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BALTIC MEDIA HEALTH CHECK 2018–2019



Protecting Media Freedom

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FOREWORD FROM THE EDITOR



By Aija Krūtaine

Newspaper publishing is Sonny Swe's passion, and he went straight back to it after serving more than eight years of a 14-year prison term he was sentenced to in 2005 for bypassing Myanmar's censorship rules. Back in 2000, Sonny co-founded *The Myanmar Times*, the first foreign-invested, private media organisation in Myanmar. Now he leads *Frontier Myanmar*, an English-language fortnightly magazine. In between, he spent eight and a half years in prison. "I'm always proud to be a publisher. Because I'm selling the news, I'm selling the truth and I'm selling the knowledge," he said in 2017 in a TEDx talk in Myanmar's largest city Yangon.

When I heard him and other Burmese journalists speak earlier this year about their perseverance to tell the truth despite censorship and concern of their physical freedom, my first thought was how lucky journalists are in the Baltic countries. One can investigate and report on any subject without restrictions, and publish it without a fear of going to prison for one word, which doesn't necessarily need to be wrong. Here's rule of law, here's procedures to get information from the state and its institutions, a lot of information is available here publicly, and journalists can always challenge refusals to share information in court. If those under media's eye have been wronged or don't like what has been written about them, they can also go to court.

Still, recently there have been attempts to influence both public and private media. Public service media are mostly challenged by politicians under the pretense of the public good and use of taxpayer's money, while more often than not they simply don't like that they're being held accountable. Meanwhile, the small market with falling audiences makes private media financially vulnerable, which can lead to questionable practices, such as paid-for articles, self-censorship and potential conflicts of interest when accepting outside funding. That's why this year we have looked in detail at the recent attacks on public media, as well as what has happened with Latvia's largest dailies. As these cases show, being united and not taking for granted press freedom is essential to protect it. ■

THE ATTENTION WARS

Which were the most popular media outlets in the Baltic countries in 2018 and what is happening with their audiences and their owners' finances?

By Aija Krūtaine

In 2018:

- The 75 most popular media outlets in the Baltics were owned by 43 companies (decreasing from 46 a year ago). 27 of them were operating with a net profit, but 16 were in the red. 27 media houses managed to increase their revenues.
- The audience increased or remained unchanged for 22 outlets, but the majority – 43 – saw their audience decline[1].
- The most profitable media company is *All Media Lithuania*, the owner of the TV3 channel. Its net profit last year was 6.1 million euros, with a net margin of 23%, thanks to revenue growth and strict cost control.
- Meanwhile Estonian media group *Postimees Grupp* (formerly *Eesti Meedia*), the owner of *Postimees* newspaper and website, Estonia's *Kanal 2* TV channel, several radio stations and media businesses in Latvia and Lithuania, recorded the biggest loss – 8,901 million euros – across Baltic media businesses.
- Public service broadcasters in Lithuania and Estonia are among the biggest media businesses by turnover, with a budget of approximately 39 million euro each.

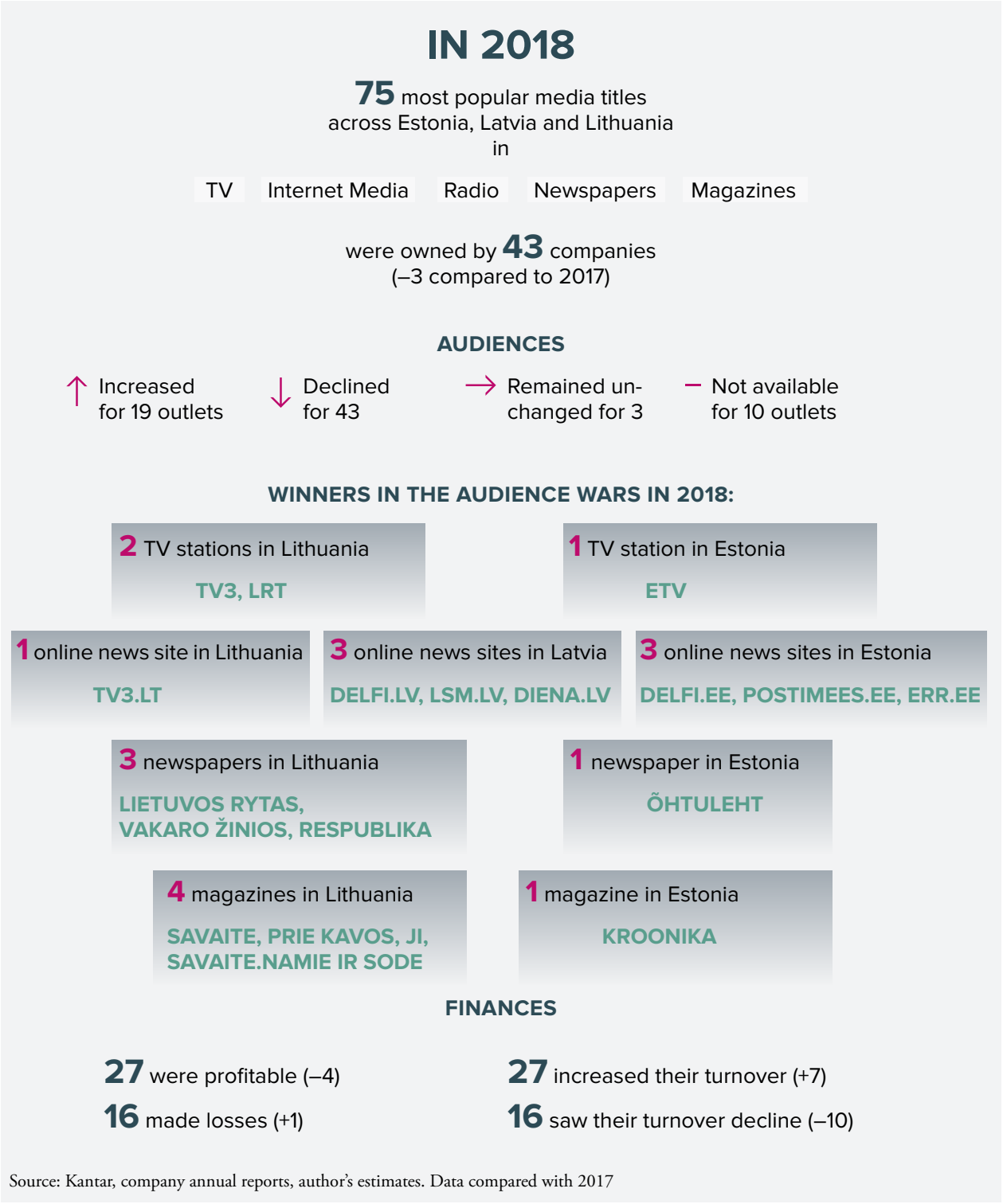
Main Conclusions

In 2018, the advertising market, which is still one of the main revenue streams for media, continued to grow in all three Baltic countries. The bad news, however, is that the fall in media audiences continued. In 2018, fewer people watched, listened and read the majority of the most popular media titles as compared to a year ago.

In recent years, print has been in a permanent decline. In 2018, television joined the club. Last year two thirds or 10 of the 15 most popular TV channels saw their audience decline. The print media was the first to experience the change in consumer habits as the popularity of the internet grew and more people were getting their news and entertainment online. Now, as on–demand streaming services have become the new normal (*hello*, *Netflix, Spotify*, and, obviously, *Youtube*), linear television and radio have also started to feel the shift. The situation in radio across the Baltics is slightly harder to gauge, as the survey methodology in Latvia and Estonia changed. Therefore, the 2018 and 2017 data is not comparable. However, in Lithuania all of the 5 most popular radio stations had fewer listeners than a year ago. The grass is slightly greener for the internet media as seven outlets saw their audience grow, but it dipped for eight.

Despite falling audiences, television is still the most popular medium, followed by social media. As a result, TV and internet receive nearly ⅔ of the total advertising pie in Latvia and Lithuania. In Estonia, the money spent on advertising on TV and the internet is smaller, being around 45% of the total market. Newspapers in Estonia historically have strong traditions and trust among readers, which has allowed them to still cash in 16% of total advertising spending. Last year, for the first time in a decade, the Baltic advertising market expanded above 300 million euro, but it's still approximately 25% below its peak (406 million euro in 2008).

[1] The methodology for radio audience surveys in Latvia and Estonia changed last year. Therefore, the reach data for 2018 is not comparable with the reach data from 2017. We have evaluated changes in the audience for 65 titles from the 75 most popular media outlets.



Source: Kantar, company annual reports, author's estimates. Data compared with 2017

Newspapers Under Transformation

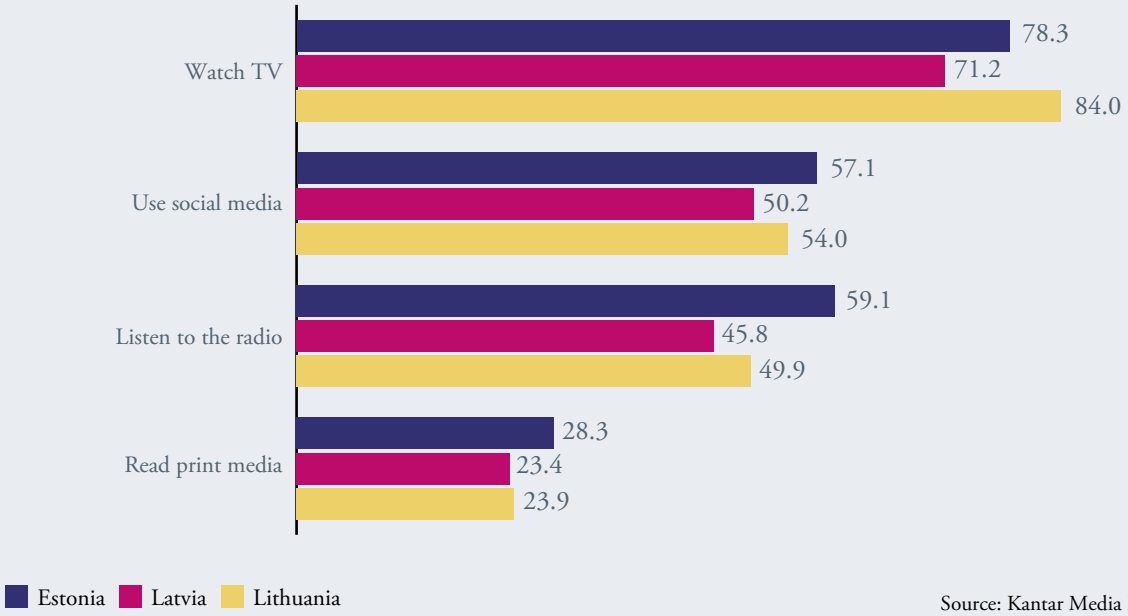
Newspaper publishers have operated with losses for years and have not been able to compensate for lost advertising revenues and falling audiences. This has now resulted in the decision of some publishers to either cut the number of print editions or cease publication.

In 2018, six of the 11 publishers who produced the most popular newspapers, operated with losses. Seven of these publishers saw their turnover decline. In this morbid market situation, the publisher of the most popular Lithuanian daily, *Lietuvos rytas,* decided that it would be published three times a week from 2020 (on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays), instead of the current five editions. Its publisher reached nearly a million euro in losses in 2018. The paper plans to focus on investigative, analytical and social journalism, and develop its news portal lrytas.lt.

Meanwhile, *Achemos grupė* has decided to stop publishing the *Lietuvos žinios* daily (not among the TOP5 most popular titles). "*Lietuvos žinios* has been operating at a loss for a long time and it was decided not to give it a go," Mindaugas Deksnys, CEO of *Achemos grupė,*

Media audience* in the Baltic countries in 2018

* Daily reach (%) - The average number of people reached daily, as a percentage of a target group (people aged 15-74)



Source: Kantar Media Day Survey

commented on the decision.

In Latvia, too, the business daily *Dienas Bizness* announced that it would turn into a weekly publication next year. It has operated with losses ranging between 30,000 – 280,000 euros for the past seven years.

Among the most popular newspapers in Latvia, only one of the TOP5 is a daily (*Latvijas Avīze*), while the others are weeklies. Latvia stands out among its neighbours as three of the most popular newspapers in 2018, same as in 2017, were Russian language publications, with *MK – Латвия* keeping its spot at the top. The average number of readers of one *MK – Латвия* press edition is three times that of its closest rival, so it's unlikely that it will be toppled from its #1 position any time soon. Latvian language papers *Latvijas Avīze* and *Ievas Virtuve* were ranked #2 and #3 in 2017, but were pushed to the bottom of the TOP5 in 2018.

All is steady in Estonia, where *Postimees* is still the newspaper with the highest average number of readers for one press edition, while *Õhtuleht* has the highest circulation. Four of Estonia's most–read newspaper titles are published by *Ekspress Grupp* (*Ekspress Meedia* is its subsidiary and it also owns 50% of *Õhtuleht Kirjastus*), which showed strong growth in its revenues last year, while it's net profit dropped.

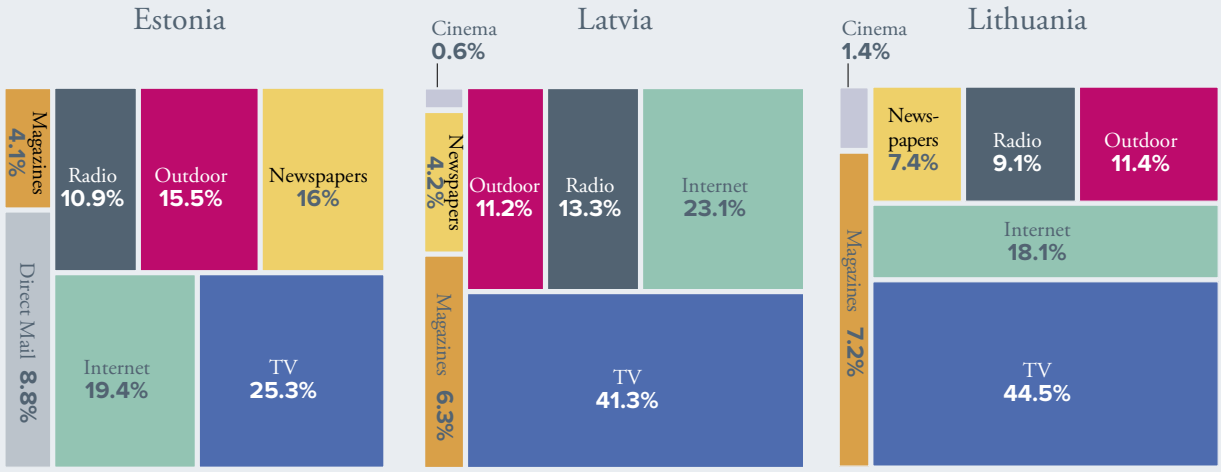
Postimees Grupp, the publisher of *Postimees*, is one of the biggest media groups in the Baltics. Last year its revenues grew to nearly 53 million euros, while its losses jumped to 8,9 million euros, making it the largest loss maker among the Baltic media owners. The group changed its financial reporting period, therefore these numbers are a result of business activities over 16 months (from January 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019). In 2017, *Postimees Grupp* operated with a loss of 6,8 million euros. In its financial report, *Postimees Grupp* doesn't explain the reason for the loss. However, it shows that its labor costs and costs of services purchased for sale increased significantly, resulting in a gross loss of almost 3 million euros. The group also underwent restructuring during the last year. It separated its classified ads business (which was sold in August 2019) and created a new holding company for its media businesses. Andrus Raudsalu, CEO of the *Postimees Grupp*, was quoted by the public broadcaster as saying that the company is aiming to reduce losses and

Changes in audience in 2018

Audience across the most popular	GREW	FELL	DIDN'T CHANGE
TV channels	↑ 3 (–4)	↓ 10 (+2)	→ 2 (+2)
Internet media websites	↑ 7 (–1)	↓ 8 (+3)	→ 0 (–2)
Radio*	–	↓ 5	–
Newspapers	↑ 4 (–1)	↓ 10 (+1)	→ 1 (0)
Magazines	↑ 5 (+2)	↓ 10 (–2)	→ 0

Source: Kantar, Baltic Media Health Check
*The methodology for radio audience surveys in Latvia and Estonia changed last year. Therefore, the reach data for 10 radio stations (five in each country) is not comparable. Data compared with 2017

Distribution of advertising expenditure in each Baltic Country in 2018



Source: Kantar

break even at some point, but that he doesn't anticipate the group starting to make a large profit.

