



## NPO DETAILED ANALYSIS

2024-09-17\_POW\_05810941

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### TOTAL SCORE

**4.6/10**

*Considerable imbalance*

0 = balanced, 10 = strongly one-sided/manipulative

## POLITICAL SPECTRUM

Classification based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) 2024

The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES 2024) is an academic survey of 609 political scientists in 31 countries. Each party is rated on a scale from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right).

Party	SP	GL-PvdA	PvdD	D66	CDA	NSC	CU	VVD	BBB	SGP	PVV	FvD
CHES	1.10	2.40	2.50	4.80	5.50	5.80	6.00	7.00	7.50	7.80	9.20	9.50
Spectrum	Left	Left	Left	Left	Centre	Centre	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right	Right

The overall tendency is displayed on a 0–10 scale (0 = strongly left-favouring, 5 = balanced, 10 = strongly right-favouring). The calculation is based on the difference in average favouring of left vs. right parties (grouping according to CHES 2024).

### TENDENCY (L – R)

**5.3 / 10**

*Balanced*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

← Left

Right →

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2024 — [chesdata.eu](https://chesdata.eu) | [Jolly et al., Electoral Studies, 2022](#) | Threshold values: [Pew Research Center](#)

This section provides political context and does not count towards the total score.



## POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The Schoof cabinet took office in July 2024 as an extra-parliamentary cabinet, supported by PVV (37 seats), VVD (24 seats), NSC (20 seats) and BBB (7 seats). Prime Minister Dick Schoof is non-partisan. The largest opposition party is GL-PvdA with 25 seats, followed by D66 (9 seats), CDA (5 seats), SP (5 seats), PvdD (3 seats), CU (3 seats), SGP (3 seats), FvD (3 seats), DENK and Volt.

Party	CHES L-R	Seats	Government/Opposition	Core position
SP	1.1	5	Opposition	Socioeconomically left, anti-market forces
GL-PvdA	2.4	25	Opposition (largest)	Climate, humane asylum policy, fair sharing
PvdD	2.5	3	Opposition	Animal rights, climate, left-progressive
D66	4.8	9	Opposition	Liberal-progressive, pro-EU, education
CDA	5.5	5	Opposition	Christian democratic, centre-right
NSC	5.8	20	Government	Economic security, rule of law, centre-right
CU	6.0	3	Opposition	Christian-social, centre-right
VVD	7.0	24	Government	Liberal-right, free market, budgetary discipline
BBB	7.5	7	Government	Agrarian-populist, right, farmers' interests
SGP	7.8	3	Opposition	Reformed, far right
PVV	9.2	37	Government (largest)	Migration stop, critical of Islam, far right
FvD	9.5	3	Opposition	Far right, Baudet, sovereignty

The main political fault line concerns migration policy: the Schoof cabinet is pursuing a historically strict asylum policy, while left-wing opposition parties advocate for a more humane policy. A second line of tension is the proposed VAT increase on sport, culture and media, which is generating broad societal resistance. Thirdly, the climate transition is under pressure: the coalition opts for a pragmatic-nationalist climate policy, while GL-PvdA and D66 advocate more ambitious targets. Finally, there is the structural tension between the trust of lower-educated citizens in the cabinet and the declining trust among higher-educated citizens.

The Dutch public broadcaster (NPO) operates under the Media Act 2008, of which Article 2.1 requires pluriform, balanced and independent reporting across the total output. The NPO is composed of separate broadcasting associations (including BNNVARA, KRO-NCRV, AVRO TROS) with their own editorial responsibility. PVV leader Wilders has repeatedly criticised the NPO as a "left-wing broadcaster", which makes the institutional position of the public broadcaster politically sensitive.



## CHAPTER 1 — PARTY-POLITICAL BIAS

### Assessment per party

Party	Score (-5..+5)	Broadcast representation vs. party programme position
VVD	0	Not covered substantively; no party programme position presented or distorted — not applicable
PVV	0	Not covered substantively; no party programme position presented or distorted — not applicable
GL-PvdA	0	Not covered substantively — not applicable
NSC	0	Not covered substantively — not applicable
D66	0	Not covered substantively — not applicable
BBB	+2	06:00 "Absolutely, very special" — Van der Plas (BBB) is given airtime on Budget Day and her fisheries statement; party programme position (farmers' interests, national symbols) implicitly confirmed without critical scrutiny — partially correct, not scrutinised
CDA	0	Not covered substantively — not applicable
SP	0	Not covered substantively — not applicable

Note on the scoring method: Because this is a news bulletin of approx. with a strongly ceremonial character (Budget Day), most parties are not covered substantively. A score of 0 here means "not applicable" and does not imply distortion. Only BBB (via Van der Plas) and implicitly the coalition as a whole are visible.

### Summary Party Bias

- Most accurate representation: BBB (score +2) — Van der Plas is given unimpeded airtime for her symbolic message
- Strongest distortion: No active distortion demonstrable; the absence of opposition parties is the main finding
- Average deviation from 0: 0.3
- Conclusion: This news bulletin contains no active distortion of party programme positions, but the selective presence of coalition members (BBB via Van der Plas, implicit coalition confirmation via trust figures) without any countervoice from opposition parties creates a structural imbalance. The trust figures are presented in a way that positions the Schoof cabinet favourably, without opposition parties being given the opportunity to interpret them.

### Left-Right Overall Tendency

TENDENCY SCORE: -0.8

CLASSIFICATION: Slightly right-favouring

Reasoning: The broadcast presents the increase in trust in the Schoof cabinet as broadly positive news (03:08–03:46), with the increase among lower-educated citizens prominently highlighted without critical context about the causes or the decline among higher-educated citizens. Caroline van der Plas (BBB, governing party) is given unimpeded airtime for a positive coalition narrative. Opposition parties are not given a voice on the substance of Budget Day, while the only critical voice in the broadcast (the demonstrators against the VAT increase, 01:35–02:01) receives no political party label and is thus framed as anonymous societal protest rather than as a political position.



