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COMMUNICATION ON TWITTER: CORONATEC DURING THE INITIAL PHASE OF CONFINEMENT IN SPAIN

COMUNICACIÓN EN TWITTER: CORONATEC EN LA FASE INICIAL DEL CONFINAMIENTO EN ESPAÑA

JUAN ENRIQUE GONZÁLEZ VALLÉS / JUANENGO@UCM.ES

COMPLUTENSE UNIVERSITY OF MADRID, SPAIN

DAVID CALDEVILLA-DOMÍNGUEZ / DAVIDCALDEVILLA@CCINF.UCM.ES

COMPLUTENSE UNIVERSITY OF MADRID, SPAIN

ALMUDENA BARRIENTOS-BÁEZ / ALMUDENA.BARRIENTOSBAEZ@UNIR.NET

UNIVERSIDAD INTERNACIONAL DE LA RIOJA (UNIR), SPAIN



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ABSTRACT

The state of alarm declared in Spain on March 14th 2020 as a result of the infections and deaths caused by the coronavirus and the COVID-19, triggered the creation of the Technical Management Committee for Coronavirus (Coronatec), which being headed by the Government president, Pedro Sánchez, led the initiative through both traditional and social media.

The first month of this exceptional situation would help measure the reaction and adaptability capacity of all these entities to social media, and in fact, the communication impacts on Twitter increased and worked as a reference channel to disseminate messages. Additionally, obtaining information from official sources through social media is more important now due to the presence of hoaxes, and the analysis of these nine organizations is even more relevant. This analysis is going to be centered on essential aspects of the analysis of these social media: followers, publications and engagement. The results will demonstrate the influence capacity of The Enforcement and Security Corps of the State in Spain against other figures such as the Government Presidency or the Ministries.

KEYWORDS

Social media; Twitter; COVID19; Coronatec; Communication; Fake news.

RESUMEN

El estado de alarma declarado en España el 14 de marzo de 2020 a raíz de los contagios y muertes provocadas por el coronavirus y el COVID-19 provocó la creación del Comité de Gestión Técnica del Coronavirus (Coronatec) que, encabezado por el presidente del Gobierno, Pedro Sánchez, llevó la iniciativa tanto a través de los medios de comunicación tradicionales, como también en redes sociales.

El primer mes de esta extraordinaria situación iba a medir la capacidad de reacción y adaptación de todas estas entidades a las redes sociales y, de hecho, los impactos comunicacionales en Twitter aumentaron y sirvió como un canal referente para difundir mensajes. Además, obtener información de fuentes oficiales a través de las redes sociales es ahora más importante por la presencia de los bulos y el análisis de estos nueve organismos es aún más pertinente. El presente análisis se centrará en aspectos esenciales del análisis en redes sociales: seguidores, publicaciones y *engagement*. Los resultados dejarán patente la capacidad de influencia de las Fuerzas y Cuerpos de Seguridad del Estado frente a otros actores como Presidencia del Gobierno o los Ministerios.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Redes sociales; Twitter; COVID19; Coronatec; Comunicación; Bulos.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a world where misinformation and infoxication dominate and start winning the battle (Caldevilla, 2013a; Soengas Pérez *et al.*, 2019), as well as the discredit and confrontation sought by them, it becomes essential, not much a control aiming to the totalitarianism of information (Polo Blanco -2018- already said: «The anarchist philosophical instinct imagines a policeman or a military man repressing a striker every time hearing the word 'State'») as a right way to manage them. Ensuring its access to the public opinion, but especially regarding official channels of institutions and public organizations, avoiding the generation of opinion states that respond more to emotional alterations rather than tested data. A notable tendency is its time course –linked to the progressive technical advance of the media- by Herrero and Toledo Chavarri (2012). The access to information, to the sources of that information, is direct thanks to social media and official platforms, and it is inevitable, as stated by Hernández Rubio (2019). But the reflection time needed for a correct comprehension of information becomes shorter and shorter, and even that very reflection is more and more polarized, erasing any nuance that, in an ideal situation, can permit a greater informative and communicative interaction inherent in a democratic system. In crisis situations such as the current pandemic these conditions become even more difficult to manage, generating movements and actions whose only intention is to reduce the space for reflection; a new term that emerged during the health emergency period has been conceptualized, the so-called «infodemic», the contagion, the global dissemination of fake news beyond the so far considered as «residual» nature; characteristic that led to the creation of a unit to fight against misinformation within the European Union. This pandemic situation of COVID-19 has shown clearly that the use of digital environments without a critical context might cause trouble. It is a lesson to learn (Brites, 2020).

Awareness raising regarding the good use, that is, considering the official channels, especially those inherent on the 3.0 digital environment, and the change it has brought to the institute-masses communication (Muller, 2016), beyond its simple use, becomes more than necessary during moments of crisis.

*In the political ambit, it is essential to communicate and explain the actions in order to reach out to society, as the representatives of citizens they are in the legislative management of the State. For their part, citizens can know and monitor the managing of their politicians, even participate in an immediate way in their decision making process through their valuing and opinion on the digital environment (Serrano Oceja *et al.*, 2019, p. 175), considering there is no small facet to communication for 2.0 methodologies, always according to Caldevilla (2013a).*

In this context, the use, or preferably, the responsible use of social media of the official organisms (Presidency, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Home Affairs, National Police Corps, Civil Guard, etc.) as information and communication channels, as primary and core sources for the public to access official information, going beyond the reliability of traditional media for masses, becomes necessary and indispensable in order to ensure the access to all the information generated during the confinement and health emergency period, information that ensures the compliance with the security measures, as well as the management of the very crisis, at least in informative terms. The incorporation of social networks into the strategic communication plans

and the professionalization of their communicators has been essential to get the most out of these tools (Arroyo *et al.*, 2018). Some tools that in the case study have contributed substantially to the knowledge and monitoring of the pandemic.

