

March 2025

The Changing U.S. News Environment

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Pew Research Center

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What we do: Generate a foundation of facts to enrich public dialogue and support sound decision-making. We conduct public opinion polling, demographic research, content analysis and data-driven social science research.

OUTLINE



**Our most recent data on
Americans' news habits**



**A deep look into how
Americans are engaging
with news online, and on
social media**



**How local news
stands out and fits in**



AMERICA FIRST
AGENDA

AMERICA FIRST POLICY INSTITUTE

AMERICA FIRST
AGENDA

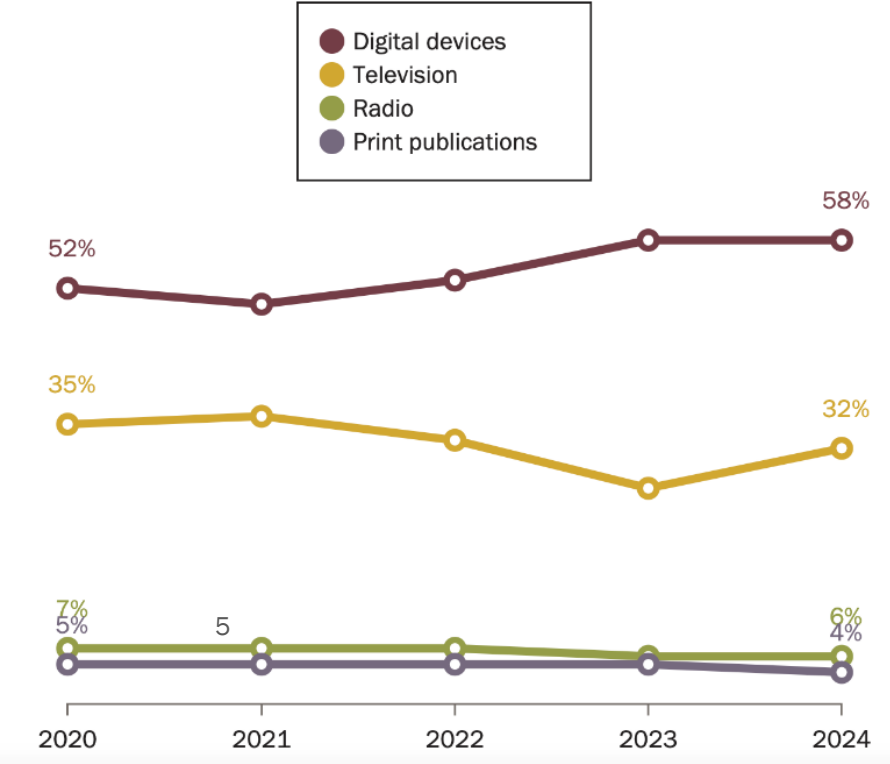
THE CHANGING NEWS AND INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT



PEW-KNIGHT
INITIATIVE

Americans increasingly prefer getting news online

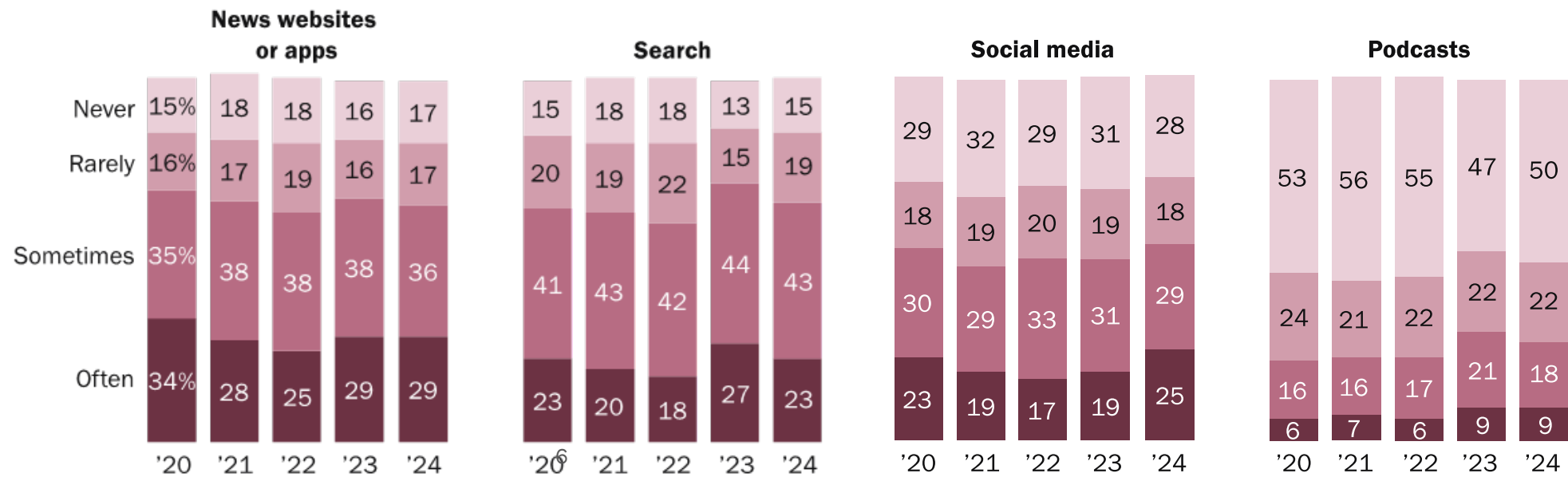
% of U.S. adults who prefer ___ for getting news



Note: "Digital devices" include smartphones, computers and tablets.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 15-Aug. 4, 2024.
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

“Digital” means more than just news websites

% of U.S. adults who ____ get news from ...



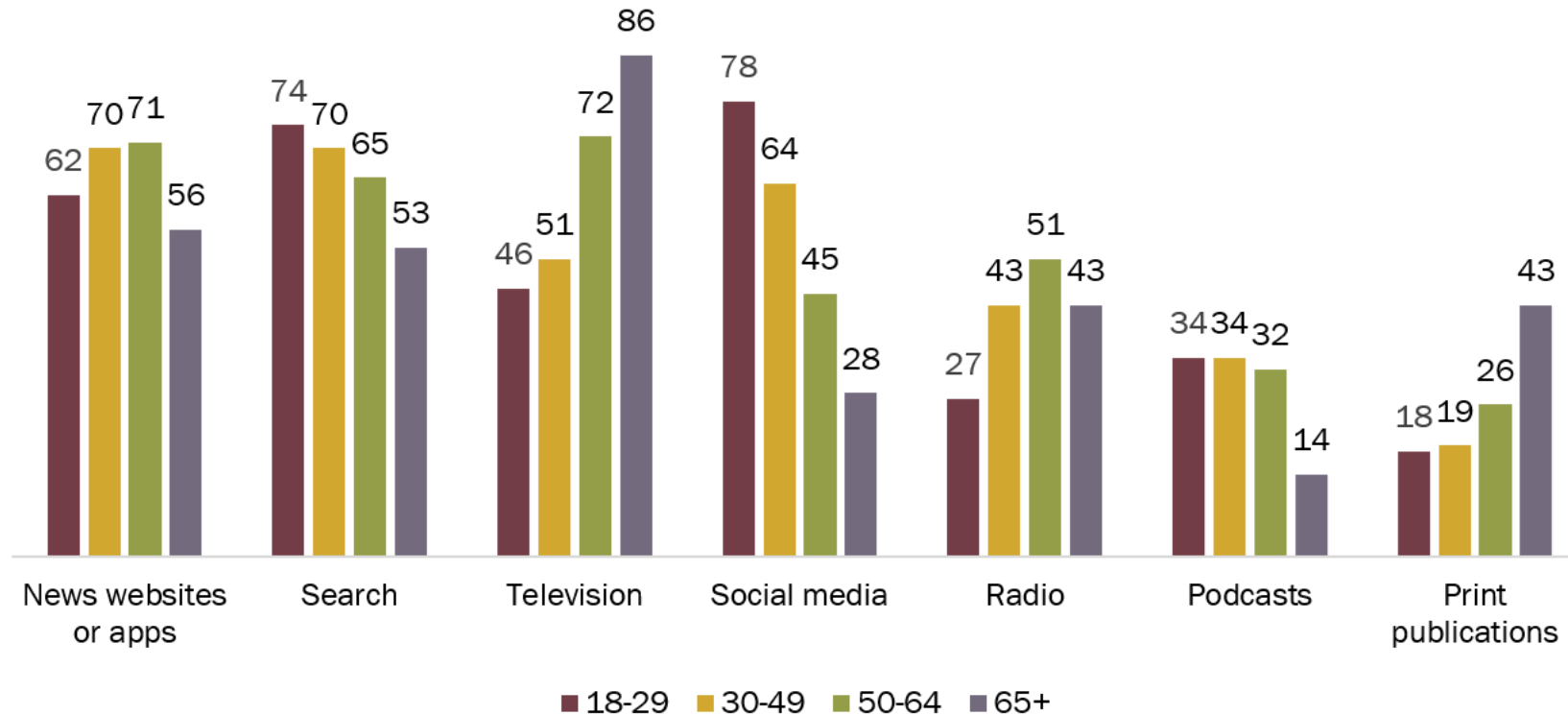
Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Respondents who do not have internet access at home did not receive these questions; they are included with those who said “Never,” along with those who say they do not get news from digital devices.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 15-Aug. 4, 2024.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Especially among the young

% of U.S. adults who often or sometimes get news from ...



