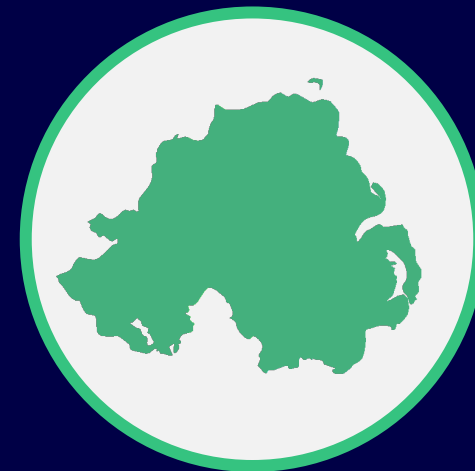


News Report – Northern Ireland

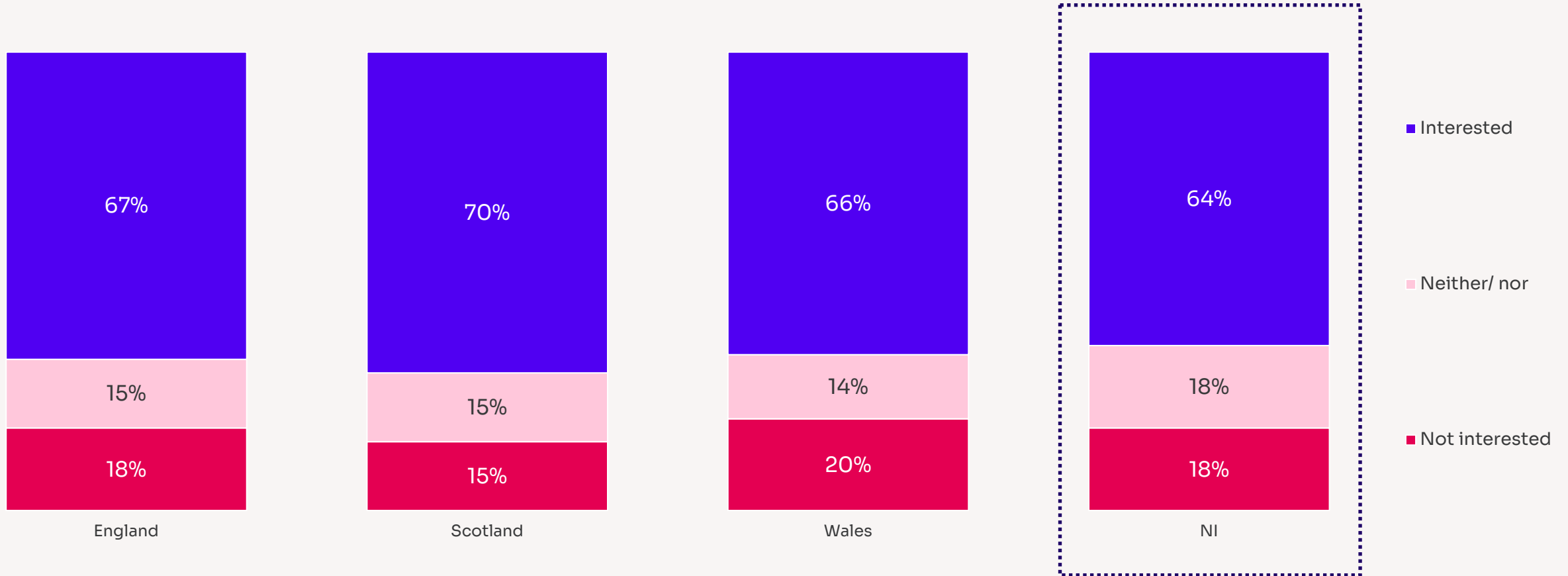
Produced by: Critical Research
Fieldwork: November 2025 to March 2026



15th September 2026

Almost two thirds (64%) of adults in Northern Ireland are interested in news, while close to two in ten (18%) are not interested. There are no significant differences compared to the UK average.

