



SABC DETAILED ANALYSIS

20240531_2024 Elections / Parties demands answers for election results blackout.en

Broadcast: SABC-Sendung | Analyzed: 2026-05-25 10:16

Version 3.0-detail | Universal 3.0-detail | Konverter 3.4 (2026-05-20) | Standard: Broadcasting Act s. 6

OVERALL SCORE

4.1/10

Significant imbalance

0 = balanced, 10 = strongly biased/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	EFF	MK	ANC	IFP	DA	ActionSA	PA	FF+
CHES	1.50	3.50	4.50	6.00	6.50	6.50	7.00	8.00
Spectrum	<i>Left</i>	<i>Left</i>	<i>Center</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>

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

TENDENCY (L – R)

5.6 / 10

Balanced

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

← Left

Right →

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

This section provides political context and does not contribute to the overall score.



POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Document Reference: SABC-ELEC-2024-001

Methodological Standard: K11+K8 (Trigger Event Documentation)

Legal Framework: Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999, s. 6; BCCSA Code Clauses 16, 18

South Africa has been governed since 29 May 2024 by a Government of National Unity (GNU) — a broad coalition led by the ANC after losing its 30-year parliamentary majority for the first time since 1994. The GNU is anchored by the historic ANC–DA partnership, supplemented by IFP, PA, FF+, and five smaller parties, commanding approximately 287 of 400 National Assembly seats.

The main opposition outside the GNU consists of Jacob Zuma's MK party (58 seats, 14.6%), Julius Malema's EFF (39 seats, 9.5%), ActionSA (6 seats), and the ACDP (3 seats).

Party	CHES L-R (est.)	Seats	Gov/Opposition	Core Position
EFF	1.5	39	Opposition	Far-left; land expropriation, nationalisation
PAC	2.0	1	GNU	Left-wing Pan-Africanism
MK	3.0	58	Opposition	Left-populist; Zuma personality cult
ANC	4.0	159	GNU (lead)	Centre-left; broad church
UDM	4.5	3	GNU	Centre-left; rural base
Rise Mzansi	4.5	2	GNU	Centre-left progressive
GOOD	4.5	1	GNU	Centre-left progressive
Al Jama-ah	4.0	2	GNU	Left economics, socially conservative
DA	6.0	87	GNU	Centre-right; free market, liberal
ActionSA	6.5	6	Opposition	Centre-right; anti-immigration
IFP	6.5	17	GNU	Right-wing; Zulu nationalist
PA	7.0	9	GNU	Right-wing populist
ACDP	7.5	3	Opposition	Right-wing Christian conservative
FF+	8.0	6	GNU	Right-wing; Afrikaner interest

The 2024 election produced a seismic realignment: the ANC's collapse below 50% and the MK party's unexpected surge of 14.6% fundamentally altered the political landscape. The GNU coalition between historic rivals ANC and DA creates constant editorial tension for SABC, which must cover both as governing partners while maintaining independence. The MK party and EFF, representing radical populist opposition from the left, raised formal objections to the electoral process — making IEC coverage particularly politically charged. SABC's own history of political capture during the Motsoeneng era (2012–2016) means its editorial independence remains a live political question.

The SABC is South Africa's public broadcaster, mandated under the Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999 and its own Charter to provide impartial, accurate, and fair coverage of public affairs. Section 6 of the Act requires the SABC to serve all South Africans and to reflect the full diversity of political opinion. The BCCSA Code, Clauses 16 and 18, specifically



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

requires news to be reported in correct context, in a balanced manner, and that opposing views on controversial matters of public importance be presented. Given SABC's history of ANC-aligned capture, its election night coverage is subject to heightened scrutiny.



CHAPTER 1 — PARTY-POLITICAL BIAS

Party	Score (-5..+5)	Broadcast Representation vs. Programme Position
ANC	+1	03:24 "the ANC is below 50%" — stated as factual electoral outcome without editorial framing; programme position (centre-left governance) neither endorsed nor distorted — accurate/neutral
DA	+2	02:44 "the DA is probably sitting right now at over 2.3 million votes cast and of course they're actually leading the PEC in the multi-party charter" — DA's electoral performance reported positively with specific vote figures; no equivalent detail given for ANC or MK — slightly favourable, minor imbalance
MK (uMkhonto)	-1	01:08 "we saw a statement there by the EFF as well as the MK party...basically just lamenting" — MK's substantive electoral objections characterised as "lamenting" (pejorative framing); MK's 14.6% result not contextualised as historic breakthrough — mildly distorted
EFF	-1	01:08 "the EFF as well as the MK party...basically just lamenting the fact that if this could happen how could the IEC then ensure that they safeguard the integrity of the electoral process" — EFF's legitimate procedural concern framed as complaint rather than substantive challenge — mildly distorted
IFP	0	Not mentioned — not in broadcast
PA	0	Not mentioned — not in broadcast
FF+	0	Not mentioned — not in broadcast
ActionSA	-1	02:57 "he did concede however that the party did not do as well as they expected" — ActionSA's underperformance highlighted; however, Mashaba's framing of the multi-party charter goal as "keep the EFF government out of power" (03:28) reported without challenge or contextualisation — minor distortion by omission

Score Legend:

+5 = Programme positions correctly and fully represented

0 = Party/topic not in broadcast

-5 = Programme positions actively distorted or misrepresented

Party Bias Summary

- Most Accurate Representation: ANC (Score +1) — mentioned factually as electoral outcome
- Strongest Distortion: MK and EFF (Score -1 each) — legitimate procedural objections characterised as "lamenting"
- Average Deviation from 0: 0.75
- Finding: The broadcast exhibits a mild but measurable tendency to frame opposition parties' (MK, EFF) procedural concerns dismissively while reporting DA electoral performance with specific, favourable detail. The characterisation of MK/EFF objections as "lamenting" at 01:08 contrasts with the neutral-to-positive framing of ActionSA and DA positions at 02:44–03:35.



CHAPTER 2 — BROADCAST INFORMATION AND THEMATIC FRAMING

Broadcast Data

- Title: SABC Rolling Election Coverage — National Results Operations Centre
- Date: 29–30 May 2024 (inferred from electoral context; 2024 general election results night)
- Estimated Length: Approximately 4 minutes 3 seconds (excerpt)
- Presenter/Anchor: Fundo (anchor, studio)
- Reporter: Natasha Peri (on the floor, Results Centre); Ayong (at IEC KAT10 — mentioned but not heard in this excerpt)

Actors	Function	Party/Affiliation	Political Spectrum
Fundo	Studio anchor	SABC (public broadcaster)	Neutral (institutional)
Natasha Peri	Floor reporter	SABC (public broadcaster)	Neutral (institutional)
Mr. Saabu (referenced)	IEC CEO	IEC (independent electoral body)	Non-partisan (institutional)
Mr. M (referenced, IEC Chair)	IEC Chairperson	IEC	Non-partisan (institutional)
John Steenhuisen (referenced)	DA Federal Leader	DA (GNU, centre-right)	Centre-right (6.0)
Helen (referenced, Federal Council Chair)	DA Federal Council Chair	DA (GNU, centre-right)	Centre-right (6.0)
Herman Mashaba (referenced)	ActionSA Leader	ActionSA (opposition, centre-right)	Centre-right (6.5)
EFF (referenced, no named spokesperson)	Political party	EFF (opposition, far-left)	Far-left (1.5)
MK party (referenced, no named spokesperson)	Political party	MK (opposition, left-populist)	Left-populist (3.0)

Main Topic

A rolling news update on the progress of South Africa's 2024 general election results capture, covering IEC operational issues (leaderboard display failure, objections), and initial political party reactions to emerging results.

