The art of framing: explaining framing mechanisms in 2011 and 2015 election campaigns in Switzerland

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Abstract

For decades, research on elections has focused on contextual framework of electoral campaigns, interplay between parties and voters, parties’ ideology, policy positions, and issues parties address. Framing theory, recently borrowed from the field of political communication, has highlighted the importance of framing as a new dimension of party competition. Existing scholarship in the field of party competition has focused on specific frames, overlooking the mechanisms of framing. I propose a theoretical framework explaining framing mechanisms, specifically frame transformation and frame diffusion, and reveal the factors that influence the choice of framing strategy by political parties. I argue that party type, power within the parliament and government, and ideology combined with the context of elections affect the parties’ choice of specific framing strategy and thus define the mechanism. In this paper, I focus on the diffusion mechanisms and specifically internal diffusion from issue to issue within one party. I argue that parties have dominant frames in their repertoire that root in their ideology and use them to frame new issues or reframe old ones. I test my theoretical assumptions on party manifestos and a selection of political ads in Swiss newspapers from two recent federal elections in Switzerland (2011 and 2015). I identify the frames diversity using quantitative content analysis and trace the use of traditional frames.

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Introduction

Traditionally the study of elections focused on party positions and issues dominating electoral competition (Downs 1957; Budge 2001; Budge 1994; Budge and Farlie 1983; Meguid 2005; Walgrave, Lefevere, and Nuytemans 2009; Tresch, Lefevere, and Walgrave 2015). Initial understanding that parties articulate specific issues during the campaign and as Budge and Farlie put it “talk past each other” (1983, 268) was challenged by recent research on the issue convergence (Sigelman and Buell 2004). In case there are major issues dominating the campaign, like environment after the Fukushima disaster or immigration today, parties have to address these issues. They also can engage with the issues their opponents are competent at (Tresch, Lefevere, and Walgrave 2015). These observations introduce the question “How do parties talk about the same issue?” Alongside using different positions on the same issue, parties also use framing to provide their own definition of the issue, its causal interpretation or recommendation on treatment (Entman 1993, 52).

The concept of framing originates from the crossroads of psychology and sociology (Goffman 1974) and initially described frameworks that individuals used in order to interpret life events and “make sense of the world around them” (Scheufele 2000, 301). Over time, the foundations of framing led to development of two different approaches - sociological (Entman 1993, Gamson and Modigliani 1987, Goffman 1974), focusing on “frames in communication” and psychological (Iyengar 1991, Kahneman and Tversky 1984) that explores “frames in thoughts”. “Frames in thoughts” describe a set of dimensions that affect the way people conceptualise and think about an issue (Chong and Druckman 2007a, 105-106), an interpretative framework individuals possess. In short, frames in individual minds (Borah 2011, 249). A “frame in communication” (Chong and Druckman 2007b, 106), in turn, denotes an idea that provides meaning to events, “organizes everyday reality” and promotes specific interpretation of issues (Chong and Druckman 2007a, 106).

In political science and party competition research, scholars focus on the “frames in communication” used by politicians, media and other actors. Analysing presidential frames on foreign policy in the US, Entman (2003, 417) describes framing as “selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation and/or solution”. This definition of the process reveals that framing involves selection and salience. Framing enables actors to emphasise and promote specific understanding of an event or issue.

Politicians strategically use frames to “mobilize voters behind their policies by encouraging them to think about those policies along particular lines” (Chong and Druckman 2007a, 106) and hence influence public opinion. Following the logic of framing theory, policy issues are multi-faceted
entities and their specific interpretations and highlighting of one of the facets depend on politicians who use them. So while talking to each other on specific issue, parties still can talk past each other while framing the issue differently. This situation is most prominent in the setting of direct democratic campaigns, when parties are forced to address the same issue (Hänggli 2011; Hänggli and Kriesi 2012).

