



# SWEDEN

## EurOMo Country Report 2025

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## Overview of main factual findings

The Swedish news media market is characterised by a noticeable concentration of ownership, in both the newspaper and broadcast media markets. Most of the news is consumed via professional news media, and to a large degree in digital channels.

In Sweden, local and regional newspapers have been crucial for the production and distribution of local news and debate, and for many years, there were almost as many newspaper companies as there were newspapers. Today, most of the approximately 140 paid-for newspapers in the country are owned by a few companies. Also, newspaper readers have mostly turned from print to digital platforms.

The decrease in independently owned newspapers is a result of acquisitions and mergers, most of which have taken place after the introduction of the Internet in the mid-1990s. The creation of these larger newspaper groups has often been motivated – according to the owners – by economies of scale and competition from the major digital platforms. During the years around 2020, a second period of mergers and acquisitions took place when Bonnier acquired a major part of its ownership in local and regional newspapers. Bonnier has also entered cross-ownership with two regional publishing groups, Gota Media and NWT Gruppen, and is thus a partner in around twenty-five more.

The broadcast news market is heavily dominated by the public service companies, Sveriges Television AB and Sveriges Radio AB, and the biggest commercial television news channel and organisation, TV4 Media AB. Until 2025, the latter channel was owned by the telecom corporation Telia Company AB, which in turn has the Swedish state as its largest owner. In 2024, Telia Company announced that TV4 Media will be sold to Norwegian media group Schibsted, and in June 2025, the affair was approved by the Swedish Competition Authority.

The platforms and social networks, or digital intermediaries, play a less central role than professional news media when it comes to the channels from which the Swedish public get their news. At the same time, the platforms attract most of the media investments from advertisers. An annual study, *Maktbarometern*, tracks the most influential social media accounts on several social media services. This aggregated index shows that today, large professional news media that engage on social media are assessed as influential. Few independent news media outlets are strong on social media.

The transparency risk for the Swedish- and Nordic-owned news media, regarding ownership and outlets, is low. For the platforms and digital intermediaries, the same risk is high.

## Outlets and owners

The Swedish newspaper market consists of less than 60 companies, which publish approximately 140 digital and printed paid-for dailies, half-weeklies, and weeklies. But almost the entire industry's turnover takes place in just more than a handful of company groups (Lindberg, 2025).

The largest company group on the media market is Albert Bonnier AB (8,171 employees), which, with its subsidiaries, owns Sweden's biggest morning paper, *Dagens Nyheter*, and the second biggest evening paper, *Expressen*. In addition, the group owns the biggest regional morning paper in the south of Sweden, *Sydsvenskan*, and the biggest national business daily, *Dagens industri*.

Through its subsidiary Bonnier News Local AB, Bonnier also owns a wide range of local and regional paid-for and free digital and printed titles, for example, *Nerikes Allehanda* and *Helsingborgs Dagblad*. The Bonnier group's mother company is owned by just over 100 members of the Bonnier family. The annual reports of the group do not include the names of all family members with ownership (and no one is reported as beneficial owner).

Since 2022, the Bonnier group owns, in addition to already mentioned companies, 30% of the regional newspaper group Gota Media AB (1,112 employees), which publishes 12 digital and printed paid-for local newspapers, and several free papers. In 2025, Bonnier News Local AB made a similar agreement with regional newspaper group NWT Gruppen (629 employees), which publishes 15 digital and printed paid-for local newspapers (Bonnier News, 2025a, 2025b). Thereby, Bonnier owns 30% of Gota Media and 30% of NWT Gruppen. In return, the two latter own 15% each of Bonnier News Local AB. Also, Norwegian media company Amedia holds a minority share in Bonnier News Local.

Another major Norwegian media group on the Swedish news media market is the Schibsted company group. Schibsted News Media AB (106 employees) publishes – digitally and in print – through its subsidiaries the biggest evening paper, *Aftonbladet*, the second biggest morning paper, *Svenska Dagbladet*, and the digital news service *omni.se*. Schibsted is also connected, via ownership in other companies, to the consortium behind Stampen Media AB (939 employees). In 2024, Schibsted ASA, then publicly traded on the Oslo Stock Exchange, was divided into two separate business areas, Vend Marketplace ASA, which remained publicly traded, and Schibsted Media AS, which was sold to the Norwegian Tinius Trust. Thereby, Schibsted News Media AB went from being a publicly traded company into being owned by a foundation (Schibsted, 2024a, 2024b).

