fög
Forschungszentrum
Öffentlichkeit und Gesellschaft

Yearbook 2024
The Quality of the Media
Main findings

No empirical evidence for the crowding out of private media by SRG

Universität Zürich UZH

Research Center for the Public Sphere
and Society (fög) / University of Zurich

Main findings – No empirical evidence for the crowding out of private media by SRG

Mark Eisenegger, Linards Udris, Daniel Vogler

Executive Summary

Switzerland's media system remains under pressure. The measured quality of news coverage in many media is still high, but interest in news and use of news has declined in recent years, advertising revenue has fallen and (too) few people are prepared to pay for journalism. In the midst of this resource crisis, media companies are turning to more and more cost-cutting measures. Media policy proposals that either demand more public media funding or aim to restrict the public media organisation SRG SSR are also gaining relevance. This year's Quality of the Media Yearbook once again documents current developments and focusses on the role of SRG SSR in the Swiss media market (1.1).

Our in-depth study does not provide any empirical evidence to support the frequently stated thesis that public media are crowding out private news media. This is shown by the data from a standardised survey on audiences' usage and willingness to pay. Firstly, our analysis confirms that the use of SRG content for news purposes correlates positively with the use of private news media. This applies to both offline and online media. SRG users not only consume commuter and tabloid media more frequently, but they also use paid subscription media significantly more often than non-SRG users. These results suggest that the use of public media complements, rather than replaces, the use of private news media. This is also supported by the fact that a very low proportion of users in the population are exclusively satisfied with SRG online news. Secondly, our study confirms that there is no correlation, neither positive nor negative, between the use of SRG news and the willingness to pay for journalistic content from private media. We are therefore unable to confirm a «crowding out» effect – i.e. excessive competition from private news media by SRG news in the user market. Our analysis suggests that public and private media should work together on solutions instead of fighting each other, as a large part of the problems are due to the upheavals caused by the large tech platforms.

With artificial intelligence (AI), journalism is facing additional upheavals. How quickly these changes will take place and how far-reaching they will be depends not only on the development of AI technology, but also on the strategies of media companies, media policy and audience acceptance. This is precisely the starting point for the second in-depth study in this yearbook (1.2), which analyses the acceptance and perception of AI in journalism among the Swiss public. Having already conducted a study on this topic last year, we are now continuing our research. Our latest survey also reveals a persistent scepticism towards the use of AI in journalism: almost three quarters of respondents rated the risks of AI in journalism as high, higher than in other areas of society such as politics or the military. Many respondents anticipate negative effects on media quality, most notably an increase in false information. However, the public is not equally critical of all areas of AI use. The use of AI for translations, data analysis or research is supported by the majority of the audience. However, the more AI intervenes directly in journalistic output, such as text or image production, the greater the scepticism. In line with the overall sceptical attitude, many respondents expect transparency from the media when using AI and would like to see detailed disclosure. Respondents also expect media companies to always take full responsibility for AI-generated content. At present, however, only a minority of respondents believe that the Swiss media handle AI responsibly – even though several media companies have developed guidelines on the responsible use of AI. The scepticism towards AI is also reflected in the fact that remarkably few people are willing to pay for AI-generated content. Overall, these results can also be seen as an indication that the public places a higher value on journalism created by humans. Likewise, respondents are also in favour of AI providers or tech platforms compensating the information media for using their content and data. The proportions in favour clearly outweigh those against. This can be interpreted as support for an ancillary copyright law, which is currently being drafted by the Federal Administration and is expected to be submitted to Parliament in 2025.

The increasing availability of AI tools offers not only journalists the opportunity to create automated content, but also organisations and people outside of journalism. In this context, it is feared that «deepfakes», i.e. AI-generated images or audio/video content that does not correspond to reality, will also increase. By analysing media coverage, our third in-depth study shows that the issue of deepfakes is receiving increasing attention in media reporting, but is still a niche topic – although around half of the population has already seen deepfakes (1.3). The accompanying survey also revealed that frequent consumption of news media correlates with a higher awareness of deepfakes, although the use of news media does not contribute to people gaining more detailed knowledge, e.g. the ability to precisely define deepfakes. Instead, people who use video platforms such as YouTube particularly often not only encounter deepfakes more frequently, but also know more about them. The population also has difficulty distinguishing deepfakes from real videos (Vogler et al., 2024b). This emphasises the importance of more intensive meta-reporting and education on the topics of AI and deepfakes.

These three in-depth analyses are followed by the findings of the regular analyses that we do every year (2). The long-term quality analysis shows a levelling off between media types of high and low quality. Overall, the quality of many Swiss media is still high according to our measurements. Swiss media do not have a fundamental quality problem, but they clearly have an increasing reach problem, as our long-term surveys show that more and more Swiss people are consuming little or no news. Their trust in the media is ambivalent, and the data shows that transparency and journalistic standards are important factors for users' trust in the media. This data is consistent with the latest survey results from our in-depth study on AI in journalism. In general, and especially when using AI, the media are expected to work professionally and demand transparency. Our time series also shows that information journalism remains in a difficult financial situation. The willingness to pay for online news is stagnating and a significant proportion of advertising revenue continues to flow to the big tech platforms. Against this backdrop, not only is structural media concentration increasing, i.e. the elimination of media companies or titles, but also media content concentration, i.e. the sharing and distribution of identical content. We measure this annually using a combination of automated and manual content analyses. These show that the concentration of media content in regional news coverage is lower than in domestic and foreign news coverage. However, the multiple use of the same articles on regional topics increased significantly year-on-year for the first time in 2023. It would be problematic if the concentration of media content and the associated loss of diversity in regional reporting were to increase further in the coming years.

In these main findings, we summarise the most important results of the 2024 Yearbook. Firstly, we present the findings of our three in-depth studies on the relationship between SRG SSR and private news media, on the acceptance of AI in journalism and on media reporting and the perception of deepfakes (1). This is followed by our long-term analysis on media quality, media use, attitudes towards media, financing and media concentration (2). We conclude the main findings with our recommendations for action (3).

1 In-depth studies

1.1 No empirical evidence for the crowding out of private news media by SRG SSR information offerings

Public media are often accused of crowding out private media in the market. This «crowding-out» thesis is becoming increasingly important as numerous news brands – from both public and private media – compete for the limited attention of the public and, in some cases, for paying subscribers in the online sector. The thesis is also used as an argument in favour of the «Halbierungsinitative», which aims to significantly reduce the license fees for SRG SSR.

In view of the politically charged debate, it is important for us to empirically test the «crowding-out» thesis. The few publicly available scientific studies have so far provided little support for this thesis (Schranz et al., 2016; Sehl et al., 2020; Fletcher

& Nielsen, 2017). Only O'Brien (2022) paints an ambivalent picture for Germany, showing that license fees can promote a «free mentality» among the public, despite not directly influencing the (low) willingness to pay for the online news.

In the existing studies, however, Switzerland was either not considered at all or only marginally. Our first in-depth study aims to close this gap. It examines whether SRG SSR is crowding out private news media in the public market and whether the use of SRG news is linked to a lower willingness to pay for news online. We focus on private and public news media in the online and offline sector in German-speaking Switzerland and Suisse romande. To answer these questions, we rely on data from a standardised, representative survey that was also conducted for Switzerland as part of the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2024 of the University of Oxford (the questionnaire can be viewed online at https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-261174).

With regard to the crowding-out hypothesis in the audience market, our analysis shows that the use of SRG news is not negatively correlated with the use of commuter, tabloid or subscription media; on the contrary, there is a positive correlation (see Figure 1). SRG users consume paid subscription media more frequently across all channels (61.4%) than non-SRG users (38.2%). Similarly, commuter and tabloid media are consumed more frequently across all channels by SRG users (75.1%) than by non-users (58.2%). This means that people in Switzerland generally use the news from SRF or RTS in addition to those of private news media. This also applies to the online sector. SRG users are also regular multiple users here. Users of SRF or RTS online access online news from commuter and tabloid media slightly more frequently (73.1%), and online news from subscription media significantly more frequently (50.8%), than those who do not use SRF or RTS online (69.3% and 37.7%, respectively). The predominantly complementary use of SRG online news is also reflected in another point: the group of SRG-exclusive users who are satisfied only with SRG online news and do not use any news from private media online is extremely small. Only 3.5% of Swiss respondents are exclusive SRG online users. Such SRG-exclusive users are also a small proportion of the population as a whole than people who exclusively use commuter and tabloid media (26.5%) or subscription media (8.5%) online.

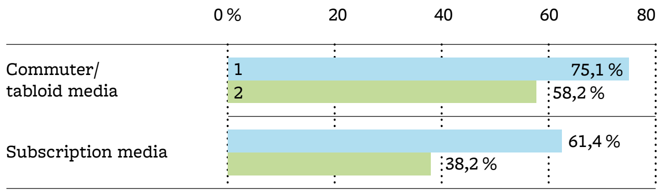


Figure 1: Cross-channel reach of private media types in comparison

The chart shows the cross-channel reach of commuter and tabloid media and subscription media for two different audiences (source: Reuters Institute, 2024). A distinction is made between people who have used at least one SRG news brand across all channels and people who have used neither offline nor online SRG news brands (usage during the «last week») (n = 2012).
Reading example: Commuter and tabloid media are used by 75.1 % of people who also use SRG news. In comparison, commuter and tabloid media are used slightly less (58.2 %) by people who do not use SRG news.

A further statistical test shows that the use of SRG news does not correlate with willingness to pay (cf. Table 1). The regression model shows no statistically significant correlations between the use of SRG content via online channels (-.12; p = .404) or traditional channels (B = .17; p = .267) and willingness to pay. Likewise, the use of commuter and tabloid media (offline and online) does not correlate with the willingness to pay for news.

While the use of all media types under analysis, both private and public, reveal no significant correlations, the attitudes of respondents can partially explain their willingness to pay. A high level of interest in news in general (B = .34; p < .001) and in politics (B = .28; p < .001) correlate significantly positively with the willingness to pay for online news. In contrast to the study by Schranz et al. (2016), there is no significant correlation between trust in the media (B = .07; p = .287) and willingness to pay. Willingness to pay is also higher among men, in the Suisse romande and among younger people.

