General Section

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Journalists in Switzerland: Structures and Attitudes

Until the late 1990s, no data was available on the subject of Swiss journalists or the state of journalism in Switzerland. After the national survey of 1998, a new survey was conducted in 2007/2008 to determine how journalists and journalism in Switzerland had changed over the last decade, and how changes in the media (e.g., the Internet) and society (e.g., globalization, commercialization) had affected journalists in the country. This article presents results from this survey and compares them to the 1998 survey. It will produce a series of conclusions about the current state of journalism in Switzerland, the changes it has been going through during the last decade, and the consequences of these developments for Swiss journalism, media, and society.

Keywords: journalism research, journalistic profession, Switzerland.

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1. Introduction

Switzerland, a small but multicultural country, has a strong international orientation but also a unique national and regional media landscape. Different historical, political, and cultural backgrounds have resulted in a series of regional characteristics that not only differentiate Switzerland from its neighbors, but which also creates distinct language regions (French, Italian, and German-speaking) within the country. Typically, linguistic borders within a nation also function as cultural borders. In Switzerland, these borders affect the social structure of journalists, their professional education, and their self-understanding vis-à-vis Swiss society (Marr & Wyss 1999; Wyss & Keel 2010).

Historically, the different regions have remained clearly separated despite increased mobility. For instance, cultural differences between the language regions are manifest in national referenda, where a harmonization of the political cultures can be observed and yet clear differences still exist (Linder, Zürcher & Bolliger 2008). Thus, any description of Swiss journalism culture needs to take into account these *regional differences* in order to render an adequate picture of the Swiss media.

The three regional media markets have been segmented into even smaller units by the federal structure of Switzerland, which has favored a high number of relatively small, local and regional media products. In the past half-century, however, the Swiss media landscape has seen increased consolidation and concentration of media organizations and titles. In the last 20 years, the number of regional daily newspapers has shrunk by 40% to 76 titles (Kradolfer 2007: 8), while the overall circulation of these titles has diminished by only 13%. This trend has resulted in fewer newspaper titles with higher circulation numbers and the dominance of a few large media organizations. Further consolidation and cross-media concentration can be expected due to rapidly advancing convergence of the media in Switzerland (Trappel & Perrin 2006).

While the growing consolidation and concentration has reduced the variety of media in Switzerland, it also has led to a higher level of professionalization in journalism and an increase in the quality of news coverage (Blum 2003: 370). However, some media experts see these effects undermined by another trend in the Swiss media: media organizations

increasingly define themselves as purely commercial businesses that have to produce profits. This shift in focus has resulted in a move toward tabloidization and commercialization of the Swiss media, with negative effects on the quality of the media overall (Imhof 2009; Blum 2009).

While new technologies have not had major consequences for the Swiss media thus far, two trends have changed the media landscape in Switzerland in recent years. One is the emergence of free daily newspapers, which have proven to be the most profitable form of print journalism. After only a few years in existence, the free daily *20Minuten* has become the newspaper with the highest circulation and the largest advertising income in Switzerland. However, with increasingly stiff competition, several titles have already disappeared after only a few years of existence. The remaining free dailies not only siphoned off advertising revenue from regular newspapers but also undermined "regular" journalism by popularizing short, fact-oriented stories that lack depth and informational background. These free publications clearly favor a more audience-oriented journalism, addressing their readers as consumers, and focusing more on people and scandals and less on political and economic issues (Blum 2009).

The second development concerns the legal framework regulating the broadcast sector in Switzerland (Blum 2003). In 1983, the state licensed the first private FM radio stations, albeit only with local reach. Ten years later, in 1993, private TV stations were allowed to compete with the public broadcasters as well. However, the dominant player, especially in television, remained the Swiss Public Broadcasting Corporation, which is mostly financed by viewership fees, as compared to private broadcasters which finance themselves through commercials and, to a much smaller extent, private membership fees. While the private radio landscape has flourished, private TV stations have never gained much relevance in Switzerland and have a negligible market share. As a result, a revision of the Radio and TV Law in 2008 allocated a share of the public viewership fees to the private broadcasters. In turn, the private media were required to meet certain standards of journalistic quality in order to fulfill their public service function (see Wyss & Keel 2009; Trebbe & Grossenbacher 2009).

