

THE ORF QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

The ORF quality assurance system consists of the following elements:

- Program structure analysis
- Public value report
- ORF monitoring
- ORF quality profiles
- Audience and expert panels
- ORF annual studies
- Independent expert

Program structure analysis

A Program structure analysis is necessary to ensure that the content offered by the ORF television and radio is well-balanced.

The basis for the evaluation of all the broadcasts for each calendar year is a group of 268 current telecast categories of the TELETEST consortium. All programs from a specific year are categorized with a three-digit program code corresponding to their respective formats and content. The smallest unit of analysis is a single program. The evaluation in regards to sophisticated primetime programs (8.00 pm to 10.00 pm) is carried out on the basis of a sample survey. The radio program structure analysis is also designed as a sample survey of a week.

According to § 4a point 3 of the ORF act, quantitative components are also required to be part of the quality assurance system. These components are based on the designated program categories, declared in the annual ORF report (§ 7 ORF). The determination of these shares should be in accordance with the ORF scheme for television and radio. Within a time period of four years a variation of + / - 5 percentage points for the shares is built in, in order to sustain the ability to respond to program-related or economic necessities in the long term. The following components were confirmed (in each case + / - 5 percentage points in the calculation period) and set as follows:





ORF-TV program structure (ORF eins + ORF 2)

Information	21%
Culture / Religion	6%
Science / Education / Self-help	10%
Sports	7%
Entertainment	44%
Family (Children / Young adults / Seniors)	13%

ORF-TV program structure (ORF eins, ORF 2, ORF III, ORF SPORT +)

Information	21%
Entertainment	32%
Culture	19%
Sports	29%

ORF RADIO – Program Structure

				
Information	23%	32%	27%	19%
Culture	38%	14%	8%	27%
Religion	4%	4%	2%	1%
Science / Education	19%	8%	3%	8%
Service / Traffic / Weather	7%	23%	29%	12%
Sports	-	7%	8%	1%
Family	2%	3%	3%	1%

Entertainment

7%

9%

21%

30%

Public Value Report

The Public Value report provides documentation for the ORF's performance in regards to its primary public mandate. Unlike commercial media, which put emphasis on advertising revenue, market shares, and quotas, public media have, at the heart of their interests, relevant public values that are essential to the democratic, social and cultural cohesion of society. This common-good-orientation is a distinctive feature of public compared to private broadcasters and one of the key arguments in favor of public service broadcasting in general.

The Public Value report categorizes the ORF performance documentation in terms of qualitative criteria: Five quality dimensions and a total of 18 performance categories are derived from the ORF Act, the ORF program policies, the ORF guidelines and the current demand in society and media development. This directly addresses the uniqueness of the usually demanding content design in primetime programs and its high quality in the areas of information, culture, and science. Concrete examples from the entire spectrum of ORF programs (television, radio, teletext, online, regional studios, off-air activities) further document the high quality of program production.

Public-Value-Categories		
Individual benefits (trustworthy, reliable information for everybody, consumerism, barrier-free media)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Trust- Service- Entertainment- Knowledge- Responsibility	Individual Value
Social benefits (Informed Citizen, citizen service)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Diversity- Orientation- Integration- Responsiveness- Culture and Art	Social Value
Benefits for Austria (Film industry, Austrian media platforms, regional diversity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Identity- Added value- Federalism	National Value
Benefits for European integration/global perspective European reports and broadcasts, ARTE, 3sat, BRalpha, EBU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- European integration- Global perspectives	International Value
Added value of the corporation New technologies, reporting system, personnel development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Innovation- Transparency- Competence	Corporate Value

Service categories and quality dimensions:

I. Individual value

Media products and services, which generate individual benefit via their consumption, encompass the following elements: reliability, credibility, trustworthiness, professionally created information, service and self-help for everyday life, sophisticated, quality-oriented entertainment, supply of educative content, which can be used individually, but also initiatives focusing on corporate social responsibility, i.e. projects like barrier-free media and immediate assistance to people in need.

I.I Trust:

Reliable, timely information on politics, the economy, culture, science, sports and society for all of Austria's population

I.II Service:

Self-help, consumerism and orientation programs, as well as traffic and weather services

I.III Entertainment:

Demanding, sophisticated and socially relevant entertainment, award-winning films, series and sports-broadcasting

I.IV Knowledge:

Education for all, children's programs, documentaries

I.V Responsibility:

Barrier-free media, service for people with sensory disabilities, humanitarian broadcasting

II. Social value

Media products and services that create value in terms of the social context of media consumption promote and possess the following features: respect for social and cultural diversity, a professional approach in regards to these topics at all times, an orientation and integration function, a cultural mandate, public accessibility and responsiveness.

II.I Diversity:

Awareness and appreciation of social, cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity

II.II Orientation:

Reports, documentaries, talk shows, thematic focal points

II.III Integration:

Ethnic groups, migration, and globalization

II.IV Responsiveness:

Civil rights programs, contact to audiences and audience participation, off-air activities

II.V Culture:

Cultural reports, features and documentaries concerning the Austrian and international cultural and artistic scene.

III. National value

Media products and services that create benefits in the context of original Austrian media production can be defined as follows: issue-focused content relevant to the Austrian identity in history, as well as to current cultural and social issues. Such content should generate benefits for the Austrian creative industries and represent extensive media production in a federal context.

III.I Identity:

Contemporary Austrian history, traditions, customs, sports, and social developments

III.II Added value:

Promoting the Austrian creative industry, film sponsorship, collaborative projects

III.III Federalism:

Productions of the nine ORF federal studios

IV. International value

Media products and services, which create benefits arising in the context of European integration and international reporting, encompass the following centerpieces: authenticity, professionalism information from Europe and the rest of the world, an extensive network of independent correspondents, and a broad spectrum of European and international cooperation.

