

## **Analysis of the SRG SSR radio program: Italian and Romansh Switzerland 2022 – executive summary**

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### **Objective of the study**

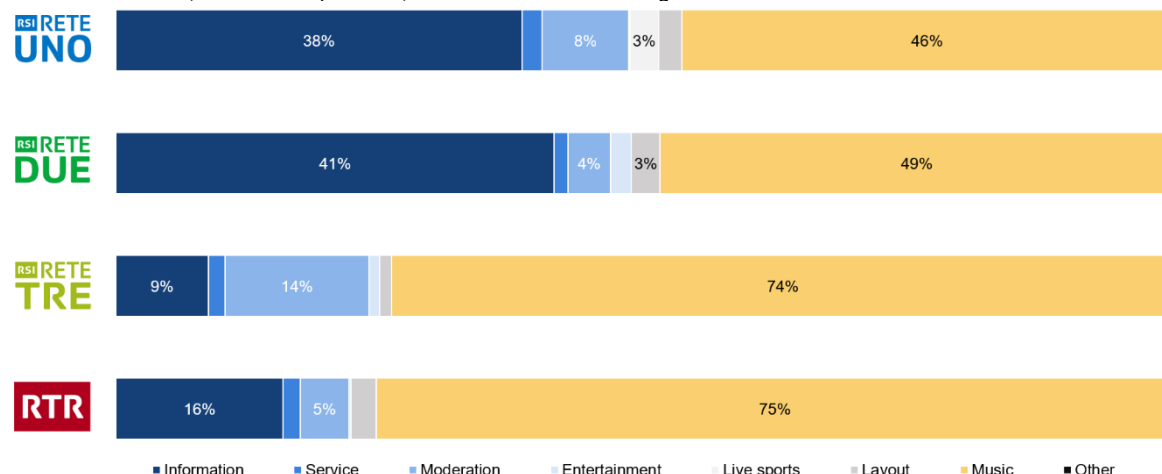
The Swiss Act on Radio and Television (RTVA) and the license issued to the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SRG SSR) serve as a mandate for SRG SSR. The responsibilities assigned to SRG SSR include providing comprehensive, diverse and factual news coverage, fostering Swiss culture and promoting a dialogue among the different regions and language communities of Switzerland. This study examined how SRG SSR carried out its mission in **2022**. The analysis focused on **SRG's radio programming in the Italian- and Romansh-speaking regions of Switzerland**.

### **Results**

The **programming quality** of the RSI and RTR radio stations was **high** during 2022, the year under review. Since the last study in 2019, no clear trend has emerged in the analyzed stations. However, a long-range comparison shows a steady decrease in the proportion of information broadcast by Rete Tre and Radio RTR: Over the last twelve years, the amount of information at Rete Tre has declined by approximately 50%, while Radio RTR saw a reduction of about one-third. Currently, the proportion of informative content stands at 9% of total broadcasting time at Rete Tre and 16% at Radio RTR. By contrast, Rete Uno and Rete Due have seen a generally positive trend in quantitative information performance. At the moment, information content makes up roughly two-fifths of broadcasting time in both stations' programming (see Figure). The entire RSI broadcasting family has an information share of 30% – a percentage that is comparable to the average levels broadcast by the first three SRG SSR radio stations in German-speaking and western Switzerland.

Figure: Program structure

Basis: Total airtime, random sample 2022, Mon.-Sun. 5 a.m. to midnight



The SRG license requires SRG radio stations to report in particular on political, economic, societal, cultural and social contexts. These **subject areas** are comprehensively covered by all stations. Compared with 2019, the amount of information about such «hard» topics has risen slightly on average in RSI programming and significantly at Radio RTR. When choosing which topics to cover, the analyzed programs differ in where they place their focus: Rete Uno frequently concentrates on societal and political aspects. Cultural issues dominate the programming at Rete Due, while Rete Tre focuses on social issues and pop culture. This differentiation in content has increased in recent years and reflects in essence the information mission spelled out by the license.<sup>1</sup> As for Radio RTR, it offers a wide-ranging mix of topics with a special emphasis on societal and political issues. It frequently relates to the Romansh-speaking region, in accordance with its license requirements.

The thematic diversity of the programming is at a similarly high level as in 2019. The same is true for the other **dimensions of diversity** - diversity of actors, opinions, and journalistic formats.

One of the high-quality standards that SRG stations are required to meet is journalistic professionalism. A typical indicator of this form of professionalism is **transparency** of the **sources** that are used in the broadcasted information, meaning that the originator of a piece of information must be specified. In 2022, the reporting of all four stations continued to be characterized by a very high level of source transparency: In about four-fifths of the informative content, it is clear where the information originated. This also applies to the transparency of source access, where the RSI stations stand out with particularly high values.

Under the license that took effect in 2019, SRG stations must endeavor to provide «an appropriate presentation and **representation of genders** in their programming.»<sup>2</sup> For this reason, this study examined whether male and female speakers were given equal amounts of broadcasting time. The study determined that male speakers dominate RSI's programming. This finding applies in particular to Rete Uno and Rete Due. Nearly two-thirds of the voices heard on the air at these two stations were male. Radio RTR

<sup>1</sup> SRG Broadcasting License, Art. 16, para. 1a.

<sup>2</sup> SRG Broadcasting License, Art. 3, para. 3

showcased the most balanced distribution of male and female voices, women were even heard slightly more frequently than men here.

The license mandates that the reporting of SRG radio stations focus and elucidate on developments on the international, national and language-regional levels. The four stations reviewed during this study broadly address these three **geographic levels** in widely different ways: RSI stations report especially intensely about international events. On Rete Due, international reporting even accounts for 60% of informative content with a local reference. RSI stations, especially Rete Due and Rete Tre, devote significant amounts of broadcasting time to topics of international scope. Radio RTR, on the other hand, allots much more time to events that occur in the regions of Romansh- and German-speaking Switzerland (47%), a figure that significantly exceeds the amount of time devoted to international events (29%). Radio RTR provides the same amount of broadcasting time to global issues as it does to issues that are relevant to a particular language region.

### Study methodology

The analysis of SRG SSR's radio programs was conducted using the methodology of quantitative content analysis, a widely employed approach in communication studies. The focus of the investigation centers on performance indicators derived from the broadcasting act and the license. These indicators include the percentage of airtime devoted to information, thematic diversity, diversity of opinion, diversity of journalistic formats, as well as regional references.

The sample consists of programming aired on each of the four analyzed radio stations on seven selected days within the time frame of 5:00 a.m. and midnight. The sample days were randomly chosen to represent an artificial week.

Table: Methodological key data of the SRG SSR radio program analysis 2022

<b>Methodology</b>	Quantitative content analysis
<b>Analyzed stations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rete Uno</li> <li>- Rete Due</li> <li>- Rete Tre</li> <li>- Radio RTR</li> </ul>
<b>Random sample</b>	<p>An artificial week (Mon.-Sun.), from 5 a.m. to midnight each day          Analyzed programming hours per station: <b>133</b>          Total analyzed programming hours: <b>532</b></p> <p>Number of analyzed music titles on music sample day: <b>730</b>          Number of analyzed music titles during the focus time: <b>581</b></p>