



DE DETAILED ANALYSIS

2024-11-14 Der Talk vom 14. November

Programme: Markus Lanz | 2024-11-14 | Analysed on: 2026-03-11 23:50

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OVERALL SCORE

6.0/10

Considerable imbalance

0 = balanced, 10 = strongly one-sided/manipulative

POLITICAL SPECTRUM

Classification according to Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) 2024

The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES 2024) is an academic survey of 609 political scientists in 31 countries. Each party is rated on a scale from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right).

Party	Linke	Greens	SPD	BSW	CDU/CSU	FDP	Freie W.	AfD
CHES	1.23	2.28	3.41	3.78	6.23	6.54	6.77	9.10
Spectrum	<i>Left</i>	<i>Left</i>	<i>Left</i>	<i>Left</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>

The overall tendency is presented on a 0–10 scale (0 = strongly left-favouring, 5 = balanced, 10 = strongly right-favouring). The calculation is based on the difference in the average favouring of left vs. right parties (grouping according to CHES 2024).

TENDENCY (L – R)

5.6 / 10

Balanced

0 1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10

← Left

Right →

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2024 — chesdata.eu | [Jolly et al., Electoral Studies, 2022](#) | Thresholds: [Pew Research Center](#)

This section serves for political classification and does not feed into the overall score.

PROGRAMME INFO AND THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

Programme data

- Date: 14.11.2024
- Moderator: Markus Lanz
- Guests:



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Actors	Function	Party/Affiliation	Political spectrum
Kerstin Münstermann	Journalist (Rheinische Post, Berlin bureau)	No party / Political journalist	Liberal-centrist
Marco Buschmann	Former Federal Minister of Justice, MdB	FDP	Economic liberal / Centre-right
Adrian Geiges	Author, China and Russia expert	No party / Non-fiction author	Foreign policy-analytical
Frederik Pleitgen	CNN reporter, connected from Moscow	No party / Foreign correspondent	Journalistic-analytical

Main topic

The programme addresses the end of the traffic light coalition, the domestic political consequences and questions of blame, as well as the geopolitical implications of the Trump election for relations with Russia, China and the future of Ukraine.



CHAPTER 1 — DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE 15 CRITERIA

Hard facts — 9 techniques that are countable and scientifically robust

1. EXPERT SELECTION

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Expert 1: Marco Buschmann (FDP)

Timestamp

03:30–45:00 — Statement: "Christian Lindner has shown in his conduct of office [...] that he is capable of devising a programme for the future that will make this country better." — Classification: Buschmann, as former Justice Minister and FDP member, is a directly involved actor, not a neutral expert. He consistently represents the FDP line. — Missing countervoice: No SPD minister, no Greens representative, no independent political scientist as a counterweight.

Expert 2: Kerstin Münstermann (journalist)

Timestamp

throughout — Statement: "The fact that you are quarrelling over this economic policy and budget policy has been the case for a year now" — Classification: Münstermann acts as a political journalist with insider knowledge. She distributes criticism to both sides, but tends to locate the structural errors more strongly with the chancellery. — Missing countervoice: An SPD-aligned journalist or commentator could have provided a counterweight.

Expert 3: Adrian Geiges (China/Russia author)

Timestamp

approx. 48:00–65:00 — Statement: "The two countries are as close to each other as they have never been before." — Classification: Geiges is competent as an author with Russia and China experience, but represents a clearly Western-critical perspective on both regimes. — Missing countervoice: A China economic expert or someone with a more differentiated view of Chinese foreign policy is absent.

Expert 4: Frederik Pleitgen (CNN reporter)

Timestamp

approx. 45:00–68:00 — Statement: "For no country will the Trump administration be more difficult, except perhaps for Iran, than for Germany." — Classification: Pleitgen provides valuable insights from Moscow, but is anchored in a Western perspective as a CNN reporter. — Missing countervoice: A Russian political scientist or a representative of a more differentiated Russia analysis is absent.

Missing expert groups: Constitutional lawyers (on the debt brake debate), economists (for economic classification), SPD representatives, Greens representatives, security policy experts, Ukraine expert.



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Summary: The expert selection is massively one-sided in favour of the FDP in the domestic political section. In the geopolitical section, the selection is competent but one-sidedly Western-critical without countervoices. The absence of an SPD representative at a programme about the collapse of the traffic light coalition is the most serious deficiency.



2. SOURCE SELECTION

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Claims without primary source = penalty points (rumour check)

Source 1: Timestamp: approx. 12:00 — Source: Buschmann cites "the new joint diagnosis of the leading economic research institutes" — Classification: Buschmann uses the joint diagnosis selectively to support the FDP position (economic initiative is not sufficient). — Missing counter-source: The joint diagnosis also contains statements on the investment gap and the need for public investment, which Buschmann does not cite. No independent economist is present to contextualise the source.

Source 2: Timestamp: approx. 48:00 — Source: Medvedev quote about "scum from Kyiv" — Classification: Geiges cites Medvedev as evidence of the Russian stance. — Missing counter-source: No contextualisation that Medvedev is deliberately deployed as a provocateur and that his statements do not necessarily reflect the official Kremlin position.

Source 3: Timestamp: approx. 32:00 — Source: Buschmann cites Volker Wissing: "I consider it irresponsible to let the coalition fail in this way." — Classification: Buschmann cites Wissing selectively to locate the blame with the Chancellor. — Missing counter-source: Wissing's full position, which also criticises the FDP strategy, is not presented.

