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## Freedom Of The Press - Finland (2011)

**Status: Free**  
**Legal Environment: 3**  
**Political Environment: 3**  
**Economic Environment: 4**  
**Total Score: 10**

Finland continued to be among the most free media environments in the world in 2010. Freedom of expression and access to information is guaranteed under Article 12 of the constitution. In general, journalists and media outlets are allowed to operate freely and without threats and fear of repercussions; however, defamation is a crime in Finland, and the government actively pursues incidents of defamation of religion or ethnicity. In 2009, local politician and blogger Jussi Halla-aho was charged with racist comments and defamation of religion in a blog comment about the Prophet Mohammad and Somalis. In 2010 an appeals court upheld his conviction for defamation but dismissed the charge of racism.

Finland has an impressive newspaper readership, ranking third in the world for circulation in relation to population. According to the Finnish Newspaper Association, 200 newspapers are published, including 53 dailies. Media ownership is concentrated, with Alma Media and Sanoma controlling most newspaper distribution. Broadcasting is dominated by the public broadcaster Yleisradio OY (YLE), and commercial MTV, with commercial Nelonen Media an outsider. Radio is dominated by four public service channels and the commercial channel Radio Nova, as well as a large number of seminational and local stations. Public radio also broadcasts in the minority languages Swedish and Sami (Lapp).

The internet is open and unrestricted, and nearly 87 percent of all citizens have regular access. There have been concerns about the Finnish child pornography filter, which a blogger exposed as blocking many legal sites. Internet publications must name a responsible editor-in-chief and archive published materials for at least 21 days. In addition, Finnish law gives every citizen the right of reply and the right to have falsely published information corrected, in internet-based and traditional publications alike. In July 2010 it became a legal right for every Finn to have a 1MB broadband internet connection. In September, a threat made against Minister of Migration and European Affairs Astrid Thors became the first prosecution of a threat made on Facebook. The man who made the threat was convicted in December and fined 640 euros.