



## INVESTIGACIÓN/RESEARCH

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### **ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS IN SPAIN 2012-2016: MUCH MORE THAN COMMUNICATION TOOLS**

Loreto Vázquez Chas<sup>1</sup>: Universidade da Coruña. Spain.

E-mail: [loreto.vazquez@udc.es](mailto:loreto.vazquez@udc.es)

#### **Abstract:**

Nowadays, *online* social networks are a part of the everyday life of millions of people in the world, and its use it is not limited to their personal sphere, but also these networks became tools for social participation and in a new type of mass media, all of that having repercussions over individual social capital, due to their power of supplementing it, as it will be shown in this paper. While studying the corresponding data, referred to Spain, the evolution of these networks will be profiled regarding the mentioned items, in the period from year 2012 to year 2016 getting to the conclusion that even if there is not an increase in the use of *online* social networks in 2015 in relationship to 2012, they still illustrate that they have the capacity of supplementing social capital.

**Key words:** social network – Internet – *online* social networks – social capital – mass media – social participation – prosumer

### **LAS REDES SOCIALES *ONLINE* EN ESPAÑA 2012-2016: MUCHO MÁS QUE UNA HERRAMIENTA COMUNICATIVA**

#### **Resumen:**

En la actualidad, las redes sociales *online* se han convertido en parte de la vida diaria de millones de personas en el mundo y su uso no queda limitado al terreno personal, si no que también se convirtieron en herramientas de participación en la sociedad y en nuevos medios de comunicación, lo que tiene repercusiones sobre el capital social de los individuos, ya que, como se verá a lo largo de este trabajo, lo complementa. Al mismo tiempo que se estudian los datos correspondientes, referentes a España, se perfila la evolución de dichas redes con respecto a los ítems mencionados en el periodo de tiempo que comprende desde el año 2012 al año 2016, para llegar a la

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<sup>1</sup> Loreto Vázquez Chas: Universidade da Coruña. Spain.

E-mail: [loreto.vazquez@udc.es](mailto:loreto.vazquez@udc.es)

conclusión de que si bien el uso que se hace de las redes sociales *online* en la actualidad no se ha incrementado con respecto a los datos de 2012, sí que continúan mostrando que tienen capacidad para complementar al capital social en la actualidad.

**Palabras clave:** red social - Internet - redes sociales *online* – capital social – medios de comunicación – participación social - prosumidor

## 1. INTRODUCTION

While social networks are as old as society, it was not until a few years ago with the widespread use of Internet and the *boom* that led to the *online* version of these networks, when the term left the intellectual field to become part of the daily life of citizens, either by the use of these networks, to hear or read about them in the traditional media or the Internet or simply because they are part of thousands of conversations every day.

The concept of social network used in this work is the same as that used by Requena Santos in his concept of social network, which

The network idea, as it is used here, is taken largely of the mathematical graph theory. This theory a number of points linked by a series of relationships that meet certain properties is called a network. That is, a node of the network is linked to another by a line that shows the direction and sense of the link (Requena Santos, 1989, p.137).

In the same work, the author explains that day by day social networks are built that begin to form when the individual joins the primary social groups, creating, as they grow, a personal network based on himself through different relationships that It establishes, its position on other networks and social scenarios in which he moves.

Thus, in its *online* version there is a fairly large number of contacts that the individual has, whether they represent strong links (that is, the familiar ones) as weak (that is, the acquaintances) (Granovetter, 1973), as if they belong to the personal sphere, to the work one, to the leisure one or any other scenario in which the individual develops an activity. They all come together in one tool in a more or less visible way to the person concerned. Not only that, the costs of access to any of those contacts practically disappears. In addition, these networks allow to participate in society in a new way and, again, reducing the costs.

