

Under Pressure survey by AEGEE-Europe

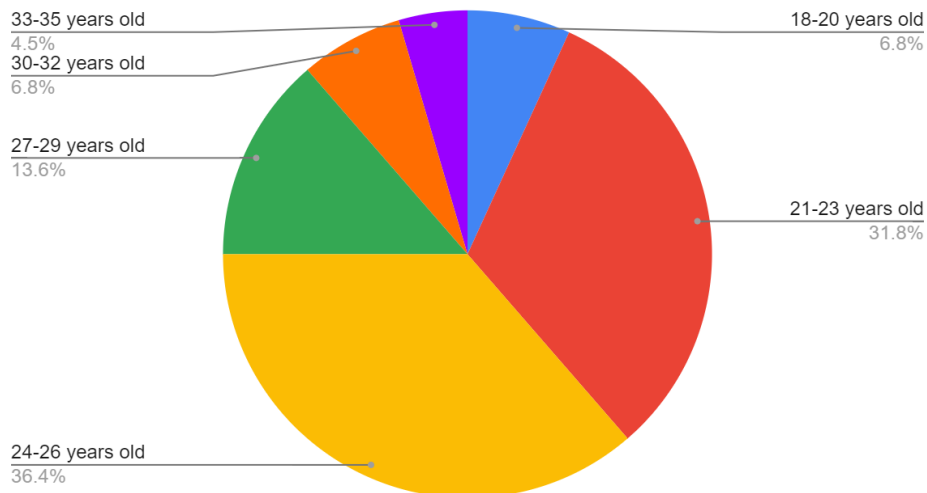
In July 2020, AEGEE-Europe conducted an online survey on young adults' experiences with the media, news, fake news and disinformation. This survey addressed the topics of young adults' news consumption and experiences with fake news and disinformation, as well as (perceived) impact of the media on people's attitudes towards others.

The survey was conducted as part of a target group research which supported the creation of the adapted Under Pressure methodology targeting young adults. More information on the Under Pressure methodology can be found on getunderpressure.com.

1. Demographics

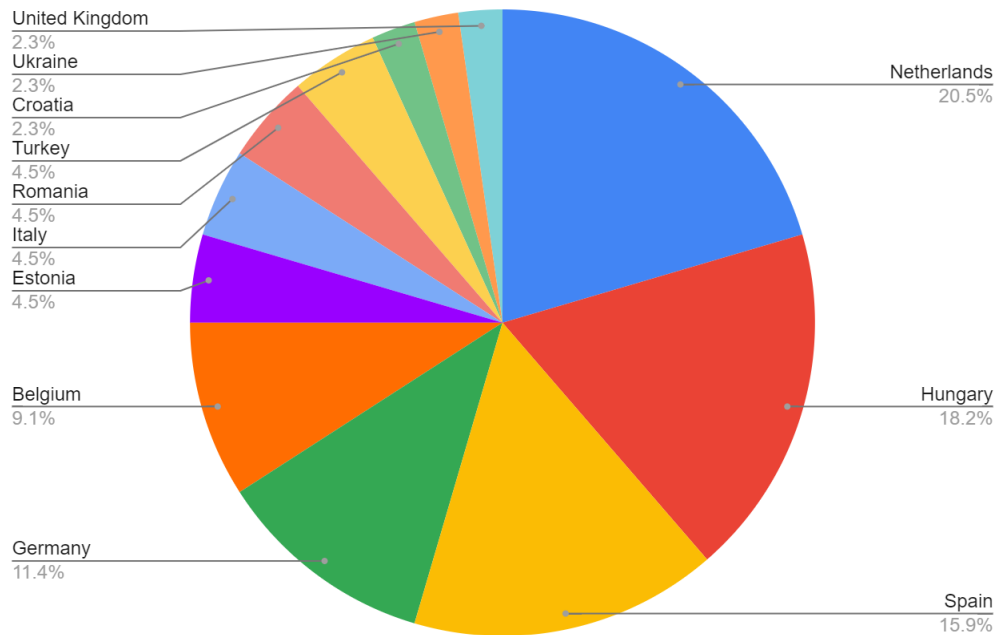
44 responses from young people from around Europe were collected through the survey questionnaire. Young people aged 21-23 and 24-26 years old represented the largest age groups, together making up more than two thirds of the respondents.

How old are you?



Respondents from 12 different countries took part in the survey. The most represented countries were the Netherlands, Hungary, Spain, Germany and Belgium, with around three fourth of the respondents living in one of these five European countries.

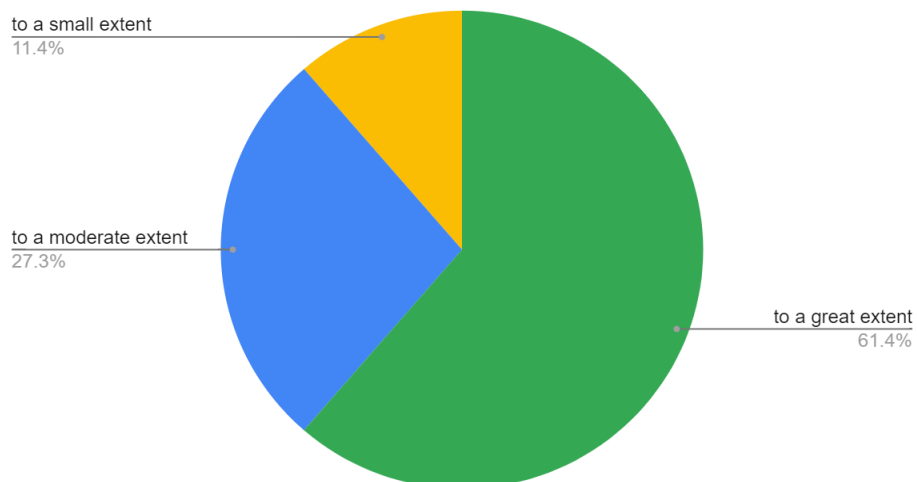
Where do you currently live?