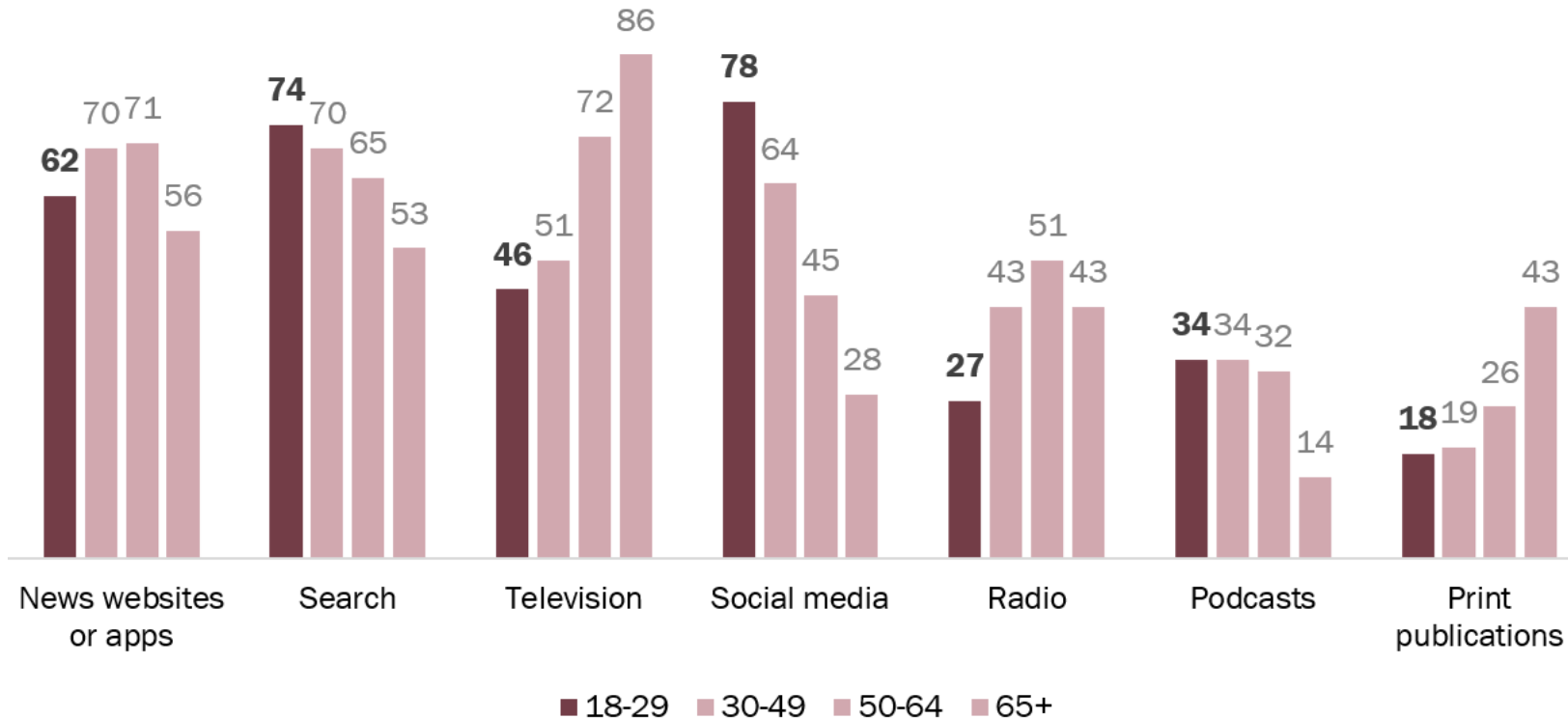
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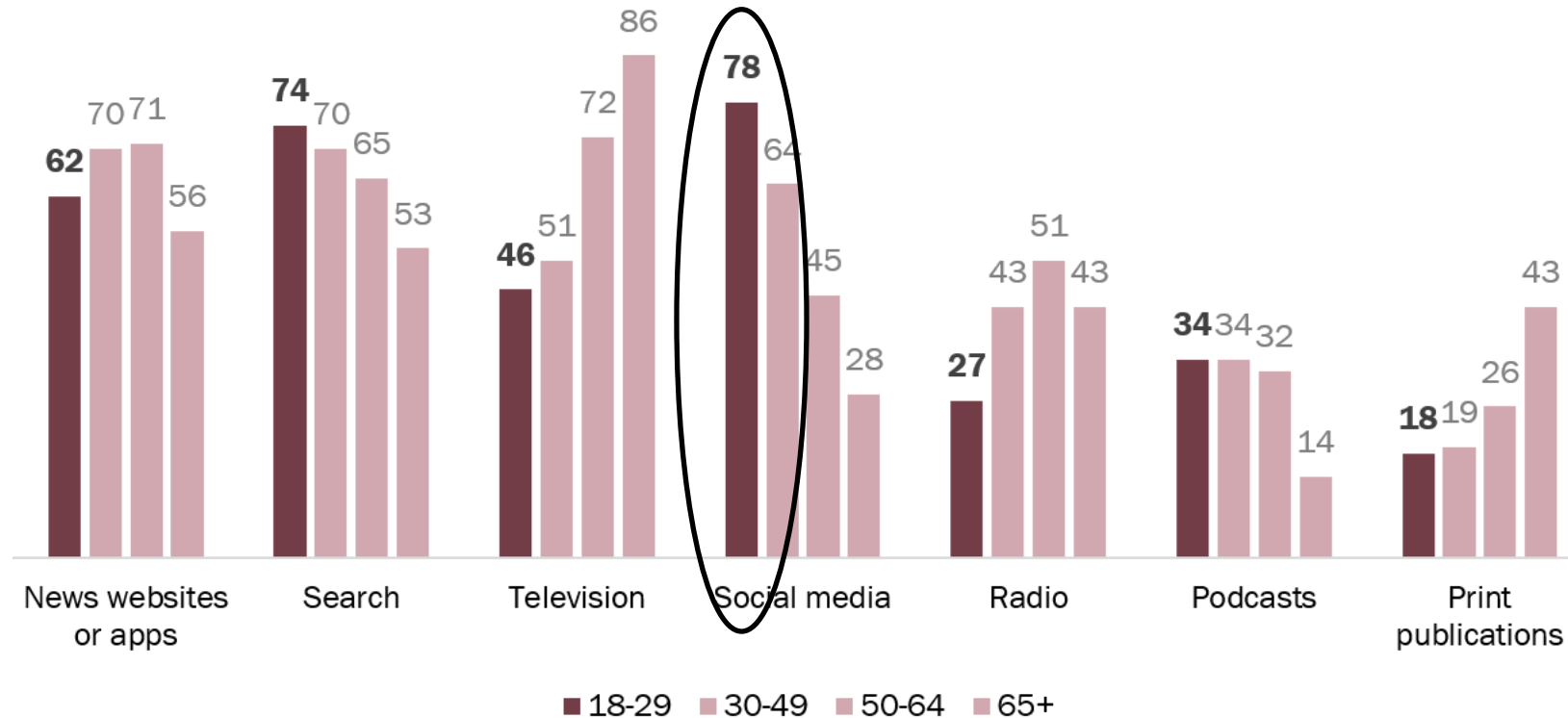
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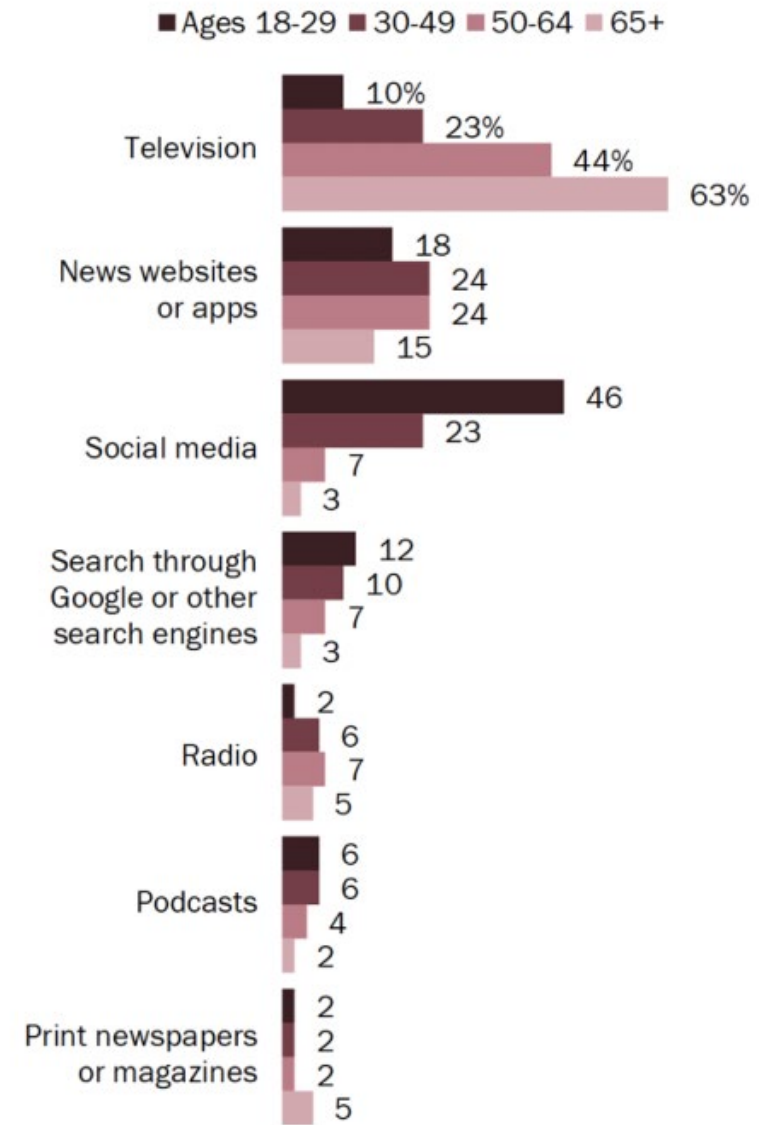
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER

We also saw this in election news habits

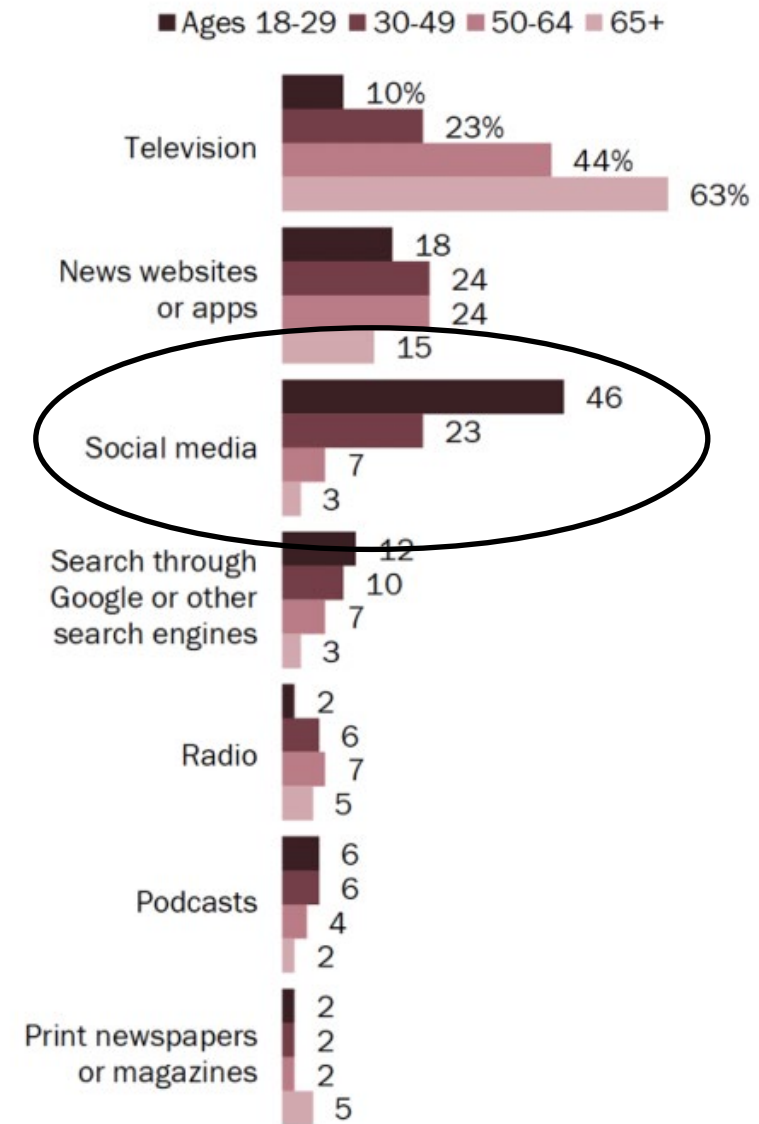
% of U.S. adults who say ___ is the most common way they get political and election news, by type



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer or said "Some other way" are not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 16-22, 2024.

