

Increasing adoption despite perceived limitations of Social Media in Emergencies

Representative Insights on German Citizens' Perception and Trends (2017–2021)

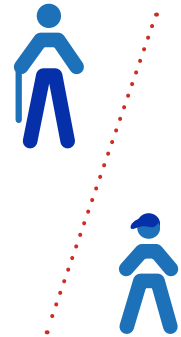


Higher need



Social media use in **emergencies** increased in **2019 and 2021** compared to 2017. During this period, general social media use did not increase. This suggests a **specific effect** that is not due to social media adoption.

Target groups



In 2021, **younger individuals (18–24 years)** used social media in emergencies more often than **older individuals (45+ years)**. Regarding gender and education, no such effects can be found.

Preferred sources

More **traditional sources** of information are still more often considered as **quite helpful** than social media in emergencies in 2021.



63%



62%



47%



45%



28%



Pros

The perceived advantage of **faster availability** of information is associated with a more frequent use of social media in emergencies. Furthermore, citizens valued the **better accessibility** of social media over other channels.



Cons

The perceived disadvantage of **information overload** represents a significant barrier to social media use in emergencies. The disadvantages of social media (issues of **data privacy, false rumors and reliability**) are rated more severe in **2021** compared to **2019**.

Diverse User Expectations



Use patterns, perceptions, and expectations are **highly diverse, context-dependent** and **dynamically changing over time**. For example, while citizens expect emergency services to **continuously monitor** social media, at the same time, they acknowledge that they are **too busy** to monitor them in emergencies.