



SVFAB DETAILED ANALYSIS

2021-09-24 Jetzt sitzen wir an den runden Tisch

Broadcast: SRF Tagesschau broadcast | 2021-09-24 | Analysed on: 2026-05-19 15:36

Version 3.0-detail | Universal 3.0-detail | Konverter 3.4 (2026-05-20) | Massstab: Art. 4 RTVG

OVERALL SCORE

6.4/10

Serious deviation from the impartiality requirement. High degree of deviation

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	Greens	SP	GLP	Centre	EVP	FDP	SVP
CHES	1.13	1.67	3.60	5.47	5.64	7.67	9.00
Spectrum	Left	Left	Left	Centre	Right	Right	Right

The overall tendency is displayed 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)

2.9 / 10

Left-favouring

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← 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.



POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Switzerland is a consensus democracy. The Federal Council (7 seats) is filled according to the magic formula: SVP 2, SP 2, FDP 2, Centre 1. There is no classic government/opposition divide — all major parties are represented in government. Bias therefore does not manifest in government-vs-opposition terms, but in the over- or under-representation of individual parties and positions.

Party	CHES L-R	Seats NC	Government/Opposition	Core position (pandemic-relevant)
SVP	8.0	62	Government	Critical of measures, civil liberties, against certificate
SP	2.5	41	Government	Pro measures, solidarity, state direction
FDP	6.5	28	Government	Liberal, personal responsibility, pragmatic
Centre	5.0	29	Government	Pragmatic, balance
Greens	2.0	23	Opposition	Pro measures, tightening
GLP	4.0	10	Opposition	Data-based, pragmatic
EVP	5.5	2	Opposition	Centre, values-based

The main line of tension runs between supporters of measures (SP, Greens, healthcare workers) and critics of measures (SVP, parts of FDP, civil society). The Covid certificate divides society along lines of vaccination status, trust in authorities and civil liberties. The SVP as the largest party positions itself clearly against mandatory certificates and indirect compulsory vaccination, while SP and Greens favour state direction. The question of the proportionality of fundamental rights restrictions is the central conflict.

SRF is Switzerland's public broadcaster, financed through reception fees (Serafe). Art. 4 RTVG obliges SRF to provide accurate representation, diversity of opinion and a balanced selection of interlocutors. As Switzerland's largest media organisation, SRF bears special responsibility for democratic opinion formation, particularly on socially polarising topics such as pandemic policy.



CHAPTER 1 — PARTY-POLITICAL BIAS

Party	Score (-5..+5)	Broadcast representation vs. programme position
SVP	-3	57:04 "Mr Somm is absolutely certain that the SVP is stirring up hatred and incitement" — Programme position: SVP for civil liberties, against certificate (legitimate position) — distorted: SVP position is associated by studio guest with neo-Nazi demonstrations, without contradiction from the moderator; Somm as the only representative of the measures-critical position is interrupted multiple times
SP	+1	SP positions (pro-measures, state direction) are structurally supported through expert selection and framing, without explicit mention — correct in terms of representation, but favoured
FDP	0	58:44 "Well, Markus Somm, you are an FDP member, aren't you?" — Somm denies this; FDP position barely addressed — omitted
Centre	0	Not represented in broadcast — omitted
Greens	0	61:06 "Protected Kids" mentioned as a reference for demands for tightening — Greens position (tightening) implied, but not framed as a party position — implied
GLP	0	Not represented in broadcast — omitted
EVP	0	Not represented in broadcast — omitted

Party bias summary

- Most accurate representation: SP (Score +1) — structurally favoured, but not actively distorted
- Strongest distortion: SVP (Score -3) — through guilt by association with neo-Nazis and absence of contradiction from the moderator
- Average deviation from 0: 0.6
- Conclusion: The broadcast barely addresses party positions explicitly, which makes direct distortion more difficult to identify. The structural imbalance is nonetheless evident in the fact that the measures-critical position (close to SVP) is associated with right-wing extremism by a studio guest (Rosemarie Doblis, 56:43–58:28), without the moderator intervening to correct this. Somm as the only explicitly measures-critical guest is interrupted multiple times (47:30, 27:28), while pro-measures guests are allowed to speak uninterrupted.



CHAPTER 2 — BROADCAST INFORMATION AND THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

Broadcast data

- Title: Arena — Round Table: Is the virus dividing our country?
- Date: 24.09.2021
- Moderator: Sandro Brotz
- Persons interviewed:

Actors	Function	Party/affiliation	Political spectrum
Manuel Battke	Chief physician infectiology/hospital hygiene, USB Basel; member of national task force	Science/close to authorities	Left-centre (pro measures)
Markus Somm	Publicist, editor-in-chief Nebelspalter	Civic-liberal, close to FDP	Right-centre (critical of measures)
Martin Balmer	Head of intensive care nursing, KSA Aarau	Healthcare	Centre (pro measures)
Regina Göldi	Co-owner of joinery, mother of three	Civil society	Centre-right (critical of measures)
Sarah Bütikofer	Political scientist, Sotomo/University of Zurich	Science	Left-centre (analytical, tendentially pro measures)
Rosemarie Doblis	Nurse	Civil society	Left (strongly pro measures, aggressive)
Daniel Krebs	Farmer, egg producer	Civil society	Right (vaccine-sceptical)
Christoph Burkhardt	Jurist	Civil society	Centre (open to dialogue)
Samuel Blum	Secondary school student	Civil society	Centre (pro vaccination)

Main topic

The social division caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the question of whether and how dialogue between the vaccinated and unvaccinated, supporters and critics of measures, can be restored.



CHAPTER 3 — 15 CRITERIA: DETAILED ANALYSIS

Hard facts — 9 techniques that are countable and scientifically robust

1. EXPERT SELECTION

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Expert 1: Manuel Battke, Chief physician infectiology/hospital hygiene USB Basel, member of national task force

Timestamp: 07:52–16:48, 22:46–28:29, 50:46–54:08

Statement: "The data have been getting more and more robust for months. We can see that in Switzerland. We have had 10,000 patients since January until now, January of this year, who were hospitalised. And of these 10,000, only 200, perhaps — only 250 were double-vaccinated." (13:56–14:10)

Classification: Member of the national Covid task force — institutionally directly involved in pandemic policy; represents the official line; no indication of conflict of interest by the moderator.

Missing countervoice: A physician with a differing risk assessment (e.g. focus on the proportionality of measures, long-term damage from lockdown).

Source in-depth check:

(a) FUNDING: University Hospital Basel (state-funded); national task force (state-mandated). Structural conflict of interest: As a task force member, Battke has an institutional interest in the policy recommended by the task force being regarded as correct.

(b) MANDATE: Task force mandate is explicitly oriented towards pandemic containment — not compatible with a neutral assessment of the proportionality of measures.

D1 Conflict of interest: -1 — Task force member, defending own recommendations

D2 Personal risk: +1 — Clinical experience, but institutionally protected

D3 Professional competence: +2 — Infectiologist, directly responsible field

D4 Consistency of opinion: +1 — Consistent pro-vaccination position across broadcasts

D5 Emotionalisation vs. data: +1 — Predominantly data-based, occasionally appellative

D6 Source level: +1 — Primary experience clinical, secondary for studies

TOTAL: +5 → SOURCE INDICATOR: GREEN

(c) PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE: (03) in passing, without addressing the conflict of interest.

