



WP8 : THE ROLE OF MEDIA

Building public trust while influencing COVID-19 related news spreading

Problématique

This study discusses the way Swiss people accessed and consumed news and information about the coronavirus from different channels, and the role media plays in public trust during the pandemic. Based on a study of 442 randomly assigned participants in French-speaking regions, we examined the following four questions: (1) What are the news sources and platforms and how are they used? (2) How does the public rate the trustworthiness of these sources and platforms? (3) To what extent does the public perceive that these sources and platforms are provided inaccurate information? (4) What roles do these sources and platforms play in the pandemic?

Principaux résultats

The findings of this project highlighted that the Swiss national government and health organizations are the sources used most often to obtain COVID-19-related news. At the same time, the Swiss, at least for the French-speaking part, prefer to share news or information about the coronavirus from those sources with others using a mobile application (e.g., WhatsApp). News organizations and the press serve as the second source of news about the coronavirus used and shared most often. The results also suggested that the Swiss national government and national health organizations are seen as the most trustworthy sources, followed by health experts and organizations, as well as the press. In contrast, respondents place relatively less trust in online sources. It is clear that news organizations still have a strong capital in trust, even if it is declining among youth according to some study. Moreover, our results showed that Swiss people are satisfied overall with the way the Swiss government is managing the coronavirus crisis. Most respondents feel that the government has helped them understand the pandemic and has explained what they can do in response to it. This is in line with previous literatures that Swiss citizens showed higher public trust of key institutions like government than the peers. Our results suggested that in health emergency situation, Swiss remain high public trust in government.

Difficulté(s) rencontrée(s) / Enseignement(s) à tirer du projet

According to our plan, the project is progressing smoothly.

Collaboratrices et collaborateurs impliqué·e·s

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Pour tout renseignement et suite

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