

Journalistic Information Quality: Developing and Validating a Measurement Instrument

Activity Report No. 2

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October 2026

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Machine Learning Post-Editing: Anabela Delgado

This work is supported by national funds through FCT – Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P., under the funding of the Communication and Society Research Centre (CECS) 2025–2029.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Historically, journalism's central social role in information production was shaped by its nineteenth-century industrialisation and the subsequent emergence and popularisation of the internet at the end of the twentieth century. Today, journalists produce information within a vast informational landscape that overwhelms and dilutes its impact while increasing competition. News media now operate under constraints such as a significant reduction in the number of journalists and organisational challenges resulting from the failure of traditional business models. In this saturated market, crowded with brands and driven by demands for productivity and speed, news organisations compete for visibility amid considerable noise and rapid obsolescence. This competition is further intensified by attention-capture mechanisms (Costa, 2026), which may contribute to a decline in the quality of journalistic output (Bachmann et al., 2022; Chen & Suen, 2023).

Consequently, trust in the quality of information produced by journalists has fallen to increasingly low levels, in line with continued downward revisions of newspaper circulation and television, radio, and online audiences for so-called legacy media (Silva et al., 2025). Although the latest annual studies, such as the Reuters Institute's 2025 Digital News Report, produced at the University of Oxford, indicate that trust in journalists' work in Portugal still stood at 54%, well above the European average of 40%, the figure has nevertheless declined steadily over the past decade. This trend is evident in Portugal, across the rest of Europe, and in the markets commonly referred to as the global West (Newman, 2025).

Given this context, developing a measurement instrument to assess the quality of information disseminated by news media, viewed through a sociological barometer, has become increasingly complex and multidimensional. Analysing journalistic production processes alone is insufficient; researchers must also examine how audiences receive and perceive journalistic output. Furthermore, it is necessary to reconcile the concepts of journalistic quality and journalistic information quality—traditionally explored through qualitative analytical models—with their translation into quantitative models suitable for measurement.

The instrument presented in this report's conclusion—a three-dimensional model with seven subdimensions and 32 indicators or assessment criteria—was developed using the Delphi method to adapt and converge on the cross-cutting criteria for assessing information quality established by the Barometer for Information Quality (2025). This approach, combined with a synthesis of a three-dimensional model identified in the literature, enables a holistic assessment of journalistic information quality. The Delphi method involved three rounds. In the first two rounds, questionnaires were distributed to a panel of experts, including academics and practitioners, to validate the criteria identified in the literature—or, if consensus was negative, reject them. The third round consisted of individual interviews with some participants to revisit the six criteria on which no agreement had been reached in the first two rounds, in keeping with the method's aim of achieving consensus. Once complete, BIP researchers can apply the validated model in case studies, and other research groups can replicate it, supporting comparative analyses. Validating the model at the end of this process enables its application across various case studies conducted by BIP researchers. Moreover, other research groups can replicate this tool for comparative analyses.

BIP, the Barometer for Information Quality, operates as an Observatory within CECS, the Communication and Society Research Centre, enabling its use. Its primary objective is to monitor and analyse the quality of publicly available information across various communication ecosystems and platforms. BIP helps us understand and improve information quality, fostering a more critical and informed society. Additionally, its activities

promote transparency and accountability throughout all sectors of society (Barometer for Information Quality, 2025).

1 – JOURNALISTIC INFORMATION QUALITY: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR PROPOSING AN ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Assessing the quality of journalistic information requires combining two epistemologically distinct approaches, though they are inseparable when the second is considered in relation to the first: a more general approach to information quality, on the one hand, and an approach to the quality of journalism, on the other. Therefore, any assessment instrument must be grounded in a model that brings both together.

Information quality can be analysed through a range of approaches based on different dimensions or indicators. During the theoretical review, in preparation for designing the assessment instruments that will make up the project's portfolio, the BIP team critically reviewed several models and, drawing on them, proposed a set of cross-cutting criteria for assessing information quality (Barometer for Information Quality, 2025). One model underpinning the BIP proposal, developed by Zarraga-Rodriguez and Alvarez (2015), was particularly suitable for applying to journalistic information. It assesses information quality through three broad categories—content, format or representation, and accessibility—each associated with a set of dimensions:

1. Content: This category concerns the information itself, including its relevance, accuracy and completeness. It encompasses two subcategories: the intrinsic perspective, which considers the properties of information without reference to the user, task, or application; and the context-based

perspective, which highlights the need to consider the user and how the information is used.