Online news services started to appear around the turn of the millennium as new channels of existing print media. Today, the Internet is the prime source for daily news for most people in Switzerland – more

important than radio or television (Meier 2009). Online news services are now in a second stage where new forms of editorial organization and production are being developed to produce multimedia for all media channels in integrated newsrooms. This trend has been accelerated by the global economic crisis and the loss of advertising revenue to new online media.

2. Previous Studies of Journalists

Until the late 1990s, no data was available about Swiss journalists or the state of journalism in Switzerland. In 1998, a team of media researchers from universities in Zurich and Berne conducted a survey to better understand who Swiss journalists are, how they work and think, and how they are organized professionally (Marr et al. 2001). The survey was based on similar studies conducted in Germany (Weischenberg, Löffelholz & Scholl 1993, 1994) and the United States (Johnstone, Slawski & Bowman 1976; Weaver & Wilhoit 1986, 1996).

In the 1998 survey, the authors discovered that journalism and journalists in Switzerland were in many respects similar to their colleagues in other Western European and North American countries. Swiss journalists not only faced similar work conditions but also shared many of the journalistic role perceptions that characterize journalists in other industrialized countries. Moreover, they seemed to face the same changes brought about by technological and economic influences.

Nevertheless, some differences could be detected. The need and pressure to change, for example, seemed to be less dramatic and less acute than in neighboring countries. This difference may be explained by the strongly segmented Swiss media landscape and the emergence of media monopolies in small regions of Switzerland, which prevent direct competition between different media organizations.

Other differences concerned the basic characteristics of Swiss journalists. The survey findings indicated that they usually started their media careers later than their colleagues in France, Germany or the United States and thus tended to be slightly older on average. And although the level of professionalization has increased, a formal journalistic education was still less common than in other, comparable nations.

Finally, the study also found that while there is relative uniformity regarding the self-perception of the journalistic profession, there are significant differences between media in terms of education, salary, and work activities. Journalists working for weekend and weekly print media as well as for private radio stations showed a stronger orientation toward commercial interests. The researchers came to the conclusion that even though the international trends of change in the media had not yet significantly affected Switzerland, technological, economic, historical and societal factors were the main forces that shaped and determined the situation of journalists in Switzerland at the end of the 20th century.

Ten years after this initial portrayal of Swiss journalists, the survey was repeated in 2008 by a team of researchers from universities in Winterthur and Zurich in order to determine how journalists and journalism in Switzerland had changed over the last decade, and how changes in the media and society had affected journalists in the country. This article thus presents an empirical analysis of Swiss journalism in the light of the impact of the Internet, technological changes, and changing role models. The underlying research questions focus on a) the demographic structure, b) the educational background and professional training, c) the working situation, and d) the perception of the professional role perceptions of Swiss journalists.

The data presented in this article is based on this national survey, which will use the 1998 survey as the basis to compare and describe these changes. In the following sections, methodological aspects relevant to this survey will be presented, followed by the results of the survey describing the Swiss journalists. We will finish with a series of conclusions about the current state of journalism in Switzerland, the changes it has gone through during the last decade, and the consequences of these developments for Swiss journalism, media, and society.

3. Methodology

Our contribution is based on the latest data from three online surveys of Swiss journalists. The first survey contacted journalists working at private broadcasting stations and was carried out between November 2006 and January 2007 ($N = 449$, response rate: 39 %). The second survey targeted

Swiss journalists working in the public broadcasting corporation and was carried out between September and October 2007 ($N = 657$, response rate: 36%). Both surveys were supported by the Swiss Federal Communication Agency *(Bundesamt für Kommunikation)* and were conducted by Heinz Bonfadelli and Mirko Marr at the Institute for Communication Science and Media Research at the University of Zürich.