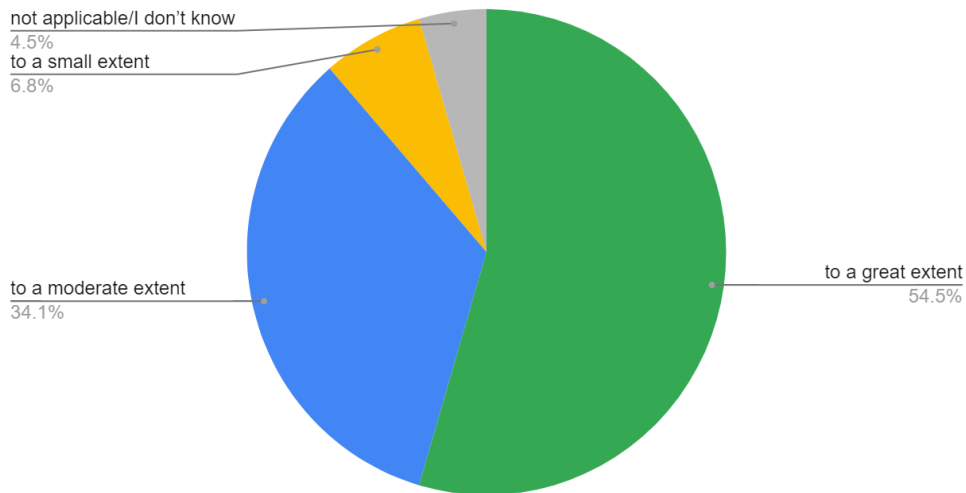
2. Young adults' news consumption

The majority of the survey respondents indicated that they follow the news regularly and that they read or watch various media sources, with more than half of the respondents doing so to a great extent.

I follow the news several times a week

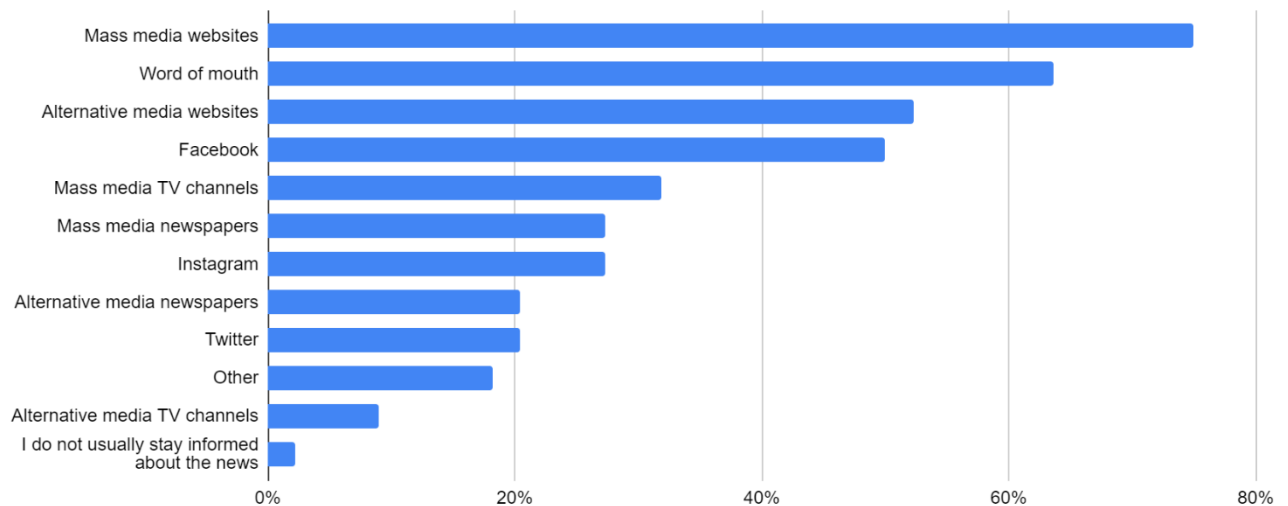


I follow the news by reading/watching various media sources.



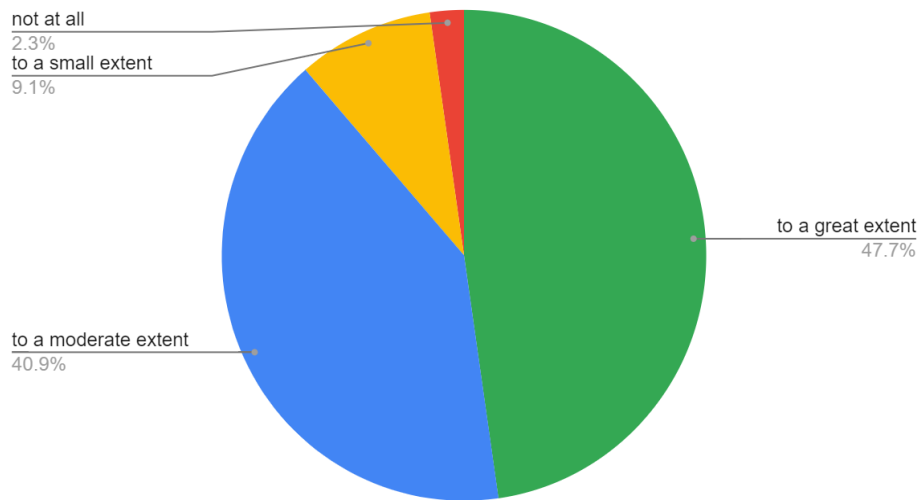
The survey results showed that around three fourths of the respondents get news through mass media websites. Word of mouth comes next with close to two thirds of the respondents getting news via this means, followed by alternative media websites and Facebook, both used by around half of the respondents. Mass media TV channels are used by around one third of the respondents, and newspapers and Instagram by exactly one fourth.

