

Engaging the Public in Regulating for Ethical Journalism Part One: Survey Data

Fielded February 2022

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Background and acknowledgements

This survey data was collected in February 2022 in the first part of a pilot project aimed at examining public perceptions and understanding of journalism and its regulation in the UK. The '[Engaging the public in regulating for ethical journalism](#)' study seeks to understand how journalism might better meet public expectations and the role of regulators in this dynamic. This second phase of the project delved deeper into key themes identified in the survey through focus groups and a report on the findings is available [here](#).

Acknowledgments: We are grateful to the funders – the project received funding from the University of Leeds's ESRC Impact Acceleration Account, the University of Leeds's School of Media and Communication, the University of Derby's SURE Impact Accelerator Fund and [Impress: The Independent Monitor of the Press](#). We thank Savanta for producing these data visualisations.

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The survey

A nationally representative survey was administered online by Savanta ComRes in February 2022 with a sample of 3044 adults from across England, Scotland, and Wales. Respondents were recruited through a panel and were representative of the UK population in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, region and social grade (see Section 1 section).

We designed forty-two questions to explore the following themes relating to news media use and public understanding of standards, ethics, regulation and trust in journalism. The survey also included questions on political participation (section 1) and news consumption (section 2).

Themes:

1. Media literacy and public knowledge of how journalism works, including how the public understand and value the role and function of journalism in society (section 3 and 4)
2. Public understanding of how the news media is regulated (section 5)
3. Public understanding of specific aspects of regulatory codes and the normative principles underlying it (section 6)
4. Suggestions of ways of improving the press via regulation, including identification of concerns (section 7)

The development of the questions was informed by a literature review (Coleman, Morrison, & Anthony, 2012; Coleman et al., 2016; Deuze, 2005; Hanitzsch, Hanusch, Ramaprasad, & De Beer, 2019; Ogbebor, 2021; Riedl & Eberl, 2022; Strömbäck et al., 2020; Ward, 2005; Wurff & Schoenbach, 2014). The survey questions are available at <https://doi.org/10.48785/100/369>

Section 1: Demographics



gions. Hence, what is needed is a federal coalition that looks beyond the legal-constitutional aspects of federalism to preserve the idea of a plural India in terms of both culture and politics.

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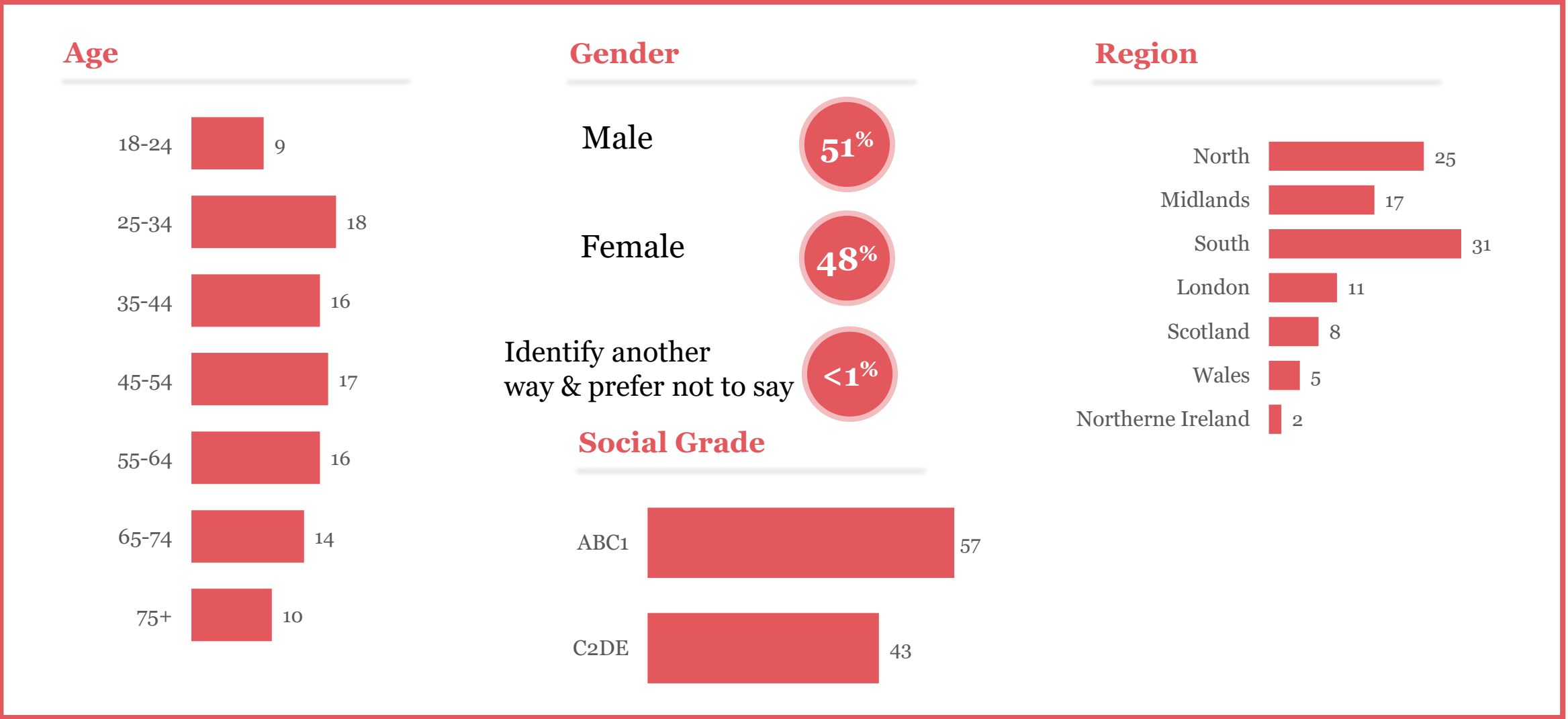
Economies and freedom

of its vaccines. This has to change. Team Europe is launching an initiative to this end – backed by billion funding from the EU budget and European development financial institutions – with African partners to boost manufacturing capacity in Africa for vaccines, medicines and health technologies.

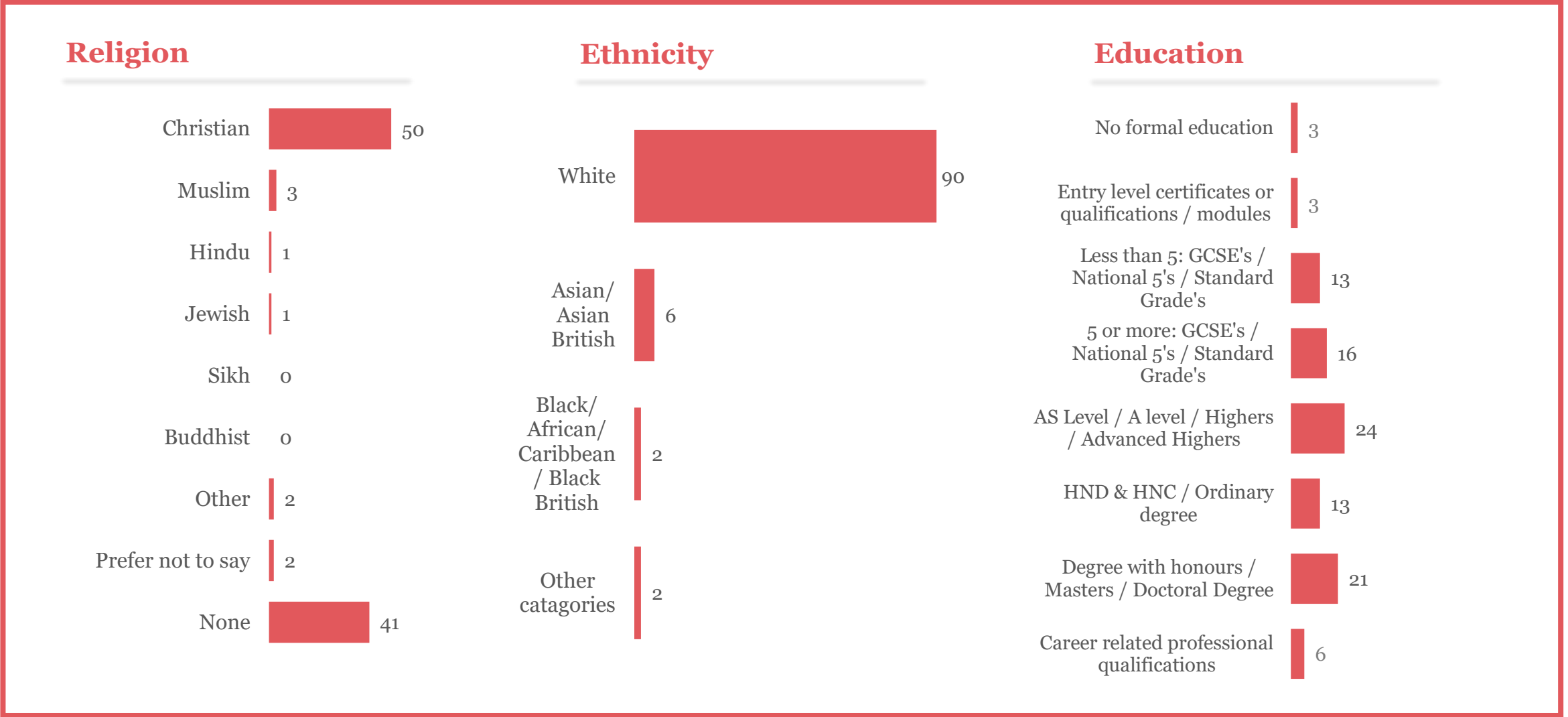
Issue of licensing

Voluntary licensing is the alleged way to ensure such transfer of technology and know-how. It turns out to be insufficient, as existing Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement and the 2001 Doha Declaration already foresee the possibility of compulsory licensing. We have been listening carefully to middle-income countries complaining about how difficult it is to use these technologies.

Demographics



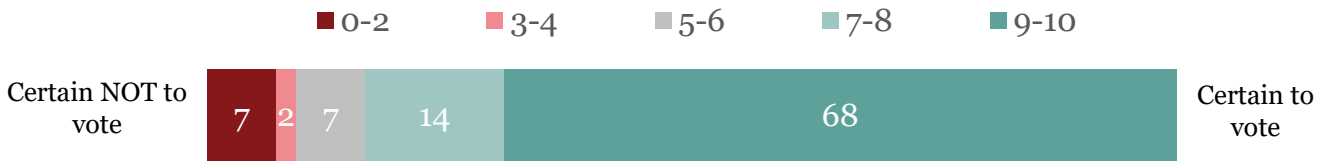
Demographics



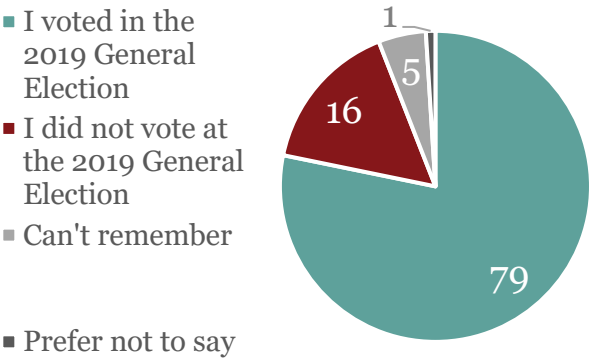
Voting behaviours

General Election

If there was a General Election tomorrow



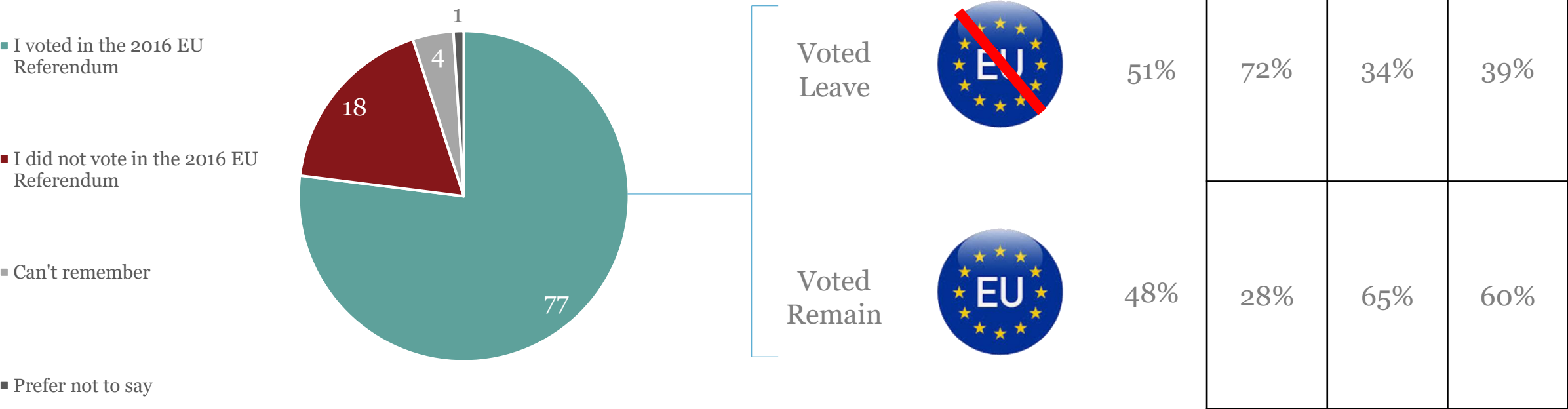
Voted in the December 2019 General Election



						Other	Undecided / Can't remember	Prefer not to say
Would vote for now	35%	28%	6%	3%	1%	7%	17%	2%
Voted for in 2019	35%	46%	7%	4%	1%	6%	1%	1%

EU membership voting 2016

EU Referendum



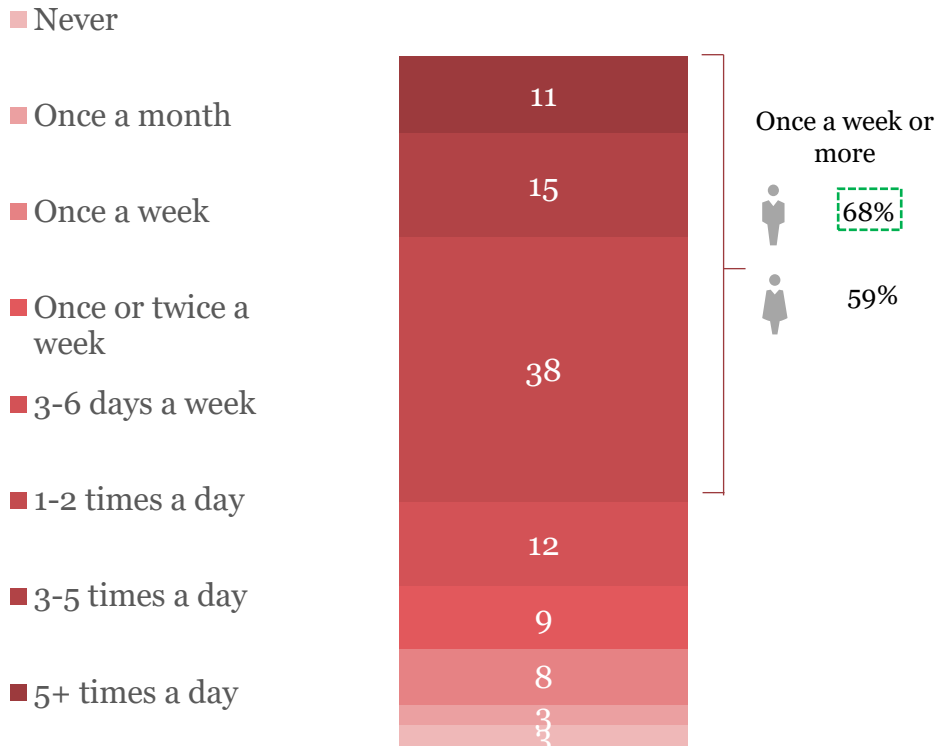
Section 2: News Consumption



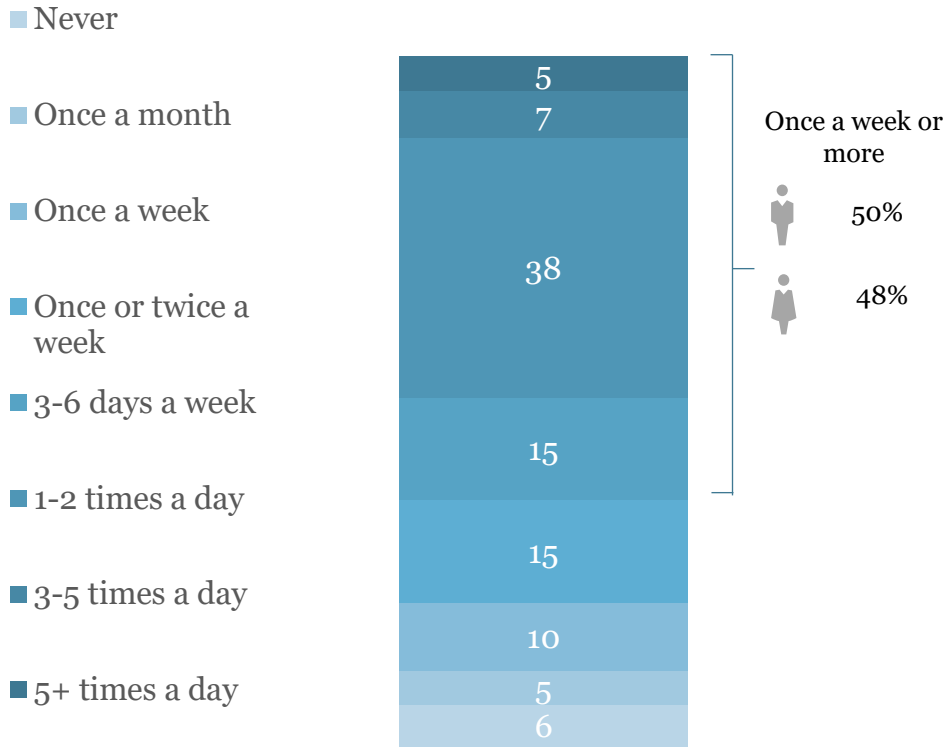
Q1.a. National news media and journalism: How often do you usually read, listen to, or watch national news? Q1.b. Local or regional news media and journalism