The third survey interviewed journalists working in print media and was conducted between June and July 2008 ($N = 1,403$; response rate: 19%). This survey was run by Vinzenz Wyss and Guido Keel for the Department of Applied Media Research in Winterthur at the University of Applied Sciences Zürich. All three studies used comparable questionnaires, concentrating on aspects such as the journalists' employment situation, job realities, role definitions, job satisfaction, professional careers, and socio-demographics. Similar questions were also used in the first comprehensive survey of Swiss journalists conducted in 1998 (Marr et al. 2001).

The goal of both the 1998 and 2008 survey was to obtain a representative picture of Swiss journalists. As with similar research projects in other countries, the researchers were confronted with the problem that a complete sampling frame for the journalist population in Switzerland does not exist. Moreover, the definition of a "journalist" was becoming less clear with the emergence of freelance journalists and bloggers. For the 1998 survey, the population was defined using the member lists of the three Swiss professional associations for journalists *(Schweizer Verband der Journalistinnen und Journalisten, Schweizerische Journalistinnen und Journalisten Union,* and *Schweizer Syndikat Medienschaffender).* A membership in one of these associations is necessary to be officially registered as a journalist in Switzerland. The three membership lists resulted in a total population of 9,135 active journalists who were members of at least one of the three associations. A sample of 5,404 was drawn, proportional to the membership structure of the three associations. Eventually, 2,020 completed questionnaires were used for further analysis and interpretation. The final sample was proportional to the overall population of journalists in terms of sex, form of employment and language region.

For the 2008 survey, the methodological design was more complex. While the questionnaire was essentially the same to guarantee functional equivalence, the sample was defined differently. First, while the print jour-

nalists received a printed questionnaire in the mail, journalists working for the private electronic media were asked to participate in an online survey. Moreover, the sample of journalists working in the private broadcast media was constructed differently than the sample of print journalists due to requests by the study's clients, namely the Federal Communication Agency. In order to determine the population of the private broadcast media, all private broadcasting organizations were asked to provide a list of their employees who earned at least half of their income or at least 12,000 Swiss Francs a year through their journalistic work. This resulted in a total population of 1,155 journalists, of which 449 filled out the online questionnaire. About one-fifth of the sample consisted of journalists who would not have been included in the sampling method used in 1998. The journalists of the Public Broadcasting Corporation were sampled in the same way, with a special focus on the exclusion of employees who were considered (by their superiors within the respective organizations) to have a more "artistic" than "journalistic" function (Bonfadelli & Marr 2008). The final population, which included journalists from all public radio and TV stations, consisted of 1,827 journalists. Of those, 657 responded to the survey.

Journalists working in print media and/or online editorial offices were selected in the same way as the journalists in the 1998 survey. However, in 2008, only the members of the two journalism associations *Impressum* and *Comedia* were approached, since the third association (SSM) almost exclusively organizes journalists from the electronic media. All 7,376 active members received a questionnaire by mail, which resulted in 1,403 completed questionnaires of print and online journalists. The sample represented the population of all print and online journalists proportionally. However, compared to the survey of the journalists working for the private broadcasting media, the response quota was roughly 1.9 times lower, which is why a weighting factor was used for the print and online journalists. Overall, the combined samples of the 2008 online and mail survey resulted in a total sample of 2,509 respondents.

Using a multi-layered analytical model (see Scholl & Weischenberg 1998; Reese 2001), the analysis attempted to include organizational and societal context factors. However, due to the questionnaire-based research design, the source of all the acquired information remained the individual journalist.

Table 1: Overview of Surveys Contributing to 2008 Survey

	Private Broadcasters	Public Broadcaster (SRG)	Print and Online Media
Method	Online survey		Printed questionnaire
Time of data collection	Winter 2006/7	Fall 2007	Summer 2008
Population	1,155	1,837	7,300
Sample	449	657	1,403
Return rate	39 %	36 %	19 %

4. Results

4.1. Basic Characteristics

We estimate the total number of Swiss journalists in 2008 to be roughly 10,500. As pointed out above, this number should be treated with great caution, since the definition of who is a journalist and the ways that they can be systematically counted have become less clear over the years. However, this estimate of Swiss journalists supports a conclusion from the 1998 survey: With roughly 136 journalists per 100,000 inhabitants, Switzerland has a relatively high number of journalists per capita.