## CHAPTER 2 — BROADCAST INFORMATION AND THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

### Broadcast details

- Title: NOS News — Budget Day edition
- Date: 17.09.2024
- Length (estimated from transcript):
- Presenter/reporter: Studio presenter (name not mentioned in transcript); reporters Nicole le Fever (The Hague, route), Marleen de Rooij (House of Representatives), Jeroen Gortworst (Ter Apel)
- Persons interviewed:

Person	Function	Party/Affiliation	Political Spectrum
Caroline van der Plas	Parliamentary group leader House of Representatives	BBB	Right (CHES 7.5)
Unnamed Member of Parliament	First Budget Day, brought mother along	Unknown	Unknown
Resident of Ter Apel (male)	Citizen	None	Not applicable
Resident of Ter Apel (female)	Citizen	None	Not applicable
Demonstrator VAT increase	Citizen/activist	Not identified	Not applicable
PSV trainer/player	Football	None	Not applicable
MBO students (hairdresser)	Student	None	Not applicable
Orange supporters (route)	Citizen	None	Not applicable

### Main theme

The NOS News of Budget Day 2024 reports on the ceremonial opening of the parliamentary year, supplemented by current news items on asylum reception in Ter Apel, the new European Commission, and sport.



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## CHAPTER 3 — 15 CRITERIA: DETAILED ANALYSIS



## Hard facts — 9 techniques that are countable and scientifically verifiable

### 1. EXPERT SELECTION

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*Definition: Who speaks as an expert?*

**Expert 1:** Reporter Marleen de Rooij (House of Representatives)

Timestamp: 03:53–07:01

#### Statement

"They are actually all very pleased about it. Both the opposition parties... who consider it important that trust is growing... but certainly also the coalition parties."

#### Framing

The reporter presents an interpretation of the mood in the House of Representatives as a factual observation, without opposition parties themselves being given a voice to confirm or refute this.

Missing countervoice: A spokesperson from GL-PvdA or D66 could have provided a more nuanced picture of the opposition's reaction to the trust figures.

Source depth check:

**(a) FUNDING:** NOS, funded by the Dutch state via the public broadcasting contribution. Structural interest in good relations with the cabinet for access and licences.

**(b) MANDATE:** Reporters have a journalistic mandate, but are not independent experts; their interpretations are editorial choices, not neutral observations.

D1 Conflict of interest: 0 — NOS is publicly funded; no direct financial interest in a particular outcome, but institutional dependence on government licences

D2 Personal risk: +1 — Reporter has limited personal risk with this interpretation

D3 Professional competence: +1 — Journalistic experience, but no political science expertise

D4 Opinion consistency: 0 — Unknown

D5 Emotionalisation vs. data: 0 — Partly factual, partly interpretive without substantiation

D6 Source level: 0 — Secondary source (reporter interprets atmosphere)

• TOTAL: +2 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW

**(c) PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE:** The statement "actually all very pleased" is framed as a neutral observation, while it is an editorial interpretation without direct quotes from opposition parties.

**Expert 2:** Caroline van der Plas (BBB, parliamentary group leader)

Timestamp: 05:45–07:01

#### Statement

"Democracy is doing its work. That is good."

#### Framing

Van der Plas is interviewed as a politician, not as an expert. She represents a governing party and has a direct interest in a positive framing of the trust figures.

Missing countervoice: An opposition politician could have given a different interpretation of the same trust figures.

Source depth check:

**(a) FUNDING:** BBB is a political party; Van der Plas has a direct political interest in a positive presentation of the cabinet.



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**(b) MANDATE:** As parliamentary group leader of a governing party, her mandate is by definition not neutral with regard to cabinet policy.

- D1 Conflict of interest: -2 — Direct political interests in positive cabinet presentation
- D2 Personal risk: -1 — No risk; positive statements about own coalition
- D3 Professional competence: +1 — Political expertise, but partisan mandate
- D4 Opinion consistency: +1 — Consistently pro-coalition
- D5 Emotionalisation vs. data: 0 — Mixed
- D6 Source level: -1 — Primary source for own opinion, but partisan

• TOTAL: -2 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW

**(c) PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE:** Van der Plas is not identified as a partisan source; her statements are presented as representative of the political mood.

*Missing expert groups:*

- Independent political scientist for contextualisation of trust figures
- Asylum law expert for context on Ter Apel
- Economist for contextualisation of the Budget Memorandum

**Source traffic light for participants:**

Source	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Total	Signal
Reporter Marleen de Rooij (House of Representatives)	0	+1	+1	0	0	0	+2	YELLOW
Caroline van der Plas (BBB, parliamentary group leader)	-2	-1	+1	+1	0	-1	-2	YELLOW

*Summary (Matrix result as structured list):*

- Reporter De Rooij: YELLOW (+2) — Interpretation presented as fact
- Van der Plas: YELLOW (-2) — Partisan source without identification as such



## 2. SOURCE SELECTION

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Claims without primary source = penalty points (rumour check)

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

**Source 1:** Ipsos I&O (trust survey)

Timestamp: 03:08–03:46

### Statement

"That was researched by Ipsos I&O on behalf of NOS."

**(a) Funding and sponsorship:** Ipsos I&O is a commercial research agency; the research was conducted on behalf of NOS itself. NOS is therefore both the client and the disseminator of the results.

**(b) Structural conflict of interest:** As a public broadcaster, NOS has an institutional interest in demonstrating public trust in political institutions; it cannot be excluded that the framing or presentation of the research reflects this interest.

**(c) Missing counter-source:** An independent political scientist or an alternative study (e.g. from the University of Amsterdam or the SCP) could have contextualised or nuanced the findings.

Rumour check (penalty points): No rumours without primary source found in this segment.

**Source 2:** ANP (situation Ter Apel)

Timestamp: 08:15–08:23

### Statement

"According to the ANP, the asylum seekers from last night have returned to Ter Apel."

**(a) Funding and sponsorship:** ANP is the national news agency, funded by a consortium of media companies. Reliable primary news source.

**(b) Structural conflict of interest:** No direct structural interest in a particular outcome in this dossier.

**(c) Missing counter-source:** The ANP report is not verified by an own reporter on the ground; Jeroen Gortworst does implicitly confirm the return (09:06–09:18).

Rumour check: No rumours without primary source found.

Summary: The source selection is limited and not very diverse: the own research (NOS/Ipsos I&O) is presented as a neutral source without critical distance, while independent experts are entirely absent. The ANP source is adequate but is not independently verified.



