

# News Consumption in the UK: 2021

**Produced by:** Jigsaw Research

**Fieldwork dates:** November & December 2020 and February & March 2021

**Published:** 27 July 2021

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# Introduction

- This report provides the findings of Ofcom's 2020/21 research into news consumption across television, radio, print, social media, podcasts, other websites/apps and magazines. It is published as part of our range of market research reports examining the consumption of content, and attitudes towards that content, across different platforms.
- The aim of this slide pack report is to inform understanding of news consumption across the UK and within each UK Nation. This includes sources and platforms used, the perceived importance of different outlets for news, attitudes towards individual news sources, international and local news use.
- This slide pack also provides an understanding of current affairs consumption among adults and news consumption among 12-15 year olds.
- The primary source for this report is Ofcom's News Consumption Survey. The report also contains information from BARB for television viewing.

## Methodology and sample

### **Due to Covid-19 enforced methodological changes, the adults' data in this report is not comparable to data in the previous News Consumption Reports**

- In News Reports published from 2018 to 2020, the adult (16+) research was conducted using a mixed methodology, combining online and face to face interviews (F2F). However, during the most recent period of research, due to Covid-19 fieldwork restrictions, it was not possible to conduct F2F interviews. In order to continue representing no/low internet users the F2F interviews were replaced by telephone (CATI) interviews.
- Due to differences in the questionnaire and differences in how respondents answered questions about individual news sources between the two survey methods used, only platform level data is available by the combined methodology adult sample. All other adults' slides are based on the online sample only.
- Reweighted adults' online sample only data from 2020 has included in this report to allow an element of trend analysis. As a result, 2020 data shown in this report may differ from the 2020 data published in last year's report. Please note, 2020 fieldwork took place before the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK.
- The children's (12-15) survey methodology was unchanged (online) and therefore that data remains comparable to previous reports.
- Fieldwork for the adults' survey this year took place from 2nd November – 10th December 2020 and 27th February – 29th March 2021. Fieldwork for the children's survey this year took place from 24th November – 7th December 2020 and 27th February – 24th March 2021. These fieldwork periods overlapped with the second and third phases of UK lockdown.

# Overall summary of findings

## Summary of key findings (1)

**TV is the most-used platform for news (79%), followed by the internet (73%), with half of adults using social media (49%) and/or other websites/apps (49%) for news. However, fewer than half now use the radio for news (46%) and less than a third use print newspapers (32%).** Use of TV is most prevalent among the 65+ age group (93%), while the internet is the most-used platform for news consumption among 16-24s (89%) and those from minority ethnic groups (85%)

**The online trend data shows that usage of radio, print newspapers and the internet for news have all declined since 2020 (-6, -5 and -3 percentage points respectively). Use of TV is unchanged**

**BBC One remains the most-used news source across any platform (62%), followed by ITV (46%) and Facebook (36%), then the BBC website/app (31%), the BBC News channel (31%) and Sky News Channel (30%).** Usage of BBC One has remained unchanged since 2020, but usage of ITV and Facebook have both decreased. Usage of Channel 4, BBC Radio 2 and BBC Radio 1 have also decreased over the last year

**When rated by their users on measures such as importance, trustworthiness, range of opinions and impartiality, the main news platforms' ratings are largely in line with 2020; TV and magazines performing strongest, and social media performing least well**

**TV remains the most common platform for accessing local news and news within the Nations.** BBC One is the most used news source in England and Wales for accessing news about the Nation, whereas STV is most used in Scotland and UTV and BBC One are most used in Northern Ireland

## Summary of key findings (2)

**As in previous years, just under six in ten (57%) 12-15 year olds are interested in news.** These children primarily engage with news to understand what's going on around them, to learn about new things and to be made to think. Being 'too boring' remains the key reason for lack of interest in news, followed by 'all news sounding the same' and a 'lack of relevance'

**12-15 year olds remain particularly interested in news about music (53%), followed by news about celebrities (45%), the environment (44%) and serious things happening in the UK (43%).** However, one in five are '*most*' interested in news about sport/sports personalities

**Talking to family (68%) and watching TV (65%) are the most common ways to find out about news among 12-15 year olds, followed by social media (57%) and talking to friends (53%).** BBC One/BBC Two remain the most-used (35%) and most important news sources (14%). However there has been a significant reduction in the use of BBC One/BBC Two and ITV in the last year. In contrast, Sky News, TikTok and WhatsApp are all used more often than in 2020

**Family, radio, then podcasts and TV are considered to be the most truthful news sources among 12-15 year olds.** Social media and friends are still considered the least truthful sources

# Overall summary – Adults (1)

**TV remains the most-used platform among UK adults (16+) for news (79%), followed by the internet (73%), radio (46%) and print newspapers (32%).** Trend data among the online sample only shows that use of radio, newspapers and the internet for news have all declined since 2020, while usage of TV is unchanged. TV sources represent seven of the top 20 most-used news sources - the most of any platform (the top 20 news sources also include four social media sites, three newspaper titles (print or digital format), three radio stations and three websites/apps). While TV is the most-used platform for news overall, there are some exceptions; for example, 16-24s are still more likely to use the internet for news than TV (89% vs. 61%), while the same is true for those from minority ethnic groups (85% vs. 69%).

**BBC One remains the most-used news source across all platforms, with 62% reach among all online UK adults, followed by ITV and Facebook.** Several sources in the top 20 have seen decreases in use since 2020: ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV (46%), Facebook (36%), Channel 4 (24%), BBC Radio 2 (13%) and BBC Radio 1 (11%). BBC sources represent seven of the top 20 most-used news sources. Furthermore, when sources are grouped by organisation, the BBC has the highest audience reach (83%), followed by ITV (50%), Sky (36%) and DMGT (30%).

**BBC One also remains the top single most important news source for the largest proportion (19%) of those who use the main platforms for news, although this has decreased from 22% of adults stating this in 2020. The BBC website/app was selected as the most important news source by 11% of news users, an increase from 2020.** This is followed by ITV (7%, a decline from 2020), Facebook (6%) and Sky News Channel (6%). However, this does vary by age: social media channels are more important among younger age groups, with 36% of 16-24s selecting a social media channel as their most important news source.

**Around half (49%) of UK adults claim to use social media for news and 49% also say they use 'other websites and apps' - i.e. any non-social media sources of news, such as websites and apps of news organisations, newspapers or other apps (e.g. LADbible).** Around a fifth (19%) of UK adults say they use news aggregators, and 25% say they use search engines for news, a decline from 2020. The BBC website / app is most used 'other website/app', used by 31% of UK adults, followed by Google (search engine) used by 17% of UK adults. 12% of those using social media for news use TikTok for news, an increase from 4% in 2020.



## Overall summary – Adults (2)

**In 2021, a third of users of social media for news claimed to mostly get news from social media posts, a decrease from 2020.** As in 2020, news consumed on social media is more likely to be from news organisations than ‘friends/family’ or ‘others you follow’. The BBC remains the most commonly followed news organisation across the social media sites, followed by Sky News on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, ITV on Facebook and The Sun on Snapchat.

**At a platform level, attitudes towards news provision (including quality, accuracy, trustworthiness and impartiality) remain consistent with 2020, with TV and magazines performing strongest, and social media performing least well. At the individual source level attitudes also remain largely consistent with 2020.** When asked which sources were good for ‘providing news about Covid-19’ and ‘helping people to understand the restrictions’ users of each platform identified TV as performing strongest and social media as performing comparatively poorly.

**TV remains the most popular platform for accessing local news and people are still highly satisfied with the quality of this news.** Half of online UK adults who follow news say they watch regional/local broadcasts on BBC TV and 37% watch ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV. Four in five of these viewers are satisfied with the quality of news these channels provide.

**TV remains the most common platform for accessing news about respondents’ own nation.** BBC One is the most used news source in England and Wales for accessing news about the nation, whereas STV is most used in Scotland and UTV and BBC One are most used in Northern Ireland. BBC One is the most important news source in England, Wales and Northern Ireland while BBC One and the BBC website/app are equally important in Scotland. Respondents in Northern Ireland and Scotland are most likely to say they are very interested in news about their nation (57% in Northern Ireland and 51% in Scotland vs 41% in Wales and 31% in England).

**As in 2020, six in ten adults (63%) think it is important for ‘society overall’ that broadcasters provide current affairs programming, more than those who say it is important to them personally (54%).**

## Overall summary – 12-15 year olds (1)

**As in 2020, just under six in ten 12-15s claim to be either ‘very’ or ‘quite’ interested in news.** These children primarily engage with news to ‘understand what’s going on around them’, to ‘learn about new things’ and to ‘make them think’. Among the four in ten who are not interested in the news, the main reason is it is ‘too boring’ (47%). A further 19% said it ‘all sounds the same’, 16% said it ‘was not relevant for people their age’, and 8% said it was ‘too upsetting’.

**The highest level of interest was in music news.** When asked about their interest in different types of news, the highest level of interest was in music news (53%). When asked which types of news content they are ‘*most*’ interested in sports/sports personalities (22%) and music news/singers/musicians (15%) were the top choices.

**Talking with family and watching the TV continue to be the most common ways to find out about the news.** Talking to family (68%) and watching TV (65%) are the most common ways to find out about news, followed by social media (57%) and talking to friends (53%). However, TV remains the platform used most often for news (27%), followed by social media (22%) and talking to family (19%). As in 2018, 2019 and 2020 social media is used most often for celebrity, music and fashion news, while TV is used most often for all other types of news content.

## Overall summary – 12-15 year olds (2)

**BBC One/Two (35%) and YouTube (33%) are the most-used news sources for 12-15s across all platforms. However, BBC One/Two declined from 41% in 2020 and 45% in 2018. BBC One/Two remain the most important (14%) news sources.** The next most used news sources are Instagram (28%) and Facebook (27%). There are seven social media sites in the top ten most used sources for 12-15s. The reach of ITV (24%) has also decreased from 28% in 2020 while Sky News, TikTok and WhatsApp have all seen increases since 2020. 12-15s remain most likely to first find out about social media sources from friends and find out about TV and radio sources from parent(s).

**Family, radio, podcasts and TV are perceived as the most truthful news sources, while social media and friends are perceived to be the least truthful.** Four in five (80%) 12-15s said the news they heard from family was either 'always' or 'mostly' accurate, compared to 75% for radio, 69% for podcasts and 69% for TV. Only one in three think news stories on social media (34%) or from friends (37%) are accurate.

**Two fifths (41%) of 12-15s say they have seen a deliberately untrue / misleading news story online in the past 12 months.** 42% of 12-15s who use social media for news claim they always/often think about whether the stories they see there are accurate. However, 52% say it is difficult to tell whether news on social media is accurate or not. The most common actions they would take if they saw a deliberately misleading story are to tell parents or another family member (37%), followed by telling friends (21%). A third (33%) said they would probably just ignore it/wouldn't do anything.

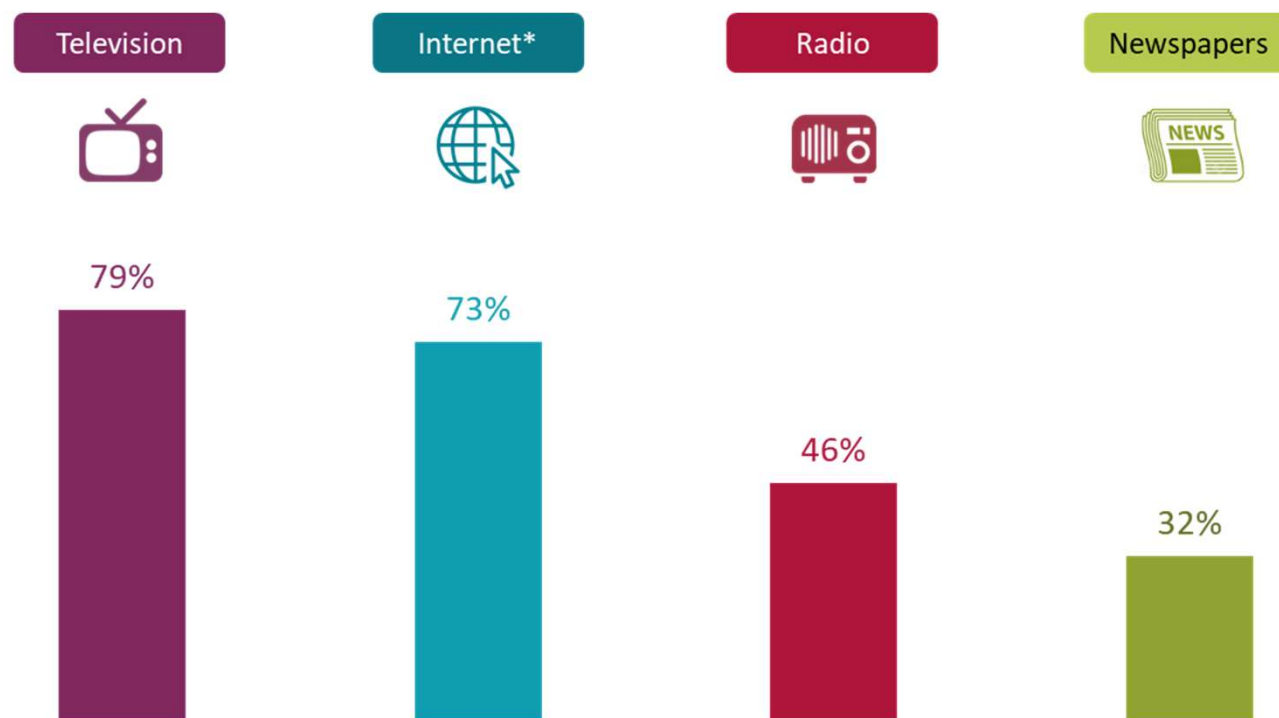
# Platforms used for news nowadays

TV and Internet are the most-used platforms for news nowadays. Fewer than half use the radio and less than a third use print newspapers

## Figure 2.1

Use of main platforms for news nowadays 2021

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All Adults 16+ - 2021=4605

\*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

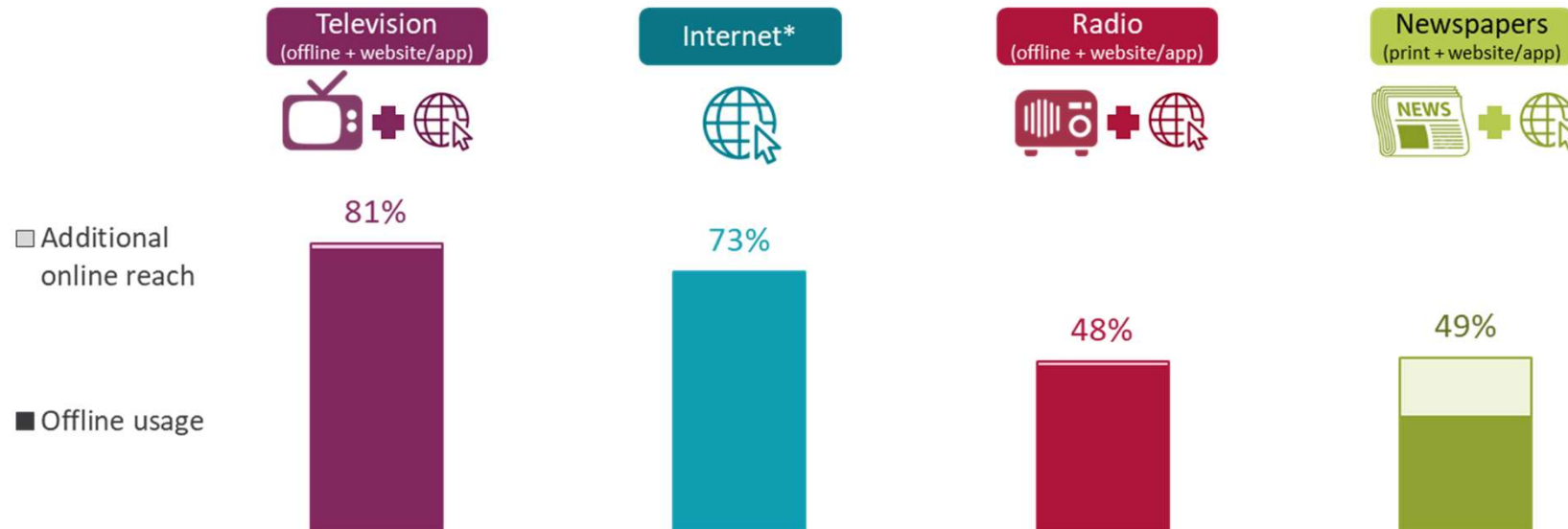
Data not comparable to  
previous surveys, due to  
Covid-19 enforced  
methodological changes

# Combining use of print newspapers and newspaper websites/apps brings the overall use of newspapers up to half of adults

**Figure 2.2**

Use of main platforms for news nowadays 2021

All adults 16+



In the internet section of the questionnaire, we ask respondents 'In which types of ways do you access and use news through internet sources nowadays'. A possible answer here was '**Watch TV news online**'. Including respondents who selected this option, who didn't originally say they used TV for news, brings the total for **TV** news (online or offline) to **81%**.

Another option here was '**Listen to radio news online**', including those who selected this option, who hadn't originally said they use radio for news, brings the total for **radio** (online or offline) to **48%**.

Combining mentions of reading news in **printed newspapers and via newspaper websites/apps**, brings the total for **newspapers** (online or offline) to **49%**.

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All Adults 16+ - 2021=4605

\*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

Data not comparable to previous surveys, due to Covid-19 enforced methodological changes

16-24s and people from minority ethnic groups are more likely to use the internet for news. Those aged 65+ and white adults are more likely to use TV, radio and print, while ABC1s are more likely use the internet, radio and print

## Figure 2.3

Use of main platforms for news nowadays 2021 - by demographic group

All adults 16+

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
Television	79%	80%	79%	61%	93%	80%	78%	69%	81%
Internet (any device)*	73%	73%	73%	89%	50%	77%	68%	85%	71%
Radio	46%	49%	43%	29%	50%	50%	42%	28%	49%
Newspapers (print only)	32%	37%	27%	16%	50%	34%	29%	23%	33%
Newspapers (print + website/app)	49%	53%	44%	34%	61%	53%	43%	42%	50%
Average number of platforms	2.3	2.4	2.2	1.9	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.0	2.3

Data not comparable to previous surveys, due to Covid-19 enforced methodological changes

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All Adults 16+ 2021 - Total=4605, Male=2231, Female=2372, 16-24=839, 65+=935, ABC1=2558, C2DE=2016, Minority ethnic groups=641, White=3951

\*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

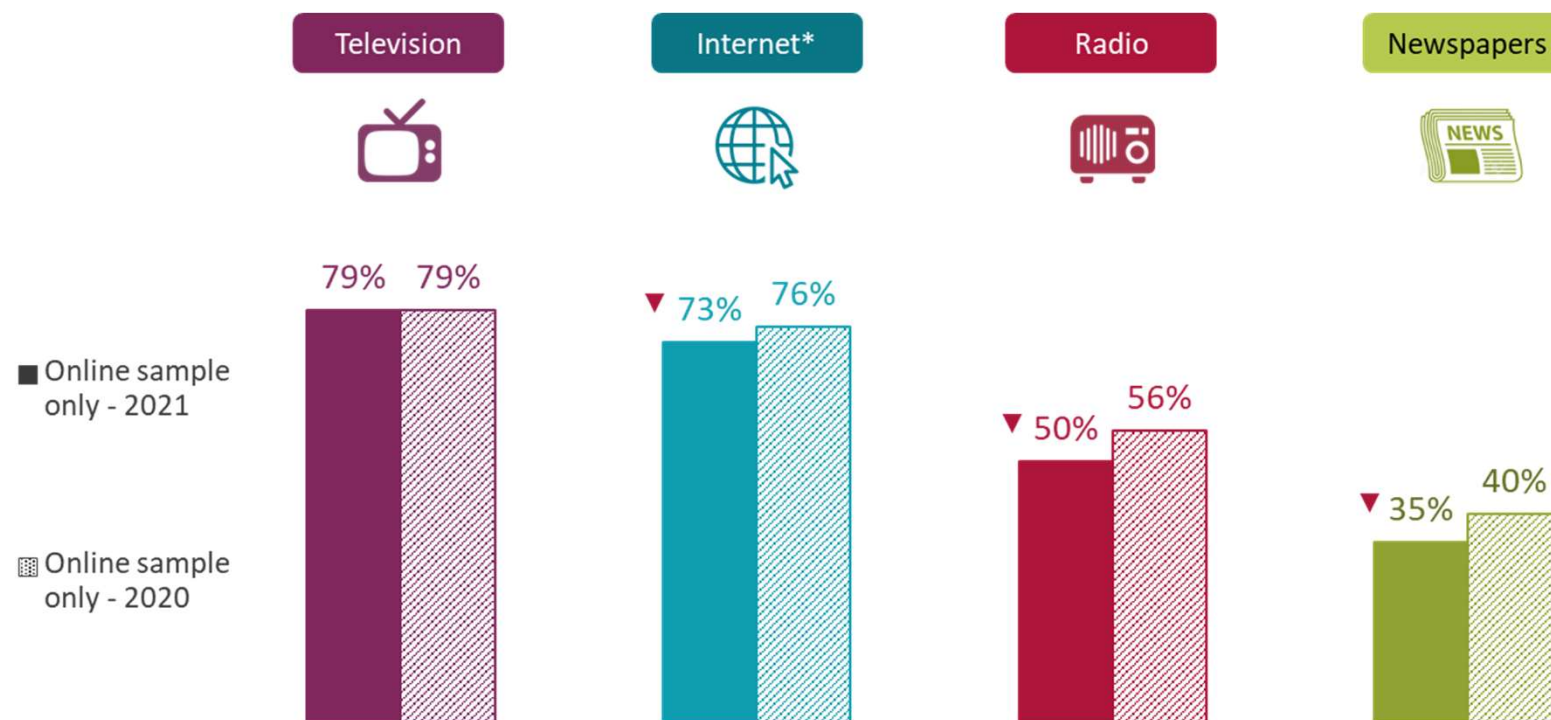
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

Use of radio, print newspapers and internet have all declined significantly since 2020, among the online sample

## Figure 2.4

Use of main platforms for news nowadays 2021 vs 2020 – Online (only) sample comparison

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ – 2021=3327, 2020=2510

\*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

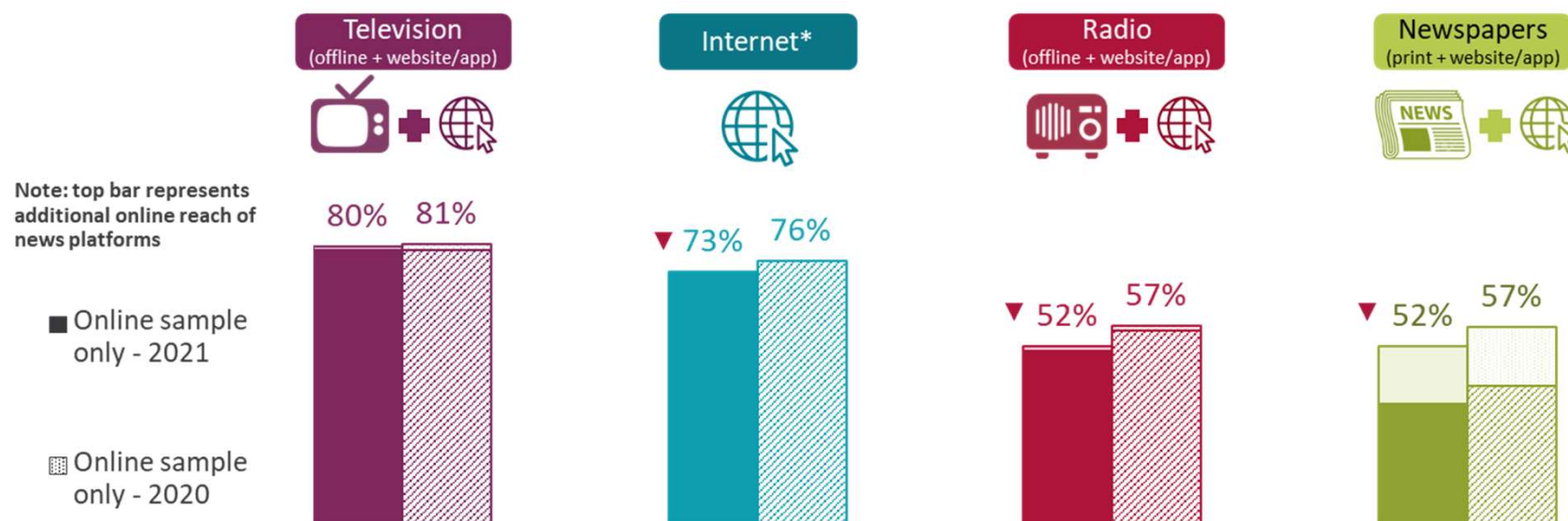


Use of radio and newspapers have also declined significantly when the additional online reach is included, amongst the online sample

**Figure 2.5**

Use of main platforms for news nowadays 2021 vs 2020 – Online (only) sample comparison

All adults 16+



In the internet section of the questionnaire, we ask respondents 'In which types of ways do you access and use news through internet sources nowadays'. A possible answer here was '**Watch TV news online**'. Including respondents who selected this option, who didn't originally say they used TV for news, brings the total for **TV** news (online or offline) to **80%**.

Another option here was '**Listen to radio news online**', including those who selected this option, who hadn't originally said they use radio for news, brings the total for **radio** (online or offline) to **52%**.

Combining mentions of reading news in **printed newspapers and via newspaper websites/apps**, brings the total for **newspapers** (online or offline) to **52%**.

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ – 2021=3327, 2020=2510

\*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

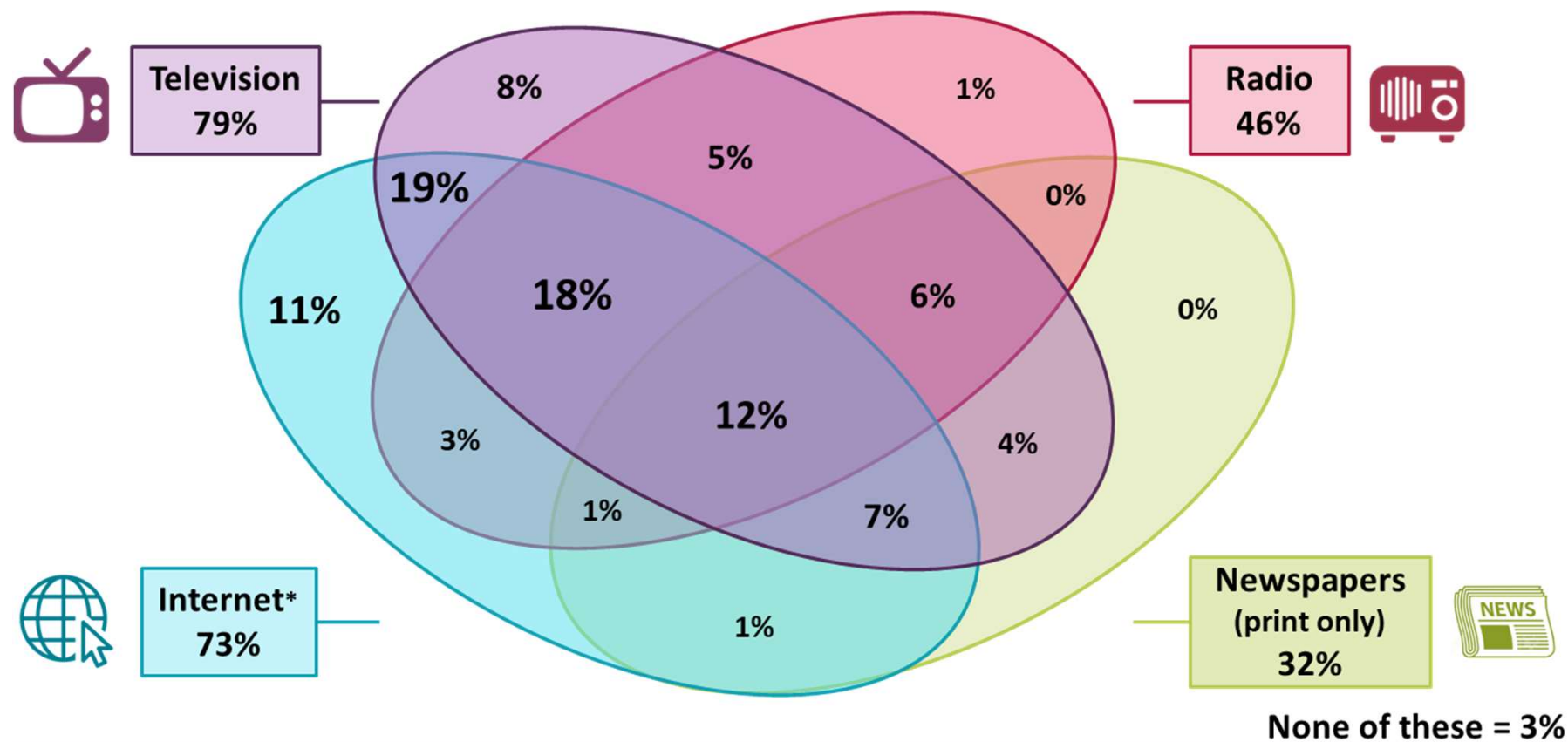
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

12% of adults claim to use all four of the main platforms for news nowadays

**Figure 2.6**

Crossover use of four main platforms for news nowadays 2021

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All Adults 16+ - 2021=4605

\*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

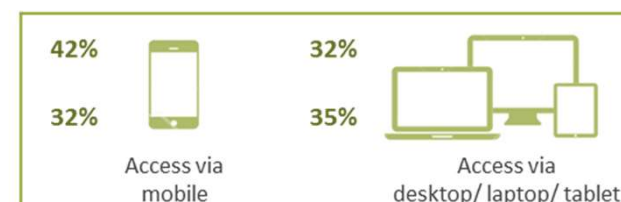
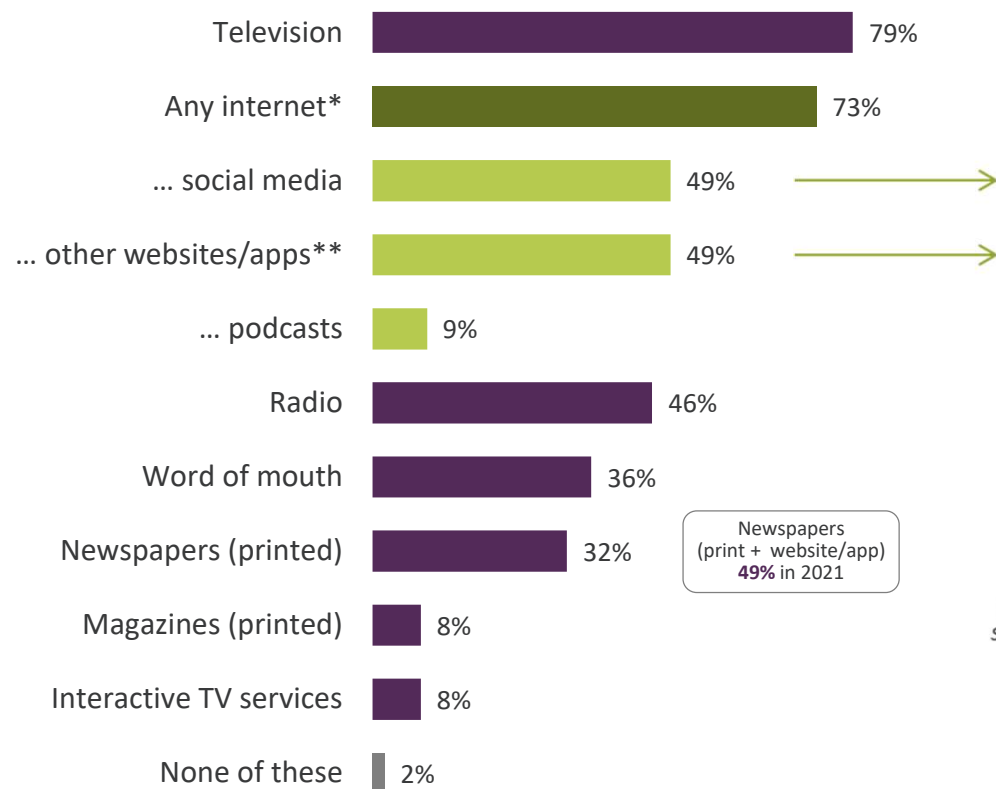
Data not comparable to  
previous surveys, due to  
Covid-19 enforced  
methodological changes

Social media and other websites/apps are each used for news by half of adults, while 1 in 10 claim to use podcasts

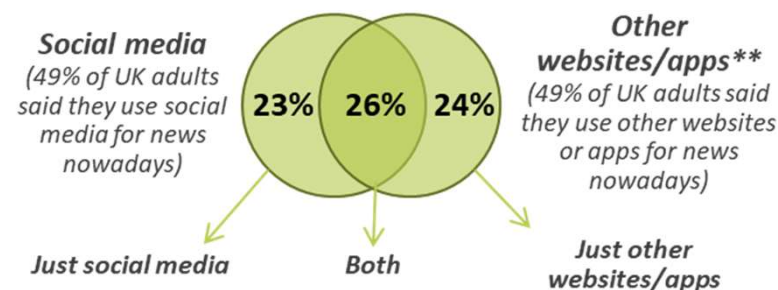
**Figure 2.7**

All platforms used for news nowadays 2021

All adults 16+



**Crossover use of social media and websites/apps**



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – COMBINED CATI & ONLINE sample

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All Adults 16+ - 2021=4605

\*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

\*\*Other websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source (excluding podcasts)

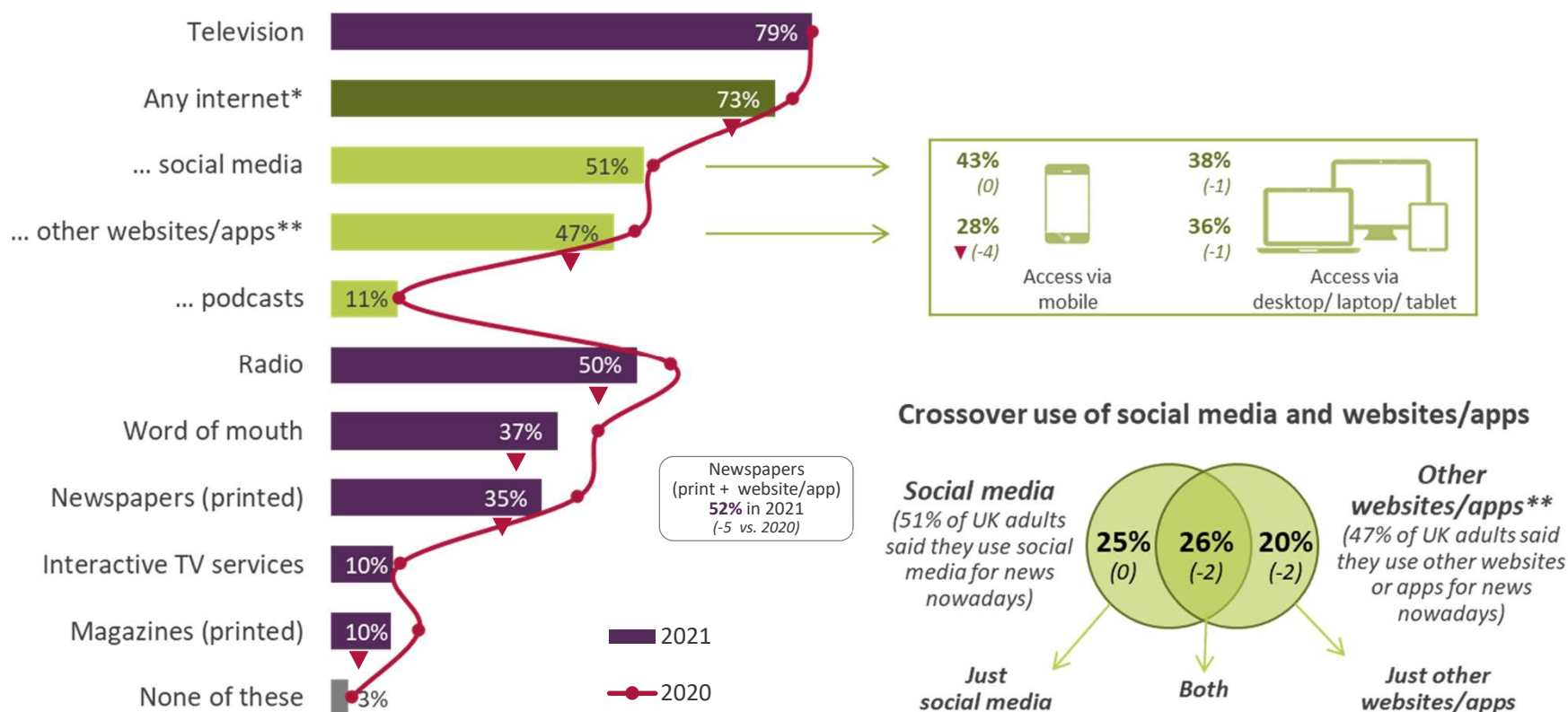
Data not comparable to previous surveys, due to Covid-19 enforced methodological changes

In addition to radio and newspapers, usage of other websites/apps, word of mouth and magazines have also declined since 2020, amongst the online sample

**Figure 2.8**

All platforms used for news nowadays

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – ONLINE sample only

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All Adults 16+ - 2021=3327, 2020=2510

\*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

\*\*Other websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source (excluding podcasts)