We also saw this in election news habits

% of U.S. adults who say ___ is the most common way they get political and election news, by type



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer or said "Some other way" are not shown.
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SOCIAL MEDIA AND NEWS INFLUENCERS



TikTok

Videos, Music & Live Streams

TikTok Ltd.



Entertainment

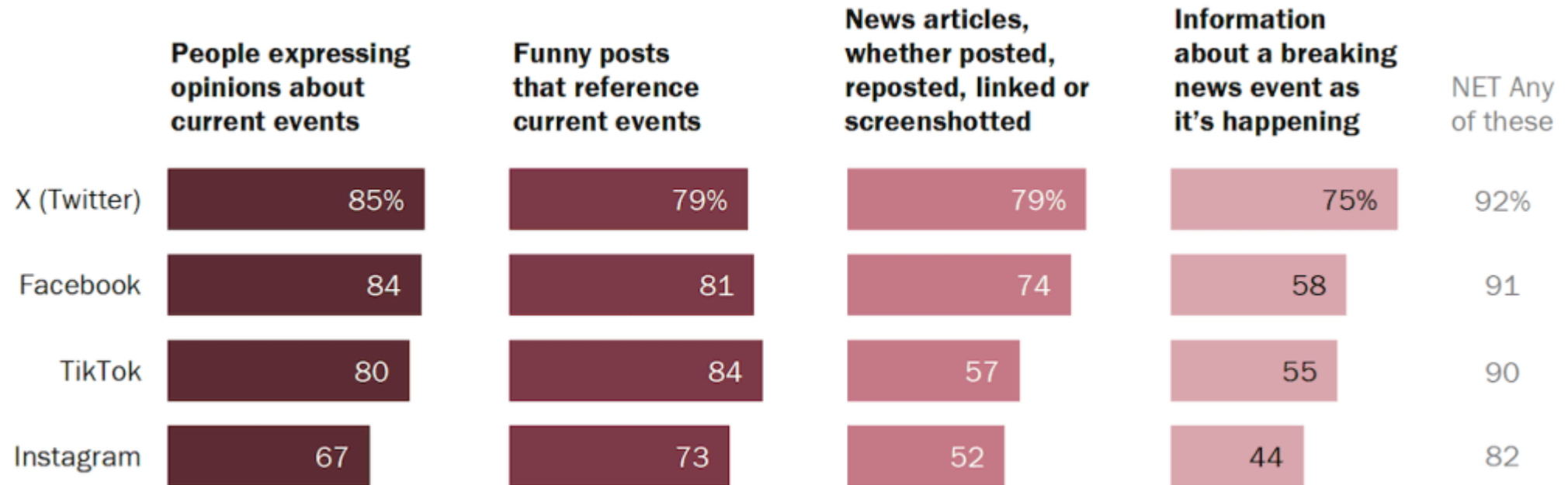
Share videos with your favourite person



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“News” on social media might not all be what you’d consider ‘news’

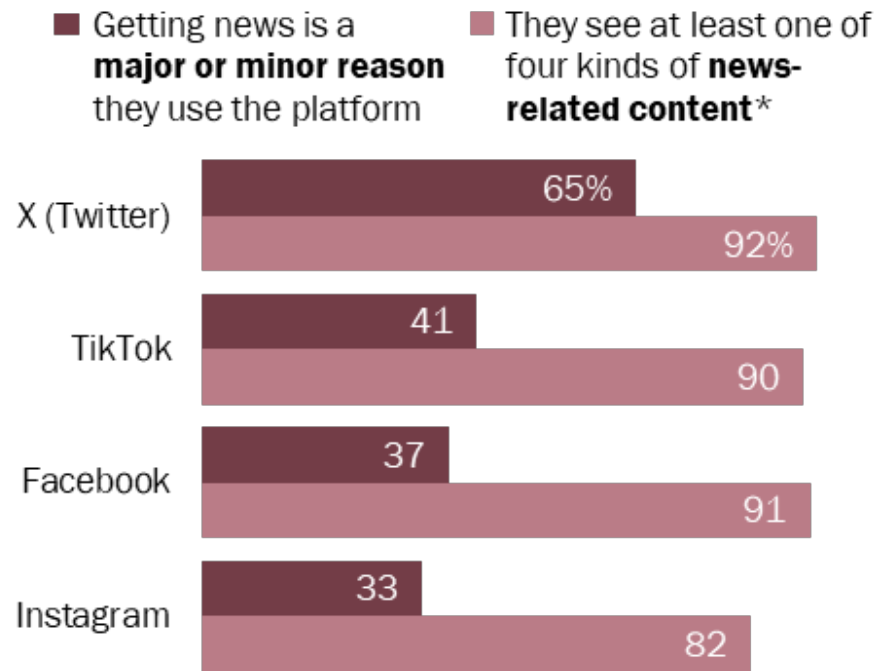
% U.S. users of each social media platform who say they ever see ___ on the platform



Note: News consumers are those who say they regularly get news on each site.
 Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted March 18-24, 2024.
 PEW-KNIGHT INITIATIVE

Getting news on these websites is often incidental

% of U.S. users of each social media platform who say ...



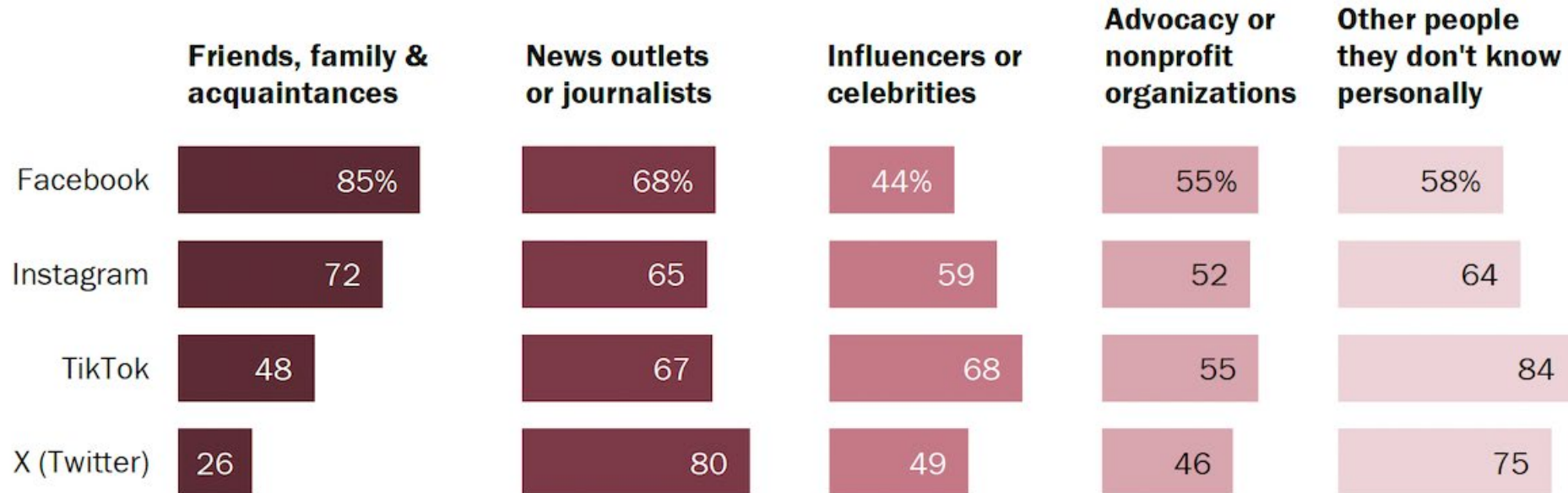
* Users of each platform were asked if they ever see funny posts that reference current events, news articles, opinions about current events, or information about a breaking news event.

Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted March 18-24, 2024.

