

# Cultural and Behavioral Insights into European Social Media Users: Platform Preferences and Personality Types

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## Abstract

The study examines European social media personalities based on age, gender, platform preference, and country of origin. The research sample, which consists of respondents from 19 European countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the UK) reflects the general population ratio and predominantly includes middle-aged individuals ensuring representative findings. Almost two-thirds of respondents engage with social media daily, highlighting its pervasive role in European life. Analysis of platform preferences reveals that Facebook and Instagram are the most popular, while TikTok and Snapchat are less favored, particularly among older demographics. The study shows that gender differences are significant, with females favoring Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat, while males prefer LinkedIn and Twitter. This delineation underscores the varying social media consumption habits between genders. The study identifies three primary social media personalities: Lurkers, who passively consume content; Ultras, who exhibit obsessive usage; and Deniers, who balance regular use without dependency. Additional personalities include Ranters, Informers, and Peacocks, each representing unique motivations and engagement styles. This diversity in user behaviors highlights the multifaceted nature of social media engagement in Europe. A country-specific analysis reveals cultural and regional differences in social media use, with distinct preferences and behaviors emerging across Europe. For instance, Germans exhibit unique tendencies with a notable presence among Approval Seekers, Changelings, and Ghosts. Such variations underscore the importance of considering cultural contexts in social media strategies. The findings offer valuable insights for stakeholders, including marketers, policymakers, and platform developers. By understanding these diverse usage patterns, more effective campaigns can be designed, privacy and digital literacy issues can be addressed, and user experiences can be enhanced. This study underscores the integral role of social media in European life and provides a foundation for future research and strategy development.

**Keywords:** social media, social media personalities, demographic analysis, psychographic analysis, Europe

## 1. Introduction

The rise of social media has fundamentally changed how information is shared, consumed, and marketed. Consequently, businesses now feel compelled to leverage social media platforms for commercial and marketing purposes to drive the growth of social commerce (Zafar et al., 2021). Social commerce merges e-commerce with social media, allowing commercial activities to be conducted through online social connections (Hu et al., 2022). The increased usage of social media platforms has enabled individuals to build significant online followings (Akdin et al., 2022), leading to the emergence of Social Media Influencers (SMIs) who wield considerable influence and play a crucial role in the development of online influencer marketing (Antonopoulos et al., 2023). This industry is projected to reach billions of dollars in value, prompting brands to adjust their global marketing strategies by investing heavily in influencer marketing to achieve objectives like enhanced brand awareness and increased sales (Chetioui et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Socializing is frequently regarded as a common aspect of social media platforms, even if not all are made explicitly for this purpose. These platforms, sometimes called online communities, are helpful because users typically do not discriminate between virtual and real friends as long as they feel linked to and supported by like-minded people. By enabling users to discuss significant life events, social media enhances connections by promoting in-person contacts. In households, it has also become a standard means of communication. According to research by Sponcil & Gitimu (2013), 91.7% of students use social media primarily for communication with friends and family, with 50% using it daily and

another 40% using it a few times a week (Aichner & Jacob, 2015). According to Williams and Merten (2011), social media supports family ties by keeping in touch with immigrant families, particularly regarding globalization and mobility. Family members must communicate internationally (Lazakidou, 2012).

Researchers have defined social media in various ways throughout the last 25 years, sometimes using different terminology. Researchers and businesses find evaluating and utilizing findings difficult because perceptions and understandings have also differed (Aichner et al., 2021; Aichner & Jacob, 2015). Social media platforms are becoming the primary focus of marketing efforts, which has changed how businesses engage with their clientele. Consumers are no longer passive recipients; they actively participate by asking questions, providing comments, and anticipating prompt, tailored answers. Managers understand that moving a business on social media radically alters customer relationships, transforming them from just consumers into allies or enemies.

Understanding social media users' personalities is essential to improving research findings and business outcomes. Not all social media users are study subjects or prospective clients. Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom are among the 19 European nations whose social media users are examined in this article. Four factors are considered in this study: the participants' age, gender, favorite platform, and place of origin.

## 2. Literature Review

With billions of users worldwide and still growing, social media has become a global phenomenon in recent years. Social media has impacted almost every part of people's lives by allowing them to interact with people who share their interests and obtain relevant information. It has a significant influence on how companies carry out sales, marketing, and services (Bhimani et al., 2018; Appel et al., 2020), suggesting that it is widely used and that scholars and practitioners are becoming more interested in it (Kapoor et al., 2018; Ghaisani et al., 2019). As a result, numerous literature reviews on a wide range of topics from industries like marketing (Paquette, 2013; Khan & Jan, 2015), innovation (Bhimani et al., 2018), education (Chugh & Ruhi, 2018; Ahmed, 2019), and healthcare (Zhao & Zhang, 2017; Ukoha & Stranieri, 2019) are being published on social media regularly (Olanrewaju, 2020). In order to shed light on the intricacies of social media and social media personalities, this study examines pertinent research.

