

A STUDY BY
MUCK RACK

The State of Journalism U.K.

2023

Research Partners



Methodology

We surveyed 162 U.K.-based journalists from January 4th to February 6th, 2023.

The goal of this survey is to understand the current state of journalism and the future outlook of the industry by speaking to the people who produce the news. The self-administered online survey collected 162 responses from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Muck Rack distributed the survey with the help of 14 research partners including U.K.-based journalist organizations like Press Gazette and journalism.co.uk.

Survey responses were primarily sought through email and most respondents came from email outreach directly to journalists in Muck Rack's database. The survey was open from January 1 until February 6, 2023. Survey responses were checked for duplicates as well as inconsistent or low-effort responses and only completed surveys were considered here.

Due to the small sample size, it's inadvisable to draw conclusions about the whole population of journalists in the U.K. from these results. The margin of error in that case would be around 7%. Instead, it's best to think of this as an insight into the workings of this particular group of respondents.

Executive Summary

- U.K.-based journalists surveyed by Muck Rack were less likely than their global counterparts to cite media literacy and pay-for-play content among their top concerns for the industry.
- Around two thirds of respondents say economic uncertainty has affected their work. Around one third has been affected by layoffs.
- U.K.-based journalists were more likely than journalists from other countries to say they produce 11 or more stories per week.
- Boomers were cited as a target audience less often by U.K. journalists than journalists from other countries.
- More U.K. journalists plan to spend time on TikTok this year than journalists from other countries. Many also expect to increase their time on LinkedIn.
- U.K. journalists find stories to be more shareable when they have exclusive or surprising data, infographics, or cover a subject linked to an already trending topic.
- Most journalists in the U.K. prefer their pitches to be emails, less than 300 words and ideally sent before noon.

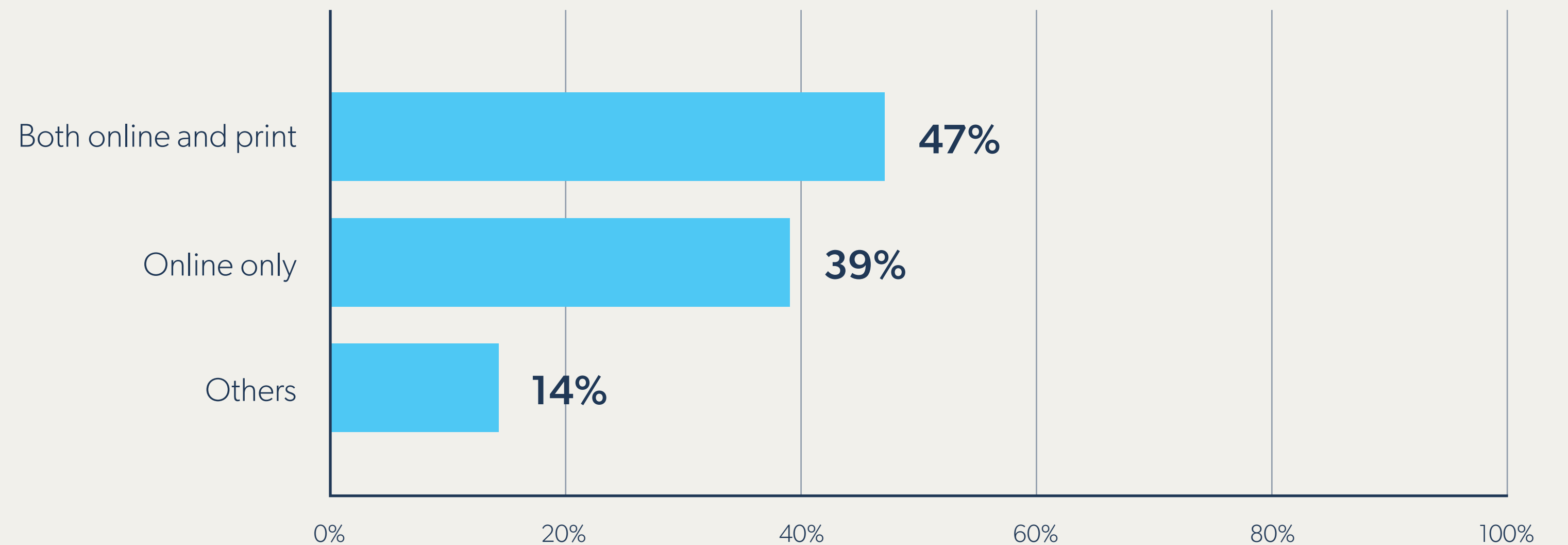


Journalism trends and challenges

Print and online are the dominant mediums for U.K. journalists

About **a third** of respondents also produce in additional formats, like podcasts and newsletters.

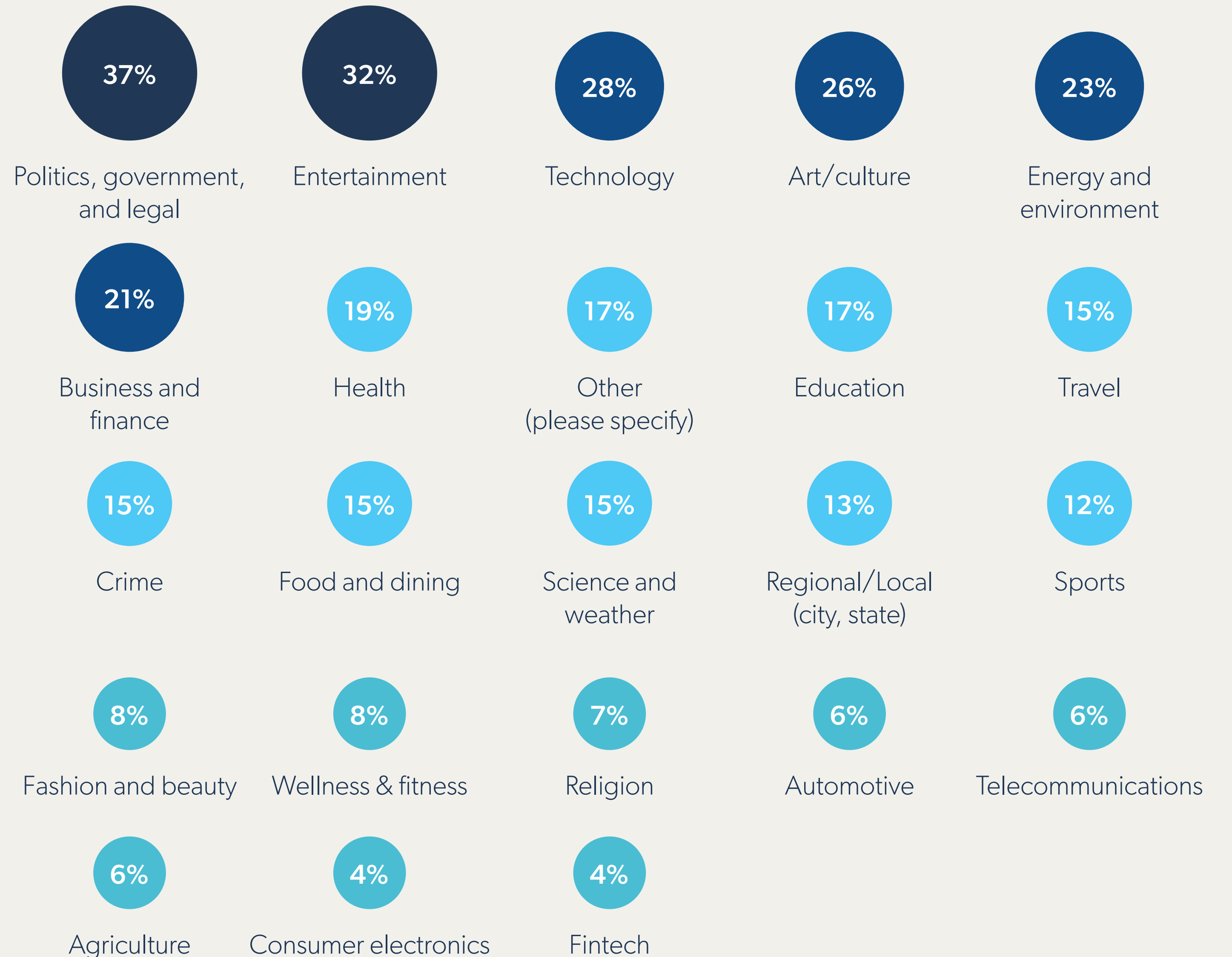
Which medium do you primarily report in?



