

*EPRA Workshop with the University of Vienna on 24 November (10-12:00 CET) on
"Evidence-Based Regulation - Youth Engagement in the Digital Environment"*

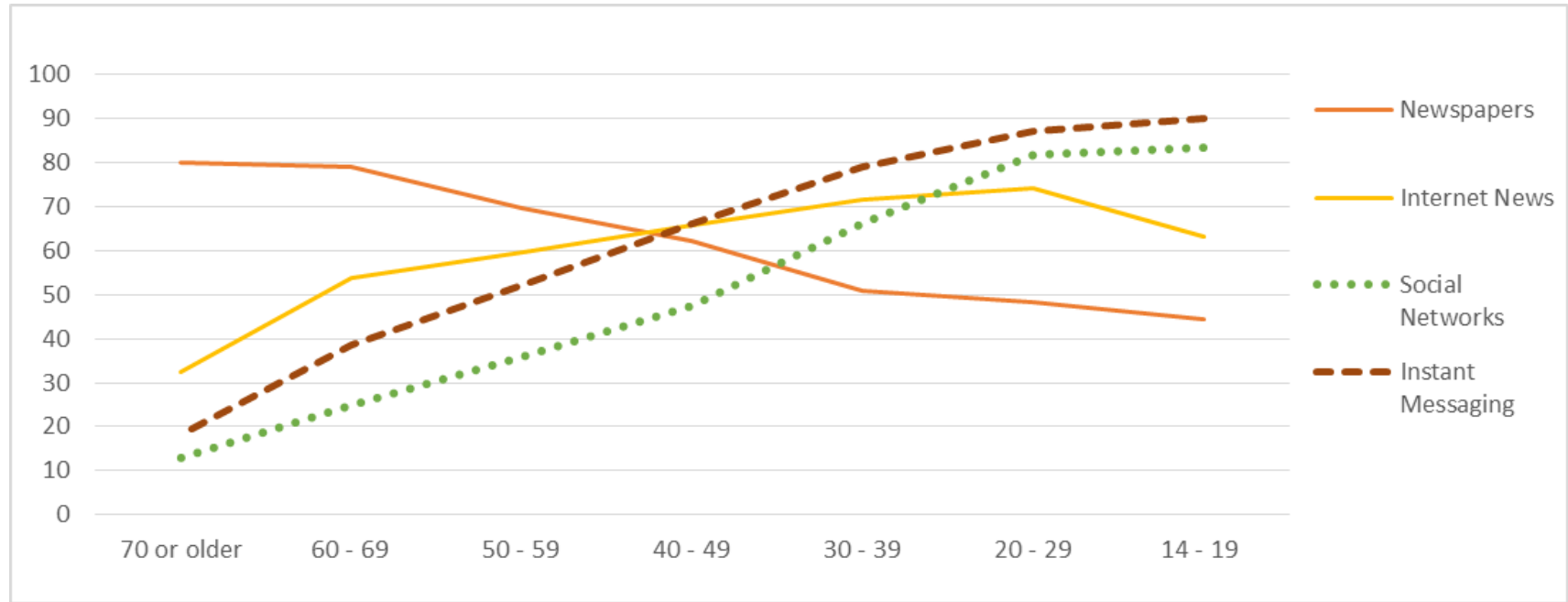
The role of social media for youth political engagement

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<http://advertisingresearch.univie.ac.at/home>

A Fundamental Shift

Media Use (Austria)



