



# News Consumption Survey 2023

## Northern Ireland

## About the News Consumption report 2023

The aim of the News Consumption report is to inform understanding of news consumption across the UK and within each UK nation. This includes sources and platforms used, the perceived importance of different outlets for news, attitudes towards individual news sources and local news use.

The primary source\* is Ofcom's News Consumption Survey. In News Reports published from 2018 to 2020, the adult (16+) research was conducted using a mixed methodology, combining online and face to face interviews (F2F). However, during the last two years of research, Jigsaw Research were unable to do this consistently, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Since online methodologies tend to underrepresent low/non internet users, Jigsaw Research conducted a combination of online and telephone interviews during November/December 2020, March/April 2021 and November/December 2021, to ensure that these groups had the opportunity to express their views. In March/April 2022, Jigsaw Research reverted back to the preferred methodology of conducting online and face to face interviews, to be consistent with previous and future years. This mixed methodology has been used again from 7 November – 7 December, 2022 and 27 February – 3 April, 2023.

This News Report shows combined online and face-to-face adult data for 2023, compared with 2022 (March/April 2022 only), 2020, 2019 and 2018.

The [full UK report](#) and details of its methodology are available on the Ofcom website.

*\*The News Consumption 2023 report also contains information from Barb for television viewing.*

## Key findings from the 2023 report

- TV remains the most-used platform for news nowadays by adults in Northern Ireland at 67%, although this represents a decline from 80% in 2022. Radio (47%) and Social media (42%) are the next most used platforms for news.
- ITV1/UTV (47%) BBC One (44%) are the news sources with the highest reach among adults in Northern Ireland. BBC iPlayer (30%) is the third most popular, with Facebook (29%) the fourth. BBC One and Sky News (14%) both see declines in reach from 2022.
- 8% use TV channels from the Republic of Ireland (RTE Channels / Virgin Media One / TG4).
- 9% of adults in Northern Ireland use the Belfast Telegraph/Sunday life, 6% use the Irish News and 3% use the Sunday World.
- The three most popular radio stations in Northern Ireland are all local; BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle (18%), Cool FM (14%) and U105 (12%).
- UTV and BBC One are the most-used sources for accessing news about Northern Ireland by people in Northern Ireland.
- Four in five people in Northern Ireland who follow news are interested in news about their own nation.

## Top 20 news sources used in Northern Ireland

% of adults 16+ in Northern Ireland using each source for news nowadays

TV Channel (offline only)	67% ▼
Radio station (offline only)	47%
Social media	42%
Other website/app	26%
Newspaper (print only)	19%

	2018	2019	2020	2022*	2023
ITV1/UTV	63%	59%	50%	54%	47%
BBC One	52%	58%	49%	56%	44% ▼
BBC iPlayer**	-	-	-	-	30%
Facebook	35%	35%	32%	34%	29%
BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle	22%	25%	18%	16%	18%
ITVX/ITVX Premium**	-	-	-	-	15%
Sky News Channel	21%	24%	20%	23%	14% ▼
Cool FM	18%	21%	20%	18%	14%
BBC website/app	15%	10%	17%	17%	13%
Twitter	11%	13%	17%	13%	12%
U105**	-	-	-	10%	12%
BBC News Channel	11%	16%	14%	15%	12%
Instagram	6%	6%	11%	13%	11%
Channel 4	12%	16%	13%	16%	11%
TikTok**	-	-	0%	6%	11%
BBC Radio 1	12%	15%	8%	13%	10%
Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday	11%	13%	8%	10%	9%
WhatsApp	9%	11%	13%	13%	9%
Google (search engine)	10%	8%	13%	8%	9%
Belfast Telegraph/Sunday Life**	-	-	-	11%	9%

Individual newspaper reach  
= print or website/app

Average number of individual sources used:

**6.2** (UK=6.8)

Cross-platform BBC news reach: 67%  
(UK=73%)

