

## Engagement of the Spanish, English and German health ministries on TikTok

### *Engagement de los ministerios de sanidad español, inglés y alemán en TikTok*

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#### **Abstract**

*During the pandemic caused by Covid-19, government-dependent institutions had to take on numerous challenges, including communication efforts to inform citizens about the situation. One of the main communication channels was social networks and, among them, the emerging social network TikTok. This study addresses the analysis of the engagement of three European ministries of health, that of Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany, on the social network TikTok. The objective of the study is to conclude which are the communication strategies of each profile and which content achieved greater engagement with users. These countries are the only ones that have a profile on the social network, and they were created during the pandemic caused by Covid-19, so the work of the ministries and the content created on TikTok was influenced by the health situation. In this study, the methodology used was content analysis, studying each of the profiles of the health ministries and each of the published videos. Each country took on the challenge differently, Germany was the profile that created the most content and the one that achieved the highest levels of engagement; The United Kingdom only published eight videos, but it achieved very high engagement figures and Spain, unlike its European peers, achieved more humble engagement levels.*

#### **Keywords**

*Engagement, TikTok, Covid-19, politics, health, Spain, United Kingdom, Germany.*

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## Resumen

Durante la pandemia provocada por el Covid-19, las instituciones dependientes de los gobiernos tuvieron que asumir numerosos retos, entre ellos los esfuerzos de comunicación para informar a la ciudadanía sobre la situación. Uno de los principales canales de comunicación fueron las redes sociales, incluida la emergente red social TikTok. Este estudio analiza el *engagement* de tres ministerios de sanidad europeos, el de España, Reino Unido y Alemania, en la red social TikTok. El objetivo del estudio es concluir cuáles son las estrategias de comunicación de cada perfil y qué contenidos lograron un mayor *engagement* con los usuarios. Estos países son los únicos que tienen perfil en la red social y fueron creados durante la pandemia provocada por la Covid-19, por lo que la labor de los ministerios y el contenido creado en TikTok se vio influenciado por la situación sanitaria. En este estudio se utilizó la metodología de análisis de contenidos, estudiando cada uno de los perfiles de los ministerios de sanidad y también cada uno de los vídeos publicados. Cada país asumió el reto de manera diferente, Alemania fue el perfil que creó más contenido y logró los niveles, más altos de *engagement*; Reino Unido solo publicó ocho vídeos, pero consiguió unas cifras de *engagement* muy elevados y España, a diferencia de sus compañeros europeos logró unos niveles de *engagement* más humildes.

## Palabras clave

Engagement, TikTok, Covid-19, política, sanidad, España, Reino Unido, Alemania.

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## Introduction

Covid-19 has changed citizens' working routines. The health crisis affected all the institutions that were forced to fight an unknown virus and impose tough and complex measures to control it in the best way, while keeping the population informed. The ministries of health in each country were one of the actors responsible for this function. The methods of communication with the population were both through traditional channels and more innovative ones. Although many had profiles on several social networks, they took advantage of the situation to enter the emerging social network TikTok.

The target of this work is the European ministries of health which have a profile on the social network TikTok. In this case, Spain (@sanidadgob), the United Kingdom (@nhsuk) and Germany (@bmg\_bund). In this study, the engagement that these three profiles have generated since their creation

will be analyzed, taking into account the different strategies developed by the communication teams in each country and the type of content that generated the most commitment among TikTok users.

## **Topic contextualization and previous studies**

### *The TikTok phenomenon*

TikTok originated in China in September 2016 under the name Douyin, within ByteDance. The application made it possible to create music videos in which users performed lipsync. In November 2017, the company merged with Musical.ly and created TikTok, being Douyin version the one launched to the western market (Ballesteros-Herencia, 2020; Kumar & Prabha, 2019; Vázquez-Herrero *et al.*, 2020; Vintimilla-León & Torres-Toukoumidis, 2021).