Summary: The source selection is one-sided. Economic sources are only selectively cited by Buschmann, political sources (Wissing, Medvedev) are used without sufficient contextualisation.



3. TIME DISTRIBUTION						6/10			
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Estimated speaking time (total length):

- Marco Buschmann: (31%)
- Kerstin Münstermann: (17%)
- Markus Lanz: (23%)
- Frederik Pleitgen: (14%)
- Adrian Geiges: (11%)
- Inserts/transitions: (3%)

Summary: Buschmann dominates the programme with an estimated 31% speaking time and receives the entire first section () as a platform. The geopolitical experts share the second section. The asymmetry lies less in the distribution of speaking time among the guests present than in the fact that no SPD or Greens representative is present who could have used a comparable speaking time.



4. OMISSION (Selective Omission)

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Omission 1: Context: The SPD perspective on the collapse of the coalition is completely absent as an independent voice. — Relevant in: entire first section (03:30–45:00) — Effect: Scholz's actions are interpreted exclusively through Buschmann and Münstermann. The Chancellor's reasons for the ultimatum (months of disloyalty by the FDP, D-Day paper, systematic obstruction) are not presented from the SPD's point of view.

Omission 2: Context: The so-called "D-Day paper" of the FDP, which documents strategic planning of the coalition break by the FDP leadership, is not mentioned. — Relevant in: approx. 05:00–15:00, when the question is whether the FDP planned the break — Effect: Buschmann's portrayal that the FDP was "surprised" remains unchallenged. (Note: The D-Day paper may only have become public after the programme; if it was already known at the time of broadcast, the omission is serious.)

Omission 3: Context: The economic counter-position to the FDP line on the debt brake is not presented. Numerous economists (including DIW, IMK, many international institutions) advocate a reform or temporary suspension of the debt brake. — Relevant in: approx. 10:00–20:00 — Effect: Buschmann's portrayal that the debt brake is constitutionally and economically without alternative remains as the only expert position. His citation of the "joint diagnosis" is used selectively only for the FDP position.

Omission 4: Context: The role of the FDP parliamentary group and the Secretary General in the systematic destabilisation of the coalition is mentioned by Lanz and Münstermann, but not explored in depth. — Relevant in: approx. 33:00–36:00 — Effect: Buschmann can neutralise the criticism by referring to "all sides did that", without concrete examples of FDP obstruction being named.

Omission 5: Context: The perspective of Ukraine on the German government crisis and the Trump election is completely absent. — Relevant in: approx. 55:00–65:00 — Effect: Ukraine is only discussed as an object of great power politics, not as an actor with its own interests and positions.

Summary: The most serious omissions concern the SPD perspective, the economic counter-position on the debt brake, and Ukraine as an independent actor. These omissions result in the FDP's portrayal of the coalition collapse remaining as the dominant narrative of the programme.

Missing voices

- SPD representative (e.g. Lars Klingbeil, Hubertus Heil): Could have presented the Chancellor's perspective on the ultimatum and the reasons for Lindner's dismissal, and independently represented the narrative of "provocation by the FDP".
- Greens representative (e.g. Omid Nouripour, Katharina Dröge): Could have contributed the Greens' role as mediator and their own frustration with both coalition partners.
- Independent economist (e.g. Marcel Fratzscher, Monika Schnitzer): Could have provided expert context for the debt brake debate, rather than viewing it only through the FDP lens.



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- CDU/CSU representative: Could have contributed the opposition perspective and their own programme for the new election.
- Ukrainian representative or Eastern Europe expert: Could have brought in the perspective of those directly affected by the war and the Trump election.
- Security policy expert (e.g. Claudia Major, Carlo Masala): Could have provided expert context for the defence policy implications for Germany and NATO.
- Citizens' representative / social scientist: Could have addressed the mood among the population and trust in politics.
- Constitutional lawyer: Could have independently contextualised the debt brake question and the vote of confidence, rather than leaving Buschmann's portrayal as the only legal position.



5. MANIPULATION OF FIGURES

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Complete figures include: absolute value, share (%) and trend

Finding 1: Timestamp: approx. 42:00 — Figure: Buschmann: "We have 1,400 new members." Lanz: "1,400? You said quite, quite a lot. 1,400?" — Missing context: Lanz briefly questions the figure, but the context is missing: How many members left? How does this compare to new members of other parties after the coalition collapse? (The Greens, for example, also reported thousands of new members.) — Effect: Buschmann's claim of "very many" is briefly questioned, but not contextualised with comparative figures.

Finding 2: Timestamp: approx. 42:00 — Figure: Buschmann: "We are at five percent in the most recent polls." — Missing context: Which poll? At what point in time? Other polls showed the FDP at 3-4%. — Effect: Buschmann selects the poll most favourable to the FDP without this being contextualised.

Finding 3: Timestamp: approx. 15:00 — Figure: Buschmann: "in addition to the 50 billion euros in net new debt that was already there" — Missing context: The 50 billion is framed as an already existing high level of debt, without mentioning the context of Germany's historically low debt ratio by international comparison or the investment needs. — Effect: The figure appears as evidence for the FDP position that further debt would be irresponsible.

