Nordic Illusion and Challenges for Epistemic Rights in the Era of Digital Media

*Reeta Pöyhtäri, Riku Neuvonen, Marko Ala-Fossi,
Katja Lehtisaari, and Jockum Hildén*

Introduction

Traditionally, the Nordic countries have demonstrated a specifically Nordic model of media and communications policies and communication rights. However, in the last decades, these countries' related developments have started to differ and they have displayed varying practices not only in responses to digital challenges but also in other media policy areas.

R. Pöyhtäri • M. Ala-Fossi • K. Lehtisaari (✉)
Tampere University, Tampere, Finland
e-mail: reeta.poyhtari@tuni.fi; marko.ala-fossi@tuni.fi; katja.lehtisaari@tuni.fi

R. Neuvonen
Faculty of Management and Business, Tampere University, Tampere, Finland
e-mail: riku.neuvonen@tuni.fi

J. Hildén
RISAI—Research Institute for Sustainable, Stockholm, Sweden
e-mail: jockum@risai.se

171

In addition, the Nordic freedom of speech regulations differ also historically which leads in differences in legislations and their implementation, while at the same time the Nordic countries share similar goals and cooperate.

This chapter contributes to the study of epistemic rights by addressing how the Nordic countries support freedom of speech and dialogical rights during the digital era through regulation and other media policy measures. Also considering their historical backgrounds, we examine the differences and persistent similarities in the Nordic countries' practices through three example cases. First, we examine the regulation of online audiovisual media, demonstrating national path dependencies in content moderation legislation. Second, we explore disputes between public service and private media related to media content and subsidies, which are both essential in supporting the public's rights to varied information and social dialogue. Third, we discuss national policy responses to online hate speech that challenge both freedom of expression and dialogue.

Finally, we suggest a critical reassessment of the Nordic media model to ensure continued support of epistemic rights in the digital media age, as neither the model nor the epistemic rights should be taken for granted.

The Nordic Media Model

The Nordic countries (Finland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland) have been described as *media welfare states* (Syvertsen et al., 2014), which are characterised by both a democratic, corporatist media system (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) and social-democratic, welfare-state ideology (Esping-Andersen, 1990). This Nordic 'media welfare model' includes strong state support for universally available and accessible communication systems, along with subsidies for both public service and private media, institutionalised editorial freedom and the self-regulation of media. Public service media have been used especially as a policy tool to serve various groups' information and democratic needs (Syvertsen et al., 2014). This approach has aimed to support an inclusive and diverse sphere of public communication (Jakobsson et al., 2021), enabling both freedom of speech and dialogue.

However, especially in the present era of digital media and global influences, whether the Nordic media model still correlates with Nordic media realities is a relevant question (see also Ala-Fossi, 2020; Nordic Journal of

Media Studies, 2020). The Nordic countries' media policies and regulations are increasingly influenced by political decisions and legislation that stem from international commitments. Their implementation, however, still depends on historical factors, such as national constitutions and economic conditions that reflect both similarities and vast differences, leading to path-dependent variations.

In the following section, we present some main historical developments and how they affect the Nordic countries' current media model. Then, we explain our analytical framework related to the media policy differences that we have observed, as well as our three case studies. Finally, we summarise our findings in the context of epistemic rights and the digital era vis-à-vis the Nordic media model, freedom of speech and dialogue.

A Long-Shared History

The Nordic countries are often considered similar and uniform. However, at least 11 wars have been waged between Sweden and Denmark. During the nineteenth century's wave of nationalism, significant cultural and language strife occurred in Norway between Norwegians and Swedes. In Finland, similar conflicts arose between Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking people. Norway was ruled by both Denmark and Sweden for centuries, and Finland was part of Sweden for over 600 years.

From Enmity to Cooperation

Cooperation between the Nordic countries is common. A long-lasting effort in this regard is the Nordic Council, the official body for formal inter-parliamentary cooperation among the Nordic countries, which was formed in 1952. During the Cold War, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), while Sweden and Finland remained neutral until the spring of 2022. Currently, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland are members of the European Union (EU), but Norway and Iceland cooperate only through the European Economic Area (EEA).

