

# rubikon.news

A site with a focus on German politics that has published pro-Russian stories, conspiracy theories, and false and misleading claims, including about the COVID-19 virus.



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

**Score: 35/100**

## Ownership and Financing

The site is owned by Initiative zur Demokratisierung der Meinungsbildung gemeinnützige GmbH (Initiative for the Democratization of Opinion Making), which is based in Mainz, in southwestern Germany. Initiative zur Demokratisierung der Meinungsbildung is a “non-profit GmbH,” which is a German limited liability company whose income is used for charitable purposes.

The company’s CEO and the site’s editor-in-chief is German journalist and author Jens Wernicke. Wernicke has published several books, including “Facade Democracy and Deep State: On the Way to an Authoritarian Age” (“Fassadendemokratie und Tiefer Staat: Auf dem Weg in ein autoritäres Zeitalter”); “The next big war: Background and Analyses of the media-political agitation against Russia” (“Der nächste große Krieg: Hintergründe und Analysen zur medial-politischen Hetze gegen Russland “); and “The eco-catastrophe: Saving the planet means toppling the ruling elites” (“Die Öko-Katastrophe: Den Planeten zu retten, heißt die herrschenden Eliten zu stürzen”).

The site also lists a 20-member Advisory Board, who “reflect the political breadth and intellectual depth of the magazine,” the site states. According to the site, “if necessary, [board members] advise the editorial staff. However, they are not involved in the operative editorial work.” Many board members have written for the Russian propaganda outlet RT Deutsch or have been frequently interviewed by RT Deutsch.

The site solicits donations; it does not run advertising.

-  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.](#)

## Content

The website describes itself on the homepage as “the magazine for the critical mass. We report about what can't be found in the mass media,” adding that its

authors are “independent journalists all over the world.”

The site primarily publishes opinion articles focused on German politics and business, along with some international news. Sections include Façade Democracy & Deep State (Fassadendemokratie & Tiefer Staat), Media & Ideology Criticism (Medien- & Ideologiekritik), War & Peace (Krieg & Frieden), Poor & Rich (Arm & Reich), Education & Social Affairs (Bildung & Soziales), Nature & Environment (Natur & Umwelt), and Hope & Utopia (Hoffnung & Utopie).

The site’s coverage generally supports pro-Russian and anti-Israel views and is critical of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Western institutions such as NATO and the European Union. Typical articles have run under headlines including “The secret NATO member” (“Das heimliche NATO-Mitglied”); “The Massacre” (“Das Massaker”); and “The vaccination business” (“Das Impf-Business”).

The site also offers a Videos section and a weekly newsletter.

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#### Credibility

Rubikon.news’s articles sometimes feature original reporting, but most rely on reporting by other news outlets, with added commentary by the site. These sources include credible outlets, such as Zeit, the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, and The New York Times.

However, Rubikon.news also aggregates content from sites that NewsGuard found to be unreliable, including KenFM.de, SputnikNews, and RT Deutsch. The site also translates and republishes articles from other unreliable sites — including GlobalResearch.ca, MintPressNews.com, and LifeSitenews.com.

For example, a September 2020 article titled “The trained citizens” (“Die abgerichteten Bürger”) and first published on GlobalResearch.ca, stated: “Is Corona the true cause of the organized insanity we are currently experiencing? By now it seems clear that none of this, neither masks, ‘infections,’ quarantine, lockdown, vaccination nor any other repressive measure, has anything to do with Covid. They are means and

instruments for the New World Order (NWO) to 'train' the population for total obedience and control by an invisible superpower or a deep dark state."

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus and the efforts to control the virus are part of a "Deep State" plot to control the world population.

The same Rubikon.news article claimed that "Germany is preparing for a new lockdown... as is France — and the USA, as they fight against race riots, Woke protests, Black Lives Matter (BLM) movements and police riots," which the site described as "All organized and paid for by the Soros, Rockefellers, Fords, Gates and other oligarchic 'philanthropic' humanitarian foundations."

Claims that billionaire financier and philanthropist George Soros paid protestors to mount demonstrations have been found baseless by multiple fact-checking and news organizations, including Reuters, PolitiFact, and Snopes. Soros' main organization, the Open Society Foundations, has repeatedly stated that it has never paid people to participate in demonstrations. There is no evidence that the Rockefeller, Ford, or Gates families have paid protestors or organized the protests that erupted in the U.S. after the death in police custody of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May 2020.

A July 2020 article, titled "The Frankenstein vaccine" ("Die Frankenstein Impfung") and first published on Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s website ChildrensHealthDefense.org, made false claims about mRNA vaccines in development by the biotechnology company Moderna for COVID-19. "Instead of injecting an antigen with an adjuvant, as is the case with conventional vaccines, Moderna injects a small piece of the genetic code of the corona virus into human cells, thereby altering the DNA in the entire human body," the article said.

The article also claimed that "What biotech companies like Moderna, supported by Bill Gates and Anthony Fauci, are trying to do would be to interfere with the genetic code of billions of people. The consequences are incalculable and would also affect the descendants

of a genetically modified humanity.” The article added that Bill Gates “hopes to be able to transform our species into genetically modified organisms (GMOs).”

There is no evidence that a future COVID-19 vaccine, including a mRNA vaccine currently being developed by Moderna, would alter people’s DNA. In a post on his personal blog, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates explained that his foundation is helping to fund research into many types of vaccines, including experimental mRNA vaccines.

According to a 2015 article on the Harvard Medical School’s website, instead of the traditional approach of using small or inactivated doses of an antigen to produce an immune system response, mRNA vaccines include a specific mRNA sequence, so the body would produce the antigen itself and develop antibodies to fight future infections. There is no evidence that such a vaccine could “alter our DNA.” A March 2019 review of existing scientific research on mRNA vaccines, published in the journal *Frontiers in Immunology*, found that the mRNA “cannot potentially integrate into the host genome and will be degraded naturally” after the body produces the antigen, thus rendering it unlikely to have any effect on DNA.