Where do you usually get news from?



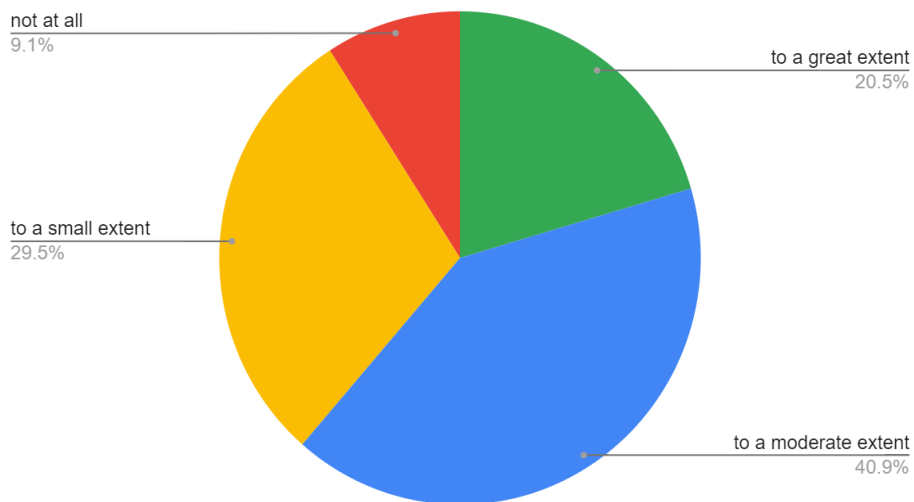
Almost all respondents indicated following the news via media outlets from their home countries at least to a small extent, with close to half of the respondents doing so to a great extent.

I follow the news via media outlets from my home country.



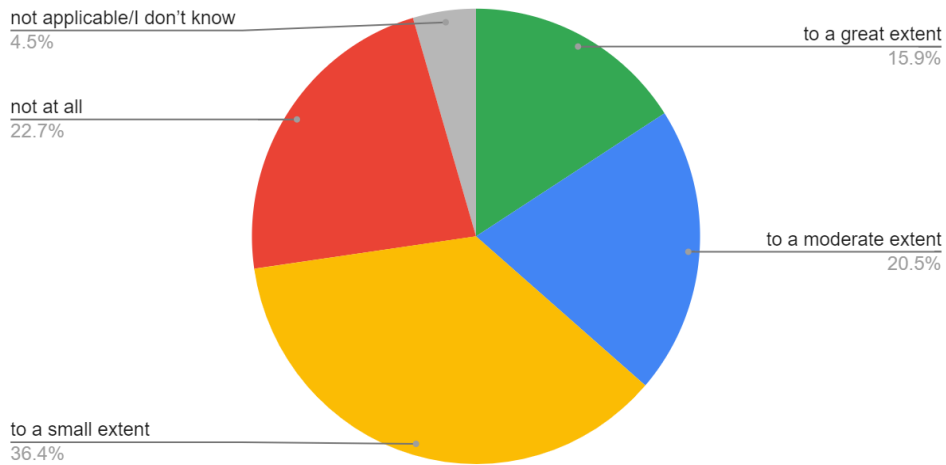
A large percentage of survey respondents also follows the news via media outlets from other countries, with one respondent out of five doing so to a great extent and two out of five to a moderate extent.

I follow the news via media outlets from other countries.



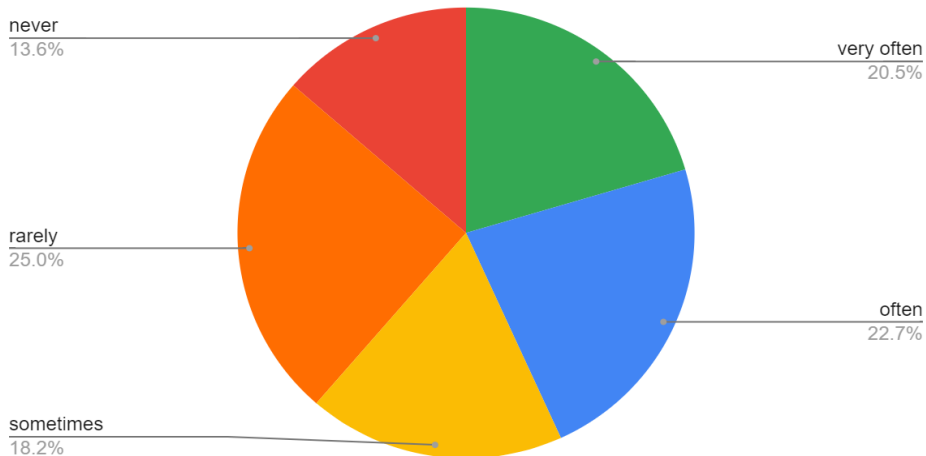
More than one third of the young people who took part in the survey believes to a great or moderate extent that the news they come across on social media provide them with better insights than traditional media sources.

I believe that the news I come across on social media provide me with better insights than traditional media sources.



