

German Media Coverage of the European Elections



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der
Stadt Brühl



Our approach on the European elections

How are the European elections presented in different newspapers and on social media?

- Tagesschau (TV, newscast)
- Spiegel (online newspaper, mainstream)
- Junge Freiheit (online newspaper, right-oriented)
- Neues Deutschland (online newspaper, left-oriented)
- Facebook, Twitter and Instagram



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Tagesschau

Press show:

- Only reports about current topics
- At the moment relevant events
- from January until middle of March **256** listings and reports on the European elections
- European elections will be in 2 months
→ we were relatively uninformed in the beginning



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Tagesschau

Topics

- Reports about politicians
- Topics that are related to the European elections (e.g.):
 - Experts warn against Russian influence
 - Peter Liese leads CDU country list
 - „Yellow Vest“ movement and its own list for the European election



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Tagesschau

Facts and influences

- Article: “Auf dem Weg zum Bundesstaat Europa”
 - “On the way to Europe as a federal state”
- On FDP’s party conference for Europe, election results are announced. FDP general secretary Beer becomes top candidate for her party in the European election campaign. She defended herself against allegations of political proximity to Hungarian Prime Minister Orban.
 - other politicians are quoted



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Tagesschau

Facts and influences

- Article: “Vor Europawahl legen Rechte zu“ (“Before the European elections right-wing parties gain voters“)
- Survey of the EU parliament says that the number of extreme right populists is growing
- Prognosis of the EU parliament:
 - The ENF and EFF (right-wing) fractions will gain seats
 - people's party and Socialdemocrats will have big losses
 - AfD (german right-wing party) will also gain seats



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Tagesschau

Our Conclusion

- Tagesschau does not influence because
 - There are no hidden opinions in the article
 - They only tell verified facts that they are sure of



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EUROPASCHULE
in Nordrhein-Westfalen

Spiegel Online

Which parties gain the widest media coverage?

- All parties are mentioned
- There are fewer articles on: “Die Grünen“ and “Die Linke“
(both left-oriented)
- No articles about “Pulse of Europe“ demonstrations



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Spiegel Online

Facts and influences

- Articles are mostly reports
 - Only one comment
 - Written in a neutral style
 - → Spiegel Online does not influence its readers
- 
- 2019



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Spiegel Online

Which articles relate to the European election in a neutral, positive or negative way?

- Few articles focused on European elections
- Those are neutral or positive in content and tone



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Junge Freiheit

General information

- right oriented
- weekly newspaper
- they name themselves „the organ of the new rights“
- Founder: Dieter Stein



Junge Freiheit

Press review



- Articles: “Yellow Vests want to run for European election” (24.1.19)
“Di Maio angers Paris with Yellow Vests-meeting” (7.2.19)

Junge Freiheit

Analysis: “Yellow Vests want to run for European election“

- The newspaper says that Yellow Vests have followers from different classes
- The boss is Ingrid Levasseur, she is 31 years old
- The opinion research center Elabe made a survey and results are that the Yellow Vests are the third strongest group in France
- Yellow Vests are reported as being usually violent
→ this makes the Yellow Vests look very aggressive



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Junge Freiheit

Fact check: “Di Maio angers Paris with Yellow Vests-meeting“

- “This new provocation is unacceptable between neighboring countries and partners in the European Union“, said a speaker of the foreign ministry → an interview confirms it
- They spoke about a possible cooperation and similarities in content
- → further articles confirm it
- Salvini says that Macron is “not the leader of a new Europe, but he is a product of an experimental laboratory which is supposed to block the reform of the EU.“ → an interview from the Jungen Freiheit confirms that.



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Junge Freiheit

Influences: “Di Maio angers Paris with Yellow Vests-meeting“

- The article seems to be written very neutrally and without rating.
- BUT: only Italian position is presented, Macron is depicted as “product of an experimental laboratory” and the article ends with the sentence “Di Maio [...] accused France of adding to the mass escape from the black continent”. → hostile to migration
 - In general, it is striking that the Junge Freiheit does not directly report on the European elections and the first polls.
 - They convey their own opinion in a very hidden way, making articles appear like reports but still leaning into one direction.



