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SVFAB

Methodology Report V14.5.26

**Systematic Impartiality Analysis
of Public Service Broadcasting Media
Using AI-Assisted Content Analysis**

Analysis Instruction v3.0-detail | Converter v3.1 | 15 Criteria | 19 Countries

May 2026

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1. Introduction

The SVFAB analysis system measures the impartiality of public service broadcasting programmes using a structured criteria catalogue. The methodology is grounded in the respective national broadcasting laws and operationalises their requirements for factual accuracy, plurality of opinion, and political fairness into a reproducible, evidence-based procedure.

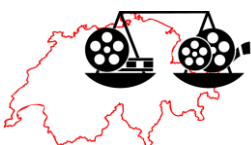
Two methodological objections arise against AI-assisted content analysis:

- **Interpretation objection:** Not all criteria are equally objectifiable. Criteria such as framing or word choice require interpretive judgements.
- **Single-model objection:** The analyses are conducted by a single AI model. Different models could arrive at different results.

The present Methodology Report V14.5.26 documents the current state of the system (Analysis Instruction v3.0-detail, Converter v3.1), addresses both objections through empirical validation, and supersedes Methodology Report v4.1 (April 2026). The following substantive changes have been made relative to v4.1:

- Expansion to 15 analysis criteria through the inclusion of Political Classification as a standalone criterion
- Explicit separation into 9 Hardfacts (countable, reproducible) and 6 Softfacts (interpretive)
- Expansion to 19 countries with country-specific legal frameworks and party landscapes
- New verification instruments: rumour check with word markers, triad check for statistics, structured outrage measurement
- Standardisation of left-right representation on the CHES scale 0–10 (Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2024)
- Universal prompt for all countries, with country-specific parameterisation

Three scientific working papers on SSRN underpin the methodological foundations (SSRN 6688478, SSRN 6733280, SSRN 6733880). The validation results from Methodology Report v4.1 — Validation Study (Chapter 5) and Multi-Model Cross-Validation (Chapter 6) — remain valid and are documented in updated form.



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2. Analysis Structure (v3.0-detail)

Each analysis follows a five-step structure (Steps 1–5). The sequence is designed so that the political contextualisation and partisan bias assessment (Step 1) precedes the actual content analysis (Steps 2–3). Overall evaluation (Step 4) and legal classification (Step 5) conclude the report.

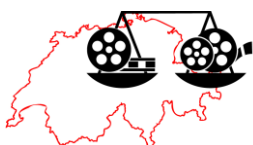
Step	Designation	Content
1	Political Landscape and Partisan Bias	Government/opposition, CHES party table, fault lines, media landscape, bias scores per party (–5 to +5), left-right overall tendency (CHES 0–10)
2	Programme Information and Thematic Framework	Programme data, main topic, 8–10 perspectives, completeness score
3	Detailed Analysis (14 Criteria)	8 Hardfacts + 6 Softfacts, each scored 0–10, max. 3 findings with timestamp/quotation
4	Overall Evaluation	Hardfacts score, Softfacts score, overall score, completeness, combined score
5	Legal Classification	Assessment under the respective broadcasting law with norm, factual basis, evidence

In total, 15 criteria are assessed: the Political Classification in Step 1 and 14 detailed criteria in Step 3. Together, these yield 9 Hardfacts and 6 Softfacts.

2.1 Step 1 — Political Landscape and Partisan Bias

Before the detailed analysis begins, the model produces an overview of the political situation in the respective country: current governing coalition, principal opposition parties, seat distribution, CHES left-right classification of all parties, current fault lines, and the position of the public service broadcaster. The party table contains, for each relevant party, the CHES score (Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2024, Jolly et al. 2022), the number of seats, government/opposition status, and core position.

Subsequently, for each relevant party it is assessed whether its official policy positions were accurately represented in the programme. The reference is the core positions from the current party platforms. The score measures representational accuracy on a scale from –5 (actively distorted) through 0 (not mentioned) to +5 (correctly and completely represented). From the individual party scores, an overall left-right tendency is calculated and displayed on the CHES scale 0–10 (0 = far left, 5 = centre, 10 = far right). The Political Classification qualifies as a Hardfact criterion, since the party scores are quantitative and reproducible via party platforms.