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

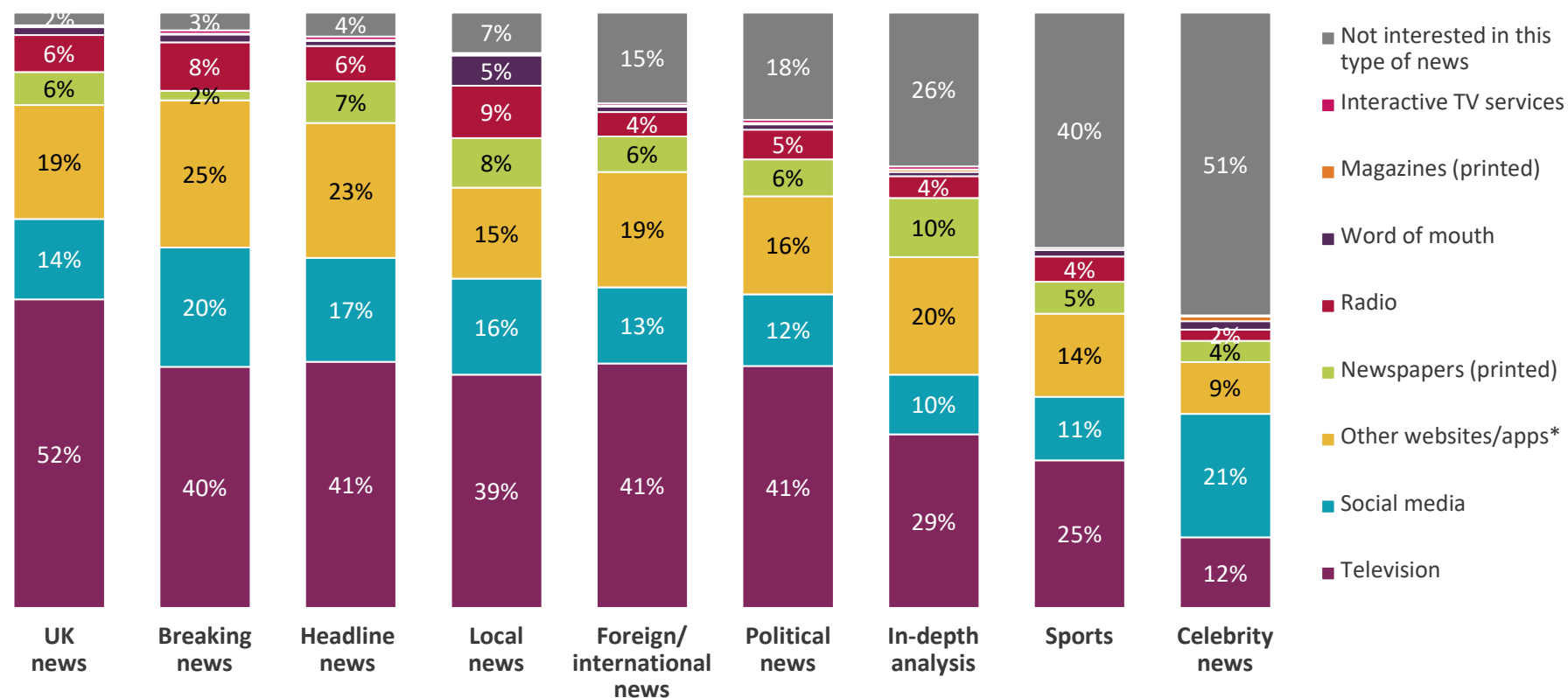
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

TV is the most-used platform for almost all types of news content, except for celebrity news, where social media is used most often

**Figure 2.9**

Platforms used most often for different types of news content 2021

*All adults 16+ who follow news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample  
 Question: D1. Where do you tend to go most often for each of the following types of news content?  
 Base: All adults 16+ who follow news – 2021=4499  
 \*Other websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source (including podcasts)

Data not comparable to  
previous surveys, due to  
Covid-19 enforced  
methodological changes

# Cross-platform news consumption

BBC One remains the most-used news source across platforms, followed by ITV and Facebook which have both declined since 2020. Use of Channel 4, BBC Radio 2 and BBC Radio 1 has also declined since 2020

### Figure 3.1

#### Top 20 news sources

% of all adults 16+ using each source for news nowadays

	2021	2020
TV channel		
Newspaper (print + website/app)		
Radio station		
Social media		
Other website/app		
BBC One	62%	62%
ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	46% ▼	49%
Facebook	36% ▼	40%
BBC website/app	31%	32%
BBC News Channel	31%	30%
Sky News Channel	30%	28%
Channel 4	24% ▼	26%
Twitter	24%	24%
Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday	22%	23%
Instagram	19%	18%
Google (search engine)	17%	19%
BBC Two	16%	15%
WhatsApp	16%	17%
The Guardian/Observer	16%	16%
BBC Radio 2	13% ▼	16%
The Sun/Sun on Sunday	12%	14%
Sky News website/app	12%	11%
Channel 5	12%	11%
BBC Radio 1	11% ▼	13%
BBC Radio 4	11%	12%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ – 2021=3327, 2020=2510

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020 online sample

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY



16-24s are more likely to use social media for news, whereas those aged 65+ are more likely to use TV (especially BBC One), Daily Mail and radio sources. ABC1s are more likely than C2DEs to use the majority of news sources

**Figure 3.2**

Top 20 news sources 2021 - by demographic

% of all adults 16+ using each source for news nowadays

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC One	62%	63%	61%	46%	82%	65%	59%	50%	64%
ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	46%	43%	49%	33%	58%	43%	51%	35%	47%
Facebook	36%	30%	42%	44%	16%	34%	40%	43%	35%
BBC website/app	31%	35%	27%	29%	29%	37%	24%	33%	31%
BBC News Channel	31%	35%	27%	21%	44%	34%	27%	31%	31%
Sky News Channel	30%	35%	25%	22%	33%	32%	27%	33%	30%
Channel 4	24%	25%	22%	18%	28%	24%	23%	25%	23%
Twitter	24%	24%	23%	44%	6%	26%	21%	38%	22%
Daily Mail/on Sunday (print + website/app)	22%	23%	20%	15%	33%	23%	20%	20%	22%
Instagram	19%	15%	23%	48%	1%	19%	18%	42%	15%
Google (search engine)	17%	18%	17%	18%	15%	18%	16%	23%	16%
BBC Two	16%	19%	12%	10%	25%	17%	15%	14%	16%
WhatsApp	16%	15%	17%	25%	4%	16%	16%	38%	13%
The Guardian/Observer (print + website/app)	16%	17%	14%	20%	11%	19%	11%	22%	15%
BBC Radio 2	13%	15%	12%	6%	19%	15%	11%	5%	14%
The Sun/Sun on Sunday (print + website/app)	12%	14%	11%	11%	11%	10%	16%	14%	12%
Sky News website/app	12%	14%	10%	10%	7%	13%	11%	14%	12%
Channel 5	12%	12%	11%	7%	16%	11%	14%	13%	12%
BBC Radio 1	11%	10%	12%	17%	3%	10%	12%	13%	11%
BBC Radio 4	11%	13%	8%	3%	22%	14%	6%	6%	11%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ 2021 - Total=3327, Male=1602, Female=1723, 16-24=656, 65+=620, ABC1=1884, C2DE=1422, Minority ethnic groups=552, White=2762

Green shading indicates significant differences between groups



The reach of DMGT, Channel 4, Global Radio, Reach, Lebedev Foundation and Facebook have all declined, while 'other intermediaries' have increased

**Figure 3.4**

Cross-platform retail providers used for news nowadays

All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazines for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazines for news – 2021=3221, 2020=2441

NOTE: Google\* = Google News + Google + YouTube. Other intermediaries\*\* includes MSN, Yahoo, Apple news, Upday

The information included in this chart is based on the most up to date information we have

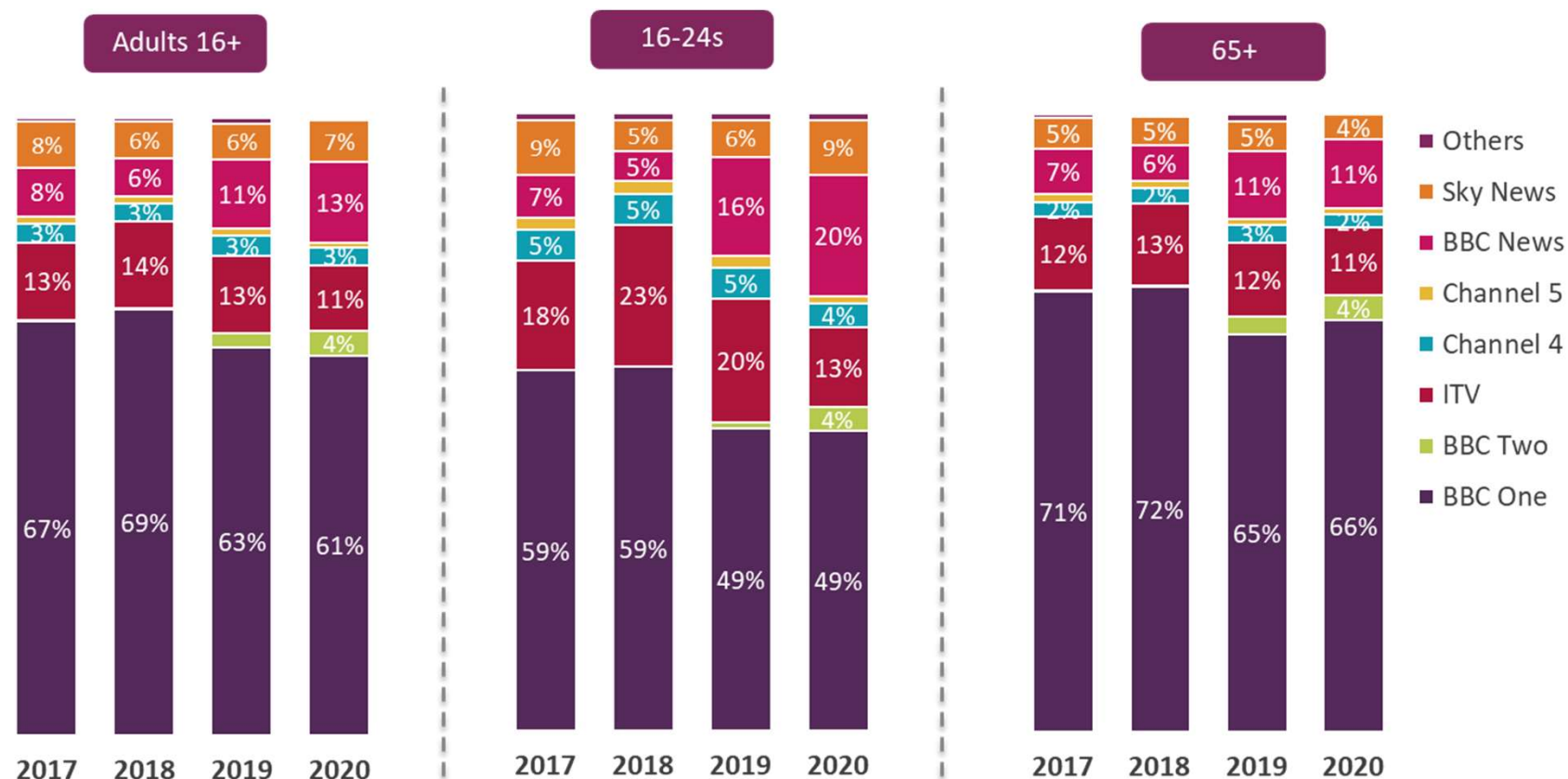
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

# News consumption via television

Industry data shows that in 2020, compared to 2019, BBC One and ITV formed a smaller proportion of news viewing hours, while BBC Two and the BBC News channel contributed to a greater proportion of news viewing hours

**Figure 4.1**

Proportion of national/international news viewing hours by channel group – 2017-2020



Source: BARB, Network. Network programming based on 4+ area filter. Genre = national/international news.

Channels include their HD and +1 variants. Others = all other channels that showed national/international news that are not any of the listed channels above.

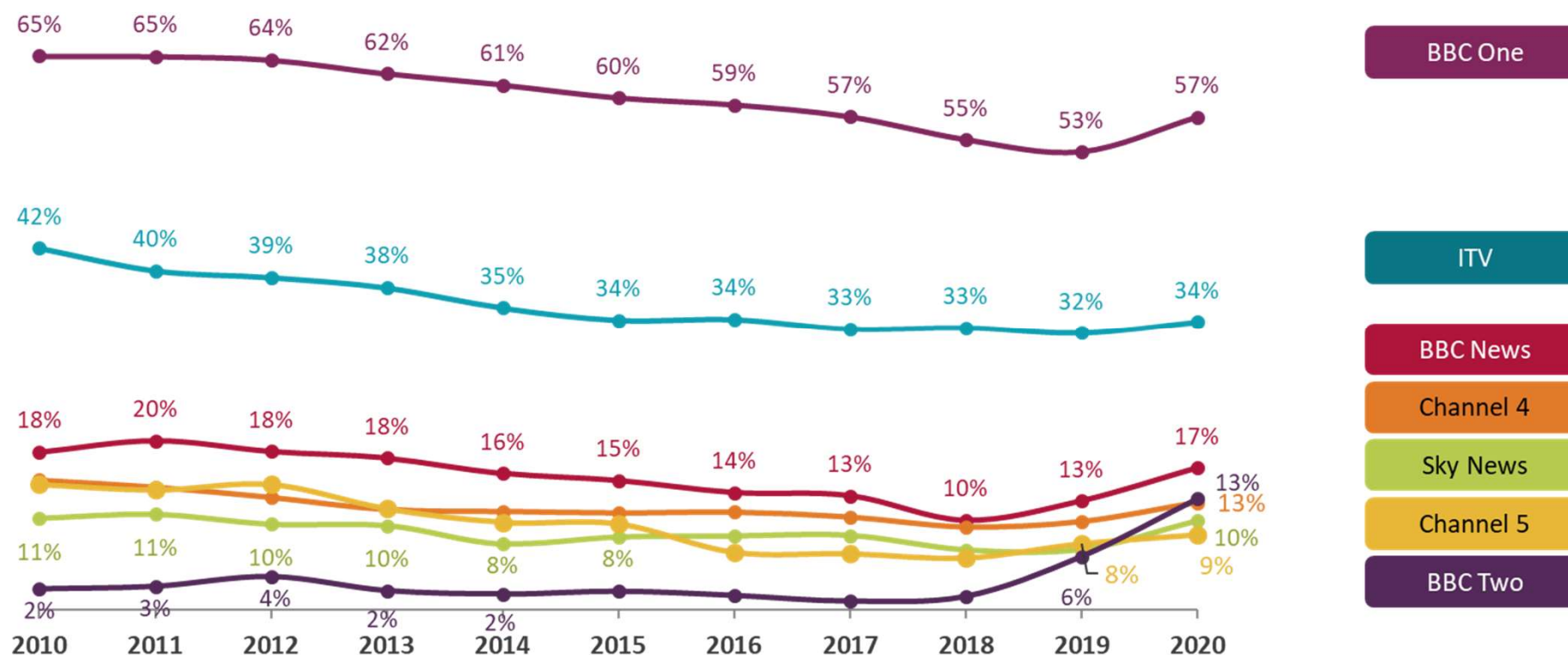
Please note there was a change in the genre coding in 2020 and 2019 data was also amended. Data from 2019 onwards may not be directly comparable to previous years and may differ from the 2019 data published last year.

On average, 57% of adults in the UK watched news on BBC One each week in 2020, the highest reach of all channels.

**Figure 4.2**

Average weekly reach of national/international news by channel - 2010 to 2020

All adults 16+



Source: BARB, Network. Network programming based on 4+ area filter. Genre = national/international news.

Channels include their HD and +1 variants. Reach criteria = 3 consecutive minutes. Full weeks used for the correct calculation of weekly averages.

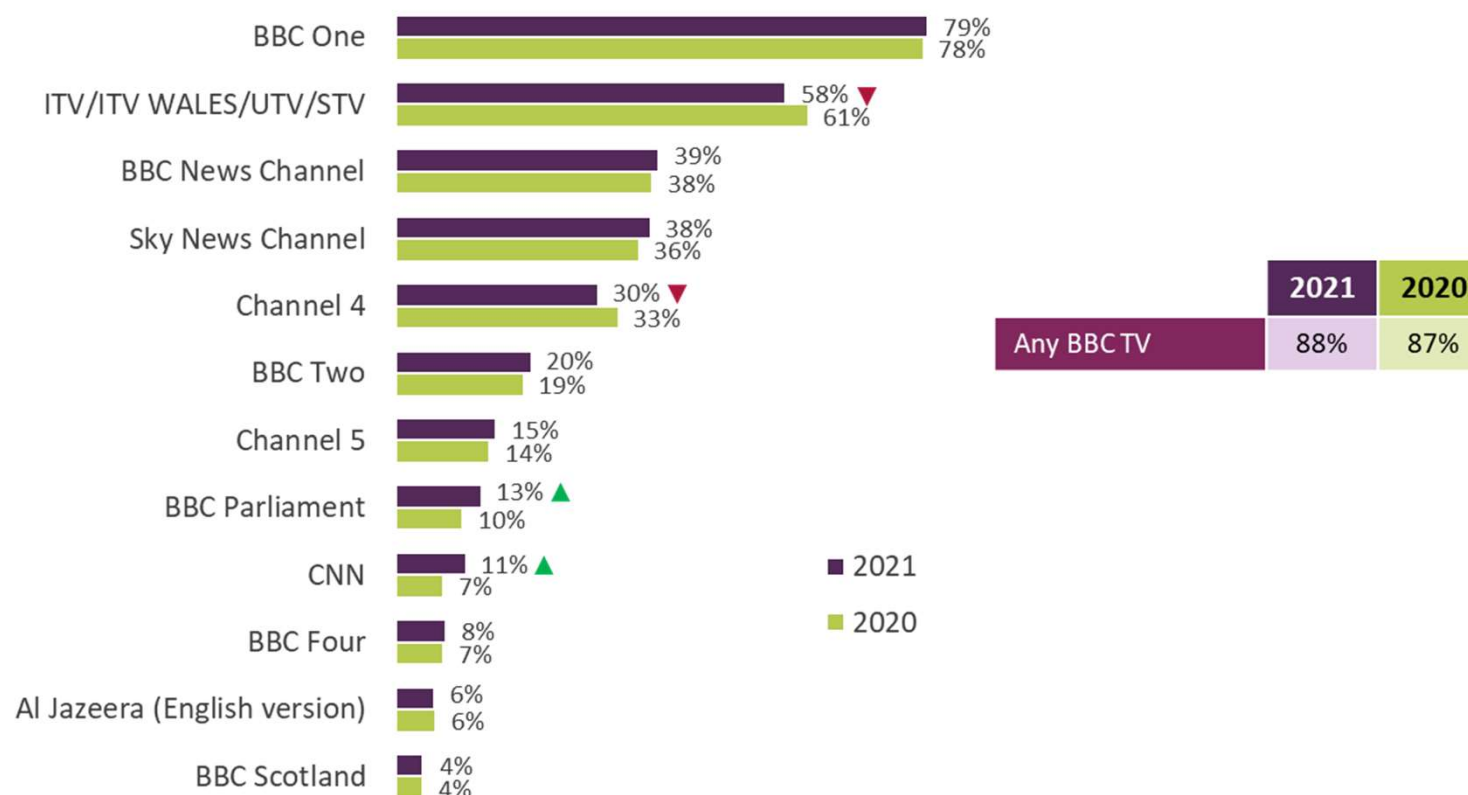
Please note there was a change in the genre coding in 2020 and 2019 data was also amended. Data from 2019 onwards may not be directly comparable to previous years and may differ from the 2019 data published last year.

Among the adults that use TV for news, BBC One remains the most-used channel, followed by ITV. Usage of ITV and Channel 4 has declined since 2020, whilst BBC Parliament and CNN have both increased

**Figure 4.3**

### TV channels used for news nowadays

*All using TV for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D2a. Thinking specifically about television, which of the following do you use for news nowadays? Base: All using TV for news – 2021=2561, 2020=1949

Only sources with an incidence of >3% in 2021 are shown

Males, those aged 65+ and minority ethnic groups are more likely than females, 16-24s and white adults to use most TV sources. The exception is ITV, where females and C2DEs are more likely to watch this channel for news

## Figure 4.4

### TV channels used for news nowadays 2021 - by demographic group

*All using TV for news*

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC One	79%	79%	78%	72%	87%	81%	76%	74%	79%
ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	58%	53%	62%	52%	62%	53%	65%	51%	58%
BBC News Channel	39%	44%	34%	32%	47%	42%	35%	46%	38%
Sky News Channel	38%	44%	32%	35%	35%	39%	35%	48%	37%
Channel 4	30%	31%	29%	29%	30%	30%	30%	37%	29%
BBC Two	20%	24%	16%	16%	26%	21%	19%	21%	20%
Channel 5	15%	15%	14%	11%	18%	13%	18%	19%	14%
BBC Parliament	13%	16%	9%	11%	15%	14%	12%	12%	13%
CNN	11%	14%	7%	8%	8%	11%	9%	22%	9%
BBC Four	8%	9%	6%	10%	7%	8%	7%	15%	7%
Al Jazeera (English version)	6%	7%	4%	4%	7%	6%	5%	12%	5%
BBC Scotland	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%	5%	3%	4%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D2a. Thinking specifically about television, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using TV for news 2021 - Total=2561, Male=1241, Female=1319, 16-24=398, 65+=579, ABC1=1466, C2DE=1082, Minority ethnic groups=354, White=2199

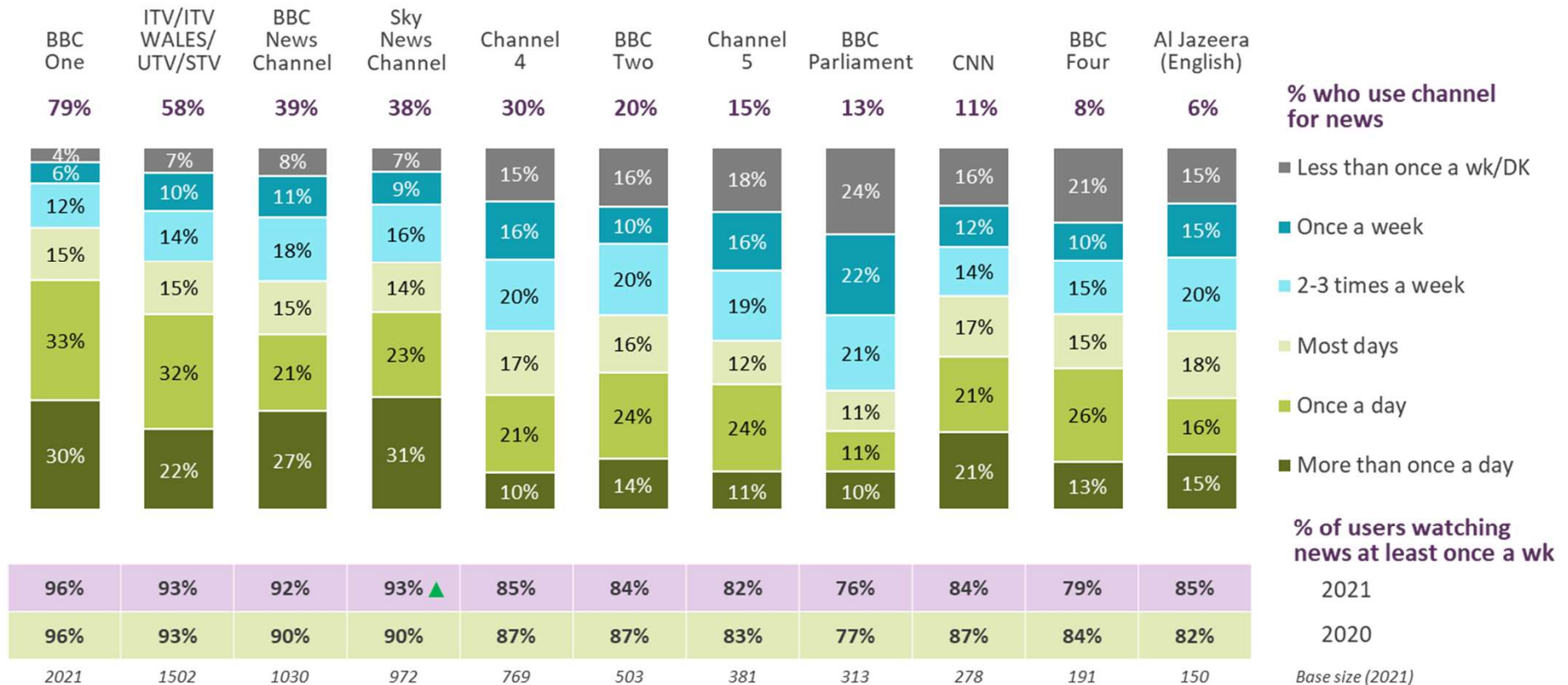
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of >3% in 2021 are shown.

BBC One is used most frequently for news. The percentage of Sky News users watching at least once a week has increased significantly over the past year from 90% to 93%

**Figure 4.5**

## Frequency of consumption for main TV channels 2021

*All using each source for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D2b. And typically how often do you watch the news on...

Base: All who use each source for news 2021 (bases shown above, only sources used by 100+ respondents included)

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

# News consumption via radio

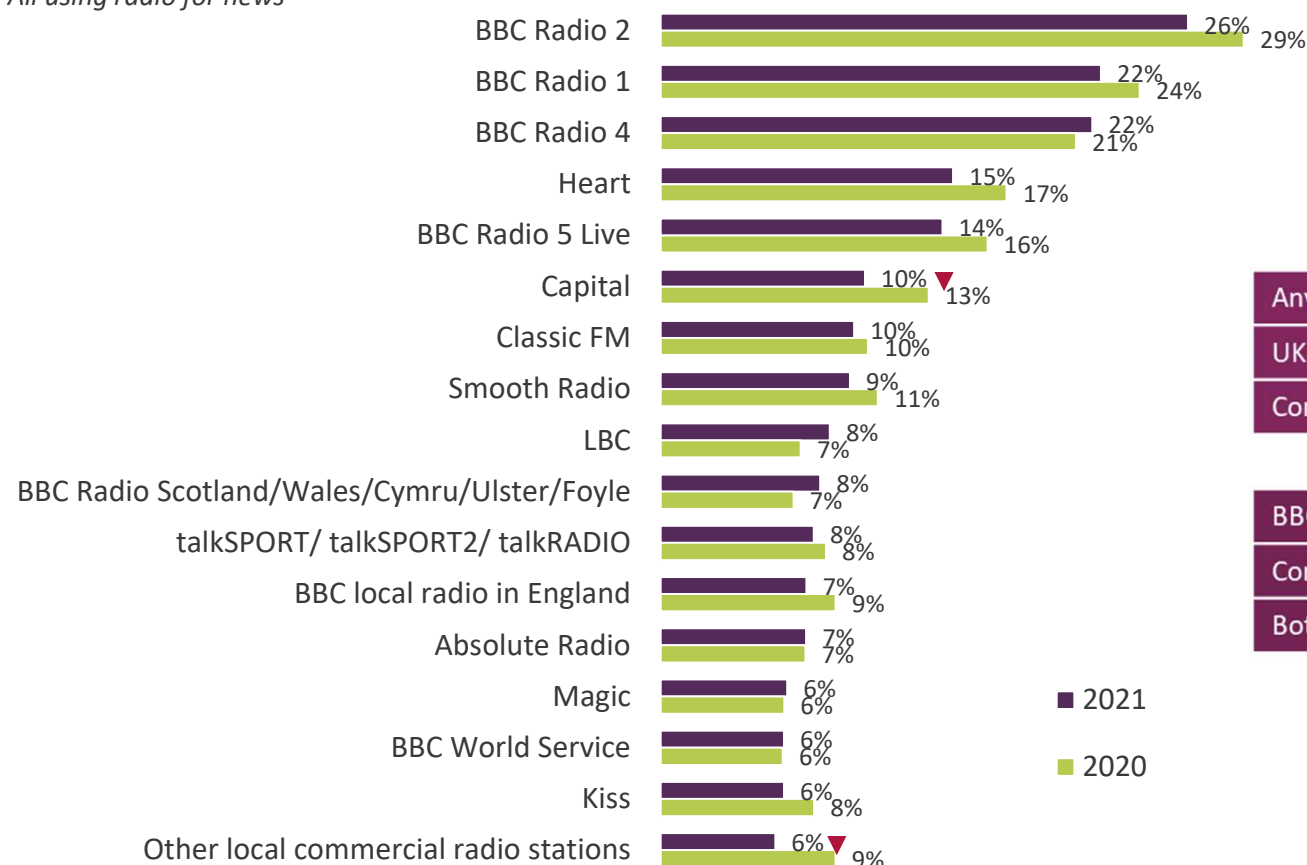


Among the adults that use radio for news, 7 in 10 claim to use a BBC station.  
BBC Radio 2, 1 and 4 continue to be most used for news.

**Figure 5.1**

## Radio stations used for news nowadays

*All using radio for news*



	2021	2020
Any BBC Radio	71%	72%
UK-wide BBC Radio	67%	67%
Commercial radio	61%	64%

BBC Radio only	36%	34%
Commercial radio only	26%	25%
Both BBC and Commercial	36%	38%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D6a. Thinking specifically about radio stations, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using radio for news – 2021=1576, 2020=1331. Only sources with an incidence of >5% in 2021 are shown

Note: Radio stations include short news bulletins at the start of each hour which aren't able to be measured through the industry metric, RAJAR. Our survey helps us understand the role radio plays in news consumption.

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

16-24s are more likely than those aged 65+ to use Radio 1, Capital, Heart and Kiss, those aged 65+ are more likely to use BBC Radio 4, 2, 5 Live and BBC local radio. ABC1s are more likely than C2DEs to listen to non-music radio stations, such as Radio 4, 5 Live, LBC and the BBC World Service

**Figure 5.2**

Radio stations used for news nowadays 2021 - by demographic group

*All using radio for news*

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC Radio 2	26%	28%	25%	18%	33%	28%	24%	15%	27%
BBC Radio 1	22%	19%	26%	51%	5%	20%	25%	38%	21%
BBC Radio 4	22%	25%	18%	9%	39%	26%	14%	18%	22%
Heart	15%	11%	19%	23%	2%	12%	18%	21%	14%
BBC Radio 5 Live	14%	20%	7%	6%	17%	17%	10%	19%	14%
Capital	10%	7%	14%	27%	1%	10%	11%	29%	9%
Classic FM	10%	11%	8%	12%	16%	11%	8%	22%	9%
Smooth Radio	9%	8%	11%	4%	9%	8%	12%	12%	9%
LBC	8%	11%	6%	7%	7%	10%	6%	12%	8%
BBC Radio Scotland/Wales/Ulster	8%	10%	6%	9%	8%	7%	9%	10%	8%
talkSPORT/ talkSPORT2/ talkRADIO	8%	13%	2%	3%	4%	8%	8%	6%	8%
BBC local radio in England	7%	8%	6%	2%	12%	6%	9%	2%	8%
Absolute Radio	7%	7%	7%	4%	2%	6%	10%	3%	8%
Magic	6%	4%	9%	5%	3%	5%	8%	4%	7%
BBC World Service	6%	8%	4%	4%	8%	7%	4%	11%	6%
Kiss	6%	5%	7%	17%	1%	5%	9%	14%	5%
Other local commercial stations	6%	5%	6%	7%	6%	4%	8%	4%	6%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D6a. Thinking specifically about radio stations, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using radio for news 2021 - Total=1576, Male=813, Female=762, 16-24=194, 65+=351, ABC1=939, C2DE=630, Minority ethnic groups=163, White=1408

Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of >5% in 2021 are shown.

# News consumption via newspapers

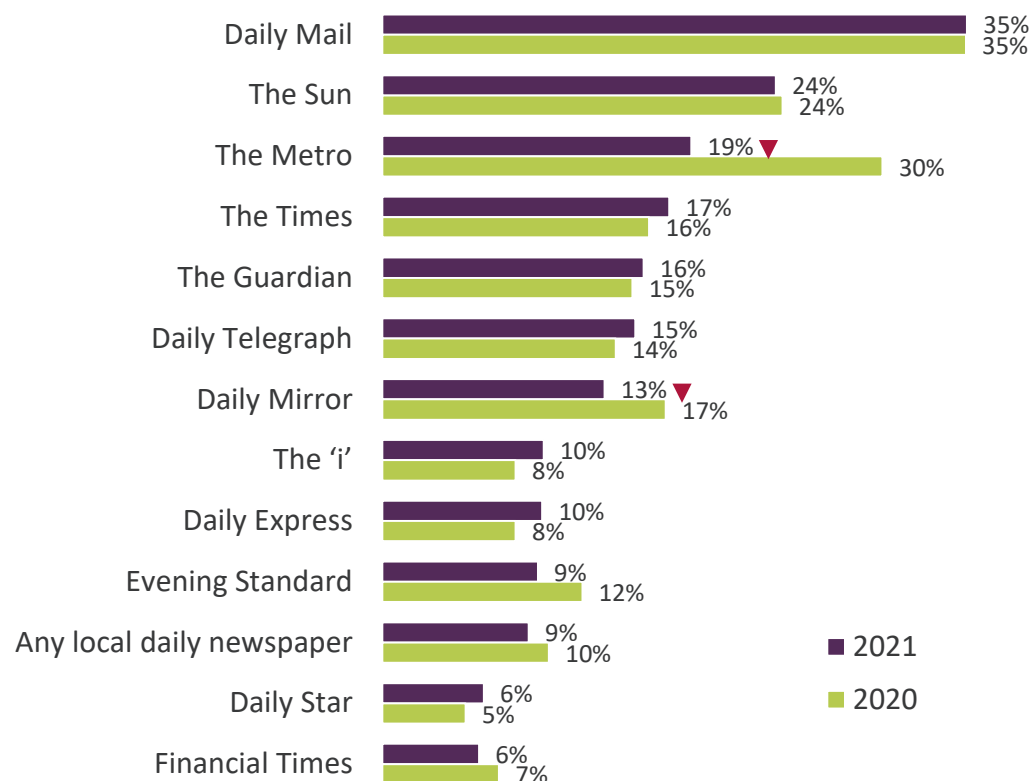
Among the adults who claim to consume news through print, the Daily Mail remains the most-used daily title followed by The Sun and The Metro, which has seen a significant decline since 2020



## Figure 6.1

### Daily newspapers used for news nowadays (print only)

All using printed newspapers for news



In total, **21%** (33% in 2020) of print newspaper readers used **daily 'free-sheets'**

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D3a. Thinking specifically about daily newspapers, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using print newspapers for news – 2021=1104, 2020=1003

Only sources with an incidence of >5% in 2021 are shown

Note: Daily free-sheets are the Metro and the Evening Standard

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

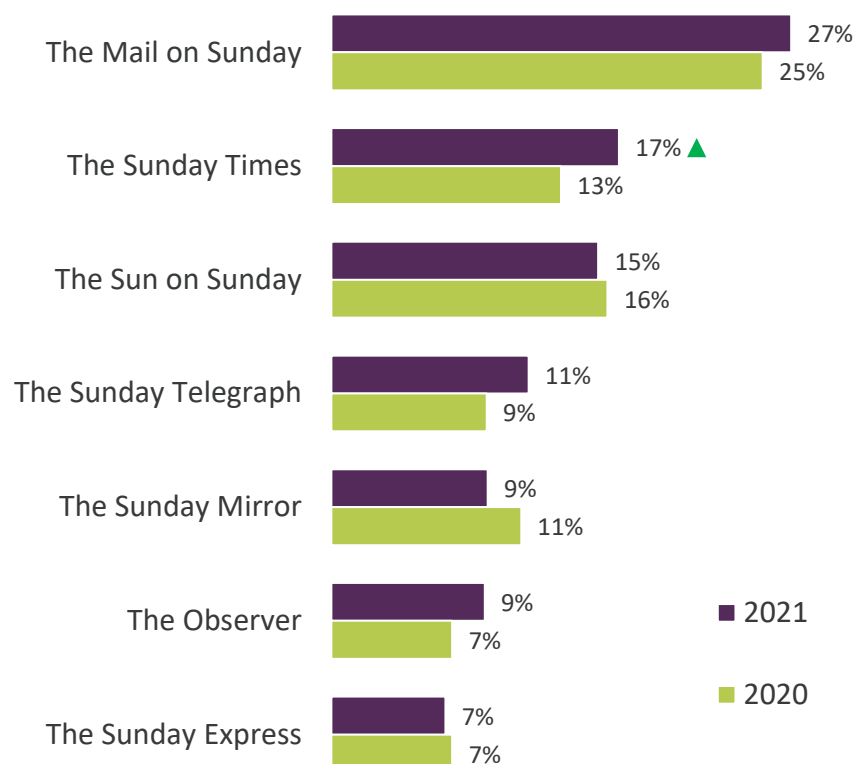
The Mail on Sunday remains the most read Sunday title, followed by The Sunday Times, which has increased significantly, and The Sun on Sunday



## Figure 6.2

### Sunday newspapers used for news nowadays (print only)

*All using printed newspapers for news*



In total, **2%** (**3%** in 2020) of print newspaper readers used free local weekly newspapers

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D4a. Thinking specifically about weekly newspapers, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using print newspapers for news – 2021=1104, 2020=1003

Only sources with an incidence of >5% in 2021 are shown

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

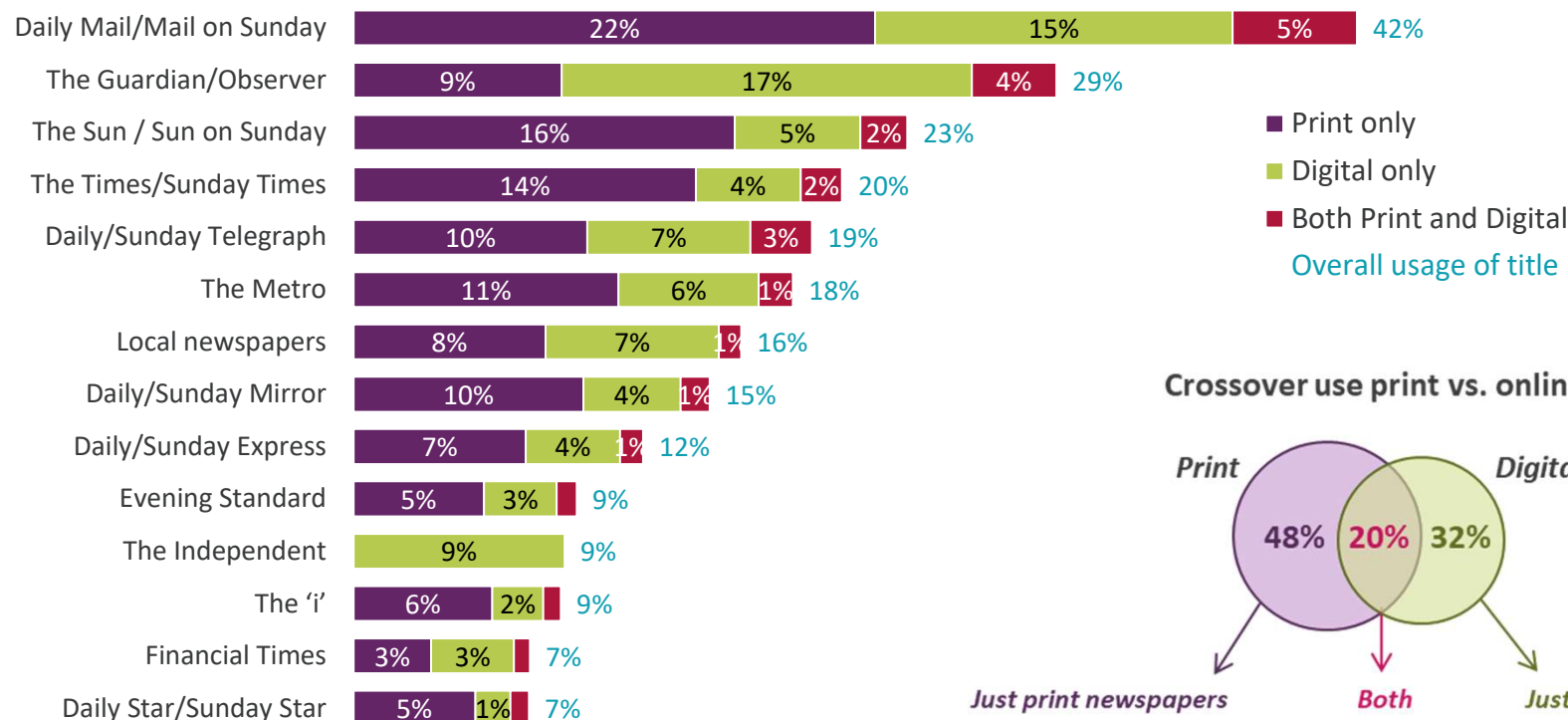
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

The Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday remains the most widely-read news title overall.  
The Guardian/Observer and Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday are the most widely-read digital titles

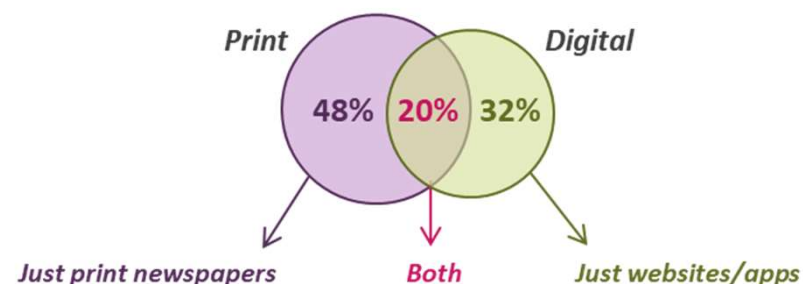
## Figure 6.3

### Print vs. digital newspaper readership 2021

All using newspapers (print + website/app) for news



### Crossover use print vs. online



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D3a/D4a. Thinking specifically about daily/weekly newspapers, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

D8a. Thinking specifically about the internet, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using newspapers (print + website/app) for news – 2021=1691

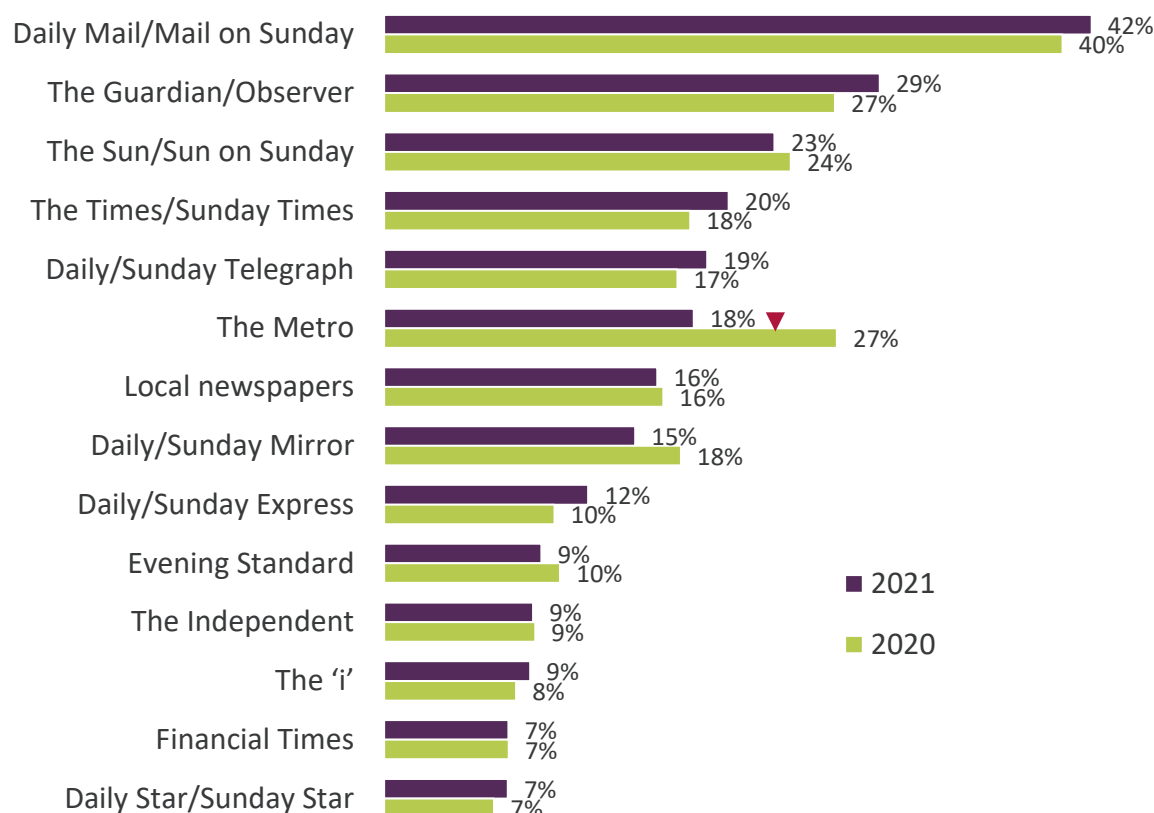
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

Among the adults who claim to consume news through print or online newspapers, Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday remains the most-used title/site/app.

**Figure 6.4**

Newspapers (**print + website/app**) used for news nowadays

*All using newspapers (print + website/app) for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D3a/D4a. Thinking specifically about daily/weekly newspapers, which of the following do you use for news nowadays? D8a. Thinking specifically about the internet, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using newspapers (print + website/app) for news – 2021=1691, 2020=1431

Among those using newspapers for news - 16-24s, ABC1s and people from minority ethnic groups are generally more likely to read more of the titles than 65+, C2DEs and white adults

## Figure 6.5

Newspapers (print + website/app) used for news nowadays 2021

- by demographic group

*All using newspapers (print + website/app) for news*



	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday	42%	41%	43%	40%	48%	41%	43%	43%	42%
The Guardian/Observer	29%	29%	30%	53%	16%	33%	22%	44%	27%
The Sun / Sun on Sunday	23%	23%	23%	27%	15%	17%	34%	29%	22%
The Times/Sunday Times	20%	22%	18%	26%	17%	25%	13%	27%	20%
Daily/Sunday Telegraph	19%	21%	17%	26%	19%	23%	13%	26%	18%
The Metro	18%	20%	16%	17%	13%	17%	21%	31%	17%
Local newspapers	16%	14%	19%	7%	26%	15%	18%	4%	18%
Daily/Sunday Mirror	15%	16%	13%	21%	12%	12%	20%	28%	13%
Daily/Sunday Express	12%	14%	9%	12%	13%	12%	13%	18%	11%
Evening Standard	9%	11%	7%	8%	7%	11%	6%	14%	9%
The Independent	9%	8%	10%	14%	5%	9%	9%	15%	8%
The 'i'	9%	9%	8%	7%	7%	9%	8%	10%	8%
Financial Times	7%	10%	4%	16%	3%	9%	5%	20%	6%
Daily Star/Sunday Star	7%	8%	6%	13%	2%	5%	11%	13%	7%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D3a/4a. Thinking specifically about daily/weekly newspapers, which of the following do you use for news nowadays? D8a. Thinking specifically about the internet, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using newspapers (print + website/app) for news - Total=1691, Male=901, Female=790, 16-24=249, 65+=417, ABC1=1021, C2DE=661, Minority ethnic groups=240, White=1445. Green shading indicates significant differences between groups.



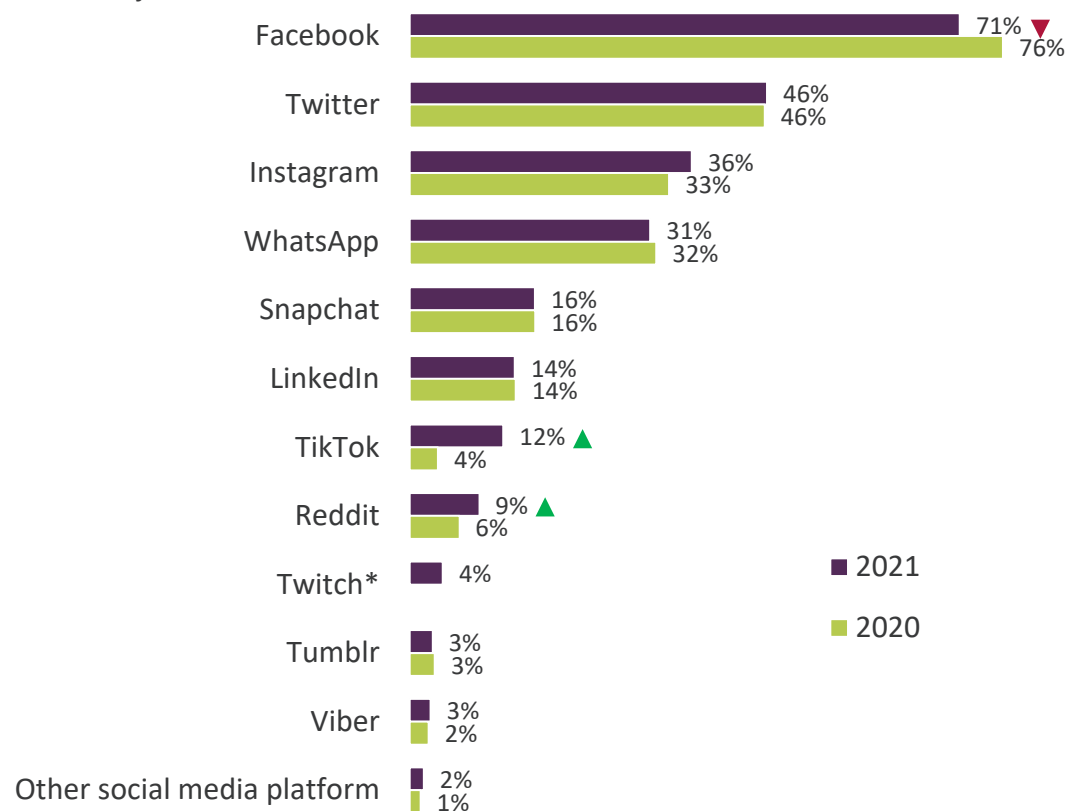
# News consumption via social media

Among the adults who consume news via social media, while still most popular, fewer adults claim to use Facebook for news in 2021, with greater proportions using TikTok and Reddit

**Figure 7.1**

## Social media used for news nowadays

*All using social media for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D7a. Thinking specifically about social media (on any device), which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using social media for news – 2021=1770, 2020=1381 \*Twitch added in 2021

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

With the exception of Facebook, 16-24s and people from minority ethnic groups are more likely to use more of the social media apps/sites for news than those aged 65+ or white adults

**Figure 7.2**

Social media used for news nowadays 2021 - by demographic group

*All using social media for news*

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
Facebook	71%	66%	75%	55%	73%	67%	76%	56%	74%
Twitter	46%	52%	41%	55%	26%	51%	40%	50%	45%
Instagram	36%	31%	40%	60%	5%	38%	34%	54%	32%
WhatsApp	31%	32%	30%	31%	18%	31%	31%	49%	27%
Snapchat	16%	14%	17%	42%	0%	16%	16%	29%	13%
LinkedIn	14%	18%	10%	11%	13%	17%	9%	23%	11%
TikTok	12%	10%	14%	27%	1%	13%	11%	20%	10%
Reddit	9%	12%	6%	16%	1%	10%	7%	11%	8%
Twitch	4%	6%	3%	7%	0%	4%	4%	3%	4%
Tumblr	3%	3%	3%	5%	0%	3%	2%	3%	3%
Viber	3%	3%	2%	2%	0%	3%	2%	6%	2%
Other social media platform	2%	2%	2%	2%	6%	2%	2%	3%	2%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D7a. Thinking specifically about social media (on any device), which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using social media for news – Total=1770, Male=755, Female=1013, 16-24=532, 65+=130, ABC1=1003, C2DE=758, Minority ethnic groups=420, White=1343

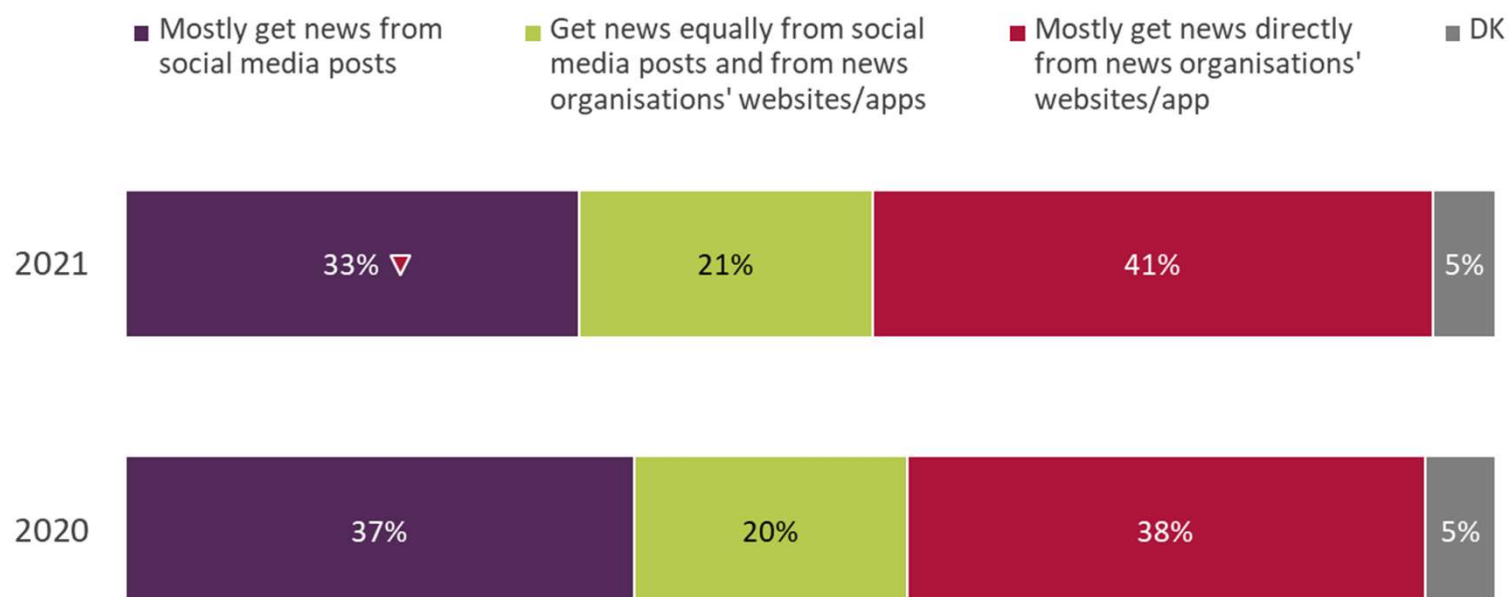
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

Those consuming news via social media remain more likely to do so ‘directly from news organisations’ websites or apps’. Significantly fewer adults now claim to mostly get their news from social media posts compared to 2020

## Figure 7.3

### Use of social media versus news organisations’ websites/apps

*All using social media for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D15. And if you had to choose, which one of the following would you say is closest to the way you find out about news when you're online?

Base: All using social media for news – 2021=1770 , 2020=1381

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

16-24s, females and C2DEs are more likely than 65+, male and ABC1s to get their news from social media posts. In contrast, males, ABC1s and those aged 65+ are more likely to get news directly from news organisations sites/apps

**Figure 7.4**

Use of social media versus news organisations' websites/apps 2021 - by demographic group

*All using social media for news*

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
Mostly get news from social media posts	33%	30%	36%	51%	19%	30%	37%	36%	33%
Get news equally from social media posts and from news organisations' websites/apps	21%	18%	24%	18%	27%	20%	24%	18%	22%
Mostly get news directly from news organisations' websites/app	41%	46%	37%	30%	43%	47%	33%	43%	41%
Don't know	5%	5%	4%	2%	12%	4%	6%	3%	5%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D15. And if you had to choose, which ONE of the following would you say is closest to the way you find out about news when you're online?

Base: All using social media for news – Total=1770, Male=755, Female=1013, 16-24=532, 65+=130, ABC1=1003, C2DE=758, Minority ethnic groups=420, White=1343

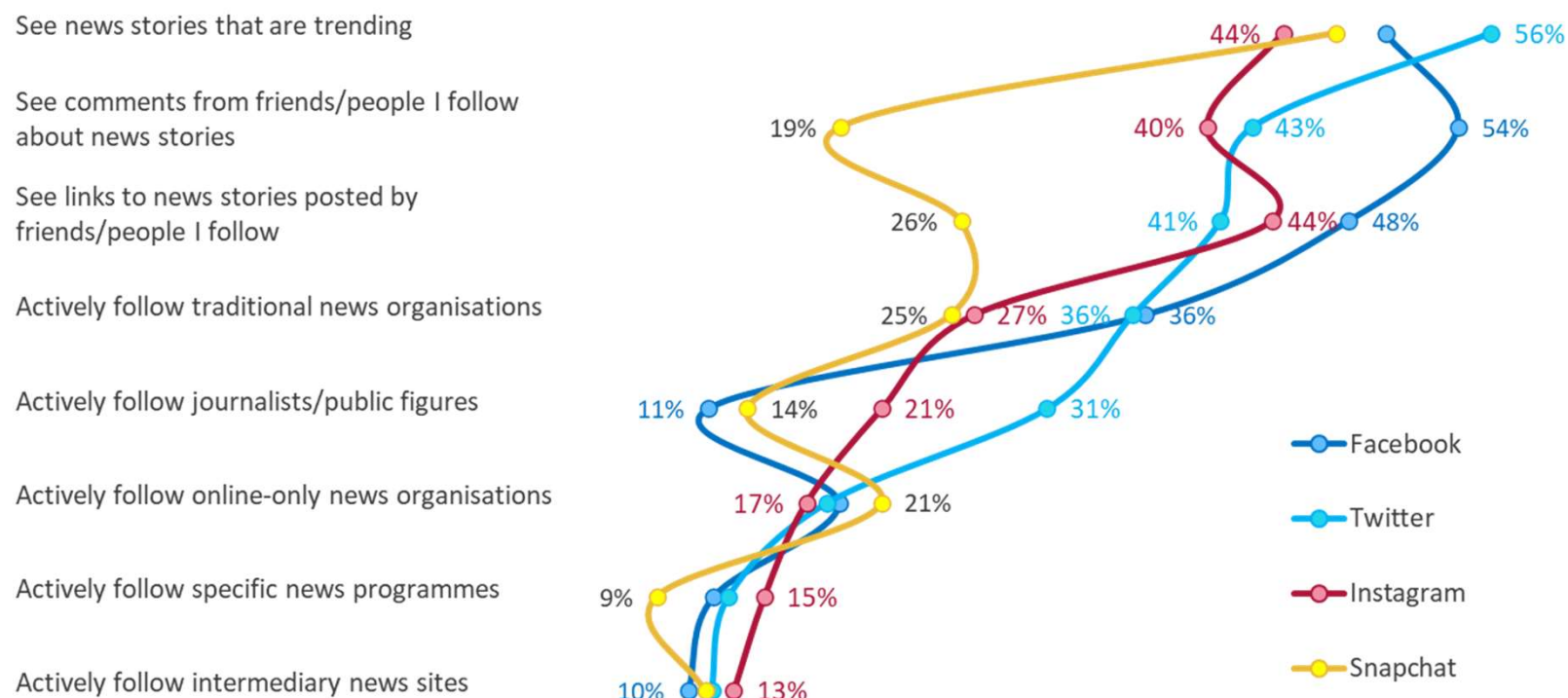
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

As in 2020, news on social media sites is most likely to be accessed via 'stories that are trending', 'seeing comments' and 'links to stories'

## Figure 7.5

### How news is accessed via social media 2021

*All using each type of social media for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D9. Earlier you mentioned that you get news from [social media site]. Which of the following do you do nowadays?

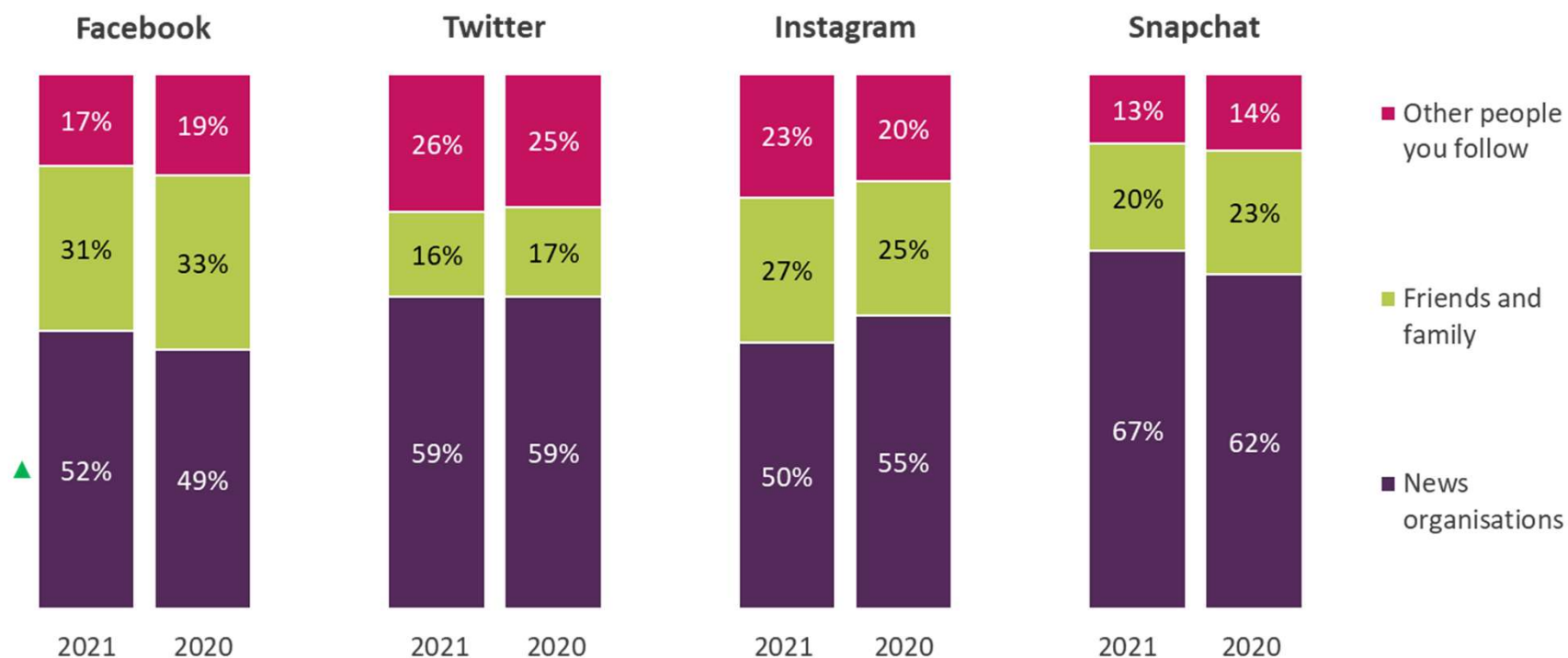
Base: All using each site for news 2021 – Facebook=1210, Twitter=812, Instagram=659, Snapchat=322

Those that consume news via social media are more likely to do so from news organisations than friends and family or other people they follow

**Figure 7.6**

Proportion of news on social media accessed from each type of source

*All using each type of social media for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D10. Approximately what proportion of the news you get from [social media site] nowadays is from news organisations, friends and other people you follow?

Base: All using each site for news 2021/2020 – Facebook=1195/1030, Twitter=806/627, Instagram=651/485, Snapchat=320/259

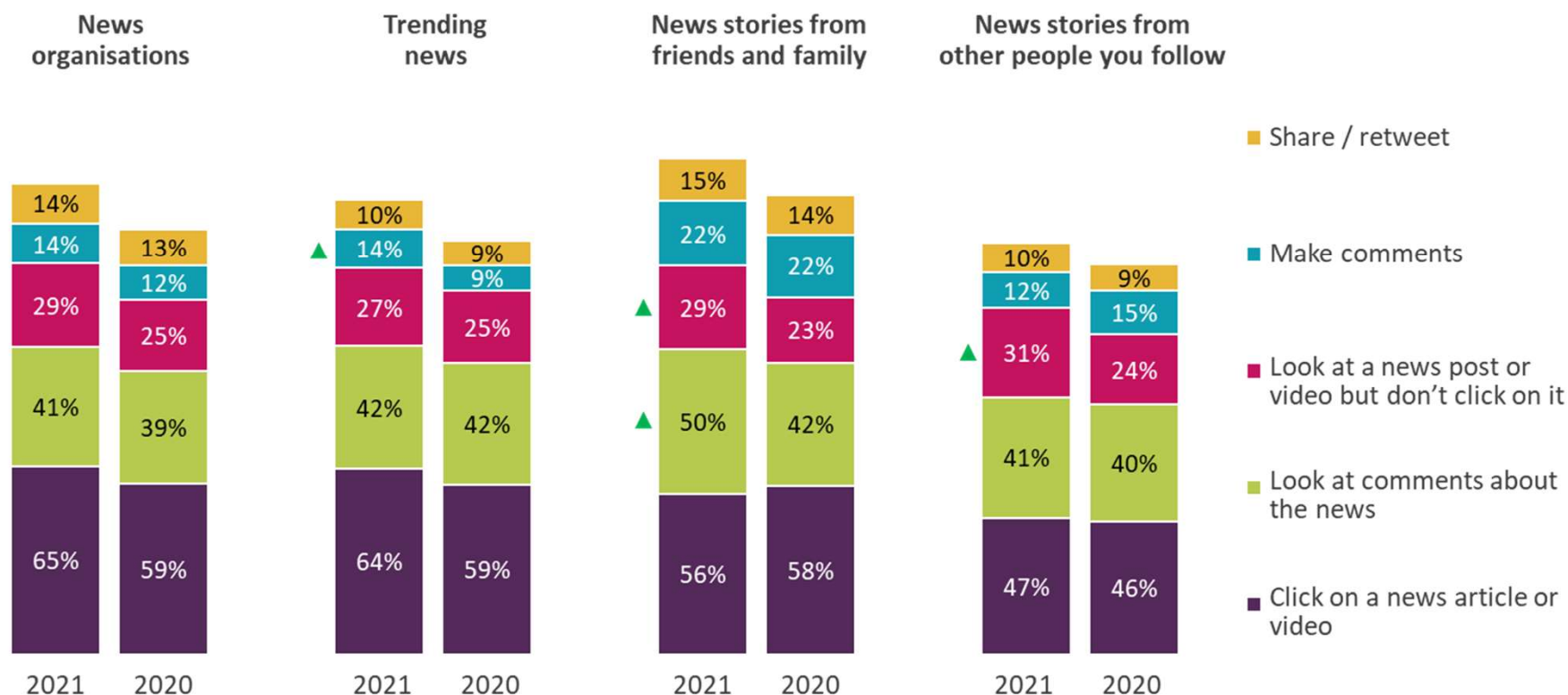
2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

Facebook users are generally more likely than in 2020 to 'make comments about the news' and 'look at news posts or videos without clicking on them'

**Figure 7.7**

## Actions normally taken when accessing news on Facebook

*All accessing news from each source on Facebook*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D11. Which, if any, of the following do you tend to do when you see posts from the following on Facebook?

Base: All accessing news from each source via Facebook 2021/2020 – News organisations=644/514, Trending news=610/532, News stories from friends/family=833/751, News stories from other people you follow=874/788

Note: bars do not sum to 100% as respondents may carry out more than one action

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

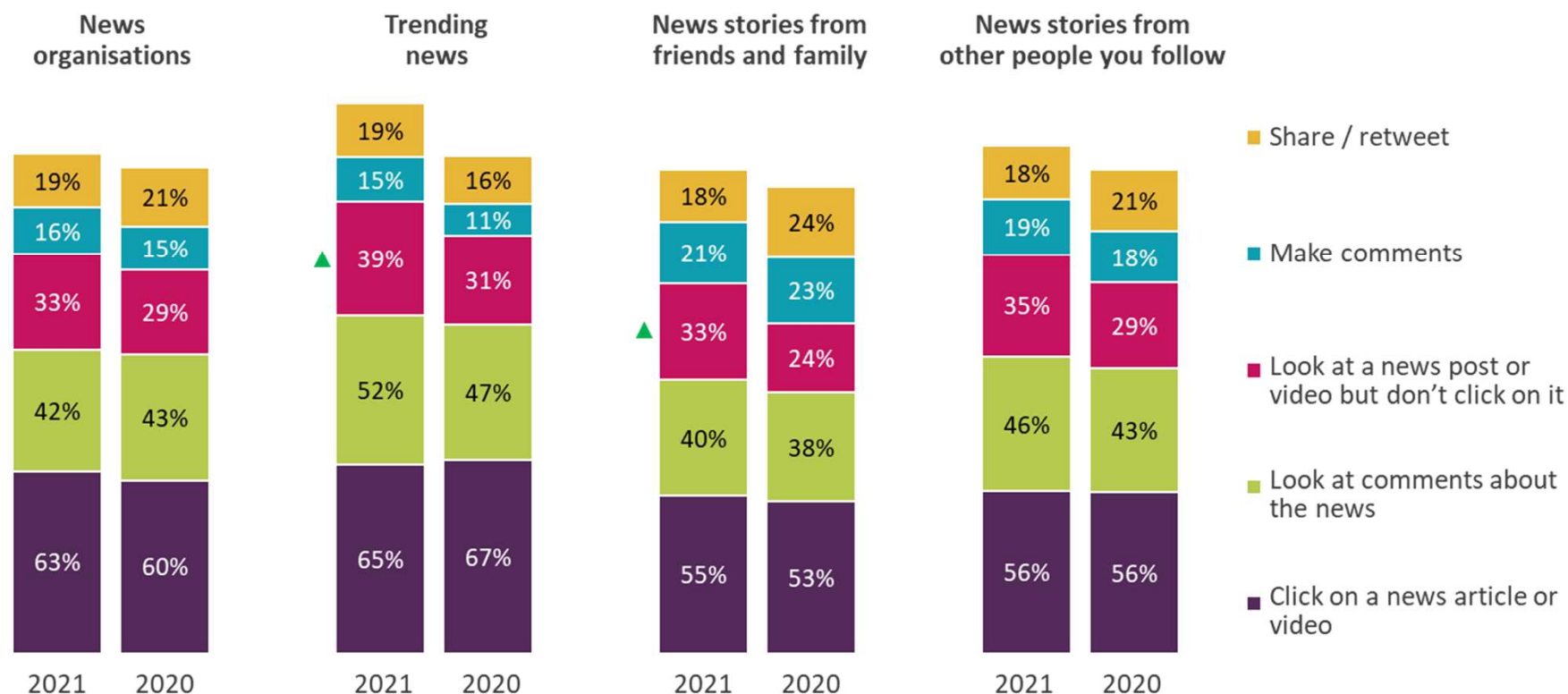


Twitter users are more likely to 'look at news posts or videos without clicking on them' compared to 2020

## Figure 7.8

### Actions normally taken when accessing news on Twitter

*All accessing news from each source on Twitter*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D11. Which, if any, of the following do you tend to do when you see posts from the following on Twitter?

Base: All accessing news from each source via Twitter 2021/2020 – News organisations=477/364, Trending news=472/361, News stories from friends/family=452/356, News stories from other people you follow=540/413

Note: bars do not sum to 100% as respondents may carry out more than one action

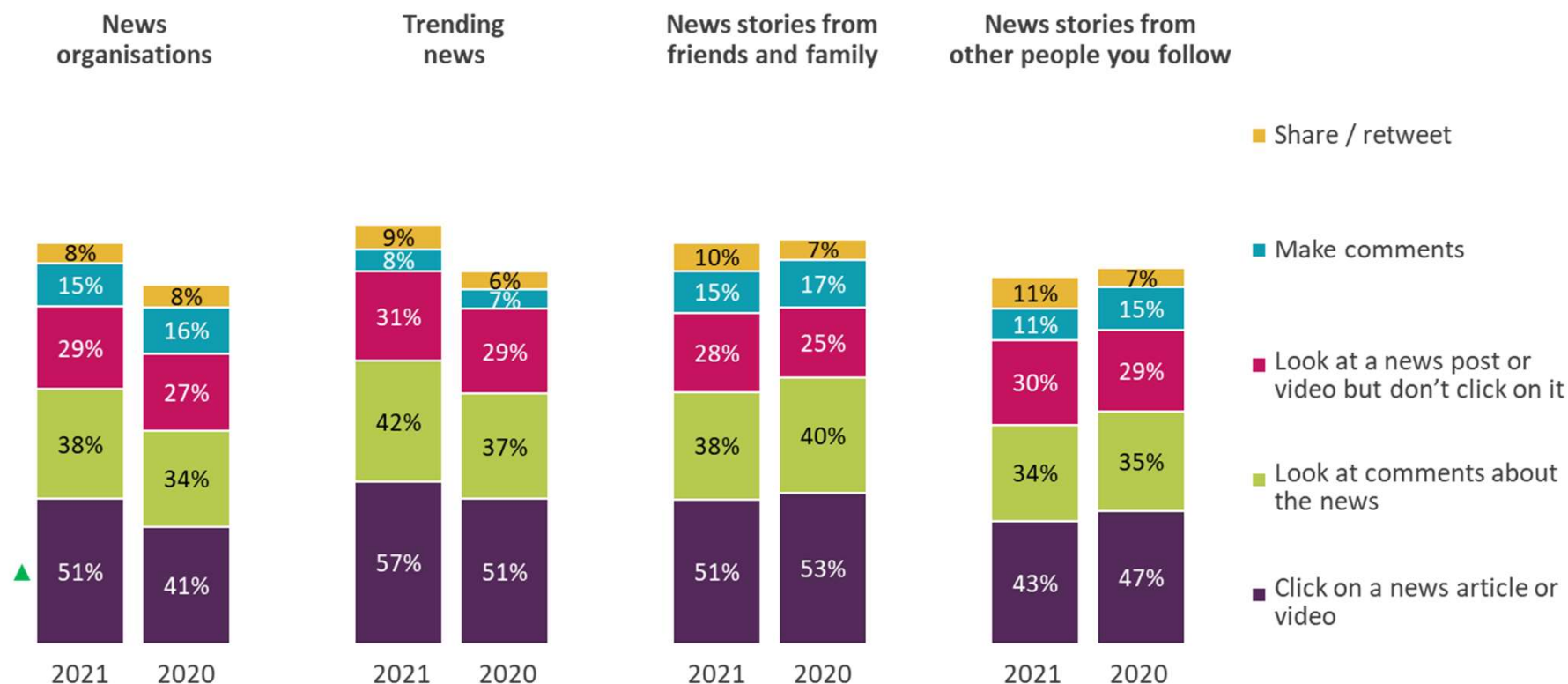
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

# Instagram news users are more likely to click on news articles or videos, when accessing news via news organisations, compared to 2021

**Figure 7.9**

## Actions normally taken when accessing news on Instagram

*All accessing news from each source on Instagram*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D11. Which, if any, of the following do you tend to do when you see posts from the following on Instagram?

Base: All accessing news from each source via Instagram 2021/2020 – News organisations=354/269, Trending news=300/221, News stories from friends/family=406/278, News stories from other people you follow=453/321

Note: bars do not sum to 100% as respondents may carry out more than one action

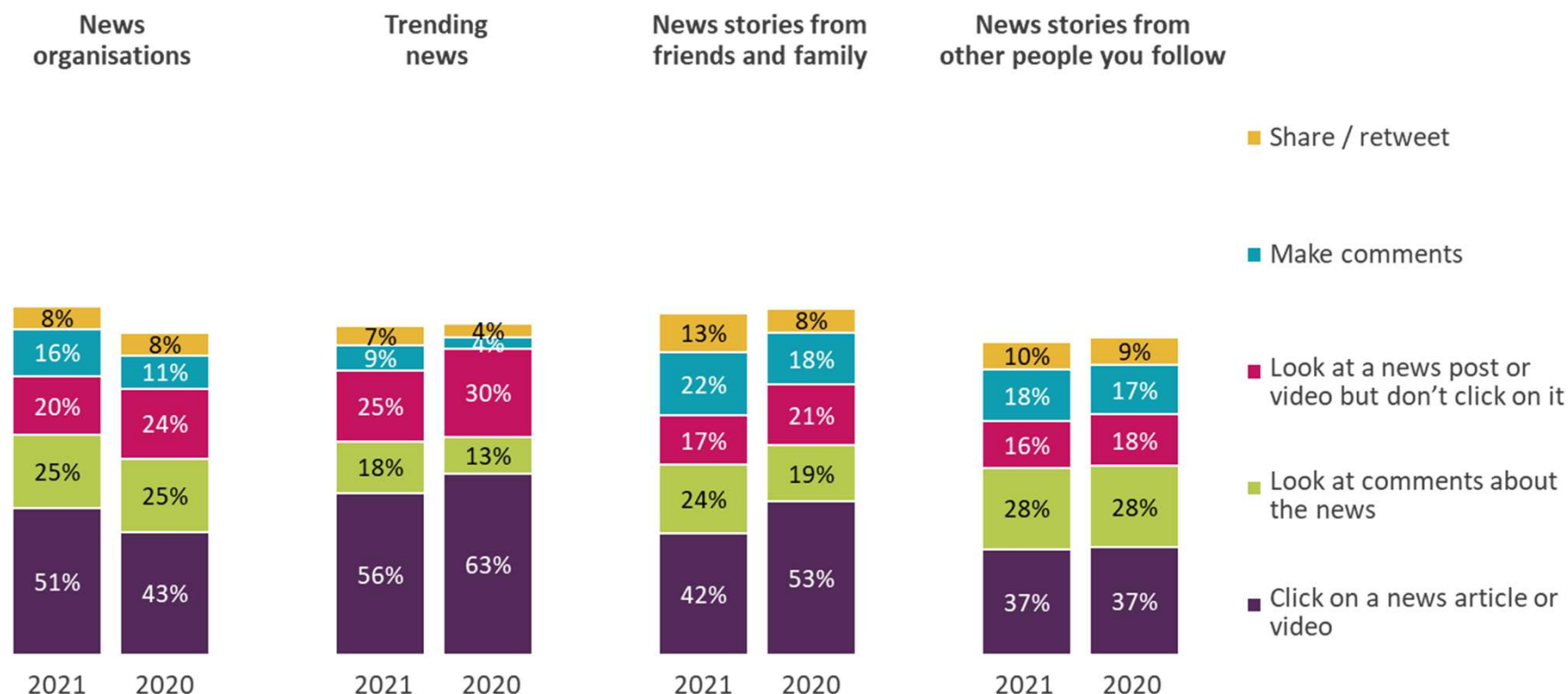
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

# Users of Snapchat for news show similar levels of engagement in 2021 and 2020

**Figure 7.10**

## Actions normally taken when accessing news on Snapchat

*All accessing news from each source on Snapchat*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D11. Which, if any, of the following do you tend to do when you see posts from the following on Snapchat?