This historical path dependency is also evident in each country's constitutional framework and identity. A constitutional framework is essential for analysing how rights are guaranteed both theoretically and in practice. While Nordic constitutions are similar, almost all Western constitutions

are alike. A closer look reveals that all such similarities are based not on a shared Nordicness but, rather, on European and even international constitutional trends.

Nordic Constitutions and Freedom of Speech

All the 'old' Nordic countries are kingdoms, and their first step in creating a constitution was transferring monarchical power to public institutions (Suksi, 2018). In Nordic countries, the Reformation altered power relations between the state and the church. Some arrangements by the Swedish Instrument of Government in 1634 remain, in one form or another, present in the Swedish and Finnish constitutions (Tamm, 2005). Since the early twentieth century, all the Nordic countries have been parliamentary democracies.

The Nordic countries' current geographical area has evolved from comprising two states to five. The Nordic constitutions are divided into Western (Denmark) and Eastern (Sweden) traditions (Tuori, 2002). This division is mainly reflected in institutional elements—for example, the separation of executive and legislative powers. However, constitutional traditions and identities affect doctrines on fundamental and human rights, such as freedom of speech. One main difference is the judicial review of laws on a constitutional basis. In the Western tradition, courts—and especially supreme courts—have the right to review laws' constitutionality. In the Eastern tradition, the Swedish parliament is the authority on constitutional review, and the Finnish parliament's Constitutional Law Committee rarely conducts judicial reviews.

The Nordic constitutions have included catalogues on fundamental and human rights for a remarkably long time. The Swedish *Freedom of the Press Act* of 1766 was a constitution. However, a new constitution by King Gustav III abolished all previous constitutions six years later. In Denmark-Norway, a declaration on the free press was issued in 1770. Today, the most notable exceptions in the Nordic countries are the Swedish freedom of speech laws; the *Instrument of Government* guarantees freedom of speech as a fundamental right, but the *Freedom of the Press Act* regulates print media, and the *Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression* regulates broadcasting and other electronic media.

All current Nordic constitutions align with international human rights treaties. The Nordic constitutions have been regularly reformed, and because of these reforms, the status of fundamental rights has become

more significant. One of the most recent reforms has occurred in Iceland, which crowd-sourced the drafting of its constitution. However, this process has ground to a halt. Today, overall, the Nordic countries share the same European values and a Nordic ideology based on the public sphere, access to information, and freedom of speech.

Analysing the Transition of Media Welfare States

The history of the Nordic countries is a useful backdrop to understand the similarities and dissimilarities in these welfare states' development. Two complementary approaches of new institutionalism, *discursive institutionalism* and *historical institutionalism*, reveal how political solutions develop by focusing on how ideas and discourses shape and promote policy changes (Schmidt, 2008).

In the Nordic countries, the discourse on a 'welfare state' is as powerful a policy tool as the actual operational policies that characterise what one could call a 'Nordic welfare state'. While the Danish declaration on the free press and the Swedish *Freedom of the Press Act* were implemented before welfare policies, the latter can however be regarded mostly as a counterrevolutionary policy by the Swedish monarchy. Freedom of expression and access to information have since developed into important elements of the Nordic model. The historical context, including periods of censorship, has become less important compared to the ideological discourse on freedom.

Nevertheless, critical points in the Nordic countries' history help explain Nordic media policies' more recent developments. These 'critical junctures' (Pierson, 2000) have set policies on a specific path. Changing political or economic realities, new technologies and shifting social norms can alter policies' paths (Mahoney, 2000, p. 517; Pierson, 2000, p. 263)—sometimes incrementally, rather than acutely (Thelen, 2009).

