University of Southampton

Faculty of Social Sciences

School of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology

The Effect of the Introduction of Online Participation Processes

in the Green Party Germany

by

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Thesis for the degree of <u>Doctor of Philosophy</u> in Web Science

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Abstract

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This thesis explores the anticipated and actual effects that the introduction of online participation processes in the Green Party Germany had on the participation of party members. It is informed by Actor-Network Theory. It investigates whether and how introduction of online participation tools changed members' participation behaviour. In line with the digital divide literature, I analyse the role of four potential effects (mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, and non-use) as a result of tool introductions, and integrate these effects in the 'differentiated online participation effects-model'. I also explore to which degree participation preferences play a role in the adoption or non-adoption of specific online tools.

The Green Party Germany has a strong commitment to grass-roots participation and gender equality, which is one of the drivers behind the party's push for online participation tools. This makes this party an ideal case to investigate the adoption of online participation processes by party members, and the role of (in-)equality in these online processes. If the adoption of online participation widens participation and includes Green Party members that have previously not participated, then it may act as a role model for other parties. If online participation failed to widen participation, or resulted in inequalities, this would give indications for potential barriers that may be amplified in contexts which are less favourable to participation.

I apply a mixed methods approach, encompassing observations, interviews and focus groups, as well as a set of surveys, including a panel survey. I identify participation preferences, issues, and strategies applied to achieve the party's goals based on qualitative data. Quantitative evidence is used to measure the scale and effects of the new tools on participation by different groups. The panel survey specifically is used to compare participation rates over time, and identify mobilisation or reinforcement effects. In combination, the data allows conclusions about how online participation tools are expected to change the participation of party members, and what effect they actually have.

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Gefion Thuermer, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

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I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. Parts of this work have been published as:

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    e. Thuermer, Gefion (2018), *Expected benefits and use of online participation tools in the Green Party Germany*. European Consortium for Political Research, Annual Conference, Hamburg, 2018

Signature:		Date:	

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Chapter 1   Introduction

This project explores the anticipated and actual effects that the introduction of online participation processes in the Green Party Germany has had on the participation of party members. In line with the digital divide literature, I aim to identify mobilisation and reinforcement processes as a result of these tool introductions, and introduce the 'Differentiated Online Participation Effects-model' (DOPE-model), which integrates four possible effects of online participation: mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, and non-use. I also explore to which degree participation preferences play a role in the introduction process, and the use or non-use of specific online tools.

Participation in itself is a politicised term; anyone using it will have their own view of what constitutes participation, and these views can differ widely. It is interpreted differently by activists and academics, and may be found in everyday activities as much as in targeted campaigns (Roth, 2016), and is mediated by political ideologies (Carpentier, 2015). Consequently, there are different definitions of participation. I understand participation as the involvement in political processes of any kind – be that voting, or discussions, or likes on political Facebook posts. Where a specific type of participation is discussed, I will make this clear.

Once hailed as a force for democratisation, research into digital inequality has shown that disadvantaged groups stay disadvantaged online, as the same factors that contribute to exclusion offline also affect exclusion online (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010; Halford et al., 2010). Therefore, using the internet for participatory processes is problematic. Inequalities exist – and persist – with regards to social, cultural, and financial capital (Bourdieu, 1986), and gender, but also internet access and use, as well as benefits derived from that use (Lenk, 1999; Hargittai, 2008; Halford and Savage, 2010; Martínez-Cantos, 2017).

The core of web science is the goal to understand how people and the web co-constitute one-another (Halford et al., 2010). This process of co-constitution has been a theme in Science and Technology studies (STS), which investigates the relationship between science and technology. STS navigates between the extremes of social determinism (society determines what technology is and the effects it has) and technological determinism (technology has a prescribed use independent of society), arguing that there is a middle ground where society and technology mutually shape one-another. In this view, technology develops within social contexts, and neither technological affordances nor social circumstances alone are sufficient to explain its development and use (Halford et al., 2010). I am applying this principle to online participation. The theoretical framework and the DOPE-model is based on the core assumption of Actor-Network Theory

(Latour, 2005) that the introduction of non-human, technological actors into participation processes changes the network of actors, and affects how participation is both perceived and conducted. How do online participation tools and the people involved in their development and use co-constitute both the tools and processes around them, and how does this shape actual participation? I will investigate these processes through an analysis of the introduction of online participation tools in the Green Party Germany.

1.1. Case Study

Participation is, and always has been, at the core of the identity of the Green Party Germany (Frankland, 2008; Heinrich and Spitz, 2014), which is based in social movements for equality. The party understands participation as any form of involvement of party members in the activities and decisions of their party. In contrast to other German parties, decisions in the Green Party are largely made bottom-up, with quotas to ensure equal participation of women, which is one of their founding ideals. The party leadership has a strong interest in enabling and encouraging participation by the whole member base. The ideal of grass-roots participation, translated to the modern world of technology, includes allowing members to participate online. If the goal is for as many members as possible to participate, they need to be enabled to do so, and the internet is one route to do that. To achieve the goal to enable more participation, the party needs to tackle the digital divide for their internal processes, as no members should be excluded based on lack of skills or resources (Kellner, 2015a). The party has decided to adapt one existing process, and introduce two entirely new tools to this end.

The party does not want to exclude members who do not have access to the necessary technology, resources or skills, or are otherwise digitally excluded (Wyatt, 2003). To prevent the digital divide from affecting participation in the party, and still reap the benefits of online participation methods – scale, efficiency, cost savings – the development and implementation of online participation processes requires awareness of the organisational values and culture as well as sources of inequality (Gibson et al., 2004; Kersting, 2014). I want to clarify that the focus of this thesis is only on the participation of party members in party-internal decision-making processes, as opposed to the general public, which has been researched extensively. The focus on party-internal participation is an original contribution of this thesis.

Ideology and preferences as indicators for online participation have only recently entered the digital divide discourse (Chang, 2017; Oser and Hooghe, 2018). Given the role both ideology and participation preferences play in political parties in general, and in the Green Party specifically, with the ideal of equal opportunities to participate being one of their founding principles,

members' participation values should have an effect on the type of online participation tools and processes they expect, and how they adopt them.

My earlier research (Thuermer, 2015) has investigated the obstacles the Green Party Germany faces when considering online processes. The internet can enable more participatory and efficient processes, but as of 2018, these possibilities are not used. Until as recently as 2014, the party's use of the internet was limited to distributing information, for fear of excluding members who are not online, amongst other reasons.

Participation in the Green Party is a means to prevent oligarchisation – the process by which the party elite distances and subsequently protects their interests from members to perpetuate their power, as I will discuss below. If online tools change participation processes, there may be a danger that the protection against oligarchisation built into the current set-up of the party changes with them. For example, the existing controls of the party elite, such as limitations to their influence through the positions they can hold simultaneously, or the openness to input from grass-roots members, may not be applicable to online processes where, at least in theory, the influence of any one individual is uncapped. The party therefore needs to tackle the digital divide, to achieve the desired effect of enabling more, and more diverse, participation.

The party experimented with online tools since at least the year 2000, where they were the first party to test a 'virtual assembly' in one of their state branches. What makes the adoption of new online processes a problem specific to the Green Party, is that their existing online platform *Wurzelwerk* ('root works') is quite universally hated. It was introduced in 2009 as a party-internal social network, and is now mainly used as a knowledge management system where members can find resources for various occasions.

For all these reasons – the value of broad participation and equal opportunity, the organisational setup that enables participation and prevents oligarchisation, and the determination to use the internet to increase participation – the Green Party is a 'crucial case' (Eckstein, 2000; Flyvbjerg, 2006): given the party's commitment to participation and equality, if online participation can be successfully implemented in any political party, it should work here. If it fails here, this will indicate fundamental challenges that will need to be addressed, wherever online participation is introduced in political or other organisations.

The party is adding three different online processes to their portfolio: first, an online verification process, to amend the existing process for proposal submissions; second, a Mitgliederbefragung (*Befragung*), a regular online survey about key policy questions, and third, a Mitgliederbegehren (*Begehren*), a petition system by which members can collectively make a demand of the executive board. To differentiate between the surveys I conducted as part of my method, and the surveys

conducted by the Green Party, and prevent continuous lengthy descriptions, I use the German terms for the tools throughout this thesis.

1.2.   Theoretical Model

The theoretical model that I develop throughout this thesis integrates four possible effects when technology and participation are combined: mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, and non-use. Mobilisation and reinforcement are often discussed as polar opposites, with little or no room in-between (Norris, 2001). Mobilisation theory (Jensen, 2013) argues that as more opportunities for participation become available, a higher number of previously inactive potential participants will begin to participate, or new participants are recruited. Participation is widened. In a party context, this means either engaging inactive members, or recruiting new members. According to reinforcement theory on the other hand, as more opportunities to participate become available, the same individuals that are already active will use these additional routes for their existing participation, thus expanding their existing advantages (Lusoli et al., 2002). Participation becomes deeper, but no new or inactive members are drawn into the process (Norris, 2001). Replacement theory argues that changes to the process do not change the status quo. Activities which previously happened through other routes are replaced with the new participation option. Participation becomes neither broader (more members) nor deeper (more participation) (Jensen, 2013). Only the medium through which participation is conducted changes. Lastly, there is a risk, especially for large organisations such as parties, that online participation methods are introduced, and not used at all. Non-use has been considered with regards to internet access (Wyatt, 2003; Reisdorf and Groselj, 2017), and to some degree for political participation (Lutz and Hoffmann, 2017; Gerl et al., 2018), but not for online political participation. It is a risk in several ways: if specific groups do not adopt tools it may lead to inequalities; or if developed processes and tools fail to gain users, it may lead to loss of legitimacy or resources. My model will integrate these existing concepts in one coherent framework, and apply it to the participation of members within political parties. Both are innovative and original contributions.

I use the body of literature around these four effects to identify the possible, anticipated and actual effects of the introduction of technology in the Green Party. In that process, I argue that these four concepts need to be integrated in a new, expansive model, the DOPE-model, encompassing mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement and non-use, to be able to investigate the whole breadth of effects. I contextualise these ideas with the way online participation is embedded into existing processes, using the concept of actor-networks: the network of human and non-human actors that enacts the participation, and thereby co-constructs the binding nature and possible influence of the participation processes.

My project requires a mixed methods approach: the four effects and the factors that may or may not influence tool adoption can be assessed statistically, but the context in which the tools operate cannot. To grasp these effects in their entirety, qualitative data is necessary to contextualise the processes in the environment where they are implemented. Neither purely qualitative nor purely quantitative methods could deliver both. An intervention in the form of the introduction of several new online participation methods allowed me to observe changes in behaviour. I argue that both the participation and digital divide play a role in tool adoption, and that there are different preferences and goals for the party elite and members, which influence how processes are implemented, and how satisfactory and participatory these processes are in practice.

By combining the mode of participation (how it happens), its influence (the effect it can have) and the underlying inequalities (the reasons for non-/participation), a clearer and more realistic picture of the true effects can emerge.

1.3.   Research Questions

Combining the context and theoretical framework, this project aims to understand whether and how party members (expect to) change their behaviour in reaction to the introduction of new online participation processes and tools; how party members' preferences influence the adoption of online participation processes, and whether there are differences in views and tool adoption between party base and elite. These research interests, in combination with the specific situation of the Green Party and current state of research into participation and the digital divide, result in the following research questions:

1.   What are the participation preferences in the party, and do they differ between groups?
2.   How are participation preferences translated into processes?
3.   How are inequalities identified and addressed?
4.   To which degree are preferences realised in processes, and are expectations of party members and leadership met? If not, why?
5.   Is there evidence for mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, or non-use? Are these effects mutually exclusive or do they occur simultaneously?
6.   What characteristics of participants correlate with each of these effects?

The next chapters will contextualise these questions, and then focus on each of the aspects in turn.

Chapter 2 discusses the context of participation, in political parties generally, and in Germany specifically, both online and offline, and provides an overview of current research on each of

these areas. It explains the importance of equality in participation and the legitimacy of decisions, and shows how participation is indeed *not* equal, either online or offline. The chapter concludes with an introduction to the theoretical framework of the DOPE-model, which integrates four possible effects of online participation: mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement and non-use.

Chapter 3 explains the mixed method approach taken to address the research questions. It positions the choice of the case study and access to the field, as well as my own role in the field. It further describes the data collection, spanning observations, interviews, focus groups, and several surveys, and gives a brief introduction to the samples. The data was analysed using both qualitative (thematic analysis) and quantitative (chi-square tests, factor analysis, linear and logistic regression models) methods, which are explained, and then applied to the research questions. The chapter concludes with thoughts on the ethical implications of the chosen methods.

Chapter 4 provides background on the Green Party Germany. It discusses the Green Party's history and organisational structure, the role of members and their participation, and their use of technology to date. I explain the specific issues the party is trying to solve, which forms the basis of the following analysis.

Chapter 5 discusses the views on participation, and draws out the ideal of participation in the party. Based on observation and interview data collected between November 2016 and summer 2017, I describe the status quo of the party's participation processes around the time when the formal decision to introduce new online participation tools was made. Different perceptions and preferences, especially around the transparency of these processes, played a significant role in the discussion about online participation. These participation preferences are important, because democratic values and ideology have been shown to influence political participation (Lorenzini and Bassoli, 2015; Oser and Hooghe, 2018), but their influence on the adoption of online participation has not yet been investigated. I operationalise the preferences into two variables for use in surveys, to be able to test them on a larger sample. I briefly test this application on the first survey, conducted in April 2017, with limited success, and proceed to measure their effect on the adoption (or not) of online participation processes in Chapter 7. The chapter concludes with an answer to research question one: there are indeed different participation preferences, both with regards to the mode of participation and the role of discourse, as well as the intensity in which members want to engage. They do differ by groups within the party, broadly aligned with the political leaning, and positions held in the party. However, these groups are not as clear-cut as anticipated.

Chapter 6 begins by setting out the results of the pre-study of participation preferences, and explains how this shaped the analysis. It then explores the views about the potential benefits of and issues with the new online processes, and their anticipated effects, based on qualitative data from interviews, observations, and focus groups, and quantitative data from two surveys. The anticipated effects are translated into requirements in the implementation, both based on implicit assumptions and explicit demands by participants: what needs to happen to realise benefits while avoiding potential problems. I further explain how these requirements are addressed to varying degrees in the implementation process. All of this is contextualised using the DOPE-model. I conclude by answering research questions two through four. The participation preferences are translated into processes, but they are neither the only nor the most important influences on tool development. While inequalities are considered in all stages, there are few actual solutions; instead, participants assumed that the online participation tools would somehow overcome existing inequalities more or less on their own. This stance of technological determinism changed during the data collection, partially as a result of it, leading to a deeper consideration of the potential effects especially regarding the equal participation of women.

Chapter 7 discusses the use, anticipated and actual effects of the different online participation processes on the participation of party members, and statistically tests the assumptions of the DOPE-model. It combines Actor-Networks derived from analysis of the qualitative data, identifying the influence the tools can have, with the results of a two-wave panel survey, allowing to measure changes in participation. I discuss the three online participation tools, showing different effects for each. The chapter concludes with answers to research questions five and six: there is indeed evidence of all four effects, which can be distinguished using the DOPE-model. While some of the expected influences of the digital divide are visible, such as different participation by gender and age, the direction of some of these effects contradicts the existing literature, especially with regards to the influence of education: higher education, rather than leading to higher participation, has a contrary effect for two out of the three tools. Surveys are the only online participation method that mobilises party members with university degrees.

Chapter 8 summarises the key findings and concludes with implications and an outlook on future work. It draws out the contributions to research in the context of online participation in political parties, and positions the findings in the wider research area. The analysis revealed that even in the equality-focussed environment of the Green Party Germany, online participation is affected by the digital divide. However, this is not the case for all analysed factors. The chapter describes the DOPE-model, and offers a clear definition of the four effects (mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, non-use) which will enable future studies in this area to be holistic and comparable.

Chapter 2   Role and Effects of Political Participation

To approach the questions framed in 1.3, it is necessary to understand the context of political participation. There are existing divides to be considered that affect participation, both in general and online. This chapter provides background to these areas. To start with, I give an overview of democratic participation, 'legitimate' decisions, and the role of equality in participation (2.1), Following the discussion of the participation divide, I consider what happens when participation processes are conducted on the internet (2.2), and the role of participation in political parties in Germany (2.3). Finally, I describe the theoretical framework I developed to assess the potential effects of online technology on participation: the mobilisation of participants, the reinforcement of existing advantages, the replacement of techniques, and non-use of online tools, which form the 'Differentiated online participation effects-model' (DOPE-model, 2.4).

2.1.   The Importance of Equality for Participation

Democratic participation and equality are intrinsically linked. Dahl describes democracy as the "process of making collective and binding decisions" (1989, p. 5), which is based on equality: if all members of a group are equal, then they all ought to have the same influence on decisions that affect them. Democratic decisions ensure the legitimacy of results through processes. Equality among participants is a key requirement, as only decisions that everyone has had the same influence on will be perceived as legitimate, and thus accepted by those they affect (Wilhelm, 1999). Consequently, inequalities between participants may weaken the legitimacy of decisions. However, equality should be understood as equality of opportunity, not of circumstances, as the latter would be impossible to achieve in practice due to existing inequalities in society.

2.1.1.   Forms of Participation

There is an inherent value to democratic participation, as it is believed to have an educative effect on those who do participate: They learn about the democratic process by engaging with it (Mill, 1965; Rousseau, 1968; Pateman, 1970). Participation requires extensive knowledge and skill of those who participate. They must not only understand the process by which decisions are made, but ideally also the context and implications of the issues they are deciding about (Laird, 1993). But it also has an effect on those who participate: It helps educate them, and increases both the understanding for the process itself, and of the outcome. Those participating in decisions are more likely to accept the results, even if they may not agree with the outcome of the process (Pateman, 1970; Laird, 1993; Michels and De Graaf, 2010).

There are diverse ways in which democratic participation can be conducted: through deliberation, with the aim of achieving consensus amongst all participants, or through votes, with specified majority rules; participants can either be involved directly, or through representatives.

The role model for consensus decision making is Habermas' 'ideal speech situation': members of the public sphere achieve consensus about issues through a process of structured discourse, which he lays out in his theory on discourse ethics and the development of the public sphere (Habermas, 1973, 1990). Ideal deliberation is free, meaning participants respect results because they believe in their legitimacy; it is reasoned, as reason is the only thing that is criticised in the process; it is equal, in that every participant has the same status, and rules do not give preference to any of them; and it is consensual, in that all participants have to agree to the final decision (Cohen, 2003). Overall, deliberative decision making means that the more people talk, the more they can agree on things, and the more democratic a decision will be perceived as legitimate (Cohen, 2003). Cohen also argues that parties are the best place for deliberation to happen, because they provide arenas and can mediate inequalities in the process - but only if they are publically funded (i.e. financially independent and thus free in their decisions). Public funding is the default situation for most parties in Germany, as I will explain in more detail in Chapter 4.

However, deliberative decision-making can also be ineffective. It may not be best suited to deal with the scale of complex problems (Smith, 2001). Where power imbalances between participants exist, these cannot typically be overcome through deliberation (Brent Edwards, 2010). Equally, existing benefits may not be recognised as such by participants who perceive themselves as disadvantaged (O'Hara, 2011). Levine et al. (2005) suggest that dialogue or 'cultural accommodation' as a pre-deliberation phase enables participants to better understand each other's views and values. By getting participants to know one another, they create a mutual understanding, which makes them more willing to find consensus. Rothschild-Whitt (1979) describes how in collectivist organisations, the time taken for decisions is directly correlated to the democratic control of the members: the more they insist on making decisions with the entire group, the longer it takes to make these decisions, to the degree that there may be no time left to do any other work. This is one of the issues that the Green Party faces, where so many proposals are submitted at their assemblies that it becomes impossible to discuss them all (see Chapter 5).

Organisations need to find a balance between their wish for participation and the necessity of efficiency in reaching decisions. That is why, according to Dahl (1989), systems of representation become inevitable. Representatives can make it easier to cope with the scale of polities. Since it is impossible in practice for everyone to participate in every decision (unless at very small scales), representation happens naturally, when those who participate represent those who do not. If there is a system to select the few people who do participate, they can represent the whole, thus

maintaining equality while increasing efficiency. A system by which representatives are selected and accountable to their constituents is considered more democratic than self-selection of those who have the time, skill, or resources to participate (Dahl, 1989).

Contrary to decisions by deliberation, voting implies that different views are either irreconcilable, or that the time and effort required for creating a consensus is not worthwhile (Smith, 2009). This is often the case in large democracies such as nation states, where debates in parliament – or society – are concluded by a vote. The main distinguishing factor then is who gets to vote, how voting is conducted, and how results are counted and measured, e.g. with a first-past-the-post system or proportional representation, or the kind of majority that must be achieved for certain decisions, such as two thirds of votes being required to change statutes or constitutions. Voting solves the main issues of deliberation, but has other shortcomings, especially in combination with direct participation: For example, minorities can be outvoted, leading to majority domination. This can in turn reinforce existing power structures and make it hard for suppressed minorities to make their voices heard (Smith, 2009; Michels and De Graaf, 2010). Especially referendums are susceptible to populist manipulation, because the public can easily be influenced by events of the day, leading to wide-ranging ad-hoc decisions, rather than considerations of long-term effects (Smith, 2005). Voting may also effectively prevent deliberations and compromises, making decisions more confrontational (Katz and Mair, 1995).

Social movements – out of which the Green Party evolved – use different techniques of decision-making. Often their ideals are deliberative, such as in the Occupy movement which decided about all issues in general assemblies. These contexts are not always perceived as 'democratic', as not all members have equal opportunity to participate, either in the event itself, or the discussions that happen there (Smith and Glidden, 2012). Each of these types of decision making comes with advantages and disadvantages, and ultimately organisations need to decide about their own terms and rules, based on their internal culture and ideology (Korte, 2012; Thuermer et al., 2016).

2.1.2. Factors in the Participation Divide

Although equal participation is an ideal in democratic theory, it is difficult in practice. The theory of capital is often used to describe differences between groups in society, and is particularly useful to understand sources of inequality in both the participation and digital divide context (Ignatow and Robinson, 2017). I will use the model described by Pierre Bourdieu, who distinguished between social, economic, and cultural capital. In this view, capitals are assets an individual has access to, such as persons they know (social capital), education or skills they have (cultural capital) and financial means (economic capital). The forms of capital are independent, but can be converted into one another, for example when higher education leads to higher

income, or affluent individuals move among more exclusive social circles. The acquisition of either form of capital is easier with sufficient economic capital backing it, but neither can be bought with money alone: acquisition of social and cultural capital always requires labour-time (Bourdieu, 1986).

In combination, the different types of capital lead to a specific habitus – the behaviour and world view associated with social class. However, the habitus a person holds is not only based on their capital, but also on their gender: Meßmer & Banaszczuk (2013) argue that women network different than men, and as a result may struggle to acquire social capital in political parties, leading to their habitual exclusion.

Social capital is defined through membership in groups of society, mutual acquaintance and the possible transferability of these relationships into other forms of value. These groups must by definition be exclusive, i.e. control who becomes a member, because the closed network of the group constitutes its value, which would lessen with a growing number of (potentially inappropriate) members that do not contribute to this value. 'Political capital', as a sub-form of social capital, refers to the network a person has within a political context, and the network-building skills of that person. Political capital is volatile, it deteriorates if the network is not constantly maintained (Meßmer and Banaszczuk, 2013). There is also a Matthew-effect, whereby those who already have a larger network can more easily expand it than those with less access to capital (Abbas and Mesch, 2018). This implies that social, but especially political capital, reinforces itself: it is produced and maintained through closed networks, and the more a person has, the easier it is to acquire even more. The maintenance of a larger network will also require more effort, which may be problematic for party members who do have limited time to spend on such activities.

Unequal distribution of capital is fundamental to unequal participation, leading to the 'participation divide'. Influence on political decisions is "systematically biased in favour of more privileged citizens – those with higher incomes, greater wealth, and better education" (Lijphart, 1997), and grows more pronounced the more time and resources are required to participate. Disadvantages in any socio-demographic factors – lower education, income, class, less available time – are linked to lower political participation and influence (Brady et al., 1995). One of the most influential factors for effective participation is gender: women participate less in formal political processes, and are often underrepresented (Krook and Norris, 2014; Lorenzini and Bassoli, 2015). Party members who have care responsibilities, less disposable time or financial resources, were found to be less likely to engage in party activities (Koschmieder and Datts, 2015). Those with more financial resources and better education are in turn more likely to engage

(Lijphart, 1997), while women and members of lower social classes (or with a lower class habitus) are less likely to participate (Meßmer and Banaszczuk, 2013).

Even though participation processes are supposedly gender-neutral, they are often underpinned by assumptions based on men, or male bodies, leading to practical exclusion of women, as what inhibits their participation is simply disregarded (Acker, 1990). Although women tend to be less active in formal types of participation (Jensen, 2013; Kersting, 2014), some studies (Brock et al., 2010; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010) found that women participate online, at least in terms of expressions of opinions, indicating the potential of technology to overcome these inequalities.

Beyond socio-demographic factors, democratic values and participation preferences influence who participates: a positive attitude towards democratic values makes potential participants more likely to engage (Chang, 2017). This positive attitude is in turn positively influenced by internet use: more active users are more likely to have a positive attitude, and are therefore more likely to engage. In France, Gibson et al. (2017) found that online participants were more critical of democratic processes than average citizens. Attitudes and values also play a role with regards to gender: A traditional gender ideology makes women less likely to engage politically offline (Krook and Norris, 2014; Lorenzini and Bassoli, 2015). Participants rights' preference (Marshall, 1950) moderates their level of activity: Those who favour political rights, related to the democratic process, participate more overall, while those who favour social rights, related to social justice, are more active in non-institutionalised contexts (Oser and Hooghe, 2018). The effect of attitudes is contradicted by Galais & Anduiza (2016), who found that efficacy or political interest had no measurable effect on participation.

Preferences for democratic principles have been shown to influence not only participation, but also preferences in tool design, as different democratic values lead to different interpretations of challenges with online participation, and different preferred solutions to these challenges. Where technological systems are required for democratic processes, the developers of these systems can have strong influence on the process (Bieber, 2014), as their values and preferences are reflected in their design (Bozdag and van den Hoven, 2015). Beyond these baseline findings, the degree to which democratic values and perceptions influence participation, specifically online participation, as well as how these preferences can be measured and implemented in online participation tools and processes, is not yet well researched.

2.2.   Online Participation and the Digital Divide

Online participation solutions have been developed for all of the above discussed participation contexts. Deliberation is enabled through tools such as online forums (Wright and Street, 2007) or

argument mapping (Spada et al., 2014), and voting through a multitude of different applications (e.g. Agre, 2002; Blum and Zuber, 2015), all of which can be used by either all members of the polity (e.g. all party members can respond to a survey), or by representatives (e.g. the virtual assembly held by the Green Party (Westermayer, 2003)). Kolleck (2014) argues that there are trade-offs of inequalities when using online participation in municipalities, such as discussing complex topics with few specialised, or open questions with more less informed participants. It is also not necessarily efficient: An analysis of the UK e-petitions system showed that 99% of e-petitions never reach any significant amount of signatures (Margetts et al., 2014).

2.2.1.   Development of Digital Divide Research

A major problem for inclusive participation online is the exclusivity of the technology. Democratic processes should be accessible for everyone, to enable equal participation opportunities. The concept of the digital divide suggests that this is not the case online. The access divide – whether or not people have access to the internet at all – is the oldest, and first level of the digital divide, where binary access or non-access to the internet is seen as the key differentiator. Sylvester & McGlynn (2010) found that people who access the internet more frequently from their home were far more likely to conduct complex political participation (e.g. contacting government officials), both on- and offline. The second level of the digital divide concerns the actual use of the internet, which differs depending on skills (van Deursen et al., 2011). These are, in turn, mediated by existing – offline – inequalities. The third level of the digital divide, now referred to as digital inequality, concerns the benefits derived from internet use: It is more beneficial for those already better off, as they have better skills, access to technology or more disposable time to learn (Hargittai, 2008; van Deursen and Helsper, 2015).

Along all these lines, online participation can be exclusive: Existing inequalities mediate internet access, use, and benefits gained from that use. The concept of capitals can be used to explain these differences. The different types of capital – social, cultural, or financial – can be used to gain maximum benefits from internet use. Naturally, the more capital there is to use, the more interest it pays in terms of benefits. Since disadvantaged groups do not have access to large amounts of either forms of capital, they stay disadvantaged when they use the internet. This is how Halford et al. (2010) argue social inequalities are reproduced in the use of the web: not everyone has access, and those who do, derive unequal benefits from it. It increases power for some, for example global media corporations, or talented 'geeks', but reproduces existing inequalities of those with less cultural or economic capital.

Zhang (2010) argues that technical capital, as a subset of cultural capital, is needed for participation online. It is linked to social and financial capital, and as with the other forms of

capital, they can be converted into technical capital (e.g. learning from friends or paying for training). Brock et al. (2010) argue that the definition of technical capital itself can be exclusive, when it is measured based on the 'norm' of white male users. They found that minorities can also successfully use technical capital to construct their shared identity online and thus promote diversity.

Unequal distribution of capital leads to unequal participation, both online and offline. Internet use can increase social capital, as well as political participation, but the effect is stronger for those with more proficient skills (Gibson et al., 2000). Jensen (2013) argues that participation online requires higher education than participation offline, since more skills are required. At the same time, a higher level of education increases the motivation for individuals to participate online. However, less educated persons have been found to be more likely to express themselves politically online, by either email or signing petitions, because this form of participation requires less capital (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010).

There are two other things to consider with regards to online participation: security and accountability (Lachenmayer et al., 2012). The performance of analogue forms of participation does not require any tools beyond pen and paper. The voting process is observable, because members of the polis can witness the count of votes and are thus able to retrace how a decision has been made, and determine whether it has been tempered with. In electronic participation, this changes, since a certain amount of understanding of the technology is required in order to retrace how decisions came about. Members of the polis with technical knowledge are therefore privileged, and those without these skills have to trust those who have them. This can make abuse easier, and thus delegitimize the process.

The legal basis for as well as moral expectations around voter accountability are very particular in Germany. Anonymous votes are paramount, and any form of link between voters and votes is considered unacceptable. Where in the UK accountability is ensured through numbered poll cards, so that votes cast can be traced back to the individual voter if required – rare as that occurrence may be – in Germany, the anonymity of voters is deemed more important, and a retrospective identification of voters is not accepted under any circumstances (Jarass and Pieroth, 2009, Art. 38, nn 10 & 16). Therefore, online voting is even more complicated in Germany than in the UK, where some parties, such as the Pirate Party UK, are already using online votes on a regular basis.

To date, despite all the possibilities proclaimed, and some advances in social movements (Margetts et al., 2015), institutional politics have not changed through the internet (Van Dijk, 2013), and its primary use in democratic context is still the distribution of information, especially

through Social Media (Gibson and Ward, 1998; Lusoli et al., 2002; Hohmann and Faas, 2014; Marchetti, 2014). However, more and more parties in Germany are attempting to use the internet for participation, not least motivated by the success of the Pirate Party around 2010 (Bieber, 2014; Hanel and Marschall, 2014; Thuermer et al., 2016). This exacerbates the need to understand the effects these online processes can have.

2.2.2.   Factors in the Digital Divide

The digital divide in Germany has been documented by a panel study spanning internet adoption in the years 2001 to 2009 (Emmer et al., 2011). It showed that a 'silent majority' (roughly 50% of the population) do not engage politically online, and only a small group (about 15%) dubbed 'digital citizens' communicate politically exclusively online. The largest explanatory factor for online communication was found to be habit: Every change to behaviour requires effort, therefore individuals stick to what they are used to, unless there is a good reason to change. Such reasons are unlikely to exist in areas that do not have a high priority – and political communication is not that relevant for most people (Vowe, 2014).

The most common, albeit on its own also too simplistic division in terms of socio-demographic factors is seen in age, famously differentiating between 'digital natives', as persons who grew up using the internet, and 'digital immigrants', who learned to use it at an older age (Prensky, 2001). This view is supported, for example by Powell et al. (2012), who found that seniors are less trusting, both in technology as well as the ease of acquiring the skills to use it, than young adults. Jensen (2013) found that younger persons are more active through the internet, and thus easier to recruit online than offline. However, retired persons do use the internet, for example through incentives to communicate with their family. They create their own use-cases, adopting online practices to add to, supplement, or replace their previous practices based on personal preferences (Quan-Haase et al., 2016). They use it differently than 'typical' users, but they do use it. This may be seen as a disadvantage by younger generations, but it is not necessarily so – this assumption might just be a normative view of how the internet *should* be used, making deviation from this ideal appear insufficient (Lutz and Hoffmann, 2017). Kania-Lundholm and Torres (2015) highlighted that age may also be an advantage, as older ICT users are more experienced in the use of technology and have more life experience to inform how they engage.

There is a growing body of evidence that age alone does not determine digital exclusion. While it is often linked to skills, there are also other factors at play. Yates et al. (2015) argue that class contributes to the digital divide independent of age: Those who are disadvantaged with regards to any form of capital remain disadvantaged regardless of age. This is supported by Olsson et al. (2019), who find that available resources fluctuate, and decrease with age. Both conclude that

overcoming the digital divide will not be achieved by waiting for the current young to become the future old users. Olsson et al. (2019) raise the issue of hardware maintenance in this context: if modern devices are not frequently updated or even replaced, they will become unusable, leading to exclusion of those who lack the financial or cultural capital to stay up-to-date. If resources decrease with old age, so will IT skill and use. This is further supported by Van Deursen et al. (2011), who argue that, just like hardware, skills need to be constantly updated. The acquisition of these skills is linked to educational attainment, meaning that those who have lower education are less likely to stay up-to-date with their IT skills, even if they have higher skills at some point in their life. Consequently, the digital divide is unlikely to disappear by itself, because people grow less literate over time.

The notion of digital 'natives' and 'immigrants' (Prensky, 2001) as the main difference in internet use has been challenged, suggesting that 'digital residents' and 'visitors' were a better comparison, as it is more important whether people use the internet frequently or occasionally, rather than at which age they learned it (White and Le Cornu, 2011). A preferable view is to open this division up, not only focussing on age, or use, but on a wider set of skills under the umbrella of 'digital literacy' (Eshet-Alkalai, 2004). One particular set of skills required for digital literacy are IT skills. These can be taught, but are mainly acquired through self-learning, and once individuals have gained an initial understanding of the technology, learning more becomes progressively easier. However, this first acquisition of basic skills requires either initial interest or a necessity to learn (Ferro et al., 2007). People who never had this necessity or interest are thus less likely to participate online. On the other hand, acquiring these skills also requires opportunities to do so, which are again unequal based on available capitals: Even among adolescents, IT skills were found to differ, as those with limited resources had less opportunity to learn either by themselves or from others (Eynon and Geniets, 2016).

Exactly how the skills required for successful use of ICT are defined is still being investigated. Self-reported skills, often used in surveys, do not necessarily reflect actual skill level, as they are prone to reflect the Dunning-Kruger effect: Those with lower skills may not be aware of their lack, while those with more skills are unaware of their advantage (Kruger and Dunning, 1999). Self-reported skills are also biased based on participants' gender, with women regularly underestimating their own abilities (Helsper and Eynon, 2013; Martínez-Cantos, 2017).

The use of social media makes the differences in online participation visible. There are diverse views on what constitutes 'political participation' online, but that posting or discussing political content on social media is one way of participation seems to be a consensus (Loader and Mercea, 2011; Hohmann and Faas, 2014; Vissers and Stolle, 2014; Choi and Shin, 2016). Social media has large potential for democratic deliberation, but this potential is realised mostly by "white, wealthy

males to the exclusion of other identities" (Loader and Mercea, 2011, p. 758). Rather than opening the political sphere up to new groups, people who are already politically engaged use social media to improve on work they already do, leading to a reinforcement effect.

In their analysis of internet adoption in Germany, Vowe (2014) found that 'digital citizens' are primarily men in their mid-twenties, with university education, no children and low income. They argue that age is especially relevant for internet use, because habits form with age, and the younger people are when they start using the internet, the more likely they are to form their habits around it. Internet use alone does not suggest use for political participation though. What points towards that is the correlation of high levels of education with political interest, which would not only make digital citizens more likely to use the internet, but also more likely to use it for political communication. Especially important for the context of democratic participation, this group values freedom over equality. This could mean that the stance towards equality in participation of this 'new elite' leaves a mark on online participation, potentially making it less equal.

On the other hand, online spaces have also been widely used by feminists and women's movements to mobilise, form communities, and participate in public discourse, e.g. through blogs (Keller, 2012), but also to mobilise offline activism (Knappe and Lang, 2014). The web has contributed significantly to contemporary feminisms, which have used it to enable activism both online and offline (Chamberlain, 2017). Feminist online activities however are also subject to the digital divide and suffer from lack of resources and skills (Fotopoulou, 2016).

Another factor for online participation are networks, which is closely linked to participants' place of residence. At its baseline, this looks like an issue of access: Rural areas have lower broadband connectivity in comparison to urban areas, and therefore overall lower internet speeds, according to the German ministry for infrastructure (BMVI, 2016). Riddlesden & Singleton (2014) also found evidence for a rural / urban divide, where rural areas, albeit having more consistent broadband speeds, deal with overall slower connections. Socially deprived urban areas on the other hand had the highest connection rates – the authors argue this is due to the population density, requiring more access points, thereby making overall access faster. Philip *et al.* (2017) further argue that people living in rural areas are very much aware of just how excluded they are, and that although they would like to do things online, the available infrastructure is not sufficient to enable them to participate.

Reflecting Jennings *et al.* (2017) findings of local divisions in the UK, Blank et al. (2018) found that location differences could be fully explained through demographic differences: Age, education and occupation were better predictors of internet use than location. However, there is a question

of cause and effect: Correa and Pavez (2016) found that rural areas are influenced by young people moving out, which means that they cannot act locally as "agents of change", to foster internet adoption. Further, the type of job dominant in an area drives adoption – manual workers use the internet less than people working in start-ups or tourism. Lower internet speeds in rural areas in turn lead to less companies settling there, meaning less available jobs (BMVI, 2016). Consequently, the lower internet connectivity in rural areas could be one of the causes of young and better educated people leaving those areas.

This is problematic for participation on multiple levels. At its baseline, it will be hard to use online participation tools which may assume a faster internet speed for their functionality. It is harder for the 'left-behind' lower-skilled members to find help with these tools if the younger, and more skilled, members are moving to the urban centres. More crucial though, personal networks remain important online. Especially in instances of intense participation, as personal affiliations are used to filter the flow of information – e.g. emails are only read if the sender is known (Nielsen, 2009). Davidson & Poor (2018) have shown that smaller local networks, such as in rural areas, also lead to less support on online platforms, because the locally acquired social capital directly influences the social capital that can be drawn upon online. Thus, local networks influence not only the potential learning, but also the effect online participation can have.

2.3.   Participation in Political Parties

Parties fill a variety of functions in society, such as participation (through citizens, members, candidates), transmission (aggregate and communicate positions), selection (of leadership / candidates), integration (of different interests in society), socialisation (teaching democracy through practice), and legitimacy (of the democratic system through process) (Koch et al., 2014). Parties are arenas in which their members can deliberate and decide on preferences, in a closed, but otherwise unrestricted forum (Cohen, 2003). They do not only aggregate views of their members, but actively process this information, and help to create consensus in the portion of society that is their member or voter base. As such, parties are a crucial part of the democratic process, an important intermediary that cannot be replaced by technology (Agre, 2002). Research around political parties has investigated how they function, make decisions and interact with their members, how much power members have, and how they both influence and are influenced by the polity (Pedersen, 1982; Katz and Mair, 1995; Lucardie, 2007; Korte, 2012; Decker and Neu, 2013; Meßmer and Banaszczuk, 2013; Niedermayer, 2015).

Parties can be categorised by their form of organisation, their policies, or their behavioural norms, as well as their clientele and decision-making processes. Gunther & Diamond (2003) use their organisational form as a primary identifier to determine the genus of a party, and differentiate

five types of parties, which evolved in chronologic order: elite-based, mass-bases, ethnicity-based, electoralist, and movement parties. Each genus has a set of species, which are determined by the other criteria: policies, behavioural norms, clientele and processes.

Elite-based parties are formed around a local elite or elite-network, and aim to create benefits for their clientele. Mass-based parties are defined by a large, active member base and affiliations with many different organisations, such as trade unions. Movement parties are the youngest species, and seen as a hybrid between a movement and a party. They are based on grassroots-principles, and do not have strong formal structures or hierarchies. They often remain ideologically and organisationally connected to the movement they evolved from. The activist background of their members influences the structure of the party, which maximises the influence of active party members. In practice, this leads to these parties using imperative mandates, rotation, and separation of office and mandate. Strong leaders and professionalization are opposed, as they would weaken the hold of the activists over the party (Gunther and Diamond, 2003).

Gunther & Diamond see the time during which the party was founded as partly determining the species of the party. Its founding context influences the effectiveness and features of the party, because it

> *"comes into existence within a specific social and technological context that may evolve over time, and this 'founding context' can leave a lasting imprint on the basic nature of the party's organization for decades to come."* (2003, p. 173)

The definition of a movement party clearly applies to the Green Party, as Rihoux & Frankland (2008) have demonstrated. However, they also argue that as it evolved due to internal circumstances, the party has moved away from the ideal type, and is seen in-between the movement and elite party type today.

While parties act as intermediaries between different groups in society, party members are intermediaries between voters and representatives, and thus add legitimacy to the democratic system (Cohen, 2003; Decker, 2013). By selecting candidates, and standing for elections with manifestos proposing selected policies, parties enable the democratic system: they are open to members, who vote for candidates, who stand at elections, and are accountable to their party and voters. This reduces transaction costs and enables collective action in a democracy (Müller, 2000). Parties further reduce transaction costs for citizens, by proactively approaching them to discuss politics when they canvass for elections. This engages citizens with very little effort for themselves, and has been shown to not only increase voter turnout, but political engagement overall (McClurg, 2003; Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 2007).

Party membership has declined consistently since the 1980s, potentially as a result of the individualisation in society at large (Mair and van Biezen, 2001). Grasso (2014) argues, that political participation and the repertoires of actions used by any one generation primarily depends on the way in which they were politically socialised – and since there was less political turmoil in the 80s than in the 60s, there was simply less reason for younger generations to take political action. This would explain both the ageing membership of political parties as well as their overall decline in numbers. While party membership declines, informal associations with parties become more frequent, and supporters campaign for their party without taking out formal membership (Bale and Webb, 2015).

Participation processes are largely responsible for stabilising democracy (Fishkin, 1997). Reliable procedures yield legitimacy: only when a process has been followed and its outcome cannot be challenged, can the results be accepted as binding (Wilhelm, 1999). The process itself has to be accepted as fair and legitimate as well – indeed more so than the actual decision. Even unpopular decisions can be accepted if the process by which they were made is perceived as legitimate (Leggewie, 2011). On the other hand, if a process is not perceived to be democratic, for example because it requires voting through delegates instead of members, in a group that highly values direct participation, or requires the use of a technology that not all members have access to, the process will in itself not be perceived as legitimate (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979). This is especially true for the adoption of online processes. They can only be successful if party members can accept the process itself as legitimate and in line with their democratic ideals. When new participatory processes are crated, these participation preferences need to be considered in the process design, to achieve or maintain legitimacy of their results (Thuermer et al., 2016).

Party members should have a role that differs from the general public, as otherwise the value of membership is undermined (Bolleyer et al., 2015). Cantijoch et al. (2015) found that members who are involved in a party context are less likely to participate in other non-institutionalised ways (e.g. signing online petitions). Online platforms also offer new forms of engagement with parties that do not even require membership, as political messages can be supported from the outside (Gibson et al., 2017). This increases the need for parties to develop online participation processes, to provide members with the kind of participation opportunities that they expect internally.

Parties that do not use a representative system were found to discriminate certain groups in their decision-making process. In the Pirate Party Germany, which prides itself in their use of general members' rather than delegate assemblies, single parents were underrepresented, while members who lived closer to events or had a higher income and more time were more likely to participate and better prepared, and thus had more influence on the decisions made

(Koschmieder and Datts, 2015). However, representative systems are not a perfect ideal either. Lijphart (1997) argues that there is a negative correlation between voter turnout and participation of disadvantaged constituents: The lower the turnout, the more influence better-off individuals have. Social movements have developed some techniques to overcome these issues of inequality for their assemblies, such as the 'progressive stack', a way to order speakers' lists to support typically underrepresented speakers (Roth et al., 2014).

The role of delegates may be either that of a representative, who forms their own view and acts in their constituents' best interest (even if constituents disagree), or that of a proxy, whose role it is to aggregate the views of their constituents and vote as they would (Burke, 1975). Thus, delegates can, depending on the system, be closer to direct than representative decision-making. The Green Party Germany uses a delegate system on national level, where representatives are elected at the local level to attend assemblies of the higher party branches. Although they discuss the proposals with their local branch members, they are free to use their own judgment for decisions at the assembly.

Institutional politics fosters professionalization, leading to elites. Following Michels' (1911) 'iron law of oligarchisation', the party elite has a tendency to distance itself from the party, and prioritise the protection of their own power over the achievement of the party's goals. Such elites are one reason for young people not to engage in traditional (party) politics, and lead to 'two worlds' of participation, where alternative political activities draw in younger groups, which have less efficacy than formal organisations and parties (Busse et al., 2015). Parties adopt a variety of online tools to support their administrative and participatory processes. Internet technology makes it easier for them to reach a younger audience (Gibson et al., 2004), and to make their administrative processes, such as data collection through online forms, more efficient (Heimrich, 2013). Participatory processes include online discussions, collaborative development of manifestos, or opinion polls. Although this variety suggests a major shift in opportunities for political participation, Jackson & Lilleker (2009) found that parties seek to maintain control over what happens on their internet platforms, and use the internet to inform supporters, rather than interact with them.

Parties in Germany have no obligation to be accessible to everyone – they are focussed on their members, whom they can select as they wish (Political Parties Act, 2004, s. 10), and potential constituents. Their goals are to win elections, to fill public offices, or to enact their political manifestos (Müller and Strøm, 1999). These goals can be partially at odds with one-another. Lilleker (2005) found that parties in the UK adopt marketing strategies to target specific voters. As they do this, their policy decisions are increasingly influenced (if not dictated) by necessities of this 'voter market', which leads to more centralised decision-making, disempowers members, and

alienates both supporters and members. Similar developments have been observed in Germany (Schweitzer, 2008).

The processes by which party members in Germany can influence decisions are very well documented – and they have to be, because having statues that lay out how decisions are made and how members can participate is required by law (Political Parties Act, 2004). The Political Parties Act further stipulates that members' assemblies are the highest decision-making body, from which all powers are derived. However, apart from this stipulation, the law is not specific in how exactly decisions need to be made, only that they need to be made "democratically". The processes parties use are decided by their national assembly, and depend on their history, internal culture, and capabilities (Korte, 2012).

Some decisions, such as changes to the manifesto, merging with other parties, or the dissolution of the party, must be taken by specific bodies, such as the members' or delegates' assembly, or a general members' vote. For all other decisions, parties have to define who is involved in which decision, and how they exercise this power (Political Parties Act, 2004, s. 9). Smith describes two stages in citizen participation processes: "initial agenda-setting and final decision-making – i.e. who is able to exercise power to influence the subject or scope of participation and who has decision-making power?" (Smith, 2005, p. 17). This separation can also be applied to political parties, with the members at large being involved in generating proposals for manifesto changes and electing their delegates, who then attend the respective assembly to make the actual decision. Most parties hardly make a difference between how they communicate and interact with supporters or voters, and members (Jackson and Lilleker, 2009; Heimrich, 2013).

As Freeman (1970) points out, for equal participation opportunities to be possible, rules need to be formalised. The formalisation of processes is achieved through the parties' (branch) statutes. Parties are typically structured hierarchically; the German law requires them to have an executive board, which is elected for each branch of the party. Branches usually follow the borders of states and constituencies, and each branch gives itself statutes and a manifesto. Aside from the regulated structure, the formalisation of the decision-making processes differs strongly between parties, not only in terms of voting rules, but also in terms of proposal development, consensus-finding, attendance to and running order of assemblies, and the use of technology.

German parties receive financial support, regulated through Part IV of the Political Parties Act. All parties who achieve more than 1% of the votes in either state or national elections receive funds for their campaigns. The amount they receive is proportional to the votes they gained, and capped at their own income through donations and fees: A party can only gain as many funds from the government subsidies as they have raised themselves. Saalfeld (2007) describes that

parties therefore have no financial hierarchy whereby resources are controlled from the top and distributed to the lower ranks, making them less prone to oligarchic control. Simultaneously, the strong role of parliamentary groups prevents an over boarding influence from internal bureaucracy. However, Rahat et al. (2008) found that participation, competition and representation are competing values in parties' selection processes, and that not all of them can be maximised simultaneously: more democratic participation does not lead to more representative candidates.

How participation is perceived depends on the understanding of participation held by party members (Korte, 2012), which are then embedded in decision-making processes (Thuermer, 2015). The way in which parties make decisions is thus imprinted by their history and culture. Changing this culture is no easy feat, as the factors that lead to successful participation are the same that lead to success in the party as a whole: money, time, and networks (or social, economic and cultural capital) (Meßmer and Banaszczuk, 2013). An imbalance is thus inherent to the system.

2.4.   Effects of Online Participation

There are three commonly referenced effects of the introduction of new technology in participation processes: Mobilisation, reinforcement, and replacement. Mobilisation theory argues that as more participation opportunities become available, more people will participate (Norris, 2001). Participation becomes broader or more diverse as new participants are drawn into the process. For a political party, this can either mean activating previously passive members, or recruiting new members altogether. Reinforcement theory on the other hand argues that, as new online participation methods become available, these are picked up by those who are already active, thus reinforcing their existing advantage (Margolis et al., 1997; Lusoli et al., 2002). A third, not as frequently discussed option is replacement, which is also referred to as normalisation (Ward et al., 2003; Jensen, 2013). This poses that as new online participation methods become available, those who are already active change their behaviour, and do things online that they would previously have done offline. I argue that one more possible effect should be considered: Non-use, for instances where members simply don't adopt new participation technologies at all. These are underpinned by Actor-Network Theory (ANT). I will discuss and define ANT and each of these effects in turn, and then describe how I combine them in the Differentiated Online Participation Effects-model (DOPE-model) I developed.

2.4.1.   Actor-Network Theory

Actor-Network Theory is an approach developed by Law, Latour and Callon from sociology of science (Latour, 1987; Law and Callon, 1992). Varieties of science and technology studies include the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) (Pinch and Bijker, 1984), which argues that the way technology is adopted depends on a mixture of involved social groups and closure mechanisms, or ANT, which considers both humans and technology as actors that constitute one-another in a network of actions.

ANT does not try to explain *why* social effects occur, but *how* they come about. At the heart of ANT are heterogeneous networks, composed of human and non-human actors. They are agency networks, meaning that they only exist while they are enacted. Effects of these networks arise through interaction between human and material actors. Every actor can in turn be seen as a network of all the things that influence or enable their actions. Being in action changes the way a network looks. Consequently, there may be different networks to describe the same thing or effect from different points of view. Punctualisation or black boxing of parts of action-networks is used to reduce their complexity (e.g. 'the government' rather than all the parts that make it up). The application of the theory to empirical observations – the process by which actors of different types are drawn together into one network, building an ontology of all actors that are involved in interactions – is called translation (Law 1992; Law 2009). Law and Callon (1992) have demonstrated the approach in a case study, showing how different networks can exist simultaneously and overlap one-another. Local networks are needed for the use of resources, a global network for the supply of resources, and an 'obligatory point of passage' to enable control over these networks.

A concept developed by Star & Griesemer (1989), supplements the 'classic' ANT design by Law, Latour and Callon, and allows to view a situation from multiple angles at once (rather than building one network for each viewpoint), and adds 'boundary objects' at the intersections between these viewpoints. "Boundary objects are both adaptable to different viewpoints and robust enough to maintain identity across them" (1989, p. 1). They exist in multiple worlds, or networks, simultaneously, and mean different things to different people, while their definitions overlap sufficiently to stabilise the relation between the fields that they bind together.

The core assumption of ANT – that both human and non-human actors contribute to the complex interactions that make up social processes – is crucial to the DOPE-model that I am introducing. If online tools themselves are considered to be actors, then their addition to an existing environment will change the composition of this environment, and influence the actions of and interactions between the other – human – actors involved. The performativity of Actor-Networks

– they exist through and are perpetuated only by actions – makes ANT an ideal lens through which to observe the performance and effects of participation. Like Actor-Networks, participation only exists through action. Non-action generally means non-participation, although non-participation may in some instances be an action in itself (see 2.4.5 below).

ANT is an ideal lens through which to observe the network that is involved in participation within the Green Party. Because ANT allows to look at all levels of this network simultaneously, it enables me to make explicit who or what the relevant actors in these networks are: Party members, party leaders, technicians, and the tools they use (nor not). It can show how both with human and nun-human actors interact and co-construct the participation processes, what their 'preferences' are and how they influence one-another. It enables me to find out how things work, and how this changes while processes are enacted. I use Actor-Networks to identify how the introduction of online participation tools shifts existing processes and relationships, and visualise how the new participation processes change participation itself. This allows me to identify which actors are involved, what their roles are at each stage, and how actors and roles change over time as new participation processes are rolled out.

I do not, however, use the full extent of ANT: I use it to be able to treat technology as actors. I observe the actor-network from a top-down perspective, gradually uncovering layers through the party hierarchy and relevance of tools and processes. I blackbox the actors at a level of detail that is sufficient to compare the different processes. In that, I apply ANT merely to understand the actors on a basic level, rather than drilling down into the detail of every single interaction as more classical ANT studies would. While a more granular analysis of the exact actors and actions would be extremely interesting, and may yield even very interesting insights indeed, it is not feasible to do this for three processes simultaneously.

2.4.2. Mobilisation

Mobilisation is understood as the attraction of new members, or, more relevant for the context of this work, the generation of more activity from existing, but inactive members. Organisations may attempt to mobilise their member base in general, or target specific underrepresented groups. Lusoli et al. (2002) described this as an 'equalisation'-effect, equalising the powers of members and groups within political organisations, and point out that the use of the internet may make "challenging the power of the dominant political players" (p. 93) easier, due to the lack of gatekeepers online. Ward et al. (2002) described this effect as "widening participation", and saw a specific opportunity to involve "the house-bound, such as the elderly, single parents and the disabled" (p. 202). They predicted a deepening of participation based on the opportunities in the late '90s, which were limited to emails, websites and intranets. Party members could use these

routes to communicate their views to the party elite, which could in turn help to bridge the gap between grass-roots and elites, and enable smaller groups to increase their political capital by reaching larger audiences.

Kerr & Waddington (2014) asked in their study about the introduction of online branches in a workers union, whether these new "e-forms of activity [would] attract new groups to participate or merely add a further medium of participation for already active members?" They found that by motivating inactive members to become active, organisations can increase diversity in their decision-making, especially where under-represented groups are concerned – women's participation increased, though this process was very slow. However, this online process was very resource-intensive, as all forms of participation offered (newsletters, websites, and fora) were only used consistently if they were well maintained.

For the German population, Emmer et al. (2011, p.161) found that political participation slightly increased with the rise of the internet, but there was no significant mobilisation of previously politically inactive citizens. Some online activities may be more mobilising than others, as was shown by Cantijoch et al. (2015), who found in the UK that online news consumption lead to a 'step-wise' increase in other participation categories: those who read political news online were more likely to discuss politics with friends and family online - and only online. However, online news consumption was the only activity that had an effect on political activity. Vissers et al. (2012) came to a similar conclusion in a study of Belgian university students' online use: while online activities mobilised further online behaviour, offline activities mobilised offline behaviour, with little to no effects across mediums. This is contradicted by findings from Galais & Anduiza (2016), who found in their longitudinal study of Spanish citizens with internet access that there is an effect between online and offline activities: more institutionalised online forms of participation, such as signing petitions, also increased engagement in offline participation methods.

Another aspect of mobilisation might be seen in its potential disadvantages: Many things that are criticised in direct participation are also true for mobilisation: If new members are drawn into participatory processes, they may be less experienced, and therefore more prone to populistic influence (Smith, 2005). Furthermore, online deliberation in comments on news magazine websites has been shown to decrease respect for others and increase hate speech (Kersting, 2012).

I argue that it is more likely for a mobilisation effect to be visible within a party than within the wider population, since party members have already demonstrated a stronger interest in political activity, as otherwise they would not be members in the first place.

2.4.3.   Reinforcement

When an organisation offers new forms of participation, even if it happens with a goal to mobilise new or inactive members, these participation opportunities will also be picked up by existing active members. When already active members use these new participation opportunities to enhance their participation, their activity can intensify. This can not only lead to (further) over-representation of this highly active group, but also shift power relations between these groups, if one of them adopts the new participation forms to a greater extent than another. This can lead to an intensification of existing divides, following the introduction of new participation opportunities, which is described as reinforcement.

The term 'reinforcement' has been used in varying contexts and with different definitions. Margolis et al. (1997) seem to have used it first, to refer to the replication of power structures when parties adopt internet technology. However, their focus was very much on information sources and gatekeepers, rather than direct participation for members. They concluded that drastic changes to the political system through the internet are possible but unlikely, because those with most funds will dominate this new space, thus replicating the existing power balance. Agre (2002) criticizes that reinforcement theory is based on a normative view of participation, and applies whenever a new technology does *not* make participation broader.

Norris (2001) further developed the theory, and while investigating the claim that new online participation opportunities could either reinforce or mobilise citizens' participation, found only evidence for reinforcement, as only those who were already politically active also used the internet for political participation. The same effect was described by Lusoli et al. (2002), as a result of the digital divide, and differences in resources between organisations or groups, which lead to a Matthew-effect ('The one who has will be given more'). For example, an online election in Germany held in 2001, in parallel to the state election in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, showed that those voting online were more likely to be male, higher educated, and younger than those voting offline (Kersting, 2014). Similarly, Spada *et al.* (2015) found that the introduction of online voting in participatory budgeting processes in Brazil significantly increased the voting turn-out, and included 8% of voters that would not have voted without the online process. However, those who were mobilised belonged to an already advantaged part of the society (male internet users with above average education and income), suggesting a reinforcement for that group, even though technically mobilising new participants. For political parties specifically, Gibson et al. (2017) found that, although online forms of participation can achieve more engagement, it did not engage a group that was more diverse than existing members. The same was found in the Green Party Germany, where Gerl et al. (2016) found that only already active members adopted a new online platform in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Following the mechanisms of the digital divide discussed above, if benefits and use of the internet are unequally distributed, and related to social, cultural and financial capital, then it appears likely that benefits and use of online participation tools will be more pronounced for groups who have more of these resources. Therefore, reinforcement seems to be a likely result of the introduction of online participation tool.

2.4.4.   Replacement

New opportunities to participate do not necessarily lead to change at all. It is perfectly possible for the new process to simply replace similar (e.g. offline) activities, that are still conducted by the same people and groups. This effect, which I will refer to as replacement (Jensen, 2013) is described with different terms and in different ways. Ward et al. (2002, 2003) found the effect in the way already predisposed new members joined the Liberal Democrats through the internet, rather than signing up with a party office, and concluded that the internet would not have any dramatic influence on the "socio-political order but rather will actually be absorbed and reproduce the existing biases" (Ward et al., 2003, p. 1). Gibson & Cantijoch found that "offline types of political engagement are re-emerging online" (2013, p. 714). Kerr & Waddington in their analysis of the introduction of online branches in UNISON found that these only replicated offline activity (2014).

Replacement could easily be confused with a form of reinforcement. In the example of the Green Party Germany, where Gerl et al. (2016, 2018) found that an online tool implemented at state level was only adopted by members who had already been active, they did note that this had no effect on the internal power structure. Members did not gain more influence, they simply changed their mode of participation, which in and of itself does not change the outcome.

Replacement can not only occur with regards to the medium, but also the mode of participation, for example when party members engage in internal rather than external activities (Cantijoch et al., 2015). The same happens for parties, who replicate their communication and campaigning efforts online, rather than generating new formats (Schweitzer, 2008).

2.4.5.   Non-Use

I argue that a fourth potential effect needs to be considered: Although non-use has been considered with regards to the internet in general, it has been neglected with respect to online political participation. For the internet in general, multiple reasons for non-use have been identified. Notably, Wyatt (2003) highlighted lack of access or necessity. Helsper & Reisdorf (2013) identified lack of skills or resources as the main obstacles to internet adoption, and distinguished

between external (e.g. access) and internal (e.g. interest) factors for non-use, or forced and voluntary digital exclusion. While forced exclusion was mainly due to lack of financial capital, voluntary exclusion seemed to be more related to cultural capital. Reisdorf & Groselj (2017) identified a positive attitude towards online technology as a key driver for adoption: Attitudes have a significant impact on adoption of online tools, with those who are positive about technology in general, and the internet as a tool in particular, being more likely to use it, while if attitude was negative, they were even stronger predictors of non-use than socio-demographic factors (Reisdorf and Groselj, 2017).

Gerl et al. (2018) identified several potential reasons for non-use of an online platform in one of the state branches of the Green Party Germany, with the most prevalent being neither technical nor design issues with the platform itself, but rather personal reasons such as lack of time. In that, non-use of online participation tools acts similar to non-participation in general.

Lutz & Hoffman (2017) argue that online participation in itself should not be seen as a normative value: neither is all participation necessarily positive, nor all non-participation negative. Some people may simply not want to engage online, while others do engage in a destructive manner. Their model is based on three factors: activity (does a person participate or not), agency (do they participate consciously / willingly or not), and social valence (is their (non-)participation a positive or negative contribution to the goal), leading to a set of participation profiles. This is shown in their framework for types of online participation, summarised in Table 1. In the case of the Green Party, the goal would be to encourage people in group D1 (those who could participate but choose not to) and enable those in group D2 (who cannot currently participate).

Table 1:   Typology of online (non-)participation

#	Name	Example	Activity	Agency	Valence
A1	Positive active participation	Ideal	+	+	+
A2	Negative active participation	Trolls	+	+	-
B1	Positive passive participation	Being invited	+	-	+
B2	Negative passive participation	Being tagged	+	-	-
C1	Positive active non-participation	Boycotts	-	+	+
C2	Negative active non-participation	Self-censoring	-	+	-
D1	Positive passive non-participation	Lurking	-	-	+
D2	Negative passive non-participation	Exclusion	-	-	-

Overview created from Lutz & Hoffman (2017)

With regards to use of online tools within political parties, members not using tools that have been implemented can be a problem because these tools cost considerable amounts of resources. Whether new tools are adopted by party members appears to be related to how they are introduced. This was demonstrated during the implementation of the Green Party's internal knowledge management platform *Wurzelwerk*, which was not adopted due to its perceived unintuitive interface (Heinrich and Spitz, 2014). This has had lasting effects on online participation in the party at large, which I will demonstrate in Chapter 4.

All of these aspects of and potential reasons for non-use should be considered and pre-empted when tools are developed, to enable and increase their adoption. The reasons for non-use can help to explain the other behaviours. Therefore, the DOPE-model considers non-use as one of several possible effects of the introduction of online participation processes, alongside mobilisation, reinforcement, and replacement.

2.4.6.   Introducing the 'Differentiated online participation effects-model' (DOPE-model)

Mobilisation and reinforcement are typically seen as opposites: a dichotomy, where the effect of a tool is either one or the other. However, Vissers & Stolle (2014) argue that these effects are not mutually exclusive, but can be observed simultaneously for different groups. In their study of online political participation of students in Canada, they found that internet use reinforced

existing advantages (those already politically active did more online), while also drawing a previously disengaged group into political conversations on social media. The mobilisation-reinforcement-spectrum still applies, but it is now applied by group, rather than generically.

The same effect has been observed by Kerr & Waddington (2014), in UNISON where online participation methods were introduced to replace some of the previous offline methods, and increase activity of under-represented groups, such as "women, ethnic minorities and those working on non-standard contracts" (p. 661). Both of these goals were achieved, but not as expected: Already active members quickly transferred some of their activity to the new participation platform, indicating a process of replacement, and the overall proportion of active members, and their respective activities, increased very slowly, indicating a low level of mobilisation over time. Ward et al. also found counterintuitive results in this area, stating that "the interactive and networking possibilities of the new media, which have excited the most attention, seem to be of least interest to members" (2002, p. 214). Rather than changing the intensity of their participation, participants may simply change its mode: Doing things online instead of offline, while not doing anything more or less than would have been done otherwise. Thus, replacement needs to be considered as a potential effect alongside mobilisation and reinforcement, especially where online processes directly replicate existing offline processes. If there is no different outcome, adoption alone cannot be seen as either mobilisation or reinforcement.

Similar effects could be expected in political parties, where, for example, previously inactive but highly-skilled members might be mobilised through the introduction of online participation, while previously active members might transfer some of their offline activity to the new platform, and younger active members use the new platform to intensify their participation and increase their influence on party decisions in the process. This would mean simultaneous mobilisation (of previously inactive members), reinforcement (of young members) and replacement (for active members).

If an organisation aims to introduce online participation opportunities for their members, in order to activate some of the inactive members, and ideally recruit new members as well, there is a danger that this step can backfire and already powerful groups instead intensify their advantage. This would be especially problematic in a case such as the Green Party Germany, with a strong commitment to grass-roots participation and equality, where a reinforcement effect may undermine the legitimacy of decisions. This is especially so when the new participation opportunities favour certain groups over others; for example, when members who are already active online gain larger benefits than those who just started to engage in the party.

There is a gap in current research surrounding the definition and combination of these four effects: Whether those who use online participation opportunities add these on top of everything else that they do, either from no previous participation, thus being mobilised, or from existing participation, thus reinforcing their benefits; or replace what they did before with an online opportunity; or indeed do nothing at all.

Mobilisation and reinforcement are similar in that they both raise activity levels, but one does so from a point of 'no participation' while the other does it from 'existing participation'. Mobilisation can only be positive, if the intention is that currently inactive or underrepresented members start to participate. If those who are mobilised are 'more of the same' who are already heavily engaged, mobilisation equals reinforcement. Replacement on the other hand means that one type is replaced by another. I argue that if the underlying power structures do not change, and thus neither the intensity nor the outcome of participation changes, this effect needs to be clearly distinguished from both mobilisation and reinforcement. This will allow for a clearer and more accurate picture of the effects of online participation to emerge. To differentiate between these effects, it is important to not only look at what members do, but what they did before, and what they do not do. While there are strategies to measure mobilisation and reinforcement, there is no coherent framework or method to distinguish the two, based on the described definitions.

Furthermore, if those who are well off replace their activities with online participation, and these online participation methods are less effective than what they previously did offline, this replacement may reduce their influence overall, and equalise the influence of marginalised groups. Online participation may thus not make the marginalised stronger, but the advantaged weaker. Effects like slacktivism, where low-level activity satisfies the need for participation without achieving actual results (Morozov, 2009), hint into this direction. In reverse, if offline methods are replaced with more effective online methods, replacement may free up time that can be re-invested into more, and more influential, participation, so that replacement leads to reinforcement.

While mobilisation is often framed as the goal – both by optimistic researchers and organisations – an argument could be made to make replacement a goal, rather than considering it as a side-effect. This would be better in line with adoption of online tools which are often expensive to implement, and hard to justify if they end up not being used, or worse, having an overall negative effect. Adoption could – and should – be a goal in itself, irrespective of who does the adopting.

Most models only consider inequalities in participatory processes by a variety of typically socio-demographic factors, such as skills, age, or time, and combine these with their effect on participation (Gibson et al., 2000; Norris, 2001), or how they affect influence (Kersting, 2014). But

reinforcement, as the confirmation of existing divides, is only *reinforcing* as such if something happens in addition to what is already there – if the effect on the outcome grows stronger. Replacement, on the other hand, implies that the same biases continue, but nothing else changes. One mode of participation is replaced by another, and the influence – the underlying inequalities or power structures – stay the same. Non-use on the other hand may go hand in hand with either of these effects – if one group adopts a new process, but another does not, then the adopters may be both mobilising and reinforcing their advantage – depending on whether they already have an advantage.

Recreating the same inequalities from offline in online participation does not by default reinforce advantages. Rather than treating reinforcement as the absence of mobilisation of underrepresented groups, reinforcement should imply that an effect gets stronger – either advantages or disadvantages are becoming more pronounced. This can be differentiated further, by looking at positive reinforcement (strengthening existing advantages) and negative reinforcement (strengthening disadvantages).

It seems futile to attempt to measure participation levels within a party's – or indeed, any – participation processes, without considering the effect this participation can have on actual decisions. If online participation processes have different possible outcomes than are possible offline, these possible outcomes themselves have to be considered in the evaluation of the effects. Actor-Networks can help to understand not only the changes in processes – or activities – but also in relationships between those actors, and potential outcomes of these activities. Only if the context of a participation process is considered is it possible to determine the nature of the effects it has.

The differences between the four effects lie in the starting point of the individual participants, the type of participation, the influence that participants have on the outcome of a process, and the potential effect of that process. Models that only consider what people *do* or *are* cannot capture the difference sufficiently. The main contribution that the model I develop in this thesis makes is the combination of the mode of participation (how it is done), its influence (the effect it has) and the underlying inequalities (the reasons for non-/participation). The DOPE-model that I introduce in this thesis, visualised in Figure 1, integrates all four possible effects into one model, and contextualises the effects using ANT. As indicated by the Venn-type overlaps, Mobilisation, Reinforcement and Replacement can occur simultaneously, while Non-Use indicates, if anything, reinforcement for users.

Figure 1:   Differentiated online participation effects-model (DOPE-model)

Mobilisation
- More participation opportunities lead to increased participation by previously inactive members

Reinforcement
- More participation opportunities lead to increased participation by already active members

Replacement
- New participation methods reproduce the existing status quo
- Neither the group of participating members nor the intensity of their participation change

Non-Use
- New participation opportunities are not used at all

Source: Own development

In summary, as it stands, participation is not equal regardless of whether it is conducted offline or online, and the question is not whether equal or democratic participation can be achieved online or offline, but whether adding online elements to existing offline processes can *improve the balance* between who does or does not participate. Four possible effects are considered: mobilisation, where more people are reached and therefore more people will participate (participation broadens); reinforcement, where existing divides become deeper due to perpetuation of differences; replacement, where new participation opportunities online recreate the existing status quo on a different medium; and non-use, where new tools are not adopted. The DOPE-model combines these four effects and contextualises those using Actor-Networks to allow a clear distinction between them. In the following chapters, I will use this model to analyse the effects of online participation processes in practice.

Chapter 3   Methodology

In this chapter I describe the mixed methods approach that is required to test the validity of the DOPE-model and answer the research questions. I begin with a justification for the choice of a case study in general, and the Green Party as the case in particular (3.1). I then briefly describe my own positionality in regards to the case study and the project in general, as well as how I accessed the field I am engaging with (3.2). I move on to describe the forms of data collection used (3.3): qualitative interviews, observations, and focus groups, as well as a series of surveys. I continue with a description of the analysis conducted on those data (3.4), spanning from thematic coding for the qualitative data, to chi-square tests, factor analysis, and linear and binary logistic regression models for the quantitative survey data. I conclude with a discussion of the ethical considerations for the project as a whole (3.5).

3.1.   Case Study

Eckstein argues that case studies can contribute to both theory building *and* testing. While they investigate individual cases, these cases are often black boxes containing a multitude of characteristics, and "one person's single individual may be another's numerous cases" (2000, p. 123). I am assessing one case but multiple tools within this case, thus allowing internal comparisons. Analysis is conducted with a combination of methods, thus allowing triangulation.

The project is based around a central case study of the Green Party Germany, which will be introduced in the next chapter. As noted in the introduction, in contrast to other German parties, decisions in the Green Party are largely made bottom-up. The party has a strong basis in grass-roots participation, and the party leadership has a strong interest in allowing and encouraging participation by the whole member base. This ideal includes allowing members to participate online. They are keen to expand the use of the internet in their participation processes, to give more opportunities to members, and ideally get more members involved. The party carefully considers possible sources of inequality when it comes to using online processes, and consequently, tackling the digital divide for their internal processes. If as many members as possible should participate, they need to be enabled to do this, and none should be excluded based on gender, skills, or resources (Kellner, 2015a).

Given these characteristics of the Green Party, it serves as a 'crucial', or 'most/least likely case': Given the commitment to grass-roots participation at all levels of the party, if online participation can be successful in any party, it should be successful here, where members want and expect to participate. If online participation fails here, this can give important indications to challenges that

need to be addressed, regardless of where such processes are introduced. The party is committed to the goal of mobilisation, and has the flexibility to experiment with their tools and processes to pursue this goal. Identifying mobilisation among the effects of the new online participation tools in the party would confirm that it is possible, while failure to find it would contribute evidence – at least under the given circumstances – to the contrary. With their consideration for in/equalities, an already high mobilisation of women, and their history of addressing especially gender inequalities through statutory instruments, the Green Party should be more aware of potential pitfalls in participation, and consequently less likely to inadvertently reinforce (dis-)advantages. Identifying reinforcement among the effects of the new online participation tools would indicate that this effect can occur regardless of commitments.

Following Flyvbjerg (2006), even though the case of the Green Party as well as the legal framework for parties in Germany is very specific, the results of the study can be used to generalise to the wider party, or organisational context. Within Germany, the Green Party is one of the most participatory parties. Starting from the most possible openness means that the same processes could easily be adapted to a more restricted context, for example by limiting participants to elected representatives. On the other hand, starting from the restricted legal framework in Germany, processes could be made easier by stripping away some of these restrictions, for example on binding online decisions. Thus, outside of Germany, the same processes could be used in a more open manner. Given the typical Western (capitalist democracy) society in Germany, the observed effects of online participation can be generalised to other Western countries.

3.2.   Access and Positionality

The topic of online participation is relevant to me personally due to my own experience. Between 2009 and 2014, I was an active politician in Germany, and spent two terms on the executive board of the Pirate Party Germany. The party was known as 'the internet party' at the time, and used online tools extensively. However, this has ultimately not been successful, and the party, despite their very technology-savvy members, failed to materialise the opportunities that the web had supposedly to offer. Participation was primarily online, and inherently unequal (Koschmieder and Niedermayer, 2015). The party was successful between 2010 and 2012, but then became divided, and lost members at a rapid rate, from just over 34,000 in 2012, to below 9,000 by 2018 ("Piratenreste," n.d.). It no longer holds any relevance in German politics today. This experience has motivated my research interest: To find out why this once promising political endeavour has failed, and how using the internet for participation can be successful.

I conducted a comparison between decision-making processes in the Pirate Party and Green Party Germany for my MSc thesis (Thuermer, 2015). After the conclusion of the MSc, I decided that the Green Party Germany would be the better case study to continue into the PhD, as it was clear from all I knew about both parties at that stage that the Green Party, though less tech-savvy, was more deeply committed to equality and solutions that work for all members, and I could be fairly certain that they would indeed implement new tools within the timeframe of my PhD (three years from 2015 to 2018). This turned out to be true: The Green Party has expanded on existing as well as introduced new processes, while the Pirate Party was mostly engaged in switching existing platforms off, and even considered their own dissolution in November 2018 (von Krella, 2018).

I had built contacts within the Green Party for my MSc research, as well as through my previous political engagement, which I was able to build and expand on, to establish this PhD project. Through my past role in the executive board of the Pirate Party, I was also able to build an extensive network among internet-savvy politicians, and make myself known among practitioners of digital politics. This personal network was not perceived as having a negative influence on the project, to the contrary, being known by the persons I wanted to research turned out to give me access that I likely would not have had otherwise.

I got in touch with a member of the party leadership whom I had interviewed for the MSc, sent along the MSc thesis which was meanwhile finished with a distinction, and suggested to work together more in the future. This got me a referral to the responsible member of the executive board – general secretary Michael Kellner – who agreed to meet, and in that first meeting agreed to support the project.

The project was initially intended to conduct action research, working with the party to develop participation methods, implementing, testing and improving them (Melin and Axelsson, 2007; Koch et al., 2014). This was not possible due to a severe delay in getting a contract draft written with the Research Support Team in Southampton, which meant that by the time the paperwork was completed, the party had already decided what they were going to develop and implement. Therefore, the focus changed to investigate how these developments would be perceived and adopted by party members, with regards to in- or exclusion, and at different levels of the party hierarchy.

The Green Party has been extremely supportive of the project, giving me access to their members to collect data through surveys, interviews, focus groups and observations. They contributed time of their staff, particularly the head of members' participation, who was my primary contact for the duration of the project. The party also covered costs and processing of the postal survey (see 3.3.3) and supported my fieldwork by supplementing my travel budget.

On the other hand, the party had only limited influence on the project itself. They had some suggestions to supplement my research questions – e.g. whether there is evidence of oligarchisation – which were compatible with my intended focus. There were very few instances where their engagement limited what I was able to do. One such case was the question of political orientation of their members. We had a serious discussion about my intention to ask members about their association to the party wings. I insisted on a question of this type being included, as political leaning was one of the main categories I assumed was relevant for participation, based on my initial qualitative data analysis. We ultimately agreed that rather than asking about party wings, the party would include the 11-point scale from left (1) to right (11) in their own section of the survey, as the response would be interesting to them as well. While this scale was shown to have some bias – respondents' position depends on what they associate with 'left' and 'right' (Bauer et al., 2017) – it is commonly used by German political research institute Infratest dimap[1], and thus using it allows comparisons with other datasets. Although I was able to convince the party to include this question, it was difficult to actually receive that data. When the survey was completed, we had another discussion about whether I would be able to get access to this question for my analysis. I finally obtained it after promising that I would only use this variable as a predictor, but not publish the results for this question on its own.

Nevertheless, the party has been extremely supportive and accommodating to all my requests, and has not interfered with any of my analysis or conclusions. Indeed, I was invited to present my results at multiple occasions (see 3.3.2) in order to enhance the internal discussions about participation. The findings I presented throughout were received eagerly, and fed into discussions and decisions about the future of the very tools I was researching, which ultimately brought the project back to an action-research like approach.

Finally, I would like to point out that I am not, and never have been, a member of the Green Party. I quit the Pirate Party in 2014, and have not had any personal political affiliation ever since. My role in the Green Party was that of an external observer or consultant, not an active participant.

3.3.   Data Collection

A mixed-methods approach was taken to investigate the research questions. The data collection was conducted in multiple steps, using different datasets:

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[1] https://www.infratest-dimap.de/en/

1. Qualitative assessment of the status quo before the implementation of new tools, using interviews and observations

    A: Participant Observation (general assembly, November 2016)

    B: Semi-structured Interviews (November 2016 – January 2017)

2. Multiple surveys to allow quantitative validation of qualitative results, and find evidence for or against different expected effects, at scale

    C1: Survey (all party members; April 2017)

    C2: Survey (all tool users; June 2017)

    C3a&b: Panel Surveys (November 2017 & June 2018)

3. Qualitative assessment of changes, using observations, interviews and focus groups, during and after the implementation of new tools

    D: Participant Observations (assemblies & workshops; April 2017 - September 2018)

    E: Semi-structured Interviews (November 2017 - March 2018)

    F: Focus Groups (January 2018)

The mix of qualitative and quantitative methods was necessary to address the research questions, because it allowed to address both the depth of members' individual views (through qualitative interviews and focus groups) and the breadth of the whole party (through surveys). Observations further allowed to assess the current practice and changes to that practice, as well as wider personal or institutional views concerning participation. The goal was to identify the range of views in the party through the initial set of interviews, then create surveys based on these in order to find out how the wider membership sees these issues. A focus group with grass-roots members gave insight into their perceptions, while interviews with the party elite allowed me to understand the differences in views between members and elite that would likely not come out in a survey, particularly as higher ranking members were assumed to be more likely to discuss their views honestly in a face-to-face conversation (Lilleker, 2003). The new participation tools were launched alongside my data collection, as shown in Table 2. Several papers based on this research were also published in this period, which may have had influence on the ongoing discussions in the party, especially concerning online participation of women.