Base: All accessing news from each source via Snapchat 2021/2020 – News organisations=171/124, Trending news=170/133, News stories from friends/family=119/105, News stories from other people you follow=142/122

Note: bars do not sum to 100% as respondents may carry out more than one action

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

Among those who follow news organisations on social media, BBC remains the most common source, followed by ITV on Facebook, Sky News on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, and The Sun on Snapchat

**Figure 7.11**

## News organisations followed on social media - 2021

*All accessing news organisations via each type of social media*

Facebook		Twitter		Instagram		Snapchat		YouTube	
BBC	52%	ANY Public figure	67%	ANY Public figure	70%	ANY Public figure	51%	ANY Public figure	40%
ANY Public figure	51%	ANY Journalist	60%	ANY Journalist	49% ▲	ANY Journalist	44% ▲	ANY Journalist	25%
ANY Journalist	33%	BBC	53%	BBC	36%	BBC	26%	BBC	24%
ITV	26%	Sky News	29%	Sky News	24%	The Sun	26%	Sky News	13%
Sky News	22%	Guardian/Observer	19% ▲	ITV	15%	Sky News	23%		
The LADbible	21%	ITV	19%	BuzzFeed	15%	The Daily Mail	19%		
BuzzFeed	21%	Channel 4	17%	The LADbible	14%	BuzzFeed	17%		
The Sun	17%	CNN	13% ▲	YouTube	13%	YouTube	16%		
The Daily Mail	16%	The Independent	10%	Channel 4	12%	The LADbible	13%		
Guardian/Observer	15%	BuzzFeed	10%	Guardian/Observer	12% ▲	ITV	13%		
YouTube	15%			CNN	11%	CNN	12%		
Channel 4	14%			The Daily Mail	11%	Channel 4	10%		
Huffington Post	11%					Guardian/Observer	10%		
The Metro	11%								
CNN	11%								
The Independent	10%								

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D12a/c. Which, if any, of the following news sources do you follow on [social media site]?

Base: All accessing news organisations via each type of social media - Facebook=644, Twitter=477, Instagram=354, Snapchat=171, YouTube=373

Only sources with an incidence of 10%+ on each type of social media are shown

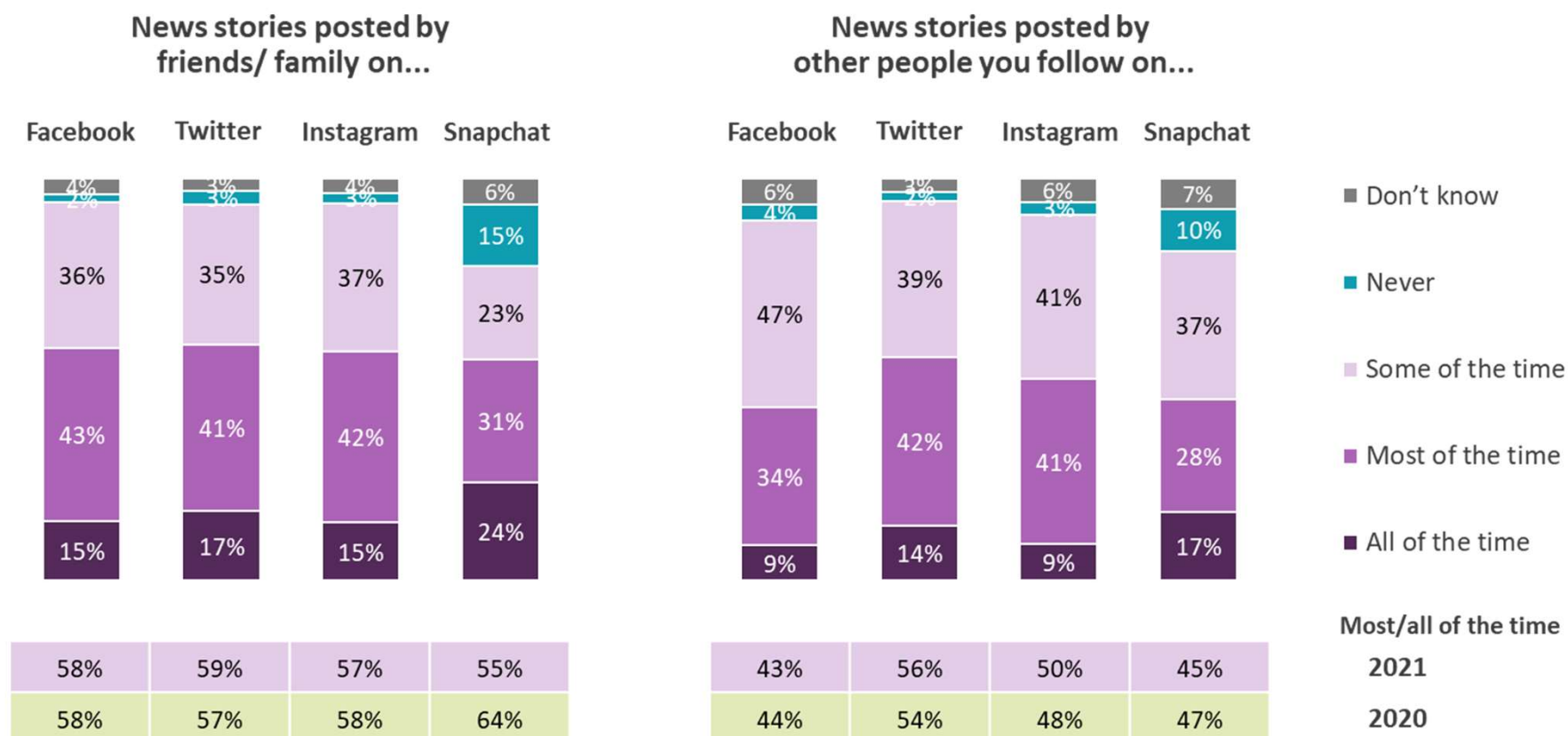
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

As in 2020, around half of social media news users say they know the source of their news stories 'most' or 'all' of the time

**Figure 7.12**

## Awareness of the source of news stories posted on social media

All accessing news stories posted by friends/family or by other people via each type of social media



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D12b. Do you typically know the source of the news stories posted by your friends & family/by other people you follow?

Base: All accessing news stories posted by each source 2021/2020 –

Family/friends on Facebook=833/751, Twitter=452/356, Instagram=406/278, Snapchat=119/105 ;

Other people on Facebook=874/788, Twitter=540/413, Instagram=453/321, Snapchat=142/122

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

# News consumption via websites or apps\*

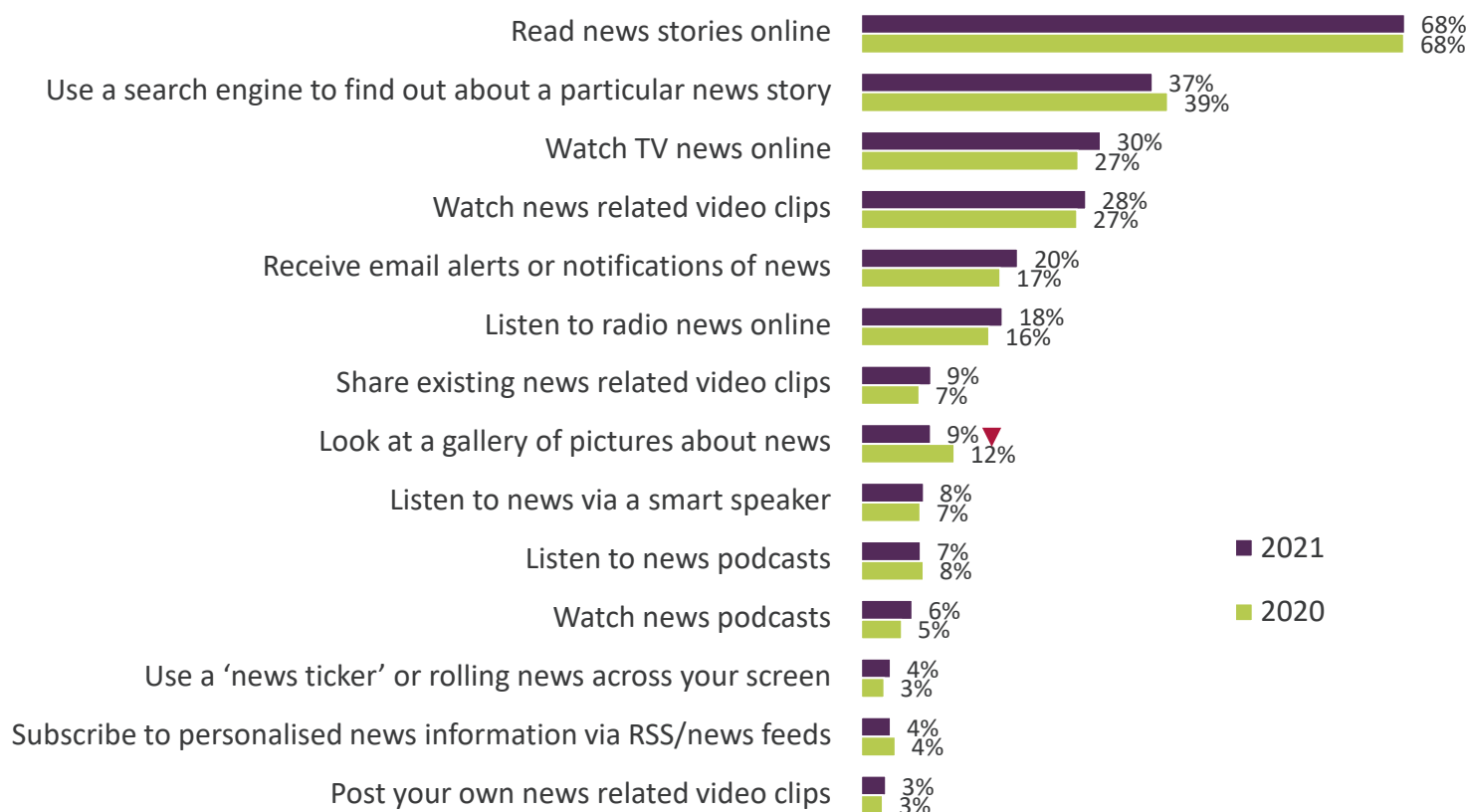
\*Websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source

## Among adults who use online news other than social media, reading news stories online remains the most common way of accessing news

**Figure 8.1**

### Ways to access news through the internet

*All using other websites/apps for news\**



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D13. In which types of ways do you access and use news through internet sources nowadays?

Base: All using other websites/apps for news – 2021=1555, 2020=1252

\*This question was not asked to those that said they used social media and no other types of websites/apps for news

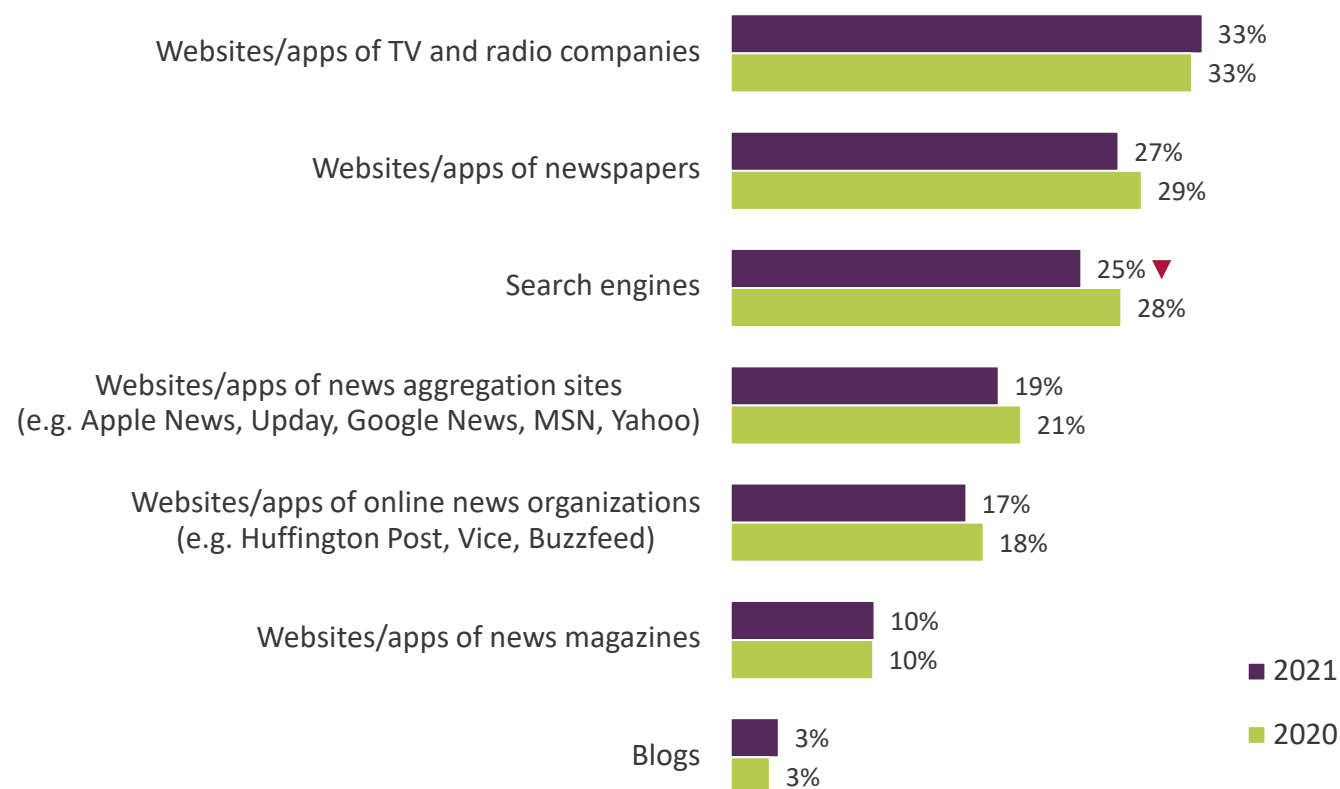
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

## Websites/apps of TV and radio companies are used by a third of adults for news. Search engines are used less than in 2020

**Figure 8.2**

Types of websites/apps used for news nowadays

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: C2. Which of the following do you use to get news?

Base: All adults 16+ – 2021=3327, 2020=2510

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY



ABC1s, males and people from minority ethnic groups tend to use a wider variety of online news sources nowadays compared to C2DEs, females and white people

## Figure 8.3

Types of websites/apps used for news nowadays 2021 - by demographic group

All adults 16+

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
Websites/apps of TV and radio companies	33%	38%	29%	24%	31%	39%	26%	33%	33%
Websites/apps of newspapers	27%	30%	25%	25%	25%	31%	22%	30%	27%
Search engines	25%	26%	23%	24%	21%	26%	23%	32%	24%
Websites/apps of news aggregation sites	19%	21%	17%	21%	15%	20%	17%	28%	18%
Websites/apps of online news organisations	17%	18%	15%	19%	12%	19%	13%	23%	16%
Websites/apps of news magazines	10%	12%	9%	12%	3%	12%	8%	18%	9%
Blogs	3%	4%	3%	3%	1%	4%	3%	6%	3%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: C2. Which of the following do you use to get news?

Base: All adults 16+ 2021 - Total=3327, Male=1602, Female=1723, 16-24=656, 65+=620, ABC1=1884, C2DE=1422, Minority ethnic groups=552, White=2762

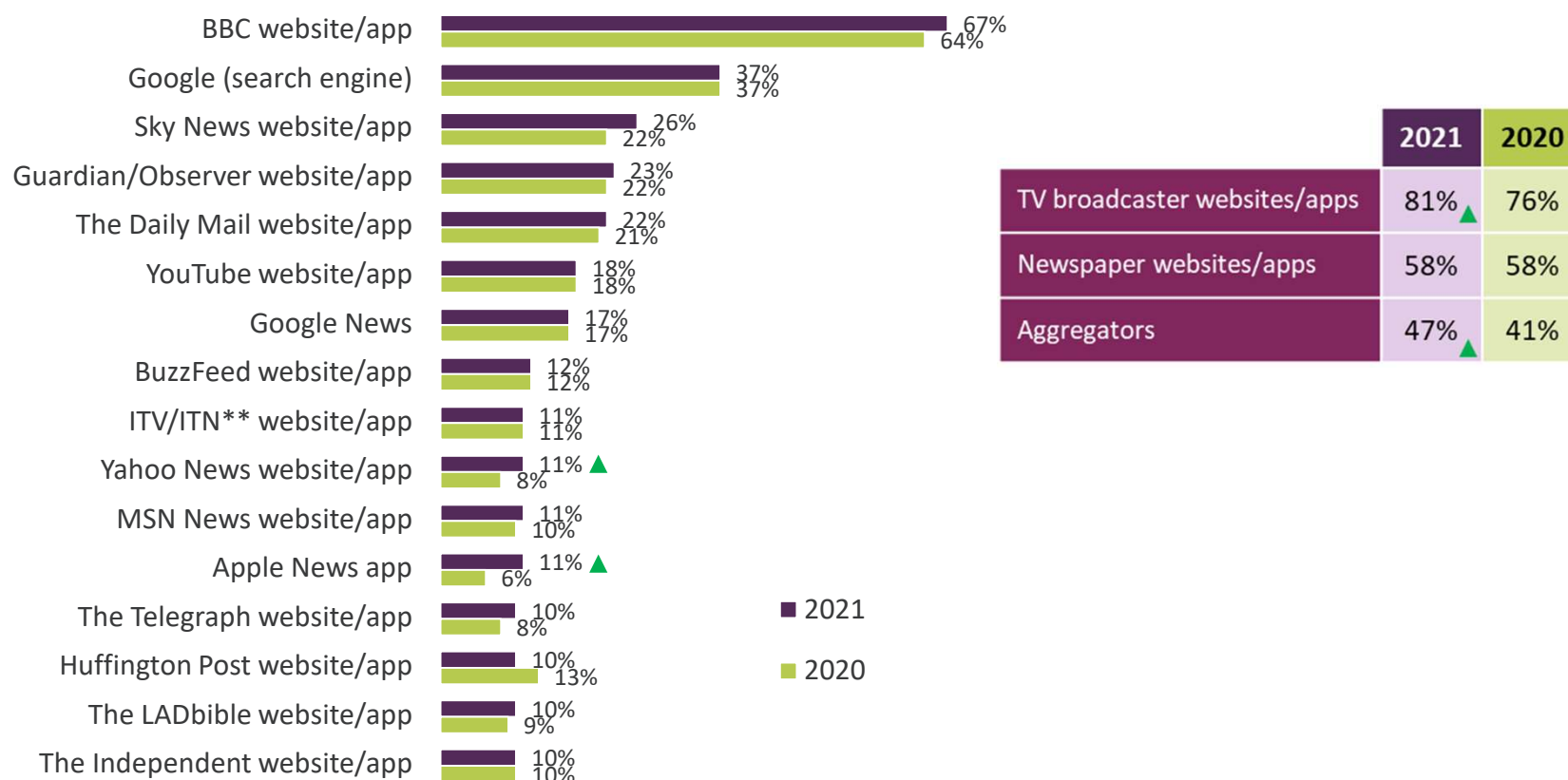
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

Among those using websites or apps for news, the BBC website/app remains the most used. Usage of the TV broadcaster and aggregator websites/apps have both increased since 2020.

**Figure 8.4**

## Websites/apps used for news nowadays

*All using other websites/apps for news\**



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D8a. Thinking specifically about the internet, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using other websites/apps for news\* - 2021=1555, 2020=1252

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

\*This question was not asked to those that said they used social media and no other types of websites/apps site for news

Only sources with an incidence of 10%+ in 2021 are shown. \*\*ITV/ITN – only includes mentions of ITV/ITN specifically, does not include mentions of STV or UTV.

Among those using websites/apps for news, females and people from minority ethnic groups generally claim to use a wider variety of website/apps for news than males and white people

**Figure 8.5**

Websites/apps used for news nowadays 2021 - by demographic group

*All using other websites/apps for news\**

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC website/app	67%	70%	65%	66%	69%	71%	61%	62%	68%
Google (search engine)	37%	35%	39%	42%	36%	36%	40%	42%	36%
Sky News website/app	26%	27%	24%	24%	18%	24%	28%	26%	26%
Guardian/Observer website/app	23%	21%	25%	31%	18%	25%	19%	29%	22%
The Daily Mail website/app	22%	19%	25%	18%	27%	22%	23%	22%	22%
YouTube website/app	18%	19%	16%	32%	9%	16%	20%	38%	14%
Google News	17%	18%	16%	13%	14%	17%	19%	25%	16%
BuzzFeed website/app	12%	6%	19%	25%	3%	12%	11%	16%	11%
ITV/ITN** website/app	11%	13%	10%	12%	10%	10%	14%	12%	11%
Yahoo News website/app	11%	13%	9%	9%	7%	9%	14%	17%	10%
MSN News website/app	11%	11%	10%	5%	18%	9%	13%	11%	11%
Apple News app	11%	9%	13%	21%	3%	11%	11%	23%	9%
The Telegraph website/app	10%	10%	11%	11%	12%	11%	8%	11%	10%
Huffington Post website/app	10%	8%	13%	6%	11%	11%	10%	12%	10%
The LADbible website/app	10%	8%	12%	19%	1%	9%	11%	12%	9%
The Independent website/app	10%	9%	10%	12%	8%	9%	11%	13%	9%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D8a. Thinking specifically about the internet, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using other websites/apps for news 2021 - Total=1555, Male=806, Female=747, 16-24=303, 65+=254, ABC1=973, C2DE=574, Minority ethnic grps=299, White=1253

Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of 10%+ in 2021 are shown.

\*This question was not asked to those that said they used social media and no other types of websites/apps site for news

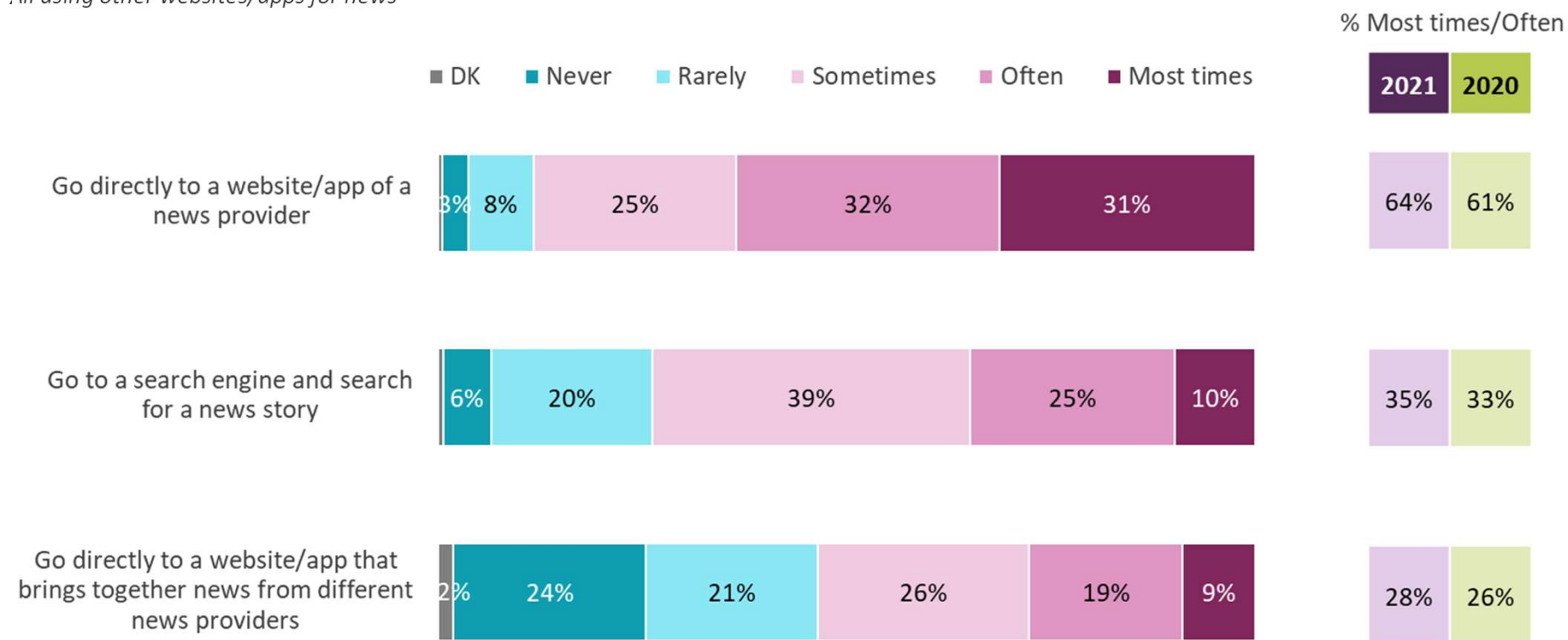
\*\*ITV/ITN – only includes mentions of ITV/ITN specifically, does not include mentions of STV or UTV

## Online news users remain more likely to go directly to the websites/apps of a news provider than via a search engine or a news aggregator

**Figure 8.6**

### Gateways to online news, and frequency of use

*All using other websites/apps for news\**



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D14. How often, if at all, you do each of the following when you want to get news?

Base: All using other websites/apps for news\* - 2021=1555, 2020=1252

\*This question was not asked to those that said they used social media and no other types of websites/apps for news

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

People from minority ethnic groups and 16-24s are more likely to use a search engine or news aggregator compared to white people and those aged 65+

## Figure 8.7

### Gateways to online news, and frequency of use 2021 - by demographic group

*All using other websites/apps for news\**

% Using most times/often	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
Go directly to a website/app of a news provider	64%	66%	61%	58%	58%	66%	60%	62%	64%
Go to a search engine and search for a news story	35%	34%	36%	43%	20%	33%	39%	48%	33%
Go directly to a website/app that brings together news from different news providers	28%	31%	24%	31%	17%	27%	29%	41%	26%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D14. How often, if at all, you do each of the following when you want to get news?

Base: All using other websites/apps for news 2021 - Total=1555, Male=806, Female=747, 16-24=303, 65+=254, ABC1=973, C2DE=574, Minority ethnic grps=299, White=1253

This question was not asked to those that said they used social media and no other types of websites/apps site for news

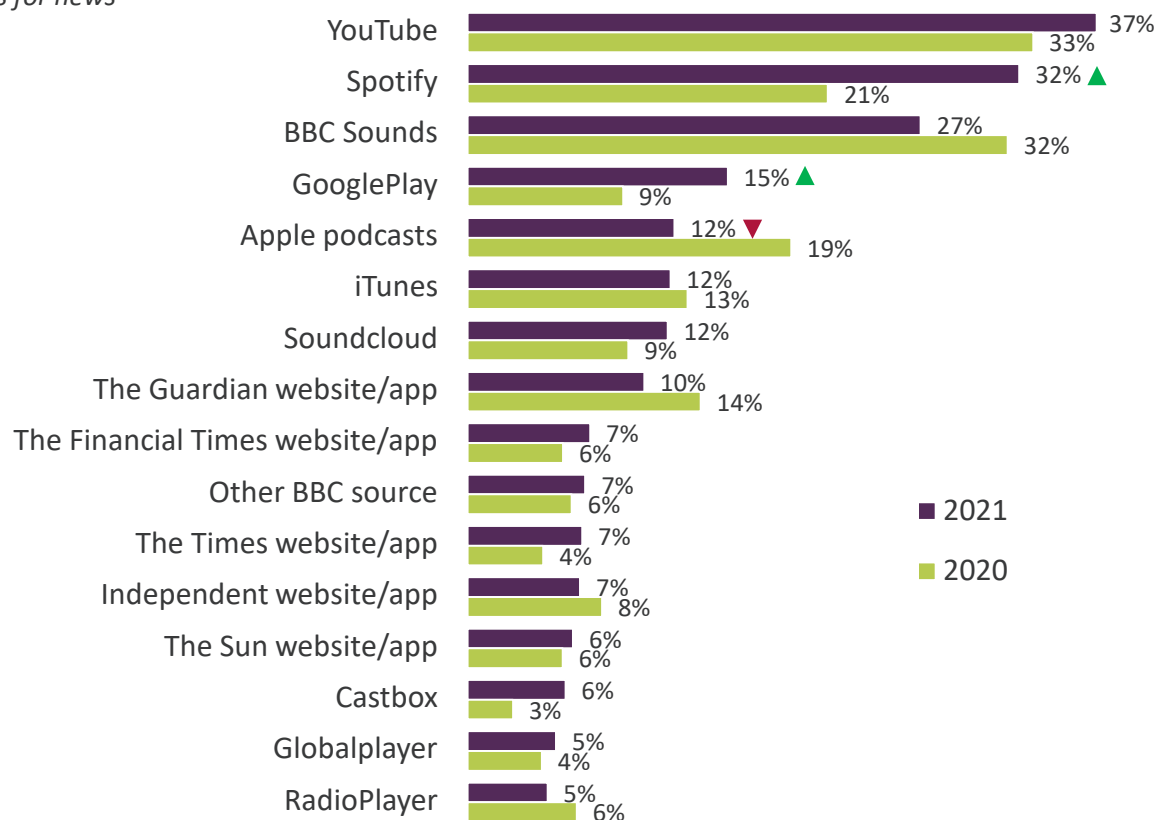
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

Among the adults who claim to consume news via podcasts nowadays, use of Spotify and GooglePlay for news has increased, whilst use of Apple podcasts has decreased since 2020

**Figure 8.8**

Podcast platforms used for news nowadays

*All using podcasts for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D8ai. And, thinking specifically about podcasts you use for news nowadays on any device, how do you tend to access them? Which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: All using podcasts for news – 2021=346, 2020=272

Only sources with an incidence of 5%+ in 2021 are shown

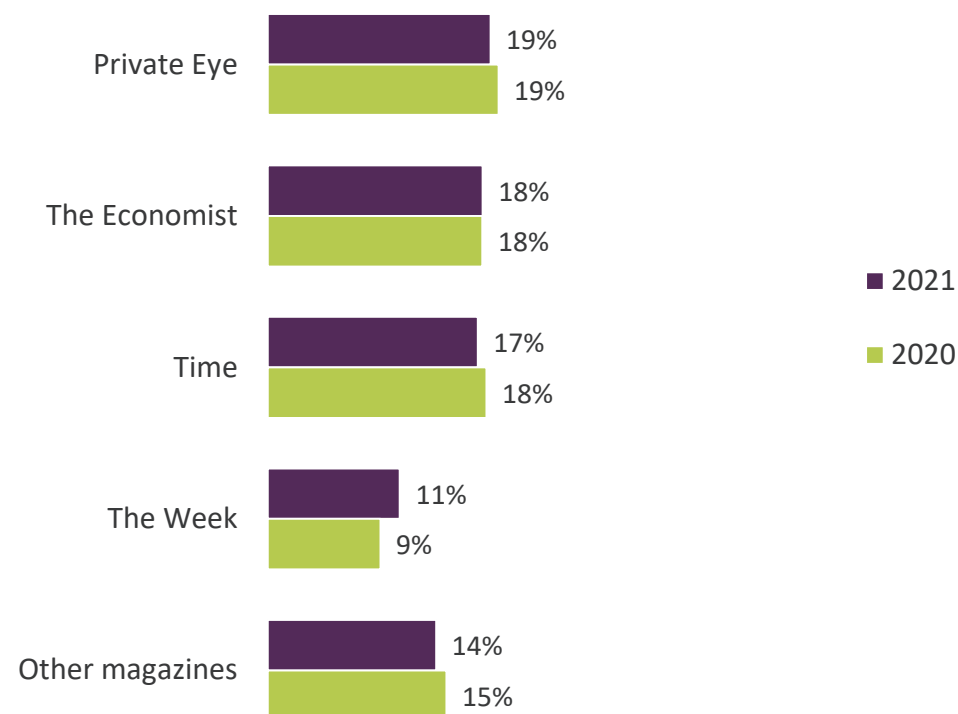
# News consumption via magazines

Among adults who consume news via magazines, around one in five claim to read Private Eye, The Economist or Time

## Figure 9.1

### Magazines used for news nowadays

*All using magazines for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D5a. Thinking specifically about magazines, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using magazines for news – 2021=316, 2020=332

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY



## Private Eye and The Economist are more likely to be read by males than females

**Figure 9.2**

Magazines used for news nowadays 2021 - by demographic group

*All using magazines for news*

	Total	Male	Female	ABC1	C2DE
Private Eye	19%	24%	11%	21%	13%
The Economist	18%	23%	11%	19%	15%
Time	17%	20%	13%	18%	17%
The Week	11%	13%	9%	13%	8%
Other magazines	14%	13%	15%	13%	17%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D5a. Thinking specifically about magazines, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using magazines for news 2021 - Total=316, Male=183, Female=133, ABC1=200, C2DE=116

Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

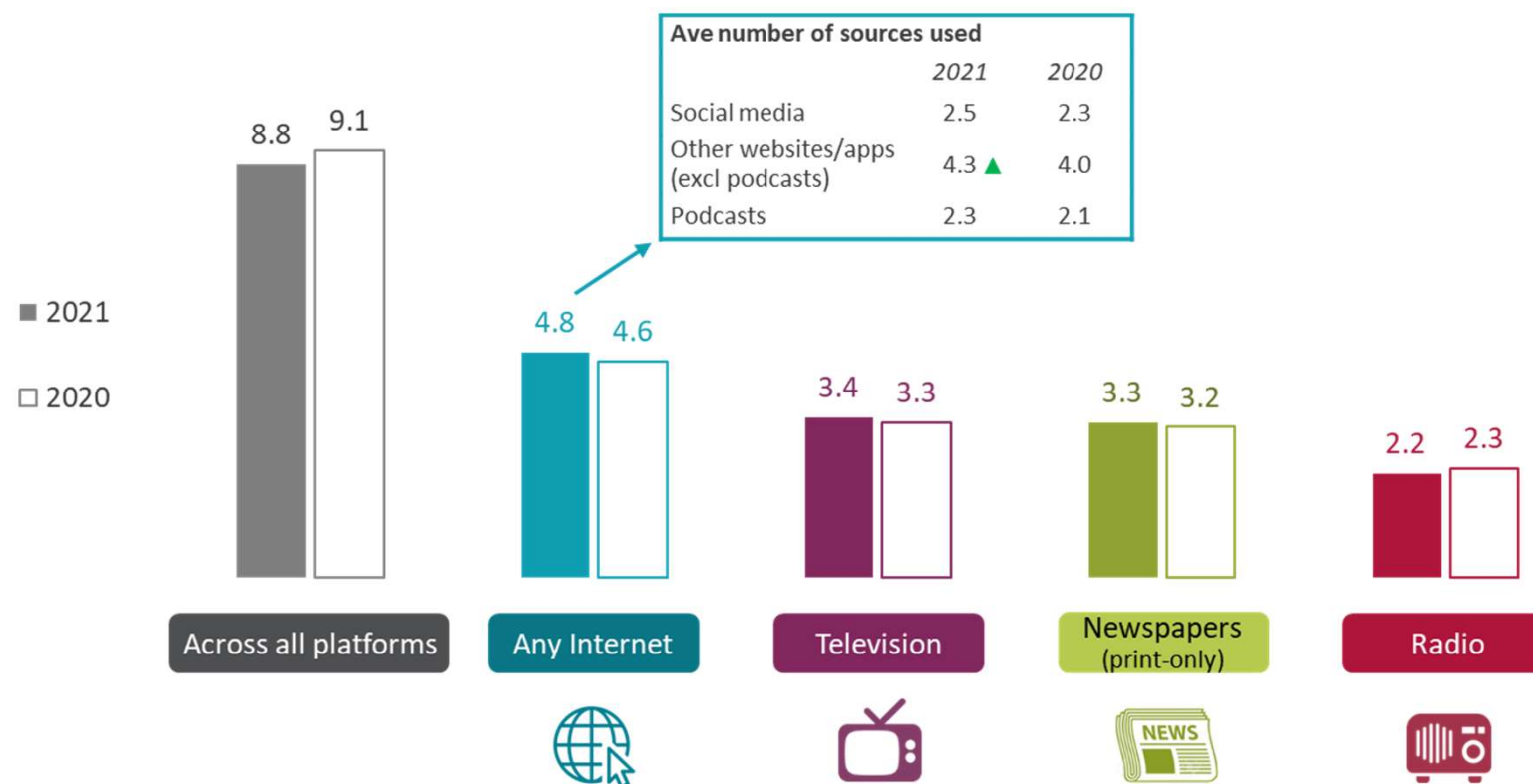
# Multi-sourcing

The average number of news sources remains flat overall, with 8.8 individual sources used on average across all platforms in 2021.