Most respondents covered politics and entertainment

On average, journalists reported having **more than three** coverage areas each.

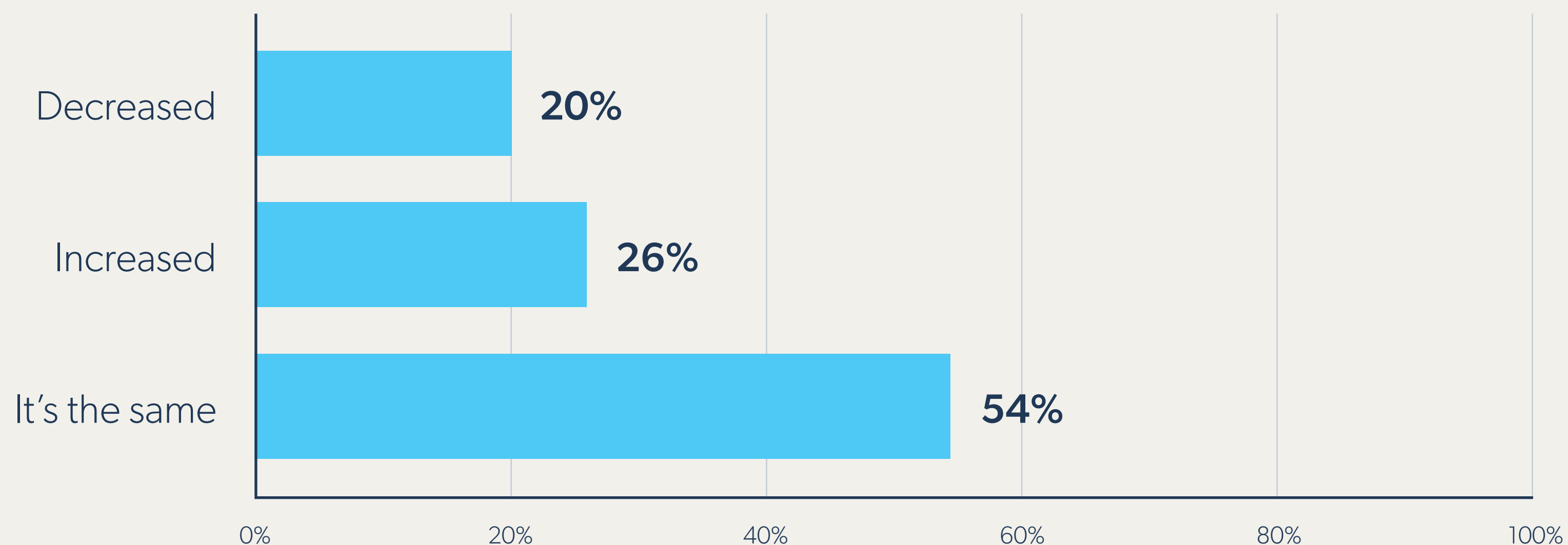
What industries do you cover? (select all that apply)



Audience trust has stayed about the same

Most journalists feel like audiences' trust in their coverage has **not changed** in the last year.

Do you feel that your audience's trust in coverage of your area of journalism has increased or decreased in the past year?



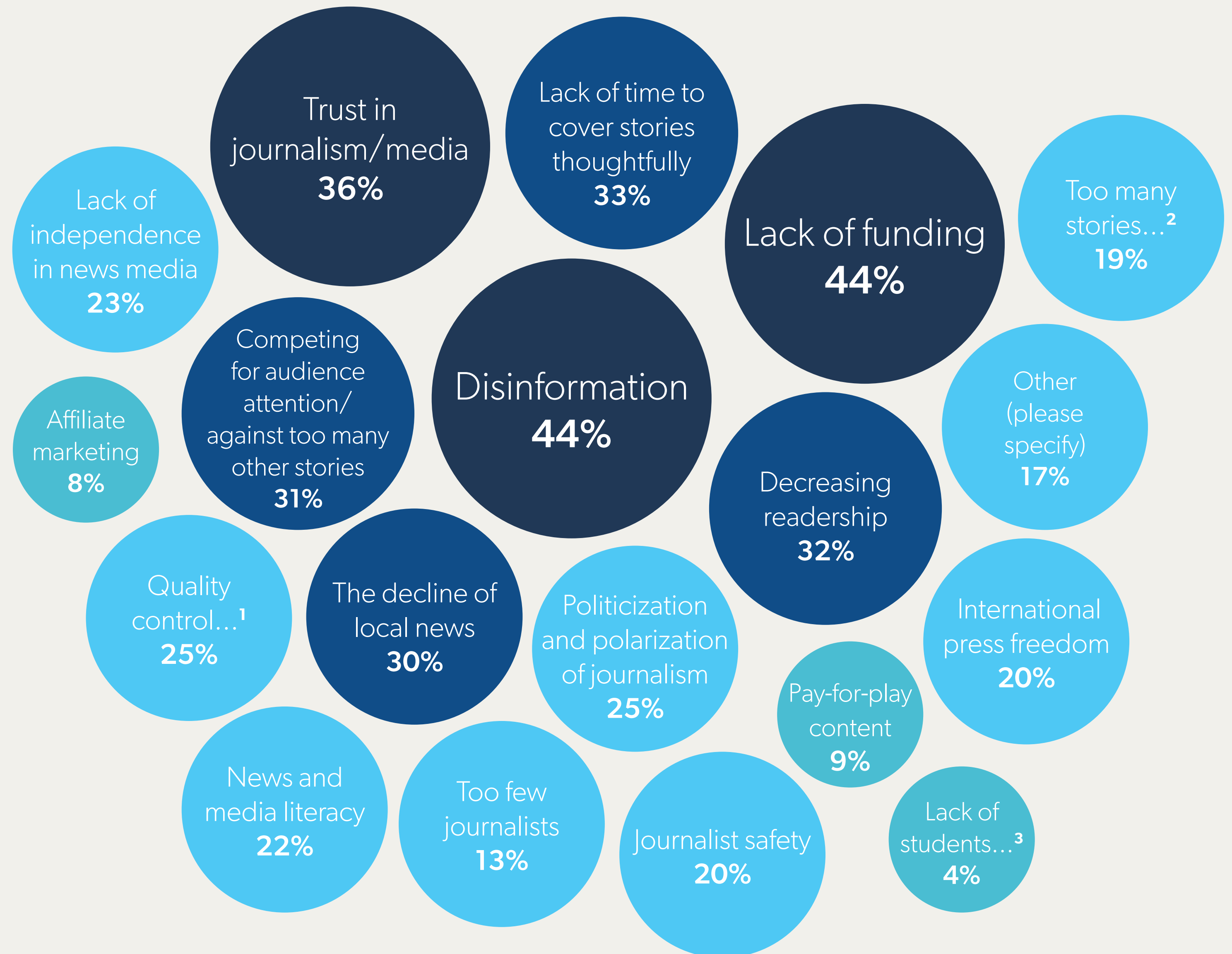
Media literacy and pay-for-play content are less concerning for U.K. journalists

Compared to their counterparts in other countries, respondents from the U.K. were **less likely** to cite these as a concerning issue.

Lack of funding and **disinformation** were among the top concerns of journalists everywhere.