Table 2:   Timeline of data collection and online process implementation

		2016				2017												2018									
		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Data Collection	A			▓																							
	B			▓	▓	▓																					
	C								1		2					3a							3b				
	D								1		2					3		4			5					6	
	E															▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓						
	F																	▓									
Implementation		*Befragung:* Social Justice		Decision B-01				Launch online verification	*Befragung:* Election campaign		First use online verification		Thuermer, 2017					Launch proposal tracking			Launch *Begehren*	*Thuermer et al.,* 2018			Thuermer, 2018		

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3.3.1. Conversations

Interviews were conducted in two phases: Dataset A was collected between November 2016 and January 2017, and Dataset E between November 2017 and March 2018. All interviews were transcribed, and then analysed using NVivo. An overview of all samples is given in Table 3, followed by a brief discussion of each step in the data collection.

Table 3: Overview of qualitative samples

	Dataset B Interviews 2016-17	Dataset E Interviews 2017-18	Dataset F Focus Group 2018
Sample Size	11	27	4
Year of first joining the party			
No member	-	2	-
1980s	2	2	-
1990s	2	5	1
2000s	4	13	2
2010s	3	5	1
Association with party wings			
No member	-	2	-
Left wing	4	12	-
None	5	7	1
Reformer wing	2	6	2
Position in party			
No member	-	2	-
None	-	3	1
Below state level	3	3	3
State level or above	8	19	-
IT Skill (self-assessed on Likert-scale)			
1 (very low)	-	-	-
2	2	4	1
3	5	8	1
4	4	7	2
5 (very high)	-	8	-
Regularity of internet use			
All the time	8	23	1
Daily	3	4	2
Weekly	-	-	1
Highest educational attainment			
Secondary School (*Hauptschule*)	-	1	-
GCSE (*Realschule*)	-	1	-
A-Levels (*Abitur*)	3	4	-
University or applied degree	8	21	4

	Dataset B Interviews 2016-17	Dataset E Interviews 2017-18	Dataset F Focus Group 2018
Occupation			
Employed (full time)	9	17	3
Employed (part time)	1	3	-
Self-Employed	-	4	-
Other	1	3	1
Age			
18-29	1	1	-
30-39	4	18	-
40-49	1	3	-
50-59	4	4	3
60+	1	1	1
Gender			
male	6	18	1
female	5	9	3
Care responsibilities			
No Care	6	12	3
Care	5	15	1
Type of residence area			
City	7	20	3
Suburb	2	2	1
Small Town	-	2	-
Rural	2	3	-
Region of residence			
East	2	4	-
West	8	13	-
Berlin	1	9	4

Interviews - Dataset B

In the first phase, 11 interviews were conducted with members who participated in the discussion about the proposals around online participation processes for the delegate assembly (see below). Participants were recruited both at the assembly, and afterwards by email. I attempted to approach all members who were involved in the discussion of the proposals, either on the party's online platform or at the assembly. Some participants were contacted through their local branches, as they had not published any contact details online. Others could not be identified and thus not be contacted. I conducted two interviews in person and the rest via Skype or phone. The questions revolved around three proposals affecting participation and online tools, and were intended to provide insight into the thoughts and motivations behind members' views on (online) participation.

The age distribution was balanced, with participants between 18 and 62 years old, though on average slightly younger than the 50 years in the party overall. The gender balance was nearly equal, at 45:55%, which means a higher proportion of women than the 39% in the party overall (Niedermayer, 2017a).

More interviewees were leaning towards the left wing of the party. The distribution in the sample may be chance, or due to members in the left wing being more interested in participation and overrepresented on the sample list for that reason. Membership in the party wings is not formalised (see Chapter 4), and so there are no reliable membership numbers. Participants estimated the proportions between left, unassociated and reformer members between 20:60:20 and 30:40:30. My last survey (see 3.3.3 below) indicates they are closer to 5:90:5, though active members – the target group for my interviews – are significantly more likely to have a wing association ($p<0.001$).

Regarding their position in the party, participants held offices or mandates at different levels. This is not surprising, as positions on local level are typical for active members, and these active members were more likely to participate in this discussion. Their self-reported IT and internet skills reflected a normal distribution. In line with the membership of the party (Niedermayer, 2017a), the participants were mostly highly educated, with more than 50% holding a university degree. Most participants (7/11) live in cities, in well distributed areas in Germany (across both North / South and East / West axes). Profiles of all interviewees can be found in Appendix B.1.

Interviews - Dataset E

In the second phase, between November 2017 and March 2018, another 27 interviews were conducted. I drew up an initial sample list of categories of persons that I wanted to interview, with members who were involved in the development or implementation of the online processes. This included

- on technical level: hackathon participants, developers, helpdesk staff
- on process level: committee members, statutory experts
- on political level: representatives of wings, youth and elderly groups, task forces, MPs, party leaders
- working for the party: staff at national and state headquarters, and in parliamentary groups

In addition, I aimed for a sample that roughly represented the diversity of gender, age and education in the party, as well as the political landscape in Germany (e.g. divide West/East). Naturally there was some overlap between these groups, for example where staff were also members and organised in wings, or technical experts held leadership positions.

An initial sample list based on these criteria was drawn up in a discussion with the head of members' participation, who has extensive knowledge of and networks in the party due to their position in the national headquarters, and involvement with the development of these processes. My personal network, as well as general knowledge about the party and its structure supplemented the selection criteria, to prevent bias from personal acquaintance. The party headquarters emailed all potential participants on the final sample list with a description of my study, an expression of support from the executive board, and a request to participate in an interview. A copy of the email (in German) is produced in Appendix B.2. I followed up with another personal email to arrange a date. Since initial responses were slow, I recruited more participants at the assemblies in November 2017 and January 2018, in collaboration with the head of members' participation, and based on the same sampling criteria.

The interview questions revolved around participants' views on the new online participation processes, the benefits and issues these new processes entailed, and their perception of their implementation. By conducting these interviews, I also contributed to the education about the tools: In some cases I had to explain them, their purpose, use and reasoning, as my participants were not aware of the processes. This was an issue especially concerning the *Begehren*, which was launched only after interviews concluded.

18 interviews were conducted in person with the rest over Skype or phone. The age distribution was not as balanced as I had hoped, with participants between 20 and 70 years old, and the majority in their thirties. This is partly due to the selection criteria for technical expertise – nearly all members engaged in development fell into this age bracket.

There is again a clear over-representation of participants leaning towards the left wing of the party. As stated above, there is no institutional data that wing association can be compared to. My survey data indicates that the left wing is slightly larger than the reformer wing, but by no means larger than the group without association. The sample is clearly biased, but I cannot identify the source of this bias. It is unlikely to be due to personal networks, as neither of the people involved in the sample selection were associated with the left wing. However, according to the survey data (C3b, see 3.3.3 below), members of the left wing are significantly ($p<.0.000$) younger, so that the large amount of members in the left wing may be related to the majority of young members in the sample.

As shown in Figure 2, the gender balance was near equal on the initial sample list, at 47% women to 53% men. Unfortunately more women than men declined to be interviewed, primarily due to lack of time or perceived expertise, which reflects women's under-estimation of their own skills (Helsper and Eynon, 2013). The actual sample includes only 33% women.

Figure 2:   Sample composition for second set of qualitative interviews by gender
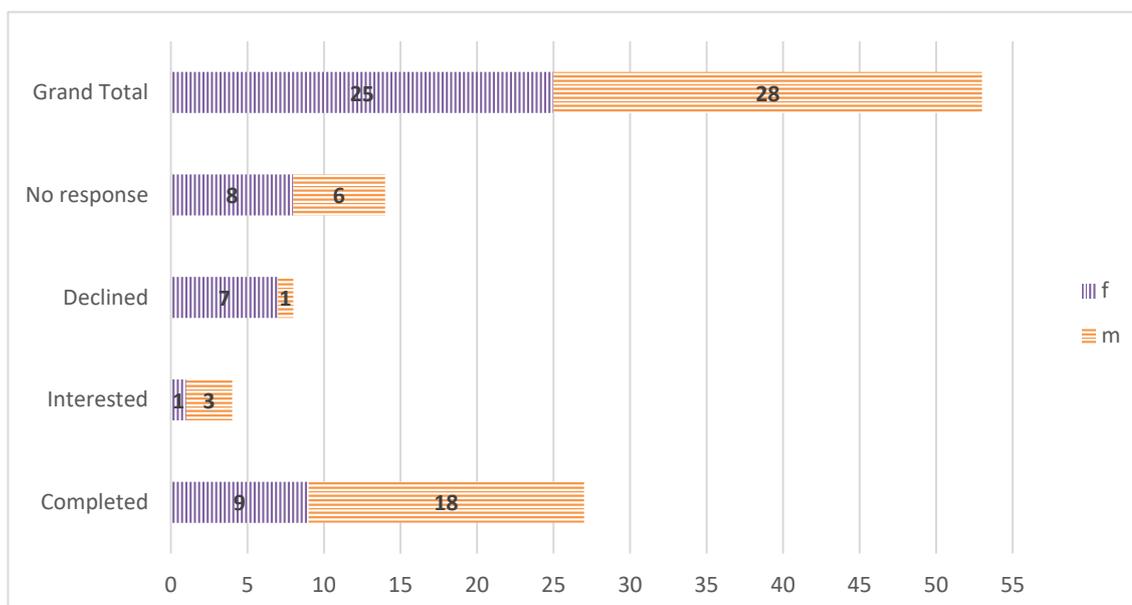
Source: Dataset E, interviews conducted between November 2017 and March 2018; N = 53

Regarding their position in the party, participants held positions or mandates at different levels. Since it was the intention of the interviews to speak to the party elite, this is not only unsurprising, but genuinely positive, as this goal was clearly met. Participants' self-reported IT skills, measured on a Likert scale, are fairly high. This again reflects the intention of the sample to speak to technical experts. All participants use the internet as part of their daily routines, which is to be expected for the sample: Technical experts, politicians and their staff all conduct a large portion of their work online.

Most participants live in cities, in well distributed areas in Germany (across both North / South and East / West axis). The majority of participants hold a university degree, which reflects the overall distribution in the party. Profiles of all interviewees can be found in Appendix B.3.

Interviews - Dataset 0

As discussed in 3.2 above, before my PhD project started, I completed an MSc thesis, comparing characteristics of web-native and non-web-native political parties, based on the examples of the Pirate Party and Green Party Germany. Part of this study was a small set of qualitative interviews with members or staff of both parties. Three interviews were conducted for the Green Party. Two of the three participants of this initial study were interviewed again for datasets B or E. Since the topic of the interviews was very similar to those of the PhD thesis, and in fact formed part of the basis for this project, these interviews were included as sources along with the above datasets. These initial interviews were specifically used to understand the current participation processes in the Green Party, and the use of technology in those processes. Some of the results were published as Thuermer *et al.* (2016).

<u>Focus Group - Dataset F</u>

In addition to the interviews with selected party members, a focus group was conducted with party members in Berlin, collated in dataset F. Similar to the interviews, the head of members' participation sent emails on my behalf to the leaders of a selection of state or regional branches, which I then followed up on. Unfortunately, the branches were not responsive: Two of the state branches approached (Bavaria and Lower Saxony), as well as two of the local groups in Berlin, were either unresponsive or unable to support the project. Two local branches in Berlin committed to support the project by inviting their members to participate, but only in one of them did members actually sign up.

The focus group was conducted in January 2018, in a branch office in Berlin. The focus group questions reflected the structure of the interviews, and circled around the participants' understanding, views and use of the online participation tools. The data was coded together with observation dataset D and interview dataset E. All attendees were between 50 and 69 and live in Berlin.

3.3.2. Participant Observations

Participant observation was conducted at multiple events hosted by the Green Party, spanning two phases. Dataset B was collected in November 2016, at the party assembly that decided about the introduction of new online participation processes. Dataset D was collected between April 2017 and September 2018, during the implementation phase of these processes. A timeline of the data collection alongside the development of the online participation processes is shown in Table 2 above.

<u>Dataset A</u>

National delegate assembly 2016, Münster, 11th – 13th November 2016
The assembly was focused on the topic of social justice, and preceded by a period of proposals development, discussions and negotiations. The most relevant discussions for the purpose of this project were the process decisions that were made – or not made. Specifically, the party discussed three proposals concerning participation, two of which were about online processes:

- B-01 "Strengthen participation: Merge on- and offline" (*Beteiligung stärken: On- und Offline verschmelzen*) (Bundesvorstand Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2016a)
  This proposal introduced a set of new participation methods, the *Befragung*, an online survey which will be held at least annually, to prepare debates about key topics, and the *Begehren*, a

type of petition system, and a completely new process by which 250 members can collectively demand some action from the national executive board. The proposal was accepted.

- W-01 "Process national election manifesto" (*Verfahren Bundestagswahlprogramm*) (Bundesvorstand Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2016b)

    This proposal was concerned with the process for the development of the new election manifesto for the general election in Germany in 2017. Amongst other details, it changed the process for proposal submissions, such that the supporters of a proposal need to individually log into the *Antragsgrün*, the online proposal submission system, to verify their support for proposals, instead of confirming their support informally to the proposal owner. The proposal was accepted.

- S-01 "BDK – Change to the proposal entitlement for individual proposals" (*BDK - Änderung der Antragsberechtigung von Einzelantragsteller*innen*) (Bundesvorstand Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2016c)

    This was a proposed change to the statutes of the party, that would have meant to increase the number of members who needed to support a proposal from 20 to 60. This was fiercely debated, with four rather than usual two speakers, and extended by another two through a procedural motion. The proposal was declined.

The three proposals lead to discussions about the way the Green Party conducts participation, and which values and rules should govern it. Observation notes were taken on all days of the assembly.

Dataset D

After completing the analysis of dataset A & B, I attended another six events:

1. **Hackathon,** Berlin, 29th to 30th April 2017

    This event was intended to bring developer volunteers from the party together to exchange ideas and create tools that could be used in the upcoming election campaign. I was invited to hold a workshop about online participation. The discussions at this event showed how the 'tech-elite' within the party saw participation, as well as how new tools are developed in the context of the Green Party. Conversations with participants also provided some insight into views and ideas about existing processes, and potential barriers in those processes.

2. **National delegate assembly 2017-1**, Berlin, 16th – 18th June 2017

    This assembly revolved around the discussion and votes upon the election manifesto for the national election which was held in Germany in September 2017. It was an opportunity to observe how the results of the verification process played out in practice.

3. **National delegate assembly 2017-2**, Berlin, 24th – 25th November 2017

   This assembly was held after the national election, and was initially intended to decide about a potential coalition contract. However, the coalition talks had failed just a few days ahead of the assembly, because one of the potential partners – the liberal democrats (FDP) – had walked out. Thus, the assembly focussed on a review of the election campaign and outcomes, and made some general decisions about positions and statutes. Apart from taking observation notes, I conducted four interviews, had several conversations with attendees, and made contacts that subsequently turned into interviews.

4. **National delegate assembly 2018-1**, Hannover, 26th – 28th January 2018

   This assembly revolved around the election of a new executive board. It was more of a media spectacle than the previous assemblies, as both chairs had announced that they would not stand again, and thus two new chairs had to be elected. Apart from collecting observation notes about the election process, which was conducted electronically and thus provided insight into how the party uses technology, I conducted another three interviews, and made further contacts.

5. **Launch convention for the new party manifesto**, Berlin, 14th April 2018

   This was a launch event for the development of the new manifesto, which should be ready for the party's 40 year anniversary in 2020. This event consisted of discussions and workshops. The new participation processes, especially the *Begehren* are planned to be a core part of the manifesto development process. I was again invited to hold a workshop, together with general secretary Michael Kellner, to discuss online participation methods with members.

6. **National women's conference and council**, Leipzig, 7th – 9th September 2018

   This was a combination between the annual women's conference of the party, and the gathering of the women's council, a statutory decision-making body primarily concerned with women's issues, and the task force for women's policy. I was invited to conduct a workshop with the council and task force, to present and discuss my preliminary results about women's online participation. I also used the opportunity to observe how this event, which was limited to women only, functioned.

I took field notes throughout all of the events. In addition to the events, several meetings and calls with staff from the party headquarters, as well as email exchanges about the project and tools involved, are included as observations, as important information about the development of the online processes was exchanged in those contexts.

3.3.3. Surveys

To supplement the qualitative data, I conducted a series of surveys among party members, with the aim to identify how party members overall perceive participation in the party, how they participate, and what expectations they have of participation processes in general and online participation specifically. Sudden changes in the plans of the party made it necessary to restructure the data collection, and resulted in four surveys across three samples, which provided much richer data than initially planned. The surveys allow me to answer research questions 4 & 5, to find evidence for or against mobilisation, reinforcement or non-use, and identify what demographic and other characteristics make members more or less likely to display either of these behaviours. An overview of all samples is given in Table 4, compared, where available, with data about the party in general, based on Niedermayer (2017a), the most representative summary of party members in Germany. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of the individual steps in the data collection process.

The samples overall are representative of the party, with education and regional divide in all three surveys very close to the distribution in the party in general. The large difference in the proportion of civil servants can be explained through a different categorisation, as Niedermayer included employees of the state who are not sworn in, as opposed to only sworn in state employees in my surveys. Participants in Dataset C1 are slightly younger, and in C3b slightly older than in general. The proportion of male participants in all three surveys is several points higher than in the party overall.

Table 4:   Overview of quantitative samples

	Green Party overall (Niedermayer, 2017a)	Dataset C1 All members April 2017	Dataset C3a Panel Wave 1 November 2017 *	Dataset C3b Panel Survey 2 June 2018 *
Sample Size		62,150	4,236	4.096
Responses		3489	572	457
Response Rate		6%	14%	11%
Year first party entry				
1980s			15%	17%
1990s			20%	19%
2000s			23%	24%
2010s			42%	41%
Association with party wings				
Left wing			3%	5%
None			95%	91%
Reformer wing			2%	4%
Position in party				
None		45%	44%	40%
Below state level		50%	48%	51%
State level or above		5%	8%	9%
IT Skill (self-assessed on Likert-scale)				
1 (very low)			3%	2%
2			9%	10%
3			30%	29%
4			33%	32%
5 (very high)			25%	27%
Regularity of internet use				
Daily		99%	96%	97%
Less than daily		1%	4%	3%
Highest educational attainment				
In education		10%	3%	8%
Secondary School	5%	1%		
GCSE	11%	6%	8%	4%
A-Levels	17%	16%	15%	17%
University degree	68%	66%	74%	71%

	Green Party overall (Niedermayer, 2017a)	Dataset C1 All members April 2017	Dataset C3a Panel Wave 1 November 2017 *	Dataset C3b Panel Survey 2 June 2018 *
Occupation	*Niedermayer includes only members in employment*			
Employed	30%	45%	48%	44%
Self-Employed	24%	16%	17%	18%
Civil Service	45%	9%	11%	10%
Retired		15%	14%	18%
Full Time Education		11%	7%	7%
Other		4%	3%	3%
Age	*Dataset C3a used an incompatible age distribution*			
	[†] *Cut off age in age distribution in Niedermayer is 20 years*			
below 18	2% [†]	1%		
18-29	11% [†]	15%		10%
30-39	16%	18%		16%
40-49	19%	18%		16%
50-59	28%	25%		31%
60+	24%	23%		27%
Gender				
male	61%	69%	67%	64%
female	39%	30%	32%	36%
other		1%	1%	0%
Care responsibilities				
No Care			50%	54%
Care			50%	46%
Type of residence area				
City		44%	46%	45%
Suburb		11%	14%	13%
Small Town		27%	22%	24%
Rural		18%	18%	17%
Region of residence				
East	7%	8%	8%	8%
West	83%	81%	82%	82%
Berlin	9%	11%	10%	10%
Preferred participation intensity				
Uncapped		32%	32%	29%
Equal		68%	68%	71%
Preferred participation type				
Discuss		45%	42%	47%
Vote		55%	58%	53%

* There was an overlap of 214 participants that responded to both panel surveys.

Dataset C1 - Grass-roots survey

The first of these surveys was conducted by the Green Party in April 2017, as part of a *Befragung* – the online surveys which the party regularly holds among their members. Although I designed several questions, and advised on others, the final survey as well as the data collection was decided and executed by the party. I only received a dataset with survey responses for those questions that were agreed between the party and myself.

All party members were invited to participate, with emails sent to everyone who had an email address registered in the party's members' database (about 84%), and those who did not receiving a letter. The data was collected by the central party office using their LimeSurvey[2] system. The survey was conducted online, but members were given the option to request the survey on paper, which was used by 15 participants. The survey was sent to 62,150 members in total, and returned just under 3500 responses, which equals a response rate of 6%. This rate is very low, which may partially be explained by the topic: The party's survey focussed on the upcoming election campaign, and members' priorities in that campaign. The previous survey on social justice policy had reached a response rate of 24% - potentially, policy draws more attention than processes.

I developed a set of questions relating to the perception and use of the new online participation methods, based on findings from the interviews (A) and observations (B). After initial agreement that I could add a set of questions to the survey, the party later informed me that the set I submitted was too large, and I needed to limit the number of questions. I subsequently reformatted the questions, leaving four specific questions about online participation:

1. How members thought the new online participation tools would influence their own participation
2. How they already participated (*Channels*)
3. What type of activity they engaged in (*Activities*)
4. Their participation preferences

The latter question was originally intended as a set of Likert-scale questions that would have allowed to determine underlying preferences through factor analysis. Instead, it was now transformed into the request to order a set of statements about participation preferences by

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[2] https://www.limesurvey.org/

importance, with the first being the most and the last being the least important. The four statements consisted of two pairs:

- All members can participate in votes

  All members can participate in discussions

- All members can participate equally

  All members can participate as much as possible

The response to this question was used to develop two binary scales for the preferred type of participation (votes or discussions) and intensity of participation (equal or uncapped). This design is explained in more detail at the end of Chapter 5.

There was no need to include all of my demographic questions explicitly, as the Green Party already covered most of the common demographic categories (e.g. age, education, gender). I merged my questions with the Green Party's own ones, e.g. by adding internet use and party rank to the demography as opposed to the participation section, and supplementing some of the response options for their existing questions, such as 'University Degree' for the level of education.

My four main questions were added to the survey as optional questions in a separate section about participation in the party. Members were not explicitly made aware that their responses would be used for research (see 3.5 for a discussion of the ethical implications). The full survey can be seen in Appendix E.5.3.

The data gathered through this survey was used to understand how the member base sees current decision-making processes within the party, and their preferences for participation. The results contribute to answering research question one. They are discussed in Chapter 5.

Dataset C2 – Tool users

A second survey was conducted by the party in June 2017, following the first general delegate assembly that had used the online verification process in *Antragsgrün*. I have developed the survey for and with the party, and the same participation and demographic questions were used to ensure comparability. The survey was conducted by the party, and sent to 2,258 members who had used the tool, and received 248 (11%) responses. However, due to lack of time, and since more insight could be derived from the larger surveys, these results have not been analysed.

Dataset C3 – Panel surveys

The panel survey was initially planned as an addition to the *Befragung*, like C1. However, the party later decided that they did not want this survey to be sent to all members. The panel

surveys were therefore conducted among a sample of 4,236 party members (4096 for the second wave). The sample was selected at random from two sets of members: those who communicated with the party by email, and those who did not. 500 members with no email address on their membership record were invited to participate by post. An equivalent proportion of members – 3736 – was invited by email. The selection was done by staff at the party's headquarters with access to the membership database. The first wave was collected throughout November 2017, and the second from 5th June to 11th July 2018. Both of these are good periods for surveys, as they lie outside or on the edges, but not within the core holiday seasons.

The stratification of the sample was intended to counter a potential bias of members who already use the internet, which would have meant that those who are most excluded from online participation, due to lack of access or skills to use the web (Sylvester and McGlynn, 2010), would not have been captured in the sample. The costs for printing and postage, which were covered by the party, limited the sample size. All participants had the option to respond either online or on paper. 34 and 30 participants answered on paper respectively, with changes happening in both directions (invited by post -> answered online, and vice versa).

A total of 572 participants responded to the first panel wave, and 457 to the second, giving response rates of 14% and 11% respectively. This is comparable to other organisational studies. Gerl et al. (2018) reached a similar response rate of 13% for a survey among Green Party members in a single state. Compared to the response rates for the *Befragung* mentioned above, this response rate may reflect the increased interest of members in participation as both an organisational and a policy issue.

Both panel waves were designed at the same time, using the same questions, with some minor adjustments. The questions were developed based on the initial findings from datasets A and B, as well as the design and results of survey C1. Rather than asking only about the *Befragung* and *Begehren*, the panel surveys also included the *Antragsgrün* as well as the online verification process in the *Antragsgrün*. The questions around participation channels and activities were reproduced, with additional response options that proved to be necessary (e.g. 'Email'), and expanded to allow tracing which channels were used for which activity (Ackermann, 2017). Additional questions revolved around members' views on, and expectations and use of the new online participation tools. As a fail-safe in case the second wave would not happen for any reason, a question about the first use of the new tools was included, to allow comparisons of criteria based on time of adoption. Due to preliminary findings that indicated opposing views about the assumed effect of online participation tools on different groups of members, discussed in Chapter 5, a set of questions around members' assumptions from online participation was included. To reflect the apparent interaction effect between personal networks on online participation, both

the size and type of networks were asked. The survey also included a set of demographic questions which reflected the set used in C1 to allow comparisons. Unfortunately the age-scale in the first panel survey was incomparable, and therefore amended in the second survey.

The main difference between the panel waves was that while the first one asked for an intended change in participation behaviour due to the new tools ('How do you think the [Antragsgrün/Online verification/Befragung/Begehren] *will* affect your own participation?'), the second wave asked about the actual effect of the tools ('How do you think the [Antragsgrün/Online verification/Befragung/Begehren] *did* affect your own participation?').

Since all three processes were introduced and/or further adopted between the two panel waves, the data collected allows conclusions about the effect of online participation, corresponding to research questions 4 and 5. The results will be discussed in Chapter 7.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted alongside the data collection, and separately for qualitative and quantitative data. The results of the first phase of qualitative data collection (datasets A and B) were used to inform the direction of data collection and analysis for following datasets. The results of analysis of dataset C1 (the survey among all party members) in turn informed the development of dataset C3 (the panel survey). The combination of both qualitative and quantitative data collection allows triangulation of methods (Patton, 1999). This is especially important as some of the core theoretical questions – such as whether party members show mobilisation, reinforcement, non-use or replacement behaviour, cannot be answered through only one type of data.

3.4.1. Qualitative Analysis

All data was transcribed and then coded thematically in NVivo. Analysis was conducted in two separate waves, for datasets A&B in spring of 2017, and datasets E-F in fall of 2018.

Datasets A&B

The goal during analysis was to gain a deeper understanding of members' views of the proceedings and the proposals, as well as their views of party-internal democracy. Observations and interviews were coded inductively, by closely reading the transcripts and identifying themes related to their views and preferences around participation, party processes, and technology. In a second step, the results were coded deductively, applying codes derived from literature in order

to identify themes from social theory, such as oligarchisation, or mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement and non-use. Codes were refined though several iterations of this process.

The result was a definition of the problem space of democratic decision-making, participation in general, and online participation in particular. The main themes identified in this dataset were:

- **Attitudes** towards participation in general, and the role of participation in the organisational context of the party. Sub-themes were, for example, the perceived fairness of participation processes, the ability of the party to adapt to changing circumstances, or the expectations members had of participation.

- **Democracy**, what members perceived as either democratic or undemocratic, what they understood the democratic values of the party to be, and which factors they perceived as relevant in this context. Sub-themes included the diversity of participants, or the type of decision-making, e.g. consensus or majority vote.

- **Factors for Participation** which members perceived as relevant, classified by their anticipated effects as enabling, inhibiting, or balancing. Sub-themes included common digital- or participation- divide themes, such as age, gender, and access, but also factors specific to the party, such as the role of full-time politicians, networks, or regional differences.

- **Forms of Participation**, or ways in which participants currently engage, or would like to engage. Sub-themes included specific participation formats, such as general members' votes, or engagement in different networks (e.g. local groups, wings), but also broader participation formats, such as agenda setting, or non-participation. The largest sub-theme was online participation, categorised by the type of comments made, as either assumptions about, experience with, known plans for, expectations of, or (anticipated) issues with online participation.

- **Green Party**, including descriptions of the different views about the party, as well as comments about how the party works. Sub-themes included the role of the grass-roots and hierarchy in the party, the party's structure, as well as the perception of democracy in and the identity of the party.

- **Processes**, or discussions of how the party makes decisions. Sub-themes included the workings of party assemblies, or the process of deliberation and decision-making in the party, as well as the different persons involved in these processes.

- **Proposals** and their role for participation in the party. Sub-themes included the proposal process, the amount of proposals submitted for assemblies, and the degree to which this was perceived as a problem.

- **Technology** that is or could be used in the party. Sub-themes included the different tools in discussion or use, such as the *Antragsgrün*, as well as potential changes through technology.

In combination, this coding allowed to preliminary answer research questions 1 and 2, concerning perceptions of participation and how these views inform processes. The results also informed the design of the surveys to collect datasets C1 and C3. A detailed codebook for datasets A&B can be found in Appendix C. Based on the existing literature discussed in Chapter 2, the following hypotheses were made:

1. What are the participation preferences in the party, and do they differ between groups?
   H1a.   Members have different participation preferences.
   H1b.   Members on different hierarchy levels have different preferences.
   H1c.   Younger members have different preferences than older members.
   H1d.   Members who are less familiar with technology have different preferences than those more familiar with technology.
2. How are participation preferences translated into processes?
   H2a.   Assumptions about direct participation underpin process design and implementation.

The results are discussed in Chapter 5.

Datasets D-F

For the second set of qualitative data, coding was primarily deductive, using a portion of the codebook generated for dataset A&B. Codes were limited to those concerning members' views of participation and the participation process in the party, and factors considered for equal participation. New codes were generated inductively to capture views about potential effects of online participation. The goal was to understand members' views of the new development in online participation, their preferences and practical experience with the implementation of the new tools and processes, and expectations and worries about their potential effects.

The result was a deeper and more nuanced overview of how party members understand democratic decision-making, participation in general, and online participation in particular. The main themes identified in this dataset were:

- **Democracy**, and how it is perceived in terms of democratic processes, as well as its role in the Green Party. Sub-themes included the role of the grass-roots and party hierarchy, and the different modes of participation, e.g. deliberation, representation, and votes.

- **Factors for Participation**, which would contribute to participation being enabled or inhibited. These were classed as either demographic, such as age, gender, and residence, or resources, such as financial, cultural, or social capital, or time.

- **Online Participation**, and how members do or do not (intend to) use it. References were tagged with the different online tools, where they were related to a specific one, and classified as

  o **Opportunities**, where participants saw potential benefits, such as increased inclusion or efficiency

  o **Issues**, where they saw potential problems, such as barriers to participation or lack of impact

  o **Requirements** for the introduction of online participation tools, such as stepwise introduction and feedback routes

  o **Strategies** for how these requirements are addressed, and

  o **Experiences** of how the implementation was perceived by participants

The results of this analysis allowed to supplement the preliminary response to research questions 2, around assumptions that underpin the design and decision about online participation tools, and answer research question 3, concerning the translation from preferences to implementation of online participation tools. A detailed codebook for datasets D-F can be found in Appendix D.

Based on the existing literature discussed in Chapter 2, the following hypotheses were made:

2. How are participation preferences translated into processes?

   H2a: Assumptions about direct participation underpin process design and implementation.

3. How are inequalities identified and addressed?

   H3a: Inequalities specific to the party are not formally identified; only well known 'digital divide'-issues are addressed.

4. To which degree are preferences realised in processes, and are expectations of party members and leadership met? If not, why?

Results of this analysis are discussed in Chapter 6. The analysis was also used to develop the actor-networks in Chapter 7.

Language Considerations

The research was carried out in German, and all interviews and the focus group have been conducted, and all observation notes were taken in German. Conducting the interviews in any other than the native language of participants would make the data obtained less rich, as participants would not have been able to express themselves as clearly. Transcriptions were also

carried out in German, with coding applied in English. Translating the data before transcription or analysis would have been too time-consuming, but would also have risked nuances being 'lost in translation'. Individual quotes were translated to English as and when needed for inclusion in the thesis, to keep as much of the original meaning for as long as possible during analysis.

Since I am a native German speaker, but know little of the German terminology in a research field that I mainly explored in English, changing the language during analysis – analysing German data using English codes – was the most practical. This approach allowed the best of both worlds: The easiest accessibility for research participants, leading to the richest possible data, as well as analysis and write-ups done in English, making results of that research accessible to a wider group of researchers.

Being German myself, and having been part of the German political system, I understand this system in a lot of depth from a practitioners' perspective. This also let me see differences to other systems like UK more clearly, which in turn gives me an advantage when it comes to analysing processes. In this context, it was very beneficial that my supervisory team was international: Silke Roth and Steffen Staab as Germans were familiar with both the language and political system, and thus able to provide support on both language and cultural questions. Kieron O'Hara on the other hand was able to provide an 'outsider'-view, which helped to contextualise the results in a way that was most meaningful to non-Germans.

3.4.2. Quantitative Analysis

All survey data was initially processed in Microsoft Excel, and then imported to and analysed in SPSS. Analysis was completed in three stages: Dataset C1 was analysed in fall 2017 (Thuermer et al., 2018). The results informed the subsequent analysis of dataset C3, which was completed in spring and summer of 2018 respectively. For all three datasets, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted, and binary logistic as well as linear regression models were built to predict key variables: participation preferences, institutional activity, use of, and intended and actual effects of online participation tools.

<u>Factor Analysis</u>

Factor Analysis is used to reduce the amount of variables in the analysis, and to identify underlying factors that the data did not include explicitly (Field, 2013, chap. 17). All factor analyses were conducted in SPSS using principal axis factoring without rotation. The quality of a factor is assessed using two values: Cronbach Alpha measures the reliability of the factor, and values above .8 are considered sufficiently reliable. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) statistic

measures the adequacy of the sample. It ranges between 0 and 1, with 1 indicating maximum correlation. Values from 0.5 upwards are considered acceptable, and above 0.9 as 'superb'.

An initial exploratory analysis of dataset C1 indicated two factors. One of them, interpreted to indicate a 'Propensity to Participate Online', based mainly on variables *Age* and *Internet Use*, was discarded as too unreliable, with a Cronbach Alpha value of just 0.381. The second, retained factor is interpreted as an indicator for participants' level of '*Institutional Activity*': The higher the factor score, the more members are engaged in institutional activities within the party. The variables binding to this factor are the types of activities members engage in (e.g. voting, attending assemblies), and the channels they use to engage (e.g. local meetings or social media), as well as their party-internal position. The factor was improved upon in the panel survey, as more data about the size of participants' network as well as different types of online platforms were gathered. An overview of the variables and loadings on each factor is given in Table 5. There are more variables in the factor for survey C3a, as they improve the overall factor, but were not available in survey C1.

Table 5:   Factor Loadings for Institutional Activity for datasets C1 and C3a

Variable	Loadings	
	C1	C3a
Activity: Discussed proposals	0.793	0.778
Activity: Worked in party bodies	0.710	0.738
Activity: Supported proposals	0.749	0.728
Channel: At supra-local Meetings (binary)	0.681	0.680
Activity: Voted as a grass-roots member	0.724	0.673
Activity: Discussed relevant topics	0.633	0.671
Size of network		0.654
Activity: Voted as a delegate	0.723	0.653
Channel: By Email (binary)		0.595
Activity: Wrote proposals	0.561	0.570
Channel: At local Meetings (binary)	0.475	0.515
Rating of Position in Party	0.553	0.419
Channel: Through party online platforms (binary)		0.400
Channel: At non-local Meetings (binary)	0.406	0.379
Channel: Through Social Media (binary)	0.356	0.327
N	3251	445
KMO	0.917	0.912
Cronbach Alpha	0.861	0.875

For comparison between panel waves, the above weighted factor loadings were generated based on dataset C3a, which were then applied to the equivalent variables in both datasets C3a and C3b, generating a weighted sum average score for each set (DiStefano et al., 2009). This allows a direct comparison of the degree of institutional activity each participant demonstrated in either panel wave, and especially to pinpoint where participants changed their level of activity. It also enabled me to create a variable for 'Change in institutional activity', which is positive if the

difference is positive, i.e. participants were more active in the second wave than in the first. This in turn allows an estimation of mobilisation: Only where a participant has become more active can they be considered to be mobilised.

The factor scores are used as dependent variables in linear regression models, to determine characteristics of active members, and as predictors in both linear and binary logistic regression models, to predict use and changes in activity through the online participation processes.

<u>Regression Models</u>

The data derived from the surveys was analysed primarily using binary logistic regression models. The main dependent variables were the responses to the question "How do you think [the new participation methods] will affect your own participation?" These were turned into binary responses, either 'Yes' or 'No' to the statements 'I will participate [more / the same]': The models thus identify which variables are significant predictors for (anticipated) increase or no (anticipated) effect through either tool. In addition, models were built to determine which variables can be used to predict the use of either tool, as well as an increase in institutional activity between the two panel waves. In all logistic models, Odds Ratios are provided, indicating the change in odds for the relevant outcome for any one category as compared to the comparison category. An odds ratio below 1 indicates negative odds, a ratio above 1 positive odds. Logistic models are assessed for model fit using Nagelkerke's R-Square, ranging between 0 and 1. It functions similar to R-Square in linear models, with higher values indicating better fit (Field, 2013, chap. 8). All models were further tested for multicollinearity, outliers and residuals. Though not all results were ideal, especially with regards to outliers in the models from the first panel wave, the results were deemed acceptable for interpretation.

In order to identify the variables that influence the degree of institutional activity of participants, linear regression models were built for both panel waves, using the factor scores (described above) as dependent variables. This allows interpretation of the characteristics of members who were active at each stage, and whether there were any changes in activity.

To generate the most accurate models, literature as well as the initial qualitative analysis informed the modelling process. The variables that were perceived as relevant in interviews and observations, such as participation preferences or networks, in conjunction with those identified in the literature, such as gender, age, or skills (Vowe, 2014), were used as the starting point in all models. Weak or insignificant predictors were subsequently removed, until all predictor variables were distinctive and significant at $p<0.05$. For example, respondents' political orientation, their residence in East or West Germany, or their income, were not significant in any of the models. More predictors that were dropped as insignificant are summarised in Table 6 below. This is not

an exhaustive list, but includes only the main predictors that – based on the digital divide and participation literature – would have been expected to make a difference.

	Antragsgrün	**Befragung**	**Begehren**
Anticipated Effect	• Gender • Age • Education • IT skills	• IT Skills • Participation preferences	• Gender • Age • Education • Participation preferences
Actual Effect	• Internet use • IT skills • Participation preferences	• Age • Education • Internet use • IT skills	• Gender • IT skills • Participation preferences

Table 6:   Overview of weak and insignificant predictors by model

All models were tested for collinearity, outliers and model fit. Possible interactions were tested in all models, based on findings in this process, and knowledge about the field. For example, tests included interactions between Gender and Care, Income and Age, and Age and IT Skills.

Mapping of data to research questions

To classify the behaviour of participants into mobilisation and reinforcement according to the theoretical framework of the Differentiated Online Participation Effects-model (DOPE-model), and subsequently answer research questions 5 (Is there evidence for mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, or non-use? Are these effects mutually exclusive or do they occur simultaneously?) and 6 (What characteristics of participants correlate with each of these effects?), a direct comparison between respondents who answered both surveys C3a and C3b was conducted. This was a total of 214 respondents. Due to the small sample size, the amount of variables that could be included in analysis was limited, since at least 15 cases per predictor variable are required, and cell counts cannot be smaller than 5 (Field, 2013). Comparisons were made based on three types of models:

- Current activity (measured through factor score)
- Current use of the tools
- Intended (wave 1) and reported (wave 2) behaviour change through each of the tools

Based on the existing literature discussed in Chapter 2, the following hypotheses were made:

5. Is there evidence for mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, or non-use? Are these effects mutually exclusive or do they occur simultaneously?
    H5a.   There is evidence for all four effects.
    H5b.   All effects happen simultaneously for different groups.

6. What characteristics of participants correlate with each of these effects?

    H6a. Behaviour differs by age: Younger members are more likely to show reinforcement.

    H6b. Behaviour differs by familiarity with technology: Members who are less familiar with technology are more likely to show replacement; Members with average technology skills are most likely to be mobilised.

    H6c. Behaviour differs by socio-economic status (e.g. income, occupation): Members with higher status are more likely to show replacement.

    H6d. Behaviour differs based on participation preferences: Members with a preference for voting are more likely to be mobilised.

If a participant has started using any of the tools in-between the two panel waves, this is considered to be 'adoption'. This is combined with participants' activity score: If they have become more active while adopting tools, this can be considered as mobilisation. Since mobilisation and reinforcement should be considered at collective level (groups rather than individuals), it is important to note that reinforcement can only occur for groups that *are* mobilised: if a group that was previously inactive became active, that would be considered as mobilisation. Since this is the type of mobilisation that the Green Party intends, this will be considered as *positive* mobilisation. If a group was active before, and has now become *more* active, that would also be mobilisation, but since the group already had an advantage (due to being more active than others), this can be seen as evidence of *reinforcement*. To identify these patterns on group level, a comparison is made between the linear regression models for Institutional Activity, and the binary logistic regression models for use and effects of the tools, as summarised in Table 7.

Table 7:   **Identification of different effects using the DOPE-model**

	Activity	**Tool Use**	**Activity Increase**
Mobilisation	-	+	+
Reinforcement	+	+	+
Replacement	x	+	-
Non-Use	x	-	x

Source: Own development. **Activity** refers to *institutional activity*; **Tool Use** refers to Current use of the different tools; **Activity Increase** refers to intended / actual changes in behaviour through the tool.
- indicates either no difference or negative correlation; **+** indicates a difference or positive correlation; **x** indicates either (as it does not make a difference to the model).

If a variable, such as age, was a significant predictor for use of the tools, as well as an increase in activity, this can be considered as mobilisation. If on the other hand the variable was significant in all three models, in the same direction, and more especially if the effect grew stronger, this would be considered as reinforcement. If tools were used, but there was no change in activity levels, this can be considered as replacement, while if tools were not used, or variables were negative

predictors of adoption, this can be considered as non-use. These differences were compared systematically, and will be discussed in Chapter 7.

The relation between all research questions and their accompanying hypotheses, the theory they are based on, as well as the data used to answer them, are summarised in Table 8:

Table 8:   Mapping of data and research questions

Theory	Research Questions and Hypotheses	Data	Datasets
Digital Divide: Use of the internet and benefit derived from it differs with age, education, skills. Oligarchy: Members of the elite and grass-roots have different views on participation - elite wants to protect their power while grass-roots want to keep elite accountable.	1. What are the participation preferences in the party, and do they differ between groups?	Overview through observations and interviews, to develop spectrum on which members can then be placed	A, B
	H1a: Members have different participation preferences.	Differences between thematic codes for democracy compared by elite level; Correlation between elite level ('Do or did you hold a position', 'At which level') and democratic preference ('order these statements')	A, B, D, F C1, C3
	H1b: Members on different hierarchy levels have different preferences.	Difference in thematic codes between participation forms and factors, and elite level	A, D, F
	H1c: Younger members have different preferences than older members.	Correlation between age group ('How old are you') and democratic preference	C1, C3
	H1d: Members who are less familiar with technology have different preferences than those more familiar with technology.	Correlation between internet use (Channels used, IT skills, internet use) and democratic preference	C1, C3
Participation: Principles of direct participation, creation of legitimacy through process. *Institutional Change*	2. How are participation preferences translated into processes?	Thematic codes for democracy and participation factors, participants who are involved in implementation or decisions about it	D, E
	H2a: Assumptions about direct participation underpin process design and implementation.		
Participation: Principles of equal participation in order to establish legitimate decisions Digital Divide: Inequalities based on access to and use of online technology	3. How are inequalities identified and addressed?	Thematic codes for factors and forms of participation Additional codes tbc based on new data	B, D, E
	H3a: Inequalities specific to the party are not formally identified; only well known 'digital divide'-issues are addressed.		
Oligarchy: Expectations of grass-roots members and elite diverge.	4. To which degree are preferences realised in processes, and are expectations of party members and leadership met? If not, why?	Define expectations from thematic codes on online participation in interviews and observations Check whether expectations are met in interviews and focus groups	A, B E, F

Theory	Research Questions and Hypotheses	Data	Datasets
Effects of Online Participation: The introduction of online participation methods can have different effects: 1. Party members are mobilised: more members participate 2. Existing divides are reinforced: already active members participate more; result of digital divide 3. Activities that were previously done offline are transferred online 4. New methods are not adopted	5. Is there evidence for mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, or non-use? Are these effects mutually exclusive or do they occur simultaneously?	Identify changes in activity based on factor scores; assign who has increased participation overall	C3
	H5a: There is evidence for all four effects.	Analysis of change in activity by tool; comparison between panel waves	C3
	H5b: All effects happen simultaneously for different groups.		
	6. What characteristics of participants correlate with each of these effects?	Analysis of changes in specified variables between panel waves	C3
	H6a: Behaviour differs by age: Younger members are more likely to show reinforcement.	Variable Age in both panel waves	C3
	H6b: Behaviour differs by familiarity with technology: Members who are less familiar with technology are more likely to show replacement; Members with average technology skills are most likely to be mobilised.	Variables IT Skill / Efficacy in both panel waves	C3
	H6c: Behaviour differs by socio-economic status (e.g. income, occupation): Members with higher status are more likely to show replacement.	Variables income, network ('# of contacts', 'type of contacts'), employment in both panel waves	C3
	H6d: Behaviour differs based on participation preferences: Members with a preference for voting are more likely to be mobilised.	Variable democratic preference in both panel waves	C3

3.5.   Ethical and Other Considerations

The data collection for the MSc thesis received ethical approval in July 2015, under ERGO ID #15464. The data collection for the PhD thesis has been approved by the ethics committee under ERGO ID #20777 in several stages: In October 2016 for datasets A & B, in February 2017 for datasets D-F, in April 2017 for datasets C1 & C2, and in June 2017 for dataset C3. The complete application including questionnaires can be found in Appendix E. The main ethical considerations for the study concern consent and confidentiality for participants, and the collaboration agreement with the Green Party.

For interviews and focus groups, the confidentiality was the main concern. All interviews were recorded and then transcribed, and participants' responses were anonymised during transcriptions. The interviewee profiles (Appendix B) were sent to interviewees before submission to give them opportunity to object (which happened in a handful of cases, and led to amendments). For the focus group, all participants signed a consent form to keep what was said in the group confidential. Data was processed the same as the interview data. However, since not all participants can be reached by email, profiles could not be confirmed, and are therefore not provided.

During party assemblies and the surveys conducted by the party (C1 and C2), it was not possible to ensure all participants are informed about the study. As a result, they could not give explicit consent to their participation. Consent for the observations was given by the party leadership, for each observed event. Since all of these events were public, and draw quite a lot of media attention in the case of national assemblies, participants would have expected to be observed. At smaller events, such as workshops (D1, Hackathon April 2017 & D5, Workshop at launch event, April 2018), participants were explicitly informed about my observations, with no objections made. Thus, the lack of individual consent was seen as acceptable.

The panel surveys each included a consent form at the beginning of the survey, which participants accepted by continuing with the survey. The surveys that the party conducted were treated as secondary data. The party did not provide data for politically sensitive questions that were not relevant for my study.

The discussions about which questions I could ask, and data I would or would not receive, were mostly amiable, and only was contentious when it came to questions around the party wings or participants' political orientation. There was an appreciation from my side that the party did not

want to have the current internal peace be picked apart by me acquiring data that would lend itself to point out imbalances. This is why I agreed that some of the data would not be published as such, but only used in analysis.

Party members responded to a survey by the party, and consented to the party using that data. The party consented to providing the data to me for research purposes. A nondisclosure and data sharing agreement was drawn up by the University of Southampton research support team to formalise this consent, which was the basis of the data exchange between the party and myself. A copy of the agreement is provided in Appendix A. Although in some instances I was unable to acquire the data that I wanted, either in quantity or content, this agreement was considered as beneficial, since this was the only way I could get the data I needed for the project in the first place.

Further to the provision of data, the Green Party also supported my fieldwork with a budget of 1000 €, managed by the University of Southampton. This was spent on four field trips to visit party conferences. Further to the travel budget, the party invited me to present my results at two workshops in 2018. Both of these trips were fully funded by the party. In addition to presenting at these workshops, I also used these trips to collect further data and observe different types of party gatherings. In that, each visit to a party event was used as a data collection opportunity, providing a very rich set of observation notes.

The party further provided me with a hotel room at the first assembly in Münster in 2016, a meeting room in their headquarters to conduct interviews while I was in Berlin, postage for the panel surveys, as well as access to their survey and participation systems.

The party leadership, especially general secretary Michael Kellner, have been very supportive of the entire project. In exchange for the party's support as well as the provision of and enablement to collect further data, the party received research results. Every paper written during the project (for the Web Science conferences in 2016 and 2018, and ECPR conferences in 2017 and 2018) was provided to the party for comment before submission. These papers were received with interest, results were discussed, especially in the workshops mentioned above, but never criticised. To the contrary, the party actively considered implementing suggestions made in these papers for the further development of their online participation processes.

There was only a single instance throughout the whole collaboration where I was asked to rephrase some of my findings. This was communicated clearly and amiably, explicitly stating that

it was not about meddling with my research, just about what the party would be willing to state publically on their own platform. Since this was for a blog post on their own website, I obliged.

Chapter 4   Organisational Culture and Participation in the Green Party Germany

In this chapter, I introduce the Green Party Germany. I begin with a brief history of the Green Party, showing their roots in social movements and how these have influenced their perception of participation and the role of the grass-roots (4.1), followed by a discussion of the party's organisational structure (4.2), and the role of party members (4.3). Finally, I will show how the party currently uses technology, both for organisational and participatory purposes, and explain how they intend to embed online participation into their existing processes (4.4). This will form the basis for the analysis of participatory processes, and the anticipated and actual effects of these processes, in the following chapters.

4.1.   History of the Green Party

The Green Party Germany was founded in West Germany in 1980, and has roots in the ecology, women's rights and peace movements. The party was conceived as the parliamentary political arm of these movements, and as such had a strong commitment to grass-roots activism. This also showed in their statutes and manifesto, where they declared themselves to be 'the alternative to the traditional parties', and introduced strong regulations in favour of grassroots-participation (Frankland, 2008).

The party was founded bottom-up: Local groups formed all over the country, which grouped together and finally founded the national party as their umbrella organisation (Switek, 2012). The party subsequently won seats in four state parliaments between 1981 and 1982, and first entered the German national parliament (*Bundestag*) in the general election in 1983, gaining 5.6% of the votes.

After the German reunification, the Western Green Party joined with the Eastern 'Bündnis 90', an alliance with similar roots and intentions, which already formed a parliamentary group with the Eastern German Green Party (Frankland, 2008). This was the foundation of the party in its modern form: While 'Die Grünen' (The Greens) is the party's commonly used short name, their full name is 'Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen'.

In the first election after the reunification in 1990, the party failed to re-enter the *Bundestag*, as they missed the required 5% threshold to enter the parliament by 0.2% in West Germany. This

lead to a range of changes and reforms, notably the institutionalisation of the party wings. Originally, Raschke (1991) identified eight currents within the party. The two biggest, and most conflicting groups were the realists ('Realos'), who favoured pragmatism to achieve (at least some of) the party's goals, and the fundamentalists ('Fundis'), who favoured idealism over government participation (Switek, 2012). After the party's failure to re-enter the *Bundestag*, these groups formed official party wings, which enabled them to negotiate and find common ground. Both wings still exist, although they are now referred to as reformers ('*Reformer*') and leftists ('*Linke*') respectively. Although they are not formally institutionalised, the wings form a part of the party structure, and as such help balance the influence of different views in the party. For example, there is an undocumented yet reliable agreement that of the two party chairs, one will be selected from each wing (Probst, 2015) – although this was not applied for the current executive board, elected in January 2018, which is seen as headed by two reformers (von Bullion, 2018).

Because they are not institutionalised and formal membership does not exist, there are no reliable numbers of how large the two wings are, though estimates from party members and officials, as well as survey data collected for this project, lie between 5 and 30 percent of members per wing. That also means that the majority of members are likely not organised in these wings. Most office or mandate holders on the other hand have a wing association, as candidates who do not belong to either of the wings are unlikely to get elected (Thuermer, 2015). The interviews conducted for this project suggests that the role of the wings differs between the German states.

Apart from the formation of the wings, the party also used its time outside of the *Bundestag* for reforms of the party structure. Some of the grassroots-idealism was sacrificed in favour of a more effective party organisation. The powerful federal executive committee had been meant to control both the executive board and parliamentary group. This turned out to be impractical as it was filled with members who were unexperienced and did not understand the workings of parliament. It was now replaced with a state council (*Länderrat*), as a second, smaller form of the national assembly with limited powers (Frankland, 2008).

The party returned to the national parliament in 1994, and has been represented there ever since. It formed a coalition government with the social democrats between 1998 and 2005. This again brought about change in the party, and yet another conflict between the fundamentalists and realists. This centred especially on the involvement of German troops in the Kosovo-conflict in 1999, and in Afghanistan in 2001. These military activities were supported by part of the government group and realists, but large parts of the party – especially those with roots in the

peace movement – opposed them. An extraordinary party assembly was forced through a statutory vote by 10% of the local branches when the policy was up for a renewal in 2007. This assembly finally decided against the suggestion of the party leadership to deploy German troops. This decision was followed by most of the MPs in the parliamentary vote. Although this did not stop the military action in Afghanistan – there was sufficient support from other factions to get the necessary majority without the votes of Green MPs (Deutscher Bundestag, 2007) – this extraordinary assembly can be seen as a display of the power that members of the Green Party have over policy and government activity (Switek, 2012).

The time the party spent as part of the federal government also lead to further sacrifices of grassroots-participation for effectiveness, such as the introduction of the party council (*Parteirat*), to advise the executive board, and the reduction of the federal executive board from eleven to five members (Frankland, 2008). Today, the party's executive board consists of six members: Two chairs, two vice-chairs, a general secretary and a treasurer (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2018a).

Like all political parties in Germany who achieve more than 1% of the votes in either state or national elections, the Green Party receives funds for their campaigns from the government. The funding is capped at the amount they collected through donations and fees: A party can only gain as many funds from the government subsidies as they have raised themselves. The Green Party gained access to this funding early on, through their electoral success in the 1980s. On the one hand, this made the party financially 'dependent', as their own income through membership fees was small, and different from their competitors, they did not receive large donations from businesses which would also have increased their state funds (Frankland, 2008, cf 2.3). On the other hand, this income also made the party independent, as they did not have to fear to disappoint donors or members who might withdraw from funding the party if they made unfavourable decisions. Funds are spent mainly on staff and campaigns (Niedermayer, 2009).

In 2011, following the meltdown at the nuclear power plant in Fukushima, Japan, Winfried Kretschmann became the first Green minister-president in the state of Baden-Württemberg. He kept this position in the latest election in 2017. The party won 8.9% of the votes in the last Bundestag election in 2017, and most recently, in October 2018 achieved 17.5% of the votes in the state of Bavaria, and 19.8% in Hesse. At the time of writing, the Green Party is on track to replace the social democrats as the second highest polling party in Germany.

4.2.   Organisational Structure of the Green Party

There are three parts of the party structure that have a strong influence on participation, which follow different dividing lines: Task forces (topical division), party wings (ideological division), and local branches (geographical division, based on place of residence). The three groupings have different influence on decision-making. While topical and ideological networks are a key space for discussion, the local networks are most important for elections of representatives and initial mobilisation of members.

Task forces play a key role for the internal opinion formation processes, because they are one of the routes through which members typically join policy discussions (Switek, 2012). They are arranged around policy areas, such as transport, environment, or peace. They are part of the statutory framework of the party, and as such receive funding, which is used to cover costs, for example for events and travel expenses for their representatives. Task forces partially follow the regional structure of the party, with divisions on state and national level. The state task forces are typically open not only to all members, but also to non-members. These are where most discussions take place. Each of the state task forces then sends two representatives into the national task force (*Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft, BAG*) (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2015a). One of the important duties of the national task forces is to create consensus between the state groups. This is particularly important given the increasing differences between these groups that, according to several participants in this project, result from different government coalitions the party has established. Where the party shares governmental responsibilities with the Christian Democrats, the views shift towards more conservative stances, whereas where the party works with the Social Democrats or the Left Party, their views are more progressive. The national task forces bring these different views together and create consensus about national policies, which they may also formalise by submitting proposals to assemblies.

Another important route to participation are the party wings, which, as indicated above, represent the main differences in ideology in the party. While the realists favour pragmatism and stand for promoting actual change through government participation, the fundamentalists favour close adherence to the party's ideals, and thus prefer to stay in opposition with their ideals intact, rather than compromising to gain more power (Switek, 2012). The Left wing is perceived as more progressive and aims for prefiguration: to live by their own ideals, and thus prove that their goals are achievable (Maeckelbergh, 2011). The Reformers are traditionally more interested in achieving governmental influence and implementing policy. Both wings are typically headed by MPs, but they are neither formalised, nor part of the statutory framework of the party (Switek,

2012). Similar to the task forces, the wings play an important role for policy discussions and creating consensus, as well as forming networks.

Local branches are important, because they are the first step for members to build their network: New members will have most contact with their local groups upon joining the party. They are the place where most members are active, and where both candidates and delegates for all levels of the party are elected (Westermayer, 2003). Local branches are also entitled to submit proposals for national delegate assemblies (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2018a). This gives them quite a lot of influence, at least in theory: A local branch assembly can decide to submit a proposal, which is independent of the number of members supporting it; as opposed to twenty members required to support an individual members' proposals. However, the branches may not agree on policy issues: Members are only assigned to these local groups by where they live, there is no division by their topical interests or ideological beliefs, and so there may not be sufficient consensus within a particular branch to use all of these participation opportunities. Local branches are very different depending on where they are located and what the population density is in their area. In big cities, a single branch can have more than a thousand members which live very close together, whereas in rural areas they could include only a hundred members distributed over a large region. This makes it harder for them to meet up, build networks, canvas support and make decisions.

4.3.   Role of Members in the Green Party

In their foundation year in 1980, the Green Party had just over 20,000 members, which rose consistently, peaking at just over 50,000 while they joined a government coalition in 1998. In July 2015, at the beginning of this project, the party had roughly 60,000 members (Niedermayer, 2017b), and had just reached 70,000 by its conclusion in October 2018 (Schuler, 2018). It is one of the few growing parties in Germany, while the older parties (CDU/CSU, SPD, Linke) are shrinking (Niedermayer, 2017a). 39% of the party members identify as female – the highest proportion of women in the major German parties (Niedermayer, 2017c). This is not surprising given their roots in the women's' movement. The average age of members is 50 years; up from 47 in 2008, but still the youngest among the major parties in Germany (Niedermayer, 2017a). The party also has – and had for a long time – an unusually high proportion of members who hold university degrees (both compared to other parties and the population of Germany) and who work in public service (Raschke and Hohlfeld, 1995; Niedermayer, 2017c).

The Green Party is very committed to its grass-roots members. Member's participation is seen as key to the identification of the members with the party, and this view is and always has been part

of the party's (self-)image (Heinrich and Spitz, 2014). However, 34% of party members stated that they were not active at all (Spier, 2011). This could be due to members of the Green Party having a higher threshold for what they consider to be 'participation' or 'active' than members of other parties. As Roth (2016) explains, the perception of activism differs with the identity of activists, and should include activism in employment, especially in academia. Given the high proportion of academics in the Green Party (Table 4, p. 52), this type of activity should be particularly prominent, but may not be recognised as such.

The members of the Green Party traditionally distrust their leaders (Frankland, 2008), and the grass-roots participation measures were (and some of them still are) meant to control them and prevent oligarchisation – leaders or position holders protecting their own influence against a 'threat' from the members (Michels, 1911). This approach is effective: oligarchisation can be mediated or prevented by extensive members' participation (Korte, 2012). Although the institutionalised grass-roots participation for party members was gradually but consistently reduced as the party developed, the members still have a stronger position in the party's decision-making processes than in any other of the major German parties (von Alemann and Laux, 2012).

The control mechanisms, such as the right to submit proposals, are supposed to maintain the party base as the ultimate decision-maker. Members see the party as very responsive, and feel involved in the decisions that are made. More than half of the party members favour direct elections for candidates and board members, but they are distinctly less keen on it than members of other parties, which, as Heinrich et al. (2002) argue, is a relic of the weak role of the board, which members do not wish to strengthen through a direct mandate. To minimize power accumulation, the party forbade members to hold mandates and party offices at the same time, and elected representatives were required to rotate (resign from their mandate to make place for others on the list) halfway through their time in office. A major method to control elected officials of the party was the so-called "imperative mandate", which was supposed to force Green MPs to vote in line with the decisions of the party base. However, this conflicts with the free mandate that all MPs have by German law: MPs are bound only by their own conscience. In parliamentary practice, MPs typically vote with their party line, especially if they are part of a government coalition. Thus, the imperative mandate, along with the idea of rotation, proved ineffective in practice, and was eventually dropped in 1986 (Frankland, 2008). Mandates and party offices are also somewhat more compatible today – no more than a third of the executive board can hold mandates, and none can also lead a fraction or be a member of government above the regional level (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2015b, §15 (4)). The current party executive board put this rule to

a test in 2018, as Robert Habeck, the minister for energy and the environment in Schleswig-Holstein, was elected as one of the party chairs. This led the party to introduce a new rule that allows a transition period of up to eight months for the person in question to pass on their responsibilities and step down from the government position (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2018a).

The decision-making processes in the party differ slightly for the type of decision, which include board and candidate elections, changes to the manifesto and statutes. For this thesis I will only focus on processes at the national level, as this is where the online participation methods I focus on are designed and implemented. The most advanced processes revolve around manifesto development and statute amendments, which is where the newly developed processes are applied. These are also traditionally the process in German parties where members are most involved (Korte and Schoofs, 2013).

The party statutes regulate how the party functions, including how it makes decisions. The manifesto, both basic and election manifestos, lay out their policies and plans in case they are elected into government. According to the party statutes, there are two routes how the manifesto can be changed: By vote of a general assembly, or through a general members' vote. However, the only route that is actually used is the assembly. Assemblies are held at least once a year, and constituted of delegates from all local branches, based on a set calculation as a proportion of the local branch from the overall party members (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2018a, para. 12).

The party uses a mixture of representation (e.g. a delegate system for national assemblies) and direct participation (e.g. online participation for all members). Deliberation is used ahead of assemblies, especially in the negotiations around proposals. All final decisions are made by votes, of either members (on local, and sometimes state level), by delegates at assemblies, or representatives such as board members in-between assemblies. Their statutes allow direct decisions by the grass-roots through general members' votes, but they are not used frequently. Such a vote was used to select the top candidates for the federal election in 2013 and 2017, and also to let members decide for the focus topics of the election campaign. Votes were held by mail, or through local meetings where the topics could be discussed as well (Bieber, 2014; Heinrich and Spitz, 2014).

Although general members' votes could be used to make decisions about the statutes or manifestos in theory, this is not done in practice. According to party office staff, this is because general members' votes are very demanding, whereas party assemblies are "well-oiled routine" (Thuermer, 2015, p. 22). Postal votes, which would typically be used for a general members' vote, are also very expensive. This could be an area for improvement through online tools, but aside

from costs, there are also legal regulations that prevent online voting: The German Political Parties Act (Germany, 2004) stipulates that decisions about statutes or manifestos can only be made by members' or delegates assemblies[3], so that in principle, the statutes contradict the law.

In practice, both manifestos and statutes can only be changed through proposals to a national delegate assembly (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2018a). The process begins with the executive board of the party, which sets the broad range of topics that will be decided about at any one assembly. The board also proposes an agenda, and appoints a writing group, who writes a draft lead proposal for the manifesto. This lead proposal is then discussed and amended through change proposals. Proposals can be submitted by a range of committees, such as the state, finance, or women's councils, but also by state and local branches, as well as the party's youth organisation. Alternatively, twenty members can collectively submit a proposal. These proposals are developed mostly in the different networks described above, but also through personal networks of party officials (Westermayer, 2013, 2017). Proposals can be either independent, or attempt to change already existing proposals. The party typically receives above 2,000 proposals for each assembly that decides about a manifesto (Westermayer, 2013, 2017). The proposal submission itself is done through an online tool, the *Antragsgrün* ('*proposal green*') – one of the tools that the party is continuously developing, and changes to which are observed and discussed in the course of this thesis. This process will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

4.4.   Use of Technology in the Green Party

Since the party was founded before the internet-era, all its processes are designed around co-presence, representation and on paper (Thuermer et al., 2016), in line with the repertoires of action available at the time their members were politically socialised (Grasso, 2014). However, like other organisations, the party already adopted a variety of online tools for communication, administration and organisation, and for both members and non-members. Their website is used to show current developments, the party policy and representatives, as well as information on various aspects of their history. It is also the jumping board into a variety of participation opportunities for members and supporters. Central communication tools also include social media accounts as well as an email newsletter (Heimrich, 2013).

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[3] The legal difficulties cannot be discussed in this thesis, but Robbe (2011) gives a detailed account.

Usually in Germany, around ten percent of party members are regularly active, and forty to eighty percent do not participate at all (Zeschmann, 1997; Korte, 2012; Treibel, 2012; Rudzio, 2015). Heinrich et al. (2002) found that most of the active members of the Green Party are in favour of more direct participation for the broad member base. Online participation can enable this. However, there is also a danger that party elites promote it to gain support, while retaining strong control over those online processes, so that results can be amended as required by the elite. This happened in the German Social Democratic Party, as Hanel & Marschall (2014) argue: the elite provided 'symbolic participation', rather than actually allowing contributions to their manifesto.

In 2009 the Green Party introduced their internal social network *Wurzelwerk* ('root works'), which can be used by all – and only – members. They can access it to read news from within the party, for all the branches they are involved in (national, state, regional, and local), if these branches indeed use the platform to post news. Members can form groups, similar to Facebook, schedule events in an online calendar, run polls, have discussions, and exchange messages (Heimrich, 2013). Unfortunately the platform was perceived as so unintuitive by users that not even an eventual relaunch could save its reputation (Heinrich and Spitz, 2014). Initially designed as an internal social network, is was subsequently transformed into an information portal, and superseded by the *Grünes Netz* ('Green Network'), a single sign-on portal that allows access to a series of tools, of which the *Wurzelwerk* is just one. This platform is also accessible only for members, and includes a wealth of resources for campaigns, as well as a variety of tools for communication, information and collaboration, a tool to create sharepics for social media as well as logos for different branches, and an integrated cloud storage where members can store and exchange documents. Several of the tools initially embedded in the Wurzelwerk, such as such as fora or etherpads for collaborative writing, are now accessible directly from the *Grünes Netz*.

Despite all of these options, party members and groups use commercial social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter for online discussions, rather than party internal platforms. To a degree, this is intentional, as the party sees online methods as not representative (Heimrich, 2013). They do not want to exclude members from discussions who do not use the internet, and the scale and speed of full-blown online processes (e.g. real-time comments) could not be made compatible with the offline world (e.g. sending summaries to members by post) (Thuermer et al., 2016).

One element that was added to the *Grünes Netz* portal in 2014 is the *Antragsgrün* ('proposal green') – the proposal submission platform discussed above. It is maintained by staff in the federal office, who are responsible for the review and publication of all submitted proposals for federal assemblies. The tool was initially intended to simplify the administrative process, as proposals had previously been sent by letter, then fax, and most recently by email. Submitting

them through an online platform made the process easier both for members and administrators, as the tool fulfils the statutory requirement to publish all proposals ahead of the party conference, and has replaced the previous requirement to send a large amount of printouts of all proposals to all 461 local branches (Thuermer et al., 2016). Although a key tool for participation and transparency, the administrative function of *Antragsgrün* was the only use of the tool until 2015. Generally, the party uses technology a lot to make the administration more effective, and save paper and postage costs, so that the increased transparency for members seems like a side-effect (Thuermer, 2015). The tools used for administration also include a membership database, as well as mailing lists and an intranet for internal communication (Heimrich, 2013), and electronic voting machines ('Televoting') which are used for elections at assemblies (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2015b).

The party experimented a fair bit with online tools. For example, it was the first party to test a 'virtual assembly', in the state branch of Baden-Württemberg, as early as in the year 2000. This translated all regular assembly functions onto an online platform, for example by allowing different parallel chats to discuss proposals. The formal votes were also conducted online through the delegates, and although the decisions were not legally binding, the party accepted them as such, as the state executive board had announced they would before the event (Westermayer, 2007; Bieber, 2014). Although the experiment was successful, it was never repeated, because it was lacking in two important aspects of physical assemblies: face to face social interactions and media representation; the typical speeches and pictures shared by the media did not happen (Westermayer, 2003).

The party also experimented with other tools such as wikis to collaboratively work on election manifestos (Westermayer, 2007). In this instance, the wiki was online for just a couple of days, and the results were fed into the regular process for developing manifestos (see Table 9 in Chapter 5). This led to hardly any of the collaboratively developed text being recognised in the final outcome (Bieber, 2014), especially because the formulated text turned out to be incompatible with formal requirements of a manifesto. Wikis are also used to organise in different contexts, for example for constant knowledge management in the party's youth organisation (Westermayer, 2007).

In addition to the above mentioned member-only platforms, an integrated campaign platform (*Meine Kampagne*, 'my campaign') was set up for the general election campaign in 2009, which allowed members and supporters to access and create campaign materials for local use. The platform was re-used in 2012, and then kept online afterwards, to maintain the community that

formed around it, which allows the party to easily mobilise supporters for further campaigns, and keep them updated on topics they subscribe to (Heinrich and Spitz, 2014).

For the election of the top candidates in 2013, online chats were arranged with all candidates, where members could ask questions, the fifteen most popular of which were then answered by the candidates in a live-stream (Korte and Schoofs, 2013). A similar process was repeated for the candidates in 2017.

The state branch of North Rhine-Westphalia introduced an online participation tool in 2013, which allowed members as well as supporters of the party to discuss and organise online. This was adopted by a small but sizeable portion of the eligible party members (26%). These users however were primarily those members that were already active in other parts of the party, rather than otherwise inactive members (Gerl et al., 2016, 2018), and so the effect of the tool was either reinforcement or replacement, but not mobilisation.

The party is actively working to further their use of the internet on federal level, and the executive board has formed a working group specifically to look into opportunities as well as the legal issues around this topic in 2015. This led to the development of new and the extension of existing online tools, intended to engage the broader member base, and draw more and different members into active participation (Kellner, 2015a). The working group also considered how exclusion through these online tools could be prevented (Kellner, 2015b).

Specifically, the party decided to improve one of their existing online processes and introduce two new ones, based on work conducted by the above mentioned working group for participation. The decisions was made at the national delegate assembly in Münster in November 2016. These adapted and new tools will be subjects of this project:

1. **Online Verification**: This is an amendment to the existing process for proposal submissions, where twenty members can collectively submit proposals. In the past, these twenty members had to physically sign the proposal. More recently, one person sent a list of twenty names to the party head office, or posted this list on *Antragsgrün*. This process will now be channelled through the *Antragsgrün* in its entirety, such that each supporter of a proposal needs to individually log in and click through each proposal to support it.
2. **Mitgliederbefragung** (*Befragung*, 'members' survey'): The party is already inviting their members to respond to regular online surveys about key policy questions. These surveys will now be sent at least once a year, and can also be conducted for branches of the party or on request by members. The survey results will be used to feed into the policy development process, and prepare debates at assemblies.

3. **Mitgliederbegehren** (*Begehren*, 'members' demand'): This is a new process similar to a petition, by which 250 members can collectively 'demand' something from the executive board. This could be a specific action, or the discussion of a topic. It was decided about as a concept, and both the tool and the process were developed alongside this project. The *Begehren* went live in April 2018, with the required signatories dropped from 250 to 50.

All three processes and process changes contribute to different questions: The online verification process, and the debates around it, inform about the democratic or participation preferences of party members. As it is the most formalised of the new processes, and based on existing technology and processes, it also allows a closer look at the way processes are embedded in pre-existing contexts. The process is likely to lead to either replacement or non-use, as members *have to* change their behaviour, with the previous process no longer being available.

The *Befragung*, as a low-level form of online participation, informs the questions about adoption of online tools and behaviour change. The process is likely to cause either mobilisation or reinforcement effects. Since there is no process by which members have been involved in discussions at this stage, it could be considered as replacement if members reduced their involvement in other discussions. On the other hand, the *Befragung* is supposed to encourage discussion, as the results are published with the goal to get members talking about critical questions.

The *Begehren* also contributes to the question of effects of online participation. However, due to its novelty – it was not introduced until April 2018 – hypothesizing about its likely effects was impossible.

4.5.   Summary

The Green Party with its roots in social movements has a tradition of grass-roots participation. Decisions are made bottom-up, with the grass-roots wielding considerable power over the course of the party. Within the limits of the rule of law in Germany, the power of party members is embedded in the party's statutory processes, offering a variety of routes to participate and influence their democratic decisions. The structure of the party further allows members to participate not only as individuals, but also as parts of different groups, such as local branches, wings, or task forces. These help build networks and thus acquire and maintain political capital. Both participation and administration of the party are supported by technology, including online tools. It has conducted some early experiments with online assemblies, and launched a members' social network, which failed to achieve wide adoption. Other tools, such as the *Antragsgrün* – a

tool for the online submission of proposals for assemblies – have been successfully adopted. Under these preconditions, the party has now decided to both adapt the existing *Antragsgrün* to increase legitimacy, and introduce two new tools, the *Befragung* – a regular survey among party members – and the *Begehren* – a petition system that members can use to set the agenda of the executive board. The following chapters will explain these decisions and the way they were made, the different views, preferences and assumptions about online participation that influenced both what was implemented and how, and which effect these new tools ultimately (can) have.

Chapter 5   Party Members' Participation Preferences and their Influence on the Implementation of Online Participation Processes

In this chapter, I discuss the overall ideal of 'grass-roots democracy' in the Green Party and its implications for participation. This is followed up by a discussion of different participation preferences with regards to discourse and transparency, from the debate at the assembly in Münster in November 2016 (dataset A), as well as in my interviews conducted between November 2016 and January 2017 (dataset B). I conclude with the definition and operationalisation of participation preferences, and some observations about the subsequent use of these participation preferences in the project, and answer research question 1: What are the participation preferences in the party, and do they differ between groups?

Members' participation preferences were at the heart of intense discussions about a proposed change to the party statutes at the party assembly in Münster in November 2016. As described in Chapter 4, the statutes allow for a group of twenty members to collectively submit an 'individual members' proposal'. The executive board, in cooperation with the proposal committee, had proposed to increase the number of required supporters from twenty to sixty. The stated intention was "to reduce the overall number of proposals to ensure a democratic and transparent procedure" (Bundesvorstand Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2016c). Their reasoning was that the number of members of the party had tripled since the threshold of twenty had been introduced, when the party was founded in 1980, and that therefore three times as many supporters for a proposal were appropriate. The number was re-negotiated ahead of the assembly with the state executive board of Hamburg, who submitted a change proposal, and led to the proposed number being reduced to 35. The idea of increasing the quorum in general was highly contested from multiple angles. At the core of this conflict lay differences in preferences for how participation should be conducted, and the perceived need for transparency in party processes.

5.1.   The Green Party's Ideal of Grass-Roots Participation

Green Party members expect that the views of every single one of them are valued and respected, and that everyone can influence the decisions the party makes. This was very visible in the interviews, where participants stated that "it is important to listen to everyone" (B04, a woman with a position at national level), and "members of government have a different view on

things, but we need to make sure that the discussions in the party are considered regardless" (B02, a man with a position at state level).

Several participants saw a latent risk of oligarchy (Michels, 1911), if the party leadership or their elected representatives were to stop recognising this ideal. However, they do not seem to see an immediate danger, as a participant in the previous study, who held a position at state level, stated: "I never felt undervalued as a grass-roots member" (0-2). This is consistent with the party's roots and history, where grass-roots participation was – and still is – one of the ways the members can control their leaders (Frankland, 2008). The grass-roots ideal is still visible in the modern party, and the proposals for online participation tools are perceived as positive because they are aligned with this ideal:

> *"Because it is easy to use for all members, whether they have a position or not, every member can contribute, speak up, and participate in the debate."* (E21, a women with a position at state level)

Korte (2012) described participation and grass-roots democracy as 'structuring principles' of the party during its formation. This participative structure is still a key factor for the identity of the Green Party, and a reason for members to join them over other parties. The question what defines the identity, or what is 'the DNA of the Green Party' has been invoked frequently during discussions and interviews. As part of the statutes-debate, participants debated the role of proposals. Some argued that it was core to the party that delegates should be able to read all of the proposals, and that their content is more important than their number, as a member of the proposal committee stated:

> *"**Green means** that content matters, and not whether we had ten thousand change proposals."* (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

The other side argued that submitting proposals is core to the party identity, a fundamental right of members which should not be limited, as a task force leader stated:

> *"There were times where the thought or idea of every single member was important to us, however small they might have been. Because that is what sets us apart. **That is grass-roots democracy. That belongs to the Green DNA**."* (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

The words chosen by members are a strong indicator that this is not just a discussion about rules, but at the core of the identity of the party: 'This is our DNA', 'This is what it means to be Green'. This perception continued from the assembly through to the interviews, and interviewees used the same kinds of arguments and wording to describe it. A change in the rules or mode of participation is also seen as a change to the identity or culture of the party itself, as one of them described:

> *"This [proposal about new online participation tools] will only work if we are able to also renew our political culture."* (B02, a man with a position at state level)

To signify this identity, and show just how important it is to members, it is interesting to note that every single interviewee in dataset B compared the Green Party to other parties in order to explain why it was different or better, unprompted, either in the context of their view on the democratic ideal of the party, or their views about online participation. For some of them, the participation opportunities were a, if not the, main reason to join the party: "In the Green Party, that's why I am here, decisions are made the other way around [bottom-up instead of top-down]" (B07, a man with a local position). Ten of the eleven interviewees talked about this unprompted, and explained how they perceived the Green Party as more participatory than other parties, more open to opinions and views of their members, and/or more willing to value members' contributions. The eleventh participant suggested that the party could potentially learn from the Pirate Party and the mistakes they made, to adapt the party's principles to online participation opportunities. The party was perceived as 'more democratic', in that more members are included in decision-making processes, and there are no instructions for how delegates are supposed to vote. Participants did acknowledge that this likely makes the party more prone to discussion and quarrels, but this was in turn seen as worthwhile and part of the party identity. This perception – that more, specifically more direct, participation is more democratic – is typical for green movements and parties (Smith, 2001).