2. DESIGN AND METHOD

The design of this research has provided a large amount of data, but these have very clear restrictions and are defined in time by the start of the alarm state established in Spain by RD (Royal Decree) 463/2020, of March 14 up to a month later. Therefore, the period under analysis is thirty-one days, from March 14 to April 13, 2020. The day on which the state of alarm began has been included, although the Official State Gazette was published late that night, since the President of the Government, Pedro Sánchez, had already announced it the day before in an appearance in the media. April 13 is included because it is the last day of Holy Week in many Autonomous Communities of Spain.

Likewise, the research is limited to the organizations that participate in CORONATEC, regulated by the aforementioned Royal Decree and that will be specifically in charge of institutional and governmental communication during the study period. In addition to the Presidency of the Government, there are four Ministries in this framework (Health, Interior, Defense and Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda) and four other entities dependent on these. Therefore, there were a total of nine entities that make up this research:

1. Government Presidency.
2. Ministry of Defense.
3. Ministry of Home Affairs.
4. Ministry of Health.
5. Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda.
6. National Police Corps.
7. Civil Guard.
8. Defense Staff
9. Health Alert and Emergency Coordination Center.

From the stage that started with Web 1.0, marked by unidirectionality, it was decided to bet on Web 2.0, where it is content is compatible with multiple channels. Profiles on social networks allow information to be presented to different audiences through different interactions, as has been observed throughout the investigation. The study focused on Twitter will be divided into Likes (L) and Retweets (RT). The fact of opting for Twitter is based on the reasons argued in the previous section, but also, it is the only social network in which all the members of CORONATEC have an account.

To measure these results, you can choose from a large number of applications that can help collect, extract and analyze data from the three social networks. Metricool is chosen as the most appropriate method because it has the ideal protocol to achieve the objectives proposed in the research. For the engagement formula, it must be determined which is the appropriate one, since

«it is something more complex than generating a 'Like' or a 'retweet' [...] Marketers must clearly understand the perceptions of customers, their wishes, needs and preferences. Connect with them on their own terms» (Sánchez Torres & Restrepo, 2015, p. 45).

Among the formulas that were found, the one that uses the engagement ratio as the number of interactions received in relation to the number of posts is chosen. As presented by Ballesteros (2018), there have been several authors who have faced both the definition and the formula of this concept, but its first formulation has been chosen since it takes into account both the total interactions and the quantitative aspect of the positions, which stands out during electoral periods due to its importance. Together they help to present a quantitative and qualitative criterion of the communicational impact.

The reflection on the most successful communication elements in qualitative terms has also provided interesting data. The typology of the contents, the use of multimedia tools, elements aimed at interaction... will be the elements on which it will be possible to observe what added value they treasure to become instruments of influence.

At this point, the control elements established by the analysis tool will also be determined. The time frame for making the comparison is earlier than the time frame set in this analysis, and the duration is the same. Therefore, the period runs from February 12 to March 13, 2020, which could be considered as the pre-crisis of the Coronavirus. This circumstance, far from being an obstacle, is a fantastic opportunity to provide the study with the necessary complexity that Spanish society itself has suffered in recent months.

3. FRAME WORK

This management must avoid, in the first place, the time reduction that social media have accentuated, regarding as the time acceleration per se including their alienating consequences (Rosa, 2010) as its lack of definition (the dyssynchrony described by Byung-Chul Han, 2018) and the hate speeches (Bustos Martínez *et al.*, 2019). Said differently, public opinion knows more things as long as it has greater access to it, in a faster and more direct way, which leads to a greater demand for answers and immediacy, being the most important thing to avoid falling into an «information void» to be filled with hoaxes or fake news, since social media make it possible. According to De Aguilera & Casero-Ripollés (2018), these technologies have created new dynamics in the production, selection, distribution and consumption of content and in the interaction, organization and political mobilization. The public entities, official sources of information during this pandemic and health emergency, must act, when communicating, directly and unequivocally, and whenever possible, interactively (Cierva, 2009), in addition to the increasingly burden of the «Emotional Organization» considerations proposed by Henar Sánchez (2016) based on the ideas presented by García Gómez (2014).

From the main and most used social media, Twitter is still ranked in fourth place among the most used social media in Spain. This fact is shown in the data of the first quarter of the present year offered by the Digital report in 2020 (created by We Are Social and Hootsuite). It exists a high proportion of young users, as pointed out by Catalina-García *et al.* (2019), and as stated by Pujols (2017) has been used successfully for the creation of complex organizations. Currently, it has around 4.4 million profiles, although the number of verified ones has been decreasing, with a downturn of 6.6% since 2018 according to the report elaborated by The Social Media Family

(2020); the bright side, what is keeping it in fourth position is that the rate of active users has increased 16% during the first months of 2020 (We Are Social), a percentage that will probably increase even more when the data of use during the months of confinement come out. According to Barrientos-Báez (2019), the increase in follow-up, for example of campaigns and debates through applications and Internet pages, is significant. Interactivity through Twitter facilitates minute-by-minute comments and opinions on the debate, so the protagonists are obliged to give their best in each intervention. That is why the importance of this social network continues to increase today. In the case of Twitter the important thing is to be present in this social network, use it to launch the slogans and seek the greatest possible interaction with the public (Carrasco *et al.*, 2018).

The active use of social media (of Twitter since it is the subject of study) is higher during periods of exceptional nature, regardless if it is analyzed from any possible perspective, social, economic, political, etcetera, as well as the state of alarm and confinement; the increase implies a greater intensity of the effects that social media have on public opinion (Casero, 2018, p. 967), even if it is just in their reach.

This way, the numerous researches about the use, effects and consequences of social media regarding political communication, mainly focused on periods of electoral campaigns (López-Abellán, 2012; Zugasti-Azagra & Pérez-González, 2016; López-Meri, 2016; and Jivkova-Semova *et al.*, 2017) allow not only to establish a concrete here and now of the 2.0 and 3.0 outlook (temporary, evidently), but also to draw conclusions that would work as a starting point to analyze the use public entities that form the Technical Management Committee for Coronavirus (Coronatec) make of social media, of Twitter, during the first days of the pandemic caused by the Covid-19, which is why it is important to take as a starting point the studies carried out from a purely communicative perspective (Costa-Sánchez, 2011, and Cartes Barroso, 2018, for example). Aware of their potential, political actors are increasingly adapting their communication strategies to the digital environment, giving greater weight to social networks with the aim of getting closer to their electorate and knowing their opinion more directly (Miquel Segarra *et al.*, 2017).