Upswing for Magazine Publishers

While the magazine audience is declining too, the financial situation of magazine publishers is better than that of newspapers. Revenues grew for six media houses and of the nine publishers which produce the most–read magazines, only one – *Õhtuleht Kirjastus* – operated with losses.

Magazine publishers in Lithuania can be particularly happy as four of the five most popular magazine titles saw their average number of readers increase last year. Lithuania's magazine market has also seen the entrance of a new player in recent years. *Media bitės* bought the *Žurnalų leidybos grupė* publishing business in October 2017, and publishes the *Žmonės* weekly magazine and *Ji* (both among the five most read magazines in Lithuania), the *Laimė* monthly and the *Žmonės Legendos* quarterly. It is among the fastest growing media businesses in Lithuania and has ventured into new business segments. In 2018, *Media bitės*' turnover reached nearly 5.5 million euro and its net profit was 400,000 euro.

"We have the ambition of becoming the biggest media house in Lithuania," says Tomas Balžekas, co–owner and general director of *Media bitės*. He foresees that the print market will consolidate and says that good trends can be observed in the weekly magazine niche, while there are bad trends for monthly and daily print.

"We are building multi–platform business with well–known press brands. We mainly focus on *Žmonės,* our very well–known brand. After we acquired it, it became not only the most read print weekly, but also an online news site, online cinema service, book e–shop and photo agency. We are a strong brand, not a brand on one platform. We believe the future belongs to strong brands that operate on many platforms and have well balanced revenue sources," says Balžekas.

Latvia's magazine powerhouse, *Žurnāls Santa*, which owns four of the most popular magazines and also one of the most popular newspapers, saw its profit increase last year despite a slight decline in turnover. *Žurnāls Santa* is certainly a success story among the Baltic publishing houses, as it continues to operate with a steady net profit margin of 15–20%, even in a declining market.

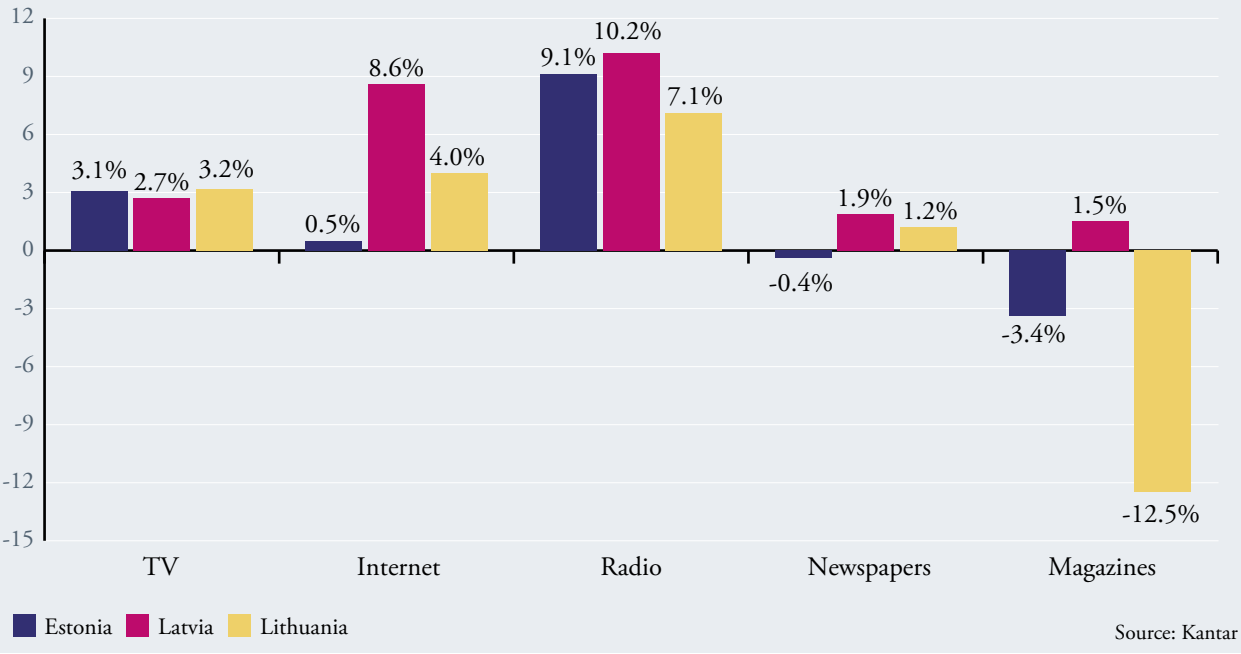
In 2019, it launched an online website where it publishes some content from its more than 20 magazines, as well as new content in a bid to reach a wider audience. Within six months of its launch, the *santa.lv* website reached the TOP20 of the most visited websites in Latvia.

In Estonia, the magazine market has traditionally been smaller than the newspaper market. This might change as *Ekspress Meedia* took over the publishing of seven magazines in June 2018, including Estonia's most widely read title *Kroonika*, from publishing house *Ajakirjade Kirjastus* (which it co–owned). "The main objective of this change was to provide a better outlet for the content of print periodicals and to support the collaboration of periodicals with existing strong web platforms," *Ekspress Grupp*, which owns *Ekspress Meedia*, said in its 2018 annual report. The magazine titles acquired by *Ekspress Meedia* are part of the *Delfi* paid–for content package.

The year 2018 was also a good year for the Swedish *Bonnier*–owned publisher *Äripäev*. Its turnover reached a record 15.3 million euro, surpassing its previous pre–crisis' highs. *Äripäev* publishes two of Estonia's most popular magazine titles (*Imeline Teadus* and *Imeline Ajalugu)*, while its flagship publication is *Äripäev,* a business daily.

In recent years, *Äripäev* has worked actively on diversifying its revenue streams: it organizes conferences, holds training and also launched a radio station. In 2017, it acquired an IT training centre which doubled the company's training revenues in 2018. The company stated in its annual report that the revenue from events (conferences and trainings) in 2018 exceeded *Äripäev*'s revenue from advertising as a

Changes in advertising spending by media type, 2018 vs 2017



Source: Kantar

result. *Äripäev* has also been steadily increasing its subscription revenue, including from digital subscriptions. Subscriptions are *Äripäev*'s most significant revenue stream and generated 6.2 million euro last year.

The Challenging Future

Television has a very strong position in the media market, but the next few years will be challenging. The popularity of on–demand video services, coupled with changes in demographics, means that drops in audiences will likely become more profound in the nearest future. Some market players, such as *All Media Baltics* and public broadcasters, have been investing in the development of web platforms, so that their content is available on–demand.

TV broadcasters top the largest media companies by turnover. Television also means a good profit. *All Media Lithuania*, *All Media Latvia*, and *Laisvas ir nepriklausomas kanalas* in Lithuania were the most profitable Baltic media companies in 2018.

Late 2018, *All Media Lithuania* acquired *Tipro Group*, which manages more than 40 specialized online portals. This move has helped *All Media Lithuania* to double its online advertising revenue.

"Today, we are the only media group in Lithuania which can offer an integrated advertising package – it combines advertising on TV, the internet and radio. Strict control of our costs is also in the genes of our company, which together with revenue growth enables us to achieve the desired profit growth results," the business daily *Verslo žinios* quoted Laura Blaževičiūtė, chairman of the board of *All Media Lithuania*, commenting on the record profit. The company sees a growing demand for TV advertising, therefore it is planning to review the pricing of TV ads, said Blaževičiūtė. That would put it in a good spot for continued revenue and profit growth.

TV is also a consolidated market, dominated by large media groups. Last year, as in 2017, two companies – *All Media Baltics* and Latvian *Baltijas Mediju Alianse* – each owned four of the most popular TV channels across the Baltics. Lithuanian *Laisvas ir nepriklausomas kanalas* owns two popular TV channels.

In 2018, only public broadcasters in Lithuania and Estonia, and Lithuania's TV3, managed to increase their audience. While the two most watched TV channels in Lithuania and Latvia are quite close to each other when it comes to their viewing share, in Estonia the gap between ETV, the most popular TV channel, and *Kanal2* and TV3 expanded in 2018. The Estonian public broadcaster was well ahead of its peers with a consolidated share of viewing of 14.7 percent in 2018.

Financially, the broadcasters are also in a very sound situation. Only 3 of the 12 owners of the most popular TV channels saw their revenues decline. Three companies – Latvia's and Lithuania's public broadcasters, and Lithuania's *Lietuvos ryto TV* – were the only businesses that operated with losses.

Challenging times may also be ahead for radio. Podcasts have been the hottest topic in media business for the past 2–3 years, and almost everybody is talking about launching audio products. *Delfi*, *Äripäev*, *15min.lt* are just a few of the media that have launched podcasts or related products within the last two years. The hype is high, but the data shows that, so far, podcasts are an important product for a small niche audience, says Margo Veskimägi, head of *Kantar* Baltic offices.

The largest Baltic media companies by turnover in 2018

	Country	Company	Category	Turnover in 2018 (euro)
1	Estonia	Postimees Grupp	TV, print, online, radio	52,973,000
2	Estonia	Eesti Rahvusringhääling	Public broadcaster	39,300,000
3	Lithuania	Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija	Public broadcaster	38,865,029
4	Lithuania	All Media Lithuania, UAB	Commercial broadcaster	26,214,002
5	Lithuania	Laisvas ir nepriklausomas kanalas, UAB	Commercial broadcaster	24,647,000

Source: Company annual reports

The most profitable Baltic media companies in 2018

	Country	Company	Category	Net profit in 2018 (euro)
1	Lithuania	All Media Lithuania, UAB	Commercial broadcaster	6,109,538
2	Latvia	All Media Latvia, SIA	Commercial broadcaster	2,870,303
3	Lithuania	Laisvas ir nepriklausomas kanalas, UAB	Commercial broadcaster	1,793,000
4	Lithuania	M–1, UAB	Radio	1,499,261
5	Latvia	Žurnāls Santa, SIA	Magazines	1,343,242

Source: Company annual reports

Nonetheless, on–demand services are likely coming after radio as well. The falling audiences of Lithuania's 5 most popular radio stations might be the precursor of what may be expected. However, despite the negative changes in audiences, Lithuania's radio companies have still managed to increase both their revenues and net profit.

Steady Online Media

Internet media are in a more favourable situation when it comes to their audiences, as seven of the 15 most popular portals were visited last year by more people than in 2017. The biggest player across Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in 2018 was *Delfi* again, which is owned by *Ekspress Grupp*. Meanwhile, *Postimees Grupp* owns the second most popular online news site in each country.

Their financial results are a mixed bag. *Delfi* was profitable in Lithuania and Estonia but generated a loss in Latvia in 2018. *Postimees Grupp*'s portals were losing money in Latvia and Lithuania, while Estonia's results are unknown.

In Latvia, *Postimees Grupp*'s internet media website *tvnet.lv* suffered a loss of more than 1 million euro last year. The *tvnet.lv* website also suffered losses the previous year. In a bid to shake it up, *Postimees Grupp* changed its management and draw up a five–year development plan, but, judging from the financial results, it is not yet bearing fruit.

Both *Delfi* and *Postimees* have introduced paywalls in Estonia, and Delfi launched subscriptions in Latvia and Lithuania this year as well. They have publicly claimed that they are encouraged by the results, but no numbers have been released.

When it comes to subscriptions, the perception of value that users get from the service is at the core of making it successful. In Lithuania, the *Delfi* subscription offers translated articles from *The Economist, The Harvard Business Review* and *Bloomberg*. In Estonia, the package includes articles from *Ekspress Meedia* newspapers and magazines, while in Latvia it includes original content across various topics. It is not yet known if and when the owners of *Postimees Grupp* will move to launch a paywall in Latvia and Lithuania, as well.

In recent years, both groups have been investing heavily in their technological platforms and original content creation. *Delfi* has managed to increase its revenues by 32% compared to 2015, but the *tvnet.lv* turnover actually dropped by 15% during the same period.

The internet sites of public broadcasters in Latvia and Estonia along with TV3 online website in Lithuania can boast the fastest growth in audience last year. The *tv3.lt* website increased its average number of visitors per day by 71%, while the audience of public service media sites in Latvia and Estonia increased by 56% and 31%, respectively.

Many say that high quality content will differentiate the winners from the losers as audiences continue to decline across existing media channels. Loyal readers, viewers and listeners should certainly not be underestimated.

"In recent years, we have observed a trend that our subscription results are stable, but retail sales are declining," says Jānis Lecinskis, finance director of *Žurnāls Santa*. "We expect this dynamic to continue, and the significance of loyal subscribers to grow more prominent. An increase in magazine prices is also unavoidable," he concluded.

Perhaps this is a tip for other media – to do what they do best and to charge what it costs.■

Owners of the most popular media across the Baltics ranked by turnover in 2018

	Country	Company	Number of media outlets owned	Turnover in 2018 (euro)	Turnover change 2018 vs 2017	Net profit/ loss in 2018 (euro)	Net profit/loss margin in 2018
1	Estonia	Postimees Grupp, AS	4	52,973,000	40.1%	-8,901,000	-16.8%
2	Estonia	Eesti Rahvusringhääling	3	39,300,000	6.4%	1,005,000	2.6%
3	Lithuania	Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija	2	38,865,029	8.5%	-796,735	-2.1%
4	Lithuania	All Media Lithuania, UAB	2	26,214,002	6.4%	6,109,538	23.3%
5	Lithuania	Laisvas ir nepriklausomas kanalas, UAB	2	24,647,000	-5.0%	1,793,000	7.3%
6	Estonia	Ekspress Meedia, AS	6	21,380,704	13.5%	478,925	2.2%
7	Latvia	Latvijas Televīzija, VSIA	2	19,556,153	6.7%	-733,506	-3.8%
8	Latvia	All Media Latvia, SIA	2	18,617,426	0.8%	2,870,303	15.4%
9	Estonia	Äripäev, AS	2	15,262,000	5.1%	558,000	3.7%
10	Estonia	All Media Eesti, AS	1	14,472,298	3.6%	584,782	4.0%
11	Estonia	Õhtuleht Kirjastus, AS	3	11,684,301	29.1%	-178,747	-1.5%
12	Latvia	Latvijas Radio, VSIA	2	9,979,580	8.8%	162,628	1.6%
13	Lithuania	Delfi, UAB	1	8,768,616	-7.6%	1,242,866	14.2%
14	Latvia	Žurnāls Santa, SIA	5	7,131,909	-3.2%	1,343,242	18.8%
15	Latvia	Izdevniecība Rīgas Viļņi, SIA	2	5,902,865	-1.6%	81,400	1.4%
16	Lithuania	Lietuvos rytas, UAB	1	5,691,087	-11.5%	-990,234	-17.4%
17	Lithuania	15min, UAB	1	5,561,509	32.6%	-277,711	-5.0%
18	Lithuania	Media bitės, UAB	2	5,457,861	280.8%	397,617	7.3%
19	Latvia	Latvijas Mediji, AS	1	4,505,439	-0.6%	-479,057	-10.6%
20	Lithuania	Savaitė, UAB	2	4,246,583	10.7%	590,941	13.9%
21	Latvia	Delfi, AS	1	4,038,560	1.6%	-444,006	-11.0%
22	Lithuania	M-1, UAB	2	3,874,457	10.5%	1,499,261	38.7%
23	Lithuania	Diena Media News, UAB	1	3,414,989	15.3%	567,014	16.6%
24	Latvia	Radio SWH, AS	1	2,927,118	8.6%	101,959	3.5%
25	Estonia	Pirmais Baltijas Kanāls, SIA	2	2,870,145	-4.0%	648,062	22.6%
26	Lithuania	Lietuvos ryto televizija, UAB	1	2,816,735	-8.1%	-577,481	-20.5%
27	Latvia	Zīme, SIA	2	2,785,078	-12.7%	-151,154	-5.4%
28	Lithuania	Lrytas, UAB	1	2,444,681	-7.4%	-247,015	-10.1%
29	Latvia	TEM LV, SIA	1	2,282,369	8.8%	157,092	6.9%
30	Latvia	Dienas Mediji, SIA	1	2,197,745	-5.1%	-515,870	-23.5%
31	Latvia	TV Net, SIA	1	2,078,875	1.7%	-1,035,253	-49.8%
32	Estonia	Mediainvest Holding AS	1	2,071,629	18.1%	353,256	17.1%
33	Estonia	Ühinenud Ajakirjad, OÜ	1	2,004,797	5.8%	206,017	10.3%
34	Lithuania	Respublikos leidiniai, UAB	2	1,955,292	-11.2%	-47,583	-2.4%
35	Latvia	Radio Skonto, SIA	1	1,631,698	8.1%	155,869	9.6%
36	Latvia	EHR Mediju Grupa, SIA	1	1,513,450	-21.7%	-37,540	-2.5%
37	Latvia	Izdevniecības nams Print Media, SIA	1	1,145,595	-0.1%	312,519	27.3%
38	Lithuania	Radiocentras, UAB	2	1,090,548	67.1%	269,474	24.7%
39	Lithuania	SS Leidyba, UAB	1	1,049,336	-7.9%	13,086	1.2%
40	Lithuania	Naujienų centras, UAB	1	743,395	23.1%	613	0.1%
41	Lithuania	Flobis, UAB	1	430,039	-4.7%	-11,195	-2.6%
42	Estonia	Taevaraadio, AS	2	320,068	29.8%	102,113	31.9%
43	Estonia	Balti Autorite ja Leviliit	1	203,649	4.0%	24,585	12.1%

