their news from television rather than newspapers or the internet, and the quality of the national news broadcasts has been declining. However, reputable news-reporting and news-analysis programs are available on radio and TV networks. The information quality of talk shows varies, ranging from “infotainment” to the serious discussion of policy issues with reputable experts.

The most damaging trend for public understanding is the decline of journalistic standards. Some media – most notoriously the conservative Fox News cable news network – exhibit pervasive ideological biases that are not confined to identifiable commentary or opinion segments, but also affect news reporting. Their broadcasts amount to outright polemical campaigning for or against certain political positions and their advocates. In addition, reflecting the economic problems of print journalism, the number of reporters covering Washington for daily newspapers declined from about 860 in 1998 to 575 in 2014.

During 2017, Fox News and other right-wing news media went beyond past displays of bias and echoed Donald Trump's constant false and destructive claims that mainstream news media, including the country's leading newspapers, reported “fake news.”

Australia

Score 5

Television and radio stations vary in the time they devote to substantive information on policy issues and government decisions. Commercial broadcasters devote relatively little time to such matters, but the state-owned broadcaster, which has one national television station and a number of radio stations, as well as a website,

devotes a considerable amount of time to high-quality analysis of government decisions. Newspaper coverage is likewise variable, with the popular newspapers providing superficial coverage and the quality “broadsheets” providing more in-depth coverage and discussion. While Australia used to have more high-quality newspapers, market concentration has contributed to a decline in print-media diversity and quality. To some extent, countering this decline has been the emergence of a number of online-only news providers. While the impact of these news outlets is difficult to assess, it is clear that at least several of them have risen to the status of mass-media outlets that are widely read by members of the Australian community.

Citation:

<https://theconversation.com/the-death-of-newspapers-have-we-reached-the-tipping-point-54728>

<https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2013/july/1372600800/eric-beecher/death-fairfax-and-end-newspapers>

Croatia

Score 5

As a result of the rise of media conglomerates and the dominance of foreign owners, the Croatian media sector is highly commercialized. Entertainment genres prevail in both the electronic and print media. Croatia lacks a great, serious daily newspaper comparable with Delo in Slovenia or Politika in Serbia. Nevertheless, the newspapers Jutarnji list and Vecernji list provide good coverage of Croatian political, economic and social affairs. As for electronic media, market share has shifted from the partisan public broadcaster HRT to the more objective independent broadcasters TV Nova and RTL Croatia.

Cyprus

Score 5

The media landscape is dominated by infotainment programming and excessive advocacy journalism that lacks analysis. The capacity to analyze and evaluate policies is generally hampered by a low level of issue knowledge, poor research and partisan biases as well as a low awareness of the media ethics code. Instead, conspiracy theories often prevail in media reporting. Pressure on print media led to the closing down of newspapers, shrinking the sector and highlighting its dependency on financial interests.

Political issues are widely covered in print and electronic media, but with little insight offered. In-depth information is only occasionally offered, typically by invited academics or experts and mostly on the public broadcaster. Analysts often fail to disclose their political connections or other conflicts of interest. Journalists’ personal views and preferences also influence reports and debates. Media did take a critical stand in 2017 in response to inconsistencies in the government’s policies. Nonetheless, the media’s approach to covering institutions and politicians was sometimes guided by preconceived ideas or self-interest.

Media coverage has also been hampered by the polarizing rhetoric and confrontational tactics of political figures' as well as the absence of productive public debate. Polarized viewpoints on the Cyprus problem affects media content.

The absence of an audit body for print-media circulation figures and transparency in media-ownership affect the public's capacity to evaluate the information received.

Czech Republic

Score 5

The main TV and radio stations provide daily news programs and some deeper discussion and analysis programs on a weekly basis. However, much of the commentary is superficial, and debates are usually structured to represent the views of the main political parties. The quality of information on government decisions has improved with the digitalization process. Czech TV established CT24, a channel dedicated to news, which also broadcasts online and offers continual analysis of domestic and international events. The Czech Republic's commercial media sector tends to eschew in-depth analysis of current affairs and instead follows an infotainment or scandal-driven news agenda. The ownership changes have further reduced the quality of the commercial media and increased the influence of private media owners on media content. The media coverage of the electoral campaign in 2017 focused on personal animosities between the party leaders, rather than on policy differences. For the first time, social media (especially Facebook) played an important role in the election campaign.

