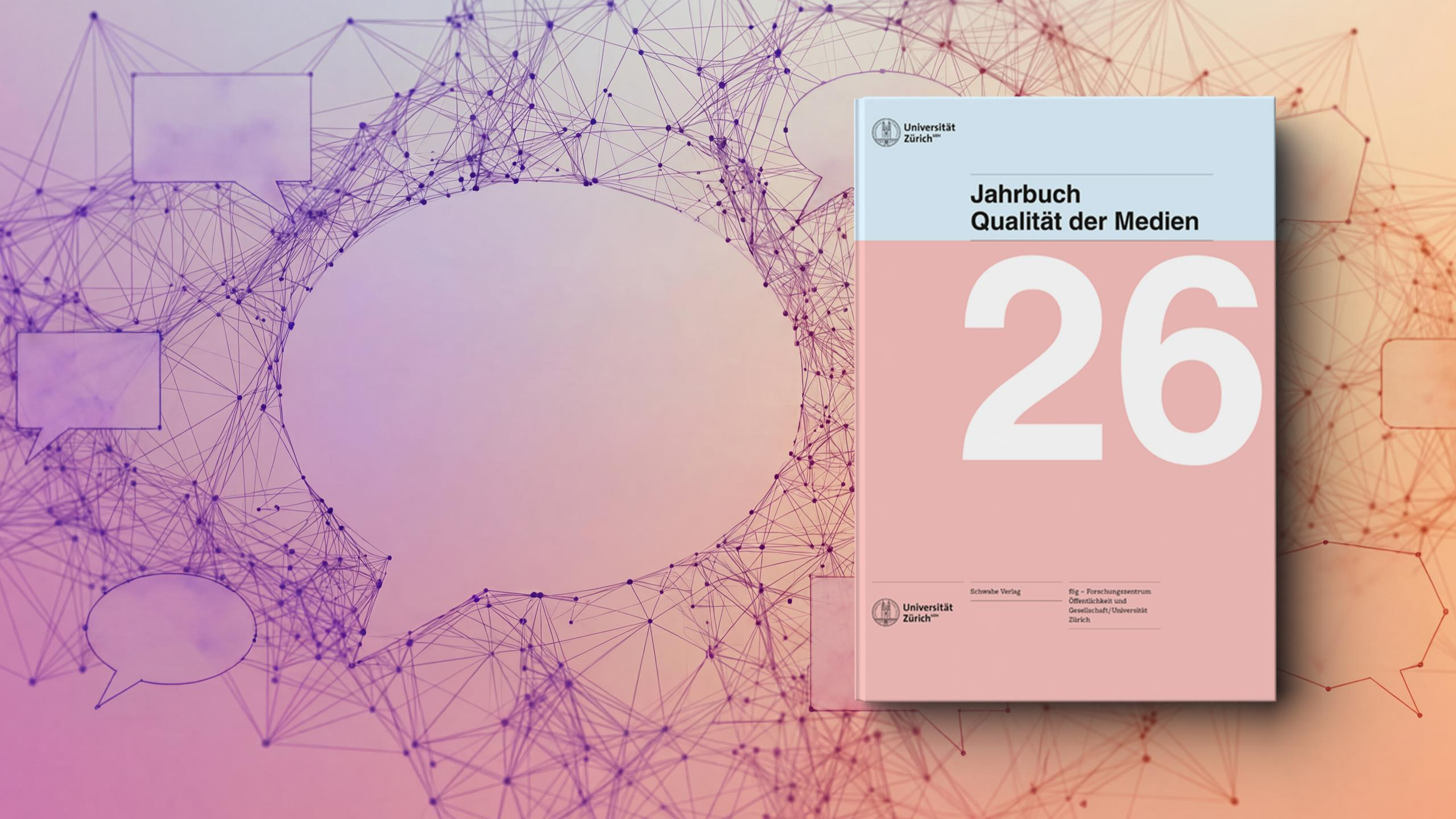
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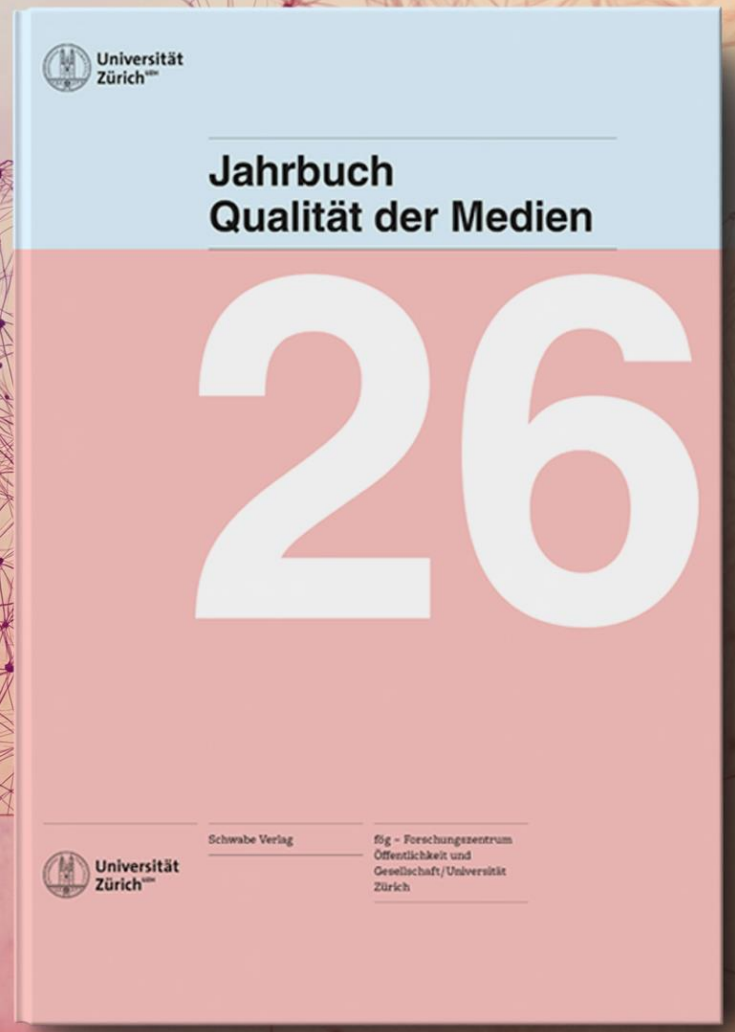


Yearbook Quality of the Media 2026

The vulnerable society: How resilient is the Swiss population to disinformation?

26 October 2026

Greeting

Prof. Dr. Nenad Stojanovic

Board member Kurt Imhof Stiftung für Medienqualität

Yearbook Quality of the Media 2026

Presentation of Results

Dr. Daniel Vogler

Co-Director fög

General information

Submit questions from the livestream via:
www.slido.com, Code: #2889335



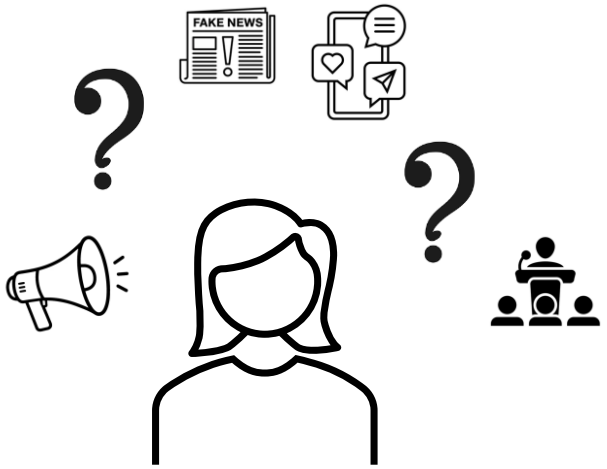
Perception of Disinformation



Perception of disinformation: Methodology

How does the Swiss public perceive the phenomenon of disinformation?