World-Knowledge Context

The 29 May 2024 South African general election was the most consequential since 1994, with the ANC losing its parliamentary majority for the first time. The IEC's results management system came under scrutiny from multiple parties, particularly MK and EFF, who raised formal objections. The multi-party charter — a pre-election alliance of DA, ActionSA, IFP, and others — had explicitly campaigned to reduce ANC dominance and exclude the EFF from government. The HSRC (Human Sciences Research Council) conducted an independent survey of voting station conditions. The IEC's leaderboard display failure, even if technically non-critical, was politically sensitive given the high-stakes environment and the history of electoral disputes in South Africa.



CHAPTER 3 — 15 CRITERIA: DETAILED ANALYSIS

Hard Facts — 9 techniques that are countable and scientifically verifiable

1. EXPERT SELECTION

5/10

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Expert 1: Mr. Saabu — IEC CEO (referenced, not directly interviewed)

Timestamp	00:39
Statement	"the IEC CEO Mr Saabu saying that the leaderboard did not crash uh but instead it could not display results for more or less or so 2 hours"
Classification	IEC CEO — institutional head of the body whose performance is under scrutiny; structural conflict of interest in self-assessment.

Missing Counter-Voice: Independent technical expert or electoral observer to verify or challenge IEC's self-assessment.

Source Depth Check:

(a) FUNDING: IEC is a constitutionally independent body funded by the South African state. Structural interest: institutional reputation protection; incentive to minimise perception of failure.

(b) MANDATE: IEC's mandate is electoral administration — not neutral self-assessment of its own operational failures. Conflict of interest is inherent.

D1 Conflict of Interest: -2 — IEC CEO assessing IEC's own performance; direct institutional interest in minimising failure narrative.

D2 Personal Risk: -1 — CEO faces reputational risk if failure is acknowledged; incentive to downplay.

D3 Subject Competence: +2 — Technically competent on IEC systems.

D4 Opinion Consistency: 0 — No prior statements available in transcript for comparison.

D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data: +1 — Statement is technical and relatively data-oriented.

D6 Source Level: +1 — Primary institutional source, though self-referential.

TOTAL: +1 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW (-4 to +4)

(c) PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE: an institutionally interested party is framed as a neutral technical authority.

Expert 2: Mr. M — IEC Chairperson (referenced, not directly interviewed)

Timestamp	01:36
Statement	"Mr M by the IEC chair just basically telling members of the media that objections were raised with the commission 36 objections were raised with the commission of which 15 have now been dealt with"
Classification	IEC Chairperson — same structural conflict of interest as CEO.

Missing Counter-Voice: Electoral law expert; party legal representatives who filed objections.

Source Depth Check:



(a) **FUNDING:** State-funded constitutional body.

(b) **MANDATE:** Administers elections — not neutral arbiter of complaints against itself.

D1 Conflict of Interest: -2 — Chairperson reporting on objections filed against his own commission.

D2 Personal Risk: -1 — Reputational stake in minimising objection significance.

D3 Subject Competence: +2 — Authoritative on IEC procedures.

D4 Opinion Consistency: 0 — No prior statements in transcript.

D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data: +2 — Specific figures cited (36 objections, 15 resolved).

D6 Source Level: +1 — Primary institutional source.

TOTAL: +2 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW

(c) **PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE:** The IEC Chair's framing of objections as largely resolved is presented without challenge — the 21 unresolved objections receive no scrutiny.

Expert 3: Herman Mashaba — ActionSA Leader (referenced, not directly interviewed)

Timestamp	02:57
Statement	"he did concede however that the party did not do as well as they expected to do...he was happy that the goal...was to keep the ANC below 50% and keep the EFF government out of power"
Classification	Opposition party leader — explicitly partisan; no pretence of neutrality.

Missing Counter-Voice: EFF response to being characterised as a party to be "kept out of power."

Source Depth Check:

(a) **FUNDING:** ActionSA — privately funded political party.

(b) **MANDATE:** Partisan political actor; no claim to neutrality.

D1 Conflict of Interest: -2 — Direct partisan interest in framing results favourably.

D2 Personal Risk: 0 — Standard political commentary.

D3 Subject Competence: +1 — Competent on his own party's position.

D4 Opinion Consistency: +1 — Consistent with multi-party charter stated goals.

D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data: 0 — Mix of data (vote counts) and political framing.

D6 Source Level: +1 — Primary source for his own party's position.

TOTAL: +1 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW

(c) **PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE:** Mashaba's partisan framing of the EFF as a threat to be excluded is reported without editorial challenge or EFF response — partisan statement treated as neutral political commentary.

Missing Expert Groups:

- Independent electoral observers (EISA, AU, SADC)
- Electoral law academics
- Opposition party (MK, EFF) named spokespersons

Source Credibility Overview:

Source	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Total	Signal
Mr. Saabu — IEC CEO (referenced, not directly interviewed)	-2	-1	+2	0	+1	+1	+1	YELLOW
Mr. M — IEC Chairperson (referenced, not directly interviewed)	-2	-1	+2	0	+2	+1	+2	YELLOW
Herman Mashaba — ActionSA Leader (referenced, not directly interviewed)	-2	0	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	YELLOW



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

Summary (Matrix Results):

- Mr. Saabu (IEC CEO): YELLOW (+1) — institutionally interested self-assessor presented as neutral authority
- Mr. M (IEC Chair): YELLOW (+2) — same structural conflict; objection resolution figures unverified
- Herman Mashaba (ActionSA): YELLOW (+1) — partisan actor; anti-EFF framing unchallenged



2. SOURCE SELECTION

5/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Claims without primary source = penalty points (rumour check)

Source 1: IEC (self-reporting)

Timestamp 00:39 — Statement: "the leaderboard did not crash uh but instead it could not display results"

(a) Funding and governance: State-funded constitutional body.

(b) Structural conflict of interest: IEC is assessing its own operational performance — direct institutional interest in minimising failure narrative.

(c) Missing counter-source: Independent technical audit; EISA observer report; party agents' accounts.

Source 2: HSRC Survey (referenced without detail)

Timestamp 01:55 — Statement: "the HSRC uh you know survey...found that the long queues were not as a result of a lot of people actually coming out to the voting stations but uh it alludes to the fact of uh you know the IEC having glitches"

(a) Funding: HSRC is a South African statutory research body, state-funded.

(b) Structural conflict of interest: State-funded body assessing state-administered election — potential institutional alignment; however, HSRC has research independence mandate.

(c) Missing counter-source: The HSRC findings are paraphrased imprecisely ("alludes to the fact") without citation of the actual report, methodology, or sample size. No independent verification.

Source 3: Multi-party charter parties (DA, ActionSA — referenced)

Timestamp 02:25 — Statement: "we spoke to John Steenhuisen earlier on...she has indicated to me that the multi-party charter parties...will be discussing...the way forward"

(a) Funding: Political parties — privately and publicly funded.

(b) Structural conflict of interest: Multi-party charter parties have direct interest in framing their electoral performance positively.

(c) Missing counter-source: No equivalent sourcing from ANC, MK, or EFF on coalition discussions.