In 2008, 35 % of all journalists in Switzerland were women, a finding that supports previous studies that found that the proportion of female journalists in the country has been increasing steadily. In 1981, for example, the percentage of female journalists in the two large media regions – Zurich (German-speaking region) and Vaud (French-speaking region) – was only 17 % (Saxer & Schanne 1981). In 1998, the percentage of female journalists throughout Switzerland stood at 32 %. Today, the male bias is especially strong in private radio and daily newspapers and somewhat less pronounced among journalists at public radio and TV stations as well as in magazines and weekly newspapers.

The average age of Swiss journalists has slightly increased during the last 10 years, from 41 to 43 years. The difference in age when entering the profession is considerably bigger. While it was at 26.5 years in 1998, it went up to 33.5 in 2008. The average age among journalists working for

Table 2: Sample of the 2008 Swiss Journalist Survey (in percentages)

		Total (N=2509)	Language Region		
			German (N=1794)	French (N=654)	Italian (N=59)
Gender	Female	35.2	35.4	35.1	31.0
	Male	64.8	64.6	64.9	69.0
Age	Up to 35	26.4	27.6	23.5	22.8
	35 to 44	31.5	29.7	36.1	36.8
	44 and older	42.1	42.7	40.3	40.4
Form of Employment	Freelancer	18.8	21.4	12.8	5.3
	Employee	53.2	58.3	41.7	34.5
Hierarchical role	Managing role (Chief editor)	12.0	11.9	12.7	8.6
	Partial managing role (sectional chief, department head, etc.)	16.0	16.0	16.3	12.1
	Occasional or temporary managing role (Rotating head of department, etc.)	12.3	13.3	9.9	10.3
	No managing role (editor, reporter, presenter, etc.)	48.4	46.4	52.3	62.1
	Trainee with employment > 12 months	1.7	1.3	2.8	1.7
	Trainee with employment < 12 months	9.5	11.0	6.0	5.2
Media type	Paid daily newspaper	31.6	29.8	39.1	n/a
	Non-daily newspaper, news magazine	16.8	15.4	22.3	(sample too small)
	Free daily newspaper	2.5	2.3	3.1	
	Trade press	8.5	10.2	4.9	
	Public broadcasting	18.6	18.3	13.4	
	Private Radio	9.4	11.3	4.2	
	Private TV	3.3	3.5	3.1	
	Online media	2.8	3.4	1.3	
	News Agency	4.4	3.9	6.2	
	Other	2.0	1.9	2.4	

private broadcasters, on the other hand, is considerably lower (32 for radio and 35 for TV). While only about 10 % of all journalists working for the public broadcasting company are less than 30 years old, the percentage of those younger than 30 at private broadcasters is 50 %.

In Switzerland, foreigners make up roughly 20 % of the population. This high share of foreigners is by no means represented in the media. Across all media types, more than 94 % of all journalists are of Swiss nationality, and 92 % say that they have grown up in Switzerland. This share is slightly higher in the French- and the Italian-speaking regions, but the representation of foreigners among the journalists remains below 10 % in all language regions.

4.2. Education and Training

As in many other countries, a formal journalism education is not required to become a journalist in Switzerland. At the same time, the growing complexity of journalistic work and the quickly changing media technologies make professionalization increasingly important. The educational systems in various Western countries have reacted to this need by establishing university-level degrees for journalism and journalism studies. Switzerland has been lagging behind in this development. Compared to neighboring countries, the Swiss have generally favored trade-related, non-university forms of education, and this trend is also found among Swiss journalists. For example, while two-thirds of German journalists had a university degree in 1998, only 44 % of Swiss journalists had such a degree in that year. The gap in tertiary education has narrowed during the last 10 years with the establishment of new universities in Switzerland, which raised the share of university-trained journalists to 56 % in 2008.

