



Coimisiún
na Meán

Digital News Report Ireland 2025

Tuarascáil ar Nuacht Dhigiteach na hÉireann 2025



Institiúid DCU um Meáin Todhchaí,
Daonlathas agus Sochaí
DCU Institute of Future Media,
Democracy and Society





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Dan Lloyd, Eileen Culloty, David Robbins,
Dawn Wheatley, Jane Suiter



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Coimisiún na Meán

Coimisiún na Meán is Ireland's agency for developing a thriving, diverse, creative, safe and trusted media landscape.

It carries out a range of activities to support Ireland's media sector and to help develop content for Irish audiences that reflects and shapes Irish society. This is achieved through the development of high-quality, accessible and inclusive content through our Sound and Vision Scheme, our Sectoral Learning and Development Programme, our Sponsorship Scheme and our new Journalism Schemes.

Coimisiún na Meán funds Ireland's participation in the Digital News Report survey, undertaken by the Reuters Institute at the University of Oxford, and commissions Dublin City University to produce an Irish report. This is our eleventh year supporting the Digital News Report Ireland, reflecting our commitment to evidence-based policy making and to supporting a media landscape that the public can trust.

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Is é Coimisiún na Meán gníomhaireacht na hÉireann chun tírdhreach meán rathúil, éagsúil, cruthaitheach, sábháilte agus iontaofa a fhorbairt.

Déanann Coimisiún na Meán raon gníomhaíochtaí chun tacú le hearnáil meán na hÉireann agus chun cabhrú le hábhar a fhorbairt do lucht féachana na hÉireann a léiríonn agus a mhúnláíonn sochaí na hÉireann. Baintear é seo amach trí ábhar ardchaighdeán, inrochtana agus cuimsitheach a fhorbairt trínár Scéim Fuaime agus Físe, ár gClár Foghlama agus Forbartha Earnála, ár Scéim Urraíochta agus ár Scéimeanna Iriseoireachta nua.

Maoiníonn Coimisiún na Meán rannpháirtíocht na hÉireann sa suirbhé Tuairisce Nuachta Digiteacha, a dhéanann Institiúid Reuters in Ollscoil Oxford, agus coimisiúnaíonn sé Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath chun tuarascáil Éireannach a tháirgeadh. Is é seo an t-aonú bliain déag atá againn ag tacú le Tuairisc Nuachta Digiteach na hÉireann, rud a léiríonn ár dtiomantas do cheapadh beartais atá bunaithe ar fhianaise agus do thacú le tírdhreach meán a bhfuil muinín ag an bpobal as.



Institiúid DCU um Meáin Todhchaí,
Daonlathas agus Sochaí
DCU Institute of Future Media,
Democracy and Society

The DCU Institute Of Future Media, Democracy And Society (Fujo) is a multidisciplinary research centre focused on the digital transformation of media, democracy, and society.

FuJo investigates how to counter digital challenges, including disinformation and digital hate; how to enhance public participation through democratic innovations; and how to secure the sustainability of high-quality journalism.

As an innovative and experimental space for journalism and media research, Fujo provides a platform where journalists, communication scholars, social and data scientists, software engineers and philosophers can come together. We test thinking, create new formats, bounce new ideas and technologies and research best practice.

The Institute brings the experience and reach of DCU's top rated School of Communications and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences together with researchers from the DCU arms of the SFI research centres, the Insight Centre for Data Analytics and the ADAPT Centre for Content Creation, along with the Institute of Ethics and the Centre for Cloud Computing.

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Is ionad taighde ildisciplíneach é Institiúid Meán, Daonlathas agus Sochaí na Todhchaí Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath (Fujo) atá dírithe ar chlaonchlú digiteach na meán, an daonlathais agus na sochaí.

Imscrúdaíonn FuJo conas dul i ngleic le dúshlán dhigiteacha, lena n-áirítear dífhaisnéis agus fuath digiteach; conas rannpháirtíocht an phobail a fheabhsú trí nuálaíochtaí daonlathacha; agus conas inbhuanaitheacht na hiriseoireachta ar ardchaighdeán a chinntiú.

Mar spás nuálach turgnamhach don iriseoireacht agus do thaighde na meán, cuireann Fujo ardán ar fáil inar féidir le hiriseoirí, scoláirí cumarsáide, eolaithe sóisialta agus sonraí, innealtóirí bogearraí agus fealsúna teacht le chéile. Déanaimid tástáil ar smaointeoireacht, cruthaímid formáidí nua, preabann muid smaointe agus teicneolaíochtaí nua agus déanaimid taighde ar dhea-chleachtas.

Tugann an Institiúid taithí agus raon feidhme Scoil na Cumarsáide agus Dhámh na nDaonnachtaí agus na nEolaíochtaí Sóisialta is airde rátáil de chuid Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath OCBÁC in éineacht le taighdeoirí ó réimsí OCBÁC de na hionaid taighde SFI, an Lárionad Insight um Anailísíocht Sonraí agus an Lárionad ADAPT um Chruthú Ábhar, chomh maith leis an Institiúid Eitice agus an Lárionad um Néalríomhaireacht.



The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) is dedicated to exploring the future of journalism worldwide through debate, engagement, and research.

The RISJ believe in the value of independent journalism, the power of news, and the importance of an informed public. They are committed to the timeless journalistic aspiration of seeking truth and reporting it, as well as the ongoing work of remaking the profession and the organisations that enable it. Its focus is on journalism, the media industry, and the public that they serve.

By connecting practice and research, by facilitating global exchange, and by driving conversations around the future of news, the RISJ works to ensure that journalists, editors, and media executives face the opportunities and challenges of a changing media environment from a position of strength. Its goal is to help them build better and more sustainable journalism for tomorrow.

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Tá Institiúid Reuters um Staidéar ar Iriseoireacht (RISJ) tiomanta do thodhchaí na hiriseoireachta ar fud an domhain a fhiosrú trí dhíospóireacht, rannpháirtíocht agus taighde.

Creideann an RISJ i luach na hiriseoireachta neamhspleách, i gcumhacht na nuachta, agus sa tábhacht a bhaineann le pobal eolach. Tá siad tiomanta don mhian iriseoireachta gan teorainn an fhírinne a lorg agus í a thuairisciú, chomh maith leis an obair leanúnach chun an ghairm a athdhéanamh agus na heagraíochtaí a chuireann ar a cumas í. Tá sé dírithe ar iriseoireacht, ar thionscal na meán, agus ar an bpobal ar a bhfreastalaíonn siad.

Trí chleachtas agus taighde a nascadh, trí mhalartú domhanda a éascú, agus trí chomhráite a bhrú chun cinn maidir le todhchaí na nuachta, oibríonn an RISJ lena chinntiú go dtugann iriseoirí, eagarthóirí agus feidhmeannaigh meán aghaidh ar na deiseanna agus na dúshláin a bhaineann le timpeallacht meán atá ag athrú ó sheasamh láidir. Is é an sprioc atá aige ná cabhrú leo iriseoireacht níos fearr agus níos inbhuanaithe a chruthú don lá amárach.

Coimisiún na Meán

Foreword

The publication of this year's Reuters Institute Digital News Report Ireland once more reveals a number of critical insights into the habits and perceptions of the Irish public that are key to understanding the ongoing development of our media industry. The Digital News Report provides reliable, internationally comparable data on news consumption, which underpins our work in achieving a media landscape that is sustainable, pluralistic and participative, and which supports democracy. Coimisiún na Meán is proud to support this research, now in its eleventh year, reflecting our commitment to a media landscape that consumers can trust, by having access to high-quality sources of news and information.

Confirming some of the enduring trends we have seen in previous years, such as a strong interest in news, including local news, and high levels of trust, the 2025 report also highlights the key challenges facing the industry, including misinformation, disinformation and concerns around the use of AI. It also indicates that while many news brands have diversified their outputs and formats to survive online, sustainability of the sector is still a crucial issue.

As an organisation, we rely on research and data to support evidence-based policy making and programme design. It is therefore vital to understand how the Irish news media landscape is evolving so we can effectively meet the public's changing needs. In this regard, it is positive to note that trust and interest in news has remained consistently high amongst Irish audiences. It is also encouraging to see that the Irish public has continued to rely on local news brands over the past decade, particularly during periods of instability where concerns regarding increased dissemination of false and misleading information have become increasingly widespread.

Nonetheless, while the report shows that Irish people still have a strong appetite for news, giving us cause for optimism about the Irish news sector, there is a longer-term recognition that the sector, particularly local news outlets, needs ongoing access to sustainable support measures including funding schemes and sectoral development initiatives.

As part of our commitment to support high-quality, trusted and independent news and current affairs, this year Coimisiún na Meán launched two Journalism Schemes to enhance coverage of local democracy and local courts reporting on a platform neutral basis. €5.7 million is being awarded through the schemes, and over 100 new or enhanced journalist roles are being created. After a successful pilot, we are delighted that funding has been approved for a further round of the schemes. In addition, later this year we look forward to providing further support to the sector through the implementation of two additional schemes, the Digital Transformation Scheme and the News Reporting Scheme. We are very grateful to the Minister for

Media, Patrick O Donovan, TD and Departmental officials for their generous support for all of these important Schemes.

This year's report also confirms the Irish public's unique and longstanding relationship with radio, which remains a cornerstone of our media landscape. This, coupled with an ongoing surge in the popularity of podcasts, reflects our distinctively strong audio culture in Ireland. In recognition of this, Coimisiún na Meán is providing support to FáilteDAB in operating a Digital Audio Broadcasting trial which began in April of this year. Through practical initiatives such as the DAB trial, and with our ongoing licensing activities for the commercial and community radio and television sectors, Coimisiún na Meán recognises that incorporating a diversity of opinions, views and content is key to upholding the democratic values that are important to Irish society.

While the findings in this year's report reflect an era of relative stability when looking at the consumption habits of Irish respondents, factors such as technological advancement, globalisation of content and the increasing integration of AI by platforms are likely to continue to influence the media ecosystem. The Digital News Report serves as a valuable tool for policymakers, academics and the public in navigating these developments. It also guides our own actions at Coimisiún na Meán, empowering us to make informed decisions which look to the future and support our work in establishing a resilient, vibrant and inclusive media industry which Irish consumers can trust.

On behalf of Coimisiún na Meán, I'd like to extend our thanks to the DCU Institute for Media, Democracy, and Society (FuJo) for their collaboration on this year's report. In particular, Dan Lloyd, Dr Eileen Culloty, Dr Dave Robbins, Dr Dawn Wheatley and Professor Jane Suiter. I'd also like to thank my colleagues in Coimisiún na Meán, especially Dr Ann-Marie Murray, Naoise McNally, and others in the Research and Strategy and Media Development teams. Their expertise and shared dedication in producing the Digital News Report serves as an invaluable source of knowledge in understanding Ireland's changing media landscape.

Rónán Ó Domhnaill

Media Development Commissioner

Réamhrá Choimisiún na Meán

Nochtann foilsíú Thuarascáil Nuacht Dhigiteach Institiúid Reuters na bliana seo, arís eile, roinnt léargais chriticiúla ar nósanna agus dearthaí phobal na hÉireann atá rithábhachtach chun forbairt leanúnach ar dtionscal meán a thuiscint. Soláthraíonn an Tuairisc Nuacht Dhigiteach sonraí iontaofa, inchomparáide go hidirnáisiúnta ar thomhaltas nuachta, a thacaíonn lenár gcuid oibre chun tírdhreach meán a bhaint amach atá inbhuanaithe, iolraíoch agus rannpháirtíoch, agus a thacaíonn leis an daonlathas. Tá Coimisiún na Meán bródúil as tacú leis an taighde seo, atá ina aonú bliain déag anois, rud a léiríonn ár dtiomantas do thírdhreach meán ar féidir le tomhaltóirí muinín a bheith acu, trí rochtain a bheith acu ar fhoinsí ardchaighdeán nuachta agus faisnéise.

Agus cuid de na treochoaí marthanacha atá feicthe againn sna blianta roimhe seo á ndeimhniú, amhail suim láidir sa nuacht, lena n-áirítear nuacht áitiúil, agus leibhéil arda muiníne, leagann tuarascáil 2025 béim freisin ar na príomhdhúshláin atá roimh an tionscal, lena n-áirítear faisnéis mhícheart, dífhaisnéis agus imní maidir le húsáid IS. Tugann sé le fios freisin, cé go bhfuil go leor brandaí nuachta tar éis a n-aschur agus a bhformáidí a éagsúlú le maireachtáil ar líne, is ceist rithábhachtach í inbhuanaitheacht na hearnála.

Mar eagraíocht, braithimid ar thaighde agus ar shonraí chun tacú le ceapadh beartais agus le dearadh clár atá bunaithe ar fhianaise. Tá sé rithábhachtach mar sin tuiscint a fháil ar an gcaoi a bhfuil cúrsaí meáin nuachta na hÉireann ag athrú ionas gur féidir linn freastal go héifeachtach ar riachtanais athraitheacha an phobail. Maidir leis seo, tá sé dearfach a thabhairt faoi deara go bhfuil muinín agus suim sa nuacht fós ard i measc lucht féachana na hÉireann. Is ábhar misnigh é freisin a fheiceáil go bhfuil pobal na hÉireann ag brath i gcónaí ar bhrandaí nuachta áitiúla le deich mbliana anuas, go háirithe le linn tréimhsí éagobhsaíochta ina bhfuil imní maidir le scaipeadh méadaithe faisnéise bréagach agus míthreorach ag éirí níos forleithne.

Mar sin féin, cé go léiríonn an tuarascáil go bhfuil fonn láidir fós ag muintir na hÉireann ar an nuacht, rud a thugann cúis dóchais dúinn faoi earnáil nuachta na hÉireann, aithnítear go fadtéarmach go dteastaíonn rochtain leanúnach ón earnáil, go háirithe asraonta nuachta áitiúla, ar bhearta tacaíochta inbhuanaithe lena n-áirítear scéimeanna maoinithe agus tionscnaimh forbartha earnála.

Mar chuid dár dtiomantas tacú le nuacht agus cúrsaí reatha ardchaighdeán, iontaofa agus neamhspleácha, sheol Coimisiún na Meán dhá Scéim Iriseoireachta i mbliana chun clúdach an daonlathais áitiúil agus tuairiscí cúirteanna áitiúla a fheabhsú ar bhonn ardán neodrach. Tá €5.7 milliún á bhronnadh trí na scéimeanna, agus tá os cionn 100 ról iriseoireachta nua nó feabhsaithe á gcruthú. Tar éis scéim phíolótach rathúil, tá lúcháir orainn go bhfuil maoiniú

ceadaithe do bhabhta eile de na scéimeanna. Ina theannta sin, níos déanaí i mbliana táimid ag tnúth le tuilleadh tacaíochta a sholáthar don earnáil trí dhá scéim bhreise a chur i bhfeidhm, an Scéim um Chlaochlú Digiteach agus an Scéim Tuairiscithe Nuachta. Táimid fíorbhuíoch don Aire Meán, Patrick O Donovan, TD agus d'oifigigh na Roinne as a dtacaíocht fhlaithiúil do na Scéimeanna tábhachtacha seo ar fad.

Deimhníonn tuarascáil na bliana seo freisin an caidreamh uathúil agus seanbhunaithe atá ag pobal na hÉireann leis an raidió, atá fós ina bhunchloch dár dtírdhreach meán. Léiríonn sé seo, mar aon leis an méadú leanúnach ar an éileamh atá ar phodchraoltaí, ár gcultúr fuaime sainiúil láidir in Éirinn. Mar aitheantas air seo, tá Coimisiún na Meán ag tabhairt tacaíochta do FáilteDAB chun triail Craoltóireachta Digiteach Fuaime a fheidhmiú a thosaigh i mí Aibreáin na bliana seo. Trí thionscnaimh phraiticiúla mar thriail DAB, agus lenár ngníomhaíochtaí ceadúnaithe leanúnacha do na hearnálacha tráchtála agus pobail raidió agus teilifíse, aithníonn Coimisiún na Meán go bhfuil sé rithábhachtach éagsúlacht tuairimí, tuairimí agus ábhair a ionchorprú chun seasamh leis na luachanna daonlathacha atá tábhachtach do shochaí na hÉireann.

Cé go léiríonn torthaí tuarascáil na bliana seo ré de chobhsaíocht choibhneasta agus nósanna tomhaltais na bhfreagróirí Éireannacha á bhféachaint, is dócha go mbeidh tionchar ag fachtóirí ar nós dul chun cinn teicneolaíochta, domhandú ábhair agus comhtháthú méadaitheach IS ag ardáin ar éiceachóras na meán. Feidhmíonn an Tuairisc Nuachta Digiteach mar uirlis luachmhar do lucht déanta beartas, lucht acadúil agus don phobal chun na forbairtí seo a threorú. Treoraíonn sé freisin ár ngníomhartha féin ag Coimisiún na Meán, rud a chuireann ar ár gcumas cinntí eolasacha a dhéanamh a fhéachann ar an todhchaí agus a thacaíonn lenár gcuid oibre chun tionscal meán athléimneach, bríomhar agus cuimsitheach a bhunú a mbeidh muinín ag tomhaltóirí na hÉireann as.