The Stampen Media group owns and publishes around 12 local and regional paid-for digital and printed newspapers in western Sweden. Stampen also publishes several free papers. *Göteborgs-Posten*, the group's most read paper, is the third biggest morning paper in Sweden. Until 2024, Stampen Media AB was owned by the consortium PNV Media AB, which in late 2023 consisted of the Norwegian company Polaris Media ASA and the regional Swedish media companies NWT Media AB and Västerbottens-Kurirens Media AB. NWT group is family-owned, and Västerbottens-Kurirens Media is owned by a local foundation. Polaris Media ASA is in turn a publicly traded company on the Oslo Stock Exchange, with Schibsted Media AS and NWT Media AS as their most prominent shareholders. In 2025, Polaris acquired all shares in Stampen Media from Västerbottens-Kurirens Media AB and NWT Gruppen AB and is thereby the sole owner of the Stampen Media group (Polaris, 2025a, 2025b).

The two public service companies, Sveriges Television AB (2,454 employees) and Sveriges Radio AB (2,313 employees), are owned by the Administrative Foundation for Sveriges Radio AB, Sveriges Television AB, and Sveriges Utbildningsradio AB (the latter of which is not included in the project sample). The foundation, created to promote independence for the three public service companies, owns and manages all shares in the three companies and is intended to function as a buffer between the government and the broadcasters. The companies are funded by a general public service fee, which is collected via the tax system. Sveriges Television AB and its broadcast and digital outlets are Sweden's biggest news outlets. The second biggest news channel in 2024 was Sveriges Radio AB and its outlets (see Table 2).

TV4 Media AB (632 employees) and its sister companies have been owned by the telecom corporation Telia Company AB (17,960 employees) since 2019. Telia is publicly traded on the Stockholm Stock Exchange, and its biggest shareholder is the Swedish state. With its outlets, TV4

is the third largest news channel in Sweden. In 2024, Telia Company announced that TV4 will be sold to Norwegian media group Schibsted (Telia Company, 2025). In June 2025, the affair was approved by the Swedish Competition Authority (Konkurrensverket, 2025). Now, the ultimate owner of TV4 Media AB is the Norwegian foundation Tinius Trust.

The remaining major, and still independent, newspaper groups are Västerbottens-Kurirens Media AB (with five titles and *Västerbottens-Kuriren* as the most read) and Norrköpings Tidningars Media AB (17 paid-for titles, of which *Uppsala Nya Tidning* and *Östgöta Correspondenten* have the highest reach).

Along with these larger media companies, the Swedish market has a variety of smaller news outlets. They are characterised by being either very local or having an ideological aim. The *Mitt-i* newspaper, with its very local and many editions in the greater Stockholm area, has the highest combined reach of free newspapers. Also on the independent side is the paid-for newspaper *ETC*, a title with a clearly stated environmental and inclusive ideology. Not yet very large in reach, there are a handful of new digital-only media outlets that show an increasing influence on news and societal debate (Kantar Media, 2024a, 2024b).

Regarded as being of importance for reaching non-Swedish-speaking audiences, the Arabic *Alkompis* and the English *The Local* are included in the Swedish data sample. *Alkompis* and *The Local* presents Swedish news to non-Swedish-speaking audiences, providing them a context and explaining various subjects and situations to people who do not necessarily have contextual knowledge about Swedish society.

There are few independent news media outlets that are strong on social media, *Alkompis* being an exception. Professional news media that choose to engage on social media are among the most influential, for example, *Expressen*, *Aftonbladet*, and TV4 (Medieakademin, 2024).

### **Access to business information**

Almost all information about the news media companies is easy to find on publicly available and free websites, such as Allabolag.se and Hitta.se. It is also possible to get the information from the Swedish Companies Registration Office. Information about foundations is provided by the County Administrative Boards.

Detailed information about the public service companies is also available on the companies' websites and through the website of the Administrative Foundation.

Regarding the newsrooms' level of participation in the choice of editors-in-chief, the process in Sweden is as follows when the editor-in-chief has a managing role: If the employer is bound by a collective agreement (a written agreement between a trade union and an employer, upon which rules apply within a particular sector or workplace), the employer shall, in the event of major changes in the business, negotiate with the trade unions in accordance with the Employment Co-Determination in the Workplace Act. Appointment of managers typically constitutes such important changes that must be negotiated. The purpose is for the employer to give the trade unions the opportunity to comment on and discuss the employer's proposals before the employer decides; however, the union does not have the right to decide or appoint managers. When the information process is completed, the employer has fulfilled their obligation to negotiate. If the parties do not agree in the negotiation, the employer decides. If the employer is not bound by a collective agreement, this obligation to negotiate does not exist.