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And news on social media comes from a variety of sources

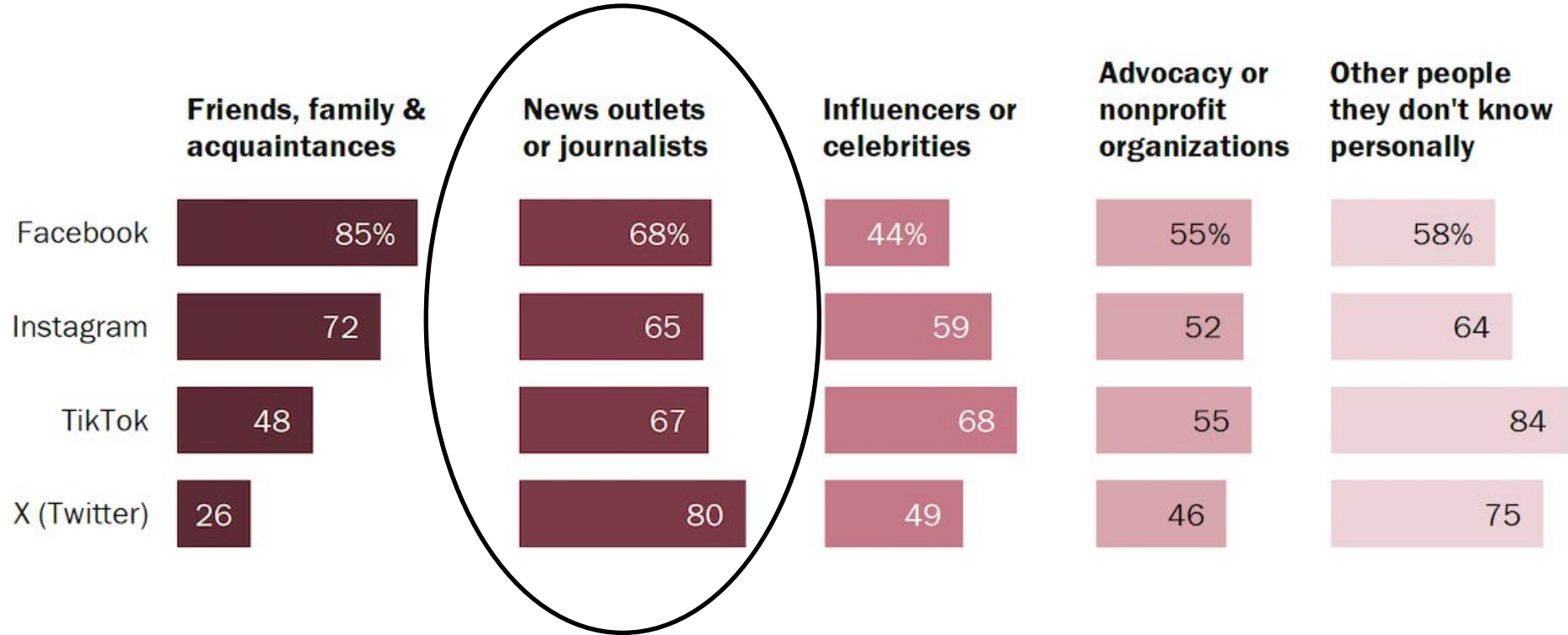
% of each platform's U.S. news consumers who say they ever get news there from ...



Note: News consumers are those who say they regularly get news on each site.
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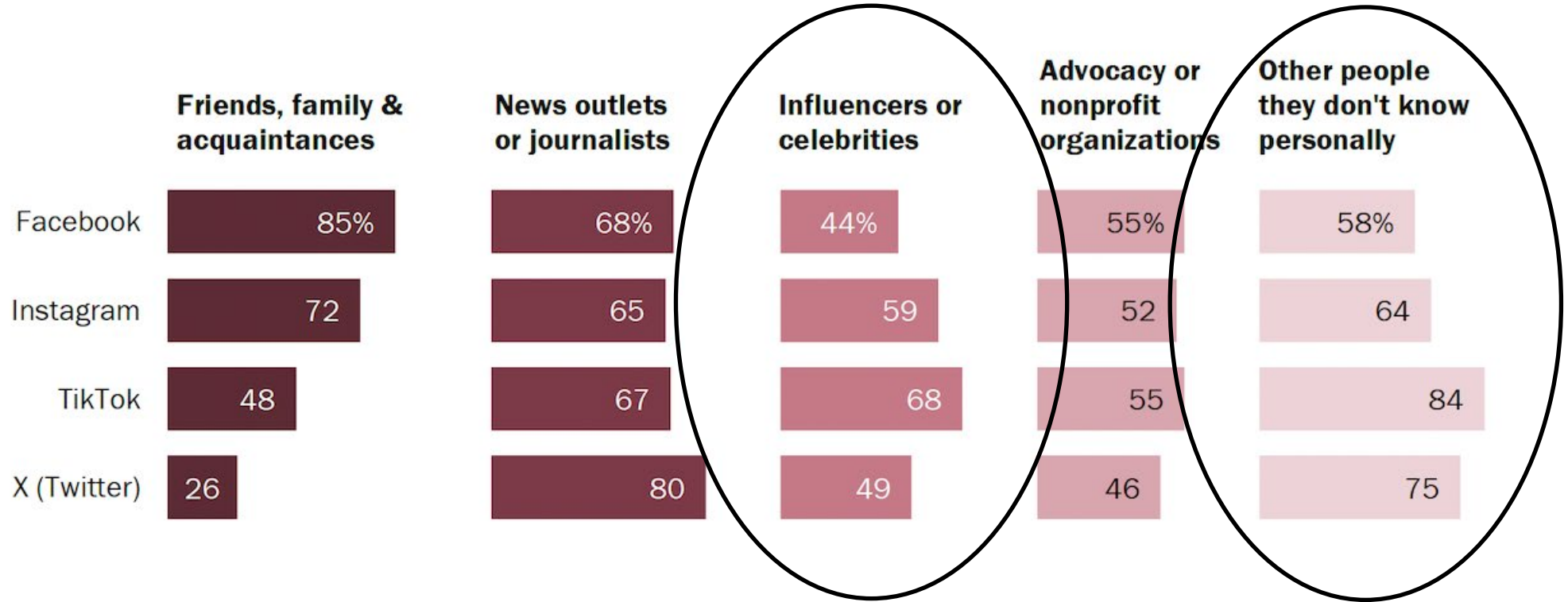
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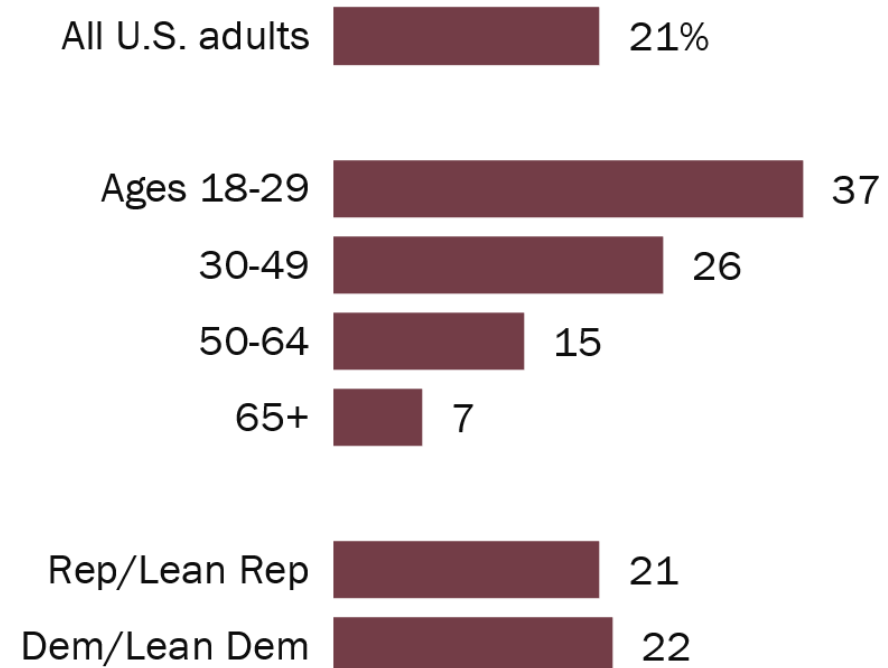
% of each platform's U.S. news consumers who say they ever get news there from ...



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Almost 4 in 10 U.S. adults under 30 get news from news influencers

% of U.S. adults who regularly get news from news influencers on social media



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 15-Aug. 4, 2024.
"America's News Influencers"

Majorities of Americans who get news from news influencers say the information they share is helpful

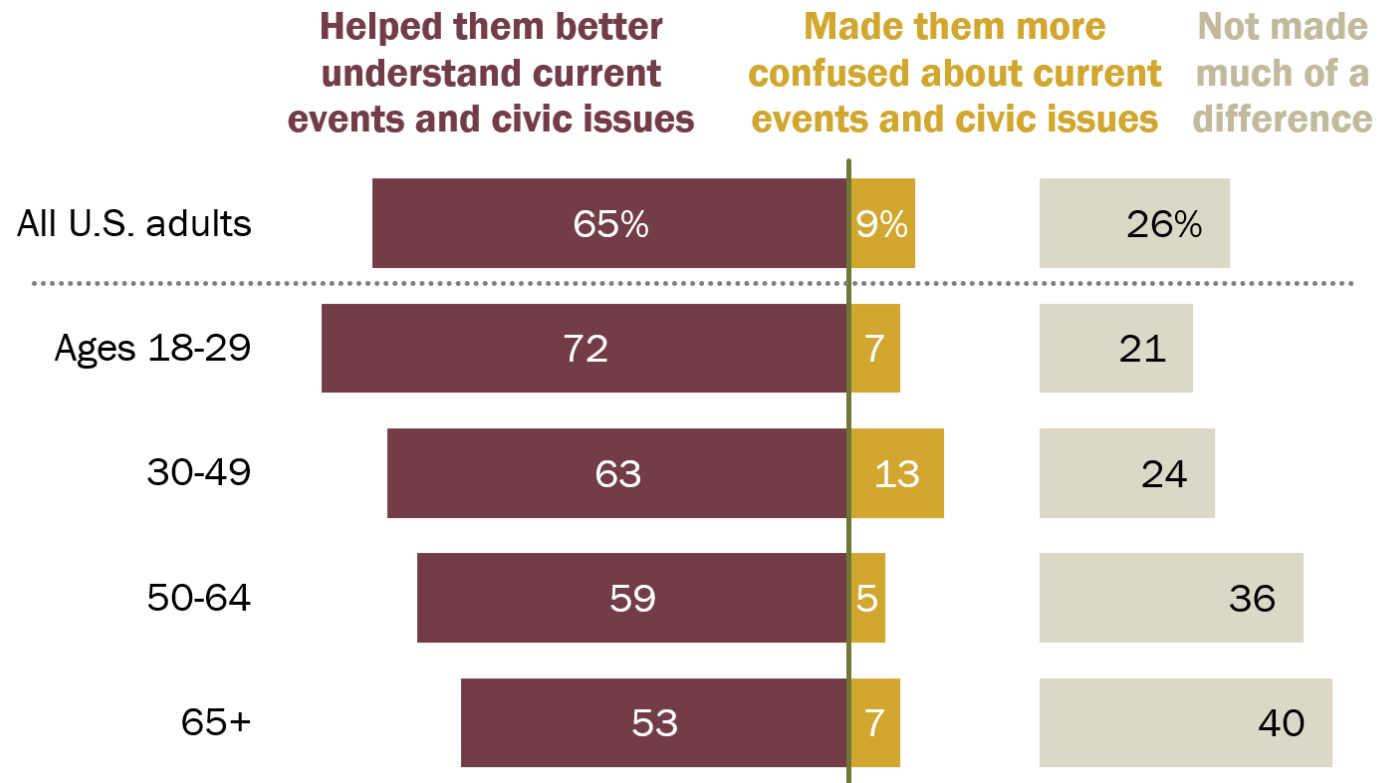
Among U.S. adults who regularly get news from news influencers on social media, % who say news influencers on social media have ...



