SPOTLIGHT*KSA

VIEWS ON TECH & DIGITAL TRENDS

September - 2025

Ipsos

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Key findings

Connection is going digital, but not replacing face-to-face

For people in Saudi Arabia, social media is the go-to for connection, with 99% using it on a regular basis. 1 in 2 turn to it to keep in touch with friends and family, and about 1 in 3 for entertainment or news. Almost half (47%) spend more time socializing online than in person, with younger adults slightly more inclined to do so. Yet face-to-face interaction remains important, with digital engagement complementing the human touch.

## Daily tools are becoming embedded in daily routines

In Saudi Arabia, technology extends far beyond social networking, underpinning how people shop, travel, learn, and manage finances. In the past six months, 78% ordered food through apps and 75% used mobile banking, with uptake highest among upper-income residents. Streaming is nearly universal, and younger adults lead in ride-hailing and online gaming. From smart home devices to health apps, digital tools have shifted from convenience to necessity across all demographics.

Balancing technological advancement with social impact

In Saudi Arabia, 45% of residents see adopting new technology as essential for societal progress, a view especially common among upper-income groups (61%). Yet this optimism is matched by caution; 41% say technological progress has a negative impact on human relationships. Nostalgia for the pre-digital era also lingers, with 39% believing life was better before the digital era. These views point to a society that embraces innovation but remains mindful of protecting the human connections that matter most.

SOCIAL MEDIA HABITS

Social media penetration and habits

99%
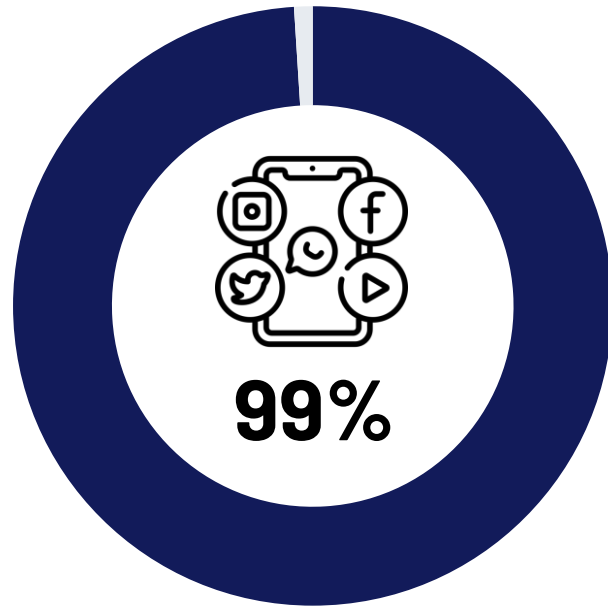
Use social media on a regular basis

47%

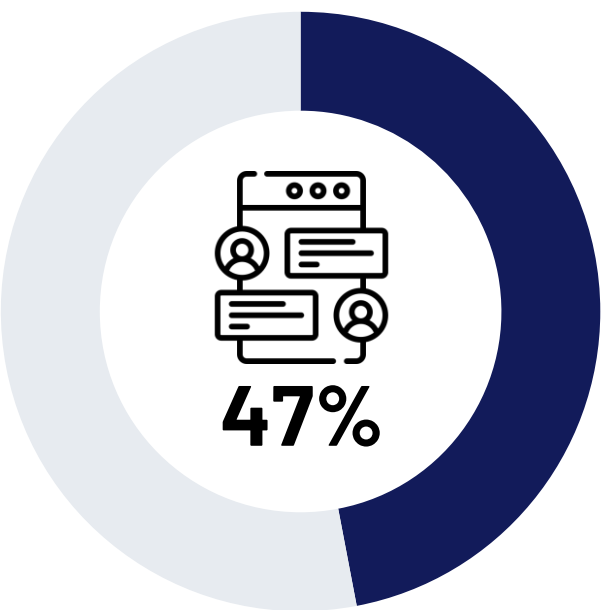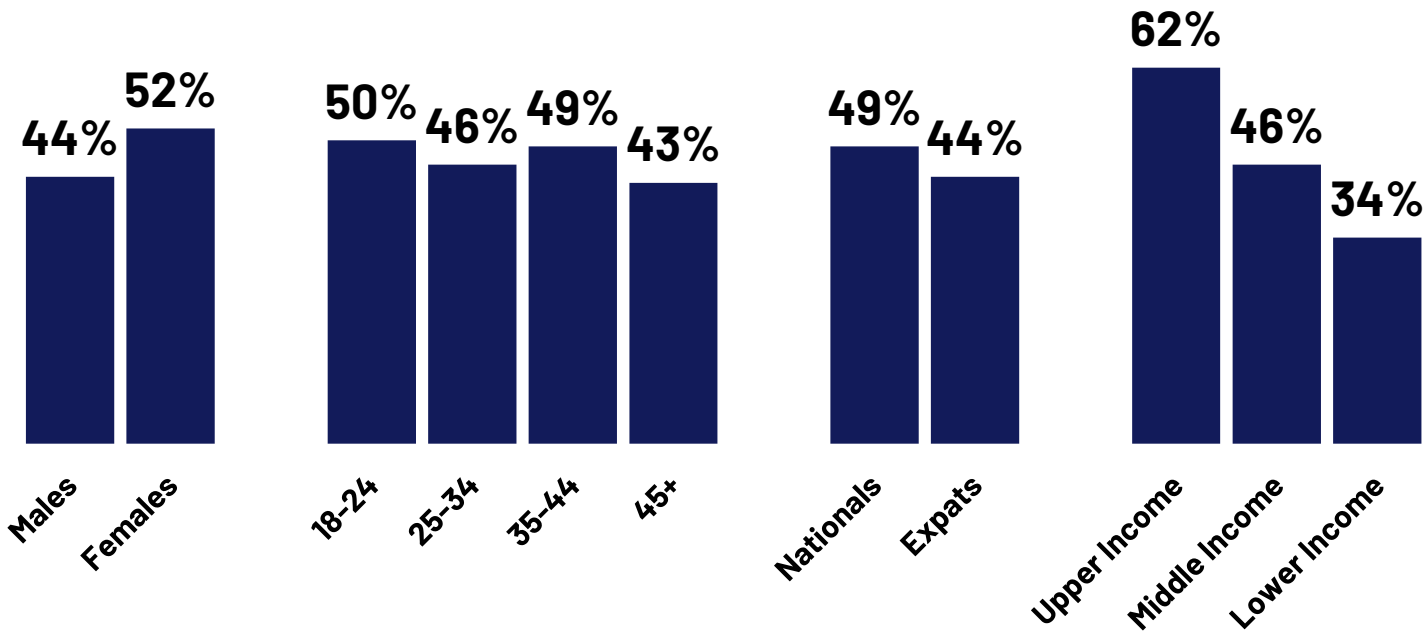Spend more time socializing with friends online than face-to-face*