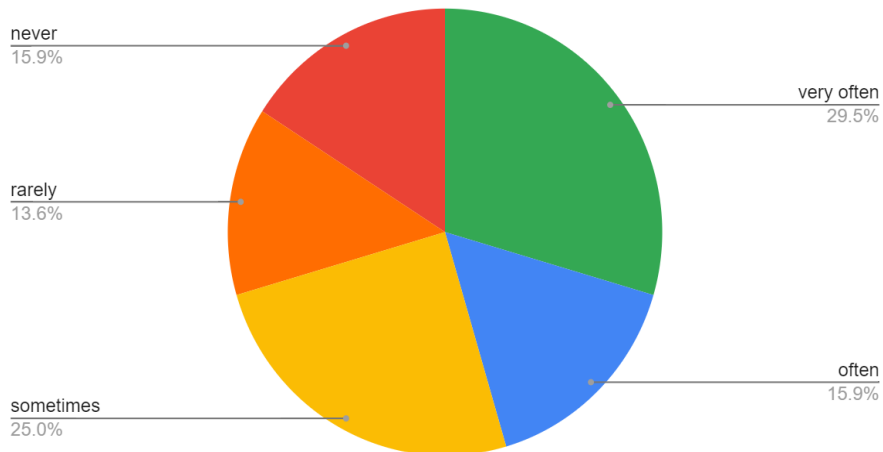
One fifth of the respondents indicated using social media very often to get informed about what is happening in their city and/or country, and another fifth indicated doing so often. Around one eighth of the respondents never use social media for this purpose according to the survey results.

How often do you use social media to get informed about what is happening in your city and/or country?



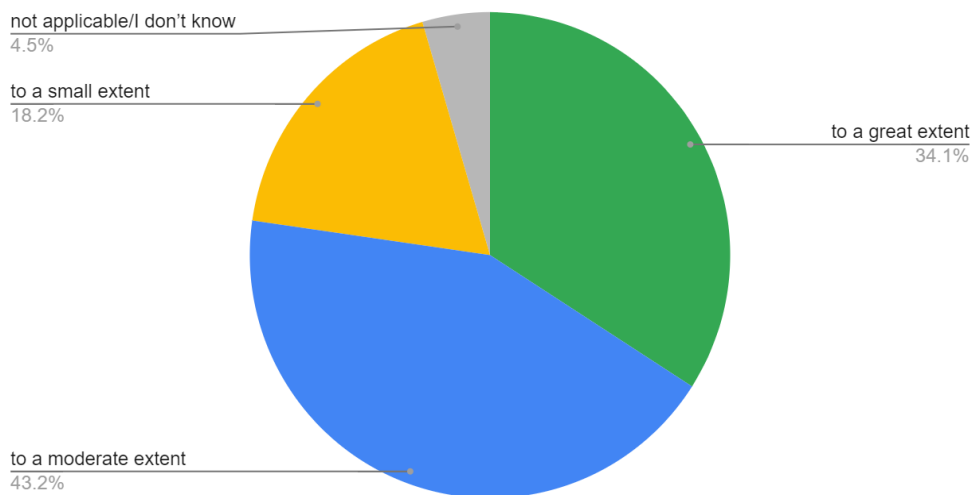
When it comes to getting informed about what is happening in the world, it appears that a larger proportion of respondents use social media for this purpose very often, with three respondents out of ten choosing this option.

How often do you use social media to get informed about what is happening in the world?



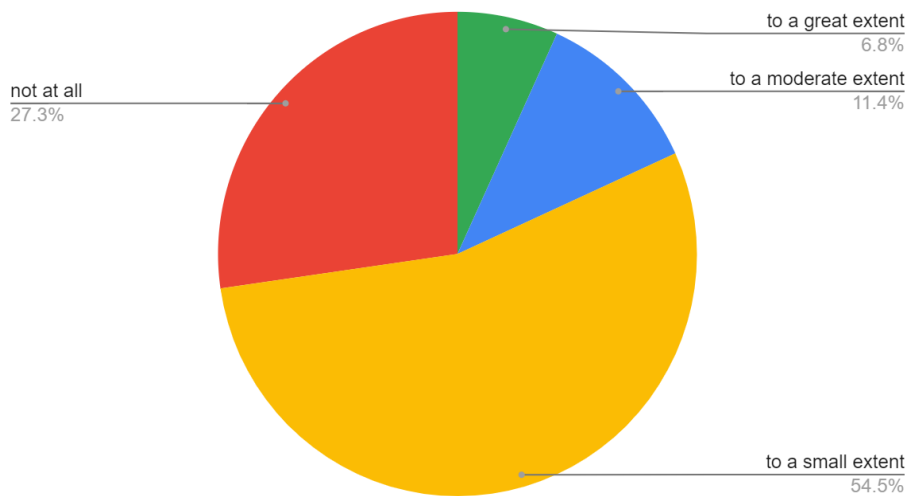
Young adults appear to discuss the news quite regularly with family, friends and/or close colleagues, as over one third of the respondents does so to a great extent, while another two out of five do so to a moderate extent.

I discuss the news with friends, family and/or close colleagues.



Young adults do not, however, appear to commonly discuss the news with people outside of their close circles, as less than one out of five of the respondents indicated doing so to a great or a moderate extent.

I discuss the news with people who are not close to me.