Thar ceann Choimisiúin na Meán, ba mhaith liom ár mbuíochas a ghabháil le hInstitiúid Meán agus Daonlathas na Todhchaí Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath (FuJo) as a gcomhoibriú ar thuarascáil na bliana seo. Go háirithe, Dan Lloyd, an Dr. Eileen Culloty, an Dr. Dave Robbins, an Dr. Dawn Wheatley agus an tOllamh Jane Suiter. Ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil freisin le mo chomhghleacaithe i gCoimisiún na Meán, go háirithe an Dr. Ann-Marie Murray, Naoise McNally agus iad siúd sna foirne Taighde agus Straitéise agus Fhorbairt na Meán. Feidhmíonn a saineolas agus a dtiomantas comhroinnte i dtáirgeadh na Tuairisce Nuachta Digiteach mar fhoinsé luachmhar eolais chun tírdhreach meán athraitheach na hÉireann a thuiscint.

Rónán Ó Domhnaill
Coimisinéir Forbartha na Meán

DCU FuJo Foreword

Welcome to the eleventh annual Digital News Report Ireland, part of the world's largest ongoing comparative study of digital news consumption. Produced in collaboration with the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford University, this report offers a detailed look at how Irish audiences engage with news in an increasingly complex media environment.

This year, we introduce a new format for the report, placing greater emphasis on analytical essays that explore key themes and situate the Irish data within broader national and international contexts. With eleven years of Irish data now available, we are able to offer deeper reflections on long-term trends—such as the evolution of radio and podcast consumption and the sustainability of news, particularly in relation to people's willingness to pay for journalism.

We also examine recent patterns in misinformation and the responses of news organisations, as well as the ongoing challenges and opportunities facing Ireland's much-loved local media sector. Alongside these thematic essays, the report continues to track core indicators of interest in news, trust, platform use, and changing audience behaviour.

As always, our goal is to provide a resource that supports journalists, editors, policymakers, educators, and all those invested in the future of media in Ireland. We are grateful to our sponsors at Coimisiún na Meán, our partners at the Reuters Institute and YouGov, and the wider research community that contributes to this work.

For more information and previous reports, visit: www.fujomedia.eu

Prof. Jane Suiter,
Director, DCU FuJo Institute
June 2025

Réamhrá OCBÁC FuJo

Fáilte go dtí an t-aonú tuarascáil bhliantúil déag ar Nuacht Dhigiteach Éireann, cuid den staidéar comparáideach leanúnach is mó ar domhan ar úsáid na nuachta digití. Léirithe i gcomhar le hInstitiúid Reuters um Staidéar ar Iriseoireacht in Ollscoil Oxford, tugann an tuarascáil seo sracfhéachaint mhionsonraithe ar conas a théann lucht féachana na hÉireann i ngleic le nuacht i dtimpeallacht meán atá ag éirí níos casta.

I mbliana, tugaimid isteach formáid nua don tuarascáil, ag leagan níos mó béime ar aistí anailíse a dhéanann iniúchadh ar phríomhthéamaí agus a shuíonn sonraí na hÉireann laistigh de chomhthéacsanna náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta níos leithne. Agus aon bhliain déag de shonraí Éireannacha ar fáil anois, táimid in ann machnamh níos doimhne a dhéanamh ar threochtaí fadtéarmacha — ar nós forbairt na húsáide raidió agus podchraoltaí agus inbhuanaitheacht na nuachta, go háirithe maidir le toilteanas daoine íoc as an iriseoireacht.

Scrúdaímid freisin patrúin le déanaí maidir le faisnéis mhícheart agus freagairtí eagraíochtaí nuachta, chomh maith leis na dúshláin agus na deiseanna leanúnacha atá roimh earnáil meán áitiúil na hÉireann a bhfuil an-mheas uirthi. In éineacht leis na haistí téamacha seo, leanann an tuarascáil ar aghaidh ag rianú príomhtháscairí spéise sa nuacht, iontaobhas, úsáid ardáin agus iompar an lucht féachana a bhíonn ag athrú.

Mar is gnáth, is é an sprioc atá againn ná acmhainn a chur ar fáil a thacaíonn le hiriseoirí, le heagarthóirí, le lucht déanta beartas, le hoideachasóirí, agus leo siúd ar fad a dhéanann infheistíocht i dtodhchaí na meán cumarsáide in Éirinn. Táimid buíoch dár n-urraitheoirí ag Coimisiún na Meán, ár gcomhpháirtithe ag Institiúid Reuters agus YouGov, agus an pobal taighde níos leithne a chuireann leis an obair seo.

Le haghaidh tuilleadh faisnéise agus tuarascálacha roimhe seo, tabhair cuairt ar: www.fujomedia.eu

Ollamh. Jane Suiter,
Stiúrthóir, Institiúid OCBÁC FuJo
Meitheamh 2025

Methodology

- The global Reuters Digital News Report is commissioned by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford. Here in Ireland, researchers from the FuJo Institute at Dublin City University have regular input into the topics to be surveyed and the questions to be asked in the survey. We then analyse the data that is specific to Ireland and to our selected comparative markets (the UK, the US and Europe).
- In Ireland, the survey was conducted by both YouGov (75%) and Cint (25%), using an online questionnaire between mid-January and the end of February 2025. In total, 2000 people were surveyed using representative quotas for age, gender, region, and education level. The data were weighted to targets based on census/industry-accepted data.
- Regarding this type of polling, it should be noted that online samples tend to under-represent the news consumption habits of people who are older and less affluent, meaning online use is typically over-represented and traditional offline use is under-represented. Our data are representative of the 92% online population.
- The use of a non-probability sampling approach means that it is not possible to compute a conventional 'margin of error' for individual data points. However, differences of +/-2 percentage points (pp) are unlikely to be statistically significant and should be interpreted with a high degree of caution. The same applies to tiny changes over time.
- It should also be remembered that surveys capture people's self-reported behaviour, which does not always reflect people's actual behaviour due to biases and imperfect recall.
- Some of our survey-based results will not match other industry data, which are often based on different methodologies, such as web-tracking.

Modheolaíocht

- Tá an Tuarascáil Dhomhanda Reuters ar an Nuacht Dhigiteach coimisiúnaithe ag Institiúid Reuters um Staidéar ar an Iriseoireacht in Ollscoil Oxford. Anseo in Éirinn, bíonn ionchur rialta ag taighdeoirí ó Institiúid FuJo in Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath ar na hábhair a ndéanfar suirbhé orthu agus ar na ceisteanna atá le cur sa suirbhé. Déanaimid anailís ansin ar na sonraí a bhaineann go sonrach le hÉirinn agus lenár margaí comparáideacha roghnaithe (an RA, SAM agus an Eoraip).
- In Éirinn, rinne YouGov (75%) agus Cint (25%) araon an suirbhé, ag baint úsáide as ceistneoir ar líne idir lár mhí Eanáir agus deireadh mhí Feabhra 2025. San iomlán, rinneadh suirbhé ar 2000 duine agus úsáid á baint as cuótaí ionadaíocha don aois, don inscne, don réigiún agus don leibhéal oideachais. Rinneadh na sonraí a ualú go dtí spriocanna bunaithe ar shonraí daonáirimh/tionscail a nglactar leo.
- Maidir leis an saghas suirbhéireachta seo, ba cheart a thabhairt faoi deara go ndéantar le samplaí ar líne gannionadaíocht de ghnáth ar nósanna tomhaltais nuachta daoine atá níos sine agus nach bhfuil chomh saibhir, lena gciallaítear go ndéantar ró-ionadaíocht ar úsáid ar líne de ghnáth agus go ndéantar gannionadaíocht ar úsáid thraidisiúnta as líne. Cuimsítear lenár sonraí 92% den daonra ar líne.
- Ciallaítear le húsáid cur chuige samplála neamhdhóchúlachta nach bhféadtar ghnáth 'lamháil earráide' a ríomh do phointí sonraí aonair. Mar sin féin, ní dócha go mbeidh difríochtaí de +/-2 phointe céatadáin (pc) suntasach go staitistiúil agus ba cheart iad a léirmhíniú go cúramach. Baineann an rud céanna le mionathruithe thar am.
- Ba cheart a thabhairt faoi deara freisin go ngabhtar le suirbhéanna iompar féintuairiscithe na ndaoine, rud nach léiríonn i gcónaí iompar daoine i ndáiríre mar gheall ar chlaontachtaí agus cuimhne neamhfhoirfe.
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Authorship and Research Acknowledgements

- Dan Lloyd, a PhD candidate at Dublin City University's School of Communications, researches the Attention Economy, focusing on information dissemination structures and digital metrics that shape news organisations in today's digital ecosystem. Before academia, he was an editor at the BBC, The Irish Times and The Times and Sunday Times (London).
- Dr Eileen Culloty is Deputy Director at the DCU Institute for Media, Democracy and Society (FuJo) and an Assistant Professor in the DCU School of Communications. She coordinates the Ireland EDMO Hub of the European Digital Media Observatory, which aims to advance research on disinformation, support fact-checking and media literacy, and assess the implementation of the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation.
- Dr David Robbins is an associate professor of journalism in the School of Communications at DCU. He is the founding director of the DCU Centre for Climate and Society. Before coming to DCU, David worked as a senior journalist and ministerial adviser in Ireland.
- Dr Dawn Wheatley is an assistant professor in the School of Communications at DCU, focusing on journalism, social media, and political communication. She worked as a production journalist in national newspapers before turning to academic research and teaching. Dawn is particularly interested in sources and diversity of voices in the news, journalistic reporting practices, and audience customisation habits on social and mobile media.
- Professor Jane Suiter is the Director of FuJo. Her present research is focused on the social, political and communicative aspects of citizen participation, empowerment and direct and participative democracy. Jane began her career at the FT Group and then moved to AP Dow Jones before working as economics editor at the Irish Times and as a current affairs presenter at TV3.

Údarachas agus Aitheantas Taighde

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Executive Summary

The Digital News Report often reflects the news environment at the time of data gathering, and this year is no exception. While news outlets in most countries are finding it difficult to connect with audiences during this fraught period for geopolitics and conflict, a time when reliable information sources should be thriving, Ireland presents a different narrative. Engagement in news has increased during the current survey wave. Subscriptions to news services have improved in Ireland over the past year and, most notably, trust in Irish news institutions remains strong.

While interest in news in Ireland remains robust compared to other countries, the industry stands at a flash point. Redundancies at the state broadcaster and elsewhere do not point to a burgeoning industry, and concerns about the impact of artificial intelligence and challenges of staying relevant in an increasingly crowded attention economy cast shadows over the sector's future. Additionally, while interest in news is up compared to 2024, analysis of eleven years of Digital News Report data shows that self-reported news interest has steadily decreased over time.

However, as this report finds, there are opportunities ahead. There is a clear desire from Irish audiences for news-related podcasts, AI-powered news personalisation, and fact-checking services from trusted sources. Local news also continues to be an essential part of Irish life and community identity.

Our findings suggest that while facing similar global challenges as other markets, the Irish news ecosystem demonstrates remarkable resilience. This resilience stems from strong audience relationships and a continuing public commitment to quality journalism. The challenge for Irish news providers will be leveraging these advantages while navigating industry transformation and evolving audience expectations.

Highlights from the data:

- Interest in news increased in Ireland this year, with those 'extremely' or 'very' interested in news totalling 56%. This is higher than in the UK, the US, or when measured against the European Average.
- As interest in news has increased, instances of news avoidance have inevitably dropped. This year, 41% of survey participants said they 'often' or 'sometimes' avoid the news, down from 44% in 2024.
- After a sharp drop following the Covid-19 pandemic, the 18-24 age group's renewed interest in news continues. The year-on-year increase has continued each year since 2022, now reaching a post-covid peak of 39%.
- While news interest increased this year, longitudinal analysis shows that those 'extremely' or 'very interested' in news in Ireland have reduced to 56% in 2025 when compared to 71% in 2015.
- Trust in Ireland's news industry remains strong, especially compared to other markets. 50% 'strongly agree' or 'tend to agree' that you can trust the news most of the time. These totals amount to 30% in the US, 35% in the UK and 39% in Europe.
- RTÉ News (72%), local radio news (72%) and local newspapers (71%) are some of the most trusted brands, placed just above The Irish Times (70%) and the BBC (70%). Local and regional radio stations and newspapers also have the lowest level of mistrust at 10% each.
- When checking information validity, 41% of this year's survey participants mainly turn to 'a news source I trust', a higher percentage than those who check official sources, like government websites (37%) and fact-checking websites (25%).
- When asked what could increase trust in news, addressing bias and increasing fact-checking protocols were the most popular responses from Digital News Report Ireland participants.

- 68% of respondents said they are concerned about what is real and fake online. This is a trend across age ranges, with over 55s (74%) being more concerned than 18–24-year-olds (62%). These findings reflect those in 2024, with a slight drop from 72% to 68% overall.
- X is the channel seen as the greatest threat regarding false and misleading information (54%), followed by TikTok and Facebook (53%). While only 17% of Irish participants chose news websites as threats, this figure stands at 28% in the US - higher than both YouTube (26%) and search engines (24%).
- Smartphones continue to be the most used device people access news in Ireland (77%). Furthermore, Digital News Report data shows that over 10 years, the use of tablets for news has remained consistent.
- Offline, legacy publishers continue to dominate. RTÉ TV News (44%) and RTÉ Radio News (29%) are still the most accessed brands by consumers, followed by Sky News (27%) and BBC News (25%). The most-read newspapers by survey participants are The Irish Times (17%) and The Irish Independent (16%).
- Online, we have a more mixed picture. RTÉ News Online (26%) is the most accessed, followed by The Journal (26%), BreakingNews.ie (22%) and The Irish Independent (22%).
- When looking at the most frequently used brands (three times or more per week), RTÉ TV News (33%), and RTÉ News Radio (19%) are still the most visited. Digitally, RTÉ News Online is still at the top at 26%, with the nearest traditional and digital-native competitors managing half of that amount.
- 20% of people in Ireland pay for news, a rise of 3% on 2024, and twice as much as those who pay in the UK. The 35–44 age group have shown the most significant gains since 2023. However, 80% of those surveyed do not pay for news.
- There have been notable increases in paid-for digital news this year, with some figures over double those in 2024. The most popular services include: The Irish Independent (36%), The Irish Times (33%), The New York Times (22%) and The Guardian (21%).
- Radio remains an important news source for 36% of Irish audiences, with 11% citing it as their main source, well ahead of the US (3%), UK (8%), and Europe (7%). The stations visited most frequently (three or more times a week) include RTÉ Radio (19%) and regional or local radio (12%).
- Local radio, whether accessed online or broadcast, is seen as the best source for local news stories (23%) closely followed by local newspapers (22%) and social media (20%). The websites of local radio stations are also a significant source of news at 8%.
- 84% of people in Ireland say they are interested in local news, higher than the US (82%), EU (80%), and UK (77%). One in five Irish respondents say they are “extremely interested” in local news, a higher rate than any other country. Only 9% of people in the UK are ‘extremely interested’ in their local news.
- The main types of local news Irish people are interest in are: crime and public safety (53%), community services (44%), local events and culture (37%), obituaries (33%), and local politics (32%).
- Only 16% of people aged 18–24 use radio as a source of news, down from 23% in 2024. Older audiences are the heaviest users, 51% of those 65 and older and 46% of 55–64 year olds listen to news on the radio weekly.
- Ireland’s audiences are one of the highest consumers of podcasts globally (12%), above the European average (9%) and the UK (7%), but lower than the US (15%). Only 3% use podcasts as their main source of news in Ireland.
- 47% of news podcast fans agreed with the statement that they would be prepared to pay a reasonable price for a podcast they like.
- When asked about major threats regarding false and misleading information, Irish respondents identified online influencers and personalities as the biggest concern (52%), similar to the UK (59%). In contrast, US respondent view politicians as the primary threat (57%). The US stands out with 46% citing journalists as significant threats compared to 38% in the UK, and only 25% in Ireland.
- Audience attitudes on the use of AI for news are improving. Last year, those very and somewhat comfortable with news mainly produced by AI with some human oversight were 15%, this has increased to 19% this year - participant age is significant with under-35s almost twice as comfortable as over-35s.
- 5% of this year’s survey participants use AI as a source of news. 2025 is the first year this AI has been provided as an option on this question.
- When asked about AI’s impact on news, 45% said it would make news less trustworthy, 40% said less accurate, and 37% said less transparent. Only 18% think AI will make news more trustworthy.

