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#### **Advertisements on Social Networking Sites as recruitment** tool for online surveys

Meet the Experts

Best practice methods in Survey Methodology and Computational Social Sciences

Steffen Pötzschke & Christoph Beuthner, July 22, 2021





### Speakers



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#### Dr. Steffen Pötzschke

- Postdoc in the department Survey Design and Methodology, team GESIS Panel (deputy team lead),
- Project consultant with focus on online surveys and SNS recruitment,
- Research interests: survey methodology, use of digital technologies in survey research, methods of migration research.
- Contact: <u>steffen.poetzschke@gesis.org</u> | <u>stpoetzschke</u>



#### **Christoph Beuthner**

- Doctoral researcher in the Team Survey Operations
- Master in Sociology (Technical University of Dresden)
- Research focus: Optimizing online surveys
- Contact: <u>christoph.beuthner@gesis.org</u> <u>@c\_beuthner</u>





### Information prior to the talk

- The talk will be recorded but not the discussion that follows
- Participants are muted
- Please ask questions to "meetexperts" via the chat function
- If the question goes "to all", the messages will be visible to all (incl. your name)
- Questions will be answered after the talk



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#### **Advertisements on Social Networking Sites as recruitment** tool for online surveys

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- 1. Introduction
- 2. Planning your ad campaign
- 3. Implementing your campaign
- 4. Examples
  - a) Survey of health professionals in Germany
  - b) German Emigrants Overseas Online Survey





### 1. Introduction

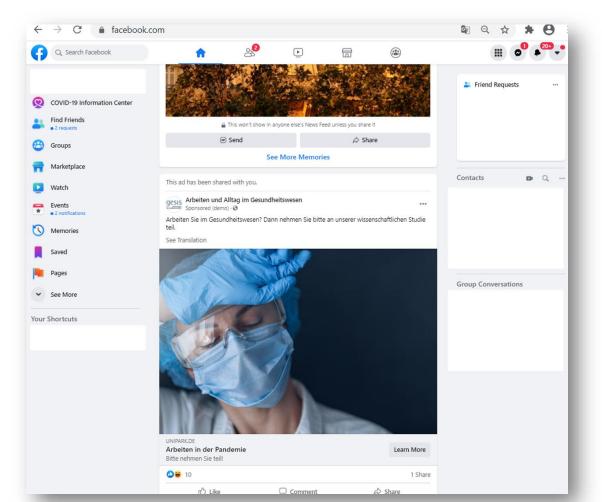
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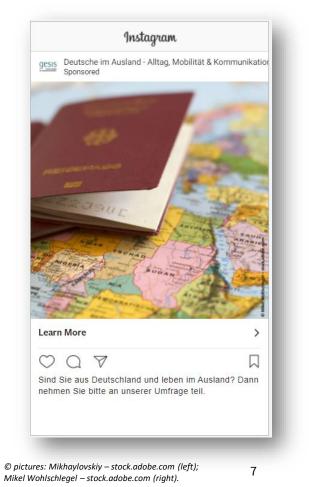


### What this talk is all about

Example 1: Survey advertisement in a user's Facebook news feed.



Example 2: Survey advertisement as displayed in the Instagram feed.





# Why use advertisements on Facebook & Instagram for sampling?

- Size, in 2020 (Facebook, 2021a):
  - > 2.8 billion monthly active Facebook users worldwide,
  - > 3.3 billion if all Facebook products (incl. Instagram & Whatsapp) are counted.
- Nearly global coverage and geographically fine-grained targeting possible,
- Facebook Advertisements Manager (FAM) allows using a plethora of targeting variables, e.g.:
  - Demographics: age, gender, place of residence,
  - Language use,

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- Interest in specific topics,
- Profession and professional association.
- Allows sampling of otherwise hard-to-reach (h2r) populations, e.g.:
  - Members of specific (small) social subgroups (e.g., working in specific sectors),
  - Scattered populations,
  - Very mobile individuals,
  - Individuals without a telephone connection.
- Easy and fast to realize,
- Open to all scholars: Use of FB Inc.'s business model,
- (Much) Less expensive than most established methods.





### Limitations

- Coverage:
  - Sampling frame includes only individuals that use the internet and Facebook or Instagram,
  - Possible effects of digital divides (influenced, e.g., by age, gender, economic status),
  - Targeting (in part) dependent on information entered by users in their profiles,
  - ► Targeting variables as black boxes, basis of exact assignment to users often unclear → risk of undercoverage.
- Self-selection of participants.





#### Use of advertisements Facebook and (less often) Instagram for survey research *(selection)*

- Medical and health research (Arcia, 2014; Chu & Snider, 2013; Fenner et al., 2012; Kapp, Peters, & Oliver, 2013; Lohse, 2013; Ramo & Prochaska, 2012; literature review: Whitaker, Stevelink, & Fear, 2017),
- Recruiting migrants (Ersanilli & van der Gaag, 2020; Pötzschke & Braun, 2017; Ryndyk, 2020),
- Recruiting supporters of conspiracy theories (Iannelli et al., 2018);
- Recruiting participants for cognitive pre-tests (Head, Dean, Flanigan, Swicegood, & Keating, 2016),
- Recruiting members of the LGBTQ community (Guillory et al., 2018; Kühne & Zindel, 2020),
- Recruiting service sector employees (Schneider & Harknett, 2019),
- Cross-national surveys of the general population on
  - Privacy concerns (Thomson & Ito, 2014),
  - COVID-19 (Grow et al., 2020).





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#### Reminder: Survey design > questionnaire design

A survey project has several components:

- Project's Facebook page,
- Facebook/Instagram advertisements,
- Online survey (externally hosted).