41%

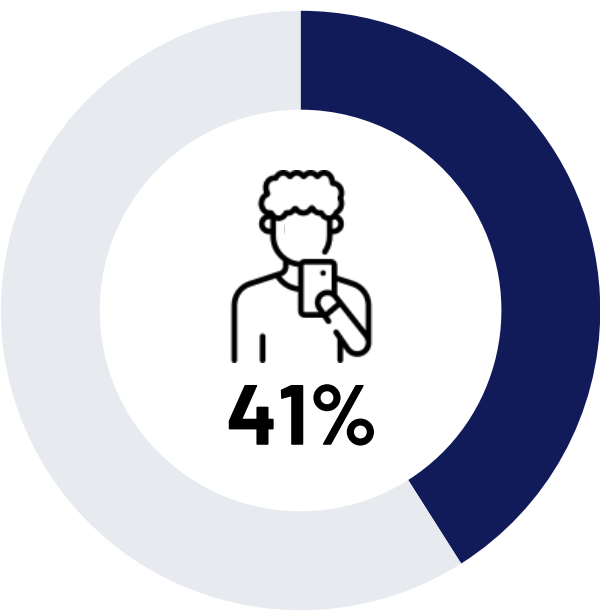Spend too much time on screen and find it difficult to unplug*

* Base: % out those who use social media platforms

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Socializing habits

% – by demographics

47%

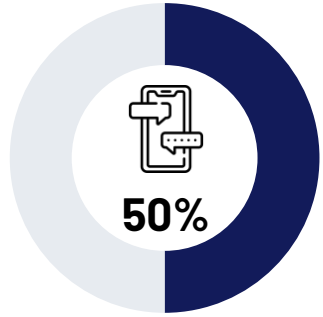Spend more time socializing with friends online than face-to-face

Males 44%	Females 52%	

18-24 50%	25-34 46%	35-44 49%	45+ 43%

Nationals 49%	Expats 44%

Upper Income 62%	Middle Income 46%	Lower Income 34%

Base: % out those who use social media platforms

Ipsos

Screen time habits

% – by demographics

41%

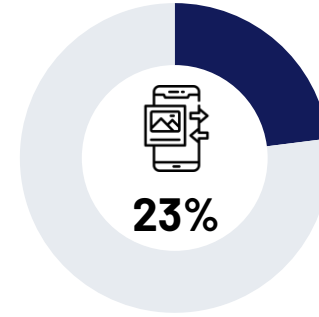Spend too much time on screen and find it difficult to unplug

Males	Females
39%	45%

18-24	25-34	35-44	45+
45%	45%	39%	36%

Nationals	Expats
43%	39%

Upper Income	Middle Income	Lower Income
59%	42%	22%

Ipsos
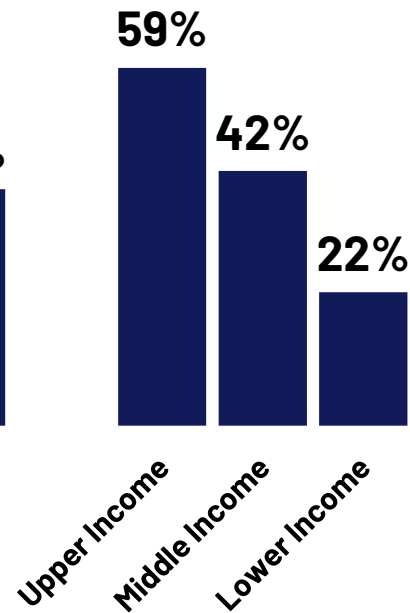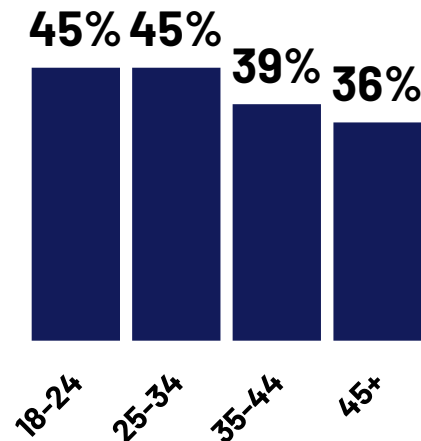
Social media main uses

50%
To stay connected with friends and family
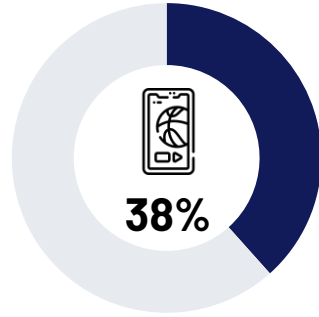
38%
For entertainment and leisure
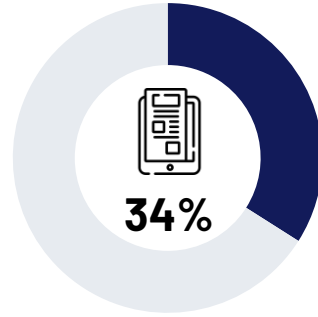
34%
To discover news and information

