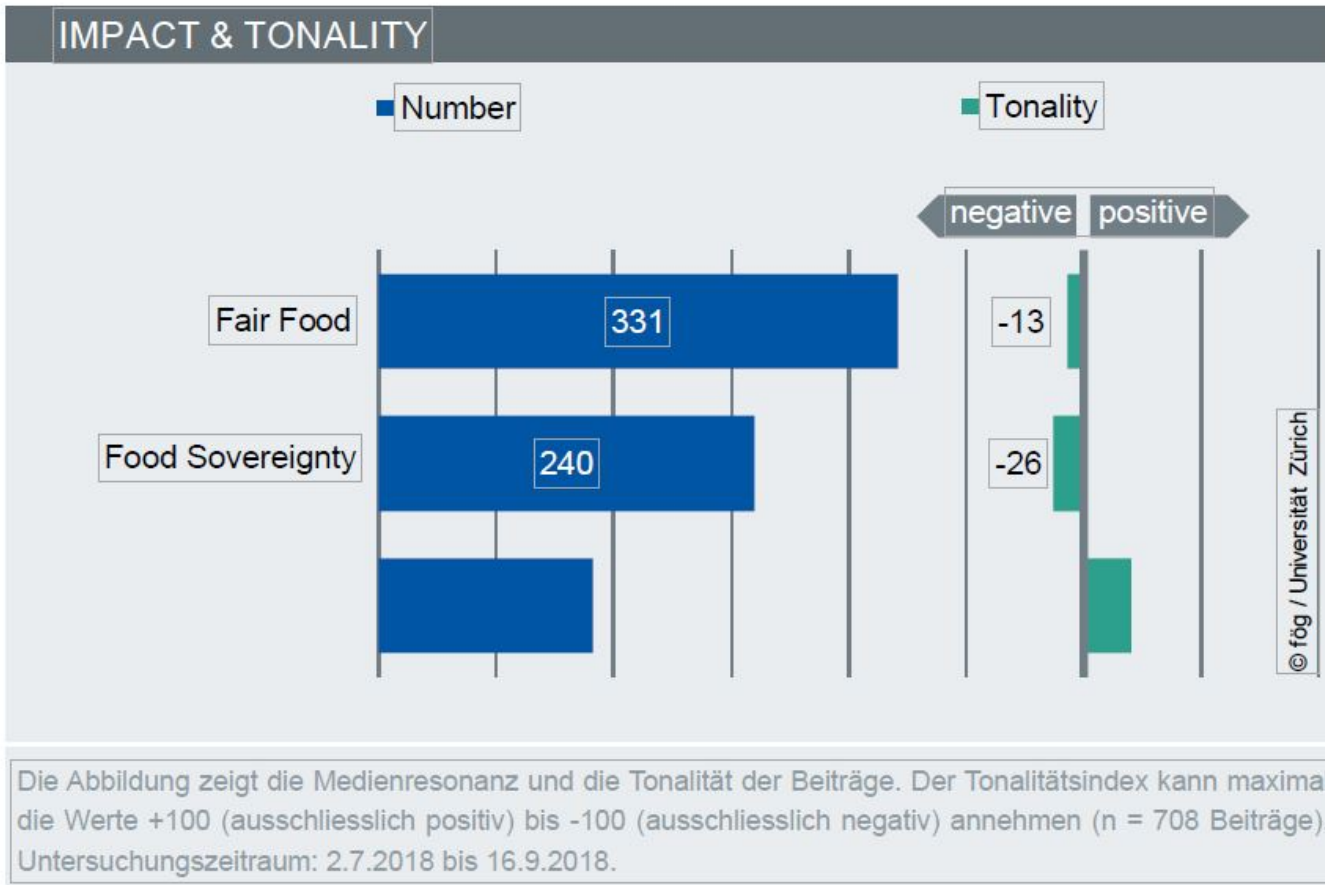


The role of media in the food debate

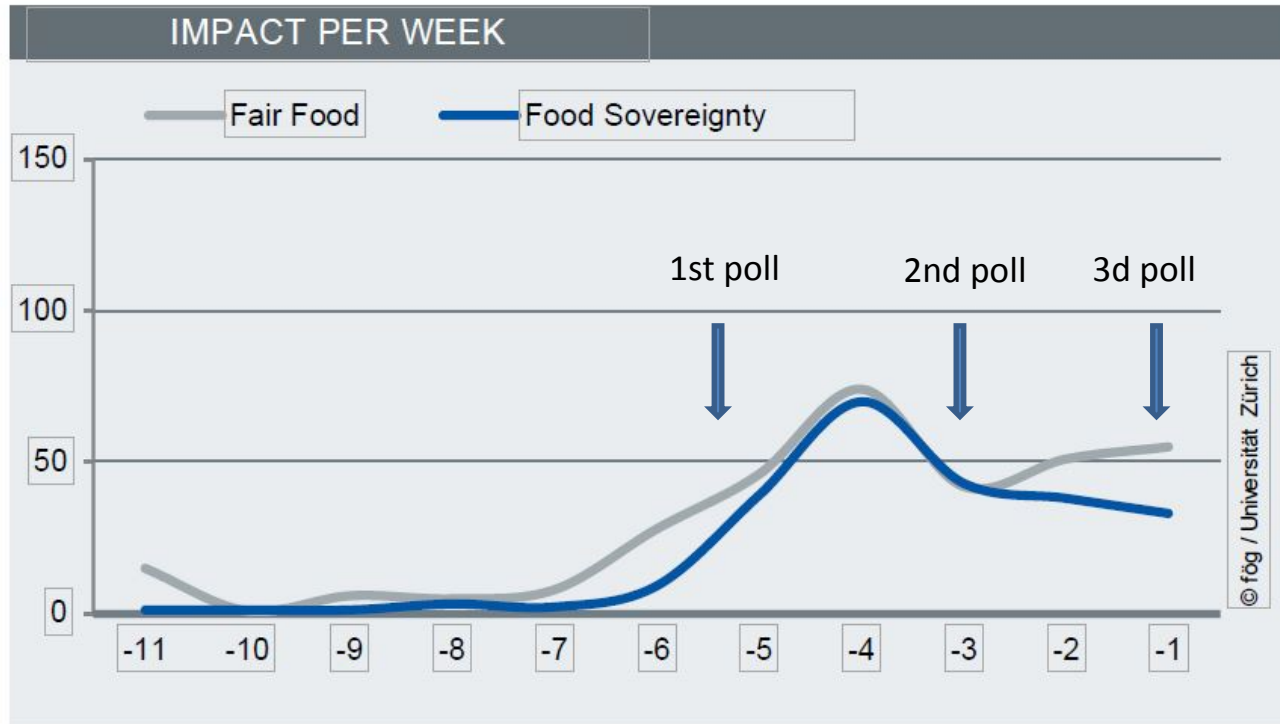
Roland Wyss-Aerni
29 september 2018

role of the media in a democracy





- a lot on Fair-Food, less on Food Sovereignty
- negative tonality



Die Abbildung zeigt die Beachtung für die ausgewählten Abstimmungsvorlagen (Anzahl Medienbeiträge) im Wochenverlauf. Der Startpunkt ist jeweils knapp 12 Wochen vor Abstimmungsdatum, der Endpunkt eine Woche vor Abstimmungsdatum (n = 708 Beiträge).