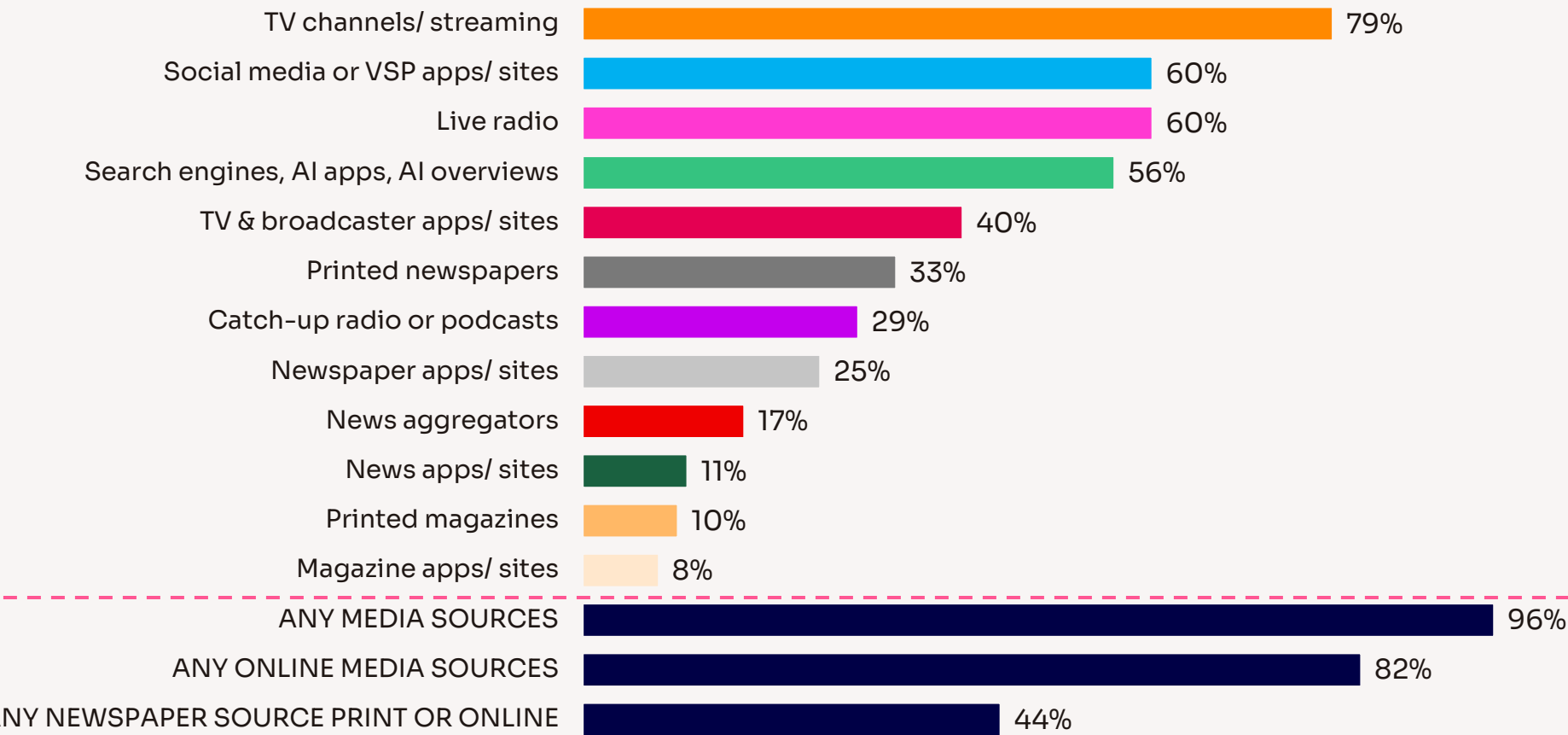
Interest in watching, reading or listening to news: by nation



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+
Question C1. How interested are you in watching, reading or listening to news?
Base: All adults in England (3,597), Scotland (600), Wales (600), Northern Ireland (600)

Nearly all (98%) adults in Northern Ireland have accessed news in the past month, with eight in ten (83%) doing this through online platforms.

Ways of accessing news in the past month, UK wide figures compared with nations

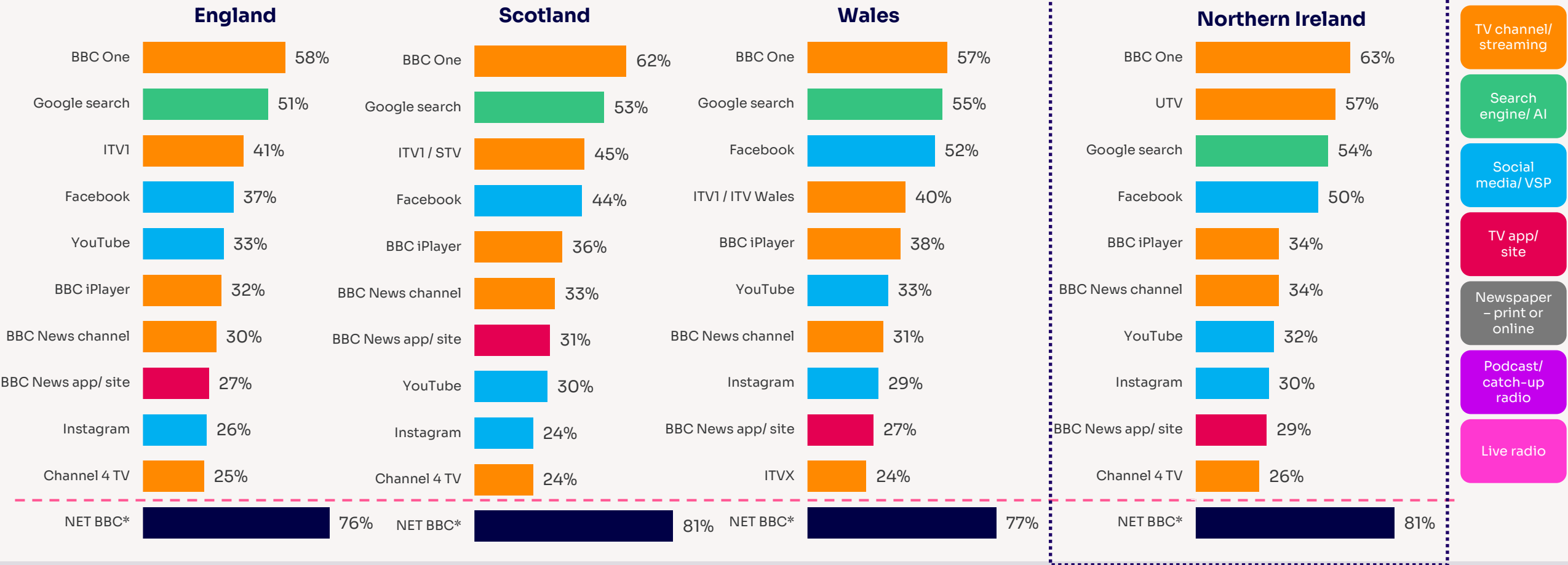


England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
78%	81%	80%	84%
59%	63%	69%	65%
59%	60%	62%	68%
56%	59%	60%	59%
39%	44%	42%	41%
34%	30%	26%	25%
28%	30%	33%	32%
24%	28%	26%	28%
17%	14%	16%	17%
10%	12%	12%	13%
10%	9%	7%	6%
8%	7%	7%	6%
95%	96%	97%	98%
82%	86%	86%	83%
44%	42%	39%	40%