Framing research in the field of party competition mostly focused on issue-specific frames and explored framing of the European integration (Hellbling, Hoeglunger, and Wüest 2010; Hellbling 2014; Wardt 2015a), immigration and integration (Hellbling 2014; Vliegenthart and Roggeband 2007), foreign policy in the US (Entman 2003), and death penalty in the US (Baumgartner, De Boef, and Boydstun 2008). A number of studies have examined the relationship between political actors and the media, and factors that explain which frames dominated the media, and why (Boydstun 2013; Hänggli 2011; Entman 2003; de Vreese 2003).

The literature primarily focuses on the frames and not on the framing\(^1\) - dynamic process and mechanisms of frame production and use. As Chong and Druckman (Chong and Druckman 2007a, 117) pointed out, “how frames emerge continues to befuddle researchers”. The literature in the field of social movements shed some light on framing and explored cases of frame transformation, namely reframing, within social movements (Snow et al. 1986; Benford and Snow 2000; Benford 1997). This research also takes on the origins of frames, mechanism and conditions of frame production in general (Benford 1997; Benford and Snow 2000; Snow and Benford 2005; Johnston 1995; Johnston and Klandermans 1995).

In this paper, I aim to contribute to the theoretical understanding of framing mechanisms research in election campaigns and reveal the factors that influence selection of specific framing strategy by parties. Drawing inspiration from the findings in social movement literature and research on party competition, especially issue-ownership and electoral strategies, I propose a cohesive analytical framework exploring the factors that activate different framing mechanisms. It includes two types of framing mechanisms in election campaigns: frame transformation, which triggers reframing or counterframing strategy that using a different issue position but the same frame on the issue, and frame diffusion. I further distinguish between external and internal frame diffusion, either as frame borrowing from one party to another or internal diffusion within one party from one issue to another.

This paper focuses on one of these mechanisms, namely, the mechanism of internal frame diffusion in federal election campaigns in Switzerland in 2011 and 2015. The study analyses party manifestos and

\(^1\) Hulst and Yanow (2014) discuss the lack of studies exploring framing in the field of policy analysis. Indeed, the focus on frames instead of framing can be observed in other fields of political science as well.
the political ads in a selection of newspapers. It explores whether parties have any traditional frames in their repertoire and whether they use them with different issues. In Switzerland, political ads in newspapers play vital role in the campaign, because the law prohibits political advertisements on the TV.

The paper presents the first results of the empirical analysis and is structured as follows. First, I briefly discuss relevant findings in the existing scholarship, introduce the main concepts and outline the analytical framework and main theoretical assumptions. Then I provide information on the Swiss case, the dataset and elaborate on methodology. Finally, I provide the results of the analysis of Swiss electoral campaigns in 2011 and 2015.

**Theoretical framework**

In my study, I focus on the framing mechanisms within the campaign and parties` strategies on framing and explore what factors influence their selection. I define frame as particular definition and causal interpretation (justification) of an issue and framing as a dynamic process and mechanism of frame emergence and frame use. Aiming at providing a comprehensive view on framing, I develop a theoretical framework that proposes ideal-type mechanisms of framing. The model combines theoretical developments within party competition literature (Meguid 2005; Wardt 2015b; Rohrschneider 2002; Tresch, Lefevere, and Walgrave 2015) and research on frames and framing within social movements (Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 2005; Snow et al. 2014; Benford and Snow 2000).

Framing largely influences public opinion and enables actors to promote specific understanding of the issues. It is a strategic process, and studies in the field of social movements revealed that actors evaluate the frames and reframe the issues depending on the desired effect (Benford and Snow 2000). As one of the examples, the scholars describe frame transformation within white separatist movements that adopted in their rhetoric “ethnic affectations” such as “heritage preservation” instead of traditional notion of “white supremacy” (Benford and Snow 2000, 625) in order to attract more members.