Although we can outline the development of Nordic countries' shared history and how their media systems' roots reflect historical, ideological, and practical similarities, the contradiction between the idealised Nordic model and reality has increased. The idea of a media welfare state should, therefore, be regarded as dynamic and in need of periodic re-examination (Syvertsen et al., 2014). Especially in the era of digital media and global influences, the question of whether the Nordic media model still correlates with Nordic media realities is relevant. The factors that influence

current media policies and regulations are historical, legal, political, economic, and technological.

The Roles of National Path Dependence and Supranational Decision-Making

While the regulation of media content has been regarded fundamentally as a national affair, in some instances, the ambition to create a single market in the EU has altered this aspect of national sovereignty. However, EU acts are always incorporated into existing national regulatory structures. Directives must be formally transposed into national legislation, a process which undoubtedly results in national variations. Although they are directly enforceable, regulations most often allow for national exceptions according to member-state law.

All Nordic countries are also members of the Council of Europe and signatories of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The reception of supranational regulation varies between countries: Sweden's idiosyncratic freedom of speech regulation has side-lined supranational regulation, while Finland, Iceland, and Norway have reformed their constitutions and legislation to meet European standards. Without underestimating the importance of supranational decision-making, considering how national path dependence influences supranational policies' incorporation into national media regulations is equally necessary.

The Transition from Welfare States to Competition States

The transition from welfare states to competition states has been ongoing since the 1970s, and Nordic social democracy is especially undergoing a deep crisis. None of the Nordic countries present a perfect example of the suggested Nordic media model, and alongside their similarities, the media systems also reflect many market- and policy-based differences (Engelstad et al., 2017; Hilson, 2008; Nord, 2008).

Finland's shift from a welfare state into a liberal competition state has been argued to be more rapid than the corresponding shifts in the other Nordic countries, especially due to two severe recessions in the 1990s and late 2000 (Ala-Fossi, 2020). These developments have also reflected in the Nordic countries' media policies, of which direct and indirect press subsidies present a good example (Ots et al., 2016).

The Digital Era and Epistemic Rights in the Nordic Countries

The digital era has brought new challenges for epistemic rights in Nordic countries. Since plenty of media players now operate through many channels and platforms, the role and importance of a national public sphere and the state's role as a media actor are under political debate (Enli et al., 2018).

Freedom of speech is just words on paper if regulations' de facto functioning and the atmosphere in which freedom of speech and public dialogue take place are not considered. All Nordic states have specific media laws and penal laws to regulate freedom of speech, and these laws also attempt to support dialogical rights to public deliberation and participation. In Sweden, websites and blogs with a journalistic focus and editors can apply for certifications verifying that their online media are within the scope of the *Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression*. Without certification or an editor, ordinary laws apply as well—as they do with discussion forums—because content can be changed by people other than editorial staff. In Denmark, journalists who work for internet media that are not registered with the Danish Press Council do not enjoy some rights and privileges of the *Media Liability Act* (Sandfeld Jacobsen & Schaumburg-Müller, 2011). In comparison, the Finnish media law and its Norwegian equivalent are technology-neutral.

Despite strong legislative guarantees of freedom of expression, issues related to the multiplicity of online content and the quality of public dialogue—especially on social media platforms—cannot be solved by legislation alone because the platforms have become significant third parties in regulation practices. Problems arise in that much of the user-generated online content published on such platforms is harmful yet not illegal, containing hate speech, misinformation, and harassment that hinder freedom of expression and free dialogue. Nordic policies have recently attempted to address these problems with measures other than law.

THREE ILLUSTRATIVE CASES

In the previous section, we presented some of the changes or critical points that we believe have affected the Nordic media model's development in recent years. In the current subsection, we use case studies to demonstrate nationally-varying responses, within the Nordic media model, to issues concerning freedom of speech and dialogical rights. For this purpose, we

used qualitative document analysis to identify some current solutions in the Nordic countries' media regulations and policies. We drew on a variety of sources, ranging from formal documents on different legislative processes to policy papers, as well as previous scholarship.