Taking all this together, a clear relationship arises with the concept of social capital. There are many definitions of it that have been given over time, generating all them their corresponding discussion, so there is no one that is unanimously accepted in the field of sociology. Social capital refers to all those features of social organization that facilitate the coordination and cooperation between individuals, to thus obtain common benefits; highlighting among these characteristics networks and trust (Putnam, 1993). In this case, for its operativeness, simplicity and adaptation to the objectives pursued in this research, the one promulgated by Burt is taken: "friends,

colleagues and wider contacts through which one has opportunities to use his financial and human capital "(Burt, 1992, p.9 cited in Portes 1998), although the family must be added to this definition, as the social capital has a role in "social control, family support and benefits transmitted through extra familial networks" (Portes, 1998, p.2).

Precisely in the situation that we are now living in Spain, a country in which we will focus this work, in which there is a deep economic crisis marked by high unemployment, the social capital through social networks both *online* and *offline*, it is not only a source of support at the personal and economic level, but also at the level of job search. Indeed, the weak links are those that allow access to different information that the one that has the inner circle of an individual and have proven to be most effective in achieving a job (Granovetter, 1973), so being able to access those links and their information, plus their contacts with just one click, is another of the implications and uses of *online* social networks.

Also it is a key in such a context the information provided by the media, in its different variants.

Therefore, the Internet stage that is really interesting for this job is that comes from the web 2.0 where the prosumers are found, a term that Toffler introduced formally. This author, analyzing the course of the economy of knowledge, used the term "prosumer" to refer to that before the Industrial Revolution, people ate what they produced, unlike what happened after that revolution in which the roads of the producer and consumer separated. It should be noted also that decades after the Industrial Revolution the media with more power and massing was the television (Islas, 2010 paraphrasing and quoting Toffler, 1981).

Islas (2010), following Toffler (1981) shows how this author pointed out that in the coming years the mainstream media would demasifiers, such as the Internet, according to Islas (2010).

And the prosumers of the present society must be placed within the information and knowledge society. The key of all this is the *mass collaboration*, that is directly related with the term "wikinomics" that is defined by Tapscott and Williams as *the art and science of mass collaboration*" (Tapscott and Williams, 2006) and describe seven models of collaboration within the wikinomics concept:

*"(1) "Peer production" is exemplified by Wikipedia and Linux. (2) "Ideagoras" are forums in which both problems (without solutions) and solutions (without applications) are openly shared --- inviting outsiders as well as insiders to invent answers. (3) "Prosumers" brings consumers into the design and production process, not just the purchase and use stage. (4) "The New Alexandrians" (e.g., the Human Genome Project) invite collaborative research among laboratories and between university and industry and see amazing advances in scientific knowledge. (5) "Platforms for Participation" describes things like Amazon's reader review section, and other collaborative knowledge sharing sites. (6) The "Global Plant Floor" describes how not just parts but*

*whole modules are produced in different places, shipped and snapped together at the last moment (e.g., Boeing's newest planes). (7) The "Wiki Workplace" is exemplified by the "Geek Squad's" development and subsequent incorporation into Best Buy" (Tapscott y Williams, 2006).*

As can be seen, collaboration in the digital world makes it possible to be part of projects that previously would only be heard or read about them, it makes possible that the consumer behavior varies due to the opinion -previously difficult to know- of many third parties about a product and even helps that science continues to advance or even a job is achieved.

Therefore, there is a more than obvious conclusion it is that communication from one to many, as was the case with traditional media, is not the only one that there is, as ever more, the message of many to many with which the web 2.0 was released, is becoming the protagonist. That is something that traditional media take into account, as at present, thinking only in the programming dedicated to the news, on television or on the radio and in the newspapers, all these media have a presence in social networks, professionally managed, interacting (some more, some less) with their audience and publishing news in near real time in them, even before they reach the digital edition, in some cases.

Furthermore, it is common to see these media there is also the prosumer role, so that in the news (and other programs, but they exceed the subject matter of this paper) can be seen often *tweets* or comments made by the audience and, therefore, they are providing the program content or issue in question.