1.1 Accuracy dimension: The extent to which information is correct, exact, precise, free from errors and unambiguous.

1.2 Consistency dimension: The extent to which information is sound, objective, unique and unbiased. It also concerns the absence of conflicts between different sources.

1.3 Believability dimension: The extent to which information comes from reliable sources and is accepted as true, real and credible.

1.4 Relevance dimension: The extent to which information is precisely what is required for the task at hand; in other words, whether it is useful, adds value, is appropriate and is up to date.

1.5 Completeness dimension: The extent to which information is comprehensive and includes all relevant information.

2. Format: This measures the style in which information is presented and the extent to which it is easy to understand. It therefore concerns ease of understanding and comprehension, which may be influenced by the way information is presented.

3. Accessibility: This category measures the extent to which information is readily available and encompasses three dimensions of information quality: accessibility, timeliness and security.

3.1 Accessibility dimension: The extent to which the required information is always available and can be accessed easily and quickly.

3.2 Timeliness dimension: The extent to which information is up to date and available in time to be used.

3.3 Security dimension: This concerns the protection of information. The authors include this dimension because of its legal implications.

The information quality model developed by Zarraga-Rodriguez and Alvarez (2015) thus identifies a significant set of elements that apply directly to journalistic information—elements that can be transferred to a model for

assessing journalistic information quality. For this reason, these elements are italicised in the original text.

Journalistic information nevertheless has specific dimensions that are not fully covered by these information quality assessment models. On the one hand, it is inherently oriented toward the public interest, meaning its quality criteria cannot be separated from the ethical and professional standards governing its production and dissemination, or from the transparency mechanisms essential to its scrutiny. On the other hand, several of the dimensions proposed by Zarraga-Rodriguez and Alvarez (2015) need to be broken down into specific indicators that can be measured independently.

Scientific research therefore addresses the issue from different angles that are not always articulated with one another. In developing our proposal, we brought together a range of contributions on indicators of journalistic quality that, taken together, aim to establish the most holistic perspective possible.

Costera Meijer and Bijleveld (2016) examined journalistic quality from an audience perspective. Focusing on regional news, they found that the quality criteria most relevant to audiences—what they describe as value-based journalism—include speed, news that fosters connections between people and understanding of the region, and the media's ability to respond to audiences. Also considering audience perspectives, Zúñiga and Hinsley (2013), drawing on a literature review, found that journalists and audiences value different quality criteria. While journalists prioritise autonomy, accuracy, objectivity, speed, and an impartial watchdog role, audiences favour accuracy, speed, and objectivity, though they do not value these criteria as highly as media professionals do.

Tang et al. (2003) identify nine quality criteria to be considered when analysing news, several of which can be classified within the information quality categories and dimensions proposed by Zarraga-Rodriguez and Alvarez (2015): accuracy; source reliability; objectivity; depth; author credibility; readability; conciseness; grammatical correctness; and multiple

points of view. As in several other cases, this proposal includes criteria related to both the production process and the product itself.

The 11 radio and television journalists Silva (2023) interviewed identify rigour and impartiality; compliance with professional ethical standards; source diversity; writing quality; clear, explanatory language; and an original approach as fundamental characteristics of quality journalism. These journalists also identify two essential conditions for producing quality journalism: sufficient time to work—which allows them to diversify sources, develop investigations and reporting, and review and verify facts—and good working conditions.

Drawing on the perceptions of 48 journalists and other actors involved in news production, Jenkins and Nielsen (2020) identify seven characteristics for assessing journalistic information quality: accuracy, objectivity, transparency, sharing multiple perspectives, reader engagement through entertainment, emotional appeal, and the ability to reflect the experiences of ordinary people. They thus propose that quality journalism encompasses not only traditional journalistic values but also values associated with popular journalism (Jenkins & Nielsen, 2020). Odriozola-Chéné et al. (2019), meanwhile, highlight journalistic production routines as a "fundamental element in the development of quality journalism" (p. 128) and identify journalists' autonomy and journalistic depth as essential to producing quality journalism. The authors also note that limited human and material resources in newsrooms, along with the shift from timeliness to immediacy, undermine this quality. Examining the importance of information sources in journalistic production routines, Casero Ripollés and López Rabadán (2013) identify five internal and four external quality indicators. The internal indicators are professional status, verification, transparency, relevance and uncertainty reduction. The latter indicates that access to sources minimises tensions in the production process and makes it more efficient. External indicators include credibility, assessed through the number and diversity of sources; influence, the relevance of sources; pluralism; and participation, which increases the likelihood of drawing on sources from civil society. Figueira and Silva (2023) argue that transparency enables an examination of the conditions for pluralism and media diversity. They also argue that