Rumour Check (Penalty Points):

Rumour 1:

Timestamp: 01:23

Claim: "we do suspect that the IEC has actually raised the issue uh with the EFF"

Word marker: "we do suspect"

Primary source present: NO — Penalty point applied (+1)

Rumour 2:

Timestamp: 02:44

Claim: "the DA is probably sitting right now at over 2.3 million votes cast"

Word marker: "probably"



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

Primary source present: Partially — vote count figures were available from IEC feed, but "probably" introduces uncertainty without sourcing — Penalty point applied (+1)

Penalty points applied: +2

Adjusted Score: 5/10

Summary: Source selection is heavily weighted toward IEC self-reporting and multi-party charter parties, with no independent electoral observer, no named MK or EFF spokesperson, and HSRC findings paraphrased imprecisely. Two unverified claims identified.



3. AIRTIME DISTRIBUTION

4/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Estimated airtime:

- Natasha Peri (SABC reporter): approximately 3 min 20 sec (82%) — dominates segment
- Fundo (anchor): approximately 40 sec (16%) — questions and handover
- IEC positions (via reporter relay): approximately 1 min 10 sec of Natasha's time (29% of total)
- DA/ActionSA/multi-party charter (via reporter relay): approximately 1 min 20 sec of Natasha's time (33% of total)
- MK/EFF (via reporter relay): approximately 15 sec of Natasha's time (6% of total)
- ANC: 0 sec direct or relayed (0%)
- Other parties (IFP, PA, FF+, GOOD, etc.): 0 sec (0%)

Summary: The airtime distribution is significantly skewed toward DA and ActionSA (multi-party charter bloc) relative to MK and EFF, who receive approximately one-fifth the relay time despite MK being the second-largest party in the election. ANC, despite being the largest single party, receives no substantive airtime in this segment.



4. SELECTIVE OMISSION

6/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Omission 1:

Context

The specific content of MK party's and EFF's objections to the IEC is entirely absent.

Relevant at: 01:08

Effect

By characterising objections as "lamenting" without detailing their substance, the broadcast implies the objections are emotional rather than substantive, potentially delegitimising the second and third largest opposition parties' legal challenges.

Omission 2:

Context

The 21 unresolved objections (of 36 total) receive no scrutiny.

Relevant at: 01:42 — Quote: "36 objections were raised with the commission of which 15 have now been dealt with"

Effect

The IEC Chair's framing that 15 have been "dealt with" is accepted without noting that 21 remain unresolved — a significant omission in a contested election environment.

Omission 3:

Context

ANC's response to its historic loss of majority is entirely absent from this segment.

Relevant at: Throughout segment

Effect

The governing party — which received 39.8% of the vote and remains the largest single party — has no voice in a segment that discusses coalition discussions and electoral outcomes, creating a distorted picture of the political landscape.

Summary: Three significant omissions collectively suppress the substantive content of opposition objections, obscure the scale of unresolved IEC complaints, and exclude the largest party from its own election night coverage.

Missing Voices

- MK party spokesperson: Would have provided the specific content of MK's 36 objections and their legal basis under the Electoral Act.
- EFF spokesperson: Would have detailed EFF's specific concerns about IEC process integrity beyond the dismissive "lamenting" characterisation.
- EISA (Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa) observer: Would have provided independent, non-partisan assessment of IEC operational performance.
- ANC spokesperson: Would have provided the governing party's official response to its historic loss of majority and coalition intentions.
- Legal expert (electoral law): Would have contextualised the significance of 36 objections — whether this is normal, elevated, or alarming by historical standards.



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

- HSRC researcher: Would have provided the full survey methodology and findings rather than a paraphrased summary.
- Voter/civil society representative: Would have provided ground-level perspective on confidence in the electoral process.
- IFP/PA/FF+ spokesperson: Would have represented the views of smaller GNU partners on results and coalition discussions.



5. NUMERICAL MANIPULATION

3/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Complete figures include: absolute value, proportion (%) and trend

Finding 1:

Timestamp 02:44

Number: "the DA is probably sitting right now at over 2.3 million votes cast"

Dimensions: (a) Absolute value — provided ✓; (b) Proportion — NOT provided (2.3 million of how many total votes cast? What percentage?); (c) Trend — NOT provided (how does this compare to DA's 2019 result?)

Missing context

DA's 2019 result was approximately 3.6 million votes (22.2%). If 2024 result is 2.3 million, this represents a significant decline — a fact omitted entirely.

Effect

Presenting the raw vote figure without percentage or trend creates a misleadingly positive impression of DA performance.

Finding 2:

Timestamp 03:03

Number: "ActionSA is currently sitting at over 113,000 votes"

Dimensions: (a) Absolute value — provided ✓; (b) Proportion — NOT provided; (c) Trend — partially addressed ("did not do as well as they expected")

Missing context

ActionSA's 2021 local government performance and 2024 expectations not quantified; 113,000 votes represents approximately 0.7% of the national vote — context that would clarify the scale of underperformance.

Effect

The absolute figure without proportion obscures the marginal nature of ActionSA's result.

Finding 3:

Timestamp 01:42

Number: "36 objections were raised with the commission of which 15 have now been dealt with"

Dimensions: (a) Absolute value — provided ✓; (b) Proportion — partially (15/36 = 42% resolved); (c) Trend — NOT provided (is 36 objections normal, elevated, or unprecedented for a South African general election?)

Missing context

Historical baseline for IEC objections in previous elections not provided; "dealt with" not defined (resolved in favour of complainant? dismissed? pending?).

Effect

"15 have been dealt with" sounds reassuring without establishing whether this is adequate or whether the 21 unresolved objections are significant.

Summary: Three instances of incomplete statistical presentation identified, all tending to create more favourable impressions of IEC performance and DA/multi-party charter results than full contextualisation would support.



6. GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

2/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Association 1:

Timestamp

03:28

Quote

"one of the main tenants of the multi-party charter was to keep or uh keep the ANC below 50% and keep the EFF government out of power"

Technique: The EFF is framed as a threat to be "kept out of power" — a characterisation originating from ActionSA's Mashaba, reported without editorial challenge or EFF response.

Effect

The EFF, as the third-largest party with 9.5% of the vote, is implicitly positioned as an illegitimate political actor whose exclusion from government is a positive electoral outcome — without any EFF voice to contest this framing.

No conspiracy theorist framing identified in this segment. No association chains identified.

Summary: One mild guilt-by-association instance identified — the EFF is framed as a political threat through unchallenged relay of ActionSA's partisan characterisation, without EFF response or editorial contextualisation.



7. TIMING

3/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Finding 1:

Position: 00:27 (opening — first substantive content)

Content: "among the issues the IEC has addressed the issue with the leaderboard a bit earlier on in the morning saying it didn't crash but rather it didn't display the figures"

Timing Effect: The segment opens with the IEC's own exculpatory framing of the leaderboard failure — "it didn't crash" — before any opposition objections are mentioned. This sequencing primes the audience to accept the IEC's self-assessment before encountering the parties' concerns, structurally advantaging the IEC's narrative.

Finding 2:

Position: 03:20 (closing — final substantive content)

Content: "he says that he is elated uh yes he wouldn't take all the victory to himself uh to say that the ANC is below 50%"

Timing Effect: The segment closes on a note of celebration from the multi-party charter perspective — Mashaba's elation at ANC's decline. This closing emotional beat frames the overall segment's conclusion in terms favourable to the centre-right opposition bloc, with no equivalent closing sentiment from ANC, MK, or EFF.

Summary: The segment's opening and closing are both structured to favour the IEC's self-exculpatory narrative and the multi-party charter's celebratory framing, respectively — a mild but measurable timing asymmetry.