**Figure 10.1**

Average number of individual news sources used nowadays by platform

*All using each platform for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using each platform for news 2021/2020 - All=3221/2441, Any internet=2461/1927, TV=2561/1949, Newspapers=1104/1003, Radio=1576/1331

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

People from minority ethnic groups, 16-34 age groups, males, those living in Northern Ireland and ABC1s tend to use a greater number of individual news sources

## Figure 10.2

Average number of individual sources used across all platforms – by demographic group

*All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazines for news*

	2021	2020
<b>Total</b>	8.8	9.1
Male	9.5	9.9
Female	8.1	8.3
16-34	9.8	9.8
35-54	8.6	8.9
55+	8.1	8.7
ABC1	9.2	9.6
C2DE	8.3	8.4
Minority ethnic groups	11.1	10.8
White	8.5	8.9
England	8.8	9.2
Scotland	9.2	8.4
Wales	7.4	8.5
Northern Ireland	9.7	9.0

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazines for news – 2021=3221, 2020=2441

Darker purple shading indicates significant differences between groups in the 2021 data

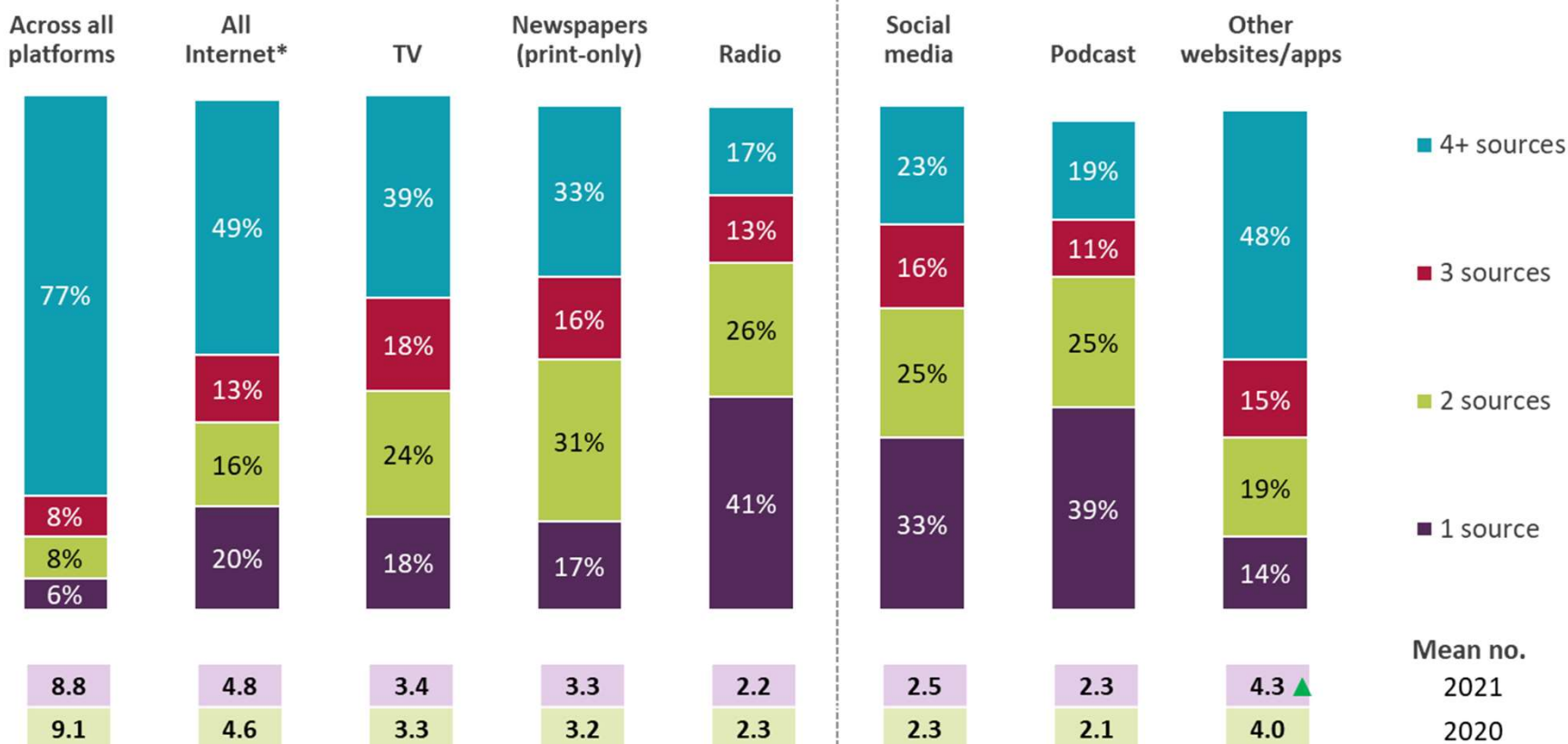
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

As in previous years, other website/app news users use the highest number of individual news sources

**Figure 10.3**

Number of individual sources used 2021 - by platform

*All using each platform for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All using each platform for news 2021 – All platforms=3221, All internet=2461, TV=2561, Newspapers=1104, Radio=1576, Social media=1770, Podcasts=346, Other websites/apps=1555. \*All internet is the sum of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps

Note: Columns do not sum to 100% as some respondents did not name specific sources within a platform (zero sources)

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

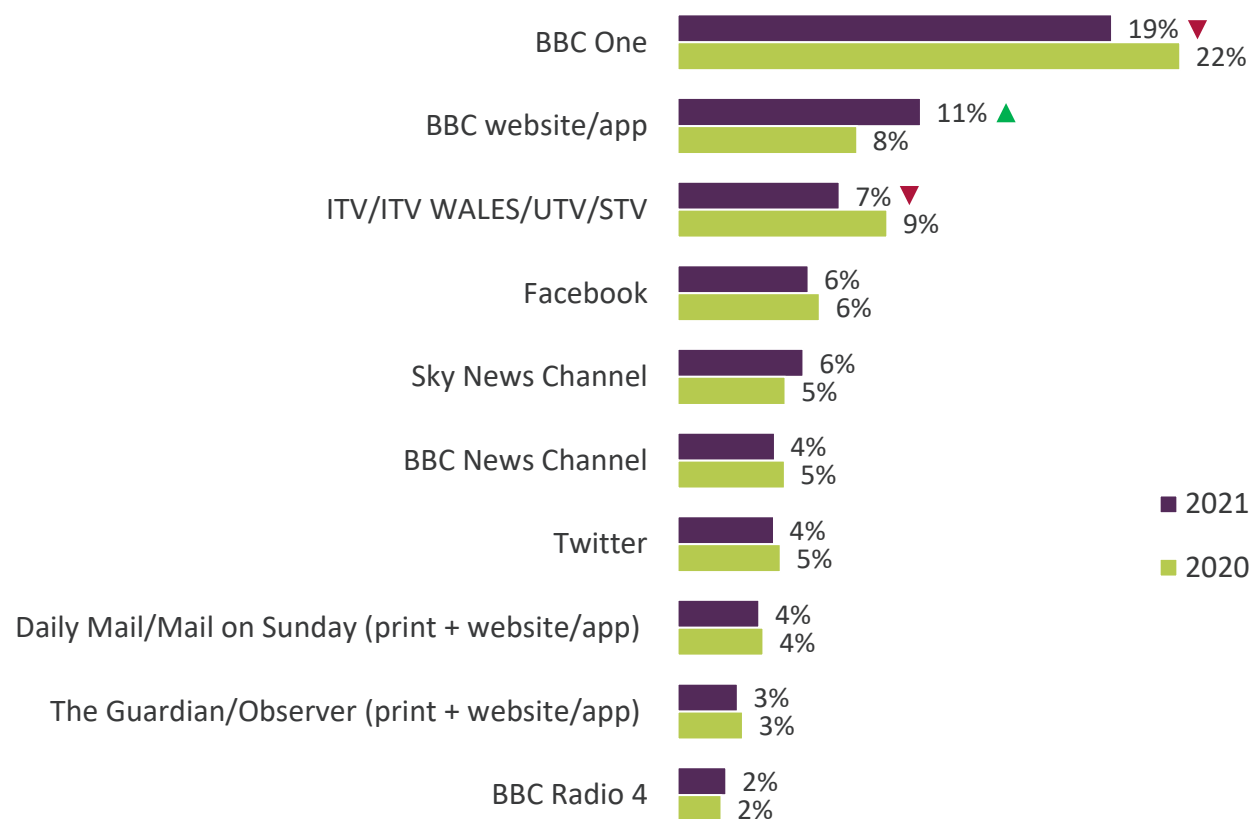
# Importance of sources and attitudes to news

Compared to 2020, fewer adults nominate BBC One or ITV as their single most important source, while more nominate the BBC website/app

## Figure 11.1

### Single most important news source

All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazine for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E1a. Looking at all the sources of news you have just said that you use, which one is most important to you?

Base: All adults 16+ specifying at least one source for news – 2021=3183, 2020=2417

Only sources with an incidence of 2%+ in 2021 are shown.

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

In general, those aged 65+, C2DE and white adults are more likely to say TV news sources are most important to them, while 16-24s and those from minority ethnic groups are more likely to nominate other websites/apps and social media

## Figure 11.2

### Single most important news source 2021 - by demographic group

All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazine for news

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC One	19%	19%	20%	14%	31%	19%	19%	12%	20%
BBC website/app	11%	13%	9%	9%	8%	14%	7%	13%	10%
ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	7%	5%	10%	2%	8%	5%	10%	3%	8%
Facebook	6%	4%	8%	8%	1%	3%	9%	7%	6%
Sky News Channel	6%	6%	5%	4%	7%	5%	6%	4%	6%
BBC News Channel	4%	5%	4%	3%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%
Twitter	4%	4%	4%	14%	0%	5%	3%	7%	4%
Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday (print+website/app)	4%	4%	4%	2%	7%	4%	3%	1%	4%
The Guardian/Observer (print+website/app)	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%	1%	2%	3%
BBC Radio 4	2%	2%	2%	0%	5%	3%	1%	0%	2%
ANY TV	40%	38%	41%	25%	54%	37%	43%	29%	41%
ANY OTHER WEBSITES/APPS	23%	25%	20%	21%	15%	26%	17%	28%	22%
ANY SOCIAL MEDIA	14%	12%	17%	36%	1%	13%	17%	26%	13%
ANY RADIO	8%	9%	7%	5%	8%	9%	8%	4%	9%
ANY NEWSPAPER	8%	9%	6%	5%	16%	9%	6%	6%	8%
ANY MAGAZINE	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: E1a. Looking at all the sources of news you have just said that you use, which one is most important to you?

Base: All adults 16+ specifying at least one source for news 2020 - Total=3183, Male=1540, Female=1641, 16-24=618, 65+=614, ABC1=1828, C2DE=1338, Minority ethnic groups=531, White=2641

Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of 2%+ in 2021 are shown.

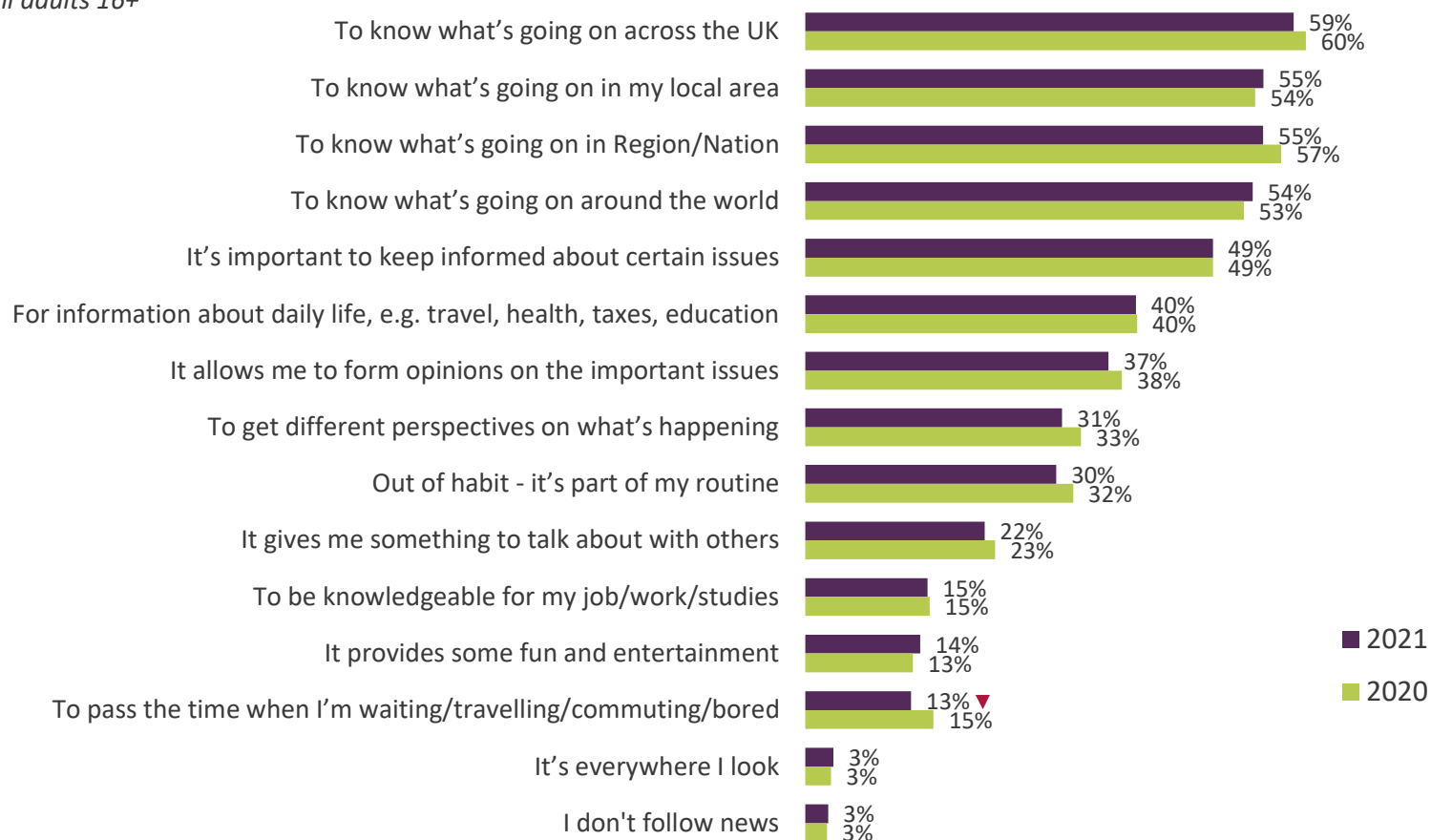


# People follow the news to understand what is going on across the UK, their local area, region/nation and around the world

**Figure 11.3**

## Reasons for following news

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: G1. Thinking about some of the reasons people might have for following news, which of these reasons apply to you?

Base: All adults 16+ - 2021=3327, 2020=2510

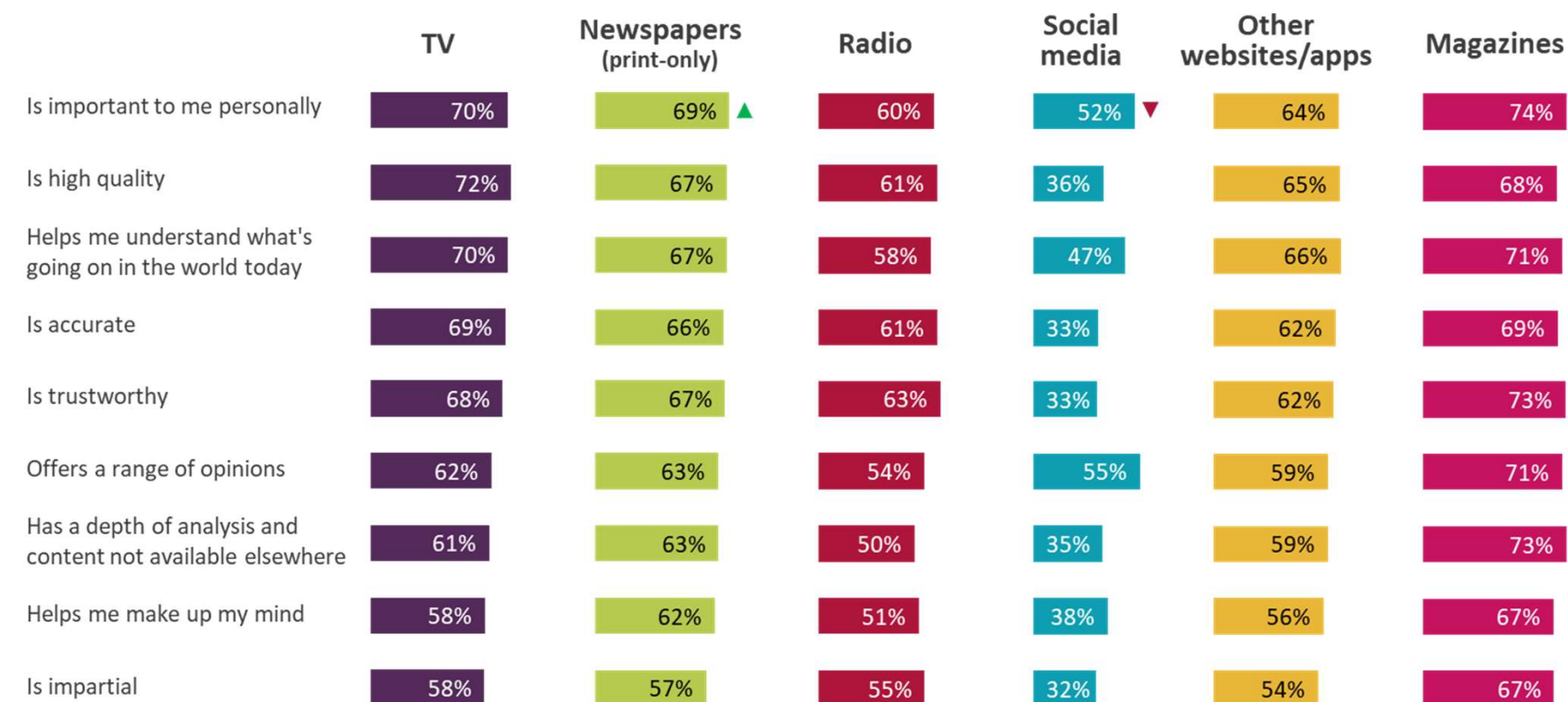
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

When rated by their users on measures such as importance, trustworthiness and impartiality, the main news platforms' ratings are largely in line with 2020, with social media receiving lower scores than other platforms

**Figure 11.4**

# Attributes of news platforms - 2021

% of ratings from regular users who rated source highly (7-10)



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. How important is <BRAND> as a source of news to you personally? E3. And to what extent do you think the following statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All ratings by those using each platform for news at least weekly (every 2-3 wks for weekly newspapers/mags)  
2021 – TV=6017, Newspapers=2404, Radio=2227, Social media=2829, Other websites/apps=4185, Magazines=131

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

User attitudes towards TV sources are generally consistent with 2020.

## Figure 11.5

### Attributes of TV sources (1) - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)

	BBC TV	ITV	Sky News	Channel 4	Channel 5	CNN	Al Jazeera
	2165	1381	895	641	305	234	136
Is important to me personally	76%	67%	74%	65%	58%	60%	60%
Is high quality	74%	73%	76%	72%	58%	69%	67%
Helps me understand what's going on in the world today	73%	69%	75%	70%	56%	70%	69%
Is accurate	71%	70%	72%	70%	57%	68%	59%
Is trustworthy	68%	70%	70%	71%	60%	63%	60%
Offers a range of opinions	58%	64%	68%	67%	51%	64%	57%
Has a depth of analysis and content not available elsewhere	60%	55%	68%	66%	50%	65%	66%
Helps me make up my mind	56%	59%	64%	63%	53%	60%	55%
Is impartial	55%	63%	61%	63%	55%	55%	51% ▼

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. How important is <BRAND> as a source of news to you personally? E3. And to what extent do you think the following statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2021 – bases shown above

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

Users of Sky News give better ratings for 'International news', whereas users of ITV and BBC provide better scores for 'Regional/Local' news

**Figure 11.6**

Attributes of TV sources (2) - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)

	BBC TV	ITV	Sky News Channel	Channel 4	Channel 5
Good for national news	77%	72%	78%	73%	58%
Good for international news	73%	65%	78%	70%	55%
Good for understanding what's going on in other parts of the UK	71%	68%	70%	65%	52%
Has high calibre journalists/presenters	70%	69%	72%	70%	53% ▼
Good for regional/local news	68%	73%	46%	48%	45%
Helps me engage/ understand political process	64% ▼	61%	67%	68%	53%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. How important is <BRAND> as a source of news to you personally? E3. And to what extent do you think the following statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2021 – BBC TV=2165, ITV=1381, Sky News Channel=895, Channel 4=641, Channel 5=305

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

Readers of The Express and The Metro claim these titles are increasingly important to them. Readers of The Guardian, The Telegraph and The Times continue to rate these titles comparatively highly for ‘high quality’, ‘helps me understand what's going on’, ‘accurate’, ‘trustworthy’ and ‘depth of analysis’

## Figure 11.7

### Attributes of Print Newspaper sources - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)

	Daily Mail/ Mail on Sunday	The Sun/ Sun on Sunday	The Times/ Sunday Times	The Guardian/ Observer	The Metro	Daily/Sunday Mirror	Daily/Sunday Telegraph	Daily/Sunday Express
	414	289	219	180	178	174	174	121
Is important to me personally	70%	61%	70%	76%	60%▲	68%	74%	77%▲
Is high quality	68%	56%	79%	86%	53%	63%	80%	67%
Helps me understand what's going on in the world today	72%	59%	76%	84%	57%	61%	74%	67%
Is accurate	63%	52%	74%	79%	59%	59%	71%	67%
Is trustworthy	62%	58%	74%	79%	64%	59%	71%	68%
Offers a range of opinions	65%	56%	69%	73%	58%	57%	66%	65%
Has a depth of analysis and content not available elsewhere	64%	56%	73%	79%	47%	59%	74%	69%
Helps me make up my mind	60%	55%	67%	75%	52%	58%	65%	67%
Is impartial	51%	48%	61%	66%	56%	49%	59%	57%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. How important is <BRAND> as a source of news to you personally? E3. And to what extent do you think the following statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly (or every 2-3 weeks for weekly newspapers) 2021

– bases shown above

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

BBC listeners are more likely to give high scores across the various attributes. Classic FM has declined on 'helps me understand', 'helps me make up my mind' and 'impartial' and Heart Radio has declined on 'depth of analysis'

## Figure 11.8

### Attributes of Radio sources (1) - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)

	BBC Radio	Heart	Classic FM	Capital	Smooth Radio	LBC	talkSPORT/ talkSPORT2/ talkRADIO
	1082	196	147	142	124	122	102
Is important to me personally	67%	51%	49%	51%	49%	65%	59%
Is high quality	74%	47%	44%	55%	45%	60%	63%
Helps me understand what's going on in the world today	70%	45%	39% ▼	50%	42%	66%	51%
Is accurate	71%	52%	47%	55%	45%	53%	63%
Is trustworthy	72%	55%	52%	55%	47%	58%	69%
Offers a range of opinions	63%	45%	33%	47%	38%	67%	64%
Has a depth of analysis and content not available elsewhere	59%	34% ▼	30%	43%	34%	58%	62%
Helps me make up my mind	60%	42%	35% ▼	48%	38%	56%	60%
Is impartial	61%	49%	47% ▼	49%	46%	44%	66%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. How important is <BRAND> as a source of news to you personally? E3. And to what extent do you think the following statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2021 – bases shown above

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

Again, BBC listeners are more likely to give high scores across the various attributes. Classic FM listeners give lower ratings for 'high calibre presenters', 'good for regional/local news' and 'helps me engage with the political process' compared to 2020

## Figure 11.9

### Attributes of Radio sources (2) - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)

	BBC Radio	Heart	Classic FM
Good for national news	75%	50%	44%
Good for international news	68%	43%	37%
Good for understanding what's going on in other parts of the UK	67%	46%	38%
Has high calibre journalists/presenters	69%	44%	35% ▼
Good for regional/local news	63%	52% ▼	25% ▼
Helps me engage/ understand political process	63%	39%	27% ▼

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. How important is <BRAND> as a source of news to you personally? E3. And to what extent do you think the following statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2021 – BBC Radio=1082, Heart=135, Classic FM=116

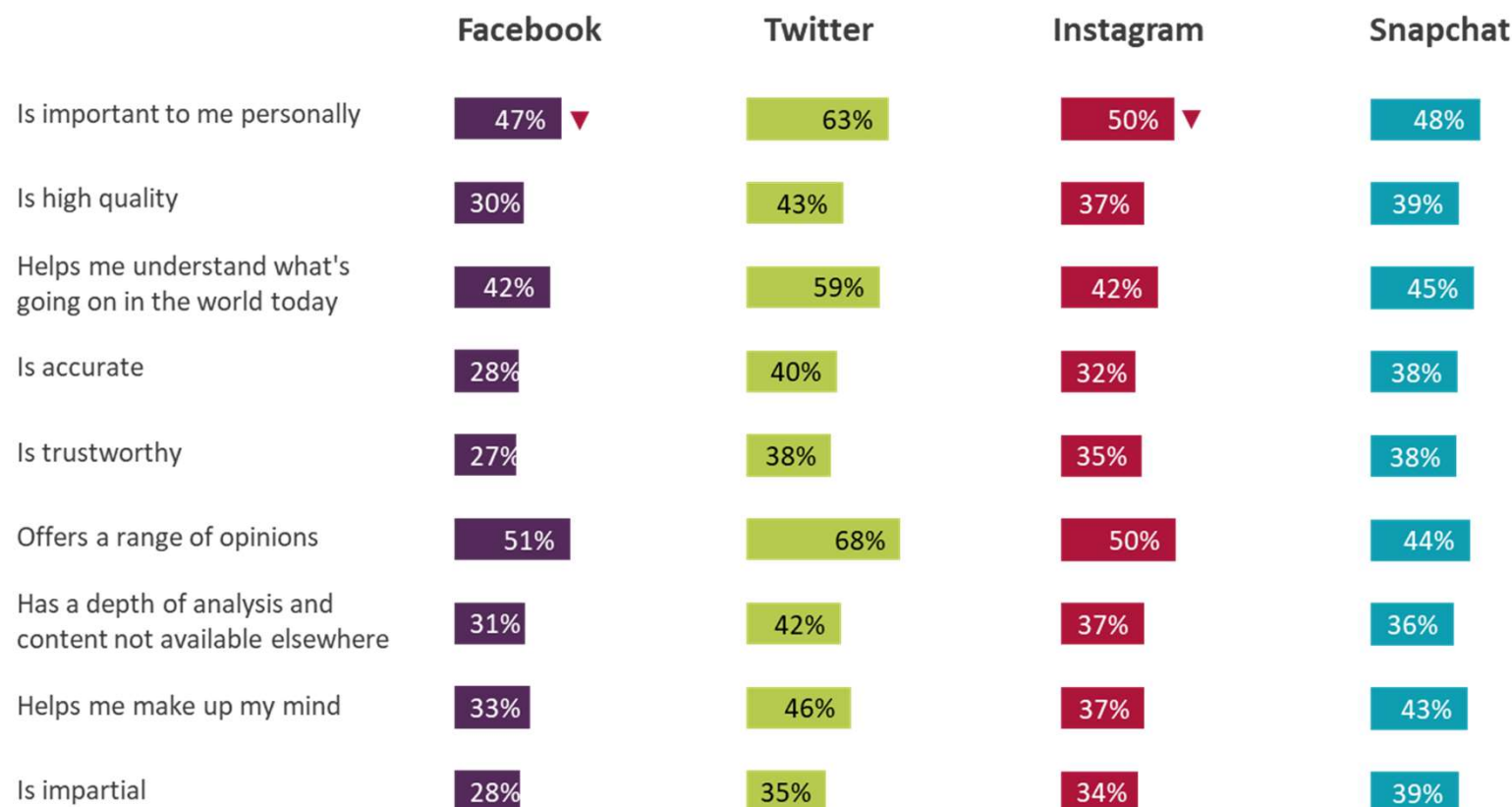
2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

Social media platforms continue to score relatively poorly, especially across 'trustworthy', 'impartial', 'accurate' and 'high quality'. The importance of Facebook and Instagram have both declined since 2020

**Figure 11.10**

Attributes of Social Media - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. How important is <BRAND> as a source of news to you personally? E3. And to what extent do you think the following statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2021 – Facebook=1150, Twitter=771, Instagram=614, Snapchat=294

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY



As in previous years, BBC, The Guardian and Sky News users are more likely to rate these websites/apps relatively highly. Compared to 2020, Sky News receives higher rating for 'trustworthy', whilst BBC receives higher rating for 'impartial'

**Figure 11.11**

### Attributes of Other Websites/Apps - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)

	BBC website/app	Sky News website/app	Guardian/ Observer	Daily Mail website/app	YouTube	Google News	MSN News	ITV/ITN* website/app	Yahoo News	Telegraph website/app	Independent website/app	Huffington Post	The Sun website/app
	1004	350	320	301	267	228	165	160	150	127	125	113	108
Is important to me personally	78%	72%	67%	60%	56%	72%	56%	67%	60%	59%	56%	43%	49%
Is high quality	79%	72%	79%	50%	48%	61%	52%	70%	56%	72%	68%	48%▼	43%
Helps me understand what's going on in the world today	78%	74%	78%	56%	55%	66%	56%	68%	60%	68%	70%	47%▼	49%
Is accurate	75%	72%	77%	45%	43%	53%	50%	70%	57%	66%	68%	50%	44%
Is trustworthy	74%	72%▲	75%	44%	39%	54%	45%	68%	60%	69%	62%	51%	47%
Offers a range of opinions	63%	66%	64%	50%	62%	62%	52%	64%	56%	55%	60%	50%	46%
Has a depth of analysis and content not available elsewhere	67%	66%	76%	50%	50%	53%	38%	60%	46%	68%	62%	47%	43%
Helps me make up my mind	63%	62%	68%	48%	49%	57%	45%	59%	53%	60%	54%	44%	37%
Is impartial	65%▲	63%	54%	35%	45%	55%	43%▼	62%	53%	51%	48%	41%	34%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. How important is <BRAND> as a source of news to you personally? E3. And to what extent do you think the following statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2021 – bases shown above

\*ITV/ITN website/app – only includes ratings of ITV/ITN specifically, does not include ratings of STV website/app

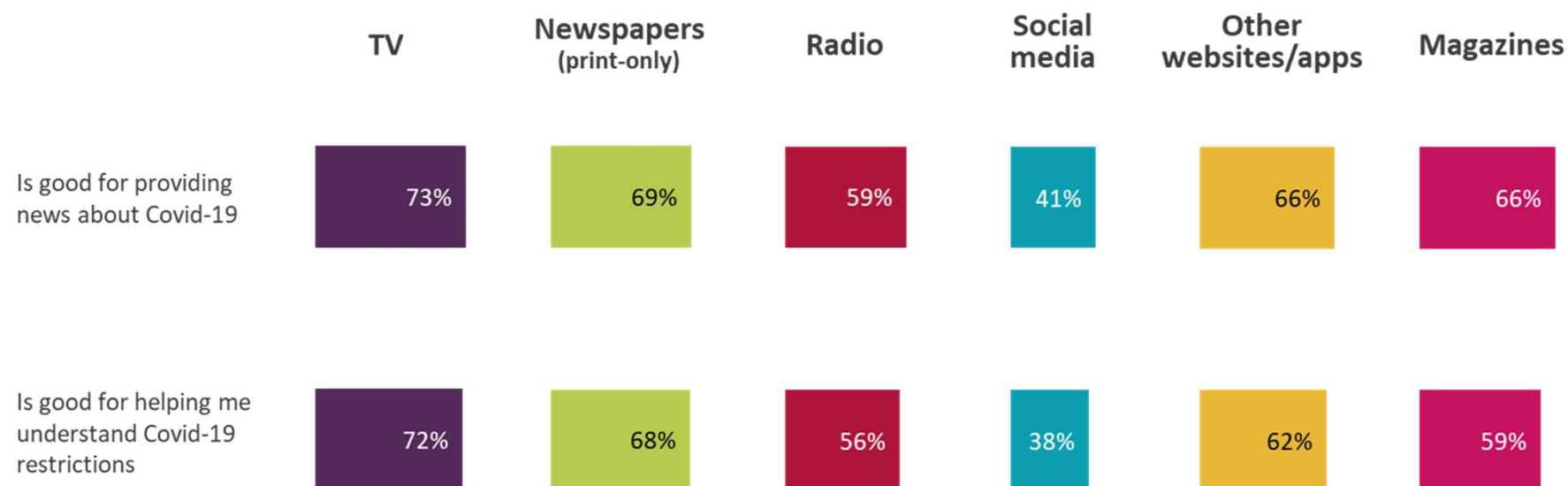
2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

When rated by their users, TV receives the highest rating for ‘providing news about Covid-19’ and ‘helping people to understand the restrictions’. Social media scores poorly compared to all other platforms

## Figure 11.12

### Attributes of news platforms on COVID-19 issues - 2021

% of ratings from regular users who rated source highly (7-10)



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: F10. Thinking now about Covid-19, to what extent do you think these statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All ratings by those using each platform for news at least weekly (every 2-3 wks for weekly newspapers/mags) 2021 – TV=6017, Newspapers=2404, Radio=2230, Social media=2829, Other websites/apps=4185, Magazines=131

BBC TV, Sky News and ITV are rated highly by their users for ‘providing news about Covid-19’ and ‘helping people to understand the restrictions’, as are The Guardian/Observer and The Times/Sunday Times.

**Figure 11.13**

Attributes of individual TV/Print Newspaper/Radio sources on COVID-19 issues - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)

	BBC TV	ITV	Sky News	Channel 4	Channel 5	CNN	Al Jazeera
	2165	1381	895	641	305	234	136
Is good for providing news about Covid-19	78%	74%	76%	72%	61%	59%	52%
Is good for helping me understand Covid-19 restrictions	76%	74%	76%	71%	61%	54%	43%

	Daily Mail/ Mail on Sunday	The Sun/ Sun on Sunday	The Times/ Sunday Times	The Guardian/ Observer	The Metro	Daily/Sunday Mirror	Daily/Sunday Telegraph	Daily/Sunday Express	BBC Radio	Heart	Classic FM	Capital	Smooth Radio	LBC	talkSPORT/ talkSPORT2/ talkRADIO
	414	289	219	180	178	174	174	121	1085	196	147	142	124	122	102
Is good for providing news about Covid-19	73%	65%	75%	79%	60%	65%	72%	71%	71%	48%	39%	55%	40%	68%	44%
Is good for helping me understand Covid-19 restrictions	68%	62%	76%	82%	60%	62%	72%	71%	67%	45%	41%	55%	41%	65%	42%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: F10. Thinking now about Covid-19, to what extent do you think these statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly (or every 2-3 weeks for weekly newspapers) 2021 – bases shown above

The BBC website is rated highly by its users for ‘providing news about Covid-19’ and ‘helping people to understand the restrictions’. The social media platforms score poorly compared to all other platforms

## Figure 11.14

### Attributes of Social Media and Other Websites/Apps on COVID-19 issues - 2021

% of regular users rating each source highly (7-10)

	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Snapchat
	1150	771	614	294
Is good for providing news about Covid-19	36%	54%	37%	37%
Is good for helping me understand Covid-19 restrictions	36%	45%	36%	35%

	BBC website/app	Sky News website/app	Guardian/Observer	Daily Mail website/app	YouTube	Google News	MSN News	ITV/ITN* website/app	Yahoo News	Telegraph website/app	Independent website/app	Huffington Post	The Sun website/app
	1004	350	320	301	267	228	165	160	150	127	125	113	108
Is good for providing news about Covid-19	82%	72%	74%	59%	49%	68%	51%	70%	60%	65%	64%	40%	60%
Is good for helping me understand Covid-19 restrictions	79%	72%	67%	56%	43%	63%	46%	69%	55%	60%	60%	32%	54%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: F10. Thinking now about Covid-19, to what extent do you think these statements apply to <BRAND> as a news source? Answer using a scale of 1 to 10

Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2021 – bases shown above

\*ITV/ITN website/app – only includes ratings of ITV/ITN specifically, does not include ratings of STV website/app

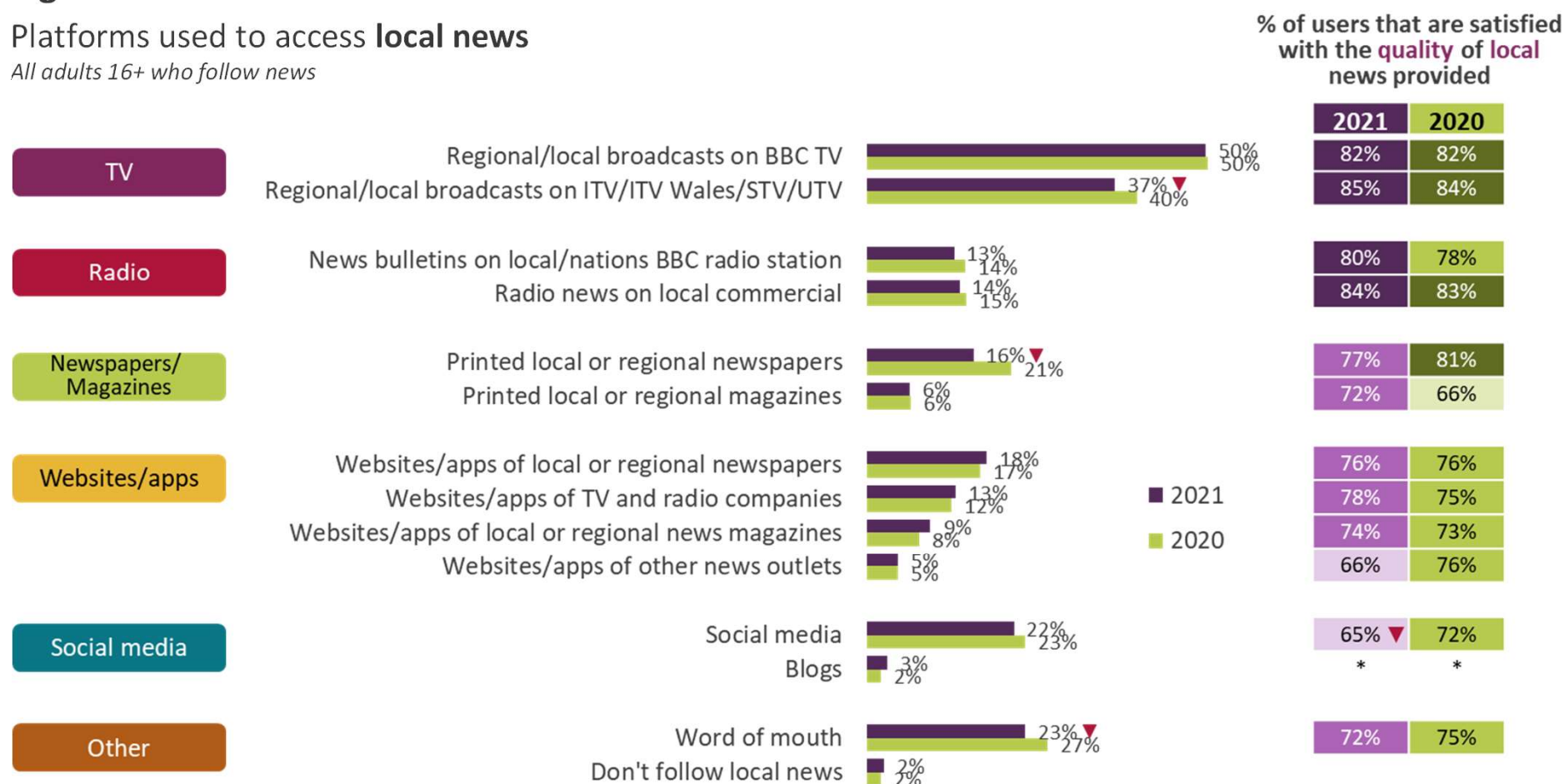
# Local news

TV remains the most used platform for accessing local news. Compared to 2020, adults are less satisfied with the local news provided via social media

**Figure 12.1**

## Platforms used to access local news

All adults 16+ who follow news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: F8: Thinking particularly about local news, which of the following do you use? Base: All adults 16+ who follow news – 2021=3234, 2020=2446

F9: How satisfied are you with the quality of the local news available from [source]?

