

Leader's 'Green' Posts. The Environmental Issues Shared by Politicians on Facebook

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Abstract

Is Facebook “green”? Do political leaders use this social medium to spread information on green policies? The aim of this paper is to investigate on whether and how Facebook is used by politicians as an arena to spread environmental policy proposals or simply information about the environment. The study covers 127 Facebook pages of political leaders in 31 different advanced industrial democracies. The 127 pages have been under observation for 26 months and 99,234 posts were scrutinized. 25,151 out of these 99,234 posts were manually coded and analyzed in order to measure how often contemporary leaders use Facebook to talk about environmental issues. We found that: (i) environmental issues do not represent a relevant concern for the main political leaders of contemporary advanced industrial democracies; (ii) left wing and younger leaders are the ones who used Facebook the most for spreading information about environmental issues; and (iii) relevant differences between leaders of countries with different levels of economic wealth and environmental pollution are noted in regard to Western countries.

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