23%
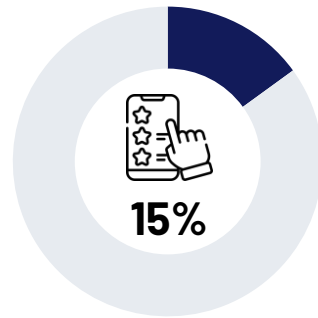To share and view updates, photos or videos
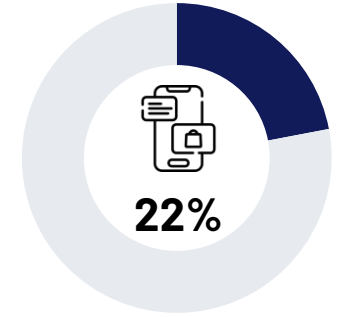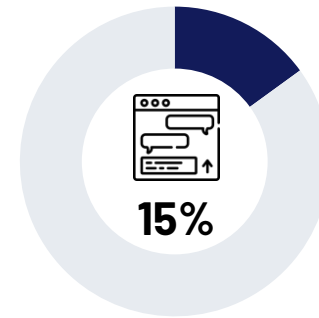
22%
To learn about products
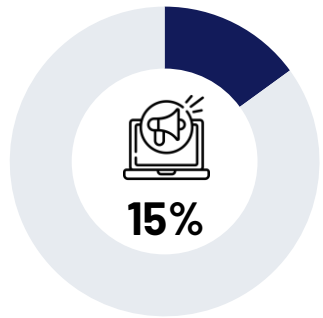
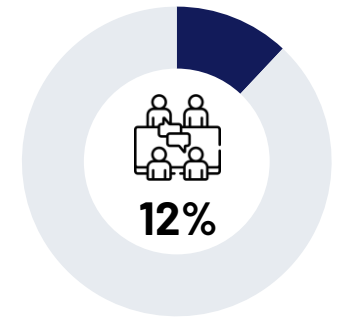**15%**
To promote personal or professional projects
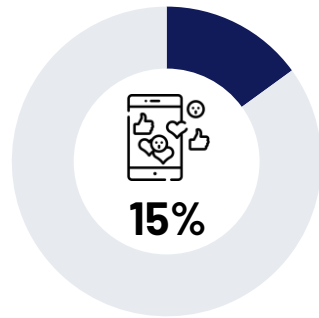
15%
To follow and engage with celebrities or influencers

15%
To follow and engage with brands or businesses

15%
To find and participate in online communities

12%
To participate in professional networking

Base: % out those who use social media platforms

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Social media main uses

% – by demographics

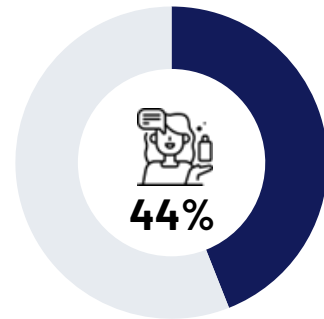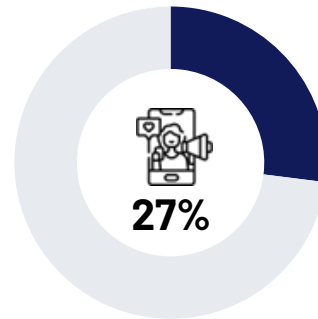|	Stay connected with friends and family	Entertainment and leisure	Discover news and information	Share and view updates, photos or videos	Learn about products	Promote personal or professional projects	Follow and engage with celebrities or influencers	Follow and engage with brands or businesses	Find and participate in online communities	Participate in professional networking
Total	**50%**	**38%**	**34%**	**23%**	**22%**	**15%**	**15%**	**15%**	**15%**	**12%**
Male	51%	34%	36%	21%	16%	17%	13%	15%	17%	13%
Female	48%	44%	30%	26%	31%	12%	19%	15%	13%	10%
18–24	39%	33%	27%	17%	26%	20%	17%	17%	14%	11%
25–34	45%	41%	29%	24%	27%	17%	21%	15%	13%	11%
35–44	49%	40%	40%	26%	21%	15%	15%	16%	15%	16%
45+	65%	37%	38%	24%	11%	7%	7%	11%	19%	8%
Nationals	48%	38%	24%	21%	27%	16%	17%	17%	17%	13%
Expats	52%	38%	46%	27%	14%	13%	14%	12%	13%	10%
Upper Income	50%	39%	30%	21%	34%	17%	18%	15%	20%	15%
Middle Income	51%	39%	29%	23%	19%	15%	17%	16%	14%	12%
Lower Income	45%	33%	50%	24%	20%	10%	9%	11%	14%	9%

Do people follow celebrities and influencers on social media platforms?

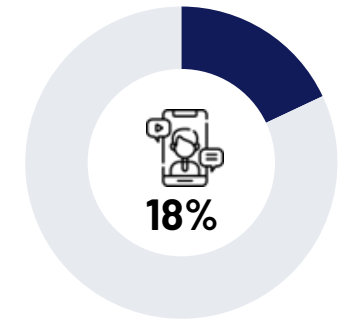**Follow influencers**

44%
Follow local influencers

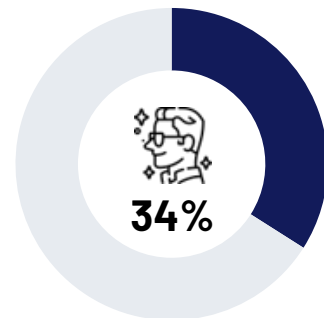**27%**
Follow regional influencers

31%
Follow international influencers

18%
Of expats follow influencers from their home country*

Follow celebrities

34%
Follow local celebrities

18%
Follow regional celebrities

19%
Follow international celebrities

10%
Of expats follow celebrities from their home country*

*Base: % among expats who use social media platforms
Base: % out those who use social media platforms

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Do people follow celebrities and influencers on social media platforms?

% – by demographics

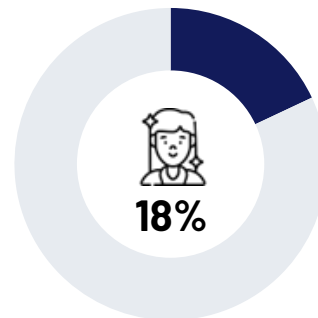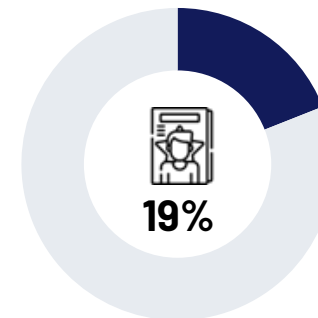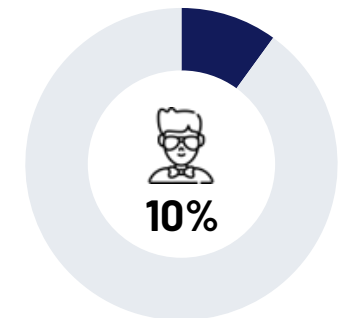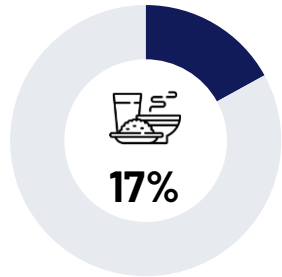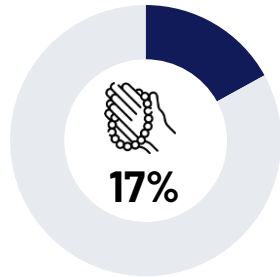|	Follow local influencers	Follow regional influencers	Follow international influencers	Of expats follow influencers from their home country*	Follow local celebrities	Follow regional celebrities	Follow international celebrities	Of expats follow celebrities from their home country*
Total	**44%**	**27%**	**31%**	**18%**	**34%**	**18%**	**19%**	**10%**
Male	43%	26%	29%	21%	35%	16%	21%	12%
Female	45%	29%	35%	14%	33%	21%	17%	8%
18–24	45%	22%	29%	15%	38%	15%	24%	5%
25–34	41%	30%	36%	19%	29%	24%	19%	9%
35–44	45%	32%	29%	17%	41%	22%	17%	9%
45+	45%	23%	29%	21%	31%	10%	18%	16%
Nationals	49%	30%	32%	-	40%	20%	15%	-
Expats	37%	24%	31%	43%	26%	15%	26%	24%
Upper Income	52%	29%	45%	7%	31%	25%	20%	2%
Middle Income	44%	29%	30%	18%	37%	18%	20%	11%
Lower Income	35%	22%	24%	28%	28%	14%	17%	14%

