

Dear referee,

We thank you for your useful and interesting suggestions. Please find below (in blue) detailed answers

REFEREE 1

The article represents an interesting and innovative approach approach EU media communication.

First recommendation is to proceed a proofreading of the text (for English).

ANSWER: We proofread the text

In the Abstract:

- first paragraph you mention "social policy" but the article is referring to cohesion policy

ANSWER: Thank you, we emended the sentence

- the abbreviation "LMA" is better to be replaced in abstract section in order to make clear the institutions that you referring to.

ANSWER: we replaced the acronym with a short description, and with another longer one afterwards

In Introduction:

- provide some citations for the following statements: "Perceiving low identification of EU citizens with the EU".... "..in spite of the empirical relevance of EU cohesion policy for local business and economic development..."

ANSWER: We provided citations for both statements

- please be more specific on you introducing the concept of LMA (what kind of institutions are they, at what territorial level are they?)

ANSWER: we added a description of what LMAs are

- I have the feeling that a reader that is not specialist in communication will only presume what you understand by "European public sphere". Suggestion is to introduce some clarification about this concept.

ANSWER: Thank you: we added a short introductory definition, and later we expanded on literature

- the last paragraph of the introduction fits more for the conclusions

ANSWER: While I understand the point, we kept it here. Yet, we used it to improve the conclusions

in Findings section:

- there are some topic names that appear in different clusters or in the same cluster (diferent is the topic ID).This may be a bit confusing for the reader.

ANSWER: we added specifications regarding the national case, or added a specification to the labels to avoid duplicates in different contexts

- I suggest to add a short definition for term "politics of signification"

ANSWER: we did

In conclusion part:

To add more substantiation for the following quote "The evidences collected in our study confirm a 'horizontal Europeanization' in the discourse that takes place on social media."

ANSWER: we expanded on that part to substantiate our claim.

Dear referee,

We thank you for your review, which provided us interesting feedback and very useful insights
Please find below (in blue) detailed answers

REFEREE 2

This is a very interesting piece on an issue of high relevance in the current European social and political arena, in which European integration and identity are situated in the current debate between citizens and politicians. At a time in which the European project is being questioned by some far-right movements, it is important to address these issues from research, contributing to a better understanding of the emergence of the European public sphere across different EU countries.

ANSWER: Thank you

Especially relevant is the methodological contribution of the study in order to further the analysis of social media regarding European integration. However, the analysis lacks discussion about the most relevant implications of this study for European societies, therefore, its social impact. In particular, it would be worth noting how this analysis might contribute to a better understanding of the tension between fragmentation and aggregation of discourse, as stated in the manuscript, and how further research might contribute to its overcoming.

ANSWER: We added a paragraph to build on this suggestion

The manuscript tackles a timely topic, which is the increase in public sphere in Europe through the social media, and this is linked to the interactions between LMAs in different EU Member States with European citizens, with a focus on cohesion policy. However, given this timeliness, it would be suggested to include in the literature review section a more updated bibliography, specially taking into account the rise of far-right in many European countries and how this might impact on European integration and public sphere.

ANSWER: We added a paragraph to update the literature review and also take into consideration the far right rise phenomenon

The article reads very well and is written in a good style; only minor revisions in terms of English language editing and in updating the literature review should be made.

Thank you