Base: All using each source – 2021=144-1599, 2020=110-1188 \*sample size <100

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY

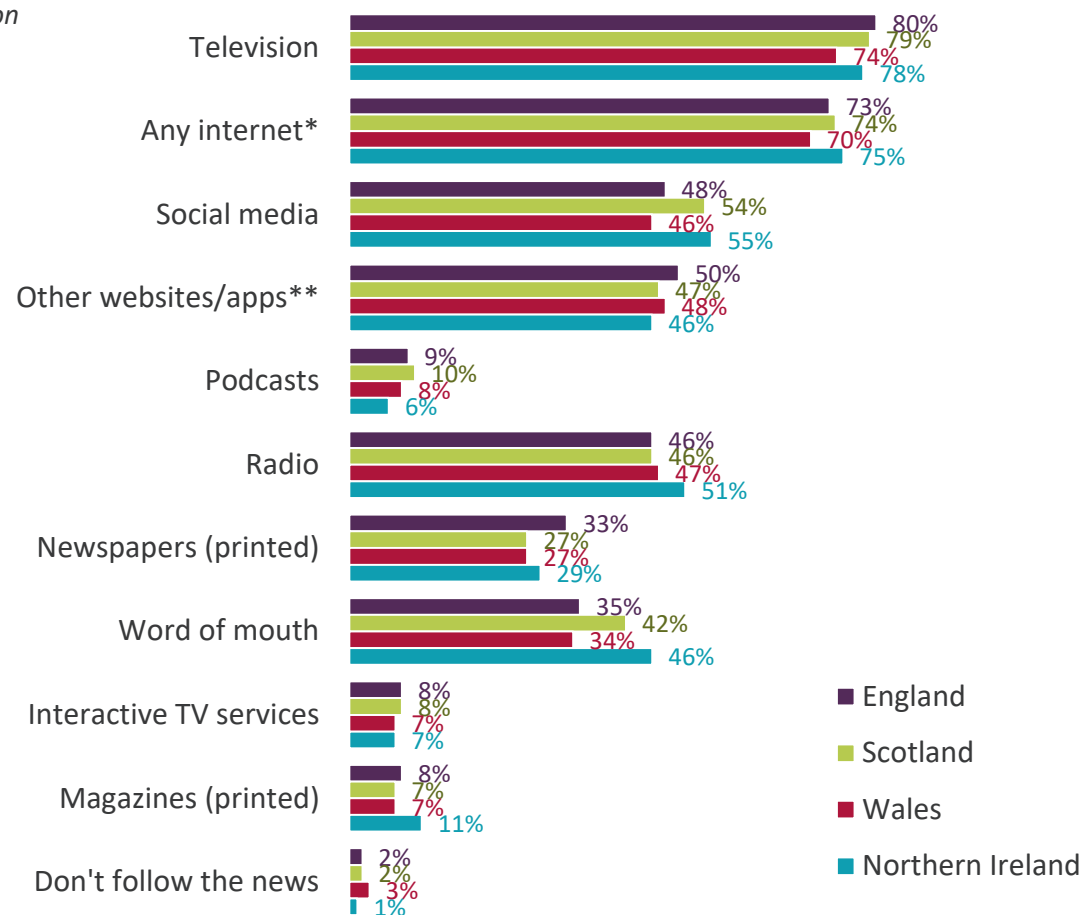
# News consumption in the nations

## TV remains the most used platform for accessing news within each nation

**Figure 13.1**

### Platforms used for news in general nowadays – by Nation

All adults 16+ in each Nation



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ 2021/2020 – Eng=3123, Scot=529, Wales=478, NI=475

\*Internet includes use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

\*\*Other websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source (excluding podcasts)

Data not comparable to  
previous surveys, due to  
Covid-19 enforced  
methodological changes

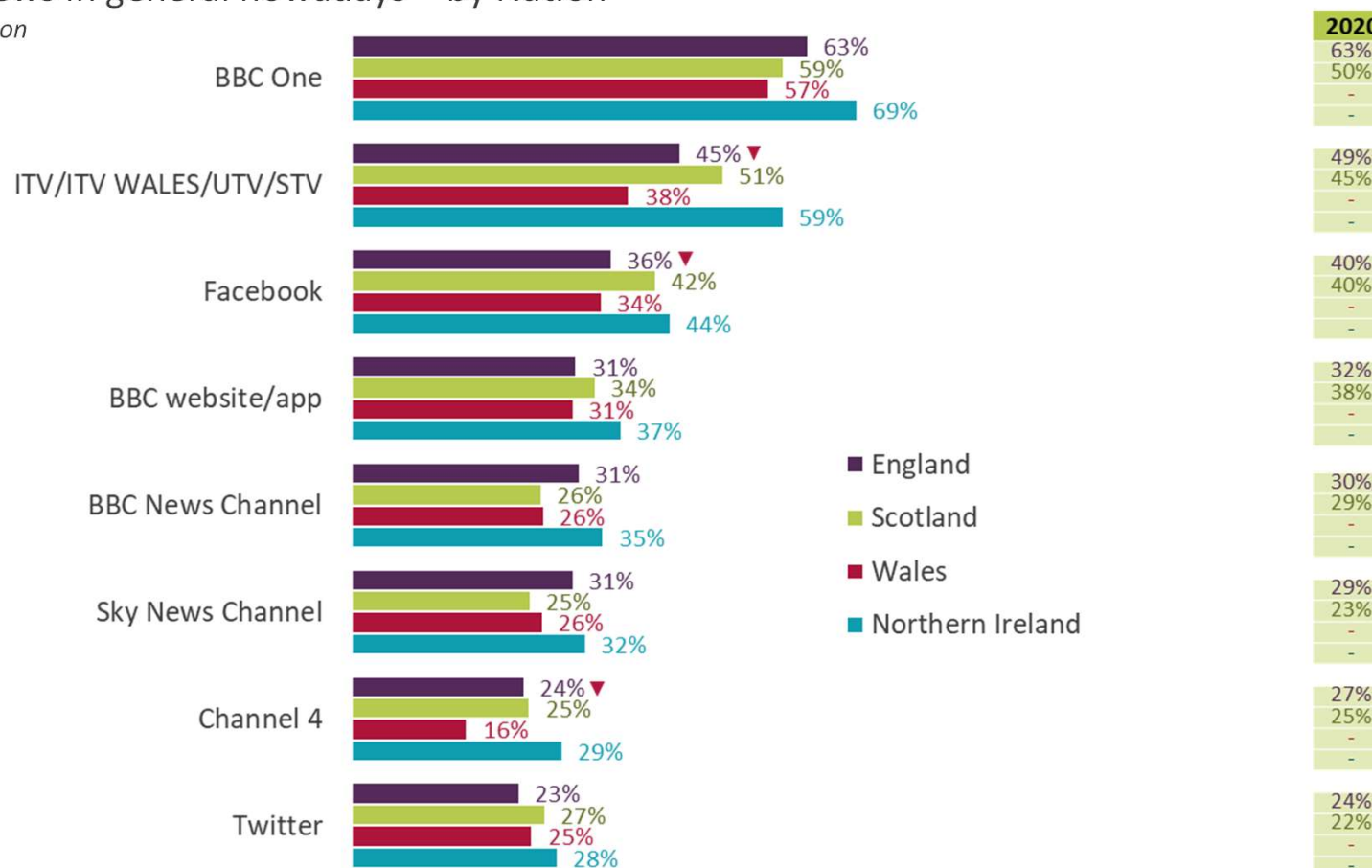


## BBC One is the most used news source across all four nations for general news nowadays

**Figure 13.2**

Top sources for news in general nowadays – by Nation

All adults 16+ in each Nation



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ 2021/2020 – England=2522/2149, Scotland=303/182, Wales=252/103, Northern Ireland=250/76

\* 2020 data not shown here as sample size =103/76

Only sources with an incidence of 20%+ in 2021 for the Total sample are shown

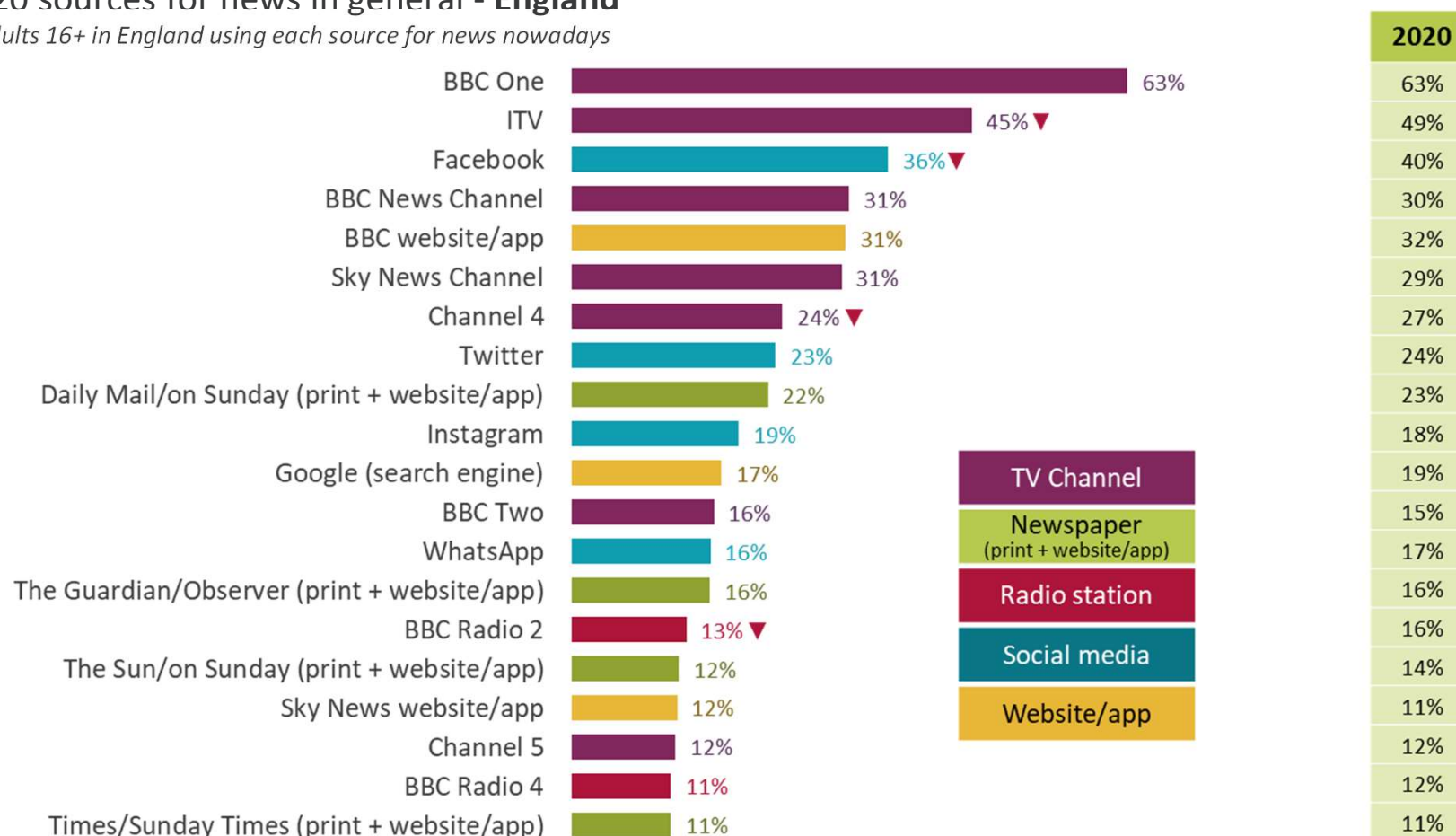
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

Almost two thirds of adults in England claim to use BBC One for news. Fewer people use ITV, Facebook, Channel 4 and BBC Radio 2 compared to last year

## Figure 13.3

### Top 20 sources for news in general - England

% of adults 16+ in England using each source for news nowadays



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in England – 2021=2522, 2020=2149

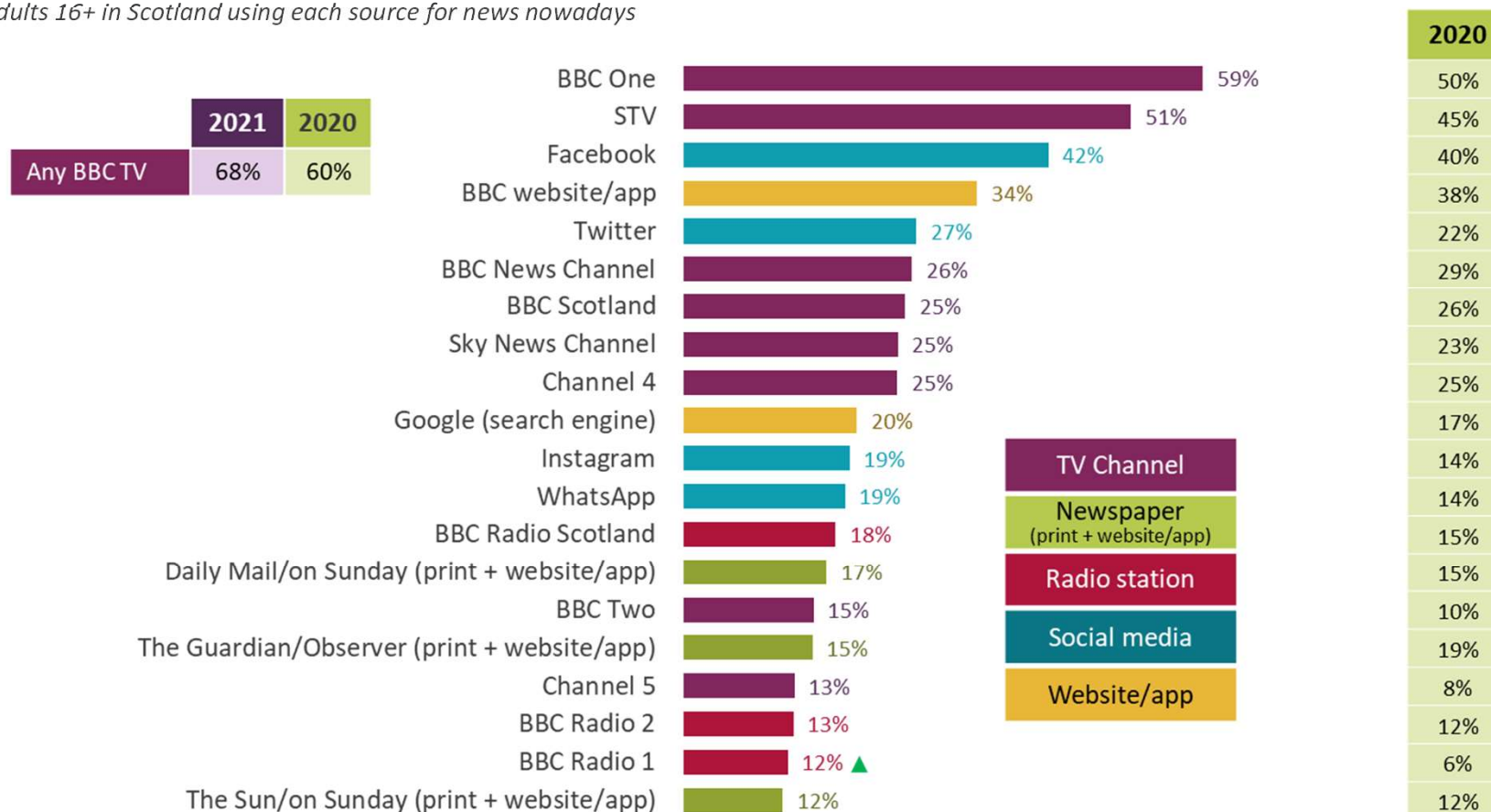
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

## Three in five adults in Scotland use BBC One, with half using STV

**Figure 13.4**

### Top 20 sources for news in general - Scotland

% of adults 16+ in Scotland using each source for news nowadays



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Scotland – 2021=303, 2020=182

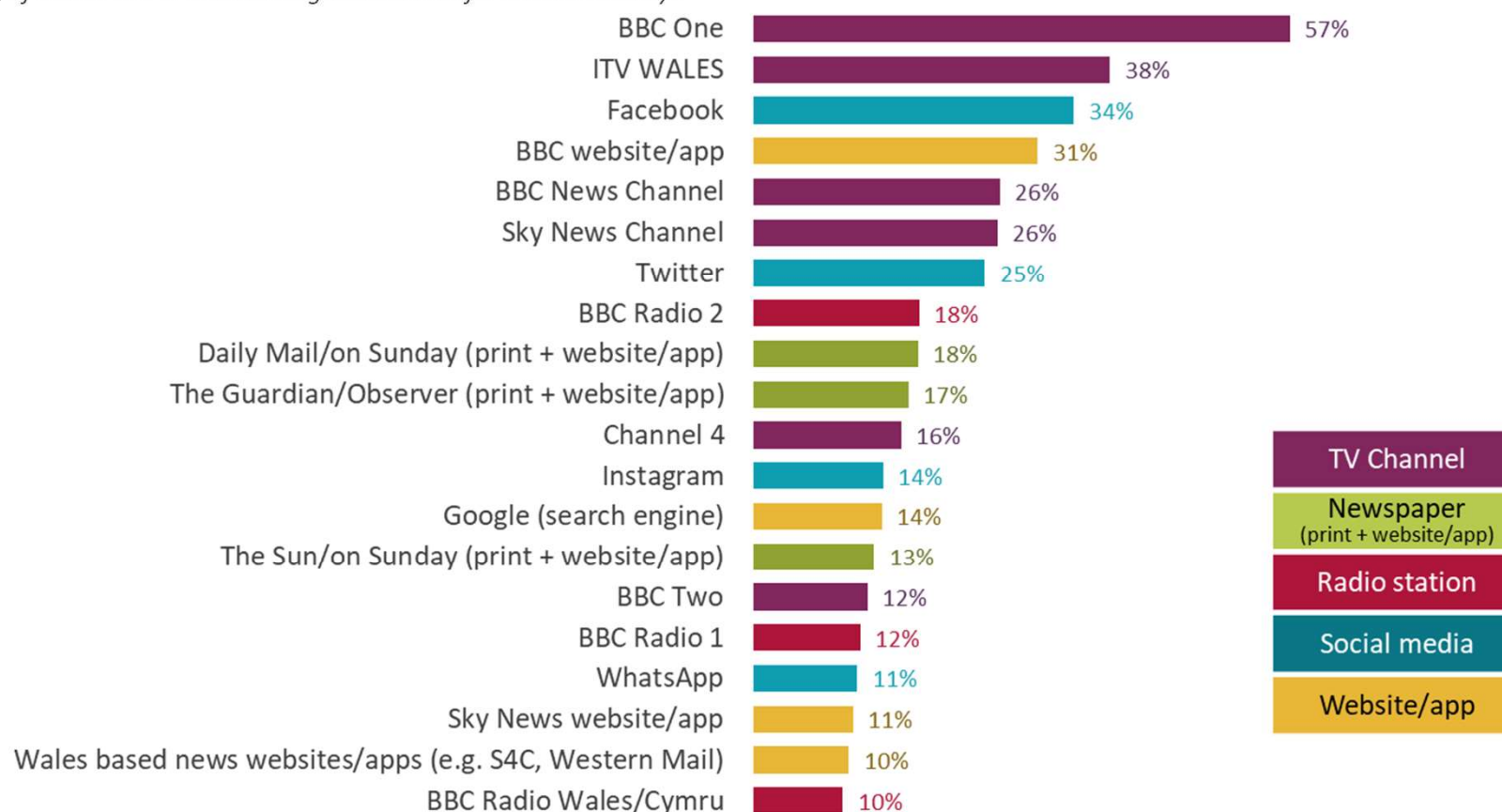
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

Three fifths of adults in Wales use BBC One for news, two fifths use ITV and one third Facebook and/or the BBC website/app

## Figure 13.5

### Top 20 sources for news in general - Wales

% of adults 16+ in Wales using each source for news nowadays



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Wales – 2021=252, 2020=103\* \*2020 data not shown here as sample size=103

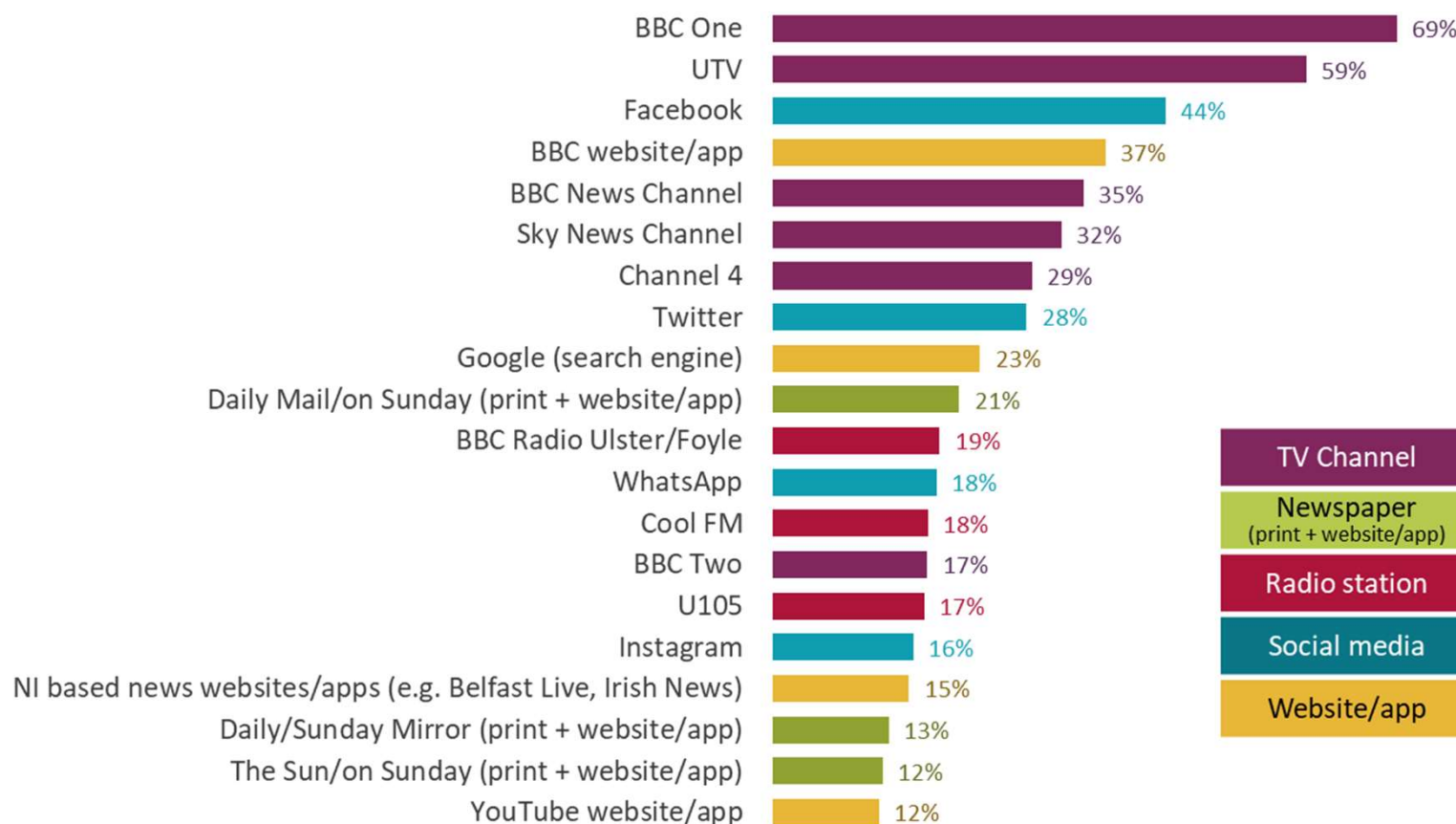
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

Two thirds of adults in Northern Ireland claim to use BBC One; three in five use UTV; just over two in five use Facebook; and around one third use BBC website/app, BBC News Channel and Sky News channel

## Figure 13.6

### Top 20 sources for news in general - Northern Ireland

% of adults 16+ in Northern Ireland using each source for news nowadays



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Question: D2a-D8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland – 2021=250, 2020=76 – 2020 data not shown here as sample size=76

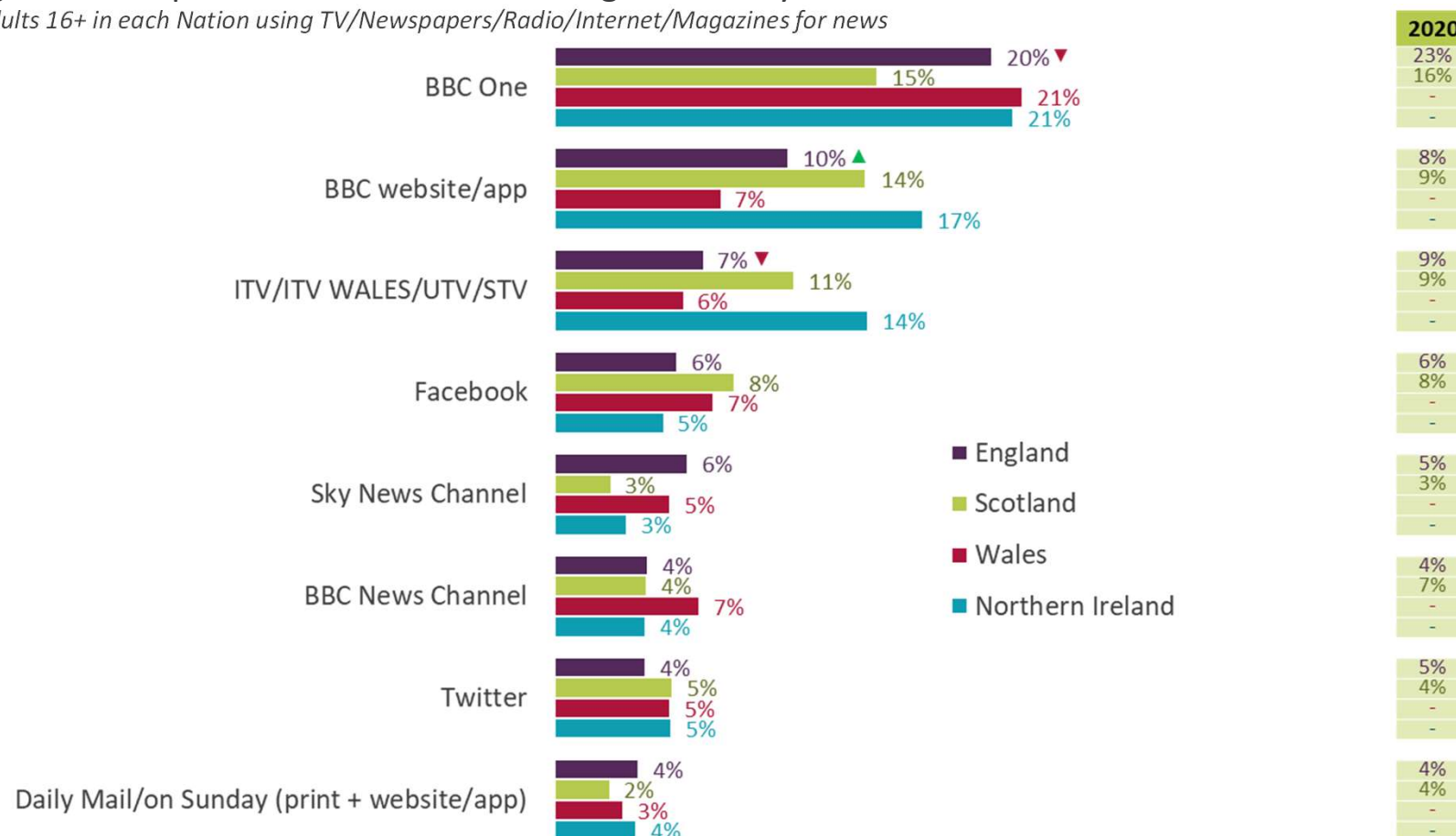
2021 ONLINE SAMPLE  
ONLY

BBC One is the single most important news source across Wales, England and Northern Ireland, and joint most important with the BBC website/app in Scotland.

**Figure 13.7**

### Single most important source for news in general – by Nation

All adults 16+ in each Nation using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazines for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: E1a. Looking at all the sources of news you have just said that you use, which one is most important to you?

Base: All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazines for news 2021/2020 – Eng=2408/2068, Scot=290/175, Wales=242/100, NI=243/74 – 2020 data not shown here as sample size=100/74

Only sources with an incidence of 4%+ in 2021 for the Total sample are shown.

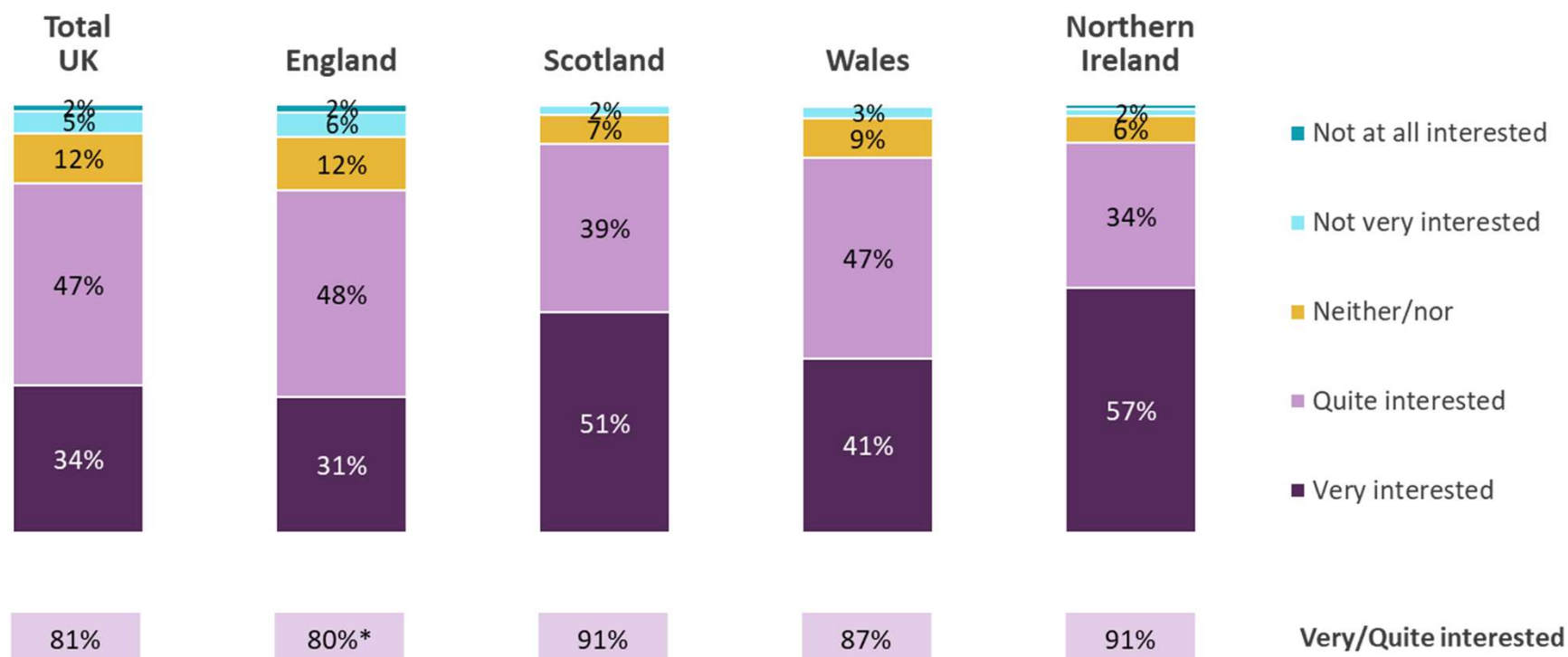
2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

Adults in Northern Ireland and Scotland are the most likely to say they are 'very interested' in news about their nation, whereas those in England and Wales are more likely to be 'quite interested'

**Figure 13.8**

Level of interest in news about own nation 2021 – by Nation

*All adults 16+ who follow news*



\*'Very/quite interested' scores in England are lower than those in Scotland, Wales and NI

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample

Question: F3. How interested are you in news about <NATION>?

Base: All adults 16+ who follow news 2021 - Total=4499, England=3046, Scotland=518, Wales=466, Northern Ireland=469

Data not comparable to  
previous surveys, due to  
Covid-19 enforced  
methodological changes

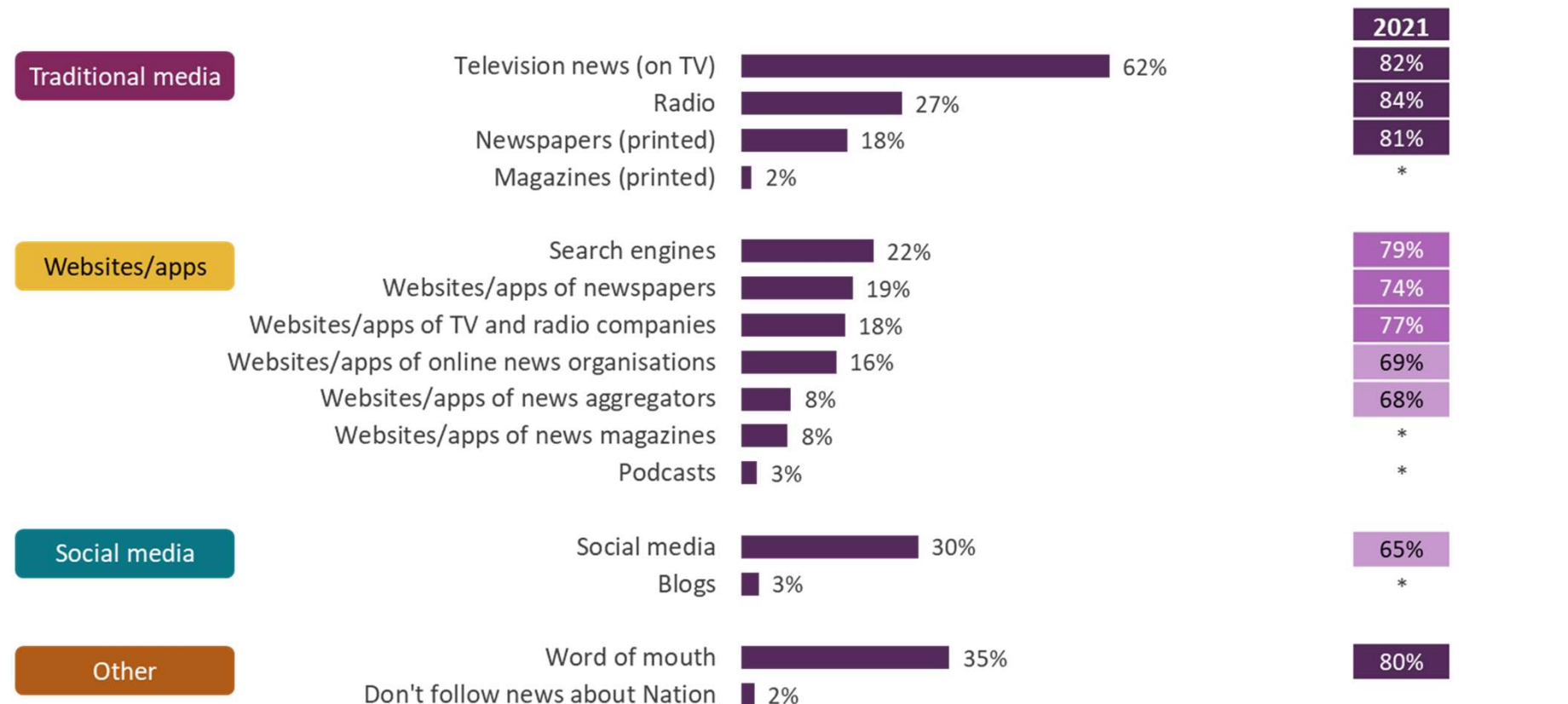


TV is the most used platform for accessing news about the nations.  
Satisfaction with the quality of news is generally higher for the traditional media channels compared to websites/apps and social media

**Figure 13.9**

Platforms used to access news about own nation 2021

*All in Scotland/Wales/N Ireland who follow news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample

Question: F4. Thinking particularly about your source of news for what is going on in NATION, which of the following do you use?

Base: All adults 16+ who follow news in Scotland/Wales/N Ireland – 2021=1453

F5. How satisfied are you with the quality of the news about NATION available from [source]?

Base: All using each source – 2021=123-891 \*sample size <100.