Therefore, the traditional media have undergone great changes in recent years. While the evolution of the percentage of Internet penetration from 1997 to 2016 ranges from 0.9% to 68% respectively, the television fell from 90.7% to 88.2%, which is not too much, especially when compared with the magazines (54.7% to 37.3%), supplements (32.4% to 10.5%) or newspapers (37.7% in 2825). The radio is the only one that presents a positive evolution of 55% in 1997 to 60.4% in 2016, but not nearly as striking as in the case of Internet (AIMC, 2016).

With the advent of Internet, printed media presented their *online* version and both radio and television began broadcasting *online* and make specific content for the Web, also using the pull offered by *online* social networks to broadcast news and encourage participation of the audience, which is a benefit for both parties.

This makes one wonder whether *online* social networks (that is, those that also allow communication with contacts, allow the participation in society) can function as a means of communication, or rather, if users of these tools use them as such. In 2014, with data for 2012 it was shown that, in Spain, it could be considered these networks as new media in terms of political and topical issues, which helps to maintain both individual social capital and at the macro level (Chas Vazquez, 2014).

Given all this, what will be shown in this research is the evolution from 2012 to 2016<sup>2</sup> of how Spanish citizens use *online* social networks both in reference to its their social capital as in terms of its use as a means of communication.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

The preliminary results of the Barometer of February 2016 of the CIS, allows to know the evolution of the use of social networks by the Spanish population since 2012, the year in which the research group OSIM, of the University of Coruña, made the *Survey on social networks in Spain 2012*, as it repeats several of the questions regarding the subject matter of this work and others are very similar.

On the one hand, the main research question of this work revolves around Are *online* social networks a tool that affects the lives of people, beyond being currently interpersonal communication tools? The hypothesis from which it starts is yes, they affect the social capital of citizens, probably in the same extent that it did in 2012, complementing it.

On the other hand, taking also into account other studies such as the one prepared by IAB in 2016, a secondary research question arises, are *online* social networks a new medium of communication? The hypothesis is that you will see a positive development since 2012 where they already had become a new means of communication, at least in terms of political, social and cultural issues for its users until 2016.

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

First, a literature review that allows contextualize the subject matter of this research and define key terms in it, such as "social network", "social capital" or "prosumer" is performed.

To carry out the empirical part of this work we start from the results of the Doctoral Thesis *Social networking: the new support of social capital* of my authorship. From these, a comparative study was carried out with the most recent data provided by the preliminary results of the *Barometer of February 2016* of the Center for Sociological Research (CIS, 2016a and CIS, 2016b) and the *Annual study on social networks* of the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) 2016, in order to answer the research questions stated.

### **3.1 Methodological difficulties**

The main difficulty in addressing the study of social networks in relation to social capital and as a new means of communication, especially if what we want to do is to know its evolution, is the lack of data that go in that direction.

However, the inclusion by the CIS in its Barometer of February 2016 of questions similar to those made in the Survey on social networks in Spain 2012 (OSIM), makes

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<sup>2</sup> While it is a small time period to discuss topics offline, it is not in the case of online items.

a first study of the evolution of the issue possible with some variations as it was not exactly the same questionnaire used.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Social networks are now an everyday tool for half of the Spanish population. In fact, in the preliminary results of the *Barometer of February 2016*, prepared by the CIS, 46.3% of Spaniards have used *online* social networks in the previous six months (CIS, 2016th), a figure that has barely grown in last years.

This situation can be observed when verifying how already in 2012, the *Survey on social networks in Spain 2012*, developed by the research group OSIM the Universidade da Coruña, showed that the number of users of such networks was 43.5% (Chas Vazquez, 2013).

It may surprise the fact that only half of the population use *online* social networks, but we must take into account the user profile of these tools.

Users of *online* social networks in Spain are aged between 16<sup>3</sup> and 44 years, they are mainly active workers, unemployed and students who have a level of medium and high studies and receive a monthly amount that is positioned from 0 to 249 euros, or between 1000 and 1999 euros (Vazquez Chas, 2014, p. 142).

