

Reuters Institute Digital News Report (Hong Kong) 2024

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Table of contents

Preface		p. 3
Part I	News consumption	p. 4
Part II	Ways to obtain online news	p. 11
Part III	Trust in the news	p. 18
Part IV	Paying for online news	p. 24
Part V	News avoidance and fake news concerns	p. 29
Part VI	News needs	p. 34
Part VII	News video consumption	p. 40
Part VIII	Perceptions of artificial intelligence in journalism	p. 45
Appendix	Methodology and demographic characteristics	p. 50

Preface

The *Reuters Institute Digital News Report* is published annually by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) at Oxford University, and it provides insights and analysis on people's digital news consumption. The 2024 report, published in June, surveyed 95,000 people in 47 markets, representing half of the world's population.¹

Hong Kong has been featured in the annual report since 2017, and the two-page profiles provide yearly snapshots of news consumption trends, attitudes, and behaviors. However, the profiles do not cover the broader range of questions and responses asked in the survey. With support from the Office of Research and Knowledge Transfer Services (ORKTS) at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, this report provides a more in-depth summary of the data. This report primarily focuses on the 2024 Digital News Report data, though comparisons with previous years are provided for some of the questions. The report is organised according to the following eight themes:

- 1) News consumption
- 2) Ways to obtain online news
- 3) Trust in the news
- 4) Paying for online news
- 5) News avoidance and fake news concerns
- 6) News needs
- 7) News video consumption
- 8) Perceptions of artificial intelligence in journalism

We welcome media organizations, academic and research institutions, non-governmental organizations, and public institutions to contact us for further information and dialogue on the findings. Any queries related to this report can be directed to Mr. Yuteng Zheng (email: ytzheng@cuhk.edu.hk).

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¹Digital News Report 2024, <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2024>

Part I.

News consumption



Frequency of news consumption

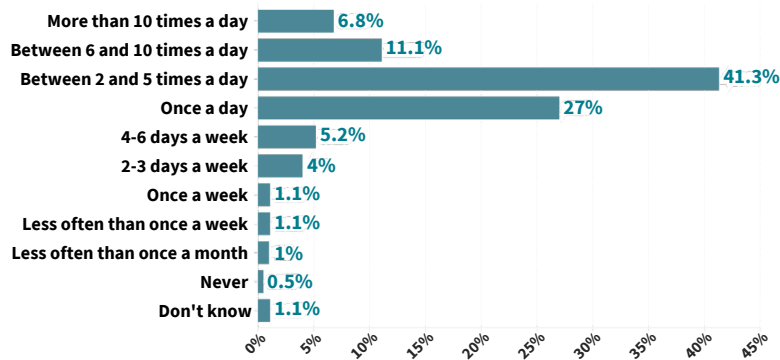
The Digital News Consumption Survey measured the overall frequency of news consumption through a question with answers ranging from “never” to “more than 10 times a day.” Overall, close to four-fifths (79.4%) of Hong Kong residents reported consuming news 1–10 times a day, and 6.8% of respondents consumed news even more than 10 times daily (see Figure 1.1). This finding makes it clear that news plays an integral part in the daily routines of the majority of Hong Kong’s population, rather than being a peripheral or sporadic activity.

Interest in news

The survey asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they were interested in the news, using a five-point scale ranging from not at all interested to extremely interested. 84.1% of Hong Kong residents reported being at least “somewhat interested” in the news, and 35.7% said they were either “very interested” or “extremely interested” (Figure 1.2).

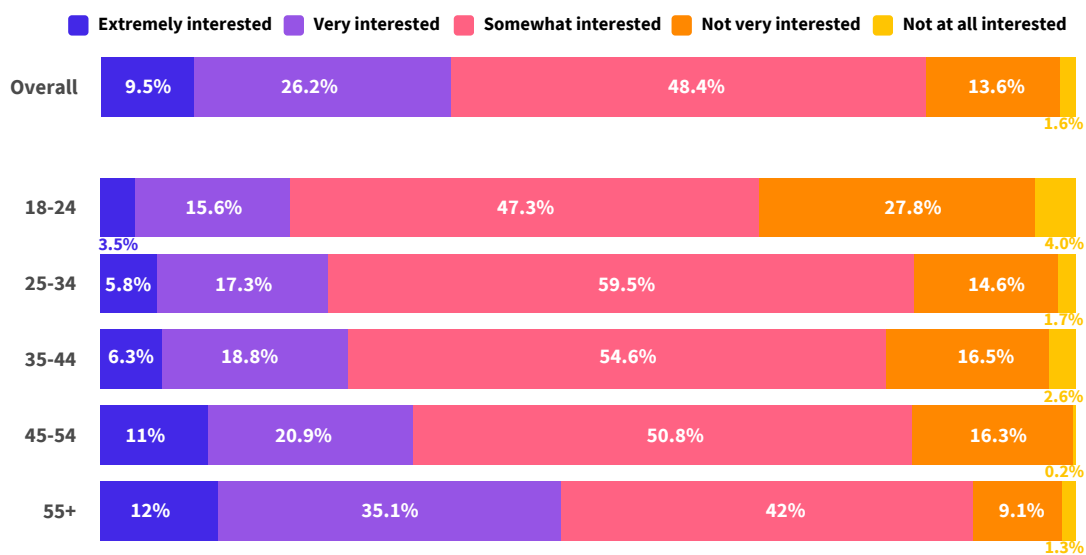
Male respondents exhibited a slightly higher degree of interest in the news when compared to females, but the gender gap is modest. More obvious inter-group differences exist among age groups. The youngest group (those aged 18 to 24) stands out as the least interested in the news, with only 66.4% reporting being at least somewhat interested. The proportion is notably lower than that for all other age groups. The oldest group (55 or above) displayed the greatest appetite for news, with a remarkable 89.1% of that cohort indicating that they were at least somewhat interested. The age groups between those extremes also demonstrated robust news interest, with nearly or more than 80% of those aged 25–34, 35–44, and 45–54 describing themselves as being at least somewhat interested. These findings point to a generational divide in news consumption habits, with younger Hong Kong residents exhibiting a notably lower level of interest than their middle-aged and older counterparts.

Figure 1.1



Question: Typically, how often do you access news? By news we mean national, international, regional or local news, and other topical events accessed via any platform (radio, TV, newspaper or online)? N = 2,005

Figure 1.2

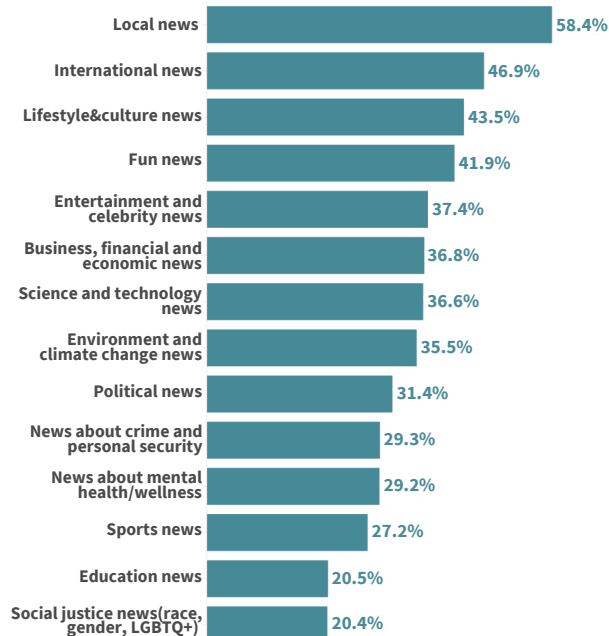


Question: How interested, if at all, would you say you are in news? N = 2,005.

Interest in different news topics

Figure 1.3 shows the types of news that interest Hong Kong residents. More than half (58.4%) of respondents indicated that they were interested in local news, whereas a little less than half (46.9%) reported an interest in international news.

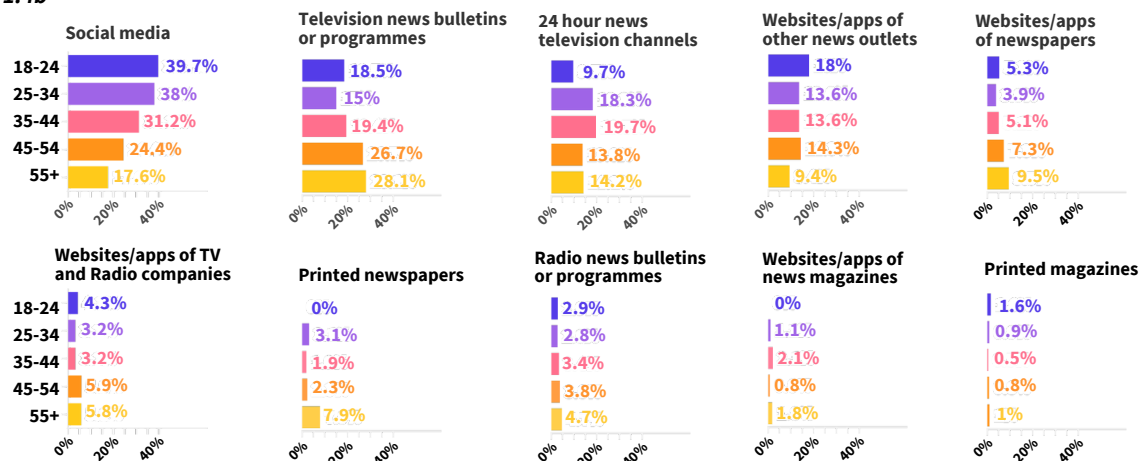
Figure 1.3



Question: Which of the following types of news, if any, are you interested in? Please select all that apply; N = 2,005.

Many respondents acknowledged being interested in “soft” news topics such as lifestyle or culture news (43.5%), fun news (41.9%), and entertainment and celebrity news (37.4%). Just under a third (31.4%) of respondents were interested in political news. Although that percentage is higher than those regarding news about mental health, crime news, and education news, it is lower than the percentage of respondents interested in financial news (36.8%), environmental news (35.5%), or news about science and technology (36.6%).

Figure 1.4b

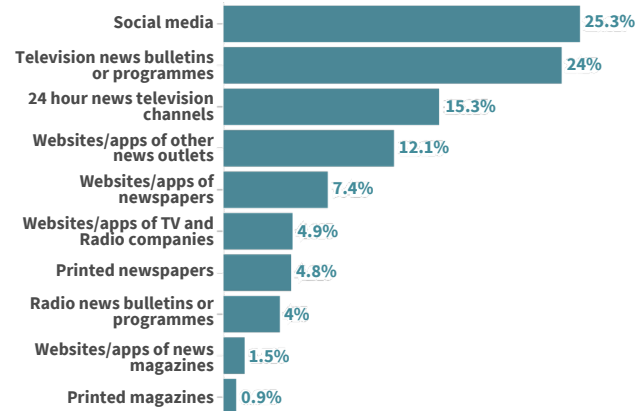


Question: You say you’ve used these sources of news in the last week; which would you say is your MAIN source of news? N = 1,957

Main source of news

Social media and television news bulletins and programmes are the two dominant channels through which people in Hong Kong access news (Figure 1.4a). When asked what constituted their main source of news, 25.3% chose social media, 24% chose television news bulletins or programmes, and 15.3% chose 24-hour news television channels.

Figure 1.4a



Question: You say you’ve used these sources of news in the last week; which would you say is your main source of news? N = 1,957.

There are only slight differences between males and females in terms of the channels through which news is accessed. Females are more likely to use social media and television news bulletins or programmes to obtain news, whereas males are more likely to use the websites or apps of other news outlets (i.e., not newspapers or broadcast stations or magazines).

There are substantial differences in age groups’ main source of news (Figure 1.4b). The youngest group was particularly likely to use social media as their main source of news (39.7%). They were also relatively more likely to use television news bulletins or programmes or websites and apps of other news outlets as their main source of news. Older age groups were more likely to use printed newspapers, websites and apps of newspapers, and television news bulletins or programmes as their main source of news. Interestingly, people aged between 35 and 44 were the most likely to use 24-hour news television channels as their main source of news.

Use of offline brands in the previous week, 2022–2024

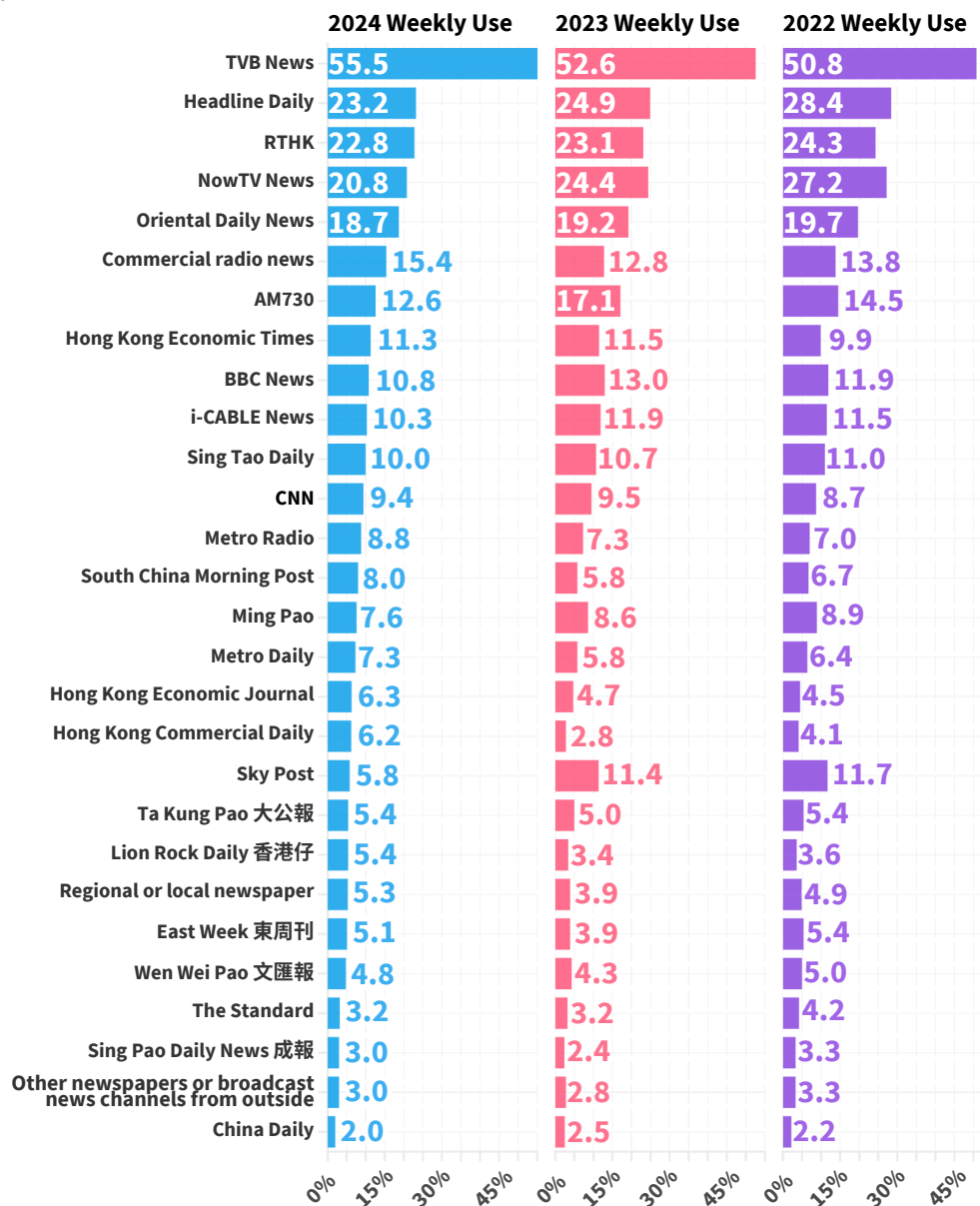
The survey also asked respondents about the specific news brands they have consumed. Because of constraints on the length of the questionnaire, the survey could not include every single brand in a market, but the 2024 questionnaire did feature 28 offline brands and 43 online brands. Respondents were asked if they had used each of the brands in the previous week and whether they had used each brand on more than three days in that week. The data shows that TVB news remains the dominant player in Hong Kong’s offline market. The percentage of respondents having used TVB news in the previous week also increased somewhat, from 50.8% to 55.5% between 2022 and 2024. Headline Daily, RTHK, NowTV, and Oriental Daily rank second to fifth in the 2024 survey, respectively, but the percentages of people using them are all slightly lower than the corresponding figures in 2022.

Sky Post experienced a sharp decline in weekly use by respondents, dropping from 11.7% in 2022 to only about 6% in 2024. Meanwhile, Metro Radio registered small but consecutive increases in self-reported usage between 2022 and 2024 (rising from 7% to 7.3% and then 8.8%).

Use of offline brands at least three days in the previous week, 2022–2024

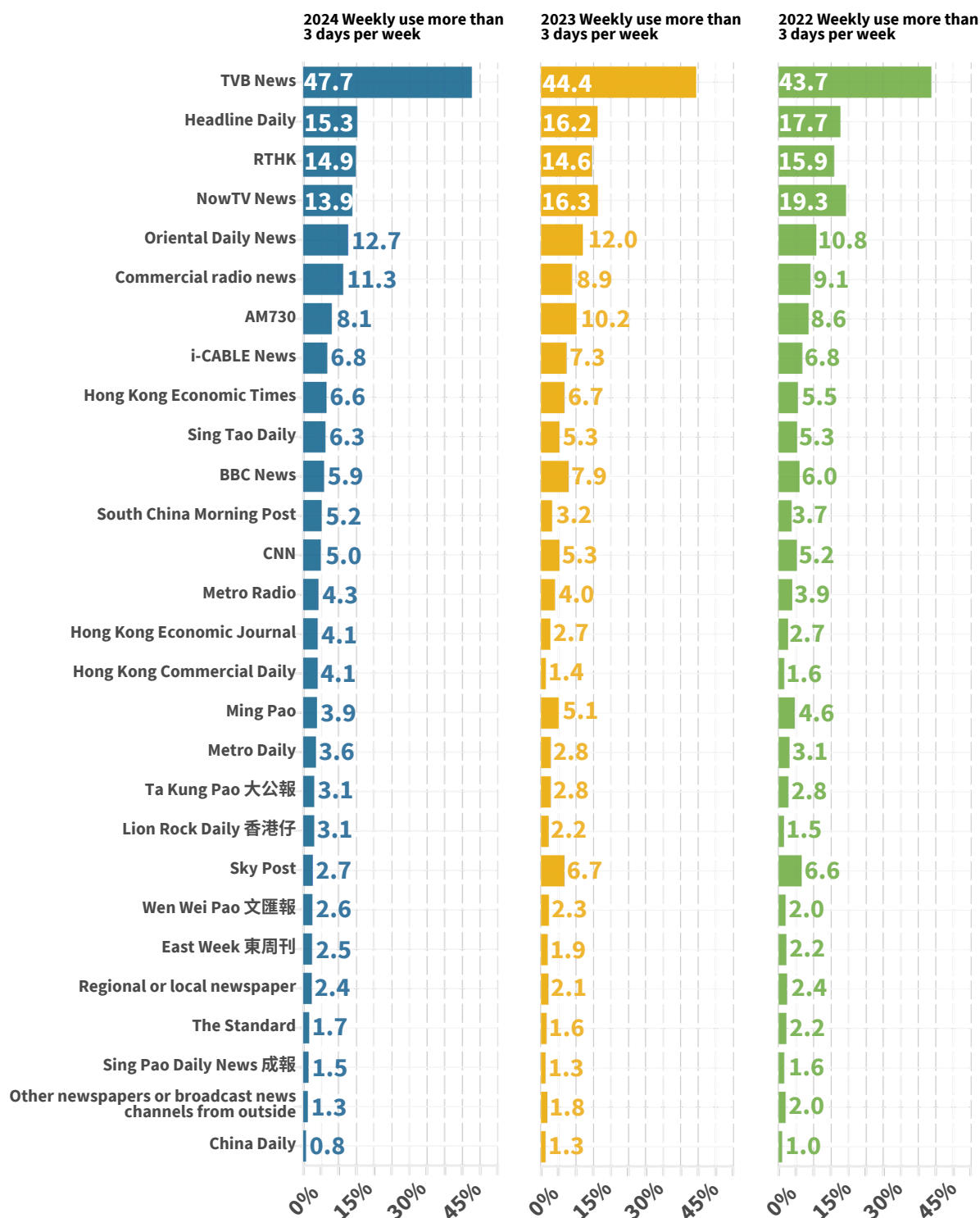
Figure 1.5b shows the results of the question about using each of the brands for at least three days in the previous week. The ranking among outlets is largely the same. TVB remains by far the most frequently used news brand, followed by Headline Daily, RTHK, NowTV News, Oriental Daily, Commercial Radio, AM730, and i-CABLE news. The use of TVB News registered a clear increase from 43.7% to 47.7% between 2022 and 2024, whereas the use of NowTV News registered a marked decline in the same period, from 19.3% to 13.9%.

Figure 1.5a



Question: Which of the following brands have you used to access news offline in the last week (i.e., via TV, radio, print, or other traditional media)? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively.

Figure 1.5b



Question: 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 three or more days? Please select all that apply. *Ns* = 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively.