Utilities that have ended up transforming how information is created, disseminated, and received, not forgetting how it is interpreted and the feedback inherent to it and to any communicative channel; patent transformations at individual, collective, and organizational and institutional levels (Cabezuelo *et al.*, 2016). Among them, it is important to point out the elimination of intermediaries, traditional mass media, which implies refocusing on establishing a much more direct relation with the potential receiver, with the citizen. This direct relation is characterized by the implication of a constant conversation with public opinion, making social media the fastest and most direct medium (Chaves, 2017). It does not cease to be something inherent to information freedom because «the contact between representatives and the ones represented is a fundamental task of the political activity in an advanced democracy» (Chaves, 2017, p. 9). But it is also true that, when eliminating the intermediary as a professional figure of information, or who professionalizes information, there is a direct impact on the communication process, and above all, on the effects of the message; that is, the haste the immediacy of the messages demand, the brevity, the emotional component, the predominance of images above words, and even, other aspects that have not been well defined yet but have been debated, such as the well-known «post-truth». To sum up, it is a new changing reality that entails new and changing implications

on the relation between public and governmental institutions and citizens (Serrano Oceja *et al.*, 2019).

In these direct communications between the addresser (the public organization) and the addressee (the citizen and public opinion), information transparency has to be the crux structuring the communicational strategy of the public entity with social media having a main role; especially regarding the detection and notification of fake news and hoaxes to avoid their dissemination and negative consequences, both socially and politically (Yus, 2020). The interest is centered on the intentionality of the participants during the communication process, whether a positive and beneficial objective is intended, that is, to transmit and share accurate information, or a malicious intention is aimed, disseminating false information with or out of malice, making the subject of study and analysis, the very intention behind disinformation, such as the impact and its effects on the social research methods (Mayoral *et al.*, 2019; Blanco Alfonso *et al.*, 2019). The redemption sought by the addresser sources and the requirements of the addressee (public opinion), have turned information and communicational transparency into «one of the most recurrent topics in researches in Communication and Information Sciences. As long as the interests of the participants in public communication are known and the results can be evaluated, the conditions of the democratic system are improved» (Cabezuelo *et al.*, 2016, p. 1263). These issues that gain even more relevance in the aforementioned contexts of exceptionality, since the circumstances surrounding information consumption are accentuated, from both the ones of verified provenance, governmental sources and official renowned media, and those of doubtful or plain suspicious provenance, opaque sources, as well as the way they influence on the behavior of public opinion, since the access through social media, through twitter, is direct and uninterrupted, and it can occur anytime and anywhere (Casero, 2018). Transparency is a two-edge sword because when it is fiercely implemented without a clear definition of objectives, it can spark controversy, when it is not intended to be directly counterproductive to the very objectives regarding public opinion. Think, for example, about the last one of the surveys from the Sociological Researches Center published in April of 2020, by which Spanish people were asked what their thoughts about «hoaxes and misleading information» was and the possibility of controlling and managing information through official sources only. The right management of information regarding health and public security matters is a guarantee of total transparency, but it also enables the emergence and dissemination of hoaxes and false information along with their consequences.

Social media per se, or preferably, the data on which can be generated, susceptible of being collected, analyzed and interpreted (with a posterior discussion and reflection), are another of the core pillars of this analysis, since facing the measurement and the use of data calls into question the very gathering of these data as the tools in order to treat them (as it is essential to any research of social nature) since they are, or not, a structured hotchpotch of information susceptible of being researched (Villars *et al.*, 2011). The possibilities of measuring social media allow obtaining both past and real-time data of multimedia nature (Caldevilla, 2014) facilitating the elimination of mistakes and the data management, that is, the materialization of the research with order and structure, as well as the right interpretation, discussion and conclusion. Additionally, the social audience can be added as a metric (Chaves, 2017, p. 22):

The sum of direct users and the secondary users who follow them, the importance of social audience lies in the fact that it is the potential number of people to whom the messages can get, therefore, it would be the followers of the direct followers.

The reach and sum of primary and secondary followers to whom a message, direct posting and a re-dissemination gets, or could get, would comprise the «perceptions» as a measure of dimension, as has been commented, the reach, which is the original message, primary response and re-dissemination of the message.

Twitter, the main social network in the study, is the most reliable network to generate two-way political communication, since it is considered the ideal platform for political debate prone to citizen participation, a direct communication channel that must be based on transparency and empathy (Serrano Oceja *et al.*, 2019). However, the immediacy, the continuous flow that Twitter enables, can also be affected by the particular interest of disseminating only and not much by the generation of debates (Shogan, 2010); despite all this, there are more positive conclusions that demonstrate the communicational advantages of this social network, since Twitter is a system with «a very special condition to facilitate bidirectional communication because of its simplicity, its facility to generate emotional bonds and its great power of mobilization» (Rodríguez-Fernández, 2011, p. 18).

The use of social media, as well as the content generated during this health crisis, has to take into account the capacity that followers and users have to transform said official contents into their own information, with the dissemination and reach possibilities it has (Túñez *et al.*, 2011).