1. Quality control/fact-checking support in newsrooms
2. Overwhelming news cycle/too many stories to cover
3. Lack of students/new job seekers interested in journalism

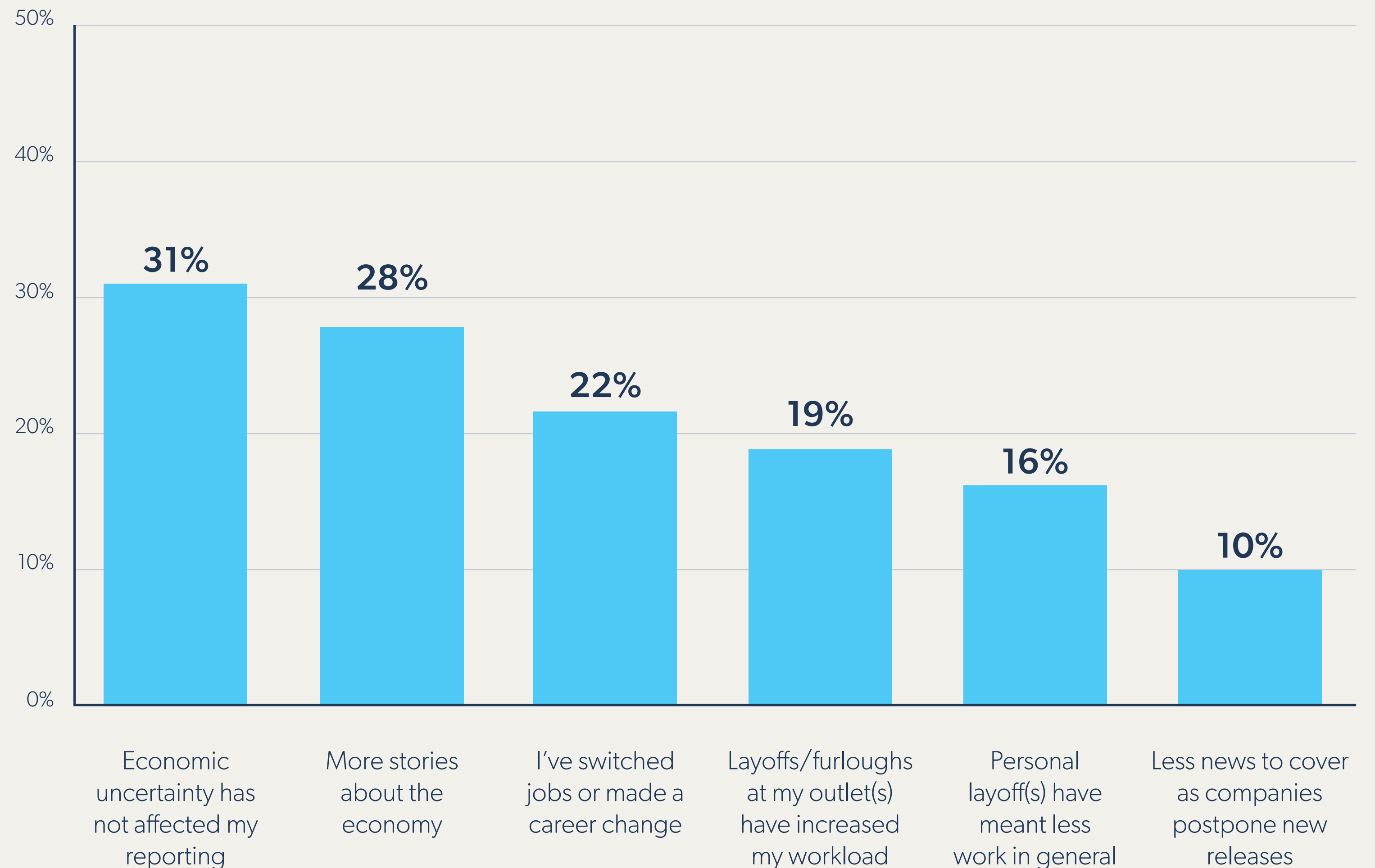
What issues facing journalism are most concerning to you? (choose your top 3)



Many U.K. journalists were impacted by layoffs or switched jobs

Overall, around **two-thirds** of U.K. journalists surveyed said economic uncertainty has affected their work in some way.

How has economic uncertainty affected your work? (select all that apply)