Besides the university courses, there are many other ways to receive a journalistic education. Typically, there are several journalism schools in all three language regions of the country without university affiliation. They offer a more practical approach to the study of journalism. Usually, these courses are combined with internships and traineeships at media organizations. In the French-speaking part of the country, attendance at the journalism school is mandatory for all trainees who work for media organizations which are part of the *Union romande de journaux* (URJ,

today: *Presse romande),* the media association of the French-speaking part of Switzerland. In the other language regions, no such obligations or requirements exist.

In 2008, 16% of all journalists said that they had no formal journalism education at all, but that they learned everything on the job instead. This number has remained stable over the last decade despite discussions about professionalization of journalism. Overall, 30% of all Swiss journalists have attended a journalism school. Among editors working for private broadcasters, this number is much lower, at 16%.

Table 3: Trends in Journalism Education of Swiss Journalists (in percentages)

	2008 (N=2506)	1998 (N=2008)
Internship lasting less than one year	35.4	33.7
Traineeship lasting more than one year	34.8	49.7
Long programs at journalism schools	29.7	44.4
Single classes at journalism schools	24.6	20.2
Internal courses	41.3	25.7
University	21.4	16.7
Other form of journalistic education	17.5	9.7
No journalistic education	15.8	13.3

Even though fewer journalists do traineeships lasting longer than one year, internships and traineeships remain the most common way into Swiss journalism. Thus, despite the fact that some media organizations have reduced their number of traineeships due to financial pressure, one of two Swiss journalists got their journalism education from an internship of up to one year. However, the share of journalists who got their journalism education at a university has grown more than 20% in the last 10 years. The increase can be almost fully attributed to the new journalism

degrees offered at universities. Finally, more than 40 % of all journalists say that they acquired their journalistic skills in seminars and courses within their media organization, almost twice as many as 10 years ago.

Thus, despite the talk about better education opportunities for journalists to meet the growing challenges of their jobs, the extent of formal education has decreased in favor of shorter educational programs. When asked, 90 % of all print journalists find their journalistic education adequate, and half of them even find their education "very" adequate. Two-thirds of all journalists were satisfied with the opportunities they had to get further journalistic education in their work. However, over the last 10 years, this number has decreased. Among journalists who work for public broadcasting, this rate is significantly higher than among those working for private broadcasters and the print media. Over the last 12 months, 60 % of all journalists in the sample have not received any extra training, with the percentage for journalists in private broadcasting being very low again with only 43 %.

4.3. Working Situation

In the last few years, the media have been going through a fundamental crisis, facing enormous challenges from all sides. Advertisers re-shuffle their budgets in favor of online channels, and blogs and other journalistic formats challenge the information monopoly of the traditional news media. However, in 2008, 68 % of all journalists say they would still recommend journalism as a profession. The number is lower than 1998 (77 %). There are significant differences between journalists from different media types: More than four of five journalists who work for public broadcasting recommend the job of a journalist, while less than half of those working for private radio or television recommend it. However, only one-third of all the journalists said that the climate in the media is good. Therefore, the satisfaction with job security in 2008 is much lower than in 1998. Career opportunities are also considered to have become worse.

When asked what they appreciated most about their work, the aspect most mentioned was the variety and the relationships with their colleagues at work. More than 90 % of all journalists stated that they were satisfied with these circumstances of their work. Next was the degree of satisfac-

tion concerning the opportunity to work according to one's own schedule. Two-thirds of the journalists found the workload, the time available to do research and the job security satisfactory. The aspects that were considered most unsatisfactory were both of an organizational nature – the lack of career opportunities (especially among print journalists) and the low salaries – especially among journalists working for private broadcasters.

When addressing job satisfaction, Swiss journalists frequently pointed to the changing nature of the profession. New technology and a changing media environment are fundamentally altering media production. However, when asked about the different tasks they perform during the day, the distribution between journalistic work, organizational duties and technological work has remained surprisingly stable. In fact, the time journalists devote to technology has decreased to about 10 % of the total working time as compared to 15 % in 1998.

