



DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM, MEDIA
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PORTRAYING COVID-19 VACCINES IN ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

A content analysis of the framing of COVID-19
vaccines in Swedish alternative news media

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Abstract

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Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to gain insights into alternative news media in crisis communication by addressing the news media portrayal of COVID-19 vaccines, inoculation campaigns and the implementation of vaccine mandates by alternative news media outlets in Sweden (*Fria Tider* and *ETC/Dagens ETC*). With an exploratory and comparative approach, the study's overall aim is to investigate how news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) has been portrayed in different Swedish alternative media outlets, and how this compares to traditional mainstream media. The relevance of the chosen research problem revolves around the changed preconditions of alternative media in today's media market and the function of the media as an information disseminator during crises.

Theory: Framing theory, alternative media anti-systemness matrix, issue attention cycle

Method: Quantitative content analysis

Result: The findings confirm that there are differences between the alternative news media outlets, also when compared against mainstream media, albeit the findings being indicative in nature. The differences concern the portrayal of actors with less praise, more criticism, and lower levels of neutrality. Alternative media were found to focus on the severity and threat to people's health, with a greater tendency to define the problem and possibly casting blame, as well as a greater focus on conflicts and alarming content in prominent positions of the news items examined. Additionally, a larger share

of emotion-evoking frames was found in the main text of the news items. Differences between the alternative news media outlets were also found in terms of thematic/episodic framing, focusing on actors on different levels, which could indicate different approaches towards responsibility attribution.

Key Words: Alternative media, Sweden, framing, anti-systemness, issue attention cycle, quantitative content analysis, Fria Tider, Dagens ETC/ETC, SVT, attribution of responsibility, COVID-19, vaccine

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Chapter I: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The COVID-19-pandemic has had lasting and far-reaching effects on the society as a whole. While the pandemic can be assessed through many different angles, it first and foremost constitutes a *public health crisis*. From a communications perspective, a significant of public health crises is described as the pressing need of information during times when information is hard to come by (see e.g., Sellnow, et. al., 2019; Seeger & Sellnow, 2016 and others) and citizens are in dire need of information on how to cope and protect themselves (Sellnow, et. al., 2019), a process in which the media have an important role (see e.g., Boin, 2017). In dealing with the COVID-19-pandemic, the production of effective vaccines with the distribution through national vaccination schemes has been an essential tool as part of the crisis management response to curb the spread of infection. However, parallel with the public health crisis, an information crisis has been unravelling, which the World Health Organization (WHO) and others (2020) have come to define as an *infodemic*. Misinformation and disinformation, and even pure conspiracy theories have been able to flourish and spread in numerous channels.

Given the role played by the media in disseminating information to the public, understanding their news coverage is vital. Although news coverage of the COVID-19-pandemic has been studied from a media perspective (see for example Ghersetti, 2021 and Ghersetti & Odén, 2021 in a Swedish context), crisis reporting varies between media (Boin, 2017), and it is therefore important to understand the differences between various types of news media. An important type of news media to provide critical angles and opinions, as well as giving space to voices not heard elsewhere, is *alternative media*. Alternative media is a notion that stretches from the traditional definitions of the critical traditions concerned with marginalized groups and empowerment of people (notable ideas include examples from Atton, 2002; Fuchs, 2010; Downing, 2001; Rodriguez, 2011), to more modern ideas on immigration-critical, hyper-partisan and counter-media that constitute a type of alternative media (notable ideas here include examples from Heft, et. al., 2020; Holt, et. al., 2019; Noppari, et. al., 2019). In this, Holt (2018) recognizes and summarizes a development where alternative media have come to constitute a challenge rather than anything else.

“Alternative and participatory media are increasingly described as threats to the system, rather than as promising and reinvigorating reformers in a time of waning enthusiasm for democratic engagement.”. (Holt, 2018: 49)

Alternative media might only enjoy a small audience share in Sweden, but can amplify messages through social media (see for example Sandberg & Ihlebæk, 2019), or influence mainstream media through processes of inter-media agenda setting (McCombs, 2014; Vliegenthart & Walgrave, 2008) where alternative media affect, or even dictate, the news coverage by mainstream media. Despite this development, the current knowledge of the nature of news coverage by alternative media in times of crises in Sweden is scarce. Since possible implications for the crisis information flow may arise, it is important to understand what role alternative media play more broadly, with the news coverage during the COVID-19-pandemic offering an opportunity to study this phenomenon from a crisis communication perspective.

This study will thus apply a quantitative content analysis to address and depict news content in the portrayal of a health crisis by alternative media, circling in on a key component of the crisis management response: the COVID-19 vaccines, inoculation campaigns and the implementation of vaccine mandates, with the overall aim to investigate how news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) has been portrayed in Swedish alternative media, as compared to traditional mainstream media. Research questions will seek to describe the nature of the news content, as well as the ways it differs from mainstream media, by outlining the appearance of different actors, including their function and evaluation, as well as the application of different framing theories (Entman, 1993; Lecheler & De Vreese, 2019 and others). While framing is a broad concept within communication research, and it usually is preferable to define and limit the use to certain types of frames, this study will, due to its exploratory nature, instead apply a wide variety of frames of different types based on the work by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) whose set of generic frames are widely used and acknowledged, as well as Dan & Raupp (2018) who reviewed and compiled studies concerned with the framing of health risks.

Two alternative news outlets are addressed, one right-leaning (*Fria Tider*) and one left-leaning (*Dagens ETC/ETC*). These two outlets represent two different types of alternative media (anti-system alternative media and irrelevant alternative media respectively) as Holt's (2018) alternative media anti-systemness matrix is applied, which offers a basis for comparison between alternative media of different types, as well as different political affiliations. To allow for comparisons with mainstream media, the public service broadcaster *SVT* (Swedish Television) will serve as a baseline. For all outlets, online news content is considered, and articles are gathered identifying peaks in the frequency of news reports (two periods following the start of the general vaccination campaign in Sweden, as well as the introduction of so-called COVID-passports or COVID-certificates) with an attention cycle framework applied (McComas & Shanahan, 1999).

This will be an exploratory study with aspects identified a priori, whose findings therefore will be indicative in nature, but nonetheless an important first step and contribution to an emerging field. Before presenting the aim of the study, along with the research questions, the aspects mentioned in the introduction will be further problematized.

1.2. Problematization

The COVID-19-pandemic has, despite its many unexpected turns, displayed a lot of traits significant of public health crises, and for example, *narrative spaces* occurred at a time when information was scarce and people craved it the most (see e.g., Sellnow, et. al., 2019; Seeger & Sellnow, 2016; Westlund & Ghersetti, 2015 on crises, public health crises and information gathering during crises). The three components of a crisis; *threat*, *urgency*, and *uncertainty* (Boin, et. al., 2017) were all fuelled by the novelty of the Coronavirus, the proximity to COVID-19 and the unpredictable nature of the virus. As vaccines were developed, they were rolled out in a pace that surprised the expectations of many. At the same time, the pandemic has been characterized by an “overabundance of information” (WHO, 2020), characteristic of an *infodemic*, so the World Health Organization in a joint statement in collaboration with a number of international organizations (WHO, 2020). According to the WHO and the other organizations behind the statement, this information has included “deliberate attempts to disseminate wrong information to undermine the public health response and advance alternative agendas of groups or individuals” (ibid).

While the role of the news media during crises has been clarified thus far as vital in information dissemination on how to cope with a crisis (see for example Seeger & Sellnow, 2016; Sellnow, et. al., 2019), the COVID-19-pandemic has been politicized (see e.g., Hart, et. al., 2020 for the situation in US media) and the Swedish news media have even been found to, initially, feature some degree of speculative news (Ghersetti & Odén, 2021). Given the important role of the media, politization and speculations are important to acknowledge. However, unlike the more liberal media systems (using the definition as by Hallin & Mancini, 2004), the Swedish media landscape contains few partisan outlets. While it should be pointed out that the neutrality of Swedish media, especially the neutrality of public service media, constitutes a long-standing debate among think tanks and pundits (and sometimes politicians), this features multiple discussions out of scope for this thesis. Instead, the high degree of journalistic professionalization and the strong presence of public service media will be emphasized as significant traits of the Swedish media system (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Weibull & Wadbring, 2020). Few partisan outlets despite, there is, however, also a significant presence of alternative media. While the definition of *alternative media* is broad, this raises questions on how this presence affects the role of

the media in times of crises, and if alternative media, that sometimes lack the restraints of media ethics, play a role in the infodemic following the COVID-19-pandemic. As of today, there is little known about the role of alternative media in public health crises.

Despite alternative media not being the go-to-source for crisis information (people seem to prefer, and even revert to trusted and traditional sources, see for example Westlund & Ghersetti, 2015), alternative media now has a presence in the Swedish media landscape and offer people an attitude-consistent alternative to mainstream media news sources. While the audience of alternative media is significant, both on the political left and the political right (TS/Kantar Sifo, 2022; Newman et. al. 2021), it is still a rather narrow field with a conscious and concentrated audience. However, beside the first-hand consumption of alternative news, phenomena such as intermedia agenda-setting and news dissemination through social media networks contribute to second-hand consumption and therefore, the theoretical chances of alternative media content reaching the general public could have increased as well. The WHO and other important organizations especially highlight technology and social media's role in the infodemic (WHO, 2020). Without getting too deep into the process of news dissemination through social media, it should be acknowledged that findings from experimental research have outlined an environment where social endorsements prevail source cues (Messing & Westwood, 2014). With the source cues missing, the way people select news changes, and social endorsements are used to assess content by users, who are less critical about the content's origin. This spread and visibility might also increase the chances of traditional media picking up topics, issues, events or actors from alternative media, a process which is known as inter-media agenda setting (see e.g., McCombs, 2014; Vliegenthart & Walgrave, 2008). While traditional agenda-setting is concerned with the relationship between news media and their audiences (McCombs, 2014), inter-media agenda setting features the relationship between different media outlets and Vliegenthart and Walgrave (2008) describe this process as "the mechanism creating a common definition of what is news and what is not" (p. 861).

Digitalization, globalization, technological developments, and seemingly unlimited media offerings despite – media consumers seem to prefer a narrow selection of news media – and research suggests that news consumers show limited interest in diverse content (see for example Van Aelst, et. al., 2017). However, the variety of choices in today's media environment has led to a new reality where news consumption is very much a conscious choice (see for example Strömbäck, et. al., 2013), and for motivated news consumers there is a lot to choose from. While the liberal media system (as per Hallin & Mancini's (2004) definition) of the U.S. has come to experience a "proliferation of channels and fragmentation of the audience" (Bennett & Iyengar, 2008: 716), Sweden still enjoys what Djerf-Pierre & Shehata (2017) describe as a "high level of interorganizational homogeneity in journalistic news

values and practices” (p. 752) and new media outlets and a fragmented media market despite, traditional media outlets still enjoy agenda-setting powers in Sweden (Djerf-Pierre & Shehata, 2017). Among the newspapers, there has traditionally been a power balance where elite media influence smaller outlets (such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* setting the standard in the U.S. (McCombs, 2005), and *Dagens Nyheter* having the leading position in Sweden, so Djerf-Pierre & Shehata 2017 who labels the newspaper as the “leading national news outlet and intermedia agenda setter in Sweden” (p. 742)). However, more recent research has found that mainstream media have become more attentive to partisan media (Meraz, 2011). Vargo & Guo (2017) find the media agendas of today to be more reciprocal in what they describe as networked relationships and that “news media of different types set each other’s network agenda to various degrees” (p. 1047). Vargo, et. al. (2018) additionally find fake news to becoming more autonomous, with partisan media becoming increasingly susceptible to the agendas of fake news, and they rather suggest a two-step flow model where fake news affects partisan media, which in turn affects other online media (p. 2043), in line with the findings of Vargo & Guo (2017). It should be noted that US based research might prove skewed in the context of the Swedish media environment, with the large partisan news outlets missing. It should, however, also be put into context of the objectives of this thesis, which is to focus on the growing share of (sometimes ideologically driven) alternative news media in Sweden. This also happens in a media market region that some scholars believe is moving in a liberal direction (see for example Hallin & Mancini, 2004). The very same process through which media in general influence other media can thus be used to explain the influence exerted by alternative media on the agenda of mainstream media (see for example Mathes & Pfetsch, 1991; Nygaard, 2020). Looking at previous research within the Nordic context, the level of intermedia agenda-setting between alternative and mainstream media in Sweden has been determined as low, or even *non-existent* (Nygaard, 2020). However, despite the actual news consumption in Sweden, as well as research on the dominance of certain actors still pointing towards a rather homogenous field, it is important to acknowledge the trends outlined thus far.

Even though the phenomena of liberal media systems, such as major partisan outlets, are missing in the Swedish media landscape, alternative media have acquired new opportunities to grow and spread their messages in the new interconnected media landscape. By addressing the motives behind alternative news media consumption, a better understanding of these developments can be discerned. The motives behind alternative media use are well-studied and a number of scholars have conducted research on alternative media users (see for example Noppari, et. al., 2019; Schwarzenegger, 2022), some of which outlines alternative media consumption as an active choice, with users aware of the type of content they consume (Noppari, et. al., 2019). Additionally, Rauch’s (2015) audience study found alternative media users to be more focused on *content* rather than *form* when categorizing different media. Choosing to

consume alternative media is by no means an exclusion of mainstream news media. Alternative media might not be *comprehensive* enough for this purpose. Holt (2016a) establishes that the (right-wing) alternative media considered in his study generally do not see themselves as complete in the sense of offering a full menu of news, rather as an alternative within specific areas. With a hybridized audience consuming both mainstream, as well as alternative media, the alternative outlets should thus be considered to be *complementing* rather than *replacing* mainstream news media. This is substantiated by Andersen et. al. (2021) who conclude that alternative news consumption complements traditional media, based on findings from their Swedish panel survey. This might be contrary to what alternative news media consumers would like to emphasize, as Rauch (2007) found the actual consumption of mainstream media to be more extensive than reported by activists themselves, in a study on activists and media use in the US, which the author interprets “as a form of symbolic resistance, whose value lies in the idea of rejecting mainstream media, as opposed to the actual practice of not using them” (Rauch, 2007: 1007).

Research in Sweden has listed political interest as a main driver of news consumption (Strömbäck et. al., 2013), and German research has found this to be true also in the case of right-wing alternative media consumption (Schulze, 2020). Another key motivator for the additional intake of alternative media found in research is *trust*, or rather the lack of it. Lack of trust in the media can be viewed in the light of journalistic integrity, with scepticism tied to a notion of journalists relinquishing ideals of objectivity and standards (see for example Kohring & Matthes, 2007; Tsfati, 2010). Low levels of trust have also been found to be associated with the use of *non-mainstream* news sources (Fletcher & Park, 2017). Sweden was not featured in the cross-national survey data included in the study, but other countries in the Nordics with similar media systems included in the selection showed a strong association. It should be noted that the authors apply an adaptation of the concept of *mainstream* and *non-mainstream* media by Tsfati & Cappella (2003) who originally regarded television and radio news, as well as daily newspapers as mainstream media, with political talk radio and online content regarded as non-mainstream media. Fletcher & Park (2017) do, however, advise to be careful regarding the causality between trust (or lack thereof) and sources. When considering research with a clearer focus on alternative media, Andersen, et. al.’s (2021) survey study establishes a “reinforcing relationship with media trust over time, as decreasing trust in mainstream media is related to increasing alternative news orientation, and vice versa” (p. 14), but the authors also conclude that causality cannot be proved based on the findings, despite the indicators available. In a report by Newman et. al. (2018), consumers of right-wing alternative news sites are, however, found to report lower levels of trust than others and Swedish research has also established that the levels of trust in Swedish media generally are lower within groups who clearly identify on the political right (Andersson, U., 2019).

All in all, it is important to better understand the nature of alternative media, and how it differs from mainstream media during public health crises. It is also important to take on a comparative approach and look into how different types of alternative media, with different political affiliations, handle crisis journalism. The COVID-19-pandemic has, in certain aspects, been heavily politicized and therefore the pandemic will be addressed in this thesis, circling in on the COVID-19 vaccine as a remedy to end the pandemic. One of the reasons behind focusing on the vaccination effort is the politicized nature of the measure. When considering the initial pandemic period, the public health measures in Sweden did after all cause minor political debate (see Johansson & Vigsø, 2021), whereas the many turns around vaccination and the measures that came along have been publicly discussed throughout. Despite the opportunities that come with alternative media in terms of providing critical perspectives and voicing opinions not heard elsewhere, alternative media also have the ability to cast doubt on facts and spread false information. This thesis will scrutinize the role of alternative media by addressing the content of them, enabling for a more comprehensive understanding of the portrayal of COVID-19 vaccines, offering insights important for the understanding of alternative media's role in crisis communication more broadly, and communication on public health measures more specifically.

1.3. Aim & Research Questions

This paper will address and depict news content in the portrayal of a health crisis by alternative media, as well as the ways through which it might differ from traditional mainstream media, problematized on the basis of the function of the media as a vital tool for information dissemination during a crisis. The portrayal will be examined through the appearance of different actors, including their function and evaluation, as well as the application of different framing theories (Entman, 1993; Lecheler & De Vreese, 2019 and others). Sparked by the immense polarization around the COVID-19 vaccines, inoculation campaigns and the implementation of vaccine mandates, the aim will be to capture descriptive features of alternative news media portrayal of the vaccination efforts and the related measures, and can be summarized as follows.

The overall aim will be to investigate how news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) has been portrayed in Swedish alternative media, as compared to traditional mainstream media.

The following research questions will be considered.

- **RQ1:** How has news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) been portrayed in Swedish alternative news media?

This first research question seeks to establish and outline the empirical foundation, enabling for conclusions on *the nature of the news media portrayal* to be drawn. Addressing this question requires a generic theoretical framework with wide applicability. Answering the overall research question will include the consideration of the following sub-questions as well.

- In what ways does the portrayal of news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) differ between alternative media with *different levels of alternativeness*?
- In what ways does the portrayal of news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) differ between alternative media of *different political affiliations*?

Alternative media possess different qualities, depending on the classification applicable to their ‘*alternativeness*’. Based on a selection of news outlets relevant for this study, conclusions will be sought regarding implications of the mere *type* of alternative medium. The study will also address possible differences between alternative media with different *political affiliations*.

- **RQ2:** In what ways does the portrayal of news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) by alternative media differ from the portrayals by mainstream media?

The second research question will seek to address the content of alternative news media more broadly, by putting it into context and comparing the findings of the first research question with aspects from empirical observations of traditional mainstream news media, determined by factors identified a priori. Answering the overall research question will include the consideration of the following sub-questions as well.

- What are the differences and similarities between the portrayal of news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) in alternative and mainstream media respectively?
- How is responsibility of events and developments attributed in the news content of alternative and mainstream media respectively?

After a broader analysis of differences and similarities, special focus will be given to the attribution of responsibility. With previous studies arguing for a rally-around-the-flag effect in Sweden during the initial part of the pandemic, one would normally expect news coverage to be less critical towards incumbents. Therefore, the study will especially address the aspect of attribution of responsibility, given the nature of alternative news media and their various degrees of *anti-system* qualities. As previous research has linked right-leaning political affiliations with lower degrees of trust in the news media, this study will specifically address political affiliation and alternative media type when assessing the content of alternative news media, as well as when drawing conclusions on the differences and similarities towards mainstream media.

1.4. Disposition

The thesis is made up of several general sections: a) a background chapter tapping into the COVID-19-pandemic and the mere crisis definition, and the role of news media in crises in general, as well as the COVID-19-pandemic; b) a research overview of studies concerned with news media in public health crises and media portrayals of vaccine coverage; c) a theory chapter outlining the concept of *alternative media*, the Swedish media market, and the role of alternative media in crisis communication, as well as the theories applied throughout this study; d) a methods section outlining the research design and the content analysis in full, followed by a coding scheme, as well as limitations and considerations; e) a findings section outlining and presenting the results as they are; f) a discussion section where conclusions are drawn regarding the meaning of the findings, as well as how they can contribute to answering the research questions; g) a final discussion tying together all aspects of the thesis. Throughout the text, several abbreviations are used, mainly covering the news outlets *Fria Tider* (FrT), *Dagens ETC/ETC* (ETC) and *Swedish Television* (SVT), but also other organizations. These are clarified upon their first appearance in the text. All translations provided in the text are the author's own.

Chapter II: Background

2.1. COVID-19 as a Public Health Crisis

In December 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) picked up early signals regarding cases of viral pneumonia in Wuhan, China (WHO, 2022a). A couple of months later, on 11 March 2020, the WHO announced that the spread of the disease *COVID-19* caused by a novel Coronavirus had reached the status of a pandemic (WHO, 2022a). The *COVID-19-pandemic* has since constituted a global health crisis, which is still ongoing at the time of writing. On 27 May 2022, well over 6 million deaths had been reported world-wide (WHO, 2022b). The first case in Sweden was confirmed on 31 January 2020, as a traveller returning from China tested positive (PHA, 2020a), and the pandemic has since then caused over 18 000 deaths only in Sweden (WHO, 2022b).

Labelling the COVID-19-pandemic a *crisis* is hardly controversial, but for the sake of scientific accuracy, the term will be addressed in more detail. When defining crisis, crisis communication scholars Boin, et. al. (2017) focus on the three components of *threat*, *urgency*, and *uncertainty*.

“In our definition of crisis, a social system – a community, an organization, a policy sector, a country, or an entire region – experiences an urgent threat to its basic structures or fundamental values, which harbours many “unknowns” and appears to require a far-reaching response.” (Boin, et. al., 2017:5)

In the case of COVID-19, the disease clearly poses a *threat* against public health, but the threat does not just come from the disease itself. Restrictions and other measures to protect people all have consequences, such as implications for personal liberties or the economy, just to highlight a few aspects. When assessing the *urgency*, it is not just a matter of time and immediateness, so Boin, et. al. (2017), but also a matter of *proximity* to the problem. In the case of COVID-19 this aspect is of course fuelled by the fact that the disease spread globally. The final aspect of *uncertainty* has been driven throughout the pandemic by the novelty of the Coronavirus and the unpredictable nature of the disease COVID-19.

2.1.1. A National Response to a Global Crisis

The Swedish response to the COVID-19-pandemic has been controversial at times, especially initially when strategies and implementations of measures deviated from advisories by international experts and health organizations. Occasionally referred to as *the Swedish experiment* (Esaiasson et. al., 2021), the choice to keep the society open with modest restrictions attracted attention from all around the world (Pierre, 2020). Despite the exceptional approach there was little political debate to be found initially,

and increased support for government and authorities followed through a so-called '*rally-around-the-flag effect*' (Johansson & Vigsø, 2021). One prerequisite for this effect to occur is both extensive, as well as uncritical media reports (Van Aelst, 2022) and in early assessments of the media coverage, Ghersetti (2021) found the reporting in the Swedish media to be in line with the government and the authorities, allowing less space for critical voices. In their assessment of the pandemic, Johansson & Vigsø (2021) highlight the autonomous nature of the Swedish agencies relieved from government control, and the multiple levels of governance – with regions organizing health care, and municipalities in charge of elderly care – as important factors for the outcome, and the high level of trust among Swedish citizens for responsible authorities is emphasized.

2.1.2. Vaccinations – Driving the Response Towards COVID-19

Along with the development of vaccines, vaccination became the most important tool to combat the pandemic from a Swedish perspective early on. The Minister for Health and Social Affairs, Lena Hallengren even described this as “our best chance of being able to revert to more normal circumstances [vår bästa möjlighet att kunna återgå till mer normala förhållanden]” (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 2020) in August 2020, as the ambition to purchase the new vaccine in development from Astra Zeneca was announced. Put into context, the inoculation campaign will be considered a *response* to the COVID-19-pandemic, meaning here that all matters related to the pandemic should be viewed as crucial components in a chain of events. To better capture the course of events throughout, a timeline covering the vaccination efforts based on (mainstream) media reports is outlined in *figure 2:1*.

Figure 2:1. Timeline – COVID-19 Vaccines in Sweden

2020

A Way Out of the Pandemic

Vaccination was introduced early on as a possible solution to the new emerging health crisis, and the Director General of the WHO Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus made an announcement in February 2020 implying that a vaccine could be ready in 18 months (Boseley, 2020).

The Development of Vaccines

Positive news is announced throughout 2020 in terms of progress on the development of new vaccines, and especially the previously rather unknown concept of *mRNA vaccines* receives widespread attention, given its speedy development with trials starting already in spring 2020 (Lundin, 2020; Rasper, 2020).

Coordinated Purchases

The European Commission make joint agreements with several vaccine manufacturers during autumn 2020, coordinating purchases of vaccines between the European Union member states (Augustsson & Wadendal, 2020). These include AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, as well as Pfizer-BioNTech (Olsson/TT, 2020) and later also Moderna (Svahn, 2020).

2021

Approval of Vaccines & First Deliveries

During the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021, several vaccines are approved for use. On 27 December 2020 the very first dose is administered in Sweden (PHA, 2020b), and within the first two months of 2021, three vaccines are approved for use in Sweden; AstraZeneca, Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna (Holmgren, et. al., 2021).

The Swedish National Vaccination Plan

Following the advice of the Public Health Agency, the Swedish National Vaccination Plan consisted of four phases, which determined the order of priority to receive vaccine, starting with elderly and health care workers, people with underlying health conditions, and people with different vulnerabilities, moving downwards age-wise for each phase (PHA, 2022). Additional aspects, such as socio-economic factors, were also to be regarded in the vaccination plan (ibid).

National Vaccination Campaign

A national communication campaign was conducted in conjunction with the final two phases of the vaccination plan, with the overall theme "Protect yourself and others [Skydda dig själv och andra]" (PHA, 2021a).

Vaccine Passports for Travelling

During spring 2021, a common COVID-19 certificate is agreed upon within the European Union, initially discussed in the context of enabling for and simplifying travelling within the EU (Dokk/ TT, 2021). The idea behind a certificate is to validate the status of a person, as either vaccinated against, tested for or recovered from COVID-19.

Vaccine Passports in Society & Mandates

In the summer of 2021, there are discussions in several EU countries to introduce these certificates as a requirement to enter culture venues, restaurants, and similar places (Ekblom, 2021), and by late summer this measure is also discussed in Sweden (Westesson, 2021). By 1 December 2021, COVID certificates are introduced in Sweden as a requirement to gain access to certain types of large gatherings, where social distancing to other parties and other similar health measures cannot be upheld (PHA, 2021b). The restrictions are later removed on 9 February 2022 (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 2022).

Chapter III: Previous Research

3.1. News Media in Crisis Communication

As previously outlined when classifying the COVID-19-pandemic as a crisis, *uncertainty* is a major driver fuelling the crisis, and in this, news media become a vital actor. The media have the ability to satisfy the information need of the general public and affected citizens, as well as bridging the information gaps that occur in times of crises. Seeger & Sellnow (2016) address this information gap with the notion of a *narrative space*, in which existing beliefs among people are not enough to explain what is happening during a crisis. Media reports (among others) are suggested as a component with the possibility to fill these spaces and the authors state that these narrative spaces are especially likely to occur during a *health crisis* such as a pandemic, making narratives especially difficult to manage in this type of events.

There is a common understanding that people turn to the media for information and orientation during crises (see for example Sellnow, et. al., 2019; Westlund & Ghersetti, 2015), and the media are thus to be considered as important tools for organizations and institutions to reach the public with important information. It is impossible to outline the role of the media without shortly touching upon the needs of the public. Odén, et. al. (2016) summarize these needs along three basic capabilities: *survival capabilities* concerning the information need, *democratic capabilities* allowing for the evaluation of responsibility, and finally *ontological capabilities* relating to community and public support. When focusing on the survival capabilities, the personal motivation to turn to news media during a crisis varies, and Westlund & Ghersetti (2015) point towards the increased information need, which also has implications for what types of media are being consumed. Media offering *real-time reporting* and *live-broadcasting* – such as television, radio, and online media – seem preferred for this purpose (ibid). However, this fact also varies depending on what type of information is sought after, and one could differentiate between the need for either *immediate news* or *in-depth long-term information* (Westlund & Ghersetti, 2015; Van Aelst, 2022). This need, like previously implied, changes over time along with a changing nature of the crisis (Ghersetti & Odén, 2021), but may also vary depending on the crisis type (Westlund & Ghersetti, 2015).

In existing literature, there is a general focus on the preference for traditional media in people's information-seeking during crises (see for example Odén, et. al., 2016), a preference that seems to dominate despite previous news habits, including generational traits among news consumers, as gaps in media consumption between generations are reduced in times of crises (Westlund & Ghersetti, 2015). The authors' findings thus contain a *broadened* media use during crises, rather than a replacement of media types.