Greece

Score 5

The media have been badly hit by Greece's economic crisis. Facing declining circulation figures and advertising revenues, some outlets have imposed cuts or closed altogether. Meanwhile, wealthy owners have tried to consolidate and extend their power through the media, and the incumbent government has tightened its control over state-owned media.

The most popular TV and radio channels are privately owned and provide infotainment rather than in-depth information. Such channels may offer in-depth information only in cases in which the economic interests of private media owners are affected by a prospective government decision. Media owners often change sides, first favoring the government, then the opposition.

Political debates in the media tend to be rather general, along partisan lines, focusing on the government budget and trying to speculate on political developments. Substantive in-depth information is rare and the presentation of issues is more sentimental and partisan (pro- or anti-government) than objective.

On the other hand, the circulation of dailies has declined considerably from a low level, though they are quite influential in shaping the daily agenda and in framing debates. Sunday newspapers have a larger circulation and feature articles based on investigative journalism. Most people inform themselves through TV programs or various news websites. Nearly 67% of the population accessed the internet regularly in 2015. However, only a few websites publish informed contributions. News printed on the front page of a few, “yellow” Athenian dailies reveal a tendency to commit defamation or slander.

There is a deepening divide between pro-government and anti-government media. In short, one may find interesting in-depth information by browsing Greek websites, but overall in the period under review there was further decline in the unsatisfactory performance of Greek media.

Latvia

Score 5

A minority of the ten most important mass-media brands in Latvia provide high-quality information. The majority of reporting is a mix of quality information and infotainment programs. The financial constraints on the media brought about by audience and advertising shifts to internet-based sources and limited budgets for public broadcasting have had a negative effect on the provision of high-quality content. Additional challenges include the proliferation of pro-Russian narratives in the media, broadcasted by Russia as well as Latvian outlets and shared through social networks.

Nevertheless, some media players have succeeded in meeting a high standard of quality. The weekly magazine IR, established in 2010, provides in-depth information on government policy plans as well as publishes leaked information of broad political significance. Investigative reporting on public and private television stations fulfills a watchdog function. A concerted investigatory journalism effort in 2017 by the public broadcaster has put the treatment of children in institutions on the political agenda. Sustained analytical focus on issues of public concern is provided by the non-profit investigative-journalism center Re:Baltica, founded in August 2011. It focuses on issues such as the social costs of economic austerity, consumer protection and drug-money flows. By cooperating with the mainstream media, it has succeeded in moving these issues onto the public agenda.

Economic constraints on the media have exacerbated the media’s tendency to allow financial pressures to influence content. Research indicates that hidden commercial advertising can be arranged in any media channel in Latvia. Hidden political advertising is denied by the Latvian-language media, but acknowledged by the Russian-language media.

New concerns have arisen about the influence of Russia's "hybrid warfare" on the media environment in Latvia, especially for Russian-language media consumers. Proposals to expand the public-broadcasting services to include Russian-language programming have stalled, however.

Data from 2017 show that trust in media stands at 50% (6% completely trust, 44% mostly trust). This level of trust is slightly less than when information is obtained through social networks (e.g., friends and family). The most trusted media sources in Latvia are internet news site www.delfi.lv (cited by 18% as the most trusted), followed by the public broadcasters (11% for LTV, 7% for LR) and another internet site www.tvnet.lv (8%).

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Lithuania

Score 5

A minority of mass-media organizations, whether TV, radio, print or online, provide high-quality information content analyzing government decisions. Since it is quite expensive to provide high-quality analysis within Lithuania's small media market, the state-funded National Radio and Television is in the best position to undertake in-depth analysis of government decisions. Andrius Tapinas, a famous Lithuanian journalist and TV host, launched a weekly political discussion show, which attracted about 4,300 financial supporters and thousands of viewers. Other mass-media brands tend to produce infotainment-style programming. Although the Lithuanian media are regarded as quite independent, they are not widely trusted by the public. Indeed, in September 2017, only 37% of respondents to a national survey said they trusted the media.

Citation:

<http://www.vilmorus.lt>.

