

# News Consumption in the UK: 2020

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# Introduction

- This report provides the findings of Ofcom's 2019/20 research into news consumption across television, radio, print, social media, podcasts, other internet sources 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.
- Fieldwork for the adults survey this year took place during 9th November – 8th December 2019 and 24th February – 30th March 2020. Fieldwork for the children's survey this year took place during 15th November – 10th December 2019 and 1st – 20th April 2020. This report does not explore the coronavirus lockdown period. For information on news consumption during the Covid-19 lockdown period, please go to the [Covid-19 news survey](#).
- The primary source for this report is Ofcom's News Consumption Survey. The report also contains information from a range of industry currencies including:
  - BARB for television viewing
  - ABC for newspaper circulation

# Summary of key findings

**TV remains the most-used platform for news (75%), followed by the internet (65%). However, compared to 2019, fewer adults claim to use social media (45%) for news and it has returned to 2018 levels.** Use of TV is most prevalent among the 65+ age group (92%), while the internet is the most-used platform for news consumption among 16-24s (79%) and those from minority ethnic groups (74%)

**While BBC remains the most-used news source, there is a decrease in UK adults using BBC TV channels for news.** BBC One continues to be the most-used news source among all adults (56%), followed by ITV (41%) and Facebook (34%)

**There is evidence that UK adults who use social media for news (45%) are less engaged with the news content.** Those who use Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are less likely to share/retweet trending news articles, and smaller proportions are clicking on news articles/videos (Facebook/Instagram) or making comments (Twitter/Instagram) compared to 2019

**When rated by their users on measures such as quality, accuracy, trustworthiness and impartiality, magazines continue to perform better than other news platforms, followed by TV.** Users of social media think it is less trustworthy, impartial and accurate than in 2019. The opposite is true for other websites and apps, which users rate more highly in 2020 than in 2019

# Summary of key findings

**TV remains the most common platform for accessing local news and news within the nations.** BBC One remains the most-used source for news in England and Wales. BBC One and STV are joint top in Scotland, and UTV and BBC One are joint top in Northern Ireland

**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 and to think about new things. Being 'too boring' remains the key reason for lack of interest in news, followed by a lack of relevance

**Talking to the family (68%) and TV (67%) are the most common ways to find out about news amongst 12-15 year olds, followed by social media (55%) and talking to friends (49%).** BBC One/BBC Two are still the most-used (41%) and most important news source (17%), although it is noteworthy that six of the top ten most used sources among 12-15s are social media sites

As in previous years, **Family and Radio, then 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

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# Overall summary of findings

# Overall summary – Adults (1)

**TV remains the most-used platform among UK adults for news (75%), followed by the internet (65%), the radio (42%) and print newspapers (35% - a decrease from 38% in 2019).** TV sources represent six of the top 20 most-used news sources- the most of any platform (the top 20 news sources also include four social media sites, five newspaper titles (print or digital format), three radio stations and two 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 (79% vs. 49%), while the same is true for those from minority ethnic groups (74% vs. 65%). By contrast, those aged 65+ remain more likely to use more traditional platforms for news, including TV, radio and print newspapers, with TV use among this age group almost universal (92%). ABC1s remain more likely than C2DEs to use the internet, radio and print newspapers.

**While the BBC remains the most-used news source, there is a decrease in UK adults using BBC TV channels for news. BBC One remains the most-used news source across all platforms, with 56% reach among all UK adults (a decrease since 2018).** The top 3 news sources remain unchanged since 2019, with ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV (41%) and Facebook (34%) the second and third most used sources. Following the top three are The Sky News channel, with a reach of 25% of adults, the BBC website/app at 23% and the BBC News Channel at 21% (the latter having seen a decline over the last two years). BBC sources represent seven of the top 20 most-used news sources. Furthermore, when sources are grouped into wholesale categories, the BBC has the highest audience reach (77%), followed by ITN (53%), Sky (29%) and DMGT (27%).

**BBC One also maintains its status as the most important news source (23%), although this has decreased from 27% of all adults in 2018.** This is followed by ITV (12%), Facebook (8%), Sky News Channel (7%) and the BBC website/app (6%). However, this does vary by age: social media channels are more important among younger age groups, with Facebook, Twitter (both 13%) and BBC One (10%) rated as most important news sources among 16-24s.

# Overall summary – Adults (2)

**45% of UK adults claim to use social media for news (a decrease from 2019, and a return to levels seen in 2018) and 41% 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).** 13% of UK adults say they use news aggregators. Use of these platforms is higher among younger age groups compared to over 65s.

**Users of social media for news are less engaged with news via this source compared to 2019.** Those who use Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for news are less likely to share/retweet trending news articles, and smaller proportions are clicking on news articles/videos (Facebook/Instagram) or commenting on news (Twitter/Instagram). As in 2019, news consumed on social media is more likely to be from news organisations than ‘friends/family’ or ‘others you follow’. 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 BuzzFeed on Snapchat.

**At a platform level, attitudes towards news provision (measures such as quality, accuracy, trustworthiness and impartiality) remain strongest among consumers of news in magazines, followed by TV and weakest for news from social media.** In addition, social media sees significant decreases across attitudes in 2020, while, in contrast, attitudes towards news on other apps and websites have become more positive.

**TV remains the most popular platform for accessing local news and people are still highly satisfied with the quality of this news.** 42% of UK adults who follow news say they watch regional/local broadcasts on BBC TV and 32% watch ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV. Four in five of these viewers are satisfied with the quality of news that these channels provide.

**TV remains the most common platform for accessing news about respondents’ own nation. Overall, BBC One remains the most-used source for news in England and Wales. BBC One and STV are joint top in Scotland, and UTV and BBC One are joint top in Northern Ireland.** BBC One is the most important news source in England and Wales, and BBC One and STV are equally important in Scotland, whereas UTV and BBC One are the most important sources in Northern Ireland. Respondents in Wales and Scotland are most likely to say they are very interested in news about their Nation (55% in Wales and 47% in Scotland vs 41% in Northern Ireland and 28% in England).

**As in 2018 and 2019, six in ten adults think it is important for ‘society overall’ that broadcasters provide current affairs programming, more than those who say it is important to them personally (52%).**

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

**As in 2019, 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 (42%) who are not interested in the news, the main reason is it is ‘too boring’ (42%). A further 19% said it ‘was not relevant for people their age’, 14% said it was ‘too upsetting’ and 14% said it ‘all sounds the same’.

**When asked how often they read, watch or listen to or follow news, three quarters (77%) of 12-15s said they do so at least once a week.** As in 2019, 7% said they never accessed news. Recognising that news is not always accessed on purpose, we asked children how often they inadvertently came across news (e.g. because others are watching, listening to or talking about it); 84% said this happened at least once a week, and 62% said they actively look for news at least once a week.

**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 (57%), but when asked which types of news content they are most interested in sports/sports personalities (20%) and music news/singers/musicians (17%) were the top choices.

**Talking with family and the TV continue to be the most common ways to find out about the news.** While family and the TV are the most common ways to ever find out about news, TV remains the platform used most often for news (32%), followed by social media (18%) and talking to family (17%). As in 2018 and 2019, 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 remain the most-used (41%) and most important (17%) news source for 12-15s across all platforms.** The next most used news sources are YouTube (30%), Facebook (29%), Instagram (28%) and ITV (28%). There are six social media sites in the top ten most used sources for 12-15s. 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 and radio, then TV continue to be perceived as the most truthful news sources, while social media and friends are perceived to be the least truthful.** 80% of 12-15s said the news they heard from family was either ‘always’ or ‘mostly’ accurate, compared to 77% for radio and 69% for TV - all consistent with 2018 and 2019. Only one in three think news stories on social media (33%) or from friends (32%) are accurate.

**The vast majority of 12-15s have heard of ‘fake news’ and of these, about half say they have seen a news story online or on social media that they thought was ‘fake news’.** 41% of 12-15s who use social media for news claim they always/often think about whether the stories they see there are accurate. However, 55% say it is difficult to tell whether news on social media is accurate or not. 89% of 12-15s say they have heard about ‘fake news’ and 86% say they are aware of its meaning. 55% of 12-15s who are aware of the term claim they have seen a ‘fake news’ story. The most common actions they would take if they saw a fake news story are to tell parents or another family member (33%), followed by telling friends (16%), leaving a comment saying it was fake news (13%) and reporting it to the social media site (12%). 41% said they would probably just ignore it/wouldn’t do anything.

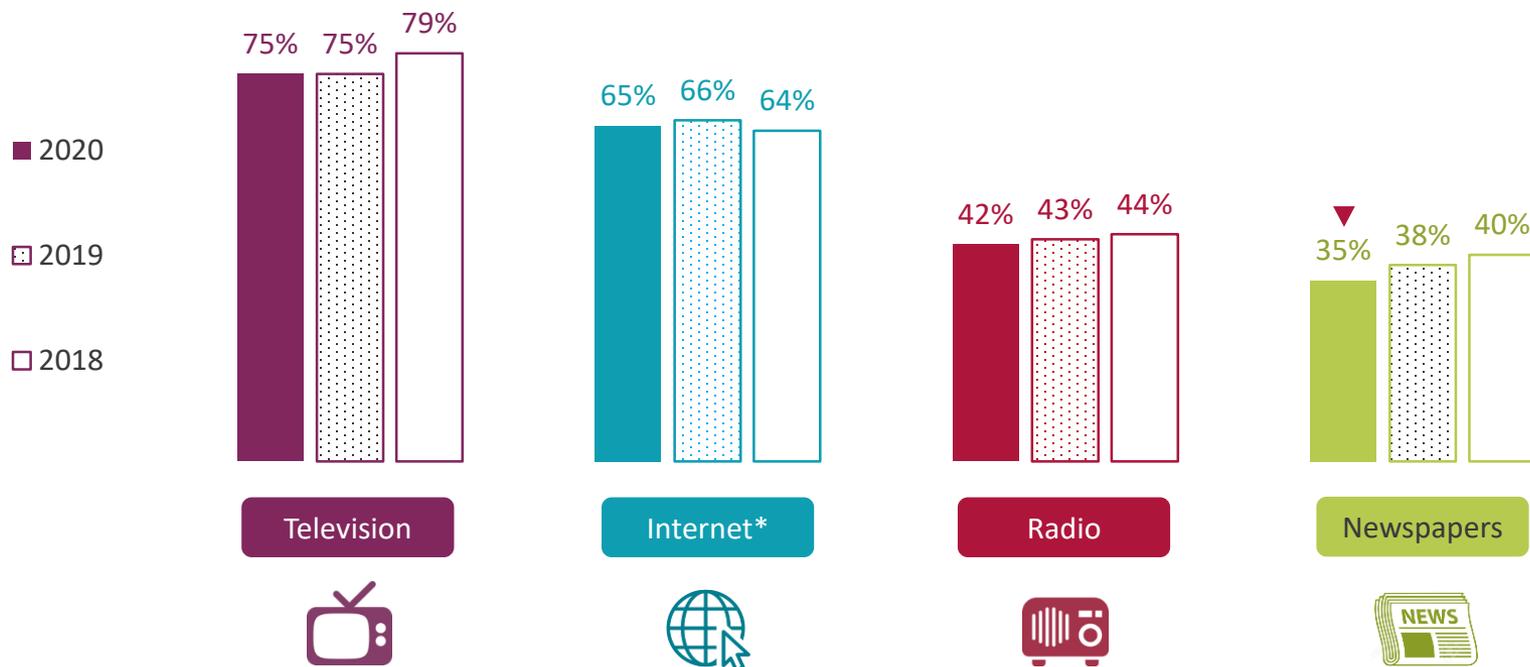
# Platforms used for news nowadays

# TV remains the most-used platform for news nowadays, followed by the internet. Usage of print newspapers continues to decline

**Figure 2.1**

Use of main platforms for news nowadays

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All Adults 16+ - 2020=4576, 2019=4691, 2018=4618 \*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

(NB: A question on podcasts was included for the first time during the 2020 research)

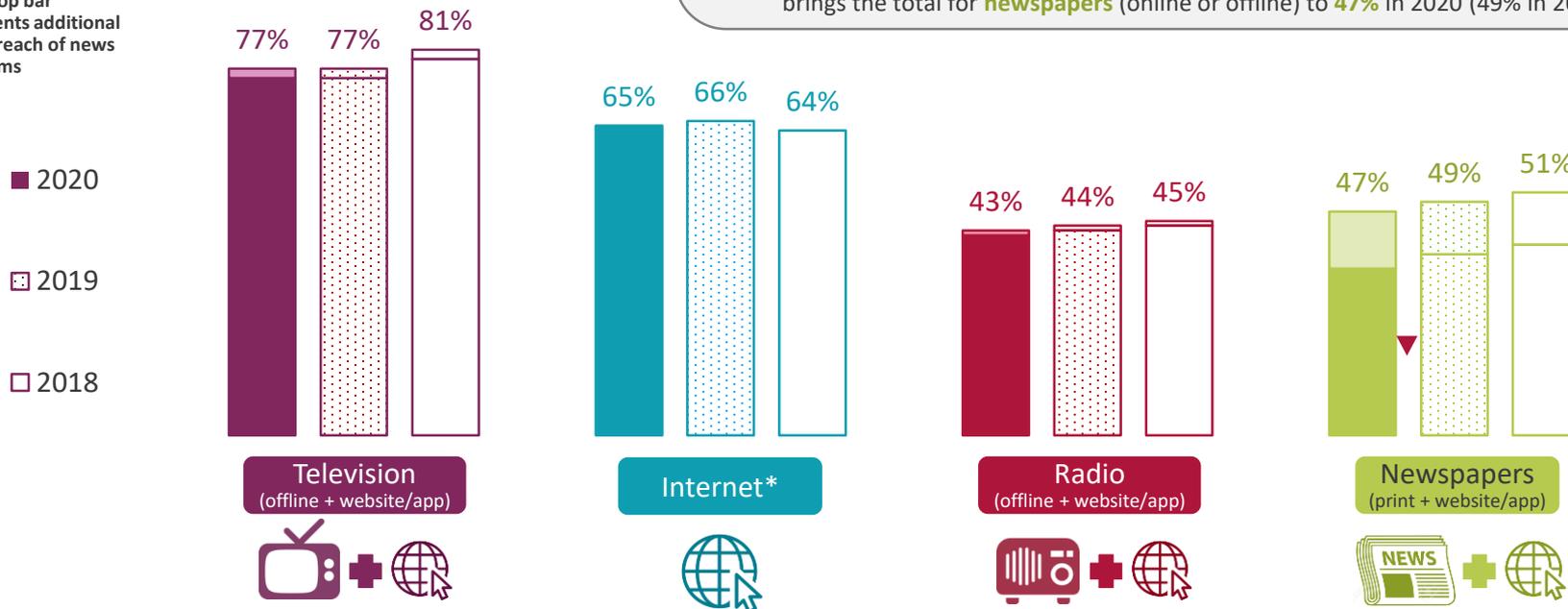
# Combining use of print newspapers and newspaper websites/apps brings the overall use of newspapers up to 47% of adults in 2020

## Figure 2.2

### Use of main platforms for news nowadays

All adults 16+

Note: top bar represents additional online reach of news platforms



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 **77%** in 2020 (77% in 2019).

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 **43%** in 2020 (44% in 2019).

Combining mentions of reading news in **printed newspapers and via newspaper websites/apps**, brings the total for **newspapers** (online or offline) to **47%** in 2020 (49% in 2019).

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All Adults 16+ - 2020=4576, 2019=4691, 2018=4618 \*Internet figures include use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device

(NB: A question on podcasts was included for the first time in the 2020 research)

As in 2019, 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 and radio, whereas ABC1s use a greater variety of sources than C2DEs

### Figure 2.3

#### Use of main platforms for news nowadays 2020 - by demographic group

All adults 16+

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
Television	75%	74%	76%	49%	92%	75%	75%	65%	77%
Internet (any device)*	65%	64%	65%	79%	44%	68%	60%	74%	63%
Radio	42%	42%	43%	24%	48%	45%	40%	31%	45%
Newspapers (print only)	35%	37%	32%	20%	56%	37%	32%	34%	35%
Newspapers (print + website/app)	47%	49%	46%	35%	63%	52%	42%	50%	47%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All Adults 16+ 2020 - Total=4576, Male=2153, Female=2420, 16-24=726, 65+=911, ABC1=2505, C2DE=2066, Minority ethnic groups =676, White=3889

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

(NB: A question on podcasts was included for the first time in the 2020 research)

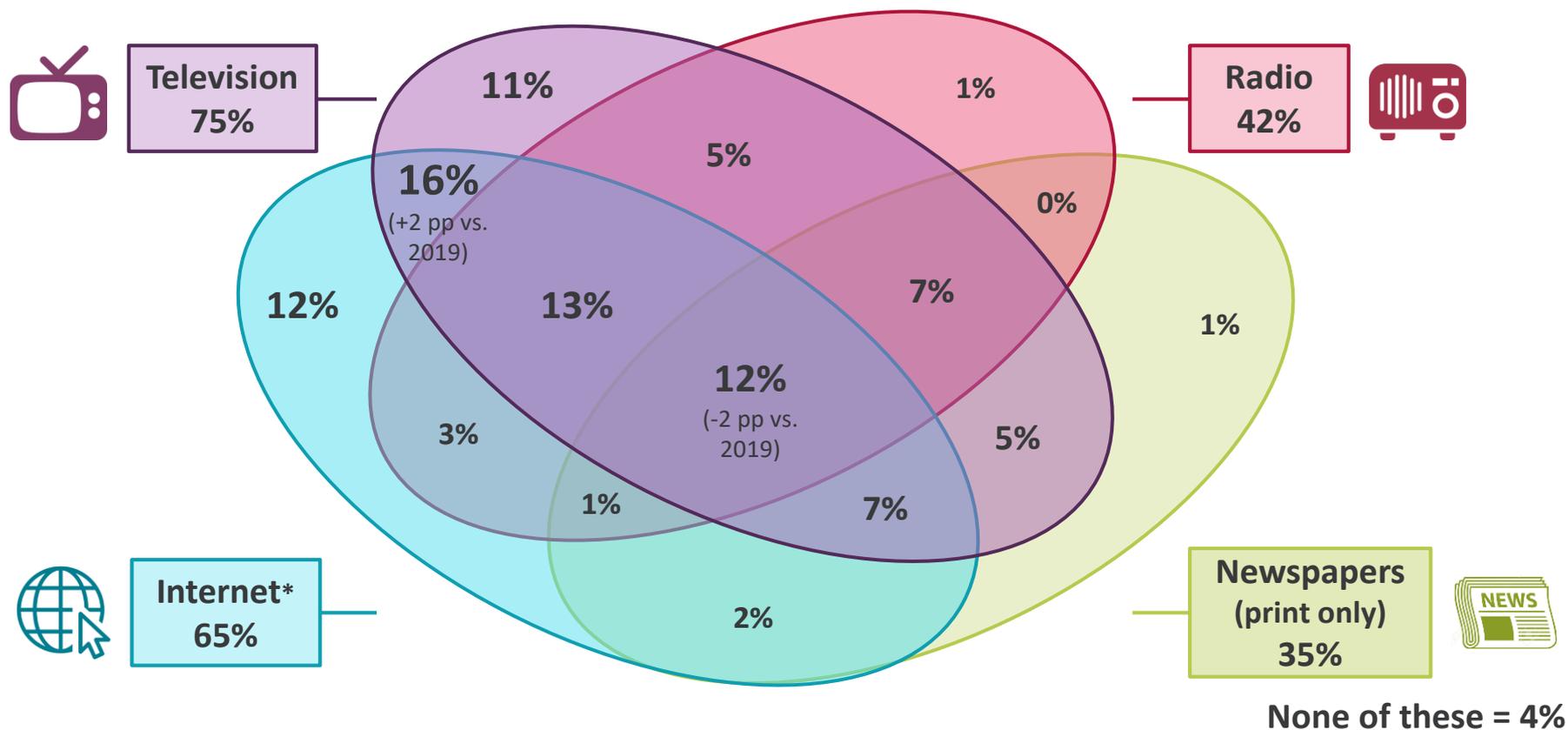
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

12% of adults claim to use all four of the main platforms for news nowadays.  
The same proportion only use the internet and 11% use only television

**Figure 2.4**

Crossover use of four main platforms for news nowadays - 2020

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All Adults 16+ 2020 - Total=4576

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

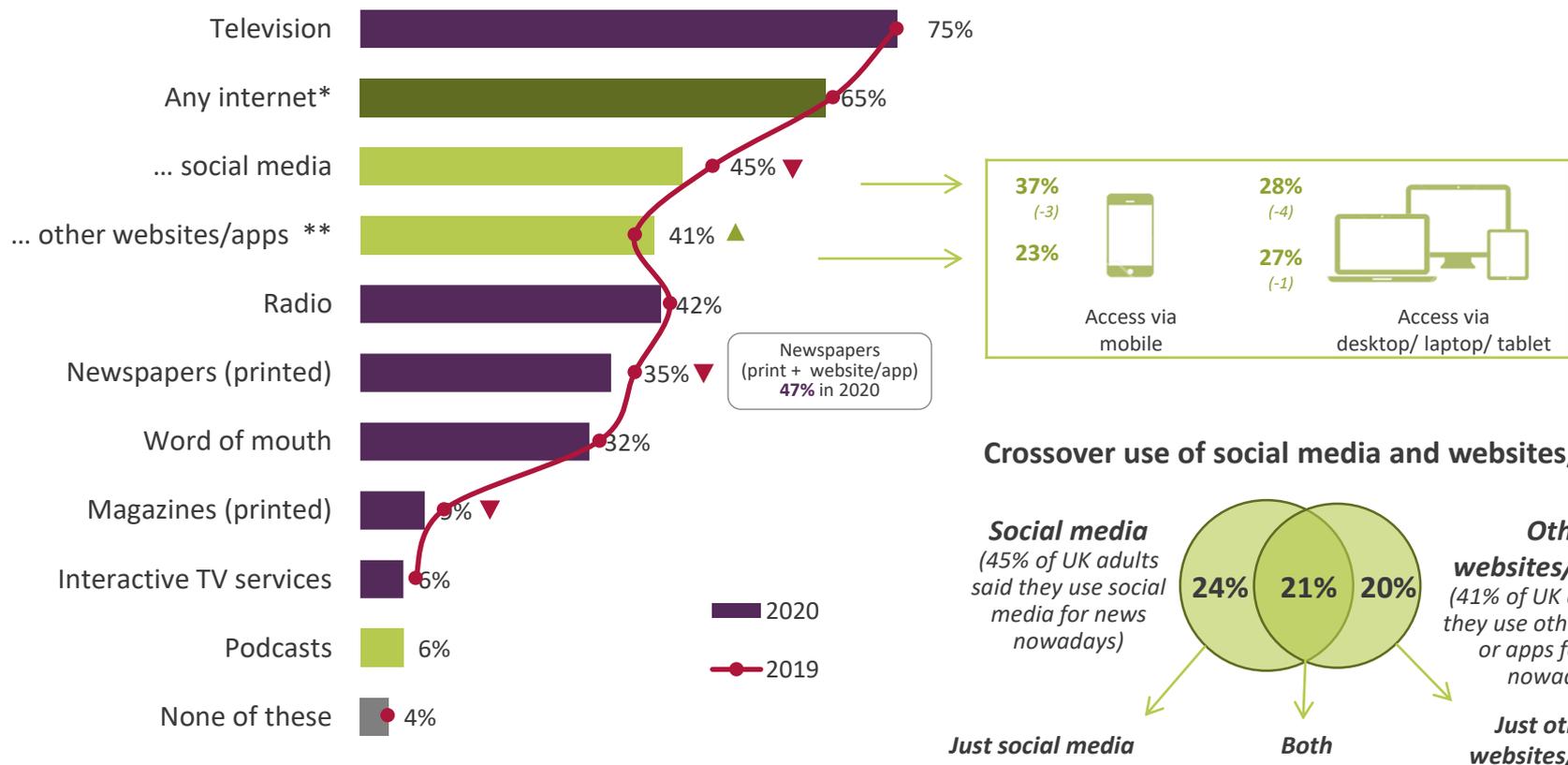
(NB: A question on podcasts was included for the first time in the 2020 research)

Compared to last year, fewer adults claim to use social media (a return to levels seen in 2018), magazines and newspapers for news

**Figure 2.5**

**All platforms used for news nowadays - 2020**

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All Adults 16+ - 2020=4576, 2019=4691

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

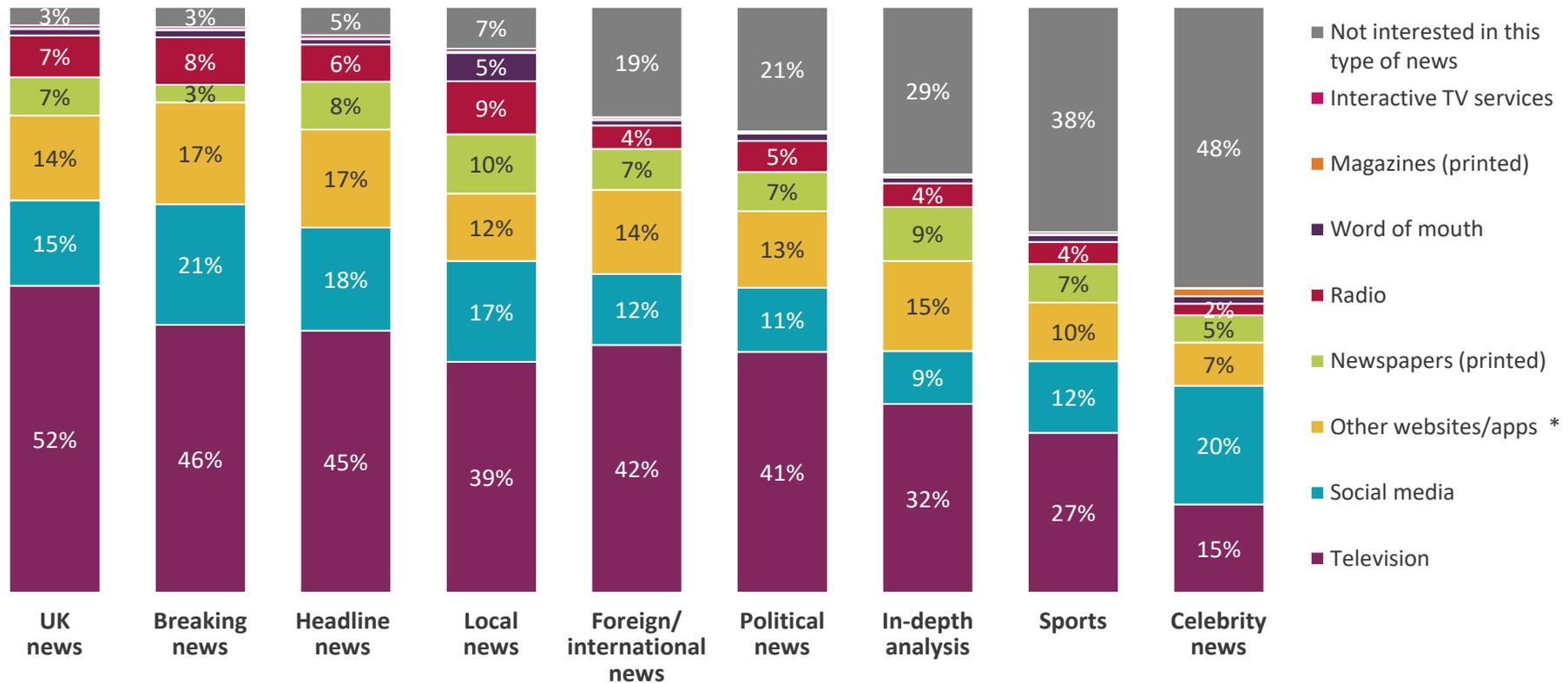
\*\*other websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source (including podcasts for the first time in 2020)

TV remains the most-used platform for all types of news content. The only exception is celebrity news, where social media is used most often

**Figure 2.6**

Platforms used most often for different types of news content – 2020

All adults 16+ who follow news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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 2020 – Total=4379

\*Other websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source (and includes podcasts in 2020)

# Cross-platform news consumption

BBC One remains the most-used news source across platforms, although use has decreased since 2018. Use of Google (search) for news has decreased since last year, whilst use of Metro has increased

**Figure 3.1**

Top 20 news sources

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

	2020	2019	2018
<b>TV channel</b>			
BBC One	56%	58%	62%
ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	41%	40%	41%
<b>Newspaper (print + website/app)</b>			
Facebook	34%	35%	33%
Sky News channel	25%	23%	24%
BBC website/app	23%	25%	23%
BBC News channel	21%	23%	26%
<b>Radio station</b>			
Channel 4	18%	17%	18%
<b>Social media</b>			
Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday	17%	18%	18%
Twitter	17%	16%	14%
Google (search engine)	15% ▼	19%	17%
Instagram	14%	13%	9%
WhatsApp	13%	14%	10%
BBC Radio 2	12%	12%	12%
BBC Two	11%	11%	14%
<b>Other website/app</b>			
Metro	11% ▲	9%	10%
The Sun/Sun on Sunday	10%	11%	11%
The Guardian/Observer	10%	11%	11%
BBC Radio 1	9%	9%	9%
Local newspapers	9%	10%	11%
BBC Radio 4	9%	9%	10%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ – 2020=4576, 2019=4691, 2018=4618

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

**Figure 3.2**  
 Top 20 news sources 2020 - by demographic group  
*% of all adults 16+ using each source for news nowadays*

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC One	56%	56%	56%	34%	77%	58%	54%	43%	58%
ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	41%	38%	44%	25%	49%	37%	46%	26%	44%
Facebook	34%	30%	39%	47%	14%	34%	36%	37%	34%
Sky News channel	25%	28%	22%	16%	25%	27%	22%	31%	24%
BBC website/app	23%	26%	21%	22%	20%	29%	17%	25%	23%
BBC News channel	21%	23%	19%	13%	27%	25%	17%	26%	20%
Channel 4	18%	18%	18%	13%	18%	19%	16%	21%	17%
Daily Mail/on Sunday (print + website/app)	17%	16%	18%	13%	28%	19%	15%	15%	17%
Twitter	17%	18%	15%	33%	5%	18%	15%	24%	15%
Google (search engine)	15%	16%	15%	18%	11%	18%	12%	19%	15%
Instagram	14%	13%	16%	36%	1%	15%	13%	28%	12%
WhatsApp	13%	14%	13%	23%	4%	15%	12%	30%	10%
BBC Radio 2	12%	13%	12%	5%	14%	13%	11%	6%	14%
BBC Two	11%	12%	10%	7%	17%	12%	9%	9%	11%
Metro (print + website/app)	11%	11%	10%	8%	7%	11%	10%	19%	9%
The Sun/on Sunday (print + website/app)	10%	11%	9%	7%	9%	8%	14%	9%	11%
The Guardian/Observer (print + website/app)	10%	12%	9%	11%	7%	15%	6%	17%	9%
BBC Radio 1	9%	9%	9%	12%	2%	9%	9%	13%	8%
Local newspaper (daily/weekly + website/app)	9%	9%	9%	3%	16%	9%	8%	3%	10%
BBC Radio 4	9%	10%	7%	2%	17%	11%	6%	5%	9%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ 2020 - Total=4576, Male=2153, Female=2420, 16-24=726, 65+=911, ABC1=2505, C2DE=2066, minority ethnic groups=676, White=3889

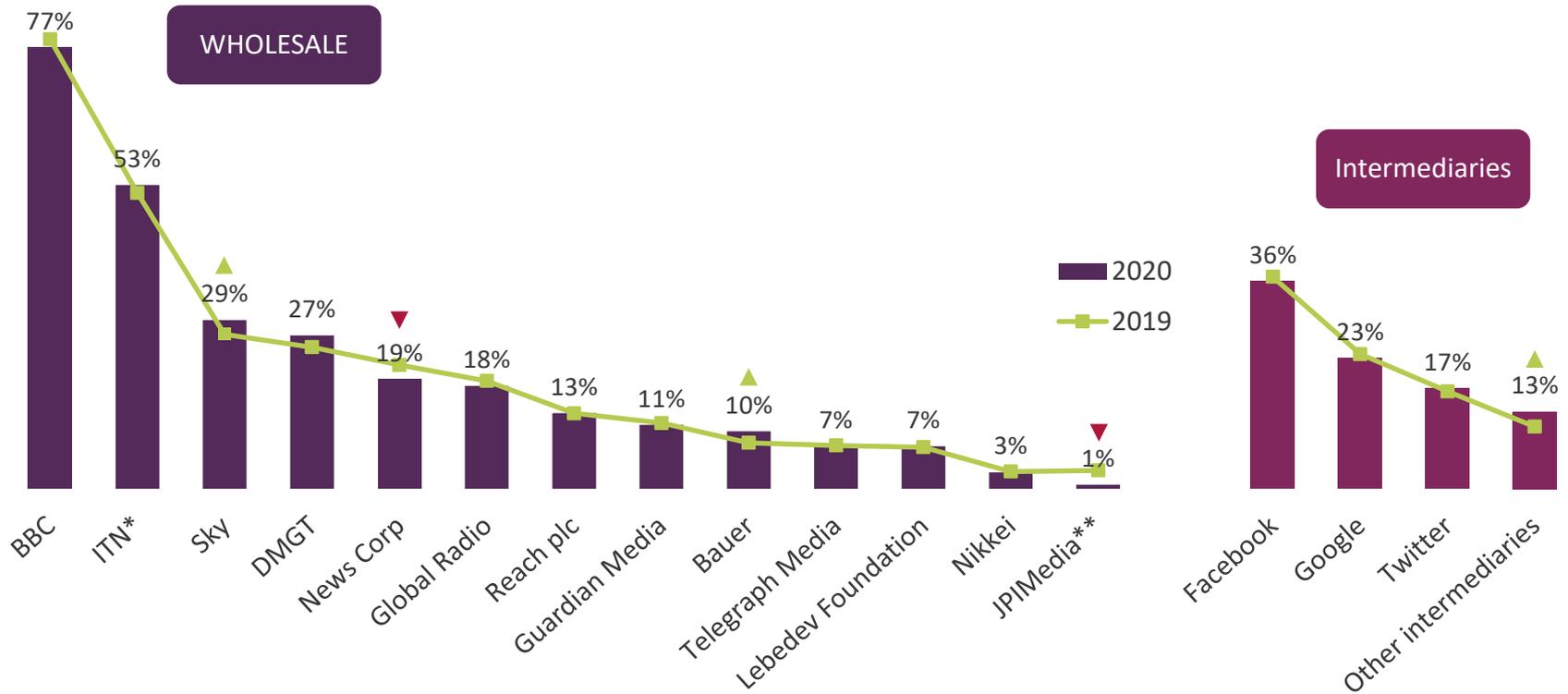
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

# The reach of News Corp and JPIMedia have declined, whilst Sky, Bauer and 'other intermediary' have increased

## Figure 3.3

### Cross-platform wholesale providers used for news nowadays

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



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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 – 2020=4350, 2019=4481

NOTE: 'Google' = Google News + Google + YouTube. 'Other intermediary' includes MSN, Yahoo, Apple news, Upday. We distinguish between retail news provision (the individual title or brand of each news source that provides content to the user e.g. ITV News) and wholesale news provision (the supply and production of the news for a retail news source e.g. ITN).