### 3. TIME ALLOCATION

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*Definition: Distribution of airtime between different positions.*

#### Estimated airtime:

- Ceremonial/atmosphere Budget Day (including citizens, MBO students, supporters): approx. 5 min. (28%)
- Trust figures + House of Representatives (including Van der Plas): approx. 3 min. (17%)
- Ter Apel (asylum reception): approx. 2 min. (11%)
- European Commission: approx. 0.5 min. (3%)
- Other news (Trump, Titan, Myanmar, SP Oss, RT ban): approx. 3 min. (17%)
- Sport (hockey, PSV, Perisic, Eredivisie): approx. 3.5 min. (19%)
- Presenter/transitions/weather: approx. 1 min. (6%)

#### Airtime per political position:

- Coalition (Van der Plas/BBB): approx. 1.5 min. (8%)
- Opposition: 0 min. (0%)
- Neutral citizens: approx. 2 min. (11%)
- Reporters/presenter: approx. 4 min. (22%)

Summary: The time allocation is strongly skewed to the detriment of the opposition, which receives no airtime whatsoever. Coalition members (exclusively Van der Plas) receive unimpeded airtime, while the substance of Budget Day itself is barely covered. Sports coverage (19%) receives more time than the political news about Budget Day.



#### 4. OMISSION (Selective Omission)

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*Definition: What is not shown, even though it is relevant?*

##### Omission 1:

###### Context

The content of the Speech from the Throne and the Budget Memorandum is completely omitted.

Relevant at: 00:10–07:12 (entire Budget Day coverage)

###### Effect

The viewer sees only the ceremonial exterior of Budget Day, without any information about the policy content. This creates a positive, festive image of politics without critical scrutiny of the plans.

##### Omission 2:

###### Context

The reaction of opposition parties to the Budget Memorandum and the trust figures is completely absent.

Relevant at: 03:53–07:01 (House of Representatives coverage)

###### Effect

The reporter claims that "both opposition and coalition are pleased" with the trust figures, but not a single opposition politician is given a voice to confirm or nuance this. This is a structural omission that favours the coalition.

##### Omission 3:

###### Context

The perspective of asylum seekers themselves and the broader policy context of asylum reception are absent from the Ter Apel segment.

Relevant at: 07:13–09:30

###### Effect

The situation in Ter Apel is presented as a logistical problem ("too busy"), without naming the political causes (cabinet policy, cuts to reception, dispersal act). Asylum seekers are presented as passive objects, not as people with a voice.

Summary: Selective omission is the strongest finding in this broadcast: the content of Budget Day, the opposition's reaction and the perspective of asylum seekers are systematically omitted, resulting in a one-sided and incomplete picture.

#### Missing voices

- Spokesperson GL-PvdA or D66: Could have articulated the opposition's expectations regarding the Budget Memorandum
- Independent political scientist (e.g. Leiden or Amsterdam University): Could have contextualised the trust figures in historical and political context
- State Secretary for Asylum and Migration: Could have explained the cabinet's response to the situation in Ter Apel
- Asylum seeker or COA employee on the ground: Could have provided the human perspective on the situation in Ter Apel



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- Economist or CPB employee: Could have contextualised the macroeconomic consequences of the Budget Memorandum
- Representative of the sports sector or cultural sector: Could have substantively underpinned the concrete consequences of the VAT increase
- EU expert or European affairs specialist: Could have contextualised the composition and priorities of the new European Commission
- Historian or master of ceremonies: Could have explained the special historical context of this first Budget Day of the Schoof cabinet



## 5. FIGURE MANIPULATION

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Complete figures include: absolute number, share (%) and trend

*Definition: Selective or misleading use of statistics.*

### Finding 1:

Timestamp: 03:08–03:46

Figure: "Of all Dutch people, 44 percent now have trust in national politics and 42 percent in the Schoof cabinet."

Dimensions:

- (a) Absolute value: shown (44%, 42%)
- (b) Share: shown (percentage of all Dutch people)
- (c) Trend: partially shown (comparison with last year: 33% and 24%)

#### Missing context

The absolute values (44% and 42%) are not contextualised: a trust level of less than half the population is historically low. The comparison with the caretaker Rutte IV cabinet (24%) is selective: a caretaker cabinet structurally has lower trust than a newly installed cabinet. This comparison is methodologically not equivalent.

#### Effect

The increase appears spectacular (+18 percentage points for the cabinet), but the comparison with a caretaker cabinet in a period of political crisis is misleading. A comparison with the start of previous cabinets would give a fairer picture.

### Finding 2:

Timestamp: 03:34–03:46

Figure: "Of this group, only 17% had trust in the cabinet last year. Now it is 49%."

Dimensions:

- (a) Absolute value: shown
- (b) Share: shown
- (c) Trend: shown

#### Missing context

The increase from 17% to 49% among lower-educated citizens is presented without mentioning that this trust is measured in the Schoof cabinet, which is supported by PVV — the party that traditionally scores strongly among lower-educated citizens. The political explanation for this increase (PVV voters trust their own cabinet) is completely absent.

#### Effect

The increase is presented as a broad societal phenomenon, while it is partly a party-political effect.

Summary: The trust figures are selectively presented in a way that maximises the increase and minimises the political context. The comparison with a caretaker cabinet is methodologically problematic and is not identified as such.



## 6. GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

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*Definition: Discrediting through association with negative groups or ideas.*

### Finding 1:

Timestamp: 11:11–11:32

#### Quote

*"Russian state media such as RT, formerly Russia Today... the media are guilty of covert influence operations."*

Technique: RT is associated with "covert influence operations" via Meta's formulation. The term "guilty" has a legal connotation that goes beyond a factual description of the ban.

#### Effect

The framing suggests proven guilt, while it concerns a decision by a private company (Meta) based on its own policy, not a judicial ruling.

*No persons framed as "conspiracy theorists" in this broadcast.*

Summary: Guilt by association is limitedly present in the RT coverage, where the term "guilty" has a stronger connotation than the factual situation warrants. This is a minor finding.



## 7. TIMING

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

### Finding 1:

Position: 03:08–03:46 (early in the broadcast, directly after the atmosphere coverage)

Content: "There is considerably more trust in politics and in the cabinet than in the past two years."