Frequency read, listen to, or watch

National news media and journalism



Local or regional news media and journalism

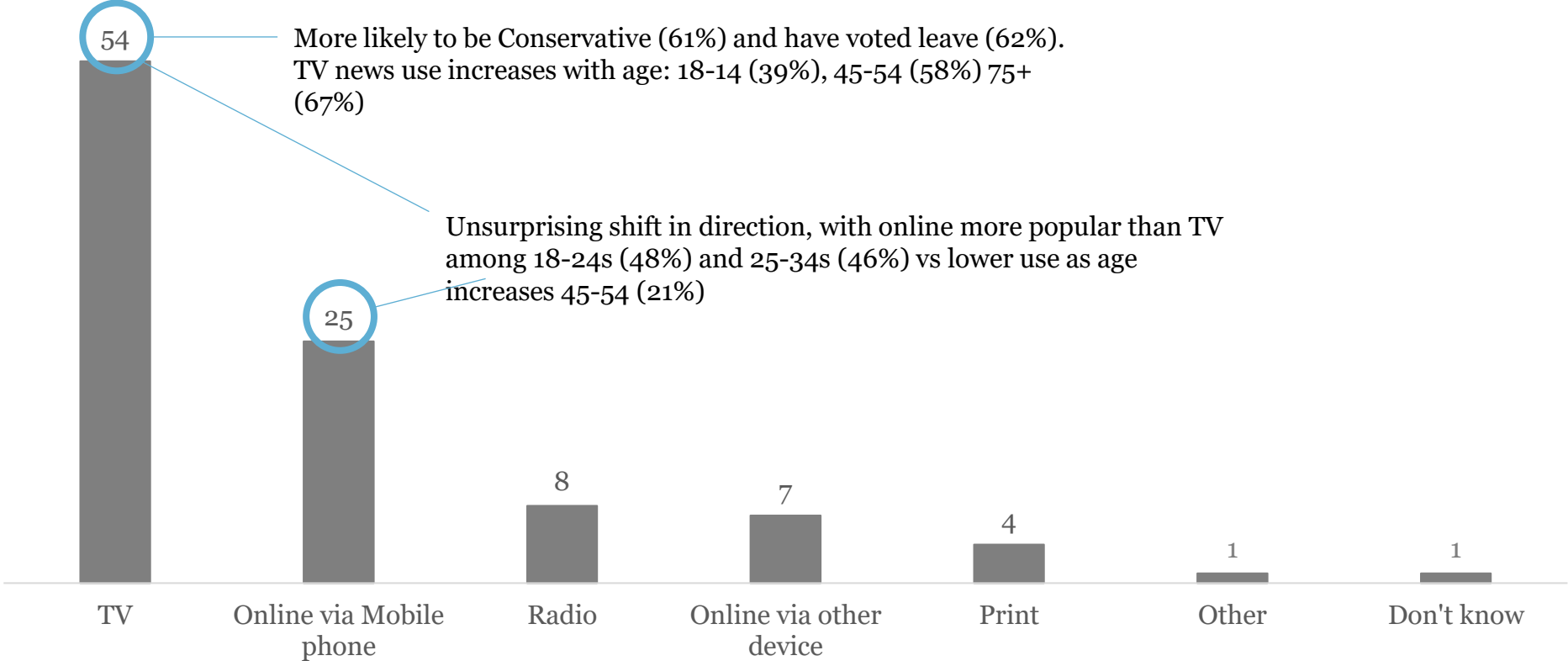


Shows significant difference between gender

Q2. Which of the following is the main way that you get your news?

Snapshot: TV is the main way respondents access the news with over half respondents accessing this way

Main way get News



Q2. Which of the following is the main way that you get your news?& Q1a and 1b – national and local news use.

Snapshot: Respondents are more likely to read, listen to or watch National news once a day or more compared to Local or regional news

Main way get News

National news media and journalism

Frequency read, listen to or watch

Once a day
or more

Less than
once a day

TV	61%	27%
Radio	45%	45%
Print	57%	36%
Online via Mobile phone	43%	49%
Online via other device	49%	32%

Local or regional news media and journalism

Frequency read, listen to or watch

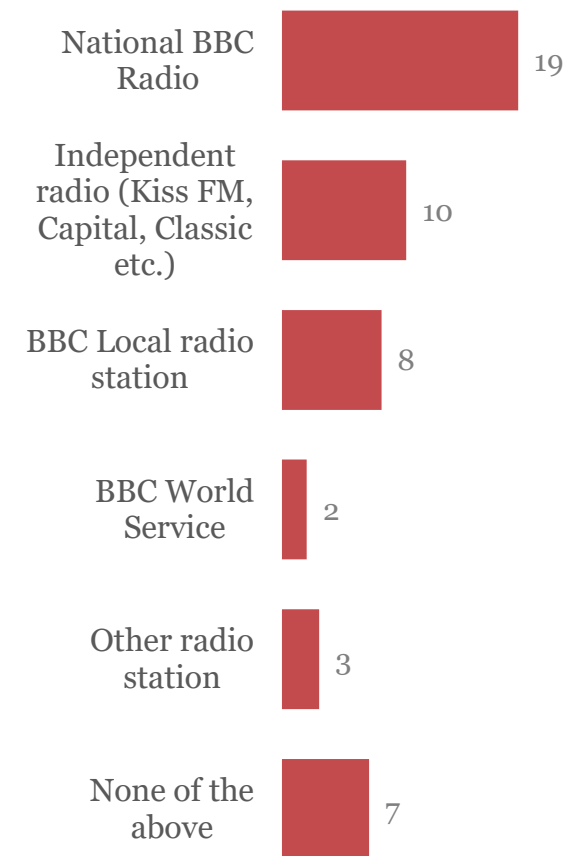
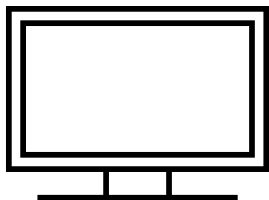
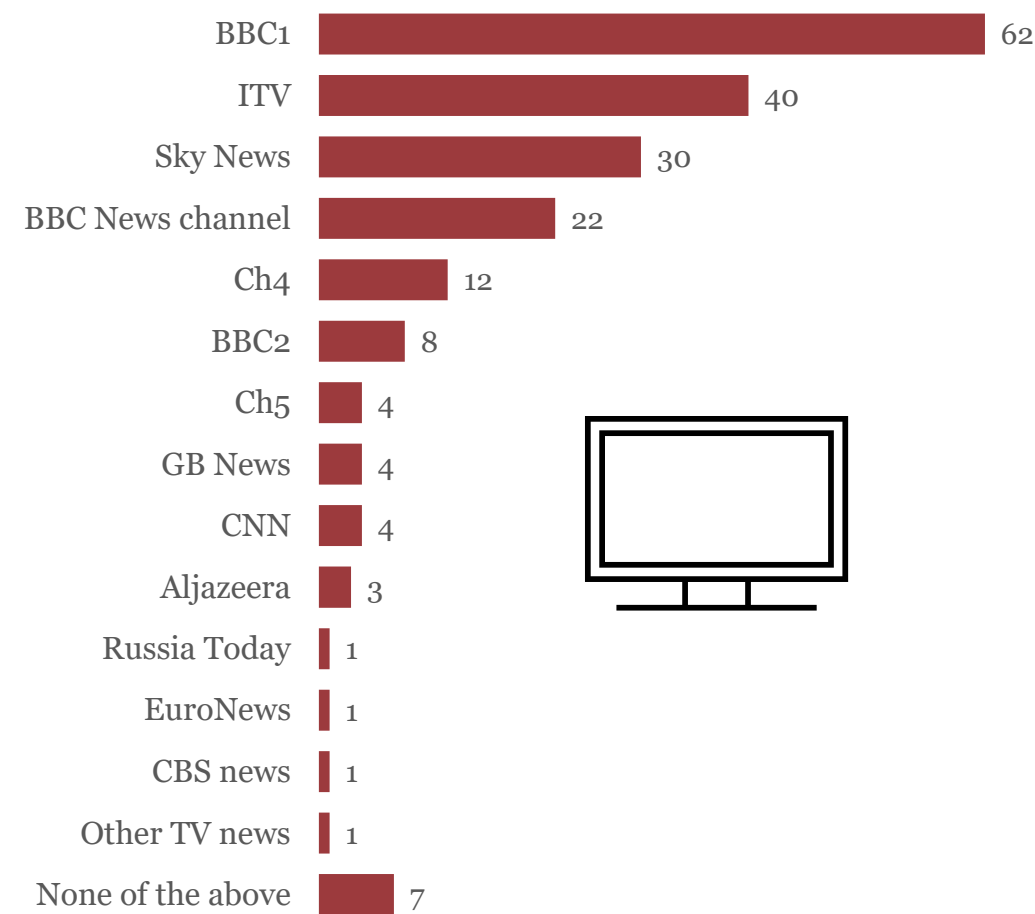
Once a day
or more

Less than
once a day

TV	58%	41%
Radio	38%	61%
Print	41%	61%
Online via Mobile phone	37%	63%
Online via other device	43%	55%

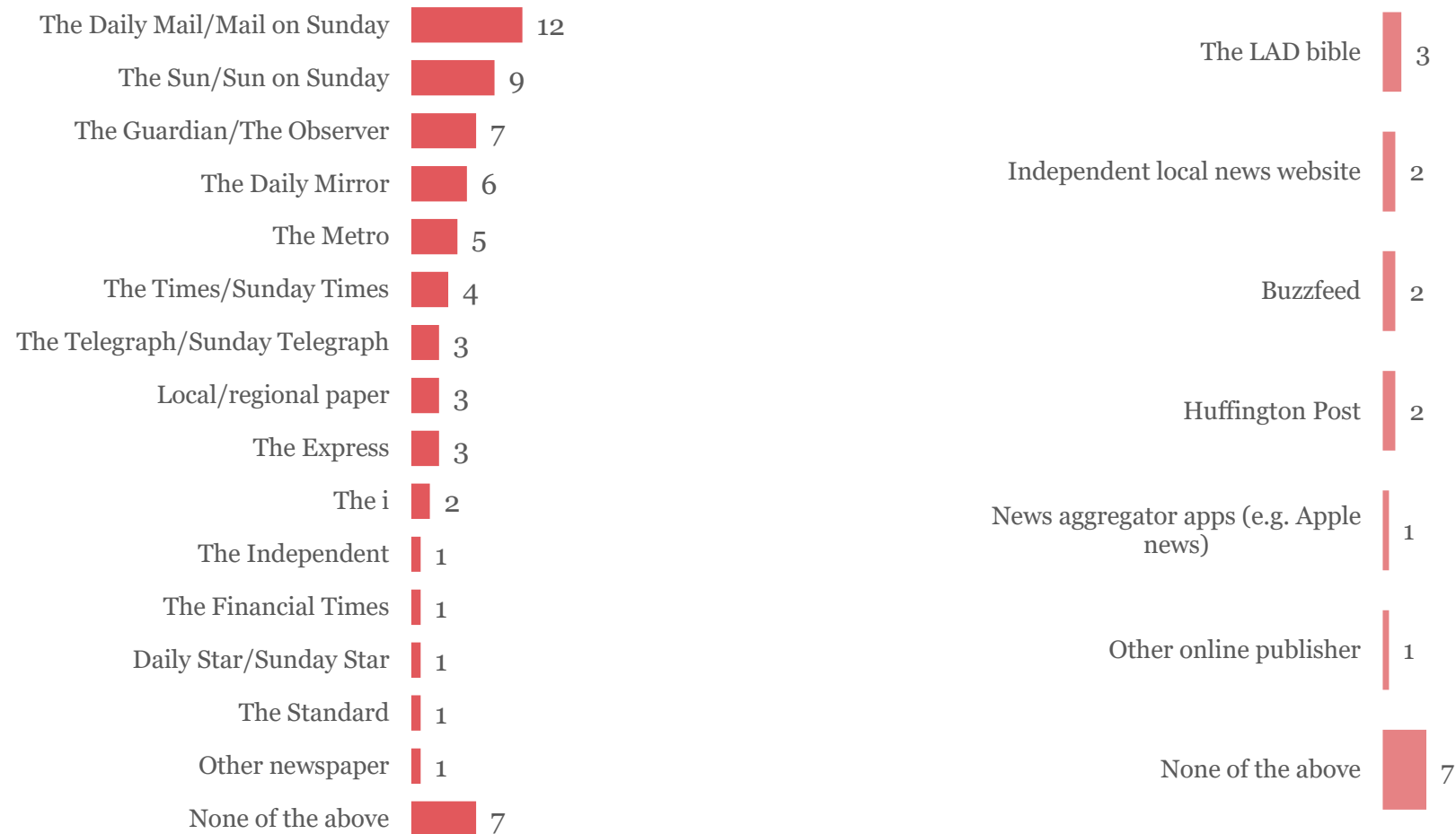
Q3. TV/ Radio/ Newspaper in print or online/ Online only publishers: Which of the following are your most used sources of national news and journalism?

Most used sources of National News



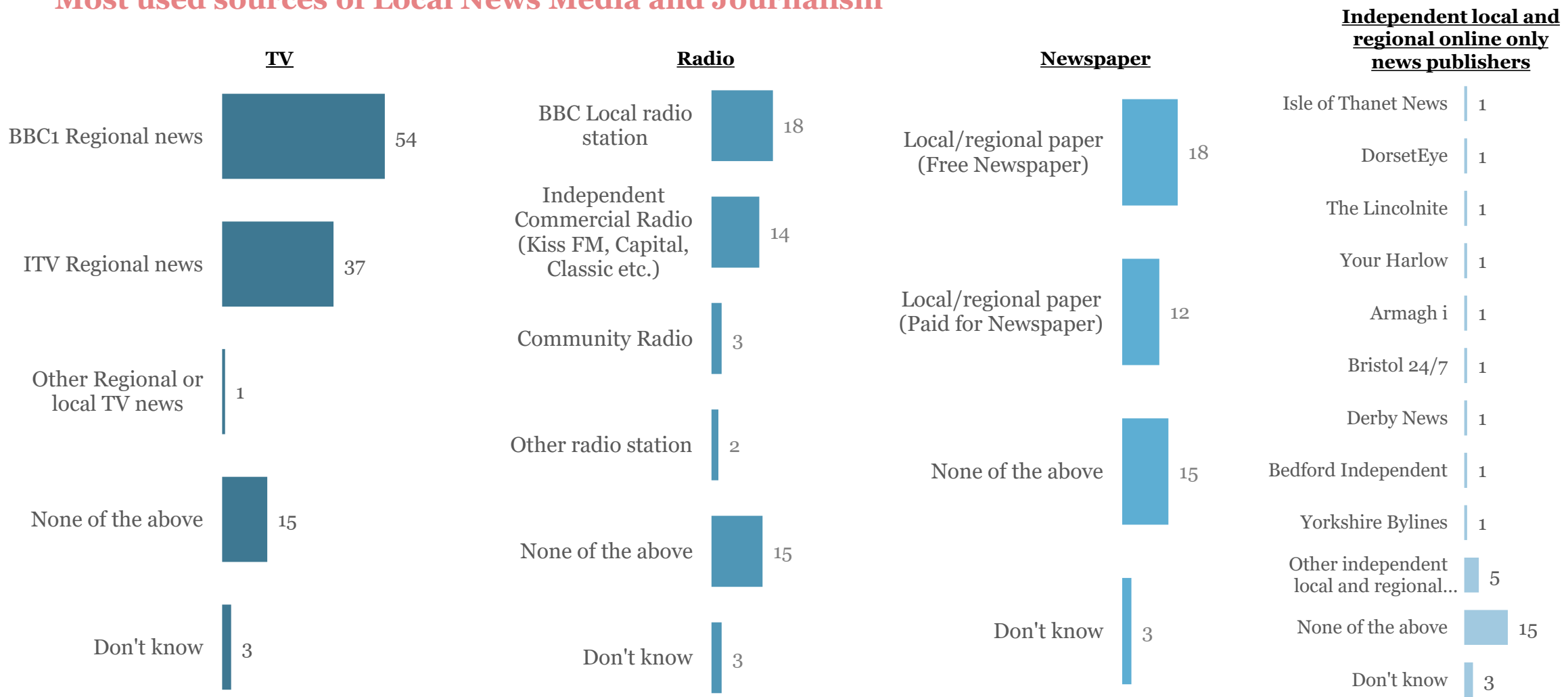
**Q3. TV/ Radio/ Newspaper in print or online/ Online only publishers:
Which of the following are your most used sources of national news and
journalism? Select up to 5 options**

Most used sources of National News



Q4. Which of the following are your most used sources of local news and journalism? Select up to 5 options

Most used sources of Local News Media and Journalism



Q5 a and b: Which of the following are your most used sources of social media for a) News from a journalist or established news organization; b) Information produced or shared by friends, family, people or organisations that are not journalists or established news organisations.