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2.2 Step 2 — Programme Information and Thematic Framework

Programme data (title, date, duration, presenter, interview partners with political affiliation) are documented. The model then identifies 8–10 perspectives that would be necessary for an impartial programme (based on world knowledge, independent of the transcript). Each perspective is cross-checked against the transcript: COVERED / HINTED / OMITTED. The completeness score (0–10) measures how many of the expected perspectives actually appear.

Additionally, 6–8 missing voices are identified: professional groups or office holders whose perspective would have been necessary for a factually accurate representation.

3. The 15 Analysis Criteria

The 15 criteria are divided into two categories: 9 Hardfacts and 6 Softfacts. A criterion qualifies as a Hardfact if an independent observer can reproduce the finding without making interpretive judgements — i.e., through counting, documenting, or verifying via public sources. This separation enables a three-tier reporting framework (cf. Chapter 8) and addresses the interpretation objection against AI-assisted content analysis.

The 14 criteria from Step 3 are each rated on a scale from 0 (neutral/impartial) to 10 (strongly one-sided/manipulative). Per criterion, a maximum of 3 findings are documented — each with timestamp, direct quotation from the transcript, description, and justification. Each finding is thus independently verifiable.

3.1 Hardfacts (9 Criteria): Countable and Reproducible

The following nine criteria satisfy the condition that an independent observer can reproduce the finding without making interpretive judgements. Each finding is either directly countable, verifiable via public sources, or documented by a direct quotation with timestamp.

Political Classification (Step 1)

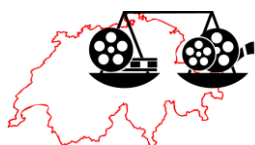
Definition: How accurately are the positions of political parties represented in the programme?

Each relevant party is rated on a scale from –5 (actively distorted) through 0 (not mentioned) to +5 (correctly and completely represented). The reference is the official party platforms. The measurement is quantitative: the difference between the platform position and the representation in the programme. From the individual scores, an overall left-right tendency is calculated on the CHES scale 0–10.

K1 — Expert Selection

Definition: Who appears as an expert? What conflicts of interest exist?

Each cited expert undergoes a source depth check: (a) funding, (b) mandate compatibility, (c) credibility matrix (Source Traffic Light) with 6 dimensions (each –2 to +2): D1 Conflict of Interest, D2 Personal Risk, D3 Professional Competence, D4 Opinion Consistency, D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data, D6 Source Level. Total → Source Traffic Light: GREEN ($\geq+5$), YELLOW (-4 to $+4$), RED (≤-5).



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Cf. SSRN 6733880. Verification is conducted via publicly accessible sources: university websites, LinkedIn profiles, publication lists, party memberships.

K2 — Source Selection

Definition: Which sources are cited? Are they diverse and independent?

Assessment of funding, sponsorship, and structural conflicts of interest for each cited source. The measurement is purely quantitative: number of sources per position, weighted by prominence. Special rules for church-funded institutions, state-funded institutions, and NGOs/advocacy organisations. New in v3.0: rumour check with word markers ("allegedly", "according to sources", "it is said", "sources close to" etc.) — per claim without primary source: +1 penalty point on the score.

K3 — Time Allocation

Definition: Distribution of speaking time among different positions.

Estimated speaking time per person/position in minutes and percent. Purely quantitative measurement. In debate formats, the seating arrangement, the order of contributions, and the overall architecture are additionally documented.

K4 — Selective Omission

Definition: What is not shown despite being relevant?

Cross-check against the perspectives identified in Step 2. A Selective Omission finding requires no interpretation — it requires demonstrating that a documentarily verifiable perspective is absent. Top-100 average: 7.3/10; overall corpus average: 5.0/10.

K5 — Statistical Manipulation

Definition: Selective or misleading use of statistics.