Malta

Score 5

According to the Media Pluralism Monitor 2016, television remains the main and most trusted source of news on national political matters. According to the 2016 Eurobarometer, respondents in Malta see their national media as more free and independent and providing more diversity of viewpoints than five years ago. However, the media outlets are dominated by Malta's two major political parties and

published information can often be described as “infotainment,” sensational or superficial. Detailed reporting on government policy are rare. However, increased competition among independent media has improved the quality of media reporting. Improvements to the Freedom of Information Act in 2012 have also improved media reporting, though numerous restrictions still exist and often newspapers cannot obtain relevant data. Increased competition has also allowed for more sensational reporting. Journalists have poor protections from owner and advertiser influence and political control over media outlets remains high. Malta is one of the few countries in Europe that has no policy on media literacy to empower citizens with critical skills needed for active participation in the contemporary exchange of information.

Citation:

Aquilina, K Information Freedom at last, Times of Malta 22/08/12
Media Pluralism monitor 2016

New Zealand

Score 5

Not all television and radio stations produce high-quality information programs, but both Television New Zealand (TVNZ) and Radio New Zealand provide a regular evaluation of government decisions. TVNZ’s TVOne has three news programs per day, each lasting between 30 minutes to one hour, as well as a lighthearted daily current affairs magazine-style program. It also has an hour-long current affairs program, “Q and A,” which screens once a week and focuses on domestic politics. TVNZ 7, a station established in 2008, offered a range of news and current affairs programming and attracted a small but loyal audience prior to its disestablishment in 2012. A second television network, TV3, offers a similar news and current affairs schedule to that of TVNZ. Radio New Zealand has four extensive news features per day in addition to hourly news programs. Newspapers provide information and analysis on government decisions and policy issues – although many articles report government statements verbatim and such stories tend to be relegated to the inner pages – with crime and celebrity stories dominating the headlines. The decline of investigative journalism by electronic- and print-media outlets has been noted by media commentators, although internet commentary, including blogs, has to some extent provided a substitute.

Citation:

TV One: <http://tvnz.co.nz/tv-one> (accessed October 9, 2014).

Radio New Zealand: <http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/programmes> (accessed October 9, 2014).

Poland

Score 5

Government decisions are widely covered by the country’s main TV and radio stations. Due to the media law, the public TVP is often dubbed TV-PiS. Jacek Kurski, party ideologist, was appointed as TV director and hired several party loyal journalists as anchors for the news shows and other relevant positions. In the private

media, despite a tendency toward infotainment, the quality of reporting, especially of the two major TV companies, POLSAT and TVN, has increased. Rzeczpospolita, the second-largest daily paper in Poland, has benefited from a change in ownership and editorial staff, and has become less politically partisan. Still, there are few print outlets and TV and radio stations that resist political pressure, and the media is divided into pro or contra government. Public trust in the objectivity of the media was always been quite low, but now it is at a very low position. The main TV news show Wiadomosci in TVP has lost 17% of its viewers.

Citation:

Markowski, R., M. Kotnarowski (2016): Rewolucja mniejszości, in: Polityka, No. 6.

Slovakia

Score 5

The quality and professionalism of media reporting in Slovakia is not extraordinarily high. The public TV and radio stations provide daily news programs and some analytical, critical programs on a weekly basis. However, much of the commentary is superficial, and debates usually serve as a vehicle for the views of the parliamentary parties. The commercialization of nationwide broadcasters, with a consequent negative impact on public-interest news and current-affairs coverage, has not left the public stations untouched. TA3, a private TV channel dedicated to news, is heavily influenced by its owner, who allegedly sponsors SNS and its leader. The commercial media sector tends to eschew in-depth analysis of current affairs and instead follows an infotainment or scandal-driven news agenda. As for the print media, the recent ownership changes have raised concerns about the political agenda of the new owners and the resulting decline in journalistic quality. A new risk is the growing popularity of conspiracy websites, many of which are sponsored by Russia. For example, the negative and often inaccurate articles on migration issues in most of the print media testify to the lack of quality.

Bulgaria

Score 4

Bulgaria's media sector suffers from heavy bias, focusing on sensationalism and scandal as a means of gaining public attention rather than producing in-depth and consistent coverage and analysis of important societal processes. In recent years, in the TV programming, this has been accompanied by a heavy accent on reality shows, which is another drain on the broadcasting time available for analyzing government and policy decisions.

Most print-media organizations can be considered as appendages to their owners' businesses. As a consequence, high-quality journalism is secondary to the owners' respective business interests in print media. However, high-quality investigative journalism and political commentary is still available.