To summarise, according to our study there is no empirical evidence that SRG SSR is crowding out private information media in the audience market or in terms of willingness to pay.

	B
Use of media types	
SRG offline	.17
SRG online	–.12
Commuter and tabloid media offline	.21
Commuter and tabloid media online	–.18
Social media as the main source of news	–.44
Attitudes	
Media trust	.07
Interest in news	**.34*****
Interest in politics	**.28*****
Unclear political stance	**–.68***
Sociodemographic characteristics	
Language region[a]	**–.39****
Gender[b]	**.49*****
Age	**–.03*****
Income	.00
Level of education	.06
(constant)	(1.53**)
Nagelkerke R^2	**.15**

Table 1: Regression to explain willingness to pay for online news

The table shows the results of a binary logistic regression analysis (n = 1533 respondents for whom data was available for all factors) (source: Reuters Institute, 2024). The regression coefficients B shows how the analysed factors correlate with willingness to pay. Significant correlations are marked with an asterisk (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$).
[a] Suisse romande is the reference category.
[b] female is the reference category.
Reading example: Interest in news correlates significantly positively with willingness to pay (B = .34).

1.2 Still great scepticism towards AI in journalism

Artificial intelligence has become one of the defining topics in the media industry. It characterises the entire production process, and therefore also influences audience acceptance, on which the continued existence of journalism greatly depends. In the last Yearbook, we analysed the acceptance of AI among the Swiss population when it comes to the production of texts in journalism. In our current, second AI study, we have expanded the field and analysed the Swiss public's perception and acceptance of AI in journalism across the entire journalistic value chain. The study is based on a representative online survey (n = 1287) for German-speaking Switzerland and Suisse romande (the questionnaire can be viewed online at https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-261113).

The results of our latest survey also make this clear: Scepticism towards the use of AI in journalism remains high. Of all areas of society, the risks for journalism are considered to be the highest. This dominant risk perception is particularly evident when it comes to the presumed effects of AI on the quality of reporting (see Figure 2). Many respondents (56.9%) are of the opinion that the quality of news decreases due to the use of AI. Only 18.2% agree with the statement that AI improves the quality of news. Almost two thirds of respondents (63.4%) also believe that AI could lead to more false information. Scepticism is also surprisingly high when it comes to more formal quality dimensions: only 23.6% are of the opinion that AI could improve the comprehensibility of news. In contrast, the influence of AI on journalistic diversity is viewed relatively positively. Around half (51.6%) expect AI to increase the diversity of topics; only 27.5% believe that AI will reduce the diversity of opinions.

The willingness to pay for AI-generated content remains low and is even declining slightly (see Figure 3). In 2023, 9.4% of respondents were willing to pay for texts created entirely by AI, while in 2024 only 6.2% are (−3.2 p.p.). A further 25.2% would pay for content created with the support of AI (−3.8 p.p.). The greatest willingness is clearly related to paying for content created without AI (61.1% of respondents). Here too, however, there is a decline compared to the previous year (−4.1 p.p.).

Swiss media are already using AI for a wide range of tasks along the entire journalistic value chain, including text production, research, data analysis, automated content distribution and translation. It can be seen that the more the use of AI directly affects journalistic output, the more the acceptance of AI decreases among the Swiss population (see Figure 4). Of our respondents, 41.1% are in favour of using AI for generating headlines, while only 35.9% are in favour of rewriting articles for different target groups and only 25.6% think it makes sense to use AI for writing articles. The use of AI to create images is also viewed critically (34.9% approved). In contrast, acceptance of AI is higher when it has less of an impact on content. For example, 78.0% are in favour of using AI for translation, 64.5% for data analysis and 58.7% for research. The shortening of articles using AI is approved of by 50.8%. The use of

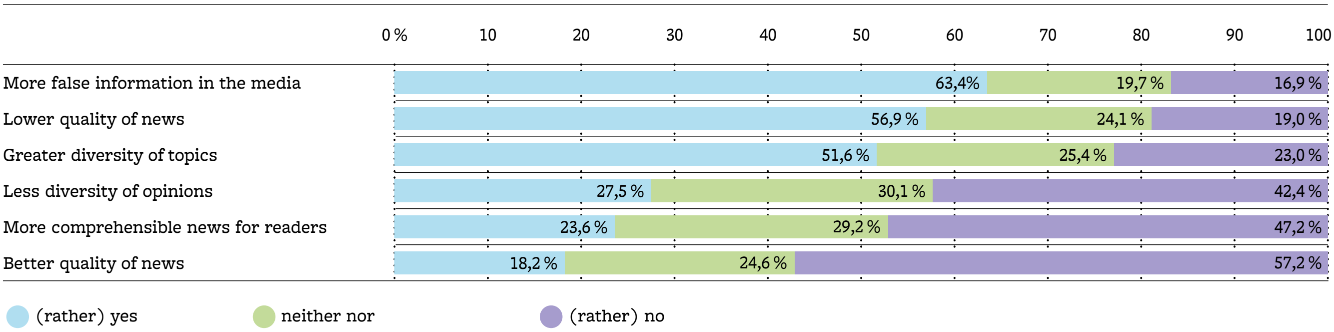


Figure 2: Expected effects of AI on the quality of news

The diagram shows how respondents assess the effects of AI on different aspects of news quality (n = 1254).
Reading example: In this survey, 59.9 % of respondents expect the increasing use of AI to lead to poorer news quality.

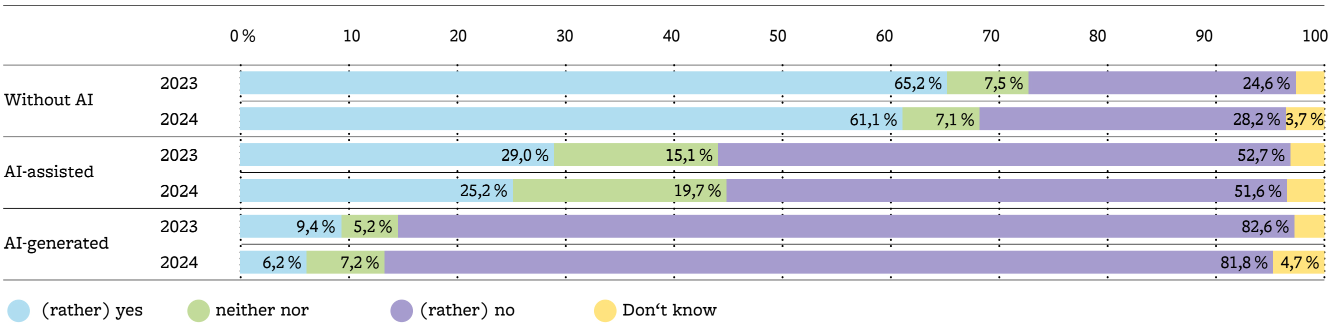


Figure 3: Willingness to pay for AI news items

The chart shows the extent to which respondents are willing to pay for journalistic content that was generated without AI, with the support of AI and entirely by AI (n = 1287).
Reading example: In 2024, 6.2 % of respondents declare that they would pay for news items generated entirely by AI. In 2023, it was 9.4 % of respondents.

AI to combat misinformation on social media is also supported by 70.6% of respondents. Another 41.9% of respondents think it makes sense to use AI to display personalised news articles. Surprisingly, only 38.7% think it makes sense to use AI to moderate user comments, although AI could help to recognise hate speech.

Transparency plays an important role in the acceptance of AI-generated content. Upstream, almost all respondents (91.1%) believe that Swiss media should always bear full responsibility for all content created with the support of AI (see Figure 5). Many media organisations, the Press Council and the Swiss Media Association (VSM) already follow this approach. With regard to the question of transparency, it is clear that a minimum standard is not enough for the respondents. The practice of publishing a one-off, blanket reference to the use of AI met with the least approval (47.6%). In contrast, around three quarters of respondents (75.9%) expect detailed disclosure for all news items in which AI was used, as well as information on the stages at which AI was used.

Our survey therefore shows that the Swiss have clear expectations of the media and their approach to AI. However, these expectations do not yet appear to be very well met: Only 21.2% of respondents believe that Swiss media use AI responsibly, while 36.1% deny this.

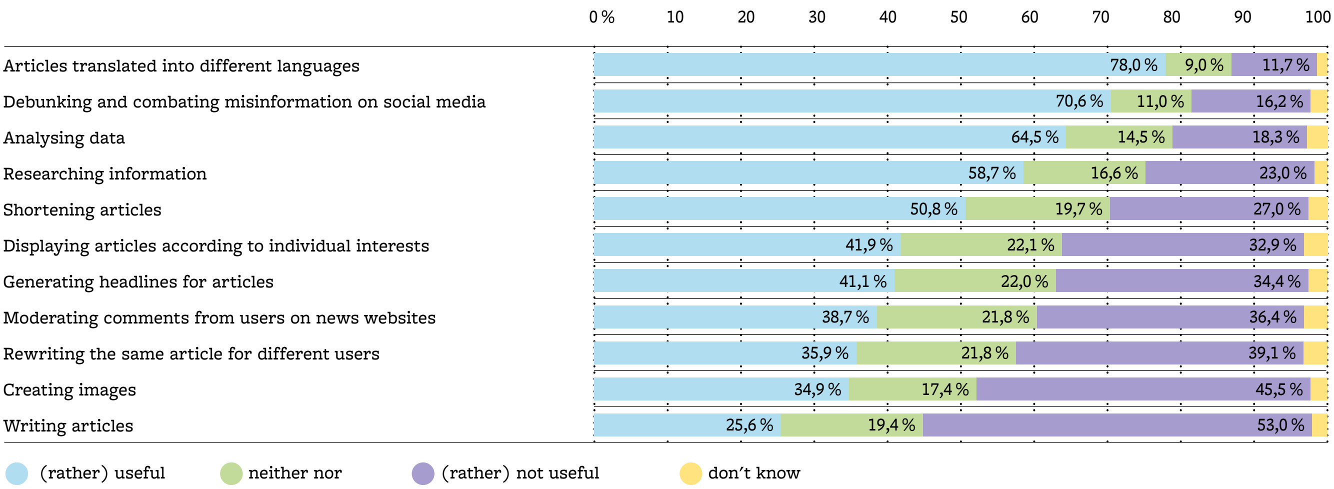


Figure 4: Assessment of the areas of application of AI in journalism

The chart shows how useful the respondents consider the use of AI to be for different areas and editorial processes in journalism (n = 1287). *Reading example:* 64.5 % of respondents believe it makes sense for AI to be used in journalism to analyse data. Only 25.6 % consider the use of AI for writing articles to be useful.