\*In some circumstances, ITV is also a wholesale provider and is included in ITN. The information included in this chart is based on the most up to date information we have.

\*\*JPIMedia no longer includes the 'i' newspaper in 2020

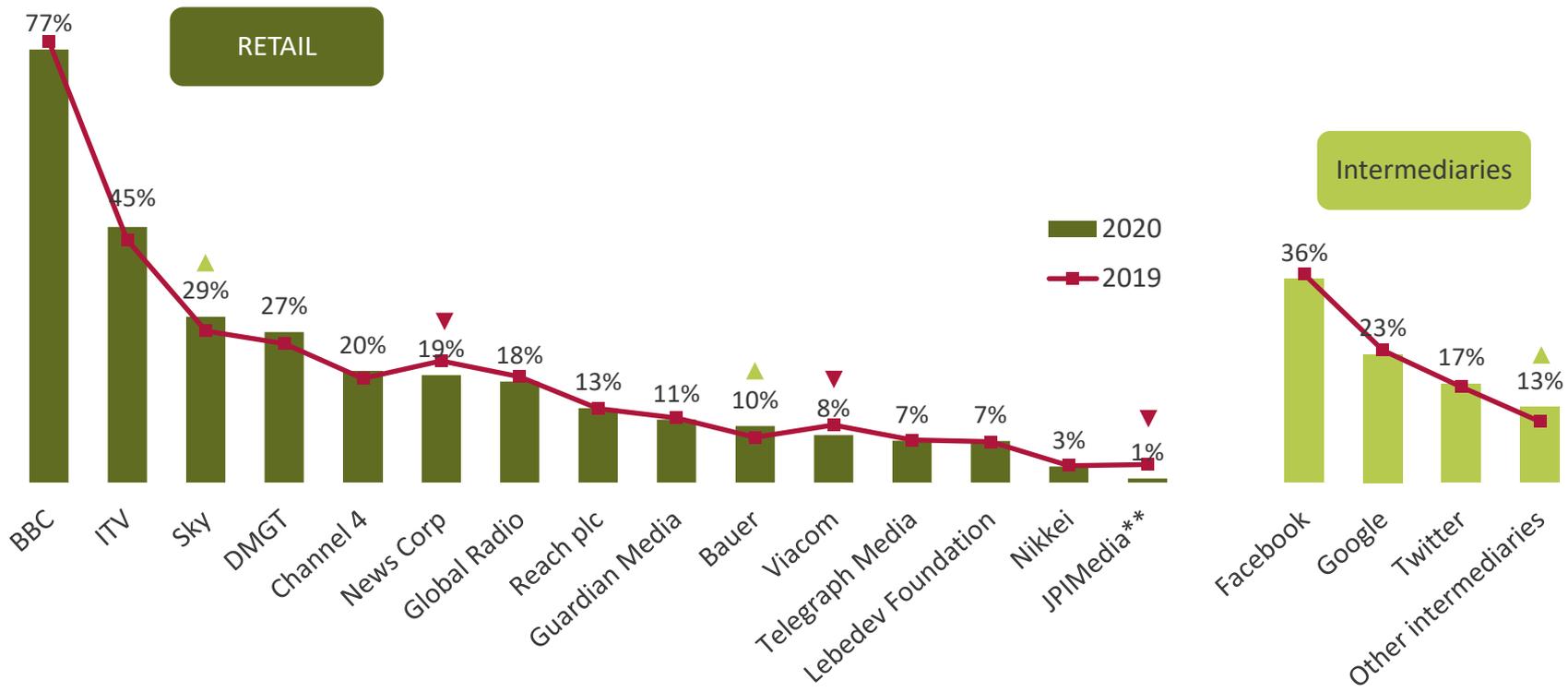
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

# The same trends are observed at the retail level

## 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 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 – 2020=4350, 2019=4481  
 NOTE: 'Google' = Google News + Google + YouTube. 'Other intermediary' includes MSN, Yahoo, Apple news, Upday. We distinguish between retail news provision (the individual title or brand of each news source that provides content to the user e.g. ITV News) and wholesale news provision (the supply and production of the news for a retail news source e.g. ITN).  
 The information included in this chart is based on the most up to date information we have.  
 \*\*JPIMedia no longer includes the 'i' newspaper in 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

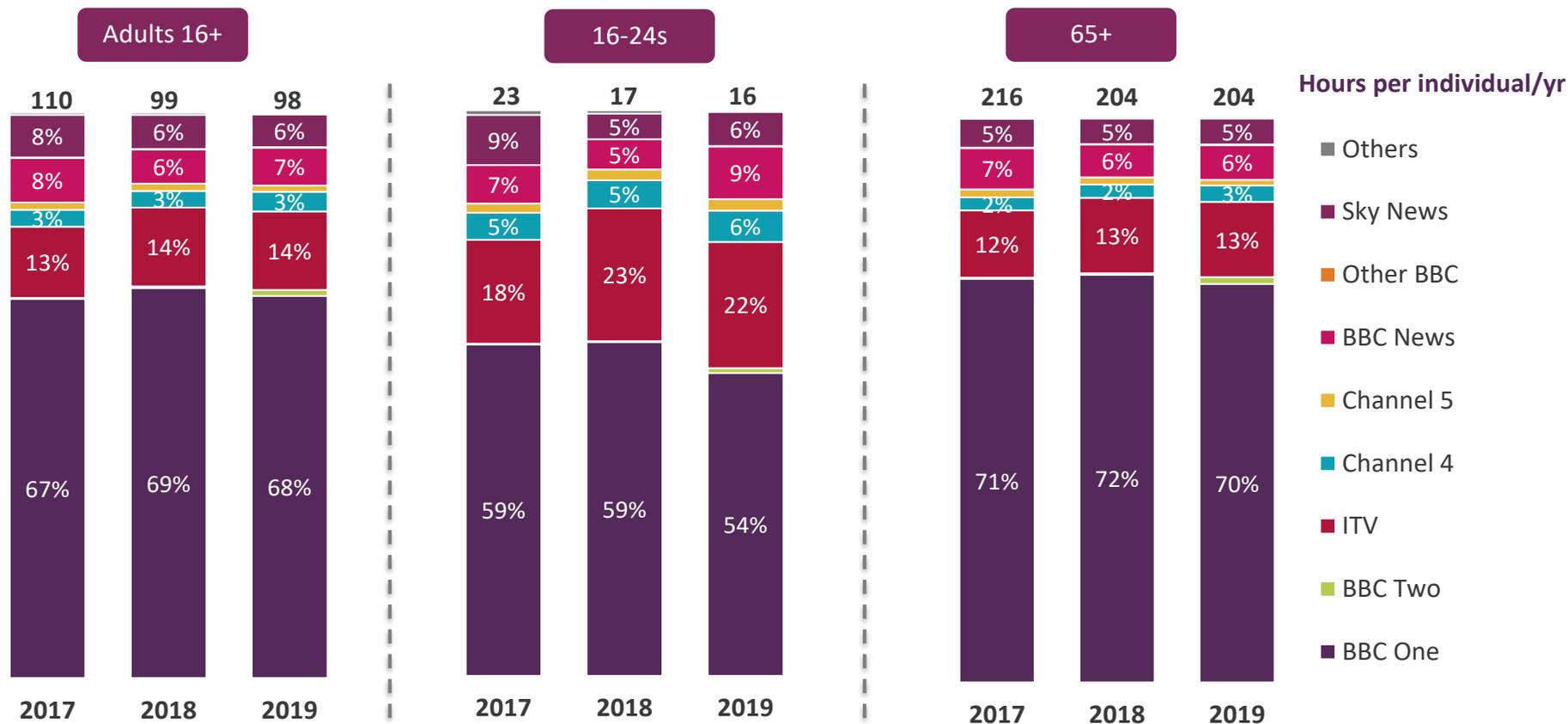
# News consumption via television

(75% of all UK adults)

Overall, adults watched an average of 98 hours in 2019, with a majority of this news viewing through BBC One. Those aged 65+ spent much more time watching news than 16-24s (204 hours vs. 16 hours for 16-24s in 2019)

**Figure 4.1**

Proportion of national/international news viewing hours by channel group – 2017-19



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

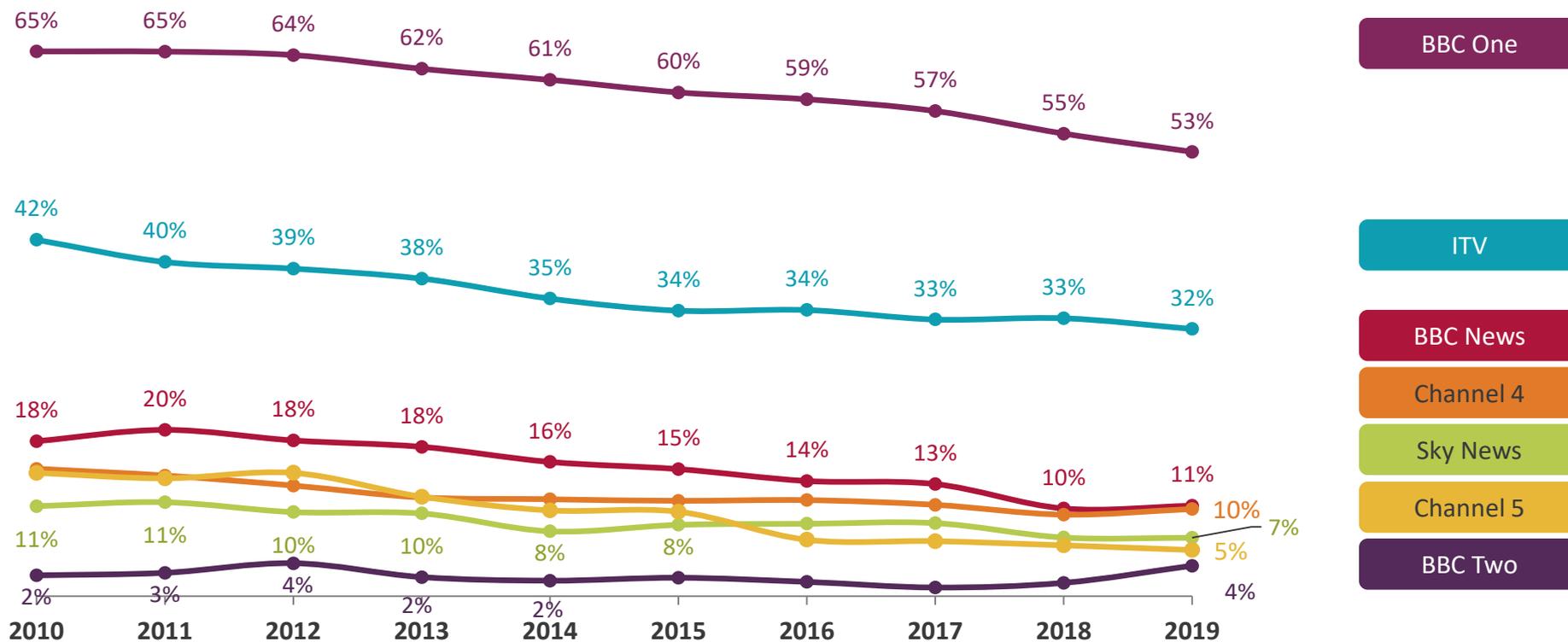
Channels include their HD and +1 variants. Others = all other channels that showed national/international news that are not any of the listed channels above.

On average, 53% of adults in the UK watched news on BBC One each week in 2019, the highest reach of all channels. However, this represents a 12 percentage point decrease since 2010

**Figure 4.2**

Average weekly reach of national/international news by channel - 2010 to 2019

All adults 16+



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

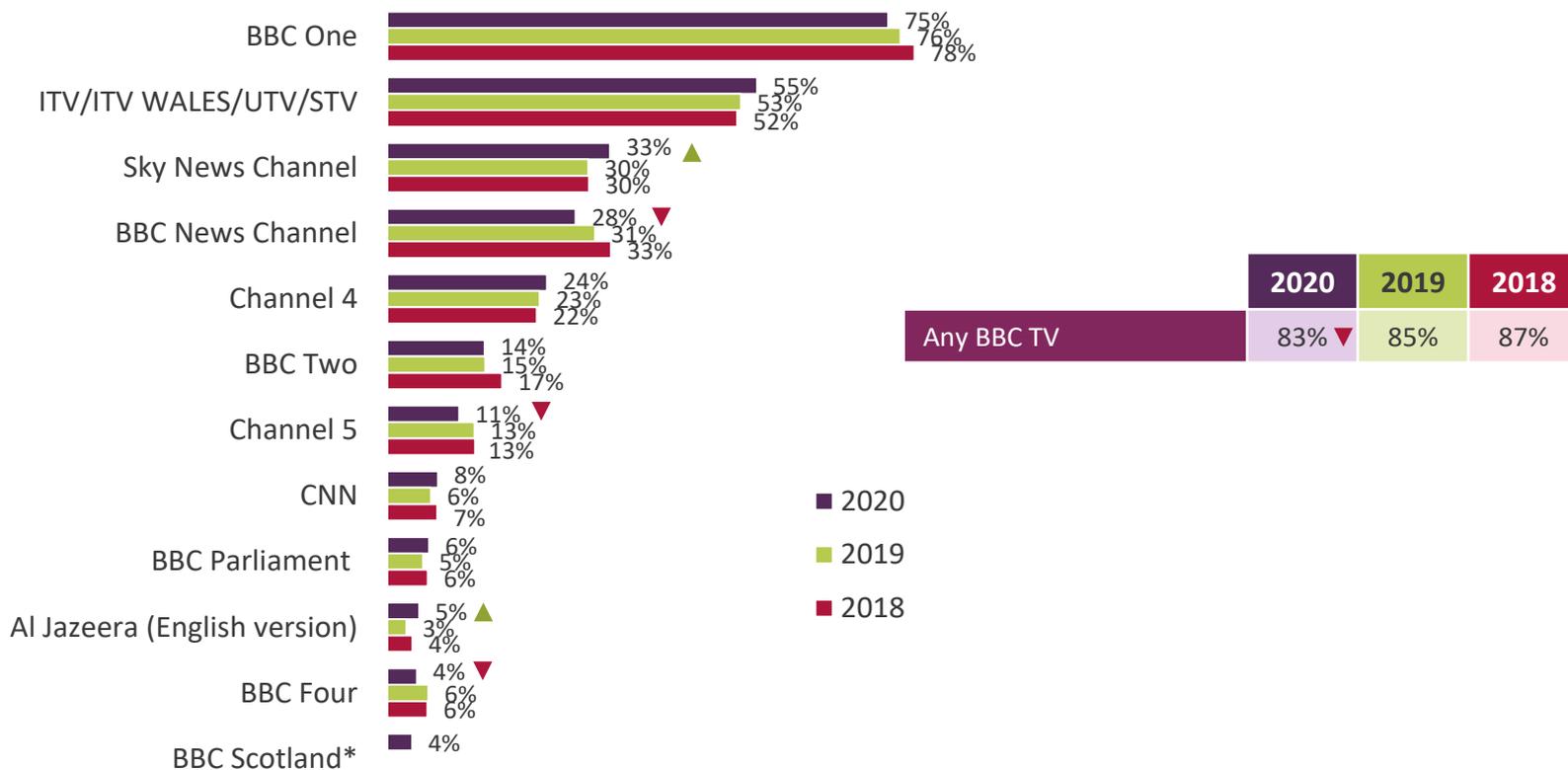
Channels include their HD and +1 variants. Reach criteria = 3 consecutive minutes. Full weeks used for the correct calculation of weekly averages

BBC One remains the most-used channel for news, followed by ITV. Use of Sky News has increased this year amongst those who watch TV for news and it is now the third most watched TV channel for news

**Figure 4.3**

**TV channels used for news nowadays**

*All using TV for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey

2020 Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All using TV for news – 2020=3456, 2019=3556, 2018=3731

Only sources with an incidence of >2% in 2020 are shown

\*BBC Scotland new this year. Figure may be inflated due to survey respondent confusion about BBC Scotland branding

Males, ABC1s and those from minority ethnic groups are more likely than females, C2DEs and white adults to use most TV sources except in the case of ITV, where the opposite is true

**Figure 4.4**

TV channels used for news nowadays 2020 - by demographic group

*All using TV for news*

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC One	75%	75%	74%	68%	84%	77%	72%	66%	76%
ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	55%	51%	58%	51%	53%	50%	61%	40%	57%
Sky News Channel	33%	37%	29%	33%	27%	36%	29%	48%	31%
BBC News Channel	28%	31%	26%	27%	29%	33%	22%	39%	26%
Channel 4	24%	24%	24%	27%	20%	26%	21%	32%	23%
BBC Two	14%	16%	13%	14%	18%	16%	13%	13%	15%
Channel 5	11%	11%	10%	9%	8%	10%	12%	14%	10%
CNN	8%	9%	6%	9%	5%	10%	5%	22%	5%
BBC Parliament	6%	8%	4%	8%	6%	8%	5%	8%	6%
Al Jazeera (English version)	5%	7%	2%	3%	4%	6%	3%	11%	4%
BBC Four	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	9%	4%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All using TV for news 2020 - Total=3456, Male=1644, Female=1810, 16-24=387, 65+=831, ABC1=1886, C2DE=1568, minority ethnic groups=462, White=2988

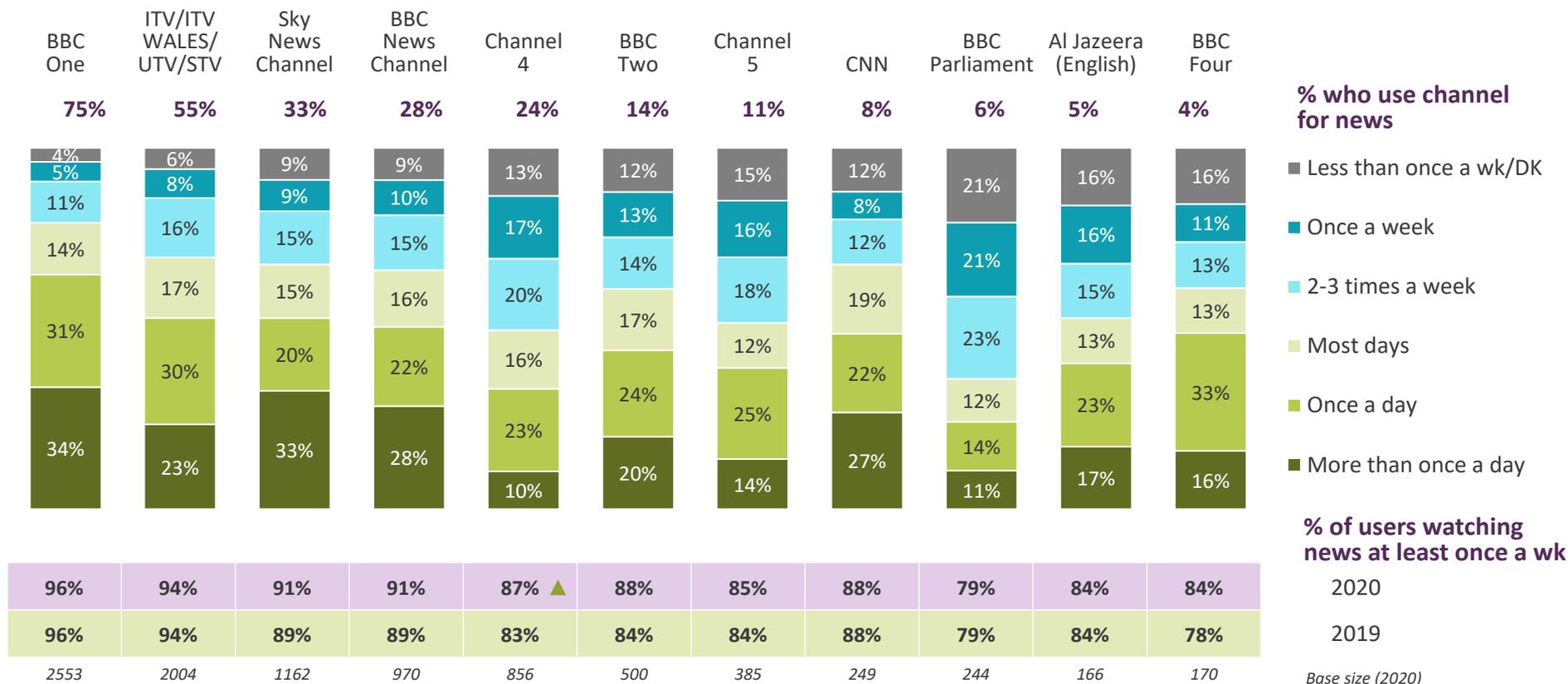
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of >2% in 2020 are shown.

# BBC One is used most frequently for news. The percentage of those using Channel 4 at least once a week for news returns to 2018 levels

**Figure 4.5**

## Frequency of consumption for main TV channels - 2020

All using each source for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All who use each source for news 2020 (bases shown above, only sources used by 100+ respondents included)

# News consumption via radio

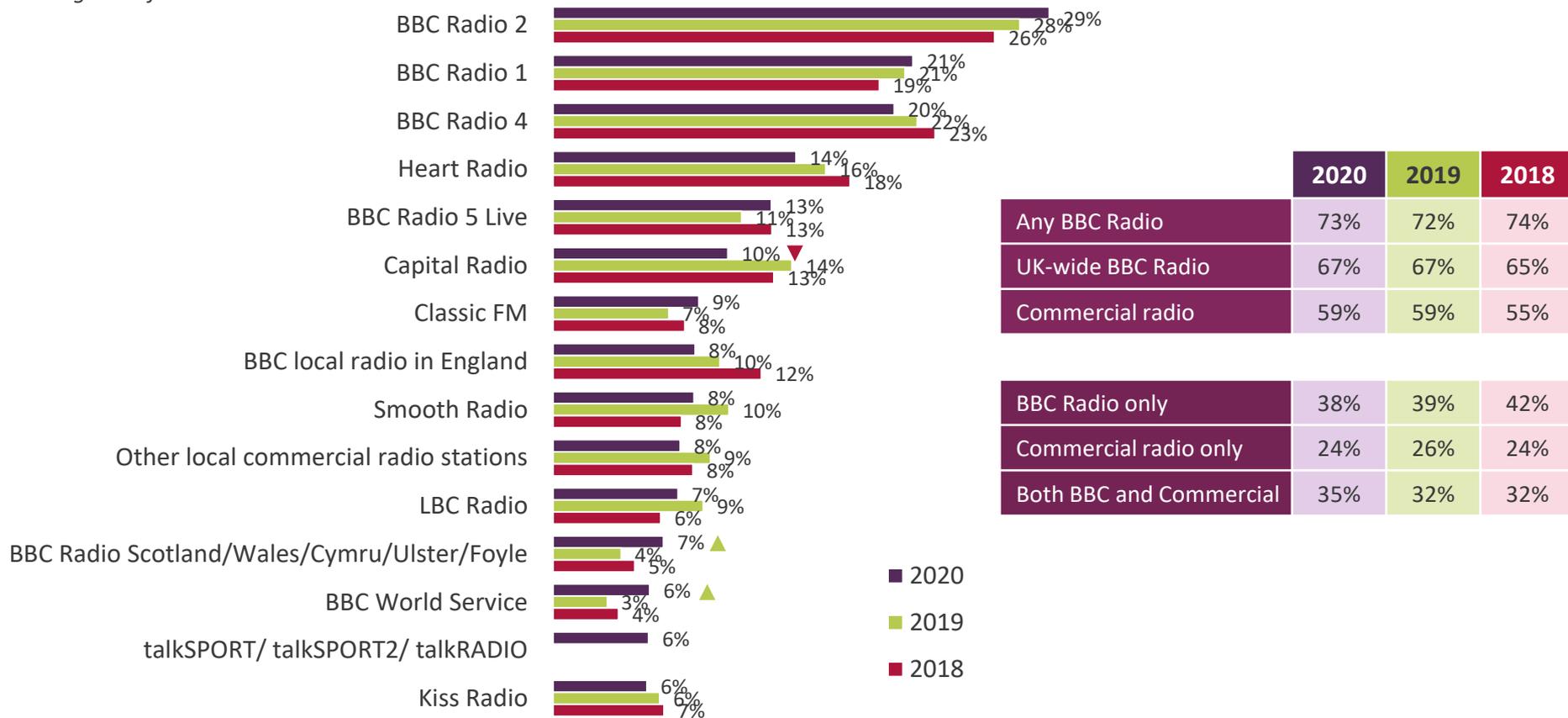
(42% of all UK adults)

Among the 42% of adults that use radio for news, three quarters (73%) claim to use a BBC station. BBC Radio 2, 1 and 4 continue to be the most used stations for news

**Figure 5.1**

Radio stations used for news nowadays

All using radio for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All using radio for news – 2020=1975, 2019=2043, 2018=2096. Only sources with an incidence of >5% in 2020 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.

People from minority ethnic groups are more much more likely than white adults to use BBC Radio 1 and LBC in particular. 16-24s are more likely to use Radio 1, Capital, Heart and Kiss, whereas those aged 65+ use BBC Radio 2, 4, local and Classic FM

**Figure 5.2**

Radio stations used for news nowadays 2020 - by demographic group

All using radio for news

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC Radio 2	29%	32%	27%	19%	29%	30%	29%	18%	31%
BBC Radio 1	21%	21%	21%	48%	5%	20%	23%	41%	19%
BBC Radio 4	20%	23%	17%	8%	35%	25%	14%	16%	21%
Heart Radio	14%	11%	18%	13%	5%	12%	17%	14%	14%
BBC Radio 5 Live	13%	20%	6%	9%	15%	15%	11%	16%	13%
Capital Radio	10%	9%	12%	27%	1%	10%	11%	16%	10%
Classic FM	9%	9%	8%	6%	13%	10%	7%	14%	8%
BBC local radio in England	8%	9%	8%	2%	18%	8%	9%	4%	9%
Smooth Radio	8%	9%	8%	4%	8%	7%	10%	8%	8%
Other local commercial stations	8%	6%	9%	3%	7%	6%	10%	4%	8%
LBC Radio	7%	10%	5%	4%	5%	8%	7%	21%	6%
BBC Radio Scotland/Wales/Ulster	7%	7%	6%	9%	8%	6%	7%	8%	6%
BBC World Service	6%	7%	5%	4%	7%	8%	3%	11%	5%
talkSPORT/ talkSPORT2/ talkRADIO	6%	10%	1%	5%	2%	6%	5%	8%	5%
Kiss Radio	6%	5%	6%	13%	0%	5%	6%	11%	5%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All using radio for news 2020 - Total=1975, Male=970, Female=1004, 16-24=192, 65+=438, ABC1=1163, C2DE=811, minority ethnic groups=225, White=1746

Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of >5% in 2020 are shown.

# News consumption via newspapers

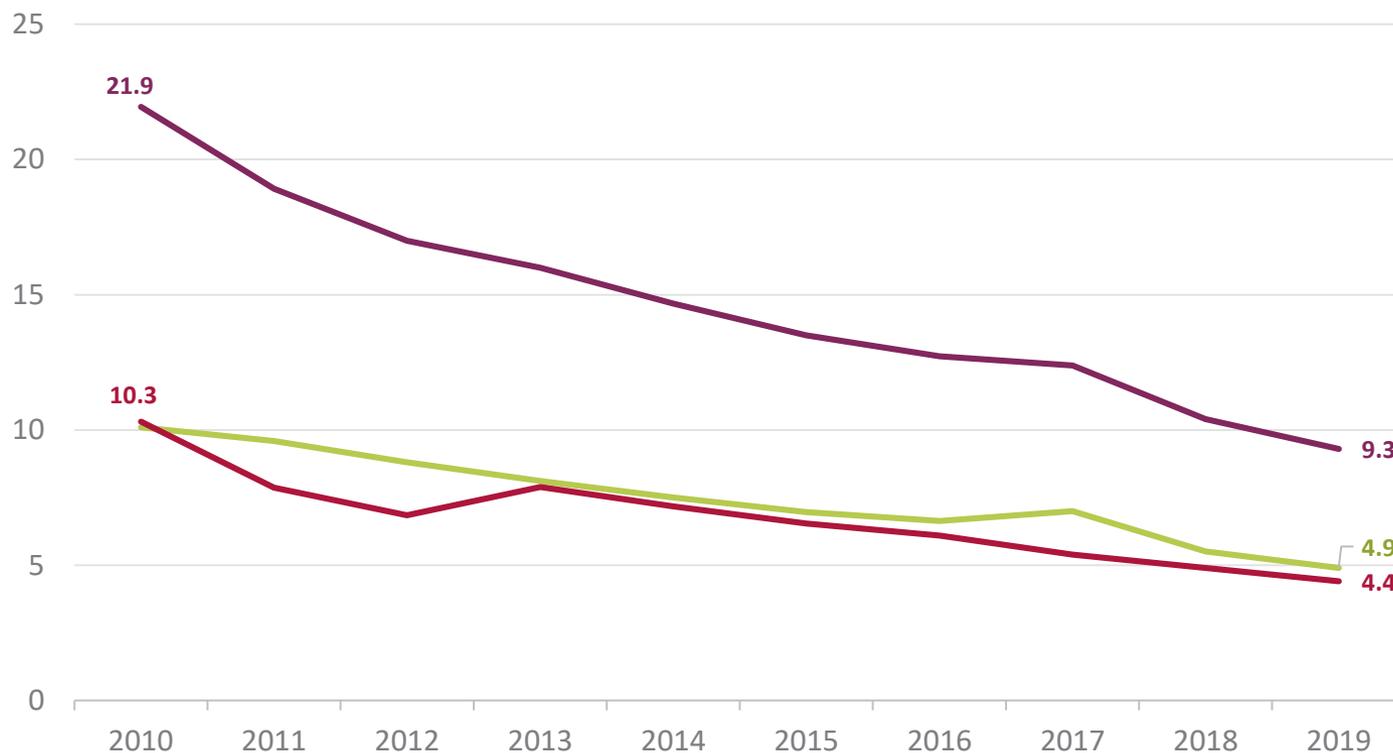
(Print: 35% of all UK adults; print and digital: 47% of all adults)

# Circulation of national newspaper titles has decreased from nearly 22 million in 2010 to 9.3 million in 2019

## Figure 6.1

### Circulation trends for national newspaper titles - 2010 to 2019

Average UK net circulation (million)



Total Market

National Daily titles

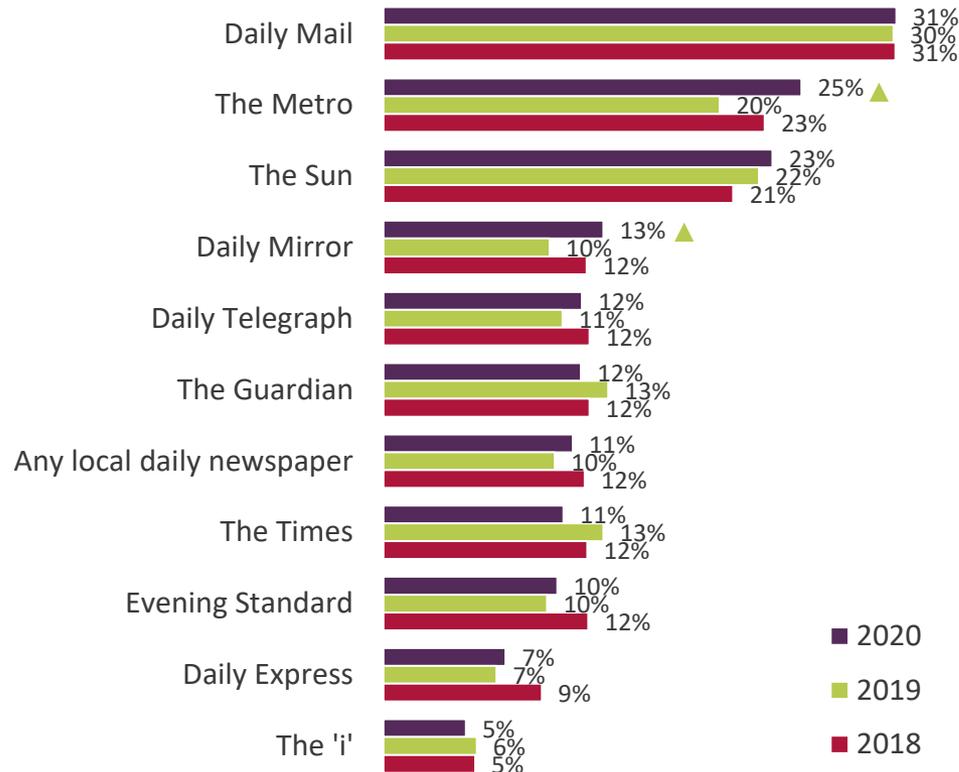
National Sunday titles

# Among the third (35%) of adults who claim to consume news through print newspapers, the Daily Mail remains the most-used daily title followed by The Metro and The Sun

**Figure 6.2**

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

All using printed newspapers for news



In total, **27%** (23% in 2019) of print newspaper readers used **daily 'free-sheets'**

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All using print newspapers for news – 2020=1594, 2019=1741, 2018=1847