Source: News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults. Question D1-D22. Which, if any, of the following [MEDIA TYPE] have you **seen or heard news** on in the last month? As a reminder... This could be news that you actively watch or listen to and it could be news that you just happen to see or hear. We’re interested in news of all types – whether it’s recent events in politics, sport, entertainment, celebrities, in your local area or around the world. (‘ONLINE MEDIA SOURCES’ INCLUDES TV STREAMING, SOCIAL MEDIA OR VSP APPS/ SITES, SEARCH ENGINES/ AI, TV & BROADCASTER APPS/ SITES, CATCH-UP RADIO/ PODCASTS, NEWSPAPER APPS/ SITES, NEWS AGGREGATORS, NEWS APPS/ SITES, MAGAZINE APPS/ SITES) Base: All adults (5,397). England (3,597), Scotland (600), Wales (600), Northern Ireland (600)

Among people in Northern Ireland, BBC One was the most common way to access news followed by UTV and Google searches.

Top 10 ways to access news in the past month, by nation



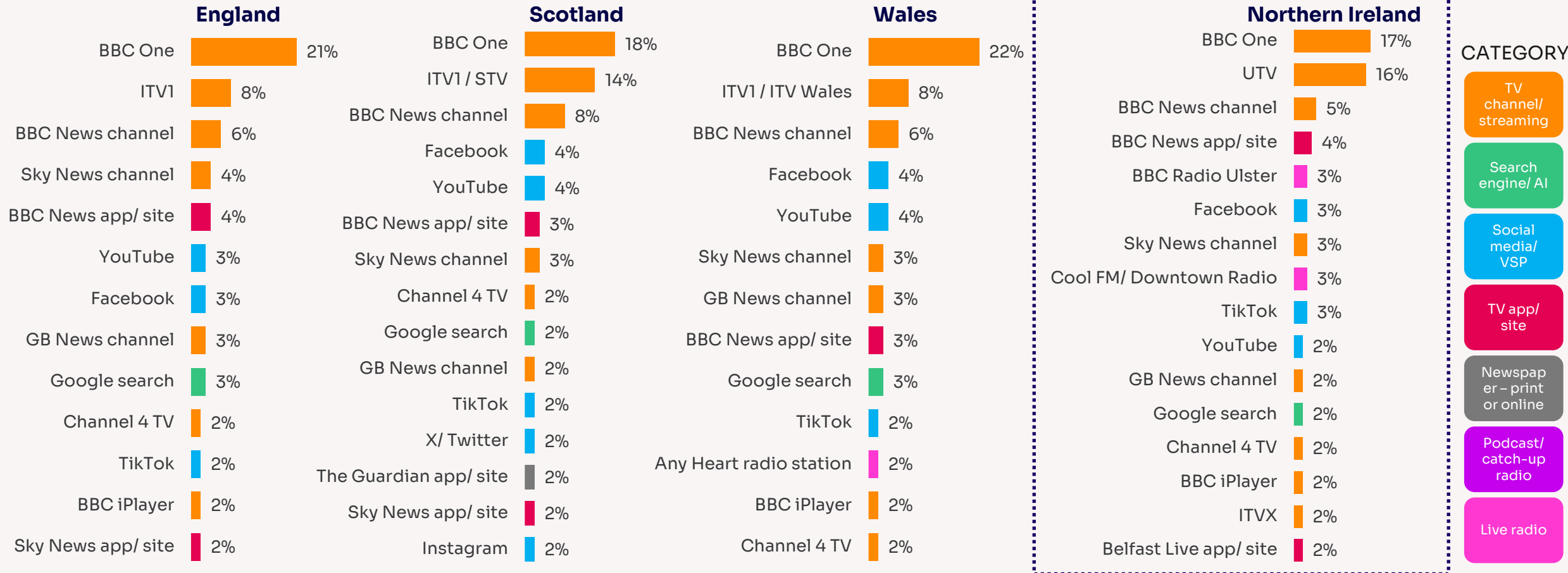
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+

D1-D22. Which, if any, of the following [MEDIA TYPE] have you seen or heard news on in the last month? As a reminder... This could be news that you actively watch or listen to and it could be news that you just happen to see or hear. We're interested in news of all types – whether it's recent events in politics, sport, entertainment, celebrities, in your local area or around the world. *NET BBC includes BBC TV/ BBC iPlayer, BBC apps/ sites, BBC Radio, BBC Sounds

Base: All adults in England (3,597), Scotland (600), Wales (600), Northern Ireland (600)

Adults in Northern Ireland are most likely to consider a TV channel (BBC One and UTV, in particular) as the most important way to access news.