Note: Respondents who did not answer are not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 15-Aug. 4, 2024.
"America's News Influencers"

Younger adults are more likely to say news influencers help them understand current events

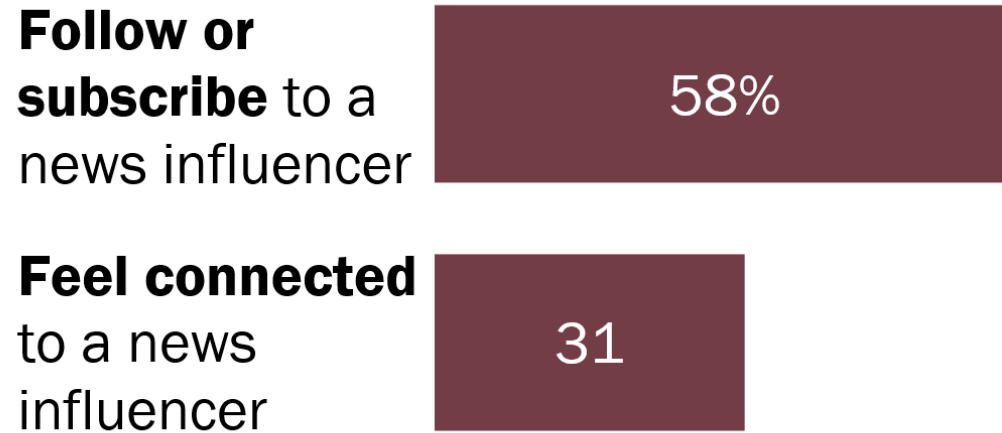
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 "America's News Influencers"

About 3 in 10 of those who get news from news influencers feel a personal connection to one

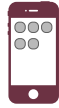
Among U.S. adults who regularly get news from news influencers on social media, % who say they ...



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 15-Aug. 4, 2024.
"America's News Influencers"

How we identified news influencers

What we studied

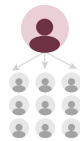


Sample of 500 news influencers across **five** social media sites

Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube

How we sampled

Searched for accounts using **keywords across 45 topics** about current events and civic issues in early 2024



Collected all accounts that used these keywords on the five sites

Each account had **at least 100,000 followers**

28,266 accounts met these criteria

Selected news influencers



Reviewed each account to identify those that regularly posted about news and were run by individuals

Found **2,058 news influencers**

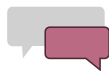
Sampled **500** of them

Analysis

From those 500 news influencers:



Identified where they post and who they are



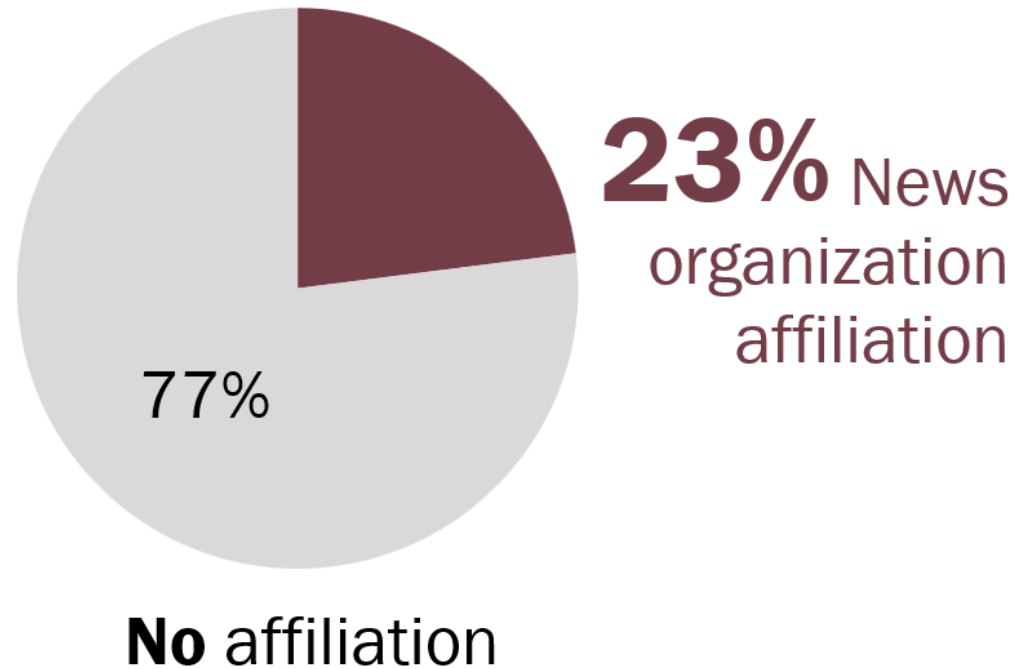
Used GPT-4 to code **104,786 posts** during three one-week periods in July-August 2024 to identify what they talk about

Researchers reviewed a subset of GPT's analysis to ensure coding was correct

"America's News Influencers"

A majority of news influencers have never worked for a news organization

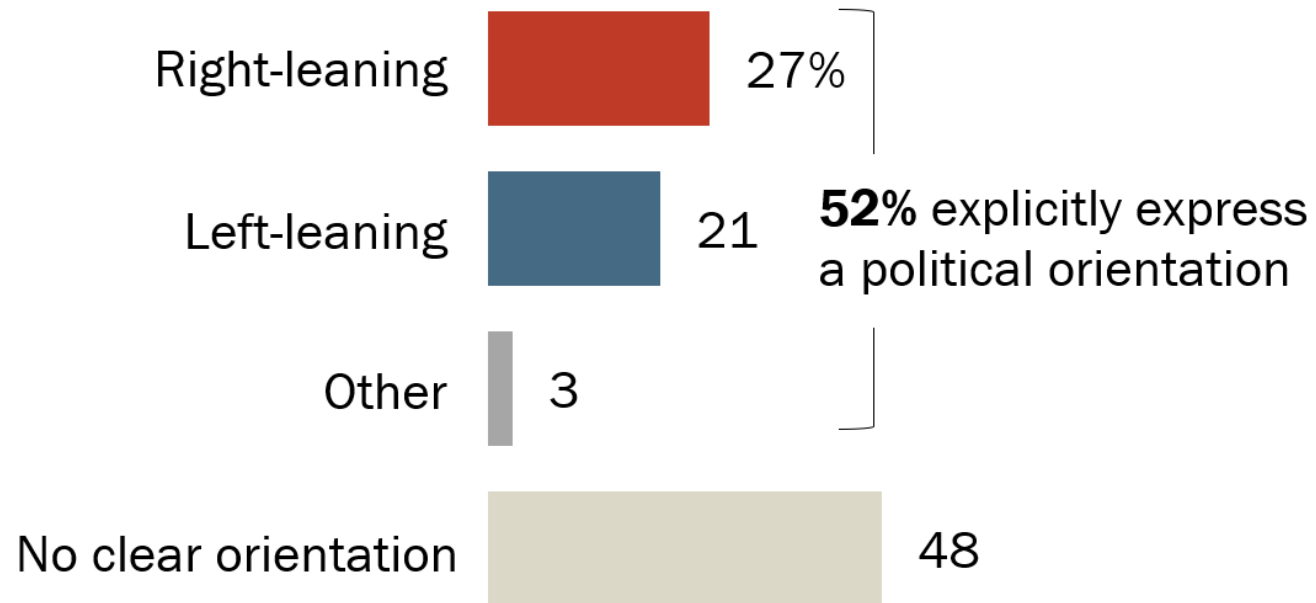
% of news influencers who have or had ...



Note: News influencers who are affiliated with a news organization are those who either currently are or previously were employed by a news organization.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 500 influencers with over 100,000 followers who regularly posted about news on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X or YouTube in early 2024. Refer to methodology for details.
“America’s News Influencers”

And many express some kind of party identity or political orientation

% of news influencers who explicitly identify as ...



Note: Right-leaning includes people who explicitly identify as conservative, Republican or express support for Donald Trump. Left-leaning includes liberals, Democrats and people who have explicitly expressed support for Joe Biden or Kamala Harris. "Other" includes independent or moderate, libertarian, or other ideologies. Political orientation could be expressed in account bios, recent social media posts, personal and professional websites and news coverage.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 500 influencers with over 100,000 followers who regularly posted about news on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X or YouTube in early 2024. Refer to methodology for details.

"America's News Influencers"

As well as other policy stances or identities

% of news influencers on each site who express values or identities in their bio that are ...

	Across sites	Facebook	Instagram	TikTok	X (Twitter)	YouTube
Pro-LGBTQ+	6%	6%	7%	13%	6%	8%
Pro-Palestinian	5	6	7	9	4	8
Pro-Ukraine	3	-	2	1	3	2
Pro-Israeli	3	4	3	2	3	5
Anti-abortion	2	3	3	2	2	3
Pro-abortion rights	<1	1	1	1	<1	<1
Pro-Russia	-	-	-	-	-	-
Any of the above	18	19	22	26	16	24

Note: A news influencer may express multiple values and identities. While 3% of news influencers identify as pro-Ukraine, no news influencers in the sample identify as pro-Russia.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 500 influencers with over 100,000 followers who regularly posted about news on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X or YouTube in early 2024. Refer to methodology for details.

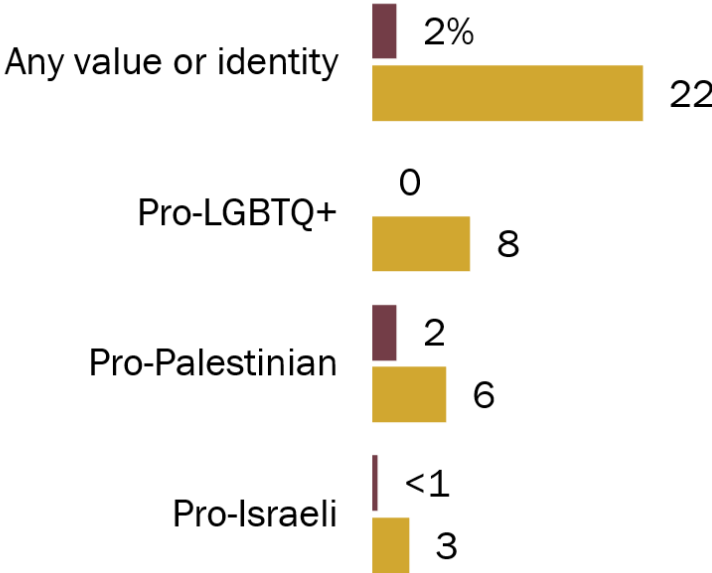
"America's News Influencers"

News influencers who have not worked for a news organization are more likely to express values and identities

% of news influencers who express values or identities in their bio that are ...

