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Journalism for tomorrow

Constructive Journalism – another take on news and climate





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The Constructive Institute



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What's the problem with the news?

NOT A NEW “PROBLEM”



TO: Agents and Correspondents

FROM: P. J. Reuter

DATE: 1883

RE: Please cover the following:

“ . . . fires, explosions, floods, inundations, railway accidents, destructive storms, earthquakes, shipwrecks attended with loss of life, accidents to war vessels and to mail steamers, street riots of a grave character, disturbances arising from strikes, duels between and suicides of persons of note, social or political, and murders of a sensational or atrocious character.” It is requested that the bare facts be first telegraphed with the utmost promptitude, and as soon as possible afterwards a descriptive account, proportionate to the gravity of the incident. Care should, of course, be taken to follow the matter up.”

A huge Atlantic ocean current is slowing down. If it collapses, La Niña could become the norm for Australia

Published: June 6, 2022 9:02pm BST

Shutterstock

Britain's last lion tamer

G2

Guardian

Chaos and disruption
Snow and ice hit UK

The central London skyline is hit by a snowstorm yesterday. The UK is set to remain very cold all week

Corbyn gets dossier on harassment

Anushka Asthana
Political editor

A dossier of 12 stories of harassment, abuse and sexual violence against women at all levels of the Labour party has been submitted to Jeremy Corbyn's office, prompting calls for the party to reform the way it deals with claims of sexual misconduct.

Women who submitted their stories anonymously to the Labour website over a two-month period gave examples of being raped, sexually groped, inappropriate sexual comments and being urged not to report what had happened. The incidents, in settings all around the country as well as in Westminster, highlighted a number of weaknesses in the way Labour has handled the issue.

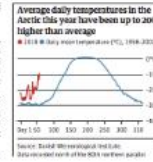
Among the problems highlighted, which the party says will be urgently fed into current reviews, were:
● Problems individuals are "common knowledge" but no action is taken against them;
● There is low or no confidence in the party's formal complaint or disciplinary processes.



Arctic heatwave triggers climate meltdown fears

Jonathan Watts

An alarming heatwave in the arctic winter Arctic is causing blizzards in Europe and forcing scientists to reconsider even their most pessimistic forecasts of climate change. Although it could yet prove to be a freak event, the primary concern is that global warming is eroding the polar vortex, the powerful winds that once insulated the frozen north. The north pole gets no sunlight



until March, but an influx of warm air has pushed temperatures in Siberia up by as much as 31C above historical averages this month. Greenland has already experienced 61 hours above freezing in 2018 - more than three times as many as any previous year. Seasonal observers have described what is happening as "crazy", "weird", and "simply shocking". "This is an anomaly among anomalies," said Michael Mann, the director of the Earth System Science Center at Pennsylvania State University. "It is far enough outside the historical range

that it is worrying - it is a suggestion that there are further surprises in store as we continue to probe the angry beast that is our climate.

"The Arctic has always been regarded as a bellwether because of the vicious circle that amplifies human-caused warming in that particular region. And it is sending out a clear warning."

Although headlines focusing on Europe's current cold weather have been jolly, the concern is that this is not a reassuring return to winters as normal, but rather a displacement of what ought to be happening further north. At the world's most northerly land weather station - Cape Morris Jessup on Greenland - recent temperatures have been, at times, warmer than London and Zurich, which are thousands of miles to the south. Although the peak of 6.2C on Sunday was not quite a record, on the previous two occasions (2011 and 2012)

Syria destroys any pretence that Europe is a moral force

Natalie Nougayrède

Journal



ESTHER HORVATH, NEW YORK

Researchers use a balloon to assess atmospheric conditions like turbulence and pollution at a scientific outpost in Greenland as part of efforts to understand the effects of global warming.

UN report on global warming carries life-or-death warning

10:51AM

Preventing an extra single degree of heat could make a life-or-death difference in the next few decades for multitudes of people and ecosystems. But will the world will rise to the challenge?

482 comments

Emissions from plastics are predicted to rise



NEW YORK POST Page Six

WORLD LEADERS SLIP ON UN SUMMIT SLOPE

WE'RE SCREWED

NEW YORK FIGHTS BACK!

Over a hundred world leaders will try to tackle climate change tomorrow at the UN. But they seem more interested in tackling each other.

Continues on Page 1

What you're not being told: Official City report predicts massive climate catastrophes, public health disasters.

Earth is warming faster than previously thought, scientists say, and the window is closing to avoid catastrophic outcomes

ne Classifieds

Climate change: the terrifying truth

Prosecutor to consider changing Manohar's Name UK

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Indian Ocean warming up fastest, may weaken monsoon: Study

Neha.Madaan @timesgroup.com

Pune: A study says the Indian Ocean has been warming consistently for over a century and at a faster rate than any other region of tropical oceans — and this may weaken the monsoon.

The study by scientists from Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Sorbonne University in Paris and Fergusson College found the warming of the Indian Ocean has been a major contributor to global sea surface warming, which may have long-term effects on climate like weakening the southwest monsoon and being detrimental to marine biodiversity. Global ocean surface warming has long-term effects on the climate since it persists for a longer time compared with land temperatures.

Mathew Koll Roxy, lead author of the research and senior scientist at the Centre for Climate Change Research at IITM, said this is the first time warming of this magnitude has been found over the Indian Ocean.