*Base: % among expats who use social media platforms
Base: % out those who use social media platforms

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Types of influencer/celebrity content followed

Top 10

17%
Food

17%
Religion and spirituality

16%
Travel

14%
Comedy
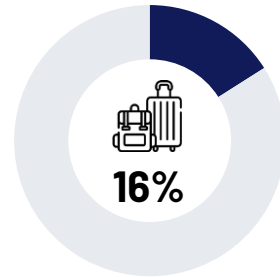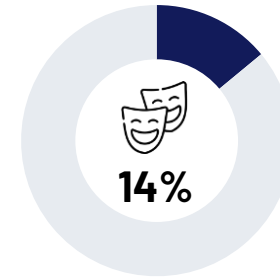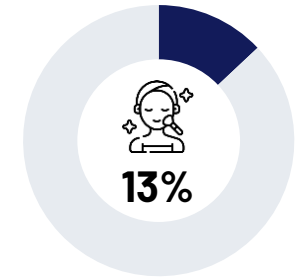
13%
Fashion and beauty

13%
Social issues
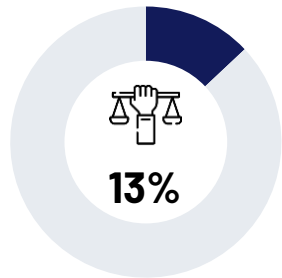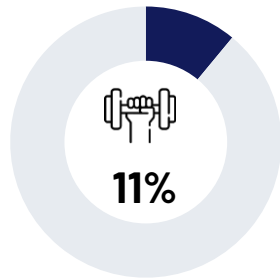
11%
Health, fitness and sports
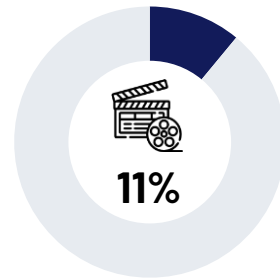
11%
Movies and TV shows

10%
Lifestyle
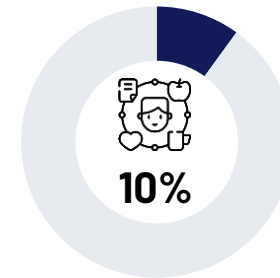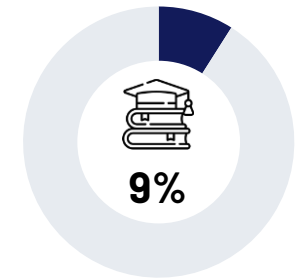
9%
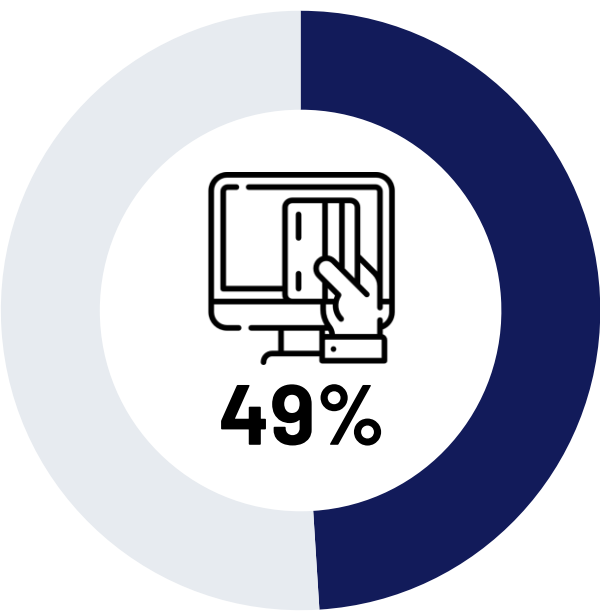Education and learning

DIGITAL CONTENT SUBSCRIPTION

Paid subscriptions

% – by demographics

49%

Paid for digital content
in the past six months

Males	47%
Females	52%
18-24	43%
25-34	61%
35-44	54%
45+	34%
Nationals	57%
Expats	38%
Upper Income	80%
Middle Income	46%
Lower Income	32%

