



REUTERS INSTITUTE
FOR THE STUDY OF JOURNALISM

What Research Tells Us About Trust in News in the Digital World

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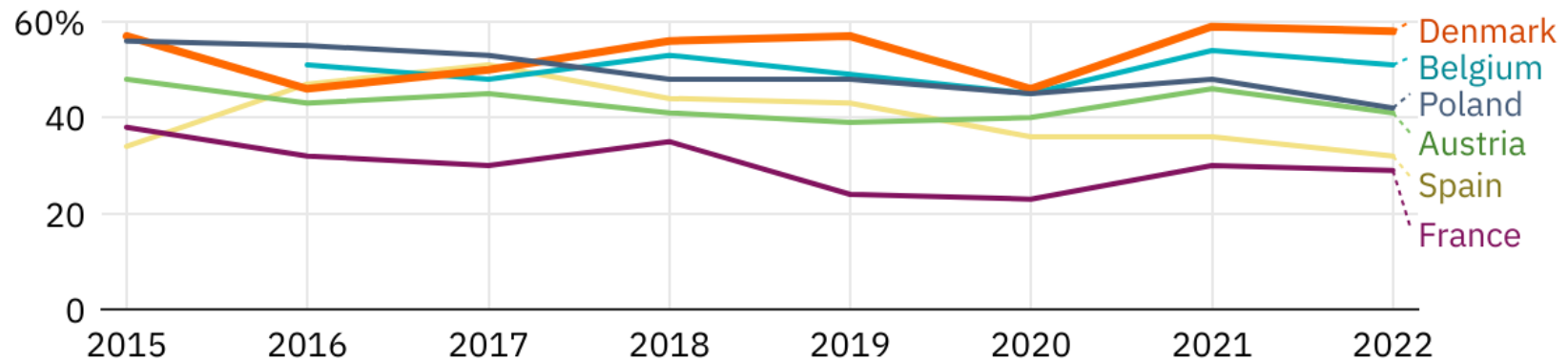


Overview of this presentation

1. Trends in trust in news
 - Factors shaping trust in news
2. Trust in a changing media environment
 - Changing news use patterns in a high-choice environment
 - Trust gap on social media
 - Why reliance on digital platforms matters for trust
3. Considerations for building trust

Downward trend in many, but not all, countries

Trust in News across Europe (2015–2022)



Source: Reuters Institute Digital News Report (2015–2022)

- Important differences across different news brands and across topics

Factors shaping trust in news

- Political environment
 - “Trust nexus” and audience polarization
- Sociocultural factors
 - “Elite cues” and popular narratives
- Journalistic practices
 - Uneven standards and chronic deficiencies
- **Changing media environment**

Research Article

Caught in the Nexus: A Comparative and Longitudinal Analysis of Public Trust in the Press

The International Journal of Press/Politics
2018, Vol. 23(1) 3–23
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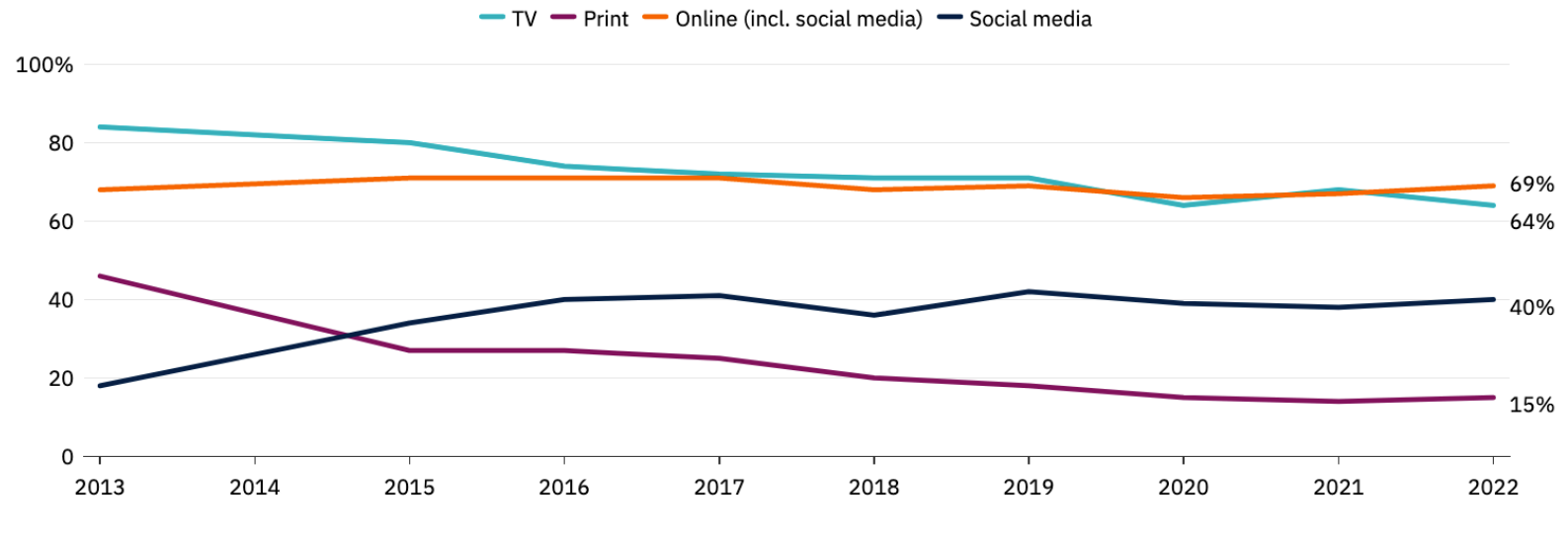