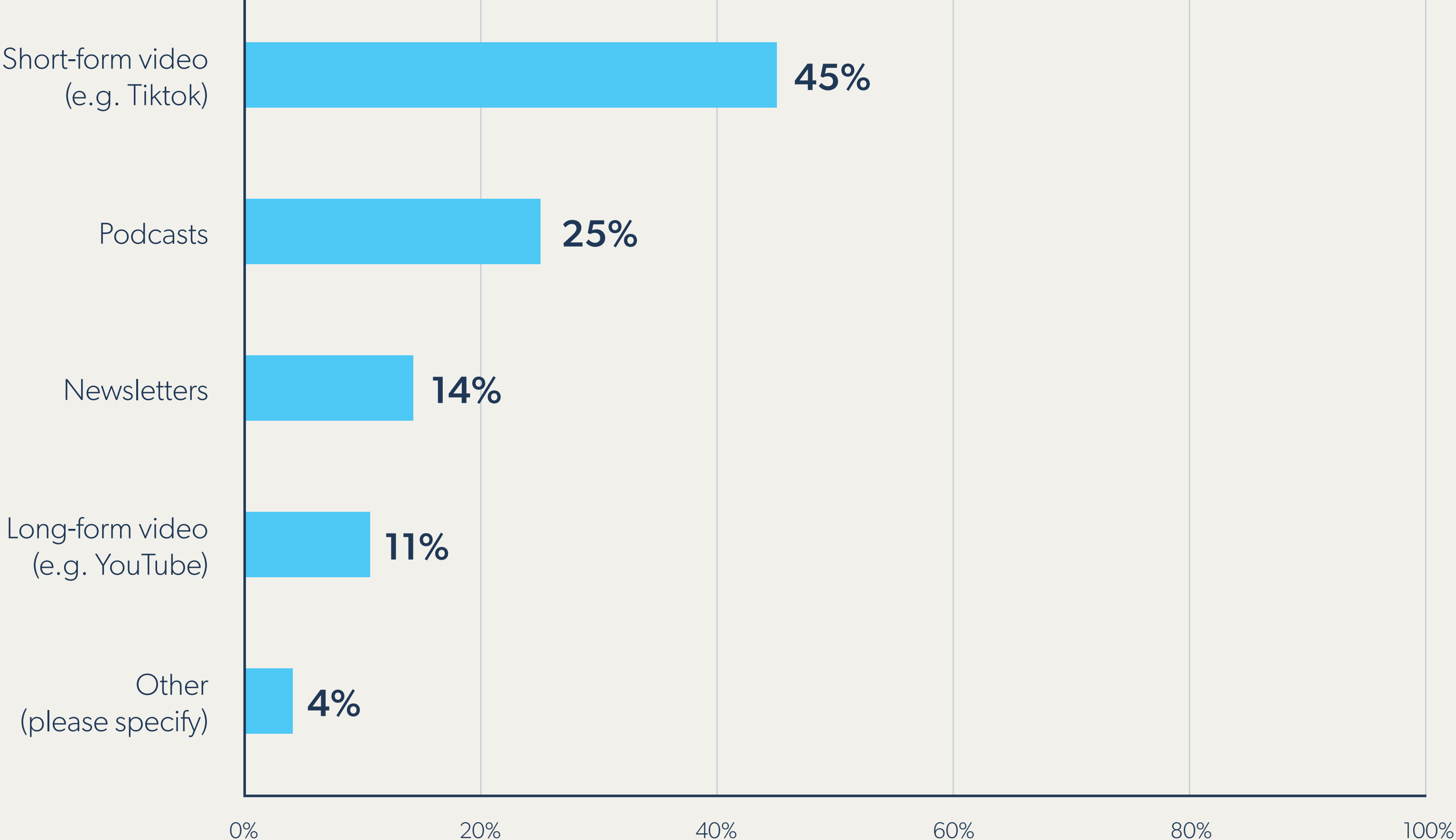




Social media usage and habits

U.K. journalists expect short-form video to become more popular

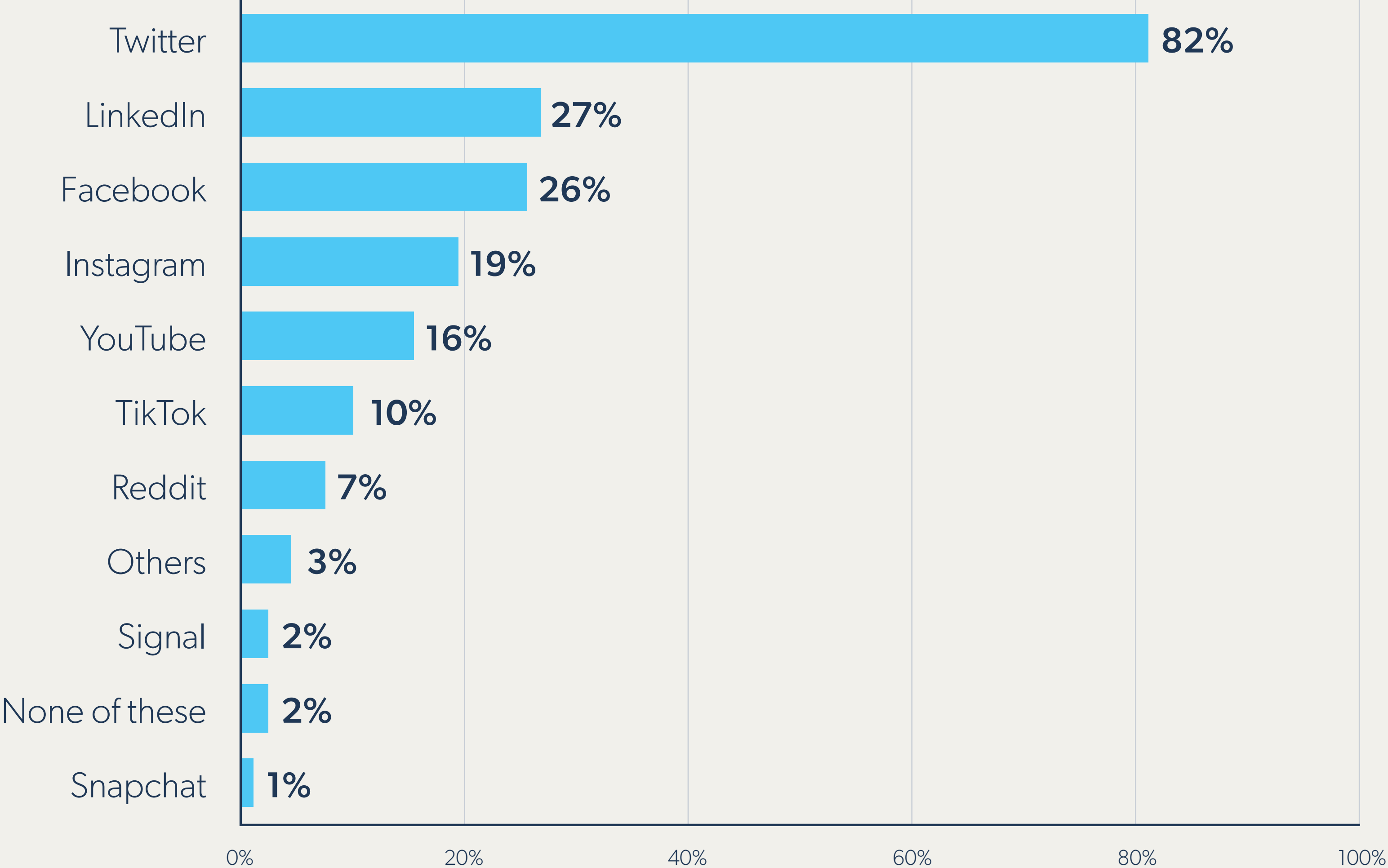
What medium do you think will grow in popularity in 2023?



Similar to the U.S., Twitter is the most valuable social network

Although respondents were **evenly split** on whether they considered leaving the platform in the last year.

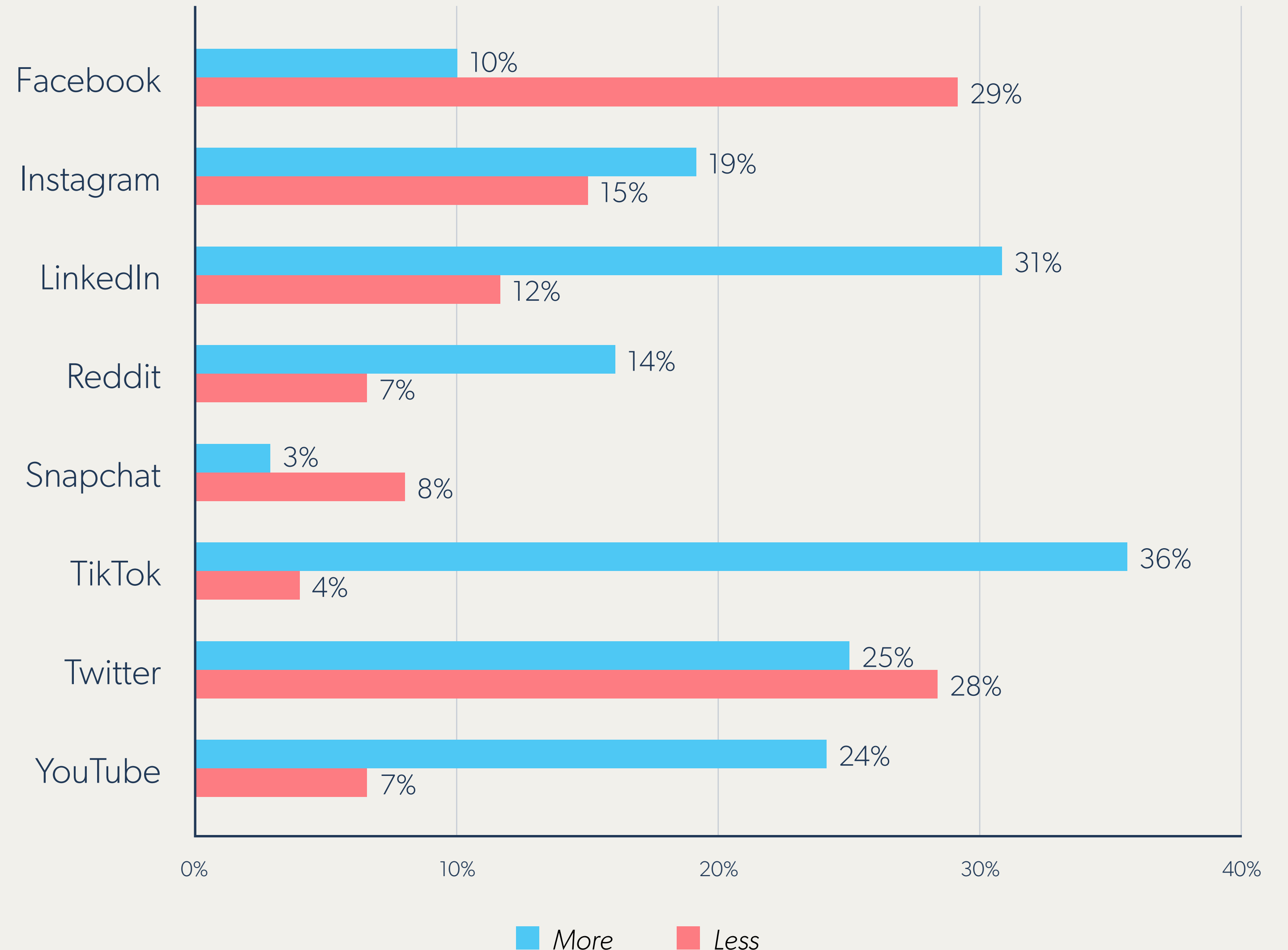
What social network is most valuable to you as a journalist?



U.K. journalists plan to spend more time this year on TikTok, LinkedIn and YouTube

More U.K. journalists plan to spend time on **TikTok** than journalists in other countries.