Only sources with an incidence of 5%+ in 2020 are shown

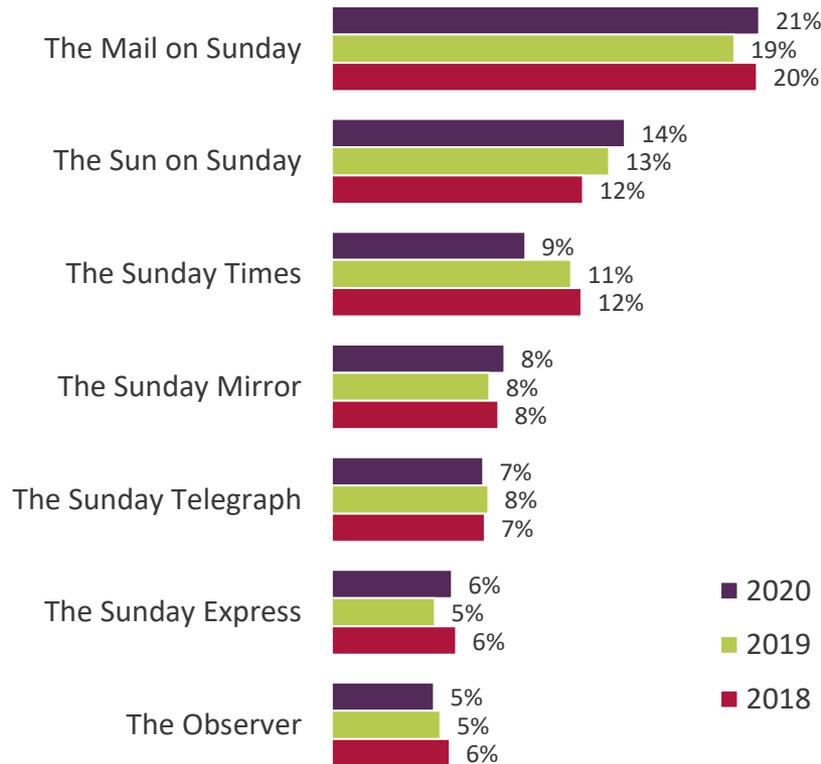
Note: Daily free-sheets are the Metro and the Evening Standard

# The Mail on Sunday remains the most read Sunday title, followed by The Sun on Sunday and The Sunday Times

**Figure 6.3**

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

All using printed newspapers for news



In total, **3%** (3% in 2019) of print newspaper readers used free local weekly newspapers

■ 2020  
■ 2019  
■ 2018

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All using print newspapers for news – 2020=1594, 2019=1741, 2018=1847

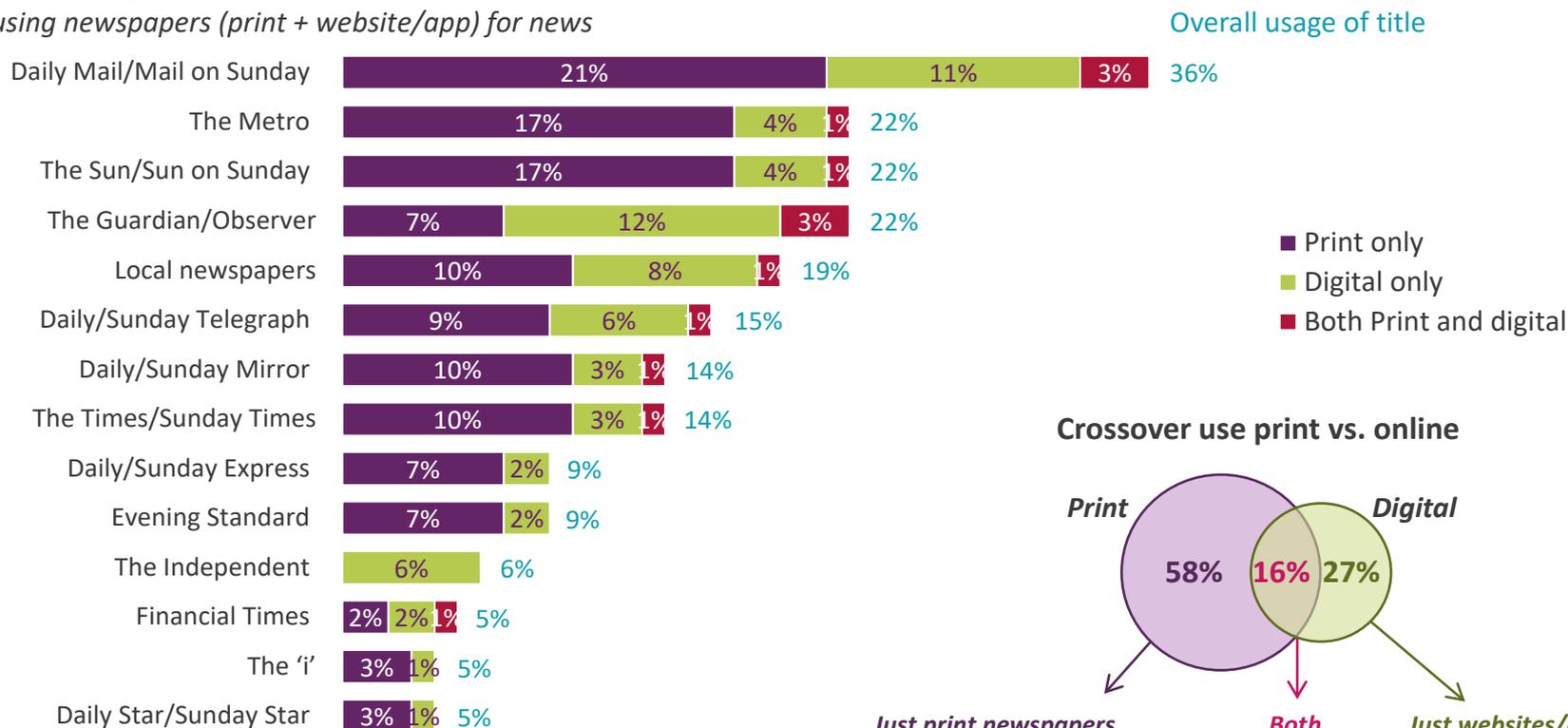
Only sources with an incidence of 5%+ in 2020 are shown

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

**Figure 6.4**

**Print vs. digital newspaper readership**

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



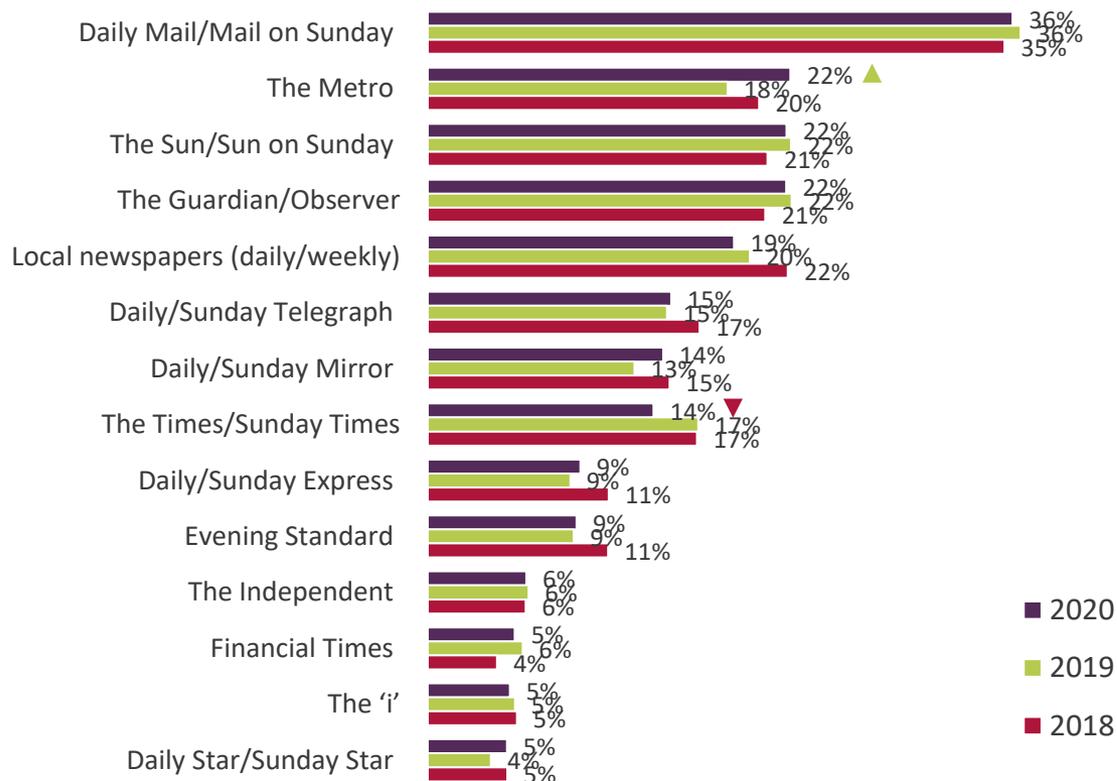
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020  
 Question: D3a/D4a. Thinking specifically about daily/weekly newspapers, which of the following do you use for news nowadays? D8a. Thinking specifically about the internet, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?  
 Base: All using newspapers (print + website/app) for news – 2020=2194  
 Only sources with an incidence of 5%+ are shown

Among the half (47%) of adults who claim to consume news through print or online newspapers, Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday remains the most-used title/site/app followed by The Metro, The Sun/Sun on Sunday and The Guardian/Observer

**Figure 6.5**

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

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



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 – 2020=2194, 2019=2279, 2018=2341

Only sources with an incidence of 5%+ in 2020 are shown

# ABC1s are generally more likely to read more of the titles than C2DEs

**Figure 6.6**

Newspapers (print + website/app) used for news nowadays 2020

- 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	36%	32%	40%	36%	44%	37%	35%	29%	37%
The Metro	22%	23%	22%	22%	12%	22%	23%	38%	19%
The Sun/Sun on Sunday	22%	23%	21%	21%	15%	15%	32%	18%	23%
The Guardian/Observer	22%	24%	20%	32%	11%	28%	13%	33%	20%
Local newspapers (daily/weekly)	19%	19%	19%	9%	26%	18%	20%	6%	21%
Daily/Sunday Telegraph	15%	18%	12%	17%	16%	19%	9%	21%	14%
Daily/Sunday Mirror	14%	15%	13%	14%	10%	11%	19%	19%	14%
The Times/Sunday Times	14%	15%	12%	18%	14%	17%	10%	19%	13%
Daily/Sunday Express	9%	10%	9%	9%	13%	10%	9%	10%	9%
Evening Standard	9%	11%	7%	10%	4%	11%	7%	21%	7%
The Independent	6%	6%	6%	10%	2%	8%	4%	7%	6%
Financial Times	5%	7%	4%	13%	1%	7%	3%	14%	4%
The 'i'	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	7%	3%	6%	5%
Daily Star/Sunday Star	5%	5%	5%	7%	2%	4%	6%	7%	4%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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 + websites/apps) for news - Total=2194, Male=1098, Female=1095, 16-24=269, 65+=568, ABC1=1315, C2DE=876, minority ethnic groups=367, White=1821. Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of 3%+ in 2020 are shown.

# News consumption via social media

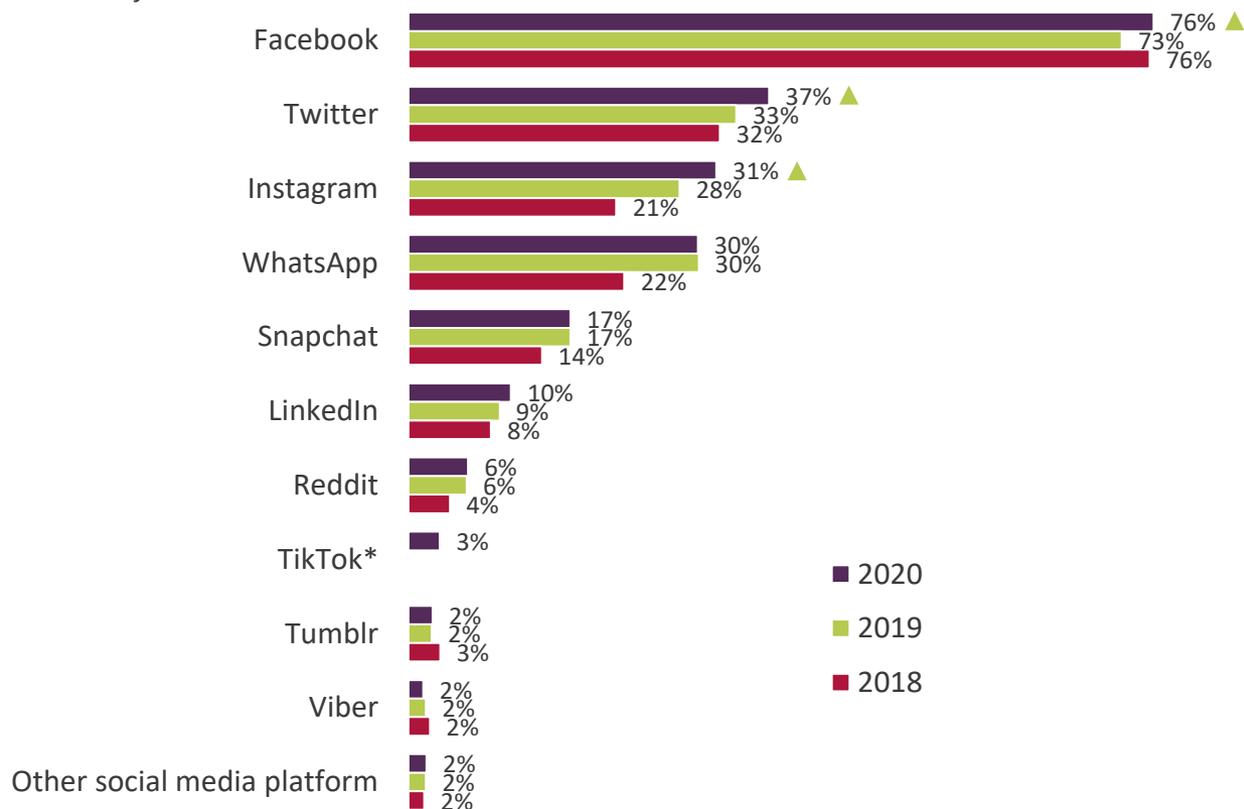
(45% of all UK adults)

Among the 45% of adults who consume news via social media, a greater proportion claim to get news via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram than in 2019

**Figure 7.1**

**Social media used for news nowadays**

*All using social media for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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 – 2020=2143, 2019=2331, 2018=2058

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

TikTok added in 2020

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

## Figure 7.2

### Social media used for news nowadays 2020 - by demographic group

*All using social media for news*

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
Facebook	76%	73%	79%	66%	77%	73%	79%	62%	80%
Twitter	37%	43%	32%	47%	28%	40%	33%	41%	36%
Instagram	31%	31%	32%	51%	8%	33%	30%	48%	27%
WhatsApp	30%	33%	27%	32%	22%	32%	26%	50%	24%
Snapchat	17%	14%	18%	41%	2%	16%	17%	32%	13%
LinkedIn	10%	11%	10%	10%	6%	15%	5%	17%	9%
Reddit	6%	9%	3%	14%	1%	8%	4%	9%	5%
TikTok	3%	3%	4%	7%	1%	3%	4%	8%	2%
Tumblr	2%	2%	3%	6%	0%	2%	3%	4%	2%
Viber	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%
Other social media platform	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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=2143, Male=916, Female=1224, 16-24=528, 65+=152, ABC1=1223, C2DE=917, minority ethnic groups=433, White=1704

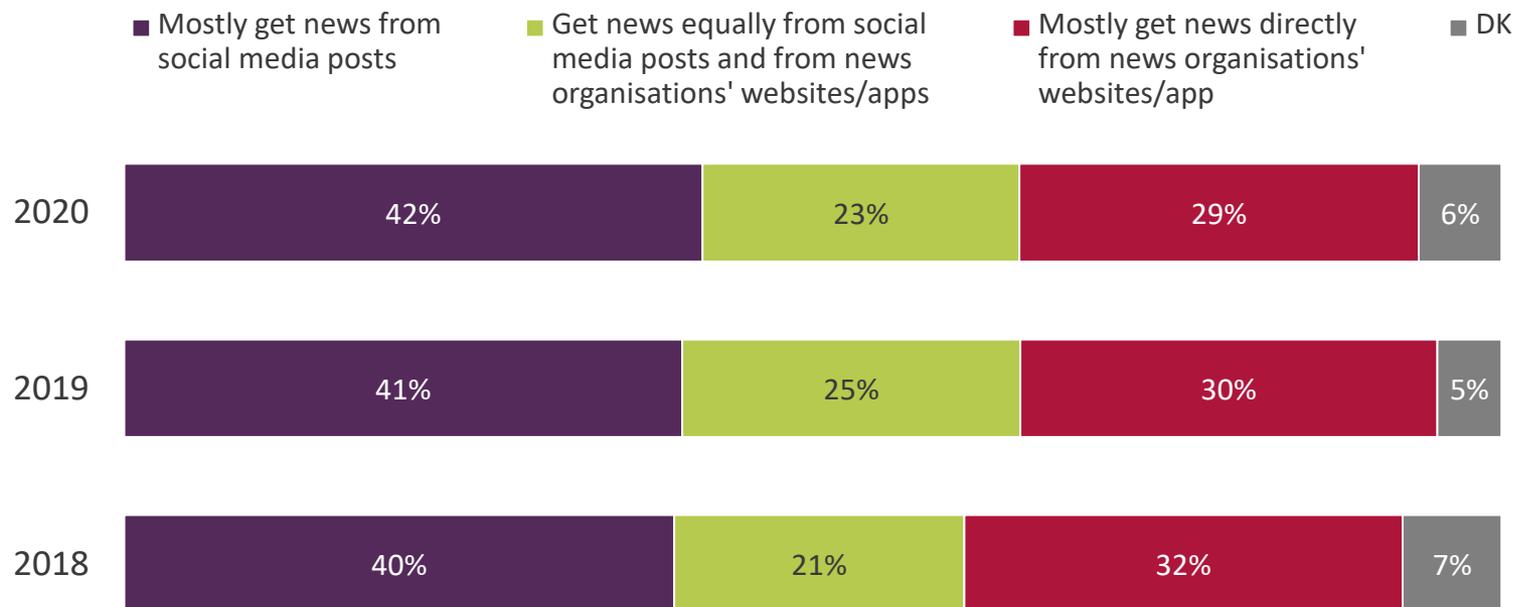
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

Those consuming news via social media remain more likely to get their online news from ‘posts’ rather than ‘directly from news organisations’ websites or apps’

### Figure 7.3

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

*All using social media for news*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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 – 2020=2143, 2019=2331, 2018=2058

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

16-24s and C2DEs are more likely to get their news mostly from social media posts than those aged 65+ and ABC1s. Those aged 65+ are more likely to get news directly from news organisations websites/apps

**Figure 7.4**

Use of social media versus news organisations' websites/apps 2020 - 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	42%	41%	43%	51%	17%	38%	48%	38%	44%
Get news equally from social media posts and from news organisations' websites/apps	23%	21%	24%	21%	29%	24%	21%	24%	22%
Mostly get news directly from news organisations' websites/app	29%	31%	27%	22%	42%	34%	23%	34%	27%
Don't know	6%	6%	6%	6%	12%	4%	9%	4%	7%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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=2143, Male=916, Female=1224, 16-24=528, 65+=152, ABC1=1223, C2DE=917, minority ethnic groups=433, White=1704

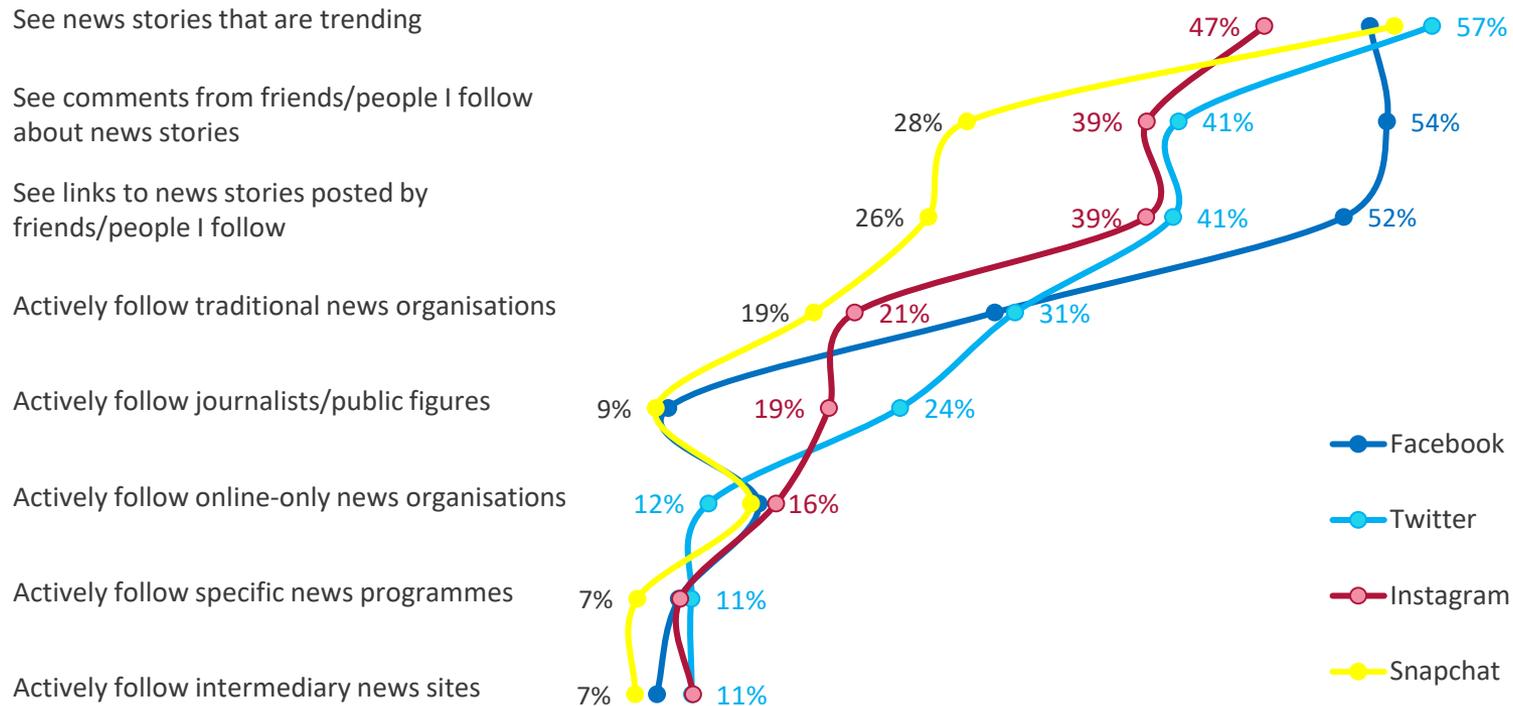
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

As in 2019, news on social media sites is most likely to be accessed via 'stories that are trending', or by 'seeing comments' and 'links to stories'

### Figure 7.5

#### How news is accessed via social media - 2020

All using each type of social media for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

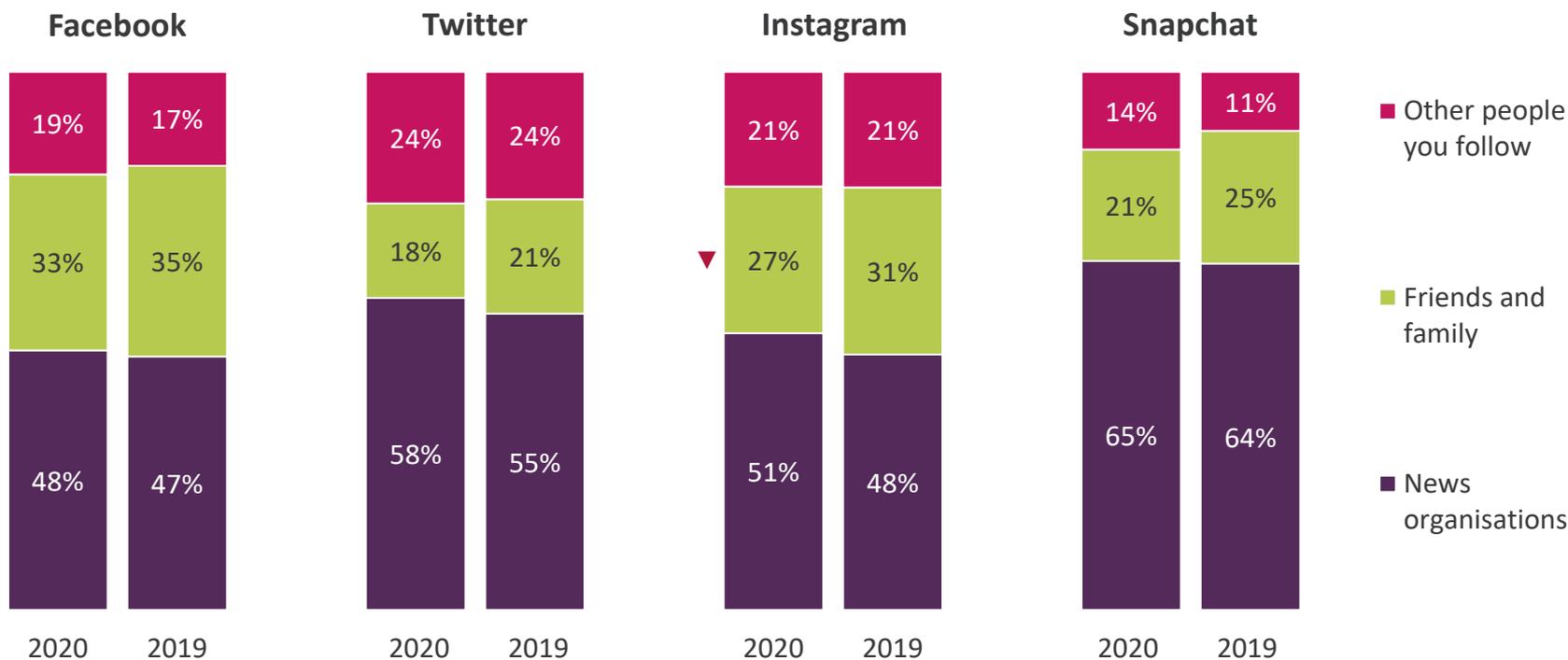
Base: All using each site for news 2020 – Facebook=1662, Twitter=823, Instagram=703, Snapchat=359

# On social media people are more likely to source their news stories 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 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 2020/2019 – Facebook=1650/1749, Twitter=816/826, Instagram=694/671, Snapchat=357/431

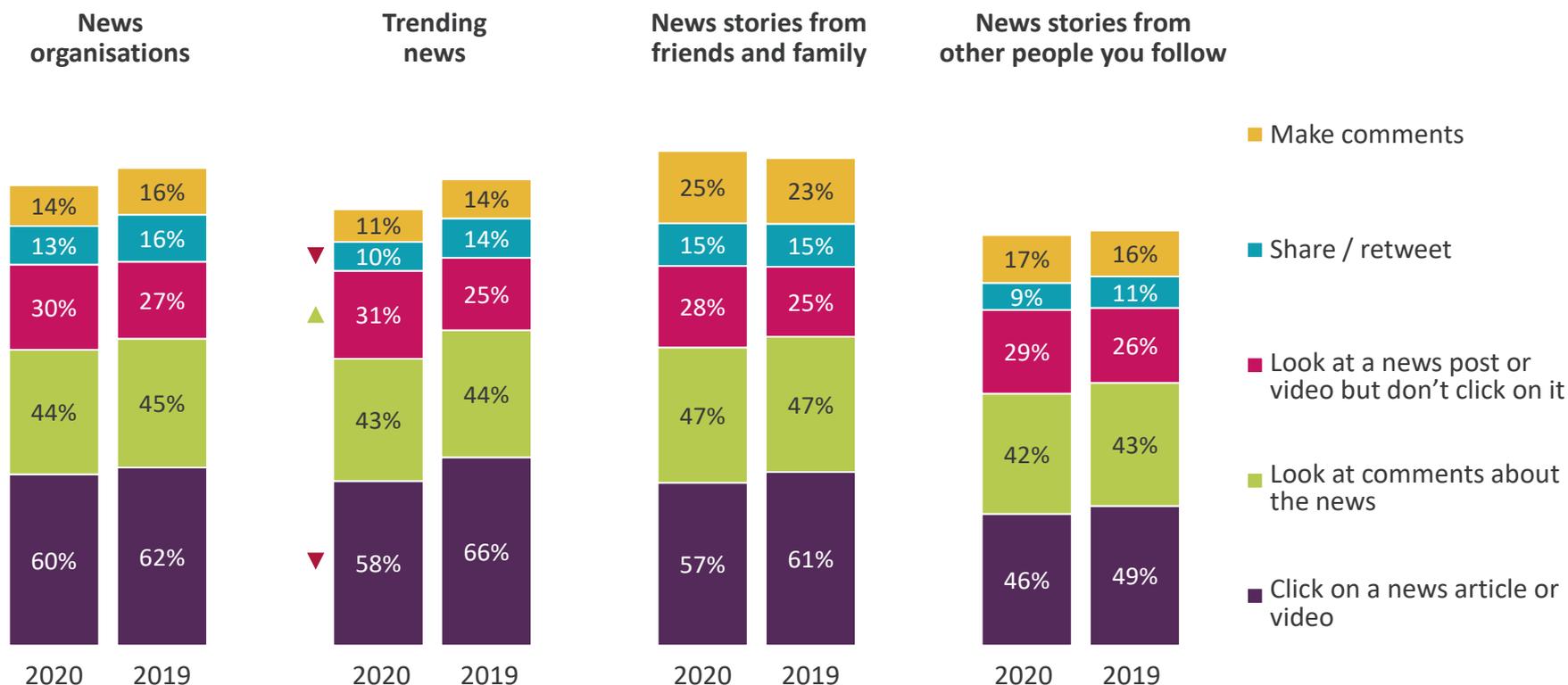
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

Facebook users are generally less engaged with the news compared to 2019. Smaller proportions are now 'clicking on news articles/ videos' or sharing compared to 2019 – especially notable for trending news

**Figure 7.7**

**Actions normally taken when accessing news on Facebook**

*All accessing news from each source on Facebook*



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

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

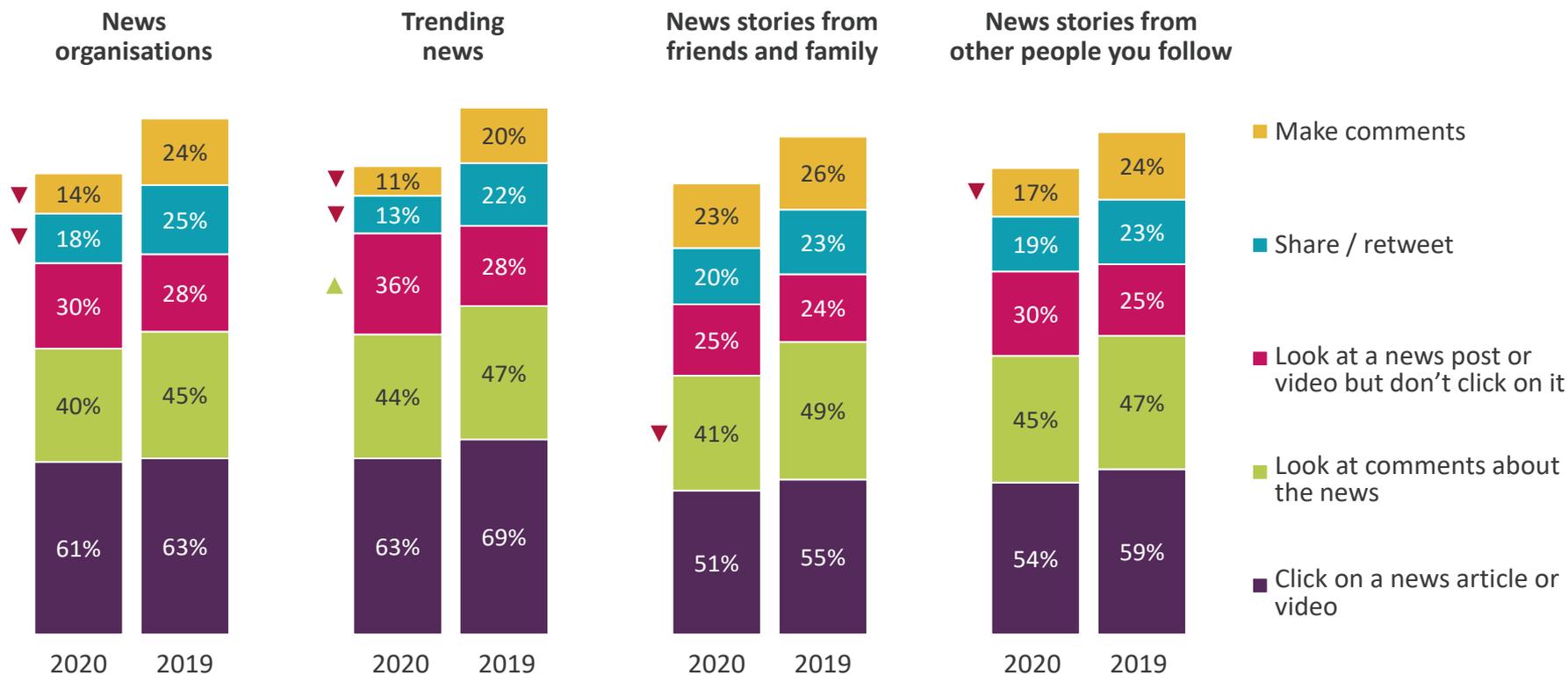
Base: All accessing news from each source via Facebook 2020/2019 – News organisations=764/857, Trending news=886/982, News stories from friends/family=1227/1315, News stories from other people you follow=1274/1367

Twitter users are also less engaged with the news compared to 2019. In particular, they're less likely to 'make comments' and 'retweet' compared to last year