If we analyze the data from the CIS (2016b) concerning the socio-demographic profile of the users of networks, taking into account the statistically significant variables in the study of the previous profile, we get that those who use social networks by age, are those between 18 and 24 (89.7%), between 25 and 34 years (81.2) and between 35 and 44 years (64.4%). From these ages onward, there are more who do not use those networks than those who do. Therefore we would be back to a profile of between 18 and 44 years old.

However, it is curious that people, when asked about what devices and new technologies changed over the daily lives of families in Spain, the *online* social networks are just the most valued option by 4% of the citizens, although, in any case it is the fifth option of a total of 11<sup>4</sup>, below the mobile phone (47.2%), the Internet (24.5%), the personal computer (7.6%) and the television (6.4%) (CIS, 2015 ).

Analyzing the ranking that fifth place is better understood, as both the mobile phone, or the Internet or the personal computer are irreplaceable for the use of *online* social networks, they have being part of the lives of people for much longer and they have become basic tools of work and leisure, including to some extent the *online* social networks themselves.

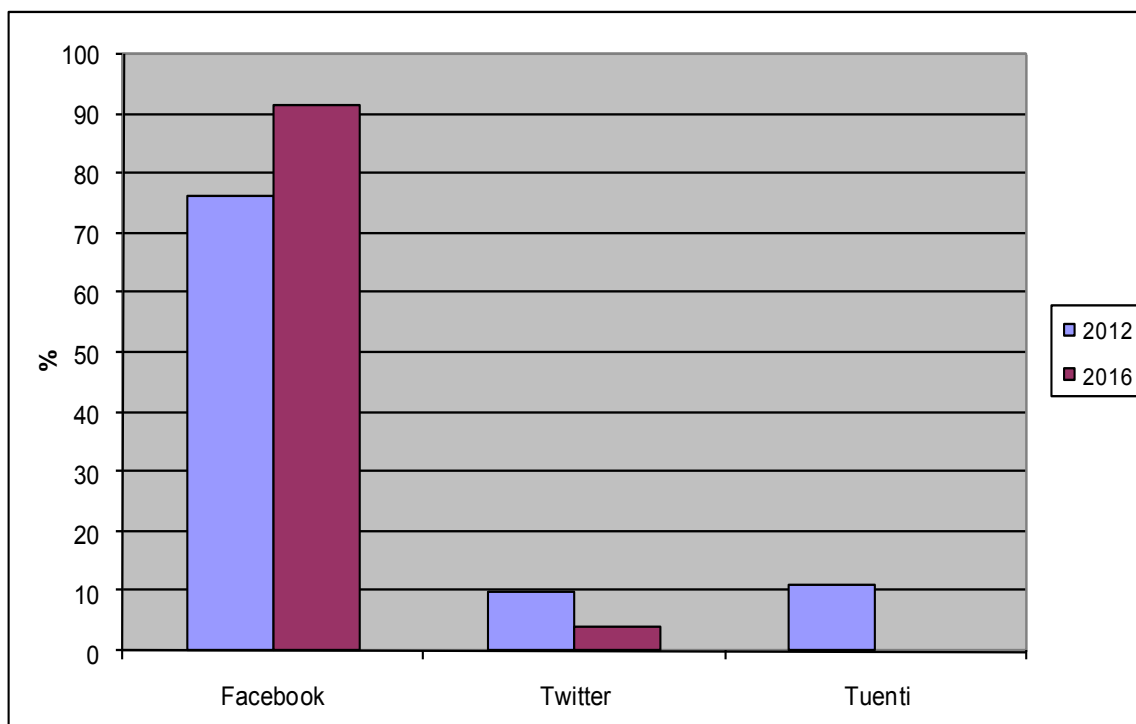
With regard to the most used social networks in Spain, during this period of four years, the scenario has changed a lot, as shown in Figure 1.

