



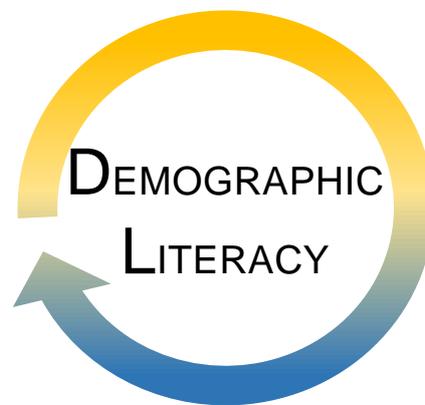
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'Demographic literacy' and its influence on German Millennials' capability to make judgements and take voting decisions during the elections of the European Parliament 2019

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ABSTRACT

The importance that literacy generally possesses for citizens and the society is nowadays widely recognised, as well is the fact that people need multiple literacies to be able to handle modern life. However, demographic literacy is practically absent from scientific research. The present work draws its relevance from this under-researched nature of demographic literacy, as well as from the assumption that demographic literacy indeed encompasses abilities and knowledge, that people need to make judgements, take decisions and participate in their society. In this sense, the present thesis constitutes a pilot study in defining, conceptualising, exploring and explaining demographic literacy. The theoretical groundwork was thereby based on literacy, as well as health literacy research. By conducting quantitative, as well as qualitative research, the present study pursued a mixed methods approach. The necessary data was thereby collected by means of an online questionnaire, as well as a focus group discussion, while the methodological approach of both studies was to a considerable extent oriented towards the Health Literacy Survey of the European Union. The target group included German Millennials (18-35 years old).

The quantitative study was primarily aimed at measuring demographic literacy, as well as analysing its influence on Millennials' ability to make judgements, to take decisions and to participate in the context of the European Parliament elections 2019. The respective findings showed tendencies towards a relationship between the levels of demographic literacy and the self-evaluated level of voting preparedness, the ability to judge party positions, and the attributed importance towards demographic topics for the voting decision. However, due to a small sample (N=51), solely descriptive evaluations were carried out, based on cross-sectional data - which is why, no final confirmation or rejection of the hypotheses was possible. The qualitative findings contributed to the interpretation of the quantitative results, while at the same time providing further insights in the field of interest. It could be shown that the perceived abilities to access, understand, judge and apply demographic information depend primarily on the motivation to deal with demographic issues, on the trust in one's own demographic knowledge and on the respective topic. The media sector was furthermore described as main source of demographic information, suggesting a rather passive role of the participants. However, since the acquisition, processing and application of demographic information seemed to occur rather unconsciously, it remains unclear how accurate their self-assessment, as well as the description of the media sector as the most important source, actually is.

Keywords: demographic literacy | demographic knowledge | literacy | health literacy | HLS-EU | European Parliament elections 2019 | mixed methods

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III. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGE	The impact of age structure(s) on the EU
DLI	Demographic Literacy Index
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HLS/HLS-EU	Health Literacy Survey of the European Union
MIG	The impact of migration processes on the EU
OQ	Online Questionnaire
PCD	Population composition and development of the EU countries
SI	Sub-Indices
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

Figure 1: A tweet by Donald Trump from 2019



Source: Trump 2019

January 11th, 2019: The president of the United States of America, Donald Trump tweets about an allegedly ‘invasion’ in the US by foreign citizens. Donald Trump has over 60 million followers on twitter, which puts him in 12th place of the people with the most followers worldwide (cf. Twitter 2019). His reach is significant, his message clear: immigration is a threat.

This is certainly an extreme example, which, however, serves at this point as a substitute to illustrate that demographic issues are widely discussed by the public. In contrast, what is needed in order to understand and judge public statements such as those by Donald Trump is not being addressed: demographic literacy is absent from scientific literature. Even though the importance that literacy generally possesses for citizens and the society is nowadays widely recognised. In fact, it is by now well established that people need multiple literacies to be able to handle modern life. Yet, however, ‘demographic literacy’ is not one of these diverse sub forms of literacy, which have been properly defined and conceptualized over the last decades.

The present thesis constitutes a pilot study in approaching demographic literacy. In the following, I will outline the relevance of exploring and explaining it, as well as the approach chosen to do so and the research questions, which guide the objectives of the present thesis.

Why demographic literacy matters for everyone

Overall, it can be stated that demography encompasses human events that *affect everyone*: It is about birth, death and (for most people) geographic mobility (cf. Poston & Sullivan 1986). Although primarily defined as a numerical task, demography is therefore more than just calculating rates and projections (cf. Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a). Demographic perspectives, in fact, are used to examine the connections between population characteristics and the broader social, economic, political, and cultural environment (cf. Wang et al. 2018). It is by now well established, that demographic change carries with its political implications and vice versa (cf. Teitelbaum 2015). This realisation is based on multiple circumstances. To give a brief insight: Every policy has a direct or indirect impact on people’s life. Consequently, political actions are likely to contribute to demographic change. In the rarest cases, this takes place quickly and in the fewest cases it can be traced back to a specific political measure (cf. Teitelbaum 2015). Demographic change, on the other hand, is not only the outcome of political actions, but creates political consequences itself (cf. Teitelbaum 2015): population size as well as the age structure of a country affect the economic power and growth of a state. The latter can furthermore have an impact on health care services, as well as pension and education systems. Housing policies, city planning, integration programs and climate related political actions – all those domains and more are affected by demographic factors (cf. Teitelbaum 2015). Besides, the development of a population impacts its composition “(...) in terms of its ethnicities, religions, races, languages, and national origins” (Teitelbaum 2015: 91) and is therefore constantly changing the policy-needs of societies.

Based on these considerations one can conclude that demographics matter for everyone - since they affect, in one way or another, every member of a population.

Demography: Difficult to grasp

Despite this realisation, demographic information seems likely to remain unclear for citizens due to its complexity, as well as to the fact that population's compositions and developments cannot be traced back to *one* cause but are instead entangled in a dense structure of numerous factors (cf. Lundquist, Anderton & Yaukey 2015). At this point one might ask: How easy or difficult is it for citizens to deal with demographic information? According to Stadtmüller (2013), this could hardly be more challenging for citizens. He refers to the demography discourse as an 'elite discourse' in which the average citizen is not involved. In line with this consideration, the Berlin-Institute for Population and Development (2019) argues that demographic changes often remain too abstract for citizens. Furthermore, Teitelbaum (2004) argues that demographic topics are often misunderstood. In this context, one needs to bear in mind that the depiction of demographic trends, forecasts and projections are based on highly complex, statistical calculations – which makes their interpretation rather complicated.

Demographic information:

Controversial, dramatised and vulnerable to (intentional) misreporting

In regard to the previous information, it is worth mentioning that Teitelbaum (2004) argues, that it cannot be assumed that journalists, for example, thoroughly understand demographic issues. This circumstance can, however, lead to an unintentional misrepresentation of those topics, by for example, interpreting projections as forecasts (cf. Teitelbaum 2004). Despite from this *unintentional* misrepresentation, *intentional* misrepresentation of demographic information (the distribution of fake news) poses a further challenge to citizens. Reuter et al. (2019) state that such fake news often deal with controversial issues. This may include demographic information - depending on context and content - since they are likely to feature highly sensible issues (cf. Teitelbaum 2004).

Regarding the portrayal of demographic topics by mass media and politicians, Ulrich (2006) states, that by the end of the 1970s, the tone had become increasingly alarmist. A similar observation was made by Wittig (2008), who describes the 'demographic catastrophe' as a 'mega topic' since the mid-90s. In line with this connotation is the observation that the tenor in the media seems to be mainly negative regarding demographic topics: there is, for example, reference to the 'greying Germans', the 'extinction of Europeans' or an 'invasion by migrants' (cf. Wittig 2008). Content-wise, the German public discourse is therefore mainly concerned with the topic of an ageing population combined with an allegedly replacement of Germans by other nationalities (cf. Bryant 2011). The German Federal Agency for Civic Education refers against this background to anti-Malthusian danger scenarios and apocalyptic fears of destruction (cf. Bryant 2011). In line with this argumentation are the considerations of Butterwegge (2009), who states, that demographic development is usually dramatized, because in this way it legitimises the restructuring or dismantling of the welfare state, pension cuts and other measures. Demography would than function as a means of socio-political demagoguery. Overall, it can be observed that the public debate on demographic issues is not always rational (cf. Lunquist, Anderton and Yaukey 2015).

Why demographic literacy should be defined

As could be shown, demographics matter for everyone. Demography, however, seems rather difficult to grasp for citizens, due to its complexity. Further challenges like the way mass media, as well as politicians handle demographic information might aggravate citizens' ability to handle it. Based on these considerations one could argue that being able to handle demographic information requires multiple abilities. In the context of the well-established conviction in scientific research that literacy in general empowers citizens to function in everyday life, I assume that demographic literacy matters for everyone. Yet, however, there is no information on what can be understood by demographic literacy, how it can be defined and conceptualised, how it can be measured and what impact it might actually have on people's ability to function in everyday life. Regarding the impact of demographic literacy, the present thesis will outline its influence on Millennials' ability to make judgements, to take decisions and to participate in the context of the European Parliament elections 2019.

Why it is relevant to talk about voting behaviour during the European elections

Literacy (in general) is a necessary precondition for citizens to be able to function in everyday life. Although all aspects of functioning are indisputably important, this thesis will focus on one particular aspect: that of citizen participation. Neither individual participation in one's own community and society, nor democracy is possible without literacy: Literacy enables citizens to participate and democracy thrives on citizen participation (cf. Roberts 2008). Citizen participation, however, entails a large range of different activities a citizen can perform. As the IGI Global states, citizen participation refers to the public political, social, cultural or economical involvement in the society (cf. IGI Global 2019). However, Choi and Kwon (2019) emphasize that traditional forms of participation, like voting in elections, are likely to decrease. This observation is in line with the voter turnout statistics of the elections of the European parliament, which have been declining, on average, since 1979 – the year of the first election (cf. Todorova, Taggart & Zaharia 2018, cf. European Parliament 2014b). As already mentioned above: democracy, however, depends on citizen participation. In this sense, European democracy is increasingly seen as at risk.¹ This observation forms the justification for focusing on citizen participation, or more precisely: on voting behaviour in advance of the European Parliament elections 2019.

Based on the described considerations, the resulting research objectives and questions, as well as the research plan of the present thesis will be discussed in the following chapter.

¹ It should be noted, however, that the voting turnout at the European Parliament elections in May this year increased significantly for the first time in decades (cf. European Parliament 2019).

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, QUESTIONS AND APPROACH

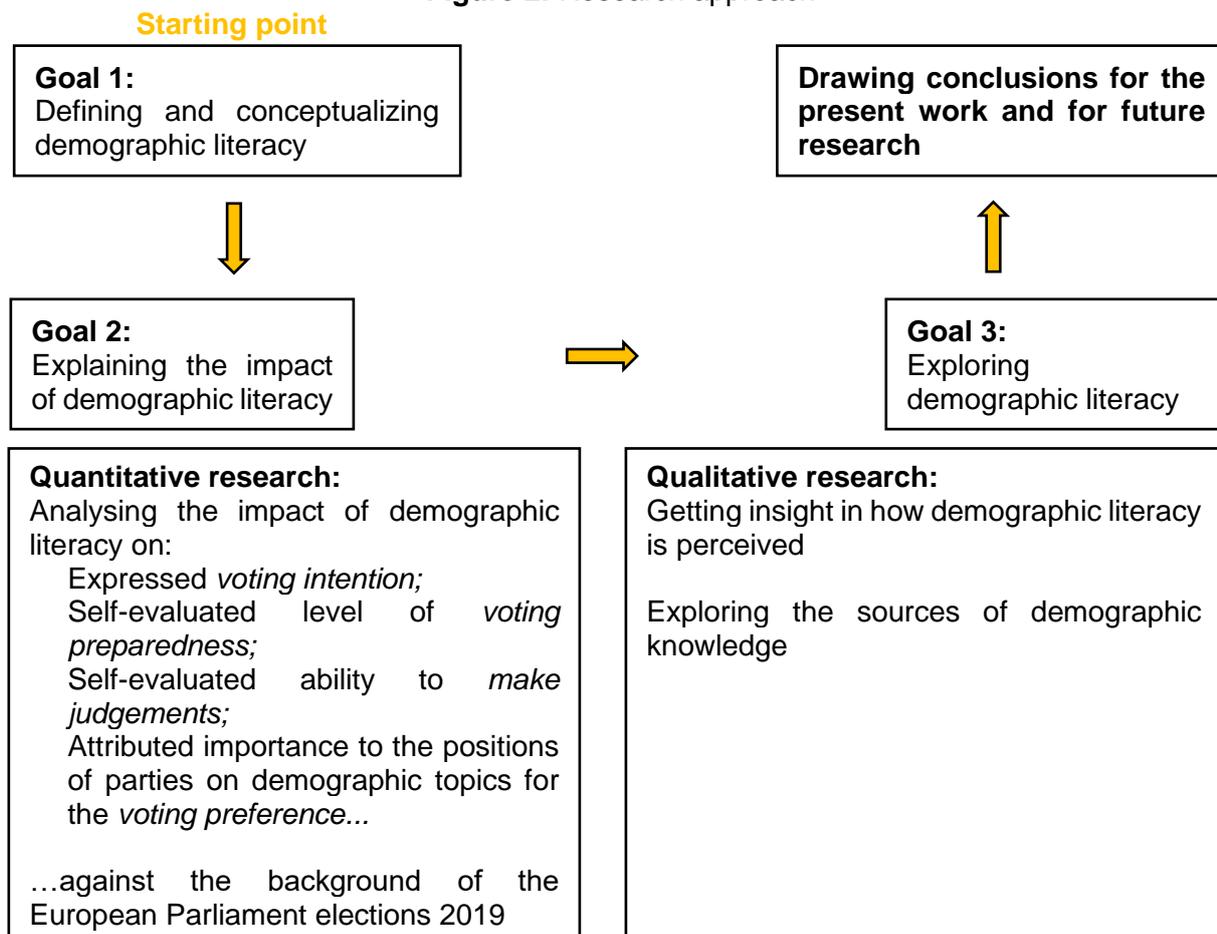
Based on the considerations presented so far, three goals can be formulated, which will guide the present thesis:

- **Goal 1:** *Defining and conceptualizing* demographic literacy
- **Goal 2:** *Explaining* the impact of demographic literacy
- **Goal 3:** *Exploring* demographic literacy

The first goal will be build on literacy, as well as health literacy definitions and models. The primary basis constitutes the Health Literacy Survey of the European Union (HLS-EU), which will serve as theoretical groundwork for the development of a definition and conceptual model of demographic literacy. This outcome will be the starting point in pursuing the second and third goal, for which quantitative, as well as qualitative research will be examined. In this context, the HLS-EU methods, the questionnaire and the analyses will be taken as a blueprint to accomplish both goals (cf. Chapter 5 & 6).

By conducting quantitative, as well as qualitative research, the present study pursues mixed methods. This approach is based on the circumstance that the present thesis constitutes a pilot project. Additionally to the explanatory part of the present thesis, it is therefore indispensable to explore demographic literacy via qualitative research. The order of the second and third goal may seem unusual, as exploring normally precedes explaining. However, due to a timetable set by the European elections, the quantitative work had to be brought forward (for more information on the methods, see Chapter 4). Nevertheless, the results of the qualitative research will be used to draw conclusions on the present work, as well as for future research. Figure 2 illustrates the described research approach.

Figure 2: Research approach



Source: Own depiction

Several quantitative, as well as qualitative research questions have been formulated which will be tried to answer in the course of the present thesis:

Quantitative research question

RQ1: To what extent does the self-assessed demographic literacy of German Millennials correlate with their expressed intention to participate, their perceived ability to take voting decisions and their perceived voting preparedness in the European Parliament elections 2019?

RQ2: To what extent does the self-assessed demographic literacy of German Millennials correlate with the importance they attribute to the position of parties on demographic topics for their voting preference in the European Parliament elections 2019?

Qualitative research questions

RQ3: How do German Millennials perceive their demographic literacy?

RQ4: Where do German Millennials get their demographic information/knowledge?

RQ5: How trustworthy do German Millennials perceive the different sources available for demographic information/knowledge?

Finally, it should be noted, that since the present thesis constitutes a pilot project towards defining, modelling and analyses, it does neither claim to be complete, nor universally valid. Rather, the present study is intended to highlight the need for studying demographic literacy, provide stimulations for future research, and illustrate the advantages of mixed methods.

In the following chapters, I will describe how and why the concept of demographic literacy was generated based on (health) literacy definitions and models, which methods were used to achieve the second and third goal of the present thesis, what results could be examined and to which conclusions their discussion leads.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The present chapter provides the basis for the two empirical studies featured in this thesis. In the following, existing definitions and models from literacy and health literacy research are described and discussed. These are then revised, summarized and adapted according to the assumed requirements of demographic literacy. This procedure finally results in a definition, as well as a conceptual model for demographic literacy.

3.1 Literacy

From alphabetization to functional literacy

“Literacy [is the] capacity to communicate using inscribed, printed, or electronic signs or symbols for representing language” (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b).

The ability to read and write, to use language – this is the most elemental understanding of literacy since the late nineteenth century (cf. UNESCO 2006). However, in the 1960s and 1970s, the understanding of literacy equalizing alphabetization has been more and more questioned. The basis of this criticism constituted the fact that the presented definition leaves unclear, how the reading and writing skills are applied, and what consequences literacy has for the individual, as well as for socio-economic developments (cf. UNESCO 2006). Furthermore, definitions of literacy oftentimes included the add-on to read and write “(...) to an appropriate level of fluency” (Blake & Hanley 1995: 89). However, according to Lawton and Gordon (1996), there was no agreement on what an appropriate or sufficient level of reading and writing would be. The authors state that, in this sense, “(...) there is no universal standard of literacy” (Lawton and Gordon 1996: 138).

One outcome of this critical debate was the evolution of the term *functional literacy*:

“Functional literacy is the ability to use reading, writing and numeracy skills for effective functioning and development of the individual and the community” (UNESCO 2006: 158).

According to the presented quote, being literate enables people to *function*, or in other words, to cope with everyday life situations. Functional literacy therefore specifies what a sufficient level of literacy would be and relates it to a *certain purpose*. However, it has been criticized that this understanding of literacy would still be too neutral in that sense, that it would be “(...) independent of social context” (UNESCO 2006: 151). Against this background, the understanding of literacy as functional was increasingly questioned in the 1980s and 1990s by several researchers for being too narrow (cf. Kickbusch 2001).

Going beyond reading and writing skills

As a result of the criticism towards functional literacy, the understanding and the definitions of literacy broadened and became more and more translated into terms like ‘abilities’ and ‘knowledge’ instead of ‘skills’ (cf. Sørensen & Pleasant 2017). Those alternative perspectives on literacy, emphasize individual competences and are linked to educational attainment (cf. Sørensen & Pleasant 2017). Furthermore, the theories of literacy collectively evolved from rather individual-based approaches towards “(...) more complex views encompassing the broader social contexts” (UNESCO 2006: 147). Kickbusch (2001: 291f) describes this development by stating that the understanding of literacy has shifted in the last decades towards one, “(...) that accounts for complexity, culture, individual empowerment and community development”. One of the pioneers who promoted this development was Paulo Freire (1993 & 1995). He approached literacy as a political emancipation, a self- and social empowerment (cf. Giroux 1988). Literacy, in this wider sense, is not only critical to make *literally* meaning of our surrounding. Literacy can then also be understood as the prerequisite to engage with our environment using one’s own full potential. Although not necessarily leading to freedom, literacy is nevertheless the indispensable precondition “(...) for engaging in struggles around both relations of meaning and relations of power” (Giroux 1988: 65).

3.1.1 Multiliteracies

As the understanding of literacy broadened, so did the debate on which abilities and knowledge are needed for a person to be called literate in the 21st century and to what extent literacy should or should not clearly distinguish itself from other related areas (cf. Kickbusch 2001). Over the years a large number of sub-literacies have developed, each claiming to have its own branch of research (cf. Cambridge Assessment 2013). This development can be traced back to the evolution of the term “multiliteracies” in the late 1990s (cf. New London Group 1996). Media literacy, digital literacy, information literacy – all those are sub forms of literacy, each of which refers to specific skills and abilities (cf. Kickbusch 2001). Another (by now) well-known example is the concept of health literacy. However, there is no such thing as a model or proper definition of *demographic literacy*.

3.1.2 Recent understanding of literacy

To conclude, the understanding of literacy broadened horizontally, as well as vertically: what distinguishes an individual as being literate has been enlarged, and the concept has been extended beyond the individual to the social context. The following UNESCO definition of literacy considers the described development and will therefore be included as a leading thread of analysis for the present thesis:

“We maintain that functional literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. It involves a continuum of learning that empowers people to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society. Rather than being solely about the ability to understand the written information in front of you, functional literacy is about your ability to use that information as a way to communicate and to express yourself. To measure whether or not literacy is truly functional, therefore, it has to be measured at different levels of proficiency” (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2017).²

Furthermore, it could be shown that there is *no universal understanding of literacy*. Instead, there are disagreements on how to characterize an appropriate level of literacy. Although there have been specifications over the last decades, literacy remains a matter of interpretation to a certain extent. To summarize the core messages of the recent understanding of literacy, it can be stated that most researchers can agree on literacy as being rather a social action than a set of skills. The outcomes of being literate/high literacy rates are furthermore expected to create *positive* benefits for *individuals*, as well as for *societies*. Against this background, researchers assume a connection between literacy and the *ability to function in everyday life*. This, of course, encompasses a manifold range of different aspects which are addressed by, for example, researching *sub-domains of literacy*. In conclusion, multiple definitions are needed to meet modern requirements when it comes to *function* in everyday life.

Throughout the present thesis, I will point out why demographic literacy can be perceived as one of those requirements. The basis for this purpose will be the information presented so far, as well as the definition and conceptual model of health literacy, which will be illustrated in the following chapter.

3.2 Health literacy

The present chapter is concerned with the concept of ‘Health Literacy’. Since approaching demographic literacy in the present thesis cannot be based on recent models of the very same, the concept of health literacy will be used as a guideline to do so. In the following, different approaches regarding health literacy definitions will be presented and discussed. Approaching health literacy means in the case of the present thesis approaching demographic literacy.

² Note: When referring to literacy in the following, it is understood to mean literacy in the sense of this UNESCO definition.

3.2.1 Defining health literacy

“It is quite clear that literacy is healthy and illiteracy, unhealthy” (Tones 2002: 287).

This quote captures the core message of every health literacy theory, which is, that a lack of literacy (in general) can be associated with poorer health (cf. Nutbeam 2008). This fundamental assumption is based on scientific research, like the World Development Report which found that the access to education is a fundamental action to improve public health (cf. World Bank 1999). It is inter alia due to this awareness, that the importance of health literacy is increasingly emphasized by researchers in recent years (cf. Sørensen & Pleasant 2017):

“People who have better developed health literacy will (...) have skills and capabilities that enable them to engage in a range of health enhancing actions including personal behaviours (...), as well as social actions for health and the capability of influencing others towards healthy decisions such as quitting smoking, or participating in preventative screening programs (...). The results are not only improved health outcomes but also a wider range of options and opportunities for health (...)” (Nutbeam 2008: 2075).

In this sense, health literacy is important for making health-related judgements and decisions. However, there are significant differences when it comes to the understanding of health literacy (cf. Sørensen & Pleasant 2017). The concept of health literacy emerged from a convergence of multiple fields and domains: educational theories, health research, as well as social and cultural factors are crucial aspects when talking about health literacy (cf. Sørensen & Pleasant 2017). For the first time introduced in the 1970s by Simonds, the concept has since evolved in similar ways as it could be shown for the term ‘literacy’ in the previous chapter. This circumstance is not a coincidence but can instead be led back to the fact that the word ‘literacy’ is part of the whole term. The fact that ‘literacy’ features quite different understandings, impacts the way in which health literacy is perceived. As it is the case for the term ‘literacy’, the concept of health literacy is therefore defined in various and diverse ways:

“(...) ‘health literacy’ frequently is translated into related words such as ‘health competencies’, ‘abilities’, ‘capabilities’, ‘skills’, ‘capacities’, ‘knowledge’ and ‘awareness’” (Sørensen & Pleasant 2017: 8).

This lack of consensus results not only in different understandings, but consequently in different ways of operationalizing and measuring health literacy in studies (cf. Sørensen & Pleasant 2017). Sørensen and Pleasant (2017) stress that the described fragmentation is in so far problematic, as it undermines the possibility for comparative research and therefore creates barriers regarding the understanding of health literacy. However, as the authors (2017: 11) point out “(...) health literacy’s ‘whole’ is more than the sum of its linguistic parts, and ‘health literacy is an emerging field in its own right”.

To shed light on this field, the variation in the understanding of health literacy shall be illustrated by two prominent definitions:

Zarcadoolas et al. (2005) suggest a model of health literacy by distinguishing between four different domains:

- *‘fundamental literacy’*,
- *‘science literacy’*,
- *‘civic literacy’*,
- *and ‘cultural literacy’*.

The authors state that a health literate person is not only able to handle health related definitions and explanations, but also to understand scientific concepts and processes, to be aware of public health interests and issues, and finally to use cultural-specific interpretation schemes in order to react to health information (cf. Zarcadoolas et al. 2005).

Nutbeam (2008) on the other hand, differentiates between three different domains:

- 'functional literacy',
- 'interactive literacy',
- and 'critical health literacy'.

The author states that a health literate person is able to understand factual health information, possesses cognitive and social skills to derive meaning from health information coming from different sources, as well as to analyse and apply that information critically (cf. Nutbeam 2008).

These two examples proof that the conceptualization of health literacy can be significantly different. Nevertheless, elementary similarities become visible here: although applying individual labels, Zarcadoolas et al. and Nutbeam use the terms 'fundamental (health) literacy' (cf. Zarcadoolas et al. 2005) and 'functional (health) literacy' (cf. Nutbeam 2008) to describe the same ability. Both terms are concerned with reading, writing and numerical skills.

Fundamental (health) literacy (cf. Zarcadoolas et al. 2005) and functional (health) literacy (cf. Nutbeam 2008) are the remnants of the original health literacy definitions, which are now complemented by additional abilities by Nutbeam, as well as by Zarcadoolas et al. - as it is common in health literacy research today. This expansion of the health literacy concept is additionally reflected in the inclusion of context to the concept. As it was the case during the evolvement of the literacy definitions, researchers are paying increasingly attention to the impact of health literacy on societies (cf. Sørensen et al. 2012). Recent debates emphasize that health literacy exists not only within individuals but should furthermore be perceived as interaction between the requirements of health systems and health professionals on the one hand, and the competencies of individuals on the other (cf. Sørensen et al. 2012). Freedman et al. (2009) argued in this context, that there should be a shift from a medical, individual perspective on health literacy towards a societal level. Today, the term 'health literacy' is being used not only in health care, but also in the context of public health (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015).

Sørensen et al. (2012) conclude, that the diversity of what is considered to be a key element of a health literacy definition is significant and leads in consequence to a "(...) wide variation between conceptual models" (Sørensen et al. 2012: 7). Although there are still significant differences observable between the health literacy definitions of Nutbeam (2008) and Zarcadoolas et al. (2005), as well as of many more, they all find common ground:

"(...) each tends to focus on peoples' ability to find, understand, evaluate and put information to use to improve decision making and, ultimately, improve health and quality of life and/or reduce inequities in health during one's life course (...)" (Sørensen et al. 2012: 8).

In fact, Sørensen et al. (2012: 7) state, the diversity of definitions can be reduced to two basic dimensions, which are the "core qualities of health literacy" (e.g., functional or critical health literacy), and the respective "area of application" (e.g., as a patient or a citizen).

However, the circumstance that there is no universally accepted definition of the concept impedes health literacy research. Sørensen et al. (2015) stress that in spite of the growing awareness and attention, "(...) information about the status of health literacy in Europe remains scarce" (Sørensen et al. 2015: 1053). Rather than fighting its socially constructed nature, Sørensen and Pleasant (2017) emphasize the need for evidence-based approaches which then should determine health literacy research (cf. Sørensen & Pleasant 2017). It is due to this belief, that Sørensen et al. (2012) on behalf of the EU conducted a systematic review of existing health literacy understandings with the aim to use the common ground of various models, "(...) to develop an integrated definition and conceptual model capturing the most comprehensive evidence-based dimensions of health literacy" (Sørensen et al. 2012: 2).

3.2.2 The Health Literacy Survey of the European Union (HLS-EU)

Population data on health literacy levels in the EU were unavailable until a consortium of nine European organisations launched the European Health Literacy Project (HLS-EU). The project achieved "(...) to conduct the first comparative European health literacy survey" (Sørensen et al. 2015: 1053). The survey took place from 2009 to 2012 and was based on an

integrated health literacy understanding which was derived from existing definitions and models. Sørensen et al. (2012), as being members of the HLS-EU consortium, described this definition development: according to the authors, the HLS's³ understanding of health literacy reflects the common ground of multiple definitions. In this sense, the final definition includes six clusters, which were derived from a content analysis of common health literacy models. These six clusters are:

1. Certain competences, like 'knowledge' or 'motivation';
2. Certain actions, as in 'to understand';
3. The respective (health-related) information and resources;
4. The objective, like 'to make judgements';
5. The context, as in 'everyday life';
6. And a time component (cf. Sørensen et al. 2012).

The inclusion of these clusters led to a comparatively broad health literacy definition, which goes as follows:

"Health literacy is linked to literacy and entails people's knowledge, motivation and competences to access, understand, appraise, and apply health information in order to make judgments and take decisions in everyday life concerning healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion to maintain or improve quality of life during the life course" (Sørensen et al 2012: 3).

If one compares the presented definition with the UNESCO's definition of literacy described in the previous chapter, it becomes clear that both contain the same core message: being (health) literate means being able to cope with everyday life - and this includes taking responsibility for one's own health, as well as for the health of one's community (cf. Sørensen et al. 2012). This understanding of health literacy is closely linked to empowerment - as is the modern concept of literacy (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015). Essential here is the role of the four actions included in the definition: Within the HLS, respondents estimate their own ability to access, understand, appraise and apply health information (cf. Gerich & Moosbrugger 2016). Hence, the outcome is a subjective, self-evaluated health literacy (cf. HLS-EU Consortium 2012). In order to clarify the importance of these four actions, they are explained in more detail below:

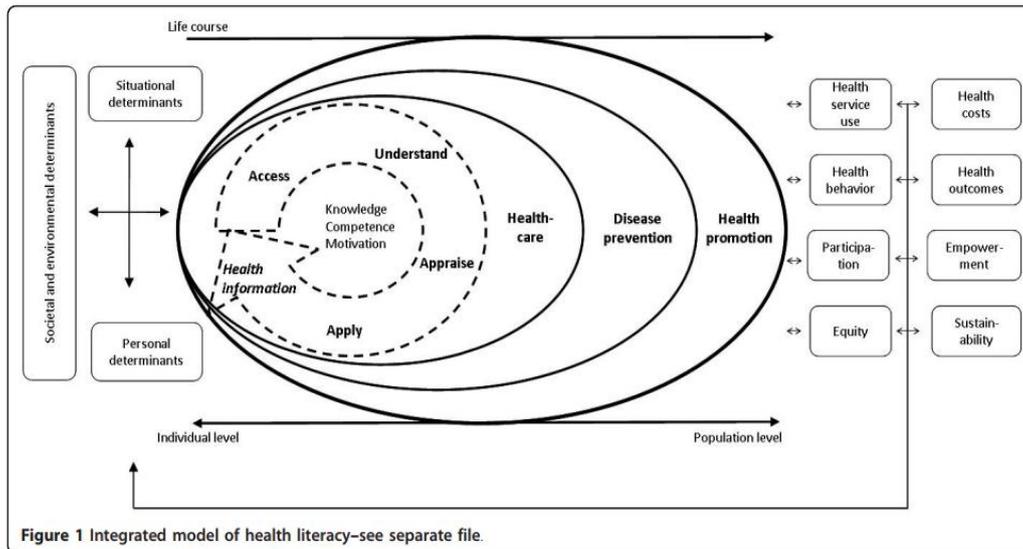
- 'access' describes the ability to seek, find and obtain health related information;
- 'understand' represents the ability to comprehend this information,
- while 'appraise' refers to the ability to judge and interpret it.
- Finally, 'apply' describes the ability to use this information and to be able to take a decision regarding one's own health based on the first three actions (cf. Sørensen et al. 2012).

Lastly, it needs to be pointed out that Sørensen et al. (2012) specified the objective of their definition by including three health-related domains - health care, disease prevention and health promotion. The HLS is based on the understanding that health literacy empowers people within those three domains (cf. Sørensen et al. 2012).

Figure 3 presents the definition described in form of a conceptual model. By recognizing personal and societal determinants, as well as the outcomes for individuals and society, the conceptual model of health literacy that the consortium conducted also takes the antecedents and consequences of health literacy into account (see Figure 3, cf. Sørensen et al. 2012). As Figure 3 illustrates, health literacy inter alia influences people's ability to *participate* – and more precisely: "(...) to participate in the ongoing public and private dialogues about health, medicine, scientific knowledge and cultural beliefs" (Sørensen et al. 2012: 10). This ability in turn has an impact on personal empowerment and vice versa (cf. Figure 3).

³ When speaking of the 'HLS-EU' in the following, the abbreviation 'HLS' will be used.

Figure 3: HLS-EU health literacy model



Source: Sørensen et al. 2012: 9

In the following, the described aspects of the HLS-EU will be used to derive a definition and conceptual model of demographic literacy.

3.3 Demographic literacy

As could be shown, literacy is nowadays commonly understood as an empowerment, through which people are enabled to function in their daily life (cf. Chapter 3.1). According to the UNESCO, this includes achieving one’s own goals, developing knowledge and potential, as well as participating with one’s social environment (cf. UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2017). Besides, it has been demonstrated that without the latter, a strong democracy would not be possible. Literacy rates in populations affect therefore not only individual lives, but also the society as a whole. In this sense, “(...) there are crucial links between literacy, democracy, empowerment, and social participation in politics and everyday life” (Kellner & Share 2005: 382).

In the absence of a concept that summarizes these ideas, health literacy was used in the previous chapter to illustrate the idea of literacy sub forms. Concentrating on one specific outcome, the HLS model assumes that *higher levels of health literacy lead, on average, to the ability to participate, which in turn leads to empowerment* and vice versa (cf. Figure 3). I assume a similar effect for demographic literacy.

However, defining demographic literacy and approaching a precise concept is a novelty which cannot be found in this form in scientific literature yet. In the following I will present examples of how demographic literacy has been mentioned in scientific literature and why there is a need for further development. Building upon these theoretical considerations, I will suggest a definition as well as a conceptual model of demographic literacy.

3.3.1 State of research

At this time, the concept of demographic literacy is practically neither addressed nor defined. This realization remains unchanged if one searches for population literacy instead. However, the term ‘demographic literacy’ has rarely been applied in the past. Two examples indicate its use. In the first example the authors present a concrete teaching guideline, i.e. *how* to convey demographic literacy (cf. Poston & Sullivan 1986). In the second, the authors describe the *content* which they assume to be necessary in the context of demographic literacy (cf. Lundquist, Anderton & Yaukey 2015). In both cases, the necessity of mediating demographic literacy to *undergraduate students* is addressed. The target group is accordingly

narrowly defined, since this concerns college and/or university students. The problem of such a target group becomes clear in connection with the demographic literacy ‘definition’ Poston and Sullivan (1986: 84) provide in their paper. Without defining it explicitly, they briefly describe what skills they would like undergraduate students to acquire:

“(...) to become demographically literate, that is, [to become] knowledgeable about the basic concepts, approaches and techniques in demography” (Poston & Sullivan 1986: 84).

The focus here is on specific applications, rather than certain general abilities. They furthermore distinctively state, that their objective is to facilitate the teaching of demography as an analytical skill. This approach is not particularly suitable for day-to-day use when it comes to demographic literacy for everyone – it rather refers to a comparatively high academic education. However, as it could be shown in the previous chapters, demographic literacy matters for every individual in a population. Demographic information should therefore be accessible, understandable, judgeable and applicable for everyone.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning, that there is no conceptual model of demographic literacy provided and, in that sense, no possibility for other researchers to elevate demographic literacy rates, nor to analyse the causes and consequences of high or low levels of demographic literacy.

3.3.2 Defining demographic literacy

With regard to the previous chapters, I assume that a definition of demographic literacy needs to include certain objections which represent the *functionality* of the respective literacy-related abilities. In this sense, demographic literacy would enable people to, for example, understand demographic interrelations. To put it in a nutshell: demographic literacy, as every form of literacy, should equip people with “(...) the intellectual tools and capacities to fully participate in one’s culture and society” (Kellner & Share 2005: 369).

Based on these considerations I suggest the following definition of demographic literacy, which is mainly grounded on the concept of health literacy:

Demographic literacy is linked to literacy and entails people’s knowledge, motivation and competences to access, understand, judge, and apply demographic information in order to make judgements and take decisions in everyday life, as well as to participate fully in their community and wider society.

As can be noticed, this definition of demographic literacy entails only the first three of the six clusters included in the definition of health literacy presented in Chapter 3.2.2, namely the abilities, the action and the information cluster. However, the word ‘appraise’ was exchanged with the term ‘judge’. This decision was made with regard to the two studies of the present thesis: It was assumed that this term would be easier to understand for participants.

Regarding the objective (forth cluster), a combination of the respective health literacy definition (cf. Sørensen et al 2012) and the UNESCO’s literacy definition (cf. UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2017) is suggested: *to make judgements and to take decisions* is an essential aspect of the idea of *functioning*. However, it seems appropriate to supplement this aspect by the participation element of the UNESCO definition. This reflects the assumption that literacy and participation are interlinked (cf. Kellner & Share 2005).

Nevertheless, it has been refrained from incorporating all objectives mentioned in the UNESCO definition (cf. UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2017). Since demographic literacy will be conceptualized for the first time, it has been decided to leave the first two parts out, so that the definition is not too specific and narrow. Besides, scientific data would be necessary to validly argue that demographic literacy empowers people to achieve their goals and to develop their full potential. A definition including this element might have been an obstacle for the present study.

In accordance with this logic, the sixth cluster of the health literacy definition (time) was also left out. The present study is based on the conviction that the definition should only be

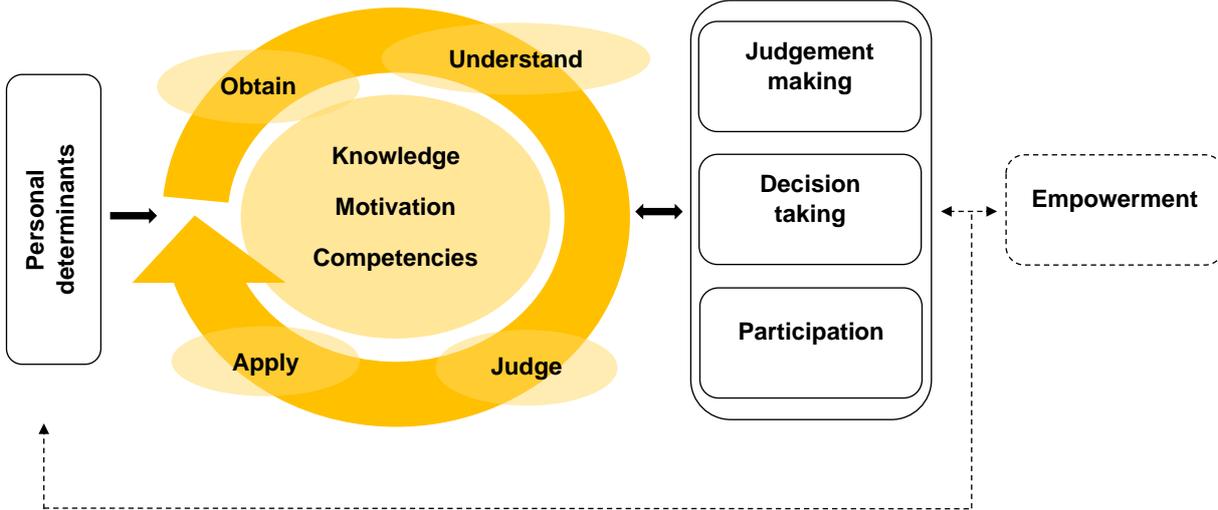
formulated to the extent that it can be applied. However, there were no capacities to validate the time aspect of a demographic literacy definition within the scope of this master thesis. The fifth cluster (context), however, was acknowledged by including the phrase ‘everyday life’ and referring to ‘community and wider society’ (cf. UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2017).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that it has been refrained from specifying the objective of the definition in the same way, as it was done by Sørensen et al. (2012). In this sense, there are no demographic-related domains included. Given the fact that demographic literacy has never been surveyed, and that, consequently, there is no knowledge of how and whether demographic literacy exerts an influence on individuals and society, it would be unwarranted to include demographic domains: On the one hand it would – again – only restrict the study, and on the other hand it would possibly leave out important domains.

As this is a pilot project with limited resources, the presented definition must be understood as a *working* definition - which is only suitable and sufficient for the specific purpose of the present study. Hence, one needs to keep in mind that the presented definition is by no means an end product, but rather a starting point for further theoretical considerations and empirical research.

Based on the presented definition the following conceptual model was designed:

Figure 4: Derived conceptual model of demographic literacy



Source: Own design based on Sørensen et al. 2012

Figure 4 illustrates the mode of operation behind demographic literacy. Similar to the conceptual model of health literacy, provided by the HLS-EU consortium, I assume that demographic literacy has an impact on people’s ability to participate by empowering them. With regard to the generated definition, this aspect is supplemented by a further assumed impact of demographic literacy, which are the abilities to make judgements and to take decisions. However, as the dashed lines shall imply: Empowerment will not be explicitly measured, and neither will its repercussions on personal determinants (cf. Chapter 4 for the methodological approach). Nevertheless, in order to do justice to the original model, it has been included here to illustrate the expected effect of a full implementation of the HLS-EU approach (cf. Sørensen et al. 2012).

As the comparison with Figure 3 demonstrates, solely a single relationship – although constituting of three different, yet interrelated aspects - is depicted. Based on the literature, it might be conceivable to add more associations - both on the individual, as well as on the population level. Since, however, the presumed relationship presented is to be investigated in this paper, further elements have been omitted. However, this does not exclude the possibility of their existence.

Finally, it needs to be noted that in comparison to the conceptual model of health literacy, neither situational, nor societal antecedents were included. The author of this study is aware that this is therefore an incomplete conceptual model, which cannot do justice to the representation of the real associations. Once again, however, it must be pointed out that the possibilities of this thesis were limited. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that a few personal determinants were collected in the quantitative study (see Chapter 5).