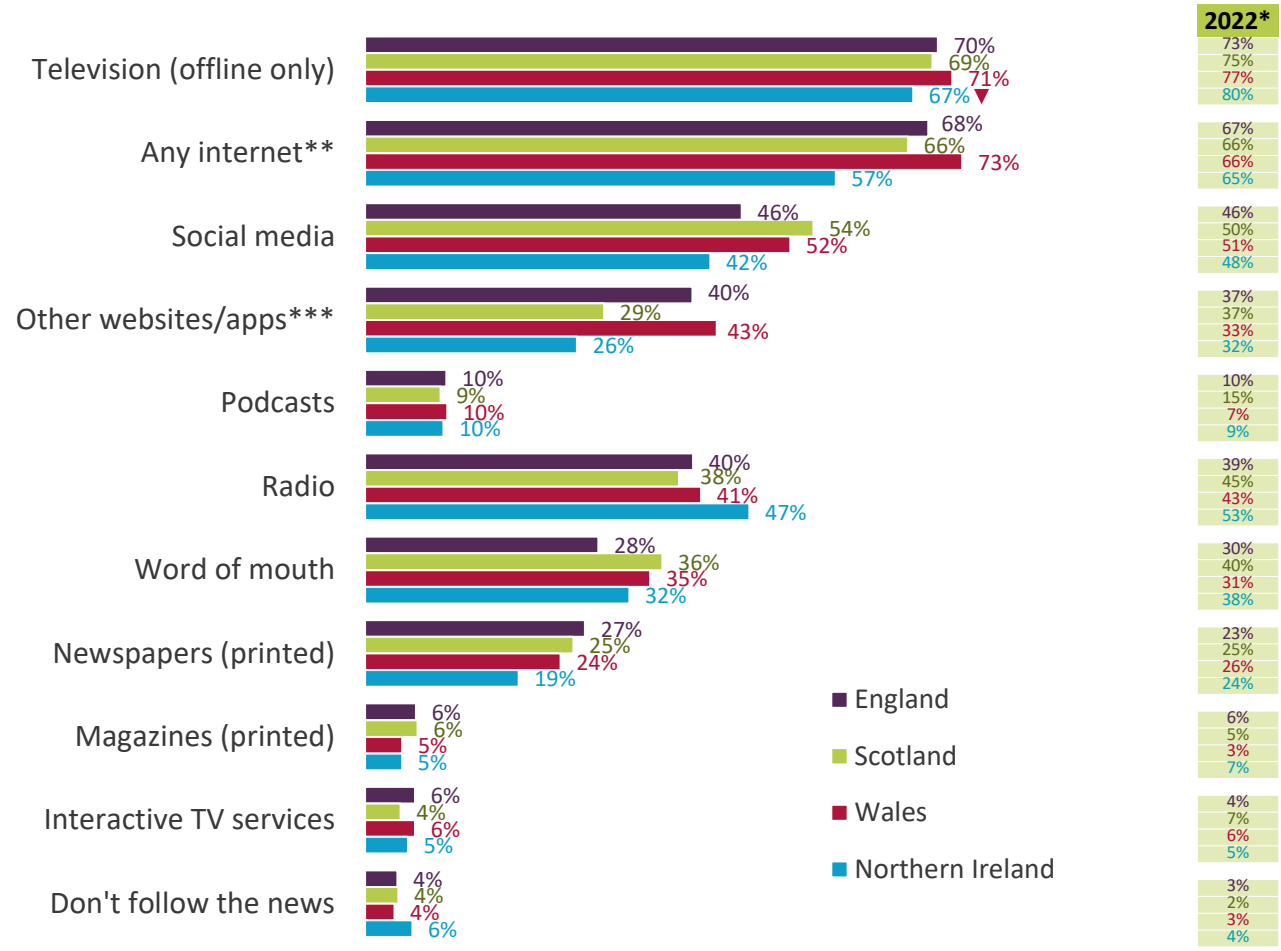
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample

Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays? D2a-8a. Thinking specifically about <platform>, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland - 2023=603 \*2022 W1, and 2021, data not shown because face-to-face fieldwork was not possible during Covid-19 pandemic

\*\*BBC iPlayer and ITVX added in 2023; U105 and Belfast Telegraph website/app added in 2022; TikTok added in 2020 Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2023 and 2022 (at 99% confidence level)

# Platforms used for news in general nowadays 2023, by nation



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – COMBINED F2F & ONLINE sample