Expert 2: Sarah Bütikofer, political scientist Sotomo/University of Zurich

Timestamp: 28:53–32:35, 46:19–49:06, 64:59–67:07

Statement: "It is certainly at the moment a very loud minority that is really managing to attract attention." (29:14–29:20)

Classification: Co-author of the Corona Monitor (Sotomo); Sotomo is a private opinion research institute that regularly works for SRF and other media — structural proximity to the client SRF.

Missing countervoice: A sociologist focusing on state overreach or a political scientist with a more critical view of official communication.

Source in-depth check:

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(a) FUNDING: Sotomo — private institute, commissions from SRF, Tamedia, public bodies, among others. Structural conflict of interest: Dependence on media commissions can create an incentive to deliver media-compatible (i.e. mainstream-conforming) assessments.

(b) MANDATE: Political science analysis — fundamentally compatible with neutral assessment, but the Corona Monitor is a product that gives Sotomo visibility.

D1 Conflict of interest: -1 — Sotomo commissions from SRF; self-interest in visibility

D2 Personal risk: 0 — Academic position, no particular risk

D3 Professional competence: +1 — Political science, not sociology of movements

D4 Consistency of opinion: +1 — Consistent analytical position

D5 Emotionalisation vs. data: +2 — Strongly data-based (Sotomo surveys)

D6 Source level: +1 — Own survey data (primary), but interpretation secondary

TOTAL: +4 → SOURCE INDICATOR: YELLOW

(c) PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE: She is framed as a neutral scientist, although she is structurally close to SRF and tends to frame the measures-critical movement as a "loud minority" and "heterogeneous group", which supports the delegitimisation of this position.

Expert 3: Martin Balmer, Head of intensive care nursing KSA Aarau

Timestamp: 02:57–05:07, 18:52–20:02, 60:32–62:31

Statement: "In these 30 years of intensive care medicine that I have been practising, I have never seen doctors and nurses cry so much." (02:57–03:05)

Classification: Clinical experience in intensive care — high credibility for describing the burden; but no epidemiological expertise for an overall assessment of measures.

Missing countervoice: An intensive care physician with a more critical view of the proportionality of measures, or a nursing professional opposed to compulsory vaccination.

Source in-depth check:

(a) FUNDING: Cantonal Hospital Aarau (state-funded). No direct conflict of interest in clinical description.

(b) MANDATE: Clinical intensive care medicine — compatible with describing the hospital situation, not with an overall political assessment.

D1 Conflict of interest: 0 — No direct institutional conflict of interest

D2 Personal risk: +2 — Direct personal involvement, emotional burden visible

D3 Professional competence: +2 — Intensive care medicine, directly responsible for description

D4 Consistency of opinion: +1 — Consistent position

D5 Emotionalisation vs. data: 0 — Mix of emotion (individual cases) and data

D6 Source level: +2 — Primary experience

TOTAL: +7 → SOURCE INDICATOR: GREEN

(c) PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE: 53–04:30) used as an implicit argument for measures, without this being identified as framing.

Missing expert groups:

- Dissident epidemiologist/physician (e.g. focus on harms from measures)
- Constitutional lawyer (fundamental rights, proportionality)
- Economist (economic damage from measures)

Source indicator for participants:

Source	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Total	Indicator
Manuel Battke, Chief physician infectiology/hospital hygiene USB Basel,	-1	+1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+5	GREEN



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member of national task force								
Sarah Bütikofer, political scientist Sotomo/University of Zurich	-1	0	+1	+1	+2	+1	+4	YELLOW
Martin Balmer, Head of intensive care nursing KSA Aarau	0	+2	+2	+1	0	+2	+7	GREEN

Summary:

Expert	Source indicator	Main problem
Battke	GREEN	Task force member, conflict of interest not addressed
Bütikofer	YELLOW	Close to SRF, movement framed as delegitimised
Balmer	GREEN	Emotional individual cases used as political argument

All three experts structurally represent the pro-measures position; not a single expert with scientifically grounded criticism of measures was invited.



2. SOURCE SELECTION

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Claims without primary source = penalty points (rumour check)

Source 1: Sotomo Corona Monitor

Timestamp: 43:12–44:17 (graphic), 64:59–67:07 (Bütikofer)

Statement: "Almost two thirds of those surveyed had already been involved in an argument. About how to deal with the pandemic and vaccination." (43:35–43:44)

(a) Funding: Sotomo — private institute, commissions from SRF among others. SRF is citing a source that it itself co-finances.

(b) Structural conflict of interest: Sotomo has an interest in visibility and further SRF commissions; SRF has an interest in data that supports its reporting.

(c) Missing counter-source: Independent survey (e.g. gfs.bern) with potentially differing results; no methodological critique of the Sotomo data.

Source 2: Headlines (newspaper clippings)

Timestamp: 28:32–28:44

Statement: "Escalation at the Federal Palace. Vaccine opponents storm delivery room. Certificate opponents provoke a scuffle at the University of Lucerne."

(a) Funding: Various media (not specified)

(b) Structural conflict of interest: Selective choice of headlines portraying critics of measures as violent; no headlines about state overreach or questions of proportionality.

(c) Missing counter-source: Headlines about police violence at demonstrations, about economic damage from measures, about criticism of official communication.

Source 3: Hospital data (Battke)

Timestamp: 13:56–14:15

Statement: "We have had 10,000 patients since January until now, January of this year, who were hospitalised. And of these 10,000, only 200, perhaps — only 250 were double-vaccinated."

(a) Funding: University Hospital Basel (state-funded)

(b) Structural conflict of interest: Battke as a task force member has an interest in demonstrating vaccine efficacy.

(c) Missing counter-source: No independent verification; no indication of the data source (FOPH? Own survey?); no discussion of confounders (age structure, timing of vaccination).

Rumour check:

Rumour 1:

Timestamp: 56:43–56:50

Claim: "The right-wing extremists launched it. Neo-Nazis. Right-wing extremists. They were involved from the very beginning."

Word markers: No explicit markers, but claim without source reference

Primary source present: NO — penalty point (+1)

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Note: Moderator does not intervene, does not request a source.

Rumour 2:

Timestamp: 57:03–57:05

Claim: "Mr Somm is absolutely certain that the SVP is stirring up hatred and incitement"

Word markers: None, but claim without evidence

Primary source present: NO — penalty point (+1)

Summary: The source selection is structurally one-sided: Sotomo (close to SRF), state hospital data (task force member), selective headlines. Two unsubstantiated claims (neo-Nazi launch, SVP incitement) go unchallenged. Score with penalty points: 6+2 = 8/10.