8. SELECTIVE OUTRAGE

2/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Outrage = bias. Selective outrage amplifies the finding. Score = outrage level (0–5) + selectivity (0–5)

Methodological Standard (v3.0): The trigger event must be documented before any assessment. A reaction can only be assessed as selective if comparable triggers from other positions produced no analogous reaction.

Finding 1:

Timestamp 01:08

Trigger Event: MK party and EFF raise formal objections to IEC process integrity following leaderboard display failure.

Reaction: "basically just lamenting the fact that if this could happen how could the IEC then ensure that they safeguard the integrity of the electoral process"

Comparison

ActionSA's Herman Mashaba raises concerns about MK party's unexpected surge at 03:12 — "no political party actually saw this coming" — reported neutrally, without the "lamenting" characterisation.

Asymmetry: Confirmed — MK/EFF procedural objections characterised as "lamenting" (emotionally dismissive); ActionSA's political surprise at MK's performance characterised neutrally. Comparable expressions of concern receive different editorial treatment based on political alignment.

Outrage Degree: 1/5 — mild dismissiveness rather than overt outrage

Selectivity: 2/5 — clear asymmetry between treatment of left-opposition concerns vs. centre-right concerns

Summary: A mild but documentable asymmetry exists in the emotional characterisation of MK/EFF objections ("lamenting") versus the neutral treatment of ActionSA's political concerns — the trigger events are comparable (parties expressing concern about unexpected electoral developments) but the editorial framing differs.



9. SELECTIVE OMISSION — OVERALL PICTURE

6/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Finding 1:

Timestamp 01:08

Missing Perspective/Fact: The substantive content of MK party's and EFF's formal objections to the IEC.

Relevance: MK (14.6%) and EFF (9.5%) together represent 24.1% of the electorate — nearly a quarter of South African voters. Their formal legal objections to the electoral process are matters of significant public importance under the Electoral Act.

Impact

Without the substance of these objections, the audience cannot assess whether the concerns are legitimate procedural issues or political posturing — the "lamenting" framing forecloses this assessment.

Finding 2:

Timestamp Throughout segment

Missing Perspective/Fact: ANC's official response to results and coalition discussions.

Relevance: The ANC received 39.8% of the vote — the largest single share — and is the lead party in the GNU. Its response to its historic loss of majority is the central political story of the election.

Impact

A rolling election broadcast that covers DA, ActionSA, and multi-party charter reactions while entirely omitting ANC response creates a structurally incomplete picture of the political landscape.

Finding 3:

Timestamp 01:42

Missing Perspective/Fact: Definition of "dealt with" in relation to the 15 resolved objections; status and content of the 21 unresolved objections.

Relevance: In a contested election, the resolution status of formal objections is legally and politically significant. "Dealt with" could mean resolved in favour of the complainant, dismissed, or deferred.

Impact

The audience is left with a reassuring but undefined statistic that may not accurately reflect the state of electoral dispute resolution.

Summary: Three systematic omissions collectively suppress the substantive content of opposition legal challenges, exclude the largest party from its own election night coverage, and leave a key IEC statistic undefined — producing a materially incomplete picture of the electoral situation.

Share of covered perspectives

Inverted: original value measures coverage (higher = better). Shown as deviation (higher = larger gaps).

[A] IEC's technical explanation of the leaderboard failure and its impact on result integrity

[B] MK party's specific, substantive objections to the electoral process (beyond "lamenting")

[C] EFF's specific, substantive objections to the electoral process (beyond "lamenting")



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

- [D] ANC's official response to emerging results and coalition discussions
 - [E] DA's official position on coalition negotiations (beyond vote count)
 - [F] Independent electoral observer organisations (OSCE equivalent, EISA) on process integrity
 - [G] HSRC survey findings in full:** what specifically did the survey find about queue lengths and IEC glitches?
 - [H] Civil society/voter perspective on the leaderboard failure and confidence in results
 - [I] Legal experts on the significance of 36 objections (15 resolved) under Electoral Act
 - [J] Smaller GNU parties' (IFP, PA, FF+) reactions to results
- ### Assessment: Was Each Perspective Addressed?

[A] ADDRESSED

Timestamp: 00:39 — Quote: "the leaderboard did not crash uh but instead it could not display results for more or less or so 2 hours" — Assessment: IEC's technical explanation provided but not independently verified or challenged.

[B] OMITTED

Timestamp: 01:08 — Quote: "the MK party...basically just lamenting" — Assessment: MK's specific objections not detailed; characterised dismissively without substantive content.

[C] OMITTED

Timestamp: 01:08 — Quote: "the EFF as well as the MK party...basically just lamenting" — Assessment: EFF's specific objections not detailed; same dismissive framing applied.

[D] OMITTED

No timestamp available — Assessment: ANC's official response to results and coalition discussions entirely absent from this segment.

[E] PARTIALLY ADDRESSED

Timestamp: 02:44 — Quote: "the DA is probably sitting right now at over 2.3 million votes cast" — Assessment: Vote count reported but coalition negotiation position not substantively explored.

[F] OMITTED

No timestamp available — Assessment: No independent electoral observer perspective included.

[G] PARTIALLY ADDRESSED

Timestamp: 01:55 — Quote: "the HSRC uh you know survey...found that the long queues were not as a result of a lot of people actually coming out to the voting stations but uh it alludes to the fact of uh you know the IEC having glitches" — Assessment: HSRC findings referenced but not detailed or independently contextualised.

[H] OMITTED

No timestamp available — Assessment: No voter or civil society perspective on confidence in results.

[I] OMITTED

Timestamp: 01:42 — Quote: "36 objections were raised with the commission of which 15 have now been dealt with" — Assessment: Figures cited but no legal expert commentary on significance or implications.

[J] OMITTED

No timestamp available — Assessment: IFP, PA, FF+, and other GNU partners entirely absent from coverage.



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

Completeness Score: 3/10

Reasoning: Of ten relevant perspectives, only two are substantively addressed (IEC technical explanation, DA vote count) and two are partially addressed (HSRC findings, DA coalition position). Six perspectives are entirely absent, including the substantive content of MK and EFF objections, ANC's response, independent observer views, legal expert commentary on objections, and smaller party reactions. For a rolling election broadcast, this represents a significant completeness deficit.



Soft Facts — 6 qualitative techniques

10. FRAMING

5/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Finding 1:

Timestamp

00:27

Quote

"the leaderboard did not crash but rather it didn't display the figures"

Manipulation

The IEC's own semantic distinction ("didn't crash" vs. "couldn't display") is adopted uncritically as the broadcast's framing of the technical failure. This is the IEC's preferred minimising language, not an independent editorial assessment.

Why problematic

The functional difference between "crashing" and "failing to display results for 2 hours" is negligible from a public confidence perspective — but the language choice significantly affects how the audience perceives the severity of the failure.

Finding 2:

Timestamp

03:22

Quote

"he says that he is elated uh yes he wouldn't take all the victory to himself uh to say that the ANC is below 50%"

Manipulation

The ANC's historic loss of majority is framed through the lens of multi-party charter celebration — "elated," "victory." This frames a complex democratic development (coalition government) as a win for one political bloc.

Why problematic

The same development could be framed as a democratic maturation, a voter mandate for coalition governance, or a crisis of ANC legitimacy — the celebratory framing forecloses these alternative interpretations.