- While many remain cautious about AI's role in news, many are open to AI-powered features. The most requested feature is news summaries (27%), followed by customisation of homepages based on interests (20%), story recommendations or news alerts based on interests (19%), and news articles translated from another language to their native language (19%).

Throughout this report, you will find articles on the following topics:

- Engagement with news in Ireland
by Dan Lloyd, DCU FuJo
- Formats and devices rise and fall, but big brands prevail
by Dr Dawn Wheatley, DCU FuJo
- Rowdy and resilient: A decade of radio and podcasts
by Dr David Robbins, DCU FuJo
- Disinformation and the fact-checking divide
by Dan Lloyd, DCU FuJo
- Local Journalism can't survive on trust alone
by Eileen Culloty, DCU FuJo



Achoimre Feidhmiúcháin

Is minic a léiríonn an Tuairisc Nuachta Digiteach an timpeallacht nuachta tráth bailithe sonraí, agus ní haon eisceacht í i mbliana. Cé go bhfuil sé deacair ag asraonta nuachta i bhformhór na dtíortha ceangal a dhéanamh le lucht éisteachta le linn na tréimhse casta seo maidir le geopholaitíocht agus coinbhleacht, tráth inar chóir go mbeadh foinsí iontaofa faisnéise faoi bhláth, cuireann Éire scéal eile i láthair. Tá méadú tagtha ar rannpháirtíocht sa nuacht le linn an tsuirbhé reatha. Tá feabhas tagtha ar shíntiúis do sheirbhísí nuachta in Éirinn le bliain anuas agus, go háirithe, tá muinín láidir i gcónaí in institiúidí nuachta na hÉireann.

Cé go bhfuil spéis láidir i gcónaí sa nuacht in Éirinn i gcomparáid le tíortha eile, tá an tionscal ag splancphointe. Ní léiríonn iomarcaíochtaí ag an gcraoltóir stáit agus in áiteanna eile tionscal atá ag fás, agus chuir imní faoi thionchar na hintleachta saorga agus na dúshlán a bhaineann le fanacht ábhartha i ngeilleagar aird atá ag éirí níos plódaithe scáthanna ar thodhchaí na hearnála. Ina theannta sin, cé go bhfuil an t-ús sa nuacht méadaithe i gcomparáid le 2024, léiríonn anailís ar shonraí 10 mbliana de Thuairisc Nuachta Digiteach gur tháinig laghdú seasta ar an spéis sa nuacht féintuairiscithe le himeacht ama.

Mar sin féin, mar a aimsíonn an tuarascáil seo, tá deiseanna romhainn. Tá fonn soiléir ar lucht féachana na hÉireann podchraoltaí a bhaineann le nuacht, pearsanú nuachta faoi chumhacht IS, agus seirbhísí seiceála fríci ó fhoinsí iontaofa. Leanann nuacht áitiúil de bheith ina chuid riachtanach de shaol na hÉireann agus d'fhéiniúlacht phobail na hÉireann.

Tugann ár dtorthaí le fios, cé go bhfuil dúshlán dhomhanda comhchosúla roimh mhargaí eile, go léiríonn éiceachóras nuachta na hÉireann athléimneacht iontach. Eascaíonn an athléimneacht seo as caidreamh láidir leis an lucht féachana agus tiomantas leanúnach poiblí d'iriseoireacht ardchaighdeán. Is é an dúshlán do sholáthróirí nuachta na hÉireann ná na buntáistí seo a ghiarail fad is a bheidh athrú ar an tionscal agus ionchais an lucht éisteachta á bhforbairt ag an am céanna.

Buaicphointí ó na sonraí:

- Tháinig méadú ar an spéis sa nuacht in Éirinn i mbliana, agus 56% san iomlán acu siúd a bhfuil 'an-suim' nó an-suim acu sa nuacht. Tá sé sin níos airde ná sa RA, sna SAM, nó nuair a chuirtear i gcomparáid leis an Meán Eorpach é.
- De réir mar a mhéadaigh an spéis sa nuacht, tá laghdú gan dabht ar chásanna seachanta nuachta. I mbliana, dúirt 41% de rannpháirtithe an tsuirbhé go seachnaíonn siad an nuacht 'go minic' nó 'uaireanta', laghdú ó 44% in 2024.
- Tar éis titim ghéar i ndiaidh na paindéime Covid-19, leanann an t-ús athnuaite san aoisghrúpa 18-24 sa nuacht. Tá an méadú bliain ar bhliain ag leanúint ar aghaidh gach bliain ó 2022, ag baint amach buaicphointe 39%.
- Cé gur tháinig méadú ar an spéis sa nuacht i mbliana, léiríonn anailís fhadtéarmach gur laghdaigh na daoine a bhfuil 'an-suim' nó 'an-suim acu' i nuacht in Éirinn go 56% in 2025 i gcomparáid le 71% in 2015.
- Tá muinín láidir i gcónaí i dtionscal nuachta na hÉireann, go háirithe i gcomparáid le margaí eile. 50% 'aontaím go láidir' nó 'aontaím' gur féidir muinín a bheith agat as an nuacht an chuid is mó den am. Is ionann na hiomláin seo agus 30% sna SA, 35% sa RA agus 39% san Eoraip.
- Tá nuacht raidió áitiúil (72%) agus nuachtáin áitiúla (71%) ar na brandaí is mó a gcuirtear muinín iontu, agus iad díreach os cionn The Irish Times (70%) agus an BBC (70%). Tá an leibhéal mímhúiníne is ísle ag stáisiúin raidió agus nuachtáin áitiúla agus réigiúnacha ag 10% an ceann.

- Agus bailíocht faisnéise á seiceáil acu, téann 41% de rannpháirtithe suirbhé na bliana seo go príomha chuig ‘foinse nuachta a bhfuil muinín agam as’, céatadán níos airde ná iad siúd a sheiceálann foinsí oifigiúla, amhail láithreáin ghréasáin an rialtais (37%) agus suíomhanna gréasáin a sheiceálann fíricí (25%).
- Nuair a fiafraíodh díobh cad a d’fhéadfadh cur le muinín sa nuacht, ba iad na freagraí ba mhó a raibh éileamh orthu ó rannpháirtithe Thuarascáil Nuachta Digiteach na hÉireann aghaidh a thabhairt ar chlaontacht agus méadú ar phrótacail seiceála fíricí.
- Dúirt 68% de na freagróirí go bhfuil imní orthu faoi cad atá fíor agus falsa ar líne. Is treocht é seo thar raonta aoise, le daoine os cionn 55 (74%) níos buartha ná daoine 18-24 bliana d’aois (62%). Léiríonn na torthaí seo iad siúd in 2024, le laghdú beag ó 72% go 68% ar an iomlán.
- Is é X an cainéal a fheictear mar an bhagairt is mó maidir le faisnéis bhréagach agus mhíthreorach (54%), agus TikTok agus Facebook (53%) ina dhiaidh sin. Cé nár roghnaigh ach 17% de rannpháirtithe na hÉireann suíomhanna gréasáin nuachta mar bhagairtí, seasann an figiúr seo ag 28% sna SA - níos airde ná YouTube (26%) agus innill chuardaigh (24%).
- Is iad na fóin chliste fós na príomhghléasanna a fhaigheann daoine rochtain ar nuacht in Éirinn (77%). Ina theannta sin, léiríonn sonraí na Tuairisce Nuachta Digiteach go bhfuil úsáid na dtáibléid le haghaidh nuachta comhsheasmhach le himeacht na 10 mbliana.
- As líne, tá ceannas i gcónaí ag foilsitheoirí oidhreacht. Is iad Nuacht Teilifíse RTÉ (44%) agus Nuacht Raidió RTÉ (29%) fós na brandaí is mó a mbíonn rochtain orthu ag tomhaltóirí, agus Sky News (27%) agus BBC News (25%) ina dhiaidh sin. Is iad na nuachtáin is mó a léann rannpháirtithe an tsuirbhé ná The Irish Times (17%) agus The Irish Independent (16%).
- Ar líne, tá pictiúr níos measctha againn. Is é RTÉ News Online (26%) na cinn is mó a bhfuil rochtain orthu, agus ina dhiaidh sin The Journal (26%), BreakingNews.ie (22%) agus The Irish Independent (22%).
- Nuair a bhreathnaítear ar na brandaí is minice a úsáidtear (trí huaire nó níos mó in aghaidh na seachtaine), is iad Nuacht Teilifíse RTÉ (33%), agus Raidió Nuacht RTÉ (19%) na cinn is mó a dtugtar cuairt orthu go fóill. Ó thaobh digiteach de, tá RTÉ News Online fós ar an mbarr ag 26%, agus na hiomaitheoirí traidisiúnta agus digiteacha is gaire ag bainistiú leath den mhéid sin.
- Íocann 20% de dhaoine in Éirinn as nuacht, ardú 3% ar 2024, agus dhá oiread níos mó ná iad siúd a íocann sa RA. Tá na gnóthachain is suntasaí ó 2023 léirithe ag an aoisghrúpa 35-44. Mar sin féin, ní íocann 80% díobh siúd a ndearnadh suirbhé orthu as nuacht.
- Bhí méaduithe suntasacha ar nuacht dhigiteach íoctha i mbliana, le roinnt figiúirí níos mó ná dhá oiread na bhfigiúirí in 2024. Áirítear ar na seirbhísí is coitianta: The Irish Independent (36%), The Irish Times (33%), The New York Times (22%) agus The Guardian (21%).
- Is foinse thábhachtach nuachta fós é raidió do 36% de lucht féachana na hÉireann, agus luaigh 11% é mar a bpríomhfhoinsé, i bhfad chun tosaigh ar na SA (3%), an RA (8%), agus an Eoraip (7%). I measc na stáisiúin ar tugadh cuairt orthu is minice (trí huaire nó níos mó sa tseachtain) tá Raidió RTÉ (19%) agus raidió réigiúnach nó áitiúil (12%).
- Feictear gurb é raidió áitiúil, bíodh rochtain air ar líne nó craolta, an fhoinsé is fearr le haghaidh scéalta nuachta áitiúla (23%) agus nuachtáin áitiúla (22%) agus na meáin shóisialta (20%) go dlúth ina dhiaidh sin. Is foinse shuntasach nuachta freisin iad suíomhanna gréasáin na stáisiún raidió áitiúil ag 8%.
- Deir 84% de dhaoine in Éirinn go bhfuil suim acu sa nuacht áitiúil, níos airde ná SAM (82%), AE (80%), agus an RA (77%). Deir freagróirí Éireannacha amháin as gach cúigear go bhfuil “an-suim acu” sa nuacht áitiúil, ráta níos airde ná aon tír eile. Níl ach 9% de dhaoine sa RA a bhfuil ‘an-suim acu’ ina nuacht áitiúil.
- Is iad seo a leanas na príomhchineálacha nuachta áitiúla a bhfuil spéis ag muintir na hÉireann iontu: coireacht agus sábháilteacht an phobail (53%), seirbhísí pobail (44%), imeachtaí agus cultúr áitiúil (37%), tráchtanna marbha (33%), agus polaitíocht áitiúil (32%).

- Ní úsáideann ach 16% de dhaoine idir 18-24 bliain d'aois raidió mar fhoinsé nuachta, laghdú ó 23% in 2024. Is iad lucht féachana níos sine na húsáideoirí is troime, éistean 51% de dhaoine 65 bliana d'aois agus 46% de dhaoine 55-64 bliain d'aois le nuacht ar an raidió go seachtainiúil.
- Tá lucht féachana na hÉireann ar cheann de na tomhaltóirí is airde podchraoltaí ar fud an domhain (12%), os cionn an mheáin Eorpaigh (9%) agus an RA (7%), ach níos ísle ná na SA (15%). Ní úsáideann ach 3% podchraoltaí mar phríomhfhoinsé nuachta na hÉireann.
- Nuair a fíafraíodh de mhórbhagairtí maidir le faisnéis bhréagach agus mhíthreorach, d'aithin freagróirí Éireannacha gur daoine a bhfuil tionchar acu ar líne agus ar phearsantachtaí ar líne an imní is mó (52%), cosúil leis an RA (59%). I gcodarsnacht leis sin, féachann freagróir SAM ar pholaiteoirí mar phríomhbhagairt (57%). Seasann SAM amach le 46% ag lua iriseoirí mar bhagairtí suntasacha i gcomparáid le 38% sa RA. agus gan ach 25% in Éirinn.
- Tá feabhas ag teacht ar dhearcaí an lucht éisteachta ar úsáid IS le haghaidh nuachta. An bhliain seo caite, b'ionann iad siúd a bhí an-chompordach agus beagán compordach le nuacht a tháirgtear go príomha ag IS le roinnt maoirseachta daonna 15%, tá sé seo méadaithe go 19% i mbliana - tá aois rannpháirtí suntasach le daoine faoi 35 beagnach dhá uair chomh compordach le daoine os cionn 35.
- Úsáideann 5% de rannpháirtithe suirbhé na bliana seo IS mar fhoinsé nuachta. Is é 2025 an chéad bhliain a cuireadh an IS seo ar fáil mar rogha ar an gceist seo.
- Nuair a cuireadh ceist orthu faoi thionchar IS ar an nuacht, dúirt 45% go ndéanfaidh sé nuacht níos lú iontaofa, dúirt 40% nach raibh sé chomh cruinn, agus dúirt 37% nach raibh sé chomh trédhearcach. Ní cheapann ach 18% go ndéanfaidh IS nuacht níos iontaofa.
- Cé go bhfuil go leor fós aireach faoi ról IS sa nuacht, tá go leor oscailte do ghnéithe faoi thiomáint IS. Is é an ghné is mó a iarrtar ná achoimrí nuachta (27%), agus ina dhiaidh sin leathanaigh baile a shaincheapadh bunaithe ar ábhair spéise (20%), moltaí scéalta nó foláirimh nuachta bunaithe ar ábhair spéise (19%), agus ailt nuachta aistrithe ó theanga eile go teanga dhúchais (19%).

Ar fud na tuarascála seo, gheobhaidh tú ailt ar na hábhair seo a leanas:

- Rannpháirtíocht le nuacht in Éirinn, le Dan Lloyd, FuJo OCBÁC
- Ardaíonn agus titeann formáidí agus gléasanna, ach tá brandaí móra i réim (forbhreathnú 10 mbliana), ag an Dr Dawn Wheatley, FuJo OCBÁC
- Ramhar agus athléimneach: Deich mbliana de raidió agus podchraoltaí (forbhreathnú 10 mbliana), leis an Dr David Robbins, FuJo OCBÁC
- Dífhaisnéis agus an Roinn seiceáil fíricí, le Dan Lloyd, FuJo OCBÁC
- Ní Féidir le hIriseoireacht Áitiúil Maireachtáil ar Iontaobhas Aonair, le Eileen Culloty, FuJo OCBÁC

01

Engagement with news in Ireland

By Dan Lloyd

The 2025 Digital News Report reflects an intense and unpredictable news cycle that included government formation talks, Donald Trump's second presidential inauguration, a subsequent barrage of executive orders, and continued conflict in Ukraine and the Middle East. These events and others collectively drove a rise in audience engagement with news, which is echoed in this year's report.

Irish interest in news

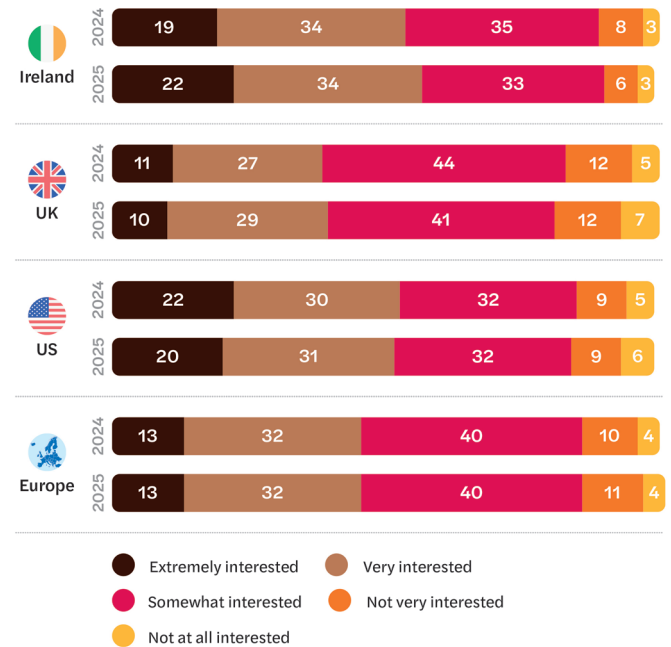
Regardless of the torrent of international headlines, Irish audiences continue to maintain a strong relationship with news, especially compared to the UK. In Ireland, 56% of respondents across all age groups say they are extremely interested or very interested in news. That figure stands at 39% in the UK. Other international comparisons with the US and Europe show similar engagement to Ireland, but the Irish are slightly more interested overall.