Alternatively to intentional frame transformation used by political actors they also observe counterframing as a reaction to the initial frames used by rivals (Chong and Druckman 2013). In general, counterframing is theoretically close to reframing. However, it differs from simple reframing – defined as use of a new frame – in one important point: a counterframe comes later in time and advocates a position on the issue that is contrary to the earlier frame (Chong and Druckman 2013,
The actors adopt different positions on the same issues using the same frame. For example, if one party frames immigration using economic frame and saying that migrants still jobs and another party uses the same economic frame but with a different position, saying that migrants can fill the gap on the labour market.

Alongside frame transformation process, Benford and Snow (2000, 2005) describe frame diffusion process, the spread of frames, practices and ideas from one movement to another or from one culture to another (Benford and Snow 2000, 627). In the definition of Benford and Snow (ibid.), frame diffusion is intentional borrowing from one culture to another. Similarity of contexts between the cultures, or as Entman (2003) calls similar setting among the elites - *cultural congruence*, enables frames to “travel” and simplifies accommodation of the objects of diffusion in the host context.

Political parties as collective actors unified by ideology and common goal resemble social movements and policy actors, such as interest groups. The competition setting of elections force parties to choose their strategies and at the same time to consider their opponents, they follow bounded rationality logic and aim to maximize the success in the given circumstances.

The traditional approach to framing assumes that elites are solely responsible for the frame production. However, in one of the most prominent studies on frame production Entman (2003) sketches a cascade model of frame activation that highlights the multidimensionality and dynamics of the framing process. He argues that at least in the case of frames on foreign policy issues in the US, the frames originating from the president and presidential administration shape the frames of other actors, media, and public and at the same time feedback from these actors triggersreshaping of the frames. Since politicians do not exist in vacuum and consider the campaigns of their opponents and public opinion, it is reasonable to expect situations when politicians reframe an issue or borrow a frame from other actors in order to push the issue through.

Combining the findings of existing research, I propose a theoretical framework (see Figure 1) that includes two different types of ideal-type framing mechanisms: frame transformation and frame diffusion. I further distinguish two strategies adopted by the parties in case of frame transformation – reframing and counterframing, and two strategies in case of frame diffusion – borrowing and internal diffusion.

Under reframing strategy, I understand use of different frame for the same issue by different actors. For example, when one party frames immigration as a threat to cultural homogeneity and another party frames immigration as a threat to the job market. In the case of counterframing parties use the same
frames for the same issues, but adopt different positions on the issue. For example, if a party opposes immigration framing it in economic terms and another party supports immigration regarding it through the economic frame: e.g., one party opposes immigration, claiming that it leads to higher unemployment and another party supports immigration arguing that the Swiss economy is in need of qualified workers.

Within frame diffusion mechanisms borrowing strategy refers to the cases when frames diffuse between the parties, or parties “steal” frames for the same issue from their opponents: e.g., use of equality frame for an issue of health care by the CVP in Switzerland copies the use of this frame for the same issue by the SPS. Under internal diffusion, I understand the cases when frames diffuse within the party. For example, when Swiss Green Party adopts its traditional ecological frame for economy speaking about a “Green economy” or frames immigration as a threat to ecology and nature.

*Figure 1. Overview of framing mechanisms and strategies*

Although the mechanisms are related, they distinguish in the level at which mechanism works. The transformation mechanism capture the strategy of the party in engaging into discussion with its counterparts: the issue is already on the agenda and the party chooses a strategy towards the issue. It either reframes the given issue using a different frame or counterframes the issue using the same frame with another issue position. The diffusion mechanism describe the internal party-strategy in selecting the frame. The party can choose to borrow an issue framing from ideologically close counterpart or select a frame traditional for the party itself (for example, ecological for Green parties or fairness and
Aiming to explore what influences parties’ choice of specific framing mechanisms, I assume that party strategy on framing largely depends on the set of different factors. Motivated by existing research (Chong and Druckman 2007b; Chong and Druckman 2007a; Entman 2003; Hänggli and Kriesi 2012), I include into the model party specific factors and consider the campaign context. Party specific factors include power and ideology.