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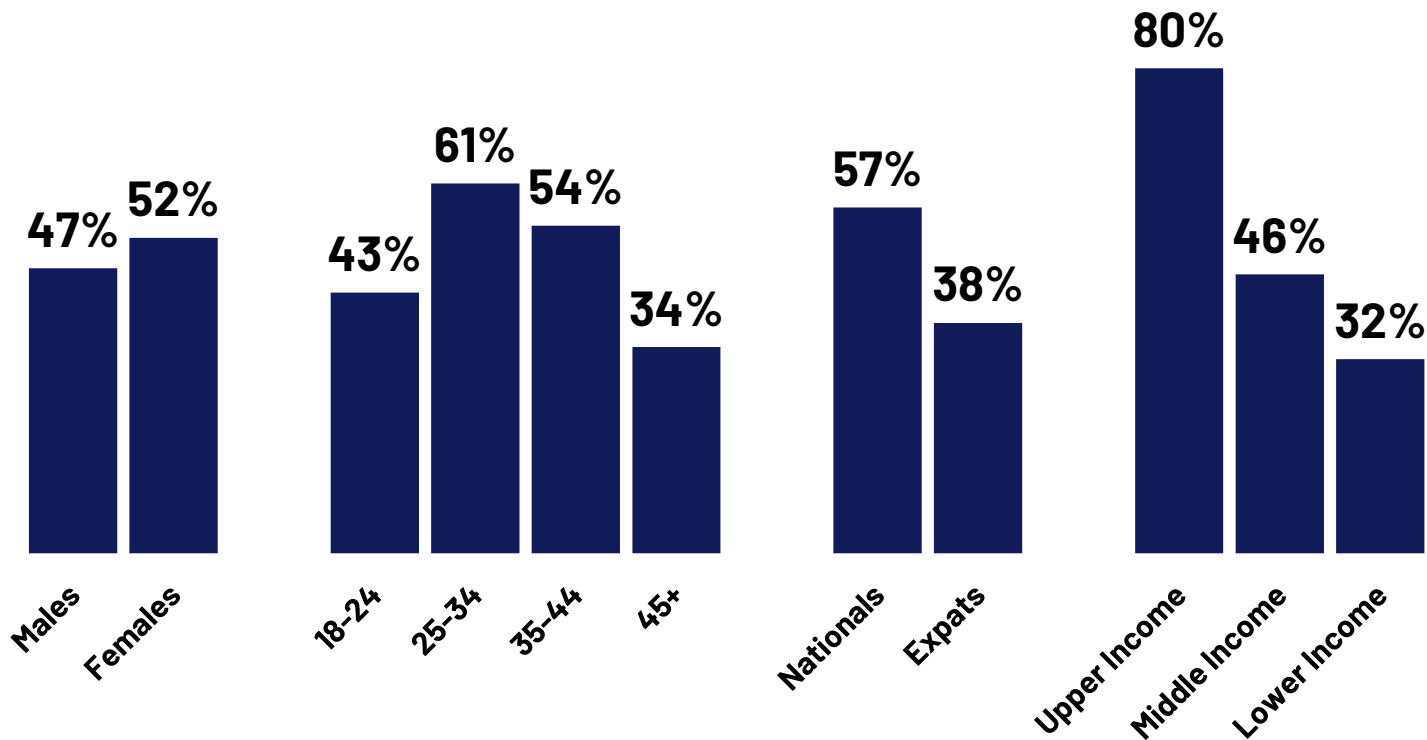
TRENDS ADOPTION

Trends adoption

% distribution of trend adopters

44%
Laggards:
prefer to stay with what they're used to as long as possible and would rather not change if it's not necessary

43%
Main followers:
try out new trends after they become popular, and more people have tried them

13%
Early adopters:
like to be among the first to try out the latest trends and have their own opinion about it

Trends adoption

% distribution of trend adopters – by demographics
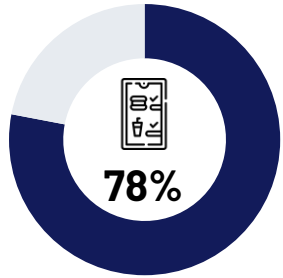
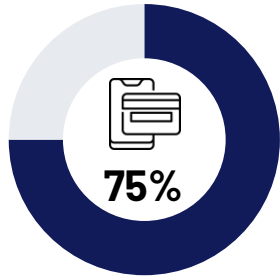|	Laggards	Main Followers	Early Adopters
Total	**44%**	**43%**	**13%**
Male	47%	40%	12%
Female	40%	46%	14%
18-24	50%	38%	13%
25-34	43%	44%	13%
35-44	45%	41%	14%
45+	41%	46%	13%
Nationals	40%	46%	14%
Expats	50%	38%	12%
Upper Income	41%	49%	9%
Middle Income	41%	47%	12%
Lower Income	57%	23%	20%

DIGITAL INTEGRATION IN DAILY LIFE

Technology integration

% usage in the past six months

78% Ordered food using food apps

75% Used mobile banking apps

73% Streamed videos online

68% Used digital wallet apps
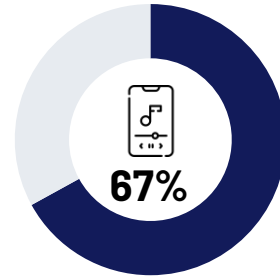
67% Streamed music on websites or apps

66% Used VOIP apps

61% Used ride hailing apps

60% Used video conferencing tools

56% Engaged in online learning or attended virtual classes

56% Used virtual assistant services

55% Used fitness or health tracking apps or devices

50% Used smart home devices or automation technologies

50% Participated in online/mobile gaming or esports activities

35% Used AR or VR apps, devices or experiences

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Technology integration
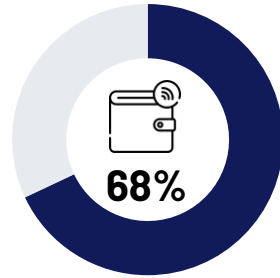
% usage in the past six months - by demographics