Among news influencers who have or had ...

■ News organization affiliation ■ No affiliation



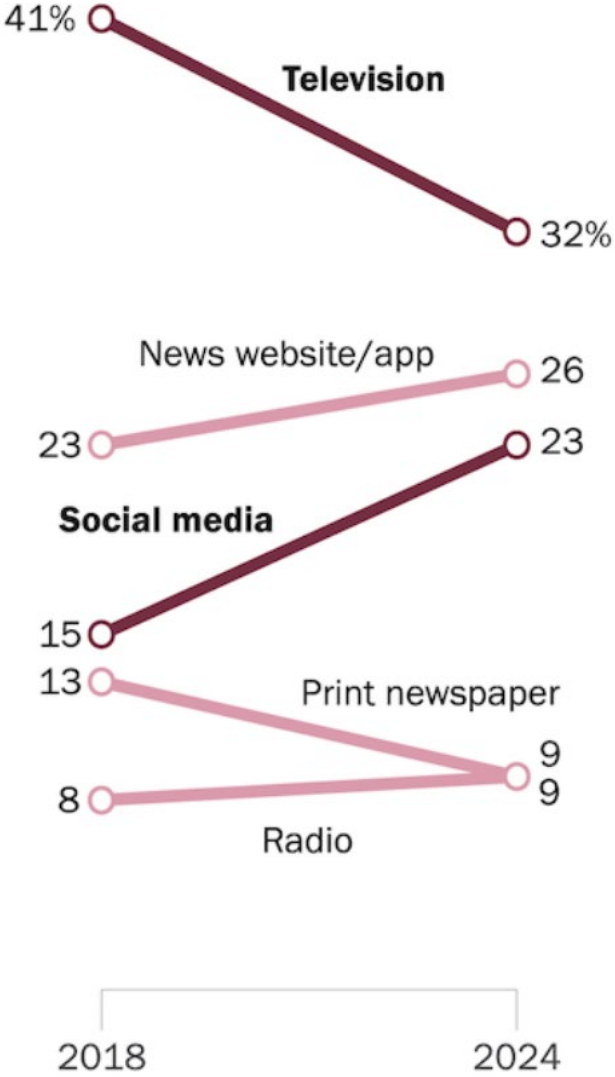
Note: News influencers who are affiliated with a news organization are those who either currently are or previously were employed by a news organization. A news influencer may express multiple values and identities. Other values, including support for Ukraine and a stance on abortion rights, are not shown.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 500 influencers with over 100,000 followers who regularly posted about news on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X or YouTube in early 2024. Refer to methodology for details.
“America’s News Influencers”

LOCAL NEWS STANDS OUT



Similar patterns in local news re: movement towards digital consumption

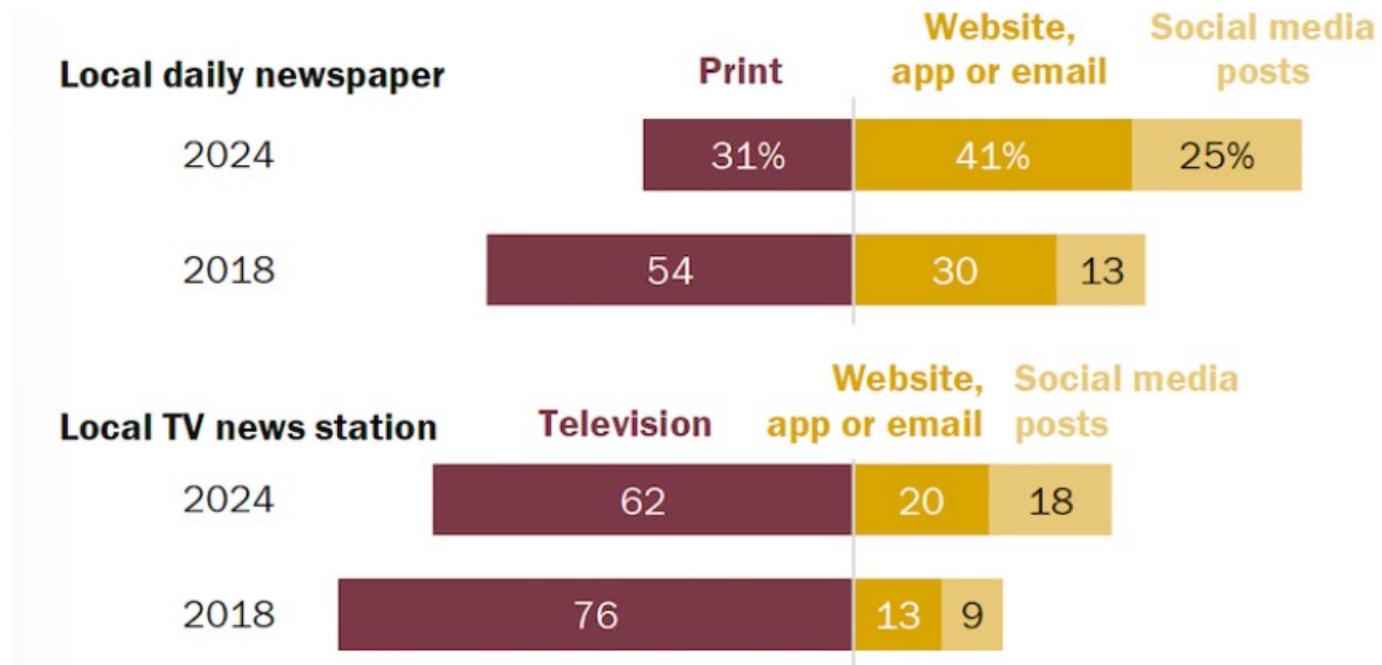
% of U.S. adults who say they prefer ___ for getting local news and information



Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-28, 2024.

Local newspapers are no longer accessed primarily through print

Among U.S. adults who get news from each type of outlet, % who primarily get that news via ...

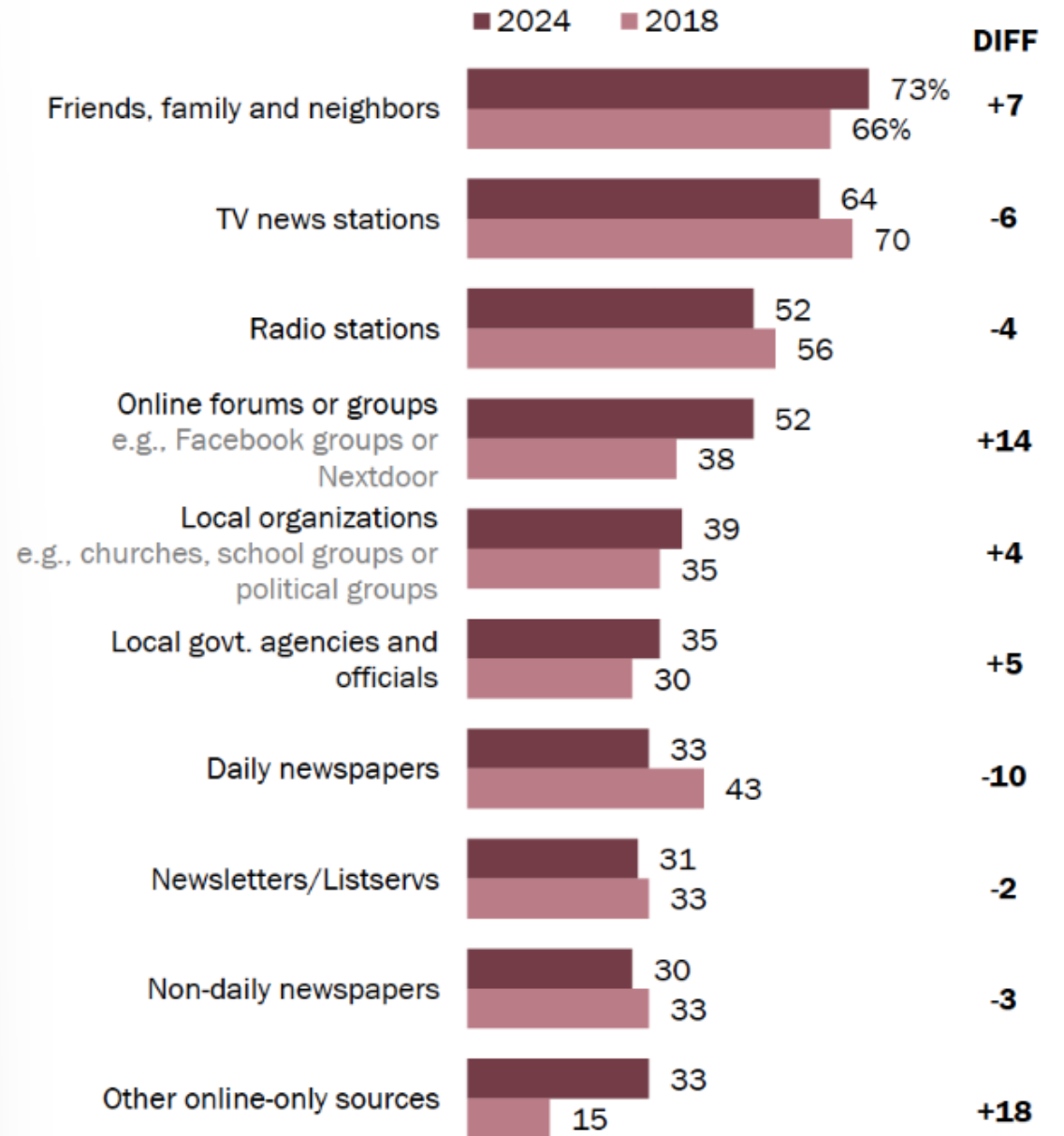


Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-28, 2024.