On the other hand, the party was also seen as more demanding, having higher expectations of their members not only with regards to how they should participate, but also *how much* they should participate. This aligns with Roth (2016), who pointed out that activism is defined differently by different groups. The opportunity to participate in itself was perceived as highly motivating by study participants. A limitation of participation on the other hand was perceived as de-motivating, both for study participants themselves, and on behalf of others that they were trying to motivate. A local branch leader who needed to create an active community in their local branch described this at the assembly:

> *"The effect of a proposal that I seek support for reaches into people, into the grass-roots, and creates a feeling in all the people that I approach, regardless of the topic, that they are heard, that they can participate."* (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

The party broadly agrees on grass-roots democracy ('*Basisdemokratie*') as a term, but in practice there is no unique definition. Although some of the foundations of the term within the party – direct participation, bottom-up decision-making, inclusion, flat hierarchies – may overlap between different points of views, the term does by no means refer to the same concept for everyone. Instead, every participant perceived the grass-roots ideal of the party to be more or less the same

as their own, personally held ideal. Those who favoured very direct participation, such as through general members' assemblies, felt just as much in line with the general perception of the term as those very much in favour of representation; those who preferred equal influence across the member base claimed it as their own just as much as those who favoured uncapped participation. Members who would rather vote on issues saw this just as much as the ideal of grass-roots democracy as those who want to deliberate, or even engage in prefigurative politics (Maeckelbergh, 2011). The different perceptions between members appeared to be linked to their ideological stance, and especially pronounced between those in the left and realist wings. However, the sample in dataset B was too small to judge this alignment with sufficient reliability.

A related question that was raised during the second phase of observations (dataset D, assemblies and workshops between April 2017 and September 2018) and interviews (dataset E, conducted between November 2017 and March 2018), was the definition of the 'grass-roots', or 'base' of the party. I had assumed that this would be clear-cut, my assumption being that the grass-roots would be those members who do not hold elected positions, either within or on behalf of the party. This assumption was challenged, when members of party bodies, even federal party bodies, described themselves as 'grass-roots members'. While of course every member of the party regardless of positions is a *party* member, the definition of 'grass-roots' is important when it comes to the ideal of grass-roots democracy: Who are the 'grass-roots' that are ideally making all these bottom-up decisions? Some members of party bodies described themselves as 'not the grass-roots', and for example, refused to accept delegations on that basis (E26), or supported proposals as other members would, 'because they are still members' (E19, an MP). The threshold from 'grass-roots' to 'elite' seems to be fluent, with some members in elected positions describing themselves as grass-roots because they are not earning money through their political engagement (observation notes D4, discussion of candidates for party council). If this were the definition, several state executive board would need to be considered to be grass-roots, as not all of them are paid. Like 'grass-roots democracy', 'the grass-roots' themselves do not seem to have an agreed definition in the party either. For the purpose of my analysis, I will continue to use my initial assumption about the grass-roots, and use a scale from 'no position' (0) to 'position below state level' (1) through to 'position at state level or above' (2). On that scale, 2 can be classified as the elite, and 0 as the grass-roots, and 1 as the middle management layer.

None of this prevents members from invoking grass-roots democracy in discussions, and it is frequently used as an argument for or against changes to participation processes in the party, with each side claiming the term to support their side of the argument. In that, the statutes discussion in Münster can be seen as a discussion about the very nature of grass-roots democracy.

5.2.   Discussion Processes and their Limitations

The Green Party's processes are overall very participatory, although some inequalities still exist, such as public office holders being at an advantage through staff that can brief them on important proposals, whereas the rank-and-file delegates have no such support. In all processes, the party has a strong focus on gender balance, owing to its roots in the women's movement. An entire section of the party statutes, the *Frauenstatut* ('women's statute') is devoted to ensuring equal participation of women (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 1986). The statute, which was introduced in 1986, was the first of its kind in a party in Europe (Freidenvall, 2013). It codifies a minimum quota of 50% women for all positions, from the executive board to speaking at assemblies. The quota, among other things, led to a rise of female representation not only in internal offices, but also in elected mandates (Hoecker, 1995). Specific support for women in parties was found to have this effect across different political cultures (Krook and Norris, 2014). The women's statute further introduced a right for women to vote separately on, and even veto assembly decisions. It introduced an annual women's conference to discuss policy issues, and constituted the women's council as a federal decision-making body for these issues. It secured funds from the federal party to enable this participation, for the conference and council, as well as by mandating child care at assemblies and cover for care costs for office holders.

The way discussions are structured, and the priorities members see in these processes, can be used as indicators for their participation preferences. Proposal discussions follow a partially institutionalised structure in five stages, summarised in Table 9. Participants had different preferences for each of these discussion stages, from informal discourse to formal debate, and a different understanding of how important each of them was, or should be. Interviews in the first wave of interviews in dataset B suggested a correlation between a person's role in the party's hierarchy, and where they see the focus of discussion: Grass-roots members wanted more deliberation in all stages; the party elite on the other hand preferred to have discussions ahead of rather than at the assemblies.

Discourse (stage 1) and proposal development (stage 2) are the stages where online tools and discussions are quite unanimously perceived as beneficial. The new participation tools, especially the *Befragung*, are seen as an opportunity to enable this form of discussion, as the responsible executive board member described when he introduced the proposal for the new tools:

> *"I would wish for something like the* Befragung *to be done throughout the year, for key topics. To see it not as the end of a debate, but as the start of it: What are the important questions, the answers, the opinions of the party? And then we can discuss those."*
> (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

Using the tool in this way would indeed enable richer discussions of policy proposals, based on an overview of members' opinions.

Table 9: **Stages in the proposal discussion process in the Green Party Germany in 2016**

	Name	Description	Time	Actors	Formality
1	Discourse	Generic conversations about policies within the party	Ongoing	Members, 'the public'	Informal, in personal, local, topical or ideological networks
2	Proposal Development	Discussion of specific policy ideas for the purpose of proposal development	Ahead of proposal submission deadline for assemblies	Members, branches, committees	Informal, but possibly in institutionalised groups
3	Proposal Discussion	Specific discussion about proposals after submission; seen as preparation for vote at assembly	Between proposal submission and assembly	Members, interested non-members	Informal or formal, typically in personal, local, topical or ideological groups
4	Negotiation	Negotiation about proposals for the purpose of generating consensus for process recommendations	Between proposal submission and assembly	Proposal committee and proposal owners	Formal, act of committee, but not following set rules
5	Debate	Formal debate at assembly, ahead of concluding vote	Assembly	Proposal owners and Delegates	Formal, according to statutes and rules of procedure

Source: Own development based on dataset A (observations general assembly November 2016) and B (interviews between November 2016 and January 2017), and review of statutes and orders of proceedings (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2015b, 2015c)

The new tools are intended as scalable instruments where the process itself is scalable: It does not matter how many members participate in general discussions, and rather than being harmful, it would indeed be good for the party if more members participated in the development and discussion of proposals, as that could improve their quality. However, some of the conversations with grass-roots members suggested that, whereas the party leaders want to start filtering and make participation more efficient, grass-roots members want scale rather at this formal end of the process, in submitting and voting upon proposals. This would require more advanced participation systems, such as online discussion or voting tools. Indeed, this was a frequent assumption by interviewees in the second wave of interviews in dataset E, who saw the *Befragung* and *Begehren* as a way to formalise support, rather than – as the executive board intended – the starting point of a discussion. Interview questions in dataset E, concerning the new online participation tools, frequently led to discussions about online voting. Most participants, both in conversations and events, seemed to assume that this is the direction in which the party

was going in the long run. The more technical expertise interviewees had, the more critical were they regarding this development.

In the discussion process, technology was seen as a potential solution to the problem of scale, the overwhelming amount of proposals for the discussion stage (#3 in Table 9), not only to improve transparency, but also to improve the discussions themselves: The survey could result in members being better informed about the views in the party, this would foster more discussions and would make the preparation for assemblies easier. What participants saw as an opportunity through online processes was to improve the currently unstructured discussion process by structuring it. However, the discussions themselves would at this stage still be held offline, supported by the broader availability of data about members' views.

After the proposal submission deadline, usually about one month ahead of the assembly, all proposals were available to view and comment online on the *Antragsgrün*. Proposals were then discussed through a variety of routes, such as topical conferences, local meetings, party wings, or on social media platforms such as Facebook. Notably, there was no party-internal online discussion platform. The discussions that took place on party-external social media platforms were either between individual members, in groups, or on pages related to the party, but not mediated through official channels. The only channel owned and managed by the party was the proposal submission platform *Antragsgrün*, where members could comment on individual proposals.

A proposal committee, consisting of the six members of the executive board and six elected members, prepared process recommendations for the assembly, which made suggestions about what should happen with every single proposal. These could take the form of an amendment (a change proposals is included in the main proposal), a modified amendment (the proposal is included partially), vote (the proposal is voted upon separately), retraction (the proposal owner retracts the proposal, potentially following concessions) or diversion (of the proposal to a more suitable party body, such as a parliamentary group). The vast majority of recommendations were modified amendments. Importantly, and different from other parties, the recommendations only suggested *how* the party should make their decision, not *which* decision should be made – this remained up to the delegates.

The negotiations stage (4) started once proposals were submitted, and continued up to the assembly. Often negotiations were concluded only during the assembly itself. The most focussed discussion about proposals and process recommendations took place just before the beginning of the assembly, as part of the negotiation stage. A meeting hosted by the proposal committee was

attended by the owners of all proposals that did not yet have a process recommendation, representatives of task forces and local branches, and the party leadership, to discuss, negotiate, and ideally find consensus about open questions. The negotiation, process recommendations, as well as the meeting, were required because otherwise it would have been impossible to decide about the vast amount of proposals that were submitted for any one assembly. The goal of the committee was to keep the proposals and change proposals that required individual votes to a minimum, thus allowing a smooth, and media-compatible, flow of the assembly. The committee prepared a set of process recommendations for each section and topic, which was introduced to the delegates at the beginning of every discussion, and usually accepted without changes.

The final decision about all proposals was made by the delegates at the party conference. Speeches were held, the proposals discussed in a formal debate (stage 5), and then voted upon. Some of these speeches were set by the conference committee, and the delegates that were allowed to speak were drawn by lot – a measure that was introduced to prevent party prominence from dominating the debate (Frankland, 2008; Switek, 2012).

The debates at assemblies were highly regulated, with gender-balanced speaker lists and strictly limited time per speaker (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2011). The party leadership saw these speeches as supporting the content of the proposal, rather than arguments (observation notes D, meeting notes January 2019: "they portray the topic"). In general, the broader the proposal being discussed, the broader the statements that were made in discussions – or speeches – about them. While for proposal introductions and general discussion, speeches were as broad as described above, arguments were made explicitly for specific proposal amendments (observation notes D2, assembly June 2017: "speakers talk more explicitly about the actual proposal"; "the more specific the proposal, the more specific the speeches").

These debates had different meanings for different groups within the party. For the grass-roots members and some delegates among interviewees in dataset B, assemblies were the most important discussion space. These members believed that opinions about proposals were formed in the formal 'debate'. However, those higher up in the party hierarchy saw this stage as an orchestrated performance, as the assemblies were closely watched by the media, and therefore open conflict would be damaging to the image of the party. Thus, they wanted to keep critical discussions as much as possible out of this stage, seeing it happening ahead of the assembly instead. This difference remained consistent throughout later observations in dataset D, and interviews in dataset E: Members of the party elite perceive assemblies as a media presentation of the party, where decisions are performed rather than made (e.g. Observation notes D3,

Antragsstellertreffen: "proposal committee visibly directs the decisions they do or do not want to make at the assembly"), whereas members lower down in the hierarchy see it as a space for deliberation and negotiation, an active part of decisions (e.g. interview participant E22, an IT consultant, who described the relevance of emotional debates at assemblies for decisions). There is some awareness of the role the debates play for members: One participant suggested that there should be more national delegate assemblies to satisfy the perceived requirement for discussion in the grass-roots (B06, a women with a position at state level).

According to interview participants, the limit to discussions at assemblies was also due to practical considerations, as the limited time at assemblies does not allow much room for discussions. One of them suggested that the assembly is seen as a stage on which the party can present itself to the media and the public:

> *"You have time for fifty debates at most. But when you have four thousand change proposals you have to think very carefully about the process, so that you do not create frustration, and extract the most important debates out of these four thousand proposals, that people understand, and that maybe look good in the media."* (B11, a party employee)

This is difficult to observe, because speakers at assemblies are only introduced as delegates of the group they represent, and not in any other role they have for the party (observation notes A, assembly November 2016 & D2-4, assemblies between June 2017 and January 2018). Therefore, outsiders – or less informed party members – cannot judge what other positions they hold, and thus what 'rank' they have in the party. This aligns with Frankland (2008), and Switek (2012): The intention of drawing delegates by lot is to prevent prominent members from dominating the debate. This domination is made even harder by the fact that the internal rank of members is not communicated proactively: When they speak, all members are the same. However, at least some speakers use the debates to strengthen their own profile. One delegate described this as 'political showcasing':

> *"I think that the opinion formation for members at general assemblies is really difficult, if they, they might want to hear something about the proposal, to form an opinion, whether they lean toward one opinion or another, but the podium is used by speakers to make their name known."* (B09, a women with a position at national level)

An employee of a Green MP confirmed this, and described how speeches they wrote for their MP used the topic of the chapter of the election manifesto being discussed as a starting point, to lead on to topics that would present the MP in a positive light (observation notes D2, assembly June 2017). This goes against this intention of equality, as grass-roots neither have staff to write speeches for them, nor do they need to speak to maintain their role. On the other hand, the same

employee also described that the MP needed to be seen to speak on this public stage, as the local grass-roots supporting them expected this.

Survey C1 showed clearly that grass-roots members participate primarily in general discourse, but less in proposal discussions, while the party elite is very active in all phases, with those with positions on or above state level most active in stages 3 and 5, as shown in Table 10. This implies that assemblies are a platform for the party elite, while the grass-roots primarily engage elsewhere.

Table 10:   Proportion of members who are active in discussions, by stage and position

		Stages								
		1 - Discourse			2 – Proposal Development			3&5 – Proposal Discussion & Debate		
	Position	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**2**
Activity	**Inactive**	35	10	6	96	88	60	78	50	22
	Active	34	31	19	4	11	32	19	41	47
	Very Active	31	57	75	0	1	8	2	9	31

Source: Dataset C1, N = 3489
Stages: 1 – Discourse = 'Discussed Topics', 2 – Proposal Development = 'Wrote Proposals', 3&5 – Proposal Discussion & Debate = 'Discussed proposals'
Positions: 0 = No position or mandate, 1 = Position or mandate below state level, 2 = Position or mandate at state level or above
Activity: Inactive: 'not at all', Active: 'Once', '2-5 Times', Very Active: '6-10 Times', 'More than that'

With regards to participation preferences, the distinction between when and at which formal stage participants engage implies a different preference concerning the formality of participation. Furthermore, the difference by positions indicates that this is role-based. All of this reflects what Lillecker (2005) and Schweitzer (2008) have found about the media orientation of party elites: It is not quite oligarchisation, as party leaders have no intention to limit the influence of grass-roots on decisions; neither is the marketing logic taking over entirely, as decisions are not based on the voter-market. The intention here is only to apply the influence that the grass-roots have, before the public stage of the discussion, to maintain control over the representation of the party.

5.3.   Contested Role of Transparency in the Proposal Process

There is a trade-off between the amount of proposals that are submitted for an assembly (and by extension the ease of submitting them), and the opportunity to discuss and deliberate over all proposals in a transparent process. When too many proposals are submitted, delegates are unable to work through, let alone discuss them in finite time, whilst if the barriers are raised, less proposals might be submitted, making it easier to discuss, but harder for members to participate in the policy development process by submitting proposals.

The party is applying several techniques to make the amount of proposals manageable: Discussing the proposals before they are submitted; pulling the proposal deadline forward, thus allowing more time for discussion and negotiations post-submission; organised discussions of submitted proposals, and the selection of proposals through ranking mechanism at the assembly (for 'various' proposals that do not fit into any of the set agenda items). The required twenty supporters may also be seen as a limit to proposal submission, as it filters out those proposals which lack sufficient support.

The proposals are central for participation in the party. Without sufficient information about them, achieved by reading all the proposals, participants felt that members could not properly utilise their membership rights. The justification of the proposal to change the statutes and increase the required number of supporters implied that there was an expectation that members, or at least the delegates who vote at assemblies, should be aware of the proposals that they vote upon. However, a participant with a position at state level explained in one of the interviews how it should not be assumed that grass-roots members are able to do that: "How would they, a whole binder. That is insane" (B01).

Especially important in the context of this discussion was the role of the proposal committee. They considered the results of their own negotiations as insufficiently transparent, which gave them a lot of influence over decisions, as one of them explained at the assembly:

> *"The proposal committee has to 'negotiate away' ninety percent of the proposals, so that we can create a process at all, to get through the weekend decently. (…) This [the proposed increase of the quorum] is not about the workload, this is about the whole process shoving more and more influence our way. We have a problem with unequal influence!"* (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

At the time this debate was held, the results of the proposal committee's negotiations, the process recommendations, were made available, but all forms of making them available had insufficiencies: Paper versions that were printed regularly could be out of date within hours, so that it remained hard to know the current status of any proposal. Online versions were more frequently updated, but not very accessible, with a PDF for each of the >2,000 change proposals available on the intranet. The *Antragsgrün* showed exactly what was changed and how, in a diff-view similar to GitHub (see Figure 3), but only for the initial proposals, and not the status of negotiations or process recommendations (Observation notes A, assembly November 2016).

Figure 3: **Example of diff-view in** *Antragsgrün*

EP-P-01-056: PRÄAMBEL: EUROPAS VERSPRECHEN ERNEUERN - GEMEINSAM VORAN ODER GETRENNT ZURÜCK? DAS IST DIE FRAGE UNSERER ZEIT

Antrag:	Präambel: Europas Versprechen erneuern - Gemeinsam voran oder getrennt zurück? Das ist die Frage unserer Zeit
Antragsteller*in:	KV Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (beschlossen am: 02.10.2018)
Status:	Geprüft
Eingereicht:	05.10.2018, 11:15

ANTRAGSTEXT

Von Zeile 56 bis 57:
Wasserkraftwerke miteinander verbinden und gemeinsam weitere europäische Standorte ausbauen. Alleine werden auch für jedes Land die Kosten sehr viel höher werden Nur gemeinsam lässt sich eine kosteneffiziente, umfassende und nachhaltige Energiewende realisieren.

Source: https://antraege.gruene.de/43bdk/motion/585/amendment/4299 (accessed 18/10/2018); shows how new text (green) is added to replace a sentence in the lead proposal (red) through a change proposal.

Availability of information can be a problem in multiple ways, either if it is of low quality, or if there is too much of it. I propose to use the term 'Vogonism' to describe this phenomenon. It is based on Douglas Adam's 'Hitchhikers' guide to the galaxy' (Adams, 1995), where the vogons are a species that takes care of interstellar bureaucracy, and their specialty – among many other things, which literate readers will appreciate – is to hide information in plain sight. Vogonism describes this behaviour of making so much information available in (incoherent) information systems that it becomes impossible for individuals to find or identify the information that are relevant to them. Vogonism is a common issue in online environments. The term is commonly used in the Pirate Party Germany, to describe the impossibility to find any information whatsoever in their central knowledge management tool (a wiki[4]) due to the vast amount of information that is stored there, and has been applied in mathematical sciences (Peimbert and Alcaraz, 2016), but not in social sciences. In the Green Party, vogonism occurs in the large number of proposals that are submitted to general assemblies, which make it impossible for members to find the proposals they would be interested in.

The party discussed three possible routes of action to solve this problem, and the underlying conflict about the implementation of a democratic and transparent process: Maintain the status quo with 20 supporters, maintain the rules but make the process more efficient, or change the

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[4] http://wiki.piratenpartei.de/

rules. The executive board proposed to change the rules, the opposition proposed to maintain the status quo; making the process more efficient was suggested from both sides, either by increasing resources for, or improving technology in the process. Most participants, both at the assembly and in interviews, agreed that indeed not all proposals could be discussed, but disagreed about what this meant, and how it influenced the democratic process.

I identified two dominating understandings of transparency and the availability of information in the party. The core difference was whether the party should prioritise access to information, or the possibility to process all available information. It is also a difference of quantity vs. quality of information. Both concepts are also closely related to the scalability of online tools, as these might mediate the issue.

5.3.1. Transparency as Meaningful Discourse

One side of the argument was that the goal should be for all delegates to be able to read and form an opinion about all of the proposals, as one participant with a position at state level explained:

> *"Of course, with the amount of proposals that is voted upon, often in a very short period of time, it is very complicated to look at every one of them in detail. But I still have the desire that everyone listens to the arguments that are exchanged and then decides based on that what they find most convincing."* (B06)

This is a classic deliberative view, which I want to describe as 'transparency as meaningful discourse': the amount of proposals is a problem, because the more proposals there are, the less likely it is that it is possible to read and discuss them all. Delegates cannot know what they are deciding about, and as a result the process is seen as less democratic. This was argued by several members of the proposal committee at the assembly.

The resulting information overload – vogonism – is also seen to disadvantage grass-roots members, who are least likely able to read everything, due to time limitations. This was again perceived as undemocratic by the committee, as one of them argued during the debate at the assembly:

> *"The lack of transparency in negotiations and the lack of clarity of all the proposals means that normal delegates, who do not have the time to read all the proposals and change proposals in advance, cannot know what is being negotiated at all, and what we write in our process recommendations. And that is a blatant problem for democracy."* (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

It was important to members who hold this preference that all proposals could be read and discussed. To enable members and delegates to digest all of this information, the amount of

information that is produced needs to be limited. To achieve that goal, minimum thresholds to participation need to be introduced or raised. The goal of limiting the amount of proposals was valued higher than the ease of submitting proposals for individual members; the right to have a meaningful discussion was valued higher than the right to easily submit proposals. If a discussion of all proposals was not achievable, this was seen as a lack of democracy in the process. One participant described how occasionally change proposals were included without delegates being aware of it before they are voted upon (B3, a woman in her fifties). Therefore, the proposal committee and executive board argued that the large amount of proposals made it impossible for decisions to be made transparent – and thus they were not sufficiently democratic. Consequently, their proposed solution was a higher threshold for proposal supporters, which would lead to fewer proposals, as the person who introduced the proposal at the assembly argued: "We want proposals with good content to be pre-discussed and supported by a relevant number of members." (Observation Notes A, Assembly November 2016).

The intention of the proposed changes, and the solution of transparency through meaningful discourse, was to limit the number of proposals so that they could be better discussed, thus increasing the awareness of members for and the legitimacy of the decisions that were made (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979). This would encourage participation in the entire discussion process independent of whether this discussion happened online or offline. Thus, it did not have a direct link to the DOPE-model. Members would need to use the online tools, especially the *Antragsgrün*, in order to access the proposals, but the goal would not be to *increase* their participation, but to focus it, which corresponds best to the concept of replacement. Online tools would need to be used, as it is hard to see how the goal for all delegates to read all proposals, and the discussion around them, could be achieved in an offline environment.

5.3.2. Transparency as Access

The other side of the argument saw the goal in maximal participation opportunities for members, meaning that it should be as easy as possible for members to submit proposals. The threshold of twenty members has existed since the party was founded, and was seen as legitimate. To increase this threshold was perceived as curtailing the rights of members, which in turn was seen as illegitimate. This side argued against any change at all in the debate, instead suggesting to maintain the current rule of 20 supporters for a proposal: "I still wish for it to be possible that we have good individual proposals by non-experts who know what they are talking about." (Observation Notes A, Assembly November 2016).

Members who argued this way assumed that familiarity with all submitted proposals, was unrealistic regardless of circumstances. One interviewee from the left wing of the party described how delegates needed to miss parts of the assembly anyway, to eat, go to the toilet, or simply take a break, and therefore automatically make decisions about which discussions are less relevant for them (B07). Instead of trying to digest all information, it was assumed that delegates would select what they wanted to know and discuss about. I want to describe this 'transparency as access': what counts is the availability of the information, not the possibility to read it all. Barriers to proposal submission can be low or non-existent, as the amount of information that is produced does not matter. Members who hold this view have a preference for direct participation, they value the opportunity for each member to submit proposals easily higher than the possibility to discuss them; the right to submit proposals was valued higher than the right to feasibly read all of them. They believe that it is impossible to read and deliberate over all proposals regardless of how many there are, and therefore it is not legitimate to curtail members' rights on those grounds.

Their proposed solution was that there is no problem, the process functions as intended, and therefore there should be no change. Since the solution of transparency through access was that nothing should change, there was also no intention to either increase or otherwise affect participation. It would however have kept participation more accessible, as there would not have been an increased threshold, with the goal to make it easy for members to engage. Since there was no change, it would, if at all, have increased participation only among those members who would have participated anyway, thus leading to a reinforcement effect.

5.3.3. Transparency through Technology

The third option, to make the process more efficient, was attempted in multiple ways, one of which was to improve the process through technology. This was a key suggestion from both sides, especially by improving the already existing *Antragsgrün*, and the way in which it was used. The idea was that for both sides of the argument, technology could solve their main issues with the process.

For those arguing that too many proposals make it impossible to read everything, an online platform that enables them to find relevant information, combined with a technologically applied threshold such as the online verification process, could both reduce the number of proposals and make them more accessible. Technology makes transparency as meaningful discourse easier, but it cannot solve the basic problem of vogonism, because its contributes to its cause (Eppler and

Mengis, 2004). The party still has to decide about the scale of information, and whether the amount that is produced should be limited to achieve more transparency.

On the other side, technology could help enable transparency as access. With large amounts of proposals, the *Antragsgrün* already allowed members to select and see what was relevant for them, and find the right information to focus on. It enabled them to find the needle in the haystack. However, it did not do this sufficiently at the time, as not all information was available in real-time. Therefore, some of the critique towards raising the barriers stated that if only the technology was used as it should be, the transparency issue could be reduced, as was argued by a member of the left wing in the debate:

> *"[A proposal committee member] said it is difficult for everyone to see in the end what a proposal really says. Yes, I have criticised that as well. But the reason for that are not the many proposals, but this crap software."* (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

However, this appeared slightly short-sighted, as the problem did not stem solely from the technology or use of it – although this could indeed have been improved – but in the negotiation process that is required to create the process recommendations in the first place. If the proposal committee cannot find consensus in time ahead of the assembly, then no suggestion can be made or communicated, be that on the tool or anywhere else.

Concluding the discussion at the assembly, the delegates voted narrowly against the increase of required proposal supporters. The fact that this proposal was rejected in turn made the current process more legitimate, even for those who previously deemed it undemocratic, as was explained by an employee working for the committee:

> *"The core of the statement is that there is a legitimacy to do this. Up to now the proposal committee has been elected, but the party never said that they want things to be run exactly the way they are. And we have that now."* (B 11)

Ultimately, the party has indeed used technology as the solution: As of the assembly in January 2018, *Antragsgrün* includes the process recommendations by the committee (observation notes D4, assembly January 2018). This improves the availability – and findability – of information, and thereby reduces vogonism.

5.4.   Operationalisation of Participation Preferences

Based on the analysis of the participant observation and semi-structured interviews carried out in 2016, I operationalised participation preferences for inclusion in subsequent surveys (2017, 2018). The two most relevant statements were selected from the analysis of datasets A and B in March

2017, and then paired with fitting counterparts. Following the difference in the perception of discourse, the statements 'All members can participate in discussions' was selected, and then matched with 'All members can participate in votes'. Reflecting the discussion about what enables participation, and whether quality or quantity of information was more relevant, the statement 'All members can participate as much as possible' was selected, and then matched with 'All members can participate equally'. These two distinctions were labelled as preferred participation type ('discuss' or 'vote') and intensities ('uncapped' and 'equal').

The preferred type of participation is relevant because it indicates what type of online participation is most appropriate, and to which degree the intended and implemented tools can actually meet members' expectations. Intensity on the other hand is relevant for the types of rules on those platforms. For example, if members preference was that everyone votes all the time, over balanced or otherwise limited deliberation (e.g. men can only post if a women posted first) then an online voting platform would be a more appropriate online participation tool than a highly regulated forum.

Logistic regression models based on the first survey, conducted among the entire member base in 2017 (dataset C1), attempting to identify factors that made members more or less likely to hold either of the preferences were unsuccessful. Predictors that were tested and found to be insignificant included respondents' gender, age, education, place of residence, internet use, and position and activity in the party (see Table 4, Dataset C1, for an overview of predictors available). Equally, there were no correlations between wing associations and participation preferences: Wing associations or position on the political spectrum represented in the party does not determine the preference for the intensity of participation, although there was a correlation between position on the political spectrum and the preferred participation type.

The differences between the party-internal groups, particularly the Leftists and Reformers, becomes more distinct when looking at the factors they perceive as relevant for participation. Those who have a limited network, or no association with either of the party wings, see access as more crucial, while networks are a topic that those who are organised in wings discuss. Members associated with the Leftist wing seem to be more focussed on what enables participation, and the effect that participation opportunities have for others, while those associated with the Reformers focus on what inhibits participation, and what enables their own. This is also in line with the participation preferences: Where a preference for uncapped participation is visible, things that enable participation are more important than things that inhibit, while when equal participation is prioritised, it is logical to think more about what may affect others.

A summary of combined preferred participation types and intensities developed from Survey C1, the all-members survey, is shown in Figure 4; on a two-dimensional spectrum, with preferred participation intensity (uncapped or equal participation) on the x-, and preferred participation type (discussion or voting) on the Y-axis. The majority of members prioritises equality over uncapped participation, while the split between preferences for the type of participation was much more balanced. As for the type of online participation format they preferred, the balance between the preference for voting and discussion suggests that the intended tools did address different needs for different members: Those with a preference for discussions were happy about the enabling effect of the *Befragung*, and appreciated the comments on both proposals and *Begehren*, while those with a preference for voting appreciated the verification process, as well as the strength-in-numbers on the *Begehren*.

Figure 4: Weighted participation preferences of party members
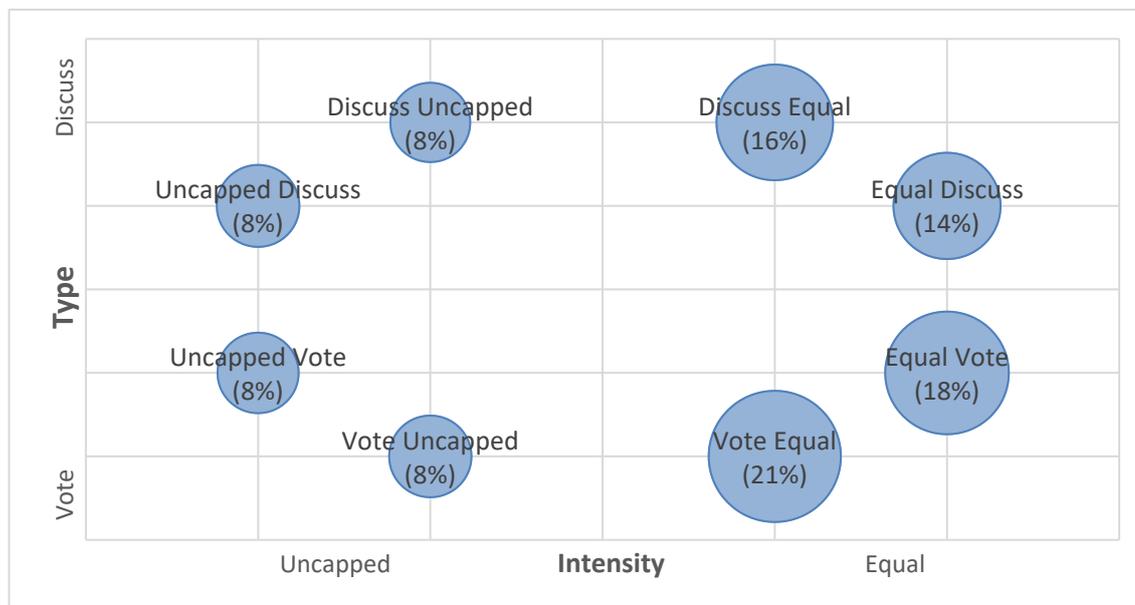
Source: Dataset C1, all-members survey, conducted April 2017; N = 3489
Discuss: Preference for discussion over votes; **Vote**: Preference for votes over discussion
Uncapped: Preference for most possible participation; **Equal**: Preference for equal participation
The size of the bubble represents the proportion of members with this preference.
Label and position on each axis indicate the order of preferences.

Particularly interesting in this context was that the division on the intensity-axis totals very close to one and two thirds (32%:68%). A two-third majority is needed to change the party's statutes. The vote at the assembly in Münster narrowly missed this majority, which has concluded the debate for the time being. Barriers to participation were not raised. The discussion did not come up again at later assemblies (observation notes D2-4, assemblies June & November 2017 and January 2018; D6, women's council September 2018). However, the question of supporter

thresholds was still discussed in internal bodies, which was pointed out in a later interview with E19, an MP of the party.

This division suggests that the majority of members were in favour of regulating participation to ensure equality. Without tools to balance participation, such as the gender quotas, everyone could participate as their own circumstances allow, and processes would be unequal as a result. Equality further implies that the party needs to enable participation, to ensure that those who want to participate can do so, ultimately ensuring the legitimacy of decisions (Wilhelm, 1999).

These preferences for participation intensity and type were treated as two binary variables in subsequent analysis. Chi-Square tests showed a correlation between participants' preferences and Age, Occupation, and position on both the left-right spectrum, and within the party, summarised in Table 11.

Table 11: **Relationship between participation preferences and demographics**

	Intensity	Type	Combined Intensity & Type
Age	0.000	0.206	0.015
Occupation	0.000	0.015	0.000
Position on left-right Spectrum	0.280	0.000	0.016
Position in Party Hierarchy	0.648	0.001	0.066

Source: Dataset C1, all members' survey. All p-values of Chi-Square tests; black indicates significance at <0.05.

While the alignment between participation preferences and party wings could not be confirmed, the correlation with political orientation, measured on an 11-point scale of political orientation (Left (1) to Right (11)), can substitute this. According to Rudzio (2015) members associated with the party's left wing would be expected to position themselves left of the *Reformer*, but neither of the wings on the right (>6) of the spectrum. Analysis of survey C3b (the second panel wave, and the only survey that included a question about both the political orientation and association with party wings) confirmed that position is loosely associated with the party wings: Figure 5 shows that members' allegiances correlate with their position on the political spectrum.

Figure 5: **Comparison of political orientation on 11-point scale to party wing association**
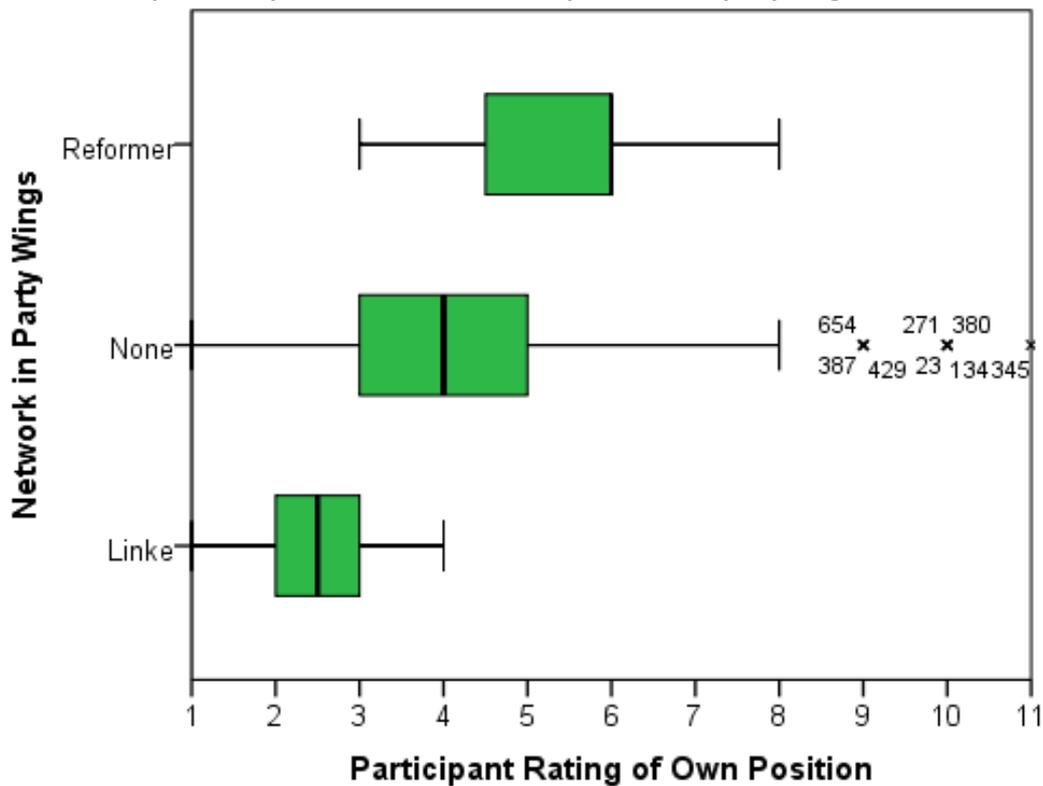
Source: Second wave of panel survey (C3b), conducted June 2018; N = 473

Despite these consistently significant relationships between participation preferences and age, position and occupation, attempts to predict the nature of these relationships in more robust regression models were not successful. However, since the qualitative data underpinning these variables, and the relationship with some of the expected demographics are significant, the variables were used in the subsequent panel surveys and tested further in the regression models in Chapter 7.

5.5.   Conclusion: Participation Preferences in the Green Party

The goal of the analysis in this chapter was to identify participation preferences among members, broadly responding to research question 1 and the corresponding hypotheses:

1. What are the participation preferences in the party, and do they differ between groups?

    H1a   Members have different participation preferences.

    H1b   Members on different hierarchy levels have different preferences.

    H1c   Younger members have different preferences than older members.

    H1d   Members who are less familiar with technology have different preferences than those more familiar with technology.

Analysis showed that, although members overall are supportive of the party's founding concept of 'grass-roots democracy', what they understand this term to mean is very different, and aligned with their personal preferences. While the understanding of the term diverges significantly between members, the overlap between their views is still stronger than that with any other party, as shown by their arguments for grass-roots democracy being a reason for them to be members in the first place. Grass-roots democracy is the focal point of the shared identity of all party members – but it is not *in fact* a shared identity. Rather than having one distinct definition, the very term 'grass-roots democracy' serves a boundary object (Star and Griesemer, 1989), fusing the ideological views and networks in the party together, despite their differences.

Scheerder et al. (2017) found that "digital divide research is largely limited to sociodemographic and socioeconomic determinants." This analysis offers a new set of determinants for the intersection of the digital divide and political participation: Participation preferences. The effect of attitudes, democratic values and ideology on online participation have been investigated to some degree recently (Galais and Anduiza, 2016; Chang, 2017; Oser and Hooghe, 2018). The preferences I propose are derived from qualitative findings from party members in the specific context of online participation. This is based on the assumption that preferences for participation in general will drive the adoption or non-adoption of online participation tools. There was a clear division between members' preferences for participation, operationalised as participation 'Type' and 'Intensity'. In terms of participation types, members either prioritised the opportunity to discuss issues, or vote upon them. In terms of intensity, they either preferred equal participation, implying possible limitations to the quantity of participation for any one member, or uncapped participation to the possible detriment of equality across members. Both were shown in varying degrees in the qualitative data, and came out even more clearly as a meaningful distinction in surveys.

From the early qualitative datasets (A&B), the participants' preferences appeared to be aligned with their positions in the party, as well as their association with the party wings. Attempts to confirm these associations through regression models were not successful. However, significant correlations were found between the preferences and participants' age, occupation, internal position, and position on the left-right spectrum.

In summary, the hypotheses can be partly confirmed:

H1a   can be confirmed: While participants agree on a common foundation in grass-roots democracy, there are clear differences with regards to how, and how much, they want members to participate.

H1b can be neither confirmed nor rejected. While qualitative data suggests a difference by participants' rank, this could not be confirmed in the surveys.

H1c can be confirmed: Participants' preference for participation intensity was correlated with their age; younger members preferred equal, older members preferred uncapped participation.

H1d must be rejected: While participants with more technical expertise were more worried about the use of online tools in general, familiarity with or enthusiasm for technology was no significant predictor of participation preferences.

One goal of this thesis was to find out what role participation preferences play in the introduction of online participation processes. By necessity, this required the identification of different preferences. I am confident that the method of ranking statements was successful, not least because the survey results were well aligned with the qualitative data, especially with regards to the size of groups (1:2 thirds). However, given the failure to generate reliable models to align the results with groups in the party, I believe that the method needs refinement to become more meaningful, as will be explained in section 8.2.

Beyond the categorised participation preferences, the debates about the online verification process and proposal supporters revealed another interesting angle: The discussions did not concern the question whether things happen online or offline so much as they concerned how the medium 'internet' changes the process itself. The verification process was implemented as a perfect equivalent of the previous offline process: Instead of signing on a sheet of paper, members signed into an online platform. This would have made the process *easier*, if it were not for the process that was used in practice in the interim: Instead of collecting signatures, proposals were discussed, and then submitted by one person listing 20 supporters, initially by email, and then through the *Antragsgrün*. The large amount of proposals and supporters made it impossible to manually validate all submissions, which made the process easier, but also less reliable and less legitimate, as it led to vogonism. With the introduction of the verification process, arguments were not only brought forward against the online process, but much more so against the offline counterpart – physical signatures – which was at least identical to the original process, or even better, as digitalised signatures were now explicitly allowed. Still, the verification process re-introduced a complication that had previously been seen as *solved* through technology. The problem then was not that it happened online, but that it happened at all.

This demonstrates a new perception of the process in general, which is *caused* by the introduction of technology. This can be seen as evidence that technology changes both the process and the perception of participation, and thus validates the use of Actor-Network Theory: If the use of technology affects how party members engage, then technology itself cannot be 'just' a tool, but must be an active part of, an actor in these processes, and these changes cannot be uncovered without a theory that allows to treat them as such.

I will further develop the expectations and preferences members have with regards to online participation, and the links between these views and the potential use of online participation tools, in the next chapter.

Chapter 6   Expectations of and Implications for the Implementation of Online Participation Processes

In this chapter, I discuss the views of party members around online participation. I will begin with a brief summary of the first set of qualitative data, consisting of observations (dataset A, from the general assembly in November 2016) and interviews (dataset B, collected between November 2016 and January 2017). In section 6.1, I show how participants saw online participation at the beginning of the project, where their assumptions and expectations were mainly on behalf of others, rather than reflecting on their own use. This shaped the data collection for the rest of the project.

I then show the assumptions and expectations that party members hold, and how they relate to the development and implementation of the new online participation processes, based on the second phase of interviews (dataset E, collected between November 2017 and March 2018) and observations (dataset D, collected between April 2017 and September 2018), which was conducted alongside the development and implementation of the new online participation processes. The all-members survey conducted in April 2017 (dataset C1) and the first panel wave (dataset C3a) will be used to provide further context to the findings. I discuss four categories of views in turn. In section 6.2, I explore the variety of opportunities participants saw in online participation processes, specifically with regards to how it could draw more members into participation, or lead to mobilisation. In section 6.3 I discuss the anticipated problems with online participation, such as resulting inequalities, or how they could lead to reinforcement or non-use, as well as the unintended outcomes the tools may have. Both opportunities and problems will be contrasted with survey data which show some of the assumptions members made about the effect of online participation tools at scale. In section 6.4 I discuss the requirements for the implementation of the new processes that members considered in order to gain the benefits while preventing the anticipated problems. These are compared to the actual strategies applied by the party leadership, and the experiences participants have already made with these processes, in section 6.5. This deep dive into the data will allow me to explore the expectations and perceptions of online participation processes, which indicate the subsequent effects the tools (can) have. I conclude in section 6.6, and use the discussed data to answer research questions two through four:

2. How are participation preferences translated into processes?
3. How are inequalities identified and addressed?

4. To which degree are preferences realised in processes, and are expectations of party members and leadership met? If not, why?

What members assume about current participation and how they perceive the new processes matters, because of the grass-roots structure of the Green Party. Members make decisions about online participation tools, either through votes at (delegate) assemblies, where they decide about tools to be implemented in the future, or through voting with their feet, by either using or not using the tools that are introduced. If they think the tools are useful for them, they are more likely to adopt them (Niehaves and Plattfaut, 2014). If they perceive the tools as used for and by all, the results of those tools are also likely to be perceived as more legitimate (Kersting, 2014). A higher legitimacy in turn would give the outcomes of these processes more recognition and leverage in future policy development processes, making the tools themselves more influential (Koch et al., 2014).

6.1. Online Participation is great – for somebody else

In the first data collection phase, participants shared their views on online participation, which was overall very positive: They expected that it would generally be more positive than negative, and assumed that it was both enabling and inhibiting for different groups. Their own experience with online participation was equally positive, such as using mailing lists to develop proposals, finding supporters for their proposals on social media, or using online tools in parliamentary work. The plans they were aware of were perceived as enabling participation, and expected to be more enabling than inhibiting. No-one has either experienced or feared negative effects that online participation could have *on themselves*. However, only a single participant explicitly expressed the expectation to be enabled through the new online participation methods – they expected to be involved through surveys. While experience was primarily enabling participants themselves, the expectations, both for enabling and inhibiting effects, were primarily for others. It seems that participants made positive experiences themselves, and thought that others should benefit too, though not everybody might. Table 12 shows an overview of these views. The result is well aligned with findings by Gerl et al. (2018), where 74% of online tool users, and 58% of non-users, thought that the use of online platforms should increase.

Table 12: **Members' views on status and effects of online participation in 2016**

	Enabling			Inhibiting		
	General	**Others**	**Self**	**General**	**Others**	**Self**
Assumptions	7	4	-	4	3	-
Experience	4	7	9	1	3	-
Expectations	12	8	1	5	8	-
Issues	2	-	1	6	2	-

Source: Datasets A&B; Crosstab of codes for all views about online participation; N = 12
Rows described the different types of statements made:
Assumptions = what participants thought was currently the case (regardless of whether this was in fact true)
Experience = personal experience with such tools
Expectations = what they thought would happen in the future once tools were introduced
Issues = problems they anticipated in this context
Columns describe whom participants saw as affected, and how:
Enabling = positive effects, such as increasing inclusion
Inhibiting = negative effects, such as exclusion
General = not related to a specific group, or group discusses was unclear
Others = group/s that participants were not a part of
Self = either participants personally, or a group they belong to ('members in rural areas')
Double coding and counts possible; for details of codes see Appendix C.

Participants suspected that there were existing divides, but disagreed about which of the members would indeed benefit. For example, older members could be excluded due to lack of digital literacy, or included as they could not engage in offline meetings due to frailty. Younger members would be more willing to engage online than offline; parents who could not attend meetings in the evening could instead participate online. While the party leaders thought online participation would be most beneficial for the grass-roots, some of the grass-roots assumed it would benefit the leaders. Most participants neither considered online participation processes as particularly useful for themselves, nor did they see them as hindering their own participation. They were enthusiastic on behalf of others, but indifferent for themselves.

All participants were in favour of the *Befragung* (the regular online surveys). Neither in interviews nor during observations did anyone critique the new tool, although they favoured different practices of using it; it was mainly seen as an opportunity to improve discussions. The *Begehren* (the petition system) was hardly discussed at this stage, as nobody quite knew what it would look like – it would only be introduced 1½ years later. The online verification process for proposal submissions on the other hand was highly debated, as described in Chapter 5: some members argued that it was necessary to validate supporters, to ensure the statutory implementation of the proposal process, and thus increase its legitimacy; others thought it created an unnecessary barrier.

All participants, from grass-roots to leaders, want to include underrepresented groups, and use online participation to enable them. There were some reoccurring ideas about who these

excluded persons are: Parents, especially single parents; shift workers, and others who do not have regular working hours; persons with limited mobility, for example through lack of financial resources, or through frailty or disabilities; but also members with smaller networks, for example from rural areas or very small local branches. Nearly all of the expectations were on behalf of others, and in opposing directions: The party elite assumed that there would be benefits for the grass-roots members, as an executive board member explained at the assembly:

> *"We want to develop more tools, so that we can also discuss online, members can participate online who might not be able to participate in the classic party bodies. These members should also have the opportunity to participate."* (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

On the other side, grass-roots members assumed that the internet has benefits for the party leadership, as a woman with experience of committee work explained:

> *"There are networks where you can communicate in line with the statutes, where the executive board can network with the state boards, where only selectively, people have access based on their roles within the party."* (B04)

These differences continued along many of the divisions in the party. Experience of members sometimes confirmed (or led to) expectations for other members. For example, a participant in his teens described how the *Befragung* was accessible, and thus user friendly for older members:

> *"I think the surveys were very accessible, so that everyone, including old people, could participate. It stated clearly to ‚now click this link in the next line.'"* (B10)

This was also reflected in the view of a participant in his fifties, who described how online participation can make it easier for older members to participate:

> *"Online participation is one way to improve inclusion. For example, we have older people who are less mobile who could participate through this route."* (B02)

It is important to note that none of these persons considered themselves 'old', 'digitally illiterate' or 'immobile' – they described what they thought members who were in these categories would experience. This was also the case with regards to age, where older members thought that online participation methods are particularly relevant to the next generation:

> *"I notice that not all, but many young people don't see the internet as a virtual world, but simply as their world. (…) That is how they communicate."* (B02)

Participants without care responsibilities also expected that online participation would help those who have these responsibilities:

> *„Our assemblies always happen at children's bedtime. It sounds trivial, but this highly specifically excludes parents. For polls, discussions and so on, online participation would be really great."* (B01)

And lastly, participants of retirement age expected that online methods would help others who have limited availability due to their jobs:

> *"[Online Participation] is really good because it allows easy access independent of people's life and circumstances. For example, shift workers who work at night and can then go online and participate when they have the time."* (B04)

There were many expectations of what online participation will do to enable or inhibit 'others'' participation – groups that the members who made these comments do not belong to themselves, who were expected to be mobilised. These differences in expectations show how everyone thinks that online participation will be great *for somebody else*. Although all participants were already actively using online platforms, these were taken for granted and not considered in any detail, while the expectations for future benefits for those who are not in this situation were very high indeed. The persons who were expected to benefit most from online participation were not the same who expected to actually *use* it.

Some of the groups who were expected to be mobilised are unlikely to have strong online habits, such as the elderly, women, parents, or persons with disabilities (Vowe, 2014; Quan-Haase et al., 2016). Since motivation is key for adoption (Niehaves and Plattfaut, 2014), and habits form, and therefore change less, with age (Vowe, 2014) it seems unlikely that these habits would change simply because new tools to participate in the party are available. It seems unlikely that these groups would indeed be mobilised.

These opposing assumptions are evidence for privilege blindness (Ferber, 2012; Current and Tillotson, 2017): Only those who had a particular disadvantage saw it, while those who did not were not aware of their own privilege. This meant, for example, that party members who were well off financially, male, or from cities, did not realise that their counterparts struggled to participate without these advantages. The most visible case was the natural use of email and social media as online tools, without recognition that these indeed were online tools that might be excluding, or less accessible for others. This blindness to own advantages could become an issue for the party; if it reduced the perceived legitimacy of processes, and thus affected the acceptance of newly introduced online processes (O'Hara, 2011). Assumptions about what makes others disadvantaged seemed to be based on early evidence from the digital divide literature (e.g. digital natives & immigrants, Prensky, 2001), but did not go beyond that. Though participants assumed some disadvantages in the future, they did not see those that were already influencing participation at the time.

These initial findings shaped the focus for the remaining data collection (interviews, observations, and the focus group), and led to a detailed discussion of the opportunities and issues participants

saw with regards to online participation in general, and the new tools and processes in particular. Since the differences in expectations were so pronounced, a set of Likert-scale questions was included in the first panel survey (C3a), to capture the expectations members held on behalf of different groups, and see whether these differences were measurable at scale.

6.2.   Anticipated Benefits of Online Participation

Participants had very high expectations of online participation. Broadly, they expected that it would enable participation, make the party's processes more inclusive and open new routes for those who they assume are currently disadvantaged. The biggest opportunity they saw in online participation was mobilisation, along with an increase in equality, diversity and inclusion in participation. This is followed by operational aspects like the opportunity to give and receive feedback, increase efficiency, and modernise party processes. Lastly, participants expected that online participation would improve participation processes themselves, such as increasing motivation, improving the influence, discussions and agenda setting opportunities for grass-roots members. Concerning the tools that the party is introducing now – *Befragung*, *Begehren*, and the online verification process in *Antragsgrün*, operated through *Grünes Netz* – perceptions of what these different tools will do differ as much as the processes themselves. An overview of the types of opportunities participants discussed overall, and in relation to specific tools, is shown in Table 13. I focus my discussion on the two main areas: increasing and diversifying participation, and changing the participation processes themselves.

Table 13:   Summary of opportunities through online participation in the second phase of the study

		Grünes Netz	Antrags-grün	Befragung	Begehren	Overall
Increase & Diversify	Mobilisation	2	1	4	2	36
	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion	0	2	4	3	34
	Finding allies	0	6	1	1	19
	Adoption	4	3	0	1	10
Change Processes	Feedback	0	3	13	1	25
	Modernisation	0	3	2	1	25
	Efficiency	1	9	0	1	19
	Transparency	0	7	0	1	19
	Legitimacy	0	8	1	1	17
	Discussion	0	1	2	2	15
	Agenda Setting	0	0	1	9	14
	Motivation	0	0	1	1	9
	Influence	0	0	2	2	5
	Bottom-up	0	1	0	0	3

Source: Datasets D (observation of workshops and assemblies between April 2017 and September 2018), E (second wave of interviews, conducted between November 2017 and March 2018), F (Focus Group, conducted in January 2018) and 0 (interviews conducted in 2015 for MSc project). Columns for tools (*Grünes Netz, Antragsgrün, Befragung, Begehren*) are a binary count of the code per participant or observation. Column 'Overall' contains total count of references, which may include multiple references by the same participants, as well as references that were not linked to specific tools.

The results of the panel survey to investigate the opposing assumptions at scale were indeed remarkable: Figure 6, Figure 7, and Figure 9 through Figure 12 summarise the complementary response pairs for the question "How do you think more opportunities to participate online are going to influence the participation of these groups?" with the y-axis representing the number of responses, and the x-axis the distribution on the Likert-scale for each group, with 'gets harder (1)' on the left and 'gets easier (5)' on the right.

6.2.1.   Increasing and Diversifying Participation

Respondents assumed that through online participation tools, participation would become easier for everyone, on average: the average rating across all groups they were asked about was 3.98. Contradicting the findings from the above discussed analysis of datasets A&B, when asked directly, respondents assumed that, on average, participation would become easier for members like themselves than for others, with the 'members like you' group averaging at 4.18.

Figure 6: Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Summed for all groups

Figure 7: Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Members like the participant
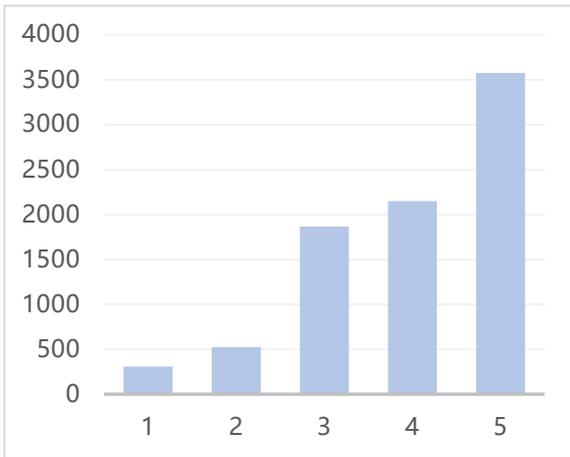
Source: Dataset C3a; N = 8426; Average 3.97
1 = Participation gets harder
5 = Participation gets easier
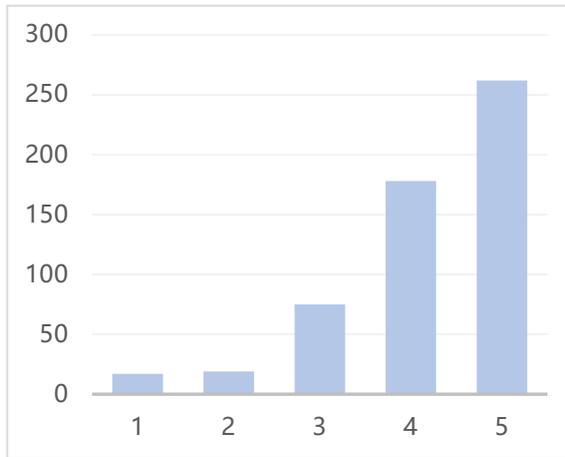
Source: Dataset C3a; N = 551; Average 4.18
1 = Participation gets harder
5 = Participation gets easier

There is a statistically significant linear relationship between how online participation is assumed to influence *other* groups, and the assumed effect on members *like the respondent*. As shown in Figure 8, the assumed average across all groups increased by 0.4 for each 1 point increase on the Likert-scale in the assumed benefit for members 'like the participant'. This aligns with findings by Niehaves & Plattfaut (2014) that the expected benefits derived from internet use strongly predicts intended adoption.

Figure 8: Relationship between Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Summed for all groups & Members like the participant
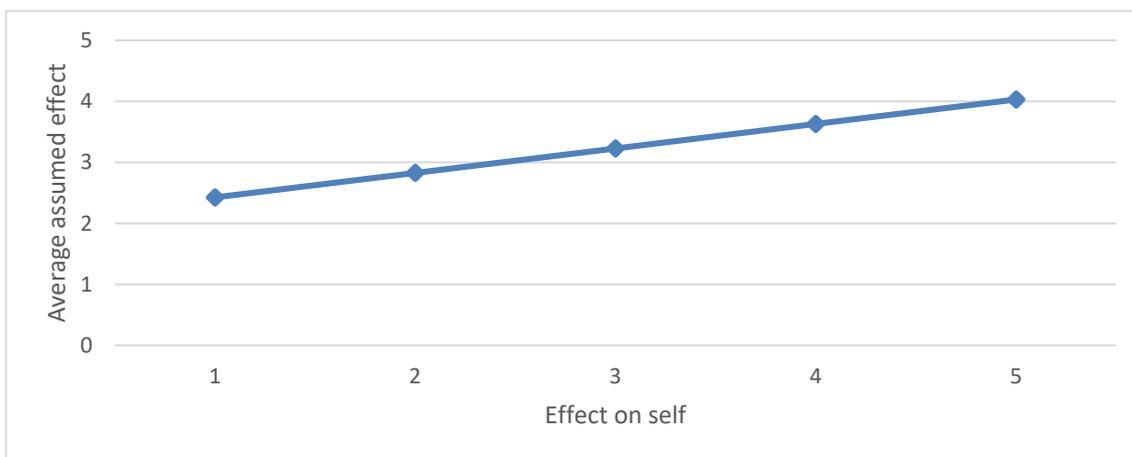
Source: Dataset C3a; N = 550; p = 0.000; R^2 = 0.229

In subsequent conversations, with interview participants (dataset E), and the focus group (dataset F), participants thought that offering more – online – routes for participation would increase both participation in general, and participation by a more diverse group of members. The ideal

outcome was seen as "gathering a larger variety of opinions" (E01, an IT consultant from Berlin) through the *Befragung*: "to make the talent, knowledge and history of the party more visible" (E29, a participation who holds a position at federal level). This was seen as a specific opportunity online, as several participants commented: "Even though not everyone is online, those who do not have a computer at home to go online are a small minority. So we will reach many more members" (E04, a male IT expert in his fifties); "Every member that has access to the internet can participate. That's definitely more than ever before." (E06, a male IT expert in his thirties).

Benefits were expected in several areas, especially concerning the participation of women, and members with lower financial, cultural and social or political capital, who were expected to be mobilised.

Gender

The Green Party was founded, among other policies, on a philosophy of gender equality. Women are less active in political participation in general (Krook and Norris, 2014), but the Green Party has the highest proportion of female members among the leading German parties (Niedermayer, 2017c). Given that the first set of interviews, were focussed around participation and what influences it, potential barriers and enabling factors, it was striking that the only participants who spoke about gender as a factor for participation were women. This might potentially be influenced by myself being a women. The theme continued to some degree in the following interviews, where five of fourteen women, but only two of nineteen men – both of whom were familiar with the results of my research – mentioned gender as an issue.

In conversations during observations, some men alluded that it was to be expected that women focus on gender questions, since gender is a highly formalised aspect of the party, and those who formally engage with the topic are exclusively women. One man told me that traditionally, men in the party were 'trained' to respect women working on gender issues, not to work on these issues themselves – a stance that only started to change with LGBT rights becoming a political issue which affects both genders, and thus made gay men part of the discussion. If this was indeed the case, the more recent discourse which was brought into focus by the #metoo movement, concerning male allies and the effects of (toxic) masculinity (Ford, 2018), might include more men in this discussion.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the Green Party has strong institutions supporting gender equality, the main one being the quota system. This is perceived by women as enabling them, to participate or speak up. One women in her fifties (B03) described how it is natural for women to speak up when there is a place reserved for them to do it. On the other hand, participants made the experience

that these quotas were not always followed, or did not lead to balanced participation, even if they were enforced. One of the women (B09) spoke at length about the difference between having quotas, enforcing them, and achieving a balance in gendered participation. Especially in rural areas, even if there is a high percentage of female members, the local branches struggle to find female candidates for positions (conversations in observations, especially at women's council, dataset D6). Quotas are applied when delegates to federal task forces are elected – one woman and one man for each state – but then, in many of the women's experience, only the men actually attend meetings. All of this may be seen as an effect of processes that elect women, but subsequently exclude them based on gendered assumptions, when things like childcare commitments, which are still mainly picked up by women, are not considered when meeting times are set (Acker, 1990).

Other participants described their experience of women being excluded from current participation, primarily due to childcare issues: "The date and time of meetings does not work for me, I have no time … We would reach those women with an online survey" (F3, a women in the focus group).

These issues kept coming up throughout the data collection, and were also regarded as one of the intentions for online participation by many of the participants, who thought that online processes would lead to women's mobilisation. The online verification process especially, along with the overall setup of the proposal submission system *Antragsgrün*, could enable women to find and engage with allies that they are unable to find offline, as one participant with a position at federal level described:

> *"We have state task force meetings where young women do not attend, because they are occupied by the same old men all the time, who tell them that they've had these discussions ten years ago … [online participation] is an opportunity to (…) find allies, network, and try different things that way."* (E29)

Looking at the issue at scale in the survey (Figure 9), there was virtually no difference between participation expectations for men and women: Members assumed that online participation makes participating easier for both genders at the same rate. This assumption was made equally by women and men.

With regard to family structures (Figure 10), respondents assumed that participation becomes easier for parents than for members with no children. This is aligned with the intention of the party leadership as well as assumptions by interview participants, all of which thought that less time-bound online participation would make it easier to fit engagement around childcare duties. Having young children was perceived as a disadvantage when it comes to participation, as

members who have children, especially small children, have less time, or do not have time when they would need it. This was particularly obvious for party meetings or assemblies, where parents need to care for children, preventing them from attending or engaging in the process – although all general assemblies offered free childcare for delegates' children (observation notes at assemblies: November 2016 (A); June & November 2017 (D2&3); and January 2018 (D4)). By extension, childcare is a specific disadvantage for women, as they are still the main carers.

Figure 9:	Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Gender	Figure 10:	Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Parental Status
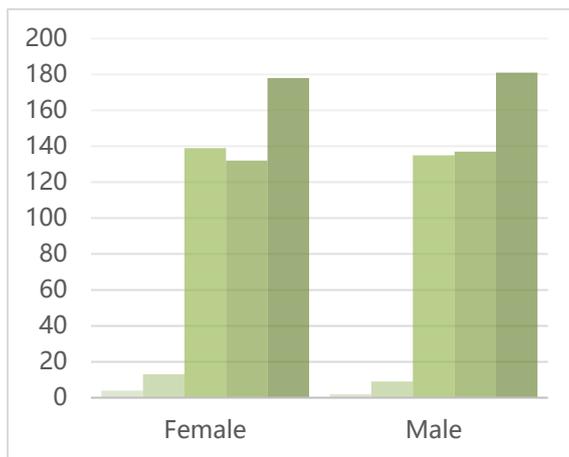
Source: Dataset C3a;
1 = Participation gets harder
5 = Participation gets easier
Average Female: 4.00; Male 4.05
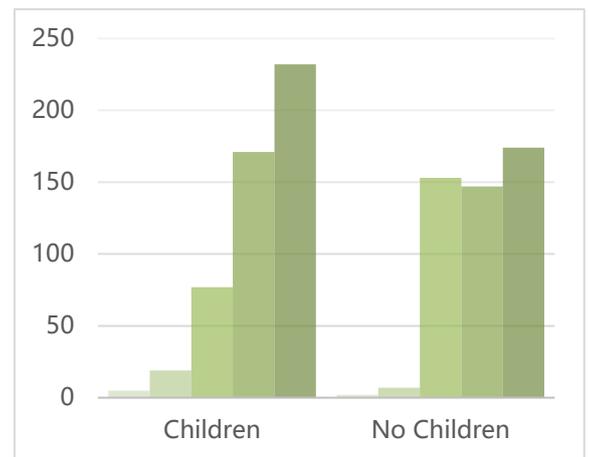
Source: Dataset C3a;
1 = Participation gets harder
5 = Participation gets easier
Average Children: 4.20; No children: 4.00

The effect of gender is the only question about expectations where respondents very distinctly diverged from what the literature suggests: There is evidence for a clear gender difference, both in terms of political participation (Niedermayer, 2017a), and internet use (Emmer et al., 2011). Although women do catch up with men, and may be able to derive larger benefits from web use in some instances, such as expressions of opinions on blogs or social media (Brock et al., 2010; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010; Keller, 2012), this effect is observed over time, rather than from the beginning (Kerr and Waddington, 2014). While mobilisation is possible, it is rare, and not an immediate effect of online processes.

The diverging assumption about the effect on women may have several causes. First, given the cultural context of the party, these responses are likely to be based on ideological belief and lived experience. As noted above, the party has a strong gender ideology, reflected in the women's statute (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 1986), which stipulates that participation has to be balanced. However, the women's council and elected representatives in charge of women's issues all operate on a policy-level. Offline, women are made visible and given time through the quota. This

visibility is certainly helpful: Campbell et al. (2006) have shown that female role models are important for other women to step up. However, it is a necessary, not a sufficient, condition for mobilisation.

Party members' lived experience of (perceived) equality may lead them to assume that the same balance will apply online. However, the statutes ensuring this balanced participation offline are not currently applied online: there is no practical, institutionalised method to mobilise or support women online. While the problem is considered by members who are involved with or affected by these issues, it is not seen in the party at scale. This poses a risk for the party, which could be hit by two divides at the same time: The general participation divide, where women are less active politically (Niedermayer, 2017c), and the digital divide, where they are less active online, especially in institutionalised forms of political participation (Emmer et al., 2011). Rather than achieving a gender balance in online participation, the effect is more likely to be either non-use by women, or even reinforcement for male members, if they are indeed already more active than their female peers.

Socio-Economic Status

Financial resources are an important enabler of participation in general (Lijphart, 1997). Interestingly though, in the initial interviews, finances were mostly discussed with regards to resources of, for, or provided by the party, and very rarely came up as a potentially limiting factor for individual members. This may be due to a bias towards higher incomes in the sample, as most research participants earned well above national average, while those who mentioned it as problematic mostly earned below that average, potentially again pointing to privilege blindness of the well-off members. The sample reflects the overall membership of the party, given that they have a high proportion of civil servants and members with university degrees, with likely higher incomes (Spier, 2011). For members who wanted to attend events, without holding roles in the party and thus being entitled to refunds for travel costs, finances did come up as a factor that held them back.

What was more important than travel cost, were time and the timing of meetings, which is a well-known issue, for example described by Smith & Glidden (2012), who found that the timing of assemblies in the Occupy movement "reflected the preference of a minority of the participants" (p. 289). Interviewees in dataset B perceived having or not having time as one of the strongest factors influencing participation. One participants who held a position at state level (B01) described that time invested in the party translated directly into power, especially on local level

where discussions and decisions are made at members' assemblies, and the more time a person could invest, the more power they could acquire.

Both time and financial resources are an area where online participation is seen as potentially enabling members: If they lack the time or financial resources to attend events in person, they could use online tools to compensate for that, as one of the IT experts described:

> *"There are people who do not have the option to attend a meeting at 7.30pm (…) That limits the circle of people who could participate. And we do not want that." (E06).*

Time, in turn, is influenced by several other things. Another group that was seen as disadvantaged were shift-workers, who have irregular working patterns, and thus may not have time to regularly attend meetings. For both parents and shift workers, online participation was seen as potentially advantageous, especially where it was not in real-time. For example, one interviewee of retirement age described how it would be great that "everyone can participate according to their own possibilities, and just sit down with their computer or tablet when they have the time." (B04). Online participation does not only allow members to participate from a distance or at different times, but *in their own time*: "It's time at the *right* time. I could afford to spend ten hours, but only if I could do it after 10pm" (E10, a father from Eastern Germany). The new tools can be used at any time, giving members the liberty to do just that.

In the survey (Figure 11), respondents assumed that participation would become easier for members with a lot of time, while those with less time would benefit slightly less. This is in line with studies showing that lack of time is one of the key barriers to online participation (Gerl et al., 2018).

Figure 11:   Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Available time
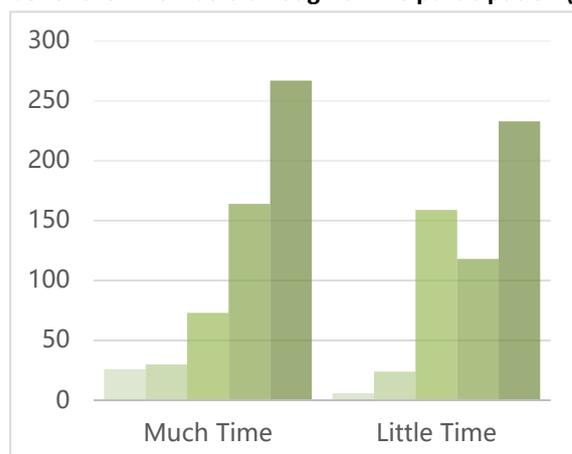
Source: Dataset C3a; 1 = Participation gets harder; 5 = Participation gets easier
Average Much time: 4.10; Little time: 4.01

In this one assumption, respondents are divided though: what they think about the effect on members with much time depends on the respondents' occupation – and thus the amount of time they (may be assumed to) have. Respondents who are homemakers or unemployed – those that others may assume will have plenty of time – are significantly less likely to assume that participation gets easier for members with plenty of time. As shown in Table 14, the odds ratio for unemployed or homemakers stating 'participation gets easier for members with much time' is 0.115, in comparison to civil servants. For employees on the other hand, the odds ratio is 4.692: those who will likely be assumed to have little time are much more likely to assume their peers with plenty of time will participate more easily online. This can be seen as an indicator for potential conflict. Members who see themselves as less able to gain additional benefit from online tools due to lack of time assume that some of their peers will be able to benefit more. The groups that would likely be assumed to have more time – homemakers and unemployed – do not share this assumption.

Table 14:   Odds Ratios for effect of 'Occupation' on 'Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Available time'

	1	**2**	**3**		**4**		**5**	
Unemployed	-	-	0.333		0.313	*	0.115	**
Homemaker	-	-	0.333		-		0.115	**
Employee	-	-	6.667	**	4.875	**	4.692	**

Source: Dataset C3a (first panel wave, November 2017)
N = 529; Nagelkerke's R Square = 0.641.
Likert: 1 = Participation gets harder, 5 = Participation gets easier
Reference category for occupation is 'civil servant'
* Significant at 0.05, ** Significant at 0. 01

However, a persons' occupation does not on its own determine their available time. For example, those who are not in paid labour will require time to comply with the demands of job centres;

having little money also is time-consuming as one cannot buy services; those who do unpaid care are significantly constrained by looking after those who are too young, too old, or too unwell to be left alone. A study in Switzerland found that employment status did not affect political participation (Lorenzini and Giugni, 2012). The respondents' assumptions thus seem very employment-centric and overlook that employees may use their mobile devices on commutes or even participate while at work (Roth, 2016). They have more access to resources, both digital and financial, which can compensate for time limitations.

Online participation tools are thus, again, assumed to lead to mobilisation of currently disadvantaged members. This is, again, unlikely when considering the literature in this area, where the same resources are required to participate offline and online, and lack of these resources will thus be exclusive either way (Vowe, 2014), so that non-use of the already excluded, and reinforcement for the already active members, is a much more likely result.

Position in the Party

One group that was consistently seen – both by themselves and by others – as having a great advantage in terms of participation, are full-time politicians, such as MPs and paid committee members, and their employees. Those who can spend all day on politics are seen as better off than grass-roots members with jobs outside of politics. This is closely connected to two other factors: information and networks. Participants thought that the network that this elite group builds up in their roles makes it easy for them to gather support, while spending all day with policy questions gives them an information advantage. They also have easier access to information, more time to digest it, and better contacts, all of which puts them into a better position to influence decisions. This aligns well with Bourdieu's theory of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986): Social capital, or networks, cost time to acquire and maintain, and for those with richer social connections, these make their participation both easier and more impactful (Hargittai, 2008; Valenzuela et al., 2012). However, there are also indications that internet use can help underrepresented groups to form and then leverage new networks (Brock et al., 2010).

The difference in available time became most obvious with regards to the discussion of proposals ahead of assemblies. Delegates who do not have jobs in politics and need to prepare for the assembly in their free time had less opportunity to prepare, and as a result were less well informed about the content or discussions about those proposals than their full-time politics counterparts.

In the survey (Figure 12) respondents assumed that participation would become slightly easier for members with no elected positions, as compared to those in office. This was surprising, as elected

members, depending on their rank, were described as having more time to spend on political engagement, including online participation, either because they are paid for their political work, or have staff to support them, or both:

> *"For board members, it is complicated to compete with MPs, because they have less time and other resources, such as staff, to help them prepare their arguments."* (B06, a woman with a position at state level)

Figure 12: Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Position in the party
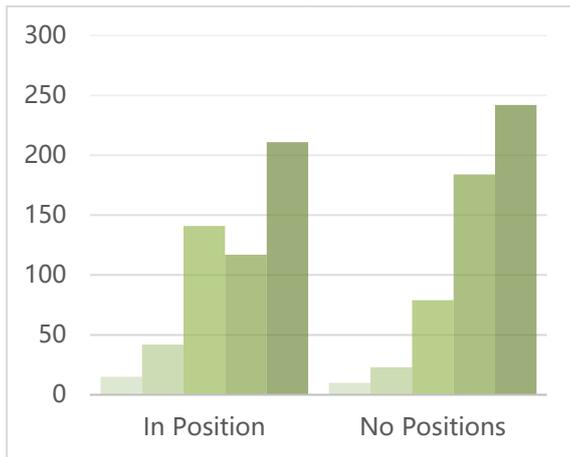
Source: Dataset C3a;
1 = Participation gets harder
5 = Participation gets easier
Average In post: 3.89; No post: 4.16

Figure 13: Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Length of membership
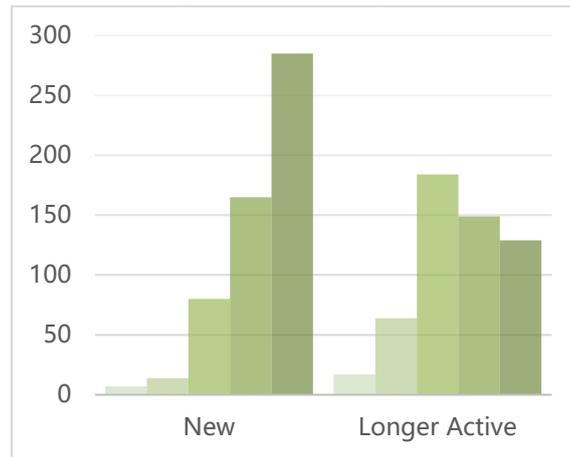
Source: Dataset C3a;
1 = Participation gets harder
5 = Participation gets easier
Average New: 4.28; Longer active: 3.57

Respondents clearly assumed that grass-roots members – or those without positions – would be able to benefit more than the party 'leaders'. This is plausible when considering that those in office are already very active, and have more influence on decisions, by virtue of sitting on decision-making committees and boards. If respondents assumed that participation would get easier for grass-roots members as opposed to those in these elevated positions, then they also assume that the grass-roots can 'catch up', and potentially increase their influence in comparison to boards and the like. If this were to be the case, it would indicate a mobilisation effect (Krueger, 2002), while also countering an onset of oligarchisation by giving more influence to the grass-roots. Increased grass-roots engagement was one goal of the new tools (Bundesvorstand Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2016a), and members clearly believe that this can be achieved.

In addition to more, and more diverse members, the online verification process specifically was assumed to also make existing participation more equal, with existing imbalances, for example through prominent supporters for proposals, becoming more balanced:

> *"There used to be a lot of namedropping. You wrote a proposal, and then selected the right people to support it. In a way you can still do that by contacting those people first,*

but as soon as the proposal is public, you have no control over who supports it." (E20, a man with a position at state level in Eastern Germany)

With regards to length of membership, survey respondents assumed that participation would become easier for members who have joined the party more recently, with longer standing members seeing only a slight improvement (Figure 13). This may be related to longer standing members being older, but also pointing to higher expectations for new joiners. However, one aspect that was raised several times in interviews was that tools are only useful if those supposed to use them understand not only how they work, but also how they fit into the structure and wider processes of the party. For example, members see little value in the proposal system if they do not understand the role of a proposal in general. Longer standing members may have the advantage of experience, in that they know the processes, even if they have to get used to a new way of following them.

There was a slight tendency for members who joined recently to assume that participation will become easier for longer standing members. This was significant in chi-square tests (p=0.034), but did not hold in regression models. Given the importance of habit for online participation – those who use the internet in their daily lives will also use it when they engage politically (Vowe, 2014) – it seems logical that new members have less trouble adopting online tools. Rather than having to unlearn years of party-internal processes, with all the changes they undergo, new members can just get used to online tools with all their functions from the start.

In summary, participants assumed mobilisation effects for both grass-roots members and those who joined the party more recently. Whether these assumptions can be turned into practice will be discussed in more detail with regards to the Actor-Networks around the processes, as well as actual use, in Chapter 7.

Networks among Members

Aside from positions and process knowledge, having or not having an extensive network was perceived by participants as a strong factor for participation. There are multiple routes to form these networks among members, the most important of which are the wings, task forces, and local branches, as described in Chapter 4.

The task forces as a large structural element of the party are important for participation, as they are often the place where proposals are developed. Networks form within these groups, and like-minded members join together to work on issues, in and outside of the formal task force structure. There seemed to be some doubt over the degree of their influence though. Even though they are entitled to submit proposals to assemblies, this does not mean that it actually

happens, as one interviewee described: The national task forces meet only a few times per year, and thus may not be able to decide about proposals in time to meet assembly deadlines. This makes the network amongst their members all the more important, as these groups indeed submit individual proposals together, which was highlighted by several participants.