Indian Ocean has major role in global climate, P 3

Indian Ocean has major role in regulating global climate

Continued from Page 1

"Earlier analysis were for shorter periods (e.g. past 50 years), while our current analysis is with multiple datasets for the

Roxy said among the major oceans, Indian Ocean is the smallest and the warmest. It plays a critical role in regulating the climate and variability of the Asian monsoon, as well as the global climate. This research found warming over the Indian Ocean to be happening at a rate faster than any other region of the tropical oceans, and with a 'potential' to alter the strength and course of the monsoon.

Generally, the western Indian Ocean has cool surface waters, while the central-east Indian Ocean is a warm pool with sea surface temperature (SST) gra-

warming for more than a century and has attained the warm pool SST values of 28 degrees C."

Scientists attributed the warming over western Indian Ocean to increasing El Nino events, among other causes. "The periodical El Nino events over the east Pacific change the global atmospheric circulation, and weaken the winds over the western Indian Ocean," said Roxy. "This induces abnormal warm surface waters over the western Indian Ocean. Also, the La Niña events fail to make any significant changes over the Indian Ocean. Along with this the



THE NEWS CRITERIA

Relevance

Proximity

Frequency

Timeliness

Conflict

THE STRUCTURE OF FOREIGN NEWS

*The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises
in Four Norwegian Newspapers**

By

JOHAN GALTUNG and MARI HOLMBOE RUGE

Peace Research Institute — Oslo

1. *Introduction*

In this article the general problem of factors influencing the flow of news from abroad will be discussed, following the kind of reasoning given by Östgaard in his article,¹ but in a somewhat different

the more valid is the old sociological slogan about 'everything's relevance for everything else'.

Thus, the world consists of individual and national actors, and since it is axiomatic that action is based on the actor's

DIGITAL DISRUPTION



- More News
- 24 Hours
- Shocking images
- Sharper headlines
- Faster deadlines
- On more platforms
- With fewer people
- And less money

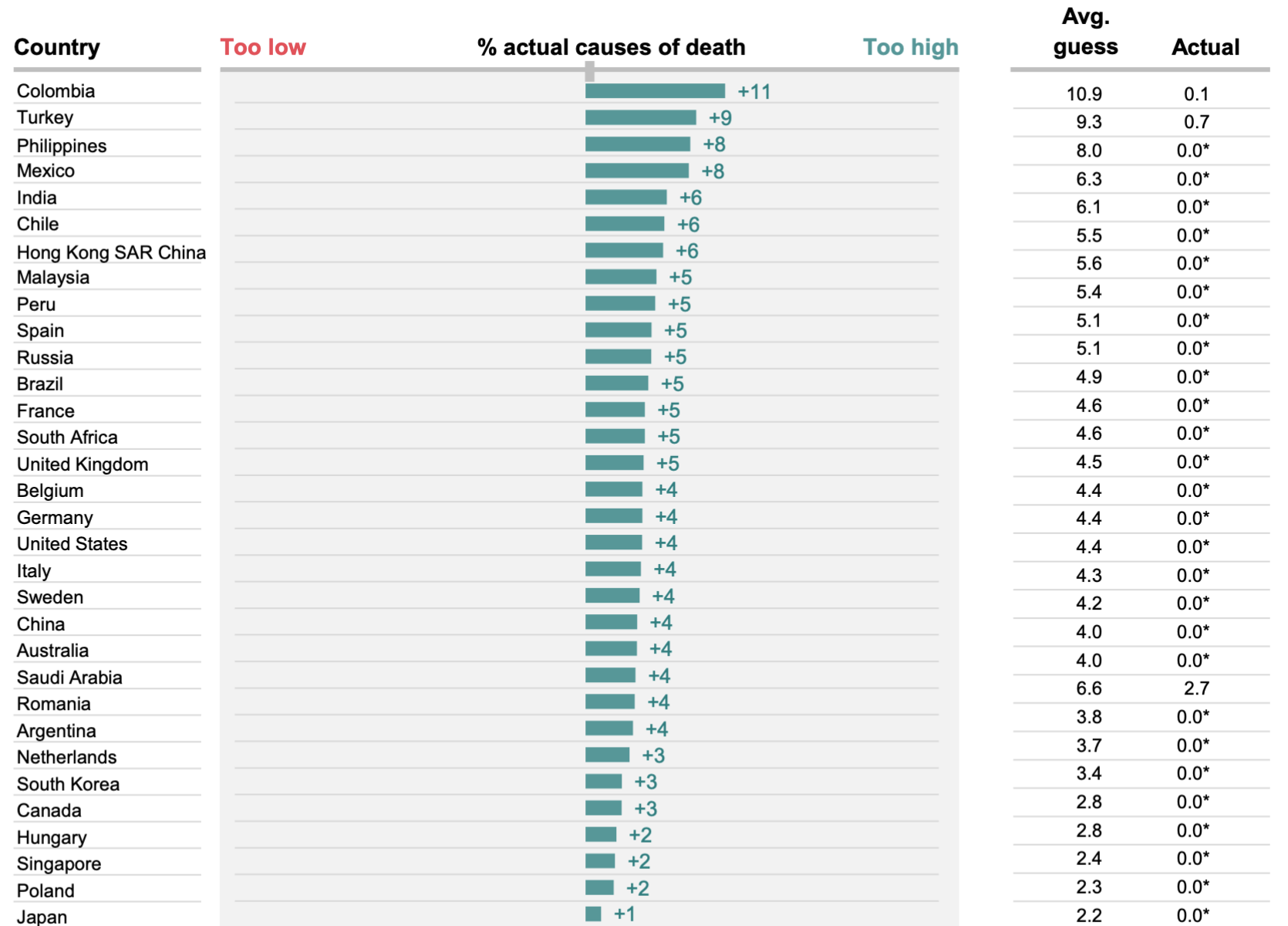


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What is the impact on audiences?