Case 1: Path Dependence and Supranational Decision-Making, the Regulation of Online Audiovisual Media

The regulation of online media is conspicuously national, although policy-making has increasingly taken the form of EU acts that are adapted into national contexts in a path-dependent manner. While other Nordic countries' ways of transposing EU regulation tend to be duly considered when designing national regulation, the solutions have been more oriented towards national needs and regulations. A recent example is the ongoing transposition of the updated *Audiovisual Media Services Directive* (AVMSD, 2018/1808). The directive includes additional content moderation requirements for video-sharing platforms. While the directive's key definitions and initiative to regulate video-sharing platforms stemmed from the EU institutions, the national regulatory proposals that transpose the relevant provisions are structured according to how media have been regulated nationally.

The Finnish and Swedish proposals require video-sharing platforms to protect audiences from specific crimes identified in criminal codes. While these provisions are similar, notably, the crimes themselves differ slightly in their national definitions, and unlike the Finnish proposal, the proposed law in Sweden also requires platforms to take reasonable measures against unlawful threats (Prop., 2019/20:168, 27). Conversely, the Danish proposal authorises the Minister of Culture to introduce new rules for video-sharing platforms regarding relevant criminal offences (Kulturministeriet, 2019, p. 4). All three proposals transpose the responsibilities defined in Article 28b of the updated AVMSD; nevertheless, the national criminal codes reflect national path dependencies—in terms of both who can define necessary governance measures in the respective countries and the criminalisation of specific activities.

In online media, the commonalities between the Nordic countries stem less from the countries' shared histories and more from their EU or EEA membership.

Case 2: The Public's Dialogical Rights Versus the Press's Private Interests

In the Nordic countries, print media have a dual nature as publicly supported instruments of a free and inclusive public sphere, enabling the public's dialogical rights, and as private businesses. Traditionally, Nordic print media have been publicly subsidised in two ways: with direct subsidies to ensure diversity and with tax subsidies to ensure viability. However, unlike its Western neighbours, Finland decided in the 1990s to cut public spending by abandoning direct press subsidies. This decision may have accelerated the confrontation between, especially, the Finnish press industry and the public service media Yleisradio since the internet has become an increasingly relevant form of content distribution for both parties.

The commercial press in Finland continues to enjoy relatively generous indirect tax subsidies because of its importance to freedom of speech, social dialogue, and democracy. However, its criticism against Yleisradio—which is publicly funded for the same reasons—has increased at almost the same pace as the decrease in income from print subscriptions and advertising over the past two decades. Commercial media have constantly criticised both the remit and funding of public service media in other Nordic countries as well. However, Finnish commercial media alone have succeeded in also restricting public service media through a complaint to the European Commission. As a result, the Danish Media Association and Swedish Media Publishers' Association are considering types of complaints like those by the federation of Finnish private media, Finnmedia, made in 2017. Additionally, two more related complaints to the Commission are in process: a complaint about Yleisradio's online learning services and video-on-demand services filed by Sanoma Corporation in Finland and a complaint about Estonian Public Broadcasting online news by the Estonian Association of Media Enterprises.

The dispute over public service media's internet operations has deep roots in Finland. Twenty years ago, Yleisradio had an early advantage in developing new online services—partly because private Finnish publishing companies dismissed, at first, the internet as a serious platform. However, private media companies started demanding Yleisradio's exclusion from the internet in 2004. Overall, Yleisradio faced a financial crisis since its income from television licencing fees collapsed after television's digital switchover in 2007. A parliamentary committee issued a proposal for Yleisradio's new funding system in 2009, but it never proceeded into

parliament since Finnmedia organised a campaign against the proposal, considering Yleisradio to be too well-funded (Laakso, 2012.) As this tension further increased with the economic crisis and the Finnish commercial media's decreasing income, Yleisradio funding reforms had to wait until the next general elections in 2011. Parliament accepted an updated proposal for an income-linked Yleisradio tax in December 2011. Three other Nordic countries (Norway, Denmark, and Sweden) implemented funding reforms for public service media after Finland.