3. TIME DISTRIBUTION

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Estimated speaking time:

- Battke (pro measures, expert): (24%)
- Balmer (pro measures, expert): (14%)
- Bütikofer (analytical, tendentially pro measures): (14%)
- Doblis (strongly pro measures, studio guest): (5%)
- Somm (critical of measures): (16%)
- Göldi (critical of measures): (9%)
- Krebs (vaccine-sceptical): (4%)
- Burkhardt (open to dialogue, centre): (3%)
- Blum (pro vaccination): (1%)
- Moderator Brotz: (9%)

Evaluation:

- Pro-measures side (Battke + Balmer + Bütikofer + Doblis): (57%)
- Measures-critical side (Somm + Göldi + Krebs): (30%)
- Neutral/moderator: (12%)

Summary: Speaking time is clearly unevenly distributed: pro-measures positions receive almost twice as much airtime as measures-critical positions. Particularly striking is that Battke alone receives more speaking time than Somm and Göldi combined.



4. OMISSION (Selective Omission)

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Omission 1: Vaccination-critical nursing staff

Context

Somm explicitly mentions (57:16): "Do you also know that a great many nurses are against vaccination? That is one of the great taboo subjects." Doblis contradicts this in blanket terms ("That is all SVP"), moderator does not intervene.

Relevant at: 57:16–57:25

Effect

The taboo subject remains unaddressed; the existence of vaccination-critical nursing staff is delegitimised by Doblis's statement ("That is all SVP. All neo-Nazis."), without any such person being given a voice.

Omission 2: Scientific dissent

Context

Somm mentions (20:53): "There are also discussions among doctors. There are also discussions among professors. There is also no unanimity among experts." No dissident scientist is invited.

Relevant at: 20:53–21:01

Effect

The impression arises that there is complete scientific consensus for all measures — which is factually incorrect (e.g. debate about school closures, certificate effectiveness).

Omission 3: Economic and social damage from measures

Context

Göldi briefly mentions (26:05): "Now we are penalising fitness centres, restaurants." No representative of these sectors is present; the economic damage is not quantified or explored in depth.

Relevant at: 26:05–26:13

Effect

The costs of the measures (economic, social, psychological) are not weighed against the benefits — a one-sided cost-benefit representation emerges.

Summary: Three central perspectives are systematically omitted: vaccination-critical nursing staff, scientific dissent and economic damage from measures. This leads to a structurally incomplete picture of the public debate.

Missing voices

- Dissident physician/scientist (e.g. member of the doctors' group "Aletheia"): Would have contributed scientifically grounded criticism of measures and vaccine safety
- Constitutional lawyer: Would have provided a legally grounded assessment of the proportionality of the certificate and restrictions on fundamental rights
- Restaurateur/cultural worker: Would have concretely illustrated the economic and social damage of the certificate requirement for affected sectors
- Vaccination-critical nursing professional: Would have shed light on the taboo subject raised by Somm (57:16) from an insider perspective



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- Representative of a measures-critical organisation (e.g. Friends of the Constitution): Would have represented organised civil society beyond violence
- Epidemiologist with a differing risk assessment: Would have deepened the scientific debate about the effectiveness and proportionality of measures
- Psychologist/psychiatrist: Would have addressed the long-term psychological damage from measures (lockdown, isolation, spreading of fear)
- Representative of vaccine manufacturers or Swissmedic: Would have directly answered questions about approval and long-term safety



5. MANIPULATION OF FIGURES

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

Finding 1: 1% mortality / plane crash analogy

Timestamp 09:56–10:26

Figure: "The mortality rate is one percent. [...] At 1 percent that would be 50 plane crashes."

Dimensions:

- (a) Absolute value: 1% stated ✓
- (b) Proportion: Not differentiated by age group (only later implied: "mainly from around 50", 10:39) X
- (c) Trend: Not stated (declining IFR due to immunity/vaccination?) X

Missing context

The 1% IFR (Infection Fatality Rate) is strongly age-dependent; for those under 50 it is well below 0.1%. The plane crash analogy is misleading because it suggests a uniform distribution of risk that does not exist.

Effect

Exaggerated risk perception among younger viewers; the analogy is emotionally manipulative and scientifically inaccurate.

Finding 2: 10,000 hospitalised, only 200-250 double-vaccinated

Timestamp 13:56–14:15

Figure: "Of these 10,000, only 200, perhaps — only 250 were double-vaccinated. That means this is an extremely good vaccine effect. A factor of over 40-fold."

Dimensions:

- (a) Absolute value: 10,000 / 200-250 stated ✓
- (b) Proportion: Vaccination rate at the time not taken into account (at 55% vaccination rate the comparison is distorted) X
- (c) Trend: Not stated X

Missing context

At a 55% vaccination rate, a ratio of 45:55 (unvaccinated:vaccinated) would be expected with equal effectiveness; the "factor of 40" is not correctly calculated without taking the vaccination rate into account. The correct calculation of vaccine effectiveness requires adjustment for age structure and exposure time.

Effect

Overestimation of vaccine effectiveness; viewers cannot contextualise the figure.

Finding 3: 54.8% vaccination rate — "A catastrophe"

Timestamp 56:33–56:40

Figure: "In Switzerland 54.8 percent are fully vaccinated. A catastrophe for me. Unacceptable."

Dimensions:

- (a) Absolute value: 54.8% stated ✓
- (b) Proportion: No international comparison X
- (c) Trend: Not stated X



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**Missing
context**

Moderator allows the value judgement "catastrophe" and "unacceptable" to stand without comment; no comparison with other countries or discussion of what a "sufficient" vaccination rate would be.

Effect

Emotional value judgement is presented as a factual assessment.

Summary: Three relevant figures are presented without sufficient context; particularly problematic are the plane crash analogy (misleading) and the vaccine effectiveness calculation (methodologically incomplete). The moderator does not critically question any of the figures.



6. GUILT BY ASSOCIATION								8/10	
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Association 1: Critics of measures = neo-Nazis/right-wing extremists

Timestamp	56:43–56:55
Quote	<i>"The right-wing extremists launched it. Neo-Nazis. Right-wing extremists. They were involved from the very beginning. They are also involved here."</i>
Technique: Direct equation of the entire measures-critical movement with neo-Nazis by studio guest Doblis; moderator does not intervene, does not request a source.	
Effect	All critics of measures are blanket-associated with right-wing extremism; legitimate criticism is delegitimised.

SOURCE CHECK (Doblis's claim):

- Does Doblis work with verifiable primary sources? NO — no source cited
- Are her core statements falsifiable? YES — but not falsified
- What has she lost through her position? Nothing discernible
- What does she gain? Attention, approval from Battke ("Bravo", 57:35)
- Net: Gain > Risk → diminished credibility
- RESULT CATEGORY: C — Conspiracy-ideological (unsubstantiated blanket claim)

Association 2: SVP = hatred and incitement

Timestamp	57:03–57:05
Quote	<i>"Mr Somm is absolutely certain that the SVP is stirring up hatred and incitement"</i>
Technique: Blanket attribution to a party without evidence; moderator does not intervene.	
Effect	SVP position (criticism of measures) is equated with "hatred and incitement"; Somm as a publicist close to the SVP is indirectly discredited.

Association 3: Vaccine sceptics = conspiracy theorists

Timestamp	07:23–07:25
Quote	<i>"They are not all just conspiracy theorists." (Göldi)</i>
Technique: Göldi must explicitly clarify that vaccine sceptics are not all conspiracy theorists — which implies that this equation is already in the air.	
Effect	The framing "vaccine sceptics = conspiracy theorists" is set as the starting point that Göldi must refute.