3.2. News Media in Public Health Crises

Previous pandemics and outbreaks of infectious diseases have contributed to the status quo of research within a number of research fields, as this type of events tend to interest scholars of multiple disciplines. When addressing the news media *portrayals* of public health crises, it is valuable to look at previous pandemics to get a better understanding of the nature of the news media and the studies outlined in this section are the result of casting a wide net. Highly relevant for the purpose of this thesis is to consider the quantitative analysis of Swedish media during the swine flu (H1N1) of 2009 by Ghersetti & Odén (2010). Through a quantitative content analysis, the nature of the content, the tone of the content, as well as actors represented were studied. The results included an alarmist tone, and while the authors found that the media provided sufficient information about the pandemic, they did not engage in critical examination of societal actors. Swedish authorities were the most frequent group of actors in the studied content and affected patients and their relatives were the most frequent group of actors portrayed (ibid).

A common denominator when approaching the portrayal of public health crises is the wide use of *framing theories* (see for example Entman, 1993; Chong & Druckman, 2007a; Lecheler & De Vreese, 2019 on conceptual definitions) as a theoretical foundation in previous research. The concept of framing, and the way that selection and salience (see Entman, 1993) influence communicative situations, will be addressed more in detail in the subsequent theory chapter, in conjunction with how it can contribute to this study.

When assessing studies applying framing theories it becomes clear that not only the crisis type can have implications for the framing, but previous studies have also addressed how framing is changing throughout crises. In times of crises, some scholars point towards the fact that the media might amplify the risk of outbreaks, affecting both knowledge and risk perception, as concluded by Sell, et. al. (2018) who studied the occurrence of risk-related messages in the US media, which were found to vary over time along with changes in conjunction with the Zika virus outbreak. Drawing upon framing theory and the so-called issue attention cycle, Shih, et. al. (2008) looked into the framing of a variety of health

epidemics in printed news media in the US. With an assembled set of frames based on different aspects of previous research, the authors based their methodology on the prominence of frames during different phases of the media reports, establishing that there are framing differences between the different diseases, such as the conflict frame appearing more frequently in reports about the mad cow disease, which had the nature of a political issue, as well as the reassurance frame appearing more frequently due to what the authors acknowledge as a 'proximity news value' (ibid). This is an interesting aspect, considering the political nature of the COVID-19-pandemic outlined earlier. Concerning news attention, Shih, et. al. (2008) found that the media coverage followed the number of cases, as well as government actions in a way the authors described as 'event based'. Fuelling the news coverage were new cases, new policies, and new scientific discoveries.

Looking further into how news reports vary over time, Jung Oh, et. al.'s (2012) comparative content analysis of both US and South Korean news coverage of the swine flu (H1N1) pandemic in 2009 addresses attention cycles, sources, and news frames. The authors used the set of frames from Shih, et. al.'s (2008) study, albeit with some modifications. The authors found that the attention cycles differed between the two countries in terms of "different patterns of waxing and waning news attention" (p. 226), using terminology by McComas & Shanahan (1999) (which also is further scrutinized in the coming theoretical chapter), relating to actual significant events. With an additional waxing phase in Korean media, it is suggested that either the Korean news media is more attentive to events, or the US media is neglective to announcements from the authorities (Jung Oh, et. al., 2012). While news coverage only will continue as long as events keep occurring, and other issues are not competing too much, the authors found differences between the use of news frames and sources between the two countries. Luisi, et. al. (2018), who conducted a content analysis of US newspapers in conjunction with the Ebola epidemic, discussed the prevalence of action frames against the backdrop of the seemingly low infection and death rates in the US, contradicting earlier conclusions by Jung Oh, et. al. (2012) that the two would be connected somehow. While it should be emphasized that neither the US', nor South Korea's media systems can be compared with Sweden's, these findings are interesting in the way that the framing changes during different phases of the attention cycle.

The focus on *negativity* and *alarmism* has been addressed by many scholars. Several studies focus on the occurrence of alarming news as a possible contributor to the crisis (see for example Yang & Lee, 2020; Vasterman & Ruigrok; 2013; Rossmann, et. al., 2018; Carretón Ballester & López Villafranca, 2016), albeit the results are far from conclusive. Vasterman & Ruigrok's (2013) content analysis in the Netherlands during the 2009 outbreak of swine flu (H1N1), containing both qualitative and quantitative approaches, established a presence of overall high levels of alarming content. Vasterman & Ruigrok

(2013), however, concluded that the level of alarmism was not increased by the media, it rather proved to be original sources and experts that tended to be more alarmist.

One way to study the impact of institutionalized factors of the media, such as journalistic norms and the practices and the way they are affecting media content, is to view statements or press releases and compare them against the final news product. This allows for conclusions on how (or if) the content has changed, which can be further analysed (such as the studies by Rossman, et. al., 2018; Lee & Basnyat, 2013; Kott & Limaye, 2016; Lee, 2014). Rossmann, et. al. (2018) conducted a quantitative content analysis in ten European countries (Sweden included) and found evidence of the press focusing on alarming, emotional and personal content to a larger degree than the original press releases. The findings by Yang & Lee (2020) did display a “double risk-reporting pattern” (p. 395) in which the media emphasise risk-alarming frames initially, after which they apply risk-mitigating frames during the following phase, by focusing on the causes of the risk. While the impact of the media was recognized, it did not contribute to alarmism. Lee & Basnyat’s (2013) content analysis of Singapore media clearly revealed that changes of media frames occurred when information from press releases were to be transformed into news, suggesting that the news stories are being framed to provide more than factual content. Also Kott & Limaye (2016) studied how US broadcast media reported on the Ebola outbreak and to what degree the media used similar framing to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and found that both framing and authoritative voice changed in the process and varied over time.

3.3. News Media Portrayals of Vaccines

Vaccines have in many ways been discussed and regarded as a remedy to combat the COVID-19-pandemic (as outlined in *figure 2:1*). With this in mind, and given the scope of the thesis, it is important to consider previous research on how vaccines are portrayed in the media. While there still is a void concerning studies explicitly focused on the portrayal of COVID-19-vaccinations, the scope of the research overview will be extended to other diseases.

As parallels already have been drawn to previous pandemics affecting Sweden on a broad scale, the first example that will be considered is the H1N1 2009 pandemic, commonly known as the swine flu. Sweden took an offensive approach and quickly vaccinated a large part of the population, something that proved problematic as cases of narcolepsy started to appear as a side effect, and from which Sweden accounted for more than half of the reported cases in Europe (Scott & Enander, 2017). Scott & Enander (2017) addressed the framing of actors (victims and authorities) in a content analysis of printed Swedish news media in the aftermath of the vaccination campaign during the time period 2010-2013, and concluded

that, overall, victims were portrayed as vulnerable and the authorities as incompetent, and that there was a divide between the two actors.

Looking into a previous content analysis of US media during the H1N1 outbreak, Chang (2010) addressed the use of frames. By adopting the theoretical framework of ‘problem frames’ (see Altheide, 1997), Chang (2010) captured 22 frames in total used by opponents and advocates during three time periods. More specifically, the frames in favour of vaccination were focused on illness and suffering for vulnerable family members, and frames opposed to vaccination focused on the uncertainty of the new product and potential dangers (ibid). Chang (2010) drew parallels between the occurrence of problem frames and the production of fear (as argued by Altheide, 1997), and noted that the period with the highest amount of problem frames was during the initial shortage of vaccines, before becoming widely available, a time with the largest uncertainties in relation to availability and safety. According to Chang (2010) there was a dominance in the media of pro-vaccination frames, and a larger consistency in the messages from vaccine promoters.

Besides addressing vaccination efforts during previous pandemics, continuous campaigns can also be considered. Ashwell & Murray (2020) conducted a content analysis of Australian and New Zealand newspapers in 2016–2017, a time when legislative changes were being discussed. The findings included medical sources as the most frequent in both countries, and in Australia also political sources, with prevention and protection of the vaccines as the most frequent argument. To explain the fact that most news articles in the study were framed in a positive way, Ashwell & Murray (2020) applied and discussed the so-called emphasis framing theory, using the definition as by Koch & Peter (2017) of a theory focused on the emphasis or suppression of certain parts of a matter, in relation to equivalence framing theory more concerned with the different ways that information is presented on the same matter (Koch & Peter, 2017; Cacciatore, et. al., 2016). Koch & Peter’s (2017) experimental work established that “people who frame all of their statements negatively are judged more trustworthy than those who apply positive framing” (p. 859), given that people associate negativity with news and positivity with persuasion. This would, in theory, explain why public opinion and vaccination rates, despite the positive media portrayal, were not following this trend and why positive vaccine coverage may produce resistance instead (see discussion by Ashwell & Murray, 2020: 5632). Ashwell & Murray (2020) do, however, call for further research on this matter, which they themselves describe as more of an “assumption of the research” (p. 5632).

3.4. News Media and COVID-19

3.4.1. The Role of News Media during the COVID-19-Pandemic

Despite the recency of events, some studies have already addressed the role of the media in the context of the COVID-19-pandemic. The shifting consumption of news media in Sweden during the pandemic can best be summarized as a general return to established traditional actors, in line with expectations from previous research (see for example Westlund & Ghersetti, 2015 as discussed previously). Based on numbers from a dedicated survey conducted during the pandemic by the *SOM Institute* at the University of Gothenburg, Andersson (2020) concludes that consumption of news through social media declined, while the public broadcasters, as well as one of the commercial broadcasters' online news websites increased. The author further describes an increased consumption of web-based material among the older groups of the population, as well as a decrease of digital news media (most notably news distributed through social media) (Andersson, 2020).

When considering the motives of the audience, Van Aelst, et. al. (2021) conducted a comparative panel study in which news consumption changed, with an increase in the consumption of televised news, as well as social media and the internet as sources for information. The authors suggest that televised press briefings might have drawn audiences to television, while people then might have turned to the internet to evaluate the crisis and find more information on how to deal with it, relating back to the need for both immediate, as well as more long-term information (Westlund & Ghersetti, 2015; Van Aelst, et. al., 2021) outlined in the previous sections. The rise in news consumption was most significant for people who already displayed high trust in legacy media news, as well as people most concerned about the disease leaving *anxiety* and *concern* as motivators to seek out news (Van Aelst, et. al., 2021). Other interesting findings from this study include initial media use as a moderating factor, as well as the fact that the crisis increases news media use most among low-level consumers, suggesting that “a crisis situation might lower the news gap between news avoiders and news junkies” (ibid: 1223).

When addressing *the role* of the news media in the context of the COVID-19-pandemic, research has found that Swedish news media largely reported on information originating from the authorities, in line with their interpretations (see Ghersetti, 2021). This is perhaps not surprising when considering the two-folded role of the media to *spread important information* on how to cope during a crisis, while also *scrutinizing governance and administration* (Ghersetti & Odén, 2021), a task that seemingly proved challenging for the Swedish media to balance. Questions posed by journalists at the then daily press briefings held by the Swedish Public Health Agency during 2020, were studied by Dahlgren (2021a) who concluded that ultimately foreign media participating in the press briefings contributed with a

critical voice. Additionally, the number of critical questions remained stable over time according to Dahlgren (2021a), which might not be what one would expect considering that the information needs change over time. While it should be noted that there was an absence of political opposition and debate during the initial stages of the pandemic (Johansson & Vigsø, 2021), this mainly positions the media in the role of a *transmitter of government information*. This phenomenon could also be described in terms of *consensus pressure*, applying a terminology by Thorbjørnsrud & Figenschou (2018), who used the term in their interview study of news editors following the Oslo terror attacks in 2011, where they found that “editors representing the main national media express a stronger responsibility as guardians of the master narrative than their colleagues in the regional and niched media, who also emphasize the critical watchdog role” (p. 345). While this was not entirely true in Dahlgren’s (2021a) content analysis (although comparisons should be viewed against the backdrop of a different methodology), where the local and specialized media came across as more critical than other domestic media, it raises the question whether alternative media could be taking on a more critical role by simply evading this consensus pressure. Dahlgren (2021a) did not find evidence of so-called *niched media* being more critical, but it is an aspect worth pursuing in this study. And while one should not forget the limited availability of information during the initial stages of the pandemic, it is important to recognize the media rituals that occur during crises.

3.4.2. COVID-19 in Mainstream News Media

Several scholars have conducted content analyses on Swedish news media content in conjunction with the COVID-19-pandemic already. Ghersetti & Odén’s (2021) study combine a content analysis with surveyed material on public opinion, revealing an exceptional amount of news regarding COVID-19 that can be observed during what the authors divide into two phases: the *initial* phase and the *intensive* phase, both during late winter and spring 2020. Ghersetti & Odén (2021) found an overall alarming tone, corresponding to a large degree with the previous swine flu (H1N1) pandemic in 2009 and the Ebola pandemic in 2014. A large amount of news was produced, but the initial lack of knowledge contributed to more speculative news reports (ibid).

In terms of actors in the news content, Ghersetti & Odén (2021) establish that journalists, businessmen, followed by doctors and medical experts, and three leading authorities are most frequently portrayed actors, with an overall positive portrayal of health care workers, and a neutral to negative portrayal (more of the latter in opinionated articles) of the government. By applying a method of computerized content analysis of Swedish media during the first year of the pandemic, Dahlgren (2021b) provides a report which identifies politicians, athletes and Eastern European dictators and dissidents as prominent actors, with Donald Trump, the previous US-American President, most frequently mentioned.

In research on the portrayal of news media, framing theories are commonly used, like emphasized in previous sections. Ghersetti & Odén's (2021) content analysis features the evaluation of frames present in the news content, concentrated on the actions by politicians and government (both positive and negative portrayals), negative financial consequences, as well as social limitations from shutdowns. Other notable studies addressing framing can be found outside Sweden, such as in the US (see for example Hubner, 2021; Hart, et. al., 2020).

Despite similarities in discoveries on frames, there are some differences between the Swedish and the US research findings in terms of dominating actors. Hubner (2021) found that citizens, interest group individuals, politicians, and academics were dominating as quoted sources for articles. The fact that interest group individuals and political officials were occurring more often in quotes than academics and public health officials is discussed by the author as something different from previous outbreaks, as well as disconcerting, given Hart, et. al.'s (2020) findings that the number of politicians quoted in news stories during the initial phases of the pandemic was considerable. Hubner (2021) even suggests that relying on politicians over public health experts can be seen as a sign of politicization by the news media. The findings in Swedish research do not suggest the same pattern. In fact, Ghersetti & Odén (2021) found doctors, medical experts, and authorities to be highly present (after journalists and businessmen, it should be noted, which might suggest a different focus on the economic consequences instead), and Johansson & Vigsø (2021) highlight a lack of political debate, suggesting an absence of political actors. The decision by US media to focus on news stories involving individual consequences rather than the public health response (although it should also be emphasized that the level of verified information was scarce initially), is suggested by Hubner (2021) to possibly "have grounded COVID-19 as a threat to one's way of life rather than a serious threat to one's health" (p. 118).

Multiple studies have sought to identify news frames related to COVID-19 outside Sweden and the US (some examples are Poirier, et. al., 2020; Wallace, et. al.; 2021, Cho & Wang, 2021; Gui, 2021; Wang & Mao, 2021; Ogbodo, et. al., 2020). There is little research done on a global scale, adopting a comparative approach, which is also not easy, considering that countries have different systems, including factors such as politics, health care, legislation, media, journalism, to name a few. An exception can be found in Cho & Wang (2021) who conducted a content analysis of Chinese and Korean newspapers by applying a most-different system design, especially scrutinizing attribution of responsibility. Also, Ogbodo, et. al.'s (2020) content analysis pose an exception as they investigate global media outlets to make conclusions on a cross-national level. The study by Ogbodo, et. al. (2020) establishes that a human-interest frame, as well as a fear/scaremongering frame are the two most

common cross-nationally, also establishing that the news coverage can be labelled *alarmist* while “sensationalising the stories that further create fear and panic among the public” (p. 266), pointing towards a reinforced connection between the media’s portrayal of the crisis and people’s perception of the pandemic.

There seems to be a clear consensus of the overall politicization of the COVID-19-pandemic in research. Hart, et. al. (2020) for example studied politicization of the COVID-19 coverage in the news media during the early pandemic phase in the US and conclude that in comparison to previous research, news coverage during the first three months “were at least as polarized and politicized as recent news coverage of global climate change, if not more so” (p. 692). In the previous section, a possible explanation for this politicization was mentioned in passing; a reliance on politicians in news content over public health experts, as suggested by Hubner (2021). Even though Hubner’s (2021) results originate in the US, other aspects can be found also in a Swedish context, like Ghersetti & Odén (2021) concluding that a lack of knowledge initially coincided with speculative news. This initial phase might thus have had large implications for the way that the media content was perceived, for the very same reason argued by Entman (1991), as well as Cho & Wang (2021); the initial news coverage sets the tone of the framing process of a new issue.

More specifically given ideology, research on COVID-19 has come to attribute conservatism with lower perceived vulnerability and overall lower knowledge about the disease (see for example the online study by Calvillo, et. al., 2020). Calvillo, et. al.’s (2020) find this puzzling considering the previously established notion that conservatives normally are more sensitive to threats than liberals, even though COVID-19 and climate change seem to pose exceptions. Additionally, Chung & Jones-Hang (2021) conducted a survey analysis which found respondents consuming conservative media and press briefings with the then President Trump to be less likely to perceive COVID-19 as a serious threat, and less likely to find protective health measures viably effective, with lower intentions to act by adopting these measures. Although these findings originate in the US, they might, however, be of value to consider in the light of the consumption of alternative news media as a conscious choice, as well as the *liberalization* of some of the European media markets (see Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Studies conducted in Sweden have addressed opinion formation and news use during the COVID-19-pandemic, and Shehata et. al. (2022) for example focused on *sociotropic* belief formation in a survey study, concluding that people with right-wing beliefs and a high news consumption were more pessimistic about the Coronavirus. While the concept of pessimism might be difficult to grasp, we know from previous research that trust has an important role to play in the motivation behind news media

choice (see e.g., Noppari, et. al.'s (2019) definition of politicised mistrust). The large political consensus that was so significant of the Swedish response initially, in the absence of a political debate (Johansson & Vigsø, 2021) should, however, also be put into this context. The choice by the government to pass the baton to the Public Health Agency (see SOU 2022:10, Vol. 1, 2022) might have caused a lesser politization of the matter in Sweden (despite the limited ability to compare between the two studies, consider for example the difference between Hubner's (2021) findings pointing to an overrepresentation of politicians in news material initially in the US, with the more balanced findings pointing towards a somewhat reversed situation in Sweden, where Ghersetti & Odén (2021) present a smaller share of political representatives present in the news media content). While a stricter public health approach aimed at keeping infection rates down generally was attributed to progressive and liberal political powers in the US (considering e.g., Calvillo, et. al.'s (2020) and Chung & Jones-Hang's (2021) findings presented earlier), the first signs of criticism towards the lax approach in Sweden came from the centre-right and far-right opposition parties (Stenberg, 2020). This changed as information regarding protective measures was channelled into vaccination campaigns, and in this, two approaches can be discerned; one towards public health measures, and another concerning the vaccines, where Sweden, in contrast to the protective measures, has proved quite strict in the periodical implementation of so-called vaccination passports (see timeline in *figure 2:1* for details). Therefore, it is perhaps wise to acknowledge this difference and treat earlier findings with caution despite their relevance.

3.4.3. COVID-19 in Alternative News Media

A minor selection of research on *alternative media* and the *portrayal* of COVID-19 has been conducted. Rooke (2021) addressed alternative far-right media in a content analysis, by applying framing theory and factors of risk amplification on video material, concluding that alternative media work with templates different from the ones of other media. Dahlgren's (2021b) previously mentioned study substantiates this through a correspondence analysis measuring word use, which clearly identifies certain *clusters* that can be attributed to the *type* of news media. Addressing both mainstream and alternative media with a comparative approach, a recent quantitative content analysis by Melek & İşeri (2022) scrutinizes Turkish media by applying a theory of populist frames. The study concludes that populist frames are more frequent in pro-government media, and less so in alternative and opposing media, with alternative media providing a balanced reporting, which concerning the reporting on COVID-19 seems to follow political ideology, no different from previous accounts of media fragmentation (ibid).

Chapter IV: Theory

4.1. The Concept of Alternative Media

The research field of *alternative media* is comparably narrow, according to Fuchs (2010), as well as Atton (2002) who recognizes that “dominant theoretical traditions of media research” (p. 7) have not given much attention to alternative media. The initial task of defining alternative media thus has to pass through an array of definitions from previous studies and academic traditions, at first mainly guided through critical studies with a broad take on alternative media and its role in opposing the dominant discourse of the powerful mass (*bourgeoise*) media, to the more narrowly defined notions of hyper-partisan media with political agendas, mainly concerned with opposition to immigration and established media.

The historical focus on social justice in conjunction with the concept of alternative media has largely resonated with issues brought from the political left, such as the inclusion of marginalized groups emphasized both in media coverage as well as access to the media (Atton, 2002). Alternative media furthermore allow for views that cannot be found or experienced anywhere else being made available (*ibid*). When trying to conceptualize alternative media, Atton’s (2002) typology contains two parts based on *processes* and *products* of media, which can differ in regard to content, form, production techniques, distribution processes, social relations, and communication processes. Within this critical tradition, other notions rather close to the one of alternative media should also be considered, such as *critical media*, which Fuchs (2010) presents as “the communicative dimension of the counter-public sphere” (p. 184); *radical media*, which Downing (2001) defines as “media, generally small-scale and in many different forms, that express an alternative vision to hegemonic policies, priorities, and perspectives” (p. V), and *citizens’ media*, which Rodriguez (2011) defines as “those media that facilitate the transformation of individuals into “citizens”” (p. 24). Even though this strain of definitions centred around social justice long has been synonymous with activism in research, alternative media have become more intertwined with the mainstream in appearance and topics (Atkinson, 2019).

In recent years, right-wing online news media have come to challenge both other actors (see Heft et. al., 2020), as well as the mere definition of alternative media, that has come to include immigration-critical right-wing media expressing opposition to established media. There is a conceptual ambiguity also around this newer type of right-wing alternative news media. Even though Heft et. al. (2020) conclude that right-wing alternative media increase along with populism in the political sphere, the authors do not, however, automatically equate alternative media with notions of *populist media*. Other terminology, like *hyper-partisan media* also occurs in research (see Heft et. al. 2020 or Holt et. al., 2019). In the

Finnish context, Noppari et. al. (2019) reject the alternative media terminology in favour of a notion of *counter-media*, due to the *reactive* nature of the Finnish news outlets studied, responding to content from other media through the ideological lens of the outlet. While Holt (2016a) recognizes a wider notion of alternative media covering a broader selection of media within research, he highlights the conceptual difference in the everyday use of the notion of alternative media, which he believes has come to refer to *immigration-critical media* in opposition to established media.

Definitions despite, the fact is that scholars have treated these new media in different ways, either by using novel concepts, or by extending the previous concept of alternative media. However, the inclusion of right-wing online news media in the concept of alternative media is not uncontroversial. Frischlich, et. al., (2020) for example, claim that right wing populist alternative news media “stage their alternativeness while simultaneously orienting strongly on the mainstream in terms of stylistic means” (p. 165). There thus seems to be a will by these media to *position themselves* as alternative. In Mayerhöffer’s (2021) qualitative content analysis conducted in Denmark, the oppositional stance is found to lie on a *structural* level, rather than on a content level. While the motives behind running alternative media differ, the positioning in opposition to mainstream media is crucial, according to Holt (2016a).

Some attempts have been made to bridge the gap between the traditional forms of alternative media and the newer news media that have come to be attributed to the same notion. Holt et. al. (2019) propose a relational approach, overlooking ideological forces behind the medium, and suggest that “alternative news media should be considered first and foremost in light of a position as a self-perceived corrective of “traditional,” “legacy” or “mainstream” news media in a given sociocultural and historical context” (p. 862). When viewing this extended definition of alternative media, a shared approach towards mainstream media can be identified, where both left-wing and right-wing alternative media position themselves *in opposition*, albeit for different reasons and with different motives (see for example Atton (2002) on the “construction of news, based on alternative values and frameworks of news-gathering and access” (p. 10) or what Frischlich, et. al. (2020) describe as “counter-hegemonic agenda” (p. 152), in comparison to Figenschou & Ihlebæk (2019) whose qualitative content analysis identifies five positions taken by far-right media in relation to knowledge and criticism towards mainstream media).

Given the label *alternative*, it is not unimaginable to consider alternative media a deviation from normal, traditional, or mainstream media. Holt, et. al., (2019) describe the identification of alternative media in binary opposition to the mainstream ditto as distinctive of early research on the subject, and Harcup (2005) describes this as “a tendency to look at forms of journalism practised within alternative media in isolation from – or in opposition to – forms of journalism practised in more mainstream or commercially

dominant media” (p. 361). Leung & Lee (2014) add to this by defining alternative media according to its oppositional stance towards mainstream media relating to “ownership structure, operation model, production norms, content, and/or relationships with audience” (p. 341). There is, however, criticism against this alternative stance, such as Downing (2001), who simply claimed that “everything, at some point, is alternative to something else” (p. IX).

Undoubtedly, both left- and right- leaning alternative media can be said to take on an oppositional stance, and supposedly give a voice to opinions left out by the mainstream media (for whatever reason that might be). Content-wise however, they seem to differ. While already outlined as mainly concerned with social justice, left-wing media lack a unifying topic playing as an important role as immigration does for right-wing alternative media. Immigration has previously been identified as a significant topic in right-wing alternative media, and Holt (2016a) clearly adds immigration-critical news coverage to the very core of the debate on alternative media in Sweden.

When discussing the concept of alternative media, it should be recognized that the degree of journalistic professionalism differs between outlets. With content produced outside the realms of journalistic norms, one might even question whether the product of the media still can be considered journalism. Such criticism is for example raised by Weibull & Wadbring (2020) referring to immigration-critical sites. However, even though alternative media act in opposition to established journalistic norms, the content produced might still appear in the form of journalistic material. Additionally, Nygaard (2020) recognizes the difficulties in distinguishing professional journalism in light of the hybridity of the modern media environment where changing and increasingly porous boundaries apply, in line with arguments presented by Chadwick (2013). Chadwick (2013) further suggests that *hybrid norms* in regard to news media also is changing the preconditions of the actors, and with a special focus on politics and citizens Chadwick (2013) concludes that “bloggers and activists can adopt what they consider to be the “genuine” norms of old-style, professional journalism as a way of asserting their identity and power” (pp. 213–214). Based on this notion, it would not be unthinkable to apply this idea on alternative media as well, especially when considering the previously discussed links between alternative media and citizen media. Erasing the previous journalistic borders, a new media market offering an assortment of journalistic content produced by journalists, content producers and likewise new users themselves, can be discerned. This aspect could undoubtedly be further scrutinized, but for the purpose of this thesis, alternative media will simply be regarded as (alternative) journalism, when the content is produced and presented in the form of such.

4.2. The Concept of Mainstream Media

When discussing alternative media as a phenomenon opposed to a mainstream ditto, the notion of *mainstream media* also requires a clear definition. A classical definition (and differentiation) between *mainstream* and *non-mainstream* media is one offered by Tsfaty & Cappella (2003). The authors define television, radio news and newspapers as mainstream media, and political talk radio and information from the internet as non-mainstream media, differing in terms of genre, content, format, as well as interaction with audiences. Besides being problematic in the sense that most television, radio channels and newspapers operate online today, the definitions do offer a first idea of what constitutes mainstream media. However, after reviewing Holt, et. al.'s (2019) definition of alternative media in the previous section, it is only fair to consider their definition of mainstream media as well, which they specify as “as a societal system that is formed by specific legacy news media organizations which themselves are characterized by certain, often hierarchical, organizational structures and traditional publishing routines” (p. 861). Less bothered about the medium itself, this definition might work better in a fluid media environment focusing on *function*, as the authors emphasize that mainstream media “fulfill a societal function by enabling public discourse through the provision of topics of general interest that are oriented on facts, selected by professional actors, and published following professional rules” (p. 861).

4.3. Mainstream and Alternative Media in the Swedish Media Market

When describing the Swedish media system, Hallin & Mancini's (2004) classical models offer a good starting-point, covering aspects of both the media system, as well as the political system. Hallin & Mancini (2004) consider Sweden to fulfil the criteria of the *Democratic Corporatist Model* (or the *North/Central European Model*), meaning a historically important newspaper market with a high circulation of papers, strong public broadcasters, a high degree of journalistic professionalization and a good balance between legislative initiatives by the state and press freedom (Hallin & Mancini 2004; Weibull & Wadbring, 2020). The high circulation of newspapers and dominance of public broadcasters in television and radio remain true also in today's media landscape (Springer 2021; Weibull & Wadbring, 2020).