Most important way to access news, by nation



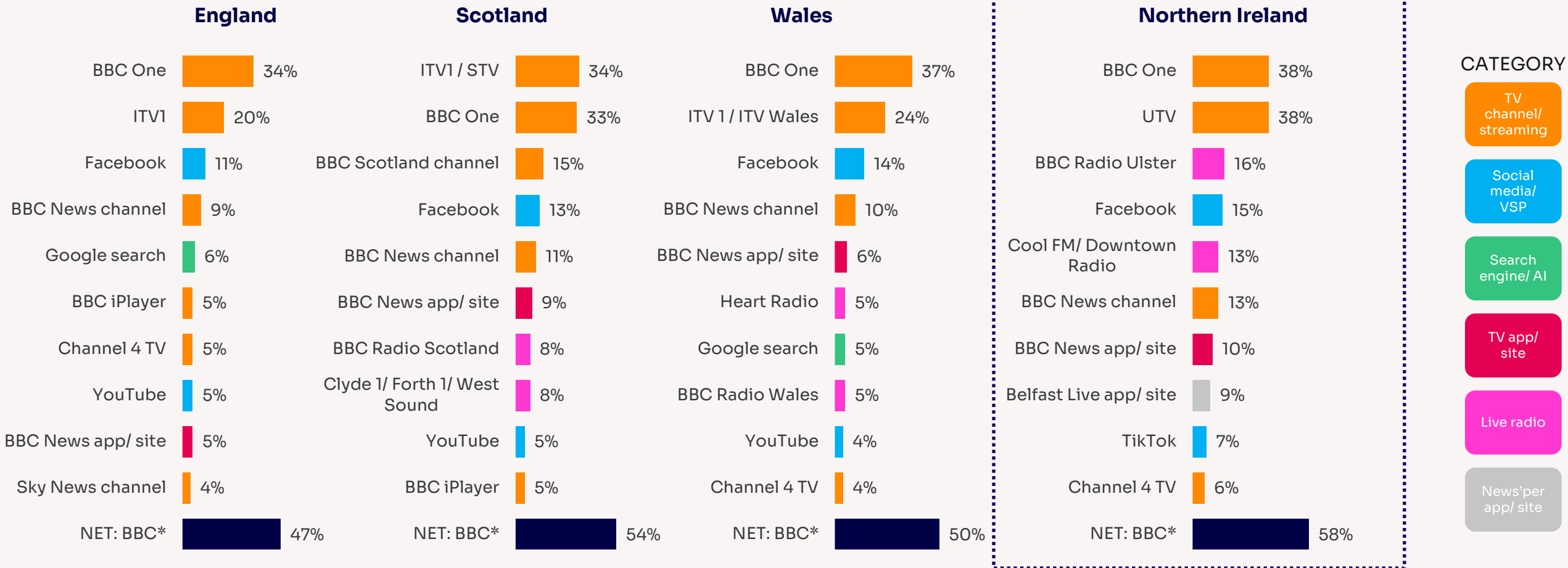
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+

Question E1. Looking at all of the sources of news that you have seen or heard news on in the last month, which **one** do you consider the most important to you personally? (SHOWS MENTIONS FROM 2% OR MORE IN EACH GROUP)

Base: All adults who have seen or heard any news through any sources of news in the last month in England (3,426), Scotland (572), Wales (584), Northern Ireland (586)

Four in ten (38%) adults in Northern Ireland have accessed news about Northern Ireland on BBC One or UTV.

Top 10 individual ways to access news about your region/ nation, by nation



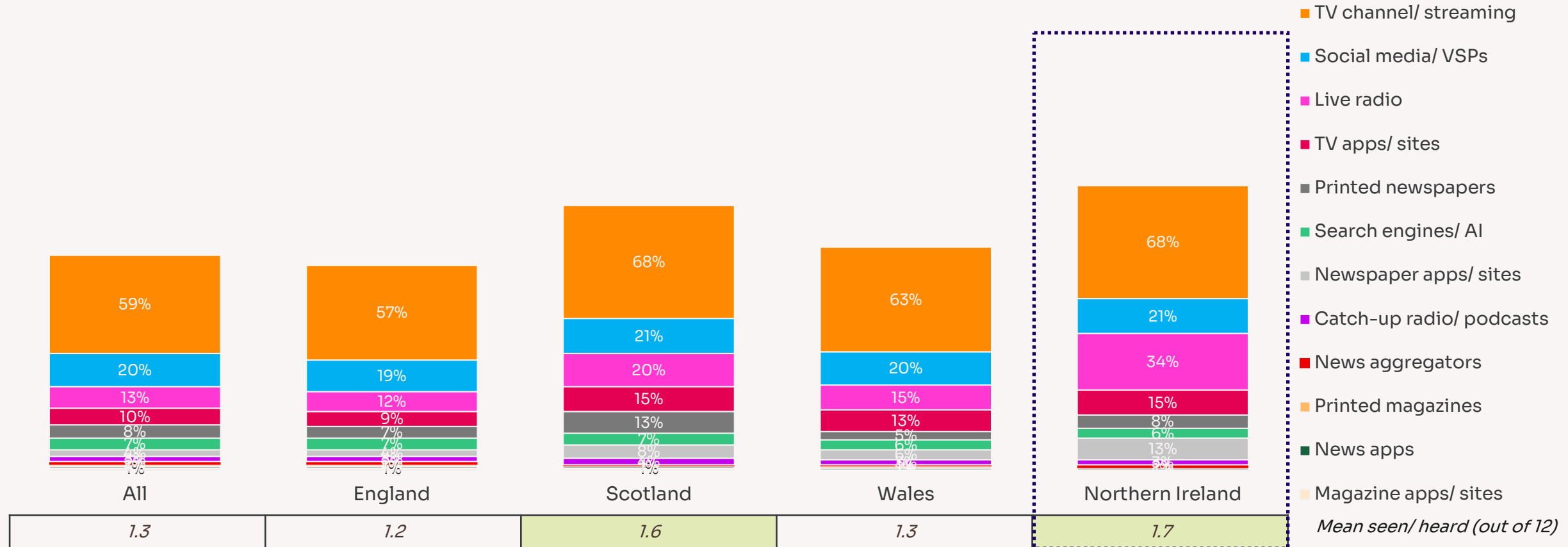
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+

Question F2. Looking at all of the sources of news that you have seen or heard news on in the last month, which of these have you seen or heard news on about what is going on in your region/ Scotland/ Wales/ Northern Ireland? *NET BBC includes BBC TV/ BBC iPlayer, BBC apps/ sites, BBC Radio, BBC Sounds

Base: All adults in England (3,597), Scotland (600), Wales (600), Northern Ireland (600)

Seven in ten (68%) adults in Northern Ireland have accessed news in the last month about Northern Ireland through TV channels/ streaming services and three in ten on live radio.

Ways to access news about your region/ nation, by nation



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+

Question. F2. Looking at all of the sources of news that you have seen or heard news on in the last month, which of these have you seen or heard news on about what is going on in your region/ Scotland/ Wales/ Northern Ireland?