Social media's broad usage raises user satisfaction and platform value. Global social media users increased from 2.78 billion in 2018 to 2.95 billion in 2019, with an estimated 3.43 billion by 2023 (Clement, 2020, April 1). There are many reasons behind this appeal. First, social media users actively produce material (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Lewis, 2010). People start blogs, post information on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, and interact with others by leaving comments, liking, disliking, and responding. Second, social networking sites are easily used and available through mobile apps (Gaikwad, 2020). Thirdly, Kohli et al. (2018) state that most popular platforms are free. Fourth, social media impacts the labor market by allowing people to advertise their abilities and locate openings (Gaikwad, 2020).

Recently, social media has become essential for online knowledge and information sharing. Internet users increasingly use social media to share content (Ghaisani et al., 2017). Social media offers a variety of platforms for content creation and dissemination, including wikis for educational information, forums for conversations on certain subjects, microblogs for brief communications, and social networking sites for updates (Budz & Starosta, 2018). The four communication prototypes—one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many, and many-to-one—are all included in social media (Jensen & Helles, 2017, AlAfnan, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c). A Facebook post, for instance, is an example of one-to-many communication; comments transform it into many-to-one, and as more people join the discussion, it transforms into many-to-many. One-on-one communication is what a personal message is (Egilsdottir, 2019). Additionally, social media facilitates communication in both real-time (synchronous) and delayed (asynchronous) ways (Dron & Anderson, 2014; AlAfnan & MohdZuki, 2023; AlAfnan, 2024a).

Social media has drawn more attention from scholars, professionals, and specialists in various sectors. Review studies shed light on the most recent developments in research. One hundred thirty-two studies addressing user behavior, review authenticity, organizational use, marketing applications, hazards, and political consequences were reviewed by Kapoor et al. (2018). The papers were published between 1997 and 2017. Some studies use mixed, qualitative, or quantitative methodologies to compare social media and conventional media. Bhimani et al. (2018) acknowledged the impact of social media by reviewing 111 papers and concluding that social media stimulates creativity through resource-based viewpoints and behavior. More research is necessary to understand how social media and innovation interact fully.

Al-Qaysi et al. (2020) examined 122 social media studies connected to education and information systems theories. They suggested more research on the usefulness of social media in the classroom and how well-received it is by instructors and students. Weller (2015) outlined several obstacles in social media research, such as the requirement for

infrastructure, moral dilemmas, and the caliber of big data. Six actions were suggested by Pagoto and Nebeker (2019) to guarantee the moral use of social media data. Big data analytics on social media and digital data collection are the subjects of several studies.

Social media significantly impacts people's lives, and the impact of content varies based on communicators, recipients, and context (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Shared experiences drive traffic and boost sales (Bao & Chang, 2014; Chang et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2015; Rui et al., 2013), and they also provide market intelligence (Aswani et al., 2018; Izogo & Jayawardhena, 2018; Joseph et al., 2017). Scholars highlight social media's function in customer relationship management, branding, and promotions. Positive reviews increase sales, whereas bad reviews decrease them (Rui et al., 2013). Reviews can affect customer selections (Nazlan et al., 2018; Yoo et al., 2013). Despite much research, there is still a vacuum in knowledge about social media personalities. By analyzing the personalities of social media users across several European nations, this study seeks to close this gap.

### 3. Methodology

This study aims to identify social media personalities in Europe by examining the social media platforms used for three variables: age, gender, and country of origin. The researcher created an anonymous survey using Google Docs to achieve this goal and distributed it to respondents across various social media platforms. Participants were asked six questions: What is your age? What is your gender? What is your country of origin? How often do you use social media? What is your favorite Social Media App? Which of the following describes your Social Media Personality? For the last question, respondents could choose from nine personalities (Faull, 2013), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Social media personalities

Personality	Definition
Approval seeker	Constantly checks feed After posting... Reads feed.
Changeling	Adopts new personality online so no one knows real identity.
Denier	Maintain social media. Social media does not control your life, and you get anxious when you do not have access.
Lurker	Watching what others say... rarely contributes.
Peacock	Popularity contest: High numbers of likes, followers, and comments are essential.
Ghost	Creates some profiles for fear of giving opinions.
Ranter	Mild in face-to-face discussions, highly opinionated online.
Ultra	Check feed dozens of times a day (has an obsession).
Virgins	I am taking the first tentative social media steps.
Social Butterflies	Storytelling, discussing issues, enjoy getting feedback, and do not upload any permanent posts, only temporary stories because discussion is an enjoyment
Informers	I am seeking kudos for being the first to share news online.

