



Varying levels of trust in public institutions vs private media channels

A considerable number of participants expressed initially their general distrust in social media: “There are no reliable sources in the social media” (G5-P4 - see source document for full reference). However, as the discussions progressed, it was revealed that many of them inadvertently equated 'social media' with Facebook and, exclusively, with social media messages from private individuals, as they were unaware of public authorities' social media sites: “I think I would trust the authorities first and then maybe the radio. But I don't think I would trust Facebook” (G7-P3). Of those participants who were aware, the majority explained that they would trust social media sites and messages from public institutions rather than those of private media channels “Public-service media aren't always to be taken completely seriously either, but compared to private media they are still the more serious alternative” (G9-P4) often drawing upon their perception of traditional media, i.e. their preference of public TV rather than private TV channels. Amongst public news providers, participants in most groups outlined additionally their preference of local media, in particular the regional public-service broadcaster “Hessischer Rundfunk”, based on beliefs that “they collect all the information and sort through it before they publish their news” (G2-P8); “they are funded by the GEZ [German public broadcasting fees], we are paying for them not to lie to us” (G2-P10).

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Attitudes toward authorities](#), [Attitudes toward the media](#)

Disaster Phases: [Response](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [Non-active citizens](#), [Media](#), [Local authorities](#), [Government](#)

Hazards: [Natural hazards](#), [Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations](#), [Man-made intentional hazards](#)

Recommendations:

- [Engage in activities and develop strategies aiming to improve trust between citizens and authorities](#)
- [Inform citizens about the risk they may face and about possible actions and measures. they can take to reduce vulnerability and better prepare themselves](#)
- [Use cultural factors to improve the effectiveness of disaster communication](#)

Source

[Deliverable D5.6 "Report on citizens' reactions and opinions: Citizen Summit 4 \(Germany\)" \(page 25\)](#)

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