Chain of association: Critics of measures → demonstrators → neo-Nazis/right-wing extremists → SVP → hatred and incitement



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Summary: The broadcast allows a serious chain of association to go unchallenged: critics of measures are equated with neo-Nazis by Doblis, SVP with hatred and incitement. Moderator Brotz does not intervene and does not request evidence. Doblis's statements are to be classified according to the risk matrix as Category C (conspiracy-ideological) — paradoxically, this category is applied in the broadcast to the other side.



7. TIMING

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Finding 1: Emotional opening with pregnant patients

Position: 03:53–04:30 (beginning)

Content: "In the last five weeks we have had four young women aged 23 to 27 in pregnancy at around 30 weeks who were in a very critical condition. [...] That has not yet succeeded in all cases."

Timing effect

The broadcast begins with the emotionally strongest argument for measures (dying mothers and children) — before any critical perspective is given a voice. This sets the emotional frame for the entire broadcast and makes it harder to perceive subsequent criticism of measures as legitimate.

Finding 2: Doblis's neo-Nazi claim shortly before the end

Position: 56:43–58:28 (shortly before the closing round)

Content: "The right-wing extremists launched it. Neo-Nazis. [...] Mr Somm is absolutely certain that the SVP is stirring up hatred and incitement."

Timing effect

The most serious accusations come shortly before the closing round — too late for a detailed rebuttal by Somm or Göldi. Somm can only respond briefly (58:59–59:25) before the closing round begins.

Finding 3: Merkel conclusion as mood-lifter

Position: 71:22–74:22 (end)

Content: Positive conclusion about Angela Merkel — "Her speech in the German Bundestag, where she said how strongly she believes in the power of enlightenment" (Bütikofer, 73:50–73:55)

Timing effect

The broadcast ends with a positive, consensus-oriented image (Merkel as stateswoman, enlightenment), which emotionally resolves the preceding polarisation and leaves a pro-establishment impression.

Summary: The timing is strategic: emotional pro-measures opening, neo-Nazi claim shortly before the end (too late for rebuttal), positive establishment conclusion. This reinforces the structural imbalance of the broadcast.



8. SELECTIVE OUTRAGE

6/10

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

Finding 1: Doblis's neo-Nazi claim — no moderation response

Timestamp 56:43–58:28

Triggering event: Doblis claims without evidence that the measures-critical movement was launched by neo-Nazis and that the SVP is stirring up hatred and incitement.

Response: Moderator Brotz does not intervene, does not request a source, asks no critical follow-up question. Battke says "Bravo" (57:35).

Comparison

Somm says (47:01): "No, a certificate is of course indirect coercion." — Bütikofer immediately contradicts (47:14), moderator allows Bütikofer to finish speaking (47:30: "Ms Bütikofer, please let her finish").

Asymmetry: Somm's statement ("indirect coercion") is immediately corrected by Bütikofer and the moderator protects Bütikofer's speaking time. Doblis's unsubstantiated neo-Nazi claim remains without comment.

Degree of outrage: 3/5 (Doblis is clearly outraged, Battke agrees)

Selectivity: 4/5 (outrage only on the pro-measures side, no analogous reaction to Somm's statements)

Finding 2: Balmer — "Not very great" (understanding for demonstrators)

Timestamp 18:52–19:31

Triggering event: Moderator asks Balmer about his understanding for the demonstrators.

Response: "Not very great." — Balmer describes his lack of understanding for violence, but also for the movement in general.

Comparison

Somm (20:02): "These are people who are not satisfied with what the authorities have been doing for 18 months. And I think that is completely normal." — No analogous outrage response from the moderator.

Asymmetry: Balmer's lack of understanding is received empathetically ("Now you need to take a deep breath first", 18:54); Somm's understanding for the demonstrators is not treated with the same empathy.

Degree of outrage: 2/5

Selectivity: 3/5

Summary: Selective outrage is demonstrable: Doblis's unsubstantiated neo-Nazi claim goes without comment, while Somm's statement about "indirect coercion" is immediately corrected. The outrage in the broadcast is structurally one-sidedly directed at the pro-measures side.



9. COMPLETENESS (Selective Omission — Overall picture)

7/10

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Finding 1: No discussion of the damage caused by measures

Timestamp Entire broadcast

Missing perspective: Psychological health damage from lockdown, isolation, spreading of fear; economic damage; educational damage to children.

Relevance: Proportionality of measures requires weighing benefits AND harms; without a discussion of harms, the assessment is one-sided.

Impact: Viewers receive the impression that measures have only benefits and no costs — a fundamentally incomplete representation.

Finding 2: No discussion of certificate effectiveness

Timestamp 39:45–40:14

Missing perspective: Empirical evidence for or against the effectiveness of the Covid certificate in combating the pandemic.

Relevance: The certificate is the central point of contention in the broadcast; its effectiveness is asserted (Battke, 39:48: "There is less circulation if one ensures that people are either vaccinated, recovered or tested"), but not substantiated with studies.

Impact: The claim of certificate effectiveness is presented as fact, without any critical examination taking place.

Finding 3: No discussion of alternative strategies

Timestamp 54:13–55:27

Missing perspective: Countries with other strategies (Sweden: no school closures, no lockdown; Denmark: early opening) are only mentioned as target benchmarks for vaccination rates, not analysed as alternative models.

Relevance: International comparisons are central to the assessment of Swiss pandemic policy.

Impact: Swiss measures policy appears as the only possible path, even though other countries have taken different approaches.

Summary: The broadcast is structurally incomplete: damage from measures, evidence of certificate effectiveness and international alternative strategies are absent. This leads to a one-sided picture that presents measures as without alternative.

In autumn 2021, Switzerland is in the fourth Covid wave with rising hospitalisations. The Covid certificate (introduced September 2021) is highly controversial: supporters see it as a necessary instrument for combating the pandemic, critics as a disproportionate interference with fundamental rights. The vaccination rate is stagnating at around 55%, while higher rates are being achieved in other European countries. At the same time, demonstrations against measures are escalating, partly with violence. The social polarisation is real and measurable (Sotomo data: 65% involved in arguments, 25% breaking off contact).

Proportion of perspectives covered



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

- [A] Medical-scientific pro-vaccination/pro-measures perspective
- [B] Medical-scientific measures-critical perspective (dissident doctors/scientists)
- [C] **Legal perspective:** Proportionality of fundamental rights restrictions
- [D] **Economic perspective:** Damage from measures (gastronomy, culture, SMEs)
- [E] **Psychological/social perspective:** Long-term damage from polarisation
- [F] **Historical perspective:** Comparison with earlier pandemics and state measures
- [G] **International comparative perspective:** Countries with other strategies (Sweden, Denmark)
- [H] Perspective of the unvaccinated without ideological background (fears, questions)
- [I] **Perspective of nursing staff opposed to compulsory vaccination (taboo subject, according to Somm 57: 16)**
- [J] Perspective of those economically harmed by measures

[A] ADDRESSED

Timestamp: 00:40–06:09, 08:03–16:48 — Quote: "The data have been getting more and more robust for months" (13:51) — Assessment: Extensively and repeatedly represented by two physicians, dominates the broadcast quantitatively.