Summary: Figures are used selectively in the programme and insufficiently contextualised. Buschmann's poll figures and new membership numbers are only superficially questioned, the budget figures presented one-sidedly within the FDP narrative.



6. GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

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Association 1: Timestamp: approx. 47:00 — Quote: Pleitgen: "the speech by Federal Chancellor Scholz in the Bundestag was shown there, but only reactions from the AfD parliamentary group to it. The AfD still had very good contacts here in Russia, including in the highest political circles." — Technique: Indirect association between the coalition collapse and the strengthening of the AfD/Russia axis. — Effect: Suggests that the coalition collapse benefits Russia and the AfD, without saying so explicitly.

Association 2: Timestamp: approx. 46:00 — Quote: Lanz/Geiges on Medvedev: "the election victory of Donald Trump is a day of mourning for the scum of Kyiv" — Technique: The Medvedev quote is placed in the context of the German government crisis, creating an implicit connection between domestic political failure and geopolitical threat. — Effect: Reinforces the narrative that domestic political disputes benefit the enemies of democracy.

Summary: Guilt by association is not a dominant device in this programme, but the placement of the AfD-Russia connection and the Medvedev quote in the context of the coalition collapse creates implicit associations between domestic political failure and geopolitical threat.



7. TIMING

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Finding 1: Position: 00:00–45:00 (first section) — Content: The entire first third to half of the programme is devoted to the coalition collapse, with Buschmann as the only political actor. — Timing effect: The FDP perspective is established as the first and most extensive narrative. When the geopolitical dimension comes in the second section, the domestic political narrative is already established.

Finding 2: Position: approx. 65:00 — Content: Buschmann's closing statement: "It is rather international law against despotism." — Timing effect: Buschmann gets the last substantive word of the programme and can position himself as a defender of international law — a statesmanlike closing position that points beyond FDP party interests. Lanz comments: "Good closing statement."

Finding 3: Position: approx. 45:00 — Content: The transition from the domestic political to the geopolitical section takes place with Lanz's comment: "We are talking here about the sensitivities of individual politicians" — Timing effect: The domestic political debate is devalued at the moment of transition as "sensitivities", which relativises the FDP criticism and shifts the focus to the external threat.

Summary: The timing of the programme favours the FDP perspective by placing it as the first and last narrative. The transition to the geopolitical section devalues the domestic political criticism.



8. SELECTIVE OUTRAGE

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Outrage = bias. Selective outrage reinforces the finding. Score = degree of outrage (0–5) + selectivity (0–5)

Finding 1: Timestamp: approx. 30:00 — Reaction: Lanz: "that was then also the outburst of anger from Scholz, interestingly read from the teleprompter. I believe I have also never seen an outburst of anger read from the teleprompter." — Comparable without outrage: Lindner's Bundestag speech, in which he said "sometimes a dismissal is perhaps also like a liberation", is cited positively by Buschmann and not critically commented on by Lanz. — Asymmetry: Scholz's prepared speech is marked as inauthentic/staged, Lindner's prepared speech is treated as authentic.

Finding 2: Timestamp: approx. 15:00 — Reaction: Buschmann on Scholz's ultimatum: "I consider that to be unsound" — Lanz does not question this assessment and lets it stand as fact. — Comparable without outrage: Lindner's "autumn of decisions" and the economic paper as an ultimatum are described by Münstermann as a "crash course", but Buschmann can reframe this as "normal negotiation preparation" without Lanz pressing further.

Summary: The outrage over Scholz's behaviour (teleprompter speech, ultimatum) is significantly stronger than the outrage over comparable FDP behaviour (Lindner's paper, Secretary General's appearances). This asymmetry is reinforced by the absence of an SPD representative.



9. COMPLETENESS

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The programme is embedded in a week of maximum political upheaval: the collapse of the traffic light coalition on 6 November 2024 and the election of Donald Trump as US President coincide. In Germany, there is economic weakness, a government crisis and uncertainty about the election date. Geopolitically, the situation is intensifying due to the Ukraine war, the Chinese-Russian rapprochement and the unpredictability of the incoming Trump administration. The programme moves in the tension between domestic political reappraisal and foreign policy threat analysis.

Share of perspectives covered

Inverted: Original value measures coverage (higher = better). Displayed as deviation (higher = greater gaps).

[A] FDP perspective on the coalition collapse and its own role

[B] SPD/Chancellor perspective on the coalition collapse and the dismissal of Lindner

[C] Greens perspective on the end of the coalition and their own role

[D] Economic classification of the budget debate (debt brake yes/no)

[E] Perspective of citizens/voters on the government's failure

[F] Opposition perspective (CDU/CSU) on the crisis and the election campaign

[G] Geopolitical classification: Russia's strategy and the Ukraine war

[H] Geopolitical classification: China's role and the Taiwan question

[I] Concrete effects of the Trump election on Europe and Germany

[J] Perspective of Ukraine itself / smaller European states

[A] FDP perspective — TREATED IN DETAIL

Timestamp: 03:30–45:00 — Quote: "I am at peace with myself." / "Christian Lindner has shown in his conduct of office that he is capable of devising a programme for the future" — Assessment: Marco Buschmann, as the only coalition partner, receives an extensive platform to present the FDP's view.