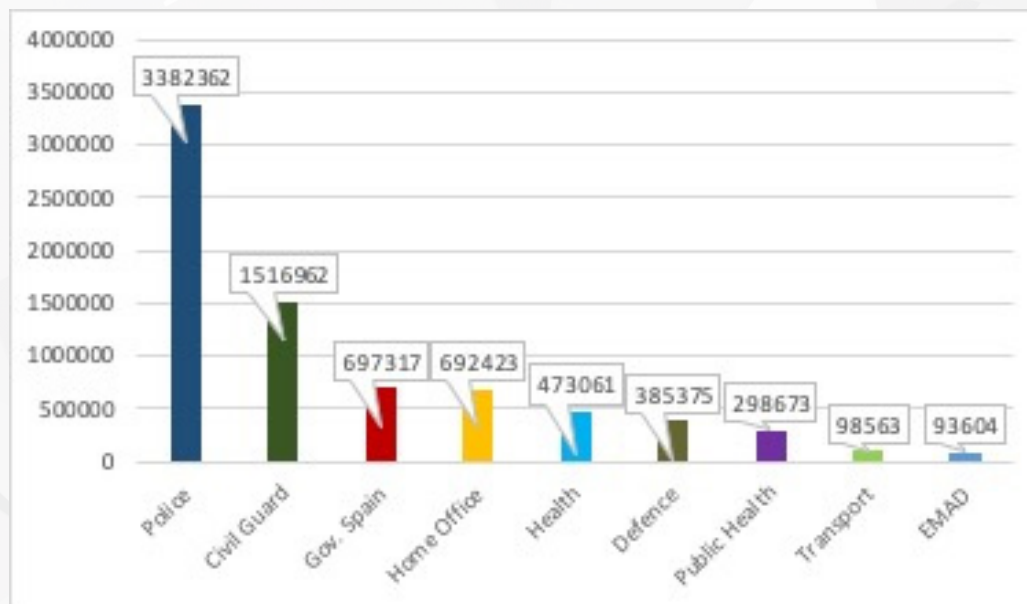
This dissemination and re-dissemination of messages, especially those regarding contents related to the pandemic, are most of the times influenced by a «consensus illusion», that is, believing that if plenty of people share the content, it must be true. When in reality dissemination responds to the characteristic of social media, as stated by Bustamante Donas (2015). Official sources must position themselves as the only ones on their social media, at least in the first instance, capable of offering proven information, since they have to bear in mind, having the collaboration of these platforms or not, that the algorithms with which these networks are programmed, favor the contents of scandalous nature, those that have a morbid tone and are more shared and disseminated between users. During the confinement stage (to date, April 19, according to the newspaper El País), the Government of Spain identified more than 200 jokes referring to health content, directly related to the pandemic and the virus. Ultimately, the management and use Spanish political and health authorities make of social media, especially twitter, becomes indispensable in order to ensure the circulation of truthful information. Information susceptible of being analyzed to understand better what the use of Twitter or any social network is, and to find better ways of using it in crisis situations and future emergencies.

The public nature of the data of some institutions and organizations facilitate the analysis of content and interactions between addressers and addressees (Serrano-Cobos, 2014), which could finally allow us to see what the behavior and use of some of these social networks (Twitter) was from the Spanish public entities during the beginning of this world pandemic caused by the Coronavirus. Also, social networks are fundamental and represent a great opportunity to meet the current challenges of promoting the empowerment of citizens in health in today's society, in which information and knowledge are fundamental bases present in all areas of society (Seco & Ruiz-Callado, 2020, p. 117).

4. RESULTS

In this section, the results obtained after conducting the search of the Twitter profiles of CORONATEC members will be studied in detail. It begins with the total number of followers accumulated for each figure at the completion of the research stage.

Image 1. Total followers



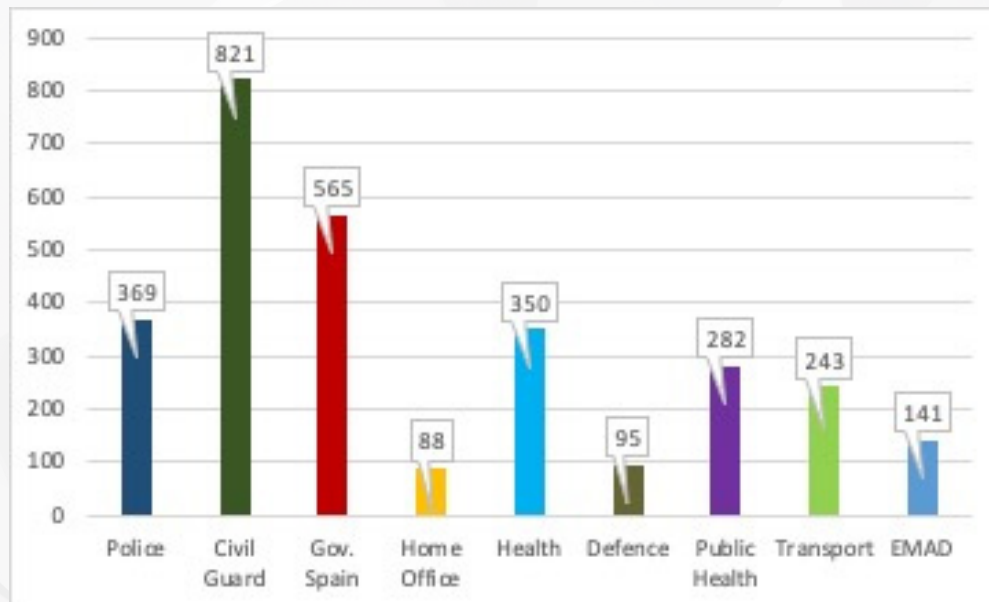
Source: authors' own creation and Metricool

As it is shown, Twitter is the social network where National Police Corps triumphs. In fact, it has been the State Security Force or Corps most followed in the world for over five years, above other elite corps such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (Europa Press, 2014). This entity, ruled by the general director Francisco Pardo Piqueras, obtained more accumulated followers than the rest of the studied elements in this research, except for Civil Guard. This organization, created by the Duque de Ahumada, held a second position, with more than half the distance from the National Police Corps, but above twice the numbers from the third place, which is held by the official profile of the Spanish Government.

From this third position on, a range of profiles of the Ministries opens, with the exception of Public Health, representing the Health Alert and Emergency Coordination Center (CCAES) on this social network and is above the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda. In the last position is the Defense Staff. However, it accumulates one of the highest increases regarding the number of followers during the analyzed period with almost 8 percent (7.96%).