IV.I European integration:

Coverage of European topics, reports, documentations, European film co-productions, ARTE, 3sat, BRalpha and the EBU

IV.II Global perspective:

International reporting, correspondents, international co-productions

V. Corporate value

Services and efforts that document the company's value, its technological innovations, competence and transparency for the public:

V.I Innovation:

Media development and new technologies

V.II Transparency:

Public relations, communication with the audience

V.III Competence:

Staff development, employee / internal trainings

These specified quality dimensions and performance categories are further applied in the ORF audience and expert panels, the annual studies and particularly in the ORF quality profiles. This ensures that the results of external evaluations have an impact on the quality assurance process and the general program design of the ORF.

To uphold maximum transparency and make this documentation accessible in a modern way, a company website has now been established. The Public Value report's content can be found at <http://zukunft.orf.at> (video and audio statements, program examples, figures, data and facts, studies, and scientific contributions of different authors). Since the new ORF Act has come into effect the website also offers all publications regarding the ORF's public mandate.

The magazine "TEXTE - public value in discourse" was established as an additional scientific part of a greater legitimizing effort, and to scientifically discuss the dimensions of the quality assurance system, its performance etc. It comprises opinions and articles written by renowned scientists and experts regarding this topic.

ORF-Monitoring (representative survey)

The level of audience satisfaction with the ORF and its programming is measured by a representative survey. An overall survey has been used since 2003. This has the advantage of being able to preserve continuity while allowing long-term comparability of public assessments on a representative basis. Fundamental interest levels are measured according to the different program segments like information, entertainment, culture and sport etc. Secondly, the audience's satisfaction with the ORF programming offered in these areas is also taken into account.

ORF-Quality Profiles

To ensure that quality assurance procedures and criteria are enacted, as demanded by the ORF Act, quality profiles for each ORF program category are created. Quality profiles define performance criteria that in turn establish a set of requirements for a specific program category and its subcategories. Thus the uniqueness of content and format of the usually demanding prime-time programs and their high quality in the areas of information, culture, entertainment and science are ensured.

A quality profile consists of:

- I. Specifically designed values, which are determined based on the statutes of the ORF core mandate, the ORF program policies and its public-value performance categories.
- II. Genre-specific properties that refer, respectively, to the differing conditions and requirements of the diverse program categories and subcategories.

Overall, a quality profile represents a desired or target status of a given program category. This is controlled by external evaluations, which in turn are designed to lead to optimization measures. The development and evaluation of different quality profiles is an ongoing process. The ORF television programs hold the highest priorities in this case, and are thus the first subjects of analysis. In accordance with the knowledge and experience gained from these first analytical steps, the system of quality profiles can as a follow-up be gradually extended to all areas of ORF media. Quality profiles are created for all five program categories, which combined cover the entire ORF TV spectrum. The program categories are further split up into subcategories, which consist of the particular program genres. These are then assigned to the already existing programs.

Program categories:

Information

Culture / Religion

Science / Education / Self-help

Sports

Entertainment

In evaluating the quality profiles the process follows the five basic program categories. An annual assessment of the entire ORF media supply would be useful, but with regards to resource capacity is simply not possible. One program category per year is to be examined. In addition, the annual assessment of all areas of the program is ensured by the quality monitoring and the ORF audience-discussions.

The evaluation of the quality profiles using recognized methods of qualitative audience research for the respective target group is carried out by external institutes.

Audience and Expert Panels

Audience and expert panels play a substantial role in the ORF quality assurance. On an annual basis the demands of the ORF core mandate and the ORF program guidelines are checked and controlled by external reflection. The audience and experts are invited to discuss and make suggestions for the ORF programs in all fields, ranging from information, culture and religion, to sports, entertainment, science and education. This includes the discussion of all media channels like television, radio, teletext and internet.

I. Audience panels

The format is a structured group discussion. The ORF invites selected audience groups to express their attitudes, experiences and ideas for various future program activities. This happens in dialogue with representatives of the ORF and the respective program managers. This is supposed to specify the requirements the ORF has to meet in the short and long term. These talks provide information and advice on the acceptability and future of ORF program design. In addition, a bonding process with the actual audiences is actively pursued, which in turn fulfills the requirement for public accessibility and audience participation.

II. Expert panel

Expert discussions are carried out in the form of a moderated group discussion. It is a measure to enhance the dialogue between program representatives and experts within each thematic segment. The expertise and opinion of the respective scientists or experts is thus given great significance, for the future development of the ORF.

ORF-Annual Studies

According to § 4a point 5 of the ORF Act the quality assurance system requires regularly performed representative recipient-surveys, in order to assess the viewer's/listener's interest. A representative recipient survey is conducted annually on a proposal of the audience-council,

In addition, there is the annual public value study, which refers to a particular aspect of its program scope. This in-depth evaluation allows the results of quality control to be a forward-looking as well as a practical foundation for the program design.

Methodology:

According to the quality system core elements, the ORF is expected to generate an annual report, which has to be assessed by an independent expert, in accordance with § 4a point 2 of the ORF Act, by an independent expert. The annual report and the overall assessment of the independent expert are to be submitted to the foundation board and the audience council together with an opinion by the Director-General by the end of June of the following year. These criteria and procedures shall be reviewed annually according to § 4a point 6 of the ORF Act and adjusted if necessary. The results will be published on <http://zukunft.ORF.at> according to § 4a point 7 of the ORF Act.