Base: All adults in the UK (5,397), England (3,597), Scotland (600), Wales (600), Northern Ireland (600). Coloured cells show significance testing at 99% by nation compared to all.

Adults in Northern Ireland have used an average of 2.9 different ways to access news about Northern Ireland in the past month.

Mean number of ways to access about your region/ nation, by nation

	UK	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
Base	5,397	3,597	600	600	600
TV channel/ streaming	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.3
Social media/ VSPs	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
Live radio	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.5
TV apps/ sites	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2
Printed newspapers	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Search engines/ AI	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Newspaper apps/ sites	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
Catch-up radio/ podcasts	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
News aggregators	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Printed magazines	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
News apps	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Magazine apps/ sites	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
MEAN NUMBER SEEN/ HEARD	2.2	2.1	2.6	2.0	2.9

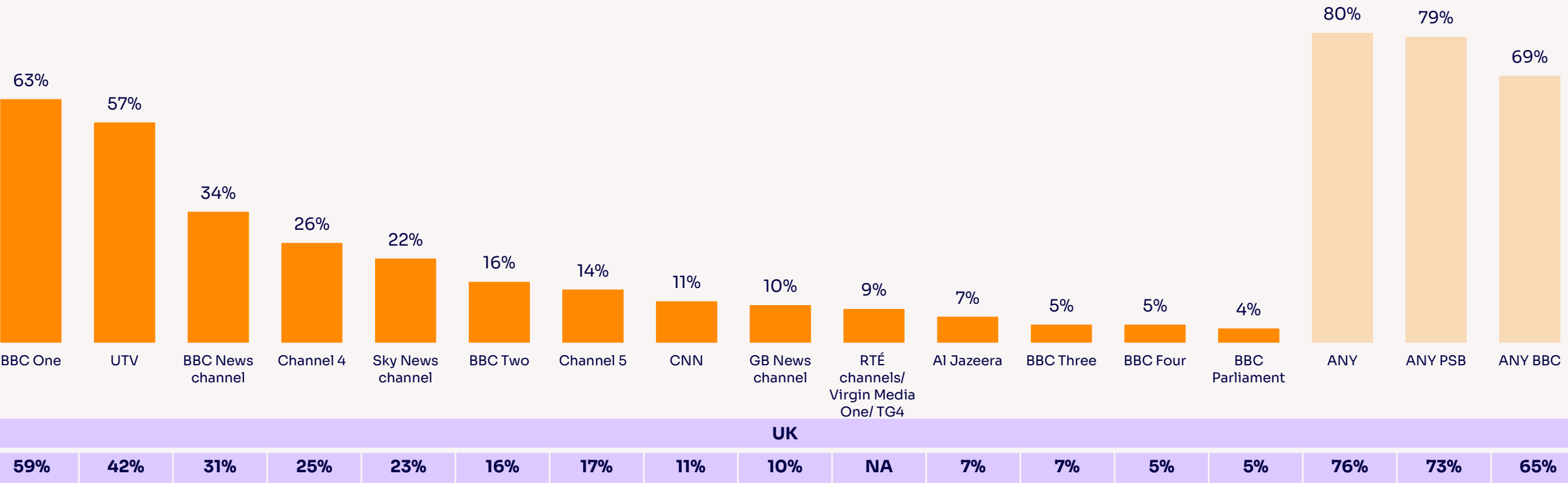
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+

Question F2. Looking at all of the sources of news that you have seen or heard news on in the last month, which of these have you seen or heard news on about what is going on in your region/ Scotland/ Wales/ Northern Ireland?

Base: All adults in the UK (5,397), England (3,597), Scotland (600), Wales (600), Northern Ireland (600). Coloured cells show significance testing at 99% by nation compared to all.

Six in ten (63%) adults in Northern Ireland used BBC One for news in the past month, rising to seven in ten (69%) across all BBC TV channels.

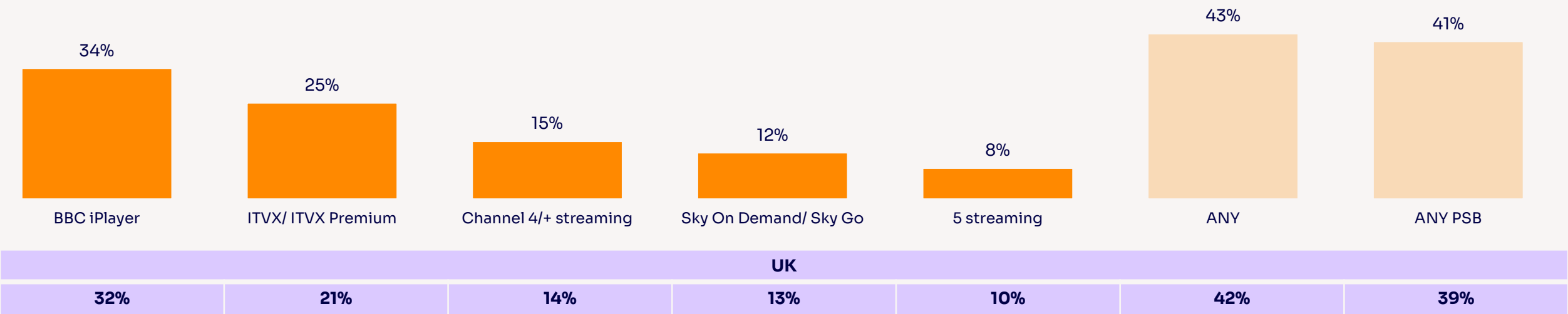
TV channels used for news in the past month in Northern Ireland



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+
Question D1. Which, if any, of the following **TV channels** have you **seen or heard news** on in the last month? (SHOWS MENTIONS FROM 4% OR MORE OF ALL ADULTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND)
Base: All adults in Northern Ireland (600)

Four in ten (43%) adults in Northern Ireland used any TV on-demand / catch up services for news in the past month, with three in ten (34%) using BBC iPlayer.