Use of online brands in the previous week, 2022–2024

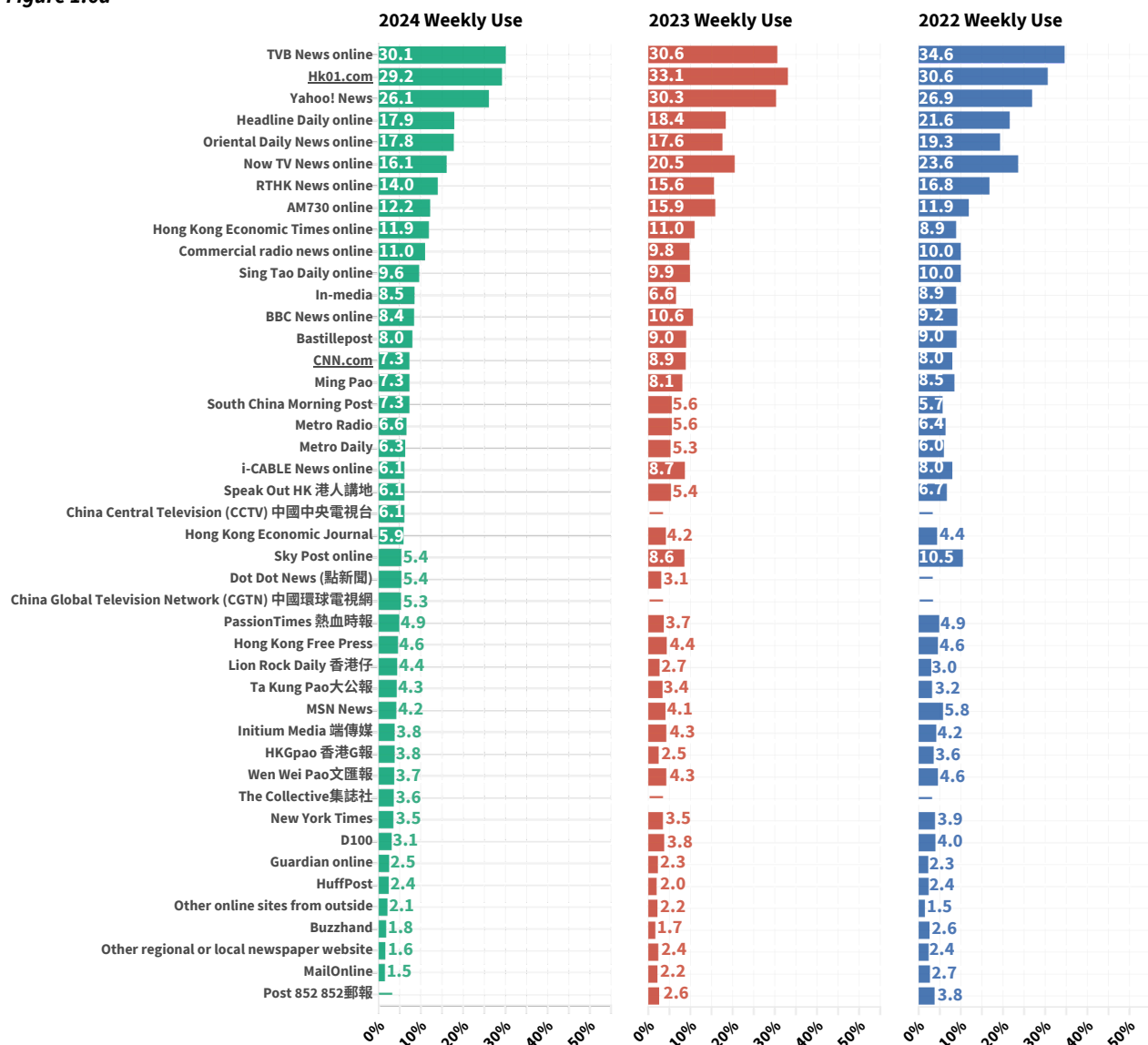
Figure 1.6a turns to respondents’ use of the various online brands. TVB news online also ranks first on the list, but hk01.com places a very close second, with Yahoo! News ranking third. Interestingly, the percentages of respondents using each of these three outlets registered a decline between 2023 and 2024; that decline was relatively larger for hk01.com and Yahoo! News. As a result, TVB news online, which ranked third in 2023, moved into first place in 2024.

The other frontrunners, including Oriental Daily online, Headline Daily online, RTHK online, and NowTV online, all

registered declines in self-reported number of users when compared to 2022. The decline for NowTV online was particularly substantial.

Not unlike other countries, Hong Kong’s online environment allows the emergence of small-scale digital-only news outlets. In-media, for instance, is one such outlet with a relatively long history, having been established in 2005, and its percentage of users is even higher than many conventional news brands. The year 2022 also witnessed the establishment of a few new online outlets, and the 2024 survey included The Collective, one such outlet, for the first time. The extent of its use is not high but also not far behind other online outlets such as The Initium, HKG Pao, and Hong Kong Free Press.

Figure 1.6a



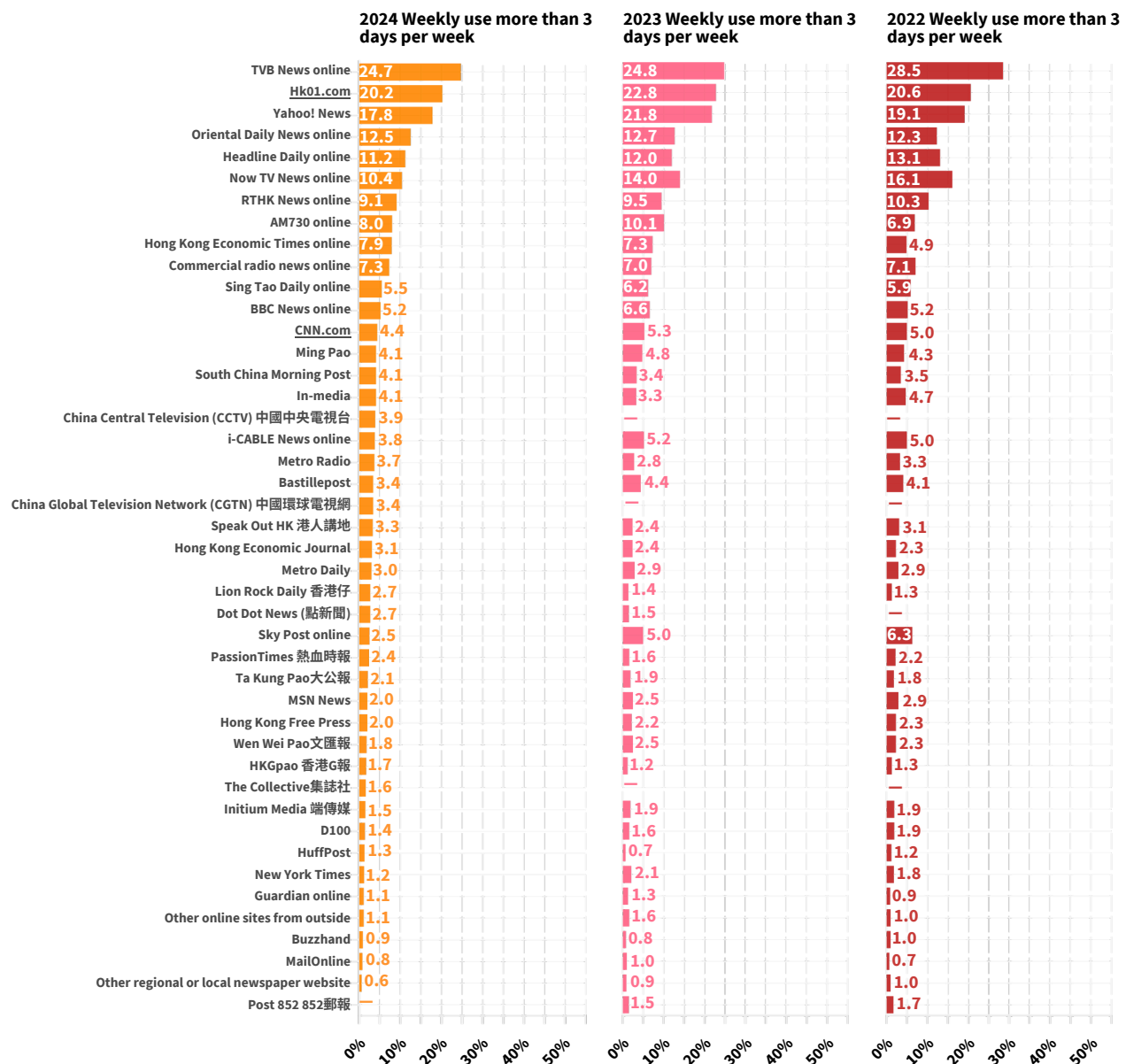
Question: Which of the following brands have you used to access news online in the last week (i.e., via websites, apps, social media, and other forms of internet content)? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively.

BBC online (8.4%) and CNN.com (7.3%) are the two most frequently consumed international news outlets in the online environment, whereas Guardian online and New York Times online registered substantially lower levels of usage (2.5% and 3.5%, respectively). The 2024 survey also included a couple of major official media outlets from mainland China for the first time: namely, Chinese Central Television and its internationally oriented China Global Television Network. The extent of consumption of these two outlets (6.1% and 5.3%, respectively) are comparable to that of some conventional news brands in Hong Kong, such as i-cable news online and Hong Kong Economic Journal.

Use of online brands at least three days in the previous week, 2022–2024

Figure 1.6b summarizes the results of respondents reporting using each of the brands for three days or more in the previous week. Again, the ranking remains largely the same. TVB news online is the most frequently consumed, followed by hk01.com and Yahoo! News.

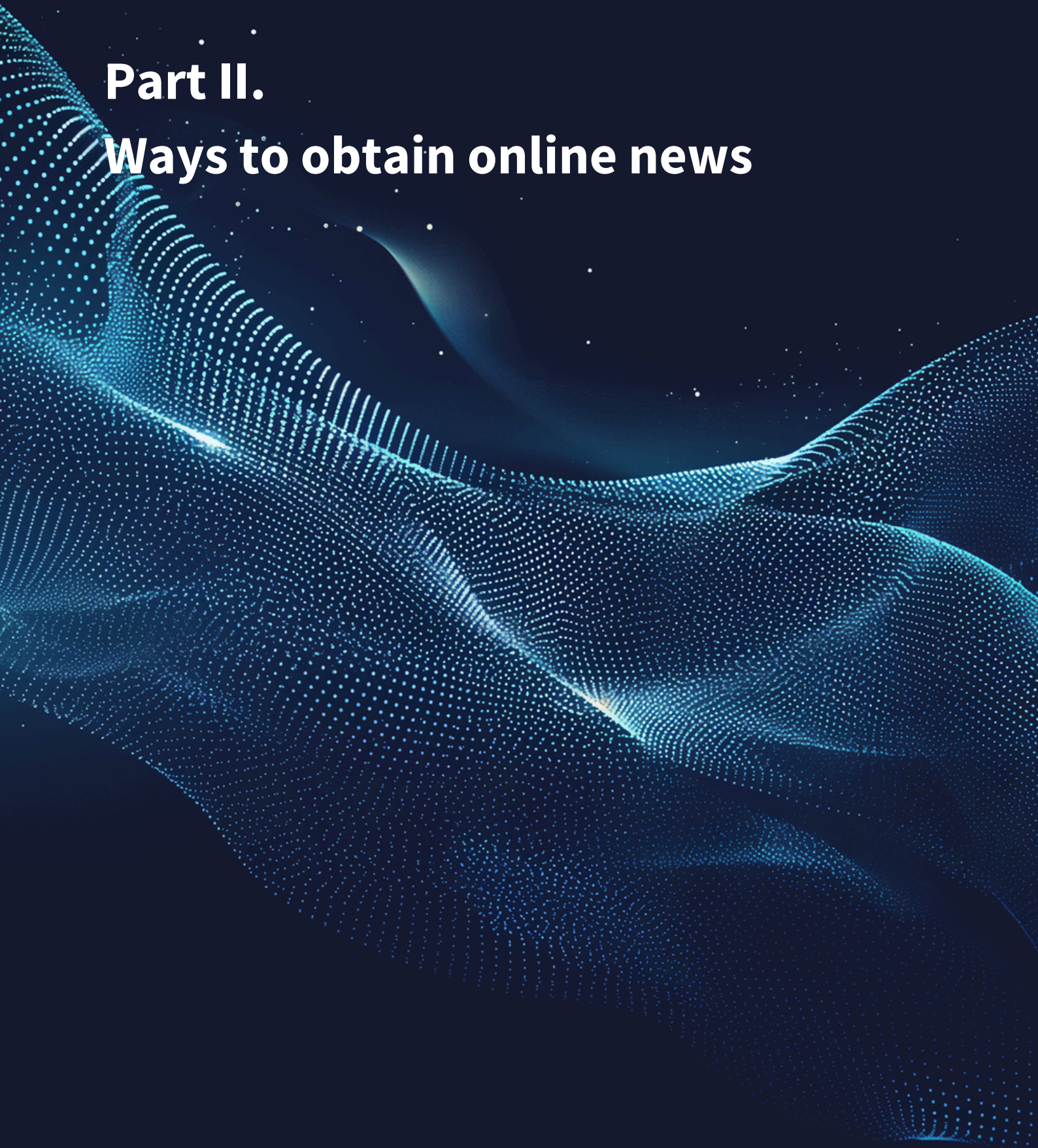
Figure 1.6b



Question: You said you have used the following brands to access news online in the last week. Which of these, if any, did you use on three or more days? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively.

Part II.

Ways to obtain online news



Ways to come across online news

Among the respondents in 2024, the three most commonly used methods for obtaining online news were using social media and coming across news that way (51.9%), going directly to news websites or apps (45%), and using a search engine to go to a specific website (43.2%). In other words, slightly more than half of the respondents came across news in the online environment simply by allowing the news to “find” them on social media platforms, though there were also substantial proportions of respondents using more proactive means to seek news or news outlets.

Gender differences in this respect are not large, but men were slightly more likely to employ all means to get online news than were females. Age differences are more complicated, as Figure 2.1a shows. The 35 to 44 group was the most likely to come across news via social media. People in the youngest group (18- to 24-year-olds) were notably less likely to go directly to a news website or app but were also the most likely to use a search engine to look for a specific news site. Respondents aged 55 or above were the most likely to go directly to a news site or app and least likely to use social media and come across news incidentally. Meanwhile, those between 25 and 34 were the most likely to use a search engine to look for a specific news story.

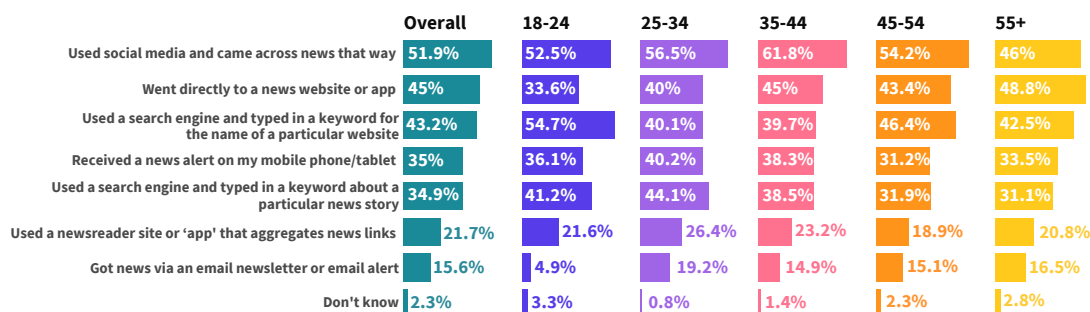
Ways to come across online news, 2021–2024

Figure 2.1b compares the results from 2021 to 2024. The percentage of respondents coming across news via social media increased steadily during that period, rising from 45.4% to 51.9%. The use of search engines, whether for reaching a specific news outlet or finding a particular news story, has also increased over the years, though the biggest jump occurred between 2021 and 2022. By contrast, the percentage of people going directly to a news website or app declined slightly over the years in question, dropping from 48.7% in 2021 to 45% in 2024.

The percentages of respondents accessing online news via a mobile news alert or a newsreader site or app that aggregates news also increased in the period, from 28.5% to 35% for the former and 14% to 21.7% for the latter.

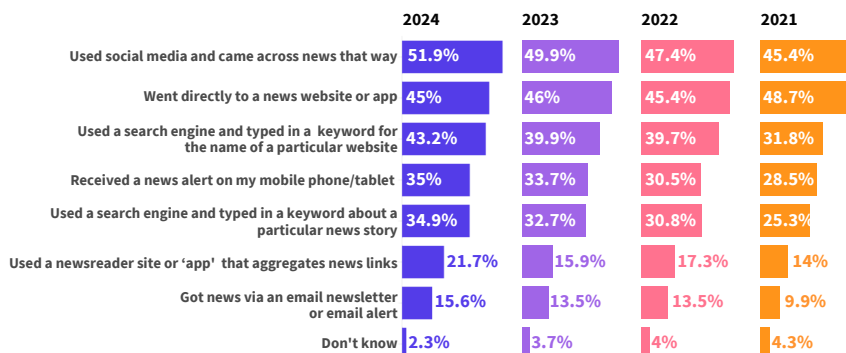
Interestingly, although the percentage of respondents accessing online news via an email newsletter is small when compared with all the other options, it registered an increase over the years, from 9.9% in 2021 to 15.6% in 2024. This is probably due to the fact that many online news outlets, including some of the newest outlets established since 2022 in Hong Kong, include email newsletters as part of their offerings to subscribers or donors.

Figure 2.1a



Question: Thinking about how you obtained news online (via computer, mobile, or any device) in the last week, which were the ways in which you came across news stories? Please select all that apply; N = 2,005.

Figure 2.1b



Question: Thinking about how you obtained news online (via computer, mobile, or any device) in the last week, which were the ways in which you came across news stories? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1,501 for the years 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Main way to obtain online news

While Figures 2.1a and 2.1b report on a question allowing respondents to choose more than one way to obtain online news, the survey contained another question asking the respondents to select their main way of obtaining online news from the same set of options. As Figure 2.2a shows, going directly to a news website or app became the most frequently chosen option (26.8%), followed closely by coming across news on social media (24.8%). Using a search engine to look for a particular news site dropped to a distant third (15.1%). Thus, using a search engine was something that many respondents did once in a while, but not that many respondents used search engines as their main way to obtain online news.

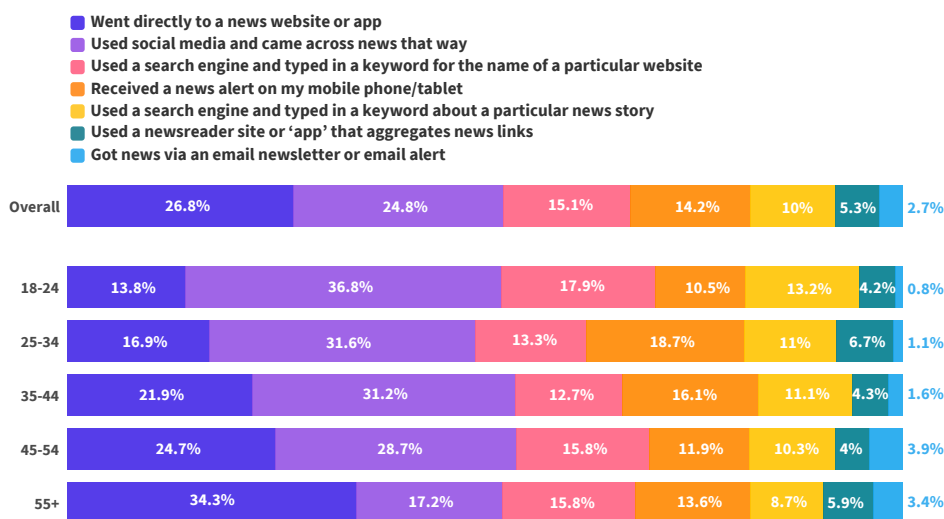
Gender differences were very minor, but there are substantial differences across age groups, as Figure 2.2a shows. Going directly to a news website or app constituted

by far the most dominant means of getting online news for people aged 55 or above. For all the other groups, coming across news via social media platforms was the most frequently used approach. For people aged 18 to 34, people using social media and coming across news that way vastly outnumbered people going directly to a news site or app.

Main ways to obtain online news, 2021–2024

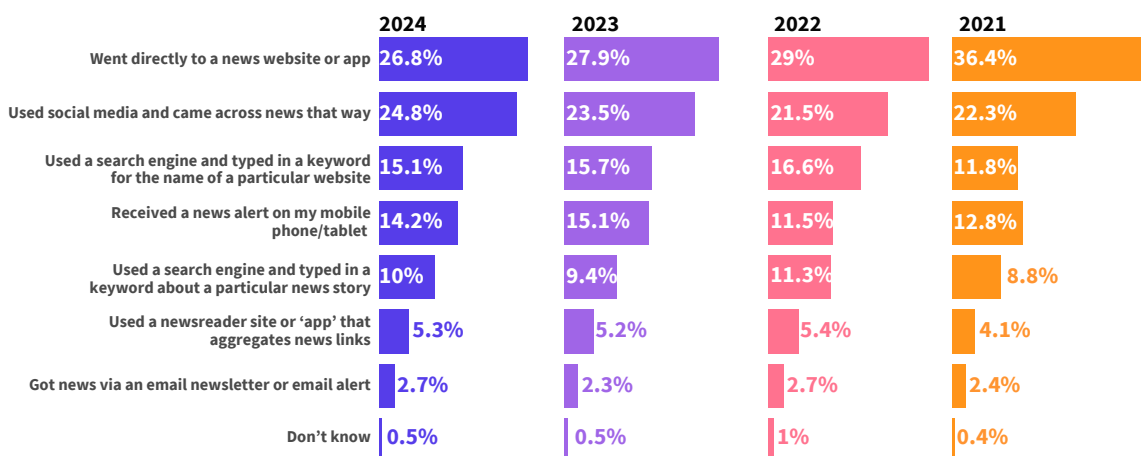
Figure 2.2b shows the trends in the main ways Hong Kong residents obtained online news from 2021 to 2024. While direct access to news websites and apps occupied the top spot in each of the four years, the gap between direct access and coming across news on social media declined substantially, from 14.1% to only 2%. The narrowing of this gap is largely the result of the declining percentage of respondents going directly to a news website or app, as the percentage of respondents coming across news on social media platforms did not increase significantly.

Figure 2.2a



Question: Which of these was the main way in which you obtained online news in the last week? N = 1,939.