The effect is particularly visible in the 18–24 age group—the cohort most coveted by the news industry. Despite their historically turbulent relationship with news, 39% now say they are interested in news, the highest level since the Covid-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, those not interested dropped to 20%, down from 23% in 2024. These shifts suggest another ‘Trump bump’, matching the rise in attention during Trump’s first term in 2016.

However, longitudinal DNR analysis across numerous markets, including Ireland, has identified a slow disengagement from online news over the past decade. Media leaders here are sanguine about the future and acknowledge the need for content and portfolio diversification. In a recent interview with The Sunday Times, Irish Times Group Managing Director Deirdre Veldon pointed to potential in ‘events, podcasts and video’. Mediahuis Ireland’s CEO, Peter Vandermeersch, has adopted a similar optimistic tone, while RTÉ’s ‘New Direction Strategy’, outlines plans for immersive storytelling, ‘using new tools and new ways of working, delivering national and local news through text, social, podcasts, video and audio programmes’ by 2027.

Figure 1.1

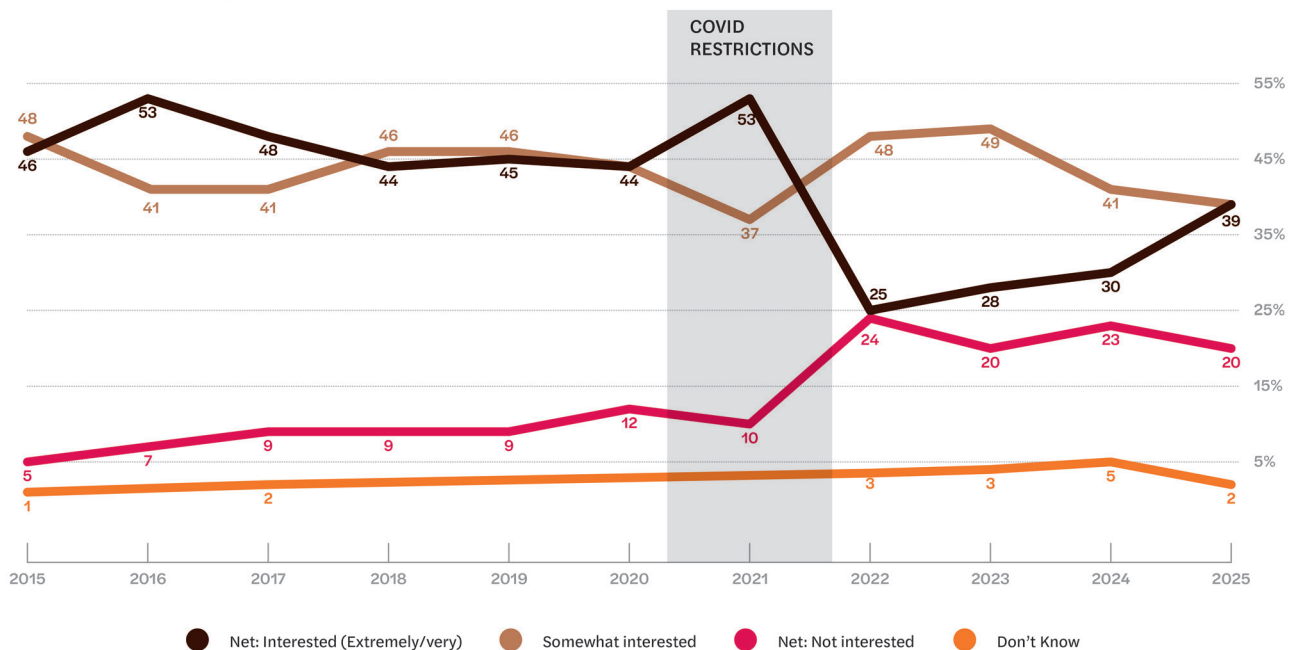
Interest in news - International and 2024/2025 comparison



Q: How interested, if at all, would you say you are in news?
Base: All n=2000.

Figure 1.2

Interest in news - Age 18-24



Q: How interested, if at all, would you say you are in news? Base: 18-24 respondents' range between n=181-242 each year

News avoidance

News avoidance has been a concern for many years. From a democratic perspective, people worry it will create a divide between the informed and the uninformed. From a news industry perspective, people worry it will reduce audiences. In the UK, journalist Nick Robinson blamed news avoiders for a decline in listeners to his BBC Radio 4 programme¹. In Ireland, news avoidance experiences peaks and troughs. This year, 41% said they actively try to avoid the news, down from 44% in 2024, but still higher than the below 30% levels last seen in 2017.

In response to concerns about news avoidance and in an effort to attract new audiences, international publishers are experimenting with formats such as explainers, solutions journalism, and more human-focused stories. Others invest in multimodal storytelling strategies by embracing more visual and audio formats². Testament to this is Ireland's boom in podcast production, which plays to the country's longstanding relationship with audio content.

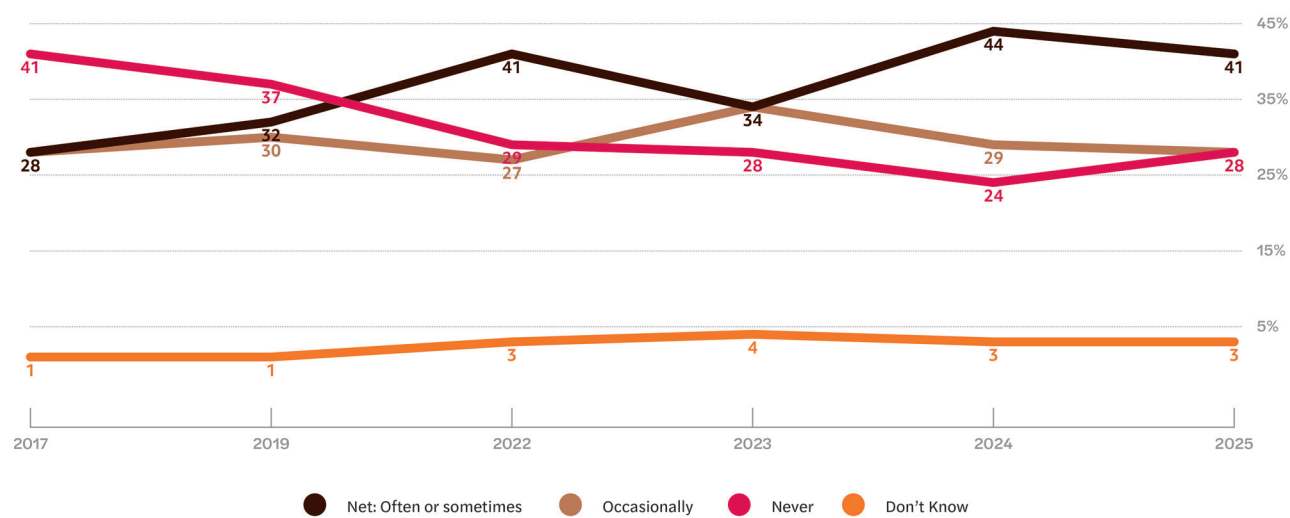
For many newsrooms, podcasts may provide an avenue to attract lost audiences (Section 3). In this year's survey, 47% of news podcast enthusiasts (12%) agreed with the statement that they would be prepared to pay for a podcast they like.

Irish news consumers participate in news in numerous ways. Talking face-to-face with friends and colleagues is the most popular way of sharing news, followed by reading comments on social media posts and news websites. More superficial metrics - such as liking, rating or adding a story to favourites - are less common.

Despite efforts by news outlets to address news avoidance, empirical research has largely focused on its causes rather than potential solutions. While avoidance is often seen as a problem for democracy and the news industry, many individuals describe it as a positive and healthy choice – a way to distance themselves from the negativity they associate with the news.

Figure 1.3

News avoidance



Q: Do you find yourself actively trying to avoid news these days? Base: All n=2000.

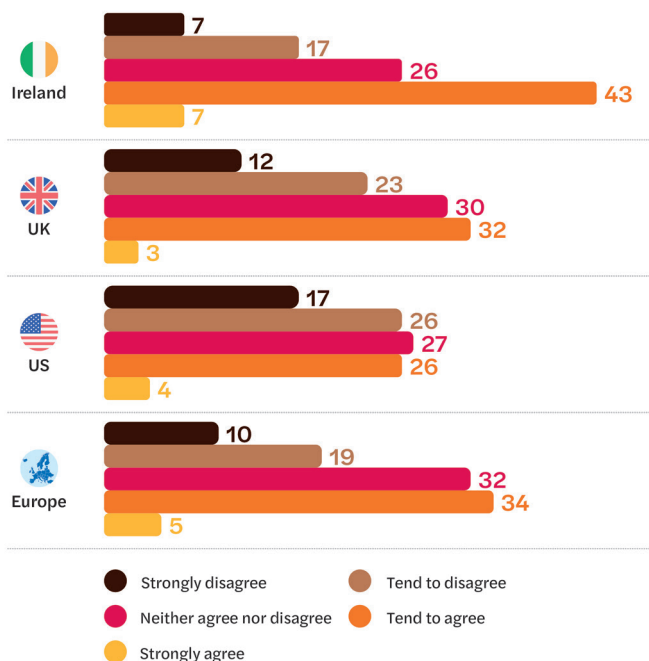
1 <https://www.thenational.scot/news/23819709.bbc-nick-robinson-blames-news-avoiders-falling-ratings/>
2 Jones, M. P. (2024, April 17). News publishers share multimodal storytelling strategies. International News Media Association (INMA). <https://www.inma.org/blogs/conference/post.cfm/news-publishers-share-multimodal-storytelling-strategies>

Trust in news

Overall, Ireland trusts news more when compared to other markets. When asked, ‘can you trust the news most of the time?’ The amount that strongly agreed, or tend to agree, was 50%, compared to 35% in the UK, 30% in the US, and 39% for merged data from Europe.

Figure 1.4

Trust news most of the time (‘I think you can trust news most of the time’)



Q: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: I think you can trust most news most of the time. Base: All n=2000.

When it comes to brands, traditional news outlets continue to perform well. Unchanged from last year, 72% of DNR respondents described RTÉ News as trustworthy, while trust in The Irish Times declined slightly to 70%, down from 72% in 2024. Local radio and newspapers ranked highly in 2024 (71% and 69%) and continued to do so in 2025. At the other end of the scale, The Irish Daily Mail and Irish Daily Mirror scored 44% and 41% in 2024, rising slightly to 45% and 44% this year. Importantly, those who pay for online news are more likely to choose trusted traditional brands (Section 2).

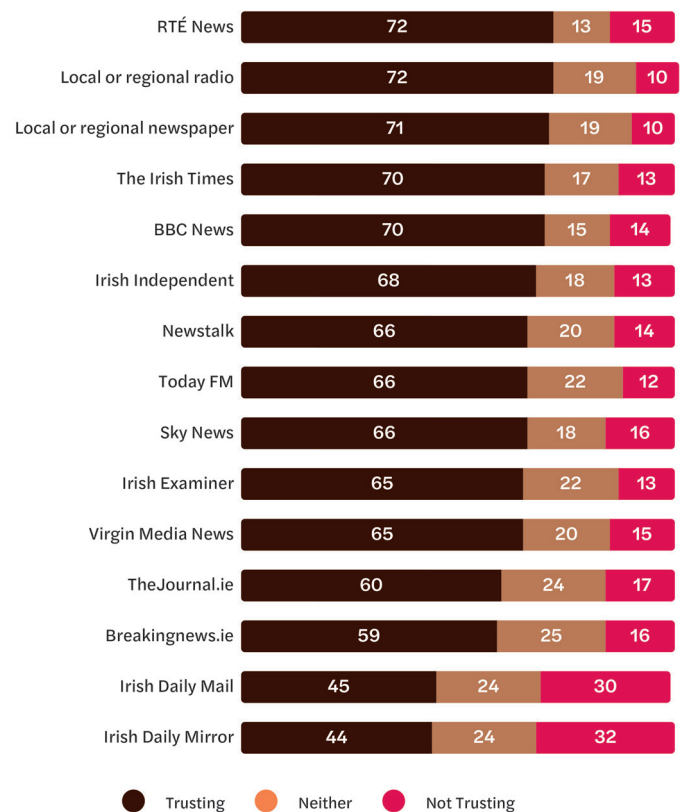
This year, the report tried to understand what informs trust and how news media could demonstrate their trustworthiness. When asked the open-ended question, ‘What actions, if any, could the news media take to increase your trust in the news?’, the overwhelming reply was to tackle bias. Addressing bias is no easy task. The Los Angeles Times’ proprietor’s idea for an AI-generated ‘bias meter’ for opinion articles was scrapped after fierce criticism, although an alternative viewpoint, ‘Insights’ feature remains³.

Elsewhere, even the BBC, whose pillars include impartiality, come up short on perception bias with certain audiences.

Overall, trust remains complex to untangle. Consider, for example, RTÉ. Internal research found that only 40% of the public considers RTÉ, as an overall institution, trustworthy. This is perhaps unsurprising given recent scandals. However, it seems clear that people separate the overall institution from its news output. RTÉ is consistently the most trusted news source in the Digital News Report. Moreover, the internal research found that 81% consider RTÉ valuable to society⁴. This indicates that blunt trust metrics are often inadequate to understand audience perceptions and audience capacity to make distinctions between institutions, news output, and public roles.

Figure 1.5

Trust in brands



Q: How trustworthy would you say news from the following brand is? Base: All who have heard of brand, n=1815 to 1977.

3 Knolle, S. (2025, April 15). The LA Times has ‘Moved on’ from AI-Driven Bias meter after KKK Snafu. TheWrap. <https://www.thewrap.com/la-times-bias-meter-ai-kkk-hector-becerra/>

4 O’Rourke, E. (2025, April 15). Trust in RTÉ has fallen, value to society has risen - FOI. RTE.ie. <https://www.rte.ie/news/ireland/2025/0415/1507803-public-trust-rte/>

Conclusion

Earning audience participation is difficult in a cluttered, often polarising digital ecosystem. Yet the Digital News Report – across this and previous years - has shown that during times of uncertainty, Irish people turn to the news, particularly established news outlets.

Irish news consumers remain highly engaged. However, the Irish news industry cannot be complacent. Rebuilding trust, increasing participation, and convincing audiences not to opt out requires moving beyond formats and syndication on third-party platforms to the substance of journalism itself. Academia also has a role in researching the dynamics of trust, bias, and perceived bias.

Meanwhile, the sector has to deal with AI. While only 5% of respondents say they use AI as a news source, openness to AI-driven features is rising—27% favour AI-generated summaries, 20% want customised homepages, and 19% would value AI-powered news alerts. These preferences suggest audiences are increasingly comfortable with algorithmic intervention, as long as it improves relevance and control.

Yet, concerns persist. At a 2024 Oireachtas briefing, Newsbrands Ireland Chair Sammi Bourke spoke about the financial costs of producing quality journalism - ‘which is being harvested for search, social media and AI without proper agreement and compensation’⁵. Time will tell whether AI is used to support deeper engagement or to undercut it.

5 Buckley, L. (2025, April 14). ‘Future of Irish Journalism’ speech from Sammi Bourke, Chair of NewsBrands Ireland. News Brands Ireland. <https://newsbrandsireland.ie/future-of-irish-journalism-speech-from-sammi-bourke-chair-of-newsbrands-ireland/>



02

Formats and devices rise and fall, but big brands prevail

By Dawn Wheatley

Journalism's reorientation towards online and digital platforms has often been accompanied by grave, gloomy predictions around the sector's viability and relevance in a competitive media landscape. Editors and managers are also reckoning with public commitment to news content fading: as discussed in (Section 1), those extremely or very interested in news in Ireland has fallen from 71% in 2015 to 56% this year. Despite this, the past decade of audience research illustrates a strong ongoing connection between the public and established Irish news institutions who have diversified their outputs and formats. The overall media ecosystem is clearly more fragmented than ever, but it is still the well-established news brands that punctuate the landscape.

Print lives on

A defining trait of the past two decades is the decline of the physical print newspaper against the backdrop of rising social media and online news consumption. This is true when the emphasis lies purely on the specific format: actual newspapers as a news source have dipped from reaching 50% of audiences in 2015, down to 22% in 2025. They are now the *main* source of news for just 4% of people (in contrast with online/social media being the main source for 47%), but such a figure distorts the overall impact of Irish and international print brands. It may be surprising to see that online news, including social media, is now at its lowest point of the decade, suggesting a plateaued penetration rate, and perhaps a manifestation of the wider ‘turning away’ from news or all-day news exposure, outlined in Section 1. With some distance now from the Covid-bump years and the recent 2021 peak of 41%, TV as a *main* source of news has returned to its settled level of mid-30s, close to its 2015 level of 37%, while radio remains a crucial part of the Irish landscape (Section 2). The arrival of AI chatbots has seen early adopters (5%) already use them as a source of news and this is only likely to grow in the coming years.