Another crucial indicator for social media analysis is the content production. By limiting it to Twitter, a quantitative analysis will first be performed to determine the number of tweets for each profile during the period under study:

Image 2. Total number of tweets

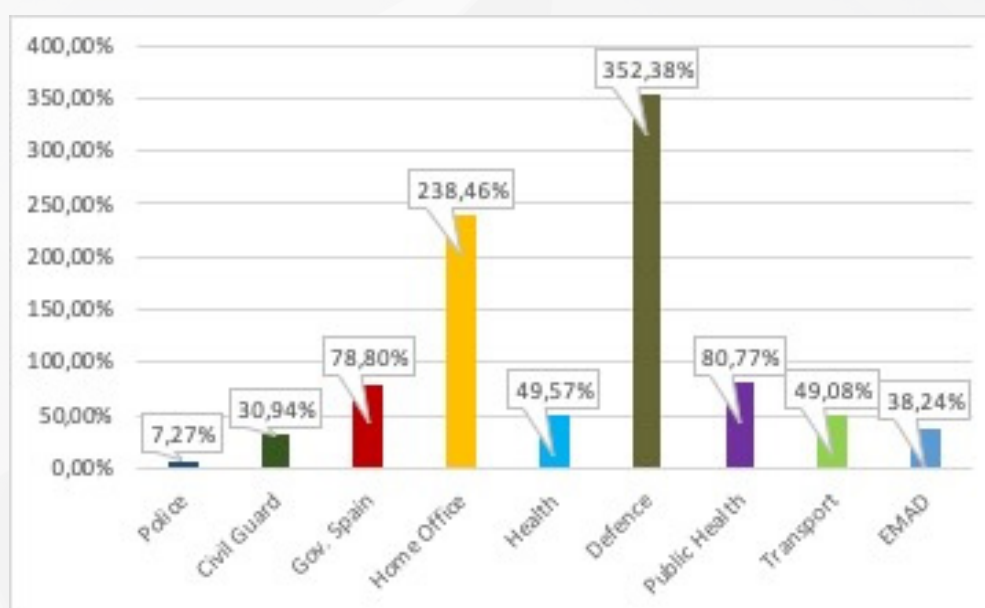


Source: authors' own creation and Metricool

During the thirty-one days covered by our research the comparison between the different governmental entities, part of the CORONATEC, brought the Civil Guard to the highest position of the classification, having published over 800 tweets. If we pile the entities belonging to the Cabinet, they make up a total of 1341, while the rest of the figures of our research go as high as 1613 tweets when piled.

The consolidation of the profiles that accumulated more followers is observed and now, although in different position, it occupies the first three places in terms of the volume of content published on Twitter as well. In a second segment, the quantitative capacity of the Ministry of Health stood out, since, in the face of a crisis of its area of responsibility, it ranked fourth, but very prominently above the rest of entities. The little activity of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Defense is also curious because, despite being the ones who ensure the safety of all Spanish citizens during the state of alarm, they maintained a low profile in terms of the number of communications published impacts.

If the content production of the entities on Twitter that are being analyzed is analyzed in percentage terms, the perceptions will go even further:

Image 3. Percentage of tweets

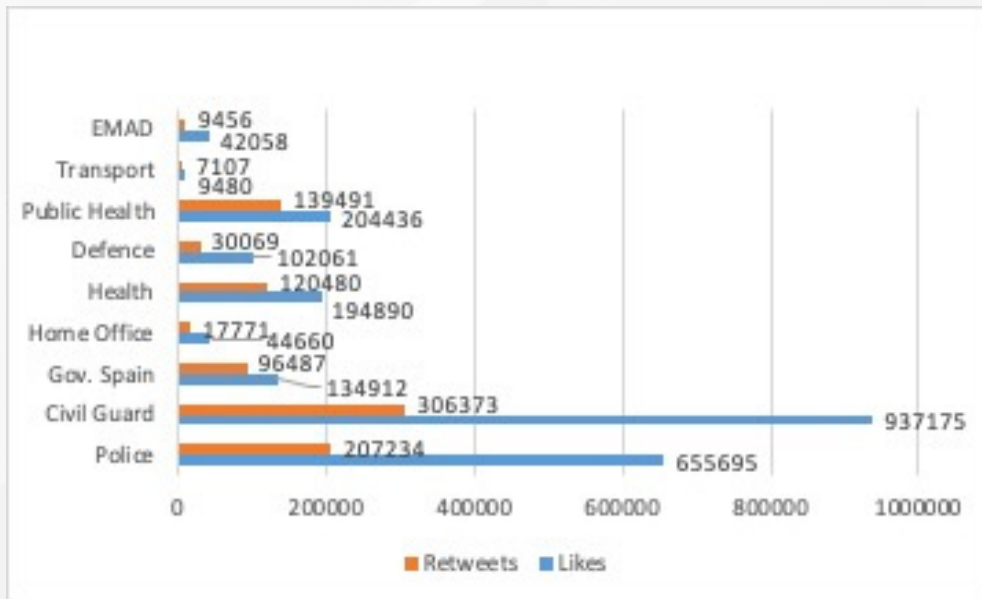
Source: authors' own creation and Metricool

If the period under analysis (seventeen days) is compared with the same part of the time frame just before (already in pre-crisis), it can be seen that the activity of the entities under study in order to create content on Twitter has increased significantly, except for the National Police Corps which barely adds up to seven percent more (7.27%), although, in absolute terms, as seen above, it is only surpassed by the Government of Spain and the Civil Guard. In this way, the strategic commitment of the organization that wears a blue uniform to communicate on Twitter can be highlighted, providing sustainability and continuity on this social network.

Despite the low number of tweets posted by the Ministry of Defense (95), it is interesting to see that it is the entity with the highest growth in percentage terms, way higher than three hundred percent (352.38%). The same circumstance occurs for the Ministry of Home Affairs which had the least impact on the tweets published, but whose growth compared to it gave it second place, since it has more than double the number of messages published.

Using the data obtained in the analysis of social networks, a very interesting and critical research will be carried out in many aspects. For example, studying the interactions the members of the CORONATEC received during this first month of state of alarm, as well as the engagement concept that provides us an objective and quantitative measurement to observe the evolution of these organizations on Twitter.