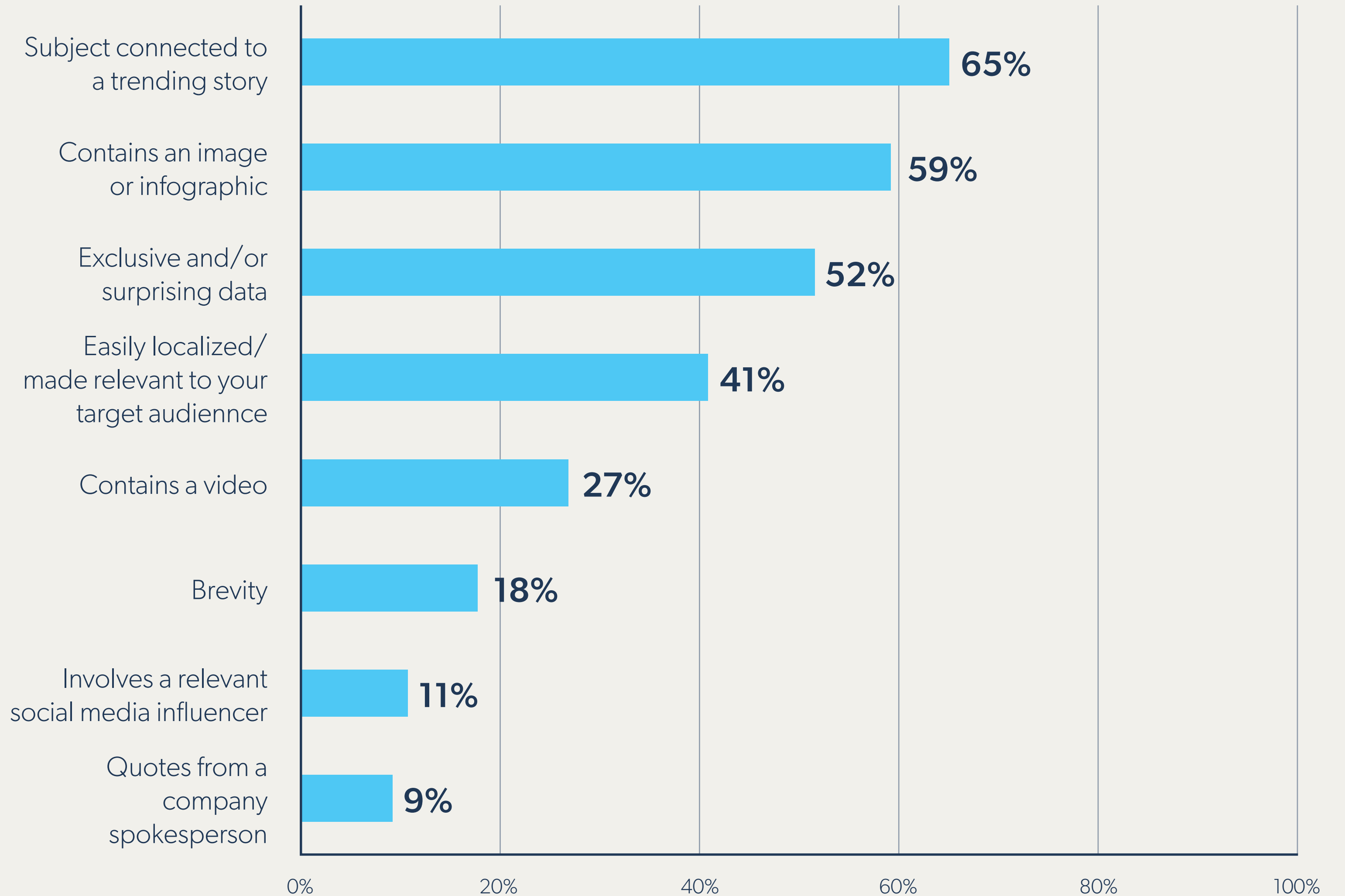
Do you expect to spend more or less time on the following social networks this year?



Data and graphics make stories more shareable

U.K. journalists who responded to the survey were **less likely** than other journalists to say easily localized stories are more shareable.

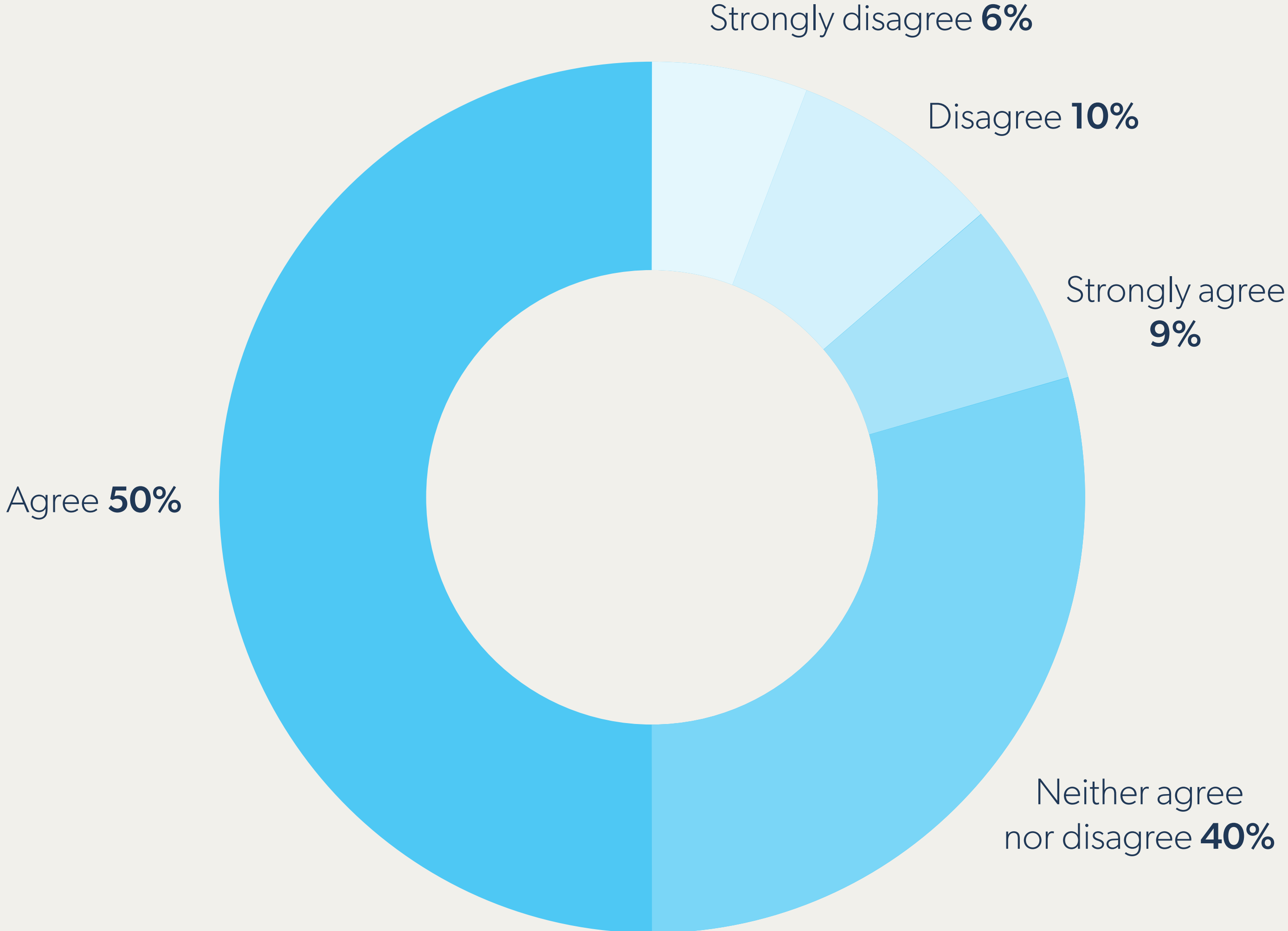
What makes a story shareable?



Company social media accounts are important to U.K. journalists

Most U.K. journalists will reference them when working on a story.