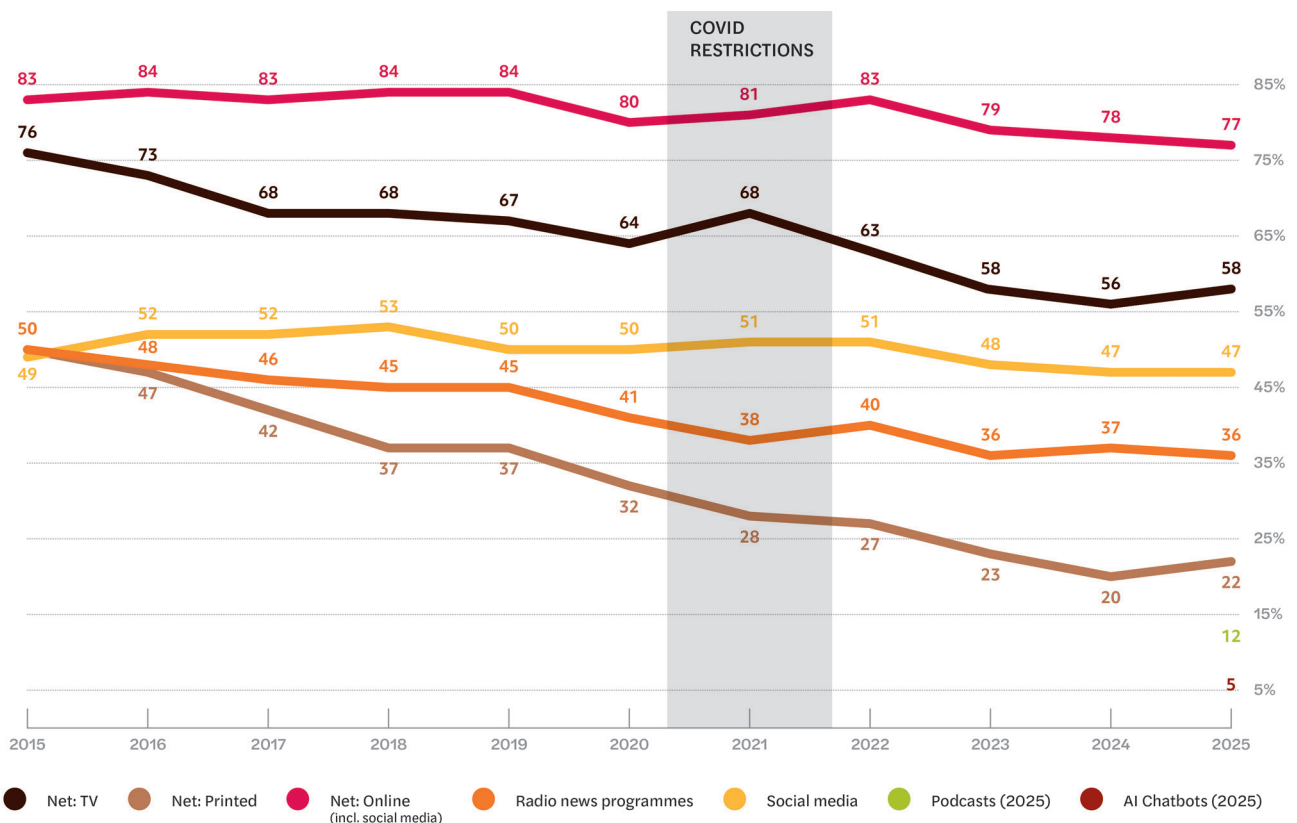
One of the most important shifts in media consumption comes to light when we examine physical devices – most notably the growth of the smartphone: the ultimate, handheld gateway to continuous news and social media updates. Smartphone usage for news increased from 52%

in 2015 up to 77% in 2025; however, the seeds were really sown in 2007 with the first Apple iPhone (and the first Android device the following year). The computer/laptop has seen an almost identical inversion, dipping from 74% in 2015 to 54% in 2025. However, as predicted in the 2015 Digital News Report, ‘...the likely situation emerging is that of multiple device usage. The trend is not device replacement but synergy of news content across complementary devices.’ This synergy encapsulates the fluid, ambient news landscape where many people are continually, passively exposed to news content throughout the day, on an array of devices.

The enduring use of tablets may be an opportunity for news organisations to further refine their apps/content with tablet screens in mind, such as the e-print version of the newspaper, which is more comfortable to read on larger screens. For example, Mediahuis is currently trying to lure audiences to ‘read the digital replica editions of every newspaper we print’, offering 16 e-paper titles with its Premium subscription, while the Irish Daily Star describes how the e-paper enables you to read ‘with an incredible touch screen experience, allowing you to swipe through the paper’. Similar daily offerings are also available from the Irish Times, Irish Examiner, Irish Daily Mail, Irish Mirror and Irish Sun; their presence indicates an enduring market for the single, curated daily newspaper, with the self-contained print design possibly acting as a more familiar and digestible bridge towards digital.

Figure 2.1

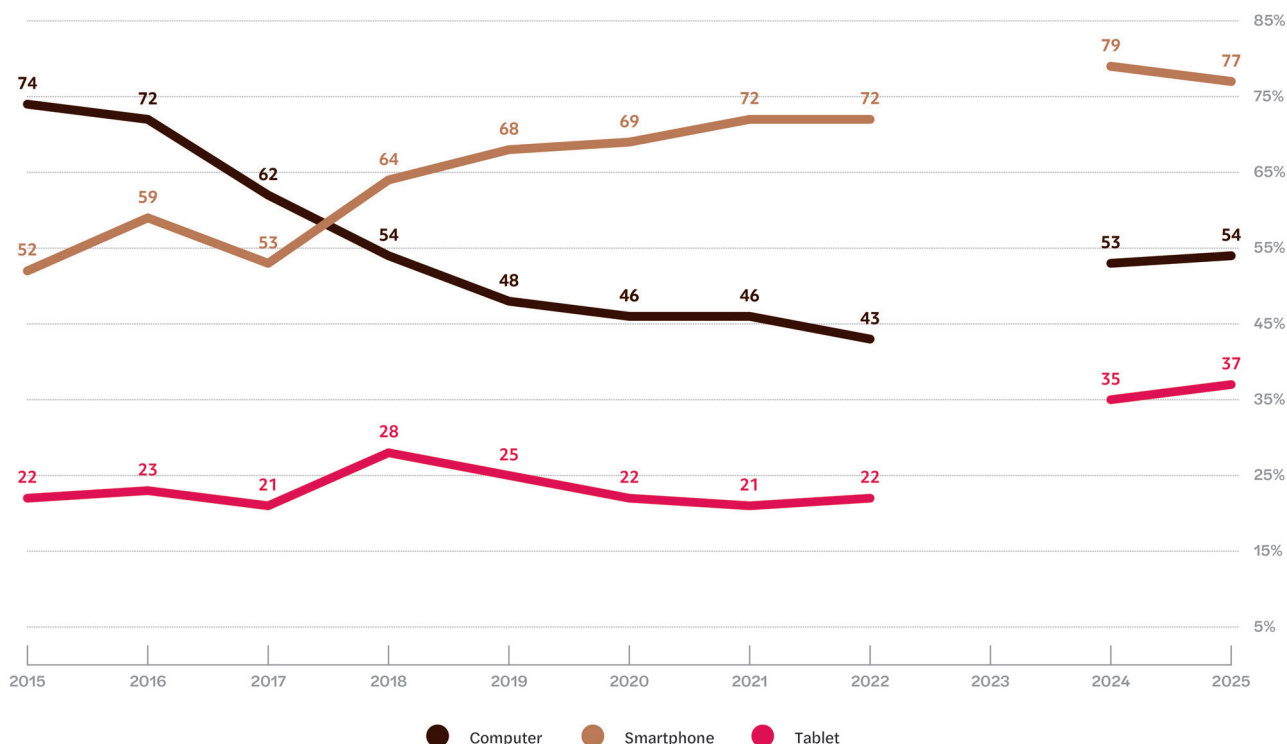
Source of news



Q. Which, if any, of the following have you used in the last week as a source of news? Please select all that apply.
Base: ranges from 1501 – 2035 each year.

Figure 2.2

Devices for news



Q: Which, if any, of the following devices have you used to access news in the last week? Base: All 2000

Note: Question design change in 2024 has resulted in higher figures across computers, smartphones, and tablets.

Maintaining the brand online

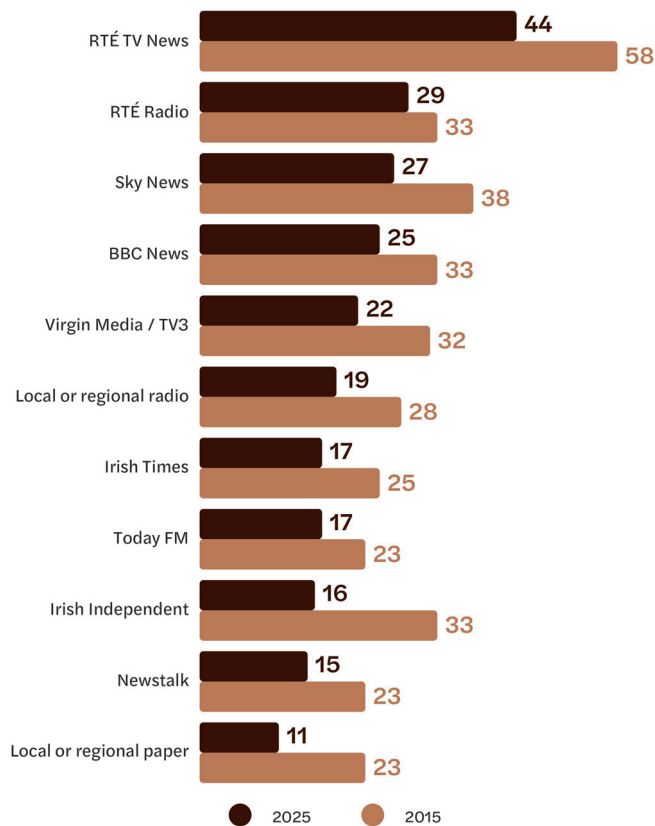
A core challenge for traditional or legacy news brands over the past two decades has been remaining visible and relevant, but a decade of data suggests that the organisations that dominated offline have made that transition and established a firm presence online. Why is this? Alongside the brand recognition, most had the resources to experiment with apps, websites and social media content, and have the ready-to-go stock of content from the 'primary' product; the newspaper or broadcast segment being produced for the 'main' format can be quickly and easily repackaged and republished online. This led to a plentiful, straightforward and cost-effective pipeline of content to populate websites and social media feeds and attract audiences and followers. Nevertheless, brands are clearly operating in a more fragmented landscape, and the undercurrent is one of gradually diminishing influence. RTÉ TV news, for example, is reaching 44% of people in 2025 compared with 58% in 2015, while the Irish Independent newspaper halved from 33% of people consuming its content to 16%. The decline is evident across the board in terms of traditional formats, but growth

is evident among the digital brands: for example, RTÉ News online, TheJournal.ie, and BreakingNews.ie have all grown in reach since 2015. Smaller outlets are also playing a part and making a dent with audiences with titles such as the Dublin Inquirer (4%), Gript (5%), The Currency (3%) and The Ditch (3%), being accessed online weekly.

The dominance of RTÉ, albeit at a much lower level than pre-internet era, is not uniquely Irish and aligns with the enduring influence of public service broadcasters in Northern/Western Europe: BBC, UK (41%), NRK, Norway (48%), ORF2, Austria (35%), YLE, Finland (56%), ARD, Germany (39%), SR/SVT, Sweden (32%/51%), DR, Denmark (47%), RTBF/VRT, Belgium (18%/17%). The pattern appears to be that the broadcasting brands that had the reputation and resources in the pre-internet era have transitioned this reach to the digital landscape and are maintaining their relevance. For audiences in these countries with strong public service broadcasting histories, there is a well-established culture of high quality, freely available material which has transitioned online.

Figure 2.3

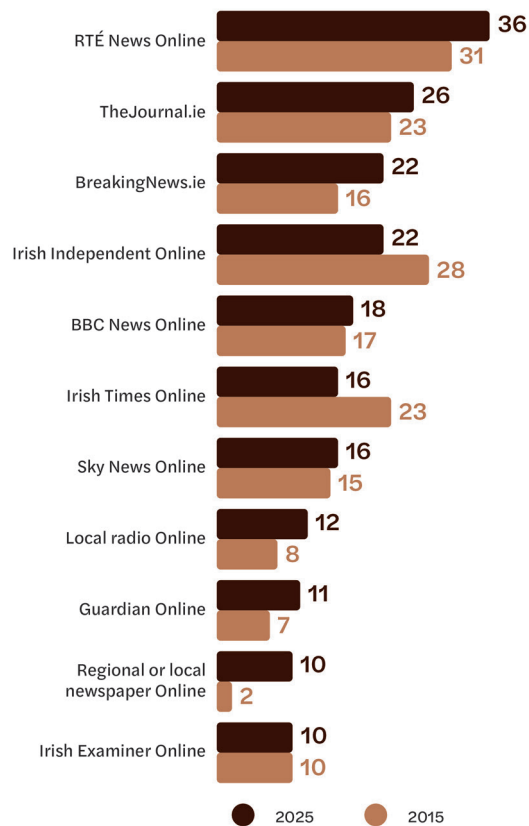
Brands accessed offline



Q. Which of the following brands have you used to access news offline in the last week (via TV, radio, print, and other traditional media)? Please select all that apply.
Base: All n=2000.

Figure 2.4

Brands accessed online



Q. Which of the following brands have you used to access news online in the last week (via websites, apps, social media, and other forms of Internet access)? Please select all that apply. Base: All n=2000.

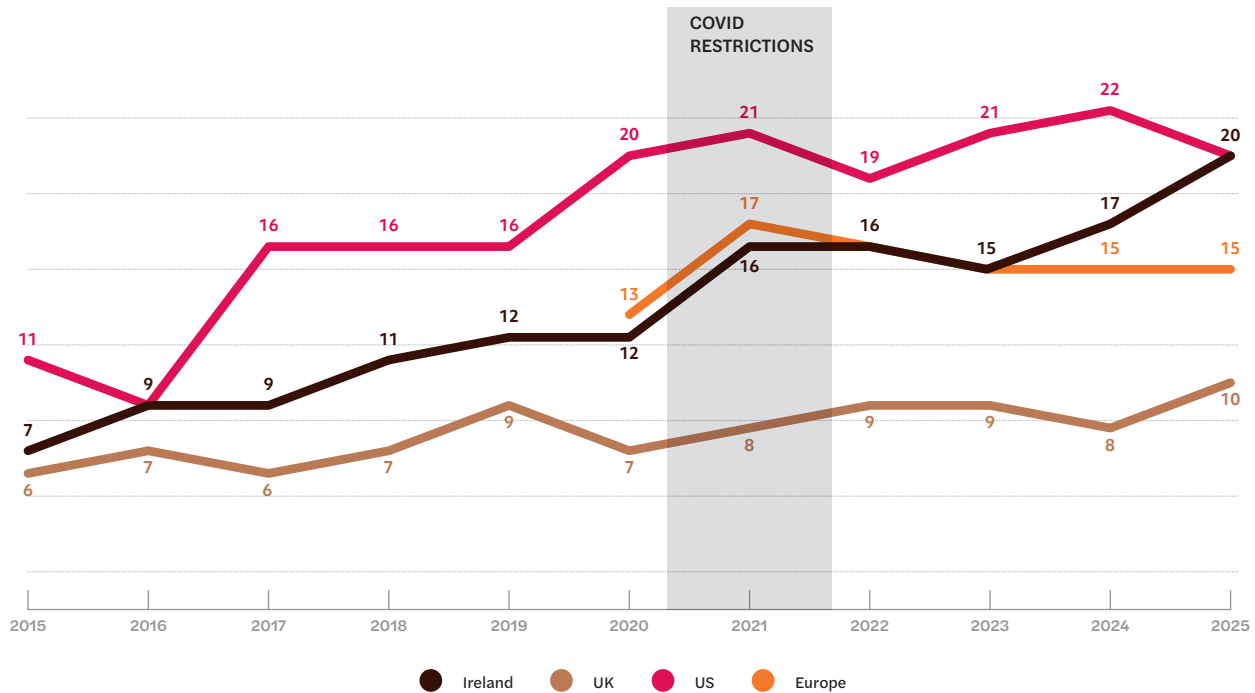
When the 2025 figures are examined further in terms of *most frequently* used (three times or more per week), the broadcasters continue to dominate with RTÉ the most regularly consumed, reaching 33% in terms of traditional TV coverage and 26% of people in terms of online. This online figure is twice that of its closest competitors in the digital space -TheJournal.ie (13%), Independent.ie (12%) and BreakingNews.ie (11%) - suggesting the Irish online space is a mixture of traditional broadcast brands, newspapers and digital-native websites. Nevertheless, these are relatively small audience share numbers and again indicate a fragmented news landscape. Interestingly, both the Irish Times and Irish Independent are the two that have notably *declined* in terms of overall weekly online reach since 2015, perhaps as a consequence of now targeting a smaller (paying) audience and not trying to be all things to all people.