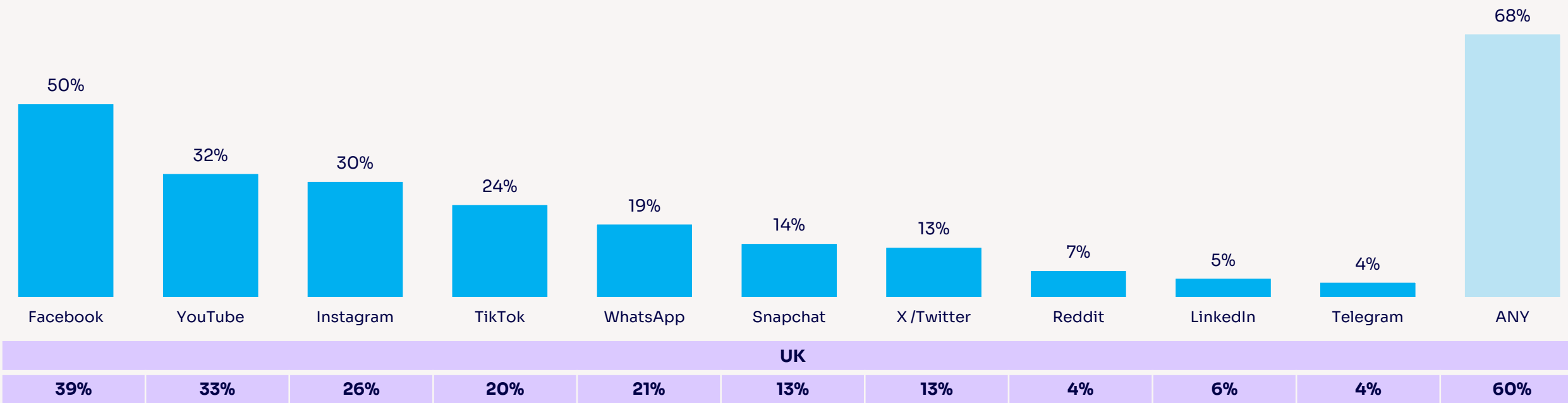
TV on-demand or catch-up services used for news in the past month in Northern Ireland



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+
Question D2. Which, if any, of the following **TV on-demand or catch-up services** have you **seen or heard news** on in the last month? (SHOWS MENTIONS FROM 4% OR MORE OF ALL ADULTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND)
Base: All adults in Northern Ireland (600)

Seven in ten (68%) adults in Northern Ireland used social media apps or sites for news in the past month, with half (50%) using Facebook and a third (32%) using YouTube.

Social media or video sharing apps/ sites used for news in the past month in Northern Ireland



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+
 Question D18. Which, if any, of the following **social media or video sharing apps or sites** have you **seen or heard news** on in the last month? (SHOWS MENTIONS FROM 4% OR MORE OF ALL ADULTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND)
 Base: All adults in Northern Ireland (600)

The types of news seen on different types of social media and VSPs differs. Among people in Northern Ireland, Facebook skews more to local and UK news, while YouTube and X skews more to international news.

Type of news encountered on social media/ VSPs in Northern Ireland

	Facebook	YouTube	Instagram	TikTok	X	Snapchat
Base / Seen/heard in the last month	333 / 50%	216 / 32%	209 / 30%	159 / 24%	86** / 13%	93** / 14%
Local news	60%	29%	34%	42%	37%	31%
UK news	53%	47%	44%	47%	49%	22%
International news	42%	51%	43%	44%	56%	18%
Breaking news	27%	20%	28%	32%	36%	14%
News headlines	25%	21%	27%	28%	25%	11%
Light-hearted or human interest news	15%	16%	17%	24%	21%	14%
Memes or jokes about the latest news	16%	16%	22%	28%	16%	19%
In-depth analysis or discussion of news	4%	12%	8%	13%	15%	1%
Reporting that verifies stories in the news	4%	7%	6%	4%	11%	2%
None of these	5%	7%	10%	14%	17%	25%

KEY
50% +
30-49%
20-29%
1-19%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+

Question. D24A-F. Which, if any, of the following types of news have you seen or heard on [SOCIAL MEDIA/ VSP] in the last month?

Base: Adults in Northern Ireland who have seen or heard news on each social media/ VSP in the last month (bases in table *Base of fewer than 100 interviews for X and Snapchat – treat with caution). Coloured cells show incidence levels in the four bands shown in the key.

Across selected social media / VSPs, traditional broadcasters were the most reported news providers. Around half of adults in Northern Ireland using YouTube, X and Facebook for news reported seeing BBC News content on those services in the past month.

Attribution of news source on selected social media/VSPs, among adults who have seen or heard news on social media in Northern Ireland

	YouTube	X	Facebook	Instagram	TikTok	Snapchat
Base / Seen or heard news in the last month	216 / 31%	86** / 13%	333 / 50%	209 / 30%	159 / 24%	93** / 14%
Any UK broadcaster	70%	59%	68%	56%	50%	43%
Any PSB	57%	54%	62%	47%	45%	35%
BBC News	47%	52%	52%	41%	38%	31%
Sky News	33%	37%	28%	19%	21%	21%
ITV News	24%	37%	30%	21%	27%	19%
GB News	14%	13%	11%	9%	14%	7%
Channel 4 News	14%	18%	11%	10%	10%	6%
Channel 5 News	8%	10%	4%	6%	6%	4%
Any international TV News broadcaster	14%	14%	9%	8%	11%	5%
Any online-only news providers	6%	7%	5%	7%	7%	8%
Political parties / politicians	3%	13%	5%	10%	8%	1%
Journalists	10%	16%	8%	13%	13%	6%
Influencers / independent commentators	14%	18%	12%	28%	26%	22%
None of these	11%	11%	12%	11%	16%	22%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+

Question: D26A-F. When you see or hear news on <SOCIAL MEDIA APP OR WEBSITE>, is it from any of these providers?