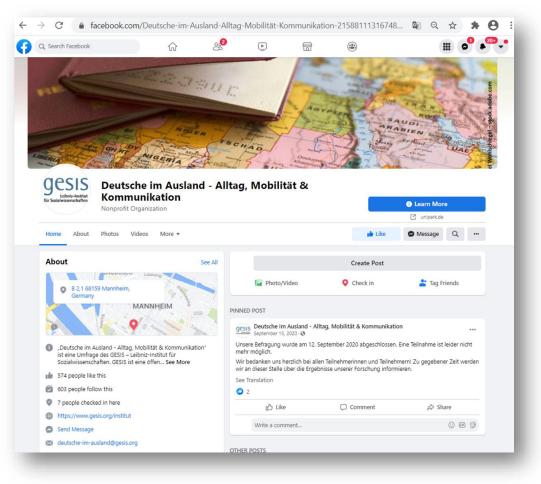
Follow Dillman's *Tailored Design Method* (Dillman et al., 2014). This means, e.g.:

- Use similar design elements across above-mentioned components,
- Take the respondents point of view,
- Keep stimuli of your ad as consistent across devices and services as possible,
  - Use URL parameters to allow consideration of design effects in the analysis.





#### Tailoring the main survey components

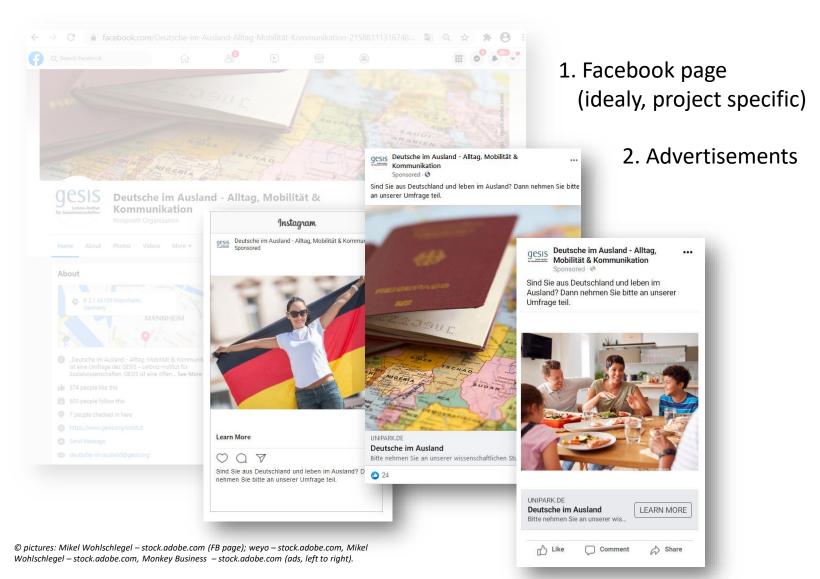


1. Facebook page (idealy, project specific)





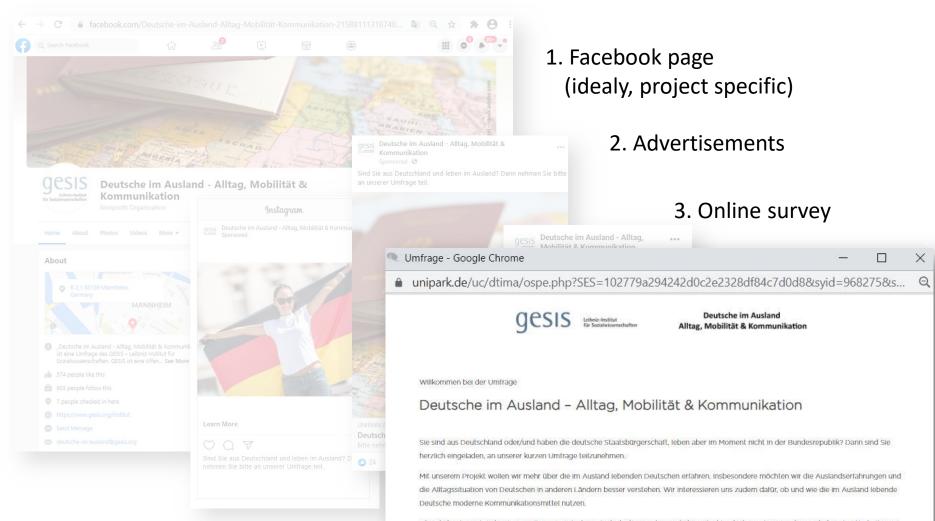
#### Tailoring the main survey components







#### Tailoring the main survey components



© pictures: Mikel Wohlschlegel – stock.adobe.com (FB page); weyo – stock.adobe.com, Mikel Wohlschlegel – stock.adobe.com, Monkey Business – stock.adobe.com (ads, left to right).

Obwohl heute welt mehr als 3,4 Millionen Deutsche außerhalb der Bundesrepublik Deutschland leben, ist wenig über sie bekannt. Bitte helfen Sie uns diese Wissenslücke zu schließen und beteiligen Sie sich an einer der ersten Befragungen von Deutschen im Ausland überhaupt!

Diese Umfrage wird vom GESIS - Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften mit Sitz in Mannheim (Deutschland) weltweit durchgeführt. Sie richtet



...

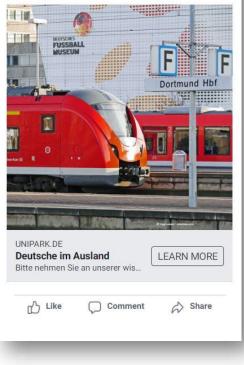
## Tailoring advertisements



Deutsche im Ausland - Alltag, .... Mobilität & Kommunikation

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Sind Sie aus Deutschland und leben im Ausland? Dann nehmen Sie bitte an unserer Umfrage teil.



Use ...

- ... a target specific survey title, e.g.:
  - "Germans abroad Daily life, Mobility & Communication"
  - "Work and daily life in the health sector"
- ... an engaging ad text, e.g.:
  - "Are you from Germany and live abroad? Please participate in our survey."
  - "Do you work in the health sector? If so, please participate in our scientific study."
- ... several images (sparking the interest of different segments of the target population),
- ... the space for short text elements (below pictures) to attract additional attention.

Gesundheitswesen Sponsored · @

Studie teil.