**Figure 7.8**

Actions normally taken when accessing news on **Twitter**

All accessing news from each source on Twitter



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

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

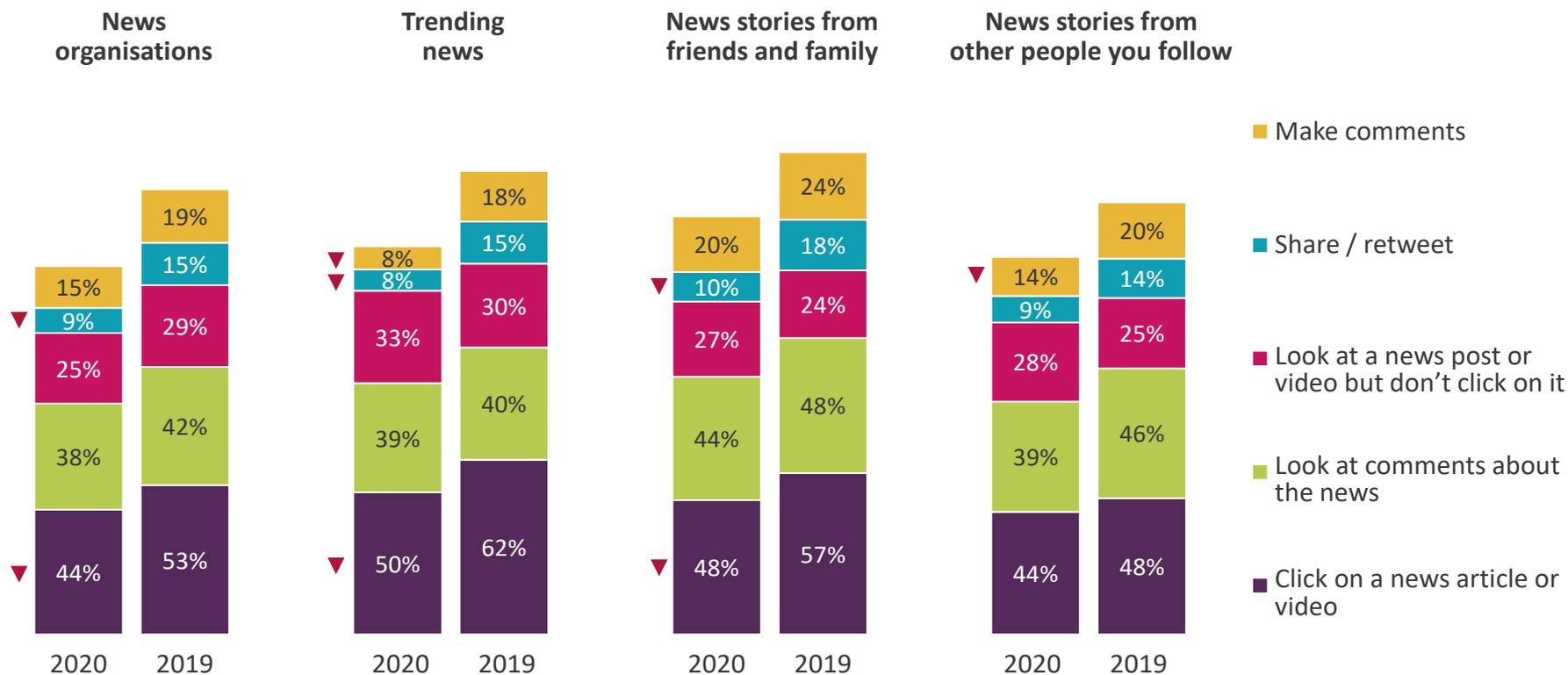
Base: All accessing news from each source via Twitter 2020/2019 – News organisations=445/476, Trending news=483/478, News stories from friends/family=480/511, News stories from other people you follow=546/582

Similar trends can also be observed amongst Instagram news users, with smaller proportions engaging with the news – especially ‘clicking on news articles/ videos’ and ‘sharing’

**Figure 7.9**

**Actions normally taken when accessing news on Instagram**

*All accessing news from each source on Instagram*



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

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

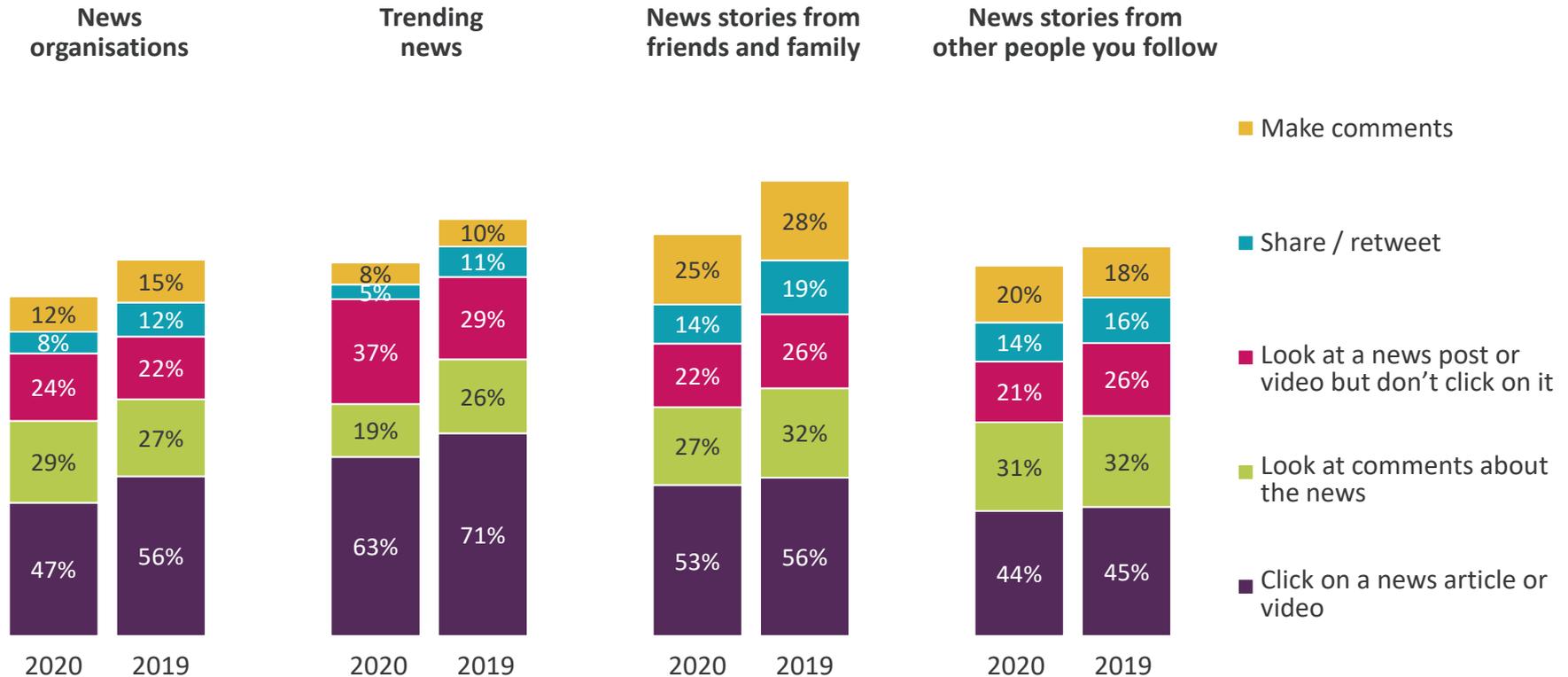
Base: All accessing news from each source via Instagram 2020/2019 – News organisations=347/346, Trending news=340/320, News stories from friends/family=413/419, News stories from other people you follow=464/478

# Those who use Snapchat for news appear to be most likely to click on news articles/videos about trending news

## Figure 7.10

### Actions normally taken when accessing news on Snapchat

All accessing news from each source on Snapchat



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

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 2020/2019 – News organisations=145/202, Trending news=197/253, News stories from friends/family=159/175, News stories from other people you follow=179/206

Note: Columns do not sum to 100% (this was a multi-code question)

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

**Figure 7.11**

News organisations followed on social media - 2020

All accessing news organisations via each type of social media

Facebook		Twitter		Instagram		Snapchat		YouTube	
BBC	52%	ANY Public figure	62% ▲	ANY Public figure	60% ▲	ANY Public figure	46%	ANY Public figure	32%
ANY Public figure	37%	ANY Journalist	50%	BBC	38%	BBC	33%	BBC	22%
ITV	24% ▲	BBC	50%	ANY Journalist	35%	ANY Journalist	29%	ANY Journalist	18%
ANY Journalist	23%	Sky News	25% ▼	Sky News	20%	BuzzFeed	28%	Sky News	11%
Sky News	22%	ITV	17%	ITV	18% ▲	The Daily Mail	21%		
The LADbible	20%	Guardian/Observer	12%	YouTube	18% ▲	The LADbible	20%		
BuzzFeed	20%	Channel 4	10%	BuzzFeed	16%	Sky News	17%		
The Daily Mail	18%			The LADbible	15%	ITV	16%		
YouTube	15%			The Daily Mail	11%	The Sun	14%		
The Sun	14% ▲			Channel 4	11%	YouTube	14%		
Channel 4	13% ▲			CNN	10%	Channel 4	12%		
The Metro	13% ▲					Vice	10%		
Guardian/Observer	12%					CNN	10%		
Huffington Post	10%								

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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=762, Twitter=444, Instagram=345, Snapchat=144, YouTube=364

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

As in previous years, 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**

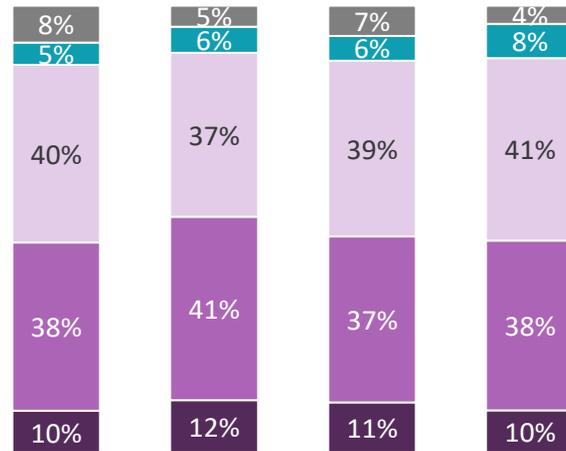
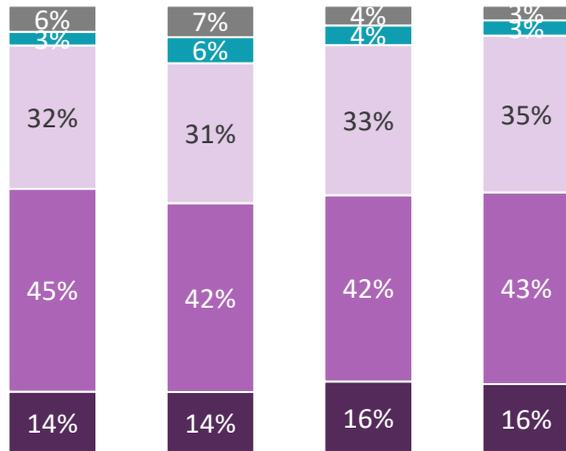
*All accessing news stories posted by friends/family or by other people via each type of social media*

**News stories posted by friends/ family on...**

**News stories posted by other people you follow on...**

Facebook Twitter Instagram Snapchat

Facebook Twitter Instagram Snapchat



- Don't know
- Never
- Some of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

Platform	2020	2019
Facebook	59%	58%
Twitter	56%	59%
Instagram	58%	54%
Snapchat	58%	57%

Platform	2020	2019
Facebook	47%	47%
Twitter	53%	59%
Instagram	48%	50%
Snapchat	48%	48%

**Most/all of the time**  
**2020**  
**2019**

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 2020/2019 - Family/friends on Facebook=1227/1315, Twitter=480/511, Instagram=413/419, Snapchat=159/175 ; Other people on Facebook=1274/1367, Twitter=546/582, Instagram=464/478, Snapchat=179/206

# News consumption via websites or apps\*

(41% of all UK adults)

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

Among the 41% of adults who look at online news other than social media, reading news stories online remains the most common way of accessing news, followed by using a search engine

**Figure 8.1**

**Ways to access news through the internet**

*All using other internet for news\**



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 – 2020=1757, 2019=1773, 2018=1661

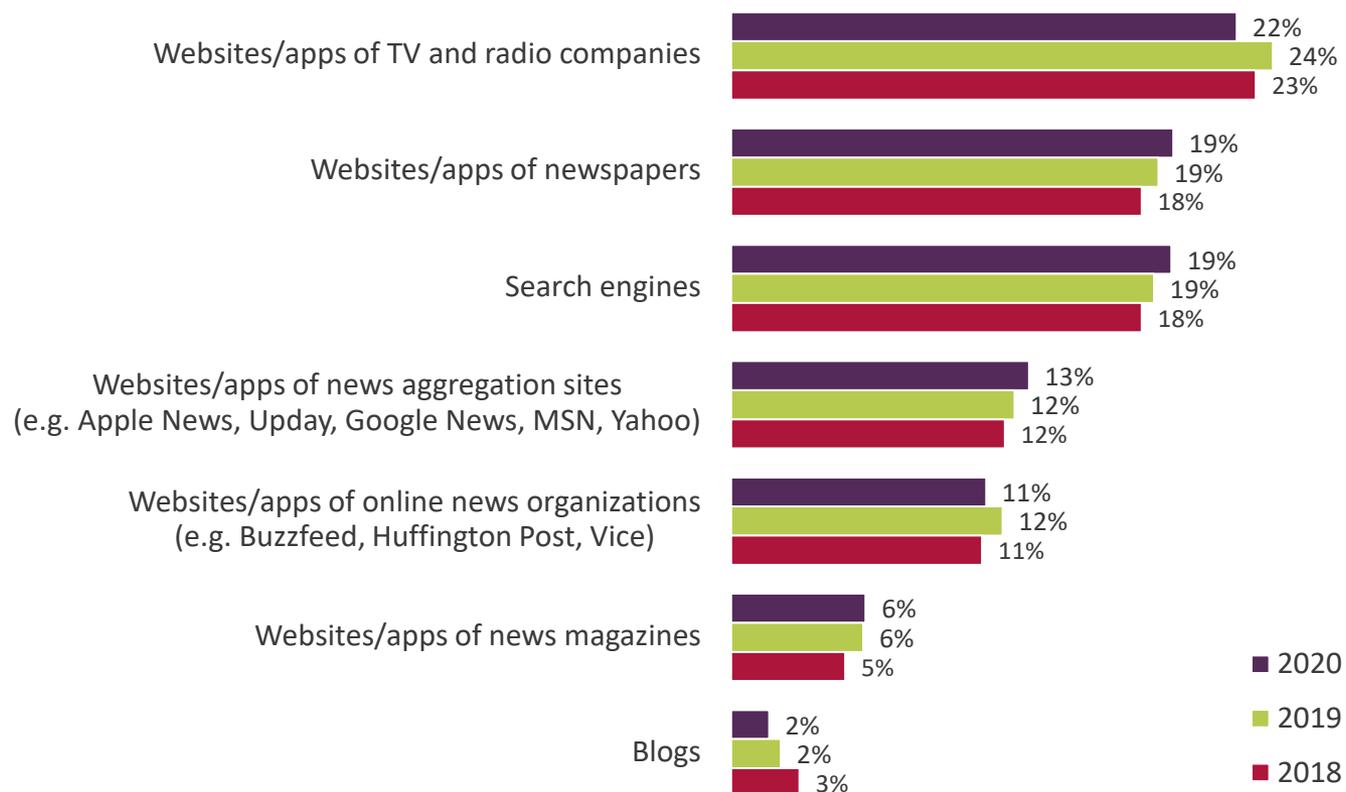
\*This question was not asked to those that said they used social media and no other types of websites/apps for news

# Websites/apps of TV and radio companies, websites/apps of newspapers and search engines are all used by one in five adults for news

**Figure 8.2**

Types of websites/apps used for news nowadays

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ – 2020=4576, 2019=4691, 2018=4618

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

ABC1s, people from minority ethnic groups and 16-24s tend to use a wider variety of types of online news sources nowadays compared to C2DEs, white people and those aged 65+

### Figure 8.3

Types of websites/apps used for news nowadays 2020 - 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	22%	24%	20%	21%	20%	27%	16%	23%	22%
Websites/apps of newspapers	19%	20%	19%	20%	19%	23%	15%	23%	19%
Search engines	19%	20%	18%	23%	15%	23%	15%	25%	18%
Websites/apps of news aggregation sites	13%	14%	12%	13%	10%	15%	11%	18%	12%
Websites/apps of online news organisations	11%	11%	11%	15%	6%	14%	8%	18%	10%
Websites/apps of news magazines	6%	7%	5%	10%	3%	7%	4%	11%	5%
Blogs	2%	2%	1%	3%	0%	2%	1%	3%	1%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ 2020 - Total=4576, Male=2153, Female=2420, 16-24=726, 65+=911, ABC1=2505, C2DE=2066, minority ethnic groups=676, White=3889

Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

Among those using websites or apps for news, usage of the BBC website/app and Google (search) have both decreased since 2019, whilst Google News and LADBible have both increased

**Figure 8.4**

Websites/apps used for news nowadays

All using other internet for news\*

	2020	2019	2018
BBC website/app	60% ▼	65%	63%
Google (search engine)	39% ▼	51%	46%
Sky News website/app	20%	20%	17%
Guardian/Observer website/app	18%	18%	17%
The Daily Mail website/app	18%	17%	17%
Google News	17% ▲	13%	11%
YouTube website/app	15%	15%	13%
Any local newspaper website/app	10%	10%	11%
Huffington Post website/app	10%	11%	12%
ITV/ITN** website/app	10%	8%	10%
BuzzFeed website/app	10%	9%	8%
MSN News website/app	8%	10%	11%
The Telegraph website/app	8%	8%	9%
LADBible website/app	8% ▲	6%	5%
Yahoo News website/app	7%	7%	11%
The Independent website/app	7%	8%	8%
The Sun website/app	6%	7%	6%
The Metro website/app	6%	5%	5%

	2020	2019	2018
TV broadcaster websites/apps	72%	74%	74%
Newspaper websites/apps	52%	51%	53%
Aggregators	38%	36%	42%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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\* - 2020=1757, 2019=1773, 2018=1661

\*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 >5% in 2020 are shown. \*\*ITV/ITN – only includes mentions of ITV/ITN specifically, does not include mentions of STV or UTV.

16-24s, ABC1s and people from minority ethnic groups generally claim to use a wider variety of website/apps for news than those aged 65+, C2DEs and white people

**Figure 8.5**

Websites/apps used for news nowadays 2020 - by demographic group

*All using other internet for news\**

	Total	Male	Female	16-24	65+	ABC1	C2DE	Minority ethnic groups	White
BBC website/app	60%	63%	57%	54%	57%	63%	55%	56%	60%
Google (search engine)	39%	39%	40%	45%	33%	40%	39%	43%	38%
Sky News website/app	20%	24%	17%	19%	18%	20%	21%	20%	20%
Guardian/Observer website/app	18%	19%	18%	19%	14%	21%	14%	20%	18%
The Daily Mail website/app	18%	14%	21%	17%	22%	18%	18%	14%	19%
Google News	17%	19%	15%	19%	11%	18%	16%	20%	16%
YouTube website/app	15%	18%	13%	31%	4%	15%	17%	26%	13%
Any local newspaper website/app	10%	10%	11%	6%	11%	9%	13%	4%	12%
Huffington Post website/app	10%	10%	11%	7%	11%	10%	10%	11%	10%
ITV/ITN** website/app	10%	9%	12%	9%	13%	9%	13%	10%	10%
BuzzFeed website/app	10%	8%	11%	19%	1%	10%	9%	17%	8%
MSN News website/app	8%	8%	8%	5%	7%	7%	9%	10%	8%
The Telegraph website/app	8%	9%	6%	10%	8%	9%	6%	11%	7%
LADbible website/app	8%	7%	8%	15%	2%	8%	7%	9%	7%
Yahoo News website/app	7%	8%	7%	5%	6%	8%	6%	12%	6%
The Independent website/app	7%	8%	7%	9%	4%	9%	5%	8%	7%
The Sun website/app	6%	7%	6%	8%	4%	4%	9%	6%	6%
The Metro website/app	6%	6%	6%	6%	2%	6%	7%	7%	6%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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 2020 - Total=1757, Male=881, Female=874, 16-24=309, 65+=281, ABC1=1125, C2DE=630, minority ethnic groups=321, White=1431 Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of >5% in 2020 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

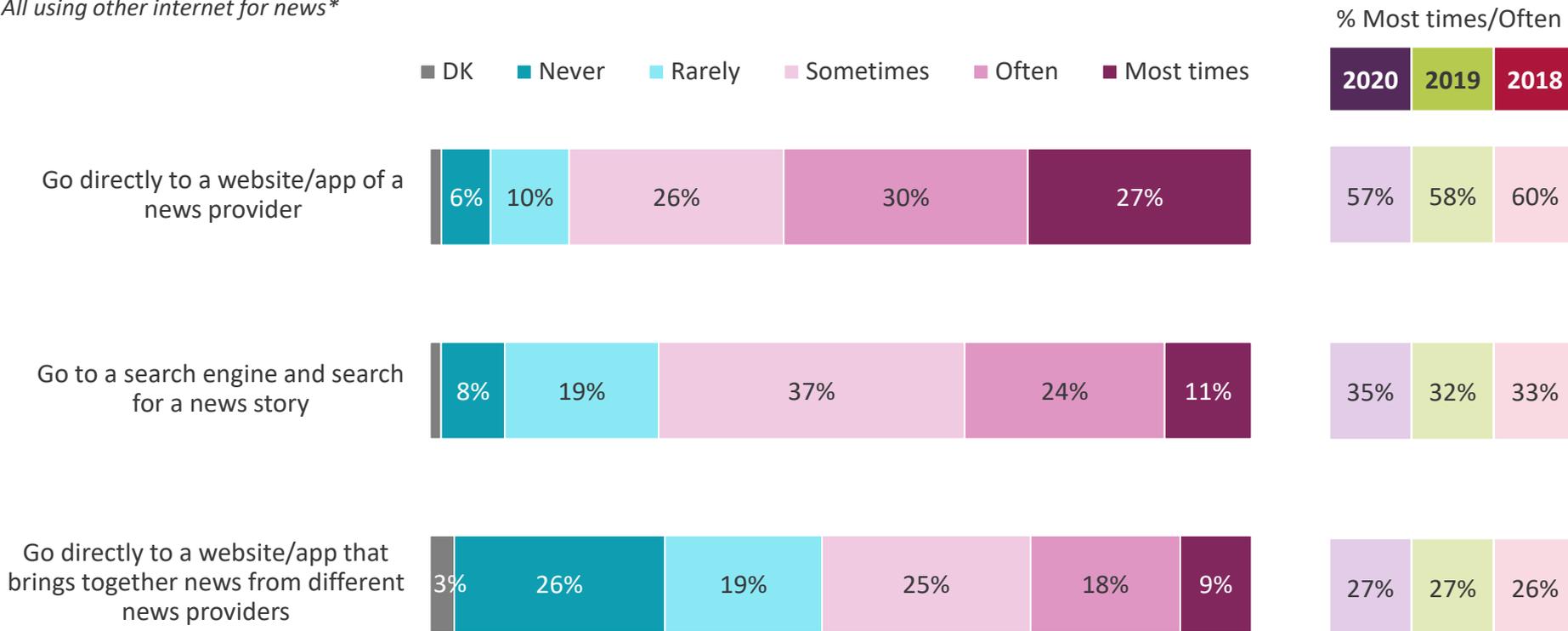
\*\*ITV/ITN – only includes mentions of ITV/ITN specifically, does not include mentions of STV or UTV

# 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 internet for news\*



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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\* - 2020=1757, 2019=1773, 2018=1661

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

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

## Figure 8.7

### Gateways to online news, and frequency of use 2020 - by demographic group

All using other internet 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	57%	59%	55%	48%	56%	58%	55%	55%	57%
Go to a search engine and search for a news story	35%	35%	35%	35%	28%	37%	32%	45%	33%
Go directly to a website/app that brings together news from different news providers	27%	29%	25%	30%	20%	28%	25%	41%	24%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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 - Total=1757, Male=881, Female=874, 16-24=309, 65+=281, ABC1=1125, C2DE=630, minority ethnic groups=321, White=1431

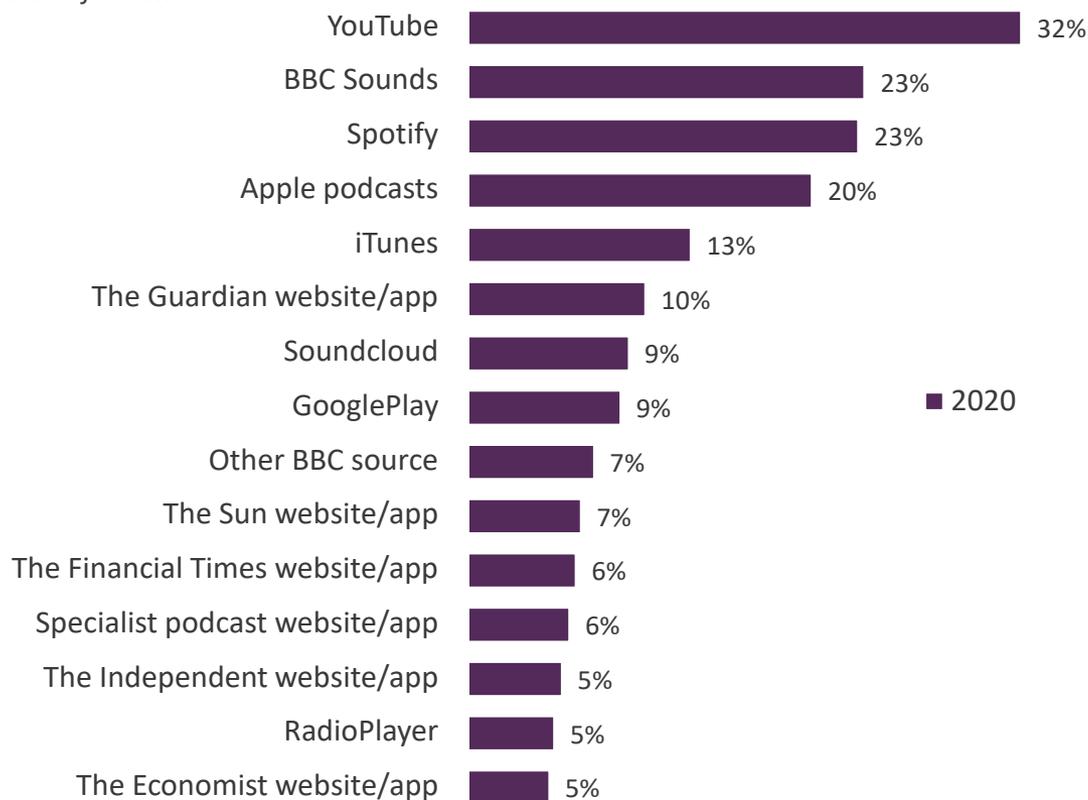
This question was not asked to those that said they used social media and no other types of websites/apps site for news

Just over one in twenty (6%) adults claim to consume news via podcasts nowadays. Of these, one third claim to use YouTube, with around a quarter using BBC Sounds and Spotify and a fifth using Apple podcasts

## Figure 8.8

### Podcasts used for news nowadays (new question for 2020 research)

All using other podcasts for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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 – 2020=316

Only sources with an incidence of 5%+ in 2020 are shown

# News consumption via magazines

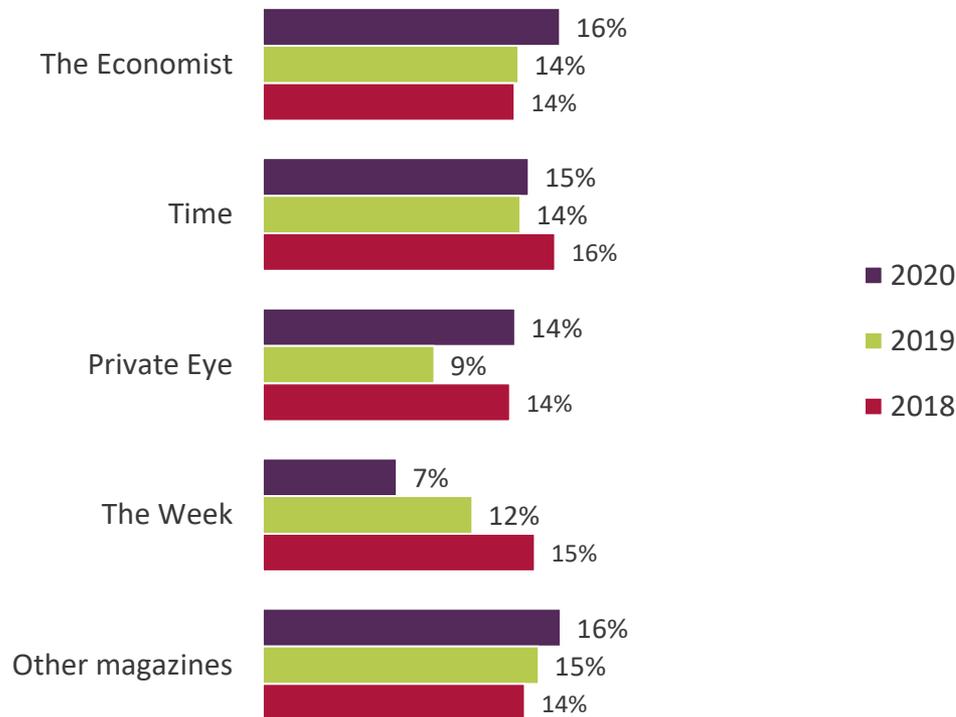
(9% of all UK adults)

Among the 9% of adults who consume news via magazines, around one in six claim to read The Economist or Time and one in seven read Private Eye

## Figure 9.1

### Magazines used for news nowadays

All using magazines for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

Base: All using magazines for news – 2020=433, 2019=496, 2018=533

# The Economist and Private Eye are more likely to be read by males and ABC1s than females and C2DEs

## Figure 9.2

Magazines used for news nowadays 2020 - by demographic group

*All using magazines for news*

	Total	Male	Female	ABC1	C2DE
The Economist	16%	22%	11%	21%	10%
Time	15%	17%	13%	14%	15%
Private Eye	14%	21%	7%	17%	8%
The Week	7%	9%	6%	8%	7%
Other magazines	16%	14%	19%	14%	20%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All using magazines for news 2020 - Total=433, Male=211, Female=222, ABC1=271, C2DE=162

Green shading indicates significant differences between groups

# Multi-sourcing

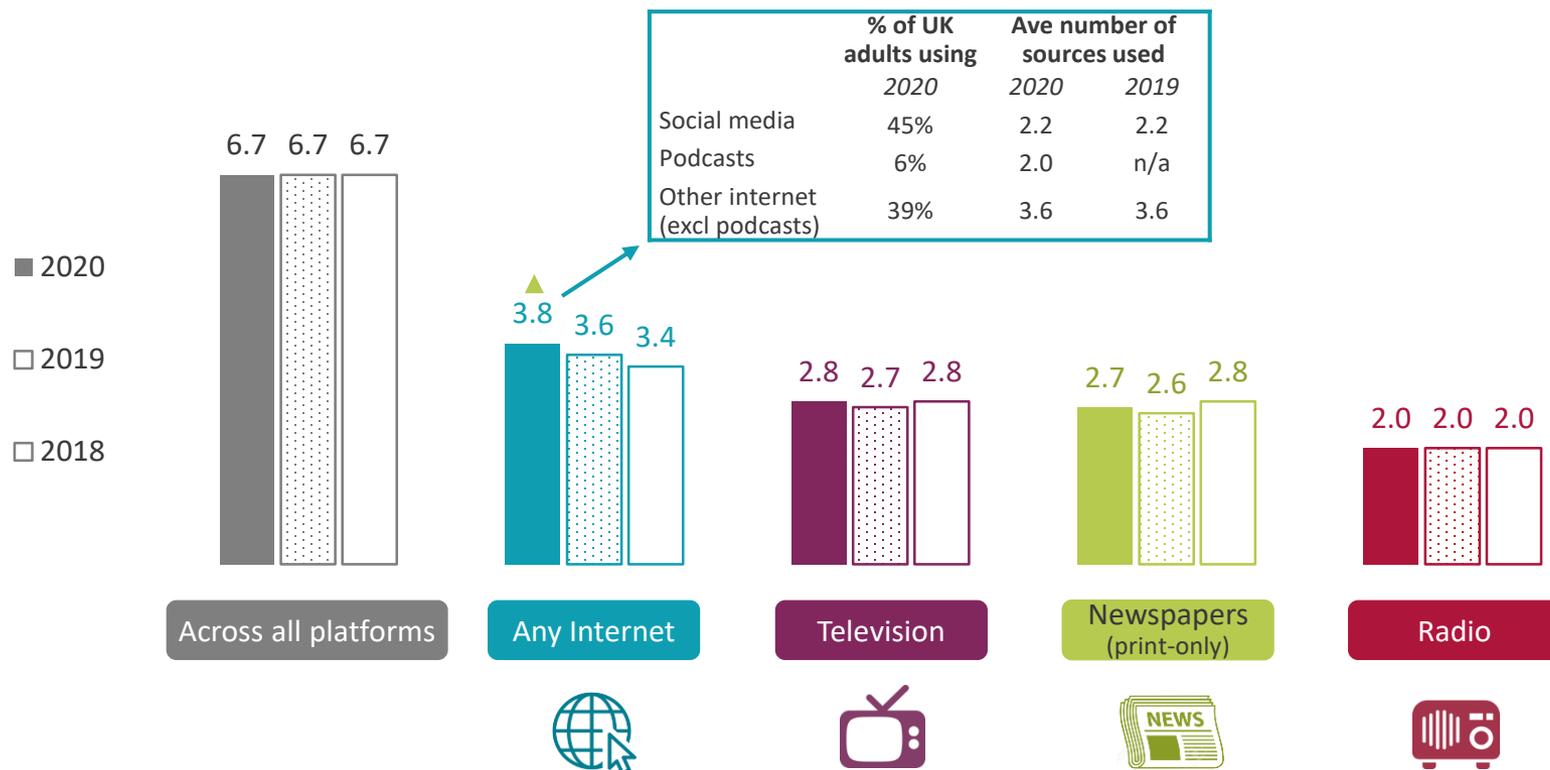
The average number of news sources remains flat, with 6.7 individual sources being used across all platforms.