More Americans are turning to online forums (like Facebook groups, Nextdoor) and other online-only sources for local news

*% of U.S. adults who say they **often or sometimes** get local news and information from ...*

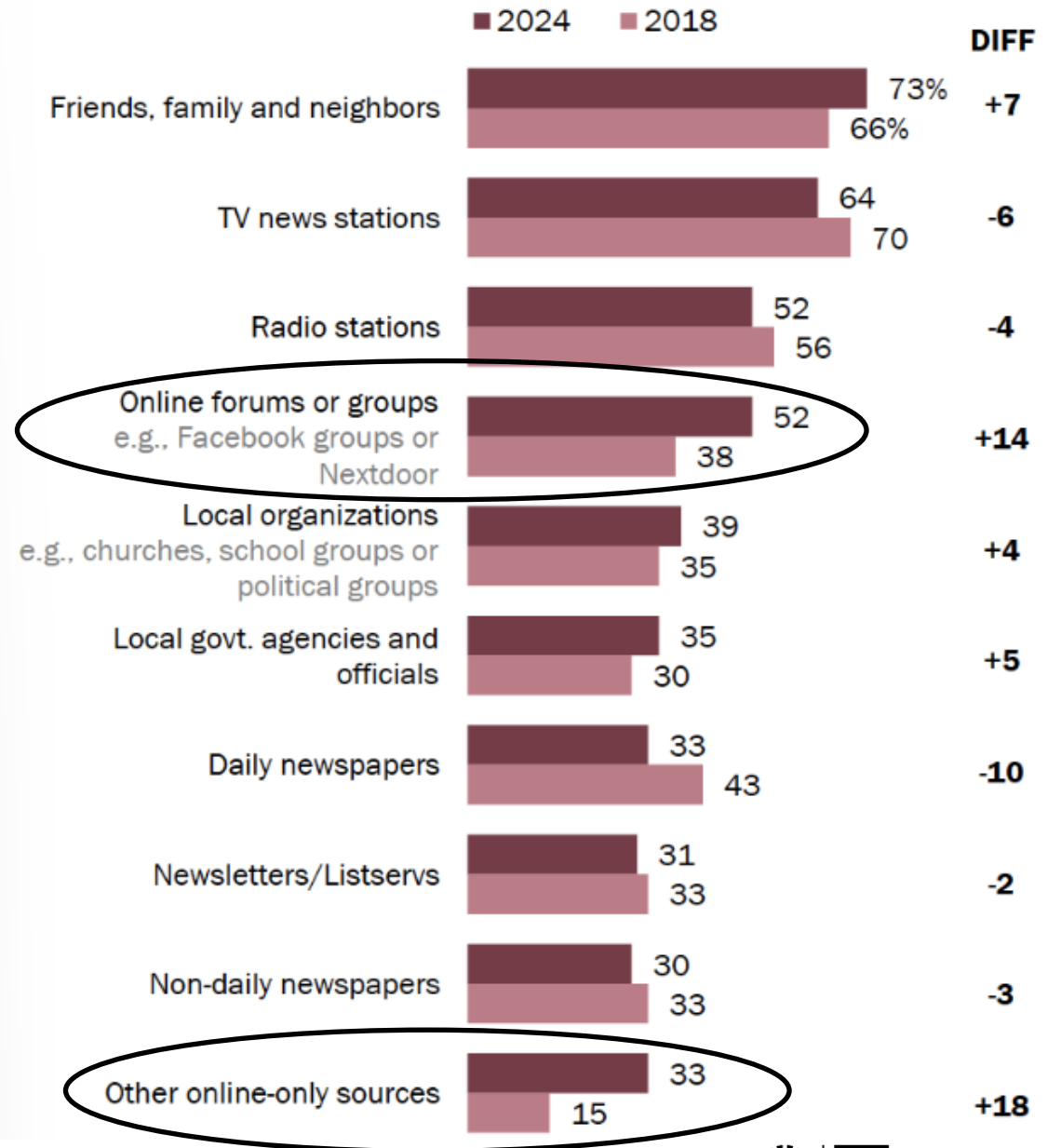
Note: All differences shown are statistically significant
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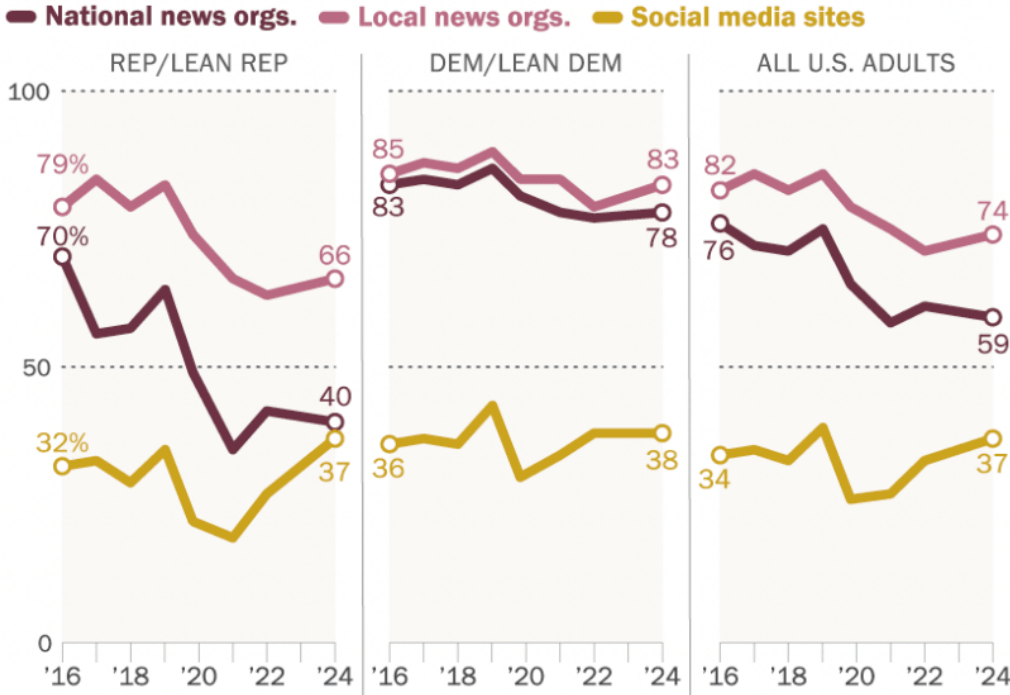
*% of U.S. adults who say they **often or sometimes** get local news and information from ...*

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Local news media haven't seen the same polarization in trust as national news media

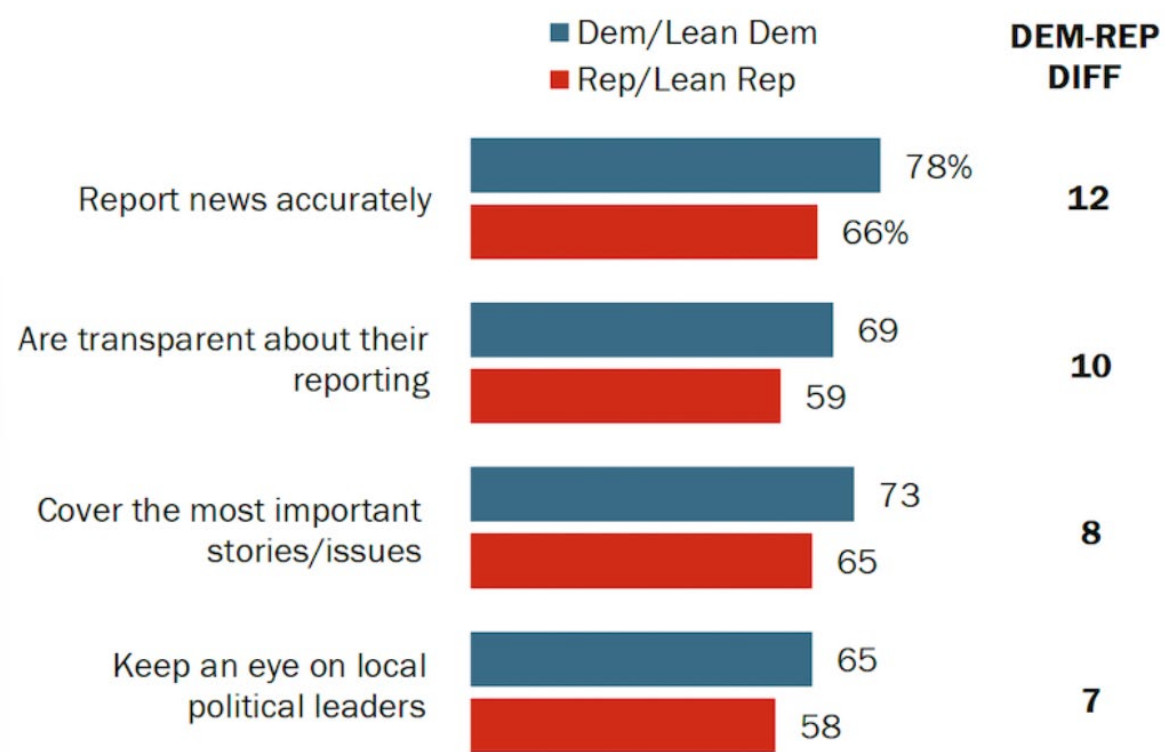
*% of U.S. adults who say they have **some or a lot of trust** in the information they get from ____, by party*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. Note: In 2016, trust of information from social media was only asked of and based on internet-using U.S. adults. In the question on trust in the information from social media sites, the examples used have changed over time; for more detail on the specific wording, see the topline.
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 16-22, 2024. For dates of other surveys, refer to the topline.

Surprising bipartisan approval of local news media

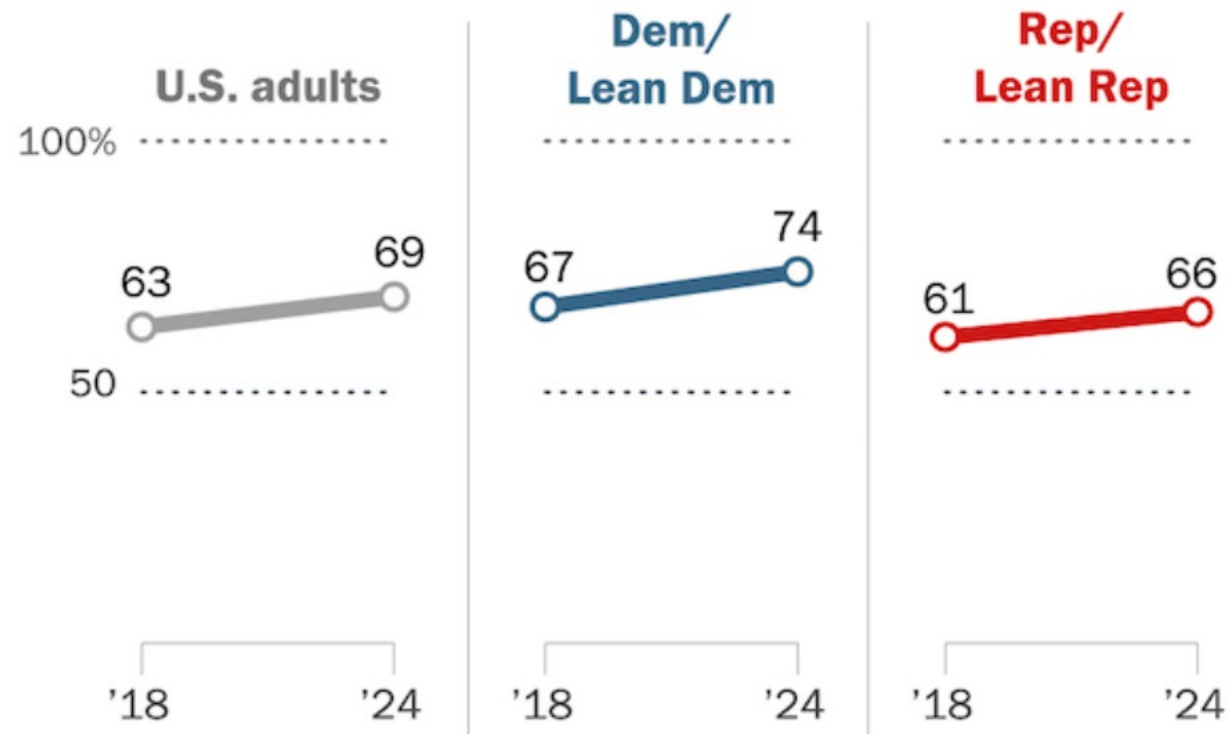
% of U.S. adults who say they their local news media do each well



Note: All differences shown are statistically significant
Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-28, 2024.