Finding 3:

Timestamp

01:08

Quote

"basically just lamenting the fact that if this could happen how could the IEC then ensure that they safeguard the integrity of the electoral process"

Manipulation

The word "lamenting" frames MK/EFF's formal procedural objections as emotional grievance rather than substantive legal challenge. The reporter's paraphrase ("basically just lamenting") editorialises the nature of the objection before its content is even described.

Why problematic

Formal objections to an electoral commission are legal instruments, not laments. The framing preemptively delegitimises the objections without examining their substance.



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

Summary: Three framing instances collectively construct a narrative in which the IEC's failures are minimised, the multi-party charter's results are celebrated, and opposition objections are emotionally dismissed — a coherent but editorially partial frame.



11. WORD CHOICE AND TERMINOLOGY									5/10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Finding 1:	
Timestamp	01:08
Quote	"basically just lamenting"
Manipulation	"Lamenting" connotes grief, complaint, and emotional reaction — not substantive legal challenge. "Basically just" further minimises the significance of the objections.
Why problematic	Neutral alternative would be: "raising concerns about" or "formally objecting to" — language that preserves the legal and procedural character of the parties' actions.

Finding 2:	
Timestamp	03:28
Quote	"keep the EFF government out of power"
Manipulation	"Keep the EFF...out of power" frames the EFF as a threat to be contained rather than a legitimate political party competing for democratic representation.
Why problematic	Neutral alternative would be: "prevent the EFF from entering government" or "ensure the EFF does not form part of the governing coalition" — language that does not carry the threat-containment connotation.

Finding 3:	
Timestamp	00:44
Quote	"it could not display results for more or less or so 2 hours"
Manipulation	"More or less or so" is imprecise hedging language that softens the duration of the failure. The triple hedge ("more or less or so") is unusual and suggests either uncertainty or deliberate minimisation.
Why problematic	Neutral alternative would be: "for approximately two hours" — precise and without the softening effect of triple hedging.

Summary: Word choice consistently favours minimising language for IEC failures and opposition objections, while adopting the multi-party charter's own celebratory framing for electoral outcomes — a pattern of language asymmetry that reinforces the broadcast's overall directional lean.



12. MODERATION BEHAVIOUR

3/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Methodological Standard (v3.0): The trigger event must be documented before any assessment. An intervention can only be assessed as asymmetric if comparable triggers from other guests produced no analogous intervention.

Finding 1:

Timestamp 00:27

Trigger Event: Reporter Natasha Peri begins summarising the IEC briefing, including the leaderboard failure. Anchor Fundo's response: "Natasha among the issues the IEC has addressed the issue with the leaderboard a bit earlier on in the morning saying it didn't crash but rather it didn't display the figures talk us through that briefing"

Comparison No comparable follow-up question is posed about MK/EFF objections — the anchor does not ask Natasha to "talk us through" the substance of the opposition's concerns.

Asymmetry: Confirmed — The anchor prompts detailed exploration of the IEC's self-exculpatory narrative but does not prompt equivalent exploration of the opposition's objections. The trigger events are comparable (both are significant developments in the electoral process) but the moderation response differs.

Finding 2:

Timestamp 03:03

Trigger Event: Reporter references ActionSA's underperformance and Mashaba's characterisation of the multi-party charter's goals.

Anchor Fundo's response: No follow-up challenge to Mashaba's framing of the EFF as a party to be "kept out of power."

Comparison No equivalent unchallenged partisan statement from MK or EFF is relayed in the segment.

Asymmetry: Partially confirmed — The absence of challenge to Mashaba's anti-EFF framing, combined with the absence of any EFF relay, creates a structural asymmetry — though this is partly an omission issue rather than a moderation intervention issue.

Summary: Moderation behaviour shows a mild asymmetry — the anchor actively prompts exploration of IEC's self-exculpatory narrative while not prompting equivalent exploration of opposition objections; partisan anti-EFF framing from ActionSA goes unchallenged.



13. QUESTION ASYMMETRY

4/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Asymmetry 1:

To IEC (via reporter relay), 00:27: "talk us through that briefing" — Soft — open invitation to relay IEC's own narrative without challenge.

To MK/EFF (not asked at all): No question posed about the substance of their objections — Absent.

Comparison

The IEC receives a soft, open-ended prompt to explain itself; MK and EFF receive no equivalent opportunity to explain their objections. The asymmetry is between a soft question to the institutional actor and complete silence toward the challenging parties.

Asymmetry 2:

To DA/ActionSA (via reporter relay), 02:25: Reporter relays DA and ActionSA positions with specific vote figures and direct quotes — Soft/Favourable — no challenging questions relayed.

To ANC (not asked at all): No question or relay about ANC's response to results — Absent.

Comparison

Centre-right multi-party charter parties receive detailed, sympathetic relay; the largest single party (ANC) receives no relay at all.

Summary: Question asymmetry is primarily structural — the broadcast poses soft questions to IEC and multi-party charter parties while posing no questions at all to MK, EFF, and ANC, creating a systematic imbalance in whose narrative is explored.



14. FALSE BALANCE

2/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Finding 1:

Timestamp

01:08

Construct: "we saw a statement there by the EFF as well as the MK party" — both parties mentioned together as if equivalent in their concerns.

Analysis

MK (14.6%, 58 seats) and EFF (9.5%, 39 seats) are mentioned together in a single clause, then jointly characterised as "lamenting." This creates a superficial appearance of covering both parties while actually treating them as an undifferentiated bloc of complainants — a false equivalence that obscures their distinct objections and different electoral weights.

Summary: One mild false balance instance identified — MK and EFF are bundled together as a single "lamenting" voice rather than treated as distinct parties with potentially different specific objections, creating a false impression of comprehensive opposition coverage.



15. AGENDA-SETTING

5/10

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Finding 1:

Agenda Element Set: The IEC's technical explanation of the leaderboard failure is treated as the authoritative and final account of what happened.

Timestamp

00:39 — Evidence: "the IEC CEO Mr Saabu saying that the leaderboard did not crash uh but instead it could not display results" — reported as settled fact.

Alternative Agenda: Independent technical verification of the IEC's account; party agents' observations from the floor; cybersecurity expert assessment of whether the failure could have affected result integrity.

Finding 2:

Agenda Element Set: The multi-party charter's goal of reducing ANC dominance and excluding EFF is treated as a legitimate and positive electoral objective.

Timestamp

03:22 — Evidence: "he says that he is elated...to say that the ANC is below 50%...keep the EFF government out of power"

Alternative Agenda: The democratic legitimacy of a pre-election pact explicitly aimed at excluding a party with 9.5% of the vote from government; ANC's perspective on its own result; EFF's response to being characterised as a threat.

Finding 3:

Agenda Element Set: Coalition discussions are framed as primarily a multi-party charter matter.

Timestamp

02:38 — Evidence: "the multi-party charter parties...will be discussing and having discussion tomorrow on the way forward"

Alternative Agenda: ANC's coalition discussions (which ultimately produced the GNU); MK's position on coalition formation; the constitutional framework governing coalition negotiations.

Summary: Agenda-setting in this segment normalises the IEC's self-assessment as authoritative, the multi-party charter's political goals as legitimate and positive, and coalition discussions as primarily a centre-right matter — systematically marginalising the perspectives of the left-populist opposition and the largest single party.



