KONKURRENSVERKET
Swedish Competition Authority

Ansökan om forskningsmedel

Datum
13/01/2026

Observera att ansökan och bilagor endast ska skickas elektroniskt till konkurrensverket@kkv.se.

1 Sökande (huvudansvarig för projektet)

Namn * Andrea Schneider	
Universitet/högskola eller motsvarande Jönköping University	Institution eller motsvarande Jönköping International Business School
Postadress P.O. Box 1026	Postnr och ortsnamn 551 11 Jönköping
Telefonnummer [redacted]	E-post [redacted]

* **Huvudansvarig för projektet** är ansvarig för att uppgifterna som lämnas i ansökningsblanketten är korrekta.

2 Anslagsförvaltare

Universitet/högskola eller motsvarande Jönköping University	Institution Jönköping International Business School
Postadress P.O. Box 1026	Postnr och ortsnamn 551 11 Jönköping
Telefonnummer 036-10 10 00	

3 Projektbeskrivning

Projekttitel Konkurrens på digitala uppmärksamhetsmarknader: Evidens från det svenska nyhetslandskapet	
Projektets relevans för Konkurrensverket (högst 240 tecken) Projektet är relevant för Konkurrensverket eftersom det utvecklar empiriskt förankrade indikatorer för att bedöma marknadsmakt och inträdeshinder i plattformsmarknader där konkurrensen sker om uppmärksamhet snarare än priser.	
Projektet avses starta/startade, datum 1 januari 2027	Projektet beräknas vara slutfört, datum 31 december 2029
Sammanfattning på svenska av projektets syfte, betydelse och genomförande (högst 1 000 tecken). Digitala plattformar är i dag en viktig arena för spridning och konsumtion av nyheter i Sverige. På dessa marknader betalar användare inte med pengar, utan med sin uppmärksamhet, och vilka nyheter som syns styrs i stor utsträckning av plattformarnas algoritmer. Detta skapar nya utmaningar för konkurrenspolitiken, eftersom vanliga sätt att mäta konkurrens inte fungerar väl när tjänster är gratis för användarna. Projektet utvecklar praktiska, mätbara indikatorer för att identifiera marknadsmakt, inträdeshinder och minskad konkurrens i uppmärksamhetsbaserade digitala marknader. Särskilt analyseras hur ett fåtal mycket synliga nyhetsprofiler och ökad spridning av lågkostnadsinnehåll påverkar konkurrensen och nyhetsaktörers räckvidd. Projektet bygger på omfattande data från Facebook, Instagram och YouTube i Sverige, kombinerat med automatiserad innehållsanalys och kvasi-experimentella metoder. Resultaten ska ge Konkurrensverket policyrelevant kunskap för tillsyn och framtida reglering.	

Bifoga även en utförligare projektbeskrivning (svenska eller engelska, ca 10 A4-sidor) som bilaga till denna ansökan.

4 Kostnadsredovisning

Observera att den högsta tillåtna arbetstiden för disputerad forskare, docent och professor är 75 procent av heltid.
För doktorand, forskningsassistent eller liknande är den högsta tillåtna arbetstiden 85 procent av heltid.

Projektår 1 Personalnamn och akademisk titel **(bifoga CV)** **Namn**	**Akademisk titel**	Månadslön (brutto)	Anställningstid i projektet, månader	Arbetstid i procent av heltid	Lönekostnad inkl. sociala avgifter
	Universitetslektor	58 995	12	25	286 716
[redacted]	Universitetslektor	62 341	12	25	293 255
	Summa lönekostnader inkl. sociala avgifter				579 971
	Summa övriga kostnader (hämtas från tabell 4a)				15 000
	Summa förvaltningskostnader inklusive lokalhyra				231 988
	Total kostnad inklusive sociala avgifter och förvaltningsavgifter				826 959

Projektår 2 Personalnamn och akademisk titel **(bifoga CV)** **Namn**	**Akademisk titel**	Månadslön (brutto)	Anställningstid i projektet, månader	Arbetstid i procent av heltid	Lönekostnad inkl. sociala avgifter
[redacted]	Universitetslektor	61 059	12	25	296 751
[redacted]	Universitetslektor	64 523	12	25	303 519
	Summa lönekostnader inkl. sociala avgifter				600 270
	Summa övriga kostnader (hämtas från tabell 4a)				20 000
	Summa förvaltningskostnader inklusive lokalhyra				240 108
	Total kostnad inklusive sociala avgifter och förvaltningsavgifter				860 378

Projektår 3 Personalnamn och akademisk titel **(bifoga CV)** **Namn**	**Akademisk titel**	Månadslön (brutto)	Anställningstid i projektet, månader	Arbetstid i procent av heltid	Lönekostnad inkl. sociala avgifter
[redacted]	Universitetslektor	63 196	12	25	307 137
[redacted]	Universitetslektor	66 781	12	25	314 142
	Summa lönekostnader inkl. sociala avgifter				621 279
	Summa övriga kostnader (hämtas från tabell 4a)				20 000
	Summa förvaltningskostnader inklusive lokalhyra				248 512
	Total kostnad inklusive sociala avgifter och förvaltningsavgifter				889 791

4a Redovisning övriga kostnader

Maxbelopp för övriga kostnader per år är 25 000 kronor. Ifall detta belopp överskrids ska detta motiveras särskilt i ansökan.

	År 1	**År 2**	**År 3**
Material och utrustning	10 000		
Resor		20 000	20 000
Andra kostnader	5 0000		
Summa	15 000	20 000	20 000

5 Kostnadssammanfattning (anges i kronor) för nu sökt anslag

Total projektkostnad
2 577 128

Därav söks från		Tidigare erhållna anslag från	
Konkurrensverket	Annan anslagsgivare *	Konkurrensverket	Annan anslagsgivare **
2 577 128	0	0	0

* Anslagsgivarens namn	Ansökan inlämnad, datum	Sökt belopp
** Anslagsgivarens namn	Ansökan beviljad, datum	Beviljat belopp

6 Övriga projekt som samtidigt kommer att ledas av huvudansvarig

Projekttitel

OBS! Namn och institution på personer som beviljas forskningsbidrag kommer att publiceras på Konkurrensverkets webbplats. Om en ansökan om forskningsbidrag skickas in till Konkurrensverket innebär

det ett medgivande till att dina personuppgifter registreras och behandlas av Konkurrensverket samt att uppgifter om namn och institution för beviljade bidrag publiceras på webbplatsen.