Multiple articles on the site have made false claims about the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks in the U.S..

For example, a September 2020 article, original to the site and titled “The Pentagon Fake” (“Der Pentagon-Fake”), claimed that the Pentagon was not actually hit by an airplane during the 9/11 attacks. “The official account of the alleged terrorist attack on the Pentagon turns out to be a bizarre deception that violates the laws of physics,” the article said. Citing images of the Pentagon crash site released by the Pentagon, the article claimed that the “hole that was left behind during the attack does not fit in the format of a passenger plane at all.” According to the article, the hole is “undoubtedly much too small and no aircraft debris can be seen.”

The article concluded: “The fact that the official theory about the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in the USA is not true can be shown by this exposure of the Arlington Pentagon 9/11 fake alone. 9/11 served the USA to launch the ‘war on terror’ and thus to establish extensive surveillance and censorship measures as well as numerous wars and interventions below the military threshold that violate international law.”

The 9/11 Commission and multiple other investigations concluded that the al-Qaida terror network and Osama bin Laden masterminded the 2001 terror attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people, including 189 plane passengers and military personnel at the site of the crash at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. Video captured images of the airplanes striking the two World Trade towers.

Other articles on the site have supported claims that Russia’s military agents were not responsible for the March 2018 poisoning of former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter in the UK. For example, an August 2019 article titled “The poison lie” (“Die Gift-Lügen”) and first published on pro-Russian site Anti-Spiegel.ru, described the poisoning as a “prime example of perfidious media manipulation” and a “successful anti-Russian media campaign in the West that provided further excuses for sanctions and put Russia in a bad light.”

In September 2018, the UK charged two men identified as Russian military intelligence officers with attempted murder in Skripal’s poisoning. The finding that the men are linked to Russia intelligence was backed by other western governments, including the U.S. and the European Union. An independent investigation by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) analyzed blood samples taken from Skripal and his daughter, and, according the organization, "confirm[ed] the findings of the United Kingdom relating to the identity of the toxic chemical" — namely, that a Novichok nerve agent produced in the former Soviet Union was used in the attack.

The same article also denied Russia's involvement in the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17, which was shot down by an anti-aircraft missile in Eastern Ukraine in July 2014, killing all 298 persons on board. "Russia is accused of shooting down flight MH17 and killing 283 people on July 17, 2014," the article said. "Here, too, it is concealed that despite differing media reports, it is still unclear who is responsible."

A joint investigation team, as well as investigations by independent researchers, indicated that the missile that took down the aircraft came from a Russian brigade and was transported into Eastern Ukraine by pro-Russian fighters.

Because Rubikon.news has often published debunked conspiracy theories and false claims, NewsGuard has determined that the site repeatedly publishes false information and does not gather and present information responsibly.

Headlines are generally short and do not include the false claims made in the article. Therefore, the site meets NewsGuard's standard for avoiding deceptive headlines.

Rubikon.news's Contact page lists a person in charge of corrections and provides an email address to report corrections. However, NewsGuard did not find any corrections on the site.

The site describes itself as a "magazine" and does not label any content as news. The site's Editorial Guidelines (Redaktionsstatut) page describes Rubikon.News as a "medium in which publicists, philosophers, artists, scientists, activists, journalists and many others speak out and critically analyze politics and society."

However, articles on the site often promote an undisclosed pro-Russian, anti-Israel, and anti-Western perspective.

For example, a September 2020 article titled "Skripal 2.0" stated: "We have long been familiar with this pattern of argumentation: if something bad happens

somewhere in the world, Putin is to blame. The Russian president is ascribed downright omnipotence by the West.”

An August 2020 article, titled “Transnational elite fascism” (“Transnationaler Elitenfaschismus”), stated: “Since March 2020, the form of rule that has systematically unfolded since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989/1990 has been taking full effect: A transnationally operating oligarchic caste has taken over rule in the western ‘democracies.’” The article described the EU as “the decisive control center for the de-democratization of nation states.”

A July 2020 article, titled “Legalized land theft” (“Legalisierter Landraub”), stated: “With the planned annexation of Palestinian territories, Israel is putting a cherry on top of a disastrous development.” According to the article, “It should be clear to all factions in the German Bundestag that the two-state solution is only a fiction, which, due to the Israeli land theft and the progressive settlement policy, has long since ceased to offer an option for an independent Palestinian state and peace in the region.”

Because Rubikon.news’s articles regularly promote a political and ideological perspective that the site does not disclose, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

The site did not respond to two NewsGuard emails inquiring about the articles cited above and the site’s approach to corrections and opinion.

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#### Transparency

The Imprint page discloses the site’s ownership by Initiative zur Demokratisierung

der Meinungsbildung GmbH. The Contact page names the site’s editor-in-chief as well as other top editors and department heads.

An Authors (Autoren) page offers a directory of the site’s writers, along with biographical information.

The site does not run advertising.

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## History

The site was launched in February 2017 by Jens Wernicke.

In April 2020, Wernicke filed a lawsuit in the Administrative Court (Verwaltungsgericht) of Mainz against COVID-19 restrictions in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, claiming that they violated basic human rights — including the right to privacy and freedom of religion. In an article on the site, Wernicke asked his readers to file similar lawsuits and stated, “I am by no means alone in my concern for our basic rights, dignity, and physical well-being.” In May 2020, the court denied Wernicke’s request for a preliminary injunction.

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

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Transparency

<https://www.rubikon.news/kontakt>

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Content creators:

<https://www.rubikon.news/autoren>

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