In their coverage, most major media organizations tend to frame government decisions as personalized power politics, diverting attention away from the substance of the policy toward the entertainment dimension. Usually there is no coverage of the preparatory stages of policy decisions. When coverage begins, basic information about a given decision or policy is provided, but typically without any deep analysis of its substance and societal importance. On two separate occasions in 2017, prominent politicians – one member of parliament and one deputy prime minister – publicly and directly threatened journalists in an obvious attempt to intimidate them and shutdown substantive policy discussions. This clearly undermines the capacity of media to provide substantive in-depth information on government decision-making.

Online media, whose numbers and importance are increasing, offer a new venue for coverage of policy decisions. In some instances, online media promises timelier and more in-depth reporting on topical issues.

Chile

Score 4

Legal norms are published in the Official Journal (Diario Oficial de la República de Chile), a state institution dependent on the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security. Its print version was terminated on 17 August 2016. Since then, the Official Journal is available only as an online edition.

Although locally produced news programs are generally of high quality and draw large audiences – particularly through radio – Chile's newspapers and the main public TV stations report tabloid news, and employ bold headlines and techniques with strong popular and infotainment appeal. Furthermore, statistics released by the National TV Commission (Consejo Nacional de Televisión) show that on average, less than five hours a week per channel or radio station is spent discussing in-depth political information. More than 50% of the news presented through publicly accessible channels is dedicated to sports and crime. Surveys indicate that the Chilean audience would prefer less sports news and more focus on national and international politics. Due to the biased media landscape, there is a strong ideological framing of political information and policy discussion.

Chile's largest free TV channel (TVN) is state-owned, and by law is required to provide balanced and equal access to all political views and parties – a regulation which is overseen by the National Television Directorate (Consejo Nacional de Televisión, CNTV). Although La Nación and TVN are state-owned, they must operate according to market rules; they have to fund themselves by relying on advertising and high audience ratings. By the end of the period under review, TVN declared bankruptcy and the future of the channel was uncertain as the parliament will have to decide by the end of 2017 whether to provide public funds and guarantee its functioning or privatize the channel.

Since the print edition of the La Nación newspaper was eliminated under former President Piñera, the quality of its reporting and in-depth information on government decision-making has dropped significantly.

Citation:

http://www.cntv.cl/prontus_cntv/site/artic/20130723/asocfile/20130723171104/pluralismo_en_la_televisi_n_p_bli ca.pdf

<http://www.diarioficial.cl/quienes-somos/>

Mexico

Score 4

The quality of the media is mixed. The quality of some Mexico City newspapers and magazines is high, but the rest of the press, particularly radio and TV, focuses mainly on entertainment. This is particularly troublesome as there is a high degree of media concentration, with only two national TV companies (Televisa and TV Azteca) controlling 94% of commercial TV frequencies. These companies have similar programming and political inclinations, and account for 76% of the political news content consumed by Mexicans. The close ties between the two major television companies and the government limits their capacity to impartially inform the public. For example, the president's wife is a former Televisa actress and model. In addition, the 2012 election created the "telebancada," a prominent caucus of 20 congressmen who have worked directly or indirectly for one of the two TV companies.

In an effort to reduce telecommunications concentration and increase transparency, the government approved a Federal Law of Telecommunications and Broadcasting in 2014. This was an important step toward dissolving the questionable ties between the presidency and TV networks: Televisa was declared a preponderant agent and the government can impose restrictions on the share of frequencies it controls. However, doubts remain as to the reach of the telecom law. Telebancada altered some elements of the reform proposal and critics worry that TV networks' interests will prevail. To date, the effect of the restrictions and sanctions is not yet clear.

On the supply side, the quality of journalists remains a challenge as they sometimes fail to understand or explain complex issues accurately. Particularly on security related issues, increasing violence against critical and investigative journalism often results in self-censorship. Even if the telecom law is successful, it will not erase these challenges as it mainly focuses on the expansion of existing TV channels. This change will probably be good for public revenue, but is unlikely to improve the intellectual quality of news media and the safety of journalists.

At the same time, media diversity (online media) has strongly increased in the last decade and Mexicans do have access to high-quality offerings if they are interested. Moreover, information on Mexican politics is easily accessible from United States and Latin American media outlets due to technical progress. However, this diversity

in content and quality will hardly have an impact on the majority of the population as only a very small minority of Mexicans use the internet and newspapers as their main sources of political information. The influence of manipulating news and social media – a topic of increasing relevance in many OECD countries – is as yet an understudied theme in Mexico, but probably will gain importance in the next national elections.