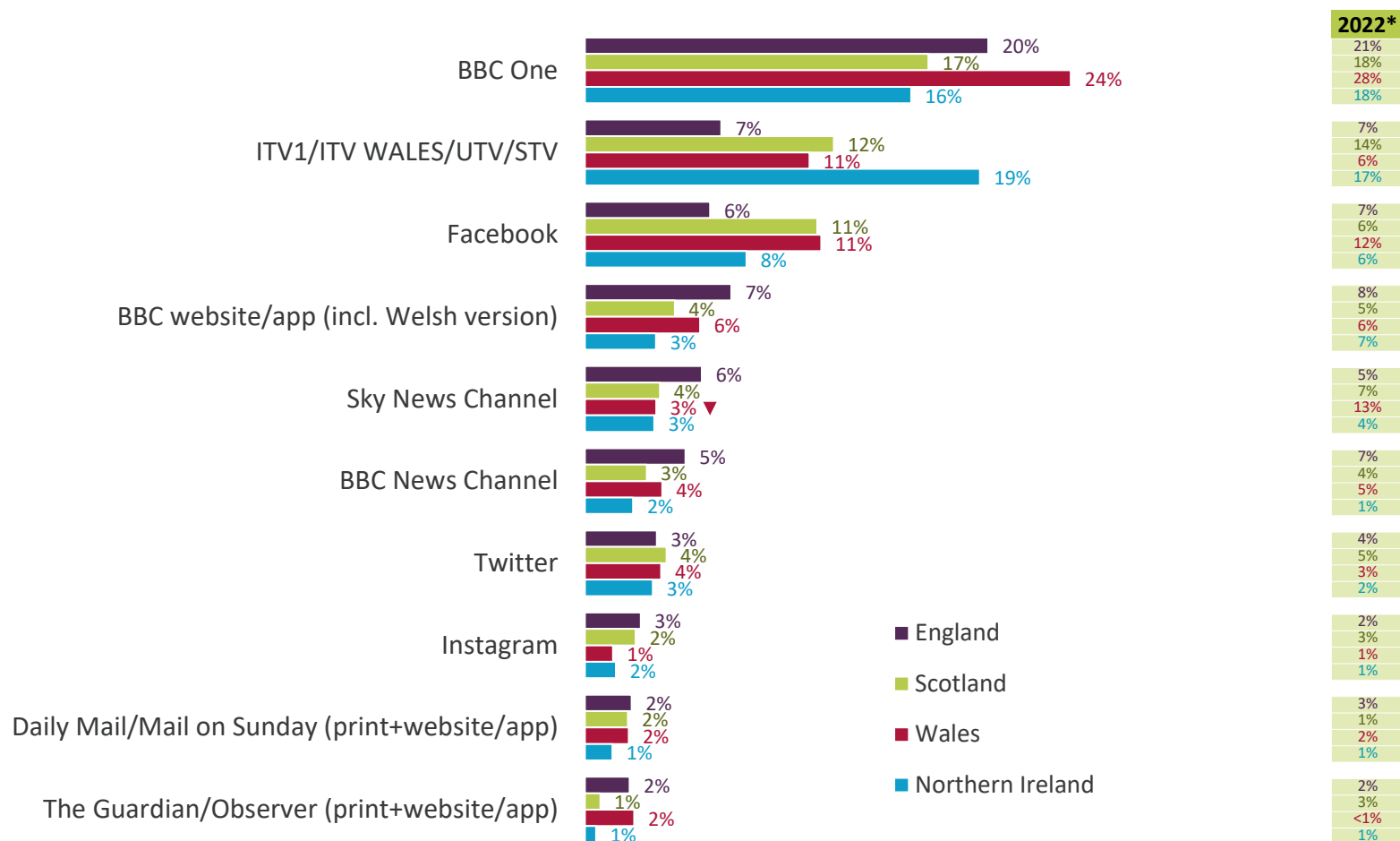
Question: C1. Which of the following platforms do you use for news nowadays? Base: All adults 16+ 2023 – England=2605, Scotland=691, Wales=657, NI=603

\*2022 W1 data not shown because face-to-face fieldwork was not possible during Covid-19 pandemic

\*\*Internet includes use of social media, podcasts and all other websites/apps accessed via any device \*\*\*Other websites/apps includes any non-social media internet source (excluding podcasts)

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2023 and 2022 (at 99% confidence level)

## Single most important source for news in general 2023, by nation



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2022 – COMBINED F2F & ONLINE sample

Question: E1a. Looking at all the sources of news you have just said that you use, which one is most important to you?