The research on the emergence of media frames (Entman 2003; Hänggli 2011; Hänggli and Kriesi 2012; Scheufele 1999) revealed power of the actors generating the frames to be one of the most influential factors for frame production. I define power as the governmental status of a party: whether party is a governmental party or challenger (Vries and Hobolt 2012). I broaden the challenger party concept of de Vries and Hobolt (2012), defining such parties as parties that were not in the government at the time of elections.

Depending on their ideology, parties emphasise specific issues and thus strive to be perceived as issue-owners by voters. However, in electoral campaign parties have to engage in competition over the issues outside of their ideological spectrum. Issue-ownership scholarship explored how issue owners react to the emergence of new issues, triggered by external events (Sides 2006). Confronted with unavoidable issues, they try to reframe them and talk about them by highlighting dimensions of that issue that correspond to the party’s traditional philosophy (Petrocik 1996; Sides 2006). Thus, I assume that similarly to traditional issues parties “own” traditional frames, rooting in their ideology.

In this paper, I focus on one dimension of the proposed theoretical framework and explore internal diffusion within the party from one issue to another. I argue that powerful parties with clear ideological profile have traditional dominant frames corresponding to their ideology that they use if forced to address new issues. For example, the Green party in Switzerland framed immigration as a potential threat to the preservation of nature with an ecological frame in its political ads in 2011. Similarly, the Green party frames economy as “Green economy” using ecological frame (GPS Manifesto 2011). I further assume that growing power of a party (electoral success or success in referenda) triggers the diffusion of traditional frames to a larger set of issues.

The internal diffusion strategy I test for in the paper is not exclusive and the question on the choice of different strategy is subject to my further research. I expect that in general parties more often prefer to remain in their positional or ideological niche in order to preserve credibility and maximize their electoral performance. However, I suppose that framing of some issues requires debate and thus
reframing or even counterframing due to ambivalence of issues.²

Introducing the case of Switzerland

Highly fragmented Swiss party system³ with its diverse parties is a perfect setting to study party competition. Switzerland is considered a textbook example of a consensus democracy (Lijphart 1999, 33). However, the access to the government is relatively “closed”: the major parties remain in the government on a permanent basis according to an informal principle of “concordance”. For almost fifty years, from 1959 to 2003, the government composition remained stable and included four parties with seats distributed according to a “magic formula”: two members from the Liberals (FDP), two from the Christian-Democrats (CVP), two from the Social-Democrats (SPS) and one from the Swiss People’s Party (SVP). The situation changed in 2003, when Swiss People’s Party received their second seat at the expense of the Christian-Democrats.

The Swiss party system developed based on traditional religious cleavages and opposition between the rural and urban population. Recent studies (Kriesi et al. 2008b; Kriesi et al. 2008a) revealed emergence of a new cleavage triggered by globalisation, that is an opposition between “losers” and “winners” of globalisation. The parties now position themselves not only on the economic left-right dimension but also on the cultural dimension as promoters of open Switzerland or defenders of the Swiss traditions (Kriesi and Trechsel, 2008, 96). As a result, the right part of the scale is divided between the nationalist-conservative SVP and moderate right FDP and the Christian-Democrats. The Green Party (GPS) and the SPS occupy the left end of the scale, with the Conservative Democrats (BDP), CVP and Green Liberals (GLP) accordingly in the centre (Lutz 2016, 66). The Swiss multiparty system provides a perfect setting for this study, since all the major ideological groups are present, as well as parties with ideological proximity.