Data not comparable to previous surveys, due to Covid-19 enforced methodological changes

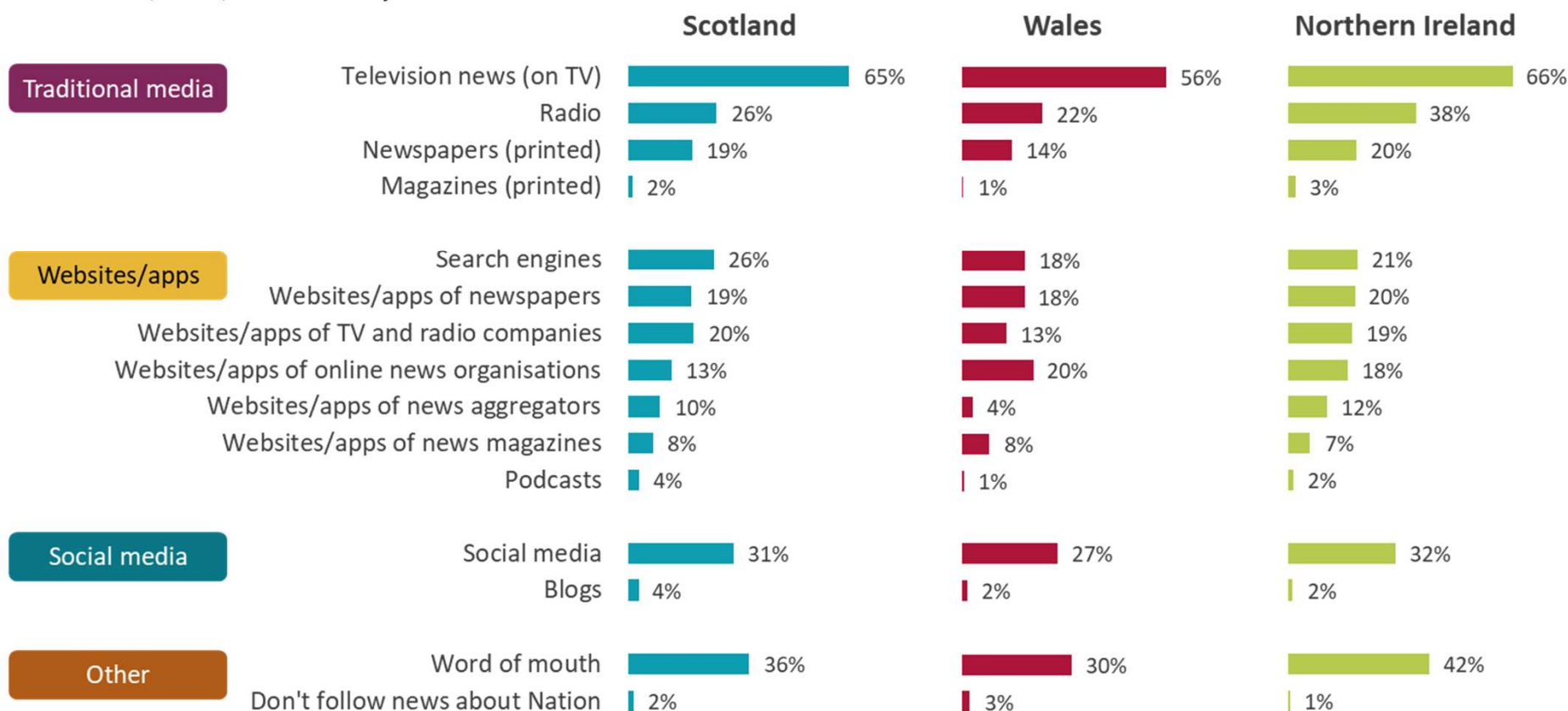


TV is the most popular platform for accessing news about the nations, although more popular in Northern Ireland and Scotland than in Wales

**Figure 13.10**

Platforms used to access news about own nation 2021 – by Nation

*All in Scotland/Wales/N Ireland who follow news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – **COMBINED CATI & ONLINE** sample

Question: F4. Thinking particularly about your source of news for what is going on in NATION, which of the following do you use?

Base: All adults 16+ who follow news – Scotland=518, Wales=466, N Ireland=469

Data not comparable to previous surveys, due to Covid-19 enforced methodological changes

BBC One is the most used news source in England and Wales for accessing news about the Nation, whereas STV is most used in Scotland and UTV and BBC One are the most used in Northern Ireland

**Figure 13.11**

Sources used to access news about own nation

*All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazine for news*

England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
BBC One	33% ▼	STV	36%	BBC One	33%	UTV	50%
ITV	20% ▼	BBC One	26%	ITV WALES	25%	BBC One	45%
Facebook	15%	BBC website/app	22%	Facebook	18%	BBC website/app	26%
BBC website/app	13% ▲	Facebook	20%	BBC website/app	17%	Facebook	26%
		Twitter	15% ▲	Any Wales based news site/app	11%	BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle	14%
		BBC Scotland TV	12% ▼	BBC Radio Wales/Cymru	8%	Any NI based daily newspaper	13%
		Google (search engine)	11%	Twitter	8%	Cool FM	13%
		BBC Radio Scotland	9%			U105	12%
		Any Scotland based daily paper	8%			Any NI based news website/app	12%
						Twitter	10%
						BBC News Channel	9%
						The Belfast Telegraph	7%
						Google (search engine)	7%
Don't follow Nation news	6%	Don't follow Nation news	3%	Don't follow Nation news	3%	Don't follow Nation news	0%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 – ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: F6. From which of the following sources do you get news about what is going on in your NATION nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazine for news - England=2408, Scotland=290, Wales=242, Northern Ireland=243  
Only sources with an incidence of >6% in each Nation are shown

2020 and 2021 ONLINE  
SAMPLE ONLY

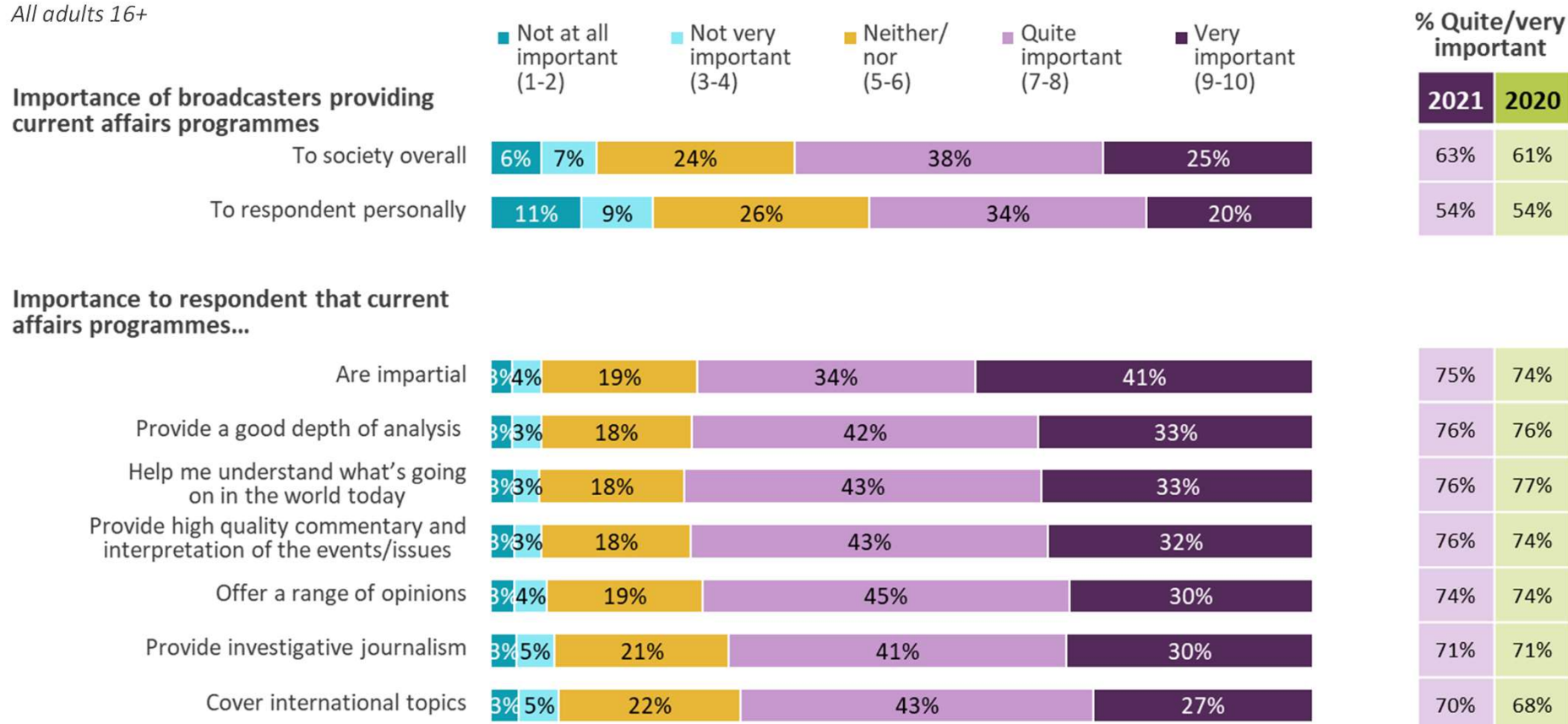
# Current affairs

Just over six in ten adults feel it is important 'to society overall' that broadcasters provide current affairs programmes, while just over half feel it is important 'to them personally'

**Figure 14.1**

### Attitudes to current affairs programmes

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2021 - ONLINE sample only

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2020

Question: H1/H2. On a scale of 1 -10 where 1 means not at all important and 10 means extremely important, how important for [you personally / society overall] is it that broadcasters provide current affairs programmes? H3. How important for you personally is it that current affairs programmes...

Base: All adults 16+ - 2021=3327, 2020=2510

2020 and 2021 ONLINE SAMPLE ONLY 100

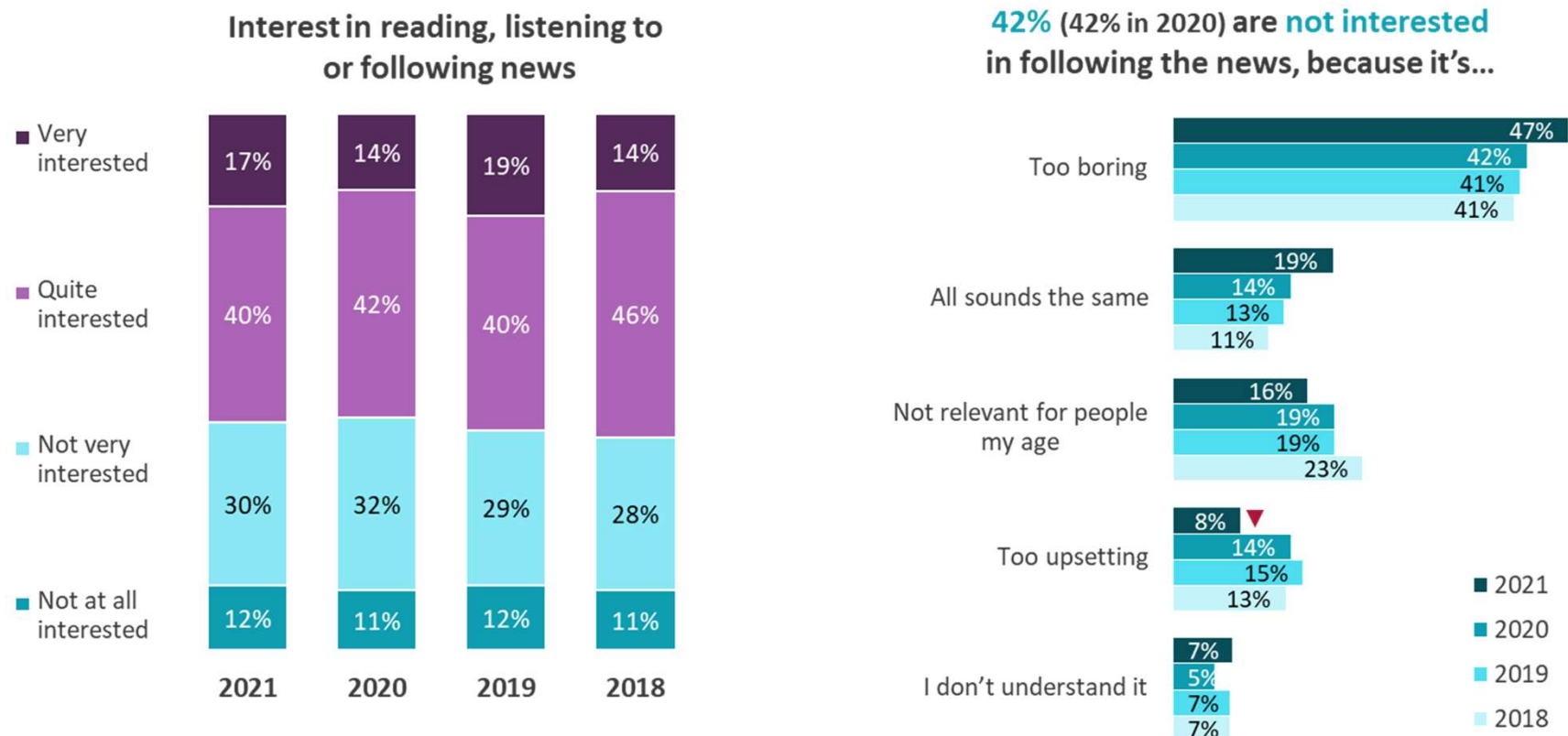
# How children aged 12-15 consume news

As in previous years, just under six in ten 12-15s claim to be very or quite interested in following the news. Being 'too boring' remains the key reason for a lack of engagement

**Figure 15.1**

## Overall interest in following the news

All children aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: B1. How interested are you in reading, watching, listening to or following news? Base: All children aged 12-15 – 2021=1010, 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

Question: B2. Why are you not interested in reading, watching, listening to or following news? Base: All not interested in following news – 2018-2021=421-395

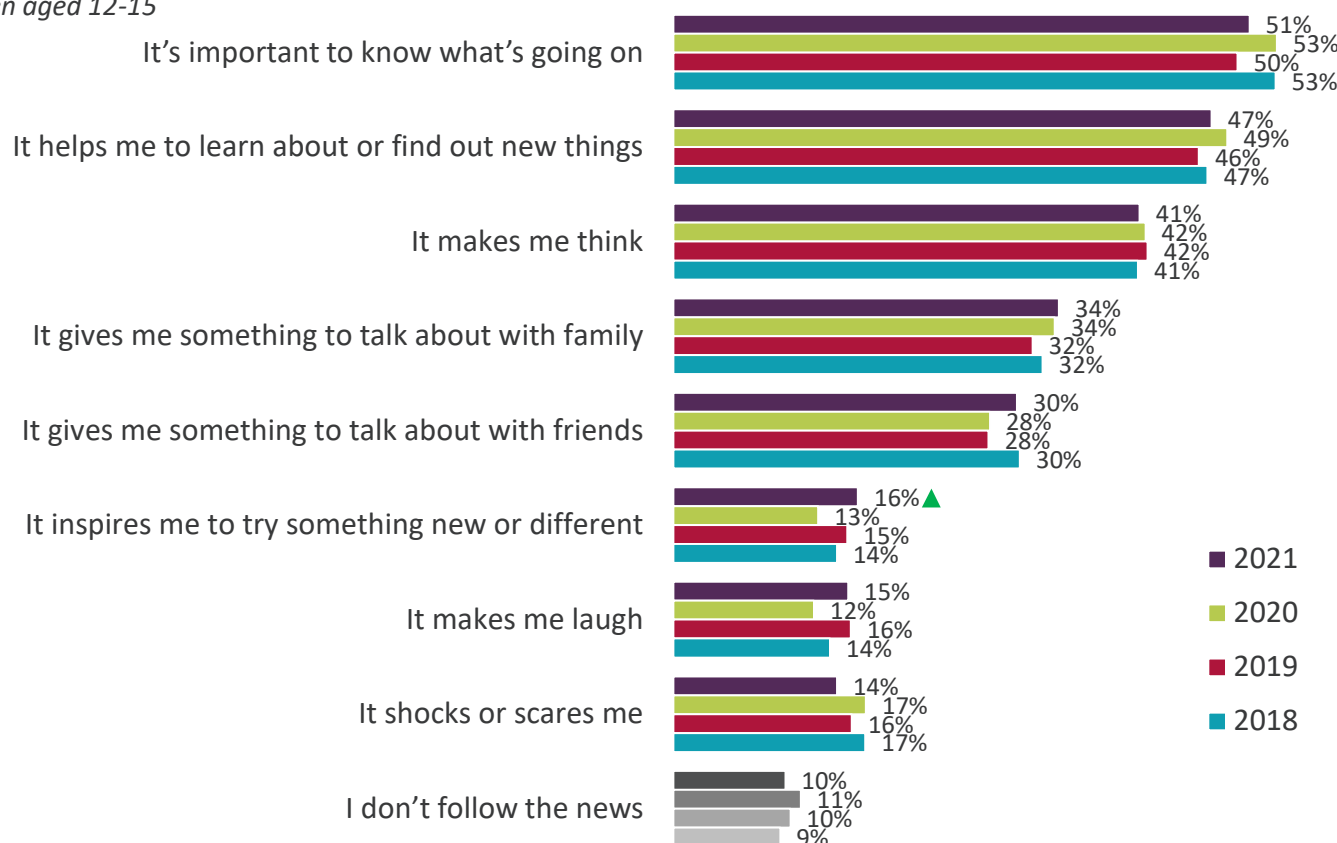
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence level between 2021 and 2020

The main reasons for being engaged with the news also remain largely unchanged. 12-15 year olds like to understand what's going on around them, to learn about new things and to be made to think

**Figure 15.2**

### Reasons for following the news

*All children aged 12-15*



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: F1. Here are some reasons that young people might have for reading, watching, listening to or following news. Which of these apply to you?

Base: All children aged 12-15 – 2021=1010, 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

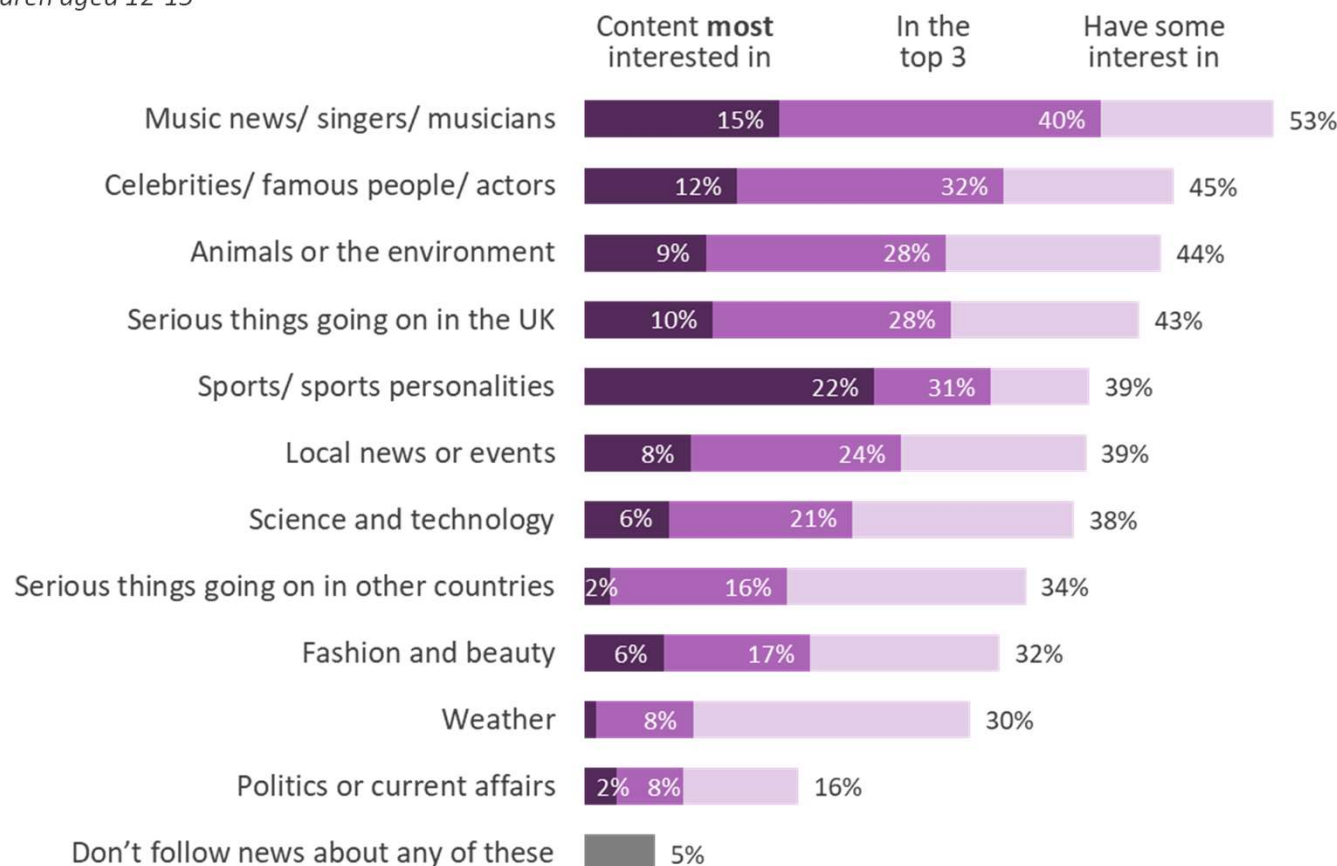
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence level between 2021 and 2020

12-15 year olds remain particularly interested in news about music, followed by news about celebrities, the environment and serious things happening in the UK. However, one in five remain *most* interested in news about sport.

**Figure 15.3**

Interest in different types of news content

*All children aged 12-15*



% Have some interest in

2020	2019	2018
57%	55%	58%
45%	46%	47%
43%	43%	43%
43%	40%	39%
37%	39%	39%
40%	41%	40%
35%	38%	39%
33%	34%	34%
31%	34%	37%
31%	34%	37%
18%	18%	16%
5%	7%	4%

Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: B3. Here are some different types of news. Which, if any, of these are you interested in? B4. Which of these types of news are you most interested in?

Base: All children aged 12-15 – 2021=1010, 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence level between 2021 and 2020

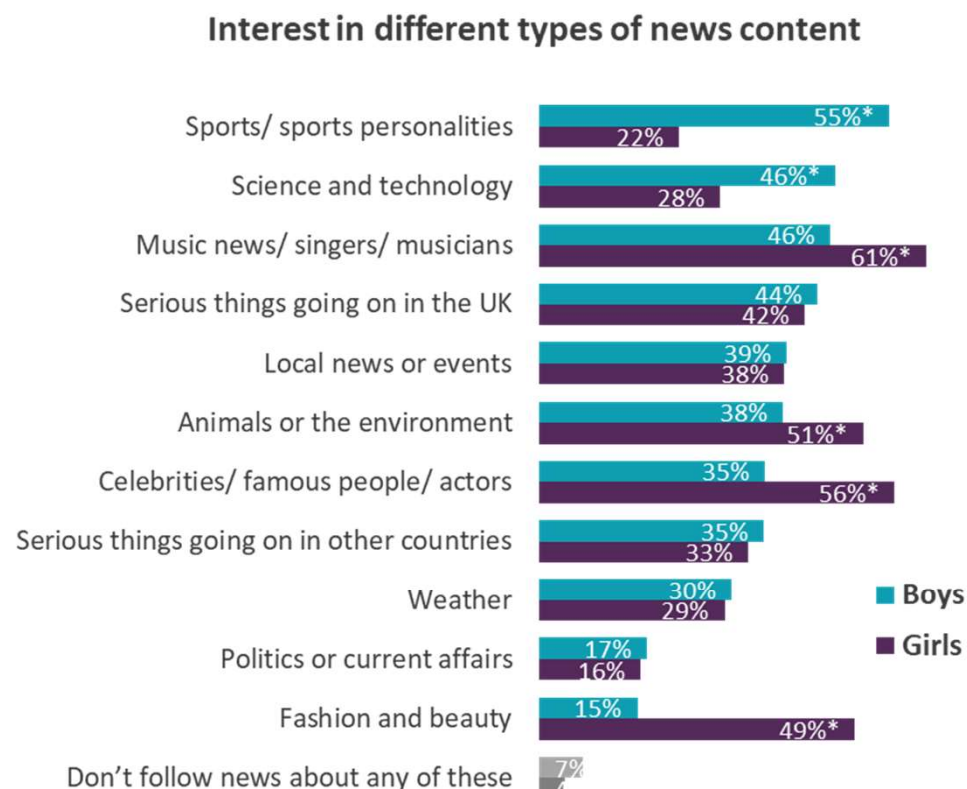
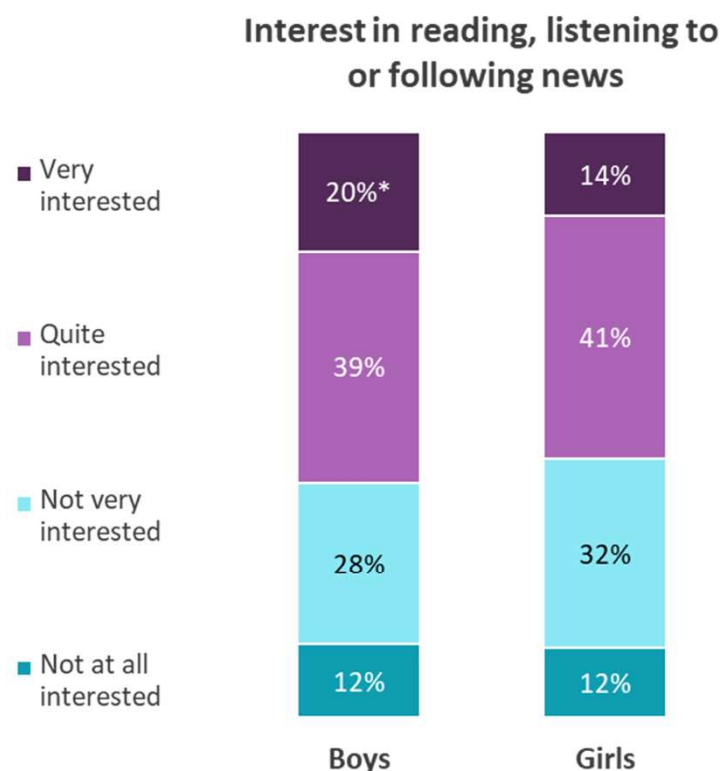


Boys are more likely to be very interested in the news than girls. They are more interested in news about sport and science & tech, whereas girls are more interested in music, celebrities, the environment and fashion & beauty

**Figure 15.4**

Interest in following the news – by child's gender

*All children aged 12-15*



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: B1. How interested are you in reading, watching, listening to or following news? B3. Here are some different types of news. Which, if any, of these are you interested in? Base: All children aged 12-15 2021 – Boys=503, Girls=507

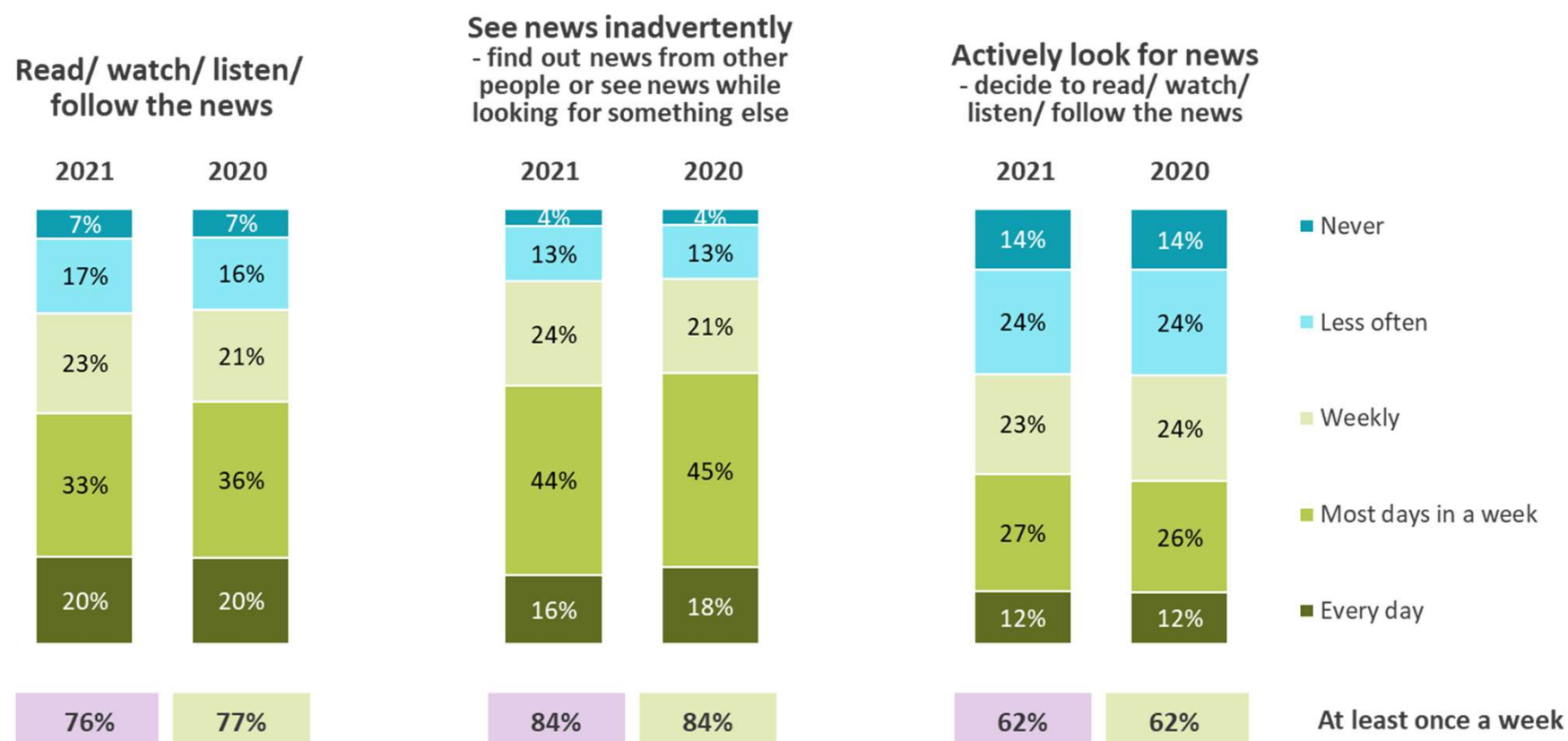
Asterisks indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence level between the data for Boys and Girls

As in 2020, three quarters of 12-15s claim to consume news on a weekly basis, five in six say they are inadvertently exposed to news and six in ten actively look for it

## Figure 15.5

### Frequency of following the news

All children aged 12-15



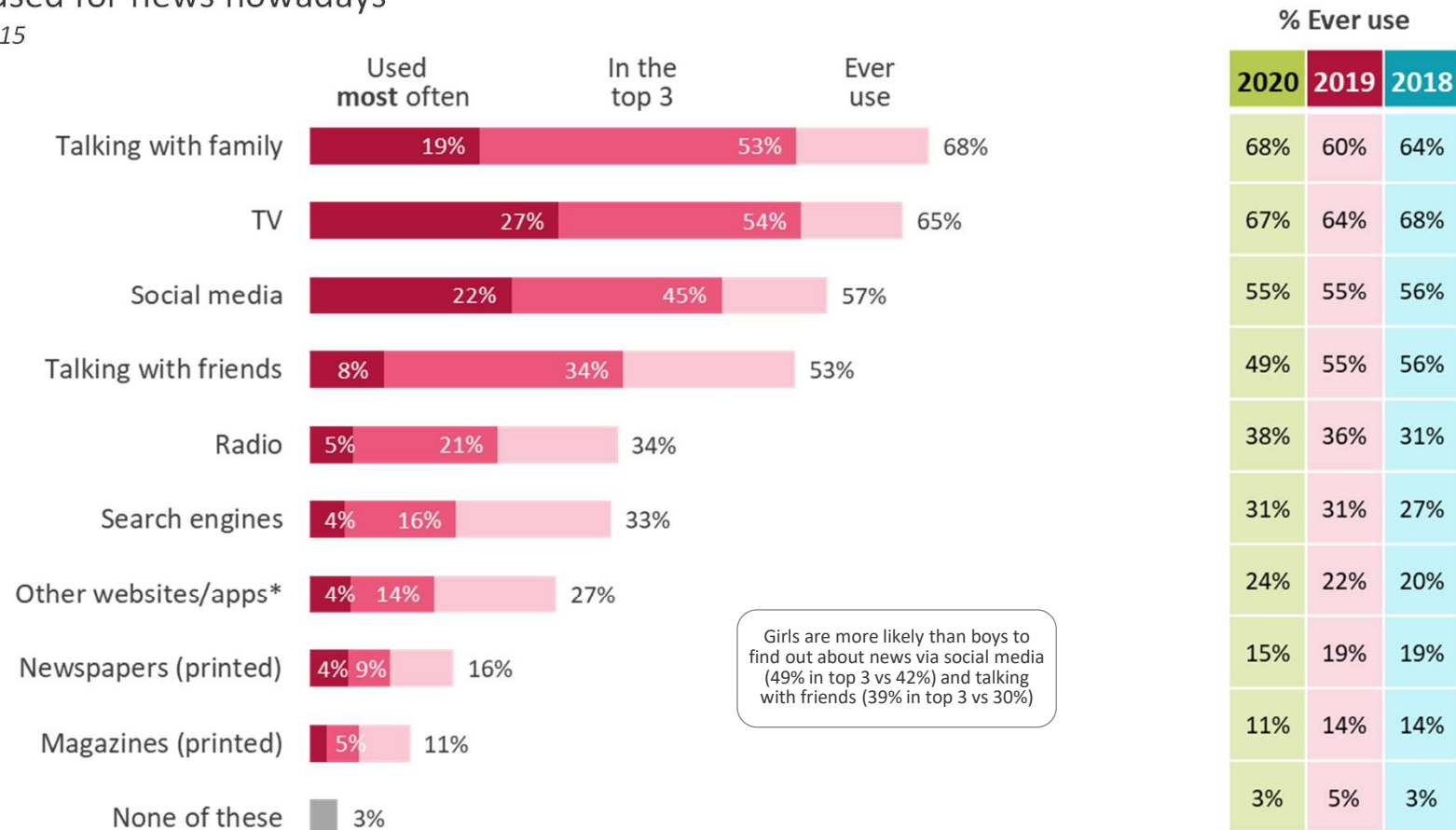
Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021. Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence between 2021 and 2020.  
Question: B5. How often do you read, watch, listen to or follow the news? Base: All children aged 12-15 – 2020=1010, 2020=1007  
B6. Sometimes people find out about the news because others are watching, listening to or talking about it. On other occasions they may see a news story online, when they're looking for something else. B7. Sometimes people actively look for news. For example, they decide to watch it on TV, listen to it on the radio or read it in the paper. On other occasions, they may go online to look for news, sign up to news alerts or read news updates on social media. How often, if at all do, you actively read, watch, listen to or follow the news like this?

# Talking to family and watching TV remain the most common ways to find out about news among 12-15s, followed by social media and talking to friends

**Figure 15.6**

All platforms used for news nowadays

All children aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021 Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence between 2021 and 2020

Question: C1. Here is a list of different ways you can find out about or get updates on news stories. Which of these ways do you ever use?

C2. And which of these ways do you use the most to get updates on news stories?

Base: All children aged 12-15 – 2021=1010, 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

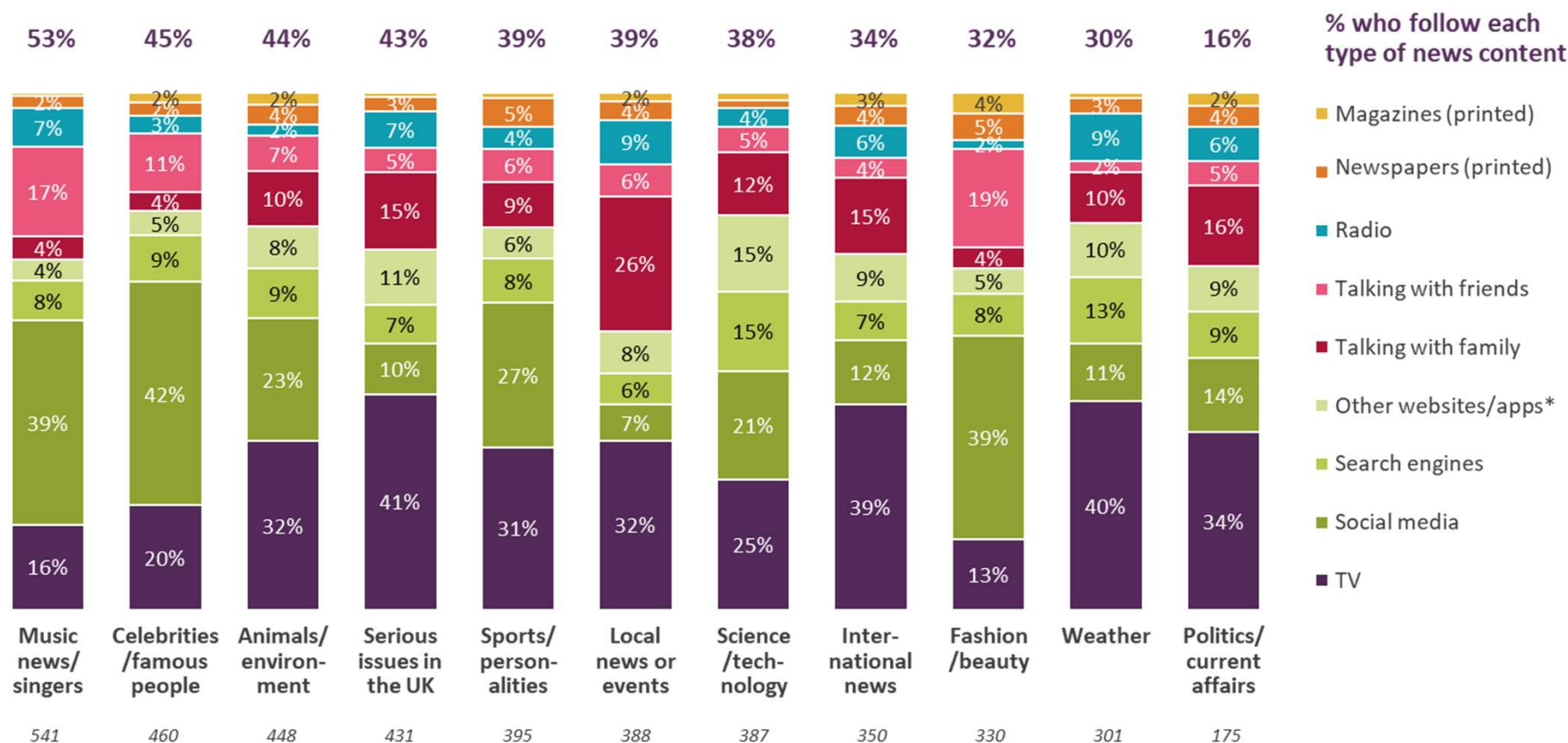
\*Other websites/apps includes any internet source, excluding social media and search engines, but including podcasts

As in 2020, Social media is used most often for celebrity, music and fashion news. TV is the most popular platform for all other types of news content

**Figure 15.7**

Platforms/method used most often for different types of news content 2021

All children aged 12-15 who follow each type of news content



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: C3. Where do you tend to go most often for the following types of news stories?