Base: All adults who have seen or heard news on <social media app or website> in the last month in Northern Ireland (base shown in table **Base of fewer than 100 interviews for X and Snapchat – treat with caution). Note: Participants were asked about selected social media app or websites only. N.B. ITV includes STV, UTV and ITV Wales

BBC News was the most widely followed news provider on selected social media and VSPs.

News providers followed on selected social media/VSPs, among adults who have accessed news on social media in Northern Ireland

	X	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	TikTok	Snapchat
Base / Seen or heard news in the last month	86** / 13%	216 / 31%	333 / 50%	209 / 30%	159 / 24%	93** / 14%
Any UK broadcaster	45%	49%	50%	39%	39%	34%
Any PSB	39%	40%	43%	33%	33%	28%
BBC News	39%	32%	34%	26%	26%	23%
Sky News	22%	19%	15%	10%	12%	13%
ITV News	18%	11%	18%	10%	15%	13%
GB News	7%	8%	5%	5%	6%	3%
Channel 4 News	10%	8%	6%	5%	5%	4%
Channel 5 News	5%	4%	2%	2%	4%	3%
Any international TV News broadcaster	6%	6%	3%	3%	5%	4%
Any online-only news providers	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%	5%
Political parties / politicians	5%	2%	2%	6%	6%	0%
Journalists	8%	7%	4%	7%	7%	4%
Influencers / independent commentators / online-native creators	11%	10%	8%	20%	19%	15%
None of these	42%	38%	41%	42%	41%	49%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+

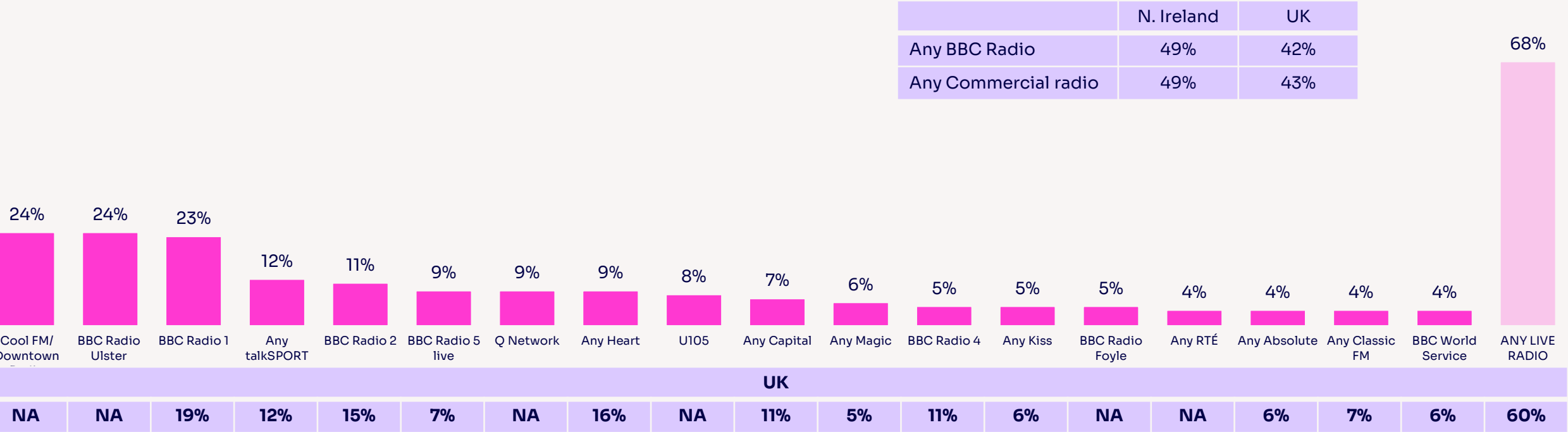
Question: D27A-F. Which, if any, of these sources of news do you follow on [SOCIAL MEDIA/ VSP]?

Base: All adults who have seen or heard news on <social media app or website> in the last month in Northern Ireland (base shown in table **Base of fewer than 100 interviews for Snapchat – treat with caution). Note: Participants were asked about selected social media app or websites only. N.B. ITV includes STV, UTV and ITV Wales

Seven in ten (68%) adults in Northern Ireland have heard any news on live radio in the past month, across a wide range of stations.