#### Timing effect

The trust figures are presented directly after the positive atmosphere coverage of Budget Day, creating a cumulative positive image of the cabinet and politics. The placement before any critical reporting reinforces the positive framing.

### Finding 2:

Position: 07:13 (directly after the positive Budget Day segment)

Content: Ter Apel segment on asylum reception problems

#### Timing effect

The Ter Apel segment follows directly after the positive Budget Day segment, but is not linked to cabinet policy. The placement after the positive segment softens the potentially critical impact of the asylum reception problems.

Summary: The placement of the trust figures early in the broadcast, directly after the positive atmosphere coverage, reinforces the positive image of the cabinet. The Ter Apel segment is not linked to cabinet policy, thereby neutralising its critical potential.



## 8. SELECTIVE INDIGNATION

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Indignation = bias. Selective indignation reinforces the finding. Score = degree of indignation (0–5) + selectivity (0–5)

*Definition: Indignation at certain positions, but not at comparable others.*

*Methodological starting point (v2.2): Before each assessment, the triggering event is documented. A reaction can only be assessed as selective if comparable triggering events at other positions did not produce an analogous reaction.*

### Finding 1:

Timestamp: 07:45–08:10

Triggering event: Residents of Ter Apel express frustration about the asylum reception problems.

Reaction: "They just have to stop it, that's it, full is full." / "That it makes no sense. They just have to solve it."

### Comparison

There is no comparable segment in which residents or those involved express indignation about cabinet policy (e.g. spending cuts) and where the reporter asks follow-up questions or nuances.

Asymmetry: The indignation of Ter Apel residents is presented without nuance or countervoice. However, there is no active amplification by the reporter; the statements are presented factually. The asymmetry lies in the absence of comparable segments with criticism of cabinet policy.

Degree of indignation: 2/5

Selectivity: 1/5 (limitedly demonstrable)

Summary: Selective indignation is limitedly present. The frustration of Ter Apel residents is presented without nuance, but there is no active amplification by the reporter. The asymmetry is structural (no comparable segments with other forms of societal indignation) but not acutely manipulative.



## 9. COMPLETENESS (Selective Omission — Overall Picture)

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*Definition: How completely does the broadcast portray the subject?*

### Finding 1:

Timestamp: 03:53–07:01

Missing perspective/fact: Reaction of opposition parties to the trust figures and the Budget Memorandum

Relevance: On Budget Day, the opposition's reaction to the cabinet's plans is an essential component of democratic reporting.

#### Impact

By allowing only a coalition member (Van der Plas) to speak and paraphrasing the opposition via the reporter ("both opposition and coalition pleased"), a one-sided picture of political consensus is created that is not substantiated.

### Finding 2:

Timestamp: 07:13–09:30

Missing perspective/fact: Cabinet policy as the cause of the situation in Ter Apel; perspective of asylum seekers

Relevance: The situation in Ter Apel is directly connected to the asylum policy of the Schoof cabinet; this connection is not made.

#### Impact

The situation is presented as a logistical problem without political cause, meaning the cabinet is not held to account.

### Finding 3:

Timestamp: 09:32–10:13

Missing perspective/fact: Substantive contextualisation of the new European Commission and Hoekstra's position

Relevance: The composition of the European Commission is politically relevant news that requires contextualisation, especially given the Dutch position in the EU.

#### Impact

The reporting is limited to a factual enumeration without context or analysis.

Summary: The broadcast is structurally incomplete on the three most politically relevant subjects: Budget Day (no content), Ter Apel (no policy context) and the European Commission (no contextualisation). This pattern of superficial reporting without critical depth is the most significant finding of this analysis.



## Soft facts — 6 qualitative techniques

### 10. FRAMING (Setting the frame)

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*Definition: How is the subject fundamentally framed?*

#### Finding 1:

Timestamp: 00:10–03:07

<b>Quote</b>	<i>"The weather is wonderful." / "For me it is a kind of King's Day, but with decorations." / "Everyone is looking forward to it here."</i>
<b>Manipulation</b>	Budget Day is framed exclusively as a festive popular celebration, without any reference to the political content or the societal tensions surrounding the Budget Memorandum.
<b>Why problematic</b>	The festive frame neutralises the political criticism (VAT increase, asylum policy) that is playing out on the same day. Viewers are conditioned to experience Budget Day as a positive event before any critical information is presented.

#### Finding 2:

Timestamp: 03:08–03:46

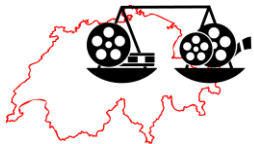
<b>Quote</b>	<i>"There is considerably more trust in politics and in the cabinet than in the past two years."</i>
<b>Manipulation</b>	The increase in trust is framed as a broadly positive societal signal, without naming the political context (PVV voters trust their own cabinet) or the methodological limitations (comparison with caretaker cabinet).
<b>Why problematic</b>	The frame "more trust = good news for everyone" masks the politically polarised nature of the increase in trust.

#### Finding 3:

Timestamp: 07:13–09:30

<b>Quote</b>	<i>"It was too busy yesterday at the registration centre in Ter Apel."</i>
<b>Manipulation</b>	The asylum reception problems are framed as a capacity problem ("too busy"), not as a political policy problem. The word "too busy" suggests a temporary logistical problem rather than a structural consequence of policy choices.
<b>Why problematic</b>	This frame relieves the cabinet of political responsibility for the situation in Ter Apel.

Summary: The dominant frame of the broadcast is positive-ceremonial for Budget Day and the cabinet, while critical subjects (asylum reception, VAT increase) are framed as logistical or societal problems without political cause.



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## 11. WORD CHOICE AND TERMINOLOGY

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*Definition: What language is used? What connotations are created?*

### Finding 1:

Timestamp: 03:08

<b>Quote</b>	<i>"There is considerably more trust in politics and in the cabinet than in the past two years."</i>
<b>Manipulation</b>	The word "considerably" is a value judgement that makes the increase appear larger than the figures warrant. A neutral formulation would be: "Trust in the cabinet has risen from 24% to 42%."
<b>Why problematic</b>	A neutral alternative would be: "Trust in the cabinet has increased compared to last year."