In Finland, the public criticism of Yleisradio funding, as well as the limits of its remit, continued in the press and peaked on private television just before the general elections of 2015. The new government of the National Coalition Party, Centre Party, and Finns Party appointed a working group to study the development of Yleisradio, which reached a consensus only in June 2016. The committee made a few concessions to the private sector, but no drastic cuts to Yleisradio funding took place. So, despite the relative success of its domestic media campaign, Finnmedia failed again to achieve its political objectives (Karppinen & Ala-Fossi, 2017).

At this point, Finnmedia decided to change tactics by taking the domestic dispute to the European level using legal arguments. In 2017, it filed a complaint with the EU Commission, arguing that Yleisradio's online content in text format violated EU state aid rules since text content was not mentioned in Yleisradio's legal remit. After non-public discussions with the Commission's Directorate-General for Competition, the Finnish government proposed an amendment to the *Act of Yleisradio*, which required the text-based journalistic content on the Yleisradio website to be linked to audio and video content with only a few exceptions. Despite criticism from academic researchers, as well as a citizens' initiative that proposed an alternative solution, the Parliament of Finland endorsed this amendment in March 2022.

Case 3: Hate Speech as a Threat to Free Expression and Dialogue and Policy Solutions

Hate speech has greatly concerned both the Council of Europe and the EU. It is seen to endanger the cohesion of democratic societies, the protection of human rights and the rule of law while increasing the risk of social unrest and violence.[1] Furthermore, the hate speech issue has been

---

[1] See: https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/hate-speech.

addressed under the Nordic cooperation of the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers.[2] This Nordic cooperation has addressed, for example, gender-based online hatred and harassment in recent years (e.g., Bladini, 2017; Mogensen & Helding Rand, 2020).

In the Nordic countries, legislation does not define 'hate speech'. However, all the Nordic countries criminalise specific speech acts which can be categorised as 'hate speech'. Such acts include, for example, defamation, illegal threats, persecution, and incitement to hatred. For incitement to hatred, the protected characteristics that could be attacked include race, skin colour, ethnicity, religion, nationality, and sexual orientation. Gender, in general, is not a protected characteristic; however, the legislations are due to change. Moreover, all crimes can be investigated and convicted as hate crimes if a hate-based motive can be demonstrated (see, e.g., Bladini, 2017).

In line with the Nordic media model's strong focus on media policy, all Nordic countries have recently published hate-speech–related policies, seeking solutions to this growing problem. For Case 3, key Nordic policy documents dating from 2016 to 2021 ($N = 11$)[3] were analysed, and we mapped similarities and differences in problem definitions and suggested solutions.

Nordic policies regard hate speech as especially threatening to society's basic values, including democracy, freedom of expression and opinion, free public debate, human rights, and equality. A shared view across the Nordic countries' respective policies suggests that public debate should be open to all opinions, that freedom of expression receives strong support, and that great variety of speech is allowed, yet with respect to others in the debate. Such open dialogue is presently regarded as endangered by hate speech, threats, disinformation, and propaganda. Instead of focusing only on hate speech directed at individuals or minority groups, based on their named and legally protected characteristics, the hate speech policies also focus on the harassment of people in public positions and people who participate in public debate. The harassment of these public actors is seen

[2] See: https://www.norden.org/en/political_areas.

[3] These policy papers were found through an online search of the Nordic countries' government websites (Denmark, $n = 3$, regeringen.dk; Norway, $n = 2$, regjeringen.no; Sweden, $n = 3$, regeringen.se; and Finland, $n = 3$, various ministries' website). This search was conducted from November 2020 to January 2021. The policy papers were checked again between April and August 2022. Due to space limitations, we do not provide the related references in full here.

as the most harmful aspect of hate speech for society's democratic functions.

