

Fabian Burkhardt<sup>1</sup>: The Framing of the "Ukraine crisis" in German political talk shows 2013-2014

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The dataset covers data on 30 political talk shows on the German public-service TV channels ARD, ZDF and Phoenix in the period from 10 December 2013 to 30 April 2014. The dataset was compiled by the author with the goal to map the discourse on the so-called "Ukraine crisis" as a discourse network. The initial dataset was transformed into a network dataset with guests, TV shows and discourse frames as "nodes" and relations between guests and shows and guests and their discourse frames as "edges".

The motivation for this data collection effort were claims coming from both Russian and Ukrainian officials that media coverage in the German media on the Maidan protests, the annexation of Crimea as well as the Russian military activities in Donbas was biased. In particular, the aim of the data collection was to find answers to two questions: Were reporting and comments in German political talk shows anti-Russian? Did Ukraine have a voice? For this purpose, the invitation patterns of eight major German political talk shows were scrutinized, and guests were coded according to their foreign policy views.

The dataset can only partly provide answers to the question of media bias since it only covers talk shows on major public TV channels, not the whole coverage in German media. But it alleviates some of the drawbacks associated with debates on media bias as it goes beyond anecdotal evidence and personal selection and perception biases by allowing for a systematic analysis of an important section of the German debate on the "Ukraine crisis".

Talk shows at public-service channels were selected because of the attention they drew among the German public as well as due to the mandate of these public broadcasters to provide qualitative and unbiased coverage. The dataset comprises all talk shows that touched upon the "Ukraine crisis" in the period between December 2013 and April 2014.

The columns of the data set comprise the following information:

**Column A:** names of the public-service TV channels the talk shows were broadcast at: the first channel ARD, the second channel ZDF, and Phoenix.

**Column B:** The unique ID assigned to the individual talk shows that are included in the dataset ranging from 1 to 30.

**Column C:** The name of the talk show. The dataset comprises the eight major talkshows Anne Will; Günther Jauch; Menschen bei Maischberger; Beckmann; Hart aber Fair mit Frank Plasberg; Maybritt Illner; Phoenix Runde and Unter den Linden.

**Column D:** Titles of the talk shows. The choice of wording appears to fit the genre of German talk shows and could be analyzed on their own terms.

**Column E:** Hyperlinks to the websites of the respective talk shows, mostly on the official websites of the TV channels. The web links were last accessed in June 2014. Many of them are defunct at the time of writing this data documentation (February 2021). This is most likely because the TV channels have rearranged their websites without redirecting the user to the new landing pages of the respective talk shows. The web links are nonetheless kept in the dataset because they were used to compile information on the guests of the respective talk shows.

**Column F:** The date when the talk show was broadcast for the first time. The first show in the dataset was aired on 10 December 2013, the last on 30 April 2014.

**Column G:** Average audience rate (in million viewers), or Sehbeteiligung. It was compiled from open internet sources by the author for ARD and ZDF. The figures for all Phoenix talk shows were provided to the author from the TV channel via email. The minimum audience rate was 0.09 million for a Phoenix Runde on 30.04.2014, and the maximum 5,47 million for a Günther Jauch show on 23.03.2014. Values for two ARD shows are missing as no data could be found.

**Column H:** The audience market share (in percent), or Marktanteil. It was compiled from open internet sources by the author for ARD and ZDF. The figures for all Phoenix talk shows were provided to the author from the TV channel via email. Values for two ARD shows are missing as no data could be found.

**Column I:** The names of the talk show guests were compiled from the official website announcements of the respective shows. Five guests attended shows four times, four guests attended shows three times, but most others attended either once or twice.

**Column J:** The professional backgrounds of the talk show guests were compiled from the official website announcements of the respective shows and supplemented from other open internet sources. With almost 40 percent, journalists were the most frequent talk show guests. All other professions such as members of the German Bundestag, members of the European Parliament, former politicians, scholars, think-tankers, diplomats, members of the government or business representatives were represented between four and ten percent of the time.