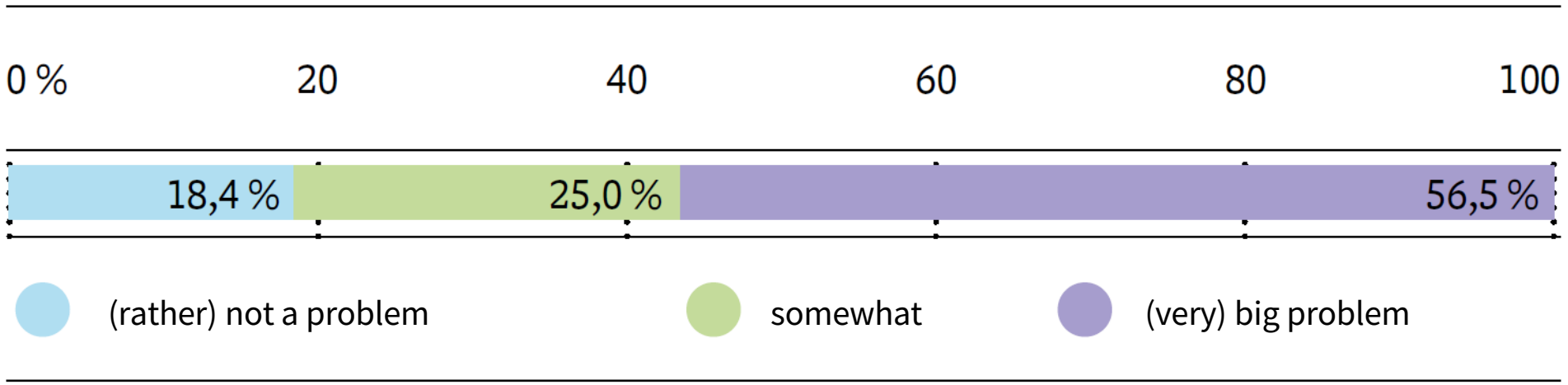
- Representative online survey in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222)
- Respondents' assessments of the phenomenon of disinformation



Perception of the problem

How do you estimate the problem of disinformation in Switzerland?

+8 percentage points since 2020

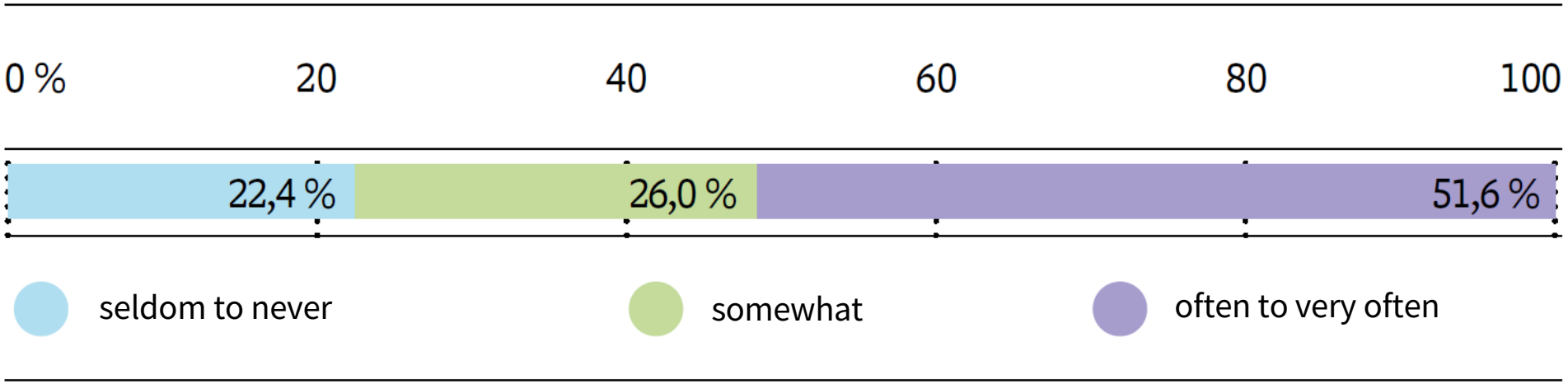


Data source: Representative online survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222).

Exposure to disinformation

**@Dani: war die Mittel-Kategorie auf Deutsch angeschrieben? Wenn ja, wie?
«middle» oder «medium» auf Englisch wirkt nicht gut. Können wir lieber «sometimes» schreiben?**

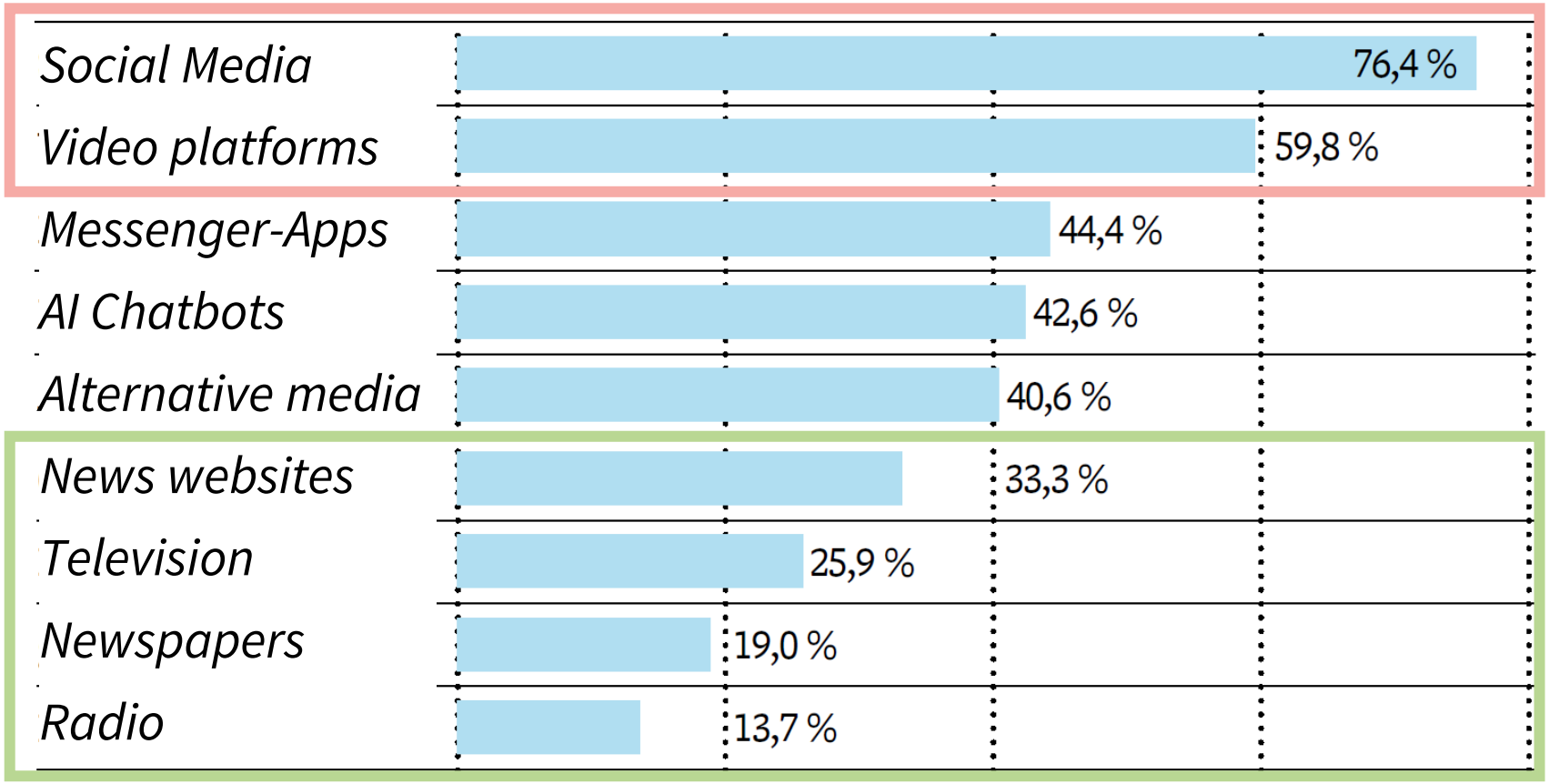
How often do you come across disi
disinformation—in your daily life?



