

COVIDisc: Discussion with young people about the corona pandemic

Study information

1. Aim of the project

COVIDisc investigates the media coverage of the Coronavirus Pandemic and presentation of young people in the media and official communications, and how young people perceive the discussion, which messages reach them and how they experience the Coronavirus Pandemic. To this purpose, the perspective of young people will be surveyed, and language experts will examine the content of the articles and communications to see how they report about Coronavirus and this age group (for further information see <https://www.zhaw.ch/gesundheits/covidisc>)

2. Study population

The Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO) randomly selected young people aged 15 to 34 years on 1st of January 2020 who were resident in the cantons of Zurich, Thurgau and Ticino. These persons will receive a written invitation to the study by mail.

3. General information on the project

Background information

Since the beginning of 2020, the coronavirus pandemic has been the subject of public discussion in the media and among the persons responsible to manage the pandemic. The role of young people, their risk and behavior are part of this discussion. The COVIDisc study examines the media coverage from 2 sides. On the one hand from the perspective of young people: how do they inform themselves, what do they think about the reporting, how do they behave and what influence does the pandemic and the pandemic regulations have on their lives? On the other hand, the discussion is analyzed from the media and language perspective: how and by whom is the coronavirus pandemic discussed, what words and images stand for the coronavirus pandemic, what is written about this age group? The information behavior and the perception of the public discussion by young people has not yet been thoroughly researched in Switzerland.

Structure and duration of the project and number of participants

The project was launched in June 2020 and will run until May 31, 2021. The first part of the study involves filling out an online questionnaire once (approx. 25 minutes). In the three cantons, a total of 3600 randomly selected persons are invited to participate in the survey. In the online questionnaire, we ask you about your demographics, the media you use to inform yourself about the coronavirus crisis, your perception of the reporting, how you behave towards the recommended coronavirus protection measures and your previous experiences with the coronavirus crisis. The second part of the study consists of an in-depth interview (approx. 45-60 minutes) to gain an even better understanding of young people's perspective on the corona pandemic. If you are interested in participating in an interview, you can provide your contact details in the online questionnaire. The interview will take place online and we will arrange an individual appointment that suits you. Finally,

for a smaller group, we will invite you to provide any statements or testimonials, in written, audio or visual format, that can be shared in the final reporting of the study.

4. Benefit

The results of the research project are important for giving young people a voice in the Coronavirus Pandemic. The results will inform official communication as well as media about young people's media preferences and perceptions and can thus contribute to addressing young people adequately. The results of this study are therefore beneficial to society. The participants themselves do not necessarily have any direct personal benefit.

5. Rights

You participate voluntarily. If you do not want to participate in this research project or later withdraw your participation, you do not have to justify this. As a participating person, you have the right to view your data at any time. This project will be carried out in accordance with the laws in Switzerland and has been authorized by the ethics committee at (insert – ZHAW or canton?).

6. Risks

There are few risks involved in participating in the study, such as maybe you feel uncomfortable with some questions or do not understand them. If you are concerned by any of the questions asked, you can skip the question(s) or just ask one of us and we will help to explain.

7. Confidentiality of data

Your data, which we received from the BFS, will be encrypted for the study and stored on a password protected server. All data that could identify you (name, address) are replaced by a code. We will ask you to enter this code before starting the survey. This is because you have been randomly chosen for this study and we want to ensure that only invited persons will participate. Also, by entering the code, you will not be reminded to take the survey if you have already participated. Access to your personal data is only granted to study staff members who are bound by confidentiality.

In the first part of the online survey your data will be collected confidentially. Should you take part in the second part of the study (personal interview) we will ask you for your consent to record the interview. The recording of the interview will be stored on a secure server at the university. The interview will be transcribed in writing for analysis. All text passages that could identify you will be anonymized.

8. Withdrawal

You can withdraw from the study at any time. In this case, the data collected up to that point will still be evaluated in encrypted form. The encryption code for your data will be deleted upon completion of the study. Your data is then anonymous and cannot be traced back to you.

9. Financing

The study is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

10. contact person(s)

In case of any uncertainties or questions you can always contact the following contact person:

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