

PRESS RELEASE

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Finns continue to have a high level of trust in news – however, news avoidance has increased

In Finland, the percentage of people who trust the news has been growing consistently for three years and has now reached a new record. 76% of the adult population in Finland trust the news they follow. This proportion increased by one percentage point from last year. The data is based on the Digital News Report 2023 survey carried out by the Reuters Institute at the University of Oxford.

The percentage of people who trust most news in Finland, 69%, remained unchanged when compared to last year. Finland is the only country in the survey in which the proportion exceeds two-thirds. The lowest level of trust was recorded in Greece, where the percentage of those who trust most news was only 19%.

“In Finland, trust in news is supported by a general culture of trust, universal comprehensive education and the relatively strong professional independence of journalists. In addition, it’s possible that the war in Ukraine and Finland’s NATO membership process linked to it have strengthened the cohesion of the majority of the population, which may have also contributed to the level of trust in the news,” says **Esa Reunanen** from the University of Tampere, who prepared Finland’s country report.

A growing phenomenon that slightly chips away at the trust is the avoidance of news. In Finland, 21% of the population avoids news at least occasionally. In 2019, the percentage of avoiders was 17%. The most avoided news topic was the war in Ukraine.

“Many news avoiders would prefer positive, solution-oriented journalism to comprehensive coverage of difficult or unfortunate events. On the other hand, the study revealed that in difficult times, many people seek information from traditional media rather than social media, for example. These findings will hopefully help the media in planning news content and increasing content engagement,” says **Noora Alanne**, Executive Director of the Media Industry Research Foundation of Finland.

In Finland, the percentage of people who only follow news online rose to 24%, compared to 20% last year. The percentage of people following news only from print media has stabilised at 9%. The internet and social media are extremely important for the youngest age group in the study, 18–24-year-olds. 84% of this group considered the internet to be the main channel for following news. For the first time, they also consumed news more on social media (33%) than by going directly to a news site (29%).

Ulla Järvi, Secretary General of the Finnish Association of Science Editors and Journalists, who wrote a commentary on the report, also takes notice of the possibilities of reaching young audiences. “High-profile journalists attract attention, but media audiences are increasingly drawn to celebrities and social media influencers. The influence of TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram is growing among the youngest media audiences. In order for news to be interesting to this group, journalists, politicians, experts and researchers must adopt completely new means of storytelling,” Järvi says.

This year, the country report of Finland includes commentaries by Ulla Järvi, **Timo Huovinen**, Head of Journalistic Standards and Ethics at Yle, **Riina Nevalainen**, Executive Editor-in-Chief of Kauppalehti,

Risto Puolimatka, Editor-in-Chief of Nivala-lehti, and **Veera Vehkasalo**, Editor-in-Chief of Iso Numero, commented on the research results in Finland's country report this year.

The Digital News Report research of the Reuters Institute compares the use of news media in 46 countries. The data is based on a survey taken by approx. 2,000 participants in each country. The research is conducted annually, and Finland has been participating since 2014. The Media Industry Research Foundation of Finland funds the report. This year's research was carried out in January–March as an online survey organised by research institute YouGov.

More information

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