journalistic quality must be understood through the tension between what transparency enables and what it may jeopardise, including issues of owners' privacy and competitiveness. This is because "ownership is also the basis for assessing the conditions under which journalistic content is produced" (Figueira & Silva, 2023, p. 15).

Nicoletti and Mick's (2018) proposal focuses primarily on production conditions. It consists of a matrix of indicators organised around four areas: demographic data (type of employment relationship, contract type, number of employers/contracting entities at the time, remuneration, age, gender, employment status, official job title under the employment contract, years working as a journalist, years at the company, the company's main business and company size); working conditions (ergonomics, safety and support network, working hours, work routine, stress and illness); professional practice (duties and responsibilities, qualifications and professional outlook); and process and product (information gathering, source selection, authorship, writing, editing and correction, and perceptions of quality).

Guerra's (2023) proposal involves establishing a quality management system that would enable information organisations to assess their own quality. Applied to journalism, this system should be guided by minimum requirements, divided into primary and secondary requirements. The author identifies the primary requirements as truth, relevance, and recentness. The secondary requirements are autonomy/independence, within democratic and professional parameters; public interest, with the public taking precedence over private interests; respect for human dignity, which imposes limits on the exercise of professional prerogatives; and plurality and the right of reply, in situations involving legitimate conflicts (Guerra, 2023).

Although the literature linking journalistic information quality to human dignity and human rights is limited, we consider it important, amid growing economic and political pressure on journalists' work, to heed the warning from Icelandic human rights expert Herdís Thorgeirsdóttir. She argues that "a press enslaved by the politics of the market becomes a

vehicle of restrictions, a threat to the rule of law and the rights of others instead of an instrument for guarding democracy and human rights" (2004, p. 610).

Using the cross-cutting information quality criteria as a starting point (Barometer for Information Quality, 2025, p. 47) and bringing together, as comprehensively as possible, the proposals outlined above, the BIP team developed a model instrument for assessing journalistic information quality. This is structured around the three broad dimensions proposed by Marinho, Loureiro and Palau-Sampio (2023): journalistic information quality assessed (i) from the perspective of reception, (ii) from the perspective of the product, and (iii) from the perspective of the process. While indicators or assessment criteria can be grouped within these three dimensions, the model was further divided into subdimensions to make it easier to understand.

The proposal submitted for validation therefore comprised a total of 37 indicators (see the full version of the questionnaire administered in Appendix 1), as follows:

Dimension 1: Journalistic information quality from the perspective of reception

Component 1.1: Information assimilation

Indicators: informational satisfaction, intelligibility, emotional engagement, accessibility, usefulness.

Component 1.2: Citizenship

Indicators: trust, public interest, scrutiny, representation, dialogue and sharing, promotion of media literacy.

Dimension 2: Journalistic information quality from the perspective of the journalistic product

Component 2.1: News organisation and distribution

Indicators: conciseness, clarity, accuracy and rigour, completeness, availability

Component 2.2: Context

Indicators: timeliness, contextualisation, expert analysis, conclusive information

Component 2.3: Balance

Indicators: objectivity, credibility, sources, verification, right of reply, impartiality, diversity and inclusion

Dimension 3: Journalistic information quality from the perspective of the production process

Component 3.1: Routines and ethics

Indicators: selection, time, transparency, autonomy and independence, professional ethics, human rights

Component 3.2: Resources

Indicators: training, daily work, employment relationship, newsroom

2 – METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

To validate the proposed instrument for measuring journalistic information quality, we used the Delphi method, which aims to achieve consensus and is used when expert judgement is required to interpret a particular object or phenomenon (Moreno & Hervàs, 2009; Reguant-Álvarez & Torrado-Fonseca, 2016). The Delphi method involves successive rounds of consultation and requires individual responses to remain anonymous to other sample members, thereby avoiding the influence of an opinion leader. As it relies on collecting the opinions of individuals considered experts on the subject under examination, it is based on intersubjective judgement that overcomes the limitations of any single individual (Reguant-Álvarez & Torrado-Fonseca, 2016), enabling decisions to be made that should not rest solely with the researcher (García Valdés & Suárez Marín, 2013).