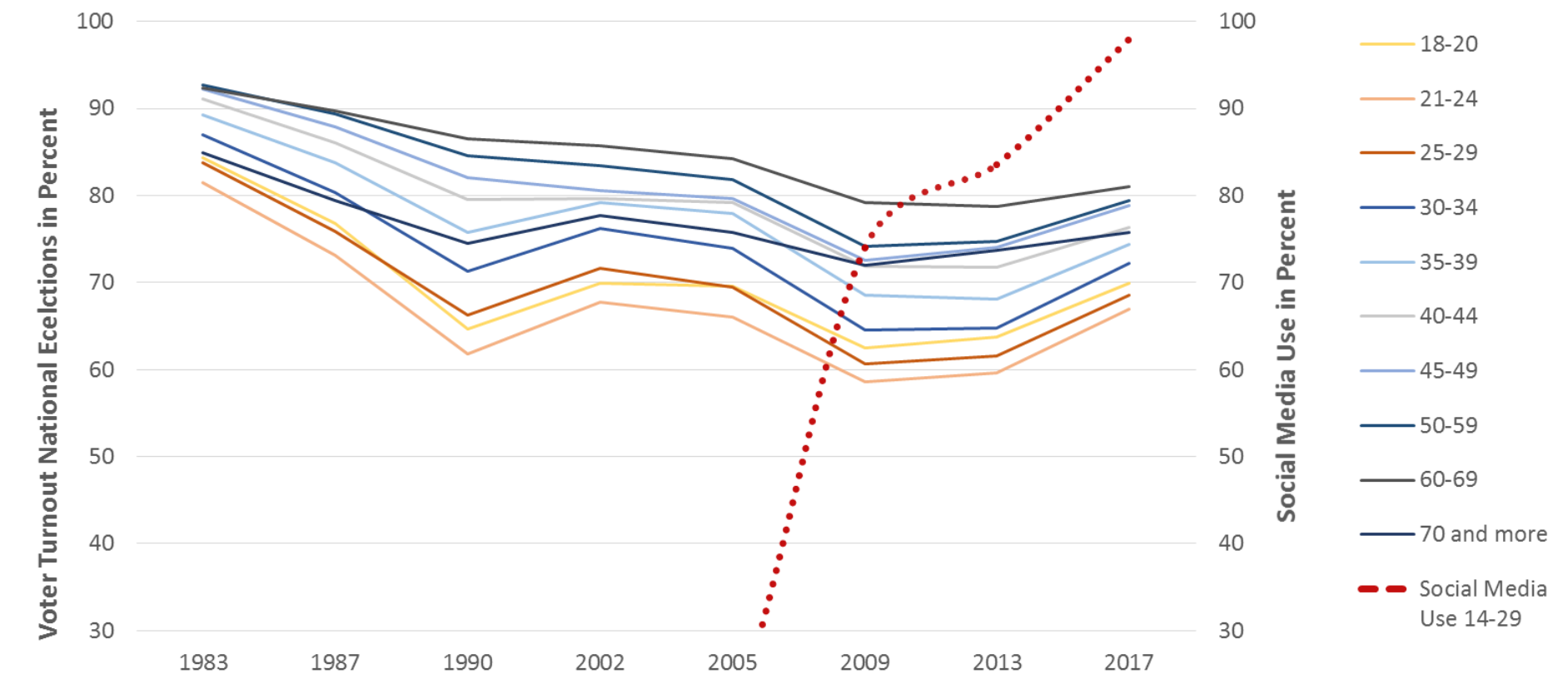
Source: Media Analyse 2017/18

Social Media Hopes

On the one hand...