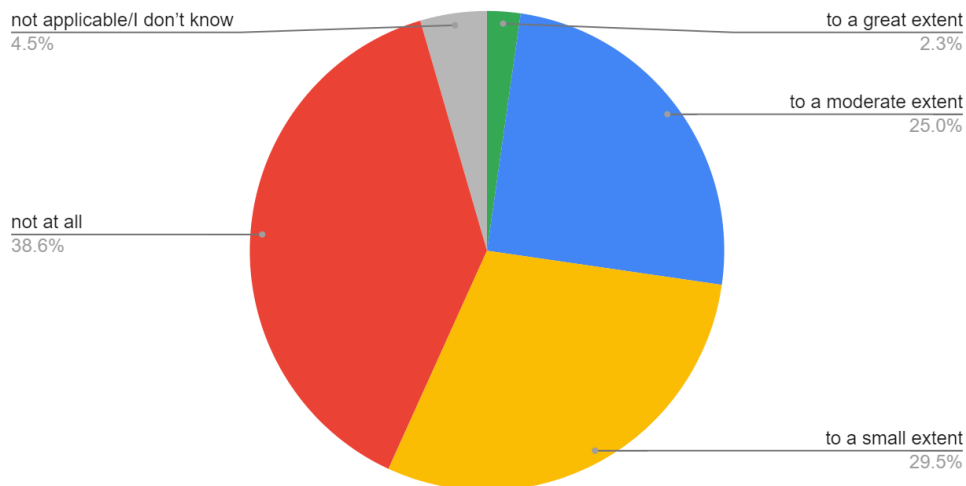


In July 2020 when the survey was conducted, topics that had caught the respondents' attention in the news recently were commonly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement, and politics in Europe and beyond. The environmental crisis, mental health and social rights infringements were also commonly mentioned. More specifically, respondents also stated that their attention had been drawn by topics such as the EU budget negotiations, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Uighur situation in China, the possibility of an economic crisis, the concerning situation surrounding media independence in some countries, and upcoming elections in Germany and in the US.

3. Impact of the media on people's attitudes towards others

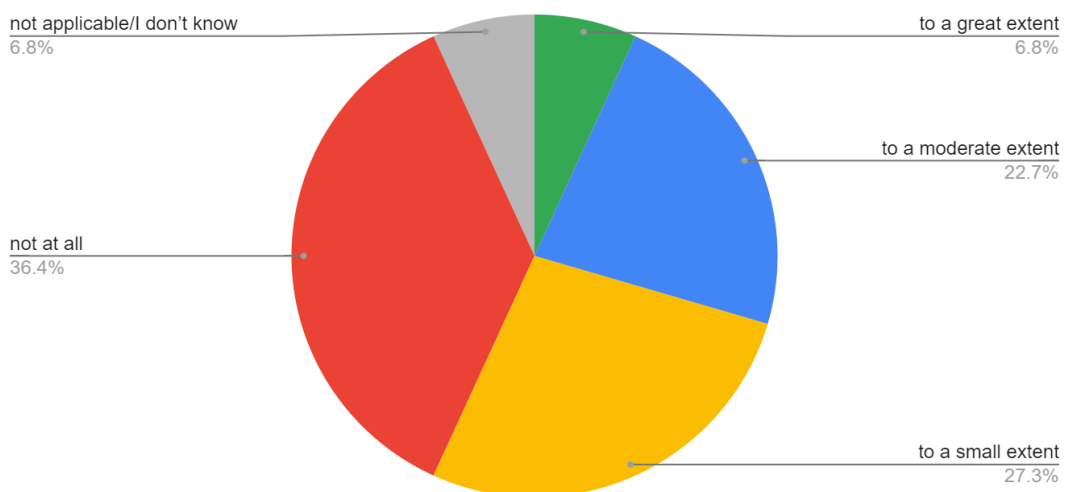
More than half of the respondents feel that the media have an impact on the way they treat others, with one fourth of the respondents indicating that they have the feeling that they treat people differently to a moderate extent due to the media, and more than one fourth indicating having this feeling to a small extent. A small percentage even indicated treating people differently to a great extent due to the media.

I have the feeling that I treat people differently due to the media.



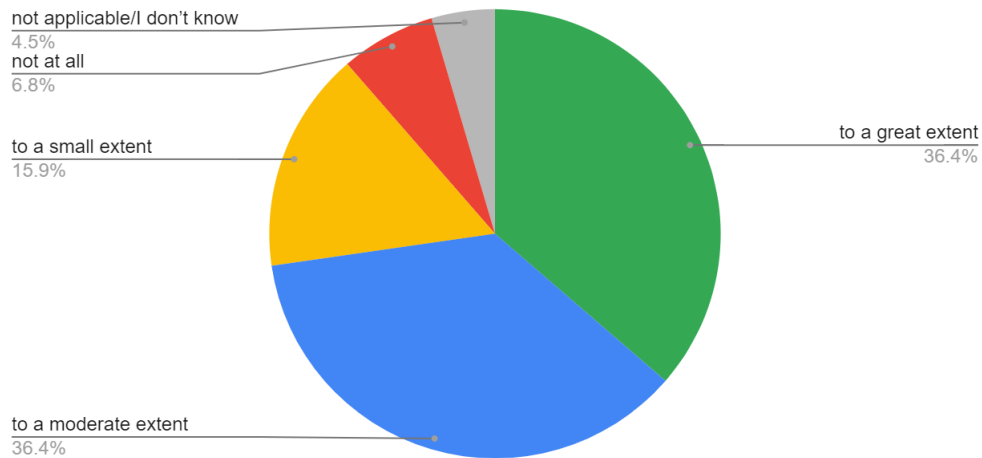
Young adults also appear to feel that people treat them differently due to the media, with a slightly higher percentage of respondents indicating that they feel this is happening to a great extent compared to the previous question.

I have the feeling that people treat me differently due to the media.



Taken from a broader and less personal perspective, close to nine respondents out of ten indicated having the feeling that people treat others differently due to the media, with over one third feeling that this is happening to a great extent and another large third feeling this is happening to a moderate extent.