As explained by Xu *et al.* (2019) the expansion of TikTok, Douyin in China, was possible by the strategy of the creative company ByteDance, which used four lines of action: promotion by recognized people, investment in marketing, online and offline activities and expansion to other countries. For the international presentation of the application, they chose to change the name to TikTok and began expanding it in the neighboring countries such as Japan, South Korea or Thailand. They would then access the Western market, where they placed among the applications with the most downloads and most active users (Xu *et al.*, 2019).

TikTok is a short video creation and broadcast application. This type of video is “broadcast to the public through mobile internet technology, with entertainment, science, singing and fashion being its main content” (Yang *et al.*, 2019, p. 340). Although social network content was linked to lipsync, it was diversified and included challengers, dances, anecdotes, recipes, but smoke videos became one of the most common themes (Wang, 2020).

According to the Digital Report 2021 of We are social (2021a), TikTok managed to position globally as the seventh most widely used social platform, with 689 million active users in January 2021. It was also placed in 2021 as the fourth social network where users spend the most time, about 13,3 hours a month. Focusing only on mobile consumption, in 2020, TikTok was the most downloaded application and the second where users spent the most time.

Looking at the data from the Spanish variant of the Digital 2021 report by We are social (2021b), it can be seen that TikTok is the tenth application with the most users monthly in 2020 and in the same year it was the mobile application with the most downloads, regardless of gaming applications.

### *Engagement and political participation in the age of digitization*

Participation is needed when talking about engagement. Carpentier (2011) explained that the concept of participation “is not a fixed notion, but is deeply rooted in our political realities and, therefore, it is the subject of intense and lasting ideological struggles” (p. 351). For this reason, a theoretical approach to the concepts of engagement and participation must be made.

Engagement can be translated as a commitment, although the term in English provides nuances that relate to motivation, enthusiasm, and involvement (Bergillos, 2017). The same author, Ignacio Bergillos (2017), also notes that engagement is interpreted as different from participation but understands them as complementary and the presence of both is necessary, since they are “two sides of the same coin”.

For its part, Nico Carpentier (2011) defined participation as “codecision,” which is “a situation where the actors involved in decision-making processes (formal or informal) are related with each other through power relations that (to some extent) are egalitarian” (Carpentier *et al.*, 2013, p. 132). Pateman, in his book *Democratic Theory and Participation* explained the concept of participation as “a process in which every member of a decision-making body has the same power to determine the outcome of decisions” (Pateman, 1970, p. 71).

Committed individuals have “feelings of persistence, vigor, energy, dedication, absorption, enthusiasm, alertness and pride” (Macey & Schneider, 2008, p. 4) generating engagement. This feeling or commitment is understood as cognitive, behavioral, and attitudinal attachment (Guidry *et al.*, 2017; Johnston, 2014; Paek *et al.*, 2013; Yang & Kang, 2009).

### *Political communication and permanent election campaign*

Participation of citizens in political conversation on social networks is an essential part of political communication (Koc-Michalska *et al.*, 2016). This participation is seen both in the production and in the dissemination of content in online environment. This role of creators and disseminators di-

rectly affects the strategic planning of the current political communication (Gil-Ramírez *et al.*, 2020).

What is now understood as active participation in politics goes beyond the electoral campaign, because it occurs in a context of a permanent campaign (Nimmo, 1999) that transcends elections and covers the entire political cycle. To be an active citizen, voting is essential but also participating in the campaign, being in contact with representatives and in lobbying (Verba *et al.*, 1995).

Applied to the online environment, the prosumer, who is the consumer, producer, and issuer of the content (Gil-Ramírez *et al.*, 2020), modified the traditional power relations between the three spheres involved in political communication, the media, politics and the public. The first two held the power, since politicians and the media had the hegemony of speech, faced with a citizenship with little capacity for participation; this hierarchy disappeared because of the social media, allowing civil society the capacity to intervene in political information directly through the web 2.0 (Gil-Ramírez & Gómez de Travesedo, 2020). This intervention of the citizenry is related to the loss of the power of the traditional media to set the agenda and to the modification of the way political information is presented and disseminated (Mitchelstein *et al.*, 2018; Vargo *et al.*, 2014).