Even though alternative media have been defined as a fairly new phenomena thus far, partisan media with political affiliations are nothing new. The Swedish press has historically been strong, and the newspapers were largely integrated in the political parties well into the middle of the 20th century (Springer, 2021), when neutral balanced news coverage largely came to replace partisan reporting, notably since the prospect of advertising with increased revenues from a higher circulation surpassed previous partisan ties in priority, and since public service broadcasters' strive for objectivity became an ideal (Weibull & Wadbring, 2020). In newspapers, partisan content was consigned to editorials and

opinion sections. Throughout the middle of the 20th century, many newspapers shut down in Sweden, or consolidated in what became known as '*the death of the printed press*' (Springer, 2021; Weibull & Wadbring, 2020). A new market was shaped with a more concentrated ownership and subsidies from the state, along with a high journalistic agency as previous ties to political parties were cut or re-shaped (ibid). Despite – or maybe even as a result of – a high journalistic agency, political balance and partisan views absent from the news, critical thinkers presented ideas on a media hegemony (by applying Gramsci's (1971) hegemony concept to the media) where "media hegemony refers to the dominance of a certain way of life and thought and to the way in which that dominant concept of reality is diffused throughout public as well as private dimensions of social life" (Altheide, 1984: 477). As outlined in the previous section, a "counter-hegemonic agenda" (Frischlich et. al., 2020: 152) has been one of the functions held by alternative media with the ability to challenge the dominant culture, values and ideology promoted by and through the media. Following the same development as outlined in the previous section, early accounts of alternative media in Sweden were centred around activism, whereas alternative media today is associated with right-leaning opinions and even racism, rather than progressive activism (Andersson, L., 2019).

Media and communication science-related research on the matter from a Swedish perspective is scarce, and so are the previous classifications of news media outlets. Annual reports on news consumption in Sweden usually do not feature alternative media individually, other than the occasional category of *miscellaneous*, meaning that it is difficult to overview the de facto consumption of alternative media. *Figure 4:1* features an overview over a *selection* of Swedish alternative news media. This selection is by no means comprehensive.

The selection of left-leaning alternative news media outlets in Sweden is based on titles defined as alternative in a previous student thesis by Marniku (2021), and are measured through circulation (within brackets), which is presented as an aggregate of printed and digital circulation (TS/Kantar Sifo, 2022 based on 2020 figures). The examples of right-leaning news outlets are classified as alternative, either by Newman et. al. (2018) using the definition '*alternative or partisan brands*', or by Holt (2016a & 2016b) offering a selection of alternative news media in Sweden. These media are measured through their weekly digital usage in percent (within brackets) (Newman et. al., 2020). It should be noted that the weekly digital usage is based on survey results from 2020 (Newman et. al. 2020), rather than the most recent report from 2021, which presents numbers several percentage points lower for some of the alternative media (Newman et. al. 2020 & Newman et. al. 2021). This is done due to the fact that some of the outlets presented in the table are missing in the 2021 survey results, and combining numbers from 2020 and 2021 would be misleading in terms of outlining the balance between the audiences of each of

the news outlets. Even though weekly usage might contain periodic consumption and does not reveal the frequency of usage, these numbers indicate a substantial first-hand reach.

Lastly, it should be emphasized that even though *figure 4:1* lists circulation numbers and weekly reach respectively, the numbers are not comparable between left-leaning and right-leaning alternative media as they are based on different sources measuring either circulation or weekly usage respectively. The numbers should merely enable comparisons between the titles within each box.

Figure 4:1. A Selection of Alternative News Media Outlets in Sweden

Left-leaning alternative media

Printed and digital circulation within brackets
(TS/Kantar Sifo, 2022)

- Dagens ETC (10 300)
- Flamman (3 200)
- Arbetaren (2 000)
- Dagens Arena (N/A)

Right-leaning alternative media

Weekly digital usage in percent within brackets
(Newman et. al., 2020)

- Samhällsnytt (9 %)
 - Fria Tider (11 %)
 - Nyheter Idag (12 %)
 - Ledarsidorna (8 %)
 - Nya Tider (6 %)
 - Samtiden (7 %)
-

4.4. Anti-Systemness – Defining Alternative Media

In order to assess and categorize the alternative media considered in this thesis in a systematic way, *the Alternative Media Anti-Systemness Matrix* by Holt (2018) will be applied. Placing the news media within Holt's (2018) matrix enables for more fruitful comparisons between different alternative media, as well as conceptual clarity when using alternative news media defined as *alternative*, but from very different traditions. Holt's (2018) Alternative Media Anti-Systemness Matrix is based on two aspects of *anti-systemness*, drawing upon Capoccia's (2002) '*anti-system parties*' typology; *ideological* and *relational* anti-systemness. While the ideological aspect concerns opposition towards the entire media system, mainstream media, and their institutions, the relational aspect includes other properties that are not ideological, but for example contribute to a more polarized media market or new expectations regarding what is acceptable, by portraying news through a different type of content (Holt, 2018).

The two-by-two matrix thus have two dimensions, and four types of alternative media according to Holt (2018); *anti-system alternative media* (which display both ideological and relational anti-systemness), *polarizing alternative media* (which display relational anti-systemness), *irrelevant alternative media* (which display ideological anti-systemness), and *not anti-system media* (which display neither ideological, nor relational anti-systemness). Anti-system alternative media are positioned in opposition to established media and media standards, shunned by traditional media, although offering competition with content unsuitable for mainstream media, and Holt (2018) emphasizes that this type of alternative media might cause traditional media to change their ways of working by fear of losing consumers, and thus ultimately might change the public discourse. Polarizing alternative media do not oppose the media market as such but are interested in changing it, and Holt (2018) exemplifies this category with alternative media willing to join the *National Press Club*. Polarizing alternative media also offer competition to mainstream media, they have a similar content to the anti-system media unsuitable for mainstream media, and are less of a threat to the system, but have the ability to influence it (ibid). Not anti-system media include alternative media with (subjectively) provocative content that do not fulfil the criteria of the two forms of anti-systemness, and irrelevant alternative media is radical media, albeit unheard of and unnoticed, with the ability to turn anti-system if mainstream media provide them with enough attention (ibid).

It is important to note that the anti-system qualities are shifting, and according to Holt (2018) the positions are not static, meaning that they can change on both sides of the media landscape due to, for example, changed values or new political realities.

4.5. Framing Theory

Framing theory is another prominent theory, or perhaps rather a bunch of theories, widely referred to and applied in multiple academic fields, such as the social sciences and the humanities (Entman, 1993), and as discussed in previous chapters widely used in studies uncovering the portrayal of different issues through news media content analyses. With its origins in sociology and journalism, the concept appeared in the 1970's and Goffman (1986) first published the book *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience* in 1974, describing his thoughts on how frames include ideas on how humans make sense of the world defined as “frameworks or schemata of interpretation” (p. 21). During the same period, Tuchman (1980) developed the idea of news as “a window on the world” (p. 1). Entman (1993) made an attempt to clarify the concept of framing in what he referred to as a *fractured paradigm* in the early 1990's focusing on *selection* and *salience*.

“To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.”
(Entman, 1993: 52)

Entman (1993) suggests that frames can be located in four places of the communication process: with the communicator, in the text, among the receivers and within culture. By addressing news media, this study is thus concerned with the frames located *in the text*. Entman (1993) further outlines four functions of frames; defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgements, and suggesting remedies, all of which will be considered going forward in this paper. Entman (1993) especially highlights the meaning of frames in *political news*, focusing on the struggle between politicians and journalists over control, and compares the news frame with an “imprint of power” (p. 55).

When discussing frames within media and communication research, the difference between *equivalence* and *emphasis* frames is usually highlighted (see Chong & Druckman, 2007a and Lecheler & De Vreese, 2019 on conceptual definitions). Lecheler & De Vreese (2019) define equivalence frames as referring to “logically similar content that is presented or phrased differently” (p. 3), while Chong & Druckman (2007a) highlight them as “similar to emphasis or issue communication frames insofar as both put the respondent’s focus on specific considerations” (p. 114). Emphasis frames, on the other hand, “focus on qualitatively different yet potentially relevant considerations” (Chong & Druckman, 2007a: 114) and are the main focus of news media content studies applying framing, due to the complexity of ascertaining equivalency in communicative situations involving politics (Lecheler & De Vreese, 2019). When considering this differentiation, the importance of, not only the actual communication, but also the perception becomes evident. For this reason, a differentiation between the *actual frames in communication* and *frames in thought* is made (see for example Chong & Druckman, 2007b), with frames in communication being the frames as presented by the speaker, and frames in thought being the frames as perceived by the audience. With the objectives of this thesis in mind, the focus will be on *frames in communication*.

Another aspect of framing important to define is the differentiation between *issue-specific* and *generic* frames (De Vreese, 2005). De Vreese (2005) defined issue-specific frames as “pertinent only to specific topics or events” (p. 54), while generic frames “can be identified in relation to different topics, some even over time and in different cultural contexts” (p. 54). The use of the first category obviously involves a greater degree of accuracy in capturing the portrayal of various topics in news media, but is less optimal for comparative approaches like this study with a greater need for generalizations and empirical evidence (Lecheler & De Vreese, 2019). Additionally, there is the aspect of identifying frames *inductively* or

deductively, with an inductive approach offering more detailed information of the framing but with the deductive methodology enabling replications and building on previous knowledge (ibid).

A final aspect of the framing theory will focus on *how* to recognize and classify frames in media content. Cappella & Jamieson (1997) presented four conditions for proper identification of a frame; identifiable conceptual and linguistic characteristics, commonly observed in journalistic practice, possible to distinguish from other frames, and lastly frames have to possess representational validity and be perceived or understood in the same way by audience and researchers. Other scholars have offered more explicit concepts on how to identify frames, such as Gamson & Modigliani (1987) who suggested that *framing devices*, such as metaphors, exemplars, catch-phrases, depictions, and visual images, contemplate information to be disseminated in the media.

Important to consider when applying theories of framing is the large variety of frames already identified in previous research. A conscious selection is thus necessary moving forward, for which a set of generic frames and frames related to health crises will be considered. Before addressing them individually, it should be emphasized that a text can contain multiple frames simultaneously. A small selection of frames are mutually exclusive or dichotomous (and these are clarified in the upcoming sections), but in most cases they are able to work parallel with one another.

4.5.1. Generic Frames & Attribution of Responsibility

For the purpose of this thesis, two traditional sets of generic frames will be applied and presented more in detail; Semetko & Valkenburg's (2000) five generic frames (*the human interest, conflict, morality, economic and attribution of responsibility frames*), with the latter frame problematized against Iyengar's (1991) differentiation between *episodic* and *thematic* framing.

Starting with the five generic frames by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000), the frequent citing in the previous chapters already gives an idea about their wide-spread and acknowledged use within research. As outlined in previous sections covering the nature of generic frames, also Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) emphasize the importance of these, in order to capture longitudinal developments and enable for comparative approaches.

“A reliable set of content analytic indicators is necessary for studying developments in the news over time and similarities and differences in the ways in which politics and other topics of national and international importance are framed in the news in different countries.” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000: 94)

The Conflict Frame is mainly about capturing “conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest” (p. 95), something that has been found to cause cynicism among citizens in previous research (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). *The Human-Interest Frame* possesses a “human face of an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000: 95), which for example can be done through personalization adding drama and emotions to the news content, with the aim of increasing interest among the audiences. *The Economic Consequences Frame* concerns media reports of “an event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region, or country” (p. 96), with economic consequences being significant enough to contribute to the news value of an event (ibid). *The Morality Frame* “puts the event, problem, or issue in the context of religious tenets or moral prescriptions” (p. 96), something which the authors highlight usually is done ‘indirectly’ with the objectivity norms characteristic of professional journalism, and less frequently is found among frames in communication (ibid). *The Responsibility Frame* “presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group” (p. 96). This frame is partly based on the work by Iyengar (1991) who found that media portrayal in US television could indicate where causal and treatment responsibility should be placed (origin and power to fix problems). Iyengar (1991) developed a set of generic frames which were either *episodic* or *thematic*. The two differ in the way public issues are depicted; the episodic frame “takes the form of a case study or event-oriented report and depicts public issues in terms of concrete instances” (p. 14), while the thematic frame “places public issues in some more general or abstract context” (p. 14). Iyengar (1991) links episodic framing to individualistic attributions of responsibility, and thematic framing to societal attributions of responsibility, which makes the frames relevant in the understanding of the attributed level of responsibility overall. An & Gower (2009), who applied the generic frames by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) in combination with Iyengar’s (1991) thematic and episodic frames, did so as an extension of the responsibility frame, describing the *level of responsibility* (An & Gower, 2009). Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) do, however, conclude that the findings of Iyengar (1991) perhaps only are able to explain US television coverage, with framing of responsibility being shaped by political culture and social context, and with results in their findings indicating that episodic framing can be combined with attribution of responsibility towards actors on the societal, rather than the individual level.

4.5.2. Frames Used to Study Health Risks

Addressing the media’s role in the social construction of risk, Dan & Raupp (2018) reviewed content analyses focused on the framing of health risks. North American studies dominated in this review, along with Asian dittos, and it should be noted that European studies only had a minor contribution (ibid).

With a general abundance of frames in research, this approach is, however, valuable in limiting the number of frames and instead focusing on capturing the main traits. In total, 45 frame names were identified in the 37 studies, which the authors summarized to 15 frames, including the consequence frame, the health severity frame, the human-interest frame, the economic consequences frame, the attribution of responsibility frame, the action frame, the thematic frame, the episodic frame, the medical frame, the uncertainty frame, the alarmist frame, the reassurance frame, the gain frame, the loss frame, and the conflict frame (ibid). These frames were then grouped into categories according to framing *function*, the *number* of functions and *degree* of informational specificity. When considering function, the four aspects outlined earlier were considered: defining problems, identifying causes, suggesting treatments, or performing a moral evaluation. Most of the frames tended to have only one function, albeit with a few exceptions. Most interested, scholars seem to be in frames regarding the problem definition, causal interpretation, and treatment recommendations, with moral evaluation frames largely missing in research (ibid). The final aim of Dan & Raupp's (2018) study concerned the addressing of the prevalence and occurrence of all frames, where a third of the studies were found to apply frames focused on the problem definition. A lack of thematic and uncertainty frames was noted, along with an excess of alarmist frames, as well as cultural differences, where the authors make comparisons between the US and Asia, but also caution against making conclusions based on these findings considering the lack of comparative studies (ibid). As a final recommendation, the authors urge for a wide selection of frames to be included in studies (ibid), which will be adhered to going forward with this paper.

4.6. Attention Cycles

It has long been noted by scholars that issues continuing over an extended period, usually fail to maintain public attention over the same course of time. Theories have instead pointed towards cycles, in which the level of public attention varies over time (see for example Downs (1972) who originally developed the *issue-attention cycle* for public attention on domestic matters stretching over a long period of time). Downs' (1972) issue-attention cycle is constructed based on *five* stages, covering all aspects of public attention to issues. For the purpose of this study, however, another concept of *attention cycles* by McComas & Shanahan (1999) will be applied. In a content analysis of media narratives regarding climate change during the 1980's and 1990's in the US, McComas & Shanahan (1999) developed their theory on how continuous issues receive public attention, which carries a lot of similarities to Downs' (1972) original issue-attention cycle, but also takes the role of narratives into account. McComas & Shanahan (1999) adopt a three-stage cycle based on a *waxing*, *maintenance*, and *waning* period, thus following Down's (1972) original model in containing a *rise*, a *peak*, and a *fall* in news coverage (McComas & Shanahan, 1999). Like implied by the referencing to a *cycle*, the model is not linear, and

McComas & Shanahan (1999) establish that different narrative themes are dominant during different parts of the cycle. To be more precise, some of their findings include a higher occurrence of narratives related to *dangers and consequences* of climate change during the waxing phase, a high occurrence of narratives related *scientific controversy* and *economics* during the maintenance phase, with a subsequent focus on narratives related to *new evidence and research* during the waning phase (ibid).

Chapter V: Method

5.1. Study Outline

With a systematic and objective methodology applied, the approach behind this thesis is probably best described as functionalist in nature, with quantitative methods approaching knowledge as measurable in a positivist spirit. A quantitative approach is simply necessary considering the overall aim and objectives of the study, which seek to answer research questions on a more general level covering a large selection of data. A qualitative approach would merely have been able to provide contextual understanding (see Bryman, 2016), and when tackling a large quantity of data, the logistics of the study simply call for a quantitative approach (see Riffe, et. al., 2019). Common criticism against quantitative research within social sciences is the application of a method used in natural science (Bryman, 2016), however the method also has a lot of advantages. Bryman (2016) lists *causality*, *generalization*, and *replication* as the most central concerns in quantitative research, concerns that will be addressed more in detail.

The study addresses the nature of different news media and thus focuses on the content through a *content analysis only design* (see Riffe, et. al., 2019). What *influences* the content might be addressed on a speculative level, but is not within the scope of the study, nor are any *effects* of the media content as an independent variable. Additionally, no claims are made to study the *meaning* of the media content, for which a more qualitative approach might have proved useful. Riffe, et. al. (2019) highlight some of the advantages of addressing media content (or *messages*) separated from their senders and receivers as: being able to focus on the material in itself, not having to rely on the sender, as well as the fact that material is readily available also after the period of interest.

The research design of this descriptive study is based on the nature of the overall objective and research questions, for which a comparative approach is necessary. According to Bryman (2016) “the key to the comparative design is its ability to allow the distinguishing characteristics of two or more cases to act as a springboard for theoretical reflections about contrasting findings” (p. 68). Like suggested in the previous chapter, the study is firmly anchored in theory, in line with what Bryman (2016) highlights in the deductive approach taken between theory and research when conducting a quantitative study. By operating adhering to research questions rather than hypotheses, the approach is inevitably exploratory in its nature.

5.2. Quantitative Content Analysis

The media content (or *messages*) is studied through a quantitative *content analysis* of news media. Berelson (1952) offers a well-cited definition of content analyses that will serve as a starting point for this purpose.

“Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.” (Berelson, 1952: 18)

The very same aspects re-occur when consulting the work of more recent scholars, such as Bryman (2016) and Neuendorf (2002) who emphasize both *objectivity* and a *systematic approach*, or an a priori design, as defining features of content analyses. Content analyses are generally flexible in nature and considered objective methods, with a transparency that easily allows for replications (Bryman, 2016). *Objectivity*, *systematics*, *quantity*, and *manifest* are thus the central notions of the quantitative content analysis, as highlighted by Nilsson (2010) who concludes that studies consequently need to be replicable with the approach well-defined, the selection accurate, statistical methods should be used, and the conclusions should be limited to explicit content.

Content analyses are first and foremost a *numerical process* in which categories are identified and tallied, along with the amount of other important variables (Neuendorf, 2002). These values are numerically summarized, from which generalizable conclusions are derived in line with the nomothetic approach (ibid). These summaries are thus able to provide scholars with the characteristics of communication, which is ideal for the aim and purpose of this study to examine and compare the portrayal of news content in different news outlets. Additionally, despite quantitative content analyses not being able to outline influences or effects, findings can serve as a foundation for continuous discussions about issues and possible implications of the news content (Priest, 2010).

As outlined thus far, several of the definitions emphasize the necessity of focusing on the *manifest* level of the studied content (Berelson, 1952; Riffe, et. al., 2019). This means measuring what is *present* in the text, rather than interpreting *unobserved concepts* (see Neuendorf, 2002). When applying theories of framing, this clear limitation sometimes becomes problematic in terms of determining what is actually present in the text and what is a result of an interpretation. Neuendorf (2002) highlights criticism against this dichotomy suggesting a continuum instead. For the purpose of this study, Riffe, et. al.’s (2019) clarification that “manifest content involves denotative meaning – the meaning most people share and apply to given symbols” (p. 32), serves as guide in determining and limiting findings to the manifest content, albeit allowing for some flexibility which certainly is required for certain variables concerning

framing, as well as common understandings and interpretations. This will, however, be explicitly discussed in conjunction with the variable definitions for clarity around methods and procedures.

Like previously emphasized, the application of pre-defined theories is an important part of quantitative research, and the theoretical choices are useful at mainly three stages of the study: in the process of identifying news outlets through their conceptual definition, in the process of scrutinizing the news media content, and in the process of identifying the time periods of interest. The upcoming sections of this chapter will describe the application of theories more in detail. Considerable focus will be given to the selection of news frames due to the large implication this might have on the outcome. Bearing the theoretical choices and the deductive methodological approach in mind, clarity around definitions and choices along the way are absolutely necessary.

5.2.1. Selection of News Outlets

In order to capture a representative sample of alternative media, and to establish a point of reference through mainstream media enabling comparative analyses, three media outlets were selected for the content analysis. Two of the news outlets are alternative media (one left-leaning and one right-leaning) and one news outlet serves as a baseline reference for mainstream media. The outlets have different forms of distribution, but it is the online version of their reporting that has been considered, as the comparative elements of this study are benefitted by a selection of outlets producing news through the same medium, allowing the study to focus on the actual content, rather than logics of the medium that content is broadcasted through.

Alternative Left-Leaning Media: “Dagens ETC”

The daily newspaper *Dagens ETC* was founded in 2014 (Weibull, 2014) as “a socialist alternative to the bourgeois dailies” (Fossbo, 2014). While *ETC* has been an established brand as a periodical and a publishing house since the late 1970’s (Fossbo, 2014), the daily paper was to provide “a red newspaper for a greener world” [“en röd nyhetstidning för en grönare värld”], so the founder Johan Ehrenberg in an interview with *Swedish Radio* (Rentzsch & Lindquist, 2014). While earlier studies conducted on *Dagens ETC* have used labels such as “left leaning” (Andersen, et. al. 2021:7) or “red-green” (Coogan & Wänelöf, 2014: 5), others have described it as a “generalist news site with a leftist slant” (Theorin & Strömbäck, 2020: 1248). The founder Ehrenberg especially highlights two issues in which the newspaper differs considerably from the established press: economy and climate (Rentzsch & Lindquist, 2014). For this study, the online content of ETC.se is considered, which besides the daily newspaper *Dagens ETC* also contains some content from the periodicals *ETC nyhetsmagasin* and *Kloka hem*.

When considering Holt's (2018) alternative media anti-systemness matrix, *Dagens ETC* place themselves in opposition to established media (or '*the bourgeois press*') and thus display ideological anti-systemness. In terms of relational anti-systemness, there is less deviance from mainstream media, as the newspaper for example has been a recipient of press subsidies (Jansson, 2014). With few open conflicts, and a limited number of reactions triggered towards themselves, they also have limited impact on the mainstream media landscape, and *Dagens ETC* could thus be argued to fall within the category of *irrelevant alternative media*.

Alternative Right-Leaning Media: "Fria Tider"

The online news site *Fria Tider*, which was founded in 2009, operates with the tagline "*The media of Sweden need a straight right*" ["Mediesverige behöver en rak höger"] (Granström, 2022), which in the original language can be interpreted both that the media of Sweden need an honest/upright (political) right, or that the media of Sweden need a '*straight*'/'*right*', also known as *cross*, referring to a punch in boxing. The news site was founded by Widar Nord (Carlsson, 2017), in a media market described by the founder in an interview study by Holt (2016a) as lacking in alternatives to the "'left liberal' media establishment" ["vänsterliberala" medieetablissemangen] (Holt, 2016a: 128). In the same interview, Nord describes how *Fria Tider* strives to replicate some traits of established media in terms of methods, structure, and production, as well as appointing a responsible editor, even though they have chosen not to join the media ethical system or applying for press subsidies (Holt, 2016a).

The definition of *Fria Tider* simply as *alternative media* is by no means comprehensive, and there are several other definitions previously applied. Holt (2018) has provided the definition *immigration-critical alternative media* (Holt 2018), to which *Fria Tider* would be categorized. In a report by *The Swedish Media Council* (2013) the content of *Fria Tider* was described as "*clearly racist, xenophobic and Islamophobic*" [uppebart rasistiska, främlingsfientliga och islamofobiska innehåll], and the conservative tabloid *Expressen* has previously listed *Fria Tider* as one of Sweden's "most influential hate sites" [mest tongivande hatsajter] (Baas, 2017). While the ideological foundation is not clearly pronounced, the founder of *Fria Tider*, Nord identifies as libertarian conservative (Holt, 2016a). The Reuters Digital News Report establishes that the readers of *Fria Tider* clearly identify themselves far to the right on the political spectrum, more so than readers of other news sites included in the comparison (Newman, et. al., 2018). Among the right-leaning alternative news media sites in Sweden, *Fria Tider* has had one of the largest usage percentages in previous years, so the Reuters Digital News Report (Newman, et. al., 2018; Newman, et. al., 2019; Newman, et. al., 2020; Newman, et. al., 2021).

When considering Holt's (2018) alternative media anti-systemness matrix, *Fria Tider* could be an example of *anti-system alternative media*, due to their position in opposition to established media and decision to remain outside of the media ethical system, and not applying for press subsidies. Relationally, there is a polarization towards other mainstream journalistic actors (see for example Baas, 2017 who labels *Fria Tider* as a '*hate site*'), and while they sometimes are part of the mainstream debate, they are considered radical (Nygaard, 2020), which in turn might generate news coverage in mainstream media.

Mainstream Media: "SVT" (Swedish Television)

When selecting a news outlet to represent mainstream media in this study, the public service broadcaster *Swedish Television* (SVT) will serve as a reference baseline. To be more precise, the online news coverage on the SVT webpage will be considered, even though linear news broadcasts are a key part of the SVT offering. The online section is also known as *SVT News*. The history of public service in Sweden, and its strong stance within the Swedish media landscape was outlined already in the previous chapter. More importantly SVT has been one of the public's go-to-sources for crisis information during the COVID-19-pandemic, with the highest trust levels among the news consumers (Bohlin, et. al., 2021). Additionally, public service news in Sweden is regulated by their broadcasting licence, calling for unbiased reports and content (SVT Nyheter, 2017). As a minor exception from this aspect of neutrality, somewhat simplified, one might say that the so-called *democracy clause* calls for the production to be created in the spirit of democracy, equality, freedom, and dignity of the individual, which causes the broadcaster to counter racially motivated prejudices and anti-democratic statements (ibid). Using SVT as a baseline is thus not unproblematic when involving the political aspects that come from dealing with alternative media. The neutrality of public service broadcasters in general, and SVT in particular is debated from time to time in the public discourse (see for example Reimers, 2019). This is a discussion on its own, and while it is important to highlight, it is unfortunately outside the scope of this thesis. The possible pitfalls of the media selection are here weighted against the large trust expressed by the audience, in combination with the wide usage of the media product in a crisis situation.

5.2.2. Sampling

A purposive, non-probability sampling was applied when gathering material for the content analysis. A purposive approach is adequate to make the study manageable in terms of limiting a large number of articles (Riffe, et. al., 2019), with conscious choices in terms of limitations which will be argued for. A sample was drawn gathering texts from the three news outlets presented in previous section: *Dagens ETC*, *Fria Tider* and *SVT* (Swedish Television). The articles were gathered through *Retriever*, the largest digital online news archive in the Nordics. For this study, only online news content has been considered,

allowing for conclusions to be drawn on the actual content, rather than evolving around inferences of the medium itself.

In order to identify news relevant for this study of the portrayal of COVID-19 vaccines and related measures, the search in *Retriever* was conducted with the following search phrase.