Figure 2.2b



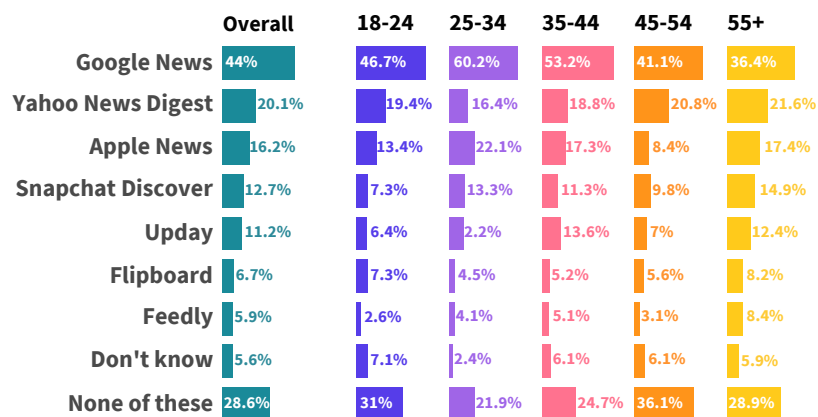
Question: Which of these was the main way in which you came across news in the last week? Ns = 1,939, 1,919, 1,911, and 1,415 for the years 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Apps and aggregators

Another question asked the respondents about the news apps or aggregators that they have used. Google News emerged as the most frequently used news site (44%). Notably, the survey question explicitly asked the respondents not to choose this option if they merely encountered news stories via Google search results. Yahoo! News Digest was a distant second (20.1%), followed by Apple News (16.2%) and Snapchat Discover (12.7%). A little more than a quarter (28.6%) of respondents indicated that they did not use any news apps or aggregators.

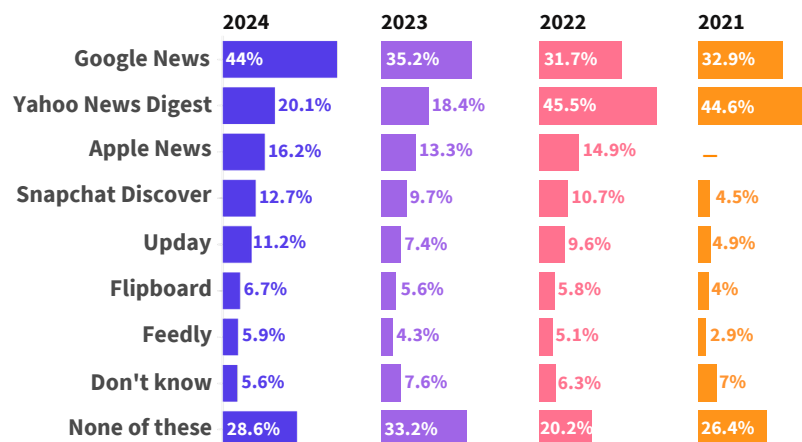
Males were somewhat more likely to have used apps and aggregators than females. However, as demonstrated in Figure 2.3a, the difference across age groups exhibits a greater variance; respondents at 55 or above were least likely to have used Google News and most likely to have used Yahoo! News Digest. Respondents between 25 and 34 were by far most likely to have used Google News and Apple News. That group of respondents was also the least likely to not have used any news app or aggregator sites, while 36.1% of respondents between 45 and 54 were most likely to not have used any aggregator sites or apps.

Figure 2.3a



Question: When using the internet for news, have you used any of the following sites or mobile apps that aggregate different news links in the last week? Please select all that apply; *N* = 2,005.

Figure 2.3b



Question: When using the internet for news, have you used any of the following sites or mobile apps that aggregate different news links in the last week? Please select all that apply; *N*s = 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1,501 for the years 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Apps and aggregators, 2021–2024

Figure 2.3b reveals the trends in the use of news apps and aggregators by Hong Kong residents from 2021 to 2024. Google News experienced significant growth over that period, while the percentage of respondents using Yahoo! News Digest declined over those years, with a particularly substantial drop between 2022 and 2023, from 45.5% to 18.4%. As a result, Google News overtook Yahoo! News Digest as the most frequently used news app or aggregator in the 2023 survey.

Apple News was only included in the survey beginning in 2022, and the percentage of users remained largely stable in the period. Other smaller players exhibited gains in usage between 2021 and 2024. The percentage of respondents using Snapchat Discover increased rather substantially from 4.5% in 2021 to 12.7% in 2024, and the percentage of respondents using Upday also increased, from 4.9% to 11.2% in the same period. The percentages of respondents using Flipboard and Feedly also increased slightly, though their absolute popularity remained modest.

Social media as sources of news

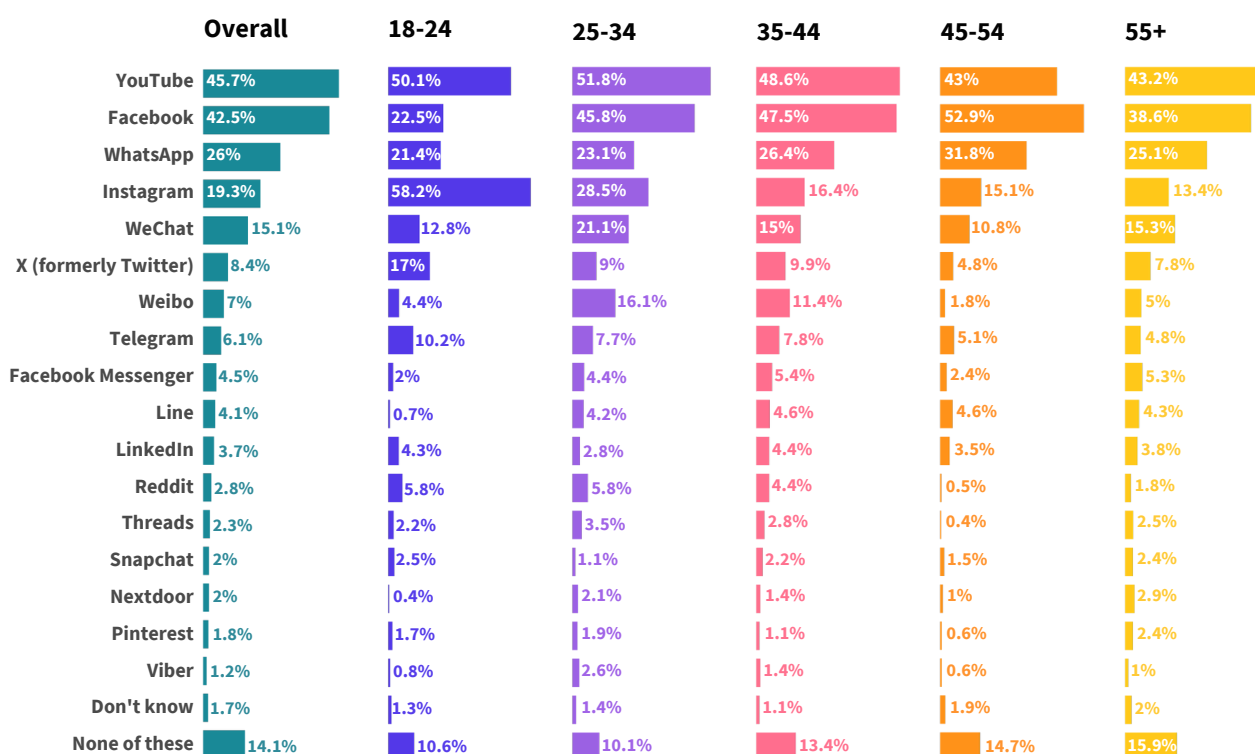
Figure 2.4a shows the percentages of respondents accessing news via different social media platforms. YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp were the most common social media news sources among Hong Kong respondents. YouTube leads with 45.7%, followed closely by Facebook at 42.5%. Just over a quarter (26%) of respondents reported accessing news via WhatsApp, whereas 19.3% and 15.1% used Instagram and WeChat, respectively. Only 8.4% of Hong Kong respondents used X (formerly Twitter).

Males significantly outnumber females in their use of social media platforms for news, with especially striking differences for YouTube and Facebook. More differences emerge when age groups are considered; the 25-34 group

Top 10 social media platforms as sources of news, 2021–2024

Figure 2.4b depicts the use of various social media platforms as sources of news. The percentage of respondents using YouTube for that purpose increased from 36.4% in 2021 to 45.7% in 2024, which was likely at least partly due to the increasing use of YouTube by digital news outlets to convey content. The percentage of respondents using Facebook as a source of news declined gradually over the years in question and was overtaken in 2024 by YouTube as the most frequently used social media platform. The significance of WhatsApp as a source of news also declined between 2021 and 2024. Given that WhatsApp is a messaging service, that decline means that fewer Hong Kong people are now sharing news stories on WhatsApp.

Figure 2.4a

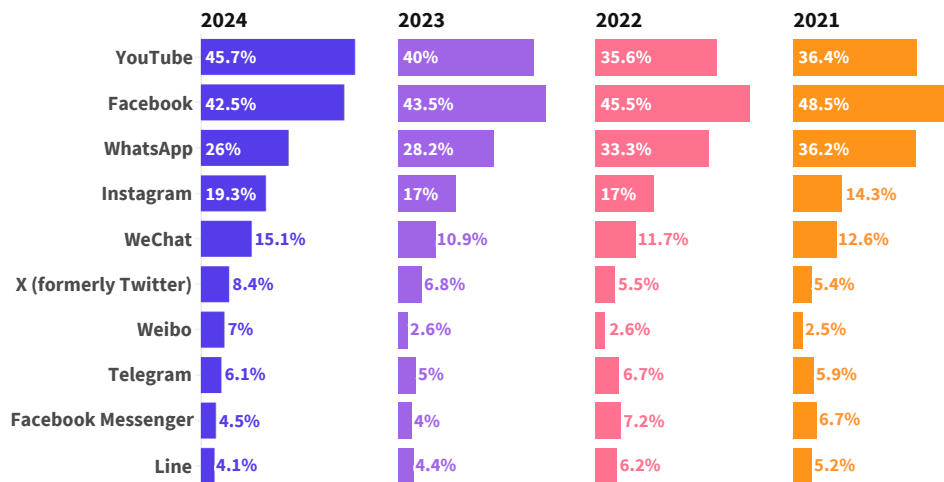


Question: Which, if any, of the following have you used for finding, reading, watching, sharing, or discussing news in the last week? Please select all that apply; N = 2,005.

was the most likely to have used YouTube, but the other age groups also used YouTube to a large extent. More interestingly, 45- to 54-year-olds were the most likely to have used Facebook to access news (52.9%). That percentage was 45.8% among people aged between 25 and 34, but it plummeted to only 22.5% among the youngest respondents. By contrast, Instagram is easily the most commonly used platform (58.2%) among people aged 18 to 24. When compared to other age groups, the youngest group was also somewhat more likely to have used Telegram and X (formerly Twitter) to access news.

The percentage of respondents using Instagram as a news source has increased slightly over the years, driven primarily by the youngest age group (see Figure 2.4a). An interesting finding is the rise in usage of WeChat and Weibo, the dominant social media platforms in mainland China, among Hong Kong residents over this period. Specifically, while only 2.5% of the respondents in 2021 reported using Weibo as a source of news, the percentage grew to 7% in 2024. The percentage of respondents using WeChat as a source of news increased slightly from 12.6% in 2021 to 15.1% in 2024.

Figure 2.4b



Question: Which, if any, of the following have you used for finding, reading, watching, sharing, or discussing news in the last week? Please select all that apply; *N*s = 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1501 for the years 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Devices for obtaining news

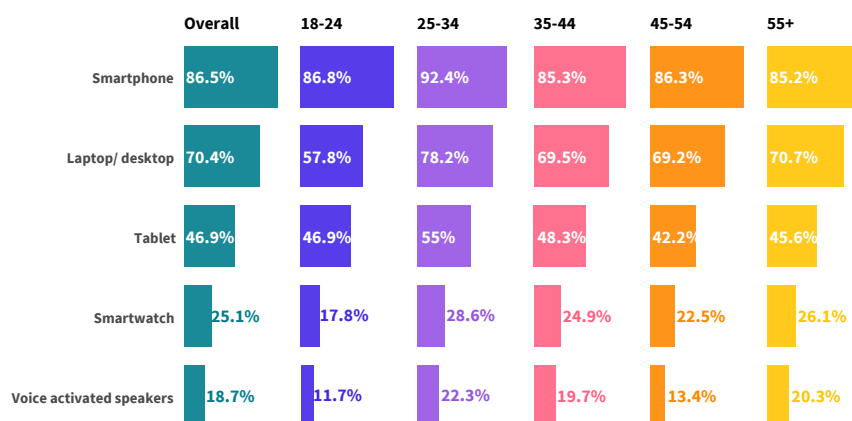
Figure 2.5a shows the percentages of respondents accessing news via different types of devices. Given the centrality of the mobile phone in most people's everyday lives, it is not surprising that smartphones were the most commonly used devices for obtaining news in 2024, with 86.5% of respondents reporting using them; 70.4% of respondents used laptop or desktop computers, whereas 46.9% used tablets.

Looking at the overall situation, men were more likely than women to use the various devices to access news. The gender disparity is particularly clear in the use of laptop or desktop computers (76.9% vs. 65.2%). As to age group, people between 25 and 34 were the most likely to use the full range of devices to access news. The youngest group was particularly less likely to use laptops or desktops, smartwatches, or voice-activated speakers.

Devices for obtaining news, 2021–2024

Figure 2.5b reveals trends in the use of devices by Hong Kong residents for obtaining news from 2021 to 2024.

Figure 2.5a

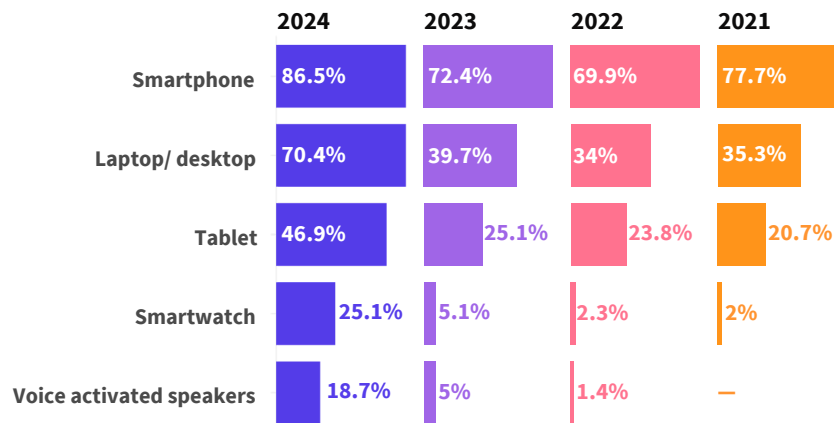


Question: Have you used the following devices to access news in the last week? *N* = 2,005.

The percentage of respondents using smartphones to access news increased from 72.4% in 2023 to 86.5% in 2024. More strikingly, the percentages of respondents reporting using laptops or desktops to access news jumped from 39.7% to 70.4%, whereas the percentage who reported using tablets nearly doubled, with an increase from 25.1% to 46.9%. The percentages of respondents reporting using a smartwatch to access news also increased markedly, from 5.1% to 25.1%.

Admittedly, these large increases are abnormal. In terms of question design, in the 2024 survey, before asking people to select the devices through which they have accessed news in the previous week, the questionnaire included the prompting statement "We are now going to ask you whether you have used each of these devices to access any form of news in the past week" (emphasis added). The explicit indication that any form of news could count might have reminded people about specific occasions when they accessed some form of news from specific types of devices. This might at least partially account for the substantial increases in the percentages.

Figure 2.5b



Question: Have you used the following devices to access news in the last week? *Ns* = 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1,501 for the years 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Part III.

Trust in the news



The digital news survey contains several questions related to people’s trust in the news. Figures 3.1a and 3.1b summarize the findings regarding respondents’ agreement with two statements on whether they can trust 1) most news most of the time and 2) most of the news they consumed most of the time.

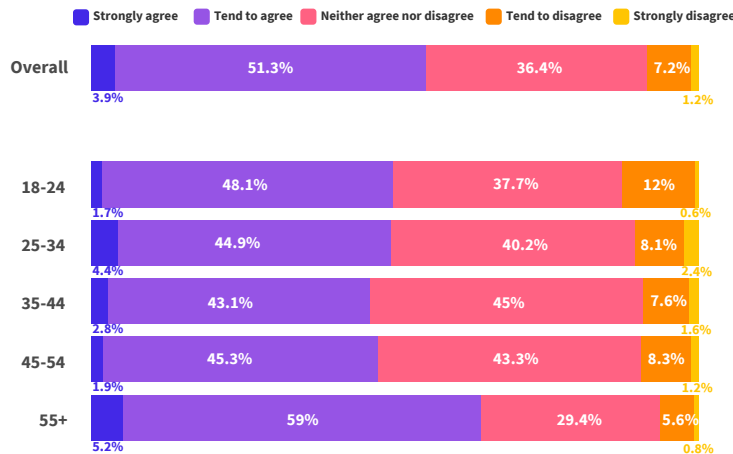
General trust in most news most of the time/most of the news being consumed most of the time

Overall, only 3.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that they could trust most news most of the time, but a majority (51.3%) did agree with the statement. More than a third (36.4%) of respondents chose the middle option of neither agree nor disagree, with only 8.4% of the respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement. The results regarding the second statement are similar. Since that statement refers to the news that respondents were actually consuming, the level of trust was slightly higher: 8.6% strongly agreed and 51.4% agreed with the statement. Only 7.9% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

General trust in the news did not vary substantially between men and women. For both statements, men were slightly less likely to choose the middle option of neither agree nor disagree. They were both slightly more likely to agree with the statements and slightly more likely to disagree with the statements.

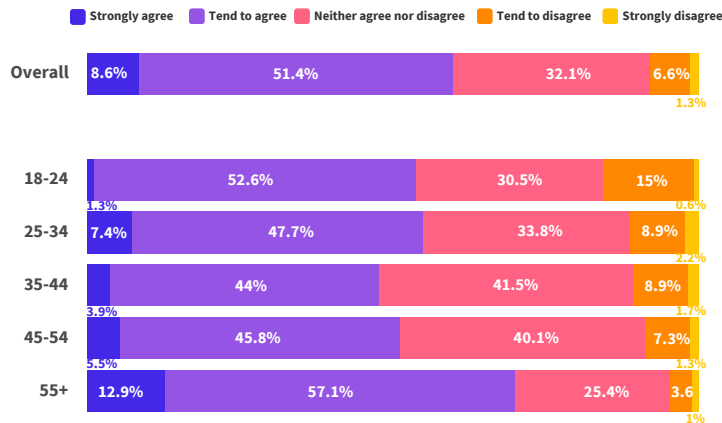
As Figures 3.1a and 3.1b show, more substantial differences exist across age groups. The oldest group—those aged 55 or above—was the most likely to trust news in general: 64.2% of the respondents in this group agreed or strongly agreed that they could trust most news most of the time, and 70% agreed or strongly agreed that they could trust the news they actually consumed most of the time. The variations among the other four age groups were smaller, with the youngest respondents most likely to distrust the news: 12.6% of respondents between 18 and 24 disagreed that they could trust most news most of the time, and 15.6% disagreed that they could trust the news they consumed most of the time.

Figure 3.1a



Question: How much do you trust the news as a whole within your country? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think you can trust most news most of the time. N = 2,005.

Figure 3.1b

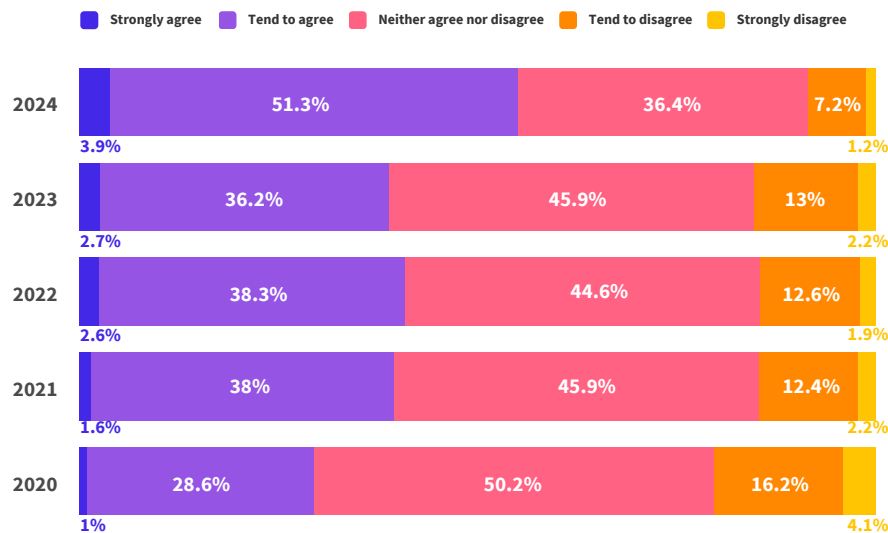


Question: How much do you trust the news that you choose to consume? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think I can trust most of the news I consume most of the time. N = 2,005.

Trusting most news most of the time, 2020–2024

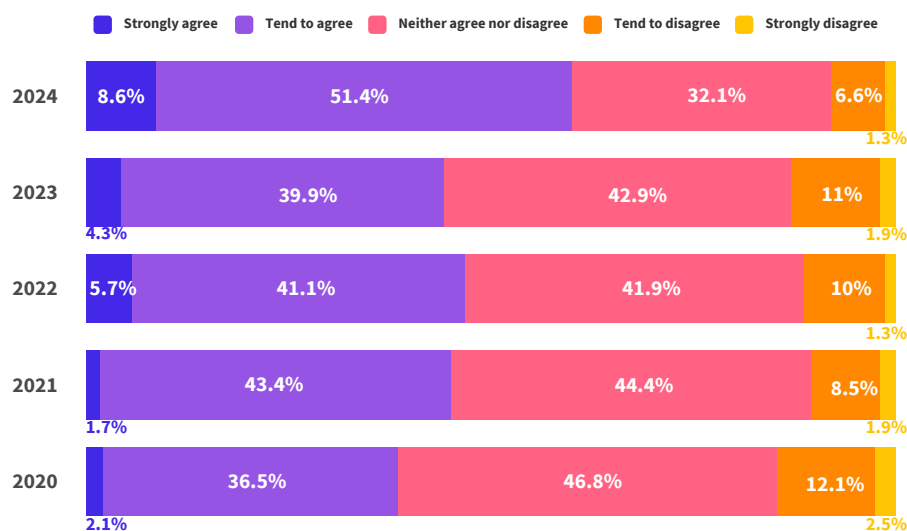
Figure 3.2a compares the results for the first statement from 2020 to 2024 and shows that general trust in the news increased substantially over that period of time. The percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement rose from 29.6% to 39.6% between 2020 and 2021. The corresponding percentages slightly decrease in 2022 and 2023 but jump substantially to 55.2% in 2024. At the other end of the response scale, 20.3% of respondents disagreed that they could trust most news most of the time in 2020. That percentage dropped to around 14% and 15% in 2021, 2022, and 2023 and declined further to only 8.4% in 2024.