Image 4. Total number of interactions

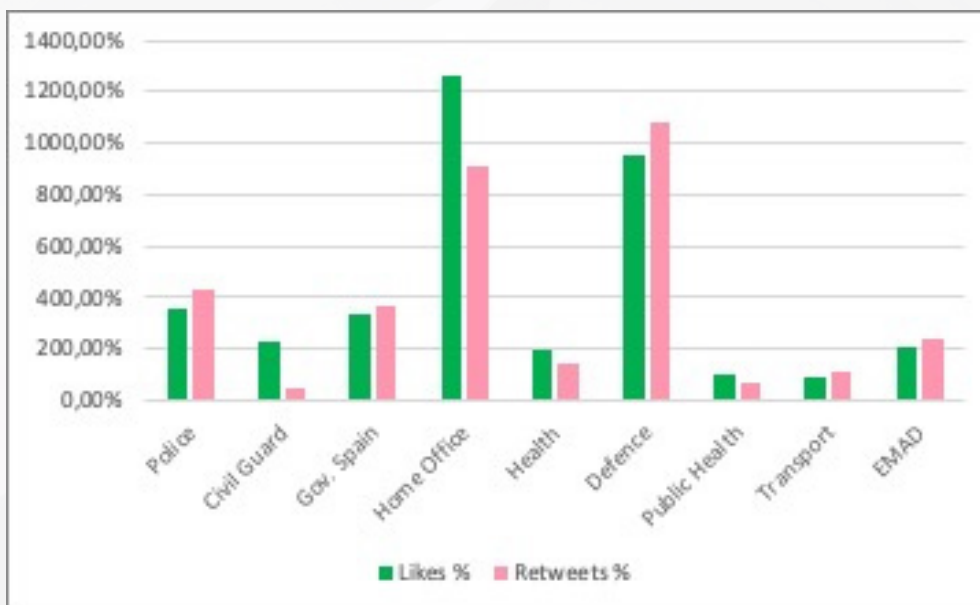


Source: authors' own creation and Metricool

The dominance of the Civil Guard and the National Police Corps for this indicator is overwhelming, and according to the objectives that certain public service organizations set this parameter can be considered as key. Either because of the number of Likes (L) or Retweets (RT), their outstanding positions, quantitatively speaking, is obvious since they are the only ones having six digits when counting both aspects. The organization directed by María Gámez is leader when it comes to the number of Likes by a significant difference, since, during the period under analysis, it surpassed the nine hundred thousand (937175), with almost three hundred thousand more than the National Police Corps (281480). These distances do get shorter for both entities when it comes to the number of RT, but they almost reach the one hundred thousand figures (99139).

In the lower right part of the graph is the Ministry of Transport, being the one that Likes the least and RT receives; and the Defense Staff which did not reach the nine thousand five hundred retweets (9456). However, there is the paradox that this organization does accumulate a high number of Likes (42058), achieving a position very close to the Ministry of Home Affairs (44660). This leaves the entity directed by José Luis Ábalos with the poorest figures.

Image 5. Interaction percentages



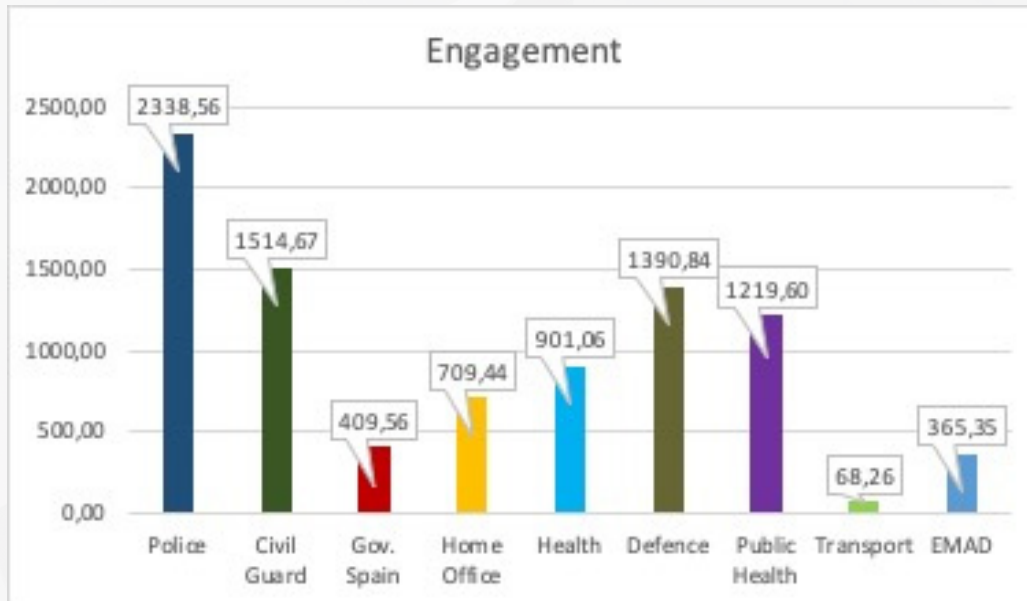
Source: authors' own creation and Metricool

In a similar way to how it was formulated with the previous indicators, some aspects are also being clarified by including the percentage increase or decrease, at the interaction level, in the research, compared to previous equidistant sampling periods. Once again, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Defense are victorious in this comparison, although there are certain aspects that must be taken into account.

It can be affirmed that there is a low intensity of interaction for the Ministry of Transport, which did not produce a significant variation in percentage terms either. However, the growth in interaction for the National Police Corps and the Civil Guard, although in the graphic is not the highest, in absolute numeric terms it has a significant prominence. In fact, in the sum of Likes and RT, the Civil Guard increases its interactions by 754000 in relation to the control period, while the National Police Corps does it by 680000.

The increases for the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Defense also have a very different reading if it is interpreted in absolute numeric terms, since they sum 57000 and 120000 interactions, respectively, resulting very far from the first positions of the study. However, the ministry organizations directed by Fernando Grande Marlaska and Margarita Robles actually can boast about their new influence capacity on this initial phase of the state of alarm in Spain, since the increase percentages on Likes, have even reached four digits, 1266.17% and 951.31%; and a similar thing happened with the RT, 905.15% and 1082.89%.