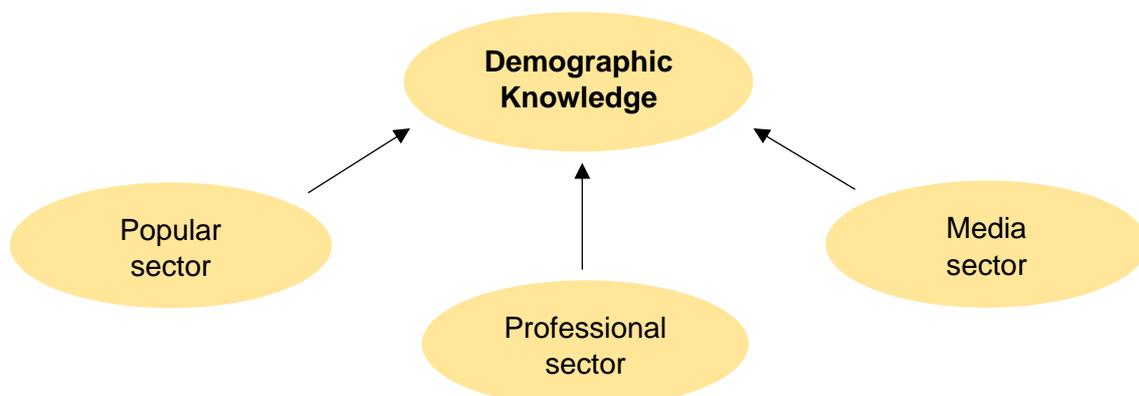
3.3.3 Sources of demographic knowledge

Before addressing the influence demographic literacy might have on the ability of people to function in their everyday life, it is necessary to take a step back and explore one aspect of the presented model in more detail: the demographic knowledge. As could be shown, knowledge is an essential aspect of the concept of health literacy and part of the clusters which constitute its definition. As further explained in the methods chapter of the present study, knowledge, however, is quite complicated to capture. Therefore, the present paper will not only collect actual demographic knowledge - which can only be done inadequately - but will also deal with its corresponding sources. Since the basis of the demographic literacy model already represents that of health literacy, it seems appropriate to transform another model from health research for this purpose. Kleinman (1980) developed a model of the local health care system in which the author illustrates three knowledge sectors on which people build their health activities. The first of those three sectors described by Kleinman (1980), is the so-called *'popular sector'*. In this sector, all health activities are "(...) individual-, family-, or community-based (...)" (Oosterhoff 2015: 93). Kleinman (1980) supplements the described one by furthermore defining the *'professional sector'*. This sector represents "(...) the domain of medical and other health care providers, health educators, and researchers" (Oosterhoff 2015: 93). In the present thesis, the professional sector covers inter alia educational institutions and politicians. The latter represent certainly a borderline case. The decision, however, was taken on the basis of the fact that public statements by politicians are primarily perceived in connection with their office, i.e. their profession. They act in such moments as representatives, or also experts, of a certain conviction or opinion. Even if their statements and messages are mainly spread through media channels, this does not necessarily have to be the case.

Finally, the third sector described by the author is the so-called *'folk sector'*. In contrast to the previous two, this sector is non-professional and characterised by specialised activities, which are "(...) based on a combination of professional and popular knowledge" (Oosterhoff 2015: 93). Kleinman's model will be used to get insight on how and where demographic knowledge is obtained. However, given the importance of (social) media for the target group, it was decided not to include the folk sector and instead to focus on the media sector as the third source of demographic knowledge.

Why this is the case, what characterises the target group beyond this aspect and why it has been decided to focus on the respective individuals is described below.

Figure 5: The three demographic knowledge sectors



Source: Own design based on Kleinman 1980

3.4 The target group

As could be shown, the European democracy is seen as at risk. Additional reasons for this, besides the ones already mentioned, are no less than Europe's demographic factors (cf. Eilfort 2017). At the centre of the discussion about the challenge demography poses to democracy is the observation, that the already shrinking younger population is less likely to participate in elections (cf. Eilfort 2017). According to the European Parliament, only 28% of eligible voters in the age group 18-24 participated in the European Parliament elections 2014 and 35% of the eligible voters in the age group 25-39 (cf. European Parliament 2014a). In this sense, older voters increasingly influence the outcome of elections (cf. Stadtmüller 2014). Davidson argues that in consequence of the importance of elderly people for elections, "Politicians carefully consider strategies for developing relationships with older voters (...) as issues that directly affect an ageing population often prove crucial in local and national election campaigns" (Davidson 2016: Abstract). Young cohorts, on the other hand, are considered as being apolitical and uninterested (cf. Soule 2001).

Affected by this neglect on the one hand, and the presented accusations on the other hand, are in particular the so-called 'Generation X' and 'Generation Y', or 'Millennials' in the case of the latter (cf. Soule 2001). Those terms are just some of many that were created by science and media to describe current young generations in their uniqueness, to ascribe them an unmistakable mentality or a uniform, social character (cf. Hurrelmann & Albrecht 2014). As Hurrelmann and Albrecht (2014) state, it makes most sense to classify age categories into groups of approximately 15 years. The authors state, that, for example, everybody born between 1985 and 2000, can be regarded as a Millennial (cf. Hurrelmann & Albrecht 2014). The term 'Millennials' derives from the circumstance that these citizens were born just before the beginning of the new Millennium. Another common name for this group is 'Generation Y' (>>why<<). This term represents the typical characteristic of the Millennials, identified by researchers, to question social norms and principles in work, family and politics (cf. Hurrelmann & Albrecht 2014). In the year 2019, everyone aged 18 (if they turned 19 this year) to 35 (but only if they do not turn 36 this year) can be understood as a Millennial. In this sense, Generation Y includes the youngest citizens who were entitled to participate in the European Parliament elections 2019 - including first-time voters. In view of the fact that the Millennials represent a group of citizens with the lowest voter turnout in the past, it was decided to focus on them. This decision reflects the urgency of the challenge demography poses to democracy.

However, it is worth mentioning that researchers are divided on the question of whether an entire generation can be reduced to one catchword. Hurrelmann and Albrecht (2014) argue in this context that since all cohorts of a generation grow up at the same time and are shaped by the same events in the decisive phase of personality development, namely in youth, a quite uniform social character is formed. The authors also explain, however, that every human does nevertheless establish a personal approach in handling occurrences. Furthermore, it must also be considered that those catchwords cannot necessarily be transferred across all national borders to one generation (cf. Hurrelmann & Albrecht 2014).

3.5 Derived hypotheses

The presented definition and the conceptual model are based on the assumption that demographic literacy empowers individuals to make judgements, to take decisions and to be able to participate. Since one of the aims of this study is to test the validity of the mentioned demographic literacy definition and its respective conceptual model by examining the impact of demographic literacy, certain aspects of '*functioning in everyday life*' were chosen to assist in pursuing this goal:

- Millennials' *expressed voting intention*,
- their *self-evaluated level of voting preparedness*,
- their *self-evaluated ability to judge*, whether parties represent their views when it comes to demographic topics,

- and the *importance* they attribute to the position of parties on demographic topics for their *voting preference*...

...against the background of the European parliament elections 2019.

In the following I will formulate multiple hypotheses concerning those aspects of functioning, which will then constitute the starting point for the empirical research of the present thesis. However, it should be noted that those hypotheses solely concentrate on the quantitative part of the paper. Although qualitative research questions have been formulated, no respective hypotheses will be tested. This is based on the conviction that the qualitative research should be as unprejudiced as possible and open to unforeseen results.

The explanatory, quantitative research hypotheses

In the run-up to the European parliament elections 2019, Kaltwasser, Vehrkamp and Wrátil, (2019) conducted a multinational online survey, in which they *inter alia* examined the voting intention of European citizens. The results show, that people with a higher educational level, were more likely to have an intention to vote than those with lower educational levels (cf. Kaltwasser, Vehrkamp & Wrátil 2019). As already described, education and literacy cannot be treated as two clearly separated domains. Against this background, I assume that high levels of demographic literacy affect voting intention in the same way, as education in general does:

H1: The higher the level of demographic literacy, the more likely it is that Millennials *express their intention to participate* in the European Parliament elections 2019.

Against this background, I further assume that demographic literacy influences the feeling of preparedness to participate in the elections:

H2: The higher the level of demographic literacy, the higher is the Millennials' *self-evaluated preparedness to participate* in the European Parliament elections 2019.

As it could be furthermore shown, demographic developments affect politics and politics affect demographic developments - to vote means therefore to be *inter alia* involved in deciding which political measures are implemented in response to, or in anticipation of demographic composition and change. In this sense, I assume that citizens need to have some demographic literacy background to make informed judgements (cf. Smith 2016):

H3: The higher the level of demographic literacy, the higher is the Millennials' *self-evaluated ability to judge*, whether parties agree with their views on demographic topics.

Regarding the perceived importance of the position of parties on demographic information for voting decisions, I base my assumption on Roy's (2009) argumentation, who states that higher levels of information will lead citizens to consider more factors in their voting choice. In this sense, levels of demographic literacy are expected to have an impact on how important the positions of parties on demographic topics are for the voting preference:

H4: The higher the levels of demographic literacy, *the more importance is attributed* by Millennials to the positions of parties on demographic topics for their *voting preference* in the European Parliament elections 2019.

Finally, it should be noted that the author of this thesis does not assume that demographic literacy is a panacea, but that it is an important, hitherto unconsidered aspect, which needs to be further examined. The following chapter outlines the methodological approaches, which have been adopted to achieve this objective.

4. METHODOLOGY: MIXED MODES

In this chapter the methodology of the present studies will be described. The present thesis features a mixed methods approach. The reason for this lies in the purposes of the present study, which are to *explore* demographic literacy, as well as to *explain* it. Different methods were needed to pursue these goals.

The aim to *explain* demographic literacy comes along with the necessity to measure and quantify it. The quantitative research is guided by assumptions which are inherent to the paradigm of *positivism*. Within this paradigm, it is assumed that reality consists of facts and that objective measurement is not only desired but also achievable (cf. Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). However, it needs to be noted, that these core assumptions of positivism are widely criticised among qualitative researchers and that the present thesis is based on the belief that all research is interpretative (cf. Denzin & Lincoln 2008). Nevertheless, the quantitative research of the present thesis is characterised by some positivistic features, like deriving its hypotheses from theoretical concepts.

To test those hypotheses and to answer the respective research questions, an online questionnaire was chosen as appropriate research instrument. This decision is based on several advantages an online questionnaire offers. First of all, using the Internet promised to reach significant more people, than a paper-based questionnaire would have. In addition, the use of this method did not bind the author of the present study to specific places of collection, which promised to diversify the background of the participants. Furthermore, it is a method, which enables the participants to answer the questionnaire flexible under the conditions they prefer, using the device they want. Finally, using an online questionnaire reduced the study costs significantly (cf. Babbie 2016).

In contrast to the quantitative part of the present thesis, *exploring* demographic literacy supplements the research by providing a deep insight in the subsistence of demographic literacy. This qualitative research is guided by assumptions inherent to a paradigm called *interpretivism*, which acknowledges that there is more than just a single truth on reality. This conviction is reflected in the present thesis' approach to qualitative research, which features an interplay between deductive and inductive strategies. The respective strategy leaves room for views and interpretations of demographic literacy, which may not have occurred to the researcher, helping to explore this research field based on individual, and therefore subjective experiences. Overall, the qualitative part of the present thesis should be understood as a circular process, in which the analysis of the data is not necessarily the end-product, but also the start for new theoretical considerations (cf. Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011).

The research instrument chosen for this approach is a focus group discussion. The decision for this method is based on some advantages the chosen instrument offers in comparison to other qualitative research methods. In contrast to in-depth interviews, a focus group discussion promised to provide not only one perspective per interview, but a diverse range of opinions, as well as a potential evolution of arguments, opinions and thoughts throughout the conversation. This prospect was perceived as highly valuable: a discussion promised that the participants would ideally provide each other with impulses for new ideas and thoughts. It was considered as a brain storming process, which was assumed to most likely do justice to the unexplored nature of demographic literacy.

Nevertheless, the circumstance that demographic information is oftentimes highly sensible, can of course become a disadvantage during a focus group discussion. The fact that its setting does not offer anonymity between the participants, might hinder them in freely communicating their feelings and opinions. However, it was expected that the threshold to talk about this topic might be lower than one could think, since it could be shown that demographic issues are widely debated in public – especially in advance of the European Parliament elections. This circumstance features another important reason to conduct a focus group discussion: group dynamics and social norms might become more visible for the researcher when discussing

these topics with a group instead of conducting in-depth interviews (cf. Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011).

In the following I will proceed chronologically and therefore present first the quantitative and then the qualitative method used. However, there is some information regarding the data preparation which concern both studies and which will be described at the end of this chapter:

- Ethical considerations
- Translation & transcription

4.1 Quantitative Methodology: Online questionnaire

For the quantitative research, an online questionnaire was developed and translated, a sample was drawn, and data was collected, a Demographic Literacy Index was constructed and finally, statistical analyses were carried out. In the following, the single steps will be described one by one.

4.1.1 Questionnaire development

The developed online questionnaire consists of 39 items, which represent statements the participants were asked to react to, as well as questions they were asked to answer. All items, with the exception of three socio-demographic questions, were formulated in a closed-ended manner. The questionnaire includes five parts and was designed to take the participants about 10 to 15 minutes to answer. It handles the following themes:

- 1) Explanations on demographic terms and topics – with the possibility to skip this part without reading it;
- 2) Socio-demographics;
- 3) Demographic literacy;
- 4) Motivation for and knowledge of demographic information;
- 5) Voting intention, preparedness, judgement and preference.

The third, fourth and fifth parts of the questionnaire described above are explained in more detail below.

Demographic literacy items

The development of the online questionnaire is oriented on the approach used for the HLS-EU, which was generated in several rounds using multiple methods (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015). However, in regard of the limitations the present thesis was confronted with, the respective approach was broken down to its essential elements.

The items to assess demographic literacy were conducted based on the theoretical background presented, as well as in consultation with dr. Sanne S. Visser. The main points of reference were the generated definition and conceptual model of demographic literacy, as well as the methodological approach of the HLS-EU. The latter consists in its final form of 47 items ('HLS-EU-Q47'), which are distributed across 12 subdomains (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015). Those subdomains result from the four actions 'access', 'understand', 'appraise' and 'apply' which had been put in a matrix with the three health domains 'healthcare', 'disease prevention' and 'health promotion' (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015). However, as already mentioned, while the four actions were being transferred in the present study, it was refrained from conceptualising three demography domains. Nevertheless, in order to generate items that could then be used to assess demographic literacy, the four actions were grouped into a matrix of three demographic themes:

- 'PCD': Population composition and development of the EU countries;
- 'MIG': The impact of migration processes on the EU;
- 'AGE': The impact of age structure(s) on the EU.

The decision for these three themes was made on the basis of the literature presented in the previous chapters. It became clear from the theoretical considerations that migration and age structure are the most popular demographic issues in Germany. The first category, however, is rather broad since it covers all imaginable subtopics of demography. This category is included to capture the ‘big picture’ - i.e. the extent to which participants are aware of demographic interrelationships. In conclusion, it should be said that the classical three of demographic research – deaths, births and migration – were not surveyed in this form and combination, since they might have been too numerical. All those three pillars of demography occur in the media. However, they are embedded in a certain context and story, in which it is assumed that they are of need to the recipients and therefore worth reading. Against this background, it was assumed that participants were more likely to associate something with the impact of migration and age structures than, for example, with death and birth rates or net migration. Furthermore, the focus was put on EU countries, since the questionnaire later also dealt with the European Parliament elections 2019.

Remark: As already mentioned in Chapter 3, the term ‘appraise’ was exchanged by the term ‘judge’.

In contrast to the HLS, the present thesis limited its items to the number of subdomains. In this sense, 12 items were generated, one per subdomain:

Table 1: Matrix for operationalising the demographic literacy definition

	Access	Understand	Judge	Apply
Population composition and development of the EU countries	<i>Ability to access/find demographic information on population composition and development of the EU countries</i>	<i>Ability to understand demographic information on population composition and development of the EU countries</i>	<i>Ability to judge demographic information on population composition and development of the EU countries</i>	<i>Ability to apply demographic information on population composition and development of the EU countries</i>
Impact of migration processes on the EU	<i>Ability to access/find demographic information on the impact of migration processes on the EU</i>	<i>Ability to understand demographic information on the impact of migration processes on the EU</i>	<i>Ability to judge demographic information on the impact of migration processes on the EU</i>	<i>Ability to apply demographic information on the impact of migration processes on the EU</i>
Impact of age structure on the EU society	<i>Ability to access/find demographic information on the impact of age structure on the EU</i>	<i>Ability to understand demographic information on the impact of age structure on the EU</i>	<i>Ability to judge demographic information on the impact of age structure on the EU</i>	<i>Ability to apply demographic information on the impact of age structure on the EU</i>

Source: Own design based on Sørensen et al. 2012

Lastly the participants were invited to rate the 12 tasks on the following five-category Likert scale: ‘very easy’, ‘fairly easy’, ‘fairly difficult’, ‘very difficult’ and ‘not possible’. In contrast to

the HLS-EU, the developed online questionnaire offered the possibility to additionally select the options *'I don't know'*, and *'I don't want to answer this question'*. The latter was included as demographic issues can be very sensitive (cf. Chapter 1) and the option *'I don't know'* was added as demographic topics are complex issues and it must be assumed that not all participants are familiar with those (cf. Chapter 1).

Motivation and Knowledge

As defined in the previous chapter, demographic literacy entails people's knowledge, motivation and competencies to perform the four actions described in the matrix (cf. Figure 4, cf. Table 1). In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of what demographic literacy is and what it encompasses, data on this aspect of the definition was collected in the third part of the questionnaire.

First of all, it has to be noted that it was not possible to find a satisfactory solution for the assessment of the participants' competencies within the framework of the thesis. For this purpose, it would have been necessary to define what this term exactly means. Instead, it was decided to use the educational level of the participants as a substitute. However, this in no way implies that the thesis was able to capture the competencies of the respondents in a valid way.

The motivation of the participants was assessed by means of four questions relating to the four actions: A statement was given which described a high motivation to find, understand, evaluate and apply demographic information. Participants could choose between *'Applies to me'* and *'Does not apply to me'* as possible answers.

Collecting the knowledge of the participants proved to be as difficult as assessing their competencies. Therefore, a concrete field of knowledge was targeted: that of demography. For this purpose, the most recent Eurostat statistical analysis on the demographic composition of the EU was used (cf. Eurostat 2017, 2018, 2019a, 2019b & 2019c). In consultation with supervisors, eight facts about the demographic composition of the EU were selected. The participants were asked to indicate whether they had known, or approximately correctly estimated, that the respective facts applied to the EU. Accordingly, the respective questions concerned factual knowledge of demographic topics.

Voting intention, voting preparedness, voting decision and voting preference

In order to answer the hypotheses, it was not only important to determine the participants' level of demographic literacy, but also their self-declared voting intention, as well as their self-assessed voting preparedness and the importance of demographic topics for their voting preference. However, similar to the nature of demographic topics, questions concerning elections are highly sensible. This already results from the German law, which states that voting decisions must be confidential (among other things) (cf. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 2019). Despite guaranteed anonymity, it was important in this context, to give the participants the opportunity to refuse the answer.

Besides asking the participants about their voting intention, they were asked how well prepared they feel for the European Parliament elections 2019 in general, as well as regarding the three demographic themes: PCD, MIG and AGE. They could choose between feeling *'extensively'*, *'sufficiently'*, *'insufficiently'* and *'not at all'* informed and prepared.

Furthermore, the participants were invited to answer questions about their ability to make judgements. In this context, they were asked how easy or difficult it would be for them to decide, if parties represent their views when it comes to the three topics mentioned. They could choose between *'very easy'*, *'fairly easy'*, *'fairly difficult'*, *'very difficult'* and *'not possible'*.

Finally, three questions were asked about the importance participants attribute to parties' positions on the three demographic topics for their voting preference. They could choose between the options *'highly'*, *'fairly'*, *'hardly'* and *'not at all'* important, as well as *'I won't vote'*.

4.1.2 Sampling

In order to achieve the widest possible reach and a high number of Millennials, the questionnaire was distributed via the social media platforms *'Facebook'* and *'Instagram'*. This recruitment approach was chosen since it represents the optimal communication method for

addressing the young target group: social media platforms are of high importance among Millennials and widely used regardless of socio-cultural backgrounds (cf. Micheli 2006). This approach therefore promised to guarantee diversity among the participants.

The beforehand formulated goal regarding the total number of participants was set to about 100 participants. To achieve saturation, the distribution of the questionnaire was repeated after reaching about 50 participants. Initially, the online questionnaire was accessible to all interested people. In the end, a total of 93 participants answered the complete questionnaire. After the evaluation, however, it became clear that solely 82 of them fit into the target group. As already elaborated, this includes solely participants of German nationality at the age of 18-35. Therefore, the total number of participants fell slightly short of expectations.

Apart from the socio-demographic factors already described, no further information about the participants was collected. In this sense, there is no knowledge about which part of Germany the participants come from. It remains unclear to what extent they are distributed evenly across different regions and whether they tend to come from rural or urban areas. Furthermore, no data were collected on income, current employment, sexual or religious orientation. In conclusion, no statement can be made regarding the sample's representativeness with respect to the missing factors mentioned above. Age, gender and education constitute the only points of reference here.

Finally, it needs to be mentioned that the sample is probably biased by the fact that all participants took part voluntarily, which means, they may differentiate in their personality, values and beliefs from the people who were not willing to participate (cf. Babbie 2016). This, however, is a circumstance that researchers always encounter when they launch a call to participate and adhere to ethical guidelines.

4.1.3 Data collection

The data was collected in the last two weeks before the European Parliament elections 2019. In Germany, the election day took place on May 26th. The online questionnaire was accessible from May 15th onwards and closed at midnight on the election day.

4.1.4 Construction of the Demographic Literacy Index

A Demographic Literacy Index (DLI) was constructed using the 12 items described in the matrix above (cf. Table 1). The answers were assigned points with 'very easy' being worth four points down to 'not possible' receiving zero points. The answer possibilities 'I don't know' and 'I don't want to answer this question' were excluded from the index. Whereas it is quite clear why the latter could not be included, the exclusion of the former was done after careful consideration and in consultation with dr. Viktor Venhorst. Including the answer possibility 'I don't know' in the index was up for discussion, since a significant number of participants (31 out of 82) chose it. However, since it remained unclear if the participants used this option because they could not decide, did not understand the question, or never tried to, for example, find demographic information. In the case of the latter, it would not have been appropriate to assign the participants who had chosen this answer a zero for this item. 'Not yet tried' does not mean 'not being able to'. In consequence, however, this approach reduced the number of participants whose responses contributed to the index to n=51, which ultimately led to a new sample, called 'DLI sample'.

The DLI was computed by summing up all the points achieved within the 12 items while then transforming the scores to a scale ranging from a minimum of zero to a maximum of 10 points – solely entailing rounded absolute numbers with no decimals. In contrast, the HLS-EU constructed an index with a maximum of 50 points (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015). However, since the HLS-EU included significant more items to its health literacy index, with significant more participants contributing to it, the meaningfulness would have been limited if one had proceeded in the same way with the present study.

Lastly, it needs to be noted, that the HLS-EU provide health literacy thresholds which determine if the participants health literacy is "(...) 'inadequate' (0–25), 'problematic' (>25–33), 'sufficient' (>33–42) (...) [or] 'excellent' (>42–50) (...)" (Sørensen et al. 2015: 1054). However,

those thresholds were set by experts. The present study abstained from defining and labelling certain levels of demographic literacy itself. Nevertheless, in Chapter 5, the relevance of the HLS-EU thresholds for the DLI results will be described and discussed.

4.1.5 Statistical Analyses

In order to test the hypotheses formulated, the original aim of the work was to carry out a cross-sectional and logistic regression. However, since the participants reduced significantly during the process of recoding the variables and constructing the DLI, it was abstained from pursuing this approach. The number of participants was too small to achieve significant results. Several other options were taken into consideration. However, after consulting dr. Sanne S. Visser and dr. Karsten Hank, it was decided to solely execute descriptive analyses, using the statistical software Stata.

In summary, it can be stated that the descriptive evaluations were carried out to show the response behaviour of the participants in consideration of their DLI score. This entails the illustrations of the participants' motivation, their knowledge, and all results of the voting-related questions with reference to their demographic literacy level. The DLI constitutes the elemental component of all hypotheses, and therefore that of the quantitative results as well. In this sense, the statistical evaluation is based on the DLI sample. Chapter 5 presents the corresponding results.

4.2 Qualitative Methodology: Focus group discussion

For the qualitative research, a guide was developed and translated, a sample was drawn, data was collected during a focus group discussion, and finally analysed using deductive, as well as inductive generated codes. In the following, the single steps will each be described.

4.2.1 Focus group discussion guide

The discussion guide consists of 34 elements (excluding sub-questions and probes), which are all open-ended questions (excluding the activities; see below), so that participants would be able to answer freely and from any perspective. Besides, attention was paid to formulating the questions neutrally in order to avoid a so-called '*deference effect*', "(...) whereby participants say what they think a moderator wants to hear (...)" (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011: 164). During the development of the questionnaire, great importance was furthermore placed on using conversational language and the questions were formulated as clear and short as possible. The priority was for the participants to feel at ease (cf. Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011).

The discussion guide consists of eight parts and was designed to take the participants about one and a half hours:

- The introduction
- Transition questions
- Topic 1: Demography in everyday life
- Topic 2: Demographic Literacy
- Topic 3: Discussion some results of the online questionnaire
- Topic 4: Demography and politics
- Topic 5: Questions concerning the quantitative hypotheses (H1, H2 & H3)
- Closing questions

The discussion guide was constructed in a way that would make it as easy as possible for the participants to dive into the subject. In this sense, introduction and transition questions were formulated and the five topics follow a logical sequence. In this sense, the first main topic of the discussion guide is concerned with questions on where demography might play a role in the participants daily life and how important or not it is for them, to be familiar with demographic topics. Following, the second topic features questions about the participants' own

demographic literacy – which, however, was labelled ‘demographic knowledge’ to make it easier for them to comprehend the questions. Subsequently, the third topic deals with some main results from the online questionnaire. The fourth topic was designed to lead the debate towards the question in how far demography and politics are interrelated. Consequently, the fifth topic includes questions related to the quantitative hypotheses. Finally, closing questions were formulated to ensure that the discussion would come to a pleasant end for the participants.

As the different topics show: the discussion guide was designed with the purpose not only to get answers for the qualitative research questions, but also to get a new perspective on the quantitative results. In the run-up, it was therefore assumed that the conversation would be both time-consuming and profound. In this sense, the guide was conceptualised in such a way that the discussion would be open to questions and input from the participants, as well as varied and interactive. For this purpose, a power point presentation was designed to support the guide, activities were created to involve the participants, and short video clips were presented. The activities featured small surveys created via the interactive presentation software ‘*Mentimeter*’. In total, this format was included four times, twice for a ranking and twice to answer open questions. The video clips were included to encourage a vivid discussion, since they entailed two contrasting statements regarding population development.

4.2.2 Sampling

At the end of the online questionnaire, participants were asked to contact the author of the present thesis via the provided e-mail if they were interested in participating in a follow-up focus group discussion. Nine people reached out to the author of whom seven finally confirmed their participation. The method of recruitment was therefore research-based (cf. Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). In this sense, the seven discussion participants also belong to the group of 82 people who participated in the quantitative study described in Chapter 5. Consequently, they are all German and part of the ‘Millennials’ generation. In the end, the group was quite homogenous regarding socio-demographic characteristics – as it is recommended by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011). In contrast to the ambiguity regarding the online questionnaire participants’ place of residence in the case of the discussion participants, it had to be ensured among the discussion participants, that they all currently live in North Rhine-Westphalia - where the discussion took place. Since both studies could not offer any incentive for participation, it would have been to time and cost-consuming for people living in other regions of Germany to participate. Without jeopardising the participants anonymity, it can further be stated, that all of them live in urban areas and have a comparatively high educational level (ISCED 3 or higher). It needs to be noted, that there were significantly more women (5) than men (2) participating in the discussion. However, since the beforehand formulated goal regarding the total number of participants was set at about 6 to 8 participants, it was abstained from enlarging the group by another male participant.

The high homogeneity among the participants offered some important advantages for the conduction of the focus group. According to Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) it is more likely that participants speak freely if the other members of the group are similar to them. However, what is good for the conversation flow, aggravates the problems already mentioned for the sample questionnaire: both with the results of the questionnaire, and even more drastically with the analysis of the discussion, the author of the present thesis solely gets insight on a fragment of the target group. This circumstance will be taken into account when discussing the results (cf. Chapter 7).

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that some of the participants knew each other. Hence, there was some level of familiarity among them. However, the reduced confidentiality between them was expected not to hinder them from sharing their opinions and views. Although demographic topics can be highly sensible, they still impact not only individuals, but also the society as a whole. Other than for a focus group discussion thematising, for example, drug addiction, it was expected that the level of familiarity would rather encourage the participants to have a vivid conversation than discourage them.

4.2.3 Conduction of the focus group discussion

The discussion took place on August 18th. The location chosen is an indoor office space in the inner-city centre of Cologne. The available room offered the possibility to use multimedia devices, as well as its furniture. As suggested by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011: 152), "(...) the location is quiet, private, comfortable, free of distraction and easy for participants to locate". The seats were arranged in a circle to ensure eye contact between all participants and to maximize group interaction (cf. Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011).

Figure 6 & Figure 7: Pictures of the location



Source: The images were taken by the author on August 18th, 2019

Before starting the discussion, the participants were informed about the purpose of the study, duration of the conversation as well as its elemental structure. They were encouraged to speak freely and to let one person speak at a time. Finally, they were informed about the recording and some ethical considerations (cf. Chapter 4.3, cf. appendix).

To ensure that the discussion would focus around its purpose, the author of the present study (the moderator) used the guideline as orientation, while at the same time trying to be as flexible as possible to leave room for the participants input. Overall, the moderator of the discussion aimed to achieve group interaction and vivid group dynamics. With the use of activities and different probes, the participants were guided to have a conversation instead of a discussion dominated by the moderator. The moderator encouraged everybody to engage in the discussion. It was, however, abstained from actively addressing single participants to involve in the conversation. Naturally, some participants engaged more than others in the discussion. In the end, however, everyone was a fundamental part of the conversation and played an important role.

4.2.4 Data analysis

The process of data analysis entailed three essential steps:

- the development of deductive codes;
- Data preparation (Transcription, translation and anonymisation, cf. Chapters 4.3 & 4.4);
- Coding the data and development of inductive codes

As already stated, the data analysis of the present thesis features an interplay between deductive and inductive code development. In this sense, codes were generated *before*, as well as *after* the conduction of the focus group discussion. The deductive codes were generated based on the theoretical considerations, as well as on the topics of the discussion guide. The inductive codes, on the other hand, originated from the data itself: from the answers the participants had given during the discussion. As Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011: 218) state "(...) inductive codes allow the data to 'speak for itself'". Including inductive codes was assumed to be essential to do justice to the data analysis. An analysis solely based on

deductive codes would have probably led to the exclusion of essential issues brought up by the participants that the researcher might not have thought of before.

Overall, the process of coding was characterised by searching the data for deductive codes, as well as by topics. Through annotating the data, as well as reading it analytically, multiple inductive codes, as well as one in vivo code could be identified. The validity of all codes was guaranteed by assuring that they either occurred repeatedly throughout the transcript, or that they were highlighted by the participants. Redundant deductive codes were deleted (cf. Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). This procedure was then performed a second time, so that finally, saturation could be achieved and links between codes identified. In the end, 28 codes were developed, described and kept in a codebook, whereby inductive codes and mixed forms predominate (cf. appendix). The latter type features codes which are based on a deductive idea but had to be revised to do justice to the data. Those codes are labelled in the codebook as 'Deductive/ Inductive'.

Finally, thick description was used to depict the generated codes. Ultimately, five different code groups and seven subcategories could be identified. With regard to the limitations of the present thesis, it was not possible to check their consistency with additional coders. Therefore, inter-coder reliability cannot be assured. However, attention has been paid to make the process of data analysis as transparent as possible by explaining the essential elements of all codes precisely, and by providing each with an example.

The data analysis was performed using the research software Atlas.ti. Chapter 6 presents the corresponding results.

4.3 Ethical considerations

In the beginning of both the online questionnaire, as well as the focus group discussion, the participants were provided with detailed information on the objective of the respective study. In both cases, the participants were furthermore informed that their participation would be entirely voluntary and that they could stop at all time without fearing any negative consequences. Moreover, the questionnaire and the moderator explained that their data would only be used for the purpose of the present thesis and treated confidential at all times.

In the beginning of the focus group discussion, participants were also informed that the entire conversation would be recorded and permission to do so was obtained by an oral approval (cf. appendix). Recording was only started after the permission of all participants. Furthermore, the moderator stressed that the respective record would be deleted immediately after the completion and submission of the thesis. The anonymisation of the data was achieved by deleting or exchanging every personal information, which would have made it possible to draw conclusions about the identity of the participants. Each participant of the focus group discussion was assigned an individual marking, which consists of a letter ('F' for females, and 'M' for males), as well as a personal number according to the order of appearance:

- F1, F2, F3, F4 & F5
- M1 & M2

Finally, all participants (questionnaire & discussion) were provided with an e-mail address specifically generated for them to contact the author of the present study if they would have questions, concerns or feedback.

The well-being of the participants has always been a priority.

4.4 Data preparation: translation and transcription

The developed online questionnaire, as well as the focus group discussion guide were translated in German in order to address the target group more effectively. This procedure was undertaken by the author of the present thesis. In the absence of a professional translator, the translations were then verified by a German '*English Literature and Language*' graduate. The same procedure was followed with the focus group transcript.

The focus group discussion was transcribed literally, which means that the final transcript includes not only the core messages of the participants' answers, but also pauses, speech

fillers and emotions, like laughter. However, it was abstained from including verbal gestures, like *'um'* and *'aha'* (cf. Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). The software used was f4transkript.

Both the online questionnaire, as well as the focus group discussion guide and transcript can be found in the appendix – in English, as well as in German.

5. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

In the following, the results of the online questionnaire will be described and analysed. First, there will be a description of the socio-demographic composition of the sample. Furthermore, the findings of the Demographic Literacy Index (DLI) will be presented and interpreted. Finally, the hypotheses will be evaluated.

5.1 The sample

As explained in the previous chapter, only the answers of 51 participants were included in the generation of the DLI. Nevertheless, the number of the participants excluded is quite high – representing 37.8% of the original sample. Therefore, both samples, the original with N=82, as well as the revised one with N=51, should be briefly described. Only through this comparison is it possible to assess, whether socio-demographic aspects represented a decisive factor in the context of the participants’ response behaviour, which ultimately led to the exclusion of 31 participants and the composition of the DLI sample.

The comparison shows, that the DLI sample did not transform as much as one might expect with such a high number of participants excluded: Neither in terms of age, or sex, nor education can large changes be observed between the original, and the DLI sample. Taking a look at Figure 8 and 9 clarifies that, in fact, the socio-demographic composition of the revised sample is almost the same as it was with 82 participants:

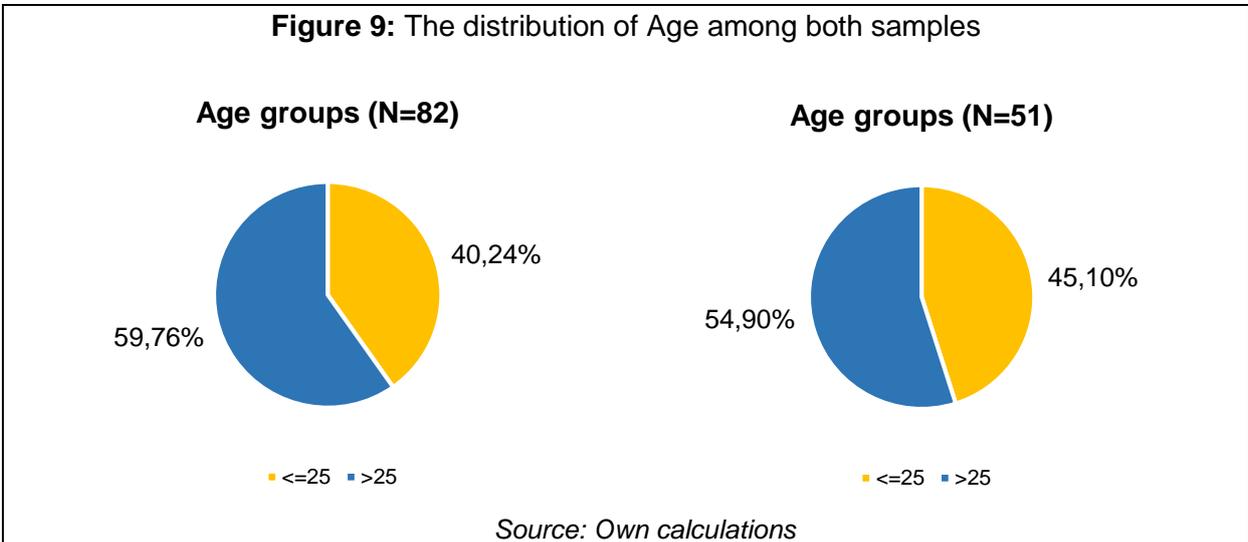
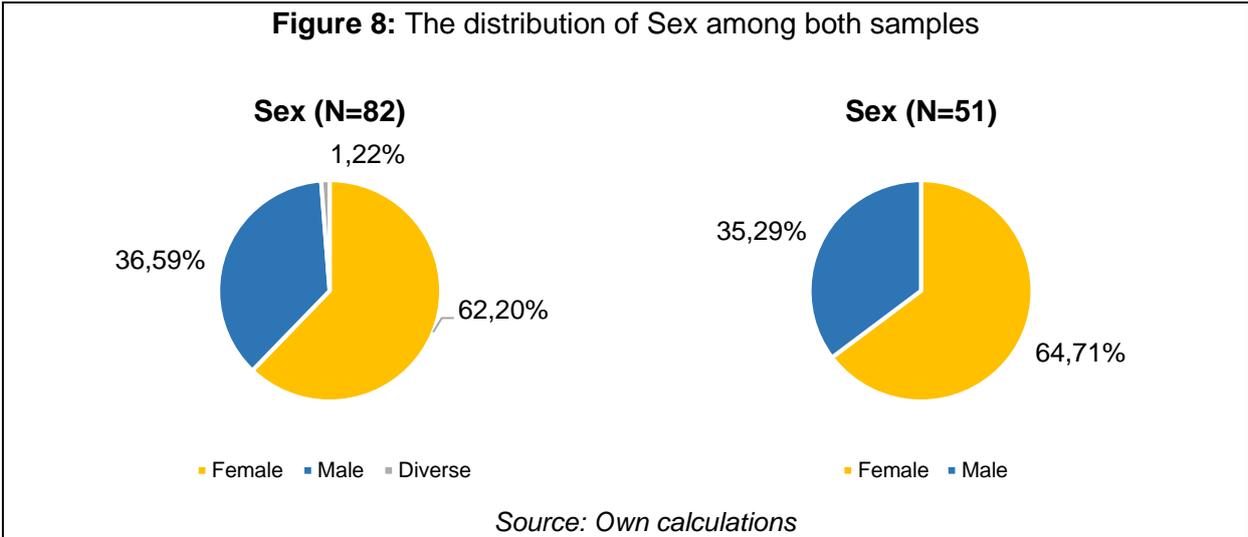


Table 2: Level of education

Educational level	N=82	N=51
Lower secondary-ISCED 2	1.22%	1.96%
Upper secondary-ISCED 3	29.27%	27.45%
Post-secondary non-tertiary-ISCED 4	7.32%	9.80%
Tertiary education-ISCED 5	1.22%	1.96%
Tertiary education-ISCED 6	36.59%	37.25%
Tertiary education-ISCED 7	21.95%	19.61%
Else	2.44%	1.96%

Source: Own calculations

Overall, the DLI sample features slightly less highly educated participants: In the original sample, 58.54% of the participants featured an ISCED level of 6 or 7. Within the DLI sample, this share reduced to 56.86% (cf. Table 2). However, despite this slight change, there are no significant differences between the two samples regarding the participants' educational level. In absolute numbers, the two most frequent groups, ISCED 3 and ISCED 6, also experienced the highest losses of participants in the context of the exclusion of the 31 participants. Furthermore, as Figure 9 illustrates, the DLI sample includes slightly less participants who are older than 25, compared to the original sample (in ratio). Finally, the female dominance already observed in the original sample, has intensified due to the exclusion of the 31 participants (cf. Figure 8).

Ultimately, the DLI sample can be characterised as follows:

- *Female-dominated:* The sample includes the answers of 33 women and 18 men (cf. Figure 8);
- *Slightly more participants older than 25:* 23 of the participants were at the time of survey 25 or younger, while 28 of them were 26 or older (cf. Figure 9); As already described, the age range of the target includes all participants aged 18-35.
- *Slightly more participants who are highly educated:* Their educational level ranges from ISCED level '2' to '7' - most of them (19 participants) had an ISCED level of '6', or of '3' (14 participants). Although quite diverse regarding their educational level, one can state that the sample is still highly educated (cf. Table 2).

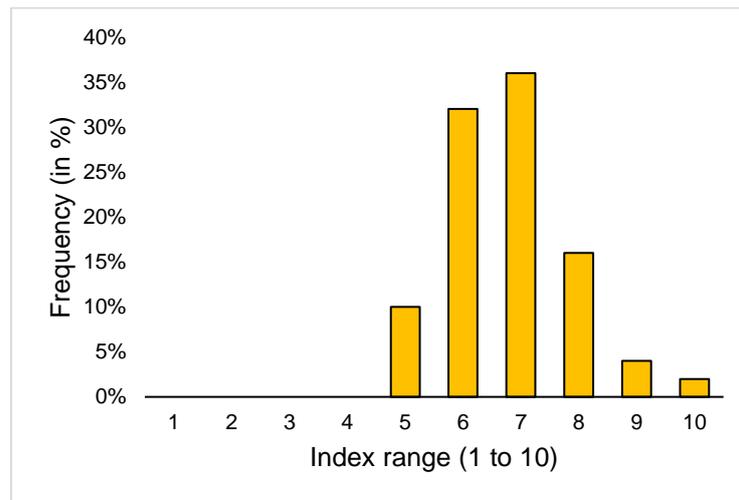
5.2 The distribution of demographic literacy

As described in the methods chapter, 12 items were included in the construction of the DLI. Those items represent the participants' self-evaluated abilities to access, understand, judge and apply demographic information on three different themes. The DLI was computed to – hypothetically - range from zero to 10 scores, with the latter being the highest achievable level of demographic literacy (please see Chapter 4 for a detailed description).