When reporting on a company, I consult the company's social media





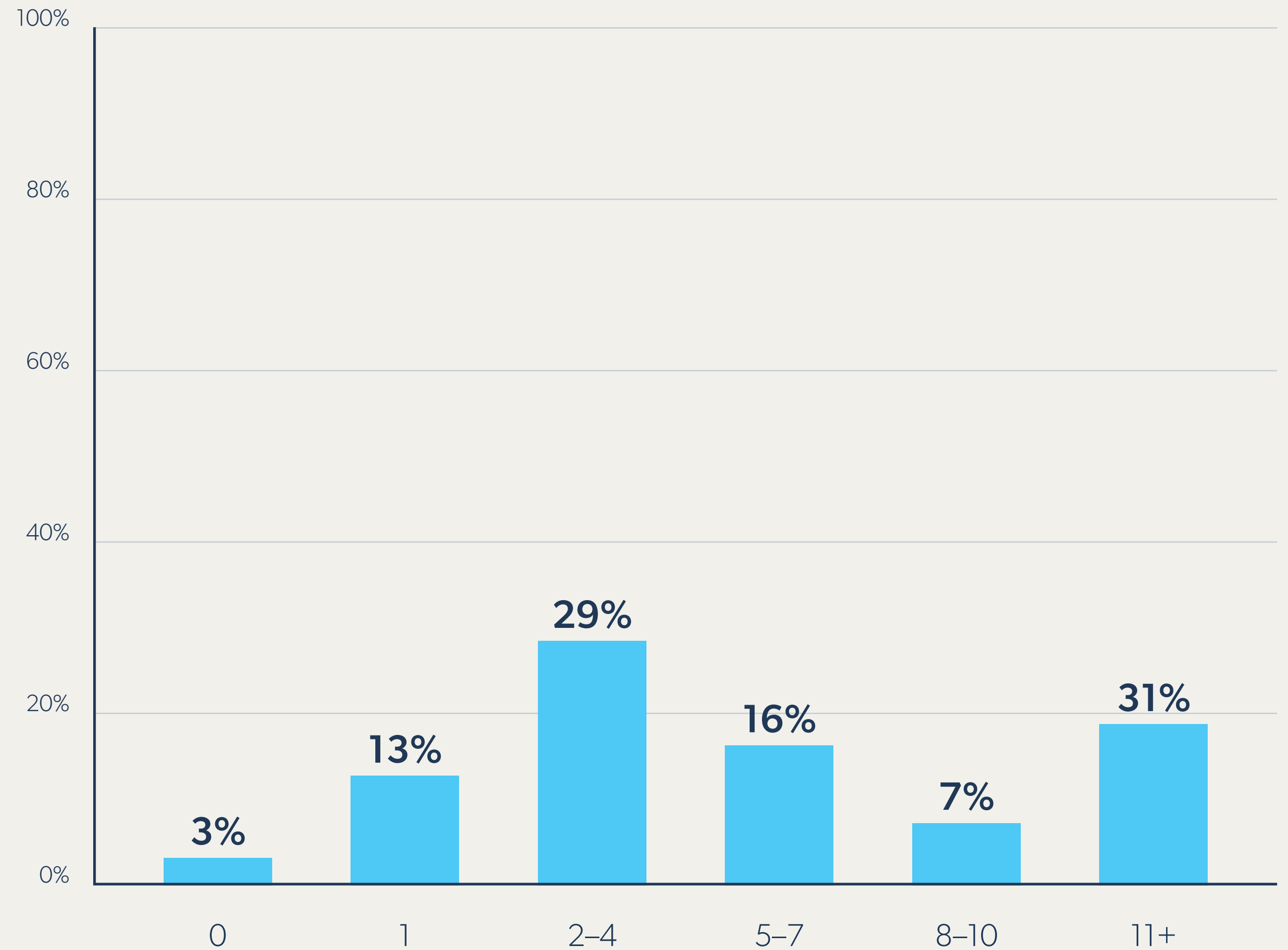
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Media relations and pitches preferences

U.K. journalists are more likely to produce 11+ stories per week than journalists in other countries

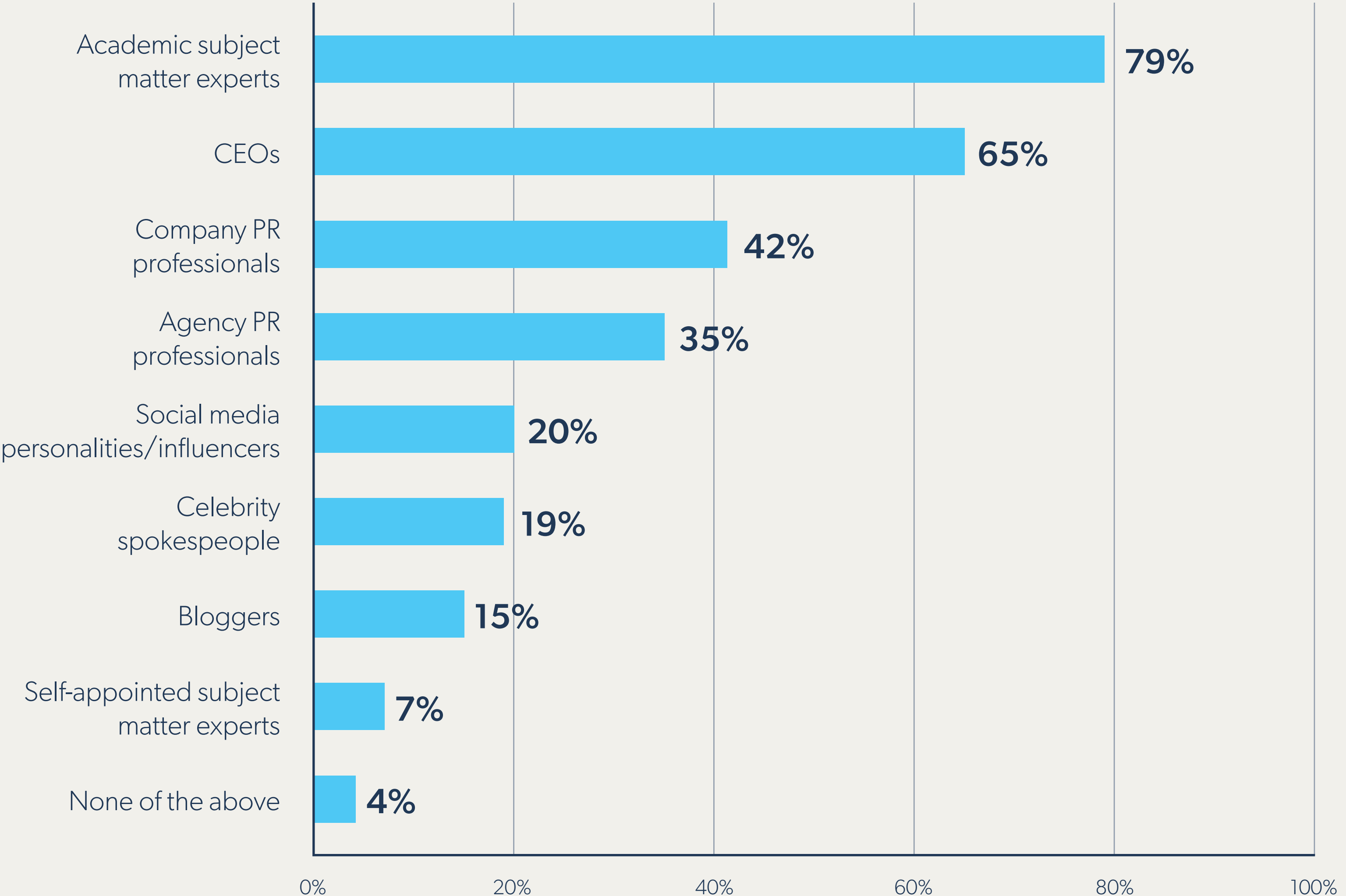
Most journalists surveyed in the U.K. produce between **1-7** stories per week.

About how many stories do you publish in an average week?



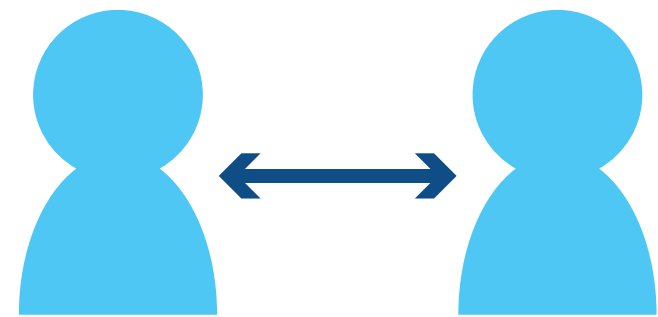
U.K. journalists consider academic experts the most credible sources, similar to their global counterparts

Do you consider the following to be credible sources for your reporting?