Sponsored · Arbeiten Sie im Gesundheitswesen? Dann nehmen Sie bitte an unserer wissenschaftlichen





# Think ahead: Advertisement review

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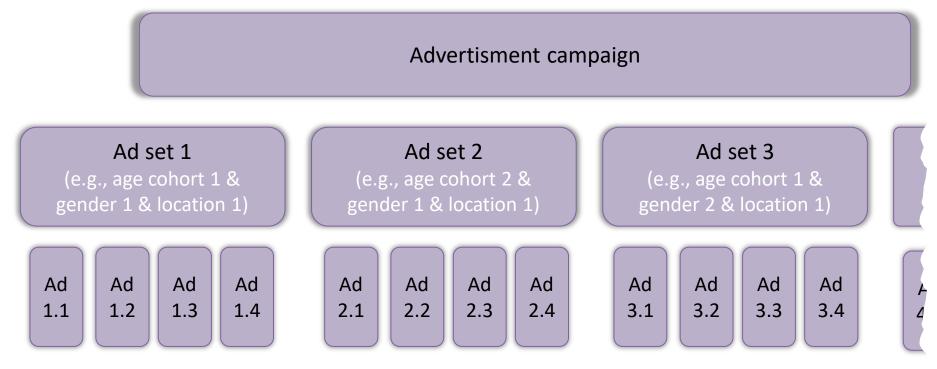
- Ads on any Facebook Inc. outlet have to comply with Facebook's advertising policies and their community standards (Facebook, 2021c; King, 2021):
  - Plan all components of your ad campaign accordingly!
  - Allow (at least) 24 hours for the initial automated review process,
  - Active ads might be reviewed a second time by Facebook employees (at random or if unusual user activity is detected).
- There may be specific regulations for ads in certain contexts:
  - Current example: COVID-19 (Facebook, 2021b).





# Ad campaign structure

- Advertisement campaigns on Facebook have three (nested) levels:
  - Campaign (i.e., overall project): can include several ad sets,
  - Ad set: can include several ads,
  - Ad: can differ in used text elements and/or pictures/videos.







# Ad sets are important!

- Targeting variables, fielding time and pricing are defined on the ad set level,
- Besides targeting variables: Facebook does not know which sample characteristics are important to you.
- Facebook AI could increase biases in your sample:
  - Ad budget will *not automatically* be spent in a way that results in a balanced sample composition (e.g., regarding age),
  - Within a given ad set AI pushes successful ads (e.g., those receiving most clicks),
- Solution: Use ad sets to stratify targeting
  - Recommendation: Use URL parameters to record for each observation which ad set (even better: which ad) the participant came from.
- Drawback:
  - Increase of needed budget or reduction of targeting budget available per individual ad set,
  - Increasingly complex sampling design,
  - Example: Using four ads and stratifying the targeting to two gender and two age cohorts in two different locations results in eight ad sets, featuring a total of 32 ads.





#### Costs

- Two billing modes: Costs per click & cost per impression,
- No fixed rates → Price determined by automated auction,
- Reported costs per click/impression vary,
- Net advertisement costs per completed questionnaire, examples:

Whitaker et al. (2017)	Lit. review of 17 health related studies (average across all studies)	~ <b>12.13€</b> (\$14.41)
Schneider and Harknett (2019)	Service sector employees in USA	<b>~ 4.85€</b> (\$5.76)
Bennetts et al. (2019)	Parents in Australia	~ <b>1.46€</b> (AUS\$2.32)
Grow et al. (2020)	General population in 8 countries	1.05€
Silber et al. (2021)	Health care professionals in Germany	0.86€
Pötzschke and Weiß (2020)	German emigrants in 148 countries & regions	0.58€
Pötzschke and Braun (2017)	Polish migrants in 4 European countries	0.47€





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# Some practicalities for starters

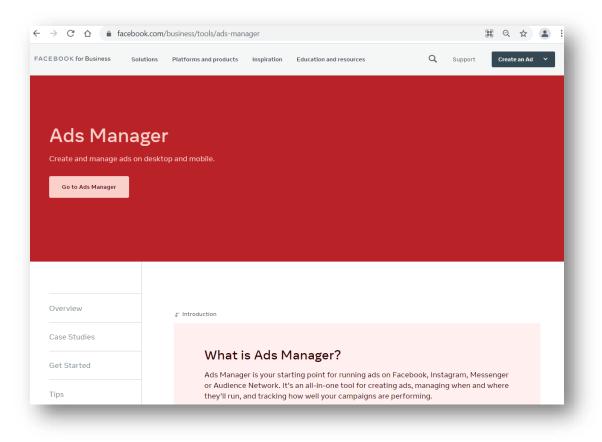
- To create an ad campaign, you need an ad account (free of charge),
- An institutional ad account allows several team members access to the same ad campaign,
- New accounts are tricky:
  - They can only use the 'Costs per impression' option until some budget (8€?) has been spent → Do a small pretest well before your main campaign,
  - Billing amounts increase over time: new accounts might be charged various small amounts in a short period of time 
    Alert your administration to this beforehand!



# Login to the Facebook advertisement manager: <u>https://www.facebook.com/business/tools/ads-manager</u>

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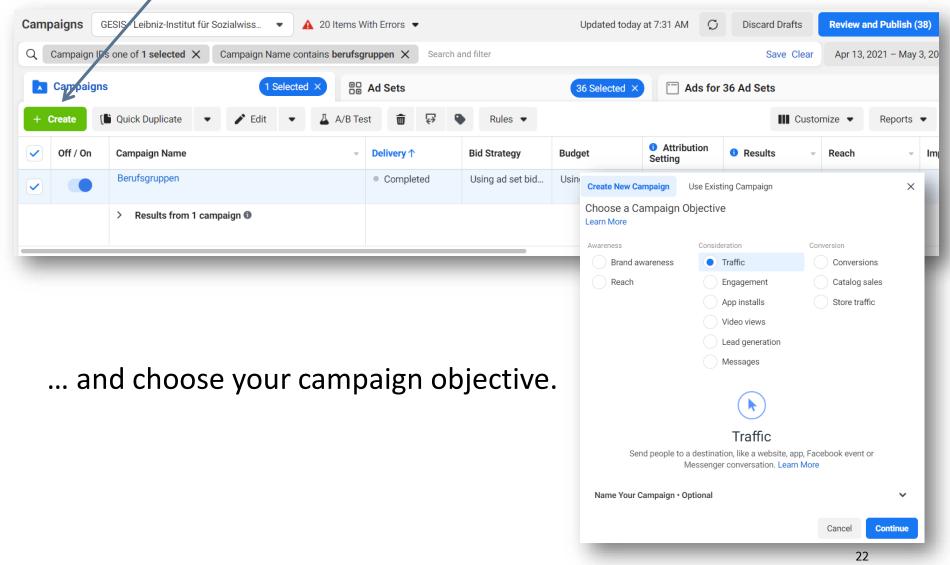
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The screenshots on this and the following slides are taken from Facebook. The authors of this presentation do not claim any copyright for these pictures.