Q. Out of every 100 deaths in [COUNTRY] – about many are a result of terrorism and conflict?

In every country people overestimate the proportion of people killed by terrorism and conflict.

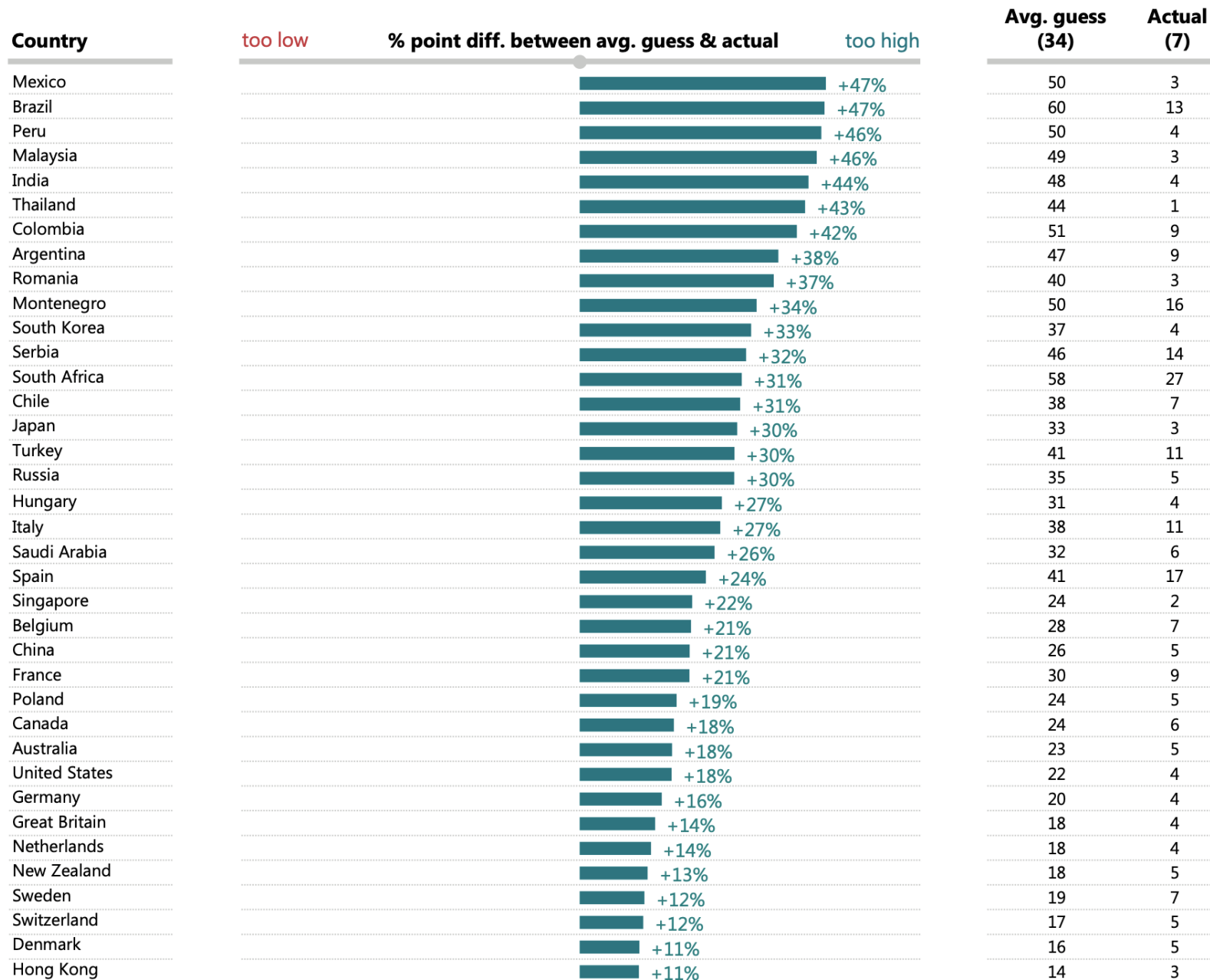


Please see <http://perils.ipsos.com/> for full details of all sources.