Figure 10 and Figure 11 show that using the revised sample with 51 participants, the DLI ranges between a minimum of five and a maximum of 10. Its distribution is unimodal and comes close to the shape of a bell. However, as it is demonstrated in Table 3, the distribution features a moderately positive skewness. It is furthermore leptokurtic, and its mean is slightly shifted to the right of the distribution's peak. One can therefore assume, that the distribution is neither symmetric, nor free of outliers. In fact, the index seems to be sensitive to high levels of demographic literacy: the two highest demographic literacy levels ('9' and '10') occurred only three times in total (cf. Table 5). In this sense, the calculated mean of the DLI, which is 6.78, is not necessarily representative for the demographic literacy of the sample (cf. Table 3).

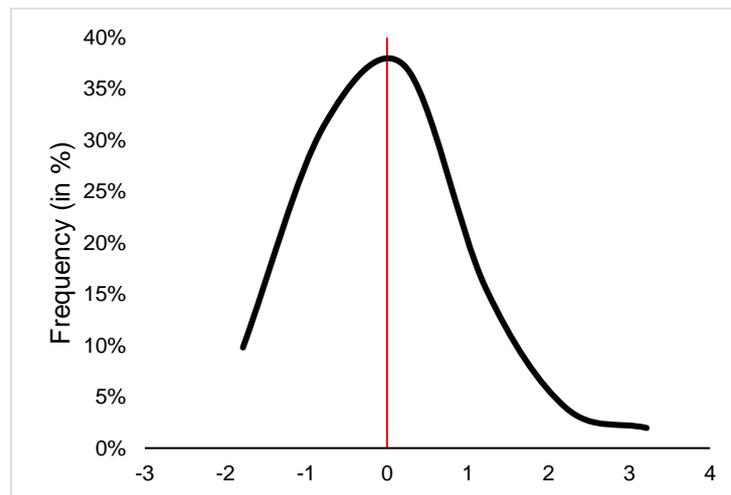
Overall, it needs to be considered that these results are based on a small number of participants.

Figure 10: Distribution of the DLI (N=51)



Source: Own calculations

Figure 11: Mean standardized distribution of the DLI (N=51)



Source: Own calculations

To get an idea of what the distribution would look like with a higher N, the results of a test version of the DLI were included in Table 3. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the DLI excluded everybody who chose the answer options *'I don't know'* and *'I don't want to answer this question'*. In the test version depicted in Table 3, every participant who answered one of the 12 index items with *'I don't know'* were included again, assigning this answer zero points. This equals 30 participants. With N=81, the distribution of the test version of the index ranges from zero to 10. Furthermore, it features a moderately negative skewness, and the standard deviation and kurtosis increased compared to the DLI sample. Hence, this distribution has a high sensitivity for lower levels of demographic literacy. Although now including more participants, this test version is even more asymmetrical. Moreover, 81 participants still pose a small N – the HLS included almost 8000 (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015). Even on the basis of 81 participants, an evaluation using logistic regression would have not been possible.

Against the background of the comparison and the methodological considerations described in the previous chapter, the present thesis will solely use the DLI to analyse the relationship between demographic literacy and the remaining variables of interest.

Table 3: Descriptive measures of the DLI

Index	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. D.	Var.	Skewness	Kurtosis
DLI	51	5	10	6.78	7	1.08	1.17	0.53	3.4
Test version	81	0	10	5.99	6	1.59	2.54	-0.63	4.65

Source: Own calculations

In addition to the DLI, seven sub-indices have been calculated (cf. Table 4). Although not used for the hypotheses, they were calculated to get a better insight in how challenging the four actions, as well as the three demographic themes were for the participants. As Table 4 illustrates, among the four actions, the sub-index which measures the ability to judge demographic information features the smallest mean (6.05). Of the three demographic themes, the sub-index which depicts the ability to handle demographic information about the impact of migration on the European society has the lowest mean (6.47). These results have been discussed during the focus group discussion (cf. Chapter 6).

Table 4: Descriptive measures of the Sub-Indices (SI)

Index	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. D.	Var.	Skewness	Kurtosis
SI Access	51	5	10	7.57	8	1.06	1.12	0.12	3.28
SI Understand	51	3	10	7.57	8	1.46	2.13	-0.66	3.77
SI Judge	51	3	10	6.05	6	2.08	4.33	0.32	2.17
SI Apply	51	3	10	6.9	7	1.45	2.13	-0.76	3.22
SI PCD	51	5	10	7.15	7	1.12	1.25	-0.14	2.65
SI MIG	51	4	10	6.47	6	1.43	2.05	0.2	2.63
SI AGE	51	3	10	7.16	7	1.7	2.89	-0.42	2.71

Source: Own calculations

5.2.1 Proportion of low demographic literacy in the sample

As outlined in the previous chapter, the HLS defines four different categories which describe the adequacy of the participants' health literacy levels (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015). If one were to adopt these threshold values for the present study, every participant with an index value of 0–5 would have an inadequate demographic literacy level (cf. Table 2, red marking).

Table 5: Thresholds for health literacy and demographic literacy

Thresholds	HLS-EU (Index range: 0-50)	DLPS (Index range: 0-10)
Inadequate	0–25	0–5
Problematic	>25–33	>5–6.6
Sufficient	>33–42	>6.6–8.4
Excellent	>42–50	>8.4–10

Source: Own calculations

The HLS furthermore summarises the categories 'inadequate' and 'problematic' as 'limited' health literacy (cf. Sørensen et al. 2015). If applied to the present study, every participant with an index value of 6.6 or lower would have a *limited* demographic literacy (cf. Table 2, orange marking). As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the DLI is constructed with a

hypothetical range from zero to 10 and presented by using solely integers: 1, 2, 3, ... and so forth. This circumstance means that it is not possible to depict the exact mark for a *limited* demographic literacy – which is, as described, 6.6. In this sense, an orange marking will show its approximate position in the following tables of the present chapter.

However, this transmission of the HLS thresholds is for illustrative purposes only and should therefore be understood as templates. Since they were formulated for the HLS, they are not transferable to the DLI. However, as already described in the previous chapter: What can be defined as an inadequate or problematic level of demographic literacy could not be determined on the basis of this paper. Hence, the HLS thresholds are used to give an idea of the consequences that the determination of these thresholds may have for the interpretation of the results. The following sections describe in more detail how the results of the DLI are to be interpreted, if the thresholds of the HLS could be applied to the available data.

Table 5 presents the frequency evaluation of the DLI. The respective table illustrates that 10% of the sample, or five participants, would have an inadequate demographic literacy *according to the thresholds defined by the HLS* (cf. Table 5, red marking). A limited demographic literacy would have 41.18% of the sample, which equals 23 participants (cf. Table 5, orange marking). The HLS came to very similar results: “Almost every second respondent (47.6%) in the total sample had limited (inadequate or problematic) health literacy (...)” (Sørensen et al. 2015: 1055).

Overall, it needs to be taken into account that the demographic literacy levels ‘5’, ‘8’, ‘9’ and ‘10’ were solely reached by less than 10 participants each. In contrast, level ‘6’ and ‘7’ include almost 70% of the sample (cf. Table 5).

Table 6: Frequency evaluation of demographic literacy

Index value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulation
1	0	0%	0%
2	0	0%	0%
3	0	0%	0%
4	0	0%	0%
5	5	9.80%	9.80%
6	16	31.37%	41.18%
7	19	37.25%	78.43%
8	8	15.69%	94.12%
9	2	3.92%	98.04%
10	1	1.96%	100%
Total	51	100%	

Source: Own calculations

5.2.2 Low demographic literacy per groups

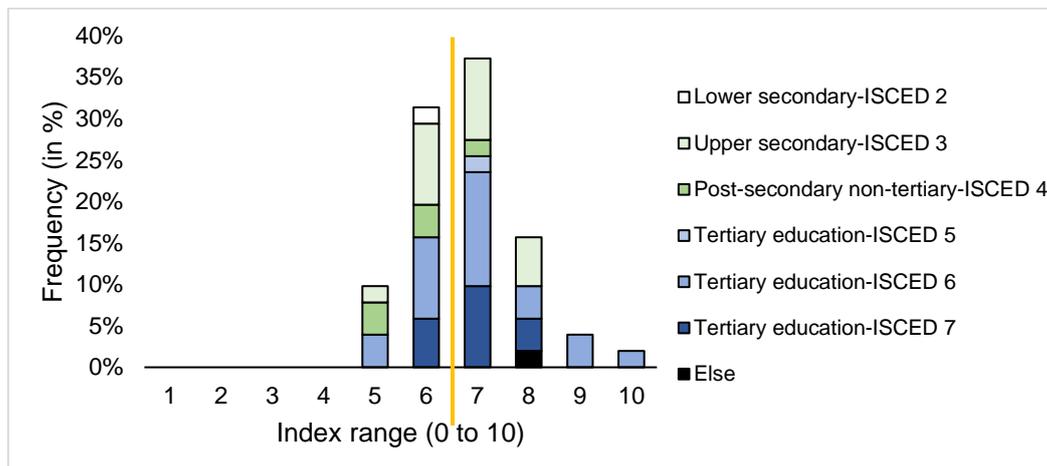
If one were to assume that the HLS-thresholds described would be transferable to demographic literacy, then *female and young participants* would, on average, be more likely to have a limited demographic literacy than male or older participants:

- 51.51% of the women who answered the questionnaire would have a limited demographic literacy compared to 22.24% of the male participants;
- 43.49% of the participants who were 25 or younger would have a limited demographic literacy compared to 39.27% of the participants who were older than 25.

The distribution of educational levels across levels of demographic literacy is, however, somewhat less obvious (cf. Figure 12):

- As stated in the methods chapter, the educational level of the participants serves as a substitute for their competencies. Figure 12 illustrates, that ISCED level '2', '4' and '5' are not represented among those participants who have a demographic literacy level of '8' or higher. However, all educational levels (with the sole exception of ISCED 5) occur among the participants who have a 'limited' demographic literacy according to the HLS-thresholds.

Figure 12: Educational levels distributed across the DLI (N=51)



Source: Own calculations

Overall, tendencies can be observed towards an association between DLI and education, gender and age of participants. Especially the difference between female and male participants is remarkable in this context. However, it remains unclear to what circumstances these differences can be attributed. Ultimately, the DLI is a self-assessment. So, it might not be the actual demographic literacy of women that is lower than that of men, but perhaps only their trust in it. However, no final statement can be made on this issue.

5.3 Demographic literacy and the participants' motivation and knowledge

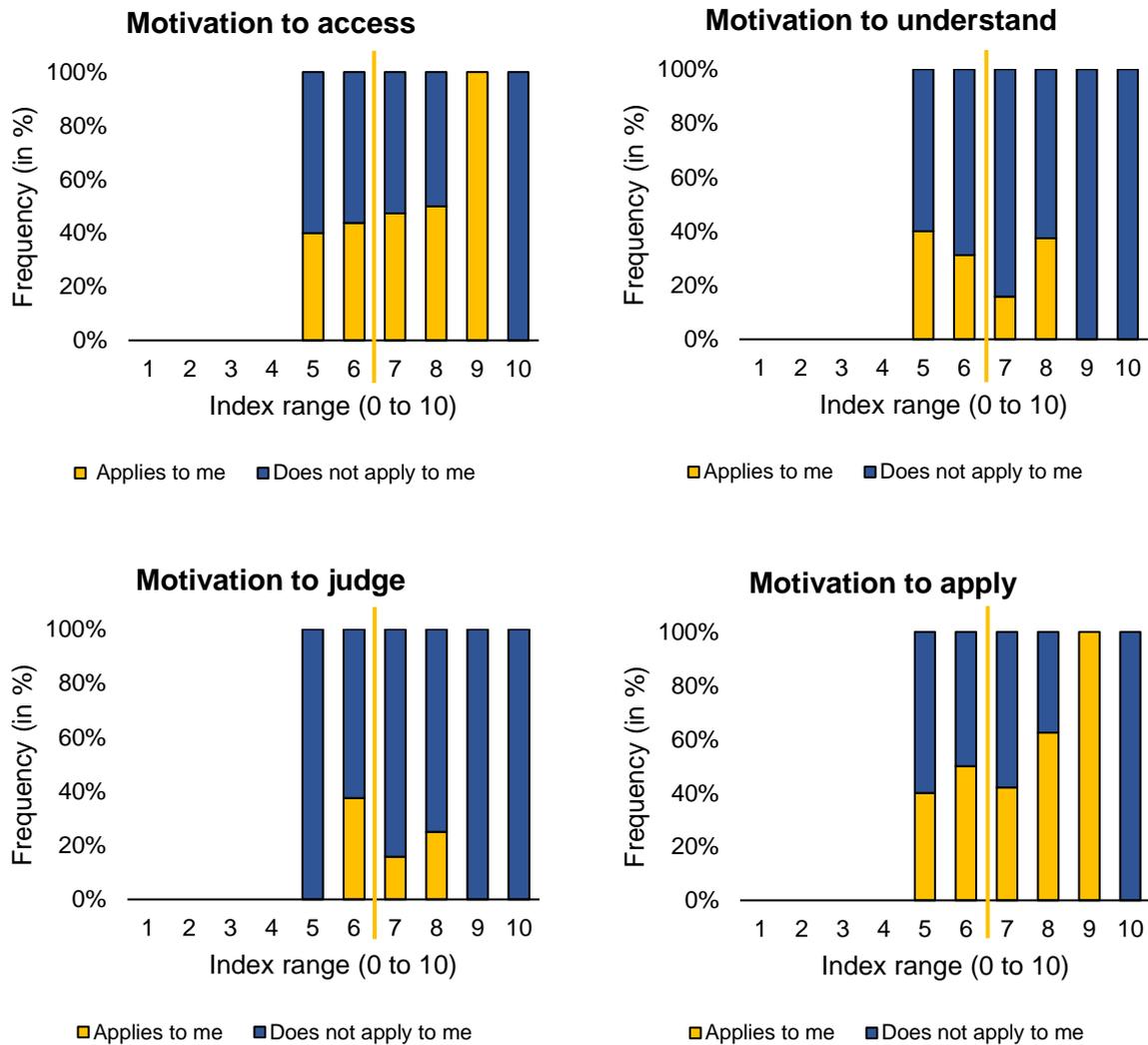
The 51 participants were furthermore analysed by their motivation to access, understand, to be able to judge and apply demographic information, as well as by their demographic knowledge.

As Figure 13 illustrates, it is not possible to identify a consistent pattern between the relationship of the participants motivation and their demographic literacy. However, tendencies are noticeable: especially in the case of searching for demographic information and applying it, the graphs show that participants are more likely to do so when their demographic literacy is high and vice versa. One exception constitutes the highest demographic literacy level ('10'). However, as already stressed, this index value was solely reached by one participant. In contrast, the tendencies regarding the participants motivation to understand and to be able to judge demographic information, are kind of reversed: here, the motivation seems to be rather decreasing the higher the demographic literacy and vice versa.

One could conclude from these findings that the participants who have a high demographic literacy might feel confident in understanding and evaluating demographic information. Against this background, they might not see any need for additional effort as they are more likely to trust their competencies. Conversely, it could be assumed that participants with a comparatively low demographic literacy are less likely to be motivated to talk about demographic issues, for example, as they might feel too insecure to do so.

However, these are only assumptions. The underlying reasons for the results remain unknown.

Figure 13: Motivation to access, understand, to be able to judge and apply demographic information, distributed across the DLI (N=51)



Source: Own calculations

Similar to the descriptive analyses concerning the four fields of motivation, the demographic knowledge results are inconclusive as well. However, it goes beyond the possibilities of the present work to present all eight knowledge questions graphically. In this sense, two comparatively extreme and at the same time contradictory examples are illustrated in Figure 14 and 15. The two graphs demonstrate the distribution of the second (Figure 14) and seventh (Figure 15) knowledge-related question across the DLI. The questions are as follows:

Knowledge-Question 2: *Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that there are more deaths than births in the European Union?*

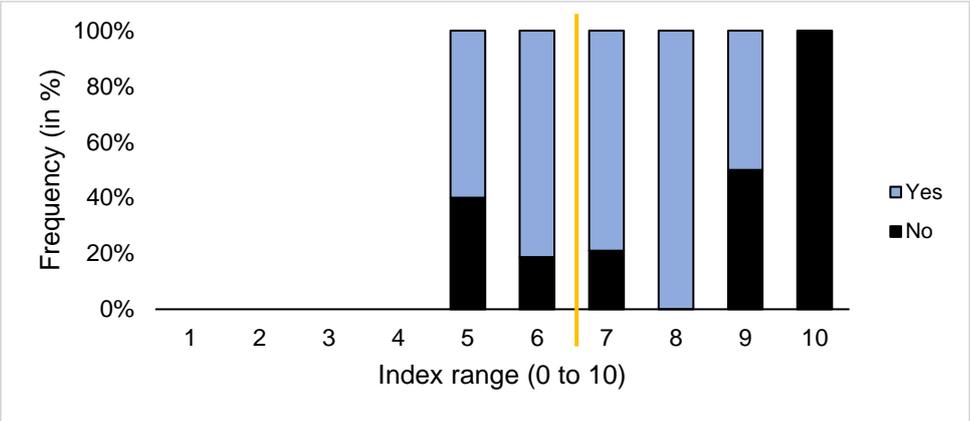
Knowledge-Question 7: *Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that 1.59 children are born per woman in the EU, on average?*

The depiction of Knowledge-Question 2 illustrates a quite surprising result: the participants who answered with 'Yes' have rather low levels of demographic literacy (cf. Figure 14). In contrast, the graph which presents the distribution of Knowledge-Question 7, shows an

opposing result. Here, all participants with a demographic literacy level of 8 or higher answered with 'Yes' (cf. Figure 15).

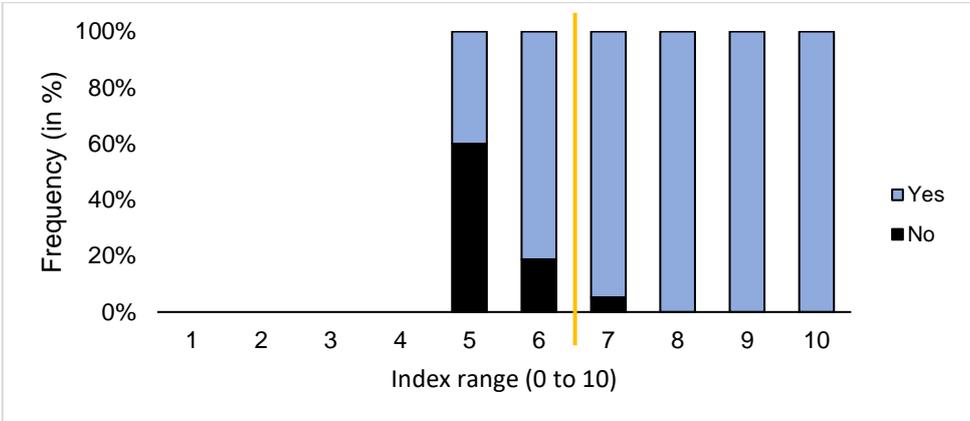
These findings suggest that the participants' demographic knowledge appears to be - at least partially - independent of their self-evaluated ability to access, understand, judge and apply demographic information. Factual knowledge thus does not necessarily seem to be tied to procedural knowledge. Once again, however, no final conclusions can be drawn.

Figure 14: Knowledge-Question 2 distributed across the DLI (N=51)



Source: Own calculations

Figure 15: Knowledge-Question 7 distributed across the DLI (N=51)



Source: Own calculations

5.4 Demographic Literacy and voting intention, preparedness, decision and preference

After describing the distribution of demographic literacy, the present chapter will deal with the descriptive analysis with regard to the relationship of demographic literacy to voting intention, preparedness, decision and preference. In the following, the description of the results, which refer to the hypotheses, is carried out chronologically.

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis is concerned with the influence of demographic literacy on the voting intention of the participants, assuming the following:

H1: The higher the level of demographic literacy, the more likely it is that Millennials express their intention to participate in the European Parliament elections 2019.

However, looking on the participants voting intention already indicates that there will not be any relationship to observe: 96.34% of the 82 participants of the original sample declared that they intended to vote. Only 1.22% answered that they don't have the intention to vote - which is equivalent to one participant. The last 2.44% said that they weren't sure yet. Using the DLI sample reduced the number of participants who intended to vote by 30 and those who weren't sure by one – which means that there are still 96.08% of the DLI sample who answered that they intended to vote. In this sense, there is no relationship between levels of demographic literacy and voting intention observable: based on the data of the present thesis, *H1 must be rejected*. However, this is not a statistical driven conclusion, but instead solely based on an observation of the available data. In this sense, no statement can be made as to the extent to which the hypothesis could be confirmed or rejected using a different data set. It also remains unclear to what extent the phenomenon of 'social desirability' played a role in the participants' response behaviour.

Hypothesis 2

The second Hypothesis deals with the relationship between demographic literacy and the participants self-declared voting preparedness:

H2: The higher the level of demographic literacy, the higher is the Millennials' *self-evaluated preparedness to participate* in the European Parliament elections 2019.

As described in the previous chapter, this hypothesis was examined by including four different questions, which are concerned with four different types of feeling prepared (or not):

- Perceived voting preparedness in general
- Perceived voting preparedness regarding the population composition and development of European countries (PCD)
- Perceived voting preparedness regarding the impact of migration on European society (MIG)
- Perceived voting preparedness regarding the impact of age structure on European society (AGE)

Figure 16 illustrates an overview of these four relationships. Becoming apparent from the respective graphs is the fact that all four of them seem to implicate tendencies towards a support of H2:

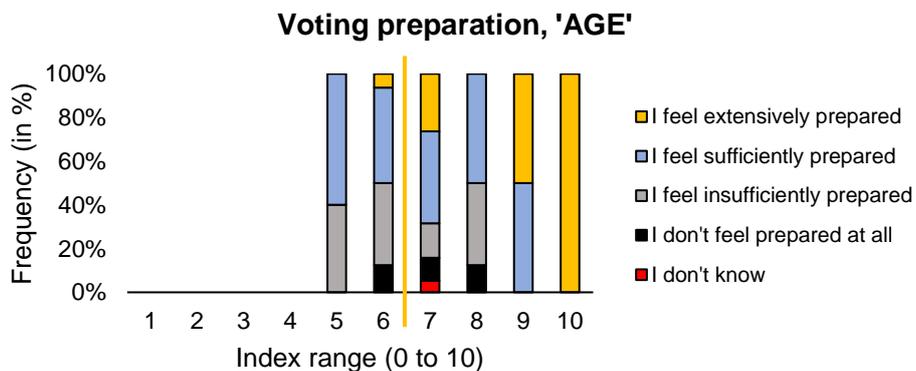
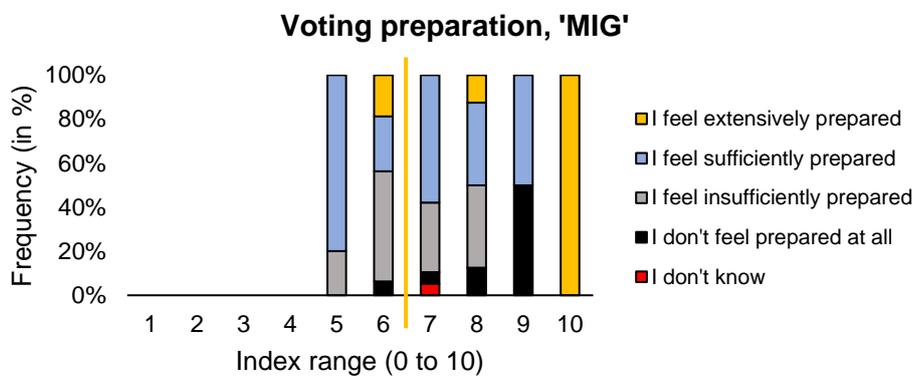
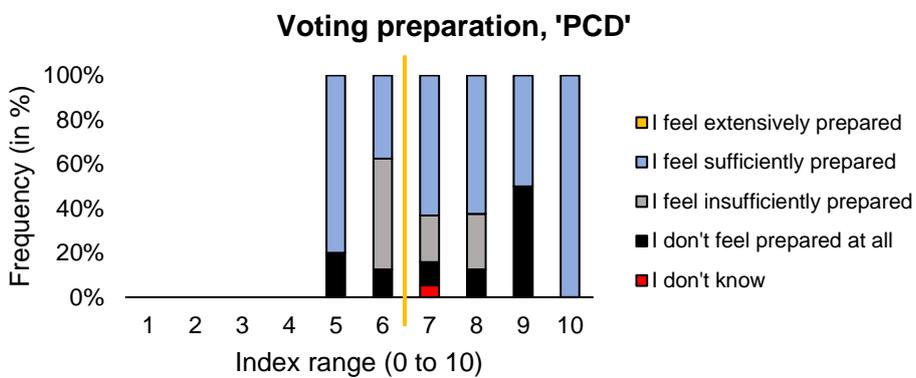
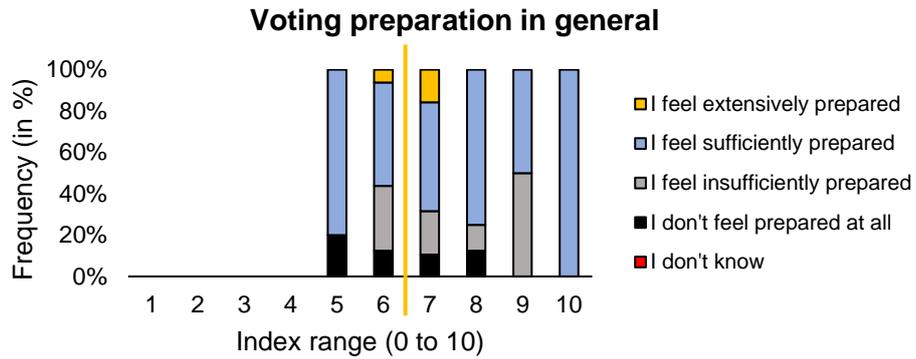
- 'feeling extensively prepared' and 'feeling sufficiently prepared' occurs rather in higher levels of demographic literacy, whereas 'feeling insufficiently prepared' and 'feeling not at all prepared' is especially prevalent in lower levels of demographic literacy.
- Especially the fourth graph, which is concerned with perceived voting preparedness with regard to the impact of age structure on the European society illustrates, how the participants feeling of preparedness increases with higher levels of demographic literacy

However, there are exceptions that should not be left unmentioned:

- In the first, third and fourth graph of Figure 16, the answer option 'I feel extensively prepared' occurs also among lower levels of demographic literacy.
- In contrast, in the second and third graph the answer option 'I don't feel prepared at all' is prevalent among high levels of demographic literacy as well.

Based on these results, one could conclude that a high, self-evaluated demographic competence might be accompanied by a certain self-confidence with solely specific topics and vice versa. The relationship between the variables might also work the other way around: Participants might assess their demographic literacy as rather high because they are particularly familiar with specific topics. In this context, one could argue that the factual, demographic knowledge of the participants might influence the relationship between the DLI and their feeling of being prepared. Whether and to what extent this might be the case, however, cannot be said. Overall, H2 can neither be rejected, nor supported. Although some trends are apparent, no final statement can be made.

Figure 16: Voting preparation distributed across the DLI (N=51)



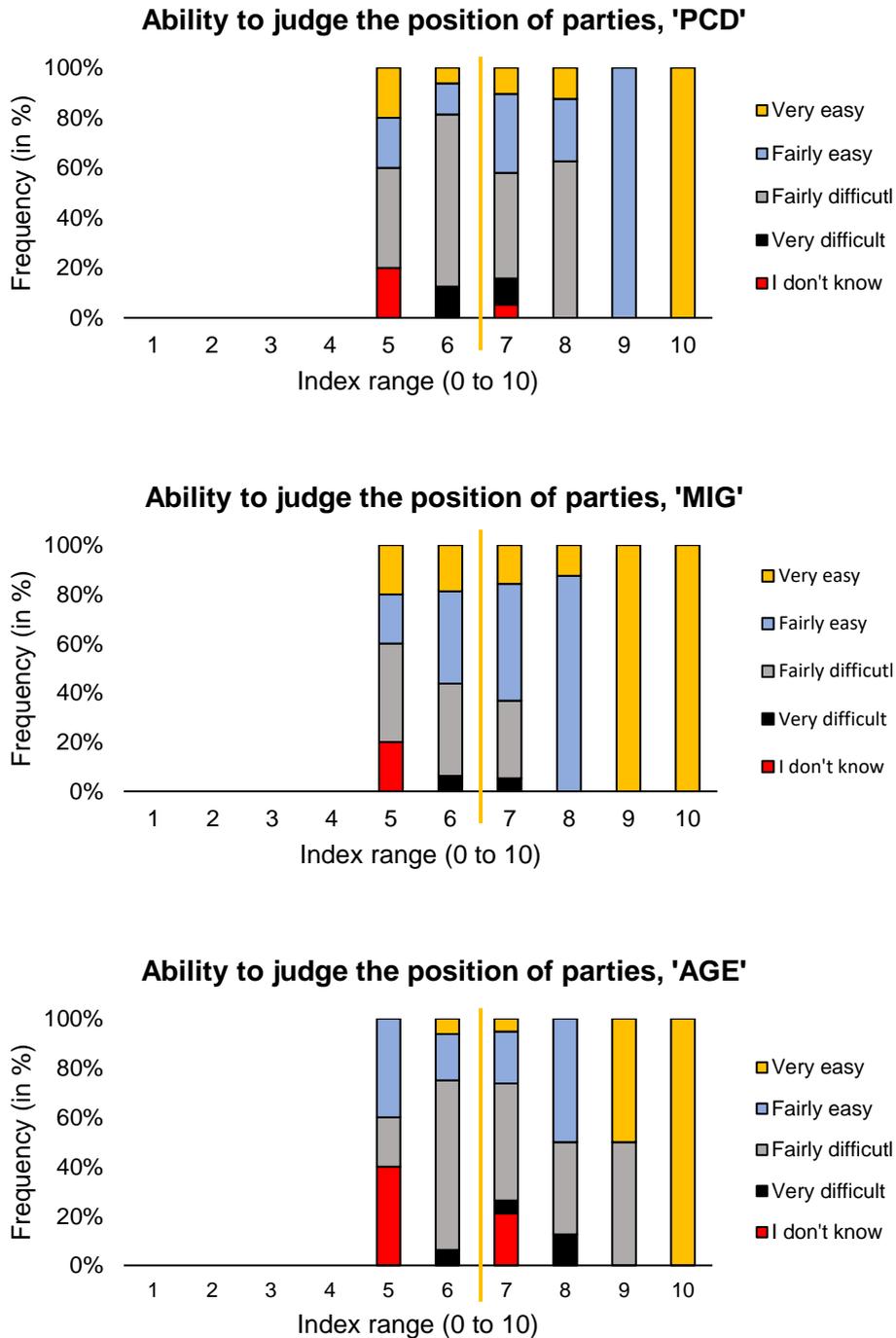
Source: Own calculations

Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis of the present thesis deals with the relationship of demographic literacy and its influence on the self-evaluated ability to judge, whether parties represent their views when it comes to demographic topics:

H3: The higher the level of demographic literacy, the higher is the Millennials' *self-evaluated ability to judge*, whether parties agree with their views on demographic topics.

Figure 17: Self-evaluated ability to judge the position of parties. Distributed across the DLI (N=51)



Source: Own calculations

Once again, participants were asked the corresponding question on all three topics: PCD, MIG and AGE. Figure 17 shows that the results are comparatively consistent among the three demographic themes, with a tendency towards a confirmation of H3:

- Especially the second graph ('MIG') illustrates an increasing importance of the answer option 'fairly easy', the higher the demographic literacy of participants is.
- A similar, albeit more irregular picture represents the distribution of the answer option 'fairly difficult': All three graphs show that it seems to be rather prevalent among participants with lower levels of demographic literacy.
- Finally, the answer option 'I don't know' occurs comparatively often – overall, but especially among participants with a demographic literacy, which would be described as 'limited', or 'sufficient' according to the HLS thresholds.

However, there are some greater inconsistencies observable as well:

- The answer option 'very difficult' is not solely chosen by participants with a limited demographic literacy.
- Furthermore, participants among every level of demographic literacy chose the answer option 'Very easy' in the second graph, which is concerned with the impact of migration on the EU.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that under different conditions and with a different data set, one might observe a confirmation of H3. Ultimately, however, there is no final statement possible here either. The results nevertheless reveal some insights: despite a small dataset, trends can be observed that suggest an influence of demographic literacy on the ability to judge parties according to their positions about demographic issues. Nevertheless, it remains unclear to what these observations can be attributed:

- The trust in one's own demographic literacy might go hand in hand with the trust in one's own ability to judge the position of parties.
- The feeling of being able to judge parties might be based on general opinions rather than factual knowledge.
- It furthermore remains to be explained on what basis the assessment of the parties' positions is based: What influence does the judgement of the media or the family have on one's own judgement?

Many questions therefore remain unanswered. However, the results provide first insights – especially regarding the fact, that in the question of the parties' positions, it seems to be comparatively independent of the respective demographic topic to what extent the participants trust their ability to judge them.

Hypothesis 4

The fourth and final hypothesis of the present thesis deals with the relationship of demographic literacy and its influence on the importance attributed to the positions of parties on demographic topics for the voting decision:

H4: The higher the levels of demographic literacy, *the more importance is attributed* by Millennials to the positions of parties on demographic topics for their *voting preference* in the European Parliament elections 2019.

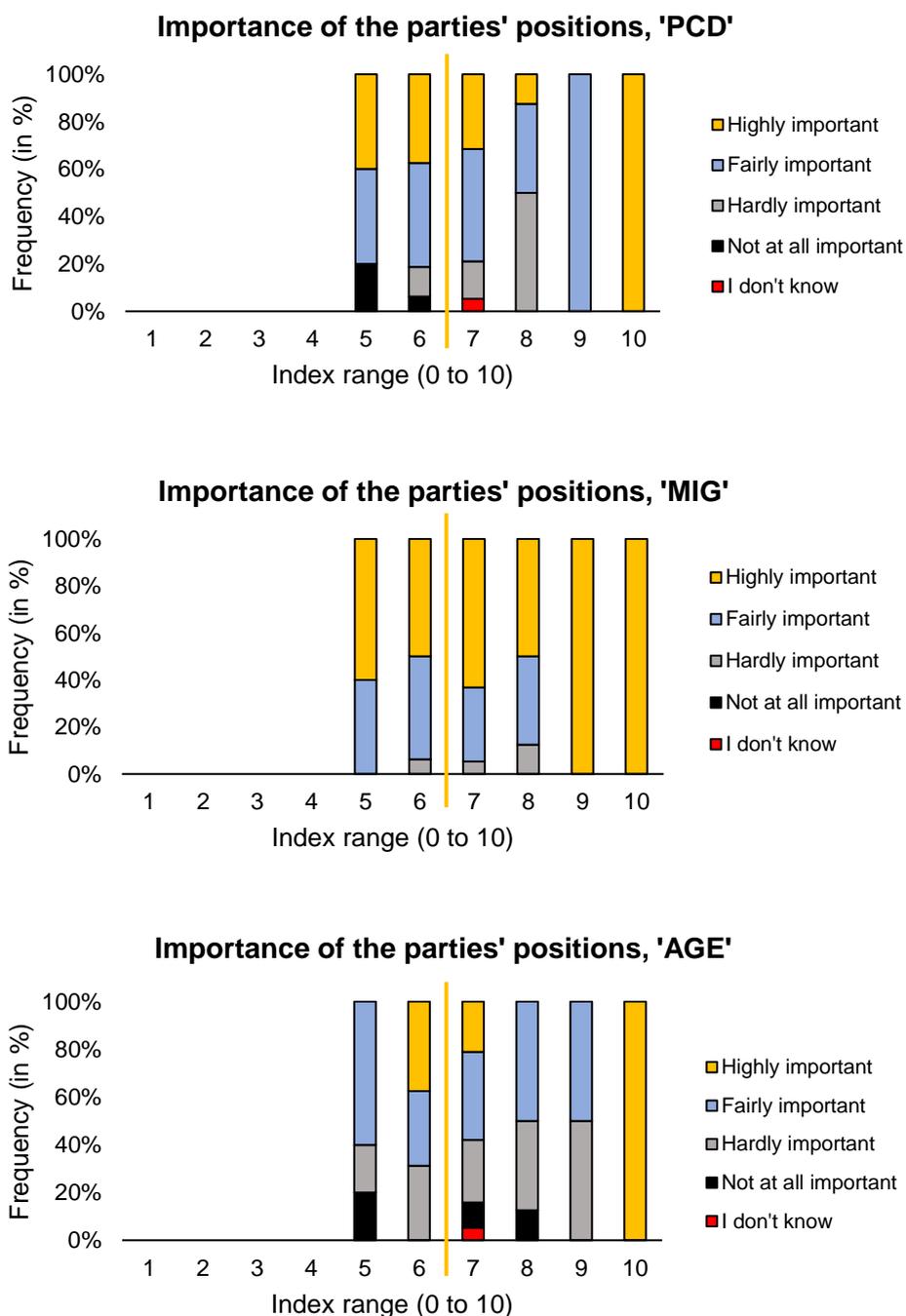
As illustrated in Figure 18, there are some tendencies towards a support of H4:

- The first graph illustrates that the answer option 'not at all important' was solely chosen by participants with a limited demographic literacy.
- In the first and second graph, every participant with an excellent demographic literacy answered either with 'highly important', or 'fairly important'.

However, there are also tendencies towards a rejection of H4 observable:

- The second graph, which is concerned with the impact of migration on the EU, illustrates a high prevalence of the answer option 'highly important' – not only among participants with a high demographic literacy, but also among those with limited demographic literacy.
- Especially the third graph depicts a quite diverse distribution: The answer options 'fairly important' and 'hardly important' occur among every level of demographic literacy – except the highest ('10'). Besides, some participants with comparatively high levels of demographic literacy ('7' and '8'), chose the answer option 'not at all important' – which is a contradictory result for the assumption of H4.

Figure 18: The importance attributed to the positions of parties on demographic topics for the voting decision. Distributed across the DLI (N=51)



Source: Own calculations

In context of the findings related to H3, it seems remarkable, that the topic of migration (MIG) stands out again. Across all levels of demographic literacy, participants attribute a high importance to the parties' positions about this topic, while at the same time, participants across all levels of demography self-evaluate their ability to judge if those positions are in line with their views as 'very easy'. The reasons for this answer behaviour are not known, but could be related to the following considerations:

- One could hypothesise that political parties position themselves quite clearly regarding the topic of migration, which in turn, might make it easier for participants to judge their position.
- Besides, one could argue that the topic of migration is highly prevalent in the media, gaining its importance for participants through its omnipresence.
- A further consideration could be that the participants are the most emotionally affected by the topic of migration, making it a topic that is highly connected to their values and beliefs. This circumstance would make it highly important for them. Besides, they might in consequence perceive it to be easier to judge parties' positions based on their personal values, than factual knowledge.

However, these are hypothetical considerations, the validity of which cannot be deduced from the available data. In this sense, it remains unclear which reasons triggered the response behaviour of the participants.

6. QUALITATIVE RESULTS

In the present chapter, the findings of the focus group discussion will be presented. First of all, the respective sample will be described based on its socio-demographic characteristics. In the following, the opinions, thoughts and feelings expressed by the participants will be elaborated.

6.1 The sample

Table 7 provides an overview of the participants transcript-ID, their age and highest educational attainment, as well as their current occupation. In comparison to the socio-demographic composition of the online questionnaire (DLI sample), it becomes evident that the qualitative sample is, on average, higher educated and consists of more women. Furthermore, the proportion of participants being 26 or older at the time of the discussion is higher than in the DLI sample. The current occupations range from an apprenticeship and several student statuses to full-time employments.

Table 7: Descriptive depiction of the sample

ID	Age	Highest educational attainment	Current occupation
F1	25	ISCED 6	Master student of sociology and social sciences
F2	27	ISCED 6	Employee in a market research agency
F3	27	ISCED 6	Student of a dual study in a municipal administration service
F4	26	ISCED 7	Graduate student in sociology and social sciences
F5	26	ISCED 8	Doctor
M1	22	ISCED 3	Apprentice in wholesale and export trade
M2	28	ISCED 7	Journalist in an online sports' editorial office

Source: Own depiction

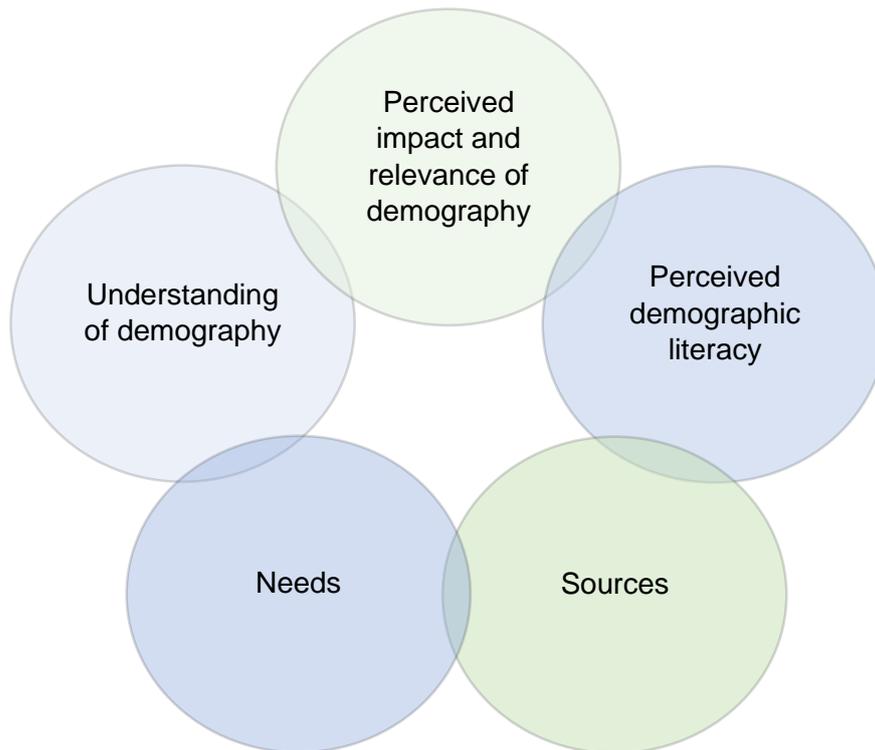
6.2 Description of the findings

The following chapter describes how the participants expressed their views on the various topics raised in the discussion. The structure is thereby based on the established code categories (cf. Figure 19). Although these are described one by one, they should be viewed as flexible entities, which are all closely interrelated (cf. Figure 19). Therefore, they cannot be understood separately.