#### Create a new campaign ...







# **Editing Ad Sets**

Search	Q 🖸 🗅 Berufs	sgruppen [MTE] > 📑 female, 18-35, BY BW NRW, Industrie	> 🗂 7 Ads	• In Draft
img4 - Würfel	****		Creview 💿 Review	
female, 18-35, BY BW NRW, Indust		Ad Set Name	Create Name Template	✓ Performance may be impacted
img 1 - PCR	***	female, 18-35, BY BW NRW, Industrie		Evolving changes related to how Facebook can process data may affect your ad set's delivery and performance.
📄 img 6 - Opa		Traffic	^	ePrivacy Directive
📋 img 2 - Impfung		Choose where you want to drive traffic. You'll enter more	details about the destination	
🗂 img 7 - Oma	***	later.		Audience Definition
img4 - Würfel	***	App Choose the app you want to advertise. You can advertise any	and that you've registered on	Your audience selection is fairly broad.
img3 - Stress		Facebook's developer site. Get Help for App Install Ads	app that you ve registered on	Specific Broad
🗂 img5 - Teddy		Send people from ads into Messenger conversations with you people more likely to open Messenger.	r business. Your ad will be shown to	Potential Reach: 11,000 people
🔡 female, 18-35, Rest, Branche	***	WhatsApp When someone clicks your ad, a message thread with your bu		opt out of tracking on iOS 14.5 or use other data controls on Facebook.
img 7 - Oma	***	will be shown to people who are more likely to message you in	n WhatsApp.	
🗂 img 2 - Impfung		Dynamic Creative Provide creative elements, such as images and headlines,	Off	Estimated Daily Results
🗂 img 6 - Opa		combinations optimized for your audience. Variations may templates based on one or more elements. Learn More		701 - 2.0K
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img3 - Stress	•••	Offer	Off	5 - 18





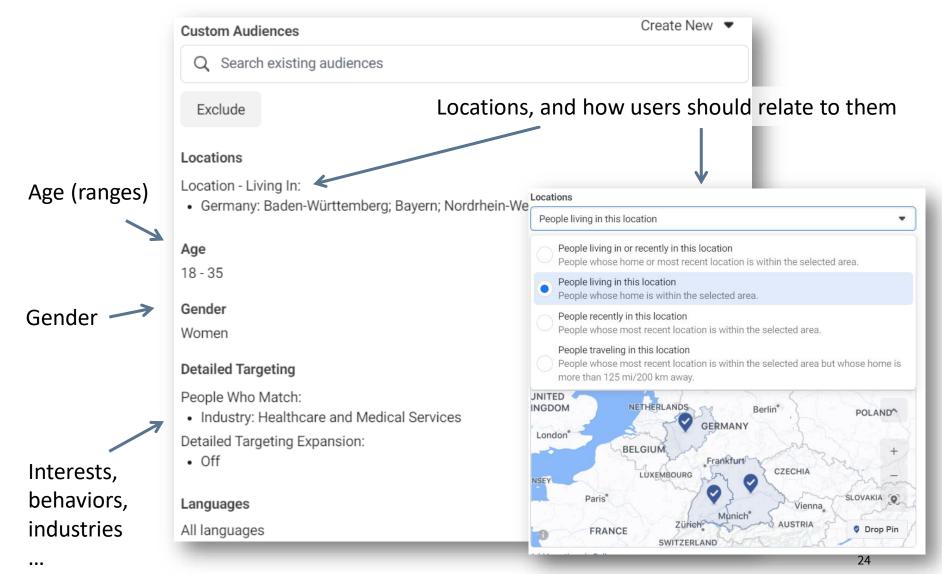
# **Editing Ad Sets**

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>	🗂 img5 - Teddy		Messenger Send people from ads into Messenger conversations with your business. Your ad will be shown to people more likely to open Messenger.	-
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	🗂 img4 - Würfel	•••	Link Clicks	
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#### Targeting criteria (examples)



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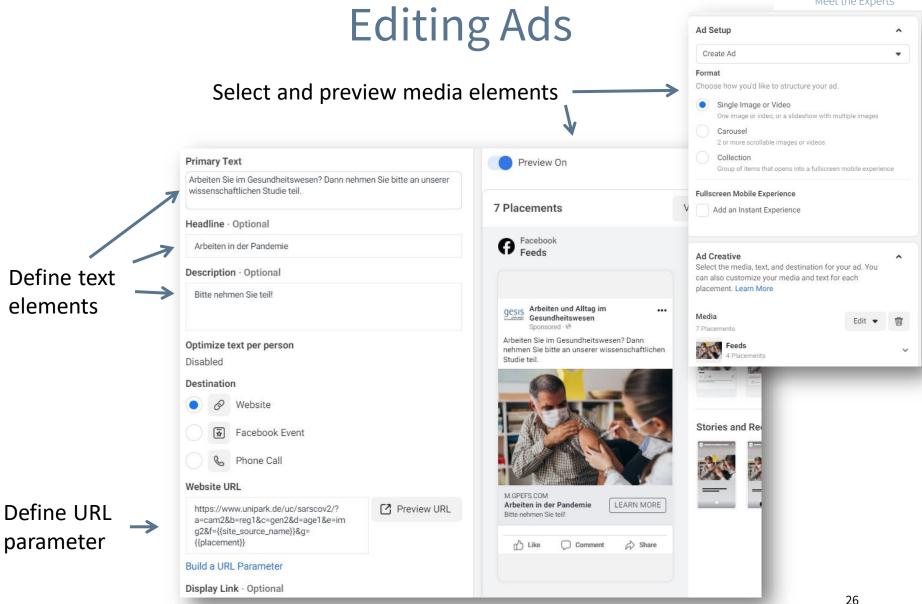