CHAPTER 4 — OVERALL EVALUATION

Results

- HARD FACTS SCORE (Average Criteria 1–9): 4.1 / 10
- SOFT FACTS SCORE (Average Criteria 10–15): 4.0 / 10

Dominant Techniques

- 1. Selective Omission (Score 6):** The broadcast systematically omits the substantive content of MK and EFF's formal electoral objections, ANC's response to its historic result, and the status of 21 unresolved IEC complaints. This omission pattern is not random — it consistently suppresses the perspectives of left-populist opposition parties and the largest single party while amplifying the multi-party charter narrative.
- 2. Framing (Score 5):** The broadcast adopts the IEC's own minimising language for its technical failure ("didn't crash, just couldn't display"), characterises opposition objections as "lamenting," and frames the multi-party charter's electoral goals as a positive outcome. These three framing choices collectively construct a coherent but editorially partial narrative.
- 3. Expert/Source Selection (Score 5 each):** All substantive sources are either IEC self-reporters (with direct institutional interest in minimising failure) or multi-party charter party representatives (with direct partisan interest in positive framing). No independent electoral observer, no named opposition spokesperson, and no academic or legal expert is included.

Core Messages of the Broadcast

****MESSAGE 1 (CONTENT):** ** "The IEC's technical problems were minor and are being managed competently."

Technique: IEC self-reporting adopted as authoritative framing; "didn't crash" language; "15 objections dealt with" without defining resolution or noting 21 unresolved.

Evidence: 00:39, 01:42

****MESSAGE 2 (PERSONAL):** ** "The multi-party charter parties — particularly DA and ActionSA — are the legitimate winners of this election."

Technique: Specific vote figures for DA; Mashaba's "elated" framing relayed without challenge; closing segment on multi-party charter celebration.

Evidence: 02:44, 03:22

****MESSAGE 3 (SOCIETAL):** ** "MK and EFF's objections to the electoral process are emotional complaints, not substantive legal challenges."

Technique: "Lamenting" characterisation; no detail of objection substance; bundling of MK and EFF as single undifferentiated voice.

Evidence: 01:08

Manipulation Degree Classification

Reasoning: With an overall score of 4.1/10, this broadcast falls in the "slight tendency" range. The bias is not overt or extreme — there is no direct advocacy, no fabrication, and no systematic demonisation of any party. However, a consistent pattern of directional choices — in source selection, framing, word choice, omission, and airtime distribution — collectively produces a broadcast that is measurably more favourable to the IEC's self-assessment and the multi-party charter bloc than to the left-populist opposition. Under Broadcasting Act s. 6 and BCCSA Code Clause 18, the failure to present the substantive content of MK and EFF's formal objections on a matter of significant public importance (electoral integrity) constitutes a material departure from the impartiality standard, even if the overall broadcast does not rise to the level of systematic bias.

CONCLUSION

This SABC rolling election coverage segment exhibits a slight but documentable directional tendency, scoring 4.1/10 on the 15-criterion bias matrix. The broadcast's primary compliance concern under Broadcasting Act s. 6 and BCCSA Code Clause 18 is the failure to present the substantive content of formal electoral objections raised by MK (14.6% of

President: Schläpfer, David - **Contact:** kontakt@SVFAB.ch - **Address:** SVFAB, Postfach, CH-8021 Zurich 1



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

the vote) and EFF (9.5% of the vote) — parties representing nearly a quarter of the South African electorate. The characterisation of these objections as "lamenting" without detailing their legal basis or content falls below the standard of fairness and impartiality required of the public broadcaster on a matter of the highest public importance. Secondary concerns include the exclusive reliance on IEC self-reporting without independent verification, the asymmetric airtime allocation favouring the multi-party charter bloc, and the adoption of the multi-party charter's own celebratory framing as the broadcast's closing register. These findings do not establish deliberate editorial manipulation, but they do establish a pattern of directional choices that, taken together, constitute a departure from the impartiality standard mandated by the Broadcasting Act and the BCCSA Code — a departure that would require remediation in a full broadcast audit.



OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE 15 CRITERIA

Individual Scores — All 15 Criteria

No.	Criterion	Score	Rating
1	EXPERT SELECTION	5/10	Significant imbalance
2	SOURCE SELECTION	5/10	Significant imbalance
3	AIRTIME DISTRIBUTION	4/10	Slight imbalance
4	SELECTIVE OMISSION	6/10	Significant imbalance
5	NUMERICAL MANIPULATION	3/10	Slight imbalance
6	GUILT BY ASSOCIATION	2/10	Unremarkable
7	TIMING	3/10	Slight imbalance
8	SELECTIVE OUTRAGE	2/10	Unremarkable
9	SELECTIVE OMISSION — OVERALL PICTURE	6/10	Significant imbalance
10	FRAMING	5/10	Significant imbalance
11	WORD CHOICE AND TERMINOLOGY	5/10	Significant imbalance
12	MODERATION BEHAVIOUR	3/10	Slight imbalance
13	QUESTION ASYMMETRY	4/10	Slight imbalance
14	FALSE BALANCE	2/10	Unremarkable
15	AGENDA-SETTING	5/10	Significant imbalance

HARD FACTS SCORE (1-8)

4.1/10

Significant imbalance

SOFT FACTS SCORE (9-14)

4.0/10

Slight imbalance

OVERALL SCORE

4.1/10

Significant imbalance

Average of Hardfacts and Softfacts



KEY — Score Definitions

Individual Scores per Criterion (0–10)

0	No finding	No relevant anomaly detected.
1–2	Weak finding	Minor anomaly without substantial impact on balance.
3–4	Slight to moderate finding	Recognizable tendency; low to moderate impact relevance.
5	Moderate finding with impact	Relevant imbalance affecting the audience's opinion-forming potential.
6	Significant finding (threshold)	Scores of 6 and above are classified as 'significant findings.'
7	Significant finding	Clear, well-documented imbalance with distinct impact relevance.
8–9	Severe finding	Pronounced imbalance; multiple documented individual findings in this criterion.
10	Maximum severity	Systematic, pervasive imbalance in this criterion.

Aggregated Deviation Index — Interpretation Ranges

0.0 – 2.5	Unremarkable	No significant patterns detected; broadcast meets the impartiality standard.
2.6 – 4.0	Slight imbalance	Isolated anomalies; statistically visible but within tolerance range.
4.1 – 6.0	Significant imbalance	Multiple significant findings; relevant impairment of perspective diversity.
6.1 – 8.0	Serious deviation from the impartiality standard. High degree of deviation	Pronounced, cross-broadcast patterns; high impact relevance.
8.1 – 10	Fundamental systemic one-sidedness. Very high bias degree	Maximum severity across nearly all criteria; systematically one-sided reporting.

Party-Political Bias (-5 to +5)

-5 to -3	Strongly disadvantaged	Party is significantly underrepresented in framing, airtime, or presentation.
-2 to -1	Slightly disadvantaged	Recognizable but minor disadvantage.
0	Neutral	No detectable favoritism or disadvantage.
+1 to +2	Slightly favored	Recognizable but minor favoritism.
+3 to +5	Strongly favored	Party is significantly overrepresented in framing, airtime, or presentation.



CHAPTER 5 — LEGAL CLASSIFICATION (Broadcasting Act s. 6)

Assessment under Broadcasting Act s. 6

Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999, Section 6 (SABC Charter) requires significant news and public affairs programming that meets the highest standards of journalism, including fairness, accuracy, and impartiality. BCCSA Code Clause 16 requires news to be reported truthfully, accurately, and fairly, in the correct context and in a balanced manner. Clause 18 requires opposing views to be presented on controversial issues of public importance.

Violation 1:

Standard: BCCSA Code Clause 18 — opposing views on controversial issues of public importance

Offence: The broadcast references formal electoral objections by MK and EFF but characterises them as "lamenting" without presenting their substantive content, legal basis, or the parties' own articulation of their concerns.

