

legitim.ch

A far-right, German-language Swiss site that publishes hoaxes and false claims, including about the COVID-19 pandemic.



Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.

Ownership and Financing

The site's Editorial Staff (Redaktion) page identifies the site's owner as Jan Walter. According to Psiram, an online encyclopedia that documents pseudoscience and conspiracy theories, Walter is a Swiss blogger who belongs to the Truth movement, which consists of people who believe that the public is being misinformed and manipulated by governments and the media.

The site's Shop section sells what are described as "ethical products," including nutritional supplements for weight loss, anti-aging, and general health. The site also lists as partners three websites selling health supplements, although it is unclear what these partnerships entail. The site runs advertising for these three partners.

Content

On the Editorial Staff (Redaktion) page, Legitim.ch (German for "Legitimate") states that the site "focuses on topics that are wrongly or inadequately covered in the mainstream media." The site primarily publishes articles on national and international politics, finance, and health, mostly based on reporting from other sites, with added commentary.

Many stories accuse global elites and world leaders of conspiring for dark purposes, such as alleged plots to overthrow U.S. President Donald Trump or to use vaccinations to reduce population growth. These claims often come from QAnon, an online extreme right-wing group that argues that a shadowy "Deep State" runs the U.S. and is conspiring against President Trump.

Typical articles have run under headlines such as "Travis Walton: Probably the most spectacular UFO abduction in history" ("Travis Walton: Die wohl spektakulärste UFO-Entführung der Geschichte") and "14 ATTACKS PER DAY - Poor BABY fights against DEATH after vaccination!" ("14 ANFÄLLE PRO TAG – Armes BABY kämpft nach IMPFUNG gegen den TOD!").

Score: 20/100

-  Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)
-  Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
-  Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
-  Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
-  Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
-  Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
-  Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
-  Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
-  The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

The site links to Maona.tv, an online TV channel that states that it publishes “spiritual films, lectures, [and] exercises,” and that has published conspiracy-oriented videos, such as the documentary “Vaxxed,” which includes false and unsubstantiated claims about vaccines. The website also links to a site called “Knowledge makes (you) free”, an apparent reference to the motto of the National Socialist concentration camps, “Work makes (you) free.” Legitim.ch publishes a newsletter.

Credibility

Articles on Legitim.ch often rely on unnamed sources or videos from anonymous YouTube accounts, as well as on social media posts from QAnon-related accounts. Articles on the site often include false or misleading claims and promote debunked conspiracy theories.

For example, a June 2020 article, titled “5G and COVID-19: From Fact to Fiction and back” (“5G und COVID-19: Von Fakt zu Fiktion und wieder zurück”), claimed that symptoms of the COVID-19 virus are caused by 5G technology and are aggravated by vaccines. “There is also evidence that many of the symptoms of coronavirus are similar to 5G symptoms, which strongly resemble influenza symptoms. 5G sensitivity depends on the metal exposure of the body. Vaccinations produce exactly the symptoms associated with COVID-19 in many people,” the article stated. “It is suspected that one aim of the planned vaccination campaign could be to blame the 5G symptoms on the coronavirus.”

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is connected to either 5G or vaccines. A March 2020 report from the International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation Protection, a Germany-based organization that studies the health effects of non-ionizing radiation such as radio waves, found no evidence that 5G exposure posed a risk to human health. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration says on its website that “to date, there is no consistent or credible scientific evidence of health problems caused by the exposure to radio frequency energy emitted by cell phones.” The claim that advocates of vaccines are angling to blame the coronavirus for “5G symptoms” is baseless.

An April 2020 article, titled “Bang !!! Trump confirmed: Women and children are currently being liberated” (“Paukenschlag !!! Trump bestätigt: Aktuell werden Frauen und Kinder befreit”), claimed that governments around the world are using the COVID-19 pandemic to conduct a big rescue operation to free children imprisoned by the “elites,” a conspiracy theory that has been spread by members of the QAnon movement in Germany. “The alleged corona pandemic may be the last desperate attack on our God-given freedom. But this shot obviously backfired, because with the global lockdown the background powers have literally dug their own grave,” the article stated. “Instead of a totalitarian world government, the official revelation of the darkest secrets, the liberation of children, and the mass arrest of the so-called world elite are now imminent.”

To back the claim that the pandemic has obscured a large-scale rescue operation for imprisoned children, the article included a video of an April 2020 White House press conference, which the site said shows President Trump confirming that women and children were being freed. Under the subheading “The liberation of children from the clutches of Satanists,” the article also included photos of children being treated by military personnel and doctors at make-shift coronavirus hospitals in New York and Texas. Citing posts on Twitter, the site also reported that underground tunnels, where these children had supposedly been imprisoned, were being blown up. “On April 5th, several attentive Q followers shared screenshots of a radar app that clearly show an explosion pattern. It can be assumed that tunnel systems are being blown up over a wide area,” the site claimed.

There is no evidence that the coronavirus pandemic serves to hide efforts to free children imprisoned by “elites” or that such underground prisons are being discovered. It is true that during a press conference, President Trump spoke about renewed efforts to stop human trafficking, especially of women and children. However, he did not at any point state that these children had been imprisoned by the “elites,” or that the pandemic had unleashed a rescue effort for these children. The photos in the article show children being treated at regular coronavirus treatment centers and do not provide any indication that these children had been imprisoned and recently freed.

A September 2019 article, titled “This surveillance camera disproves the official 9/11 investigation! [leaked & censored]” (“Diese Überwachungskamera widerlegt die offizielle 9/11-Untersuchung! [geleaked & zensiert”)), claimed that “The attacks of September 11, 2001 were a classic operation under a false flag. The Deep State organized a terrorist attack against its own people to justify invading the Middle East.”