*NB: The increase in the number of platforms across 'any internet' is driven by the usage of podcasts (which was included for the first time in the 2020 research)*

### Figure 10.1

#### Average number of individual news sources used nowadays by platform

All using each platform for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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 2020/2019/2018 - (All=4350/4481/4479, Any internet=2949/3096/2885, TV=3456/3556/3731, Newspapers=1594/1741/1847, Radio=1975/2043/2096)

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

# People from minority ethnic groups, ABC1s, 16-34 age groups, Males and those living in England 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*

	2020	2019	2018
<b>Total</b>	6.7	6.7	6.7
Male	<b>7.1</b>	7.2	7.2
Female	6.4	6.2	6.3
16-34	<b>7.4</b>	7.0	6.9
35-54	<b>6.7</b>	7.0	7.1
55+	6.2	6.2	6.2
ABC1	<b>7.4</b>	7.5	7.2
C2DE	6.0	5.8	6.2
Minority ethnic groups	<b>8.3</b>	8.2	8.6
White	6.5	6.4	6.4
England	<b>6.9</b>	6.9	7.0
Scotland	5.8	5.5	5.3
Wales	6.3	6.4	5.7
Northern Ireland	6.4	5.9	5.2

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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 – 2020=4350, 2019=4481, 2018=4479

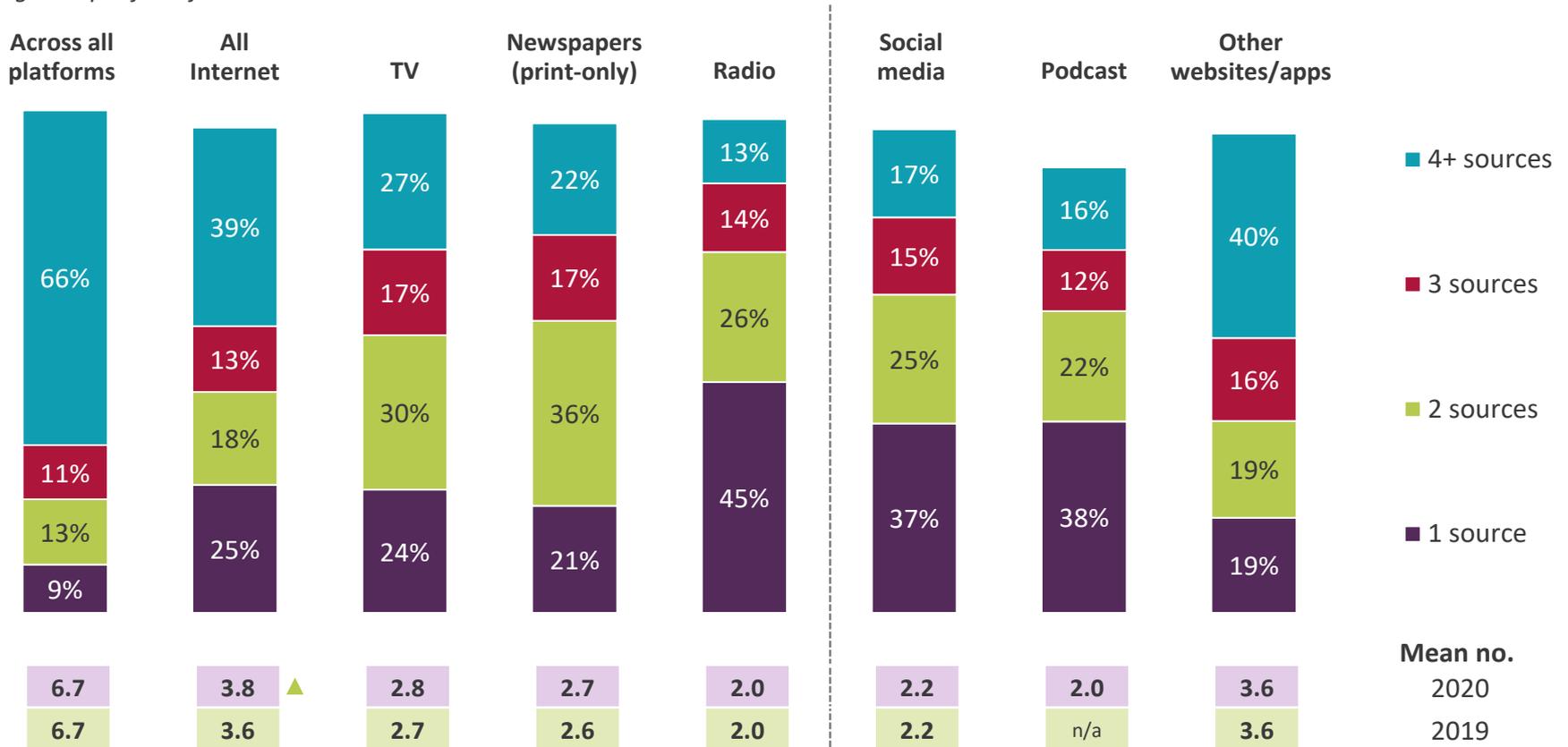
Darker purple shading indicates significant differences between groups in the 2020 data

As in previous years, internet news users use the highest number of individual news sources

**Figure 10.3**

Number of individual sources used 2020 - by platform

All using each platform for news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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 2020 – All platforms=4350, All internet=2949, TV=3456, Newspapers=1594, Radio=1975, Social media=2143, Podcasts=316, Other websites/apps =1757

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

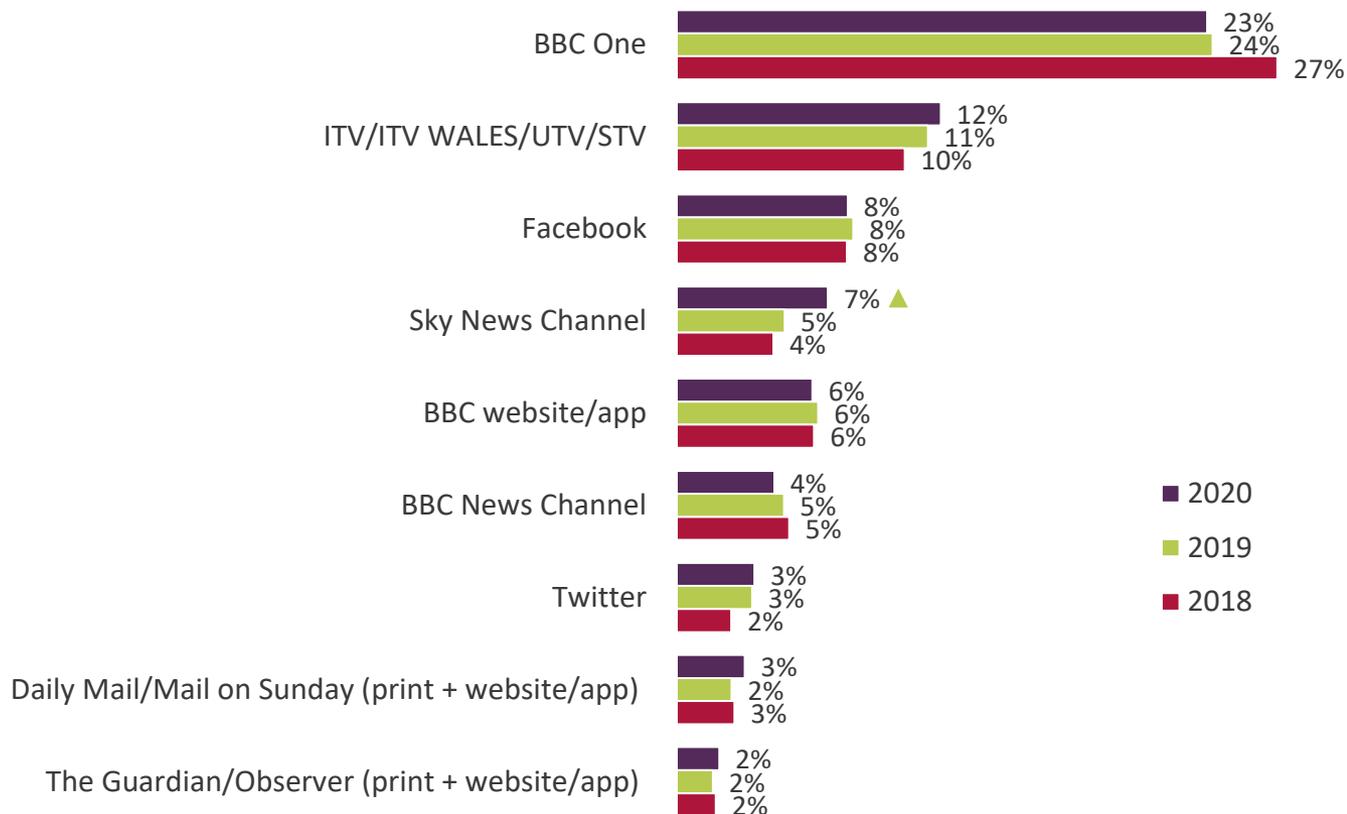
# Importance of sources and attitudes to news

Just under a quarter of news users nominate BBC One as their single most important source. Sky News is chosen by 7% of news users, an increase from 2019

### Figure 11.1

#### Single most important news source

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



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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=4314, 2019=4492, 2018=4463

Only sources with an incidence of 2%+ in 2020 are shown.

In general, those aged 65+, C2DE and white news users 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 say social media

## Figure 11.2

### Single most important news source 2020 - 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	23%	23%	24%	10%	38%	23%	23%	13%	25%
ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	12%	8%	15%	6%	13%	8%	16%	5%	13%
Facebook	8%	6%	9%	13%	1%	6%	9%	7%	8%
Sky News Channel	7%	8%	6%	4%	8%	8%	6%	11%	6%
BBC website/app	6%	6%	5%	8%	4%	8%	4%	6%	6%
BBC News Channel	4%	5%	4%	2%	5%	5%	4%	6%	4%
Twitter	3%	4%	3%	13%	0%	3%	4%	5%	3%
Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday (print+website/app)	3%	2%	4%	1%	5%	3%	3%	2%	3%
The Guardian/Observer (print+website/app)	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	2%
ANY TV	50%	48%	51%	25%	66%	47%	52%	42%	51%
ANY SOCIAL MEDIA	14%	13%	16%	40%	1%	13%	16%	22%	13%
ANY OTHER INTERNET	14%	15%	14%	18%	8%	18%	11%	17%	14%
ANY RADIO	8%	9%	7%	4%	7%	8%	7%	5%	8%
ANY NEWSPAPER	7%	8%	6%	5%	13%	7%	7%	6%	7%
ANY MAGAZINE	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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 2020 - Total=4314, Male=2046, Female=2265, 16-24=646, 65+=887, ABC1=2391, C2DE=1919, minority ethnic groups=645, White=3659

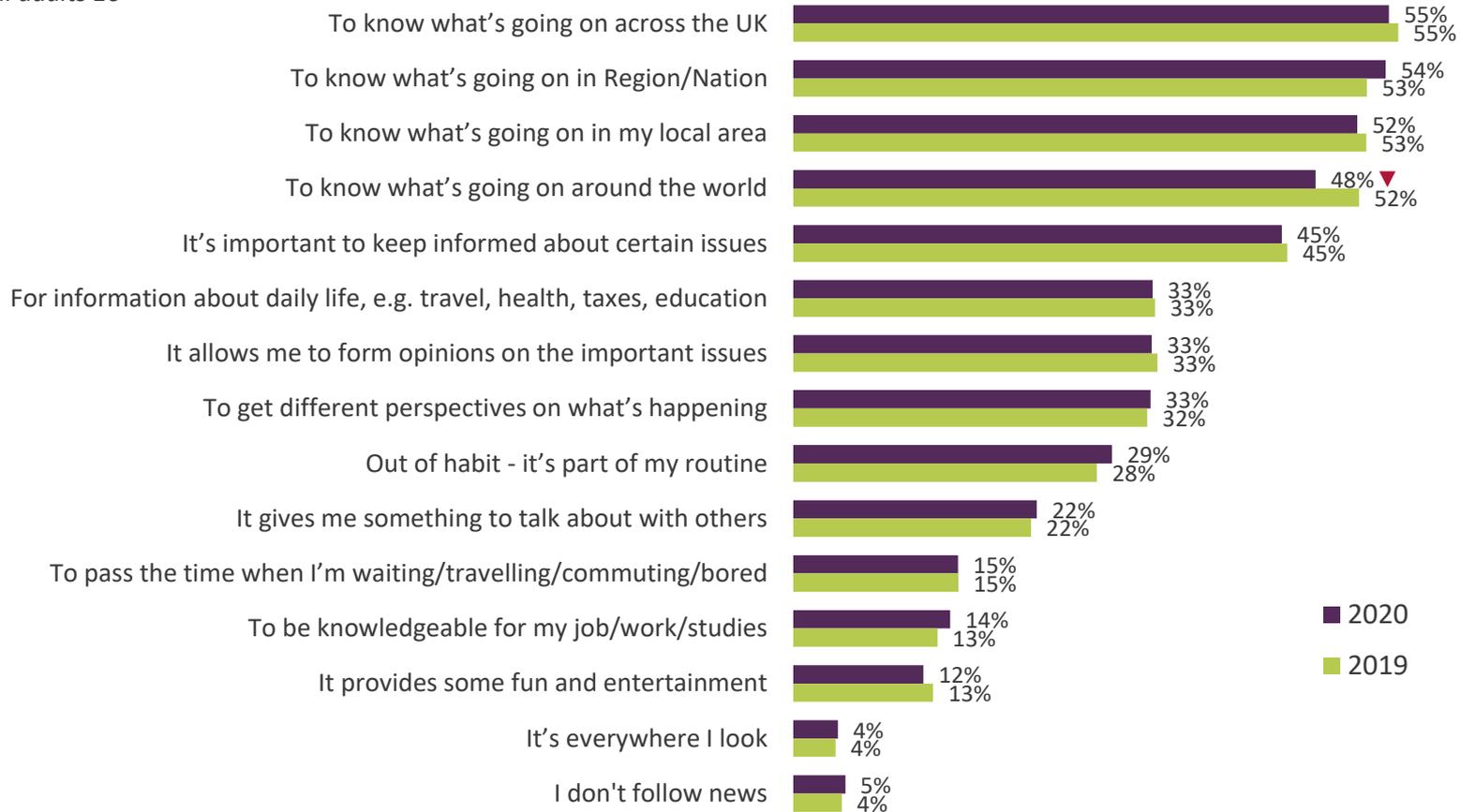
Green shading indicates significant differences between groups. Only sources with an incidence of 2%+ in 2020 are shown.

# People follow the news to understand what is going on in the UK, their region/nation and their local area (pre-Covid-19).

## Figure 11.3

### Reasons for following news

All adults 16+



■ 2020  
■ 2019

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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+ - 2020=4576, 2019=4691

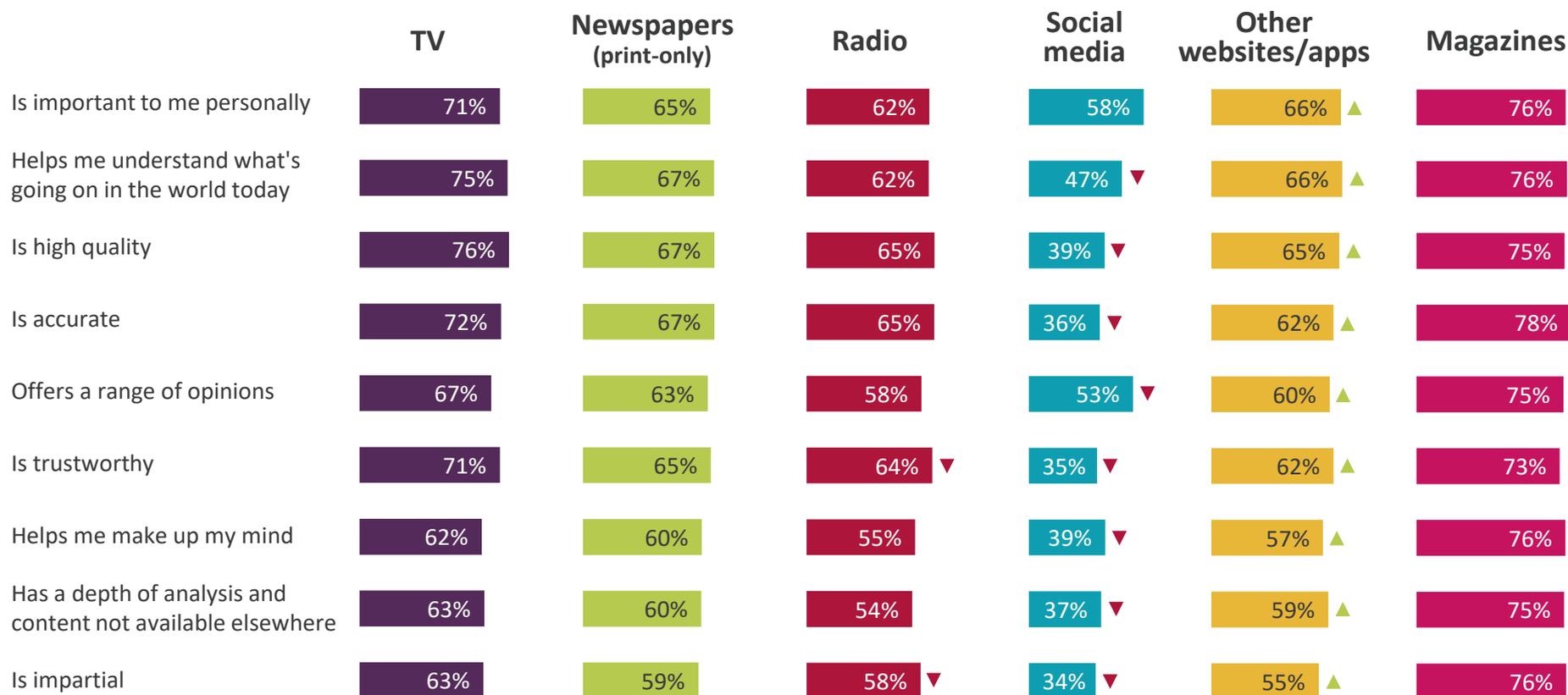
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

Those using social media for news rate it less highly than in 2019 on almost all measures. The opposite is true among those using 'other websites/apps'

**Figure 11.4**

**Attributes of news platforms - 2020**

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



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 (or every 2-3 weeks for weekly newspapers and magazines) 2020 – TV=7410, Newspapers=3114, Radio=2792, Social media=3357, Other websites/apps =4135, Magazines=169

With the exception of ‘offers a range of opinions’ for BBC TV and ‘important to me personally’ for CNN, attitudes towards TV sources are consistent with 2019

## Figure 11.5

### Attributes of TV sources (1) - 2020

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

	BBC TV	ITV	Sky News	Channel 4	Channel 5	CNN	Al Jazeera
	2754	1894	1058	746	331	222	153
Is important to me personally	75%	69%	77%	61%	58%	77% ▲	63%
Helps me understand what's going on in the world today	77%	74%	80%	70%	64%	81%	78%
Is high quality	78%	74%	81%	71%	66%	82%	78%
Is accurate	72%	71%	76%	70%	65%	81%	71%
Offers a range of opinions	63% ▼	67%	74%	68%	60%	82%	70%
Is trustworthy	71%	71%	74%	70%	65%	79%	69%
Helps me make up my mind	59%	62%	69%	60%	58%	75%	68%
Has a depth of analysis and content not available elsewhere	62%	57%	72%	67%	54%	79%	75%
Is impartial	58%	63%	69%	66%	61%	77%	69%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

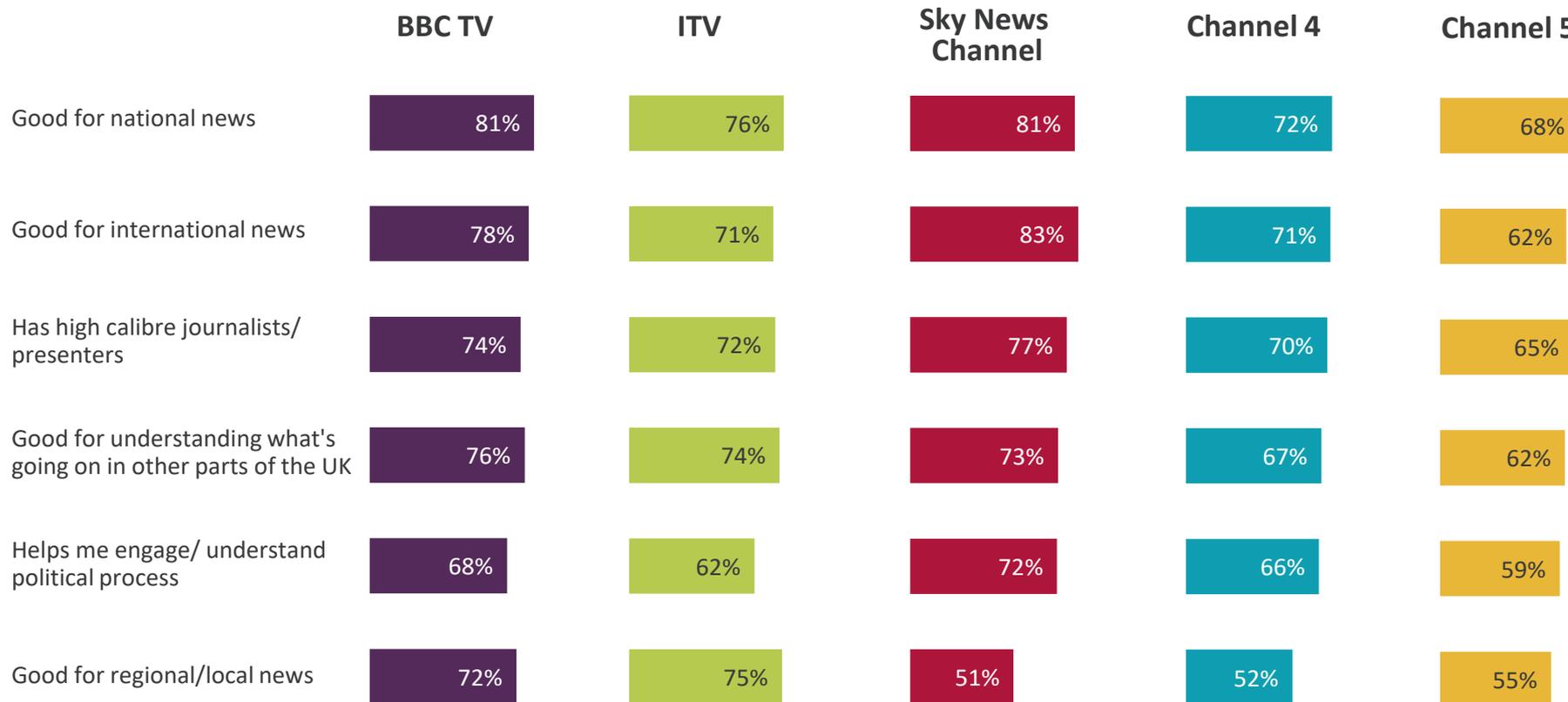
Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2020 – bases shown above

Users of Sky News give better ratings for ‘International news’ and ‘helps me understand the political process’, whereas users of BBC and ITV provide better scores for ‘Regional/Local’ news

**Figure 11.8**

Attributes of TV sources (2) - 2020

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



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 2020 – BBC TV=2754, ITV=1894, Sky News Channel=1058, Channel 4=746, Channel 5=331

Readers of The Guardian, The Times and The Telegraph print continue to rate these papers comparatively highly for ‘high quality’, ‘helps me understand what's going on in the world today’, ‘accurate’ and ‘trustworthy’. The Evening Standard performs better in several categories compared to 2019

**Figure 11.9**  
Attributes of Print Newspaper sources - 2020

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

	Daily Mail/ Mail on Sunday	The Sun/ Sun on Sunday	The Metro	Daily/Sunday Mirror	The Times/ Sunday Times	Daily/Sunday Telegraph	The Guardian/ Observer	Local daily newspaper	Evening Standard	Daily/Sunday Express
	487	389	339	227	229	201	221	173	154	138
Is important to me personally	69%	59%	53%	64%	77%	71%	73%	66%	61%▲	61%
Helps me understand what's going on in the world today	70%	65%	61%	63%	77%	76%	84%	48%	69%	63%
Is high quality	68%	57%	56%	65%	79%	80%	81%	63%	71%▲	68%
Is accurate	66%	56%	61%	62%	76%	76%	81%	63%	74%▲	62%
Offers a range of opinions	64%	60%	57%	60%	72%	73%	73%	58%	66%	64%
Is trustworthy	60%	54%	62%	58%▼	74%	77%	80%	69%	65%	61%
Helps me make up my mind	56%	58%	55%	61%	67%	68%	74%	51%	66%▲	62%
Has a depth of analysis and content not available elsewhere	59%	55%	49%	57%	73%	72%	79%	46%	64%	55%
Is impartial	52%	51%	60%	55%	62%	69%	66%	63%	61%	53%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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) 2020 – bases shown above

LBC listeners are more likely to rate this station highly across the various attributes, followed by the BBC and then talkRADIO/SPORT. Smooth radio sees declines across every metric compared to 2019

**Figure 11.10**

**Attributes of Radio sources (1) - 2020**

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

	BBC Radio	Heart Radio	Capital Radio	Classic FM	Smooth Radio	LBC Radio	Kiss Radio	talkSPORT/ talkSPORT2/ talkRADIO
	1406	272	206	162	155	129	117	119
Is important to me personally	68%	51%	58%	45%	49% ▼	78%	56%	64%
Helps me understand what's going on in the world today	71%	46%	47%	52%	42% ▼	80%	55% ▲	54%
Is high quality	74%	50%	53%	55%	46% ▼	76%	57% ▲	63%
Is accurate	72%	53%	50%	58%	49% ▼	77%	55%	66%
Offers a range of opinions	66%	44%	44%	46%	36% ▼	79%	53% ▲	60%
Is trustworthy	69%	55%	50%	62%	50% ▼	77%	55%	70%
Helps me make up my mind	62%	40%	40%	48%	36% ▼	76%	55% ▲	55%
Has a depth of analysis and content not available elsewhere	61%	42%	34%	42%	36% ▼	77%	50% ▲	51%
Is impartial	61%	51%	48%	61%	48% ▼	64%	52%	61%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

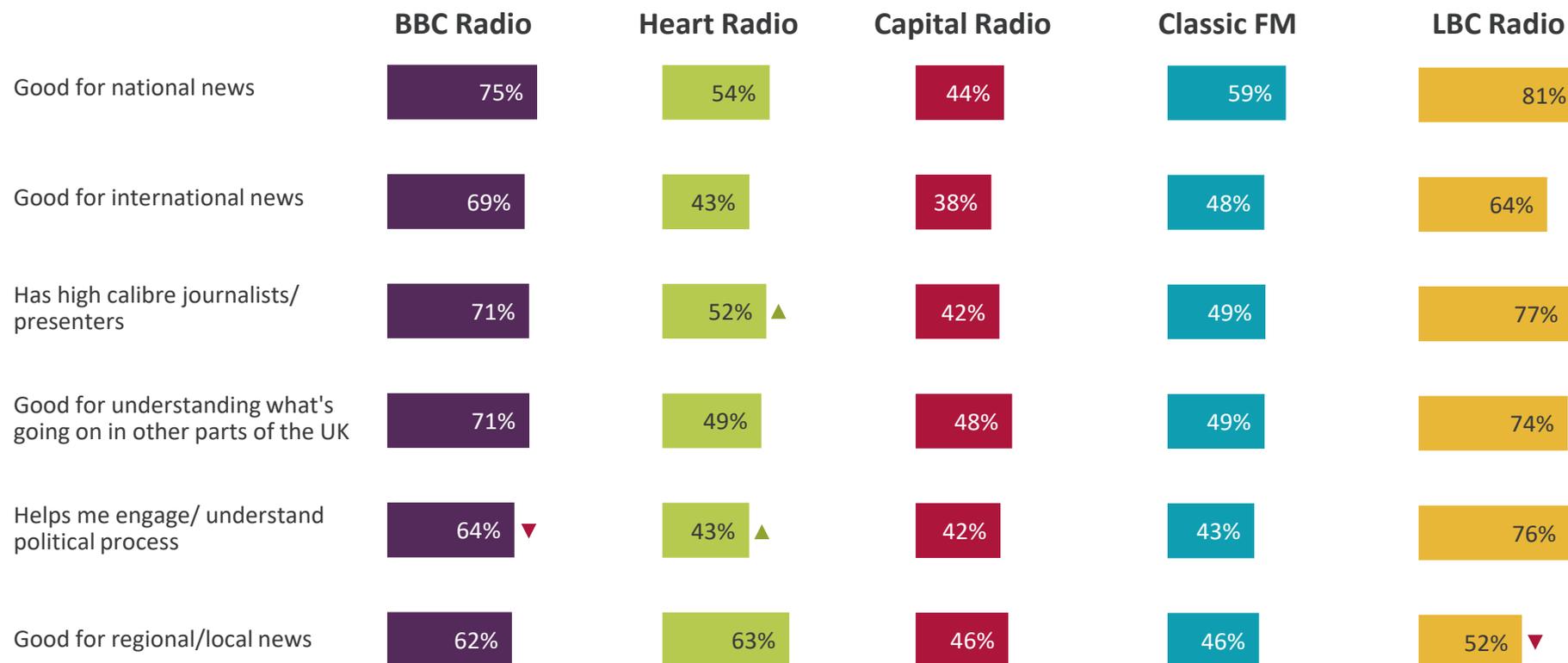
Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2020 – bases shown above

# BBC Radio listeners give lower ratings for 'helps me understand the political process' than last year and LBC listeners give lower ratings for 'regional/local news' than last year

**Figure 11.11**

## Attributes of Radio sources (2) - 2020

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



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

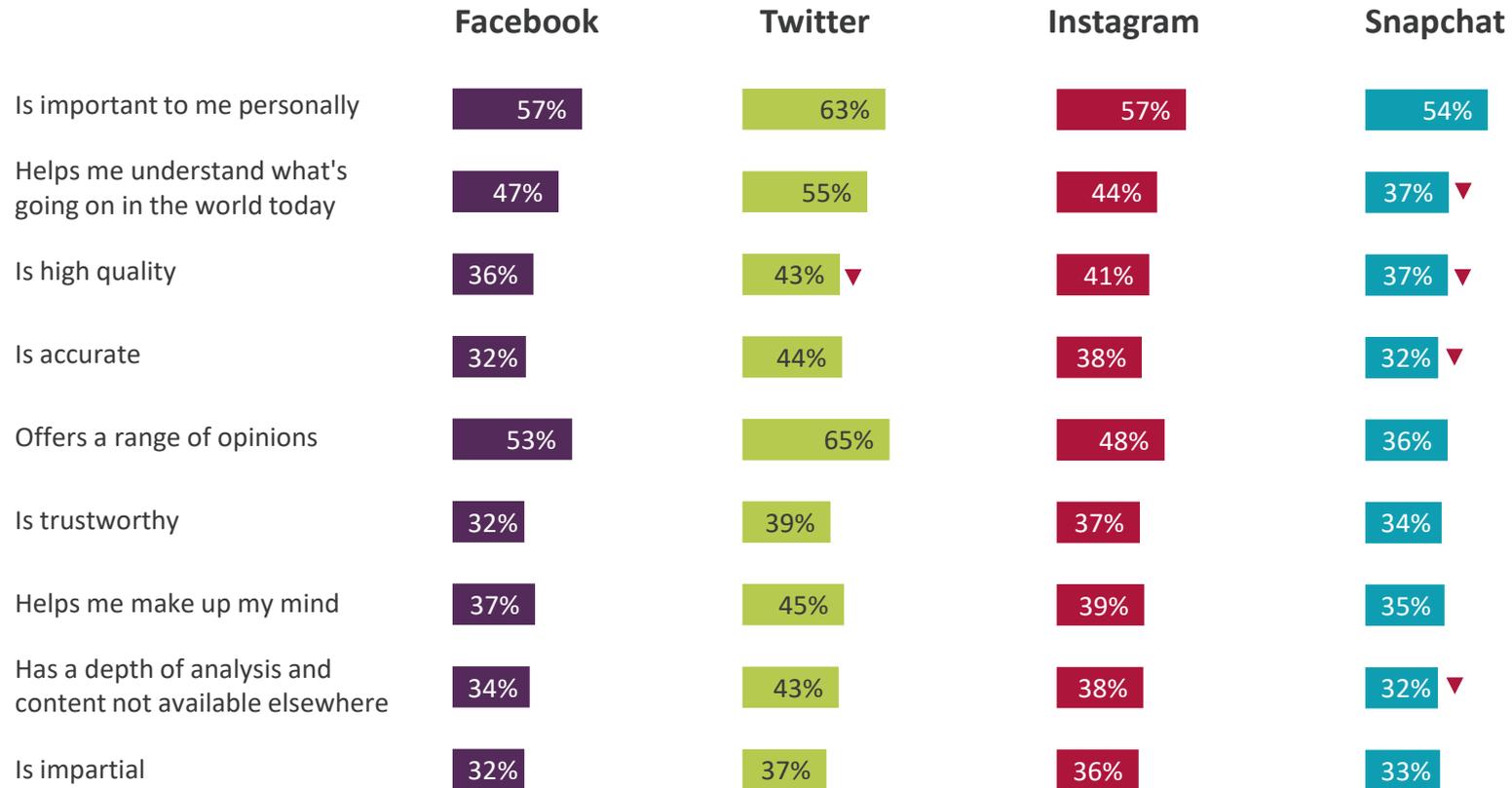
Base: All using each source for news at least weekly 2020 – BBC Radio=1406, Heart=192, Capital=121, Classic FM=127, LBC=105

# Social media platforms continue to score poorly, especially across ‘impartial’ and ‘trustworthy’. In particular, Snapchat’s scores have declined since 2019

**Figure 11.12**

## Attributes of Social Media - 2020

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



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 2020 – Facebook=1600, Twitter=776, Instagram=654, Snapchat=327

As in previous years, BBC, Sky News and The Guardian users are more likely to rate these websites/apps highly. Several attitude metrics have increased for the Daily Mail and The Huffington Post