IT REALLY HAPPENED

Things to remember about Baltic media in 2018-2019

ESTONIA

1. Owner of Postimees Grupp sells its classifieds business

The owner of Estonia's largest media group *Postimees Grupp (*previously known as *Eesti Meedia), UP Invest,* reshuffled ownership of its media companies at the beginning of 2019 and spun off its classified ad business into a new company, *Baltic Classifieds Group*. It was sold to the London-based private equity fund *Apax Partners* in August 2019. *Postimees Grupp* previously owned such classifieds portals as *KV*, *City24*, *Soov*, *Autoplius* and others across all three Baltic countries. In 2017, the revenue from those portals made up 20% or nearly 19 million euros of *Postimees Grupp*'s consolidated turnover. *UP Invest* said it was planning to use the funds from this sale to expand other group companies, including its media businesses.

2. Media groups and their owners seek new horizons

There have been several other notable acquisitions by media groups and their owners in 2019. In March, *Ekspress Grupp* bought the Lithuanian technology and innovation conference company *Login Conferences* and Estonian digital outdoor advertising company *Linna Ekraanid*. In June, it acquired the Latvian ticketing service platform, *Biļešu Paradīze*. Hot on its heels, *UP Invest* announced the same month it became the sole owner of *Apollo Group*, which owns cinemas, stores and restaurants in Estonia. In July it announced it was entering outdoor media market through the purchase of a company called *Digital Future*. And in October, *UP Invest* said it was buying *Baltic Ticket Holdings*, another popular ticketing service platform operating in the Baltics.

Janek Veeber, the co-owner of the *Õhtuleht Kirjastus* publishing house said in May he was selling his shares (50%) in the enterprise to a holding company *Alexela Grupp*, which is energy, real estate and metal investment company. *Ekspress Grupp*, the other co-owner, will keep its 50% share in the publisher. Meanwhile, *Ekspress Grupp*'s owner Hans H. Luik has entered the short-term lending business by opening e-marketplace *Compara*.

3. ERR will get a new television centre

After years of pleas from the Estonian Public Broadcasting (ERR) Estonian government decided in August to allocate 22 million euros for the planning and construction of a new television centre. ERR has been struggling with the depreciated television house for more than a decade. The conditions have turned from bad to worse and technical obsolescence is threatening to interrupt broadcasting. The proposed TV building would accommodate 400 workplaces. The existing TV buildings would be sold, and funds raised from that sale would be used for the construction of the new television centre.

4. Calls for new taxation rules

The Estonian Association of Media Enterprises, which comprises the country's largest media groups, is calling for changes in taxation to give media business more room to breathe. The association wants the government to introduce a new digital tax under which would force global tech giants such as Facebook and Google to pay a tax of 3-5% on their advertising revenue earned in Estonia. Local players argue that they pay 4.5 times more in taxes than their global competitors. The association has submitted its proposal to the Ministry of Finance, which will need to decide what to do. Media groups are also lobbying for a reduction of VAT applied to digital subscriptions from the current 20% to 9%. They claim the VAT rate cut would allow them to bring down subscription prices.

5. Bye-bye Tallinn Television

The municipal television channel *Tallinna Televisioon* (TTV) was shut down by the new city mayor Mihhail Kõlvart. The channel was established in 2007 with the official purpose to cover local events in Tallinn. Most of the time, however, it served as a platform for the center party *Keskerakond* to promote the party's leader and the former mayor of Tallinn, Edgar Savisaar. Citizens of Tallinn accused the channel of wasting taxpayers' money. After Savisaar was suspended from the position as the mayor of Tallinn, and Taavi Aas took on the position of the acting mayor in 2015, the TTV content became more balanced. The TV channel stopped broadcasting on October 1st, 2019, but its legal owner will continue to operate as a production company offering programs for other TV channels to air. ■

By Marju Himma-Kadakas, Aija Krūtaine

LATVIA

1. Judges rule in favour of journalists

In April 2019, the Supreme Court ruled that a municipality is obliged to disclose information to journalists about the use of municipal money in commercial enterprises and societies which it co-owns. In late 2017, the Baltic Center for Investigative Journalism *Re:Baltica* filed a case against the Riga City Council as it refused to reveal the amount of money it was spending at *Riga.lv* and on what. The latter is a non-government organisation established by the municipality to inform society, but which in effect, actively promoted former city mayor Nils Ušakovs. The city council justified its refusal on the grounds of protecting trade secrets and personal data.

The Administrative Court ruled in favour of the journalists, but the city appealed. The Supreme Court upheld the ruling. As the council was forced to open the budget files, *Re:Baltica* was able to establish that Nils Ušakovs' party *Harmony* had spent at least 3.7 million euro in the last five years employing people associated with the party, who in some cases had questionable personal qualifications, and more often than not, actually did no work.

2. New ombudsman

In late 2018, the largest media industry associations and market players established a new ombudsman (the Media Ethics Council) with the hope of creating an effective and industry-respected self-regulator. The activities of the ombudsman are driven by a comprehensive code of Media Ethics that protects freedom of expression, diversity of information and views, editorial independence, media credibility and so forth. Its primary task is to assess complaints from the media and the public about possible violations of media ethics. It currently has 23 members and has reviewed three complaints.

3. Where is the money?

Latvia's public broadcasters, LTV and *Latvian Radio,* are legally obliged to exit the advertising market in 2021. There's just one 'but'. It is not clear whether the Latvian public broadcasters will receive the state funding needed to compensate for the loss of income from advertising. The Ministry of Culture estimates that the budget for public broadcasters should be increased by at least 7.2 million euro in 2020 and at least 14 million euro per year in 2021 and beyond. Meanwhile, the Latvian government has earmarked an additional allocation of just 5.5 million euro for public TV and radio next year. The Latvian public broadcasters have the smallest budget in the Baltics. Demoralised by a lack of money and the changes in management of recent years, public broadcasters will continue to be weakened in an already unfavourable media market, unless they receive the required funding.

4. Press fights for subsidies

Latvian publishers can breathe for another year as the government has decided to continue to subsidise postal deliveries of the press by the national postal company, *Latvijas Pasts*. While the market for newspapers has continued to shrink, around 60% of the cost of delivering the press to subscribers has been covered by the state funded *Latvijas Pasts*. The arrangement was set to expire this year, but the Latvian Association of Press Publishers voiced their concerns that many print media would die if the subsidy was cut (5.7 million euro in 2020). After some debate, the government decided to extend the existing arrangement at least until the end of next year. What then? No one knows.

5. End of an era in *All Media Latvia*

Baiba Zūzena, the CEO of media group *All Media Latvia*, which owns the leading commercial channel TV3 among many other things, suddenly resigned in August 2019. She was at the helm of the company for over a decade during which *All Media Latvia* acquired another popular commercial channel, *LNT*. Now the entire group, *All Media Baltics*, is managed by Christian Anting, who was previously responsible for the group's digital transformation initiatives. ■

By Madara Fridrihsone

LITHUANIA

1. Welcome, paywalls!

In September, Lithuania's most popular online news portal *Delfi.lt* launched its new freemium product *DelfiPlius (Delfi Plus)*, which in practice means a partial paywall. *Delfi*'s new content platform offers paying subscribers the possibility to read additional content, exclusive op-eds by well-known public figures, and translated articles from *Bloomberg*, *Harvard Business Review* and *The Economist*. *DelfiPlius* also allows authors to create content, publish it on *Delfi.lt* and receive a fee for their contribution. Lithuania was the last of the three Baltic countries for *Delfi* to introduce a freemium product. (The regular pricing varies across the Baltic countries, it's 1,99 euros per 4 weeks in Latvia, 7,99 euros per month in Lithuania and 9,99 euros per month in Estonia.) *Delfi.lt* is the only popular online news portal (except for the specialised business daily *Verslo žinios*) that has introduced a paywall in Lithuania. The platform's development was partly funded by the *Google Digital Initiative*.

2. To court over Facebook posts

After two Lithuanian journalists on their personal social media accounts criticised a rumoured government plan to consolidate all the national media regulators into a new institution, ministers decided to test whether the journalists had overstepped the boundaries of ethics. The government denied such a plan existed and asked a special journalistic ethics inspector to evaluate whether, by disseminating unverified information, the journalists had broken the law, as well as the rules of journalistic ethics. The inspector concluded that the journalists were acting within the limits of freedom of expression and had enough information from various sources to support their claims and express opinions. The government office decided to challenge the inspector's decision in court, where the inspector's findings were upheld.

3. Journalists demand access to public information

Journalists from all the major Lithuanian newsrooms united against the government's decision to cut off access to public registries databases, which contain information about companies and other legal entities, property, etc. In the past, journalists had free access to public registries, but since September 2018, their access has been restricted. The officials responsible for this argued that data had been provided to journalists unlawfully and that continuing to do so may not be in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Moreover, the prime minister Saulius Skvernelis claimed that media organisations are businesses which should purchase the data like everyone else. Access to public registries is crucial for journalists, and such fees would significantly increase the costs of investigations. Following protests, the government provided temporary access to some data. Still, Lithuanian journalists are unable to access historical data about corporate shareholders and data on real estate owners, which makes some investigations impossible.

4. National dailies going down

2019 was extremely depressing for the Lithuanian national dailies – all market players were reporting losses. As a result, one of the oldest Lithuanian daily newspapers *Lietuvos žinios*, which was founded in 1909, ceased its operations in May 2019. Meanwhile, the biggest daily *Lietuvos rytas* announced that, from 2020, it will be printing just three issues a week instead of the current five, thereby effectively ceasing to be a daily newspaper. The other national newspapers which are (currently) continuing to issue five editions a week is the specialised business daily *Verslo žinios* and tabloid *Vakaro žinios*. However, a number of local newspapers, such as *Kauno diena*, *Šiaulių kraštas* and *Klaipėda*, do continue to run print issues five or six times a week.

5. Reporting on suicide restricted

The Lithuanian parliament this year amended the main media law (on the Provision of Information to the Public) to prohibit journalists from mentioning the motives, means or methods of suicide or attempted suicide when reporting on such cases. Members of parliament claimed that this will help to reduce the copycat effect and will prevent the media from abusing freedom of expression for clicks and ratings. Media experts say that the new regulation is excessive and highly restrictive, and cases of unethical reporting on suicide have decreased significantly over the last two decades. ■

By Džina Donauskaitė



Estonia's president Kersti Kaljulaid attended the swearing-in ceremony of the new government at the parliament wearing a sweatshirt with a slogan "Speech is Free" on April 29, 2019. Photo: Erik Peinar, Riigikogu.

PUBLIC MEDIA UNDER ATTACK

Public service media in all three Baltic countries have come under attack in recent years from politicians who are eager to weaken news organisations that hold them accountable. The head of Latvia's public broadcaster was sacked. In Lithuania, politicians have been probing public media funds as a means to push for more influence. Estonia's otherwise stable media landscape was shaken this spring by attacks on press freedom by a populist party which was about to join the government. Will public media in Baltic countries manage to survive?

By Džina Donauskaitė, Marju Himma-Kadakas and Alina Lastovska

"Does the board plan, as usual, to wash their hands and say 'oops, we'll try harder next time'? Or is there a plan to take the employees who demonstrated their bias and unprofessionalism off the air?"

The question was asked by Martin Helme, a leader of the Estonian Conservative People's Party (EKRE), in a letter to the supervisory board of public broadcaster *Eesti Rahvusringhääling* (ERR) soon after his far-right party placed third in Estonia's parliamentary elections in March 2019. He demanded that ERR's journalists who were critical of EKRE on the air should be 'punished'.

Estonia's media landscape has been considered the healthiest of the three Baltic countries. Always well ahead of its neighbours in the World Press Freedom Index, it boasts a strong market position with print media, the best-funded public service broadcasters and an overall favorable environment. Therefore, the energy with which the politicians attempted to silence journalists came as a surprise.

Yet Estonia turned out to be vulnerable to populists who view their critics in the media as the root of all evil.

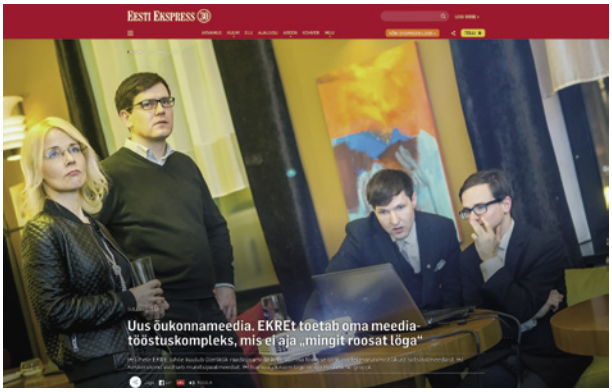
The Build-Up

EKRE's politicians started to verbally attack ERR journalists immediately after the elections as political parties were negotiating to bring them - a far-right party - into the government for the first time. The party's leaders, Martin Helme and his father Mart, sent numerous complaints to the public broadcaster, mostly about the choice of words used by TV presenters to describe EKRE in their shows. They went so far as to suggest that Erik Roose, the head of ERR, be replaced. EKRE did not restrain its attacks only on public media, it turned against journalists from private media, too.

EKRE has considered media an adversary for years. It often caricatures its critics on its website, *uueduudised.ee*. In 2015, the party filed a lawsuit against *Ekspress Meedia* over 19 articles, claiming defamation and seeking 150,000 euro in damages. EKRE alleged the articles had damaged its reputation and forced the party to remain in opposition. The court dismissed the first action, a ruling that was upheld on appeal in 2017.

The party's supporters soon started repeating the populist leaders' rhetoric. They flooded ERR with negative feedback, much of which involved personal attacks on journalists via social media.

There were other troubling developments. In April, Peeter Helme, who is the nephew of Mart Helme, was named editor-in-chief of Estonia's leading daily, *Postimees*. He was appointed by Margus Linnamäe, the owner of the media group *Postimees Grupp* (previously known as *Eesti Meedia*), and a member of the conservative Isamaa party, to which he donates generously. Before joining *Postimees*,



Postimees editor-in-chief Peeter Helme (second from left) pictured here with his cousin Helle-Moonika Helme (first from left) and cousin Martin Helme (in front of the painting third from left) in spring 2015 at the party after the Riigikogu elections. Photo: Eesti Ekspress, Eero Vabamägi

Peeter Helme was a culture editor on ERR's Vikerraadio station.