To not disturb the flow of reading, the respective codes are depicted on the right side of the chapter. Quotes of the participants are marked with the respective ID and time of the contribution, so that the reader can trace the quotes back using the transcript (cf. appendix).⁴

⁴ Within those quotes, breaks within a speech contribution are marked with "[...]", whereas the omission of fragments by the author is marked with "(...)".

Figure 19: Code categories



Source: Own depiction

Understanding of demography

The participants explained and showed a very specific understanding of demography, which could be summarised in two subcategories - entailing the meaning they assigned⁵ to demography, as well as its characteristics. Their opinions and thoughts are presented below.

Meaning

The participants were very coherent in their answers when it came to the meaning they attributed to the term 'demography'. The first activity on Mentimeter nicely depicted that the topics concerned with ageing societies, as well as population structure-related terms were highly prominent among all participants (cf. Figure 20). The respective activity further illustrated, that migration played only a subordinate role in this context. The participants explained with regard to this result, that it felt somewhat more obvious for them to think about the age and population structure first:

Ageing society

Population structure

"Maybe if you think of demography, as has just been said, you often think of the country you live in and look at the age structure, how many are born, how many men, how many women, in which age groups. And perhaps you don't think about who's going in and who's going out at first (...)." (F1, #00:08:43-1#).

An ageing society-centred understanding of demography was further confirmed when asked about demography in general. The participants oftentimes used examples concerned with topics like pensions, or perceived

⁵ The following chapter is written in past tense, since the participants might have changed their opinions in the meantime

shortage of care places in Germany, to explain their feelings and thoughts. Although not directly asked about their understanding of the meaning of demography in those cases, the participants nevertheless answered indirectly to the respective question by using those specific examples. The personal choice of concrete examples was therefore understood as indication of the participants' comprehension of demography. This understanding reduced the dominance of population structure-related topics as main framework of meaning in the course of the discussion. 'Ageing society' turned out to be their primary reference when it came to their understanding of demography.

Figure 20: First activity on Mentimeter⁶



Source: Own depiction via Mentimeter

Overall, the participants were able to formulate several, different topics that they could knowingly associate with demography. However, as the distinction between different demography-related topics already indicates, it became evident that some participants' understanding of this term was rather focussed on specific issues than on the 'big picture'. Nevertheless, the respective participants were aware of this circumstance and they even addressed it self-reflective:

"My problem is that with eight out of ten terms that we discussed, I didn't even know that they belonged to it. So, age structure or migration, you know / they are such noticeable terms. You know them and you can assign them. But with the others I don't know at all that they belong to it. I can't subordinate everything under this big term (...)" (M1, #00:49:33-9#).

Unfamiliarity

This quote illustrates, that participants were able to assign meaning to different demographic subtopics. However, they were not necessarily aware of the fact that these can be summarised under the word 'demography', since it was rather difficult for some to grasp this term. Those participants, who did not perceive this as a difficulty, nevertheless stated that in their opinion, this would still be true for most people:

"So, if you want to define this term, what do people understand by demography, then I would definitely say that there is no awareness of what is meant by it" (F4, #01:26:44-9#).

Overall, it would be inaccurate to state that the participants didn't know what demography means. What, however, became clear is the fact that some participants had an incomplete understanding of what demography entails, since they were rather unfamiliar with the term.

⁶ Translation of the three most frequently used terms: 'altersstruktur' = 'age structure', 'bevölkerung' = 'population', 'probleme' = 'problems'.

Characteristics

In line with the previous findings, the participants emphasised that they perceive demography as highly complex, characterised by multiple interrelations, which usually remain unclear or superficial for them and others:

“The term is not used in the media because it is so complex that many can't grasp it. And then it's such a main topic, where it is subordinated beneath and nobody can get anything out of it, although of course there is knowledge about it” (F1, #00:50:06-3#).

Complex and interrelated

This perception was the most repeated, as well as most agreed on during the discussion. All participants assigned these two characteristics to demography – some multiple times, and independent of the question asked. It therefore represents one of the core messages of the discussion.

Furthermore, the participants characterised demographic topics as triggering emotions in people and that debates and conversations about those issues are not necessarily rational. They clarified their position by arguing that they thought that people's beliefs and attitudes rather turn the balance on how demographic topics are perceived than arguments and facts do:

Emotions, beliefs & attitudes

“But it's just a basic political position that you have on topics like migration and pensions. I don't think you're aware of it at all, but everyone has an attitude to it, be it well-founded or not. (...)” (F1, #00:35:19-3#).

They did not exclude themselves from this realisation and it became clear that strong convictions represented their primary point of orientation when it came to demography-related topics. In particular, they were concerned about perceived overpopulation and the consequences this might impose for the environment. At this point, a clear connection to the perceived influence of demography on their own lives could be observed, which will be explained in more detail below.

Perceived impact and relevance of demography

What became evident in the context of the participants' understanding of demography, is that a concrete point of contact was needed for them to feel a connection to demography. When they reported that they didn't feel any relation to demographic topics, it could be led back to the fact that they had not yet seen any intersections with their everyday lives:

Experienceable

“I think it has something to do with the fact that it doesn't affect us directly in everyday life. When a situation comes or something is reported in the media and details and numbers are mentioned / But in normal everyday life you are not confronted with more specific things (...)” (F2, #00:18:27-3#).

In contrast, every participant who reported that demographic issues were concretely relevant or even important for them, referred in that context to a specific example, in which demography was visible or experienceable for them - since it had affected friends, members of their family, or themselves in the past. Remarkable in this context is the circumstance that those specific points of contact were always perceived negatively:

Linked to negative outcomes

“(...) If I also think of my grandfather, we really had problems finding a place in a nursing home. I also notice that when I look at my friends. Getting your grandmother's care done is an important issue. Also because of the nursing

professions, which understandably nobody wants to go to because they are so badly paid” (F3, #00:14:51-6#).

In fact, positive or neutral aspects never came up. The observation that negative associations with demography played an important role for the participants became already apparent during the first Mentimeter activity: 'problems' was one of the three most frequently mentioned terms (cf. Figure 20). So, to summarise this result: participants felt the impact and relevance of demography in their everyday life, when related issues were linked to negative outcomes for them, or people close to them. This finding became further evident with regard to other points of contact that were identified: Besides the frequent topic of ageing societies, life planning, overpopulation and climate change were described as issues, which one way or another had impacted their life. Especially the latter was emphasised in this context. Although not mentioned as something they would link to the term 'demography' during the first Mentimeter discussion, the participants showed that they connected climate change with specific demographic issues:

Experienceable:

Ageing society

Climate change

Life planning

Over-population

“I just talked to a friend about it yesterday. We probably all want to have children, but when you look at the earth, it's totally selfish. It's the worst thing you can do right now. Theoretically” (F4, #00:16:18-8#).

The participants therefore emphasised connections between different topics and drew consequences for their own lives. As Figure 21 illustrates, the importance of climate change became furthermore evident, when asked, which topic had been the most important for them in the course of the European Parliament elections 2019:

Figure 21: Fourth activity on Mentimeter⁷



Source: Own depiction via Mentimeter

As illustrated, neither population-related, nor ageing society-related terms were mentioned here. Migration, although a demographic topic, was hardly described as something the participants would associate with demography – in the first Mentimeter activity, it was only mentioned once (cf. Figure 20). Based on this background, (practically) no term that the participants related to demography beforehand was named when asked about important topics in course of the elections. Instead, one could summarise the participants' main driver for their voting decision as 'anti-populist':

*'Anti-populist'
voting decision*

“I think that the voter turnout was also a lot higher than usual this time, because somehow / That may sound harsh, but with the right-wing populists you had a common image of the enemy. That you might have got your ass up and rallied yourself to vote, because you wanted to try with all your might that they wouldn't get any votes” (M2, #01:20:57-6#).

⁷ Translation: 'klimawandel' = 'climate change', 'umwelt' = 'environment', 'umweltschutz' = 'environmental protection'.

Hence, it was more important for them to position themselves against populist parties, than explicitly in favour of specific demography approaches.

Regarding their perception of migration, one participant explained the following:

"(...) I wasn't aware that migration is a big part of demography because I always linked it to age structure and so on. (...)" (M2, #01:30:22-7#).

In this context, it needs to be taken into account that when talking about 'migration', the participants referred to international migration, and more precisely: to immigration from other countries to Germany. Nonetheless, it became evident that some of the participants did not think about migration as a demography-related topic and none of the participants felt impacted by it. They expressed that it did not affect them in their everyday life, while referring to migration as something that is normal for them. Paradoxically, since migration had been such a natural part of their everyday life, they neither described it as an important or relevant issue, which impacts them, nor did they necessarily describe it as a demographic topic:

*Migration
=
self-evident*

"I think migration is not unimportant, not at all. But I think that's because it's less of an issue for me, because it's so self-evident to me that it's okay" (F5, #01:18:34-0#).

Since the participants did not feel negatively affected by migration, they unitedly explained that it would not really be an issue for them in their everyday lives. It had become an issue, however, in the course of the elections, due to their urge to position themselves against populists. In this context, the attitudes and values of the participants were perceived as threatened by a possible upswing of those populists. Hence, migration became an important issue at that moment when their beliefs had been perceived as endangered, and when the topic had been linked by them to negative outcomes. A close connection between the described, rather emotional than rational approach to demography, and the perceived, negative consequences for one's own life in connection with demographic issues became clear.

It is finally worth mentioning, that although the participants did not express a personal impact through demography-related topics, if not directly or indirectly affected by those, they unitedly stressed that demography has an impact on everyone. However, this impact was approached in a rather distanced manner and mostly not specified in more detail. The participants thus emphasized their awareness that demographic issues affected everyone:

"I believe that quite often we don't even notice that problems that we have or things that are addressed fall under the term at all. We have just talked about the fact that the population is ageing more and more and there will be more and more problems in the future because fewer and fewer children are born. And, paradoxically, there are still not be enough day care places for everyone. So, it seems to be a problem in all age structures. And I think that affects everyone, no matter what age you are. When you're old, there's no pension, when you're young, no day care places. I think it affects everyone, even if you don't know it's a demographic issue" (F1, #00:13:18-7# #00:13:18-7#).

*Impact on
everyone*

In this context, the impression was reinforced that this impact was not felt by them, unless there was an individual link experienced in their everyday

lives. Although the participant spoke of society as a whole and there was no explicit reference to her own life in the above given quote, demographic issues were again negatively associated here and linked to perceived problems.

Perceived demographic literacy

It became furthermore evident, that the group was divided between those, who had at least some confidence in their demographic knowledge and their abilities and those, who did not.

Demographic knowledge and the motivation to deepen one's competencies

Regarding their demographic knowledge, most participants stated that they had some but limited demographic knowledge. They already emphasised its restrictions by arguing that it wouldn't be enough to apply it – which is one of the four actions of the demographic literacy definition:

"I think we rather have amateurish knowledge. You pick up something everywhere, but it's not a well-founded knowledge with which you could discuss for two hours" (F4, #00:34:06-0#).

*Some/limited,
topic-
dependent
demographic
knowledge*

Hence, the participants distinguished between their knowledge and their ability to apply demographic information. It became evident, that they perceived demographic knowledge as kind of a prerequisite for this ability. The participants' expertise was furthermore described as linked to single, demographic components. This is in line with the results mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, which imply that the participants were more familiar with specific topics rather than every discipline the term 'demography' might entail. In this sense, it was kind of difficult for the participants to estimate their demographic knowledge, since they could not generalise it. Tight linkages between the different codes generated throughout the analysis are observable here.

This has also been the case regarding the participants' motivation to deepen their demography-related competencies, which was linked to points of contact as well: the participants explained that their motivation depended on the extent to which they were affected by demographic issues. In this sense, some of them stated that they didn't have any motivation to deepen their competencies, since they saw no reason for it:

*Motivation is
linked to
points of
contact*

"I don't think I'm specifically looking for it. Something like pension is still too far away for me. I'm not yet so involved as to sacrifice my free time for it. (...)" (M2, #00:21:46-0#).

Applying

The fact that the participants thought of demographic knowledge as a prerequisite of the ability to apply demographic information in combination with the circumstance, that they perceived their knowledge as limited, resulted in statements, in which they declared or showed, that they were rather insecure regarding applying demographic information in conversations. As it was already the case with their demographic knowledge, their perceived ability to apply demographic information was described as depending on the respective topic:

*Feeling
insecure*

"And it's also difficult to generalize all the demographic issues. If I had to talk to someone about pensions and would have to represent my favourite payment model, then / I don't know / But if someone comes around the corner with AfD

slogans, then I would probably find it much easier to show them that they are on the wrong track. It is difficult to generalize” (M2, #00:34:22-0#).

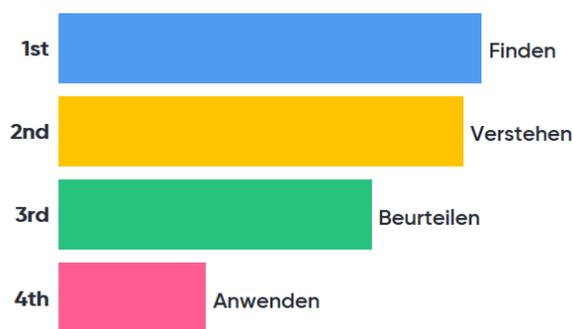
The quote shows that the difficulty was not only perceived as dependent on the topic. The participant compared here a more fact-based discussion with a conversation about political slogans.⁸ The latter can also be based on values and beliefs. Factual knowledge is not necessarily needed to position oneself against or for certain convictions. This insight is closely related to the fact that attitudes and emotions had also played a decisive role in the participants’ voting decisions.

Overall, applying demographic information was perceived as the most challenging task in comparison to the remaining abilities: access, understand and judge. The participants emphasised that the four actions kind of build upon each other regarding their difficulty:

“You can find many things. Evaluating is the step that follows. I have to be able to judge it somehow and it's not that easy. But the mass is already there” (F2, #00:39:03-0#).

“And to be able to evaluate it correctly, you theoretically have to understand it first. And then I thought theoretically I could use it, although I didn't understand it. Maybe that happens a lot. That you find things, think, you have understood them and carry them out into the world, but actually it's not like that” (F1, #00:39:26-0#).

Figure 22: Second activity on Mentimeter⁹



Source: Own depiction via Mentimeter

Accessing and judging

In this sense, finding demographic information was described as the easiest task to accomplish (cf. Figure 22). However, none of the participants explicitly stated that they would actively search for demographic information. In consequence, they emphasised that they could not really evaluate their ability to find demographic information, since they just had not known how easy or difficult it would be for them. As already implied by the statement above, the ‘mass’ was perceived as (hypothetical) accessible. Demographic information was therefore described as being available and the participants felt kind of provided with it:

,I don't know'

“(...) mostly information just comes to you. I can't decide whether I want to take it or not. And maybe it's the case that if you don't reflect that now then it's like [...] / I just know it now, but I don't even know anymore whether it was a simple or a difficult process” (F1, #00:48:38-2#).

⁸ Note: 'AfD' is the abbreviation for a German party from the right spectrum, which is represented in the Bundestag.

⁹ Task: Please rank these four actions from easiest to most difficult regarding how challenging you think these tasks are. Translation: 'finden' = 'access', 'verstehen' = 'understand', 'beurteilen' = 'judge', 'anwenden' = 'apply'.

However, it became clear that this provision was not necessarily positively associated, since the participants had no influence on the amount, topic and presentation of the information. Statements like these were directly related to the media as a platform that provides participants with information (see next code category). What became furthermore evident in this context, is that the process of gaining knowledge was described as taking place rather unconsciously. The participants simply knew about certain things. They explained that they would not control the flow of information - unless they would have a concrete motivation to do so. Their role in this context was described as being primarily passive.

In line with this finding, the participants explained that they had relied more on their instincts than on conscious, rational argumentation when it came to judge demographic information. They furthermore explained, that this circumstance had assumingly made it comparatively difficult for people to self-evaluate their ability to do so during the online questionnaire:

"(...) You go back to your own experience when you judge things, compare it to known things and I can imagine that when it comes to demographic issues where many people don't know they're actively dealing with them - or they just don't actively deal with them per se - they find it very difficult to judge whether the information is right or not" (M2, #00:40:36-2#).

The participants assumed that a lack of conscious experiences with demographic information, would make it complicated for people to judge those.

Understanding

Regarding the ability to understand demographic information, it is worth mentioning that the participants were divided over the question if this would be easy or difficult. Two opposing views could be identified: the first one emphasised that the ability to understand demographic information depends on a topic's complexity, while the second one accentuated that lots of information facilitate the process of understanding. In this context, it is worth mentioning, that the participants explicitly linked those views to different demographic topics. Ageing society-related issues were perceived as less complex and therefore as rather understandable for those, who felt that the difficulty of a topic is defined by its complexity:

"(...) I consider age to be the most one-dimensional of the subjects. Who is how old? What percentage? And so on. Population pyramid. Migration, how many come, how many leave? I find it more complicated than age structure, but it's not as complex as population development and composition. That includes everything somehow. It's much more complex, it's more general" (F5, #00:43:56-8#).

Migration-related issues, however, were perceived as rather understandable for those, who felt that the more information provided the easier would it be to understand a topic:

"I (...) have migration in the first place because you just get the most information about it" (F4, #00:44:34-9#).

It became clear from the above-mentioned quote that this approach was again accompanied more by a passive role of the participants. They described how they were provided with information. Since they themselves did not actively search for such information, it was easier for them to

*Complexity
=
Difficulty*

*The more
information,
the easier it
gets*

understand demographic issues about which much information was circulating.

However, the opinion that complexity leads to difficulty was more prevalent throughout the discussion, than the assumption that more information makes it easier to comprehend demographic issues. Therefore, it comes with no surprise that when asked to perform the third Mentimeter activity, 'age structure' was the demographic topic perceived as the easiest to understand:

Figure 23: Third activity on Mentimeter¹⁰



Source: Own depiction via Mentimeter

Overall - and in line with the previous results - single demography-related topics were emphasised as more understandable than demographic interrelations.

Sources for demographic information

When asked about which sources they would use to get demographic information, the participants clearly emphasised that the media sector represented their main provider. Throughout the discussion, it became evident that their role in this context was primarily passive. As already explained, the participants had practically not sought demographic information in the past. The question as to whether access to demographic information from any source was difficult or easy for them could only be answered with 'I don't know'. Hence, the participants had rather been provided with the information – mainly by various media services, but also by schools, universities and politicians. Providers from the popular sector like family and friends were only mentioned as existing, without outlining their position more precisely. The popular sector therefore played a clearly subordinated role in comparison to the other sectors.

Furthermore, the participants unitedly stated that the trust they would place in information depends highly on the source from which they perceive it. In this context, they explicitly referred to politicians, in whom they have comparatively little confidence:

Trust depends on source

"(...) I wouldn't tie it to demographic themes, if and how much I trust a source. For example, at the 'Tagesschau', you might believe in what is reported simply because it is a public broadcasting station. And when a politician says something,

¹⁰ Task: Please rank these four topics from easiest to most difficult regarding how challenging you think they are
Translation: 'Altersstruktur' = 'Age structure', 'Bevölkerungsentwicklung und -zusammensetzung' = 'Population composition and development'.

I don't automatically believe him. But that's not because of the demographic issues, but because he's a politician. (...)" (M2, #00:29:53-0#).

The 'Tagesschau' mentioned here is a news programme of the public broadcaster ARD, which in Germany is generally associated with seriousness and the distribution of factual information. What was also mentioned several times were political podcasts to which the participants felt personally connected, for example 'Die Lage der Nation'¹¹. This was justified by the fact that they had been following the respective authors for some time and therefore trusted them. Confidence in factual information and confidence in people with whom they had been connected for a long time were the decisive factors in this context.

Professional sector

Reasons why participants placed less trust in politicians than in the media might be linked to the circumstance that they were perceived to abuse demographic information for their political purposes:

Instrumentalisation

"(...) And you know that he is pursuing his own agenda with his statements" (M2, #00:29:53-0#).

In contrast to the example given above ('Tagesschau'), neither trust in a neutral representation, nor in the persons themselves was given here. Furthermore 'the politicians' were not described individually, and no concrete examples were given. Hence, it became evident that the negative attitude of the participants towards politicians was to be understood as generalizing.

Whereas politicians and the media were understood as sources which rather overwhelm the participants with complex demographic information, they emphasised that in schools, colleges and universities, there had not been enough points of contacts to demography-related topics:

Not enough points of contact in school

"Well, I've seen an age pyramid before. I had an advanced class in geography. But somehow that wasn't really discussed enough. And many have deselected geography. Well, I don't think that everyone I went to school with has ever dealt with it" (F5, #00:55:02-2#).

In this context, it was particularly emphasised that the participants were aware of their comparatively high level of education. All the less they showed understanding for the fact that 'not even they' were better informed about these topics. Once again, the passive role of the participants became visible here.

Media sector

As already mentioned, the media sector had represented the main source for the participants in their everyday life so far. Numerous formats were enumerated during the discussion, which had received varying degrees of trust from the participants. A generalization is therefore difficult here. Nevertheless, it can be stated that the media formats were mainly perceived to focus their reporting on the topic of 'migration':

Main source

"I find that a very big topic in the media is migration, something that is repeatedly raised in waves, even if we haven't all mentioned it right now. Migration is always a big issue, including escape routes across the Mediterranean and so on. The EU and Frontex, and everything else. I think that it is definitely present. (...)" (F5, #00:10:54-3#).

¹¹ Translation: 'The state of the nation'

In this context it became evident, that the participants felt dependent on the media agenda, when it comes to the presence of specific demographic topics:

*Agenda
dependency*

“Nevertheless, you are dependent on the agenda and how it is addressed at the moment. If demographic issues such as migration are very present at the moment, of course, more information is also included. (...)” (M2, #00:21:46-0#).

Content-wise, the participants expressed that the different media formats were mainly experienced as being of poor quality, characterised by a superficial coverage. At this point, the profound nature recognized by the participants as one of the main characteristics of the term ‘demography’, was perceived as missing in media contributions.

Poor quality

Needs

As described, the discussion was mainly defined by the participants’ conclusion, that the term demography would be unknown for most of the people, and that the respective field is complex and interrelated - which, in turn, had made it difficult for most of them to understand demographic issues. Furthermore, the main source from which demographic information had been derived was perceived as representing the respective issues in a superficial way. Meanwhile, the professional sector was characterised by politicians, whom the participants believed they could not trust, and educational facilities, which the participants experienced as neglecting demography.

*Transparent
and
comprehensible
communication*

Against this background, the participants explained what would be needed in their opinion, to improve the situation. They referred in this context to a more transparent and comprehensible communication in the media and through people who stand in public:

“But on the other hand, you could make everything more transparent, if by doing this you can see / So of course that people come because we flooded their island or something and they can't live there anymore or the earth is really completely dry now. But that you say that it really has consequences what we do here for demographic issues like population and age structure. And that could somehow help to wake people up” (F1, #01:28:07-2#).

They furthermore emphasised, that education is needed, to improve the demographic knowledge and the ability to handle demographic information:

Education

“I also think that one would have to know more about it so that one can then also make responsible decisions. (...) I think that's very important. Because only if you really know about it, if you can classify many things correctly and if you can really classify all this polemic, which many politicians fall into, and if you can say: Honestly, you're just doing emotional opinion-making and stirring up fear / And fear is always a big engine to make such decisions. But to overcome fear, you have to have knowledge in order to be empowered” (F5, #01:29:14-6#).

Based on their own experiences, all participants were able to agree on this point.

6.3 Summary

What became evident during the discussion, was that 'demography' represents a term which was rather difficult for the participants to grasp. This was mainly due to their unfamiliarity with the term, as well as the complexity they attributed to it. Although the participants explained and showed awareness of demographic interrelations, they kept referring to certain sub-topics when talking about demography. These sub-topics, like age structures, were mainly described as something that would especially affect the whole population, rather than them personally - unless there was a personal connection experienceable in their everyday lives.

Overall, they associated demography exclusively with negative consequences and problems, which mainly remained unspecific. Unless there was a concrete connection to the participants' own lives - or the lives of family members and friends. However, it was more common that statements about demography remained unspecific and no personal reference and thus no individual, negative consequences were noticeable. Accordingly, their motivation to deal more closely with these issues and to learn more about them was rather low. They simply saw no necessity in it. In line with these findings, they had a rather mediocre, topic-dependent confidence in their own demographic knowledge, which was furthermore difficult for the participants to assess. Instead, attitudes and values had formed the basis for the application of demographic information in their past, e.g. in their voting decision. Although migration was mentioned as one of the issues that had played a role (albeit a small one) for the latter, it played a rather subordinate role for them when talking about demographic issues. Even though it was described as the most dominant, demographic topic in the media, some did not necessarily link it to the term 'demography'. The corresponding statements also made clear that the participants' understanding of migration was rather one-dimensional (solely concerned with immigration to Germany).

Overall, the media sector was described as the main source of demographic information. However, this was less due to the fact that the participants had actively searched for information provided by the media. Rather did their passive role in gaining demographic knowledge play a decisive part here. The media had provided them with information almost automatically. However, the participants were aware of the fact that this information had not necessarily been of high quality and they also expressed a dependency on the respective agendas. Accordingly, they furthermore explained that they would not trust all sources equally.

The role of the participants also remained passive in relation to other sources mentioned (e.g. educational institutions). In this sense, the aspects which they considered to be in need of improvement were also oriented towards how they could be better supplied with information - both by the media and by educational institutions.

All in all, the discussion showed that the acquisition of demographic knowledge by the participants was rather unconscious and that it was difficult for them to judge what could be understood as demographic knowledge at all. Accordingly, it was challenging for them to express how difficult or easy it had been for them to access, understand, judge and apply demographic information. They were not necessarily aware of the fact, that they had accomplished these actions in the past.

Nevertheless, they were generally very reflective in their statements, talked about consequences and solutions for the issues addressed and held an active discussion in which they also openly addressed ambiguities. However, one must be aware of the fact that the participants were comparatively highly educated. Hence, the results must be understood against this background. The fact that the difficulties described by the participants may be even more serious for others with a lower level of education, was addressed by the participants themselves.

The implications of these and the quantitative results for the present, as well as future research will be discussed in the following chapter.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present thesis constitutes a pilot study in defining, conceptualising, exploring and explaining demographic literacy. By conducting quantitative, as well as qualitative research, the present study pursued mixed methods. In order to meet the three objectives formulated at the beginning of the thesis, a well-founded review of existing theories and models was carried out, as well as two different studies. In this context, both qualitative and quantitative research was examined, resulting in a mixed methods approach.

The remaining part of the present work consists of the compilation and discussion of the respective findings, the description of limitations, and the outlook on future research. In order to avoid confusion, the participants which accomplished the online questionnaire will be referred to as 'OQ participants' below, whereas those who participated in the focus group discussion will be identified as 'FGD participants'.

7.1 Compilation of the quantitative and qualitative results

In the following, conclusions about the quantitative results will be drawn with the help of the qualitative findings. Against this background, it should be remembered that demographic literacy, to simplify it, was defined as comprising four different actions: Accessing, understanding, judging and applying. In the course of the quantitative analysis, the respective participants were asked to evaluate their skills in relation to these four actions. This was undertaken with reference to three different demographic themes:

- Population composition and development of the EU countries (PCD);
- The impact of migration processes on the EU (MIG);
- The impact of age structure(s) on the EU (AGE).

The four actions and three demographic themes represent the seven elements included in the Demographic Literacy Index (DLI), which finally comprises 12 items (cf. Table 1).

Self-evaluated and perceived demographic literacy

As the results of the quantitative analysis showed, almost 70% of the OQ participants (DLI sample) self-evaluated their demographic literacy as rather mediocre, achieving a '6' or '7' on the index scale. This result is in line with the statements of the FGD participants, who described their demographic literacy overall as rather limited. However, the focus group discussion showed that the individual components of demographic literacy were assessed very differently by the participants, and that the actions associated with demographic literacy depended on different factors:

- *Apply*: According to the FGD participants, the ability to apply demographic information is highly impacted by demographic knowledge. Due to their perceived lack of the latter, they felt rather insecure about their ability to do so. The connection between factual knowledge and the ability to apply it was particularly emphasized by them.
- *Judge*: A similar relationship between demographic knowledge and the four actions was described in relation to the ability to judge demographic information. In order to accomplish this ability, the FGD participants said it would require a certain level of certainty or experience with demographic issues.

In contrast, the ability to access and understand demographic information seemed to depend rather on motivational aspects, and general competencies:

- *Access*: The FGD participants particularly linked 'accessing' to a perceived need and therefore motivation to carry out this action, resulting from a perceived point of contact to demographic issues in their everyday lives. According to the participants, this ability is less about *being able* than about *being motivated*.
- *Understand*: The ability to understand demographic information was mainly described as depending on the complexity of demographic issues and the respective subject. The subjectively assigned degree of difficulty was given priority here.

These results suggest that demographic knowledge, the motivation to access, understand, judge and apply demographic information, and the competences of people might each have different impacts on the four actions. Furthermore, these relationships seem to be additionally interlinked with the respective demographic topics.

Against this background, it is difficult to transfer the statements of the FGD participants on the individual four actions to the findings of the DLI, which was composed by merging the scores of the four actions into a unified index. However, the seven sub-indices generated in the course of the quantitative analysis, provided some additional insights in this context:

- On average, it was most difficult for the OQ participants to judge demographic information, as well as to accomplish all four actions with regard to the MIG topic.
- The FGD participants described the MIG topic to be challenging as well. However, they argued that the PCD topic was even more difficult for them, since it was perceived the most comprehensive of the three demographic themes. Furthermore, the FGD participants described the ability to apply demographic information as most difficult – with the ability to judge as second most challenging.

Although both studies came to different results here, the findings still share some common features:

- The two abilities the FGD participants described as most dependent on demographic knowledge, were at the same time evaluated as most challenging to accomplish in both studies: judging and applying. One's own, self-assessed demographic knowledge seemed to be an indicator for the perceived difficulty of the four actions.
- Content-wise, neither the OQ, nor the FGD participants perceived the AGE topic as most difficult. On the basis of the statements of the FGD participants, this could be attributed to the fact that neither them, nor the OQ participants perceived it as particularly complex.
- Overall, one needs to bear in mind that the FGD participants have, on average, a very high educational background. Higher than the OQ participants (on average). During the discussion, they were very reflective in their argumentation. They explained that people who didn't have a lot demographic knowledge might feel overwhelmed by demographic issues, which were highly prevalent in the media. The MIG topic was described by them as being such a topic. Their argumentation stressed that by not being confronted with the issue of PCD on a daily basis, one might feel more confident about it. Even if this feeling might not be accurate. Due to the rather unspecific nature of the PCD topic, it remained furthermore unclear whether all OQ participants had understood what it meant and entailed. These considerations could be an explanation for the fact that the OQ participants evaluated the MIG topic as most difficult.

However, these considerations cannot be conclusively answered on the basis of the available data.

Another important finding of the focus group discussion is that the acquisition, processing and application of demographic knowledge was described as occurring rather unconsciously. This result is to be understood in combination with the FGD participants' explanation, that the term 'demography' would be unknown to most people and that they were not aware of all the aspects that could be subsumed under it. Against this background, it was overall difficult for the FGD participants to assess their abilities and it must be assumed that the OQ participants felt the same way. This could also explain why so many OQ participants used the answer 'I don't know'.

Moreover, there is much to suggest from the results of the discussion that most people might actually not be looking for demographic information at all, because their role in obtaining it, is mainly passive. In contrast, one could also assume, that people do search for demographic information, without being aware of it. To give a hypothetical example: Maybe the participants informed themselves about how many senior citizens need a place in a nursing home because they have noticed that their grandmother was on a long waiting list. Not everyone would necessarily interpret this as searching for information about age structures or

ageing societies, and the consequences resulting from this circumstance for social systems and health sectors.

Motivation and knowledge

The discussion showed that in any case, there was a personal reference needed for the FGD participants to be motivated to deal with demographic issues: they had to be experienceable affected by those issues in their daily lives. In contrast, a high level of demographic literacy was not described, and did not become apparent, as a motivating factor for the FGD participants. However, questions concerned with a *personal* motivation were not included in the questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire merely indicated that participants with a high demographic literacy level were more motivated to actively seek information and apply it in conversations and vice versa. This could imply the following:

- It might indicate that the role of participants in the process of acquiring demographic knowledge becomes more active the higher the demographic literacy;
- And moreover: if people with high demographic literacy are more likely to look for and apply demographic information, the demographic literacy gap between them and those people with low demographic literacy might increase over the course of their lives.

Regarding demographic knowledge, it became evident that the OQ participants' level of demographic literacy was not necessarily an indicator for how much they actually knew about factual, demographic information. The various knowledge questions showed quite different results, which cannot be generalized. Although this result might seem surprising on its own, it is consistent with the statements of the FDG participants. They emphasized that their demographic knowledge was topic dependent.

In addition, one could assume that due to the passive role in obtaining demographic information, demographic knowledge might *inter alia* significantly depend on which sources people provide with which demographic information.

The hypotheses

Regarding the hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the present thesis, it needs to be noted that the corresponding results (except those of H1) all showed tendencies towards their support, while the findings were at the same time accompanied by inconsistencies. However, since the present thesis provides exclusively a descriptive representation, and a data set which is based on a small sample, no final statements could be made about the validity of the hypotheses.

When aiming to understand the questionnaire results, it is furthermore important to note that the DLI is based on a self-assessment of the participants. A decisive factor in the results might therefore be the extent to which the participants have confidence in their own abilities.

As the FGD participants explained, the trust in their factual and procedural demographic knowledge was topic dependent. This result might explain why the hypotheses related results, were almost always varying across the respective demographic themes. To give three examples:

- H2: The expected association between self-assessed demographic literacy and the feeling of being prepared for the elections was the most supported in relation to the AGE topic.
- H3: The expected association between self-assessed demographic literacy and the perceived ability to judge whether parties agree with one's own opinions was the most supported in relation to the MIG topic.
- H4: The expected association between self-assessed demographic literacy and the attributed importance to the positions of parties for one's voting decision was also the most supported in relation to the MIG topic.

Perceived familiarity with the topic might be an explanation for the first example. The FGD participants clearly stated and showed, that the 'ageing society' constituted their main framework of meaning when it comes to demography-related topics. As already mentioned, this topic was furthermore evaluated as comparatively less complex. In this sense, it might not

only depend on the perceived demographic literacy, but possibly also on the familiarity with and complexity of a subject, whether one feels well prepared for the elections in relation to it - and vice versa.

The perceived role of the media as main source for demographic information, with an agenda experienced as mostly concerned with international migration when it comes to demographic issues, might be an explanation for the second and third example. The FGD participants furthermore outlined that their values and beliefs played an important role when applying demographic information and that they felt the urge to position themselves against populist parties in context of the European Parliament elections. Even though the topic of migration was not necessarily linked to the word 'demography' by the FGD participants, it nevertheless constituted an important, emotionally charged topic for them, about which they regularly received information from the media.

Overall, the relationship between demographic literacy and the aspects presented might vary depending on the subject:

- whether it is rather emotional or not for the participants,
- whether they feel a personal connection to the topic or not,
- whether it is perceived as rather complicated or not;
- whether information is mainly passively received and from which sources.

7.2 Limitations

The present work was confronted with several limitations affecting the methodological approaches, as well as the analyses of the two studies. Those limitations will be elaborated in the following.

With regard to the research plan, it would have been desirable for the qualitative study to have taken place before the development of a final definition and conceptual model of demographic literacy, as well as before the collection of the quantitative data. In this sense, the outcome of the discussion could have been used to draw upon definition, model and questionnaire. However, this was not feasible in terms of time, because the European elections, which were held in May 2019, were to be taken into account in the questionnaire. Due to this circumstance, it was not possible to explore demographic literacy, before defining it and trying to test its influence.

Besides, if the resources of the present work had allowed it, one could have followed the methodological procedure of the HLS in more detail. However, as this was not possible, the consultation of experts for the elaboration of the index items had to be dispensed with. The selection of the three demographic themes that have been included in the index is instead mainly based on the topics found as prevalent in the German media. Furthermore, no pre-tests of the questionnaire could be carried out.

Regarding the composition of the questionnaire, it is finally worth mentioning, that only a limited number of personal determinants, and neither situational, nor societal determinants were included. The supplementation by corresponding variables might have contributed to a significant benefit for the study.

Addressing the HLS further, it must be stated that its model is designed to observe health literacy over the lifespan. However, the quantitative study has been analysed based on cross-sectional data only. Furthermore, the data set was too small to perform logistic regression. Due to these circumstances, it was not possible to make statements about the significance of findings. With regard to the considerations discussed in the compilation chapter above, it further might have been informative to test for interaction effects. This would have made it possible to better include the impact of participants' knowledge, motivation and competencies on the ability to access, understand, judge and apply demographic information. Finally, it needs to be stressed that due to the statistical limitations listed, it was not possible to draw any causal conclusions on the data.

Regarding the two samples, it was already elaborated in the methods chapter that they were not representative for German Millennials. The participants in both studies, especially those of the discussion, have a comparatively high education. More women than men participated and the Millennial age range (18-35) set by the theory, could not be entirely covered. Furthermore,

it can be stated with certainty, that at least in the qualitative study, all but one participant were born in North Rhine-Westphalia and now live in and around Cologne. These circumstances have an impact on the findings, which do in consequence not cover the full range of possible answer behaviours, thoughts, opinions and feelings towards demographic literacy.

The consequences resulting from these limitations for future elaborations of the demographic literacy definition, its respective conceptual model, and the composition of the questionnaire will be described in the following.

7.3 Future research

The focus group discussion provided a detailed insight into the opinions and thoughts of the participants on the subject of demographic literacy and demographic knowledge. Against this background, it became clear that the online questionnaire should be structured differently in future research. First of all, 12 items seem to be not enough to cover such a complex topic as demography. As in the case of the HLS, a group of experts should decide which topics should be covered. Both horizontally and vertically, a deepening should take place here: the topics selected require more questions in order to adequately reflect them. In addition, it might be useful to include further topics, or subtopics, like life expectancies or internal migration. Furthermore, no demographic domains were included in the definition of demographic literacy, due to a lack of data to convincingly argue which domains that should have been. However, summarising the different demographic topics in several categories which depict different demographic domains might be useful for future research.

In addition, the individual items should establish a personal connection for the participants. The questionnaire of the present work dealt exclusively with a reference to society as a whole, for example by addressing the influence of migration processes on the EU. However, it became clear from the focus group discussion, that such questions were difficult for the participants to answer. The reference to one's own life might have been far too abstract here. Questions that include concrete points of contact such as life planning, care places, nursery places etc., could possibly provide a better picture of participants demographic literacy. Especially, since acquisition, processing and application of demographic knowledge was described as occurring rather unconsciously.

Furthermore, questions regarding which sources are important for participants when it comes to demographic information were not considered at all in the questionnaire of the present thesis. However, the qualitative research clarified that this aspect is worth exploring. Especially, since the media sector seems to represent the main source for the provision of demographic information. This insight is elementary: one only has to imagine what it would be like if people did not acquire their literacy mainly at school but were dependent on the agenda of the media instead. Nowadays, especially components of general literacy, but also some aspects of health literacy, take place in schools as a matter of course. One might ask, why this is not the case with demographic literacy. If, contrary to what was perceived by the FGD participants, demographic literacy is indeed covered in schools, one could also ask why they weren't aware of this circumstance.

Regarding the important role of the media in the context of demographic information, it might also be interesting to see if levels of demographic literacy are correlated to levels of media literacy. Since the media sector was perceived as being the primary source of demographic information, people might need to have certain media skills to access, understand, judge and apply demographic information. Applying it in the 21st century could also mean to participate in an online discussion on social media or writing a tweet thematising demographic issues.

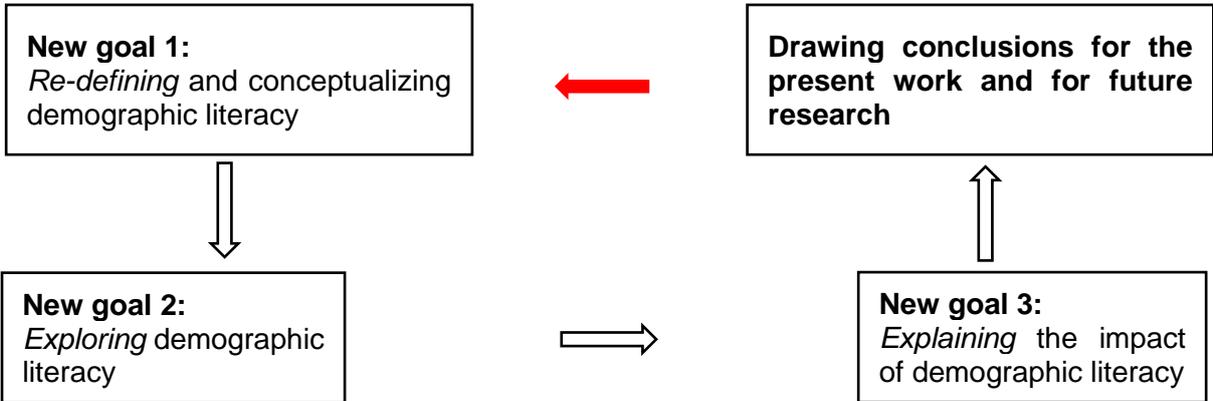
In addition, the question arises as to why family and friends did not seem to play a role as a source of demographic information for the FGD participants. However, this result might also reflect the circumstance that the reception of demographic information seems to occur rather unconsciously. Some examples:

- When parents express that they cannot retire as early as their grandparents did;
- When a neighbour tells you that he is now voluntarily helping out in a refugee home;
- When a friend explains that she is waiting at least 5 years to have a child because she wants to earn money after her long studies.

Participants might not have deliberately considered such examples. The question arises as to whether the media sector is indeed the main source of demographic information, or whether the role of the other sectors is simply not consciously perceived. Exploring this further could be interesting, both for future focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews.