Figure 3.2a



Question: How much do you trust the news as a whole in your country? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think you can trust most news most of the time. *Ns* = 2,005, 2,203, 2,010, 1,501, and 2,023 for the years 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively.

Figure 3.2b



Question: How much do you trust the news that you choose to consume? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think I can trust most of the news I consume most of the time. *Ns* = 2,005, 2,203, 2,010, 1,501, and 2,023 for the years 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively.

It is difficult to pin down the exact reasons for this increase in news trust, especially the substantial increase between 2023 and 2024, but one plausible reason can be noted. The 2020 survey was conducted at a time when the 2019 protests were still ongoing, while by 2021, political changes in the city had led to the decline of not only contentious politics but also political debates and controversies in general. Meanwhile, while the surveys in 2021, 2022, and 2023 were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic; the 2024 survey was the first post-pandemic survey. These changes could have generated, by the time of the 2024 survey, a news environment in which controversial information and competing viewpoints had become much less frequent. This could create a sense among the news audience that there is nothing particularly suspicious or untrustworthy in the news. If this interpretation is correct, whether an increase in trust means that the news media were performing significantly better than they had in the past is a separate issue.

Brand trust

In addition to general trust in the news, the survey also asked respondents to rate the trustworthiness of specific news brands on an 11-point scale. For presentational clarity, we treated scores of 0–4 as not trusting, 5 as neither, and 6–10 as trusting. Figure 3.3a summarizes the results from the 2024 survey. NOW TV emerged as the most trusted news brand among respondents, with 70.2% trusting it and only 8.5% not trusting it. We can calculate a net trust score by subtracting the percentage not trusting a brand from the percentage trusting that brand, which is 61.7% for NOW TV.

Both RTHK and Commercial Radio were trusted by 66.2% of the respondents, but Commercial Radio had a higher net trust score than RTHK (56.9% vs. 52.2%).

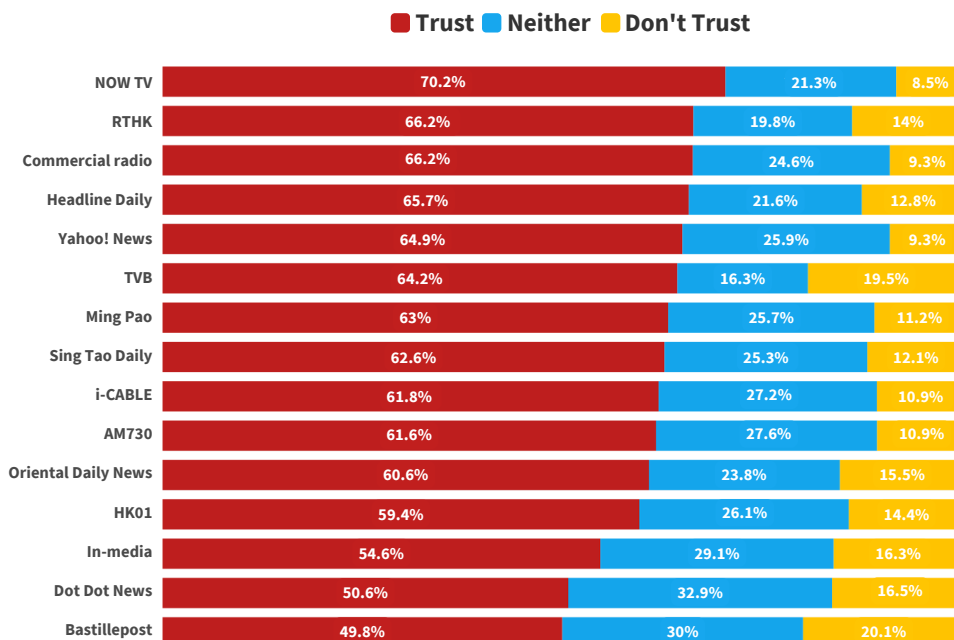
When the net trust score is used, Yahoo! News emerged as the third most trusted brand in the survey (55.6%). TVB, the most frequently consumed news outlet in Hong Kong, was trusted by 64.2% of respondents, but it also registered a relatively large percentage of distrusting respondents (19.5%), so its net trust score is only 44.7%, which is lower than the net trust scores of Ming Pao Daily News (51.8%), i-Cable (50.9%), AM730 (50.7%), and Sing Tao Daily (50.5%).

Toward the bottom of the table, several online-only news media outlets registered the lowest levels of trust of the brands in the survey. The net trust score for HK01 was 45%, virtually the same as that of TVB News, and the net trust score for In-media was 38.3%. The corresponding scores for Dot Dot News and Bastille Post were 34.1% and 29.7% respectively.

Brand net trust, 2022–2024

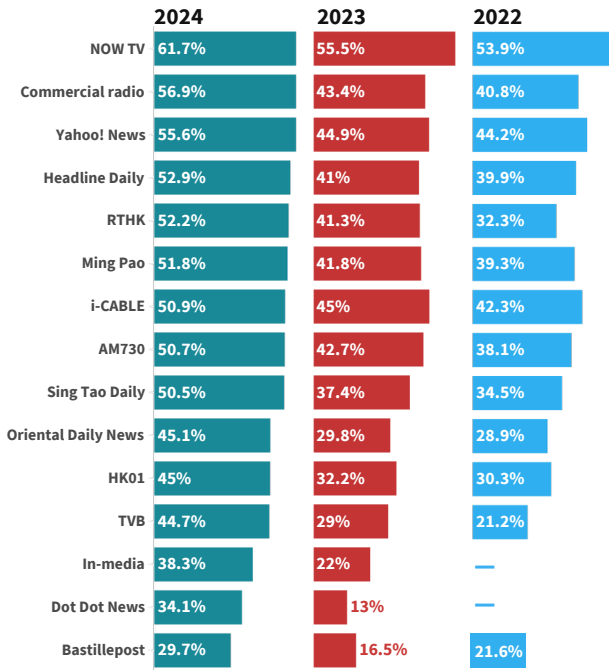
Figure 3.3b shows the trend in net trust of the various brands from 2022 to 2024. A few points are worth noting. First, in line with the increase in general trust in the news shown above, all brands included in the survey also saw their net trust increase from 2022 to 2024. NOW TV, for instance, received the highest net trust score in all three years, and net trust of the broadcaster increased from 53.9% in 2022 to 61.7% in 2024.

Figure 3.3a



Question: How trustworthy would you say news from the following brands is? Please use the scale below, where 0 is not at all trustworthy and 10 is completely trustworthy (6–10 coded as trusting, 5 coded as neither, 0–4 coded as not trusting). Those who hadn't heard of a given brand were excluded from the calculation for that brand. Whether respondents consider a brand trustworthy is their subjective judgement, and the scores are aggregates of public opinion rather than an objective assessment of underlying trustworthiness.

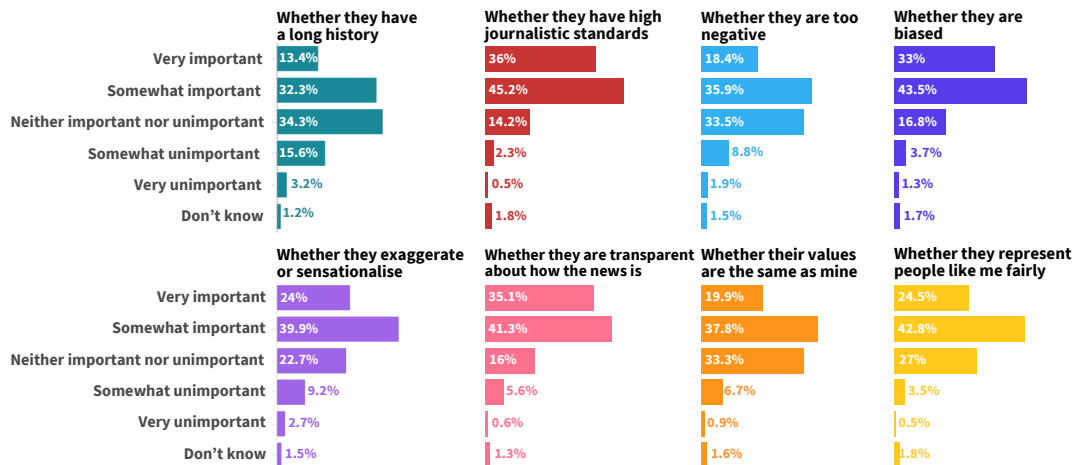
Figure 3.3b



Question: How trustworthy would you say news from the following brands is? Please use the scale below, where 0 is not at all trustworthy and 10 is completely trustworthy (6-10 coded as trusting, 5 coded as neither, 0-4 coded as not trusting). Those who hadn't heard of a given brand were excluded from the calculation for that brand. The net trust score refers to the percentage trusting the brand minus the percentage not trusting the brand.

Second, despite the fact that all brands saw their net trust levels improve, the extent of those increases varied. For example, i-Cable had a net trust score of 45% in 2023, the second highest net trust score among all news outlets. In 2024, its net trust score increased to 50.9%. However, several other outlets had their brand trust scores increased by an even larger amount (e.g., from 44.9% to 55.6% for Yahoo! News and from 43.4% to 56.9% for Commercial Radio). As a result, i-Cable ranked only seventh in net trust score in 2024.

Figure 3.4



Question: Still thinking about trust in news, how important or unimportant are the following aspects to you when it comes to deciding which news outlets to trust? N = 2,005.

Third, as noted above, some of the more polarizing outlets had relatively low net trust scores. TVB is a case in point; although it ranked sixth in terms of percentage of people trusting it in 2024, it ranked only twelfth in terms of net trust score. Nonetheless, there was a substantial improvement in TVB's net trust score. By contrast, the improvement in net trust score was much smaller for the Bastille Post, and online news post.

Reasons to trust specific news outlets

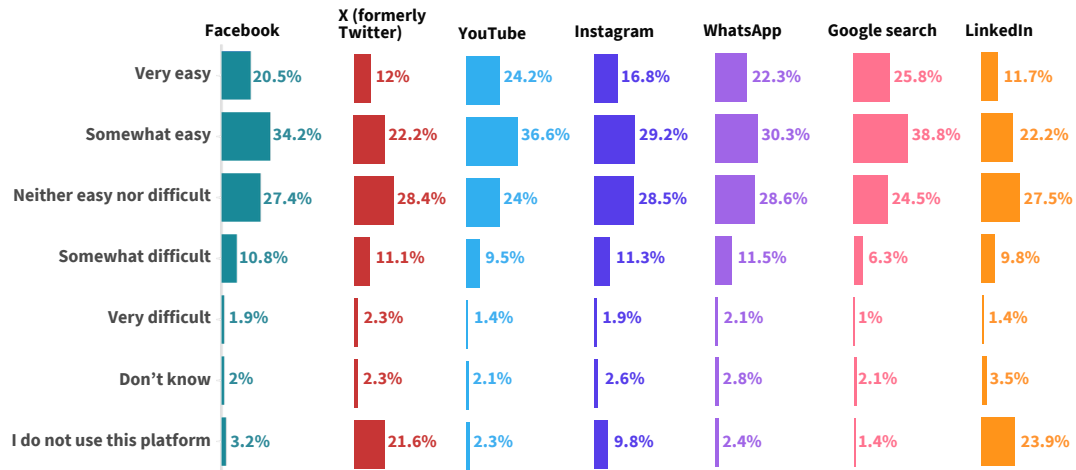
In addition to having respondents rate various brands, the 2024 survey also asked respondents about the reasons they trusted specific news outlets. Figure 3.4 summarizes the results. More than four fifths (81.2%) of respondents rated high journalistic standards as very important or somewhat important. Of course, the question did not specify what that term meant, and it might be regarded as somewhat tautological to state that people trust an outlet because of its high standards. The more meaningful results, therefore, are that 76.5% of the respondents saw that whether a news outlet was biased or not as very or somewhat important, and almost the same number (76.4%) felt that whether a news outlet was transparent about how news is made was very or somewhat important.

Meanwhile, 57.7% of the respondents acknowledged that whether a news outlet shared their values constitutes a very or somewhat important reason to trust the outlet, and 67.3% felt that whether a news outlet represented people like them fairly was very or somewhat important. At the other end, 45.7% reported that whether a news outlet had a long history was very or somewhat important.

Trust in specific platforms

Finally, since many people came across news on digital and social media platforms, the 2024 survey also asked people about their opinions regarding various platforms. However, platforms are not themselves producers of news; rather, they can serve as the conduit for both trustworthy and non-trustworthy news. The question thus asked respondents whether they found it easy or difficult to differentiate between trustworthy and untrustworthy news and information.

Figure 3.5



Question: Still thinking about trust, how easy or difficult is it for you to tell trustworthy versus untrustworthy news and information apart on each of the following platforms? N = 2,005.

As Figure 3.5 shows, Google Search emerged as the platform on which respondents found it easiest to differentiate credible news and information from less reliable material. Almost two thirds (64.6%) of respondents found it somewhat or very easy to differentiate between trustworthy and untrustworthy news and information when using Google Search. Following Google Search was YouTube, with 60.8% of respondents considering it an easy portal on which to identify credible news and information. By comparison, 46% of respondents found it easy to differentiate between trustworthy and untrustworthy

news and information on Instagram, and only 34.2% found it easy to differentiate between trustworthy and untrustworthy news and information on X (formerly Twitter). Admittedly, about 21.6% of the respondents said they did not use X. But even if we restrict the analysis to users of X, the percentage of people finding it easy to differentiate between trustworthy and untrustworthy news and information would increase only to 43.6%, which is still lower than Instagram, not to mention Google Search and YouTube.

Part IV.

Paying for online news

The background of the page is a dark blue gradient. It features several wavy, glowing lines in shades of orange and light blue that sweep across the frame from the bottom left towards the top right. These lines are overlaid on a grid of small, semi-transparent blue dots, creating a digital or data-like aesthetic. The overall effect is modern and tech-oriented.

Percentage of people paying for online news

The continued existence of online news depends partly on the willingness of people to pay for relevant services. The *Digital News Report* survey asks a set of questions regarding people’s willingness to pay for online news and their actual paying behavior. Figure 4.1a presents the percentage of Hong Kong respondents in the 2024 survey who paid for online news content. Overall, 17.5% of respondents reported paying for online news, including digital subscriptions, donations, or a one-off online payment for specific content.

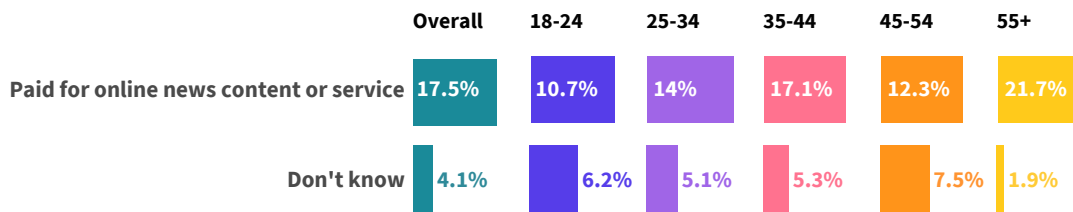
Male respondents were significantly more likely to have paid for online news than female respondents (19.6% vs. 15.8%). As Figure 4.1a shows, there were also differences among age groups, but those differences were not linear. People aged 55 and over were the most likely to have paid for online news, which is likely related to their demographic tendencies as news users. Those aged 35 to 44 had the second highest ratio of online news payers. At the other end of the scale, respondents aged 18 to 24 and between 45 and 54 were substantially less likely to have paid for online news. The

youngest respondents were least likely to pay for online news, which may be partly related to their more limited financial resources.

Percentage of people paying for online news, 2020–2024

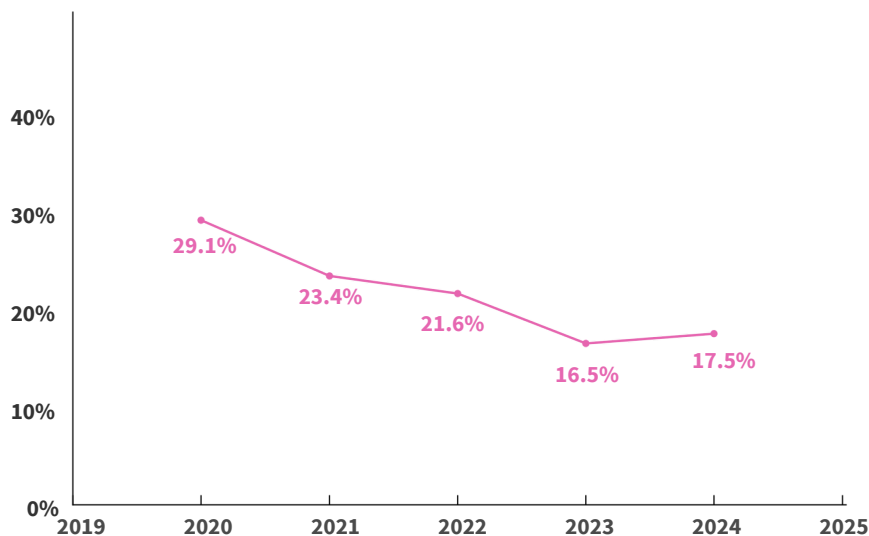
Over the past five years, the percentage of people in Hong Kong paying for online news has experienced a notable decline: 29.1% in 2020, 23.4% in 2021, 21.6% in 2022, and a low point of 16.5% in 2023. That percentage did grow slightly (17.5%) in 2024, but the overall trend is not difficult to understand. When the 2020 survey was conducted in January and February of that year, the anti-extradition protests had not completely ended. During the protest movement, many Hong Kong citizens participated in consuming political news, and many offered financial support to pro-democracy online media outlets. The end of the protest movement and the subsequent disappearance of a few pro-democracy online media outlets could explain the decline in percentages of respondents paying for online news in 2021 to 2023.

Figure 4.1a



Question: Have you paid for online news content or accessed a paid online news service in the last year? This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or a one-off payment for an article, app, e-edition. N = 2,005.

Figure 4.1b



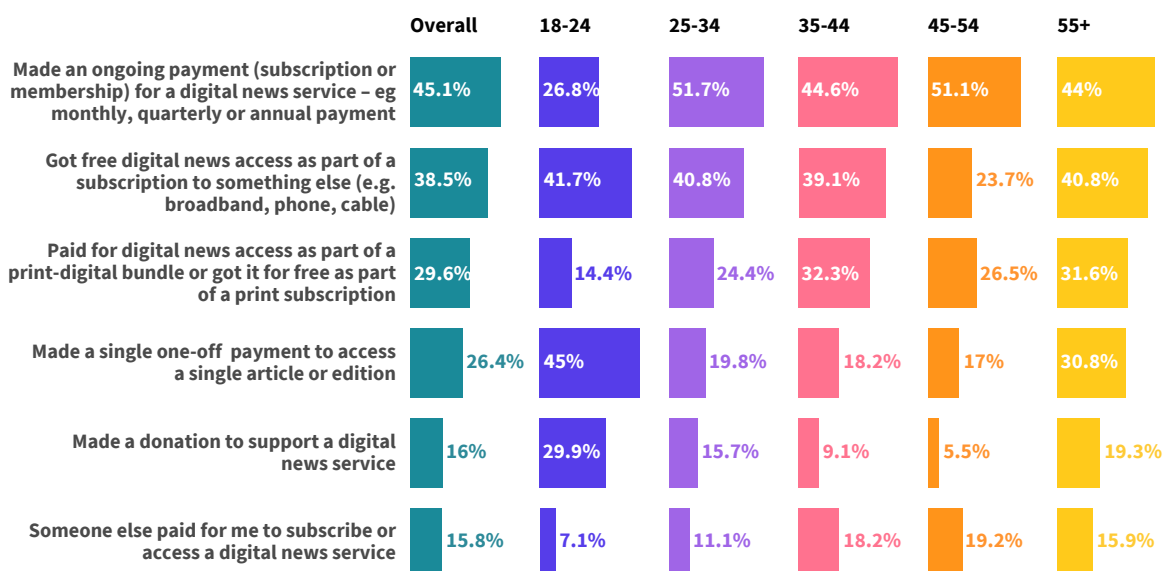
Question: Have you paid for online news content or accessed a paid online news service in the last year? This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or a one-off payment for an article, app, e-edition. Ns = 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, 1,501, and 2,023 for the years 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020, respectively.

Ways of paying for online news

The questionnaire included a set of items asking respondents about how they paid for online news. The primary way was ongoing payments on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis (45.1%). This was followed by receiving free digital news access as part of a subscription to something else (38.5%). Additionally, 29.6% of the respondents reported that they paid for digital news access as part of a print-digital bundle or received online news for free as part of a print subscription. Just over a quarter (26.4%) of respondents made a one-off payment to access an article or edition, whereas 16% made a donation to support a digital news service.

Women were more likely than men to make ongoing payments for a digital news service as a regular basis and also more likely than men to pay for a digital news service as part of a bundle. More substantial differences among age groups were observed, as Figure 4.2 shows. The youngest group, as shown above, was least likely to have paid for online news, but if they did pay for it, they were more likely to do so through a one-off payment for specific content or making a donation to support a digital news service. Across age groups, respondents between 25 and 34 were the most likely to have paid by making ongoing and regular payments. The youngest group of respondents was the most likely to have gained access to online news through a subscription to something else and least likely to have obtained access to online news as part of a print-digital bundle. These findings suggest that the youngest group was most likely to have been subscribing to non-digital news content or products.