This wasn't the only occasion when Linnamäe interfered in the editorial process. Before the elections, he ordered *Postimees* to create a new section which propagated a conservative worldview in pieces which mixed facts and opinions, as was pointed out by Estonia's Press Council.

Journalists who were more critical of EKRE, most notably *Postimees*' political news expert Vilja Kiisler and ERR's politics analyst and radio presenter Ahto Lobjakas, were reprimanded by their editors about an unsuitable choice of words. Both heavyweights of Estonian journalism viewed it as a demand for self-censorship and decided to leave.

This raised tensions to a new level. "Media executives should find their spines and take risks to keep their backs straight. That is what they get paid for. There is no need for them if everything is fine," Lobjakas said shortly after leaving his position.

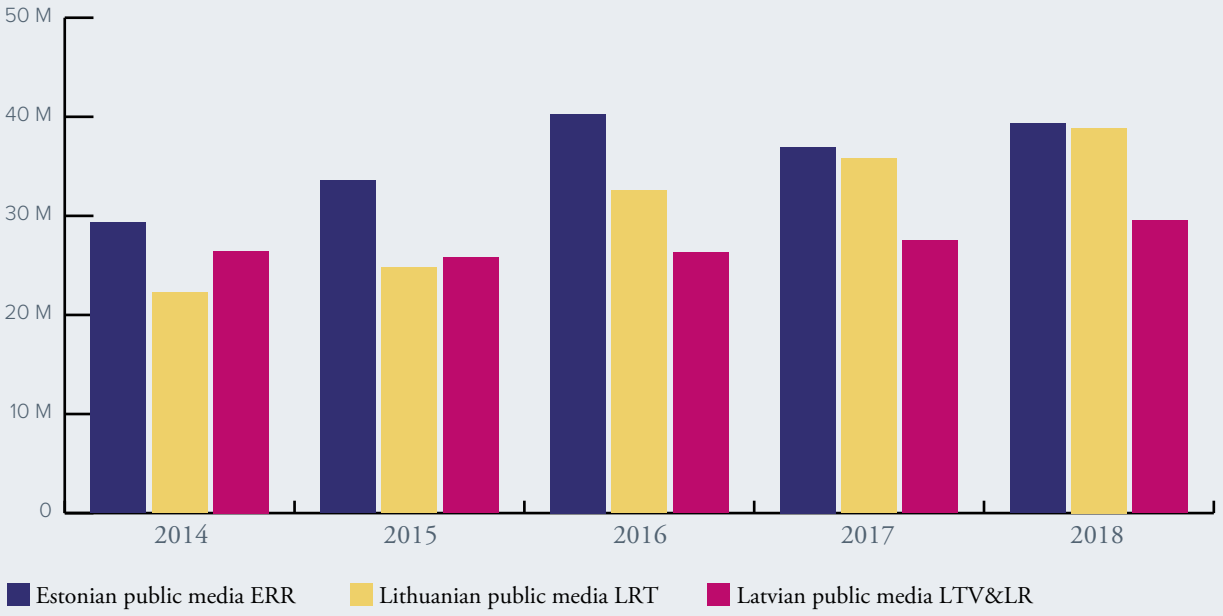
What Is Considered Pressure?

A few months after the incidents, journalists say tensions have eased. "There is more talk about the pressure than the actual pressure itself," says Riina Rõõmus, member of ERR's executive board responsible for radio. Erik Roose agrees that there is no personal or organisational pressure anymore.

EKRE's coalition partners, in fact, have sent the opposite message, in particular deciding to fund the building of a new television center for ERR, notes Andres Jõesaar, Associate Professor on media policy at the University of Tallinn.

Tõnis Lukas, the Minister of Culture (Isamaa), whose ministry is responsible for regulating public service media, emphasizes that ERR has full journalistic autonomy

Comparison of Public Media Funding In the Baltic Countries



Source: Annual reports of Eesti Rahvusringhääling (ERR), Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija (LRT), Latvijas Televīzija (LTV) and Latvijas Radio (LR).

Funding here refers to the total revenues of each public service media. As public broadcasting and public radio operate separate companies in Latvia, their revenues have been added together

Estonia's public broadcaster has the biggest budget among the Baltic countries.

and independence.

This may be thanks to frequent expressions of support for free journalism from different stakeholders, including robust condemnation of the attacks on ERR. Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid made headlines when she wore a sweatshirt with the slogan "Sõna on vaba" ("Speech is free") on the day the incoming right-conservative government was sworn in, just days after Kiisler and Lobjakas had resigned. Private media played an essential role in pushing back against EKRE's rhetoric, too. They felt that if ERR were to lose its journalistic autonomy, private media would be the next to come under fire.

A New Year's Gift

It was the last working day of 2018, December 28, when Latvian electronic media regulator (NEPLP) fired two officials at public broadcaster LTV: chief executive officer Ivars Belte and Sergejs Ņesterovs, the board member responsible for program development. The regulator claimed that LTV management had failed to ensure planning of strategic development projects in 2017 and 2018, thereby risking the use of taxpayers' funds in the best public interest. The sacking of LTV board members was badly received in the media industry, which argued that the decision lacked sufficient grounds and threatened media freedom.

Immediately, an open competition was announced for the top management positions at LTV. Out of 38 applicants, the regulator decided that Einārs Giels, a marketing data analyst of a pharmaceutical company with questionable management experience, was the best possible CEO for public TV. The replacement for board member Nesterovs was advertising executive Eva Juhņēviča, whose last job had been to organise the massive national

Rankings of the Baltic countries in the World Press Freedom Index

ESTONIA	LATVIA	LITHUANIA
11	24	30
in the 2019 World Press Freedom Index	in the 2019 World Press Freedom Index	in the 2019 World Press Freedom Index
RANKING ↑ +1	RANKING =0	RANKING ↑ +6
12 in 2018	24 in 2018	36 in 2018

Source: Reporters Without Borders

song and dance festival.

Public outcry was fierce, especially about Giels' lack of experience. During media appearances he demonstrated questionable understanding of the media's role and independence. Ultimately, both winning candidates declined to accept the jobs. Since then, the media watchdog has not managed to find a new CEO for the public broadcaster.

"This year is lost for television," says Ivars Priede, director of finances and the last remaining board member at LTV. In the current uncertainty, the main focus has been on maintaining stability, says Priede.

Meanwhile, a conflict has escalated between the management of Latvian public radio and its newsroom which has called for the board to resign and are preparing to go on strike in late 2019. The public radio has been underfunded for years, especially when it comes to journalist wages.

"The inaction and deliberate action of the current *Latvian Radio* leadership shows that strong and independent public radio as an integral part of democracy is not in its interests," the radio's newsroom said in a public letter in July 2019. Journalists accused the board of weakening the newsroom. Eight journalists have left since 2018, but instead of wage increases the management decided to run less content and cut several jobs.

Great Expectations

The events at the Latvian public broadcasters inevitably led to questions over the regulator's professionalism, as its earlier decisions had already left the industry perplexed and angry. For example, the regulator pushed through a law aimed to restrain one-sided propaganda-style news reports from Kremlin broadcasters, but opened the first two administrative cases under the law against LTV and TV3 for criticising the regulator itself.

NEPLP members are elected by the parliament. In the aftermath of firing and hiring of public broadcaster's management, one member of the NEPLP council, Gunta Līdaka, resigned. The head of NEPLP, Dace Ķezbere, who came under the most intense fire, could not make up her mind whether to resign or not. In October, she finally announced that she will resign, citing political pressure.

The new law on public media and its management, which is currently being reviewed by the parliament, could solve at least some of recent ills. One key objective of the law would introduce a stable model for public media funding, freeing them from the annual budget battle which provides opportunity for political pressure. Financing could be linked to a fixed percentage of GDP, tax revenue or other indicators. Politicians have promised that they would finalise the law by the beginning of 2020.

The events at the Latvian public broadcasters inevitably led to questions over the regulator's professionalism, as its earlier decisions had already left the industry perplexed and angry.

These great expectations, however, could turn into a great disaster. The culture minister Nauris Puntulis (National Alliance) has stated that the public broadcasters' new supervisory council should be political. According to him, members of the council should represent liberal and conservative views and together decide whether public broadcasters' reports are in line with their position. Whether this comes to pass will be up to the parliament.

Under Politicians' Scrutiny

In Lithuania, the public broadcaster *Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija* (LRT) has been battling political interference for the last two years. As in Estonia, it started with a change of power. The 2016 parliamentary election was won by the Farmers and Greens Union, which hadn't held significant power before and was an amalgam of politicians with very different values. The party has been burdened by negative press since the beginning, mainly because of initiatives it proposed. It banned advertising of alcoholic beverages in media, stripping the industry of already dwindling ad revenues. It also came up with an initiative to balance positive and negative news at 50/50 (which was rejected).

At the end of 2017, in an unprecedented move, the responsible committee of Lithuania's parliament rejected LRT's annual report. The committee accused LRT's leadership of poor governance and potential corruption. It was headed by Ramūnas Karbauskis, the leader of the Farmers and Greens Union and a wealthy businessman. For him, the battle with media was also personal. Soon after winning the elections he lost his close ally, Greta Kildišienė, who was pressured by the media to resign after journalists found out she had withheld some crucial information from the voters.

Members of the parliament wanted to scrutinize the public broadcaster's budget in great detail. LRT claimed that some of the information represented commercial secrets. Such explanation was met with scepticism, especially given that LRT had been solely funded by the state since 2015. Critics expected greater transparency. This prompted politicians, media experts and journalists, including some within LRT, to question whether the LRT Council was able to examine the decisions of the public broadcaster's general director.

The Farmers and Greens Union was quick to capitalize on the scepticism regarding LRT. It formed a special

LRT Council

The highest governing body of Lithuania's public broadcaster

CONSISTS OF 12 INDIVIDUALS

4 appointed by president

4 appointed by parliament

1 from Council of Science
from the Board of Education
from the Association of Lithuanian Art Creators
from the Conference of Lithuanian Bishops

- Members of parliament and ministers can't serve on the LRT Council
- Term: 6 years, independent from political cycles.
- Rotation happens constantly, new members are appointed at different times.

The Council

- elects and supervises the work of the general director
- forms an advisory Administrative Commission which provides evaluation on costs and benefits of spending

We implemented many changes towards transparency of the LRT, but it seems that it went unnoticed.

investigation commission in parliament to scrutinize the public broadcaster's governance in January 2018. The investigation lasted for 10 months. The commission did not find cases of grave mismanagement, but concluded that LRT's general director had too much power. "We need to end the autocracy of the general director in LRT, and we will do it," Virgilijus Poderys, a member of the investigation commission, said as he was lobbying for changes in the governance and management model of LRT.

Politicians were eager to replace LRT's existing advisory Administrative Commission with a board of seven members to oversee the general director's work. Politicians also wanted to cut the term of LRT Council members from the current six to five years, decrease the number of political representatives and include more representatives of the public. Another novelty was an offer to establish an ombudsman who would investigate ethics complaints about the public broadcaster.

"There is always room for improvement of governance structures. Yet the [proposed] changes, especially the introduction of a new management body, the board, would require a change of the entire management of LRT. In this case, the ruling politicians could expect to see more favourable people in key positions," said Deimantas Jastramskis, professor from Vilnius University. According to him, the present governance model of LRT is good compared to other EU countries.

Constitutional Court's slap

European Parliament members have voiced concerns about the attacks on LRT. The European Broadcasters Union offered its assistance during the probe, an offer that was rejected by the politicians.

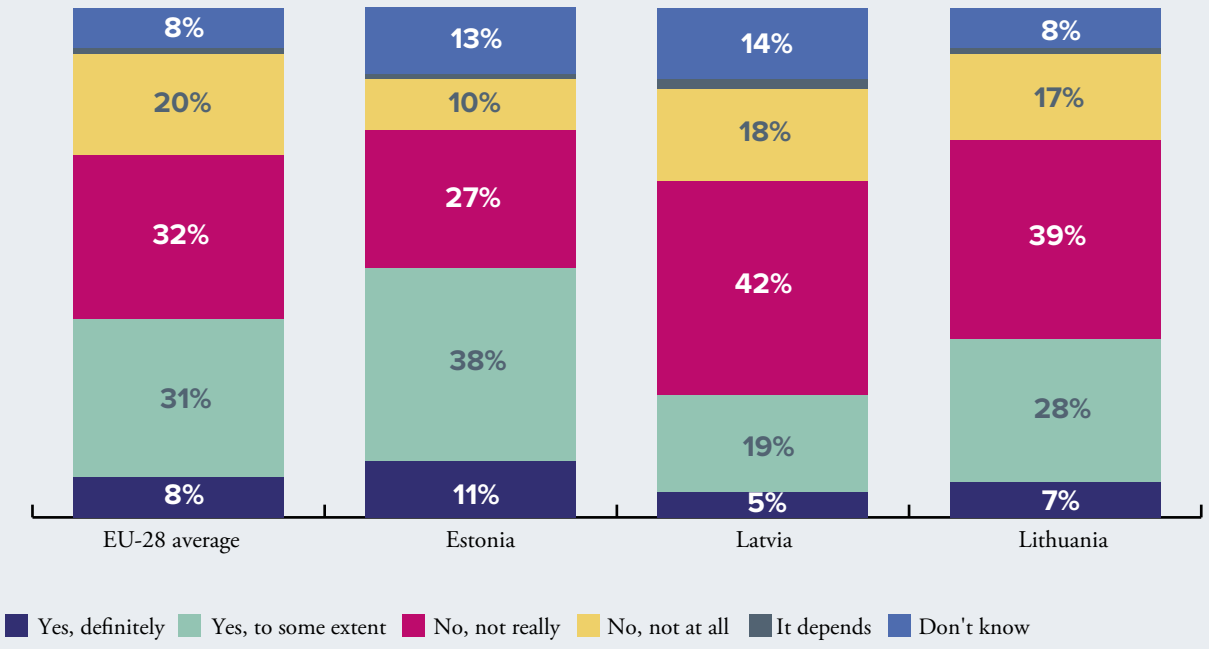
LRT cooperated with the investigation and took some criticisms into account. It drafted an internal Code of Ethics and set up internal procedures to oversee its implementation. The public broadcaster also reduced purchases from commercial producers and made annual reports more detailed.

"We implemented many changes towards transparency of the LRT, but it seems that it went unnoticed. We believe this is because transparency was not something the ruling party is aiming for," says LRT general director, Monika Garbačiauskaitė-Budrienė.

After the investigation commission presented its conclusions to the parliament, the majority voted them down. Politicians of the ruling party tried to sidestep that decision, drafting a new law which included the investigation commission's proposals for LRT governance change. That was rejected, too.

Moreover, the Constitutional Court ruled that

Are public service media free from political pressure?



Source: Standard Eurobarometer 90 Autumn 2018.

Nearly half of Estonians agree that their public media is free from political pressure, while Latvians are the most sceptical about the public broadcaster's freedom from political pressure

parliament's decision to establish the investigation commission for the parliamentary scrutiny of LRT breached the Constitution, particularly the protection of free speech.

That did not, however, bring the controversial political process to an end. Now politicians are trying to push through new regulations in bits and pieces. Members of the ruling party of Farmers and Greens are behind most of these initiatives.

The politicians' hostility towards LRT might be related to the work that the public broadcaster's journalists are doing. In January, LRT's investigative reporters revealed that Klaipeda's mayoral hopeful Arvydas Vaitkus, who was heading the Klaipėda State Seaport Authority and was backed by the Farmers and Greens Union, had received campaign funding from the port's business partners. He eventually lost the municipal election and his position. LRT reported that following the investigation multiple complaints about the broadcaster were submitted to various institutions and new initiatives to change the LRT law were registered.