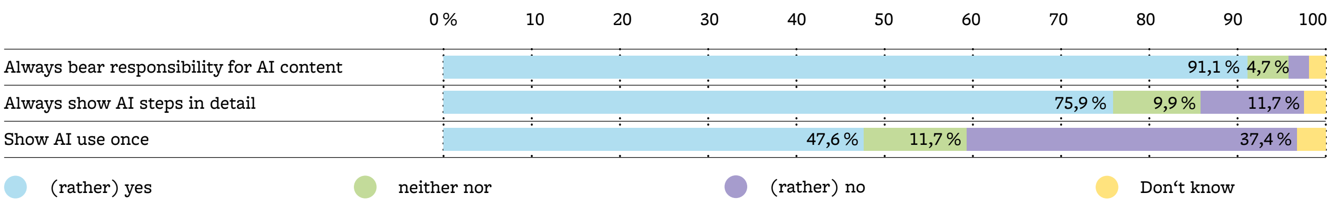


Figure 5: Expectations of transparency when using AI

The diagram shows respondents' expectations regarding transparency in the use of AI in Swiss media (n = 1,287). *Reading example:* Most respondents (91.1 %) expect Swiss media to always take responsibility for content created with the support of AI.

After all, Swiss audiences have clear expectations not only of journalism, but also of the providers of AI tools. AI providers often use content from news media for their tools and training models, usually without paying for them. As in our first study, we therefore asked whether the Swiss population believes that AI providers should compensate media providers for the use of journalistic content (see Figure 6). This shows that measures to remunerate journalism providers, such as the enforcement of copyrights, are accepted by a large portion of the population. Those in favour (45.1%) clearly outweigh those against (27.5%).

1.3 Deepfakes – Journalism contributes to awareness, but not to knowledge about the phenomenon

AI can be used to create not only journalistically verified content, but also deepfakes, i.e. content that does not correspond to reality and is sometimes used to deliberately deceive. Our third in-depth study analysed media coverage of deepfakes and how they are perceived by the Swiss population. A content analysis of reporting on deepfakes in 11 Swiss online media outlets (n = 380) was combined with a representative online survey of the Swiss population from German-speaking Switzerland and Suisse romande (n = 1359).

The results of the content analysis show that the topic of deepfakes gained attention in the Swiss media in 2023. However, reporting predominantly focussed on risks such as disinformation, while opportunities – e.g. applications for film and music – are less highlighted. Accordingly, a negative tone predominates: Almost 60% of articles report negatively on the phenomenon. In the survey, more than half of the respondents (57%) had already heard of deepfakes. Statistically, this shows that the consumption of news media correlates positively with awareness of deepfakes. News media therefore contribute to people finding out about this new phenomenon. Almost half (49.2%) also state that they have already seen a deepfake themselves. However, the use of video platforms – and not news media – determines the extent to which people come into contact with deepfakes; apparently, people are less likely to encounter deepfakes in news media than on YouTube. Considering that deepfakes often contain disinformation, this is a positive result for journalism. However, it is problematic that, according to our study, news media have no influence on how much people actually know about deepfakes or the extent to which they can at least rudimentarily define deepfakes. This is an indication that journalism should report on the phenomenon more and in a more differentiated way.

The following finding is also important: In another study that arose from the same research context, Vogler et al. (2024b) were able to show in an online experiment that Swiss people are barely able to distinguish well-made deepfakes from real videos. Even a short tutorial on how to recognise deepfakes, which was shown to half of the participants, had no effect on their ability to recognise them. This makes it all the more important for news media to report even more intensively on the phenomenon, provide information and teach strategies for dealing with deepfakes.

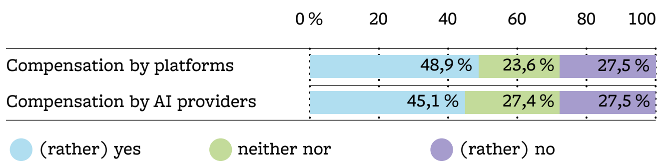


Figure 6: Support for compensation by AI providers and tech platforms

The chart shows whether, in the opinion of the respondents, the providers of AI tools or tech platforms should compensate the providers of journalism when they use their content (n = 1254).
Reading example: Of our respondents, 45.1% believe that providers of AI tools should compensate providers of journalism if they use journalistic content for their tools, and 48.9% are in favour of such compensation by tech platforms.

2 Long-term analyses from the Yearbook Quality of the Media

2.1 Decreasing gap between the top-quality and lower-quality media types

We are continuing our content analysis on the development of media quality in Switzerland in this Yearbook. In 2023, the average value for all media types is 6.1 out of a maximum of 10 points (see Figure 7). As in previous years, public radio (7.7) and public television programmes (7.5) lead the ranking, although diversity is decreasing in the long term. In terms of quality, the radio programmes SRF Echo der Zeit (8.1) and SRF Rendez-vous (7.9) remain the benchmark. By contrast, the SRG SSR online portals (6.3) have lost almost 1 point since 2015, though they continue to offer a high level of relevance and diversity. Private television (6.4) has improved since 2020 and is characterised in particular by a high level of professionalism and, in some cases, diversity. It is interesting to note that Léman Bleu (7.5) and, increasingly, Tele Ticino (7.4) have been achieving similarly good ratings to SRG SSR's brands in several dimensions for several years. The fact that these small television stations can achieve solid or even good quality ratings – at least with their main news programmes – despite limited resources, shows that high quality is also possible with relatively low resources. Sunday newspapers and magazines (6.0) are above average in terms of contextualisation, but

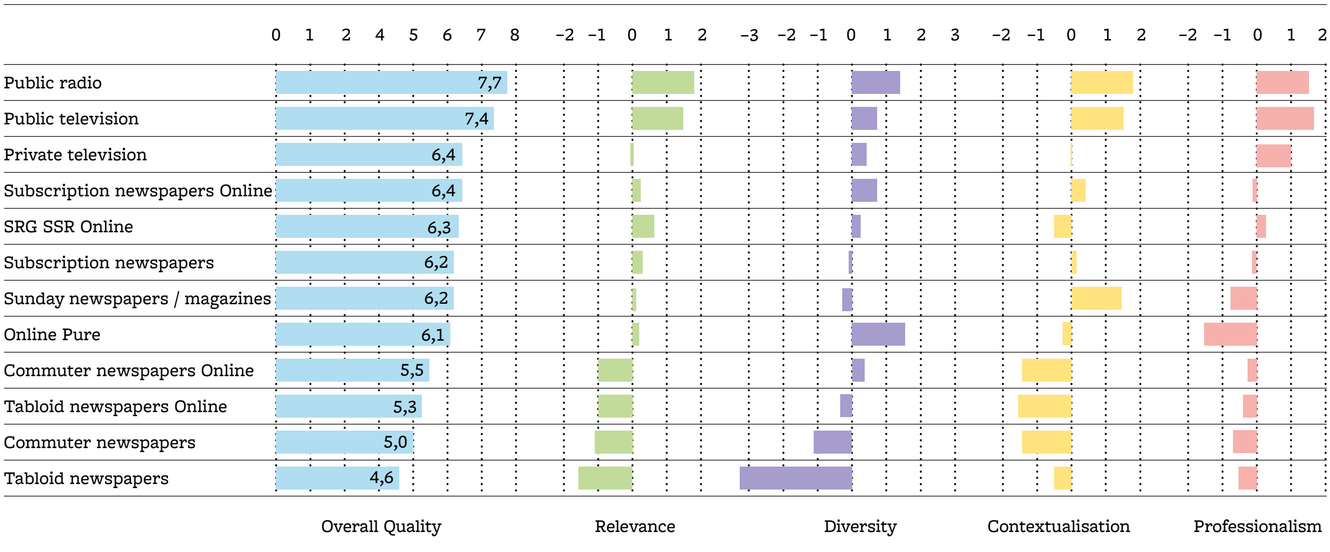
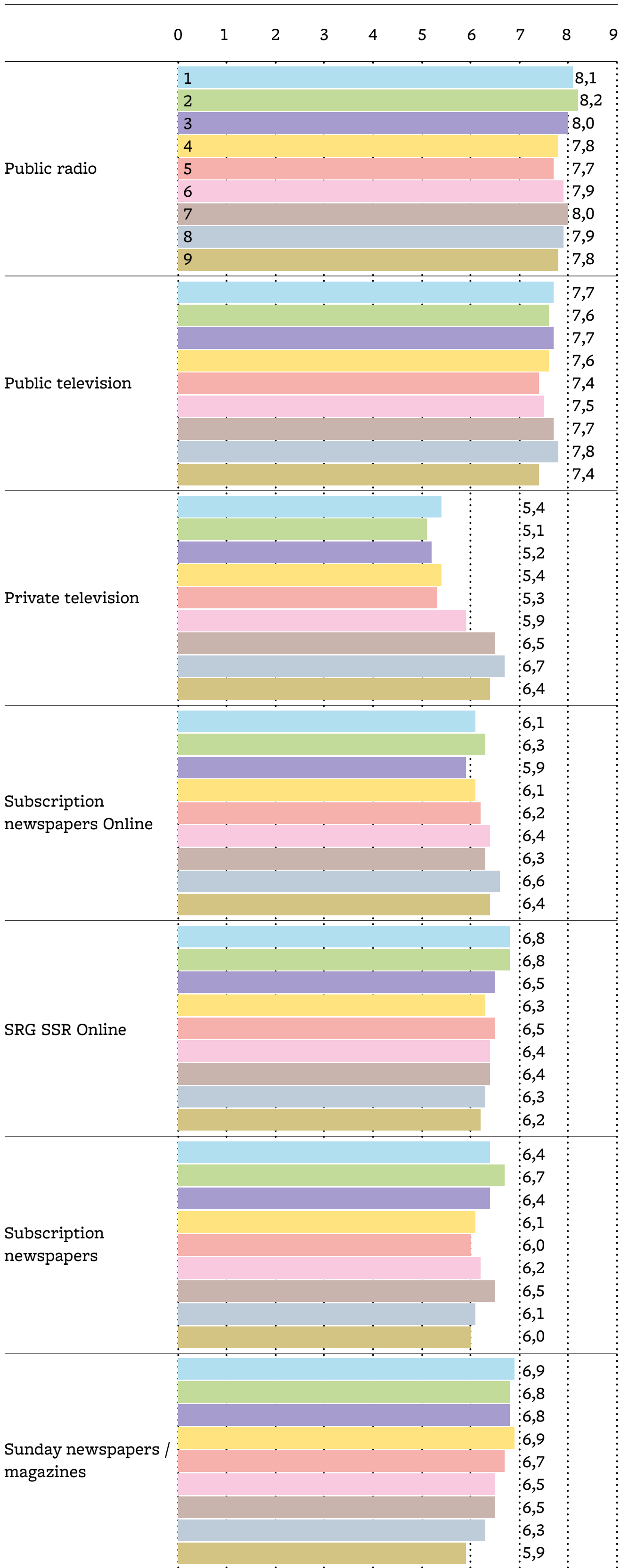