Figure 4.2

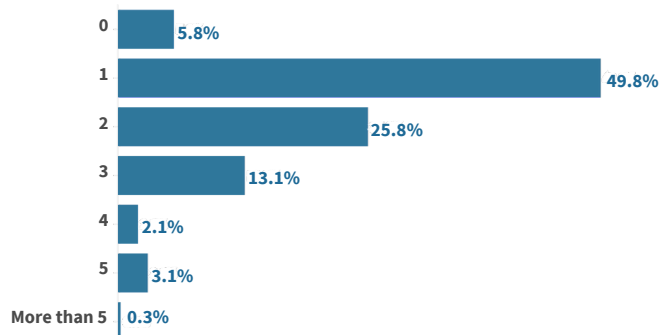


Question: You said you have accessed paid online news content in the last year. Which, if any, of the following ways have you used to pay for online news content in the last year? Please select all that apply. This question was asked only of respondents who reported paying for online news; N = 351.

Number of services paid for

As Figure 4.3 shows, when respondents who paid for online news were asked how many paid services they subscribed to, the majority (49.8%) reported only one such service. A significant portion (25.8%) paid for two services, and 13.1% paid for three. Understandably, only a very small group (5.5%) paid for four or more news services. Notably, 5.8% of the online news payers replied that they did not pay for any online news service. In relation to the answers in Figure 4.2, these respondents could be those who had someone else paying for them to access a digital news service or could be those who made one-off payments to access specific content and hence did not see themselves as subscribing to a specific news service.

Figure 4.3



Question: You said you paid for a subscription to or membership in a digital news service in the last year. How many different news providers did you give money in this way? This question was asked only of respondents who paid for online news, and 133 respondents who said they had paid for online news did not answer this question; N = 218.

Although the majority of respondents paid for only one online news service, the results also show that nearly half—that is, almost a majority—of respondents paid for more than one such service. There could be several reasons for people to pay for multiple news services. The first is product differentiation among online news services, with people paying for multiple services to access significantly or at least somewhat different types of news and information. The second is that people may pay for online news not so much to obtain access to content or services but to offer support to outlets that they see as deserving financial support. It would not be surprising to see people donating to multiple outlets.

Amount paid

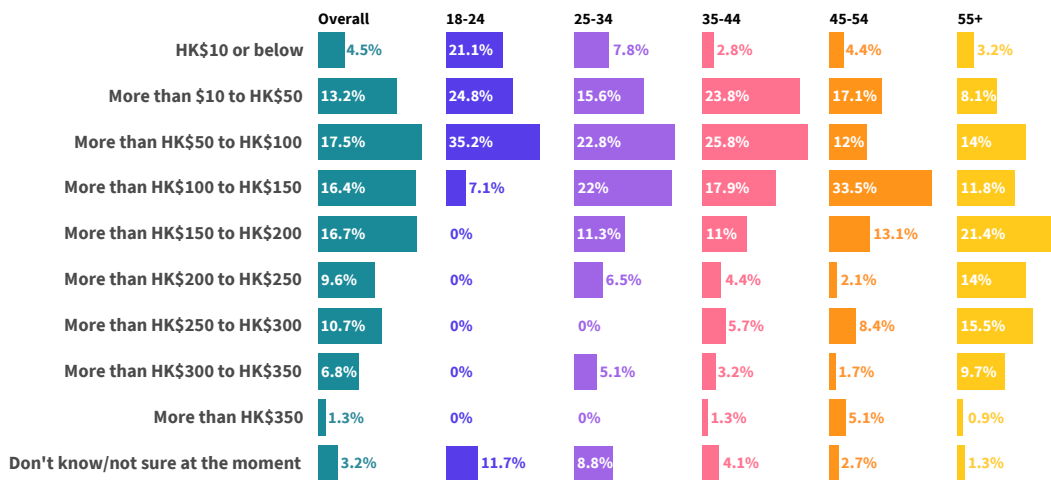
In the survey, people who were paying for online news were also asked about their monthly expenditure on online news subscriptions and donations. A very small proportion (4.5%) of payers spent only HKD10 or less each month, with 30.7% paying more than HKD10 and less than HKD100 per month. Almost exactly a third (33.1%) paid more than HKD100 and less than HKD200 per month, 20.3% paid more than HKD200 and less than HKD300 per month, and 8.1% paid more than HKD300. The percentages were distributed rather evenly across categories, showing a large degree of diversity in terms of the amount that online news payers were actually spending.

There are very substantial age differences in the amount of money paid. Among online news payers who were 18 to 24, nearly 81% spent only HKD100 or less per month, with the remainder either saying they didn't know or spent between more than HKD100 and less than HKD150 per month. The older respondents, who could be supposed to have larger financial capacity on average, were willing to pay more. Among people aged 55 or above, only 11.3% of news payers spent HKD50 or less in a month, while 40.1% spent more than HKD200 per month.

Perceived fair price

One basic reason why people might not pay for online news is that much online content, including news content, is free of charge. People might not see the necessity of paying for news. That raises the question of what non-payers would consider a fair price for online news content. Figure 4.5 summarizes the findings from the relevant question in the survey. Almost half (49.6%) of non-news payers found it difficult to name a fair price for online news. Meanwhile, 39% of non-payers who did name a fair price chose HKD100 or below per month. If we exclude people who chose don't know, as many as 77.4% of non-payers who gave a valid answer to the question indicated that the price should be HKD100 or below.

Figure 4.4 Amount paid

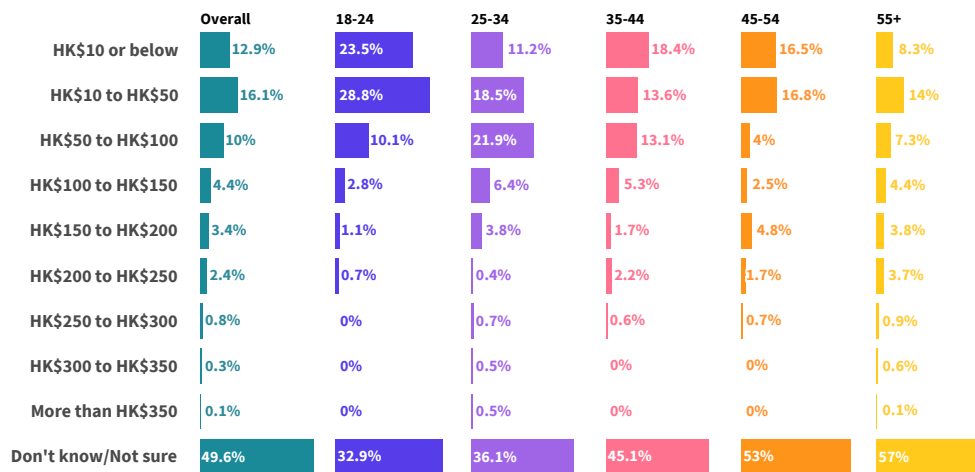


Question: You said that you pay for an online news subscription. How much does your main online news subscription cost per month? The question was asked only of respondents who reported paying for online news; N = 351.

There were some gender differences in the amount paid; 31.3% of female payers for online news spent between 0 and HKD100, while the corresponding percentage for male respondents was 39.5%. Nearly two fifths (39.2%) of female news payers spent between more than HKD100 and less than HKD200 monthly, whereas the corresponding percentage for male news payers was only 27.1%. However, 30.6% of male news payers spent more than HKD200 per month, whereas the corresponding percentage for female news payers was 26.2%. Male online news payers were somewhat more likely to pay either a very small amount or a relatively large amount.

Comparing across genders, female non-payers were much more likely to choose the don't know answer (56.2% vs. 41.3%). However, it should be noted that they were somewhat more likely to choose a higher fair price for online news when they did provide a valid answer to the question. When respondents choosing don't know were excluded, 17.2% of female non-payers who named a fair price chose an answer of more than HKD150 per month, while the corresponding percentage for male non-payers was only 11%.

Figure 4.5



Question: You said you don't currently pay for online news. If you were to pay for online news, what is a fair price that you would be happy paying, if anything? This question was posed to respondents who were not paying for online news, and respondents who chose don't know were excluded; see Figure 4.1a. N = 1,571.

As to age differences, the results are similar to Figure 4.4 in the sense that the youngest respondents tended to name a lower fair price for online news. More than three fifths (62.4%) of non-payers between 18 and 24, or 93.2% of non-payers within this age group who named a fair price, chose an amount between HKD0 and HKD100. Among the oldest group, 9.1% of respondents named a fair price as higher

than HKD150. Excluding people who answered don't know, 21.2% of non-payers aged 55 or above named a fair price higher than HKD150. Older respondents were not only more willing to pay (Figure 4.1) but were also paying more when they actually paid (Figure 4.4) and were more willing to acknowledge a higher fair price for online news, even when they were not paying (Figure 4.5).

Part V.

News avoidance and fake news concerns



News avoidance—the tendency for some citizens to avoid consuming any news – has attracted much public and scholarly attention in the past few years. The academic literature generally distinguishes between intentional and unintentional news avoidance. Unintentional news avoidance refers to non-consumption of news that is not driven by an actively negative view toward the news or the news media, whereas intentional avoidance refers to conscious attempts to reduce or even eliminate one’s news consumption.

News avoidance

The digital news survey has included questions about intentional news avoidance in recent years. Specifically, in the 2024 survey, respondents were asked to assess the degree to which they proactively avoided the news. Figure 5.1a summarizes the results. Overall, a relatively small percentage of respondents (4.6%) reported avoiding the news often, although 19.5% reported that they would avoid the news sometimes, and 37% reported avoiding the news occasionally.

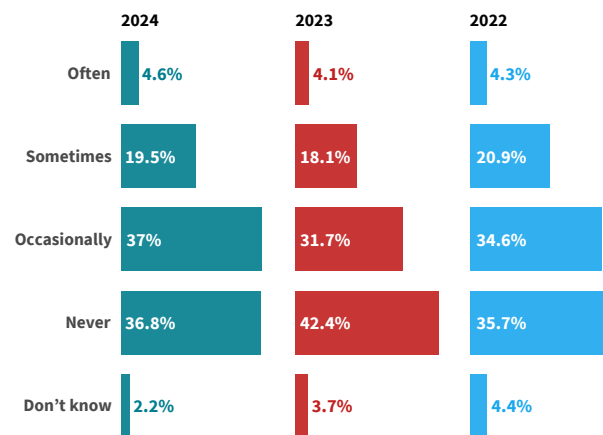
Gender differences in active news avoidance were very small. Virtually the same proportion of men and women reported avoiding the news often, while men were only slightly more likely to report avoiding the news sometimes (21.3% vs. 18.1%). Unlike gender, news avoidance is much more varied with age group, as Figure 5.1a shows, but the relationship is somewhat complicated. A total of 27.2% of respondents aged 55 or above reported that they avoided the news often or sometimes, 20.6% of respondents aged between 35 and 44 reported avoiding the news often or sometimes, but only 15.3% of respondents aged between 18 and 24 chose one of those two answers. These percentages appear to suggest that young respondents were more likely to avoid the news. However, the findings also show that 42.9% of respondents aged 55 or above never avoided the

news, while only 33.8% of respondents aged between 18 and 24 said they never avoided the news. In other words, young respondents were both less likely to say that they often avoided the news and less likely to say they never avoided the news. They were particularly likely to acknowledge that they avoided the news occasionally.

News avoidance, 2022–2024

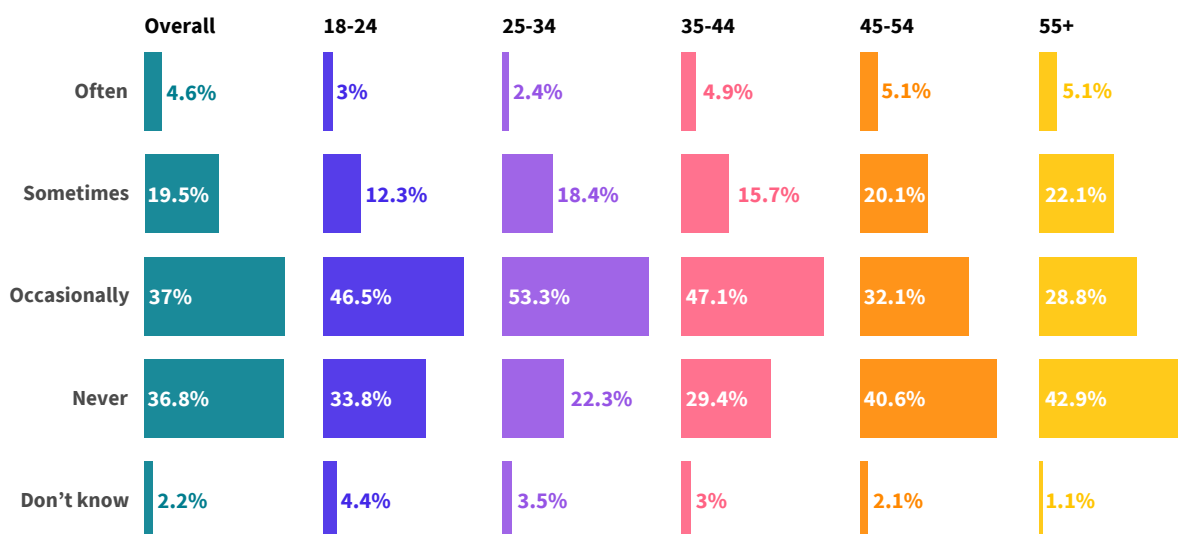
Figure 5.1b compares the overall degree of news avoidance over the past three years. The percentages remain very stable: the proportions of respondents saying that they avoided the news sometimes or often are 25.2%, 22.2%, and 24.1% for 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively. There is no obvious trend of increasing or decreasing degrees of active news avoidance.

Figure 5.1b



Question: Do you find yourself actively trying to avoid news these days? *Ns* = 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively.

Figure 5.1a

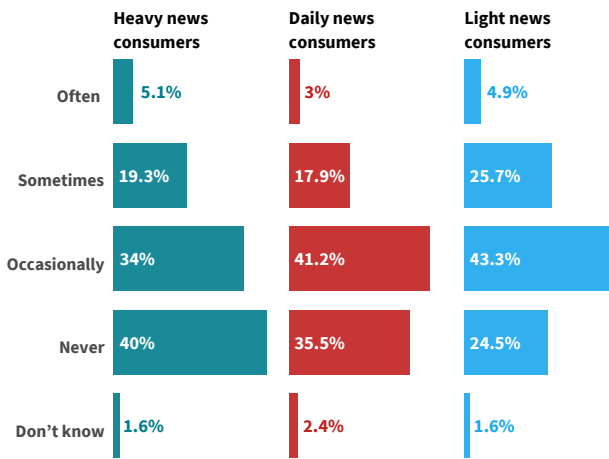


Question: Do you find yourself actively trying to avoid news these days? *N* = 2,005.

News avoidance and news consumption

How does news avoidance relate to frequency of news consumption? Intuitively, people who often avoid the news should be those who consume the news less frequently. However, in the academic literature, scholars have found only a weak relationship between news avoidance and news consumption. It is possible that even avid consumers of news would find the need to avoid the news sometimes or occasionally to better control their news diet.

Figure 5.1c



Question: Do you find yourself actively trying to avoid news these days? N = 2,005.

Figure 5.1c shows the relationship between news consumption frequency and news avoidance as indicated by the 2024 survey. We classified respondents who consumed news more than once a day as heavy news consumers, respondents who consumed the news once a day as daily news consumers and

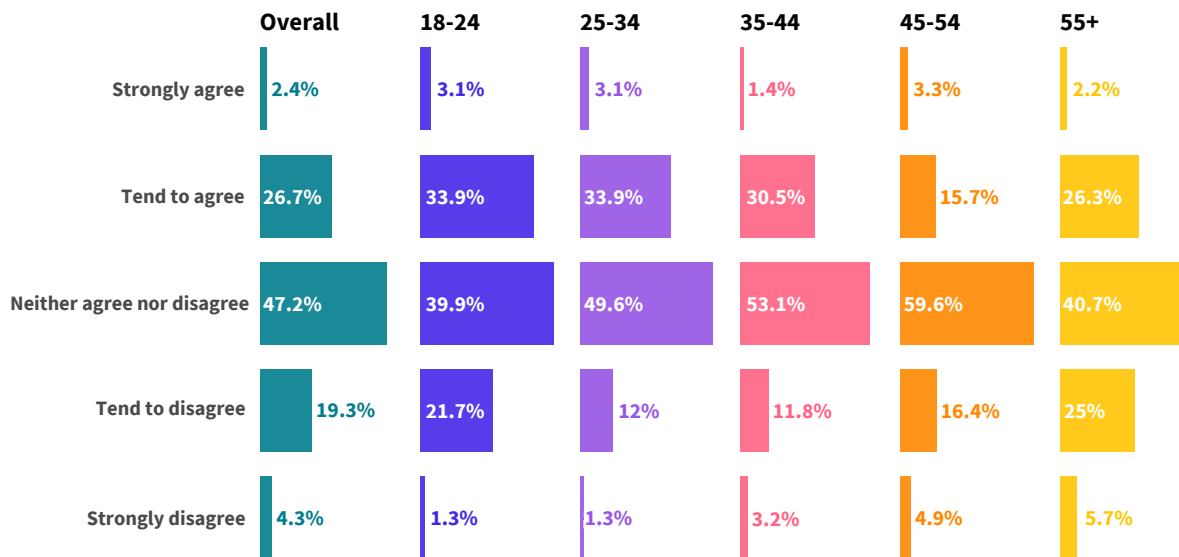
respondents who consumed the news less than once a day as light news consumers. The results show that there is no straightforward and linear relationship between news avoidance and news consumption. Light news consumers were indeed the more likely to report avoiding the news: 30.6% of those respondents said that they often or sometimes avoided the news, whereas only 20.9% of daily news consumers often or sometimes avoided the news. However, heavy news consumers were actually slightly more likely than daily news consumers to avoid the news: 24.4% of respondents in the former group said that they often or sometimes avoided the news.

Perception of being worn out by the news

At a global level, information fatigue or information overload can be a key reason behind people avoiding the news. The 2024 survey thus also directly asked respondents whether they felt worn out in this regard. Specifically, respondents were asked to indicate on a five-point Likert scale whether they agreed with the statement “I am worn out by the amount of news there is these days.” Figure 5.2 summarizes the results. Overall, 29.1% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, whereas 23.6% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed. More respondents agreed than disagreed that they felt worn out by the amount of news, though the difference is not large.

Men were more likely than women to acknowledge being worn out by the news; 32.8% of men strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, compared to 26.1% of women. Regarding age, people between 18 and 24 were most likely to say that they felt worn out—37% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, whereas the corresponding percentages were only 19% and 28.5% for respondents aged between 45 and 54 and aged 55 or above, respectively.

Figure 5.2



Question: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: “I am worn out by the amount of news there is these days”; N = 2,005.

Concerns over fake news

Another issue that can be related to people’s sense of being worn out and tendency to avoid the news is the spread of misinformation. In the 2024 survey, one question asked respondents to indicate on a five-point Likert scale if they agreed with the statement “Thinking about online news, I am concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet.” As Figure 5.3a shows, 62.1% of respondents overall agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, whereas only 6.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

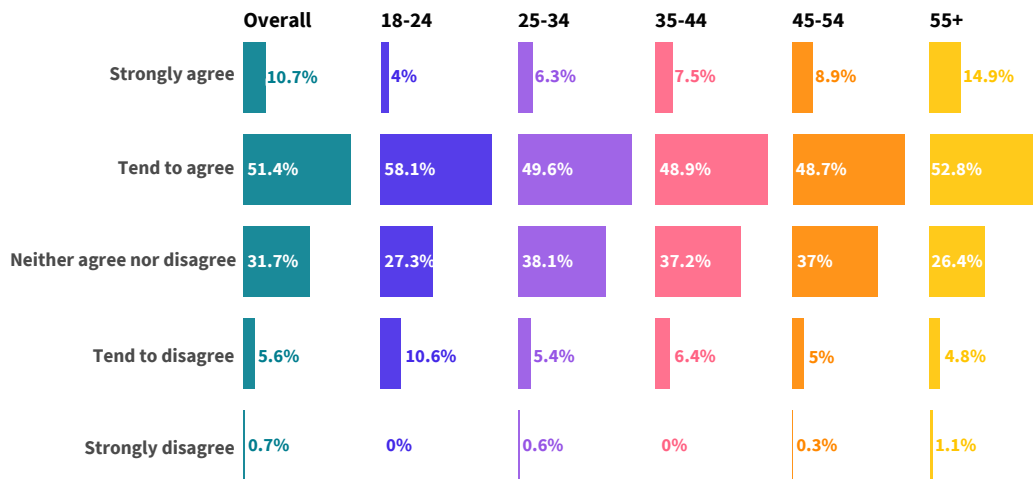
Gender differences regarding concerns over fake news were minor, with men being slightly more likely to agree with the statement (64.3% of men agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, compared to 60.2% of women). Age was not related to concerns over fake news in a linear manner, as Figure 5.3a shows. Two thirds (67.7%) of respondents aged 55 or above agreed or strongly agreed with the statement; 57.6% of respondents between 45 and 54 tended to agree or

strongly agreed with the statement. Respondents between 25 and 34 were least likely to agree with the statement, but they still expressed ample concern about the issue, with 55.9% tending to agree or strongly agreeing with it. Concerns among the youngest respondents were somewhat higher than concerns among people between 25 and 44; 62.1% of respondents aged 18 to 24 tended to agree or strongly agreed with the statement. However, 10.6% of respondents between 18 and 24 tended to disagree with it, the highest percentage among all five age groups.