This figure of citizens as prosumers causes the messages planned by the political sphere to compete in a scenario where multiple ideas are present, complicating the effectiveness of the desired strategic communication (Gil-Ramírez *et al.*, 2020). This problem has forced political actors to modify the dynamics that governed political communication in the twentieth century but that no longer work and therefore they must adapt to the new context (Rúas-Araújo & Casero-Ripollés, 2018). This adaptation involves understanding that the prosumer is a new narrator and can build his/her own agenda, which complicates the control of communication planning in a strategic way for political actors (Cancelo-Sanmartín & Gadea-Aldave, 2013; Gil-Ramírez *et al.*, 2020).

Social networks are platforms that inform citizenship and build political thinking (Mouffe, 2000). According to Valenzuela (2013), there are three possible political uses of social networks, to inform, where the news is accessed; to express the political thinking and activism, i.e., to create a space to unite the causes with a mobilizing purpose.

This mobilization will also depend on the relevance and influence that individual has on social networks. Activity and popularity are considered in

determining this influence of the different actors (Riquelme & González-Cantergiani, 2016; Valerio *et al.*, 2015; Yoo & Gil de Zúñiga, 2014). The activity indicator refers to the amount of content created and disseminated and the capacity of the content to have an impact on the public agenda and political processes; popularity is related to visibility, i.e., the ability to be recognized by other users. This is related to the number of followers: the more followers, the more influence; and the digital authority occurs when the user has connections with other highly connected users on the network, having a voice in the digital debate (Casero-Ripollés, 2020).

This new digital environment has broken the media's monopoly on producing information (Chadwick, 2017), but it has also ended the media's monopoly on "exercising influence on public debate" (Casero-Ripollés, 2020, p. 36). Scholars have opposing ideas about this disruption of the Internet and the effects it can have on political participation. For authors such as Wojcieszak and Mutz (2009), social networks can have negative effects in this area, as homogeneous social networks are created, where components lack the variety of information to train politically and discuss with other individuals. On the contrary, other authors such as Farrell (2012) see Internet as a means that facilitates political participation to reach a wide audience, to create partnership between individuals and, in general, their democratic potential.

## **Research objectives**

This study analyzes engagement in TikTok accounts of the ministries of health of three European countries: Spain (@sanidadgob), the United Kingdom (@nhsuk) and Germany (@bmg\_bund). The aim of this research is to know the content each ministry creates, and which one generated the most commitment in the audience to point out similarities and differences, as well as to know the content creation dynamics of the three ministries.

## **Materials and method**

After a country search, it was found that only these three ministries of health had an account in this social network. The profiles are Spain (@sanidadgob), UK (@nhsuk) and Germany (@bmg\_bund).

The study is based on the objective of identifying and analyzing the strategies for achieving engagement used by the profiles of European health ministries in a social network such as TikTok. The motivation for choosing this social network is its novelty, especially because the three profiles chosen represent the only European countries that have an account created by their ministries of health because of the pandemic. All three were created either during the first months of the health crisis, or during the crisis. Germany was the first country that created it, which published a TikTok welcoming the account on 25 March 2020; the United Kingdom created it on 2 April 2020, and Spain had the first content published on 7 September 2020.

The methodology used is content analysis. This is a “research technique designed to formulate, on the basis of certain data, reproducible and valid inferences that can be applied to its context” (Krippendorff, 1990, p. 28).

Laurence Bardin (1986) explained content analysis as “a set of methodological instruments, increasingly perfect and constantly improving, applied to extremely diversified ‘discourses’ (contents and continents)” (p. 7). Bardin also points out that the analysis of content moves between two sides: objectivity and subjectivity.

To carry out this research, a detailed analysis of the profiles was done, and two tables of analysis were constructed, one aimed at the profiles of the ministries of health and the other to analyze each video individually. The profiles table analyzes the number of followers and followed, total views, generated content, and users’ global interactions with the profile.

A detailed analysis is carried out in the table of each video, attending to several groups: identification, engagement, theme, text of the publication, hashtags, audio, and video.

Subsequently, the data obtained were analyzed quantitatively and comparatively, placing the different contents in a decreasing way according to the number of interactions they had generated. This number of interactions along with the analysis of the content of the videos comments are the key to knowing the engagement of each account and its TikToks.