The data collection spanned over a year, with the survey being shared on multiple social media platforms, ensuring that the research sample was random. The researcher had no control over who responded or how they responded. Random sampling effectively obtains reliable results about the phenomenon (Olken & Rotem, 1995). By the end of the data collection period, the researcher had received 1242 responses from 19 European countries: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the UK. The respondents included males and females aged 13 to over 60 years old, with varying frequencies of social media use (daily, weekly). They used various social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, LinkedIn, and X (Twitter).

### 4. Data Analysis

As mentioned above, the data was collected using an online survey. The survey was shared on several social media platforms, and the contacts were requested to share it with their contacts. At the end of the data collection period, 1242 responses were received. Figure 1 shows that the 1242 respondents are 718 females (58%) and 524 (42%) males. This shows a balanced research sample, especially since the European males-to-female ratio, according to Eurostat (2021), is 100 males to 104 females.

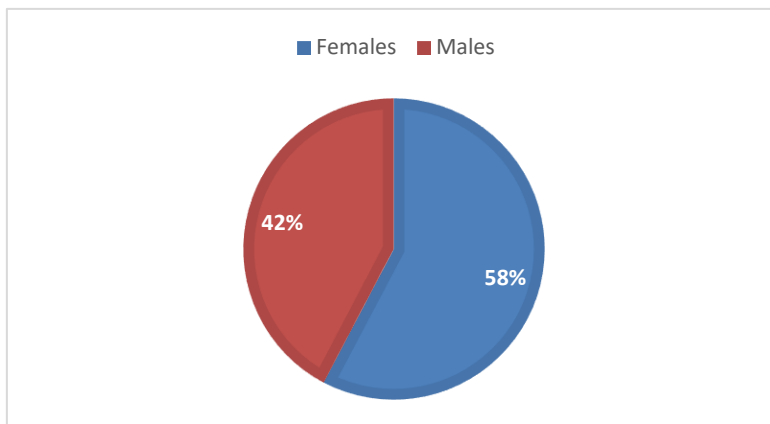


Figure 1. Gender of respondents in Europe

Figure 2 shows that the 1242 respondents belong to all age groups but with different fractions. The most significant fraction is the number of respondents who belong to the 40-49 years-old as they are 40% of the respondents. The second most considerable fraction is the respondents who belong to the 30-39 age group, which is 34% of the respondents. The respondents who belong to the 50-59 age group make up 12% of the respondents, and those who belong to the 20-29 age group make up 11%. The smallest two percentages are the 13-19-year-olds, 1% of the respondents, and the above 60-year-olds, 2% of the respondents. This shows that the research sample is mainly middle-aged respondents, which is also representative of the median age in Europe, which is 44.5 years old, according to Eurostat (2024).

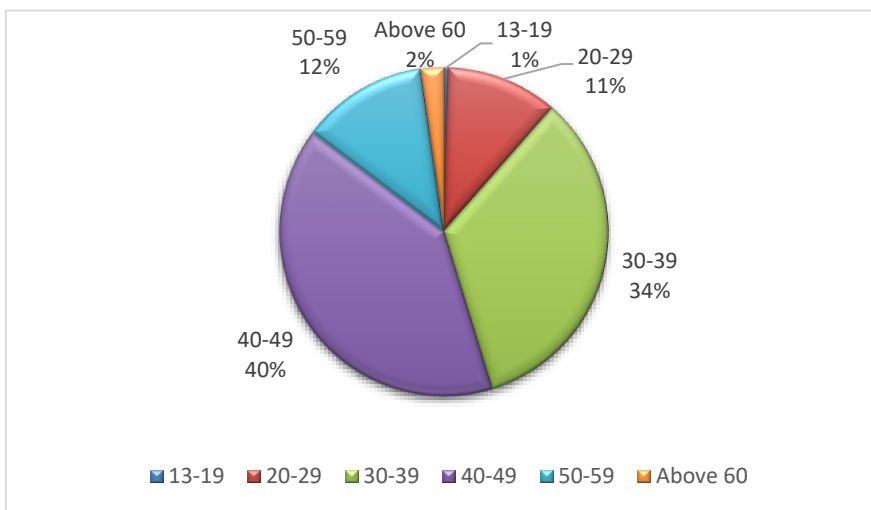


Figure 2. Age group of respondents

The respondents were given four options regarding the frequency of using social media: daily, weekly, monthly, and not very often. The 1242 respondents, as Figure 3 shows, answered ‘daily’ (61%) and ‘weekly’ (39%). This shows that the frequency of social media use is very high compared to the use in Asia (Alafnan, 2024b).