The current hate speech problem manifests especially on online platforms. The internet and social media have not only provided people with new means of self-expression and participation but also created multiple problems. Platforms are identified in the policies as the third party that currently controls public debate and its values, and this is seen as a threat to democracy. Additionally, the analysed policies identify that hate speech derives from various societal processes, such as growing differences in shared basic values, polarisation, segregation, the rise of populism and nationalism, the changing media landscape, and professional journalism's economic problems. Hate speech involves and affects multiple actors across society in various ways.

The suggested policy solutions to hate speech involve governance, officials, legislation, education, social policies, perpetrators, victims, users of online services, the media, and, finally, online platforms. The policies call for joint action at all levels of the welfare state, including continued support for the fundaments of media welfare states such as subsidies for professional media to ensure universal access to and the diversity of content, guarantees for editorial freedom and media self-regulation, as well as civil society's actions and consultations. The state is responsible for guaranteeing a functioning democracy and freedom of expression, but according to the policies, individuals are responsible for their online behaviour. Individuals are to be supported, for example, through media literacy education.

Hate speech is pushing Nordic countries towards shared solutions: instead of developing country-specific legal measures on hate speech, these countries all expect Europe-wide and international processes to produce new regulations that will help control the platforms, which have been reluctant to seriously address hate speech. National legislation that would regulate these giants or, for example, give them editorial responsibilities has not gained support. National criminal laws facilitating more efficient punishment of online harassment have, however, been adjusted in Denmark and in Finland. These laws will also be relevant for the enforcement of the EU's Digital Services Act, which places specific requirements on very large online platforms.

Conclusion

The Nordic media welfare state model still forms the basis for media policies and regulation, especially given the ideal of media subsidies paired with media freedom, including strong legislative support for freedom of expression and dialogue. However, we argue that the Nordic countries' implementations increasingly differ. Historically grounded constitutional and legal differences have led to national path dependence in these implementations. Paradoxically, these differences are becoming increasingly visible in today's supranational regulatory environment.

In the regulation of online media, commonalities have been observed in the high regard for freedom of speech, but concrete regulatory frameworks differ. Online media policies' most similar aspects stem not from Nordic cooperation but from the underlying EU framework. The actual implementation of EU legislation has varied among the Nordic countries, as the regulation of audiovisual online content has demonstrated. Also, despite similar principles and goals for public service and commercial media, national solutions have varied and sparked different disputes in the respective Nordic countries. Current online challenges, such as hate speech, are pushing the Nordic countries towards accepting new international and shared legal solutions, while some solutions can be found in national policies and renewed support for the media welfare model's principles such as diverse and open public sphere and sustainable professional media.

The three cases that we have presented in this chapter demonstrate the increasing difficulty of arguing that the Nordic countries presents a unified example of the Nordic media model. While these nations' common histories can be reasonably recognised, the Nordic media model must now be reassessed in view of their differences. Such a reassessment also requires the critical observation of the Nordic countries' ability to support citizens' epistemic rights in the age of digital platforms and disruption. While the principles of freedom of expression and dialogue are highly valued in legislation, they are not upheld in practice unless also other conditions for a viable, free, and diverse public sphere are guaranteed. Continued support for epistemic rights and the media welfare model demands constant re-evaluation and political will in the changing digital media environment. Neither the support nor the imagined perfection of the media welfare-state model should be taken for granted.

References

Ala-Fossi, M. (2020). Finland: Media welfare state in the digital era? *Journal of Digital Media & Policy, 11*(2), 133–150. https://doi.org/10.1386/jdmp_00020_1

Bladini, M. (2017). *Hat och hot på nätet. En kartläggning av den rättsliga regleringen i Norden från ett jämställdhetsperspektiv.* NIKK, Nordisk information för kunskap om kön, på uppdrag av Nordiska ministerrådet. https://www.nikk.no/wp-content/uploads/Hat-och-hot-p%C3%A5-n%C3%A4tet_170627.pdf

Engelstad, F., Larsen, H., Rogstad, J., & Steen-Johnsen, K. (Eds.). (2017). *Institutional change in the public sphere. Views on the Nordic model.* De Gruyter Open Ltd.