"We have so many new plans, so much work to do, yet we are forced to be constantly cautious about ruling party politicians who are seemingly determined to force their grip on independent public service media in Lithuania," says Monika Garbačiauskaitė-Budrienė. "It takes a lot of our energy and time to stop those processes which otherwise we could dedicate to improve content and programmes of the public broadcaster." ■

Džina Donauksiate is the director of the Lithuanian Journalism Centre and a postdoctoral researcher at Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas).

Marju Himma-Kadakas is a professor at the University of Tartu and research editor and radio presenter at ERR.

Alina Lastovska is editor-in-chief of *Forbes Latvia*.



Photo: Kairit Leibold, ERR

Erik Roose, CEO of Estonia's public broadcaster ERR

WE MUST SUSTAIN THE PRODUCTION OF PROFESSIONAL AND CREDIBLE NEWS

What is the main role of public service media?

Roose: It is similar to that of the BBC: to inform, educate, and entertain. In addition, in Estonian society, our role is to connect people culturally and to integrate different societal groups. To understand the ERR's role, we should imagine a situation where there was suddenly no ERR and people had only commercial media channels.

What is the most important change that public service media needs to undergo in the next few years to stay relevant?

Roose: Firstly, our current needs are very practical: we need a new television centre, otherwise our audiovisual production will collapse in the near future. Secondly, no matter what happens in society, we must sustain the production of professional and credible news; news are the last ones to turn off the lights. Thirdly, although ERR has experienced professionals on its payroll, we also need young professionals with their ideas and new skills for addressing young audiences. This demands both technical upskilling and an open-minded approach to new genres and formats.

What digital products would you want to develop?

Roose: Today's user is spoilt with excellent user experience; there is no room for mediocre products. My ultimate demand for any technical development in ERR is to have a cutting-edge solution. It doesn't matter that we have been outstanding for 60 years, because we have to be outstanding all the time. Therefore, we need to be continually developing excellent products, and at the same time, monitoring audiences to understand how they are consuming our content. However, we are 'flying on our best guess', since our audience monitoring is underfinanced and underdeveloped. Audience monitoring systems, data gathering and analysis, and best-personalised user experience for ERR's content in Estonia is our goal. ■



Photo: Eimantas Genys, LRT

Monika Garbačiauskaitė-Budrienė, general director of Lithuania's public broadcaster LRT

WE AIM TO MAKE LRT.LT THE THIRD MOST POPULAR NEWS SOURCE

What is the main role of public service media?

Garbačiauskaitė-Budrienė: As a public service media organisation, we take on functions and roles that could never be performed by the commercial media. Our mission is not only to inform, but also to educate. I also think that LRT should establish quality standards for the rest of the industry – we are free from commercial interests, therefore we can develop investigative journalism and hire the best journalists.

What is the most important change that public service media needs to undergo in the next few years to stay relevant?

Garbačiauskaitė-Budrienė: We have developed a strategy for the next three and a half years in which we identified seven main programmes. Each of them has sub-tasks, activities and goals. For example, under "News speed, accuracy and depth", we are committing to dedicating more time and resources into developing a network of LRT foreign reporters, arming our reporters with reporting skills for different mediums, i.e. making them more versatile, and developing investigative and constructive journalism teams. Second, we will pay a lot of attention to original, creative production. We are currently working on LRT's strategy for culture. Since we are an important player in the country's cultural life, we want to strategise our role and relations with other cultural institutions. We are aiming to refresh our radio programmes and to livestream more sports games too. Third, we plan to integrate our platforms more closely (TV, radio and online) to achieve better coordination between them. Instead of an expensive and unpopular TV channel for Lithuanians living abroad, we are thinking of developing a new online news portal. We aim to make *lrt.lt* the third most popular news source for the Lithuanian audience [currently it is the 5th, and in 2017, it was the 13th – Ed.]. A huge challenge for us is content for young people and children – this is something that worries most public broadcasters in Europe.

What digital products would you want to develop?

Garbačiauskaitė-Budrienė: We developed a quiz game app called *Prototo* (an online brain game, quite popular among young people, often played in various bars and cafeterias – Ed.). We have started to use podcasts, which attract various audiences. Personalisation of our content is another digital innovation that we will introduce. We also are considering what algorithm to use and how to implement personalisation responsibly, as our mission is to educate our readers and show them broader perspectives, not to keep them in information bubbles. ■



Photo: Ģirts Rāgelis, LTV

Ivars Priede, member of the board of Latvia's public broadcaster LTV

OUR MISSION IS TO USE ALL POSSIBLE CHANNELS TO ATTRACT VIEWERS

What is the main role of public service media?

Priede: Our main goal is to serve the public interest, addressing different audiences, without dividing society in any way. We are the watchdogs; we raise issues that are important to society. These are not commercially successful stories just aiming to attract advertisements. Examples would be our stories about orphanages, or about the availability of healthcare to cancer patients. I also really like the message that the public media is the only real antidote to the sea of fake news. Our task is to resist propaganda and false news.

What is the most important change that public service media needs to undergo in the next few years to stay relevant?

Priede: A major challenge for LTV, as it is for everyone, is to get the viewer to spend their time with us. It is no secret that the consumption of the linear TV is shrinking. People are spending more and more time on other media platforms, such as social media, on-demand services and paid subscriptions like *Netflix* and *HBO*. These platforms are competing successfully with linear television. Therefore our mission is to use all possible channels in order to attract viewers from all social groups and offer them our content. We also have *lsm.lv*, the public service media's online portal, which creates its own content, as well as publishing LTV and *Latvian Radio* content.

What digital products would you want to develop?

Priede: LTV currently is working on its digital strategy, in which we are going to evaluate all our digital platforms and brands. Our public service media already has a presence on social networks; LTV developed a TV series for young adults called "16+" [available only on YouTube - Ed.]. One of the challenges is to attract young audiences, and here we need to be flexible, constantly changing. It is essential to offer high-quality, original, interesting content that we can distribute through channels that are more appropriate, while not neglecting linear television. ■



Photo: LETA

So-called oligarchs (left to right) Aivars Lembergs, Andris Šķēle and Ainārs Šlesers are questioned at the Parliamentary inquiry committee about their involvement in the ownership change of the daily *Diena* and other episodes mentioned in the oligarch tapes, October and December of 2017.

THE COST OF INFLUENCE

The oligarch tapes, secretly recorded by the Latvian anti-corruption bureau between 2009 and 2011, revealed how the three so-called Latvian 'oligarchs' — Ainārs Šlesers, Aivars Lembergs and Andris Šķēle — tried to tame the media and took control of the leading Latvian daily *Diena* in their efforts to mute the critical press. What has been the return on their investment?

By Aija Krūtaine

"We have *Diena*, then we have *Dienas Bizness*, Aivars has *Neatkarīgā*," an influential Latvian businessman and former politician, Ainārs Šlesers, boasted in September 2010, listing three major daily newspapers in the Baltic nation. The private conversation took place in a hotel room and was secretly recorded by the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau of Latvia. The series of recordings came to light in 2017, when they were published by the weekly news magazine *IR*.

For nearly two decades, *Diena* was a staple of independent journalism, majority-owned by Swedish *Bonnier group*. The Swedish media group also owned the business daily *Dienas Bizness*. Meanwhile, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, the third largest Latvian daily, often served the political interests of the mayor of the seaside port Ventspils, Aivars Lembergs, since the establishment of its publisher *Mediju nams* in 2002.

Shareholders of major Latvian newspaper publishers

Izdevniecība Dienas Mediji, publisher of *Diena*

Period	Owner(s)
17.11.2015 until present	Edgars Kots becomes sole owner of Dienas Mediji
16.09.2010	A transit company (Rīgas tirdzniecības osta) holds majority through AS Diena
03.07.2009	Nedela S.A (Luxembourg) becomes majority owner through AS Diena
Until 03.07.2009	The publisher's majority shareholder is Bonnier Group (Sweden) through AS Diena

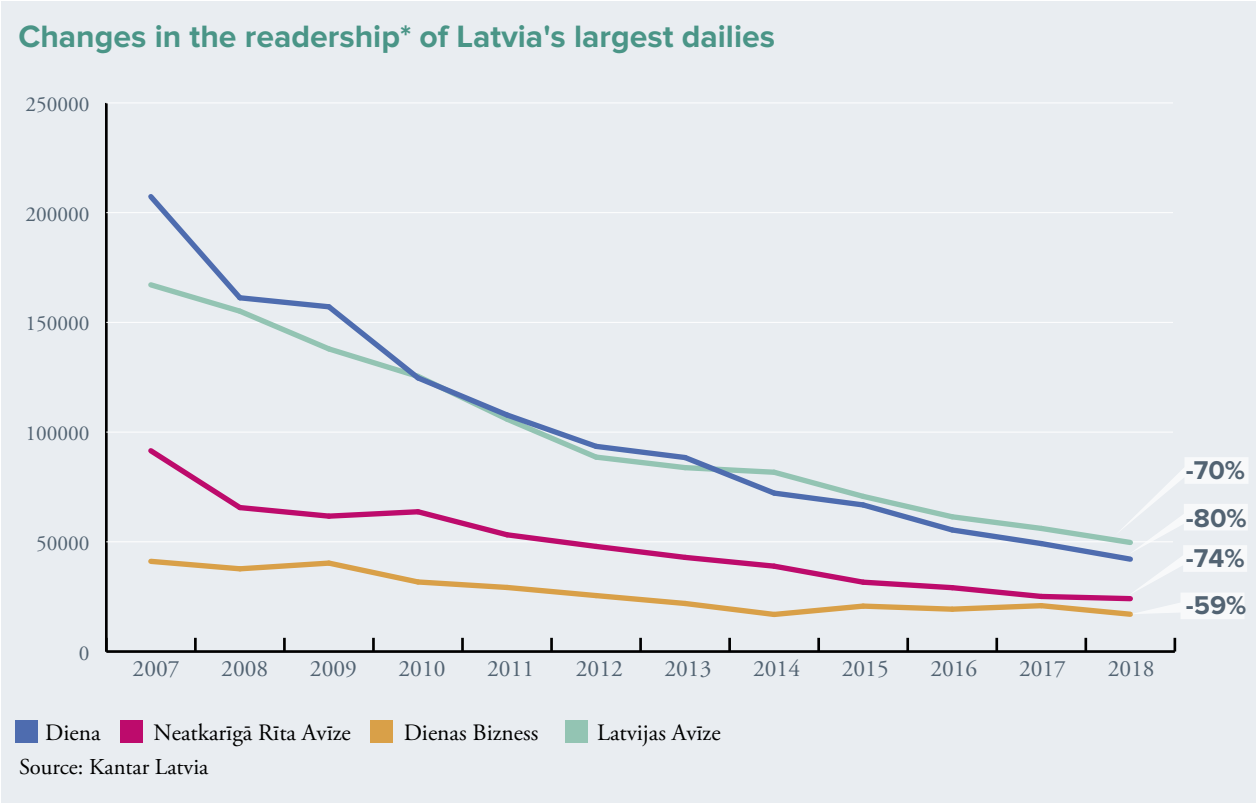
Mediju Nams, publisher of *Neatkarīgā*

Period	Owner(s)
From 25.05.2016 until present	Nauris Kāpostiņš becomes sole owner of Mediju Nams through SIA MN Mediji
14.01.2010	Armands Puče, Uldis Dreiblats, Lilita Seimuškāne are shareholders through SIA MN Mediji
05.01.2009	LASCO Investment, a subsidiary of Latvijas Kuģniecība, becomes majority owner
31.01.2003	Ventspils Nafta holds more than 90% of shares directly and less than 10% through its subsidiary AS Preses Nams
25.11.2002	AS Preses Nams, a subsidiary of Ventspils Nafta, is the sole owner

Izdevniecība Dienas bizness, publisher of *Dienas Bizness*

Period	Owner(s)
From 17.11.2015 until present	Jānis Maršāns & Jānis Svārpstons become owners of Dienas Bizness through SIA SM Investīcijas
25.02.2011	A transit company (Rīgas tirdzniecības osta) becomes the owner through AS Diena
07.07.2009	Nedela S.A (Luxembourg) is sole shareholder
Until 07.07.2009	The publisher's majority shareholder is Bonnier Business Press (Sweden)

Source: Lursoft



***Diena*, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, *Latvijas Avīze* and *Dienas Bizness* are the largest dailies in Latvia**

The names of Šlesers, Lembergs or Šķēle would not be found among the newspaper owners or managers. All three deny that either of them has ever been an owner of these newspapers.

Diena's former editor-in-chief, Guntis Bojārs, and a former member of the board of the newspaper's publisher, *Dienas Mediji*, Uldis Salmiņš, paint a different picture. They say at various times *Diena* was run by people connected to each of the 'oligarchs', who hired loyal people for certain management and editorial positions. "*Diena* had personally hurt each one [of them] at some point," Bojārs said in 2013 after leaving the newspaper. "Perhaps, the main drive [to buy *Diena*] was revenge. I don't believe that the goal was to dissolve *Diena*. More likely it was to neutralize [the newspaper]. So that *Diena* would not disturb."

The Black Hole

Ten years later *Diena*, *Dienas Bizness, Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, and other newspapers for that matter, have little influence. The readership of the biggest national daily newspapers has plummeted between 60 to 80 percent since 2007.

There are a number of reasons behind the fall. First and foremost, it's the general trend in the print media. Publishers were hit hard by the global financial crisis. It nearly halved the advertising market, one of the most important revenue streams for print media, even before the Silicon Valley tech giants Google and Facebook became the dominant online advertising market players.

The readership of the biggest national daily newspapers has plummeted between 60 to 80 percent since 2007

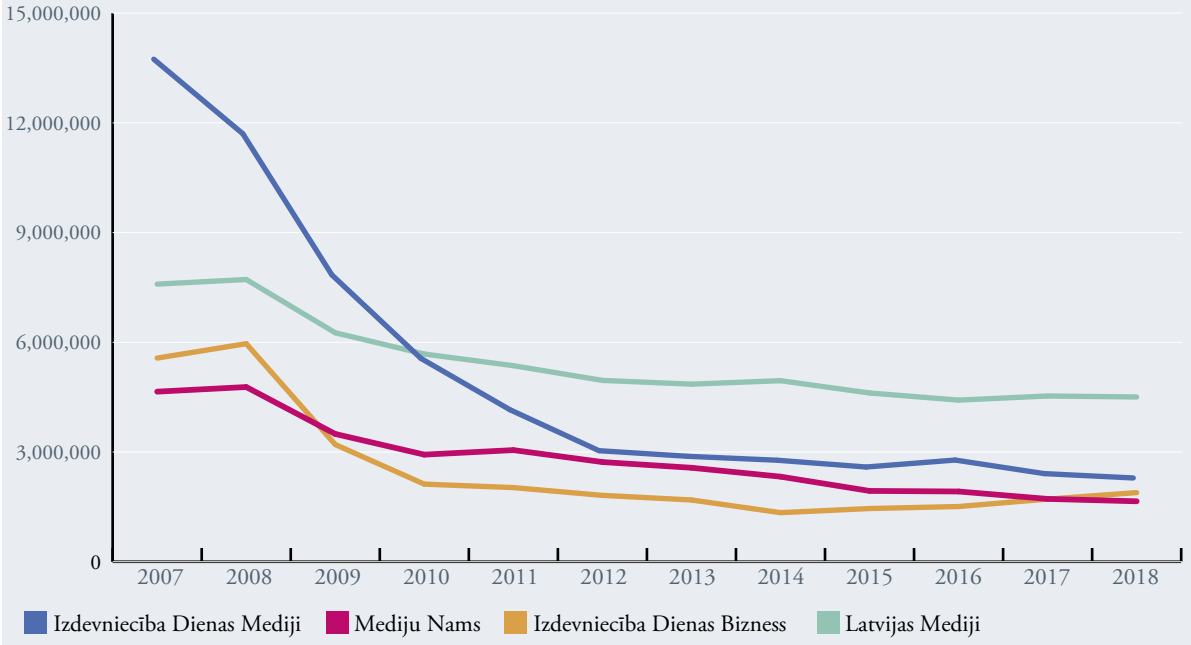
Smartphones coupled with the rise of digital and social media sped up the downward trend, luring more people to read the news on their mobiles rather than on paper. As a result, the financial situation of publishers had worsened.