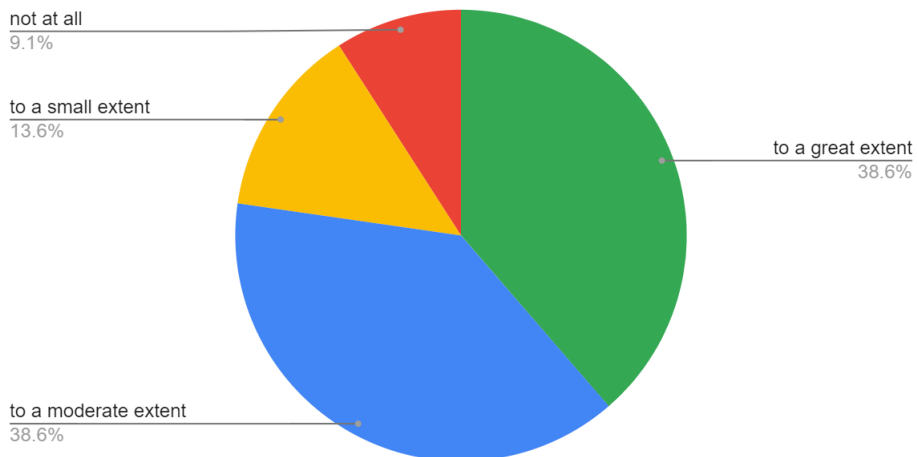
I have the feeling that people treat others differently due to the media.



4. Young adults' experiences with fake news and disinformation

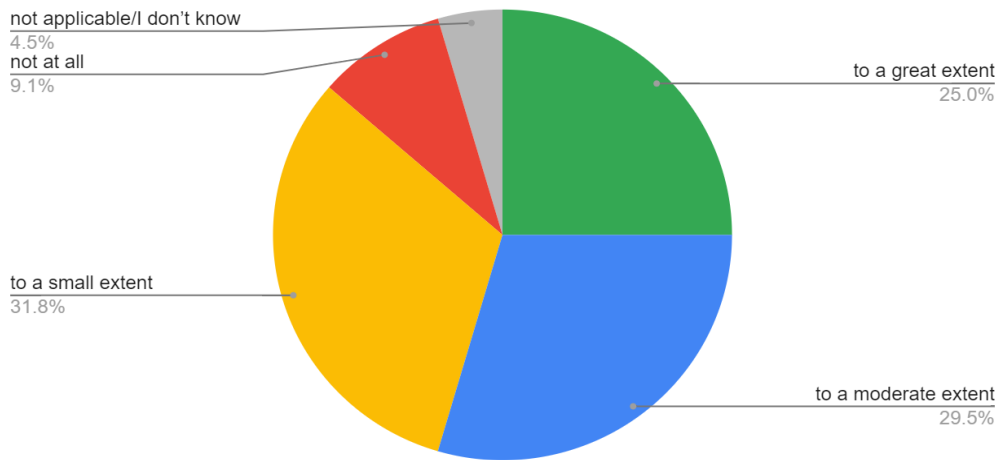
Based on the survey results, a large majority of young adults appears to feel moderately or greatly knowledgeable about ways to recognise fake news and disinformation, as close to two out of five of the survey respondents feel knowledgeable to a great extent and another two out of five to a moderate extent.

I feel knowledgeable about ways to recognise fake news and disinformation.



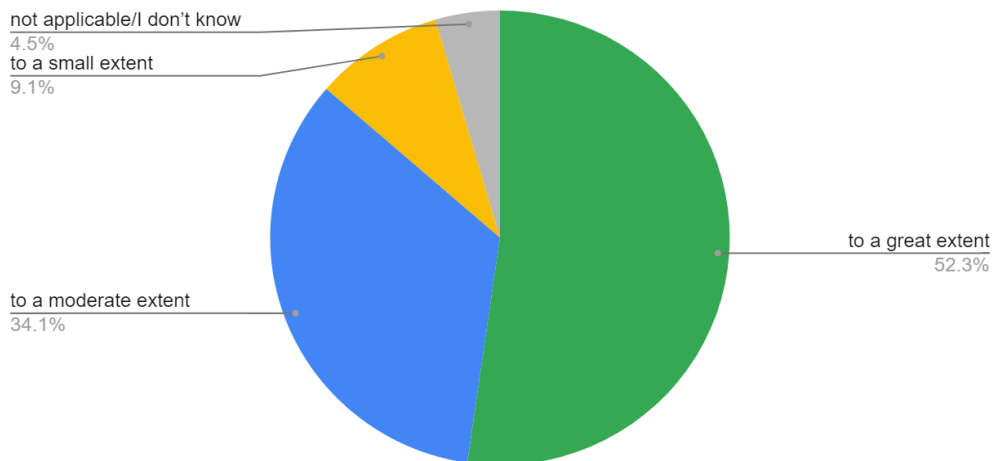
However, a smaller majority feels knowledgeable about ways to deal with fake news and disinformation, as only one fourth of the respondents believes to have this knowledge to a great extent and a bit more than one fourth to a moderate extent.

I feel knowledgeable about ways to deal with fake news and disinformation.



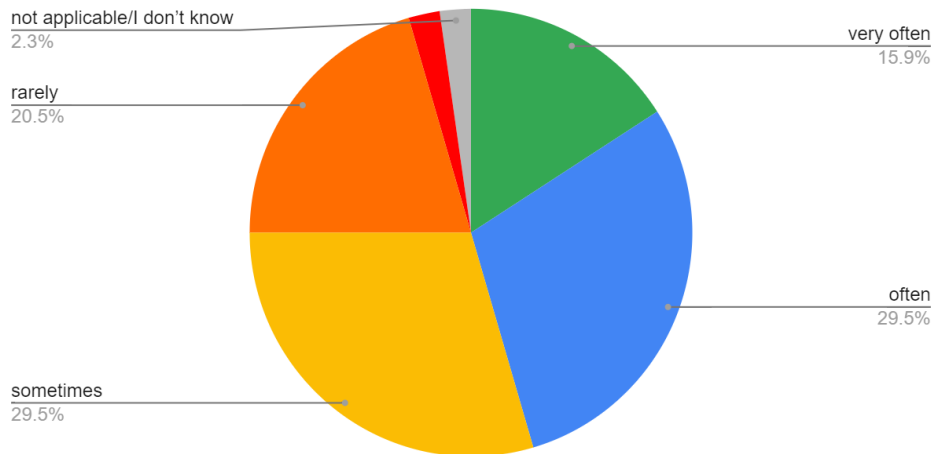
A majority of the respondents believes to a great extent that some media sources purposely spread fake news or disinformation, while another third believes this to be happening to a moderate extent.