Data source: Representative online survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222)

Disinformation is a phenomenon of digital media consumption

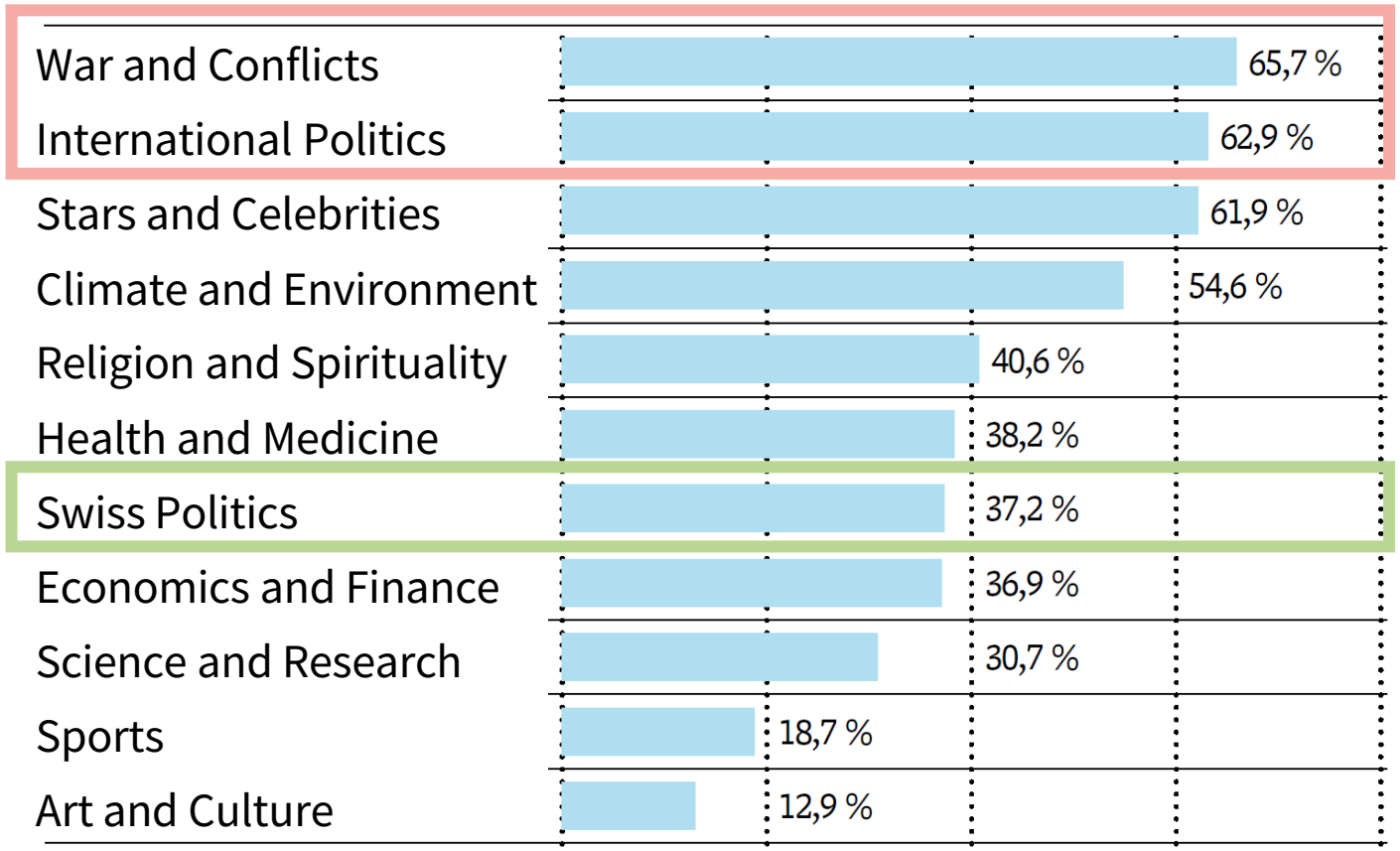
How often do you come across disinformation on the following channels?



Data source: Representative online survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222)

Disinformation is primarily perceived as an international issue

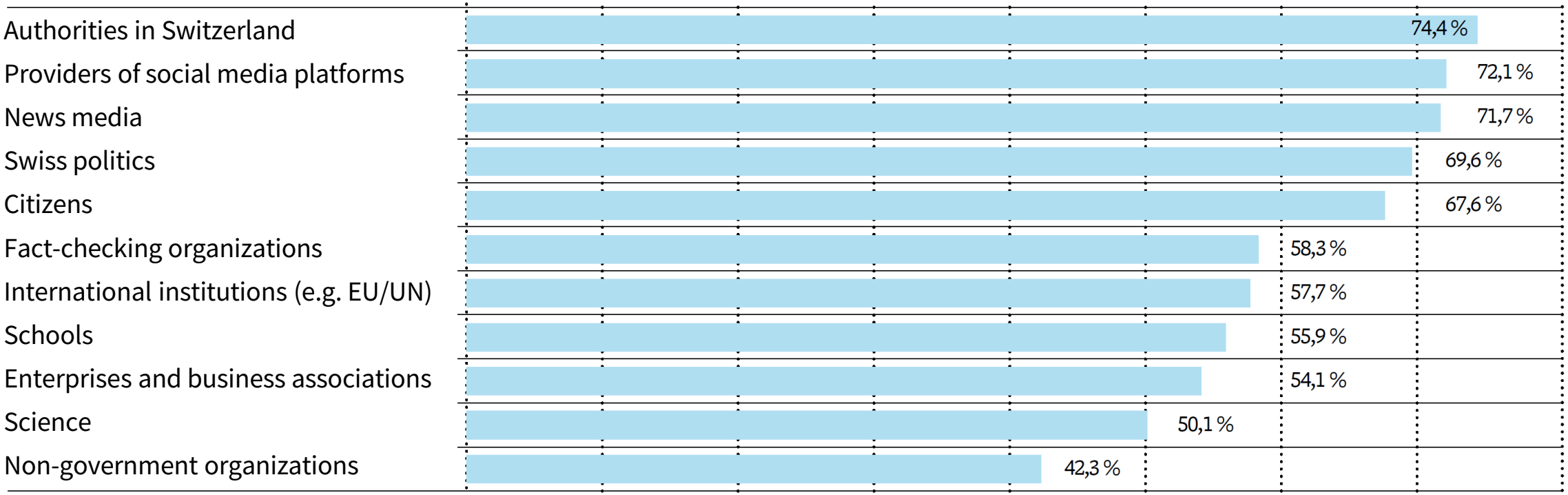
How often do you come across disinformation related to the following topics?



Data source: Representative online survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222)

The federal government, social media platforms, and news outlets share responsibility

In your opinion, who is responsible for combating the spread of disinformation in Switzerland?