For several years after the crisis publishers of *Diena* and *Neatkarīgā* Rīta Avīze operated with losses between 2-3 million euros per year. *Mediju nams* operated with a net profit only one year — in 2014 when it sold its subsidiary. In recent years the situation has somewhat improved. In 2018, *Mediju Nams* losses were 960,000 euros, while *Dienas mediji* was operating with a loss of 520,000 euros.

The publisher of the business daily *Dienas Bizness* has had a buoyant financial performance over the years. It posted a record loss of 700,000 euros in 2009, after which it managed to operate with a profit for two years, but recently it has slipped again in red, losing around 200,000 euros per year.

These annual losses have snowballed. At the end of 2018, *Mediju Nams* reported a cumulative loss (negative retained earnings) of 16.2 million euros, while *Dienas*

Turnover of major Latvian newspaper publishers (euro)



Source: Lursoft, publishers' annual reports

Mediji had accumulated losses of 12.4 million euros. The accumulated losses of *Dienas Bizness*' publisher are much smaller, at 700,000 euros.

All three publishers have negative shareholders' equity (their total assets exceed total liabilities). This means that they cannot sustain themselves and need an injection of funds to stay afloat. The new owners of *Diena* have pumped nearly 9 million euros in the share capital of the publisher between 2009 - 2018, but it has not been enough to cover for its accumulated losses. Owners of *Mediju Nams* increased the share capital of their company every year from its registration until 2009, including a 6.8 million euro capital increase between 2007 and 2009. They haven't invested since. *Dienas Bizness* share capital has remained almost unchanged for the last decade.

While these newspapers struggle, the formerly second largest daily *Latvijas Avīze* has become a market leader. The daily itself has the highest average number of readers, and its publisher has the largest turnover in the newspaper industry. While it, too, has suffered losses in the recent years, it has managed to finance those from profits made earlier; its shareholders' equity is positive, too. It is owned by Olafs Berķis, an ally-turned-foe of Lembergs.

The Cost

To finance such losses is not an easy task. The publisher and co-owner of *Dienas Bizness*, Jānis Maršāns, says that shareholders are putting in their money and the publishing house has loans from third parties. "There is no other way to fund it," he says.

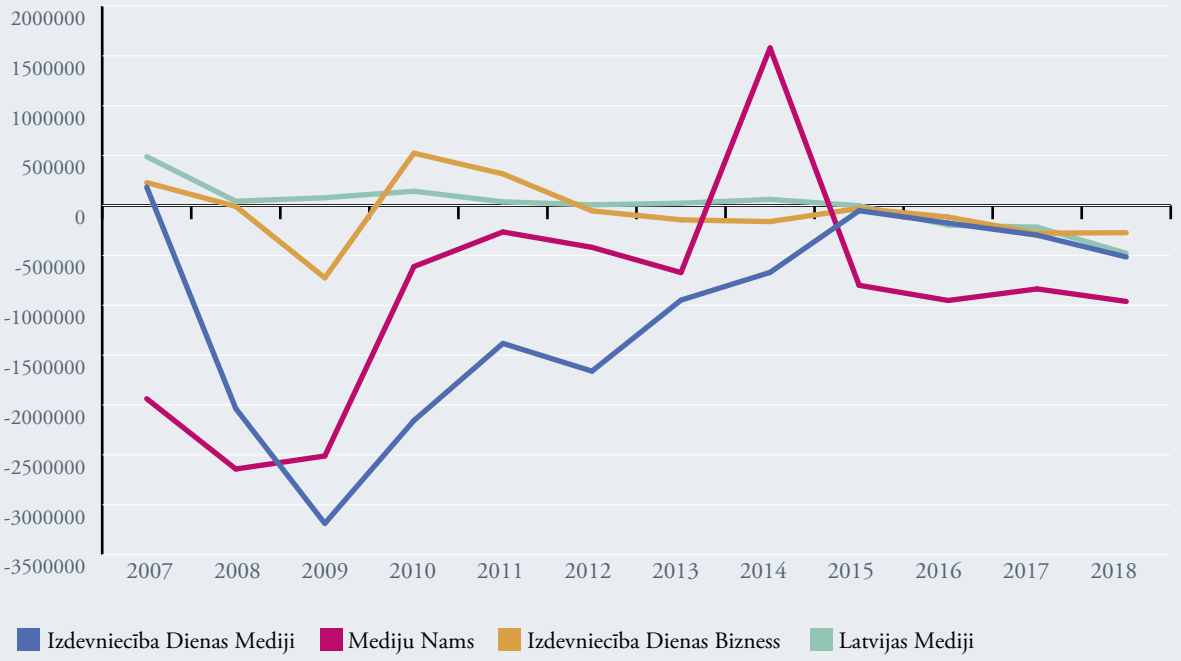
At the end of 2018, *Mediju Nams* reported a cumulative loss (negative retained earnings) of 16.2 million euros, while *Dienas Mediji* had accumulated losses of 12.4 million euros

In a bid to limit losses, the daily *Dienas Bizness* will become a weekly newspaper from 2020. "We certainly haven't lost hope that we can come out of losses and become a profitable media. The next year will show if this change of format will give any positives," says Maršāns.

"Clearly, the purpose is not to burn money. If this change of format won't prove successful, then we will have to see what next steps should we take. For now, we don't consider closing the newspaper or abandoning this business," says Maršāns.

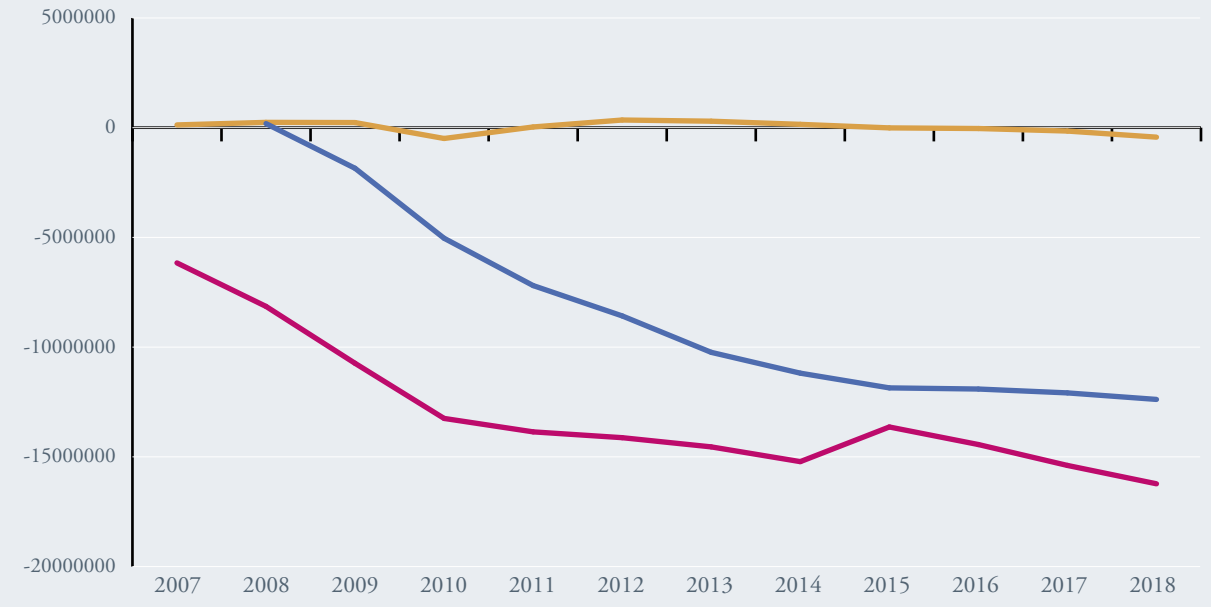
Another blow for *Dienas Bizness* may be coming. During the 2018 general election campaign, the daily ran free special editions promoting certain politicians and disparaging their competitors. The anti-corruption bureau considers that move as a campaign advertising, therefore the publisher may be subject to a hefty fine. The outcome of the ongoing investigation will determine the fine.

Profit or loss of major Latvian newspaper publishers (euro)



Source: Lursoft, publishers' annual reports

Accumulated loss of major Latvian newspaper publishers (euro)



Source: Lursoft, publishers' annual reports

Dienas Mediji has been working to optimise operations and limit losses for the past years. The publisher is developing new products and new business lines, says Edgars Kots, the owner of *Dienas Mediji*. On the positive side, *Diena* online website has increased its audience in 2018 and was one of the top 5 most visited websites in Latvia, according to *Kantar* data. *Dienas Mediji* also announced recently it was buying a popular sports newspaper brand *Sporta Avize* from its rival, *Mediju Nams,* which it would start publishing next year. The move, however, forced the sport newspaper staff to announce that they were leaving.

"We are committed to work without losses in the future," says Kots. He distances himself from the decision taken by the previous owners and management of the publishing house, and stresses that the financial situation has improved compared to five or ten years ago. When asked about funding, Kots says that *Diena* has various revenue

streams and it also uses other available financing.

The strategy of *Mediju Nams* currently focuses on the development of its online website and related digital products, as well as promoting content on social media, says Nauris Kāpostiņš, the owner and the chairman of the board of *Mediju Nams*. According to him, advertising revenues from digital channels are growing. "This is a strategy that we will continue to build a positive future for the publishing house," says Kāpostiņš. He declined to reveal details on how the publishing house was financing its losses.

Whatever the 'oligarchs' wanted to achieve by buying daily newspapers, it has come at a high cost. If they attempted to silence their critics, they failed. When they bought *Diena* in 2009, the core team at *Diena* left

Whatever the 'oligarchs' wanted to achieve by buying daily newspapers, it has come at a high cost

to establish a brand new weekly magazine *IR*. Other journalists have founded the investigative journalism center *Re:Baltica* and work at the public broadcaster. In the current environment where the printed press has the smallest audience reach in Latvia, the impact these newspapers might have on their readers even if they were to sway public opinion is small. How long they will be willing to finance their pocket mouthpieces before they shut them down remains an open-ended question. ■

Small newspapers have little influence on society, but disproportionate influence on decision makers



Iveta Kažoka, director of think tank *Providus*

Despite their small circulation, newspapers provide access to decision-makers. I believe this is what oligarchs consider to be important. By conducting an interview with a minister or a government official, one can gain access to information, which otherwise for the newspaper owners would be harder to get. The interview may lead to an impression that a particular issue is of a general interest rather than matters primarily to the oligarch. Also, newspaper owners can threaten an official with negative publicity.

In this way, the newspaper owners can become more influential than if they lobbied their interests directly. With that, even though the newspapers are marginal, they promote the influence of their owners.

After the parliamentary elections in 2018, we conducted a survey about the campaign's effect on voters choices. The survey showed that newspapers held no obvious sway. People, who claimed to read *Diena*, *NRA*, *Dienas Bizness* and the weekly *IR* -- each of these outlets had certain political preferences -- still voted for the same parties: those parties that attract a typical ethnic Latvian voter who lives in Riga and has a comparatively high income and education. Meanwhile, readers of *Latvijas Avīze* voted for those parties that muster support among all rural residents, regardless of whether they read this specific newspaper or not.

It is possible that politicians have understood that, as their rhetoric now increasingly turns to an argument: it won't cause any political harm even if some newspaper presents news about their political party in a negative light. A typical newspaper reader – a comparatively better-off Riga resident of the middle or older generation – lives in an environment overloaded by information and has learned to separate the relevant information not only in the media as a whole but also in one specific newspaper. This is the reason why *Dienas Bizness*' campaign before the 2018 elections didn't impact their readers' choices.

I think the low quality of the daily newspapers, which are filled with paid-for content or content pushing the owners' interests, is the main reason why the circulation has been falling. Another important reason is that daily newspapers haven't found a way to speak to the younger generation, who consider the conservative values represented by the newspaper content not worth their time. The post-election survey showed that less than one in 10 young people under the age of 25 has read a newspaper before the elections.

The heirs of Potemkin



Nellija Ločmele, editor-in-chief of weekly *IR*, former editor-in-chief of *Diena*

If one were to sum up the collapse of the daily newspapers in Latvia in one word, it would be "oligarchs." Often people think that it is a problem of the market or business: modern internet media replace aging newspapers. However, this conclusion is incomplete, and therefore incorrect.

Yes, the print media lost 65 percent of the advertising revenue in the 2009 financial crisis. They still haven't recovered and will never return to the pre-crisis income level. However, because of the oligarchs in Latvia, the newspapers are denied the only secure alternative for survival: financial support from readers, who are willing to vote for journalism that is independent and of high quality. Oligarch-controlled newspapers simply cannot offer that. Readers aren't stupid. They understand that. This is why, compared to 2009, there has been collapse of the readership audience and financial indicators.

Compared to audience and income, why isn't press credibility level catastrophically low? My hypothesis: in such surveys people basically base their perception of press credibility on their own experiences and, therefore, rate the press that they still consume. Media outlets that completely lost the public trust remain as background noise that affects the overall picture, but is not in focus.

Why do oligarchs continue support media that have lost their influence? There are many reasons. One million euros a year to publish a newspaper isn't that expensive if one can maintain this as an outlet to promote your point of view and to defame your opponents. The losses can be partially covered by obtaining state or local government advertising contracts through schemes. Even though direct readership has been lost, the old aura continues to exert its indirect influence, as these oligarch newspapers are still viewed by the general public and media professionals as poor but equal market players. Their content is sometimes republished and authors are invited to comment publicly on processes as though they represent independent journalism, rather than the narrow interests of the owners. This is how this Potemkin village hangs on: contaminating people's minds with knock-off journalism and further crushing the media market. The only adequate answer to this is truly high-quality and independent journalism, which is capable to reach out to the Latvian public and shed light, among other things, on the distorted media market.

