

Prof. Dr. Martin Emmer, Weizenbaum Institute & FU Berlin, martin.emmer@fu-berlin.de
(Dr.) Christian Strippel, Weizenbaum Institute, christian.strippel@weizenbaum-institut.de

HORIZON-CL2-2027-01-DEMOCRACY-04: Addressing the impact of artificial intelligence, cyberviolence, and deepfakes on equality, democracy and inclusive societies

Research interest

We are interested in learning how (young) citizens assess and use the potential of AI in their daily lives and how AI supports or damages their self-determination as citizens in their social, professional, and political environment. This includes unwanted effects, such as exacerbating social divisions. We understand users as citizens, being defined via their active, participatory integration in society and their resources and expectations that shape their self-concept as citizens. In this context, images of AI and attitudes about the technology are important factors in explaining the effects of AI (e.g., “algorithm dependency”), as well as in developing recommendations for AI implementations.

Potential contribution to the consortium

For potential consortia, we could contribute empirical data collections and analyses from a citizen-oriented micro-perspective, e.g. large-scale quantitative surveys, qualitative studies, or analyses of digital behavioral data. This could contribute to identify AI-related factors relevant to democracy via case studies, interviews, or focus groups, or for testing theoretical models with quantitative data from surveys or smartphone tracking. From a theoretical perspective, we could offer an approach to AI use that considers citizens’ practices and attitudes as explanatory factors in explaining the social and democratic effects of AI.

Previous projects

Project “We and AI” (2020–2021), funded by Goethe Institute, Germany

A survey study of AI-related attitudes of young Europeans (aged 18-30) in five EU countries. It covered AI-related experiences and attitudes in fields like education, job, and news use.

Project “Weizenbaum Panel” (since 2022, ongoing), funded by BMFT/ Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space, Germany

A yearly longitudinal national survey study that collects data on digital media use, participation, attitudes on politics, media and AI, and other aspects of the digital transformation.

Project “New approaches to the study of mobile media use” (2022-2023), funded by German National Science Foundation (DFG)

We developed a tracking app to record smartphone use data in combination with mobile survey and ESM data collection, which is free to use for researchers.

Publications

Gagrčin, E., Schaetz, N., Rakowski, N., Toth, R., Renz, A., Vladova, G., & Emmer, M. (2021). *We and AI – Living in a datafied world: Experiences & attitudes of young Europeans*. Weizenbaum Institute. <https://doi.org/10.34669/wi/1>

Schaetz, N., Gagrčin, E., Toth, R., & Emmer, M. (2025). Algorithm dependency in platformized news use. *New Media & Society*, 27(3), 1360–1377. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448231193093>

Toth, R., Parry, D., & Emmer, M. (2025). From Screen Time to Daily Rhythms: A Mixed Methods Study of Smartphone Use Among German Adults. *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.51685/jqd.2025.019>