The U.S. 9/11 Commission and multiple other investigations concluded that the twin towers were brought down by two passenger planes that had been hijacked by terrorists and slammed into the buildings. No evidence has emerged suggesting that the U.S. government was somehow involved in the attack.

Because Legitim.ch has promoted numerous debunked conspiracy theories and false or misleading claims, NewsGuard has determined that the website repeatedly publishes false content, does not gather and present information responsibly, and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

The site does not publish a corrections policy, and NewsGuard found only one published correction from 2019 on the site — which does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for regularly issuing corrections.

The site does not disclose an agenda or political ideology. Nevertheless, articles published in the News section frequently include opinionated content that advance far-right and other extremist stances on immigration, the media, elections, and vaccinations.

For example, a July 2020 article, titled “Unbelievable - Bill & Melinda Gates are looking forward to the next Corona wave!” (“Unfassbar – Bill & Melinda Gates freuen sich auf die nächste Corona-Welle!”), stated, “[A]part from that, it must have become clear to everyone that the WHO and the vaccination agenda are controlled by criminals.”

Another July 2020 article, titled “RAY OF HOPE: After Donald Trump Poland’s President Duda also speaks out against mandatory vaccinations” (“LICHTBLICK: Nach Donald Trump spricht sich auch Polens Präsident Duda gegen die Impfpflicht aus!”), stated, “In the context of the Corona crisis, certain circles are trying by hook or crook to introduce worldwide compulsory vaccination, which is totally absurd from a logical point of view.... People who wish to poison themselves

voluntarily should of course be allowed to do so, but please leave those in peace who don't want that. In this spirit thank you to Donald Trump, Andrzej Duda and all those who advocate for our God-given freedom.”

A May 2020 article, titled “GB: Despite lockdown - 100'000 ARRIVALS PER WEEK - What is the situation in GERMANY?” (“GB: Trotz Lockdown - 100'000 EINREISEN PRO WOCHE - Wie sieht es in DEUTSCHLAND aus?”), stated, “While the Western lifestyle is socially and economically ruined through radical (protective) measures, the migration industry continues on briskly... The staged refugee crisis is followed by the staged corona crisis and everyone is let back in.”

Because Legitim.ch frequently includes opinionated content in its news articles that promote an undisclosed perspective, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not distinguish between news and opinion responsibly.

The site's owner, Jan Walter, declined to comment on NewsGuard's questions sent via the general contact form, seeking comment on the articles cited above, the site's handling of opinion, and its approach to corrections.

Transparency

The site's Editorial Staff (Redaktion) page identifies the site's owner and editor-in-chief Jan Walter, and provides a general contact form.

Articles are typically credited to Walter. However, the site does not provide any contact or biographical information for Walter, or for any other people involved in the operation of the site — which does not meet NewsGuard's standard for providing information about content creators.

Advertising is typically distinguishable from editorial content. However, in July 2020, the site published an article, titled “CANNERALD - These guys rock the CBD-REVOLUTION & you can participate!” (“CANNERALD – Diese Jungs rocken die CBD-REVOLUTION & Du kannst daran TEILHABEN!”), about a Swiss-based cannabis company. Although the article promoted and linked to the company's website and services, it was not labeled as advertising or sponsored content.

Because this appears to be an isolated case and NewsGuard did not find multiple examples of unlabeled advertising, NewsGuard has determined that the site generally meets the standard for clearly labeling paid content.

The site's owner, Jan Walter, declined to comment on NewsGuard's questions submitted via the general contact form, seeking comment on the site's lack of content creator information.

History According to the domain search tool Whois, Legitim.ch was registered in December 2016.

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Edited by: [Eric Efron](#), [Florian Meißner](#)

Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

Sources

Ownership and Financing <https://www.legitim.ch/>
<https://www.legitim.ch/redaktion>
https://www.psiram.com/de/index.php/Jan_Walter
<https://www.legitim.ch/ethische-produkte>
<https://www.facebook.com/jan.walter.182>

Content <https://www.legitim.ch/redaktion>
<https://www.maona.tv/>
Example headlines:
<https://www.legitim.ch/post/unfassbar-bill-melinda-gates-freuen-sich-auf-die-n%C3%A4chste-corona-welle>
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Credibility 5G and corona:
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Corona elite children trafficking:

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<https://www.cnbc.com/2016/12/30/read-all-about-it-the-biggest-fake-news-stories-of-2016.html>
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/local/wp/2016/12/04/d-c-police-respond-to-report-of-a-man-with-a-gun-at-comet-ping-pong-restaurant/>
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Chlordioxid:

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Other false articles:

<https://www.legitim.ch/post/geleakte-bilder-best%C3%A4tigen-tom-hanks-wurde-heimlich-vom-fbi-verhaftet>

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Opinion:

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Correction:

<https://www.legitim.ch/post/es-l%C3%A4uft-nach-plan-trump-hat-soeben-die-mondlandung-entlarvt>

Award nomination:

<https://dergoldenealuhut.de/der-goldene-aluhut/der-goldene-aluhut-2019-die-nominierten/>

Transparency

<https://www.legitim.ch/redaktion>

<https://www.legitim.ch/impressum>

<https://www.legitim.ch/datenschutz>

Unlabeled ad:

<https://www.legitim.ch/post/cannerald-diese-jungs-rocken-die-cbd-revolution-du-kannst-daran-teilhaben>

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History

<http://whoisdomain.ch/legitim.ch.html>

<https://books.google.com/books?id=ITg7DwAAQBAJ&dq=legitim.ch+2017&q=legitim.ch#v=snippet&q=legitim.ch&f=false>