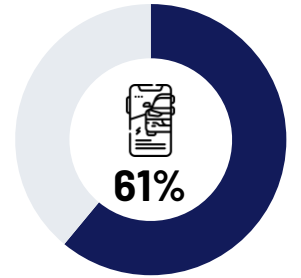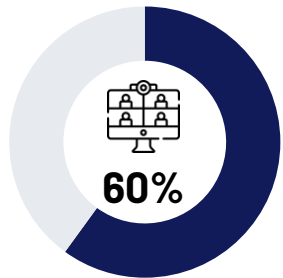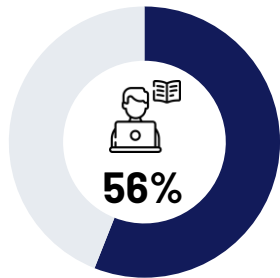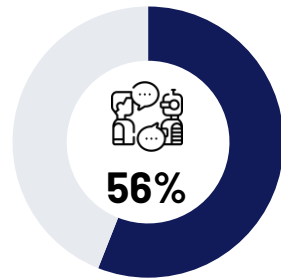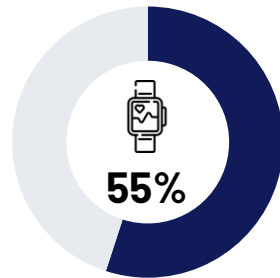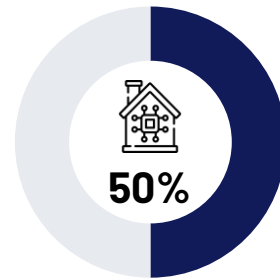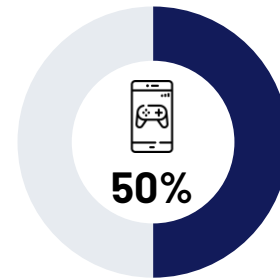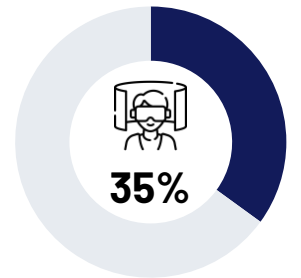|	Ordered food using food apps	Used mobile banking apps	Streamed videos	Used digital wallet apps	Streamed music	Used VOIP apps	Used ride hailing apps	Used video conferencing tools	Engaged in online learning	Used virtual assistant services	Used health tracking apps or devices	Used smart home devices	Participated in online/ mobile gaming	Used AR or VR apps/ devices
Total	**78%**	**75%**	**73%**	**68%**	**67%**	**66%**	**61%**	**60%**	**56%**	**56%**	**55%**	**50%**	**50%**	**35%**
Male	74%	79%	69%	69%	68%	66%	60%	57%	54%	56%	54%	49%	50%	33%
Female	83%	67%	81%	68%	65%	66%	63%	64%	60%	57%	58%	53%	50%	39%
18–24	76%	77%	65%	57%	64%	65%	70%	55%	64%	61%	46%	50%	57%	33%
25–34	76%	74%	74%	70%	69%	64%	61%	62%	59%	58%	60%	52%	54%	36%
35–44	82%	76%	78%	75%	70%	73%	58%	59%	55%	53%	60%	55%	51%	32%
45+	76%	72%	74%	69%	62%	60%	56%	62%	47%	54%	53%	43%	38%	38%
Nationals	80%	75%	76%	71%	71%	65%	65%	63%	58%	61%	62%	58%	58%	39%
Expats	74%	74%	69%	65%	61%	67%	55%	56%	53%	50%	46%	39%	39%	30%
Upper Income	93%	77%	87%	83%	83%	72%	73%	76%	69%	78%	69%	70%	70%	52%
Middle Income	78%	76%	72%	70%	66%	67%	66%	61%	55%	57%	56%	49%	45%	33%
Lower Income	63%	69%	67%	49%	54%	56%	37%	44%	48%	35%	39%	38%	46%	26%

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PERCEPTIONS ON TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

Perceptions on technological progress

% Agree

45%

Adopting new technology is the only way to progress as a society

39%

The world was a better place before we became immersed in technology and digital tools

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Is new technology adoption the only way to progress as a society?

% – by demographics

45%

Adopting new technology is the only way to progress as a society

Males	43%	
Females	48%	

18-24	44%
25-34	48%
35-44	46%
45+	41%

Nationals	49%
Expats	40%

Upper Income	61%
Middle Income	46%
Lower Income	29%
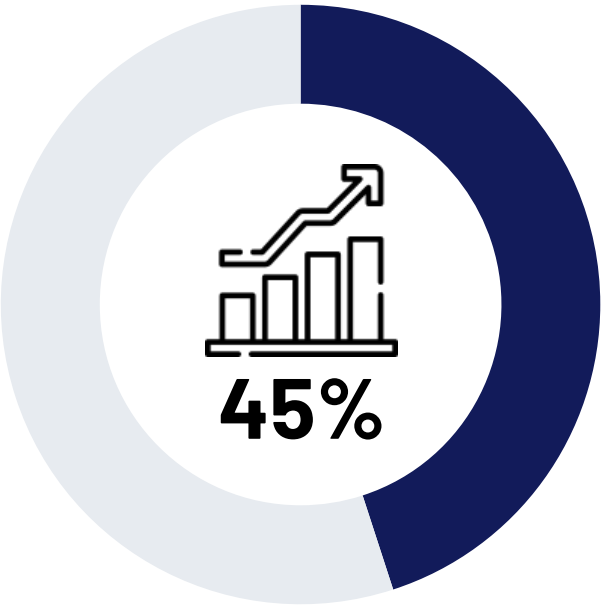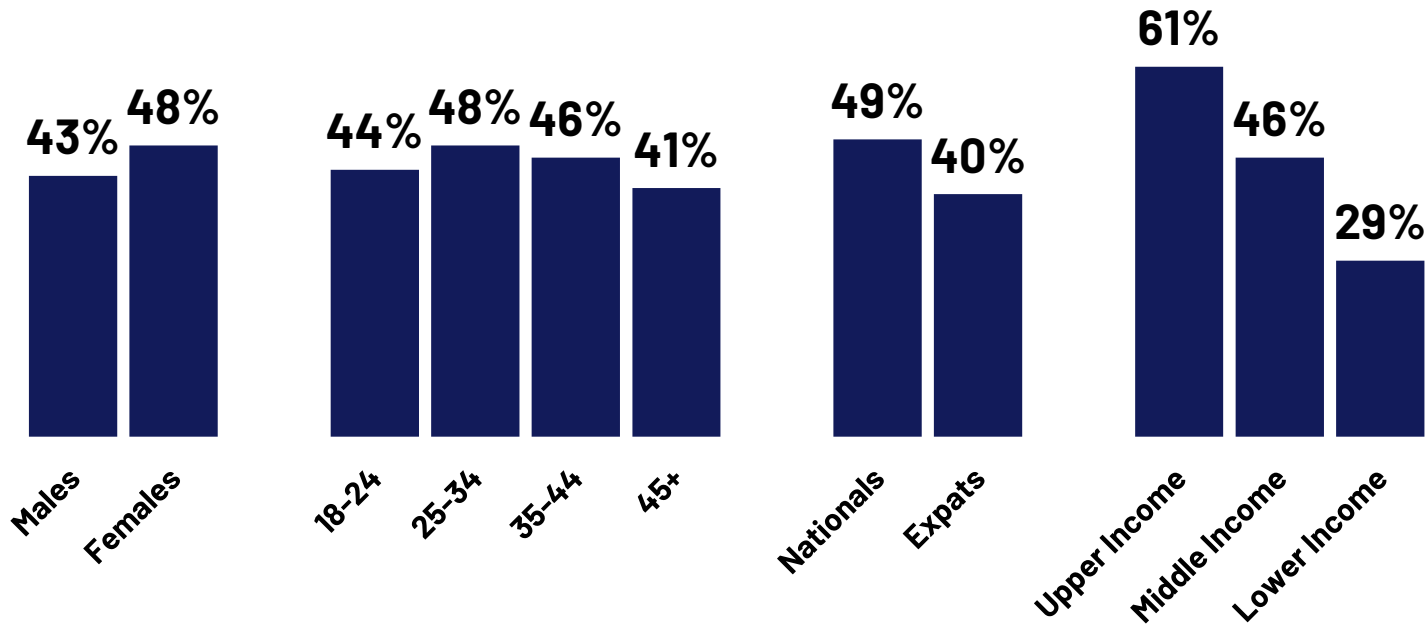
Was the world better before digital technology?

