

Ruler of the news flow

Traditional media in the competitiveness pact negotiations 2015–2016

OLLI SEURI
RIIKKA ERA
ANU KOIVUNEN
MACIEJ JANICKI
PIHLA TOIVANEN
JULIUS HOKKANEN
EETU MÄKELÄ

The shift in political communication has been described as a transition to a hybrid media system, which has evolved through mutual (inter)actions among older and newer media logics. This article explains how the Finnish media moved the flows of power in the Competitiveness Pact negotiations in 2015–2016 by giving a voice to various actors. Research shows that in the labor market context, news coverage is traditional. Empirical findings verify the importance of elite sources and institutional positions: the government and the trade union movement are key actors, while employers' organizations, the opposition and outside experts remain side actors and "ordinary citizens" have little voice. However, the impact of the hybridization can be seen in the way the media gives voice to actors. Stories that quote only one actor are much more common than stories that cite two or more actors. The power of traditional media is the power to control the news flow – it rhythmizes and compiles the speech acts of individual actors, which is not necessarily much more dialogical in form than the social media news stream. For the time being, however, traditional media brings together institutional power players, legitimizing its position as a key forum for politics.

Keywords: news flow, labor market, competitiveness pact, hybrid media system, quote detection

The opening power elite

Recruitment of women to the Finnish elites in 1991–2021

ILKKA RUOSTETSAARI

Purpose of the study was to explore the extent to which the position of women has changed in the topmost decision-making of Finnish societal sectors in 1991–2021. The study epitomizes the changes that have taken place in terms of the openness of elite structure and the gender equality of opportunities.

The study analysed, whether the 40 percent threshold was broken in terms of elite positions of women among the elites of politics, public administration, business, organisations, mass media, science, and culture; how Finland can be compared to other Nordic countries with respect to the representation of women among the elites, and the extent of which elite positions were accumulated for women and men. As regards the research method and data, the study was based on the positional approach: individuals belonging to the elites were defined on the basis of public documents as the holders of the top leadership positions of the most influential organizations in various sectors of society.

The representation of women among Finnish power elite has grown steadily and tripled from 12 per cent to 35 per cent. In all Nordic countries, the share of women of elite positions was highest in political and cultural elites, but lowest in the business elite. The share of women in the Finnish business elite was lower than that in Iceland and Norway, and it has grown more slowly than in other Finnish elite groups. The accumulation of elite positions for the same persons has slightly decreased between 1991 and 2021 and is by far the most common among the elites of business and politics. Of the five people with the most accumulated elite positions, two are women, although the accumulation of elite positions for men is clearly more common than women.

The increased representation of women in the Finnish elites, as well as the decrease in the accumulation of elite positions, indicate to a small extent the increasing openness of elites and the fragmentation of the elite structure.

Keywords: power elite, elites, recruitment, gender, Finland, Nordic countries

“We have no politics involved in government subsidies!”
Civil servants as political actors within the system of cultural administration

OLLI JAKONEN
SAKARIAS SOKKA

Our article examines cultural policy as a significant organizational structure exerting public power with its policy instruments. State subsidies are some of the most integral instruments of Finnish cultural policy. Our focus is on the allocation of state subsidies and the exercise of power by civil servants in the different parts of the allocation process. The current procedures include practices from different paradigms of public administration and individual officials have the best knowledge of how different parts of the system function. Allocation of state aid is not a linear administrative process, but a continuous, cyclical political activity linked to different, overlapping stages and steering methods of public administration. According to our analysis, individual officials have the potential to influence the functioning of the cultural policy system in several ways, from strategic planning and policy preparation to evaluation and guidance. The power relations are however not one-way, for example, civil society actors continue to have effect on administration.

Keywords: cultural policy, administrative politics, policy instrument, state subsidy policies, government steering system