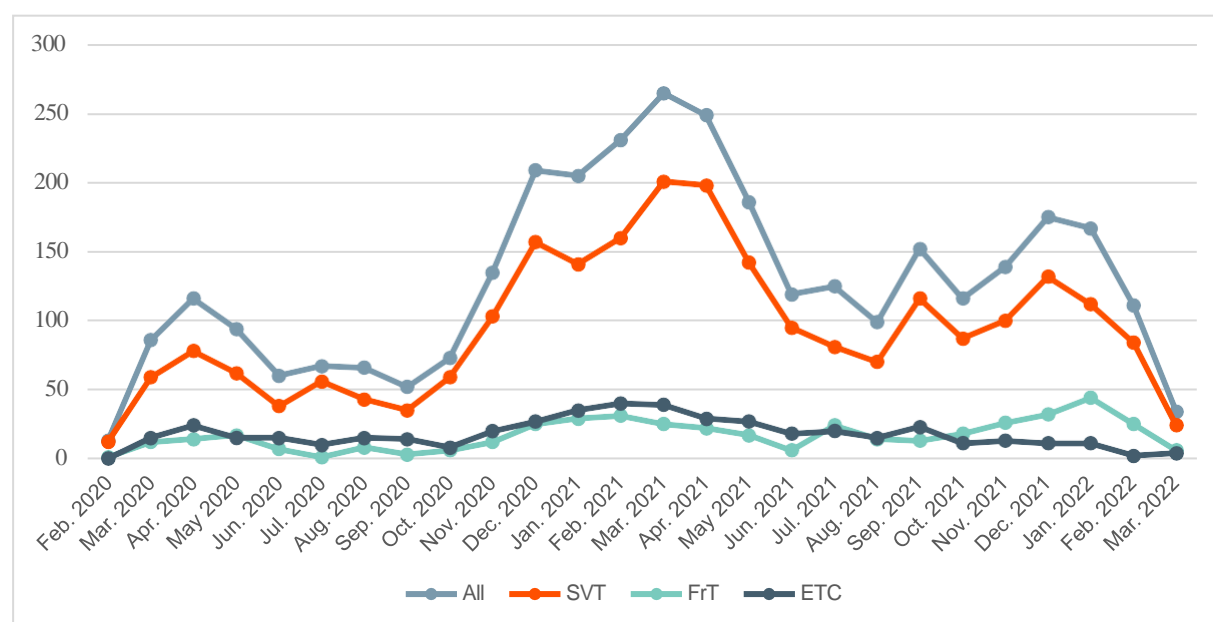
(corona OR covid*) AND (vaccin* OR *pass)*

The search phrase thus considers the mixed, and sometimes inconsistent, use of the term *Coronavirus* and *COVID-19*. The inclusion of both terms in the first bracket effectively includes news about the virus itself or the disease caused by it. The second bracket introduces the terms *vaccine* [vaccin] or *passport* [pass], effectively enabling the inclusion of news about the Coronavirus/COVID-19, in combination with either *vaccine* or *passport*. The phrase should therefore be able to identify: a) news about COVID-19 vaccines; b) news about COVID passports. The latter includes the full variety of official terms used; *vaccinpass* [vaccine passport], *gröna/grönt pass* [green passport(s)] (when the term *Corona/COVID* also is included), *corona/covid-intyg* [Corona/COVID certificate] (when the term *vaccine* also is included) and *corona/covid-bevis* ["proof of" corona/COVID (vaccination)] (when the term *vaccine* also is included). For some of the official terms, there are obviously some caveats should the additional words discussed be missing, however there is also a large flexibility given the use of asterisks, which opens up for a wider range of results. As a final remark on the appropriateness of the search phrase, it should be emphasized that the study is mainly focused on the manifest content, which makes this type of searches less problematic in terms of missing out on content dealt with in an implicit way.

Serving as a third limitation, two time periods have been considered: 01.02.2021 to 31.05.2021 and 01.11.2021 to 28.02.2022. There are several reasons for implementing time limits. Resources is certainly one of them, with the sheer number of articles being quite substantial during the period. Additionally, previous research on the topic of framing has identified the initial period as highly important in determining the framing process for new issues (Entman, 1991; Cho & Wang, 2021), meaning that two episodes during the pandemic are of special interest; the introduction of the COVID-19 vaccine and the introduction of COVID passports and/or restrictions for unvaccinated. These two episodes also correlate with the *frequency* of news reports on the matter. By using the search phrase outlined previously, and the three news outlets specified, in order to conduct a search in *Retriever* between February 2020 and March 2022, the frequency can be reviewed more in detail, as outlined in *figure 5:1*.

Notably, *two peaks* can be identified in the frequency of news reports, one in March 2021 as vaccination campaigns were introduced in Sweden, as well as December 2021 when COVID passports were implemented on a large scale in Sweden.

Figure 5:1. News Frequency February 2020 to March 2022 (number of articles)



Comments: Total number of articles per month in SVT, FrT and ETC found in the media search engine 'Retriever' using the search phrase "(corona* OR covid*) AND (vaccin* OR *pass)".

The framework of *attention cycles* (McComas & Shanahan, 1999), outlined in the previous chapter, was applied to identify, and limit the time periods surrounding these two peaks. Attention cycles are useful in case of long-lasting crises which change in intensity throughout, which arguably has been the case to a large degree throughout the COVID-19-pandemic. The framework of attention cycles (as interpreted by McComas & Shanahan, 1999) identifies three periods – a rise, peak and fall (or waxing, maintenance, and waning phases). *Table 5:1* specifies the different phases for the two time periods.

Table 5:1. News Item Frequency: Corpus (number of articles)

	Phase	All	SVT	FrT	ETC
Feb. 2021	Waxing	231	160	31	40
Mar. 2021		265	201	25	39
Apr. 2021	Maintenance	249	198	22	29
May 2021	Waning	186	142	17	27
Total period 1		931	701	95	135
Nov. 2021	Waxing	139	100	26	13
Dec. 2021		175	132	32	11
Jan. 2022	Maintenance	167	112	44	11
Feb. 2022	Waning	111	84	25	2
Total period 2		592	428	127	37

Comments: Total number of news items (corpus) with attention cycle phases for each of the two time periods specified. The attention cycle framework (as well as terminology) by McComas & Shanahan (1999) is applied.

The total amount of articles in the media archive *Retriever* search outlined thus far is accounted for in *table 5:1*. A closer inspection of the totals reveals a considerably higher number of articles from SVT than the other outlets respectively. Considering the resources and audience of each of the outlets, this discrepancy is perhaps no surprise, but in order to generate a more tangible amount given the scope of this study, whilst maintaining the reliability of the findings, the articles from SVT were limited to *every third day* during each period (inspired by a similar approach in Ghersetti & Odén, 2021), starting on the first day of each period and phase. Leaving out days can of course be problematic when approaching media content in general, due to journalistic and editorial procedures tied to certain weekdays, or holidays etcetera (Nilsson, 2010), but as the limitation is systematic in nature, and the application of every third day ensures that different days are included and left out from calendar week to calendar week, the number of articles should still be large enough to ensure a robust enough sample.

5.2.3. Content Limitations & Unit of Analysis

While the initial selection of articles ought to be relevant based on the criteria argued for thus far, additional limitations were considered. Starting with *external* limitations, such as article genres and types, no articles were excluded in advance. While the practice to define and limit the width of this aspect in advance might be common in media content analyses, the structure of news in online environments is less strict with more fluent and user-generated boundaries between genres and themes.

Material such as sports, or opinionated articles can thus be presented in conjunction with pure news articles, with few cues telling the reader which articles belong to what section. When studying alternative media, some of which possibly might be coloured by political ideology, excluding opinionated articles also does not make sense. SVT (*Swedish Television*) additionally should not be presenting opinionated news content arguing for a certain political standing (this is discussed previously in the chapter). Both domestic and international news were thus considered, as well as softer news genres, such as sports and entertainment.

The fact that online news content is being studied, requires the challenges with the sampling of internet content to be highlighted. As emphasized by Riffe, et. al. (2019) and Nilsson (2010), sampling online material is unpredictable as set time and content restrictions do not exist in the same way, and since content might disappear. Articles might further be updated, including the headlines, and the placement might change depending on personal settings and preferences. This means that factors concerning placement of articles and surrounding material cannot be taken into consideration with the current structure of the study, which however, is less of an issue when dealing with the manifest content. Nilsson (2010) additionally highlights the use of digital archives, such as *Retriever*, as possibly challenging due to systematic patterns in dropped articles (these can for example include copyright issues, user-produced content, and the use of newsagents), or the fact that the material is taken out of its original context.

The choice to operate with few external limitations while using a broad search phrase requires strict *content limitations*. Inspired by a previous content analysis by Asp, et. al. (1998), such a criterion was applied, that *minimum a quarter of the text needed to be of relevance to the subject of COVID-19 vaccines or any vaccine-related topics* to be included. This excluded general reports of the COVID-19-pandemic that did not mention or make any references to the vaccine. While this requires a more subjective assessment on behalf of the coder, something that normally ought to be minimized, it also enables for a manual assessment and a broader inclusion of articles of relevance, despite their overall theme or genre. COVID-19 has, after all, had long-going consequences for the whole society and restrictions and lockdowns have, at times, halted culture and sport events, which means that a total automatic exclusion of softer genres would not be desirable.

With the outlined limitations in mind, the unit of analysis was defined as a *full news story*, or an article, containing the subject of COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates). As an article, the whole text was included, including headlines but excluding images, image captions and text in graphic elements. While also graphic elements are important for how news is interpreted, new technologies once again complicate matters by

offering content on different platforms where the format varies. Certain platforms offer *reading views* excluding images altogether. Basing research on these elements would therefore require further considerations outside the scope of this study. The text, however, is to be considered static, platform despite, and one of the elements remaining unchanged throughout content wise. The definition of a news article was limited to articles containing three or more sentences (in the whole news item, including headline and preamble). The amount of *three* sentences was chosen since the article body, preamble, as well as headlines were to be included in this number. The idea was to exclude shorter updates, articles featuring embedded videos as main content, reports listing social media posts more in the form of *live feeds*, and status updates not containing much more than a headline. Additionally, teasers about upcoming articles and duplicates were to be excluded. Further limitations were made during the coding in terms of excluding daily summaries of the news hour, as they would have provided the analysis with irrelevant material. Transcripts of live chats were excluded due to their lack of journalistic material, and so were transcripts of TV programs which appeared among the search results. It became clear that the limit of three sentences or more was not enough to exclude captions of videos and live feeds, but all content that met the criteria was included in the end. Sorting out duplicates proved difficult as modified articles appeared during the same days, but the applied strategy included assessing if the articles were based on the same event, background information or sources, and removing articles in shortened versions or with only minor modifications.

After all limitations had been done, 423 articles were selected and coded, equivalent to 27,8 % (rounded to one decimal place) of a corpus of 1523 articles in total. *Table 5:2* contains an overview of the total number of articles coded, per time period and attention cycle phase.

Table 5:2. Coded Articles per Outlet and Attention Cycle Phase

	Phase	All	SVT	FrT	ETC
Feb./Mar. 2021	Waxing	140	79	38	23
Apr. 2021	Maintenance	64	37	18	9
May 2021	Waning	49	31	12	6
Total period 1		253	147	68	38
Nov./Dec. 2021	Waxing	98	42	44	12
Jan. 2022	Maintenance	46	13	26	7
Feb. 2022	Waning	26	12	13	1
Total period 2		170	67	83	20

Comments: Total number of news items coded in content analysis, per news outlet and attention cycle phase for each of the two selected time periods. The attention cycle framework (as well as terminology) by McComas & Shanahan (1999) is applied.

5.3. Coding Scheme

After the selection of articles had been done, the news items were downloaded and manually coded by the author following the codebook (which can be found in *appendix 1*). The codebook's structure will be presented in detail. First of all, it should be emphasized that the variables were assembled to enable for a comparative approach answering previously stated research questions, with a broad unconditional application of news frames. The variables were concerned with a nominal level of measurement, with categories of content identified and given numbers accordingly.

5.3.1. Variables

The variables were assembled to define the unit of analysis and consist of questions aimed at the text. The structure consists of: a) formal variables; b) variables concerning actors present in the news items; c) frame identification in the article headline and preamble; d) frame identification in the the article body.

According to Nilsson (2010) variables of a technical character are needed in a content analysis (formal variables V1–V6). These include formal data such as identification, medium, date, time period, and similar. As an addition to this formal data, it should be noted that all the coding was done by the author during a limited semester period. This information was thus excluded from the codebook to limit the number of variables.

Mapping actors as a complement to the focus on framing (V7–V15) can add value to the study looking to establish patterns and identify similarities and differences between different media. After all, early definitions of alternative media covered the inclusion of marginalized groups, and newer definitions are somewhat concerned about aspects left out by mainstream media. The presence of different actors can be such an aspect. Several benefits of focusing on the actors present in news media are highlighted by Nilsson (2010) as also the context can shed light on differences in media portrayal.

The first subcategory of framing (V16–29) was concerned with frames in the *headlines*, including the first and second titles, as well as the *preamble* of the news items. The second subcategory of framing was concerned with frames in the article body (V30–66). The selection of frames was based on most of the fifteen main frames identified by Dan & Raupp (2018) when reviewing previous research on the framing of health risks, and the structure of this category follows Entman's (1993) four framing functions; problem definition, cause identification, treatment proposal and moral evaluation, followed by procedural frames without function, as grouped by Dan & Raupp (2018). The motive behind the inclusion of such an extensive selection of news frames was a strategic choice given methodological

considerations. The validity of any findings from this unconditional deductive approach is obviously dependent on the theoretical considerations and applications. With the aim of capturing and distinguishing characteristics, the broader theoretical approach of framing theories the better, as they all possess different properties, keeping as many options open as possible. Each of the frames, however, need to fill a function, and in combination with one another, they also need to complement each other. As a result, some of the original frames identified by Dan & Raupp (2018) as well as Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) were disregarded. The framing functions concerned problem definition (V16–18 and V30–40), cause identification (V19 and V41–45), treatment proposal (V20–23 and V46–51), moral evaluation (V24–26 and V52–58), as well as procedural frames (V27–28 and V59–66). A more detailed overview is outlined in the codebook (*appendix 1*) for each variable and is further discussed in the findings chapter.

On a final note, it should be emphasized that the variables largely followed the structure of Semetko & Valkenburg's (2000) code scheme with several variables measuring the occurrence of indicators of a certain frame. The variables mainly consist of binary yes-or-no questions with mutually exclusive values. In some cases, options were added for additional answers, but the presence of miscellaneous categories was kept to a minimum. While it normally is encouraged to allow for this type of category, the test-coding did not show any problems with the applied approach. After all, yes-or-no questions are rather straight-forward.

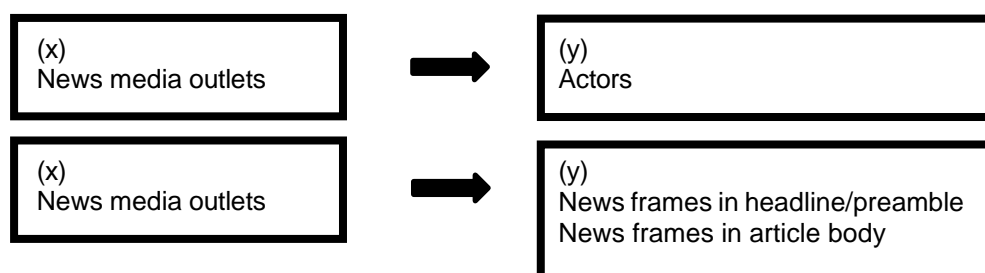
5.3.2. Coding Procedure & Data Analysis

The articles were downloaded between 15 May and 19 June 2022, using lists generated by the search results from *Retriever*. The coding took place between 31 May and 23 June 2022 and was performed by the author. The news items were downloaded and coded manually following a code sheet (*appendix 2*), later transferred to Microsoft Excel for formatting into columns. A test-coding was performed initially before the main coding period, which led to the exclusion of a so-called *problem definition frame* (Dan & Raupp, 2018) as it became clear that this function could be derived from measuring the prevalence of other frames with similar functions if desired. Some articles were excluded due to not meeting the criteria in terms of length, form, and COVID-19 vaccine-related content. During the coding, it was decided to exclude the 48th variable of the action frame, as the variable proved vague. While mainly being interested in the offering of alternatives to vaccines, it was discovered that this also occurred simultaneously along with vaccination encouraging messages. A category of actors called *global organizations* was added during the coding process as the miscellaneous category became rather extensive. Naturally, all processed news items were re-coded accordingly.

The finished dataset was later imported into *IBM SPSS* for further analysis, which will be presented in the findings section, along with experiences and considerations on the author's behalf. As the occurrence – or prevalence – of various aspects was of interest, variables with missing values were computed in order to include these variables in the total number. Most of the dichotomous (yes-or-no) variables were re-coded into indexed variables. A multi-item scale was created, in which all individual variables of a group measuring the occurrence of a single frame were added up to an index, from which an average was derived. V52–54 for example, measuring the occurrence of the uncertainty frame, were included in a multi-item scale in which the indexed value was divided by three (representing the number of variables). The new average values for all variable groups were thereafter re-coded into a dichotomous value – either 0, meaning that no frame was present (representing average values of 0–0,49 of the multi-item scales) or 1, meaning that the frame was present (representing average values of 0,5–1 of the multi-item scales). The new variables were inspired by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) and range from 0=not present to 1=present.

The material was assessed according to two models – one addressing actors in the news items as dependent variables and the news media outlets as independent variables, another addressing news media frames as dependent variables, and the news media outlets as independent variables – both of which are outlined in *figure 5:2*.

Figure 5:2. Overall Relationships and Focal Interests



The statistical analyses generally consisted of contingency tables, whose associations between variables were assessed through Cramer's V-measurements, and whose significance was tested and verified through Pearson's Chi-squared tests. Associations between variables were considered along with the Cramer's V-value ranging from 0 (no association) to 1 (perfect association). According to Bryman (2016), $p < .05$ is usually the highest acceptable significance within the social sciences, and this level will also be applied here (alpha).

5.4. Limitations & Considerations

In conclusion, the study is built on a solid foundation and the strengths include a robust method with an approach anchored in both theory, as well as previous research. According to Nilsson (2010), a quantitative content analysis seeks to make conclusions on a general level when properly conducted. This is also the aim of this study, albeit with a few caveats around generalizability which will be discussed more in detail in coming sections. Criticism against the overall methodological choice of a quantitative content analysis mainly concerns three dimensions, according to Nilsson (2010); the meaning of quantity, the balance between a whole and its components, and objectivity. The first aspect involves simplification, rather than taking an interest in the unique, which in turn requires a well-defined theoretical approach (ibid), something that this study has adopted. The second aspect of balance especially revolves around the context, and the meaning of it (ibid), which is getting more and more complicated when studying online content. It is simply difficult to understand the context of how the news material is presented to the receiver. This study does not explicitly address this issue, but rather adopts a platform-neutral approach by focusing on the text in each news item, which is one of the elements that can be believed to remain consistent throughout. Another aspect that has not been accounted for is the fact that news articles can be constantly updated throughout the day, with live elements and multiple versions. The final aspect of objectivity involves clarity in the research instructions, with researchers making interpretations close to the average reader (ibid). Obviously, the risk of misunderstandings through instructions is limited by the fact that this study was performed by a single author. However, this also includes an increased risk of bias for certain interpretations and requires a higher self-awareness when performing the analysis. Like emphasized by Bryman (2016) it is difficult to avoid interpretive elements from the coder's side, especially in terms of more latent content. This risk is narrower with the focus on manifest content. Moreover, there is a risk of disproportionate focus on the *measurable*, rather than what might be *theoretically significant* (ibid). While the methodological choices are argued for, framing theories could require a deeper understanding of latent content and connotations, something that also needs to be considered when assessing the appropriateness of the study. Nevertheless, the approach remains fully disclosed and evaluations of this aspect can thus be performed if desired.

Some immediate weaknesses to consider include the narrow time frame and the (relative to what has been published on the COVID-pandemic) small selection of articles considered. As the initial news coverage is important in determining the framing process of a new issue (see Entman, 1991; Cho & Wang, 2021), it has been argued that the time limits defined the most important periods (the introduction of vaccines and the introduction of COVID passports). However, it should anyway be noted that important aspects might be present outside of these time frames. Furthermore, the study has been able

to identify several frames at the same time, in line with conclusions by Goffman (1986:21) that more than one frame might operate at the same time. Ideas on a single *dominating frame* are thus not captured, even though, to some extent, the focus on a frame in the news item headline can be an example of pinpointing frames deemed as additionally important by the news media outlet. The implications of excluding pictures and context, as well as the placement of articles have been mentioned already, and should not be understated. While the focus on manifest content has been defined, there is a fine line in-between the various layers, and especially when focusing on evaluations of valence in terms of actors and frames a certain degree of subjectivity is inevitable. However, by being aware of this fact, the implications of this can be minimized.

While measures have been taken to enable for comparisons between the different news media outlets, such as focusing on news content in the same online format, during the same relevant time periods, with identical search words, it should be emphasized that the outlets represent different types of alternative media. Two different approaches to alternative media with different levels of anti-systemness. Implications of this will be elaborated on in the final discussion but deserves mentioning already at this stage.

A high *reliability* means that the same results are achieved when repeating the study (Neuendorf, 2002: 112). This is in line with one of the previously outlined prerequisites for conducting a quantitative content analysis: *replicability*. This means that the issue has been addressed by the creation of a rich codebook and an explicit and clear way of conducting the study. This also means that the variables need to be interpreted and coded in the same way, and even though the study was performed by a single individual, the coding done by the author was assessed through reliability scores. An intracoder reliability check was performed a couple of weeks after the main coding was done with 10% (equivalent to 42 news items) of the news items re-coded. The means of all variables (excluding the formal variables) were analysed comparing the variable values of the original coding with the re-coded news items, and the weighted Cohen's Kappa ended up at .713, which is a good and significant ($p = .000$) strength of agreement (Bryman (2016) determines that coefficients of between .6 and .75 are *good*). Furthermore, the analyses and findings presented in the upcoming chapters have all been assessed and controlled by tests measuring the strength between variables through Cramer's V values, and Chi-Square tests have been conducted to determine the significance of each analysis.

A high *validity* means that the study measures what it is supposed to measure, while being *reliable*, *accurate* and *precise* (Neuendorf, 2002). As already concluded, the reliability is good, but accuracy and precision are also important. When assessing the study's internal validity, the measurement validity is

in focus, with the face validity as the first, perhaps most obvious aspect to comment on, which contains the author's assessment of the validity (Neuendorf, 2002). In this case the previously argued limitations in terms of sampling the internet for material is the main caveat that might need to be addressed. Secondly, the methodological choice to adopt techniques from previous research (such as a framing selection from Dan & Raupp (2018), research techniques from Ghersetti & Odén, 2021, as well as certain variables straight from Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) or Reinemann, et. al., 2012) increases the concurrent validity (see Riffe, et. al., 2019).

To assess the *external validity*, Neuendorf (2002) consider the *representativeness* of the sample and *replicability*. With elaborated motivations behind the methodological choices, there is a well-developed strategy behind the sampling, ensuring the representativeness of it. Thorough coding schemes and methodology sections, as well as a consistent transparency throughout the process ensure replicability. The material that has been featured has been natural material, however one caveat needs to be addressed once again. The text material was taken out of its context and did not exactly represent the product that reaches the media consumer. As already discussed, this is a problem in research dealing with online material, as the material is featured on different platforms, in different contexts, on different devices in an environment largely dependent on browsing history, personal settings, and something as basic as cookie-preferences in a browser. Focusing on the text, however, has also meant focusing on the core content. All in all, a number of limitations have been applied and discussed throughout, which need to be considered when assessing the appropriateness and the generalizability of this study. However, this is an exploratory study with an unconditional comparative approach, which also means that the indicative findings will need further substantiating.

Chapter VI: Findings

6.1. Actors Present in the News Items

For the purpose of outlining and describing the media portrayal of COVID-19 vaccines, the prevalence of actors was included in the content analysis. The context of *prevalence* was limited to three areas, with variables included to identify and outline the presence of actors in the news items in terms of *type* of actor, *function* in the text, as well as *evaluation* of said actor. The coding was limited to *three* actors, established by order of appearance in the ranking order: first headline, second headline, lead paragraph, followed by body text. A wide definition of *actor* was applied for this purpose extending to *people*, *organizations*, *institutions*, or *functions*, which could appear with reference to either name or function/position. Implicit references to actors were also included, as far as references were understood by the coder. An overview of the categories applied can be found in *appendix 3*.

Given the coding, some considerations were necessary, which will be outlined briefly. When no main actor has been clearly identifiable, the order of appearance has been used instead. Only a minor selection of articles did not meet the criteria of identifiable actors (SVT10140 and SVT10141 for example). For actors bordering between several categories, their primary function in the news item has been considered. This, for example, means coding doctors as representing a *profession* when described within their job role and coding them as *experts* when providing medical statements or sharing their expertise on a matter covered in the news item. For this reason, the then Swedish chief epidemiologist Anders Tegnell has been coded as *expert* throughout, whereas other colleagues from the Public Health Agency have been coded as *authority/non-elected officials*. Also, scientific papers have been coded as *scientists/experts* when the referencing of them in the news items has been having a legitimizing effect on the facts presented.

Sweeping references were largely excluded throughout the coding, such as references to groups of actors (“the EU members”, “the public health centres”, “the authorities”). Additionally, geographical references were excluded, such as “Sweden”, “EU”, “Stockholm”. This was also the case when referring to political decisions originating from an institution with the geographical terminology used instead, mainly since sweeping geographical terms make it more difficult to identify the actual actor. The term “EU” for example, says very little about which EU institution or function that should be coded, hence the exclusion altogether. In a few articles (such as SVT10614) exemptions have been made and the sweeping reference to EU has been coded as an actor, due to the lack of other actors in the news items and the implicit understanding that “EU” referred to a single institution in these cases. Swedish regions are other exceptions, as they are sometimes referred to by their geographical terminology when listed in the news items. Supranational and global organizations and institutions were coded separately, albeit

with the exception of health authorities such as the *European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)* and the *European Medicines Agency (EMA)*, who arguably have had a more hands-on practical role in the rollout of vaccines and therefore were grouped together with health authorities.

An area that proved rather ambiguous to code was the health care actors, and therefore public health centres have been coded as *corporations* when discussed from a managerial perspective, whereas the regional healthcare information services have been coded as *authorities* providing health advice based on guidance from expert authorities. Additionally, the employers' organization *SALAR* (Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions) is an exception which has been coded as (*regional or local*) *government*. Despite *SALAR* being an employer organization, it has had a prominent role in the vaccination process representing the regions which have been responsible for the vaccination rollout in each regional area respectively.

The category of *citizens* has also included groups of people without any formal connection other than a shared feature or trait (e.g., “vaccinated” or “unvaccinated”). Citizens participating in protests have been coded as public actors when being loosely affiliated (i.e., the use of “protesters” in general), and as civil society when participating as a joint protest group (i.e., “protesters” with an explicitly shared purpose, or affiliations such as “the Freedom Convoy”).

Among other considerations, only references to vaccine manufacturers were coded as actors (e.g., “Astra Zeneca”, “Pfizer” or “Moderna”), and not when the vaccine name itself was used. Exempted from this, however, were the cases including *Sputnik V*, which were not referenced to the manufacturer in the examined news items. The category of *journalists* was extended to also include media companies more broadly, and fictitious characters were grouped with celebrities. While this category also includes references to religious leaders, references to “God” or “Jesus” were not coded as actors.

While the evaluation has been rather straightforward following the prerequisites outlined in the previous chapter, the element has been left out when several actors have been included in the news item evaluation (such as SVT20280). Additionally, unclear evaluations have been coded as undeterminable. The evaluation and function of the actors were partly assessed through epithets used, such as SVT20536 using the term *tennis star* rather than *tennis player* or *athlete*. A risk with the evaluative element is that people might interpret neutral actions differently. FrT20043, which is neutrally written concerning vaccine donations, might be interpreted with appraisal, in the same way that FrT20041 might be interpreted with criticism towards the local government/municipality for denying unvaccinated people the right to work (even if this too is neutrally written). Given the purpose of this study, these evaluations

will not be conducted, and the analysis focuses on the manifest content. Some alternative media news items were difficult to interpret, as they seemed to contain irony and excessively making use of citation marks. The implications of adding citation marks are unfortunately out of scope for this thesis as it requires a deeper textual analysis, but it is worth acknowledging.

Other than what has been outlined thus far, the categorization of *function* and *evaluation* followed the set criteria. In total, 420 main actors, 389 secondary actors, and 329 tertiary actors were included in the analysis.

6.1.1. Actor Types

Initially, it should be emphasized that the *type* of actor concerns the function, rather than the person. It is of less importance *who* is present, rather *what/which/whom* the person represents (see Nilsson, 2010). The occurrence of *governmental* and *authority* actors (including non-elected officials) is high throughout, both among main, secondary, and tertiary actors. Additionally, when observing secondary and tertiary actors, members of the public and corporations have a high occurrence within this category.