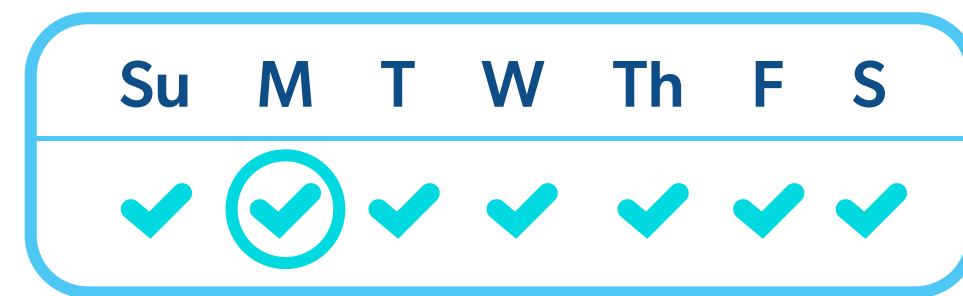


THE PERFECT PITCH

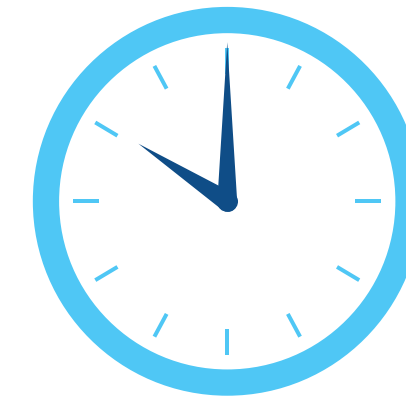
According to a survey of 162 U.K.-based journalists



93% of journalists prefer to be pitched via 1:1 email



60% don't care which day they pitched—of those who do, **19%** prefer to be pitched on a Monday



78% want to receive pitches before noon



87% prefer pitches that are 300 words or less. **68%** prefer less than 200 words

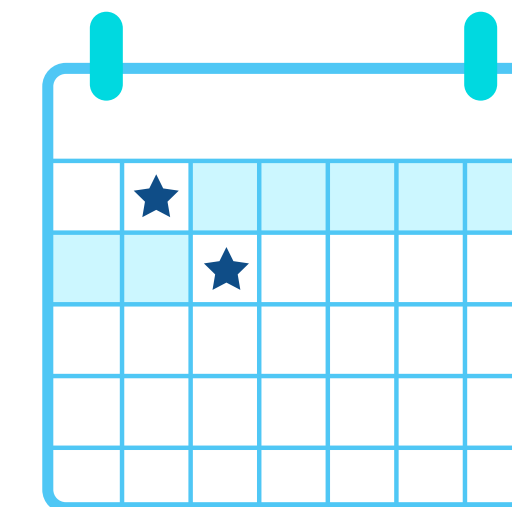


Now Trending

65% say pitches that connect to a trending story are the most shareable



79% are more likely to cover a story if offered an exclusive

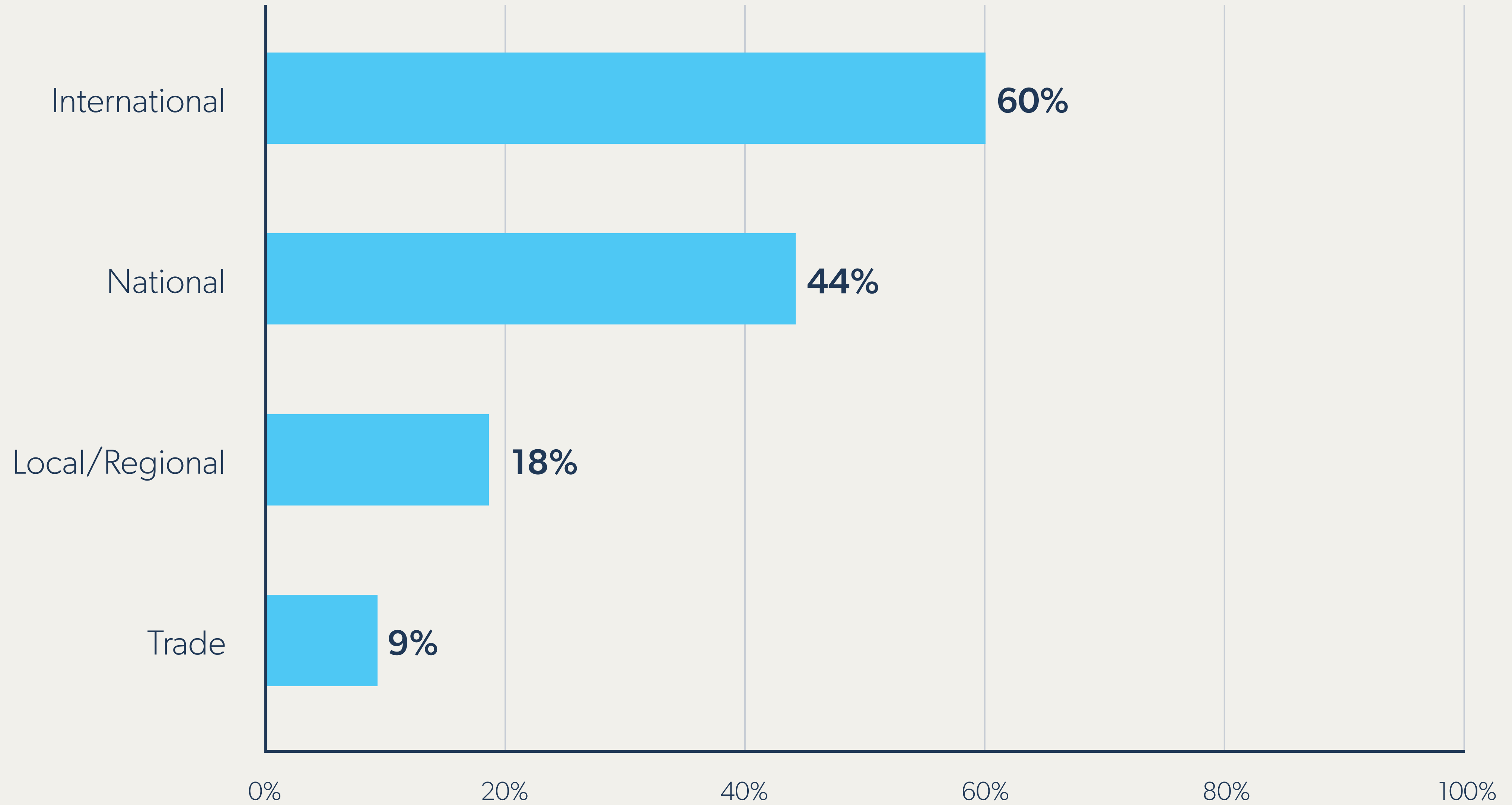


55% say one follow up is ideal and **48%** say it should come within 3–7 days later



Beats, mediums and audiences

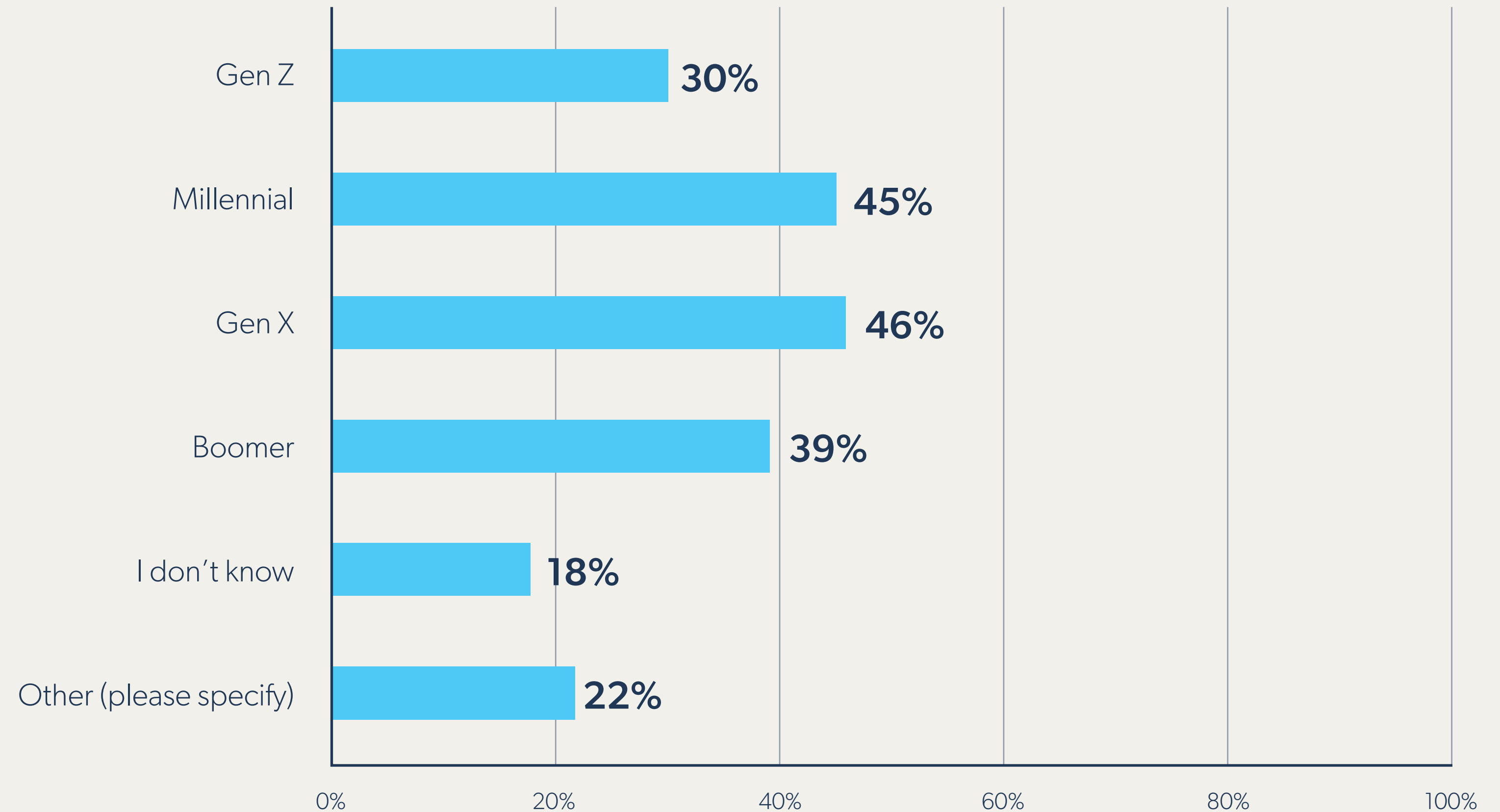
How would you categorize the scope of your coverage?