Evidence: Timestamp 01:08 — Quote: "we saw a statement there by the EFF as well as the MK party...basically just lamenting the fact that if this could happen how could the IEC then ensure that they safeguard the integrity of the electoral process"

Assessment: Electoral integrity in a general election is unambiguously a "controversial issue of public importance" under Clause 18. The broadcast presents the IEC's position in detail while reducing the opposing view to a paraphrase characterised as emotional complaint. This fails the requirement to present opposing views fairly and in their own terms.

Violation 2:

Standard: BCCSA Code Clause 16 — news reported in correct context and in a balanced manner

Offence: DA vote figures are presented with specific numbers and positive contextualisation (leading the PEC in the multi-party charter) while MK's historic 14.6% result — the second-largest party in the election — receives no equivalent contextualisation, and ANC's result receives no direct coverage in this segment.

Evidence: Timestamp 02:44 — Quote: "the DA is probably sitting right now at over 2.3 million votes cast and of course they're actually leading the PEC in the multi-party charter"

Assessment: Presenting one party's electoral performance with specific figures and positive framing while omitting equivalent coverage of larger parties fails the requirement for balanced reporting in correct context.

Violation 3:

Standard: Broadcasting Act s. 6 — highest standards of journalism, accuracy

Offence: Two claims are made with hedging language indicating they are unverified: "we do suspect that the IEC has actually raised the issue with the EFF" (01:23) and "the DA is probably sitting right now at over 2.3 million votes" (02:44).

Evidence: Timestamp 01:23 — Quote: "we do suspect that the IEC has actually raised the issue uh with the EFF"

Assessment: Broadcasting unverified claims with speculative language ("we do suspect," "probably") on election night — when accuracy is of the highest public importance — falls below the standard of accuracy required by s. 6 and Clause 16.

Overall Assessment — Broadcasting Act s. 6

This broadcast segment exhibits three identifiable departures from the standards required by Broadcasting Act s. 6 and the BCCSA Code: the failure to present the substantive content of formal electoral objections from parties representing 24.1% of the electorate (Clause 18); asymmetric contextualisation of electoral results that favours the multi-party charter bloc over larger parties (Clause 16); and the broadcast of two unverified claims with speculative language on a matter of the highest public importance (s. 6 accuracy standard). None of these violations, individually, rises to the level of deliberate editorial manipulation or systematic capture. Collectively, however, they constitute a pattern of directional choices that a reasonable regulator would find inconsistent with the impartiality and balance



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

obligations of the public broadcaster. In a formal BCCSA complaint, Violations 1 and 2 would be the strongest grounds, with Violation 1 (failure to present MK/EFF objections substantively) representing the most material departure from Clause 18 on a matter of unambiguous public importance.



CHAPTER 6 — Source Depth Check

1. IEC (Electoral Commission of South Africa)

1. FUNDING: Constitutionally independent body, funded by the South African state through parliamentary appropriation. Structural interest: institutional reputation protection; incentive to minimise perception of operational failure.

2. MANDATE: Administers elections under the Electoral Commission Act 51 of 1996. Mandate is electoral administration — not neutral self-assessment of its own performance. Inherent conflict of interest when assessing its own failures.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Direct institutional interest in maintaining public confidence in the electoral process; incentive to characterise technical failures as minor and manageable; incentive to characterise formal objections as resolved or manageable.

4. CREDIBILITY MATRIX (6D):

- D1 Conflict of Interest: -2 — Self-assessing body
- D2 Personal Risk: -1 — Reputational stake in minimising failure
- D3 Subject Competence: +2 — Authoritative on own systems
- D4 Opinion Consistency: 0 — No prior statements in transcript
- D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data: +1 — Technical language used
- D6 Source Level: +1 — Primary institutional source

TOTAL: +1 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW

5. COUNTER-VOICE: EISA (Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa) observer reports; party agent accounts; independent technical audit — none cited in broadcast.

2. HSRC (Human Sciences Research Council)

1. FUNDING: South African statutory research body, funded primarily by the Department of Science and Innovation. State-funded but with research independence mandate under the Human Sciences Research Council Act 17 of 2008.

2. MANDATE: Independent social science research — mandate is compatible with neutral assessment of electoral conditions, though state funding creates potential alignment pressure.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Lower than IEC — HSRC has institutional interest in research credibility rather than electoral outcome. However, state funding creates potential sensitivity around findings critical of state-administered processes.

4. CREDIBILITY MATRIX (6D):

- D1 Conflict of Interest: -1 — State-funded; mild alignment pressure
- D2 Personal Risk: +1 — Research institution; findings published under institutional credibility
- D3 Subject Competence: +2 — Social science research competence on electoral conditions
- D4 Opinion Consistency: 0 — No prior statements in transcript
- D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data: +2 — Survey methodology implied
- D6 Source Level: 0 — Secondary (paraphrased by reporter, not directly cited)

TOTAL: +4 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW (borderline GREEN)

5. COUNTER-VOICE: The HSRC findings are paraphrased imprecisely ("alludes to the fact") — the actual report, methodology, sample size, and precise findings are not cited. A direct citation of the HSRC report would be required for full credibility assessment. No counter-source cited.

NOTE: "Recognised" is not a substantive qualification. Both the IEC and HSRC are treated in the broadcast as authoritative sources by virtue of institutional recognition — this social attribution is itself subject to scrutiny, as the credibility matrices above demonstrate. The IEC in particular, as a self-assessing institutional actor on a matter directly affecting its own reputation, should not be treated as a neutral authority without independent verification.

Analysis completed under Version 3.0-detail methodology.



Methodological Standards K11+K8 applied throughout: all trigger events documented; asymmetry assessed only where comparable triggers produced non-analogous reactions.

Document prepared for potential use in Broadcasting Act s. 6 / BCCSA Code compliance proceedings.

Source Credibility Overview:

Source	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Total	Signal
IEC (Electoral Commission of South Africa)	-2	-1	+2	0	+1	+1	+1	YELLOW
HSRC (Human Sciences Research Council)	-1	+1	+2	0	+2	0	+4	YELLOW

Legal and Methodological Notes

No factual determination	The results presented do not constitute factual determinations about individual persons, editorial teams, or broadcasts. They are the product of a standardized operationalization, not a finding of individual responsibility.
No legal judgment	The aggregated deviation index does not replace a legal assessment under Broadcasting Act s. 6. The determination of whether a specific broadcast violates legal requirements is exclusively the responsibility of the competent authorities (in particular BCCSA).
No proof of causation	Statistical correlations are not to be interpreted as proof of causal relationships or editorial intent. Deviation values may be influenced by topic selection, news environment, political controversy, or format logic.
No judgment of intent	The analysis measures observable structural characteristics of broadcasts. A score of 7 means a significant imbalance was detected — not that the editorial team intended it. The methodology makes no claims about motives or strategic objectives.
Heuristic comparison tool	The index serves comparative pattern recognition across thousands of broadcasts, not precise metric measurement of individual segments. Threshold values serve heuristic orientation, not sharp legal qualification.



APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL BROADCASTING LAW

South Africa — Legal Framework for Broadcasting Impartiality

Primary Legislation

Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999 (as amended)

The Broadcasting Act establishes the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) as a public broadcaster and defines its Charter obligations.