**Figure 11.13**

**Attributes of Other Internet sources - 2020**

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

	BBC website/app	Sky News website/app	Daily Mail website/app	Google News	Guardian/Observer	YouTube	ITV/ITN* website/app	Huffington Post	MSN News	Yahoo News	Telegraph website/app	Independent website/app	The Sun website/app
	1005	345	299	275	301	287	179	157	140	116	124	125	103
Is important to me personally	78%	68%	62%	71%	71%	61%	57%	54%	49%	68%	56%	60%	40%
Helps me understand what's going on in the world today	79%	72%	55%	68%	74%	53%	65%	58%	56%	62%	63%	66%	50%
Is high quality	78%	71%	52%	62%	78%	46%	67%	58%	54%	58%	69%	62%	43%
Is accurate	74%	65%	51%	57%	74%	37%	65%	56%	55%	58%	62%	65%	46%
Offers a range of opinions	65%	67%	52%	62%	64%	62%	63%	55%	48%	62%	55%	58%	46%
Is trustworthy	74%	67%	48%	60%	73%	41%	67%	52%	52%	58%	68%	59%	45%
Helps me make up my mind	64%	62%	51%	57%	66%	44%	58%	50%	43%	51%	56%	52%	44%
Has a depth of analysis and content not available elsewhere	68%	66%	49%	59%	71%	50%	60%	55%	44%	56%	60%	56%	42%
Is impartial	64%	60%	40%	58%	49%	39%	63%	52%	55%	66%	46%	51%	36%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 2020 – bases shown above

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

# Local news

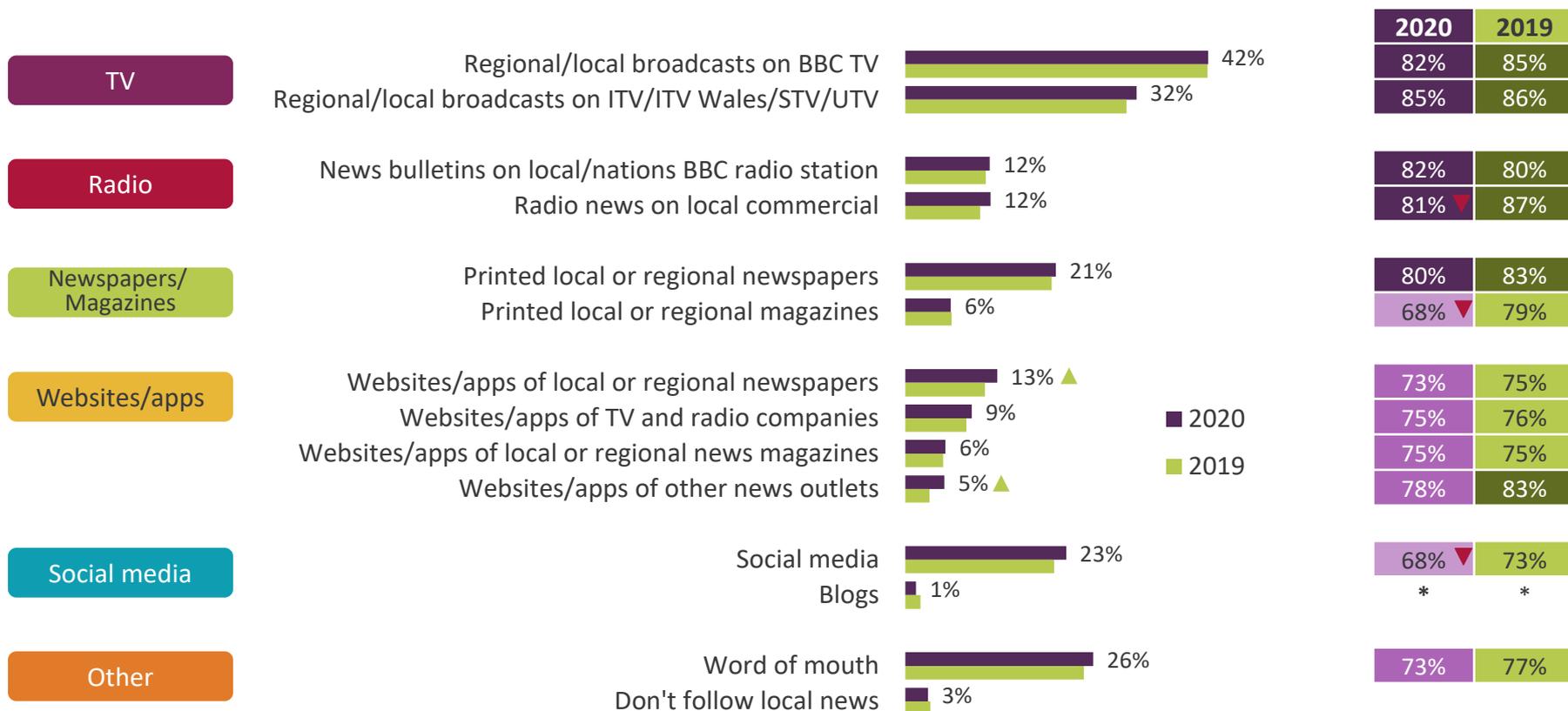
TV remains the most used platform for accessing local news. Users are less satisfied with the quality of local news provided on local commercial radio, printed local/regional magazines and social media than in 2019

**Figure 13.1**

Platforms used to access local news

All adults 16+ who follow news

% of users that are satisfied with the quality of local news provided



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

Question: F8: Thinking particularly about local news, which of the following do you use? Base: All adults 16+ who follow news – 2020=4379, 2019=4524

F9. How satisfied are you with the quality of the local news available from [source]? Base: All using each source – 2020=238-1870, 2019=142-1880

\*sample size <100

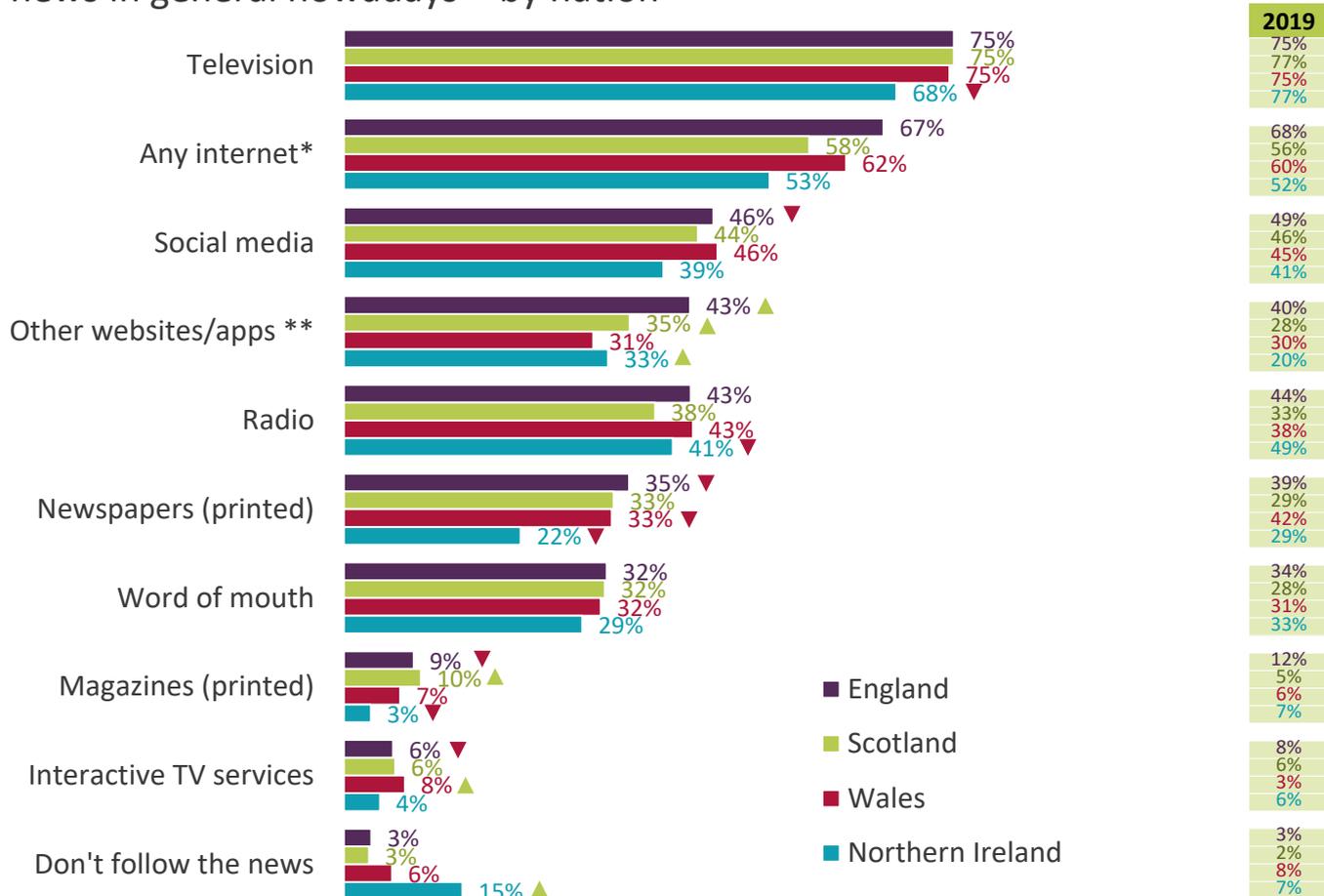
# News consumption in the nations

# England, Wales and Northern Ireland see a fall in the use of print newspapers for news

**Figure 14.1**

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

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ 2020/2019 – England=3171/3245, Scotland=541/551, Wales=456/475, Northern Ireland=408/420

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

\*Internet includes use of social media, podcasts and all other internet sources accessed via any device

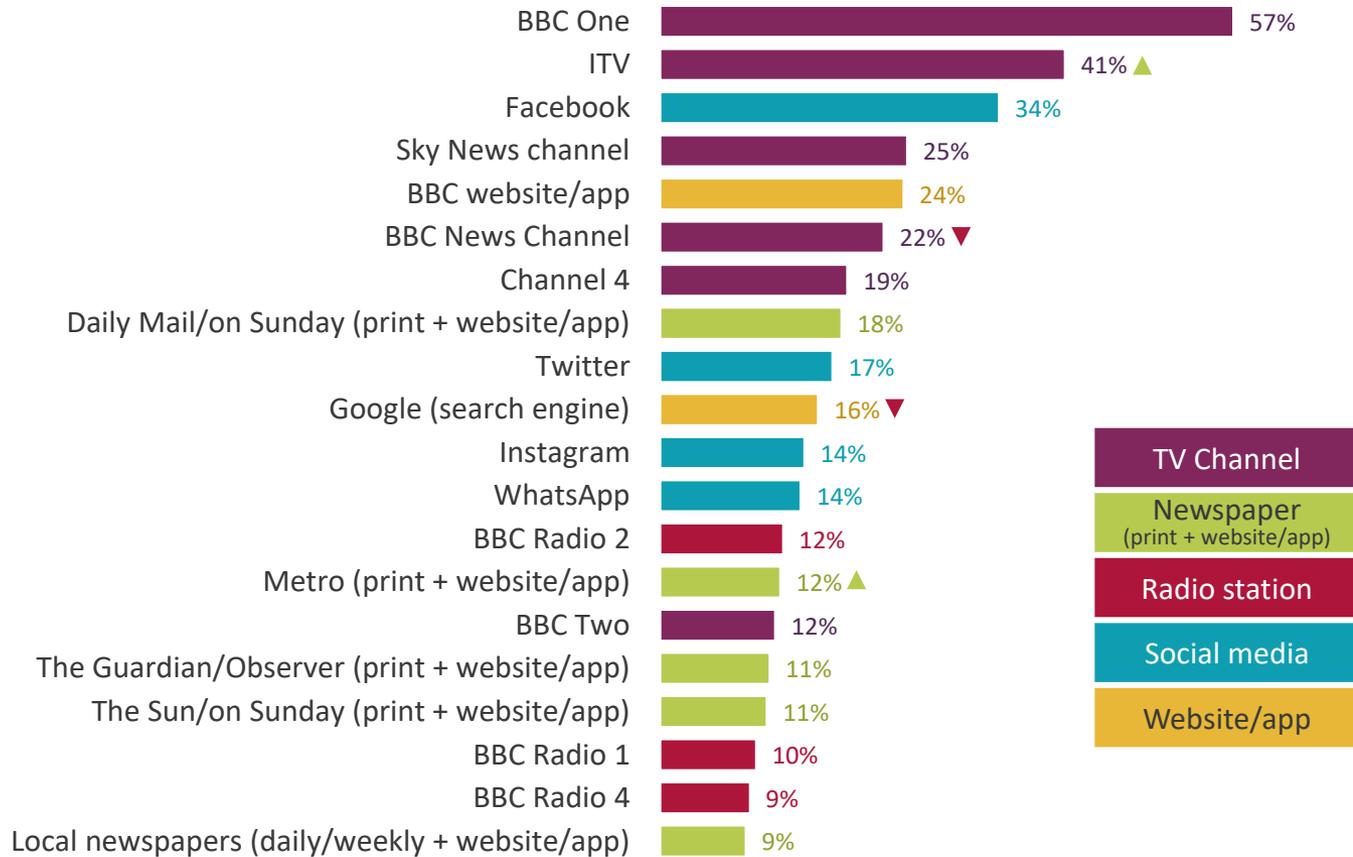
\*\* Websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source (including podcasts for the first time in 2020)

Just under three in five adults in England claim to use BBC One for news. More people use ITV and The Metro compared to last year, but usage of the BBC News Channel and Google (search) have both declined

**Figure 14.2**

**Top 20 sources for news in general 2020 - England**

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



2019	2018
58%	62%
38%	39%
35%	33%
23%	24%
27%	25%
25%	28%
18%	19%
19%	19%
17%	14%
21%	19%
15%	10%
15%	10%
12%	12%
10%	12%
12%	14%
12%	11%
11%	11%
9%	8%
10%	10%
10%	12%

- TV Channel
- Newspaper (print + website/app)
- Radio station
- Social media
- Website/app

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ in England – 2020=3171, 2019=3245, 2018=3206

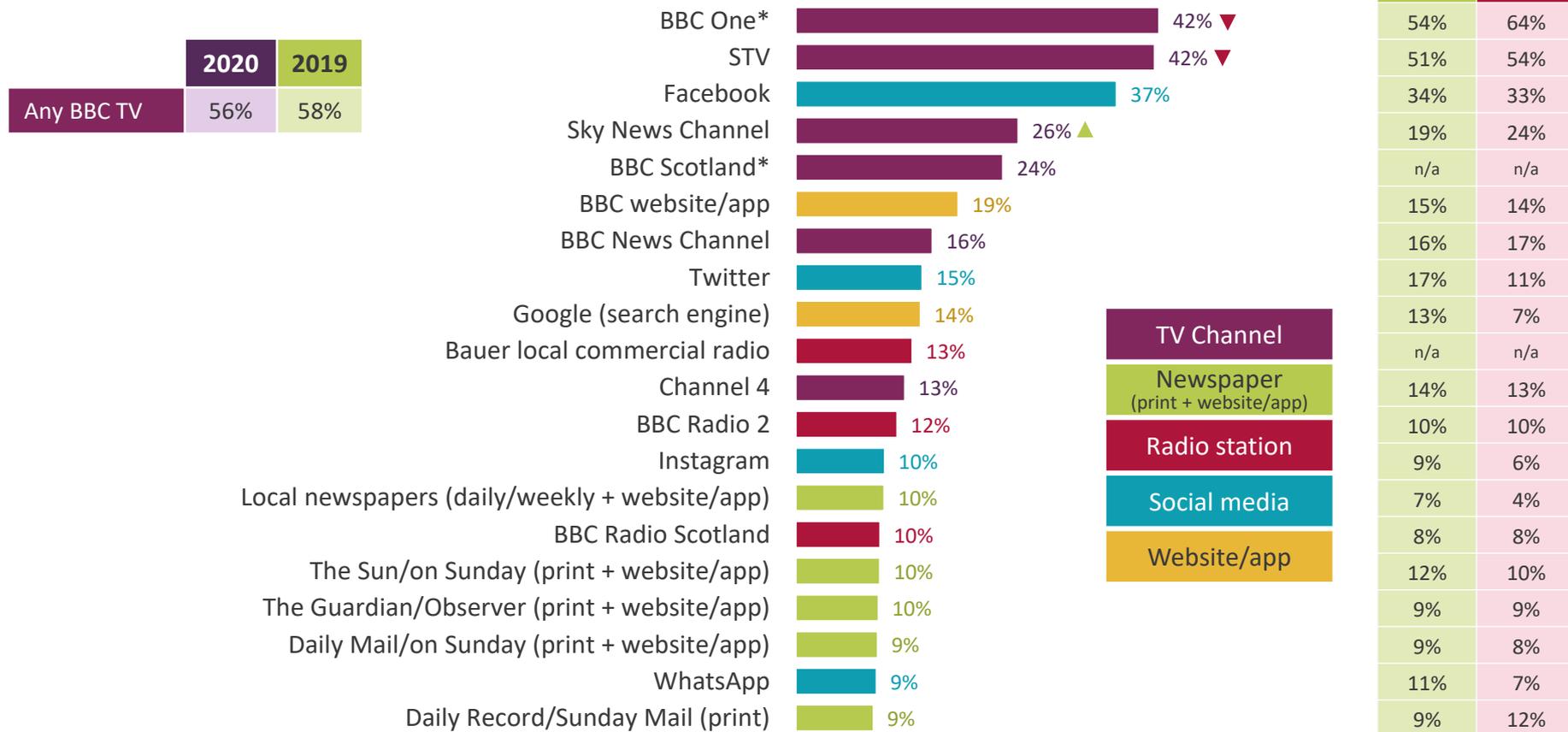
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

Only two in five adults in Scotland now use BBC One or STV for news, a significant drop compared to 2019. A quarter claim to use Sky News, an increase from 2019

**Figure 14.3**

**Top 20 sources for news in general 2020 - Scotland**

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



- TV Channel
- Newspaper (print + website/app)
- Radio station
- Social media
- Website/app

2019	2018
54%	64%
51%	54%
34%	33%
19%	24%
n/a	n/a
15%	14%
16%	17%
17%	11%
13%	7%
n/a	n/a
14%	13%
10%	10%
9%	6%
7%	4%
8%	8%
12%	10%
9%	9%
9%	8%
11%	7%
9%	12%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ in Scotland – 2020=541, 2019=551, 2018=540

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

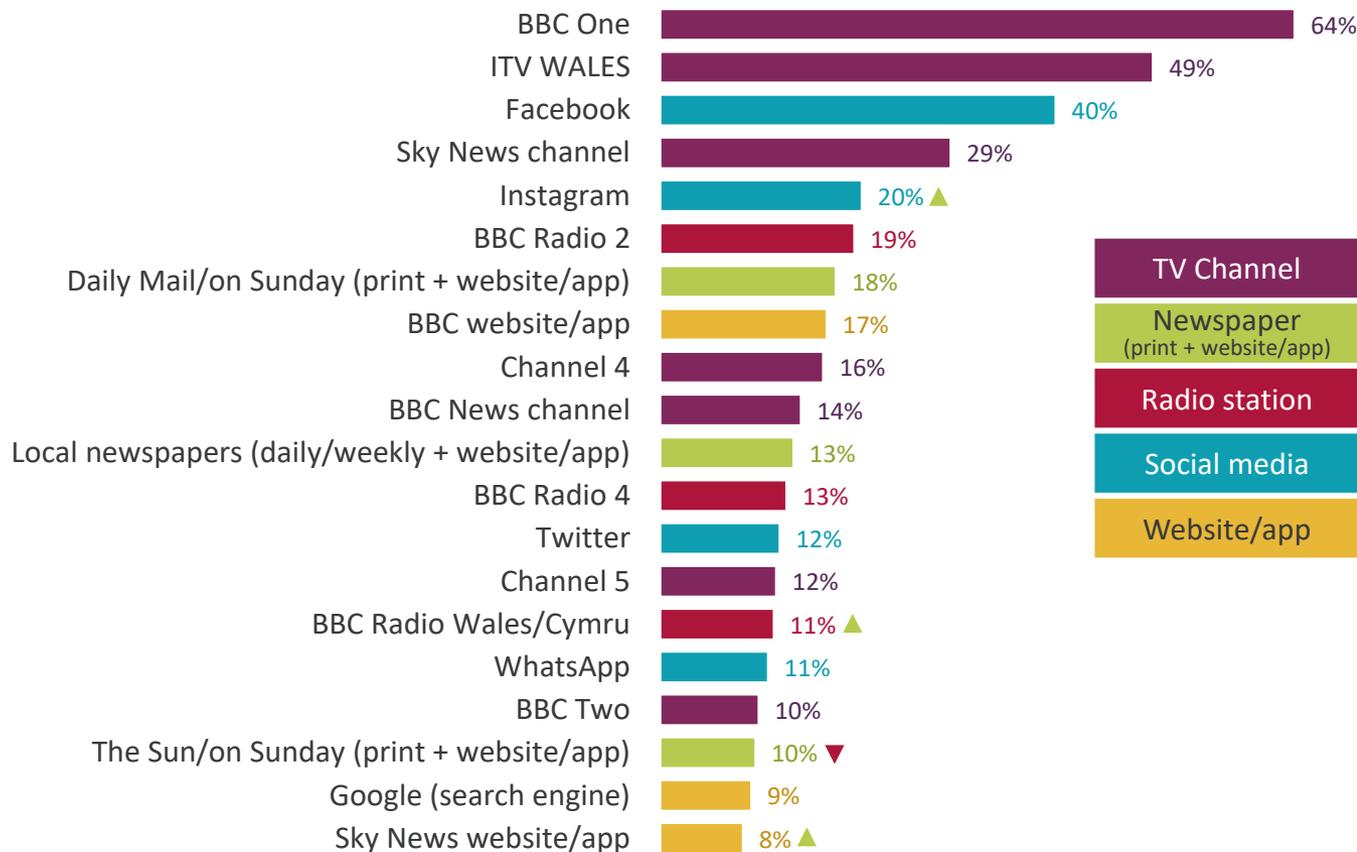
\*BBC Scotland new this year. BBC Scotland and BBC One Scotland figures may be affected by respondent confusion about BBC Scotland branding

Two thirds of adults in Wales use BBC One for news, while half use ITV and two in five Facebook. Instagram and BBC Radio Wales/Cymru have both seen an increase in use since last year

### Figure 14.4

#### Top 20 sources for news in general 2020 - Wales

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



	2019	2018
	57%	68%
	45%	45%
	38%	35%
	28%	26%
	8%	6%
	15%	14%
	20%	15%
	18%	22%
	11%	12%
	14%	19%
	14%	14%
	8%	14%
	11%	13%
	7%	7%
	4%	10%
	7%	7%
	7%	13%
	15%	8%
	13%	10%
	4%	5%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

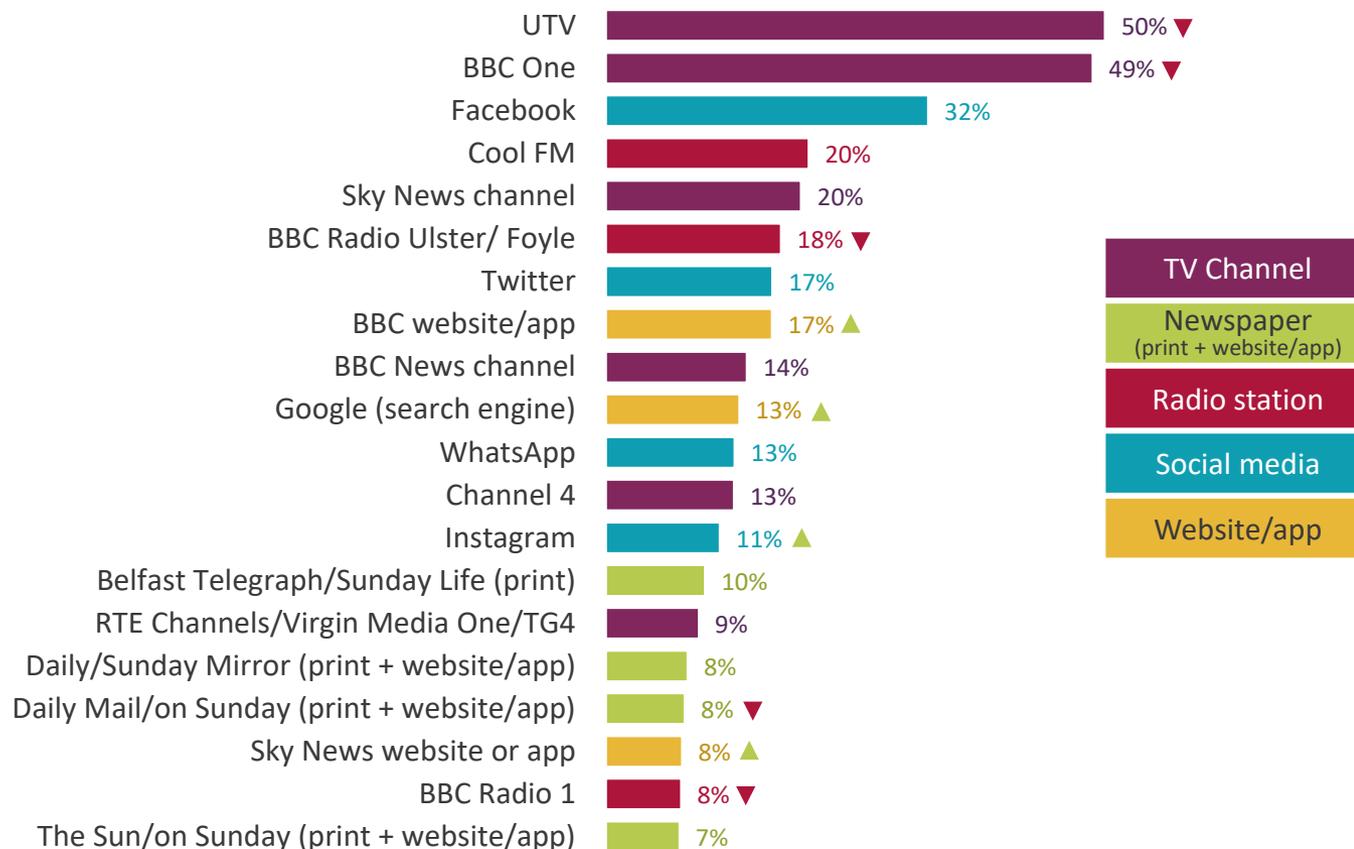
Base: All adults 16+ in Wales – 2020=456, 2019=475, 2018=458

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

Fewer adults in Northern Ireland claim to use UTV, BBC One or BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle while several online sources, such as the BBC website, see increases this year.

**Figure 14.5**  
Top 20 sources for news in general 2020 - Northern Ireland

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



2019	2018
59%	63%
58%	52%
35%	35%
21%	18%
24%	21%
25%	22%
13%	11%
10%	15%
16%	11%
8%	10%
11%	9%
16%	12%
6%	6%
12%	13%
8%	8%
8%	5%
13%	11%
3%	2%
15%	12%
7%	11%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland – 2020=408, 2019=420, 2018=414

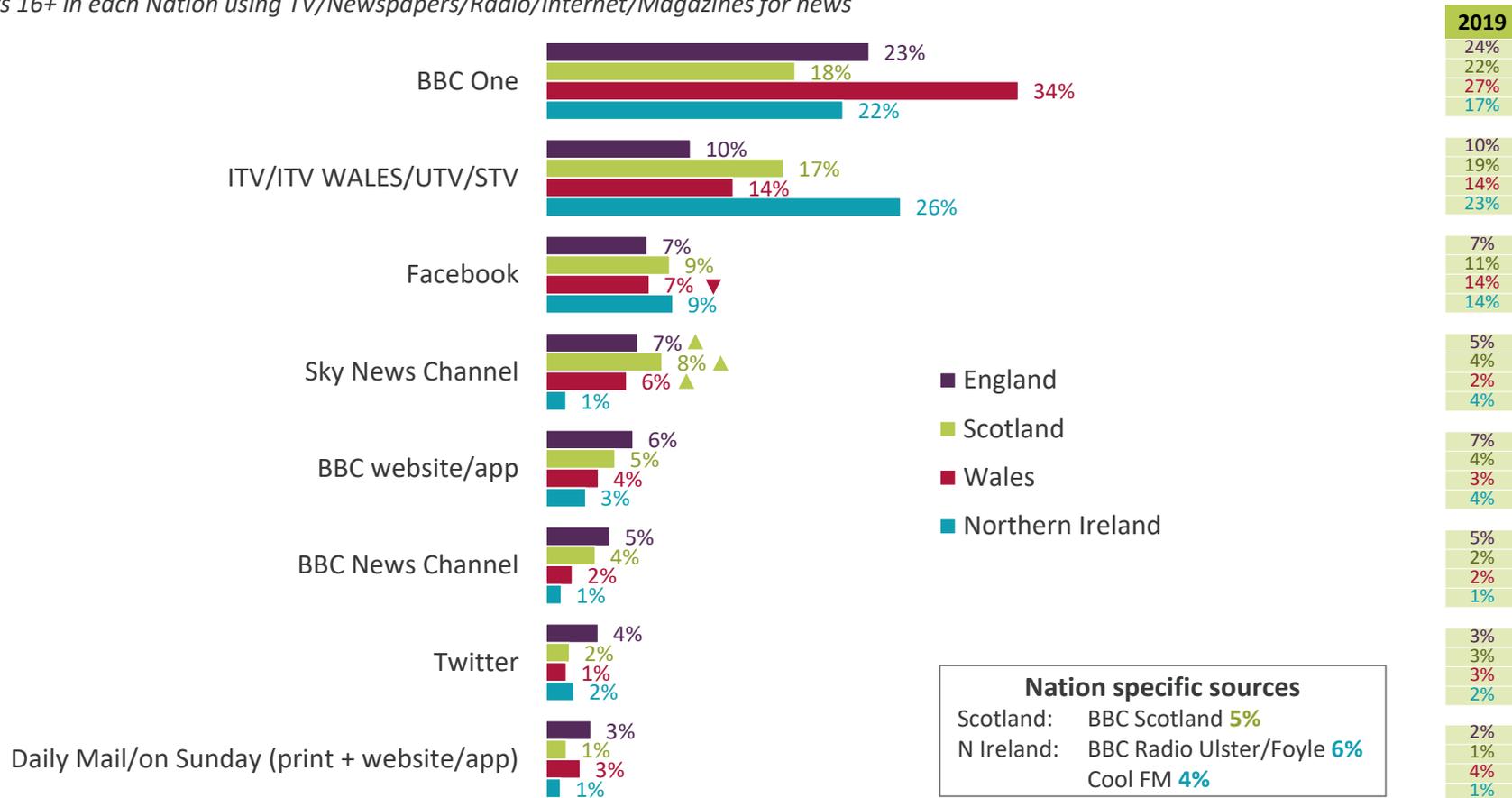
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

BBC One is the single most important news source in Wales and England.  
UTV and BBC One are the most important sources in Northern Ireland, while  
BBC One and STV are equally important in Scotland

**Figure 14.6**

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 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 2020/2019 – England=3032/3146, Scotland=521/531, Wales=415/433, N Ireland=346/382

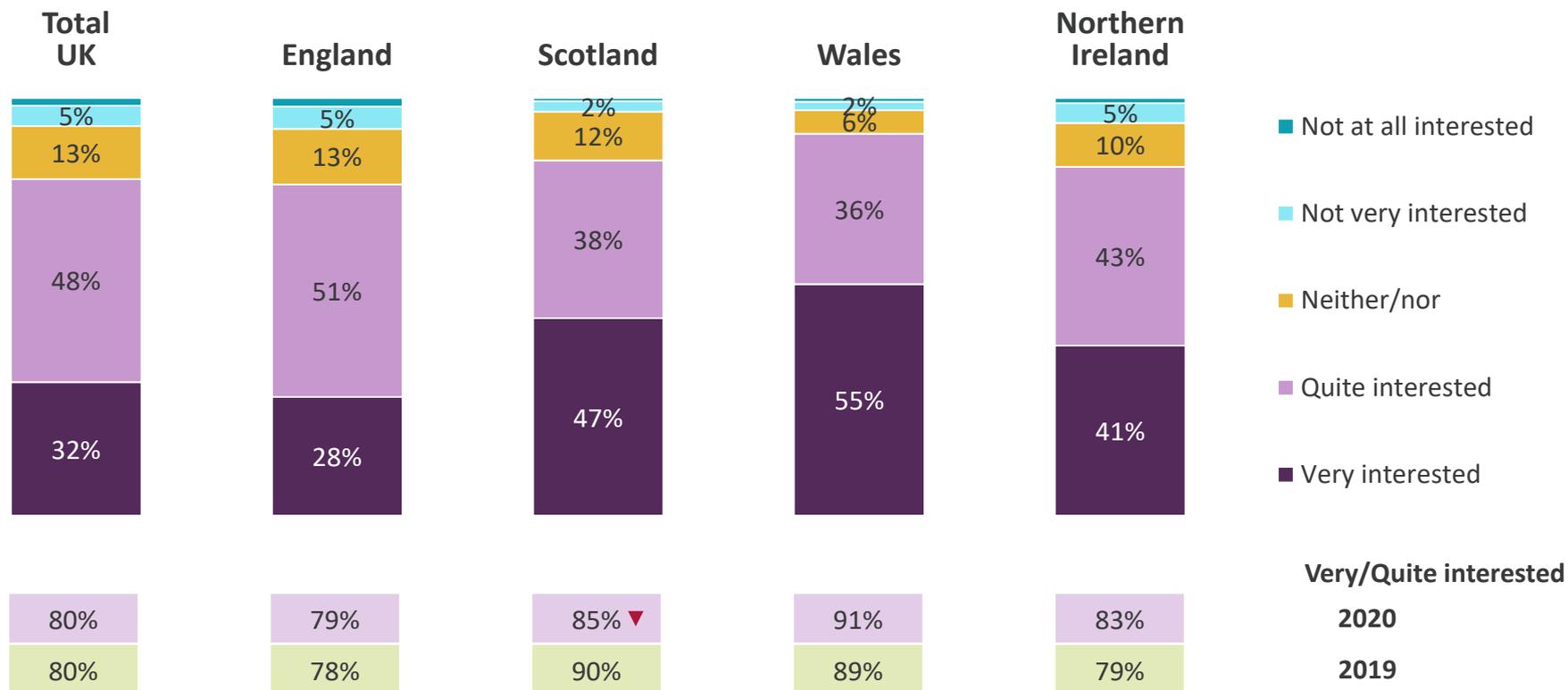
Only sources with an incidence of 3%+ in 2020 for the Total sample are shown. Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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

**Figure 14.7**

Level of interest in news about own nation – by Nation

All adults 16+ who follow news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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

Base: All adults 16+ who follow news 2020/2019 - Total=4379/4524, England=3082/3150, Scotland=526/544, Wales=420/435, Northern Ireland=351/395

