

Abstract

The issues of this research lie in the field of social sciences, combining aspects of social communication and media sciences with selected matters of political science and sociology. The doctoral thesis focuses on three main research aims. Firstly, the thesis characterizes Polish first-time voters' approaches to politics. Secondly, empirical research aims to identify their sources of political information. Thirdly, the thesis attempts to distinguish patterns of political use of social media by them. The term "first-time voters" refers to the youngest cohort of voters who gain the right to vote in a general election for the first time. The current youngest Polish voters constitute a significant subject of media studies, as they are the first citizens from Generation Z, born and raised in the digital world. Social media impact their lives, being an attractive source of information about the world, including politics. The research focuses on voters making their debut in the 2019 and 2020 elections – the period of increased civic activity in Poland. The methodological approach involves conducting a mixed-method research procedure. The first stage of the research is a survey (CAWI) with a sample of 388 respondents. The qualitative phase assumes conducting focus group interviews with Polish representatives of digitized first-time voters. Based on the research findings, it will be possible to forecast future patterns of civic participation and political social media usage, assuming the society and democracy transformation induced the development of new technologies.