Data and Method

Within this study, I explore internal frame diffusion in two recent national parliamentary elections in Switzerland. Inclusion of two elections provides an opportunity to observe how parties adjust their strategies according to the results of previous elections or referenda. In the case of Switzerland, referendum with one-issue at stake make parties talk about the same issues and “test-drive” their own understanding, or justification of the issue, their own framing. Parties have to take into account the

² The current framework does not include the external factors; I plan to adjust it after the first empirical tests.
³ 11 parties in the National Council in 2011, and 12 parties elected to the National Council in 2015
results of referenda as well as elections, and react to these voting results accordingly. Broader timeframe allows including major external events, such as most prominently consequences of the global financial crisis in Greece, and Fukushima disaster. The study focuses only on the nine parties that gained parliamentary seats in the elections studied.

The dataset\(^4\) includes party manifestos and political ads in a selection of the Swiss newspapers\(^5\): 676 ads for 2011 and 431 for 2015 elections. The newspaper sample includes quality papers with the highest circulation rate and major tabloids with an exception of the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland. The ads dataset was collected for two months prior to the election date.

In the first stage, the data was coded by five coders following a slightly adopted version of the Core Sentence Approach (CSA), a “relational” (as opposed to thematic) type of quantitative content analysis (Kleinnijenhuis and Pennings 2001, 163). This approach aims at capturing the relationship between political subjects and objects in the text and describing this relationship. It focuses not on the entire text but on the core sentences (or statements) within the text. The CSA has several advantages: it enables to explore perceived interests individually for each actor, and due to the standardised representation of the content provides high internal (Wueest and Fossati 2015), as well as external (Helbling and Tresch 2011) validity. Coding tests and adjusting of the coding rules after discussions enabled us to achieve high intercoder reliability (Cohen’s kappa 0.90).

The coding of frames was conducted according to a modified version of the Policy Frames Codebook\(^6\) (Boydstun and Gross 2014). It allowed to identify the frames adopted by parties for specific issues, issue positions, and trace their frequency, as well as to explore the change of the frames and the “diversity of discussion” (Boydstun 2013) over the same issue. The coders could code up to five frames to every issue, coding them in order of appearance. Since the frames are by definition connected to the issues, there is no possibility to observe and code frames without an issue.

In the second stage, I analysed the diversity of traditional frames and their use. For the further measurement of party specific factors influencing framing mechanisms, I rely on existing research tradition. The power is measured as a binary variable by governmental status. There are four governmental parties- the SVP, the FDP, the SPS and the CVP. Ideology is defined as party position

\(^4\) The data on 2015 was collected by my colleagues and me within the SNSF project “Party strategies and dynamics of the party competition” at the University of Lausanne, the newspaper ads for 2011 were provided by “Année politique Suisse”, University of Bern

\(^5\) *Neue Züricher Zeitung, Blick, Le Temps, Le Matin, Tagesanzeiger and Tribune de Genève*

\(^6\) For the full list of frames and coding scheme see the Annex
on the left-right scale. For ideological position, I referred to self-reported ideology measures by candidates (Lutz 2016, 66) and existing research (Kriesi and Trechsel, 2008; Kriesi et al. 2008b). Based on these sources and preliminary data analysis, I attribute following frames as traditional to respective parties: nationalistic/cultural identity – the SVP, economic – the FDP, fairness and justice – the SPS, and policy prescription and evaluation to the CVP. The CVP as a party located in the centre of political space tends to avoid “thematic” frames and use vague policy prescription and evaluation frame.

Results

As the coding results show, there is a large share of sentences with frames within both types of data. Out of 3330 coded sentences for the 2011 elections, there are 1668 frames, in 2015 there are 2695 frames within 4584 core sentences (see Table 1 in the Appendix).

I start the discussion of the results with the SVP as it accounts for the majority of frames and has the most diverse palette of frames used. Confirming the theoretical assumptions, in 2011 campaign, the SVP predominantly uses the nationalistic frame (36% of all the SVP frames). However, the variation in use of this frame is very limited (see Graph 1) with the majority of frames used with the issues migration (68%) and international affairs (25%). There is definite correspondence between the issue topics and frame use. The use of economic frame (28%) contributes to the framing of the same issues, 80% of economic frames related to the issue of migration and 15% to foreign policy (Graph 2).