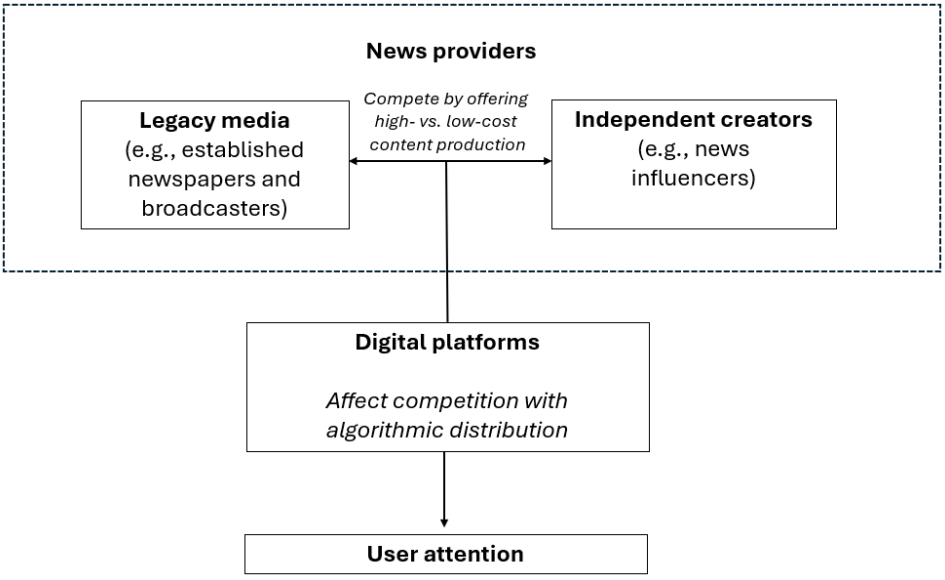
Competition in Digital Attention Markets: Evidence from the Swedish News Ecosystem

Introduction and purpose

Digital platforms increasingly shape competition in markets where users do not pay with money, but with their time and attention. In Sweden, a large and growing share of news consumption now takes place on global platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. These platforms play a central intermediary role, as they decide which news content is visible, which actors reach audiences, and which struggle to be seen at all. As a result, competitive advantages are often determined by visibility and algorithmic ranking rather than prices or output. This creates a challenge for competition policy, as traditional tools – designed to detect price increases or reduced output – are poorly suited to markets where services are nominally free for most end users but access to attention is scarce.

Economists describe these environments as digital attention markets, where competition takes place over user exposure, engagement, and data rather than prices. In such markets, small advantages in visibility can translate into large differences in audience reach, creating concentration dynamics (e.g., Jullien and Sand-Zantman, 2021). Dominant platforms can further shape competitive outcomes through design choices such as content ranking, bundling of services, or favoring their own products and tools in recommendation systems (e.g., Calvano and Polo, 2021; Tirole, 2023). As the Swedish Competition Authority has noted, these dynamics raise new concerns related to algorithmic opacity, data-driven distortions, and the difficulty of identifying market power using conventional indicators (Konkurrensverket, 2021). The EU's Digital Markets Act (DMA) responds to these challenges by introducing ex-ante rules for large gatekeeper platforms, but effective enforcement requires new empirical methods to observe and measure competitive harm in practice.

Figure 1: Conceptual model of competition for audience attention in digital news markets



Note: For simplicity, the figure abstracts from reverse causality and confounding factors.

Figure 1 illustrates the basic competitive structure of platform-based news markets, highlighting how legacy media (e.g., established news organizations) and independent creators compete horizontally for scarce audience attention, with digital platforms mediating access through algorithmic ranking and recommendation systems. Currently, a systematic and analytically coherent overview of the digital news ecosystem in Sweden is missing, and consistent measures of market competition are lacking. This project addresses this gap.

Two recent developments make these challenges particularly pressing. First, news influencers – individual content creators who regularly publish news, political commentary, or societal analysis outside traditional media organizations – have become increasingly important competitors for audience attention. A small number of highly visible "superstar influencers" now attract disproportionate shares of engagement, as platform rules and monetization systems may disadvantage smaller or newer entrants (e.g., Gaenssle and Budzinski, 2024). Although influencers are typically treated as part of broader platform markets, growing concentration and emerging anti-competitive practices suggest the need to study this segment explicitly (e.g., Hinnosaar and Hinnosaar, 2024).

Second, the rapid spread of low-value, large-scale content – often enabled by generative AI tools – has begun to reshape attention markets (e.g., Menczer et al., 2023). Such content ("AI slop") is typically inexpensive to produce, highly repetitive, and optimized for engagement rather than informational value. Because it can be supplied at scale, it competes directly for the same limited user attention as higher-cost news production and can flood recommendation systems, crowding out costly, editorially intensive content even when audiences value accuracy and credibility (e.g., Brüns and Meißner, 2024; Stanusch et al., 2025). From a competition perspective, the central concern is therefore not the technological origin of content, but the resulting cost asymmetries, scale advantages, and risks of foreclosure, particularly as platforms increasingly promote their own content tools and formats.

Both phenomena – the rise of superstar influencers and the spread of low-cost, high-volume content – point to a common competitive mechanism: platform-driven amplification of scalable content, which may reinforce winner-takes-most outcomes, raise entry barriers, and disadvantage higher-cost news production. From a competition perspective, this mechanism reflects the interaction between sharp cost asymmetries, high scalability, and algorithmic allocation of scarce user attention (e.g., Meyer et al., 2024). When content can be produced and supplied at very low marginal cost, a small number of actors can publish at high frequency and rapidly optimize content for platform ranking and recommendation systems. Under conditions of attention scarcity, such dynamics can generate self-reinforcing advantages in visibility, even in the absence of price-setting or formal entry restrictions (e.g., Jullien and Sand-Zantman, 2021; Tirole, 2023). In theory, the market may therefore become more concentrated and less contestable, not because entry is blocked, but because effective access to audiences increasingly requires scale and algorithmic optimization.

