The Impact of Social Media on National Security: Perceptions of Lithuanian Youth

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ABSTRACT

Social media is an integral part of modern life, used by billions of people every day to maintain personal and professional relationships, both nationally and internationally. The use of social networks is assessed in two ways. First, they facilitate communication between individuals and organisations, enabling information to be communicated quickly and easily. Social networks are also a favourable medium for the exchange of ideas and information, i.e. they raise public awareness, provide access to national and world news, allow people to react to it by expressing their own views through debate or comment, etc.

However, the widespread use of social media raises significant concerns about its impact on national security. This is based on the fact that social networks allow the dissemination of disinformation, cyber threats, breaches of privacy, or the spreading of hatred. In other words, scholars argue that social networks can have an impact on various areas of national security, such as social, economic, political, and informational, etc.

The aim of this study is to determine the impact of social networks and threats to national security in the case of Lithuanian youth. The study used a quantitative questionnaire survey method. More than 300 respondents participated in the research.

The data analysis explored two main issues: 1) identification of young people's behaviour when using social media; 2) evaluation of the opinion of Lithuanian youth on the relationship between social networks and national security, and evaluation of potential threats to social, economic, political and ethical security.