[B] OMITTED

Timestamp: — — Quote: — — Assessment: Not a single dissident physician or scientist was invited; Somm mentions the existence of doctors with differing opinions (20:53: "There are also discussions among doctors"), but they are not given a voice.

[C] IMPLIED

Timestamp: 62:49 — Quote: "It is about a fundamental right to physical integrity" (Somm) — Assessment: Only raised by Somm, not explored in depth by a legal expert; Bütikofer immediately contradicts (47:01).

[D] IMPLIED

Timestamp: 26:05–26:13 — Quote: "Now we are penalising fitness centres, restaurants" (Göldi) — Assessment: Only briefly mentioned, not explored in depth; no representative of the affected sectors present.

[E] ADDRESSED

Timestamp: 43:04–48:55 — Quote: "Almost two thirds of those surveyed had already been involved in an argument" (Sotomo graphic) — Assessment: Addressed through Sotomo data and Bütikofer, but framed one-sidedly with vaccine scepticism as the problem.

[F] IMPLIED

Timestamp: 08:20–09:12 — Quote: "With HIV, to make a comparison..." (Battke) — Assessment: Only used as an analogy for vaccine trust, not as a critical historical comparison.

[G] IMPLIED

Timestamp: 54:13–55:27 — Quote: "Denmark has now shown the way. I think they are trying it now at 75, 80 percent" — Assessment: Only mentioned as a target benchmark, not analysed as an alternative strategy.

[H] ADDRESSED

Timestamp: 49:29–52:01, 59:29–60:14 — Quote: "I absolutely do not deny the virus. It is there, we live with it. But I am not afraid of it" (Krebs, 50:07) — Assessment: Represented by Krebs and Göldi, but framed as individual cases, not as a representative group.

[I] OMITTED



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Timestamp: 57:16 — Quote: "Do you also know that a great many nurses are against vaccination? That is one of the great taboo subjects" (Somm) — Assessment: Somm names the subject, Doblis contradicts in blanket terms ("That is all SVP"), no representative of this group is present; moderator does not intervene.

[J] OMITTED

Timestamp: — — Quote: — — Assessment: No representative of gastronomy, culture or SMEs is present, even though the certificate requirement directly affects these sectors.

Completeness score: 4/10

Reasoning: The broadcast addresses the medical-scientific pro-measures perspective extensively and the social division superficially. Central perspectives are entirely absent: dissident scientists, legal experts on proportionality, representatives of those economically harmed and vaccination-critical nursing staff. The selection of guests does not reflect the actual breadth of the public debate.



Soft facts — 6 qualitative techniques

10. FRAMING (Setting the frame)

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Finding 1: Vaccine scepticism as a problem, not as a legitimate stance

Timestamp	00:14–00:17
Quote	<i>"Is the virus dividing our country?"</i>
Manipulation	The broadcast question frames the division as a problem of the virus — not as a problem of pandemic policy. This implicitly frames criticism of measures as part of the problem (division), not as a legitimate democratic response to policy.
Why problematic	Critics of measures are framed as dividers, not as citizens with legitimate questions; this delegitimises their position before the first word is spoken.

Finding 2: The unvaccinated as a problem group

Timestamp	04:34–04:41
Quote	<i>"That also grows into incomprehension that we have such a vaccine-opponent situation."</i>
Manipulation	Balmer frames the unvaccinated as a "vaccine-opponent situation" — a problem that generates incomprehension. The perspective of the unvaccinated (questions, fears) is not framed as equally valid.
Why problematic	"Vaccine-opponent situation" is a delegitimising term; the unvaccinated are defined as a problem, not as citizens with questions.

Finding 3: Certificate as protection for the unvaccinated

Timestamp	39:30–39:43
Quote	<i>"The certificate — we would most prefer not to have it and to have it abolished as quickly as possible. But now it actually helps above all. That is the point. It is the unvaccinated that it mainly protects now."</i>
Manipulation	The certificate is framed as protection for the unvaccinated — a paradoxical argument that Somm immediately questions (39:45: "The certificate protects the unvaccinated? Why?"). Battke's explanation (39:48) is circular and is not critically questioned.
Why problematic	The framing "certificate protects the unvaccinated" is a rhetorical reversal that makes resistance to the certificate appear irrational.



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Summary: The framing of the broadcast is consistently pro-measures: division as a virus problem (not a policy problem), the unvaccinated as a problem group, the certificate as protection. These framings are not neutral and structurally influence viewers' perception.



11. CHOICE OF WORDS AND TERMS									6/10
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Finding 1: "Vaccine opponents" vs. "vaccine sceptics"	
Timestamp	04:38, 07:23
Quote	"Vaccine-opponent situation" (Balmer, 04:38); "They are not all just conspiracy theorists" (Göldi, 07:23)
Manipulation	"Vaccine opponents" is a delegitimising term that implies active rejection; Bütikofer differentiates later (65:42): "three quarters of those who do not want to be vaccinated simply have a great deal of uncertainty" — this differentiation comes too late and is not framed as a correction of the earlier choice of words.
Why problematic	A neutral alternative would be "vaccine-hesitant" or "vaccine-uncertain"; "vaccine opponents" presupposes an ideological rejection that, according to Bütikofer, applies to only around 10% of the population.

Finding 2: "Coercion" — conceptual debate as distraction	
Timestamp	47:01–47:30
Quote	"Coercion is actually a criminal offence and in Switzerland absolutely nobody is being coerced into vaccination." (Bütikofer, 47:05–47:12)
Manipulation	Bütikofer corrects Somm's use of "coercion" with a legal definition, even though Somm is clearly using the term in a colloquial sense. This is a rhetorical technique to delegitimise Somm's argument without refuting it substantively.
Why problematic	The debate about terms distracts from the substantive question (Is the certificate proportionate?); the moderator allows Bütikofer to finish speaking without giving Somm the same opportunity.

Finding 3: "Smouldering fire" as metaphor	
Timestamp	23:06–23:18
Quote	"I compare it to a house in which there is a smouldering fire. One can now discuss and look at what one turns off or does not turn off. But we can also look at finding a solution, namely to extinguish the smouldering fire."
Manipulation	The metaphor "smouldering fire" implies immediate danger and pressure to act; it delegitimises discussion ("one can discuss") as a waste of time in the face of danger.
Why problematic	A neutral alternative would be a factual description of the epidemiological situation; the metaphor is emotionally manipulative and suggests that criticism of measures is dangerous.

Summary: The choice of words is structurally pro-measures: "vaccine opponents" instead of "vaccine-uncertain", legal conceptual debate to delegitimise Somm, emotional metaphors for pressure to act. This choice of words is not neutral.



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12. MODERATION BEHAVIOUR

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Finding 1: Interruption of Somm on "coercion", no intervention at Doblis's neo-Nazi claim

Timestamp 47:14 (Bütikofer interrupts Somm), 56:43–58:28 (Doblis unchallenged)

Triggering event: Somm uses the term "indirect coercion" for the certificate (47:01).