When looking closer into the differences between the different news media outlets, a contingency table applying the news media outlet as an independent variable reveals differences in the occurrence of different actors. *Table 6:1* features a contingency table of main actors determined by the news media outlet through which they are featured. Due to the shifting sample sizes of news items from the different outlets, the row percentages are presented for better comparisons. Notable differences between the alternative media outlets and the mainstream outlet used as a baseline is the high (in comparison) occurrence of main *actors affiliated with the political opposition*, which was considerably lower in the mainstream media outlets. Less prevalent as main actors in alternative media were *scientists or experts*, *global organizations*, as well as *journalists*, *influencers*, and *celebrities*. One of the alternative media outlets (FrT) also included *members of the public* as main actor to a larger degree than the other outlets included in this study.

Table 6:1. Overview of Main Actors (n=420), All Periods (percent)

	SVT	ETC	FrT	Total
Authority actor	23	22	21	22
Government representative	20	22	23	21
The public	10	10	19	13
Corporations	11	9	12	11
Scientist or expert	13	10	5	10
Civil society/NGO	8	10	7	8
Journalists, influencers & celebrities	8	3	5	6
Global organizations	7	3	2	5
Political opposition	1	7	5	3
Other actor	0	2	1	1
Total (percent)	100	100	100	100
N (number of coded articles)	211	58	151	420

Comments: Cross tabulation with row percentages. Values are rounded to the nearest integer. Pearson's $\chi^2 = 33,698^{**}$, Cramer's $V=.200$. * $p<.10$, ** $p<.05$, *** $p<.005$.

Looking further into the occurrence of other actors in the news items, *table 6:2* features a contingency table of second and third actors determined by the news media outlet in which they are featured. This is less coherent than previously outlined figures and features more discrepancies between the two different alternative news media outlets. Notable differences include a smaller occurrence of *authority actors*, but a larger focus on *governmental actors* in news items from ETC. ETC also had a lower occurrence of *corporations* among the actors. *Members of the public* were slightly more prevalent among actors in news items from FrT. While the prevalence of *global organizations* was higher in ETC, it was lower in news items from FrT. The alternative media outlets both had a higher frequency of *actors tied to the political opposition* and a lower occurrence of *journalists, influencers, and celebrities*.

Table 6:2. Overview of Secondary and Tertiary Actors per News Outlet ($n=389/n=329$), All Periods (percent)

	Second actor				Third actor			
	SVT	ETC	FrT	Tot.	SVT	ETC	FrT	Tot.
Authority actor	22	11	18	19	29	18	25	26
Government representative	15	25	10	15	16	18	16	16
The public	19	9	27	20	14	16	11	13
Corporations	22	18	22	21	16	9	20	16
Scientist or expert	8	9	5	7	7	11	12	9
Civil society/NGO	7	14	10	9	7	9	7	7
Journalists, influencers & celebrities	3	2	2	3	5	0	3	4
Global organizations	5	5	1	4	3	13	3	5
Political opposition	0	4	3	2	2	4	3	3
Other actor	1	4	1	1	1	4	1	2
Total (percent)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N (number of coded articles)	186	56	147	389	153	56	120	329

Comments: Cross tabulation with row percentages. Values are rounded to the nearest integer. Second Actor: Pearson's $\chi^2 = 33,109^{**}$, Cramer's $V=.206$. Third Actor: Pearson's $\chi^2 = 23,545$, Cramer's $V=.189$. $*p<.10$, $**p<.05$, $***p<.005$.

6.1.2. Function of the Actors in the News Items

The variables of the content analysis also included the *function* and the *evaluation* of the actors outlined above. To examine the relationship between these variables, contingency tables were produced featuring the news media *outlet* as the independent variable, adding the *function* and the *evaluation* as dependent variables featuring the *type* of actor as layer, or control variable.

The *function* of the actor implicates whether the person is portrayed as active or passive in the sense of being *referred* or being *referred to*. The function variables could thus determine if actors were described in terms of *performing an act* or *giving a statement*, or in terms of *being subjected to an act* or *referred to/talked about*. If any actors were portrayed as both active and passive, they were regarded as active, as with it comes a greater sense of control for the actor. When addressing the *function* of the actors in the news items, it should first be noted that the associations generally are quite weak for the first and third actors combined, with $\chi^2=2,291$ and $2,393$ (with $p>0,1$, which is non-significant) and Cramer's $V=.074$ and $.085$ respectively. These figures are somewhat better for the totals of the second actor with $\chi^2=18,479$ (and $p<.005$, which is significant) and Cramer's $V=.218$. Despite involving a low

significance for many of the associations, the numbers can be used to gain descriptive insights in an indicative manner, and some important differences will thus be considered. The findings will be presented in this section, and the analyses are accounted for in full in *appendix 4 (tables A4:1; A4:3; A4:5)*.

Starting with the main actor, authority figures were found to be exclusively active in news items from ETC (100%) compared to FrT (91%) and SVT (90%), while main actors of the political opposition were found to be less featured as active by FrT (75%) in comparison to both SVT and ETC (100%). Members of the public were more often active as main actors in ETC (67%) compared to FrT (35%) and SVT (30%) and civil society actors/NGOs were more often portrayed as active by alternative media (FrT at 70% and ETC at 83%) than mainstream media (SVT at 59%). Experts and scientists were found to be passive as main actors to a larger degree in FrT (13%) compared to SVT (4%) and ETC (0%). Additionally, global organizations were less likely to be portrayed as active as main actors in ETC (50%) compared to SVT (86%) and FrT (100%). All in all, there is, however, small differences in the overall portrayal of active versus passive main actors in the news items studied.

When considering the secondary and tertiary actors, the findings of highest interest with confirmed associations between variables focus on the function of the actors and include a higher percentage of passive secondary governmental actors in the news items of FrT (60%) compared to both SVT (29%) and ETC (21%). Both ETC (50%) and FrT (56%) were less likely to portray secondary authority actors as active, compared to SVT (78%). Members of the public were more often portrayed as active as secondary actors by ETC (40%) than FrT (10%) and SVT (23%), whereas journalists, influencers and celebrities more often were portrayed as passive as secondary actors by both ETC (100%) and FrT (67%) compared to SVT (33%). Corporations were more often portrayed as passive as secondary actors by FrT (88%) compared to ETC (70%) and SVT (78%). With all scientists and experts featured as secondary actors by ETC being active, this figure was lower among news items from FrT (63%) and SVT (71%). All in all, the secondary actor was less likely to be active in FrT (31%) compared to ETC (59%) and SVT (50%) and this association is both strong and significant.

The third actor featured was more average in terms of differences between the news outlets. Tertiary authority actors were found to be passive to a higher degree in ETC (50%) compared to FrT (37%) and SVT (30%), and tertiary political opposition actors were more often passive in FrT (25%) compared to ETC and SVT (both at 0%). Members of the public were more often active as tertiary actors in ETC (44%) compared to FrT (23%) and SVT (23%). A significant association is the portrayal of tertiary civil society/NGO-actors as passive in FrT (88%) and ETC (60%) compared to SVT (27%). Corporations

were most often passive as tertiary actors in alternative media (ETC 100% and FrT 92%) compared to SVT (79%), and global organizations were mainly passive in FrT (67%), compared to ETC (29%) and SVT (40%). The combined totals do not display any large differences, apart from FrT that was slightly more likely to portray tertiary actors as passive (52%) compared to ETC (41%) and SVT (44%).

6.1.3. Evaluation of the Actors in the News Items

The *evaluative* aspect was included to determine if any type of judgement was passed by the journalist or media outlet, and if the actor was criticized, praised, or discussed in neutral terms. For the evaluation of the actors featured in the news items, there is a higher significance and strong associations. The totals of the main, secondary, and tertiary actors feature $\chi^2=36,963$, 26,861 and 21,936 respectively (all with $p<.005$, which is significant), and Cramer's $V=.210$, .186 and .183 respectively. The findings will be presented in this section, and the analyses are accounted for in full in *appendix 4 (tables A4:2; A4:4; A4:6)*.

Starting with the evaluation of the main actor, governmental actors were found to be more criticized in news items from ETC (54%) compared to FrT (15%) and SVT (19%) which were found to feature more neutral portrayals (FrT 68% and SVT 69%). Main authority actors were more critically portrayed by FrT (19%) than ETC (0%) and SVT (4%), with significant associations. Also significantly, members of the public were less often neutrally portrayed as main actors by ETC (33%) compared to FrT (90%) and SVT (90%) but rather praised (ETC at 17%) or criticized (ETC at 50%). The alternative media outlets significantly tended to criticize corporations as main actors (ETC at 100% and FrT at 67%) compared to SVT (29%). While none of the alternative media outlets were found to praise corporations as main actors, SVT did so in 21% of the items featured. The evaluation of experts tended to be neutral for SVT (93%) and ETC (100%) as main actors, whereas the news items from FrT featured praise (25%) and criticism (13%) to a larger degree. While global organizations as main actors largely were neutrally portrayed in mainstream media (SVT at 86%), half of the news items from ETC contained praise and a third of the news items from FrT contained criticism, all of which were significant, albeit based on only a few news items. The overall assessment of the evaluation of main actors finds the alternative media outlets to be applying less praise (FrT at 3% and ETC at 3% compared to SVT at 6%), more criticism (FrT at 22% and ETC at 33% compared to SVT at 11%) while being less neutral in their portrayal than mainstream media. These final associations are strong and significant.

The evaluation of the second actor contained fewer significant aspects, but a higher degree of critical portrayal of secondary actors is noted in news items from FrT (40%) compared to ETC and SVT (both at 29%). The same pattern reoccurred also for members of the public as secondary actors from which

news items from FrT were neutral in 80% of the cases, compared with ETC (100%) and SVT (97%). As secondary actor, journalists, influencers, and celebrities were completely neutrally portrayed in alternative media as opposed to SVT (67%). Corporations were criticized as secondary actors by alternative media (FrT at 61% and ETC at 40%) compared to SVT (25%), rather than neutrally portrayed (FrT at 27% and ETC at 10%) compared to SVT at 53%, with numbers based on strong and significant associations. Also significant is the portrayal of scientists and experts as secondary actors as neutral by ETC (100%) and SVT (79%) as opposed to FrT (38%), which also displayed a high share of praise towards the same category of actors (25%) compared to ETC (0%) and SVT (7%). Also in terms of global organizations, the alternative media outlets were less neutral (ETC at 33% and FrT at 50%) compared to SVT (89%). To sum up the evaluations of secondary actors, FrT was found to be more criticizing (25%) in comparison to ETC (18%) and SVT (15%), and ETC was found to be evaluating secondary actors both positively and negatively in the news coverage (13%) compared to FrT (2%) and SVT (3%). These final associations are moderate and significant.

The evaluation of the tertiary actor also contained fewer significant aspects, but it is noted that tertiary governmental actors were more criticized by alternative media (FrT at 26% and ETC at 30%) compared to SVT (17%), despite all outlets being more or less equally neutral. FrT stands out in terms of criticism of tertiary authority actors (13%) compared to ETC (0%) and SVT (2%) while ETC, on the other hand, stands out in terms of praise of tertiary authority actors (10%) compared to FrT and SVT (both at 0%), with strong associations and significance. The evaluation of corporations as tertiary actors was less neutral by alternative media outlets (ETC at 20% and FrT at 38%) compared to SVT (63%) with more criticism (FrT at 58% and ETC at 40%), as well as praise (ETC at 40%), all aspects with strong associations and significance. Scientists and experts were most criticized as tertiary actors by ETC (33%) compared to FrT (14%) and SVT (0%), with FrT being most neutral in their evaluation (86%) compared to ETC (67%) and SVT (80%). Similar patterns reoccurred for global organizations for which ETC provided the least neutral evaluation (86%) compared to FrT and SVT (both at 100%). All in all, the evaluation of tertiary actors was more critical in alternative media (FrT at 23% and ETC at 20%) compared to SVT (9%). Whereas ETC (7%) and SVT (8%) had some degree of praise in their content, this was non-existent in the content of FrT (0%). These final associations are moderate and significant.

6.2. Frames in the News Items

Given the exploratory approach of this study, a wide selection of frames was applied, based on a selection of frames used to study health risks, identified by Dan & Raupp (2018). Some limitations have been placed and the considerations as such were outlined in the previous chapter, as well as a comprehensive description of what they each entail. A general overview of the frames included in the content analysis is featured in *table 6:3*. Some important considerations adhered to throughout the coding process will be outlined briefly, per framing function.

Table 6:3. Overview of the Frames Included in the Content Analysis

Problem definition	Cause identification	Treatment proposal	Moral evaluation	Procedural
Health severity frame	Attribution of responsibility frame	Action frame	Uncertainty frame	Grain frame
Human interest frame		Episodic frame	Alarmism frame	Loss frame
Economic consequences frame		Thematic frame	Reassurance frame	Conflict frame
		Scientific frame		

Comments: The overview of frames is based on a selection from Dan & Raupp (2018).

Problem Definition

Starting with the function of problem definition, the variables (V16–18 and V30–40) were assembled to determine the presence of *the health severity frame* by establishing if the story provides real, or hypothetical examples of impact on human life at large (see Dan & Raupp, 2018), *the human interest frame* by establishing if the story provides a human face or emotional angle (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000), as well as *the economic consequences frame* by establishing if the story portrays the financial consequences to different actors (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The variables were either built on definitions from Dan & Raupp (2018) with certain passages cited, or fully cited from Semetko & Valkenburg's (2000) study and coding scheme covering the presence of generic frames. Dan & Raupp (2018) identified an additional frame for problem definition, *the consequence frame*. Due to its low information specificity and low prevalence in the reviewed research (Dan & Raupp, 2018), it was excluded from this study. Additionally, one might argue that the three frames outlined thus far cover consequences sufficiently. Shih, et. al. (2008), who apply the consequence frame in their study, focus on the consequences on human life, society, and economy. These are all aspects largely covered by the previously outlined frames.

The health severity frame did feature numerical risks, risk comparisons and tallying of mortality rates. It also included vaccine side effects. The occurrence of risk comparisons was measured widely, and for example the inclusion of numbers of patients admitted to the ICU of the hospitals with COVID-19, comparing vaccinated and unvaccinated (ETC20057) is one such example, another is the comparison between COVID-19 and previous pandemics. The human-interest frame was identified through the outlined criteria, which also included a focus on events that might be of importance to people (e.g., how events would impact Christmas celebrations in FrT20014 and ETC20050) and the use of an emotive language (“waiting desperately” in ETC20047, describing how vulnerable groups got “lost in the phone queue” in SVT10371, encouraging to “protect our close and loved ones” in FrT20014, labelling COVID-rules as “aggressive” in FrT10015). Another example of an emotive approach is to focus on children and the consequences for them (e.g., in FrT20008 and ETC10081). Additionally, the tendency to put a human face on an issue was measured, and this can be exemplified by the large focus on the chief epidemiologist Tegnell (e.g., in SVT10593) rather than referencing the authority he represents. It should, however, be noted that the inclusion of politicians and governmental representatives was not coded as adding a human face to the issue, unless the politicians were explicitly featured in the role of a private citizen without the function of their job role. Lastly, it should be emphasized that only explicit references were coded in the case of the economic consequences frame, and not implicit suggestions of for example financial losses.

Identifying Causes

The function of identifying causes (V19 and V41–45), concerns *the attribution of responsibility frame*, so Dan & Raupp (2018). The presence of *the attribution of responsibility frame* is determined by establishing if the story presents issues in ways that attribute responsibility to either government or an individual/group (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The variables were either built on definitions by, or fully cited from Semetko & Valkenburg’s (2000) study and coding scheme covering the presence of generic frames.

In terms of attribution of responsibility, it became evident during the coding that the variables featured only managed to capture attributed claims of responsibility towards individuals and governments, and not the cases where the responsibility claim was unspecified or directed towards a corporation or a vaccine manufacturer (e.g., FrT10072, FrT10015, ETC10081, ETC10079). These aspects were only covered when the attribution claims came as a result of a governmental effort to implement vaccines, and for example when the attribution of responsibility shifted from the manufacturer to the government (FrT10078). It should be noted that *government* in this case came to include the state in general,

including authorities and people representing them. Urgency of action was captured by the use of direct words such as “immediately” (ETC10268) and calls to, for example, “capture early” (SVT10203).

Proposing Treatments

The function of proposing treatments (V20–23 and V46–51) included variables to determine the presence of *the action frame* by establishing if the story focused on measures that people and society can take to mitigate the health risk in general (Dan & Raupp, 2018), as well as the presence of *episodic, thematic & medical framing* establishing if the cause and cure is attributed to the individual, societal or scientific level (Dan & Raupp, 2018; Iyengar, 1991). For the purpose of clarity, vaccination campaigns were considered as a *mitigator* of risk. A dedicated variable was created to capture possible advice to limit the risk of COVID-19 without getting vaccinated, thus able to identify scepticism to vaccines even when this does not extend to scepticism to COVID-19 as a disease. The variables were either built on definitions by Dan & Raupp (2018) with certain passages cited or built on variables from a previous content analysis by Reinemann, et. al. (2012), from which the variable definition (question) was cited in an adapted version to fit the structure.

The variables dealing with treatment proposing frames did not offer a lot of difficulties in terms of coding, but the differentiation between *episodic* and *thematic* framing is perhaps best to exemplify as it can be a bit of a grey area. In differentiating between the two, the episodic frame is applied when news items simply report on an event, while the thematic frame best can be exemplified by describing and outlining the consequences and implications of an event or a development. This can for example be done by explaining contributing factors to the tallied mortalities (SVT10376) or outlining the reasons for stopping vaccination campaigns (FRT10024) and providing details of a broader context. On a final note, it should be clarified that while it is not really possible to combine thematic, episodic, and scientific framing based on the definitions of the codebook, certain news items contained multiple topics and in a few cases several of these variables were chosen (such as SVT10267).

Moral Evaluation

The function of evaluating morality and offering cues to the public on how to act (see Dan & Raupp, 2018) (V24–26 and V52–58) included variables to determine the presence of *the uncertainty frame* by establishing if the news story focused on what is unknown or casted doubt on already known facts (Dan & Raupp, 2018), or the dichotomic *alarmist/reassurance frames*, by determining if the story played up or down health risks (ibid). The variables were built on definitions by Dan & Raupp (2018) with certain passages cited, all fully outlined in the codebook (*appendix 1*) per each variable. While the alarmist and reassurance frames are dichotomous per definition, and relative in that sense, they should not be

considered as mutually exclusive in this case. A news story might for example be reassuring in terms of COVID-19, but alarming regarding vaccine side effects. Therefore, the two frames were coded individually. *The morality frame*, as defined by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), was not included in the study, as it has been identified as less common in news content in previous research (Neuman, et. al., 1992), nor is it listed by Dan & Raupp (2018) as a common frame in framing studies on health risks.

The frames with a moral evaluation function are perhaps the group of frames requiring the clearest definitions in order to avoid an all too subjective evaluation. *The uncertainty frame* was determined by queues offering clues about aspects not fully understood such as “unclear whether” (FrT20052), “suspected side effects” (FrT10047) or referring to “prognoses” (ETC10240). *The reassurance frame* occurred in different ways, but examples of downplayed risks of COVID-19 are ETC20057 focusing on personal freedom over risk prevention, or ETC10081 listing other measures beside the vaccine as more efficient to prevent risks. The evaluation of people in charge was somewhat difficult to capture, as actors in news items without criticism were not automatically considered capable, but also had to include some positive evaluation. In case of several different people in charge being evaluated simultaneously, the variable was not coded for the specific news item.

The alarmist frame includes sensationalist and unsubstantiated claims, and for this purpose any news item that provided claims without sources was coded as such. This includes sweeping references to “critics” (FrT20028), “several experts” (ETC10242) or “many researchers” (see for example SVT20362). It should be noted that facts were not checked, and sources were not evaluated – only the mere presence was considered. It should also be emphasized that experiences are considered as unsubstantiated facts in this case (such as ETC10127) largely labelling opinionated articles as sensationalist when they lack sources (such as ETC10195) as a result. It was further determined that terms such as “coerced vaccination”/“vaccination by force” was to be labelled sensationalist. Although mandates might call for compulsory vaccination in certain places, with consequences of a refusal, none of the examples encountered in the news items included vaccines injected by force. Alarmism also included statements with (exaggerated) severe implications for health, which were only rectified towards the end of the news item (such as SVT10069 listing 4000 virus mutations, later to specify that only a limited amount of these would mutate in a significant way), as well as statements that insinuate causality and correlation without substantiating these claims (such as FrT10006 tallying vaccine mortalities without a substantiated connection, as well as FrT10068 and FrT10089 which lead the reader to assume there is a connection between mortalities and vaccine, even though this is not substantiated by the facts presented, or ETC10177 suggesting causality between strategy and mortality rates). Finally, an overall

sensationalist language was assessed as alarmist, such as ETC10079 referring to “the vaccine disaster”, or FrT10075 referring to the “lethal vaccine”.

Procedural Frames

The final category of frames concerns frames without a framing function, defined as *procedural* by Dan & Raupp, 2018. The category included variables (V27–28 and V59–66) to determine the presence of *gain & loss frames* by establishing if the news story focused on positive or negative assessments of treatment recommendations offered in the news items (Dan & Raupp, 2018), as well as *the conflict frame* by establishing if the news story focused on conflict between different actors to attract interest (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). To narrow the scope of the valence-oriented gain & loss frames, the variables focused on the act of getting vaccinated and implementing COVID passports/restricting unvaccinated people in society. The variables were either built on definitions by Dan & Raupp (2018) with certain passages cited, or fully cited from Semetko & Valkenburg’s (2000) study and coding scheme covering the presence of generic frames.

The variables measuring the gain and loss frames were assessed rather unconditionally. The gain frame was mainly measured through positive aspects in terms of minimizing risk (ETC20057), whereas the loss frame mainly was measured through the cost of not getting vaccinated, such as the difficulties in travelling with the restrictions in place at the time (SVT10073) or being at greater risk of severe illness (ETC20057). It should be noted that the gain and loss frames only were able to measure the benefits *one way*. It was noted by the coder that some of the news items identified benefits of *not* getting vaccinated, as well as *the cost of doing so* – an aspect important to consider when discussing the results at a later stage.

In terms of conflict, an absence of *separate sides* is no guarantee of a similar absence of conflict. Only conflicts reflected in the news items have been coded as such. This means that future (hypothetical) disagreements waiting to happen as a result of a measure outlined in the article was not included, such as FrT20078 which features measures that will come into effect for unvaccinated in the future, however allowing enough time for people to get jabbed before, meaning that labelling the event as a conflict would be speculative. The conflict frame also includes people not following vaccine priority plans, such as in SVT10383 which features people “cutting in line”, and refusals to comply like in ETC10060 featuring people who “do not want to wait”.

6.2.1. Frames in the News Item Headline/Preamble

The first subsection is concerned with frames in news item *headlines and preambles*. In terms of visibility and attention, it is likely that the frames in the headlines are the frames the news outlets are likely to emphasize. After all, headlines and preambles are the result of editorial choices, and they are therefore important to distinguish. Previous research has also found news consumers to have limited interest beyond the headlines, with the largest share of readers not going any deeper into articles after reading the headlines (American Press Institute, 2014; Sternvik, 2004), and it therefore seemed like a reasonable choice to emphasize the element of the news article that makes up the most read part.

Addressing the findings and evaluating differences between the news media outlets, a contingency table applying the news media outlet as an independent variable reveals differences in the occurrence of different frames. *Table 6:4* features a contingency table of headline/preamble frames determined by the news media outlet through which they are featured. Due to the shifting sample sizes of news items from the different outlets, the row percentages are presented to allow for better comparisons.

Table 6:4. Overview of Frames in Headline/Preamble ($n=423$), All Periods (percent)

	SVT	ETC	FrT	Total	Chi ²	Cramer's V
Episodic	70	62	80	73	8,212**	.139
Human interest	27	28	33	29	1,874	.067
Action	28	26	23	26	1,087	.051
Action	28	26	23	26	1,087	.051
Uncertainty	25	17	25	24	1,528	.060
Thematic	18	36	14	19	13,698***	.180
Health severity	13	19	23	18	6,351**	.123
Conflict	13	26	21	18	6,661**	.125
Attribution of responsibility	8	19	20	14	12,207***	.170
Alarmism	4	21	21	12	26,276***	.249
Medical	11	2	12	10	5,196*	.111
Gain	15	9	3	10	13,546***	.179
Loss	2	21	8	7	24,508***	.241
Reassurance	7	9	5	6	1,398	.057
Economic consequences	2	5	3	3	1,277	.055

Comments: Cross tabulation with row percentages. Values are rounded to the nearest integer.

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .005$.

Problem Definition

The presence of frames in the news item headlines/preambles dealing with problem definitions is fairly high and dominated by the human-interest frame (29%) followed by the health severity frame (18%) and the economic consequences frame (3%). The prevalence of the health severity frame is perhaps the most interesting in this case given its moderate and significant associations with the news media outlet, differing considerably between the alternative news media outlets (FrT at 23% and ETC at 19%) and the mainstream media outlet SVT (13%). While the associations are lacking in the case of the two other frames, the frequency is worth highlighting even though it does not differ considerably between the news media outlets. A third to a quarter of the article headlines/preambles contain the human-interest frame and only a minor share entails the economic consequence frame.

Cause Identification

The cause identification function contains the attribution of responsibility frame which is both significant and moderate in its associations in the contingency table. Occurring in 14% of the news items, it is considerably more common in the alternative media outlets (FrT at 20% and ETC at 19%) compared to the mainstream news media outlet SVT (8%).

Treatment Proposal

The function of proposing treatments is highly prevalent in the studied news items. A quarter of the texts contain the action frame in the headline/preamble. For the other three frames, most of the news items have only been coded with one of the three. When addressing the ratio of episodic-thematic frames, the prevalence is at 73% and 19% respectively, with the medical frame accounting for 10% of the headlines/preambles. While the action frame is similarly applied by the news outlets, the medical frame is considerably less found in content from ETC (2%) compared to SVT (11%) and FrT (12%). While the action and the medical frame lack significance, the episodic and thematic frames are high in significance with moderate associations. Notable differences are the ratios between thematic and episodic framing where ETC (62%) applies the episodic frame to a smaller degree than mainstream media (SVT at 70%), with FrT applying the same frame to a higher degree (80%). Subsequently, the opposite is true for the thematic frame, which is applied to a higher degree by the ETC (36%) than both SVT (18%) and FrT (14%).

Moral Evaluation

The presence of frames dealing with moral evaluations in the news items' headlines and preambles is mainly concerned with the uncertainty frame (24%). The alarmism and reassurance frames each account for 12% and 6% respectively. The alarmism frame is the most interesting frame to focus on here as it is

significant with strong associations. Alternative media clearly adopt this frame more often (ETC at 21% and FrT at 21%) than SVT (4%). The uncertainty frame is somewhat less common in news items from ETC (17%) compared to FrT (25%) and SVT (25%), as is the reassurance frame in news items from FrT (5%) compared with ETC (9%) and SVT (7%).

Procedural Frames

The presence of procedural frames is perhaps smaller, but still accounts for 18% in the case of conflict frames, with the gain and loss frames at 10% and 7% respectively. All procedural frames are significant with strong or moderate associations. In terms of differences between the news media outlets, the gain frame is less common in the alternative media outlets (FrT at 3% and ETC at 9%) compared to the mainstream media outlet SVT at 15%. On the contrary, the loss frame is more common in the alternative media outlets (ETC at 21% and FrT at 8%) compared to SVT (2%). Subsequently, also the conflict frame is more common in the alternative media outlets with ETC at 26% and FrT at 21%, compared with SVT at 13%.

6.2.2. Frames in the News Item Body

Like in the previous section, a contingency table applying the news media outlet as an independent variable reveals differences in the occurrence of different frames. *Table 6:5* features a contingency table of article body frames determined by the news media outlet through which they are featured. Due to the shifting sample sizes of news items from the different outlets, the row percentages are presented to allow for better comparisons.

Table 6:5. Overview of Frames in News Item Body ($n=423$), All Periods (percent)

	SVT	ETC	FrT	Total	Chi ²	Cramer's V
Episodic	51	38	68	55	18,914***	.211
Conflict	27	62	37	35	25,466***	.245
Human interest	24	52	40	34	19,393***	.214
Action	32	36	36	34	0,992	.048
Thematic	35	59	22	34	25,824***	.247
Gain	35	47	20	31	16,598***	.198
Attribution of responsibility	27	41	27	29	4,932*	.108
Reassurance	15	35	19	19	3,578	.168
Uncertainty	20	19	16	18	0,854	.045
Alarmism	7	31	23	16	26,971***	.253
Loss	11	35	17	16	18,107***	.207
Health severity	14	26	12	15	6,687*	.126
Medical	14	3	10	11	5,492*	.114
Economic consequences	2	21	5	6	29,193***	.263

Comments: Cross tabulation with row percentages. Values are rounded to the nearest integer.