Payments

A decade ago, the 2015 Digital News Report for Ireland starkly suggested 'the outlook for generating customer revenue from online news in the Irish market is not promising,' but there have been glimmers of hope for news organisations. While the vast majority still do not pay for news, a notable audience segment is increasingly accustomed to handing over card details, with one in five people in Ireland now paying for news (20%), up from 7% (2015). The slight bump (+3pp) over the past year will also provide some optimism for news producers as the figure had stagnated since 2021. This latest increase also suggests three key surges in terms of audience payment: 2015-2018 (year-on-year increase), 2020-2021 (Covid pandemic bump), and now 2023-2025. The current rate of payment in Ireland is double that of the UK, and above the European average, so Irish news producers have reason for some optimism, even if perhaps the pace and rate of growth has not been as hoped for.

Figure 2.5

Paying for news – International comparison



Q: Have you paid for ONLINE news content, or accessed a paid for ONLINE news service in the last year? (This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or one off payment for an article or app or e-edition). Base: All n=2000.

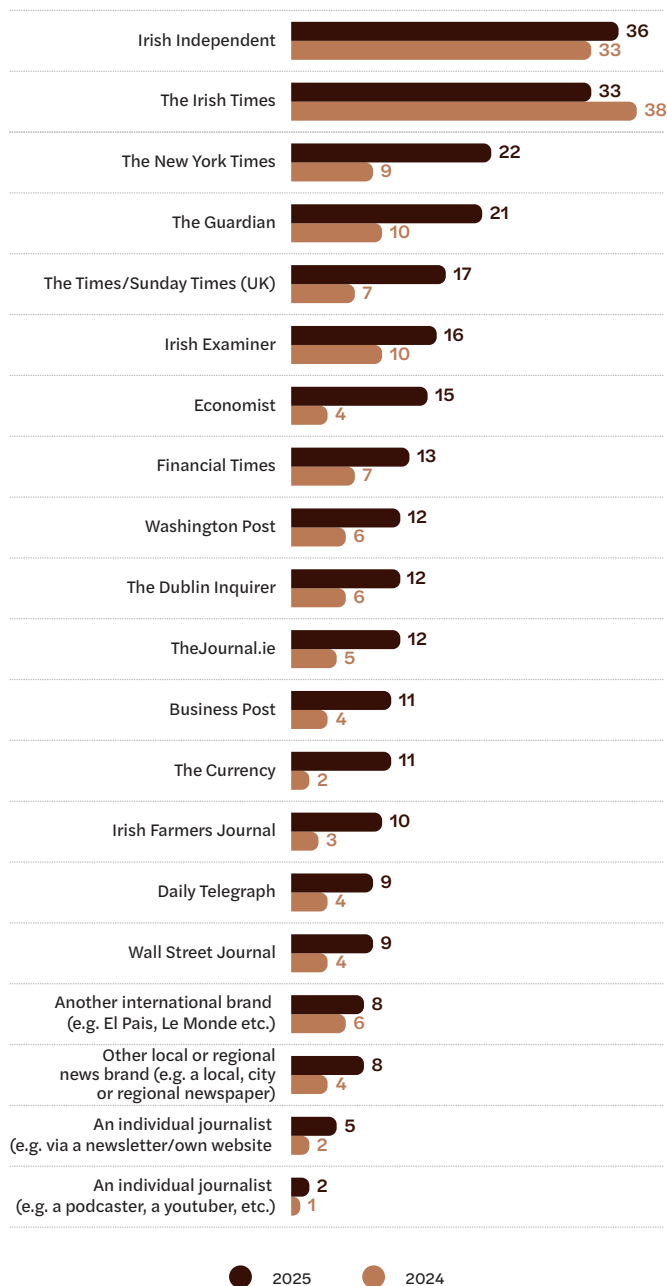
Age-related patterns are also clear: younger audiences, under 45, are more likely than older audiences to pay, a trend that was evident even back in 2015. The past two years have seen notable growth among the 35-44 age group in particular: payment for news among this cohort has increased from 14% up to 27% since 2023, in contrast to the current 16%-17% among the various over-45 age groups evident this year.

It is important to recognise that the shift towards audiences paying for content has not necessarily been a natural one. News outlets have attempted to lure subscribers with goodies: the Irish Times tried deals including partnerships with Ring doorbells, the New York Times ('Times 2 - Twice the Insight'), and even reusable water bottles ('journalism that holds water'). The Times of Ireland once offered iPad minis, while in April 2025 the Independent.ie was offering a €100 adventure centre voucher. Such offers serve as somewhat humbling reminders that journalism has often needed other bells and whistles to attract buyers. Previously, news was part of a bundled product: you got the news, but also things like cinema and TV listings and classified ads. The 'bundle' has had a revamp, but it still hints at the challenge of people's instincts regarding paying for reporting alone, particularly after two decades of free-flowing 'good enough' content being available for no cost.

Ultimately, though, payment and brand recognition are intertwined: the two frontrunners are the Irish Times and the Irish Independent, both of which have in recent years attracted around one in three of those making a regular payment. This illustrates that, although print as a physical format is in steady decline, the well-established print-brand titles remain resilient in the digital space. Of course, print outlets always needed to attract paying customers. In the list of all paid-for digital titles, the top eight are all traditional print-brand titles; notably, however, five of those are internationally based (including the UK-based Times/Sunday Times, which does have a small Irish operation). The inclusion of special-interest publications covering finance and farming is also notable, indicating a willingness to pay for niche content. Unsurprisingly, given that television is freely available to access in Ireland and the UK, there are no broadcasters listed in the paid-for titles. Earlier this year Sky News announced a plan to move towards a subscription model, so it will be interesting to see if television makes inroads into news subscriptions in the coming years.

Figure 2.6

Paid for digital titles



The decade ahead?

Looking back since 2015, we see that broadcasters have maintained more wider appeal, while newspaper brands are the ones attracting payments. Overall, the brands that dominated offline have transitioned online; there has not been a radical upending of the news landscape, but more widely, bigger issues around trust, news avoidance and misinformation are inevitably having an impact (see Sections 1 and 4). Predicting what 2035 data might show is a foolish game, but the patterns since 2015 suggest the leading brands in Ireland will maintain their dominant role, even if the overall figures continue to gradually decline. At this point, it is difficult to see any new arrival disrupting or entering the wider, general news landscape as it seems settled now, with the existing digital-native players (TheJournal.ie and BreakingNews.ie in particular) carving out a sustained space alongside the more established traditional brands covering daily news. Instead, there may be an increase in new, smaller outlets that can attract 2-3% of audiences, but which will play an important role in challenging, diversifying and complementing the existing Irish news ecosystem. The lower costs of entry and distribution costs is one of the most opportune aspects of online journalism production and dissemination, and new outlets which take advantage of this may be able to benefit from the Irish audiences' increasing willingness to pay for journalistic content.

Q: You said you have paid a subscription/membership to a digital news service in the last year... Which of the following did you subscribe to? Please select all that apply. Note: Those who have made a regular payment to at least one digital news service in the last year: Base All: range between n=194-286.

03

Rowdy and resilient: A decade of radio and podcasts

By David Robbins

Looking back at a decade of Digital News Reports into the radio and podcast sectors, what stands out? Well, the huge boom in podcasting is the most noticeable development over that time, but equally remarkable, although a lot more understated, is the resilience of the radio sector.

Ireland's love of radio

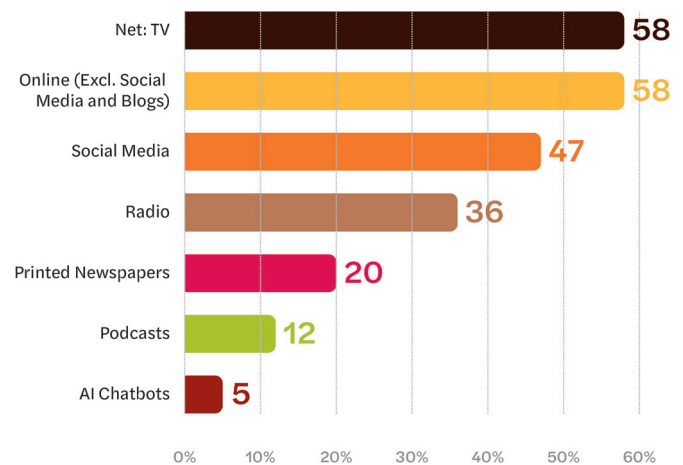
Irish radio is almost 100 years old. The first Irish station, called 2RN, began broadcasting almost at the foundation of the state, in 1926. Throughout the often-tumultuous intervening years, Irish radio has remained a trusted and companionable backdrop to Irish lives, homes, and workplaces. Today, nine in 10 of us tune in to radio every day⁵.

Despite competition from other actors in the attention economy, despite a brash younger sibling jostling at its elbow (the podcasters), and in the face of new technologies such as smart speakers and Digital Audio Broadcast (DAB), Irish radio has remained largely at the centre of Irish life.

There are many theories which attempt to explain this strong listening culture: our love of storytelling, the closeness of audiences and broadcasters, our particular affinity with, and approach to, music⁶, and our perception of radio as a kind of public confessional going back to the days of the *Gay Byrne Show* and *Dear Frankie*⁷, and continuing to the present with Joe Duffy's *Liveline*.

Figure 3.1

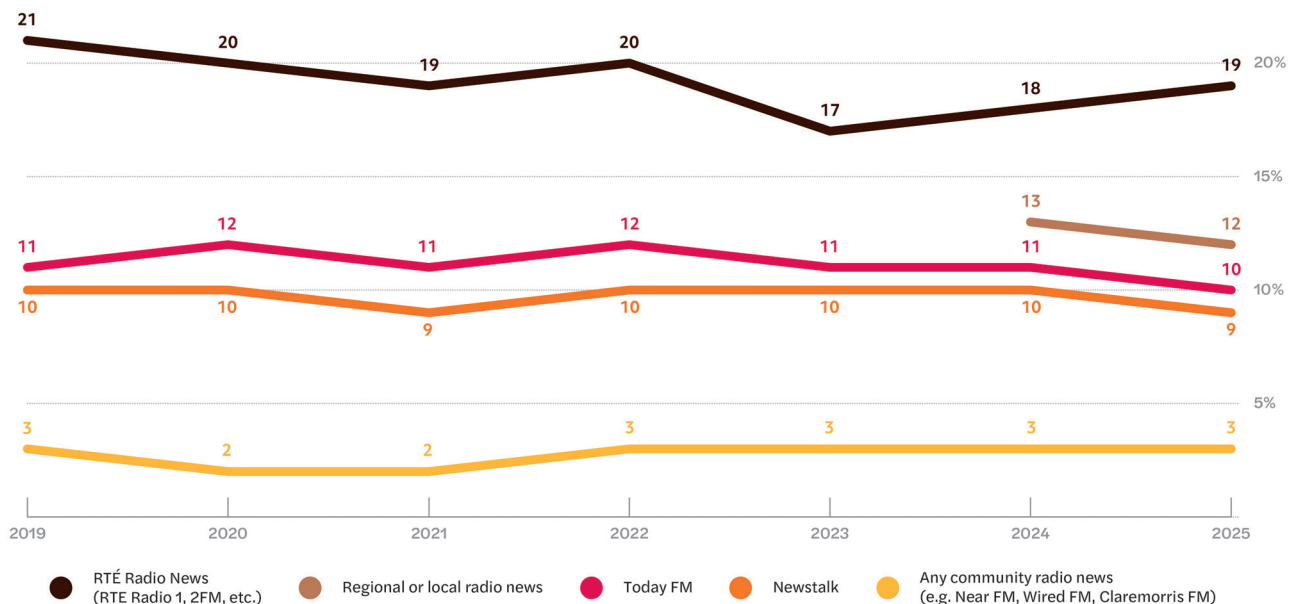
Any source of news



Q: Which, if any, of the following have you used in the last week as a source of news? Please select all that apply. Base: All n=2000.

Figure 3.2

Most frequently used traditional audio news outlets



Q: You said you have used the following brands to access news offline in the last week...Which of these, if any, did you use on 3 days or more? Please select all that apply. Base: All n=2000. Note: Original question included all formats (e.g. TV, Radio, Newspapers). Whatever the reasons, the enduring popularity and quiet resilience of the radio sector in Ireland is still evident today. Particularly relevant in the context of the Digital News Report is

5 JNLR The Irish Audio Report, 2024. Available at <https://www.radiocentreireland.ie/insights/the-2024-irish-audio-report-provides-comprehensive-analysis-of-the-irish-audio-market>

6 Quinn, Toner, (2024), Does Ireland have its own way of thinking about music? Online article. *RTÉ Culture*. Available at <https://www.rte.ie/culture/2024/0814/1452433-does-ireland-have-its-own-way-of-thinking-about-music/>

7 Doyle-O'Neill, F. (2013) 'Life on-air: talk radio and popular culture in Ireland', in Ní Fhuartháin, M. and Doyle, D.M. (eds.) *Ordinary Irish life: music, sport and culture*. Dublin : Irish Academic Press, pp. 128-145.

radio's important role as a source of news. In 2025, 11% of Irish news consumers turned to radio as their primary source of news, which is quite high by international standards, comparing to 8% in UK, 3% in US, and 7% in Europe.

When we look at the use of radio as a source of any news consumed (as opposed to the primary source), that figure increases to 36%. Radio brands also perform strongly when we look at most frequently used traditional brands (i.e. that news consumers turn to three or more times per week). The 2025 figure for RTÉ Radio is 19%, for regional or local radio, it is 12%, while 3% tune in regularly to community radio to get their news.

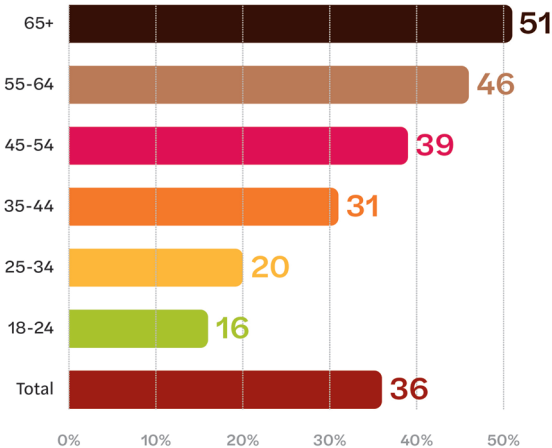
The resilience and agility of local

Indeed, the important social role played by regional, local, and community radio is often overlooked. Just like national radio broadcasters, those working among smaller audiences and communities have weathered stormy media weather over the last 10 years. This sector has been agile and quick to adapt to new technologies and changing audience demands, often using Facebook to carry on the community-building work initiated on air⁸.

The websites of local radio stations are also a significant source of news, with 8% of Irish news consumers getting their news from this source three days or more a week in 2025. Today FM (4%) and Newstalk online (3%) also have relatively healthy audiences for their online news. Among people who consume local news, local radio (either broadcast or via the station's website) is the preferred source (23%), with local newspapers (22%) also popular.

Radio is also a trusted medium for news consumers, and the more intimate nature of the relationship between broadcaster and listener may contribute to the sense of trustworthiness. Some 72% of Irish news consumers trust local or regional radio as a source of news, and the same percentage trust RTÉ News. Bauer Media's stations Newstalk and Today FM have slightly lower, but still impressive, levels of trust, with 66% of news consumers saying they are trusted sources of news. When we look at those who actively mistrust news outlets, radio stations again perform relatively well: local and regional radio stations have the lowest level of mistrust (10%), compared to RTÉ (15%), Newstalk (14%) and Today FM (12%).

Figure 3.3
Radio as a source of news - Age comparison



Q: Which, if any, of the following have you used in the last week as a source of news? Base: Original question included all sources of news (e.g. TV, Radio, Newspapers). All n=2000.

One challenge for the radio sector in the future is a demographic one: radio audiences skew older. Only 16% of people aged 18-24 said they used radio as a source of news (down from 23% in the 2024 Digital News Report), compared to 51% of those aged 65 and older. As with other media sectors, attracting younger audiences is a concern.

