Dear editors,

We are pleased to submit our manuscript "Convergent Television Audiences, Digital Inequalities and Social Support in Getting Audio-visual Content" for review and possible publication in the *International Journal of Communication*.

In this article, we enrich existing research on digital inequalities with the topic of cultural consumption and focus primarily on audiences who benefit from the potential of digital technologies with the help of others. We show that the use of help is not just a complementary activity to the independent use of digital technologies but a full-fledged strategy to participate in society. In doing so, we choose an area of participation that has been neglected in digital inequality research until recently.

The normative designation of certain outcomes as worthy of interest may, on the one hand, benefit clarity. On the other, however, such an approach runs the risk of cultural imperialism, as shown by Payal Arora or Massimo Ragnedda.

By focusing on cultural consumption, we want to recall Henry Jenkins' brilliant depiction of changing culture in the digital age and show that even in the realm of leisure, there are structural differences among people that ultimately lead to different quality of life.

We show that the help of others is not only used by non-users but also by those who are at least somewhat familiar with information technology. According to the results of our study, the request for help may not be motivated only by the need to overcome own incompetency but, for example, as an excuse to communicate with others. The ability to benefit from others' support is conditioned not only by the availability of skilled helpers but also by help-seekers' character.

We believe our work can help grasp digital inequalities' diversity better. A robust research sample allows us to formulate well-supported conclusions. Since we have studied a society that does not differ significantly from other developed countries in its cultural consumption behaviour, we can expect to see the trends presented in different geographic areas. Thus, combining research on digital inequalities and audience studies may inspire other researchers to build on our work.

Our article is part of a research project on downloading and copying audio-visual content. To date, three papers of our research team have been published in the Journal of Media Ethics ("'We are Sorry This Video Is Not Available in Your Country': An Ethical Analysis of Geo-blocking Audio-Visual Online Content"), the Economy and Society journal ("The six faces of ignorance in online piracy: How not knowing shapes the practices of media consumption"), and the Cultural Studies - Critical Methodologies journal ("When Things Get Real: (Re)Considering the Challenges to Cultural Industries Research"). Other papers are now under review. None of these articles overlaps in its aims and topics with the present study. Both authors are familiar with the manuscript's final version and agree to submit it to the *International Journal of Communication*. None of us experiences a conflict of interest concerning this research.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Štěpán Žádník & Jakub Macek



**Masaryk University | Faculty of Social Studies**

Department of Media Studies and Journalism

A: Joštova 10 | 60200 Brno
Czech Republic