#### Placement (examples)

Devices	Devices						
Devices	All Devices (Recommended)	All Devices (Recommended)	•				
Platforms	Platforms         - Facebook       - Instagram         Audience Network       Messenger         Asset Customization       Select all placements that support asset customization	Mobile  Desktop					
	Placements	<ul> <li>Stories and Reels</li> <li>Stories and Reels</li> </ul>	people				
	▼ Feeds	Tell a rich, visual story with immersive, search on Facebook fullscreen vertical ads Facebook Search Results					
	Get high visibility for your business with ads in feeds	Instagram Stories					
Placement	Facebook News Feed	Facebook Stories     Send offers or updates to people are already connected to your but					
within	Instagram Feed	Instagram Reels Messenger Sponsored Message	es 🗌				
platforms	Facebook Marketplace	In-Stream     Quickly capture people's attention while     In-Article					
	Facebook Video Feeds	they're watching videos Facebook In-Stream Videos					
	Facebook Right Column	Instagram IGTV					
	Instagram Explore	Apps and Sites     Expand your reach with ads in external     apps and websites					
	Messenger Inbox	Audience Network Native, Banner and Interstitial					
	Facebook Groups Feed	Feeds         Audience Network Rewarded Videos           Audience Network In-Stream Videos	25				



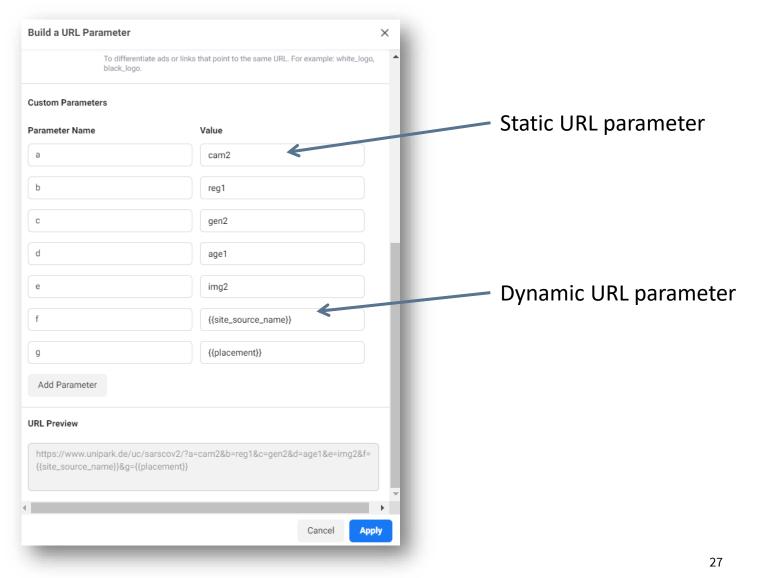




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#### URL Parameter (examples)





Copy and adjust ads within your ad set, ad sets, and campaigns,

Campaigns						+ Creute	(🖺 Quick Duplicate 🔹 🧨 Edit 👻	👗 A/B Test 🝵 🔻 🐺	1 Selected ×     Image: Selected ×       ▲ A/B Test     Image: Vector *         A/B Test     Image: Vector *         Rules ▼	
+ 0	reate [	🖌 Quick Duplicate 🔹 💉 Ed	it 👻 🗸 A/B Test	j <b>-</b> Ş &	Preview Rules 💌	Off / Or	n Ad Set Name	⊸ ch ⊸ In	pressions 👻 Cost per Result	
							male, 36-64, SL MV Bremen, Branche	-	-	
	Off / On	Ad Name		Impressions -	Cost per Result - Quality Ranking		male, 18-35, BY BW NRW, Gen. Pop.	-	-	
					Ad Relevance		male, 18-35, Rest, Branche.	-	-	
		img5 - Teddy	_	-	-		female, 18-35, SL MV Bremen, Gen. Pop.	-	-	
		img4 - Würfel	-	-	-		male, 36-64, BY BW NRW, Gen. Pop.	-	-	
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		- Wuller					male, 18-35, Rest, Interesse	_	_	

■ Publish your campaign(s) → Review process starts,

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 Constantly monitor the progress of your campaign and adjust settings as needed.

Quick Duplicate 🔹 🎤 Edit 🔹 🛓 A/B T		Rules 🔻							
Campaign Name	<b>0 1 1 1 1</b>							Customize 🔻	Reports 💌
	<ol> <li>Attribution Setting</li> </ol>	Results	Reach -	Impressions -	Cost per Result 🛛 👻	Amount Spent -	Ends 👻	Frequency -	Unique Link Clicks
Berufsgruppen [MTE]	-	-	-	-	-	-	Jul 15, 2021	-	-
Berufsgruppen	7-day click or	11,469 Link Clicks	301,403	641,300	€0.24 Per Link Click	€2,699.17	May 3, 2021	2.13	10,740
Results from 2 campaigns ()	7-day click or	11,469 Link Clicks	<b>301,403</b> People	<b>641,300</b> Total	€0.24 Per Link Click	€2,699.17 Total Spent		2.13 Per Person	<b>10,74</b> 0 Tota
	erufsgruppen	erufsgruppen 7-day click or	erufsgruppen 7-day click or 11,469 Link Clicks Results from 2 campaigns () 7-day click or 11,469	erufsgruppen         7-day click or         11,469         301,403           Results from 2 campaigns ()         7-day click or         11,469         301,403	reufsgruppen         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300           Results from 2 campaigns ()         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300	Results from 2 campaigns ()         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300         €0.24           Results from 2 campaigns ()         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300         €0.24	Results from 2 campaigns ①         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300         €0.24         €2,699,17           Results from 2 campaigns ①         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300         €0.24         €2,699,17	results from 2 campaigns ()         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300         €0.24         €2,699.17         May 3,2021           Results from 2 campaigns ()         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300         €0.24         €2,699.17         May 3,2021	erufsgruppen         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300         €0.24         €2,699.17         May 3,2021         2,13           Results from 2 campaigns ①         7-day click or         11,469         301,403         641,300         €0.24         €2,699.17         May 3,2021         2,13



#### Documentation, documentation, documentation ...

- Before you activate your ads: record target group estimates (estimated reach) for each ad set,
- During the ad campaign's fielding period: regularly export statistics provided by Facebook in the ad manager (ideally on campaign, ad set and ad level),
- Checklist of information to include in methods section/appendix of your publications:
  - Campaign structure and duration,
  - Used target criteria,
  - Estimated reach,

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- Advertisement budget,
- Number of impressions, link-clicks, started questionnaires, completed questionnaires,
- Cost-per-click,
- Cost-per completed questionnaire,
- Used pictures,
- Information on incentives (also state if you did not use any).