% – by demographics
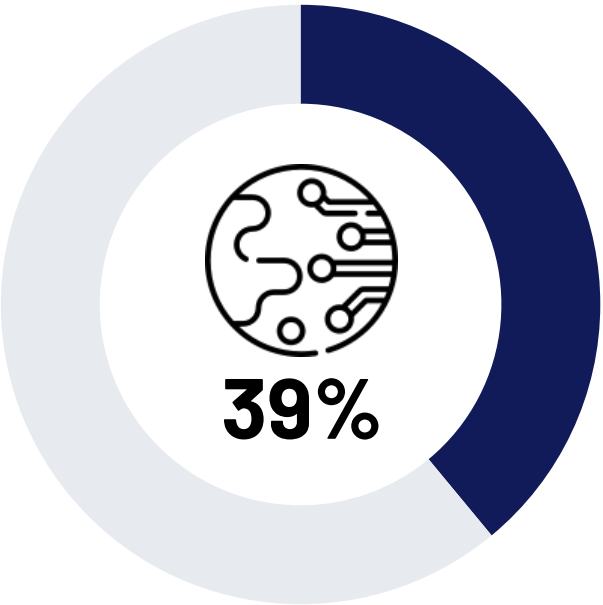
39%

The world was a better place before we became immersed in technology and digital tools

Males	Females
38%	42%

18-24	25-34	35-44	45+
39%	40%	43%	35%

Nationals	Expats
39%	40%

Upper Income	Middle Income	Lower Income
55%	35%	38%
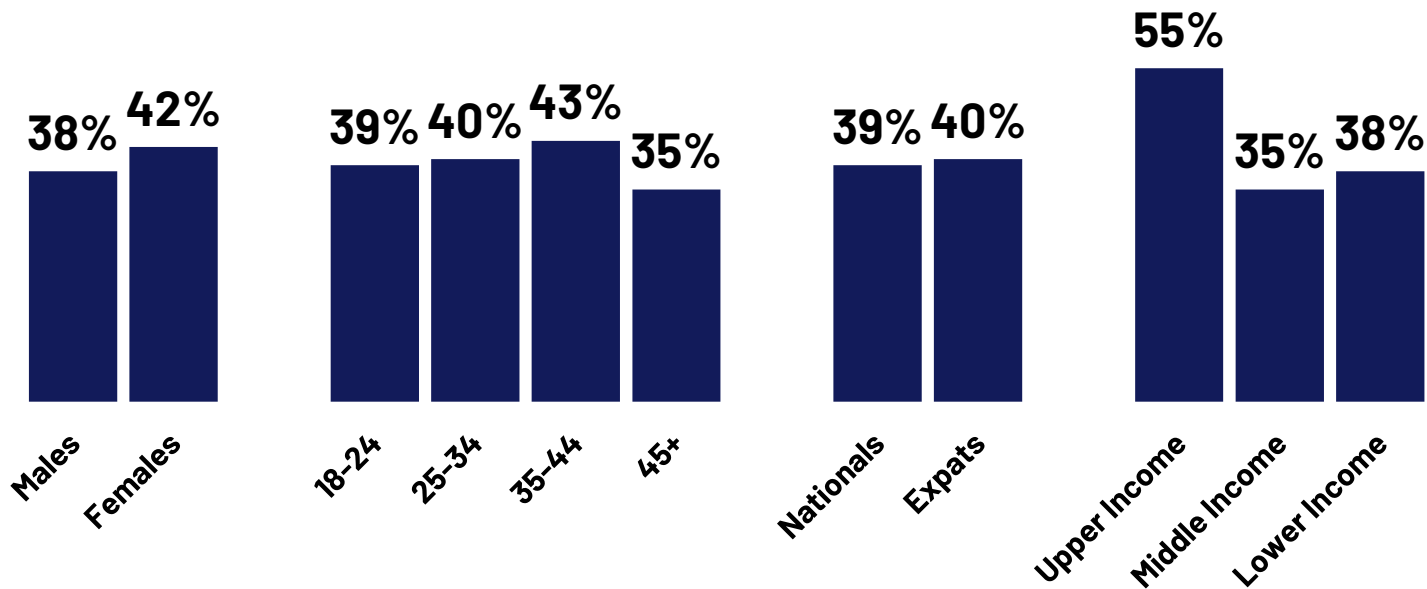
Perceptions on technology's impact on human relationships

% Agree

44%

Technological progress is facilitating new kinds of human relationships

41%

Technological progress has a negative impact on human relationships

Technology-driven changes in human relationships
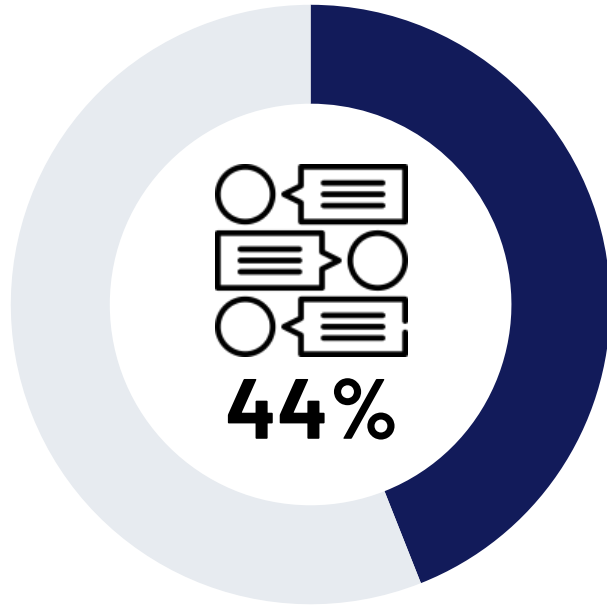
% Agree – by demographics