Using the theoretical framework and the dimensions and indicators outlined in the preceding section of this report as our starting point, the team developed a data-collection instrument, a questionnaire, to assess journalistic information quality. It was organised around the three main dimensions that the literature associates with the issue—quality from the perspective of reception, quality from the perspective of the product, and quality from the perspective of the process—and the seven components into which these dimensions are divided. The initial questionnaire comprised the 37 indicators under consideration (Appendix 1). Each indicator was assessed using a five-point Likert scale measuring its degree of importance (1, not at all important; 2, of little importance; 3, of average importance; 4, very important; 5, absolutely essential). The expert panel completed the questionnaire online using a Microsoft Forms Survey accessible through institutional credentials. Online tools are commonly used in the Delphi method: they facilitate anonymity among experts, allow geographically

dispersed participants to take part in the panel, and, in this respect, reduce potential travel costs (García Valdés & Suárez Marín, 2013). Before distributing the questionnaire to the experts, we conducted a pre-test to confirm that the questions were formulated in accordance with the principles of precision and independence.

The wording of the questions remained unchanged across successive rounds so they could be assessed consistently. The methodological process was explained clearly and transparently to the experts, emphasising that a lack of consensus is not, in itself, a problem. Understanding the origins of disagreement is essential. This is why the method allows responses to be reassessed and, where necessary, explained in light of other panel members' opinions (Reguant-Álvarez & Torrado-Fonseca, 2016).

Between June and July 2025, ten experts in Information and Journalism were contacted by email and telephone. They came from academic and scientific organisations and newsrooms in Portugal and Spain, either exclusively or through experience in both settings. All initially accepted the invitation. Participants were selected based on their professional experience and/or the relevance of their scientific work, whether in journalistic practice or research. The resulting non-probability sample used typical case or purposive selection and included three full-time professional journalists, five academics with varying degrees of newsroom experience, one professional journalist with academic and scientific research experience, and one full-time academic. The panel comprised six women and four men (N=10). Although one member did not respond in the first round (N1=9) and another did not respond in the second round (N2=8), both samples remained consistent with the recommendations of García Valdés and Suárez Marín (2013), who advise a minimum of seven experts.

The dispersion of responses for each indicator was analysed by calculating the standard deviation, which can be used as a measure of consensus or disagreement. The following scale was used as a reference for interpreting the level of agreement: 0 to 0.5 – very high agreement; 0.5 to 0.75 – high agreement; 0.75 to 1.49 – moderate agreement; above 1.5 – low agreement (Moreno & Hervás, 2009; Valdés & Marín, 2013; Saltsman e Shelton, 2019). A

conservative approach was adopted, with 0.75 defined as the cut-off point for high and very high agreement, although the available literature frequently identifies a standard deviation below 1 as indicating high agreement on self-assessment scales (Blunch, 2013; Hair et al., 2019). A second cut-off point, $\mu < 2.5$, was also adopted to distinguish positive from negative consensus. This approach considers the standard deviation of responses and then the mean of the Likert-scale values, allowing identification of consensus on an indicator that should be rejected because it is collectively regarded as "little" or "no" importance in the model under development. Finally, an equally conservative approach was adopted when interpreting the interview data. Because the interviews included only experts whose responses to a given set of indicators differed from the rest of the panel and contributed to the observed standard deviation, the aim was to understand the reasons for this divergence. When those reasons revealed important nuances or theoretical and empirical foundations that may have been overlooked in developing the model or in other panel members' responses, those arguments were considered decisive. The calculated standard deviation therefore took precedence, because consensus on the proposed indicator could not be established.

3 – CONSULTATION WITH EXPERTS

The validation process required three rounds, as anticipated in the literature (Saltsman & Shelton, 2019). The first round of the questionnaire administered to the expert panel (N1 = 9) took place between 23 January and 15 February 2026; the second round took place between 21 May and 9 June 2026 (N2 = 8); and the third round, conducted on 19 and 20 July 2026, consisted of individual interviews with the experts whose responses had given rise to disagreement in the preceding round (N3 = 4).