Holding elected positions, or working for those who do, brings members into contact with a large variety and number of people, and thus enables networking and conversations off the record. The party wings are a key channel for discourse and information, where proposals are not only developed, but also discussed. Especially the meetings that both wings organise ahead of the national delegate assembly are perceived as very important for members' opinion formation. The role of the wings as a network is specifically important for participation of members who do not associate with either of them. Not having access to this network and the information and discussion shared within it is seen as a disadvantage. One participant (B04, a women with a position at federal level) described how she felt left out of informal participation routes due to her not wanting to commit to either of the wings.

The role of networks was discussed very broadly at the assembly in 2016, with regards to the proposed change to the statutes. The discussion hinged on the extent of the network that members (can) have access to. The size of the network is key for individual proposal submissions, where members need to obtain nineteen supporters. A person who was involved in the negotiation of the proposal to increase the number of supporters argued that an increase is reasonable, but a trebling of supporters would assume that the network size of all members would have trebled, and this was perceived as unreasonable.

Employees and office holders have larger networks and more opportunity to expand them. This is a chicken and egg problem though, as they also require larger networks to get into these positions. Furthermore, there is a learning effect where inexperienced members benefit from 'celebrities' or more experienced or better skilled members in their personal networks. For example, one participant (B10, a male teenager with local positions) suggested that, to increase the quality of proposals, members could pass them by their state MPs before they submit them. Well connected members could also help others to extend their network, or function as hubs that less well connected members can leverage – essentially the contact-rich sharing their political capital. The same participant described how they benefitted from sitting next to a well-known politician at assemblies, because the seats are assigned in alphabetical order of local branches, and this was a learning opportunity for them. Such 'weak ties' are well established in network analyses as impactful for building networks and gathering support (Valenzuela et al., 2012).

The potential positive effect of online participation on these networks was most obvious with regards to the *Begehren*, as well as the online verification process, which were seen as an opportunity for those members who did not have large networks to find and rally allies:

> *"Simply that you can now say 'this is my proposal, I send it out and let others distribute it on my behalf, and others can support it (…) directly in the tool' – that alone, I think, makes participation more equal, or at least emancipates people with smaller networks."* (E05, a grass-roots member and IT expert)

In the survey, respondents assumed that online participation tools will make participation easier for members with both good and poor networks, though slightly easier for the former (Figure 14). While those with existing large networks may benefit more in the short term, it seems likely that others can *build* their networks and increase their reach through the internet (Gladwell, 2010), and thus catch up with this advantage. This is certainly what participants believed would happen:

> *"You don't necessarily know other people at the other end of the republic. This is a form of empowerment, for people who maybe hold a minority view where they are based, or are hatching new ideas."* (E25, a party employee)

The role of local branches was a big discussion point in the debate about proposal supporters at the assembly in Münster, specifically the difference between finding enough supporters for a proposal, and knowing enough people one can canvas for support in the first place. Local branches are responsible for about 20% of proposals (Westermayer, 2013, 2017). In sparsely populated rural areas, there are less members to connect with, and so it is harder for individual views to be acknowledged. Some participants suggested that it is harder for these members to submit the same amount of proposals as peers living in urban areas, because they spend so much more time recruiting supporters. One participant (B05, a man with a position at federal level) described how local branches are rarely topically coherent groups, and although they may discuss policy broadly, members of the group will be interested in a variety of topics, and may hold different ideological views about them.

Figure 14: Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Network within party

Figure 15: Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Residence area
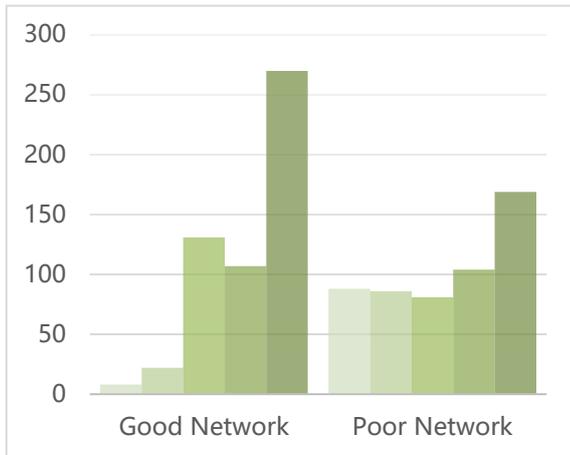
Source: Dataset C3a;
1 = Participation gets harder
5 = Participation gets easier
Average Good Network: 4.13;
Poor Network: 3.34
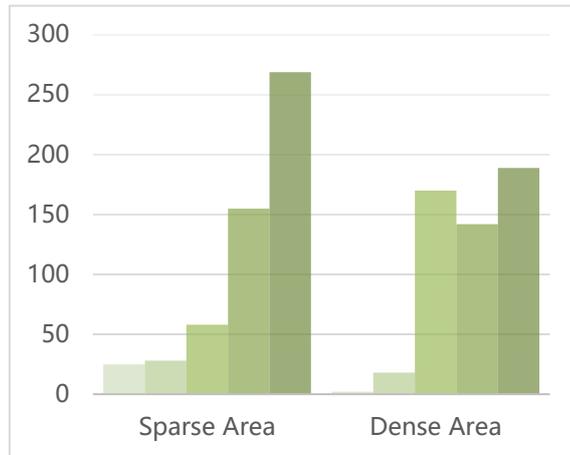
Source: Dataset C3a;
1 = Participation gets harder
5 = Participation gets easier
Average Sparse Area: 4.15;
Dense Area: 3.96

A related problem is that, as local branches are the lowest level of the party, decisions are made at members' instead of delegate assemblies. The groups are place-bound, so members have to physically attend meetings in order to participate in decision-making, which may be a factor for exclusion (Smith and Glidden, 2012). Beside the problem of attending meetings, members who move frequently are at a disadvantage. They would typically change their local branch when they move, thus not only losing their immediate network, but also any position they may have had based on their previous branch, such as delegations. The differences in opportunity to build and maintain a network lead to a rift, where some members have very extensive networks, and thus very little problems to find support for their proposals, while others struggled to meet the requirements as they are today. This may be seen as a problem regardless of technology, and a natural result of network effects that occur both online *and* offline. Not everyone can be connected equally well, and those who are already well connected offline continue to expand their network online (Döring, 2008).

Participants thought the issue of networks of support could be solved or at least eased through technology, with those living in sparsely populated areas benefitting more from online participation tools than their peers in densely populated areas (Figure 15). Especially in rural branches, online participation was assumed to make it easier for members to engage and find comrades:

> *"It surpasses space. We have local branches with only seven members, and they have never met all together. If they wanted to submit a proposal, they would have to get in*

> *the car and drive long distances to get twenty people together. And now they can just send it through the right mailing list."* (E20, a man with a position at state level)

Technology plays a major role in the extent of networks that members (can) have. Gil de Zúñiga *et al.* (2010) found evidence that networks can be built online, and so members may build networks not only among local but also topical and ideological groups. Especially through online communication within existing groups, such as party wings or task forces, social media and mailing lists allow members to connect with allies they would not necessarily meet otherwise. Some participants believed that the internet has *already* solved these issues, as an interviewee from an urban area pointed out:

> *"With emails, it is a lot easier to find fifty or sixty people to support a proposal, than it was to find twenty in the past. And that is also the case for rural areas, as most of them should have internet by now."* (B08, a man with a position at state level)

However, a member who lived in a rural area made the experience that processes are more of a barrier in the countryside, regardless of whether they are online or offline, simply because there are fewer members, and with a smaller network, support is harder to find. Abbas & Mesch (2018) have shown that local offline networks affect the scale of online networks. Even if it were easier to recruit supporters online, because their local network is limited, so is their opportunity to reach out to others. This shows how offline inequalities can be perpetuated online (Halford and Savage, 2010).

Finding support for proposals online is only possible if members have the necessary network, or access to a network, through the web. It seems that what is changing is not necessarily the network size for all members, but the range and distribution of network sizes: There is an opportunity for more members to have larger networks, and those networks to be shared and accessed more easily.

These differing views are also reflected in the survey (Figure 14), where respondents assumed that participation would become easier for members in both densely and sparsely populated areas, though less so for the latter. This makes sense from a perspective of internet connectivity, as cities are more likely to have good internet connections than rural areas. While 92% of households in Germany have access to broadband (Eurostat, 2017), connectivity is significantly lower in rural areas (BMVI, 2016, p. 21). Also, since there are fewer people living in rural areas, there is less incentives for internet service providers to build good network connections.

In summary, participants assumed that online participation processes would have a mobilisation effect for members who live in rural areas. Since those who have larger networks are already seen as having an advantage, rather than leading to mobilisation, their advantage would be reinforced.

Both of these assumptions are likely to be true when considering the literature. However, the true effects will likely go beyond this assumption: Not only are members with larger networks more likely to mobilise, but those with smaller networks can *become* better networked, which could mobilise them as well. This would also include members in sparsely populated areas, so long as their internet connection and speed allows them to use the online tools to their full advantage.

6.2.2.   Changing Participation Processes

Apart from participation becoming more inclusive, by making it more accessible to previously excluded members, participants also expect the new online participation processes and tools to change the way participation is conducted. In some instances, such as the *Begehren*, this is a natural effect, as the tool *per se* offers a way to participate that did not exist before. Participants also described more subtle changes with other tools, and benefits for participation processes in general. These new types of participation are likely to lead to replacement effects: They may be used *instead of* existing routes to participation.

Modernisation of Party and Processes

With changes in society through digitalisation, party members want the party to remain adaptable, to try out new things, tools for or forms of participation, and learn from the experience. Interviewees agreed that there is a need for development: "People won't understand if we don't use the opportunities technology gives us to enable participation" (B11, a man with a position at state level); "digital signatures should be a standard for a party that campaigns for digitalisation" (E09, a male IT expert working for the party). Members want the party to develop, and keep developing. They think that it should introduce online tools, but not insist on sticking with them at all costs – it should instead be willing for things to change again and again until they are right. The attitude that online tools should simply be 'tried out' came through in nearly half of all interviews. One participant described the new processes as experiments that "must be tested and prove themselves in practice" (B06, a women with a position at state level), another stated that "it does not even really matter *what* we do, so long as we do *something"* (E25, a man working for the party). The current change is not seen as "revolutionary, rather a cautious 'moving with the times' (…) it does not make the party more modern, it just stays as modern as it is" (E05, and IT expert). Modernising the party and using online processes was even seen as a political necessity to maintain the credibility of the party, because "it used to be one of our strongest motivations for our policy development, to embrace transparency, openness and participation as *values*" (E13, an employee).

Rather than being irritated by changes, participants were proud of the party's willingness to adopt new tools, and to experiment: "I am happy with the Green Party, in comparison to other parties, because they are more willing to try things out than other parties, that's something we can be proud of" (E07). Some participants did not even think that the processes were that new, but that "essentially, we take a process that existed before and technologise it" (E16, a male IT expert working for the party).

This modernisation also affects the foundational beliefs of the party quite distinctly, with one participant suggesting that "this is grass-roots democracy, translated into modern forms of communication" (E17, a women with a position at state level), or "these processes fit into the green ideal of democracy, considering that the ideal should suit 2018, and thus you cannot think it without including online" (E28, an employee who also holds a position at local level). Participants in the focus group also agreed that pure offline participation, insisting on physical meetings, was no longer aligned with the ideal of grass-roots democracy. In that, the ideal itself has developed, to encompass participation in different forms, with the underlying core that the grass-roots should be able to participate, and do this in whichever way was convenient to them.

Some participants even called the default of *offline* participation into question, and wondered whether, with the distribution of the web today, and as high as it would likely be in the future, online participation should be considered general practice:

> *"I think we will come to the point where we put pressure on members, and say that if 95% of members accept a process, then it is part of the accepted party culture."* (E05, a male IT expert)

One participant in the focus group even wondered whether online participation should at some point in the future become the default, with *offline* being the exception, essentially turning away from the tradition of local branch meetings and physical assemblies for decision making:

> *"We have to think about when the turning point is reached, where we have to say, this is now the rule, we assume everyone has access, daily life is so permeated in every way, this is now also the case for our members. And then if someone cannot or does not want that, then they have to take on an extra burden that was previously carried by people on the other side, and say that a refusal to use it may have consequences."* (F2)

All of this suggest a replacement process, where existing offline processes are replaced, or supplemented, by online participation tools, without necessitating a change in the intensity of participation. Members want to do things online, but that does not mean that they will do more or less. The mode of participation is changed, but intensity and influence are not.

Participants did not think that the party should just modernise for modernisations sake. Rather, they thought that there are some very valid reasons do adopt online processes that improve what the party already does. This is the case especially with the online verification process for *Antragsgrün*, the proposal submission system, which is changed rather than newly introduced. This is also visible in Table 13 (p. 117), which shows that the main opportunities seen with *Antragsgrün* are in the areas of efficiency, legitimacy, and transparency.

The online verification process changes the way support is tracked: Rather than one person posting a list of twenty supporters for a proposal, every one of those twenty has to log in and verify their support. This creates more and earlier visibility, as it makes proposals visible as soon as they start to collect support, rather than when they are submitted, and changes the process for committee members and staff working on the proposals. As of January 2018, the tool displayed the process recommendations by the proposal committee, which replaced the previously used, inaccessible spreadsheets, described in Chapter 4.

The main gain in efficiency is seen in the tools' improved ability to cope with the large amount of proposals. Rather than using print-outs, which could be out of date by the time they were voted upon, delegates can now see the actual status of each proposal in real time, including a *diff*-view (Figure 3, p. 98) showing how the original proposal has been changed.

Participants showed varying degrees of enthusiasm for this development, from accepting it as a necessary improvement ("I understand the intention, and it is not to make things more transparent but to make the processing easier", E01, a grass-roots member and IT consultant), to delight ("There were cheers in the committee meeting because the process recommendations were now included", member of the proposal committee, Observation notes D4, assembly January 2018). While some participants perceived the verification as a barrier (which will be discussed in 6.3.1 below), others thought it made their own participation a lot easier:

> *"In a well-built system I don't have to spend that much time on bureaucracy. I don't have to individually sign three times, I just log in, and thus verify everything I do on the system."* (E07, a grass-roots member and IT expert)

The original verification process was developed to increase the legitimacy of proposal supporters. When supporters were simply listed, there were several instances where listed members got in touch with the headquarters and complained that they never actually supported the proposal. Whether their support was assumed because of a vague email on a mailing list, a like on Facebook, or simply because the person who submitted it thought they would be in favour, does

not matter – what does matter to the party, and especially those in charge of these processes (the executive board, proposal committee, un/verified supporters) is that the people listed as supporters of a proposal are valid. The process needed to change because this was not always the case. In fact, in a case before the court of arbitration (the internal court of the party) against the change, the judges found that the process to date, where support was not made explicit, did not meet the statutory requirements. Most participants, if they commented on the benefits of *Antragsgrün*, accepted that it would increase the legitimacy of outcomes:

> *"The online verification was introduced to make the proposal process more transparent. To make it more visible, upfront. I think it's a tool to make a process that is virtual, partly confusing and anonymous, a bit more credible and legitimate"* (E19, a female MP)

In addition to verifying the legitimacy of supporters, the process is also seen to improve the quality and legitimacy of the *content* of proposals, by virtue of making sure every supporter accesses it, and hopefully reads it before they click through to support it: "I think the people who do support proposals know better what it is that they support" (E16, a man with a position at local level). Given this overall agreement that the process indeed becomes more legitimate, it should also lead to more legitimate decisions overall (Kersting, 2012).

The process also makes things easier on a very administrative level, such as automating the counting of supporters – which used to be done manually by staff, for several hundred proposals that were submitted to different assemblies (E24, an employee; also see Westermayer, 2013, 2017). It also saves paper, which is not to be underestimated, given that this is the Green Party, with a focus on environmental policies. Rather than printing all proposals for each delegate, and then distributing change proposals on separate sheets as they are negotiated throughout the assembly (observation notes A, Assembly November 2016; D2-4, Assemblies June and November 2017 and January 2018), delegates can now simply add a sticker to their table in the assembly hall, stating that "I am digital!", and thus opting out of any paper printouts (Observation notes D2, assembly June 2017).

Because the process is online, and accessible to all members, it is also seen as increasing transparency. This was already the case with the very early *Antragsgrün* system, and as such described in interviews in 2014 (dataset 0), but has continued in more recent conversations, for example with E05, a male grass-roots member and IT expert, who described that the visibility of proposals at different stages, and who supported them, made off-the-record deals harder. The opportunity to directly compare what a change proposal intends to change, and what the result of negotiations with the proposal committee were, was seen as particularly beneficial:

> *"You had a ten-page-long proposal, that was the old version, and then another ten pages for the new version, and there was no way for you to see, at one glance, what the*

changes were. (...) You had to compare line by line what had changed" (E16, a male IT expert with a local position).

Though the existing functionality *can* be used to make the negotiation process more transparent, participants in the early interviews and observations (datasets A&B, assembly in November 2016 and subsequent interviews) thought that this opportunity was not used sufficiently, in that the tool was not updated in real-time. One interview participant described how it is simply not feasible to open a PDF for each proposal during the debate, as locating and downloading them whilst following the debate is not possible. Therefore, the *Antragsgrün* was seen as not as useful as it could (or should) be. With the newest developments, where the results of the negotiations are displayed as well, this early criticism has already been addressed.

Lastly, because *Antragsgrün* also allows members to comment on proposals, it enables feedback, with the potential to amend proposals, so that they can reach the necessary 20 supporters. This was seen by some participants as an opportunity to improve the discussion process, and reach more and better consensus ahead of assemblies:

> *"Members who want to submit proposals get feedback through the comments. This communication that happens before the proposal is submitted could only be had with the committee until now."* (E03, a female IT expert with a position at state level)

Beyond improvements to the proposal process in *Antragsgrün*, some other opportunities stood out in conversations, the largest of which was seen in a side-effect of the online verification: Because everyone who wants to support proposals now needs to access the *Antragsgrün*, and this login is – through a single-sign-on – the same for the *Grünes Netz*, members who adopt the *Antragsgrün* can automatically also access a cornucopia of other tools and information:

> *"Once something like this is implemented – and the verification is the first step to that – you can offer other things, like, collecting donation receipts."* (E08, a man with a position at federal level)

What all these anticipated improvements have in common is that they would make participation broader. More members could, and would need to, engage in these online processes, especially in the online verification. However, they are not intended to *increase* participation, but more to replace or improve existing processes. Thus, replacement is the most likely result. Reinforcement is unlikely, given that more members, including those who previously engaged through different routes such as email or social media, have to engage in the statutory process. This is unlikely to lead to mobilisation – increased participation – in the short term, but may do so in the long term (Kerr and Waddington, 2014).

New types of participation

The new online processes are not only seen as increasing participation and improving processes: Some of the tools also offer brand-new routes to participation, and thus processes that simply were not there before. This is primarily the case for the *Begehren*, which now allows members to petition the executive board, and the *Befragung*, the surveys which enable feedback, and make a new type of data available to both members and committees in the party.

The *Begehren* allows a group of 50 members to 'petition' the executive board. Like with a petition, it does not mandate a specific outcome, but a successful *Begehren* must receive a response from the executive board in a set timeframe. This gives members a formal route to "reach out to the executive board, the decision makers" (E26, a man with a position at federal level), and thus to set the agenda. The formality of the route is particularly relevant, as many of the interview participants, who tended to hold positions of their own, explicitly stated that they would *not* use the Begehren, as they had different routes to reach out to the board, make their views heard, or try to influence policy decisions: "I have many contacts, I am in committees, and I see this as a tool for members who do not have that level of access" (E19, a female MP). They universally saw the *Begehren* as an opportunity for members who did not have their network and position to do the same. In that, the *Begehren* can balance some of the influence that informal networks would otherwise have: "It's a structured way to set a goal, or disagree with something, and have a structured discussion about that" (E03, a female IT expert).

Several participants highlighted that networks are one of the key routes for informal participation, be it through access to information, influence on decision-making processes, or simply to know where decisions are made in the first place. Especially membership in selective groups, such as the writing groups for manifesto proposals – which have no application and election process, but are hand-picked by the executive board – gives party members more influence than they could otherwise obtain. One interviewee (B05, a man with a position at federal level) described how being a delegate is less relevant, because they "would be one of 850 delegates, but one of 50 task force speakers." The *Begehren* is seen as a way for grass-roots members to balance these imbalances to some degree, because they make it easier to set the agenda and force bottom-up decisions in their favour: "It is a big thing when 50 members get a response from the executive board" (Observation notes D5, manifesto launch event, April 2018). This process then allows grass-roots members more control and makes the board more accountable, which may in turn helps to prevent oligarchisation.

Some local leaders also saw an opportunity to use the *Begehren* to achieve national attention for local issues, especially where the topic does not draw sufficient support to achieve a ranking for a 'various-proposal' at a national delegate assembly. Some assumed that the *Begehren* could, to some degree, replace those proposals, as it would offer an alternative route for members to gauge the support for their ideas, and help solve to the problem of vogonism in proposals by reducing their number. The potential benefits were highlighted in several interviews: Positions could either become more legitimate, because they demonstrate that they have broad support in the party; or they could be outed as insignificant, especially where they were raised by a 'loud minority' (Bourdeaux, 2008):

> *"There's a few groups who think that their topics are really important, but the executive board never does anything about them. (…) And then you rank them and find that actually the board never does, because this is a radical faction that is loud, but not large. And that is a good thing to make visible."* (E24, a female member and employee)

However, others argued that it would be easier to collect 20 supporters for a proposal at an assembly, than 50 supporters for a *Begehren*. While there seems to be some potential for replacement, it remains to be seen which purpose for use of the *Begehren* prevails.

The *Befragung* also offers a new way of interacting between grass-roots and leaders. While previously a board may have occasionally used external companies to conduct surveys, having the opportunity to do it themselves, with technology provided by the party at no additional costs, opens up new possibilities for leaders on all levels to receive feedback on their own work:

> *"It changes the dynamics of feedback. Traditionally there is a board, and they do things, and hold power, and just do things with that. And then afterwards, members can vote them out if they did not like it. But it makes much more sense for the board to get feedback on their own, now and then."* (E20, a man with a position at state level)

The results of a *Befragung* are a new type of 'data' that did not exist before: The party never had regular, structured data about the views of party members on a range of questions. The availability of this information, and the opportunity for branches and committees in the party to collect it easily and effectively, are new. In addition to informing boards and committees, this data could also allow members to understand how their own views compare to the majority of the party, or on larger scale, allow the executive board to see how their intentions compare to, for example, those of strong state branches: "the executive board could say, we have this tool, if you as a state branch want to argue that position, let us see how the party as a whole sees it" (E05). In that, the tool offers the opportunity for committees to gather and use feedback from relevant party branches. This 'getting a feeling for what is going on in the party' was seen as a great opportunity by many participants, across all levels of the party, with side effects such as enabling the Berlin-centric party elite to understand what is going on outside of their 'bubble'. Many

participants also saw this as a potential to motivate members, as they can give their opinion much more frequently than they otherwise could.

These new participation processes are so new, that not even those developing them were quite certain what they would ultimately look like. Given the interest in the tools, wide spread non-use seems unlikely, although the lack of awareness of the *Begehren* makes a repetition of Gerl et al. (2018) likely, where only a small group of members adopted and a majority did not know about the tool. If the new processes are adopted, this may lead to replacement (if participation simply shifts), reinforcement (if active members adopt them), or mobilisation (if new members adopt them).

In summary, party members have distinct expectations of who will benefit from online participation: it will make participation easier for everyone, apart from 'old people'. Members who are younger, both in terms of age and membership, well connected, with elected positions and plenty of time, living in sparsely populated areas, and with children – not necessarily in this precise, hard-to-attain combination – are assumed to benefit the most. This also reflects members who are not currently heavily involved. Overall though, respondents assume that, on average, participation will become easier for members like themselves than for others. If these assumptions were true, it would be logical to expect the introduction of online participation tools to lead to a mobilisation effect. It would be easier for members who are currently excluded to participate, therefore they could increase their participation, and catch up with their highly active peers.

6.3.   Anticipated Problems with Online Participation

The biggest worry members had with online participation was that it creates barriers, and thereby exclude members from participation. This was followed by worries about the results of these processes, which could either have effects that were not intended – like survey results being more binding than they ought to be – or no effect at all, which could demotivate members. Just like with the opportunities that members see, worries of what the different tools will do differed strongly. An overview of the types of issues participants discussed overall, and in relation to specific tools, is shown in Table 15. I will now focus on the two main areas: inequality, and unintended outcomes.

Table 15:   Summary of issues with online participation in the second phase of the study

		Grünes Netz	Antrags-grün	Befragung	Begehren	Overall
Inequality	Barriers	0	10	2	0	30
	Inequality	0	1	4	1	21
	Reinforcement	0	2	0	0	9
Unintended Outcomes	Missing Impact	0	0	5	4	20
	Directed Discourse	0	1	7	0	16
	Necessity	0	0	1	4	11
	Demotivation	0	0	2	1	10
	Lack of Discussion	0	0	0	1	10
	Overload	0	1	2	5	9
	Accidentally Binding Decisions	0	0	3	0	8

Source: Datasets D (observation of workshops and assemblies between April 2017 and September 2018), E (second wave of interviews, conducted between November 2017 and March 2018), F (Focus Group, conducted in January 2018) and 0 (interviews conducted in 2015 for MSc project). Columns for tools (*Grünes Netz, Antragsgrün, Befragung, Begehren*) are a binary count of the code per participant or observation. Column 'Overall' contains total count of references, which may include multiple references by the same participants, as well as references that were not linked to specific tools.

6.3.1.   Inequality, Exclusion

While online participation was perceived by and large as a big opportunity to increase and diversify participation, as discussed above, participants were worried that it may also lead to new forms of exclusion, or the reinforcement of existing inequalities. This view would be supported by the reinforcement theory (Norris, 2001). For example, if members failed to adopt the single-sign-on platform, they would be excluded from *all* of the opportunities this would otherwise give them access to.

> *"Of course, because it is now digital, there's a tendency for people who are online, or more online than others, that they will have it easier to participate, than those who are not online at all. On the other hand, those are probably not the people who have been active before, attended assemblies and the like. So, while online is always problematic to some degree, I doubt that it actually creates new divisions."* (E16, and IT expert working for the party)

The most critically discussed tool by far was the online verification process, which was seen to have the *purpose* of creating a barrier where previously there was none. It fulfils a statutory task – supporting proposals – and is online by default. Using the tool was described as easy enough, and its capacity to make the process transparent was appreciated by many. However, participants were worried, or had even made the experience, that the process is exclusive for members who are older, have limited internet access or skills:

"All I can say is, from my experience, is that nobody knows about this, apart from those who have always submitted proposals – who of course adopted this immediately. Apart from that, the generic grass-roots member does not even know the process exists, and will only hear about it when they try to sign or submit a proposal." (E17, a woman with positions at state and federal level)

Participants were particularly worried about *systematic* exclusion for those members who could not, or would not, use online tools:

"Those who are already active online, or have an affinity, will use these processes immediately, and others will not. We need to have a look at that, to make sure that we do not systematically exclude certain groups." (E19, a female MP)

The Green Party used to be a 'young' party, in the overall party spectrum in Germany, with the youngest average age of members. However, this average age has constantly risen as members are ageing. The first generation of members who joined in the 80s are now, nearly 40 years on, seen as struggling to keep up with the demands of the digital world. It is thus little surprising that members see age as a key differentiator for online participation.

In the initial interviews, online participation was seen as potentially beneficial for both younger *and* older members: For young members, because they are technically savvy and do everything else online anyway, for older members, because they may be excluded from other forms of participation, such as attending events, due to frailty. Online participation *could* be an opportunity for older members, and some participants were optimistic that older party members are sufficiently technology-savvy to adopt online tools ("even 80 year old grandma uses WhatsApp nowadays" (E06)). However, this optimistic view was not shared by all participants. Indeed, some of them described experiences where lack of technical skills kept members from participating in the way that they wanted:

"I submitted a proposal for [name], because they simply were not able to do it, to gather supporters and all that. They wrote a wonderful proposal, got their local branch to agree and all that, but couldn't [get the proposal submitted] on their own." (B03, a women in her fifties)

In the survey (Figure 16), respondents assumed that online participation tools would make participation a lot easier for younger members, while making it slightly harder for older members – the only group for which participation was assumed to become harder.

Figure 16:   Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Age
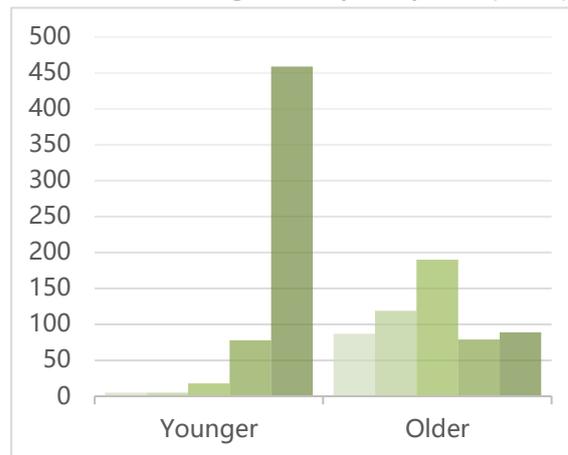
Source: Dataset C3a; 1 = Participation gets harder; 5 = Participation gets easier
Average Younger: 4.74; Older: 2.94

The assumption that older members will struggle to leverage the new tools is unsurprising, as age – defining groups of digital natives and immigrants (Prensky, 2001) – is the one demographic category affecting digital divides that has reached mainstream attention. Although this concept in itself is too narrow (White and Le Cornu, 2011), age has been shown to be a relevant factor for internet use time and time again (Ward et al., 2002; Emmer et al., 2011; Oser et al., 2013; Vowe, 2014). Participants are right to worry that older members may struggle to use the new online tools. However, this could only be the case for the online verification process, which is in fact replacing a previously easier (though still primarily online) process. While there is an alternative route to participate, for example through letters or fax, one participant pointed out that this is not the same: "We always say that there are online and offline components, but of course, the offline components are used much less." (E08, a man with a position at national level)

Apart from the online verification process, it is difficult to see how participation can in fact get *harder* when new tools do not replace or replicate existing offline processes but supplement them. Instead, they offer an *additional* route to influence the party's policy discussions. As such, they cannot make participation harder per se. The additional online route may however be less accessible to these 'older members', which is what members did worry about: "Especially the people who are a bit older, I don't think that they will click through a survey every time" (E02, a woman with a position at national level). The discussion about age overlooks that older members may also be both more experienced in political and party process, as well as the relevant technology (Kania-Lundholm and Torres, 2015).

Age is consistently seen as an indicator for IT skills. Lacking these skills in turn was often perceived as a barrier to online participation both among participants and in literature (van Deursen et al.,

2011; Eynon and Geniets, 2016; Beam et al., 2018). One participant in her sixties was very aware of her lack of skills to use the technology as much as younger members did.

> *"Equal access for everyone also means that you have to pick people up from where they currently stand. For example, I am over sixty, and I try to get along with new media, and I know that I have much bigger difficulties with it than younger people, who grew up with this. And I know that there are people in my age group who do not even know how to send a text message. They may have a mobile phone, if at all, but possibly not even an email address."* (B04, a women in her sixties)

Despite the broad assumptions across members that lack of IT skills can prevent participation, it is mostly seen as a problem that *other* people have. This was very visible in the discussion about the introduction of the online verification process, as one member opposing the changes argued at the assembly:

> *"For half of these twenty people, logging in and getting around the Wurzelwerk is only an increase of work and a bit annoying. Three or four have lost their login details or would rather do it tomorrow, for five of them it is a real challenge because they have never accessed the platform before, and one or two are definitely not joining in, because their digital competency is insufficient."* (Observation notes A, Assembly November 2016)

However, even interview participants who argued against the process had already recruited their supporters online, mainly through Facebook and mailing lists. This was called out as a contradiction by another participant:

> *"Who does not use online shopping, or has an account somewhere for some purpose, where they have to remember login details. I think … to say that, of all purposes, it would be too much to remember another password for the party, that's a bit …"* (F2, female participant in the focus group)

In general, when technology is seen as inhibiting member's participation, this is usually framed as a problem of the tools that are used, not as a lack of skills: The tools are too complicated, they should be easier to use, and skills should not be a requirement to participate in the first place. Members may simply have higher expectations of the skills that are required than they actually need. For example, one participant described how they can surf the internet but not build a homepage, and framed that as a lack of skill (B04, a women in her sixties) – but building homepages is a skill that is not at all required to use the party's participation tools.

To derive benefits from technological advantages, members require skills, or an affinity to technology. If they have the skills to use the technology to their advantage, then they benefit, if they cannot, they don't (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010). This can create – or reinforce – a rift in the membership. Hardly any members perceived any other than IT skills as relevant, again reflecting the concept of digital natives and immigrants (Prensky, 2001).

There was some discussion about other skills required for participation *in general*, such as voicing an opinion or formulating proposals. The rather academic tone of discussions in the party was perceived as excluding members, or potential members. One participant mentioned how the party does make an effort to translate all their publications, such as manifestos, into accessible language, but the discussions that lead to these publications are held at such a high, academic level, that only highly educated persons can participate in them (Observation notes D1, Hackathon April 2017). A participant of the women's conference asked pointedly how the party could: "reach lesser educated women if we have discussions on this academic level?" (Observation notes D6, women's conference September 2018).

Differences in skill levels between younger members were not discussed at all. The broad assumption was that 'young people know how to use the internet' – which is contradicted in the digital divide literature (Eynon and Geniets, 2016). Internet use, especially for political participation, differs based on age, gender, income and education (Emmer et al., 2011), which in turn influences the benefits participants can derive from use of the web (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010).

Participants were also worried, albeit to a much lesser degree, about the use of the *Befragung*, as not all members may equally be able to give feedback and thus input into policy discussions. In this regard, one issue, which was raised frequently from participants who felt involved with or responsible for women's issues, was that women could participate less:

> *"Online, you usually have a higher participation by men than by women. It is important that we ensure that women's participation (…) is equal, and crate the space for that to happen." (*E12)

The surveys the party has conducted to date have had less participation from women than men, which was also noted in interviews. As described above, the party currently has no structured approach to supporting women's participation online. This lack of support fits with findings by Knappe & Lang (2014), who argue that as of 2010 German feminist movements mainly used the internet to inform, while conducting their activism offline. Given the party's focus on gender equality, I had expected to find that they consistently supported women both offline and online, especially since both the digital divide literature (Meßmer and Banaszczuk, 2013) as well as the party's own history (Frankland, 2008) would suggest gender as a potential source of inequality for online participation. This turned out not to be the case.

Inequalities of online participation processes were also not as present in discussions as I had expected. There are a lot of other issues, around influence, unintended consequences (e.g. accidentally binding decisions), and security, that are much more prevalent than exclusion or

inclusion. In overall comparison, exclusion is not very relevant for members, or at least seen as one small one among many larger issues – mainly because they make an assumption well aligned with technological determinism: that the online tools will 'naturally' include more members.

6.3.2.   Unintended Outcomes

Unequal access or exclusion of members are the most discussed, but only one of several potential unintended consequences of the introduction of online participation methods that participants worried about. They also highlighted potential issues with the outcomes of those participation methods, such as the results not materialising, or being negative in themselves.

Lack of impact of participation was the third most mentioned issue, according to Table 15 (p. 140). This was highlighted as a possible effect of both the *Befragung* and *Begehren*, but also in a more general way, where participants said that online participation tools must not be a 'simulation' of participation, as that would have a demotivating effect: "If you do create a participation opportunity, then it must have an impact. Otherwise you get people to engage for nothing, and that will cause frustration" (E12, a woman with a position at national level)

If this topic came up in interviews, participants by and large agreed that online participation would only be worthwhile if it had an actual impact. This is a well-known problem from citizen participation, where transparency is paramount to acceptance (Huber et al., 2011). Participants did see potential problems in this space for both *Befragung* and *Begehren*: The data from surveys could be either not accessible, not discussed, or simply inconclusive: "What happens if there are no 'good results'? I think that in the least of all cases, you realise afterwards that what you found [through a survey] is spectacular in any way" (E01, a male grass-roots member). If that were the case, and members were regularly asked for their views, but those views would not lead to any distinguishable changes to discussions or decisions, or *Begehren* would not lead to the outcome that members wished for when the executive board discussed them, this would in turn be demotivating:

> "If the board says, we looked at your Begehren, but we see this entirely different, then it just vanishes. And I don't know, in that case, whether it wouldn't be better to not have the tool at all." (E02, a women with a position at national level)

Several participants also stated that they were not aware what, if any, impact the surveys the party conducted to date had had.

> "It depends what they do with it in the end. I did not find this transparent for the last one. What happened there? We had this focus topic of social justice, and now what do we do? Or what does the board do?" (E23, a woman with a position at national level)

The *Begehren* could also have a negative impact, if they were used too much, or by 'the wrong people': "If people saw that it is only used for insignificancies, (…) I would be afraid to rely on the tool, because my issue might get a bad name if I do." (E01, a male grass-roots member). Others saw a similar danger for the *Befragung,* if it were used for nonsensical questions, as this could undermine more important participation.

What many participants were worried about with regards to the *Befragung* was its impact on the discussion and culture of the party, in several ways. First, since the process functions top-down, with the executive board selecting topics and writing the survey questions, some participants were worried that this could be used to create intended outcomes, or direct the discourse in a way to support the views of those who created the survey, either through the questions that are asked at all: "I feel that obvious questions are not asked, even though they are the elephant in the room" (E02, a women with a position at national level), or their wording: "I have the impression that questions are asked without much consideration, and I wonder whether there is sufficient awareness of the influence the questions have on responses" (E22, a man working for the party).

Aside from controlling what is being discussed, ("If you control what is being discussed, then you control the processes in the party," E06, a male IT expert), participants thought both the *Befragung* and *Begehren* could replace rather than advance discussions. Some participants were concerned that it would make little sense to ask for opinions about a topic unless there had been a broad discussion about it first: "I'm sceptical, because I believe that often a direct confrontation or debate would be required, and that could drop out of sight, or not happen at all" (E17, a women with a position at federal level).

As an extension to the lack of debates, the results of the new online processes could be taken so seriously that they effectively become binding decisions. This was a specific worry for the IT experts in the sample, as they felt that if that happens, while the survey tool does not meet minimum security criteria for actual online decision-making, this would pose an even larger risk: "If it *de facto* forces the board's hand, and they *cannot* decide any other way, (…) then there's the question of how representative this feedback really is" (E05, a male IT expert). Moreover, if this was how results were perceived, this would also call into question how the party conducts democracy internally, and what the role of their committees and boards should be:

> *"It cannot work if at some stage it is perceived as undemocratic if something was not decided through a* Befragung*, because there are certain questions that are better suited to a committee or assembly."* (E19, a female MP)

In the longer term, if surveys or even online decisions became a commonality, this could not only raise doubts about the role of committees or the party-internal hierarchy, but even about the

concept of value of participation that is currently adhered to; if members' engagement and expertise were no longer valued, as it could easily be overruled by an uninformed majority, this would be demotivating for those engaged in traditional routes:

> *"There's a danger for people who are active in the party and spend a lot of time (…) that their efforts are simply overruled by people who just make a few clicks once a week, and that then in effect de-values or negates weeks of committee work."* (E06, a male IT expert with a position at state level)

What makes the adoption of new online processes a problem specific to the Green Party, is that the existing platform *Wurzelwerk* is quite universally hated. It was designed as a party-internal social network, and is now mainly used as a knowledge management system where members can find resources for various occasions. However, members do not seem to be clear about what the Wurzelwerk is, and describe how they may not like other online participation opportunities that they perceive as related to the platform, which are in fact not related to the *Wurzelwerk* at all. They mix up the different tools, like the *Antragsgrün* (the proposal submission system), or *Grünes Netz* (the umbrella platform), and generally seem to be confused about what is what. This was especially visible during the focus group, where participants ended up spending a significant amount of time explaining the tools to each other, only to end with "This is all … very in-transparent, so, maybe we should propose that this is explained to us more clearly, the what, where, how, and for what purpose" (F3, a female participant in the focus group).

What is interesting about these anticipated negative outcomes, is that by and large, they could be labelled as replacement – but in a negative way. Rather than replacement simply referring to the adoption of new tools and replacing other forms of participation, focussing on the *new tool*, participants were afraid that the replacement of the *old processes*, especially discussions, would be to the detriment of the quality of participation overall. The worst-case-scenario would be for the new tools to mobilise the 'loud minorities' and thereby drive those the party wants to mobilise into non-use; underrepresented groups could be overruled as they already are in some instances offline, such as young women who do not attend male-dominated meetings.

6.4. Requirements for the Introduction of Online Participation

To realise the opportunities seen in online participation processes, and prevent the anticipated issues, participants discussed a series of requirements they felt were needed during the introduction and use of these tools, summarised in Table 16. The most discussed requirements relate to the functionality of the tools: Their usability and security. Another major area was information: Members need to be made aware that the tools exist and be educated about how

they work, and their impact must be clear to users. Lastly, the new processes should be introduced in a certain way: They should be tested and tried, fitting into party processes, and be embedded in a long-term strategy, and there should be a mechanism for feedback about the processes while they are introduced. The majority of these requirements concern online participation processes *in general*, with very few, such as offering alternatives, related to specific tools.

Table 16: **Summary of requirements for the implementation of online participation in the second phase of the study**

		Grünes Netz	Antrags-grün	Befragung	Begehren	Overall
Function-ality	Usability	2	4	2	1	41
	Security and Data Protection	0	2	0	0	28
	Alternative Routes	0	2	0	0	3
Implementation	Trying things out	0	0	2	8	36
	Adapting to party processes	0	3	0	0	16
	Gradual Introduction	0	2	1	0	13
	Strategy	0	1	2	0	11
	Allow feedback	0	0	0	0	6
Infor-mation	Educating Members	3	1	0	2	35
	Raising awareness	0	3	1	2	22
	Visibility or potential impact	0	0	5	4	19

Source: Datasets D (observation of workshops and assemblies between April 2017 and September 2018), E (second wave of interviews, conducted between November 2017 and March 2018), F (Focus Group, conducted in January 2018) and 0 (interviews conducted in 2015 for MSc project). Columns for tools (*Grünes Netz, Antragsgrün, Befragung, Begehren*) are a binary count of the code per participant or observation. Column 'Overall' contains total count of references, which may include multiple references by the same participants, as well as references that were not linked to specific tools.

6.4.1. Functionality of the Tools

Participants, especially those with technical expertise, felt that usability was key if the tools were to be adopted by members. They should function, as expected, reliably, and be easy to use in the process.

> *"It has to work. There's nothing worse than bad software being thrown on the market, that does not work, and then fifty percent of the users are gone and do not believe that it works."* (E06, an IT expert)

This was a key issue for others as well, primarily because of the experience the party has made with the introduction of the *Wurzelwerk*, which was perceived as unintuitive, and subsequently not adopted by members (Heinrich and Spitz, 2014).

Something that came up throughout the data collection period was that when technology is used in processes, it needs to be made *easy* to use, and accessible for all members, regardless of age or skills, so that as many people as possible can participate, not only in terms of content, but also with regards to the technology itself. Easy-to-use and accessible tools are most important if the diversity and inclusion was to be achieved, and exclusion to be prevented. The diverging assumptions about time as a factor that influences participation could be considered as another motivation to make sure the tools are as easy and efficiently useable as possible, so that participation does not take much time regardless of occupation, and thus relieve the worry of workers that they could be left behind.

Another aspect that was brought up across the whole data collection period was that there should be no replacement of existing participation routes. Alternatives should always be available, so that the requirement to use technology cannot reinforce disadvantages. Whenever an online opportunity is introduced, a parallel offline method is expected, to prevent exclusion: "It should not replace anything, that's important" (E07). Replacement suggests a change in behaviour, not in opportunity. Users replace one behaviour with another. Organisations replacing processes may enforce this behaviour change. In some ways, the *Begehren* could lead to a form of replacement, since – as some participants have pointed out – there was always a route to address the board directly, simply by writing to them: "Most people who write to the executive board receive a response, even if they are on their own" (E14, a women with a position at federal level). An equivalent that another participant mentioned are 'open letters', which could be signed by a list of supporters and then made public. However, this was seen as "more of an affront, rather than being welcomed" (E12, a women with a position at national level).

To a large extent, the concerns participants had were not for themselves, but for their peers, who may not be able to use online tools. Some even perceived the non-availability of advantages as a disadvantage. For example, if some members were not to use the *Antragsgrün*, sending proposals by post would take longer, real-time communication would not be possible, and therefore members who used this option would have a disadvantage. Participants wanted to actively prevent the reinforcement of existing (dis-)advantages, instead aiming for mobilisation, so that those who want to participate online can do it, and those who cannot, do not have to: "You cannot give people tools that they cannot use. It would be a misconception that that would be positive for participation" (E07, a grass-roots member and IT expert).

Following on from the potential issues discussed, particularly around gender and skills, participants agreed that this would need to be addressed, but were unsure especially about how a

gender balance could be achieved. One thing some participants thought would be useful to achieve that was to involve a variety of relevant people in the development process:

> *"Some to think about the political process, others for the technical process, and some who think about the psychology of the tool, so that all in all, it is user oriented and well thought through."* (E07, a grass-roots member and IT expert)

The tools should not be too complex, not only for users, but also for administrators – because they should be usable across branches, rather than just at the federal level. Participants across all datasets saw it as the role of the party to provide tools centrally, to enable participation of members and in branches. The financial arrangement alone makes this a requirement: the party uses a financial distribution system, where all state branches contribute towards costs of the tools developed at federal level, with the understanding that they will be developed in a way that allows the branches to use the tools for their local purposes as well. If that is to work, the tools need to be easy to use *and* easy to administer, as otherwise only centrally trained experts would be able to set up a new survey, for example.

> *"You have those huge tools, where people who really only wanted to ask three questions don't see the wood for the trees. That is often lost from sight, this 'featuritis'."* (E09, an employee)

On a more technical level, participants thought that the tools needed to be well documented, enabling all members to understand how they function: "It should be transparent, so that it's not an elite thing, (…) that only the clever ones who know how it works can use, and nobody else" (E21, a women with a position at state level). It should also be neutral in its design, so that users are not directed in their political choices through the design: "So you can see, for example, where is which proposal, so that you have a clean process" (E28, a male employee).

Lastly, many participants highlighted a need for security – of the platform against hacking, as well as the personal data on the system. This was brought up by participants from all backgrounds, and argued more fiercely the more technical expertise the participants had:

> *"Of course certain standards of IT security must be adhered to: Who has the data, where are the servers, is the transmission encrypted, and so on, classic aspects of IT security, data protection and data security."* (E08, a man with a position at federal level)

In combination, the requirements for the functionality of the tools are well suited to address the potential inequalities of the digital divide, as well as enable adoption of the tools by a variety of members. Rather than focussing on who adopts the tools, is mobilised or replaces behaviour, the intention is to prevent non-use, and make sure the tools are used *at all*. While these are necessary, conditions for adoption, they are not sufficient, as specific encouragement is also necessary.

6.4.2.   Information about the Tools and Processes

The overall perception of participants was that if participation *in general* is not taken seriously, or no feedback is given post-participation, this has a demotivating effect. Also, the availability of participation opportunities alone is not sufficient for members to participate. They need to know these opportunities exist, and they need to be willing and engaged enough to use them. This is corroborated by findings from Gerl et al. (2016) that differences in awareness of tools correlated with internal positions and internet use habits. This is why information was a major area of concern for participants' requirements: Members needed to be made aware that the tools exist in the first place. As mentioned above, even many of the participants were not aware of the *Begehren* until they heard about it from me. It appears that this was the rule rather than the exception in the grass-roots, as one participant stated: "We have a lot of tools, but members do not know they exist, that makes participation hard" (E04, a male IT expert). While members do use the internet for participation, they are not necessarily aware of the party's own tools, even those that already exist: "It's astonishing how little members at the grass-roots know about these things. (…) Email is the state of the art there!" (E26, a man with a position at federal level). Thus, there was a very broad consensus that members needed to be informed about the tools, and guided towards using them:

> *"We have to advertise these processes, so that members are encouraged to use them. What are the benefits for them?"* (Workshop Participant, observation notes D5, manifesto launch event April 2018)

Furthermore, the party should clarify how the tools work together, but also how they are different from the *Wurzelwerk*, to prevent the negative connotation the name ensues. This would be particularly important not just to increase adoption of the tools, but also their general acceptance and legitimacy. Only if members are aware of what is coming and why, would they accept them:

> *"Nobody should be offended when a new participation format launches, and we can only ensure that by clearly stating the benefits and downsides, provide information about the thinking behind the process and why we want them."* (E17, a women with a position at state level)

Further to simply informing members, they would also need to be educated about what the tools are, what they can do with them, and how they fit into the existing party processes: "An introduction, not only about the functionality, but also what the tools do in relation to the party, and how they can influence things" (E01, a male IT expert). This was a need perceived by both grass-roots members as well as leaders on different levels, who felt they needed to enable their branch members to use the tools:

> *"Maybe through training courses, or information materials. But if people sit in front of these tools and don't know what they are supposed to do with it, this does not help."*
> (E03, a female IT expert)

This information and education was perceived as necessary not just during the introduction of the tools, but continuously, as new members join, existing members want to adopt, or remind themselves: "You have to explain these things, not just once, but all the time" (E28, a man with a position at local level). This aligns with research on online activities, showing that enthusiasm was a major motivator (Niehaves and Plattfaut, 2014).

Rather than just explaining what the tools do and how they function, to address the potential issue with perceived impact, members also needed to be made aware of the outcomes of the tools, and the results of their participation efforts, again reflecting the requirements known from citizen participation (Smith, 2009; Huber et al., 2011):

> *"Those who do participate must know what happens with the output, (…) that their views are heard, and their input has led to changes, or new ideas, whatever it is, that it has consequences."* (E17, a women with a position a state level)

Lastly, to achieve actual impact, the tools and processes themselves must be underpinned by working processes that flow through the hierarchy of the party, so that the participation process for members is directly and consistently linked to the processes that happen in committees and boards: "It's a question of continuity: Is it only done if it fits in with whatever suits at the time, or is there a connection to regular decision-making processes?" (E08, a man with a position at federal level). Participants by and large agreed that, whatever the party did online, it must not be a 'simulation', but 'real participation'. This is underlined by earlier findings that online processes must fit into the wider cultural and organisational context (Kersting, 2014; Thuermer et al., 2016).

Like with the functionality requirements, the need for information is intended to increase adoption in general, and prevent non-use. However, since members are more likely to know about tools if they are more active (Gerl et al., 2016), the intended target group are the less-informed, and thereby less-active members. Therefore, the primary intention is mobilisation of those who are currently less active.

6.4.3. Implementation of the Tools and Processes

In addition to functional tools and an informed member base, there are a few things participants thought the party needed to do during the actual implementation. To increase their acceptance and legitimacy of the tools, the executive board should allow feedback, discuss the introduction itself, hear criticism and react to it. Rather than engaging members only in the participation

process itself, they should do so throughout their implementation: Essentially, the introduction of online participation processes should itself be a participatory process, showing the influence of grass-roots participation in all areas of the party. The overall perception, particularly from members with positions in which they would need to communicate the new processes to their members, was that if things were decided over their heads, members would not follow and use the tools:

> *"These things need to be discussed at an assembly, to make sure that everyone understands it, and also give an opportunity to debate it – there are surely opposing views about online participation processes. Those must be heard, (…) so that we can address fears of members".* (E17, a women with a position at state level)

Participants thought that this form of feedback, especially if it was built into the process, would also benefit those who run these processes, so long as they are willing to listen to it:

> *"If the tools are planned with a two-way channel, so that suggestions and a debate about them are possible, then position holders can also learn from it, and I think that is very valuable."* (E13, a male employee)

While the tools should be well discussed, they should also only be introduced gradually, to give members the opportunity to learn, and not be overwhelmed. This would also increase acceptance of the tools in the grass-roots: "I think the Greens are rather conservative, and critical of technology, but if you introduce things slowly, it's generally accepted" (E05, a male IT expert).

The development of these tools in general is seen as a gradual process, and the tools that are introduced now are seen as a starting point rather than the end of the journey. Participants felt that online participation should be seen as a process of continuous development: "The tools are not yet what I envision, but I think they're a good way to gradually introduce new processes" (E08, a man with a position at federal level). This gradual development must be slow, and ideally the tools should be tested with a small sample before they are launched for the whole party:

> *"If you really want these tools to be used, you should start with a small group, (…) and find out what works for them, and what does not. And maybe try to improve the tool before it is made available to everyone."* (E03, a female IT expert)

In all this, participants were very willing indeed to just 'try things out', to learn what worked for the party through trial and error, and adapt tools or processes as needed. They were mostly not worried about the 'error' part of 'trial and error', as they felt that failure was part of the learning process: "If they are not adopted, then they were not right in the first place" (E03). The successful tools from this learning process could then be further developed: "Try out what the people want to use, what works, and then build on that" (E03).

One participant even suggested that this process was part of the party's political philosophy, and that in a process of prefiguration (Maeckelbergh, 2011), the party could be seen as a laboratory where online participation processes were tested that would be beneficial for society at large:

> *"We see ourselves as an internet-savvy party, and we want to use the opportunities of technology, but see them as a societal challenge. Everything we do, we do with a view to make the party democratic, but also, to encourage a wider debate about how we can use this technology to improve democratic processes in the society."* (E19 a female MP)

While participants were very happy to learn by trial and error about what works and what does not, they did feel that there should be an underlying strategy that binds all of the trials together. All online participation tools should be aligned to achieve a common goal, which should also be visible and discussed in the wider party:

> *"There should be an aligned process, people should think about what the outcome should be, not just give people a pad and tell them to just do things. That won't lead anywhere."* (E06, a male IT expert with a position at state level)

This strategy should be based upon the problems that members currently have with participation, and try and address them, to solve them in the long-term (E10, a man with a position at state level). Furthermore, how tools function, especially the *Antragsgrün* which is so central for a statutory process, should be well aligned to the party's requirements. This affects legal requirements: "It needs to fit in with our statutes and our political and legal framework," (E08, a man with a position at national level), administrative requirements: "The work processes must be recognised. (…) It's really important for the party headquarters that their processes are reflected" (E16, a male IT expert), and political requirements:

> *"You have no control over who supports your proposal. Maybe you do not want support from a certain person, because that would damage the cause."* (E20, a man with a position at state level)
>
> *"It's really hard to rank proposal supporters, but it's really important from a political point of view. This is political capital, and we are not all equal, and it does matter who is on that list."* (E02, a women with a position at federal level)

Participants were again uncertain how this could be addressed, though some suggested a technical solution. In the specific case of *Antragsgrün*, some suggested that users could bring proposal supporters into a specific order before they submitted the proposal on the tool. However, other participants saw the limited control over supporters as a feature, rather than an issue, as it *did* make members more equal if the 'namedropping' were no longer possible.

The way participants thought online participation tools should be introduced was very closely aligned with the culture and specific context of the Green Party. This is a good reflection of earlier findings that this culture and context need to be recognised for tool implementations to be

successful (Kersting, 2014; Thuermer et al., 2016). While for the requirements around functionality and information the focus was on adoption, and the prevention of non-use, the requirements for the implementation concern the acceptance and legitimacy of the tools and their results. Only if members felt they were part of the process would they use the tools, and accept their results.

6.5.   Strategies applied by the Party Leadership in the Introduction of Online Participation[5]

Some, but not all of the requirements identified with participants are already being addressed by the group of people involved in the development and implementation of the new online participation tools, or even implemented in practice. The most relevant strategies are summarised in Table 17. With regards to functionality, participants have already described extensive experience with the tools, summarised in Table 18. Both strategies and experience will now be discussed in combination, to show where the strategies address requirements, and to which degree they are perceived as successful, or not.

Table 17: **Summary of strategies applied in the introduction of online participation in the second phase of the study**

	Grünes Netz	Antrags-grün	Befragung	Begehren	Overall
Clear communication	0	5	2	1	13
Alternative Routes	0	5	1	0	10
Listening to feedback	0	0	0	0	8
Long-term strategy	0	1	1	0	8
Limit barriers	0	0	1	1	5

Source: Datasets D (observation of workshops and assemblies between April 2017 and September 2018), E (second wave of interviews, conducted between November 2017 and March 2018), F (Focus Group, conducted in January 2018) and 0 (interviews conducted in 2015 for MSc project). Columns for tools (*Grünes Netz, Antragsgrün, Befragung, Begehren*) are a binary count of the code per participant or observation. Column 'Overall' contains total count of references, which may include multiple references by the same participants, as well as references that were not linked to specific tools.

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[5] Because this section addresses discussions or decisions that only a small group of individuals were involved in, I will quote interviews and observations without referencing participants, to protect their anonymity.

Table 18: Summary of experiences with existing or newly introduced online participation in the second phase of the study

	Grünes Netz	Antrags-grün	Befragung	Begehren	Overall
Adoption	2	17	7	0	43
Impact	0	1	9	0	29
Efficiency	1	10	0	0	19
Transparency	0	8	0	0	18
Barriers	0	1	2	0	15
Inclusion	0	1	0	0	6
Legitimacy	0	3	0	0	4
Inequality	0	0	2	0	3
Missing Impact	0	0	2	0	3

Source and details as for Table 17 above

6.5.1. Functionality of the Tools

The main strategy in the implementation and use of the tools that addresses inclusion is the consistent opportunity of alternative routes to participation. The requirement has been recognised, and implemented. The participation statute stipulates that members are invited to participate in the *Befragung* via email, and through 'appropriate means' if they have no email address registered with the party (Bundesvorstand Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2018, §2). It also clarifies that offline participation should remain possible (Bundesvorstand Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2018, §4). This is visible in practice when it comes to the proposal submission in *Antragsgrün*:

> *"Experience has shown that nobody is cut off. We receive a few proposals by fax for each assembly, from people who say they don't get along with the technology, but want to support proposals regardless. And that just works."* (a male employee)

However, it is unclear how and to which degree members do participate in the *Befragung* or *Begehren* offline. An intriguing, but not further analysed detail from the data collection process concerned the participants in the panel survey who were invited by post due to lack of an email in their membership record: Though a good number of them indeed did not use the internet, or did not use it frequently, some of the participants indicated that they do use it as much as most other members. Thus, members who do not provide their email address to the party do not necessarily do this because they do not *have* one, or *use* the internet – but because they do not *want* the party to contact them by email.

To ensure that all members have the option to participate online, the invitation for the first *Befragung* was sent to all members along with a poll card for the general members vote about the top candidate for the German election in 2016. Subsequent surveys were invited by email only.

In terms of equality, while no solutions are implemented, participants were very positive that this would not become an issue, and any issues would be addressed:

> *"I think there is a strong lobby against exclusion in the Green Party, that is a base-consensus, and there is no question about it. That's why people always look out for this, and that it does not happen."* (a male IT expert)

However, there are no strategies, either in the party or the research field, to successfully and consistently prevent exclusion through the digital divide. The one discussion in this area that took on some significance over the course of the project was that about the participation of women. This is also the one discussion where my research has had significant impact. It may well be partly due to my research that the issue has become so prominent. Following publication of the first paper from this thesis (Thuermer, 2017), which highlighted a potential gender bias through the new online participation methods, the party leadership has begun to take this issue into consideration. This was also reflected in the subsequent data collection, where a member of the executive board told me in an interview how they had 'learned from a scientist that women's participation was an issue'. I was later invited to discuss my findings with the women's council in September 2018, to help the party's beginning discussion about potential solutions to this problem. As of the national delegate assembly in November 2018, the *Antragsgrün* includes a breakdown of supporters by gender per proposal ('*Frauenanteil*') – a first step to raise awareness of the issue.

This appears to be the beginning of the party's efforts to achieve gender balance online. It is unlikely to be sufficient on its own, however, as voluntary quotas are less effective than mandatory ones (Krook and Norris, 2014). If no more advanced policy for gender balance online were adopted, the party would risk experiencing the combination of the gender divide in both political and online participation, potentially leading to a significant reduction on women's participation as compared to offline – this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

Several participants highlighted how the *Antragsgrün* had already improved transparency, enabling all members to see proposals early on, understand what changes are made, and thus making it easier to follow the proceedings at assemblies:

> *"I cannot imagine assemblies without it, having the whole proposal process in front of you, the ease of use, submitting proposals, seeing others' proposals, and changes. It make the whole process transparent and clear"* (a man with a position at state level)

During the implementation of the online verification process, many options for technical solutions were discussed, fully aware that while verification was necessary, it would by definition create a barrier that some members might struggle with. The consensus was a combination of username and password, which was felt to be the lowest common denominator, creating a required threshold to participation, but at the lowest possible level:

> *"If we had asked for ID numbers or who-knows-what, (…) that would have gone too far. (…) I think even requiring a username and password is a barrier for some, to submit or support proposals. If we had asked for any more than that, I would have criticised that very strongly."* (a women with a position at federal level)

Even with this highly disputed verification process, most members seemed to be reconciled today. My data collection progressed alongside the introduction of the verification process, spanning some time before it was introduced, the assemblies that decided about its introduction, where it was first used, and three subsequent ones. The longer I collected data on the process, the less it was raised as an issue. While in 2016 it was seen as a major barrier, and early on in 2017 there were significant doubts about its usefulness, towards the end of the data collection in 2018, most participants simply stated that the process has been widely adopted, and there were very little issues and complaints. While a very small number of participants described that their peers struggled to support proposals, the majority had personal and positive experience of using the tools. Some even stated explicitly how they had been worried about potential exclusion, but their doubts had been dispelled:

> *"I thought initially that the people would be cut off. (…) But experience has shown plain and simple that that does not happen. (…) It just works, and I have heard no complaints!"* (a male employee)

The wide adoption and absence of major issues or complaints suggests that the verification process has indeed been widely adopted. This must, by definition, be a replacement process, as the previous process – to confirm support in an email or on social media – was no longer an option. This replacement may however have led to some reinforcement, where members who are unfamiliar with the *Antragsgrün* are less likely to adopt it, at the cost of not participating in the proposal process. On the other hand, there seems to have been some mobilisation as well, where members who would not have used the tool before are now frequent and able users.

For the other tools, although there is some awareness of potential exclusion, processes to address and prevent these from materialising are still in their infancy, and the longer these take to implement and have effects, the more likely reinforcement processes will be.

6.5.2.   Information about the Tools and Processes

Those involved with the implementation of the participation process were throughout very aware of the necessity to inform and educate members about the new processes, albeit potentially not about the extent of this requirement. The main thing that is done to achieve adoption of the tools is to "talk about the new opportunities, talk about how they are additions and not replacements," and also find members to help spread the message, who are enthusiastic and willing to experiment ('participation pilots', Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, 2018b). Participants described how they had themselves been enrolled to help spread the message among the grass-roots:

> *"When it came to informing members about [the new tools], the managers, state executive boards, from the federal board down, were supplied with materials and information, so that they could carry this into the grass-roots."* (a women with a position at state level)

To support the adoption of *Antragsgrün*, the party headquarters also offered a hotline that members could call in order to get support with their proposals. This was used, especially by members of the 'Green Elderly' group, which ultimately "knew better how to use it than some MPs!" However, the best effort to inform members is of little value, if members do not listen, as one grass-roots participant described:

> *"I always receive the emails from Michael Kellner, and I think they are cute and well meant, and okay – but I only ever scroll through them. I am very, very, very certain that they meticulously inform about the progress with regards to participation."* (a male IT expert)

This indicates that the processes must be important enough for members to engage with them (Vowe, 2014).

The topic that was possibly the most discussed was the impact of the new participation tools. Participants described especially how they had used the results of the *Befragung*, discussed them and formed policy proposals on their basis. The *Befragung* specifically was perceived as already making an impact, as it informed decision-makers about views that they had not previously known about. The potential impact of the tool is constantly under discussion:

> *"We discuss what the impact is every time. The questions, why do we run this survey, who benefits, and what do we do with it, that's a question we discuss every single time. And that will remain the case for every* Befragung *that the executive board initiates, that this must be discussed."* (a women with a position at federal level)

Those involved with the *Befragung* are very aware that the way questions are asked can influence the results, and intend to address this through the participation statutes, which were agreed at the state council in April 2018. There is also a lot of awareness for the necessity to make members feel that they have influence – underlined by research on the effect of efficacy, which shows that

perceived influence increases acceptance of process outcomes and thus legitimacy (Leggewie, 2011). This is done, in the view of those involved, by consistently feeding back to members what has happened with their contributions.

However, as seen in the quote above, this is not necessarily what the members receive. Other participants described how they read the results, but did not do anything about it, nor had the impression that anybody else did. In combination, this discussion suggests that while the party leadership and those involved with core policy decisions are very aware of and actively seeking to use the new data that the *Befragung* provides, and ensure that members' participation is indeed impactful, this is not well communicated to the grass-roots. Rather than being a simulation that pretends to have impact while it does not, the *Befragung* simulates to *not* have impact while it does. The lack of knowledge of actual impact may hold members back from actually adopting the tools, while those who are familiar with, and approve of, what happens with the results would be more likely to participate. Informing the grass-roots better may thus improve the likelihood of mobilisation.

6.5.3. Implementation of the Tools and Processes

The concept for the new online participation processes is itself the result of a long-standing process. The party had set up a committee to review the structural development of the party, which looked at a variety of topics concerning the party structure, between 2014 and 2015. One of the results of this committee was the necessity to look at online participation, which was subsequently done, between 2015 and 2016, in a special task force for participation. This task force developed the strategy paper which was accepted by the delegate assembly in November 2016, at the beginning of this project, and introduced the *Befragung* and *Begehren*. This in turn led to the creation of the *participation statute*, with the intention to define processes and regulate the relationship between online and offline participation, in the long term, and especially where they run parallel. The statute was seen as necessary to ensure that both online and offline routes would be balanced. In the very long term, the intention is to not only modernise, but also to change the culture in the party, and encourage more participation from members who, to date, do not engage.

Feedback was part of this entire process, from the selection of committee members, where members could apply through technical discussions, to the tool implementation. Especially members who held positions between the local and state level felt that this was necessary – and

all of them also stated that they were either explicitly asked for feedback, gave it regardless, or could have if they had wanted to.

All interview participants were in some way or another involved with the groups that are in turn involved with the discussion, development or implementation of the new online participation processes – those were the sample criteria, as discussed in 3.3. Unfortunately, due to the difficulties in recruiting focus group participants, this cannot be contextualised with views from the grass-roots apart from those who are already involved. However, the participants of the one focus group seemed to expect to be informed of the results, rather than be involved in the process.

Like feedback, 'trying things out' is very much part of the implementation process. A participant involved with the process described how they "very consciously try things out. This is a learning process, and it is not final." They were also very aware that this was a gradual process that would be slow and cumbersome.

Regarding the alignment with party processes, this was primarily done with the *Antragsgrün*, which was built to the requirements of the party. Similarly, there is a focus on tools being developed specifically for the party, as opposed to buying software packages, which is why the *Begehren* is based on the same software as *Antragsgrün*. This is done with the intention that the tools really fit into the party culture, and are recognisable for users making them easier to use.

By and large, apart from a handful of exceptions discussed above, all participants were indeed very happy with how the requirements they felt were relevant were addressed during the implementation process, so that the results can indeed be expected to be legitimate.

6.6. Conclusion: Process Development, or Building for Inclusion

This chapter evaluated the status quo in the party ahead of and during the implementation of new tools and processes, and identified assumptions about opportunities and risks seen by participants in that process. This lead to the definition of requirements for both the tools themselves and the implementation process, which were then compared to the strategies that were actually applied during the implementation processes, with an assessment of how well the requirements were addressed. Overall this chapter responds to research questions 2, 3, and 4 and the corresponding hypotheses:

2. How are participation preferences translated into processes?

H2a   Assumptions about direct participation underpin process design and implementation.

3.   How are inequalities identified and addressed?

H3a: Inequalities specific to the party are not formally identified; only well known 'digital divide'-issues are addressed.

4.   To which degree are preferences realised in processes, and are expectations of party members and leadership met? If not, why?

In their online process introduction, the party followed two goals: Engaging a broader portion of their grass-roots, and including members who currently do not participate. The internet allows them to reach out to their grass-roots, but does not foster diversity. The two goals are thus reflected in the digital divide: The party can either *include* everyone, or include *everyone* – give everyone the opportunity to engage online, or ensure the opportunity is used equally. In this instance, inclusion was their primary goal.

Analysis showed a wide range of assumptions about the potential effects of online participation processes and what they could mean for the party. Equality in these processes was initially seen as a critical element. And it was, but it turned out to be one of many elements which were equally important to participants. While the participation preferences identified in Chapter 5 were reflected in the data, they were not the only guiding principles in the discussions and decisions about online participation.

The main benefits participants expected from online participation were that it would enable more and different members to participate. While this was underpinned by assumptions based on the participation divide, such as the exclusion of parents in offline processes, participants did not see the goal in participation becoming *equal*, and balance out inequalities in offline participation. The goal was rather an *increase* in both numbers and diversity. Of course more diversity would entail more equality, e.g. when underrepresented groups are better represented as a result, but this was considered as a side effect rather than the main goal. Aiming for equality instead might have entailed, for example, that participation by certain over-represented groups would be capped, to prevent reinforcement – an idea that was not entertained until the debate about women's exclusion online in September 2018.

The assumptions participants had about which members would be enabled to participate broadly reflected the general knowledge about the party: Members with disabilities or few resources, parents and others with little control over their daily routines, or those with a smaller network or

in rural areas were targeted. One aspect of the digital divide that was distinctively underrepresented was participation of women. While this was raised as a potential issue by some participants, this awareness did not scale, with survey participants assuming men and women would equally benefit. On the other hand, several participants in conversations assumed that online participation would enable women specifically to participate more.

Participation was also assumed to become more equal in political terms, as a 'neutral' online platform could balance out some of the benefits that members of the party elite would otherwise have, thus enabling the grass-roots to gain more influence in comparison. Also, members could use the *Begehren* especially to hold the party leaders to account. As such, the assumption was that online participation would counteract oligarchisation processes in the party. This would also mean that introducing a new actor, in the form of new online participation tools, would lead to more equality between grass-roots and elite. The technology was assumed to mediate between the two groups, and thereby change the existing relationship. This change could only be caused by technology if some level of agency is ascribed to it.

Aside from changing *who* participates, study participants saw a big opportunity in *how* participation was conducted: Online tools were seen as more modern, and there was a perception that the party would renew itself and potentially even its political culture by adopting modern technology. It would also make participation easier and potentially more efficient, by automating previously manual processes. Lastly, because the tools were new, they would also allow entirely new forms of participation, which were seen as something of a wild card: they could be successful, or they could evaporate without effect.

Matching the potential benefits, participants talked at length about potential negative implications of online participation. Where the online tools were seen as enabling for some members, they were perceived as a barrier for others, especially for older members and those who were less familiar with technology – indeed these were often seen as the same group, following the popular digital immigrant/native divide by Prensky (2001). This was especially obvious in the discussions about the *Antragsgrün*, where technology was used to supplement an existing process, without changing the process itself. It was the new tool, the new actor that would make it harder for members to engage, particularly those that did not frequently interact with such tools. The process would become more difficult *because* of the technology.

Apart from potentially excluding some members, the main issues were seen with potential negative results of the new process: They could demotivate members if they were not sufficiently impactful; they could be hijacked for partisan interests, and thus de-valued for non-partisan users;

they could be disregarded, or on the other hand, overrated, with survey results effectively becoming decisions, rather than leading to discussions. There was a small amount of worry about potential abuse from the top, such as party leaders framing surveys in their favour. All of these potential effects depend very much on how the new processes are embedded in the existing culture (Kersting, 2014; Thuermer et al., 2016) and Actor-Networks (Latour, 1987; Nielsen, 2009).

To gain the benefits and prevent the negative consequences, participants thought that first and foremost, the tools needed to be well built – only a functional platform would be used by members, let alone previously inactive ones, in the first place. Naturally, only if tools were used, could they increase participation. Simultaneously, functional and accessible tools were also seen as the answer to potential exclusion: The more accessible and easy to use online participation tools are, the larger the opportunity for them to be used by those with lower skills.

Apart from functionality – which was very much treated as a baseline requirement – information about the tools and processes was seen as key to adoption. Only if members knew about the tools, about what they did, and how they could be used, would there be a chance of adoption. Lastly, to achieve acceptance and prevent negative impact on the political processes underpinning the tools, there would need to be a broad discussion about not just the results of the processes, but the very processes and tools themselves. Only if members had a say, participants felt, would they accept the tools as legitimate – similar to what Rothschild-Whitt (1979) found in collectivist organisations, reflecting the social movement roots of the party.

Some, but not all of these requirements were addressed during the implementation. Functionality was ensured through custom-developed tools for the particular purposes of the party, though apparently with limited user testing. Specific features were added as the need arose, for example to visualise the gender balance of proposal supporters. Information was and continues to be provided, although there was a distinct lack of information about the outcome of the processes: Not because it was not there, but because it was not communicated – potentially because it was not sufficiently tangible. Lastly, the implementation was conducted in small steps, allowing for time to discuss and adapt as necessary. Nearly all participants were content that their requirements were met.

If staff bring in their expertise on administrative processes, the political leaders have an eye on the political elements of the process, the technical experts bring in their views on technical issues of tools, and experts on women's issues look out for equality, and *all of them* have the impression to be heard and their views to be considered and the final product to be fulfilling their needs, then this promises to be a successful implementation process. The successful implementation can

be seen as the result of the strategy by the people in charge, who created an open environment where different voices could be heard, not only for the participation itself, but the meta-process of development and implementation. However, the one group that does not seem to be involved are the actual users. Whether this is a gap in my data, due to the lack of grass-roots involvement, or a gap in the strategy, cannot be determined. Participation leads to acceptance, it creates buy-in for the tools and processes, as well as legitimacy of its results – not only in the political process itself, but also in the technical implementation of these processes.

In conclusion, the hypotheses can be partly confirmed:

H2a   can be partly confirmed: There was a general assumption that online participation would lead to more direct participation in decisions in the long term. However, since this is not currently the intention, this did not translate into implementation per se. All of the new tools enable participation on an *individual* level, and allow more direct interactions between grass-roots and leaders.

Responding to the wider question, participation preferences were reflected in the implementation process: Roughly half of the party members felt that discussions were more relevant than voting, and all tools to date have a strong focus on enabling discussions within the party. The frequent discussions about online voting imply that there is another area of preferences that will need addressing in the future. The preference for equality over uncapped participation on the other hand was not well represented. To the contrary, the new online tools may enable more participation without yet offering sufficient controls for inequalities.

H3a: can be confirmed: Initially, mainly well-known digital divides were considered, especially age and skills. Further inequalities were identified throughout the process – although it was to some degree this very project that helped to identify them. However, they are not yet well addressed.

4   can be answered: The expectations and requirements participants had for online participation were by and large met. However, those were not solely based on participation preferences, but on an array of considerations ranging from equality through information to recognition of political necessities.

Chapter 7   Effects of Online Participation Processes

After discussing members' expectations of how participation would change and for whom, in this chapter, I am turning my attention to the actual effects of online participation processes on members' participation. My analysis is based on the panel surveys (C3a & C3b), which, in combination, allow me to show the change of participation over time. In a series of regression models which predict the Institutional Activity (the factor score discussed in section 3.4.2) of members, and their anticipated and actual use of the *Antragsgrün*, *Befragung*, and *Begehren*, I focus on demographics and variables for participation preferences, to predict either an in- or decrease in participation for each tool, and to identify where, to which degree, and for whom, mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, or non-use are visible effects.

As described in Chapter 6, the core assumption of Green Party members and leaders is that more and different people will participate online than offline: Study participants want to achieve a mobilisation effect. This does not necessarily affect 'equality' per se, but rather contribute to more diversity: They want more, and different people to engage, and involve a wider portion of their members. While equality is important to participants, the goal is not to have a representative sample of members participate online. Ideally they want to mobilise previously inactive members without reinforcing existing advantages for members who are already active, and influential. However, most of the party leaderships' strategies in the implementation of these processes are focussed on adoption in general, rather than adoption for currently underrepresented or inactive groups.

The intended and actual use of the tools are rather different though: The statistical analysis of the surveys indicates that the likelihood for members to increase their own participation through the new online methods varies, following at least some of the expected lines of the digital divide – such as age and gender (Hargittai, 2008; Emmer et al., 2011) – and not the expectations of members discussed in 6.2. There are also exceptions, such as the effect of education, which surprisingly appears to be the reverse of the digital divide. My analysis will focus on who participates *in general*, who participates *online* through the different tools, and how their behaviour changes. The statistical analysis is supplemented with a series of Actor-Networks (Latour, 2005), which were generated from the qualitative data. These will be used to contextualise the changes in participation, and show how participation itself has changed at each step of the implementation process.

Figure 17 shows the status quo of online participation in the party in 2016, at the beginning of this project. The *Grünes Netz*, as the umbrella platform, was well established, and gave members access to a variety of tools, such as the *Wurzelwerk*, applications for cloud storage and calendars.