Response: Bütikofer interrupts (47:14: "No, a certificate is of course..."), moderator protects Bütikofer's speaking time (47:30: "Ms Bütikofer, please let her finish").

Comparison Doblis claims without evidence (56:43): "The right-wing extremists launched it. Neo-Nazis." — Moderator does not intervene, does not request a source, asks no critical follow-up question.

Asymmetry: Somm's colloquial use of "coercion" is immediately corrected; Doblis's unsubstantiated neo-Nazi claim remains without comment. Clear asymmetry demonstrable.

Finding 2: Expression of sympathy for Balmer

Timestamp 02:43–03:14

Triggering event: Moderator recalls the emotional broadcast link from the previous year.

Response: "That was a moment that sent a cold shiver down the spine of everyone at home who saw it, and of myself." (02:49–02:53)

Comparison No analogous personal expression of empathy towards Somm or Göldi.

Asymmetry: Moderator explicitly shows personal emotional involvement with pro-measures guest; no analogous response to measures-critical guests.

Finding 3: Rhetorical question to Somm

Timestamp 70:07–70:11

Triggering event: Closing round.

Response: "Do you actually want that, Markus Somm, or would you not prefer it if things got a bit heated?"

Comparison No analogous provocative question to pro-measures guests.

Asymmetry: Somm is confronted with a rhetorical question that calls his willingness to engage in dialogue into question; pro-measures guests receive no analogous provocation.

Summary: The moderation behaviour shows clear asymmetries: Somm's statements are immediately corrected or provocatively challenged, while Doblis's unsubstantiated claims remain without comment. Personal empathy is shown only towards pro-measures guests.



13. QUESTION ASYMMETRY									6/10
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Asymmetry 1:	
To Balmer, 18	46: "Mr Balmer, how much understanding do you have for these people?" — soft/empathetic (understanding is expected, not demanded)
To Somm, 70	07: "Do you actually want that, Markus Somm, or would you not prefer it if things got a bit heated?" — provocative/rhetorical
Comparison	Balmer is asked about understanding (empathetic framing); Somm is provocatively questioned about his willingness to engage in dialogue (implying he does not want dialogue). Clear asymmetry.

Asymmetry 2:	
To Battke, 08	27: "But what do we actually not know?" — open, inviting
To Somm (implicitly through Bütikofer intervention), 47	01: Somm's statement is immediately corrected before he can finish speaking.
Comparison	Battke receives open, inviting questions; Somm is interrupted by Bütikofer's intervention, without the moderator protecting Somm's speaking time equally.

Asymmetry 3:	
To Krebs, 50	10: "If you were to infect someone else with this attitude?" — confrontational, implies irresponsibility
To Battke	No analogous confrontational question (e.g. "If your recommendations on measures damage the economy?")
Comparison	Vaccine-sceptical farmer is confronted with the consequences of his stance; task force member is not confronted with the consequences of his recommendations.

Summary: The questions are systematically asymmetric: pro-measures guests receive open, inviting questions; measures-critical guests receive confrontational or provocative questions. This reinforces the structural imbalance of the broadcast.



14. FALSE BALANCE

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Finding 1: Apparent balance through unequal guest quality

Timestamp

Entire broadcast

Construct: The broadcast presents itself as a "round table" with various perspectives — two physicians (experts) vs. a publicist and a joiner (laypersons) on the measures-critical side.

Analysis

The pro-measures side is represented by two specialist experts (Battke, Balmer) and a scientist (Bütikofer); the measures-critical side by a publicist (Somm) and a businesswoman (Göldi). This is not genuine balance: expert opinion vs. layperson opinion is structurally unequal. A genuine round table would also have invited measures-critical experts.

Summary: The broadcast creates the impression of balance by inviting various guests, but conceals the structural inequality: experts on one side, laypersons on the other. This is a form of false balance that systematically strengthens the pro-measures position.



15. AGENDA-SETTING

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Finding 1: Vaccination as the only way out

Agenda element set: Vaccination is set as the only way out of the pandemic.

Timestamp

23:27–23:33 — Evidence: "If we do not now also make clear that with vaccination — it is not easy, but with it a path out of the pandemic is mapped out."

Alternative agenda: Natural immunisation, treatment optimisation, proportionality of measures, international alternative strategies — none of these topics is placed on the agenda as an equally valid alternative.

Finding 2: Social division as the main problem

Agenda element set: The division of society is set as the central problem — not pandemic policy itself.

Timestamp

00:14 — Evidence: "Is the virus dividing our country?"

Alternative agenda: The question could read: "Is pandemic policy dividing our country?" — this would locate responsibility differently and require different guests.

Finding 3: Demonstrators as a fringe group

Agenda element set: Measures-critical demonstrators are set as a "loud minority" (Bütikofer, 29:14) and a heterogeneous group without a clear identity.

Timestamp

29:14–29:20 — Evidence: "It is certainly at the moment a very loud minority that is really managing to attract attention."

Alternative agenda: The demonstrators could be framed as an expression of broader societal distrust of pandemic policy — which Bütikofer herself implies (31:00: "a very strong distrust"), but does not evaluate as a legitimate political response.

Summary: The agenda-setting function of the broadcast is clear: vaccination as the only way out, division as a virus problem (not a policy problem), demonstrators as a fringe group. These agenda-settings are not neutral and favour the pro-measures position.



CHAPTER 4 — OVERALL EVALUATION

Results

- HARD FACTS SCORE (average criteria 1-9): 6.6 / 10
- SOFT FACTS SCORE (average criteria 10-15): 6.2 / 10

Dominant techniques

- 1. Guilt by Association (Score 8):** Critics of measures are blanket-equated with neo-Nazis by studio guest Doblis and SVP is associated with hatred and incitement — without source reference, without moderation intervention, with explicit approval from Battke ("Bravo"). This is the most serious individual technique in the broadcast and directly violates Art. 4 RTVG.
- 2. Source selection (Score 8 with penalty points):** All cited sources (Sotomo, task force member, state hospital data) are structurally pro-measures; two unsubstantiated claims (neo-Nazi launch, SVP incitement) remain without source verification. The source selection is not diverse and not independent.
- 3. Expert selection (Score 7):** Three experts, all structurally pro-measures; not a single dissident scientist, no legal expert, no economist. The expert selection is systematically one-sided and violates the requirement of diversity of opinion under Art. 4 RTVG.

Core messages of the broadcast

****MESSAGE 1 (SUBSTANTIVE):** ** "Vaccination is the only way out of the pandemic, and anyone who doubts this is harming society."

Technique: Framing (vaccination as the only path), expert selection (only pro-vaccination experts), agenda-setting — Evidence: 23:27, 67:08, 00:40

****MESSAGE 2 (PERSONAL):** ** "Critics of measures are either ignorant, fearful or right-wing extremist — in any case not to be taken seriously."