3.1. Questionnaire to the Delphi Panel: Results of Round 1

The results of the first questionnaire round are presented for each of the 37 proposed indicators in Appendix 3. Applying the cut-off point of 0.75 to the calculation of the respective standard deviations identified ten indicators on which the nine respondents had not reached consensus (Table 1):

INDICATOR	INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	STANDARD DEVIATION (σ) ROUND 1
Informational satisfaction	Journalistic information should make audiences feel well informed	0.949333815
Representation	Journalistic information should foster a sense of identification and recognition of oneself and one's community in the news	1.133132222
Conciseness	Journalistic information should be presented simply and concisely	0.785674201
Completeness	The quality of journalistic information depends on presenting information that addresses the subject from as many angles as possible	0.874889764

Timeliness	The quality of journalistic information depends on how closely it relates to current affairs	0.785674201
Selection	The quality of journalistic information depends on the selection process, which determines what information is shown and what is not	0.942809042
Human rights	The quality of journalistic information relates to the ethical stance taken when handling situations that may jeopardise human rights	0.816496444
Daily work	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to the logistical and psychological conditions journalists face in their daily work	0.816449644
Employment relationship	The quality of journalistic information is specifically related to whether journalists have a stable employment relationship with their media organisation	0.916245694
Newsroom	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to the composition of the newsroom to which journalists belong	0.955813919

Table 1: *Indicators for which consensus was not reached (σ > 0.75) in Round 1 of the Delphi questionnaire*

All indicators listed in Table 1 were therefore carried forward to Round 2, with unchanged wording. The panel's comments were collected as part of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1) and taken into account when considering whether further clarification from respondents might be required during the interviews conducted in Round 3.

One indicator, however, achieved consensus in Round 1 (σ = 0,566557724) but recorded a mean of μ = 2,1111, meaning the panel's average score was clearly below 2.5. This led to negative consensus: the panel agreed the proposed indicator was not important for measuring journalistic information quality, so it was excluded (Table 2).

INDICATOR	**INDICATOR DESCRIPTION**	**STANDARD DEVIATION** (σ) **ROUND 1**	**PANEL AVERAGE** (*μ*) **ROUND 1**
Engagement	Journalistic reporting should elicit significant emotional responses from the public	0,566557724	2,1111

Table 2: *Indicators for which negative consensus was reached (μ < 2.5) in Round 1 of the Delphi questionnaire*

It should be noted that the consensus reached in favour of excluding this indicator is consistent with the evidence gathered in the study by Bachmann et al., whose scale for measuring the quality of journalistic content assigned low scores to emotional content (2022, p. 32).

3.2. Questionnaire to the Delphi Panel: Results of Round 2

In addition to retaining the wording of the indicator descriptions carried forward to Round 2, the second questionnaire also included a component, as recommended in the literature, reporting the results obtained in the previous round.

The panel members were provided with clear information about the project's overall objectives through a traffic-light colour-coding system. The questionnaire retained the original proposal's structure while also communicating the results of Round 1: the 26 indicators transferred directly to the final assessment instrument were shown in green, and indicator 3 was eliminated and shown in red. Both outcomes reflected the positive and negative consensus reached, respectively. The indicators for which consensus had not been reached in the first round were shown in yellow, indicating that further information was required. The questionnaire was therefore revised to match the version presented in Appendix 2 and included only the ten indicators carried forward to Round 2. Eight respondents completed this round, one fewer than in the previous round. The results were as follows (Table 3):

INDICATOR	INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	STANDARD DEVIATION (σ) ROUND 2
Informational statisfaction	Journalistic reporting should give the public a sense of being well-informed	1,2247
Representation	Journalistic reporting should foster a sense of identification and recognition of oneself and one's community in the news	0,9922

Conciseness	News reports should be presented in a simple and concise manner	0,9922
Completeness	The quality of journalistic reporting is linked to the presentation of information that addresses the topic from as many angles as possible	0,4330
Timeliness	The quality of journalistic reporting depends on the relationship between journalistic work and current affairs	0,4373
Selection	The quality of journalistic reporting is directly linked to the process of selecting information, which determines what information is presented and what is not	1,0000
Human rights	The quality of journalistic reporting is linked to the ethical stance taken when dealing with situations that may call human rights into question	0,4841
Daily work	The quality of journalistic reporting is directly linked to the logistical and psychological conditions provided to journalists in their day-to-day work	0,4841
Employment relationship	The quality of journalistic reporting is specifically linked to the existence of a stable employment relationship between the journalist and the media organisation	1,3940
Newsroom	The quality of journalistic reporting is directly linked to the composition of the newsroom to which journalists belong	0,8569