Majorities of both parties say local journalists are in touch with their community

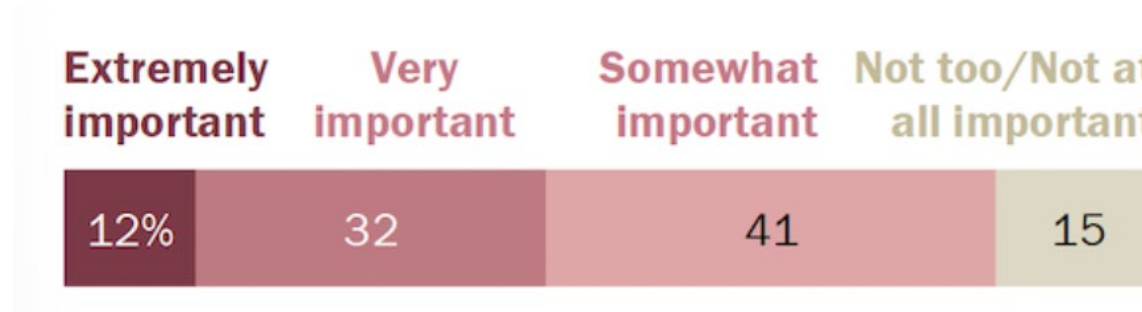
% of U.S. adults who say local journalists in their area are mostly in touch with their community



Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-28, 2024.

Most Americans say local media are at least somewhat important to their community

% of U.S. adults who say they think local news outlets are ___ to the well-being of their local community

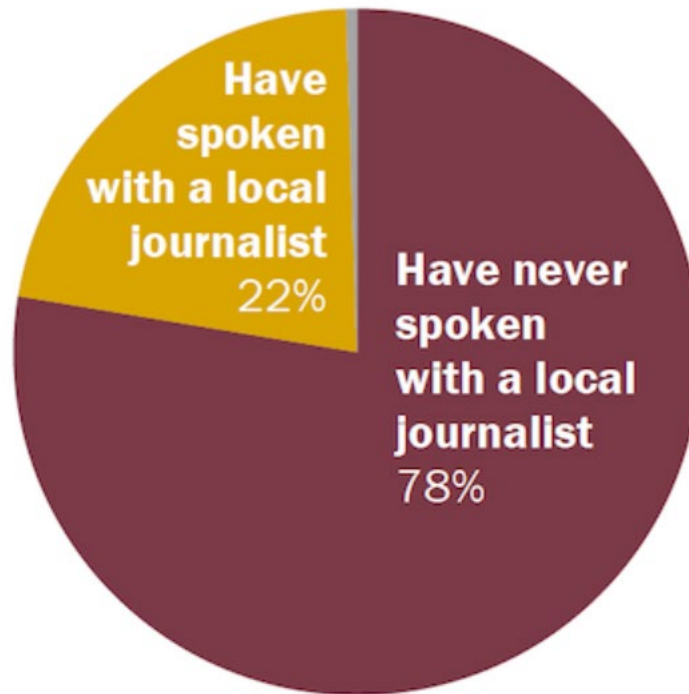


Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-28, 2024

Most Americans have never spoken with a local journalist

% of U.S. adults who ...

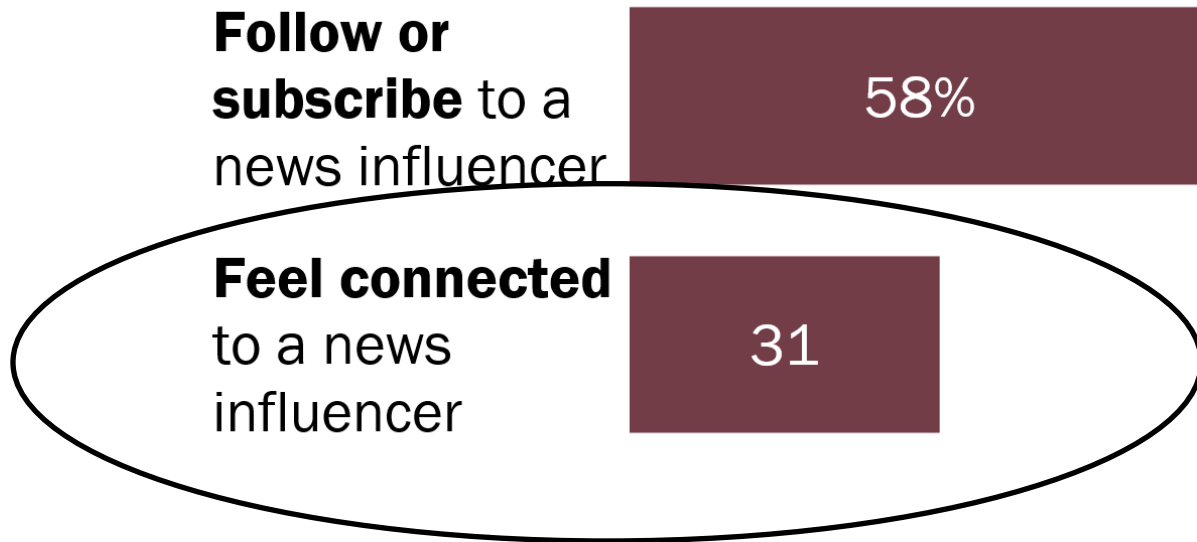
No answer <1%



Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-28, 2024.

About 3 in 10 of those who get news from news influencers feel a personal connection to one

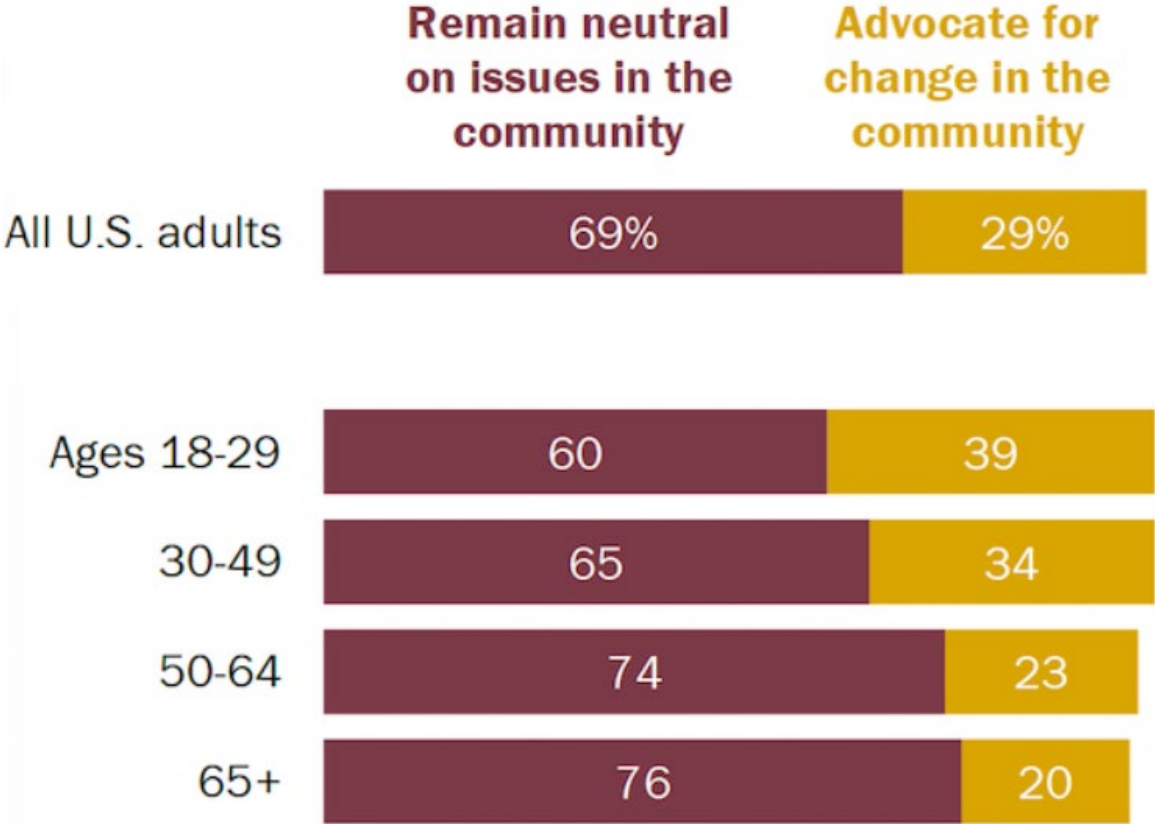
Among U.S. adults who regularly get news from news influencers on social media, % who say they ...



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 15-Aug. 4, 2024.
"America's News Influencers"

Some views appear to be changing about how local journalists should engage

% of U.S. adults who say local journalists should ...



Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-28, 2024.

DISCUSSION



Social media is here to stay

Digital news consumption goes beyond websites – young Americans are turning more to social media.



News consumption on social media looks different

There's a focus on individuality, identity, humor, and opinion, to capture Americans' attention.



The impact on local news

There's uniquely bipartisan approval of the work local news media do. But some of the identity/value shifts in the role of journalism show up in opinions about local news.