The data were collected from 14 to June 20, 2021, so the figures or values could vary from the time of collection to the time of publication.

## **Results**

### **Creation of profiles and first content**

The accounts of the ministries of health in Germany, the United Kingdom and Spain were created to provide information on coronavirus, which is observed in biographies in the United Kingdom and Germany. In the English case, their presentation is “Yes, the current NHS. We can’t give medical advice here. Don’t waste COVID tests” and in German: “Bundesministerium für Gesundheit. Aktuelle Informationen zum Coronavirus”. Spain shows a more general message: “Cuenta oficial del Ministerio de Sanidad, Gobierno de España”, but its content is largely about coronavirus.

As for the first videos, Spain presented its first video through animations, texts, and music to announce its arrival in the social network, the video has 4834 visualizations, 312 likes, 24 comments and 570 shared views. In the case of Germany, it is the Minister of Health, Jens Spahn, who presents the profile of the German Ministry of Health. The TikTok has 2,5 million views, 109 200 likes, 2531 comments and 2946 shared views. Finally, the United Kingdom presented its first video with the help of health workers who were working during the pandemic. The video has 1,7 million views, 235 600 likes, 6413 comments and 2244 shared views.

In most social networks, there are profile verification mechanisms, which are granted to relevant accounts. Out of the three accounts analyzed, Spain is the only one without the logo.

### **Videos that generated the most engagement based on their content**

It is interesting to know if the videos with the most views and interactions are related in some way to try to understand what kind of videos the audience is most interested in and interact with.

In the case of the views, the five most viewed TikToks of each profile were chosen and their contents were also included to see which are the most viewed.



**Table 1***The fifth @sanidadgob TikToks with more views and their content*

	Views	Type of content	Link
1	123,5K	Press conference by Fernando Simón showing the pin with the symbol to fight against antibiotic resistance.	<a href="https://bit.ly/30uQbUb">https://bit.ly/30uQbUb</a>
2	89,9K	Press conference by Fernando Simón where he acknowledges the action of Pablo, a boy and his friends who cleaned up areas affected by vandalism after a demonstration against the curfew.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m8hyL7">https://bit.ly/3m8hyL7</a>
3	88,8K	Mental health awareness campaign.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3EYaXuj">https://bit.ly/3EYaXuj</a>
4	85,6K	Wizard Héctor Sansegund does a card trick while explaining the 3M.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m73txN">https://bit.ly/3m73txN</a>
5	78,3K	Campaigns of previous years to fight AIDS and the advances made in raising awareness in society.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m5y1OU">https://bit.ly/3m5y1OU</a>

In the most seen TikToks of @sanidadgob, it is observed that the first two include Fernando Simón, director of the Coordination Center for Health Alerts and Emergencies. In the third and fifth place, although the main theme is coronavirus, the TikToks dealing with other health sectors are also viewed. The third most watched video is a mental health campaign and the fifth is the fight against aids. In addition, one of the videos featuring Fernando Simón, the most viewed in the profile, despite being part of a press conference to report on the pandemic, actually talks about the day of fighting antibiotic resistance. Also, there is a video that talks about 3M for virus prevention but is presented by a magician.

**Table 2***The fifth TikToks of @nhsuk with more views and their content*

	Views	Type of content	Link
1	1,7M	A chief nurse is sentimental with the applause for health workers.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3ISOd7">https://bit.ly/3ISOd7</a>
2	139,2K	View of buildings and people applauding health workers during confinement.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3q2KpBV">https://bit.ly/3q2KpBV</a>
3	116,8K	A candle burning while observing a minute of silence for those who died of Covid-19.	<a href="https://bit.ly/30zjepG">https://bit.ly/30zjepG</a>
4	91,3K	Animation that explains the three basic standards of protection: Mask, distance and hand hygiene.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DXOM6a">https://bit.ly/3DXOM6a</a>
5	12,6K	Vaccination campaign.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m8NgYH">https://bit.ly/3m8NgYH</a>

Although the English profile only has eight videos, it is noted that the most viewed content of @nhsuk is the one that touches feelings, being in the first place the images of a chief of nurses excited by the support of the citizenry; in the second, the images of applause for health workers and, thirdly, the minute of silence in memory of people who died during the pandemic. Fourth and fifth are pandemic awareness videos that do not appeal so much to feelings.