Most used sources of Social Media



Q5.a. News from a journalist or established news organisation

42%	22%	19%	11%	7%	5%	3%	3%	2%	2%	37%	2%
35% 49%	18% 26%	20% 18%	11% 12%	7% 7%	7% 2%	3% 3%	3% 3%	2% 1%	2% 2%	41% 33%	2% 2%

Q5.b Information produced or shared by information produced or shared by friends, family, people or organisations that are not journalists or established news organisations

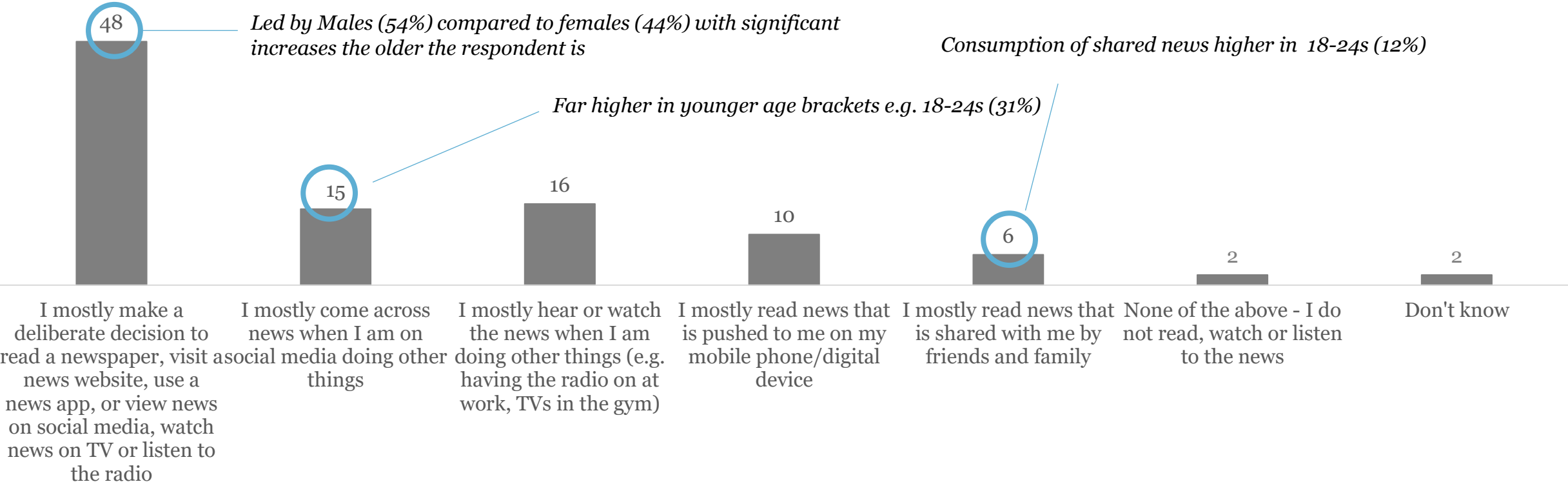
45%	21%	14%	9%	7%	4%	2%	3%	2%	2%	35%	2%
37% 53%	16% 26%	16% 13%	8% 10%	7% 6%	5% 2%	3% 2%	3% 3%	3% 1%	2% 2%	41% 30%	2% 3%

Male
Female

Shows significant difference with Less than Female

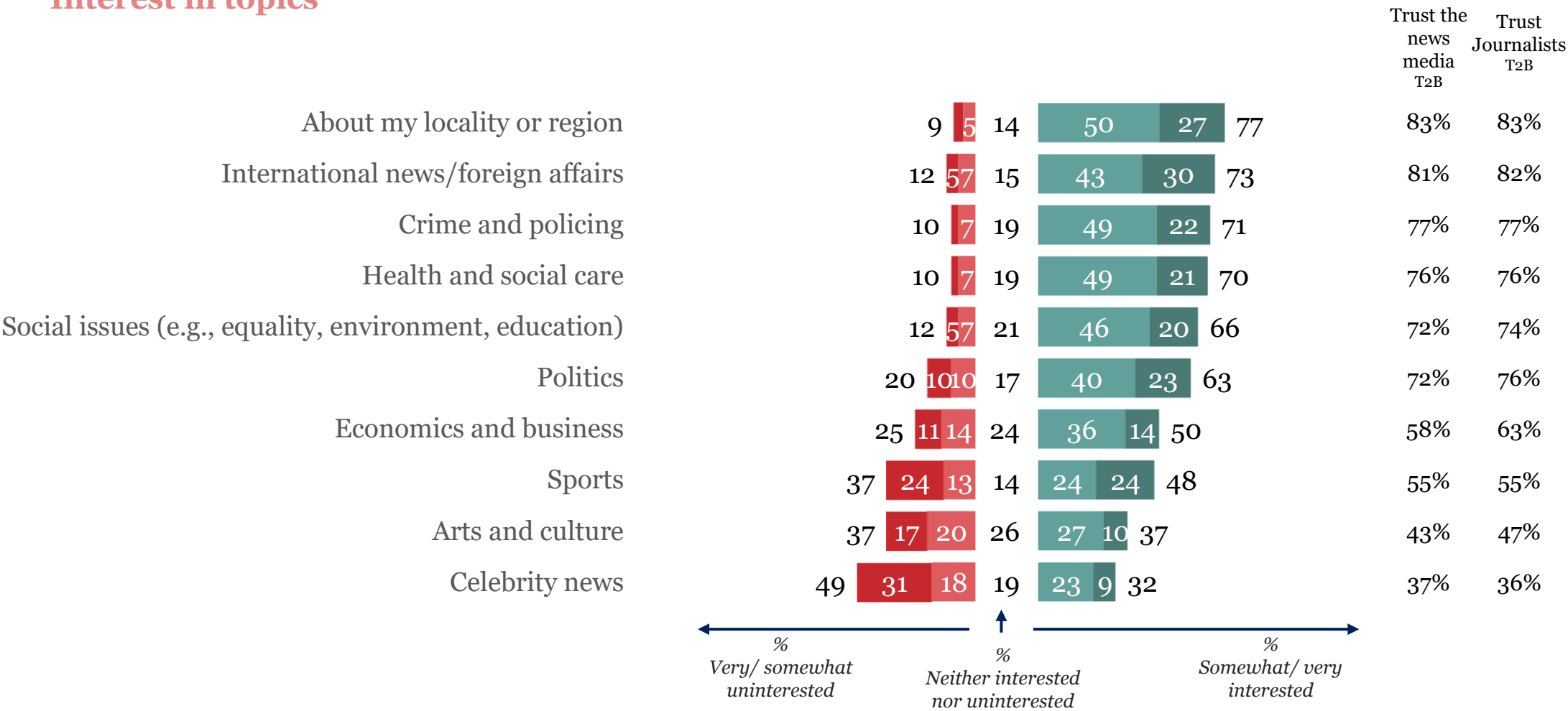
Q6. Which of the following statements, if any, most accurately describes how you consume news media and journalism most often?

News Media and Journalism Consumption and Intention



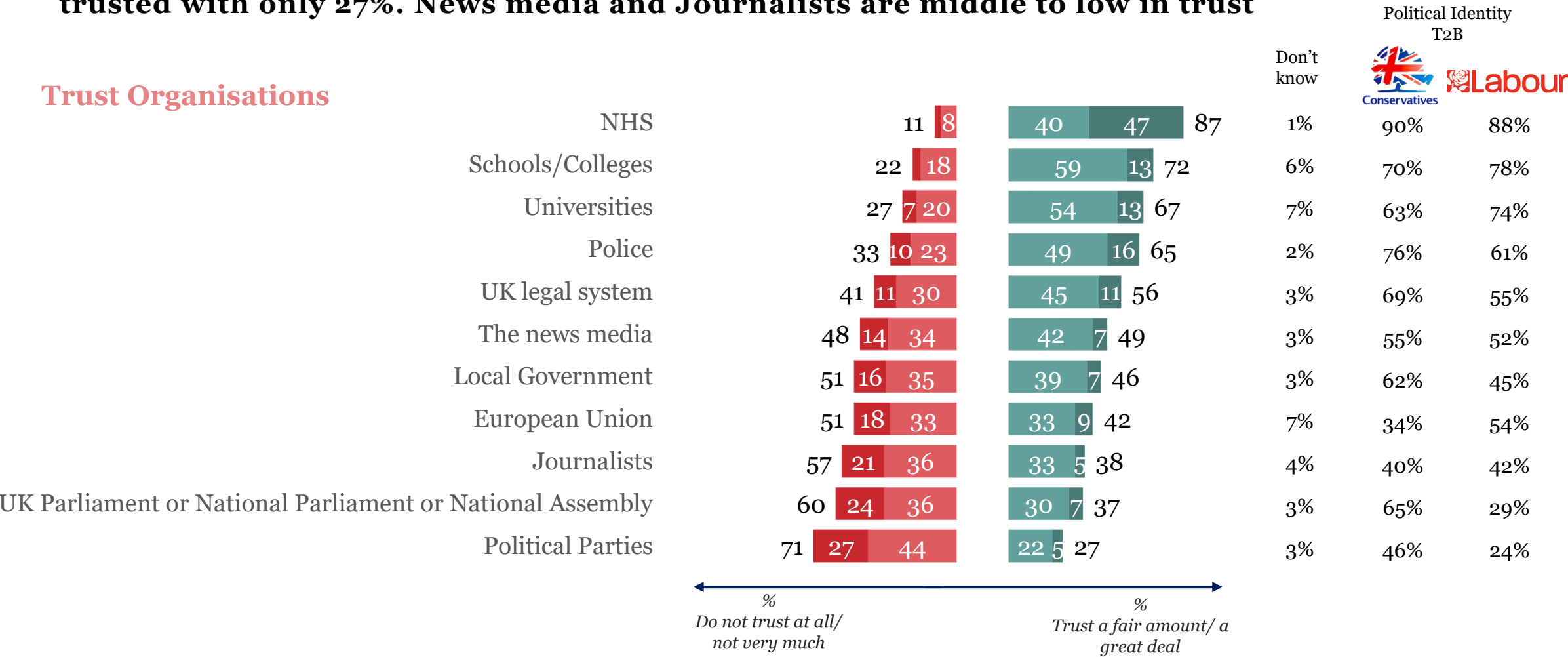
Q7. To what extent, if at all, are you interested or not in the news media and journalism about the following topics?

Interest in topics



Q8. To what extent, if at all, do you trust the following organisations?

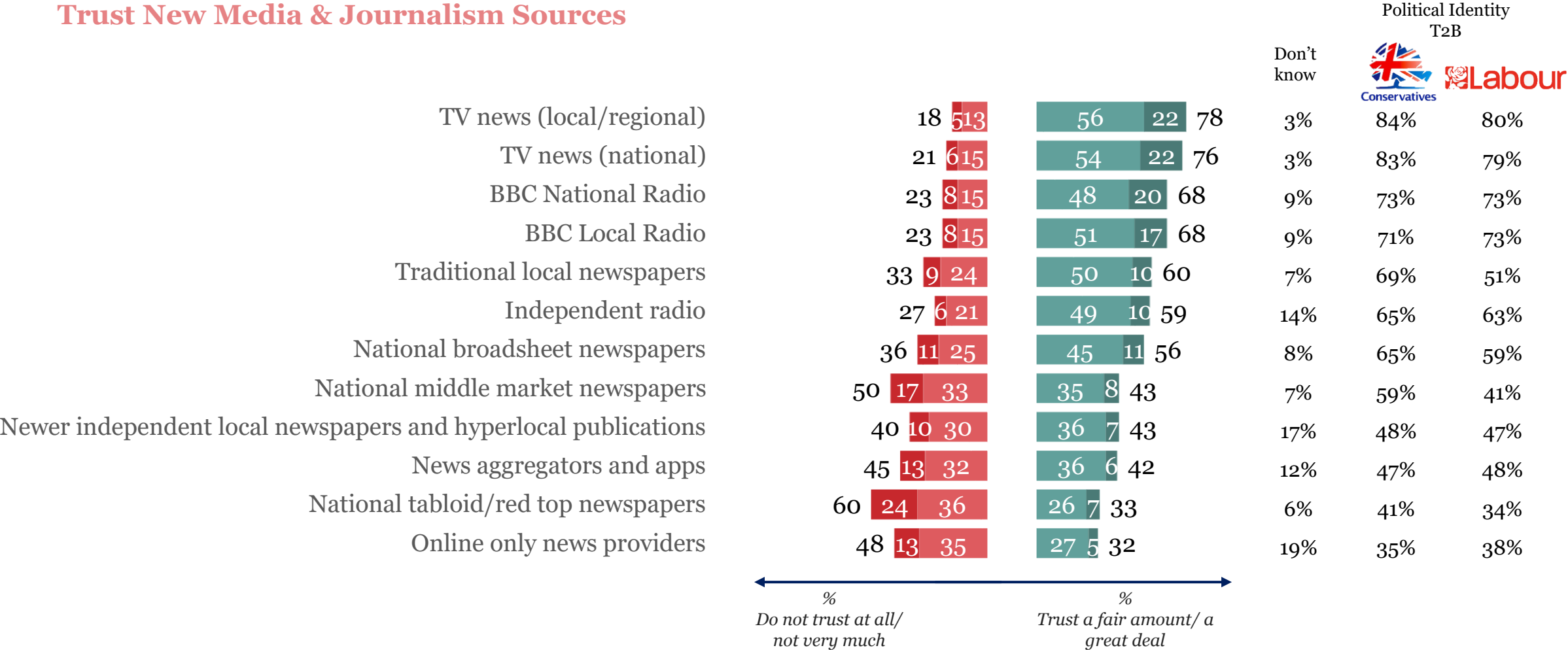
Snapshot: NHS is the most trusted organisation with 87%. Political Parties are the least trusted with only 27%. News media and Journalists are middle to low in trust



Q9. To what extent, if at all, do you trust the following news media and journalism sources to report on issues fairly?

TV news is the most trusted source, closely followed by BBC Radio

Trust New Media & Journalism Sources



Section 3: Journalism Values



Socio-cultural foundation

The third and crucial change lies in the social-cultural foundations of federalism. Chatterjee argues that the legal-constitutional foundation of federalism is the socio-cultural foundation.

gions. Hence, what is needed is a federal coalition that looks beyond the legal-constitutional aspects of federalism to preserve the idea of a plural India in terms of both culture and politics.