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# Why Facebook and Instagram?

- Health professionals are at the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic,
  - Increased risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (115,000 deaths due to COVID-19) (WHO 2021).
- High level of stress (even under normal working conditions),
  - Chance for researchers to investigate how the pandemic affects health professionals,
- Health professionals are a hard-to-reach population,
- Contacting them via their workplace nearly impossible, especially given the pandemic,
- Facebook offers possibility to target health professionals with tailored advertisements,
- 3 ways of targeting:
  - General population,
  - Interest: Healthcare,
  - Affiliation: Healthcare.



### Survey of Health care professionals in Germany

German online survey,

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- Comprehensive questionnaire (median completion time: 15 minutes)
  - Work experience during COVID-19,
  - Vaccination and recommendation of vaccines,
  - Demographics.
- Targeting German health professionals (i.e., individuals working in the German health industry, hospitals),
- Targeting through ads on Facebook & Instagram,
  - Access to survey directedly through ads or via Facebook page;
- Questionnaire, ads and FB page in German only,
- No incentives,
- Field period:
  - Ad campaign: April 20 to May 3, 2021,
  - Survey: April 20 to May 21, 2021.





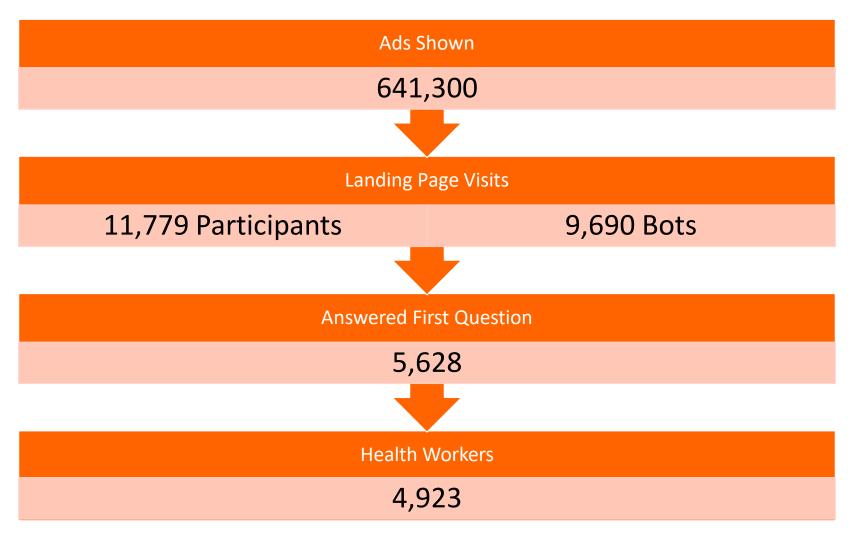
### Setup

- 5 advertisements showing health professionals in various situations,
- Quota:
  - Gender,
  - Age (18-35, 36-64),
  - Region (3 groups based on size of federal states).
- Ad Placement: Facebook (Feed, Stories, Right Column) and Instagram (Feed, Stories),
- All devices included (mobile and desktop).