**Table 3**

*The fifth TikToks of @bmg\_bund with more views and their content*

	Views	Type of content	Link
1	12M	First video of #TeamAntiVirus, a recreation of Nintendo's Mario Bros adapted to coronavirus.	<a href="https://bit.ly/33xQw9L">https://bit.ly/33xQw9L</a>
2	3.4M	Video #TeamAntiVirus, also inspired by Mario Bros but with a female character.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DY1YrC">https://bit.ly/3DY1YrC</a>
3	3.3M	Video of #TeamAntiVirus, a video game is played where the protagonist, @itsdyma, a German tiktoker, must dodge people to keep a safe distance.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3ysbRwK">https://bit.ly/3ysbRwK</a>
4	2.5M	Profile presentation that includes Jens Spahn, German Minister of Health.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DSciBy">https://bit.ly/3DSciBy</a>
5	2.0M	The tiktoker @eduardbaka is hitting emerging messages where plans that are not safe or do not respect the rules of prevention of Covid-19 are proposed; it finishes when a good proposal appears.	<a href="https://bit.ly/33xSJSB">https://bit.ly/33xSJSB</a>

The German case is probably the clearest. The most viewed video of @bmg\_bund makes it clear that the #TeamAntiVirus campaign, where a series of videos that mimic video games trying to raise awareness and give information related with the virus, are a success. Almost all videos belong to the campaign of #TeamAntivirus, except for the fourth place, occupied by the video presentation of the account in which Jens Spahn, German Minister of Health, appears. The first video achieved 12 million views, well above the next most watched video that remained in 3.4 million views.

The #TeamAntiVirus campaign had 21,8 million views. Of the total profile views, i.e., 34,9 million, the reproduction achieved by the #TeamAntiVirus campaign represent 62,41%.

Beyond views, audience engagement can be analyzed through interactions, observing what content they like, what they comment on and what feelings the videos generate and what they share.

In this way, a table was created for each profile that collects the five videos with more likes, the five with more comments and the five with more shares. In addition, the table also refers to the type of content that each of the TikToks addresses, and the description was simplified for those that repeat.

**Table 4**

*The fifth TikToks of @sanidadgob with more interactions divided into likes, comments and shares*

	Likes	Type of content	Link
1	3427	A starting video game where a personified coronavirus and its opponents in the fight are presented: the mask, alcohol, and a ruler.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3s5OhVd">https://bit.ly/3s5OhVd</a>
2	3106	Press conference by Fernando Simón showing the pin with the anti-antibiotic resistance symbol.	<a href="https://bit.ly/30uQbUb">https://bit.ly/30uQbUb</a>
3	1765	Wizard Hector Sansegund performs a magic trick to raise awareness of the 3M.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m73txN">https://bit.ly/3m73txN</a>
4	1297	Press conference of Fernando Simón where he acknowledges the action of Pablo, a boy and his friends who cleaned up areas affected by vandalism after a demonstration against the curfew.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m8hyL7">https://bit.ly/3m8hyL7</a>
5	918	Video showing AIDS campaigns.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m5y1OU">https://bit.ly/3m5y1OU</a>
	Comments	Type of content	Link
1	114	Press conference by Fernando Simón on antibiotic resistance.	<a href="https://bit.ly/30uQbUb">https://bit.ly/30uQbUb</a>
2	101	Wizard Hector Sansegund performs a magic trick to raise awareness of the 3M.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m73txN">https://bit.ly/3m73txN</a>
3	89	Press conference of Salvador Illa announcing the beginning of vaccination in Spain on December 27, 2020.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3F0tOVE">https://bit.ly/3F0tOVE</a>
4	72	Fernando Simón thanking Paul and all “Pablos of Spain” for their gesture.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m8hyL7">https://bit.ly/3m8hyL7</a>
5	61	TikTok simulating a coronavirus video game against 3M.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3s5OhVd">https://bit.ly/3s5OhVd</a>