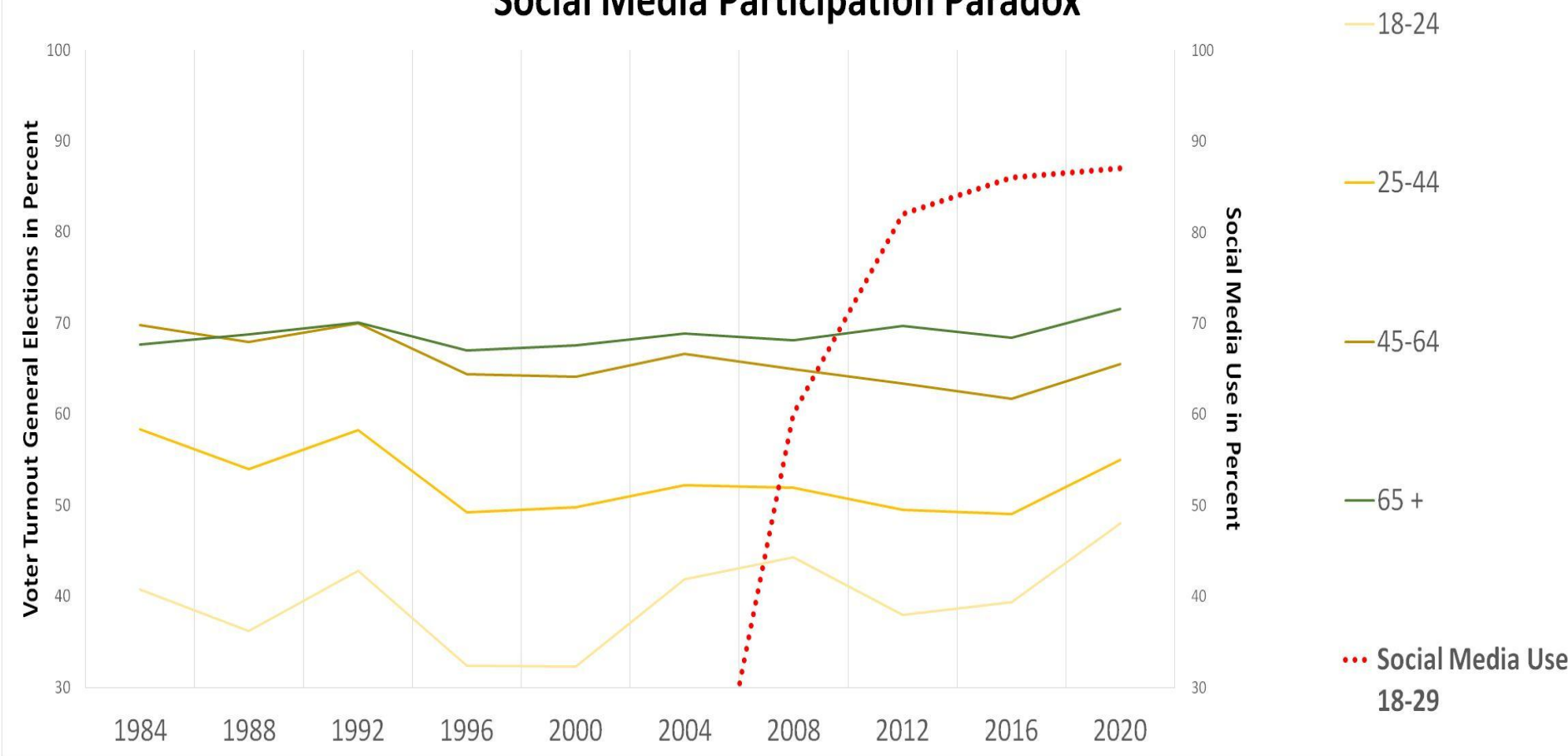
- Social media can build relationships, enable social interaction, connect people, enhance expression
- Positive relationship between frequency of social media use and protest participation among youth (Valenzuela et al., 2014)
- *Political* social media use have consistently found to have a positive effect on participation (e.g. Ekström, Olsson, & Shehata, 2014; Skoric & Zhu, 2015)

Social Media Participation Paradox



Social Media Data: Media Perspektiven (2005, 2009, 2017)
Election Data: Der Bundeswahlleiter (2017)

Social Media Participation Paradox



Voter turnout in general elections in percent (total population)

Source for voting: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Source for social media use: Pew Research Center, 2021;

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/social-media/>

Three Questions

What do adolescents do on social media?

What kind of political content are they exposed to?

Can social media engage...and distract?