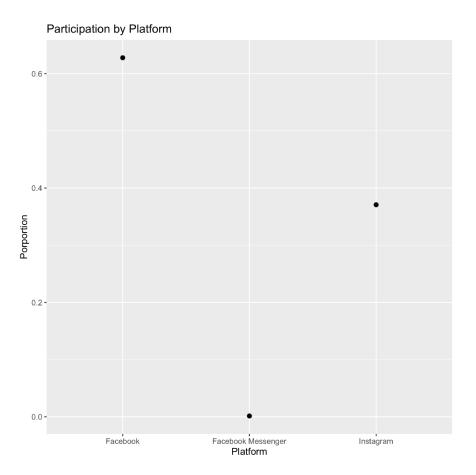
## Ads and Participation

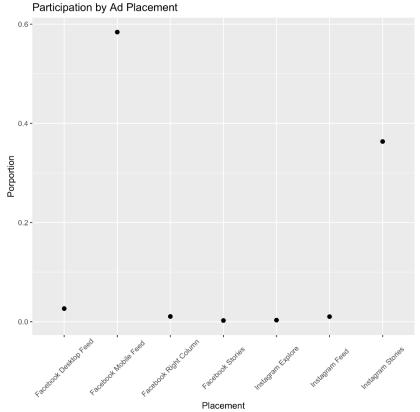






## Facebook vs. Instagram

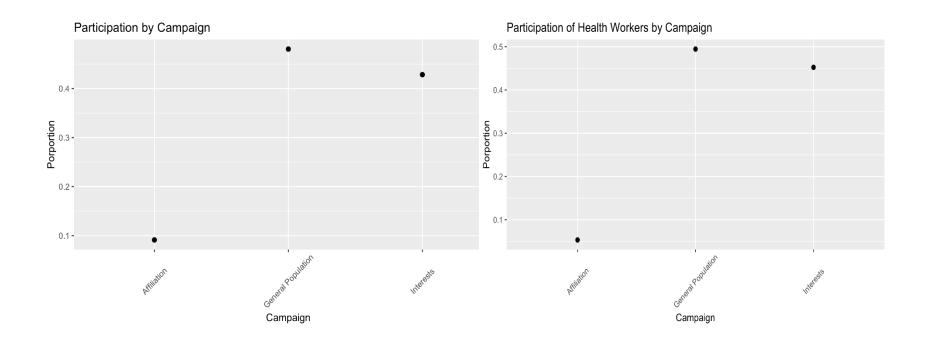








#### Comparing different campaigns







#### Performance of Ads

Image 1



Image 3



Image 2



Image 4



Image 5

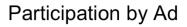


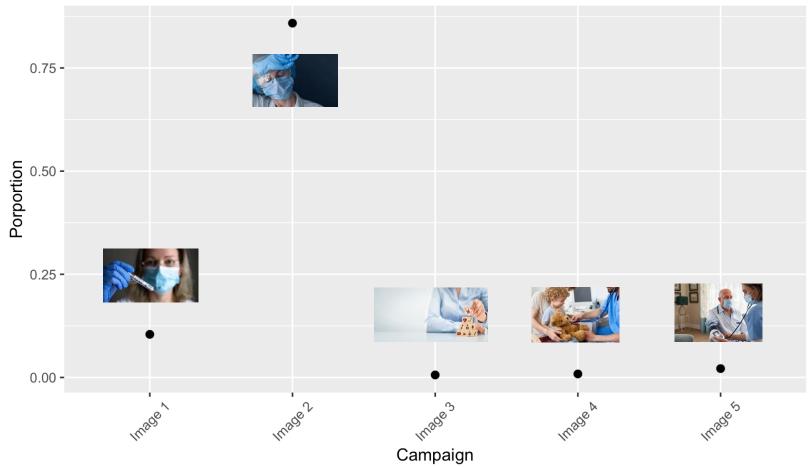
© pictures: scaliger - stock.adobe.com (Image 1); Mikhaylovskiy stock.adobe.com (Image 2).; REDPIXEL - stock.adobe.com (Image 3).; Seventyfour - stock.adobe.com (Image 4). Rido ; stock.adobe.com (Image 5).;





#### Performance of Ads







## Anecdotal evidence

 Image 1 lead to provocative comments (mainly related to conspiracy theories surrounding Covid-19),

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- Comments were hidden by research team (regular checks necessary),
- One Image was banned by Facebook due to guideline violations.





© pictures: scaliger - stock.adobe.com (top); cherryandbees - stock.adobe.com (bottom).





# Takeaways

- 1. Using the correct targeting mechanism with a large enough reach is important,
- 2. Mobile devices are very important for recruitment (Facebook mobile feed, Instagram story),
- 3. The pictures used in ads should relate to the topic and have high symbolic value,
- 4. Develop a strategy to deal with hate speech, trolls and offensive comments.





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- Migrants are often a hard-to-reach population (Tourangeau, 2014),
- Especially in cross-national research, their sampling is challenging (Careja & Andreß, 2018; Reichel & Morales, 2017; Font & Méndez, 2013),
- Emigrants (usually) present further challenges:
  - Geographically dispersed on a global level,

- Most sampling frames do not cover all countries,
- Same sampling frames do not exist in all countries on a national level,
- Settlement patterns are not known beforehand.
- No well-established methods to sample emigrants in a high number of countries
  - But several innovative approaches exist, e.g. register-based sampling (Erlinghagen et al., 2021).
- Specific to German emigrants: Previous studies indicated coverage problems for non-European regions beyond North America.



### German Emigrants Overseas Online Survey (GEOOS)

- Cross-national online survey,
- Comprehensive questionnaire (median completion time: 19 minutes)
  - Use of SNS and communication behavior,
  - Migration and mobility experience,
  - Demographics.

- Targeting German emigrants overseas (i.e., individuals born in Germany and/or holding German citizenship living in a non-European country),
- 52 ad sets: 13 regions, 2 gender & 2 age cohorts,
- Targeting through ads on Facebook & Instagram,
  - Access to survey directedly through ads or via Facebook page,
  - Additional snowball sample.
- Questionnaire, ads and FB page in German only,
- No incentives,
- Field period:
  - Ad campaign: August 13 to August 30, 2020,
  - Survey:



#### Ad campaign metrics and achieved sample size

•	Unique users reached:	354,604
•	Impressions:	1,805,217
•	Unique clicks:	20,220
•	Used advertisement budget:	2,222.90 €
•	Average cost per click:	0.11€
•	Average costs per completed survey	
	(emigrants broadly defined; ads only/all):	0.62 € / 0.58€

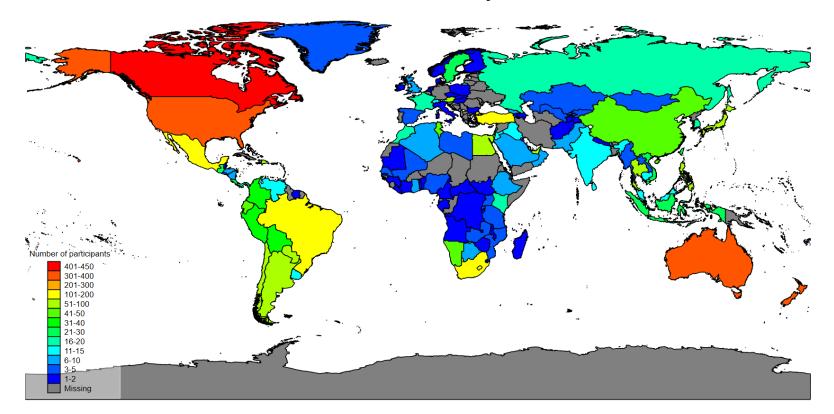
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	Completed	Emigrants	Emigrants narrowly
	surveys (total)	broadly defined	defined
Advertisements	3,632	3,558	3,222
Facebook page	74	74	67
Snowball	189	184	173
Total	3,895	3,816	3,462



148 countries and territories,

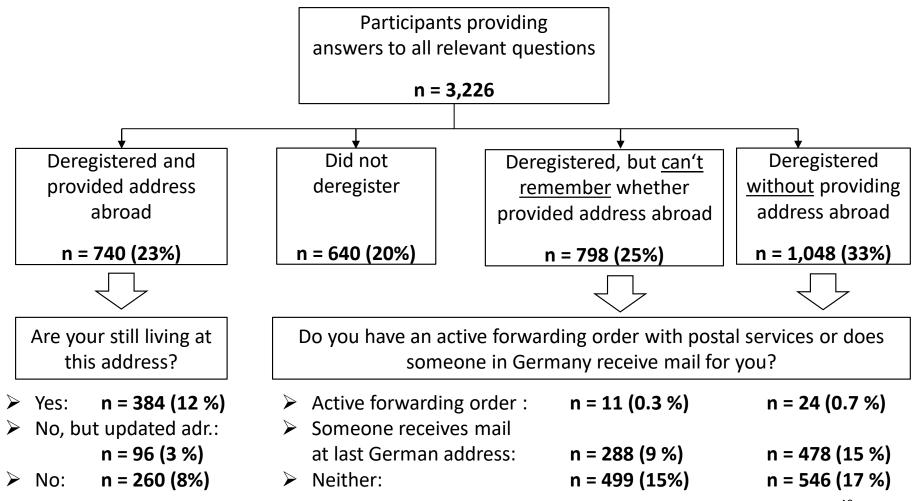
- Subsamples of n > 50 in 18 and n>10 in 53 countries and territories,
- Biggest subsamples: Canada (n=416); New Zealand (n=359), Australia (n=344); USA (n=323), Brazil (n=155), Turkey (n=144), South Africa (n=140)







