

Executive Summary/Abstract

Structure and content of the SRG television programmes in 2019

- **Context of research**

For the Television Programme Analysis Switzerland, the Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM) commissioned a quantitative, multi-level content analysis of SRG SSR's linear television channels in 2019. The study was conducted under the direction of Joachim Trebbe by GöfaK Medienforschung GmbH, Potsdam, in cooperation with the Department of Communication and Media Research at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

- **Sample and method**

In spring and autumn 2019, the channels SRF 1, SRF zwei, SRF info, RTS Un, RTS Deux, RSI LA 1 and RSI LA 2 were digitally recorded over the scope of a complete natural calendar week. Using a standardised procedure, the material was analysed on a structural and on a content level regarding programme and topic structures, regional references, and other quality criteria. A total of 2,352 programme hours were examined.

- **Programme structure**

The SRG's seven channels broadcast 24 hours a day. This is the frame of reference for the present programme analysis and forms the basis for the programme comparison. For editorial reasons and to bridge the hours with low audience involvement, all channels feature numerous short-term reruns and programme take-overs. Except for SRF info, the proportion of firstly broadcasted content scores between 50 percent and two thirds of the average day. The three most important programme categories are television journalism (at a stable level compared to 2017), entertainment formats (primarily films and series) and sports (primarily in the second channels of the respective language family). Serial formats have not lost any of their fundamental importance for television entertainment. Through the expansion of "RTS Info", the programme family RTS has most extended their television journalism segment the most. During high-viewership prime time hours between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m., more sports are shown compared to 2017. Furthermore, this time is characterised by a higher proportion of game and quiz shows as well as a higher amount of daily updated information programmes.

- **Topic structures**

In addition to the formats dedicated for daily reporting, television magazines (for SRF 1, RTS Deux and RSI LA 1) are the most important formats for providing information. SRF 1 continues to focus on documentaries and reports. Talk and interview shows are particularly well represented in the German-language programmes and on RTS Deux. In most programmes, reports on politics and social controversies fill the largest share of journalistic broadcasting time (exception: SRF zwei). Compared to the data from 2017, this segment

has grown. According to the latest data, the range lies between every 10th (RSI LA 2) and every third minute of broadcasting (SRF info) for these societal particularly relevant topics. Topics with no political or socially controversial references are the second largest segment and fill up to one quarter of the daily broadcasting time. In contrast, all other subject areas — human touch, personal stories, service information — at a stable low level. Between one and six percent of daily broadcasting time is reserved for them. Overall, the latest analysis of topic structures showed only minor changes from the 2017 results.

- **Regional reporting and specific thematic references**

There are no structural fundamental changes in the regional referencing to the language areas compared to 2017. As expected, the regional references are strongly linked to the broadcasting language. Thus, the well-known “magnetism” of German-speaking Switzerland as the largest part of the country becomes apparent, even if the federal political and national references are excluded. The respective other language areas are still present, albeit at a consistently low level. The Romansh-speaking part of Switzerland is primarily featured within the German- or Italian-speaking channels.

The new SRG-SSR license contains several specifications regarding the coverage of specific topics and featured actors. Within the latest programme analysis, additional data has been collected on a structural and on content level. As a result, unique programmes with references to migration topics (SRF 1 and SRF zwei, RSI 1), programmes particularly focused on certain language areas (all channels), and programmes especially featured as children's and youth formats (for SRF 1, RTS Un, RSI LA and 2) were identified.

As part of the quality analysis of reporting on socially relevant or controversial topics, each examined channel addressed gender, migration, and integration discourses mentioned in the license — with up to 20 percent of airtime devoted to these topics. Serving as an indicator for the journalistic treatment of genders in political reporting (in the broadest sense), the proportions of single stories with female actor involvement vary greatly. According to this first-time analysis, their share fluctuates between 29 and 64 percent.