### Finding 2:

Timestamp: 07:29

<b>Quote</b>	<i>"Dozens of asylum seekers were at risk of having to sleep in the grass."</i>
<b>Manipulation</b>	The word "at risk of" has a threatening connotation that frames the situation from the perspective of the surroundings, not from the perspective of the asylum seekers themselves. A neutral formulation would be: "Dozens of asylum seekers possibly had no sleeping place."
<b>Why problematic</b>	The word choice activates a frame of threat rather than humanitarian need.

### Finding 3:

Timestamp: 11:21

<b>Quote</b>	<i>"the media are guilty of covert influence operations."</i>
<b>Manipulation</b>	The word "guilty" has a legal connotation that implies a judicial ruling, while it concerns a decision by Meta based on its own policy.
<b>Why problematic</b>	Neutral alternative: "Meta states that the media are involved in influence operations."

Summary: The word choice in the broadcast reinforces the dominant frame at several points: "considerably more trust" amplifies the positive coalition image, "at risk of sleeping in the grass" activates a threatening connotation surrounding asylum seekers, and "guilty" exceeds the journalistic neutrality standard.



## 12. MODERATION BEHAVIOUR

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

*Methodological starting point (v2.2): Before each assessment, the triggering event is documented. An intervention can only be assessed as asymmetric if comparable triggering events with other guests did not produce an analogous intervention.*

### Finding 1:

Timestamp: 05:45–07:01

Triggering event: Caroline van der Plas (BBB, governing party) is interviewed about Budget Day and the trust figures.

#### Quote (reporter)

*"You always wear something with a particular meaning. This year it is fisheries."*

#### Comparison

There is no comparable interview with an opposition politician in which critical questions are asked about the cabinet's plans.

Asymmetry: The question to Van der Plas is soft and ceremonial in nature; no critical questions are asked about the BBB's position on the Budget Memorandum or asylum policy. Because no opposition politicians are interviewed, the asymmetry is structural but not directly demonstrable as a deliberate choice by the interviewer.

### Finding 2:

Timestamp: 06:32–07:01

Triggering event: Reporter confronts Van der Plas with the trust figures and the fact that she was in the previous coalition.

#### Quote (reporter)

*"The trust figures in politics and the cabinet have risen enormously. You were in the previous coalition. Does it hurt?"*

#### Comparison

The question "does it hurt?" is a soft, empathetic question that gives Van der Plas the opportunity to give a positive answer. A critical question would have been: "What do you think of the cabinet's plans that you can no longer influence?"

Asymmetry: The question is somewhat confrontational (reference to previous coalition), but the formulation "does it hurt?" invites a positive, democratic answer rather than critical reflection.

Summary: Moderation behaviour is mildly asymmetric: Van der Plas receives soft, ceremonial questions without critical follow-up on policy content. The absence of opposition politicians makes a direct comparison of questioning impossible, but the structural choice to interview only a coalition member is itself a form of asymmetry.



### 13. QUESTION ASYMMETRY

4/10

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*Definition: Different degrees of hardness/softness of questions to different persons.*

#### Asymmetry 1:

To Van der Plas (BBB), 05:49: "You always wear something with a particular meaning. This year it is fisheries." — soft/ceremonial

To resident of Ter Apel, 08:08: "How do you view that?" — neutral/open

#### Comparison

Van der Plas receives a question that gives her the opportunity to spread her symbolic message; the resident of Ter Apel receives an open question. There is no comparable hard question to Van der Plas about policy content.

#### Asymmetry 2:

To Van der Plas (BBB), 06:32: "The trust figures in politics and the cabinet have risen enormously. You were in the previous coalition. Does it hurt?" — soft/empathetic

To no opposition politician: no comparable question about the consequences of the increase in trust for the opposition.

#### Comparison

The question to Van der Plas is formulated empathetically and invites a positive answer. There is no comparable question to an opposition politician about their reaction to the increase in trust.

Summary: The question asymmetry is limited but structural: Van der Plas receives soft, ceremonial questions, while opposition politicians are not interviewed at all. This makes a direct comparison of questioning impossible, but the structural absence of critical questions to coalition members is a finding.



## 14. FALSE BALANCE

2/10

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*Definition: Artificial balance despite factual imbalance.*

### Finding 1:

Timestamp: 04:07–04:28

Construction: "They are actually all very pleased about it. Both the opposition parties... who consider it important that trust is growing... but certainly also the coalition parties."

### Analysis

The reporter suggests a broad consensus ("all pleased") that is not substantiated with quotes from opposition parties. This is not false balance in the classical sense (presenting two equivalent sides), but rather a false consensus: the suggestion that everyone agrees, while this has not been demonstrated.

Summary: False balance in the classical sense (presenting two equivalent but unequal positions side by side) is limitedly present. The main finding is the false consensus in the House of Representatives segment, where the reporter suggests a broad political agreement that is not substantiated.



## 15. AGENDA-SETTING

6/10

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

### Finding 1:

Stated agenda element: The increase in trust in the cabinet is positive news for democracy.

Timestamp: 03:08–03:46 — Evidence: "There is considerably more trust in politics and in the cabinet than in the past two years."

Alternative agenda: The question of whether a trust level of 42% (less than half the population) is sufficient for a democratic mandate; the question of why trust among higher-educated citizens has not increased; the political explanation for the increase among lower-educated citizens.

### Finding 2:

Stated agenda element: Budget Day is primarily a festive popular celebration.

Timestamp: 00:10–03:07 — Evidence: "The weather is wonderful." / "For me it is a kind of King's Day, but with decorations."

Alternative agenda: The content of the Budget Memorandum; the political tensions surrounding cabinet policy; the demonstrations against the VAT increase (only briefly touched upon).

### Finding 3:

Stated agenda element: The situation in Ter Apel is a logistical capacity problem.

Timestamp: 07:13–09:30 — Evidence: "It has been too busy at the registration centre for a long time."

Alternative agenda: Cabinet policy as the cause of the structural overload; the political responsibility of the State Secretary; the humanitarian dimension from the perspective of asylum seekers.

Summary: The agenda-setting of the broadcast is consistent: Budget Day as a celebration, the cabinet as trustworthy, and Ter Apel as a logistical problem. Political responsibility, opposition positions and humanitarian perspectives are systematically kept off the agenda.