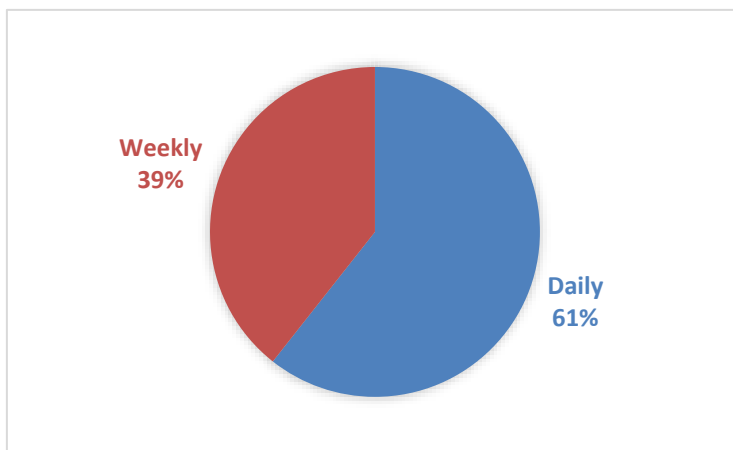


Figure 3. Frequency of using social media

Regarding the social media platforms used in Europe, as Figure 4 shows, Facebook is the most popular platform for 419 respondents, equivalent to 33.7%. Instagram is the second most popular platform, with 363 respondents (29.2%). After that comes LinkedIn, with 314 (25.28%) respondents. Twitter is not as popular as the previously mentioned platforms, with 112 (9%) respondents. The least popular platforms are TikTok, with 32 (2.5%) respondents, and Snapchat 2 (0.16%) respondents. The small number of respondents using TikTok and Snapchat is probably because the average age group of the respondents is 30-49 years old. TikTok and Snapchat, according to AlAfnan (2024b), are very popular among teenagers and people in their 20s.

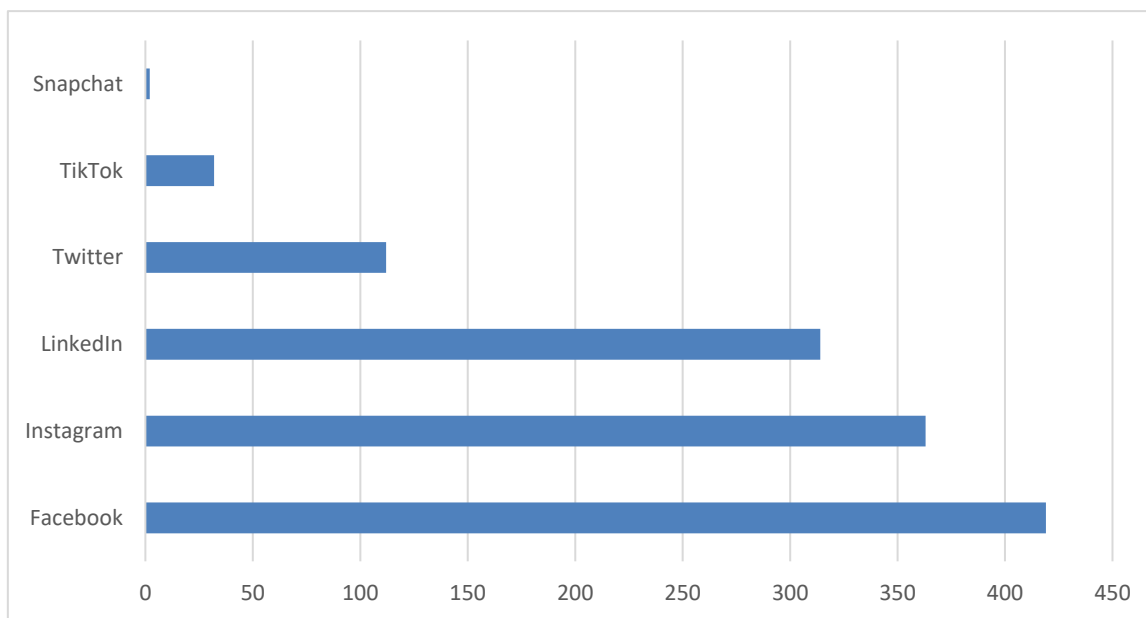


Figure 4. Social media platforms used in Europe

Regarding the age group of respondents, it can be noticed in Table 2 that Facebook is very popular among all age groups, except teenagers, who prefer TikTok. In addition to teenagers, TikTok is also popular among the 40-49-year-old age group and popular among the 20-29 age group. Instagram is popular among all age groups except for people above 60 years. LinkedIn, however, is mainly famous among respondents who are 30-49 years old. X (Twitter) is popular among respondents from 20 to 48 years old. This means the 40- to 49-year-old group explores all social media platforms except Snapchat. The 30 to 39-year-old group uses most platforms except Snapchat and TikTok. The above 60-year-old age group only uses Facebook. The 50 to 59-year-old uses Facebook and Instagram. The 20-29-year-old age group likes all platforms except LinkedIn as they are working on creating a professional profile. The 13 to 19-year-old age group likes TikTok and Instagram.