Figure 7: Quality scores by media type

The chart shows the quality scores for 12 media types, which are ranked in descending order. For each type, it is also indicated whether it deviates positively or negatively from the average in the four quality dimensions of relevance, diversity, categorisation performance and professionalism. The data is based on all contributions to the quality analysis from the random sample (2023: n = 20,431; 68 media titles).
Reading example: SRG SSR news sites occupy an above average position in the quality ranking of media types, with 6.3 points. However, they score below average in contextualisation.

below average in terms of professionalism and objectivity. Subscription newspapers, both printed (6.2) and online (6.4), have similar scores, as their content overlaps considerably, with the online editions offering greater diversity. The Online Pure type (6.0) remains slightly below average, with large differences in quality within this type. In addition to Watson.ch, Nau.ch and blue News (bluewin.ch), Heidi.news and Republik.ch have also been included here since 2022. The quality of these brands varies greatly, particularly in terms of contextualisation. Tabloid and commuter media show improvement in the long term, particularly in the areas of relevance and diversity, as they publish more hard news. These improvements are also due to journalistic strategies that focus more on quality. What is striking about the Blick titles is that the new offshoot in Suisse romande (Blick.ch/fr) has improved year-on-year. Thanks to a more relevant and varied mix of topics and a more factual style, it performed slightly better than its German-speaking Swiss counterpart in 2023, despite continuing to provide less categorisation and less content of its own.

A more detailed look at the changes shows that quality fell overall by 0.2 points compared to the previous year, interrupting the trend of increasing quality observed since the coronavirus pandemic (see Figure 8). This dynamic is explained by different developments in the quality dimensions. On a positive note, relevance continued to increase slightly in 2023 (+0.1), reaching its highest level in the last nine years. Although contextualisation is higher than in 2015, it decreased slightly compared to the previous year (−0.2). Diversity has seen significant losses since 2015 and is around 1 point lower in 2023, with a slight year-on-year decline (−0.1). There is also limited diversity of the media system as a whole, as more and more media are sharing the same contributions. Finally, 2023 shows a clear decline in professionalism (−0.6), making 2023 the year with the lowest values in this dimension. This is due to the decline in objectivity, i.e. the increase in articles that are emotional, appealing or even polemical. In a longer-term comparison with 2015, some media types show a decline in quality, including public radio and (with fluctuations) public



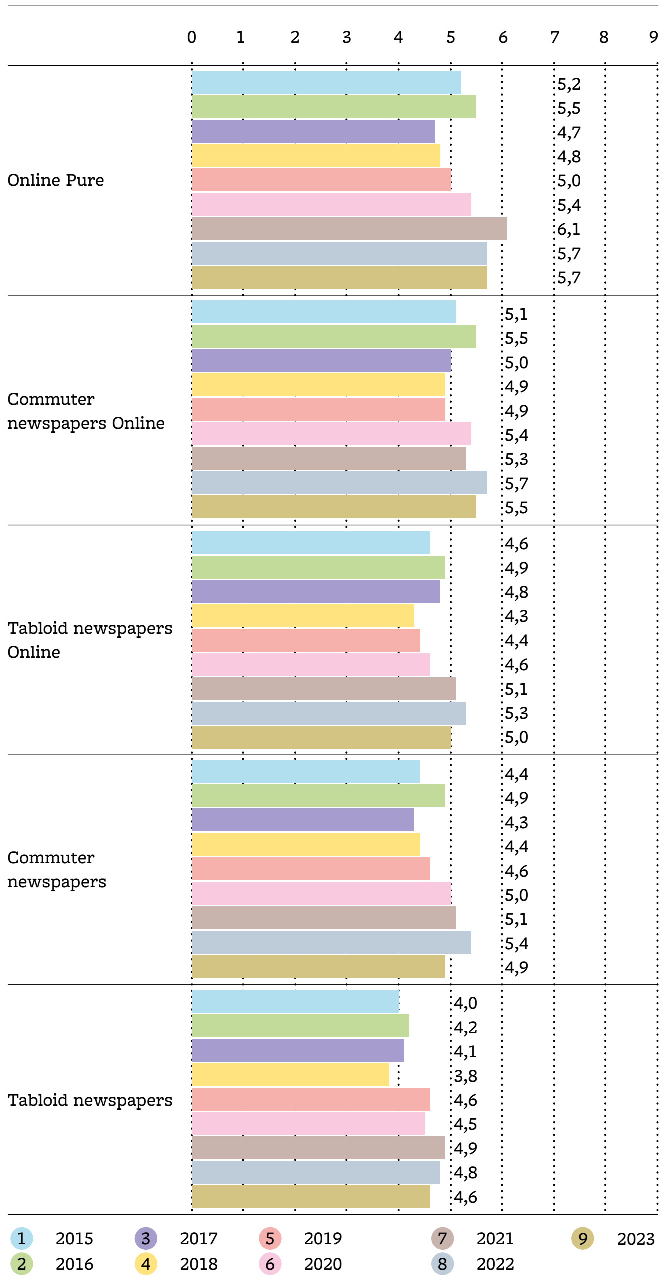


Figure 8: Changes in quality between 2015 and 2023

The chart shows the change in quality between 2015 and 2023 per media type. The mean value of the quality scores of individual outlets and brands was used for each media type. The data is based on all contributions to the quality analysis from the random sample of the respective years (2015: n = 22,032; 2016: n = 22,226; 2017: n = 22,260; 2018: n = 20,669; 2019: n = 19,861; 2020: n = 17,024; 2021: n = 16,974; 2022: n = 17,013; 2023: n = 16,861). Only the 54 outlets and brands for which data was available from all nine calendar years were selected. The media types are ranked in descending order according to their quality score in 2023.
Reading example: The quality score of an average public radio news programme is 8.1 points in 2015. In 2023, the score for this type of programme is 0.3 points lower, at 7.8 points.

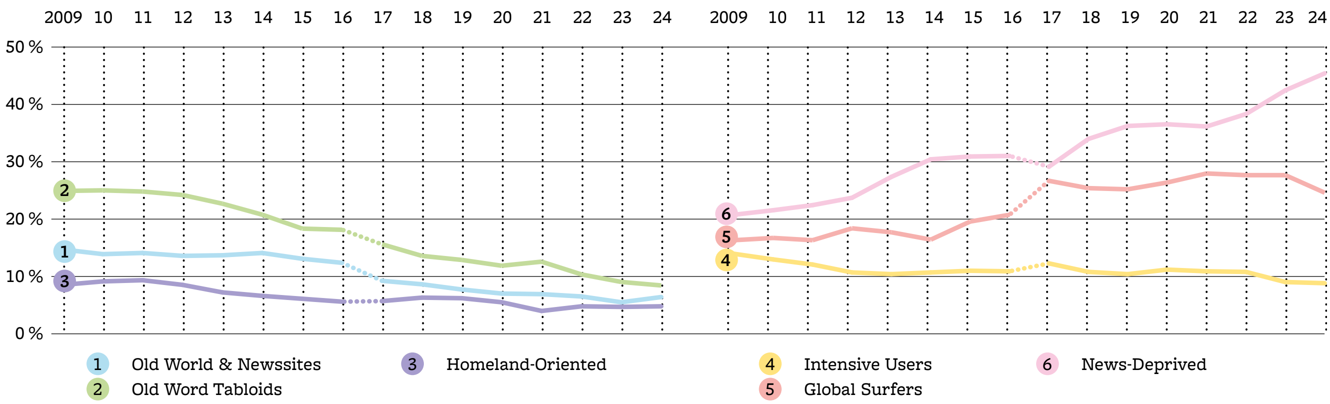


Figure 9: Development of news repertoire types since 2009

The chart shows changes in the share of the six repertoire types from 2009 to 2024 (n = 55,066). The set of underlying media categories was expanded from 2016 to 2017.
Reading example: The proportion of news-deprived people increased from 21.0 % in 2009 to 45.7 % in 2024.

television, printed subscription newspapers (but not their online versions), SRG SSR news sites and Sunday newspapers/magazines. Commuter and tabloid newspapers in both online and offline formats, the Online Pure type, news sites of subscription newspapers and, in particular, private television have developed positively in the long term. Overall, the media types are converging in terms of their overall quality, as high-quality types are tending to drop slightly and lower-quality types are gaining ground.

