

Guidebook for Collection of Data on Media Ownership and Bias

Goal: To produce a research paper on how changes in media ownership impact both *what* media covers and *how* they cover it. This is incredibly important in a world where backsliding governments and their allies use assorted means to take over key media sources. Here is a [small, related version](#) of what we're trying to do at a larger scale.

Task: Construction of a data set that tracks ownership information for each individual media source used in the MLP project.

Countries to Focus on: Tunisia, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala, Nigeria, Jamaica, Ghana, Malawi, Albania, Kenya, Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Benin, Mali, Zambia, Nicaragua, Serbia, South Africa, Turkey, Nepal, Ukraine, Honduras, Hungary, Kosovo

Guiding Structure and Format of the Data:

- Create a row for each ownership. If there is no change in ownership, the newspaper gets one row with the last year and month that it was scraped. If there is a change, it gets an extra for each change with the date of change and following information:

country: Name of the country

source: Name of the source

year: starts in 2024 and goes backward, ideally all the way to 2012, depending on availability. It's likely that reconstructing ownership will be harder as one goes back in time.

month: We need the month (and year) of each change in ownership for each news source for each of the countries noted above.

owners: name of the current owner, can be a corporation or individual media holding, or the government. -999 if ownership information is not available for a source.

owner_type: takes value 1 if the government, takes value 2 if a political figure (current or former politician, political operative or party official, or member of the government), takes value 3 if a media holding company, takes value 4 if a conglomerate. Note that these values are not mutually exclusive, i.e. an owner can be BOTH a political figure AND that figure can own a conglomerate. In such cases, record all relevant values separated by a semi-colon.

ownership_change: the month indicating any ownership change

gov_support: If the newspaper is pro-government (1), neutral (0), or anti-government (-1)

gov_support_change: If the above variable has changed, takes value 1. If not, takes value 0.

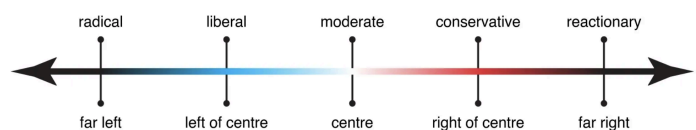
ideology: If the newspaper's ideology is (far) left (2), centre-left (1), centre (0), or centre-right (-1), (far) right (-2)

ideology_change: If the above variable has changed, takes value 1. If not, takes value 0.

notes_on_change: Any available

information related to the change, including the reason for transfer. If the government took over, what official reason did the government cite for acquisition, etc. is useful. Please include links to any sources from which relevant information is obtained in the `reference` column.

Political spectrum



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Notes: Provide any useful info that went into coding decisions.

reference: cite all sources or link to the source that informs the previous columns.

[Here's](#) a link to the structured google sheet where the data needs to be entered.

Data sources:

This is not an exhaustive list, new sources will need to be explored during the process.

- Global Media Registry's [Media Ownership Monitor](#)
- RSF: Reporters without Borders Country Profiles. These include annual write-ups that summarize changes in the media environment, oftentimes including a discussion of important changes in ownership.
- Freedom of the Press Reports for countries by [Freedom House](#).
- Country-specific analyses of the local media by Media Research Groups, Civil Society Organisations, or other Research Reports.
- Wikipedia pages for country media environments will be helpful in finding ownership info, but do try to go to the original source that Wikipedia cites.
- 'About Us' page of a newspaper, although this will only be helpful in finding the current owner without any hints of change or previous owners.