Overall, these considerations suggest that it would be advisable in future research to focus first on exploring demographic literacy, before attempting to explain related effects. If a new questionnaire would then be developed on the basis of this suggested qualitative research, it should primarily deal with the recording of demographic literacy. It might be informative to look more closely at the relationships between knowledge, motivation, competences and the four actions, while taking into account different demographic issues and/or domains. Only after the successful completion of these tasks might it make sense to examine the influence of demographic literacy on the ability to make judgements, take decisions and participate in everyday live. Figure 24 presents the research approach that would be pursued if a follow-up project were to be started directly after this master's thesis:

Figure 24: Revised research approach



Source: Own design

Overall, the combination of different methods has proven to be effective for the present paper and can be recommended for future studies (in a slightly different order). In order to be able to work more effectively with the results of quantitative research in the future, however, a larger sample that is representative of the corresponding target group is required.

Finally, it can be stressed that the present work rather raises new questions than finds valid answers. This is mainly due to the pilot character of the present work. This thesis should therefore rather be regarded as a starting point for future research, than as a self-contained project. There are numerous indications that demographic literacy indeed matters for everyone and may perform a significant contribution to functioning in everyday life. Although the participants' confidence in their own demographic knowledge and skills has not proven to be particularly high, on average, they were all likely to be confronted with demographic issues on a daily basis and might unconsciously know more about demography than they thought. Future research could make a significant contribution to drawing attention to the issue and thus bringing about possible policy implications. At best, this might turn lead to an increase in people's demographic knowledge, their motivation to deal with relevant issues and their ability to handle demographic information. If these factors actually contribute to empowering people to make judgements, take decisions and to participate in society, much would be achieved in terms of equal opportunities.

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V. APPENDIX

Overview of the content

- German online questionnaire
- English online questionnaire
- German focus group discussion guide
- English focus group discussion guide
- Focus group discussion Power Point slides in German and English
- German focus group discussion transcript
- English focus group discussion transcript
- Codebook

GERMAN ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Willkommen zum Fragebogen!

Mein Name ist Amelie Simon und ich bin Studentin an der Universität Groningen und an der Universität zu Köln. Ich studiere an diesen beiden Unis die Masterprogramme „Population Studies“ und „Sociology and Social Research“. Im Fokus steht dabei das Verständnis demographischen Verhaltens, Bevölkerungsdynamiken und sozialen Ungleichheiten.

Vielleicht hast du den Begriff "Demographie" schon einmal gehört oder weißt sogar, was er bedeutet. Falls nicht: Demographie ist die Untersuchung von Populationen. Demographen interessieren sich daher grundsätzlich für Dinge wie:

- Bevölkerungsgrößen und ihre jeweilige Dichte,*
- die Anzahl von Geburten und Todesfällen,*
- die Anzahl von Aus- und Einwanderungen,*
- die Auswirkungen dieser Faktoren auf die Altersverteilung in einer Gesellschaft...*
- ...und auf das Wachstum oder den Rückgang einer Bevölkerung*

Mit diesem Fragebogen möchte ich mehr darüber erfahren, wie viel du über all diese Dinge weißt und wie einfach oder schwierig es für dich ist, demographische Informationen zu finden, zu verstehen, zu bewerten und schließlich selber in Diskussionen oder Gesprächen zu verwenden. Außerdem interessiert mich, wie wichtig dir demographische Themen im Zusammenhang mit den bevorstehenden Europawahlen am 26. Mai 2019 sind. Zum Beispiel: Spielt das Thema Migration eine Rolle für deine Wahlentscheidung? Dieser Fragebogen soll dich jedoch in keiner Weise beeinflussen - weder in deiner Absicht überhaupt wählen zu gehen, noch in deiner Präferenz für eine Partei!

Deine Antworten und die Ergebnisse des Fragebogens werden ausschließlich für die Durchführung meiner Masterarbeit verwendet. Auch in Feedbackgesprächen mit meiner Betreuerin oder in Diskussionsrunden mit meinen Kommilitonen werden deine Antworten immer vertraulich behandelt. Das bedeutet, dass alle deine persönlichen Daten niemals weitergegeben werden und deine Anonymität somit gewahrt wird. Außerdem möchte ich betonen, dass weder du noch die anderen Teilnehmer irgendeinen finanziellen Anreiz für eure Teilnahme erhalten werdet (oder erhalten habt).

Wenn du an weiteren Hintergrundinformationen über meine Masterarbeit interessiert bist, kannst du mich gerne per E-Mail kontaktieren:

masterarbeit.ameliesimon@web.de

Abschließend bleibt noch zu sagen, dass deine Teilnahme an diesem Fragebogen völlig freiwillig ist und du ihn daher jederzeit abbrechen kannst, ohne negative Folgen befürchten zu müssen.

Der Fragebogen besteht aus vier Teilen und dauert ca. 10-15 Minuten.

Vielen Dank für deine Hilfe!

Zusatzinformationen

WICHTIGER HINWEIS:

Wenn du dich mit demografischen Themen sicher fühlst, kannst du die folgenden Zusatzinformationen überspringen und die Antwortmöglichkeit "Sie waren für mich nicht notwendig, ich kenne mich mit demografischen Themen aus" am Ende der Seite auswählen.

Im Fragebogen werden dir unter anderem Fragen darüber gestellt, wie einfach oder schwer es dir fällt, mit Informationen zu demografischen Themen umzugehen. Hier findest du Zusatzinformationen, die dir bei der Beantwortung der Fragen helfen könnten. Am Ende wirst du gefragt, ob diese Informationen hilfreich für dich waren.

Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung in der EU

Mit 28 Ländern - 27 ohne Großbritannien - ist die Europäische Union recht vielfältig, bezogen auf Sprachen, Kulturen, Prioritäten in der Politik, Bruttoinlandsprodukte und so weiter. Die Vielfalt der EU ist auch bei der Zusammensetzung ihrer Bevölkerung zu beobachten: Es gibt unterschiedliche Bevölkerungsgrößen und -dichten, einige Bevölkerungen wachsen und andere schrumpfen.

Das Wachstum oder der Rückgang der EU-Bevölkerungen hängt von mehreren Faktoren ab, wie z.B. der Anzahl von Geburten, Todesfällen, Aus- und Einwanderern. Bevölkerungen können dabei prinzipiell wegen verschiedener Faktoren wachsen:

- Aufgrund eines natürlichen Wachstums (d.h. es werden mehr Menschen geboren als Menschen sterben),
- Aufgrund einer positiven Nettomigration (d.h. es kommen mehr Menschen in die EU als Menschen die EU verlassen),
- Oder aufgrund einer Kombination aus beiden Faktoren.

Da sich diese Faktoren laufend im Wandel befinden, sind die Bevölkerungen der EU nicht statisch, sondern entwickeln sich ständig weiter.

Migrationsprozesse in der EU

Migrationsprozesse umfassen viele verschiedene Formen. Hier ist dabei die dauerhafte Aus- und Einwanderung zwischen verschiedenen Ländern gemeint – also z.B. von einem EU-Land ins nächste, von einem EU-Land in ein Nicht-EU-Land oder von einem Nicht-EU-Land in ein EU-Land. Diese Aus- und Einwanderungen beeinflussen nicht nur Wachstum oder Rückgang der EU-Bevölkerungen, sondern auch deren Zusammensetzung: zum Beispiel deren Altersstrukturen und damit auch die Anzahl der erwerbstätigen Personen.

Altersstruktur in der EU

Die Zahl der Kinder, Erwachsenen und Rentner, die in der EU leben, hat einen erheblichen Einfluss auf die Anzahl der benötigten Schul- oder Pflegeplätze, auf die Zahl der erwerbsfähigen Menschen (Arbeitskräfte) und damit auf das Volumen der Steuereinnahmen, sowie auf die zukünftigen Renten der jüngeren Generationen.

Waren diese Zusatzinformationen hilfreich für dich?

- Ja
- Nein
- Sie waren für mich nicht notwendig, ich kenne mich mit demografischen Themen aus

TEIL I / IV

Bitte beantworte zunächst die folgenden vier Fragen.

Geschlecht

- Weiblich
- Männlich
- Keine der angegebenen Optionen trifft auf mich zu. Ich identifiziere mich als (bitte angeben):

Alter (in Jahren)

- _____

Staatsbürgerschaft

- Deutsch
- Andere EU-Staatsbürgerschaft
- Andere Nicht-EU-Staatsbürgerschaft

Höchstes abgeschlossenes Bildungsniveau

- Kein Abschluss
- Hauptschulabschluss
- Fachoberschulreife
- Fachhochschulreife
- Hochschulreife
- Abgeschlossene Ausbildung
- Meister/Fachwirt
- Bachelor
- Master
- Keine der angegebenen Optionen trifft auf mich zu. Mein höchster Bildungsstand ist (bitte angeben): _____

TEIL II / IV

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich, Informationen über die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU-Länder zu **finden**?

- Sehr einfach
- Eher einfach
- Eher schwierig
- Sehr schwierig
- Unmöglich

- Ich weiß es nicht.
- Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich, Informationen über die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU- Länder zu **verstehen**?

- Sehr einfach
- Eher einfach
- Eher schwierig
- Sehr schwierig
- Unmöglich

- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich, zu **beurteilen**, ob die Informationen, die du über die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU-Länder erhalten oder gefunden hast, vertrauenswürdig sind?

- Sehr einfach
- Eher einfach
- Eher schwierig
- Sehr schwierig
- Unmöglich

- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich, in Gesprächen über die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU-Länder **mitzureden**?

- Sehr einfach
- Eher einfach
- Eher schwierig
- Sehr schwierig
- Unmöglich

- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich, Informationen über die Auswirkungen von Migrationsprozessen auf die EU zu **finden**?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich
-
- Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich, Informationen über die Auswirkungen von Migrationsprozessen auf die EU zu **verstehen**?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich
-
- Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich, zu **beurteilen**, ob die Informationen, die du über die Auswirkungen von Migrationsprozessen auf die EU erhalten oder gefunden hast, vertrauenswürdig sind?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich
-
- Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich, in Gesprächen über die Auswirkungen von Migrationsprozessen auf die EU **mitzureden**?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich
-
- Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig würdest du sagen, ist es für dich, Informationen über die Auswirkungen der Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. der verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern zu **finden**?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich
-
- Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig würdest du sagen, ist es für dich, Informationen über die Auswirkungen der Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. der verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern zu **verstehen**?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich
-
- Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig würdest du sagen, ist es für dich, zu **beurteilen**, ob die Informationen, die du über die Auswirkungen der Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. der verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern erhalten oder gefunden hast, vertrauenswürdig sind?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich
-
- Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig würdest du sagen, ist es für dich, in Gesprächen über die Auswirkungen der Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. der verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern **mitzureden**?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich
-
- Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich will diese Frage nicht beantworten

TEIL III / IV

Du hast nun den ersten und zweiten Teil des Fragebogens geschafft. Vielen Dank für deine bisherige Teilnahme!

In diesem Teil des Fragebogens würde ich gerne mehr darüber erfahren, wie du mit Informationen über demographische Themen umgehst und nach Informationen suchst, sowie darüber wie dein Wissen über die EU-Bevölkerung ist.

Bitte beantworte die folgenden Fragen.

Neben den Informationen, die ich zum Beispiel in der Schule/Universität erhalte, den Nachrichten oder die mir von Freunden und Familie erzählt werden, suche ich selbst nach Informationen über Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung, Migration und die Altersstruktur in der EU

- Trifft auf mich zu
- Trifft nicht auf mich zu

Wenn ich diese Informationen nicht verstanden habe, investiere ich zusätzliche Zeit, um sie besser zu verstehen

- Trifft auf mich zu
- Trifft nicht auf mich zu

Wenn ich mir nicht sicher bin, ob diese Informationen vertrauenswürdig sind, überprüfe ich sie, indem ich nach weiteren Informationen und/oder anderen Quellen suche

- Trifft auf mich zu
- Trifft nicht auf mich zu

Ich spreche regelmäßig mit Menschen in meinem Umfeld oder in sozialen Medien über Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung, Migration und die Altersstruktur in der EU.

- Trifft auf mich zu
- Trifft nicht auf mich zu

Nachfolgend findest du ein paar Fragen zu deinem Wissen über die EU-Bevölkerung. Bei der Zusammenstellung der Informationen wurde auf vertrauenswürdige Quellen und eine neutrale Darstellung geachtet.

Bitte beantworte die folgenden Fragen.

Hättest du gewusst oder es deiner Meinung nach ungefähr richtig eingeschätzt, dass die Bevölkerung der Europäischen Union kürzlich auf ca. 512 Millionen Menschen geschätzt wurde?

- Ja
- Nein

(Diese Information basiert auf Eurostat-Statistiken von 2018)

Hättest du gewusst oder es deiner Meinung nach ungefähr richtig eingeschätzt, dass es in der Europäischen Union mehr Todesfälle als Geburten gibt?

- Ja
- Nein

(Diese Information basiert auf Eurostat-Statistiken von 2017)

Hättest du gewusst oder es deiner Meinung nach ungefähr richtig eingeschätzt, dass das Bevölkerungswachstum in der Europäischen Union zwischen 2017 und 2018 daher ausschließlich auf Einwanderung zurückzuführen ist?

- Ja
- Nein

(Diese Information basiert auf Eurostat-Statistiken von 2018)

Hättest du gewusst oder es deiner Meinung nach ungefähr richtig eingeschätzt, dass 2017 2,4 Millionen Einwanderer aus Nicht-EU-Ländern in die EU kamen und dass 22,3 Millionen Menschen (4,4 %) der am 1. Januar 2018 in der EU lebenden rund 512 Millionen Menschen Nicht-EU-Bürger waren?

- Ja
- Nein

(Diese Information basiert auf Eurostat-Statistiken von 2017)

Hättest du gewusst oder es deiner Meinung nach ungefähr richtig eingeschätzt, dass die als erwerbsfähig eingestuftten Personen (15 bis 64 Jahre alt) im Jahr 2017 64,9 % der EU-Bevölkerung ausmachten - und dass dieser Anteil an Menschen im erwerbsfähigen Alter wahrscheinlich aufgrund von mehr älteren Menschen als jungen Menschen in der EU abnehmen wird?

- Ja
- Nein

(Diese Information basiert auf Eurostat-Statistiken von 2017)

Hättest du gewusst oder es deiner Meinung nach ungefähr richtig eingeschätzt, dass europäische Frauen im Durchschnitt 5,2 Jahre länger leben als europäische Männer?

- Ja
- Nein

(Diese Information basiert auf Eurostat-Statistiken von 2017)

Hättest du gewusst oder es deiner Meinung nach ungefähr richtig eingeschätzt, dass in der EU durchschnittlich 1,59 Kinder pro Frau geboren werden?

- Ja
- Nein

(Diese Information basiert auf Eurostat-Statistiken von 2017)

Hättest du gewusst oder es deiner Meinung nach ungefähr richtig eingeschätzt, dass das Durchschnittsalter von Frauen bei der Geburt ihres ersten Kindes in der EU 29,1 Jahre beträgt?

- Ja
- Nein

(Diese Information basiert auf Eurostat-Statistiken von 2017)

TEIL IV / IV

Du bist nun beim letzten Teil des Fragebogens angekommen. Hier werden dir ein paar Fragen zu den bevorstehenden Wahlen des Europäischen Parlaments gestellt.

Bitte beantworte die folgenden Fragen.

Die Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament finden in Deutschland am 26. Mai 2019 statt. Hast du vor, teilzunehmen?

- Ja
- Nein

- Ich habe mich noch nicht entschieden
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Bitte gib an, inwieweit du dich für die Wahl des Europäischen Parlaments im Allgemeinen informiert und vorbereitet fühlst:

- Ich fühle mich umfassend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl
- Ich fühle mich ausreichend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl
- Ich fühle mich unzureichend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl
- Ich fühle mich nicht informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl

- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Nachdem du nun die Frage beantwortet hast, wie informiert und vorbereitet du dich für die Europawahl im Allgemeinen fühlst, beantworte bitte die folgenden, konkreteren Fragen:

Bitte wähle die Antwort aus, die deiner Meinung am besten auf dich zutrifft:

- Ich fühle mich umfassend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU
- Ich fühle mich ausreichend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU
- Ich fühle mich unzureichend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU
- Ich fühle mich überhaupt nicht informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU

- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Bitte wähle die Antwort aus, die deiner Meinung nach am besten auf dich zutrifft:

- Ich fühle mich umfassend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Auswirkungen von Migrationsprozessen auf die EU
- Ich fühle mich ausreichend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Auswirkungen von Migrationsprozessen auf die EU
- Ich fühle mich unzureichend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Auswirkungen von Migrationsprozessen auf die EU
- Ich fühle mich überhaupt nicht informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl, in Bezug auf die Auswirkungen von Migrationsprozessen auf die EU

- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Bitte wähle die Antwort aus, die deiner Meinung nach am besten auf dich zutrifft:

- Ich fühle mich umfassend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Auswirkungen der Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. der verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern
- Ich fühle mich ausreichend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Auswirkungen der Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. der verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern
- Ich fühle mich unzureichend informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl in Bezug auf die Auswirkungen der Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. der verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern
- Ich fühle mich überhaupt nicht informiert und vorbereitet für die Europawahl, in Bezug auf die Auswirkungen der Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. der verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern

- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie wichtig ist die Haltung von Parteien über die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU für deine Parteienpräferenz bei der Europawahl?

- Sehr wichtig
- Eher wichtig
- Eher unwichtig
- Überhaupt nicht wichtig

- Ich werde nicht wählen gehen
- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich zu entscheiden, ob die Parteien, die du bei der bevorstehenden Europawahl wählen kannst, deine Ansichten in Bezug auf die Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung der EU vertreten?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich

 - Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten
-

Wie wichtig ist die Haltung von Parteien über Migrationsprozesse in der EU für deine Parteienpräferenz bei der Europawahl?

- Sehr wichtig
- Eher wichtig
- Eher unwichtig
- Überhaupt nicht wichtig

- Ich werde nicht wählen gehen
- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich zu entscheiden, ob die Parteien, die du bei der bevorstehenden Europawahl wählen kannst, deine Ansichten in Bezug auf Migrationsprozesse in der EU vertreten?

- Sehr einfach
 - Eher einfach
 - Eher schwierig
 - Sehr schwierig
 - Unmöglich

 - Ich weiß es nicht
 - Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten
-

Wie wichtig ist die Haltung von Parteien über die Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. die verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern für deine Parteienpräferenz bei der Europawahl?

- Sehr wichtig
- Eher wichtig
- Eher unwichtig

- Überhaupt nicht wichtig
- Ich werde nicht wählen gehen
- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für dich zu entscheiden, ob die Parteien, die du bei der bevorstehenden Europawahl wählen kannst, deine Ansichten in Bezug die Altersstruktur in der EU bzw. die verschiedenen Altersstrukturen in den EU-Ländern, vertreten?

- Sehr einfach
- Eher einfach
- Eher schwierig
- Sehr schwierig
- Unmöglich

- Ich weiß es nicht
- Ich möchte diese Frage nicht beantworten

Vielen Dank für deine Teilnahme! Deine Antworten sind für meine Masterarbeit sehr wertvoll.

Falls du daran interessiert bist, an einer Diskussionsrunde zu diesem Thema teilzunehmen, dann melde dich unter:

masterarbeit.ameliesimon@web.de

Ich würde ich mich über deine Teilnahme freuen!

ENGLISH ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Welcome to this online questionnaire!

My name is Amelie Simon and I am a student of the University of Groningen and the University of Cologne. I am doing my double master's programme in Population Studies (Groningen), as well as Sociology and Social Research (Cologne), which focusses on the understanding of demographic behaviour of people, population dynamics and social inequalities.

Maybe you already heard of the term "demography" before or even know what it means. If not: demography is the study of populations. Therefore, demographers are basically interested:

- In population sizes and their density,*
- in how many people are born and how many people die,*
- in how many people leave the population due to emigration and how many people enter the population due to immigration,*
- in the impact of these factors on the age distribution in a society...*
- ...and on the growth or decline of a population.*

With this questionnaire I want to learn more about your knowledge about all these things and how easy or difficult it is for you to find and understand demographic information, to judge how reliable that information is and to use that information in discussions or conversations. Besides, I am interested in how important you feel are demographic topics regarding the upcoming European elections on the 26th of May 2019. However, this questionnaire is not intended to influence you in any way, neither in your intention to vote, nor in your voting preference.

The results of the questionnaire will be exclusively used for the conduction of my Master Thesis. Even in feedback reviews with my supervisor or in discussion meetings with my fellow students, your answers will always be treated confidentially. This means, that all your personal information will never be shared to preserve your anonymity. Besides, I want to underline that neither you nor any other participant will receive (or received) any sort of incentive for your participation.

If you are interested in more background information about my personal motivation for this research topic, you can reach me via e-mail:

masterarbeit.ameliesimon@web.de

Finally, your participation in this questionnaire is completely voluntary. Therefore, you can always stop at any point in time, without fearing any negative consequences.

The questionnaire consists of four parts and will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

Additional information

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you feel comfortable with demographic topics, you can skip the following additional information and select the answer "I didn't need it, I feel comfortable with demographic topics" at the bottom of the page.

In the questionnaire you will be asked questions about how easy or difficult it is for you to deal with information on demographic topics. Here you will find additional information to help you answer the questions. At the end you will be asked if this information was helpful for you.

Population composition and development

With 28 countries - 27 without Great-Britain – the European Union is quite diverse when it comes to languages, cultures, key policy areas, GDP's and so forth. The EU's diversity is also observable regarding the composition of its populations: there are different sizes and densities, some of them are growing and some of them are shrinking.

The growth or decline of the EU population depends on several factors like the number of births, deaths, emigrants and immigrants. A population can increase:

- due to natural growth (which means that there are more people born than there are people dying),*
- due to positive net migration (which means that there are more people coming to the EU than people leaving the EU),*
- or due to a combination of both.*

The populations of the EU are not static but instead constantly evolving due to the factors described above.

Migration processes in the EU

Migration processes involve many different forms. This refers to permanent emigration and immigration between different countries - e.g. from one EU country to another, from one EU country to a non-EU country or from a non-EU country to an EU country. These migrations not only influence the growth or decline of the EU population, but also its composition: for example, its age structure and thus also the number of people in employment.

Age structure in the EU

The number of children, adults and pensioners that are living in the EU (age structure) has a significant influence on the amount of people that are able to work (labour force), that need school places or nursing places and therefore on the volume of tax revenues, as well as on future pensions of the younger, European generations.

Has this additional information been helpful for you?

- Yes*
- No*
- I didn't need it, I feel comfortable with demographic topics*

PART I / IV

Please answer the following four questions:

Sex

- Female
- Male
- You don't have an option that applies to me. I identify as (please specify):

Age (in years)

- _____

Nationality

- German
- Another EU Nationality
- Another Non-EU Nationality

Highest level of education completed

- No degree
- "Hauptschulabschluss"
- "Fachoberschulreife"
- "Fachhochschulreife"
- "Hochschulreife"
- Full-time vocational training school
- Dual system of vocational training
- Bachelor
- Master
- You don't have an option that applies to me. My highest level of education is (please specify): _____

PART II / IV

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **find** information about the population composition and development of the EU countries?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **understand** information about the population composition and development of the EU countries?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **judge** whether the information you obtained about the population composition and development of the EU countries is trustworthy?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **participate** in conversations about the composition and development of the EU population?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **find** information about the impacts of migration processes on the EU?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **understand** information about the impacts of migration processes on the EU?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **judge** whether the information you obtained about the impacts of migration processes on the EU, is trustworthy?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **participate** in conversations about the impacts of migration processes on the EU?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **find** information about the impacts of the age structure in the EU/ different age structures in the EU countries?

- very easy
 - fairly easy
 - fairly difficult
 - very difficult
 - not possible
-
- I don't know
 - I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **understand** information about the impacts of the age structure in the EU/ different age structures in the EU countries?

- very easy
 - fairly easy
 - fairly difficult
 - very difficult
 - not possible
-
- I don't know
 - I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **judge** whether the information you obtained about the impacts of the age structure in the EU/ different age structures in the EU countries, is trustworthy?

- very easy
 - fairly easy
 - fairly difficult
 - very difficult
 - not possible
-
- I don't know
 - I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult would you say is it for you to **participate** in conversations about the impacts of the age structure in the EU/ different age structures in the EU countries?

- very easy
 - fairly easy
 - fairly difficult
 - very difficult
 - not possible
-
- I don't know
 - I don't want to answer this question

PART III / IV

You now answered the first and the second part of the questionnaire. Thanks for your participation so far!

In this part, I am interested in how you deal with and search for information about demographic topics, as well as in your knowledge about the EU population.

Please answer the following questions.

Beside the knowledge that I receive, for example, in school/university, the news or am told by friends and family, I search for information about population composition and development, migration and age structure in the EU myself.

- Applies to me
- Does not apply to me

If I have not understood information about population composition and development, migration and age structure in the EU that I have received, for example, in school/university, the news or am told by friends and family, I invest additional time to better understand it.

- Applies to me
- Does not apply to me

If I am not sure if I can trust the information about population composition and development, migration and age structure in the EU that I have received, for example, in school/university, the news or am told by friends and family, I search for other sources to make sure I get it right.

- Applies to me
- Does not apply to me

I talk regularly with people in my environment or on social media about population composition and development, migration and age structure in the EU.

- Applies to me
- Does not apply to me

Below you find a few questions regarding your knowledge about the EU population. When compiling the information, attention was paid to trustworthy sources and a neutral presentation.

Please answer the following questions.

Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that the population of the European Union was recently estimated at approx. 512 million people?

- Yes
- No

(This information is based on Eurostat statistics from 2018)

Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that there are more deaths than births in the European Union?

- Yes
- No

(This information is based on Eurostat statistics from 2017)

Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that the population growth in the European Union between 2017 and 2018 was therefore solely due to migration?

- Yes
- No

(This information is based on Eurostat statistics from 2018)

Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that 2.4 million immigrants came to the EU from non-EU countries in 2017 and that 22.3 million people (4.4 %) of the approx. 512 million people living in the EU on 1 January 2018 were non-EU citizens?

- Yes
- No

(This information is based on Eurostat statistics from 2017)

Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that the persons considered to be of working age (15 to 64 years old) accounted for 64.9 % of the EU population in 2017 and that this share of working age people will probably decrease due to more elderly than young people in the EU?

- Yes
- No

(This information is based on Eurostat statistics from 2017)

Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that European women can expect to live 5.2 years more than European men, on average?

- Yes
- No

(This information is based on Eurostat statistics from 2017)

Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that 1.59 children are born per woman in the EU, on average?

- Yes
- No

(This information is based on Eurostat statistics from 2017)

Had you known, or in your opinion roughly correctly estimated, that the average age of women at birth of the first child in the EU is 29.1 years?

- Yes
- No

(This information is based on Eurostat statistics from 2017)

PART IV / IV

You've now arrived at the last part of the questionnaire. Here, you are going to be asked to answer a few questions regarding the upcoming elections of the European parliament.

Please answer the following questions.

The European Parliament elections in Germany will take place on the 26th of May 2019.

Are you planning to vote?

- Yes
- No

- I haven't decided yet
- I don't want to answer this question

Please indicate to what extent you feel informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament in general:

- I feel extensively informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament
- I feel sufficiently informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament
- I feel insufficiently informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament
- I don't feel informed and prepared at all for the election of the European Parliament

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

Now that you answered the question on how informed and prepared you feel for the election of the European Parliament in general, please answer the following, more specific questions:

Please select the answer that you feel is most fitting your knowledge:

- I feel extensively informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding population composition and development in the EU
- I feel sufficiently informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding population composition and development in the EU
- I feel insufficiently informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding population composition and development in the EU
- I don't feel informed and prepared at all for the election of the European Parliament regarding population composition and development in the EU

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

Please select the answer that you feel is most fitting your knowledge:

- I feel extensively informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding the impacts of migration processes on the EU
- I feel sufficiently informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding the impacts of migration processes on the EU
- I feel insufficiently informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding the impacts of migration processes on the EU
- I don't feel informed and prepared at all for the election of the European Parliament when it comes to the impacts of migration processes on the EU

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

Please select the answer that you feel is most fitting your knowledge:

- I feel extensively informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding the age structure of the EU/different age structures in the EU countries
- I feel sufficiently informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding the age structure of the EU/different age structures in the EU countries
- I feel insufficiently informed and prepared for the election of the European Parliament regarding the age structure of the EU/different age structures in the EU countries
- I don't feel informed and prepared at all for the election of the European Parliament regarding the age structure of the EU/different age structures in the EU countries

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How important is the position of parties on population composition and development of the EU countries for your voting choice in the European Elections?

- Highly important
- Fairly important
- Hardly important
- Not at all important

- I won't vote
- I don't know

- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult is it for you to decide if the parties you can vote in the upcoming European Parliament election represent your views when it comes to population composition and development of the EU countries?

- very easy
 - fairly easy
 - fairly difficult
 - very difficult
 - not possible

 - I don't know
 - I don't want to answer this question
-

How important is the position of parties on migration processes in the EU for your voting choice in the European Elections?

- Highly important
- Fairly important
- Hardly important
- Not at all important

- I won't vote
- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult is it for you to decide if the parties you can vote in the upcoming European Parliament election represent your views when it comes to migration processes in the EU?

- very easy
 - fairly easy
 - fairly difficult
 - very difficult
 - not possible

 - I don't know
 - I don't want to answer this question
-

How important is the position of parties on age structure of the EU/different age structures in the EU countries for your voting choice in the European Elections?

- Highly important
- Fairly important
- Hardly important

- Not at all important
- I won't vote
- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

How easy or difficult is it for you to decide if the parties you can vote in the upcoming European Parliament election represent your views when it comes to age structure of the EU/different age structures in the EU countries?

- very easy
- fairly easy
- fairly difficult
- very difficult
- not possible

- I don't know
- I don't want to answer this question

Thank you for your participation! Your answers are highly valuable for my Master thesis and your engagement is very much appreciated!

If you are interested in participating in a discussion on this topic, please contact me:

masterarbeit.ameliesimon@web.de

I would be happy about your participation!

GERMAN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Willkommen und vielen Dank für eure Teilnahme an dieser Fokusgruppen-Diskussion!

Mein Name ist Amelie Simon und ich studiere an der Universität Groningen und der Universität Köln. Ich mache meinen Doppel-Masterstudiengang in Population Studies (Groningen) sowie in Sociology and Social Research (Köln), welche sich auf das Verständnis des demographischen Verhaltens von Menschen, von Populationsdynamiken und sozialen Ungleichheiten konzentriert.

Für meine Masterarbeit möchte ich etwas über eure Gedanken zu demografischem Wissen erfahren und darüber, wie ihr euer demografisches Wissen einschätzt. Ich bin gespannt auf eure Meinung, wenn es um das Verständnis von Demografie und die Wichtigkeit oder Nicht-Wichtigkeit von demografischem Wissen für politische Beteiligung geht. Ich habe zu diesem Zweck einige Fragen vorbereitet, aber ich werde versuchen, unser Gespräch so flexibel wie möglich zu gestalten, damit ihr die Möglichkeit habt, der Gruppe selbst Fragen zu stellen - wenn ihr das möchtet.

Da es immer wieder eine Debatte über demographische Themen in Politik, Medien und der Öffentlichkeit gibt, wurdet ihr vielleicht schon mal in eurem Alltag mit demografischen Themen konfrontiert, oder habt sogar schon mal an einer Diskussion darüber teilgenommen. Auch wenn ihr dies nicht getan habt: eure Gefühle und Meinungen sind in dieser Diskussion mehr als willkommen. Eure Erfahrungen und Gedanken sind für meine Forschung sehr wertvoll!

Ich möchte betonen, dass eure Teilnahme an dieser Gruppendiskussion vollkommen freiwillig ist. Deshalb steht es euch frei, die Diskussion jederzeit zu verlassen, auch wenn ich hoffe, dass ihr bis zum Ende bleibt und eure Gedanken mit der Gruppe teilt. Der Inhalt unserer heutigen Diskussion wird ausschließlich für die Durchführung meiner Masterarbeit verwendet. Eure Antworten werden immer vertraulich behandelt, was bedeutet, dass eure Anonymität gewahrt bleibt und eure persönlichen Daten nicht weitergegeben werden.

Vor diesem Hintergrund ermutige ich euch, frei über eure Meinungen und Gefühle zu sprechen. Es gibt keine falschen Antworten und jeder Input von euch wird geschätzt. Es ist mir sehr wichtig, dass ihr euch so wohl wie möglich fühlt. Um dies zu ermöglichen, möchte ich euch alle bitten, niemanden aus unserer Gruppe wegen seiner oder ihrer Meinung anzugreifen. Natürlich steht es euch immer frei, anderer Meinung zu sein und eure eigenen Gedanken auszudrücken. Ich möchte euch jedoch bitten, alle TeilnehmerInnen ihre Ausführungen beenden zu lassen und sich gegenseitig nicht zu unterbrechen. Dies ist allein schon wichtig, damit ich im Nachhinein alle Meinungen korrekt dokumentieren kann.

Das führt mich zu einem weiteren wichtigen Punkt: Ich möchte unsere Diskussion gern aufzeichnen. Es erleichtert die Analyse und hilft mir zudem, eure Gedanken und die Diskussion korrekt wieder zu geben. Aber wie ich euch bereits gesagt habe, ist es meine oberste Priorität, eure Anonymität zu wahren und eure persönlichen Daten zu schützen. Die Aufnahme wird von mir nur zur Durchführung einer Abschrift verwendet und ist für keine andere Person zugänglich.

*Seid ihr alle damit einverstanden, dass ich diese Gruppendiskussion aufnehme?
Die Gruppendiskussion wird ca. 60-90 Minuten dauern.*

*Gibt es noch Fragen, bevor wir anfangen?
Dann würde ich nun mit der Aufnahme beginnen.*

Einleitungsfrage/Vorstellungsrunde

1. Zuerst möchte ich, dass wir uns alle kennenlernen. Es wäre toll, wenn sich jeder von euch vorstellen könnte.

Übergangsfragen + 1. Aktivität

Ich möchte gern mit einer kleinen Umfrage starten. Vielleicht habt ihr ja schon mal was von ‚Mentimeter‘ gehört? Ich habe hier einen Link für euch. Wenn ihr den in euer Handy eingibt, werdet ihr nach einem Code gefragt. Bitte gebt diesen Code hier ein (*siehe PPP*) und beantwortet die Frage, die euch dann angezeigt wird:

2. Welche Wörter kommen dir in den Sinn, wenn du an den Begriff ‚Demografie‘ denkst?
Probe: Es gibt keine falschen Antworten, gebt einfach den ersten Gedanken ein, der euch in den Sinn kommt.

Diskussion der Mentimeter Ergebnisse (*die Fragen werden je nach Gesprächsverlauf flexibel gestellt*):

3. Was haltet ihr von dem Ergebnis?
4. Warum habt ihr euch für diese Begriffe entschieden?
5. Warum meint ihr, haben die anderen Teilnehmer in der Gruppe diese Begriffe gewählt?
6. Was verbindet ihr mit dem Begriff ‚Demografie‘?

Um euch einen Eindruck davon zu vermitteln, was unter diesem Begriff im Allgemeinen verstanden wird, sind hier einige wichtige Punkte für euch aufgeführt (*siehe PPP*).

7. (**Falls es starke Abweichungen von den Mentimeter Ergebnissen gibt**) Was meint ihr, warum verbindet ihr andere Dinge mit dem Begriff ‚Demografie‘?

Thema 1: Demografie im Alltag

Nachdem wir nun darüber gesprochen haben, was Demografie bedeutet und was ihr darunter versteht, möchte ich mit euch darüber diskutieren, wie sich demografische Themen in eurem Alltag auf euch auswirken und in welchen Situationen ihr mit ihnen konfrontiert werdet.

8. Wo begegnen euch demografische Themen im Alltag?
Probes: Flüchtlingskrise, sinkende Geburtenrate, alternde Gesellschaft, Rentensystem, ...
9. Wie wirken sich diese Themen eurer Meinung nach auf eure Leben aus?
10. Was würdet ihr sagen, wie wichtig ist es, mit diesen Themen vertraut zu sein? In welchen Situationen?
Probe: Hat sonst noch jemand eine andere Meinung dazu?

Thema 2: Demografische Kompetenz

Nun, da wir darüber gesprochen haben, ob und wie wichtig es für euch ist, über demografische Themen Bescheid zu wissen, was würdet ihr sagen:

11. Wie gut kennt ihr euch mit demografischen Themen aus?
12. Was würde euch dazu motivieren, euer Wissen über demografische Themen zu vertiefen?
13. Welche Quellen gibt es bzw. nutzt ihr, um demografische Informationen zu finden? Würdet ihr sagen, dass es eher leicht oder schwierig ist, diese Informationen zu finden?
14. Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für euch, demografische Informationen zu verstehen?
15. Wie einfach oder schwierig ist es für euch die Vertrauenswürdigkeit von demografischen Informationen zu beurteilen?

Probes:

Wie beurteilt ihr die Vertrauenswürdigkeit von demografischen Informationen in den Medien im Vergleich zur Vertrauenswürdigkeit von demografischen Informationen, die ihr von Freunden oder Familienmitgliedern erhaltet?

Wie beurteilt ihr die Vertrauenswürdigkeit von demografischen Informationen, die ihr z.B. an der Universität oder in der Schule erhalten habt?

16. Wie fühlt ihr euch bei eurer Teilnahme an Diskussionen über demografische Themen?
Probe: Inwieweit fühlt ihr euch in solchen Situationen selbstbewusst/sicher oder eben nicht?

Thema 3: Diskussion der deskriptiven Ergebnisse des Online-Fragebogens zur demographischen Alphabetisierung + 2. und 3. Aktivität

Da ihr alle an meinem Online-Fragebogen teilgenommen habt, erinnert ihr euch vielleicht daran, dass ich dort ganz ähnliche Fragen dazu gestellt habe, wie einfach oder schwierig es für euch ist, mit demografischen Informationen umzugehen. Also, vielen Dank, dass ihr diese Fragen noch einmal beantwortet und sie als Gruppe mit mir diskutiert habt.

Jetzt würde ich gerne von euch wissen, wie einfach oder schwierig die vier verschiedenen Aufgaben, über die wir gerade gesprochen haben, eurer Meinung nach im Vergleich zueinander sind. Nämlich: demografische Informationen finden, verstehen, beurteilen und anwenden (zum Beispiel in Gesprächen).

17. Könnt ihr bitte diese vier Aktionen von am einfachsten bis am schwierigsten sortieren, je nachdem, wie anspruchsvoll sie für euch sind?

Probes:

Warum steht diese Fähigkeit an erster Stelle?

Findet jemand, dass die Reihenfolge anders sein müsste und wenn ja, warum?

Im Durchschnitt fanden es die Teilnehmer am schwierigsten, demografische Informationen danach zu beurteilen, ob sie vertrauenswürdig sind.

18. Was haltet ihr von diesem Ergebnis?

Probes (*In Bezug auf die vorherige Aufgabe bei Bedarf anpassen*):

Findet ihr dieses Ergebnis eher überraschend/ hättet ihr es genauso erwartet?

Was könnte eurer Meinung nach der Grund für dieses Ergebnis sein?

Nun würde ich euch bitten, dass ihr bei diesen drei demografischen Themen dasselbe tut: Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung, Migration & Altersstruktur

19. Könnt ihr bitte diese drei Themen von am einfachsten bis am schwierigsten sortieren, je nachdem, wie anspruchsvoll sie für euch sind?

Probes:

Warum steht dieses Thema an erster Stelle?

Findet jemand, dass die Reihenfolge anders sein müsste und wenn ja, warum?

Im Durchschnitt fanden es die Teilnehmer am schwierigsten, sich mit dem Thema Migration auseinanderzusetzen.

20. Was haltet ihr von diesem Ergebnis?

Probes (*In Bezug auf die vorherige Aufgabe bei Bedarf anpassen*):

Findet ihr dieses Ergebnis eher überraschend/ hättet ihr es genauso erwartet?

Was könnte eurer Meinung nach der Grund für dieses Ergebnis sein?

Viele Teilnehmer beantworteten die Fragen, wie einfach oder schwierig es für sie ist, mit demografischen Informationen umzugehen mit "Ich weiß nicht".

21. Was haltet ihr von diesem Ergebnis?

Probes:

Findet ihr dieses Ergebnis eher überraschend/ hättet ihr es genauso erwartet?

Was könnte eurer Meinung nach der Grund für dieses Ergebnis sein?

Könnte es sein, dass sie die Frage(n) nicht verstanden haben?

Könnte es sein, dass sie noch nie versucht haben, demografische Informationen zu finden?

Thema 4: Demografie und Politik + 4. Aktivität

Nachdem wir nun darüber gesprochen haben, wie selbstbewusst und fit ihr euch in Bezug auf euer persönliches, demografisches Wissen fühlt, möchte ich mit euch darüber sprechen, inwiefern ihr demografische Wissen für notwendig haltet, um sich politisch einzubringen. Das klingt vielleicht etwas kompliziert, also nehmen wir ein Beispiel:

22. Was denkt ihr: was haben demografische Themen mit Politik zu tun?

Probe: Hat sonst noch jemand eine andere Meinung dazu?

23. Was denkt ihr, wie wichtig ist es, sich für Wahlen, z.B. für die Europawahlen im Mai, mit demografischen Themen auszukennen?

Ich möchte euch zwei kurze Videos zeigen und gerne eure Meinung dazu hören.

Der erste Auszug stammt aus der Buchverfilmung von Dan Browns ‚Inferno‘

00:26:25 – 00:28:18 (01:53)

Der Zweite aus einem Vortrag des Wissenschaftlers Hans Rosling (*siehe PPP*).

00:19:19 – 00:26:14 (05:55)

24. Was haltet ihr von diesen Clips? Wie fühlt ihr euch, wenn du ihr diese Clips ansieht?

Probe: Hat sonst noch jemand eine andere Meinung dazu?

Ich würde euch gerne diese beiden Fragen von eben noch einmal stellen:

25. Was denkt ihr: was haben demografische Themen mit Politik zu tun?

26. Was denkt ihr, wie wichtig ist es, bei Wahlen, z.B. bei den Europawahlen im Mai, sich mit demografischen Themen auszukennen?

Thema 5: Quantitative Hypothesen + 5. Aktivität

Ich möchte noch etwas weiter auf die Europawahlen eingehen. Ich möchte, dass ihr wisst, dass ich nicht von euch erwarte, dass ihr mit mir darüber sprecht, ob ihr wählen gegangen seid oder – falls ihr wählen gegangen seid – wem ihr eure Stimme gegeben habt.