Figure 17:   Actor-Network 1: Status Quo before new online processes were introduced
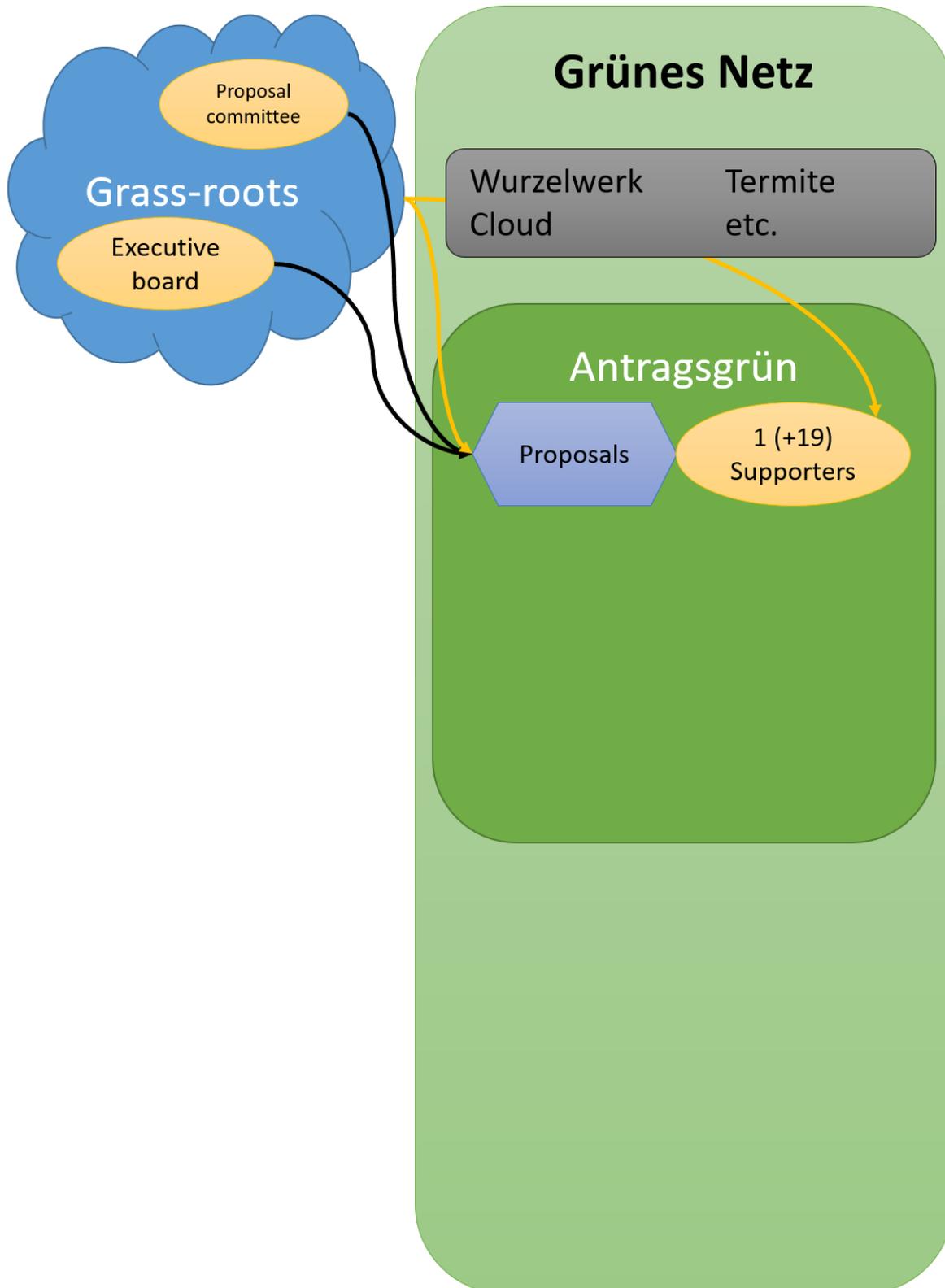
One of the applications accessible through the *Grünes Netz* was the *Antragsgrün*, where grass-roots members, as well as boards and committees, could submit proposals. This was done, as described in 4.4, by one person, who uploaded a text through an online form. The proposal was either submitted on behalf of an eligible group (such as a task force, board, etc.), or a group of individuals, in which case the one person uploading it needed to supply a list of the necessary 19 supporters. The proposal committee would then work through the submitted proposals and negotiate what would be included, or voted upon. The *Antragsgrün* itself replaced an offline process, where supporters had to sign proposals on paper.

7.1. Institutional Activity of Members

Table 19 shows a summary of three regression model: The linear models include criteria that predict activity in the two surveys, C3a conducted in 2017, and C3b conducted in 2018, respectively. The 'B' given is the regression coefficient. The logistic model includes criteria that predict an increase of institutional activity between the two surveys in 2017 and 2018. The 'Odds' given are odds ratios. Comparison categories are provided in brackets. The first thing that is obvious from this summary is that the criteria are not consistent. There is not a single variable that is significant in all three models. Two variables are significant for activity in both 2017 and 2018: Network in party wings, and education.

Members who are associated with either of the party wings are more active than those who have no association. This aligns well with the qualitative data, which suggested that, the more active members are, the more necessary it becomes for them to associate with a wing, as this will give them access to informal networks and information, as well as provide support required to get elected into positions. Thus, the significance of wing associations is likely to be a result, rather than a cause, of increased activity.

In comparison to members who hold a university degree, members who hold a PhD are slightly less active, while those with GCSEs become slightly more active in 2018. Higher cultural capital – measured in education – is usually an indicator of *more* participation, rather than less (Norris, 2001; Emmer et al., 2011). However, this does not have to be negative, as it aligns active members with the voters of the party, and German society, where only 31% hold a university degree (Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis), 2017), as opposed to 68% of members of the Green Party (Niedermayer, 2017c)(see also Table 4, p. 52).

Table 19: Linear and binary logistic models for 'Institutional Activity'

	Linear				Logistic		
	2017		2018		Increase		
	B	Sig	B	Sig	N	Odds	Sig
Constant	1.045	**	0.693	**			
Network in party wings (None)							
Left	0.638	**	0.782	**			
Reformer	0.881	**	0.820	**			
Network above state level: yes					64	2.495	**
Gender: female	0.129	*					
Age 18-75					159	0.988	**
Expected effect of online participation on members like the participant (Likert)	-0.065	*					
Preference of Participation Type: Vote	-0.113	*					
Education (University Degree)							
Vocational Training	0.084		-0.120				
GCSE	-0.123		0.297	*			
A-Levels	0.029		0.135				
PhD	-0.213	**	-0.181	*			
Residence (Rural)							
Directly within a city	-0.181	*					
In the suburbs of a large city	0.055						
In a small town	0.047						
Occupation (employees)							
Full Time Education			-0.187				
Self Employed			-0.051				
Civil Service			-0.208	*	22	2.909	*
Pensioner			-0.032				
Housemaker			-0.154				
Unemployed			0.364				
N	359		378		159		
(Nagelkerke's) R-Square	0.228		0.187		0.103		
p	0.000		0.000		0.005		

Women were more active than men in 2017, but not in 2018 (cf. Brock et al., 2010; Kerr and Waddington, 2014). The mode of participation seems to interact with gender, which may be due to different perceptions of skill, as women generally underestimate their abilities in this regard (Martínez-Cantos, 2017).

Participants who expect that online participation will benefit members like themselves were slightly less active in 2017, but had no significantly different activity in 2018; the same is true for members with a preference for voting over discussions. In 2017, members who lived in cities were less active than their peers in rural areas. City dwellers usually have better access to online

participation opportunities – which is both suggested by participants in the qualitative data, as well as supported by literature (Correa and Pavez, 2016; Blank and Lutz, 2018). Thus, at the baseline of participation, the members of the Green Party already behave rather differently from common digital divide assumptions (Emmer et al., 2011).

Looking at the predictors for an increase in participation, it is important to note what changed in the period between the two panel surveys. This was summarised in Table 2 (p. 92): between the first panel survey (C3a) in November 2017 and the second survey (C3b) in June 2018, both the proposal tracking in *Antragsgrün*, which allows members to see the results of the proposal committee in real time, and the *Begehren* were launched. Moreover, there were two federal delegate assemblies (one to discuss the results of the national election in 2017, another to elect a new executive board in 2018), and one convention to launch the re-write of the manifesto.

Only three predictors were significant for an increase in participation in this period: having a national network, age, and an occupation in civil service. The only one of these that overlaps with activity is civil servants – they were *less* active as compared to employees in 2018, but three times *more* likely to increase their activity than others. Why this change would have occurred during this specific timeframe is uncertain – there is no obvious reason why civil servants specifically should have become so much more active. However, the sample not sufficient to investigate this question – the difference would warrant more observation and research in the future.

Members with a network above state level – who have regular contact with federal groups or committees, or more political capital – are significantly more likely to have increased their activity. This is likely more related to the three events at federal level than to online participation: Members who engage at this level are likely to attend these events, and in addition will have had to prepare for them, leading to more activity.

The one predictor that is interesting with regards to online participation is age: For each year in age, participants were 1% less likely to increase their participation. There is no obvious reason why the events themselves would have caused increased participation by younger members – unless it is combined with the use of digital tools these events entail. If older members were less prone to use both the *Antragsgrün* and *Begehren*, (which they are, as I will explain in the next section), this is well in line with the digital divide literature, which poses that, while higher age is a positive predictor for political participation, this effect is reversed for *online* political participation (Ward et al., 2002; Oser et al., 2013; Vowe, 2014). The difference in age can therefore be considered as an indicator for *mobilisation* of younger, and a higher chance of *non-use* for older members.

7.2. Use and Effects of *Antragsgrün*

Figure 18 shows the change in participation through the introduction of the online verification process in *Antragsgrün*. Rather than one member submitting a proposal on behalf of 20, now each of the 20 members has to log in to support the proposal. In theory, this should not change much about the way proposals are written, though – as discussed in section 6.2.2 – there is an expectation that it will lead to more discussion and awareness of the content of proposals, as well as more legitimacy of the process. In practical terms, the new process means that up to twenty times as many logins to the tool are required per proposal. The barrier that was always there for the *submission* of the proposal – a login for the tool – was extended from one member to twenty. In addition, proposals are now visible as soon as they are uploaded as drafts, rather than when they are submitted.

These drafts are a new type of data that was never available before: Members can now see what proposals their peers are working on before they are submitted. This leads to a merge between discussion stages two and three, discussed in Chapter 5: as members can now see un-submitted proposals, they can start discussions earlier. The party administration and proposal committee on the other hand have visibility of proposals to come, and can adapt their negotiations accordingly.

Figure 18: Actor-Network 2: Changes to process due to Online Verification
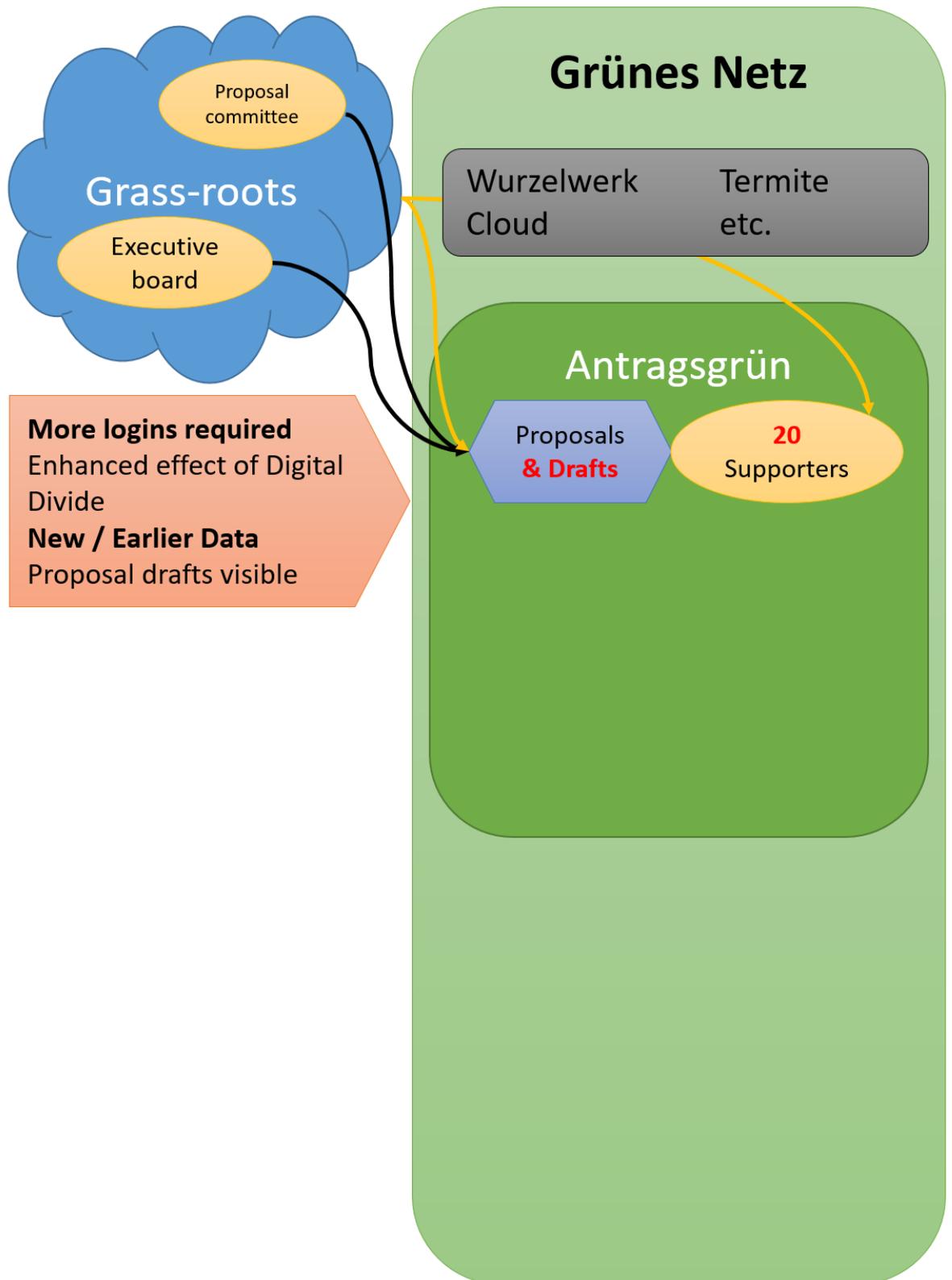
Table 20 summarises six models concerning *Antragsgrün*. The models for 'Current Use' predict the participants in surveys C3a and C3b who stated that they had used the tool, 'Intention' refers to the anticipated effect members said the tools would have on their participation in survey C3a, and 'Actual' refers to the effect participants said it did have in survey C3b.

Both models for current use show age and institutional activity as significant predictors for use of the *Antragsgrün*, with the addition in 2018 of having or not having a university degree. In both models, compared to 18-25 year-olds, all other age groups are *less* likely to use the *Antragsgrün*, with a tendency indicating that the older a participant is, the less likely they are to do so. This, again, aligns with the assumptions of the digital divide (Ward et al., 2002; Oser et al., 2013; Vowe, 2014). Looking at the effect that the *Antragsgrün* has had on members' participation, younger members were significantly more likely to say that they did *not* change behaviour, while each year in age made members 3% less likely to say they had increased their participation. This also reflects the model for increase in institutional activity in Table 19 above, where age, although not an indicator of activity per se, was a significant negative predictor for an increase in participation. Young members are active and do not change that, and older members do not catch up with this development. This confirms some of the worries discussed in Chapter 6, where members thought that online processes would make it harder for older members to engage. The party fails to mobilise the older age groups, both online and in general. Although older citizens tend to be more active politically in international studies (Jensen, 2013), Vowe (2014) has shown that in the German population, age is a negative predictor for political interest. However, since younger members do not *increase* their participation, this cannot be considered to be a reinforcement effect either. It is more likely to be evidence of either a replacement or mobilisation process that happened *before* the survey data was collected, when younger members adopted the online tool, while older members did not: A divide that is now maintained, but not changed as the tool or process is developed further.

Participants who were more active were far more likely to have used the *Antragsgrün*, both in 2017 (Odds Ratio=6.260) and in 2018 (Odds Ratio=4.874). The tool is clearly most used by highly active members. This is not unexpected, as it is part of the processes that participants can be active in.

Table 20:   Binary Logistic Regression models for current, intended and actual use of *Antragsgrün*

	Use of *Antragsgrün*						Anticipated Change in Use						Actual Change in Use					
	2017			2018			No Change			Increase			No Change			Increase		
	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig
Age																	0.968	**
18-25	22		**	43		**							15	14.95	**			
26-35	53	0.112	**	19	0.284	*							40	4.172	**			
36-45	80	0.040	**	52	0.391	*							45	2.688	*			
46-55	103	0.056	**	63	0.358	**							56	1.748				
56-65	128	0.047	**	81	0.277	**							77	1.805				
Above 65	40	0.049	**	98	0.221	**							20		**			
Institutional Activity		6.260	**		4.874	**								0.722				
University Degree: has degree				257	0.366	**							186	2.031	*	214	0.402	**
Rating Antragsgrün for BDK (Likert)								7.284	**		0.381	**						
Expected effect on members like participant (Likert)								2.939	*		0.676	**						
Year of first party entry								0.998	**									
Use of Antragsgrün: has used										97	2.007	**	95	0.410	**	109	4.845	**
Preference of Participation Type: Vote										180	0.551	*						
Gender: Female													86	4.711	*	107	0.342	**
Institutional Activity by Gender														0.277	*			
Rating Antragsgrün (Likert) by Expected effect on members like participant (Likert)								0.632	**		1.334	**						
N		426			348			354			316			243			294	
Nagelkerke's R-Square		0.554			0.355			0.131			0.257			0.360			0.637	
p		0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000	

While institutional activity on its own was not significant for the models for increase in participation, an interaction between institutional activity and gender is. Gender was not significant in current use of the tool, but it was for changes in actual behaviour: Women are nearly four times more likely to *not* change behaviour than men, and also 65% less likely to increase their participation, leading to a mobilisation or reinforcement effect for men. The more active women are, the more unlikely they become to increase participation, at a higher rate than their male peers, as shown in Figure 19. While it is not unexpected that already active members do not intend to do even more, the difference by gender points to an underlying reason preventing women from reaching the same level of activity as men.

Figure 19: **Interaction effect between Institutional Activity and Gender for 'Actual – No Change' through** *Antragsgrün*
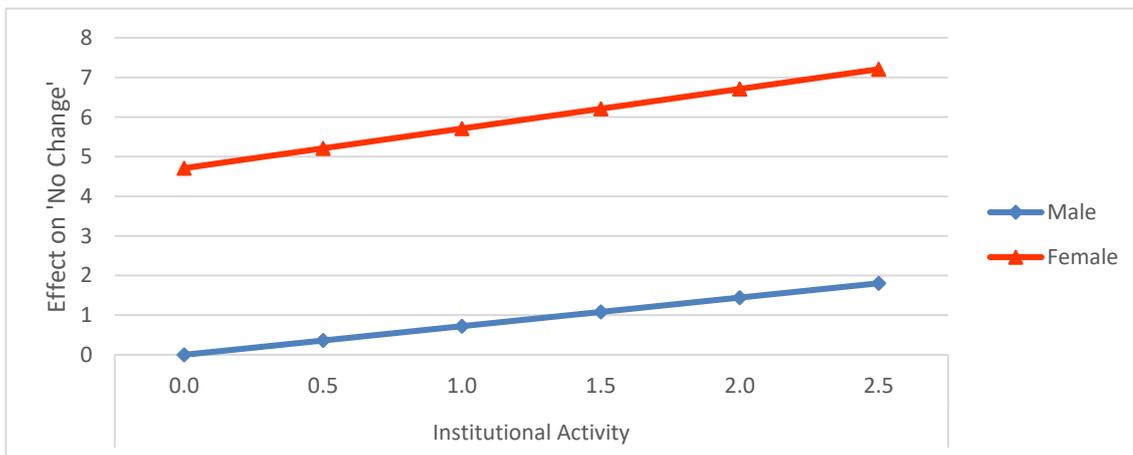
Source: Second panel survey (C3b)

This is dangerous for the Green Party, who pride themselves on gender equality both as an external and internal policy: Women currently use the tool to the same degree as men (i.e. no significant difference), but while they do not change their behaviour as new tools are introduced, men increase their participation. If this trend continues, it may eventually lead to a gender-imbalance in use of the *Antragsgrün*. This is very much not what the members expected, as highlighted in Chapter 6: participants assumed that online participation would be equally beneficial to both men and women. From a digital divide perspective, this result is not surprising, as gender is consistently shown as a relevant factor for political participation and use of online tools, with women being less active in either (Emmer et al., 2011; Niedermayer, 2017a). An initially lower participation of women has also been shown to be mediated over time (Kerr and Waddington, 2014), however, the direction of the effect works the other way around in this case: It is not visible in usage yet, but given the direction of behaviours, likely to be so in the future.

In 2018, members who held a university degree were over 60% less likely to have used the *Antragsgrün*. Similar to the above described models for institutional activity, the effect of education on the use of online tools is the reverse of the digital divide (Norris, 2001; Emmer et al., 2011). This is rather spectacular, given that 68% of the party members (Niedermayer, 2017c) and 70% of the sample hold such a degree. This should alleviate some of the worries of party members discussed in Chapter 6, that online participation, specifically the online verification in *Antragsgrün*, would exclude less educated members. This is unlikely to be the case. On the contrary, there might be an issue with *exclusion* of higher educated members, especially if compared with the models for actual effects: Members with a university degree were twice as likely to say that they had *not* changed their behaviour, and 60% less likely to say that they had increased their participation through the tool. Not only are these members less active, as shown Table 19 in section 7.1, but they are also unlikely to change this. This in turn reinforces the participation of members with lower education levels. This effect differs with the tool in question, as I will show in the next section: the *Antragsgrün* is not the right tool to motivate academics to participate.

The last significant predictor in the 'Actual' models is current use of *Antragsgrün*: Participants who have used the tool already were 59% less likely to say they did not change their behaviour, and nearly four times more likely to say they increased their participation. This reflects a trend that was already visible in the models for 'Intended' changes in behaviour, where the rating, expected benefit and use of the tool were the strongest predictors. The actual effect is more than twice as strong as the anticipated one. Members who liked the *Antragsgrün* and expected online tools in general to make participation easier for members like themselves were more likely to intend no change in their behaviour, and less likely to increase their participation. The rating of *Antragsgrün* and the expected effect on 'members like you', both on a Likert scale, interacted, for both models, as shown in Figure 20 and Figure 21 respectively: The more participants liked and thought they might benefit from the tool, the stronger the effect. The direction of the effect – positive ratings leading to increased odds for no anticipated change, and decreased odds for an anticipated increase in participation – seems counterintuitive at first. However, these are likely – and in the case of increase, definitely – members who are *already* actively using the tool, so that there is no need for either change or increase in participation: They can just keep doing what they are already doing. In summary, members who like the tool are likely to use it, and members who do not, are not. This mirrors findings by Chang (2017), who found that positive attitudes improved adoption.

As with age, this is not a case of reinforcement, since there is no intended increase – there is already a divide, but its dimensions are unlikely to change. The party may want to bridge this divide though, to achieve their goal of mobilising new and more members. This is underlined by the

requirement for communication about the existence and use of the tools, which was highlighted in

6.4. As many members are currently not very aware of the tools, raising awareness may also

increase the opinion members have of them, which can then increase adoption.

Figure 20: Interaction Effect between 'Rating Antragsgrün (Likert)' and 'Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Members like the participant' for 'Anticipated – No Change' through *Antragsgrün*
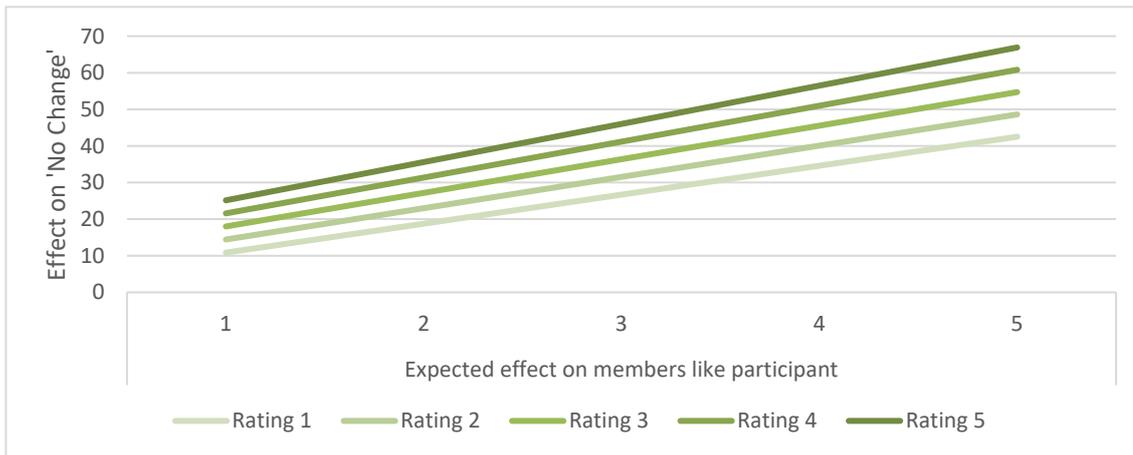
Figure 21: Interaction Effect between 'Rating Antragsgrün (Likert)' and 'Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Members like the participant' for 'Anticipated – Increase' through *Antragsgrün*

7.3.   Use and Effects of *Befragung*

The executive board (at federal, or as planned in the future, any level) can decide to run a

Befragung, create a survey, and send it to their respective members (see 4.4). Members can then

respond to this survey, providing their opinion and feedback. The response data is then received

and processed by the board, or their respective staff. Depending on the nature of the survey, the

results are either kept confidential (and may or may not influence the future decisions of the board,

see 6.5), or published, distributed and presented internally, so that they can form the basis for a discussion in the party or branch.

Figure 22 shows the change in participation through the introduction of the *Befragung*. As this is an entirely new process, it creates new possibilities of interaction for both the executive board and the members, and also a new type of data that was previously not available. In terms of the actor-network, this change has expanded the size of the network – there are *more* and *different* interactions between members and leaders, as well as a brand new actor: the data, which may in turn influence both discussions and decisions in the party. The newness of this process makes it hard to predict what effect it will have, although members are hardly worried that it will have negative effects. Since it is a new form of participation, the general assumption is that it will increase and broaden engagement and draw in new participants – a mobilisation effect is expected.

Table 21 summarises six models concerning the *Befragung*. As above, the models for 'Current Use' predict the participants in surveys C3a and C3b who stated that they had used the tool, 'Intention' refers to the effect members anticipated the tool would have on their participation in survey C3a, and 'Actual' refers to the effect participants said it did have in survey C3b.

Opposed to all other tools and models, for the *Befragung*, participants with lower educational attainment were less likely to intend to increase their participation, while those who hold a PhD are most likely to intend an increase, followed by participants with university degrees. Given that, as discussed above, members with (any type of) university degree are currently *less* active than others, the *Befragung* – arguably a rather academic activity – seems to be able to draw these members in, thus mobilising a currently underrepresented group. In the long term, this might mean that the *Befragung* brings some of the digital divide into participation, if higher educated participants would indeed increase activity and benefit from the online tool (Ferro et al., 2007; Hargittai, 2008). However, given that this is the *only* tool that shows any sign of an increase in participation for highly educated members, while all others indicate no change, this is unlikely to become a problem. Following worries about the interpretation of survey results (6.3.2), the rather academic audience should however be taken into consideration when results are discussed, as well as in comparison to other data from the population, where the proportion for university degrees is less than half of that for members of the Green Party (Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis), 2017). The party should consider what the goal of their mobilisation is: Participation being more representative of the party members, of voters, or society? If in the long term the recruitment of more new members from different layers of society were the goal, the *Befragung* is unlikely to be the tool that achieves this.

Figure 22:   Actor-Network 3: Changes to process due to *Befragung*
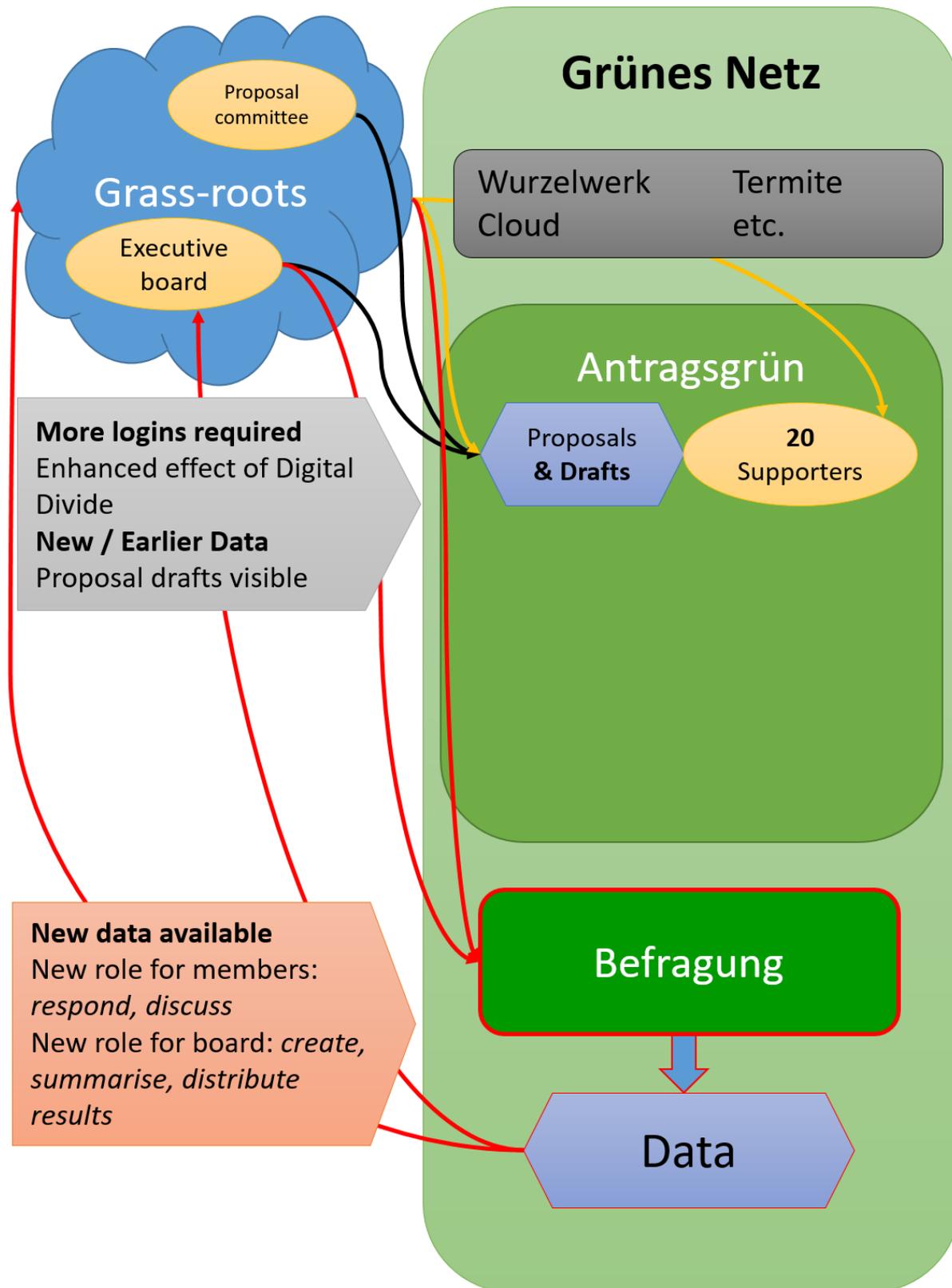
Table 21: Binary Logistic Regression models for current, intended and actual use of *Befragung*

	Current Use						Intention						Actual					
	2017			**2018**			**No Change**			**Increase**			**No Change**			**Increase**		
	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig
Gender: Female	118	2.195					169	1.734	*	133	0.568	*	130	1.559	*			
Care for dependents													161	0.592	*			
Institutional Activity		7.737	**		4.441	**												
Age (18-25)				18		**	23	0.682										
26-35				53	2.374	*	64	0.211	**									
36-45				61	2.020	*	86	0.342	**									
46-55				84	2.043	*	127	0.604										
56-65				99	1.852		156	0.667										
Above 65				43	4.285	**	52		*									
Network above state level: yes							145	2.039	**	116	0.456	**						
Rating *Befragung*								0.636	**		2.273	**						
Use of *Befragung*																	0.287	*
Rating *Antragsgrün*											0.721	*						
Expected effect on members like participant (Likert)														0.843	**		0.495	**
Preference of Participation Intensity: Equal													255	1.887	**		0.547	*
Daily Internet Use							490	3.217	*									
Residence: Directly within a city	195	1.415																
Highest education qualification (PhD)										41		*						
Vocational Training										14	0.306	*						
GCSE										35	0.277	**						
A-Levels										64	0.236	**						
University Degree										226	0.309	*						
Occupation: Self Employed													61	1.954	*			
Gender: Female by Residence (Directly within a city)		0.315	*															
Exp. effect on m. like participant by Use of *Befragung*																	3.044	**

	Current Use		Intention		Actual	
	2017	**2018**	**No Change**	**Increase**	**No Change**	**Increase**
N	413	358	508	380	354	352
Nagelkerke's R-Square	0.497	0.577	0.359	0.290	0.097	0.143
p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

More important than education is participation of women though: Gender on its own was not a significant predictor for current use of the *Befragung* in either 2017 or 2018. There was however a significant interaction effect between gender and residence in cities (above 100.000 residents) in 2017, showing that women living in cities were more likely to be users than men. In terms of changes to behaviour though, women said that they intended to increase their participation 40% less often than men, and were 70% more likely to have no intention of changing behaviour. This has continued into the model for actual change: Although there was no significant difference for an increase in participation, women were 56% more likely to not have changed behaviour. This corresponds to the digital divide literature, where women are still less likely to use the internet and engage in political activity online (Emmer et al., 2011), as well as women's overall lower participation and representation in politics (Busse et al., 2015). Moreover, this result also corresponds to participation in the first survey (C1) – which was part of a *Befragung* – where only 30% of respondents were women.

While there are certainly other factors that warrant differentiation (e.g. race, class), gender is particularly important in the Green Party, as gender equality is one of their founding principles. Consequently, the gender difference in participation through the *Befragung* is highly problematic, especially as it directly contradicts members' assumption that online participation tools would make participation easier for men and women at the same rate. This may be a result of the wording of this particular question, in that participation 'becoming easier' does not necessarily mean that the opportunity to participate, regardless of barriers, will be used. However, the opportunity being used so significantly less by women is a matter of gender inequality.

Men adopted the *Befragung* and intended to participate more, while women, even if they adopted the tool, did not change their level of activity as a result. They replaced existing activities, but were unlikely to do more. This cannot be classed as 'reinforcement' for men, as there is no current difference in use; men do not have an advantage. On the contrary, the linear model for Institutional Activity indicates that women are slightly *more* active in the party overall. In the short term, increased participation by men *could* in this case be seen as positive mobilisation (if men are indeed seen as underrepresented), or *negative* mobilisation, as the imbalance between men and women participating online far outweighs the current over-representation of women. This may eventually lead to a reinforcement effect for men, if they become more active on the tool than women, as their intention indicates they will.

That members have such a skewed assumption about participation opportunities being equal, when this clearly translates neither into intentions nor effects, may make it hard for the party to

properly address this issue – although, as described in section 6.5, they have already started this process, and awareness of the issue is being raised.

Another indicator for use and no intended change in behaviour was age. Participants over 65 were least likely, and participants between 26 and 35 most likely to use the *Befragung* in 2018. The younger members also intended to change their participation behaviour at a higher rate. The average age of party members is 50 years (Niedermayer, 2017a), which was reflected in both samples. The higher use of younger members, and intention of older members to not change behaviour, could point to members being right in their assumption that online tools make it harder for 'older members' to participate. Since habits form over the life-course (Vowe, 2014), older members are less likely to be familiar with online tools. On the other hand, when political socialisation determines the common action repertoires of a generation (Grasso, 2014), and younger members are more used to the activity of responding to online surveys, they are more likely to use them in the party as well. Older members did not intend to change their behaviour in 2017, and were less active than their younger peers in 2018. If this trend continues, the divide between age groups in use of the tool is likely to increase, potentially reinforcing the existing difference in activity by age. However, there is currently no significant difference in age for an actual change in behaviour – if intentions are turned into action, this is not visible yet.

The preferred participation '*Intensity*' is a strong predictor for actual changes to participation, with members preferring equal to uncapped participation being half as likely to say they increased, and twice as likely to say they did not change their participation through the *Befragung*. In reverse, members who think participation should be uncapped were more likely to say they changed, and increased, their participation. This is consistent with the qualitative data: Where participants were sceptical about online systems, they referred to the systems' performance against the party's ideal of equal participation (6.3.1). Participation preferences are not yet part of either the digital divide or mobilisation and reinforcement literature – but this may count as evidence that they should be, with a preference for uncapped participation indicating a higher degree of mobilisation.

Internet use on the other hand is by definition well established in the digital divide (Norris, 2001; Carpentier, 2015). Daily internet use was by far the strongest predictor for no intended change in participation: Respondents who used the internet every day were more than three times as likely to intend to participate the same as members who were online less than daily. Possibly, these members were already using the *Befragung*, and thus had no need to change their behaviour. However, since internet use did not come up as a significant predictor in any of the other models, there is no evidence for this assumption.

Participants with a network on national level were half as likely to intend to change behaviour as their peers without such networks. This is the polar opposite of the respondents' assumption that participation becomes easier for members who have an extended network. Similar to the model for *Antragsgrün*, this may be due to the fact that these well networked members were already highly active; they did significantly increase their activity between 2017 and 2018. That they did not intend to increase their participation also means that there is an opportunity for less connected members to catch up with them, and thus balance out some of the currently existing inequalities. The inverse of members with networks being less likely to increase their participation is that members without these networks were more likely to do so. As shown in Figure 22, members do not need a network to participate in the *Befragung* – each of them is invited and may respond on their own. The *Befragung* is an opportunity to mobilise the grass-roots, surpass existing networks, and express the collective grass-roots opinions regardless of their position in the party.

A group of indicators reflect the influence of the current views and use of online tools: Higher ratings for *Antragsgrün* reduce the odds for an intended increase in participation, potentially because members who like the tool are already using it, thus being highly active, with little capacity for an *increase* in participation. They were more likely to replace activities than to increase their already high activity. A high rating for the *Befragung* made members less likely to intend to participate the same – this is aligned with those members being more likely to increase their participation. Members who liked the tool increased their participation – if possible – while those who did not, did not. This is further evidenced by an interaction effect between the expected effect on members like the participant, and use of the *Befragung*: Participants who liked the tool already used it were much more likely to increase their participation, as shown in Figure 23.

Figure 23: **Interaction Effect between 'Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Members like the participant' and 'Use of Befragung' for 'Actual – Increase' through *Befragung***
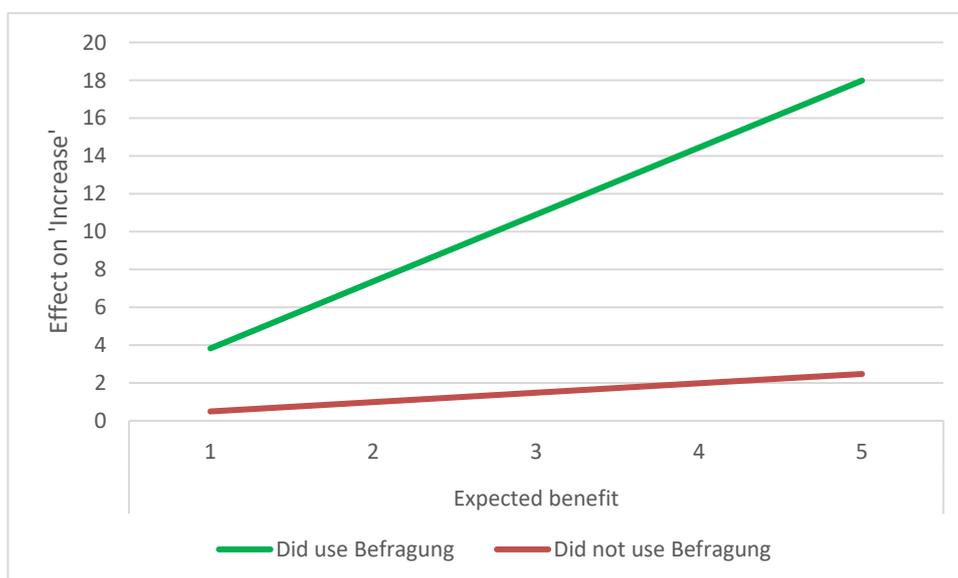
This seems to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, and may limit the use of the tool to those members who already approved of it. As with the *Antragsgrün*, increasing awareness and approval of the *Befragung* may help alleviate this.

7.4. Use and Effects of *Begehren*

Figure 24 shows the changes in participation processes due to the introduction of the *Begehren*. Like the *Befragung*, it is a new type of participation, enabling new interactions. Unlike the *Befragung*, it builds on existing technology, namely the *Antragsgrün* and the online verification processes in the *Antragsgrün*. As explained in section 4.4, a *Begehren* is a petition to the executive board, and works on a technical level like a proposal with 50 instead of 20 supporters. Unlike a regular proposal, it has two phases: A discussion stage, lasting 21 days, where potential supporters can comment or suggest amendments, and the initiator can react and/or amend the text; and a supporter stage, where the (amended) proposal can gather supporters. If it reaches 50 supporters, it can be submitted, and the executive board has to respond to it, on the same platform, within another six weeks.

The *Begehren* allows members to set items on the agenda of the executive board, in a structured process that is visible to all party members. Since it requires a discussion process, it enables discussions on a party-internal platform – something that has not successfully been done in the party in the past. Since each *Begehren* is by design visible to all users of the tool, there is no need for supporters to know one-another, enabling new forms of networking between party members. With the executive board being obliged to respond, this is a new form of control over what the board does, and might even lead to anticipatory obedience, where the board addresses issues before they are 'forced' upon them (cf. Rudzio, 2015). Similar to the *Befragung*, because the *Begehren* is a new process, members expect the *Begehren* to engage new and different members, and lead to a mobilisation effect.

Table 22 summarises five models concerning the *Begehren*. The model for 'Current Use' predicts the members in 2018 who stated that they had used the tool. There is no model for 2017 because the tool has only been introduced in April 2018, a few months ahead of the second panel wave. 'Intention' refers to the anticipated effect members said the tools would have on their participation in 2017 (C3a), and 'Actual' refers to the effect participants said it did have in 2018 (C3b).

Figure 24: Actor-Network 4: Changes to process due to *Begehren*
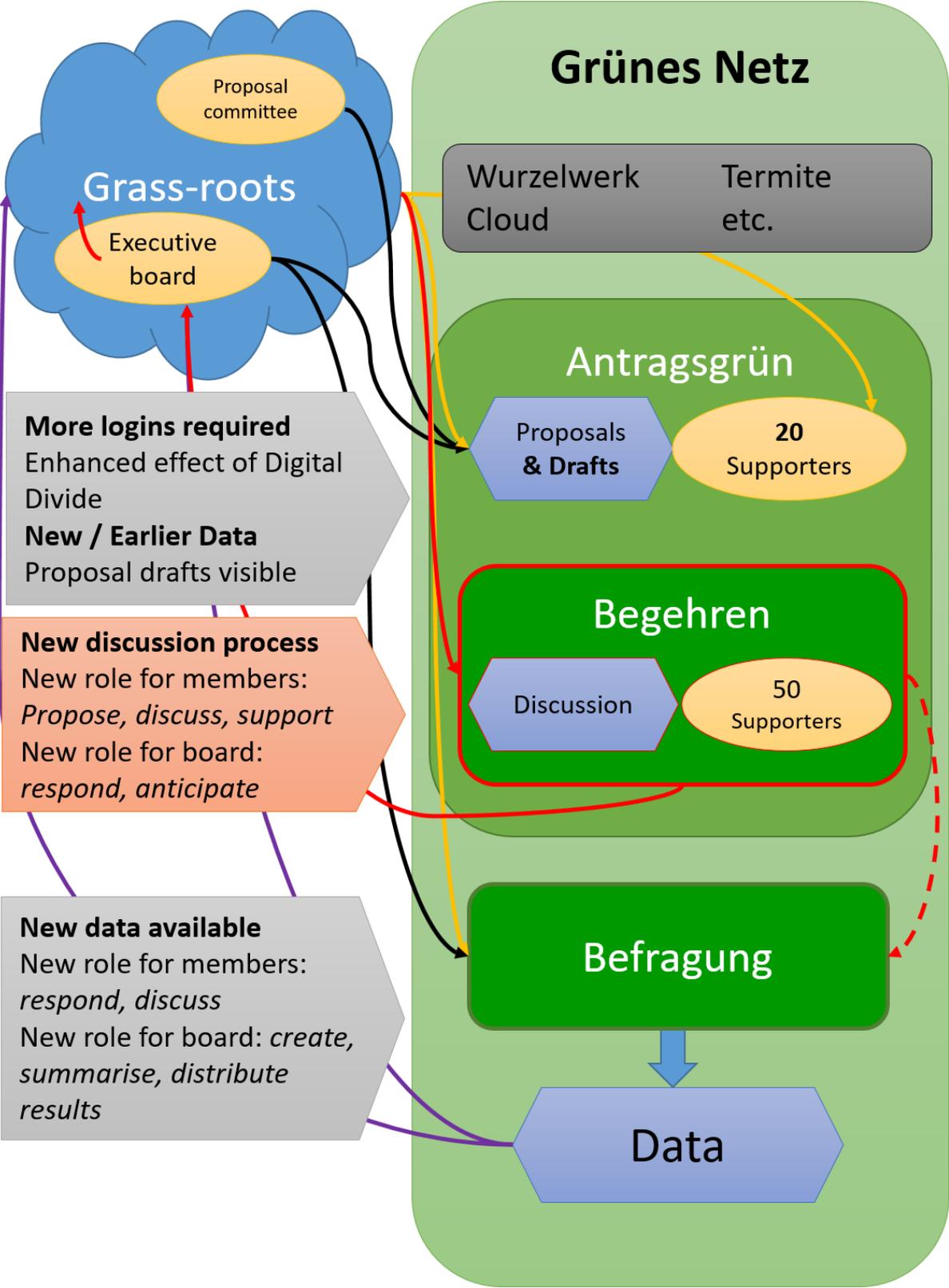
Table 22: Binary Logistic Regression models for current, intended and actual use of *Begehren*

	Current Use			Intention						Actual					
	2018			No Change			Increase			No Change			Increase		
	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig	N	Odds	Sig
Expected effect on members like participant (Likert)		1.598	**		0.759	*		1.429	*		0.828	*		1.479	**
Daily Internet Use: yes				370	7.902	**							314	0.054	**
University Degree: has degree										232	2.128	**	232	0.514	*
Institutional Activity		4.014	**												
Rating Begehren (Likert)					0.753	**		1.718	**						
Use of Antragsgrün: has used				85	1.753	*									
Rating Online Verification (Likert)								0.647	**						
IT Skills (Likert)								0.113	**						
Network in party wings (None)										298		**			
Left										16	0.185	**			
Reformer										11	0.263	*			
Age (Above 65)	40									33		**			
18-25		-								15	31.223	**			
26-35	51	0.002	*							45	3.019	*			
36-45	60	1.884								60	4.01	**			
46-55	77	7.072								73	2.563	*			
56-65	95	5.402								99	2.826	**			
Exp. effect on members like participant (Likert) *by* Age			*												
by Age (26-36)		4.085	*												
by Age (36-45)		0.654													
by Age (46-55)		0.494													
by Age (56-65)		0.486	*												
N		339			381			335			325			325	
Nagelkerke's R-Square		0.653			0.098			0.126			0.247			0.570	
p		0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000	

The model for 'current use' by definition describes the early adopters of the *Begehren*, as the tool had only been available for three months at the time of the survey. Participants who were very active in the party were most likely to have already adopted the tool: Each point increase in Institutional Activity made them four times more likely to be users. However, as there is no effect for an *increase* in participation, neither in the models for anticipated nor for actual change, this does not seem to be a reinforcement effect: Active members adopt the tool, but they did not increase their participation as a result of it. As they are clearly using the *Begehren*, and since it is a new process that they must have added to their participation portfolio, chances are that they use the *Begehren* instead of other activities. This would indicate a replacement effect. Participants in datasets D-F suggested that *Begehren* could be used instead of open letters or regular proposals for assemblies. Given the functionality of the tool described above, the most likely replacement is for informal communication: Rather than using informal networks to discuss and influence policy, *Begehren* could be used to formalise the process – thereby also increasing the transparency of these discussions, making them visible to all (online) party members.

Participants who thought that the new participation processes would benefit members like themselves were 50% more likely to use the *Begehren*, further supporting the previously discussed possibility that members who are enthusiastic about online participation are more likely to adopt it. There is also an interaction effect between the expected effect and age: In comparison to members older than 65, those aged 26-35 are significantly less likely to use the *Begehren*, *unless* they have a high expectation that online tools are going to benefit them. Members aged 56-65 on the other hand were more likely to have used the *Begehren*, but the benefit they expected from online tools had a much lower impact on their adoption. This can be seen as evidence of the digital divide (Emmer et al., 2011), or an effect of enthusiasm for technology: members who are younger and more enthusiastic adopt tools at a higher rate even than older enthusiasts.

This is further supported by the intentions to change behaviour with adoption of the tool, shown in Figure 25: participants who rated the *Begehren* highly were 25% less likely to intend no change to their participation, and 72% more likely to intend to increase it. Equally, a higher expectation of benefits from online participation made them 24% more likely to change their participation behaviour, and 43% more likely to intend to increase it. In combination, this, again, has the appearance of a self-fulfilling prophecy: if members like the tool and think it will help them, they'll use it. If not, then they won't. This poses a danger for the party that a subset of partisan members who are 'enthusiasts' uses the tool to their own advantage, at the expense of other members – a worry that did come up in the interviews, as discussed in 6.3.2. It also underlines the lack of awareness of the tool that was highlighted in the qualitative data (6.4.2): Members who were not involved in the discussion or implementation of the *Begehren* were hardly aware of the concept, let

alone the plans for its use. Information and training for members on a broader scale may thus alleviate the influence of 'insider-knowledge' and increase adoption.

Figure 25: Interaction Effect between 'Expected benefit for members through online participation (Likert): Members like the participant' and 'Age' for 'Current Use' of *Begehren*
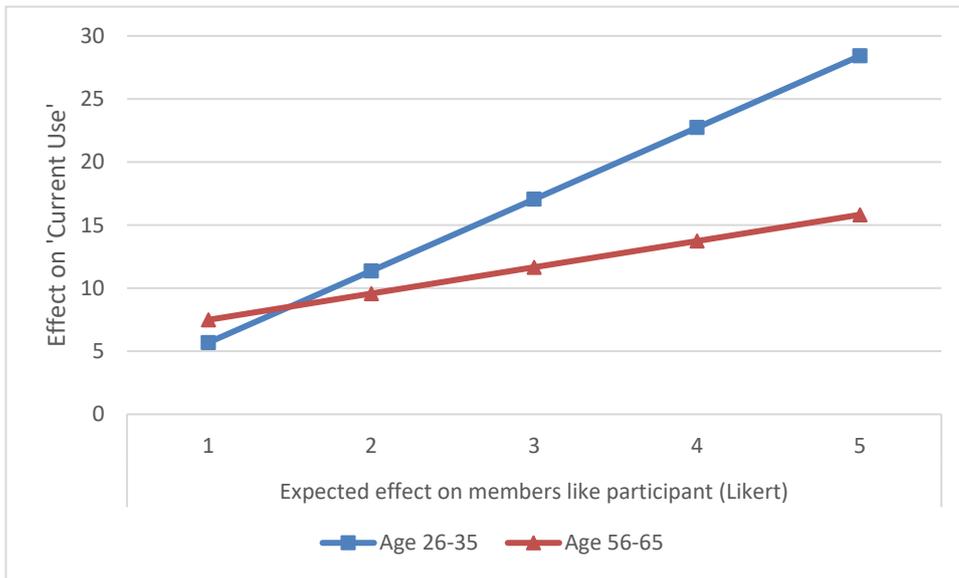
Source: Second panel survey (C3b), conducted June 2018; N = 565
Reference category for Age = 'Above 65'

Members who rated the online verification process highly, as well as those with higher IT skills, intended to increase their participation through the *Begehren* significantly less than their peers with opposing views and skills. This speaks against some of the worries members discussed in the qualitative data, that the tools might be too complicated: If lower skilled members intend to increase their participation through the online tool, then this allows the party to mobilise a group that maybe they did not even think they could reach. Also, given that the online verification was highly debated, the fact that those who do not like it now intend to increase their participation through a tool that uses it indicates what was also stated in interviews: That the process has been seamlessly adopted into common practice (6.5.3).

Another measurable effect of the digital divide is internet use: Participants who used the internet every day were seven times more likely to say they did not intend to change their participation through the *Begehren* than those who used it less frequently, and 95% less likely to say that they have increased their participation. This can be seen as evidence against the effect of the digital divide for the *Begehren*, as those who are already familiar with the internet should have been more likely to use it to their own advantage (Lusoli et al., 2002; Vowe, 2014). This in turn points to a mobilisation effect for those who use the internet less frequently. The *Begehren* may be sufficiently motivating for less savvy members to go online.

A further diversion from the expectations of the digital divide is the reiteration of the effect of formal education. Just like for the *Antragsgrün*, holding a university degree makes members both less likely to change behaviour, and less likely to increase their participation. Highly educated members are not only less active, but they are also less likely to change that. This contradicts some of the worries raised in the qualitative analysis, where participants felt that online tools could exclude lower educated members. It seems to be the other way around – members with higher education seem to have no intention to increase their engagement, while those without university education do!

7.5.   Conclusion: Differentiated Online Participation Effects

This chapter discussed the effects of the new processes on participation, and the characteristics of groups that were likely to use the tools, and change or not change their participation behaviour as a result. This broadly responds to research questions 5 and 6, and corresponding hypotheses:

5.   Is there evidence for mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement, or non-use? Are these effects mutually exclusive or do they occur simultaneously?

H5a   There is evidence for all four effects.

H5b   All effects happen simultaneously for different groups.

6.   What characteristics of participants correlate with each of these effects?

H6a: Behaviour differs by age: Younger members are more likely to show reinforcement.

H6b: Behaviour differs by familiarity with technology: Members who are less familiar with technology are more likely to show replacement; Members with average technology skills are most likely to be mobilised.

H6c: Behaviour differs by socio-economic status (e.g. income, occupation): Members with higher status are more likely to show replacement.

H6d: Behaviour differs based on participation preferences: Members with a preference for voting are more likely to be mobilised.

My results indicate that the party's goals to overcome the participation and digital divide are unlikely to be achieved. The literature on participation and the digital divide tells us that there are still clear distinctions in terms of who participates, and to which effect: All forms of capital: social / political, financial and cultural, in the form of social class, available resources and time, gender and education, play a role in determining how likely a person is to be active, both politically, and on the internet (Brady et al., 1995; Lijphart, 1997; Emmer et al., 2011). These differences lead to different effects, such as the mobilisation of inactive members (Ward et al., 2002), reinforcement of existing

advantages (Norris, 2001), replacement of existing practices (Jensen, 2013), or non-use of the tools (Lutz and Hoffmann, 2017). There was however no unique effect of any one of the tools. All of them instead led to different effects for different people, as the 'Differentiated online participation effects-model' suggested. The effects are summarised in Table 23.

Table 23: Overview of effects of tools by characteristics

	Mobilisation			Reinforcement			Replacement			Non-Use		
	var	V	E	var	V	E	var	V	E	var	V	E
Antragsgrün	Age	+	-	Education	-	+	Age	-	+	Age	+	+
	Gender	male	+							Effect	-	+
	Education	+	-							Opinion	-	+
	Opinion	-	-									
Befragung	Education	+	+	Age	-	+	Opinion	+	+	Age	+	+
	Gender	male	+							Opinion	-	+
	Intensity	uncapped	+									
	Network	-	+									
Begehren	Internet Use	-	+	Opinion	+	+	Activity	+	+	Opinion	-	+
	Education	-	+									

> For each combination of tools (major rows) and effects (major columns), the set of variables moderating the effect is given on the left. The details given on the right of each variable signify the type of effect, with 'V' indicating the variable value, and 'E' the effect. 'Age + +' can be read as 'when Age is higher, the effect is more likely'.

This means that the effects vary by group as well as by tool, and indicates that a number of factors need to be considered when assessing the impact of the introduction of online decision making tools.

The *Antragsgrün* mobilises men, reinforces participation for members with lower educational attainment, replaces other participation methods for younger members, and is likely used less by members who are older, or less convinced of the benefits of the tool.

The *Befragung* mobilises men, members with higher educational attainment, those who prefer uncapped participation, and members without extensive networks. It reinforces existing benefits for younger members, replaces other forms of participation for those who believe in the benefits of online tools, and is likely used less by those who do not believe in these benefits, as well as older members.

The *Begehren* mobilises members who do not use the internet every day, as well as those with lower educational attainments. It reinforces use for members who believe in the benefits of online tools, and replaces existing participation for active members. Members who have a low opinion of the tool are unlikely to adopt it.

Although members expected all kinds of benefits, especially for their less-privileged peers, the members who are likely to benefit most from online participation tools are not those the Green Party had hoped to engage. This is problematic as, although the goal of increasing participation may be met, the goal of holding participation equal will likely not be. Even if more participation happens, it will mostly be 'more of the same'.

The party is also well known for their focus on gender equality, and their high female representation (Heinrich, 2002; Frankland, 2008). Although women are still underrepresented in the party in comparison to the German population (Niedermayer, 2017a), they were more active than men, at least in 2017. This balance however is now in danger, with both the *Antragsgrün* and *Befragung* mobilising men at a higher rate. In practical terms, there might be room to re-think some of the processes in order to change this, for example by introducing quotas, or addressing and supporting underrepresented members. For example, the party could develop methods to increase women's participation online that correspond to their offline processes. They could also offer explicit training to increase members' skills and thus confidence to participate.

There are some exceptions though. The results for education, which is a negative predictor for both participation and online participation through two of the three tools, not only contradict some of the participation and digital divide literature (Brady et al., 1995; Lijphart, 1997) but also the 'urban knowledge' about the Green Party. The party is well known for having the highest proportion of university educated members (Andersen and Woyke, 2008, p. 38; Niedermayer, 2017a). My analysis has shown that this is commonly misinterpreted: The higher proportion of university-educated members does *not* translate into more contributions from these educated members. To the contrary, members who are *not* university educated are much more active, and more likely to mobilise through the *Begehren*, and even reinforce their existing over-representation through *Antragsgrün*. The party is not the 'academics' party' after all. There is only one exception to this rule: Members with university degrees intend to increase their participation through the *Befragung* at a higher rate than members with lower educational attainments. This suggests that academics are only motivated by specific types of participation, which cost comparably little time, and are, at least for some, familiar from practice. In other words: Academics like surveys.

A detail that all models for intended use share is the significance of variables that indicate enthusiasm for online participation: ratings of the different tools, regularity of internet use, and the expected effect on members like the participants. Participants with a positive outlook on the tools generally intended to participate more. However, these largely remain intentions, as the factors that moderate current activity, tool use, and changes in participation behaviour, are aligned with the digital divide. While a low the opinion of all of the tools indicates non-use, demographics like gender, age, and education are more common factors for mobilisation and reinforcement effects.

Age and gender moderate these effects in expected ways: Men are more likely to be mobilised, older members are less likely to adopt tools, while younger members use new tools to either replace their existing activities, or reinforce their advantage.

As expected, Actor-Network Theory was a useful framework to understand the complex interactions alongside these changes. The co-construction of the processes by both human and non-human actors, the members and party bodies and the new technology, contributed to a change not only in processes, but also in perceptions. The technology was not only a tool to be added to a portfolio of participation processes, but required a rethinking of the very processes it was embedded into. This was visible in the role technology played in the re-definition of legitimacy for proposal supporters, but also in the new opportunities for interactions between human actors that the tools enabled. As shown in Figure 26, the new participation processes result in both new, and more structured data, as well as new interactions between tools and members, grass-roots members and party leaders, in either direction, as well as between grass-roots members who may not previously have known one-another. As a result, the *Antragsgrün*, *Befragung* and *Begehren* enable networking and discussions, but also efficiencies through automation.

Figure 26:   Actor-Network 5: New Status Quo after all new online processes are introduced
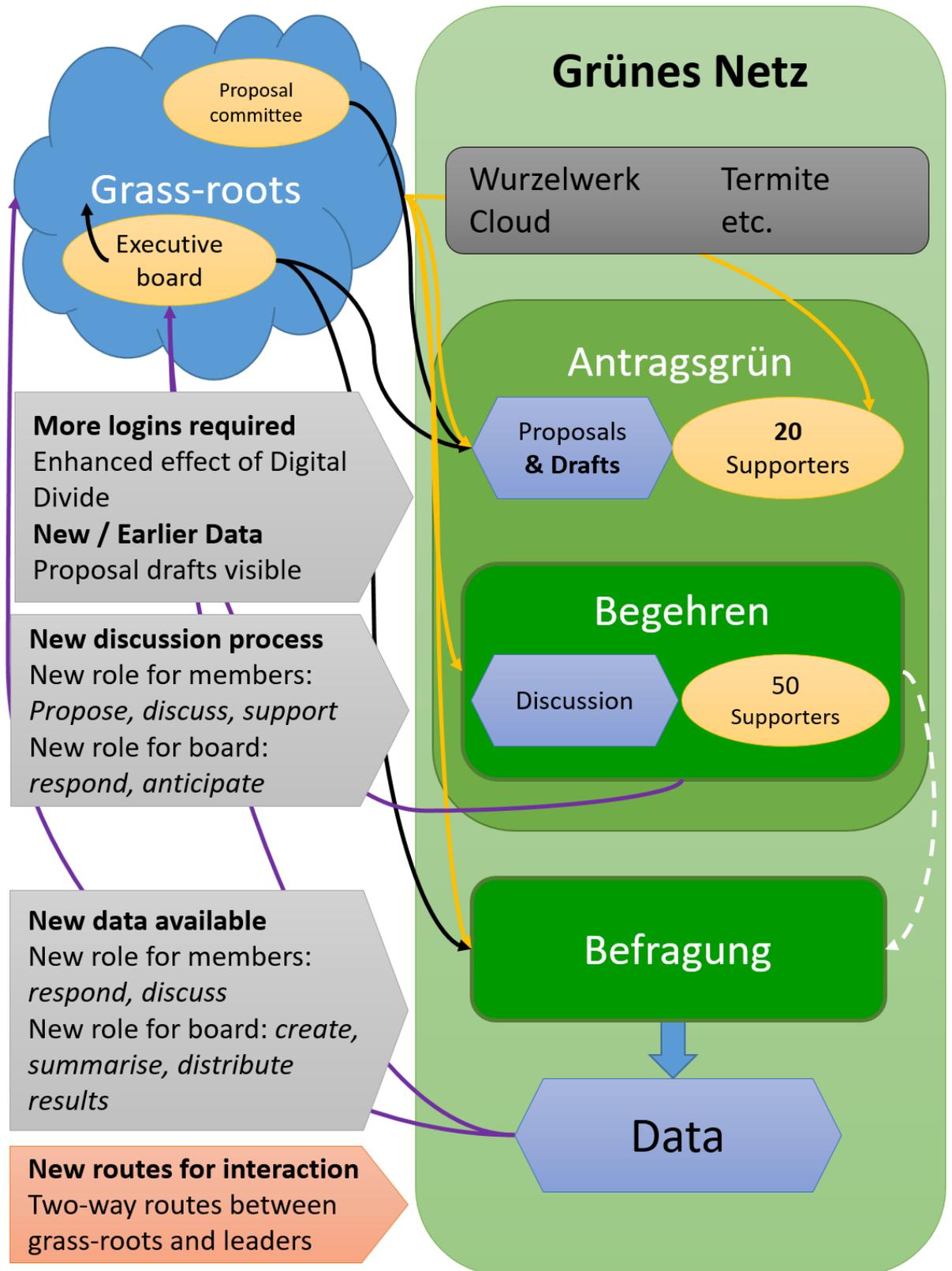
In conclusion, the hypotheses can be partly confirmed:

H5a: can be confirmed: There was indeed evidence for all four effects.

H5b: can be confirmed: There was evidence for all four effects for all three tools, but affecting different, in some instances contradicting groups.

H6a: can be partially confirmed: Behaviour did differ by age for the *Befragung*, with younger members indeed showing reinforcement; however, for *Antragsgrün*, younger members were more likely to show replacement behaviour, while older members showed non-use.

H6b: can be confirmed in principle, but must be rejected in particulars: IT skills were not significant for any of the identified behaviours. While the views of the tools and their benefit were indeed highly significant, their effects work in different directions: Familiarity indicated replacement for the *Befragung*, but reinforcement for the *Begehren*. Less familiarity indicated non-use for all tools.

H6c: must be rejected: Neither income nor occupation were significant predictors for use of any of the tools, let alone effects.

H6d: can be confirmed in principle, but must be rejected in particulars: While participation preferences were indeed linked to a mobilisation effect in the *Begehren*, this was members who preferred uncapped participation intensity, rather than the participation type of votes.

Chapter 8   Conclusion

This thesis makes a major contribution to our understanding of the impact of the introduction of online participation processes on political participation. Based on an analysis of the introduction of online participation processes in the Green Party Germany, it developed a differentiated model of effects of online participation tools. This was applied to participation processes that happen *within* political parties, thereby making an important contribution to a field that has so far focussed primarily on citizen participation. Using Actor-Network Theory as a framework has proven useful in the development of this model. The thesis has further introduced the concept of vogonism in a social science context, as the inability of participants to find relevant information due to the amount of it being made available on online platforms; and shown how grass-roots democracy in the Green Party is not a unified term, but rather a boundary object that binds party members together *despite* their different views.

The thesis has made three major contributions to knowledge:

1. I developed and operationalised participation preferences as an indicator for the effects of online participation
2. I provided an in-depth case-study of participation in the Green Party Germany, and the assumptions that underpinned the implementation of their online participation processes
3. I integrated four potential effects of online participation processes (mobilisation, reinforcement, replacement and non-use) in the Differentiated online participation effects-model (DOPE-model), and tested it on the case study using an extensive dataset. Using this model, I have shown that effects differ by both groups *and* tools.

8.1.   Differentiated online participation effects-model

One core goal of this thesis was to re-conceptualise how the mobilisation and reinforcement theories are used, and combine them with replacement and non-use, to achieve a more wholesome picture of the effect that online participation methods can have. Existing theoretical models are limited because they neither identify the differences between mobilisation and reinforcement with sufficient clarity, nor do they represent the whole spectrum of possible effects. The terminology of studies around online participation effects has been disjointed, with the use of terms overlapping or even contradicting one-another. According to the DOPE-model introduced in 2.4.6, which was operationalised in Chapter 3, and then applied throughout Chapters 5-7, the following definitions can be made:

- **Mobilisation** is an increase of participation through online participation tools, moderated by specified criteria, such as age, education, gender, or participation preferences. It can be measured twofold, either by comparing two models, and identifying whether odds for use have increased, ('are more people in group x using the tools now than were using them before'), or through a question about participation levels ('has participation increased?'). If participation has gone up, participants were mobilised.

- **Reinforcement** is an increase of participation through online participation tools, moderated by specified criteria, such as age, education, gender, or participation preferences, in a situation where these criteria were already indicative of higher participation. Reinforcement cannot be measured in a single model, because it would look the same as mobilisation. It can only be identified in comparison between models: If a group was already significantly more active, and increased their participation in subsequent models, this can be classified as reinforcement. Because reinforcement requires an increase in participation, it would be hard for the most active members to reinforce their advantage: they are already so active that they can hardly do more. This is a natural limit to reinforcement, as a behaviour that cannot be intensified cannot be reinforced either. The main question then becomes whether participating through new online tools is more effective or influential than other forms of participation. If that were the case, in the long-term, replacement of inefficient offline with more efficient online processes might lead to reinforcement, where previously unavailable resources are freed up.

- **Replacement** is the adoption of online participation tools *instead of* previously applied practices, moderated by specified criteria, such as age, education, gender, or participation preferences. Replacement cannot be measured per se, because it is impossible to identify (at least with data available in this thesis) which practices are replaced through the new online tools. What can be said is that if participants adopt an online participation tool, without changing the *intensity* of their participation, they *must* have replaced something, as otherwise participation levels would have gone up along with the adoption: If it's not adding, it must be replacing. Future work could collect data in a format that allows to compare both overall and relative participation by channels, to make this effect more visible.

- **Non-use** is the non-adoption of online participation tools, moderated by specified criteria, such as age, education, gender, or participation preferences. Non-use can be measured by implication, where one group adopts at a significantly higher rate than another, which allows statements about the group that does *not* adopt. If participants are not using the new tools, this can be classified as non-use, regardless of whether they have or have not been active before. More important than identifying which groups do show non-use is the

question *why* this behaviour occurs. As Lutz & Hoffman (2017) have shown, not all non-use is negative. In future work, this should therefore be measured through questions like 'Did you participate in this way before? Do you do it today? Why (not)?'

These effects can be distinguished through comparisons of different indicators, namely the activity of participants, their use / adoption of online participation tools, and changes in their activity. Although developed in a context of online participation within political parties, this model should hold for research in wider organisational or governmental contexts. As such, it can help researchers in the interdisciplinary field of web science, but also in more traditional research in sociology or political science, to understand the effects of online participation tools on participation behaviour. Using this model will make future studies richer, by providing a more holistic and context-based picture of online participation effects. This model will make studies more comparable, by aligning terms through data-driven and clearly distinguishable definitions. It also shows that effects of online participation vary for different groups *and* tools.

8.2.   Limitations and Future Work

The Green Party may be a good case study to investigate the effects of the introduction of online participation, but it is still only a single case. As such, it can only give indications of what to look out for when new online participation tools are introduced. The results presented here would benefit from validation of the identified effects through comparisons with other parties, countries, and political cultures. Comparing online participation in a less progressive party would allow to see how the preferences and subsequent implementation differ: While for example factors like diversity may be perceived as less relevant in other parties, individual members will still need to be mobilised, which will be dependent on their individual – diverse – perceptions.

More comparison would also allow to test the reliability of the participation preferences, distinguishing between intensity and type, and to identify whether the boundaries drawn here are applicable in other contexts. They could also be closer aligned to democratic theory, potentially by selecting better matched pairs of statements. Given sufficient data, it should further be possible to identify who holds these preferences. If it is not possible through regression models, then maybe some form of cluster analysis will yield better results. Data covering a longer period of time might also allow to track whether the participation preferences themselves change over time. On a finer grained level, it would be interesting to find out why civil servants behave so very different than every other occupation group, and whether this is a wider effect, or limited to the Green Party.

Linking these effects within a party to the engagement of parties with supporters or the wider public would be equally interesting. This could involve, for example, to find out whether these

effects would apply in a context of government petitions, or discourse on social networks. Would parties offering citizens to get involved in discussions online be as engaging as engaging them in door to door canvassing?

In the context of the Green Party, more data on political leaning, and a broader spectrum on demographic criteria, as well as more detailed measurements for factors like IT skills and digital literacy (Eshet-Alkalai, 2004; van Deursen and Mossberger, 2018) would improve the analysis conducted here. For example, more and broader data could identify clearer which elements of digital literacy contribute to the described effects. Similarly, the predicted variable in most of the models – the response to the question 'How do you intend to / did you change your participation behaviour through [tool]?' is a rather crude measure, and could be improved upon, by developing better, clearer measurements for change of participation behaviour. Asking participants what they did is good, validating it objectively would be better. A change in the factor score used to measure institutional activity, or indeed a change to the composition of the score, might be a good indicator. This could be further supplemented by looking at actual use of tools through system data, rather than relying on self-reported usage. Ethical considerations about (consent for) use of this data, which is sensitive because political discussions are happening on these platforms, would need to be addressed.

As the Green Party has only just starting to use online tools, the whole introduction process could be followed further into the future. More tools are being introduced, such as a distinct discussion platform, and progress will likely gather speed as new tools arrive. There is a case for more research into the specific adoption process, to differentiate between short- and long-term effects, similar to what Kerr and Waddington (2014) have done for Unison. This could be accomplished by simply continuing and developing this project, e.g. running more panel surveys and interviews as future implementation and adoptions come along, maybe even talking to the same participants in intervals, to develop a better picture of adoption over time. This would also allow to investigate whether some of the effects that were predicted as likely or unlikely in this thesis do or do not come to pass, and also whether their perceptions and preferences change through experience with the tools. This could further be supported by comparing predictions of the development based on the findings in these thesis with future findings about actual effects.

A good deal of the effect that the *Befragung*, but also of other tools, entail that the party needs to develop strategies on what to do, or not to do, with the additional data that these tools generate. The surveys are the most obvious example as their whole purpose is to create data that can be used to guide discussions. But this also applies to the verification process and the *Begehren*, where drafts are visible to a wider audience much earlier than before, allowing for more discussion. The automation of these processes offers even more new opportunities: Where at an assembly, a

'women's vote' is by necessity a separate step, in an online process a push of a button is sufficient to provide a gender split for the supporters of every single proposal or Begehren. This may influence how the party apply their gender statutes. Are the current measures to achieve gender equality, which used to be necessary in an offline world – through the women's vote, and gender-divided speakers' lists – still required when technology may be able to automate equality?

Appendix A   Green Party Data Sharing Agreement

MUTUAL NONDISCLOSURE AND DATA SHARING AGREEMENT

THIS MUTUAL NONDISCLOSURE AGREEMENT (this "**Agreement**") is dated 01.11.2016 and is entered into by and between the University of Southampton ("University"), as represented by the Faculty of Social, Human and Mathematical Sciences, whose administrative address is at University Road, Highfield, Southampton, SO17 1BJ, United Kingdom, and [Bündnis 90/Die Grünen] whose administrative offices are at Platz vor dem Neuen Tor 1 , 10115 Berlin ("Die Grünen").

Background

The parties wish to discuss and exchange information in order to facilitate a PhD student (the "Student") access to Die Grünen employees and registered members, and to conduct activities around the introduction of online participation methods Die Grünen (the "Purpose"), as outlined in Appendix A and incorporated herein.

In consideration of the mutual benefits of disclosing and receiving the Confidential Information, the parties have agreed to comply with the following terms in connection with the use and disclosure of Confidential Information.

1. **Confidentiality.** Each party and their respective employees, officers, directors, contractors, agents and advisors (collectively, "**Representatives**") are willing to furnish the other party and/or its Representatives with certain information which is non-public, confidential or proprietary in nature. This oral, written, graphic, electronic or other information, in whole or in part, furnished after the date hereof, relating to the Purpose including, but not limited to intellectual property, know-how, data, formulae, processes, designs, photographs, drawings, specifications and samples provided by the disclosing party or on behalf of the disclosing party is collectively referred to in this Agreement as "**Confidential Information.**" Each party agrees to safeguard Confidential Information received under this Agreement with at least the same degree of care as it normally uses to protect its own similar Confidential Information. Each party also warrants that it has the right to disclose the Confidential Information to the receiving party and to authorize the receiving party to use such Confidential Information for the Purpose.

2. **Exclusions.** Confidential Information does not include information that (a) is or becomes generally available to the public other than as a result of direct or indirect disclosure in breach of this Agreement by the receiving party or any of its Representatives; (b) is or becomes available to the receiving party on a non-confidential basis from a source other than the disclosing party or its Representatives who is not known by the receiving party to be bound by a confidentiality agreement with the disclosing party or by any other legal or fiduciary obligation of secrecy to, or for the benefit of, the disclosing party; (c) was known by the receiving party or in its possession on a non-confidential basis prior to the date of disclosure by or on behalf of the disclosing party; (d) was or is independently developed by the receiving party or any of its Representatives without use of, or reference to, Confidential Information, as demonstrated by tangible evidence; or (e) is furnished by the disclosing party to others with written confirmation that such information is not Confidential Information and may be disclosed.

3. **Restriction in Use/Access.** Subject to Section 7 of this Agreement and unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the disclosing party, the receiving party agree to keep Confidential Information strictly confidential and will only use Confidential Information in connection with this Agreement and will not disclose

Confidential Information to any other party, save for its Representative, and then only on a need-to-know basis, who have been made aware of the confidential nature of the information and to whom disclosure is necessary for the Purpose. The receiving party will procure an undertaking from each individual recipient to be bound by the obligation of confidentiality contained herein.

Should the receiving party have reason to believe that any Confidential Information has been disclosed to a person not authorized to receive such information, the receiving party shall inform the disclosing party in writing as promptly as practicable. Under such circumstances, the receiving party shall use reasonable efforts to limit any damage that may be caused to the disclosing party as a result of the disclosure. The receiving party also agrees to promptly notify the disclosing party in writing of any breach by it or its Representatives of this Agreement of which the receiving party becomes aware, and in any event, the receiving party shall be responsible for any breach of this Agreement by any of its Representatives.

4. **Publication and Theses.** This Agreement shall not prevent or hinder registered students of the University from submitting theses based on findings obtained during the course of the discussions for degrees of the University, or from following the University's procedures for examinations and for admission to postgraduate degree status. In accordance with normal academic practice, all employees or students of the University shall be permitted, following the notice procedure laid down below, to publish or discuss findings obtained during the course of the discussions, always subject to the obligations of confidentiality under clause 3. The University will submit to Die Grünen, in writing, a draft which any employee or student of the University intends to publish, at least 30 days before the date of the proposed submission for publication. Die Grünen may, by giving notice to the University (a "Confidentiality Notice"), require the University to delay the proposed publication for a maximum of 1 month after receipt of the Confidentiality Notice, if, in the reasonable opinion of Die Grünen, that delay is necessary in order to seek patent or similar protection, or to modify the publication in order to protect information deemed confidential by Die Grünen. Die Grünen must give that Confidentiality Notice within 10 days after Die Grünen receives details of the proposed publication. If the University does not receive a Confidentiality Notice within that period, its employee or student may proceed with the proposed publication.

5. **Data Protection.** Each Party agrees that, where required by applicable data protection laws, any personal data disclosed to the receiving party has been obtained with the appropriate consent from individuals and ethical approval in place, and each party will comply with all applicable laws, regulations and codes of practice from time to time in force in relation to data protection.

6. **No License.** Each party agrees that Confidential Information provided by or on behalf of the disclosing party shall at all times remain the exclusive property of the disclosing party. Neither party is granting a license to the other party to use any of the disclosing party's Confidential Information or intellectual property, except as may be specifically required for the Purpose of this Agreement, and then only for such Purpose.

7. **Return/Destruction.** Upon the disclosing party's written request, the receiving party agrees to use reasonable efforts to return or destroy (at the receiving party's discretion) the Confidential Information and any copies or extracts thereof in its possession or in the possession of its Representatives. The receiving party and its Representatives may retain any Confidential Information that (a) it is required to keep for compliance purposes under a document retention policy or as required by a court or regulatory agency or by applicable law,

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rules, regulations or professional standards; (b) consists of analyses, compilations, studies or other documents prepared by the receiving party or its Representatives; or (c) have been created electronically pursuant to automatic or ordinary course archiving, back-up, security or disaster recovery systems or procedures. If the receiving party elects to destroy Confidential Information (subject to any retention rights provided in this Agreement), the disclosing party may request that the receiving party provide it with written confirmation of destruction in compliance with this paragraph. Each party agrees to promptly inform the other party in writing if it believes that it erroneously or unintentionally disclosed Confidential Information to the other party, and in any such instance, the receiving party will dispose of or return such Confidential Information as instructed by the disclosing party.

8. **Legal Disclosure.** The receiving party may disclose Confidential Information to the extent such Confidential Information is required to be disclosed by law, by any governmental or other regulatory authority, or by a court or other authority of competent jurisdiction provided that, to the extent it is legally permitted to do so, it gives the disclosing party as much notice of this disclosure as possible and, where notice of disclosure is not prohibited and is given in accordance with this clause 7, it takes into account the reasonable requests of the disclosing party in relation to the content of this disclosure.

9. **No Representations.** NEITHER PARTY NOR ITS REPRESENTATIVES HAVE MADE OR MAKE ANY EXPRESS OR IMPLIED REPRESENTATION OR WARRANTY IN THIS AGREEMENT AS TO THE ADEQUACY, ACCURACY, COMPLETENESS OR FITNESS FOR PURPOSE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND NONE OF THEM SHALL HAVE ANY LIABILITY OR OTHERWISE UNDER THIS AGREEMENT TO THE OTHER PARTY, ANY OF ITS REPRESENTATIVES OR ANY OTHER PERSON RELATING TO OR RESULTING FROM USE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION OR FOR ANY ERRORS THEREIN OR OMISSIONS THEREFROM.

10. **Relationship of the parties.** Nothing in this Agreement shall create, imply or evidence any partnership, joint venture or relationship of principal and agent between the parties.

11. **Choice of Law.** This Agreement will be governed by and construed under the laws of England and Wales and the parties agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the English courts.

12. **Entire Agreement.** This Agreement represents the entire understanding and agreement of the parties regarding the subject matter of this Agreement and supersedes all prior agreements and understandings relating to the subject matter of this Agreement. This Agreement may not be modified or amended, except by a written document duly executed by both parties.