Enli, G., Syvertsen, T., & Mjøs, O. J. (2018). The welfare state and the media system. *Scandinavian Journal of History, 43*(5), 601–623. https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2018.1474023

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism.* Princeton University Press.

Hallin, D., & Mancini, P. (2004). *Comparing media systems: Three models of media and politics.* Cambridge University Press.

Hilson, M. (2008). *The Nordic model. Scandinavia since 1945.* Reaktion Books.

Jakobsson, P., Lindell, J., & Stiernstedt, F. (2021). A neoliberal media welfare state? The Swedish media system in transformation. *Javnost – The Public, 28*(4), 375–390. https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2021.1969506

Karppinen, K., & Ala-Fossi, M. (2017). Finland: Maintaining the fragile consensus. In C. Herzog, H. Hilker, L. Novy, & O. Torun (Eds.), *Transparency and funding of public service media – Die deutsche Debatte im internationalen Kontext* (pp. 107–117). Springer VS. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-17997-7_9

Kulturministeriet. (2019). *Forslag til lov om ændring af lov om radio- og fjernsynsvirksomhed og lov om film.* https://prodstoragehoeringspo.blob.core.windows.net/242bc25c-d414-4a2e-959c-48242cbf46ae/Lovudkast.pdf

Laakso, A. (2012). *"Pakkoavioliittoa" vastustamassa. Suomalainen lehdistö ja mediamaksu 2009–2010.* Master's thesis, University of Tampere.

Mahoney, J. (2000). Path dependence in historical sociology. *Theory and Society, 29*(4), 507–548.

Mogensen, C., & Helding Rand, S. (2020). *The angry internet. A threat to gender equality, democracy and well-being.* Centre for Digital Youth Care. https://cfdp.dk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CFDP_the_angry_internet_ISSUE.pdf

Nord, L. (2008). Comparing Nordic media systems: North between West and East? *Central European Journal of Communication, 1*(1), 95–110.

Nordic Journal of Media Studies. (2020). Special Issue 2(1).

Ots, M., Krumsvik, A. H., Ala-Fossi, M., & Rendahl, P. (2016). The shifting role of Value-Added Tax (VAT) as a media policy tool: A three-country comparison

of political justifications. *Javnost – The Public, 23*(2), 170–187. https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2016.1162988

Pierson, P. (2000). Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics. *American Political Science Review, 94*(2), 251–267. https://doi.org/10.2307/2586011

Prop. 2019/20:168. En moderniserad radio- och tv-lag. https://www.regeringen.se/4a6620/contentassets/978a310426b64fd4b74f86bd9cbf7b0e/en-moderniserad-radio%2D%2Doch-tv-lag-prop.-201920168.pdf

Sandfeld Jacobsen, S., & Schaumburg-Müller, S. (2011). *Media law in Denmark*. Kluwer Law International.

Schmidt, V. A. (2008). Discursive institutionalism: The explanatory power of ideas and discourse. *Annual Review of Political Science, 11*(1), 303–326.

Suksi, M. (2018). Common roots of Nordic constitutional law? Some observations on legal-historical development and relations between the constitutional systems of five Nordic countries. In H. Krunke & B. Thorarensen (Eds.), *The Nordic constitutions – A comparative and contextual study* (pp. 9–42). Hart Publishing.

Syvertsen, T., Enli, G., Mjøs, O. J., & Moe, H. (2014). *The media welfare state. Nordic media in the digital era*. University of Michigan Press.

Tamm, D. (2005). How Nordic are the old Nordic Laws? In D. Tamm & H. Vogt (Eds.), *How Nordic are the Nordic Medieval Laws?* (pp. 6–22). University of Copenhagen Press.

Thelen, K. (2009). Institutional change in advanced political economies. *British Journal of Industrial Relations, 47*(3), 471–498. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8543.2009.00746.x

Tuori, K. (2002). *Critical legal positivism*. Ashgate.