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<sup>3</sup> The correct figure is 18.

<sup>4</sup> Regardless of the categories "not applicable", "S.N." and "N.C."

**Figure 1:** Evolution 2012-2016 Percentage of users per network used most frequently in Spain.



**Source:** Survey on social networks in Spain. 2012. (OSIM –

[http://ruc.udc.es/dspace/bitstream/handle/2183/12419/VazquezChas\\_Loreto\\_TD\\_2014.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y](http://ruc.udc.es/dspace/bitstream/handle/2183/12419/VazquezChas_Loreto_TD_2014.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y) ) and *Barometer February 2016* of the CIS, preliminary results (2016th) ([http://datos.cis.es/pdf/Es3128mar\\_A.pdf](http://datos.cis.es/pdf/Es3128mar_A.pdf) ). Prepared by themselves.

The most often network used in Spain continues to be Facebook, whose percentage has increased by 15.5% since 2012. With regard to the second most commonly used network, things have changed, as well as for the third. While the second network preferred by the users in 2012 was Tuenti with 11.1% , it now is Twitter, with only 3.8%, while the latter network ranked third in 2012 with 9.6%. With regard to Tuenti, it has virtually disappeared from the ranking of the most frequented by Spanish social networks, falling to 10th place with 0.1% in 2016.

This condition, which also is found in other studies, such as the Annual Survey of Social Networks (IAB, 2016), where Tuenti is one of the networks that disappears from this study with respect to the previous edition, while Facebook and Twitter have stayed, while the second stands out as one of the networks that have more seen their frequency of visits.

#### 4.1 Social Capital

To study the social capital, one should not only take into account the individual's social network (and the factors that affect this, such as confidence), but also participation in society. Therefore, in this study both aspects are taken into account.

In 2012, users of *online* social networks were asked if, thanks to its use, they had recovered old contacts, to which 70% said yes, 44.1% also created new contacts (Vazquez Chas, 2014). While in 2016 exactly the same questions were not made, three were asked with respect to the two previous ones and they report that the main reason why the Spaniards use networks in 2016 is to keep contact with those who they cannot see more frequently (51.2%), other of the main reasons is to make new friends 9.4% and another to associate (dating) 1.7% (CIS, 2016th).

Although, strictly speaking, you cannot compare these data, they do allow to get a general idea that networks currently continue to fulfill the primary role of maintaining contact between people and also meeting new people, being both functions positive for the individual social capital, to keep it and the second to increase it.

In the same situation is the number of people with which citizens interact face to face and with which they do it *online* or both. In 2012, it was found that 72% of users were related to the same contacts in real life and in the network (Vazquez Chas, 2014), however, in 2016 the question was different because a time frame was specified (a normal day) and it was asked with how many of the people they related with face to face they also related with through the main virtual social network. The result is that on a normal day, 18.2% of users do not relate to the same people *online* than *offline* (CIS, 2016th). Considering the lack of time frame in the question in 2012, we can say, that we cannot say with certainty, because for it both questions should be identical, that more than a third of citizens relates sometime with the same people in the *online* and *offline* life.

Perhaps the above could look clearer if the data pertaining to 2016 are "compared" with the data showing that the percentage of people with whom users would lose contact if they abandoned the networks, which in 2012 stood at 22.3% (Vazquez Chas, 2014), indicating a decrease of 4.18% compared to 2016, a year in which it is indicated that 18.2% of citizens in a normal day do not contact with the same people *online* that through the networks (CIS 2016th).

The fact that citizens use the *online* social networks to keep and increase their contacts and care about the interaction with them means that networks are also currently collaborating in maintaining the individual social capital.

With regard to participation in society, measured in terms of citizen participation in politics and voluntary organizations, this type of formal social capital is positively affected by *online* social networks, increasing both the possibilities of participation and the participation quota (Chas Vazquez, 2013).