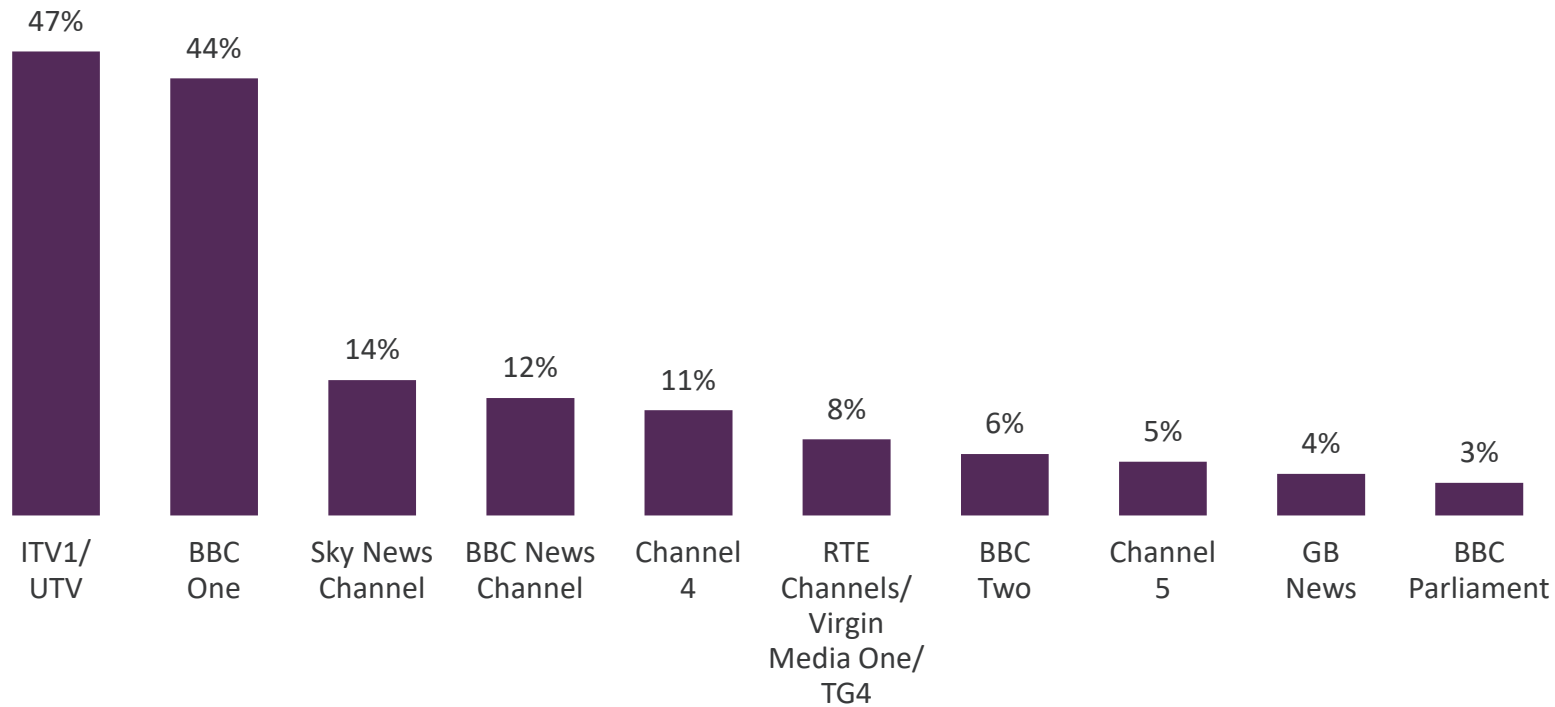
Base: All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazines for news 2023 – England=2467, Scotland=655, Wales=617, NI=541 Only sources with an incidence of 2%+ in 2023 for the Total sample are shown

