

Panel discussion

# TikTok, democracy and young people: *Beyond bans?*

Thu 16.4.2026  
16:15–17:45

Väinö Linna auditorium,  
Tampere University

How do TikTok and other social media platforms transform democracy? How does short video format impact politics and sociality in young people's lives? According to Sitra's new study, social media algorithms drastically affect content consumers' worldviews through favoring sensational and polarized contents and thus steering political debate.

Social media platforms are essential in young people's everyday lives, peer cultures, as well as cultural and political expressions. Short video formats have become a central way of producing and conveying knowledge used by journalists, politicians, and other content creators.

The aim of this panel is to reach beyond discussions about social media bans, and critically ponder the relationships between social media, democracy, short video, and young people's everyday lives. We welcome scholars, students, and everyone interested in these themes to join!

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## The panelists include

Vilma Rimpelä (RARE Media), Esko Nieminen (Tampere University), Heta Mulari (Tampere University). The panel is chaired by Lauri Lahikainen (Tampere University, DRN).

The panel is organized in collaboration with the Democracy Research Network (Tampere University), research project TikTokCracy (Tampere University) and Perla: Tampere Centre for Children, Youth, and Family Research.



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