13. **Assignment.** Neither party may assign this Agreement without the prior written consent of the other party (which shall not be unreasonably withheld or delayed).

14. **Term.** This Agreement shall take effect from 01.11.2016 (the "Effective Date") and shall automatically terminate 3 years after the Effective Date unless extended in writing by both parties. This Agreement shall be terminable by either party by 30 days written notice or by mutual written agreement or immediately if either party has reason to believe that the other is in breach of any of the obligations contained herein. Confidential Information disclosed pursuant to this Agreement shall be subject to the terms of this Agreement for five (5) years following the termination date of this Agreement, except that Confidential Information that constitutes personally identifiable information, as identified by the disclosing party, shall be subject to the terms of this Agreement forever, without expiration.

15. **Severability.** If any provision of this Agreement is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, it will not affect the validity or enforceability of the other provisions of this Agreement, which shall remain in full force and effect.

16. **No Waiver.** It is further understood and agreed that any failure by the disclosing party in exercising any right, power or privilege under this Agreement shall not act as a waiver hereunder nor shall any single or partial exercise thereof preclude any further exercise of any right, power or privilege.

17. **Counterparts.** This Agreement may be executed in counterpart signature pages, each of which when executed shall constitute a duplicate original, but all the counterparts shall together constitute the one agreement. Transmission of an executed counterpart of this agreement (but for the avoidance of doubt not just a signature page (a) by fax or (b) by e-mail (in PDF, JPEG or other agreed format) shall take effect as delivery of an executed counterpart of this agreement.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

By: _____

Name: MYLENE PLUTAERT

Title: HEAD OF RESEARCH FUNDING DEVELOPMENT

Date: 5/1/2016

DIE GRUNEN

By: _____
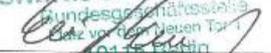
Name: EMILY BÜNING

Title: GENERAL MANAGER

Date: 01.11.2016

I, Gefion Thuermes [name], the Student herein acknowledge that I have read and understood the terms of this Agreement and my obligations hereunder, relating to confidentiality.

Signed: _____

Date: 5/1/17

Appendix A
"Purpose"

Background

The Student's project is to investigate the introduction of online participation methods in Die Grünen. Its aim is to understand how Die Grünen can use the internet effectively in their decision-making processes.

Die Grünen is currently the third largest political party in Germany. It has a strong grounding in grass-roots participation: each member can participate in decisions through proposals, and locally elected delegates. The Die Grünen leadership is keen to expand the use of the internet in their decision-making processes, to give more participation opportunities to the members, and ideally to involve more members in their policy decisions.

Outline and Methodology of Accessing the Data

Data will be collected using a combination of observations, interviews, focus groups, and surveys. Observation data will be collected during working meetings and Die Grünen assemblies. Interviews will be held with Die Grünen officials, and focus groups with grassroots members. Surveys will be conducted by Die Grünen through their own systems. The Student will have the opportunity to add some questions to surveys that are sent to the entire member base, and will have access to the survey data, but no personal details of members of Die Grünen.

The research will be undertaken by Gefion Thuermer ("the Student"), who is currently studying for a PhD in Web Science at the University. The Student will conduct interviews and focus groups with staff and registered members from Die Grünen to support her research in online participation process. Die Grünen will agree this list of interviews with the Student in advance and will facilitate the introductions to enable the interviews to be scheduled. Die Grünen will enable access to either a specific or a random sample of members, and, if required by the Student, provide data from their online participation platform.

The key contacts / stakeholders are:

- Gefion Thuermer (PhD Student from University of Southampton).
- Silke Roth, Kieron O'Hara & Steffen Staab comprise Gefion Thuermer's Supervisory team (University of Southampton)
- Michael Kellner (General Secretary, Die Grünen)
- Emily Büning (General Manager and Signatory, Die Grünen)

The Student will provide:

- An analysis of the views of members of Die Grünen on democratic and online participation, including a breakdown by their position in the party hierarchy.

- An analysis of observation, interview and focus group data, to inform the development of the process, specifically identifying potential issues.

- An analysis of the changes in member's views on online participation through the process, including a breakdown by their position in the party hierarchy.

- Attendance of project meetings to contribute expert knowledge in the development process.

Academic outputs. Subject to the conditions set out in the NDA, the Student may author conference / journal papers and incorporate findings from the research into her PhD Thesis. Any academic outputs based on data gathered during the project, which mention Die Grünen by name, will be subject to a review and a possible edit or anonymisation request. Where academic material is passed to Die Grünen for review purposes no transfer of ownership, know-how or IP is implied and all rights in the works remain with the Student and any co-authors listed.

For each proposed external academic output, the Student will prepare a synthesis / abstract in German which will establish in clear non-academic language how her research makes use of Die Grünen -owned data and the general argument of the

proposed output, in order to facilitate the assessment of potential sensitivities and to reduce the burden of detailed review of multiple academic papers.

Fees:

All the research described hereby will be performed at no cost to Die Grünen. Die Grünen agrees to pay the University for the reasonable travel expenses of the Student, but these must be pre-approved by a Die Grünen senior manager before any cost has been incurred. These costs shall not exceed €1000 in aggregate, or €250 per journey with up to four journeys. The University of Southampton will send an invoice to Die Grünen, which will be due within 30 days of invoice.

Notices:

Notices to University of Southampton must be sent to:
University of Southampton
Research and Innovation Services
Building 37, Room 4107
University Road
Highfield
Southampton
SO17 1BJ
United Kingdom
Attention: Director, RIS

Notices to Die Grünen must be sent to:

Emily Büning

BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN
Platz vor dem Neuen Tor 1
10115 Berlin
Germany

Appendix B   Interviews

B.1   Interviewee Profiles Dataset B

Participant B1 is a women in her thirties. She lives in a city in Western Germany, and has no children. She holds a PhD, and held a position at state level in the past.

Participant B2 is a man in his fifties. He lives in the countryside in Western Germany, and is a parent. He holds a position at state level.

Participant B3 is a woman in her fifties. She lives in a city in Western Germany, and is a parent. She holds a communal mandate.

Participant B4 is a woman in her sixties, and the oldest member in the sample. She lives in Berlin, and is a parent. She holds a position on national level.

Participant B5 is a man in his forties. He lives in a city in Western Germany, and is a parent. He holds a position on national level.

Participant B6 is a woman in her thirties. She lives in a city in Western Germany, and is a parent. She holds several positions at state level.

Participant B7 is a man in his fifties. He lives in a city in Eastern Germany, and is a parent. He holds a position on local level, as well as a local mandate.

Participant B8 is a man in his fifties. He lives in a suburb in Western Germany, and has no children. He holds a position on state level, as well as a local mandate.

Participant B9 is a woman in her thirties. She lives in a city in Eastern Germany, and has no children. She holds position at national level.

Participant B10 is a man in his teens, and the youngest person in the sample. He lives in a city in Western Germany, and has no children. He holds several local positions in the party.

Participant B11 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a city in Western Germany, and has no children. He holds several positions at state level, and also works for the party.

B.2 Interview Recruitment Email Activity E

Thuermer G.

From:	Thomas Künstler <thomas.kuenstler@gruene.de>
Sent:	12 October 2017 08:39
To:	
Cc:	Thuermer G.
Subject:	Anfrage für ein Interview zu Beteiligung in der Partei

Liebe Freundinnen und Freunde,

auf der BDK in Münster haben wir 2016 beschlossen, parteiinterne Beteiligung online wie offline zu stärken. Als Bundesverband haben wir diesen Prozess auch neben dem Wahlkampf weitergeführt. Unter anderem entwicklen wir unsere Antragsplattform Antragsgrün weiter und wir werden mit dem Mitgliederbegehren eine neue Möglichkeit vorschlagen, wie sich Mitglieder beteiligen können.

Bei diesem Prozess werden wir wissenschaftlich von Gefion Thuermer, Doktorandin an der Universität von Southampton, begleitet, die sich die Effekte bei der Einführung von Onlinebeteiligungsmöglichkeiten bei uns genauer anschauen und im Rahmen ihrer Doktorarbeit wisenschaftlich analysieren will. Wir unterstützen Gefion gerne bei ihrer Arbeit, weil wir uns genauere Erkenntnisse erhoffen, die uns helfen, unsere Partei besser aufzustellen und noch mehr Menschen mitzunehmen bei unserer politischen Arbeit.

Ein wichtiger Bestandteil der Datenerhebungen sind sogenannte Expert*innen-Interviews, die Gefion gerne mit euch einzeln führen möchte. Dabei geht es unter anderem um das Verständnis von Demokratie und der innerparteilichen Prozesse innerhalb der Grünen, insbesondere im Hinblick auf Onlinebeteiligung.

Ein Interview dauert erfahrungsgemäß zwischen 30 und 45 Minuten per Skype. Es wäre toll, wenn ihr euch diese Zeit nehmen würdet.

Gefion wird euch in der nächsten Zeit per E-Mail kontaktieren, um einen Termin abzusprechen. Ihr könnt euch aber auch gerne direkt bei Gefion melden unter gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Bitte gebt mir eine kurze Rückmeldung, wenn ihr nicht interviewt werden möchtet. Die Interviews sind im übrigen auch nach den Verhandlungen möglich. :)

Vielen Dank und herzliche Grüße

Thomas

--
Thomas Künstler
Referent für Beteiligung und Digitales

Bündnis 90/Die Grünen
Platz vor dem Neuen Tor 1
10115 Berlin

Tel.: + 49 (0) 30 - 28 442 179
Mobil: + 49 (0) 151 - 424 144 86

thomas.kuenstler@gruene.de
www.gruene.de

B.3   Interviewee Profiles Dataset E

Participant E1 is a man in his thirties. He lives in Berlin, and has no children. He is an IT consultant, and does not hold any positions.

Participant E2 is a women in her thirties. She lives in a city in Western Germany, and is a parent. She holds a position at national level.

Participant E3 is a woman in her twenties. She lives in a city, and has no children. She is an IT expert and holds a position at state level.

Participant E4 is a man in his fifties. He lives in Berlin, and is a parent. He is an IT expert and holds a position at state level.

Participant E5 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a city in Western Germany, and has no children. He is an IT expert, and does not hold any positions.

Participant E6 is a man in his thirties. He lives in Berlin, and has no children. He is an IT expert, and holds a position at state level.

Participant E7 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a city in Western Germany, and has no children. He is an IT expert, and does not hold any positions.

Participant E8 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a Berlin, and is a parent. He holds a position at national level.

Participant E9 is a man in his thirties. He lives in Berlin, and does not have children. He is an IT expert working for the party.

Participant E10 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a city in Eastern Germany, and is a parent. He works for the party and holds a position at state level.

Participant E11 is a man in his fifties. He lives in Berlin, and is a parent. He works for the party.

Participant E12 is a women in her thirties. She lives in Berlin, and is a parent. She holds a position at national level.

Participant E13 is a man in his thirties. He lives in Berlin, and is a parent. He works for the parliamentary group of the party.

Participant E14 is a women in her thirties. She lives in Berlin, and is a parent. She holds a position at national level.

Participant E15 is a man in his forties. He lives in a rural area in Western Germany, and is a parent. He is an MP for the party.

Participant E16 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a city in Western Germany, and does not have children. He is an IT expert working for the party, and holds a position at local level.

Participant E17 is a women in her fifties. She lives in a town on Western Germany, and is a parent. She holds a position at state and national level.

Participant E18 *agreed to be interviewed, but the interview failed due to technical problems.*

Participant E19 is a woman in her thirties. She lives in a city in Western Germany, and does not have children. She is an MP for the party.

Participant E20 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a city in Eastern Germany, and is a parent. He holds a position at state level.

Participant E21 it a woman in her fifties. She lives in a town in Western Germany, and is a parent. She holds a position at state level.

Participant E22 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a city in Western Germany, and is a parent. He is an IT consultant and works for the party.

Participant E23 is a women in her thirties. She lives in a rural area in Western Germany, and is a parent. She holds a position at national level.

Participant E24 is a women in her thirties. She lives in Berlin and is a parent. She works for the party, and held a position at state level.

Participant E25 is a man in his forties. He lives in Berlin and does not have children. He works for the party, and held a position at local level.

Participant E26 is a man in his sixties. He lives in a rural area in Western Germany, and is a parent. He holds a position at national level.

Participant E27 *was interviewed, but did not provide their signed consent form. The data was discarded.*

Participant E28 is a man in his thirties. He lives in a city in Eastern Germany and does not have children. He works for the party, and held a position at local level.

Participant E29 is a man in his forties. He lives in Berlin and is a parent. He holds a position at national level.

Appendix C   Codebook 1 (Dataset A&B)

Name	Description	Sources	References
Attitudes	Attitudes that relate to (democratic) participation processes; attitudes of organisations, bodies, stakeholders or participants.	0	0
Adaptability	Flexibility, ability of organisation to adapt to changing circumstances	5	11
Esteem	Esteem towards participants' contributions of any kind	6	12
Expectation	Expectations of participants in participation processes	3	10
Fairness	Fairness in participation processes	1	2
Familiarity	Familiarity in interactions between participants	3	8
Intuition	Intuition of participants in participation processes	2	2
Neutrality	Neutrality of persons involved in processes	1	1
Openness	Listening to (different) opinions; possibility for unexpected things to happen	6	15
Pragmatism	Pragmatism of participants in participation processes; as opposed to idealism	4	5
Trust	Trust between participants, or participants and bodies / organisations; trust in processes	5	8
Democracy	Factors that define (necessary, not sufficient) or influence democracy in general (not specifically in the Green Party)	5	11
Consensus	Consensus as part of a democratic process; examples of existing consensus, or consensus-development; perceptions of consensus.	4	9
Diversity	Diversity as an aspect of what democracy entails	1	1
Majority	The role of the majority in democracy	2	2

Name	Description	Sources	References
Representation	Examples and effects of, and views on, representation within democratic processes	3	3
Factors for Participation	Factors that are relevant, enable or inhibit participation	0	0
#Classification		0	0
Balancing	Factors that make participation more equal	10	23
Enabling	Factors that are inclusive, or make participation easier, in general (also if it cannot be distinguished whether the speaker would be affected or not)	15	50
Enabling Others	Factors that are inclusive, or make participation easier for others, in the view of the speaker	12	47
Enabling Self	Factors that are inclusive, or make participation easier for the speaker themselves	12	28
Inhibiting	Factors that are exclusive, or make participation more complicated, in general (also if it cannot be distinguished whether the speaker would be affected or not)	15	38
Inhibiting Others	Factors that are exclusive, or make participation more complicated for others, in the view of the speaker	13	51
Inhibiting Self	Factors that are exclusive, or make participation more complicated for the speaker	8	23
Access	Access to tools, events, or networks (and discussions in those networks)	9	22
Age	Age as a factor in or consideration for choices in regards to participation	7	19
Anonymity	How anonymity, especially online, influences how party members perceive participation	4	9
Children	Having children as an inhibiting factor for participation	3	4
Disability	Active steps taken to allow participation for disabled persons	3	6
Full-time politicians	Perception of how being a full-time politician enables participation	4	6
Gender	Gender as a consideration for or influencing participation	4	17
Internet access	Internet access as a factor for online participation	5	8

Name	Description	Sources	References
Money	Financial means as a factor for participation of individual members, or for party bodies	7	21
Network	Network of a person, factors that influence this network, and that are influenced by it	18	53
Personal Network	Personal network that members establish and rely on, built over time and through different channels	8	10
Place-based network	Network of members in a local community, such as local branches	5	10
Participation Opportunities	Opportunities for members to participate in party processes; Actual use of these opportunities	7	8
Regional Differences	Factors for participation that differ between areas or area types in Germany	10	31
Rural Areas	Specificities for participation of members in rural areas	8	13
Skills	Any type of skills as a prerequisite for participation in general	4	6
IT Skills	IT Skills as a factor for participation, especially online participation	9	18
Time	Time as a factor for participation, either as time a person has or needs, or as time a thing or participative action requires	14	33
Shift-workers	Shift-workers as a group that has special requirements for participation	2	2
Timing of meetings	Timing and duration of meetings where discussions or votes occur.	5	7
Forms of Participation	Ways in which party members currently can, would like to, or not like to, participate	7	15
Agenda setting	Ways in which the agenda, the policy decisions that are discussed and made in the party, is influenced	6	15
General Members Vote	Description and views on the general members vote for the top candidates	4	6
Informal participation	Participation that is not regulated by statutes or other rules	5	10
Non-Participation	Participation that could but does not happen; members explicitly no participating	4	6
Online participation	Discussion of how members participate online, or may or may not want to participate online	0	0

Name	Description	Sources	References
1 Assumptions about online participation	What people think is currently happening with regards to online participation; assumptions about what online participation does or does not do; current, but not experienced	12	23
2 Experience with online participation	Actual experience with online participation; participants using it, descriptions of this experience or opinions about things that people have themselves experienced	10	24
3 Plans for online participation	What people know is going to happen with regards to online participation, actually formulated plans, and opinions about these plans	6	9
4 Expectations of online participation	What people think could / would / should be happening in the future with regards to online participation; assumptions about what online participation may or may not do in the future and the effects it may or may not have	11	38
5 Issues with online participation	Things that can go wrong, potential problems that occur with online participation, with regards to the users (not the technology)	5	11
Online Voting	Discussions of online voting; reasons why online voting is not wanted	4	6
Participation in elected positions	Discussion of how members participate in elected positions, in the party, in party bodies or task forces.	8	20
Participation in employment	Discussion of how members participate when they are employed in a party context; advantages to participation through employment	3	4
Participation in local group	Discussion of how members participate in their local branches	5	7
Participation in mandate	Discussion of how members participate in mandates; difficulties with this kind of participation, and recruitment of candidates for these positions	3	6
Participation in party wings	Discussion of how members participate in party wings	4	5
Participation in task forces	Discussion of how members participate in task forces; the types of activities they engage in as members or speakers of task forces	9	16
Green Party	Views on what the party is, how it functions	0	0

Name	Description	Sources	References
Comparison to other parties	Perceived, explicitly stated differences between the Green Party and other parties in Germany; may be positive or negative; also includes examples the party sets, or should strive for	12	27
Role models	Positive and negative role models; examples in comparison to other parties that the GP should strive for, or steer away from	3	6
Where GP is better	Examples of the Green Party being described or implied as better than other parties; mostly due to different views or implementation of participation	10	18
Where GP is similar	Examples of the Green Party being described or implied as similar to other parties; similarities are perceived as negative	3	3
Governmental Responsibility	Effects that governmental responsibility of party mandate holders has on participation processes within the party	5	12
Grass-roots	Definition of the grass-roots ('Basis'); What they do, think, say, could or should do; Grass-roots as an actor, an acting entity	5	13
Top-down Bottom-up	Discussion of the direction in which decision-making in the party happens; description of how grass-roots should hold power	6	7
Green Democracy	The concept of democracy that unifies the Green Party in the views of members and stakeholders. Idealised form of democracy that members believe they share	18	60
Green Identity	Aspects of the shared identity of the party; what makes the Green Party what it is in the view of their members	10	24
Hierarchy	Perceptions of hierarchy within the party; notable through absence, hierarchies perceived as flat and not relevant	3	4
Party Structure	Aspects of party structure, such as bodies, and their relevance for participation	3	6
Local branches (KVs)	Role of local branches for participation; motion proposition and immediate network; importance for elections of candidates, delegates etc.	9	17
Party Wings	Role of party wings for participation	6	12
Task Forces	Role of task forces for participation	5	8

Name			Description	Sources	References
Information			Role of information in participatory processes; Access to and availability of information; information as a prerequisite for participation, and effects of different levels of information among members	9	19
	Awareness		Party members being aware (or not) of issues concerning participation; awareness as a consideration for actions	3	4
	Expertise		Expertise among members for specific topical areas; use of expert knowledge in participation processes	3	8
	Transparency		Transparency as availability of information, requirement for participation, different views on what transparency is or should be	11	41
		Vogonism	Lack of transparency due to information overload; there is so much information that it is no longer possible to consume it	2	3
Proposals			The role of proposals at assemblies; typically problematised as a trade-off between the amount of proposals and their discussion	9	32
	Amount of proposals		Views on the amount of proposals for assemblies, and whether this is a problem or not; and if so, of which kind; and if not, why not	11	45
		Maintaining low barriers to proposal submission	Value of low barriers to proposal submission (as opposed to reducing the amount of proposals by making it harder to propose them)	4	7
		Manageability	(Im-)possibility to manage an assembly due to the amount of proposals	6	12
		Reducing the amount of proposals	Reducing the amount of proposals by making it harder to propose them (as opposed to maintaining low barriers to proposal submission)	4	8
		Improving the quality of proposals	Improving the quality of the content of individual, change, and completed proposals, in order to reduce their number; Prioritise longer, broader, and qualitative better proposals over sheer volume	3	8
	Proposition vs. discussion		Weighing the possibility to easily submit proposals with the possibility to discuss all proposals	3	12
	Proposal Supporters		Support for proposals as a factor for participation; how many should be required, how are they canvassed, how important are they	13	46

Name	Description	Sources	References
Motivation	The importance / role of motivation of and through participation	0	0
Discouragement	When participation is not taken seriously, or participation opportunities are being restricted, this is perceived as demotivating by members and on their behalf	5	8
Participation as Motivation	Participation motivates members, encourages them to join / stay in the party, and do things in and for the party	4	9
Process	Stages of the decision-making process, what happens in these stages, who are actors, how do members perceive what is happening	3	10
Assemblies	Any type of assembly or formal decision-making body of the party Factors that influence assemblies and their decisions	10	28
Assembly Chair Committee	Role of the committee at assemblies	2	4
Assembly length	Duration of assemblies; considerations in regards to this duration	2	2
Audience	Audience at assemblies. Behaviour, effects of and considerations in regards to this audience. Distinct from attendees in that it refers to the difference between speaker and audience.	2	2
Language	Language used at assemblies, especially by speakers at these assemblies.	4	8
Members assemblies	Specific type of assembly in which all members of the respective party branch can attend and vote; distinct from delegate assemblies	3	6
Motion Proposer Meeting	Role of the motion proposer meeting; how members perceive it, what is being discussed	4	7
Speakers	Influence and role of speakers at assemblies	6	10
Candidates	Selection of candidates for elections; critique of process, issues with the process	2	9
Delegates	The role of delegates, differences between delegates, how they are elected, the influence they have and how they typically behave	8	20
Discussion Process	Different stages of discussion during the decision-making process; from informal to formal	0	0

Name	Description	Sources	References
1 Discourse	Generic conversations about politics within the party	5	13
2 Pre-discussion	Specific discussion for the purpose of proposal development	8	14
3 Proposal Discussion	Specific discussion about proposals after submission; seen as preparation for (vote at) assembly	8	20
4 Negotiation	Negotiations of the motion committee; What they do, how this is perceived	8	25
5 Debate	Specific form of discussion centred around pro and contra arguments; strongly formalised; used at assemblies or ahead of general members' votes	10	19
Influence	Influence in the decision-making process; of or on individuals and bodies; different forms or weight of influence	10	27
Motion committee	Role of the motion committee, what it does, how that is perceived	7	27
Process recommendation	Views on the process recommendations as one of the key tasks of the motion committee	4	8
Statutes	Discussion of statutes as influencing participation (not as the subject of a participatory process, e.g. at assembly); evidence of awareness of relevance of statutes	4	12
Technology	Technology that currently is or could be used in the Green Party; views on this technology and its use	1	1
Antragsgrün	Views on the Antragsgrün motion proposition tool and process	8	18
Changes	Changes in participation processes; Things that have changed, or instances, examples of this change happening	1	1
Communication	Changes in and due to communication	5	10
Digitization	Change towards using more technology, and technology in more processes	6	9
Speed	Speed at which society or the party changes; speed at which things happen	7	10
Online Security	Considerations regarding security in and of online participation processes; with regards to the technology (not the users)	5	7

Name	Description	Sources	References
Online Verification	Views on the newly introduced process for motion supporters to verify themselves online	12	25
Opinion Poll	Views on polls in the decision-making process; including the grass-roots survey as a tool and process; using polls to survey existing opinions and help members form an opinion	7	20
Paper	Current and past use of paper in processes; Paper used for signatures, as print-outs to allow discussion; reasons why using paper is not a good solution	7	13
Parallel online and offline	Views on using online and offline processes in parallel; not replacing one with the other; benefits and downsides of mixing them	13	22
Social Media	Use of social media in decision-making processes; to distribute information into ones network, or get feedback from it	5	9
Streaming	Use of streaming to enable members' participation from a distance	2	2
Tech as a solution in itself	Discussion of where technology is seen as a solution in itself; opinion that that cannot be the case	2	4
Variety	References to the variety of tools that are available; view on the range of things that technology does	5	6
Wurzelwerk	References to the internal social media tool; what it does or does not do (not all of which seems to be what it is actually supposed to do); expectations and criticism	8	22
Theoretical Concepts	Evidence of or allusions to relevant theoretical concepts	0	0
Equality	Equality of participants in participation processes; instances where (the possibility of) equality is, or should be, considered	10	19
Legitimacy	Legitimacy of a decision or process; ways in which legitimacy is created and assured	3	4
Mobilisation	Creating active members, recruiting new members, necessity for active members to maintain the party	4	8
Oligarchisation	Examples or mention of oligarchisation within the party.	3	4
Prefiguration	Examples of members wanting to prefigure; act internally on their own policy preferences	3	3
Reinforcement	Reinforcing advantages in participation by already active groups	1	2

Appendix D   Codebook 2 (Dataset D-F)

Name	Description	Sources	References
Democracy	Summary of preferences, perceptions, demonstrations or discussions of democracy, both within the Green Party and in general.	0	0
Green Party	Summary category for codes relating to what the party is, how it functions	0	0
Gatekeepers	Evidence or discussion gatekeeper roles. A gatekeeper is a person or groups who can either enable or prevent others' participation.	10	19
Grass-roots	Discussion of who the grass-roots are, what they do, want, or don't want, and how they are or should be involved.	20	34
Green Democracy	Definitions of democracy specific to the Green Party. Grass-roots democracy. Interpretations of the term.	31	52
Green Identity	Ideals of the party; what makes the party what it is; what is distinctive about their identity.	9	12
Hierarchy	Perceptions of hierarchy within the party; different ways of doing things depending on role in the party.	30	61
Party Wings	Role of party wings for participation; demonstration of or comments on how party wings see participation.	12	26
Process	Description, demonstration or discussion of the role of different elements of the democratic process	0	0
Consensus	Perceived or demonstrated consensus in or about participation processes.	9	18
Deliberation	Demonstration or discussion of the role of information in the democratic process	22	65
Information	Demonstration or discussion of the role of information in the democratic process.	13	39
Representation	Demonstration or discussion of the role of representation or representatives in the democratic process.	15	21
Votes	Demonstration or discussion of the role of votes in the democratic process.	14	32
Factors for Participation	Factors that are relevant for, enable or inhibit participation	5	5
Demographics	Summary category for demographic factors	0	0

Name	Description	Sources	References
Age	Effect of age on participation	17	22
Children	Effect of children or other care work on participation	12	18
Disability	Effect of (dis)ability on participation	10	14
Gender	Effect of gender on participation	22	51
Residence	Effect of residence on participation	5	11
Resources	Summary category for demographic factors, broadly following Bourdieu's capitals.	0	0
Internet access	Effect of internet access on participation	13	19
Money (Financial)	Effect of financial resources on participation	12	16
Network (Social)	Effect of personal networks on participation	21	32
Skills (Cultural)	Effect of skills or education on participation	21	42
Time	Effect of time on participation	20	32
Online participation	Discussion of how members participate online, or may or may not want to participate online	0	0
1 Experience	Actual experience with online participation; descriptions of what participants have themselves experienced	0	0
Adoption	Experience of tool adoption	23	43
Barriers	Experience of barriers	7	15
Efficiency	Experience of efficiency	15	19
Impact	Experience of impact	13	29
Inclusion	Experience of inclusion or accessibility	4	6
Inequality	Experience of inequality; only inequality explicitly experienced is with regards to gender.	3	3
Legitimacy	Experience of an increase in legitimacy of processes	3	4

Name	Description	Sources	References
Missing Impact	Explicit mentions of no perceived impact where impact should have been visible.	2	3
Transparency	Experience of increased transparency	10	18
2 Opportunities	Potential positive effects of online participation.	0	0
Adoption	Members start using tools	7	10
Agenda Setting	Members can influence or set agenda in the party	10	14
Bottom-up	Specific opportunities for grass-roots members	3	3
Discussion	More discussions	7	15
Efficiency	Processes become more efficient	14	19
Equality, Diversity, Inclusion	Participation becomes more equal / diverse / inclusive; broader participation	19	34
Feedback	Increased opportunity to give or receive feedback	14	25
Finding allies	Finding allies online that would not have been found offline; especially for members without extended networks.	12	19
Influence	Influence on further processes or decisions	5	5
Legitimacy	Increased legitimacy of outcomes	10	17
Mobilisation	More members participate	14	36
Modernisation	Processes are modernised, 'mit der Zeit gehen'	15	25
Motivation	Increased motivation	7	9
Transparency	Increased transparency	12	19
3 Issues	Potential issues that can arise as a result of online participation	0	0
Accidentally Binding Decisions	When results of online participation are turned into decisions not by process but by perception	5	8

Name	Description	Sources	References
Barriers	New barriers are introduced	17	30
Demotivation	Members are demotivated	6	10
Directed Discourse	Undue influence on what is discussed	10	16
Inequality	Participation becomes (more) unequal; specific (groups of) members are excluded	15	21
Lack of Discussion	Discussion does not happen, or not happen sufficiently	7	10
Missing Impact	Results do not materialise, or do not exert influence	9	20
Necessity	Doubts about the necessity of the processes	5	11
Overload	Too much traffic or content overloads processes or bodies	8	9
Reinforcement	Existing divides are deepened	6	9
4 Requirements	Requirements that should be met for successful introduction of online participation.	0	0
Adapting to party processes	New processes must fit in with what the party already does	10	16
Allow feedback	Feedback should be heard	6	6
Alternative Routes	Enable alternatives, do not make online the only option	3	3
Educating Members	Inform members about processes and enable them to use them through training, education	13	35
Gradual Introduction	Introduce new processes step by step, so members and processes can adapt	8	13
Raising awareness	Inform disseminators and members about the new processes; disseminate / advertise within the party	11	22
Security and Data Protection	Ensure platform security and data protection; protection from manipulations	16	28
Strategy	Have an overall strategy in place	8	11
Trying things out	Try things, allow for failure, trial and error to get processes right	15	36
Usability	Platforms / processes must be user friendly / easy to use / accessible / usable across branches	20	41

Name	Description	Sources	References
Visibility or potential impact	Make clear what impact processes can or will have	9	19
5 Strategies	Strategies implemented during actual introduction. What the party does to meet requirements or address issues.	0	0
Alternative Routes	Alternative routes are offered / used, e.g. letters, paper surveys	8	10
Clear communication	Processes are communicated, disseminated into the party; clear descriptions and guidance is provided for users	11	13
Limit barriers	Steps are taken to prevent exclusion	4	5
Listening to feedback	Feedback is considered, taken seriously	7	8
Long-term strategy	Processes are included in a long-term strategy	6	8
Other Effects		0	0
Non-Use	Members do explicitly not adopt tools. This may be intentional or unintentional, a result of voluntary self-exclusion or lack of inclusion. Not all non-use is negative, and it is often due to considerations of the role of the person that does not participate.	22	42
Replacement	Where online processes may, or do, replace existing processes in the party	12	18
Tools		30	57
Grünes Netz	Discussions about Grünes Netz (umbrella platform), and single-sign-on concept	16	29
Antragsgrün	Discussion about Antragsgrün, and online verification	41	177
Befragung	Discussion about the Befragung	36	136
Begehren	Discussion about Begehren	35	136
Wurzelwerk	Discussion about Wurzelwerk (knowledge management platform, once intended as party-internal social media)	21	36
Online Decisions Voting	Discussions of online voting; all theoretical, as this is not currently done.	20	40

Appendix E   Ethics Application

E.1   Application Form

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

This version updated December 2013

SSEGM ETHICS SUB-COMMITTEE APPLICATION FORM

Please note:

- *You must not begin data collection for your study until ethical approval has been obtained.*
- *It is your responsibility to follow the University of Southampton's Ethics Policy and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.*
- *It is also your responsibility to provide full and accurate information in completing this form.*

1.   **Name(s):**   Gefion Thuermer

2.   **Current Position:**   PhD candidate

3.   **Contact Details:**
      Division/School: Sociology
      Email: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk
      Phone: 07580752244

4.   **Is your study being conducted as part of an education qualification?**
      Yes   x   No   ☐

5.   **If Yes, please give the name of your supervisor**
       Silke Roth

6.   **Title of your project:**
Use of the internet in participation processes in the Green Party Germany

7.   **Briefly describe the rationale, study aims and the relevant research questions of your study**
The study aims to understand how the Green Party, a political party in Germany adopts online decision-making methods. This goal will be achieved through a combination of surveys, interviews and observations around the implementation of an online system or process. The goal is to study the perception of members and elites, and impact of online tools of political participation in the Green Party.

8.   **Describe the design of your study**

stratified sample of about 4000 party members. The members will be contacted by the party, and the survey will be run both on paper and on an online system. Which survey system will be used is not yet confirmed at this stage. The cost for the postal survey will be covered by the party. The goal will be to find out about the perception and adoption of the process introduced in the party. This data will be analysed statistically and in comparison to the data gathered both in the first two surveys and the qualitative data, to identify changes in perception and measure the success of the intervention.

Since these panel surveys will be conducted purely for my research and not as part of a party activity, the participants will be informed about the purpose and process of the surveys, allowing them to give informed consent.

ACTIVITY D: Participant Observation (during implementation)

The third stage of the study will consist of the introduction of three new online participation process within the national branch of the party. In this stage, data will be collected through participant observation. I will take observation notes at party assemblies, as well as during meetings with the party leadership and / or working group. If allowed, the meetings will also recorded and transcribed. I will seek consent from meeting attendees at each instance, and for assemblies from the party leadership, while I will ask those leaders to make the participants aware of my presence. I will also use typical communication channels, such as Facebook and Twitter, the party website, and media reports, to follow what is happening in the implementation process.

ACTIVITY E: Semi-structured Interview (during implementation)

I will conduct interviews with decision-makers within the party, and party members. I will identify participants during the preparation of the new process (Activity D). I will interview members of the party leadership, and members who are sceptical of focus groups, to allow for an environment in which they can talk about potentially critical views. I will record the discussions and later transcribe it for analysis. In addition, I will take notes during the conversation. I will analyse the data thus collected using qualitative content analysis. The goal will be to identify and compare themes, in and between discussions and actions of stakeholders. The results will also be compared to the data gathered from members in stage one, to identify differences.

Consent will be sought from each participant prior to participation.

ACTIVITY F: Focus Groups

In addition, I will conduct focus groups with grass-roots members of the party. I will approach appropriate local branches of the party after discussion with the party leadership. Party members will be invited to participate in focus groups, either by the national or local party leadership, or by myself. The focus groups will be scheduled alongside local party events, to discuss their views on the online participation process, and flush out potential differences in these views. I will record and later transcribe the discussions. In addition, I will take notes during the conversation. I will also ask members to fill in a small survey with questions about themselves and their membership and role in the party. The data thus collected will be analysed using qualitative content analysis. The goal will be to identify and compare themes, between discussions and actions of grass-roots members and stakeholders. The results will also be compared to the data gathered from members in stage one, to identify differences.

Consent will be sought from each participant prior to participation.

9.   **Who are the research participants?**

ACTIVITY A: Participant Observation (during general assembly 2016)

The participants are the party leadership, delegates and guests attending the delegate assembly.

ACTIVITY B: Semi-structured Interviews (following the general assembly 2016)

The participants are the party leadership and delegates attending the delegate assembly, especially those who actively participate in the debate about online participation.

ACTIVITY C1: Survey (all party members)

The participants are all members of the party. The survey will be sent by the party executive board to all members who have registered an email address with the party (~53k).

ACTIVITY C2: Survey (all tool users)

The participants are all members who have used the parties' newly developed motion proposal and approval tool to propose or support motions for the national delegate assembly in June 2017. The survey will be sent by the party executive board to all members who fall into this category. The survey will be sent by email only.

ACTIVITY C3: Panel Surveys

The participants are a stratified sample of members, selected by their place of residence in urban / rural areas. The selection will be done by the party based on their membership database, to which I will not be given access. The survey will be sent by the party executive board on my behalf, by email to about 3000 members, and to an additional 1000 members by post, for those who do not use email to communicate with the party, and some who do use email, who will receive the survey on paper instead of online.

ACTIVITY D: Participant Observation (during implementation)

The participants are the party leadership, staff, delegates and guests attending meetings or delegate assemblies. For party assemblies, all participants of the assembly will be observed, though the focus will be on those interacting in and around discussions relating to online participation methods, such as speakers in debates.

For smaller meetings, I will observe all participants for the duration of the meeting.

ACTIVITY E: Semi-structured Interview (during implementation)

The participants are the party 'elite', i.e. MPs, MEPs, executive board members, and others who are key decision makers in the party, as well as members who prefer interviews over focus groups.

ACTIVITY F: Focus Groups

The participants are grass-roots members of the party, which may include local politicians. Local branches of the party will be selected in discussion with the party executive board. The local party leaders will be contacted and all members of the local branch will be invited to participate through official party channel, either by the party leadership or by myself.

10.   If you are going to analyse secondary data, from where are you obtaining it?

The surveys the party is conducting (Activities C1 and C2), is secondary data, since I am not involved in the data collection. The party will provide me with an anonymised dataset, which will include responses to socio-demographic questions, as well as responses to questions I have provided, and which were approved by the party. The party may include responses to other questions that they asked the members, which are neither socio-demographic nor provided by me, at their discretion.

As part of the participant observation, I may be given access to documents from a party-internal court of arbitration case which involves the online participation platform I am investigating. This data would either be non-confidential (by German Data Protection and Political Parties Act), or disclosed to me under the regulations set out in the contract with the party.

11.   If you are collecting primary data, how will you identify and approach the participants to recruit them to your study?

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Please upload a copy of the information sheet if you are using one – or if you are not using one please explain why.

ACTIVITY A: Participant Observation (during general assembly 2016)

The participants are the party leadership, delegates and guests attending the delegate assembly.

ACTIVITY B: Semi-structured Interviews (following the general assembly 2016)

The participants are the party leadership and delegates attending the delegate assembly, especially those who actively participate in the debate about online participation.

ACTIVITY C1: Survey (all party members)

The participants will be all party members who have provided an email address to the party. The executive board of the party will send an email to all these members, inviting them to participate in the survey. Since the survey is run by the party, and the party leadership wants to ensure consistent information, members will not be informed about my use of the data for my project.

ACTIVITY C2: Survey (all tool users)

The participants are all members who used the parties' newly developed motion proposal and approval tool to propose or support motions for the national delegate assembly in June 2017. The executive board of the party will send a survey to all these members, inviting them to participate in the survey. Since the survey is run by the party, and the party leadership wants to ensure consistent information, members will not be informed about my use of the data for my project.

ACTIVITY C3: Panel Surveys

The participants will be a stratified sample of about 4000 members. The executive board of the party will contact these members on my behalf. The selection itself will be made by the party based on their membership database, using their place of residence in rural or urban areas as strata. The letter or email accompanying the invitation to participate will include an information sheet (attached), telling the prospective participants about the purpose of the study.

ACTIVITY D: Participant Observation (during implementation)

The participants of assemblies comprise the party leadership, delegates and guests attending the delegate assembly. The participants of meetings comprise the attendees of these meetings, who are selected based on their roles in the party.

ACTIVITY E: Semi-structured Interview (during implementation)

I will identify potential participants during the observations in Activity D. I will approach them personally, either during meetings, by email, or over the phone, and potentially ask for introductions by the party board or shared acquaintances.

ACTIVITY F: Focus Groups

The focus groups will be aligned with party events of local branches. The branches will be selected in discussion with the national executive board, and local party leaders will be contacted initially. If they agree to hold a focus group in their branch, members of that branch will be invited to participate in the focus group alongside the selected party event.

12. **Will participants be taking part in your study without their knowledge and consent at the time (e.g. covert observation of people)? If yes, please explain why this is necessary.**

Yes, partially. To ensure consistency, the party will send the two separate surveys (Activity C1 and C2), including some questions for my research project, to the members without explicitly stating that some of the questions are for my project. This is a decision the party has made to ensure consistency of their

own communication with members, which I cannot influence. Members will be informed of the results of the study through party channels.

13.   **If you answered 'no' to question 13, how will you obtain the consent of participants?**

   Please upload a copy of the consent form if you are using one – or if you are not using one please explain why.

ACTIVITY A: Participant Observation (during general assembly 2016)

Consent for the observation has been given by a party representative. Attendees of the assembly will be informed of my presence. Since all participants relevant for my observation are delegated for their local branch, or hold elected positions within the party, all of them are accountable for their positions, so that there should be no issues with sensitive political positions during this event. Moreover, the entire assembly will be recorded by the party, and covered in the media through attending journalists.

ACTIVITY B: Semi-structured Interviews (following the general assembly 2016)

Consent for the interviews will be sought in a personal conversation, and captured in a consent form signed by each participant.

ACTIVITY C1: Survey (all party members)

Members will not be aware that some of the questions in the survey are related to my PhD research. I will only be given a secondary dataset from the party.

ACTIVITY C2: Survey (all tool users)

Members will not be aware that some of the questions in the survey are related to my PhD research. I will only be given a secondary dataset from the party.

ACTIVITY C3: Panel Surveys

Members will receive an invitation to participate in the panel, either by email of by post. The letter or email accompanying the invitation will include an information sheet (attached), telling the prospective participants about the purpose of the study. Participants will check a box underneath the information sheet before they progress to the online survey, and on the first page of the paper survey, to confirm their consent.

ACTIVITY D: Participant Observation (during implementation)

Consent for the observation of party assemblies will be given by a party representative. The party leadership will also inform attendees of the assembly of my presence. Since all participants are delegated for their local branch, or hold elected positions within the party, all of them are accountable for their positions, so that there should be no issues with sensitive political positions during this event. Moreover, the entire assembly will be recorded by the party, and covered in the media through attending journalists.

Where I observe smaller meetings, I will inform attendees of my presence and gain their consent through a consent form signed by all participants.

ACTIVITY E: Semi-structured Interview (during implementation)

I will seek consent for the interviews in a personal conversation, and capture it in a consent form signed by each participant.

ACTIVITY F: Focus Groups

I will seek consent for the focus groups in a personal conversation, and capture it in a consent form signed by each participant.

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14. **Is there any reason to believe participants may not be able to give full informed consent? If yes, what steps do you propose to take to safeguard their interests?**

No.

15. **If participants are under the responsibility or care of others (such as parents/carers, teachers or medical staff) what plans do you have to obtain permission to approach the participants to take part in the study?**

n/a

16. **Describe what participation in your study will involve for study participants.**

    Please attach copies of any questionnaires and/or interview schedules and/or observation topic list to be used

ACTIVITY A: Participant Observation (during general assembly 2016)

Attendees of the assembly will be observed in their regular activity during the assembly, especially during the debate around online participation.

ACTIVITY B: Semi-structured Interviews (following the general assembly 2016)

Participants for short interviews will have a short discussion based on a semi-structured interview schedule, which will ask questions about their views towards democratic (online) participation.

ACTIVITY C1: Survey (all party members)

Participants in this survey will respond to questions during a survey sent to them by the party executive board. Members will be sent an email with a link to the survey, which will be run on the online system of the party.

ACTIVITY C2: Survey (all tool users)

Participants in this survey will respond to questions during a survey sent to them by the party executive board. Members will be sent an email with a link to the survey, which will be run on the online system of the party.

ACTIVITY C3: Panel Surveys

Participants in the panel survey will respond to questions sent out by the party executive board on my behalf. This survey can be responded to in two ways: 3000 members will be sent an email with a link to the survey; a further 1000 members will receive a letter inviting them to participate in the survey, either online or on paper.

ACTIVITY D: Participant Observation (during implementation)

I will observe attendees of the assembly in their regular activity during the assembly.

I will observe attendees of smaller meetings for the duration of the meeting, and potentially audio-record during these meetings.

ACTIVITY E: Semi-structured Interview (during implementation)

I will have a discussion with interview participants, based on a semi-structured interview schedule, which will include questions about their views towards democratic (online) participation.

ACTIVITY F: Focus Groups

Participants for focus groups will have a group discussion about their views towards democratic (online) participation, which I will facilitate. He discussion will take place alongside a local party event. Participants will also fill out a short survey to capture their demographic data.

17.   How will you make it clear to participants that they may withdraw consent to participate at any point during the research without penalty?

There is no explicit consent of all participants for the observations at party assemblies, as this is given by the party leadership for the assembly in general. Should individual members not wish to be observed, they will be able to tell me at the event.

I will provide participants who are observed at meetings, or who participate in interviews or focus groups, with a participant information sheet, which will also explain how they can withdraw from their participation, or withdraw their consent to the use of the data after their participation.

Participants of the surveys in activity C1 and C2 will not be able to give explicit consent due to the data collection process through the party as described above.

Participants of the panel survey in activity C3 will be informed about the purpose and process of the study. The information sheet will include details on how they can withdraw their consent. All participants will be assigned an ID that will be sent to them along with the survey, which can be used to identify their data if they wish to withdraw consent.

18.   Detail any possible distress, discomfort, inconvenience or other adverse effects the participants may experience, including after the study, and you will deal with this.

No adverse effects are expected.

19.   How will you maintain participant anonymity and confidentiality in collecting, analysing and writing up your data?

ACTIVITY A: Participant Observation (during general assembly 2016)

The main actors of the debate will be named speakers on the assembly agenda, which will make anonymity impossible.

ACTIVITY B: Semi-structured Interviews (following the general assembly 2016)

Interview participants will be given a choice whether they wish to be named or not in the results of the study. This will be part of the consent form. I foresee little issues even if this results in a mixture of anonymous and named participants, as the total number of potential participants is very large, making it hard to identify individuals if they wish to stay anonymous.

ACTIVITY C1: Survey (all party members)

It will not be possible to give participants full anonymity during the data collection. Since the collection will be done by the party, I have no influence over how this is done, and no access to the backend in which the data is aggregated. Administrators within the party who have access to both the membership database and the backend of the used survey tool may be able to identify individual members. However, these administrators will have a duty to keep this data confidential, both through their employment by the party, as well as legally through the German Data Protection Act.

The dataset I will be given by the party will contain no personal information of members. In my analysis and write-up, I myself will not be able to identify any members, or breach their confidentiality.

All data will be kept confidential both by myself and by the party. The confidentiality of the data is also part of the agreement between myself and the party for this project, which I attach to this application.

ACTIVITY C2: Survey (all tool users)

It will not be possible to give participants full anonymity during the data collection. Since the collection will be done by the party, I have no influence over how this is done, and no access to the backend in

which the data is aggregated. Administrators within the party who have access to both the membership database and the backend of the used survey tool may be able to identify individual members. However, these administrators will have a duty to keep this data confidential, both through their employment by the party, as well as legally through the German Data Protection Act.

The dataset I will be given by the party will contain no personal information of members. In my analysis and write-up, I myself will not be able to identify any members, or breach their confidentiality.

All data will be kept confidential both by myself and by the party. The confidentiality of the data is also part of the agreement between myself and the party for this project, which I attach to this application.

ACTIVITY C3: Panel Surveys

Given the nature of panel surveys, all participants of the panel will be assigned an ID. I will not be able to give participants full anonymity during the data collection, since the selection of the sample and distribution of surveys will be done by the party. I have limited influence over how this is done. I will have access to the backend in which the data is aggregated, but this backend will only include IDs and no personal identifiable information. Administrators within the party who have access to both the membership database and the backend of the used survey tool may be able to identify individual members. However, these administrators will have a duty to keep this data confidential, both through their employment by the party, as well as legally through the German Data Protection Act.

In my analysis and write-up, I will not be able to identify any members, or breach their confidentiality.

All panel data will be kept confidential both by myself and by the party. The confidentiality of the data is also part of the agreement between myself and the party for this project, which I attach to this application.

ACTIVITY D: Participant Observation (during implementation)

Some actors will be named speakers on the assembly agenda, which will make anonymity impossible. However, I will anonymise the data I use during the write-up of the analysis. All participants of observed meetings will be anonymised during write-up.

ACTIVITY E: Semi-structured Interview (during implementation)

Interview participants' identity will be anonymised in the results of the study. This will be part of the consent form. I foresee no issues with this, as the total number of potential participants is large enough to make it hard to identify individuals. Any identifying information will be removed.

ACTIVITY F: Focus Groups

Focus group participants' will be invited to use pseudonyms during the group discussion, to prevent the collection of personal data. Their identity will be anonymised in the results of the study. This will be part of the consent form, and all participants will be asked to respect each other's anonymity, and not reveal who participated in the focus group, or what was said.

20.   **How will you store your data securely during and after the study?**

The University of Southampton has a Research Data Management Policy, including for data retention. The Policy can be consulted at http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/research-data-management.html

All files, including audio recordings and their transcriptions, consent forms and contact details of participants, as well as the survey data, will be stored on a password protected computer.

It will be deposited on the university systems in accordance with the universities policies when I leave the university.

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21. **Describe any plans you have for feeding back the findings of the study to participants.**

The results of the study will be shared with the party leadership, with the goal to inform their members.

22. **What are the main ethical issues raised by your research and how do you intend to manage these?**

ACTIVITY A: Participant Observation (during general assembly 2016)

The main issue with this activity is that it will not be possible to gain consent from all attendees of the assembly. I plan to manage this by making sure that the attendees are informed of my presence, through an announcement at the beginning. That way, if individual participants do not wish to be observed, they can approach me, and I can exclude their actions from my data collection. I do not foresee this to be a major issue, since the participants are mostly delegates who are used to be being under scrutiny of their actions through the party members they represent.

ACTIVITY B: Semi-structured Interviews (following the general assembly 2016)

The main issue in this activity is confidentiality. I will endeavour to keep conversations I have with members confidential, but this may not always be possible in the environment of the assembly.

As for Activity A, I do not foresee this to be problematic, since the participants I intend to speak to will be selected exactly because they are vocal about their views on the issue I am interested in.

Equally, I will keep participants who do not wish to be named in my work anonymous. This may require also anonymising participants who have waived their anonymity; whether this will happen will depend on the amount and variety of participants. I will carefully consider and discuss this with my supervisors at the time of analysis and write-up.

ACTIVITY C1: Survey (all party members)

The main issue with this activity is that I do not have any control over the data collection process. Because I will be working with a party with a very large (>53k) member base, I cannot be given, nor would I want to ask for, data on all their members. An agreement has been signed between the party and the university, which covers the terms under which data for this project can be shared. The process described for the survey in this application is part of this agreement. The agreement also ensures that data is kept confidential.

The fact that I do not control the data collection process means that I can neither promise full anonymity to my participants, nor can I collect informed consent. In this, the data should be seen as secondary data. I have little control over – though some influence on – how my questions will be framed as part of the survey. My assumption is that party members will be more inclined to respond to a survey sent to them by their executive board, than they would be to respond to an unknown researcher. Some members may not want to respond to some questions in the survey – which they will not have to in order to participate in the rest of the survey and thus exercise their membership rights.

One danger is that because there will be additional questions in the survey, members will be put off from responding to the survey altogether, which would in turn potentially influence the policy decisions the party takes. I assume this risk to be minimal, since members who would be put off by optional questions are likely to have wider reservations about the process in the party which are not related to my research.

All in all, this is not an ideal situation, but it is the only situation under which the required data can be collected at all.

ACTIVITY C2: Survey (all tool users)

The main issue with this activity is that I do not have any control over the data collection process. An agreement has been signed between the party and the university, which covers the terms under which

data for this project can be shared. The process described for the survey in this application is part of this agreement. The agreement also ensures that data is kept confidential.

The fact that I do not control the data collection process means that I can neither promise full anonymity to my participants, nor can I collect informed consent. In this, the data should be seen as secondary data. I have little control over – though some influence on – how my questions will be framed as part of the survey. My assumption is that party members will be more inclined to respond to a survey sent to them by their executive board, than they would be to respond to an unknown researcher. Some members may not want to respond to some questions in the survey – which they will not have to in order to participate in the rest of the survey and thus exercise their membership rights.

There is a possibility that members will be put off from responding to the survey by some additional questions. However, since the responses to this survey will only inform future tool development and not be used for policy decisions, even if this were the case, the influence would be minimal, since members who would be put off by optional questions are likely to have wider reservations about the process in the party which are not related to my research.

All in all, this is not an ideal situation, but it is the only situation under which the required data can be collected at all.

ACTIVITY C3: Panel Survey

The main issue with this activity is that I need to link the two panel waves, which means that the data collection cannot be completely anonymous. Participants will need to be identified in order to contact them for both panel waves. This will be mitigated in two ways: First, the party selects the sample and distributes the survey, and I will not have access to personal data of members. An agreement has been signed between the party and the university, which covers the terms under which data for this project can be shared. Second, the participants will be fully informed about the purpose of the study and the use of their data, and can thus give informed consent. There are no negative consequences if they choose to not participate.

ACTIVITY D: Participant Observation (during implementation)

The main issue with this activity is that it will not be possible to gain consent from all attendees of the delegate assembly. I plan to manage this by making sure that the attendees are informed of my presence, through an announcement at the beginning. That way, if individual participants do not wish to be observed, they can approach me, and I can exclude their actions from my data collection. I do not foresee this to be a major issue, since the participants are mostly delegates who are used to be being under scrutiny of their actions through the party members they represent.

During meetings with the party leadership, it may not be possible to record the conversations, as the content is sensitive, and it may not be possible to speak openly if recordings are made. In that case, I will not record, take notes instead, and confirm with the persons involved which of the information that is shared during the meeting can be used for publication. This is also what was agreed with the party in the attached project agreement.

ACTIVITY E: Semi-structured Interview (during implementation)

The main issue in this activity is confidentiality. Since the participants will be recruited from a distinct group, members or others who know the party very well may be able to identify the participants based on their statements. This will be mitigated by keeping profiles of the participants vague, and not publishing overall quotes from any interview that will make the identity of my participants obvious. A small risk remains, which I assume the participants will accept, as this is due to their own elevated position within the party.

ACTIVITY F: Focus Groups

The main issue in this activity is also confidentiality. I will endeavour to keep conversations I have with members confidential, but given the size of a focus group, and the requirements for these to be face-to-face, and most likely held in party rooms, it may not be possible to keep confidential who participated in the focus groups. It will however be possible to keep confidential who said what within these groups, and anonymise their identity during the write-up. Each participant will sign a consent form, which will also include that they will keep the conversation confidential.

23.   Please outline any other information you feel may be relevant to this submission.

In a previous study for my MSc thesis (ERGO #15464), I have conducted several interviews with members of the Green Party. This study builds on the first study, as I am researching similar themes (internal decision-making processes).

During my MSc project, I have established a working relationship with the party leadership. This allows me to now work closer with the party, and gives me access to discussions and processes which would not typically be accessible.

The project requires to be conducted in multiple stages described above, as each stage builds on the previous. The previous stage, covering activities A and B, has been approved under ERGO #20777 on the 28th October 2016. A second application Activities C to F has been approved under ERGO #20777 on the 7th March 2017, and a third for Activities C1 and C2 on 2nd May. In this application, approval is sought only for activity C3. All additions or amendments are highlighted.

E.2   Risk Assessment Form

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January 2016

Risk Assessment Form

- Please see Guidance Notes for completing the risk assessment form at the end of this document.

Researcher's name: | Gefion Thuermer |

Part 1 – Dissertation/project activities

What do you intend to do?   (Please provide a brief description of your project and details of your proposed methods.)

The study aims to understand how the Green Party Germany adopts online decision-making methods. This goal will be achieved through a combination of surveys, interviews and observations around the implementation of an online system or process.

Will this involve collection of information from other people?   (In the case of projects involving fieldwork, please provide a description of your proposed sample/case study site.)

Yes. The study will follow several, consecutive stages, the second and third of which approval is sought for in this application.

ACTIVITY A

I will be a participant observer at the delegate assembly of the party, which will be between 11th and 13th November 2016, in Münster, Germany. I will follow the discussions about the introduction of online participation methods, and take observations notes throughout the assembly.

ACTIVITY B

I will interview some of the delegates and other attendees about their views of democratic participation. I aim for about ten interviews over the course of the weekend. During the interviews, I will record the conversation and also take notes. I may also conduct interviews over the phone or via Skype after the assembly.

ACTIVITY C1-3

I will run a set of surveys, before and after the introduction of a new online participation method in the party.

ACTIVITY D

I will be a participant observer at the meetings of the party, most importantly including the delegate assembly between 16th and 18th June 2017, in Berlin, Germany. I will follow the discussions about the introduction of online participation methods, and take observations notes throughout the meetings.

ACTIVITY E

I will interview some of the members, especially those who hold important positions in the party hierarchy about their views of democratic and online participation. I aim for about ten interviews but

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may do more to achieve a balanced sample. During the interviews, I will record the conversation and also take notes. Interviews will be conducted either in person, over the phone, or via Skype.

ACTIVITY F

I will conduct focus groups some of the grass-roots members of the party about their views of democratic and online participation. I aim for two to three focus groups with five to six participants, but may do more to achieve a balanced sample. During the focus groups, I will record the conversation and also take notes. All focus groups will be conducted in person, in different locations in Germany.

If relevant, what location/s is/are involved?

Berlin, and potentially other locations in Germany
Skype or phone interviews would be conducted either from my office in the University of Southampton, or from my home in Winchester.

Will you be working alone or with others?

I will mainly be working alone, but may on occasion work with representatives of the party.

Part 2 – Potential safety issues / risk assessment.

Potential safety issues arising from proposed activity?

Risk of data exposure

Person/s likely to be affected?

Members of the party

Likelihood of risk?

Unlikely.

Part 3 – Precautions / risk reduction

During focus groups, participants will sign a consent form including a statement that they should keep the identity of fellow participants and the content of the discussion confidential.

Existing precautions:

Data will be saved on a password-protected laptop and university server.

Proposed risk reduction strategies if existing precautions are not adequate:

Interviews or focus groups and personal details of members will be stored separately.

CONTINUED BELOW ...

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Part 4 – International Travel
If your activity involves international travel you must meet the Faculty's requirements for Business Travel which are intended to: 1. Inform managers/supervisors of the travel plans of staff and students and identify whether risk assessment is required. 2. Provide contact information to staff and students whilst travelling (insurance contact details, University contact in case of emergency etc.) Full details are provided in the Faculty H&S Handbook in the **Business Travel** section. Selecting **Business Travel** from the Contents list will take you straight to the relevant section.

Risk Assessment Form for International Travel attached	~~YES~~ / NO*	(Delete as applicable)

* Will be submitted for each trip once travel plans are confirmed!

E.3   Activity A – Participant Observation

E.3.1   Participant Information

Participant Information – Activity A – Participant Observation

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2016-09-22
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your participation is completely voluntary.

What is the research about?

My project aims to understand how Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen uses the internet in their decision-making processes. I am especially interested in understanding how members of the party currently see decision-making processes and the use of the internet.

I am a research student at the University of Southampton in the UK. This project forms part of my education and will lead to a doctoral degree in Web Science.

If you are interested, I will send you a digital copy of the completed study so you can see how your data was used.

Why have I been chosen?

The participants in this project are members of the Green Party Germany. I am especially interested in those who actively participate in the discussion around online participation at this assembly.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, I will participate as a guest in the delegate assembly, and observe the proceedings. This will be especially during the discussion of the motions about online participation ('Strengthen Participation: Merging on- and offline'). I would ask you to please inform the participants of the assembly of my presence, so that they can let me know if they do not want their activities to be observed. I would then exclude these individuals from my data collection. My observations will not create any costs for you.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

I hope that you will find taking part an interesting experience. The results of this research may be useful to your party and other organisations who want to improve their decision making processes and / or adoption of the web for these processes.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks associated with your participation. My participation in the assembly will not go beyond what other guests or journalists would do at assemblies like this.

Will my data be confidential?

No. Since the event is public, I will not be able to guarantee confidentiality. Should individual participants of the assembly not wish their activity to be observed, they can let me know, and I will not include them in my data collection.

The results will be stored on a password protected computer so that they cannot be accessed by anyone else. Information will be used only in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study for the purpose of safeguarding national security; preventing or detecting crime; prosecuting or apprehending offenders; assessing or collecting tax; or protecting the vital interests of the participant or anyone else.

If you would like to know more about how you can access, amend or retract your data, please contact the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk).

What happens if I change my mind?

You may withdraw your consent, access or change your data for any reason at any time and for any reason.

What happens if something goes wrong?

Should you have any concern or complaint, contact me if possible (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), otherwise please contact one of the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk, or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, you may also contact the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)

E.3.2   Participant Information (German)

Teilnehmerinformationsblatt – Aktivität A – Teilnehmende Beobachtung

Ethikkommissionsreferenznummer: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Datum: 2016-09-22
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte lesen Sie diese Informationen sorgfältig durch, bevor Sie sich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojet entscheiden. Wenn Sie der Teilnahme zustimmen bitte ich Sie die Einverständniserklärung zu unterzeichnen. Ihre Teilnahme ist vollkommen freiwillig.

Worum geht es in dieser Studie?

Ziel meines Projektes ist es zu verstehen, ob bzw. wie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen verwenden. Insbesondere interessieren mich die Ansichten der Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu diesen Entscheidungsprozessen und der Nutzung des Internets.

Ich bin Studentin an der Universität von Southampton in Großbritannien. Dieses Projekt ist Teil meiner Promotionsarbeit für einen Doktorgrad in Web Science.

Wenn Sie daran interessiert sind, werde ich Ihnen sobald die Studie beendet ist, eine digitale Kopie der fertigen Arbeit zur Verfügung stellen, so dass Sie sehen können wie ich Ihre Daten verwendet habe.

Warum wurde ich ausgewählt?

Alle Teilnehmer dieser Studie sind Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. Besonders interessiert bin ich an denjenigen Mitgliedern, die auf diesem Parteitag aktiv an der Diskussion um Onlinebeteiligung in der Partei teilnehmen.

Was geschieht wenn ich teilnehme?

Wenn Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen, werde ich als Gast an der Bundesdelegiertenkonferenz teilnehmen, und den Verlauf beobachten. Dies wird insbesondere während der Diskussion der Anträge zu Onlinebeteiligung ("Beteiligung stärken: On- und Offline verschmelzen") sein. Ich bitte Sie, die Teilnehmer der Veranstaltung über meine Anwesenheit und Tätigkeit zu informieren, so dass diese der Beobachtung Ihrer Aktivitäten widersprechen können, so sie das möchten. Es entstehen für Sie keine Kosten durch meine Beobachtungen.

Was habe ich davon wenn ich an der Studie teilnehme?

Ich hoffe dass Sie die Teilnahme interessant finden werden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie können für Sie und Ihre Partei nützlich sein, um die Entscheidungsprozesse, und die Internetnutzung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, zu verbessern.

Gehe ich ein Risiko ein wenn ich teilnehme?

Die Teilnahme birgt keine Risiken. Meine Teilnahme an der Veranstaltung wird nicht über das hinausgehen, was andere Gäste oder Pressevertreter auf der Versammlung tun.

Ist Ihre Teilnahme vertraulich?

Nein. Da die Veranstaltung öffentlich ist, kann ich eine Vertraulichkeit der Beobachtungen nicht garantieren. Sollten einzelne Teilnehmer keine Beobachtung Ihrer Aktivitäten wünschen, können diese mich das wissen lassen, und ich werde Sie nicht in meine Daten aufnehmen.

Die Ergebnisse werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert, so dass sie niemandem sonst zugänglich sind. Die Daten werden ausschließlich in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet. Dieses Gesetz erlaubt es zuständigen Behörden, wie beispielsweise der Polizei, auf die Daten der Studie zuzugreifen um die nationale Sicherheit zu gewährleisten, Straftaten aufzudecken oder zu verhindern, Straftäter zu verfolgen und festzunehmen, Steuern zu ermitteln oder einzuziehen, oder lebenswichtige Interessen des Teilnehmers oder anderer Personen zu schützen.

Wenn Sie mehr über das Projekt, die Datensammlung und den Datenschutz wissen möchten, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter Gefion.Thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Was passiert wenn ich es mir anders überlege?

Sie können ihr Einverständnis zur Teilnahme ohne Angabe von Gründen jederzeit zurückziehen, Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern.

Was passiert wenn etwas schief läuft?

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder eine Beschwerde haben, kontaktieren Sie bitte mich, (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), oder die Projektbetreuenden Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk) oder Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). Im Falle von Beschwerden können Sie sich auch an die Leitung von Research Governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk) wenden.

E.3.3   Consent Form

Consent Form – Activity A – Participant Observation

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2014-09-23
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please initial the boxes if you agree with the statements:

I have read and understood the Participant Information (version 1 dated 2016-09-22) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for the purpose of this study

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may access, change or withdraw my data for any reason at any time.

I understand that my data will be used in reports of the research

Data Protection

I understand that information collected during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA (1998) requires data to be processed fairly and lawfully in accordance with the rights of participants and protected by appropriate security. In addition, the DPA (1998) makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study.

Name of participant (print name)...

Signature of participant..

Date...

E.3.4 Consent Form (German)

Einverständniserklärung – Aktivität A – Teilnehmende Beobachtung

Ethikkommissionsrefrenznummer: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Datum: 2016-09-23
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte markieren Sie die Sätze denen Sie zustimmen mit Ihren Initialen:

Ich habe das Teilnehmerinformationsblatt (Version 1, datiert 2016-09-22) gelesen und hatte die Gelegenheit Fragen zu der Studie zu stellen.

Ich stimme meiner Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt und der Aufzeichnung und Verarbeitung meiner Daten zu diesem Zweck zu.

Ich verstehe dass meine Teilnahme freiwillig ist und dass ich meine Daten jederzeit ohne Angabe von Gründen einsehen, ändern oder zurückziehen kann.

Ich verstehe dass die gewonnen Daten in der Publikation der Studie verwendet werden.

Datenschutz

Ich verstehe, dass Informationen die während meiner Teilnahme an dieser Studie aufgezeichnet werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert werden, und dass diese Informationen nur in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet werden. Dieses Gesetz besagt dass Daten sozialverträglich und gesetzlich in Übereinstimmung mit den Rechten der Teilnehmer verwendet und angemessen geschützt werden müsse. Zusätzlich bestimmt das Gesetz das zuständige Behörden, wie beispielsweise die Polizei, auf die im Rahmen der Studie gespeicherten Daten zugreifen können.

Name des Teilnehmers (in Druckbuchstaben)..

Unterschrift des Teilnehmers..

Datum..

E.3.5   DPA Plan

DPA Plan – Activity A – Participant Observation

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/FSHMS/20777**	Version: 1	Date: 2016-09-22
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

The data collection comprises observation notes.

The data is required to understand how members of the Green Party Germany view online participation in the party, and what expectations they have of an only online system or process for democratic decision-making.

The data is adequate because it will cover exactly what is required to analyse this question, and the data is not excessive because no more information than what is required will be collected.

The data will be processed fairly because the participants will be aware of the observations taking place.

The data's accuracy is ensured because it will consist of observation notes, and may be supplemented through protocols or recordings of the event.

Data will be stored on the Investigator's laptop and backed up on university servers. The laptop will be protected by a password known only to the researcher. The data will be held in accordance with University policy on data retention.

The data will be destroyed by the researcher, ten years after publication of the PhD dissertation (expected Winter 2018) through deletion.

The data will be processed in accordance with the rights of the participants because they will have the right to access, correct, and/or withdraw their consent for any reason. Participants will be able to exercise their rights by contacting the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk) or the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, they will also be given the contact details for the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

E.4   Activity B – Semi-Structured Interviews

E.4.1   Participant Information

Participant Information – Activity B – Semi-Structured Interviews

Ethics reference number: **ERGO**/FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2016-09-22
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your participation is completely voluntary.

What is the research about?

My project aims to understand how Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen uses the internet in their decision-making processes. I am especially interested in understanding how members of the party currently see decision-making processes and the use of the internet.

I am a research student at the University of Southampton in the UK. This project forms part of my education and will lead to a doctoral degree in Web Science.

If you are interested, I will send you a digital copy of the completed study so you can see how your data was used.

Why have I been chosen?

The participants in this project are members of the Green Party Germany. I am especially interested in those who actively participate in the discussion around online participation at this assembly.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will participate in an interview about the decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany. I will ask questions concerning your opinion about these processes, your understanding of democracy and online participation. Of course, it will not cost you anything to take part.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

I hope that you will find taking part an interesting experience. The results of this research may be useful to your party and other organisations who want to improve their decision making processes and / or adoption of the web for these processes.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks associated with your participation. You are not obliged to respond to any questions if you do not want to.

Will my data be confidential?

Yes. Unless you give explicit consent to be named, your name will be anonymised in publications. The names of anyone else you mention (such as fellow party members) will be anonymised in any case.

The results will be stored on a password protected computer so that they cannot be accessed by anyone else. Information will be used only in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study for the purpose of safeguarding national security; preventing or detecting crime; prosecuting or apprehending offenders; assessing or collecting tax; or protecting the vital interests of the participant or anyone else.

If you would like to know more about how you can access, amend or retract your data, please contact the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk).

What happens if I change my mind?

You may withdraw your consent, access or change your data for any reason at any time and for any reason.

What happens if something goes wrong?

Should you have any concern or complaint, contact me if possible (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), otherwise please contact one of the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk, or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, you may also contact the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)

E.4.2 Participant Information (German)

Teilnehmerinformationsblatt – Aktivität B – Leitfadengestützte Interviews

Ethikkommissionsreferenznummer: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Datum: 2016-09-22
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte lesen Sie diese Informationen sorgfältig durch, bevor Sie sich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojet entscheiden. Wenn Sie der Teilnahme zustimmen bitte ich Sie die Einverständniserklärung zu unterzeichnen. Ihre Teilnahme ist vollkommen freiwillig.

Worum geht es in dieser Studie?

Ziel meines Projektes ist es zu verstehen, ob bzw. wie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen verwenden. Insbesondere interessieren mich die Ansichten der Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu diesen Entscheidungsprozessen und der Nutzung des Internets.

Ich bin Studentin an der Universität von Southampton in Großbritannien. Dieses Projekt ist Teil meiner Promotionsarbeit für einen Doktorgrad in Web Science.

Wenn Sie daran interessiert sind, werde ich Ihnen sobald die Studie beendet ist, eine digitale Kopie der fertigen Arbeit zur Verfügung stellen, so dass Sie sehen können wie ich Ihre Daten verwendet habe.

Warum wurde ich ausgewählt?

Alle Teilnehmer dieser Studie sind Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. Besonders interessiert bin ich an denjenigen Mitgliedern, die auf diesem Parteitag aktiv an der Diskussion um Onlinebeteiligung in der Partei teilnehmen.

Was geschieht wenn ich teilnehme?

Wenn Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen, werde ich mit Ihnen ein kurzes Interview zu den Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen führen. Ich werde Ihnen Fragen zu Ihrer Meinung zu diesen Prozessen, Ihrer Auffassung von Demokratie sowie von Onlinebeteiligung stellen. Selbstverständlich entstehen für Sie keine Kosten durch die Teilnahme.

Was habe ich davon wenn ich an der Studie teilnehme?

Ich hoffe dass Sie die Teilnahme interessant finden werden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie können für Sie und Ihre Partei nützlich sein, um die Entscheidungsprozesse, und die Internetnutzung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, zu verbessern.

Gehe ich ein Risiko ein wenn ich teilnehme?

Die Teilnahme birgt keinerlei Risiken. Sie sind nicht verpflichtet Fragen zu beantworten, die Sie nicht beantworten möchten.

Ist Ihre Teilnahme vertraulich?

Ja. Sofern Sie nicht explizit zustimmen namentlich genannt zu werden, wird Ihr Name in Publikationen anonymisiert werden. Die Identität etwaiger weiterer Personen, die Sie im Rahmen des Interviews erwähnen (wie beispielsweise andere Parteimitglieder), wird in jedem Fall anonymisiert.

Die Ergebnisse werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert, so dass sie niemandem sonst zugänglich sind. Die Daten werden ausschließlich in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet. Dieses Gesetz erlaubt es zuständigen Behörden, wie beispielsweise der Polizei, auf die Daten der Studie zuzugreifen um die nationale Sicherheit zu gewährleisten, Straftaten aufzudecken oder zu verhindern, Straftäter zu verfolgen und festzunehmen, Steuern zu ermitteln oder einzuziehen, oder lebenswichtige Interessen des Teilnehmers oder anderer Personen zu schützen.

Wenn Sie mehr über das Projekt, die Datensammlung und den Datenschutz wissen möchten, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter Gefion.Thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Was passiert wenn ich es mir anders überlege?

Sie können ihr Einverständnis zur Teilnahme ohne Angabe von Gründen jederzeit zurückziehen, Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern.

Was passiert wenn etwas schief läuft?

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder eine Beschwerde haben, kontaktieren Sie bitte mich, (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), oder die Projektbetreuenden Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk) oder Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). Im Falle von Beschwerden können Sie sich auch an die Leitung von Research Governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk) wenden.

E.4.3   Consent Form

Consent Form – Activity B – Semi-Structured Interviews

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2014-09-23
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please initial the boxes if you agree with the statements:

I have read and understood the Participant Information (version 1 dated 2016-09-22) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for the purpose of this study

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may access, change or withdraw my data for any reason at any time.

I understand that my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research

(Optional): I consent to be named in publications about this research

Data Protection

I understand that information collected during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA (1998) requires data to be processed fairly and lawfully in accordance with the rights of participants and protected by appropriate security. In addition, the DPA (1998) makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study.

Name of participant (print name)..

Signature of participant...

Date..

E.4.4 Consent Form (German)

Einverständniserklärung – Aktivität B – Leitfadengestützte Interviews

Ethikkommissionsrefrenznummer: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Datum: 2016-09-23
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte markieren Sie die Sätze denen Sie zustimmen mit Ihren Initialen:

Ich habe das Teilnehmerinformationsblatt (Version 1, datiert 2016-09-22) gelesen und hatte die Gelegenheit Fragen zu der Studie zu stellen.

Ich stimme meiner Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt und der Aufzeichnung und Verarbeitung meiner Daten zu diesem Zweck zu.

Ich verstehe dass meine Teilnahme freiwillig ist und dass ich meine Daten jederzeit ohne Angabe von Gründen einsehen, ändern oder zurückziehen kann.

Ich verstehe dass meine Antworten in anonymisierter Form in der Publikation der Studie verwendet werden.

(Optional): Ich stimme zu, in Publikationen zu der Studie namentlich genannt zu werden

Ich verstehe, dass Informationen die während meiner Teilnahme an dieser Studie aufgezeichnet werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert werden, und dass diese Informationen nur in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet werden. Dieses Gesetz besagt dass Daten sozialverträglich und gesetzlich in Übereinstimmung mit den Rechten der Teilnehmer verwendet und angemessen geschützt werden müsse. Zusätzlich bestimmt das Gesetz das zuständige Behörden, wie beispielsweise die Polizei, auf die im Rahmen der Studie gespeicherten Daten zugreifen können.

Name des Teilnehmers (in Druckbuchstaben)..

Unterschrift des Teilnehmers...

Datum...

E.4.5 Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you agreeing to participate in this interview. As you know, I am interested in decision making processes in the Green Party, and your responses today will help me to understand what matters to party members just as yourself.

The goal of my project is to understand how members of the party perceive democratic processes, and which considerations are important for them when it comes to online participation.

Understanding of democracy

First of all, I am interested in what your personal preferences are when it comes to democratic decisions.

1. What is important to you when it comes to participation in Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen?
2. How do you currently participate in decision-making processes?
3. If you could change anything about decision-making processes, is there anything that you would like to change? What should change?
4. How is democracy understood in Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, and how do you think this understanding of democracy has been realised?

Online Participation

Let us now turn to internet-use in decision making processes of Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen.

5. Do you think Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen should use the internet in their decision-making processes?
6. Which advantages and disadvantages do you see in regards to online participation?
7. Are you aware of the motions for online participation ('Strengthen Participation: Merging on- and offline') that is being discussed at this assembly?
   a. If so: What are your views on this proposal?

Interviewee details

Finally, I would like to know a little bit more about your membership and position in Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, and some demographic details.

8. When did you join the Green Party?
9. When did you become an active member of the party?
10. Do you identify with one of the wings of the party?
11. Do you or did you ever hold an office in the party? (Which)
12. Do you or did you ever hold a mandate? (Which)
13. In which federal state do you live?
14. Do you live in an urban, suburban, or rural area?
15. How would you rate you IT skills?
16. How would you describe your internet-use?
17. What is your highest qualification?
18. What is your current occupation?
19. May I ask how old are you?

20. What is your gender?
21. Do you have children? (How many, how old?)
22. What is your annual income?

E.4.6 Interview Guide (German)

Interview Guide

Einleitung

Vielen Dank für Ihre Bereitschaft an diesem Interview teilzunehmen. Wie Sie wissen bin ich an den Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen interessiert, und Ihre Antworten werden mir helfen zu verstehen was Parteimitglieder wie Sie an diesen Prozessen wichtig ist.

Das Ziel meines Forschungsprojektes ist zu verstehen, wie Parteimitglieder demokratische Prozesse wahrnehmen, und welche Aspekte Ihnen wichtig sind wenn es um Partizipation geht.

Auffassung von Demokratie

Zunächst interessiere ich mich für Ihre persönlichen Präferenzen im Hinblick auf demokratische Entscheidungsprozesse.

1. Was ist Ihnen wichtig im Hinblick auf Beteiligung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen?
2. Wie sind Sie im Moment an Entscheidungsprozessen beteiligt?
3. Wenn Sie die Entscheidungsprozesse ändern könnten, gibt es etwas dass Sie gern ändern würden? Was sollte sich ändern?
4. Wie würden sie das Demokratieverständnis von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beschreiben, und in wie weit halten sie es für verwirklicht?

Onlinebeteiligung

Lassen Sie uns nun auf die Nutzung des Internets in den Entscheidungsprozessen von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu sprechen kommen.

5. Denken Sie das Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen nutzen sollte?
6. Welche Vor- und Nachteile sehen Sie im Hinblick auf Onlinebeteiligung?
7. Sind Sie mit den Anträgen zu Onlinebeteiligung ("Beteiligung stärken: On- und Offline verschmelzen"), die auf dieser BDK behandelt werden, vertraut?
    a. Wenn ja: Wie schätzen Sie diese Anträge ein?

Details über Teilnehmer

Zuletzt wüsste ich gern noch etwas mehr über ihre Mitgliedschaft und Rolle bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, sowie eine demografische Informationen.

8. Wann sind Sie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beigetreten?
9. Seit wann sind Sie in der Partei aktiv?
10. Würden Sie sich einer politischen Strömung innerhalb der Partei zuordnen?
11. Füllen Sie ein Amt aus, oder haben Sie das in der Vergangenheit getan? Welche(s)?
12. Haben Sie ein Mandat, oder haben Sie in der Vergangenheit eines gehabt? Welche(s)?
13. In welchem Bundesland leben Sie / sind Sie Mitglied?
14. Leben Sie in der Stadt, in einem Vorstadtgebiet, oder in einer ländlichen Gegend?
15. Wie würden Sie ihre IT-Kenntnisse einordnen?
16. Wie würden Sie Ihre Nutzung des Internets beschreiben?
17. Was ist ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss?
18. Was ist ihr Beschäftigungsstatus?