\*2022 W1 data not shown because face-to-face fieldwork was not possible during Covid-19 pandemic

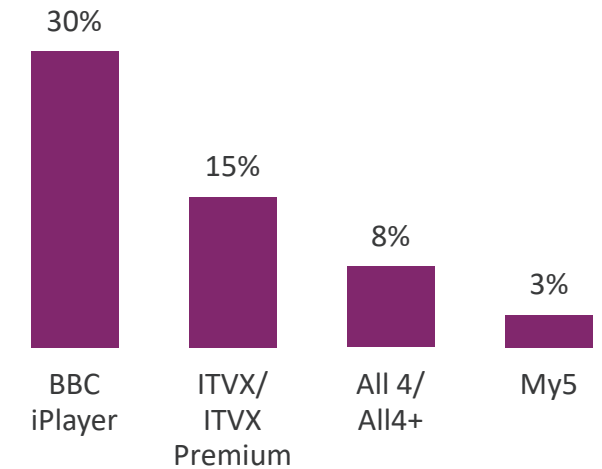
Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2023 and 2022 (at 99% confidence level)

# TV channels used for news nowadays, Northern Ireland

## Traditional channels



## BVoD services



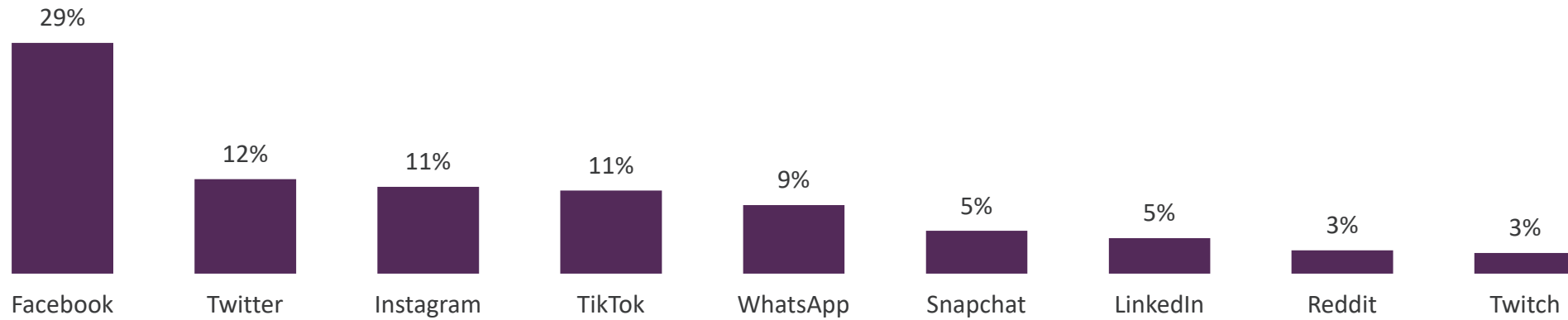
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample

Question: D2a. Thinking specifically about television, which of the following do you use for news nowadays? D2ai. Which, if any, of the following on-demand or catch up services do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland - 2023=603