2.2 Media use – Journalism has an increasing reach problem and news deprivation is at a new high

Since 2009, we have been tracing the development of six media usage groups in the Yearbook: the news repertoire types. These are characterised by typical patterns of use of different types of media and different intensities of using news sources. The news-deprived repertoire, which is characterised by far below average news consumption, continued to grow from 2023 to 2024 to just under 46% (+3 p.p.) of the Swiss population (see Figure 9). This is a cause for concern in terms of democratic policy, as low news consumption is also associated with lower democratic participation or less trust in democratic institutions (Udris et al., 2022). The increase in news deprivation reflects the general decline in the use of news, which is not offset by digital channels. This is also illustrated by the results from the international survey of the Reuters Institute Digital News Report, from which data is also available for Switzerland (Reuters Institute, 2024; Udris et al., 2024). A symptom of this decline is the fact that, for the first time since the start of our measurements, social media lost ground to other media channels as the main source of information compared to the previous year (−2.2 p.p.). Although social media is the main source of information for 33.0% of the youngest age group (compared to other media channels), 18- to 24-year-olds in 2024 use social media as a source of news significantly less frequently than in 2016 (−11 p.p.) (Udris et al., 2024).

Overall, news usage is not simply shifting to digital channels; it is decreasing in general. With regard to the increasing deprivation of news, there is a paradox: on the one hand, media quality is relatively good (2.1) and the population still has a relatively high level of trust in the media (2.3), but on the other hand, the use of such media is tending to decline. Journalism in Switzerland therefore does not primarily have a quality or trust problem, but a reach problem.

News usage behaviour also correlates with a specific perception of society. This can be seen by analysing the topics that are perceived by the different repertoire types. The news-deprived, whose news usage is below average and primarily via social media, are much more aware of emotionally charged and/or soft news-orientated social topics such as debates on LGBTIQ+ or the coronation of Charles III.

2.3 Attitudes towards the media – Majority of respondents do not think expectations of constructive, hopeful journalism are fulfilled

Attitudes towards media shape specific usage behaviour. If we first look at interest in news, 47.5% of Swiss people still say that they are (very) interested in news. This represents a significant decrease compared to previous years, when between 57% (2016) and 62% (2021) indicated a high interest in news.

For this Yearbook, we analyse what specific expectations users have of news (see Figure 10). Almost three quarters of those who expect news media to keep them up to date with current events or to help them learn more about various topics declare that these expectations are being fulfilled. However, expectations regarding the diversity of perspectives (59.8%), arousing feelings of connection (59.1%) or constructive, hopeful reporting (47.0%) are seen as less fulfilled. More than half of those who value constructive journalism are of the opinion that this is not sufficiently present in the news media. This confirms the finding from the last Yearbook that the need for constructive journalism in Switzerland is insufficiently met, although this could increase interest in and use of news (Fürst & Rieser, 2023).

Trust in the news media is also crucial for the media to be able to fulfil their central role in shaping public information and opinion (Prochazka, 2020). In a European comparison, Switzerland ranks 10th out of the 24 countries surveyed and is therefore only in the top half. 41.2% of Swiss people tend to agree or completely agree with the statement that most news can be trusted. Over a quarter (27.4%) trust the news «hardly» or «not at all», and 31.4% are undecided. It is true that more people trust the media than not. Nevertheless, that trust must be considered fragile in view of the large number of people who are undecided. Trust in the media varies greatly according to age, education, political orientation and language region. People aged 35 and over with a higher level of education and a political orientation in the centre have greater trust in the media than younger people with a lower level of education, who

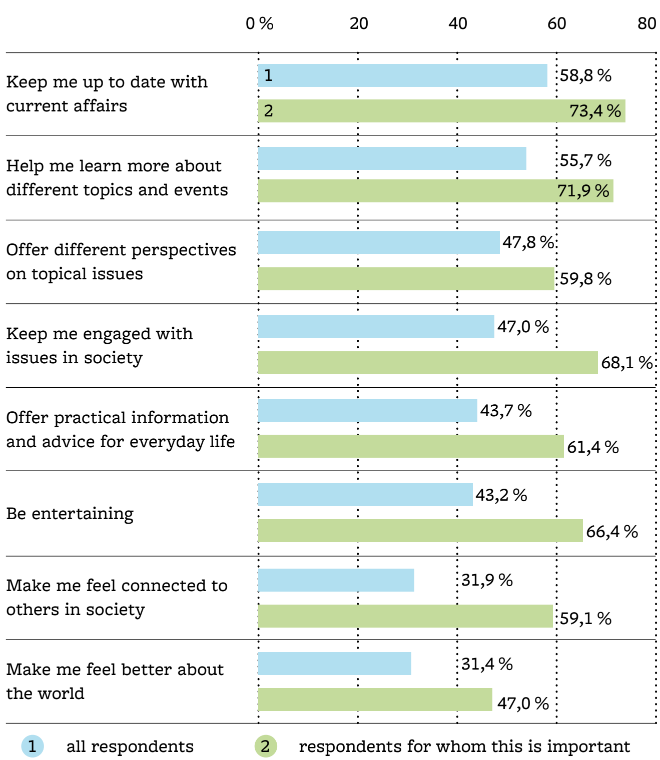


Figure 10: Fulfilled expectations of news

The chart shows the extent to which news fulfils the expectations placed on it from the perspective of the Swiss population (source: Reuters Institute, 2024). It shows the proportion of respondents who stated that the news media they use are «very good» or «somewhat good» at fulfilling certain purposes. The chart also shows the responses of those who said that this was important to them.
Reading example: 47.8% of the Swiss population agree that news media are «very good» or «fairly good» at offering «different perspectives on topical issues». Among respondents for whom this is «very important» or «somewhat important», 59.8% also consider this to be the case. Conversely, this means that 40.2% of them are disappointed.

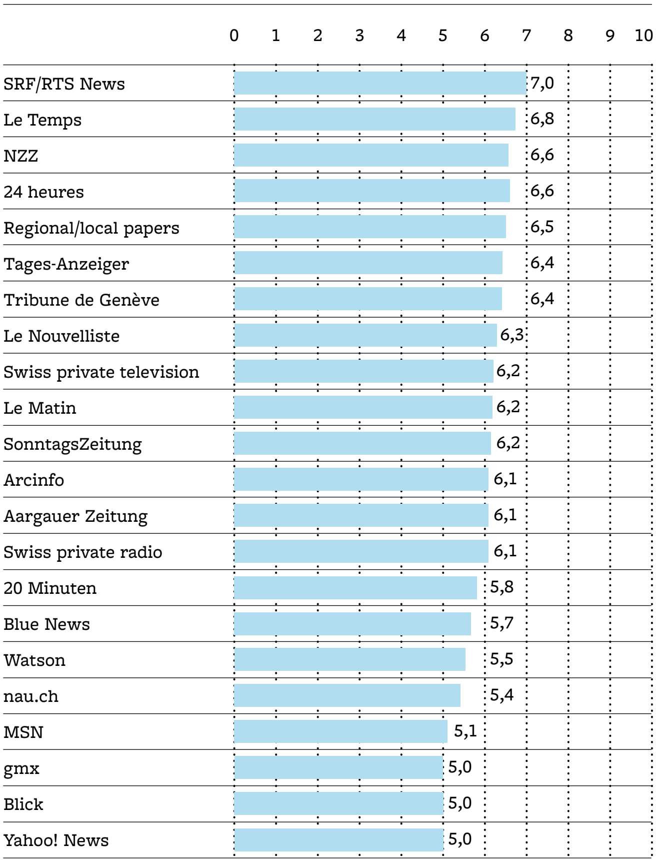


Figure 11: Trustworthiness of news from different sources

The chart shows how trustworthy the Swiss population considers the news from various sources and media titles (source: Reuters Institute, 2024). The 11-point scale ranges from 0 = «not trustworthy at all» to 10 = «absolutely trustworthy».
Reading example: On average, the respondents rate the content of SRF News and RTS News as very trustworthy (m = 7.0). In contrast, the news from Blick is rated as less trustworthy, with a mean value of 5.0.

tend to locate themselves on the political fringes. In French-speaking Switzerland (38.7%), trust is slightly lower than in German-speaking Switzerland (42.2%). Not all media brands are trusted equally. In Switzerland, the news programmes from SRF and RTS and the news from subscription newspapers such as Le Temps, NZZ, 24 heures and Tages-Anzeiger enjoy a particularly high level of trust (see Figure 11).

In order to strengthen trust in the news media, it is crucial to know the factors on which this trust depends (see Figure 12). The Swiss population attaches great importance to journalistic transparency: 72.9% of respondents state that their trust in news media depends on whether they communicate how the news is made. High journalistic standards (68.3%) and the impression that respondents feel fairly represented in reporting (62%) are also important trust-building factors. Factors such as unbalanced (53.2%) or sensationalised (48.6%) reporting, on the other hand, have a negative impact on trust. To summarise, transparency and high journalistic standards are crucial for trust in news media, especially in view of the increasing use of artificial intelligence in journalism (1.2; Vogler et al., 2023).

2.4 Financing – Low willingness to pay with high online advertising revenues continuing to flow to tech giants

The trends in the financing of Swiss information media are continuing this year. Advertising income is declining overall and remains below pre-pandemic levels. While there has been growth in the online advertising market, this cannot compensate for falling revenues, particularly in the press and television markets. This is also due to the fact that the majority of advertising revenue is attributable to tech platforms such as Google and Meta. The Advertising Statistics Foundation has published an estimate for the second time in a row (exact data is not available). For 2023, online advertising revenue for YouTube, search engines and social media in Switzerland is estimated at CHF 1828–2240 million, which represents an increase over the previous year (2022: CHF 1690–2070 million). The upper estimate of CHF 2240 million thus exceeds the total advertising revenue of Swiss media providers in press, TV, radio and digital media (2023: CHF 2111 million).