*Indicates a value higher than 0 but less than 0.5

Q. Out of every 100 people of working age in [COUNTRY], about how many do you think are unemployed and looking for work?

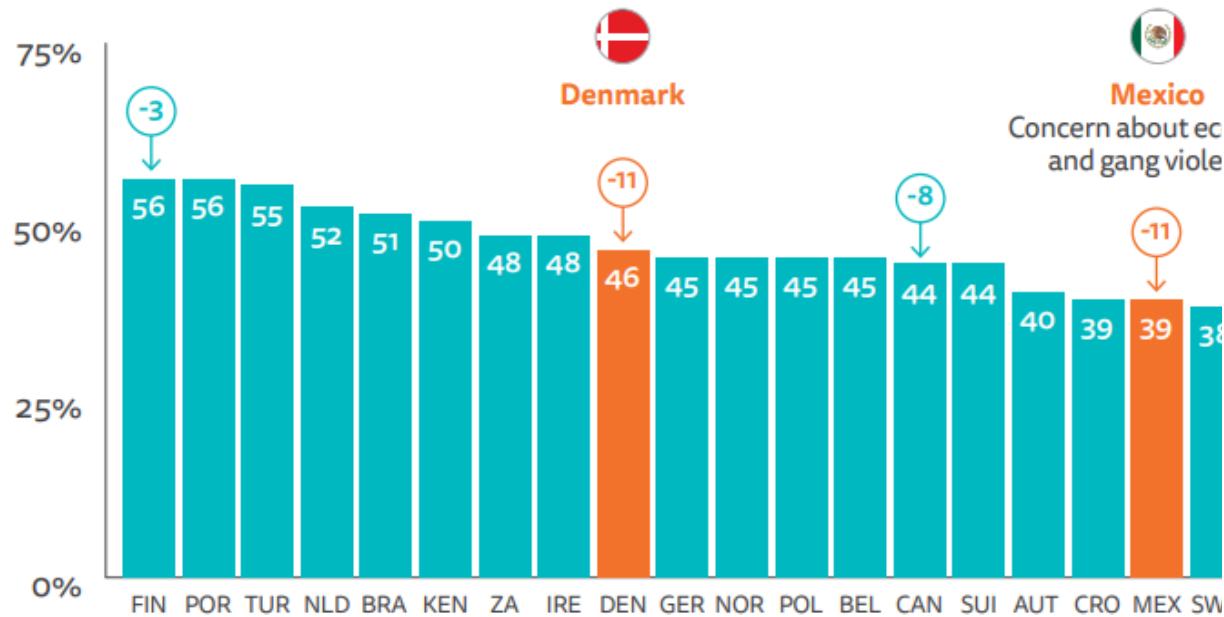
People in all countries hugely overestimate the levels of unemployment in their country. Several countries such as Brazil, Mexico and India, think around half of the working age population is unemployed and seeking work.



Please see <http://perils.ipsos.com/> for full details of all sources.



PROPORTION THAT AGREE THEY CAN TRUST MOST NEWS MOST OF THE TIME – ALL MARKETS



Q6_1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think you can trust

PROPORTION THAT TRUSTS MOST NEWS MOST OF THE TIME – ALL MARKETS



Trust news overall

44% (+6)

Trust news I use = 50%



Trust news in social media

24%

Trust news in search = 34%

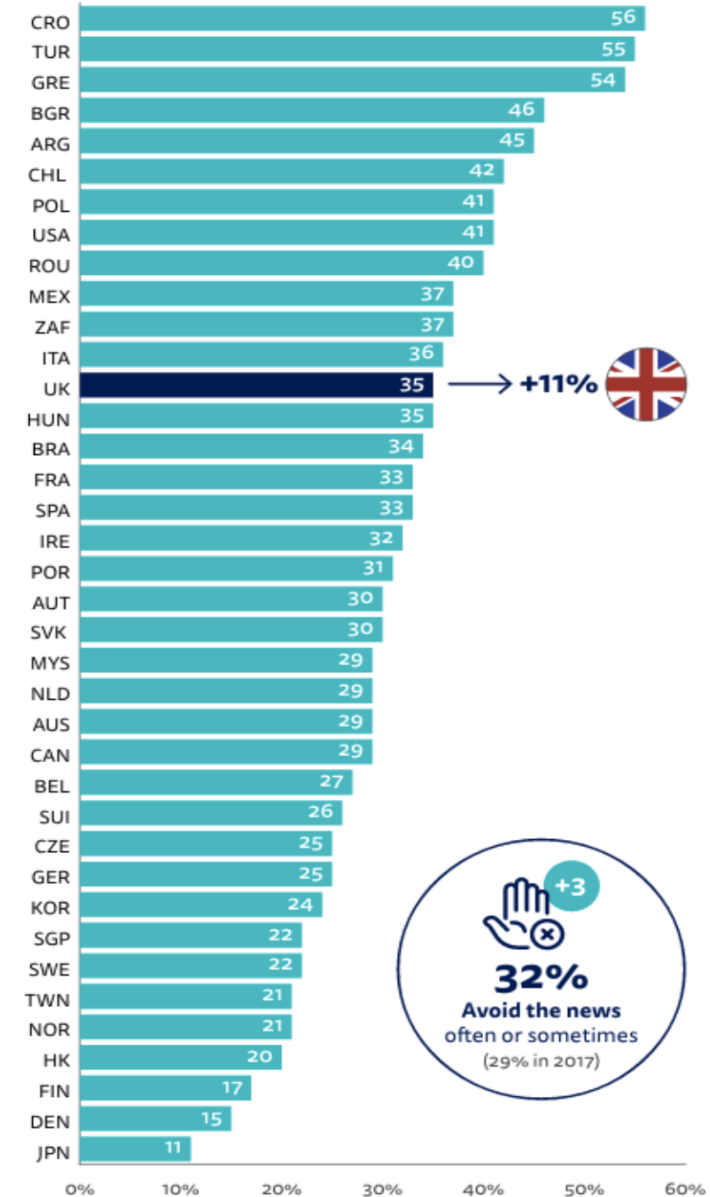
Trust gap has grown

Q6_1/2/3/4. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: I think you can trust the news/news I use/news in social media/news in search most of the time. Base: Total sample in all markets: 92,372.