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .005$.

Problem Definition

Like in the case of the headlines and preambles, also the article bodies contain a large share of frames dealing with problem definition. The human-interest frame dominates (34%), followed by the health severity frame (15%) and the economic consequences frame (6%). This set of frames is important to acknowledge given the strong significant associations, where the differences between the news outlets are considerable. Starting with the health severity frame, this is most prominent in ETC (26%) and occurring the least in FrT (12%), with SVT in-between at 14%. Both alternative media outlets have a high share of the human-interest frame (ETC at 52% and FrT at 40%), both of which are considerably higher than the mainstream media outlet (SVT at 24%). ETC stands out also in the case of the economic consequences frame at 21%, with FrT at 5% and SVT at 2%.

Cause Identification

The attribution of responsibility frame will only be acknowledged briefly as it lacks significance in this case. The alternative news media outlet ETC clearly stands out at 41% prevalence, which is higher than both FrT (27%) and SVT (27%).

Treatment Proposal

When addressing the frames contributing with treatment proposals, there are mixed indications of significance and association. Whereas the action and the medical frame lack this, the thematic and episodic frames are high on both aspects. Addressing the latter two, the values differ considerably between the news outlets. Among the alternative news outlets, FrT stands out with a high percentage of episodic framing (68%) compared to ETC (38%) and SVT (51%). Subsequently, ETC stands out with a high percentage thematic framing (59%) compared to FrT (22%) and SVT (35%). The medical frame is somewhat less occurring in alternative media outlets (ETC at 3% and FrT at 10%) compared to SVT (14%), and the action frame is slightly more prevalent in the alternative media outlets, even if just by a few percentage points.

Moral Evaluation

Among the frames dealing with moral evaluations in the news items' body, the alarmism and reassurance frames stand out, both significant and with strong associations. The alarmism frame is considerably more frequent in the alternative media outlets (ETC at 31% and FrT at 22%) compared to SVT (7%). However, also the reassurance frame is more frequent in the same outlets (ETC at 35% and FrT at 19%) compared to SVT (15%). In terms of the uncertainty frame, only FrT stands out at 16% prevalence, compared to SVT (20%) and ETC (19%), even if this is just by a few percentage points and with lacking significance.

Procedural Frames

In the final selection, the procedural frames are significant with strong associations, and they thus differ considerably between the different outlets. The gain frame is most prevalent in ETC (47%) with FrT at 20% and SVT somewhere in-between at 35%. Also, the loss frame is most prevalent in ETC (35%), although with a slightly higher percentage in FrT (17%) than in SVT (11%). Finally, the conflict frame is clearly more featured in the alternative media outlets (ETC at 62% and FrT at 37%) than in the mainstream media outlet (SVT at 27%).

Chapter VII: Discussion & Conclusions

7.1. Analysis

When addressing the actors of the news items, it can be established that governmental and authority actors dominated as *main* actors. As *secondary* and *tertiary* actors, also corporations and the public had a high frequency. This is largely in line with previous studies examining actors in news media content during the initial part of the COVID-19-pandemic (Ghersetti, 2021), where corporations, the public and the government were found to have the highest occurrence in the studied news material, along with media and journalists. The alternative media outlets did feature a higher frequency of actors affiliated with the political opposition as main actors, which on the one hand could indicate a more critical stance overall to political power, as these actors mainly had an active role. On the other hand, the evaluation of these actors tended to be neutral or criticizing, even though it also should be emphasized that none of the news media outlets included in the study were praising neither government, nor political opposition to a larger degree.

Also standing out in the occurrence of main actors, FrT featured members of the public more frequently than the other news outlets. Subsequently, FrT did also have the highest prevalence of the human-interest frame (both in the headline/preamble and the article body) which follows naturally with a high focus on individuals. The evaluation of the public as main actor contained a more positive or critical evaluation by ETC, with FrT and SVT being more neutral, a situation that changed when the public was evaluated as a secondary or tertiary actor. There was an overall higher occurrence of global organizations in ETC than in both SVT and FrT. There was also a higher occurrence of the thematic frame in ETC than in the other news outlets featured in the study, which includes a larger focus on the societal level, beyond reports on single events. On the same note, it should be mentioned that FrT had the lowest frequency of global organizations featured, and subsequently a smaller degree of the thematic frame throughout the news items.

The actor category of journalists, influencers and celebrities did have a lower frequency of occurrence in alternative than in mainstream media. If one is to generalize, this is a category that also could be described as a type of *media establishment*. While the mainstream media included in this study was not overtly positive in their evaluations, alternative media proved to be more critical towards this category of actors. Another category where the news outlets were differing was the category of corporations, including vaccine manufacturers. News items from ETC entailed the lowest occurrence of corporations, less so than mainstream media. News items from FrT, on the other hand, entailed a higher frequency of corporations in their articles. At the same time, however, these were more critically evaluated throughout

the whole news items. Lastly, scientists and experts occurred less frequent as main actors in alternative media, but all the more frequent as secondary and tertiary actors.

There were small differences in the overall portrayal of the main actor function, but secondary and tertiary actors were found to be more passive in FrT than in mainstream media. These actors were portrayed as slightly more active in ETC than in mainstream media, but only just. Governmental and authority actors tended to be more passively portrayed as secondary and tertiary actors by alternative media (FrT more so than ETC), but with these actors mainly portrayed as active when evaluated as main actors. Overall, alternative media outlets included in this study applied less praise and more criticism of actors, being less neutral than mainstream media.

The occurrence of news frames has been touched upon briefly but deserves further attention. When assessing the prevalence of frames in different news media, the health severity frame and the attribution of responsibility frame are considerably more common in the alternative news media outlets' headlines and preambles, and the human-interest frame and the reassurance frame are more common in the news article body of alternative media. Considerably more common in the whole article (both headline and body) of alternative news media are the alarmism frame and the conflict frame, as well as the economic consequences frame that stands out especially in the case of ETC.

Differing between the outlets is the distribution of episodic/thematic/medical frames. The episodic frame is most frequently applied (both in headlines and article body) by FrT, and the least by ETC, with mainstream media somewhere in-between. The reversed relationship is true for the thematic frame. In the article headlines and preambles, the gain frame is more common in mainstream media, and the loss frame has a higher frequency in alternative media, meaning that they more often focus on, for example, the cost of not getting vaccinated. In the article body, ETC stands out applying the gain frame more often than mainstream media, however also in the body, the loss frame is more often applied by both alternative media.

7.2. Conclusions

The overall aim of this study has been to investigate how news regarding COVID-19 vaccines (including the vaccines themselves, vaccination campaigns, vaccine passports and mandates) has been portrayed in Swedish alternative media, as compared to traditional mainstream media. The first research question simply tapped into the portrayal by Swedish alternative news media. The findings confirm a somewhat different approach based on the actors featured, their function and evaluation, as well as the frames

applied in the news items. Governmental and authority actors dominate, as well as the public and corporations. While the occurrence of political and authority actors best can be exemplified by actions and measures from official sources being directed at someone, the occurrence of corporations includes vaccine manufacturers mentioned frequently in various contexts surrounding the campaigns. Implications of the fact that governmental and authority actors tended to be more passively portrayed by alternative media than mainstream media as secondary and tertiary actors ought to be considered, but also weighed against the fact that these categories of actors mainly were portrayed as active when evaluated as main actors.

While not differing too much from media in general concerning the dominating actors, alternative media, however, additionally allowed for a greater inclusion of political opposition with an active role. While this could be the result of a more critical stance towards government and authorities, the political opposition was not praised, rather portrayed with neutrality or criticism. Another aspect to consider is the lower prevalence of *the media establishment* (such as journalists and influencers), with more criticism in the portrayal. Scientists also received less focus as main actors, even though they were more frequent as subsequent actors. The evaluation by alternative media can be summarized as portraying actors in conjunction with the studied subject with less praise, more criticism, and lower levels of neutrality. While this shallowly supports the notion of alternative media as a type of counter-media giving attention to marginalized groups and citizens, the outlined results lack a solid enough foundation to substantiate such a connection and conclusion.

A considerably larger frequency of the health severity frame and the attribution of responsibility frame, as well as the alarmism and conflict frames were found in alternative media headlines and preambles. These are important to acknowledge given their prominent position in the text and include a greater likeliness to be focusing on the severity and threat to people's health, a greater tendency to define the problem and possibly casting blame, as well as a greater focus on conflicts and alarming content. In the article body, the alarmism and conflict frame, as well as the human-interest frame and the reassurance frame were found to be more common in alternative media. Although the consequences of different types of framing (framing effects) have not been a part of this study, these findings could perhaps best be summarized as a larger share of emotion-evoking content that is close and relatable to readers, also serving the need for people to orient themselves during crises.

The first research question also sought to answer how the portrayal differs between different types of alternative media of different political affiliations. The study featured two out of four types of alternative news media (FrT as anti-system alternative media and ETC as irrelevant alternative media) when

matched against the framework by Holt (2018), as well as two political directions (the term *direction* serves this purpose better, as affiliation is not explicit in both cases): FrT as right-leaning and ETC as left-leaning. While the focus on just two out of the four different types of alternative media suggested by Holt (2018) obviously limits any conclusions on the nature of different types of alternative media, conclusions on differences between alternative media of different political directions are interesting. Based on the content analysis, FrT was found to explicitly focus on the public to a larger degree with a higher frequency of the inclusion of normal citizens as actors, along with a greater application of the human-interest frame, as well as the episodic frame. The news items of FrT also contained less criticism of the public as actor than ETC. ETC, on the other hand, featured a higher frequency of global organizations than FrT, along with a greater share of thematic framing. While this could indicate a larger focus on the global level, conclusions in this direction should be avoided as no separation was done between national and international actors within the other categories. There was a larger share of corporations featured in FrT, notably with a great focus on vaccine manufacturers, a category which was also more critically evaluated. ETC further differed from FrT by applying the economic consequence frame to a larger degree in the headlines and preambles, as well as by the application of the gain frame in the article body.

The attributed responsibility of events and developments in the news content can be assessed in two ways based on the results derived from this study: through the function of the attribution of responsibility frame, and the use of thematic/episodic framing. The attribution of responsibility frame was found to be more prominent in alternative media headlines and preambles overall. The episodic frame was most applied by FrT (more than in mainstream media) and the least by ETC (less than in mainstream media), with the opposite being true for the thematic frame. While the episodic frame can be linked with individualistic claims of responsibility, and the thematic frame with societal attributions of responsibility (Iyengar, 1991), this aspect has been questioned (see for example Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000 who found attribution of responsibility claims diverging from these relationships). If true, however, this would indicate that FrT applied a more individualistic attribution of responsibility, while ETC applied attributions of responsibility on a societal level. Without data on towards which actor the attribution of responsibility claims were directed, this is, however, not possible to verify.

The findings of the content analysis are descriptive in nature and thus provide insights into the nature of alternative media. These can be used to describe tendencies and outline the wider implications for the crisis management processes. Most importantly however, the fact that the news content of alternative media proved different from mainstream media confirms that this is an area that requires scholarly attention. Furthermore, the increased levels of alarmism, conflict, attribution of responsibility and health

severity frames in prominent positions of the news items of alternative media question the very basic understanding that media can be relied upon for acting as an (uncritical) information disseminator in times of crises. This might require crisis management to feature more extensive strategies on how to cope with different types of media in order to reach out to the public. Despite the limited reach argued for when discussing alternative media, the alternative outlets are growing (even though modest), and intermedia agenda-setting increases the possibilities of them actually influencing the mainstream media news coverage. Additionally, the process of news dissemination through social media and other networks is already very real. Even though people generally turn to mainstream media during crises, the pro-longed nature of the COVID-19 pandemic entails a crisis that changes, along with a process that passes through different cycles, for which the demand for, but also the supply of information changes. From what has been outlined thus far, the choice to consume alternative media is a conscious one, however, the consumption is also of a complementary nature. This also means that the implications discussed above should not be overstated.

There are some obvious important considerations when assessing the findings of this study. No differentiations were done between regional, national, and international actors for most of the categories. This would have been interesting to consider, especially as the response to the pandemic has differed between countries and regions. It should be noted that the variable measuring the emphasis on individuals and affected groups was found in many news items, possibly as a result of the articles focusing either on risk groups or vaccination priority orders, as these largely were centered around specific groups of citizens. Other aspects that were realized during the process included the failure to capture benefits of getting vaccinated, which were not always explicitly mentioned. Many times, these seemed to be implicitly understood. The low occurrence of the scientific aspect could indicate a politicization of the matter but might as well be a result of journalistic practice to place scientific issues into a societal context (thematic framing) or relate them to events close to people (episodic framing). The attribution of responsibility frame was not entirely clear in terms of towards which actor this was directed, as this aspect was not included in the study. Conclusions on the matter should thus be executed with caution. Furthermore, it would have been preferable to code vaccine manufacturers separately, as the level of criticism would have offered the ability to draw conclusions regarding the level of attributed responsibility. It is also likely that the levels of sensationalism would have been greater if facts and sources would have been checked and verified, even though this was outside the scope of the thesis.

On a final note, it should be emphasized that the very construction of the codebook entailed a focus and a basic assumption that vaccination was preferable. This means that the variables sought to identify, for example, benefits of getting vaccinated, whereas some news items featured benefits of *not* getting

vaccinated, an aspect that would not have been captured. This was also the case with vaccination certificates and COVID-passports. A concrete example of how this affected the analysis was the inclusion of mortality rates related to COVID-19, leaving out mortality rates related to side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines (which was a frequent topic in news items from some alternative media), which thus failed to be captured in the health severity frame, only being listed as a side effect.

The chosen research design has its obvious limitations. First of all, the study is exploratory, and any findings are thus to be considered indicative and in need of further substantiation to be confirmed. Furthermore, the study was designed with logistical limitations in terms of sample and inclusion of sources, meaning a limited selection of news outlets to base conclusions on. For general conclusions on the nature of alternative media, more outlets would have been preferable, and for definite conclusions on the nature of different types of alternative news media, the inclusion of additional types of alternative news outlets would have been absolutely necessary. An important aspect regarding the research design is also the fact that the analysis could have included indexed variables summarizing the two alternative news media outlets, rather than interpreting them individually. This would have allowed for clearer comparisons with mainstream media. At the same time, the aim of the study did entail the outlining of differences in-between alternative news media outlets and treating them separately thus serves a purpose as well.

While the study was said to focus on the manifest content, some tapping into the latent content was unavoidable, especially given the evaluative aspect. In order to ensure high validity, the process and execution of these evaluations have, however, been extensively outlined and accounted for. Like already mentioned, irony was difficult to grasp, since this – while being clear towards the coder – would have included latent interpretations. This also reveals another weakness, as the average reader would have been likely to interpret also latent content, and the study might therefore fail to capture this aspect to a certain degree.

The use of a database to access news articles could possibly have some implications for the findings, given inconsistencies in transferring of text content from the original source. The full articles were retrieved directly from the Retriever database in the case of ETC and SVT, whereas the articles from FrT required viewing the full article online. This could possibly mean that any systematic failures on behalf of the database would affect the material unequally. This also includes variables such as the word count, which was manually calculated in the FrT articles and based on the search engine's calculations in the other cases.

Finally, the choice to use framing theory to explain the results is not self-evident. The scholarly discussions around framing are extensive, and there might be reasons to further question and discuss the methodological choice regarding frames used to communicate health risks, given the politization of the COVID-19-pandemic. The frames used to study health risks might work better to investigate general COVID-19 communication more broadly, but less so for the actual vaccination efforts. However, despite being viewed in the light of its thus far outlined limitations, the study has touched upon a subject which is important from a societal perspective, and in dire need of further scholarly attention. Qualitative methods could also have been considered to address the subject with a more open approach – perhaps even discovering further aspects – and additional quantitative studies could seek to substantiate the findings of this thesis, to increase the overall understanding. If a similar research design was to be considered in future research, a different set of news frames could be included, perhaps with a more narrowly defined aim. As the intermedia agenda-setting by alternative media still is limited, the implications for crisis communication are not immediate, but the constantly more interconnected media landscape means that alternative, and non-mainstream outlets are likely to grow in importance. While this increases the ability to raise critical perspectives and voice opinions not heard elsewhere, it might also have implications for the accuracy of public health measures and crisis communication, given the ability of certain media to cast doubts on facts and spread false information. For this reason, a narrower scope addressing one particular type of alternative news media could be considered. This study has focused on the national perspective from a Swedish angle, and the aspects of alternative media are thus based on the notion of a free media system. Future research could include other types of media systems on a national level, or even comparative approaches on a global level. Alternative media, after all, play the most different roles in different media systems.

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Appendix 1: Codebook

I. Formal Categories

V1) Item Identification Number

The item identification number is alphanumeric and consists of the medium (SVT/ETC/FrT), the period (1 or 2), and the page number of the Retriever search list (lists are exported individually per news outlet and time period, and the articles are sorted periodically oldest to newest) (NNNN), presented in the following format: xxxNNNNN.

V2) Date

The date of publication (according to the Retriever search list) is stated as follows; YYYYMMDD.

V3) Medium

The name of the medium is specified, according to one of the three options.

- 1 = SVT (Swedish Television)
- 2 = Dagens ETC
- 3 = Fria Tider

V4) Length of News Item

This includes the total word count of the article (image captions and text in graphic illustrations are excluded).

V5) Time Period

The time period for the date of publication is specified, according to one of the following options. The options follow the phases of the *attention cycles* (as defined by McComas & Shanahan, 1999) surrounding the two peaks in news media reports regarding the COVID-19 vaccines and vaccine-related measures in March 2021 and December 2021.

- 1 = Period 1 (waxing phase) – 01.02.2021 to 31.03.2021
- 2 = Period 1 (maintenance phase) – 01.04.2021 to 30.04.2021
- 3 = Period 1 (waning phase) – 01.05.2021 to 31.05.2021
- 4 = Period 2 (waxing phase) – 01.11.2021 to 31.12.2021
- 5 = Period 2 (maintenance phase) – 01.01.2022 to 31.01.2022
- 6 = Period 2 (waning phase) – 01.02.2022 to 28.02.2022

V6) News Item Headline

The news item headline (limited to the first headline only) is provided in text. If no headline is present, no value is coded.

II. Actors Present in the News Items

This set of variables are to identify and outline the presence of actors in the news items, in terms of *type* of actors, *function* in the text, as well as *evaluation* of said actor. The category is limited to three actors, named *Actor 1* to 3. The three variables used to identify each of the actors are identical but labelled individually (within brackets); Actor 1 (V7-V9), Actor 2 (V10-V12) & Actor 3 (V13-V15).

Actor 1 is the *main actor* of the news item, and it is the actor of the article that receives the most attention or is assigned the greatest level of importance. If several actors receive an equal amount of attention/importance, the main actor is established by order of appearance (first mentioned) in the ranking order first headline, second headline, lead paragraph, followed by body text. Actors 2 and 3 are always determined by the ranking order outlined, given their prominence in the news item. If no second or third actor is present in the text, no values are coded for their respective variables.

The definition of actor in this context extends to *people, organizations, institutions, or functions*, which can appear with reference to either name or function/position. Implicit references to actors are also included, as far as references are understood by the coder. Sources referred to (such as other news outlets or news agencies) are excluded.

V7, V10, V13) Actor 1, 2 & 3 – Type

For the first actor appearing in the text, one of the following options is chosen to determine the type of actor. If no actor is present in the text, no value is coded.

- 1 = Government (national, regional, or local) representative
- 2 = Authority actor or another non-elected official
- 3 = Actor affiliated with the political opposition
- 4 = Member of the public/private citizen (individual citizen representing herself)
- 5 = Civil society/NGO (organized group or individual representing a group or a profession)
- 6 = Journalist (other than article author), media officer, or influencer
- 7 = Corporations (including medical companies or vaccine manufacturers)
- 8 = Scientist or expert
- 9 = Global organization/Supranational union

- 11 = Other actor

V8, V11, V14) Actor 1, 2 & 3 – Function

For the first actor appearing in the text, one of the following options is chosen to determine the function of the actor, i.e., if the actor is portrayed as *active* (if the actor is described in terms of *performing an act* or *giving a statement*) or as *passive* (if the actor is described in terms of *being subjected to an act* or *referred to/talked about*). If the actor is portrayed as both active and passive, the actor is coded as active. If no actor is present in the text, no value is coded.

- 1 = Active
- 2 = Passive
- 3 = Not possible to determine

V9, V12, V15) Actor 1, 2 & 3 – Evaluation

For the first actor appearing in the text, one of the following options is chosen to determine the evaluation of the actor, i.e., if the actor is *praised* (described in positive terms or in relation to successful actions), *criticized* (described in negative terms or in relation to failures), or described in *neutral* terms (neither positive or negative terms appear in conjunction with the actor in the text, nor success or failure). If no actor is present in the text, no value is coded.

1 = Praised

2 = Criticized

3 = Neutral

4 = Both praised and criticized

5 = Not possible to determine

III. Frames in the News Items (Article Headlines/Preamble)

This set of variables have been assembled to determine the presence of different news frames in the article *headlines and preamble*. Headlines include first and second titles of the news items. The selection of frames is based on most of the fifteen main frames identified by Dan & Raupp (2018) when reviewing previous research on framing of health risks. A full discussion on selection is included in the main document. The structure of this category follows Entman's (1993) four framing functions; problem definition, cause identification, treatment proposal and moral evaluation, followed by procedural frames without function, as grouped by Dan & Raupp (2018: 215-216).

Problem Definition

V16) Headlines/Preamble – Health Severity Frame

Do the headline and/or the preamble contain information about the impact on human life? (E.g., through tallying and the presentation of mortality rates, see Dan & Raupp, 2018: 213)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V17) Headlines/Preamble – Human Interest Frame

Do the headline and/or the preamble focus on the aspect of human interest? (E.g., by emphasizing individual people's life, adding emotive language, and putting a human face on issues, see Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000: 100)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V18) Headlines/Preamble – Economic Consequences

Do the headline and/or the preamble focus on economic consequences? (E.g., through the expression of financial gains/losses, see Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000: 100)

1 = Yes

0 = No

Cause Identification

V19) Headlines/Preamble – Attribution of Responsibility

Do the headline and/or the preamble contain attributions of responsibility? (E.g., through suggesting that certain actors carry responsibility, or offering suggestions for solutions, see Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000: 100)

1 = Yes

0 = No

Treatment Proposal

V20) Headlines/Preamble – Action

Do the headline and/or the preamble contain information about concrete actions already conducted, or suggested to mitigate health risks? (see Dan & Raupp, 2018: 213)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V21) Headlines/Preamble – Focus on the Individual Level (Episodic)

Do the headline and/or the preamble focus on a specific event or present an issue by offering a specific example, case study, or event-oriented report? (Passage partially cited from Reinemann, et. al., 2012: 38)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V22) Headlines/Preamble – Focus on the Societal Level (Thematic)

Do the headline and/or the preamble place an issue into a broader context (societal level)? (Passage partially cited from Reinemann, et. al., 2012: 38)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V23) Headlines/Preamble – Focus on the Medical Aspect

Do the headline and/or the preamble focus on scientific solutions to health problems caused by biomedical problems? (Passage partially cited from Dan & Raupp, 2018: 215)

1 = Yes

0 = No

*Moral Evaluation***V24) Headlines/Preamble – Uncertainty**

Do the headline and/or the preamble focus on unknowns, cast doubt on already established facts or focus on hypothetical scenarios? (see Dan & Raupp, 2018:15)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V25) Headlines/Preamble – Alarmism

Do the headline and/or the preamble offer exaggerated, sensationalist or unsubstantiated claims? (see Dan & Raupp, 2018: 213 & 215)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V26) Headlines/Preamble – Reassurance

Do the headline and/or the preamble play down risks related to COVID-19 vaccines or related measures, or describe people in charge as capable to deal risks? (see Dan & Raupp, 2018: 213 & 215)

1 = Yes

0 = No

Procedural

V27) Headlines/Preamble – Gains

Do the headline and/or the preamble suggest benefits of getting vaccinated or implementing COVID passports with restrictions for unvaccinated? (see Dan & Raupp, 2018: 216)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V28) Headlines/Preamble – Losses

Do the headline and/or the preamble mention costs of not getting vaccinated or implementing COVID passports with restrictions for unvaccinated? (see Dan & Raupp, 2018: 216)

1 = Yes

0 = No

V29) Headlines/Preamble – Conflicts

Do the headline and/or the preamble contain conflicts?

(E.g., through disagreements, multiple sides, or winners and losers, see Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000: 100)

1 = Yes

0 = No

IV. Frames in the News Items (Article Body)

This set of variables have been assembled to determine the presence of different news frames in the article *body*. The selection of frames is based on most of the fifteen main frames identified by Dan & Raupp (2018) when reviewing previous research on framing of health risks. A full discussion on selection is included in the main document. The structure of this category follows Entman's (1993) four framing functions; problem definition, cause identification, treatment proposal and moral evaluation, followed by procedural frames without function, as grouped by Dan & Raupp (2018: 215-216).

IV.I. Problem Definition

The Health Severity Frame

Variables to determine the presence of the health severity frame in the news items. The following variable definitions (questions) are based on the frame definition by Dan & Raupp (2018: 213) with certain passages cited in adapted versions to fit the structure of this codebook. The variables seek to answer if the story provides real, or hypothetical, examples of impact on human life at large (see Dan & Raupp, 2018: 213).

V30) Impact on Human Life – Numerical

Does the story provide numerical information to explain the risk to human life?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V31) Impact on Human Life – Comparisons

Does the story provide comparative elements, so called risk comparisons, relating the risk of COVID-19 and potential side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines to other risks?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V32) Tallying & Mortality Rates

Does the story provide statistics on incidence and mortality rates, related to COVID-19?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V33) Tallying – COVID-19 Vaccine Side Effects

Does the story provide statistics on the occurrence of vaccine-related (COVID-19 vaccines) side effects?

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Human Interest Frame

Variables to determine the presence of the human-interest frame in the news items. The following variable definitions (questions) are directly cited by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000: 100).

V34) Human Face on Issue

Does the story provide a human example or “human face” on the issue?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V35) Emotive Adjectives/Vignettes

Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V36) Emphasis on Affected Individuals/Groups

Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V37) Personal Life

Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors?

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Economic Consequences Frame

Variables to determine the presence of the economic frame in the news items. Variable definitions (questions) are directly cited by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000: 100).

V38) Financial Losses/Gains

Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V39) Involvement of Costs

Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V40) Economic Consequences

Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?

1 = Yes

0 = No

IV.II. Identifying Causes

The Attribution of Responsibility Frame

Variables to determine the presence of the attribution of responsibility frame in the news items. Variable definitions (questions) are directly cited by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000: 100).

V41) Government Ability to Alleviate

Does the story suggest that some level of government has the ability to alleviate the problem?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V42) Government Responsible

Does the story suggest that some level of the government is responsible for the issue/problem?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V43) Solutions Offered

Does the story suggest solution(s) to the problem/issue?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V44) Individuals Responsible

Does the story suggest that an individual (or group of people in society) is responsible for the issue-problem?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V45) Urgency of Action

Does the story suggest the problem requires urgent action?

1 = Yes

0 = No

IV.III. Proposing Treatments

The Action Frame

These variables are based on the frame definition by Dan & Raupp (2018: 213) with certain passages cited in adapted versions to fit the structure. For the purpose of clarity, vaccination campaigns are considered as a mitigator of risk. A dedicated variable has been created in order to capture possible advice to limit the risk of COVID-19 without getting vaccinated.

V46) Concrete Actions by Officials

Does the story contain information about what public officials do to contain the risk? This also includes information about concrete actions by public officials to increase vaccine coverage, availability, and increase inoculation rates.

1 = Yes

0 = No

V47) Concrete Advice for Citizens

Does the story contain information about what regular people can do to mitigate the risk of COVID-19? This includes information about how, when, and where to get vaccinated.

1 = Yes

0 = No

V48) Minimizing the Risk of COVID-19 without Vaccine

Does the story contain information about what regular people can do to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 without getting vaccinated (should they choose to refuse or abstain due to medical reasons)?

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Episodic Frame

This variable is based on variables from a previous content analysis Reinemann, et. al. (2012: 38), from which the variable definition (question) has been cited in an adapted version to fit the structure.

V49) Focus on the Individual Level

Does the news item present an issue by offering a specific example, case study, or event-oriented report? (Focusing on the individual level, e.g., covering unemployment by presenting a story on the plight of a particular unemployed person.) If no issue can be detected, no value is coded.