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Junge Freiheit

Analysis

- only two articles about the European elections
 - the two articles are about the Yellow Vests and the conflict between the Italian government and the French government
 - the articles are only about the problems of the European election
 - they let it look like they have no opinion
- But they have an opinion: it's right-oriented



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Neues Deutschland

neues deutschland ▶ SOZIALISTISCHE TAGESZEITUNG

nd

“New Germany: socialist daily newspaper“



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EUROPASCHULE
in Nordrhein-Westfalen

Neues Deutschland

Which party is mentioned the most?

- “Europe under pressure from the right wing”
→ AfD (right-oriented)
- “For a clear pro-European EU-criticism”
→ Die Linke (left-oriented)
- “Yellow vests and red brigade”
→ Lega and Five stars movement



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Neues Deutschland

Which articles deal with the EU elections positively, neutrally, negatively?

- “Europe under pressure from the right wing”
→ positively
- “For a clear pro-European EU-criticism“
→ positively
- “Yellow vests and red brigade“
→ neutrally



Neues Deutschland

Which articles deal with parties and politicians positively,
neutrally, negatively?

- “Europe under pressure from the right wing“
 - right wing parties: negatively
 - left wing parties: positively
- “For a clear pro-European EU-criticism“
 - positively
- “Yellow vests and red brigade“
 - Macron: negatively



Neues Deutschland

What types of articles were written the most?

- “Europe under pressure from the right wing”
→ comment
- “For a clear pro-European EU-criticism”
→ feature
- “Yellow vests and red brigade”
→ report



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Neues Deutschland

Analysis: “For a clear pro-European EU-criticism“

- Written by a politician from the left wing party „Die Linke“
- Talks about the plans of her own party with regard to European projects
- To fortify her way she gives examples:
 - Militarization of Europe
 - social problems employment

→ this is clearly an article that should support the party “Die Linke“
→ influence on the reader by arguing towards the left wing



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EUROPASCHULE
in Nordrhein-Westfalen

Facebook

Overview of
the parties

	for EU	against EU
SPD social democrats		AFD right-wing populist, national, anticonstitutional
CDU/ CSU conservatives		NPD extreme right-wing, national, anticonstitutional
Die Grünen environmentally , economically and socially sustainable, (generally left-wing)		
Die Linke left-wing, communists		
Die Piraten “party of the information society”		
FDP liberals, business-friendly		



Facebook

Which parties post most frequently?

- Die Linke 13 posts/day
 - AfD 11 posts/day
 - CDU / CSU 9 posts/day
 - Die Grünen 7 posts/day
 - SPD / FDP hardly any posts
- but not every post is about the European elections



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Facebook

Pro-European post

- Manfred Weber (CSU), 15.02.2019:

“We will not hand over Europe (“our affair of the heart”) to those who want to destroy it.

Together we stand up against the enemies of Europe. Europe needs our powerful voice. The European elections are not about whether the EU is good or bad. It is a question of what kind of Europe we want in the future. #Our Europe is safe, strong and holds together.”

Facebook

Anti-European post

- AfD guideline proposal for the European party congress (11.-14.1.19):

“In the event that our fundamental reform approaches in the existing system of the EU are not realized within one legislative period, do we consider a withdrawal of Germany or an orderly dissolution of the EU and the establishment of a new European economic and political lobby as necessary?”



Twitter

Examples of posts

- “Left Party wants to be a party of the Enlightenment”; candidates Demirel and Shirdewan
- “EU parliament wants to expand” (AfD); Jörg Meuthen explains
- “The AfD’s dangerously well-done Europe agenda“
- Announcement by EVP top candidate Weber (CSU); wants to end dark debate
- Seehofer wants citizenship withdrawal (CDU)



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Twitter

Analysis: Announcement by EVP top candidate Weber (CSU)

- Manfred Weber is the top candidate at the EVP for the European elections.
 - In the interview, Manfred Weber answer questions asked by Focus-Online about changes in his election after the European elections.
 - Manfred Weber's opinions and answers:
 - "We need a real democratization"
 - "Europe already has a strong voice in business and trade policy"
 - "Europe means home, identity and diversity"
- Can Manfred Weber get more voters with these answers?

Twitter

Analysis: “AfD’s dangerously well-done Europe agenda“

- Jörg Meuthen is the Top candidate at the AfD for the European elections.
 - In the Interview, Jörg Meuthen talks about problems and possible solutions
 - The AfD manages to bring people's fears and worries to one point.
 - The AfD wants to offer protection to people.
- Can Jörg Meuthen get more voters with these answers?