NEWS AVOIDANCE (and/or NEWS FATIGUE)

- 32% Avoid the news often or sometimes

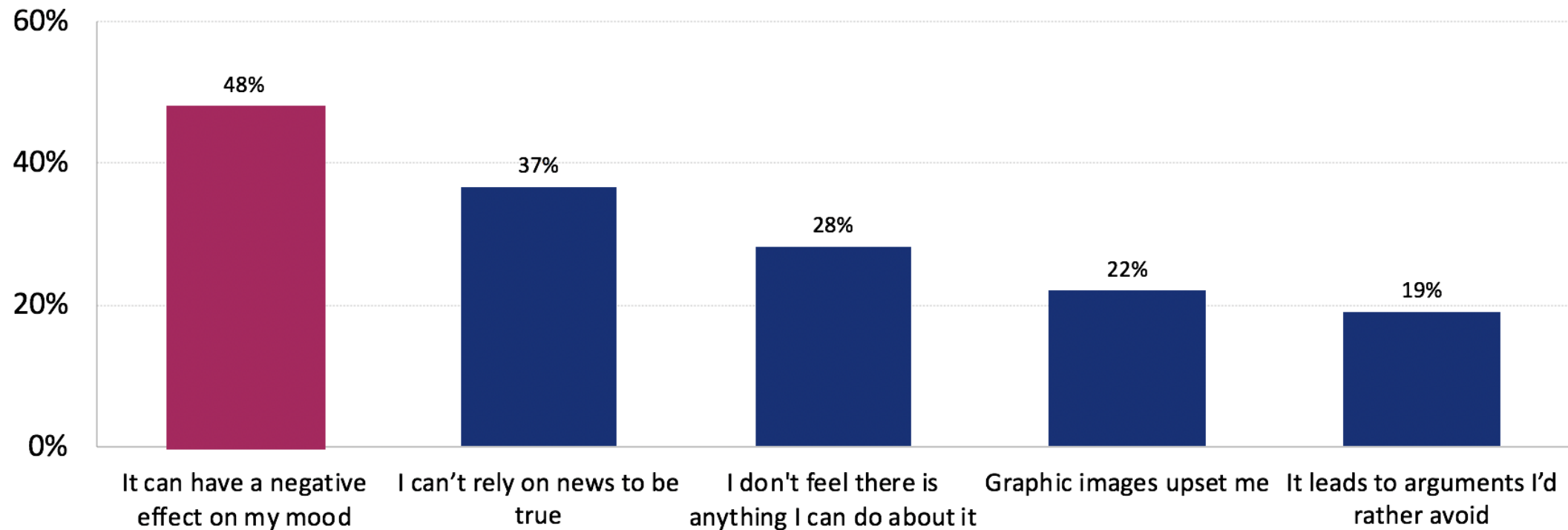
PROPORTION THAT OFTEN OR SOMETIMES ACTIVELY AVOIDS THE NEWS – ALL MARKETS



Q1d1_2017. Do you find yourself actively trying to avoid news these days? Base: Total sample in each country = 2000, Taiwan = 1005.

Reasons for avoiding the news (all countries)

NEGATIVITY, FEELING OF HELPLESSNESS AND LACK OF TRUST ARE ALL KEY REASONS



Base: Frequent News Avoiders in each country (Often/Sometimes): 21011



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Constructive Journalism



constructive

/kən'strʌktɪv/

adjective

1. having or intended to have a useful or beneficial purpose.
"constructive advice"

Similar:

positive

useful

of use

helpful

encouraging

productive



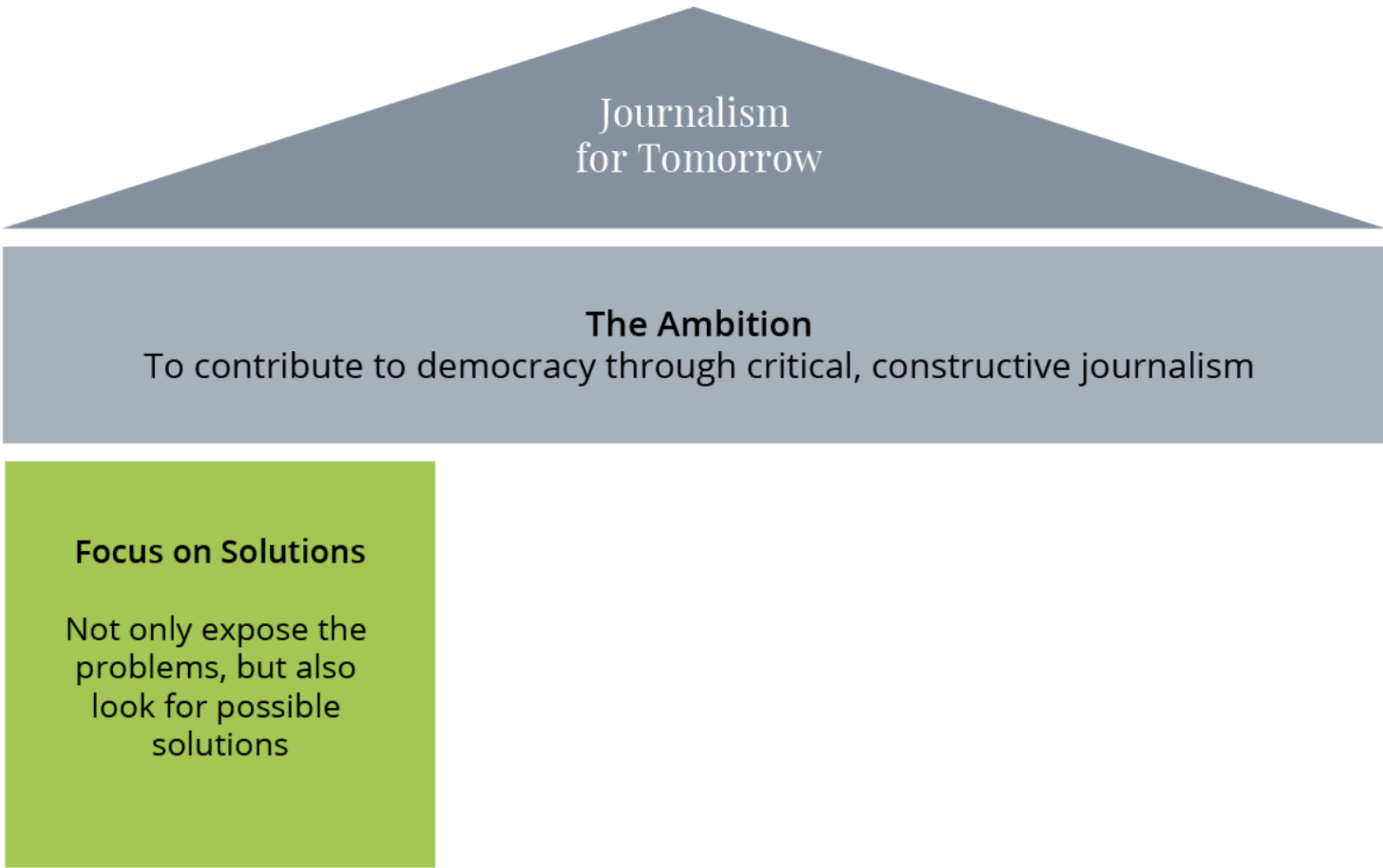
Not only positive news – no
constructive journalism without a
problem