For Swedish- and Nordic-owned news media, the risk to transparency regarding ownership and outlets is low. One type of information that is not explicitly mentioned so often in the media companies' annual reports is the shareholders' voting shares.

### Distribution of news

As in most other European countries, media and news in Sweden are increasingly consumed via digital channels. According to Nordicom's national media use study (Ohlsson, 2025), the reach of media channels such as streaming TV and podcasts is growing rapidly. On an average day, streaming TV now reaches a larger portion of the Swedish population than linear broadcast TV. The same pattern applies for digital newspapers versus printed newspapers. Broadcast radio, however, is still the biggest media channel. In later years, Facebook's daily reach has decreased (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Channel: Daily reach, 9–85 years old, 2024

Media channel	Reach (%)
Broadcast radio	70
Streaming TV	67
Facebook	60
Instagram	58
Digital newspaper	58
Broadcast TV	51
YouTube	47
Printed book	38
Snapchat	29
Podcast	29
Printed newspaper	20
Printed magazine	20
Digital magazine	18

Source: Ohlsson, 2025

As seen in Table 2, the most important professional news outlets, according to most used news sources, are the public service outlets Sveriges Television and Sveriges Radio. Other important news outlets are the (by then) free-to-air channel TV4 and the morning and evening newspapers. Social networks play a less important role as a source for news for most of the population. In general, younger audiences tend to a greater extent get their news via social networks than older audiences.

**Table 2.** News: Daily reach, 9–85 years old, 2024

News media channel (online/offline)	Reach (%)
Sveriges Television	51
Sveriges Radio	41
TV4	35
Morning newspaper	33
Evening newspaper	27
Facebook	22
Instagram	19
YouTube	11
TikTok	11
X	6
Snapchat	4

Source: Ohlsson, 2025

A characteristic of the digital news market in Sweden is that most of the traffic to news sites is direct. The share of users who use search engines to find relevant news is smaller than in many other European countries. Surveys show a growing use of AI services in the population. This could raise concerns about news consumption, but rather, AI tools replace the general use of Google search (Internetstiftelsen, 2025). News aggregators like Apple and Google News do not play a vital role in the Swedish market.

No third party audits the audience of social media accounts. However, an annual report, *Maktbarometern*, tracks the most influential accounts on various social media services. The report shows there are few independent news media outlets that are strong on social media. Furthermore, accounts belonging to large professional news media are among the most influential social media accounts for news (Medieakademin, 2024).

For ordinary media users, it is relatively hard to find transparent, independent, and audited distribution data. The largest and most influential newspapers in the country do not report a hard copy circulation figure in line with the traditional audit process (TS Media Audit) through Kantar Media, and a lot of news sites do not report an audited report on their web traffic. The most common way to report information about the size of the audience is by reach. The reach is measured and reported every four months by Kantar Media in the *Orvesto Consumer* report, which includes print audience (incl. the PDF replica), digital-only, and total reach. Almost all opinion-shaping news media participate in the *Orvesto* report. Kantar Media also provides weekly reach for websites and apps through its service Mediafact.

For Swedish- and Nordic-owned news media, the risk to transparency regarding the distribution is moderate.

For platforms or digital intermediaries, the picture is somewhat different. All major platforms have permanent presence in Sweden with several companies, for example, Amazon Corporate Services Sweden AB (73 employees), Apple AB (360 employees), Facebook Sweden AB (65 employees), Google Sweden AB (433 employees), and Tik Tok Sweden AB (94 employees). But since a large proportion of the platforms' revenues are booked in countries other than Sweden, the reported revenues of the mentioned companies and their sister companies do not give a complete picture of how big the revenues generated in Sweden are. It is also much harder to get information on their economy, financial status, executives, personnel, and ownership, compared with the Swedish- or Nordic-owned media companies. None of the platforms in question allow an independent third party to revise its traffic figures or participate actively in various studies of reach.

For the platforms and digital intermediaries, the risk to transparency is high.

## Legal framework

Sweden has, like most other democracies, a written Constitution that sets out the rules for how society shall be governed.

The Constitution consists of four fundamental laws, two of which regulate freedom of the press and freedom of expression: the Freedom of the Press Act (1949:105) and the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression (1991:1469). These laws state that information concerning the identity of the responsible editor shall be available to the public, and a periodical must have a responsible editor. The person who has been appointed responsible editor by the owner bears sole responsibility in the event of a breach of freedom of the press or freedom of expression.