Only sources with an incidence of >2% are shown

## Social media sources used for news nowadays, Northern Ireland



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample

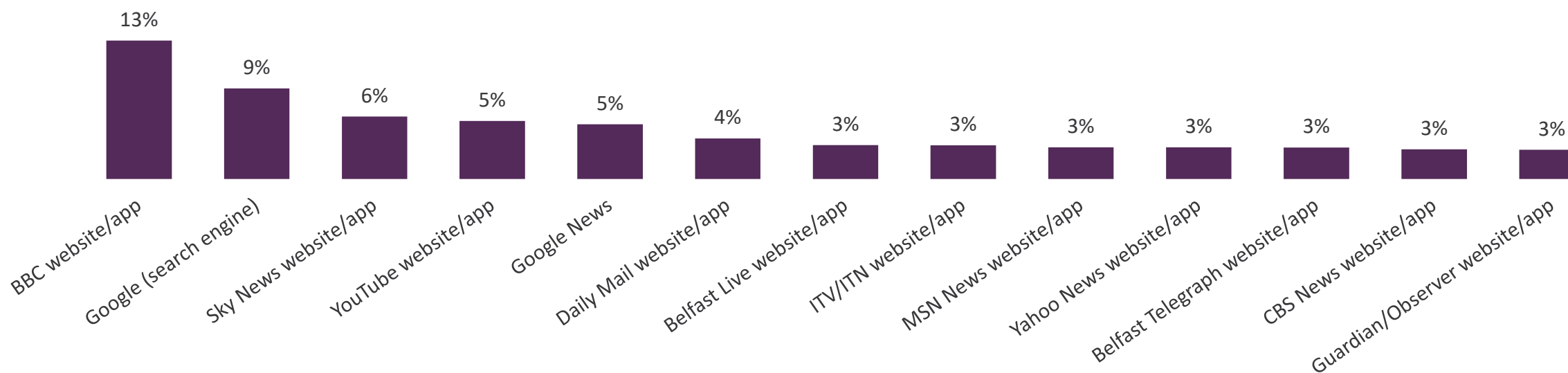
Question: D7a. Thinking specifically about social media (on any device), which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland - 2023=603

Only sources with an incidence of >2% are shown



## Other internet sources used for news nowadays, Northern Ireland



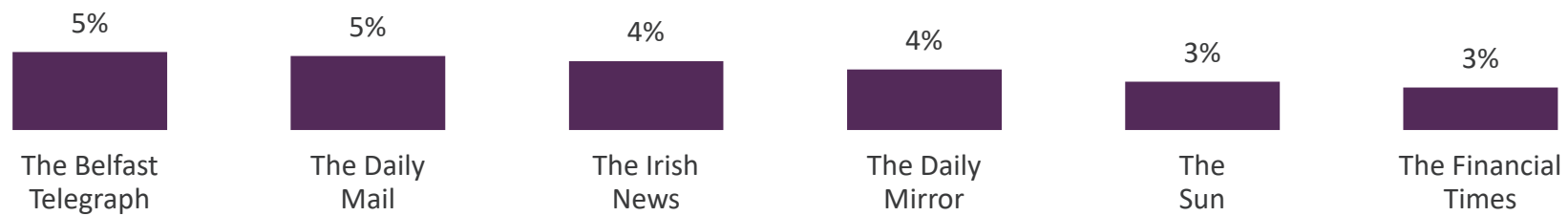
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample

Question: D8a. Thinking specifically about other internet sources (including apps), on any device, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

D8aa. And which of the following Northern Ireland based websites or apps do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland - 2023=603      Only sources with an incidence of >2% are shown

## Daily newspapers (print) used for news nowadays, Northern Ireland



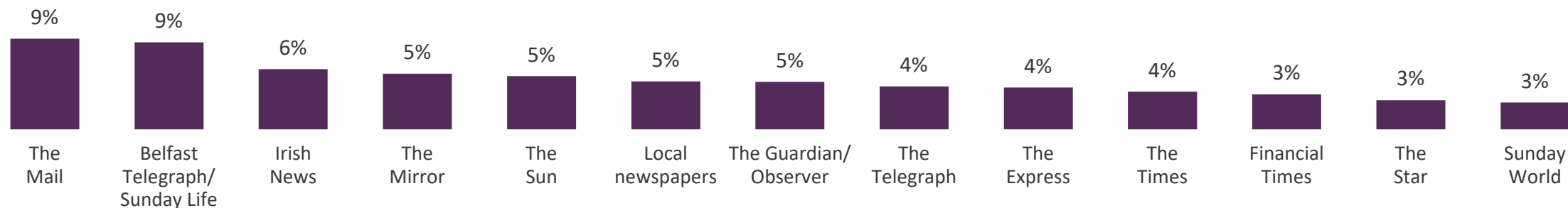
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample

Question: D3a. Thinking specifically about daily newspapers, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland - 2023=603

Only sources with an incidence of >2% are shown

## Print and online newspapers used for news nowadays, Northern Ireland (Combined daily newspapers, Sunday newspapers and websites/apps)