Base: All children aged 12-15 who follow each type of news content (bases shown above)

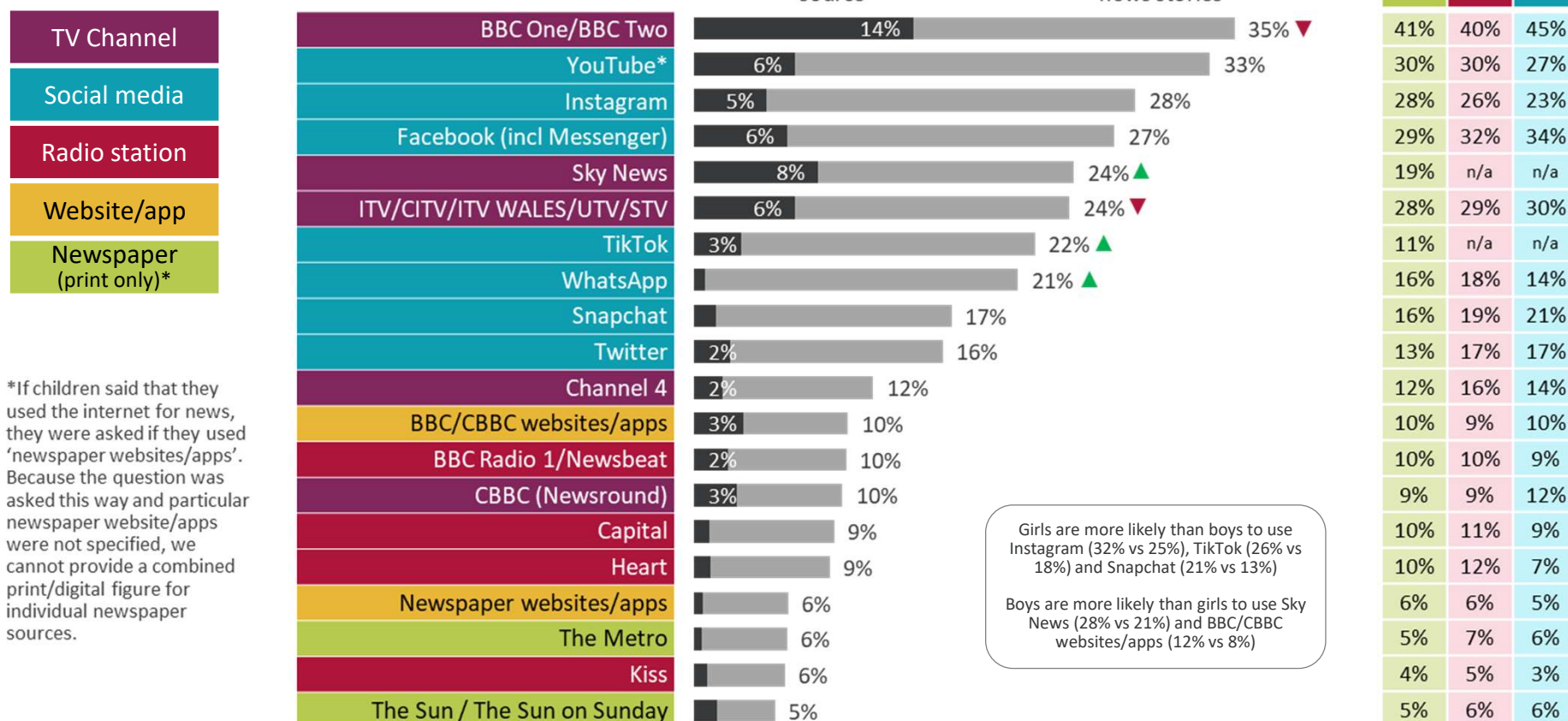
\*Other websites/apps includes any internet source, excluding social media and search engines, but including podcasts

BBC One/Two remain the most used and most important sources of news across all platforms, but there has been a decrease in the usage of BBC One/Two and ITV since 2020. Sky News, TikTok and WhatsApp are all used more for news than in 2020

**Figure 15.8**

Top 20 news sources

All children aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence between 2021 and 2020

Question: D1. Which, if any, of the following do you use to read, watch, listen to or follow news stories?

E1a. Here is a list of all the news sources that you say you use. Which ONE of these is the most important news source to you?

Base: All children aged 12-15 – 2020=1010, 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

\*YouTube is a net for YouTube as a 'social media' channel plus YouTube website/app as 'an other website/app'

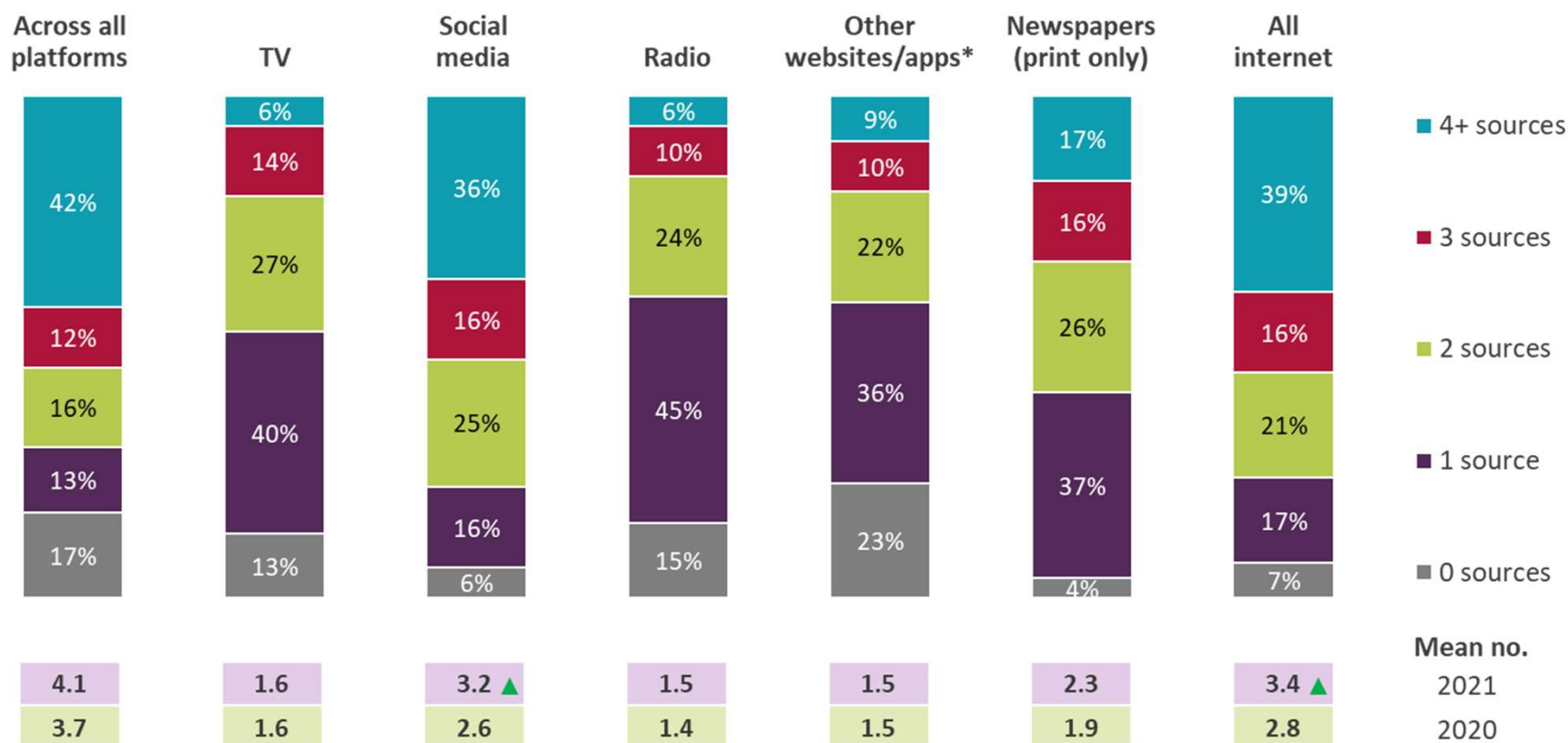


Across all platforms, an average of 4.1 individual sources are used for news. Social media news users use an average of 3.2 social media sources, an increase from 2.6 since 2020

**Figure 15.9**

Number of individual sources named - by platform

All children aged 12-15 using each platform for news



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence between 2021 and 2020

Question: D1. Which, if any, of the following do you use to read, watch, listen to or follow news stories?

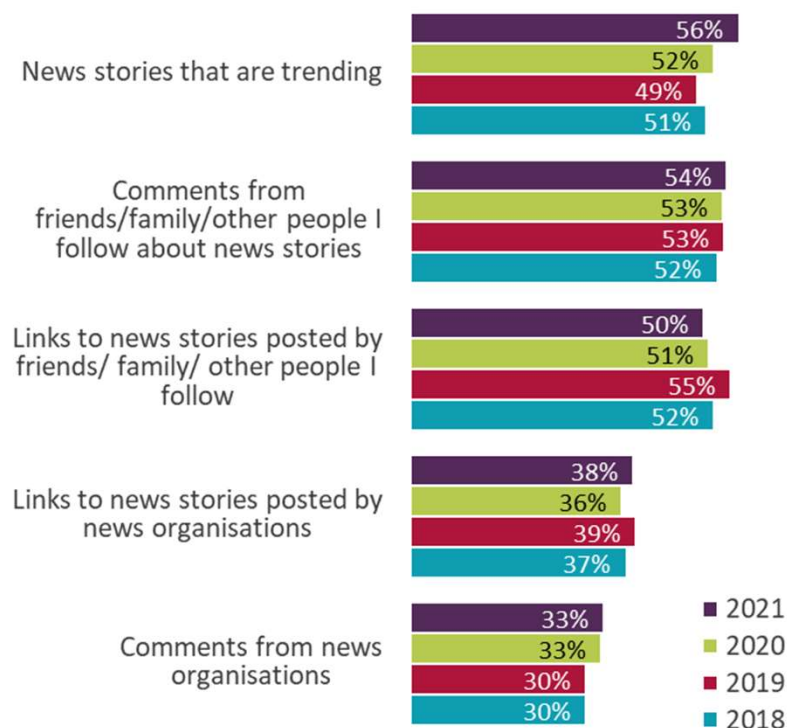
Base: All using each platform for news 2021 – All platforms=1010, TV=658, Social media=574, Radio=348, Other websites/apps=214, Newspapers=163, All internet (Social media and/or Other websites/apps)=632 \*Other websites/apps includes any internet source, excluding social media and search engines

Note: Some respondents did not name specific sources within a platform so appear as having zero sources

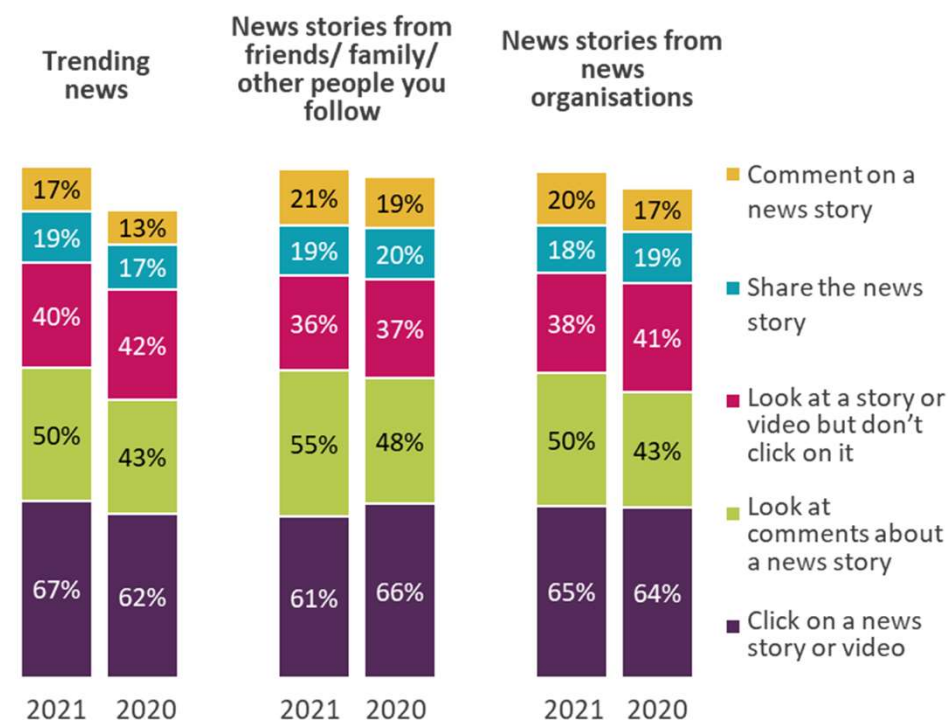
57% of 12-15s claim to access news via social media. They are most likely to access news via trending news, comments and links posted by friends/family. The most common actions include clicking on stories and looking at comments

**Figure 15.10**

**How news is accessed via social media**  
*All children aged 12-15 using any social media to follow news*



**Actions normally taken when accessing news on SM**  
*All accessing news from each source on social media*



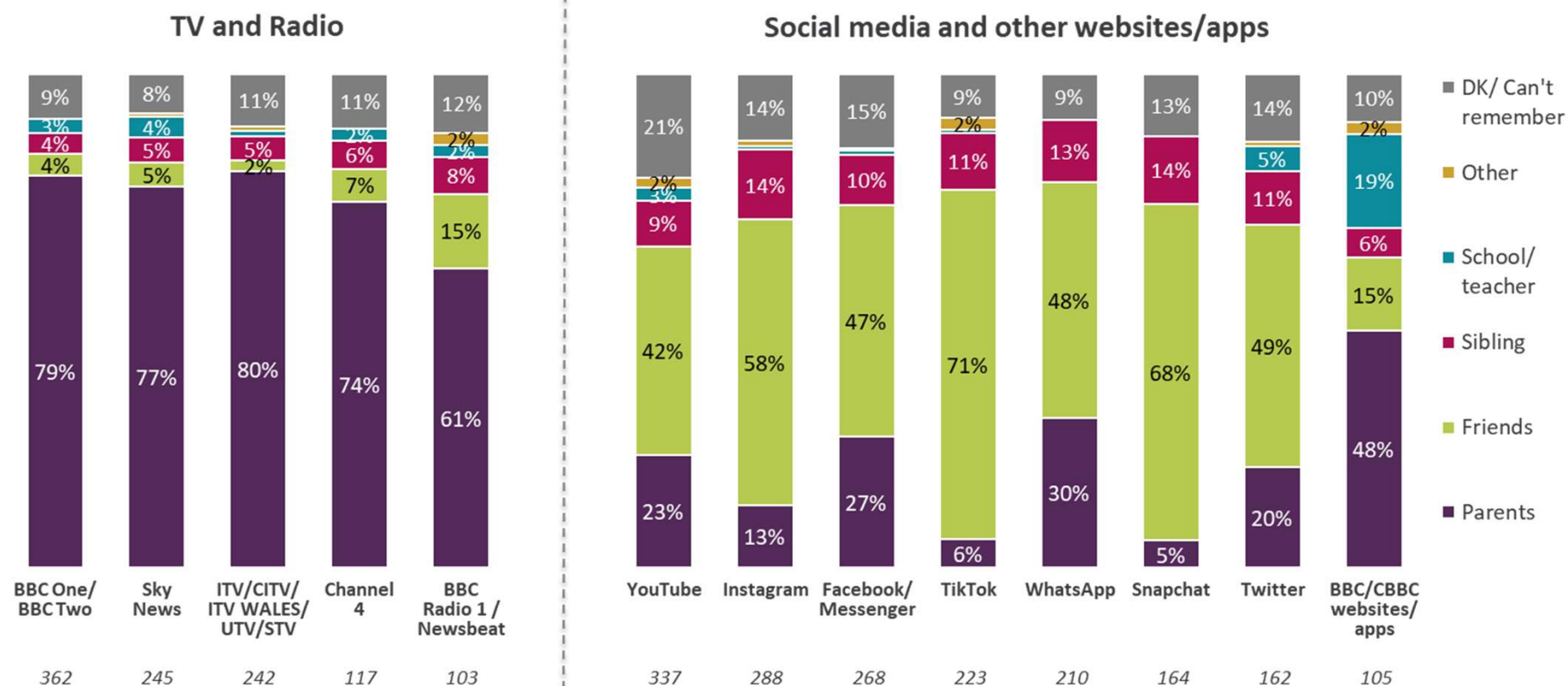
Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021      Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence between 2021 and 2020  
Question: C7. Which, if any, of the following do you read or see on the social media sites or apps you use most often?  
Base: All using social media to follow news – 2021=574, 2020=555, 2019=548, 2018=556  
C8. Which, if any, of the following do you do when you read or see [type of news] on social media sites or apps?  
Base: All accessing news from each source via social media 2021/2020 – Trending news=318/292, News stories from friends/family/other people=410/395, News organisations=310/288      Note: Columns do not sum to 100% (this was a multi-code question)

When 12-15s were asked how they first found out about particular news sources, friends are typically mentioned for social media, whereas parents are mostly cited in relation to more traditional media

**Figure 15.11**

## Initial introduction to news sources 2021

All children aged 12-15 using each source for news



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: D3. How did you first find out about SOURCE as a source of news?

Base: All children aged 12-15 who use each source for news (bases shown above, only sources used by 100+ respondents included)

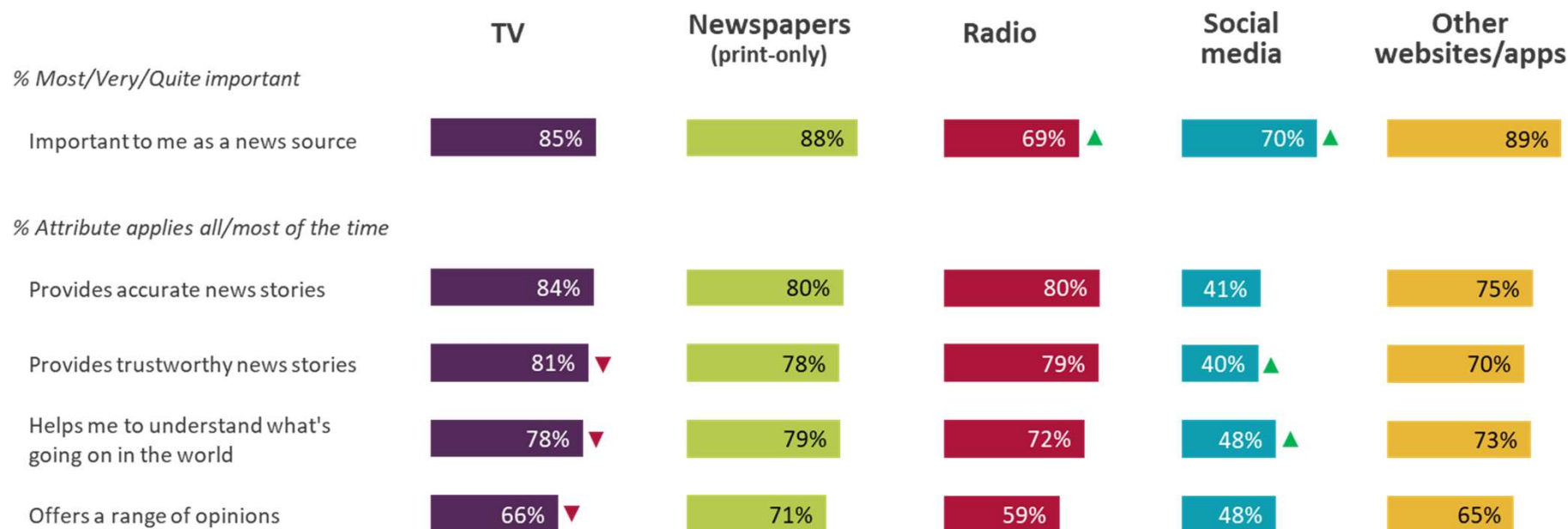


Users of TV and Newspapers tend to give high ratings across the majority of the attributes. By comparison, social media users give comparatively lower scores, especially for 'trustworthy' and 'accuracy'

## Figure 15.12

### Attributes of news platforms - 2021

Ratings from children aged 12-15 using each platform for news



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence between 2021 and 2020

Question: E2. You will now see all of the other news sources that you use. I would like you to tell me how important each one is to you.

E3. You will now see a list of statements. I would like you to tell me how often each of these statement applies to each of the different news sources

Base: All ratings by children aged 12-15 who use each platform for news – TV=1076, Newspapers=356, Radio=536, Social media=1821, Other websites/apps=326

BBC/CBBC website/app, BBC Radio 1/Newsbeat, BBC One/Two, Sky News and ITV tend to receive the highest ratings (above 80%) from their users across most of the attributes

**Figure 15.13**

## Attributes of news sources – 2021

All children aged 12-15 using each source for news

	TV and Radio					Social media and other websites/apps							
	BBC One/ BBC Two	Sky News	ITV/CITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	Channel 4	BBC Radio 1 / Newsbeat	YouTube	Instagram	Facebook/ Messenger	TikTok	WhatsApp	Snapchat	Twitter	BBC/CBBC websites/apps
	362	245	242	117	103	337	288	268	223	210	164	162	105
<i>% Most/Very/Quite important</i>													
Important to me as a news source	86%	87%	82%	77%	82%	81%	64%	70%	65%	68%	55%	74%	89%
<i>% Attribute applies all/most of the time</i>													
Provides accurate news stories	84%	80%	82%	82%	89%	47%	37%	35%	30%	39%	34%	51%	87%
Provides trustworthy news stories	82%	81%	82%	73%	87%	45%	32%	34%	32%	39%	29%	52%	87%
Helps me to understand what's going on in the world	81%	78%	75%	75%	81%	54%	47%	44%	43%	43%	34%	59%	88%
Offers a range of opinions	61%	69%	64%	68%	70%	52%	46%	51%	48%	38%	33%	53%	78%

Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: E2. You will now see all of the other news sources that you use. I would like you to tell me how important each one is to you

E3. You will now see a list of statements. I would like you to tell me how often each of these statement applies to each of the different news sources

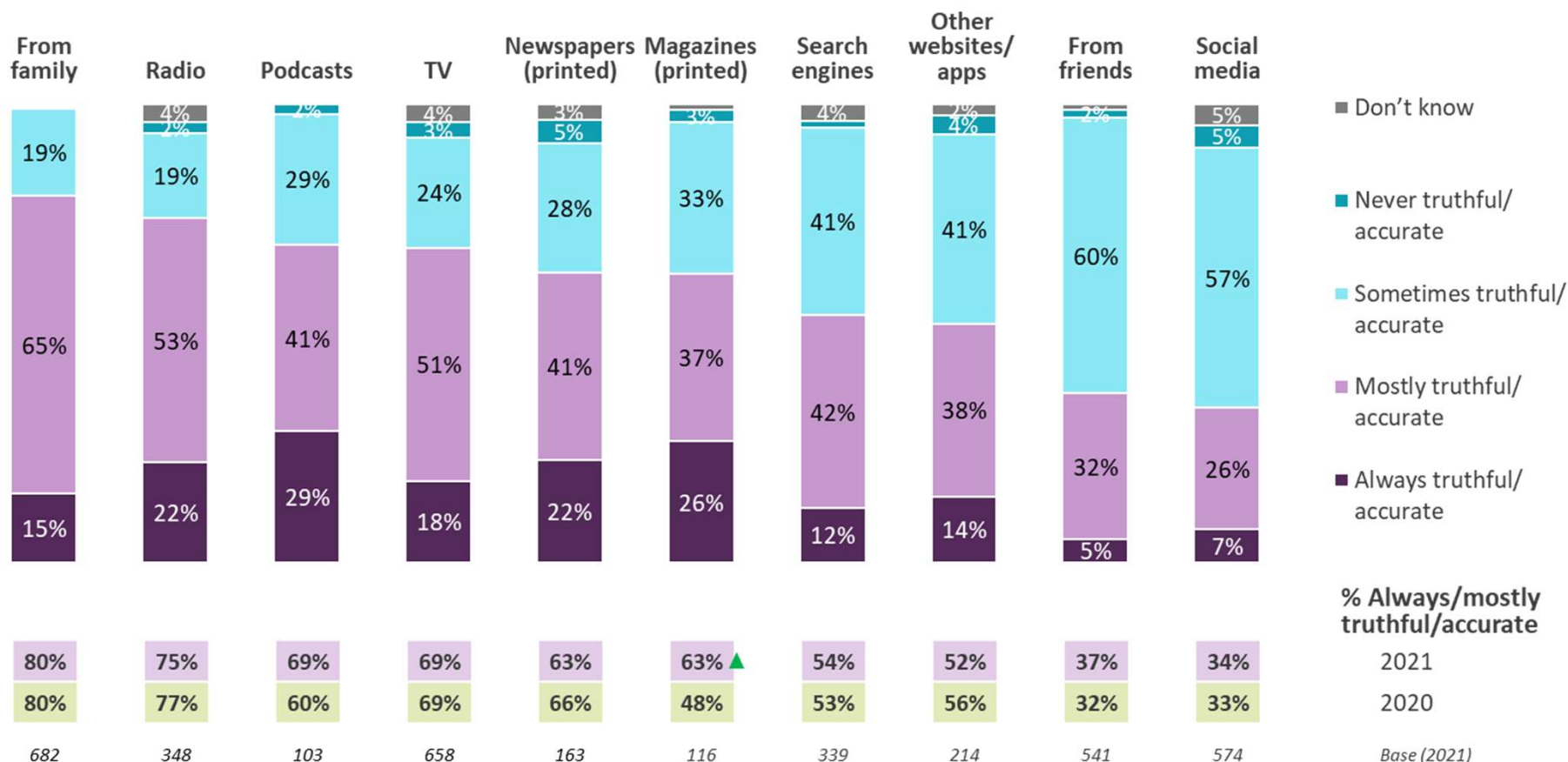
Base: All children aged 12-15 who use each source for news (bases shown above, only sources used by 100+ respondents included)

Family, radio, podcasts and TV are to be considered the most accurate/truthful sources, while social media and friends are the considered least truthful

**Figure 15.14**

Perceived accuracy of news stories from each platform

All children aged 12-15 who use each platform for news



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: C4. Which one of these answers best describes the news that you read or see?

C5/6. When you hear about news stories from your [friends / family], how likely do you think the stories are to be accurate?

Base: All children aged 12-15 who use each platform for news (bases shown above)

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence level between 2021 and 2020

Two in five 12-15 year olds who use social media for news claim they always/often think about whether stories are reported accurately. More than half said it was difficult to tell whether the news on social media is accurate

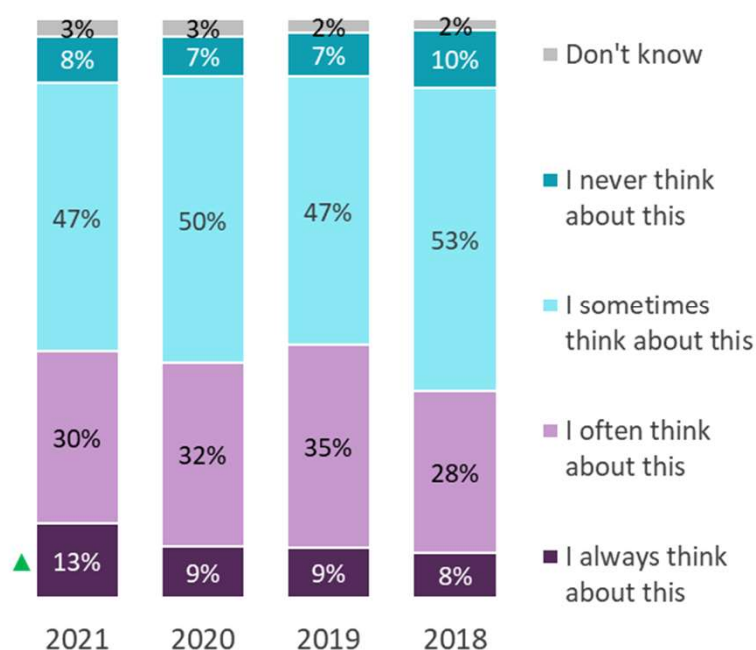
**Figure 15.15**

## Accuracy of news stories accessed via social media (1)

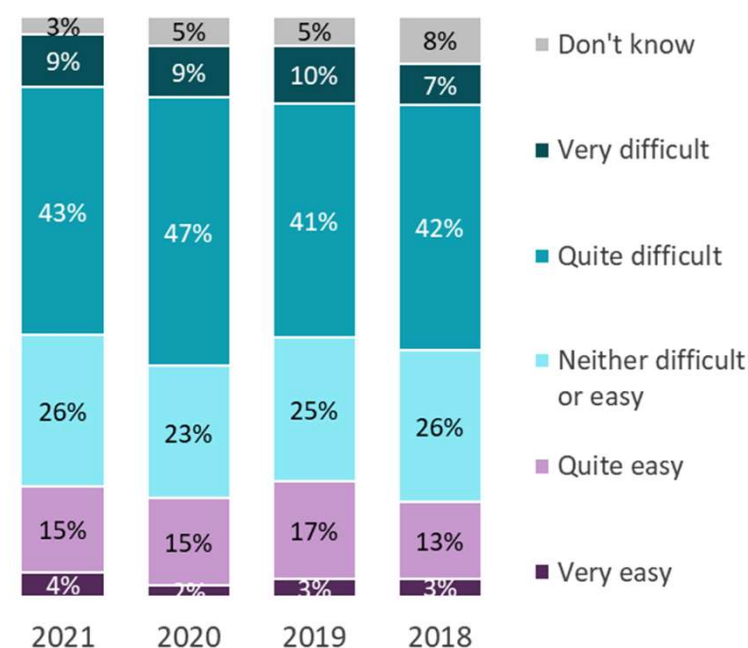
All children aged 12-15 who use social media for news

Boys are more likely than girls to say it is 'easy' to tell that a news story on social media is accurate (24% very/quite easy vs. 15%)

### How often children think about whether a news story on social media is accurate



### How easy it is to tell whether a news story on social media is accurate



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Question: C9a. When you read or see a news story on social media sites or apps, how often, if at all do you think about whether the story is actually true?

C10. How easy or difficult is it to tell whether a news story on social media is true?

Base: All using social media to follow news – 2021=574, 2020=555, 2019=548, 2018=556

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence level between 2021 and 2020

Social media news users aged 12-15 were asked what they would do if they wanted to check a news story they had seen. As in 2020, the most common actions were to 'look at the comments about the story' and to 'check if the same story appears anywhere else'

**Figure 15.16**

## Accuracy of news stories accessed via social media (2)

All children aged 12-15 who use social media for news

### Perceptions of news stories on social media



**34%** (33% in 2020) think that news stories on social media are **reported truthfully** most or all of the time



**42%** (41% in 2020) will normally **think about** whether a news story they see on social media is actually true



**19%** (17% in 2020) find it **easy to tell** whether a news story on social media is true

### Actions might take to check authenticity of an SM news story



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence between 2021 and 2020

Question: C4. Which one of these answers best describes the news that you read or see? C9a. When you read or see a news story on social media sites or apps, how often, if at all do you think about whether the story is actually true? C10. How easy or difficult is it to tell whether a news story on social media is true?

C11. When you read or see a news story on social media sites or apps which if any of these things would you ever do if you wanted to check the story?

Base: All using social media to follow news – 2021=574, 2020=555

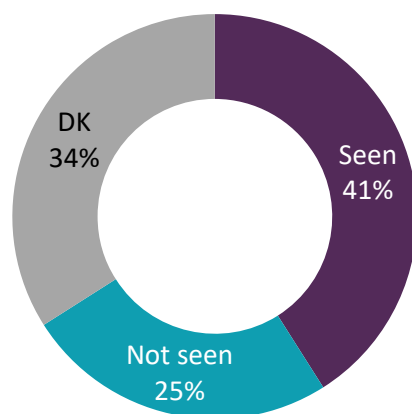
Two in five 12-15 year olds have seen a deliberately untrue or misleading news story online in the last year. Upon seeing such a story, the most likely actions include telling parents or other family members or friends.

**Figure 15.17**

## Accuracy of news stories accessed online

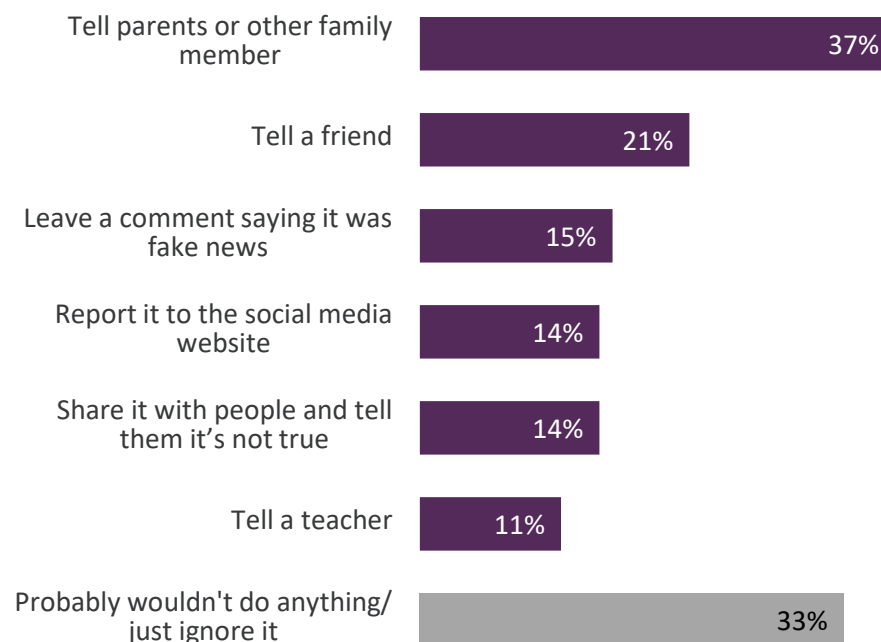
All children aged 12-15

### Incidence of seeing a deliberately untrue/ misleading news story online in the last 12 months



Boys are more likely than girls to say they've seen a deliberately untrue/ misleading news story (44% vs. 37%)

### Actions might take if saw a deliberately untrue/ misleading news story online



Source: Ofcom Children's News Consumption Survey 2021

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 95% confidence between 2021 and 2020

Question: C14. In the last 12 months, have you ever seen anything online or on social media that you thought was a deliberately untrue/misleading news story?

C15. If you did see a news story on social media or online that you thought was deliberately untrue/misleading what, if anything would you do about it?

Base: All children aged 12-15 – 2021=1010

## Appendix – Industry currencies and methodology

## Industry currencies used in the report

- BARB (Broadcasters' Audience Research Board) is the official industry currency for TV consumption. It uses a continuous panel of approximately 5,300 UK homes and tracks television viewing among all people aged 4+ in these homes using meters attached to every working television set in the home.



## News Consumption Survey – Adult methodology

- From December 2017 until March 2020, Jigsaw Research conducted a mixed methodology approach, combining online and face to face interviews. However, during the most recent period of research, they were unable to conduct face to face interviews, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Since online methodologies tend to underrepresent low/non internet users, Jigsaw conducted separate Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) to ensure that these groups had the opportunity to express their views.
  - This additional CATI survey achieved 1,278 interviews, with the nations over-represented during fieldwork.
  - This data has been weighted to correct for this over-representation, with weights being applied by age, gender and socio-economic group (SEG) within Nation, to provide a representative view of all UK adults.
- In addition to the CATI interviews, a total of 3,327 online panel interviews were undertaken.
  - This online data has been weighted by age, gender, nation/region, working status and ethnicity to ensure they are representative of ‘recent’ internet users, as found in the ONS Internet Users research (published on 6th April, 2020).
- Due to differences in the questionnaire and differences in how respondents answered questions about individual news sources between the two survey methods used, the combined adult methodology slides only show platform level data. All other adults’ slides are based on the online sample only.
- The CATI and online interviews were conducted over two waves of research, from 2nd November – 10th December, 2020 and 27th February – 29th March, 2021. These interviewing periods have remained consistent over the last four years. Consequently, 2020 data was collected pre- Covid-19 and 2021 data was collected during the second and third UK lockdown periods.
  - *NB: The 2020/21 online data has been reported as ‘2021’ within this report, whilst the 2019/20 online data has been reported as ‘2020’*
- Findings by different demographic groups are shown on the slides, where possible. Statistically significant differences are shown at a 95% confidence level.

## News Consumption Survey – Adult & Child methodology

- The survey has approximately 200 codes for different potential sources for news, as well as the option to allow respondents to nominate their own sources which yields a further 800 or so, including regional sources. This gives us a bottom-up measure of what people consider they use for news (about their Nation, the UK, and internationally) and will not necessarily include every possible outlet. The survey therefore provides a granular range of news sources. These individual news sources are then aggregated into various groups or “nets” relating to their owner or publisher.
- This is a recall-based survey. As such, it is likely to provide somewhat different results to other types of measurement. In particular, it may underestimate some online news consumption activity. It is likely to be harder for respondents to recall ad-hoc online news consumption compared to, say, the purchase of a newspaper or the watching of an evening television bulletin. On the other hand, respondents show through such surveys which news sources resonate with them.
- The methodology used for the 12-15s study is largely unchanged since the 2020, 2019 and 2018 reports.
- In total, 503 interviews from 24th November – 7th December 2020 have been combined with 507 interviews from 27th Feb – 24th March 2021. Consequently, 2021 data was collected during the second and third UK lockdown periods.
- Quotas were set on age, gender, socio-economic group (SEG) and Nation to ensure the sample was representative of the UK and the data has also been weighted on age, gender, SEG and nation. Statistically significant differences year-on-year are shown at a 95% confidence level.
- Each wave of fieldwork was undertaken in three stages:
  - Stage 1: We targeted parents of 12-15 year olds, using an online panel.
  - Stage 2: Parents were screened to ensure we recruited a representative sample of participants.
  - Stage 3: The parent asked their (qualifying) child to complete the rest of the questionnaire.