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Economies and freedom

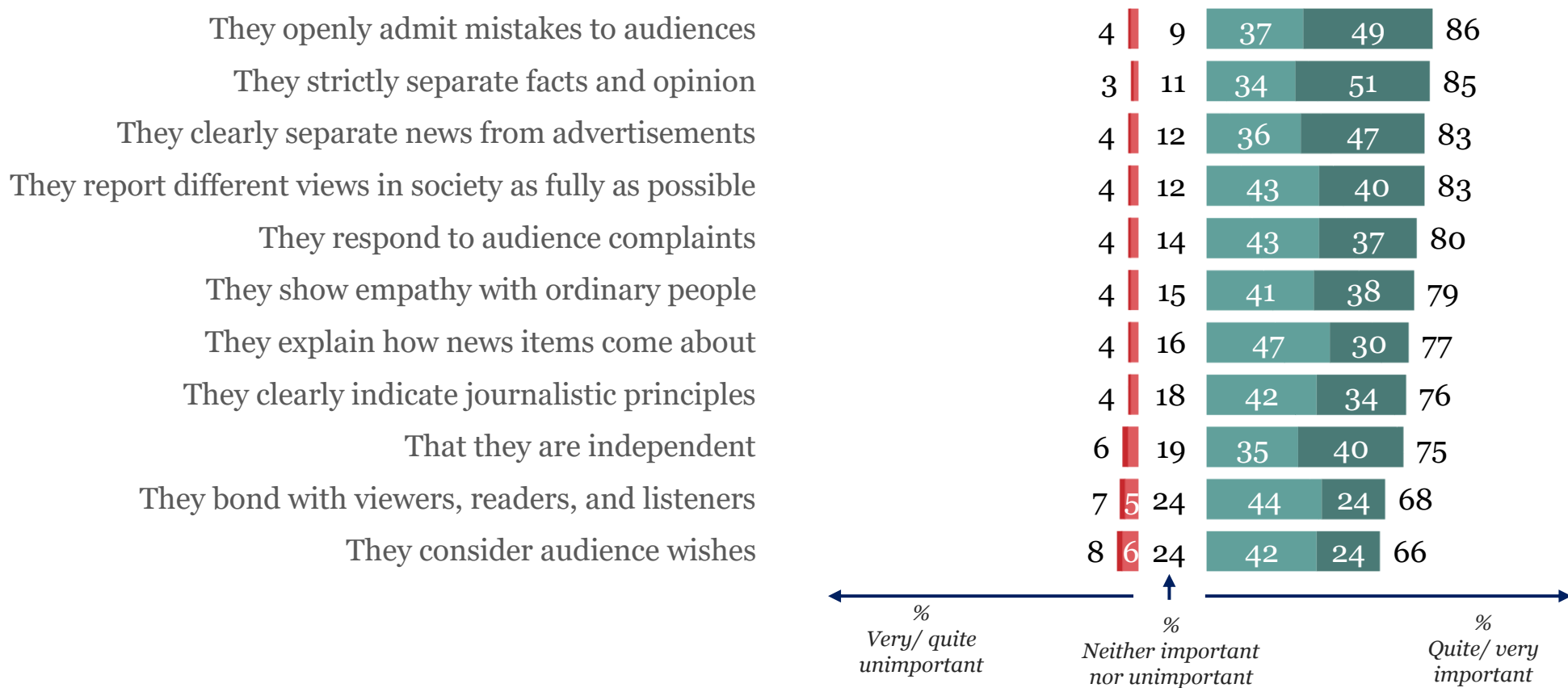
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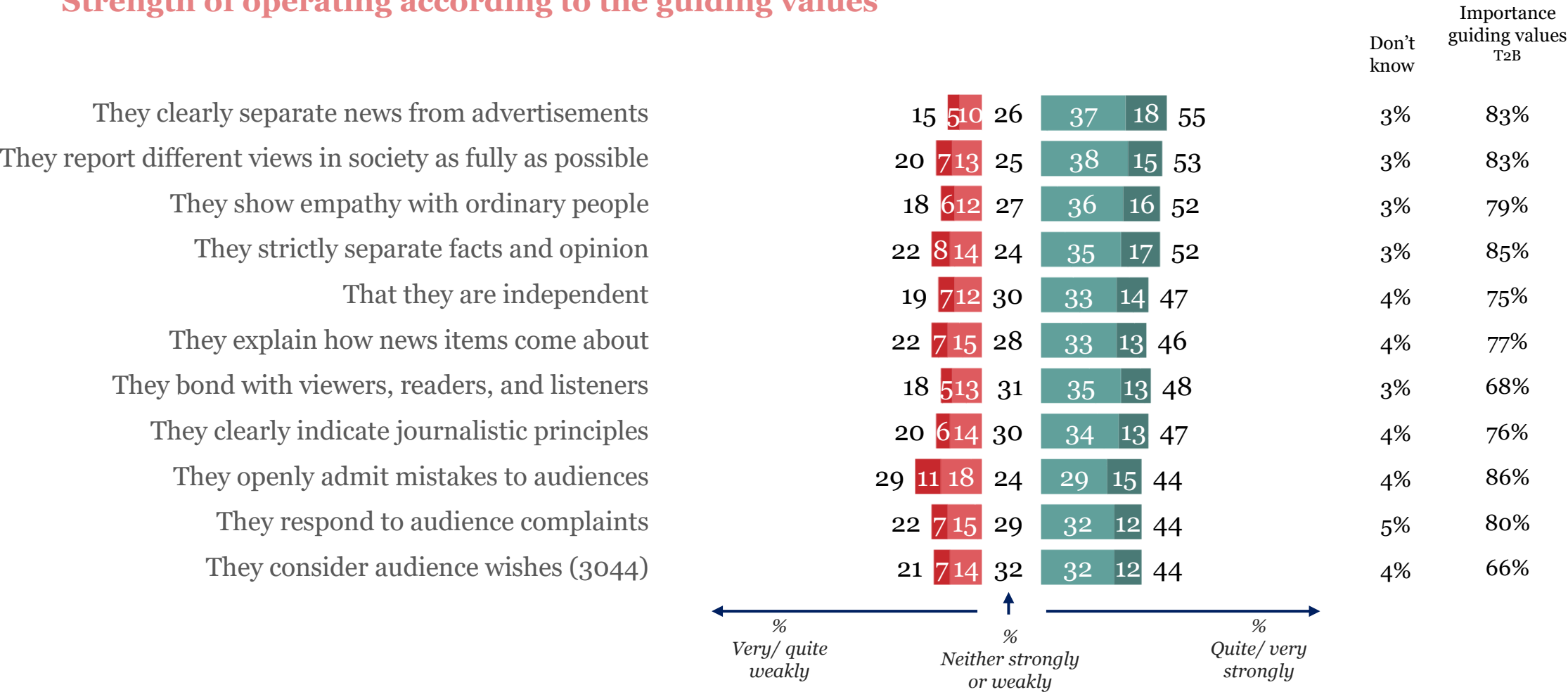
Q10. To what extent, if at all, is it important to you that the work of journalists and the news media are guided by the following values?

Importance of journalists and news media operating according to guiding values



Q11. How strongly or weakly, if at all, do you think news providers and journalists in the UK operate according to these guiding values?

Strength of operating according to the guiding values



Q11. How strongly or weakly, if at all, do you think news providers and journalists in the UK operate according to the these guiding values? Note these response categories were modified from definitions based on a study by in Van der wurff and Schoenbach, 2014. Civic and citizen demands of news media and journalists: what does the audience expect from good journalism? *Journalism & mass communication quarterly*, 91, 433-451. Base: All respondents 3044

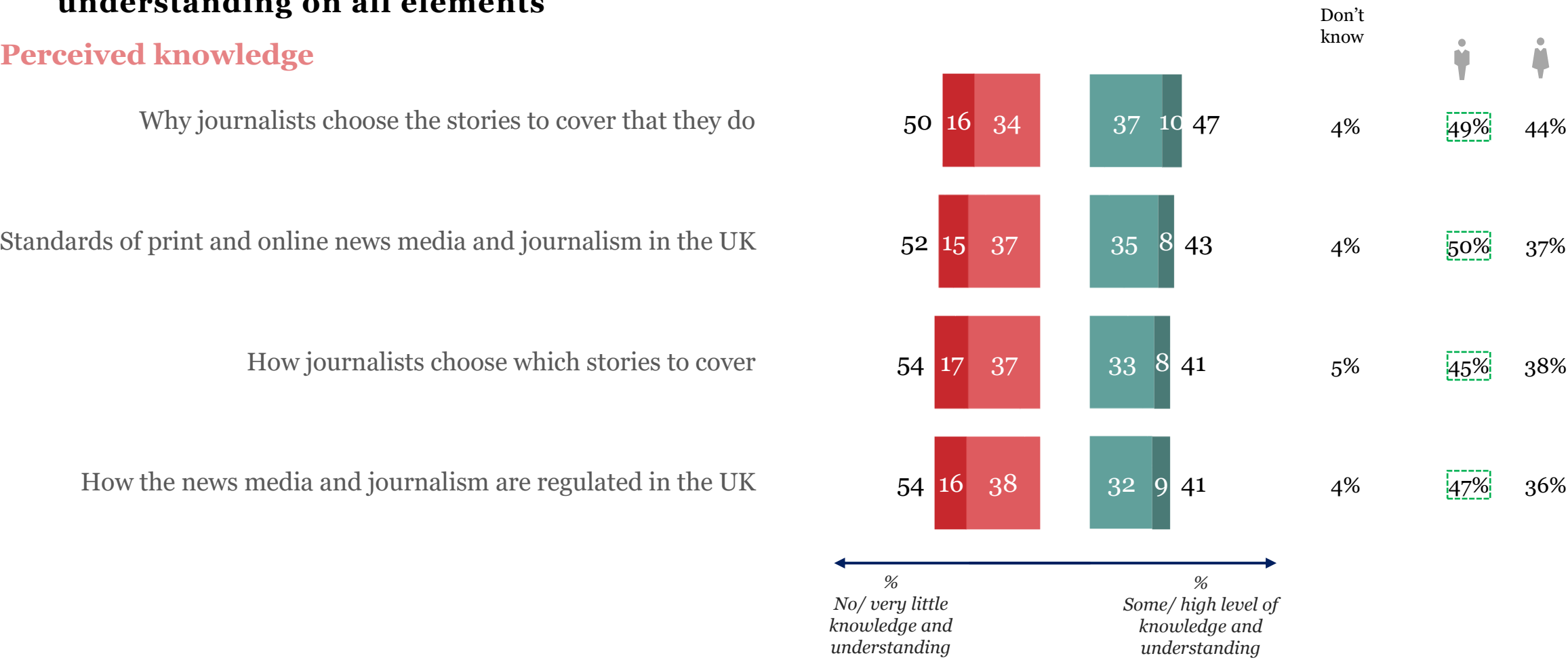
Section 4: News literacy and public knowledge of how journalism and regulation works



Q12. How much do you feel you know about and understand the following, if anything?

Snapshot: Just over half of respondents do not feel they have enough knowledge and understanding on all elements

Perceived knowledge



Q13. Which of the following statements about the regulation of news media and journalism is true and which is false?

Knowledge of regulation of News Media and Journalism

	True	False	Don't Know
News on TV and radio is regulated by the same regulator as newspapers and online	45%	22%	33%
The BBC is regulated in the same way as other broadcasters	60%	21%	18%
All newspapers (and their online versions) have to be signed up to a regulating body	59%	14%	27%
Social media companies are responsible for regulating the new stories that newspapers and broadcasters post on their sites	41%	31%	28%
Anything a journalist posts on social media such as Twitter is regulated in the same way as the news stories they write for a publication	30%	38%	32%
The BBC's social media output is regulated the same as their TV and Radio output	53%	17%	30%

Men more likely to think this is false (44%) than women (33%), with heavy news consumers more likely to believe this is false

Q14. To what extent, if at all, do you think the following is important or not?

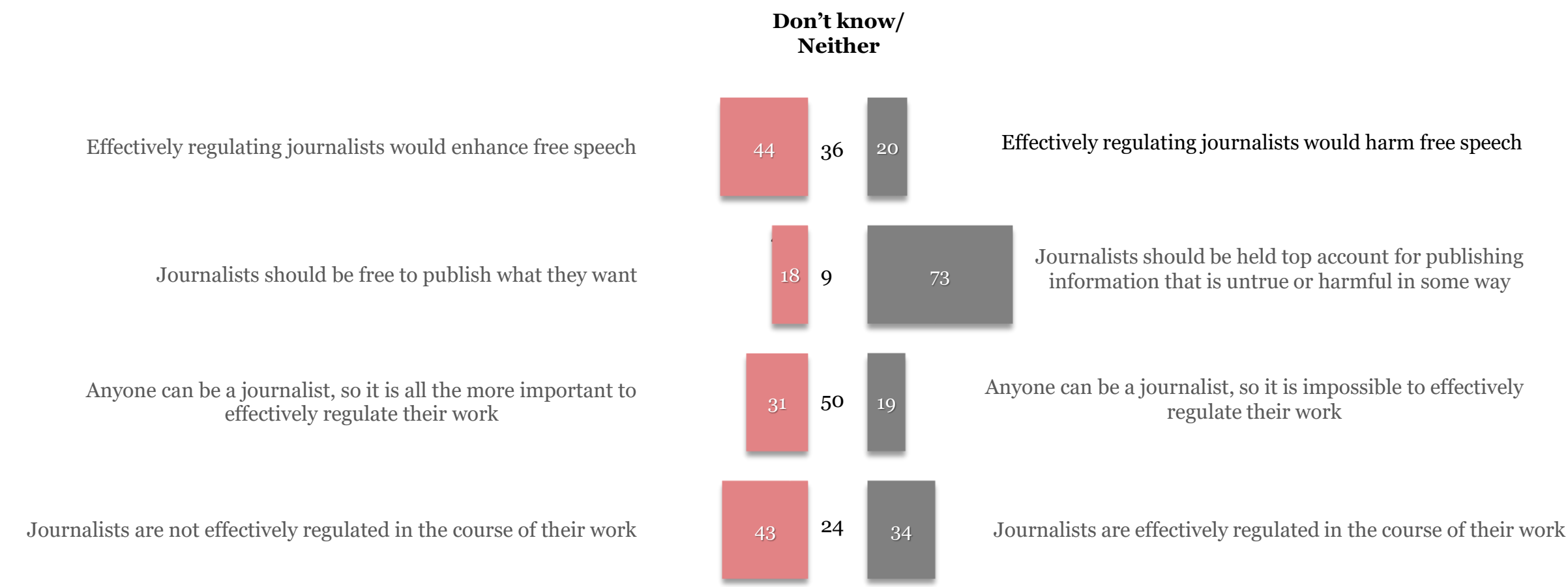
Snapshot: 4 in 5 respondents believe that the news media and journalism should be regulated effectively, increasing steadily with age and educational level

Importance of regulation



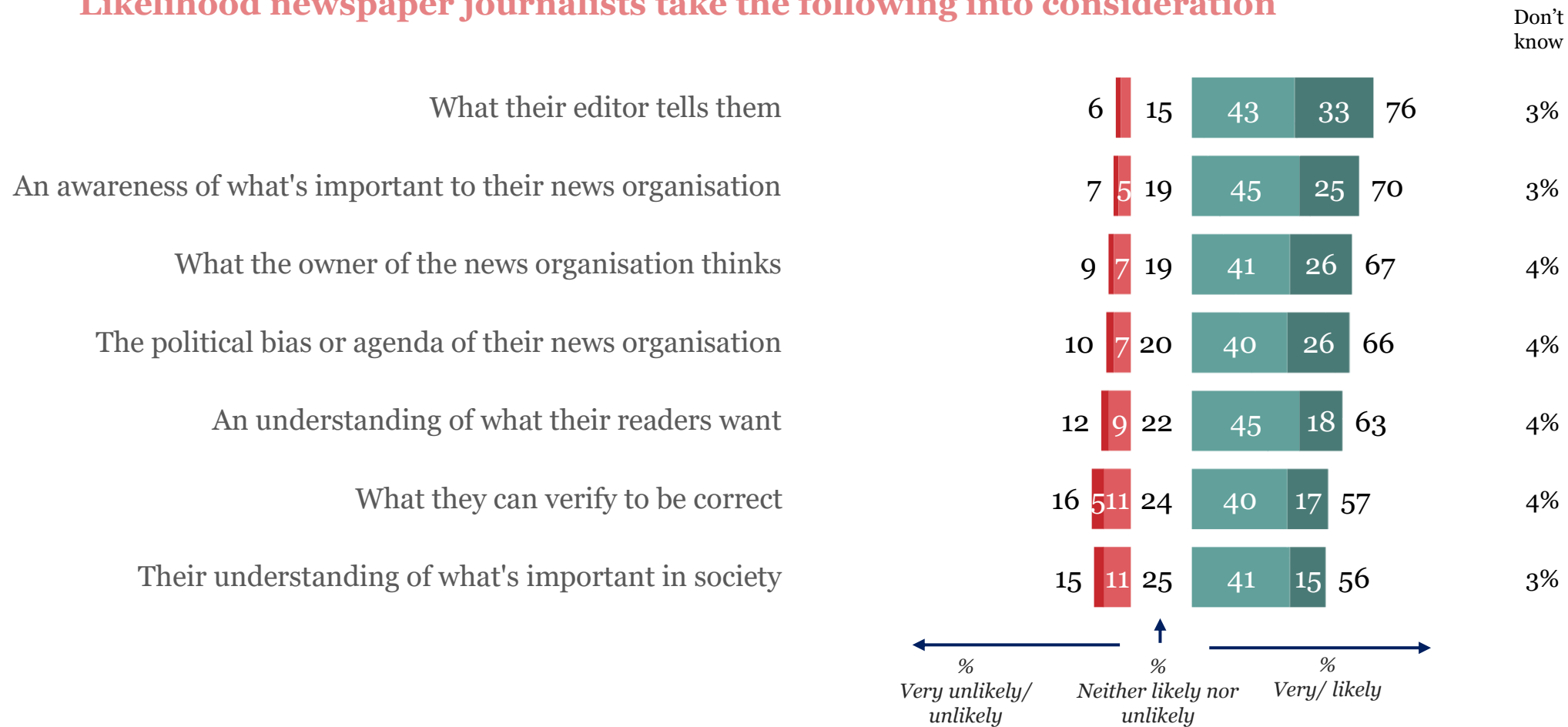
Q15. Please read the paired statements below and select which most closely reflects your view

Attitude to accountability, regulation and freedom of speech



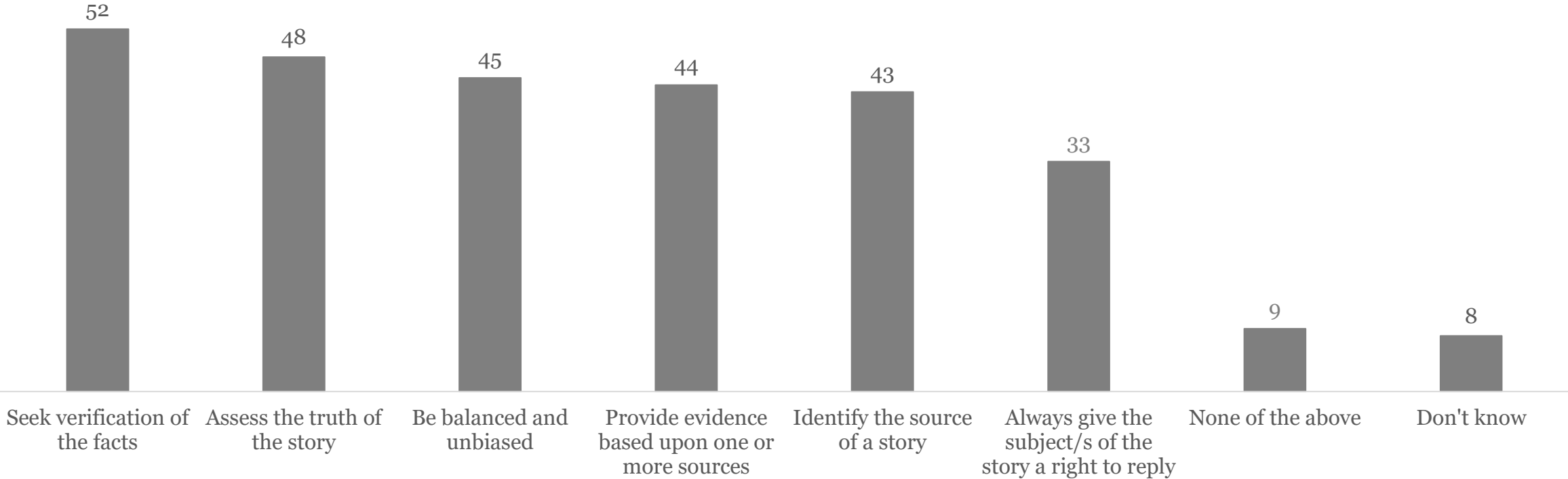
Q16. How likely or unlikely do you think it is that newspaper journalists take the following factors into consideration when deciding which stories to cover, if at all?