Against this background, the **overall aim of this project is to develop empirically grounded methods for identifying market power, entry barriers, and distortions of effective competition in platform-based news markets**. We do so by analyzing how audience attention is distributed between legacy media, news influencers, and different types of content that varies in production costs on major digital platforms in Sweden, and by translating the resulting evidence into actionable insights for competition enforcement and policy design.

To achieve this aim, we empirically analyze the Swedish news ecosystem, defined as the set of news producers and distributors – including established news organizations (legacy media)

and news influencers – that publish news-related content targeting audiences in Sweden and compete for user attention on major digital platforms used in the country. Sweden provides an especially relevant case due to its highly digitalized media landscape, strong reliance on platforms for news consumption (e.g., Newman et al., 2025), and excellent data availability, allowing the project to generate robust and policy-relevant evidence. In particular, we examine how the growing dominance of a small number of highly visible news influencers ("super influencers") and the increasing prevalence of low-value, low-cost content affect the ability of legacy media and independent creators to reach audiences on digital platforms. Put simply, we investigate whether these developments reinforce winner-takes-most outcomes, raise barriers to entry, or are associated with systematic differences in visibility linked to platform ranking and recommendation systems.

The project does not seek to replace legal market definition as applied in competition law. Rather, it develops analytical indicators that complement traditional market definition by capturing competitive dynamics in settings where prices are zero and exposure is the primary competitive dimension. These indicators are intended as diagnostic and screening tools that can inform, but not predetermine, market definition and dominance assessments in specific enforcement contexts.

Research design, methods, and implementation

The project follows a sequential research design in which data construction, content classification, and empirical analysis build on each other to generate evidence relevant for competition policy. It adopts a data-driven, indicator-based approach that is aligned with recent work on computational antitrust, which emphasizes the use of large-scale digital data and empirical screening tools to identify potential competition concerns in complex markets (e.g., Graef et al., 2024). Work Package (WP) 1 maps the set of actors competing for audience attention on major digital platforms and constructs the underlying dataset. WP 2 develops content-based indicators of production strategies and attention concentration that capture competitive dynamics in zero-price markets. WP 3 then examines how documented platform policy and design changes are associated with reallocations of attention and shifts in relative market positions. Finally, WP 4 synthesizes the findings to assess their welfare-relevant implications for competition enforcement and policy design. Table 1 summarizes the project timeline and sequencing of the four work packages.

Table 1: Project timeline

	2027				2028				2029			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
WP 1	x	x	x	x								
WP 2			x	x	x	x	x	x				
WP 3							x	x	x	x		
WP 4									x	x	x	x

WP 1: Mapping and data collection of the Swedish platform-based news ecosystem

The first work package focuses on constructing a comprehensive, content-rich dataset of the Swedish platform-based news ecosystem using large-scale data from Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. These platforms are among Sweden's most important intermediaries for news consumption (Newman et al., 2025) and allow for reliable data access through the Meta

Content Library and the YouTube Data API. The dataset is designed to capture both market structure (which actors compete for attention) and content characteristics (what types of content compete for attention), thereby providing the empirical foundation for the subsequent analysis of attention concentration and competitive dynamics.

For legacy media, we will identify Swedish news outlets based on official registers and industry reports from Mediemyndigheten and Nordicom and link them to their corresponding accounts on major digital platforms. For news influencers, we focus on accounts that regularly publish news, political commentary, or societal analysis without being formally affiliated with legacy media organizations. This includes well-known actors such as Hanif Bali, Henrik Jönsson, and Greta Thunberg, as well as less visible accounts that play a role in the public debate. The identification process combines automated searches with manual checks to ensure that the resulting set of accounts accurately reflects the range of actors competing for attention in the Swedish news ecosystem.

To assess competition and entry barriers, it is essential to capture not only the most visible actors but also smaller and emerging ones. We therefore design the dataset to include accounts across the full spectrum of audience reach, from highly visible "superstar" actors to mid-sized and marginal creators. This ensures that the analysis reflects both concentration at the top and contestability at the margins. For each account, we collect post- and video-level information on content, audience engagement, and basic content characteristics. Data will be collected retrospectively for the period 2020–2026, with the starting point chosen to capture the pandemic-related expansion of platform-based news consumption and subsequent developments in competitive positions over time.

WP 2: Measuring content production effort, attention concentration, and market power

The second work package examines how the distribution of audience attention is shaped by differences in production effort, and how this affects competition in platform-based news markets. Rather than focusing narrowly on whether content is produced by humans or artificial intelligence, a distinction that has become increasingly difficult to draw, the analysis differentiates between *high-cost* and *low-cost* content. High-cost content is original, information-rich, and expensive to produce, whereas low-cost content is generic, repetitive, or optimized for engagement and can be generated at very low fixed and marginal cost. Differences in content production effort and cost are used as observable proxies for informational richness, reflecting the resources required to produce original and substantive news content. From a competition perspective, this distinction is crucial, as low-cost content can be supplied at scale and directly competes for the same limited user attention as higher-cost, editorially intensive news production. Crucially, this distinction is applied at the content level and not inferred from producer type. Both legacy media and news influencers may produce content that spans the full range from high-cost, editorially intensive production to low-cost, highly scalable formats. Examining how high- and low-cost content is distributed across legacy media and independent creators allows us to assess whether competitive pressure and platform incentives systematically favor certain production strategies, with implications for entry, adaptation, and contestability.

The work package begins with manual annotation by the research team of content samples drawn from posts and videos, following established content analysis standards (Krippendorff, 2013). The annotation focuses on observable content features that are relevant for understanding competitive dynamics, including (i) the presence of original material, (ii) the degree of reuse or templating, (iii) evidence of sourcing and attribution, and (iv) production complexity.