19. Darf ich fragen wie alt Sie sind?
20. Welchem Geschlecht ordnen Sie sich zu?
21. Haben Sie Kinder? (Wie viel / wie alt?)
22. Was ist ihr jährliches Einkommen?

E.4.7 DPA Plan

DPA Plan – Activity B – Semi-Structured Interviews

Ethics reference number: **ERGO**/FSHMS/**20777**	Version: 1	Date: 2016-09-22
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

The data collection comprises semi-structured interviews. The interview schedule provides the list of questions participants will respond to.

The data is required to identify how members of the Green Party Germany perceive democratic decision-making in the party, and what expectations they have of an only online system or process for democratic decision-making.

The data is adequate because it will cover exactly what is required to analyse this question, and the data is not excessive because no more information than what is required will be collected.

The data will be processed fairly because the participants will have given explicit consent.

The data's accuracy is ensured because it will consist of recording of conversations.

Data will be stored on the Investigator's laptop and backed up on university servers. The laptop will be protected by a password known only to the researcher. The data will be held in accordance with University policy on data retention.

The data will be destroyed by the researcher, ten years after publication of the PhD dissertation (expected Winter 2018) through deletion.

The data will be processed in accordance with the rights of the participants because they will have the right to access, correct, and/or withdraw their consent for any reason. Participants will be able to exercise their rights by contacting the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk) or the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, they will also be given the contact details for the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

E.5   Activity C1 – Survey (all party members)

E.5.1   Survey

Activity C1 (all members survey)

1. Survey Questions

Question 1.

The delegate assembly in Muenster decided to introduce three new forms of participation. How do you think your own participation is going to change due to these new processes?

	Will participate more	WIl participate just the same	Will participate less	Will participate in different ways (e.g. do more online, do different things)	Don't know
Online verification	○	○	○	○	○
Grass-roots survey	○	○	○	○	○
grass-roots demand	○	○	○	○	○

Question 2.

How often have you participated within the party in these ways in the last six months?

	Not at all	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than ten times	Don't know
Discussed topics relevant to the party	○	○	○	○	○	○
Wrote proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Supported proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Discussed proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Contributed	○	○	○	○	○	○

to lead proposals for assemblies					
Voted as a grass-roots member	○	○	○	○	○	○
Voted as a delegate	○	○	○	○	○	○
Worked in party bodies	○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 3.

Through which channels did you do these things?

- ☐ At local meetings or assemblies
- ☐ At national meetings or assemblies
- ☐ At non-localised meetings (Skype telephone conference)
- ☐ Via Mail / Fax
- ☐ On Social Media(Facebook Twitter etc.)
- ☐ On party owned platforms online (Antragsgr?n Wurzelwerk etc.)
- ☑ Other

How else did you participate?

[   ]

Question 4.

How would you like to be involved in party-internal decision making processes?

- ☐ Discuss topics relevant to the party
- ☐ Write proposals for assemblies
- ☐ Support proposals for assemblies
- ☐ Discuss proposals for assemblies
- ☐ Contribute to lead proposals for assemblies
- ☐ Vote as grass-roots member
- ☐ Vote as a delegate
- ☐ Work in party bodies
- ☑ Other

How else would you like to be involved in decision making processes?

Question 5.

Please rate the below statements in order of how important they are for you in regards to party-internal democracy:

[– ▾] All members can participate as much as possible
[– ▾] All members can participate equally
[– ▾] All members can participate in votes
[– ▾] All members can participate in discussions

Save and Continue

You haven't answered all the questions on this page Save and Continue Anyway

Activity C1 (all members survey)

2. Demographical Questions

Question 1.

When did you join the Green Party?

Question 2.

When did you become an active member of the party?

Question 3.

Where would you locate yourself on the political spectrum within the party?

Left 1	2	3	4	5	Realists	Not at all
○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 4.

Do you or did you ever hold a mandate or an office in the party?

- ☐ Hold a mandate party office at the moment
- ☐ Held a mandate or party office in the past
- ☐ Never held a mandate or party office

At which level?

- ☐ Europe
- ☐ National
- ☐ State
- ☐ Region
- ☐ Local (Kreis)
- ☐ Local (Ort)

Question 5.

In which federal state do you live?

Please select ▼

Question 6.

Do you live in an urban, suburban, or rural area?

Please select ▾

Question 7.

How would you rate you IT skills?

Very Bad 1	2	3	4	5	Very Good	Don't know
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯		◯

Question 8.

How regularly do you use the internet?

Not at all	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	All the time	Don't know
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Question 9.

What is your highest qualification

Please select ▾

Question 10.

What is your current occupation?

Please select ▾

Question 11.

How old are you?

Question 12.

What is your gender?

Please select ▾

Question 13.

Do you have children?

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Prefer not to tell

Question 14.

What is your gross annual income?

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Save and Finish

Once this button is pressed you will not be able edit your responses

You haven't answered all the questions on this page   Save and Finish Anyway

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E.5.2 Survey (German)

Activity C1 (all members survey) DE

1. Umfrage

Question 1.

Auf der BDK in Münster wurden drei neue Beteiligungsformen beschlossen. Wie denkt Du wird sich Deine Beteiligung durch diese neuen Prozesse verändern?

	Werde mich mehr beteiligen	Werde mich genau gleich beteiligen	Werde mich weniger beteiligen	Werde mich auf andere Art beteiligen (z.B. mehr online tun andere Dinge tun)	Weiß nicht
Onlineverifikation	○	○	○	○	○
Basisbefragung	○	○	○	○	○
Basisbegehren	○	○	○	○	○

Question 2.

Wie oft hast Du Dich in den letzten sechs Monaten innerhalb der Partei auf diese Arten beteiligt?

	Gar nicht	1 Mal	2-5 Mal	6-10 Mal	Öfter	Weiß nicht
Parteirelevante Themen diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Leitanträge für einen Parteitag mitgeschrieben	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als Basismitglied an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	○	○	○	○	○	○

Als Delegierter an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	○	○	○	○	○	○
In Gremien mitgearbeitet	○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 3.

Über welche Kanäle hast Du Dich dabei beteiligt?

- ☐ Auf Treffen oder Mitgliederversammlungen vor Ort
- ☐ Auf überregionalen Treffen oder Parteitagen
- ☐ Auf nicht ortsgebundenen Treffen (Skype, Telefonkonferenzen)
- ☐ Per Post / Fax
- ☐ In Sozialen Medien (Facebook, Twitter etc.)
- ☐ Auf Parteiplattformen im Internet (Antragsgrün, Wurzelwerk etc.)
- ☑ Anderes

Wie hast Du Dich noch beteiligt?

[...]

Question 4.

Wie möchtest Du gern an Entscheidungsprozessen beteiligt werden?

- ☐ Parteirelevante Themen diskutieren
- ☐ Anträge für einen Parteitag schreiben
- ☐ Anträge für einen Parteitag untersttzen
- ☐ Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutieren
- ☐ Leitanträge für einen Parteitag mitschreiben
- ☐ Als Basismitglied an einer Abstimmung teilnehmen
- ☐ Als Delegierter an einer Abstimmunt teilnehmen
- ☐ In Gremien mitarbeiten
- ☐ Gar nicht
- ☑ Anderes

Wie möchtest Du noch an Entscheidungsprozessen beteiligt sein?

[...]

Question 5.

Bitte ordne die folgenden Sätze nach ihrer Wichtigkeit in Bezug auf innerparteiliche Demokratie

(Bitte wähle für jede Aussage eine Zahl aus, je nachdem wie wichtig dir die Aussage für Beteiligung innerhalb von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen ist; 1 ist am wichtigsten)

– ▼	Alle Mitglieder koennen sich so viel wie moeglich beteiligen
– ▼	Alle Mitglieder können sich gleichberechtigt beteiligen
– ▼	Alle Mitglieder koennen sich an Abstimmungen beteiligen
– ▼	Alle Mitglieder koennen sich an Diskussionen beteiligen

Save and Continue

Activity C1 (all members survey) DE

2. Demografische Fragen

Question 1.

Wann bist Du Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beigetreten?

Question 2.

Seit wann bist Du in der Partei aktiv?

Question 3.

Wo verortest Du Dich innerhalb des politischen Spektrums der Partei?

Linke 1	2	3	4	5	Realos	Gar nicht
○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 4.

Bekleidest Du ein Amt oder Mandat, oder hast Du das in der Vergangenheit getan?

- ☑ Habe aktuell ein Amt oder Mandat
- ☐ Hatte in der Vergangenheit ein Amt oder Mandat
- ☐ Hatte nie ein Amt oder Mandat

Auf welcher Ebene?

- ☑ Europa
- ☑ Bund
- ☐ Land
- ☐ Region
- ☐ Kreis
- ☐ Ort

Question 5.

In welchem Bundesland bist Du Mitglied?

Please select ▼

Question 6.

In was für einer Gegend lebst Du?

[Please select ▼]

Question 7.

Wie würdest Du Deine IT-Kenntnisse einordnen?

Sehr Schlecht	1	2	3	4	5	Sehr gut	Weiß nicht
	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 8.

Wie regelmäßig nutzt Du das Internet?

Gar nicht	Monatlich	Wöchentlich	Täglich	Durchgehend	Weiß nicht
○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 9.

Was ist Dein höchster Bildungsabschluss?

[Berufsausbildung ▼]

Question 10.

Was ist Dein Beschäftigungsstatus?

[Please select ▼]

Question 11.

Wie alt bist Du?

[   ]

Question 12.

Welchem Geschlecht ordnest Du Dich zu?

[Please select ▼]

Question 13.

Hast Du Kinder?

○ Ja

◉ Nein

○ Keine Angabe

Question 14.

Etwa wie hoch ist Dein jährliches Bruttoeinkommen?

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Once this button is pressed you will not be able edit your responses

E.5.3 Green Party Survey (as sent April 2017)

Grüner Monitor

Liebes Mitglied,

in einem halben Jahr findet die Bundestagswahl statt. Heute wollen wir von Dir im Grünen Monitor wissen, wie Du die aktuelle Lage siehst. Deine Einschätzungen rund um Politik, Themen und Menschen werden in unsere Kampagnenplanung einfließen. Neben Umfragen in der Bevölkerung sind wir auch sehr an Deiner Meinung als Parteimitglied interessiert. Aktuell interessiert uns vor allem, wie Du die aktuelle Lage einschätzt, welche Teile des Programmentwurfs Dir besonders wichtig sind und wie genau Du in der Partei aktiv bist.

Warum mache ich das? Es hilft bei der Entwicklung unserer Wahlkampagne und beim größeren Thema der Parteireform. Die Ergebnisse sind ein Baustein von mehreren. Da es explizit eine interne Befragung und kein Mitgliederentscheid ist, werden wir die Ergebnisse nicht veröffentlichen. Damit wir unsere Planungen aber auf einer möglichst breiten Datengrundlage machen können, freue ich mich sehr, wenn Du mitmachst und mich so unterstützt.

Diese Umfage endet am Freitag, den **07. April um 13:00 Uhr**. Das Ausfüllen dauert nur rund 13 Minuten. Zum Starten klicke bitte unten auf "Weiter".

Die Umfrage dient rein internen Zwecken und wird gemäß des Bundesdatenschutzgesetzes (BDSG) durchgeführt. Alle Angaben werden nur in anonymisierter Form ausgewertet. Die Antworten werden nicht detailliert veröffentlicht. Die erhobenen Daten werden nicht an unbefugte Dritte weitergegeben. Falls Du Fragen hast, schreibe eine kurze Email an: umfrage@gruene.de (http://gruene.de) oder rufe unter 030 - 28 44 2 - 103 an.

Vielen Dank für Deine Teilnahme!

Herzliche Grüße,

Michael Kellner

Politischer Bundesgeschäftsführer
Diese Umfrage enthält 27 Fragen.

Grüner Monitor

1 []
Wie zufrieden bist Du ganz allgemein mit der Arbeit von Bündnis 90/Die Grünen im Bund?
*

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ sehr zufrieden

○ zufrieden

○ weniger zufrieden

○ gar nicht zufrieden

○ keine Angabe

Bitte wähle nur eine der Antworten aus.

2 []
Wie beurteilst Du die Geschlossenheit der grünen Partei?
*

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ groß

○ eher groß

○ eher gering

○ gering

○ keine Angabe

Bitte wähle nur eine der Antworten aus.

3 []
Wie stark willst Du Dich persönlich im anstehenden Wahlkampf einbringen?

∗

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ sehr stark

○ stark

○ schwach

○ gar nicht

○ keine Angabe

Bitte wähle nur eine der Antworten aus.

4 []
Bitte gib an, ob Du der jeweiligen Aussage voll und ganz zustimmst, eher zustimmst, eher nicht zustimmst oder überhaupt nicht zustimmst.

∗

Bitte wähle die zutreffende Antwort aus:

	Stimme voll und ganz zu	Stimme eher zu	Stimme eher nicht zu	Stimme überhaupt nicht zu	keine Angabe
Es braucht starke Grüne, um unsere Demokratie gegen Nationalismus und Populismus zu verteidigen.	○	○	○	○	○
Es braucht starke Grüne, damit die Menschen in unserem Land auch in Zukunft frei leben können.	○	○	○	○	○
Die Grünen setzen sich am konsequentesten für den Schutz unserer natürlichen Lebensgrundlagen ein.	○	○	○	○	○

	Stimme voll und ganz zu	Stimme eher zu	Stimme eher nicht zu	Stimme überhaupt nicht zu	keine Angabe
Es braucht starke Grüne, um zu mehr Chancengerechtigkeit in Deutschland zu kommen.	○	○	○	○	○
Die Grünen haben die besten Ideen für die Zukunft unseres Landes.	○	○	○	○	○
Die Grünen sollten an der nächsten Bundesregierung beteiligt sein, um die große Koalition abzulösen.	○	○	○	○	○

5 []
Welche Aussage vermittelt mit Blick auf die Bundestagswahl 2017 für Dich die wichtigste Botschaft?

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Es braucht starke Grüne, damit die Menschen in unserem Land auch in Zukunft frei leben können.

○ Es braucht starke Grüne, um zu mehr Chancengerechtigkeit in Deutschland zu kommen.

○ Es braucht starke Grüne, um unsere Demokratie gegen Nationalismus und Populismus zu verteidigen.

○ Die Grünen sollten an der nächsten Bundesregierung beteiligt sein, um die große Koalition abzulösen.

○ Die Grünen setzen sich am konsequentesten für den Schutz unserer natürlichen Lebensgrundlagen ein.

○ Die Grünen haben die besten Ideen für die Zukunft unseres Landes.

6 []Denke jetzt bitte nur an die Situation bei Dir vor Ort: Welche Themenfelder sorgen derzeit am meisten für Gesprächsstoff? *

Bitte wähle maximal 3 Antworten aus.

Bitte wähle **alle** Punkte aus, die zutreffen:

☐ Arbeit

☐ Bildung, Schule, Kita

☐ Demokratie, Bürger*innenrechte, Bürger*innenbeteiligung

☐ Energieversorgung

☐ Ernährung und Landwirtschaft

☐ Familie, Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Familie

☐ Finanzen, Haushalt, Steuern

☐ Fremdenfeindlichkeit und Rechtsextremismus

☐ Gesundheit und Pflege

☐ Gleichberechtigung von Mann & Frau

☐ Handel, z.B. Ceta und TTIP

☐ Innenpolitik, Kriminalität

☐ Integration, Flüchtlinge, Einwanderung

☐ Internationales

☐ Klimaschutz, Umwelt/Natur

☐ Kultur

☐ Ländlicher Raum

☐ Mieten, Wohnungsbau

☐ Netzpolitik

☐ Politik(er)verdruss

☐ Rente, Alterssicherung

☐ Sozialer Zusammenhalt

☐ Verbraucher*innenschutz

☐ Verkehr, Infrastruktur

☐ Wirtschaft

☐ Wissenschaft, Forschung, Hochschule

☐ Zusammenhalt in Europa

Bitte wähle maximal 3 Antworten aus.

7 []Man spricht in der Politik immer wieder von „links" und „rechts". Wo würdest Du Bündnis 90/Die Grünen auf einer Skala von 1-11 einordnen, wobei 1 bedeutet, dass die Partei „links" ist und 11 bedeutet, dass die Partei „rechts" ist. Mit den Werten dazwischen kannst Du Deine Einschätzung abstufen. *

Bitte wähle die zutreffende Antwort aus:

											Keine
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Antwort
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

8 []Und wie ist das mit Dir selbst? Wo würdest Du Dich auf einer Skala einordnen, bei der 1 „links" bedeutet und 11 „rechts"? *

Bitte wähle die zutreffende Antwort aus:

											Keine
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Antwort
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

9 []Wenn man den Bundeskanzler direkt wählen könnte, für wen würdest Du Dich entscheiden: für Angela Merkel oder für Martin Schulz? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Für Angela Merkel

○ Für Martin Schulz

○ Für keinen von beiden

○ keine Angabe

Bitte nur eine Antwort auswählen.

Wichtigkeit der Themen im Wahlprogrammentwurf

10 []Welches Thema im Bereich "Umwelt im Kopf" des Wahlprogrammentwurfs soll für uns im Wahlkampf die höchste Wichtigkeit haben? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Wir erhalten unsere Natur

○ Wir machen Deutschland zum Vorreiter beim Klimaschutz

○ Wir begrünen unsere Wirtschaft für Umweltschutz, Lebensqualität und neue Arbeitsplätze

○ Wir sorgen für gesunde Lebensmittel ohne Gift und Tierquälerei

○ Wir steigen um - komplett auf grüne Energien

○ Wir sorgen für saubere, bezahlbare und bequeme Mobilität

11 []Welches Thema im Bereich "Welt im Blick" des Wahlprogrammentwurfs soll für uns im Wahlkampf die höchste Wichtigkeit haben? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Wir kämpfen um Europas Zusammenhalt

○ Wir stehen ein für Frieden und Menschenrechte

○ Wir machen den Welthandel fair

○ Wir bekämpfen die Fluchtursachen und schützen Flüchtlinge

○ Wir gestalten unser Einwanderungsland

12 []
Welches Thema im Bereich "Freiheit im Herzen" des Wahlprogrammentwurfs soll für uns im Wahlkampf die höchste Wichtigkeit haben?

*

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Wir streiten für Toleranz, Vielfalt und Selbstbestimmung

○ Wir schaffen endlich Gleichberechtigung und Lohngleichheit

○ Wir sorgen für Sicherheit und erhalten die Freiheit

○ Wir stärken die Demokratie

○ Wir machen Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher stark

○ Wir machen das Internet frei und sicher

○ Wir sorgen für bezahlbare Wohnungen und lebenswerte Kommunen

13 []
Welches Thema im Bereich "Gerechtigkeit im Sinn" des Wahlprogrammentwurfs soll für uns im Wahlkampf die höchste Wichtigkeit haben?
*

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

- ○ Wir investieren in Kindertagesstätten, Schulen und Universitäten
- ○ Wir teilen den Wohlstand gerechter
- ○ Wir machen den Sozialstaat sicher und zukunftsfest
- ○ Wir holen Kinder aus der Armut und fördern Familien
- ○ Wir kämpfen für gute Arbeit und bessere Vereinbarkeit
- ○ Wir gestalten die Digitalisierung

Beteiligung an der Parteiarbeit

14 []

Auf der BDK in Münster wurden verschiedene Beschlüsse dazu getroffen, wie Mitglieder sich einbringen können. Dabei wurden zwei neue Beteiligungsformen (Mitgliederbegehren* und Mitgliederbefragung**) eingeführt. Wie denkst Du, werden sich diese Beschlüsse auf Deine Beteiligung in der Partei auswirken?

*

Bitte wähle die zutreffende Antwort aus:

	Werde mich mehr beteiligen	Werde mich genau gleich beteiligen	Werde mich weniger beteiligen	Weiß nicht
Mitgliederbefragung	○	○	○	○
Mitgliederbegehren	○	○	○	○

* Ein Mitgliederbegehren auf Bundesebene bedeutet, dass 250 Mitglieder gemeinsam die Behandlung eines Themas im Bundesvorstand erzwingen können. Die Antragssteller*innen erhalten verpflichtend in der Regel innerhalb einer Frist von vier Wochen eine Stellungnahme des Bundesvorstandes zu ihrem Anliegen.

** Der Bundesvorstand will die Mitglieder durch frühzeitige Mitgliederbefragungen stärker in die programmatische Weiterentwicklung einbeziehen. Zu mindestens einem der Themen wird einmal im Jahr eine Online-Umfrage durchgeführt, um Meinungen einzuholen und Debatten vorzubereiten. Die Befragung ergänzt politische Debatten, ersetzt sie aber nicht.

15 []

Wie oft hast Du Dich in den letzten sechs Monaten innerhalb der Partei auf diese Arten beteiligt?

*

Bitte wähle die zutreffende Antwort aus:

	Gar nicht	1 Mal	2-5 Mal	6-10 Mal	Öfter	Weiß nicht
Parteirelevante Themen diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als Mitglied an einer Abstimmung in einer LAG oder Mitgliederversammlung teilgenommen	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als Delegierte*r an einer Abstimmung z.B. bei einer LDK, BDK oder BAG teilgenommen	○	○	○	○	○	○
In Gremien mitgearbeitet	○	○	○	○	○	○

16 []

Über welche Kanäle hast Du Dich dabei beteiligt?

Bitte wähle **alle** Punkte aus, die zutreffen:

☐ Auf Treffen oder Mitgliederversammlungen vor Ort

☐ Auf überregionalen Treffen oder Parteitagen

☐ Auf nicht ortsgebundenen Treffen (Skype, Telefonkonferenz)

☐ Per Post / Fax

☐ In sozialen Medien (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

☐ Auf Plattformen im Internet (Antragsgrün, Wurzelwerk, etc.)

☐ Anderer:: [   ]

17 []
Bitte ordne die folgenden Sätze nach ihrer Wichtigkeit in Bezug auf innerparteiliche Demokratie (höchste Bewertung oben)

*

Alle Antworten müssen unterschiedlich sein und du musst sie ordnen.

Bitte nummeriere jede Box in der Reihenfolge Deiner Präferenz, beginnend von 1 bis 4

[   ]

  Alle Mitglieder können sich so viel wie möglich beteiligen

[   ]

  Alle Mitglieder können sich gleichberechtigt beteiligen

[   ]

  Alle Mitglieder können sich an Abstimmungen beteiligen

[   ]

  Alle Mitglieder können sich an Diskussionen beteiligen

Soziodemographie

18 []Welchem Geschlecht ordnest Du Dich zu? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ weiblich

○ männlich

○ anderes

○ keine Angabe

19 []Wie alt bist Du? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ unter 18

○ 18-29

○ 30-39

○ 40-49

○ 50-59

○ 60-69

○ 70+

○ keine Angabe

20 []In welchem Bundesland wohnst Du? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Baden-Württemberg

○ Bayern

○ Berlin

○ Brandenburg

○ Bremen

○ Hamburg

○ Hessen

○ Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

○ Niedersachsen

○ Nordrhein-Westfalen

○ Rheinland-Pfalz

○ Saarland

○ Sachsen

○ Sachsen-Anhalt

○ Schleswig-Holstein

○ Thüringen

○ Ausland

○ keine Angabe

21 []Wo lebst Du? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Direkt in einer Großstadt (über 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

○ Im Speckgürtel einer Großstadt (über 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

○ In einer Kleinstadt (zwischen 10.000 und 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

○ Auf dem Land (Gemeinde mit weniger als 10.000 Einwohner*innen)

○ keine Angabe

22 []Was ist Dein höchster Schulabschluss? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Noch in der Schule

○ Volks-/Hauptschule

○ Realschule oder gleichwertig

○ Fachhochschul- oder Hochschulreife

○ Fachhochschule- oder Hochschulabschluss

○ Promotion/Habilitation

○ Kein Schulabschluss

○ keine Angabe

23 []Was ist Dein derzeitiger beruflicher Status (bitte Hauptbeschäftigung)? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ Schüler*in/Student*in/Azubi

○ Arbeitslos

○ Angestellt

○ BeamteR

○ Selbstständig

○ Rente/Pension

○ Hausfrau oder -mann

○ keine Angabe

24 []Wie regelmäßig nutzt Du das Internet? *

Bitte wähle nur eine der folgenden Antworten aus:

○ gar nicht

○ monatlich

○ wöchentlich

○ täglich

○ durchgehend

○ keine Angabe

25 []Bekleidest Du ein Amt oder Mandat oder hast Du das in der Vergangenheit getan? *

Bitte wähle maximal eine Antwort aus.

Bitte wähle **alle** Punkte aus, die zutreffen:

☐ Habe aktuell ein Amt oder Mandat

☐ Hatte in der Vergangenheit ein Amt oder Mandat

☐ Hatte nie ein Amt oder Mandat

26 []Auf welcher Ebene? *

Beantworte diese Frage nur, wenn folgende Bedingungen erfüllt sind:

-------- Scenario 1 --------

Antwort war bei Frage '25 [code24]' (Bekleidest Du ein Amt oder Mandat oder hast Du das in der Vergangenheit getan?)
-------- oder Scenario 2 --------

Antwort war bei Frage '25 [code24]' (Bekleidest Du ein Amt oder Mandat oder hast Du das in der Vergangenheit getan?)

Bitte wähle **alle** Punkte aus, die zutreffen:

☐ Europa

☐ Bund

☐ Land

☐ Region

☐ Kreis

☐ Ort

27 []Vielen Dank für Deine Antworten bis hier. Falls Du uns noch etwas mitteilen möchtest, nutze bitte dieses Feld. Ansonsten klicke unten ein letztes Mal auf "Weiter" und beende damit die Umfrage.

Bitte gib hier Deine Antwort ein:

GreenSurvey - Grüner Monitor   https://umfrage.gruene.de/index.php/admin/printablesurvey/sa/index/s...

Vielen Dank für Deine Teilnahme!
07.04.2017 – 13:00

Absenden der Umfrage.
Vielen Dank für die Beantwortung des Fragebogens.

GreenSurvey - Grüner Monitor   https://umfrage.gruene.de/index.php/admin/printablesurvey/sa/index/s...

Vielen Dank für Deine Teilnahme!
07.04.2017 – 13:00

Absenden der Umfrage.
Vielen Dank für die Beantwortung des Fragebogens.

E.5.4 DPA Plan (Activity C1-C3)

DPA Plan – Activity C1-C3 – Surveys

Ethics reference number: ERGO/FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2017-03-29
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

The data collection comprises two panel surveys.

The data is required to understand how members of the Green Party Germany view and use online participation in the party, and what expectations they have of an only online system or process for democratic decision-making.

The data is adequate because it will cover exactly what is required to analyse this question, and the data is not excessive because no more information than what is required will be collected.

The data will be processed fairly because the participants will be informed about the collection and use of their data.

The data's accuracy is ensured because it will consist of data collected directly from members in a survey.

Data will be stored on the Investigator's laptop and backed up on university servers. The laptop will be protected by a password known only to the researcher. The data will be held in accordance with University policy on data retention.

The data will be stored on university systems in accordance with university guidelines, when the researcher leaves the institution.

The data will be processed in accordance with the rights of the participants because they will have the right to access, correct, and/or withdraw their consent for any reason. Participants will be able to exercise their rights by contacting the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk) or the project supervisors, Dr Silke Roth and Prof Dr Steffen Staab (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, they will also be given the contact details for the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

E.6   Activity C2 – Survey (all tool users)

E.6.1   Survey

Activity C2 (all tool users survey)

1. Survey

Question 1.

For which national delegate assembly did you first use the Antragstool?

(Please select one assembly from the list)

1 ▾	2017 (Berlin)
2 ▾	2016 (Muenster)
3 ▾	2015 (Halle)
4 ▾	2014 (Hamburg)
5 ▾	2013 (Oktober - Berlin)
6 ▾	2013 (Februar - Berlin)
7 ▾	2012 (Hannover)
8 ▾	2011 (Kiel)
9 ▾	Do not know

[2017 (Berlin)   ▾]

Question 2.

How did you use the Antragstool for the national delegate assembly 2017?

(Please select all applicable options)

- ☐ Logged in
- ☐ Submitted proposal for a party body or committee
- ☐ Created an individual members' proposal
- ☐ Read an individual members' proposal
- ☐ Supported an individual members' proposal
- ☐ Submitted an individual members' proposal
- ☐ Read a submitted proposal
- ☐ Commented on a submitted proposal
- ☑ Other

How else did you use the Antragstool?

(Please give a short explanation)

[...]

Question 3.

Did you have support for the use of the Antragstools?

(Please select one option)

- ○ No I did not need support
- ○ No but I would have liked to have support
- ○ Yes I contacted the headoffice

○ Yes someone I know helped me

◉ Other

Which other form of support did you have?

(Please explain briefly)

| ... |

Question 4.

If you created but did not submite a proposal: Why was it not submitted?

(Please give a brief explanation of the reson(s)

| ... |

Question 5.

How often have you participated within the party in these ways in the last six months?

(Please respond for every row, how often you participated in the corresponding way)

	Not at all	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than ten times	Don&#039;t know
Discussed topics relevant to the party	○	○	○	○	○	○
Wrote proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Supported proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Discussed proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Contributed to lead proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Voted as a grass-roots member	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○

| Voted as a delegate | | | | | | |
| Worked in party bodies | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Question 6.

Through which channels did you do these things?

(Please select all channels you used to participate)

- ☐ At local meetings or assemblies
- ☐ At national meetings or assemblies
- ☐ At non-localised meetings (Skype telephone conference)
- ☐ Via Mail / Fax
- ☐ On Social Media(Facebook Twitter etc.)
- ☐ On party owned platforms online (Antragsgr?n Wurzelwerk etc.)
- ☐ On other online platforms
- ☑ Other
- ☐ Not at all

How else did you participate?

(Please explain briefly)

...

Question 7.

How would you rate you IT skills?

(Please select the option that best reflects your self-assessment)

| Very Bad 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Very Good | Don't know |
| ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | | ○ |

Question 8.

How regularly do you use the internet?

(Please select the option that best fits your typical use)

| Not at all | Monthly | Weekly | Daily | All the time | Don't know |

Question 9.

What do you do on the internet, when you use it?

(Please select the five options that are most important for you)

- ☐ E-Mails
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Use online media (e.g. watch films, listen to music)
- ☐ Look for Informationen
- ☐ Read news
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Gaming
- ☐ Telephone calls (z.B. per Skype)
- ☑ Other

What else do you to online?

(Please explain briefly)

...

Save and Continue

Activity C2 (all tool users survey)

2. Demographical Questions

Question 1.

When did you join the Green Party?

(Please select the year from the list)

Options:
2017-1980 + prefer not to say

[2017   ▼]

Question 2.

When did you become an active member of the party?

(Please select the year from the list)

Options:
2017-1980 + prefer not to say + not an active member

[2017   ▼]

Question 3.

Where would you locate yourself on the political spectrum within the party?

(Please select the option that most fts your own political orientation)

Left 1	2	3	4	5	Realists	Not on this Spectrum
○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 4.

Do you or did you ever hold a mandate for or an office in the party?

(Please select all applicable options)

- ☐ Hold a mandate or party office at the moment
- ☑ Held a mandate or party office in the past
- ☐ Never held a mandate or party office

At which level?

(Please select all applicable options)

☑ Europe
☑ National
☐ State
☐ Region
☐ Local (Kreis)
☐ Local (Ort)

Question 5.

In which federal state do you live?

(Please select the state from the list)

[Please select   ▼]   Options: List of federel states in Germany

Question 6.

Do you live in an urban, suburban, or rural area?

(Please select one option from the list)

[Please select ▼]

Question 7.

What is your highest qualification?

(Please select the most appropriate option from the list)

[Please select   ▼]

Question 8.

What is your current occupation?

(Please select the most appropriate option from the list)

[Please select   ▼]

Question 9.

How old are you?

(Please select the correct category from the list)

[Please select ▼]

Question 10.

What is your gender?

(Please select the most appropriate category from the list)

Please select ▾

1 ▾	Female
2 ▾	Male
3 ▾	Both
4 ▾	Neither
5 ▾	Other

Question 11.

Do you regularly look after someone in your household (e.g. your children, partner, parent)?

(Please select one response)

○ Yes

○ No

◉ Prefer not to tell

Question 12.

What is your monthly net income?

(Please select the appropriate category from the list)

Please select ▾

1 ▾	More than 4.000 €
2 ▾	3500 - 4000 €
3 ▾	3000 - 3500 €
4 ▾	2500 - 3000 €
5 ▾	2000 - 2500 €
6 ▾	1500 - 2000 €
7 ▾	1000 - 1500 €
8 ▾	500 - 1000 €
9 ▾	Less than 500 €
10 ▾	Keine Angabe

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Save and Finish

Once this button is pressed you will not be able edit your responses

E.6.2   Survey (German)

Activity C2 (all tool users survey) DE

1. Umfrage

Question 1.

Für welche Bundesdelegiertenkonferenz hast Du das Antragstool zum ersten Mal benutzt?

(Wähle eine BDK aus)

| 2017 (Berlin) ▾ |

Edit drop down responses

1 ▾	2017 (Berlin)	□
2 ▾	2016 (Muenster)	□
3 ▾	2015 (Halle)	□
4 ▾	2014 (Hamburg)	□
5 ▾	2013 (Oktober - Berlin)	□
6 ▾	2013 (Februar - Berlin)	□
7 ▾	2012 (Hannover)	□
8 ▾	2011 (Kiel)	□
9 ▾	Weiss nicht	□

Question 2.

Wie hast Du das Antragstool für die BDK 2017 genutzt?

(Klicke alle Optionen an die zutreffen)

☐ Mich eingeloggt

☐ Einen Antrag fuer ein Gremium eingereicht

☐ Einen Einzelantrag angelegt

☐ Einen angelegten Einzelantrag gelesen

☐ Einen Einzelantrag unterstuetzt

☐ Einen Einzelantrag eingereicht

☐ Einen eingereichten Antrag gelesen

☐ Einen eingereichten Antrag kommentiert

☑ Anderes

Wie hast Du das Antragstool noch genutzt?

(Bitte erkläre in Stichworten)

| tralala :) |

Question 3.

Hast Du bei der Nutzung des Antragstools Unterstützung gehabt?

(Bitte wähle eine Antwort aus)

○ Nein, ich habe keine Unterstuetzung gebraucht

○ Nein, aber ich haette gerne Unterstuetzung gehabt

○ Ja, ich habe die Bundesgeschaeftsstelle kontaktiert

○ Ja, jemand aus meinem Bekanntenkreis hat mir geholfen

◉ Anderes

Welche andere Art der Unterstützung hattest Du bei der Nutzung des Anstragstools?

(Bitte erläutere kurz)

dumdidum

Question 4.

Wenn Du einen Antrag angelegt, ihn aber nicht eingereicht hast: Warum wurde der Antrag nicht eingereicht?

(Bitte erläutere kurz den oder die Gründe)

blubb

Question 5.

Wie oft hast Du Dich in den letzten sechs Monaten innerhalb der Partei auf diese Arten beteiligt?

(Bitte gib in jeder Zeile an wie oft Du Dich auf die entsprechende Art beteiligt hast)

	Gar nicht	1 Mal	2-5 Mal	6-10 Mal	Oefter	Weiss nicht
Parteirelevante Themen diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Leitanträge für einen Parteitag mitgeschrieben	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als Basismitglied an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als Delegierter an	○	○	○	○	○	○

einer
Abstimmung
teilgenommen

In Gremien
mitgearbeitet ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Question 6.

Über welche Kanäle hast Du Dich dabei beteiligt?

(Bitte wähle alle Kanäle aus über die Du Dich beteligt hast)

☐ Auf Treffen oder Mitgliederversammlungen vor Ort

☐ Auf überregionalen Treffen oder Parteitagen

☐ Auf nicht ortsgebundenen Treffen (Skype, Telefonkonferenzen)

☐ Per Post / Fax

☐ In Sozialen Medien (Facebook, Twitter etc.)

☐ Auf Parteiplattformen im Internet (Antragsgrün, Wurzelwerk etc.)

☐ Auf anderen Onlineplattformen

☑ Anderes

☐ Gar nicht

Wie hast Du Dich noch beteiligt?

| ... |

Question 7.

Wie würdest Du Deine IT-Kenntnisse einordnen?

(Bitte wähle die Option die am ehesten Deiner eigenen Einschätzung entspricht)

Sehr Schlecht	1	2	3	4	5	Sehr gut	Weiss nicht
	○	○	○	○	○		◉

Question 8.

Wie regelmäßig nutzt Du das Internet?

(Bitte wähle die Option die am ehesten Deiner üblichen Nutzung entspricht)

Gar nicht	Monatlich	Wöchentlich	Täglich	Durchgehend	Weiß nicht
○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 9.

Was tust Du im Internet, wenn Du es nutzt?

(Bitte wähle die fünf Optionen aus die für Dich am wichtigsten sind)

- ☐ E-Mails
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Medien nutzen (z.B. Filme ansehen Musik hoeren)
- ☐ Informationen suchen
- ☐ Nachrichten lesen
- ☐ Einkaufen
- ☐ Spielen
- ☐ Telefonieren (z.B. per Skype)
- ☑ Anderes

Was tust Du noch im Internet?

(Bitte erkläre in Stichworten)

| ... |

Save and Continue

Activity C2 (all tool users survey) DE

2. Demografische Fragen

Question 1.

Wann bist Du Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beigetreten?

(Bitte wähle das entsprechende Jahr aus der Liste aus)

[2017 ▼]

Optionen:
1980-2010 + Keine Angabe

Question 2.

Seit wann bist Du in der Partei aktiv?

Optionen:
1980-2010 + Keine Angabe

(Bitte wähle das entsprechende Jahr aus der Liste aus)

[2017 ▼]

Question 3.

Wo verortest Du Dich innerhalb des politischen Spektrums der Partei?

(Bitte wähle die Option die am ehesten Deiner politischen Orientierung entspricht)

Linke 1	2	3	4	5	Realos	Nicht auf diesem Spektrum
○	○	○	○	○		◉

Question 4.

Bekleidest Du ein Amt oder Mandat, oder hast Du das in der Vergangenheit getan?

(Bitte wähle alle zutreffenden Optionen aus)

- ☑ Habe aktuell ein Amt oder Mandat
- ☑ Hatte in der Vergangenheit ein Amt oder Mandat
- ☐ Hatte nie ein Amt oder Mandat

Auf welcher Ebene?

(Bitte wähle alle zutreffenden Optionen aus)

☐ Europa

☐ Bund

☑ Land

☑ Region

☑ Kreis

☐ Ort

Question 5.

In welchem Bundesland bist Du Mitglied?

(Bitte wähle das entsprechende Bundesland aus der Liste aus)

| Bayern ▼ |

Question 6.

In was für einer Gegend lebst Du?

(Bitte wähle die zutreffende Option aus der Liste aus)

| In der Stadt ▼ |

Question 7.

Was ist Dein höchster Bildungsabschluss?

(Bitte wähle die am besten zutreffenden Option aus der Liste aus)

| Berufsausbildung ▼ |

Question 8.

Was ist Dein Beschäftigungsstatus?

(Bitte wähle die am besten zutreffenden Option aus der Liste aus)

| Verbeamtet ▼ |

Question 9.

Wie alt bist Du?

(Bitte wähle die zutreffende Kategorie aus der Liste aus)

| 26-35 ▼ |

1 ▼	Unter 18
2 ▼	19-25
3 ▼	26-35
4 ▼	36-45
5 ▼	46-55
6 ▼	56-65
7 ▼	66-75
8 ▼	Ueber 75

Question 10.

Welchem Geschlecht ordnest Du Dich zu?

(Bitte wähle die zutreffende Kategorie aus der Liste aus)

Weiblich ▼

Question 11.

Übst Du regelmäßig die Fürsorge für jemanden in Deinem Haushalt aus (z. B. Kinder, Partner, Elternteil)?

(Bitte wähle die zutreffende Antwort aus)

○ Ja

◉ Nein

○ Keine Angabe

1 ▼	Ueber 4.000 €
2 ▼	3500 - 4000 €
3 ▼	3000 - 3500 €
4 ▼	2500 - 3000 €
5 ▼	2000 - 2500 €
6 ▼	1500 - 2000 €
7 ▼	1000 - 1500 €
8 ▼	500 - 1000 €
9 ▼	Unter 500 €
10 ▼	Keine Angabe

Question 12.

Etwa wie hoch ist Dein monatliches Nettoeinkommen?

(Bitte wähle die zutreffende Kategorie aus)

Ueber 4.000 € ▼

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Save and Finish

Once this button is pressed you will not be able edit your responses

E.7   Activity C3 – Survey (panel)

E.7.1   Survey

Activity C3 (Panel surveys)

⚠ Response data will not be saved in this preview mode.This will affect any section logic you have applied as previous response data cannot be viewed and verified.

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. Your participation is of course completely voluntary.

What is the research about?

My project aims to understand how Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen uses the internet in their decision-making processes. I am especially interested in understanding how members of the party currently see decision-making processes and the use of the internet.

I am a research student at the University of Southampton in the UK. This project forms part of my education and will lead to a doctoral degree in Web Science.

If you are interested, I will send you a digital copy of the completed study so you can see how your data was used.

Why have I been chosen?

The participants in this project are members of the Green Party Germany. They have been randomly selected from two groups (those living in rural and urban areas).

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will respond to two connected surveys, which are expected to be sent out in summer 2017 and spring 2018. Both will comprise questions about your participation in decision-making processes within Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, and your views on online participation processes. You may respond to all, some, or none of the questions. The surveys should take no longer than an hour to complete.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

I hope that you will find taking part an interesting experience. The results of this research may be useful to your party and other organisations who want to improve their decision making processes and / or adoption of the web for these processes.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks associated with your participation. You are not obliged to respond to any questions if you do not want to.

Will my data be confidential?

Everyone who has access to the survey data, either within the party or at the University, will have signed a confidentiality agreement. Your responses to both surveys will be connected using an ID. At no point will I have access to your personal details, since the distribution of the surveys is handled by the head office of Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen.

The results will be stored on a password protected computer so that they cannot be accessed by anyone else. Information will be used only in accordance with the British and German Data Protection Acts. The British DPA makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study for the

purpose of safeguarding national security; preventing or detecting crime; prosecuting or apprehending offenders; assessing or collecting tax; or protecting the vital interests of the participant or anyone else.

If you would like to know more about how you can access, amend or retract your data, please contact the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk).

What happens if I change my mind?

You may withdraw your consent, access or change your data for any reason at any time and for any reason. Please use the below contact details and state your individual ID.

What happens if something goes wrong?

Should you have any concern or complaint, contact me if possible (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), otherwise please contact one of the project supervisors, Dr Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk), or Prof Dr Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, you may also contact the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk), or call them at 02380 595058.

☑ Please tick (check) this box to indicate that you consent to taking part in this survey

Click here to start this survey

Activity C3 (Panel surveys)

1. Panel 1 (June 2017)

In this survey some terms from processes in Bünsnis 90 / Die Grünen woll be used frequently. These are referring to:

'**Antragsgrün**': The Antragsrün is the currently used platform at https://antraege.gruene.de/, which is used for proposal submissions to delegate assemblies.

'**Onlineverification**': The verification of proposal supporters through Grünes Netz. The delegate assembly in 2016 in Münster has decided that those who support proposals have to log in to the Antragsgrün and verify their support through a click for each proposal.

'**Grass-roots survey**: The executive board wants to involve members more and earlier in policy development. For at least one topic there will be an annual online survey, to poll opinions and prepare debates. The survey supplements political debates but does not replace them.

'**Grass-roots demand**': A grass-roots demand at national lebel means that 250 members can collectively force the executive board to deal with a topic or issue. The proposers have to receive a response from the executive board within four weeks.

Question 1.

In the last months, several processed in the party have changed and new processes have been introduced. How would you rate ...

(Please select the option that best fits your opinion for each process)

	Very Bad 1	2	3	4	5	Very Good	Do not know
... the proposal tool for national delegate assemblies?	○	○	○	○	○		○
... the changed process for proposal supporters (verification of motion	○	○	○	○	○		○

supporters
through
Gruenes
Netz)?

... that
regular
grass-roots   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○
surveys are
happening?

... that a
grass-roots
demand is   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○
introduced?

Question 2.

When did you start using ...

(Please select the applicable response for each question)

... the Antragstool   [Please select ▼]

... the online verification on the Antragstool   [Please select ▼]

... the grass-roots survey   [Please select ▼]

... the grass-roots demand   [Please select ▼]

Question 3.

How do you think will your own participation change due to these new processes?

(For each process, please select the response that you find most likely)

	Will participate more	Wll participate just the same	Will participate less	Will participate in different ways (e.g. do more online, do different things)	Do not know
Proposal	○	○	○	○	○

tool for national delegate assemblies					
Changed process for motion supporters (online verification)	○	○	○	○	○
Regular grass-roots survey	○	○	○	○	○
Newly introduced grass-roots demand	○	○	○	○	○

Question 4.

How often have you participated within the party in these ways in the last six months?

(Please respond for each line how often you participated in the corresponding way)

	Not at all	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than ten times	Don't know
Discussed topics relevant to the party	○	○	○	○	○	○
Wrote proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Supported proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Discussed proposals	○	○	○	○	○	○

for assemblies						
Voted as a grass-roots member	○	○	○	○	○	○
Voted as a delegate	○	○	○	○	○	○
Worked in party bodies	○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 5.

Through which channels did you do these things?

(Please select all channels you used to participate in the party)

- ☐ At local meetings or assemblies
- ☐ At national meetings or assemblies
- ☐ At non-localised meetings (Skype telephone conference)
- ☐ Via Mail / Fax
- ☐ On Social Media(Facebook Twitter etc.)
- ☐ On party owned platforms online (Antragsgr?n Wurzelwerk etc.)
- ☑ Other
- ☐ Not at all

How else did you participate?

(Please explain briefly)

[...]

Question 6.

How do you think extended opportunities to participate online will influence the participation opportunities for the below groups?

(For each group, please select the value on the scale that best expresses how you would rate the change in their their participation opportunities)

	Participation becomes 1 easier	2	3	4	5	Participation becomes harder	Do not know
Older members	○	○	○	○	○		○
Younger members	○	○	○	○	○		○
New members	○	○	○	○	○		○
Members that have been active in the patzy for a while	○	○	○	○	○		○
Members who have lots of time	○	○	○	○	○		○
Members who have little time	○	○	○	○	○		○
Position or mandate holders	○	○	○	○	○		○
Grass-roots members without positions or mandates	○	○	○	○	○		○
Members who know many people	○	○	○	○	○		○

Members who know few people	○	○	○	○	○	○
Members in sparsely populated areas	○	○	○	○	○	○
Members in densely populated areas	○	○	○	○	○	○
Members with carer duties	○	○	○	○	○	○
Members who do not have carer duties	○	○	○	○	○	○
Female members	○	○	○	○	○	○
Male members	○	○	○	○	○	○
Members like you	○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 7.

How would you rate your own influence on decisions that are taken in the Green Party?

(Please select the option that best fits your view)

Very weak	1	2	3	4	5	Very strong	Do not know
	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 8.

With how many party members are you in contact regularly (at least once a month)?

(Please select the category that best representsthe number of party members that you are connected with)

- ○ weniger als 5 Mitglieder
- ○ 5-10 Mitglieder
- ○ 11-20 Mitglieder
- ○ 21-50 Mitglieder
- ○ mehr als 50 Mitglieder
- ○ Do not know

Question 9.

There are several groups in the structure of the party that enable participation. Which of these groups are you actively participating in, or have regular contact with

(Please select all groups with which you have regular contact (at least once a month) or in which you are actively participating)

- ☐ Local branch
- ☐ State branch
- ☐ National branch
- ☐ Left Wing
- ☐ Realo-Wing
- ☐ State task force
- ☐ National task force
- ☐ Communal parliamentary group
- ☐ State parliamentary group
- ☐ National parliamentary group
- ☐ Green Youth
- ☐

☐ Green Elderly

☐ European Greens

☐ Other organsations that are affiliated with the party

☑ Other

With other groups within the party are you participating in?

(Please explain briefly)

...

Question 10.

How would you rate you IT skills?

(Please select the option that best reflects your self-assessment)

Very Bad	1	2	3	4	5	Very Good	Don&#039;t know
	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 11.

How regularly do you use the internet?

(Please select the option that best fits your typical use)

Not at all	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	All the time	Don&#039;t know
○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 12.

What do you do on the internet, when you use it?

(Please select the five options that are most important for you)

☐ E-Mails

☐ Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Blogs)

☐ Use online media (e.g. watch films, listen to music)

☐ Look for Informationen

☐ Read news

☐ Shopping

☐ Gaming

☐ Telephone calls (z.B. per Skype)

☑ Other

What else do you to online?

(Please explain briefly)

`...`

Question 13.

Please rate the below statements in order of how important they are for you in regards to party-internal democracy:

(Please select a number for each statements, depending on how important the statement is for you; 1 is the most important)

[– ▾] All members can participate as much as possible

[– ▾] All members can participate equally

[– ▾] All members can participate in votes

[– ▾] All members can participate in discussions

[Save and Continue]

Activity C3 (Panel surveys)

2. Panel 2 (Spring 2018)

In this survey some terms from processes in Bünsnis 90 / Die Grünen woll be used frequently. These are referring to:

'**Antragsgrün**': The Antragsrün is the currently used platform at https://antraege.gruene.de/, which is used for proposal submissions to delegate assemblies.
'**Onlineverification**': The verification of proposal supporters through Grünes Netz. The delegate assembly in 2016 in Münster has decided that those who support proposals have to log in to the Antragsgrün and verify their support through a click for each proposal.
'**Grass-roots survey**': The executive board wants to involve members more and earlier in policy development. For at least one topic there will be an annual online survey, to poll opinions and prepare debates. The survey supplements political debates but does not replace them.
'**Grass-roots demand**': A grass-roots demand at national lebel means that 250 members can collectively force the executive board to deal with a topic or issue. The proposers have to receive a response from the executive board within four weeks.

Question 1.

In the last months, several processed in the party have changed and new processes have been introduced. How would you rate ...

(Please select the option that best fits your opinion for each process)

	Very Bad 1	2	3	4	5	Very Good	Do not know
... the proposal tool for national delegate assemblies?	○	○	○	○	○		○
... the changed process for proposal supporters (verification of motion supporters through	○	○	○	○	○		○

Gruenes
Netz)?

... that
regular
grass-roots   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○
surveys are
happening?

... that a
grass-roots   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○
demand is
introduced?

Question 2.

When did you start using ...

(Please select the applicable response for each question)

... the Antragstool   [Please select ▼]

... the online verification on the Antragstool   [Please select ▼]

... the grass-roots survey   [Please select ▼]

... the grass-roots demand   [Please select ▼]

Question 3.

If you have not used one or several of these new or changed processes - why not?

(Please explain briefly for each process you did not use)

Antragstool [＿＿＿＿＿＿＿]

Online verification on the Antragstool [＿＿＿＿＿＿＿]

Grass-roots survey [＿＿＿＿＿＿＿]

Grass-roots demand [＿＿＿＿＿＿＿]

Question 4.

How did your own participation change due to these new processes?

       Participated   Participated   Participated   Participated   Don't

	more	just the same	less	in different ways (e.g. do more online do different things)	know
Antragstool	○	○	○	○	○
Online verification	○	○	○	○	○
Grass-roots survey	○	○	○	○	○
Grass-roots demand	○	○	○	○	○

Question 5.

How often have you participated within the party in these ways in the last three months?

	Not at all	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than ten times	Don't know
Discussed topics relevant to the party	○	○	○	○	○	○
Wrote proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Supported proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Discussed proposals for assemblies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Voted as a grass-	○	○	○	○	○	○

roots member						
Voted as a delegate	○	○	○	○	○	○
Worked in party bodies	○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 6.

Through which channels did you do these things?

- ☐ At local meetings or assemblies
- ☐ At national meetings or assemblies
- ☐ At non-localised meetings (Skype telephone conference)
- ☐ Via Mail / Fax
- ☐ On Social Media(Facebook Twitter etc.)
- ☐ On party owned platforms online (Antragsgr?n Wurzelwerk etc.)
- ☐ On other online platforms
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Not at all

Question 7.

With how many party members are you in contact regularly?

(Please select the category that best representsthe number of party members that you are connected with)

- ○ weniger als 5 Mitglieder
- ○ 5-10 Mitglieder
- ○ 11-20 Mitglieder
- ○ 21-50 Mitglieder
- ○ mehr als 50 Mitglieder
- ○ Do not know

Question 8.

There are several groups in the structure of the party that enable participation. Which of these groups are you actively participating in, or have regular contact with

(Please select all groups with which you have regular contact or in which you are actively participating)

- ☐ Local branch
- ☐ State branch
- ☐ National branch
- ☐ Left Wing
- ☐ Realo-Wing
- ☐ State task force
- ☐ National task force
- ☐ Communal parliamentary group
- ☐ State parliamentary group
- ☐ National parliamentary group
- ☐ Green Youth
- ☐ Green Elderly
- ☐ European Greens
- ☐ Other organsations that are affiliated with the party
- ☐ Other

Question 9.

How would you rate you IT skills?

(Please select the option that best reflects your self-assessment)

Very Bad	1	2	3	4	5	Very Good	Don&amp;#039;t know
	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 10.

How regularly do you use the internet?

(Please select the option that best fits your typical use)

Not at all	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	All the time	Don&amp;#039;t know
○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 11.

What do you do on the internet, when you use it?

(Please select the five options that are most important for you)

- ☐ E-Mails
- ☐ Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Blogs)
- ☐ Use online media (e.g. watch films, listen to music)
- ☐ Look for Informationen
- ☐ Read news
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Gaming
- ☐ Telephone calls (z.B. per Skype)
- ☐ Other

Question 12.

Please rate the below statements in order of how important they are for you in regards to party-internal democracy:

(Please select a number for each statements, depending on how important the statement is for you; 1 is the most important)

- [– ▾] All members can participate as much as possible
- [– ▾] All members can participate equally
- [– ▾] All members can participate in votes
- [– ▾] All members can participate in discussions

6/6/2017   iSurvey - Online Questionnaire Generation from the University of Southampton

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Save and Continue

You haven't answered all the questions on this page Save and Continue Anyway

Activity C3 (Panel surveys)

3. Demographical Questions

Question 1.

When did you join the Green Party?

(Please select the year from the list)

Please select ▼

Question 2.

Do you or did you ever hold a mandate for or an office in the party?

(Please select all applicable options)

☐ Hold a mandate or party office at the moment
☐ Held a mandate or party office in the past
☐ Never held a mandate or party office

At which level?

(Please select all applicable options)

☐ Europe
☐ National
☐ State
☐ Region
☐ Local (Kreis)
☐ Local (Ort)

Question 3.

In which federal state do you live?

(Please select the state from the list)

Please select ▼

Question 4.

Do you live in an urban, suburban, or rural area?

(Please select one option from the list)

Please select ▼

Question 5.

What is your highest qualification?

(Please select the most appropriate option from the list)

Please select ▼

Question 6.

What is your current occupation?

(Please select the most appropriate option from the list)

Please select ▼

Question 7.

How old are you?

(Please select the correct category from the list)

Please select ▼

Question 8.

What is your gender?

(Please select the most appropriate category from the list)

Please select ▾

Question 9.

Do you regularly look after someone in your household (e.g. your children, partner, parent)?

(Please select one response)

○ Yes

○ No

○ Prefer not to tell

Question 10.

What is your monthly net income?

(Please select the appropriate category from the list)

Please select ▾

Question 11.

Is there anything else about this survey that you want to let us know?

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Save and Finish

Once this button is pressed you will not be able edit your responses

You haven't answered all the questions on this page   Save and Finish Anyway

Once this button is pressed you will not be able edit your responses

E.7.2 Survey (German)

Activity C3 (Panel survey) DE

Bitte lesen Sie diese Informationen sorgfältig durch, bevor Sie sich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt entscheiden. Ihre Teilnahme ist selbstverständlich vollkommen freiwillig.

Worum geht es in dieser Studie?

Ziel meines Projektes ist es zu verstehen, ob bzw. wie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen nutzen. Insbesondere interessieren mich die Ansichten der Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu diesen Entscheidungsprozessen und der Nutzung des Internets.

Ich bin Studentin an der Universität von Southampton in Großbritannien. Dieses Projekt ist Teil meiner Promotionsarbeit für einen Doktorgrad in Web Science.

Wenn Sie daran interessiert sind, werde ich Ihnen sobald die Studie beendet ist (voraussichtlich 2019), eine digitale Kopie der fertigen Arbeit zur Verfügung stellen, so dass Sie sehen können wie ich Ihre Daten verwendet habe.

Warum wurde ich ausgewählt?

Alle Teilnehmer dieser Studie sind Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. Sie wurden zufällig aus zwei Gruppen ausgewählt (nach ihrem Wohnort in städtischen und ländlichen Gegenden).

Was geschieht wenn ich teilnehme?

Wenn Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen, werden Sie an zwei zusammenhängenden Umfragen teilnehmen, die voraussichtlich im Sommer 2017 und Frühjahr 2018 stattfinden werden. Beide werden Fragen zu ihrer Beteiligung an Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und ihrer Meinung zu Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen beinhalten. Sie können alle, einige, oder keine dieser Fragen beantworten. Die Beantwortung der Umfrage dauert nicht länger als eine Viertelstunde.

Was habe ich davon wenn ich an der Studie teilnehme?

Ich hoffe, dass Sie die Teilnahme interessant finden werden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie können für Sie und Ihre Partei nützlich sein, um die Entscheidungsprozesse und die Internetnutzung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu verbessern.

Gehe ich ein Risiko ein wenn ich teilnehme?

Die Teilnahme birgt keinerlei Risiken. Sie sind nicht verpflichtet Fragen zu beantworten, die Sie nicht beantworten möchten.

Ist Ihre Teilnahme vertraulich?

Ja, Ihre Teilnahme ist vertraulich.

Jede Person, die Zugang zu den Umfrageergebnissen hat, hat eine Datenschutzerklärung unterzeichnet, und ist verpflichtet diese Daten vertraulich zu behandeln. Ihre Antworten zu beiden Umfragen werden mittels einer ID miteinander verbunden. Ich werde zu keinem Zeitpunkt Zugriff auf ihre persönlichen Daten haben, da der Versand der Umfrage von der Bundesgeschäftsstelle von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen gehandhabt wird.

Die Ergebnisse werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert, so dass sie niemandem sonst zugänglich sind. Die Daten werden ausschließlich in Übereinstimmung mit den Datenschutzgesetzen von Großbritannien und Deutschland verwendet. Dieses Gesetz erlaubt es zuständigen Behörden, wie

beispielsweise der Polizei, auf die Daten der Studie zuzugreifen um die nationale Sicherheit zu gewährleisten, Straftaten aufzudecken oder zu verhindern, Straftäter zu verfolgen und festzunehmen, Steuern zu ermitteln oder einzuziehen, oder lebenswichtige Interessen des Teilnehmers oder anderer Personen zu schützen.

Wenn Sie mehr über das Projekt, die Datensammlung und den Datenschutz wissen möchten, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter Gefion.Thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Was passiert wenn ich es mir anders überlege?

Sie können ihr Einverständnis zur Teilnahme ohne Angabe von Gründen jederzeit zurückziehen, Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern. Bitte nutzen Sie dazu die unten stehenden Kontaktdaten und geben Sie ihre individuelle ID an.

Was passiert wenn etwas schief läuft?

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder eine Beschwerde haben, kontaktieren Sie bitte mich, (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), oder die Projektbetreuenden Dr Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk) oder Prof Dr Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). Im Falle von Beschwerden können Sie sich auch an die Leitung von Research Governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk) wenden. Diese ist auch telefonisch unter 0044 2380 595058 erreichbar.

☐ Bitte bestätigen Sie durch das anklicken des Kästchens, dass Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen.

[Klicken Sie hier um die Umfrage zu beginnen]

Activity C3 (Panel survey) DE

1. Panel 1 (Juni 2017)

In dieser Umfrage werden regelmäßig einige Begriffe aus den Prozessen von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen auftauchen. Damit ist jeweils gemeint:

'**Antragsgrün**': Das Antragsgrün ist die derzeit unter https://antraege.gruene.de/ genutzte Plattform, über die Anträge für BDK'en gestellt werden können.

'**Onlineverifizierung**': Die Verifikation von Antragsinterstützern durch das Grüne Netz. Die BDK2016 in Münster hat beschlossen, dass Antragssteller sich im Antragsgrün einloggen und ihre Unterstützung dort per Mausklick zu dem jeweiligen Antrag verifizieren müssen.

'**Mitgliederbefragung**': Der Bundesvorstand will die Mitglieder durch frühzeitige Mitgliederbefragungen stärker in die programmatische Weiterentwicklung einbeziehen. Zu mindestens einem der Themen wird einmal im Jahr eine Online-Umfrage durchgeführt, um Meinungen einzuholen und Debatten vorzubereiten. Die Befragung ergänzt politische Debatten, ersetzt sie aber nicht.

'**Mitgliederbegehren**': Ein Mitgliederbegehren auf Bundesebene bedeutet, dass 250 Mitglieder gemeinsam die Behandlung eines Themas im Bundesvorstand erzwingen können. Die Antragssteller*innen erhalten verpflichtend in der Regel innerhalb einer Frist von vier Wochen eine Stellungnahme des Bundesvorstandes zu ihrem Anliegen.

Question 1.

In den letzten Monaten haben sich einige Prozesse in der Partei verändert, und neue Prozesse sind hinzugekommen. Wie finden Sie …

(Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer Meinung entspricht)

	Sehr Schlecht 1	2	3	4	5	Sehr Gut	Weiss nicht / Kenne ich nicht
... das Antragsgrün für Anträge an Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen?	○	○	○	○	○		○
… die Onlineverifikation für Anträge an Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen?	○	○	○	○	○		○
… die regelmäßig stattfindenden Mitgliederbefragungen?	○	○	○	○	○		○
… das neu eingeführte Mitgliederbegehren?	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 2.

Wann haben Sie zum ersten Mal ...

(Bitte wählen Sie zu jeder Frage eine Antwort aus der Liste aus)

		1 ▼	Noch nie	□
		2 ▼	Vor weniger als drei Mona	□
... das Antragsgrün genutzt?	Please select	3 ▼	Vor mehr als drei Monaten	□
... die Onlineverifikation genutzt?	Please select	4 ▼	Vor mehr als sechs Mona	□
... an einer Mitgliederbefragung teilgenommen?	Please select	5 ▼	Vor mehr als einem Jahr	□
... ein Mitgliederbegehren angeregt oder unterstützt?	Please select	6 ▼	Vor mehr als zwei Jahren	□
		7 ▼	Vor mehr als drei Jahren	□
		8 ▼	Keine Angabe	□

Question 3.

Wie denken Sie wird sich durch diese neuen oder geänderten Prozesse Ihre eigene Beteiligung verändern?

(Bitte wählen Sie für jeden Prozess die Antwort aus, die für Sie am ehesten zutrifft)

	Werde mich mehr beteiligen	Werde mich genau gleich beteiligen	Werde mich weniger beteiligen	Werde mich auf andere Art beteiligen (z.B. mehr online, andere Dinge tun)	Weiß nicht
Antragsgrün für BDK'en	○	○	○	○	○
Onlineverifikation für BDK'en	○	○	○	○	○
Mitgliederbefragungen	○	○	○	○	○
Mitgliederbegehren	○	○	○	○	○

Question 4.

Wie oft haben Sie sich in den letzten sechs Monaten innerhalb der Partei auf die folgenden Arten beteiligt?

(Bitte geben Sie in jeder Zeile an, wie oft Sie sich auf die entsprechende Art beteiligt haben)

	Gar nicht	1 Mal	2-5 Mal	6-10 Mal	Öfter	Weiß nicht
Parteirelevante Themen diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als Basismitglied	○	○	○	○	○	○

an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen						
Als DelegierteR an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	○	○	○	○	○	○
In Gremien mitgearbeitet	○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 5.

Welche Kommunikationswege haben Sie für Ihre Beteiligung genutzt?

*(Bitte wählen Sie **alle** Kommunikationswege aus über die Sie sich beteiligt haben)*

- ☐ Auf **lokalen Treffen** oder Mitgliederversammlungen (z. B. Stammtisch, KMV)
- ☐ Auf **ueberregionalen Treffen** oder Parteitagen (z. B. L/BDK, AG-Treffen, Fraktionssitzung)
- ☐ Auf **nicht ortsgebundenen Treffen** (z. B. Skype, Telefonkonferenzen)
- ☐ **Schriftlich** (z. B. Post, Fax)
- ☐ Ueber **Soziale Medien** (z. B. Facebook, Twitter)
- ☐ Auf **Parteiplattformen im Internet** (z. B. Antragsgruen, Mailinglisten etc.)
- ☐ Auf anderen **Onlineplattformen** (z. B. private Blogs)
- ☐ Anderes
- ☐ Gar nicht

Question 6.

Wie denken Sie werden sich mehr Möglichkeiten sich im Internet zu beteiligen auf die Beteiligung dieser Personengruppen auswirken?

(Bitte wählen Sie für jede Gruppe auf der Skala einen Wert dafür aus, ob Beteiligung eher vereinfacht oder eher schwieriger gemacht wird)

	Beteiligung wird einfacher 1	2	3	4	5	Beteiligung wird schwieriger	Weiss nicht
Jüngere Mitglieder	○	○	○	○	○		○
Ältere Mitglieder	○	○	○	○	○		○
Neue Mitglieder	○	○	○	○	○		○
Mitglieder die schon länger in der Partei aktiv sind	○	○	○	○	○		○
Mitglieder die wenig Zeit für	○	○	○	○	○		○

Politik haben						
Mitglieder die viel Zeit für Politik haben	○	○	○	○	○	○
Amts- und/oder MandatsträgerInnen	○	○	○	○	○	○
Basismitglieder ohne Ämter und Mandate	○	○	○	○	○	○
Gut vernetzte Mitglider	○	○	○	○	○	○
Schlecht vernetzte Mitglieder	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mitglieder in dünn besiedelten Gebieten	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mitglieder in dicht besiedelten Gebieten	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mitglieder mit Kindern	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mitglieder ohne Kinder	○	○	○	○	○	○
Weibliche Mitglieder	○	○	○	○	○	○
Männliche Mitglieder	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mitglieder wie Du	○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 7.

Wie schätzen Sie Ihren persönlichen Einfluss auf die Entscheidungen der Partei ein?

(Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht)

Sehr schwach 1	2	3	4	5	Sehr stark	Weiss nicht
○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 8.

Mit wie vielen anderen Parteimitgliedern haben Sie regelmäßig (mindestens ein Mal pro Monat) Kontakt?

(Bitte wählen Sie die Kategorie, die am ehesten die Zahl der Parteimitglieder wiederspiegelt, mit denen Sie vernetzt sind.)

○ weniger als 5 Mitglieder

○ 5-10 Mitglieder

○ 11-20 Mitglieder

○ 21-50 Mitglieder

○ mehr als 50 Mitglieder

○ Weiss nicht

Question 9.

In der Parteistruktur gibt es verschiedene Gruppen, die Beteiligung ermöglichen. In welchen dieser Gruppen sind Sie aktiv beteiligt, oder haben Sie regelmaessigen Kontakt?

(Bitte wählen Sie alle Gruppen aus in denen Sie aktiv sind oder mit denen Sie regelmäßig (mindestens ein Mal pro Monat) Kontakt haben)

☐ KV / Ortsgruppe

☐ Landesverband

☐ Bundesverband

☐ Linker Flügel

☐ Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft

☐ Realo-Flügel

☐ Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft

☐ Kommunale Fraktion

☐ Landtagsfraktion

☐ Bundestagsfraktion

☐ Grüne Jugend

☐ Grüne Alte

☐ Andere parteinahe Verbände

☐ Anderes

Question 10.

Wie würden Sie Ihre IT-Kenntnisse einordnen?

(Bitte wählen Sie die Option die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht)

Sehr Schlecht	1	2	3	4	5	Sehr gut	Weiss nicht
	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 11.

Wie regelmäßig nutzen Sie das Internet?

(Bitte wählen Sie die Option die am ehesten Ihrer üblichen Nutzung entspricht)

Gar nicht	Monatlich	Wöchentlich	Täglich	Durchgehend	Weiss nicht
○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 12.

Was tun Sie im Internet, wenn Sie es nutzen?

(Bitte wählen Sie die fünf Optionen aus, die für Sie am wichtigsten sind)

- ☐ E-Mails
- ☐ Soziale Medien (Facebook, Twitter, Blogs etc.)
- ☐ Medien nutzen (z.B. Filme ansehen Musik hoeren)
- ☐ Informationen suchen
- ☐ Nachrichten lesen
- ☐ Einkaufen
- ☐ Spielen
- ☐ Telefonieren (z.B. per Skype)
- ☐ Anderes

Question 13.

Bitte ordnen Sie die folgenden Sätze nach ihrer Wichtigkeit in Bezug auf innerparteiliche Demokratie

(Bitte wählen Sie für jede Aussage eine Zahl aus, je nachdem wie wichtig Ihnen die Aussage für Beteiligung innerhalb von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen ist; 1 ist am wichtigsten)

- [– ▾] Alle Mitglieder koennen sich so viel wie moeglich beteiligen
- [– ▾] Alle Mitglieder können sich gleichberechtigt beteiligen
- [– ▾] Alle Mitglieder koennen sich an Abstimmungen beteiligen
- [– ▾] Alle Mitglieder koennen sich an Diskussionen beteiligen

Speichern und weiter

You haven't answered all the questions on this page Save and Continue Anyway

Activity C3 (Panel survey) DE

2. Panel 2 (Frühjahr 2018)

In dieser Umfrage werden regelmäßig einige Begriffe aus den Prozessen von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen auftauchen. Damit ist jeweils gemeint:

'**Antragsgrün**': Das Antragsgrün ist die derzeit unter https://antraege.gruene.de/ genutzte Plattform, über die Anträge für BDK'en gestellt werden können.

'**Onlineverifizierung**': Die Verifikation von Antragsinterstützern durch das Grüne Netz. Die BDK2016 in Münster hat beschlossen, dass Antragssteller sich im Antragsgrün einloggen und ihre Unterstützung dort per Mausklick zu dem jeweiligen Antrag verifizieren müssen.

'**Mitgliederbefragung**': Der Bundesvorstand will die Mitglieder durch frühzeitige Mitgliederbefragungen stärker in die programmatische Weiterentwicklung einbeziehen. Zu mindestens einem der Themen wird einmal im Jahr eine Online-Umfrage durchgeführt, um Meinungen einzuholen und Debatten vorzubereiten. Die Befragung ergänzt politische Debatten, ersetzt sie aber nicht.

'**Mitgliederbegehren**': Ein Mitgliederbegehren auf Bundesebene bedeutet, dass 250 Mitglieder gemeinsam die Behandlung eines Themas im Bundesvorstand erzwingen können. Die Antragssteller*innen erhalten verpflichtend in der Regel innerhalb einer Frist von vier Wochen eine Stellungnahme des Bundesvorstandes zu ihrem Anliegen.

Question 1.

In den letzten Monaten haben sich einige Prozesse in der Partei verändert, und neue Prozesse sind hinzugekommen. Wie finden Sie …

(Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer Meinung entspricht)

	Sehr Schlecht 1	2	3	4	5	Sehr Gut	Weiss nicht / Kenne ich nicht
... das Antragsgrün für Anträge an Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen?	○	○	○	○	○		○
… die Onlineverifikation für Anträge an Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen?	○	○	○	○	○		○
… die regelmäßig stattfindenden Mitgliederbefragungen?	○	○	○	○	○		○
… das neu eingeführte Mitgliederbegehren?	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 2.

Wann haben Sie zum ersten Mal ...

(Bitte wählen Sie zu jeder Frage eine Antwort aus der Liste aus)

... das Antragsgrün genutzt?   [Please select ▼]

1 ▼ Noch nie	□
2 ▼ Vor weniger als drei Mona	□
3 ▼ Vor mehr als drei Monater	□
4 ▼ Vor mehr als sechs Mona	□
5 ▼ Vor mehr als einem Jahr	□
6 ▼ Vor mehr als zwei Jahren	□
7 ▼ Vor mehr als drei Jahren	□
8 ▼ Keine Angabe	□

... die Onlineverifikation genutzt? `Please select`

... an einer Mitgliederbefragung teilgenommen? `Please select`

... ein Mitgliederbegehren angeregt oder unterstützt? `Please select`

Question 3.

Wenn Sie einen oder mehrere der neuen oder veränderten Prozesse nicht genutzt hast - warum nicht?

(Bitte schreiben Sie zu jedem Prozess, den Sie nicht genutzt haben, eine kurze Antwort)

Antragsgruen	
Verifikationsfunktion im Antragsgruen	
Regelmaessig stattfindende Basisbefragungen	
Neu eingefuehrtes Basisbegehren	

Question 4.

Wie denken Sie hat sich durch diese neuen oder geänderten Prozesse Ihre eigene Beteiligung verändert?

(Bitte wählen Sie für jeden Prozess die Antwort aus, die für Sie am ehesten zutrifft)

	Habe mich mehr beteiligt	Habr mich genau gleich beteiligt	Habe mich weniger beteiligt	Habe mich auf andere Art beteiligt (z.B. mehr online getan, andere Dinge getan)	Weiß nicht
Antragsgruen fuer Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen	○	○	○	○	○
Geändertes Verfahren für Antragsunterstützer (Onlineverifikation)	○	○	○	○	○
Regelmäßig stattfindende Basisbefragungen	○	○	○	○	○
Neu eingeführtes Basisbegehren	○	○	○	○	○

Question 5.

Wie oft haben Sie sich in den letzten sechs Monaten innerhalb der Partei auf die folgenden Arten beteiligt?

(Bitte geben Sie in jeder Zeile an, wie oft Sie sich auf die entsprechende Art beteiligt haben)

	Gar nicht	1 Mal	2-5 Mal	6-10 Mal	Öfter	Weiß nicht
Parteirelevante Themen diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	○	○	○	○	○	○
Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als Basismitglied an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als DelegierteR an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	○	○	○	○	○	○
In Gremien mitgearbeitet	○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 6.

Welche Kommunikationswege haben Sie für Ihre Beteiligung genutzt?

*(Bitte wählen Sie **alle** Kommunikationswege aus über die Sie sich beteiligt haben)*

- ☐ Auf **lokalen Treffen** oder Mitgliederversammlungen (z. B. Stammtisch, KMV)
- ☐ Auf **ueberregionalen Treffen** oder Parteitagen (z. B. L/BDK, AG-Treffen, Fraktionssitzung)
- ☐ Auf **nicht ortsgebundenen Treffen** (z. B. Skype, Telefonkonferenzen)
- ☐ **Schriftlich** (z. B. Post, Fax)
- ☐ Ueber **Soziale Medien** (z. B. Facebook, Twitter)
- ☐ Auf **Parteiplattformen im Internet** (z. B. Antragsgruen, Mailinglisten etc.)
- ☐ Auf anderen **Onlineplattformen** (z. B. private Blogs)
- ☐ Anderes
- ☐ Gar nicht

Question 7.

Mit wie vielen anderen Parteimitgliedern haben Sie regelmäßig (mindestens ein Mal pro Monat) Kontakt?

(Bitte wählen Sie die Kategorie, die am ehesten die Zahl der Parteimitglieder wiederspiegelt, mit denen Sie vernetzt sind)

○ weniger als 5 Mitglieder

○ 5-10 Mitglieder

○ 11-20 Mitglieder

○ 21-50 Mitglieder

○ mehr als 50 Mitglieder

○ Weiss nicht

Question 8.

In der Parteistruktur gibt es verschiedene Gruppen, die Beteiligung ermöglichen. In welchen dieser Gruppen sind Sie aktiv beteiligt, oder haben regelmaessigen Kontakt?

(Bitte wählen Sie alle Gruppen aus in denen Sie aktiv sind oder mit denen Sie regelmäßig (mindestens ein Mal pro Monat) Kontakt haben)

☐ KV / Ortsgruppe

☐ Landesverband

☐ Bundesverband

☐ Linker Flügel

☐ Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft

☐ Realo-Flügel

☐ Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft

☐ Kommunale Fraktion

☐ Landtagsfraktion

☐ Bundestagsfraktion

☐ Grüne Jugend

☐ Grüne Alte

☐ Andere parteinahe Verbände

☐ Anderes

Question 9.

Wie würden Sie Ihre IT-Kenntnisse einordnen?

(Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht)

Sehr Schlecht	1	2	3	4	5	Sehr gut	Weiss nicht
	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 10.

Wie regelmäßig nutzen Sie das Internet?

(Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer üblichen Nutzung entspricht)

Gar nicht	Monatlich	Woechentlich	Taeglich	Durchgehend	Weiss nicht
○	○	○	○	○	○

Question 11.

Was tun Sie im Internet, wenn Sie es nutzen?

(Bitte wählen Sie fünf Optionen aus die für Sie am wichtigsten sind)

- ☐ E-Mails
- ☐ Soziale Medien (Facebook, Twitter, Blogs etc.)
- ☐ Medien nutzen (z.B. Filme ansehen Musik hoeren)
- ☐ Informationen suchen
- ☐ Nachrichten lesen
- ☐ Einkaufen
- ☐ Spielen
- ☐ Telefonieren (z.B. per Skype)
- ☐ Anderes

Question 12.

Wie schätzen Sie Ihren persönlichen Einfluss auf die Entscheidungen der Partei ein?

(Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht)

Sehr schwach	1	2	3	4	5	Sehr stark	Weiss nicht
	○	○	○	○	○		○

Question 13.

Bitte ordnen Sie die folgenden Sätze nach ihrer Wichtigkeit in Bezug auf innerparteiliche Demokratie

(Bitte wählen Sie für jede Aussage eine Zahl aus, je nachdem wie wichtig Ihnen die Aussage für Beteiligung innerhalb von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen ist; 1 ist am wichtigsten)

[– ▾] Alle Mitglieder koennen sich so viel wie moeglich beteiligen

– ▾ | Alle Mitglieder können sich gleichberechtigt beteiligen

– ▾ | Alle Mitglieder koennen sich an Abstimmungen beteiligen

– ▾ | Alle Mitglieder koennen sich an Diskussionen beteiligen

[Eine Seite zurück]

[Speichern und weiter]

You haven't answered all the questions on this page [Save and Continue Anyway]

Activity C3 (Panel survey) DE

3. Demografische Fragen

Question 1.

Wann sind Sie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beigetreten?

(Bitte wählen Sie das entsprechende Jahr aus der Liste aus)

Please select ▾   Years 1980 - 2017 + 'Keine Angabe'

Question 2.

Bekleiden Sie ein Amt oder Mandat, oder haben Sie das in der Vergangenheit getan?

(Bitte wählen Sie alle zutreffenden Optionen aus)

- ☐ Habe aktuell ein Amt oder Mandat
- ☐ Hatte in der Vergangenheit ein Amt oder Mandat
- ☐ Hatte nie ein Amt oder Mandat

Auf welcher Ebene?