Likelihood newspaper journalists take the following into consideration



Q17. Thinking about newspaper and broadcast journalists, which of the following do you think they have to do to get a story published?

Process to have story published



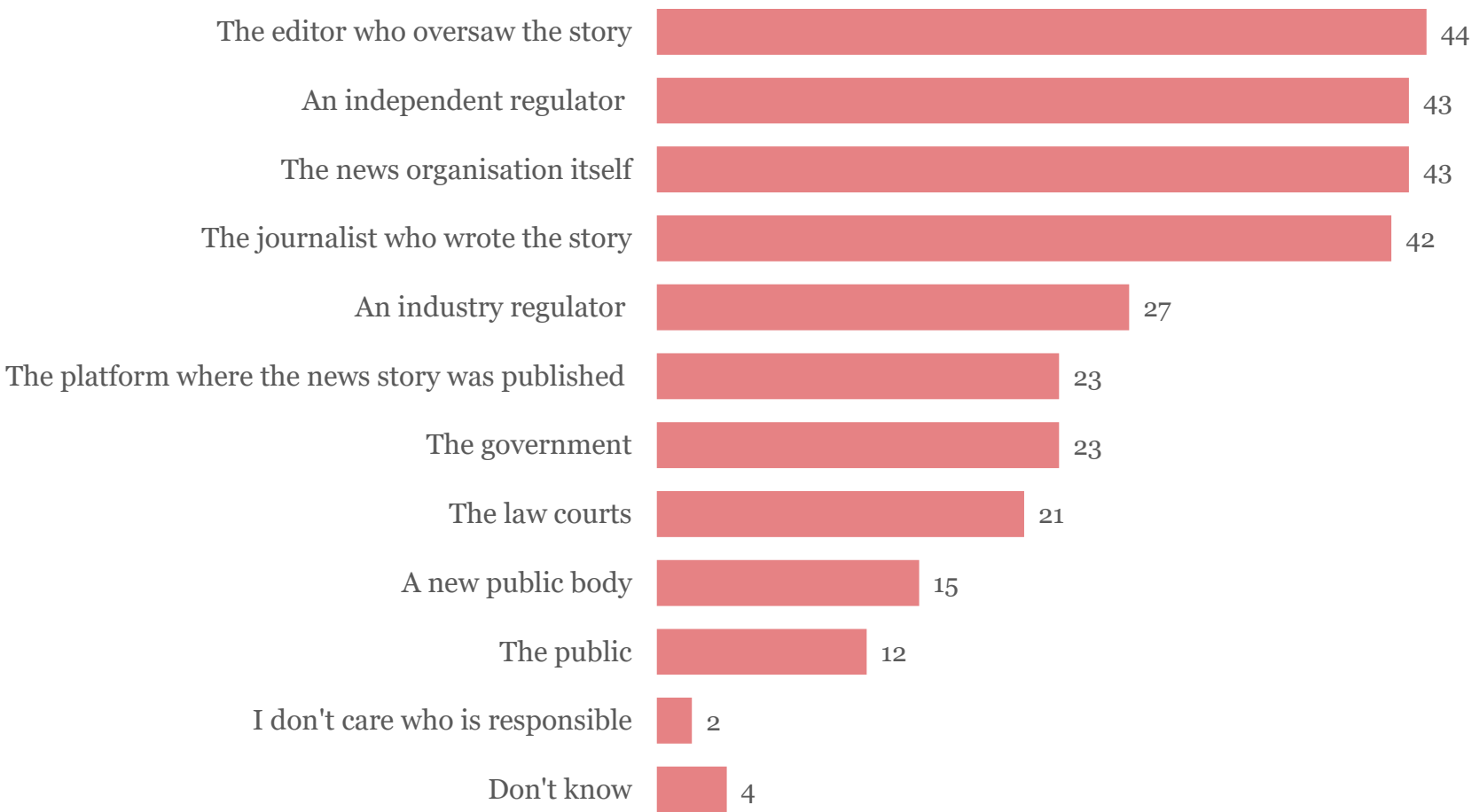
Q18. Which of the following aims do you think are the most important in order to achieve effective regulation?

Important to Achieve Effective Regulation

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Top 3
It should stop disinformation (deliberately misleading information)	22%	17%	14%	51%
It should stop misinformation (unintentionally misleading information)	14%	15%	13%	40%
It should properly hold news organisations to account	13%	14%	13%	38%
It should prevent hate speech and discrimination	11%	13%	13%	35%
It should properly hold individual journalists to account	10%	10%	12%	31%
It should enable high standards to be met	10%	8%	8%	26%
It should protect members of the public who have been mistreated by the news media	8%	11%	13%	30%
It should empower members of the public to exercise their rights in relation to news media abuses/excesses	5%	6%	6%	17%
None of the above	2%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%	4%

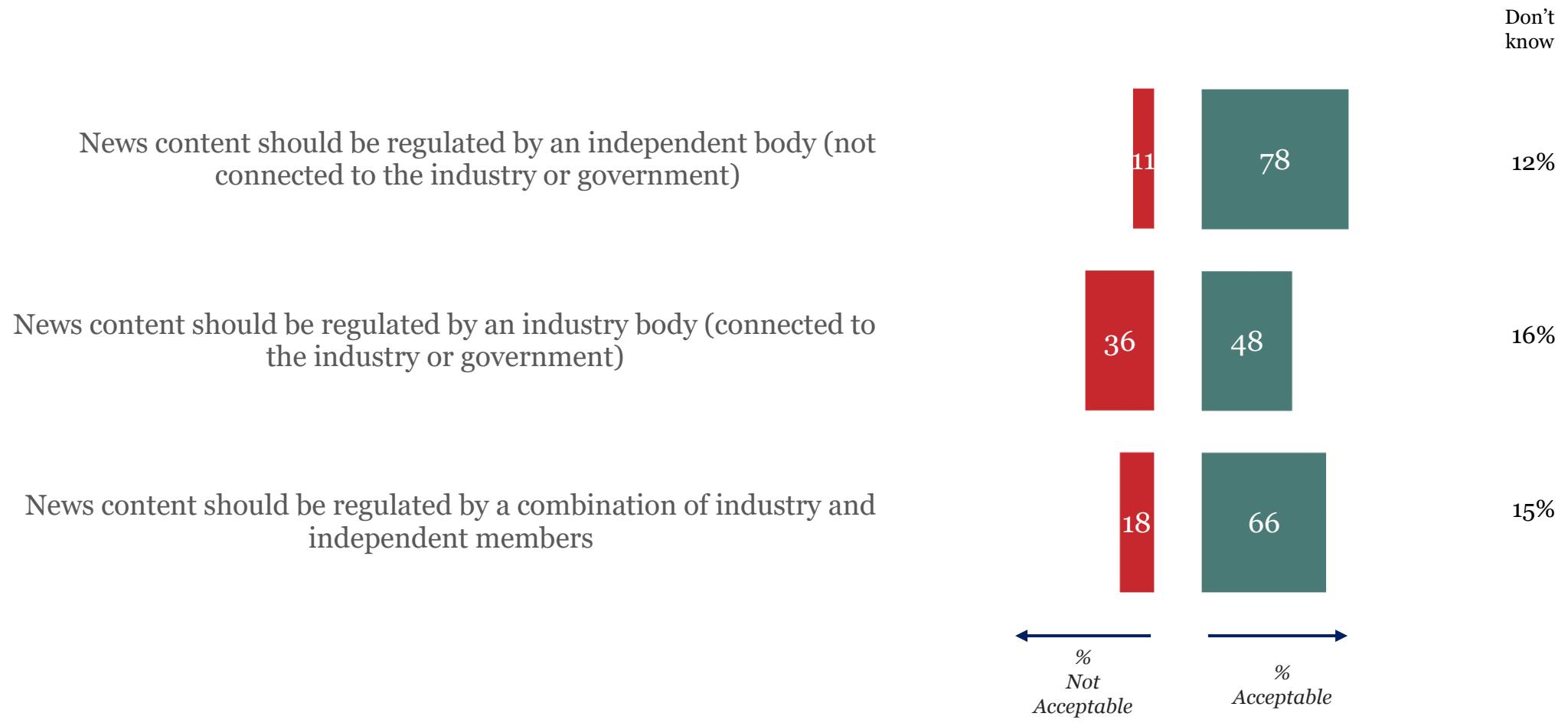
Q19. Who do you think should be responsible for ensuring that news content meets high standards of accuracy and verifiability?

Responsibility



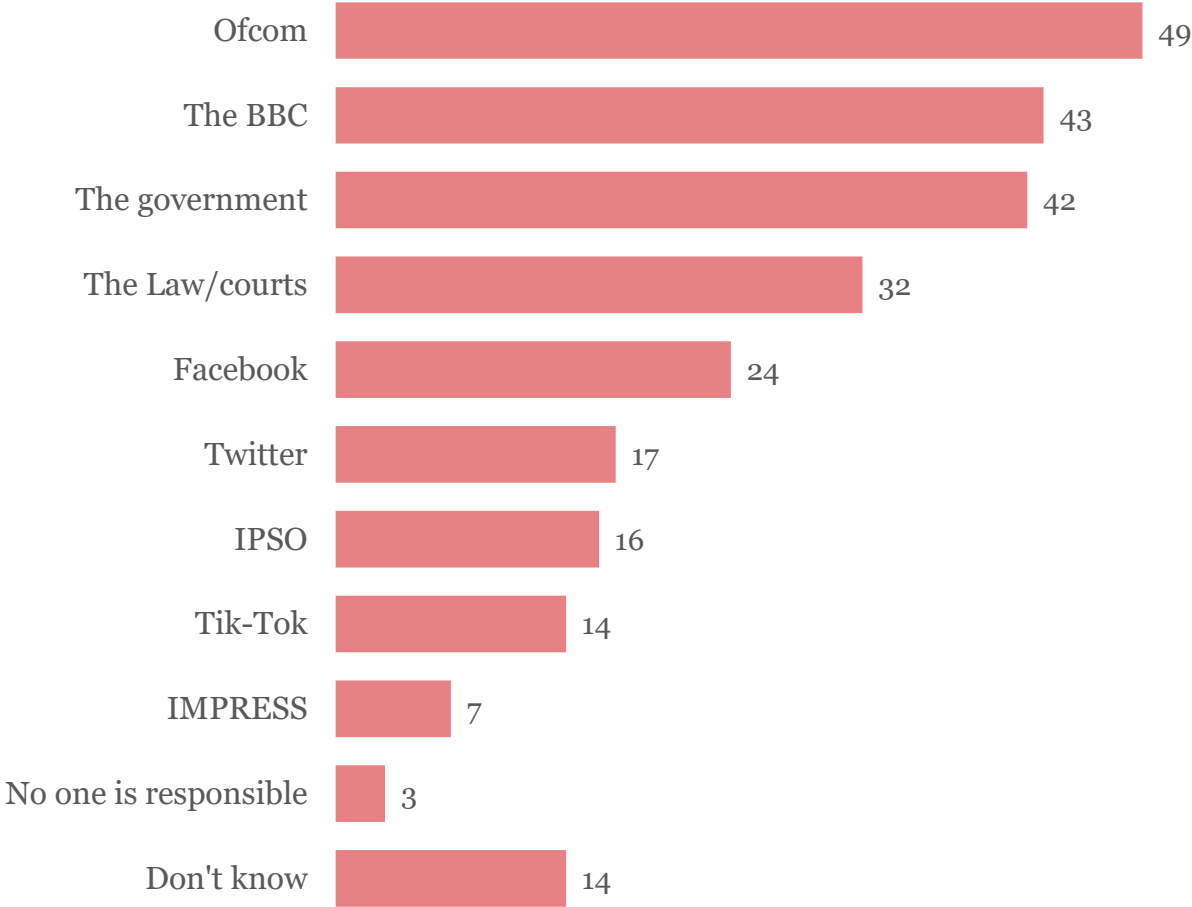
Q20. In your opinion, which of the following forms of regulating the news media and journalism is acceptable or not acceptable?

Acceptable Forms of Regulating News Media and Journalism



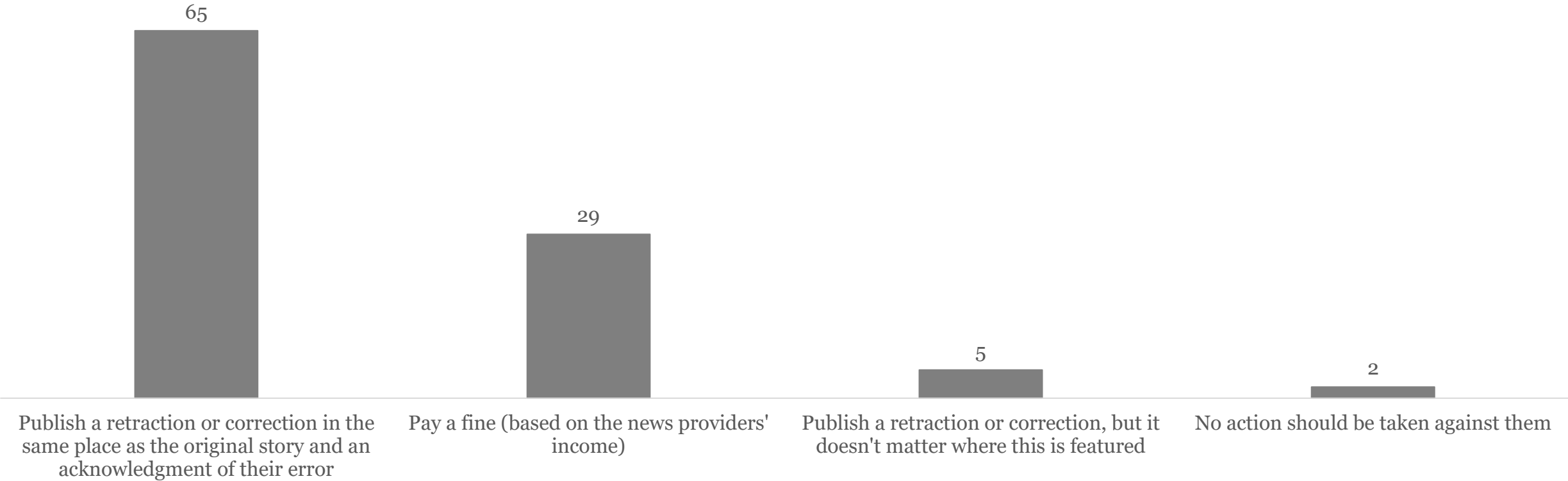
Q21. Different news media have different regulators. Select all that you think have a responsibility for regulating

Responsibility for Regulating



Q23. Now thinking about the actions listed below, which of the following do you think is the best action that a news provider should take if it is found that they have not complied with ethical standards set down by the regulator?