Profiles on *online* social networks of such organizations, of personalities and political parties, allow direct interaction and with little costs with whoever is on the other side of the device. Before, it was much more complicated to participate, in the sense



involving displacement, higher level of commitment, provide numerous personal data and even paying memberships, as the case may, among other situations. Today it is possible to have all the information you want and participate in an initiative with just one click and without leaving the social network from anywhere at any time.

In fact, there are cases that clearly shows the benefits of *online* participation through social networks. A striking case is that of the *online* user participation networks in educational, artistic, musical and cultural organizations, where network users participated through these tools by 36%, and so *offline* 14% while non-network users grew by only 9%. A similar situation live sports organizations. In the case of NGOs, in 2012, *online* participation via networks by users thereof was 18%, followed by *offline* participation of these citizens in these organizations, with almost 15% while *offline* participation of non-networkers fell by 14%. similar to that experienced by the unions (Vazquez Chas, 2013) situation.

In 2016, we can see that *online* participation still complements the *offline* participation. While in this case it should be explained that email and IM applications mensajería<sup>5</sup> are included in the data presented, 21.9% of those who have used at least one communication technology among which there are social networks in recent six months, they have used these technologies to contact or communicate with some association or organization, 18.8% write comments about current events, social or political in some forum, blog, social network, etc. 17.7% to sign a petition or adhere to a manifesto or campaign, among other situations (CIS, 2016th).

It is evident, therefore, that social participation is still seen favored by new technologies, especially *online* social networks, which favors the more formal social capital.

## 4.2 Opinions versus facts

OSIM data (2012) together with the CIS (2016a), allow us to reflect on some of these issues.

Citizens are convinced that before the face-to-face relationships, *online* relationships involve less confidence (38.9%), less commitment (39.2%), less sincerity (42.3%), less affection (43.6%) and less communication ( 26.7%)<sup>6</sup> 1 (CIS, 2016th).

Regarding confidence, it should be noted that it is higher in *online* social networks than outside of them, in fact, on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being the total confidence, network users when they are *online* put a note of 7.31 responding to whether, in general, it is possible to trust each other, or if they are never too careful. When they are not *online*, such user confidence is placed in a 4.99, while those who

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<sup>5</sup> In the survey on social networks in Spain. 2012, the OSIM group was not taken into account Whatsapp as a social network, although citizens deem as such because at that time did not provide opportunities for participation, something that now begins to do so is another point to consider when evaluating these results.

<sup>6</sup> This includes only the value 0, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means it is not "totally disagree and 10" strongly agree ".

are not users of *online* social networks still trust a little less, 4.74 (Chas Vazquez, 2013).

As to whether the *online* social networks mean less commitment, less sincerity and less affection, the data show that most people with whom they relate *online*, belong to their *offline* life, therefore, the opinion is based on public opinion or it does not seem possible to sustain this afirmación<sup>7</sup> (unless we are thinking only in contacts created *online*).

Finally, there is the response indicating that Internet relationships involve less communication, we must keep in mind that *online* social networks are used primarily as a communication tool and most users interact with their contacts daily (it is worth mentioning that 48.7% is with their friends and 37% with their colleagues<sup>8</sup>), also a large group interacts with their contacts several times a week (22.3% with the family 21.6% with the friends 21.6% with colleagues and 19.9% with acquaintances) (Vazquez Chas, 2014). Currently, 16.7% of those who have used *online* social networks in the past six months continuously connect to them, 33.1% several times a day and 25.3% once daily (CIS, 2016th). It should be, therefore, the question of whether it actually involves less communication, or whether to make nuances in that statement and say that there is more communication *online* than *offline* or while being absorbed in an *online* communication he is preventing a face to face communication, considerations which will be discussed again in the conclusions of this work.

#### **4.3 The *online* social networking as a means of communication**

At this point we must consider the term "prosumer", explained in the Introduction and how *online* social networks are used as a means of communication.

