

# Preface

The nature, scope, and extent of the societal, political, economic, and environmental changes brought about by the advance of digital communication technologies in general and of social media platforms in particular have been studied by media scholars and policymakers for nearly two decades now. The growing number of uncertainties associated with the new information environment, further enhanced by the rise of information warfare waged by both radical domestic actors and geopolitical powers in recent years, has become a reason for concern in liberal democracies. Yet policy responses to the challenges of the new media landscape lag behind technological transformation.

The central issue of this volume is that a secure and safe information environment, where people are protected from disinformation and threats and can access trustworthy information, remains key to democratic processes: political elections, public debates, accountability, and participation. The current state of communication infrastructures calls for an agile regulatory framework for both legacy media and digital platforms, seeking policy solutions that, grounded in a human-centric approach, ensure platform diversity and transparency of operations, secure free speech, and protect citizens. Fundamental political decisions must be taken on both the national and the supranational levels. Regulatory institutions must have more powers and real authority to act, not just a title and formal responsibilities. They need clear legal powers and enough financial resources to protect accurate information and set transparency rules, to enable meaningful exchanges among citizens by supporting media literacy initiatives, and to fight disinformation by investigating coordinated manipulation and applying sanctions. Only informed and critical-minded citizens can defend democracies.

This volume appears at a time when risks to information integrity and democratic resilience are exceptionally high. The threats are too real to be devalued. Awareness and action are needed.

As editors, we would like to thank all contributors to this collective volume. Representing the Euromedia Research Group ([euromediagroup.org](http://euromediagroup.org)) and having worked for several decades as a collaborative body, we also thank all members of the group who have generously taken their time and given advice and support to make this volume possible. Initially, the core idea

of platformisation, which is a connective thread across all chapters, emerged from an ERASMUS+ Programme-funded Jean Monnet Network project, “EuromediApp – European Media and Platform Policy” ([euromediapp.org](http://euromediapp.org)) – thus, we feel indebted to these activities and discussions. We are especially grateful for the informative comments of the two external reviewers and the enthusiastic Nordicom staff – especially the director, Jonas Ohlsson. A special thanks goes to Magnus Fredriksson, a scientific editor at Nordicom and of this volume, whose careful supervision assisted us not only when we needed help but also inspired us to anticipate potential key issues.

*The Editors*  
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