Data source: Representative online survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222)

Hold platforms more accountable

Evaluation of Measures to Combat Disinformation

84% Social media platforms should be held more accountable

79% Politics, academia, the media, and civil society should cooperate more closely in the fight against disinformation

78% Educational programs are intended to promote a critical approach to disinformation

78% News organizations should expand their fact-checking teams



Source verification and government websites used most frequently – limited significance of fact-checking websites and AI chatbots

What do you do when you're not sure whether the information or content you come across is true or false?



Data source: Representative online survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222)

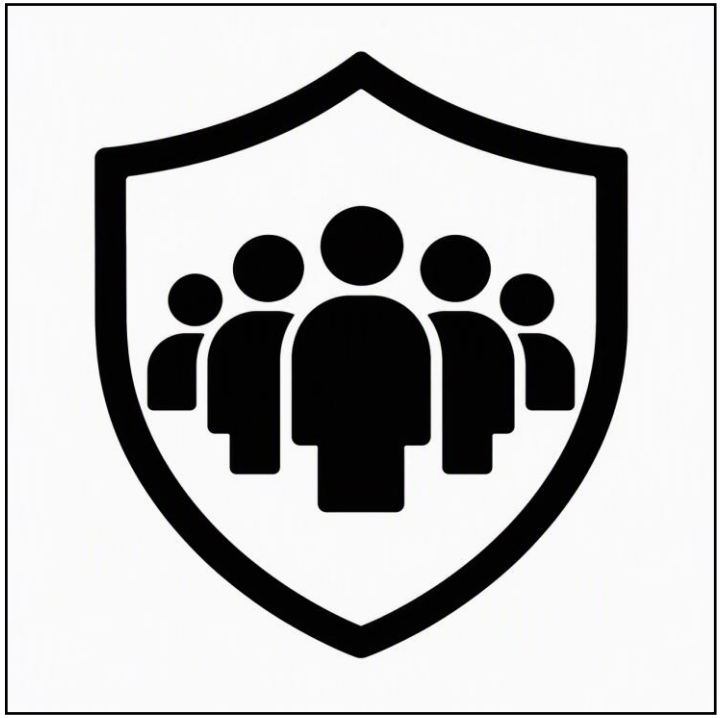
Resilience Against Disinformation

2

Resilience Against Disinformation: Methodology

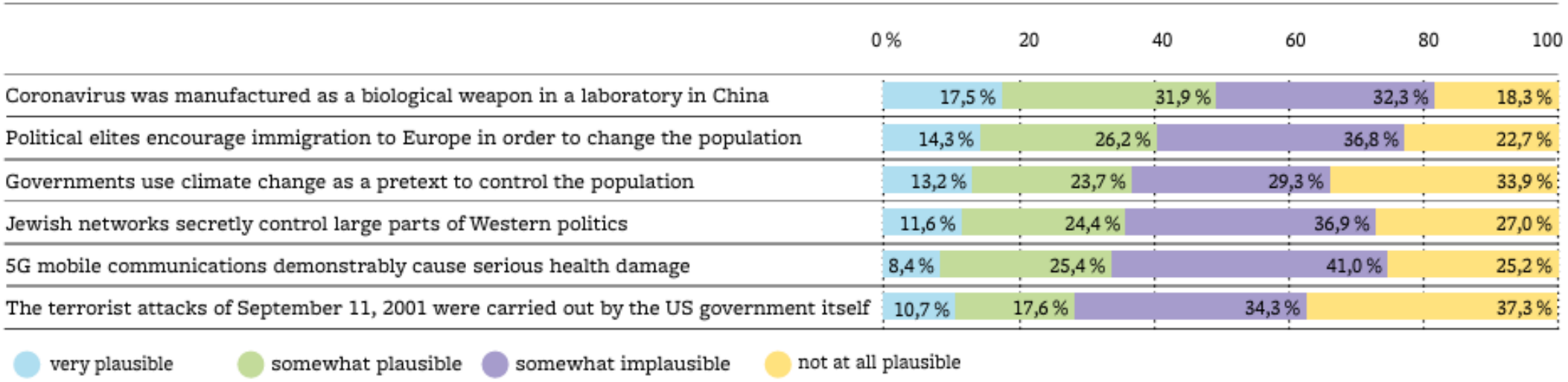
How resilient is the Swiss population to misleading conspiracy theories?

- Respondents were asked to rate the plausibility of six misleading conspiracy claims



In some cases, substantial agreement with misleading conspiracy theories

How plausible do you think the following statements are?



Data source: Representative online survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222).

Resilience Against Disinformation: Methodology

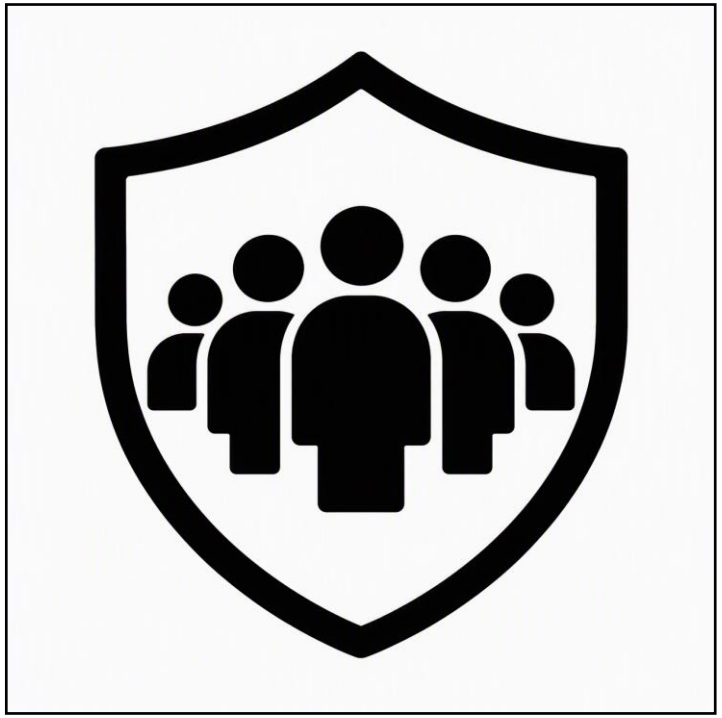
How resilient is the Swiss population to misleading conspiracy theories?

- Respondents were asked to rate the plausibility of six misleading conspiracy claims

What factors are correlated with this resilience?

- Measuring the ability to recognize typical patterns of disinformation

- Survey on news consumption (news repertoires)



Verification skills: Recognizing typical patterns of disinformation

Agreement with statements such as :

- Problems usually stem from a single cause.
- When many people believe something to be true, it speaks to the reliability of the information.
- When many people believe something to be true, it speaks to the reliability of the information.
- …