What do Irish audiences want from podcasts?

Turning now to radio's rowdy sibling, podcasts. As with radio, Irish audiences are enthusiastic about this audio format, with 12% of Irish news consumers listening to podcasts each week. This is higher than the figure for Europe (9%) and the UK (7%), but lower than that for the US (15%), where partisan politics and the culture wars drive podcast audiences⁹.

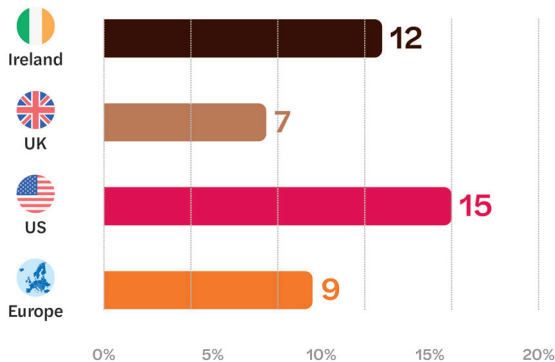
Podcasts may be a popular source of entertainment or analysis, but listeners do not generally use them as a main source of news. Only 2% of Irish news consumers cite podcasts as their main source of news, similar to the UK (also 2%) and the US (3%).

8 McMahon, D. (2021). In Tune with the Listener: How Local Radio in Ireland has Maintained Audience Attention and Loyalty. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, 11(3), e202112. Available at <https://doi.org/10.30935/ojcm11085>

9 Shaughnessy, B. et al. (2024) That Is So Mainstream: The Impact of Hyper-Partisan Media Use and Right-, Left-Wing Alternative Media Repertoires on Consumers' Belief in Political Misperceptions in the United States, *International Journal of Communication* 18, 1561–1581

Figure 3.4

Consume podcasts weekly - international comparison



Q: Which, if any, of the following have you used in the last week as a source of news? Podcasts. Base: All n=2000. Note: Original question included all formats.

In the Digital News Report for 2020, we did a 'deep dive' on podcasts and found that there were several reasons Irish listeners downloaded or streamed them: podcasts are more convenient, and provide a deeper understanding of the news (54% either tended to agree or strongly agreed with these statements). They also cover a wider range of topics than linear news (57% tended to agree or strongly agreed) and were more entertaining to listen to (53% tended to agree or strongly agreed). So although podcasts are not a main source of news, Irish news consumers are obviously listening to a lot of 'news-adjacent' content for political analysis and discussion of news events they have already learned about through other media.

The rise, and rise of podcasts in Ireland

On the production side, podcasting in Ireland is in a healthy state. Apple podcast charts feature several Irish productions in its 'top charts' list: *The David McWilliams Podcast* (Acast), Nicola Tallant's *Crime World* (Sunday World), *Let's Do This! with Arthur and Donal* (new entrant, with chef Donal Skehan and professional dancer Arthur Gourounlian), *Red Room* with Jenny Claffey (true crime stories, Acast), *Indo Sport* with Joe Molloy, the *Indo Daily* podcast (both Mediahuis), and the *Irish History Podcast*.

Similarly, on the Spotify podcast charts, Irish shows feature prominently: in addition to those featured in the Apple charts, the paid-for *TBX* interview podcast with Calvin O'Brien and Terence Power and the *2 Johnnies Podcast* are popular with Spotify members. For this year's Digital News Report, we asked Irish podcast listeners (12% of Irish news consumers) to name podcasts they were familiar with. The *Indo Daily* (Irish Independent/Mediahuis), *In the News* (The Irish Times), *Inside Politics* (The Irish Times), *The Rest is Politics* (Gary Lineker's Goalhanger company), and *The Path to Power* (Matt Cooper and Ivan Yates, produced by Acast) were mentioned, in that order.

An interesting recent trend in podcasting is live-streaming or posting podcasts on video sharing platforms such as YouTube. *The Joe Rogan Experience* podcast has over 19m subscribers on YouTube, and most videos are over two hours long. The trend for watching podcasts is growing, and Spotify now hosts over 250,000 video podcasts. Research carried out for US podcast producers Sweet Fish shows that 46% of regular podcast listeners prefer video with their audio¹⁰. RTÉ's *Morning Ireland* flagship morning news programme offers a 'watch live' streaming option, and leading news podcasts such as *The Daily* from the New York Times are now offered as video as well as audio.

The benefits of video for podcasters include greater visibility across more platforms, the ability to clip show segments for sharing on social media, and the opportunity to create 'a sense of community, intimacy, and trust between podcast hosts and the audience through a feeling of liveness and immediacy'¹¹ provided by video.

A less positive development for radio and podcast followers is the news that the BBC's audio platform BBC Sounds will no longer be available in the Republic of Ireland. The BBC has decided that the radio stations, podcasts, audiobooks, and music mixes currently available in the Republic will cease later this year, due to 'rights limitations' and to offer better value to UK listeners¹².

Despite this setback, looking back over a decade of radio and podcasting in Ireland as captured by the Digital News Report, the picture is of a vibrant and resilient sector which caters to a particularly Irish audio culture.

¹⁰ Petersen, P. (2025), The 2025 State of Video Podcasts, online article. Available at <https://www.sweetfishmedia.com/blog/the-2025-state-of-video-podcasts>

¹¹ Euritt, A. (2023). *Podcasting as an intimate medium*. Routledge, cited in Vaarala, V. (2025), Podcasting the Truth: Challenging Journalistic Knowledge and Building Epistemic Authority in Independent YouTube Podcasts, *Media and Communication*, 13, available at <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.8984>.

¹² Wilson, R. (2025), Why is BBC Sounds not going to be available in Ireland? Online article. Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5yg065058no>

04

Disinformation and the fact-checking divide

By Dan Lloyd

Conspiracy theories, disinformation and misinformation once again took centre stage in news coverage across digital and broadcast channels this year. One social network saw news outlets leave in protest, while another ceased fact-checking on its platforms, all while the industrial-sized misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) continued online.

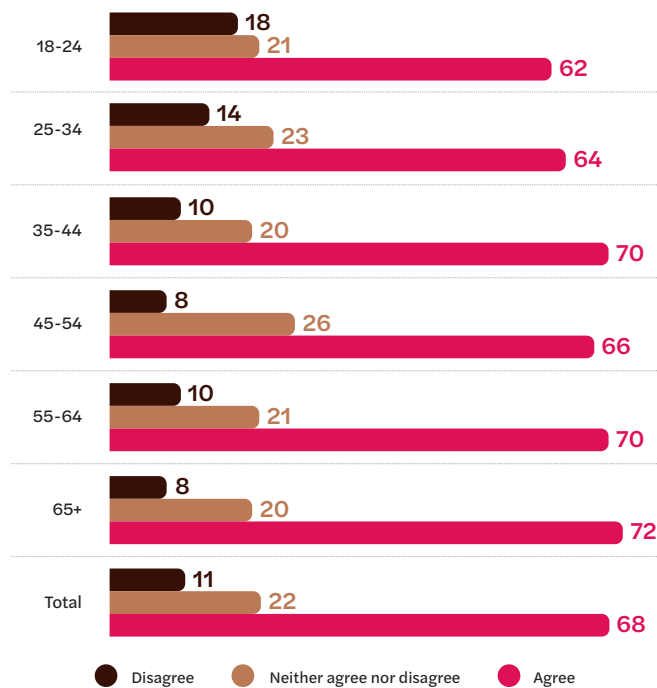
For the second year running, the World Economic Forum ranked disinformation and misinformation highest in its Global Risks Report. The forecast may seem bleak, but this year's Digital News Report finds that increased audience awareness fuels a need for reliable sources.

Misinformation: Audience concerns

In Ireland, 68% said they are concerned about what is real and fake online. These findings broadly reflect those in 2024, with a slight drop from 71%. A high degree of worry is shared across age ranges, with over 55s (71%) being more concerned than 18–24-year-olds (62%).

Figure 4.1

Concern about what is real and fake online - Age comparison



Q: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: "Thinking about online news, I am concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet." Base: All n=2000.

When asked, 'What actions could the news media take to increase your trust in the news?', most of the DNR responses centre around increased fact-checking and verification of sources. Legacy news outlets have already responded. In April RTÉ launched its 'BBC Verify' doppelganger, 'Clarity'. Elsewhere, the European Broadcasting Union recently established a collaborative verification network, Eurovision News Spotlight. Meanwhile, The Journal's FactCheck unit remains the only verified Irish signatory of the International Fact-Checking Network and offers 'The Explainer' podcast to contextualise issues for audiences.

With the majority (41%) of this year's survey participants turning to 'a news source I trust' when checking suspect information, these and other approaches will play an important role in stopping disinformation dissemination.

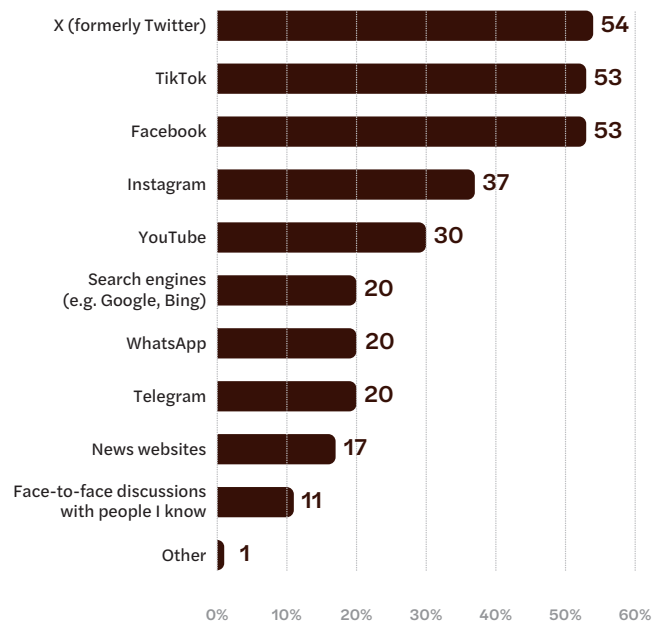
Publishers leave X as Meta changes tack

Whilst fact-checking efforts have increased natively, we've also seen an exodus of trusted news sources from third-party platforms, most notably, X. The Guardian, NPR, PBS, and Le Monde have all stopped publishing on Elon Musk's social network, citing algorithmic changes that prioritise extremism^{13, 14}.

In Ireland, Mediahaus has taken legal action against X over 'fake advertisements' using Irish Independent branding, while AI-generated scams on X and Facebook have exploited images of RTÉ News and its journalists. Meanwhile, campaign group Global Witness uncovered how bots were deployed on X during anti-migrant protests in Dublin last year, and also found instances of disinformation related to the Irish election on TikTok¹⁵.

Figure 4.2

Channels of false and misleading information



Q: Which of the following do you think poses a major threat in terms of false and misleading information? Please select all that apply. Base: All n=2000.

At 54%, X is the channel seen as the greatest threat regarding false and misleading information, closely followed by TikTok and Facebook, at 53%. News websites sit at the lower end of the scale at 17%, a stark comparison to the US, where news websites (28%) are seen as more of a threat than YouTube (26%) and search engines (24%). These differences point to a recurring theme throughout the report, a trust in Ireland's media.

¹³ <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/2024/11/14/toxic-x-just-not-worth-it-anymore-the-guardian-concludes/>

¹⁴ <https://www.politico.eu/article/le-monde-france-top-newspaper-quits-elon-musk-x/>

¹⁵ <https://www.rte.ie/news/technology/2024/0604/1452872-tiktok-disinformation-ads/>

However, these numbers could change significantly next year. Meta has stopped its fact-checking programme in the US in favour of a 'Community Notes' style feature seen on X. The fallout from the world's biggest social network owner's decision will likely be seen in the coming months, and perhaps publishers doubling down on fact-checking vehicles is a good bet. Indeed, an investigation found that professional fact-checkers are among the three most cited sources on Community Notes¹⁶.

At this year's International Journalism Festival in Perugia, proponents of fact-checking said they hoped Meta would reverse its decision. Faktograf's Ana Brakus, based in Croatia, said that if social platforms are used to harm other people, those platforms have a 'responsibility to help'¹⁷.

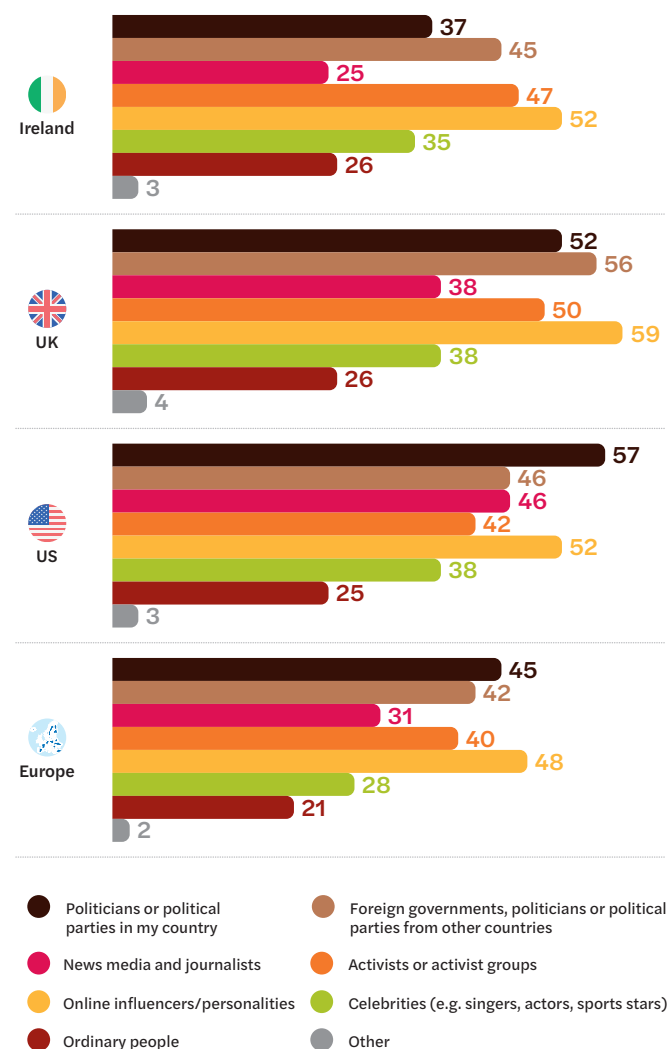
In Europe, the Digital Services Act (DSA) provides a barrier against Meta vetoing its fact-checking responsibilities, as it requires platforms to 'put in place measures to counter the spreading of illegal goods, services or content online', or otherwise face substantial fines¹⁸. The European Commission is in discussion with X after finding discrepancies with the platform's 'soft moderation' practices¹⁹. The outcome of those talks and any attempt by Meta to strip fact-checking from its services in the EU will be another test of the resilience of the DSA.

Dis and misinformation threats

Another addition to the DNR this year is related to the source of false and misleading information. Significant variations exist between countries - particularly attitudes towards news media and journalists. The US stands out with 46% citing journalists as a significant threat. The UK is also high at 38%. Only 25% agreed with that statement in Ireland. Online influencers and personalities are seen as the biggest threat in Ireland (52%) and the UK (59%), and in the US, politicians top audience concerns (57%). Misinformation investigations into high-profile podcasters such as Steven Bartlett by the BBC may be a factor in these results²⁰.

Figure 4.3

Sources of false and misleading information - International comparison



Q: When it comes to false and misleading information online these days, in general, which of the following would you say poses a major threat? Please select all that apply. Base: All n=2000.

¹⁶ <https://www.poynter.org/ifcn/2025/fact-checkers-contribute-improve-community-notes-x/>

¹⁷ *The evolution of the censorship narrative: challenges and threats facing fact-checkers in recent years.* (2025). International Journalism Festival. <https://www.journalismfestival.com/programme/2025/the-evolution-of-the-censorship-narrative-challenges-and-threats-facing-fact-checkers-in-recent-years>

¹⁸ *The EU's Digital Services Act.* (2022, October 27). European Commission. https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/digital-services-act_en

¹⁹ Gkritsi, E. (2025, April 24). The EU has fined Meta and Apple. What happened to X? *POLITICO*. <https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-meta-apple-x-fines-digital-antitrust-rules-digital-services-act-elon-musk/>

²⁰ Wakefield, J. (2024, December 13). *Steven Bartlett sharing harmful health misinformation on Diary of CEO podcast.* BBC News. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4gpz163vg2o>

While news coverage of misinformation and disinformation is important for exposing harmful practices, news organisations have also played a role in amplifying misleading content by bringing it from the margins into the mainstream. Some argue that public exposure to extremist or misleading information typically remains confined to the groups where it originated, until politicians or news outlets publicly highlight these falsehoods and spread them to a broader audience²¹. Elon Musk's claims of widespread corruption linked to 'grooming gangs' in the UK received extensive attention in parliamentary debates and news reports, underscoring this point²².