Best Action

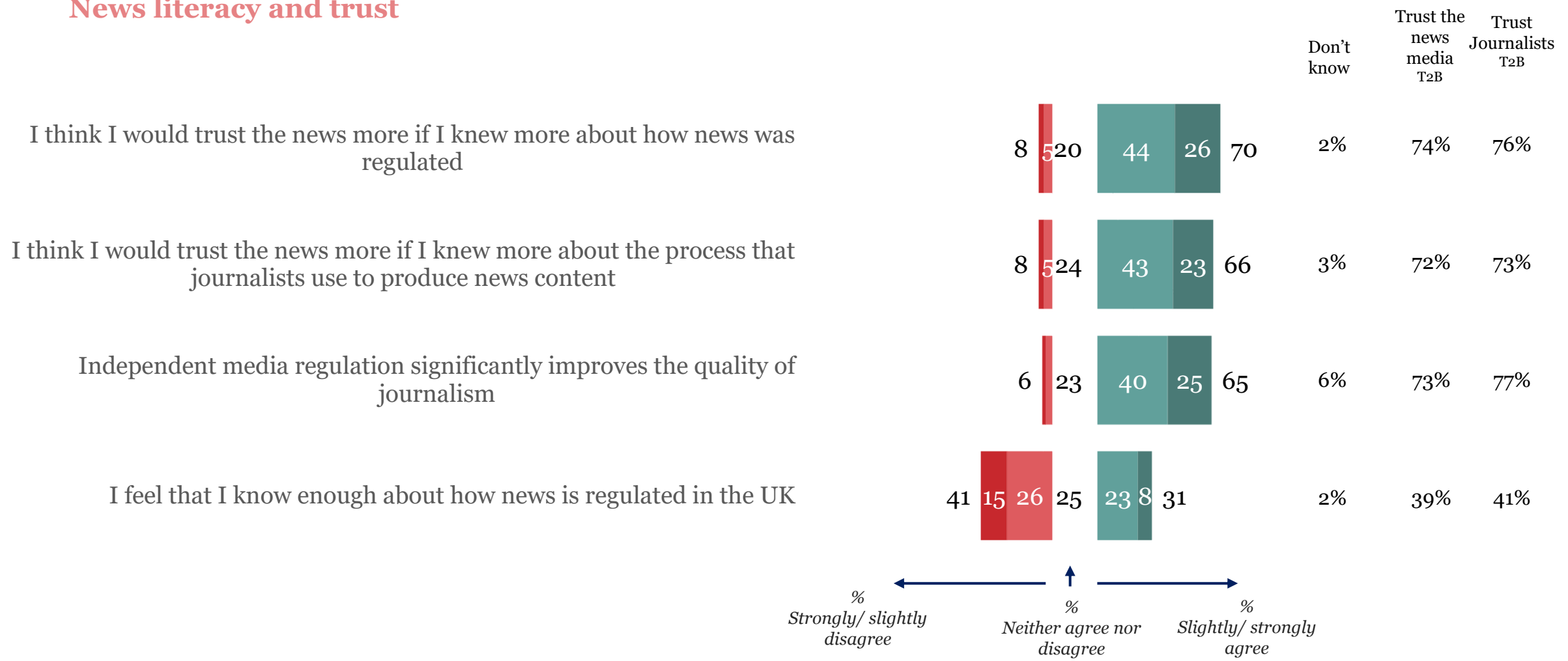


Section 5: Public understanding of how the news media is regulated



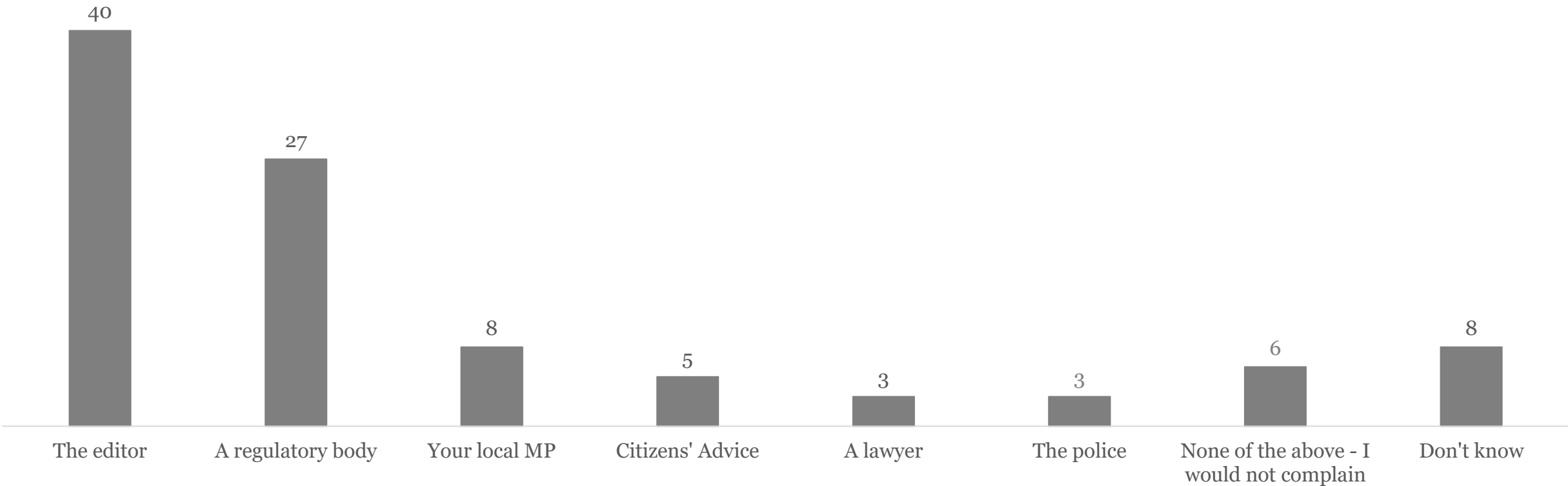
Q24. To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

News literacy and trust



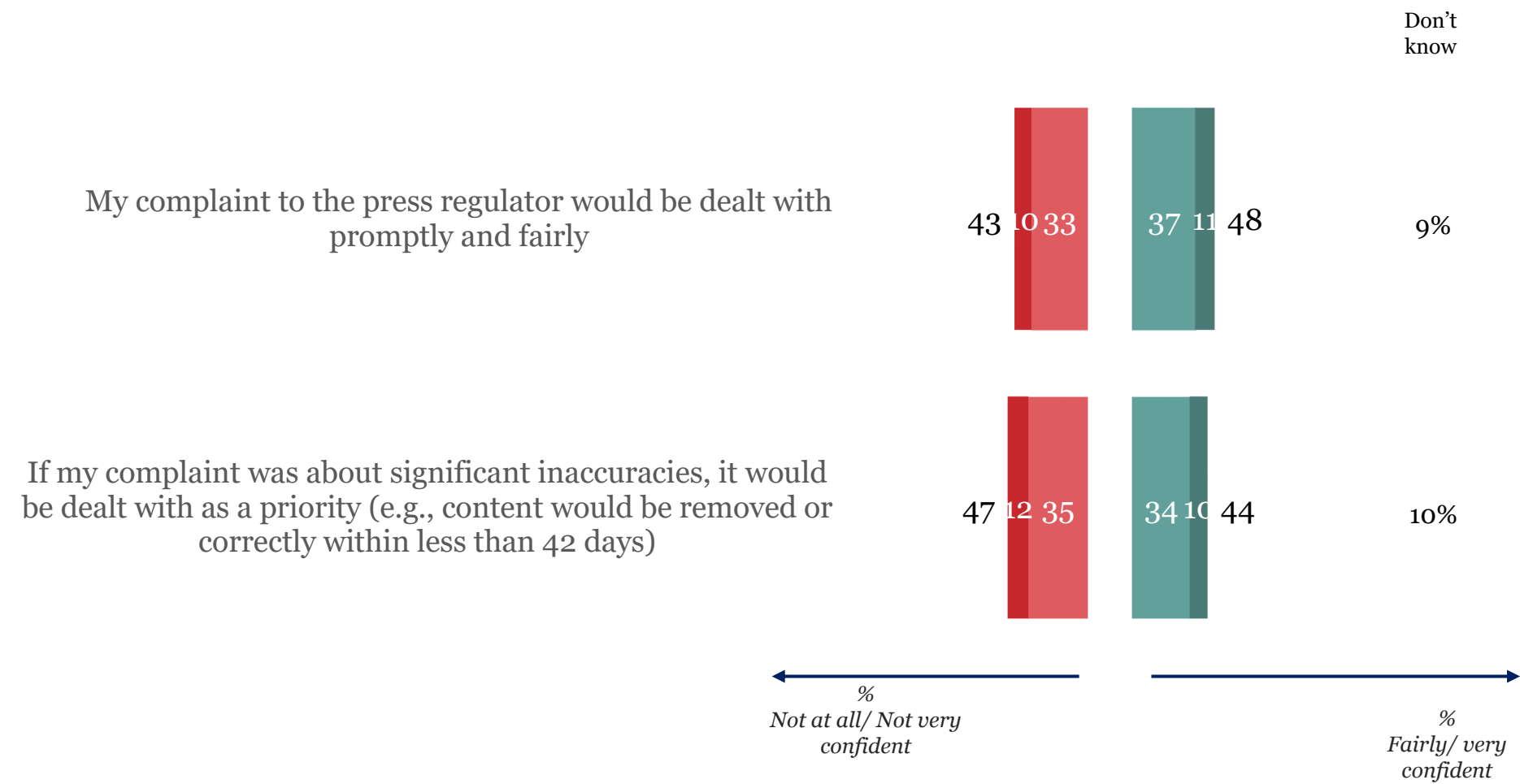
Q25. If you wanted to complain about a story in a newspaper (or its online version) who would you be most likely to contact?

Contact for Complaints



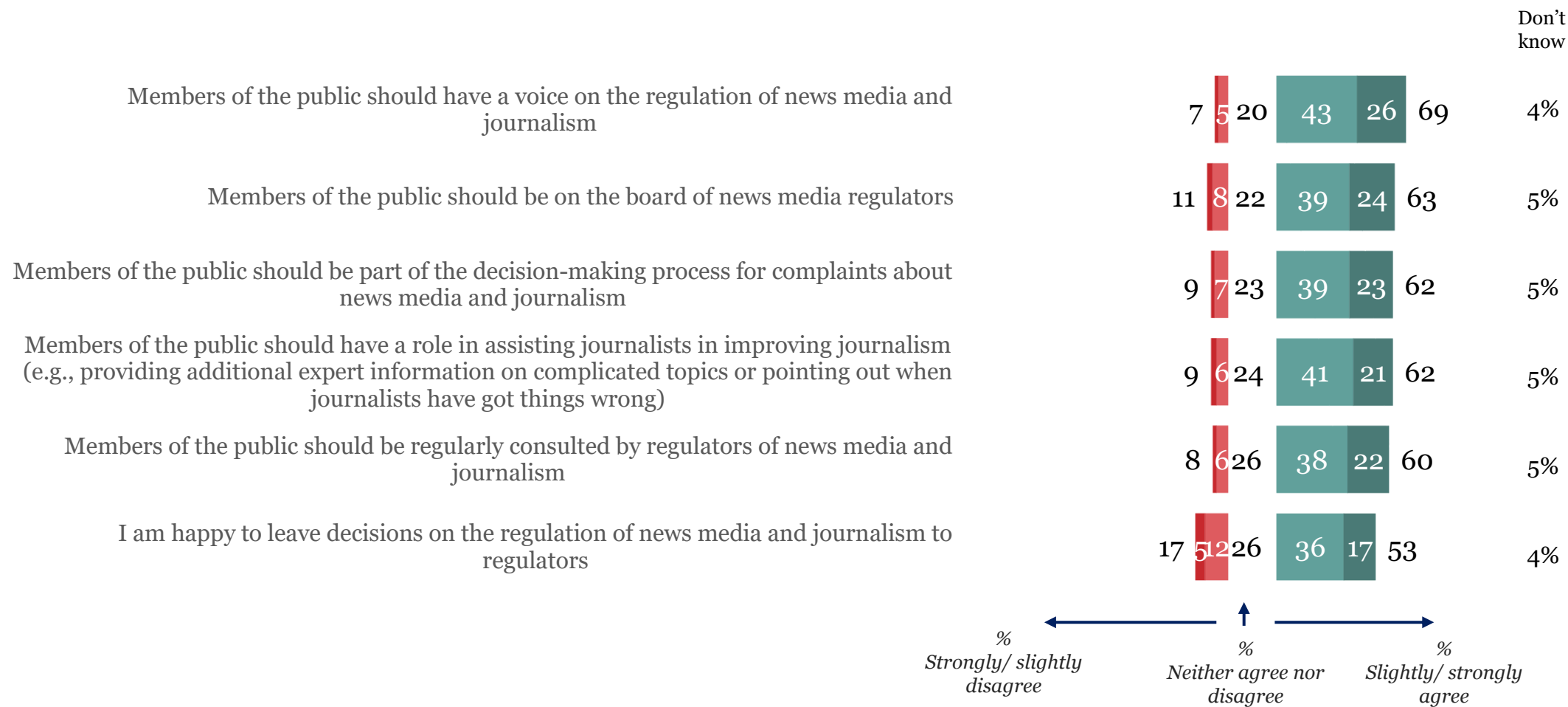
Q29. If you had reason to complain to a press regulator, to what extent, if at all, do you feel confident or not that the following would happen?

Confidence



Q30. To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Agreement with Statements

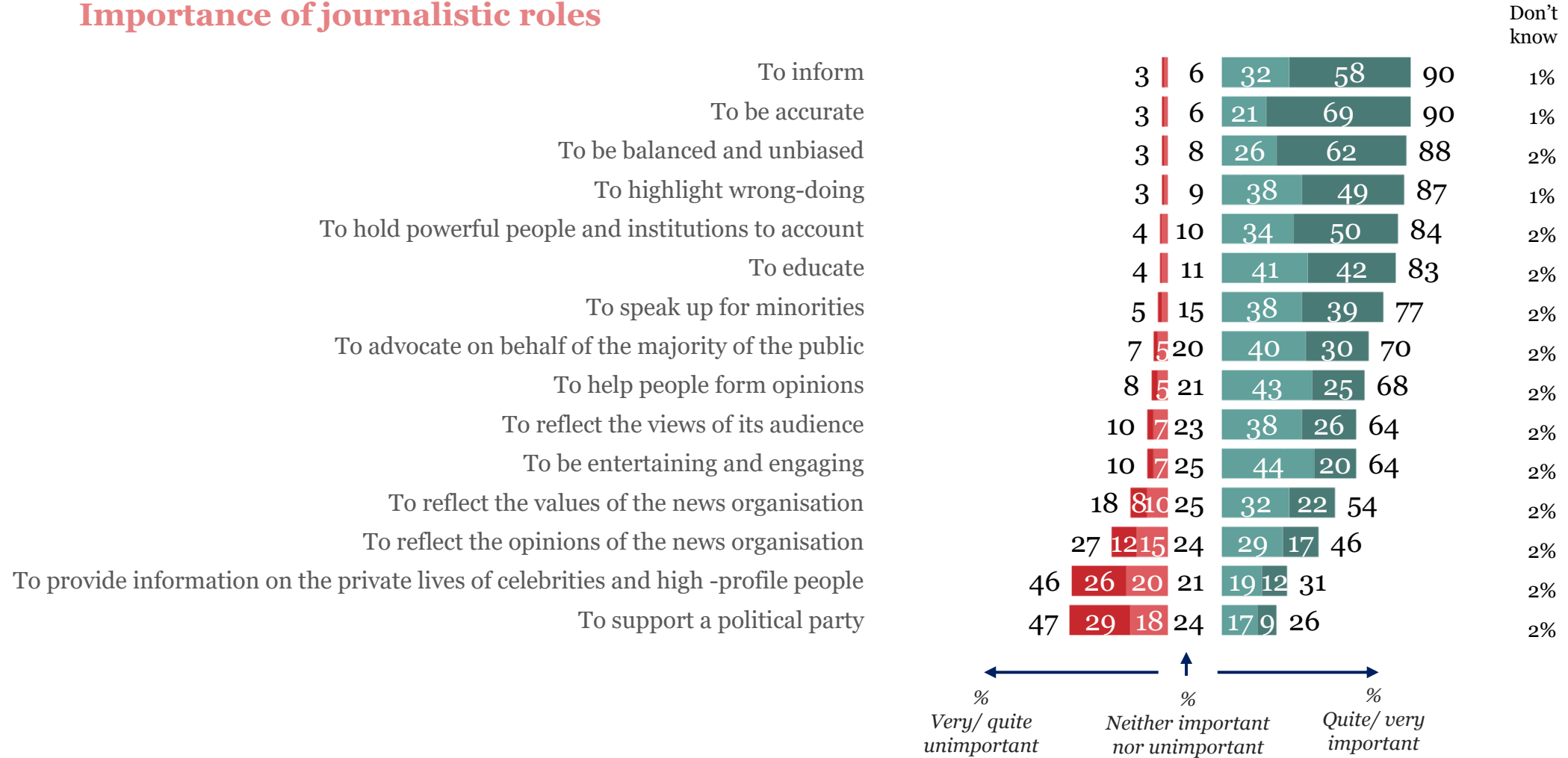


Section 6: Public understanding of codes of conduct, standards and the principles underlying them