New in v3.0: triad check. For statistics with an argumentative function, three dimensions are checked: (a) absolute value, (b) proportion (percentage, per capita), (c) trend (development over time). If a material dimension is missing, this constitutes a finding. Everyday figures without argumentative function are exempt.

K6 — Guilt by Association

Definition: Discrediting through association with negative groups/ideas.

Each finding requires a verbatim quotation from the transcript with timestamp. For every person framed as a "conspiracy theorist" or similar, a structured source check is performed: primary sources? Falsifiable claims? Risk matrix (losses vs. gains). Tonality (factual vs. apocalyptic). Result category: A (system-critical researcher), B (borderline case), C (conspiracy ideologue). The framing by the programme itself is not evidence for category C.

K7 — Timing

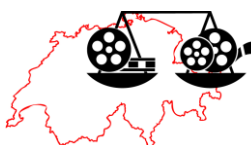
Definition: Strategic placement of information (beginning/middle/end).

Position, content, and timing effect are documented.

K8 — Selective Outrage

Definition: Outrage at certain positions but not at comparable others.

New in v3.0: structured score calculation. Score = Outrage intensity (0–5) + Selectivity (0–5). Methodological principle: before any rating, the triggering event must be documented. A reaction can only be rated as selective if comparable triggers at other positions produced no analogous reaction.



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3.2 Softfacts (6 Criteria): Interpretive

The following six criteria require interpretive judgements. They are methodologically validated through the multi-model Cross-Validation (cf. Chapter 6) and are grounded in established communication science theories (cf. Chapter 11).

K9 — Framing

Definition: How is the topic fundamentally framed?

Which implicit evaluative frame dictates the interpretation? Scientific basis: Entman 1993; Iyengar & Kinder 1987.

K10 — Word Choice and Terminology

Definition: What language is used? What connotations are established?

Evaluative, emotionally charged, or euphemistic terms. A neutral alternative is identified.

K11 — Presenter Conduct

Definition: Asymmetries in follow-up questions, interruptions, expressions of sympathy.

Methodological principle (v2.2): before any rating, the triggering event must be documented. An intervention can only be rated as asymmetric if comparable triggers with other guests produced no analogous intervention.

K12 — Question Asymmetry

Definition: Differently tough/soft questions to different persons.

Direct comparison: same context, different question intensity.

K13 — False Balance

Definition: Artificial impartiality despite an actual imbalance.

Is a fringe opinion placed on equal footing with the scientific consensus?

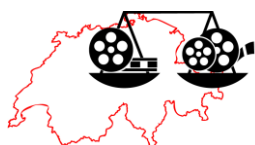
K14 — Agenda-Setting

Definition: What is treated as normal/self-evident? What does not make it onto the agenda?

Scientific basis: McCombs & Shaw 1972.

3.3 Removed Criteria

Image Selection / Visual Language (formerly K11 in v2.8-detail): Since the analysis is based on SRT transcripts, visual elements (camera angles, image selection, graphics) cannot be systematically assessed. In practice, this criterion consistently scored 0 with the note “not assessable from transcript.” It was therefore removed as of v3.0.



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4. Scoring and Overall Evaluation (Step 4)

The overall evaluation calculates five key metrics:

- **Hardfacts Score:** Average of the Hardfact criteria K1–K8.
- **Softfacts Score:** Average of the Softfact criteria K9–K14.
- **Overall Score:** Average of all 14 criteria from Step 3 (0–10).
- **Completeness Score:** Proportion of covered perspectives from Step 2 (0–10).
- **Combined Score:** 70% Overall Score + 30% Completeness.

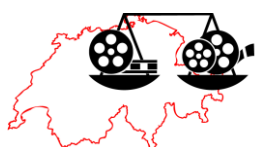
Manipulation severity classification:

Score Range	Classification
0–2	Impartial reporting
3–4	Slight tendency
5–6	Clear one-sidedness
7–8	Systematic imbalance
9–10	Extreme imbalance

Additionally, the three most dominant techniques of the programme are identified, and three implicit core messages (content-related, personal, societal) are documented with supporting technique and timestamp.