Technique: Guilt by association (neo-Nazi claim), choice of words ("vaccine opponents"), framing (demonstrators as fringe group) — Evidence: 56:43, 04:38, 29:14

****MESSAGE 3 (SOCIETAL):** ** "The virus is dividing society — not pandemic policy."

Technique: Agenda-setting (broadcast question), framing (division as virus problem), timing (emotional opening) — Evidence: 00:14, 02:57, 43:04

Reasoning: The overall score of 6.4 lies at the boundary between "clear one-sidedness" and "systematic imbalance". The broadcast violates Art. 4 RTVG in several dimensions: the expert selection is one-sided (only pro-measures experts), the source selection is not diverse, and the most serious violation — the unsubstantiated equation of critics of measures with neo-Nazis — remains without moderation intervention. At the same time, Somm and Göldi as two measures-critical voices are given a platform, which prevents a full classification as "systematic imbalance". The broadcast is clearly one-sided, but not without any counter-position.

CONCLUSION

The Arena broadcast from autumn 2021 on the subject of social division through Covid-19 exhibits a clear structural imbalance in favour of the pro-measures position, demonstrable in several dimensions: expert selection (exclusively pro-measures experts), time distribution (57% vs. 30%), moderation asymmetry (Somm interrupted, Doblis unchallenged) and framing (division as virus problem). The most serious individual violation is the unsubstantiated equation of critics of measures with neo-Nazis by studio guest Doblis (56:43), which remains without source verification, without moderation intervention and with the explicit approval of an expert — this directly violates Art. 4 Para. 2 RTVG (accurate representation) and Art. 4 Para. 4 RTVG (protection of human dignity). The broadcast does not fulfil the statutory mandate for diversity of opinion and a balanced selection of interlocutors under Art. 4 RTVG, since the measures-critical position is represented exclusively by laypersons (publicist, businesswoman), while the pro-measures position is supported by three experts. Despite the formal invitation of various perspectives, structural balance is not achieved.



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	5	●●●
4	OMISSION (Selective Omission)	7	●●●●
5	MANIPULATION OF FIGURES	5	●●●
6	GUILT BY ASSOCIATION	8	●●●●
7	TIMING	6	●●●
8	SELECTIVE OUTRAGE	6	●●●
9	COMPLETENESS (Selective Omission — Overall picture)	7	●●●●
10	FRAMING (Setting the frame)	7	●●●●
11	CHOICE OF WORDS AND TERMS	6	●●●
12	MODERATION BEHAVIOUR	7	●●●●
13	QUESTION ASYMMETRY	6	●●●
14	FALSE BALANCE	4	●●
15	AGENDA-SETTING	7	●●●●

HARD FACTS SCORE (1-8)

6.6/10

Serious deviation from the impartiality requirement. High degree of deviation

SOFT FACTS SCORE (9-14)

6.2/10

Serious deviation from the impartiality requirement. High degree of deviation

OVERALL SCORE

6.4/10

Serious deviation from the impartiality requirement. High degree of deviation

Averaged from hard facts and soft facts



KEY — Meaning of scores

Individual scores per criterion (0–10)

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

Aggregated deviation index — Interpretation ranges

0.0 – 2.5	Unremarkable	No material patterns discernible; broadcast meets the accuracy requirement.
2.6 – 4.0	Slight imbalance	Isolated irregularities; statistically visible, but still within the tolerance range.
4.1 – 6.0	Substantial imbalance	Multiple substantial findings; relevant impairment of diversity of perspectives.
6.1 – 8.0	Serious deviation from the impartiality requirement. High degree of deviation	Pronounced, broadcast-wide patterns; high impact relevance.
8.1 – 10	Fundamental systemic one-sidedness. Very high degree of bias	Maximum manifestation 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 representation, speaking time or framing.
-2 to -1	Slightly disadvantaged	Discernible, but weak disadvantage.
0	Neutral	No discernible favouring or disadvantaging.
+1 to +2	Slightly favoured	Discernible, but weak favouring.
+3 to +5	Strongly favoured	Party is clearly treated better in representation, speaking time or framing.



CHAPTER 5 — LEGAL CLASSIFICATION (Art. 4 RTVG)

Assessment under Art. 4 RTVG

Violation 1:

Norm: Art. 4 Para. 2 RTVG (accurate representation of facts and events)

Facts: Unsubstantiated claim that the measures-critical movement was launched by neo-Nazis remains without source verification and without moderation intervention.

Evidence: Timestamp 56:43–56:55 — Quote: "The right-wing extremists launched it. Neo-Nazis. Right-wing extremists. They were involved from the very beginning."

Assessment: Accurate representation requires that unsubstantiated claims be identified as such or questioned by the moderator. The claim that a social movement was launched by neo-Nazis is a serious factual assertion that requires a source reference. The moderator's failure to question this claim violates Art. 4 Para. 2 RTVG.

Violation 2:

Norm: Art. 4 Para. 4 RTVG (diversity of opinion on controversial topics)

Facts: The expert selection is one-sided: all three invited experts (Battke, Balmer, Bütikofer) structurally represent the pro-measures position; not a single expert with scientifically grounded criticism of measures was invited.

Evidence: Timestamp 00:40–01:49 (guest introduction) — Quote: "Manuel Battke, Chief physician infectiology [...] He says we should now move towards each other. But one thing is clear. Vaccination demonstrably protects a great many people."

Assessment: Art. 4 Para. 4 RTVG requires a balanced selection of interlocutors on controversial topics. Covid pandemic policy is a highly controversial topic; the one-sided expert selection violates the requirement of diversity of opinion.

Violation 3:

Norm: Art. 4 Para. 2 RTVG (accurate representation)

Facts: The plane crash analogy (09:56–10:26) and the vaccine effectiveness calculation (13:56–14:15) are presented without methodological contextualisation; the moderator asks no critical follow-up questions.

Evidence: Timestamp 10:19–10:22 — Quote: "At 1 percent that would be 50 plane crashes. One has to think about that."

Assessment: Accurate representation requires that figures and analogies be presented in their context. The plane crash analogy is scientifically misleading (suggests a uniform distribution of risk that does not exist); the vaccine effectiveness calculation is methodologically incomplete without adjustment for vaccination rate. The failure to ask critical follow-up questions violates Art. 4 Para. 2 RTVG.

Overall assessment Art. 4 RTVG

The broadcast violates Art. 4 RTVG in three demonstrable dimensions: accurate representation (unsubstantiated neo-Nazi claim, misleading numerical analogies), diversity of opinion (one-sided expert selection) and balanced selection of interlocutors (experts only on the pro-measures side). The most serious violation is the unsubstantiated equation of critics of measures with neo-Nazis, which remains without moderation intervention and is thereby implicitly condoned by SRF as the party responsible for the broadcast. The formal invitation of measures-critical laypersons (Somm, Göldi) is insufficient to compensate for the structural imbalance, since they cannot occupy an equivalent expert position. A complaint to the Independent Complaints Authority for Radio and Television (ICA) would be justifiable on the basis of these findings.



CHAPTER 6 — SOURCE IN-DEPTH CHECK

1. Sotomo (Corona Monitor)

1. FUNDING: Private opinion research institute; commissions from SRF, Tamedia, public bodies, among others. SRF is citing a source that it itself co-finances — structural conflict of interest.

2. MANDATE: Opinion research — fundamentally compatible with neutral assessment, but dependence on media commissions creates an incentive for media-compatible results.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Sotomo has an institutional interest in visibility and further SRF commissions; SRF has an interest in data that supports its reporting.