[B] SPD/Chancellor perspective — OMITTED

Timestamp: No SPD representative present — Quote: Scholz's position is only reported through Buschmann and Münstermann, e.g. "He said in essence, either this decision is made today or there would be serious consequences." — Assessment: The SPD perspective is completely absent as an independent voice. Scholz's actions are portrayed exclusively through the lens of his opponents.

[C] Greens perspective — OMITTED

Timestamp: Only mentioned in passing — Quote: Münstermann: "The Greens were the ones who hoped it would work." — Assessment: Habeck and the Greens are only mentioned as passive peripheral figures, no independent presentation of their position.

[D] Economic classification — INDICATED

Timestamp: approx. 12:00 — Quote: Buschmann: "the new joint diagnosis of the leading economic research institutes. And they said, in view of the situation [...] that is certainly good, that is useful, but it is not enough for an economic turnaround." — Assessment: Economic positions are only selectively cited by Buschmann, no independent economist is present. The pro-debt brake position is presented as consensus.

[E] Citizens' perspective — OMITTED

Timestamp: None — Assessment: No citizens' representative, no survey data on citizens' opinions about the coalition collapse, no insert of street surveys in Germany.

[F] Opposition perspective CDU/CSU — OMITTED

Timestamp: Only in passing — Quote: Münstermann: "as Friedrich Merz had envisaged it, because he also hoped for political profit from it" — Assessment: Merz and the CDU/CSU are only mentioned in passing, no substantive engagement with their programme or position.

[G] Russia's strategy and the Ukraine war — ADDRESSED



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Timestamp: approx. 45:00–65:00 — Quote: Pleitgen: "Germany has increasingly become an opponent of Russia."
— Assessment: Well covered by Pleitgen from Moscow, but primarily from a Western observer perspective.

[H] China's role and Taiwan — ADDRESSED

Timestamp: approx. 48:00–58:00 — Quote: Geiges: "Since then it has been openly discussed there whether the right moment has not now come to take Taiwan very quickly." — Assessment: Competently presented by Geiges, but without a countervoice (e.g. China sympathisers or business representatives with China operations).

[I] Trump's effects on Europe/Germany — ADDRESSED

Timestamp: approx. 55:00–68:00 — Quote: Pleitgen: "For no country will the Trump administration be more difficult, except perhaps for Iran, than for Germany." — Assessment: Well addressed, but one-sidedly as a threat scenario, no voice bringing in possible opportunities or more differentiated scenarios.

[J] Perspective of Ukraine / smaller EU states — OMITTED

Timestamp: None — Assessment: Ukraine is only discussed as an object of great power politics. No Ukrainian representative, no Eastern European expert, no voice from Poland, the Baltic states or Scandinavia.

Completeness score: 4/10

Rationale: Of ten relevant perspectives, only four are treated substantively (FDP, Russia, China, Trump effects), two are indicated (economics, Greens), and four are completely absent (SPD, citizens, CDU/CSU opposition, Ukraine/Eastern Europe). The domestic political half of the programme is massively one-sided due to the dominance of the FDP perspective without a counterweight from an SPD or Greens representative.



Soft facts — 6 qualitative techniques

10. FRAMING (setting the frame)

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Finding 1: Timestamp: 00:30 — Quote: Lanz on Münstermann: "even if it did at times actually look like it, we are apparently not a banana republic after all" — Manipulation: The framing sets the framework "banana republic yes/no" and suggests that the coalition collapse brought democracy to the brink. — Why problematic: This framing dramatises the end of a coalition, which is a normal process in parliamentary democracies, and diverts from substantive analysis.

Finding 2: Timestamp: 01:30 — Quote: Lanz on Buschmann: "The first Federal Minister from this failed government to take a seat here [...] who effectively dismissed himself and who was present in this historic moment when the Chancellor fired the Finance Minister, his party leader." — Manipulation: The framing "historic moment" and "fired" dramatises and personalises. At the same time, Buschmann is framed as someone who "dismissed himself" — a positive connotation (loyalty to principles), while Scholz is framed as the one who "fires". — Why problematic: The asymmetric choice of words (Buschmann "dismisses himself" = honourable; Scholz "fires" = aggressive) already sets a value judgement in the introduction.

Finding 3: Timestamp: 02:00 — Quote: Lanz: "How strongly do you in the FDP really still stand behind Christian Lindner, who significantly co-caused this situation?" — Manipulation: A critical question is posed to the FDP here, but the framing "significantly co-caused" relativises FDP responsibility through the word "co" — it does not say "caused", but "co-caused", which distributes the responsibility. — Why problematic: In combination with the absence of an SPD representative, the question of primary responsibility remains unresolved.

Finding 4: Timestamp: 45:00ff — Quote: Lanz: "We are talking here about the sensitivities of individual politicians, but a weakening of Germany as the second most important, after the USA, second most important liberal economic power." — Manipulation: The framing of "sensitivities" for the domestic political debate devalues it and sets the geopolitical framework as the truly important one. — Why problematic: The budget debate and the question of the debt brake are not "sensitivities", but central economic policy decisions.

Summary: The programme is presented from the outset in a dramatising framework that stages the coalition collapse as a "historic moment" and potential "banana republic" situation. The geopolitical framing in the second section devalues the domestic political debate as "sensitivities" and creates a threat scenario that makes differentiated analysis more difficult.