4.1 Left-Right Representation (CHES 0–10)

The overall partisan tendency is displayed on the CHES scale 0–10 (Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2024, Jolly et al. 2022). 0 = far left, 5 = centre, 10 = far right. The CHES landscape table (parties with CHES score, seats, government/opposition status) is parsed directly from the analysis text and displayed in the report.



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5. Validation Study: Top-100 Analysis

5.1 Methodology

From the total corpus of 8,383 fully analysed programmes (Tagesschau: 3,402, 10vor10: 2,887, Rundschau: 1,188, Arena: 879), the 100 programmes with the highest overall score were selected. For these 100 programmes, the Hard Score was calculated: the arithmetic mean of the five countable criteria (per v4.1 definition: Selective Omission, Source Selection, Expert Selection, Guilt by Association, Time Allocation).

The comparison addresses three questions:

- Does the finding weaken when only objectifiable criteria are considered?
- Does the ranking of programmes remain stable?
- Does the distribution shift by programme format?

5.2 Results

The Hard Score is higher than the overall score in 88 of 100 cases. The average difference is +0.89 points. This means: the interpretive criteria (Framing, Word Choice, Presenter Conduct, Question Asymmetry, Statistical Manipulation, Timing, Image Selection, Selective Outrage, False Balance, Agenda-Setting) systematically dilute the finding — they do not produce it.

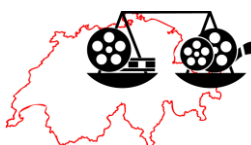
80% of the 100 programmes with the highest overall scores also remain in the Hard Score ranking. The interpretive criteria alter the ranking only marginally.

Individual criterion scores (Top-100 average vs. overall corpus, as of v4.1):

Criterion	Top-100 Avg.	Corpus Avg.
Selective Omission	7.3 / 10	5.0 / 10
Expert Selection	7.0 / 10	4.3 / 10
Time Allocation	6.9 / 10	4.3 / 10
Source Selection	6.3 / 10	4.1 / 10
Guilt by Association	5.0 / 10	2.6 / 10

5.3 Individual Criteria in Detail

Selective Omission and Expert Selection are the most consistent drivers. Guilt by Association shows the greatest variance: many programmes score 2–3, while individual cases reach 8. This corresponds to the nature of the criterion — Guilt by Association occurs episodically, not structurally.

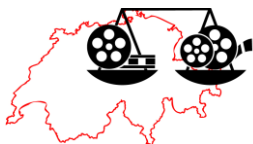


5.4 Distribution by Programme Format

The most striking shift concerns Arena and 10vor10. Arena loses 14 places (20 → 6) when switching to hard criteria. This is explained by the debate format: Arena achieves high scores in Question Asymmetry and Selective Outrage — both interpretive criteria that are excluded from the Hard Score.

10vor10 dominates the Hard Score list (67 of 100). The format consistently shows high values in Selective Omission and Source Selection — structural deficits that systematically occur in short news formats.

Note: The v4.1 validation study used five countable criteria. The current system defines nine Hardfacts (eight from Step 3 plus Political Classification). The three additional Hardfacts (Statistical Manipulation, Timing, Selective Outrage) have not yet been separately validated but satisfy the same reproducibility criterion. The averages in the table above originate from the v4.1 calculation and should be recalculated on the current corpus (8,383 analyses).



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6. Multi-Model Cross-Validation

A central objection against AI-assisted content analysis states: the results could be an artefact of the model used. To refute this objection, a Cross-Validation with three independent AI systems from three different companies was conducted.