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Thematic Frame

This variable is based on variables from a previous content analysis Reinemann, et. al. (2012: 38), from which the variable definition (question) has been cited in an adapted version to fit the structure.

V50) Focus on the Societal Level

Does the news item place an issue into a broader context? (Focusing on the societal level, e.g., covering unemployment by reporting on the latest unemployment figures and offering commentary by economists or public officials on the impact of the economy on unemployment) If no issue can be detected, no value is coded.

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Medical Frame

This variable is based on a frame definition by Dan & Raupp focused on biomedical factors (2018: 215), with certain passages cited in adapted versions to fit the structure.

V51) Focus on the Scientific Level

Does the story focus on the need for scientific solutions to a health problem caused by biomedical problems (without highlighting individual or societal causes, or attribution of responsibility)?

1 = Yes

0 = No

IV.IV. Moral Evaluation

The Uncertainty Frame

These variables are based on a frame definition by Dan & Raupp focused on uncertainty (2018: 215), with certain passages cited in adapted versions to fit the structure.

V52) Aspects not Fully Understood

Are important aspects related to COVID-19 vaccines presented in the news story as not fully understood?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V53) Doubt Casted on Known Facts

Is doubt casted on known facts in the news story?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V54) Hypothetical Scenarios

Are hypothetical scenarios presented in the news story?

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Alarmist & Reassurance Frames

These variables are based on frame definitions by Dan & Raupp focused on alarmism and reassurance (2018: 213 & 215), with certain passages cited in adapted versions to fit the structure.

V55) Sensationalism & Exaggerations

Does the story contain elements of sensationalism and/or exaggerations?

Examples of sensationalism include an emotionally loaded language, while exaggerations can be exemplified through an excessively visually descriptive language to describe events.

1 = Yes

0 = No

V56) Unsubstantiated Claims

Does the story contain unsubstantiated claims and exaggerations?

Unsubstantiated claims can be claims without an explicit source, or claims expressed by the author.

1 = Yes

0 = No

V57) Risks Downplayed

Does the story present risks related to COVID-19 as less serious than other known risks?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V58) Capability of People in Charge

Does the story act reassuring in the sense that people in charge are described as capable of dealing with the risks?

1 = Yes

0 = No

IV.V. Procedural Frames

The Gain & Loss Frames

These variables are based on frame definitions by Dan & Raupp focused on *positive* or *negative* assessments of treatment recommendations offered in news items (2018: 216), with certain passages cited in adapted versions to fit the structure. To narrow the scope of this approach, the variables focus on the act of getting vaccinated and implementing COVID passports/restricting unvaccinated people in society.

V59) Benefits of Getting Vaccinated

Does the story contain benefits of getting vaccinated? If the news item does not mention getting vaccinated, leave blank.

1 = Yes

0 = No

V60) Cost of Not Getting Vaccinated

Does the story contain the cost of not getting vaccinated? If the news item does not mention getting vaccinated, leave blank.

1 = Yes

0 = No

V61) Benefits of Implementing COVID Passports

Does the story contain benefits of implementing COVID passports and restricting access for unvaccinated people in society? If the news item does not mention COVID passports/restricted access for unvaccinated, leave blank.

1 = Yes

0 = No

V62) Cost of Not Implementing COVID Passports

Does the story contain costs of not implementing COVID passports and restricting access for unvaccinated people in society? If the news item does not mention COVID passports/restricted access for unvaccinated, leave blank.

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Conflict Frame

Variables to determine the presence of the conflict frame in the news items. Variable definitions (questions) are directly cited by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000: 100).

V63) Disagreements Reflected

Does the story reflect disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-countries?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V64) Actor Reproached by Another

Does one party-individual-group-country reproach another?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V65) Separate Sides

Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?

1 = Yes

0 = No

V66) Winners and Losers

Does the story refer to winners and losers?

1 = Yes

0 = No

Appendix 2: Code Sheet

I. Formal Categories

V1) Item Identification Number	
Format: xxxNNNNN	
V2) Date	
Format: YYYYMMDD	
V3) Medium	
1 = SVT (Swedish Television)	
2 = Dagens ETC	
3 = Fria Tider	
V4) Length of news item	
Word count	

V5) Time Period	
1 = Period 1 (waxing phase) – 01.02.2021 to 31.03.2021	
2 = Period 1 (maintenance phase) – 01.04.2021 to 30.04.2021	
3 = Period 1 (waning phase) – 01.05.2021 to 31.05.2021	
4 = Period 2 (waxing phase) – 01.11.2021 to 31.12.2021	
5 = Period 2 (maintenance phase) – 01.01.2022 to 31.01.2022	
6 = Period 2 (waning phase) – 01.02.2022 to 28.02.2022	
V6) News Item Headline	
Text format, leave blank if missing.	

II. Actors Present in the News Items

V7) Actor 1 - Type	
V10) Actor 2 - Type	
V13) Actor 3 - Type	
1 = Government (national, regional, or local) representative	
2 = Authority actor or another non-elected official (also on EU level)	
3 = Actor affiliated with the political opposition	
4 = Member of the public/private citizen (individual citizen representing herself)	
5 = Civil society/NGO (organized group or individual representing a group or a profession)	
6 = Journalist (other than article author), media officer, influencer, or celebrity	
7 = Corporations (including medical companies or vaccine manufacturers)	
8 = Scientist or expert	
9 = Global organization/Supranational union (e.g., EU institutions, UN, WHO)	
11 = Other actor	
N/A = No actor - no value	
V8) Actor 1- Function	
V11) Actor 2 - Function	
V14) Actor 3 - Function	
1 = Active	
2 = Passive	
3 = Not possible to determine	
N/A = No actor - no value	

V9) Actor 1 – Evaluation	
V12) Actor 2 – Evaluation	
V15) Actor 3 – Evaluation	
1 = Praised	
2 = Criticized	
3 = Neutral	
4 = Both praised and criticized	
5 = Not possible to determine	
N/A = No actor - no value	

III. Frames in the News Items (Article Headline/Preamble)

Problem Definition

V16) Headline/Preamble – Health Severity Frame	
V17) Headline/Preamble – Human Interest Frame	
V18) Headline/Preamble – Economic Consequences	
1 = Yes	
0 = No	

Cause Identification

V19) Headline/Preamble– Attribution of Responsibility	
1 = Yes	
0 = No	

Treatment Proposal

V20) Headline/Preamble – Action	
V21) Headline/Preamble – Focus on the Individual Level (Episodic)	
V22) Headline/Preamble – Focus on the Societal Level (Thematic)	
V23) Headline/Preamble – Focus on the Medical Aspect	
1 = Yes	
0 = No	

Moral Evaluation

V24) Headline/Preamble – Uncertainty	
V25) Headline/Preamble – Alarmism	
V26) Headline/Preamble – Reassurance	
1 = Yes	
0 = No	

Procedural

V27) Headline/Preamble – Gains	
V28) Headline/Preamble – Losses	
1 = Yes	
0 = No	
V29) Headline/Preamble – Conflicts	
1 = Yes	
0 = No	

IV. Frames in the News Items (Article Body)

IV.I. Problem Definition

The Health Severity Frame

V30) Impact on Human Life – Numerical Risks	
V31) Impact on Human Life – Risk Comparisons	
V32) Tallying – Mortality Rates & Incidence	
V33) Tallying – COVID 19 Vaccine Side Effects	

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Human-Interest Frame

V34) Human Face on Issue	
V35) Emotive Adjectives/Vignettes	
V36) Emphasis on Affected Individuals/Groups	
V37) Personal Life	

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Economic Consequences Frame

V38) Financial Losses/Gains	
V39) Involvement of Costs	
V40) Economic Consequences	

1 = Yes

0 = No

IV.II. Identifying Causes

The Attribution of Responsibility Frame

V41) Government Ability to Alleviate	
V42) Government Responsible	
V43) Solutions Offered	
V44) Individuals Responsible	
V45) Urgency of Action	

1 = Yes

0 = No

IV.III. Proposing Treatments

The Action Frame

V46) Concrete Actions by Officials	
V47) Concrete Advice for Citizens	
V48) Minimizing the Risk of COVID-19 without Vaccine	

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Episodic/Thematic Frame

V49) Focus on the Individual Level	
V50) Focus on the Societal Level	

1 = Yes

0 = No

N/A = No issue detectable - no value

The Medical Frame

V51) Focus on the Scientific Level	
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1 = Yes

0 = No

IV.IV. Moral Evaluation

The Uncertainty Frame

V52) Aspects not Fully Understood	
V53) Doubt Casted on Known Facts	
V54) Hypothetical Scenarios	

1 = Yes

0 = No

The Alarmist & Reassurance Frames

V55) Sensationalism & Exaggerations	
V56) Unsubstantiated Claims	
V57) Risks with COVID-19 Downplayed	
V58) Capability of People in Charge (+N/A)	

1 = Yes

0 = No

IV.V. Procedural Frames

The Gain & Loss Frames

V59) Benefits of Getting Vaccinated	
V60) Cost of Not Getting Vaccinated	

1 = Yes

0 = No

N/A = News item does not mention getting vaccinated - no value

V61) Benefits of Implementing COVID Passports	
V62) Cost of Not Implementing COVID Passports	

1 = Yes

0 = No

N/A = News item does not mention COVID passports

/restricted access for unvaccinated

The Conflict Frame

V63) Disagreements Reflected	
V64) Actor Reproached by Another	
V65) Separate Sides	
V66) Winners and Losers	

1 = Yes

0 = No

Appendix 3: Overview of Actors Identified in the News Items

Type of Actor	Description
Government Representative	Actors representing a government, or the people's political power (i.e., a parliament which generally under normal circumstances has a majority supporting or tolerating the government). This can be national, regional, or local, meaning that it also includes the Swedish regions and municipalities.
Authority Actor	This category includes actors representing authorities or other non-elected officials. This is mainly on a national level, but also includes health authorities on the EU-level. The definition is not limited to Swedish authorities, however the application of the notion of <i>authority</i> is based on the Swedish context, meaning that i.e., universities, military, courts, and police forces are categorized as authorities.
Political Opposition	Actors affiliated with the political opposition include references to political actors which are in opposition (i.e., not in government, in a minority in parliament).
The Public	This category includes members of the public or private citizens (i.e., individual citizens representing themselves)
Civil Society/NGO	This category includes organized groups or individuals representing a group or a profession. This includes unions, groups of professions, and people who are united by a shared cause (i.e., protesters).
Journalist, Influencer or Celebrity	This category includes journalists (other than article author, or the author when written as a chronicle with personal reflections), media officers, influencers, or celebrities (i.e., singers, performers, athletes). The category further includes references to religious figures and fictional actors.
Corporations	This category includes any type of corporation or business. This includes medical companies and vaccine manufacturers. The category is not limited to legitimate businesses and includes references to i.e., criminal organizations.
Scientist or Expert	This category includes scientists or experts who have a clear expert knowledge on the matter for which they are featured.
Global Organization	This category includes supranational unions and global organizations (e.g., EU institutions, UN, WHO).
Other Actor	This category features miscellaneous actors.

Appendix 4: Function & Evaluation of Coded Actors

**Table A4:1. Function of Main Actors
(n=420), All Periods (percent)**

Actor Type		Active	Passive	Chi²	Cram- er's V
Government	SVT	88	12	0,129	0,038
	ETC	85	15		
	FrT	88	12		
	Total	88	12		
Authority	SVT	90	10	1,449	0,125
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	91	9		
	Total	91	9		
Political Opposition	SVT	100	0	1,477	0,337
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	75	25		
	Total	85	15		
Member of the Public	SVT	30	70	2,775	0,225
	ETC	67	33		
	FrT	35	66		
	Total	36	64		
Civil Society/ NGO	SVT	59	41	1,271	0,196
	ETC	83	17		
	FrT	70	30		
	Total	67	33		
Journalist/ Influencer	SVT	94	6	0,551	0,146
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	100	0		
	Total	96	4		
Corporation	SVT	54	46	0,668	0,119
	ETC	60	40		
	FrT	67	33		
	Total	60	40		
Scientist/ Expert	SVT	96	4	1,444	0,185
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	88	13		
	Total	95	5		
Global Org.	SVT	86	14	2,347	0,351
	ETC	50	50		
	FrT	100	0		
	Total	84	16		
Other Actor	SVT			3,000 *	1,000
	ETC	0	100		
	FrT	100	0		
	Total	67	33		
Total	SVT	78	22	2,291	0,074
	ETC	85	16		
	FrT	75	25		
	Tot. %	78	22		
	Tot. Amount	327	93		

Comments: Cross tabulation Medium, Function Main Actor, Type Main Actor. N=420. *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.005. Values are rounded to the nearest integer.

**Table A4:2. Evaluation of Main Actors
(n=420), All Periods (percent)**

Actor Type		Praised	Criticized	Neutral	Both pr/cr	Not determ.	Chi ²	Cram- er's V
Government	SVT	5	19	69	7	0	14,684*	0,287
	ETC	0	54	39	8	0		
	FrT	6	15	68	3	9		
	Total	5	23	64	6	3		
Authority	SVT		4	96	0	0	14,797**	0,282
	ETC		0	92	8	0		
	FrT		19	78	0	3		
	Total		9	89	1	1		
Political Opposition	SVT		0	100			1,381	0,326
	ETC		25	75				
	FrT		50	50				
	Total		39	62				
Member of the Public	SVT	0	10	90		0	21,062***	0,438
	ETC	17	50	33		0		
	FrT	3	0	90		7		
	Total	4	9	84		4		
Civil Society/ NGO	SVT	6	12	59	18	6	3,496	0,230
	ETC	0	17	83	0	0		
	FrT	0	20	60	10	10		
	Total	3	15	64	12	6		
Journalist/ Influencer	SVT	18	6	53	24	0	11,645	0,473
	ETC	0	50	50	0	0		
	FrT	0	29	29	14	29		
	Total	12	15	46	19	8		
Corporation	SVT	21	29	38	13		14,965**	0,399
	ETC	0	100	0	0			
	FrT	0	67	33	0			
	Total	11	51	32	6			
Scientist/ Expert	SVT	4	4	93			6,639	0,281
	ETC	0	0	100				
	FrT	25	13	63				
	Total	7	5	88				
Global Org.	SVT	7	0	86	7	0	15,543**	0,640
	ETC	50	0	50	0	0		
	FrT	0	33	33	0	33		
	Total	11	5	74	5	5		
Other Actor	SVT						3,000*	1,000
	ETC		100	0				
	FrT		0	100				
	Total		33	67				
Total	SVT	6	11	76	7	1	36,963***	0,210
	ETC	3	33	60	3	0		
	FrT	3	22	66	2	7		
	Tot. %	5	18	70	5	3		
Tot. Amount		20	75	295	19	11		

Comments: Cross tabulation Medium, Evaluation Main Actor, Type Main Actor. *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.005. Values are rounded to the nearest integer.

**Table A4:3. Function of Second Actor
(n=389), All Periods (percent)**

Actor Type		Active	Passive	Chi ²	Cram- er's V
Government	SVT	71	29	5,756 *	0,318
	ETC	79	21		
	FrT	40	60		
	Total	65	35		
Authority	SVT	78	23	4,386	0,245
	ETC	50	50		
	FrT	56	44		
	Total	67	33		
Political Opposition	SVT			0,600	0,316
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	75	25		
	Total	8	17		
Member of the Public	SVT	23	77	3,826	0,220
	ETC	40	60		
	FrT	10	90		
	Total	18	82		
Civil Society/ NGO	SVT	46	54	0,765	0,146
	ETC	50	50		
	FrT	33	67		
	Total	42	58		
Journalist/ Influencer	SVT	67	33	2,000	0,447
	ETC	0	100		
	FrT	33	67		
	Total	50	50		
Corporation	SVT	23	78	2,092	0,159
	ETC	30	70		
	FrT	12	88		
	Total	19	81		
Scientist/ Expert	SVT	71	29	2,359	0,296
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	63	38		
	Total	74	26		
Global Organization	SVT	56	44	0,444	0,178
	ETC	33	67		
	FrT	50	50		
	Total	50	50		
Other Actor	SVT	0	100	4,000	1,000
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	100	0		
	Total	75	25		
Total	SVT	50	50	18,47	0,218
	ETC	59	41		
	FrT	31	69		
	Tot. %	44	56		
	Tot. Amount	171	218		

Comments: Cross tabulation Medium, Function Second Actor, Type Second Actor. N=420. *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.005. Values are rounded to the nearest integer.

**Table A4:4. Evaluation of Second Actor
(n=389), All Periods (percent)**

Actor Type		Praised	Criticized	Neutral	Both pr/cr	Not determ.	Chi²	Cram- er'sV
Government	SVT	7	29	64	0		4,680	0,203
	ETC	0	29	64	7			
	FrT	0	40	53	7			
	Total	4	32	61	4			
Authority	SVT		13	88			0,836	0,107
	ETC		0	100				
	FrT		11	89				
	Total		11	89				
Political Opposition	SVT						0,600	0,316
	ETC		0	100				
	FrT		25	75				
	Total		17	83				
Member of the Public	SVT		0	97		3	7,334	0,215
	ETC		0	100		0		
	FrT		15	80		5		
	Total		8	89		4		
Civil Society/ NGO	SVT		8	92	0	0	3,285	0,214
	ETC		13	75	13	0		
	FrT		7	80	7	7		
	Total		8	83	6	3		
Journalist/ Influencer	SVT	17	17	67			1,667	0,289
	ETC	0	0	100				
	FrT	0	0	100				
	Total	10	10	80				
Corporation	SVT	8	25	53	15	0	20,737**	0,353
	ETC	10	40	10	40	0		
	FrT	6	61	27	3	3		
	Total	7	41	37	13	1		
Scientist/ Expert	SVT	7	14	79		0	13,111**	0,493
	ETC	0	0	100		0		
	FrT	25	0	38		38		
	Total	11	7	70		11		
Global Organization	SVT	0	11	89	0		11,900*	0,652
	ETC	0	33	33	33			
	FrT	50	0	50	0			
	Total	7	14	71	7			
Other Actor	SVT			100				
	ETC			100				
	FrT			100				
	Total			100				
Total	SVT	4	15	77	3	1	26,861***	0,186
	ETC	2	18	68	13	0		
	FrT	3	25	65	2	5		
	Tot. %	3	19	71	4	2		
	Tot. Amount	13	75	277	16	8		

Comments: Cross tabulation Medium, Evaluation Second Actor, Type Second Actor. *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.005. Values are rounded to the nearest integer.

**Table A4:5. Function of Tertiary Actors
(n=329), All Periods (percent)**

Actor Type		Active	Passive	Chi²	Cram- er's V
Government	SVT	79	21	0,005	0,009
	ETC	80	20		
	FrT	79	21		
	Total	79	21		
Authority	SVT	71	30	1,603	0,138
	ETC	50	50		
	FrT	63	37		
	Total	66	35		
Political Opposition	SVT	100	0	1,406	0,395
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	75	25		
	Total	89	11		
Member of the Public	SVT	23	77	1,683	0,196
	ETC	44	56		
	FrT	23	77		
	Total	27	73		
Civil Society/ NGO	SVT	73	27	6,854**	0,534
	ETC	40	60		
	FrT	13	88		
	Total	46	54		
Journalist/ Influencer	SVT	38	63	2,000	0,408
	ETC				
	FrT	0	100		
	Total	25	75		
Corporation	SVT	21	79	2,476	0,216
	ETC	0	100		
	FrT	8	92		
	Total	13	87		
Scientist/ Expert	SVT	90	10	0,423	0,119
	ETC	83	17		
	FrT	93	7		
	Total	90	10		
Global Organization	SVT	60	40	1,270	0,291
	ETC	71	29		
	FrT	33	67		
	Total	60	40		
Other Actor	SVT	0	100	5,000*	1,000
	ETC	100	0		
	FrT	100	0		
	Total	60	40		
Total	SVT	56	44	2,393	0,085
	ETC	59	41		
	FrT	48	52		
	Tot. %	54	46		
	Tot. Amount	177	152		

Comments: Cross tabulation Medium, Function Third Actor, Type Third Actor. *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.005. Values are rounded to the nearest integer.

**Table A4:6. Evaluation of Tertiary Actors
(n=329), All Periods (percent)**

Actor Type		Praised	Criticized	Neutral	Both pr/cr	Not determ.	Chi²	Cram- er'sV
Government	SVT	8	17	71		4	4,373	0,203
	ETC	0	30	70		0		
	FrT	0	26	74		0		
	Total	4	23	72		2		
Authority	SVT	0	2	96		2	12,805**	0,276
	ETC	10	0	90		0		
	FrT	0	13	87		0		
	Total	1	6	92		1		
Political Opposition	SVT	33		67			2,250	0,500
	ETC	0		100				
	FrT	0		100				
	Total	11		89				
Member of the Public	SVT		18	82			0,825	0,137
	ETC		11	89				
	FrT		8	92				
	Total		14	86				
Civil Society/ NGO	SVT	9	0	91			5,881	0,350
	ETC	20	20	60				
	FrT	0	0	100				
	Total	8	4	88				
Journalist/ Influencer	SVT	13	13	75			0,750	0,250
	ETC							
	FrT	0	25	75				
	Total	8	17	75				
Corporation	SVT	17	13	63	8		17,148**	0,402
	ETC	40	40	20	0			
	FrT	0	58	38	4			
	Total	11	36	47	6			
Scientist/ Expert	SVT	20	0	80			7,333	0,350
	ETC	0	33	67				
	FrT	0	14	86				
	Total	7	13	80				
Global Organization	SVT		0	100			1,224	0,286
	ETC		14	86				
	FrT		0	100				
	Total		7	93				
Other Actor	SVT	50	0	50			3,333	0,577
	ETC	0	50	50				
	FrT	0	0	100				
	Total	20	20	60				
Total	SVT	8	9	81	1	1	21,936**	0,183
	ETC	7	20	73	0	0		
	FrT	0	23	77	1	0		
	Tot. %	5	16	78	1	1		
	Tot. Amount	16	51	257	3	2		

Comments: Cross tabulation Medium, Evaluation Third Actor, Type Third Actor. *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.005. Values are rounded to the nearest integer.

Appendix 5: News Items Reference List

Ref. No.	Date	Headline
SVT10019	20210201	Astras vaccin sannolikt inte för äldre
SVT10020	20210201	Dubbelt så många doser från Pfizer
SVT10021	20210201	Ryckighet i tillgång begränsar vaccinationstakten
SVT10063	20210204	Digitala vaccinationspass införs till sommaren
SVT10064	20210204	Uppdaterade rekommendationer gällande prioritering av vaccinering
SVT10066	20210204	Nio av tio sprutor till personalen
SVT10067	20210204	Sveriges mål: Digitalt vaccinationsintyg till sommaren
SVT10069	20210204	Storbritannien: 4 000 mutationer i omlopp
SVT10073	20210204	Särskilt intyg för personer som inte är vaccinerade mot covid-19
SVT10101	20210210	Analys: Vaccinet kan bli Rysslands största framgång på många år
SVT10103	20210210	Ökat intresse för ryskt vaccin bland världens länder
SVT10106	20210210	Inget krav på bank-id vid vaccinering
SVT10107	20210210	Rundade kön - får en andra dos
SVT10108	20210210	Modernas vaccinveranser halveras
SVT10109	20210210	Attendo: Vaccineffekt på boenden
SVT10110	20210210	Analys: Vaccinerna fungerar - trots de nya varianterna
SVT10112	20210210	Tyskt läkemedelsbolag hjälper Astra
SVT10126	20210213	Prognos: Varannan får Pfizervaccin
SVT10138	20210216	Ny studie: Antikroppar mot covid-19 kvar efter nio månader
SVT10140	20210216	Vilka vacciner är godkända?
SVT10141	20210216	Hur länge skyddar vaccinet mot covid-19?
SVT10144	20210216	59 nya dödsfall - 9 458 nya smittade
SVT10149	20210216	Filosofen Torbjörn Tännsjö: Gamla borde inte vaccineras först
SVT10151	20210216	Här är länderna i Europa som blir först med vaccinationspass
SVT10200	20210219	Vårdpersonal är positiv till covid-vaccin
SVT10203	20210219	Vaccinen har en skyddseffekt även mot mutationerna
SVT10210	20210219	51 nya dödsfall inrapporterade
SVT10214	20210219	USA och EU utlovar miljarder till vaccin - besked under G7-mötet
SVT10264	20210225	SAS redovisar ny brakförlust - hoppas på sommaren
SVT10267	20210225	Lättnader för äldre som fått två vaccindoser: Får krama barnbarnen
SVT10270	20210225	Folkhälsomyndigheten: Vaccineffekt bakom sjunkande dödstal
SVT10304	20210303	Seychellerna kan bli först i världen att uppnå flockimmunitet
SVT10305	20210303	Sjungande Dolly Parton vaccineras - byter ut Jolene mot vaccine
SVT10314	20210303	Flera länder lättar på restriktionerna
SVT10346	20210306	Vaccineringen tar fart i Afrika
SVT10347	20210306	EU ber USA om Astra Zeneca-vaccin
SVT10350	20210306	Polisen: Erbjudanden om privata vaccin är falska
SVT10352	20210306	Forskaren om svarta vaccinköp: Rationalitet sätts åt sidan
SVT10371	20210309	PRO: Svårt för äldre att boka tid för vaccination

SVT10372	20210309	Olagligt att ge svenska OS-stjärnor vaccinförtur
SVT10375	20210309	Samtliga regioner inne i fas 2
SVT10376	20210309	Fortsatt minskning av antalet dödsfall per vecka
SVT10377	20210309	FHM: 39 nya dödsfall inrapporterade
SVT10378	20210309	Sömn kan påverka hur mycket antikroppar man bildar av vaccin
SVT10382	20210309	Vaccineringen tar fart i Afrika - flera länder ökar takten
SVT10383	20210309	Tysklands lärare går före i vaccinkön - nu ska skolorna öppna igen
SVT10384	20210309	Tandvårdspersonal i Stockholm gick före i vaccinkön
SVT10412	20210312	Biden: Amerikaner ska erbjudas vaccin senast 1 maj
SVT10413	20210312	Danmark öppnar när 50-plussarna fått vaccin
SVT10417	20210312	Richard Bergström: Bara en dos till tidigare covid-sjuka kan påverka Sveriges mål
SVT10421	20210312	Hallengren om försenade vaccinet: Målbilden kan behöva ses över
SVT10423	20210312	Inget bevisat samband mellan blodproppar och vaccinationer
SVT10427	20210312	Tegnell: Det fördröjer arbetet
SVT10428	20210312	WHO ger tummen upp för Janssen-vaccin
SVT10429	20210312	Analys: USA vägrar släppa Astra Zeneca-doser
SVT10440	20210315	Ingebrigtsen tveksam inför OS: Inte aktuellt att gå före i vaccinkön
SVT10443	20210315	Norsk kvinna avliden efter Astra-vaccinering
SVT10444	20210315	Flera länder pausar Astra Zenecas vaccin - efter oro för biverkningar
SVT10447	20210315	Sverige fortsätter vaccinera med Astra Zeneca
SVT10485	20210318	Christina Schollin om Astravaccinet: Tur att vi hann få det
SVT10486	20210318	Marmorstein om Löfvens känga: Övertydligt taktiskt
SVT10487	20210318	Emma Frans: Svårt att se att man skulle stoppa vaccinet
SVT10489	20210318	Covid-19: Myndigheterna håller pressträff - Teckenspråkstolkat
SVT10490	20210318	Norsk expert: Kopplingen mellan Astra Zeneca-vaccinet och blodproppar är bekräftad
SVT10492	20210318	8 dödsfall och 10,8 procent vaccinerade
SVT10499	20210318	Klart: Astravaccin godkänns av EMA
SVT10500	20210318	FHM: Besked nästa vecka om Astravaccinering återupptas
SVT10502	20210318	EMA ger besked: Grönt ljus för Astra Zeneca
SVT10503	20210318	Oro kring Astra Zenecas vaccin - trots grönt ljus från EU
SVT10520	20210321	Många ryssar skeptiska till Sputnik V
SVT10538	20210324	Uppgifter: Exportstopp för vaccin från EU
SVT10541	20210324	Novus: 94 procent vill ta vaccinet
SVT10546	20210324	Tittar-tombolan: Era frågor om Astra Zeneca-vaccinet
SVT10547	20210324	Astra-vaccinering av äldre återupptas i Finland
SVT10585	20210330	EU stoppar exporten av Astra Zenecas vaccin
SVT10587	20210330	Johnson & Johnson-vaccin i april
SVT10588	20210330	1177 informerade om vaccin - med bild av känt meme
SVT10590	20210330	28 nya dödsfall med covid-19
SVT10593	20210330	Tegnell tveksam till nya vaccinmålet: Kan bli svårt att nå
SVT10604	20210401	Jemen har fått sina första doser vaccin
SVT10608	20210401	WHO: Vaccineringen går oacceptabelt långsamt
SVT10610	20210401	Sveriges vaccinmål spricker