(Bitte wählen Sie alle zutreffenden Optionen aus)

- ☐ Europa
- ☐ Bund
- ☐ Land
- ☐ Region
- ☐ Kreis
- ☐ Ort

Question 3.

In welchem Bundesland sind Sie Mitglied?

(Bitte wählen Sie das entsprechende Bundesland aus der Liste aus)

Please select ▾   16 Bundesländer + 'Keine Angabe'

Question 4.

In was für einer Gegend leben Sie?

(Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Option aus der Liste [...]

Please select

Please select
Please select
Direkt in einer Grossstadt (ueber 100.000 Einwohner*innen)
Im Speckguertel einer Grossstadt (ueber 100.000 Einwohner*innen)
In einer Kleinstadt (zwischen 10.000 und 100.000 Einwohner*innen)
Auf dem Land (Gemeinde mit weniger als 10.000 Einwohner*innen)
Keine Angabe

Question 5.

Was ist Ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss?

(Bitte wählen Sie die am besten zutreffenden Option aus der Liste au [...]

Please select

Please select
Please select
Noch in schulischer Ausbildung
Kein allgemeiner Schulabschluss
Haupt-(Volks-)schulabschluss
Realschul- oder gleichwertiger Abschluss
Berufsausbildung
Fachhochschul- oder?Hochschulreife
Fachhochschul- oder Hochschulabschluss
Promotion/Habilitation
Keine Angabe

Question 6.

Was ist Ihr Beschäftigungsstatus?

(Bitte wählen Sie die am besten zutreffenden Option aus der Liste aus)

Please select

Please select
Please select
Schüler*in / Student*in
Arbeitslos/-suchend
Arbeiter*in
Angestellt (Teilzeit)
Angestellt (Vollzeit)
Verbeamtet
Freiberufler / Selbstständig
Pensioniert
Keine Angabe

Question 7.

Wie alt sind Sie?

(Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Kategorie aus der Liste aus)

Please select

Please select
Please select
Unter 18
18-25
26-35
36-45
46-55
56-65
66-75
Ueber 75
Keine Angabe

Question 8.

Welchem Geschlecht ordnen Sie sich zu?

(Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Kategorie aus der Liste aus)

Please select

Please select
Please select
Weiblich
Maennlich
Sowohl als auch
Weder noch
Anderes
Keine Angabe

Question 9.

Üben Sie regelmäßig die Fürsorge für jemanden in Ihrem Haushalt aus (z. B. Kinder, Partner, Elternteil)?

(Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Antwort aus)

○ Ja

○ Nein

○ Keine Angabe

Question 10.

Etwa wie hoch ist Ihr monatliches Nettoeinkommen?

(Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Kategorie aus)

[Please select ▼]

Please select ▼
Please select
Ueber 4.000 €
3500 - 4000 €
3000 - 3500 €
2500 - 3000 €
2000 - 2500 €
1500 - 2000 €
1000 - 1500 €
500 - 1000 €
Unter 500 €
Keine Angabe

Question 11.

Möchten Sie uns noch etwas zu dieser Umfrage sagen?

[Eine Seite zurück]

[Speichern und beenden]
Once this button is pressed you will not be able edit your responses
You haven't answered all the questions on this page [Save and Finish Anyway]
Once this button is pressed you will not be able edit your responses

Activity C3 (Panel survey) DE

Unique Participant Number : **2349771**

Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme an dieser Umfrage.

Bitte notieren Sie sich die ID dieser Umfrage - diese wird benötigt wenn Sie Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern möchten!

E.7.3   Panel Survey 1 (as sent November 2017)

[Briefkopf]

[Vorname] [Name]
[Straße]
[PLZ] [Stadt]

Betr.: Umfrage zu Beteiligung in der Partei

Guten Tag [Vorname] [Nachname],

auf der BDK in Münster haben wir 2016 beschlossen, parteiinterne Beteiligung online wie offline zu stärken. Als Bundesverband haben wir diesen Prozess auch neben dem Wahlkampf weitergeführt. Unter anderem entwickeln wir unsere Antragsplattform Antragsgrün weiter und wir werden mit dem Mitgliederbegehren eine neue Möglichkeit vorschlagen, wie sich Mitglieder beteiligen können.

Bei diesem Prozess werden wir wissenschaftlich von Gefion Thuermer, Doktorandin an der Universität von Southampton, begleitet, die sich die Effekte bei der Einführung von Onlinebeteiligungsmöglichkeiten bei uns genauer anschauen und im Rahmen ihrer Doktorarbeit wissenschaftlich analysieren will. Wir unterstützen Gefion gerne bei ihrer Arbeit, weil wir uns genauere Erkenntnisse erhoffen, die uns helfen, unsere Partei besser aufzustellen und noch mehr Menschen mitzunehmen bei unserer politischen Arbeit.

In Rahmen dieser Studie möchten wir Dich einladen, an einem Panel zum Thema Beteiligung teilzunehmen. Das Panel besteht aus zwei Umfragen, die mit etwas zeitlichem Abstand beantwortet werden sollen. Beide Umfragen werden durch eine ID verbunden, so dass Veränderungen in den Antworten identifiziert werden können. Die erste Umfrage läuft jetzt, zwischen dem 1. und 30. November 2017, die zweite ist für Sommer 2018 geplant. Die Umfragen können sowohl online als auch auf Papier beantwortet werden.

Durch Deine Teilnahme hast Du die Möglichkeit, die Gestaltung und Einführung von Onlinebeteiligungsmöglichkeiten zu beeinflussen. Die Analyse der Ergebnisse wird dabei helfen zu verstehen, wie die Onlinebeteiligungsprozesse von Mitgliedern aufgefasst und genutzt werden. Mehr Details zu der Studie und der Umfrage findest Du in dem beiliegenden Informationsblatt.

Wir würden uns freuen, wenn Du an der Studie teilnimmst! Wenn Du Fragen hast, kannst Du Dich an Thomas Künstler, den Referent für Beteiligung und Digitales, oder direkt an die Forscherin, Gefion Thuermer, wenden. Thomas ist in der BGS, oder per E-Mail unter thomas.kuenstler@gruene.de erreichbar, Gefion erreichst Du unter der E-Mail gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk oder per Telefon unter +49 157 8835 3956.

Teilnehmen kannst Du entweder über diesen Link: [Link]/[Token]
oder schriftlich, indem Du die beiliegende Umfrage ausfüllst und an die BGS schickst.

Deine Teilnehmer-ID ist **[ID]**

Herzliche Grüße,
xxx

Informationen über diese Umfrage

Bitte lesen Sie diese Informationen sorgfältig durch, bevor Sie sich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt entscheiden. Ihre Teilnahme ist selbstverständlich vollkommen freiwillig.

Worum geht es in dieser Studie?

Ziel meines Projektes ist es zu verstehen, ob bzw. wie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen nutzen. Insbesondere interessieren mich die Ansichten der Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu diesen Entscheidungsprozessen und der Nutzung des Internets.

Ich bin Studentin an der Universität von Southampton in Großbritannien. Dieses Projekt ist Teil meiner Promotionsarbeit für einen Doktorgrad in Web Science.

Wenn Sie daran interessiert sind, werde ich Ihnen sobald die Studie beendet ist (voraussichtlich 2019), eine digitale Kopie der fertigen Arbeit zur Verfügung stellen, so dass Sie sehen können wie ich Ihre Daten verwendet habe.

Warum wurde ich ausgewählt?

Alle Teilnehmer dieser Studie sind Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. Sie wurden zufällig aus zwei Gruppen ausgewählt (Mitglieder die mit der Partei per E-Mail kommunizieren, oder dies nicht tun).

Was geschieht wenn ich teilnehme?

Wenn Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen, werden Sie an zwei zusammenhängenden Umfragen teilnehmen, die voraussichtlich im Herbst 2017 und Sommer 2018 stattfinden werden. Beide werden Fragen zu ihrer Beteiligung an Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und ihrer Meinung zu Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen beinhalten. Sie können alle, einige, oder keine dieser Fragen beantworten. Die Beantwortung der Umfrage dauert nicht länger als eine Viertelstunde.

Was habe ich davon wenn ich an der Studie teilnehme?

Ich hoffe, dass Sie die Teilnahme interessant finden werden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie können für Sie und Ihre Partei nützlich sein, um die Entscheidungsprozesse und die Internetnutzung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu verbessern.

Gehe ich ein Risiko ein wenn ich teilnehme?

Die Teilnahme birgt keinerlei Risiken. Sie sind nicht verpflichtet Fragen zu beantworten, die Sie nicht beantworten möchten.

Ist Ihre Teilnahme vertraulich?

Ja, Ihre Teilnahme ist vertraulich.

Jede Person, die Zugang zu den Umfrageergebnissen hat, hat eine Datenschutzerklärung unterzeichnet, und ist verpflichtet diese Daten vertraulich zu behandeln. Ihre Antworten zu beiden Umfragen werden mittels einer ID miteinander verbunden. Ich werde zu keinem Zeitpunkt Zugriff auf ihre persönlichen Daten haben, da der Versand der Umfrage von der Bundesgeschäftsstelle von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen gehandhabt wird.

Die Ergebnisse werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert, so dass sie niemandem sonst zugänglich sind. Die Daten werden ausschließlich in Übereinstimmung mit den Datenschutzgesetzen von Großbritannien und Deutschland verwendet. Dieses Gesetz erlaubt es zuständigen Behörden, wie beispielsweise der Polizei, auf die Daten der Studie zuzugreifen um die nationale Sicherheit zu gewährleisten, Straftaten aufzudecken oder zu verhindern, Straftäter zu verfolgen und festzunehmen, Steuern zu ermitteln oder einzuziehen, oder lebenswichtige Interessen des Teilnehmers oder anderer Personen zu schützen.

Wenn Sie mehr über das Projekt, die Datenerhebung und den Datenschutz wissen möchten, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter Gefion.Thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Was passiert wenn ich es mir anders überlege?

Sie können ihr Einverständnis zur Teilnahme ohne Angabe von Gründen jederzeit zurückziehen, Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern. Bitte kontaktieren Sie dazu mich (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), oder die Projektbetreuenden Dr Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk) oder Prof Dr Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). Bitte geben Sie zur Änderung oder Löschung Ihrer Daten ihre individuelle ID an.

Was passiert wenn etwas schief läuft?

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder eine Beschwerde haben, können Sie sich an die Leitung von Research Governance der Universität Southampton wenden. Diese ist unter rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk oder telefonisch unter 0044 2380 595058 erreichbar.

Genutzte Begriffe

In dieser Umfrage werden regelmäßig einige Begriffe aus den Prozessen von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen auftauchen. Damit ist jeweils gemeint:

'**Antragsgrün**': Das Antragsgrün ist die derzeit unter https://antraege.gruene.de/ genutzte Plattform, über die Anträge für BDK'en gestellt werden können.

'**Onlineverifizierung**': Die Verifikation von Antragsunterstützern durch das Grüne Netz. Die BDK2016 in Münster hat beschlossen, dass Antragssteller sich im Antragsgrün einloggen und ihre Unterstützung dort per Mausklick zu dem jeweiligen Antrag verifizieren müssen.

'**Mitgliederbefragung**': Der Bundesvorstand will die Mitglieder durch frühzeitige Mitgliederbefragungen stärker in die programmatische Weiterentwicklung einbeziehen. Zu mindestens einem der Themen wird einmal im Jahr eine Online-Umfrage durchgeführt, um Meinungen einzuholen und Debatten vorzubereiten. Die Befragung ergänzt politische Debatten, ersetzt sie aber nicht.

'**Mitgliederbegehren**': Ein Mitgliederbegehren auf Bundesebene bedeutet, dass 250 Mitglieder gemeinsam die Behandlung eines Themas im Bundesvorstand erzwingen können. Die Antragssteller*innen erhalten verpflichtend in der Regel innerhalb einer Frist von vier Wochen eine Stellungnahme des Bundesvorstandes zu ihrem Anliegen.

||||| | || |||| | |||| ||

Panelumfrage Beteiligung

Ihre Teilnehmer-ID ist: [ID]

Bitte notieren Sie sich diese ID – sie wird benötigt wenn Sie Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern möchten!

1. Ich habe die Informationen über diese Umfrage gelesen und stimme der Teilnahme zu

Bitte kreuzen Sie das Kästchen an, nachdem Sie die einleitende Information gelesen haben

☐

Neue Beteiligungsprozesse

2. In den letzten Monaten haben sich einige Prozesse in der Partei verändert, und neue Prozesse sind hinzugekommen. Wie finden Sie ...

Bitte wählen Sie jeweils die Option, die Ihrer Meinung entspricht, wobei 1 'Sehr Schlecht' und 5 'Sehr Gut' bedeutet

	Sehr Schlecht 1	2	3	4	Sehr Gut 5	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
... das Antragsgrün für Anträge an Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... die Onlineverifikation für Anträge an Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... die regelmäßig stattfindenden Mitgliederbefragungen?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... das neu eingeführte Mitgliederbegehren?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Wie denken Sie wird sich durch diese neuen oder geänderten Prozesse Ihre eigene Beteiligung verändern?

Bitte wählen Sie für jeden Prozess die Antwort aus, die nach Ihrer persönlichen Einschätzung am ehesten zutrifft

	Werde mich mehr beteiligen	Werde mich genau gleich beteiligen	Werde mich weniger beteiligen	Werde mich auf andere Art beteiligen (z.B. mehr online, andere Dinge)	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
Antragsgrün für BDK'en	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Onlineverifikation für BDK'en	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitgliederbefragungen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitgliederbegehren	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. **Wie denken Sie werden sich mehr Möglichkeiten sich im Internet zu beteiligen auf die Beteiligung dieser Personengruppen auswirken?**

Bitte wählen Sie für jede Gruppe auf der Skala aus, ob Beteiligung über das Internet schwieriger oder einfacher wird

	Beteiligung wird					Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
	Schwieriger				Einfacher	
Jüngere Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ältere Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Neue Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder die schon länger in der Partei aktiv sind	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder die wenig Zeit für Politik haben	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder die viel Zeit für Politik haben	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Amts- und/oder MandatsträgerInnen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Basismitglieder ohne Ämter und Mandate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gut vernetzte Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Schlecht vernetzte Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder in dünn besiedelten Gebieten	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder in dicht besiedelten Gebieten	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder mit Kindern	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder ohne Kinder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Weibliche Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Männliche Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder wie Sie	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Wie lange ist es her, dass Sie zum ersten Mal...

Bitte wählen Sie zu jeder Frage eine Antwort aus der Liste aus

	0-3 Monate	3-6 Monate	6-12 Monate	1-2 Jahre	2-3 Jahre	Über 3 Jahre	Noch nie	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
... das Antragsgrün genutzt haben?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... die Onlineverifikation genutzt haben?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... an einer Mitgliederbefragung teilgenommen haben?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... an einem Mitgliederbegehren teilgenommen haben?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Eigene Beteiligung

6. Wie schätzen Sie Ihren persönlichen Einfluss auf die Entscheidungen der Partei ein?

Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht

Sehr Schwach	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Sehr Stark	☐	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe

7. Wie oft haben Sie sich in den letzten sechs Monaten innerhalb der Partei auf die folgenden Arten beteiligt?

Bitte geben Sie in jeder Zeile an, wie oft Sie sich auf die entsprechende Art beteiligt haben

	Gar nicht	1 Mal	2-5 Mal	6-10 Mal	Öfter	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
Parteirelevante Themen diskutiert	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Als Basismitglied an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Als DelegierteR an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In Gremien mitgearbeitet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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8. Über welche Kommunikationswege haben Sie sich auf die folgenden Arten beteiligt?

*Bitte wählen Sie **alle** Kommunikationswege aus über die Sie sich beteiligt haben*

	Partei-relevante Themen diskutiert	Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	In Gremien mitgearbeitet	Als Basismitglied an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	Als DelegierteR an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen
Auf **lokalen Treffen** oder Mitgliederversammlungen (z. B. Stammtisch, KMV)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auf **überregionalen Treffen** oder Parteitagen (z. B. BDK, AG-Treffen)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auf **nicht ortsgebundenen Treffen** (z. B. Skype, Telefonkonferenzen)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Schriftlich (z. B. Post, Fax)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Per E-Mail (inkl. Mailinglisten)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Über **Soziale Medien** (z. B. Facebook, Twitter)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auf **Parteiplattformen im Internet** (z. B. Grünes Netz, Antragsgrün)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auf anderen **Onlineplattformen** (z. B. private Blogs)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gar nicht	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Andere, und zwar:							

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9. Mit wie vielen anderen Parteimitgliedern haben Sie regelmäßig (mindestens einmal pro Monat) Kontakt?

Bitte wählen Sie die Kategorie, die am ehesten die Zahl der Parteimitglieder wiederspiegelt, mit denen Sie vernetzt sind.

☐	weniger als 5 Mitglieder	☐	21-50 Mitglieder
☐	5-10 Mitglieder	☐	mehr als 50 Mitglieder
☐	11-20 Mitglieder	☐	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe

10. In der Parteistruktur gibt es verschiedene Gruppen, die Beteiligung ermöglichen. In welchen dieser Gruppen sind Sie aktiv beteiligt, oder haben Sie regelmäßigen Kontakt?

Bitte wählen Sie alle Gruppen aus in denen Sie aktiv sind oder mit denen Sie regelmäßig (mindestens einmal pro Monat) Kontakt haben

☐	KV / Ortsgruppe	☐	Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft
☐	Landesverband	☐	Kommunale Fraktion
☐	Bundesverband	☐	Landtagsfraktion
☐	Linker Flügel	☐	Bundestagsfraktion
☐	Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft	☐	Grüne Jugend
☐	Reformer Flügel	☐	Grüne Alte
☐	Andere, und zwar:		

Internetnutzung

11. Wie würden Sie Ihre IT-Kenntnisse einordnen?

Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht

Sehr Schlecht ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Sehr Gut ☐ Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe

12. Wie regelmäßig nutzen Sie das Internet?

Bitte wählen Sie die Option die am ehesten Ihrer üblichen Nutzung entspricht

☐	Gar nicht	☐	Täglich
☐	Monatlich	☐	Durchgehend
☐	Wöchentlich	☐	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe

||||||| █ ██ ████ ██ █ ████

13. Was tun Sie im Internet, wenn Sie es nutzen?

Bitte wählen Sie die fünf Optionen aus, die für Sie am wichtigsten sind

☐	Einkaufen	☐	Nachrichten lesen
☐	E-Mails abrufen und schreiben	☐	Soziale Medien nutzen (Facebook, Blogs etc.)
☐	Informationen suchen	☐	Spielen
☐	Medien nutzen (z.B. Filme ansehen Musik hören)	☐	Telefonieren (z.B. per Skype)

☐ Anderes, und zwar:

Demokratieverständnis

14. Bitte ordnen Sie die folgenden Sätze nach ihrer Wichtigkeit in Bezug auf innerparteiliche Demokratie:

Bitte ordnen Sie jeder Aussage eine Zahl von 1-4 zu, je nachdem wie wichtig Ihnen die Aussage jeweils für Beteiligung innerhalb von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen ist. 1 ist am wichtigsten, 4 ist am wenigsten wichtig.

☐ Alle Mitglieder können sich **so viel wie möglich** beteiligen

☐ Alle Mitglieder können sich **gleichberechtigt** beteiligen

☐ Alle Mitglieder können sich **an Abstimmungen** beteiligen

☐ Alle Mitglieder können sich **an Diskussionen** beteiligen

Parteimitgliedschaft

15. In welchem Bundesland sind Sie Mitglied?

Bitte kreuzen Sie das entsprechende Bundesland an

☐	Baden-Württemberg	☐	Hessen	☐	Sachsen
☐	Bayern	☐	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	☐	Sachsen-Anhalt
☐	Berlin	☐	Niedersachsen	☐	Schleswig-Holstein
☐	Brandenburg	☐	Nordrhein-Westfalen	☐	Thüringen
☐	Bremen	☐	Rheinland-Pfalz	☐	Ausland
☐	Hamburg	☐	Saarland	☐	Keine Angabe

16. Wann sind Sie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beigetreten?

Bitte geben Sie das entsprechende Jahr an. Falls mehrfach bitte Ersteintritt angeben.

17. Bekleiden Sie ein Amt oder Mandat, oder haben Sie das in der Vergangenheit getan?

*Bitte wählen Sie **alle** zutreffenden Optionen aus*

☐ Habe aktuell ein Amt oder Mandat

☐ Hatte in der Vergangenheit ein Amt oder Mandat

☐ Hatte nie ein Amt oder Mandat *[Bitte fahren Sie mit Frage 19 fort]*

18. Auf welcher Ebene haben oder hatten Sie ein Amt oder Mandat?

*Bitte wählen Sie **alle** zutreffenden Optionen aus*

☐ Europa   ☐ Bund   ☐ Land   ☐ Region   ☐ Kreis   ☐ Ort

Demografie

19. In was für einer Gegend leben Sie?

Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Option aus

☐ Direkt in einer Großstadt (über 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

☐ Im Speckgürtel einer Großstadt (über 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

☐ In einer Kleinstadt (zwischen 10.000 und 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

☐ Auf dem Land (Gemeinde mit weniger als 10.000 Einwohner*innen)

☐ Keine Angabe

20. Was ist Ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss?

Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Option aus

☐ Noch in der Schule   ☐ Fachhochschul- oder Hochschulreife

☐ Volks-/Hauptschule   ☐ Fachhochschul- oder Hochschulabschluss

☐ Realschule oder gleichwertig   ☐ Promotion/Habilitation

☐ Berufsausbildung   ☐ Kein Schulabschluss

☐ Keine Angabe

21. Was ist Ihr Beschäftigungsstatus?

Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Option aus

☐ Schüler*in/Student*in/Azubi	☐ Rente/Pension	
☐ Angestellt	☐ Arbeitslos	
☐ Selbstständig	☐ Hausfrau oder -mann	
☐ BeamteR	☐ Keine Angabe	

22. Was alt sind Sie?

Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Kategorie aus

unter 18	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	über 75	Keine Angabe
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

23. Welchem Geschlecht ordnen Sie sich zu?

Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Kategorie aus

☐ Weiblich	☐ Männlich	☐ Sowohl als auch	☐ Weder noch	☐ Anderes	☐ Keine Angabe

24. Üben Sie regelmäßig die Fürsorge für jemanden in Ihrem Haushalt aus (z. B. Kinder, Partner, Elternteil)?

Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Antwort aus

☐ Ja	☐ Nein	☐ Keine Angabe

25. Etwa wie hoch ist Ihr monatliches Nettoeinkommen?

(Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Kategorie aus)

☐ Unter 500 €	☐ 2500 - 3000 €	☐ 5000 - 5500 €
☐ 500 - 1000 €	☐ 3000 - 3500 €	☐ 5500 - 6000 €
☐ 1000 - 1500 €	☐ 3500 - 4000 €	☐ Über 6.000 €
☐ 1500 - 2000 €	☐ 4000 - 4500 €	☐ Keine Angabe
☐ 2000 - 2500 €	☐ 4500 - 5000 €	

26. Möchten Sie uns noch etwas zu dieser Umfrage sagen?

E.7.4 Panel Survey 2 (as sent June 2018)

BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN · POSTFACH 040609 · 10063 BERLIN

An

Gefion Thuermer
Teststr. 17
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Bundesvorstand

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Thomas Künstler
Referent für Beteiligung und Digitales
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030 28442 179

Berlin, 15. Mai 2018

Umfrage zu Beteiligung in der Partei

Hallo ,

auf der Bundesdelegiertenkonferenz in Münster haben wir 2016 beschlossen, parteiinterne Beteiligung online wie offline zu stärken. Als Bundesverband haben wir diesen Prozess auch neben dem Wahlkampf weitergeführt. Unter anderem entwickeln wir unsere Antragsplattform Antragsgrün weiter und haben nun mit dem Mitgliederbegehren eine neue Möglichkeit geschaffen, wie sich Mitglieder beteiligen können.

Bei diesem Prozess werden wir von Gefion Thuermer, Doktorandin an der Universität von Southampton, begleitet, die die Effekte bei der Einführung von neuen Möglichkeiten zur Onlinebeteiligung im Rahmen ihrer Doktorarbeit wissenschaftlich analysieren will. Wir unterstützen Gefion gerne bei ihrer Arbeit, weil wir uns genauere Erkenntnisse erhoffen, die uns helfen, unsere Partei besser aufzustellen und noch mehr Menschen mitzunehmen bei unserer politischen Arbeit.

Im Rahmen dieser Studie möchten wir Dich herzlich einladen, an einem Panel zum Thema Beteiligung teilzunehmen. Das Panel besteht aus zwei Umfragen, die mit etwas zeitlichem Abstand beantwortet werden sollen. Beide Umfragen werden durch eine ID verbunden, so dass Veränderungen in den Antworten identifiziert werden können. Die erste Umfrage lief im November 2017, die zweite läuft jetzt, zwischen dem 1. und 30. Juni 2018. Die Umfragen können sowohl online als auch auf Papier beantwortet werden.

Durch Deine Teilnahme hast Du die Möglichkeit, die Gestaltung und Einführung von Onlinebeteiligung zu beeinflussen. Die Analyse der Ergebnisse wird dabei helfen zu verstehen, wie die Beteiligungsprozesse von Mitgliedern aufgefasst und genutzt werden. Mehr Details zu der Studie und der Umfrage findest Du in dem beiliegenden Informationsblatt.

Seite 2 von 8

Wir würden uns freuen, wenn Du an der Studie teilnimmst! Wenn Du Fragen hast, kannst Du Dich an mich oder auch an Gefion Thuermer wenden. Gefion erreichst Du unter der E-Mail gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk oder per Telefon unter +49 157 8835 3956.

Teilnehmen kannst Du über diesen Link: https://umfrage.gruene.de/index.php/924274?lang=de-informal/Pnn37KyTj3U11u7/.

oder schriftlich, indem Du die beiliegende Umfrage ausfüllst und an die BGS schickst.

Deine Teilnehmer-ID ist **10670001.**

Dein Teilnehmer-Token ist: **Pnn37KyTj3U11u7**

Herzliche Grüße

Informationen über diese Umfrage

Bitte lesen Sie diese Informationen sorgfältig durch, bevor Sie sich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt entscheiden. Ihre Teilnahme ist selbstverständlich vollkommen freiwillig.

Worum geht es in dieser Studie?

Ziel meines Projektes ist es zu verstehen, ob bzw. wie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen nutzen. Insbesondere interessieren mich die Ansichten der Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu diesen Entscheidungsprozessen und der Nutzung des Internets.

Ich bin Studentin an der Universität von Southampton in Großbritannien. Dieses Projekt ist Teil meiner Promotionsarbeit für einen Doktorgrad in Web Science.

Wenn Sie daran interessiert sind, werde ich Ihnen sobald die Studie beendet ist (voraussichtlich 2019), eine digitale Kopie der fertigen Arbeit zur Verfügung stellen, so dass Sie sehen können wie ich Ihre Daten verwendet habe.

Warum wurde ich ausgewählt?

Alle Teilnehmer dieser Studie sind Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. Sie wurden zufällig aus zwei Gruppen ausgewählt (Mitglieder die mit der Partei per E-Mail kommunizieren, oder dies nicht tun).

Was geschieht wenn ich teilnehme?

Wenn Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen, werden Sie an zwei zusammenhängenden Umfragen teilnehmen, die voraussichtlich im Herbst 2017 und Sommer 2018 stattfinden werden. Beide werden Fragen zu ihrer Beteiligung an Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und ihrer Meinung zu Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen beinhalten. Sie können alle, einige, oder keine dieser Fragen beantworten. Die Beantwortung der Umfrage dauert nicht länger als eine Viertelstunde.

Was habe ich davon wenn ich an der Studie teilnehme?

Ich hoffe, dass Sie die Teilnahme interessant finden werden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie können für Sie und Ihre Partei nützlich sein, um die Entscheidungsprozesse und die Internetnutzung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu verbessern.

Gehe ich ein Risiko ein wenn ich teilnehme?

Die Teilnahme birgt keinerlei Risiken. Sie sind nicht verpflichtet Fragen zu beantworten, die Sie nicht beantworten möchten.

Ist Ihre Teilnahme vertraulich?

Ja, Ihre Teilnahme ist vertraulich.

Jede Person, die Zugang zu den Umfrageergebnissen hat, hat eine Datenschutzerklärung unterzeichnet, und ist verpflichtet diese Daten vertraulich zu behandeln. Ihre Antworten zu beiden Umfragen werden mittels einer ID miteinander verbunden. Ich werde zu keinem Zeitpunkt Zugriff auf ihre persönlichen Daten haben, da der Versand der Umfrage von der Bundesgeschäftsstelle von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen gehandhabt wird.

Die Ergebnisse werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert, so dass sie niemandem sonst zugänglich sind. Die Daten werden ausschließlich in Übereinstimmung mit den Datenschutzgesetzen von Großbritannien und Deutschland verwendet. Dieses Gesetz erlaubt es zuständigen Behörden, wie beispielsweise der Polizei, auf die Daten der Studie zuzugreifen um die nationale Sicherheit zu gewährleisten, Straftaten aufzudecken oder zu verhindern, Straftäter zu verfolgen und festzunehmen, Steuern zu ermitteln oder einzuziehen, oder lebenswichtige Interessen des Teilnehmers oder anderer Personen zu schützen.

Wenn Sie mehr über das Projekt, die Datenerhebung und den Datenschutz wissen möchten, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter Gefion.Thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Was passiert wenn ich es mir anders überlege?

Sie können ihr Einverständnis zur Teilnahme ohne Angabe von Gründen jederzeit zurückziehen, Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern. Bitte kontaktieren Sie dazu mich (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), oder die Projektbetreuenden Dr Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk) oder Prof Dr Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). Bitte geben Sie zur Änderung oder Löschung Ihrer Daten ihre individuelle ID an.

Was passiert wenn etwas schief läuft?

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder eine Beschwerde haben, können Sie sich an die Leitung von Research Governance der Universität Southampton wenden. Diese ist unter rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk oder telefonisch unter 0044 2380 595058 erreichbar.

Genutzte Begriffe

In dieser Umfrage werden regelmäßig einige Begriffe aus den Prozessen von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen auftauchen. Damit ist jeweils gemeint:

'**Antragsgrün**': Das Antragsgrün ist die derzeit unter https://antraege.gruene.de/ genutzte Plattform, über die Anträge für BDK'en gestellt werden können.

'**Onlineverifizierung**': Die Verifikation von Antragsunterstützern durch das Grüne Netz. Die BDK2016 in Münster hat beschlossen, dass Antragssteller sich im Antragsgrün einloggen und ihre Unterstützung dort per Mausklick zu dem jeweiligen Antrag verifizieren müssen.

'**Mitgliederbefragung**': Der Bundesvorstand will die Mitglieder durch frühzeitige Mitgliederbefragungen stärker in die programmatische Weiterentwicklung einbeziehen. Zu mindestens einem der Themen wird einmal im Jahr eine Online-Umfrage durchgeführt, um Meinungen einzuholen und Debatten vorzubereiten. Die Befragung ergänzt politische Debatten, ersetzt sie aber nicht.

'**Mitgliederbegehren**': Ein Mitgliederbegehren auf Bundesebene bedeutet, dass 250 Mitglieder gemeinsam die Behandlung eines Themas im Bundesvorstand erzwingen können. Die Antragssteller*innen erhalten verpflichtend in der Regel innerhalb einer Frist von vier Wochen eine Stellungnahme des Bundesvorstandes zu ihrem Anliegen. Das Mitgliederbegehren wird unter den Namen **Beteiligungsgrün** im Grundsatzprogrammprozess genutzt.

Panelumfrage Beteiligung

Ihre Teilnehmer-ID ist: 10670001

Bitte notieren Sie sich diese ID – sie wird benötigt wenn Sie Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern möchten!

1. Ich habe die Informationen über diese Umfrage gelesen und stimme der Teilnahme zu

Bitte kreuzen Sie das Kästchen an, nachdem Sie die einleitende Information gelesen haben

☐

Neue Beteiligungsprozesse

2. In den letzten Monaten haben sich einige Prozesse in der Partei verändert, und neue Prozesse sind hinzugekommen. Wie finden Sie …

Bitte wählen Sie jeweils die Option, die Ihrer Meinung entspricht, wobei 1 'Sehr Schlecht' und 5 'Sehr Gut' bedeutet

	Sehr Schlecht 1	2	3	4	Sehr Gut 5	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
… das Antragsgrün für Anträge an Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
… die Onlineverifikation für Anträge an Bundesdelegiertenkonferenzen?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
… die regelmäßig stattfindenden Mitgliederbefragungen?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
… das neu eingeführte Mitgliederbegehren?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Wie denken Sie hat sich durch diese neuen oder geänderten Prozesse Ihre eigene Beteiligung verändert?

Bitte wählen Sie für jeden Prozess die Antwort aus, die nach Ihrer persönlichen Einschätzung am ehesten zutrifft

	Habe mich mehr beteiligt	Habe mich genau gleich beteiligt	Habe mich weniger beteiligt	Habe mich auf andere Art beteiligen (z.B. mehr online, andere Dinge getan)	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
Antragsgrün für BDK'en	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Onlineverifikation für BDK'en	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitgliederbefragungen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitgliederbegehren	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. **Wie denken Sie werden sich mehr Möglichkeiten sich im Internet zu beteiligen auf die Beteiligung dieser Personengruppen auswirken?**

Bitte wählen Sie für jede Gruppe auf der Skala aus, ob Beteiligung über das Internet schwieriger oder einfacher wird

	Beteiligung wird					Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
	Schwieriger				Einfacher	
Jüngere Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ältere Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Neue Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder die schon länger in der Partei aktiv sind	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder die wenig Zeit für Politik haben	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder die viel Zeit für Politik haben	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Amts- und/oder MandatsträgerInnen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Basismitglieder ohne Ämter und Mandate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gut vernetzte Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Schlecht vernetzte Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder in dünn besiedelten Gebieten	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder in dicht besiedelten Gebieten	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder mit Kindern	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder ohne Kinder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Weibliche Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Männliche Mitglieder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mitglieder wie Sie	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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5. Wie lange ist es her, dass Sie zum ersten Mal...

Bitte wählen Sie zu jeder Frage eine Antwort aus der Liste aus

	0-3 Monate	3-6 Monate	6-12 Monate	1-2 Jahre	2-3 Jahre	Über 3 Jahre	Noch nie	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
... das Antragsgrün genutzt haben?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... die Onlineverifikation genutzt haben?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... an einer Mitgliederbefragung teilgenommen haben?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... an einem Mitgliederbegehren teilgenommen haben?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Eigene Beteiligung

6. Wie schätzen Sie Ihren persönlichen Einfluss auf die Entscheidungen der Partei ein?

Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht

Sehr Schwach	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Sehr Stark	☐	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe

7. Wie oft haben Sie sich in den letzten sechs Monaten innerhalb der Partei auf die folgenden Arten beteiligt?

Bitte geben Sie in jeder Zeile an, wie oft Sie sich auf die entsprechende Art beteiligt haben

	Gar nicht	1 Mal	2-5 Mal	6-10 Mal	Öfter	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
Parteirelevante Themen diskutiert	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Als Basismitglied an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Als DelegierteR an einer Abstimmung teilgenommen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In Gremien mitgearbeitet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Über welche Kommunikationswege haben Sie sich auf die folgenden Arten beteiligt?

*Bitte wählen Sie **alle** Kommunikationswege aus über die Sie sich beteiligt haben*

	Partei-relevante Themen diskutiert	Anträge für einen Parteitag geschrieben	Anträge für einen Parteitag unterstützt	Anträge für einen Parteitag diskutiert	In Gremien mitge-arbeitet	Als Basis-mitglied an einer Abstim-mung teil-genommen	Als DelegierteR an einer Abstim-mung teil-genommen
Auf **lokalen Treffen** oder Mitgliederversammlungen (z. B. Stammtisch, KMV)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auf **überregionalen Treffen** oder Parteitagen (z. B. BDK, AG-Treffen)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auf **nicht ortsgebundenen Treffen** (z. B. Skype, Telefonkonferenzen)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Schriftlich (z. B. Post, Fax)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Per E-Mail (inkl. Mailinglisten)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Über **Soziale Medien** (z. B. Facebook, Twitter)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auf **Parteiplattformen im Internet** (z. B. Grünes Netz, Antragsgrün)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auf anderen **Onlineplattformen** (z. B. private Blogs)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gar nicht	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Andere, und zwar:							

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9. **Mit wie vielen anderen Parteimitgliedern haben Sie regelmäßig (mindestens einmal pro Monat) Kontakt?**

Bitte wählen Sie die Kategorie, die am ehesten die Zahl der Parteimitglieder wiederspiegelt, mit denen Sie vernetzt sind.

☐	weniger als 5 Mitglieder	☐	21-50 Mitglieder
☐	5-10 Mitglieder	☐	mehr als 50 Mitglieder
☐	11-20 Mitglieder	☐	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe

10. **In der Parteistruktur gibt es verschiedene Gruppen, die Beteiligung ermöglichen. In welchen dieser Gruppen sind Sie aktiv beteiligt, oder haben Sie regelmäßigen Kontakt?**

Bitte wählen Sie alle Gruppen aus in denen Sie aktiv sind oder mit denen Sie regelmäßig (mindestens einmal pro Monat) Kontakt haben

☐	KV / Ortsgruppe	☐	Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft
☐	Landesverband	☐	Kommunale Fraktion
☐	Bundesverband	☐	Landtagsfraktion
☐	Linker Flügel	☐	Bundestagsfraktion
☐	Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft	☐	Grüne Jugend
☐	Reformer Flügel	☐	Grüne Alte

☐ Andere, und zwar:

Internetnutzung

11. **Wie würden Sie Ihre IT-Kenntnisse einordnen?**

Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht

Sehr Schlecht	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Sehr Gut	☐	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe

12. **Wie regelmäßig nutzen Sie das Internet?**

Bitte wählen Sie die Option die am ehesten Ihrer üblichen Nutzung entspricht

☐	Gar nicht	☐	Täglich
☐	Monatlich	☐	Durchgehend
☐	Wöchentlich	☐	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe

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13. Was tun Sie im Internet, wenn Sie es nutzen?

Bitte wählen Sie die fünf Optionen aus, die für Sie am wichtigsten sind

☐ Einkaufen	☐ Nachrichten lesen
☐ E-Mails abrufen und schreiben	☐ Soziale Medien nutzen (Facebook, Blogs etc.)
☐ Informationen suchen	☐ Spielen
☐ Medien nutzen (z.B. Filme ansehen Musik hören)	☐ Telefonieren (z.B. per Skype)

☐ Anderes, und zwar:

Demokratieverständnis

14. Bitte ordnen Sie die folgenden Sätze nach ihrer Wichtigkeit in Bezug auf innerparteiliche Demokratie:

Bitte ordnen Sie jeder Aussage eine Zahl von 1-4 zu, je nachdem wie wichtig Ihnen die Aussage jeweils für Beteiligung innerhalb von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen ist. 1 ist am wichtigsten, 4 ist am wenigsten wichtig.

☐ Alle Mitglieder können sich **so viel wie möglich** beteiligen

☐ Alle Mitglieder können sich **gleichberechtigt** beteiligen

☐ Alle Mitglieder können sich **an Abstimmungen** beteiligen

☐ Alle Mitglieder können sich **an Diskussionen** beteiligen

15. Man spricht in der Politik immer wieder von „links" und „rechts". Wo würden Sie Bündnis 90/Die Grünen auf einer Skala von 1-11 einordnen, wobei 1 bedeutet, dass die Partei „links" ist und 11 bedeutet, dass die Partei „rechts" ist. Mit den Werten dazwischen können Sie Ihre Einschätzung abstufen.

Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht

1 (Links)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11 (Rechts)	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

16. Und wie ist das mit Ihnen selbst? Wo würden Sie Sich auf einer Skala einordnen, bei der 1 „links" bedeutet und 11 „rechts"?

Bitte wählen Sie die Option, die am ehesten Ihrer eigenen Einschätzung entspricht

1 (Links)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11 (Rechts)	Weiß nicht / Keine Angabe
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Parteimitgliedschaft

17. In welchem Bundesland sind Sie Mitglied?   *Bitte kreuzen Sie das entsprechende Bundesland an*

☐ Baden-Württemberg	☐ Hessen	☐ Sachsen
☐ Bayern	☐ Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	☐ Sachsen-Anhalt
☐ Berlin	☐ Niedersachsen	☐ Schleswig-Holstein
☐ Brandenburg	☐ Nordrhein-Westfalen	☐ Thüringen
☐ Bremen	☐ Rheinland-Pfalz	☐ Ausland
☐ Hamburg	☐ Saarland	☐ Keine Angabe

18. Wann sind Sie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beigetreten?

Bitte geben Sie das entsprechende Jahr an. Falls mehrfach bitte Ersteintritt angeben.

☐

19. Bekleiden Sie ein Amt oder Mandat, oder haben Sie das in der Vergangenheit getan?

*Bitte wählen Sie **alle** zutreffenden Optionen aus*

☐ Habe aktuell ein Amt oder Mandat

☐ Hatte in der Vergangenheit ein Amt oder Mandat

☐ Hatte nie ein Amt oder Mandat   *[Bitte fahren Sie mit Frage 19 fort]*

20. Auf welcher Ebene haben oder hatten Sie ein Amt oder Mandat?

*Bitte wählen Sie **alle** zutreffenden Optionen aus*

☐ Europa   ☐ Bund   ☐ Land   ☐ Region   ☐ Kreis   ☐ Ort

Demografie

21. Was alt sind Sie?   *Bitte tragen Sie ihr aktuelles Alter in das Kästchen ein*

☐

22. Welchem Geschlecht ordnen Sie sich zu?   *Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Kategorie aus*

☐ Weiblich   ☐ Männlich   ☐ Sowohl als auch   ☐ Weder noch   ☐ Anderes   ☐ Keine Angabe

23. Üben Sie regelmäßig die Fürsorge für jemanden in Ihrem Haushalt aus (z. B. Kinder, Partner, Elternteil)?

Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Antwort aus

☐ Ja   ☐ Nein   ☐ Keine Angabe

24. In was für einer Gegend leben Sie?   *Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Option aus*

☐ Direkt in einer Großstadt (über 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

☐ Im Speckgürtel einer Großstadt (über 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

☐ In einer Kleinstadt (zwischen 10.000 und 100.000 Einwohner*innen)

☐ Auf dem Land (Gemeinde mit weniger als 10.000 Einwohner*innen)

☐ Keine Angabe

25. Was ist Ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss?   *Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Option aus*

☐ Noch in der Schule   ☐ Fachhochschul- oder Hochschulreife

☐ Volks-/Hauptschule   ☐ Fachhochschul- oder Hochschulabschluss

☐ Realschule oder gleichwertig   ☐ Promotion/Habilitation

☐ Berufsausbildung   ☐ Kein Schulabschluss

☐ Keine Angabe

26. Was ist Ihr Beschäftigungsstatus?   *Bitte wählen Sie die zutreffende Option aus*

☐ Schüler*in/Student*in/Azubi   ☐ Rente/Pension

☐ Angestellt   ☐ Arbeitslos

☐ Selbstständig   ☐ Hausfrau oder -mann

☐ BeamteR   ☐ Keine Angabe

27. Etwa wie hoch ist Ihr monatliches Nettoeinkommen?   *Bitte wählen Sie die passende Kategorie aus*

☐ Unter 500 €   ☐ 2500 - 3000 €   ☐ 5000 - 5500 €

☐ 500 - 1000 €   ☐ 3000 - 3500 €   ☐ 5500 - 6000 €

☐ 1000 - 1500 €   ☐ 3500 - 4000 €   ☐ Über 6.000 €

☐ 1500 - 2000 €   ☐ 4000 - 4500 €   ☐ Keine Angabe

☐ 2000 - 2500 €   ☐ 4500 - 5000 €

28. Möchten Sie uns noch etwas zu dieser Umfrage sagen?

E.8   Activity D – Participant Observation

E.8.1   Participant Information

Participant Information – Activity D – Participant Observation - Assemblies

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your participation is completely voluntary.

What is the research about?

My project aims to understand how Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen uses the internet in their decision-making processes. I am especially interested in understanding how members of the party see decision-making processes and the use of the internet.

I am a research student at the University of Southampton in the UK. This project forms part of my education and will lead to a doctoral degree in Web Science.

If you are interested, I will send you a digital copy of the completed study so you can see how your data was used.

Why have I been chosen?

The participants in this project are members of the Green Party Germany. I am especially interested in those who actively participate in the development of and discussion around online participation processes.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, I will participate as a guest in the above described meeting, and observe the proceedings. If feasible, each participant should be provided with this information sheet and a consent form to sign. I appreciate that this will be impossible at delegate assemblies. In that case I would ask you to please inform the participants of the assembly of my presence, so that they can let me know if they do not want their activities to be observed. I would then exclude these individuals from my data collection. My observations will not create any costs for you.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

I hope that you will find taking part an interesting experience. The results of this research may be useful to your party and other organisations who want to improve their decision making processes and / or adoption of the web for these processes.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks associated with your participation. My participation in the assembly will not go beyond what other guests or journalists would do at assemblies like this. If you would prefer specific parts of an event not to be observed, you may notify me of this at any time.

Will my data be confidential?

As the event is public, I will not be able to guarantee confidentiality. Should individual participants of the assembly not wish their activity to be observed, they can let me know, and I will not include them in my data collection.

The results will be stored on a password protected computer so that they cannot be accessed by anyone else. Information will be used only in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study for the purpose of safeguarding national security; preventing or detecting crime; prosecuting or apprehending offenders; assessing or collecting tax; or protecting the vital interests of the participant or anyone else.

If you would like to know more about how you can access, amend or retract your data, please contact the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk).

What happens if I change my mind?

You may withdraw your consent, access or change your data for any reason at any time and for any reason.

What happens if something goes wrong?

Should you have any concern or complaint, contact me if possible (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), otherwise please contact one of the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk, or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, you may also contact the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)

E.8.2 Participant Information (German)

Teilnehmerinformationsblatt – Aktivität D – Teilnehmende Beobachtung – Mitgliederversammlungen

Ethikkommissionsreferenznummer: **ERGO**/FSHMS/2077	Version: 1	Datum: 2017-01-24
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte lesen Sie diese Informationen sorgfältig durch, bevor Sie sich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojet entscheiden. Wenn Sie der Teilnahme zustimmen bitte ich Sie die Einverständniserklärung zu unterzeichnen. Ihre Teilnahme ist vollkommen freiwillig.

Worum geht es in dieser Studie?

Ziel meines Projektes ist es zu verstehen, ob bzw. wie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen verwenden. Insbesondere interessieren mich die Ansichten der Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu diesen Entscheidungsprozessen und der Nutzung des Internets.

Ich bin Studentin an der Universität von Southampton in Großbritannien. Dieses Projekt ist Teil meiner Promotionsarbeit für einen Doktorgrad in Web Science.

Wenn Sie daran interessiert sind, werde ich Ihnen sobald die Studie beendet ist, eine digitale Kopie der fertigen Arbeit zur Verfügung stellen, so dass Sie sehen können wie ich Ihre Daten verwendet habe.

Warum wurde ich ausgewählt?

Alle Teilnehmer dieser Studie sind Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. Besonders interessiert bin ich an denjenigen Mitgliedern, die aktiv an der Einführung von oder Diskussion um Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen in der Partei teilnehmen.

Was geschieht wenn ich teilnehme?

Wenn Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen, werde ich als Gast an dem oben genannten Event teilnehmen, und den Verlauf beobachten. Ich bitte Sie, die Teilnehmer der Veranstaltung über meine Anwesenheit und Tätigkeit zu informieren, so dass diese der Beobachtung Ihrer Aktivitäten widersprechen können, so sie das möchten. Es entstehen für Sie keine Kosten durch meine Beobachtungen.

Was habe ich davon wenn ich an der Studie teilnehme?

Ich hoffe dass Sie die Teilnahme interessant finden werden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie können für Sie und Ihre Partei nützlich sein, um die Entscheidungsprozesse, und die Internetnutzung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, zu verbessern.

Gehe ich ein Risiko ein wenn ich teilnehme?

Die Teilnahme birgt keine Risiken. Meine Teilnahme an der Veranstaltung wird nicht über das hinausgehen, was andere Gäste oder Pressevertreter auf der Versammlung tun. Sollten Sie bevorzugen dass bestimmte Teile der Veranstaltung nicht beobachtet werden, teilen Sie mir dies einfach mit.

Ist Ihre Teilnahme vertraulich?

Da die Veranstaltung öffentlich ist, kann ich eine Vertraulichkeit der Beobachtungen nicht garantieren. Sollten einzelne Teilnehmer keine Beobachtung Ihrer Aktivitäten wünschen, können diese mich das wissen lassen, und ich werde Sie nicht in meine Daten aufnehmen.

Die Ergebnisse werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert, so dass sie niemandem sonst zugänglich sind. Die Daten werden ausschließlich in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet. Dieses Gesetz erlaubt es zuständigen Behörden, wie beispielsweise der Polizei, auf die Daten der Studie zuzugreifen um die nationale Sicherheit zu gewährleisten, Straftaten aufzudecken oder zu verhindern, Straftäter zu verfolgen und festzunehmen, Steuern zu ermitteln oder einzuziehen, oder lebenswichtige Interessen des Teilnehmers oder anderer Personen zu schützen.

Wenn Sie mehr über das Projekt, die Datenerhebung und den Datenschutz wissen möchten, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter Gefion.Thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Was passiert wenn ich es mir anders überlege?

Sie können ihr Einverständnis zur Teilnahme ohne Angabe von Gründen jederzeit zurückziehen, Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern.

Was passiert wenn etwas schief läuft?

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder eine Beschwerde haben, kontaktieren Sie bitte mich, (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), oder die Projektbetreuenden Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk) oder Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). Im Falle von Beschwerden können Sie sich auch an die Leitung von Research Governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk) wenden.

E.8.3   Consent Form

Consent Form – Activity D – Participant Observation - Assemblies

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please initial the boxes if you agree with the statements:

I have read and understood the Participant Information (version 1 dated 2016-09-22) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for the purpose of this study

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may access, change or withdraw my data for any reason at any time.

I understand that my data will be used in reports of the research

Data Protection

I understand that information collected during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA (1998) requires data to be processed fairly and lawfully in accordance with the rights of participants and protected by appropriate security. In addition, the DPA (1998) makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study.

Name of participant (print name)...

Signature of participant...

Date...

E.8.4   Consent Form (German)

Einverständniserklärung – Aktivität D – Teilnehmende Beobachtung - Mitgliederversammlungen

Ethikkommissionsrefrenznummer: **ERGO**/FSHMS/2077	Version: 1	Datum: 2017-01-24
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		
Beobachtetes Event:		

Bitte markieren Sie die Sätze denen Sie zustimmen mit Ihren Initialen:

Ich habe das Teilnehmerinformationsblatt (Version 1, datiert 2017-01-24) gelesen und hatte die Gelegenheit Fragen zu der Studie zu stellen.

Ich stimme der Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt und der Aufzeichnung und Verarbeitung von Daten von der Veranstaltung zu diesem Zweck zu.

Ich verstehe dass die Teilnahme freiwillig ist und dass ich die Daten jederzeit ohne Angabe von Gründen einsehen, ändern oder meine Zustimmung zurückziehen kann.

Ich verstehe dass die gewonnen Daten in der Publikation der Studie verwendet werden.

Datenschutz

Ich verstehe, dass Informationen die während meiner Teilnahme an dieser Studie aufgezeichnet werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert werden, und dass diese Informationen nur in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet werden. Dieses Gesetz besagt dass Daten sozialverträglich und gesetzlich in Übereinstimmung mit den Rechten der Teilnehmer verwendet und angemessen geschützt werden müsse. Zusätzlich bestimmt das Gesetz das zuständige Behörden, wie beispielsweise die Polizei, auf die im Rahmen der Studie gespeicherten Daten zugreifen können.

Name des Verantwortlichen (in Druckbuchstaben)...

Unterschrift des Teilnehmers...

Datum..

E.8.5   DPA Plan

DPA Plan – Activity D – Participant Observation

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/FSHMS/20777**	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

The data collection comprises observation notes.

The data is required to understand how members of the Green Party Germany view online participation in the party, and what expectations they have of an only online system or process for democratic decision-making.

The data is adequate because it will cover exactly what is required to analyse this question, and the data is not excessive because no more information than what is required will be collected.

The data will be processed fairly because the participants will be aware of the observations taking place.

The data's accuracy is ensured because it will consist of observation notes, and may be supplemented through protocols or recordings of the event.

Data will be stored on the Investigator's laptop and backed up on university servers. The laptop will be protected by a password known only to the researcher. The data will be held in accordance with University policy on data retention.

The data will be stored on university systems in accordance with university guidelines, when the researcher leaves the institution.

The data will be processed in accordance with the rights of the participants because they will have the right to access, correct, and/or withdraw their consent for any reason. Participants will be able to exercise their rights by contacting the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk) or the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, they will also be given the contact details for the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

E.9 Activity E – Semi-Structured Interviews

E.9.1 Participant Information

Participant Information – Activity E – Semi-Structured Interviews

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your participation is completely voluntary.

What is the research about?

My project aims to understand how Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen uses the internet in their decision-making processes. I am especially interested in understanding how members of the party currently see decision-making processes and the use of the internet.

I am a research student at the University of Southampton in the UK. This project forms part of my education and will lead to a doctoral degree in Web Science.

If you are interested, I will send you a digital copy of the completed study so you can see how your data was used.

Why have I been chosen?

The participants in this project are members of the Green Party Germany. I am especially interested in those who actively participate in the development of and discussion around online participation processes.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will participate in an interview about the online participation processes in the Green Party Germany. I will ask questions concerning your opinion about these processes, your understanding of democracy and online participation. Of course, it will not cost you anything to take part.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

I hope that you will find taking part an interesting experience. The results of this research may be useful to your party and other organisations who want to improve their decision making processes and / or adoption of the web for these processes.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks associated with your participation. You are not obliged to respond to any questions if you do not want to.

Will my data be confidential?

Yes. Your identity, and the identity of anyone else you mention (such as fellow party members) will be anonymised.

The results will be stored on a password protected computer so that they cannot be accessed by anyone else. Information will be used only in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study for the purpose of safeguarding national security; preventing or detecting crime; prosecuting or apprehending offenders; assessing or collecting tax; or protecting the vital interests of the participant or anyone else.

If you would like to know more about how you can access, amend or retract your data, please contact the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk).

What happens if I change my mind?

You may withdraw your consent, access or change your data for any reason at any time and for any reason.

What happens if something goes wrong?

Should you have any concern or complaint, contact me if possible (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), otherwise please contact one of the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk, or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, you may also contact the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)

E.9.2   Participant Information (German)

Teilnehmerinformationsblatt – Aktivität E – Leitfadengestützte Interviews

Ethikkommissionsreferenznummer: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Datum: 2017-01-24
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte lesen Sie diese Informationen sorgfältig durch, bevor Sie sich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojet entscheiden. Wenn Sie der Teilnahme zustimmen bitte ich Sie die Einverständniserklärung zu unterzeichnen. Ihre Teilnahme ist vollkommen freiwillig.

Worum geht es in dieser Studie?

Ziel meines Projektes ist es zu verstehen, ob bzw. wie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen verwenden. Insbesondere interessieren mich die Ansichten der Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu diesen Entscheidungsprozessen und der Nutzung des Internets.

Ich bin Studentin an der Universität von Southampton in Großbritannien. Dieses Projekt ist Teil meiner Promotionsarbeit für einen Doktorgrad in Web Science.

Wenn Sie daran interessiert sind, werde ich Ihnen sobald die Studie beendet ist, eine digitale Kopie der fertigen Arbeit zur Verfügung stellen, so dass Sie sehen können wie ich Ihre Daten verwendet habe.

Warum wurde ich ausgewählt?

Alle Teilnehmer dieser Studie sind Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. Besonders interessiert bin ich an denjenigen Mitgliedern, die aktiv an der Einführung von oder Diskussion um Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen in der Partei teilnehmen.

Was geschieht wenn ich teilnehme?

Wenn Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen, werde ich mit Ihnen ein kurzes Interview zu den Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen führen. Ich werde Ihnen Fragen zu Ihrer Meinung zu diesen Prozessen, Ihrer Auffassung von Demokratie sowie von Onlinebeteiligung stellen. Selbstverständlich entstehen für Sie keine Kosten durch die Teilnahme.

Was habe ich davon wenn ich an der Studie teilnehme?

Ich hoffe dass Sie die Teilnahme interessant finden werden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie können für Sie und Ihre Partei nützlich sein, um die Entscheidungsprozesse, und die Internetnutzung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, zu verbessern.

Gehe ich ein Risiko ein wenn ich teilnehme?

Die Teilnahme birgt keinerlei Risiken. Sie sind nicht verpflichtet Fragen zu beantworten, die Sie nicht beantworten möchten.

Ist Ihre Teilnahme vertraulich?

Ja. Ihre eigene, und die Identität etwaiger weiterer Personen, die Sie im Rahmen des Interviews erwähnen (wie beispielsweise andere Parteimitglieder), wird anonymisiert.

Die Ergebnisse werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert, so dass sie niemandem sonst zugänglich sind. Die Daten werden ausschließlich in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet. Dieses Gesetz erlaubt es zuständigen Behörden, wie beispielsweise der Polizei, auf die Daten der Studie zuzugreifen um die nationale Sicherheit zu gewährleisten, Straftaten aufzudecken oder zu verhindern, Straftäter zu verfolgen und festzunehmen, Steuern zu ermitteln oder einzuziehen, oder lebenswichtige Interessen des Teilnehmers oder anderer Personen zu schützen.

Wenn Sie mehr über das Projekt, die Datensammlung und den Datenschutz wissen möchten, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter Gefion.Thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Was passiert wenn ich es mir anders überlege?

Sie können ihr Einverständnis zur Teilnahme ohne Angabe von Gründen jederzeit zurückziehen, Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern.

Was passiert wenn etwas schief läuft?

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder eine Beschwerde haben, kontaktieren Sie bitte mich, (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), oder die Projektbetreuenden Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk) oder Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). Im Falle von Beschwerden können Sie sich auch an die Leitung von Research Governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk) wenden.

E.9.3 Consent Form

Consent Form – Activity E – Semi-Structured Interviews

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please initial the boxes if you agree with the statements:

I have read and understood the Participant Information (version 1 dated 2017-01-24) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for the purpose of this study

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may access, change or withdraw my data for any reason at any time.

I understand that my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research

Data Protection

I understand that information collected during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA (1998) requires data to be processed fairly and lawfully in accordance with the rights of participants and protected by appropriate security. In addition, the DPA (1998) makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study.

Name of participant (print name)...

Signature of participant...

Date...

E.9.4 Consent Form (German)

Einverständniserklärung – Aktivität E – Leitfadengestützte Interviews

Ethikkommissionsrefrenznummer: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Datum: 2017-01-24
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte markieren Sie die Sätze denen Sie zustimmen mit Ihren Initialen:

Ich habe das Teilnehmerinformationsblatt (Version 1, datiert 2017-01-24) gelesen und hatte die Gelegenheit Fragen zu der Studie zu stellen.

Ich stimme meiner Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt und der Aufzeichnung und Verarbeitung meiner Daten zu diesem Zweck zu.

Ich verstehe dass meine Teilnahme freiwillig ist und dass ich meine Daten jederzeit ohne Angabe von Gründen einsehen, ändern oder zurückziehen kann.

Ich verstehe dass meine Antworten in anonymisierter Form in der Publikation der Studie verwendet werden.

Datenschutz

Ich verstehe, dass Informationen die während meiner Teilnahme an dieser Studie aufgezeichnet werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert werden, und dass diese Informationen nur in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet werden. Dieses Gesetz besagt dass Daten sozialverträglich und gesetzlich in Übereinstimmung mit den Rechten der Teilnehmer verwendet und angemessen geschützt werden müsse. Zusätzlich bestimmt das Gesetz das zuständige Behörden, wie beispielsweise die Polizei, auf die im Rahmen der Studie gespeicherten Daten zugreifen können.

Name des Teilnehmers (in Druckbuchstaben)..

Unterschrift des Teilnehmers..

Datum..

E.9.6   Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Einleitung

Vielen Dank für Ihre Bereitschaft an diesem Interview teilzunehmen. Wie Sie wissen bin ich an Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen interessiert. Ihre Antworten werden mir helfen zu verstehen wie Parteimitglieder wie Sie diese Prozesse wahrnehmen.

Onlinebeteiligungsprozesse

Lassen Sie uns zunächst über die Onlinebeteiligungsprozesse sprechen, die auf der BDK in Münster beschlossen wurden. Dabei handelt es sich um (I) die Onlineverifizierung von Antragsunterstützern, (II) die Basisbefragung, und (III) das Basisbegehren.

1. Wie finden Sie diese Beteiligungsprozesse?
2. Welche Möglichkeiten ergeben sich Ihrer Ansicht nach daraus?
3. Welche Probleme sehen sind mit diesen Prozessen verbunden?
4. Nutzen Sie diese Prozesse aktiv, bzw. haben Sie dies vor?
    a. Wie
    b. Warum/Nicht?
5. Wie passen diese Prozesse Ihrer Ansicht nach zu dem Grünen Demokratieideal?

Implementation

Als nächstes wüsste ich gern etwas mehr über die Einführung dieser Prozesse.

6. Was ist Ihre Rolle bei der Einführung dieser Prozesse?
7. Welche Kriterien sind Ihnen bei der Einführung dieser Prozesse wichtig?
8. Wie macht sich das bei der Implementation bemerkbar?

Details über Teilnehmer

Zuletzt wüsste ich gern noch etwas mehr über ihre Mitgliedschaft und Rolle bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, sowie eine demografische Informationen.

9. Wann sind Sie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beigetreten?
10. Seit wann sind Sie in der Partei aktiv?
11. Würden Sie sich einer politischen Strömung innerhalb der Partei zuordnen?
12. Füllen Sie ein Amt aus, oder haben Sie das in der Vergangenheit getan? Welche(s)?
13. Haben Sie ein Mandat, oder haben Sie in der Vergangenheit eines gehabt? Welche(s)?
14. In welchem Bundesland leben Sie / sind Sie Mitglied?
15. Leben Sie in der Stadt, in einem Vorstadtgebiet, oder in einer ländlichen Gegend?
16. Wie würden Sie ihre IT-Kenntnisse einordnen? (Skala 1-5, von sehr schlecht bis sehr gut)
17. Wie würden Sie Ihre Nutzung des Internets beschreiben?
18. Was ist ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss?
19. Was ist ihr Beschäftigungsstatus?
20. Darf ich fragen wie alt Sie sind?
21. Welchem Geschlecht ordnen Sie sich zu?
22. Haben Sie Kinder? (Wie viel / wie alt?)
23. Was ist ihr jährliches Einkommen?

E.9.7 Interview Guide (German)

Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. As you know, I am interested in online participation processes in the Green Party. Your responses today will help me to understand what how party members such as yourself perceive these process.

Online Participation Processes

First of all, I would like to talk about the online participation methods that were approved by the delegate assembly in Münster. That is specifically (I) the online verification process for motion propositions, (II) the grass-roots survey, and (III) the grass-roots demand.

1. What is your opinion of these participation processes?
2. Which opportunities arise through them?
3. Which problems are related to these processes?
4. Are you actively using these processes, or planning on doing so?
    a. How?
    b. Why/not?
5. In your opinion, how do these processes align with the Green Party ideal of democracy?

Implementation

Let us now turn to the implementation of these processes

6. What is your role in the implementation of these processes?
7. Which criteria are important to you when implementing the processes?
8. How does this show in what happens during the implementation?

Interviewee Details

Finally, I would like to know a little bit more about your membership and position in Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, and some demographic details.

9. When did you join the Green Party?
10. When did you become an active member of the party?
11. Do you identify with one of the wings of the party?
12. Do you or did you ever hold an office in the party? (Which)
13. Do you or did you ever hold a mandate? (Which)
14. In which federal state do you live?
15. Do you live in an urban, suburban, or rural area?
16. How would you rate you IT skills?
17. How would you describe your internet-use?
18. What is your highest qualification?
19. What is your current occupation?
20. May I ask how old are you?
21. What is your gender?
22. Do you have children? (How many, how old?)
23. What is your annual income?

E.9.8   DPA Plan

DPA Plan – Activity E – Semi-Structured Interviews

Ethics reference number: ERGO/FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

The data collection comprises semi-structured interviews. The interview schedule provides an indication of the questions participants will respond to.

The data is required to identify how members of the Green Party Germany perceive democratic decision-making in the party, and what expectations they have of an only online system or process for democratic decision-making.

The data is adequate because it will cover exactly what is required to analyse this question, and the data is not excessive because no more information than what is required will be collected.

The data will be processed fairly because the participants will have given explicit consent.

The data's accuracy is ensured because it will consist of recording of conversations.

Data will be stored on the Investigator's laptop and backed up on university servers. The laptop will be protected by a password known only to the researcher. The data will be held in accordance with University policy on data retention.

The data will be stored on university systems in accordance with university guidelines, when the researcher leaves the institution.

The data will be processed in accordance with the rights of the participants because they will have the right to access, correct, and/or withdraw their consent for any reason. Participants will be able to exercise their rights by contacting the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk) or the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, they will also be given the contact details for the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

E.10 Activity F – Focus Groups

E.10.1 Participant Information

Participant Information – Activity F – Focus Groups

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your participation is completely voluntary.

What is the research about?

My project aims to understand how Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen uses the internet in their decision-making processes. I am especially interested in understanding how members of the party currently see decision-making processes and the use of the internet.

I am a research student at the University of Southampton in the UK. This project forms part of my education and will lead to a doctoral degree in Web Science.

If you are interested, I will send you a digital copy of the completed study so you can see how your data was used.

Why have I been chosen?

The participants in this project are members of the Green Party Germany. I am especially interested in those who actively participate in the development of and discussion around online participation processes.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will participate in a group discussion about the online participation processes in the Green Party Germany. You will discuss questions concerning your opinion about these processes, your understanding of democracy and online participation. You will also be asked to fill in a short questionnaire about you and your membership and role in Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. The discussion will take place in a location near you. Travel costs will not be covered.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

I hope that you will find taking part an interesting experience. The results of this research may be useful to your party and other organisations who want to improve their decision making processes and / or adoption of the web for these processes.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks associated with your participation. You are not obliged to respond to any questions if you do not want to.

Will my data be confidential?

Yes. Your identity, and the identity of anyone else you mention (such as fellow party members) will be anonymised in the write-up of the study. Of course your fellow group participants will know that you participated and what you said, but each participant, just like you, will sign a consent form that states that they will in turn keep the identities of the other participants and their statements confidential.

The results will be stored on a password protected computer so that they cannot be accessed by anyone else. Information will be used only in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study for the purpose of safeguarding national security; preventing or detecting crime; prosecuting or apprehending offenders; assessing or collecting tax; or protecting the vital interests of the participant or anyone else.

If you would like to know more about how you can access, amend or retract your data, please contact the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk).

What happens if I change my mind?

You may withdraw your consent, access or change your data for any reason at any time and for any reason.

What happens if something goes wrong?

Should you have any concern or complaint, contact me if possible (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), otherwise please contact one of the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk, or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, you may also contact the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)

E.10.2   Participant Information (German)

Teilnehmerinformationsblatt – Aktivität F – Fokusgruppen

Ethikkommissionsreferenznummer: **ERGO**/FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Datum: 2017-01-24
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte lesen Sie diese Informationen sorgfältig durch, bevor Sie sich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojet entscheiden. Wenn Sie der Teilnahme zustimmen bitte ich Sie die Einverständniserklärung zu unterzeichnen. Ihre Teilnahme ist vollkommen freiwillig.

Worum geht es in dieser Studie?

Ziel meines Projektes ist es zu verstehen, ob bzw. wie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen das Internet in ihren Entscheidungsprozessen verwenden. Insbesondere interessieren mich die Ansichten der Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen zu diesen Entscheidungsprozessen und der Nutzung des Internets.

Ich bin Studentin an der Universität von Southampton in Großbritannien. Dieses Projekt ist Teil meiner Promotionsarbeit für einen Doktorgrad in Web Science.

Wenn Sie daran interessiert sind, werde ich Ihnen sobald die Studie beendet ist, eine digitale Kopie der fertigen Arbeit zur Verfügung stellen, so dass Sie sehen können wie ich Ihre Daten verwendet habe.

Warum wurde ich ausgewählt?

Alle Teilnehmer dieser Studie sind Mitglieder von Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen. Besonders interessiert bin ich an denjenigen Mitgliedern, die aktiv an der Einführung von oder Diskussion um Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen in der Partei teilnehmen.

Was geschieht wenn ich teilnehme?

Wenn Sie der Teilnahme an dieser Studie zustimmen, werden Sie an einer Gruppendiskussion zu den Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen teilnehmen. Darin werden Sie Fragen zu Ihrer Meinung zu diesen Prozessen, Ihrer Auffassung von Demokratie sowie von Onlinebeteiligung stellen. Außerdem werden sie einen kurzen Fragebogen zu sich und ihrer Mitgliedschaft und Rolle bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen ausfüllen. Die Gruppendiskussion wird an einem Standort in Ihrer Nähe stattfinden. Reisekosten für die Teilnahme können nicht erstattet werden.

Was habe ich davon wenn ich an der Studie teilnehme?

Ich hoffe dass Sie die Teilnahme interessant finden werden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie können für Sie und Ihre Partei nützlich sein, um die Entscheidungsprozesse, und die Internetnutzung bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, zu verbessern.

Gehe ich ein Risiko ein wenn ich teilnehme?

Die Teilnahme birgt keinerlei Risiken. Sie sind nicht verpflichtet Fragen zu beantworten, die Sie nicht beantworten möchten.

Ist Ihre Teilnahme vertraulich?

Ja. Ihre eigene, und die Identität etwaiger weiterer Personen, die Sie im Rahmen des Interviews erwähnen (wie beispielsweise andere Parteimitglieder), werden beim Schreiben der Studie anonymisiert. Natürlich werden die anderen Teilnehmer der Gruppendiskussion ihre Identität und das was sie sagen erfahren, aber alle Teilnehmer werden, so wie Sie selbst, eine Einverständniserklärung unterschreiben in der sie versichern, die Identität und Aussagen aller anderen Teilnehmer ebenfalls vertraulich zu behandeln.

Die Ergebnisse werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert, so dass sie niemandem sonst zugänglich sind. Die Daten werden ausschließlich in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet. Dieses Gesetz erlaubt es zuständigen Behörden, wie beispielsweise der Polizei, auf die Daten der Studie zuzugreifen um die nationale Sicherheit zu gewährleisten, Straftaten aufzudecken oder zu verhindern, Straftäter zu verfolgen und festzunehmen, Steuern zu ermitteln oder einzuziehen, oder lebenswichtige Interessen des Teilnehmers oder anderer Personen zu schützen.

Wenn Sie mehr über das Projekt, die Datensammlung und den Datenschutz wissen möchten, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter Gefion.Thuermer@soton.ac.uk.

Was passiert wenn ich es mir anders überlege?

Sie können ihr Einverständnis zur Teilnahme ohne Angabe von Gründen jederzeit zurückziehen, Ihre Daten einsehen oder ändern.

Was passiert wenn etwas schief läuft?

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder eine Beschwerde haben, kontaktieren Sie bitte mich, (gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk), oder die Projektbetreuenden Silke Roth (Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk) oder Steffen Staab (S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). Im Falle von Beschwerden können Sie sich auch an die Leitung von Research Governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk) wenden.

E.10.3   Consent Form

Consent Form – Activity F – Focus Groups

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

Please initial the boxes if you agree with the statements:

I have read and understood the Participant Information (version 1 dated 2017-01-24) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for the purpose of this study

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may access, change or withdraw my data for any reason at any time.

I will keep the identity of my fellow participants as well as statements made during this focus group confidential.

I understand that my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research

Data Protection

I understand that information collected during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). The DPA (1998) requires data to be processed fairly and lawfully in accordance with the rights of participants and protected by appropriate security. In addition, the DPA (1998) makes provision for an appropriate authority, such as the Police, to access data held by the study.

Name of participant (print name)..

Signature of participant...

Date...

E.10.4   Consent Form (German)

Einverständniserklärung – Aktivität F – Fokusgruppen

Ethikkommissionsrefrenznummer: **ERGO**/FSHMS/20777	Version: 1	Datum: 2017-01-24
Titel der Studie: Nutzung des Internets in Entscheidungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, und die Rolle von Ideologie und Ungleichheit in ihrer Entwicklung		
Forscherin: Gefion Thuermer		

Bitte markieren Sie die Sätze denen Sie zustimmen mit Ihren Initialen:

Ich habe das Teilnehmerinformationsblatt (Version 1, datiert 2017-01-24) gelesen und hatte die Gelegenheit Fragen zu der Studie zu stellen.

Ich stimme meiner Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt und der Aufzeichnung und Verarbeitung meiner Daten zu diesem Zweck zu.

Ich verstehe dass meine Teilnahme freiwillig ist und dass ich meine Daten jederzeit ohne Angabe von Gründen einsehen, ändern oder zurückziehen kann.

Ich werde die Identität der anderen Teilnehmer sowie alle Aussagen die im Rahmen dieser Fokusgruppe gemacht werden vertraulich behandeln.

Ich verstehe dass meine Antworten in anonymisierter Form in der Publikation der Studie verwendet werden.

Datenschutz

Ich verstehe, dass Informationen die während meiner Teilnahme an dieser Studie aufgezeichnet werden auf einem passwortgeschützten Computer gespeichert werden, und dass diese Informationen nur in Übereinstimmung mit dem Datenschutzgesetz (1998) von Großbritannien verwendet werden. Dieses Gesetz besagt dass Daten sozialverträglich und gesetzlich in Übereinstimmung mit den Rechten der Teilnehmer verwendet und angemessen geschützt werden müsse. Zusätzlich bestimmt das Gesetz das zuständige Behörden, wie beispielsweise die Polizei, auf die im Rahmen der Studie gespeicherten Daten zugreifen können.

Name des Teilnehmers (in Druckbuchstaben)..

Unterschrift des Teilnehmers...

Datum...

E.10.5 Discussion Guide

Focus Group Discussion Guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. As you know, I am interested in online participation processes in the Green Party. Your responses today will help me to understand what how party members such as yourself perceive these process.

Online Participation Processes

First of all, I would like to talk about the online participation methods that were approved by the delegate assembly in Münster. That is specifically (I) the online verification process for motion propositions, (II) the grass-roots survey, and (III) the grass-roots demand.

1. What is your opinion of these participation processes?
2. Which opportunities arise through them?
3. Which problems do you foresee?
4. Are you actively using these processes, or planning on doing so?
    a. How?
    b. Why/not?
5. In your opinion, how do these processes align with the Green Party ideal of grass-roots democracy?

Participant Survey

Please fill out this survey containing questions about you, your membership with Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, and some demographic information. This will enable me to set your views into context to others.

1. When did you join the Green Party?
2. When did you become an active member of the party?
3. Do you identify with one of the wings of the party?
4. Do you or did you ever hold an office in the party? (Which)
5. Do you or did you ever hold a mandate? (Which)
6. In which federal state do you live?
7. Do you live in an urban, suburban, or rural area?
8. How would you rate you IT skills?
9. How would you describe your internet-use?
10. What is your highest qualification?
11. What is your current occupation?
12. May I ask how old are you?
13. What is your gender?
14. Do you have children? (How many, how old?)
15. What is your annual income?

E.10.6   Discussion Guide (German)

Fokusgruppendiskussionsleitfaden

Einleitung

Vielen Dank für Ihre Bereitschaft an dieser Fokusgruppe teilzunehmen. Wie Sie wissen bin ich an Onlinebeteiligungsprozessen bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen interessiert. Die heutige Diskussion wird mir helfen zu verstehen wie Parteimitglieder wie Sie diese Prozesse wahrnehmen.

Onlinebeteiligungsprozesse

Lassen Sie uns zunächst über die Onlinebeteiligungsprozesse sprechen, die auf der BDK in Münster beschlossen wurden. Dabei handelt es sich um (I) die Onlineverifizierung von Antragsunterstützern, (II) die Basisbefragung, und (III) das Basisbegehren.

1. Wie finden Sie diese Beteiligungsprozesse?
2. Welche Möglichkeiten ergeben sich Ihrer Ansicht nach daraus?
3. Welche Probleme sehen Sie damit?
4. Nutzen Sie diese Prozesse aktiv, bzw. haben Sie dies vor?
    a. Wie
    b. Warum/Nicht?
5. Wie passen diese Prozesse Ihrer Ansicht nach zu dem Grünen Ideal der Basisdemokratie?

Teilnehmerumfrage

Um ihren Standpunkt zu anderen ins Verhältnis zu setzen bitte ich Sie, diesen Fragebogen auszufüllen. Er beinhaltet Fragen zu Ihnen und Ihrer Mitgliedschaft und Rolle bei Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen, sowie einige demografische Informationen.

1. Wann sind Sie Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen beigetreten?
2. Seit wann sind Sie in der Partei aktiv?
3. Würden Sie sich einer politischen Strömung innerhalb der Partei zuordnen?
4. Füllen Sie ein Amt aus, oder haben Sie das in der Vergangenheit getan? Welche(s)?
5. Haben Sie ein Mandat, oder haben Sie in der Vergangenheit eines gehabt? Welche(s)?
6. In welchem Bundesland leben Sie / sind Sie Mitglied?
7. Leben Sie in der Stadt, in einem Vorstadtgebiet, oder in einer ländlichen Gegend?
8. Wie würden Sie ihre IT-Kenntnisse einordnen?
9. Wie würden Sie Ihre Nutzung des Internets beschreiben?
10. Was ist ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss?
11. Was ist ihr Beschäftigungsstatus?
12. Darf ich fragen wie alt Sie sind?
13. Welchem Geschlecht ordnen Sie sich zu?
14. Haben Sie Kinder? (Wie viele / wie alt?)
15. Was ist ihr jährliches Einkommen?

E.10.7 DPA Plan

DPA Plan – Activity F – Semi-Structured Interviews

Ethics reference number: **ERGO/**FSHMS**/20777**	Version: 1	Date: 2017-01-24
Study Title: Use of the internet in decision-making processes in the Green Party Germany and the role of ideology and inequality in their development		
Investigator: Gefion Thuermer		

The data collection comprises focus groups. The focus group schedule provides an indication of the questions participants will discuss.

The data is required to identify how members of the Green Party Germany perceive democratic decision-making in the party, and what expectations they have of an only online system or process for democratic decision-making.

The data is adequate because it will cover exactly what is required to analyse this question, and the data is not excessive because no more information than what is required will be collected.

The data will be processed fairly because the participants will have given explicit consent.

The data's accuracy is ensured because it will consist of recording of conversations.

Data will be stored on the Investigator's laptop and backed up on university servers. The laptop will be protected by a password known only to the researcher. The data will be held in accordance with University policy on data retention.

The data will be stored on university systems in accordance with university guidelines, when the researcher leaves the institution.

The data will be processed in accordance with the rights of the participants because they will have the right to access, correct, and/or withdraw their consent for any reason. Participants will be able to exercise their rights by contacting the investigator (e-mail: gefion.thuermer@soton.ac.uk) or the project supervisors (e-mail: Silke.Roth@soton.ac.uk or S.R.Staab@soton.ac.uk). For complaints, they will also be given the contact details for the head of research governance (rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

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