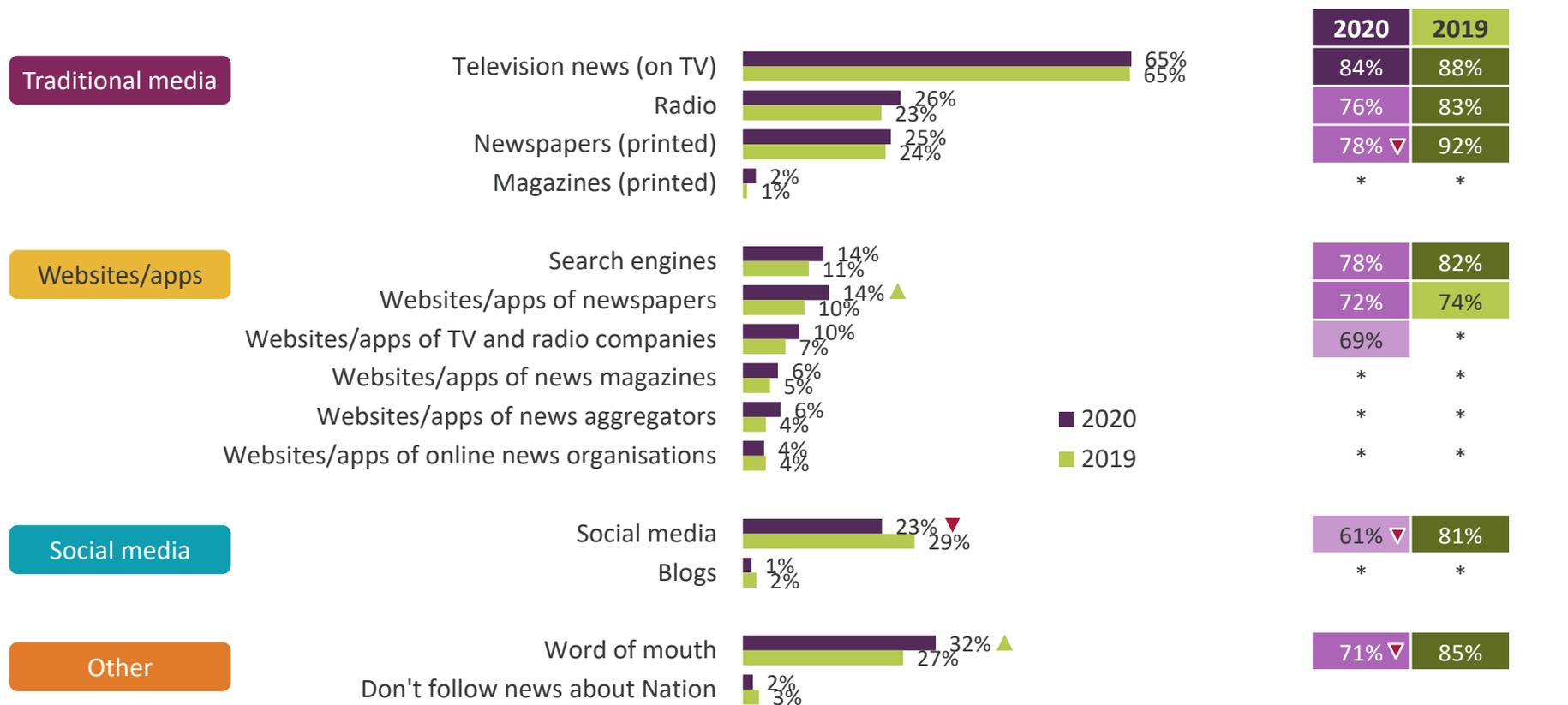
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

TV remains the most used platform for accessing news about the nations. Satisfaction with the quality of news provided about users' nation provided through newspapers and social media has fallen this year

**Figure 14.8**

Platforms used to access news about own nation

All in Scotland/Wales/N Ireland who follow news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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 – 2020=1297, 2019=1374

F5. How satisfied are you with the quality of the news about NATION available from [source]? Base: All using each source – 2020=112-868, 2019=133-906

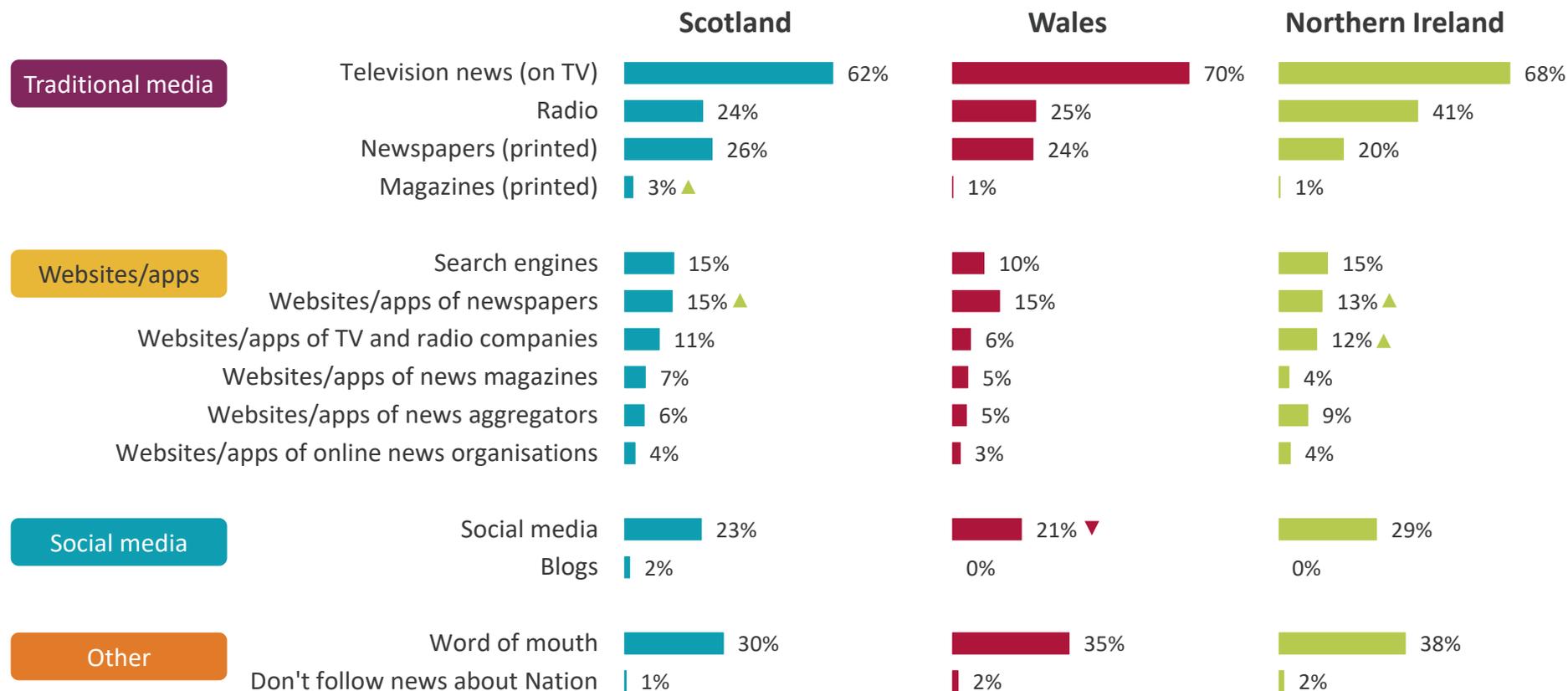
\*sample size <100. Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

# The radio is more popular for accessing news about the nations in Northern Ireland than Scotland or Wales

## Figure 14.9

### Platforms used to access news about own nation 2020 – by Nation

All in Scotland/Wales/N Ireland who follow news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2020

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=526, Wales=420, N Ireland=351

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

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 (despite a significant drop) and UTV and BBC One are joint leaders in Northern Ireland

**Figure 14.10**

Sources used to access news about own nation - 2020

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

England		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
BBC One	38%	STV	34% ▼	BBC One	51%	UTV	47%
ITV	24%	BBC One*	24% ▼	ITV WALES	33%	BBC One	46%
Facebook	15%	BBC Scotland*	18%	Facebook	19%	Facebook	21%
BBC website/app	7%	Facebook	17%	BBC Radio Wales/Cymru	8% ▲	BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle	16%
Twitter	4%	BBC website/app	10%	Local daily newspaper	6%	Cool FM	15%
BBC local/regional radio station	4%	Bauer local commercial radio	9%	BBC website/app	5%	BBC website/app	8% ▲
Google (search engine)	4%	Twitter	6%	South Wales Echo	5% ▼	RTE Channels/Virgin Media One	7%
Sky News Channel	4%	The Daily Record	5%	The Western Mail	4%	Twitter	7%
		Google (search engine)	5%	Any Wales based news site/app	4%	The Belfast Telegraph	6%
		BBC Radio Scotland	4%			Google (search engine)	5%
		BBC One / BBC Scotland NET	39%			Any NI based news site/app	5% ▲
						Local commercial radio station	4%
Don't follow Nation news	5% ▼	Don't follow Nation news	1% ▼	Don't follow Nation news	3% ▼	Don't follow Nation news	2%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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=3032, Scotland=521, Wales=415, Northern Ireland=346

Only sources with an incidence of 4%+ in each Nation are shown. Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

\*BBC Scotland new this year. BBC Scotland and BBC One Scotland figures may be affected by respondent confusion about BBC Scotland branding

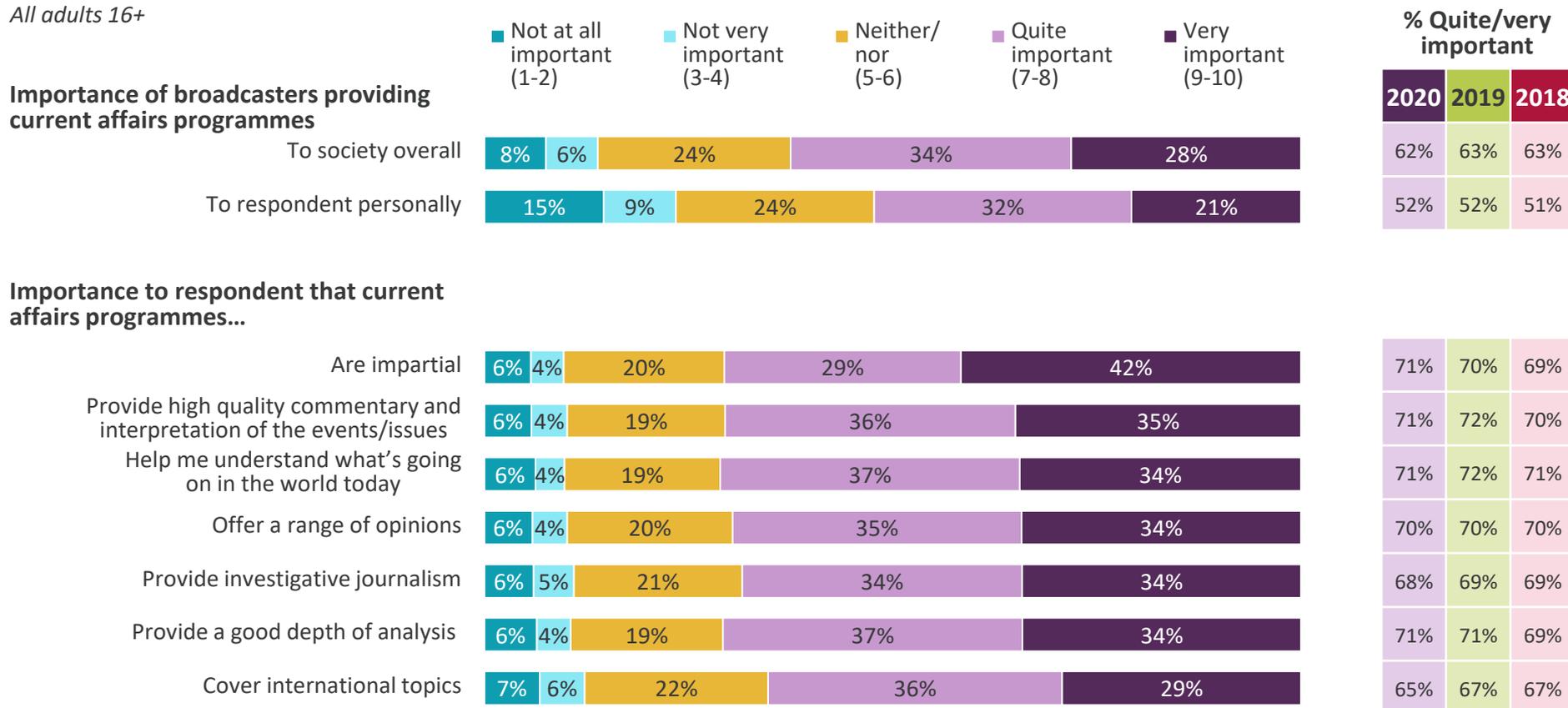
# Current affairs

The picture remains unchanged since 2018. 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 15.1**

**Attitudes to current affairs programmes**

All adults 16+



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 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+ - 2020=4576, 2019=4691, 2018=4618

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2020 and 2019

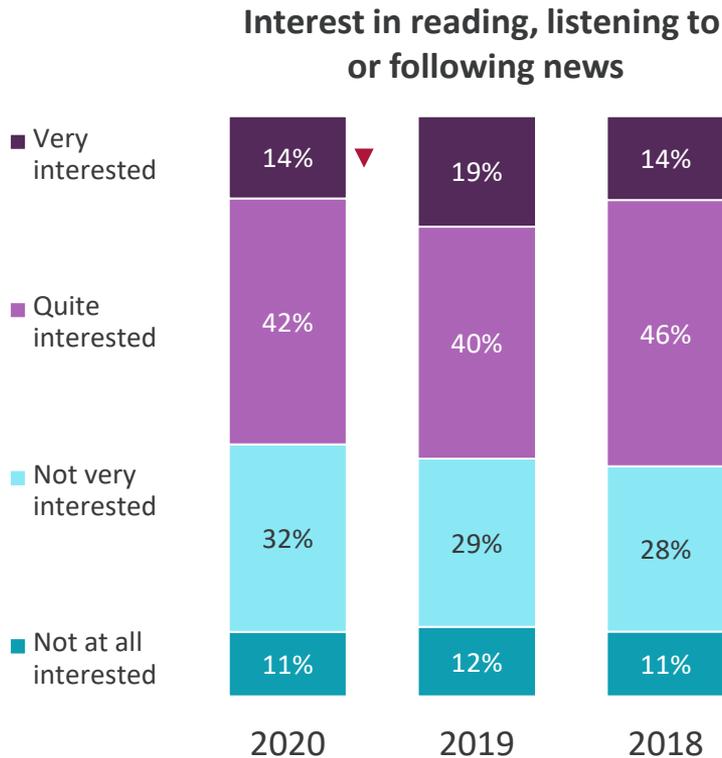
# How children aged 12-15 consume news

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, followed by a lack of relevance

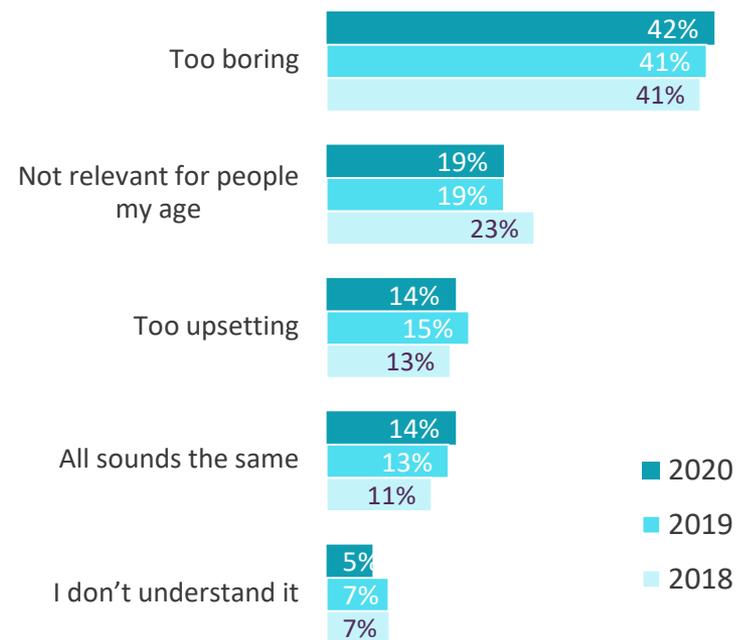
**Figure 16.1**

Overall interest in following the news

All kids aged 12-15



**42% (40% in 2019) are not interested in following the news, because it's...**



Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

Question: B1. How interested are you in reading, watching, listening to or following news? Base: All kids aged 12-15 – 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 – 2020=421, 2019=401, 2018=395

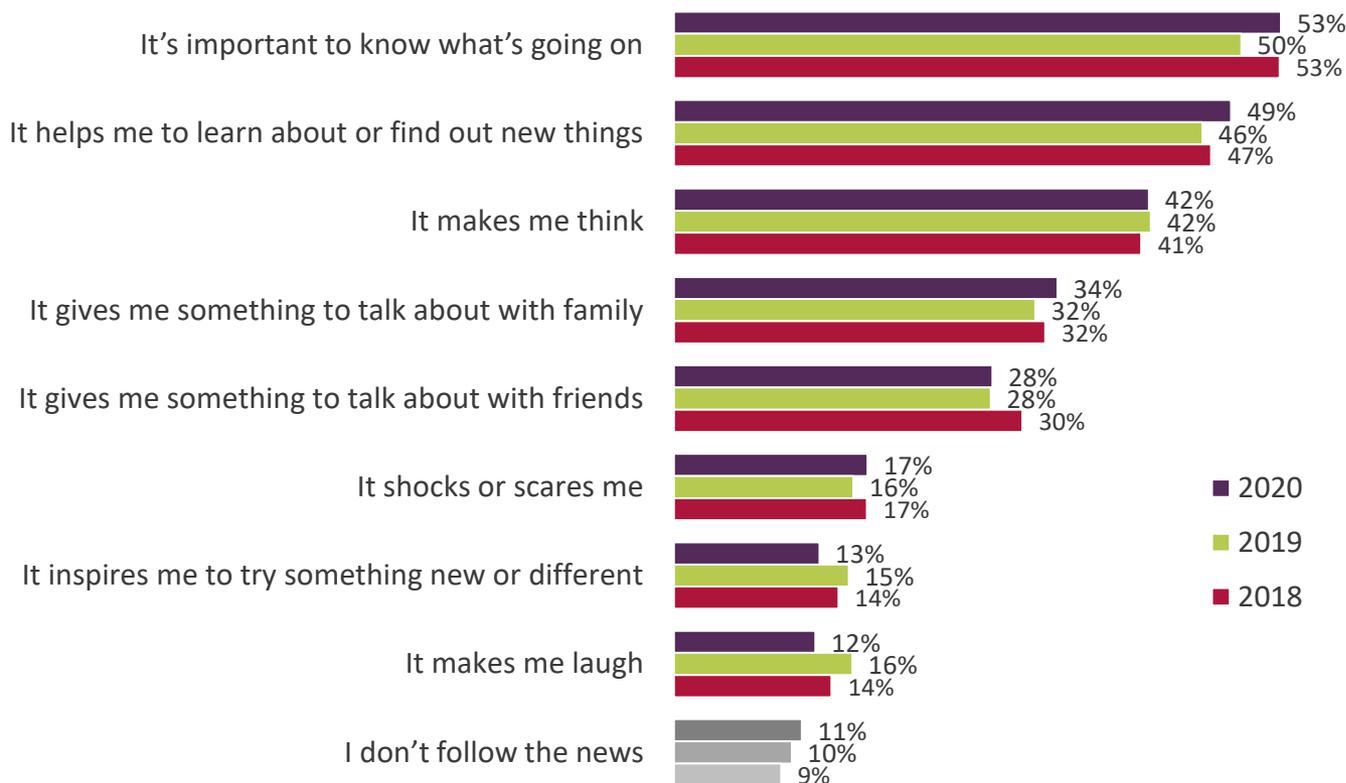
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

The main reasons for being engaged with the news have remained largely unchanged since 2018. 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 16.2

### Reasons for following the news

All kids aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

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 kids aged 12-15 – 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

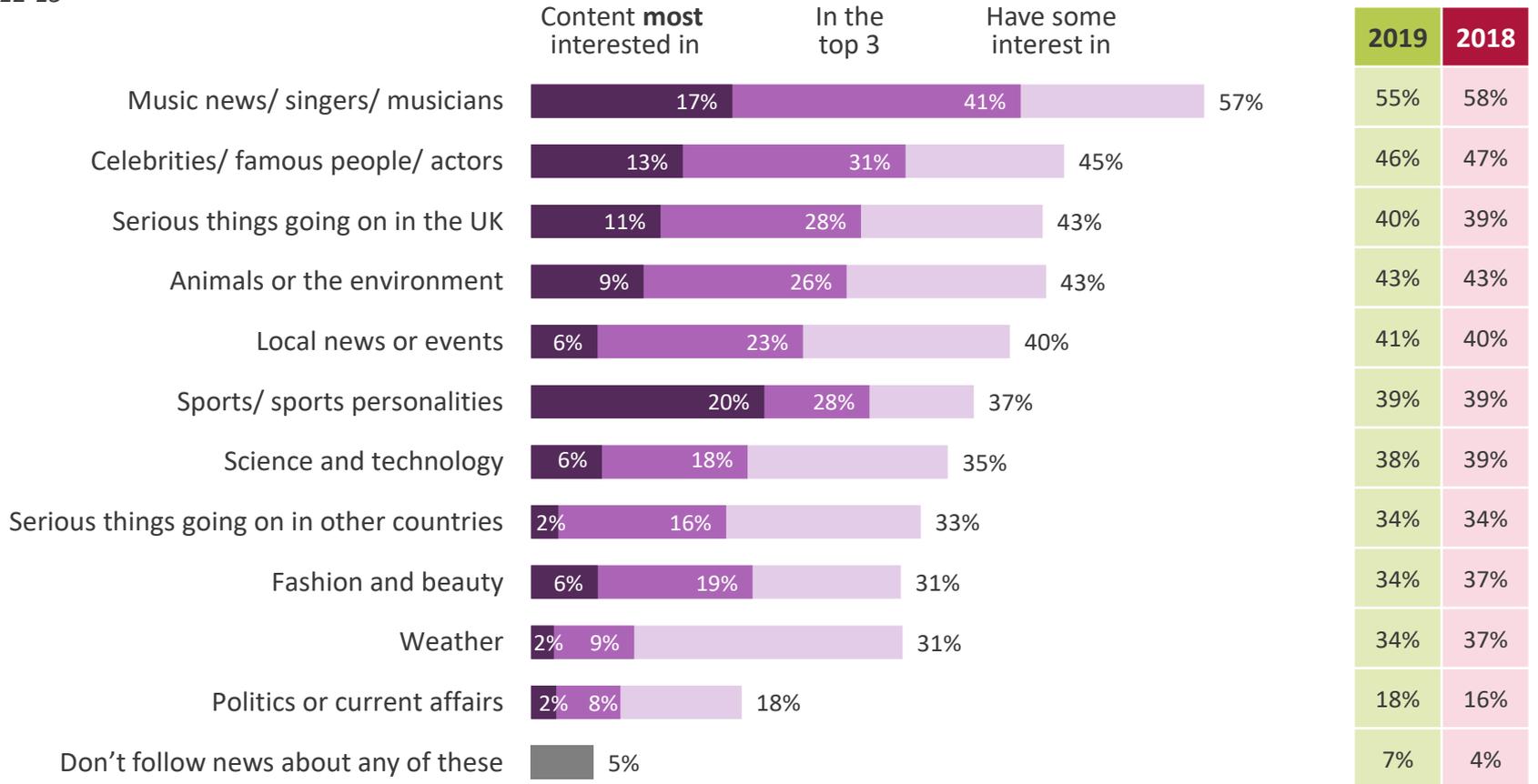
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

12-15 year olds remain particularly interested in news about music. However, one in five remain *most* interested in news about sport.

**Figure 16.3**

Interest in different types of news content

All kids aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

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 kids aged 12-15 – 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

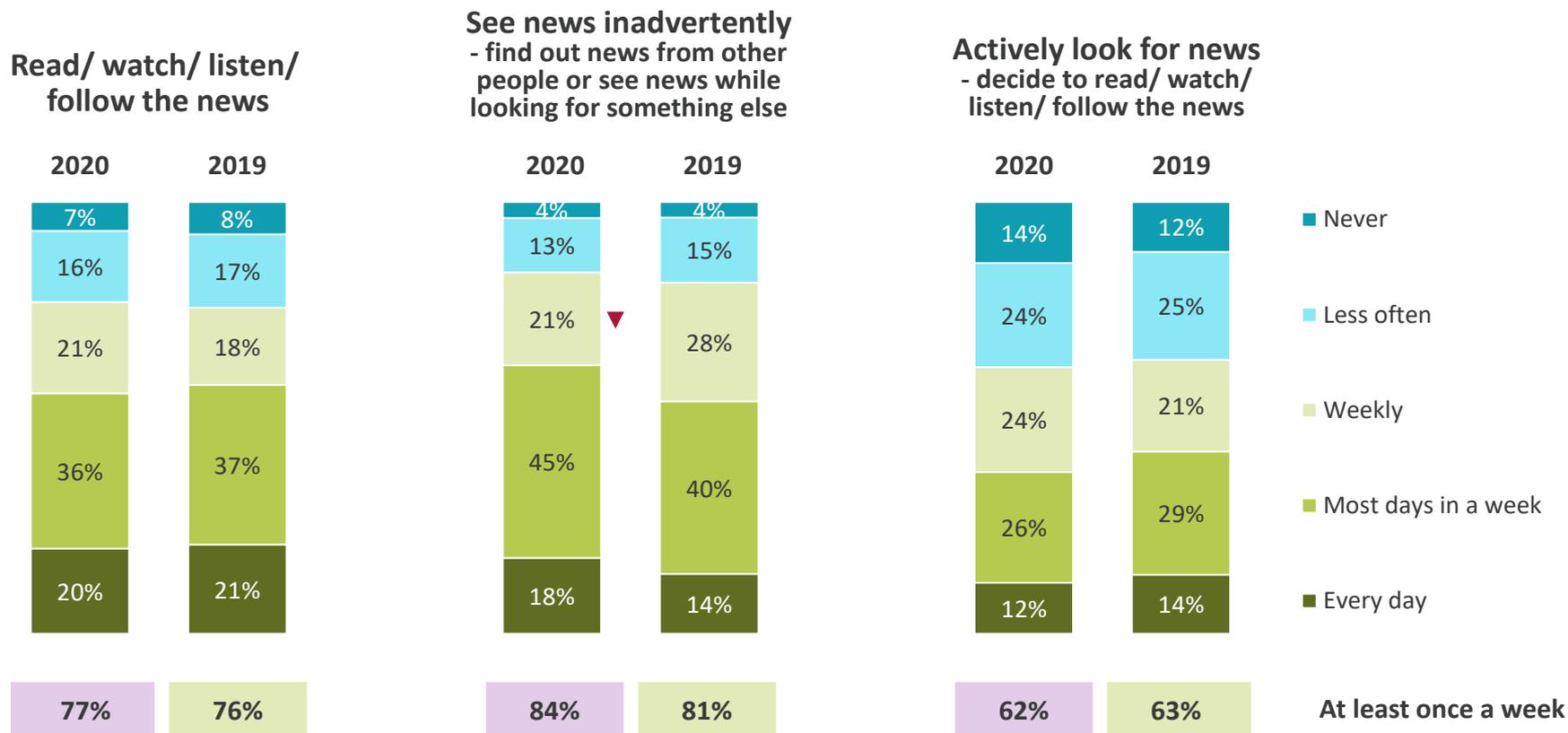
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

The frequency of following the news is almost identical to 2019. 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 16.4

### Frequency of following the news

All kids aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

Question: B5. How often do you read, watch, listen to or follow the news? Base: All kids aged 12-15 – 2020=1007, 2019=1000

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?

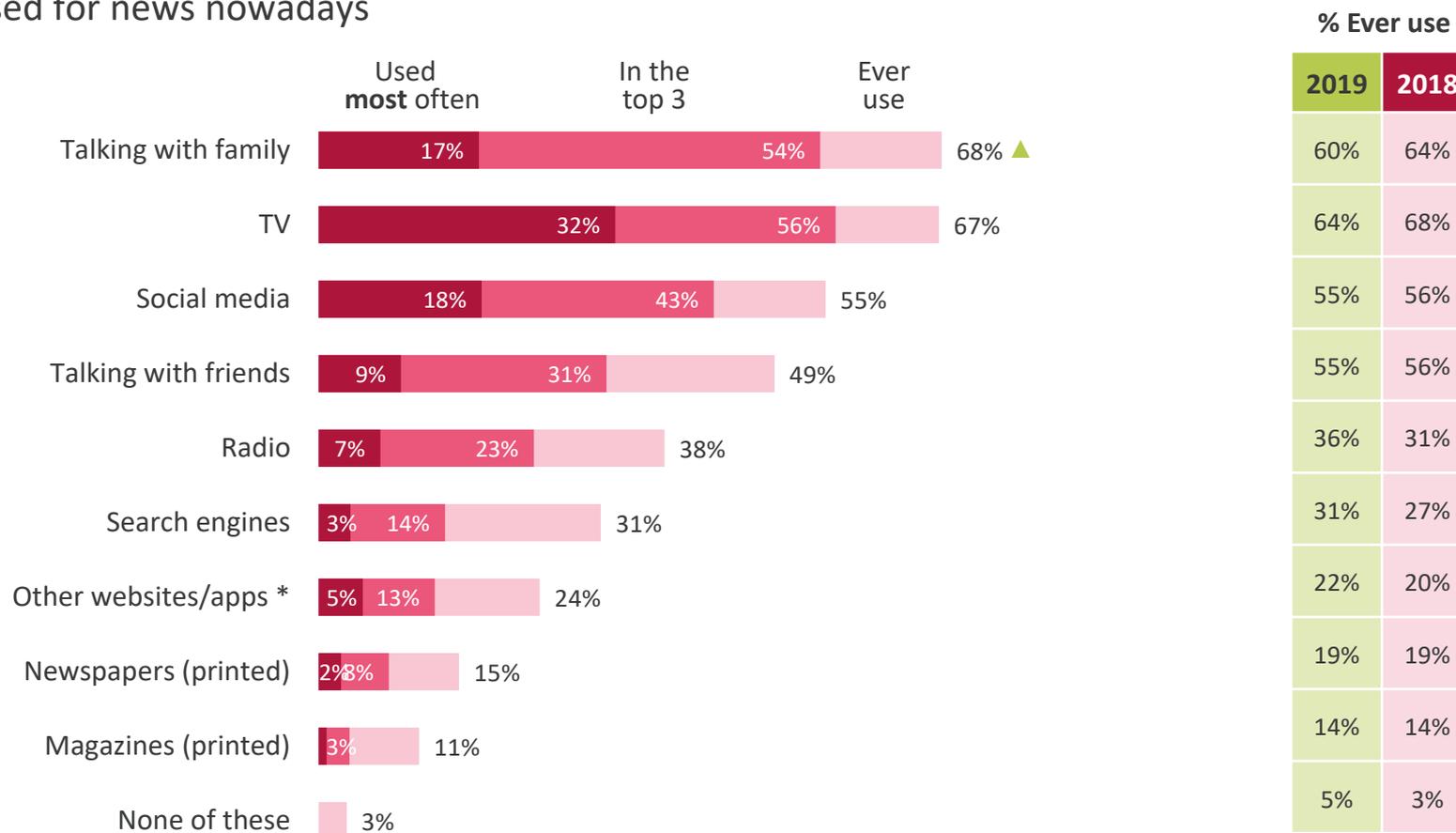
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

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

## Figure 16.5

### All platforms used for news nowadays

All kids aged 12-15



Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020 Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

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 kids aged 12-15 – 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

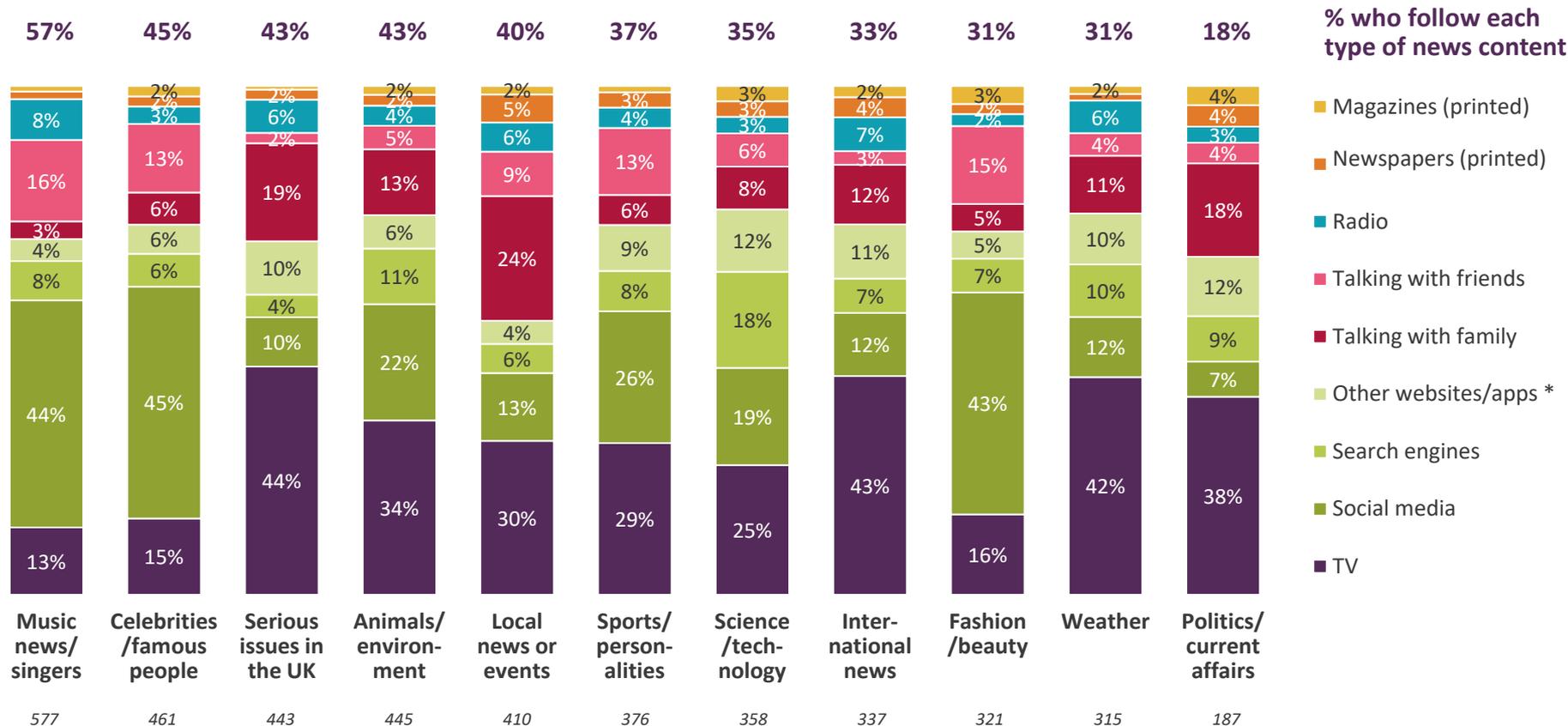
\*Other websites/apps includes any internet source, excluding social media and search engines, but including podcasts