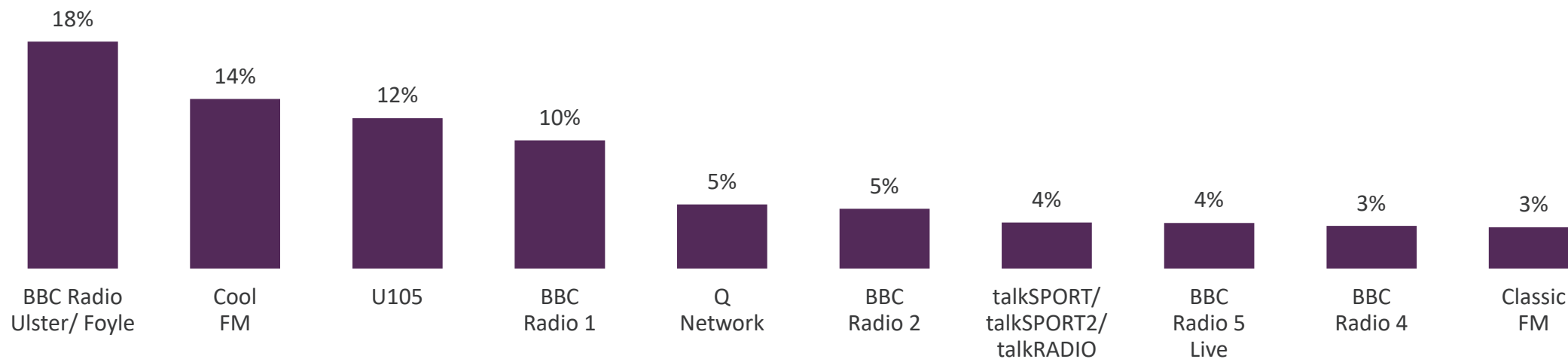
Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample

Question: D3a/4a/8a. Thinking specifically about [daily newspapers / weekly newspapers / other internet sources (including apps), on any device], which of the following do you use for news nowadays?

D8aa. And which of the following Northern Ireland based websites or apps do you use for news nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland - 2023=603 Only sources with an incidence of >2% are shown

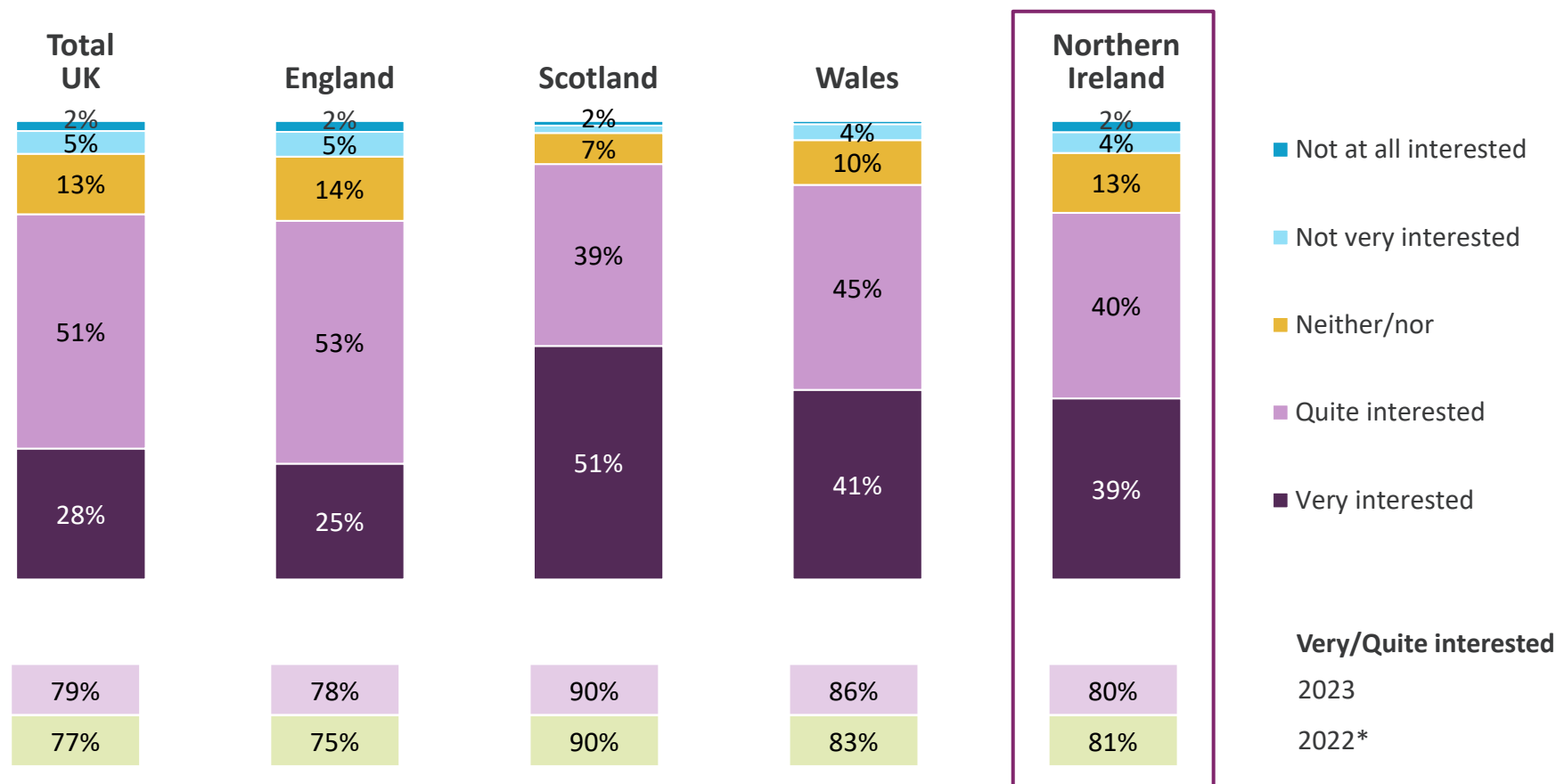
## Radio stations used for news nowadays, Northern Ireland