11. CHOICE OF WORDS AND TERMS

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Finding 1: Timestamp: 01:30 — Quote: Lanz: "when the Chancellor [...] fired the Finance Minister" — Manipulation: "Fired" is colloquially aggressive and suggests an arbitrary act. The correct term would be "dismissed" or "proposed the dismissal to the Federal President". — Why problematic: The choice of words emotionalises and negatively evaluates the constitutionally prescribed process for Scholz.

Finding 2: Timestamp: approx. 35:00 — Quote: Lanz: "Because when you then have, to stay with the image, such loose cannons that are always rattling around and you never know exactly where they will go off" — Manipulation: The metaphor "loose cannons" for FDP politicians like Kubicki and the Secretary General is vivid, but also trivialising-humorous. — Why problematic: The systematic destabilisation of the coalition by FDP functionaries is framed as an amusing quirk rather than strategic behaviour.

Finding 3: Timestamp: approx. 28:00 — Quote: Buschmann: "this in my view hasty dismissal or the firing, as you called it" — Manipulation: Buschmann adopts Lanz's choice of words "firing" and adds "hasty dismissal". — Why problematic: The choice of words is not questioned. No indication that Scholz acted in accordance with constitutional law and that the dismissal of a minister is the Chancellor's right.

Finding 4: Timestamp: approx. 48:00 — Quote: Medvedev quote, reported by Geiges: "a day of mourning for the scum of Kyiv" — Manipulation: No direct manipulation, but the quote is left standing without being contextualised as a typical Medvedev provocation. — Why problematic: Geiges does classify it as a proxy statement, but the sharpness of the quote functions in the context of the programme as evidence of the threat situation, without the propagandistic function of such statements being sufficiently deconstructed.

Summary: The choice of words in the programme tends towards dramatisation and emotionalisation. In particular, the terms "fired", "historic moment" and "banana republic" set value judgements that make objective analysis more difficult. Buschmann's terminology ("hasty dismissal") is not sufficiently questioned.



12. MODERATION BEHAVIOUR

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Lanz is known for provocative follow-up questions — the asymmetric challenge is analysed.

Finding 1: Timestamp: 03:30–05:00 — Quote (Lanz): "How are you? How have you processed this shock? Because it can't have been anything else." — Analysis: Lanz opens the conversation with Buschmann empathetically and personally. The formulation "shock" and "it can't have been anything else" frames Buschmann as a victim, not a co-perpetrator. By comparison: Scholz is framed in absentia as the one who "fires".

Finding 2: Timestamp: approx. 06:00–08:00 — Quote (Lanz): "here comes someone who does politics very passionately, who is a conviction politician in the best sense" — Analysis: Lanz characterises Buschmann as a "conviction politician in the best sense" — an outstandingly positive attribution that occurs before the actual questioning and sets the framework for the entire conversation. A comparable positive attribution for Scholz or Habeck is absent.

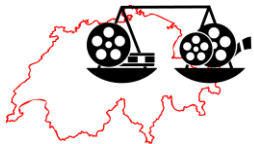
Finding 3: Timestamp: approx. 25:00 — Quote (Lanz): "And then he said in essence, excuse me, my memory is not quite photographic after all" — Analysis: Lanz allows Buschmann to describe the FDP's version of events extensively and largely undisturbed. The follow-up questions are present, but more comprehending than confrontational.

Finding 4: Timestamp: approx. 33:00–36:00 — Quote (Lanz): "Because when you then have, to stay with the image, such loose cannons [...] then you must surely expect that at some point a Chancellor says, right, that's enough now." — Analysis: This is the sharpest confrontation with Buschmann. Lanz addresses the FDP-internal destabilisation. However, the criticism is softened by the humorous metaphor "loose cannons" and Buschmann can neutralise it with a counter-example (Hubertus Heil).

Finding 5: Timestamp: approx. 40:00–42:00 — Quote (Lanz): "Is Christian Lindner the best lead candidate you can imagine for the FDP?" — Analysis: The question is direct, but Buschmann's quick "Absolutely" is commented on by Lanz with "Came a bit quickly" — a slightly ironic, but not really confrontational follow-up.

Finding 6: Timestamp: approx. 38:00 — Quote (Lanz): "I have just played a significant part in driving this coalition into the wall and in the next cabinet I would like to be back, by the way, as Federal Finance Minister. That is a completely different attitude." — Analysis: This is the most critical point towards Lindner/FDP. Lanz formulates a clear value judgement here. However, Buschmann can defuse the criticism by referring to "determination" and "clear statements".

Summary: Lanz does ask critical questions of Buschmann, but the overall dynamic is more empathetic-comprehending than confrontational. The opening with "conviction politician in the best sense" and "shock" sets a



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benevolent framework. The sharpest questions are softened by humorous metaphors or quick changes of topic. By comparison, Scholz is judged significantly more harshly in absentia.