As in 2019, 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 16.6**

Platforms/method used most often for different types of news content - 2020

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



Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

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

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

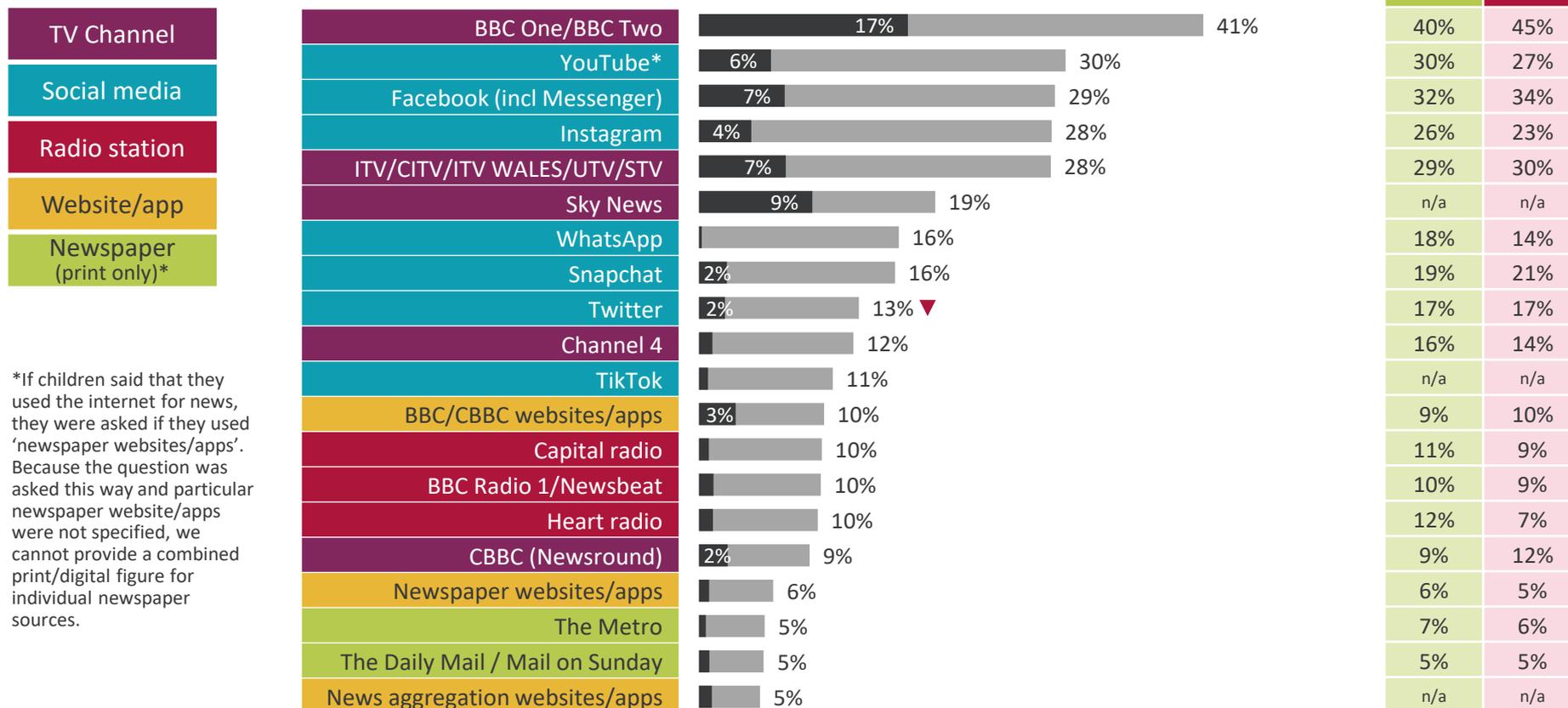
\*Other websites/apps includes any internet source, excluding social media and search engines, but including podcasts

BBC One/Two remains the most used and most important news source across all platforms. There are six social media sites in the top ten most used sources for news

**Figure 16.7**

**Top 20 news sources**

All kids aged 12-15



\*If children said that they used the internet for news, they were asked if they used 'newspaper websites/apps'. Because the question was asked this way and particular newspaper website/apps were not specified, we cannot provide a combined print/digital figure for individual newspaper sources.

Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020 Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

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 kids aged 12-15 – 2020=1007, 2019=1000, 2018=1001

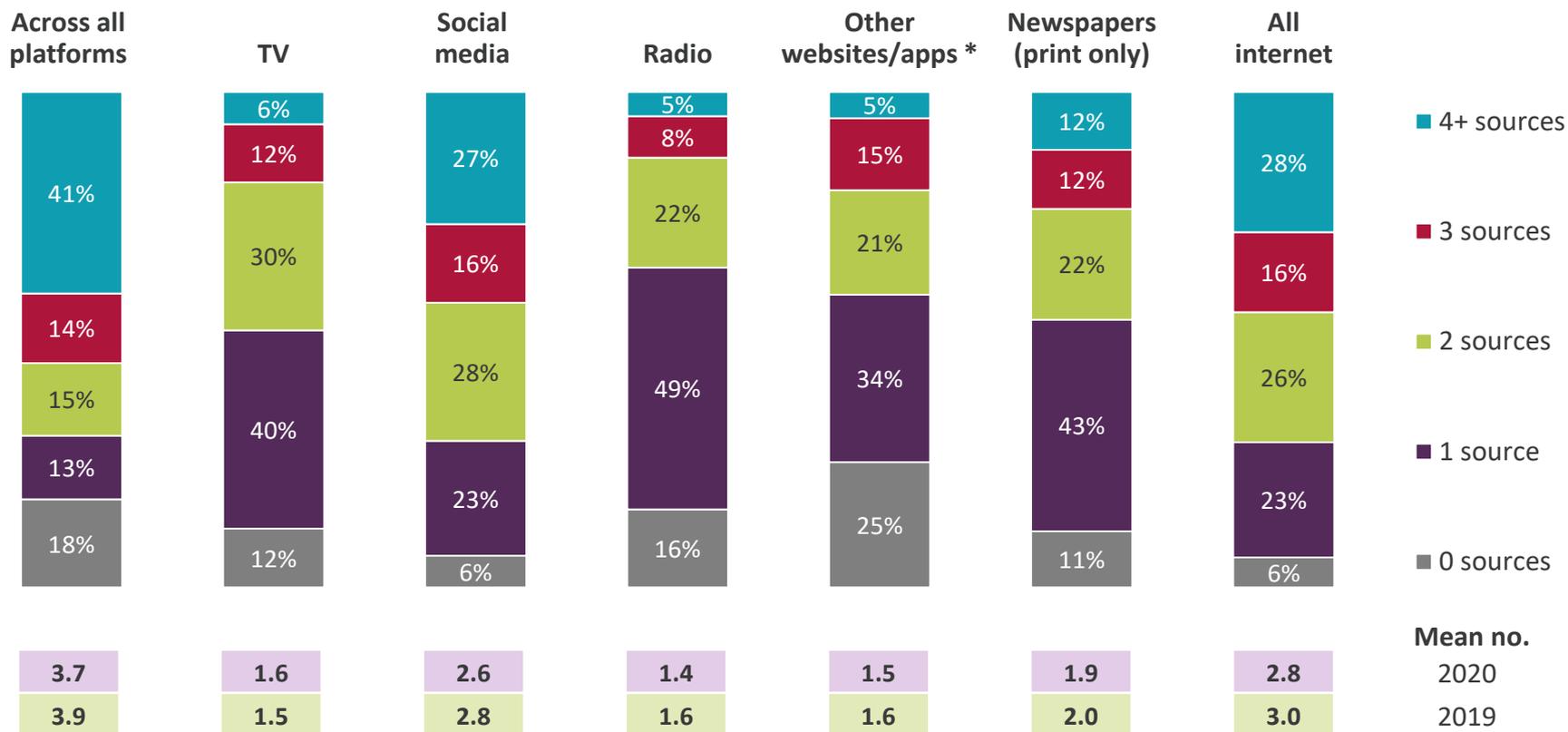
\*YouTube is a net for YouTube as a 'social media' channel plus YouTube website/app as 'an other online' channel

# Across all platforms, an average of 3.7 individual sources are used for news. Social media news users tend to have the most individual sources

## Figure 16.8

Number of individual sources named - by platform

All kids aged 12-15 using each platform for news



Mean no.  
2020  
2019

Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

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 2020 – All platforms=1007, TV=683, Social media=555, Radio=386, Other online=208, Newspapers=159, All internet (Social media and/or Other online)=632 \*Other websites/apps includes any internet source, excluding social media and search engines

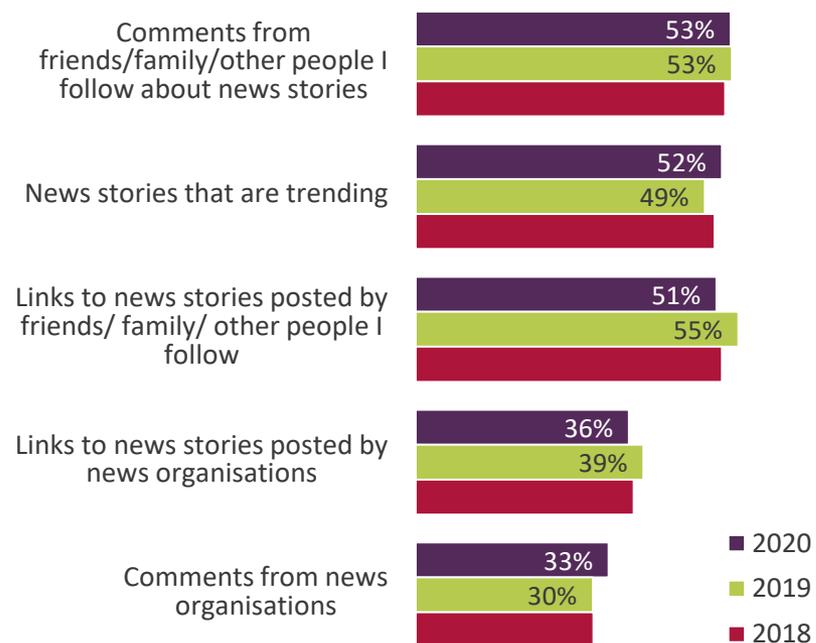
Note: Some respondents did not name specific sources within a platform so appear as having zero sources

55% of 12-15s claim to access news via social media. They are most likely to access news via comments, trending news and links posted by friends/family. The most common actions include clicking on stories and looking at comments

**Figure 16.9**

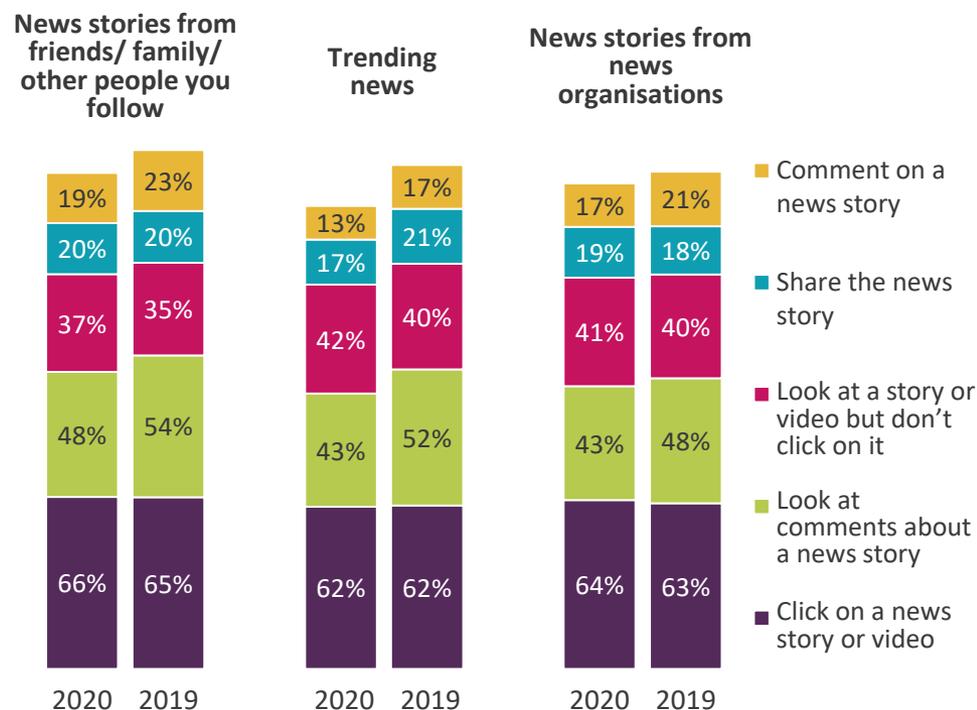
**How news is accessed via social media**

*All kids 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 Kids News Consumption Survey 2020 Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

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 – 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 2020/2019 – News stories from friends/family/other people=395/414, Trending news=292/268, News organisations=288/288

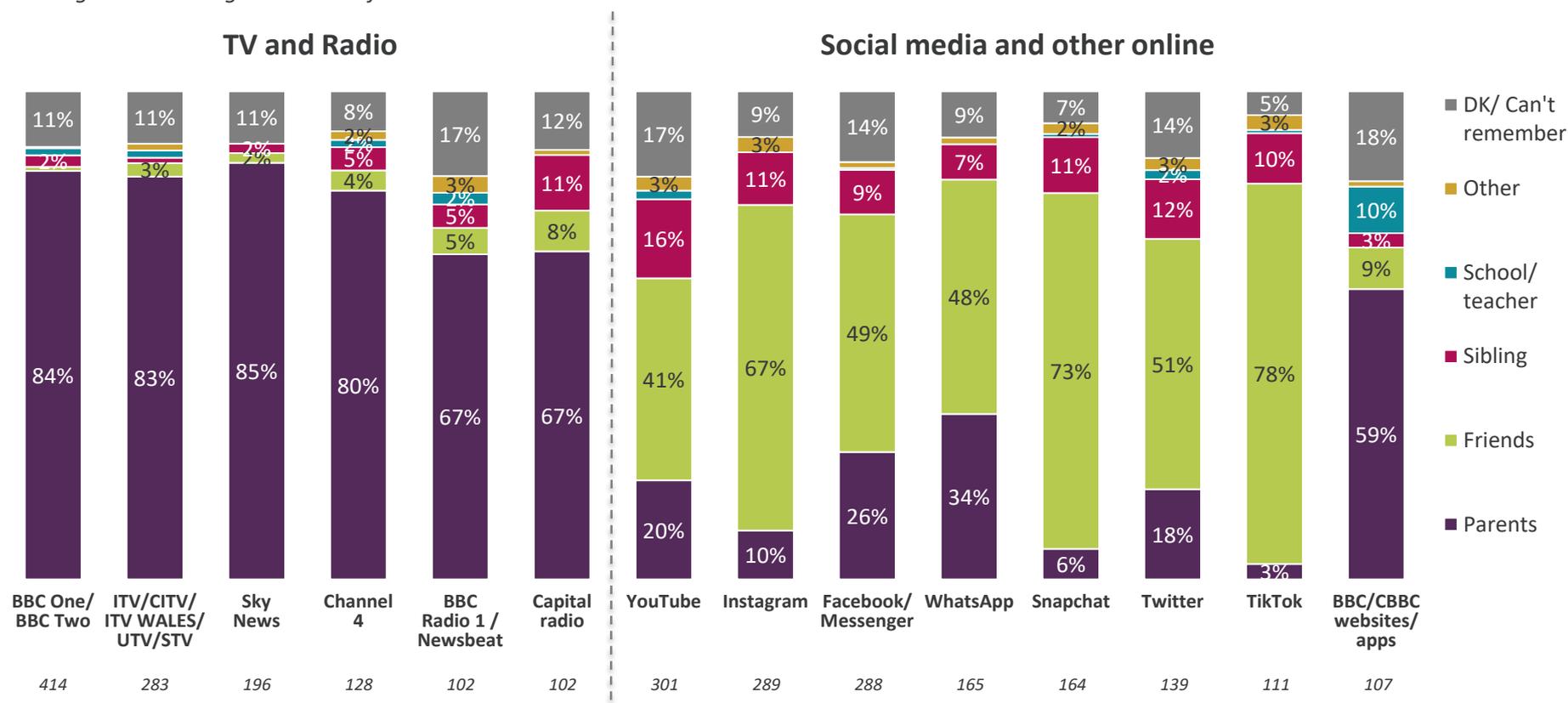
Note: Columns do not sum to 100% (this was a multi-code question)

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 TV and radio

**Figure 16.10**

**Initial introduction to news sources - 2020**

All kids aged 12-15 using each source for news



Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

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

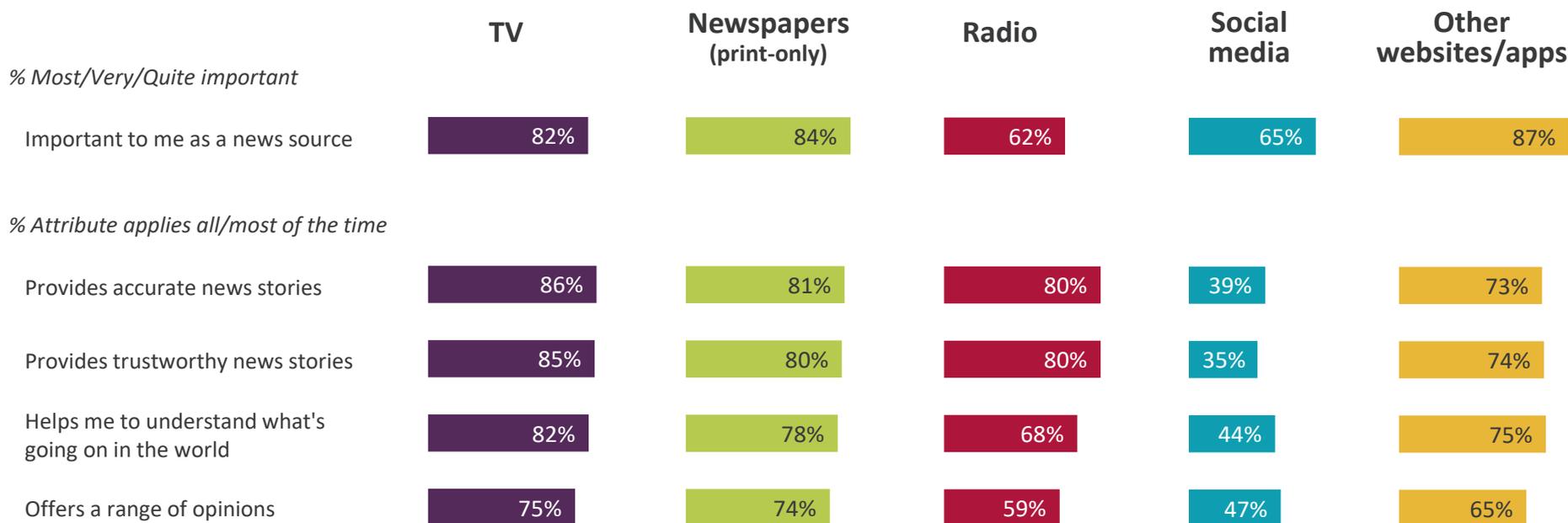
Base: All kids aged 12-15 who use each source for news (bases shown above, only sources used by 100+ respondents included)

Users of TV and Newspapers tend to give ratings at or above 80% across the majority of the attributes asked about. By comparison, social media users give comparatively low scores, especially for 'trustworthy' and 'accuracy'

## Figure 16.11

### Attributes of news platforms - 2020

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



Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 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 kids aged 12-15 who use each platform for news – TV=1122, Newspapers=317, Radio=559, Social media=1510, Other websites/apps =315

BBC/CBBC website/app, Sky News, BBC One/Two and Channel 4 tend to receive the best ratings (above 80%) across most of the attributes

**Figure 16.12**

**Attributes of news sources – 2020**

All kids aged 12-15 using each source for news

TV and Radio						Social media and other websites/apps							
BBC One/ BBC Two	ITV/CITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV	Sky News	Channel 4	BBC Radio 1/ Newsbeat	Capital radio	YouTube	Instagram	Facebook/ Messenger	WhatsApp	Snapchat	Twitter	TikTok	BBC/CBBC websites/apps
414	283	196	128	102	102	310	289	288	165	164	139	111	107

*% Most/Very/Quite important*

Important to me as a news source	83%	77%	89%	81%	70%	59%	70%	65%	67%	58%	58%	79%	51%	95%
----------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

*% Attribute applies all/most of the time*

Provides accurate news stories	87%	80%	89%	87%	89%	74%	45%	38%	41%	33%	29%	50%	25%	87%
Provides trustworthy news stories	85%	82%	88%	82%	84%	79%	39%	33%	36%	31%	25%	53%	23%	93%
Helps me to understand what's going on in the world	81%	79%	86%	80%	81%	65%	50%	43%	43%	38%	36%	60%	34%	87%
Offers a range of opinions	71%	73%	78%	76%	68%	57%	51%	46%	48%	40%	38%	60%	40%	75%

Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 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 kids aged 12-15 who use each source for news (bases shown above, only sources used by 100+ respondents included)

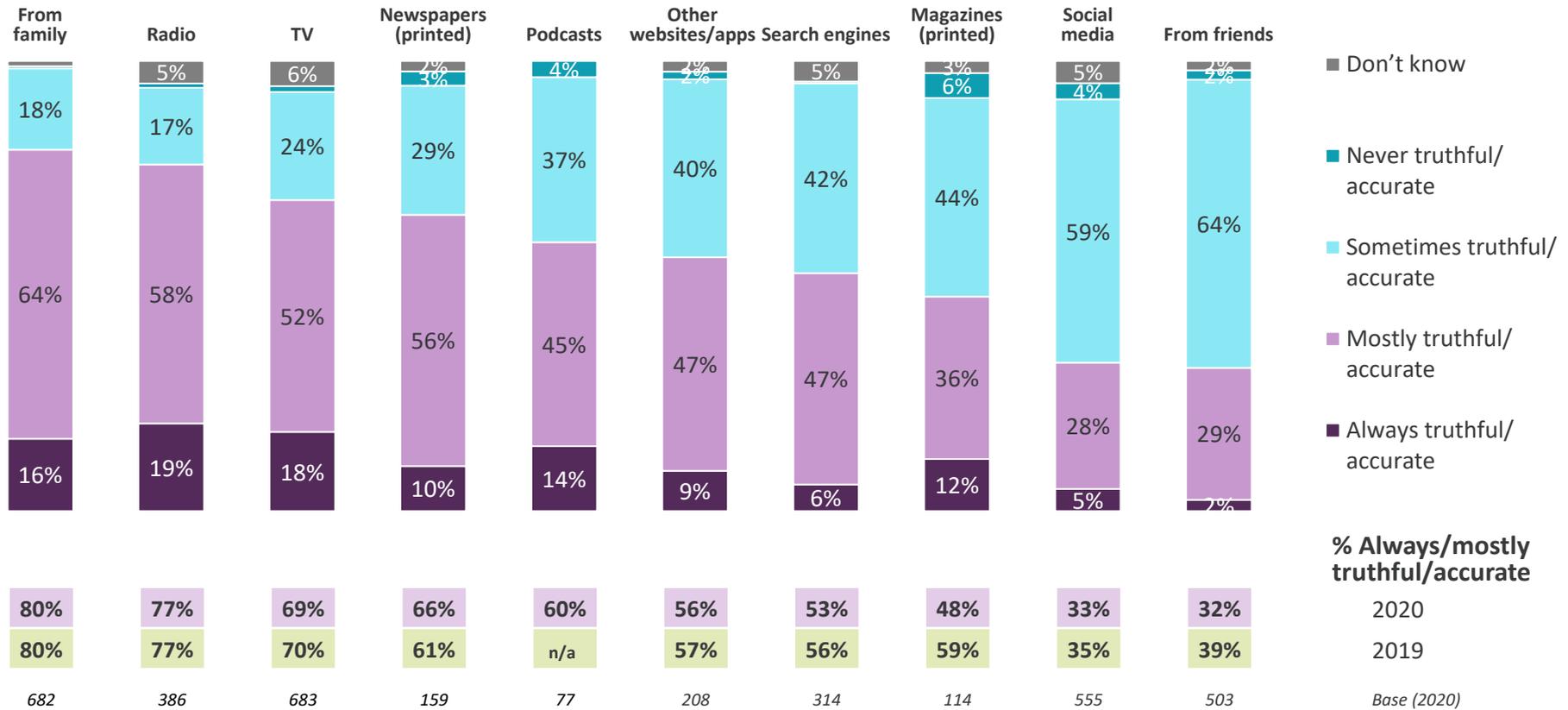
# Family, radio and TV continue to be considered the most accurate/ truthful sources, while social media and friends are the considered least truthful



## Figure 16.13

Perceived accuracy of news stories from each platform

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



**% Always/mostly truthful/accurate**

2020

2019

Base (2020)

Source: Ofcom Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

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 kids aged 12-15 who use each platform for news (bases shown above)

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

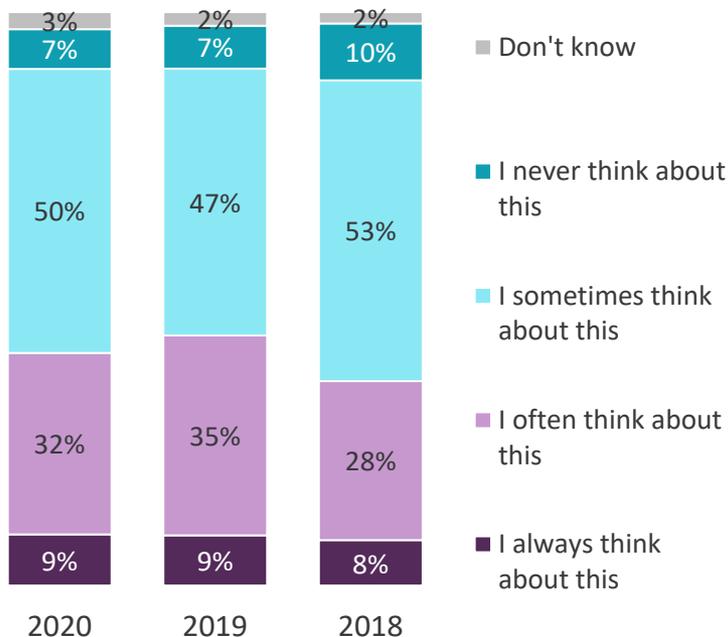
Two in five 12-15 year olds who use social media for news claim they always/often think about whether stories are reported accurately. More than half said it was difficult to tell whether the news on social media is accurate

**Figure 16.14**

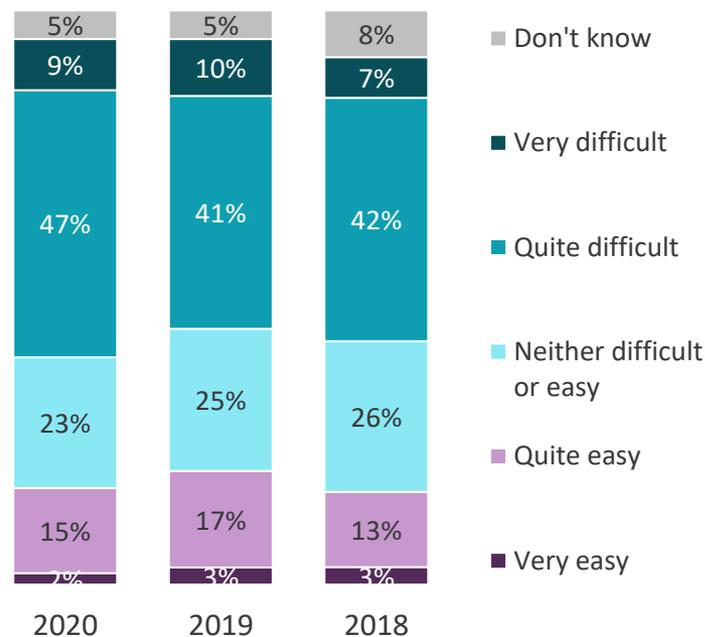
Accuracy of news stories accessed via social media

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

**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 Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

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 – 2020=555, 2019=548, 2018=556

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

Social media news users aged 12-15 were asked what they would do if they wanted to check a news story they had seen on social media. As in 2019, the most common actions were to ‘look at the comments about the story’ and to ‘check if the same story appears anywhere else’

**Figure 16.15**

Accuracy of news stories accessed via social media

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

**Perceptions of news stories on social media**



**33%** (35% in 2019) think that news stories on social media are **reported truthfully** most or all of the time



**41%** (44% in 2019) will normally **think about** whether a news story they see on social media is actually true



**17%** (20% in 2019) 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 Kids News Consumption Survey 2020

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences at 99% confidence level between 2020 and 2019

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 – 2020=555, 2019=548

12-15 year olds are increasingly familiar with ‘fake news’. Nine in ten claim to have heard of it, five in six say they’re aware of its meaning and more than half claim to have seen a ‘fake news’ story

**Figure 16.16**

**Awareness of ‘fake news’**

All kids aged 12-15



**89%** (87% in 2019) have **ever heard** of ‘fake news’



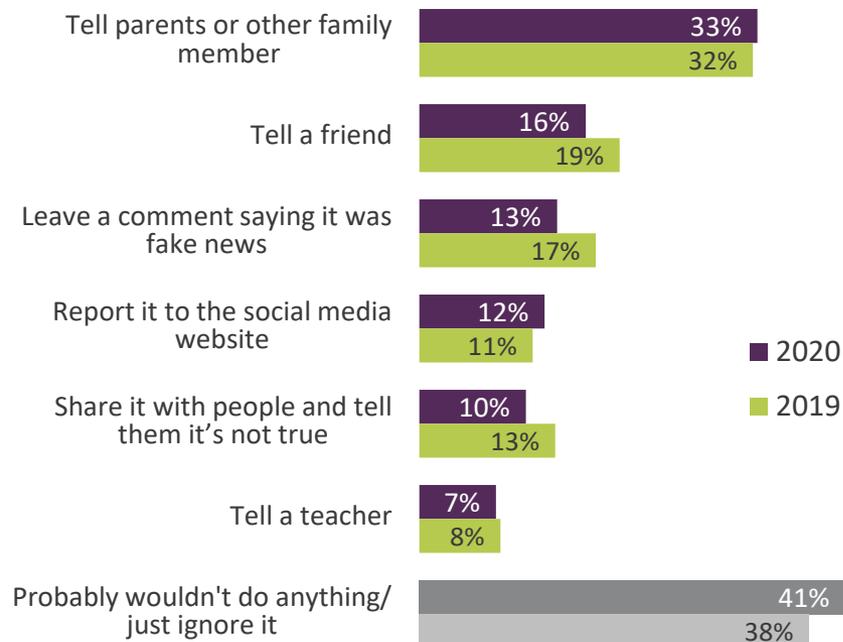
**86%** (83% in 2019) are **aware of its meaning** as ‘false/made up news stories written deliberately to mislead people’



**55%** (50% in 2019) have **seen a news story** online or on social media that they thought was ‘fake news’

**Actions might take if saw a ‘fake news’ story online**

All kids aged 12-15 aware of ‘fake news’



■ 2020  
■ 2019

# 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.
- ABC (Audit Bureau of Circulation) publishes verified newspaper circulation figures, based on sales information provided by publishers.

## News Consumption Survey – Adult methodology

- During 2017/18, Ofcom decided to move the News Consumption tracker from a 100% face-to-face omnibus approach to include online interviews. This methodology was repeated during 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- Face-to-face respondents were approached to participate by door-to-door interviewers; they then completed the survey using a tablet (CAPI). Online respondents, recruited from an online panel, were invited to complete the same survey separately via email.
- In total, 2,066 face-to-face and 2,510 online interviews were carried out during 2019/20. Face-to-face fieldwork was halted during wave 2 of the NCS adults study this year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. 56 planned face-to-face interviews that had not been achieved were replaced with online interviews. We do not believe this has had a significant impact on the results. Nations were over-represented during fieldwork to produce robust sample sizes for analysis.
- The interviews were conducted over two waves (9<sup>th</sup> November – 8<sup>th</sup> December and 24<sup>th</sup> February – 30<sup>th</sup> March) in order to achieve a robust and representative view of UK adults.
  - *NB: The combined 2019/2020 data has been reported as '2020' within this report, whilst the 2018/2019 data has been reported as '2019' and 2017/2018 data has been reported as '2018'.*
- The survey data has been weighted to correct for the over-representation of the Nations, with weights applied to age, gender and SEG within Nation to match known population profiles. A final weight step was taken to calibrate between the face-to-face and online methodologies.
- It is possible to make direct comparisons between the 2020, 2019 and 2018 data, as the methodology and question wording is consistent. However, due to the changes made to the survey in 2017/18, it is not possible to make direct comparisons to data collected before 2018.
- 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 150 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 2019 and 2018 reports.
- In total, 502 interviews from 15<sup>th</sup> November – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 have been combined with 505 interviews from 1<sup>st</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020. Quotas were set on age, gender, SEG and nation to ensure the sample was representative of the UK and the data has also been weighted on age, gender, socio-economic group (SEG) and nation in 2020. Statistically significant differences year-on-year are shown at a 99% 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.