Image 6. Engagement



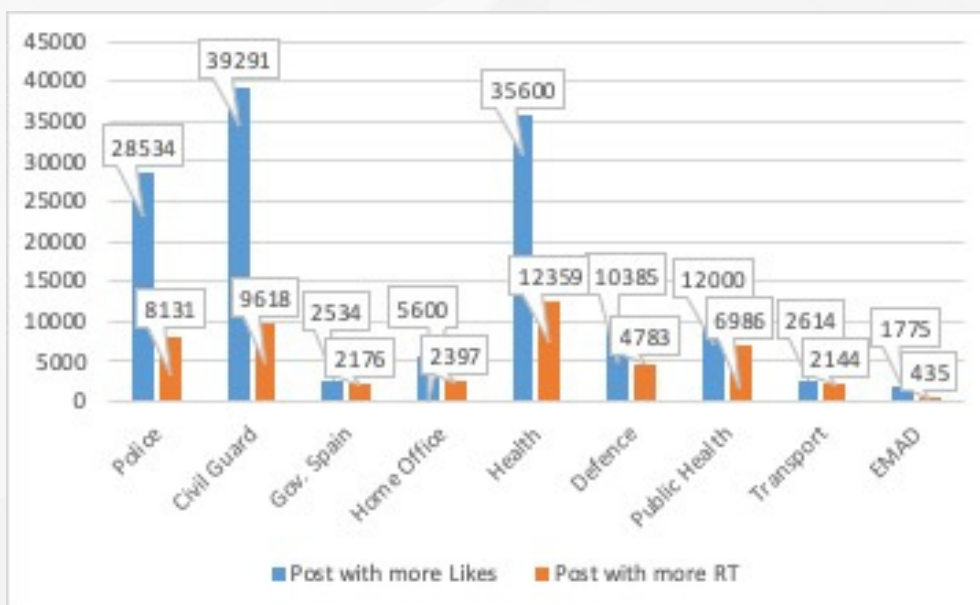
Source: authors' own creation and Metricool

Taking into account the commitment formula that has been detailed in the methodology, the solid commitment of the followers with the contents of the National Police Corps and the Civil Guard is confirmed. The total number of interactions (Likes + RT) for the Civil Guard added up to seven digits (1.243.548) for the first time during the period under analysis, leaving behind the National Police Corps with a figure close to a million interactions (862.929). Far in numbers there are Public Health (343.927), the Ministry of Health (315.370), and the Government of Spain (231.399); and again the Ministry of Transport is in the last position (16.587).

These figures speak for themselves of the impact that the different profiles and their positions had during the period analyzed, but by relating both concepts is how to obtain an overall vision that allows establishing a clear classification of commitment to the profiles of the selection within the delimited research extent. And, it is in this context in which the National Police Corps obtain an overwhelming success with a figure that surpasses two thousand basis points (2338.56). The Civil Guard, the Ministry of Defense and Public Health are within the range from one thousand to two thousand. The performance done by the profile representing the Health Alert and Emergency Coordination Center during the state of alarm stands out, and achieved a greater commitment than the entity on which it depends, the Ministry of Health. At this point, it is worth wondering what elements make up at least the best tweets posted by this profile, and as will be explained below, the figure of director of the Center for the Coordination of Health Alerts and Emergencies, Fernando Simón, is going to be an element of the qualitative study of these communicational impacts.

Although the data that had been previously observed already lead to the following result, the profile of the Ministry of Transport is, with a significant difference, the organization that achieved the least commitment, without even reaching the a hundred basis points (68.26). The number of tweets posted was not among the lowest figures (243) but the volume of interactions received was (16587) which lead to an engagement way lower than the rest of the analyzed entities in our research.

Image 7. Posts with more interactions



Source: authors' own creation and Metricool

Regarding the mobilization on Twitter of the involved organizations in the CORONATEC, the image of one entity is quite powerful again, the Civil Guard, which, once more, held the first position because of its publication with more Likes (39291), the second one with more RT (9618) and which also climbed to the first place with the summation of both (48909). However, the second recipient of these results is the Ministry of Health, the second regarding the post with more Likes (35600), first for RT (12359) and also second in the summation (47959). The analysis of the data also provides one more reading, since the Civil Guard and the Ministry of Health have the three data that have been presented previously, but they also have an extra characteristic. When the post that has accumulated the most likes and RT is the same, its label has been highlighted with green and this condition is met by the cases of the Civil Guard and the Ministry of Health, which could be weighed in various ways by the effort of collect both conditions, but it is preferred to focus only on the quantitative aspect for this graph.

Image 8. Examples of posts with more interactions



Source: Twitter

Now, qualitative aspects of the research on the tweets that received a greater number of interactions will be addressed. In the first place, the already commented cases of the Civil Guard (2020) and the Ministry of Health (2020) are analyzed since both entities meet the condition of having a single tweet accumulating more Likes and RT. This peculiarity is also found in the profiles of Public Health (2020), Ministry of Transport (2020), Ministry of Defense (2020) and Defense Staff (2020).

Three out of the twelve tweets had audiovisual elements and these were the ones from the Ministry of Health, Public Health and the Ministry of Defense. As for the case of the profile that reports on behalf of the work of the Health Alert and Emergence Coordination Center, it is the director of this last organization, Fernando Simón, who is the star addressing the comparison of what happened in Wuhan and the differences with the European environment. The length of the video is two minutes and has one single fixed medium shot of the director of the entity dependent on the Ministry of Health.

This entity also reached its highest high of interaction with the audiovisual format, specifically with an institutional campaign video that lasts one minute. It gathered contributions from particular citizens that had posted them on their profiles on the social networks and the narrative thread was done by a voice-over with diegetic music in the background, in addition to having subtitles incorporated for people with hearing impairment. The last shot was for the hashtag promoted by the government institutions, #EsteVirusLoParamosUnidos and in the upper left part of the screen you can observe the Shield of Spain together with the labels of the Ministry of Health and the Government of Spain.

As for the video of the Ministry of Defense, the image depicts several trucks of the Military Emergency Unit (MEU) coming out of a military base to perform reconnaissance activities in seven

Spanish cities. The audio is the background sound saturated by the noise of the trucks when starting their engines and there is no other type of statement during the whole forty two seconds it lasts.