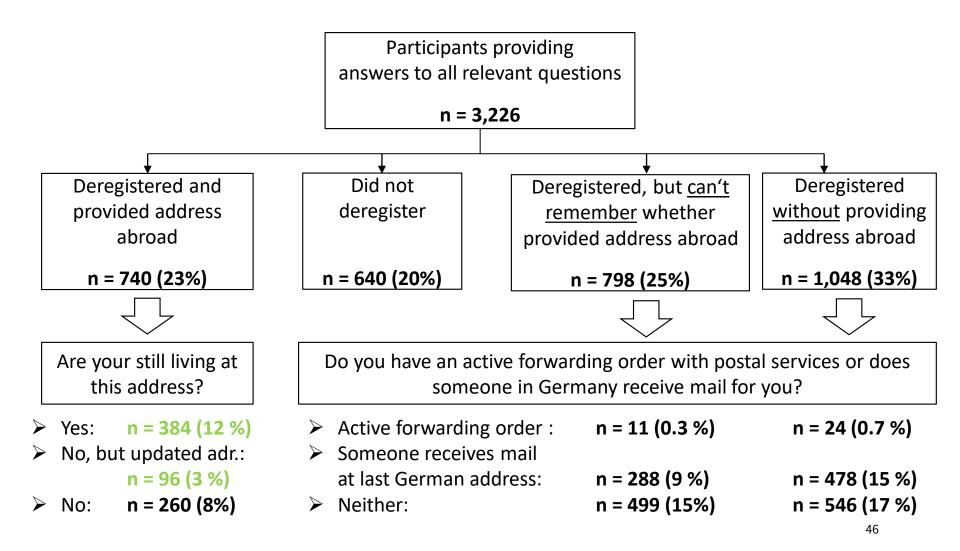
#### Possible inclusion of GEOOS respondents in a population register-based sample







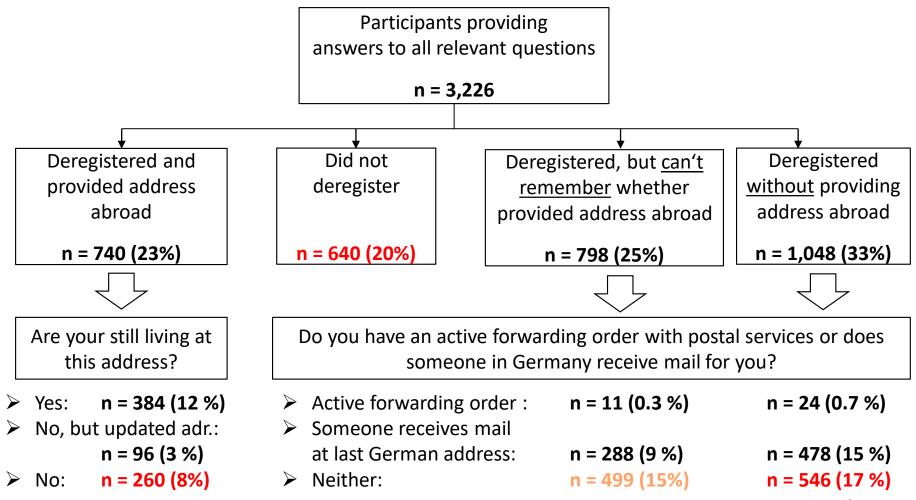
#### Possible inclusion of GEOOS respondents in a population register-based sample







#### Possible inclusion of GEOOS respondents in a population register-based sample







## Takeaways

- 1. Facebook and Instagram allowed recruiting a comparatively large sample of German emigrants within short time,
- 2. Using this approach, we were able to survey emigrants on a global level,
- 3. Strategic use of ad sets allowed for a high degree of diversity regarding countries of residence,
- 4. Of those respondents who provided the relevant information:
  - Only 15% could have been reached through addresses registered with authorities in the origin countries,
  - 45% could not have been recruited through a registerbased sampling approach at all.

# **GESIS** publications using SNS sampling

- Beuthner, C., Pötzschke, S., Weiß, B., & Silber, H. (forthcoming): *Using Facebook and Instagram to recruit Respondents online*, GESIS Survey Guidelines
- Pötzschke, S., & Braun, M. (2017). Migrant Sampling Using Facebook Advertisements: A Case Study of Polish Migrants in Four European Countries. *Social Science Computer Review*, 35(5), 633–653. <u>https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439316666262</u>
- Pötzschke, S., & Weiß, B. (2020). *Employing Social Networking Sites in migration research. Preliminary findings of the German Emigrants Overseas Online Survey*. GESIS -- Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. <u>https://www.doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/wnc4b</u>
- Pötzschke, S., & Bernd, W. (2020a, November 27). Using Facebook and Instagram to sample German emigrants on a nearly global scale. *GESIS Blog*. <u>https://www.doi.org/10.34879/gesisblog.2020.25</u>
- Pötzschke, S., & Bernd, W. (2020b, December 4). Preliminary findings of the German Emigrants Overseas Online Survey. What did we learn about the Germans we reached through social networking sites? *GESIS Blog*. <u>https://www.doi.org/10.34879/gesisblog.2020.26</u>
- Priebe, J., Silber, H., Beuthner, C., Pötzschke, S., Weiß, B., & Daikeler, J. (2021, June 7). How German health workers' views on vaccine safety can be swayed by the AstraZeneca controversy. *LSE COVIS-19 Blog*. <u>https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/covid19/2021/06/07/how-german-health-workers-viewson-vaccine-safety-can-be-swayed-by-the-astrazeneca-controversy/</u>





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## Thank you for your attention.

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Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences



Contact: <u>steffen.poetzschke@gesis.org</u> <u>christoph.beuthner@gesis.org</u>

<u>@stpoetzschke</u>

🖌 <u>@c\_beuthner</u>





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