- short campaigns
- early drop of attention

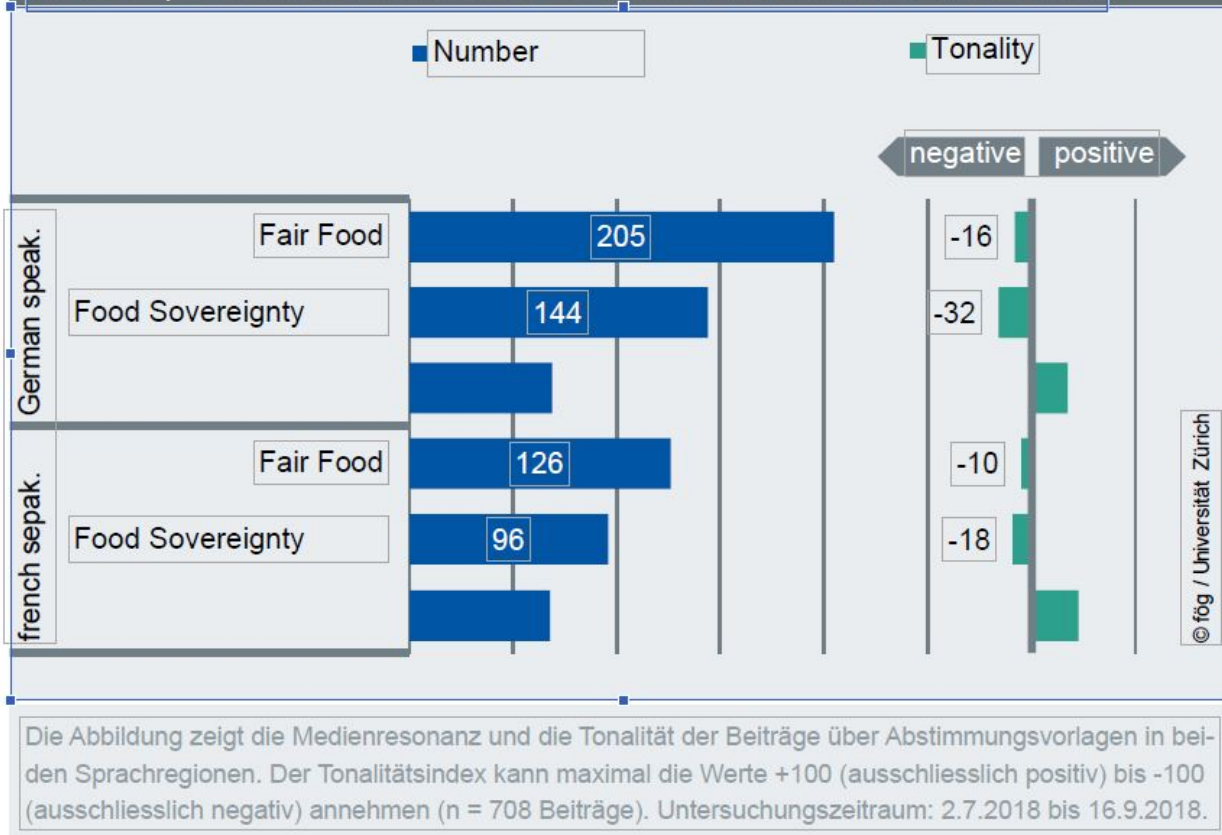
REFERENDUMS COVERED



Die Abbildung zeigt die Anzahl der Beiträge, in denen die Fair-Food-Initiative und die Initiative für Ernährungssouveränität entweder einzeln oder zusammen thematisiert werden (n = 386).

- both referendums often treated together
- real debate on Fair-Food, not on Sovereignty

ABB. 4 | IMPACT & TONALITY: GERMAN vs. FRENCH SPEAKING



- more equal coverage in Romandie
- more positive tonality in Romandie

media coverage

- 1st polls mid-august 78 % in favour of Fair-Food, 75 % in favour of Food Sovereignty
 - journalists pick up the issue, start investigating, strong coverage with all the arguments pro & con
 - alarm bell for opponents, campaign is intensified

media coverage

- most opinion pieces were opposed to both referendums, few exceptions in Romandie
- arguments: paternalism, protectionism, trouble with WTO, less food choice for higher prices
- But: a lot of descriptive pieces with arguments from both sides

social media

- heated debates on facebook, on the sites of supporters and opponents
- supporters are more active
- Less debates on twitter, more messages from supporters and opponents, parties, federations, organisations
- Impact on opinion formation?