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample  
 Question: D6a. Thinking specifically about radio, which of the following do you use for news nowadays?  
 Base: All adults 16+ in Northern Ireland - 2023=603  
 Only sources with an incidence of >2% are shown

## Level of interest in news about own nation/region 2023, by nation

% of adults 16+ who follow news



Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample

Question: F3. How interested are you in news about your NATION/REGION? Base: All adults 16+ who follow news 2023 - Total=4371, England=2516, Scotland=665, Wales=627, Northern Ireland=563

\*2022 W1 data not shown because face-to-face fieldwork was not possible during Covid-19 pandemic

Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2023 and 2022 (at 99% confidence level)

## Sources used to access news about own nation/region, by nation

% of adults 16+ who follow news using main platforms

### England

BBC One	30%
ITV1	18%
Facebook	16%
BBC website/app	9%
BBC News Channel	5%
Instagram	5%
Twitter	5%

Don't follow region news 9%

### Scotland

STV	33%
BBC One	26%
Facebook	22%
BBC Scotland TV	10%
Twitter	9%
BBC website/app	8%
Clyde 1/ Forth 1/ West Sound/ Tay FM/ Northsound 1/ MFR	7%
BBC News Channel	5%
Sky News Channel	5%

Don't follow Nation news 3%

### Wales

BBC One	38%
ITV Wales	28%
Facebook	25%
BBC website/app**	13%
Any Wales based news sites/apps	10%
Twitter	6%
BBC Radio Wales	6%

Don't follow Nation news 4%

### Northern Ireland

UTV	41%
BBC One	34%
Facebook	17%
BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle	15%
Cool FM	9%
U105	7%
BBC website/app	6%
BBC iPlayer	5%
Twitter	5%

Don't follow Nation news 2%

Source: Ofcom News Consumption Survey 2023 – Combined F2F and ONLINE sample.

Question: F6. From which of the following sources do you get news about what is going on in NATION/REGION nowadays?

Base: All adults 16+ using TV/Newspapers/Radio/Internet/Magazine for news 2023 – England=2466, Scotland=655, Wales=617, Northern Ireland=541 \*\* Includes Welsh language version

Only sources with an incidence of 5%+ in each Nation are shown. Green/red triangles indicate statistically significant differences between 2023 and 2022 (at 99% confidence level)