## CHAPTER 4 — OVERALL ASSESSMENT

### Overview of Individual Scores

No.	Criterion	Type	Score	Main finding (1 sentence)
1	Expert selection	H	6	Exclusively coalition member (Van der Plas) and own reporter as "expert"; no independent political scientist or opposition voice
2	Source selection	H	5	Own research (NOS/Ipsos I&O) presented as neutral source without critical distance
3	Time allocation	H	5	Opposition receives 0% airtime; coalition (BBB) receives unimpeded airtime
4	Omission	H	7	Content of Speech from the Throne, opposition reaction and perspective of asylum seekers systematically omitted
5	Figure manipulation	H	4	Trust figures selectively presented with methodologically problematic comparison
6	Guilt by association	H	1	Limitedly present in RT coverage; no persons framed as conspiracy theorists
7	Timing	H	4	Trust figures placed early after positive atmosphere coverage; Ter Apel not linked to cabinet policy
8	Selective indignation	H	2	Limitedly present; frustration of Ter Apel residents without nuance, but no active amplification
9	Completeness	H	7	Structurally incomplete on three politically relevant subjects: Budget Day, Ter Apel, EU Commission
10	Framing	S	6	Dominant frame: Budget Day as celebration, cabinet as trustworthy, Ter Apel as logistical problem
11	Word choice	S	5	"Considerably more trust", "at risk of sleeping in the grass" and "guilty" reinforce the dominant frame
12	Moderation behaviour	S	4	Soft, ceremonial questions to Van der Plas; no critical follow-up on policy content
13	Question asymmetry	S	4	Van der Plas receives soft questions; opposition is not interviewed
14	False balance	S	2	False consensus ("all pleased") in House of Representatives segment; no classical false balance
15	Agenda-setting	S	6	Political responsibility, opposition positions and humanitarian perspectives systematically kept off the agenda

### Results

- HARD FACTS SCORE (average criteria 1–9): 4.6 / 10
- SOFT FACTS SCORE (average criteria 10–15): 4.5 / 10
- TOTAL SCORE (average all 15 criteria): 4.5 / 10

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## Dominant Techniques

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- 1. Omission / Selective Omission (Score 7):** The content of the Speech from the Throne and Budget Memorandum, the reaction of opposition parties and the perspective of asylum seekers are systematically omitted. This creates a structurally one-sided picture in which the cabinet is not substantively scrutinised and the opposition receives no voice.
- 2. Agenda-Setting (Score 6):** The broadcast establishes three dominant agenda elements — Budget Day as a celebration, the cabinet as trustworthy, Ter Apel as a logistical problem — that systematically keep political responsibility and critical perspectives out of view. This is the most subtle but structurally most influential technique in this broadcast.
- 3. Framing (Score 6):** The festive frame of Budget Day and the positive frame of the trust figures are established early in the broadcast and are not broken by critical information. The Ter Apel frame ("too busy") relieves the cabinet of political responsibility.

## Core Messages of the Broadcast

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**MESSAGE 1 (SUBSTANTIVE):** "The Schoof cabinet enjoys broad public trust and Budget Day is a positive popular celebration."

**Technique:** Framing + Agenda-Setting + Time Allocation — Evidence: 00:10–03:46, 03:08–04:28

**MESSAGE 2 (PERSONAL):** "Caroline van der Plas and BBB represent a positive, democratic force in Dutch politics."

**Technique:** Expert Selection + Question Asymmetry — Evidence: 05:45–07:01

**MESSAGE 3 (SOCIETAL):** "The asylum reception problems in Ter Apel are a logistical capacity problem, not a political policy problem."

**Technique:** Framing + Omission + Word Choice — Evidence: 07:13–09:30

Reasoning: The total score of 4.5/10 places this broadcast on the boundary between "mild tendency" and "clear one-sidedness". The main findings are structural in nature: the systematic absence of opposition parties, the selective presentation of trust figures and the frame of Budget Day as a celebration without policy content. These patterns are consistent and point to an editorial choice that favours the Schoof cabinet, without there being active disinformation or gross manipulation. In light of Media Act Art. 2.1, the absence of pluriform voices — in particular the opposition and asylum seekers — is the most concerning finding.

## CONCLUSION

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The NOS News of Budget Day 2024 does not fully meet the requirements of pluriform and balanced reporting as required by Media Act Art. 2.1. The broadcast has a strongly ceremonial character in which the content of the Budget Memorandum and the Speech from the Throne is completely absent, opposition parties receive no airtime and the situation in Ter Apel is presented as a logistical problem without political context. The trust figures are selectively presented in a way that maximises the increase and minimises the political context, with the comparison with a caretaker cabinet being methodologically problematic but not identified as such. The dominant frame of the broadcast — Budget Day as a celebration, the cabinet as trustworthy, Ter Apel as a capacity problem — is consistent and points to a structural editorial choice that favours the Schoof cabinet. Although the findings in themselves do not reach the threshold of "systematic bias", they together form a pattern that puts the pluriformity requirement of the Media Act under pressure.



## OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE 15 CRITERIA

### Individual scores — All 15 criteria

No.	Criterion	Score	Classification
1	EXPERT SELECTION	6	●●●
2	SOURCE SELECTION	5	●●●
3	TIME ALLOCATION	5	●●●
4	OMISSION (Selective Omission)	7	●●●●
5	FIGURE MANIPULATION	4	●●
6	GUILT BY ASSOCIATION	1	●
7	TIMING	4	●●
8	SELECTIVE INDIGNATION	2	●
9	COMPLETENESS (Selective Omission — Overall Picture)	7	●●●●
10	FRAMING (Setting the frame)	6	●●●
11	WORD CHOICE AND TERMINOLOGY	5	●●●
12	MODERATION BEHAVIOUR	4	●●
13	QUESTION ASYMMETRY	4	●●
14	FALSE BALANCE	2	●
15	AGENDA-SETTING	6	●●●

#### HARD FACTS SCORE (1-8)

**4.6/10**

*Considerable imbalance*

#### SOFT FACTS SCORE (9-14)

**4.5/10**

*Considerable imbalance*

#### TOTAL SCORE

**4.6/10**

*Considerable imbalance*

*Average of Hard Facts and Soft Facts*



## KEY — Meaning of the scores

### Individual scores per criterion (0–10)

<b>0</b>	<b>No finding</b>	No relevant deviation established.
<b>1–2</b>	<b>Weak finding</b>	Minor deviation without material impairment of balance.
<b>3–4</b>	<b>Minor to moderate finding</b>	Recognisable tendency; minor to moderate impact.
<b>5</b>	<b>Moderate finding with impact</b>	Relevant imbalance that affects the opinion-forming potential of the public.
<b>6</b>	<b>Considerable finding (threshold)</b>	Scores from 6 onwards are classified as 'considerable findings'.
<b>7</b>	<b>Considerable finding</b>	Clear, well-documented imbalance with clear impact.
<b>8–9</b>	<b>Serious finding</b>	Pronounced imbalance; multiple documented individual findings in this criterion.
<b>10</b>	<b>Maximum severity</b>	Systematic, ongoing imbalance in this criterion.