I believe that some media sources purposely spread fake news or disinformation.

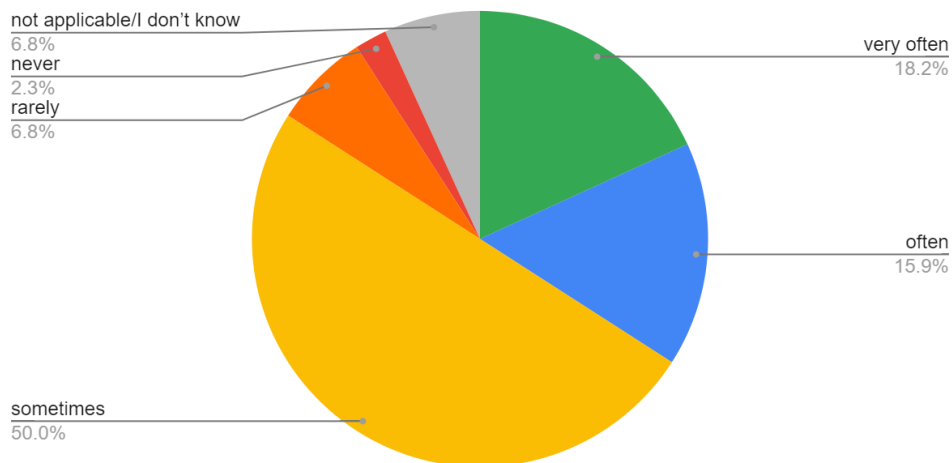


The survey respondents appear to believe that they encounter fake news or disinformation more often when using the mainstream media than when using alternative media sources. Close to half of the respondents think they are confronted with fake news or disinformation often or very often when using the mainstream media, while around one third think they are confronted with this kind of news often or very often when using alternative media.

When using the mainstream media, how often do you think you are confronted with fake news or disinformation?

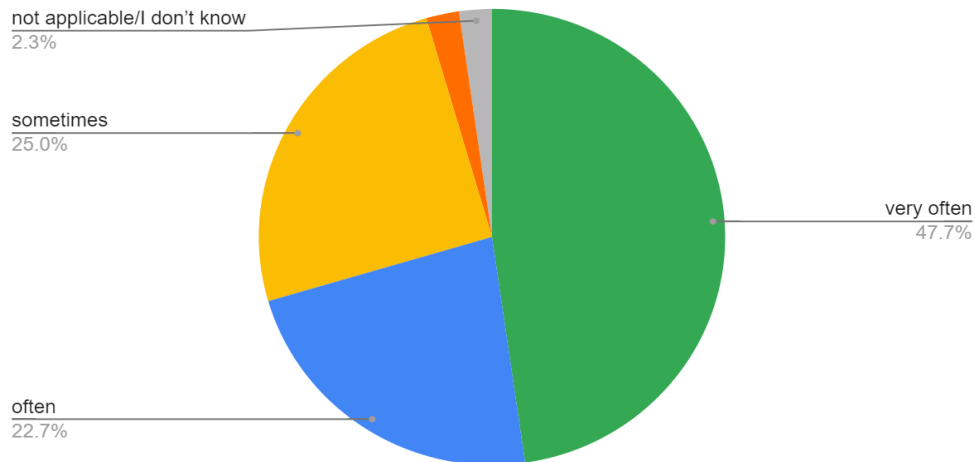


When using alternative media, how often do you think you are confronted with fake news or disinformation?



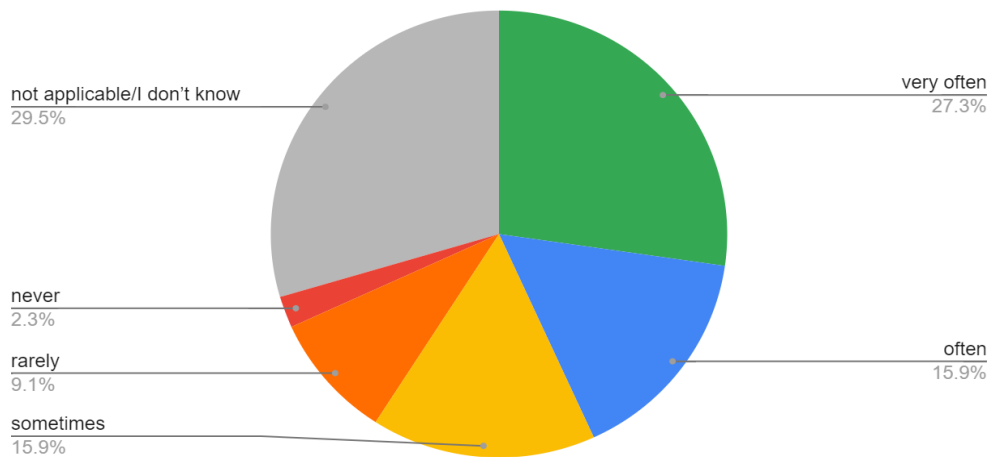
When it comes to social media, Facebook seems to be the platform where young adults believe to encounter fake news or disinformation the most commonly. Almost half of the respondents think they are confronted with this kind of news very often when using Facebook, and more than one fifth believes this to be happening often.

When using Facebook, how often do you think you are confronted with fake news or disinformation?