In 2015, situation changed and the SVP started using cultural identity frame (Graph 3) much more often alongside the nationalistic frame. Both frames reflect the shift of the SVP to the right and its domination on the immigration issue after the success of its initiative against mass immigration in February 2014. The party established itself as an issue-owner of immigration issue (Lutz 2016) and in line with my theoretical assumptions started to promote its traditional frames more extensively. It also started to use these frames to previously unframed issues or issues the party framed differently in 2011. The diversity of topics for which the SVP uses nationalistic and cultural identity frames further confirms the assumptions on internal diffusion. If in 2011 the party used these frames only with issues of immigration and international relations, in 2015 the party broadened the spectrum of issues and adopted these frames for such issues as government operations, foreign trade, law and order, defence and civil rights. At the same time, the party included economic frame into its repertoire as an almost universal way to address issues.
The SPS in both elections follows the logic of issue-ownership and predominantly uses its traditional fairness and equality frame (Table 1). Confirming the assumptions, the socialists adopt their traditional frame to a variety of topics (Graph 4) that change from one election to another. This instability reflects the potential for the frame diffusion within the party. The analysis further revealed that in 2011 the SPS used economic frame even more often than fairness and equality (35%), most probably due to the need to address the consequences of the global economic crisis.

For the FDP 2011, the results correspond to the assumptions on the domination of economic frame (31% of overall FDP frames amount) and large variation (Graph 5). The party uses this frame for almost all the topics, the most prominent are international affairs and social welfare. The results show that in 2011 the nationalistic frame (Graph 6) was the second to be used after the economic (20%). Since the party campaigned under the motto “Out of love to Switzerland” (“Aus Liebe zur Schweiz”/ “Par amour de la Suisse”) and it was often embedded into the text, especially in ads, and thus framing the issues: e.g “Strengthen freedom. Out of love to Switzerland”. Thus, these findings reveal that the FDP built its advertisement campaign largely around the slogan that emphasised nationalistic framing.

In 2015, the situation did not change much, both frames remained in the frame palette of the FDP. However, if the nationalistic frame was used across more topics than before, the use of economic frame was restricted to much less topics than previously. The party thus strengthened its economic framing of mostly economic topics. At the same time, it started to compete with the SVP using nationalistic framing towards more different issues. This result might be rooted in the success of the SVP and willingness of the FDP to incorporate popular framing.

Opposite to the expectations, the CVP did not have any consistent framing portfolio, party tends to use a palette of frames with economic being most prominent. The hypothesised “owned” policy prescription frame was used only in 2011 to a selection of issues (Graph 7). This frame enabled the party to address the issues without providing a specific solution, mostly criticizing the status quo, what corresponded to its ideological position in the centre of the left-right scale. In 2015, the use of economic frame prevailed. The diversity of frame use reveals the closeness of the CVP to the FDP and possible competition (Graph 8).

For the non-governmental parties the situation is different. The Green party showed persistence in the use of ecological frame towards large number of issues, thus confirming the assumptions on diffusion (Graph 9). It also adopted economic framing and in this regard approached the FDP and the CVP. Similarly, economic frames dominated the BDP manifestos and ads. At the same time its frame palette
was in general relatively diverse, thus reflecting the search of this party for its position in the ideological space. Same development was observed in the case of the GLP: the frame selection and use was unstable over time. In the case of the EVP, the analysis revealed very small number of frames within the documents, different from its opponents.

**Conclusion**

The results confirm that the governmental parties in general tend to use a frame that is close to their ideological stances more often than other frames. However, there is overlapping in frame use among the parties who are ideologically close. In 2011, the FDP largely used nationalistic frame, competing with the SVP. In 2015, after the SVP’s success in the referendum on mass immigration it continued to do so, adopting this frame towards more issues. The CVP and BDP opted for economic framing, potentially competing with the FDP. In 2015, the CVP used large number of ecological frames, approaching the GPS. This borrowing of ecological frame corresponds to the general public interest in ecological problems and success of the Green parties in neighbouring countries triggered by the Fukushima disaster.