Ich möchte euch bitten, dass ihr noch einmal eure Handys rausholt und diesem zweiten Mentimeter Link folgt. Bitte gebt diesen Code ein (*siehe PPP*) und beantwortet die Frage, die euch dort angezeigt wird:

27. Welches Thema war für euch bei den Europawahlen am wichtigsten?

Probe: Es gibt keine falschen Antworten, geben Sie einfach das erste Thema ein, das Ihnen in den Sinn kommt.

(*In Bezug auf die Mentimeter Ergebnisse*)

28. Eurer Meinung nach: Würdet ihr eher sagen, dass demografische Fragen die Menschen dazu motiviert haben, an den Europawahlen teilzunehmen, oder dass demografische Themen keine Rolle bei der Wahlabsicht gespielt haben?

29. Wie sah eure Vorbereitung auf die Europawahlen zu demografischen Themen aus?

30. Waren demografische Fragen für eure Parteipräferenz bei den Europawahlen wichtig?

31. Würdet ihr sagen, dass ihr verstanden habt, wie sich die verschiedenen politischen Parteien in demografischen Fragen positioniert haben?

a. Woher habt ihr diese Informationen erhalten?

b. War es für einige Parteien einfacher als für andere? Warum?

Schlussfragen

32. Wie hat euch unsere Diskussion gefallen?

Probes:

Was könnte verbessert werden?

Was möchtet ihr mir noch als Feedback zu diesem Thema mitgeben?

Hat sonst noch jemand eine andere Meinung dazu?

33. Habt ihr den Eindruck, dass eher zu wenig oder zu viel über demografische Fragen gesprochen wird?
34. Was ist die wichtigste Botschaft für Euch, die ihr aus dieser Diskussion mit nach Hause nehmt?

Vielen Dank für eure Teilnahme!

ENGLISH FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome and thank you for your participation in this focus group discussion!

My name is Amelie Simon and I am a student of the University of Groningen and the University of Cologne. I am doing my double master's program in Population Studies (Groningen), as well as Sociology and Social Research (Cologne), which focusses on the understanding of demographic behavior of people, population dynamics and social inequalities.

For my Master Thesis I want to learn about your thoughts on knowledge on demography and on how you perceive your own. I am interested to hear your opinions when it comes to understanding demography and the importance or non-importance of demographic knowledge for people to get involved politically. I have prepared some questions for this purpose, but I will try to make our conversation as flexible as possible, so that you have the opportunity to ask questions to the group – if you want to.

Since there is again and again a debate about demographic topics in politics, the media and the public, you might have already been confronted with demographic issues in your daily life, or you might have even participated in a discussion about it. Even if you did not: your feelings and opinions are more than welcomed in this discussion. Your experiences and thoughts are highly valuable for my research!

I want to underline that your participation in this group discussion is completely voluntary. Therefore, you are free to leave the discussion any time, even if I hope that you will stay until the end and share your thoughts with the group. The content of our discussion today will be exclusively used for the conduction of my master thesis. Your answers will always be treated confidentially, which means that your anonymity will be preserved, and your personal information will not be shared.

Against this background, I encourage you to speak as free as you want to about your opinions and feelings. There are no wrong answers and every input will be appreciated. It is very important for me to make you feel as comfortable as possible. To make this possible, I would like to ask you all not to attack anyone from our group for their opinion. Of course, you are always free to disagree and to express your own thoughts. However, I would like to ask you to let all participants finish their statements and to not interrupt each other. This is also important so that I am able to correctly document all opinions afterwards.

This leads me to another important point: I would like to record our discussion. It facilitates the analysis and it also helps me to reproduce your thoughts and the discussion accurately. But as I already told you, it is my primary priority to maintain your anonymity and to protect your personal information. The recording will only be used by me to conduct a transcript and will not be accessible to any other person.

*Do you all agree that I record this group discussion?
The group discussion will take approximately 60-90 minutes.*

*Are there any questions left before we start?
Then I would now begin the recording.*

Introduction question/round of introduction

1. First of all, I'd like us all to get to know each other. It would be great if each of you could introduce herself/himself.

Transition questions + 1st Activity

I would like to start with a small survey. Maybe you've heard of 'Mentimeter' before? I have a link for you here. If you enter it into your mobile phone you will be asked for a code. Please enter this code (*see PPP*) and answer the question that will be displayed:

2. Which words come to your mind when you think of 'demography'?
Probe: There are no wrong answers, just enter the first thoughts that come to your mind.

Discussion of the Mentimeter result (*the questions will be asked flexibly depending on the flow of the conversation*):

3. What do you think of the result?
4. Why did you choose these terms?
5. How do you think it is that the others have chosen these terms?
6. What do you associate with the term 'demography'?

To give you an impression of what is generally understood by this term, here are a few key points for you (*see PPP*)

7. (*If there are strong deviations from the survey results*) What do you mean, why do you associate other things with "demography"?

Topic 1: Demography in everyday life

Now that we've talked about what demography means and what you understand by it, I'd like to discuss with you how you feel demographic issues affect you in your everyday life and in which situations you are confronted with them.

8. Where do you encounter demographic issues in everyday life?
Probes: Refugee crisis, declining birth rate, ageing society, pension system, ...
9. How do you feel these topics impact your life at this moment?
10. What would you say, how important is it to be familiar with these topics? In what situations?
Probe: Does anyone else have a different view on this?

Topic 2: Demographic Literacy

Now that we've talked about if and how important it is for you to know about demographic issues, what would you say:

11. How well do you know about demographic issues?
12. What would motivate you to deepen your knowledge of demographic issues?
13. What would be sources/which sources do you use to find demographic information?
Would you say it is rather easy or difficult to find this information?
14. How easy or difficult is it for you to understand demographic information?
15. How easy or difficult is it for you to judge the trustworthiness of demographic information?
Probes:
How do you feel about the trustworthiness of demographic information in the media compared to the trustworthiness of demographic information you get from friends or family members?
How do you feel about the trustworthiness of demographic information you get for example at university or during your education?

16. How do you feel about your participation in these discussions about demographic issues?

Probe: In how far do you feel confident or not in such situations?

Topic 3: Discussing the descriptive results of the online questionnaire with regard to demographic literacy + 2nd & 3rd Activity

Since you all participated in my online questionnaire, you might remember that I asked quite similar questions about how easy or difficult it is for you to handle demographic information. So, thank you for answering these questions again and discussing it as group with me.

Now I would like you to tell me how easy or difficult the four different tasks we have just talked about are in your opinion compared to each other. Those are: finding demographic information, understanding it, judging it and applying it (for example in conversations).

17. Could you please rank these four actions from easiest to most difficult regarding how challenging you think they are?

Probes:

Why is this ability ranked first?

Does anyone feel different about this order?

On average, the participants found it most challenging to **judge** demographic information

18. What do you think about this result?

Probes (*Modify probes in regard to the previous card task*):

Do you find this result rather surprising or would you have expected it the same way?

What do you think might be the reason for this result?

Now I would like you to do the same thing with these three demographic topics: population composition and development, migration & age structure

19. Could you please rank these three demographic themes from easiest to most difficult regarding how challenging you think they are?

Probes:

Why is this issue ranked first?

Does anyone feel different about this order?

On average, the participants found it most challenging to deal with **migration**.

20. What do you think about this result?

Probes (*Modify probes in regard to the previous card task*):

Do you find this result rather surprising or would you have expected it the same way?

What do you think might be the reason for this result?

Many participants also answered the questions about how easy or difficult it is for them to handle demographic information with "**I don't know**".

21. What do you think about this result?

Probes:

Do you find this result rather surprising or would you have expected it the same way?

What do you think might be the reason for this result?

Could it be that they did not understand the question(s)?

Could it be that they have never tried to find demographic information before?

Topic 4: Demography and politics + 4th Activity

Now that we've talked about how confident and fit you feel about your personal demographic knowledge, I'd like to discuss with you in how far you feel that demographic knowledge is necessary to get politically involved. This might sound a little bit complicated, so let's take an example:

22. What do you think demographic issues have to do with politics?
Probe: Does anyone else have a different view on this?
23. What do you think, how important is it to know well about demographic topics when you vote, for example in the European elections held in May?

I would like to show you two short videos and hear your opinion about them.

The first excerpt is from the book adaptation of Dan Brown's 'Inferno'

00:26:25 – 00:28:18

The second is from a lecture by the scientist Hans Rosling (see *PPP*).

00:19:19 – 00:26:14 (05:55)

24. What do you think about these clips? How do you feel watching these clips?
Probe: Does anyone else have a different view on this?

I would like to ask you these two questions again:

25. What would you say, how important is it to know about demographic topics when you vote, for example in the European elections held in May?
26. What do you think demographic issues have to do with politics?

Topic 5: Quantitative hypotheses + 5th Activity

I'd like to talk to a little bit further about the European elections. Please note that I don't expect you to talk to me about whether you were voting or - if you were voting - to whom you gave your vote.

I would like to ask you to take your mobile phone again and follow this second link to Mentimeter. Please enter this code (see *PPP*) and answer the following question:

27. Which topic would you say was most important for you in the European elections?
Probe: There are no wrong answers, just enter the first topic that comes to your mind.

(With regard to the Mentimeter results)

28. In your opinion: Would you rather say that demographic issues did motivate people to vote in the European elections or that demographic issues did not play a role for voting intentions?
29. How was your preparation for the European elections on demographic issues?
30. Were demographic issues important for your choice in the European elections?
31. Would you say you understood how the different political parties positioned themselves in demographic issues?
 - a. How did you retrieve this information?
 - b. Was it easier for some parties than others? Why?

Closing questions

32. How did you like our discussion?
Probes:
What could be improved?
What else would you like to give me as feedback on this topic?
Does anyone else have a different view on this?
33. I'd like to ask you if your impression is that rather enough or too little is being talked about demographic issues?
34. What would be the most important take-home message for you?

Thank you very much for your participation!

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION POWER POINT SLIDES IN GERMAN AND ENGLISH

Willkommen zu unserer
Fokusgruppen-Diskussion
zum Thema Demografie!

18.08.2019
Amelie Simon

Welcome
to our
Focus Group Discussion
about
Demography!

08/18/2019
Amelie Simon



➤ Demografie befasst sich mit der Entwicklung von Bevölkerungen und ihren Strukturen

➤ Demografen interessieren sich für Dinge wie

- Populationsgrößen und deren Dichte,
- wie viele Menschen geboren werden und wie viele sterben,
- wie viele Menschen die Bevölkerung aufgrund von Auswanderung verlassen wird & wie viele Menschen aufgrund von Einwanderung in die Bevölkerung eintreten,
- die Auswirkungen dieser Faktoren auf die Altersverteilung in einer Gesellschaft und auf das Wachstum oder den Rückgang einer Bevölkerung

Three circular icons: one with a single person, one with two people (one holding a balloon), and one with a group of people.

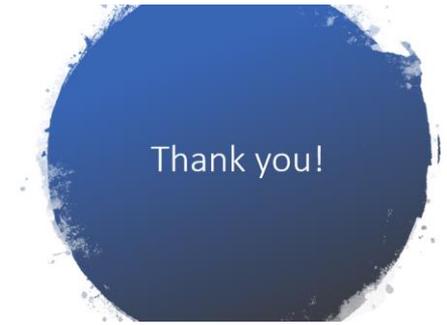
➤ Demography is the study of populations

➤ Demographers are interested in things like

- population sizes & their density,
- in how many people are born & how many people die,
- in how many people leave the population due to emigration & how many people enter the population due to immigration,
- and in the impact of these factors on the age distribution in a society and on the growth or decline of a population

Three circular icons: one with a single person, one with two people (one holding a balloon), and one with a group of people.





GERMAN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TRANSCRIPT

Anmerkungen:

- AS: Individuelle Markierung für den Moderator
AS = Amelie Simon
- M/F + Nummer: Individuelle Markierung für die Teilnehmer
F = weiblich (F1, F2, F3, F4 & F5)
M = männlich (M1 & M2)
- Non-verbale Ausdrücke des Moderators und der Teilnehmer werden in eckigen Klammern festgehalten, z.B.: [kichert]
- Pausen innerhalb eines Redebeitrags werden mit drei Punkten in Klammern markiert [...]
- Abbrüche in Sätzen werden mit einem Schrägstrich markiert: /
- Überlappungen zwischen Teilnehmern werden mit zwei Schrägstrichen markiert: //
- Falls der Forscher Wörter im Zuge der Transkribierung nicht verstehen konnte (z.B. wegen der Qualität der Aufnahme oder der Betonung der Redner), wurden diese ausgelassen. Die Stellen im Transkript, an denen dies vorkam wurden wie folgt markiert: [?]
- Um die Anonymität der Teilnehmer zu achten, wurden alle vertraulichen Informationen gelöscht oder ersetzt. Z.B.: [F1] anstelle des tatsächlichen Namens, oder [XX] für den Wohnort.

AS: Noch einmal herzlich willkommen zur Fokusgruppen-Diskussion. Schön, dass ihr alle da seid und euch die Zeit genommen habt. Ich fände es ganz schön, wenn ihr euch am Anfang einmal vorstellen würdet. #00:00:22-5#

M2: Ich bin [M2] und habe auch studiert, bin jetzt aber berufstätig und arbeite hier in einer Online-Sportredaktion. #00:00:37-9#

AS: Hallo [M2]. #00:00:37-9#

F3: Ja, ich bin [F3]. Ich studiere erneut. Ich habe mal studiert und mache ein duales Studium im Kommunalverwaltungsdienst bei der Stadt [XX]. #00:00:46-0#

M1: Ja, ich bin [M1] und ich mache eine Ausbildung im Groß- und Außenhandel und bin jetzt im dritten Lehrjahr. #00:00:54-3#

F4: Hallo, ich bin [F4]. Ich habe jetzt gerade meinen Master beendet in Soziologie und Sozialwissenschaften. #00:01:02-7#

F1: Hallo, ich bin [F1] und ich schreibe gerade meine Masterarbeit im gleichen Fach. #00:01:08-8#

F2: Und ich bin [F2] und ich arbeite seit Anfang des Jahres in einem Marktforschungsinstitut und habe Englisch studiert. #00:01:17-8#

F5: Und ich bin [F5] und ich arbeite als Ärztin seit wenigen Monaten. #00:01:24-1#

AS: Vielen Dank, wir starten direkt mit einer kleinen Umfrage. Es wäre super, wenn ihr eure Handys rausholen könntet und auf diesen Link geht. Dort werdet ihr nach einem Code gefragt. Das ist der, den ihr hier angezeigt bekommt. Und dann steht da eine Frage und es wäre super, wenn ihr die beantworten könntet. Ihr könnt drei Sachen eingeben, wenn ihr wollt, müsst ihr aber nicht. Also macht einfach das, was euch einfällt. Es gibt keine falschen Antworten, also einfach das, was euch in den Sinn kommt. #00:03:14-4#

AS: Sind alle fertig? #00:03:14-4#

Alle: [...] Ja. #00:04:11-4#

AS: Also das funktioniert, dass Sachen, die auch öfter genannt wurden, werden auch größer angezeigt. Das heißt, Bevölkerung, Probleme und Altersstruktur haben offensichtlich mehrere von euch angegeben. [...] Ja, warum habt ihr euch für die Begriffe entschieden? Vielleicht habt ihr Lust, etwas dazu zu sagen, [...] wieso [...] ausgerechnet die Begriffe. Okay, einen Moment, ich sehe gerade, Altersstruktur steht da zweimal. #00:04:42-7#

F5: Das war bestimmt ich. [...] Falsch geschrieben (lacht). #00:04:48-8#

AS: Bevölkerungswissenschaften, Bevölkerungszahlen, Überalterung, alternde Weltbevölkerung, Bevölkerungsstruktur, Bevölkerungswachstum, Migration, [?]. Altersstruktur und Bevölkerung scheint ja auf jeden Fall sehr beliebt bei euch gewesen zu sein / Wandel und Rente sehe ich hier auch ein bisschen kleiner. Warum die Begriffe? #00:05:11-7#

M2: Geht es darum, was wir persönlich gemacht haben oder? #00:05:15-6#

AS: Auch, was ihr glaubt, warum die anderen die Begriffe ausgewählt haben. #00:05:17-5#

M2: Ja, ich kann einfach mal anfangen. Dass Bevölkerung so prominent ist, ist ja auch ein bisschen in der Natur der Sache. Dass man einfach den allgemeinen Begriff einfach mal nennt. Also grob angibt, worum es bei Demografie geht. Und ich denke, dass so vielleicht in Deutschland am präsentesten ist, dass es viel um Altersstruktur geht, eben auch mit der alternden Gesellschaft und dass das so [...] der Hauptdeutungsrahmen ist, den man hier zu hören bekommt und dass das natürlich gleichzeitig Probleme mit sich bringt aufgrund von Sachen wie Rente und damit verbunden demografischer Wandel etc. #00:06:19-1#

AS: Das war ja schon mal eine sehr ausführliche Antwort. Danke [M2] #00:06:19-1#

F4: Dem kann ich mich eigentlich nur anschließen. Ich weiß nicht, aber wenn man von Demografie hört oder in den Medien liest ist es ja tendenziell immer so, dass: okay wir gehen in eine alternde Gesellschaft rein. Gerade in Deutschland kommen keine Jungen mehr nach. Unser Problem wird es irgendwann mal sein, überhaupt eine Rente zu bekommen, weil keine Nachkommen mehr da sind. Deswegen habe ich halt auch viel diese Generationenunterschiede und wandelnde Bevölkerung angegeben, weil das immer mehr in den Medien oder im Volksmund ist. Dass wir einfach zu alt werden. #00:06:54-6#

AS: Ja, okay. Ihr seid auf jeden Fall alle nahe bei einander mit euren Antworten. Dann zeige ich euch noch, was ich mir dazu rausgesucht habe. Eure Antworten sind auf jeden Fall sehr nah daran gewesen, was man jetzt als die Antworten nennen würde, wenn man das Fach studiert. Im Groben habe ich drei Themen dazu rausgesucht, die ihr so auch benannt habt. „Wie entwickelt sich die Population und welchen Einfluss haben Migration, also Auswanderung und Einwanderung, auf die Gesellschaft und wie wirken sich verschiedene demografische Faktoren auf die Altersstruktur aus“ [...] Also eigentlich alles Sachen, die ihr auch so genannt habt, wenn man sich jetzt noch einmal euer Ergebnis anguckt. Vor allem die Altersstruktur war ja sehr prominent. Migration scheint nur eine Person genannt zu haben. Was meint ihr, woran liegt das? #00:08:21-3#

F1: Vielleicht wenn man an Demografie denkt, was ja gerade schon gesagt wurde, dass man ganz oft an das Land denkt, in dem man lebt und sich quasi die Altersstruktur anguckt, wie viele werden geboren, wie viele Männer, wie viele Frauen, in welchen Altersschichten. Und vielleicht gar nicht erst einmal daran denkt, wer rein- und wer rausgeht, obwohl das natürlich auch einen großen Einfluss darauf hat, wie groß eine Bevölkerung ist und wie die Altersstruktur ist und wie viele Menschen darin leben. #00:08:43-1#

AS: Da ihr wirklich sehr nahe an den Ergebnissen dran wart, mache ich direkt mit dem nächsten Thema weiter. Nachdem wir darüber gesprochen haben, was Demografie für euch bedeutet, möchte ich nun mit euch darüber reden, wo euch demografische Themen im Alltag begegnen oder ob sie euch überhaupt im Alltag begegnen. Wie empfindet ihr das? Es kann alles darunter gefasst werden. Wo habt ihr mit den Themen zu tun? Weil ihr direkt betroffen seid, darüber lest oder darüber sprecht. #00:09:41-0#

F5: Ich finde ein ganz großes Thema in den Medien ist Migration, etwas, das immer wieder wellenartig hochgeholt wird, auch wenn wir das jetzt gerade nicht alle genannt haben. Migration ist immer wieder ein großes Thema, dazu gehören auch die Fluchtwege über das Mittelmeer und so weiter. EU und Frontex und überhaupt. Ich finde, dass ist auf jeden Fall präsent. Und was in meinem Alltag jetzt nicht so präsent ist, was ich aber bei meinem Vater sehe, der mit 60 in Frührente geht, ist das Thema Rente, bei dem man sich schon fragt: Es kommen immer weniger Junge nach und immer mehr Leute / wir werden einfach alle immer älter und dass das auch bedeutet, dass Renten anders finanziert werden, als sie vielleicht noch vor 50 Jahren finanziert wurden. Und ich finde, dass / also es betrifft mich jetzt nicht jeden Tag, aber es ist auf jeden Fall etwas, das da mit reinspielt. Ich finde das Thema Wachstum, also wer bekommt wie viele Kinder, denke ich nicht, dass mich das im Zusammenhang Bevölkerungswachstum betrifft, sondern mehr was die persönliche Lebensplanung angeht. #00:10:54-3#

AS: Okay, wie sehen das die Anderen? #00:10:54-7#

F4: Also ich würde auch nicht sagen, dass man sich jeden Tag mit dem Thema beschäftigt oder dass es so präsent ist. Wenn man nach draußen geht, ist es nicht so, als denkt man daran. Ich glaube, es ist so wie [F5] meint, eher medial vermittelt. Und dann ab und zu, wenn man / zum Beispiel mein Papa, der sich ein Jahr um meine Großeltern gekümmert hat, als die nicht mehr konnten. Bei sowas ist dann auch das Thema Alterung eher präsent im Alltag, aber ich würde nicht sagen, dass ich jeden Tag auf die Straße gehe und damit konfrontiert werde. Und ich denke auch, dass wir das Thema Migration nicht angesprochen haben, weil wir vielleicht gar nicht wahrnehmen, dass das im Alltag so ein großer Wandel ist. Und es für uns vielleicht keinen Unterschied macht. #00:11:49-5#

F5: Vielleicht aber auch, weil es für uns in der EU so selbstverständlich ist. Ich kann nur für mich sprechen, aber ich bin gefühlt ohne Grenzen aufgewachsen. Als deutscher Staatsbürger gibt es auch nicht so wirkliche Grenzen, an denen man scheitert. Man kann ja eigentlich überall hinreisen, wo man hinreisen möchte. Und innerhalb von Europa / Migration klingt für mich immer so / Migration ist für mich immer mit einer Grenze verbunden. Und die gibt es für mich irgendwie nicht mehr. Für mich ist alles eher Eins, was vielleicht eine Utopie ist, weil es faktisch gesehen so nicht ist. #00:12:33-0#

AS: Wenn ihr sagt, dass euch das im Alltag nicht so betrifft, könnt ihr euch denn vorstellen, dass es für andere Menschen anders aussieht? #00:12:40-9#

F1: Ich glaube, dass wir ganz oft gar nicht merken, dass Probleme, die wir haben, oder Sachen, die angesprochen werden, überhaupt unter den Begriff fallen. Gerade haben wir darüber gesprochen, dass die Bevölkerung immer weiter altert und es in Zukunft immer mehr Probleme geben wird, weil immer weniger Kinder geboren werden. Und paradoxerweise gibt es dann trotzdem nicht genug Kita-Plätze für alle. Es scheint ja also in allen Altersstrukturformen irgendwie ein Problem zu sein. Und ich denke, das betrifft jeden, egal in welchem Alter man ist. Wenn man alt ist, gibt es keine Rente, wenn man jung ist, keine Kita-Plätze. Ich denke, es betrifft jeden, auch wenn man nicht weiß, dass es ein Demografie-Thema ist. #00:13:18-7#

M2: Ja, das denke ich auch. Dass es ein Problem ist, dass Demografie einfach so ein Riesen-

Thema ist und man sich nicht bewusst macht, wie viel es mit dem Alltag zu tun hat. Ein dummes Beispiel: Man geht an die Dönerbude und im Prinzip ist das schon ein Kontakt mit demografischen Themen, weil es mit Migration zu tun hat. Im weitesten Sinn. Ich glaube, man hat das alles als selbstverständlich hingenommen, sodass man sich gar nicht mehr bewusst macht, um welchen Themen-Oberpunkt es überhaupt geht. #00:14:04-9#

AS: Was würdet ihr denn sagen, wie wichtig ist es, sich trotzdem mit diesen Themen auszukennen? #00:14:15-4#

F3: Also ich denke, es ist schon wichtig. Wenn ich jetzt auch an meinen Großvater denke, bei dem wir echt Probleme hatten, einen Platz im Pflegeheim zu finden. Das bekomme ich auch bei Freundinnen mit. Die Pflege der Großmutter realisiert zu bekommen, ist ein wichtiges Thema. Auch wegen den Pflegeberufen, in die verständlicherweise keiner will, weil sie so schlecht bezahlt sind. #00:14:51-6#

F4: Man kann es auch ganz groß sehen, zum Beispiel mit dem Klimawandel. Wir sind einfach viel zu viele Menschen auf dem Planeten. Wir haben zwar gesagt, es kommt niemand mehr nach. Aber wenn man sich mal andere anschaut / Auf dem afrikanischen Kontinent gibt es sehr viele Nachzügler-Kinder. So kann man es auch sagen, dass der weltliche demografische Wandel irgendwann nicht mehr zu stoppen sein wird. #00:15:30-5#

AS: Also würdest du sagen, dass ist ein Argument dafür, warum man sich mehr mit Demografie auseinandersetzen sollte, damit einem die Zusammenhänge eher bewusst sind? #00:15:51-9#

F4: Ja, auf jeden Fall. Ich habe erst gestern mit einer Freundin darüber gesprochen. Wir haben vermutlich alle Lust, Kinder zu bekommen, aber wenn man mal auf die Erde blickt, ist es total egoistisch. Es ist das Schlimmste, das du gerade machen kannst. Theoretisch. #00:16:18-8#

AS: Wenn also sonst niemand mehr etwas dazu sagen möchte, würde ich dann weitermachen [...] Was meint ihr, wie gut kennt ihr euch mit demografischen Themen aus? Würdet ihr sagen ihr fühlt euch gut informiert? Wie ist es um euer demografisches Wissen bestellt? #00:16:37-7#

F3: Mittelmäßig würde ich sagen. #00:16:43-4#

F4: Ich glaube, dass man oft nicht weiß, dass es unter den Begriff fällt. Wenn man etwas liest, schiebt man es nicht direkt in die Kategorie Demografie. #00:17:00-7#

M2: Das denke ich auch. Ich weiß jetzt nicht, wie die Geburten- und Sterberate in Serbien ist. #00:17:09-6#

F1: Aber du weißt, dass es etwas damit zu tun hat. #00:17:09-6#

M2: Genau, ich weiß, dass es etwas damit zu tun hat. Ich glaube, ich weiß die groben Zusammenhänge. Vielleicht reicht das auch in vielen Fällen, keine Ahnung. Aber es ist schwierig es richtig einzuschätzen, weil es so tief ins Detail gehen kann, dass [...] dass man in den Details keine Ahnung hat, aber trotzdem das Gefühl hat, dass man sich mit dem Thema auskennt. #00:17:41-6#

F2: Ich glaube es hat damit zu tun, dass es uns nicht direkt im Alltag betrifft. Wenn eine Situation kommt oder etwas in den Medien berichtet wird, und Details und Zahlen kommen / Aber im normalen Alltag wird man jetzt nicht mit Spezifischerem konfrontiert und deshalb würde ich auch sagen, es ist schwer einzuschätzen. Vielleicht hat man was im Studium gelernt, aber das sind dann vielleicht auch Sachen, die man dann teilweise auch vergisst. #00:18:27-3#

AS: Weil man sie im Alltag nicht anwendet? #00:18:27-3#

F2: Genau. #00:18:27-3#

AS: Gäbe es denn irgendetwas für euch, dass euch motivieren würde, sich mehr mit dem Thema zu beschäftigen? Oder ist es eher so, dass ihr nicht so den Bedarf im Alltag seht und es deswegen schon so in Ordnung ist, wie es gerade ist? #00:18:49-4#

F2: So lange man nicht an einen Punkt kommt, an dem es für einen selbst direkt zu Problemen führt, habe ich selbst noch nie gedacht, dass ich mich gerade mehr mit Demografie beschäftigen muss. Wenn man generelles Interesse an dem Thema hat, ist es natürlich etwas anderes. #00:19:17-5#

F1: Das ist aber auch dem Begriff geschuldet. Ich würde es jetzt nicht bei Google suchen. Ich habe es im letzten Jahr noch studiert, aber ich würde jetzt nicht extra nachgucken. Aber andersherum, wenn ich jetzt in einer Situation wäre und ich Rente bräuchte oder einen Pflegeplatz, auch wenn es mir vielleicht gar nicht bewusst ist, ist die Motivation natürlich da. Vielleicht lernt man dann auch neue Sachen über Zusammenhänge und denkt sich: Das war mir vorher gar nicht bewusst. Klar, wir haben jetzt nicht genug Rente, weil unsere Bevölkerungsstruktur eben so ist, wie sie ist. Vielleicht macht es dann ja Klick. #00:19:49-9#

AS: Ihr habt alle meinen Fragebogen ausgefüllt und jetzt kommen ein paar Fragen, die auch in ähnliche Richtung gehen, wie ich sie auch im Fragebogen gestellt habe. Ich möchte gerne noch einmal mit euch persönlich darüber sprechen. Es geht darum, wie leicht es euch fällt, mit demografischen Informationen umzugehen, wenn ihr damit konfrontiert werdet. Die erste Frage ist: Welche Quellen nutzt ihr, wenn ihr nach demografischen Informationen sucht oder kommt es erst gar nicht dazu? Und wie leicht fällt es euch, nach diesen Informationen zu suchen? Es sind mehrere Fragen, also antwortet gern spontan, was euch einfällt. #00:20:44-0#

M2: Ich glaube, dass ich nicht spezifisch danach suche. So etwas wie Rente ist für mich noch zu weit weg. Da beschäftige ich mich noch nicht so mit, als dass ich meine Freizeit dafür opfern würde. Dazu, wie man auf diese Informationen stößt: Das hängt damit zusammen, wie es gerade medial thematisiert wird. Ich denke, jeder hat seine eigene Routine, wie man an Nachrichten kommt und das gibt es ja sehr viele unterschiedliche Wege. Man ist trotzdem von der Agenda abhängig und wie es gerade thematisiert wird. Wenn gerade demografische Themen wie zuletzt Migration sehr präsent sind, nimmt man natürlich auch mehr Informationen auf. Aber es ist nicht so, dass ich gezielt nach diesen Informationen suche, sondern sie werden mir im Zuge der täglichen Berichterstattung übermittelt. #00:21:46-0#

AS: Und was sind Quellen, über die einem die Informationen übermittelt werden? Sind das Medien oder Familie, Freunde, Kollegen? #00:21:55-0#

F4: Ich würde sagen mehr in den Medien. Tägliches Zeitung lesen. #00:22:08-6#

F2: Würde ich auch sagen. Außer man ist in einer speziellen Situation. Zum Beispiel unser Mitbewohner kommt aus dem Iran und hat zuletzt viel erzählt. Das ist natürlich eine spezielle Situation. Aber im Allgemeinen eher über die Medien. #00:22:26-8#

AS: Und würdet ihr sagen, dass Social Media da eine besondere Rolle spielt oder ist das eher untergeordnet? #00:22:44-7#

F4: Bei mir geht es eher über Nachrichten oder Online-Zeitungen. Aber es hängt auch immer davon ab, wie deine Algorithmen bei Social Media funktionieren. Deswegen kommt es bei mir jetzt eher weniger vor, dass ich da auf Facebook, Facebook sowieso nicht, da mache ich gar

nichts mehr, und auf Instagram folge ich glaube ich den falschen Seiten. #00:23:19-7#

F1: Ich habe zum Beispiel bei Instagram die Tagesschau abonniert und dann machen die immer von den wichtigsten Meldungen einen kurzen Text. Bei mir ist es so, dass ich viel Zeit auf Instagram verbringe, aber dadurch diese Informationen habe. Die haben auch immer einen Link, zu dem Thema, um das es geht. Aber zum Beispiel unter den Instagram-Posts oder bei Facebook findet dann schon ein Diskurs statt. Wir wissen alle, der ist nicht immer auf hohem Niveau oder geht nicht zwingend um das Thema, aber ich kann mir vorstellen, dass da und nicht zwingend im Primär-Text viel Meinungs- und Informationsaustausch stattfinden könnte. Auch wenn ich es persönlich nicht so mache. #00:24:01-1#

F4: Mir fällt da gerade noch das Thema ‚Podcasts‘ ein. #00:24:09-4#

F5: ‚Die Lage der Nation‘. #00:24:09-4#

F3: Ich habe von der Tagesschau auch einen Whatsapp-Dienst, den kann man beantragen und dann bekommt man morgens und abends die wichtigsten Nachrichten des Tages und kann dann bei Bedarf auch noch einmal auf die Seite gehen und sich das detaillierter durchlesen. Das ist ganz cool. #00:24:30-2#

AS: Nun ist es ja so, dass in diesem Raum alle Abi gemacht haben. Was denkt ihr, wie es für Leute aus, die vielleicht einen Hauptschul- oder Realschulabschluss haben? [...] #00:25:02-9#

M2: Man muss aufpassen, dass man da nicht in ein Schubladen-Denken verfällt. Auch wenn ich mich da nicht ausnehmen kann. Ich denke bei sowas sofort an irgendwelche Fake News auf Social Media von angeblichen Vergewaltigungen, die angeblich ein Migrant getan haben soll. Da reicht dann meistens schon eine schlechte Recherche, um herauszufinden, dass das so nicht stimmt. Aber viele Leute sind nicht in der Lage, das zu leisten und die Quellen zu differenzieren. Stattdessen nehmen sie alles für bare Münze. Aber eigentlich ist es auch Schubladen-Denken, dass ich so etwas anmerke. Ich denke, der Trend geht dahin, dass die Menschen mit geringerer Bildung eher auf Fake News hereinfließen als Leute mit höheren Abschlüssen. #00:25:53-9#

AS: Wenn wir einmal vom Finden der Informationen weggehen. Wie ist es, wenn ihr Informationen erhalten habt, zum Beispiel bei der Tagesschau. Wie leicht fällt es euch zu verstehen. Könnt ihr damit dann etwas anfangen oder denkt ihr bei demografischen Themen wie der Altersstruktur oder Migration eher, dass es für euch gerade nicht ganz deutlich wird? #00:26:18-4#

F5: Um beim Tagesschau-Beispiel zu bleiben. Ich finde, die bereiten es gerade auf Instagram mit knackigen, kleinen Grafiken sehr zugänglich auf. Bei diesem konkreten Beispiel denke ich, dass es gut verständlich ist. Vielleicht wird nicht immer das große Ganze angegangen, was natürlich schwierig ist. Je kürzer die Beiträge sind desto weniger gibt es her, dass man alles komplex darstellen kann. Aber ich denke schon, dass die Information an sich, erst einmal leicht zu verstehen ist. #00:27:03-2#

F1: Ich überlege gerade, wo man noch damit konfrontiert wird. Oft ist so, dass es dann über die Politik geht, weil es um neue Renten, ein neues Migrationsgesetz oder ähnliches geht. Und dann ist es tendenziell eher so, dass ein Instagram-Rahmen gar nicht reicht. Man kann es nicht mit 160 Zeichen darstellen, und selbst wenn, steht immer im Raum, dass oftmals gar nicht nachvollzogen werden kann, worum es gerade geht. Wenn dann in Printmedien oder im Fernsehen über politische Entscheidungen berichtet wird, ist es für mich manchmal nicht zugänglich. Ich merke dann, so ganz kann ich es nicht nachvollziehen. Dann muss man sich schon aktiv dazu entscheiden, es sich noch einmal anzuschauen, weil es einen vielleicht selbst betrifft oder interessiert. #00:27:55-3#

AS: Das ist gerade ein ganz gutes Beispiel, weil es zur nächsten Frage passt. Wenn ihr mit solchen Informationen konfrontiert werdet, habt ihr dann das Gefühl, dass ihr ihnen vertrauen könnt? #00:28:28-7#

F5: Bei mir kommt es sehr stark auf die Quelle an. Dem Podcast "Die Lage der Nation" vertraue ich auf absurde Art so sehr, als wären es Freunde von mir. Ich habe das Gefühl, dass das, was die beiden sagen, so stimmt. Und selbst wenn sie dann einmal die Rückmeldung bekommen, dass etwas nicht gestimmt hat, dann sagen sie es in der nächsten Folge und sprechen ihren eigenen Fehler an. Wenn ich mir jetzt aber bei der Tagesschau, also nicht in der App, sondern in der richtigen Tagesschau, einen Politiker anschau, dann denke ich nicht, dass das, was er sagt, bestimmt stimmt. Es kommt sehr auf die Quelle an. #00:29:17-9#

M2: Ich sehe es themenunspezifisch so wie [F5]. Ich würde es nicht an demografischen Themen festmachen, ob und wie sehr ich einer Quelle vertraue. Zum Beispiel bei der Tagesschau glaubt man vielleicht eher, was berichtet wird, weil es einfach ein öffentlich-rechtliches Medium ist. Und wenn ein Politiker etwas sagt, dann glaube ich es ihm nicht automatisch. Das hängt aber nicht mit den demografischen Themen zusammen, sondern damit, dass es ein Politiker ist. [...] Und man weiß, dass er mit seinen Aussagen eine eigene Agenda verfolgt. #00:29:53-0#

AS: Also ist es themenunabhängig, wie ihr Quellen beurteilt? #00:30:35-8#

M2: Also ich mein [...] das kann aber auch an unserem Kreis hier liegen. Wir haben hier glaube ich alle die ähnliche Meinung zu Migration und so. Dass man dann aber vielleicht bei solchen demografischen Themen vielleicht sehr emotional sein kann und sich somit fehlleiten lassen kann, ist dabei wahrscheinlich eher gegeben, als wenn es jetzt z.B. um den Haushaltsentwurf geht. #00:31:06-5#

F4: Ich glaube vieles wird in der Berichterstattung auch nur an der Oberfläche angekratzt. Sie ist so kurz, dass man meistens gar nicht so tief eintauchen kann. Man sieht es und akzeptiert es, aber denkt gar nicht weiter darüber nach. #00:31:22-3#

AS: Die letzte Herausforderung wäre, das Wissen selber anzuwenden. Wie sicher fühlt ihr euch, wenn ihr mit Freunden, Familie oder Kollegen über Migration, Flüchtlingskrise, Altersstruktur, Rente, alles, was ihr bisher genannt habt, sprecht? Habt ihr das Gefühl, ihr könnt gut mitreden oder seid ihr euch eher unsicher, was diese Themen angeht. #00:31:50-6#

F3: Unsicher. #00:31:57-3#

AS: Und ist es anders als bei anderen Themen? #00:32:06-9#

F3: Also ich habe einfach / Also in der Uni hatten wir das Thema auch. So ein paar Grundlagen habe ich sicherlich drauf. Aber wenn man jetzt zu Renten oder so etwas fragen würde dann Nein. Da könnte ich nicht drüber diskutieren. #00:32:33-3#

F5: Ich finde es geht häufiger, so bekomme ich das mit, eher um grundsätzliche Sachen und Standpunkte. Ich komme nicht in die Situation, in der ich über detaillierte Fakten reden muss. Ich finde, es geht eher so, dass man etwas sagt wie "Okay, man sollte eine private Rentenversicherung machen" oder "Okay, aber wir brauchen auch Leute, die zu uns kommen, um offene Arbeitsstellen, die hier nicht besetzt werden, besetzen. Es geht also nicht darum, wie viele Leute genau kommen und wie viele Stellen es gibt, sondern um Standpunkte. Wo vielleicht Meinungen nicht immer auf Fakten beruhen, sondern es politische Grundeinstellungen sind. Da fühle ich mich sicher. Auch wenn ich mich vielleicht fälschlicherweise sicher fühle, weil ich einfach so sehr an meine eigene Meinung und meinen Standpunkt glaube. Und dass so sehr, dass ich Migration trotzdem hierhaben will, selbst wenn

es keine offenen Stellen gibt. Das ist ja nicht unbedingt rational. Deshalb würde ich sagen, dass ich mich nicht komplett unsicher fühle, aber ich wiege mich aufgrund meiner Überzeugungen aber vielleicht in einer falschen Sicherheit. #00:33:52-2#

F4: Ich glaube, es ist eher Laienwissen, das wir haben. Man überall etwas aufgeschnappt, aber es ist kein fundiertes Wissen, mit dem man zwei Stunden diskutieren könnte. #00:34:06-0#

M2: Wobei es da auch schwierig ist, alle demografischen Themen über einen Kamm zu scheren. Wenn ich mich mit jemandem über Rente unterhalten müsste und müsste mein favorisiertes Zahlungsmodell vertreten, dann / Keine Ahnung / Wenn jetzt aber jemand mit AfD-Parolen um die Ecke kommt, dann hätte ich es vermutlich deutlich einfacher, ihm aufzuzeigen, dass er auf dem Holzweg ist. Es ist schwierig zu verallgemeinern. #00:34:22-0#

F1: Man schnappt Sachen auf, sei es in den Medien oder bei Freunden. Und ich denke mir, das kann ich nachvollziehen und es passt in mein Weltbild. / Ne, sorry, das kommt dann ja falsch. / Aber ist einfach eine politische Grundeinteilung, die man bei Themen wie Migration und Rente hat. Ich glaube, man ist sich dem gar nicht so bewusst, aber jeder hat nunmal eine Einstellung dazu, sei sie jetzt fundiert oder nicht. Ich glaube nicht, dass man komplett still wäre in solchen Gesprächen, aber ich könnte jetzt auch kein detailliertes Hintergrundwissen zu der aktuellen Demografie-Phase, in der wir leben, geben. Sollte ich können, kann ich aber nicht. #00:35:19-3#

AS: Vielen Dank. Dann würde ich euch bitten, noch einmal euer Handy in die Hand zu nehmen. Wir haben ja gerade darüber gesprochen, wie einfach oder schwierig es für euch ist, Informationen zu finden, zu verstehen, zu beurteilen und anzuwenden. Und ich fände es super, wenn ihr mir nun ein Ranking geben könntet, was von diesen vier Sachen am einfachsten oder schwierigsten für euch ist. Das ist der neue Code. [...] Die erste Option ist die, die euch am einfachsten fällt und die vierte ist die Schwierigste. [...] Also [...] wie man sieht ist es für euch am einfachsten, Informationen zu finden und am schwierigsten, Informationen anzuwenden. Wie kommt es dazu? Warum diese Reihenfolge oder hat vielleicht jemand eine andere Reihenfolge genommen? #00:37:46-2#

M2: Also, ich habe "finden" tatsächlich als schwierigstes genommen. Weil ich einfach nie aktiv danach suche und wenn ich mich darüber aktiv informieren müsste, nicht sofort wüsste, wo. Ich lasse die Informationen eher zu mir kommen. Und deshalb habe ich es so herum gemacht. #00:38:04-2#

F4: Ich hatte "finden" so verstanden, dass ich mich an den Computer setze und einfach suche. #00:38:17-9#

AS: Ja, so ist es auch gemeint. #00:38:17-9#

F4: Und bei "anwenden" war ich mir unsicher, inwiefern es gemeint ist. Also in einer Diskussion oder in einer Klausur oder so. #00:38:41-4#

AS: Das geht beides. #00:38:43-8#

F2: Finden kann man Vieles. Beurteilen ist der Schritt, der danach kommt. Ich muss es irgendwie beurteilen können und das ist dann nicht so einfach. Aber die Masse ist ja schon gegeben. #00:39:03-0#

F1: Und um es richtig beurteilen zu können, muss man es theoretisch ja zuerst verstanden haben. Und dann habe ich gedacht, ich kann es ja theoretisch auch anwenden, obwohl ich es nicht verstanden habe. Das passiert ja vielleicht auch oft. Dass man Sachen findet, denkt, man hat sie verstanden und trägt es hinaus in die Welt, aber eigentlich ist es gar nicht so.