6.1 Methodology

Three AI models analysed the same programme text using a structurally identical analysis instruction. The models were queried independently, without knowledge of each other's results:

- Claude (Anthropic)
- Gemini (Google)
- GPT (OpenAI)

Each model rates, for each programme, the favouring or disadvantaging of seven Swiss parties on a scale from -5 (strongly disadvantaged) to +5 (strongly favoured). The party assignment follows the Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2024 (609 political scientists, Jolly et al. 2022):

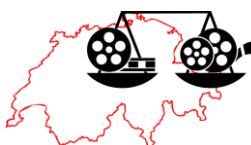
- Left: SP (CHES 1.67), Greens (1.13), GLP (3.60)
- Centre: Die Mitte (5.47)
- Right: EVP (5.64), FDP (7.67), SVP (9.00)

The Cross-Validation does not test the numerical precision of the scores, but rather the concordance on the core finding: which party is most favoured, which is most disadvantaged, and in which direction does the overall tendency point?

6.2 Sample

The sample comprises 50 Tagesschau main editions (Switzerland) over a period of 30 years (1996–2026). Selection was stratified along two dimensions: 25 of the 50 programmes fall on referendum or election days (politically charged reporting), 25 on politically unremarkable days (control group). The sample size of $n=50$ corresponds to the recommendation of Krippendorff (2004) for reliability tests in content analysis.

The Cross-Validation was conducted once for Switzerland. All three models independently identified the same direction.



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6.3 Results

For each programme, it was determined which party received the highest score (most favoured) and which the lowest score (most disadvantaged). Concordance is reported as majority decision (at least 2 of 3 models agree):

Core Finding	Majority Concordance	Result
Most disadvantaged party	80%	SVP
Overall direction	84%	left-favouring
Most favoured party	74%	SP

The results show high majority concordance on all three core findings. The three models are based on different training data and were developed by independent companies. The agreement therefore cannot be attributed to shared training data or a systematic bias of a single model.

6.4 Individual Model Characteristics

Claude shows the lowest variance (Std. 0.84) and is thus the most consistent model. Gemini and GPT fluctuate more but arrive at the same average result: a slight to moderate left-favouring tendency in the SRG Tagesschau.

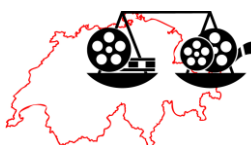
6.5 Scientific Context

In quantitative content analysis, it is standard practice to test inter-coder reliability with at least two independent coders (Krippendorff 2004). The present Cross-Validation uses three coders (AI models) and thus meets the scientific minimum standard.

For the interval-scaled tendency rating (numerical score), Krippendorff's Alpha is 0.46 — below the threshold of 0.667 for acceptable reliability. This means that the models cannot agree on the exact magnitude of the tendency.

At the nominal level of core findings (which party benefits most, which is disadvantaged, what is the overall direction), however, a majority concordance of 74–84% is observed. This is the relevant metric: the SVFAB analysis does not claim to quantify the tendency to tenths of a point, but rather identifies direction and affected actors.

For comparison: Gilardi et al. (2023) demonstrate in PNAS that GPT-4 outperforms human crowd workers in text annotation tasks. Törnberg (2023) confirms this for political text classification. AI-assisted content analysis is therefore not a makeshift solution, but a methodologically validated alternative to manual coding.



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7. Methodological Significance

7.1 Line of Defence Against the Interpretation Objection

The most frequent objection against AI-assisted media analysis is: “The model interprets, and interpretations are subjective.” The validation study (Chapter 5) refutes this objection in three steps:

- **Reduction:** The 15 criteria are reduced to 9 Hardfacts that require no interpretation — only counting, documenting, and verifying.
- **Stability:** 80% of the most extreme cases remain in both rankings. The interpretive criteria alter the ranking only marginally.
- **Amplification:** The Hard Score is +0.89 points higher than the overall score (data basis: 8,383 analysed programmes). The interpretive criteria dilute the finding — they do not produce it.

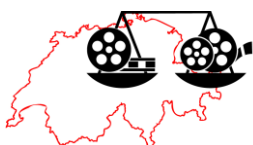
7.2 Line of Defence Against the Single-Model Objection

The second most frequent objection is: “This is only one model — another would arrive at a different result.” The Cross-Validation (Chapter 6) refutes this objection:

- Three independent models from three different companies (Anthropic, Google, OpenAI) analyse the same programmes.
- In 80% of cases, at least two of three models agree on which party is most disadvantaged.
- The overall direction (left-favouring) is concordantly classified in 84% of cases.