	Shared	Type of content	Link
1	851	Awareness campaign “This is not a game” where health guidelines are presented.	<a href="https://bit.ly/320F6e3">https://bit.ly/320F6e3</a>
2	570	First video of the profile announcing the arrival of the Ministry of Health in TikTok.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m7urFp">https://bit.ly/3m7urFp</a>
3	559	How to store the mask properly when not in use.	<a href="https://bit.ly/324Us0S">https://bit.ly/324Us0S</a>
4	404	Video to encourage people to wear the mask properly.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m8LLd1">https://bit.ly/3m8LLd1</a>
5	333	Awareness that the virus is everywhere even if it is not seen, so all security measures should be used.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DXwX7o">https://bit.ly/3DXwX7o</a>

The content that generated more interactions in the Spanish profile is not much different from the most viewed content. In fact, there is a significant relation between the three categories.

Fernando Simón’s video on antibiotic resistance is the most viewed, the second with more likes and the most commented. It should be noted that many of the comments were not positive, not so much because of the content, but because of the person who communicated the message. A similar thing happens with the third most commented video, in which Salvador Illa, former Minister of Health, announced the beginning of the vaccination campaign. Many of the comments are negative, the result of the mistrust that the vaccine generated in its early days.

Another video is the one by Fernando Simón, who congratulates Pablo, a boy who had helped clean up the vandalism acts produced after a demonstration against the curfew. This TikTok is the second most viewed, the most liked and the most commented. The video with the magician Héctor Sansegund is the fourth most viewed, the third most liked and the second most commented; in this case, it is observed that most of the comments relate to the magic trick performed.

Despite having 81 000 views, the video presenting the “fight” among the personified coronavirus, mask, alcohol gel and ruler, was the video with more likes, reaching 3427 interactions in this category and was also the fifth with more comments, with 61.

The most shared videos are the ones with no match with the other categories. It is noted that the decision to interact with these contents has a different logic than the previous ones. In this field, there are more awareness-raising content and more serious information. So, the first video of the

campaign “This is not a game” is in the first place, which appeals to individual responsibility for going to parties, events, or meetings with friends.

The video presentation of the account is in the second place, and two videos that show the correct use of the mask are in the third and fourth place. Finally, the video of the Ministry’s awareness campaigns, which refers to the fact that the virus is still present, although it is not seen.

**Table 5**

*The fifth TikToks of @nhsuk with more interactions divided into likes, comments, and shares*

	Likes	Type of Content	Link
1	235.6K	A chief nurse is sentimental because of the applauses for health workers.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3ISOd7">https://bit.ly/3ISOd7</a>
2	20,2K	View of buildings and people applauding health workers during confinement.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3q2KpBV">https://bit.ly/3q2KpBV</a>
3	11,9K	A candle burning while observing a minute of silence for those who died of Covid-19.	<a href="https://bit.ly/30zjepG">https://bit.ly/30zjepG</a>
4	5905	Animation that explains the three basic standards of protection: Mask, distance, and hand hygiene.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DXOM6a">https://bit.ly/3DXOM6a</a>
5	962	Vaccination campaign.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m8NgYH">https://bit.ly/3m8NgYH</a>
	Comments	Type of Content	Link
1	6386	Chief nurse excited about the applauses for health workers.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3ISOd7">https://bit.ly/3ISOd7</a>
2	709	Minute of silence for those who died because of Covid-19.	<a href="https://bit.ly/30zjepG">https://bit.ly/30zjepG</a>
3	549	Applauses for health workers.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3q2KpBV">https://bit.ly/3q2KpBV</a>
4	148	Vaccination campaign.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3m8NgYH">https://bit.ly/3m8NgYH</a>
5	136	Dr. Karan Raj (@dr.karanr) explains the importance of vaccination against the virus.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3yC9Qy8">https://bit.ly/3yC9Qy8</a>
	Shared	Type of Content	Link
1	2244	Chief nurse excited about the health applause.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3ISOd7">https://bit.ly/3ISOd7</a>
2	151	Applauses for health workers.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3q2KpBV">https://bit.ly/3q2KpBV</a>
3	54	Animation that explains the three basic protection standards.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DXOM6a">https://bit.ly/3DXOM6a</a>
4	33	Candle, minute of silence for the dead.	<a href="https://bit.ly/30zjepG">https://bit.ly/30zjepG</a>
5	16	Video in favor of vaccination.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3oXXcX2">https://bit.ly/3oXXcX2</a>