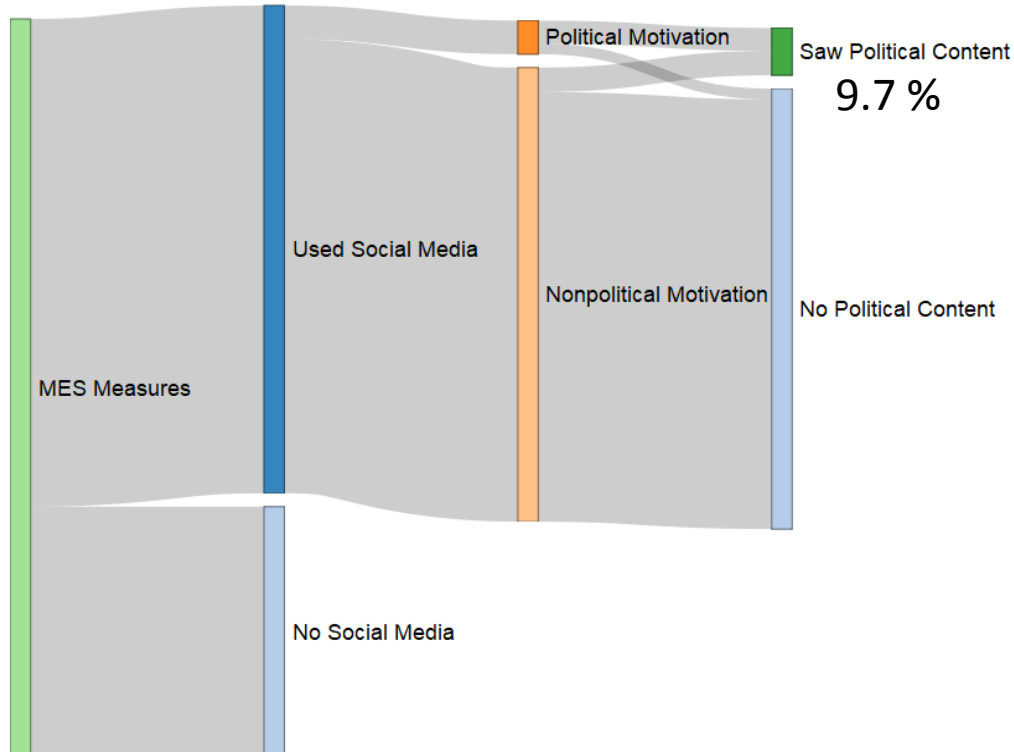
What do adolescents do on social media?

Mobile Experience Sampling (MES) Study

- Design
 - Austrian school students sample (N = 83)
 - 967 MES measurements
 - Two text messages at randomized time during the day
- Timeline of data collection
 - Recruitment of schools in February/March, 2019
 - First long questionnaire at the beginning of March
 - 7 days of short questionnaires (starting the day after the first long questionnaire)
 - Final long questionnaire at the beginning of April

What do adolescents do on social media?

