

Coronavirus skepticism on the rise in Switzerland

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A woman protests in Bern. Photo: FABRICE COFFRINI / AFP

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Despite thousands of infections all across the country, skepticism about coronavirus is growing in Switzerland.

Of the problems that Swiss authorities have encountered in battling the coronavirus pandemic, the need to convince adults that a virus is real is perhaps a little surprising.

But a new poll from [Swiss media outlet 20 Minutes](#) shows that one in five adult Swiss have doubts about the virus and feel that there are “inconsistencies” in the way it is being discussed and portrayed.

Across the country, a number of movements have been started which call into question some aspects of the virus - or whether it exists at all.

During the coronavirus lockdown, some of these movements reached a head at ‘anti lockdown’ protests, many of which featured conspiracy theorists or far-right elements.

IN PICTURES: [Inside Switzerland's anti-coronavirus lockdown protests](#)

A series of flyers being handed out at stations and in public places across the country in recent weeks have focused on masks, peddling the false narrative that facial coverings are ineffective against the virus or that they make it worse.

As reported in [Swiss news outlet Watson](#), members of the ‘StayAwake’ movement have taken on prominent media organisations, accusing them of helping the government strip away fundamental rights.

This has taken place particularly regularly since masks were made compulsory on July 6th.

‘Only those with plastic visors were infected’: [Swiss government warns against face shields](#)

The Federal Office of Public Health called out the movement, noting that it made many false assertions in its flyers - including that wearing a mask against the coronavirus is useless, leads to loss of consciousness and an increase in viruses and bacteria in the lungs.

The FOPH noted that the movement had close connections to the Kremlin, giving rise to

concerns that Russian operatives are trying to sew social discord during the pandemic.