Three kinds of news



	Breaking News	Investigative Journalism	Constructive Journalism
Time	Now	Yesterday	Tomorrow
Goals	Speed	Blame	Inspiration
Questions	What? When?	Who? Why?	What now? How?
Style	Dramatic	Critical	Curious
Role	Police	Judge	Facilitator
Focus	Drama	Crooks and Victims	Solutions and Best practice





Journalism for Tomorrow

The Ambition

To contribute to democracy through critical, constructive journalism

Focus on Solutions

Not only expose the
problems, but also
look for possible
solutions

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Not only expose the
problems, but also
look for possible
solutions

Cover Nuances

Strive for the best
obtainable version
of the truth.
See the world with
both eyes

Journalism for Tomorrow

The Ambition

To contribute to democracy through critical, constructive journalism

Focus on Solutions

Not only expose the problems, but also look for possible solutions

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See the world with both eyes

Promote Democratic Conversation

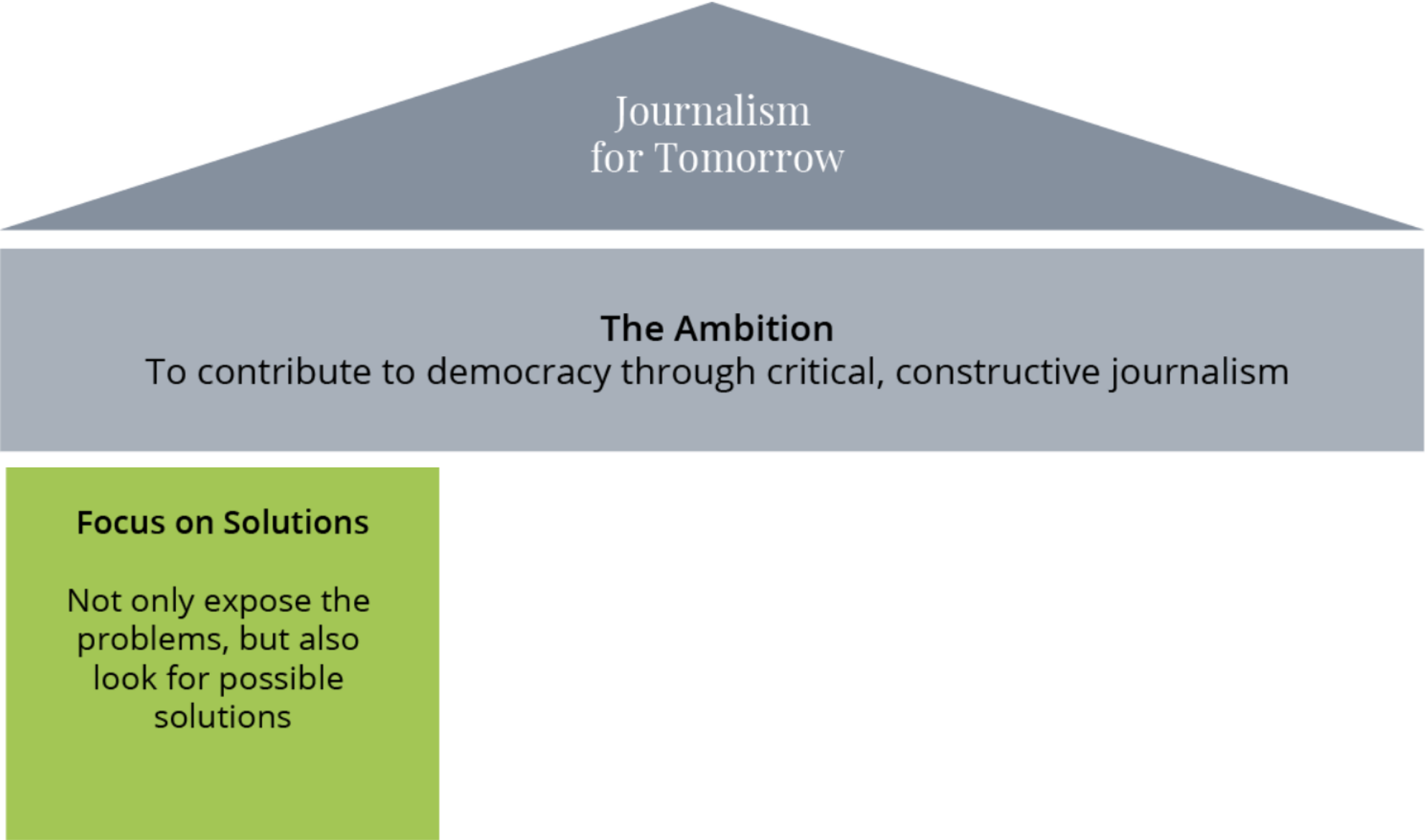
Engage and facilitate debate, including people in the community