The financing of journalism also remains difficult because the willingness to pay for online news has stagnated at a low level for four years (2024: 17.0%). In an international comparison, in 2023 willingness to pay is only high in Norway (39.7%) and Sweden (31.0%). In Denmark, which is in third place, only 17.3% of people are still willing to pay for online

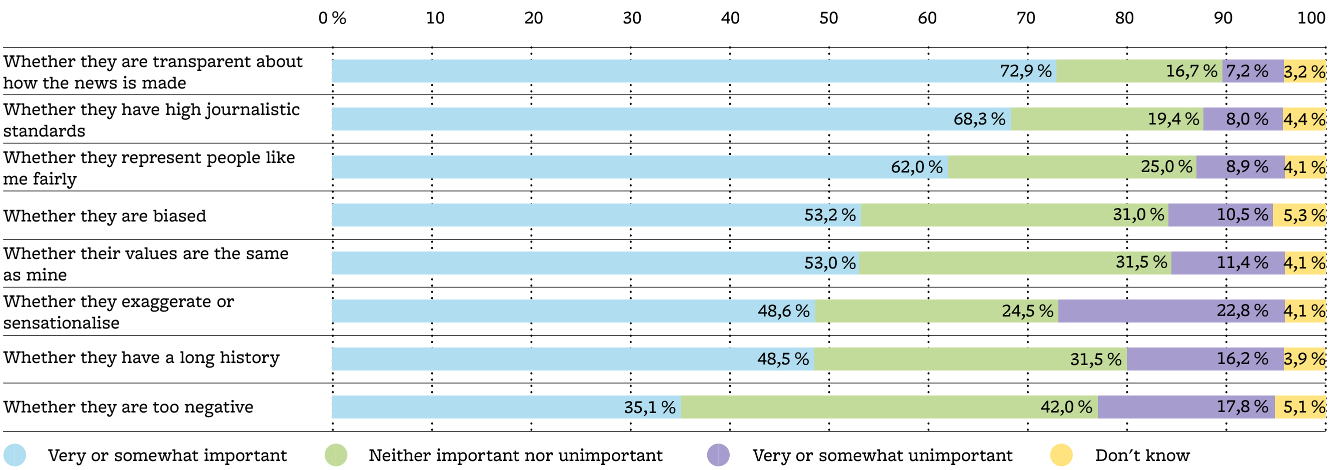


Figure 12: Factors that influence trust in news media

The chart presents responses regarding how important or unimportant certain factors are «when it comes to deciding which news media» respondents trust (source: Reuters Institute, 2024).
Reading example: A majority (72.9 %) of the respondents stated that transparent communication regarding how the news is made is important for their trust in news media.

news – almost the same as in Switzerland (17.0%). As the values for most countries are close to each other, Switzerland is slightly above average for the 12 European reference countries in terms of willingness to pay.

Moreover, not everyone who is willing to pay spends money on news on an ongoing basis. Some are content to pay for individual articles or daily passes. Of those with an ongoing online news subscription (13.2% of respondents), around one third say they spend a maximum of 10 Swiss francs per month on their main subscription. Many Swiss people therefore spend less on their online news subscription than the regular price (without discounts) that media companies charge for their subscriptions.

Among the respondents who do not currently pay for digital news services, more than half (57.0%) would continue to pay nothing for online news. About a quarter (25.6%) would be prepared to spend a maximum of 5 Swiss francs per month on online news (see Figure 13). This means that many Swiss citizens would only be prepared to spend a few francs per month, if at all. This is well below the median monthly online subscription price in Switzerland of CHF 18 (Reuters Institute, 2024).

2.5 Media concentration – Increase in multiple use of same articles in democracy-relevant, national political reporting and in opinion-orientated formats

We regularly analyse the extent to which media concentration has progressed in Switzerland on two levels. This includes both structural media concentration, in the form of ownership and provider relationships, and «media content concentration», i.e. regarding the media content itself. Here we are interested in how concentration grows in the Swiss media system as a result of identical news items being shared and distributed in different media brands.

In terms of structural media concentration, the Swiss media market appears at first glance to have a relatively high diversity of outlets. However, many smaller outlets have a very limited reach, while high-reach news media are owned by a small number of Swiss media companies. The three major providers TX Group (27.6%), SRG SSR (26.7%) and CH Media (20.3%) have a combined market share of 74.6% in German-speaking Switzerland, which corresponds to an increase of 2.3 percentage points since 2022. The

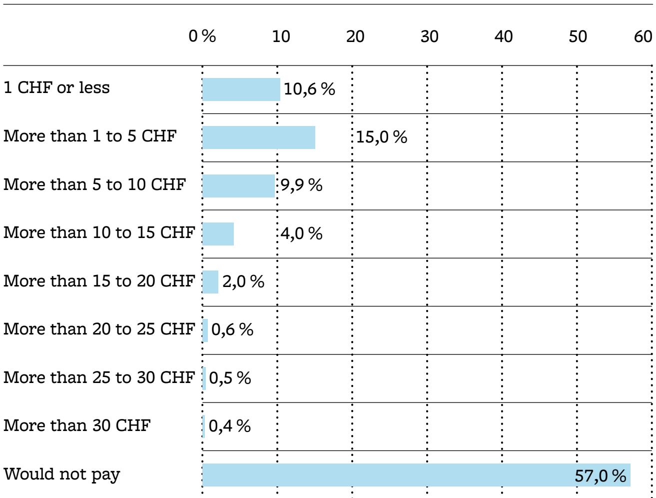


Figure 13: Willingness to pay per month

The chart shows the price that respondents who do not currently pay for online news would be willing to pay for online news each month (n = 1553) (source: Reuters Institute, 2024).
Reading example: 10.6 % of respondents who do not currently pay for online news would spend a maximum of 1 Swiss franc per month on online news.

market is even more concentrated in French-speaking Switzerland. The three largest companies – TX Group (45.0%), SRG SSR (32.4%) and Stiftung Aventinus (9.9%) – have a market share of 87.3%.

In addition to the concentration in provider and user markets, the concentration of media content is also increasing. A double concentration process is therefore taking place as a result of growing financing problems. Due to falling advertising revenues and low sales figures, media companies are increasingly focussing on synergies and multiple use of their content as well as offering the same content in different brands within their network systems. Such network systems make it possible to continue operating media brands under difficult economic conditions. At the same time, however, they lead to a loss of diversity in the entire media system (Vogler et al., 2020). In the Swiss-German press market, media content concentration has increased significantly. The proportion of shared articles rose from 10.0% to 28.5% between 2017 and 2023. In 2023, around one in four items of original reporting appeared in at least two different media brands. Media content concentration has risen sharply for media in the TX Group and CH Media network: At TX Group, the proportion of shared articles grew from 16.2% to 50.8%, and at CH Media from 12.0% to 27.2% (cf. Figure 14). By comparison, at media brands that are not part of a network system, the share remained consistently low in 2023, at 4.4%.

The number of shared articles has increased in all subject areas. In 2023, we identified the highest concentration of content in sports reporting (31.7%), followed by the business sector (30.6%) and political reporting (29.6%). In comparison, media content concentration in cultural and human interest reporting is somewhat lower (24.7% and 24.0% respectively).

From a geographical perspective, national (36.1%) and international reporting (39.5%) shows a particularly high concentration of media content. This corresponds to a sharp increase of 11 and 17 percentage points, respectively, since 2017. At 38.6%, the concentration is particularly high in national political reporting, which often also focusses on national referendums or the 2023 federal elections. In regional reporting, the concentration is lower in comparison. However, the proportion of shared articles on regional topics increased by around 6 percentage points in 2023 compared to the previous year, amounting to 12.6% (see Figure 15). In contrast to reporting on national or international topics, there are often only a few daily news media at the regional and local level. It would be particularly problematic if media content concentration and the associated loss of regional diversity were to increase in the coming years.

3 Conclusion and recommendations for action

The analyses in the 2024 Yearbook clearly show that the Swiss media system is facing fundamental challenges. The digital transformation, the growing importance of global tech platforms and the decline in traditional sources of revenue are putting journalism under increasing pressure. At the same time, technological innovations such as the use of artificial intelligence are opening up new opportunities, though they also harbour new risks. Our research shows that audiences remain sceptical about AI in

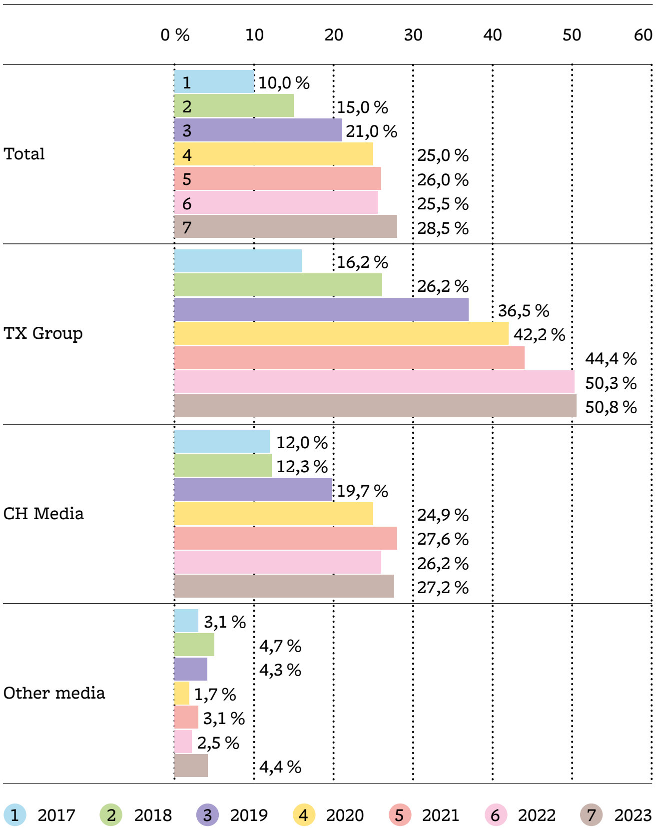


Figure 14: Media content concentration in the Swiss-German press market over time by network system

The chart shows the development of media content concentration in the press market in German-speaking Switzerland for the media that were part of the TX Group (Basler Zeitung, Berner Zeitung, Der Bund and Tages-Anzeiger) and CH Media (Aargauer Zeitung, Luzerner Zeitung and St. Galler Tagblatt) network systems in 2023. The percentages represent the proportion of shared articles from orginal reporting. As a reference value, media content concentration was determined for selected press outlets that did not belong to these two networks («Other media»: 20 Minuten, Blick, Die Südostschweiz and Neue Zürcher Zeitung).
Reading example: The proportion of shared articles in the media of the TX Group's network system was 50.8 % in 2023. This figure has increased by around 34.6 percentage points since 2017.

