Codebook for Media Ownership & Bias Dataset

Purpose of the Dataset

This dataset tracks ownership and bias dynamics of media sources across 25 countries. It focuses on how ownership changes influence media content and sentiment, government support, and ideological alignment, particularly in democratic backsliding contexts. *Each observation corresponds to <u>a distinct ownership change as the unit of analysis</u>.*

Recorded Countries

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

Variables and Descriptions

Variable	Definition	Format	Note
country	The code of the country where the media source operates	Characters (e.g., "BEN," "MLI")	We previously selected backsliding countries from the Machine Learning for Peace dataset
source	The link of the media outlet being analyzed	URL (e.g., "posta.com.tr")	These sources have been used in scraping for the MLP dataset
year	The year relevant to the ownership (The last year the source was scraped or the year that the ownership changed, if any)	Numeric (e.g., 2024, 2019)	Data spans 2012-2024, but ownership changes within their scraping timeline are recorded for each source
month	Month relevant to the ownership (The last month the source was scraped or the month that the ownership changed,	Characters (e.g., "June")	Use -999 if a specific month can't be found

	if any)		
owners	Name of the owner (individual, corporation, or government) corresponding to that year and month	Characters (e.g., "Doğan Media Group")	Use -999 if unknown
owner_type	Classification of the owner	Numeric (Categorical variable: 1 = Government, 2 = Political figure, 3 = Media holding company, 4 = Conglomerate)	Multiple values are separated by a semicolon (e.g., "2;4"
ownership_change	Indicates if there was an ownership change for the source	Numeric (Binary variable: 1 = Yes, 0 = No)	Use -999 if no information on ownership or ownership change is found
gov_support	Level of support for the government	Numeric (Categorical variable: 1 = Pro-government, 0 = Neutral, -1 = Anti-government)	Use -999 if can't determine
gov_support_change	Indicates whether government support level changed	Numeric (Binary variable: 1 = Yes, 0 = No)	Use -999 if no information on a change in government support is found
ideology	Ideological alignment of the media source	Numeric (Categorical variable: 2 = Far-left, 1 = Center-left, 0 = Neutral, -1 = Center-right, -2 = Far-right)	Use -999 if can't determine
ideology_change	Indicates whether ideological alignment changed	Numeric (Binary variable: 1 = Yes, 0 = No)	Use -999 if no information on a change in ideological alignment is found

notes_on_change	Contextual details about changes in ownership, support for government, and ideological alignment	Characters	Note any ambiguities or interesting details helpful for further analysis or potential case studies
reference	Sources supporting the data (e.g., links, reports)	Characters or URL	Helpful for traceability and validating the entries

Source Attribution

- Guidebook and findings derived from:
  - *Global Media Registry's Media Ownership Monitor*
  - *Reporters Without Borders Country profiles*
  - *Freedom House reports*
  - *Digital news resources*
  - *Local studies*