TOP 5 TV CHANELS IN THE BALTICS AND THEIR FINANCIAL INDICATORS

TOP5 Most Popular TV Stations	Lithuania	Latvia	Estonia
#1 TV channel	TV3	TV3	ETV
Share (%), 2018	17,8	9,7	14,7
Share (%), 2017	16,8	11,3	13,8
Change in share 2018 vs 2017, pp	1,0	-1,6	0,9
Broadcaster	All Media Lithuania, UAB	All Media Latvia, SIA	Eesti Rahvusringhääling
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	26 214 002	18 617 426	39 300 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	24 625 994	18 467 432	36 944 000
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	6,4%	0,8%	6,4%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	6 109 538	2 870 303	1 005 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	4 499 728	1 391 281	270 000
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	35,8%	106,3%	272,2%
Global Ultimate Owner	Providence Equity Partners (Jonathan Milton Nelson, Glenn Creamer, Paul Salem)	Providence Equity Partners (Jonathan Milton Nelson, Glenn Creamer, Paul Salem)	Public Broadcaster
#2 TV channel	LNK	LTV1	Kanal2
Share (%), 2018	16,4	9,3	10,4
Share (%), 2017	16,4	9,9	13,1
Change in share 2018 vs 2017, pp	0,0	-0,6	-2,7
Broadcaster	Laisvas ir nepriklausomas kanalas, UAB	Latvijas Televīzija, VSIA	Postimees Grupp, AS *
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	24 647 000	19 556 153	52 973 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	25 937 000	18 322 514	37 809 000
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-5,0%	6,7%	40.1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	1 793 000	-733 506	-8 901 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	3 467 000	-233 056	-6 784 000
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	-48,3%	nm	nm
Global Ultimate Owner	MG Baltic, UAB (Darius Mockus)	Public Broadcaster	UP Invest, OÜ (Margus Linnamäe)

#3 TV channel	LRT Televizija	LNT	TV3
Share (%), 2018	12,2	7,6	10,2
Share (%), 2017	10,5	7,8	11,3
Change in share 2018 vs 2017, pp	1,7	-0,2	-1,1
Broadcaster	Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija	All Media Latvia, SIA	All Media Eesti, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	38 865 029	18 617 426	14 472 298
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	35 813 306	18 467 432	13 963 721
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	8,5%	0,8%	3,6%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-796 735	2 870 303	584 782
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	-592 358	1 391 281	-336 180
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	106,3%	nm
Global Ultimate Owner	Public Broadcaster	Providence Equity Partners (Jonathan Milton Nelson, Glenn Creamer, Paul Salem)	Providence Equity Partners (Jonathan Milton Nelson, Glenn Creamer, Paul Salem)
#4 TV channel	BTV	PBK	RTR Planeta
Share (%), 2018	6,3	7,3	4,8
Share (%), 2017	7,0	8,2	4,8
Change in share 2018 vs 2017, pp	-0,7	-0,9	0,0
Broadcaster	Laisvas ir nepriklausomas kanalas, UAB	Pirmais Baltijas Kanāls, SIA	Balti Autorite ja Leviliit**
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	24 647 000	2 870 145	203 649
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	25 937 000	2 989 906	195 761
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-5,0%	-4,0%	4,0%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	1 793 000	648 062	24 585
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	3 467 000	101 879	21 784
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	-48,3%	536,1%	12,9%
Global Ultimate Owner	MG Baltic, UAB (Darius Mockus)	Baltijas Mediju Alianse, SIA (Oļegs Solodovs, Alexey Plyasunov)	Oleg Domanin, Ljubov Domanina
#5 TV channel	Lietuvos ryto TV	NTV Mir Baltic	PBK
Share (%), 2018	5,0	6,9	4,3
Share (%), 2017	5,4	7,3	5,2
Change in share 2018 vs 2017, pp	-0,4	-0,4	-0,9
Broadcaster	Lietuvos ryto televizija, UAB	TEM LV, SIA***	Pirmais Baltijas Kanāls, SIA
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	2 816 735	2 282 369	2 870 145
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	3 066 094	2 097 350	2 989 906
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-8,1%	8,8%	-4,0%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-577 481	157 092	648 062
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	-364 588	33 051	101 879
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	375,3%	536,1%
Global Ultimate Owner	Lietuvos rytas, UAB (BIG group, UAB, Gedvydas Vainauskas, Vidmantas Strimaitis)	Baltijas Mediju Alianse, SIA (Oļegs Solodovs, Alexey Plyasunov)	Baltijas Mediju Alianse, SIA (Oļegs Solodovs, Alexey Plyasunov)

Decline in audience and/or financial results marked in red

* Estonian media group AS Eesti Meedia renamed itself AS Postimees Grupp, reflecting its flagship publication, in February 2019. The group also changed its financial reporting year in 2018 to start from May 1 and end on April 30. Therefore for 2018 AS Postimees Grupp's financial reporting period lasted for 16 months from 01.01.2018 until 30.04.2019.

**TV channel RTR Planeta is owned by the Russian state-owned broadcaster VGTRK (*Всероссийская государственная телевизионная и радиовещательная компания*), however, it is the Balti Autorite ja Leviliit which owns the rights to distribute RTR Planeta TV channel in Estonia, therefore for the purposes of this report financial information reported by Balti Autorite ja Leviliit is used. Balti Autorite ja Leviliit is registered as a non-profit association, therefore its owners are not known. Members of the board of Balti Autorite ja Leviliit Oleg Domanin and Ljubov Domanina are the owners of a company that distributes RTR Planeta TV channel in Latvia, SIA Baltic Media Union.

*** Owner of NTV Mir Baltic TV channel ir Baltic Media Alliance Ltd, registered in the UK under Ofcom. The representative of this TV channel in Latvia is SIA TEM LV, which is owned by SIA Baltijas Mediju Alianse.

Sources:			
Audience data	Kantar Lithuania, TV Audience Survey, TV Meter panel 2018; 2017	Kantar Latvia, TV Audience Survey 2018; 2017	TV Audience Measurement 2018; 2017
Share (%)	Consolidated TV share of viewing, the percentage of the total viewing time over a given period of time		
Target audience	Lithuanian residents aged 4+ years	Latvian residents aged 4+ years	Estonian residents aged 4+ years
Financial data	Creditreform	Lursoft	Centre of Registers and Information Systems
na	data not available		
nm	not meaningful to calculate		

TOP 5 INTERNET MEDIA WEBSITES IN THE BALTICS AND THEIR FINANCIAL INDICATORS

TOP 5 Internet Media Websites	Lithuania	Latvia	Estonia
#1 portal	delfi.lt	delfi.lv	delfi.ee
The website is a part of other media outlet	No	No	No
Cover 2018	722 200	548 500	380 000
Cover 2017	876 700	538 200	375 000
Change in cover 2018 vs 2017, %	-17,6%	1,9%	1,3%
Cover in 2018, %	33,6	34,5	39,0
Cover in 2017, %	40,0	33,4	38,2
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 6,4	1,1	0,8
Owner	Delfi, UAB	Delfi, AS	Ekspress Meedia, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	8 768 616	4 038 560	21 380 704
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	9 487 429	3 974 800	18 832 331
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-7,6%	1,6%	13,5%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	1 242 866	-444 006	478 925
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	1 419 096	199 893	1 241 819
Change in profit 2018 vs 2017, %	-12,4%	nm	-61,4%
Global Ultimate Owner	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik)	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik)	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik)
#2 portal	15min.lt	tvnet.lv	postimees.ee
The website is a part of other media outlet	No	No	Yes
Cover 2018	502 800	340 500	268 000
Cover 2017	568 000	455 400	246 000
Change in cover 2018 vs 2017, %	-11,5%	-25,2%	8,9%
Cover in 2018, %	23,4	21,4	27,5
Cover in 2017, %	25,9	28,3	25,1
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 2,5	- 6,9	2,4
Owner	15min, UAB**	TV Net, SIA**	Postimees Grupp, AS *
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	5 561 509	2 078 875	52 973 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	4 193 866	2 043 349	37 809 000
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	32,6%	1,7%	40.1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-277 711	-1 035 253	-8 901 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	141 809	-731 215	-6 784 000
Change in profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	nm	nm
Global Ultimate Owner	Postimees Grupp, AS (Margus Linnamäe)	Postimees Grupp, AS (Margus Linnamäe)	UP Invest, OÜ (Margus Linnamäe)

#3 portal	lrytas.lt	jauns.lv	ohtuleht.ee
The website is a part of other media outlet	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cover 2018	398 700	71 500	118 000
Cover 2017	449 900	97 300	128 000
Change in cover 2018 vs 2017, %	-11,4%	-26,5%	-7,8%
Cover in 2018, %	18,5	4,5	12,1
Cover in 2017, %	20,5	6,0	13,1
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 2,0	- 1,5	- 1,0
Owner	Lrytas, UAB	Izdevniecība Rīgas Viļņi, SIA	Õhtuleht Kirjastus, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	2 444 681	5 902 865	11 684 301
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	2 641 289	5 999 014	9 053 246
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-7,4%	-1,6%	29,1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-247 015	81 400	-178 747
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	85 398	-189 854	495 105
Change in profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	nm	nm
Global Ultimate Owner	BIG group, UAB, Gedvydas Vainauskas, Vidmantas Strimaitis	Izdevniecība Pulss Plus, SIA (Aija Šmidre)	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik), Suits Meedia, OÜ (Kristi Veeber)
#4 portal	alfa.lt	lsm.lv	err.ee
The website is a part of other media outlet	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cover 2018	99 700	64 100	93 000
Cover 2017	103 200	41 200	71 000
Change in cover 2018 vs 2017, %	-3,4%	55,6%	31,0%
Cover in 2018, %	4,6	4,0	9,5
Cover in 2017, %	4,7	2,6	7,3
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 0,1	1,4	2,2
Owner	Naujienų centras, UAB	Latvijas Televīzija, VSIA	Eesti Rahvusringhääling
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	743 395	19 556 153	39 300 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	603 713	18 322 514	36 944 000
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	23,1%	6,7%	6,4%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	613	-733 506	1 005 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	23 838	-233 056	270 000
Change in profit 2018 vs 2017, %	-97,4%	nm	272,2%
Global Ultimate Owner	Ovidijus Lukošius	Public Broadcaster	Public Broadcaster

#5 portal	tv3.lt	diena.lv	epl.delfi.ee (Eesti Päev-aleht)
The website is a part of other media outlet	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cover 2018	88 800	43 800	60 000
Cover 2017	51 800	34 600	63 000
Change in cover 2018 vs 2017, %	71,4%	26,6%	-4,8%
Cover in 2018, %	4,1	2,4	6,1
Cover in 2017, %	2,4	2,1	6,4
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	1,7	0,3	- 0,3
Owner	All Media Lithuania, UAB	Dienas Mediji, SIA	Ekspress Meedia, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	26 214 002	2 197 745	21 380 704
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	24 625 994	2 316 944	18 832 331
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	6,4%	-5,1%	13,5%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	6 109 538	-515 870	478 925
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	4 499 728	-297 222	1 241 819
Change in profit 2018 vs 2017, %	35,8%	nm	-61,4%
Global Ultimate Owner	Providence Equity Partners (Jonathan Milton Nelson, Glenn Creamer, Paul Salem)	Edgars Kots	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik)

Decline in audience and/or financial results marked in red

* Estonian media group AS Eesti Meedia renamed itself AS Postimees Grupp, reflecting its flagship publication, in February 2019. The group also changed its financial reporting year in 2018 to start from May 1 and end on April 30. Therefore for 2018 AS Postimees Grupp's financial reporting period lasted for 16 months from 01.01.2018 until 30.04.2019.
** SIA TV NET and UAB 15min together with other Postimees Grupp AS companies in 2018 changed its financial year to start from May 1 and end April 30. For SIA TV Net, the 2018 data here is shown for the latest full financial year from 01.05.2018 until 30.04.2019. For UAB 15min the reporting period for 2018 was from 01.01.2018 until 30.04.2019. For both companies the data for 2017 is based on the previous reporting period - 01.01.2017-31.12.2017.

Sources:			
Cover data	Kantar Lithuania, Digital Survey Spring 2018; 2017	Kantar Latvia, Digital Survey Spring 2018; 2017	TNSAtlas 2018; 2017
Target Audience	Lithuanian residents aged 15-74 years	Latvian residents aged 15-74 years	Estonian residents aged 15-74 years
Cover	The average number of visitors per day		
Cover, %	The average number of visitors as percentage of target audience per day		
Financial data	Creditreform	Lursoft	Centre of Registers and Information Systems
na	data not available		
nm	not meaningful to calculate		

TOP 5 RADIO STATIONS IN THE BALTICS AND THEIR FINANCIAL INDICATORS

TOP5 Most Popular Radio Stations	Lithuania	Latvia	Estonia
#1 Radio	M-1	Latvijas Radio 2	Vikerraadio
Reach daily, 2018	323 000	236 800	137 000
Reach daily, 2017	399 900	209 100*	195 000*
Change in daily reach 2018 vs 2017, %	- 0,2	nm	nm
Reach daily (%), 2018	15,2	15,1	13,5
Reach daily (%), 2017	18,2	12.5*	19.1*
Change in daily reach (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 3,0	nm	nm
Owner	M-1, UAB	Latvijas Radio, VSIA	Eesti Rahvusringhääling
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	3 874 457	9 979 580	39 300 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	3 505 980	9 174 211	36 944 000
Changes in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	10,5%	8,8%	6,4%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	1 499 261	162 628	1 005 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	1 406 287	-174 301	270 000
Changes in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	6,6%	nm	272,2%
Global Ultimate Owner	Ramunė Grušnytė-Mikalauskienė	Public broadcaster	Public Broadcaster
#2 Radio	Lietus	Radio Skonto	Sky Plus
Reach daily, 2018	276 600	198 100	112 000
Reach daily, 2017	323 300	142 500*	111 000*
Change in daily reach 2018 vs 2017, %	-14,4%	nm	nm
Reach daily (%), 2018	13,0	12,6	11,0
Reach daily (%), 2017	14,7	8,5*	10,9*
Change in daily reach (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 1,7	nm	nm
Owner	M-1, UAB	Radio Skonto, SIA	Taevaraadio, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	3 874 457	1 631 698	320 068
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	3 505 980	1 509 078	246 670
Changes in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	10,5%	8,1%	29,8%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	1 499 261	155 869	102 113
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	1 406 287	43 530	33 720
Changes in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	6,6%	258,1%	202,8%
Global Ultimate Owner	Ramunė Grušnytė-Mikalauskienė	Guntis Indriksons, RS Media, SIA (Edijs Akolovs, Juris Egle, Ivars Laimonis Embrekts)	Harald Tehver

#3 Radio	LRT Radijas	Latvijas Radio 1	Raadio Elmar
Reach daily, 2018	215 900	134 700	96 000
Reach daily, 2017	261 800	119 800*	112 000*
Change in daily reach 2018 vs 2017, %	-17,5%	nm	nm
Reach daily (%), 2018	10,2	8,6	9,5
Reach daily (%), 2017	11,9	7,2*	11,0*
Change in daily reach (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 1,7	nm	nm
Owner	Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija	Latvijas Radio, VSIA	Postimees Grupp, AS **
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	38 865 029	9 979 580	52 973 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	35 813 306	9 174 211	37 809 000
Changes in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	8,5%	8,8%	40.1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-796 735	162 628	-8 901 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	-592 358	-174 301	-6 784 000
Changes in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	nm	nm
Global Ultimate Owner	Public broadcaster	Public broadcaster	UP Invest, OÜ (Margus Linnamäe)
#4 Radio	Radiocentras	Eiropas Hitu Radio	Star FM
Reach daily, 2018	203 900	128 200	85 000
Reach daily, 2017	250 500	84 300*	90 000*
Change in daily reach 2018 vs 2017, %	-18,6%	nm	nm
Reach daily (%), 2018	9,6	8,2	8,3
Reach daily (%), 2017	11,4	5,0*	8,8*
Change in daily reach (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 1,8	nm	nm
Owner	Radiocentras, UAB	EHR Mediju Grupa, SIA	Mediainvest Holding AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	1 090 548	1 513 450	2 071 629
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	652 498	1 931 844	1 754 047
Changes in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	67,1%	-21,7%	18,1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	269 474	-37 540	353 256
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	39 580	-76 882	219 086
Changes in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	580,8%	nm	61,2%
Global Ultimate Owner	Achemos grupė (Lyda Lubienė, Viktorija Lubytė, Jūratė Žadeikienė)	Uģis Polis, Ričards Zakss	Providence Equity Partners (Jonathan Milton Nelson, Glenn Creamer, Paul Salem)

#5 Radio	Rusradio LT	Radio SWH	Retro FM
Reach daily, 2018	129 200	115 900	64 000
Reach daily, 2017	134 900	77 600*	66 000*
Change in daily reach 2018 vs 2017, %	-4,2%	nm	nm
Reach daily (%), 2018	6,1	7,4	6,3
Reach daily (%), 2017	6,2	4,6*	6,5*
Change in daily reach (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 0,1	nm	nm
Owner	Radiocentras, UAB	Radio SWH, AS	Taevaraadio, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	1 090 548	2 927 118	320 068
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	652 498	2 696 459	246 670
Changes in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	67,1%	8,6%	29,8%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	269 474	101 959	102 113
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	39 580	-14 517	33 720
Changes in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	580,8%	nm	202,8%
Global Ultimate Owner	Achemos grupė (Lyda Lubienė, Viktorija Lubytė, Jūratė Žadeikienė)	Jānis Šipkēvics, Filips Rubenis, DLT Capital OU (Tatiana Tolstaya)	Harald Tehver

Decline in audience and/or financial results marked in red

* In 2018, the methodology for radio audience surveys in Latvia and Estonia was changed, therefore reach data of 2018 are not comparable with the reach data from 2017. In Lithuania, the methodology was changed in 2017, therefore its indicators are comparable.