Organizational duties such as editorial meetings make up 15 % of the time, down from 20 %. This decrease leaves more time for actual journalistic work: finding topics, doing research, producing articles or news items to be broadcast. One reason for this improvement in favor of journalistic tasks could be the journalists' perception of what "organizational tasks" and especially "technological tasks" involve. Transferring an article into the editorial software application, for example, was perceived as a technological task 10 years ago because the computer applications were a foreign aspect to the work and world of a journalist, but this task has become routine today.

The share of journalists with permanent employment has slightly decreased since 1998 from 80 % to 78 %. It remains highest among people working for the public broadcaster. Interestingly, only 64 % of all journalists work for only one medium exclusively. The other 32 % either work for other media companies as well, or for other employers altogether.

Concerning income, it must be stated that journalists' pay has not risen substantially over the last 10 years, with an average monthly salary of 6,400 Swiss francs compared to 6,000 Swiss francs in 1998, which means that adjusted to inflation, their incomes have decreased. That is why the satisfaction concerning income has decreased considerably over the last 10 years.

79 % of all journalists work in organizations with sectional structures, and 71 % are assigned to one specific section of their media organization.

This applies the least to those working for private broadcasters. The distribution between different sections has not changed much over the last 10 years.

Table 4: Distribution of Journalists between Sections (in percentages)

	2008 (N=1142)	1998 (N=1196)
Politics	21.6	24.1
International News	*4.0*	*4.5*
Domestic News/Politics	*12.4*	*13.0*
News, Information	*5.2*	*6.6*
Local News	24.5	22.2
Economics / Finances	8.6	7.9
Culture	14.2	12.6
Sports	12.1	9.9
Society/Mix	18.8	23.1

4.4. Professionalism

Because print journalists in this study were selected on the basis of their membership of a professional organization, we can discuss membership in professional organizations only based on answers from journalists working in radio or TV. Our findings show that about 45 % of radio journalists and 50 % of TV journalists are members of professional organizations.

The analysis of professional role perceptions has been a central aspect of journalist surveys around the world for the last 30 years, even though the validity of these responses has often been criticized. The key criticism is the question of what is actually measured when asking journalists about the importance of various professional roles in their work. However, it is reasonable to assume that the responses tell us more about journalism ideals than actual behaviors influencing the daily work of journalists. While we believe that questions about the roles remain relevant, we also believe that responses have to be interpreted for what they are – ideas and concepts of what a journalist should do.

Table 5: How Important are the Following Roles for your Work? (in percentages)

	2008			1998
	Total	*Public Broadcasting*	*Private Broadcasting*	Total
Neutral reporter who covers reality as objectively as possible	95.6	*94.8*	*92.8*	91.9
Analyst who researches complex issues thoroughly	84.6	*86.8*	*72.9*	85.2
Guide who helps the audience to find its way in a complex world	81.2	*78.9*	*79.9*	77.8
Watchdog who unveils bad developments and problems	79.3	*78.6*	*79.1*	81.8
Service provider who satisfies the needs of the audience	72.3	*78.9*	*81.7*	63.9
Commentator who contributes to the public opinion making process	70.1	*64.4*	*64.1*	73.0
Mediator between different groups and actors in society	65.5	*64.0*	*67.3*	65.7
Advocate of the weak and disadvantaged	56.3	*45.1*	*57.8*	64.6
Animator who offers fun and relief for the audience	48.1	*50.2*	*63.8*	45.8
Cost-conscious information broker serving the media market effectively	34.5	*32.8*	*46.5*	32.1
Efficient salesperson of a profitable product in high demand	19.0	*13.2*	*28.4*	20.8
Salesperson creating a suitable advertising environment for target groups	13.8	*5.8*	*22.2*	12.7

Similar to what was found in the 1998 survey, more than 95 % of Swiss journalists thought that the most important journalistic role is that of a neutral reporter who tries to describe reality as objectively as possible. This is followed by the role of the analyst who researches and dissects

complex issues thoroughly. The roles associated with service to the audience have grown in importance. More than four out of five journalists find important the role of a guide who helps the audience to find its way in an ever more complex world, more than the role of the critical watchdog who discovers scandals and abuse of power. This might be caused by the fact that in 2008, the information environment was a different one compared to 1998. With the Internet, a media recipient is confronted with a mind-boggling abundance of information, and thus it is the task of the media to orientate rather than to provide even more information.