In general, in 2011 all governmental parties adopted large number of economic frames reacting to the political agenda after the global financial crisis. In 2015, smaller parties followed them in this move. Issue framing shapes the public opinion but at the same time, the context and public opinion introduce new unavoidable topics and influence the parties’ frames. However, the parties with clear ideological profile tend to have stronger traditional frames that, in turn, diffuse across the issues. The most prominent example is the SVP with growing use of cultural frame contemplating the use of the nationalistic frame.

This paper provides first empirical results of the theoretical framework test that are limited due to the specifics of the data source and small amount of cases for some parties. However, they already provide insights and opportunities for further tests, since they reveal cases of borrowing and changes in framing over time. In order to overcome the limitations and further explore the mechanisms of framing, in the next step of my research I will include further data sources –press releases and media coverage, and further countries – Germany and the Netherlands, exploring framing mechanisms in comparative prospective.
References


### Table 1. Dataset overview: frames use by parties in 2011 and 2015

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N of cases 2015=2617

N of cases 2011=1633
Graph 1. Nationalistic frame use by issue, SVP

Graph 2. Economic frame use by issue, SVP
Graph 3. Cultural identity frame use by issue, SVP 2015

Graph 4. Fairness and equality frame use by issue, SPS
Graph 7. Policy prescription and evaluation frame use by issue, CVP

Graph 8. Economic frame use by issue, CVP
Graph 9. Ecological frame use by issue, GPS

Eccological frame use by issue, GPS

- Public Lands, Water Management, and Territorial Issues: 2015 - 3%, 2011 - 1%
- Government Operations: 2015 - 1%, 2011 - 1%
- International Affairs and Foreign Aid: 2015 - 6%, 2011 - 7%
- Foreign Trade: 2015 - 1%, 2011 - 1%
- Space, Science, Technology, and Communications: 2015 - 1%, 2011 - 1%
- Banking, Financ, and Domestic Commerce: 2015 - 7%, 2011 - 8%
- Community Development: 2015 - 9%, 2011 - 5%
- Transportation: 2015 - 5%, 2011 - 1%
- Immigration and Refugee Issues: 2015 - 10%, 2011 - 1%
- Energy: 2015 - 1%, 2011 - 23%
- Environment: 2015 - 16%, 2011 - 19%
- Education: 2015 - 6%, 2011 - 1%
- Labour and Employment: 2015 - 11%, 2011 - 12%
- Agriculture: 2015 - 3%, 2011 - 4%
- Civil rights, Minority issues, and Civil Liberties: 2015 - 17%, 2011 - 22%
- Domestic Macroeconomic Issues: 2015 - 17%
## Annex

### Coding scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of core sentence</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Coding example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actor-Actor</strong></td>
<td>Relationship between two political actors</td>
<td><em>The SVP nominates Bortoluzzi as a candidate for the National Council elections.</em></td>
<td>SVP / candidate Bortoluzzi / positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actor-Actor + Image</strong></td>
<td>Relationship between two political actors and an image</td>
<td><em>The Greens criticized the Green-Liberals as a pale copy of the green original.</em></td>
<td>Greens / Green-Liberals / negative Image for each party: green original / pale copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actor-Issue</strong></td>
<td>Relationship between a political actor and a political issue</td>
<td><em>The SVP wants to reduce immigration to Switzerland</em></td>
<td>SVP / Immigration / negative</td>
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</table>
| **Actor-Issue + Frame** | The relationship is defined in specific terms, actor provides justification of the issue | a) *The SVP says that immigration has to be limited in order to keep our jobs for the Swiss*  
   b) *The SVP says that immigration has to be limited in order to preserve our national identity.* | a) SVP / immigration / negative / economic frame  
   b) SVP / immigration / negative / nationalistic frame |
| **Actor-Actor-Issue** | Relationship between two political actors and an issue | *The Greens criticize the SVP for their opposition to nuclear phase-out* | Greens / negative / SVP / nuclear phase-out / positive |
| **Actor-Actor-Issue + Frame** | Relationship between two political actors, an issue and a justification of the issue | *The SP said that CVP and BDP should merge in order to save the seat of Federal Councilor Widmer-Schlumpf* | SP / neutral / CVP / political activities / positive / political frame  
   SP / neutral / BDP / political activities / positive / political frame |
FRAMES LIST