#00:39:26-0#

AS: Ich habe die Frage auch im Fragebogen gestellt und dabei kam heraus, dass es den Teilnehmer am schwierigsten fiel, die Informationen zu beurteilen. Was haltet ihr davon? Es passt ja halbwegs zu dem, was ihr auch gesagt habt, auch wenn die meisten meinten, Anwenden ist noch etwas schwieriger. #00:39:45-9#

M2: Ich nehme an, weil sie ihrem eigenen Wissen in dem Punkt nicht vertrauen. Man greift ja bei der Beurteilung von Dingen auf seine eigenen Erfahrungen zurück, vergleicht es mit bekannten Dingen und ich kann mir vorstellen, dass es bei demografischen Themen, von denen viele Leute nicht wissen, dass sie sich aktiv mit ihnen befassen - oder sie sich einfach per se nicht aktiv mit sowas befassen - dass es dann sehr schwer fällt zu beurteilen, ob die Information gerade richtig ist oder nicht. #00:40:36-2#

AS: Ich würde gerne noch einmal das mit euch machen. Es geht um demografische Themen und zwar die, die ich euch bei der Präsentation gezeigt habe: Bevölkerungsentwicklung und -zusammensetzung, Migration und Altersstruktur. Drei Themen. Es geht wieder darum zu sagen, bei welchem Thema es euch am leichtesten fällt, die gerade diskutierten vier Aufgaben zu erfüllen und wo am schwersten. [...] Also am einfachsten ist das Thema Altersstruktur, dann Migration, dann Bevölkerungsentwicklung und -zusammensetzung. Was denkt ihr? Warum? #00:42:59-7#

F5: Ich habe es tatsächlich genauso. Aus dem pragmatischen Grund, dass ich Alter für das eindimensionalste der Themen halt. Wer ist wie alt? Wie viel Prozent? Und so weiter. Bevölkerungspyramide. Migration, wie viele kommen, wie viele gehen? Finde ich komplizierter als Altersstruktur, aber es ist vom Thema her nicht so komplex wie Bevölkerungsentwicklung und -zusammensetzung. Das ist alles irgendwie. Das ist viel komplexer, es ist allgemeiner. #00:43:56-8#

AS: Hat jemand eine andere Reihenfolge gewählt? #00:43:58-7#

F2: Ich habe Migration an erster Stelle und dann Altersstruktur. Ich habe auch überlegt und war mir auch nicht sicher und das, was [F5] gesagt hat, ist schon nachvollziehbar. Weswegen Altersstruktur vielleicht doch die Mehrheit an erster Stelle hat. #00:44:25-9#

F4: Ich habe Migration auch an erster Stelle, weil man einfach die meisten Informationen darüber bekommt. #00:44:34-9#

F2: Das habe ich auch gedacht. #00:44:34-9#

M2: Ich auch. #00:44:37-4#

F5: Aber das macht es viel schwerer, finde ich. Ich finde oft ist es viel einfacher, wenn man zum Beispiel auf die Seite des Statistischen Bundesamts geht und schaut, wie alt wir hier in Deutschland sind. Das ist viel einfacher, als wenn man hundert Quellen hat und nicht weiß, was stimmt. #00:44:54-9#

F1: Deshalb habe ich Migration als schwierigstes. Altersstruktur ist ein festes Konzept, die Pyramide ist so, wie sie ist. Und Migration hängt von der Definition ab. Was ist Migration für mich? Sind es alle, die von außen hier reinkommen oder sind es auch die, die von Düsseldorf nach Köln ziehen? Und deswegen habe ich gesagt, dass es das Schwierigste ist. #00:45:21-2#

AS: Im Fragebogen haben auch die meisten gesagt, dass Migration das Schwierigste ist. Für mich kam das etwas überraschend. Aber das, was ihr gesagt habt, finde ich sehr einleuchtend. Es ist ein sehr großes Thema, dass es schwer macht, es zu greifen. Ihr empfindet also

Migration als so komplex, dass man es in den Medien gar nicht so versteht? #00:45:59-9#

F1: Zur Entwicklung: Wir hatten es schon besprochen. In Deutschland gibt es weniger, aber in Afrika kann man Boosts erwarten. Da es aber nichts ist, was uns direkt heute oder morgen beschäftigt, gibt es weniger Infos darüber. Ergo ist es für uns nicht am schwierigsten, weil wir es nicht oft machen. #00:46:18-1#

F4: Es ist eben nicht so akut. #00:46:20-8#

M2: Das kann ich mir auch vorstellen, dass wenn man sich allgemein nicht so ganz fit fühlt in diesen Themen, dass man dieses Gefühl der Überforderung dann eher bei Themen hat, die sehr präsent sind. Zum Beispiel könnte es sein, dass man über Altersstruktur sehr wenig weiß, es aber gar nicht merkt und der Raum für Überforderung bei präsenteren Themen deswegen größer ist. #00:46:53-5#

F2: Ich persönlich habe gedacht, dass bei Bevölkerungszusammensetzung und -entwicklung - und vielleicht ist das auch fälschlicherweise so - die anderen Themen mit reinspielen. #00:47:09-2#

Mehrere: Tun sie ja auch // Deshalb ist es ja am schwierigsten // Ja auf jeden Fall // Ja, weil es so komplex ist #00:47:16-7#

AS: Eine Sache, die mir im Fragebogen noch aufgefallen ist, als ich die Ergebnisse angeguckt habe, war, dass sehr viele Teilnehmer mit "Ich weiß nicht" geantwortet haben. Ganz stark war das bei der Frage "Wie leicht fällt es dir, demografische Informationen zu finden?" Was glaubt ihr, woran es liegen könnte? #00:47:53-9#

F5: Na, weil man nicht danach sucht. Ich habe nicht oft "Ich weiß nicht" angegeben, aber bei irgendwas habe ich es angegeben, ich weiß nicht mehr wo. Und bei mir lag es daran, dass ich mich noch nie damit auseinandergesetzt oder es versucht habe. Weiß ich einfach nicht. #00:48:06-3#

F1: Vielleicht ist es vielen Leuten ja gar nicht bewusst, ob es einfach oder schwierig ist. [M2] hat es auch schon gesagt, meistens kommen Informationen einfach. Ich kann gar nicht entscheiden, ob ich sie aufnehmen will oder nicht. Und vielleicht ist es so, dass wenn man das jetzt nicht reflektiert dann ist es so [...] / Ich weiß es jetzt eben, aber ich weiß gar nicht mehr, ob es ein einfacher oder schwieriger Prozess war. Es muss vielleicht noch nicht einmal was damit zu tun haben, dass man sich nicht auskennt, sondern dass dieser Flow nicht immer einseitig ist. #00:48:38-2#

AS: Ich hatte auch gedacht, dass es daran liegt, dass viele es noch gar nicht probiert haben. War die Frage aber vielleicht zu kompliziert gestellt? #00:48:57-0#

M1: Bei mir das Problem, dass bei acht von zehn Begriffen, die wir besprochen haben, ich gar nicht wusste, dass sie dazugehören. Also Altersstruktur oder Migration, da weiß man / es sind so einschlägige Begriffe. Die kennt man und kann man zuordnen. Bei den anderen weiß ich aber gar nicht, dass sie dazugehören. Ich kann unter diesem großen Begriff gar nicht alles unterordnen und deshalb weiß ich auch nicht, wie leicht oder schwer es ist, dazu etwas zu finden. #00:49:33-9#

AS: Also liegt es vielleicht daran, dass der Begriff einfach so groß ist, dass man gar nicht weiß, was dazu gehört und dass wenn man konkreter Fragen würde - zum Beispiel "Wie leicht fällt es dir, Informationen darüber zu finden, wie viele Menschen in Deutschland sterben?" ist das dann etwas anderes, als wenn man direkt nach Demografie fragt? #00:49:48-5#

F1: Es wird nicht in der Schule unbedingt / Also klar, die Sachen werden behandelt, aber nicht

unter dem Begriff. In den Medien wird der Begriff nicht benutzt, weil er so komplex ist, dass viele ihn nicht fassen können. Und dann ist es so ein Oberding, wo das drunter fällt und niemand etwas mit anfangen kann, obwohl thematisch natürlich durchaus wissen da ist. #00:50:06-3#

AS: Wir haben jetzt viel darüber gesprochen, wie ihr euch selbst oder andere einschätzt. Das nächste, was mich interessieren würde, ist, ob ihr glaubt, dass es einem einfacher macht, sich politisch einzubringen, wenn man sich mit dem Thema auskennt. Ich habe den Fragebogen absichtlich mit der Europawahl in Verbindung gebracht. Glaubt ihr, dass es wichtig, über diese Themen Bescheid zu wissen, wenn man zum Beispiel wählen gehen möchte? #00:50:50-4#

F5: Auf jeden Fall, weil es sind ja schon viele Themen, die uns alle mehr betreffen, als man im Alltag glaubt. Und wofür eine Partei steht / Also das hängt ja oft daran, wie sich dazu positionieren. Also ob sie sagen, "Wir finden Migration gut" oder ob sie sagen "Ausländer raus". Oder ob sie sagen, wir fördern eine Familienpolitik und wollen mehr Kita-Plätze ja oder nein. Deshalb finde ich, ist es schon wichtig, dass man grundsätzlich weiß, was hat man für Probleme und wie sind die Daten dazu. Finde ich schon. #00:51:29-9#

AS: Und was denkt ihr, was haben demografische Themen generell überhaupt mit Politik zu tun? #00:51:39-5#

F5: Naja, es geht um die Bevölkerung und [...] alles. #00:51:44-1#

F4: Darum geht es ja irgendwie. #00:51:47-0#

F1: Egal welches Gesetz beschlossen wird oder was jetzt auch immer geändert wird, muss ja immer in den Kontext dazu gebracht werden, wen das betrifft. Und gerade Altersstruktur / "Okay, wir haben so und so und so die Menschen" und die und die wird das betreffen und deshalb müssen wir gucken, wie viele haben wir überhaupt. Und deswegen ist ja ein bisschen die Grundlage. #00:52:07-2#

AS: Würde jeder hier der Aussage von [F5] und [F1] zustimmen, dass es super wichtig ist? Dass alles, was die Politik macht, auch unmittelbar mit Demografie zu tun hat? #00:52:24-0#

Mehrere: Ja. #00:52:31-1#

AS: Ihr seid euch also einig darüber, dass es total wichtig ist, sich mit diesen Themen auszukennen und dass jede politische Maßnahme mit Demografie zu tun hat, weil sie die Bevölkerung beeinflusst. Gleichzeitig sagt ihr aber, dass man mit dem Begriff Demographie gar nicht so viel anfangen kann. Wie passt das zusammen? Seht ihr eine Notwendigkeit deshalb etwas zu ändern? #00:52:49-0#

F5: Ich kann dazu nur sagen / Also wir haben ja schon gesagt, wir haben alle Abitur. Und bei mir auf dem Gymnasium war das so, dass ich Politik als Fach mal in der Unterstufe hatte. Da hat man dann gelernt, was ist der Bundestag, was ist der Bundesrat, wie viele Bundesländer gibt es. Wie ist das alles grundsätzlich organisiert. Dann habe ich jahrelang kein Politik gehabt, sondern nur Geschichte und ich konnte in der Oberstufe noch nicht einmal Sowi wählen, es gab nur so einen Pflichtkurs in der 13. Klasse. Ich finde es total krass, dass wir, die wir den höchsten Schulabschluss in diesem Land haben, die verrücktesten Sachen lernen. Wir können den Citratzyklus auswendig aufmalen in der 13. Klasse und irgendwelche Kurvendiskussionen machen, aber ich finde, dass in der Schule viel zu wenig, ich nenne es mal Allgemeinbildung, vermittelt wird. Das betrifft nicht nur das, das betrifft auch Ernährung, oder "Wie organisiere ich mein Leben". Das ist für mich ein großes Manko. Und gerade dieses Basis- oder Allgemeinwissen braucht man natürlich nicht nur mit Abitur, sondern alle anderen, die in diesem Land zur Schule gehen. Ich finde es aber besonders traurig, dass wir, obwohl wir die maximale Anzahl von Jahren in der Schule waren, zum Teil einfach nicht wissen, weil kein Zugang dazu

geschaffen wird. #00:54:42-0#

AS: War das bei jedem so, dass ihr das Gefühl habt, die Themen in der Schule sind eigentlich gar nicht so relevant? #00:54:45-0#

F3 und F4: Ja. #00:54:43-9#

F5: Also ich habe da schonmal eine Alterspyramide gesehen. Ich hatte Erdkunde-LK. Aber das war da irgendwie nicht wirklich genug besprochen. Und viele haben Geografie abgewählt. Also ich glaube nicht, dass jeder mit dem ich zur Schule gegangen bin, sich damit mal beschäftigt hat. #00:55:02-2#

F4: Ich glaube, der Bezug zur realen Welt fehlt in der Schule. Du lernst irgendwas und weißt nicht, wofür du es lernst. Ich würde auch sagen, dass wenn du jetzt auf die Straße gehst und jemanden fragst, wie Partei XY zu Demografie steht, dann würden die dich nur angucken / #00:55:21-9#

F5: "Ich weiß nicht" #00:55:21-9#

F4: Also ich sehe das so, dass Demografie wie eine Wolke schwebt und darunter sind die ganzen kleinen Regentropfen. Also die ganzen Unterthemen, die dazu gehören. Und man weiß vielleicht wo die hinkommen oder sich verteilen, aber dass das alles unter der Wolke Demografie steht, wissen die meisten nicht. #00:56:00-0#

F4: Was ich zum Beispiel für eine gute Erfindung halte, ist der Wahl-O-Mat. Das hat gar nicht konkret mit Demografie zu tun, aber weil wir gerade darüber gesprochen haben, wie Parteien zu bestimmten Themen stehen, finde ich es / Also auch ich setze mich vor einer Wahl nicht dahin und lese die Parteiprogramme der Parteien durch. Also entweder wähle ich das, von dem ich denke, dass ich es aus Überzeugung wählen sollte oder ich brauche so etwas wie den Wahl-O-Maten, das es mir so einfach macht. Dass ich denke: "Ah okay, die einen sagen das und das und die anderen das und das, das wusste ich bei der Detailfrage gar nicht." Soviel dazu, zum Thema Wahlen. #00:56:40-5#

AS: Zum Thema Wahlen kommen wir noch später, aber vorher würde ich euch gerne die zwei Videos zeigen, die ich euch herausgesucht habe. [...] Das erste ist ein Ausschnitt aus einem Kinofilm mit Tom Hanks. Der Film heißt Inferno. Und da ist eine kleine Szene drin, die ich euch gerne zeigen würde, weil es darin um demografische Themen geht. Ich will euch kurz zusammenfassen, worum es in dem Film geht. Es gibt einen Wissenschaftler, der sich zu Beginn des Films umbringt und Tom Hanks wird damit hereingezogen. Es ist ein großes Mysterium, er muss den Fall lösen und informiert sich jetzt über den Wissenschaftler und welche Positionen er vertritt und schaut sich dabei ein YouTube-Video über ihn an. Los geht's [...] Als Kontrast dazu habe ich hier ein anderes Video für euch von einem Forscher, der das ganze etwas anders darstellt. [...] Das waren die zwei Videos, zwei sehr gegensätzliche Videos. Was ist euer Eindruck. #01:08:45-5#

F3: Ich habe das Buch Inferno gelesen und fand es sehr bedrückend. Und habe dann den Film gesehen und dachte nur "Ach du Scheiße". Ich konnte das natürlich nicht ganz in den Kontext einsortieren. Deshalb fand ich das zweite Video jetzt schon etwas beruhigend. Es ist klingt eben logisch, was er sagt. Aber das andere klang auch logisch, aber irgendwie fand ich das jetzt / Ja, das kann ich mir auch gut vorstellen. Ich glaube lieber dem zweiten Video. #01:09:23-0#

AS: Wie sieht es bei den anderen aus? Es ist ja schon ein großer Unterschied, ob man sagt, es gibt bald elf Milliarden Menschen und es hört irgendwann auf oder ob man sagt, es gibt bald 32 Milliarden und geht immer weiter und weiter, bis wir irgendwann aussterben, weil wir den Planeten so leerräumen. #01:09:48-1#

F1: Also die ‚projections‘, von denen er erzählt hat, bis 2100, die haben eine Daseinsberechtigung. Es wird immer genauer und das, was vor 100 Jahren prophezeit wurde, ist ja auch so eingetreten, deshalb kann man davon ausgehen, dass das, was er sagt, auch so wird. Von daher war das andere vielleicht irgendwie [...] ein Spielfilm und hat dem Sinn und Zweck gedient. Wobei in dem Moment, denkt man dann doch "Okay, er hat irgendwie auch recht." Es ist immer so, man bekommt eine Information und hat nur kurz Zeit, um zu sagen "okay es ist Bullshit" oder "ich kann das nachvollziehen". Und gerade auch in diesem Film, obwohl man es eigentlich besser weiß, auch wegen der Bilder im Hintergrund, war es bis zu einem gewissen Grad überzeugend. #01:10:34-3#

F3: Was da vielleicht auch mit reinspielt. Ich habe das Hintergrundwissen nicht, aber Gesellschaften verändern sich ja. In Deutschland ist das ja auch so viel weniger geworden und so wird es ja vielleicht auch in anderen Ländern, in denen gerade noch so viele Kinder geboren werden, sein, wenn sich dort die zukünftigen Standards verändern. Dass dort dann auch weniger Kinder geboren werden. Und dann beruhigt sich das ganze vielleicht. #01:11:01-8#

AS: Genau das ist das, was auch angenommen wird. Und es geht viel eher darum - wie du sagst, es ist ein Spielfilm - aber es wird in der Öffentlichkeit mit solchen Begriffen gespielt. In dem Kontext also noch einmal die Frage: Was hat Demografie mit Politik zu tun? #01:12:01-1#

M2: Vor allem, dass es sehr wichtig ist, dass man eine Grundkompetenz, was das Thema angeht. Dass man in der Lage ist, diese Panikmache als solche zu identifizieren. Natürlich ist jeder da auch etwas anfällig für, aber dass man vielleicht die kleinen Warnsignale erkennt. Dass, wenn zum Beispiel von einer Invasion gesprochen wird, dass man dann schaut, ob es wirklich so ist, und es nicht einfach hinnimmt. #01:12:54-6#

F4: Klar ist das ein Spielfilm und geht in Richtung Panikmache, aber ich sehe es trotzdem so, dass wir aufpassen müssen, dass das jetzt nicht mehr so Thema, was in 100 oder 200 Jahren ist, sondern wir uns mit einem großen Problem konfrontiert sehen. Das spüren wir im Alltag noch nicht, aber wenn man sich intensiver damit beschäftigt und sich thematisch reinliest, sieht man, dass es schon ein Problem ist. Aber klar, dadurch, dass es ein Spielfilm ist, ist alles etwas überzogen. Es wird niemanden geben, der unser Trinkwasser verseucht. Hoffentlich. Aber die Überbevölkerung ist schon ein großes Thema, das gerade medial mehr aufgegriffen wird oder mehr an die Oberfläche kommt, was eigentlich vor 50 Jahren hätte geschehen müssen. #01:13:55-1#

M2: Ich kann mir auch vorstellen, dass die Themen etwas durcheinander geworfen werden. Dass die Überbevölkerung an sich gar nicht das Problem ist, sondern das, was er auch sagt, es kämpfen 32 Milliarden Menschen ums Überleben. Und das Problem ist dann weniger die 32 Milliarden, sondern der Ressourcenmangel. Vielleicht ist das demografische Thema, aus dem dann Angst entsteht, eigentlich Angst vor Klimawandel oder Ressourcenknappheit ist. Dann ist es aber bestimmt auch so, dass es von Populisten gerne in diese Richtung gelenkt wird, dass es eben nicht darum geht, sondern um Migration und so weiter. #01:14:34-7#

AS: Beim abschließenden Mentimeter, dass ich mit euch machen möchte, geht es darum, welches für euch das wichtigste Thema bei der Europawahl war. Und klar, wir haben schon eine Weile über demografische Themen gesprochen, aber wenn es für euch kein Thema war, dann war es eben so. Mich interessiert nur, was für euch das wichtigste Thema war. [...] Okay, möchtet ihr mir etwas zum Ergebnis erzählen? Und es gibt ja mindestens auch eine Person, die das Thema Migration ausgewählt hat. #01:16:56-7#

F5: Ich konnte mich ganz lange nicht entscheiden, ob ich Klima oder / Ich habe jetzt Umwelt genommen und nicht Umweltschutz, weil ich es allgemeiner halten wollte und ich dachte, dass zu Umwelt Klimawandel dazugehört. Bei der Europawahl finde ich krass, dass in Deutschland

das Bewusstsein, dass wir etwas gegen den Klimawandel und für die Umwelt tun müssen, sehr groß ist, aber dass sich zeitgleich niemand einschränken will. Jeder will weiter fliegen und weiter Fleisch essen und weiter Auto fahren. Auch wenn von den Deutschen lange Zeit gesagt wurde, dass sie Vorreiter sind. Wir sind keine Vorreiter mehr, auch nicht mehr in Europa. Ich finde es wichtig, dass man eine europäische Lösung findet. Denn egal was ein Staat macht, selbst wenn wir jetzt voll durchstarten würden und an der Spitze wären, was Umweltschutz angeht, auch dann würde es nicht reichen, denn man muss mehr Leute ins Boot holen. Für mich war es tatsächlich in allen Facetten, die Umwelt und Umweltschutz umfasst, das wichtigste Thema. Ich finde Migration nicht unwichtig, gar nicht. Aber ich glaube, das liegt daran, dass es für mich weniger Thema ist, weil es für mich so selbstverständlich ist, dass es in Ordnung ist. Und in meinem Alltag / Ich beschäftige mich einfach mehr mit Umwelt-Themen. #01:18:34-0#

AS: Das ist auch das, was ich als Ergebnis erwartet habe, weil das Thema vor den Wahlen in den Medien so präsent war. Würdet ihr denn sagen, auch nachdem, was wir gerade im Film gesehen haben, dass Populationswachstum und Klimawandel da mit reinspielen oder sind die demografischen Themen / #01:19:03-8#

F3: Es spielt definitiv eine Rolle, aber es wird nicht richtig vermittelt. #01:19:05-1#

F1: Gerade auch weil es super schwierig ist. Weil man sagt, Klimawandel, Überbevölkerung, wir haben keine Ressourcen, die Erde, auf der wir leben, macht es nicht mehr lange. Aber dann sagen, jeder einzelne muss irgendwas machen. Das sind ja komplett andere Level. So dass ich sagen, ich sollte nicht mehr fliegen, ich esse kein Fleisch mehr, Plastik ist sowieso blöd. Und dass dann so zu verbinden, dass mein eigenes Verhalten Einfluss darauf haben kann - was jetzt gar nicht unbedingt mit Population oder Demografie zusammenhängt - da können viele diese [...] diese Linie nicht ziehen. Was ja auch nicht unbedingt notwendig ist, wenn man versteht, dass mein Verhalten die Umwelt beeinflusst. #01:19:57-8#

AS: Würdet ihr sagen, dass demografische Themen trotzdem bei den Menschen Motivation waren, zur Wahl zu gehen? Wie habt ihr es in eurem Umfeld mitbekommen? #01:20:28-4#

M2: Ich glaube, dass jetzt auch die Wahlbeteiligung um einiges höher war als sonst, weil man irgendwie / Das klingt jetzt hart, aber mit den Rechtspopulisten ein gemeinsames Feindbild hatte. Dass man dann vielleicht eher auf gut deutsch den Arsch hoch bekommen hat und sich aufgerafft hat, wählen zu gehen, weil man mit aller Macht probieren wollte, dass die keine Stimmen bekommen. #01:20:57-6#

F1: Was ja eher gegen deren Haltung gegen Migration war. Ich kann das mit dem gemeinsamen Feindbild nachvollziehen und dass in ganz Europa ein großer Rechtsruck da war. Aber vor allem was die zu Migrationspolitik gesagt haben. Klar, zum Klimawandel stehen die auch ziemlich beschissen und wollen sich gar nicht einschränken, aber in meinem Umfeld war es so, dass hauptsächlich der Migrationsfaktor eine Rolle gespielt hat und nicht das Klima, auch wenn es für mich persönlich der wichtigste Grund war. #01:21:39-5#

M2: So meinte ich es auch. Ich habe auch Migration genommen, weil ich ein kleines Gedankenspiel gemacht habe. Wenn ich zwei Parteien hätte und eine wäre pro Willkommenskultur würde aber den Kohleabbau fördern, die andere würde nur auf grüne Energien setzen, möchte aber Ausländer raus, dann hätte ich die umweltunfreundliche genommen. Auch wenn es natürlich schwierig ist, das voneinander zu trennen. #01:22:13-9#

AS: Wie sah es denn aus, als ihr euch auf die Europawahl vorbereitet habt? Habt ihr konkret nach demografischen Themen gesucht? Fiel es euch leicht, euch da zu informieren? Habt ihr euch überhaupt über demografische Themen informiert? #01:23:09-5#

F4: Also schon, wobei ich nicht konkret danach gesucht habe, was die für einen

demografischen Plan haben. Man hat die einzelnen Themen etwas verglichen, aber gezielt demografische Themen habe ich mir nicht angeschaut. #01:23:33-9#

F2: Das würde ich auch sagen und ich denke, es spiegelt unsere Antworten wider. Das, was uns wichtig ist, ist ja vielleicht nicht in dem Demografie-Rahmen außer Migration. Aber es ist dann eher Beiwerk, aber nicht das, was die Entscheidung bei mir persönlich beeinflusst hat. #01:24:03-1#

AS: Und von eurer aktiven Suche abgesehen. Würdet ihr sagen, Parteien haben deutlich gesagt, wie sie zu demografischen Themen stehen? #01:24:23-4#

F1: Also eigentlich sind es ja die großen Themen, die sie haben: Migrationspolitik, Sozialpolitik, Rentenpolitik, Klimapolitik. Das sind ja auch Themen, auch wenn sie nie als demografische Thema bezeichnet werden, die trotzdem die Hauptthemen sind, mit denen Parteien darum werben, für was sie stehen. Und dann schaut man sich vielleicht den Wahl-O-Mat an oder liest sich doch ein Pamphlet durch. Dann ist es ja doch irgendwie so, dass man sieht, die wollen zum Beispiel Kohlekraftwerke abschaffen, mehr Kita-Plätze, was auch immer. Dann müssen die sich ja doch irgendwie die Altersstruktur angeschaut haben oder gesagt, dass es nicht weitergeht. Und dann hat man sich doch damit befasst, auch wenn es einem nicht klar war. #01:25:01-9#

F4: Ja unterbewusst. #01:25:07-6#

F1: Genau, weil dieser Begriff nie [...] educated wurde. #01:25:14-2#

AS: Das waren dann auch schon alle inhaltlichen Fragen. Ich habe noch zwei, drei Abschlussfragen für euch. Und zwar würde ich gerne noch einmal zusammenfassend wissen, ob ihr das Gefühl habt, ob genug oder zu wenig über diese Themen gesprochen wird. Habt ihr das Gefühl, dass sie euch nicht genug betreffen oder müssten sie euch mehr betreffen? Müssten demografische Themen anders aufgearbeitet werden oder reicht es, wie es ist? #01:25:44-1#

F3: Für mich überstahlt die Klimapolitik gerade alles andere. Weil ich da das Gefühl habe, wenn da jetzt nicht was passiert, ist mir der Rest egal, weil so lange gibt es uns dann nicht mehr. Deshalb rücken die anderen Themen für mich leider gerade etwas in den Hintergrund. #01:26:07-9#

F4: Wobei das natürlich auch alles zusammenhängt. Ich finde alles ist so verstrickt, dass man eigentlich generell sagen muss, wir beschäftigen uns alle tagtäglich damit, auch wenn wir das vielleicht bewusst nicht sagen können. Aber das hängt alles miteinander zusammen. #01:26:32-5#

AS: Also könnte man sagen, dass irgendwie klarer werden muss, was alles demografische Themen sind? #01:26:35-2#

F4: Also wenn du diesen Begriff definieren willst, was verstehen Leute unter Demografie, dann würde ich auf jeden Fall sagen, dass das Bewusstsein fehlt, was darunter zu verstehen ist. #01:26:44-9#

M2: Wobei es vielleicht auch gar nicht so wichtig ist, dass man diesen Begriff kennt, so lange man weiß, wie die Unterthemen funktionieren. Was gerade noch gesagt wurde: Alles ist so super verstrickt, dass es schwierig ist, die richtige Lösung zu finden. Ich dachte gerade zum Beispiel: Warum wird nicht öfter gesagt, dass wenn es zu Klimawandel kommt, es dann auch zu / Also man sagt, in Afrika haben sie weniger zu Essen und dann kommen die in größeren Migrationswellen. Und dann dachte ich mir sofort im nächsten Schritt: Bloß nicht sagen! Weil das sofort irgendwelche rechten Idioten pusht, die dann noch dieses Schreckensszenario am

Horizont haben, auf das sie sich dann stürzen können. Und das ist irgendwie [...] schwierig. #01:27:43-3#

F1: Auf der anderen Seite könnte man aber alles transparenter machen, wenn man dadurch dann sieht / Also klar, dass Leute dann kommen, weil wir deren Insel oder so überschwemmt haben und die da nicht mehr wohnen können oder die Erde jetzt wirklich komplett staubtrocken ist. Sondern dass man sagt, dass es wirklich Konsequenzen was wir hier machen für demografische Themen wie Population und Altersstruktur. Und das könnte ja irgendwie helfen, Leute wachzurütteln. #01:28:07-2#

F5: Ich denke auch, dass man mehr darüber wissen müsste, damit man dann auch mündige Entscheidungen treffen kann. Also ich finde, es ist auf jeden Fall Bedarf da, dass man einen einfacheren Informationszugang hat und dass man diesen auch einfach bekommt. Dass es nicht so ist, wenn du willst, guck mal da, sondern dass man damit konfrontiert wird. Am besten jeder in diesem Land. Ich weiß nicht wo. Ob man es irgendwie an irgendwelchen U-Bahn-Stationen macht. Wobei da guckt auch jeder aufs Handy. Ich glaube, dass das sehr wichtig ist. Denn erst wenn man darüber richtig Bescheid weiß, viele Sachen richtig einordnen kann und diese ganze Polemik, in die viele Politiker verfallen, richtig einordnen kann. Und sagen kann: Ganz ehrlich, du machst da gerade einfach nur emotionale Meinungsmache und schürst Angst / Und Angst ist immer ein großer Motor, um solche Entscheidungen zu treffen. Aber um die Angst zu überwinden, musst du Wissen haben, damit du mündig bist. #01:29:14-6#

AS: Das ist ja eigentlich auch eine schöne Botschaft, die man sich nach Hause nehmen kann. Gibt es vielleicht noch irgendwas anderes, dass ihr mit nach Hause nehmt? #01:29:38-3#

M2: Mir war zum Beispiel nicht bewusst, dass Migration ein großer Teil von Demografie ist, weil ich das immer eher mit Altersstruktur und so verknüpft habe. Und wir haben jetzt ja wirklich viel über Migration gesprochen, ohne aber [...] wie sagt man [...] vom Themenkern abzuweichen. Das finde ich sehr interessiert. #01:30:22-7#

F1: Und dass einfach alles miteinander verbunden ist. Man denkt sich das alles. Du denkst darüber nach / gut natürlich sind wir alle im Raum hier hart gebildet. Aber dass das Bewusstsein quasi schon da ist, auch wenn man das gar nicht mit einem Wort spezifizieren könnte. Man würde über Migration und Klimawandel, aber es würde voll lange dauern, bis der Begriff Migration aufkommt. Und dass es vielleicht nicht nur am mangelnden Wissen liegt, sondern an der Komplexität und dem Begriff an sich. #01:30:51-6#

AS: Was ich für mich mitnehme, aber das habe ich schon nach dem Fragebogen gehabt, deshalb finde ich spannend, dass du das gerade gesagt hast. Als ich ins Studium gestartet bin, habe ich immer zuerst an Migration gedacht und nicht an Altersstruktur. Interessant, wie verschieden da der Fokus auf den Themen liegt. Und dass eben alles zusammenhängt und man es verknüpfen muss und dass da vielen vielleicht einfach die Verbindungsstücke fehlen. Das ist das, was mir die Arbeit mit der Masterarbeit gezeigt hat. #01:31:27-8#

F4: Ich glaube, wenn du jetzt noch einmal fragen würdest, was wir unter Demografie verstehen, würde viel mehr unterschiedliche Menti auf dieser Tafel stehen. #01:31:45-5#

AS: Gibt es irgendwas, von dem ihr glaubt, es hätte in der Diskussion anders laufen müssen oder kürzer? Oder vielleicht am Fragebogen? #01:32:14-9#

F1: Soweit ich mich an den Fragebogen erinnern kann [...] waren die Fragen teilweise schon sehr komplex formuliert. Was eher am Thema liegt und nicht daran, dass du meinst, du musst irgendwelche Worte aneinander hauen. Sondern dass es einfach sehr / gerade wenn man sich noch nicht damit beschäftigt hat, oder denkt, dass man sich damit noch nicht beschäftigt hat, dass es dann sehr abschreckend viel sein kann. Du denkst dir so, du machst mal eben den Fragebogen und dann [...] oh ja. #01:32:46-7#

F4: Wahrscheinlich kam deswegen auch viel diese "Weiß nicht" Kategorie. Dass man einfach / zu überfordert oder die Frage nicht richtig verstanden hat in der Hektik. #01:33:03-9#

AS: Alles klar, dann vielen Dank! #01:34:03-5#

ENGLISH FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TRANSCRIPT

Remarks:

- AS: Individual marking for the moderator.
AS = Amelie Simon
- M/F + Number: Individual marking for the participants.
F = female (F1, F2, F3, F4 & F5)
M = male (M1 & M2)
- Non-verbal expressions of the moderator and the participants are captured in square brackets, for example: [chuckles]
- Breaks within a speech contribution are marked with three dots in brackets: [...]
- Break-offs in sentences are marked with a slash: /
- Overlaps between participants are marked with two slashes: //
- If there have been words that the researcher couldn't understand during the transcription process (for example because of the quality of the record or the pronunciation of the speaker), those words are left out. The places in the transcript where this occurred are marked as follows: [?]
- To respect the anonymity of the participants, every confidential information within the interview was deleted or replaced. For example: [F1] instead of the actual name, or [XX] for the place of residence

AS: Once again: Welcome to the Focus Group Discussion! It's nice that you're all here and that you took your time. I think it would be nice if you could introduce yourselves at the beginning. #00:00:22-5#

M2: I'm [M2]. I studied media science, but I'm employed now and work in an online sports' editorial office. #00:00:37-9#

AS: Hello [M2] #00:00:37-9#

F3: Well, I'm [F3]. I study again. I studied once and am doing a dual study in the municipal administration service at the city of [XX]. #00:00:46-0#

M1: Well, I am [M1] and I am doing an apprenticeship in wholesale and export trade and am now in my third year of apprenticeship. #00:00:54-3#

F4: Hello, I'm [F4]. I just finished my master's degree in sociology and social sciences. #00:01:02-7#

F1: Hello, I am [F1] and I am writing my master thesis in the same subject. #00:01:08-8#

F2: And I am [F2] and I have been working in a market research institute since the beginning of the year and have studied English. #00:01:17-8#

F5: And I am [F5] and I have been working as a doctor for a few months. #00:01:24-1#

AS: Thank you very much, we start directly with a small survey. It would be great if you could get your mobile phones out and go to this link. There you will be asked for a code. That's the one you get displayed here. And then there's a question and it would be great if you could answer it. You can enter three things if you want, but you don't have to. So just do what you can think of. There are no wrong answers, just what comes to mind. #00:03:14-4#

AS: Is everybody ready? #00:03:14-4#

All: [...] Yes. #00:04:11-4#

AS: So, [...] this worked. The answers, which were mentioned more often are displayed larger. This means that population, problems and age structure have obviously been mentioned by several of you. [...] Well, why did you choose these terms? Perhaps you would like to say something about it [...] why [...] especially these terms. Okay, a moment, I see right now, age structure is there twice. #00:04:42-7#

F5: That must have been me. [...] Wrong spelling (laughs). #00:04:48-8#

AS: Population Sciences, Population Numbers, Ageing, Ageing World Population, Population Structure, Population Growth, Migration, [...] Age structure and population seem to have been very popular with you in any case / I also see change and retirement a little smaller here. Why these terms? #00:05:11-7#

M2: Is it about what we did personally? #00:05:15-6#

AS: Also, what you believe, why the others have chosen the terms. #00:05:17-5#

M2: Yes, I can just start. The fact that population is so prominent is just a bit natural. So that you just call the general term once. So, you roughly indicate what demography is all about. And I think that perhaps the most present thing in Germany is that it's a lot about age structure, also because of the ageing society and that [...] it's the main frame of interpretation that you get to hear here and that of course it also causes problems due to things like retirement and demographic change, etc. #00:06:19-1#

AS: That was a very detailed answer. Thanks [M2] #00:06:19-1#

F4: Actually, I can only agree with him. I don't know, but when you hear about demography or read about in the media, it tends to be that: okay we are heading towards an aging society. Especially in Germany, there are no more young people to increase the numbers. At some point our problem will be to get a pension at all because there are no more offspring. That's why I've been saying a lot about these generation differences and the changing population, because there's more and more in the media or the vernacular. That we are simply getting too old. #00:06:54-6#

AS: Yeah, okay. You're all definitely close to each other with your answers. Then I'll show you what I've researched. In any case, your answers were very close to what one would answer when studying the subject. Roughly speaking, I picked out three topics, which you also named. "How the population develops and what influence migration, so emigration and immigration, has on society and how various demographic factors do affect the age structure" [...] All things you have mentioned, if you take another look at your results. Especially the age structure was very prominent. Migration seems to be mentioned by only one person. What do you think, why is that? #00:07:40-1#

F1: Maybe if you think of demography, as has just been said, you often think of the country you live in and look at the age structure, how many are born, how many men, how many women, in which age groups. And perhaps you don't think about who's going in and who's going out at first, although of course that also has a big influence on how large a population is and how the age structure is and how many people live in it. #00:08:43-1#

AS: Since you were really very close to the results, I will continue with the next topic. Now that we've talked about what demography means to you, I'd like to talk to you about where you encounter demographic issues in everyday life, or whether you encounter them at all in everyday life. How do you feel about that? Everything can be included. Where do you deal with these topics? #00:09:41-0#

F5: I find that a very big topic in the media is migration, something that is repeatedly raised in waves, even if we haven't all mentioned it right now. Migration is always a big issue, including escape routes across the Mediterranean and so on. The EU and Frontex, and everything else. I think that it is definitely present. And something that is not so present in my everyday life now, but what I see with my father, who goes into early retirement at the age of 60, is the subject of pensions, on which one already asks oneself: fewer and fewer young people are coming along and more and more people / we are simply all getting older and older and that also means that pensions are financed differently than they were perhaps 50 years ago. And I think that / so it doesn't concern me every day now, but it is definitely something that plays into it. I think the topic growth, so who gets how many children, I don't think that this concerns me in the context of population growth, but more in terms of personal life planning. #00:10:54-3#

AS: Okay, how do the others see it? #00:10:54-7#

F4: Well, I wouldn't say that you deal with the topic every day or that it is very present. When you go outside, it's not like you think about it. I think it's as [F5] thinks it is, more mediated by the media. And then from time to time, when you / for example, my dad, who took care of my grandparents for a year, when they couldn't do it themselves any more. With something like this, the topic of ageing is more present in everyday life, but I wouldn't say that I go out onto the streets every day and am confronted with it. And I also think that we did not address the issue of migration because we may not even realize that there is such a big change in everyday life. And it may not make any difference to us. #00:11:49-5#

F5: But perhaps also because it is so self-evident for us in the EU. I can only speak for myself, but I feel like I grew up without borders. As a German citizen, there are no real borders to fail at. You can actually travel wherever you want to go. And within Europe / Migration always sounds to me like / For me, migration is always connected with a border. And somehow that no longer exists for me. For me, everything is rather one, which is perhaps an utopia, because in fact it is not like that. #00:12:33-0#

AS: If you say that this doesn't affect you in everyday life, can you imagine that it looks different for other people? #00:12:40-9#

F1: I believe that quite often we don't even notice that problems that we have or things that are addressed fall under the term at all. We have just talked about the fact that the population is ageing more and more and there will be more and more problems in the future because fewer and fewer children are born. And, paradoxically, there are still not be enough day care places for everyone. So, it seems to be a problem in all age structures. And I think that affects everyone, no matter what age you are. When you're old, there's no pension, when you're young, no day care places. I think it affects everyone, even if you don't know it's a demographic issue. #00:13:18-7# #00:13:18-7#

M2: Yes, I think so too. That it's a problem, that demography is just such a huge topic and you don't realize how much it has to do with everyday life. A stupid example: you go to the kebab stand and in principle that's already a contact with an demographic issue because it has to do with migration. In the broadest sense. I think you've taken it all for granted, so you don't even realize what the main topic is. #00:14:04-9#

AS: What would you say, how important is it to be familiar with this topic anyhow? #00:14:15-4#

F3: Well, I think it's important. If I also think of my grandfather, we really had problems finding a place in a nursing home. I also notice that when I look at my friends. Getting your grandmother's care done is an important issue. Also because of the nursing professions, which understandably nobody wants to go to because they are so badly paid. #00:14:51-6#

