

Summary

This report focuses on implementing surveys among journalists, particularly in Finland, Sweden, and Norway. The report was produced in a research project led by the Finnish Association for Media and Communication Studies (Mevi) and funded by the Media Industry Research Foundation of Finland. The work was carried out between March and August 2024.

The project was prompted by concerns about the difficulty of conducting surveys in Finland in general, and in particular, the challenges of collecting data with surveys aimed at journalists. While online surveys have become a common way to collect data on journalists' opinions and attitudes, many researchers face the same problem: Finnish journalists are not easy to reach and the number of respondents in surveys is often low.

This report describes how the nature of cooperation between Finnish media researchers and the Union of Journalists in Finland has developed in recent years and how national-level surveys with journalists have been organised in Finland's Nordic peer countries, Norway and Sweden. Experiences and practices have also been sought from Germany and Denmark, as well as from commercial companies conducting surveys in Finland.

In Norway, a high response rate in surveys is due in particular to the excellent cooperation between the Norwegian Union of Journalists and researchers. The union works systematically to encourage its members to respond to surveys. In Sweden, the panel model has proved to be a good alternative. The Swedish Panel of Journalists has been in operation since 2012. It has around 2,000 members who actively respond to surveys. However, its funding, representativeness, and recruitment of new respondents have posed problems. The panel option has also been attempted in Norway. The Norwegian Panel of Journalists was set up with pilot funding. However, the project has so far not received new funding and the Norwegian Panel of Journalists has not been active since the 2020–2021 pilot study.

More globally, the experiences from the third wave of the [Worlds of Journalism Study project](#) suggest that many countries are struggling with the same problems in data collection as Finland. This is partly due to the increased number of surveys targeting journalists and survey fatigue.

The report proposes three possible solutions for conducting journalism surveys in Finland. These are 1) the establishment of a new Finnish Panel of Journalists, 2) closer cooperation with the Union of Journalists in Finland, and 3) the use of the services of commercial survey operators. The importance of coordination and cooperation between researchers in reducing the survey burden on journalists is also stressed.

The report is based on interviews with 17 people from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and Finland who are familiar with the topic. Project researcher Annina Vainio conducted the interviews and also wrote the report. A steering group nominated by Mevi guided the work. The Media Industry Research Foundation of Finland funded the project.