These features capture systematic differences in production effort, replicability, and scalability across content types, without making normative judgments about journalistic quality or democratic value. The annotations will be used to train and validate state-of-the-art, multimodal machine-learning models capable of classifying content on a continuous scale ranging from low- to high-cost production, drawing on textual, visual, and audio features (e.g., Tang, 2024).

Building on these classifications, the work package analyzes how platform algorithms allocate reach and engagement across different types of content and producers. Attention concentration is operationalized using engagement-based metrics (e.g., likes, shares, comments, and watch time) and summarized through attention-weighted Herfindahl-Hirschman Indices (HHI) and concentration ratios. These measures will be calculated both overall and by content category, with value-adjusted variants that capture how the prevalence of low-cost content alters effective market concentration. This approach allows us to identify patterns of attention allocation that are consistent with winner-takes-most dynamics, entry barriers for high-cost producers, algorithmic self-preferencing, or vertical foreclosure.

WP 3: Empirical assessment of algorithmic interventions

The third work package focuses on the active role of digital platforms in shaping competition for audience attention. It examines how documented changes in platform policies and design features are associated with shifts in competition in platform-based news markets. The analysis draws on documented platform interventions as sources of quasi-experimental variation, such as Facebook's removal of fact-checking in January 2025 (Kaplan, 2025) and YouTube's removal of public dislike counts in November 2021 (Zhang and Ng, 2024). These events provide opportunities to examine how changes in platform governance are associated with shifts in attention allocation across different news providers and content types.

Using the content classifications developed in WP 2, we examine heterogeneous responses across legacy media and news influencers, as well as across producers that rely primarily on high-cost, information-rich content versus those that predominantly supply low-cost, highly scalable content. We further distinguish responses across different tiers of visibility, including superstar, mid-tier, and long-tail accounts. Empirical analyses draw on staggered difference-in-differences frameworks that allow for heterogeneous treatment effects (Callaway and Sant'Anna, 2021; Sun and Abraham, 2021). To construct credible counterfactuals, we combine these designs with matching techniques, using untreated or later-treated accounts within the same platform as well as comparable accounts on other platforms in the dataset.

The analysis allows us to assess whether platform interventions coincide with increased concentration of attention, reduced contestability for new or smaller entrants, or patterns consistent with the crowding-out of higher-cost content. The results inform competition authorities about potential mechanisms consistent with algorithmic gatekeeping and foreclosure in digital attention markets.

WP 4: Analysis of welfare-relevant implications for competition policy

In this work package, we synthesize the findings from the previous work packages to assess the welfare-relevant implications of changing competitive conditions in platform-based news markets. Rather than estimating welfare effects directly, the analysis interprets observed shifts in attention allocation, market concentration, and contestability in terms of access, choice, and competitive opportunity, in line with competition-policy practice in zero-price markets. We

consider four stakeholder groups: (1) content users, (2) content creators (including legacy media and news influencers), (3) advertisers, and (4) platform operators.

For content users, welfare is closely linked to exposure to information-rich news content. Using the content classifications and attention measures developed in WPs 1 and 2, we interpret observed changes in attention concentration in terms of shifts in exposure away from more substantive, costly news content, with implications for users' effective choice sets in platform-based news markets.

For content creators, welfare depends on their ability to reach audiences and to compete on fair and predictable terms in platform-mediated distribution. Drawing on the empirical measures of user attention developed in WP 2, we assess how changes in attention concentration and contestability affect different types of creators, including legacy media, news influencers, and smaller or newer entrants. In particular, we examine whether creators producing higher-cost, editorially intensive content face systematic disadvantages in visibility relative to low-cost, highly scalable content, with welfare-relevant implications for entry, survival, and long-term incentives to invest in substantive news production.

For advertisers, the results provide evidence on how increasing concentration of audience attention and reduced contestability may limit effective outside options for reaching audiences, potentially increasing dependence on dominant platforms or highly visible actors, with implications for advertisers' bargaining position and the predictability of access to audiences.

For platform operators, welfare considerations relate to their ability to sustain engagement and growth while coordinating the interests of users, creators, and advertisers under conditions of effective competition. Drawing on insights from WP 3, we examine how changes in platform policies and recommendation systems affect the distribution of attention across different types of content and actors, with implications for the long-term sustainability and competitive neutrality of platform-based news ecosystems.

Scientific contribution

This project contributes to the scientific literature in three main ways. First, it develops and operationalizes new metrics of market concentration that shift the focus from supply and revenue shares to exposure and attention, which are the relevant competitive dimensions in platform-based, zero-price markets. By incorporating differences in content production costs, these metrics advance existing approaches to measuring market power, contestability, and winner-takes-most dynamics. Second, the project produces a large-scale, human-annotated, multimodal dataset of news-related content (text, images, and audio/video) classified along the dimensions originality, templating, source attribution, and production complexity. Combined with machine-learning techniques, this enables scalable analysis of how different types of content compete for attention, while remaining robust to future changes in content production technologies. Third, by systematically mapping the Swedish platform-based news ecosystem and linking content characteristics to attention allocation, platform governance, and algorithmic interventions, the project provides a methodological blueprint for empirical research on competition in digital media markets. The approach is transferable to other countries and content domains, supporting comparative and cumulative research on platform power and attention-based competition beyond the project's lifetime.

Policy relevance

This project directly supports the work of competition authorities by providing empirically grounded screening and diagnostic tools for assessing competition in digital attention markets. Rather than providing a purely descriptive market overview, the project translates competition-relevant concepts – such as market power, entry barriers, and contestability – into practically usable indicators that can support early-stage monitoring, case screening, and prioritization in enforcement contexts. The project does not seek to replace legal market definition or case-specific economic analysis as applied in competition law. Instead, it explicitly complements existing frameworks by addressing a well-recognized gap in enforcement practice: the lack of empirically grounded indicators for assessing competition in markets where prices are zero and visibility is the primary competitive dimension.