Four out of the twelve selected tweets possess one or several images. The Health Alert and Emergence Coordination Center gathered three photos in a single tweet, two of the A400M plane landing and another one of the already unloaded shipment coming from Turkey. The National Police Corps (2020a) used a photo showing the inside of a patrol car and incorporated a clear message in it: «Trust official sources», together with its logo on the bottom right of the picture. The Civil Guard showed a close up photo of one of its members who lost his life due to the Coronavirus. The Ministry of Home Affairs (2020a) fixed a text covering almost the entire picture to inform about the one year extension of the expiry date of the National Identification Document for those whose expiration date was posterior to the establishment of the state of alarm. It includes a drawing of the document, on the bottom left the NID drawn letters and on the bottom right the Coat of arms of Spain.

Three of the tweets have only text, without any visual or audiovisual element. The National Police Corps (2020b) used text together with emojis and a hashtag to express their congratulation to the Spanish kids, who in spite of not being able to leave their homes, are doing very well. The Ministry of Home Affairs (2020b) transmitted the condolences of the Ministry of Home Affairs because of the demise of a Civil Guard due to the COVID-19 and did not use emojis, although it used two hashtags. Finally, the Ministry of Transport combined texts and emojis to use an unprecedented format, the threads. This thread is formed by seven tweets, although the first one is the subject of the study due to its number of interactions, but all of them used only texts, except for the first and the seventh tweet which have emojis and hashtags.

The use of hashtags is general, since eleven out of the twelve tweets under analysis included them, being #EsteVirusLoParamosUnidos the most used one with eleven appearances; in a second position is #COVID19, seven times. Other hashtags that appeared are #StopBulos, #StrongerTogether, #MOPS and #GAR. As for the use of emojis, they were exactly half of them, as they were used on six of the tweets.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

First, the general objectives of the research will be addressed, that is, the way in which these organizations are part of the CORONATEC used social media during this initial stage of the state of alarm in Spain from mid-March to April of 2020. According to the results established in all of the analyses, the National Police Corps and The Civil Guard are the most cyberactive profiles and the ones that produce mobilization the most through social media. They held the first two positions for the majority of the research: number of followers, posts and high level of commitment from their followers. The Enforcement and Security Corps of the State present in the study have been the ones managing their accounts on Twitter the best during this period under analysis because they have not abandoned the first positions for all of the items analyzed, and even when they would seem disadvantaged by the growth percentages, the absolute numbers showed a side very different to the multi-faceted reality that structures the quantitative analyses.

Each aspect that has been analyzed, is described below, the National Police Corps is the one that accomplished the greatest success, outstripping the rest of institutions by far, as a result of

their previous and present work, while being constant and innovative. This led us to a separate analysis from the rest of profiles, where the Civil Guard also stood out and meant for us noticing that their leadership regarding the number of posted tweets also brought positive results, as well as in other aspects such as interactions, in which it managed to be first with Likes and RT, and therefore, in the summation of both. Engagement was the only parameter that did not succumb to the praiseworthy institution, and the National Police Corps could boast about their work on social media with it.

Broadly speaking, a lack of response and interaction from users occurred for the accounts belonging to the four Ministries under analysis, as well as for the one of the Government Presidency. All the Likes accumulated by these five profiles could not even reach the second position; and they could barely be surpassed if the RT is considered. On the positive side, within this group is the Ministry of Health, which took the lead for both in the tweets posted and in the interactions obtained. On the negative side is the Ministry of Transport with symbolic figures for interactions and the engagement ratio.

In another note, the good numbers of Public Health, are also pointed out located in the middle of the range since, echoing the press conferences of Fernando Simón and the actions of the Center for the Coordination of Health Alert and Emergence, obtained a number of interactions that were above both the Ministries under analysis and the Government Presidency. The role of the Defense Staff can be considered as symbolic, even if it is placed above the Ministries of Health and Transport in relation to the growth rate for Likes and RT, and in which the Ministries of Home Affairs and Defense had the best figures. Therefore, its influence on Twitter is just emerging, although it is growing due to the crisis caused by the Coronavirus and its inclusion in CORONATEC.

The qualitative analysis allowed to know the power of the messages with visual and audiovisual elements, a total of seven out of the chosen twelve because they accumulated more Likes, RT or both requirements. It also explains clearly how the use of other multimedia elements is gaining relevance. Emojis were part of 50% of the tweets and the use of hashtags was present on eleven of them. Finally, the coordinated work of all the profiles belonging to the members of CORONATEC is highlighted by using two prominent hashtags during this period: #COVID19 and #EsteVirusLoParamosUnidos, which calls attention to worry about the situation and opens the way to overcome it.

Therefore, it is finally concluded that Twitter has established itself as an effective communication channel for CORONATEC members to spread their messages.

As a limit to our research, we point out the qualitative part that would allow us to discuss the results obtained in greater depth. Similarly, it will be of great relevance in future studies to analyze in detail the relationship between the number and content of posts published on Twitter and the degree of commitment of the receivers. That is, e.g., what are the reasons for a greater degree of acceptance of the security forces vis-à-vis the ministries. In this way we can explain really interesting cases such as the possible social, political or other causes for which the National Police is the one that achieves the greatest success. In other words, it will be very relevant to reflect on the reasons why the State Security Forces achieve a much higher degree of success in communication, participation and engagement on Twitter than, for example, the Ministries participating in the Committee. It should be related to factors such as the number of followers,

tweets, interactions, responses, etc. Furthermore, from a qualitative point of view, it will be useful to transcend these data and try to deduce, based on the nature of the communicative exchange, what is the cause for this closeness in some forces and not in others. Explain whether this fact stems from aspects such as closeness to people (such as the police or civil guards) compared to the more abstract political institutions (such as the Ministries), or is it simply the result of good management of communication on Twitter (by the number and content of the posts, the immediacy or the temporal moment in which it is published, the use of a closer or more informal language, the use of multimodal elements such as images or videos, etc.).

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