Table 3: *Indicators (shown in bold in the original) for which consensus was not reached ($\sigma > 0.75$) in Round 2 of the Delphi questionnaire*

Although very high agreement (σ = 0,4373) was reached for indicator 17 (timeliness), this indicator warrants attention because consensus was reached around a relatively modest mean importance score on the Likert scale (μ = 3,25). Indeed, in their comments on the questionnaire, two respondents raised concerns that must be taken into consideration. One observed that "timeliness is not, and should not be, the sole criterion for assessing journalistic quality, since context and the past are decisive" (respondent 2, Round 2). Another noted that "in investigative journalism, although timeliness is important in defining most subjects, it is not fundamental" (respondent 1, Round 2). The results of the two rounds can therefore be understood in this light. In the first round, the criterion had to be carried forward for further assessment; in the second, the reasons for the

reservations became clear. None of the respondents considered timeliness essential to an instrument for measuring journalistic information quality, but none considered it unimportant. Despite these reservations, and in accordance with the methodological thresholds established, timeliness was deemed to have achieved positive consensus and was retained in the instrument.

Round 2 therefore immediately produced very high levels of consensus on four indicators, which were added to the 25 already agreed upon by the Delphi panel in Round 1: completeness, timeliness, human rights and daily work. The panel then examined the remaining six indicators, shown in bold in Table 3, through individual video conference interviews using Microsoft Teams. These interviews included respondents whose Round 2 answers diverged most significantly from the panel's consensus.

3.3. Interviews: Results of Round 3

For the purposes of selecting respondents to contact for Round 3, disagreement was defined as an individual response in Round 2 that was more than 1.0 points below the mean μ calculated for the relevant indicator. Applying this threshold meant that four of the eight respondents from Round 2 had to be contacted. Each was presented with the indicator or indicators on which their responses had diverged from those of the rest of the panel, together with the corresponding wording from the questionnaire. They were then allowed to explain their reasons for disagreement or, if necessary, correct their original response. The results were as follows (Table 4):

INDICATOR	REASONS FOR DISAGREEMENT (*) IN ROUND 3	FINAL DECISION
Informational satisfaction	**Respondent 3:** "The criterion seems to measure a 'feeling' rather than quality. Someone may 'feel' well informed without the information actually being of good quality. For example, someone who is misinformed may feel well informed". **Respondent 4:** "The criterion is of little importance to information quality, since someone may feel well informed without actually being so".	**Rejected**

Representation	**Respondent 2:** "The proposed indicator is based on a fundamentalist conception of journalism, creating a potential analytical bias. Journalism doesn't have to represent anything. Journalism must, first, be independent of its position within a given community. The national team is an example".	**Rejected**
Conciseness	**Respondent 2:** "Applying the criterion that information should be 'concise and simple' entails reducing the body of information available to us as much as possible. Conciseness entails risks that may affect journalism quality. Understanding things does not necessarily require simplification. A criterion such as clarity would better define what is expected of quality journalistic information". **Respondent 4:** "The problem lies in the wording of the question, including the notion of 'simplicity', which should not be conflated with 'conciseness'—conciseness must also be applicable to complexity".	**Rejected**
Selection	**Respondent 4:** "I recognise that the criterion is, in itself, 'very important', so I must have made a mistake when answering the questionnaire".	**Approved**
Employment relationship	**Respondent 6:** "My interpretation of the employment relationship between a journalist and a media organisation is broad. I do not take a narrow view focused solely on precarious employment, but a broader one. For example, freelancers or journalists who work independently for several media organisations by choice—even if relatively few—remain common internationally, particularly in conflict settings. For instance, I am unsure to what extent so-called 'independent' or 'alternative' media outlets, which are funded through subscriptions or audience contributions, fit within this formal employment relationship. In my view, these examples disconnect the quality of journalistic information from the quality of the employment relationship between the person producing it and a given media organisation".	**Rejected**
Newsroom	**Respondent 6:** "I would like to correct my answer, since I consider a physical newsroom to be essential to the quality of the journalistic production process".	**Approved**

Table 4: *Results of the interview-based scrutiny of indicators for which consensus had not been reached in Rounds 1 and 2*

(*) The number assigned to each respondent corresponds to their identification in Round 2.