Concerns over fake news, 2020–2024

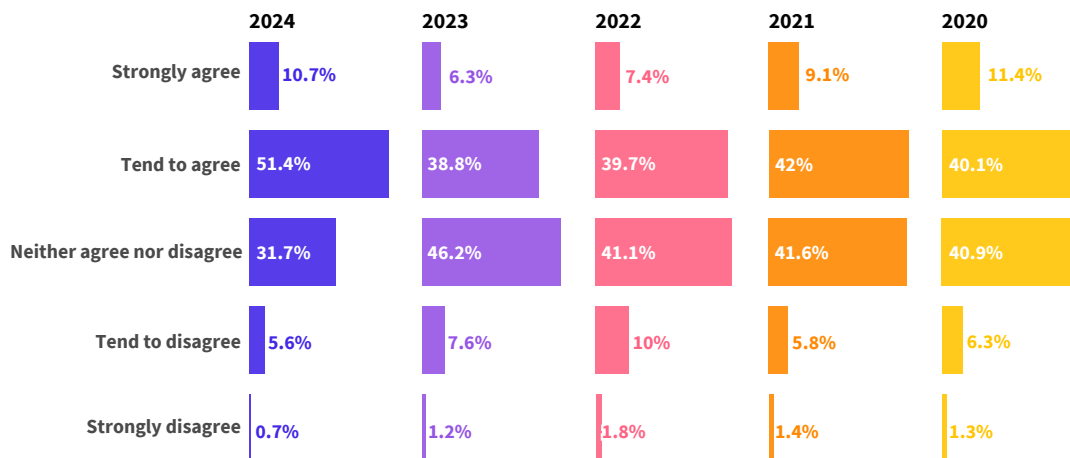
The same question was asked in previous years’ surveys. Figure 5.3b shows the results between 2020 and 2024. In both 2020 and 2021, about 51% of respondents tended to agree or strongly agreed that they were concerned about fake news. The percentage decreased slightly in 2022 and 2023, but it rose again considerably in 2024.

Figure 5.3a



Question: 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”; N = 2,005.

Figure 5.3b



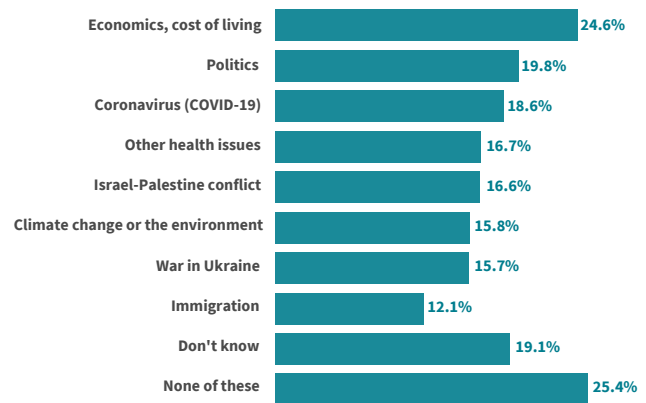
Question: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: “Thinking about online news, I am concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet”; Ns = 2,005, 2,023, 2010, 1,501, and 2,023 for the years 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020, respectively.

Concern with fake news by topic

Finally, the survey also asked respondents about whether they were concerned about fake news about different topics. Notably, the percentages of respondents expressing concerns about fake news regarding a specific topic were not large. The most concerning issue was the economy and cost of living, with 24.6% of respondents concerned about fake news on that issue; 19.8% were concerned about fake news about politics. Apparently, people were concerned about the general category of misinformation being spread via the internet rather than fake news about specific news topics.

In addition, the percentages of Hong Kong respondents being concerned about fake news regarding the war in Ukraine and the Israel–Palestine conflict were not large, which was likely due to the distant character of those conflicts, especially vis-à-vis the location of Hong Kong. Although the COVID pandemic had ended, 18.6% of respondents reported being concerned about fake news regarding the virus, whereas 16.7% of the respondents reported being concerned about fake news regarding other health issues.

Figure 5.3c



Question: Have you seen false or misleading information about any of the following topics in the last week? Please select all that apply; N = 2,005.

Part VI.

News needs



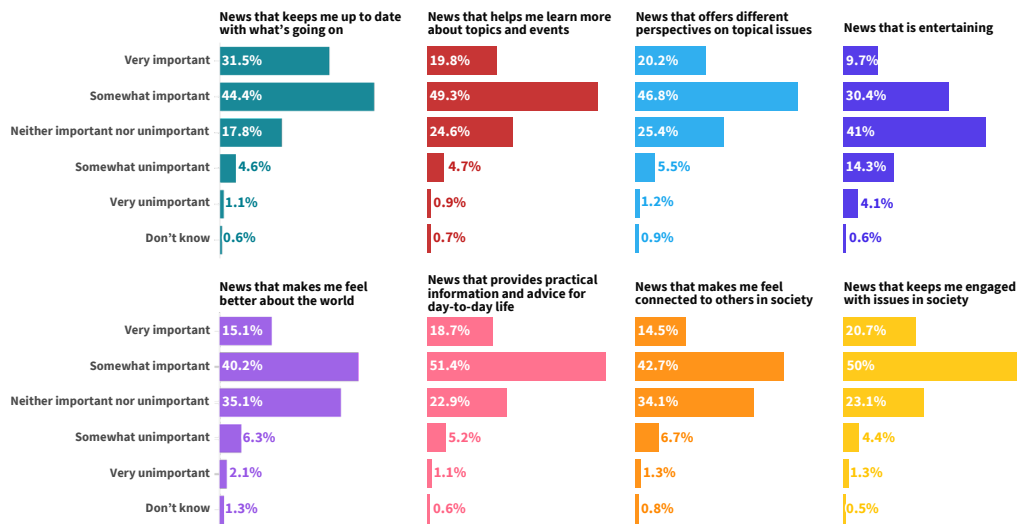
News needs

Respondents to the 2024 survey were asked to assess the degree to which news serving different types of needs and purposes is important in their lives. Figure 6.1a summarizes the results. The majority of respondents highly valued news that kept them informed and up to date on current events, with 75.9% considering that very or somewhat important. Following close behind was news that engages people with societal issues, with 70.7% considering it very or somewhat important. A similar number (70.1%) of respondents rated news that provides practical information and advice for day-to-day life as very or somewhat important. In comparison, only 55.3% saw news that made them feel better about the world as very or somewhat important, and only 40.1% saw news that was entertaining as very or somewhat important.

Perceived importance of news needs

The perceived importance of different types of news did not vary much by gender, but there were more differences between age groups. Interestingly, as Figure 6.1b shows, people aged between 35 and 44 were particularly less likely to rate news that kept them up to date with what was going on, news that kept them engaged with issues in society, news that provided practical information and advice for day-to-day life, news that helped them learn more about topics and events, and news that offered different perspectives on topical issues as important. Members of the youngest age group were least likely to see news that made them feel connected to others in society as important, which suggests that the youngest respondents were likely to rely on other means to connect with others. People aged between 25 and 34 were the most likely to see news that made them feel better about the world and news that was entertaining as important.

Figure 6.1a



Question: Thinking about the role that news plays in your life, how important or unimportant are each of the following? N = 2,005.

Figure 6.1b



Question: Thinking about the role that news plays in your life, how important or unimportant are each of the following? The percentages shown in the figure indicate the proportion of respondents who considered each type of news very or somewhat important; N = 2,005.

Perceived importance of news needs relate to news consumption

Do perceptions of the importance of different types of news relate to actual levels of news consumption among the respondents? We conducted an analysis to answer this question. Using the same three-part grouping as we describe in Part V, we compared how the three groups of respondents rated the importance of different types of news. Figure 6.1c summarizes the findings.

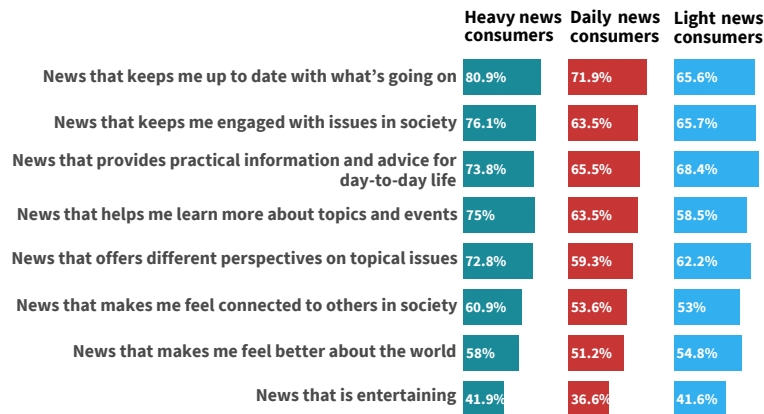
Not surprisingly, heavy news consumers generally rated the importance of all types of news more highly, but the difference between daily news consumers and light news consumers was very small. On news that provided practical information and advice for day-to-day life, news that kept them engaged with issues in society, and news that offered different perspectives on topical issues, the percentages of daily news consumers rating these categories as important were actually somewhat lower than the percentages of light news consumers rating them as important. One possible explanation is that many daily news consumers take in news once a day as a matter of routine and habit; that activity is not necessarily grounded in the perceived importance of news to their everyday lives.

It is also worth noting that while heavy news consumers are substantially more likely than light news consumers to rate the first six types of news listed in the figure as important, the two groups differ only slightly in their ratings of feel-good journalism and entertaining news.

Perceived media performance in satisfying needs

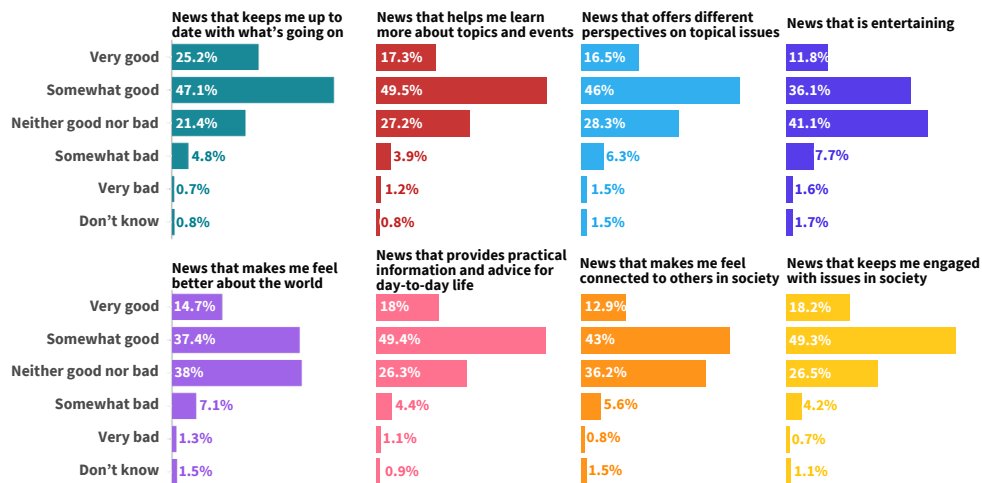
In addition to evaluating the importance of various types of news, the survey asked respondents whether they viewed the news media as able to meet their needs. A majority rated the performance of the media positively. Only a small percentage of the respondents saw the news media as performing somewhat or very badly in satisfying each type of news need. By contrast, 72.3% of the respondents believed that the news media were very or somewhat good at providing timely access to current events. Roughly two thirds (67.5%) of respondents viewed the news media as somewhat or very good at providing news that kept them engaged with social issues, while 67.4% and 66.8% of respondents considered the news media effective at offering news that provided practical information and advice for day-to-day life and offering news that helped people learn more about topics and events, respectively.

Figure 6.1c



Question: Thinking about the role that news plays in your life, how important or unimportant are each of the following? The percentages indicate the proportions of respondents who considered each type of news very or somewhat important; N = 2,005.

Figure 6.2a



Question: Thinking about the role that news plays in your life, how good or bad is the news media at providing you with each of the following? N = 2,005.

Perceived performance of the media in satisfying needs by age

There were minimal gender differences in the evaluations of the performance of the news media in terms of meeting news needs. Among age groups, similar to Figure 6.1b, those who were between 35 and 44 were least likely to rate the news media’s performance positively in offering news that kept them up to date with what was going on, news that provided practical information and advice for day-to-day life, and news with different perspectives on topical issues.

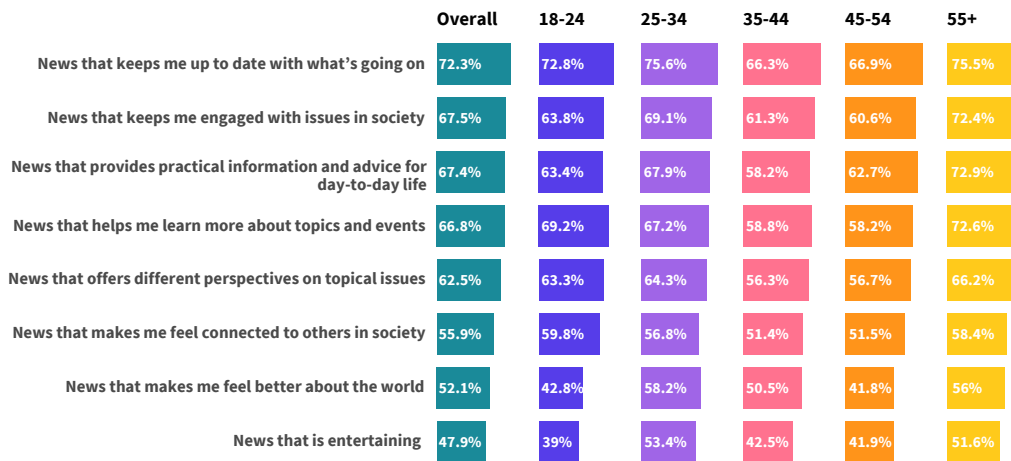
While Figure 6.1b shows that the youngest respondents were least likely to see news that helped them connect with others in society as important, that group of respondents did not rate the media’s performance in offering such news negatively. The youngest respondents were also the least likely to see the media as performing well in terms of providing news that was entertaining and news that made people feel good. Overall, the most senior group of respondents – those aged 55 or above – were the most

positive toward media performance in terms of satisfying people’s news needs.

Perceived media performance in satisfying needs by level of news consumption

Figure 6.2c shows the percentages of three groups of respondents differentiated, according to levels of news consumption, and their views on whether the media have done a good job in providing different types of news. Frequent news consumers rated the media as performing better, especially on providing substantive news that oriented them in their everyday lives and toward social issues. Compared to Figure 6.1c, daily and light news consumers did not differ from each other to the same extent. Daily news consumers rated media performance even less positively in terms of providing news that offered different perspectives on social issues, news that connected them to others, news that made people feel good, and news that was entertaining.

Figure 6.2b



Question: Thinking about the role that news plays in your life, how good or bad is the news media at providing you with each of the following? The figures indicate the percentages of respondents seeing media performance as very or somewhat good; N = 2,005.

Figure 6.2c



Question: Thinking about the role that news plays in your life, how good or bad is the news media at providing you with each of the following? The figures indicate the percentages of respondents seeing the media as being very or somewhat good at providing each type of news; N = 2,005.

Availability of needed information

The survey also asked respondents to rate the availability of news addressing various topics. Notably, the questions were directed only to those who reported that they were interested in the specific topic; that is, the availability of news on education was rated only by those who were interested in education news. Figure 6.3a summarizes the results.

The respondents rated the availability of local news, international news, and business and financial news quite positively, with 65.3%, 49.3%, and 56.8% of respondents describing the three respective types of news as highly available (i.e., either most or all of the information needed). News on many other topics was also rated as generally available. Those topics reported as less readily available included social justice news (43.4%), news about crimes and personal security (45.9%) and, most notably, news about mental health and wellness (36.8%).

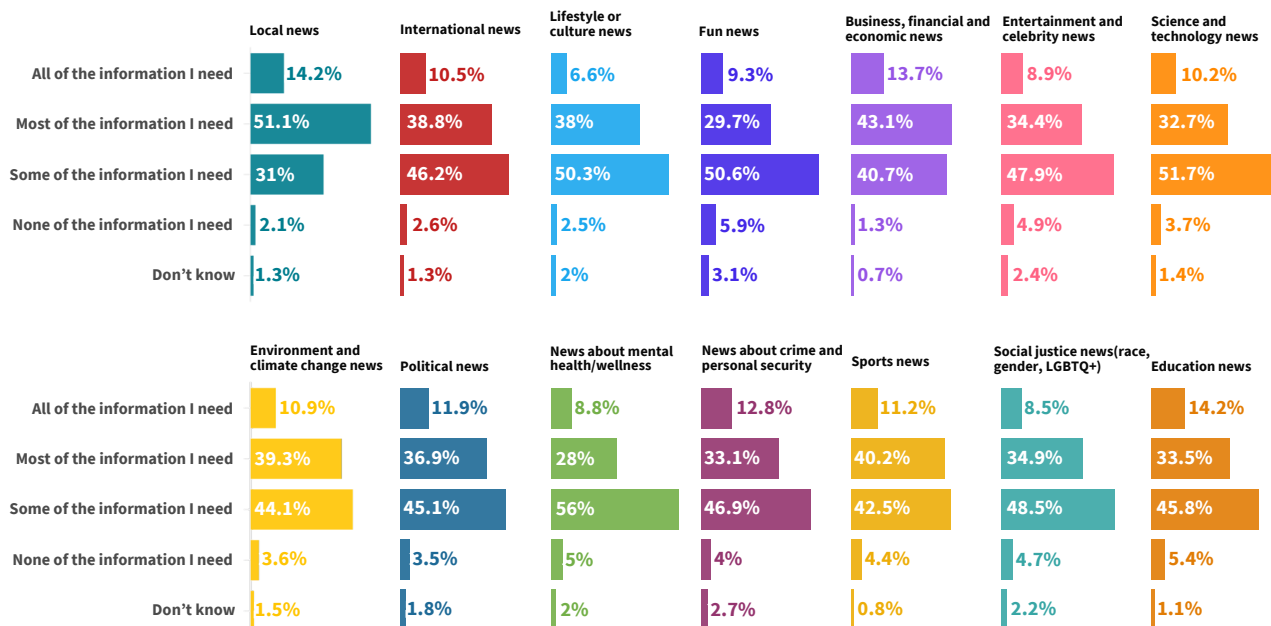
Perceived high availability of needed information

Male respondents rated the availability of different categories of news more positively than did females: of the 14 categories of news, the percentage of male respondents rating availability positively (either most or all of the information needed) was higher than the percentage of female respondents in 12 categories.

Age group differences are much more complicated, as Figure 6.3b shows. The youngest respondents were most likely to find local news and environmental news to be largely available, whereas the oldest group of respondents were most likely to see financial news, education news, and international news as largely available. Notably, people aged between 45 and 54 were less likely to rate several categories of news as available. For example, only 58% of respondents in that age group found local news to be largely available, while the corresponding percentages for the other age groups ranged from 64.2% to 69.7%. Only 36.5% of respondents in the 45–54 age group found social justice news to be largely available; the corresponding percentages for the other age groups ranged from 38.6% to 55.8%.

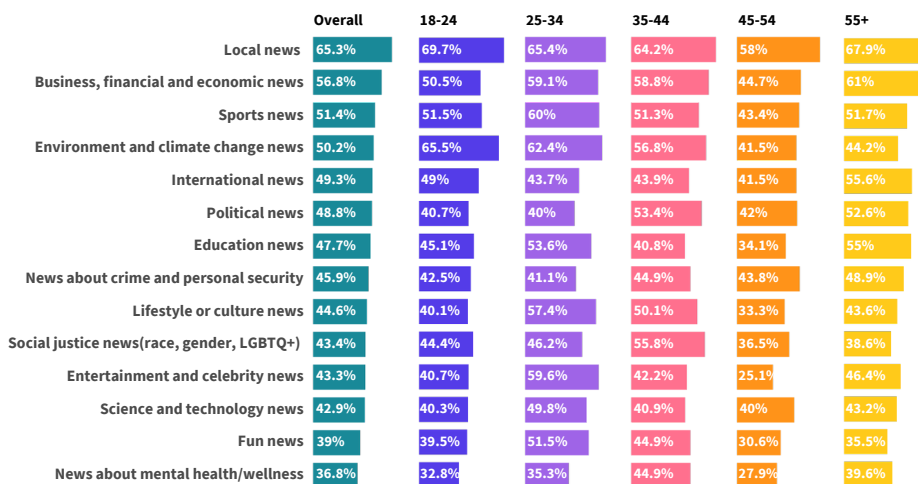
At the same time, people aged 35 to 44 constituted the group second least likely to find information largely available on many topics. For example only 34.1% of people aged 45 to 54 found education news largely available, followed by 40.8% of people those aged between 35 and 44. The corresponding percentages for the other three age groups ranged from 45.1% to 55%. In other words, middle-aged citizens (i.e., between 35 and 54) were often least likely to find news information adequate. One plausible reason is that these citizens were most directly and deeply affected by various social issues such as social justice and education and wanted more detailed news information on a range of topics.

Figure 6.3a



Question: In your experience, how much of the information you need, if any, is available to access on each of the following topics? Only people who were interested in a news topic rated the availability of news about that topic. *Ns:* Local news = 1,171; International news = 941; Lifestyle or culture news = 873; Fun news = 840; Business, financial, and economic news = 738; Entertainment and celebrity news = 750; Science and technology news = 735; Environment and climate change news = 711; Political news = 630; News about mental health and wellness = 586; News about crime and personal security = 587; Sports news = 546; Social justice news = 409; Education news = 411.

Figure 6.3b



Question: In your experience, how much of the information you need, if any, is available to access on each of the following topics? Only people who were interested in a news topic rated the availability of news about that topic. Ns: Local news = 1,171; International news = 941; Lifestyle or culture news = 873; Fun news = 840; Business, financial, and economic news = 738; Entertainment and celebrity news = 750; Science and technology news = 735; Environment and climate change news = 711; Political news = 630; News about mental health and wellness = 586; News about crime and personal security = 587; Sports news = 546; Social justice news = 409; Education news = 411.