The role of AI in misinformation

While fact-checking efforts continue to grow at news organisations, technologies such as AI introduce new complexities in the battle against misinformation.

Disinformation and AI are often mentioned together, and that message resonates with the public. When asked about AI's impact on news, 45% said it would make news less trustworthy, 40% said less accurate, and 37% said less transparent. Only 18% think AI will make news more trustworthy.

These concerns about AI's role in news seem justified. BBC research in February found that 51% of AI-generated news summaries had 'significant inaccuracies' when conducting tests on Open AI's ChatGPT, Google's Gemini, Microsoft's Co-Pilot and Perplexity AI platforms²³.

While the concerns around AI are valid, steps are being taken to address them. News organisations, including The Guardian, The New York Times, and The Wall Street Journal, are especially cautious, using human oversight during development as they fine-tune AI summaries for their journalism, as they try to balance AI opportunities with the potential problems²⁴. Others are experimenting with AI tools to detect misinformation before it spreads.

Audience attitudes to the use of AI for news are improving. Last year, those very and somewhat comfortable with news mainly produced by AI with some human oversight were 15%, this has increased to 19% this year. The difference when accounting for age is clear, with under-35s almost twice as comfortable as over-35s when considering the same measure.

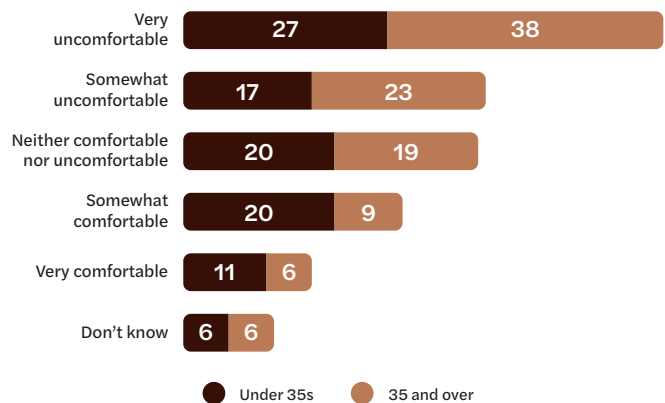
In the early days of AI, some of these figures may seem encouraging for platforms looking to generate news content for audiences, and with 5% of this year's survey participants using AI for news already, its influence in the digital news ecosystem will only increase.

Disinformation continues to challenge audiences. While fact-checking, verification, and explainer initiatives could help build trust, the rise of AI introduces new complexities. A combination of better fact-checking, responsible AI use, policy implementation and public education will be key to building a more trustworthy media landscape.

Figure 4.4

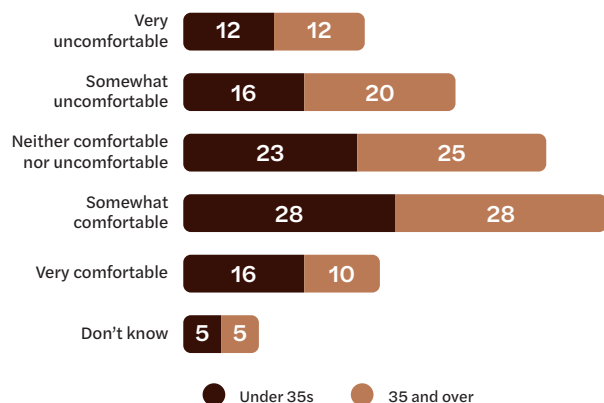
Comfort with AI - Age comparison

Mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with some human oversight



Comfort with AI - Age comparison

Mostly by a human journalist with some help from artificial intelligence (AI)



Q: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news produced in each of the following ways...? Base: All n=2000.

21 Budak, C., Nyhan, B., Rothschild, D. M., Thorson, E., & Watts, D. J. (2024). Misunderstanding the harms of online misinformation. *Nature*, 630(8015), 45–53. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07417-w>

22 Culbertson, A. (2025, January 8). *Grooming gangs scandal timeline: What happened, what inquiries there were and how Starmer was involved - after Elon Musk's accusations*. Sky News. <https://news.sky.com/story/grooming-gangs-scandal-timeline-what-happened-what-inquiries-there-were-and-how-starmer-was-involved-after-elon-musks-accusations-13285021>

23 Rahman-Jones, I. (2025, February 11). *AI chatbots unable to accurately summarise news, BBC finds*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cOm17d8827ko>

24 <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/international-journalism-festival-2025-what-we-learnt-perugia-about-future-news>

05

Local journalism can't survive on trust alone

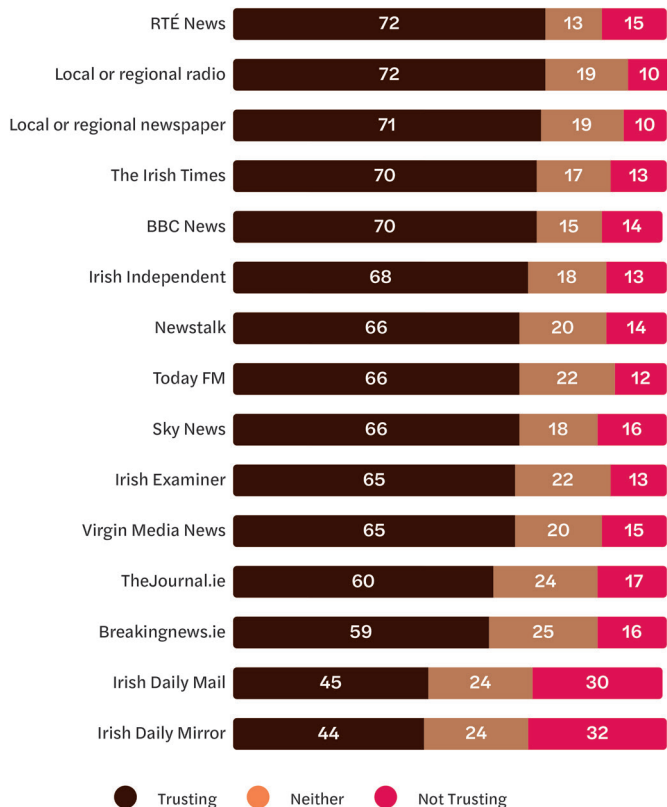
By Eileen Culloty

According to the 2025 Digital News Report, local news outlets are among the most trusted sources of information in Ireland, with 72% of respondents expressing trust in local radio and 71% in local newspapers.

This places them level with the public broadcaster RTÉ and slightly ahead of The Irish Times and BBC News. Local news providers will rightly be pleased to see such high levels of public trust.

Figure 5.1

Trust in brands



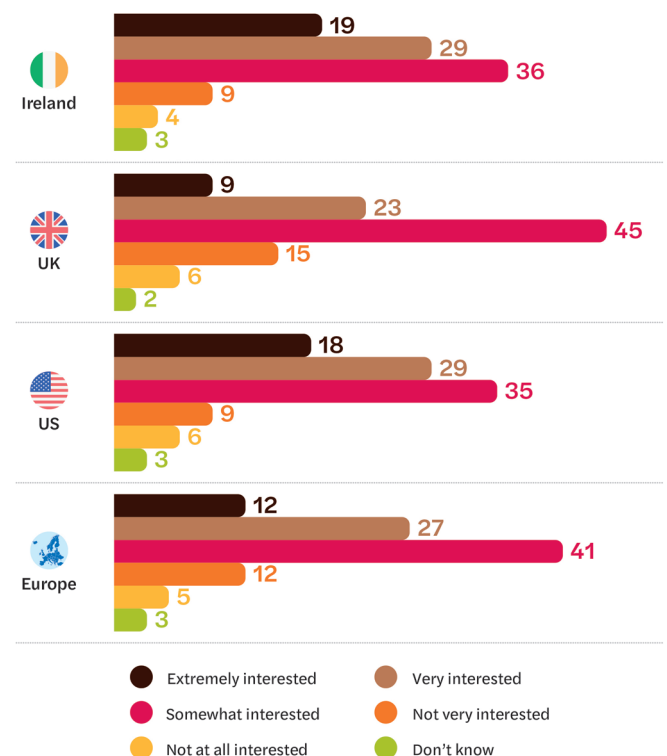
Q: How trustworthy would you say news from the following brand is?
Base: All who have heard of brand, n=1815 to 1977.

Unsurprisingly, interest in local news is also high. After all, most of us care deeply about our immediate surroundings. In Ireland, 84% of people say they are interested in local news—surpassing figures in the US (82%), Europe (80%), and UK (77%). Nearly one in five Irish respondents report being ‘extremely interested’ in local news, a higher rate than any other country surveyed. In contrast, only 9% of people in the UK express extremely high interest.

This divergence with our nearest neighbour is striking. In many ways, the UK offers a cautionary tale. Between 2005 and 2022, an estimated 271 local titles closed²². Critics have long accused the BBC of encroaching on local markets—an issue we have largely avoided in Ireland. But the UK’s decline in local news has gone hand in hand with ownership concentration. Many titles are now local in name only: owned by conglomerates that have slashed staff, automated copy with AI, and recycled agency content. In some cases, even the letters to the editor are no longer written by locals.

Figure 5.2

Local news interest – International comparison



Q: How interested, if at all, are you in local news about the area where you live? Base: All n=2000.

The local connection

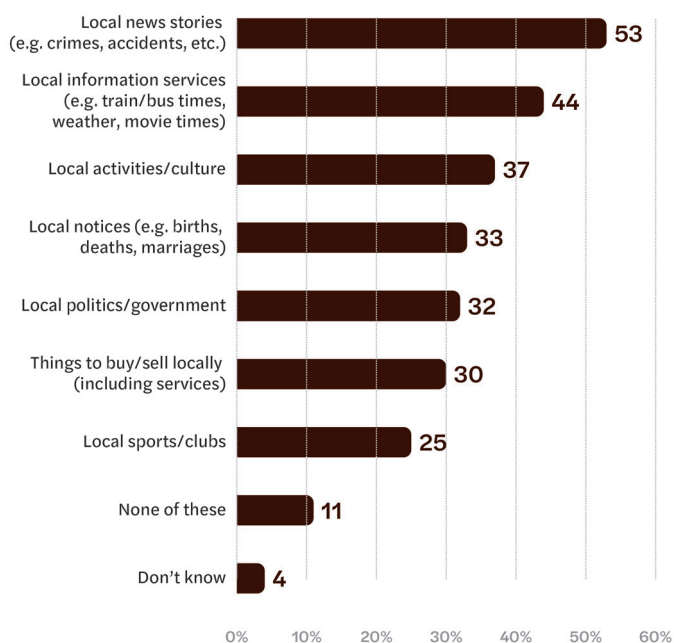
Ireland has taken some steps down the same path. Ownership of local newspapers, radio stations, and online outlets is increasingly consolidated in the hands of a few large companies, often headquartered outside Ireland²³. Late last year, *The Times* described a ‘local media land grab,’ with two dominant players: Bauer (a German media conglomerate) and Formpress (UK-owned and the largest owner of local newspapers in Ireland). Formpress alone owns around 25 titles across the island.²⁴

Market consolidation should be a concern for competition regulators. Most people don’t spend much time worrying about media ownership, but people do notice when news stops being truly local.

Survey respondents expressed a strong appetite for local information that is immediate, useful, and rooted in everyday life: crime and public safety (53%), community services (44%), local events and culture (37%), obituaries (33%), and local politics (32%). These topics form the foundation of community awareness. They support civic participation, social cohesion, and a shared sense of place.

Figure 5.3

Types of local information accessed



Q: Thinking about the types of information you may need about the area where you live...Which, if any, of the following types of local information have you accessed in the last week? Please select all that apply. Base: All n=2000.

The enduring popularity of obituaries is especially notable. Irish people’s connection to local information is perhaps best exemplified by ‘the deaths’—death notices that have long been a staple of local media. The website RIP.ie meets this need with a simple 21st-century solution: an always-on service for browsing and paying respects. Interestingly, RIP.ie, having overtaken traditional media in this space, was purchased last year by *The Irish Times*. The intense public interest in that acquisition reveals just how deep the desire for accessible, local information runs.

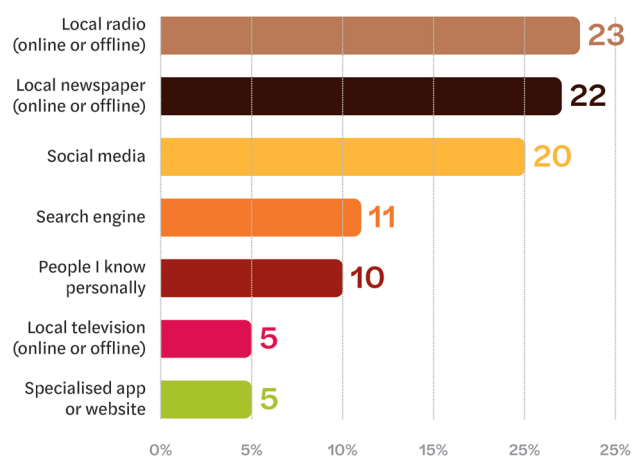
Trust vs. Use

So where do people actually go for local news? While most respondents reported high levels of trust and interest, only a fifth said they accessed a local news source in the past week. Of these, local radio (23%), local newspapers (22%), and social media (20%) were the most common sources.

Social media platforms, especially Facebook, now function as de facto hubs for local updates. Many local journalists (amateur, retired, or otherwise) have found ways to deliver engaging local content on these platforms. But overall, online platforms are inconsistent providers of journalism. They prioritise engagement over accuracy and often blur the lines between reporting, rumour, and opinion.

Figure 5.4

Best source of local news



Q: You said you have accessed local news and information about local news stories in the last week. Which source, if any, offers the BEST information for you on this topic? Please select one option. Base: All who have accessed Local news stories in the last week n=393.

²³ <http://mediaownership.ie/>

²⁴ <https://www.thetimes.com/world/ireland-world/article/whos-behind-the-local-media-land-grab-in-ireland-d8ckq7dxh#:~:text=Despite%20being%20a%20bloodstock,of%20local%20journalism%20in%20Ireland.>

Challenges and state responses

Despite strong trust and interest, local publishers and broadcasters continue to face acute financial challenges, especially in print. It's clear from the Digital News Report that Irish people value local information. Local media have played and still play a vital role in community life and are deeply aligned with Ireland's geographic sense of identity. But how can this trust and interest be converted into viable business models and lasting journalism careers across all regions?

Local outlets struggle to compete with tech giants built on massive, targeted advertising systems. However, many local businesses still see value in advertising with trusted local outlets. In contrast, public advertising often bypasses them entirely. Local Ireland, the body representing regional newspapers, recently met with Oireachtas members to call for change. It urged the government and public bodies to ensure that public information campaigns include local media. Currently, there's a troubling lack of transparency around public advertising spending.

From a democratic perspective, the stakes are high. Beyond the ownership issue, the real concern is the viability of journalism as a profession at the local level. Without local journalists, there's simply no one to report on the ground. While some UK conglomerates are experimenting with AI to automate stories, only human reporters can capture the lived experience of communities.

A report on working conditions for journalists finds that local journalists typically earn in the range €33,000-€44,000²⁵. However, many in the sector note that career progression is limited, offering little opportunity to earn more as they age and gain experience.

Policy responses have tended to focus on outcomes—like preventing news deserts and ensuring coverage of councils and courts. Following the recommendations of the Future of Media Commission, Ireland now has two journalism support schemes: one for Local Democracy Reporting and one for Court Reporting. Administered by Coimisiún na Meán, these initiatives mark the first time the media regulator has directly funded public-interest journalism. In total, €5.7 million was awarded to news outlets, supporting over 100 new or enhanced journalist roles.

Of course, these schemes have limits. They are time-bound, often time-consuming to apply for, and focus on specific beats rather than rebuilding overall newsroom capacity. Still, they represent an important starting point. Encouragingly, the current Programme for Government includes commitments to strengthen these schemes and ensure 'accessible funding for local radio and print media.'

Elsewhere, there are signs of innovation. Subscriber-funded outlets like The Dublin Inquirer have shown that audiences will support high-quality local journalism. Some community and local radio stations are forming partnerships to experiment with new content formats and engage younger audiences.

Conclusion

In 2022, the Fingal Independent ceased publication after nearly 40 years. Its owner, Mediahuis, concluded the title was no longer profitable. Yet between 2006 and 2022, Fingal's population grew by over a third—faster than any other county in Ireland. Whether or not a title is profitable, fast-growing and vibrant regions like Fingal need local journalists.

Local journalism still matters—and it is still trusted. But trust alone won't pay wages, fund reporting, or hold local power to account. To ensure the future of local news in Ireland, we must back trust with policy, investment, and long-term support for journalism as a public good.