Twitter

Conclusion

- Most parties and candidates posted nothing about the European elections
 - Only candidates from Die Linke and CSU posted some tweets, telling us their goals if they get elected
- difficult analysis because little content



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Instagram

Posts by AfD

- Publication of first 20 candidates for the European elections
- one picture with every candidate and name (13.1.19)
- “AfD starts the super-election years 2019 with 35,000 members and promoters” (4.2.19)
→ not many posts about European elections



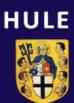
AfD [afdbund • Folgen](#)

Dankeschön an Sie: AfD startet mit über 35.000 Mitgliedern und Förderern ins Super-Wahljahr 2019! ++ Am 4. Januar 2019 begrüßte der AfD-Bundesverband sein 35.000stes Mitglied bzw. seinen 35.000sten Förderer. Aktuell engagieren sich 33.651 Mitglieder und 1.465 Förderer in unserer Bürgerpartei. Immer mehr Menschen treten bei, weil sie die Notwendigkeit für einen politischen Kurswechsel glasklar erkennen. Und das, obwohl Medien und mittlerweile auch staatliche Institutionen ein Trugbild von unserer Partei zeichnen, das den Realitäten in keiner Weise standhält. Die Bürger lassen sich davon jedoch nicht irritieren. Das macht Mut!

Im April feiert die AfD ihr sechstes



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Instagram

Posts by Die Grünen

- Official page: no posts about the European elections
- First candidate, Ska Keller: many pictures as she held discussions (e.g. 23.2.19: discussion about food, poverty, climate, agriculture)

→ not many posts about European elections



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Instagram

Posts by CDU

- 31st party convention of CDU Germany (10.12.18)
- “We stand for a democratic Europe in the hands of its citizens“ (17.2.19) → top candidate Manfred Weber on the election
- M. Weber’s posts look like little election posters with a countdown until the European election.
 - draws reader’s attention, evokes anticipation and excitement to the upcoming elections
 - in contrast to other parties, he succeeds in reaching younger people via Instagram and attracts new followers every day



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Instagram

Posts by CDU



manfred.weber • Folgen
Europe

manfred.weber 74 Days to go until the European elections. We will protect Europe's creative minds and foster innovation on our continent. This is the key to a better future for our children in Europe.

#bettereurope #strongertogether
#creativity #innovation #countdown
#europeanelections #manfredweber

Alle 6 Kommentare anzeigen

leyna.deln #lügenmanni



m.d.adventures Das ist schon sehr scheinheilig von Ihnen, wo doch Ihre Partei alles daran setzt mit #artide13 das Internet zu zensieren und künstlerische Freiheit zu drosseln.
#niemehrcdu #safeyourinternet



ynckhlr Ja ein neues „Chapter“ ohne #lügenmanni und #niewiedercdu



Gefällt 178 Mal

VOR 7 TAGEN

Kommentar hinzufügen ...



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Instagram

Posts by FDP

- Top candidates are Nicola Beer and Moritz Körner
- Moritz Körner: picture of a meeting which the representatives attended to convey
- “who has got the best ideas”
- for Europe (25.2.19)

→ hardly any posts about the European elections



moritz_koerner TB zu letzten Montag Panel der Europa Union und der hessischen Landesvertretung mit Vertretern der CDU, SPD, Grüne, Linke und der AfD über unsere unterschiedlichen Visionen von der Zukunft Europas Wir müssen in diesem Wahlkampf unsere unterschiedlichen Positionen besonders deutlich machen, damit der Europawahlkampf kein Wahlkampf zwischen pro-europäisch und anti-europäisch wird, sondern ein Wettbewerb darüber wer die besten Ideen

Gefällt 91 Mal

25. FEBRUAR

Instagram

Posts by SPD

- Top candidates are Katarina Barley and Udo Bullmann
- Katarina Barley: announcement of the congress of the social-democratic party of Europe in Madrid, where representatives of the social-democratic parties of the EU states will meet to decide on the program for the European elections (23.2.19)
 - → hardly any posts about the European elections



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Conclusion

- The European elections are not (yet) a topic of main interest in all media
- Information on the elections is not offered by the parties themselves or the newspapers
- Young people are hardly addressed specifically