These exposure- and attention-based indicators of concentration and contestability are demonstrated empirically using large-scale platform data from the Swedish news ecosystem, illustrating how authorities can use them to identify patterns that may warrant closer scrutiny, such as concentration of attention, reduced contestability for smaller or newer actors, or allocation patterns consistent with foreclosure risks or algorithmic self-preferencing. By focusing on exposure-based concentration measures and content-level cost asymmetries, the project contributes a policy-oriented analytical toolbox to improve the evidentiary basis for deciding where closer investigation is most warranted. The project's indicators and analytical workflows are designed to be transparent and replicable, enabling authorities to adapt them to other platforms or content domains as data access permits. The findings are particularly relevant for the enforcement of the Digital Markets Act (DMA), especially with regard to contestability and non-discrimination obligations, and can inform broader assessments of platform governance and market resilience under the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA).

Roles of involved researchers and preliminary work

Andrea Schneider (associate professor at Jönköping International Business School) serves as project leader. She has primary responsibility for overall project coordination, conceptual framing, and the integration of empirical results with competition policy and welfare analysis for digital platforms. Her research expertise lies in public economics, applied microeconometrics, and the economic effects of digitalization. She has experience in quasi-experimental policy evaluation (Garz and Schneider, 2023; Engström et al., 2024) and in analyzing the welfare effects of regulating platform-based business models (Gauss et al., 2024). She has extensive experience engaging with policymakers on the policy implications of her research. For example, she was invited to present her work at the European Commission (DG Economic and Financial Affairs), where she discussed empirical evidence on platform regulation in short-term rental markets (e.g., Airbnb). In this project, she leads WP 3 (assessment of algorithmic interventions) and WP 4 (welfare implications for competition policy).

Marcel Garz (associate professor at Jönköping International Business School) will be primarily responsible for the project's data-intensive and computational components. His research expertise includes media economics, digital news markets, and applied empirical methods, with a particular focus on large-scale platform data, algorithmic distribution, and content analysis. In this project, he leads WP 1 (mapping the Swedish platform-based news ecosystem and constructing the underlying dataset) and WP 2 (development of exposure-based measures of attention concentration). His prior research provides direct preliminary work for these tasks, including empirical studies of algorithmic content selection and platform-driven news exposure

(e.g., Garz and Szucs, 2023; Dujeancourt and Garz, 2023), work explicitly connected to competition and antitrust (Garz and Maaß, 2021), and extensive research on Swedish news markets (e.g., Garz et al., 2024; Garz and Ots, 2025).

Budget specification

The project requests funding equivalent to 25% of full-time employment for each involved researcher over a period of three years. In addition, 20,000 SEK in year 2 and 20,000 SEK in year 3 are requested to cover costs related to conference participation. The budget also includes 10,000 SEK for cloud computing services required for secure data storage, large-scale content processing, and model training, as well as 5,000 SEK to cover costs associated with ethics review.

Communication strategy and outreach

Academic dissemination: The project is expected to result in two peer-reviewed academic publications. The first paper focuses on the measurement of competition in digital attention markets by developing and applying exposure-based concentration metrics that account for differences in production costs. Drawing primarily on WPs 1 and 2, this paper maps the Swedish platform-based news ecosystem and analyzes the distribution of audience attention across legacy media and news influencers. The second paper investigates how platform policy and algorithmic changes affect attention allocation, market concentration, and contestability in digital news markets. Building on the quasi-experimental analyses in WP 3 and the welfare-relevant synthesis in WP 4, this paper provides evidence on mechanisms such as entry barriers, crowding-out, and potential self-preferencing. We target leading journals in industrial organization, media economics, or competition-relevant fields, such as the *Journal of Industrial Economics* or *Information Economics & Policy*. Prior to publication, we will circulate the work in our academic networks and through conferences, which allows us to incorporate feedback and improve the quality and visibility of our work.

Interaction with stakeholders and society: The project benefits from the researchers' affiliations with the Media, Management and Transformation Centre (MMTC), which has a strong track record in media and platform-related research and established links to practitioners and policymakers. In addition, we will collaborate with the Communications Department at Jönköping University, which provides professional support for popular science writing, media engagement, and public outreach. This will enable us to communicate the project's results to a broader audience, including policymakers, journalists, and the interested public, and to translate the findings into accessible formats such as policy briefs and blog posts.

Research ethics and data handling

Ethics approval will be obtained from the Swedish Ethical Review Authority prior to project start. The project analyzes exclusively publicly available content from digital platforms and does not involve interaction with human participants. It focuses on content and accounts acting as market participants and does not intentionally collect sensitive personal data. Public content may incidentally contain sensitive personal data; however, such information is not the object of analysis, is not extracted or linked across contexts, and is not used for profiling. Ethical risks primarily relate to unauthorized access or misuse of data, which could affect individuals' rights

or trust in research. These risks are mitigated through data minimization, secure storage and transfer, restricted access, and reporting only aggregated results. The project's scientific and societal benefits are considered proportionate to the residual risks.

To support transparency and replicability, the project will make all data collection scripts, preprocessing code, and analysis workflows publicly available through a recognized research repository, following the FAIR principles where applicable. In addition, we will release derived and aggregated datasets that do not contain raw content or personal data, including attention-based concentration measures and content-level features, in formats that are findable, well-documented, and reusable. Raw platform content will not be publicly shared due to data protection considerations and platform terms of service, but the documentation will enable qualified researchers to reproduce the analyses using the same procedures.

References

Brüns, J. D., & Meißner, M. (2024). Do you create your content yourself? Using generative artificial intelligence for social media content creation diminishes perceived brand authenticity. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 79, 103790.

Callaway, B., & Sant'Anna, P. H. C. (2021). Difference-in-Differences with multiple time periods. *Journal of Econometrics*, 225, 200–230.

Calvano, E., & Polo, M. (2021). Market power, competition and innovation in digital markets: A survey. *Information Economics and Policy*, 54, 100853.

Dujeancourt, E., & Garz, M. (2023). The effects of algorithmic content selection on user engagement with news on Twitter. *The Information Society*, 39, 263–281.