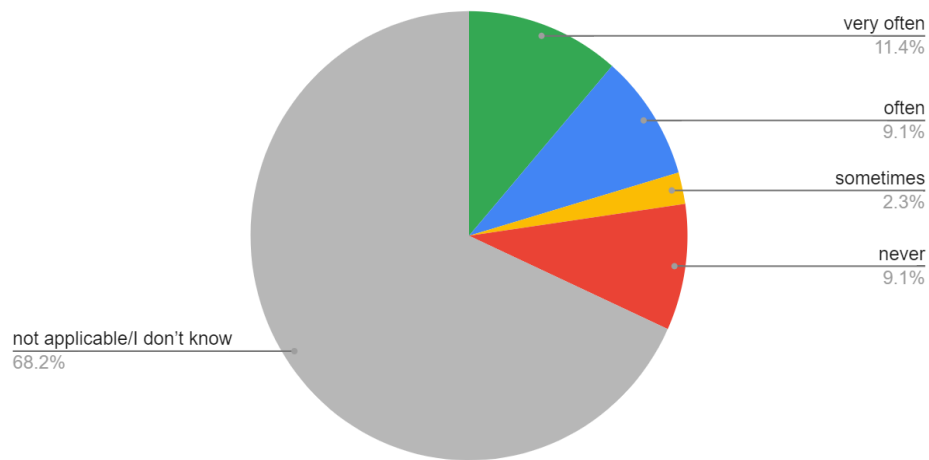
Encountering fake news or disinformation also seems to be frequent on Instagram. Three out of five of the respondents who indicated a frequency through the survey think they are confronted with fake news or disinformation often or very often when using this social media platform.

When using Instagram, how often do you think you are confronted with fake news or disinformation?

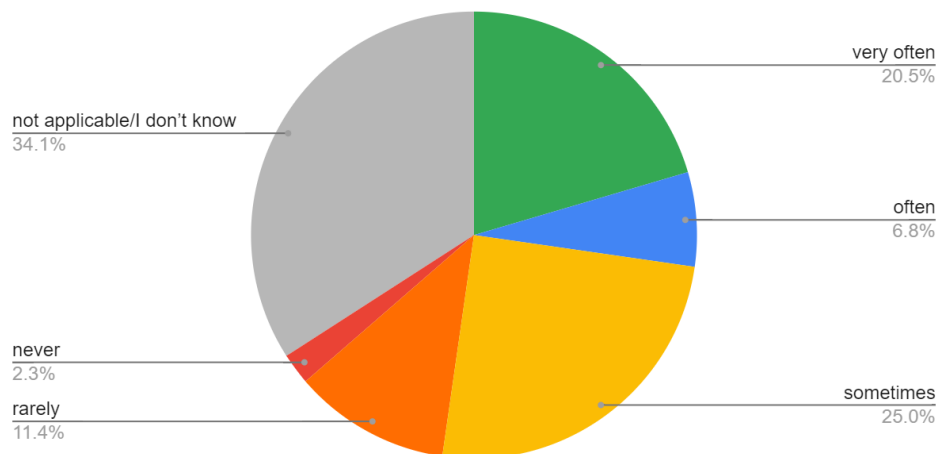


TikTok and Twitter follow closely in this ranking. More than half of the respondents who appear to be using TikTok think they are confronted with fake news or disinformation often or very often when using this younger social media platform, while two out of five of the respondents who appear to be using Twitter believe this to be happening often or very often on the short message platform.

When using TikTok, how often do you think you are confronted with fake news or disinformation?

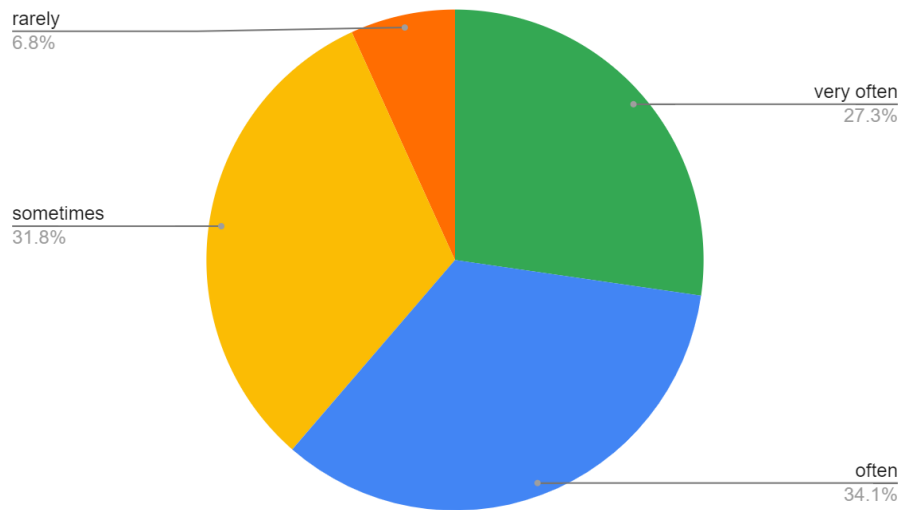


When using Twitter, how often do you think you are confronted with fake news or disinformation?



Word of mouth does not seem to be spared from fake news and disinformation either. More than one fourth of the survey respondents thinks they are confronted with this kind of news very often when speaking with friends, family or colleagues, and another third believes this to be happening often.

When using word of mouth (speaking with friends, family, colleagues), how often do you think you are confronted with fake news or disinformation?



In July 2020 when the survey was conducted, the respondents indicated that they had encountered fake news about topics such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, politics and the economy. When it comes to COVID-19, respondents had encountered fake news related to the spread of the virus, symptoms, vaccines, as well as to the lockdown and the effects of wearing a mask. Fake news related to politics encountered by the respondents were commonly connected to political statements and movements, actions of the government or of parties in the opposition, Brexit, and the situation and future of the EU. Other topics respondents encountered fake news about included immigration, LGBTQ rights, natural disasters, 5G, celebrities, and even Netflix and UFOs.