Table 2. Use of social media platforms based on age

Social Media Platforms	Aged 13-19	Aged 20-29	Aged 30-39	Aged 40-49	Aged 50-59	Aged Above 60
Facebook	0	42	200	81	65	31
Instagram	4	85	121	45	108	0
LinkedIn	0	0	38	276	0	0
TikTok	4	5	0	23	0	0
X (Twitter)	0	2	62	48	0	0
Snapchat	0	2	0	0	0	0

Regarding gender preferences when using these above-mentioned social media platforms, as Table 3 shows, females use Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat more than males. On the other hand, Males use LinkedIn and X (Twitter) more than females. This, however, does not mean that males do not use Facebook and Instagram. If we compare the percentage of males and females in this study, which is 58% females and 42% males, it will be found that males are also devoted users of Facebook and Instagram in Europe. Interestingly, none of the 489 male respondents in this study used TikTok and Snapchat. This shows that European male social media users are mainly Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter users.

Table 3. Use of social media platforms based on gender

Social Media Platforms	Males	Females
Facebook	176	243
Instagram	149	214
LinkedIn	248	66
TikTok	0	32
X (Twitter)	106	6
Snapchat	0	2

Concerning social media personalities, as Table 4 shows, European users are mainly Lurkers, Ultras, and Deniers. Lurkers are the most popular personality in Europe. Lurkers are social media users with social media profiles but rarely contribute to discussions. They have social media to receive updates based on their interests. Lurkers, who are 36.47% of social media users in Europe, view their social media platforms daily (71.96%) and weekly (28.04%) to follow what others post and receive updates. Ultras check their social media profiles several times a day. They confess that they are obsessed with social media. The Ultras, in Europe, are the second most popular personality, with 31.56% of social media users. The third most popular social media personality in Europe is the Deniers. Deniers are social media users who maintain social media, but unlike Ultras, social media does not control their lives. However, they get anxious when they have no access to social media. Deniers are 11.75% of social media users in Europe.

In addition to these three social media personalities, the second patch of social media users with a lesser frequency in Europe includes Ranters, Peacocks, and Informers. Ranters are social media users who are mild in face-to-face discussions but are highly opinionated in online discussions. These users believe that social media provides platforms to share and defend ideas. Social media provides them with confidence. Ranters are 7.80% of social media users in Europe. After that comes the Informers who seek kudos for being the first to share news online. They search for information and like to be the first ones to share it online. Informers, 6.11% of European social media users, accurately represent mobile journalists. After that comes Peacocks, which make up 6.03% of social media users in Europe. Peacocks are social media users who post often and like to receive many comments, likes, and shares. They believe that social media is a platform to show their popularity.

Europe's third patch of social media personalities includes Approval Seekers, Changelings, and Ghosts. Approval seekers are social media users who post on social media and constantly check their social to find out how others interact with their posts. Changeling's social media personality reflects individuals who adopt a different personality from their authentic selves online. They believe that social media provides the platforms to express ideas they cannot express in the real world. Finally, Ghosts create several profiles for fear of giving opinions. These social media users use fake personalities online. Interestingly, out of the 1242 respondents, we have one Approval Seeker (0.08%), one Changeling (0.08%), and one Ghost (0.08%), which reflects shallow popularity for these three personalities in Europe.

Table 4. Social media personalities based on age, gender, and frequency of use

Personality	Age Group	Frequency of Use	Gender
Approval seeker 1	13-19: 0 20-29: 1 30-39: 0 40-49: 0 50-59: 0 60+: 0	Daily: 1 Weekly: 0 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 0 Females: 1
Changeling 1	13-19: 0 20-29: 1 30-39: 0 40-49: 0 50-59: 0 60+: 0	Daily: 1 Weekly: 0 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 0 Females: 1
Denier 146	13-19: 3 20-29: 22 30-39: 43 40-49: 65 50-59: 13 60+: 0	Daily: 124 Weekly: 22 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 71 Females: 75
Lurker 453	13-19: 3 20-29: 56 30-39: 222 40-49: 76 50-59: 96 60+: 0	Daily: 326 Weekly: 127 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 206 Females: 247
Peacock 75	13-19: 0 20-29: 1 30-39: 0 40-49: 74 50-59: 0 60+: 0	Daily: 74 Weekly: 0 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 74 Females: 1
Ranter 97	13-19: 2 20-29: 2 30-39: 29 40-49: 25 50-59: 39 60+: 0	Daily: 97 Weekly: 0 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 25 Females: 72
Ultra 392	13-19: 0 20-29: 51 30-39: 127 40-49: 189 50-59: 25 60+: 0	Daily: 348 Weekly: 44 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 259 Females: 133
Informers 76	13-19: 0 20-29: 1 30-39: 0 40-49: 44 50-59: 0 60+: 31	Daily: 76 Weekly: 0 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 44 Females: 32
Ghost 1	13-19: 0 20-29: 1 30-39: 0 40-49: 0 50-59: 0 60+: 0	Daily: 1 Weekly: 0 Monthly: 0 Not often: 0	Males: 0 Females: 1