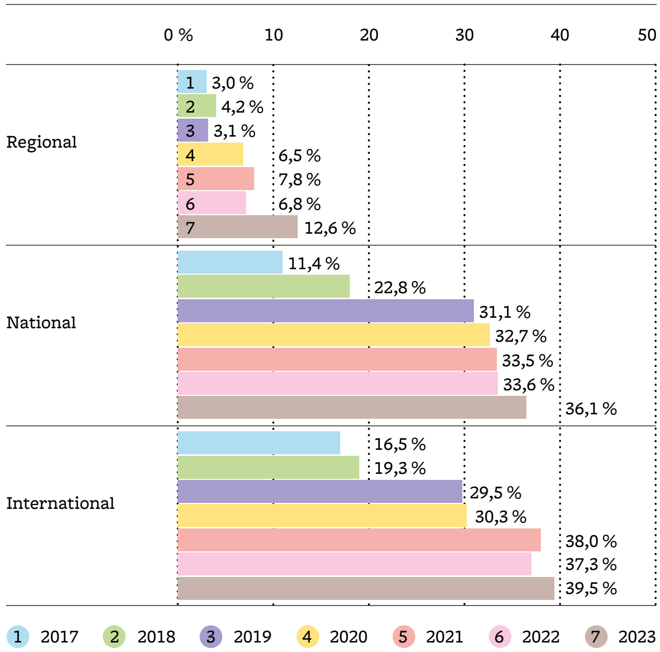


Figure 15: Media content concentration in the Swiss-German press market by geographical level

The illustration shows the development of media content concentration in the press market of German-speaking Switzerland by geographical area. Media that belonged to the network systems of the TX Group (Basler Zeitung, Berner Zeitung, Der Bund, Tages-Anzeiger) and CH Media (Aargauer Zeitung, Luzerner Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt) in 2023 were examined. Media content concentration was determined for the press outlets that did not belong to these two networks ('Other Media': 20 Minuten, Blick, Die Südostschweiz, Neue Zürcher Zeitung). The percentages of shared articles from original reporting are shown.
Reading example: The proportion of shared articles in reporting with a national focus was 36.1 % in 2023. The value increased by around 24.7 percentage points since 2017.

journalism, especially when it is used directly to create journalistic content. In view of this complex situation, private and public media houses should cooperate more closely – as well as instituting other measures, including media policy measures – in order to jointly meet the challenges of digitisation and AI-based automation. This is where the following recommendations for action come in.

3.1 Relationship between SRG SSR and private media – From competition to cooperation

Our study on SRG SSR in the Swiss media market (1.1) shows that public service news media have no negative impact on the use of private news media. On the contrary, people who consume SRG content for news purposes use private media more frequently: both paid subscription services and free media such as commuter and tabloid media. Public media are therefore used more as a supplement to private media; they do not replace them. Our study also provides no indication that the use of SRG news reduces the willingness to pay for content from private news media. Overall, our findings for Switzerland are in line with previous international studies.

What recommendations can be derived from these findings? Firstly, it is clear that the competitive attitude between private news media and public media is unfounded. SRG is not crowding out the private media in the audience market for news. As for the advertising market, developments clearly show that global tech platforms are siphoning off the majority of online advertising revenue. Therefore, in general it is not national public broadcasting that is squeezing private media companies, but the global tech platforms, since the majority of online advertising revenue flows to them. Another problem with the dominance of tech platforms is that platform users are also losing their ties to traditional news media. This affects interest in news and potentially also the willingness to pay for it. In light of these empirical findings, cooperation between private and public media should be expanded. The self-healing powers against the influence of global tech platforms and, more recently, AI providers can only be strengthened by working together and not against each other. More unifying «media patriotism» (fög, 2019) is needed from public and private media companies, supported by media policy. This must be guided by the realisation that both domestic public and private news media are indispensable for a democratic nation state like Switzerland, they ensure the «national media supply» (Zehnder, 2022) and they are primarily under pressure from outside, i.e. from global tech platforms. In the midst of the politically charged debate, this cooperation would also include a clear «no» from private media companies to the «Halbierungsinitative». Defeating this initiative, which aims to significantly reduce broadcasting licence fees and thus significantly weaken SRG SSR, would also be a strong vote in favour of a media industry guided by empirical evidence: SRG SSR's news brands have been measurably among the highest quality media for years, and, according to surveys, they enjoy the highest level of trust among all media in Switzerland – additionally, their use does not demonstrably weaken the private sector in the audience market. It would also make sense for public and private media to adopt a joint position on the regulation of platforms with regard to the financing of journalism (e.g. ancillary copyright) (3.3) or the Swiss media's approach to AI (3.2). Measures are also needed that extend beyond news media. The «Initiative 18», launched by personalities from the communications and media industry, is interesting. It is campaigning for free, safe and sustainable media to be included as the United Nations' 18th Sustainable Development Goal. The aim is to raise awareness of the role of media and information for democracy and to identify subsequent opportunities for action. According to Manfred Kluge – the chairman of the initiative – advertisers and media agencies, for example, can also contribute to the preservation of media diversity and thus strengthen democracy by allocating advertising investments responsibly (Initiative 18, 2024).

There are also other opportunities for cooperation: Firstly, the joint efforts of private and public media companies should be intensified in order to raise interest in news among the population, as interest in news has been shown to be centrally linked to willingness to pay. Various media literacy promotion projects have recently been initiated in this area, such as «UseTheNews», «YouMedia» and «Check News». These activities need to be better bundled and expanded. The extent to which public media could increasingly make their content available licence-free to private news media should also be investigated. And SRG SSR should consider becoming more involved in OneLog so that its content would only be available after the login threshold. This could be an effective step towards cooperatively strengthening the competitiveness of Swiss media vis-à-vis international digital platforms.

The «big idea» would be the development of a common digital infrastructure for journalism. There is a vision of a Swiss digital commons for professional information journalism that would be implemented jointly by public and private media companies. This would be exclusively about bundling forces to develop the media infrastructure, while maintaining competition in terms of content and journalism. This digital infrastructure would also give smaller news media access to the digital media world, which would otherwise not have the resources to invest in such technologies. The infrastructure would have to be operated independently of the state, for example, by a broadly financed foundation that is supported by civil society, among others. It would not only serve to publish and discuss news content, but would also offer intelligent search functions, interactions between users and standardised login systems. This platform would be modelled on the successful approaches of the tech giants, yet based on democratic values such as diversity, civilised discourse, quality and data protection. The algorithms would be transparent and customisable by users. In addition, the «digital commons» for private media could support various business models for news, such as flat rates for different content bundles. It should not act in isolation but should recognise the national importance of professional media for democracy and the guidelines of the Press Council, simultaneously being open to international cooperation, for example, in data protection or cross-border media projects.

Our study on the relationship between SRG SSR and private media also has limitations. It focusses exclusively on the news sector and therefore does not provide any empirically validated statements on other areas, such as pure sports or entertainment programmes. It is precisely in these areas that private media often criticise SRG SSR for not being sufficiently distinctive and for offering entertainment and sports programmes that could just as easily be provided by private media. We therefore recommend that private media specify which programmes they believe they could take over. SRG SSR should examine whether it makes sense to leave these programmes to private providers. After a certain period of time, accompanying research could be used to evaluate whether this transfer was successful.

3.2 AI in journalism – The media industry needs to do more

As in the previous year, we once again conducted a study on the acceptance of artificial intelligence in journalism. The findings show that scepticism has increased since the first study. Of all areas of society, journalism is mentioned most frequently when it comes to the risks posed by AI. At the same time, public opinion is quite differentiated: The use of AI is viewed critically above all in those areas of journalism that directly affect output, such as writing texts or creating images. However, the use of AI in journalism is approved of in upstream, supporting areas such as translation, data analysis or research.

Of particular importance for news media is the study's finding that only a minority of respondents believe that Swiss media are currently using AI responsibly. A much larger proportion explicitly deny this. Although many media companies and industry organisations (e.g. Ringier, 2023; VSM, 2023; SRG, 2024; Swiss Press Council, 2024) have recently published guidelines and recommendations for dealing with AI in journalism, such efforts do not yet appear to be sufficiently recognised by the public. This is problematic because the way journalism deals with the future technology of AI has a decisive impact on trust in journalism.

So what needs to be done? Firstly, our study confirms that a large majority of users expect media companies to take full responsibility for all content, including AI-generated content. This is in line with common practice, as set out, for example, by the Swiss Media Association in its recommendations for action (VSM, 2023). However, the very low approval ratings for the responsible use of AI by Swiss media compared to other countries emphasise that more intensive communication efforts and more education are needed for such guidelines. Apparently, only very few respondents are familiar with or aware of these guidelines. This also includes the media communicating the limits of the use of AI more clearly, for example, by stating that AI is either authorised for the direct generation of text and images or only in clearly defined areas. The results of this year's study also confirm the findings from the last study: acceptance of AI-generated content depends mainly on whether the use of AI is declared. A clear majority expect such transparency, even for journalistic content that was only created with the support of AI. This shows that a minimum standard, i.e. a one-off, blanket reference (e.g. in the legal notice) is not enough. A large majority of Swiss citizens expect detailed disclosure, including information on the stages at which AI was used. Although it can be challenging to fulfil these expectations in everyday journalism, they should nevertheless be taken seriously. In the last Yearbook, we suggested focussing on detailed, «explanatory» transparency (Carroll, 2022). This means communicating exactly how and at which steps AI was used, for what purpose and how the result was checked. This could take the form of a short description of the process of creating a news article, which explains the procedure with AI and illustrates how many human resources went into an article compared to AI. The increased use of AI in journalism must be accompanied by a strategy that simultaneously increases the visibility of the human factor and the journalists behind the news output.

However, such comprehensive transparency could also be perceived as disruptive despite the high level of approval of the AI declaration. For this reason, it should be examined whether characteristic types of AI-generated news can be distinguished. Brief methodological descriptions could be created for these, which would then simply be linked to in news articles. However, it should also be considered what unintended effects the creation of transparency can have. For example, studies indicate that transparency towards AI or automated processes can also have a negative impact on trust in journalism (Blassnig et al., 2024). This makes it clear that further research is needed to clarify how transparency can be created in the field of AI so that the desired trust-building effects actually materialise.

