

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2686396 DCU 21109010 Charles 13596721
Dissertation Title	Far-right parties youth social media targeting: An analysis of Vox's Instagram and TikTok activity

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

		Late Submission Penalty no penalty
Word Count Penalty (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)		
Word Count: 20,096 Suggested Penalty: no penalty		

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark. (Following correspondence reviewers should list the agreed final internal grade taking before and after any penalties to be applied).

Before Penalty: B3 [15] **After Penalty:** B3 [15]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• Originality of topic	Very Good
• Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified	Very Good
• Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work	Good
• Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions	Very Good
• Application of theory and/or concepts	Good
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• Evidence of reading and review of published literature	Very Good
• Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument	Very Good
• Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence	Good
• Accuracy of factual data	Very Good
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• Appropriate formal and clear writing style	Very Good
• Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation	Excellent
• Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)	Excellent
• Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?	Yes
• Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)	Yes

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

- *Appropriate word count*

Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

This thesis is appropriately titled and sub-titled. The front matter, composing a cover page and lengthy and detailed ToC, are all in order. The Abstract is of an appropriate length and synthesises the project relatively well.

The thesis is focused on far-right parties targeting of specifically youth via social media. In this case, the far-right party is Spain's Vox and the platform studied are Instagram and TikTok. Despite the importance of far-right online targeting of youth, there is relatively little research focused on this important issue to-date and most of it, as pointed out in the thesis, is concerned with Twitter activity, rather than platforms heavily trafficked by youth, including Instagram and TikTok, so this research is wholly novel in that respect.

The Introduction supplies the reader with clear and thorough context for the work, contains a clearly stated core research question and three sub-questions, and describes the thesis' overall structure accurately.

The literature review considers the appropriate literatures on political parties utilisation of social media, Spanish political parties social media activity, VOX's origins and rise, and VOX's use of social media.

The thesis' theory section is adequate, but would have benefited from a drawing together of its different elements and a clear statement of how the topics described and issues raised would bear upon the author's research on VOX's social media-based youth-targeting. This could have been done in the chapter's Conclusion, which is basically missing: the chapter just ends without any summing-up.

The thesis would also have benefited from more detailed description of the visual methodology employed in the Methodology section! It is actually described at some greater length, though still not sufficiently, in the Data Collection section.

The data is sufficiently well-described, which is important for work of this type, though a table synthesising the data would have been very helpful.

The Results and Discussion sections are generally well laid out, detailed, and insightful, though the explanation of what constitute "Youth-centric elements" (p.43) should have come prior to the findings about them.

Overall, this work has some worthwhile things to say about VOX's targeting of youth via social media.

Reviewer 2

The dissertation aims to present the content of the youth-targeted communication of the radical right party Vox in Spain. The topic has been widely studied in the literature in relation to other

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

radical right or populist radical right parties, although the focus on young people has been somewhat less investigated. One main problem of this dissertation is its very descriptive and exploratory character, which has informative potential but not much analytical value. The dissertation provides detailed information about the content of communication, but its ambitions are very limited. It can hardly fill a gap in the literature with this exploratory study especially when its conclusions are in line with much of the earlier research on the topic (see, for example, the cases of Hungary or Poland).

The literature review includes several authoritative sources and makes some good points related to the content of the targeted communication. However, it is underdeveloped and does not provide a solid basis for discussion because:

1) it does not substantiate the key issues related to content because it misses important theories and arguments from political communication. For example, one strand of literature refers to framing and focuses on how the message is conveyed to the audience. There are also studies referring to priming, which means what is presented first to the audience, while other studies focus on the emotions used by radical right parties. The literature used by the dissertation is too basic to help providing a comprehensive and persuasive answer to the question.

2) the literature review is summative rather than integrative: it highlights several points from the literature, but these lack coherence, they go in many directions (echo-chambers, disinformation, micro-targeting, and Internet culture) and are not connected by a common thread. Equally important, the literature review addresses to a limited extent the debates in the literature. The dissertation gauges to a limited degree the current concerns about the communication of radical right parties.

The dissertation does not provide an analytical framework that could help answering the research questions. The student identifies four elements but it remains unclear how and why these were outlined and not others especially when previous studies focus on many other components of communication that matter.

Overall, the methodology is good but has several problems: the case selection (Spain and Vox) is not explained appropriately, the choice of the social media (Instagram and TikTok) is not explained – we do not know how important they are for the party, there is biased selection in choosing the five most liked posts, how the variables analysed during the data collection were selected (what criteria, what theoretical considerations etc.), it remains unclear what method of data analysis was used once the data was collected (how is the content interpretation done).

The empirical evidence is very descriptive and does not bring contributions to what we know about the communication of radical right parties from other studies. The credibility of the evidence is limited because the procedures used to interpret the data were not presented. The points made in the section about theories of Vox's success – it remains unclear how success is defined or measured – are confusing; there is no evidence basis for this discussion. It is surprising that the dissertation does not present some visual elements / graphs with the number of posts and videos associated to each variable. The dissertation fails to engage with the literature when interpreting the results, to illustrate what it brings new / how it complements previous studies.