**Column K:** The political party affiliation of the talk show guests was compiled from the official website announcements of the respective shows and supplemented from other open internet sources. With 44 percent (CDU) and 22 percent (SPD), the parties represented in the ruling government coalition were also most frequently present at the talk shows. Except for the Pirate party, party membership approximately represents the distribution of seats among parties in the Bundestag.

**Column L:** The nationality of the talk show guests was compiled from the official website announcements of the respective shows and supplemented from other open internet sources. Over 70 percent of the guests were German nationals, 14 percent were from Russia, 7 percent from Ukraine, and 5 percent from the United States.

**Column M:** The discourse frames used by the talk show guests were manually coded by the author based on the statements of the guests during the talk show and in the course of the “Ukraine crisis” more broadly according to the coding scheme below. Membership in multiple categories was possible. The coding was iterative moving from inductive (based on close reading and listening of statements) to deductive (based on existing literature on German-Russian relations and the prevalent discursive frames). The coding scheme acknowledges that the Russia (and Ukraine) discourse is more complex than the frequently used dichotomy of Russia understanders/apologists (Russlandversther) and Russia bashers (Russlandkritiker).

Category	Attributes/coding explanation
Entspannungspolitik [appeasement policy]	The dialogue with Russia needs to be continued; one needs to talk with Russia; there is no way around Russia; empathy (one first needs to wrap one’s head around what makes Russia move); trade with Russia needs to continue; one needs patience with Russia; we need to make use of all available diplomatic channels. The category ranges from apologists (Rahr, Krone-Schmalz) to those who sharply criticize Russia, but nonetheless think diplomacy remains the only feasible and necessary instrument (Ischinger).
Eindämmungspolitik [containment policy]	As a rule, sanctions are demanded against Russia; NATO should be strengthened in Central Europe; support for Ukraine should be reinforced.
Russia first	Classic great power politics conducted on the back of Central European states; Russia is considered as a strategic partner; a security and economic architecture from Lisbon to Vladivostok is desired outcome.
Zentraleuropa (Central Europe)	The opposite category to Russia first: support for understanding and support of position and demands of countries in Central and Eastern Europe; support for a swift political, economic and security-wise integration of Ukraine into Western institutional framework.
Russlandexperte	A neutral category that denotes long-term expertise on Russia, often called upon to explain Russia to the broader public.
Westen auch Schuld [the West is also to blame]	Critique of EU, USA, NATO, media reporting; they are also to blame for the crisis. The spectrum is ranging from mild and balanced critique (e.g. raising questions in how far the EU’s Association Agreement was compatible with the Eurasian customs union, e.g. by Nolte) to outright opposition to the EU, USA, NATO and media reporting while whitewashing Russia (e.g. Gysi).

Wirtschaftsnah (close to business)	Business representatives (enterprises, unions and associations, lobby organizations; or persons with roles in business consultancy).
Transatlantiker (transatlantic ties)	An expert on the United States, someone who can explain the US position; supports as a rule strong political, economic and security relations with the United States
Russland (offiziell) (official Russia)	A Russian citizen who represents positions of the Russian state (the Russian ambassador, Russian embassy); Russian state media (Voice of Russia, Ria Novosti, Rossiiskaia Gazeta, Russia Today, Ruptly), state-controlled media (NTV); Russian Academy of Sciences (Below).
Russia (alternativ) (alternative Russia)	A Russian citizen who can explain Russia and its position, but does not represent these official state positions (e.g. journalists of Deutsche Welle Russian).
Ukraine (pro-Maidan)	A Ukrainian citizen who is broadly in support of the Maidan protesters/their demands
Ukraine (pro-Russia)	A Ukrainian citizen who has pro-Russian views
Ukraine (alternativ) (alternative Ukrainian)	A Ukrainian citizen without a clear-cut political position who tries to explain the events in his/her country.

The dataset was used in the publication:

Burkhardt, Fabian: Die Ukraine-Krise in den deutschen Talkshows, in: Ukraine-Analysen Nr. 135, 24.06.2014. Available at: <https://www.laender-analysen.de/ukraine-analysen/135/>.