7.3 Implication for Legal Argumentation

For UBI proceedings and parliamentary interventions, a twofold line of argumentation emerges: first, the findings hold when only objectifiable criteria are used (Chapter 5). Second, the findings are confirmed by three independent AI systems (Chapter 6). A programme that is independently identified as one-sided by Claude, Gemini, and GPT cannot be dismissed as an artefact of a single model.



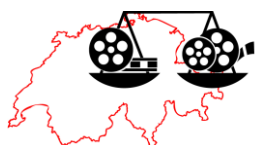
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8. Three-Tier Reporting

The Hardfacts/Softfacts separation enables a tiered reporting framework for different use cases:

Tier	Criteria	Suitability
Hard Report	9 Hardfacts (K1–K8 + Pol. Classification)	Legal proceedings, parliamentary inquiries, peer review
Cross-Validated Report	Party scores (Step 1)	Trend analyses, public communication
Full Report	All 15 criteria + all steps	Editorial quality assurance, individual case analysis

These three tiers, together with the cross-validated party scores (Chapter 6) and the scientifically grounded criteria (Chapter 11), constitute a three-tier validation framework.



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9. Supplementary Instruments

9.1 Source Traffic Light

The Source Traffic Light assesses the credibility of each cited source, each expert, and each factual claim using six complementary dimensions (SSRN 6733880):

Dimension	Description	Scale
D1 Conflict of Interest	Financial/institutional interests	-2 to +2
D2 Personal Risk	What does the source risk through its statement?	-2 to +2
D3 Professional Competence	Relevance of qualifications to the topic	-2 to +2
D4 Opinion Consistency	Temporal stability of positions	-2 to +2
D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data	Data-driven or appellative?	-2 to +2
D6 Source Level	Primary source (+2) / Secondary (0) / Tertiary (-2)	-2 to +2

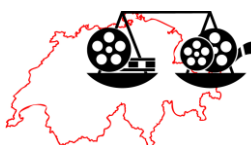
The sum of the six dimensions yields the Source Traffic Light classification: GREEN ($\geq +5$), YELLOW (-4 to $+4$), RED (≤ -5). Finding from the corpus: in fewer than 15% of cases where conflicts of interest are identifiable from public sources, these are disclosed to the audience (SSRN 6733880).

9.2 Credibility Matrix

Companion instrument to the Source Traffic Light. Two-dimensional classification along D1 (Conflict of Interest) \times D2 (Personal Risk) into four quadrants: I = High credibility (no conflict, high risk), II = Moderately high, III = Moderately low, IV = Low credibility (conflict present, no risk). Finding: Quadrant IV sources are overrepresented in the corpus relative to Quadrant I sources (SSRN 6733880).

9.3 Suppression Index

The Suppression Index S compares standardised changes in external indicators (e.g., key interest rate, consumer prices, accident statistics) with the standardised broadcast time share of the corresponding topic (SSRN 6733280). $S > 0$ = Suppression (real-world development with disproportionately little coverage), $S < 0$ = Noise (intensive coverage without proportional real-world change). Applied to 19,000+ SRF programmes (2018–2026, 9 topic clusters): 10.3% of observations show extreme deviations ($|S| > 2.0$).



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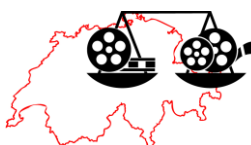
10. Technical Implementation

10.1 Universal Prompt (v3.0-detail)

A single prompt template serves as the analysis instruction for all 19 countries. Country-specific parameters (broadcasting law, parties, language, broadcaster) are dynamically inserted. The prompt enforces German as the analysis language but can produce analyses in the respective national language (14 languages supported).