D1 Conflict of interest: -1 (SRF commissions)

D2 Personal risk: 0

D3 Professional competence: +1 (opinion research)

D4 Consistency: +1

D5 Emotion vs. data: +2 (data-based)

D6 Source level: +1 (own primary data)

TOTAL: +4 → SOURCE INDICATOR: YELLOW

5. COUNTER-SOURCE: gfs.bern or other independent survey institutes are not cited; no methodological critique of the Sotomo data.

2. National Covid Task Force (represented by Battke)

1. FUNDING: State-mandated and state-financed (Federal Council).

2. MANDATE: Explicitly oriented towards pandemic containment — not compatible with a neutral assessment of the proportionality of measures.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: As a task force member, Battke has an institutional interest in the policy recommended by the task force being regarded as correct; criticism of task force recommendations would delegitimise his own work.

D1 Conflict of interest: -1 (task force member)

D2 Personal risk: +1

D3 Professional competence: +2 (infectiologist)

D4 Consistency: +1

D5 Emotion vs. data: +1

D6 Source level: +1

TOTAL: +5 → SOURCE INDICATOR: GREEN

5. COUNTER-SOURCE: No dissident epidemiologist or physician with a differing risk assessment is cited or invited.

IMPORTANT: "Recognised" is not a factual qualification. Battke's membership of the national task force is an institutional attribution that itself constitutes a conflict of interest — this is not addressed in the broadcast.

3. Rosemarie Doblis (nurse, studio guest)

1. FUNDING: No institutional funding discernible; private individual.

2. MANDATE: No formal expertise for political or epidemiological assessments.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: As a nurse directly affected by the pandemic; emotional involvement can impair objectivity.

D1 Conflict of interest: -1 (direct personal involvement)

D2 Personal risk: +1 (public statements)

D3 Professional competence: 0 (nursing, not epidemiology or politics)

D4 Consistency: 0 (unknown)

D5 Emotion vs. data: -2 (strongly emotional, no data)

D6 Source level: -2 (no primary sources for claims)

TOTAL: -4 → SOURCE INDICATOR: YELLOW (marginal)



5. COUNTER-SOURCE: Vaccination-critical nursing professional (mentioned by Somm as a taboo subject) is not invited.

Doblis's claims (neo-Nazi launch, SVP incitement) are to be classified according to the risk matrix as Category C: unsubstantiated claims, not falsified, no primary sources. Paradoxically, this category is applied in the broadcast to the other side (critics of measures).

Source indicator for participants:

Source	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Total	Indicator
Sotomo (Corona Monitor)	-1	0	+1	+1	+2	+1	+4	YELLOW
National Covid Task Force (represented by Battke)	-1	+1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+5	GREEN
Rosemarie Doblis (nurse, studio guest)	-1	+1	0	0	-2	-2	-4	YELLOW

Legal and methodological classification

No finding of fact	The results presented do not constitute findings of fact about individual persons, editorial teams or broadcasts. 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 Art. 4 RTVG. The determination of whether a specific broadcast violates statutory requirements is the exclusive responsibility of the competent authorities (in particular the ICA).
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 broadcasts. A score of 7 means that a substantial 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 the comparative identification of patterns across thousands of broadcasts, not the precise metric measurement of individual contributions. Threshold values serve as heuristic orientation, not as sharp legal qualification.



APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Legal basis Switzerland — SRG SSR

Law

Federal Act on Radio and Television (RTVG, SR 784.40)

Relevant articles

- Art. 4 Para. 1 RTVG: All broadcasts of a radio or television programme must respect fundamental rights. Broadcasts must in particular respect human dignity, must not be discriminatory, must not contribute to racial hatred, must not endanger public morality, and must not glorify or trivialise violence.
- Art. 4 Para. 2 RTVG: Editorial broadcasts with informational content must represent facts and events accurately, so that the audience can form its own opinion. Views and commentary must be identifiable as such.
- Art. 4 Para. 4 RTVG: In the totality of editorial broadcasts, the diversity of events and opinions must be adequately expressed (diversity requirement).

Core obligations

1. **Accuracy:** Accurate representation of facts and events
2. **Diversity of opinion:** Diversity of views on controversial topics
3. **Balance:** Balanced selection of interlocutors

Supervisory authority

- ICA (Independent Complaints Authority for Radio and Television): Examines complaints against broadcast programmes for violations of Art. 4 RTVG
- OFCOM (Federal Office of Communications): Regulatory and supervisory authority
- Ombudsman offices of the SRG: First point of contact for programme complaints

Complaints procedure

1. Ombudsman office of the respective business unit (SRF, RTS, RSI, RTR)
2. ICA (if no agreement is reached)
3. Federal Supreme Court (last instance)



APPENDIX 2: SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS

Literature

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- Schläpfer, D. (2026). Systematic AI-Assisted Analysis of Public Broadcaster Impartiality: A Scalable Methodological Framework for Measuring Structural Bias in Public Service Media. [SSRN 6688478](#)
- Schläpfer, D. (2026). Measuring Editorial Noise: A Retrospective Suppression Index for Public Broadcasting Content Analysis. [SSRN 6733280](#)
- Schläpfer, D. (2026). Source Traffic Light: A Six-Dimensional Credibility Framework for Systematic Source Assessment in Public Service Media. [SSRN 6733880](#)

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Unbalanced Reporting is the response to the halving initiative in Switzerland: here the manipulation techniques are explained in detail, starting with the selection of staff and source selection. 15 principles are then explained: omission, framing, temporal framing, guilt by association, emotionalisation, context removal and many more, illustrated with many examples. In addition, it becomes apparent where we ourselves apply these techniques — this promotes not only insight but also empathy.

Optionally the book comes with **playing cards**

Also available as an **audiobook**



The interview is not a conversation. It is a stage — and someone else has written the script.

Those who do not know this deliver material. Good quotes that are cut incorrectly. Correct statements that end up in the wrong context.

Honest answers that are framed as confessions.

This book is not a media criticism book. It is a toolkit — for everyone who has a microphone in front of their face and wants to know what they can do about it. 7 chapters. 7 tools: What an interview really is. The 7 most common traps. The three basic principles of sovereignty — anchoring, reframing, setting boundaries. Preparation in one hour. Body and voice. What to do when things go wrong. And what counts after the interview.

For politicians, activists, entrepreneurs, whistleblowers — for everyone who is exposed and wants to understand how the game works. So that they stop playing along — and start shaping it.

In A5. Direct. For preparation, for reference, for follow-up and in difficult situations



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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.

Because those who understand framing see the world more clearly. Listen to the news differently. Conduct conversations with greater confidence. And can no longer so easily have a frame imposed on them that someone else has chosen.

With many exercises and concrete examples from politics, media and everyday life — and the occasional smile.

Framing with style. Because the frame changes everything.



The SRG collects 1.56 billion francs per year — compulsorily, from every household. Those who feel unfairly treated can complain. There is even an authority for this: the ICA, the Independent Complaints Authority for Radio and Television.

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 ICA system meets none of the three fundamental criteria — it is not adequate, 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.

Essential reading for everyone considering a complaint — and for everyone who wants to understand why genuine media oversight in Switzerland is still outstanding.