



## DIGITAL TERRAIN



### How relevant is social media in the country and region?

*Internet access, internet penetration, gender ratio, demographics, etc.*

- ▶ [ITU](#) and [World Bank Data Catalogue](#) or statistics of internet users
- ▶ Social media ads manager for demographic stats (e.g., [Facebook Ads Manager](#))
- ▶ Even if the ratio seems insufficient for nation-wide analysis, consider assessment of a specific group of stakeholders

## CHANNEL



### What social media channel is relevant, and why?

*Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, etc.*

- ▶ Analyze purpose of social media use (information exchange, social mobilization, etc.)
- ▶ Social media stats on [Statcounter.com](#) (filter by country, platform, time)

## INFLUENCERS



### Who is leading the debate on social media, how and why?

*Political party leaders, public institutions, civil society activists, bloggers, etc.*

- ▶ Use influencer ranking platforms such as [Social Bakers](#) (filter "politics" per "country"), [Social Searcher](#), [Klear](#), [Sproutsocial](#)
- ▶ For Twitter: [catalogue and cluster influencers in Twitter lists](#) to map the main stakeholders
- ▶ View who key influencers follow to expand your network and get the full spectrum of views

## NORMATIVE CONTEXT



### What normative aspects need to be considered?

*National policies, internet regulation, social media use restrictions, etc.*

- ▶ Consider censorship, data protection, and privacy regulation
- ▶ Assess the country's human rights record, including commitment to respecting privacy, freedom of speech, etc.

## LOCATION



### Where do the news, media, tweets, and comments originate from?

*Public geolocation of social media post, details of author, post appearing inside or outside the country, etc.*

- ▶ Most social media tools offer geolocation search (e.g., [Twitter Advanced Search](#), [Instagram location search](#))
- ▶ Analyze whether posts originate from the diaspora or domestic political constituency
- ▶ Consider that users might have geolocation switched off or internationally misrepresent their location

## LANGUAGE



### What languages and dialects need to be considered?

*Natural languages, dialects and coded language*

- ▶ Assess which languages used on social media with regard to a particular country
- ▶ Analyze when social media posts are not in the native language of the author
- ▶ Identify coded language, such as when words are used to camouflage the real meaning

## AUTHENTICITY



### Is the post real or fabricated?

*Use of bots and misinformation*

- ▶ Check user name for authenticity, some official sounding Twitter handles do not belong to the person they purport to belong to
- ▶ Be mindful that not just third parties, but also the main stakeholders and political actors themselves could spread misinformation
- ▶ Use [Botometer](#) to identify bots
- ▶ [SocialBlade](#) or [Twitter Audit](#) assess how many bots follow a user

## ISSUES



### What are key issues of debate (keywords), and major social media campaigns (usually hashtags)?

*Example: Yemen peace talks (keywords), #YemenCantWait (hashtag campaign)*

- ▶ Follow topics over time to see how they correlate with real-life events, and notice when they appear or disappear
- ▶ Analyze whether debates respond to news or are making the news
- ▶ Categorize positions in online debates, the same hashtag might be used by opposing sides
- ▶ [Trends24](#) for top tweets worldwide with customizable country-filters
- ▶ [Ritetag](#) for hashtag analytics
- ▶ [Google Trends](#) to identify trending search terms

## IMPACT



### How do online debates resemble or differ from debates taking place in the real world?

*Conversation only among circle of likeminded online, or use of hate speech to drive advocacy campaign, etc.*

- ▶ Analyze who is tagged in conversations, and/or who responds to conversations, and why
- ▶ Clarify whether there is a representative of the online group in the real world, and who they are
- ▶ Try to detect if the social media posts are coordinated, random or spontaneous, and whether there is a coordinated response
- ▶ Evaluate reactions in response to the topic being discussed (e.g., indifference, suppression, internet blackouts)



## ▶ BACKGROUND

Social media has become a powerful channel for political campaigns, governing, and social mobilisation. It carries great promise for facilitating participation and connecting people worldwide by enabling a seamless exchange of information and ideas. Yet, social media has also accelerated the spread of harmful content, including misinformation, hate speech and incitement to violence.

As it can do good, social media can also be exploited by tapping into users' desire to belong, and promoting messaging that divides the world into "us" versus "them." Social media algorithms are often designed to maximize user time on the site. As studies have found, posts that tap into negative emotions such as anger or fear produce the highest engagement. In fragile conflict contexts where reputable news sources are scarce, emotionally charged rumors run rampant and can feed violence.

### UN STUDIES

- ▶ [Analysing Refugee-Host Community Narratives on Social Media in Lebanon, UNDP \(2019\)](#)
- ▶ [Experimenting with Big Data and AI to Support Peace and Security, Global Pulse Lab Kampala \(2018\)](#)
- ▶ [Monitoring Perceptions of Crisis-Related Stress Using Social Media Data, Global Pulse Lab Jakarta \(2011\)](#)

### HANDBOOKS

- ▶ [Social Media Analytics: A Practical Guidebook, DW Academy \(2019\)](#)
- ▶ [The SAGE Handbook of Social Media Research Methods \(2017\)](#)
- ▶ [The Oxford Handbook of Political Networks \(2017\)](#)
- ▶ [The Routledge Companion to Social Media and Politics \(2016\)](#)
- ▶ [Advances in Social Media Analysis, Springer \(2015\)](#)

### ARTICLES

- ▶ [Quantifying International Human Mobility Patterns Using Facebook Network Data, PLOS ONE \(2019\)](#)
- ▶ [Beyond Fact-Checking: Network Analysis Tools for Monitoring Disinformation in Social Media, Springer \(2019\)](#)
- ▶ [Opinion Mining Using Twitter Feeds for Political Analysis, International Journal of Computer \(2017\)](#)
- ▶ [A Framework for Real-time Semantic Social Media Analysis, Journal of Web Semantics \(2017\)](#)
- ▶ [Assessing Sentiment of the Expressed Stance on Social Media, SocInfo \(2019\)](#)

### GUIDANCE

- ▶ [UN Secretariat Guidelines for the Personal use of Social Media \(2019\)](#)

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