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Global majority seeks trustworthy news but may be vulnerable to disinformation

Ipsos research for the Trust Project finds limited appetite to pay for news and more confidence in one's own acumen about the reliability of sources than in other people's

New York, NY, October 14, 2020 — Around the globe, eight in ten adults make sure the news they rely on comes from trustworthy sources, according to [Trust Misplaced?](#), a report from Ipsos and the Trust Project on the future of trust in media. The report is grounded by two Ipsos Global Advisor surveys spanning 29 nations. Half of those surveyed (49%) say they generally make sure the news they read, watch or listen to come from trustworthy sources and one third (33%) say they occasionally do so. Two thirds (64%) say they have easy access to news they can trust.

Behind these encouraging signs, however, lies possible fertile ground for the continued spread of disinformation. Globally, 67% of adults say they only read news they can access for free, while only 29% say they are able and 27% are willing to pay for news from sources they trust. Many are confident in their ability to spot "fake news" (58 %) although they are less confident in their fellow citizens' ability to do so (30%). Only about half of all respondents (46%) believe other countries target people in their country with disinformation, even in the United States (58%) and Great Britain (54%) where it has been widely documented.

Additional Key Findings

- The percentage of adults who seek out sources of trustworthy news at least occasionally ranges from as much as 94% in Peru and 92% in Colombia, Chile, and South Africa to a low of 65% in Japan and 66% in South Korea. It is 88% in the United States (59% generally, 29% occasionally).
- Every country surveyed shows a majority agreeing they have easy access to news they trust and fewer than one in five disagreeing with the sole exception of Japan (25% agree vs. 23% disagree while 53% neither agree nor disagree).
- Globally, most adults surveyed frequently get news from a variety of media sources: Nearly three quarters report getting their news at least three times a week from television (74%) and social media (72%), six in ten from news websites (62%) and news apps (61%), four in ten from radio (42%), and one in four from print papers and magazines (24%).
 - Usage of each of these news sources is somewhat lower in the U.S., suggesting that Americans' news media diet is less varied than that of other people around the world, on average. However, the order of importance of each news source is the same: television (64%), social media (51%) news websites (50%), news apps (40%), radio (32%), print publications (19%)



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- Reported ability to pay for news from trustworthy sources varies widely across countries, from as much as 57% in India, 48% in China and 43% in the Netherlands to just 13% in Japan, 15% in Russia and 18% in Spain and France. Willingness to do so shows a very similar pattern.
- Confidence in one's ability to tell "real news from fake news" is highest in Latin America, the Middle East and English-speaking countries and lowest in Japan, South Korea, continental Europe and Russia. In the U.S., 61% are confident about their ability to discern how reliable news are.
- Globally, the percentage of those confident in their own ability to tell real news is 28 points higher than percentage expressing confidence in their country men and women to do so. The difference exceeds 40 points in Great Britain, Hungary and the United States; in contrast, it is less than 10 points in Saudi Arabia, China and Japan.
- Those who agree with populist or nativist ideas are more prone to being exposed to disinformation:
 - Globally, those who agree that "experts in this country don't understand the lives of people like me" are more likely than those who disagree to only read news they can access for free (72% vs. 62%).
 - Those who agree "we need a strong leader willing to break the rules" and those who agree their country "would be stronger if we stopped immigration" are more likely than those who disagree with those statements to trust news shared by people they only know through the internet (by 10 and 11 points, respectively) and to be confident that the average person can tell real news from fake news (also by 10 and 11 points, respectively).

"Truth is rapidly becoming a subjective, personal concept ruled mostly by emotions. We now speak our truth as opposed to the truth. At least that's what we see reported and lamented by many commentators these days," Darrell Bricker PhD, Global CEO, Ipsos Public Affairs writes in the report. "But this isn't what we are seeing in our surveys. There continue to be points of public consensus on many issues based on a broad acceptance of what we see the truth to be."

"Truth and trustworthiness, while at risk, are clearly sought after across the globe," said Sally Lehrman, CEO and founder of the Trust Project. "This data is a call to action for news organizations to emphasize the values and integrity behind their work and win over a larger audience that is willing to pay."





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About the Study

This study results from a collaboration between Ipsos and the Trust Project to explore four key factors influencing the future of truth and trust in media: technological changes that affect how and where people get news, access and affordability of quality news, ongoing disinformation campaigns, and the extent of nativist and populist sentiment. The Trust Project news partners helped develop scenarios in each area to produce survey topics.

The findings in the report come from two surveys conducted on Ipsos's Global Advisor platform.

The first and main survey was conducted May 22-June 5, 2020 in 27 countries among 18,998 adults aged 18-74 in the United States, Canada, Malaysia, South Africa, and Turkey, and aged 16-74 in 22 other markets: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China (mainland), France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, and Sweden. The second survey (question on social and civic engagement) was conducted June 19-July 3, 2020 among 20,047 adults in the same 27 countries plus Colombia (aged 16-74) and Israel (aged 18-74).

The samples in each of Australia, Brazil, Canada, China (mainland), France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Sweden, and the U.S. consist of approximately 1000 individuals and those in each of Argentina, Belgium, Colombia, Chile, Hungary, India, Israel, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, and Turkey of 500 individuals.

The samples in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the U.S. can be taken as representative of these countries' general adult population under the age of 75.

The samples in Brazil, Chile, China (mainland), Colombia, India, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Turkey are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population. The survey results for these markets should be viewed as reflecting the views of the more "connected" segment of their population.

The data is weighted so that each market's sample composition best reflects the demographic profile of the adult population according to the most recent census data.

Where results do not sum to 100 or the 'difference' appears to be +/-1 more/less than the actual, this may be due to rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses.

The precision of Ipsos online polls are calculated using a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points and of 500 accurate to +/- 4.8 percentage points. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

The publication of these findings abides by local rules and regulations.



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About the Trust Project

The Trust Project leads global news industry efforts to build a more trusted and trustworthy press. News partners within its consortium make commitments to socially responsible publishing and work with technology platforms to affirm and amplify journalism's commitment to transparency, accuracy, inclusion, and fairness so that the public can make informed news choices. More than 200 news sites in Europe, Latin America, Hong Kong, Canada and the United States show the 8 Trust Indicators on their pages. <https://www.thetrustproject.org>

About Ipsos

Ipsos is the world's third largest market research company, present in 90 markets and employing more than 18,000 people.

Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is listed on the Euronext Paris since July 1st, 1999. The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

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