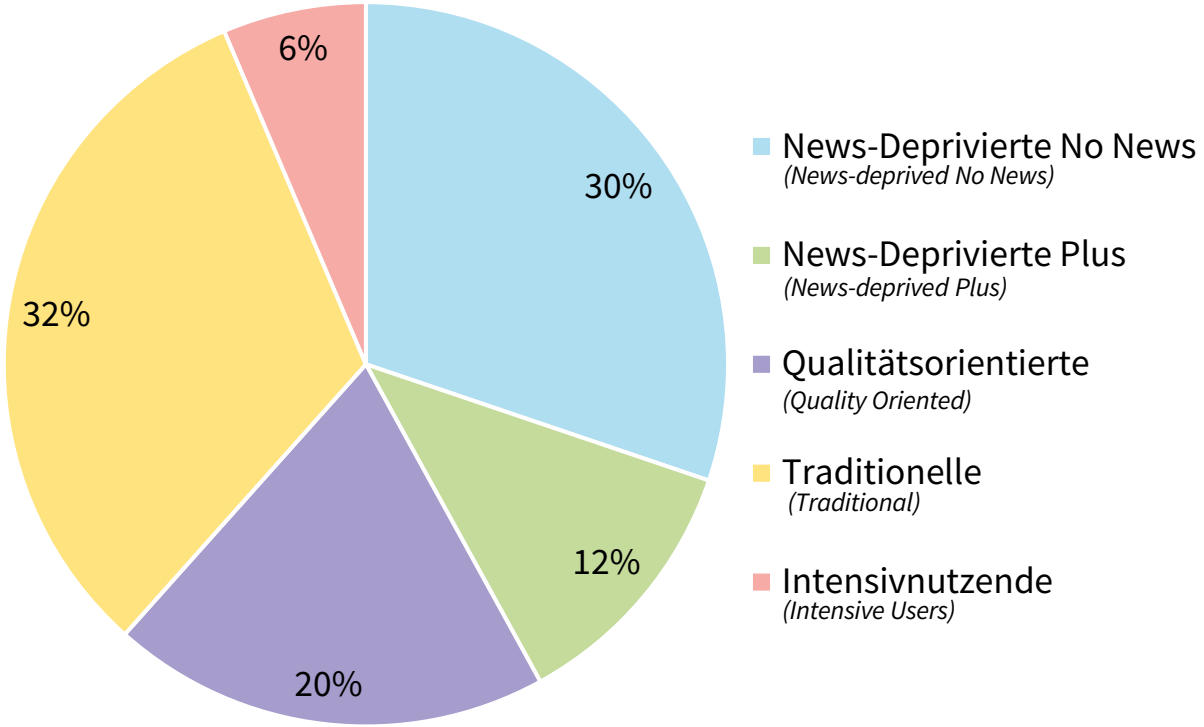


Anyone who <u>does not agree</u> with these statements has a high level of verification competence.

News repertoires: Typical patterns of information use

Development of new News Repertoires

- Greater emphasis on new digital information channels
- Data-Driven identification of five types of news repertoire
- Categorizing those deprived of news: “No News” and “Plus”



Quality journalism and fact-checking skills reduce vulnerability

Reduces vulnerability to disinformation and conspiracy theories

- Use of quality journalism
- Verification skills
- Education

Increases vulnerability to disinformation and conspiracy theories

- General propensity to believe in conspiracy theories
- Political position on the right

Regression Model: Vulnerability to Misinformation-Based Conspiracy Claims

Variables	B	p
(Intercept)	3.44	**<0.001**
Age	−0.01	0.220
Gender: female	0.27	0.147
Education: high	−0.59	**0.002**
Political position: Left	−1.00	0.084
Political position: Center-left	−0.62	0.195
Political position: Center	−0.04	0.913
Political position: Center-right	0.70	0.116
Political position: Right	1.57	**0.001**
Repertoire: Intensive users	−0.55	0.164
Repertoire: News-deprived Plus	0.19	0.540
Repertoire: Quality-oriented users	−0.95	**<0.001**
Repertoire: Traditional users	−0.92	**<0.001**
Verification competence	−0.41	**0.001**
General affinity toward conspiracy myths	1.80	**<0.001**
N	1222	
Adjusted R^2	0.421	

Data source: Representative online survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland (n = 1,222).