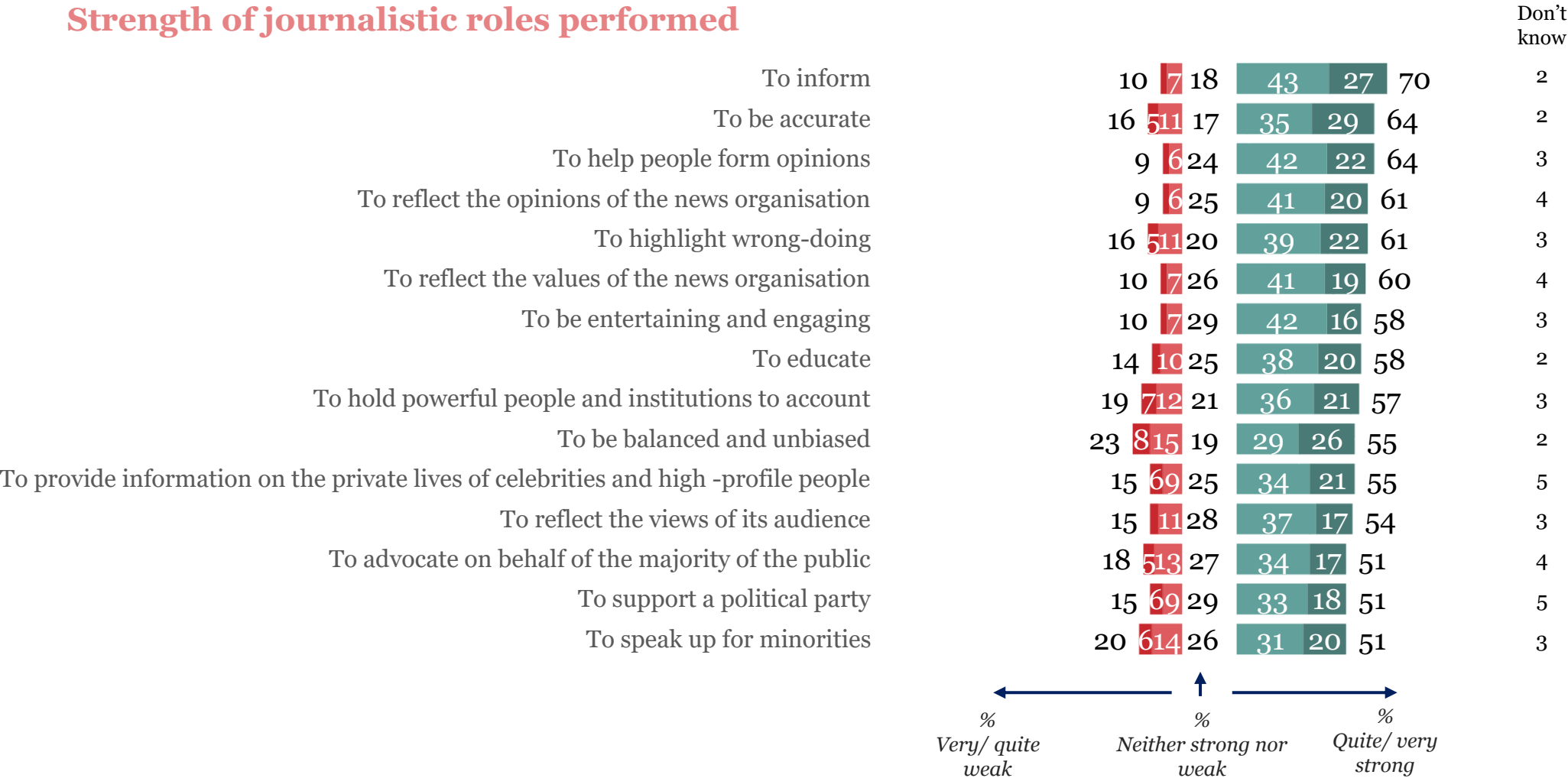
Q31. How important or unimportant are the following roles that journalists and news publications could play in UK society?

Importance of journalistic roles



Q32. How strongly or weakly, if at all, do you think news providers and journalists in the UK operate according to the following values?

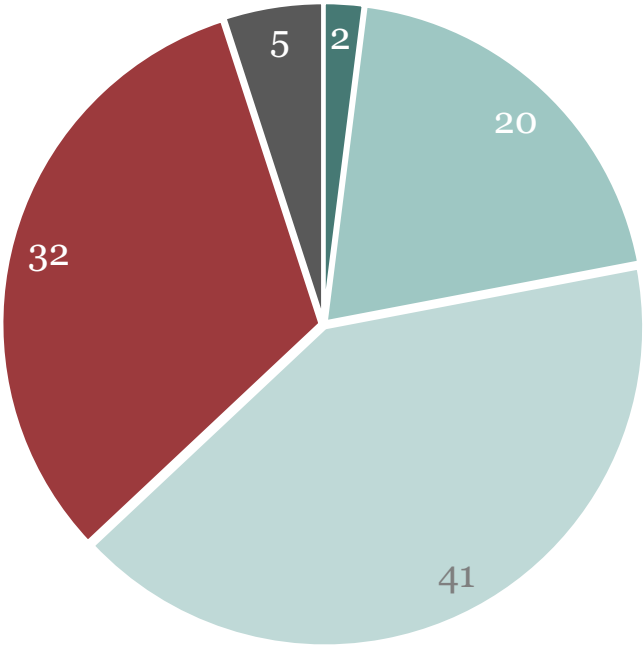
Strength of journalistic roles performed



Q33. News media regulators provide codes of conduct which help journalists conduct themselves according to an agreed set of standards. Examples include the ‘The Editors’ Code of Practice’, BBC Editorial Guidelines, and the Impress Standards Code. Before taking part in this survey, to what extent were you aware of these codes of conduct?

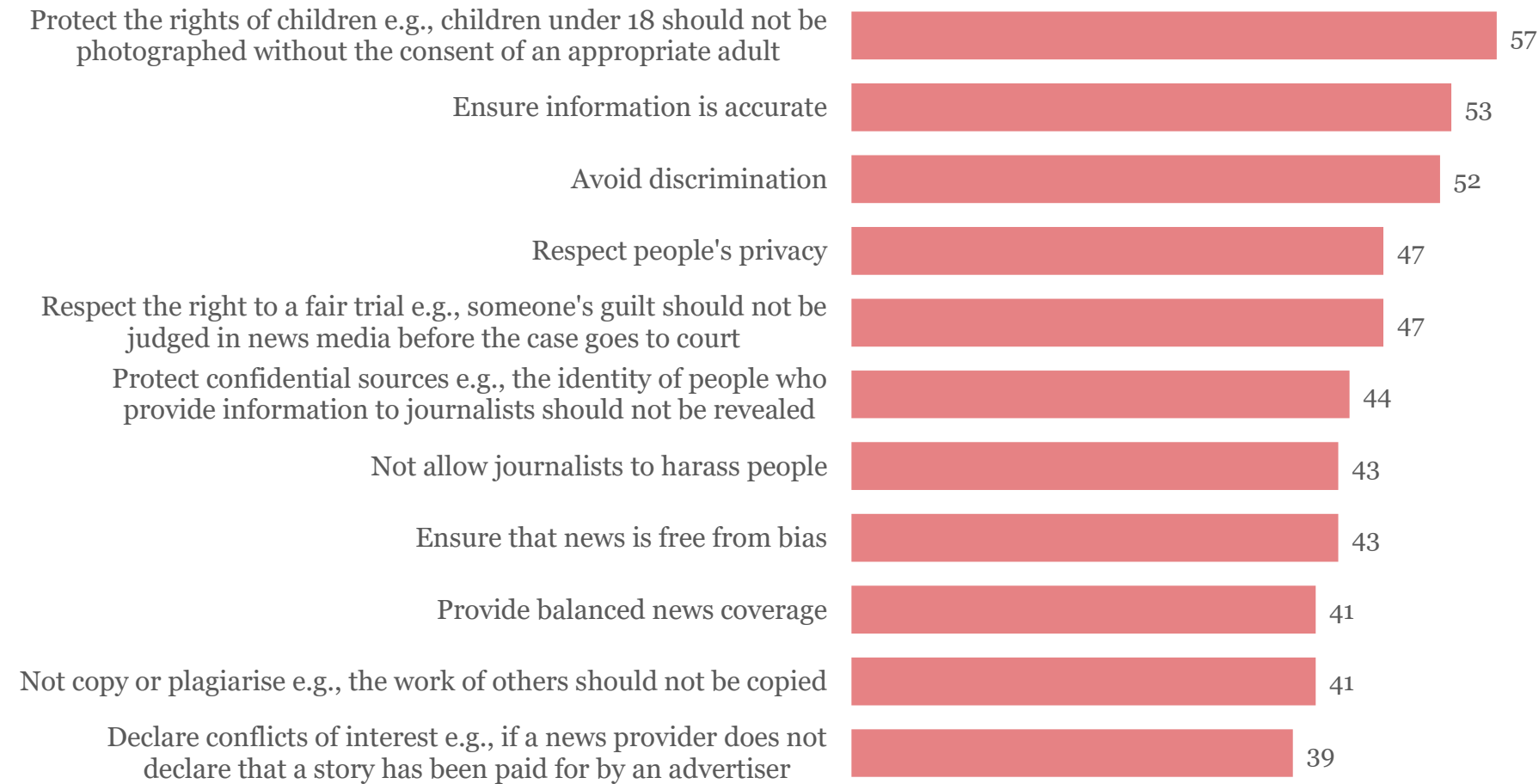
**Awareness of
Codes of Conduct**

- I'm aware that codes of conduct exist, and I know a lot about what they cover
- I'm aware that codes of conduct exist, and I know a little about what they cover
- I'm aware that codes of conduct exist, but I don't know anything about what they cover
- I'm not aware of any codes of conduct
- Don't know



Q34. Which of the following guidelines, if any, do you think are covered by codes of conduct for journalists and news media providers?

Knowledge of areas covered by codes of conduct



Section 7: Identifying issues of concern and ways to increase trust



gions. Hence, what is needed is a federal coalition that looks beyond the legal-constitutional aspects of federalism to preserve the idea of a plural India in terms of both culture and politics.

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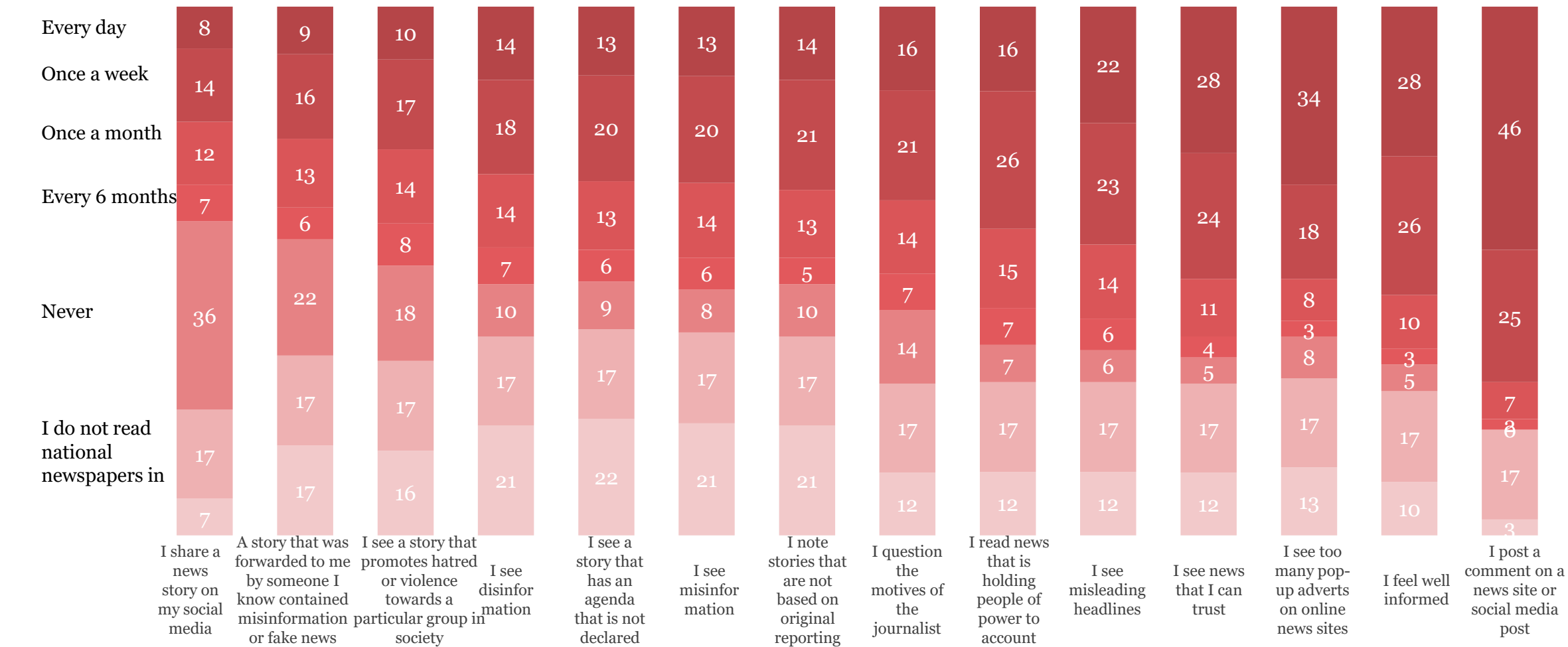
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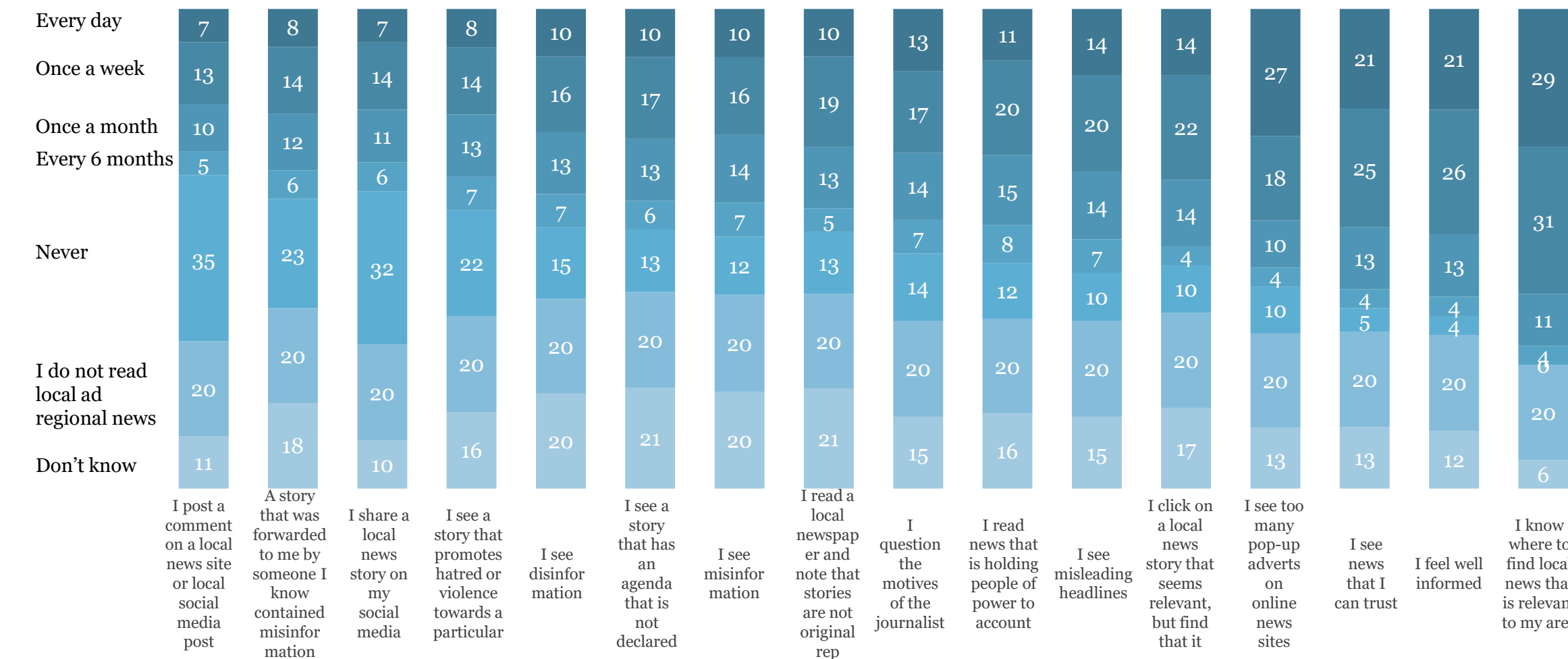
Q35. Think about your experiences of national news published by newspapers publishers in print or online but not including radio or TV. How often do you experience the following, if at all?