Before publication, the owner of the periodical must have obtained a valid certificate stating there is no legal impediment to publish – including notification of publisher – from the responsible authority. Therefore, the owner must be known.

In addition to these fundamental laws, there are several laws, regulations, and rules that govern competition and transparency in the Swedish market. The most prominent ones are the Swedish Competition Act (2008:579) and the EU's competition rules. Together, they contain two prohibitions: the prohibition against anticompetitive cooperation between undertakings and the prohibition against the exploitation of market power by undertakings in a dominant position. One aim of the Swedish Transparency Act (2005:590) is to provide the European Commission with transparency in financial relations between the state, municipality, and regions and companies owned by the public, for example, the state. The regulations also provide insight into the financial activities of certain companies and beneficial owners. The EU regulations on anti-money-laundering and owner transparency have been implemented within the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-terrorist Financing Act (2017:630) and the Beneficial Owner Registration Act (2017:631).

The Radio and Television Act (2010:696) contains provisions regarding television broadcasts, on-demand television, searchable teletext, and radio broadcasts, in accordance with information and registration, licensing requirements, and so on. Broadcasters that broadcast television and providers of on-demand television and streaming services shall make the following information easily, directly, and permanently accessible to the recipients of a service: a) the name of the media service provider; b) the geographical address where the media service provider is established; c) information about the media service provider, including e-mail and website addresses; d)

information about the supplier's owner and ownership structure; and e) information on the competent regulatory authority. The latest updates of the Radio and Television Act will, if passed by parliament in late 2025, include adaptations to the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA).

In late 2025, the Government will adopt a new law on public service media; one of the designs is to make the regulation technology-neutral. Into this new law, specific regulations on public service media will be transferred from the Radio and Television Act (i.e., the founding of public service media companies), and the Act on Financing of Public Service. The new law will also state rules on the appointment of the board of directors and so forth, to implement relevant articles of EMFA into this specific act on public service media.

Providers of on-demand television are also subject to Section 8 of the Electronic Commerce and other Information Society Services Act (2002:562). This law, in accordance with the mentioned bill, was updated in December 2024.

A limited company must file its annual report with the Swedish Companies Registration Office every year. This rule also applies to dormant companies and companies in liquidation. In the annual report, the companies must present information on their owner and ownership interests, for example, name, company registration number, and residence.

In the Annual Report Act (1995:1554), ownership interest refers to a holding in shares in another company that is intended to promote the activities of the owner company by creating a lasting connection with the other company. A holding of at least 20% of the capital in the other company is seen as an ownership interest, unless otherwise stated in the circumstances.

In accordance with the EU directive, Swedish laws, the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Act set rules for who should be considered the beneficial owner of a company, a foundation, or an association. The information must be identified and reported to the Companies Registration Office. Public listed companies are exempt. Also, in accordance with this regulation, companies, associations, and foundations must identify any politically exposed person within their organisations.

Ownership via various forms is regulated according to the Companies Act (2005:551), the Foundation Act (1994:1220), and the Economic Associations Act (2018:672).

Co-determination in the workplace is regulated according to the Employment Act (1976:580).

Information on state advertising has up until the adoption of the European Media Freedom Act not been available in Sweden. Although, as from January 1st, 2026, there will be regulation in place that requires state and official bodies to report their investments in advertising, and an obligation for media companies to make information on advertising available to the responsible authority in Sweden, the Swedish Media Agency.

The laws and regulations in place give the public good opportunities to access information about media ownership and control. These opportunities were strengthened in 2023 when the circle of providers responsible for ensuring that their service users have access to certain information was widened and they were required to provide more information than before. In 2026, the opportunities will be further strengthened with the adaptations to the EMFA. The risk to transparency is therefore low.

In general, information on the presence or absence of a politically exposed person is either not transparent or not an issue.

These laws, regulation, and rules can be found in the Swedish Government Offices' legal databases (see Regeringskansliet, 2025 and Sveriges Riksdag, 2025a, 2025b).

### **About the Swedish EurOMo 2025 data sample**

Ownership data in the database for EurOMo 2025 is collected from the companies' annual reports for 2023 and reflect the situation in Sweden on 31 December 2023. In this way, there is a fixed point in time and a fixed material for documentation of ownership. The turnover figures also apply to 2023, while audience figures are for 2024 or the end of 2024. This point in time was chosen to make a current selection of the largest news media in Sweden. In a few cases, the information for editor-in-chief and managing director has been updated if there was a change during 2024. Larger and more important changes in the ownership structure that have taken place after 31 December 2023 are commented on in this country report. Information on regulation refers to the situation in September 2025.

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