

Question in Project:

German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES) 2021 (English Version)

Question Topic:

Digitalization/ Use of digital systems

Construct:

Political use of social media

General Information:

***Note: The item was tested in German. This is an English translation of the original German wording.**

Question Text:

And please indicate which social media you occasionally or regularly use for political information.

[Und geben Sie bitte an, in welchen sozialen Medien Sie sich gelegentlich oder regelmäßig politisch informieren.]

Instruction:

Multiple answers are possible. *[Mehrfachnennungen sind möglich.]*

Answer Categories:

Facebook
Twitter
Instagram
YouTube
Snapchat
TikTok
Xing
LinkedIn
WhatsApp
Telegram
Threema

Other social media, namely: *[Sonstige soziale Medien, und zwar:]*

No use of social media for political information *[Keine Nutzung von sozialen Medien, um sich politisch zu informieren]*

Cognitive Techniques:

General Probing, Specific Probing

Findings for Question:

1. Does the question imply an active effort to obtain political information, or does it also cover "passive contacts" with political content?

When asked, seven respondents stated that they had only thought about the channels through which they actively seek political information. With the exception of one respondent (TP 05), all explained that they also encountered political content on social media without actively looking for it. However, they had not included these social media (4 x Facebook, 1 x Twitter, 1 x TikTok) in their answers:

- *"So, actively I use YouTube. [...] Where I come across political topics relatively often that want to inform me is Facebook."* (TP 03, response: YouTube)
- *"I was mainly thinking about what I actively use to actually inform myself politically. What I actively use of it, what I access specifically to look at stuff on a few sites. [...] I would additionally specify Twitter, because friends sometimes forward something. Whereas with Twitter I don't actively look for it, so I don't click on it after all."* (TP 04, response: Instagram)

Two test persons (TP 02, 08), on the other hand, thought exclusively about which social media they passively used to get political information:

- *"I thought about where I am occasionally or regularly politically informed, for example on Facebook, when I scroll through, through political stuff that is shown to me, or through Instagram, just also quite through advertising [...], and that is the same with YouTube. [...] Intentionally, I inform myself for the most part through Google."* (TP 02, response: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube).

The remaining respondent 07 stated that she had thought of both actively getting political information and where she only encounters political content. However, she explained that she was not interested in politics and accordingly selected the response category "No use [...]"

Recommendations:

Question: We recommend slightly rewording the question to make it clearer that respondents should only report social media on which they actively search for political content:

"What social media do you use occasionally or regularly to find out about political content?"

Response format: No changes recommended