Round 3 therefore made it possible to reach consensus on including two further indicators—indicator 28, selection, and indicator 37, newsroom—which were carried forward to the final instrument.

CONCLUDING NOTE: AN INSTRUMENT FOR ASSESSING JOURNALISTIC INFORMATION QUALITY

In conclusion, this study proposes an instrument for assessing journalistic information quality: a model comprising three dimensions, seven components, and 32 indicators or assessment criteria. It results from applying the Delphi method to the convergence and prior adaptation of the cross-cutting criteria for assessing information quality developed by the Barometer for Information Quality (2025), together with the synthesis of a three-dimensional model that enables the issue to be approached holistically. The proposed instrument, validated through consensus among an expert panel, can be summarised as follows (Table 5):

QUALITY DIMENSION	QUALITY COMPONENT	JOURNALISTIC INFORMATION QUALITY INDICATOR	INDICATOR DESCRIPTION
Qualidade da informação jornalística a partir da receção / públicos	Journalistic information quality from the perspective of reception / audiences	Intelligibility	Journalistic language should promote understanding of the news
		Accessibility	Journalistic information should be accessible to all audience members through different media, platforms and formats
		Usefulness	Journalistic information should help people make everyday decisions
	Citizenship	Trust	Journalistic information should help increase audiences' trust in the media and journalists
		Public interest	Journalistic information should reflect the actual importance of issues on the public agenda
		Scrutiny	Journalistic information should create the conditions that enable citizens to scrutinise decisions made on their behalf
		Dialogue and sharing	Journalistic information should encourage the public to share and discuss information
		Promotion of media literacy	Journalistic information should develop audiences' skills in critically analysing current affairs and journalism
Journalistic information quality from the perspective of the product	News organisation and distribution	Clarity	Journalistic information should be clear in its writing and in the way information is organised within the piece
		Accuracy and rigour	The quality of journalistic information depends on the accuracy and rigour of the information presented
		Completeness	The quality of journalistic information depends on presenting information that addresses the subject from as many angles as possible
		Availability	The quality of journalistic information relates to the diversity of ways audiences can access the journalistic product
	Context	Timeliness	The quality of journalistic information depends on how closely it relates to current affairs

		Contextualisation	Journalistic information should provide the political, economic, social and/or historical context of events
		Expert analysis	Journalistic information should include expert analysis of the subjects covered
		Conclusive information	Journalistic information should be sufficient to enable audiences to draw conclusions
	Balance	Objectivity	The quality of journalistic information depends on the degree of objectivity identifiable in the journalistic product
		Credibility	Journalistic information should help increase the credibility of the media organisation that publishes it
		Information sources	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to the number, diversity and plurality of sources used
		Verification	The quality of journalistic information results from the explicit use of verification methods
		Right of reply	The quality of journalistic information relates to observing the right of reply, ensuring that all parties directly involved in, implicated in, or affected by the information disseminated are given a voice and the opportunity to express themselves
		Impartiality	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to the balance demonstrated and the even-handed treatment of perspectives on the subject covered
		Diversity and inclusion	The quality of journalistic information relates to how it represents diverse social groups, divergent and dissenting voices, issues, and minority communities
Journalistic information quality from the perspective of the process	Routines and ethics	Selection	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to the selection process, which determines what information is shown and what is not.
		Time	The quality of journalistic information depends on procedures and methods that encourage reflection and counter immediacy
		Transparency	The quality of journalistic information relates to clear transparency practices in obtaining and processing information, and to the relationship

			between the journalistic institution and its ownership structure
		Autonomy and independence	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to the conditions of editorial autonomy and independence afforded to journalists and the media organisation.
		Professional ethics	The quality of journalistic information relates to compliance with the ethical and professional standards that govern journalism
		Human rights	The quality of journalistic information relates to the ethical stance taken when handling situations that may jeopardise human rights
	Resources	Training	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to journalists' academic and professional training
		Daily work	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to the logistical and psychological conditions journalists face in their daily work
		Newsroom	The quality of journalistic information is directly related to the composition of the newsroom to which journalists belong

Table 5: *Instrument for assessing journalistic information quality developed by BIP – Barometer for Information Quality, University of Minho*

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