Table 5. Social media personalities based on platforms

Personality	Social media Platforms					
	Facebook	Instagram	LinkedIn	TikTok	X-Twitter	Snapchat
Approval seeker	0	0	0	1	0	0
Changeling	1	0	0	0	0	0
Denier	28	57	42	7	12	0
Lurker	210	102	69	3	69	0
Peacock	53	1	9	12	0	0
Ranter	29	40	7	2	19	0
Ultra	66	163	143	19	0	1
Informers	31	0	44	0	0	1
Ghost	1	0	0	0	0	0

For personality and social media platform correlation, as Table 5 shows, the only Approval Seeker is a TikTok user, and the only Changeling and Ghost users are Facebook users. Interestingly, Lurker, which is the most popular social media personality in Europe, is popular on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and then X (Twitter), but Ultras, which is the second most popular social media personality in Europe, is popular on Instagram, LinkedIn, and then Facebook. Even though Lurkers are X (Twitter) users, none of the 392 X (Twitter) users is an Ultra. This may show that X (Twitter) is an updated social media platform but does not lead to obsession. Lurkers, Ranters, and Peacocks are also Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X (Twitter), and TikTok users, but Ranters are mainly on Instagram and Facebook, and Peacocks are mainly on Facebook. Interestingly, Peacocks have the second highest number of TikTok users in Europe after the Ultras. TikTok better serves the characteristics of the Ultras and the Peacocks as they are obsessed, and TikTok provides the visual interactive content they need. The Peacocks love to provide content that the Ultras like. The peacocks provide the content on TikTok, and the Ultras watch it. The data also shows that Informers are mainly Facebook and LinkedIn users as the nature of these two platforms helps satisfy that ‘information providing’ need.

Table 6. Social media personalities based on country of origin

Country	Social media personalities								
	AS	CH	DE	LU	PE	RA	UL	IN	GH
Albania	0	0	10	0	53	0	39	0	0
Bosnia & Herzegovina	0	0	4	28	0	0	43	0	0
Bulgaria	0	0	2	5	0	6	0	18	0
Czech Republic	0	0	11	2	0	5	20	0	0
Cyprus	0	0	10	0	6	3	20	0	0
France	0	0	0	10	7	5	0	5	0
Georgia	0	0	10	62	0	29	35	0	0
Germany	1	1	3	8	1	2	4	1	1
Greece	0	0	10	59	0	39	18	0	0
Italy	0	0	9	0	15	0	20	0	0
North Macedonia	0	0	2	0	0	5	13	0	0
Poland	0	0	15	23	6	14	0	0	0
Russia	0	0	15	14	3	0	6	0	0
Serbia	0	0	30	0	9	18	71	0	0
Slovenia	0	0	9	0	0	2	17	0	0
Spain	0	0	11	34	7	0	10	0	0
Sweden	0	0	12	24	0	2	12	0	0
Turkey	0	0	7	65	12	18	0	0	0
The UK	0	0	0	7	9	7	21	44	0

AS: Approval seeker; CH: Changeling; DE: Denier; LU: Lurker; PE: Peacock; RA: Ranter; UL: Ultra; IN: Informer; GH: Ghost.

About the social media personality and country of origin correlation, it can be noticed in Table 6 that the most significant number of French, Georgians, Germans, Greeks, Polish, Spanish, Swedish, and Turkish are Lurkers, which



shows that they surf the social media without actively contributing to the content. It is also noticed that a large number of Albanians, Bosnians and Herzegovinians, Czechs, Cypriots, Georgians, Italians, North Macedonians, Serbians, Slovenians, and British are Ultras who are obsessed with social media and check it several times daily. The data also shows that the Bulgarians and British are obsessed with being Informers who share news and updates on social media to help update their contacts and followers. The data also shows that a large number of Europeans from Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey are Deniers, which reflects that they are not very obsessed with social media. However, they panic if they do not have access to it. That is, they use daily. The data also shows that the Ranters, who find social media a podium to express opinions more freely than expressing their views face-to-face, are mainly from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Turkey, and British. The European Peacocks are mainly from Albania; they are the majority of social media users there: Cyprus, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Turkey, and the UK. In addition to Albania, Peacock's social media personality is popular in Italy and Turkey. Peacocks use social media as a popularity contest and are obsessed with likes and comments on their posts. Interestingly, Germans are the only Approval Seeker, Changeling, and Ghost social media users in the survey, which also provides insights into the use of social media in Germany.