Experience of National News



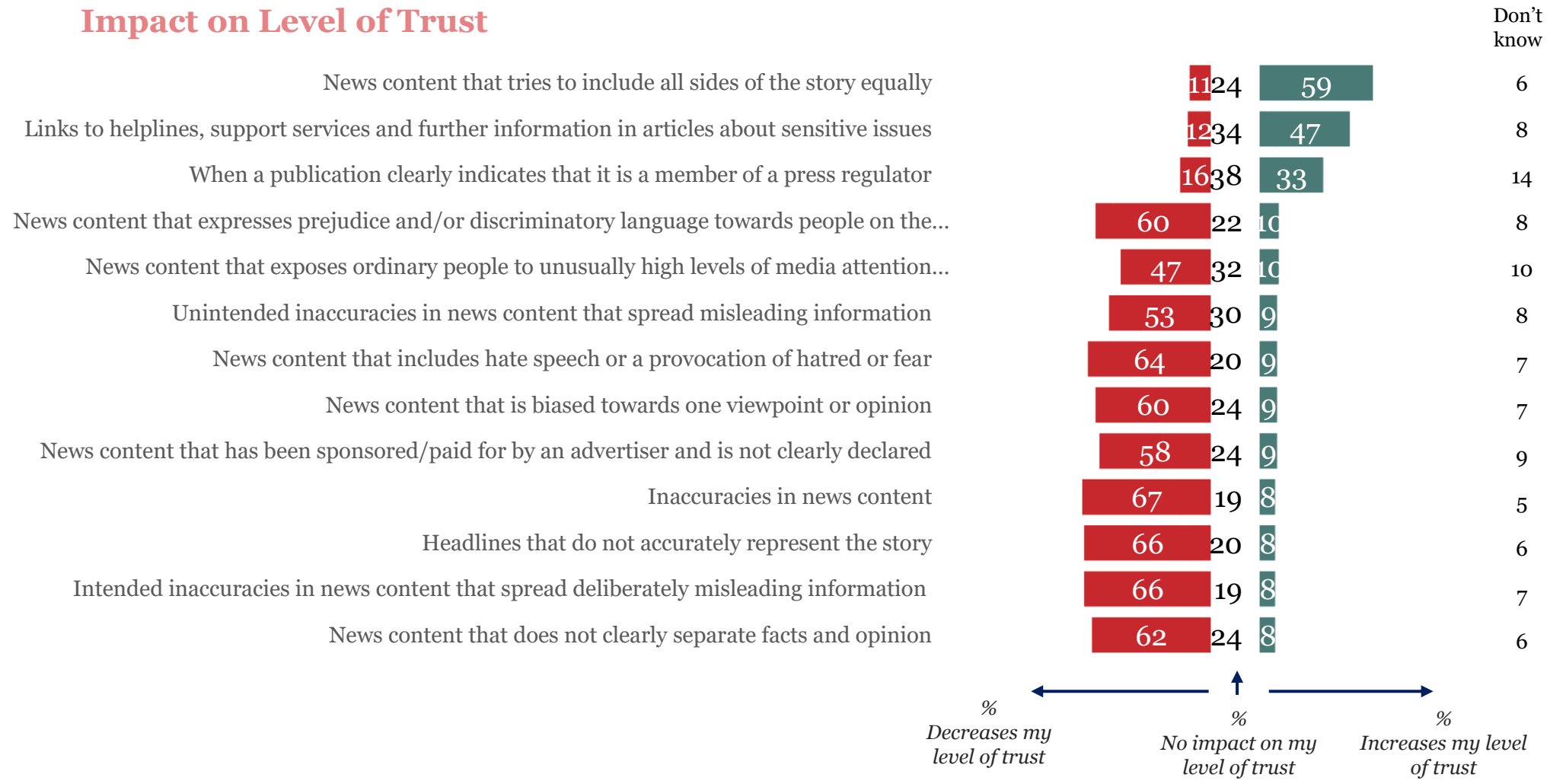
Q36. Now think about your experiences of local and regional news [...] not including local radio or local TV. How often do you experience the following, if at all?

Experience of Local News



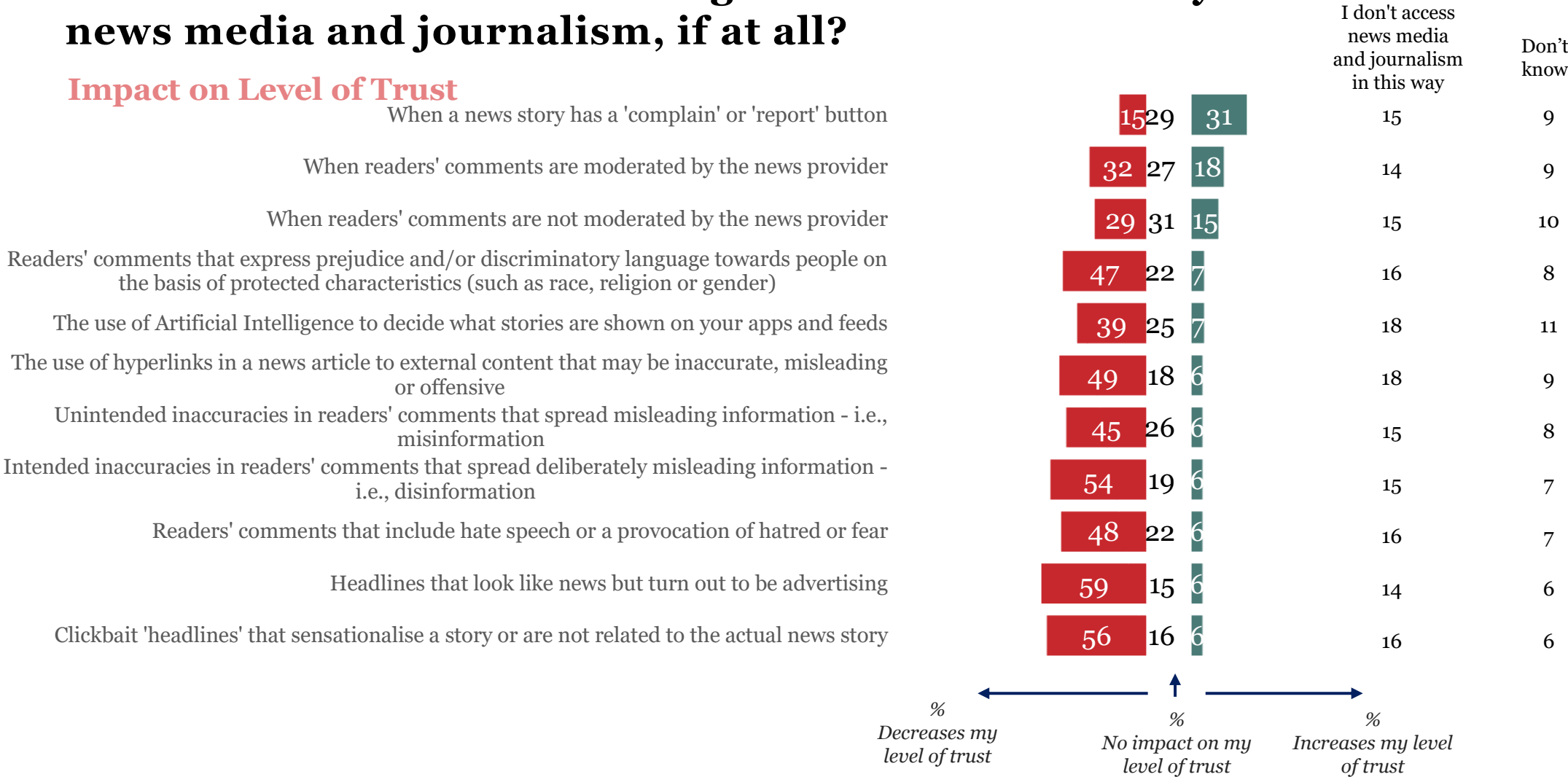
Q37. Please think about the news media and journalism you read/watch/listen to. To what extent do the following increase or decrease your level of trust in news media and journalism, if at all?

Impact on Level of Trust



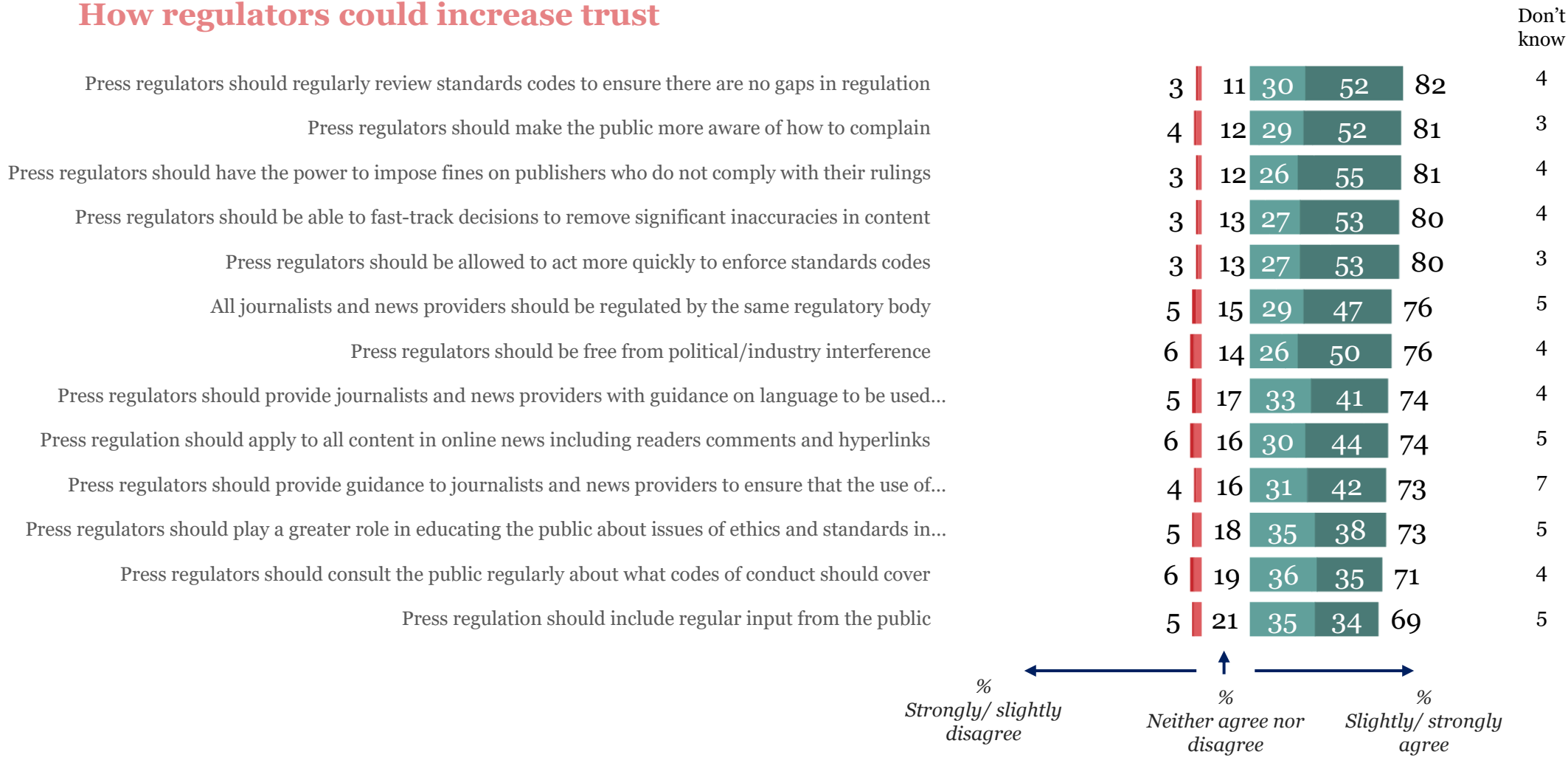
Q38. Now think about the news media and journalism that you access online on any device via the internet, an app, social media or other digital media. To what extent do the following increase or decrease your level of trust in news media and journalism, if at all?

Impact on Level of Trust



Q39. People have offered some suggestions for how regulators could work with journalists and news providers to increase levels of trust in the news. To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following?

How regulators could increase trust

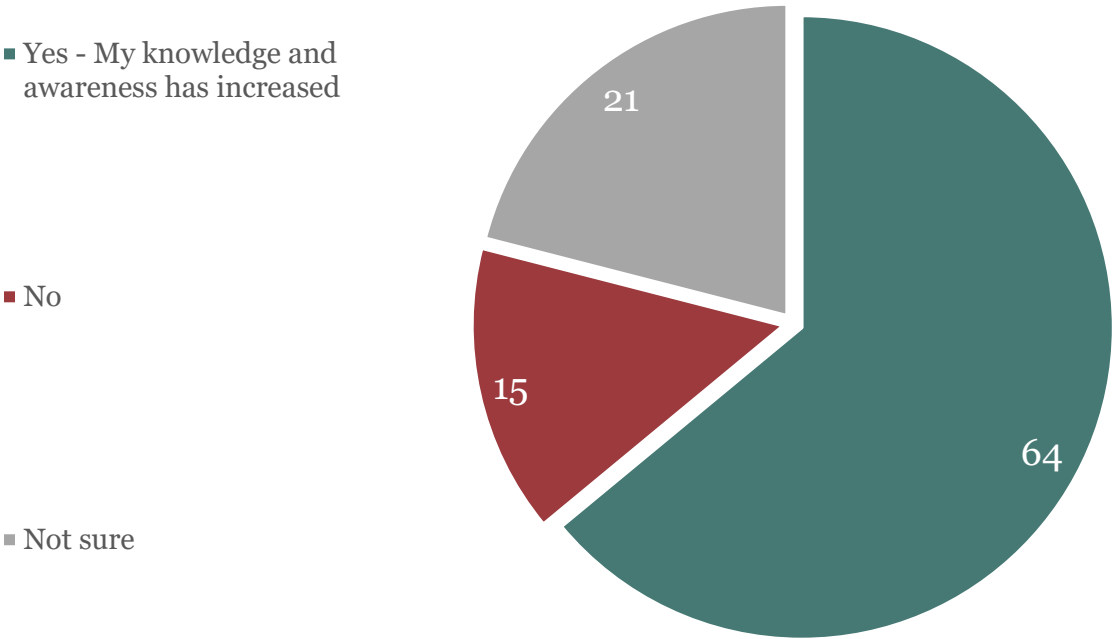


Q40. Having completed this survey, do you feel that your knowledge and awareness of issues relating to the regulation of news media and journalism has increased?

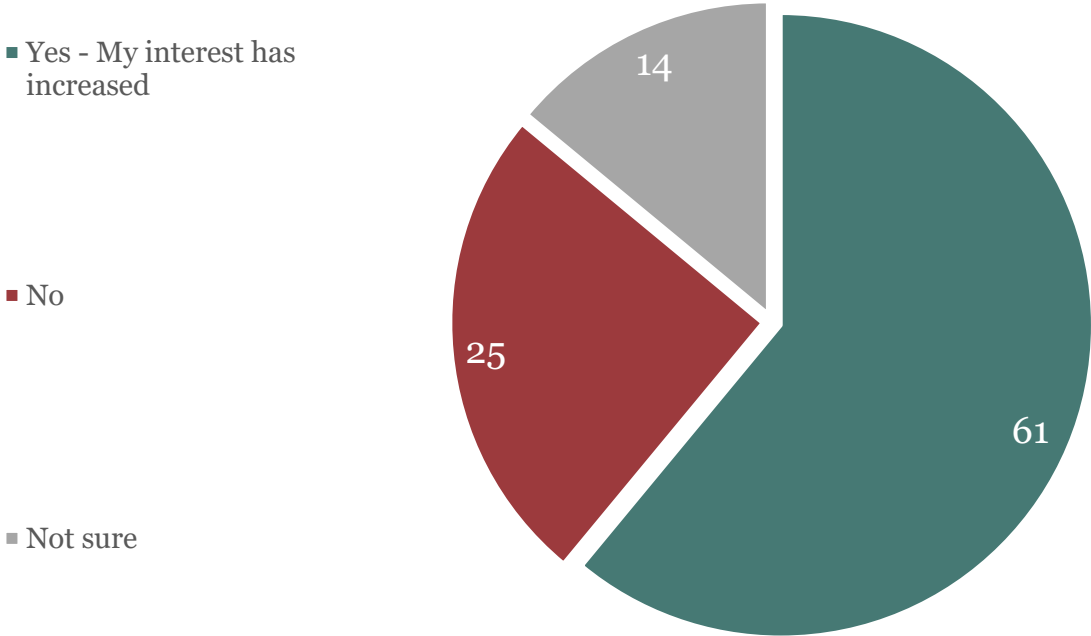
Q41. Having completed this survey, do you feel that your interest in issues relating to the regulation of news media and journalism has increased?

Impact of the survey on Knowledge, Awareness & Interest

Knowledge & Awareness



Interest



Bibliography:

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