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“Superficial public understanding of climate change, transitioning from awareness and concern to action, communicating in deeply politicized and polarized environments, and dealing with the growing sense of overwhelm and hopelessness” *(Moser, 2016)*

Constructive Climate Coverage



Journalism for Tomorrow

The Ambition

To contribute to democracy through critical, constructive journalism

Focus on Solutions

Not only expose the
problems, but also
look for possible
solutions

Consider *Solutions* in your Journalism

euronews.green

NEWS CLIMATE NATURE LIVING ECO-INNOVATION OPINION SERIES ▾

Sweden's innovative wooden skyscraper can capture 9 million kilograms of CO2

CONCLUSION

*"The Danish case thus indicates a greater need for climate journalism to function as a provider of **guidance and solutions** on how to deal with climate change in everyday life and to focus less on political opinions while giving more space to experts".*

Ida Willig, Mark Blach-Ørsten & Rasmus Burkal (2022)

The 20-storey, 75-metre-high Sara Cultural Centre - named after a popular Swedish author - opened its doors last September.

It's yet another **wooden structure** to adorn the streets of Skelleftea - a city that is tackling the climate crisis one newbuild at a time.

"Everyone thought that we were a little bit crazy proposing a building like this in timber," says Robert Schmitz, the architect behind the construction.

WHY



-To avoid newsfatigue
(and get more ordience)



-To avoid hopelessness
and empower people

HOW

-Ask, has anyone solved a
problem like this? How?

Is the solution scaleable, can
we learn from it?

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for Tomorrow

The Ambition

To contribute to democracy through critical, constructive journalism

Cover Nuances

Strive for the best
obtainable version
of the truth.
See the world with
both eyes

Consider *nuances* in your Journalism

Is nitrous oxide a climate risk? Yes, but doctors say effective pain relief in childbirth should be the priority

Experts have queried a report urging women against 'laughing gas' as pain relief during labour due to its environmental impact

- **Isabelle Oderberg: Linking nitrous oxide to climate risk is yet another example of the disdain shown to women's pain**
- **Get our free news app; get our morning email briefing**



📷 Study suggests nitrous oxide represents 7% of global emissions, but experts warn alternative pain relief for women during childbirth are not available at all hospitals. Photograph: damircudic/Getty Images/iStockphoto

