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Assessing Europeanization on social media: a new approach

Abstract:

One of the opportunities arguably provided by social media is the acceleration of Europeanization of the digital public discourse, itself a crucial ingredient for the development of a more integrated European-level political body. This paper probes for the existence of a Europeanized public discourse on Twitter on the issue of migration. It does so by collecting data over the period 2014-2019, in nine different languages, and by charting the connections and the content of Twitter-based communication using a triangulation of methods: network mapping, qualitative coding, and statistical modeling. In doing so we propose a new operationalization of Europeanization of discourse, one that uses language dynamics to illustrate transnational flows of information.

We want to find out whether the migration discourse is Europeanized, and if so, what are the mechanisms and actors by which this process takes place. Our conclusions are that 1) there is a Europeanized discourse on migration on Twitter; 2) the process is driven through uploading and downloading of messages; and 3) the most active actors in the process display views critical to migration. In addition, we discover a clear polarization of allegiances with those opposed to migration creating a strongly bonded cluster, clearly separated from those either supportive or neutral in the matter.

Bio

Anamaria Dutceac Segesten is Senior Lecturer in European Studies at Lund University. She holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Maryland (USA) and has been a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Copenhagen. Research-wise, Dr. Dutceac Segesten has written extensively on the topic of nationalism, collective identity and conflict. She is currently driving several projects investigating the role of social media in democratic politics. Her pedagogical experience covers European Union politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics and East and Central European politics. Dr. Dutceac Segesten is co-founder of the European Studies discipline at Lund University. She has taught at universities in the United States and Scandinavia, where she has supervised over 40 theses at the under and post-graduate levels. She has been twice nominated for university-wide pedagogical awards. Dr. Dutceac Segesten is an active member of the SamTech think-tank, founded at Lund University for the purpose of providing expert advice on how technology impacts society, and of the Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning network, which brings together engineers, data scientists, humanists, lawyers, and social scientists to discuss the development of Al and its practical, social, and ethical consequences.