1. **Economic** frames (costs, benefits, or monetary/financial implications of the issue to an individual, family, community or to the economy as such)

2. **Capacity and resources** frames (lack / availability of physical, geographical, spatial, human, and financial resources, or the capacity of existing systems and resources to implement or carry out policy goals)

3. **Morality** frames (any perspective, policy objective or (proposed) action that is compelled by religious doctrine or interpretation, duty, honor, righteousness or any other sense of ethics or social responsibility)

4. **Fairness and equality** frames (equality or inequality with which laws, punishment, re-wards, and resources are applied or distributed among individuals or groups. Also the balance between the rights or interests of one individual or group compared to another individual or group)

5. **Constitutionality and jurisprudence** frames (constraints imposed on or freedoms granted to individuals, government, and corporations via the Constitution, Bill of Rights and other amendments, or judicial interpretation. This deals specifically with the authority of government to regulate, and the authority of individuals/corporations to act independently of government)

6. **Policy prescription and evaluation**: Particular policies proposed for addressing an identified problem, and figuring out if certain policies will work, or if existing policies are effective.

7. **Law and order, crime and justice** frames: Specific policies in practice and their enforcement, incentives, and implications. Includes stories about enforcement and interpretation of laws by individuals and law enforcement, breaking laws, loopholes, fines, sentencing and punishment. Increases or reductions in crime

8. **Security and defence** frames: Security, threats to security, and protection of one’s person, family, in-group, nation, etc. Generally an action or a call to action that can be taken to protect the welfare of a person, group, nation sometimes from a not yet manifested threat.

9. **Health and safety** frames: Healthcare access and effectiveness, illness, disease, sanitation, obesity, mental health effects, prevention of or perpetuation of gun violence, infrastructure and

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7 The frames except for the “Nationalistic Frame” are based on: Boydstun, Amber E. and Justin Gross (2014). “Policy Frames Codebook” (version of 27 October 2014), University of California, Davis.
building safety.

10. **Quality of life** frames: The effects of a policy on individuals’ wealth, mobility, access to resources, happiness, social structures, ease of day-to-day routines, quality of community life, etc.

11. **Cultural identity** frames: The social norms, trends, values and customs constituting culture(s), as they relate to a specific policy issue

12. **Public opinion frames**: References to general social attitudes, polling and demographic information, as well as implied or actual consequences of diverging from or getting ahead of public opinion or polls.

13. **Political** frames: Any political considerations surrounding an issue. Issue actions or efforts or stances that are political, such as partisan filibusters, lobbyist involvement, bipartisan efforts, deal-making and vote trading, appealing to one’s base, mentions of political manoeuvring. Explicit statements that a policy issue is good or bad for a particular political party.

14. **External regulation and reputation** frames: external relations with another nation; the external relations of one state with another; or relations between groups. This includes trade agreements and outcomes, comparisons of policy outcomes or desired policy outcomes.

15. **Ecological** frames: The effects of a policy or issue on the environment, natural resources, biodiversity or animal well-being.

16. **Nationalistic** frame: References to nation, state-building, preservation of cultural and/or geographic boundaries, independency

17. **European** frame: References to the European Union, Europe and European culture

18. **Other** frames: Any frames that do not fit into the above categories.