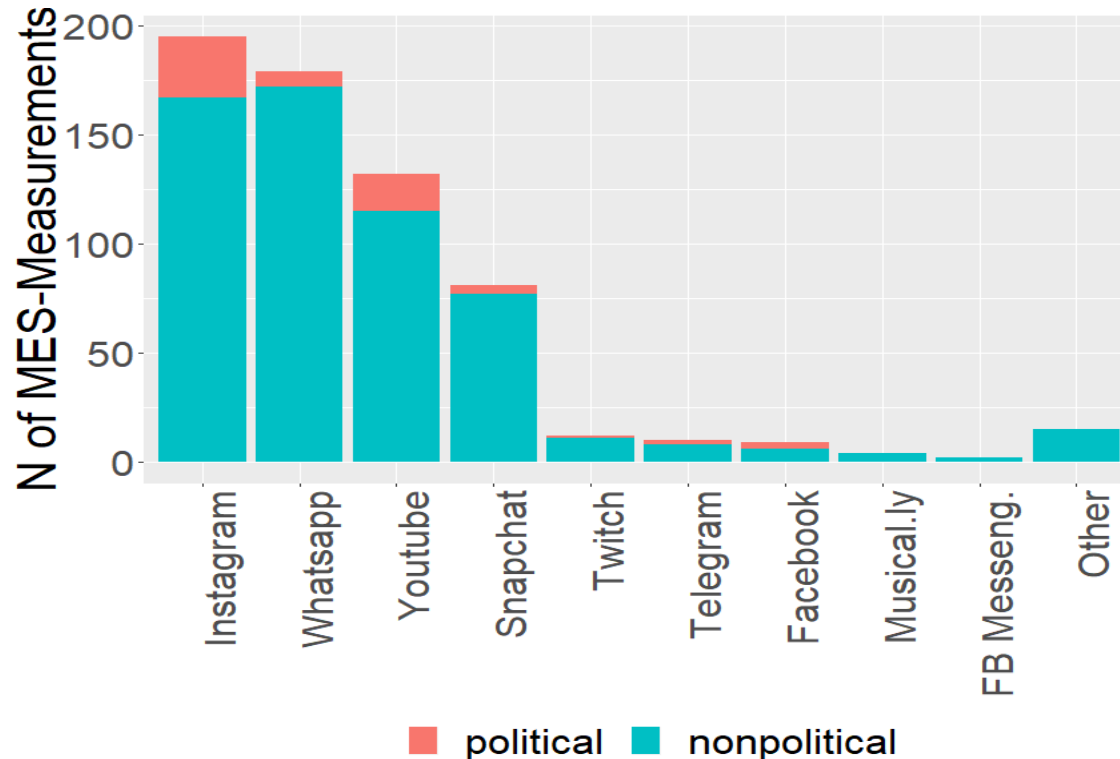
Mobile Experience Sampling Study



- Hardly any students turn to social media for political purposes
- Hardly any political content on social media

What do adolescents do on social media?

Mobile Experience Sampling Study



Three Questions

What kind of political content are they exposed to?

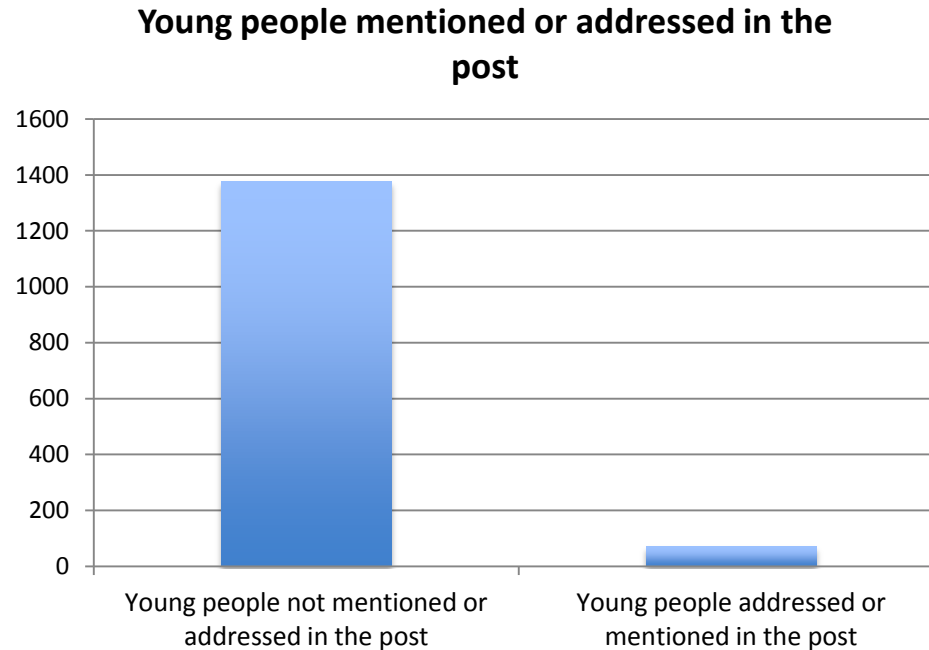
What kind of political content are they exposed to?