Greenpeace and obstetricians have questioned a scientific report warning

WHY



To avoid polarization



To get a true picture of the world and engage curiosity

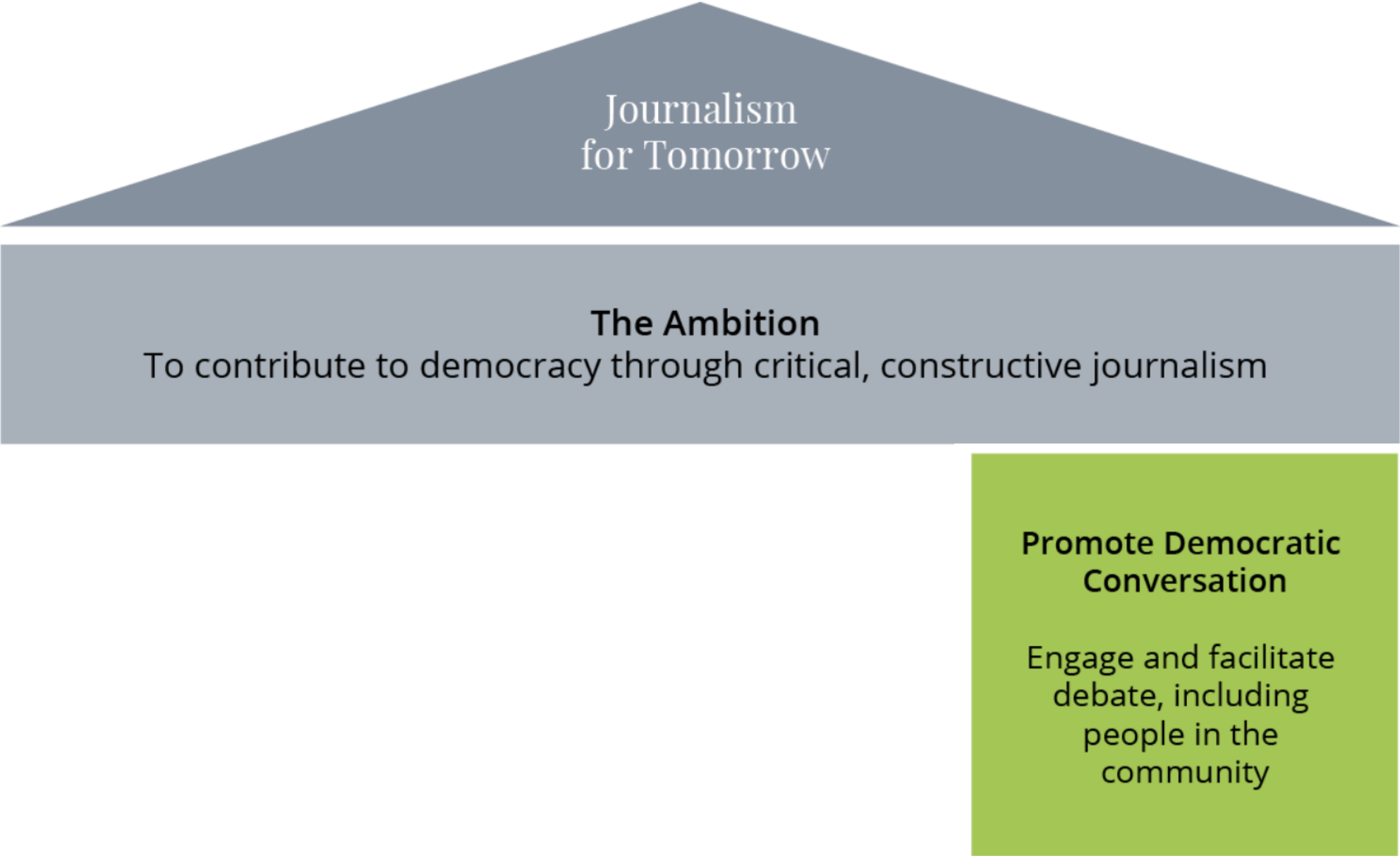
HOW



-Be curious to both sides of a problem.



What is established scientific knowledge and what is less established ?



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The Ambition

To contribute to democracy through critical, constructive journalism

Promote Democratic Conversation

Engage and facilitate
debate, including
people in the
community

Consider promoting democratic conversation

ABC

HOBART

How climate change is
affecting what we grow and
eat

Farmers and scientists are finding new ways to keep food
on the table as rainfall patterns move and heatwaves
increase.
By national regional and rural reporter [Joss Davis](#) and



PLAY

THE CONCLUSION

*“The strong audience appetite to learning more and **becoming more empowered about climate change** in Curious Climate suggests that media organisations, with specialist collaborators, must continue to rethink journalism and engagement models.”*

(Jocelyn Nettlefold & Gretta T. Pecl (2022))

In this panel discussion, the experts from the University
of Tasmania and the Tasmania Fire Service discuss how
climate change will affect bushfires and how firefighters
will need to respond.

On Mornings with Leon Compton.



WHY



To strengthen
democracy



To make necessary
changes

HOW



Collaborate and
reach out to public

Take home messages...

- *News fatigue high and main reason for avoiding news is getting in a bad mood
- *Often media is not telling the best obtainable version of the truth
- *Polarization is a real problem

By using ***constructive journalism*** as a tool to cover climate **SOLUTIONS**, **NUANCES** and **PROMOTE DEMOCRATIC CONVERSATION**, we:

- *Feel less hopeless and have less newsfatigue
- *Get a more true view of the world and avoid polarization
- *Get opportunities to engage and empower people.

GOOGLE DOC: shorturl.at/juxUZ

10 vital things to make people read, listen and watch when doing climate-journalism

A one-pager to bring knowledge out of the conference and into the newsrooms

Please remember¹

1. Tell about the **solutions** to the climate-problem you cover. Has anybody solved it? How? Can it be applied in your concrete context?²³⁴⁵
2. Tell climate stories from your **local area**. Use it as can-opener to the bigger picture⁶⁷⁸.
3. **Cover nuances** in your story to highten credibility and avoid polarization. Few people believe the world to be just black and white.⁹
4. Build connections from your story to **everyday life**. *“In order to increase feeling of self-efficiency, frames that are connected to every-day-life, such as economic issues or food and agriculture, induce that “everybody listens, because it affects all of us.”¹⁰¹¹*
5. **Use soft language**, avoid terms like “crises”, “death”, “doomed”, “catastrophe” etc¹². It creates newsfatigue and stop people from engaging.



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Thank you!

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Key scientific books and papers



- Media and Global Climate Knowledge Journalism and the IPCC (2016), Kunelius et al., Palgrave Macmillan
- Climate change and journalism (2022): Negotiating rifts of time, edited by Henrik Bødker and Hanna E. Morris, Routledge.
- Journalism and Climate Crisis (2017): Public Engagement, Media Alternatives. Hackett et al., Routledge.
- Zelizer, B (2015) Terms of Choice: Uncertainty, Journalism, and Crisis. *Journal of Communication* 65 (5): 888-908
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- Schäfer, M. S. & Painter, J. (2020). Climate journalism in a changing media ecosystem: Assessing the production of climate change-related news around the world: *WIREs Climate Change* 12(1), 1-20.
- Moser, S. C. (2016). Reflections on climate change communication research and practice in the second decade of the 21st century: what more is there to say? *WIREs Climate Change* 7(3): 345-369.
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- Ida Willig, Mark Blach-Ørsten & Rasmus Burkal (2022) What is 'Good' ClimateJournalism? Public Perceptions of Climate Journalism in Denmark, *Journalism Practice*, 16:2-3,520-539.
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