13. QUESTION ASYMMETRY

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Asymmetry 1: To Buschmann, 03:30: "How are you? How have you processed this shock?" [empathetic-soft] — To Scholz (in absentia), reported by Lanz: "If it was all so bad [...] why did you only end it now?" [hard-confrontational, but rhetorical, since Scholz cannot answer]

Asymmetry 2: To Buschmann, approx. 06:00: "here comes someone who does politics very passionately, who is a conviction politician in the best sense" [laudatory-introductory] — About Scholz, approx. 30:00: "that was then also the outburst of anger from Scholz, interestingly read from the teleprompter. I believe I have also never seen an outburst of anger read from the teleprompter." [mockingly-disparaging]

Asymmetry 3: To Buschmann, approx. 38:00: "Is Christian Lindner the best lead candidate?" [direct, but neutral] — About Scholz/Habeck/Lindner, approx. 37:00: "Then it falls apart. And then all three of them come and say, by the way, here we are again." [critical towards all three, but Buschmann can answer for Lindner, Scholz and Habeck cannot]

Summary: The question asymmetry is considerable, though less through the questions to Buschmann himself than through the fact that Scholz and Habeck are criticised in absentia without being able to respond. Buschmann receives empathetic opening questions and can answer critical questions at length, while the other side only gets a hearing through reporting.



14. FALSE BALANCE

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Finding 1: In this programme, the problem does not lie with false balance (artificial equalisation of unequal positions), but with the opposite: a massive imbalance in favour of the FDP perspective. The programme does not create false equivalence, but allows one side to dominate the discourse.

Summary: False balance in the classical sense is not a main problem of this programme. The problem is rather the lack of balance due to the one-sided selection of guests.



15. AGENDA-SETTING

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Finding 1: Agenda element set: "The coalition collapse as a question of blame between individuals" — Timestamp: 00:00–45:00 — Evidence: The entire first half revolves around the question "Who is to blame?" rather than "What does this mean for citizens?" or "Which substantive questions are now open?" — Alternative: A programme about the coalition collapse could also have focused on the outstanding legislative projects, the effects on citizens, the economic policy alternatives or the democratic theory implications.

Finding 2: Agenda element set: "Geopolitical threat as context for domestic political failure" — Timestamp: 45:00–68:00 — Evidence: Lanz: "We are talking here about the sensitivities of individual politicians, but a weakening of Germany" — Alternative: The geopolitical dimension could also have been treated as an independent topic, rather than as a contrasting backdrop to domestic political "sensitivities".

Finding 3: Agenda element set: "Debt brake as constitutional necessity" — Timestamp: approx. 10:00–20:00 — Evidence: Buschmann: "associated with the high risk of a constitutional breach" — Alternative: The debt brake debate could have been treated as an open economic policy question with pro and contra positions, rather than as a constitutional fact.

Summary: The agenda-setting of the programme prioritises the personalised question of blame and the geopolitical threat scenario. Substantive policy alternatives, citizens' perspectives and the open economic debate are marginalised.



CHAPTER 2 — OVERALL EVALUATION

Results

Dominant techniques

- 1. Omission / Selective Omission (Score 8):** The most serious technique in this programme is the complete absence of the SPD perspective in a programme about the coalition collapse. Scholz's actions are interpreted exclusively by his opponents, which constitutes a fundamental violation of the principle of balance.
- 2. Expert selection (Score 7):** The invitation of an FDP minister as the only political actor while SPD and Greens are simultaneously absent creates a structural one-sidedness that cannot be compensated by journalistic follow-up questions alone.
- 3. Framing / Agenda-setting (Score 7/7):** The combination of dramatising framing ("banana republic", "fired") and personalised agenda-setting (question of blame instead of substantive policy) steers the programme in a direction that accommodates the FDP narrative.

Rationale: The programme displays a clear one-sidedness in favour of the FDP perspective, which arises primarily from the selection of guests and the resulting absence of the SPD and Greens perspectives. This is not subtle manipulation, but a structural imbalance that offers viewers a one-sided portrayal of the coalition collapse. Lanz does ask critical questions of Buschmann, but cannot replace the missing countervoice. The geopolitical section is journalistically solid, but also suffers from a lack of diversity of perspectives. In accordance with §26 MStV, the diversity of opinion in this programme is not guaranteed, since one of the three coalition parties receives a dominant platform while the other two are only represented in absentia and through third parties.

CONCLUSION

The programme of approx. 14 November 2024 displays a clear one-sidedness in favour of the FDP perspective, which is primarily conditioned by the selection of guests: Marco Buschmann as the only political actor of the coalition collapse receives an extensive, empathetically framed platform, while the SPD and Greens perspectives are completely absent. This violates the principle of balance pursuant to §26 MStV, which requires that the significant political forces must be given a voice — particularly on a topic of this magnitude. The ZDF public service mandate requires that viewers are able to form their own opinion on the basis of a balanced presentation; this is not guaranteed in a programme in which one coalition party can present its version of events largely unchallenged. It should be noted that talk shows by their nature cannot cover all perspectives in every individual programme and that balance can also be established across several programmes — the assessment therefore refers to this individual programme.



CHAPTER 3 — PARTY POLITICAL BIAS

Party	Score (-5..+5)	Concrete evidence
CDU/CSU	0	Barely mentioned. Münstermann approx. 22:00: "as Friedrich Merz had envisaged it, because he also hoped for political profit from it" — slightly negative, but marginal.
SPD	-3	Scholz is consistently framed negatively: 01:30 "fired"; approx. 30:00 "outburst of anger read from the teleprompter"; Buschmann approx. 25:00: "I consider that to be unsound"; no SPD representative present for a counter-statement.
Greens	-1	Only mentioned in passing. Münstermann: "The Greens were the ones who hoped it would work." Habeck is presented as a passive third party. No independent voice.
FDP	+3	Buschmann as the only political guest with an extensive platform. Lanz: "conviction politician in the best sense" (06:00). Buschmann can establish the FDP narrative unchallenged. Critical questions present, but softened.
AfD	-2	Pleitgen approx. 47:00: "The AfD still had very good contacts here in Russia, including in the highest political circles." Implicit Russia association. No independent presentation of the AfD position.
BSW	0	Not mentioned.
Linke	0	Not mentioned.
Freie Wähler	0	Not mentioned.

