



“Bad news are good news”, they say among media people. It means that bad news apparently sell better. However, it makes a difference whether we consume bad or good news. Frequent consumption of “bad news” can also lead to a distorted view of the world.

vgl. <https://journalistikon.de/konstruktiver-journalismus>

But what exactly makes ‘good news’? A new approach called ‘constructive journalism’ says that media should not only report problems but also show viable solutions. Instead of only focusing on what goes wrong, this kind of journalism tries to give hope and wants to motivate people to think about positive change.

vgl. [www.sueddeutsche.de/medien/konstruktiver-journalismus-man-wirbt-immer-1.4477884](http://www.sueddeutsche.de/medien/konstruktiver-journalismus-man-wirbt-immer-1.4477884)

Other initiatives, such as the Gapminder project and the Dollar Street project, attempt to counteract a distorted, mostly negative view of the world with facts. They do this by presenting facts about key (global) trends in graphic form.

vgl. [www.gapminder.org](http://www.gapminder.org)

For many people in Western nations, the media primarily depicts crime, war, and natural disasters. Our brains react more strongly to negative events, so we often think the world is getting worse. But in his book Factfulness, Swedish scientist Hans Rosling shows that this is not true. For example, health care and education have improved in many countries.

vgl. Rosling, H., Rönnlund, A. R. & Rosling, O. (2018). Factfulness. Wie wir lernen, die Welt so zu sehen, wie sie wirklich ist. Berlin: Ullstein, S. 24 bis 25.

The media play a key role in shaping how we see the world. But they also influence whether, and how we shape the world ourselves. In democratic countries like Austria and Germany, where freedom of speech and freedom of the press are guaranteed, everyone should be able to take part in shaping public opinion. Journalists working for private newspapers or public

broadcasters have a significant role in this process.

vgl. [www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/deutsche-verhaeltnisse-eine-sozialkunde/138737/medien](http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/deutsche-verhaeltnisse-eine-sozialkunde/138737/medien) (Stand: 2021-11-25)

The quality of journalistic work can be measured in different ways, and more research is still needed on this topic. Jürgen Rager divides journalistic quality into four dimensions: timeliness, relevance, accuracy, and the way the information is presented.

vgl. <https://medien-wiki.de/journalistische-qualitaet>

In Austria, institutions like the Austrian Press Council try to make sure that media fulfil their social responsibilities. They do this by setting ethical standards, which are summarized in a code of honour.

[www.presserat.at/show\\_content.php?hid=2](http://www.presserat.at/show_content.php?hid=2)

Good media consumption can encourage people to participate in society in an informed and active way. However, media use has changed a lot in recent years. With digital media, consumers play a more active role, and the opportunities to produce media have increased and become easier to use. This also makes it easier for companies to track what people do online. In return, shaping one’s personal digital footprint on the Internet becomes a challenge for consumers. Additionally, problematic aspects such as internet addiction or fake news are evident in both the quantity and quality of current media consumption. Alongside the responsibility of the media, a reflective approach to media by consumers is becoming increasingly important. Knowledge about the availability, background, and intentions of texts or audiovisual content can be helpful and contribute to a critical evaluation of sources and their conscious selection.