Yearbook Quality of the Media 2026

Presentation of Further Results

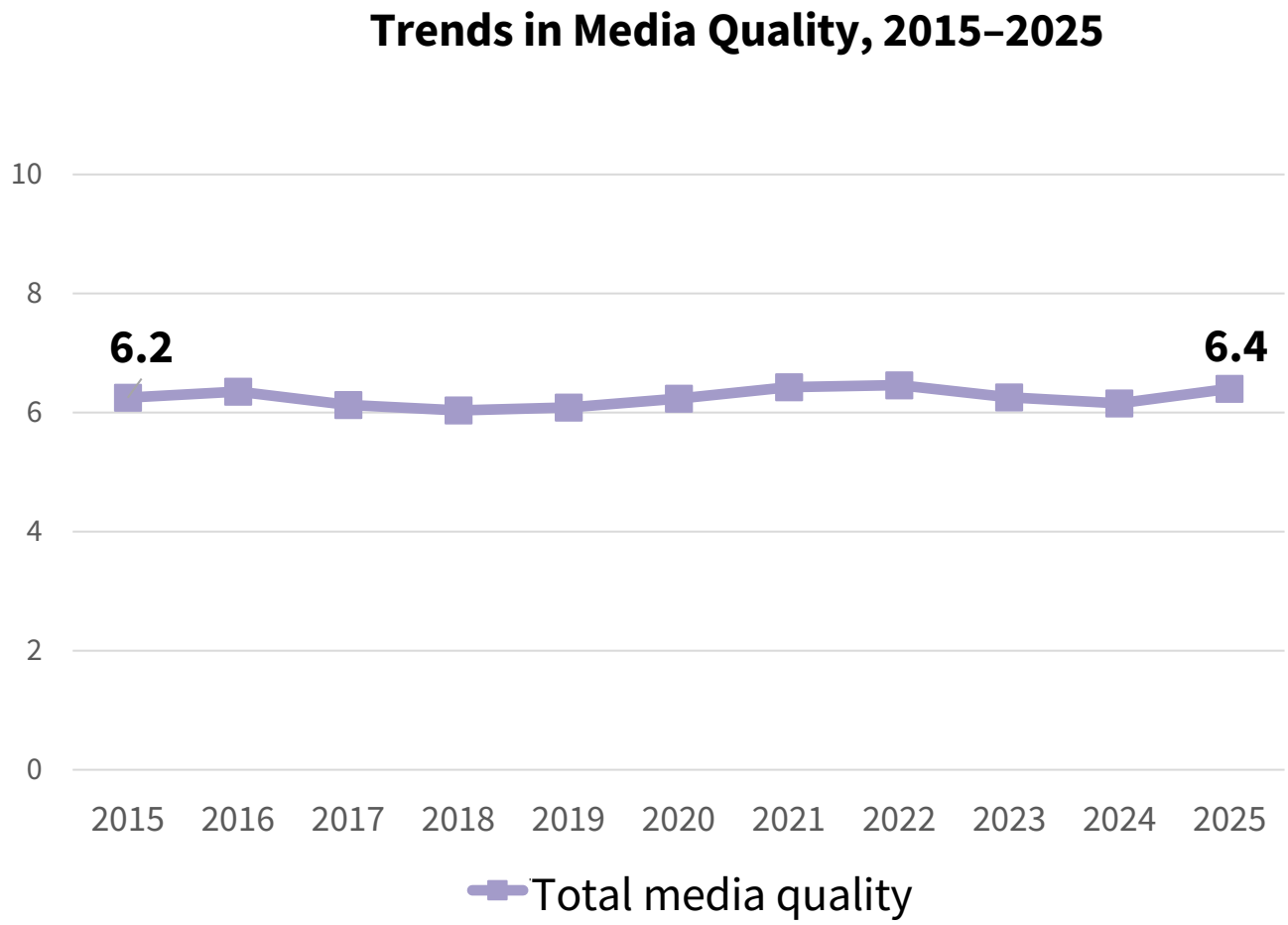
Dr. Linards Udris

Lead Outreach & Deputy Head of Research

The Importance of Quality Journalism

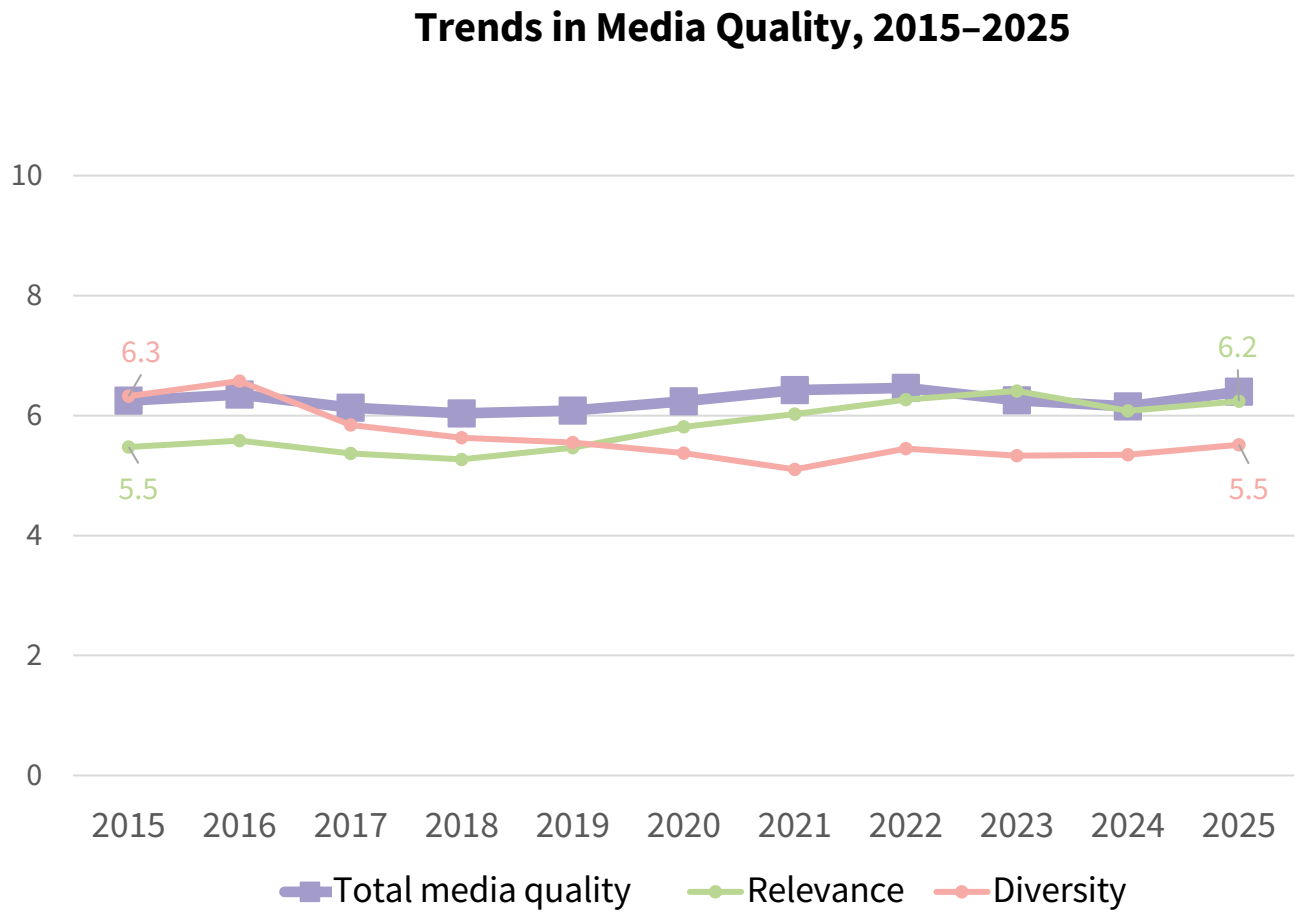


Overall media quality remains stable …



Data source: Manual content analysis. 51 Swiss news outlets, random samples from 2015 to 2025 (n = 204,719 articles)

Overall media quality remains stable, however, with opposing trends

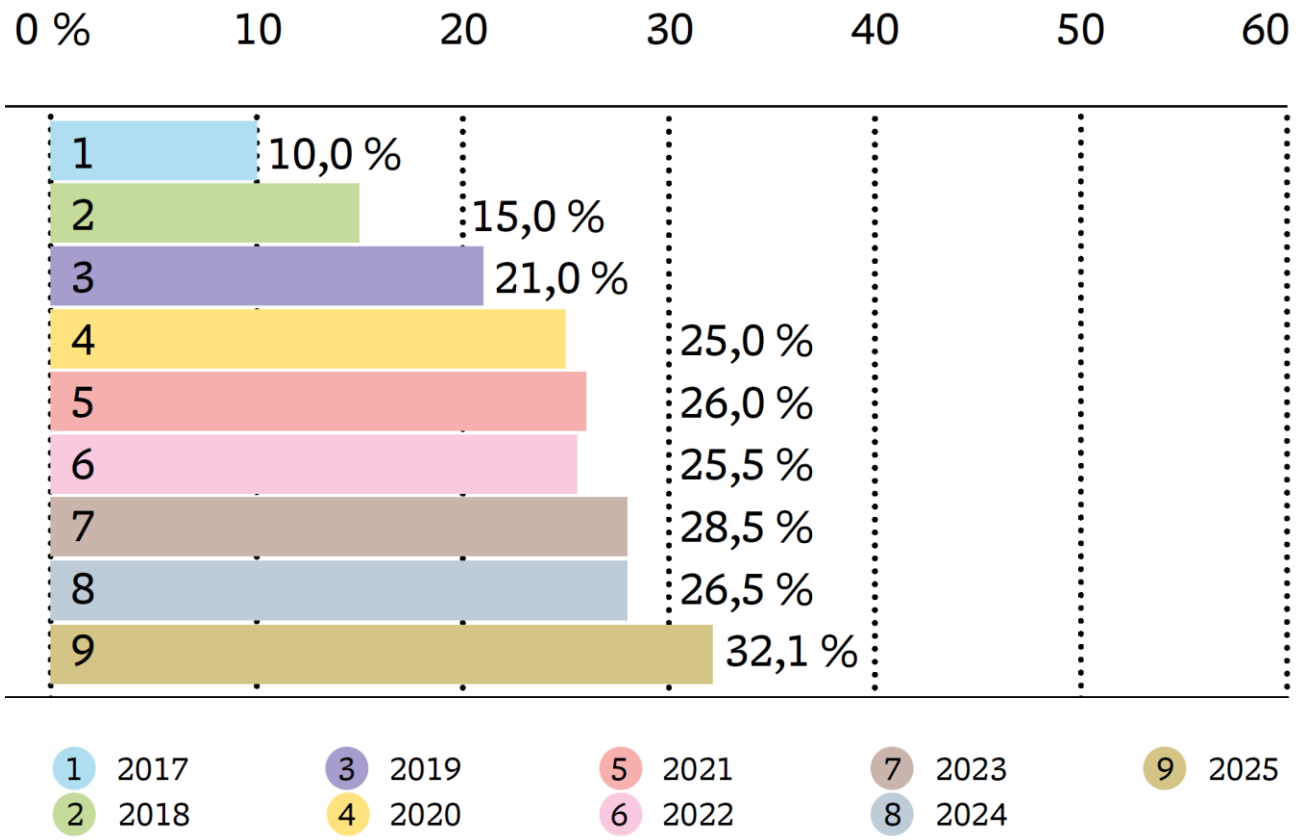


Contextualization:
recent improvement

Professionalism:
Increasingly more personal contributions, but less objectivity in the long run

Data source: Manual content analysis. 51 Swiss news outlets, random samples from 2015 to 2025 (n = 204,719 articles)

Media content concentration continues to increase



% = Percentage of shared articles (published in at least two newspapers)



2 Tages-Anzeiger – Dienstag, 11. November 2025

Politik & Wirtschaft

Leitartikel

Juso-Erbschaftssteuer gefährdet die Wirtschaft

Abstimmung am 30. November Reiche Erben sollen exorbitante Steuern zahlen. Die Volksinitiative zielt aber auf die Falschen.