In the case of the Spanish, do they feel prosumers, specifically in social networks? From the information provided by the CIS (2016th), the answer is that 63.6%<sup>9</sup> of them consider that they are not content producers, being the value with a highest percentage 0, which identifies as not to be content producer (19.4 %) and the lowest 9 and 10, the latter being the one who represents those who consider themselves active producers of content (1% and 1.2% respectively).

Then, if they do not think that they are content creators, do they consider themselves as content receivers? Noting again the data of CIS (2016a), 56.8%<sup>10</sup> of

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<sup>7</sup> Unless it is understood that the behavior of people when they are online is very different than when you are offline and the opinion formulated come from that angle.

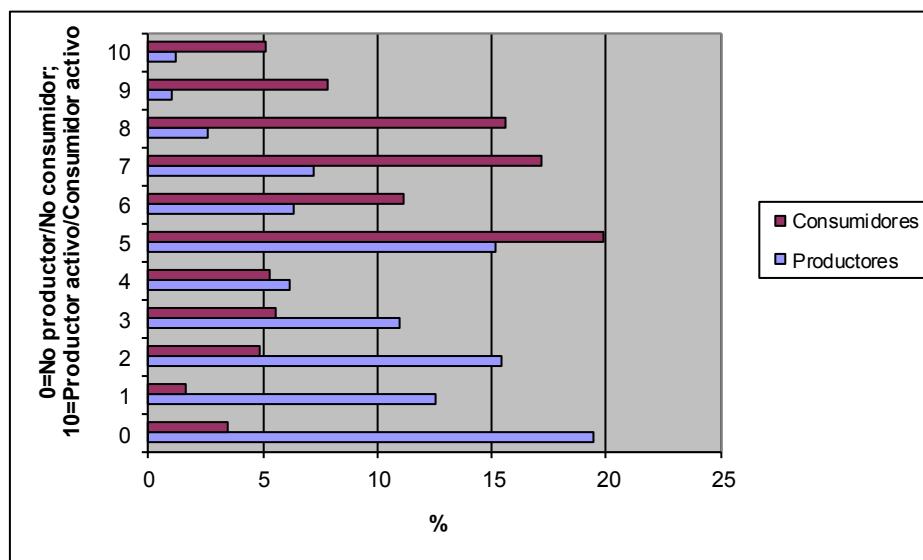
<sup>8</sup> Let it be considered again over the preceding paragraph.

<sup>9</sup> I data obtained by adding the values 0 to 4 scale of 0 to 10 who answered "Considering the content you. Share on social networks (bring in forums, share photos, music, ideas, opinions). On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means 'no producer / a content' and 10 'producer / to active / a content', where you would stand." (CIS, 2016th, p.21)

<sup>10</sup> Data resulting from adding the values 6 to 10 scale of 0 to 10 that responds to "Considering the content you. Receives social media (forums, photos, music, ideas, opinions, videos). On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means no receiver / a content 'and 10' receiver / content assets', where you would position.?" (CIS, 2016th, p.21)

the Spaniards themselves are considered active receivers<sup>11</sup> of content. However, the highest percentage is absent in this group, but in the value number 5 (19.9%) that would be the middle point where they do not see themselves as neither as producers nor as consumers.

In the Figure 2 you can study these data in more detail.



**Figure 2:** Self-regard of Spanish as producers and consumers of content on social networks.

**Source:** Barometer February 2016 the CIS, preliminary results (2016a) ([http://datos.cis.es/pdf/Es3128mar\\_A.pdf](http://datos.cis.es/pdf/Es3128mar_A.pdf)). Prepared.

As shown in figure 2, trends in both variables are opposite, so it can be said that Spanish feel themselves more as consumers rather than producers, which makes sense, on the other hand, considering that the ability to generate their own content is recent, until recently the only chance before the media of communication was to be a consumer.

If you consider that it is in the middle of the scale the point where more people are positioned as consumers and the third in which a larger number of producers are considered as such (that could well be said that they share the second place with the second rank number, since only two tenths separate them), it can be said that the figure of the prosumer on social media is beginning to be born in Spain.