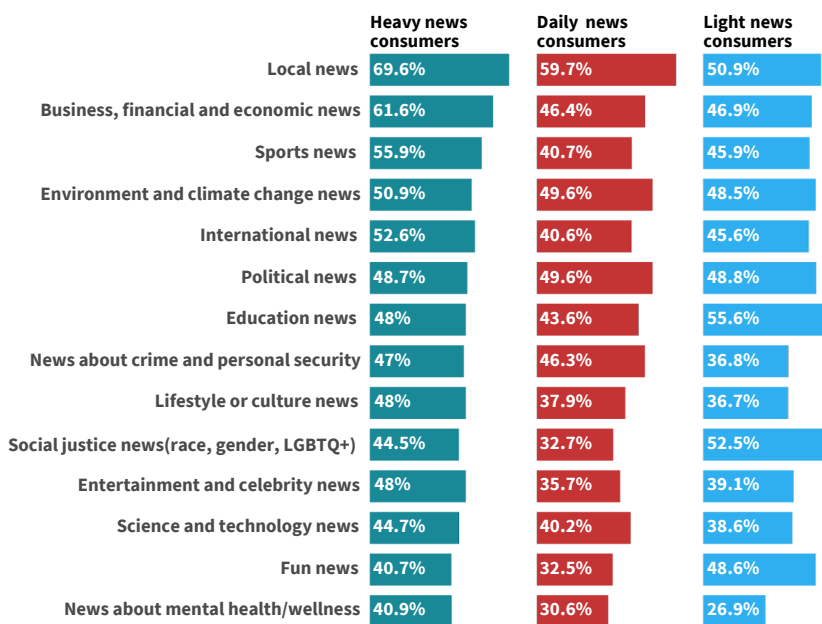
Perceived high availability of needed information relative to news consumption

Figure 6.3c shows the percentages of heavy, daily, and light news consumers who see news about various topics as largely available. At first glance, heavy news consumers were most likely to find news about various topics largely available. For instance, 69.6% of heavy news consumers found local news to be largely available, whereas only 59.7% and 50.9% of daily and light news consumers, respectively, took the same position. Similarly, 61.6% of heavy news consumers saw business and financial news as

largely available, whereas only 46.4% and 46.9% of daily and light news consumers, respectively, saw it as largely available.

However, there are some interesting exceptions. Heavy news consumers were less likely than light news consumers to see education news, fun news, and news about social justice issues as largely available. Some of these findings suggest that heavy news consumers might also tend to be most sensitive about the contemporary problem in Hong Kong of media self-censorship, which has arguably limited the availability of news about social justice issues.

Figure 6.3c



Question: In your experience, how much of the information you need, if any, is available to access on each of the following topics? Only people who were interested in a news topic rated the availability of news about that topic. Ns: Local news = 1,171; International news = 941; Lifestyle or culture news = 873; Fun news = 840; Business, financial, and economic news = 738; Entertainment and celebrity news = 750; Science and technology news = 735; Environment and climate change news = 711; Political news = 630; News about mental health and wellness = 586; News about crime and personal security = 587; Sports news = 546; Social justice news = 409; Education news = 411.

Part VII.

News video consumption



Frequency of watching news videos

Internet video platforms such as YouTube have become wildly popular and also facilitate the distribution of news videos. The 2024 survey asked respondents about the frequency with which they consumed short news videos, long news videos, and live online video streams. As Figure 7.1a shows, the respondents consumed short online news videos more frequently; 11% of respondents watched such videos more than once a day, whereas 22% watched short news videos on a daily basis. A small number (6.8%) of respondents watched live online video streams several times a day, while 15.8% watched such streams on a daily basis. Respondents were less likely to watch long news videos. However, there was still a total of 18.6% watching long news videos either daily or several times a day.

Men were somewhat more likely to have watched live video streams more frequently: 25.8% of male respondents reported watching live video streams either on a daily basis or several times a day, whereas 20.1% of female respondents did so. One third (33.6%) of female respondents either never watched live news video streams or watched them less than once a week, while the corresponding percentage for male respondents was 25.4%.

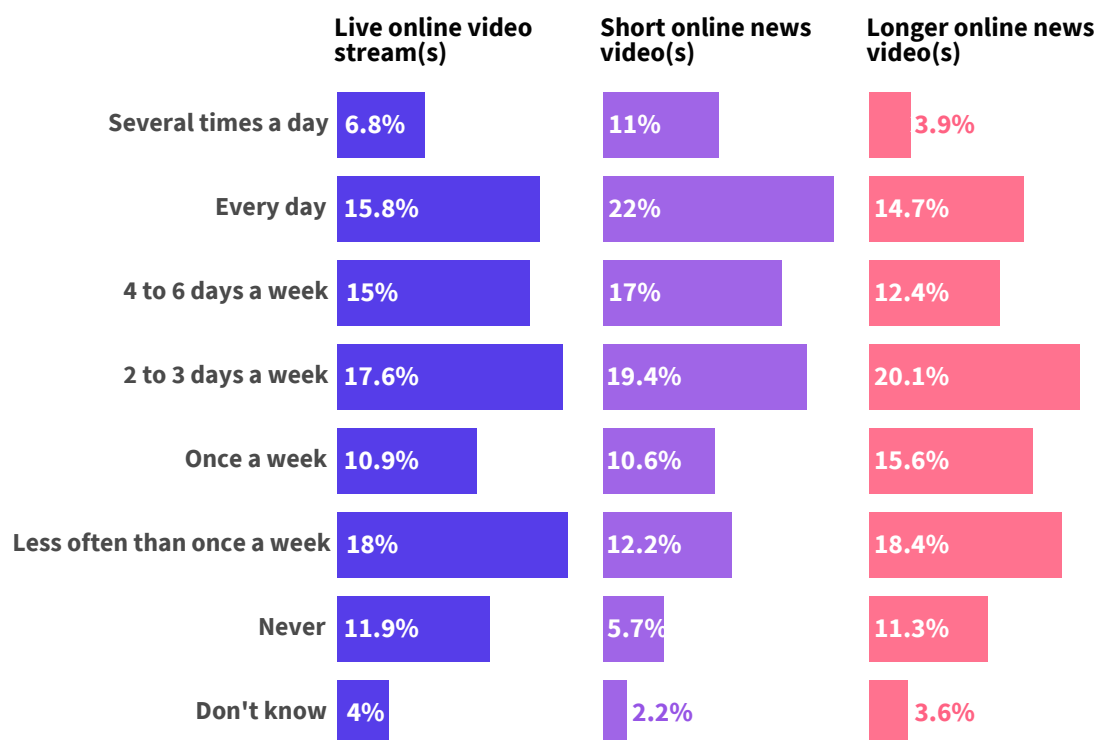
Live online video stream(s) (e.g., breaking news event or live discussion)

Conventionally, the younger generation is regarded as more comfortable with visual materials. However, the survey

results show that they are least likely to have watched live online video streams on a daily basis. As Figure 7.1b shows, only 10% of respondents between 18 and 24 watched live online video streams either every day or several times a day, while 14.3% of respondents between 25 and 34 did so either every day or several times a day. Notably, 25.6% of respondents between 45 and 54 watched live online video streams either every day or several times a day, and 25.7% of respondents at 55 or above did so every day or several times a day.

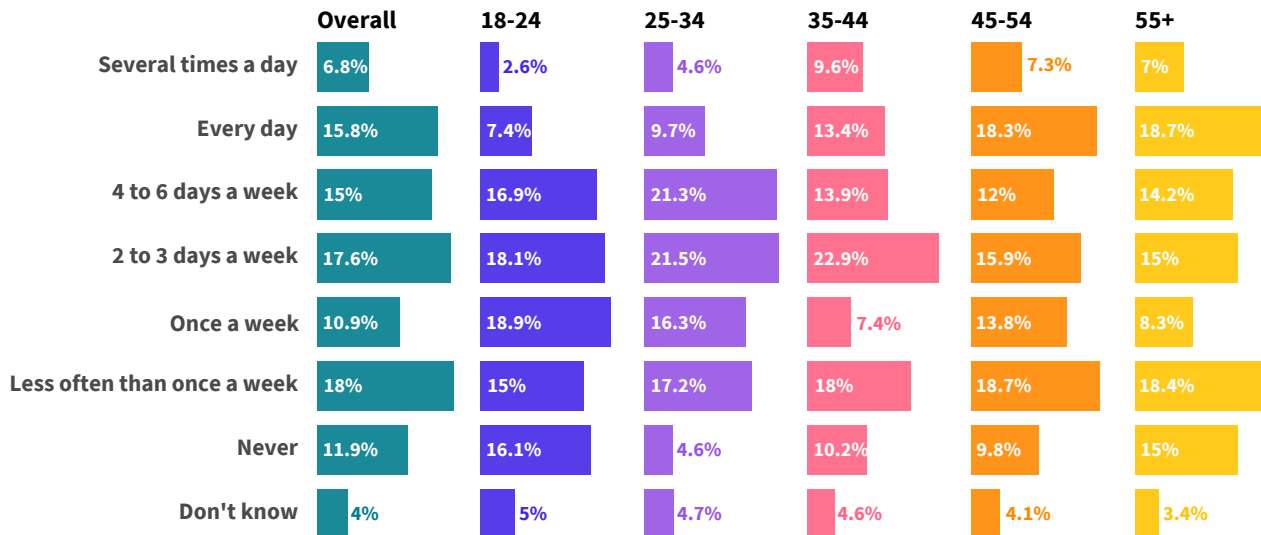
Part of the reason for the older generation to watch more live online videos is their higher level of news consumption in general. However, further analysis shows that among people who accessed online news at least once a day, older people remained more likely to have consumed online live video streams: 26.0% of respondents aged 55 or above who accessed online news at least once a day had consumed online live video streams every day or more than once a day, while only 14.4% of respondents between 18 and 24 who accessed online news at least once a day did the same. Interestingly, if we restrict our analysis to people who accessed online news less often than once a day, the gap between the youngest and oldest age groups was even wider: 23.8% of respondents aged 55 or above who accessed online news less frequently than once a day had consumed online live video streams every day or more than once a day, while only 2.4% of respondents aged between 18 and 24 who accessed online news less frequently than once a day did the same.

Figure 7.1a



Question: Thinking about when you have watched online videos about news-related issues—e.g., via a computer, smartphone, or tablet—how often, if at all, do you watch the following? *N* = 2,005

Figure 7.1b



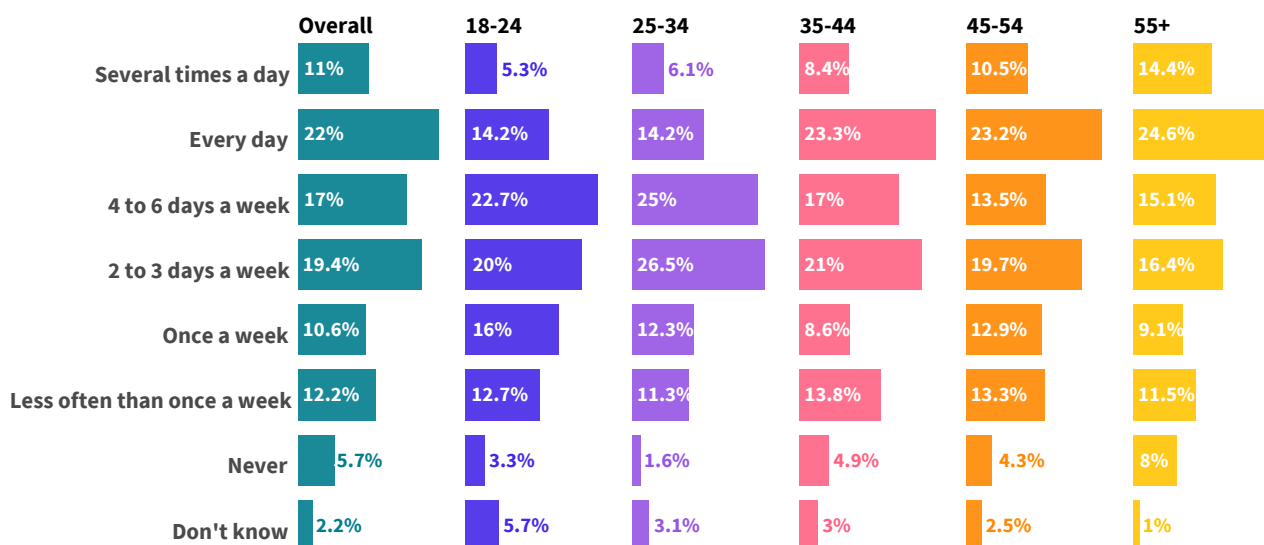
Question: Thinking about when you have watched online videos about news-related issues—e.g., via a computer, smartphone, or tablet—how often, if at all, do you watch the following? *N* = 2,005.

Short online news video(s) (a few minutes or less)

Figure 7.1c shows the results regarding watching short online news videos. The results are largely similar to those presented in Figure 7.1b. Again, young respondents were less likely to frequently watch short online news videos. Only 19.5% of respondents between 18 and 24 watched short online news videos every day or more than once a day, while 20.3% of respondents between 25 and 34 did so. At the other end of the age spectrum, 33.7% of respondents between 45 and 54 watched short online news videos every day or several times a day, and 39.0% of respondents at 55 or above did so.

If we focus only on respondents who accessed online news at least once a day, people between 25 and 34 were the least likely to watch short online news videos frequently: 21.8% of respondents in this age bracket who accessed online news at least once a day watched short news videos online every day or several times a day, while that percentage was 27.8% for respondents between 18 and 24 who accessed online news at least once a day. The oldest group remains the most likely to have watched short news videos online: 39.7% of respondents aged 55 or above watched short news videos online every day or several times a day.

Figure 7.1c



Question: Thinking about when you have watched online videos about news-related issues—e.g., via a computer, smartphone, or tablet—how often, if at all, do you watch the following? *N* = 2,005.

Longer online news video(s)

Regarding long online news videos, as Figure 7.1d shows, only 10.3% of respondents between 18 and 24 watched long online news videos every day or several times a day, but respondents between 25 and 34 were the least likely to have watched such videos frequently, as only 8.5% watched such videos every day or several times a day. Almost a quarter (23.4%) of respondents aged 55 or above watched long online news videos every day or several times a day.

The age gap remains in place when we focus only on those respondents who accessed online news at least once a day: 15.6% of respondents between 18 and 24 who accessed online news at least once a day watched long news videos online every day or several times a day. That percentage is 10.2% for respondents between 25 and 34 who accessed online news at least once a day and 23.9% for respondents 55 or above who accessed online news at least once a day.

Video topics

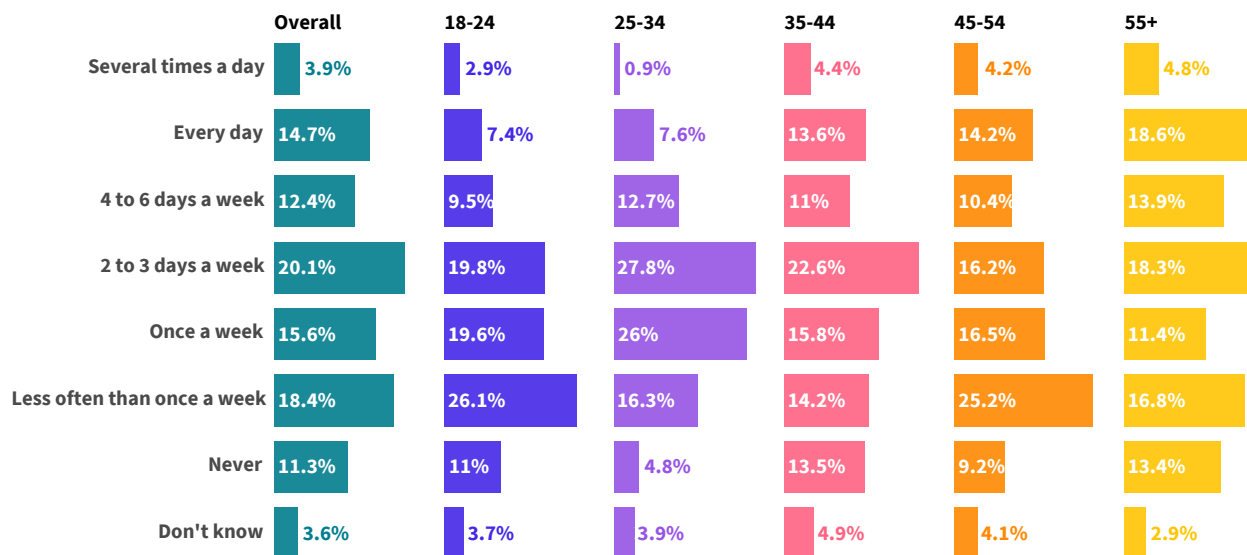
The survey also asked respondents about the topics of the online news videos that they consumed. Figure 7.2 summarizes the results. The percentages are based on people who have accessed online news videos; those who never consumed online news videos were excluded. Just over half (52.3%) of the respondents reported watching online news videos about international news, and 45.3% reported watching videos about national politics. That was

followed by fun news (40.0%), entertainment and celebrity news (39.2%), and business and economic news (37.5%).

There are substantial gender differences for some of the topics. For example, 42.2% of male respondents reported consuming news videos about science and technology, whereas only 20.8% of female respondents consumed news videos about that topic. The gender gap was around 10% for international news, national politics, and business and the economy. There was only a very small or non-existent gender gap for fun news, education, environment or climate, lifestyle, and crime and security. Meanwhile, female respondents were significantly more likely to consume news videos on the topic of entertainment and celebrity, along with health and well-being.

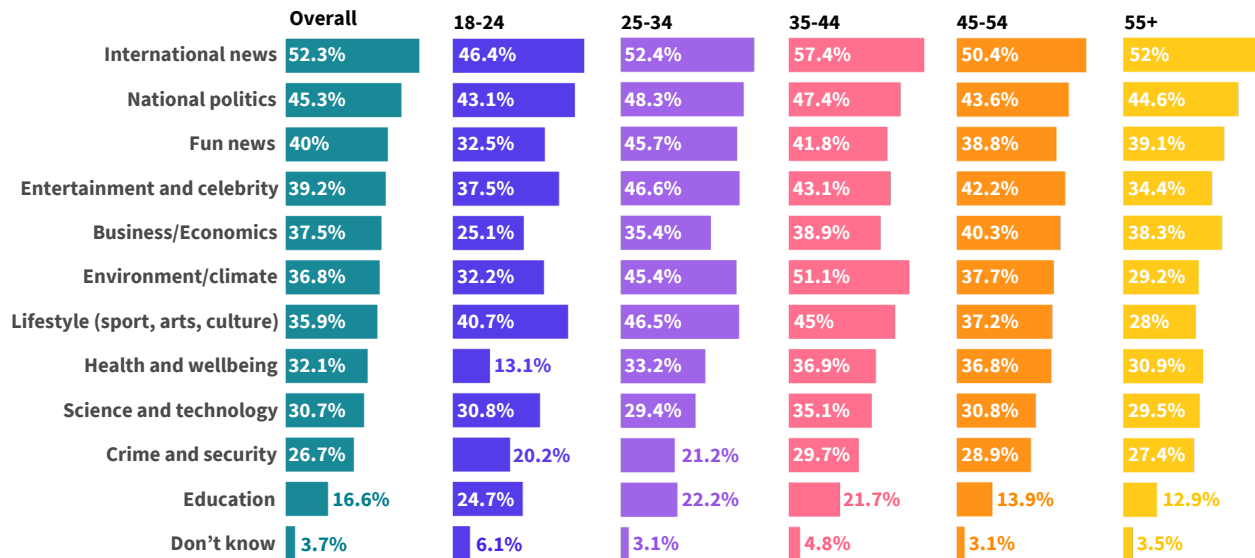
Although respondents aged 55 or above were the most likely to have watched online news videos frequently, on many topics they were not the most likely to have watched relevant online news videos. For instance, as shown in Figure 7.2, respondents between 35 and 44 were the most likely to have watched videos about international news, environment and climate, health and well-being, crime and security, and science and technology. Respondents between 25 and 34 were the most likely to have watched videos about fun news, entertainment and celebrity, lifestyle, and national politics. Understandably, despite being least likely to watch online news videos frequently, the youngest respondents were most likely to have watched online news videos about educational matters.

Figure 7.1d



Question: Thinking about when you have watched online videos about news-related issues—e.g., via a computer, smartphone, or tablet—how often, if at all, do you watch the following? N = 2,005.

Figure 7.2



Question: Thinking about when you have watched online videos about news-related issues in the last few weeks, which of the following did you watch most often? Select all that apply; N = 1,871.

Channels for watching videos

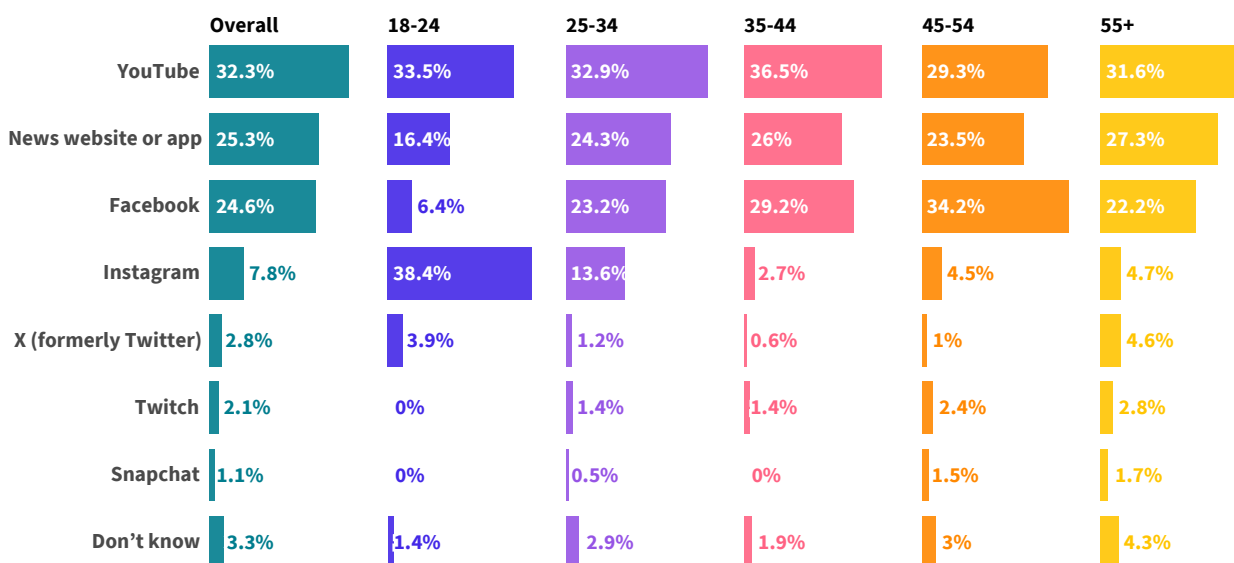
Finally, Figure 7.3 summarizes the results from a question asking respondents about the channels they used to access online news videos. Not surprisingly, YouTube was the most frequently used channel for watching news videos (32.3%), followed by news websites or apps (25.3%) and Facebook (24.6%). All other platforms were used to a much lesser extent.