** Estonian media group AS Eesti Meedia renamed itself AS Postimees Grupp, reflecting its flagship publication, in February 2019. The group also changed its financial reporting year in 2018 to start from May 1 and end on April 30. Therefore for 2018 AS Postimees Grupp's financial reporting period lasted for 16 months from 01.01.2018 until 30.04.2019.

Sources:			
Audience data	Kantar Lithuania, Radio Audience Survey (Day-After-Recall) 2018; 2017	Kantar Latvia, Radio Audience Measurement (Day-After-Recall) 2018; Radio Audience Measurement (Diaries) 2017	Kantar Emor, 2018 Radio Audience Survey (Day-After-Recall); 2017 Radio Audience Survey (Diaries)
Reach daily	The number of people who listen to a certain radio station for at least 15 minutes per day		
Reach daily (%)	The average percentage of people in a target group who listen to a certain radio station for at least 15 minutes per day		
Target audience	Lithuanian residents aged 16 to 74 years	Latvian residents aged 12 to 74 years (2017) and aged 16 to 74 (2018)	Estonian residents aged 12 to 74 years
Financial data	Creditreform	Lursoft	Centre of Registers and Information Systems
na	data not available		
nm	not meaningful to calculate		

TOP 5 NEWSPAPERS IN THE BALTICS AND THEIR FINANCIAL INDICATORS

TOP5 Most Popular Newspapers	Lithuania	Latvia	Estonia
#1 Newspaper	Lietuvos Rytas	MK - Латвия/ MK-Latvija (rus)	Postimees
Title in English	Lithuanian Morning	MK-Latvia	The Postman
Frequency	5 issues per week	1 issue per week	6 issues per week
Cover in 2018	188 800	167 200	158 000
Cover in 2017	185 600	168 100	167 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017, %	1,7%	-0,5%	-5,4%
Cover (%) in 2018	8,8	10,6	16,2
Cover (%) in 2017	8,5	10,4	17,0
Change in the Cover (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	0,3	0,2	- 0,8
Circulation in 2018	26 278	45 000	42 600
Circulation in 2017	28 650	45 000	44 700
Publisher	Lietuvos rytas, UAB	Izdevniecības nams Print Media, SIA	Postimees Grupp, AS *
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	5 691 087	1 145 595	52 973 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	6 431 404	1 146 359	37 809 000
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-11,5%	-0,1%	40.1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-990 234	312 519	-8 901 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	-102 049	2 542	-6 784 000
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	12194,2%	nm
Global Ultimate Owner	BIG group, UAB, Gedvydas Vainauskas, Vidmantas Strimaitis	Baltijas Mediju Alianse, SIA (Oļegs Solodovs, Alexey Plyasunov)	UP Invest, OÜ (Margus Linnamäe)

#2 Newspaper	Vakaro Žinios	Латвийские Вести/ Latvijskie Vesti (rus)	Õhtuleht
Title in English	Evening News	Latvian News	Evening Newspaper
Frequency	5 issues per week	1 issue per week	6 issues per week
Cover in 2018	138 900	50 100	134 000
Cover in 2017	126 900	53 700	127 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017, %	9,5%	-6,7%	5,5%
Cover (%) in 2018	6,5	3,2	13,7
Cover (%) in 2017	5,8	3,3	13,0
Change in the Cover (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	0,7	- 0,1	0,7
Circulation in 2018	25 470	na	44 200
Circulation in 2017	26 320	na	47 600
Publisher	Respublikos leidiniai, UAB	Zīme, SIA	Õhtuleht Kirjastus, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	1 955 292	2 785 078	11 684 301
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	2 201 632	3 190 528	9 053 246
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-11,2%	-12,7%	29,1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-47 583	-151 154	-178 747
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	7 483	39 366	495 105
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	nm	nm
Global Ultimate Owner	Respublikos investicija, UAB (Vitas Tomkus, Lina Tomkienė), Justinas Tomkus, Rytis Tomkus	Jeļena Ustinova	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik), Suits Meedia, OÜ (Kristi Veeber)
#3 Newspaper	Respublika	Суббота/Subbota (rus)	Maaleht
Title in English	Republic	Saturday	Rural Newspaper
Frequency	1 issue per week	1 issue per week	1 issue per week
Cover in 2018	59 600	50 000	88 000
Cover in 2017	56 400	50 100	89 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017, %	5,7%	-0,2%	-1,1%
Cover (%) in 2018	2,8	3,2	9,1
Cover (%) in 2017	2,6	3,1	9,1
Change in the Cover (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	0,2	0,1	0,0
Circulation in 2018	11 154	na	49 800
Circulation in 2017	na	na	52 500
Publisher	Respublikos leidiniai, UAB	Zīme, SIA	Ekspress Meedia, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	1 955 292	2 785 078	21 380 704
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	2 201 632	3 190 528	18 832 331
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-11,2%	-12,7%	13,5%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-47 583	-151 154	478 925
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	7 483	39 366	1 241 819
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	nm	-61,4%

Global Ultimate Owner	Respublikos investicija, UAB (Vitas Tomkus, Lina Tomkienė), Justinas Tomkus, Rytis Tomkus	Jeļena Ustinova	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik)
#4 Newspaper	Kauno Diena	Latvijas Avīze	Eesti Ekspress
Title in English	Kaunas' Day	Latvia's Newspaper	Estonian Express
Frequency	6 issues per week	5 issues per week	1 issue per week
Cover in 2018	41 100	49 700	70 000
Cover in 2017	48 400	56 100	70 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017, %	-15,1%	-11,4%	0,0%
Cover (%) in 2018	1,9	3,2	7,2
Cover (%) in 2017	2,2	3,5	7,2
Change in the Cover (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 0,3	- 0,3	0,0
Circulation in 2018	18 486	12 654	25 100
Circulation in 2017	18 014	14 250	27 700
Publisher	Diena Media News, UAB	Latvijas Mediji, AS	Ekspress Meedia, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	3 414 989	4 505 439	21 380 704
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	2 961 039	4 531 822	18 832 331
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	15,3%	-0,6%	13,5%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	567 014	-479 057	478 925
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	493 728	-216 556	1 241 819
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	14,8%	nm	-61,4%
Global Ultimate Owner	Sunra, UAB, Mindaugas Mickevičius, Vytautas Stankus,	N & J, SIA (Olafs Berķis)	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik)
#5 Newspaper	Obzor	Ievas Padomu Avīze	Eesti Päevaleht
Title in English	Review	Eve's Advice Newspaper	Estonian Daily Newspaper
Frequency	1 issue per week	1 issue per week	6 issues per week
Cover in 2018	40 600	49 300	64 000
Cover in 2017	48 800	55 600	74 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017, %	-16,8%	-11,3%	-13,5%
Cover (%) in 2018	1,9	3,1	6,6
Cover (%) in 2017	2,2	3,4	7,5
Change in the Cover (%) 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 0,3	- 0,3	- 0,9
Circulation in 2018	18 842	23 000	15 500
Circulation in 2017	20 229	24 593	15 300
Publisher	Flobis, UAB	Žurnāls Santa, SIA	Ekspress Meedia, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	430 039	7 131 909	21 380 704
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	451 240	7 367 671	18 832 331
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-4,7%	-3,2%	13,5%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	-11 195	1 343 242	478 925
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	-22 173	1 219 570	1 241 819
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	nm	10,1%	-61,4%
Global Ultimate Owner	Anatolij Lozinskij, Borisas Lozinskis, Vladimir Farberov, Josif User, Oksana Lozinskaja	Santa Anča, Ivars Zariņš	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik)

Decline in audience and/or financial results marked in red

* Estonian media group AS Eesti Meedia renamed itself AS Postimees Grupp, reflecting its flagship publication, in February 2019. The group also changed its financial reporting year in 2018 to start from May 1 and end on April 30. Therefore for 2018 AS Postimees Grupp's financial reporting period lasted for 16 months from 01.01.2018 until 30.04.2019.

Cover data	Kantar Lithuania Readership Survey 2018 Spring; 2017 Spring	Kantar Latvia National Readership Survey 2018; 2017	Kantar Emor, TNSAtlas 2018; 2017
Target Audience	Lithuanian residents aged 15-74 years	Latvian residents aged 15-74 years (2017) and 16-74 (2018)	Estonian residents aged 15-74 years
Cover	The average number of readers in target group for one issue of press edition		
Cover, %	The average percentage of readers in target group for one issue of press edition		
Circulation data	Ministry of Culture of Lithuania	As disclosed by the publishers of newspapers	Estonian Newspaper Association
Period for circulation data	Second half of 2018; second half of 2017	December 2018; December 2017	December 2018; December 2017
Financial data	Creditreform	Lursoft	Centre of Registers and Information Systems
na	data not available		
nm	not meaningful to calculate		

TOP 5 MAGAZINES IN THE BALTICS AND THEIR FINANCIAL INDICATORS

TOP5 Most Popular Magazines	Lithuania	Latvia	Estonia
#1 Magazine	Savaitė	Ieva	Kroonika
Title in English	Week	Eve	Chronicle
Type of the Magazine	TV listings, household and lifestyle tips	Women, lifestyle	Entertainment, celebrities
Frequency	weekly	weekly	weekly
Cover in 2018	533 800	166 600	64 000
Cover in 2017	491 700	173 300	59 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017	8,6%	-3,9%	8,5%
Cover in 2018, %	24,8	10,6	6,5
Cover in 2017, %	22,4	10,8	6,0
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	2,4	- 0,2	0,5
Circulation in 2018	195 898	47 100	30 300
Circulation in 2017	196 745	50 543	33 400
Publisher	Savaitė, UAB	Žurnāls Santa, SIA	Ekspress Meedia, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	4 246 583	7 131 909	21 380 704
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	3 834 576	7 367 671	18 832 331
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	10,7%	-3,2%	13,5%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	590 941	1 343 242	478 925
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	710 956	1 219 570	1 241 819
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	-16,9%	10,1%	-61,4%
Global Ultimate Owner	Asta Jelinskienė, Aleksandras Maceina	Santa Anča, Ivars Zariņš	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik)

#2 Magazine	Žmonės	Privātā Dzīve	Naisteleht
Title in English	People	Private Life	Women's Paper
Type of the Magazine	Entertainment, celebrities	Entertainment, celebrities	Women
Frequency	weekly	weekly	weekly
Cover in 2018	204 200	116 000	50 000
Cover in 2017	247 000	123 200	58 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017	-17,3%	-5,8%	-13,8%
Cover in 2018, %	9,5	7,4	5,1
Cover in 2017, %	11,3	7,6	5,9
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	- 1,8	- 0,2	- 0,8
Circulation in 2018	60 000	31 300	28 200
Circulation in 2017	67 680	32 817	28 900
Publisher	Media bitės, UAB	Žurnāls Santa, SIA	Õhtuleht Kirjastus, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	5 457 861	7 131 909	11 684 301
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	1 433 449	7 367 671	9 053 246
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	280,8%	-3,2%	29,1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	397 617	1 343 242	-178 747
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	38 674	1 219 570	495 105
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	928,1%	10,1%	nm
Global Ultimate Owner	Tomas Balžekas, Martynas Basokas, Vytautas Kaikaris, Gabrielė Burbienė, Tomas Bindokas	Santa Anča, Ivars Zariņš	Ekspress Grupp, AS (Hans H. Luik), Suits Meedia, OÜ (Kristi Veeber)
#3 Magazine	Prie kavos	Kas Jauns	Imeline Teadus
Title in English	With Coffee	What's New	Fantastic Science
Type of the Magazine	Women	Entertainment, celebrities	Popular science, education
Frequency	weekly	weekly	monthly
Cover in 2018	125 300	112 100	45 000
Cover in 2017	118 100	126 700	46 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017	6,1%	-11,5%	-2,2%
Cover in 2018, %	5,8	7,1	4,7
Cover in 2017, %	5,4	7,9	4,7
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	0,4	- 0,8	0,0
Circulation in 2018	na	na	16 600
Circulation in 2017	37 000	na	20 400
Publisher	SS Leidyba, UAB	Izdevniecība Rīgas Viļņi, SIA	Äripäev, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	1 049 336	5 902 865	15 262 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	1 139 216	5 999 014	14 515 000
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	-7,9%	-1,6%	5,1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	13 086	81 400	558 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	66 958	-189 854	767 000
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	-80,5%	nm	-27,2%
Global Ultimate Owner	Regina Sudakoviene	Izdevniecība Pulss Plus, SIA (Aija Šmidre)	Bonnier Group AB

#4 Magazine	Ji	Ievas Stāsti	Kodu&Aed
Title in English	She	Eve's Stories	Home & Garden
Type of the Magazine	Women	Biographies, stories	Interior design, decoration, gardening
Frequency	weekly	bi-weekly	monthly
Cover in 2018	88 000	106 300	45 000
Cover in 2017	79 500	113 700	51 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017	10,7%	-6,5%	-11,8%
Cover in 2018, %	4,1	6,8	4,6
Cover in 2017, %	3,6	7,1	5,2
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	0,5	- 0,3	- 0,6
Circulation in 2018	25 000	36 200	14 200
Circulation in 2017	31 360	38 755	20 300
Publisher	Media bitės, UAB	Žurnāls Santa, SIA	Ühinenud Ajakirjad, OÜ
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	5 457 861	7 131 909	2 004 797
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	1 433 449	7 367 671	1 894 618
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	280,8%	-3,2%	5,8%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	397 617	1 343 242	206 017
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	38 674	1 219 570	164 155
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	928,1%	10,1%	25,5%
Global Ultimate Owner	Tomas Balžekas, Martynas Basokas, Vytautas Kaikaris, Gabrielė Burbienė, Tomas Bindokas	Santa Anča, Ivars Zariņš	Marko Tamme
#5 Magazine	Savaitė. Namie ir Sode	Ievas Virtuve	Imeline Ajalugu
Title in English	Week. Home and Garden	Eve's Kitchen	Fantastic History
Type of the Magazine	Gardening, interior design	Cooking	Popular history, education
Frequency	bi-weekly	monthly	monthly
Cover in 2018	87 900	80 600	42 000
Cover in 2017	71 100	94 500	51 000
Change in Cover 2018 vs 2017	23,6%	-14,7%	-17,6%
Cover in 2018, %	4,1	5,1	4,4
Cover in 2017, %	3,2	5,9	5,2
Change in the Cover 2018 vs 2017, pp	0,9	- 0,8	- 0,8
Circulation in 2018	26 381	18 700	21 100
Circulation in 2017	28 300	24 790	21 200
Publisher	Savaitė, UAB	Žurnāls Santa, SIA	Äripäev, AS
Turnover in 2018 (euros)	4 246 583	7 131 909	15 262 000
Turnover in 2017 (euros)	3 834 576	7 367 671	14 515 000
Change in Turnover 2018 vs 2017, %	10,7%	-3,2%	5,1%
Profit/Loss 2018 (after tax, euros)	590 941	1 343 242	558 000
Profit/Loss 2017 (after tax, euros)	710 956	1 219 570	767 000
Change in Profit 2018 vs 2017, %	-16,9%	10,1%	-27,2%
Global Ultimate Owner	Asta Jelinskienė, Aleksandras Maceina	Santa Anča, Ivars Zariņš	Bonnier Group AB

Decline in audience and/or financial results marked in red

Sources:			
Cover data	Kantar Readership Survey 2018 Spring; 2017 Spring	Kantar National Readership Survey 2018; 2017	TNSAtlas 2018; 2017
Target Audience	Lithuanian residents aged 15-74 years	Latvian residents aged 15-74 years (2017) and 16-74 (2018)	Estonian residents aged 15-74 years
Cover	The average number of readers in target group for one issue of press edition		
Cover, %	The average percentage of readers in target group for one issue of press edition		
Circulation data	Ministry of Culture of Lithuania, except for UAB Media bitės magazines	As disclosed by the publishers of newspapers	Estonian Newspaper Association
Period for circulation data	Second half of 2018; second half of 2017	December 2018; December 2017	December 2018; December 2017
Financial data	Creditreform	Lursoft	Centre of Registers and Information Systems
na	data not available		
nm	not meaningful to calculate		