There is a great coincidence between interactions in the profile of the UK National Health Service, something that can be influenced by the low number of contents created by the English profile. It is observed that the most watched and most liked videos match up in positions. In turn, the first four most watched and liked videos were the first to be published. So that the first video was the most watched and most watched, as well as the followings.

This trend changes with the fifth most watched and most liked video, which was not the fifth published video but the penultimate. This video is part of the English vaccination campaign and was also the fourth most commented.

There are also videos that were in other categories in the most shared TikToks, except for the fifth video that is the first out of the three published that address vaccination.

The eight published the videos in the profile belong to one of the categories analyzed, except one of them, which seeks to raise awareness of existing measures among citizens, especially young people.

The English TikToks were particularly well accepted in those published at the beginning of the account, but it is true that as content progresses, views and interactions decrease and reach lower numbers.

**Table 6**  
*The fifth TikToks of @bmg\_bund with more interactions  
divided into likes, comments and shares*

	<b>Likes</b>	<b>Content type</b>	<b>Link</b>
1	109,2K	Video presentation of the profile, which featured Jens Spahn, German Minister of Health.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DSciBy">https://bit.ly/3DSciBy</a>
2	107,1K	First video of #TeamAntiVirus, a recreation of Nintendo's Mario Bros adapted to the coronavirus.	<a href="https://bit.ly/33xQw9L">https://bit.ly/33xQw9L</a>
3	73,2K	Announcement of an initiative in the page <a href="http://www.zusammengengencorona.de">www.zusammengengencorona.de</a> to fight coronavirus.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3dSqIMX">https://bit.ly/3dSqIMX</a>
4	53,7K	Tutorial on how to properly wash hands.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3Isc5SB">https://bit.ly/3Isc5SB</a>
5	44K	Video of #TeamAntiVirus, a reproduction of a video game where the protagonist, @itsdyma, a German tiktokker, must dodge people to maintain distance.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3ysbRwK">https://bit.ly/3ysbRwK</a>
	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Content type</b>	<b>Link</b>
1	2.531	Video presentation of the profile	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DSciBy">https://bit.ly/3DSciBy</a>

2	1.426	First video of #TeamAntiVirus, a recreation of Nintendo's Mario Bros.	<a href="https://bit.ly/33xQw9L">https://bit.ly/33xQw9L</a>
3	742	Announcement of an initiative in the page <a href="http://www.zusammengenegecorona.de">www.zusammengenegecorona.de</a> to fight coronavirus.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3dSqlMX">https://bit.ly/3dSqlMX</a>
4	699	Tutorial on how to properly wash hands.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3ISc5SB">https://bit.ly/3ISc5SB</a>
5	688	David Hasselhoff encourages people to get vaccinated.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3s5j44E">https://bit.ly/3s5j44E</a>
	Shared	Content type	Link
1	2946	Video presentation of the profile	<a href="https://bit.ly/3DSciBy">https://bit.ly/3DSciBy</a>
2	2683	Announcement of an initiative in the page <a href="http://www.zusammengenegecorona.de">www.zusammengenegecorona.de</a> to fight coronavirus.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3dSqlMX">https://bit.ly/3dSqlMX</a>
3	1426	First video of #TeamAntiVirus, a recreation of Nintendo's Mario Bros.	<a href="https://bit.ly/33xQw9L">https://bit.ly/33xQw9L</a>
4	1096	Tutorial on how to properly wash hands.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3ISc5SB">https://bit.ly/3ISc5SB</a>
5	931	David Hasselhoff encourages the German population to get vaccinated.	<a href="https://bit.ly/3s5j44E">https://bit.ly/3s5j44E</a>