Politicians' Facebook posts

- National politicians and political parties
 - Ministers & members of the Austrian parliament (who had Facebook-page)
 - National party organization and youth organization for each of 6 parties in Austria)
- N = 79 profiles & N = 1601 Posts
- From January to July 2015; 4 artificial weeks

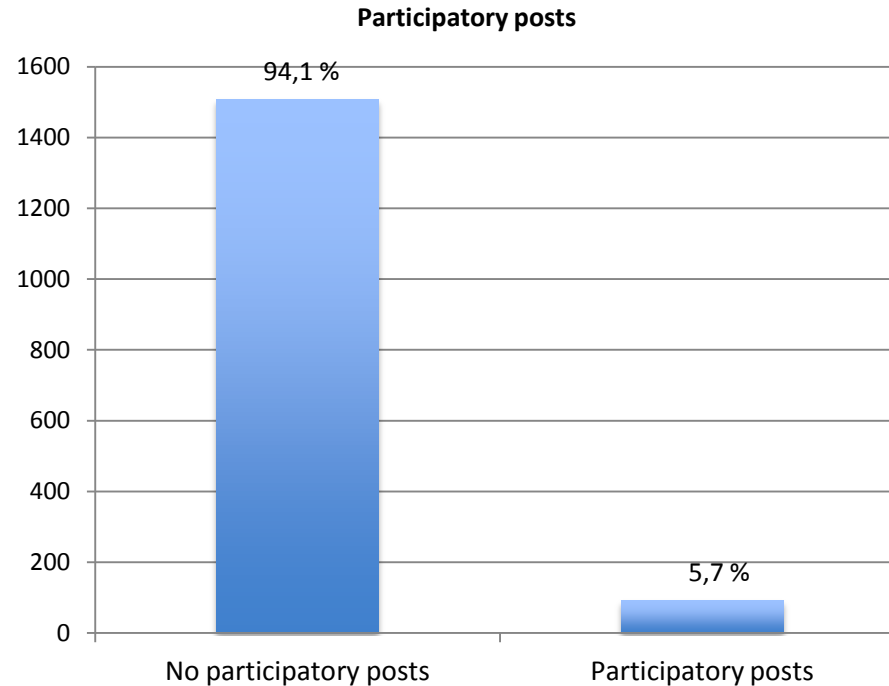
What kind of political content are they exposed to?

Young people mentioned or addressed in the post



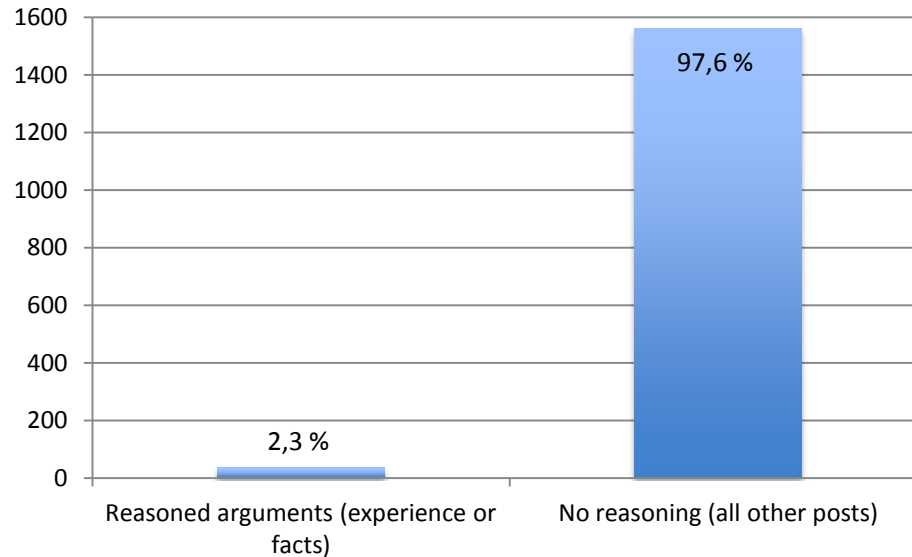
What kind of political content are they exposed to?