### Aggregated deviation index — Interpretation ranges

<b>0.0 – 2.5</b>	<b>Unremarkable</b>	No material patterns discernible; broadcast meets the balance requirement.
<b>2.6 – 4.0</b>	<b>Mild imbalance</b>	Isolated deviations; statistically visible, but within tolerance range.
<b>4.1 – 6.0</b>	<b>Considerable imbalance</b>	Multiple considerable findings; relevant impairment of diversity of perspectives.
<b>6.1 – 8.0</b>	<b>Serious deviation from the balance requirement. High degree of deviation</b>	Pronounced patterns across broadcasts; high impact.
<b>8.1 – 10</b>	<b>Fundamental systemic one-sidedness. Very high degree of bias</b>	Maximum severity across almost all criteria; systematically one-sided reporting.

### Party-political bias (-5 to +5)

<b>-5 to -3</b>	<b>Strongly disadvantaged</b>	Party is clearly disadvantaged in framing, airtime or presentation.
<b>-2 to -1</b>	<b>Mildly disadvantaged</b>	Recognisable but minor disadvantage.
<b>0</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	No discernible favouring or disadvantaging.
<b>+1 to +2</b>	<b>Mildly favoured</b>	Recognisable but minor favouring.
<b>+3 to +5</b>	<b>Strongly favoured</b>	Party is clearly favoured in framing, airtime or presentation.



## CHAPTER 5 — LEGAL FRAMEWORK (Media Act Art. 2.1)

### Assessment on the basis of Media Act Art. 2.1

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The Media Act requires pluriform, balanced and independent reporting by the public broadcaster.

#### Violation 1:

Norm: Media Act Art. 2.1 — Pluriformity

Factual description: Opposition parties (GL-PvdA, D66, SP and others) are given no voice whatsoever in a broadcast dedicated to Budget Day, the most politically significant day of the parliamentary year. Only a coalition member (Van der Plas, BBB) is interviewed about the political significance of the day.

Evidence: Timestamp 03:53–07:01 — Quote: "They are actually all very pleased about it. Both the opposition parties... who consider it important that trust is growing... but certainly also the coalition parties."

Assessment: The pluriformity requirement of Art. 2.1 requires that different political currents are covered. The paraphrasing of the opposition's reaction by a reporter without direct quotes from opposition parties does not meet this requirement, certainly not on a day like Budget Day.

#### Violation 2:

Norm: Media Act Art. 2.1 — Balance

Factual description: The trust figures are presented without methodological context and without independent contextualisation, while NOS itself is the client of the research. This creates a structural lack of independence in the reporting.

Evidence: Timestamp 03:08–03:46 — Quote: "That was researched by Ipsos I&O on behalf of NOS."

Assessment: NOS presents its own research as neutral news without naming the methodological limitations (comparison with caretaker cabinet, political explanation for increase among lower-educated citizens). This is contrary to the balance requirement of Art. 2.1.

#### Violation 3:

Norm: Media Act Art. 2.1 — Pluriformity and balance

Factual description: The situation in Ter Apel is presented without the political policy context (cabinet policy on asylum reception) and without the perspective of asylum seekers themselves. This leads to a one-sided presentation of a politically sensitive subject.

Evidence: Timestamp 07:13–09:30 — Quote: "It has been too busy at the registration centre for a long time."

Assessment: The absence of the cabinet's position, the perspective of asylum seekers and the broader policy context makes the reporting on Ter Apel structurally incomplete and therefore not in accordance with the pluriformity requirement.

### Overall Assessment Media Act Art. 2.1

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The NOS News of 17 September 2024 shows shortcomings in three respects with regard to the requirements of Media Act Art. 2.1: the absence of opposition parties on Budget Day (pluriformity), the presentation of own research as neutral news without methodological context (independence), and the one-sided framing of the Ter Apel situation as a logistical problem without political policy context (balance). These shortcomings are structural in nature and point to a consistent editorial pattern that favours the Schoof cabinet. Although the individual findings may in themselves be defensible as editorial choices, they together form a pattern that puts the pluriformity and balance requirement of Art. 2.1 under pressure. A formal complaint to the Media Authority could be admissible on the basis of these findings, with the burden of proof lying in demonstrating a structural pattern across multiple broadcasts.

### SOURCE DEPTH CHECK (Mandatory for all cited specialist bodies / NGOs / advisory bodies)

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#### 1. Ipsos I&O (trust survey, timestamp 03:08–03:46)

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- 1. FUNDING:** Ipsos I&O is a commercial research agency; the specific research is funded by NOS. NOS is a public broadcaster funded by the Dutch state.
- 2. MANDATE:** The mandate of Ipsos I&O is to conduct commissioned research; the framing and presentation are determined by the client (NOS). This is not per se incompatible with neutral execution, but the client-executor relationship creates a structural risk for the independence of the presentation.
- 3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** As a public broadcaster, NOS has an institutional interest in demonstrating public trust in political institutions (legitimising its own role). The choice to publish this research on Budget Day and present it prominently is an editorial choice that reflects this interest.
- 4. CREDIBILITY MATRIX (Source traffic light, 6D):**
  - D1 Conflict of interest: -1 — NOS as client and disseminator of own research
  - D2 Personal risk: +1 — Ipsos I&O has reputational interest in methodological quality
  - D3 Professional competence: +2 — Recognised research agency with proven methodology
  - D4 Opinion consistency: +1 — Consistent research agency
  - D5 Emotionalisation vs. data: +1 — Data-driven, but presentation by NOS is interpretive
  - D6 Source level: +1 — Primary research, but commissioned by disseminator
- **TOTAL: +5 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: GREEN** (for the research itself; the presentation by NOS is YELLOW)
- 5. COUNTERVOICE:** An independent political scientist (e.g. from the SCP or a university) could have contextualised the findings. This is completely absent.