Supported countries and legal frameworks:

Code	Broadcaster	Legal Framework
CH	SRG/SRF	Art. 4 RTVG
DE	ARD/ZDF	§26 MStV
AT	ORF	§4 ORF-Gesetz
NRK	NRK	Medieansvarslov §4
NL	NPO	Mediawet Art. 2.1
FRA	France TV / Radio France	Loi 86-1067 Art. 43-11
CAN	CBC / Radio-Canada	Broadcasting Act s.3(1)(d)
USA	PBS / NPR	47 U.S.C. §396
RAI	RAI	Contratto di Servizio Art. 6
ES	RTVE	Ley 17/2006 Art. 3
JP	NHK	放送法 第4条
FI	YLE	Laki Yleisradio Oy:stä 7 §
SE	SVT	Radio- och TV-lagen 5 kap.
KR	KBS / MBC	방송법 제6조
TR	TRT	RTÜK Act Art. 8
ARG	TV Pública	Ley 26.522 Art. 3
IE	RTÉ	Broadcasting Act 2009 s.39(1)
RU	State broadcasters	Закон о СМИ ст. 49
UK	BBC	BBC Charter Art. 6



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10.2 Converter (v3.1)

The converter transforms the analysis text files into formatted DOCX and PDF reports. It parses the structured text outputs of the LLM (criterion scores, party tables, tendency scores, Source Traffic Light results) and renders them using the SVFAB template (header, footer, logo). Supported features:

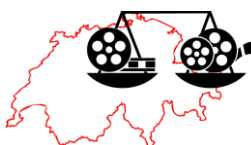
- Automatic language detection and criterion translation (14 languages)
- CHES-based left-right representation with visual bar display (0–10)
- Partisan bias table with CHES colour coding
- Score colour coding: Green (0–2), Yellow (3–4), Orange (5–6), Red (7–8), Dark Red (9–10)
- Markdown table rendering with content-adaptive column widths
- Fullwidth Unicode support (Japanese full-width characters)

10.3 Primary Model and Settings

Primary analysis model: Claude Sonnet 4.6 (Anthropic). Temperature: 0 (deterministic). Each score must be evidenced by a direct quotation with timestamp. Cross-Validation: Google Gemini 2.5 Flash, OpenAI GPT-4o mini.

10.4 Data Basis

Corpus: over 150,000 files from 19 countries, time period 1968–2026. Subtitles are extracted automatically via country-specific pipelines (API-based or via Whisper transcription). Each country has its own scraping pipeline, party configuration, and legal framework file.



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11. Scientific Foundations

11.1 Communication Science Theories

Five of the 15 SVFAB criteria are directly grounded in established communication science theories with extensive peer-reviewed research bases:

- **Agenda-Setting (K14):** McCombs & Shaw 1972; Iyengar & Kinder 1987.
- **Framing (K9):** Entman 1993; Iyengar & Kinder 1987.
- **Gate-Keeping (K1, K2, K4):** Shoemaker & Vos 2009.
- **Indexing (K1, K2):** Bennett 1990.
- **Priming (K9, K14):** Iyengar & Kinder 1987.

These five criteria, together with the nine Hardfact criteria (Chapter 3.1) and the cross-validated party scores (Chapter 6), form a three-tier validation framework. The remaining criteria (Word Choice, Presenter Conduct, Question Asymmetry, False Balance) are grounded in the general journalistic duty of care, which is enshrined in all national broadcasting laws.

11.2 AI-Assisted Content Analysis: State of Research

The use of AI models as coders in content analysis is methodologically supported by current research:

- **Gilardi et al. (2023, PNAS):** GPT-4 outperforms human crowd workers in text annotation tasks in both accuracy and consistency.
- **Törnberg (2023):** ChatGPT-4 outperforms experts and crowd workers in annotating political Twitter messages.

AI-assisted content analysis is therefore not a makeshift solution, but a methodologically validated alternative to manual coding. The SVFAB Cross-Validation with three independent models exceeds the scientific minimum standard (two coders).

11.3 Own Publications (SSRN)

Schläpfer, D. (2026). SSRN 6688478

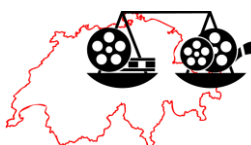
Systematic AI-Assisted Analysis of Public Broadcaster Impartiality: A Scalable Methodological Framework for Measuring Structural Bias in Public Service Media.