Engström, P., Hagen, J., Khoshghadam, A., & Schneider, A. (2024), Effects of electronic cash registers on reported revenue. *International Tax and Public Finance,* 32, 566–594.

Gaenssle, S., & Budzinski, O. (2024). The economics of influencers and social media stardom. In U. Rohn, M. B. Rimscha, & T. Raats (eds.): *De Gruyter Handbook of Media Economics*. De Gruyter, pp. 349–368.

Garz, M., & Maaß, S. (2021). Cartels in the European Union, antitrust action, and public attention. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 186, 533–547.

Garz, M., & Ots, M. (2025). Media consolidation and news content quality. *Journal of Communication*, 75, 195–206.

Garz, M., Ots, M., & Sjøvaag, H. (2024). Political Viewpoint Diversity in the News: Market and Ownership Conditions for a Pluralistic Media System. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 29, 983–1003.

Garz, M., & Schneider, A. (2023). Data sharing and tax enforcement: Evidence from short-term rentals in Denmark. *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 101, 103912.

Garz, M., & Szucs, F. (2023). Algorithmic selection and supply of political news on Facebook. *Information Economics & Policy*, 62, 101020.

Gauss, P., Gensler, S., Kortenhaus, M., Riedel, N., & Schneider, A. (2024). Regulating the sharing economy: The effects of day caps on short- and long-term rental markets and stakeholder outcomes. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 52, 1627–1650.

Graef, I., Laitenberger, U., & Prüfer, J. (2024). Charting a way forward for the use of data science in competition enforcement and platform regulation. *European Competition Journal*, 21, 294–316.

Hinnosaar, M., & Hinnosaar, T. (2024). Influencer cartels. arXiv:2405.10231v2.

Hurcombe, E. (2024). Conceptualising the “Newsfluencer”: Intersecting Trajectories in Online Content Creation and Platformatised Journalism. *Digital Journalism*, 13, 1523–1534.

Jullien, B., & Sand-Zantman, W. (2021). The Economics of Platforms: A Theory Guide for Competition Policy. *Information Economics & Policy*, 54, 100880.

Kaplan, J. (2025). More Speech and Fewer Mistakes. URL: https://about.fb.com/news/2025/01/meta-more-speech-fewer-mistakes/, last accessed Oct 26, 2025.

Konkurrensverket (2021). Konkurrensen på digitala plattformsmarknader i Sverige. Rapport 2021:1.

Menczer, F., Crandall, D., Ahn, YY. et al. (2023). Addressing the harms of AI-generated inauthentic content. *Nature Machine Intelligence*, 5, 679–680.

Meyer, T., Kerkhof, A., Cennamo, C., & Kretschmer, T. (2024). Competing for attention on digital platforms: The case of news outlets. *Strategic Management Journal*, 45, 1731–1790.

Newman, N., Ross Arguedas, A., Robertson, C. T. et al. (2025). Digital News Report 2025. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.

Stanusch, N., Degeling, M., Romano, S. et al. (2025). AI-Generated Algorithmic Virality. arXiv:2508.01042v1

Sun, L., & Abraham, S. (2021). Estimating dynamic treatment effects in event studies with heterogeneous treatment effects. *Journal of Econometrics*, 225, 175–199.

Tirole, J. (2023). Competition and the Industrial Challenge for the Digital Age. *Annual Review of Economics*, 15, 573–605.

Zhang, M. M., & Ng, Y. M. M. (2024). Beyond dislike counts: How YouTube users react to the visibility of social cues. *New Media & Society*, 28, 230–249 .

Andrea Schneider

ORCID: 0000-0002-9630-875X

Website: https://sites.google.com/site/aschneiderecon/

Current Position:

Since 04/2024: Associate Professor, Jönköping International Business School, Sweden

Past Positions:

10/2019 – 03/2024 Assistant Professor (tenured), Jönköping International Business School, Sweden

05/2011 – 09/2019 Assistant Professor, University of Münster, Germany

08/2016 – 06/2017 Associate Professor (temporary), University of Oslo, Norway

10/2014 – 03/2015 Research Visit, Norwegian Centre for Taxation (NoCeT), Bergen

01/2010 – 04/2011 Postdoc, Helmut Schmidt University/University of the Federal Armed Forces Hamburg, Germany

06/2006 – 01/2010 Research Assistant, Helmut Schmidt University/University of the Federal Armed Forces Hamburg, Germany

Education:

2010: PhD in Economics, Helmut Schmidt University Hamburg, Germany

Publications (only most recent):

Gauss, P., Gensler, S., Kortenhaus, M., Riedel, N., and Schneider, A. (2024). Regulating the sharing economy: The effects of day caps on short- and long-term rental markets and stakeholder outcomes. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 52, 1627-1650. [ABDC: A*, Norwegian list: 2]

Engström, P, Hagen, J., Khoshghadam, A., and Schneider, A. (2024). Effects of electronic cash registers on reported revenue. International Tax and Public Finance, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10797-024-09844-x. [ABDC: B, Norwegian list: 1]

Raabe, R., Sander, C., and Schneider, A. (2024). Public Goods and Diversity in Democracies and Non-Democracies. Kyklos, 77, 496-519. [ABDC: A, Norwegian list: 1]

Garz, M. and Schneider, A. (2023). Data sharing and tax enforcement: Evidence from short-term rentals in Denmark. Regional Science and Urban Economics, 101, 103912. [ABDC: A, Norwegian list: 1]

Garz, M. and Schneider, A. (2023). Taxation of short-term rentals – Evidence from the introduction of the "Airbnb tax" in Norway. Economics Letters, 226, 111120. [ABDC: A, Norwegian list: 1]

Juranek, S., Schindler, D., and Schneider, A. (2023). Royalty taxation under tax competition and profit shifting, Canadian Journal of Economics, 56, 1377-1412. [ABDC: A, Norwegian list: 1]

Becker, J. and Schneider, A. (2019). Bidding for firms with unknown characteristics, Scandinavian Journal of Economics 121 (3), 1222-1243. [ABDC: A, Norwegian list: 2]

Becker, J. and Schneider, A. (2018). Taxation of firms with unknown mobility, Journal of Public Economic Theory 20(2), 202-217. [ABDC: A, Norwegian list: 1]

Schneider, A. (2017). Corporate taxation of heterogeneous firms and the welfare effects of labour unions, World Economy 40(4), 703-714. [ABDC: A, Norwegian list: 1]

Policy report (in Swedish):
Hagen, J. and Schneider, A. Hur ser svenskernas pensionsplaner ut? - En studie av Uttagsplaneraren på minPension, November 2024.

