

# Abstract

Posts by politicians, user comments, shared photos and reels, short-lived stories disappearing within 24 hours, event invitations, public and private groups – the high penetration of the internet and social media platforms has not only reshaped citizens' leisure activities and information gathering, but has also played an increasingly significant role in political and civic participation.

This volume seeks to provide deeper insight into the forms of political and civic engagement – both online and offline – among Hungarians in Transylvania, and to examine how these practices are being transformed by the virtual world. Which groups of Transylvanian Hungarians can be distinguished on the basis of political action, and how might they be characterised? Does social media genuinely succeed in drawing passive citizens into political engagement, or does it risk diluting the very meaning of participation? Beyond addressing such questions, the book explores online mobilisation initiatives within the Hungarian community in Transylvania and, ultimately, investigates the attitudes of the younger generation – often portrayed as apolitical, yet as digital natives – towards movements promoted through social media. While the primary focus is on grassroots civic initiatives, the analysis also considers the role of political parties and politicians, given that the Hungarian civil sphere in Transylvania is highly dependent on party politics and frequently appears as an (ostensible) partner in their campaigns.

The research forming the basis of this volume was carried out in three phases, combining three methods: a representative survey of Transylvanian Hungarians to examine offline and online participation and the factors shaping it; a content analysis of 1,684 Facebook posts to trace patterns of online mobilisation; and two focus group discussions with university students, designed to explore how they might use the affordances of different social media platforms in a civic initiative, as well as their broader perceptions of online participation.