Party bias summary

- Most favoured: FDP, Score +3 — Through the selection of guests (Buschmann as the only political actor), the empathetic moderation and the opportunity to establish the FDP narrative unchallenged.
- Most disadvantaged: SPD, Score -3 — Through the complete absence of an SPD representative combined with the negative framing of Scholz's actions by Buschmann, Münstermann and Lanz.
- Conclusion: The programme displays a clear pro-FDP/anti-SPD bias, which is primarily structural and conditioned by the selection of guests. The FDP receives a platform to present its version of the coalition collapse, while the SPD only appears as an object of criticism. This is particularly problematic since this is one of the first major talk shows after the coalition collapse and the portrayal significantly co-shapes the public narrative.



CHAPTER 4 — LEGAL CLASSIFICATION (§26 MStV / ZDF State Treaty)

Assessment pursuant to §26 MStV

Violation 1: Lack of diversity of opinion in the selection of guests

Norm: §26 para. 1 MStV in conjunction with §5 para. 1 ZDF State Treaty — Facts: In a programme about the end of the traffic light coalition, only one representative of one of the three coalition parties (FDP) is invited as a political actor. The SPD as the Chancellor's party and the Greens as the third coalition partner are not represented. — Evidence: Entire programme, in particular 03:30–45:00: Buschmann as the only political guest on the coalition collapse. — Assessment: This constitutes a significant violation of the principle of balance. §26 para. 1 MStV requires that content takes account of diversity of opinion. When a topic directly concerns three parties, the invitation of only one representative of one of these parties is not compatible with the plurality requirement. However, it must be taken into account that balance can also be established across several programmes (internal pluralism over time).

Violation 2: One-sided presentation of the question of blame

Norm: §26 para. 1 MStV, §5 para. 1 ZDF State Treaty (objectivity and impartiality) — Facts: The question of blame for the coalition collapse is presented one-sidedly to the detriment of the Federal Chancellor. Scholz's actions are framed as "unsound" (Buschmann, unchallenged), as "outburst of anger from the teleprompter" (Lanz, mockingly) and as "firing" (Lanz, aggressively connoted), without the counter-perspective being independently given a voice. — Evidence: approx. 25:00 Buschmann: "I consider that to be unsound"; approx. 30:00 Lanz: "outburst of anger read from the teleprompter" — Assessment: The one-sided presentation of the question of blame without the possibility of a counter-statement by the affected party (SPD) violates the requirement of objectivity and impartiality. Lanz's own evaluative comments about Scholz reinforce the one-sidedness.

Mitigating circumstances:

1. Lanz does ask critical questions of Buschmann (Lindner as lead candidate, FDP responsibility, "loose cannons").
2. Münstermann distributes criticism to both sides and also names FDP errors.
3. Talk shows can establish balance across several programmes.
4. It is possible that SPD representatives were not available for this programme.

Overall assessment §26 MStV

The programme displays a clear one-sidedness in favour of the FDP, which is primarily conditioned by the selection of guests and is not sufficiently compensated by the moderation. §26 para. 1 MStV obliges ZDF as a public broadcaster to guarantee diversity of opinion. The ZDF State Treaty concretises this in §5 para. 1 through the requirements of objectivity, impartiality and balance. In a programme about the end of a three-party coalition, in which only one representative of one of the three parties is given a voice as a political actor, diversity of opinion is not guaranteed in this individual programme. The ZDF Television Council as the responsible supervisory body would be required to examine the balance over the broadcast period — should an SPD and/or Greens representative have been given comparably extensive airtime in timely subsequent programmes, the overall picture might be more balanced. For this individual programme, however, a violation of the principle of balance must be established.



OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE 15 CRITERIA

Individual scores — All 15 criteria

No.	Criterion	Score	Classification
1	EXPERT SELECTION	7	●●●●
2	SOURCE SELECTION	6	●●●
3	TIME DISTRIBUTION	6	●●●
4	OMISSION (Selective Omission)	8	●●●●
5	MANIPULATION OF FIGURES	5	●●●
6	GUILT BY ASSOCIATION	4	●●
7	TIMING	5	●●●
8	SELECTIVE OUTRAGE	6	●●●
9	COMPLETENESS	6	●●●
10	FRAMING (setting the frame)	7	●●●●
11	CHOICE OF WORDS AND TERMS	6	●●●
12	MODERATION BEHAVIOUR	6	●●●
13	QUESTION ASYMMETRY	7	●●●●
14	FALSE BALANCE	3	●●
15	AGENDA-SETTING	7	●●●●

HARD FACTS SCORE (1-8)

5.9/10

Considerable imbalance

SOFT FACTS SCORE (9-14)

6.0/10

Considerable imbalance

OVERALL SCORE

6.0/10

Considerable imbalance

Averaged from hard facts and soft facts



KEY — Meaning of the scores

Individual scores per criterion (0–10)

0	No finding	No relevant anomaly identified.
1–2	Weak finding	Slight anomaly without material impairment of balance.
3–4	Slight to moderate finding	Discernible tendency; relevance of effect low to moderate.
5	Moderate finding with relevance of effect	Relevant imbalance that influences the opinion-forming potential of the audience.
6	Considerable finding (threshold)	Scores from 6 onwards are reported as "considerable findings".
7	Considerable finding	Clear, well-evidenced imbalance with marked relevance of effect.
8–9	Serious finding	Pronounced imbalance; several evidenced individual findings in this criterion.
10	Maximum expression	Systematic, consistent imbalance in this criterion.