U.K. and international journalists were less likely to say they targeted boomers

Millennial and Gen X are the most commonly targeted audiences for U.K. and international journalists.

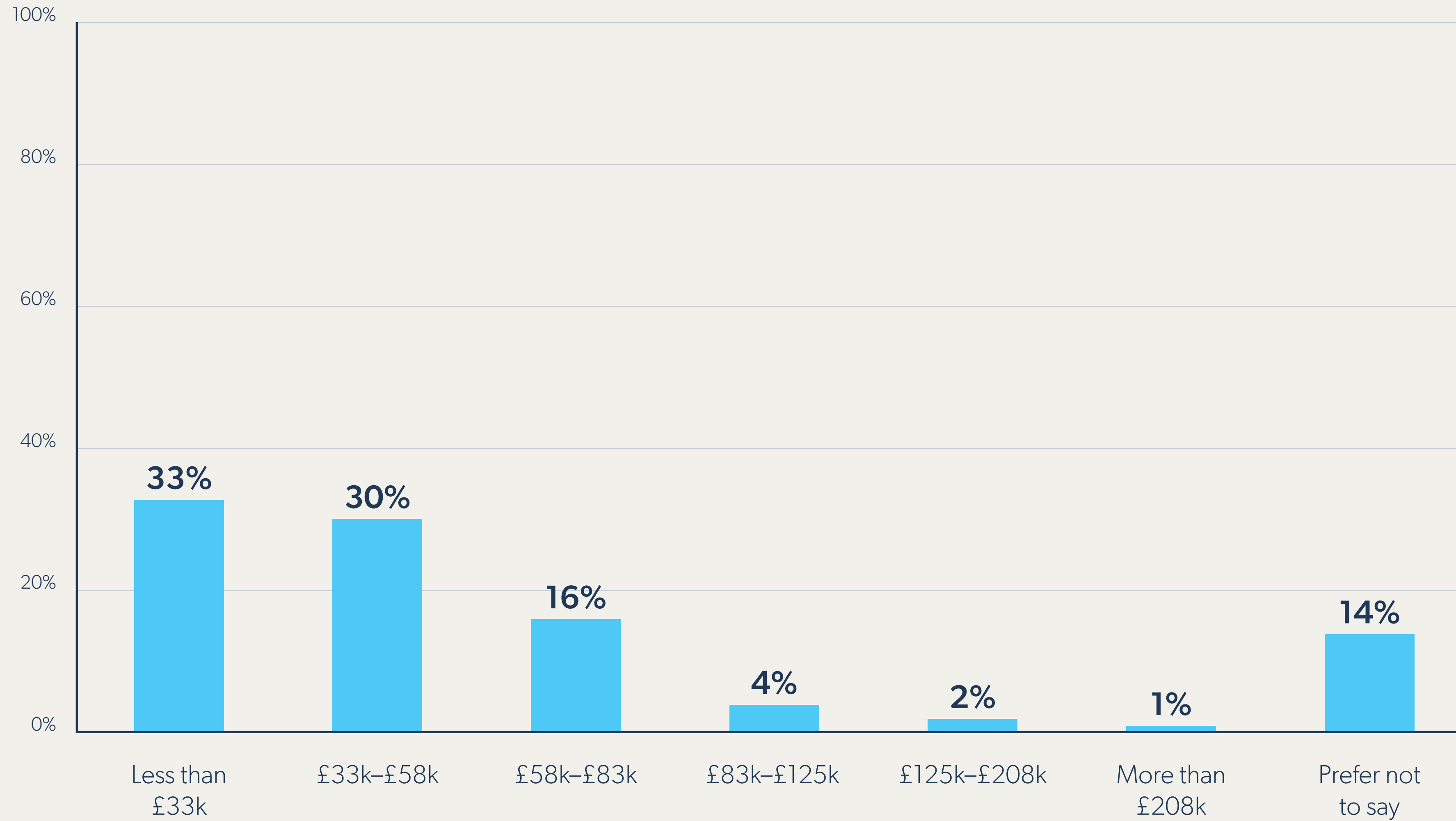
Who is your target audience? (select all that apply)



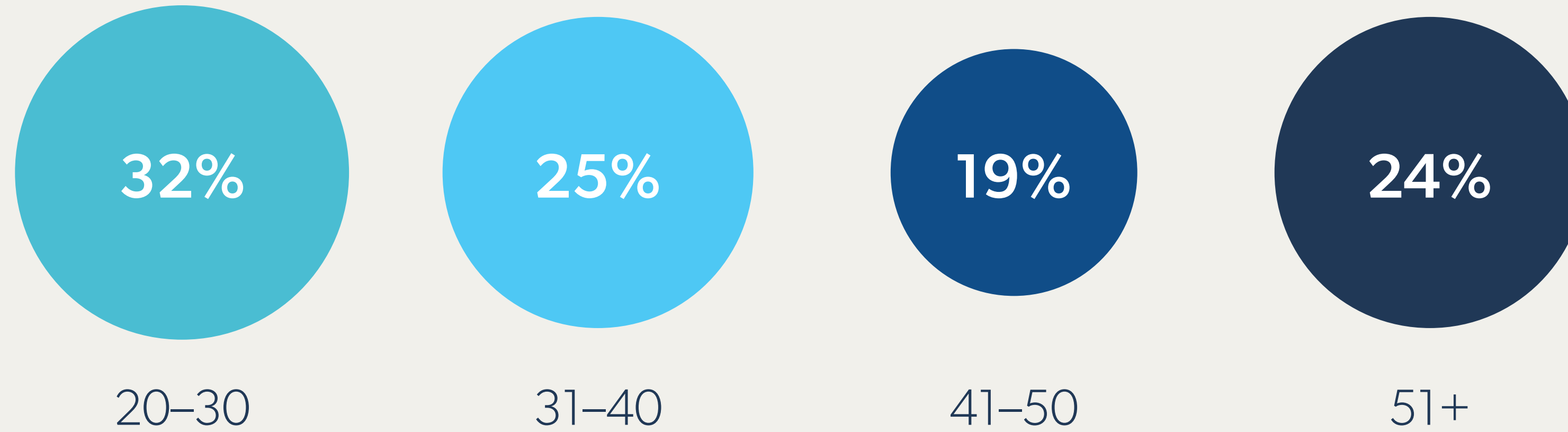
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Demographics & salary

How much do you earn a year including bonus? (in pound sterling)



How old are you?



How long have you been a journalist?



Thank you!

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