IMPORTANT: "Recognised research agency" is not a substantive qualification for the independence of the presentation. NOS presents its own research as neutral news; this is a social attribution that must itself be critically assessed.

## 2. ANP (General Dutch News Agency, timestamp 08:15–08:23)

- 1. FUNDING:** ANP is a cooperative news agency, funded by a consortium of Dutch media companies (including NOS, RTL, DPG Media). No direct state funding.
- 2. MANDATE:** The mandate of ANP is to provide factual news reports; this is compatible with neutral reporting on the situation in Ter Apel.
- 3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** No direct structural interest in a particular outcome in the asylum dossier.
- 4. CREDIBILITY MATRIX:**
  - D1 Conflict of interest: +1 — No direct interest
  - D2 Personal risk: +1 — Reputational interest in factual accuracy
  - D3 Professional competence: +2 — Professional news agency
  - D4 Opinion consistency: +2 — Consistently factual
  - D5 Emotionalisation vs. data: +2 — Factual
  - D6 Source level: +1 — Primary news source
- **TOTAL: +9 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: GREEN**
- 5. COUNTERVOICE:** Not applicable; ANP is used for factual confirmation, not for interpretation.

### Source traffic light for participants:

Source	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Total	Signal
Ipsos I&O (trust survey, timestamp 03:08–03:46)	-1	+1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+5	GREEN
ANP (General Dutch News Agency, timestamp 08:15–08:23)	+1	+1	+2	+2	+2	+1	+9	GREEN

### Legal and methodological notes

#### No factual determination

The presented results do not constitute factual determinations about individual persons, editorial teams or broadcasts. They are the product of a standardised operationalisation, not a determination of individual responsibility.



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**No legal ruling**

The aggregated deviation index does not replace a legal assessment on the basis of Media Act 2008 Art. 2.1. The assessment of whether a specific broadcast violates statutory requirements is exclusively the responsibility of the competent authorities (in particular the Media Authority).

**No proof of causality**

Statistical correlations must not be interpreted as proof of causal relationships or editorial intentions. Deviation values may be influenced by subject choice, news environment, political controversiality or format logic.

**No judgement on intent**

The analysis measures observable structural characteristics of broadcasts. A score of 7 means that a considerable imbalance has been established — not that the editorial team intended this. The methodology makes no statements about motives or strategic objectives.

**Heuristic comparison instrument**

The index serves for comparative pattern recognition across thousands of broadcasts, not for precise metric measurement of individual contributions. Threshold values serve as heuristic orientation, not as sharp legal qualification.



## APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL LEGISLATION

### Legal basis Netherlands — NPO

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#### Act

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Media Act 2008

#### Relevant articles

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- Art. 2.1 (Public media mandate): The public media service provides independent, pluriform, balanced information of high journalistic quality. The public media service contributes to the democratic, social and cultural needs of Dutch society.
- Art. 2.1 paragraph 2: The public media service reflects the societal diversity of the Netherlands.
- Art. 2.88: Editorial independence and journalistic standards are guaranteed. The programmes are made under the editorial responsibility of the broadcasting associations.

#### Core obligations

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1. **Independence:** Independent provision of information
2. **Pluriformity:** Pluriform reporting
3. **Balance:** Balanced information of high journalistic quality
4. **Societal diversity:** Reflection of Dutch society

#### Supervisory authority

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- Media Authority (CvdM): Media supervision, compliance with Media Act
- NPO Ombudsman: Internal complaints body

#### Complaints procedure

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1. NPO Ombudsman
2. Media Authority
3. Court (administrative court)



## APPENDIX 2: SCIENTIFIC SOURCES

### Literature

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### SVFAB Working Papers

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- Schläpfer, D. (2026). Systematic AI-Assisted Analysis of Public Broadcaster Impartiality: A Scalable Methodological Framework for Measuring Structural Bias in Public Service Media. [SSRN 6688478](#)
- Schläpfer, D. (2026). Measuring Editorial Noise: A Retrospective Suppression Index for Public Broadcasting Content Analysis. [SSRN 6733280](#)
- Schläpfer, D. (2026). Source Traffic Light: A Six-Dimensional Credibility Framework for Systematic Source Assessment in Public Service Media. [SSRN 6733880](#)

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**Unbalanced reporting** is the response to the halving initiative in Switzerland: here the manipulation techniques are explained in detail, starting with the selection of staff and source selection. Subsequently, 15 principles are explained: omission, framing, temporal framing, guilt by association, emotionalisation, context removal and much more, illustrated with numerous examples. Moreover, it becomes visible where we ourselves apply these techniques — this promotes not only insight but also empathy.

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The interview is not a conversation. It is a stage — and someone else has written the script.

Those who do not know this provide material. Good quotes that are cut incorrectly. Correct statements that end up in the wrong context. Honest answers that are framed as confessions.

This book is not a media criticism book. It is a toolbox — for everyone who has a microphone in front of them and wants to know what they can do about it. 7 chapters. 7 tools: What an interview really is. The 7 most common pitfalls. The three basic principles of sovereignty — anchoring, reframing, setting boundaries. Preparation in one hour. Body and voice. What to do when things go wrong. And what counts after the interview.

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**You think you see the world.** In reality you see the frame that someone has placed around it. Framing is the oldest and most elegant manipulation technique in the world. It does not change the facts — it changes what we make of the facts. How we feel. What we believe. How we decide. And it works — because we all participate. Daily. Unconsciously. You too. This book is not a dry textbook. It is a workbook — playful, direct, full of examples from real life. You learn not only how others frame you. You learn how you yourself frame — and how you can use it consciously and fairly.

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With many exercises and concrete examples from politics, media and everyday life — and an occasional smile.

**Framing with style. Because the frame changes everything.**