SVT10611	20210401	Ulf Kristersson om slopade vaccinnmålet: Våldigt stor besvikelse
SVT10614	20210401	EU-beslut: Färre vaccindoser till Sverige
SVT10618	20210404	Påven: Skynda på vaccineringen mot covid-19
SVT10639	20210407	Kronoberg vaccinerar alla över 65 år
SVT10642	20210407	45 dödsfall i covid - 6 814 nysmittade
SVT10643	20210407	EMA: Möjlig koppling mellan blodproppar och Astras vaccin
SVT10645	20210407	EMA bekräftar: Finns koppling till proppar
SVT10646	20210407	60 sekunder: Turerna kring Astras vaccin
SVT10647	20210407	Läkemedelsverket frågades ut om Astravaccin: Oerhört stor nytta
SVT10676	20210410	Astra-biverkningar kopplas till extrema nivåer av typ av antikroppar
SVT10678	20210410	Vaccin kan hjälpa personer med långtids-covid - fler studier behövs
SVT10696	20210413	Vaccin eller antikroppar krävs för att komma in i Mekka
SVT10697	20210413	Janssens vaccin pausas i USA
SVT10698	20210413	Johnson & Johnson pausar vaccinleveranser till EU
SVT10700	20210413	39 nya dödsfall - 19 105 nya smittade
SVT10741	20210416	Lättnader för vaccinerade: Okej att krama om sina barnbarn
SVT10743	20210416	27 nya dödsfall med covid-19
SVT10744	20210416	Framgångar för Sputnik V gynnar Ryssland: En sorts vaccindiplomati
SVT10746	20210416	Så lång tid tar det innan vaccinen ger skydd
SVT10761	20210419	Så många vaccindoser har varje region kasserat
SVT10764	20210419	Tre frågor om: Dubbelmuterade viruset
SVT10767	20210419	Infektionsläkaren reder ut: Kan covid-19 ge blodproppar?
SVT10799	20210422	Sverige lånar Astradoser av Norge
SVT10800	20210422	Covid-19 - senaste uppgifterna från Folkhälsomyndigheten - Teckenspråkstolkat
SVT10803	20210422	19 nya coronadödsfall - totalt 13 882 avlidna
SVT10804	20210422	Så funkar de olika coronavaccinen
SVT10805	20210422	Folkhälsomyndigheten: Över två miljoner har fått första dosen vaccin
SVT10831	20210425	Varför ska vi vaccinera barnen mot covid?
SVT10832	20210425	Pfizer till SVT: Möjligt att vaccinera barn i sommar
SVT10833	20210425	SVT:s kartläggning: Tre av fyra regioner planerar att åldersprioritera vid fas 4-vaccineringen
SVT10840	20210425	Här är dödstaten fortsatt höga - trots snabb vaccinering
SVT10861	20210428	Gravida i riskgrupp kan vaccineras i fas 3
SVT10862	20210428	32 nya dödsfall - 14 000 totalt
SVT10863	20210428	Möjligheten som kan ge OS-idrottare vaccin
SVT10915	20210504	Kina gör politik av vaccin - medier ifrågasätter säkerheten
SVT10920	20210504	Roskilde ställer in årets festival
SVT10921	20210504	Danmark lättar på restriktioner
SVT10922	20210504	Ny rapport: Vaccinet skyddar mot svår sjukdom
SVT10955	20210507	Få utrikesfödda vaccineras
SVT10956	20210507	Verksamhetschef i Rosengård: Tror många kommer att vilja vaccinera sig
SVT10960	20210507	Kan bli aktuellt att vaccinera tonåringar: Måste ta det på stort allvar
SVT10969	20210510	Osaka orolig inför Tokyo-OS
SVT10971	20210510	Artister samlade in 450 miljoner kronor till vaccin

SVT10972	20210510	Norge kan skrota Astras och Janssens vaccin
SVT10991	20210513	Ny studie: Fler biverkningar när covidvaccinen blandas
SVT10994	20210513	Vaccinationerna närmar sig fångelserna
SVT10997	20210513	Ohio: Ta sprutan - vinn en miljon
SVT11005	20210516	Osäkert om vaccinpass blir klara i tid
SVT11007	20210516	Du har fått vaccinet - vad gäller nu?
SVT11024	20210519	Chefsläkaren: Inte farligt att vänta längre på andra vaccindosen
SVT11026	20210519	Lista: Svaren på tre olika myter om coronavaccinet
SVT11027	20210519	Bokningskaos i regioner - trots stabila vaccinleveranser
SVT11054	20210525	Sverige ger minst tre miljoner vaccindoser till länder utanför EU
SVT11056	20210525	30 nya dödsfall - totalt har 14 396 avlidit
SVT11057	20210525	Alla gravida kan vaccineras i fas 4
SVT11058	20210525	Vaccinexpert: Ovanligt men inte oväntat
SVT11085	20210528	Stora skillnader över landet i vaccinationsarbetet - SKR: Vissa har äldre befolkning än andra
SVT11088	20210528	Experten: Sverige kan gå från pandemi till endemi i augusti
SVT11093	20210528	Tyskland börjar vaccinera tolvåringar
SVT11094	20210528	Vaccin för 12-15-åringar godkänt i EU
SVT11095	20210528	Barnläkarföreningen: Ingen vaccination av barn i Sverige i nuläget
SVT11097	20210528	Analys: Vaccination av barn - en svår balansgång
SVT11099	20210528	FHM ger besked om barnvaccinationer först i sommar
SVT11112	20210531	Stad i Brasilien oas efter massvaccination
SVT11113	20210531	EU: Vaccinerade bör få resa fritt
SVT20017	20211104	Ovaccinerade kan sparkas i Lettland
SVT20035	20211110	Sesame Street kritiserar och hyllar efter vaccintweet
SVT20088	20211119	Österrike inför vaccinationsplikt
SVT20089	20211119	Vaccinbevis införs för evenemang
SVT20090	20211119	Österrike stänger ner hela landet i tio dagar
SVT20091	20211119	Österrike inför vaccinationsplikt: För många har varit osolidariska
SVT20120	20211125	Över 100 000 coviddöda i Tyskland
SVT20144	20211125	Grönt ljus för vaccin till mindre barn
SVT20145	20211125	EMA godkänner coronavaccin till femåringar
SVT20146	20211125	FHM: Kraftig ökning av antalet smittfall
SVT20148	20211125	Guide: Så fungerar vaccinationsbeviset
SVT20169	20211128	Israel stänger gränsen för att förhindra spridning av omikron
SVT20170	20211128	Falsa vaccinpass säljs på illegala marknaden för kryptovaluta
SVT20172	20211128	Svårt att neka ovaccinerad utbildning
SVT20175	20211128	Schweizare ser ut att stödja pandemipolitiken
SVT20195	20211201	Vaccinationsbevis börjar användas idag
SVT20213	20211201	Nya EU-maningar i kampen mot covid-19
SVT20214	20211201	Experter svarar: Strider vaccinpass mot grundlagen?
SVT20215	20211201	Covidpass på svenska arenor: Känner mig säkrare
SVT20235	20211204	Beslut om uppdaterat covidvaccin inom kort - kan rullas ut i vår
SVT20241	20211207	Regeringen skärper coronaråden

SVT20275	20211210	Påfyllnadsdoser till yngre igång: Kommer hinna
SVT20277	20211210	Italienaren med fejkarm nu vaccinerad på riktigt
SVT20278	20211210	Virusprofessorn: Kan bli svårt att stoppa omikron-varianten
SVT20280	20211210	Tuffare restriktioner i de nordiska grannländerna
SVT20282	20211210	Vårdförbundet: Vaccineringen av vårdpersonal går för långsamt
SVT20294	20211213	Få kommuner kontrollerar om personal är vaccinerade
SVT20317	20211216	Novus-undersökning visar: 14 procent är helt emot krav på vaccinationsbevis
SVT20319	20211216	Tiotusentals fullvaccinerade nekas covidbevis
SVT20320	20211216	Sverige kommer kräva covidbevis även från inresande från Norden
SVT20324	20211216	Fem nya dödsfall i covid-19
SVT20325	20211216	FHM redovisade vaccinerade som ovaccinerade: Olycklig formulering
SVT20346	20211219	Pfizer: Covid-19 pandemi till år 2024
SVT20362	20211222	Så bra skyddar de olika vaccinen mot omikronvarianten
SVT20364	20211222	Emma Frans: Så viktig är tredje dosen för att bromsa omikron
SVT20366	20211222	Smittspridningen ökar i Sverige - topp väntas i januari
SVT20368	20211222	Vaccinkrav på anställda i Dalarna
SVT20397	20211228	Tyskland stoppar stora nyårsfester
SVT20399	20211228	Inreseregler skärps i Norden - vaccinbevis räcker inte
SVT20418	20211231	90 000 rapporterade biverkningar
SVT20419	20211231	SVT besöker världens största vaccinfabrik
SVT20428	20211231	WHO-chefens plan: Pandemin slut i juli
SVT20436	20220104	Novak Djokovic till Australien Open - hävdar undantag
SVT20463	20220107	Vaccin mot omikron tidigast i april
SVT20518	20220113	Danskar ska få fjärde vaccindos
SVT20519	20220113	FHM rekommenderar att ta dos tre tidigare
SVT20534	20220116	Nu avgörs Djokovics öde i domstol
SVT20536	20220116	Djokovic nekas visum - får inte spela Australian Open
SVT20538	20220116	Dokument: Djokovic och covidhärvan
SVT20551	20220119	Storsponsor kräver svar från Djokovic
SVT20553	20220119	Emma Frans svarar på tittarnas frågor om coronaviruset
SVT20584	20220125	Neil Young hotar lämna Spotify
SVT20585	20220125	Danmark tror på flockimmunitet
SVT20586	20220125	Enande om vaccinpass för fria EU-resor
SVT20607	20220131	Kortare tid mellan andra och tredje vaccindosen
SVT20609	20220201	Tegnell om ovaccinerade Orimligt att nå hela befolkningen
SVT20611	20220201	Drygt en miljon svenskar ovaccinerade
SVT20616	20220201	Lastbilskonvoj demonstrerar mot vaccinkrav
SVT20618	20220201	Här är länderna i Europa som släpper på restriktionerna
SVT20655	20220204	De flesta restriktionerna tas bort 9 februari
SVT20656	20220204	Dags för utlandsresa - här är reglerna som gäller
SVT20667	20220207	Olika covidvaccin skyddar olika länge
SVT20680	20220210	Så ser ländernas covidrestriktioner ut
SVT20687	20220210	Protest i Nya Zeeland - 120 gripna

SVT20690	20220210	FHM: Ny fas, men fortsatt hög smittspridning i samhället
SVT20717	20220219	FOI-forskaren förklarar: Vilka ligger bakom lastbilsprotesten i Sverige?
SVT20718	20220219	Oro för att bränslepriset hamnar i skymundan under lastbilsprotest
ETC10018	20210203	Många svarta blir utan vaccin i USA
ETC10046	20210211	Vaccinera alla palestinier
ETC10049	20210211	Regeringens vaccinmål ligger kvar
ETC10060	20210217	Svensk företagare: Så gjorde jag för att vaccinera hela min familj
ETC10079	20210222	Jaguaren i Kungälv säger också något om vaccin haveriet
ETC10081	20210222	Så kan Afrika tackla den ökade smittan
ETC10088	20210224	Vaccinera de som måste gå till jobbet först
ETC10100	20210228	Sverige säger nej till slopat vaccinpatent för fattiga länder
ETC10123	20210304	FHM rekommenderar Astra Zenecas vaccin för äldre
ETC10127	20210308	Struntar svenska strategin i alla som har assistans?
ETC10143	20210312	Vaccinsamordnaren: Därför ska vi inte köpa vaccin utanför EU
ETC10150	20210316	Sverige pausar Astra Zenecas vaccin
ETC10152	20210316	Därför fyller tanken på vaccinpass mig med obehag
ETC10155	20210317	Sverige positiva till vaccinpass
ETC10157	20210317	Etikforskare: Passen förstärker orättvisor
ETC10161	20210318	Nu minskar antalet covid-dödsfall på äldreboenden
ETC10162	20210318	Panelen: Vill du ha ett vaccinationspass?
ETC10164	20210318	EMA: Astra Zenecas vaccin är säkert att använda
ETC10165	20210319	Smet före i kön - men därför straffas inte vaccinfuskarna
ETC10176	20210325	Ger grönt ljus för att vaccinera äldre med Astra Zenecas vaccin
ETC10177	20210325	Så många kan ha dött när vårdpersonal prioriterats framför de äldsta
ETC10195	20210327	SD kommer ut som vaccin-nationalister
ETC10197	20210330	EU stoppar Astra Zeneca-export
ETC10198	20210401	Därför kan du få vaccin i vilken region du vill
ETC10207	20210408	Tegnell: Vi vill inte ha nya smittkedjor nu
ETC10215	20210413	FHM lovar besked om Janssens vaccin
ETC10225	20210414	Maffian styr vaccin i Italien - de som betalar går före
ETC10236	20210416	Nytt besked om riktlinjer för vaccinerade
ETC10238	20210419	Så stor är vaccinklyftan i region Stockholm
ETC10240	20210420	Åldersgräns ligger kvar för Astra Zenecas vaccin
ETC10242	20210423	Experter: Pandemin slut i Storbritannien
ETC10253	20210427	FHM: Gravida med riskfaktorer ska få vaccin
ETC10268	20210505	Släpp vaccinpatenten
ETC10270	20210505	Bill Gates leder vaccinapartheid - så drabbas Indien
ETC10285	20210515	Löfvens perversa vaccinbråk
ETC10299	20210522	Oförsvarbart att gynna vinster framför att ge alla vaccin
ETC10301	20210523	De blir stenrika på coronavaccinen
ETC10309	20210528	Vaccinlobbyn måste ifrågasättas
ETC20010	20211109	Därför har Rumänien högst covid-dödlighet i världen
ETC20016	20211115	Utredning ger Dalarna rätt att säga upp ovaccinerade

ETC20017	20211117	Beskedet: Vaccinpass införs i Sverige - då kan det börja gälla
ETC20028	20211130	Därför blir allt fler fullvaccinerade sjuka
ETC20034	20211203	Nya konspirationsteorin: Vaccin som smittar
ETC20037	20211203	Allt fler länder börjar överväga vaccinationstvång
ETC20040	20211207	Nya rekommendationer: Vaccinationsbevis på gym och restauranger föreslås
ETC20044	20211213	Kommentar Därför ska vi lyssna på antivaxxarna
ETC20047	20211213	Låt liv gå före vinster
ETC20049	20211217	Folkhälsomyndigheten: Nya restriktioner ska inte påverka julfirandet
ETC20050	20211217	Detta gäller för dos tre
ETC20052	20211228	Kommentar Roya Hakimnia: Det räcker inte att vilja förstå vaccinmotstånd
ETC20057	20220104	Så länge får du vänta på den tredje sprutan
ETC20059	20220104	Spanien om de nya restriktionerna: Det här är mitt enda liv
ETC20062	20220107	Tennisexperten om Djokovic: Reglerna måste gälla alla
ETC20067	20220112	FHM: Tredje vaccindos kan tas tidigare
ETC20069	20220113	Debatt: Vaccinegoismen slår tillbaka med nya mutationer
ETC20074	20220117	Stort intresse för vaccin i Rinkeby
ETC20076	20220118	Undantaget kan ge fattiga länder vaccin - men Sverige vägrar
ETC20084	20220203	Regeringen häver coronarestriktioner
FrT10005	20210203	Merkel öppnar för ryskt vaccin
FrT10006	20210203	Nu 55 döda efter svensk vaccinering
FrT10007	20210204	Sverige kan ta in ryska vaccinet
FrT10008	20210204	"Coronapass" kan bli krav vid resor, idrott och restaurangbesök
FrT10010	20210204	Var femte anställd inom äldreomsorgen vill inte ta vaccinet
FrT10011	20210204	Åkesson: "Orimligt" att illegala får förtur till vaccin
FrT10013	20210207	Köpenhamn: Stor demonstration mot vaccinpass
FrT10014	20210208	Ayatollan: "De som fått vaccinet har blivit homosexuella"
FrT10015	20210208	Facebook förbjuder alla uppgifter om att vaccin kan vara farliga
FrT10017	20210209	Äldre får inte träffa anhöriga - trots total vaccinering
FrT10018	20210210	Tre av fyra på äldreboenden har fått vaccin
FrT10019	20210210	69 svenskar döda efter coronavaccinering
FrT10022	20210213	Gävleborg stoppar vaccinering - 1 av 4 blev sjuka av sprutan
FrT10024	20210213	Fler regioner larmar: Hundratals insjuknar av coronavaccin
FrT10025	20210214	Putin har inte vaccinerat sig
FrT10026	20210215	Vårdpersonal vill inte ta Astra Zenecas vaccin
FrT10028	20210216	Israel har vaccinerat halva befolkningen - öppnar samhället
FrT10029	20210218	Här ifrågasätter Zuckerberg vaccinet - trots egna förbudet mot vaccinkritik på Facebook
FrT10030	20210220	"Invandrare först" när Stockholm vaccineras
FrT10031	20210222	Facebook samordnar vaccincensur med Biden
FrT10032	20210223	Sverige kan köpa ryskt vaccin även utan EU-godkännande
FrT10033	20210225	85 döda efter svensk coronavaccinering
FrT10036	20210303	Stenrika på corona: Modernas intäkter trettondubblade
FrT10037	20210304	FHM rekommenderar Astra Zenecas vaccin till äldre
FrT10038	20210306	Demonstration mot vaccin och coronaåtgärder i Stockholm

FrT10040	20210310	En miljon vaccinerade i Sverige
FrT10041	20210311	Läkemedelsverket stoppar inte vaccin efter dödslarm
FrT10043	20210315	Ygeman (S): Vaccinpass kan bli krav för att gå på restaurang
FrT10044	20210315	Norsk vårdanställd död efter vaccinering
FrT10046	20210316	Astra Zenecas vaccin stoppas även i Sverige
FrT10047	20210316	Första dödsfallet i Sverige efter Astra Zeneca-vaccinering
FrT10049	20210318	Vaccin biter inte på sydafrikansk corona
FrT10050	20210318	Därför dör man av Astra Zenecas vaccin
FrT10051	20210318	Sjukhus anmäler Astra Zeneca-dödsfall
FrT10054	20210323	Bildt blir vaccintopp på WHO
FrT10055	20210325	Sverige fortsätter med Astra Zeneca - men bara äldre drabbas
FrT10058	20210330	Lägg "Vaxzevria" på minnet - Astra Zenecas vaccin har bytt namn
FrT10059	20210330	Sverige: Minst 200 vaccinerade smittade ändå
FrT10061	20210405	Norsk liberal: "Jag dör gärna av Astra Zenecas vaccin"
FrT10062	20210406	Nio av tio vill ta vaccinet
FrT10063	20210407	Texas förbjuder vaccinpass
FrT10064	20210407	Stockholmsboomers vaccinlockades med "Hide The Pain Harold"
FrT10065	20210407	Fem på äldreboende smittade - trots full vaccinering
FrT10068	20210413	Dödslarm stoppar ännu ett vaccin
FrT10069	20210414	Danmark stoppar Astra Zeneca-vaccinet helt
FrT10071	20210419	Stockholmarna får inte veta vilket vaccin de ges
FrT10072	20210420	"Tillfällighet" att tre vaccinerade dog på samma boende
FrT10073	20210421	Vaccinerade sprider corona på äldreboende i Piteå
FrT10074	20210421	Svensk kvinna över 65 drabbad av dödliga Astra Zeneca- sjukan
FrT10075	20210422	Norge dumpar sina Astra Zeneca-doser i Sverige
FrT10076	20210422	Norska FHM: Större risk att dö av vaccinet än av corona
FrT10077	20210425	"Gravida personer" uppmanas vaccinera sig
FrT10078	20210426	Kvinna över 65 nytt Astra Zeneca-dödsfall
FrT10079	20210426	Facebook stängde ner jättegrupp för vaccinoffer
FrT10080	20210427	13 svenska Astra Zeneca-dödsfall rapporterade
FrT10081	20210427	Här får Löfven första sprutan - från Pfizer
FrT10082	20210502	Få invandrare vaccinerar sig
FrT10083	20210503	Sverige "skänker bort" en miljon Astra Zeneca-doser
FrT10084	20210504	Tusentals vaccinerade har smittats ändå
FrT10085	20210505	"Vaccinera inte unga och friska"
FrT10086	20210509	EU förlänger inte sitt avtal med Astra Zeneca
FrT10087	20210513	Seychellerna vaccinerat - fallen skenar ändå
FrT10089	20210517	Fick Sveriges första coronavaccin - nu har hon dött
FrT10090	20210517	Afrikaner ratar Astra Zeneca-doser
FrT10091	20210518	Eric Clapton efter Astra Zeneca-sprutan: "Trodde jag aldrig skulle spela igen"
FrT10092	20210520	Invandrare fortsätter tacka nej till vaccin
FrT10094	20210524	Nobelpristagaren: Vaccinet skapar mutationerna
FrT10095	20210525	Sverige skänkar bort tre miljoner doser vaccin

FrT20005	20211102	Fullvaccinerad minister sjuk i corona
FrT20006	20211105	Oro bland vaccinerade när Modernas aktie plötsligt kraschar på börsen
FrT20007	20211107	Bidens vaccinkrav pausas av domstol
FrT20008	20211107	Svenska läkare kräver vaccinstopp efter fuskavslöjande
FrT20009	20211107	Stjärnan vaccinvägrar – lämnar Mighty Ducks-serien
FrT20010	20211110	Tidigare tredje dos för 65-plussare
FrT20011	20211110	Så här bemöter Pfizer fuskanklagelserna
FrT20012	20211110	Ja till statlig ersättning för vaccinskadade
FrT20013	20211117	Vaccinpass införs i Sverige
FrT20014	20211117	Ställer in julen – trots att 100 procent är vaccinerade
FrT20015	20211118	20 av 23 döda var vaccinerade
FrT20018	20211121	Varannan smittad dubbelvaccinerad
FrT20020	20211123	Så vill FHM utforma vaccinpasset
FrT20021	20211124	Israel börjar vaccinera femåringar
FrT20023	20211125	FHM: "Vi tittar på" om vi ska vaccinera svenska 5-åringar
FrT20024	20211125	Nordea tar avstånd från egen vaccinanalys med nazireferens
FrT20025	20211125	Vaccinkrav på självmordskliniker
FrT20026	20211126	Folkhälsomyndigheten skärper kraven på vaccinerade
FrT20028	20211126	Byråkratisk "teknikalitet" bakom vaccinkrav för tillfrisknade
FrT20029	20211128	Stor demonstration mot vaccinpass i Göteborg
FrT20030	20211128	Danmark: Vaccinpass eller få sparken
FrT20031	20211201	Svenskar opererar in vaccinpass som chip i kroppen
FrT20032	20211201	MSB-rapport utmålade tvångsvaccinering som "konspirationsteori"
FrT20034	20211204	Fullvaccinerade driver nu smittspridningen
FrT20037	20211206	Österrike: Fängelse för vaccinvägrare
FrT20038	20211206	Tusentals kvinnor har fått mensrubbingar efter vaccinering
FrT20039	20211207	Förlamades i ansiktet av vaccinet: "Hade tagit det även om jag vetat"
FrT20040	20211208	Vaccinet kan vara 40 gånger mindre effektivt mot omikron
FrT20041	20211208	Vaccinkrav för att få jobb på kommun
FrT20043	20211210	Sverige skänker en miljon vaccindoser till Rwanda
FrT20044	20211211	Moderaterna vill ha vaccinpass "från 0 personer"
FrT20046	20211215	Kristersson: Vaccinet ger "fullt skydd mot viruset" – nu sjuk i covid-19
FrT20047	20211220	Tyske hälsoministern: Tvångsvaccinering "så snart som möjligt"
FrT20048	20211222	Dags för fjärde dos i Israel
FrT20049	20211222	Minister sjuk i corona: "Så tacksam för att jag är dubbelvaccinerad"
FrT20050	20211222	Vaccinkrav för alla region Dalarnas anställda
FrT20051	20211223	"Människojägare" ska spåra upp ovaccinerade
FrT20052	20211223	Vaccinering gav ökad risk för covid-19
FrT20053	20211223	WHO-chefen: Vaccinet används "för att döda barn"
FrT20054	20211225	SD-toppen tar avstånd från egna profilen
FrT20055	20211225	Fem års fängelse för att få corona med flit
FrT20057	20211227	Koreaner demonstrerar efter vaccindödsfall
FrT20058	20211228	Björn Söder: Tredje dos "bästa julklappen" – får kritik

FrT20062	20211230	Vaccinpionjär avstängd för vaccinkritik
FrT20064	20220102	90.000 rapporter om biverkningar
FrT20070	20220105	Krav på vaccinpass kan utvidgas
FrT20071	20220106	Tvångsvaccinering för 50-plussare i Italien
FrT20072	20220106	Färskock ska locka fler att ta vaccin
FrT20074	20220111	Pfizers VD: Två doser ger "mycket begränsat skydd" – eller skyddar kanske inte alls
FrT20076	20220112	Pfizers VD: Vi vet inte hur länge tredje sprutan skyddar
FrT20078	20220112	Beskedet: Särskild skatt för ovaccinerade
FrT20079	20220113	Ministerns primitiva vaccinbudskap till aboriginerna – "Ta corona-nålen"
FrT20080	20220113	Högre andel smittade bland vaccinerade i nästan alla åldrar
FrT20082	20220114	USA:s högsta domstol sätter stopp för vaccinkrav
FrT20083	20220114	England ska avveckla vaccinpassen
FrT20084	20220115	Fullvaccinerade barn 2,3 gånger mer smittade än ovaccinerade
FrT20085	20220115	Tyska Såpo klassar vaccinkritiker som "statsfiender"
FrT20086	20220116	Sverige har donerat över 9 miljoner vaccindoser
FrT20087	20220117	Inte ens fyra sprutor skyddar mot omikron
FrT20090	20220119	Moderat vägrar rösta för vaccinpass
FrT20091	20220119	Folkhälsomyndigheten mörkar att smittspridningen är störst bland vaccinerade
FrT20092	20220121	Tegnell vilseledde om dödstaten bland vaccinerade
FrT20093	20220122	Stor uppslutning väntas på demonstration mot vaccinpass
FrT20094	20220123	Hallengrens attack mot demonstranterna: "Farligt"
FrT20096	20220124	Folkhälsomyndigheten slutar dölja smitta hos vaccinerade efter Fria Tidens granskning
FrT20098	20220126	Pfizers VD besviken på effekten av tredje sprutan
FrT20100	20220127	Ingen allmän vaccination av barn 5-11 år
FrT20101	20220128	S-politiker: Spika igen de ovaccinerades dörrar
FrT20102	20220129	Kanadensisk lastbilskonvoj kan vara världens största
FrT20106	20220131	Påfyllnadsdos nu redan efter tre månader
FrT20107	20220201	Fler än 30 000 medlemmar i grupp om vaccinskador
FrT20108	20220201	10.000 rapporter om allvarliga biverkningar från coronavaccin i Sverige
FrT20111	20220204	EU-krav på vaccinpass förlängs till juni 2023
FrT20112	20220204	Linda, 43, blev svårt sjuk direkt efter sprutan – läkaren ville ge henne mer vaccin
FrT20117	20220209	Skämtar om alla vaccin hon tagit – kollapsar på scenen
FrT20118	20220209	Nooshi Dadgostar sjuk efter tredje dosen
FrT20121	20220211	EU utreder rapporter om mensrubbingar efter coronavaccin
FrT20122	20220212	Oro för att vaccin mot corona kan ge ökad risk för hiv
FrT20123	20220214	FHM: Dags för fjärde dos
FrT20126	20220215	Efter kollapsen: Kommer inte ta fjärde dos
FrT20127	20220217	GP föreslås få ny avdelning efter fräck vaccincensur
FrT20129	20220221	Nytt coronavaccin rekommenderas i Sverige
FrT20131	20220228	TV4 fälls för vaccinhets