Radio stations where news was consumed in the past month in Northern Ireland

	N. Ireland	UK
Any BBC Radio	49%	42%
Any Commercial radio	49%	43%

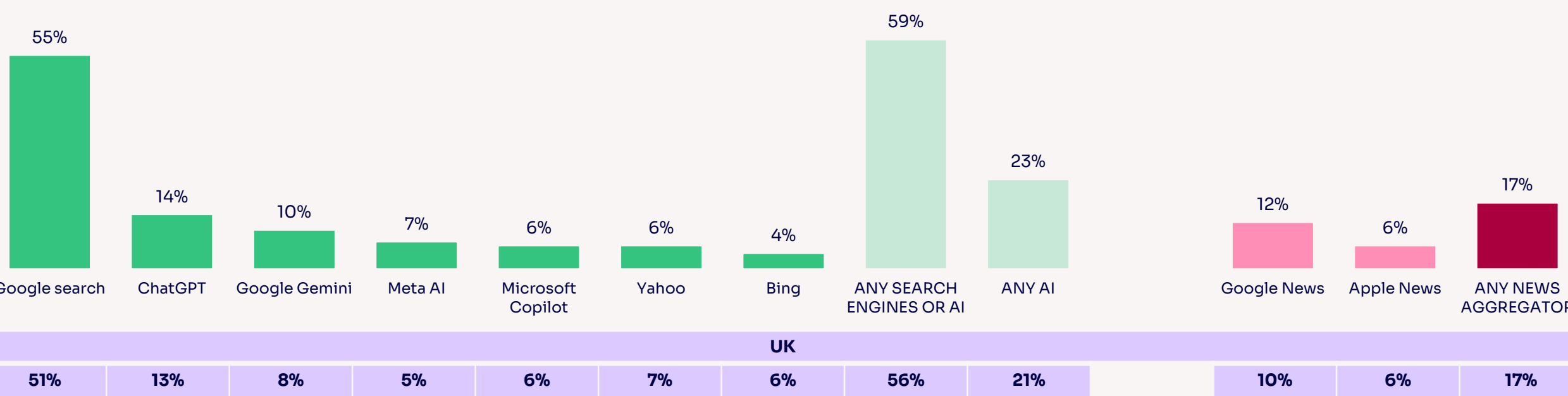


UK																		
NA	NA	19%	12%	15%	7%	NA	16%	NA	11%	5%	11%	6%	NA	NA	6%	7%	6%	60%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+
Question. D14/ D15. Which, if any, of the following **BBC Radio stations/ commercial radio stations** have you **heard news** on when you're **listening** live in the last month? (SHOWS MENTIONS FROM 4% OR MORE OF ALL ADULTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND)
Base: All adults in Northern Ireland (600)

Six in ten (59%) adults in Northern Ireland have used a search engine or AI tool for news in the past month. Most of this is attributable to Google search (55%).

Search engines, AI Overviews or AI apps or News aggregators used for news in the past month in Northern Ireland



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+
Question D20. Which, if any, of the following **search engines, AI Overviews or AI apps** have you **seen or heard news** on in the last month? / D22. Which, if any, of the following **news aggregators** have you **seen news** on in the last month? (SHOWS MENTIONS FROM 4% OR MORE OF ALL ADULTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND)
Base: All adults in Northern Ireland (600)

Four in ten (42%) adults in Northern Ireland have used TV broadcaster apps or sites in the past month, with three in ten (28%) using online newspapers

Proportion of adults who directly access online news sources, Northern Ireland vs. UK

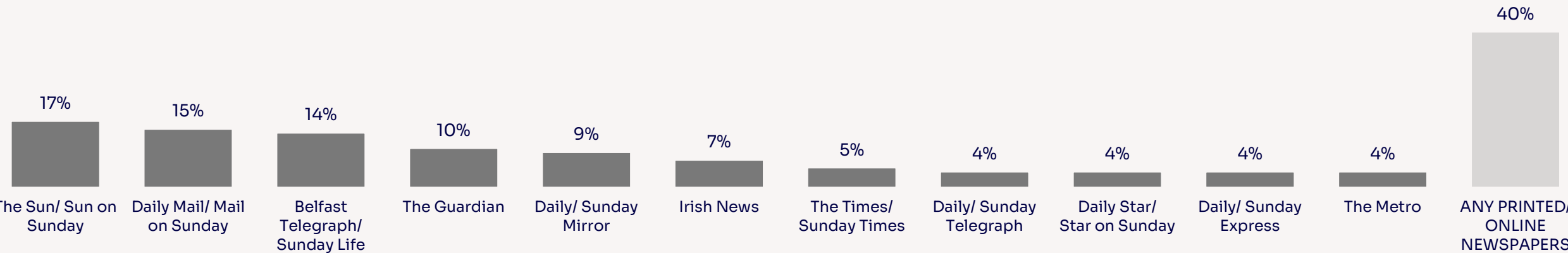
	Northern Ireland	UK
Base	600	5,397
BBC News online	29%	28%
Sky News online	18%	18%
ITV News online	15%	13%
The Belfast Live online	12%	NA
The Daily Mail online	11%	10%
The Sun online	10%	11%
The Belfast Telegraph online	9%	NA
The Guardian online	8%	8%
LADbible	8%	6%
CNN News online	7%	7%
Channel 4 News online	7%	7%
The Daily Mirror online	6%	5%
Joe.co.uk	5%	3%
GB News online	4%	5%
Irish News online	4%	NA
Buzzfeed	4%	4%

ANY	Northern Ireland	UK
TV and broadcaster apps/ sites	42%	40%
Newspaper apps/ sites	28%	25%
Other news apps/ sites	14%	11%
Magazine apps/sites	6%	8%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+
 Question D3/D7/D10/D12. Which, if any, of the following [MEDIA TYPE] have you seen or heard news on in the last month? As a reminder... This could be news that you actively watch or listen to and it could be news that you just happen to see or hear. We're interested in news of all types – whether it's recent events in politics, sport, entertainment, celebrities, in your local area or around the world. (SHOWS MENTIONS FROM 4% OR MORE).
 Base: All adults in Northern Ireland (600)

Four in ten (40%) adults in Northern Ireland have seen news in the past month in printed daily / weekly newspapers or through newspaper apps or websites.

Newspaper brands (printed or online) used for news in the past month in Northern Ireland



UK											
20%	17%	NA	12%	10%	NA	7%	7%	6%	5%	9%	44%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2025-2026 – Adults 16+
Question D5. Which, if any, of the following **printed daily newspapers** have you **seen news** in in the last month?/ D6. Which, if any, of the following **printed weekly newspapers** have you **seen news** in in the last month?/ D7. Which, if any, of the following **newspaper apps or websites** have you **seen news** on in the last month? (SHOWS MENTIONS FROM 4% OR MORE OF ALL ADULTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND)
Base: All adults in Northern Ireland (600)