## 5. Discussion

This study examines social media personalities in Europe based on four variables: age, gender, preferred platform, and country of origin. AlAfnan (2024b) analyzed social media personalities in Asia based on the same variables and found that Lurker is the primary personality in Asia, emphasizing the concept of the silent majority in Asia. Social media usage data analysis among 1242 European respondents reveals significant insights into demographic characteristics, usage patterns, platform preferences, and social media personalities. The gender distribution of respondents, comprising 718 females (58%) and 524 males (42%), closely mirrors the general population ratio in Europe, which stands at 100 males to 104 females, as per Eurostat (2021). This balanced sample ensures that the findings represent the broader European population.

Analyzing the age distribution, the largest group is respondents aged 40-49 (40%), followed by those aged 30-39 (34%). Smaller fractions are observed in the 50-59 (12%), 20-29 (11%), 13-19 (1%), and above 60 (2%) age groups. This predominantly middle-aged sample aligns well with the median age in Europe, which is 44.5 years old (Eurostat, 2024). The dominance of middle-aged respondents suggests that the findings are particularly relevant to this demographic, which has substantial purchasing power and social influence.

Regarding the frequency of social media usage, a significant majority (61%) of respondents engage with social media daily, while the remaining 39% engage weekly. This high frequency of social media engagement underscores the pervasive role of social media in the daily lives of Europeans. Compared to Asian social media usage patterns, where usage frequency can be more varied (AlAfnan, 2024b), Europeans appear to have a more consistent and intensive engagement with social media platforms.

When examining platform preferences, Facebook emerges as the most popular platform, used by 33.7% of respondents, followed by Instagram (29.2%), LinkedIn (25.28%), and Twitter (9%). TikTok (2.5%) and Snapchat (0.16%) are significantly less popular. The age distribution of respondents likely influences these preferences, with TikTok and Snapchat being more prevalent among younger demographics (AlAfnan, 2024b). Facebook's widespread use across all age groups, except teenagers, indicates its continued relevance, while Instagram's broad appeal highlights its versatility and visual appeal.

The analysis of platform use by age group reveals distinct preferences. Teenagers (13-19) favor TikTok and Instagram, while the 20-29 age group uses all platforms except LinkedIn. The 30-39 age group uses Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn extensively but avoids TikTok and Snapchat. Those aged 40-49 explore all platforms except Snapchat, and those aged 50-59 primarily use Facebook and Instagram. Individuals above 60 are almost exclusively Facebook users. This distribution indicates that professional and visual content is favored by different age groups, with younger users gravitating towards more dynamic and interactive platforms like TikTok.

A gender-based analysis of platform preferences shows that females predominantly use Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat, while males favor LinkedIn and Twitter. Despite these differences, males are also active users of Facebook and Instagram, reflecting the platforms' broad appeal across genders. The absence of TikTok and Snapchat use among male respondents highlights potential gender differences in platform engagement, possibly driven by content preferences and social networking goals.

Social media personalities in Europe are primarily Lurkers (36.47%), Ultras (31.56%), and Deniers (11.75%). Lurkers, who passively consume content without active participation, use social media daily or weekly to stay updated. Ultras, obsessed with social media, check their profiles multiple times daily, indicating deep engagement with online content.

Deniers, who use social media regularly but claim it does not dominate their lives, still experience anxiety when disconnected. This distribution suggests varying social media dependency and engagement among European users.

The second tier of social media personalities includes Ranters (7.80%), Informers (6.11%), and Peacocks (6.03%). Ranters often use social media to express strong opinions more freely than in face-to-face interactions. Informers are keen on being the first to share news, embodying the traits of mobile journalists. Peacocks seek validation through likes, comments, and shares using social media to showcase their popularity. The presence of these personalities highlights the diverse motivations behind social media use, ranging from information dissemination to self-promotion.

A smaller fraction of respondents exhibit personalities such as Approval Seekers, Changelings, and Ghosts, each constituting only 0.08% of the sample. Approval Seekers constantly seek validation for their posts, Changelings adopt different online personas, and Ghosts create multiple profiles to avoid revealing their true identity. The minimal prevalence of these personalities indicates that most European users prefer more straightforward and consistent engagement with social media platforms.

Correlating social media personalities with platform preferences reveals exciting patterns. Lurkers are prevalent across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter, indicating their preference for platforms that offer a mix of personal updates, professional networking, and news. Ultras, while also active on Instagram and LinkedIn, prefer platforms that facilitate frequent updates and engagement, such as Instagram. The absence of Ultras on Twitter suggests that the platform's real-time update model may not cater to their need for constant interaction. Peacocks, who thrive on engagement metrics, predominantly use Facebook and TikTok, platforms known for their interactive and visual content. This indicates that platforms supporting high user interaction and visual appeal levels attract users seeking visibility and validation. Conversely, informers favor Facebook and LinkedIn, leveraging these platforms' capabilities for sharing news and professional updates.