Ongoing Grants:

01/2024 - 12/2026:

Public Sector Digitalization: Innovations in Pension Data and Tax Reporting

The Hamrin Foundation, SEK 3.6 million, co-investigator

01/2024 - 12/2026:

A Broadened Analysis of the Importance of the Welfare System for a Sustainable Working Life

Forte research program; SEK 24 million; program member

Completed Grants:

01/2022 – 06/2025:

Digitalization of Pension Claiming in Sweden

with J. Hagen and A. Malisa; Kamprad Family Foundation,

SEK 2 600 000; co-investigator

01/2022 – 12/2024:

Digital Platforms: Regulate or Collaborate?

with M. Garz; Jan Wallanders and Tom Hedelius Foundation, SEK 995 000; principal investigator

PhD supervision:
Gabriel Enrique Millan Arias (Jönköping International Business School, main supervisor).

Erwan Dujeancourt (Jönköping International Business School, second supervisor, defended in April 2024)

Marcel Garz

Jönköping International Business School
Gjuterigatan 5, 55318 Jönköping, Sweden
Email: marcel.garz@ju.se
Web: marcelgarz.com
Google Scholar, LinkedIn

Current Position

Since 10/2020	Associate Professor, Jönköping International Business School

Past Positions

02/2021 – 07/2021	Docent, Rotterdam School of Management
10/2018 – 09/2020	Assistant Professor, Jönköping International Business School
06/2015 – 09/2018	Senior Research Scientist, Hamburg Media School
04/2013 – 05/2015	Research assistant, Hamburg Media School
11/2010 – 03/2013	Research assistant, Institute for Media Economics, University of Hamburg

Education

11/2010 – 02/2014	PhD (*summa cum laude*), Dissertation: “Economic aspects of information processing in the case of labor market news”, School of Business, Economics and Social Sciences, University of Hamburg
10/2008 – 09/2010	Master of Arts in Economic and Social Studies, Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, University of Hamburg
10/2005 – 09/2008	Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, University of Hamburg

Academic Publications

Refereed journals	M. Garz, M. Ots (2025). “Media Consolidation and News Content Quality”, *Journal of Communication*, 75, 195 – 206.
	M. Arango-Kure, M. Garz (2025). “Manipulation: An integrative framework of unethical influence in marketing”, *Journal of Business Research*, 197, 115476.
	M. Garz, T. Singh (2024). “Party Positioning under Populist State Leaders”, *British Journal of Political Science*, forthcoming.
	M. Garz, M. Zhuang (2024) “Media Coverage and Pandemic Behavior: Evidence from Sweden”, *Health Economics*, 33, 1319 – 1367.

J. M. Reis, M. Garz (2024) “Media Attention and Compliance with the European Court of Human Rights”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, forthcoming.

M. Garz, M. Ots, H. Sjøvaag (2024) “Political Viewpoint Diversity in the News: Market and Ownership Conditions for a Pluralistic Media System”, *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 29, 983 – 1003.

T. Cyron, M. Garz, N. Steigenberger (2024) “Beware the community type: Engagement and growth in core vs. open online communities”, *Small Business Economics*, 62, 1383 – 1407.

N. Steigenberger, M. Garz, T. Cyron (2024). “Signaling Theory in Entrepreneurial Fundraising and Crowdfunding Research”, *Journal of Small Business Management*, forthcoming.

M. Garz (2024) “News about the economy: A literature survey and methodological guidelines”, *Oxford Open Economics*, 3, odae040.

E. Dujeancourt, M. Garz (2023) “The Effects of Algorithmic Content Selection on User Engagement with News on Twitter”, *The Information Society*, 39, 263 – 281.

M. Garz, A. Schneider (2023) “Data sharing and tax enforcement: Evidence from short-term rentals in Denmark”, *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 101, 103912.

M. Garz, F. Szucs (2023) “Algorithmic Selection and Supply of Political News on Facebook”, *Information Economics and Policy*, 62, 101020.

M. Garz, A. Schneider (2023) “Taxation of short-term rentals – Evidence from the introduction of the “Airbnb tax” in Norway”, *Economics Letters*, 226, 111120.

M. Garz, J. Rickardsson (2023) “Ownership and Media Slant: Evidence from Swedish Newspapers”, *Kyklos*, 76, 18 – 40.

J. Lischka, M. Garz (2023) “Clickbait News and Algorithmic Curation: A Game Theory Framework of the Relation between Journalism, Users, and Platforms”, *New Media & Society*, 25, 2073 – 2094.

M. Garz, G. Martin (2021) “Media Influence on Vote Choices: Unemployment News and Incumbents’ Electoral Prospects”, *American Journal of Political Science*, 65, 278 – 293.

M. Garz, S. Maaß (2021) “Cartels in the European Union, Antitrust Action, and Public Attention”, *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 186, 533 – 547.

M. Garz, J. Sörensen (2021) “Political Scandals, Newspapers, and the Election Cycle”, *Political Behavior*, 43, 1017 – 1036.

M. Garz, J. Sörensen, D. Stone (2020) “Partisan Selective Engagement: Evidence from Facebook”, *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 177, 91 – 108.

M. Garz, G. Sood, D. Stone, J. Wallace (2020) “The Supply of Media Slant Across Outlets and Demand for Slant Within Outlets: Evidence from US Presidential Campaign News”, *European Journal of Political Economy*, 63, 1 – 22.