10 Dienstag, 11. November 2025 BZ

Politik & Wirtschaft

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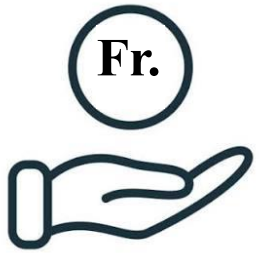
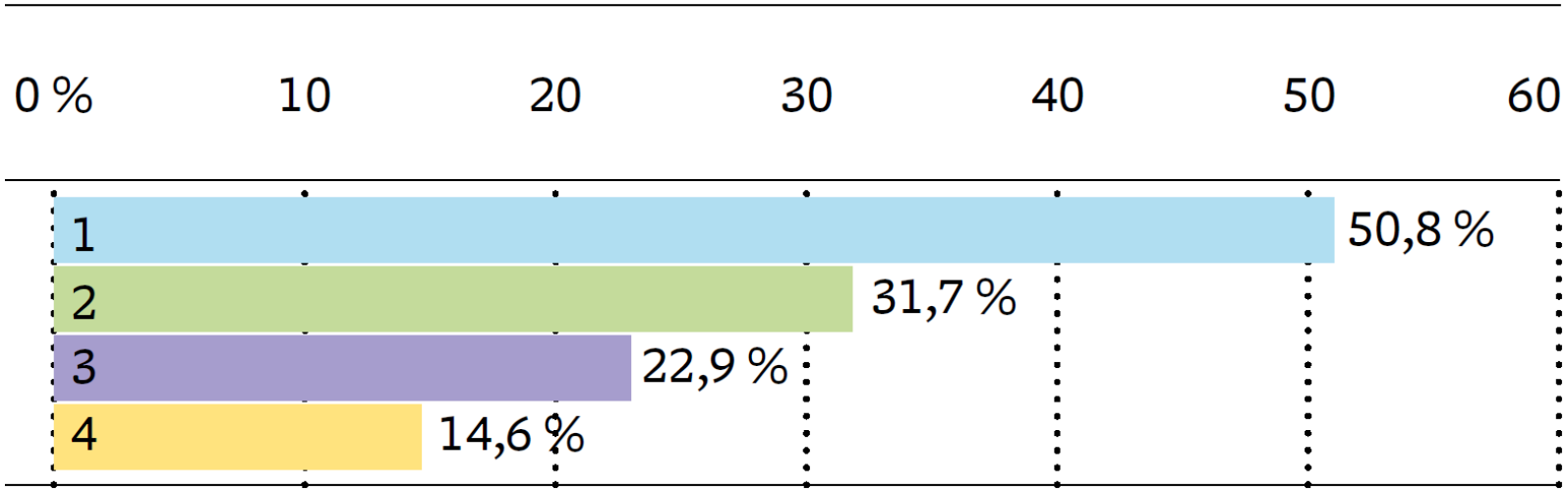
Abstimmung am 30. November Reiche Erben sollen exorbitante Steuern zahlen. Die Volksinitiative zielt aber auf die Falschen.

Data source: Manual content analysis and automated comparison of articles in the German-speaking Swiss press market (n = approximately 3,500 articles per year)

Willingness to pay remains flat; “utility” is the deciding factor



19,3%



1 access to useful content

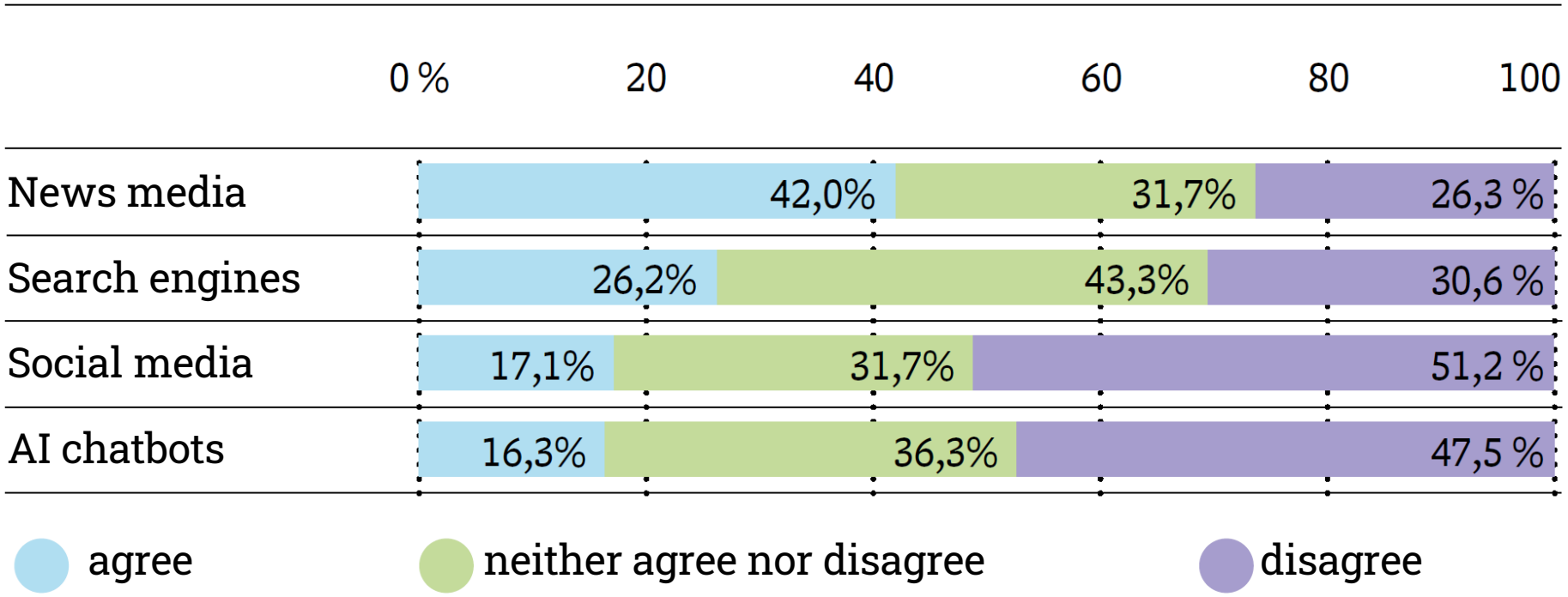
2 supporting journalism

3 access news without ads

4 taking advantage of a discount

Data source: Representative survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland in early 2026 (n = 2,051)—the chart shows only those respondents who paid for online news in the previous year. Respondents could select multiple answers. (Source: Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026)

Professional journalism is trusted more than tech platforms



Question: Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements. “I think you I can trust _____ most of the time.”

Data source: Representative survey conducted in German-speaking Switzerland and French-speaking Switzerland in early 2026 (n = 2,051) (Source: Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026)

Further analysis

- Long-term analyses of:
  - Media quality
  - Attitudes toward the media
  - Media use
  - Media financing
  - Media concentration

- Study on Expectations for Public Service Media in Switzerland (pre-released in September 2026)

Conclusion

4

Conclusion – Summary

- Awareness of disinformation as a problem is growing among the Swiss public
- Disinformation is a phenomenon of digital media consumption.
- Journalism is primarily seen as part of the solution, not the problem.
- News deprivation means greater vulnerability to disinformation.
- Social media alone is not enough. Direct engagement with (quality) journalism remains essential.
- Quality is positive, albeit with some compromises, but the economic foundation is at risk

Conclusion – Recommendations for action

- Strengthening quality journalism: media funding, copyright law (Leistungsschutzrecht), ensuring broad and digitally accessible public service media
- Tech platforms: additions to KomPG law – generative AI, verifiable obligation to mitigate systemic risks posed by disinformation; strengthening transparency as regards recommendation systems
- Media literacy: public funding, strengthening verification competence
- Fact-checking of news organizations: expanding, bundling (more cooperations), increasing visibility

Many thanks to our funding partners!

