

Abstract:

In today's digital age, social media is a pivotal tool for political campaigns. With the growing importance of social media in politics, it is essential to understand how the algorithms of these platforms can influence voter preferences. In particular, platforms like TikTok attract younger voters, which political parties use to spread their messages. The topic of examining the effects of social media algorithms on political campaigns is now very important, especially considering how algorithms can favor certain types of content and thus influence voting behavior. Current research of this topic so far has shown that although social media algorithms are designed to increase user interaction, they can have side effects such as polarizing opinions or unfair representation. Eli Pariser in the book "The Filter Bubble" pointed out the potential danger of such algorithms in creating closed information bubbles. Tarleton Gillespie in the book "Custodians of the Internet" then addresses the role of platforms in moderating content and deciding what goes viral.

In the context of the upcoming European elections in 2023, I will focus on the issue of the manifestation of the TikTok algorithm and user interaction on political preferences. The thesis will examine what political content is preferred on TikTok, especially in the context of the possible favoring of populist or extremist views, and what effect the algorithmic preferences have on voter preferences.