Participatory Posts



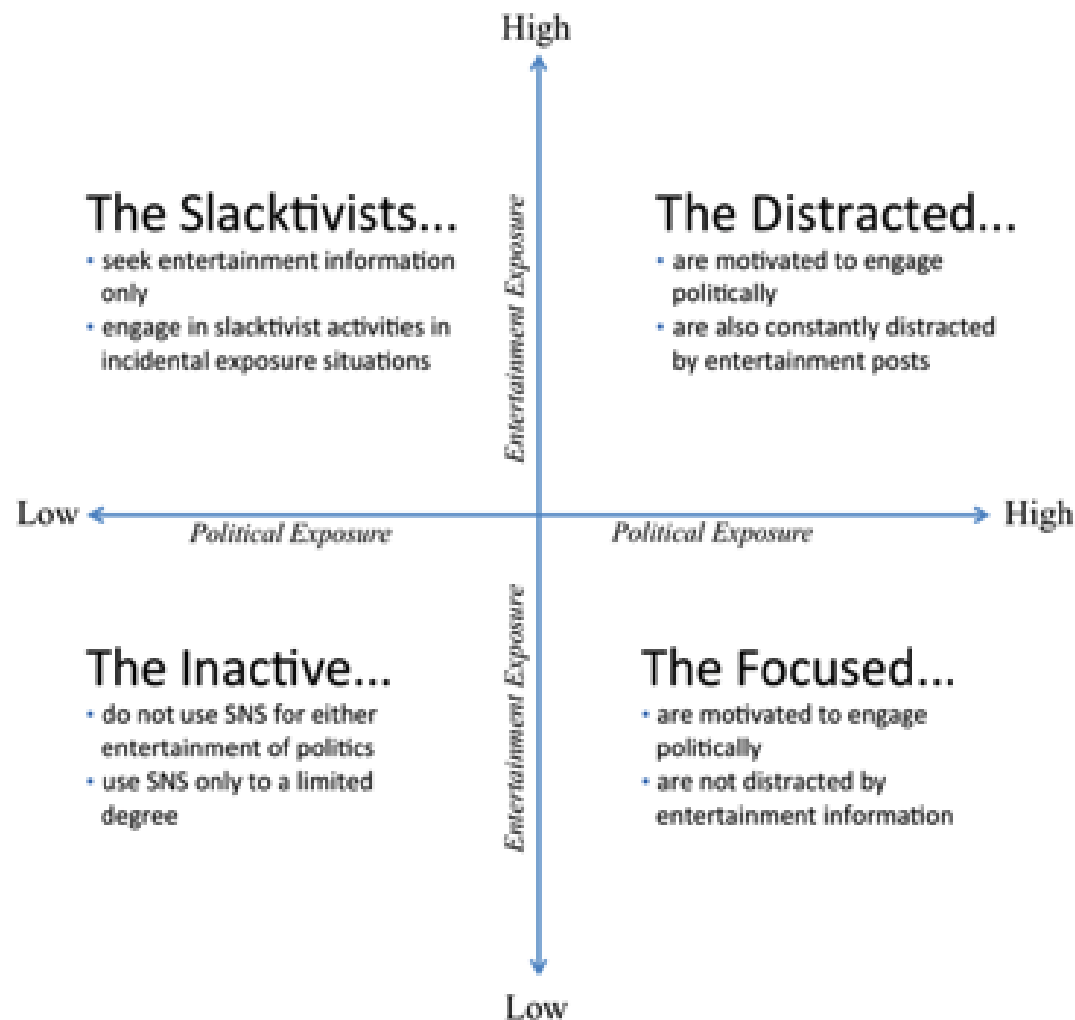
What kind of political content are they exposed to?

Quality of arguments



Three Questions

Can social media engage...and distract?



Thank you!