44%

Technological progress is facilitating new kinds of human relationships

Males 41%	Females 48%		

18-24 36% 25-34 47% 35-44 49% 45+ 43%

Nationals 50% Expats 36%

Upper Income 66% Middle Income 42% Lower Income 31%

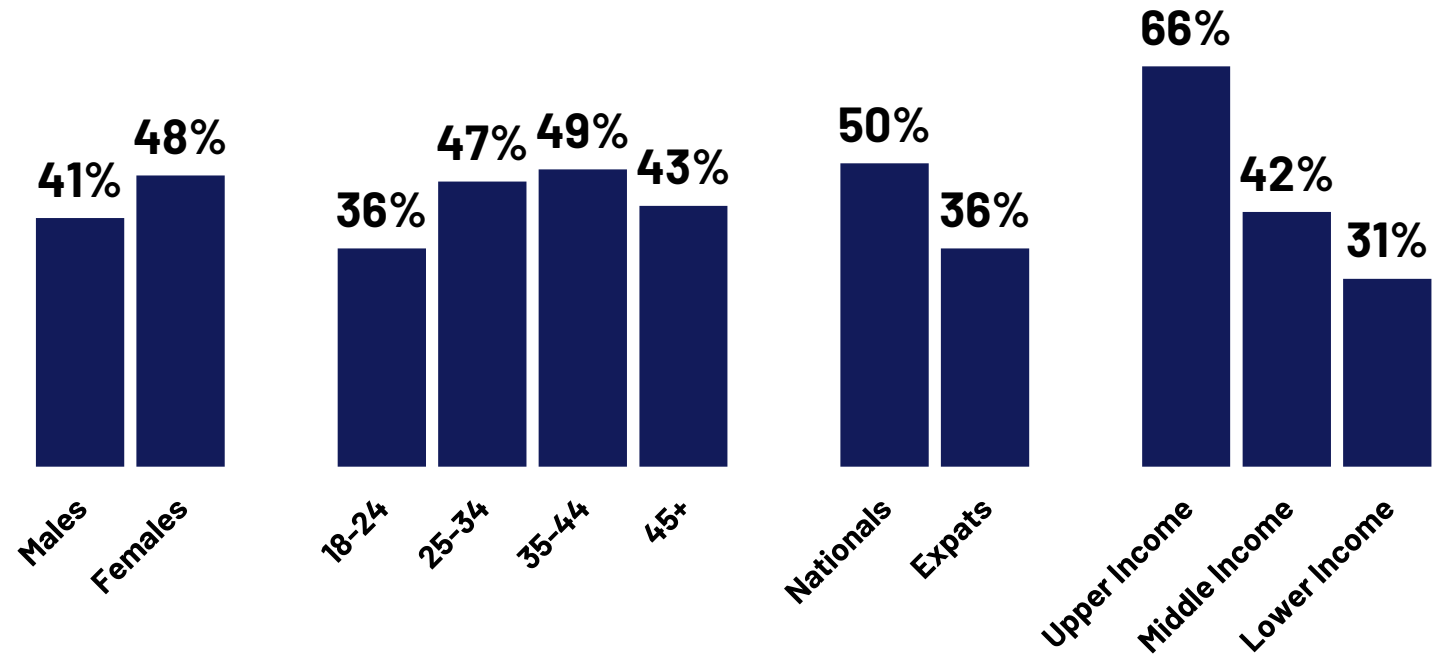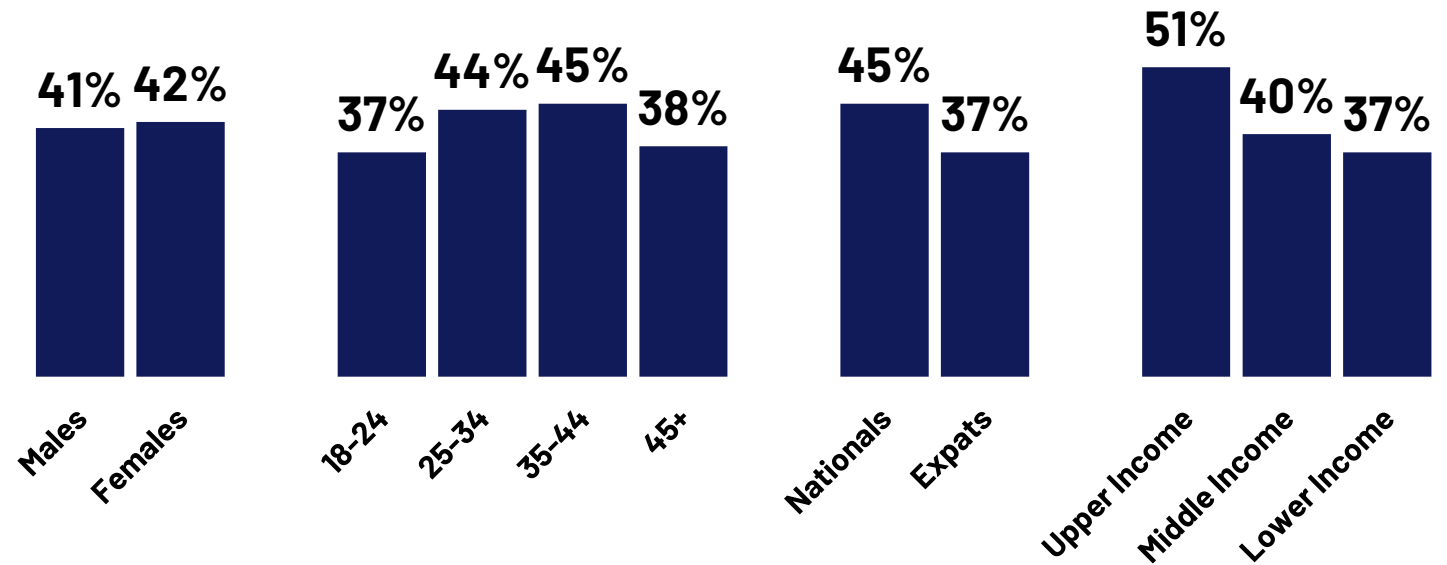# Perceived impact of technology on relationships

% Agree – by demographics

41%

Technological progress has a negative impact on human relationships

Males	Females
41%	42%

18-24	25-34	35-44	45+
37%	44%	45%	38%

Nationals	Expats
45%	37%

Upper Income	Middle Income	Lower Income
51%	40%	37%

Sample and methodology

Sample size
500 respondents

Sample criteria
General public
representative of the population across gender, age (18+),
nationality and SEC

Methodology
The survey was conducted via Ipsos online panel

Geographical coverage
Conducted in Saudi Arabia
with a nationwide coverage

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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