M. Garz, V. Pagels (2018) “Cautionary Tales: Celebrities, the News Media, and Participation in Tax Amnesties”, *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 155, 288 – 300.

M. Garz (2018) “Effects of Unemployment News on Economic Perceptions – Evidence from German Federal States”, *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 68, 172 – 190.

M. Garz (2018) “Retirement, Consumption of Political Information, and Political Knowledge”, *European Journal of Political Economy*, 53, 109 – 119.

M. Garz, J. Sörensen (2017) “Politicians under Investigation: The News Media’s Effect on the Likelihood of Resignation”, *Journal of Public Economics*, 153, 82 – 91.

M. Garz, A. Rott, M. Wass von Czege (2015) “The Online Market for Illegal Copies of Magazines: A German Case Study”, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 59, 169 – 183.

M. Arango-Kure, M. Garz, A. Rott (2014) “Bad News Sells: The Demand for News Magazines and the Tone of Their Covers”, *Journal of Media Economics*, 27, 199 – 214.

M. Garz (2014) “Good News and Bad News: Evidence of Media Bias in Unemployment Reports”, *Public Choice*, 161, 499 – 515.

M. Garz (2013) “Unemployment Expectations, Excessive Pessimism, and News Coverage”, *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 34, 156 – 168.

M. Garz (2013) “Labour Market Segmentation: Standard and Non-Standard Employment in Germany”, *German Economic Review*, 14, 349 – 371.

M. Garz (2013) “Employment and Wages in Germany Since the 2004 Deregulation of the Temporary Agency Industry”, *International Labour Review*, 152, 307 – 326.

M. Garz (2012) “Job Insecurity Perceptions and Media Coverage of Labor Market Policy”, *Journal of Labor Research*, 33, 528 – 544.

Book chapters

M. Garz (2020) “Quantitative Methods in Economic Research on Media and Communication”, in B. von Rimscha (ed.): Management and Economics of Communication, 109 – 127, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

M. Garz (2014) “Volkswirtschaftliche Effizienz und der Markt für Nachrichten”, in I. Sjurts (ed.): Zehn Jahre sind ein Jahr – Kernthemen der medienwirtschaftlichen Forschung der letzten Dekade, 79 – 94, Baden-Baden: Nomos.

M. Garz, A. Rott (2014) “Erfolgsfaktoren von politischen Wochenmagazinen”, in I. Sjurts (ed.): Zehn Jahre sind ein Jahr – Kernthemen der medienwirtschaftlichen Forschung der letzten Dekade, 217 – 243, Baden-Baden: Nomos.

GRANTS & PROJECTS

01/2025 – 12/2027

Research project “Online Platforms, News Media, and Democracy” (with F. Szucs, M. Zhuang; *Jan Wallander and Tom Hedelius Foundation*, ca. 230,000 euro; co-investigator)

12/2024 – 12/2027	Research project “The Global Social Media Experiment” (team leader for Sweden; with M. Arango-Kure, M. Björnstjerna, S. Cehajic-Clancy, R. Guadagno, A. Olsson, T. Otterbring, L. Versteegen)
01/2023 – 12/2025	Research project “Competition, multimarket contact, and quality of local newspaper coverage” (with M. Ots; *Swedish Competition Authority*, ca. 240,000 euro; principal investigator)
01/2022 – 12/2024	Research project “Digital Platforms: Regulate or Collaborate?” (with A. Schneider; *Jan Wallander and Tom Hedelius Foundation*, ca. 100,000 euro; co-investigator)
01/2020 – 12/2022	Research project “Media competition and media slant in Swedish newspapers” (with J. Rickardsson; *Swedish Competition Authority*, ca. 180,000 euro; principal investigator)
01/2017 – 12/2020	Funding to implement the “Data and Business Analytics” specialization in the MBA program at Hamburg Media School (with A. Rott, K. Schaefer; *Bertelsmann*, ca. 200,000 euro; co-investigator)
04/2016 – 03/2019	Research Network Economics of Media Bias (*German Research Foundation*, ca. 45,000 euro; principal investigator)

Workshop and Seminar Organization

Since 2024	Data Methods Initiative (co-founder)
Since 2015	Economics of Media Bias Workshop (founder)

Teaching

2010, 2011, 2013	Industrial Organization (undergraduate and graduate students, University of Hamburg)
2019	International Trade Theory (undergraduate students, Jönköping University)
2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	Introduction to Economic Thought (undergraduate students, Jönköping University)
2012	Macroeconomics (undergraduate students, University of Hamburg)
2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016	Media Economics (undergraduate and graduate students, University of Hamburg)
2023, 2025	Methods to Analyze Text as Data (graduate students, Jönköping University)
2025	Platform Economics (graduate students, Jönköping University)
2011, 2012	Political Economy (undergraduate students, University of Hamburg)
2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017	Quantitative Methods (graduate students, Hamburg Media School)
2016, 2017	Statistics (refugees, Hamburg Media School)

Refereeing

Journals	American Economic Journal: Economic Policy; American Political Science Review; American Politics Research; Comparative Political Studies; Data in Brief; Digital Journalism; Discover Artificial Intelligence; Economic Modelling; Economics & Politics; Empirical Economics; European Economic Review; European Journal of Political Economy; Government and Opposition; Health Economics; Humanities and Social Sciences Communications; Information, Communication and Society; Information Economics and Policy; International Review of Applied Economics; Journal of Computational Social Science; Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization; Journal of Economic Psychology; Journal of Economic Studies; Journal of European Social Policy; Journal of Industry, Competition and Trade; Journal of Information Technology and Politics; Journal of Labor Research; Journal of Media Business Studies; Journal of Small Business Management; Journal of the European Economic Association; Journalism; Journalism Studies; Nature: Scientific Reports; Policy Studies Journal; Political Behavior; Public Choice; Quarterly Journal of Political Science; Regional Studies; Review of Industrial Organization; Scandinavian Journal of Economics; Social Network Analysis and Mining; Technological Forecasting & Social Change; Tourism Management
Funders	European Commission; Fund for Scientific Research (Belgium); German Research Foundation