Changing news sources in a digital world

Sources of news

2013–2022

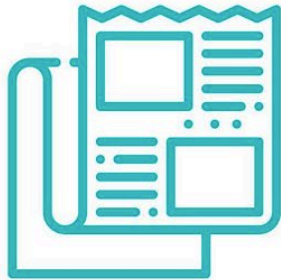
France



Source: [Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2022](#). Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

Trust on social media is lower than overall

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%

- Some research suggests higher use of SM for news is associated with lower trust in general (Park et al. 2020)

Source: [Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2021](#). Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

Platforms shape news consumption in ways that may matter for trust

- News consumption is often **less habitual** and **more incidental** (e.g. Boczkowski et al., 2018)
- People encounter **more varied sources** and may struggle to differentiate between them
 - People **have a harder time recalling the sources** of news on social media or search (Kalogeropoulos, Fletcher, & Nielsen, 2018)
 - Many say they **don't pay attention** or are **unfamiliar** with sources on social media (Pew Research Center, 2018)
- Need to cope with **abundance of information** and sources
 - “Generalized skepticism” (Fletcher & Nielsen, 2018)
 - Credibility assessment strategies

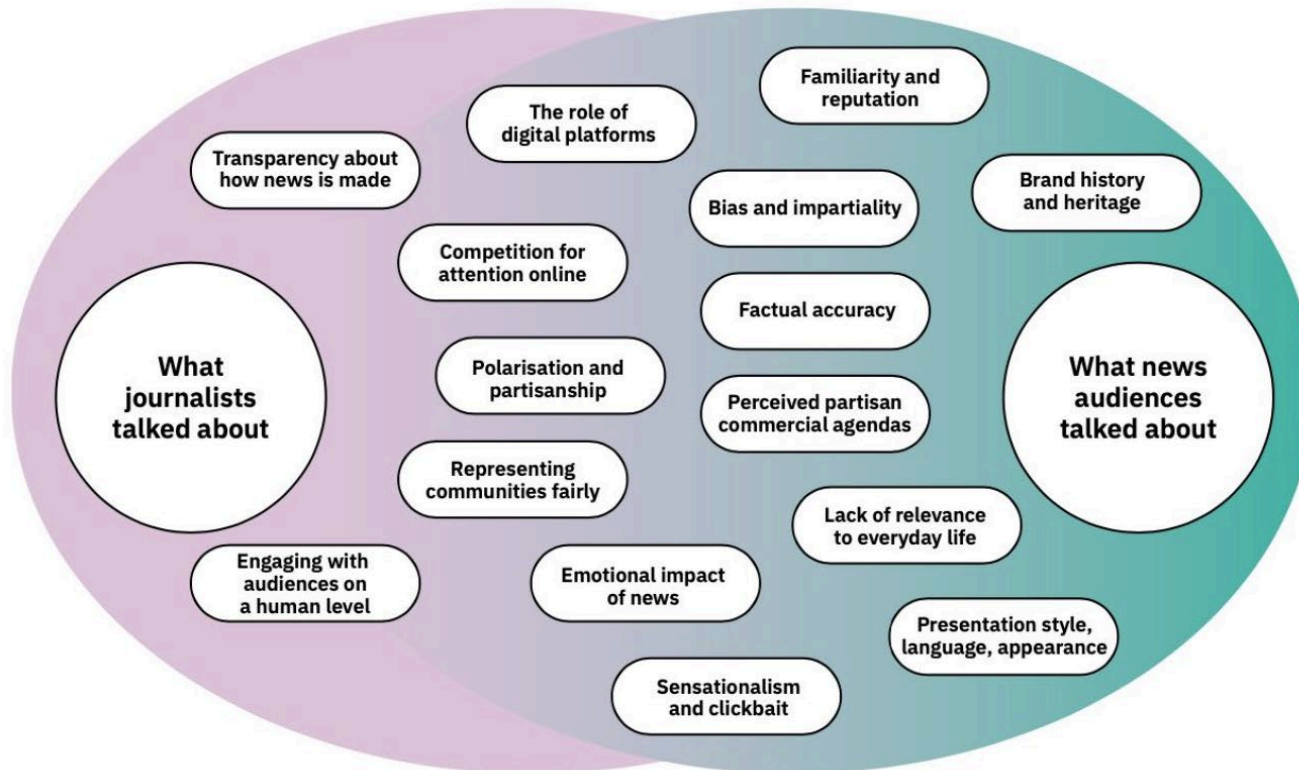
“Snap judgements” for assessing trust online



Source: [*Snap judgements: how audiences who lack trust in news navigate information on digital platforms*](#). Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

Considerations for building trust

How journalists vs audiences talk about trust in news



Source: [*Listening to what trust in news means to users: Qualitative evidence from four countries*](#). Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

A few closing thoughts...

- There is **no single** “trust in news” **problem**
- Engaging with audiences in the digital environment **can involve trade-offs** when it comes to trust
- Research also points to opportunities:
 - Professionally produced **news is still** seen as more trustworthy than news on digital platforms
 - Value of cultivating **brand familiarity** on and offline and tending to how stories are exhibited in digital spaces
 - Need to **meet audiences** where they are



Thank you!

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