Aggregated deviation index — Interpretation ranges

0.0 – 2.5	Unremarkable	No material patterns discernible; programme meets the requirement of factual accuracy.
2.6 – 4.0	Slight imbalance	Isolated anomalies; statistically visible, but still within the tolerance range.
4.1 – 6.0	Considerable imbalance	Several considerable findings; relevant impairment of diversity of perspectives.
6.1 – 8.0	Serious deviation from the principle of balance. High degree of deviation	Pronounced, cross-programme patterns; high relevance of effect.
8.1 – 10	Fundamental systemic one-sidedness. Very high degree of bias	Maximum expression across almost all criteria; systematically one-sided reporting.

Party political bias (-5 to +5)

-5 to -3	Strongly disadvantaged	Party is clearly treated worse in presentation, speaking time or framing.
-2 to -1	Slightly disadvantaged	Discernible, but weak disadvantage.
0	Neutral	No discernible preference or disadvantage.
+1 to +2	Slightly favoured	Discernible, but weak preference.
+3 to +5	Strongly favoured	Party is clearly preferred in presentation, speaking time or framing.



Legal and methodological classification

No finding of fact	The results presented do not constitute findings of fact about individual persons, editorial teams or programmes. They are to be understood as the result of a standardised operationalisation, not as a determination of individual responsibility.
No legal ruling	The aggregated deviation index does not replace a legal assessment within the meaning of §26 MStV. The determination of whether a specific programme violates statutory requirements is the exclusive responsibility of the competent authorities (in particular media regulators).
No proof of causality	Statistical correlations are not to be interpreted as proof of causal relationships or editorial intentions. Deviation values may be influenced by topic selection, news situation, political controversy or format logic.
No judgement of intent	The analysis measures observable structural characteristics of programmes. A score of 7 means that a considerable imbalance has been identified — not that the editorial team intended this. The methodology makes no statements about motives or strategic objectives.
Heuristic comparison instrument	The index serves for comparative pattern recognition across thousands of programmes, not for the precise metric measurement of individual contributions. Threshold values serve as heuristic orientation, not for sharp legal qualification.



APPENDIX: CANTONAL LEGISLATION

Legal basis Germany — ARD, ZDF

Law

Interstate Media Treaty (MStV, 2020)

Relevant articles

- §26 para. 1 MStV: Public broadcasting institutions shall provide in their content a comprehensive overview of international, European, national and regional events in all essential areas of life. They shall thereby promote international understanding, European integration and social cohesion in the Federation and the Länder. Their content shall serve education, information, advice and entertainment. They shall offer contributions in particular to culture. Entertainment shall correspond to a public service content profile.
- §5 para. 1 ZDF State Treaty: Obligation to objectivity and impartiality of reporting, consideration of diversity of opinion.
- ARD State Treaty: Public service mandate with objectivity and impartiality.

Core obligations

- 1. Diversity of opinion (internal pluralism):** All relevant perspectives must be represented in the overall programme
- 2. Objectivity and balance:** Moderators must treat guests to the same standards
- 3. Contribution to opinion formation:** The audience must receive sufficient information for independent opinion formation

Supervisory authority

- Broadcasting councils of the state broadcasting institutions: Supervision of ARD institutions (BR, WDR, NDR, etc.)
- ZDF Television Council (§19 ZDF State Treaty): Supervision of ZDF programme
- Legal supervision: Respective federal state (ZDF: Rhineland-Palatinate)

Complaints procedure

1. Programme complaint to the responsible broadcasting council or ZDF Television Council
2. Administrative court action



APPENDIX 2: SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS

Literature

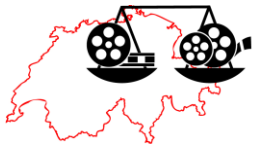
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You think you see the world. In reality you see the frame that someone has placed around it. Framing is the oldest and most elegant manipulation technique in the world. It does not change the facts — it changes what we make of the facts. How we feel. What we believe. How we decide. And it works — because we all participate. Daily. Unconsciously. You too. This book is not a dry textbook. It is a workbook — playful, direct, full of examples from real life. You learn not only how others frame you. You learn how you yourself frame — and how you can use it consciously and fairly.

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Only: it is not independent. It has no sanctioning powers. And in 99.6% of all cases it decides: nothing.

This analysis lays the system bare — factually, precisely, without polemic. Procedures, personnel, powers, costs, statistics, legal recourse. And the constitutional law review that shows: the IGAC system meets none of the three fundamental criteria — it is not appropriate, not based on separation of powers, not market-based. The authority that is supposed to protect citizens primarily protects the system it was supposed to control.

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