CENTRE FOR MEDIA PLURALISM AND MEDIA FREEDOM

Press and distribution in Europe: research findings and funding opportunities

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Trends in the EU

2020: almost 44,000 companies in news media sectors, almost 60,000 in the news-related retail sector

(European Media Industry Outlook, 2023)

News media sectors

Number of companies: 4.000 TV, 34.000 press, 5.000 radio

€ 19.8 billion revenues in 2021 for press and digital media (excl. broadcast)

Most Europeans consume news on a daily basis with TV remaining the preferred media

Average proportion of EU population reading online news increased from 47% in 2013 to 64% in 2021. Citizens aged 22-44 are the most likely to do so, but the increasing trend is consistent across all age groups(EC , 2023)

New formats used by publishers: podcasts (80%), newsletters (70%) digital video formats (63%), metaverse and Artificial Intelligence still having a marginal role (Reuters Institute, 2022)

FIGURE 9. EU-27 PRINT AND DIGITAL NEWS SECTOR REVENUES, 2016-2025F (BN EUR)

Note: * Light blue: circulation; dark blue: Advertising

*Print circulation revenues include subscription and individual purchases

*Digital circulation includes consumer spending on digital editions of newspapers, including digital subscriptions and payments for newspapers delivered directly to connected devices such as a PC, tablet or smartphone, and including fees to access online content

Source: PwC GEMO, Oliver & Ohlbaum analysis and estimates

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EU-27 news media sector number of enterprises by activity, 2018-2019 (thousands)

Note: Data is not available for 2020 at the time of writing. Includes both print and digital newsbrands.

Source: Eurostat, Oliver & Ohlbaum analysis and estimates

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FIGURE 2. EU-27 NEWS MEDIA SECTOR NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES BY ACTIVITY, 2008-2019 (THOUSANDS)

Note: Data is not available for 2020 at the time of writing. Includes both print and digital newsbrands.

Source: Eurostat, Oliver & Ohlbaum analysis and estimates

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Local Media for Democracy

#LOCALMEDIA 4DEMOCRACY

Aims at supporting local, regional and community media in emerging ‘news deserts’ in Europe. Main activities include:

1) Research and mapping of news deserts in the 27 EU Member States - highlighting both challenges and good practices, as well as developing policy recommendations for media stakeholders and national and European policy-makers.

2) Media Funding Scheme - direct financial support and technical assistance for local, regional and community news media or initiatives in EU 27 Member States, especially those operating in areas defined as “news deserts” by the mapping.

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Does the supply distribution chain (distribution companies and professional PoS) serves the local media market adequately? If data is available, please indicate if the number of press points of sales, press distribution companies and people working in the local press distribution sector have been decreasing in recent years.

Very high risk: The supply distribution chain serves the local media market inadequately across the whole media sector and the number of PoS, distribution companies and workers has decreased dramatically.

High risk: On balance, the supply distribution chain serves the local media market inadequately in most sectors and the number of PoS, distribution companies and workers has decreased.

Medium risk: The supply distribution chain adequately meets the needs of the local media market in certain media sectors, while falling short in others. The number of PoS, distribution companies and workers have decreased.

Low risk: On balance, the supply distribution chain serves the local media market adequately in most media sectors. The number of PoS, distribution companies and workers are stable.

Very low risk: The supply distribution chain serves the local media market adequately across the whole media sector. The number of PoS, distribution companies and workers are stable or increasing.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Preliminary findings

- **Press sector is suffering the most**, but in some cases counterbalanced by online reach
- Not only kiosks are diminishing, but also **post offices** and **home delivery services**
- **Monopolies of distribution and retail** (e.g. Austria, Bulgaria, Ireland), with vertical integrations, also leading to political capture (e.g. Poland)
- **Best practices:** distribution in places of aggregation (caffés, squares…) (e.g. France, Netherlands), state subsidies to postal and delivery services (e.g. Finland, Lithuania)

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

EU funding opportunities for the news media sector

European democracy action plan (2020): the EC proposed a set of measures to promote democratic participation, fight disinformation and support free and independent media.
Available budget: approx €50 million per year.

Media and audiovisual action plan (2020): sets out a series of actions to strengthen financial sustainability and digital transformation of the media sector.

- **Creative Europe programme (2021- 2027):**
  open to news media as well since 2021!

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Creative Europe (2.44 billion EUR)

75 million EUR for media pluralism, journalism and media literacy (NEW)

Horizon Europe (95 billion EUR)

Calls to support innovative applications and technologies in the media domain (AI, tools to fight disinformation, …)

Digital Europe (7.6 billion EUR)

Dedicated calls to support the digital transformation of the media sector

Invest EU (372 billion EUR)

Equity-based pilot fund to set-up by the Commission and managed by the EIF (400 million EUR)

Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme - CERV (894.1 million EUR)

Specific calls to support media literacy, citizens engagement and participation

EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility

Each national Plan earmarks at least 20% of expenditure for digital, including measures to boost the production and distribution of digital content, which may include digital media

Creative Europe (2021- 2027) – «cross-sectoral strand»

Multiple lines of actions:

- **support journalism partnerships that create systematic collaborations** among media organisations
- support projects that enable knowledge sharing on media literacy
- support a project providing rapid responses to violations of press and media freedom
- support self-regulation and ethical codes in journalism
- monitor media freedom and pluralism by assessing relevant legal frameworks across Europe and possible risks to media ownership transparency (e.g. MPM, LM4D)

Creative Europe – Cross-sectoral strand- Enhancing media resilience

- News media collaborations under "Journalism Partnerships" – for testing viable business models, developing business and editorial standards, promoting collaborative content, training and mobility of professionals, and sharing of best practices. The call for proposals is expected to be repeated on a **yearly basis**.

- Access to debt, with the backing of InvestEU guarantees, building on the success of the Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility (CCSGF) which makes an access to finance easier for news media.

- Equity instruments, the Commission is working with foundations and philanthropic investors under InvestEU to seek synergies in areas of high societal value, including support for democracy and news media.

Where to look for?

- Check the EU website for Funding & tender opportunities

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home

- Check the CulturEU Funding Guide & tool

https://culture.ec.europa.eu/funding/cultureu-funding-guide/discover-funding-opportunities-for-the-cultural-and-creative-sectors

Get Creative!

Choosing the right distribution strategy for different types of content remains key for news media outlets: both lighter and in-depth content is likely to attract engagement if it resonates emotionally with users or has wider social significance, and if it is **shared on the right platform for the type of content**

Distributors and distribution points, retailers have been and are key actors in participatory processes, and for engagement → community building

More (especially, audience) studies on this topic with European scope should be developed

Funded by the European Union

¡ Muchas gracias por su atención!

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