Core instrument: 15-criteria framework. Finding: mean Selective Omission score SRG/SRF = 7.03/10.

Schläpfer, D. (2026). SSRN 6733280

Measuring Editorial Noise: A Retrospective Suppression Index for Public Broadcasting Content Analysis.

Core instrument: Suppression Index S. Corpus: 19,000+ SRF programmes, 9 topic clusters. Finding: 10.3% extreme deviations ($|S| > 2.0$).



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Schläpfer, D. (2026). SSRN 6733880

The Source Traffic Light: A Six-Dimensional Credibility Framework for Systematic Source Assessment in Public Service Media.

Core instrument: Source Traffic Light (6D) + Credibility Matrix (2D). Finding: < 15% conflict-of-interest disclosure.

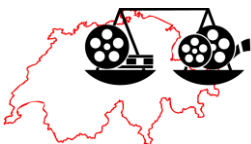
12. Limitations and Open Questions

- **AI Extraction:** The Hardfact criteria are countable, but the extraction of count values from the transcript is still performed by the AI model. The Cross-Validation partially addresses this point: three independent models predominantly arrive at the same result. A supplementary validation with human coders is planned.
- **Numerical Precision:** The models agree on the direction and the most affected party, but not on the exact magnitude (Krippendorff's Alpha = 0.46 for interval-scaled scores). The reports therefore argue primarily with direction and ranking, not with absolute decimal values.
- **Transcript-Based Analysis:** The analysis is based on subtitles (SRT/WebVTT), not the broadcast signal. Visual elements (image selection, camera work, graphics) cannot be assessed. Prosody (intonation, emphasis) is likewise lost.
- **Format Dependency:** Short news formats (e.g., 10vor10) structurally have less room for multi-perspectivity and therefore systematically achieve higher Selective Omission scores. This may be an artefact of format structure.
- **Sample Bias:** Not all analysis text files are machine-parsable. Non-parsable analyses could introduce a bias if they systematically exhibit different score distributions.
- **Generalisability of the Cross-Validation:** The Cross-Validation was conducted on Swiss Tagesschau main editions. An extension to other formats and other countries is pending.
- **Prompt Version Dependency:** The restructuring from v2.8-detail to v3.0-detail (Hardfacts/Softfacts separation, new instruments) means that analyses created with earlier prompt versions are not directly comparable with v3.0 analyses. Converter v3.1 supports both formats.

13. Summary

The SVFAB analysis system (Analysis Instruction v3.0-detail, Converter v3.1) measures the impartiality of public service broadcasting programmes using 15 criteria across 19 countries. The methodology rests on three independent validation pillars:

- **Hardfacts Separation:** 9 of 15 criteria are reproducible without interpretive judgements. The Hard Score is +0.89 points higher than the overall score (data basis: 8,383 analysed programmes). The interpretive criteria dilute the finding — they do not produce it.
- **Multi-Model Cross-Validation:** Three independent AI models (Anthropic, Google, OpenAI) identify the same direction and the same most disadvantaged party in 80–84% of cases (50 Tagesschau programmes, Switzerland).
- **Scientific Foundation:** Five criteria with direct support from established communication science theories (Agenda Setting, Framing, Gate-keeping, Indexing, Priming). Three



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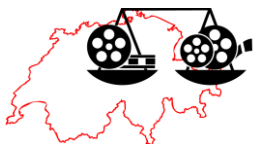
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working papers on SSRN (6688478, 6733280, 6733880) document the criteria framework, the Suppression Index, and the Source Traffic Light.

These three pillars address the two principal objections against AI-assisted media analysis (interpretation dependency and single-model dependency) and establish a robust foundation for legal, scientific, and public communication.



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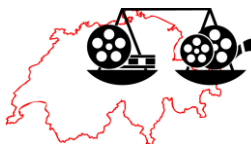
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