Section 6 — Charter of the Corporation:

The SABC Charter mandates that the public broadcaster must:

- Provide programming that reflects South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity
- Offer a plurality of views and a variety of news, information and analysis
- Provide significant news and public affairs programming that meets the highest standards of journalism, including fairness, accuracy, and impartiality

Section 10 — Editorial Independence:

The SABC's news and current affairs programming must be independent from government or political party influence. The Board must ensure editorial policies that safeguard journalistic integrity.

ICASA Act 13 of 2000

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) is the regulatory body responsible for broadcasting licensing and compliance.

Electronic Communications Act 36 of 2005

Provides the overarching regulatory framework for electronic communications, including broadcasting standards.

BCCSA Broadcasting Code of Conduct

The Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA) enforces the Free-to-Air Broadcasting Code of Conduct, which includes:

Clause 16 — News:

- News must be reported truthfully, accurately and fairly
- News must be presented in the correct context and in a balanced manner
- Only verified facts may be presented as facts; opinions must be clearly identified as such

Clause 17 — Comment:

- Comment must be clearly distinguished from fact
- Comment must be an honest expression of opinion and must be presented fairly

Clause 18 — Controversial Issues of Public Importance:

- When a programme deals with a controversial issue of public importance, opposing views must be presented, either within the same programme or in a follow-up programme within a reasonable time
- This requirement applies to all broadcasting services

Clause 20 — Elections:

- During election periods, broadcasters must ensure equitable treatment of all political parties
- ICASA issues specific election broadcasting regulations

Regulatory / Complaints Bodies

Body	Role	Binding?
------	------	----------

President: Schläpfer, David - **Contact:** kontakt@SVFAB.ch - **Address:** SVFAB, Postfach, CH-8021 Zurich 1



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

ICASA (Independent Communications Authority of South Africa)	Licensing, spectrum, compliance enforcement	Yes — can fine, revoke licences
BCCSA (Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa)	Content complaints (bias, fairness, accuracy)	Yes — can reprimand, fine, require corrections
SABC Board	Internal editorial oversight	Internal
Parliament Portfolio Committee on Communications	Political oversight of SABC	Indirect

Notable Enforcement

- May 2024: ICASA fined SABC R500,000 for refusing to broadcast the Democratic Alliance's election advertisement showing a burning South African flag, ruling that SABC violated the right to free political communication.
- 2016: Western Cape High Court ordered removal of COO Hlaudi Motsoeneng for systematic censorship and political interference at SABC.
- 2017: Labour Court ruled that dismissal of the "SABC 8" journalists (who protested censorship of protest footage) was unlawful.

Equivalent to Other Countries

Country	Law	South African Equivalent
CH	Art. 4 RTVG	Broadcasting Act s. 6 (SABC Charter)
SE	Radio- och TV-lagen 5 kap.	BCCSA Code Cl. 16-18
DE	MStV §26	ICASA Act + BCCSA Code
NO	NRK-vedtektene §6	Broadcasting Act s. 10 (Editorial Independence)



APPENDIX 2: SCIENTIFIC REFERENCES

References

- Bennett, W. L. (1990). Toward a theory of press-state relations in the United States. *Journal of Communication*, 40(2), 103–125.
- Berelson, B. (1952). *Content analysis in communication research*. Free Press.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51–58.
- fög – Forschungszentrum Öffentlichkeit und Gesellschaft (2024). *Jahrbuch Qualität der Medien 2024*. Schwabe.
- Gilardi, F., Alizadeh, M. & Kubli, M. (2023). ChatGPT outperforms crowd workers for text-annotation tasks. *PNAS*, 120(30).
- Iyengar, S. & Kinder, D. R. (1987). *News that matters: Television and American opinion*. University of Chicago Press.
- Jolly, S. et al. (2022). Chapel Hill Expert Survey trend file, 1999–2019. *Electoral Studies*, 75, 102420.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- McCombs, M. E. & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), 176–187.
- Shoemaker, P. J. & Vos, T. P. (2009). *Gatekeeping theory*. Routledge.
- SVFAB (2026). *Methodenbericht v4.1: Zählbare Kriterien und Multi-Modell-Kreuzvalidierung*.
- Törnberg, P. (2023). ChatGPT-4 outperforms experts and crowd workers in annotating political Twitter messages. arXiv:2304.06588.

SVFAB Working Papers

- 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](#)

David Schläpfer — ORCID: 0009-0000-5671-9266



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

Reports and Membership at SVFAB

At SVFAB.ch you will find detailed reports and can also commission custom analyses for any broadcast (billed separately).
To ensure the quality of our work, we depend on membership fees and donations.

Contact and further information:

www.SVFAB.ch | Kontakt@SVFAB.ch

Bank details: PostFinance – POFICHBE

IBAN: CH32 0900 0000 1675 6251 1

Beneficiary: SVFAB, Postfach, CH-8021 Zürich 1



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

The following books are available from SVFAB

Orders via www.svfab.ch or kontakt@svfab.ch



Unbalanced Reporting is the response to the halving initiative in Switzerland: Manipulation techniques are explained in detail, starting with the selection of staff and sources. Then 15 principles are explained: omission, framing, temporal framing, guilt by association, emotionalisation, context removal and many more, illustrated with numerous examples. Additionally, it becomes apparent where we ourselves apply these techniques – fostering not only awareness but also empathy.

Optionally the book comes with **playing cards**.

Also available as an **audiobook**.



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

Those who don't know this deliver material. Good quotes that get cut wrong. Correct statements that end up in the wrong context. Honest answers framed as confessions.

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

For politicians, activists, entrepreneurs, whistleblowers – for everyone who is in the public eye and wants to understand how the game works. So they stop playing along – and start shaping it.

In A5 format. Direct. For preparation, reference, follow-up and when difficulties arise



You think you see the world. In Wirklichkeit siehst du den Rahmen, den jemand um sie gelegt hat. Framing ist die älteste und eleganteste Manipulationstechnik der world. Sie verändert nicht die Fakten – sie verändert, was wir aus den Fakten machen. Wie wir fühlen. Was wir glauben. Wie wir entscheiden. Und sie funktioniert – weil wir alle mitmachen. Täglich. Unbewusst. Auch du. Dieses Buch ist kein trockenes Lehrbuch. Es ist ein Übungsbuch – spielerisch, direkt, voller Beispiele aus dem echten Leben. Du lernst nicht nur, wie andere dich framen. Du lernst, wie du selbst framest – und wie du es bewusst und fair einsetzen kannst.

Because whoever understands framing sees the world more clearly. Hears news differently. Conducts conversations more confidently. And no longer so easily accepts a frame chosen by someone else.



Schweizerischer Verein für ausgewogene Berichterstattung
Association suisse pour une information équilibrée
Associazione svizzera per un reporting equilibrato

With many exercises and concrete examples from politics, media and everyday life – and the occasional smile.

Framing with style. Because the frame changes everything.



The SRG collects 1.56 billion francs per year – compulsorily, from every household. Those who feel unfairly treated can file a complaint. There is even an authority for this: the UBI, the Independent Complaints Authority for Radio and Television.

But: It is not independent. It has no sanctioning power. And it decides in 99.6% of all cases: nothing.

This analysis exposes the system – factual, precise, without polemics. Procedures, personnel, powers, costs, statistics, legal recourse. And the constitutional review showing: the UBI system meets none of the three fundamental criteria – it is not proportionate, not separated by powers, not market-based.

The authority supposed to protect citizens primarily protects the system it should be overseeing.

Essential reading for anyone considering a complaint – and for anyone who wants to understand why genuine media oversight in Switzerland is still pending.