Citation:

<http://www.encup.gob.mx/work/models/Encup/Resource/69/1/images/Resultados-Quinta-ENCUP-2012.pdf>

<http://www.americasquarterly.org/content/telecommunications-mexicos-new-reform>

<http://www.internationalhispanicmedia.org/the-captured-liberal-model-media-systems-journalism-and-communication-policies-in-latin-america/>

Romania

Score 4

Media coverage of government decisions and action on the television stations and newspapers holding the highest market shares is highly partisan, largely focusing on political scandals and key politicians' personalities rather than in-depth policy analysis. Public opinion and political discourse are subject to manipulation and misinformation, which has contributed to a radicalization of Romanian politics. Nevertheless, there is a clear minority of mass-media brands, such as the Digi 24 television station and HotNews.ro, an online news source, that produce higher quality, less partisan and more in-depth information. NineOClock.ro also serves as a useful political news outlet but is published in English and targets a foreign market. These sources – as well as some of the more serious print media (such as the 22 weekly) – have much smaller market shares than do television stations specializing in political infotainment, particularly the Antena 3 television station.

Hungary

Score 3

The Hungarian media landscape has undergone two different processes in the last years: depolitization and scandalization. Depolitization is the result of a new type of self-censorship, caused by the attacks of the government and their representatives on the press and civil society organizations. Scandalization is the result of polarization. The sharp polarization of political life in Hungary has facilitated a replacement of in-depth analysis by a preoccupation with scandals, whether real or alleged. There is relatively little in-depth analysis of government decisions and the performance of the government in the government-controlled public media, or in those private outlets close to Fidesz. As a reaction to the government's attempts at controlling the media, social media and internet editions of established print publications have gained in importance. The independent policy institutes and some expert based NGOs have regularly published policy analyses that have been widely discussed in the opposition media. The mass demonstrations, as well as the deepening rift within Fidesz, stemming from regular corruption scandals and provocative luxurious consumption

habits, have elevated the significance of media reporting. The print media, including the tabloid press, such as *Blikk*, have been important in discovering the big scandals and policy failures. In the period under review, the significance of online media – *Index*, *444*, *HVG*, *Átlátszó*, *Kettős Mércse* and even some right-leaning websites like *Mandiner* – has grown tremendously because they have been decisive in revealing the government's behind-the-scene activities. The websites of professional NGOs have also been very active and are closely followed by journalists.

Turkey

Score 3

Despite the pluralistic media scene in Turkey, the Turkish media (TV channels, newspapers, etc.) seems increasingly split between proponents and opponents of the AKP government. Media freedoms deteriorated significantly after the failed coup attempt of 15 July 2016. Numerous journalists were imprisoned without indictment, which had an intimidating effect on other journalists. In consequence, it is difficult for citizens to find objective or substantive in-depth information on government policies and government decision-making. A media-ownership structure based on industrial conglomerates (the so-called Mediterranean or polarized pluralist media model), the government's clear-cut differentiation between pro- and anti-government media, and the increasingly polarized public discourse make it difficult for journalists to provide substantial information to the public. News coverage and debates are mainly one-sided in the pro-government media, while self-censorship is common in the mainstream, neutral media. This is true even of the main news agencies, such as *Anadolu*, *ANKA*, *Doğan* and *Cihan*. Superficial reporting, self-censorship and dismissal of critical journalists from their job are widespread within the major media outlets. Media ownership, and direct and indirect government intervention in private media outlets and journalism obscure the objective analyses of government policies. Thus, few newspapers, radio or TV stations offer in-depth analysis of government policies or their effects concerning human rights, the Kurdish issues, economic conditions and so on.

In 2017, internet freedom declined in Turkey and several internet sites were blocked, including sites managed by journalists in exile. Social media services and websites (e.g., *Wikipedia*) were also blocked. The Minister of Transportation and Communication stated that Turkey is often mentioned together with terrorist organizations on social media platforms. For example, *Wikipedia* articles include content that suggests Turkey supports terrorist organizations. Turkey is among 30 governments that employs “opinion shapers” to promote government views and agendas, and counter government critics on social media.

Citation:

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