Do the media widen or bridge the gap between the consumer and the producer and other stakeholders?

- Front lines went across farmers organisations, consumers organisations and NGOs
- → Food-Fair itself was bridging the gap, combining concerns from (some) farmers and (some) consumers
- The media made the discussion public and transparent

Do the media widen or bridge the gap between the consumer and the producer and other stakeholders?

- Food Sovereignty was considered as too extreme, as a step backwards, as no solution for existing problems
- Not much discussion on Food Sovereignty

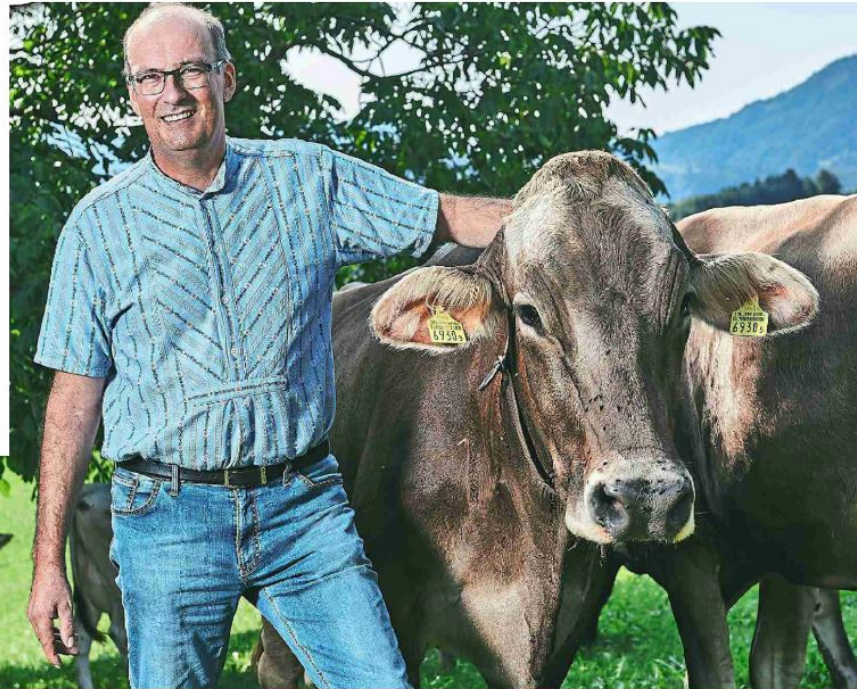
Do the media widen or bridge the gap between the consumer and the producer and other stakeholders?

- Coming referendums – «drinking water», «against pesticides», «factory farming» are more polarized between consumers and farmers
- We will see...

!Bauern-Chef Markus Ritter (51) hält die Agrar-Initiativen für einen Glücksfall

«Economiesuisse erzählt Lügenmärchen»

The right way to meet difficult discussions...



Bauern-Präsident Markus Ritter auf seinem Hof in Altstätten SG.

“It is exciting that people get engaged with agriculture.”

“We have to profit from the referendums and explain what we do, how we do it, and why we do it. Then people will understand.”

Thank you
Let's discuss!