3.3 Precarious financing of journalism – Leveraging global tech platforms

Many users associate the internet and digital platforms with free information (O'Brien, 2022). Willingness to pay remains modest. Added to this is the massive outflow of online advertising money to tech platforms. The financing of news journalism is likely to continue to pose major challenges for the media industry in future, which can hardly be overcome without regulatory measures. In our AI study, we therefore also asked respondents whether they believe that news media should be compensated when AI providers or tech platforms use their data, e.g. for training purposes or to keep their results up to date. A majority of respondents are in favour of such compensation, especially for tech platforms such as Google or Meta in comparison with AI providers. This indicates that an ancillary copyright for journalistic content could certainly meet with approval among the population. Such an ancillary copyright is generally favourable, as it targets precisely where journalism comes under the most pressure: the global tech platforms. However, it is obvious that this step alone is not enough to solve the financing problems of news.

Literature

Andersen, K., Johansson, J., Johansson, B. & Shehata, A. (2022). Maintenance and Reformation of News Repertoires: A Latent Transition Analysis. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 99*(1), 237–261. https://doi.org/10.1177/10776990211019750

Blassnig, S., Mitova, E., Strikovic, E., Urman, A., de Vreese, C., Hannák, A. & Esser, F. (2024). User Perceptions of News Recommender Systems and Trust in Media Outlets: A Five-Country Study. *Journalism Studies. Advance Online Publication.* https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2024.2364628

Brants, K. (2013). Trust, Cynicism, and Responsiveness: The Uneasy Situation of Journalism in Democracy. In C. Peters & M. Broersma (Eds.), *Rethinking Journalism: Trust and Participation in a Transformed News Landscape* (pp. 15–27). Routledge.

Carroll, J. M. (2022). Why Should Humans Trust AI? *Interactions, 29*(4), 73–77. https://doi.org/10.1145/3538392

Eisenegger, M. (2021). Third, digital structural change of the public sphere as a consequence of platformisation. In: M. Eisenegger, M. Prinzing, P. Ettinger & J. Seethaler (Eds.), *Digitaler Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Historical localisation, models and consequences* (pp. 17–39). Springer.

Fisher, C., Flew, T., Park, S., Lee, J. Y. & Dulleck, U. (2021). Improving Trust in News: Audience Solutions. *Journalism Practice, 15*(10), 1497–1515. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1787859

Fletcher, R. & Nielsen, R. K. (2017). Paying for Online News: A Comparative Analysis of Six Countries. *Digital Journalism, 5*(9), 1173–1191. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2016.1246373

Grosser, K. M. (2016). Trust in Online Journalism. A Conceptual Model of Risk-Based Trust in the Online Context. *Digital Journalism, 4*(8), 1036–1057. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2015.1127174

Initiative 18 (2024). *Initiative18 – a manifesto for the preservation of media diversity and the strengthening of democracy.* https://www.initiative18.org/manifest/

Kalogeropoulos, A., Fletcher, R. & Nielsen, R. K. (2019). News Brand Attribution in Distributed Environments: Do People Know Where They Get Their News? *New Media & Society, 21*(3), 583–601. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818801313

O'Brien, D. (2022). Free Lunch for All – A Path Analysis on Free Mentality, Paying Intent and Media Budget for Digital Journalism. *Journal of Media Economics, 34*(1), 29–61. https://doi.org/10.1080/08997764.2022.2060241

Prochazka, F. (2020). *Trust in journalism under online conditions.* Springer Fachmedien.

Schranz, M., Schneider, J. & Eisenegger, M. (2016). *Media trust – a comparative perspective* (Studien Qualität der Medien, 1). https://www.foeg.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:9779c4f1-59a0-49dc-af19-67286953c524/Studie_01_2016.pdf

Sehl, A., Fletcher, R. & Picard, R. G. (2020). Crowding out: Is there Evidence that Public Service Media Harm Markets? A Cross-National Comparative Analysis of Commercial Television and Online News Providers. *European Journal of Communication, 35*(4), 389–409. https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323120903688

Skovsgaard, M. & Andersen, K. (2020). Conceptualising News Avoidance: Towards a Shared Understanding of Different Causes and Potential Solutions. *Journalism Studies, 21*(4), 459–476. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2019.1686410

Udris, L., Rivière, M., Fürst, S. & Eisenegger, M. (2024). *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2024: Country Report Switzerland.* fög – Research Centre for the Public Sphere and Society. https://www.foeg.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:d49b34b9-5f63-40b8-a775-3d201d526f85/DNR_24_CH %20(1).pdf

Udris, L., Ryffel, Q. & Vogler, D. (2023). *Report: Pilot study on the structure of online media offerings.* fög – Research Centre for the Public Sphere and Society/University of Zurich. Zurich. https://www.bakom.admin.ch/dam/bakom/de/dokumente/bakom/elektronische_medien/Zahlen %20und %20Fakten/Studien/foeg-pilotstudie-struktur-onlinemedienangebote-2023.pdf.download.pdf/foeg_Onlinestrukturbericht_2023.pdf

Udris, L., Vogler, D., Golder, L. & Keller, T. R. (2022). Media use and political participation. The importance of news repertoires in referendums. In: fög (ed.), *Yearbook Quality of the Media 2022* (pp. 39–52). https://doi.org/10.24894/978-3-7965-4646-4. Schwabe.

Vogler, D., Fürst, S., Ryffel, Q., Eisenegger, M., Porlezza, C. & Procopio, N. (2024a, forthcoming). *Governance of AI in journalism.* Report for the Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM).

Vogler, D., Rauchfleisch, A. & de Seta, G. (2024b). Perception of deepfakes in the Swiss population. In M. Karaboga, N. Frei, M. Puppis, D. Vogler, P. Raemy, F. Ebbers, G. Runge, A. Rauchfleisch, G. de Seta, G. Gurr, M. Friedewald & S. Rovelli (Eds.), Deepfakes and manipulated realities (pp. 125–151). vdf.

Vogler, D., Udris, L. & Eisenegger, M. (2020). Measuring Media Content Concentration at a Large Scale Using Automated Text Comparisons. *Journalism Studies, 21*(11), 1459–1478. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2020.1761865

VSM – Swiss Media Publishers Association (2023). *AI applications in journalism. Recommendations for the use of AI systems in the creation of journalistic content.* https://tinyurl.com/y73a43ku

Zehnder, M. (2022). *Farewell to the national media supply.* Weekly commentary from 18 February 2022. https://www.matthiaszehnder.ch/wochenkommentar/abschied-von-der-medialen-landesversorgung/

What is the purpose of the Yearbook?

Since its first publication in 2010, the aim of the Yearbook has been to enrich the discussion about the quality of the media and to raise awareness of the achievements of information journalism in society. The Yearbook is a resource for media professionals, political and economic players, academics and anyone interested in trends in the media and its content. The impetus for the Yearbook is the realisation that the quality of democracy depends on the quality of the media. It gives the public a yardstick for assessing which journalism they want to be exposed to. Media makers are given a yardstick for reflecting on the journalism they want to produce and take responsibility for. And politicians gain insight into developments in the media industry and the resources available to information journalism in Switzerland.

Our definition of quality

This Yearbook is based on a normative understanding of quality that assumes that the information media fulfil an important task for society in a functioning democracy. Four dimensions of quality can be derived from the performance functions of public communication, which are widely established both in academic research and in journalistic practice. The dimension of relevance is intended to provide information on the ratio of hard news to soft news as well as the weight of articles on institutional processes compared to reporting on individuals. The quality dimension of diversity measures whether events are reported from many different content-related and geographical perspectives. The dimension of contextualisation is high if current events are embedded in longer-term developments and thematic contexts. Finally, the quality dimension of professionalism refers to whether the reporting is factual and based on original reporting, as well as the extent to which sources are made transparent. Detailed information on the data and methodology behind this Yearbook can be found in the methodology section.

Who is responsible for the Yearbook?

The Yearbook is compiled and published by fög – the Research Centre for the Public Sphere and Society of the University of Zurich (www.foeg.uzh.ch). External guest authors are also consulted for the in-depth studies.

Who finances the Yearbook?

The Yearbook is largely financed by the non-profit Kurt Imhof Foundation for Media Quality (www.kurt-imhof-stiftung.ch) and the University of Zurich. The Foundation's Board is made up of Christoph Degen, Mark Eisenegger, Barbara Käch, Yves Kugelmann, Christina Leutwyler, Maude Rivière and Nenad Stojanović. The Foundation owes the funds for the project to the following funding partners, in addition to individuals: Avenira Foundation, Cassinelli-Vogel-Stiftung CH Media, Ernst Göhner Foundation, Keytone-SDA, Medien- und Unternehmungsförderungsstiftung FERS, Fonds für Qualitätsjournalismus, Gottfried und Ursula Schäppi-Jecklin Stiftung, Gottlieb und Hans Vogt Stiftung, Paul Schiller Stiftung, Ringier AG, Somedia AG, SRG SSR, Verband Medien mit Zukunft and Verband Schweizer Medien.

Donations for the Kurt Imhof Foundation for Media Quality can be transferred to the following bank account: ZKB Zürich-Oerlikon, account no.: 1100-1997.531, IBAN: CH28 0070 0110 0019 9753 1, bank clearing no.: 700, SWIFT: ZKBKCHZZ80A .

Donate now with TWINT!

Scan QR code with the TWINT app.

Confirm amount and donation.

Contact: fög – Research Centre for the Public Sphere and Society, University of Zurich, Andreasstrasse 15, CH-8050 Zurich, phone: +41 44 635 21 11, e-mail: kontakt@foeg.uzh.ch

Where are the Yearbook and the studies available?

The Yearbook is published as an online edition (ISBN 978-3-7965-5200-7) by Schwabe Verlag (www.schwabe.ch). The yearbook and the individual studies are also available for download at www.foeg.uzh.ch.

Copyright

Contact

fög / University of Zurich
Andreasstrasse 15
CH – 8050 Zürich

kontakt@foeg.uzh.ch
+41 (0)44 635 21 11
www.foeg.uzh.ch