In the profile of @bmg\_bund there is a greater similarity between the videos that have more interactions, likes, comments and shares than with the videos with more views. While in the most viewed, four of the five TikToks were part of the #TeamAntiVirus video group. We found some of these contents in the other categories, but they did not have so much impact in these fields. The second most watched video that reached 3,4 million views failed to enter any of the above interaction lists. The same happened to another video of #TeamAntiVirus, in which the tiktoker @eduardbaka appeared, which despite being the fifth most viewed of the account did not generate as many interactions as to enter the other lists.

Matches are found in the three lists in the first place, where the profile presentation video was positioned. The TikTok which presents an initiative of the website [www.zusammengenegecorona.de](http://www.zusammengenegecorona.de) to fight the virus, reached the third place of the videos with more likes, the third most commented and the second most shared. In the same way, the video that explained how to wash hands correctly generated great interest.

The video in which David Hasselholff appeared to encourage the German population to get vaccinated, was not the most watched or the most

liked, but it positioned as the fifth most commented and shared, probably because of David.

In general terms, in the German case it is noted that the #TeamAntiVirus campaign is a clear success, especially the first video that was the most watched, the second with more likes and more comments and the third most shared. Leaving this aside, it is observed that there is a greater variety of content in the interactions in videos where the tiktoker @itsdyma appeared, being the fifth most watched.

Several of the most viewed content did not achieve a high rate of interaction, while others, with less views, encouraged users to comment or share.

## **Conclusions and discussion**

Social networks are a tool for institutions and for ministries of health to communicate with the public. This forced communication teams not only to create a social media communication strategy, but also to adapt this strategy to each of the platforms on which they are present. TikTok was the last network to appear, but because of its impact and number of downloads and users, some institutions understood the need to be present on it as well, being part of the communication strategy of government institutions that must be in an active election campaign.

First, the initiative of Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany to be present in a new social network that is different from the others should be highlighted. It is also important to note that this inclusion in the social network took place at a very difficult moment, the health crisis. At that time, institutions, plus ministries of health, were required to provide accurate and fast information about a virus that was increasing its rate.

In general, the three profiles analyzed provided real and proven information to the population to fight virus and its spread. In this way, the numerous videos published were very useful to explain in detail how the virus worked and how it could be combated.

In addition to having to communicate on these topics, the three profiles managed to adapt to the platform, its format, and the mechanisms of positioning existing contents.

Based on the engagement, differences were observed between the types of content that generated the most commitment in each of the countries. In Germany, the content with the most interactions were those of the #TeamAntiVi-



rus campaign and the profile's own video presentation. This shows that videos that are more relaxed but are informative are well accepted by users. Also, some of them included the participation of known people, which also helps to direct traffic from profiles with a good engagement to the profile of the ministry. In addition to these contents, others were also welcomed where the end was informative, and the video was a tutorial or a series of tips to follow.

In the UK, the videos that made the most use of the emotions lived during the pandemic were the ones that generated engagement among users. The great support they had on the part of users is striking, since the engagement achieved was very high for the number of contents published and its dispersion over time. Therefore, it is difficult to understand why they did not continue to exploit a social network from which they could profit and that could constitute a good channel of communication with their audience.

The lowest engagement data are found in the Spanish profile. The contents with the most interactions were, on the one hand, those in which Fernando Simón appeared, although the feedback in the comments was not always good, indicating problems with the government in part of the population. On the other hand, some of the contents that were not related to the virus also generated audience engagement, such as AIDS awareness campaign or more videos with the participation of people who are not part of the ministry.

The research concludes that TikTok's accounts of the ministries of Germany, the United Kingdom and Spain managed to start their journey on the social network at a very complicated time for a ministry of health, such as a public health crisis that became a global pandemic. In addition, research shows that users are willing to consuming content that comes from government institutions, especially those videos that, while being informative, address content clearly, and in a relaxed or even humorous way. All three accounts have a long way to go on the platform and must work to create content that generates engagement for users without losing their communication objectives.

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