*Online* social networks also seem to be a replacement, as regards to its users, as far as information is concerned and that is, when it comes to obtain information about

<sup>11</sup> Data resulting from adding the values 6 to 10 scale of 0 to 10 that responds to "Considering the content you. Receives social media (forums, photos, music, ideas, opinions, videos). On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means no receiver / a content 'and 10' receiver / content assets', where you would position.?" (CIS, 2016th, p.21)

political, social and current<sup>12</sup> themes, 55.5% of them get informed daily in these tools (Vazquez Chas, 2014). Further,

As for all the *online* tools used by individuals who select Internet for information and the fact of belonging or not to a social network are statistically significant and also present a far from negligible association (...) especially highlighting the partnership with (...) social networks (...), where V of Cramer reaches a .826 that reveals a very strong relationship (Vazquez Chas, 2014, p. 190).

Once obtained and explored this relationship, we find that practically 75% of users of social networks use them to get information themselves every day and several times a week. Here you must also consider that this affects positively the social capital as it is a medium that does not isolate but through sharing news, comment them or initiate discussions on them, the traditional role of isolated consumer of news is overcome, besides being able to go directly to the source of the news, regardless of their nature (Chas Vazquez, 2014).

The characteristic of these networks as media of communication is given by how its users use them which is made possible not only by the use that the traditional media make of them, but by the *influencers*. These people are followed by 85% of the users, being the most followed precisely those who publish content on current issues and topics on politics and society, with 16% and 15% respectively. This is in addition to the networks used to follow them are Facebook, with 63% and Twitter, with 34% (IAB, 2016).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In 2012 the *online* social networks aroused the interest of users as it is well reflected in the most repeated searches on Google in Spain. In that year, several social networks were in the *top ten* of several trends, such as the case of "What is it?", in which Twitter is in third place, LinkedIn in fourth and Facebook in eighth, in "How" the number one was occupied by How Twitter works and in the applications, Twitter was, again, the number one (Google Trends, 2016). At this point it is curious that, despite the interest generated by the latter network in 2012, did not translate into its use as the preferred network of Spanish neither in that year nor in 2016, whose use as a preferred network dropped since the first year of study, occupying Facebook always that space, consolidating itself over time.

The characteristics of these networks, such as maintaining contact with people who are part of the *offline* life of the individual, regain contact with people from the past or meet new people, in addition to making participation in society possible, by being able to communicate with different social agents or participate in various initiatives, lead to relate them to the social capital, showing their relationship and concluding

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<sup>12</sup> Data resulting from adding the values 6 to 10 scale of 0 to 10 that responds to "Considering the content you. Receives social media (forums, photos, music, ideas, opinions, videos). On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means no receiver / a content 'and 10' receiver / content assets', where you would position.?" (CIS, 2016th, p.21)

that *online* social networks affect social capital supplementing it (Vazquez Chas, 2014).

The study of the evolution of the variables that allowed the development of such findings four years later, through data obtained from similar variables presented by the CIS in 2016, can profile the evolution that the use of *online* social networks have had beyond being tools of interpersonal communication.

Indeed, as seen in the development of this work, *online* social networks are still operating in 2016 as a complement to individual social capital, although it seems that the intensity has decreased slightly, especially regarding the generation of new contacts.

As regards the use of *online* social networks as communication media in 2012, two figures must be added today: that of the *influencers* and of the prosumers. The first already widely installed in the networks, whose information is still followed by 85% of users and, second, that of the prosumers, an audience that creates its own content, which begins to take place in Spain.

Given all this, although one would expect the use of *online* social networks were greater than it is and that it had taken from them more advantage that it has been, the fact is that the use that is reflected here both respect to social capital, and communication media, provides a significant support to the individual, as well as support in order to increase their chances of finding employment in the context of the current economic crisis.

## **6. REFERENCES**

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