OUR 11 SOCIAL MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY EVENTS: ABSOLUTE PARTICIPATION?

2000



The world's first binding online election:

At the student parliament vote in Osnabrück, votes can be cast digitally as well as via analogue mode. Ten per cent of students take up the opportunity to vote electronically.

2004



US Americans living abroad are able to vote for the first time via **e-voting**, in the Presidential elections on 2 November

However, the project is stopped following the election, for security reasons.

2005



As the first country in the world to do so, Estonia enabled its citizens to vote electronically in the local elections on 16 October. These are the first legally-binding **online elections** at national state level. Around 15 per cent of the population cast their vote digitally.

2007



The **Twitter account** of now-serving 44th US President **Barack Obama** goes online, on 5 March. His activities are now followed by over 70 million users (as at: Feb. 2016).

2008



The Americans elect Barack Obama as President. The election subsequently goes down in history as the **"Facebook Election"**. Thanks to the support of Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes, Obama succeeds in mobilising many young voters via social networks.

2015



#NetzFragtMerkel: YouTube blogger LeFloid interviews German Chancellor Angela Merkel. In the interview, he also asks questions from the web community received via Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

2002



Ahead of the Federal elections for the German lower parliamentary house, the Bundestag, the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung) offers the **Wahl-O-Mat** for the first time – as an aid to decision-making for all voters. During the last Federal elections in 2013, this voting advice application (or VAA) was used 13 million times.

2004



On 8 December, Gregor Hackmack and Boris Hekele start the **abgeordnetenwatch.de** project – an online inquiry platform for election candidates and members of their Hamburg electorate. Since then, the platform has expanded to cover the Bundestag and the regional state parliaments.

2006



Julian Assange founds the disclosure platform **WikiLeaks**. Under the slogan "We open governments", documents are published there which are subject to secrecy rules. This "whistleblowing" triggers a broad public and political debate.

-2007



Ben Rattray and Mark Dimas found **Change.org** as a social business. In 2010, the site was redesigned as a platform for online activism and petitions, and today it has over 125 million users worldwide.

2014



Norway ends a three-year **test phase** on **e-voting**. The reasons for this are concerns about security. Voters fear that their votes could be made public, thereby undermining the democratic process.