Kurt Imhof Stiftung für Medienqualität
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Our Team



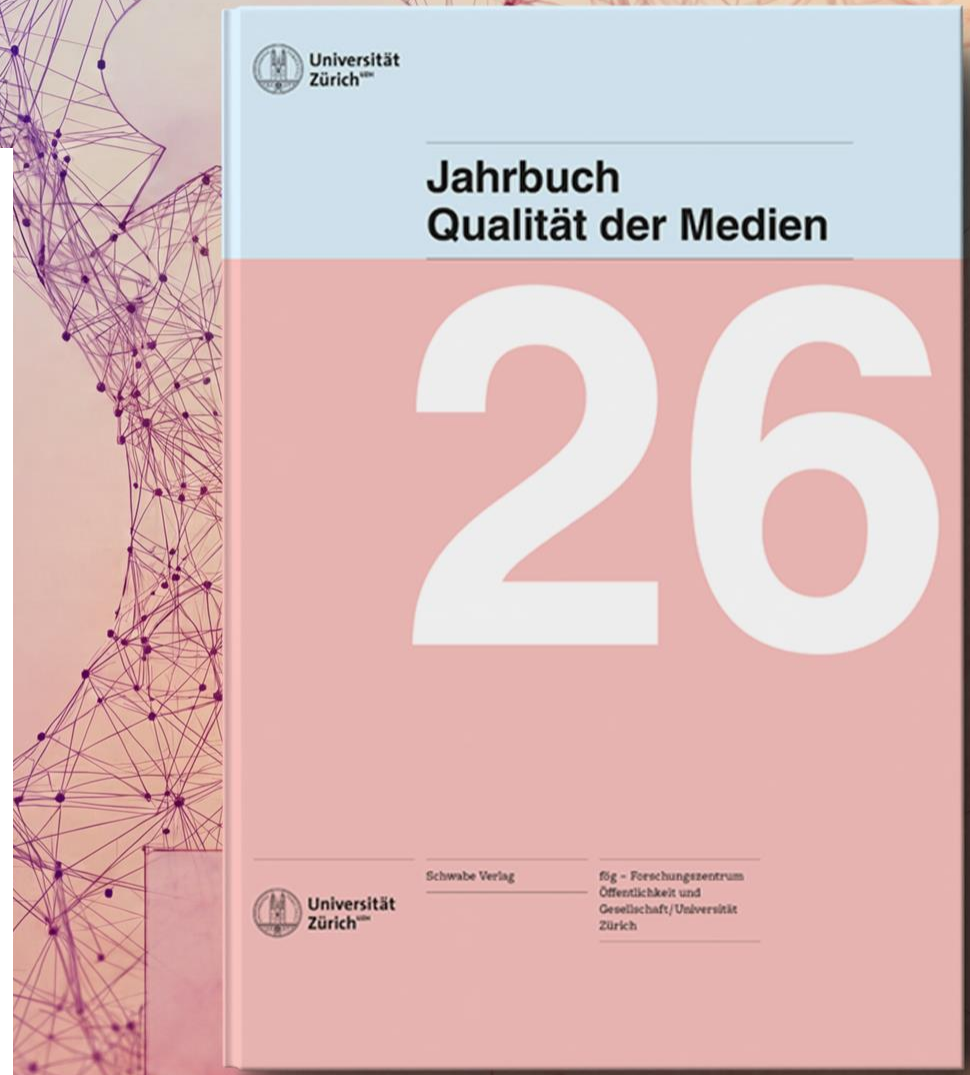
Guest author 2026

– Jörg Schneider

Do you have questions?

Questions from the livestream via slido.com

Code: #2889335



Panel discussion



Dr. Barbara Josef
Board member Swico, Trade Association for the ICT and online sector



Benno Zogg
Head of the section strategy and anticipation at the federal office for security policy SEPOS



Dr. theol. h.c. Guido Fluri
Founder of the Internet Initiative



Prof. Dr. Mark Eisenegger
Co-Director fög



Andrea Vetsch
Moderator SRF

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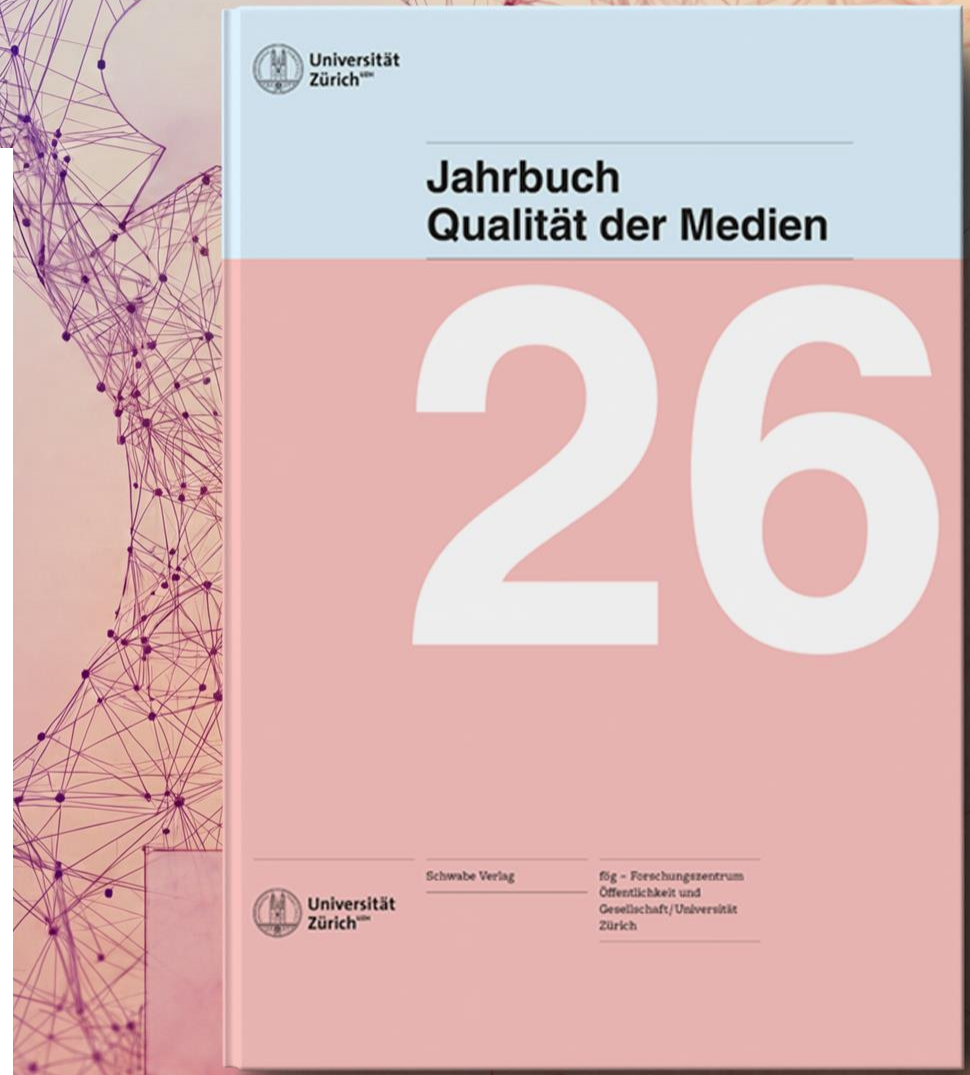

Thank you for your interest!

All documents on foeg.uzh.ch