F4: You can also look at the big picture, for example climate change. We are simply far too many people on the planet. We have said that no children will follow anymore. But if you look at others / On the African continent there are a lot of new-born children. So, you can also say that worldly demographic change cannot be stopped at some point. #00:15:30-5#

AS: So, would you say that's an argument for getting more involved with demography so that you're more aware of the connections? #00:15:51-9#

F4: Yes, definitely. I just talked to a friend about it yesterday. We probably all want to have children, but when you look at the earth, it's totally selfish. It's the worst thing you can do right now. Theoretically. #00:16:18-8#

AS: So, if no one else wants to say anything about it, I would continue. How well do you think you know demographic issues? Would you say you feel well informed? What about your demographic knowledge? #00:16:37-7#

F3: Mediocre, I'd say. #00:16:43-4#

F4: I believe that you often do not know that it falls under the term. When you read something, you don't put it directly in the demography category. #00:17:00-7#

M2: I think so too. I don't know what the birth and death rate is in Serbia. #00:17:09-6#

F1: But you know it has something to do with it. #00:17:09-6#

M2: Right, I know it has something to do with it. I think I know the connections roughly. Maybe that is enough in many cases, no idea. But it is difficult to assess it correctly, because it can go so deep into detail that [...] you have no idea about the details, but still have the feeling that you are familiar with the subject. #00:17:41-6#

F2: I think it has something to do with the fact that it doesn't affect us directly in everyday life. When a situation comes or something is reported in the media and details and numbers are mentioned / But in normal everyday life you are not confronted with more specific things and therefore I would also say it is difficult to estimate. Maybe you've learned something during your studies, but maybe those are things you forget. #00:18:27-3#

AS: Because they are not used in everyday life? #00:18:27-3#

F2: Exactly. #00:18:27-3#

AS: Is there anything that would motivate you personally to do more research on the topic? Or is it rather the case that you don't see the need in everyday life and therefore it's already as good as it is right now? #00:18:49-4#

F2: As long as you don't get to a point where it leads directly to problems for yourself, I never thought I should deal with demographics more. If you have a general interest in the subject, it's something else, of course. #00:19:17-5#

F1: But this is also due to the term itself. I wouldn't search it on Google right now. I studied it last year, but I wouldn't look it up now. But the other way around, if I was in a situation right now and I needed a pension or a nursing place, even if I may not even be aware of it, the motivation is of course there. Maybe you'll learn new things about connections and think: I wasn't aware of that before. Of course, we don't have enough pension now because our population structure is just the way it is. Maybe it will make you click. #00:19:49-9#

AS: You all have filled out my questionnaire and now there are a few questions that go in the same direction as I asked in the questionnaire. I would like to talk to you personally about it again. It is about how easy it is for you to deal with demographic information when you are confronted with it. The first question is: Which sources do you use when you search for demographic information or does it not happen at all? And how easy is it for you to search for this information? These are several questions so feel free to answer spontaneously what comes to your mind. #00:20:44-0#

M2: I don't think I'm specifically looking for it. Something like pension is still too far away for me. I'm not yet so involved as to sacrifice my free time for it. On how to find this information: That has to do with how it's being presented in the media. I think everyone has their own routine of getting news, and there are a lot of different ways. Nevertheless, you are dependent on the agenda and how it is addressed at the moment. If demographic issues such as migration are very present at the moment, of course, more information is also included. But it is not the case that I specifically search for this information, but that it is rather transmitted to me in the course of daily reporting. #00:21:46-0#

AS: And what are the sources through which the information is transmitted? [...] Is it media or family, friends, colleagues? #00:21:55-0#

F4: I would say the largest part is in the media. Reading the daily newspaper. #00:22:08-6#

F2: I'd say so, too. Unless you're in a special situation. For example, our roommate comes from Iran and has told us a lot recently. That is of course a special situation. But in general, rather via the media. #00:22:26-8#

AS: And would you say that social media plays a special role or is it rather subordinate? #00:22:44-7#

F4: For me it's more about news on TV or online newspapers. But it always depends on how your social media algorithms work. That's why it's less likely that I'm on Facebook / Facebook actually never, I don't do anything there anymore. And concerning Instagram I think I'm following the wrong pages. #00:23:19-7#

F1: For example, I've subscribed to Instagram's 'Tagesschau' account and there they always make a short text of the most important news. In my case, I spend a lot of time on Instagram, but it gives me this information. They also always have a link to the topic it's about. But for example, beneath the Instagram posts or on Facebook a discourse takes place. We all know that it's not always on a high level and that it is not necessarily about the topic, but I can imagine that there and not necessarily in the primary text a big exchange of opinions and information could take place. Even if I don't do it that way personally. #00:24:01-1#

F4: What crosses my mind is the subject of 'Podcasts'. #00:24:09-4#

F5: 'Die Lage der Nation'. #00:24:09-4#

F3: I also have a Whatsapp service from the 'Tagesschau', you can apply for it and then you get the most important news of the day in the morning and evening and then you can go to the website if necessary and read the more detailed version. That's really cool. #00:24:30-2#

AS: Well, the fact is that everyone in this room graduated with Abitur. What do you think it is like for people who perhaps have a lower educational level? [...] #00:25:02-9#

M2: You have to be careful not to fall for stereotyped thinking. Even if I can't exclude myself from it. I immediately think of some fake news on social media about alleged rapes allegedly committed by a migrant. Most of the time a bad research is enough to find out that this is not

true. But many people are not able to do that and are unable to differentiate the sources. Instead, they take everything at face value. But actually, it is also stereotyped thinking that I say something like that. I think the trend is that people with less education are more likely to fall for fake news than people with higher degrees. #00:25:53-9#

AS: Let's leave the topic of finding the information for now. What is it like when you have received information, for example at the 'Tagesschau'? How easy it is for you to understand it? #00:26:18-4#

F5: To stay with the 'Tagesschau' example. I think they prepare it especially for Instagram with crisp, small graphics in very accessible way. With this concrete example, I think it's easy to understand. Maybe the big picture isn't always addressed, which is difficult, of course. The shorter the pieces are, the less it's possible that everything can be presented in a complex way. But I think that the information itself is easy to understand. #00:27:03-2#

F1: I'm just thinking about where else you are confronted with it. It is often the case that it is about politics, because it is about new pensions, a new migration law or the like. And then it tends to be the case that an Instagram post is not enough. You cannot depict it with 160 characters, and even if you do, it is always the case that it is often impossible to understand what is about. Whenever political decisions are reported in the print media or on television, it is sometimes not accessible to me. I then realize that I cannot quite comprehend it. Then you have to actively decide to look at it again, because it might concern or interest you personally. #00:27:55-3#

AS: This is a very good example right now, because it fits quite well to the next question. When you are confronted with such information, do you feel like you can trust it? #00:28:28-7#

F5: For me it depends very much on the source. I trust the podcast "Die Lage der Nation" in an absurd way, as if they were friends of mine. I feel that what they say is true. And even when they get the feedback that something was wrong, they say it in the next episode and address their own mistake. But when I now look at a politician in the news, not in the app, but in the real television show of the 'Tagesschau', then I don't think that what he says is definitely true. It depends very much on the source. #00:29:17-9#

M2: I see it like [F5] regardless of the topic. I wouldn't tie it to demographic themes, if and how much I trust a source. For example, at the 'Tagesschau', you might believe in what is reported simply because it is a public broadcasting station. And when a politician says something, I don't automatically believe him. But that's not because of the demographic issues, but because he's a politician. [...] And you know that he is pursuing his own agenda with his statements. #00:29:53-0#

AS: So, you judge sources regardless of what the topic is? #00:30:35-8#

M2: I mean, [...] this could also be due to our group here. I think we all have the same opinion on migration and so on. However, it is probably more likely that such demographic issues can make you very emotional and thus more misguided as when it comes to, for example, the draft budget. #00:31:06-5#

F4: I think a lot of the reporting is only scratching at the surface. It's so short that you usually can't immerse yourself so deeply. You see it and accept it, but don't even think about it. #00:31:22-3#

AS: The last challenge would be to apply the knowledge yourself. How secure do you feel when you talk to friends, family or colleagues about migration, the refugee crisis, age structure, retirement, everything you have mentioned so far? Do you feel comfortable talking about it or are you insecure about these issues? #00:31:50-6#

F3: Insecure. #00:31:57-3#

AS: And is it different from other topics? #00:32:06-9#

F3: So, I just / So in college we had the subject too. I certainly know a few basics. But if you were to ask me about pensions or something like that, then no. I couldn't discuss it. #00:32:33-3#

F5: I think it's often, at least in my experience, more about basic things and points of view. I don't get into the situation where I have to talk about detailed facts. I think it's more like saying something like "Okay, you should make a private pension insurance" or "Okay, but we also need people who come to us to fill vacancies that are not filled here." So it's not about exactly how many people come and how many jobs there are, it's about positions. Where perhaps opinions are not always based on facts, but on basic political attitudes. That is where I feel comfortable. Even though I may feel secure by mistake because I believe so much in my own opinion and my own position. And even so much so that I still want migration, even if there are no vacancies. That is not necessarily rational. That's why I would say that I don't feel completely insecure, but perhaps I weigh myself in a false sense of security because of my beliefs. #00:33:52-2#

F4: I think we rather have amateurish knowledge. You pick up something everywhere, but it's not a well-founded knowledge with which you could discuss for two hours. #00:34:06-0#

M2: And it's also difficult to generalize all the demographic issues. If I had to talk to someone about pensions and would have to represent my favourite payment model, then / I don't know / But if someone comes around the corner with 'AfD' slogans, then I would probably find it much easier to show them that they are on the wrong track. It is difficult to generalize. #00:34:22-0#

F1: You pick things up, be it in the media or with friends. And I think I can understand that and it fits into my view of the world. / No, sorry, that's wrong. / But it's just a basic political position that you have on topics like migration and pensions. I don't think you're aware of it at all, but everyone has an attitude to it, be it well-founded or not. I don't think you'd be completely silent in such conversations, but I couldn't give any detailed background information about the current demographic phase we're living in. I should be able to, but I can't. #00:35:19-3#

AS: Thank you very much. Then I would ask you to pick up your mobile phone again. We just talked about how easy or difficult it is for you to find, understand, evaluate and use information. And I think it would be great if you could give me a ranking on which of these four things is the easiest or most difficult for you. This is the new code. [...] The first option is the one that is the easiest for you and the fourth is the most difficult. [...] So [...] as you can see, it is the easiest for you to find information and most difficult to use information. How does that happen? Why this order? Or did someone take a different order maybe? #00:37:46-2#

M2: Well, I actually took "finding" as the most difficult thing. Because I just never actively search for it and if I had to inform myself about it actively, I wouldn't immediately know where. I rather let the information come to me. And that's why I made it this way. #00:38:04-2#

F4: I had understood "finding" as sitting at the computer and simply searching. #00:38:17-9#

AS: Yes, that's what I mean. #00:38:17-9#

F4: And with "apply" I was unsure what it meant. So, in a discussion or in a retreat or something? #00:38:41-4#

AS: That's both possible. #00:38:43-8#

F2: You can find many things. Evaluating is the step that follows. I have to be able to judge it somehow and it's not that easy. But the mass is already there. #00:39:03-0#

F1: And to be able to evaluate it correctly, you theoretically have to understand it first. And then I thought theoretically I could use it, although I didn't understand it. Maybe that happens a lot. That you find things, think, you have understood them and carry them out into the world, but actually it's not like that. #00:39:26-0#

AS: I also asked the question in the questionnaire and it turned out that the participants found it most difficult to evaluate the information. What do you think? It's a good fit with what you said, even though most people said that it's a little more difficult to apply. #00:39:45-9#

M2: I guess it's because they don't trust their own knowledge on that topic. You go back to your own experience when you judge things, compare it to known things and I can imagine that when it comes to demographic issues where many people don't know they're actively dealing with them - or they just don't actively deal with them per se - they find it very difficult to judge whether the information is right or not. #00:40:36-2#

AS: I'd like to do that with you again. It's about demographic issues, the ones I showed you during the presentation: Population development and composition, migration and age structure. Three topics. The task is again to say on which topic you find it easiest to fulfil the four tasks that have just been discussed and where it is most difficult. [...] So the simplest topic is age structure, then migration, then population development and composition. What do you think? Why? #00:42:59-7#

F5: I actually have it just like that. For the pragmatic reason that I consider age to be the most one-dimensional of the subjects. Who is how old? What percentage? And so on. Population pyramid. Migration, how many come, how many leave? I find it more complicated than age structure, but it's not as complex as population development and composition. That includes everything somehow. It's much more complex, it's more general. #00:43:56-8#

AS: Has anyone chosen a different order? #00:43:58-7#

F2: I have migration in the first place and then age structure. I also thought about it and wasn't sure and what [F5] said is understandable. Which is why the majority may have age structure after all in the first place. #00:44:25-9#

F4: I also have migration in the first place because you just get the most information about it. #00:44:34-9#

F2: I thought so too. #00:44:34-9#

M2: Me too. #00:44:37-4#

F5: But that makes it much harder, I think. I often find it much easier, for example, to visit the website of the Federal Statistical Office and see how old we are here in Germany. That's much easier than having a hundred sources and not knowing what's true. #00:44:54-9#

F1: That's why I have migration as the most difficult. Age structure is a fixed concept, the pyramid is what it is. And migration depends on the definition. What is migration for me? Is it everyone who comes in here from the outside, or is it also those who move from Düsseldorf to Cologne? And that's why I said that it's the most difficult thing. #00:45:21-2#

AS: In the questionnaire, most people also said that migration is the most difficult thing. For me this came as a surprise. But I find what you said very plausible. It is a very big issue that makes it difficult to grasp. So, do you feel that migration is so complex that you cannot understand reports on it in the media? #00:45:59-9#

F1: On development: We had already discussed it. In Germany there are fewer, but in Africa you can expect boosts. But since it's nothing that concerns us today or tomorrow, there is less information about it. Ergo it is not most difficult for us, because we don't do it often. #00:46:18-1#

F4: It's not so urgent. #00:46:20-8#

M2: I can also imagine that if you generally don't feel comfortable with these topics, then you will have this feeling of being overwhelmed rather with topics that are very prominent. For example, it could be that you know very little about the age structure, but don't notice it at all and the probability for negative overload is therefore larger with more present topics. #00:46:53-5#

F2: Personally, I thought that when it comes to population composition and development - and perhaps this is also incorrect - the other issues play a part. #00:47:09-2#

Several: They do // That's why it's most difficult // Yes definitely // Yes because it's so complex #00:47:16-7#

AS: One thing I noticed in the questionnaire when I looked at the results was that a lot of participants responded with "I don't know". It was very strong with the question "How easy is it for you to find demographic information?" What do you think? Why might it be like this? #00:47:53-9#

F5: Well, because you're not looking for it. I didn't say often "I don't know", but for some question I said it, I don't know where anymore. For me it was because I have never dealt with it or tried it. I just don't know. #00:48:06-3#

F1: Maybe many people don't even know whether it's easy or difficult. [M2] has already said it, mostly information just comes to you. I can't decide whether I want to take it or not. And maybe it's the case that if you don't reflect that now then it's like [...] / I just know it now, but I don't even know anymore whether it was a simple or a difficult process. Perhaps it doesn't even have anything to do with the fact that you are unfamiliar with the topic, but that this flow is not always one-sided. #00:48:38-2#

AS: I had also thought that it was because many have not even tried it yet. But was the question perhaps too complicated? #00:48:57-0#

M1: My problem is that with eight out of ten terms that we discussed, I didn't even know that they belonged to it. So, age structure or migration, you know / they are such noticeable terms. You know them and you can assign them. But with the others I don't know at all that they belong to it. I can't subordinate everything under this big term and therefore I don't know how easy or difficult it is to find something about it. #00:49:33-9#

AS: So maybe it's because the term is so big that you don't even know what it means and that if you asked concrete questions - for example, "How easy is it for you to find information about how many people die in Germany?" it is something different than if you ask about demography? #00:49:48-5#

F1: It is not necessarily in school / Of course, the things are taught, but the term is not. The term is not used in the media because it is so complex that many can't grasp it. And then it's

such a main topic, where it is subordinated beneath and nobody can get anything out of it, although of course there is knowledge about it. #00:50:06-3#

AS: We have now talked a lot about how you judge yourself or others. The next thing that would interest me is whether you think it would be easier to get politically involved if you were familiar with the subject? I deliberately linked the questionnaire to the European elections. Do you think it's important to know about these issues if you want to vote, for example? #00:50:50-4#

F5: Definitely, because there are already many topics that affect us all more than we think in everyday life. And what a party stands for / Well, that often depends on how they position themselves. So, whether they say "We think migration is good" or whether they say "foreigners out". Or whether they say we promote a family policy and want more day care places, yes or no. That's why I think it's important to know what problems you have and what the associated data are. I think so. #00:51:29-9#

AS: And what do you think demographic issues generally have to do with politics? #00:51:39-5#

F5: Well, it's about the population and [...] everything. #00:51:44-1#

F4: That's the point somehow. #00:51:47-0#

F1: No matter which law is passed or whatever is changed now, it must always be put in context with whom it concerns. And just age structure / "Okay, we have so and so and so people" and these guys and these guys will be affected and therefore we have to see how many we have at all. And that's why it is the basis, a little bit. #00:52:07-2#

AS: Would everyone here agree with [F5] and [F1]'s statement that it's super important? That everything that politics does has to do with demography? #00:52:24-0#

Several: Yes. #00:52:31-1#

AS: So, you all agree that it is totally important to know about these issues and that any political action has to do with demography because it affects the population. At the same time, however, you say that the term demography is little known. How does that fit together? Do you therefore see a need to change something? #00:52:49-0#

F5: I can only say / Well we already said, we all have Abitur. And for me at the gymnasium, it was the case that I once had politics as a subject in the lower grade classes. Then you learned what the Bundestag is, what the Bundesrat is, how many federal states there are. How everything is organized in principle. Then for years I had no politics, but only history and I could not even choose social science in the upper level classes, there was only a compulsory course in the 13th grade. I think it's totally crazy that we, who have the highest school leaving certificate in this country, learn the craziest things. We can paint the citrate cycle from memory in the 13th grade and do some curve discussions, but I think that in school far too little, I call it general education, is taught. It's not just that, it's nutrition, or "How do I organize my life". That is a big shortcoming for me. And it's precisely this basic or general knowledge that you need, of course, not only for your Abitur, but for everyone else who goes to school in this country. But I find it particularly sad that although we have been the maximum number of years in school, some of us simply don't know because there is no access made to it. #00:54:42-0#

AS: Was it the case with everyone that you have the feeling that the topics in school are actually not so relevant? #00:54:45-0#

F3 and F4: Yes. #00:54:43-9#

F5: Well, I've seen an age pyramid before. I had an advanced class in geography. But somehow that wasn't really discussed enough. And many have deselected geography. Well, I think not everyone I went to school with has ever dealt with it. #00:55:02-2#

F4: I think the reference to the real world is missing in school. You learn something and don't know what you're learning it for. I would also say that if you now go out on the street and ask someone what Party XY thinks about demographics, they would just look at you / #00:55:21-9#

F5: "I don't know" #00:55:21-9#

F4: So, I see demography as a floating cloud and underneath there are all these little raindrops. All the subtopics that go with it. And you may know where they go or where they spread, but most people don't know that it's all under the cloud called demography. #00:56:00-0#

F5: What I consider a good invention, for example, is the Wahl-O-Mat. This has nothing to do with demography, but because we have just talked about what parties think about certain topics, I find it / So I don't sit down before an election and read the party programmes. So, either I choose what I think I should choose out of belief or I need something like the Wahl-O-Mate that makes it easy for me. That I think: "Ah okay, some people say that and that and others that and that, I didn't know that at all in this particular case". So much for the subject of elections. #00:56:40-5#

AS: We'll come to the subject of elections later, but before that I'd like to show you two clips, I picked out for you. [...] The first one is an excerpt from a movie with Tom Hanks. The movie is called Inferno. And there's a little scene in it that I'd like to show you because it's about demographic issues. Let me briefly summarize what the film is about. There's a scientist who kills himself at the beginning of the film and Tom Hanks gets sucked in. It's a big mystery, he's got to solve the case and now he's going to find out about the scientist and his positions and watch a YouTube video about him. Here we go [...] As a contrast, I have another video for you from a researcher who presents the whole thing in a slightly different way. [...] These were the two videos, two very opposite videos. What is your impression? #01:08:45-5#

F3: I read the book Inferno and found it very depressing. And then I saw the movie and I thought "Oh shit". Of course, I couldn't put it all in context. That's why I found the second video a bit soothing. What he says just sounds logical. But the other one also sounded logical, but somehow, I found that now / Yes, I can imagine that well too. I'd rather believe the second video. #01:09:23-0#

AS: What about the others? It's a big difference whether you say that there will soon be eleven billion people and that it will stop sometime or whether you say that there will soon be 32 billion and it will go on and on until we go extinct sometime because we are pillaging the planet. #01:09:48-1#

F1: So, the projections he told us about, until 2100, they have a right to exist. It's becoming more and more accurate and what was predicted 100 years ago has also happened, so you can assume that what he says will happen. So maybe the other one was somehow [...] a feature film and served that purpose. However, in that moment, you think "Okay, he's right somehow, too." It's always like this, you get information and you only have a short time to say: "okay it's bullshit" or "I can understand that". And especially in this movie, although you know it better, also because of the pictures in the background, it was convincing to a certain degree. #01:10:34-3#

F3: What may also play into it: I don't have the background knowledge, but societies are changing. In Germany it has become so much less so and perhaps it will be the same in other

countries, where so many children are born, if standards change there in the future. That fewer children will be born there. And then perhaps the whole thing will calm down. #01:11:01-8#

AS: That is exactly what is assumed. And it's much more about - as you say, it's a feature film - but they play with such terms in the public. So, in this context the question once again: What does demography have to do with politics? #01:12:01-1#

M2: Above all, that it is very important that you have a basic competence as far as the subject is concerned. That you are able to identify this scaremongering as such. Of course, everyone is a bit prone to it, but that you might recognize the small warning signals. That if, for example, there is talk of an invasion, then you look to see whether it really is like this and don't just accept it. #01:12:54-6#

F4: Of course, it's a feature film and it goes in the direction of scaremongering, but I still think that we have to be careful that it is not about what will be a topic in 100 or 200 years, but rather that we are confronted with a big problem now. We don't feel that in everyday life yet, but if you look more closely at it and read into it thematically, you can see that it's already a problem. But of course, because it is a feature film, everything is a bit overdrawn. There won't be anyone who contaminates our drinking water. Hopefully. But the overpopulation is already a big topic that is being taken up more by the media or comes to the surface more, which should have happened 50 years ago. #01:13:55-1#

M2: I can also imagine that the topics are confused a little bit. That overpopulation itself is not the problem, but what he also says, 32 billion people are fighting for survival. And the problem is not so much the 32 billion as the lack of resources. Perhaps the demographic issue that gives rise to fear is actually fear of climate change or scarcity of resources. But then it's certainly also the case that populists like to steer it in this direction, that it's not about that, but about migration and so on. #01:14:34-7#

AS: The final 'Mentimeter' that I would like to do with you is about what was the most important topic for you in the European elections. And of course, we've been talking about demographic issues for a while, but if it wasn't an issue for you, then it wasn't. I'm only interested in what was the most important topic for you. [...] Okay, would you like to tell me something about the result? And there is at least one person who has chosen the topic of migration. #01:16:56-7#

F5: I couldn't decide for a long time whether to take climate or / I have now taken environment and not environmental protection, because I wanted to keep it more general and I thought that climate change belongs to environment. In the European elections, I find it blatant that there is a great awareness in Germany that we have to do something about climate change and for the environment, but that at the same time nobody wants to restrict themselves. Everyone wants to keep flying and eating meat and driving. Even though it was said for a long time that the Germans are pioneers. We are no longer pioneers, not even in Europe. I think it is important to find a European solution. Because no matter what a state does, even if we were to fully start right now and be at the top when it comes to environmental protection, it would not be enough, because you have to get more people on board. For me, it was indeed the most important issue in all its facets, encompassing the environment and environmental protection. I think migration is not unimportant, not at all. But I think that's because it's less of an issue for me, because it's so self-evident to me that it's okay. And in my everyday life / I simply deal more with environmental issues. #01:18:34-0#

AS: That is also what I expected as a result, because the topic was so present in the media before the elections. Would you say, even after what we have just seen in the film, that population growth and climate change play a role or are the demographic issues / #01:19:03-8#

F3: It definitely plays a role, but it is not communicated properly. #01:19:05-1#

F1: Especially because it is super difficult. Because people say climate change, overpopulation, we have no resources, the earth we live on won't last much longer. But then we say that everyone has to do something. Those are completely different levels. So, I say I shouldn't fly anymore, I don't eat meat anymore, plastic is stupid anyway. And then to connect that in such a way that my own behaviour can influence it - which is not necessarily related to population or demography - many people can't [...] draw this line. Which is not absolutely necessary of course if you understand that your behaviour influences the environment. #01:19:57-8#

AS: Would you say that demographic issues motivated people to vote? Or was it too long ago so that climate change was the main motivator? How did you perceive it in your environment? #01:20:28-4#

M2: I think that the voter turnout was also a lot higher than usual this time, because somehow / That may sound harsh, but with the right-wing populists you had a common image of the enemy. That you might have got your ass up and rallied yourself to vote, because you wanted to try with all your might that they wouldn't get any votes. #01:20:57-6#

F1: Which was rather against their attitude against migration. I can understand what you said about the common image of the enemy and that there was a great shift to the right throughout Europe. But above all it is about what they said about migration policy. Of course, they are also quite crappy about climate change and don't want to restrict themselves at all, but in my environment, it was mainly the migration factor that played a role, not the climate, even though it was the most important reason for me personally. #01:21:39-5#

M2: That's what I meant. I also took migration because I imagined the following scenario. If there were two parties and one would promote a culture of welcoming, but would promote coal mining, while the other would only rely on green energy, but would like to kick foreigners out of the country, then I would have taken the environmentally unfriendly one. Even if, of course, it is difficult to separate them. #01:22:13-9#

AS: What did it look like when you were preparing for the European elections? Did you specifically look for information on demographic issues? Did you find it easy to inform yourself? [...] Have you informed yourself about demographic issues at all? #01:23:09-5#

F4: Well, I did, but I wasn't specifically looking for what kind of demographic plan they had. The individual topics were compared, but I didn't look at specific demographic topics. #01:23:33-9#

F2: I would say the same and I think it reflects our answers. What is important to us is perhaps not in the demographic frame except migration. But then it's more of an accessory, but not what influenced my decision personally. #01:24:03-1#

AS: And apart from your active search. Would you say parties have clearly said how they stand on demographic issues? #01:24:23-4#

F1: Well, actually it's the big issues they have: Migration policy, social policy, pensions policy, climate policy. These are also issues, even if they are never referred to as demographic issues, but they are still the main issues used by political parties to promote what they stand for. And then you might look at the Wahl-O-Mat or read a pamphlet. Then it's somehow the case that you see that they want to abolish coal-fired power stations, more day care places, whatever. Then they must have looked at the age structure somehow or said that it doesn't go on. And then they did deal with it, even if it wasn't clear to them. #01:25:01-9#

F4: Yes subconsciously. #01:25:07-6#

F1: Exactly, because this term was never [...] educated. #01:25:14-2#

AS: These were all questions with regard to content. I have two or three final questions for you. And I'd like to know in summary whether you have the feeling that enough or too little is being said about these topics. Do you have the feeling that they don't concern you enough or should they concern you more? Would demographic issues have to be dealt with differently or is it enough as it is now? #01:25:44-1#

F3: For me, climate policy just overpowers everything else. Because I have the feeling that if nothing happens now, I don't care about the rest, because we won't be around much longer. That is why the other issues are unfortunately being pushed into the background for me. #01:26:07-9#

F4: And of course, all this is connected. I think everything is so entangled that you have to say in general that we all deal with it on a daily basis, even if we deliberately may not be able to say that. But everything is connected with each other. #01:26:32-5#

AS: So, you could say that somehow it has to become clearer what demographic issues are? #01:26:35-2#

F4: So, if you want to define this term, what do people understand by demography, then I would definitely say that there is no awareness of what is meant by it. #01:26:44-9#

M2: And maybe it's not so important that you know this term as long as you know how the sub-topics work. What has just been said: Everything is so strongly entangled that it is difficult to find the right solution. I was just thinking, for example: Why isn't it said more often that when climate change occurs, it also occurs / So people say they have less to eat in Africa and then they come in larger waves of migration. And then I immediately thought to myself in the next step: Don't say anything! Because that immediately pushes some right-wing idiots, who then even have this horror scenario on the horizon, which they can then throw themselves at. And that's somehow [...] difficult. #01:27:43-3#

F1: But on the other hand, you could make everything more transparent, if by doing this you can see / So of course that people come because we flooded their island or something and they can't live there anymore, or the earth is really completely dry now. But that you say that it really has consequences what we do here for demographic issues like population and age structure. And that could somehow help to wake people up. #01:28:07-2#

F5: I also think that one would have to know more about it so that one can then also make responsible decisions. So, I think there is definitely a need to have easier access to information and to make it easy to get it. That it's not like that, if you like, "look there", but that you are confronted with it. Everyone in this country ideally. I don't know where. Whether you do it somehow at any subway stations / Although everybody looks at the mobile phone. I think that's very important. Because only if you really know about it, if you can classify many things correctly and if you can really classify all this polemic, which many politicians fall into, and if you can say: Honestly, you're just doing emotional opinion-making and stirring up fear / And fear is always a big engine to make such decisions. But to overcome fear, you have to have knowledge in order to be empowered. #01:29:14-6#

AS: That's actually a nice message that you can take home. Is there anything else you can take home with you? #01:29:38-3#

M2: For example, I wasn't aware that migration is a big part of demography because I always linked it to age structure and so on. And we've really talked a lot about migration now, but

without [...] as you could say [...] deviating from the core theme. I find that very interesting.
#01:30:22-7#

F1: And that simply everything is connected with each other. You think about all that. You think about it / well of course we are all well educated in this room here. But that consciousness is already there, even if you couldn't specify it with one word. You would talk about migration and climate change, but it would take a long time until the term migration comes up. And that perhaps it is not just the lack of knowledge, but the complexity and the concept itself.
#01:30:51-6#

AS: What I personally take home, but I already had that after the questionnaire, so I find it exciting that you just said that. When I started my studies, I always thought about migration first and not about age structure. It's interesting how different the focus is on the topics. And that everything is connected, and you have to connect it and that many people just don't have the connection pieces. That's what the work with my Master thesis showed me. #01:31:27-8#

F4: I think if you asked again what we mean by demography, there would be a lot more different mention this board. #01:31:45-5#

AS: Is there anything that you think should have gone differently in the discussion or shorter? Or maybe the questionnaire? #01:32:14-9#

F1: As far as I can remember the questionnaire [...] the questions were partly very complex. That's more because of the topic and not because you thought you had to knock some words together. But that it's just very / especially if you haven't dealt with it yet, or think that you haven't dealt with it yet, that it can be very scaring. You think, you just do the questionnaire and then [...] oh well. #01:32:46-7#

F4: Probably that's why there was a lot of this "don't know" category. That one was simply / overwhelmed or did not understand the question correctly in the hectic. #01:33:03-9#

AS: All right then, thank you very much! #01:34:03-5#

CODEBOOK

Nr.	Category	Subcategory	Code	Type	Description	Example
1	Understanding of demography	Meaning	Ageing society	Deductive	The term 'demography' is associated with terms or topics related to ageing society. This can occur specifically, or indirectly, if participants refer to the respective terms/topics although asked about demography in general.	<i>"Maybe if you think of demography, as has just been said, you often think of the country you live in and look at the age structure, how many are born, how many men, how many women, in which age groups. (...)." (F1, #00:08:43-1#).</i>
2		Meaning	Population structure	Deductive	The term 'demography' is associated with terms or topics related to population structure(s). This can occur specifically, or indirectly, if participants refer to the respective terms/topics although asked about demography in general.	<i>"(...) The fact that population is so prominent is just a bit natural. So that you just call the general term once. So you roughly indicate what demography is all about. (...)" (M2, #00:06:19-1#).</i>
3		Meaning	Unfamiliarity	Inductive	The participants describe that they/others have some understanding/knowledge of subtopics, that they/others are affected by subtopics or that the focus in the public lies on subtopics. They specify, that they/others don't know what the term 'demography' means.	<i>"My problem is that with eight out of ten terms that we discussed, I didn't even know that they belonged to it. So, age structure or migration, you know / they are such noticeable terms. You know them and you can assign them. But with the others I don't know at all that they belong to it. I can't subordinate everything under this big term (...)" (M1, #00:49:33-9#).</i>

4		Characteristics	Complex and interrelated	Deductive/ Inductive	Demography is described as complex, wide, huge, immense or elusive field. Participants describe that demographic interrelations remain unclear for them or for others.	<i>"The term is not used in the media because it is so complex that many can't grasp it. And then it's such a main topic, where it is subordinated beneath and nobody can get anything out of it, although of course there is knowledge about it" (F1, #00:50:06-3#).</i>
5		Characteristics	Emotions, beliefs & attitudes	Deductive/ Inductive	The participants explain that their or other people's approach to demography is rather emotional than rational, based on beliefs, feelings or attitudes.	<i>"But it's just a basic political position that you have on topics like migration and pensions. I don't think you're aware of it at all, but everyone has an attitude to it, be it well-founded or not. (...)." (F1, #00:35:19-3#).</i>
6	Impact and relevance	/	'Anti-populist' voting decision	Inductive	The participants indicate, that the main driver for their voting decision was primarily a decision against populist parties.	<i>"I think that the voter turnout was also a lot higher than usual this time, because somehow / That may sound harsh, but with the right-wing populists you had a common image of the enemy. That you might have got your ass up and rallied yourself to vote, because you wanted to try with all your might that they wouldn't get any votes" (M2, #01:20:57-6#).</i>
7		/	Impact on everyone	Deductive	The participants directly or indirectly describe that demographic issues have an impact on the society or on 'everyone'. No direct, personal reference is made.	<i>"(...) So, it seems to be a problem in all age structures. And I think that affects everyone, no matter what age you are. When you're old, there's no pension, when you're young, no day care places. I think it affects everyone, even if you don't know it's a demographic issue" (F1, #00:13:18-7# #00:13:18-7#).</i>

8		/	Linked with negative outcomes	Inductive	The participants refer to demographic terms or topics as 'problems'. In this context, they either see or feel the related outcomes themselves, or observe them as a consequence for the whole society.	<i>"(...) If I also think of my grandfather, we really had problems finding a place in a nursing home. I also notice that when I look at my friends. Getting your grandmother's care done is an important issue. Also because of the nursing professions, which understandably nobody wants to go to because they are so badly paid" (F3, #00:14:51-6#).</i>
9		/	Migration = self-evident	Inductive	The participants explain that they neither think about migration as a demographic topic, nor as a problem. It is rather part of their reality and their everyday lives. In this context, it is described as 'self-evident'.	<i>"I think migration is not unimportant, not at all. But I think that's because it's less of an issue for me, because it's so self-evident to me that it's okay" (F5, #01:18:34-0#).</i>
10		/	Experienceable	Inductive	The participants explain that demography is only part of their or others everyday life, if one is affected by it or if there are points of contact. They might also refer to a specific or hypothetical example, which illustrates that they see how demography affects them.	<i>"I think it has something to do with the fact that it doesn't affect us directly in everyday life. When a situation comes or something is reported in the media and details and numbers are mentioned / But in normal everyday life you are not confronted with more specific things (...)" (F2, #00:18:27-3#).</i>

11		/	Experienceable: Ageing society	Inductive	The participants explain that their or others' point of contact with demographic issues is established through the topic "ageing society". They might also say that they or others are affected by the ageing society in their daily lives, or they expect that it will affect them or others in the future. They refer to topics like pension, retirement or nursing homes.	<i>"(...) for example my dad, who took care of my grandparents for a year, when they couldn't do it themselves any more. With something like this, the topic of ageing is more present in everyday life, but I wouldn't say that I go out onto the streets every day and am confronted with it (...)" (F4, #00:11:49-5#).</i>
12		/	Experienceable: Climate change	Inductive	The participants explain that their or others' point of contact with demographic issues is established through the topic "climate change". They might also say that they or others are affected by climate change in their daily lives, or they expect that it will affect them or others in the future. They refer to topics like resources, consumption or flooding.	<i>"You can also look at the big picture, for example climate change. We are simply far too many people on the planet. We have said that no children will follow anymore. But if you look at others / On the African continent there are a lot of new-born children. So, you can also say that worldly demographic change cannot be stopped at some point" (F4, #00:15:30-5#).</i>
13		/	Experienceable: Life planning	Inductive	The participants explain that their or others' point of contact with demographic issues is established through the topic "life planning". They might also say that they or others are directly affected, or expect them or others to be affected by demography in the future, to the extent that it would affect their life plans. They refer especially to reproduction here.	<i>"(...) I just talked to a friend about it yesterday. We probably all want to have children, but when you look at the earth, it's totally selfish. It's the worst thing you can do right now. Theoretically" (F4, #00:16:18-8#).</i>

14		/	Experienceable: Overpopulation	Inductive	The participants explain that their or others' point of contact with demographic issues is established through the topic "overpopulation". They might also say that they expect them or others to be affected by overpopulation in the future. They refer to birth rates or population growth here.	<i>"(...) the overpopulation is already a big topic that is being taken up more by the media or comes to the surface more, which should have happened 50 years ago" (L4, #01:13:55-1#).</i>
15	Demographic literacy	Demographic knowledge and the motivation to deepen one's competencies	Motivation is linked to points of contact	Inductive	The participants describe that their motivation to do research on their own, depends on the point of contact they have to demographic issues: they are motivated, if they feel affected.	<i>"I don't think I'm specifically looking for it. Something like pension is still too far away for me. I'm not yet so involved as to sacrifice my free time for it. (...)" (M2, #00:21:46-0#)</i>
16		Demographic knowledge and the motivation to deepen one's competencies	Some/limited, topic-dependent demographic knowledge	Deductive/ Inductive	The participants state that they have some but at the same time limited demographic knowledge (vague statement). They might also explain that it is difficult for them to evaluate their demographic knowledge, since it's topic dependent.	<i>"I think we rather have amateurish knowledge. You pick up something everywhere, but it's not a well-founded knowledge with which you could discuss for two hours" (F4, #00:34:06-0#).</i>
17		Accessing	'I don't know'	In vivo	The participants explicitly state, that they don't know how easy or difficult it is for them to search for demographic information, since they usually don't do it. They feel rather provided with demographic information and take on a passive role.	<i>"(...) mostly information just comes to you. I can't decide whether I want to take it or not. And maybe it's the case that if you don't reflect that now then it's like [...] / I just know it now, but I don't even know anymore whether it was a simple or a difficult process" (F1, #00:48:38-2#).</i>

18		Applying	Feeling insecure about applying	Deductive/ Inductive	The participants explain that they are insecure about applying demographic information.	<i>“And it’s also difficult to generalize all the demographic issues. If I had to talk to someone about pensions and would have to represent my favourite payment model, then / I don’t know / But if someone comes around the corner with AfD slogans, then I would probably find it much easier to show them that they are on the wrong track. It is difficult to generalize” (M2, #00:34:22-0#).</i>
19		Understanding	Complexity = difficulty	Deductive	The participants argue that the difficulty of demographic themes depends on their complexity	<i>“(…) I consider age to be the most one-dimensional of the subjects. Who is how old? What percentage? And so on. Population pyramid. Migration, how many come, how many leave? I find it more complicated than age structure, but it’s not as complex as population development and composition. That includes everything somehow. It’s much more complex, it’s more general” (F5, #00:43:56-8#).</i>
20		Understanding	The more information, the easier it gets	Inductive	The participants argue that demographic topics are more comprehensible, when they are provided with lots of information about those.	<i>“I (..) have migration in the first place because you just get the most information about it” (F4, #00:44:34-9#).</i>

21	Sources	Universal	Trust depends on source	Inductive	The participants explain that it depends on the source whether they trust the demographic information provided or not, and that this is independent of the topic.	<i>"(...) I wouldn't tie it to demographic themes, if and how much I trust a source. (...) And when a politician says something, I don't automatically believe him. But that's not because of the demographic issues, but because he's a politician. (...)" (M2, #00:29:53-0#).</i>
22		Media sector	Agenda dependency	Inductive	The participants indicate that they and others depend on the media agenda when it comes to demographic information. Regarding demographic topics, they explain that migration is highly present in the media, whereas age structures/ageing societies are barely thematised.	<i>"Nevertheless, you are dependent on the agenda and how it is addressed at the moment. If demographic issues such as migration are very present at the moment, of course, more information is also included. (...)" (M2, #00:21:46-0#).</i>
23		Media sector	Main source	Deductive/ Inductive	The participants refer to the media as source of information, including TV, newspapers and social media, as well as podcasts and apps.	<i>"I would say the largest part is in the media. Reading the daily newspaper" (F4, #00:22:08-6#).</i>
24		Media sector	Poor quality	Inductive	Content-wise, the participants state repeatedly that the information provided is superficial and does not do justice to the fields' complexity. Overall, they indicate that the respective reports are (normally) of poor quality.	<i>"I think a lot of the reporting is only scratching at the surface. It's so short that you usually can't immerse yourself so deeply. You see it and accept it, but don't even think about it" (F4, #00:31:22-3#).</i>
25		Professional sector	Instrumentalisation	Deductive	The participants mention that demographic topics are abused for political purposes.	<i>"(...) And you know that he is pursuing his own agenda with his statements" (M2, #00:29:53-0#).</i>

26		Professional sector	Not enough points of contact in school	Inductive	The participants describe that there are not enough points of contact with demographic topics in school.	<i>“Well, I’ve seen an age pyramid before. I had an advanced class in geography. But somehow that wasn’t really discussed enough. And many have deselected geography. Well, I don’t think that everyone I went to school with has ever dealt with it” (F5, #00:55:02-2#).</i>
27	Needs	/	Education	Deductive	The participants directly or indirectly emphasise that demographic literacy/competences/knowledge or education in general, is something that is needed.	<i>“I also think that one would have to know more about it so that one can then also make responsible decisions. (...) I think that’s very important. (...)” (F5, #01:29:14-6#).</i>
28		/	Transparent and comprehensible communication	Inductive	The participants argue, that there is a need for transparent and comprehensible communication.	<i>“But on the other hand, you could make everything more transparent (...). And that could somehow help to wake people up” (F1, #01:28:07-2#).</i>