The commercial role of journalists remains unimportant for the majority of the journalists, even though some of these roles have gained a few percentage points over the last 10 years. More interesting in this context is the fact that more than twice as many journalists in private broadcasting place importance on the role of creating a suitable advertising environment or the role of acting as an efficient producer of a profitable product with high demand compared to their colleagues working for the public broadcaster. This finding must be seen as representing the need of private broadcasters to work toward these goals in order to survive and not so much a cultural difference between individual journalists, since many journalists working for a private radio or TV station subsequently change to the public broadcaster, leaving behind the commercial orientation of their preferred role.

The decline of the advocator's role of journalism from 64.4 % in 1998 to 56.3 % in 2008 may be interpreted as an indirect effect of increasing processes of commercialization of the media sector, in which a media company does not want to expose itself by taking a side on an issue. In addition to a question about the journalists' preferred roles, the 2008 survey asked journalists about the importance of various factors influencing their work. Answers to this question were assumed to reveal more about the actual objectives or behaviors of the journalists at work. The comparison of these two questions shows that the journalists themselves seek to satisfy their audiences while adhering to certain general principles and values. A majority of the journalists (85.6 %) believe that their organizations are trying to satisfy the audience, and almost as many (81.3 %) believe their organizations are geared towards the public interest and related goals such as political information, societal integration, and education of the public.

Half the journalists also believe that their organizations are equally influenced by factors such as powerful actors in society (53.2 %) and the advertising market (48.2 %). 53.8 % say that their organization is being guided by certain political or ideological views.

As for the journalists themselves, more important for most journalists was the influence of the judgments of their colleagues, their private friends, and the comparison with what other journalists do in other media. Here the strong influence of the organizations manifests: journalists' attitudes may have orientations which are more geared towards the public interest, but organizational norms which focus more on market imperatives keep the individual journalist from achieving his or her own individual goals.

Table 6: Journalists' Professional Orientations (in percentages)

	My media organization is oriented toward …	I am personally oriented toward …
… the satisfaction of the audience.	85.7	86.0
… certain basic principles and values.	53.8	90.2
… the interests of certain actors in society such as political parties, companies, associations or prominent individuals.	53.2	26.1
…the interest of the advertising market.	48.2	19.6

5. Conclusions

In 1998, the researchers of the last representative survey in Switzerland concluded that Swiss journalists were in many respects comparable to their colleagues in other Western European and North American countries. They were affected – albeit to a different degree and with a time lag of a few years – by the same changes in technology and by the increasing commercialization of the media (Marr et al. 2001). The same can be said a decade later. The most striking finding of the 2008 survey is probably the phenomenon described by other media scholars as a complex inter-

play of stability and change (see for example Beam, Weaver & Brownlee 2008).

Despite fundamental changes in the media environment on an organizational level and in media consumption, the basic characteristics of Swiss journalists have remained surprisingly stable with respect to aspects such as demographic composition, activities, educational professionalization, and importance of roles and values. The financial crisis and the crisis of the print media have just started to affect the media at the end of the first decade of the 21st century. However, the 2008 survey data do not yet reflect these changes.

In this fundamental crisis of the media, many media managers believe that the only way for the traditional media to survive is to refocus on the traditional tasks and duties of the media – to provide the audience with thoroughly researched information and explanations of the increasingly complex world around them, and to act as the fourth estate, which safeguards the well-being of the society and its members.

This role requires the media to focus again on what makes them unique and sets them apart in a world flooded with information and news from blogs and social networks – but also persuasive media content from advertising, public relations, and political propaganda sources. This conclusion does not mean that Swiss journalism will not or should not change. Stronger professionalization is probably needed for the news media to survive and to be heard among the many other voices. However, the reorientation toward the roots of journalism will probably mean that no matter how much the world around them is changing, Swiss journalists will show more stability than change in the years ahead.

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