The distribution of social media personalities by country reveals further insights. Lurkers dominate in countries like France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey, indicating a preference for passive content consumption. Ultras are notably prevalent in Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Georgia, Italy, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, and the UK, reflecting a higher level of engagement and obsession with social media in these regions. Informers who focus on sharing updates and news are particularly numerous in Bulgaria and the UK, suggesting a strong culture of information dissemination in these countries. Interestingly, Deniers, who use social media regularly but do not let it dominate their lives, are found in large numbers across various countries, including Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey. This widespread presence of Deniers highlights a typical pattern of significant yet controlled social media use across Europe.

The second layer of less frequent personalities in Europe also provides valuable insights. Ranters, who utilize social media as a platform to express their opinions more freely than in person, are predominantly from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Turkey, and the UK. This suggests that social media is a valuable outlet for opinion expression and debate in these countries. Peacocks, who thrive on social media engagement and validation, are mainly from Albania, Cyprus, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Turkey, and the UK. The high prevalence of Peacocks in these countries indicates a cultural inclination towards social validation and interactive social media use. Notably, Albania has an exceptionally high number of peacocks, indicating a strong culture of social media engagement focused on visibility and interaction. The unique presence of Approval Seekers, Changelings, and Ghosts exclusively among German respondents suggests a distinct pattern of social media use in Germany. These users adopt diverse online behaviors, from seeking validation (Approval Seekers) to adopting different online personas (Changelings) and maintaining multiple profiles (Ghosts). This highlights a nuanced and varied approach to social media use within the German context.

The analysis comprehensively explains European social media usage patterns, highlighting users' demographic characteristics, platform preferences, and personalities. The balanced gender distribution and predominantly middle-aged sample reflect the general population trends in Europe, ensuring the findings are representative. The high frequency of social media usage underscores its integral role in the daily lives of Europeans, with significant implications for marketers, policymakers, and social media platform developers. The platform preferences indicate that while traditional platforms like Facebook and Instagram remain dominant, there is a clear distinction in using newer platforms like TikTok and Snapchat, particularly among younger users. The detailed breakdown of social media personalities provides valuable insights into the motivations and behaviors of users, ranging from passive content consumption to active engagement and information dissemination.

The correlation between social media personalities and platform preferences offers a deeper understanding of how different platforms cater to user needs and behaviors. The country-specific analysis reveals cultural and regional

differences in social media use, highlighting the diversity of social media engagement across Europe. These insights are crucial for developing targeted social media strategies that cater to different user groups' specific needs and preferences. Understanding these patterns can help marketers design more effective campaigns that resonate with their target audience. Policymakers can use this information to address issues related to social media use, such as privacy concerns, digital literacy, and the impact of social media on mental health. Furthermore, social media platform developers can leverage these findings to enhance user experience by tailoring features and functionalities that cater to the diverse needs of their user base. By understanding different social media personalities' preferences and behaviors, platforms can create more engaging and satisfying user experiences, ultimately driving higher user retention and engagement.

The data analysis of social media usage among European respondents provides a detailed and nuanced understanding of the demographic characteristics, usage patterns, platform preferences, and social media personalities. These insights highlight the integral role of social media in the daily lives of Europeans and offer valuable guidance for marketers, policymakers, and social media platform developers in designing strategies and initiatives that effectively address the diverse needs and preferences of social media users in Europe.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study analyzed European social media personalities based on age, gender, platform preferences, and country of origin. Analyzing social media usage among the respondents reveals critical insights into demographic characteristics, platform preferences, and user behaviors. In this study, platform preferences highlight Facebook and Instagram's dominance, while TikTok and Snapchat are less popular, particularly among older demographics. This indicates that traditional platforms maintain broad appeal, whereas newer platforms attract younger users. Gender differences are evident, with females favoring Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat and males preferring LinkedIn and Twitter. Social media personalities, primarily Lurkers, Ultras, and Deniers, demonstrate varying degrees of engagement and dependency. Lurkers passively consume content, Ultras show obsessive usage, and Deniers balance regular use without allowing social media to dominate their lives. The presence of Ranters, Informers, and Peacocks further illustrates diverse user motivations, from expressing opinions to seeking validation. Country-specific analysis reveals cultural and regional differences in social media use, with distinct preferences and behaviors emerging across Europe. The nuanced and varied approach to social media use, particularly in Germany, underscores the diversity within the European context. These insights are crucial for developing targeted social media strategies. Marketers can design more effective campaigns, policymakers can address privacy and digital literacy concerns, and platform developers can enhance user experiences by tailoring features to diverse needs. Overall, the findings highlight social media's integral role in European life and provide valuable guidance for stakeholders in understanding and engaging with their audience effectively.

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The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

**Data sharing statement**

No additional data are available.

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