



The European Commission's joint Research Centre Technology and Democracy:

Understanding the influence of online
technologies on political behaviour
and decision-making

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The COVID-19 pandemic has affected our lives in an unprecedented range of ways. It is a human, economic and social crisis that has potentially changed the way we live, work, and interact with each other forever. It has taken many of our lives in an increasing online direction, both in terms of work and in the way we socialise with our friends and family. The ability to work and socialise online has some clear benefits – it enables us to stay informed, shop without risk of spreading COVID-19, keep-up with friends and family, and greatly reduces the commute to and from work! But there are drawbacks to this increasing online way of interacting.

In its seminal report on “Technology and Democracy: understanding the influence of online technologies on political behaviour and decision-making”, the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC) identified four “pressure points” that emerge with increasing online interactions. While this report focuses on clear recommendations for European policymakers, it also highlights the impact that online technologies could have on our democracy, society and scientific communities around the globe. The JRC will share how the findings from this report have informed European law-making.