Male respondents were more likely to have used YouTube to access online videos, while female respondents were more likely to have used Facebook. Age differences are more complicated. As Figure 7.3 shows, people between 35 and 44

were more likely to have used YouTube to watch news videos, though the differences among the five age groups were relatively small as to the use of YouTube.

The differences among the age groups were much more pronounced in the case of Facebook; the percentage of respondents accessing news videos via Facebook range from 22.2% to 34.2% for the four older groups, whereas only 6.4% of respondents aged 18 to 24 accessed online news videos via Facebook. The youngest respondents were clearly the most likely to access news videos via Instagram; 38.4% of respondents in this age group did so, whereas the percentages for the other four age groups ranged only from 2.7% to 13.6%.

Figure 7.3



Question: Which of the following channels do you tend to use most when it comes to watching online news or news-related videos? N = 1,871



Part VIII.

Perceptions of artificial intelligence in journalism

Have you heard about artificial intelligence (AI)

The most recent advances in artificial intelligence (AI) technologies have attracted widespread attention, and the ways AI has entered various fields, including journalism, have also started to receive substantial scholarly attention. The 2024 digital news consumption survey thus included a few questions concerning news users' familiarity with and judgments of the use of AI in journalism. Figure 8.1 summarizes the results based on the question of how much respondents had heard about AI. Among all respondents, only 6.2% reported that they had heard a large amount about AI, whereas 34.5% had heard a moderate amount. Only 7.5% reported having heard nothing at all about AI.

Men and women were basically equally likely to have heard a large amount about AI, but men were somewhat more likely to have heard at least a moderate amount about AI (38.9% vs. 30.8%). We may expect young people to be most sensitive toward developments of the newest technologies, and the findings show that this was indeed the case: 16.8% of respondents between 18 and 24 had heard a large amount about AI, and 45.8% of these respondents had heard a moderate amount about AI. Nevertheless, the oldest respondents were not the least in touch with AI. More than a third (37.9%) of respondents aged 55 or above had heard either a moderate or large amount about AI. By comparison, only 34.6% of respondents between 45 and 54 had heard either a moderate or large amount about AI.

Comfort with news produced mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with some human oversight.

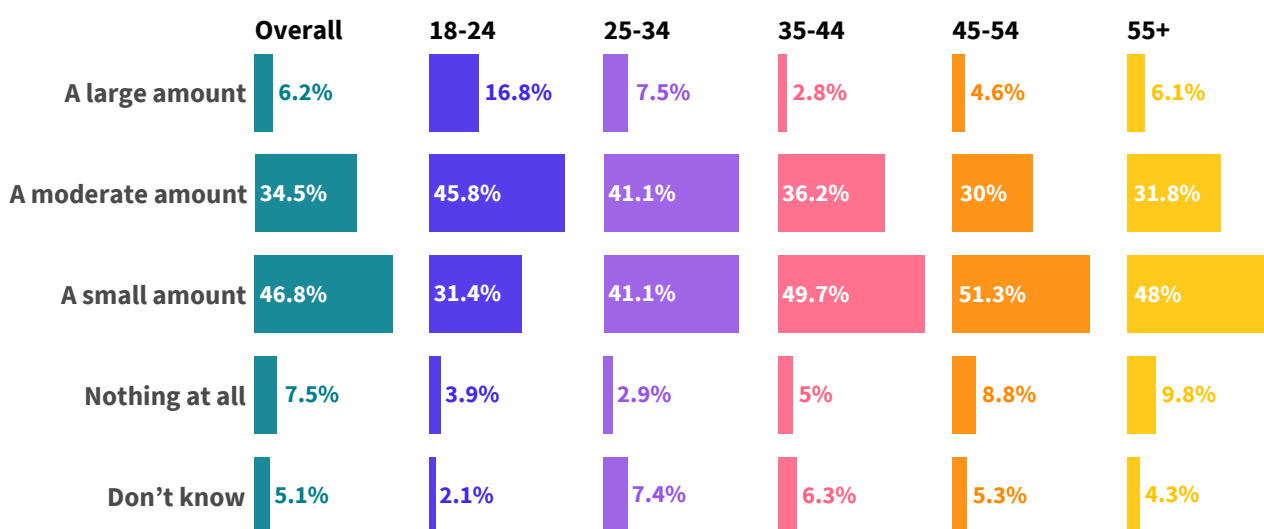
A second question in the survey asked if respondents felt comfortable with news produced with the help of AI. To

achieve more specificity, the survey differentiated between news produced mostly by AI with some human oversight and news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from AI. As Figure 8.2a shows, when news produced mostly by AI with some human oversight is concerned, 35.4% of the respondents reported that they were somewhat or very uncomfortable, while 30.1% of the respondents reported that they were somewhat or very comfortable. In other words, the percentage reporting discomfort was slightly larger than the percentage reporting being comfortable. Notably, almost a third (32.1%) of respondents indicated that they were neither comfortable nor uncomfortable with news produced mostly by AI with some human oversight.

Men were slightly more likely to report that they were comfortable with news produced mostly by AI; 32.7% of male respondents reported that they were somewhat or very comfortable, whereas the corresponding percentage was 28.0% for females. Interestingly, although young people were more likely to be familiar with AI technologies, they were not the most comfortable with news produced mostly by AI. More than a quarter (29.4%) of respondents between 18 and 24 said that they were somewhat or very comfortable with news mostly produced by AI, while 35.3% of respondents 55 or above gave the same answer. People between 45 and 54 were the least comfortable with news produced mostly by AI: only 23.7% reported being somewhat or very comfortable.

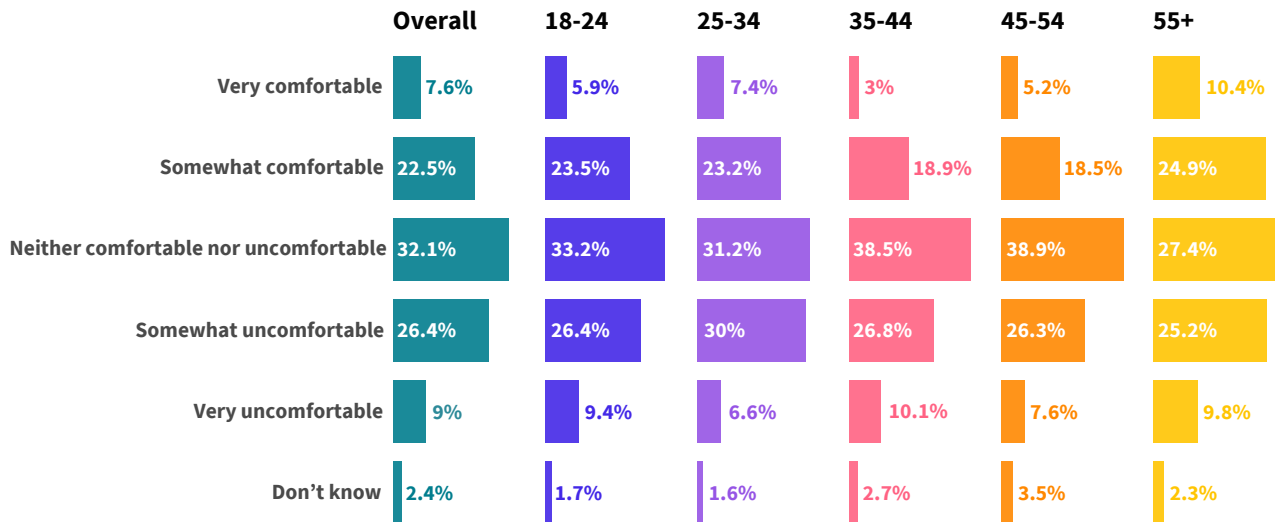
However, it is also worth noting that people of all age groups reported similar levels of discomfort toward AI. The percentages of respondents in the five age groups saying that they were somewhat or very uncomfortable about news produced mostly by AI ranged from 33.9% (respondents between 45 and 54) to 36.9% (respondents between 35 and 44).

Figure 8.1



Question: How much, if anything, have you heard or read about artificial intelligence (AI)? N = 2,005

Figure 8.2a



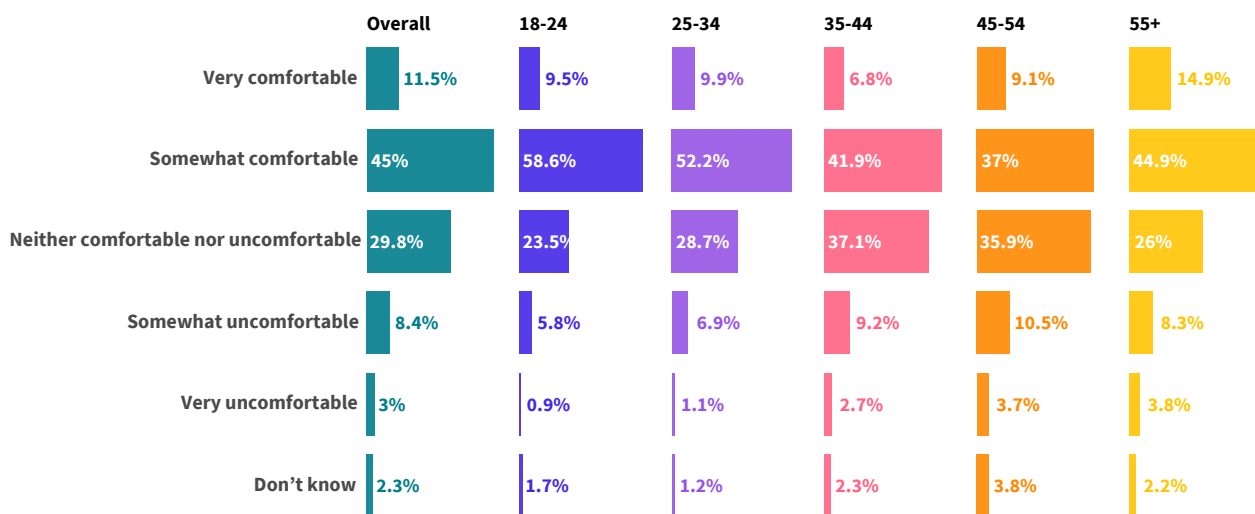
Question: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news produced mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with some human oversight? N= 2005.

Comfort with news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from artificial intelligence (AI)

Figure 8.2b summarizes the results about whether people were comfortable with news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from AI. Perhaps unsurprisingly, when AI plays only a relatively minor role of assistant, people were much more likely to feel comfortable. Overall, 56.5% of respondents were somewhat or very comfortable with such news, whereas only 11.4% said that they were somewhat or very uncomfortable.

The same small gender difference remains in place: 58.9% of male respondents reported that they were somewhat or very comfortable with news produced with some help from AI, whereas 54.4% of female respondents chose one of those answers. Unlike the results presented in Figure 8.2a, the youngest respondents were most likely to be comfortable with news produced with some help from AI: 68.1% of respondents between 18 and 24 said that they were somewhat or very comfortable, whereas 62.1% of respondents between 25 and 34 and 59.8% of respondents aged 55 or above gave one of those answers. At the other end of the scale, only 46.1% of respondents between 45 and 54 said they were somewhat or very comfortable with news produced with some help from AI.

Figure 8.2b



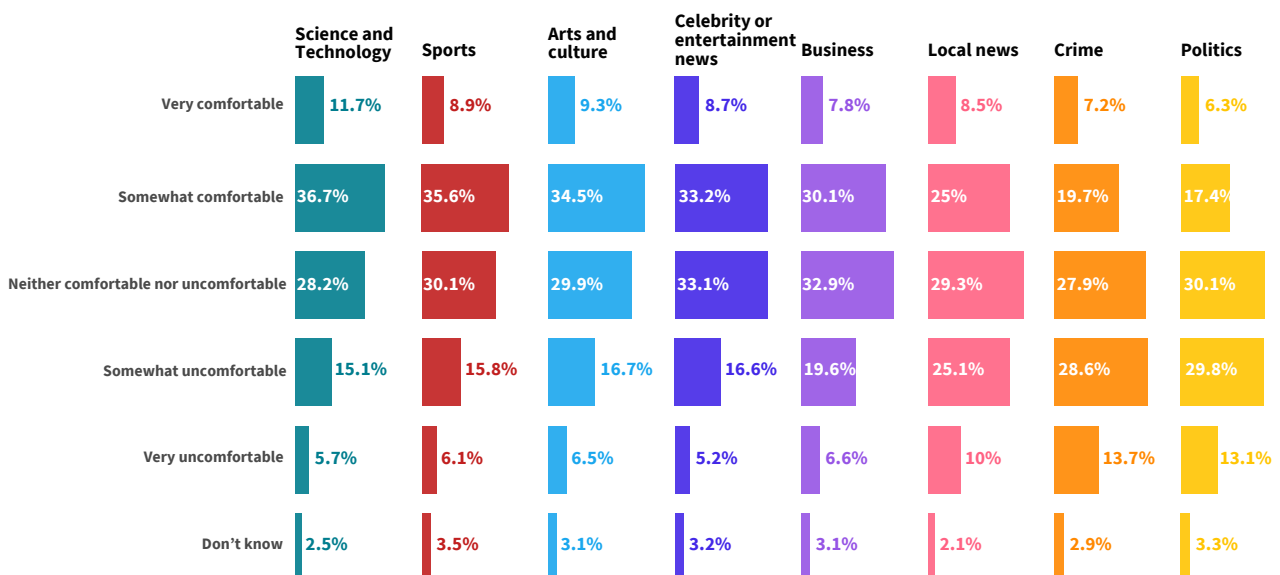
Question: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from artificial intelligence (AI)? N = 2,005.

Comfort with news produced mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with human oversight on different topics

The incorporation of AI into news making likely varies by news topic. For example, around the globe, the use of some kind of AI technologies in writing standardized financial news reports concerning daily stock market situations is nothing new. The 2024 survey thus also included a question regarding whether respondents were comfortable with news on various topics produced mostly by AI. As Figure 8.3a shows, 48.4% of respondents were somewhat or very comfortable with science and technology news produced mostly by AI. It seems that people found it sensible to use the most advanced technologies to produce news about technologies. Meanwhile, 44.5% and 43.8% of the respondents were somewhat and very comfortable, respectively, with sports news and arts and culture news produced mostly by AI.

At the other end of the scale, respondents were least likely to feel comfortable about local news, crime news, and political news produced mainly by AI, even with some human oversight. Almost a third (33.5%) of respondents said they were somewhat or very comfortable with local news produced mostly by AI, and only 23.7% of respondents were somewhat or very comfortable with political news produced mostly by AI. Just over a third (35.1%) of respondents were somewhat or very uncomfortable with local news produced mostly by AI. The corresponding percentages for crime news and political news are 42.3% and 42.9%, respectively.

Figure 8.3a



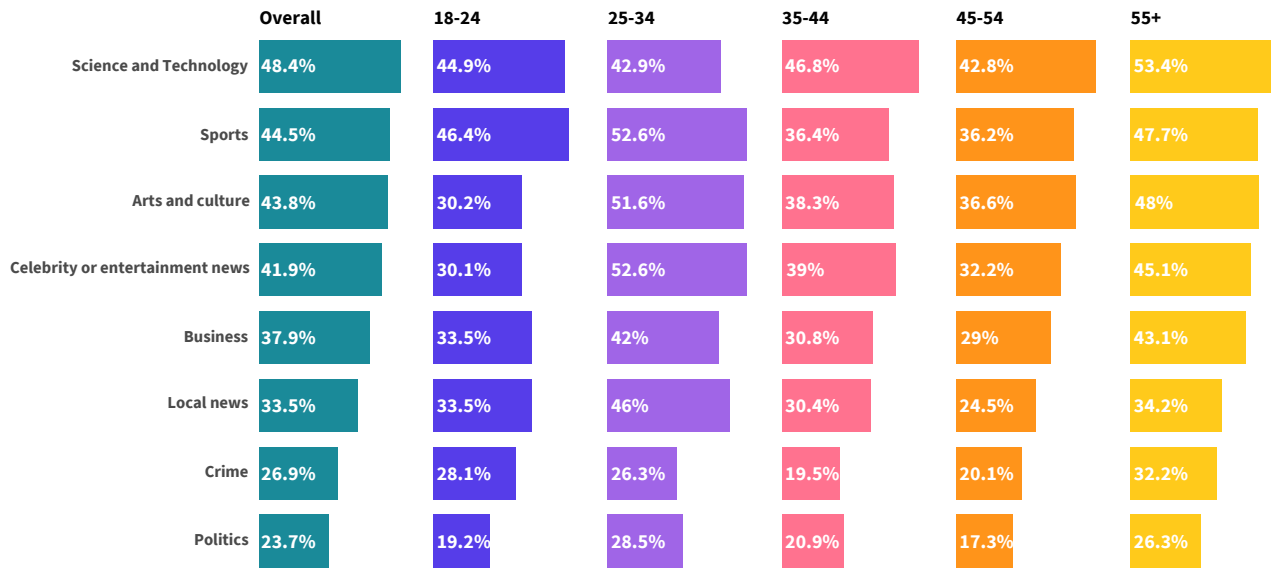
Question: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news about each of the following topics produced mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with some human oversight? N = 2,005.

Age differences in comfort with news produced mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with human oversight on different topics

Finally, Figure 8.3b shows the results regarding how comfortable people were with news produced by AI on different topics. For simplicity, the figure shows only the percentages of respondents who reported feeling somewhat or very comfortable regarding a given category of AI-produced news. On the whole, men were more likely than women to report being comfortable across all eight topics included in the question.

Age differences showed a bit more variation than gender. Figure 8.2a shows that respondents between 45 and 54 were least likely to feel comfortable about news produced mostly by AI, but when the eight topics were separated, respondents between 45 and 54 were least likely to feel comfortable on five of eight topics. The youngest respondents—those between 18 and 24—were least likely to feel comfortable about news produced mostly by AI on celebrities or entertainment, on crime, and on politics. Interestingly, while Figure 8.2a shows that the oldest group was the most comfortable with AI-produced news, Figure 8.3b shows that this was so only for three of the eight topics: crime, business, and science and technology. For the other five topics, people between 25 and 34 expressed the highest degree of comfort.

Figure 8.3b



Question: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news about each of the following topics produced mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with some human oversight? The figures indicate the percentage of respondents who felt very or somewhat comfortable with each news topic produced by artificial intelligence (AI) with human oversight. *N* = 2,005.

Appendix

Methodology and demographic characteristics of respondents

The background of the page is a dark blue field filled with a complex, abstract pattern. It features several overlapping, wavy bands of light blue and white. These bands are composed of a fine grid of small dots, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is reminiscent of a digital or data visualization, with the waves appearing to flow across the page.

The surveys covered in this report were part of an annual cross-national survey project on online news use conducted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) at Oxford University. The actual survey fieldwork was conducted by the online survey company YouGov in various countries and cities, including Hong Kong. The 2024 survey used an online questionnaire that was distributed in late January and early February. The questionnaire was drafted by the RISJ in English and then translated into Chinese. The Hong Kong team helped confirm the appropriateness of the translation and provided input regarding issues such as the list of news brands to be included in the survey.

According to the RISJ, samples in various markets were assembled using representative quotas for age, gender, and region in each market. Although this report focuses mainly on the 2024 survey data, data from 2020 to 2023 were sometimes utilized to illustrate continuities and changes over time. The following table summarizes the sample sizes and the demographic profile of the respondents in gender, age, educational level, and household income from 2020 to 2024.

Table A1 Demographic profiles of Hong Kong respondents in different years

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gender					
Male	45.3%	45.2%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%
Female	54.7%	54.8%	55.0%	55.0%	55.0%
Age					
18–24	7.9%	7.5%	7.1%	6.8%	6.6%
25–34	15.0%	14.8%	14.6%	14.4%	14.0%
35–44	17.2%	17.1%	17.0%	16.7%	16.5%
45–54	17.9%	17.6%	17.3%	17.3%	17.2%
55 or above	42.0%	43.0%	44.0%	44.9%	45.7%
Education					
Up to lower secondary	10.6%	10.5%	13.5%	9.1%	13.4%
Upper secondary	47.0%	42.5%	41.6%	46.2%	40.5%
Non-degree tertiary	18.4%	20.6%	19.6%	19.0%	20.0%
Bachelor's degree	18.3%	19.7%	19.2%	19.5%	18.5%
Graduate school	5.7%	6.7%	6.1%	6.2%	7.6%
Household income (HKD)					
Below 10,000	3.5%	3.5%	2.4%	2.6%	2.7%
10,000 to 24,999	7.0%	7.9%	8.5%	9.4%	7.9%
25,000 to 49,999	10.6%	10.6%	10.1%	15.7%	15.9%
50,000 or above	72.6%	69.8%	73.6%	68.3%	70.8%
Sample size					
	2023	1501	2010	2023	2005

Note. Percentages for household income do not add up to 100% because respondents were allowed to answer *don't know*. For age and education, percentages may not add up to exactly 100.0% due to rounding.