The "Digital Transformation" is frequently labeled disruptive or revolutionary, leaving almost no aspect of our way of life untouched. Yet, despite the breathtaking pace of the societal, economic and political changes triggered by digitization, it remains a relative marginal topic in public discourse and has only recently entered the political arena. Based on joint research with Pascal D. König (TU Kaiserslautern), Markus Siewert examines how German political parties have addressed digitization in their manifestos for sub-national elections from 2010 to 2018 and analyzes the drivers of their issue attention. An original dataset makes it possible to identify how electoral competition influences the behavior of parties stressing, e.g., the role of political resources and ideological policy stances. Beyond advancing our understanding of the politics of the digital transformation, the analyses contribute to the theoretical literature on issue competition more broadly by focusing on a policy issue which is of imminent importance but yet lacks salience in the public domain. Since it is reasonable to expect that the task of shaping the digital transformation will become more and more urgent for policy makers, our research offers a first picture at how it is negotiated within party politics.

Dr. Markus Siewert is a lecturer and post-doctoral research associate with the Professorship for Policy Analysis at the Bavarian School for Public Policy, Technical University Munich. His research focuses on the intersection of party competition and government performance (especially with regard to digitization and sustainable development), as well as qualitative empirical methods and multi-method research (especially QCA and process tracing). His work has been published, among others, in the European Political Science Review, European Political Science, and the Journal of Business Research. He holds a PhD from Goethe University Frankfurt and a M.A. from the University of Freiburg.