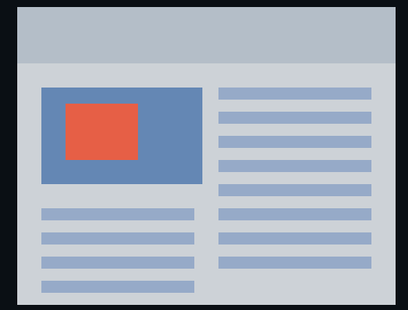
SALK

DIGITAL NEWS REPORT · LITHUANIA · 2026

41%

of Lithuanians trust most news most of the time, above the 37% DNR average. So is there a problem?



TARMO JÜRISTO · SALK · VILNIUS, 25 NOVEMBER 2026



OPENING · THE STUDY

Two questions, one survey

The Reuters Institute's Digital News Report covers 48 markets. Lithuania, like its Baltic neighbours, is not one of them. LRTK asked us to close that gap, and then to go further: how resilient is this information environment? Like DNR, our survey asks how people get their **news**, not how they use media in general: 'TikTok 14%' means using TikTok for news, not using TikTok.

DNR is polled only online. We polled both online and by phone, and that comes back at the end.

The survey

1,003 web and 300 phone interviews in Lithuanian, 13–30 October 2026.

Shortened DNR 2026 core plus a resilience module

The estimates

Modelled (MRP) to adult citizens and calibrated to the 2024 Seimas result, with credible intervals. Comparisons with DNR use a model fitted on the web interviews only, like with like; figures about Lithuania alone use both modes.

The comparison

48 DNR markets, fielded January–February 2026. Eight months apart, and no Baltic neighbour to compare with.

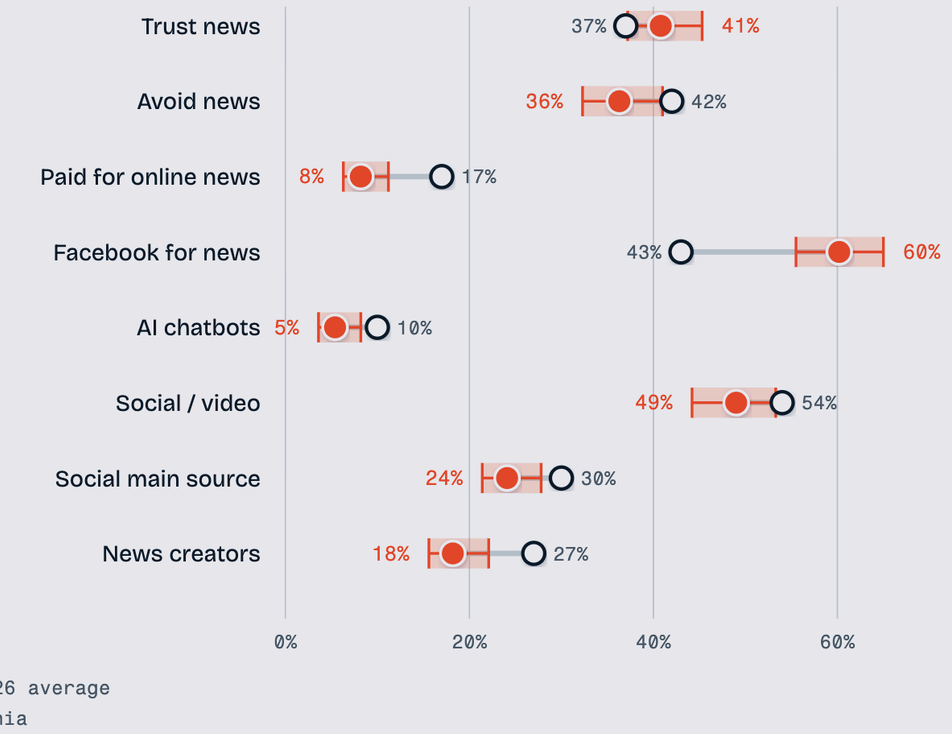
Reuters Institute, DNR 2026

I · LITHUANIA IN THE WORLD

A little more trusting, less paying, very Facebook

Against the DNR average, Lithuania stands out in three places: Facebook is far bigger, payment lower, and AI barely present as a news source. Trust is somewhat higher.

Lithuania against the DNR average



Lithuania: modelled (MRP) estimates, web-only fit (run 444) for comparison with DNR; 1,003 web and 300 phone interviews; fieldwork 13–30 Oct 2026. Shaded band = 95% credible interval. Comparisons: Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026 (YouGov online panels, Jan–Feb 2026); point values.

I · LITHUANIA IN THE WORLD

Reuters' headline stops at the Lithuanian border

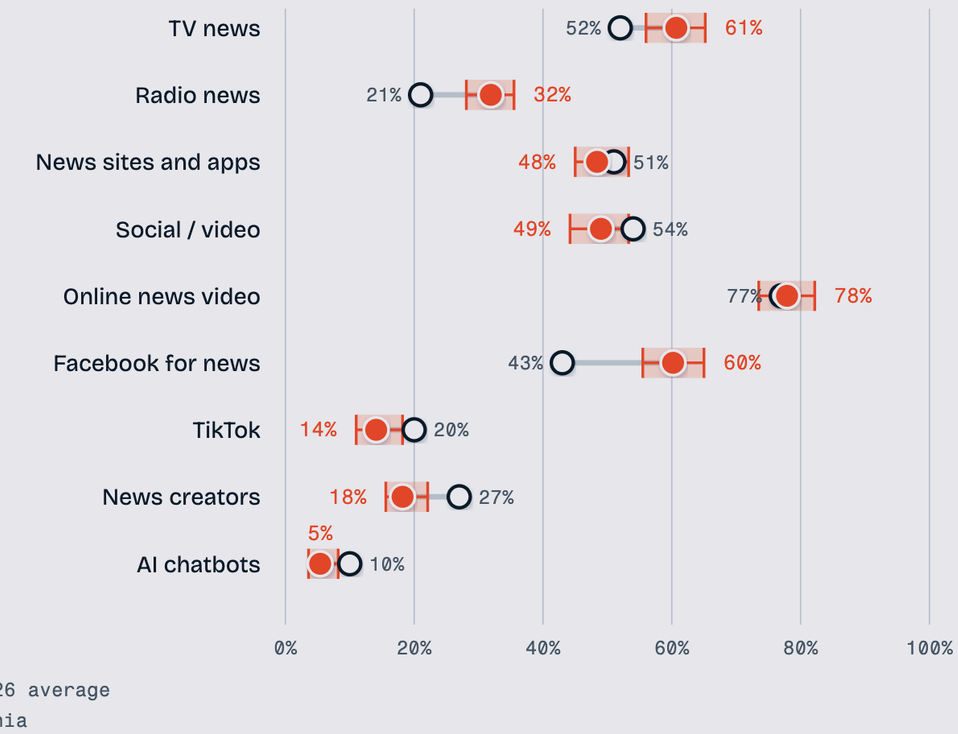
DNR's big finding this year: social media and video networks have overtaken TV and news sites, at 54% against 52% and 51%.

Not here. TV is still first at 61%, with news sites (48%) and social (49%) level behind it.

Radio holds up too: 32% use it for news weekly, against 21% across DNR.

The first wave of platforms has arrived: Facebook for news at 60% against 43%, online news video at 78%, level with DNR. The second hasn't yet: TikTok (14%), news creators (18%) and AI chatbots (5%) all run well below DNR's 20%, 27% and 10%.

Weekly use: the first wave of platforms and the second



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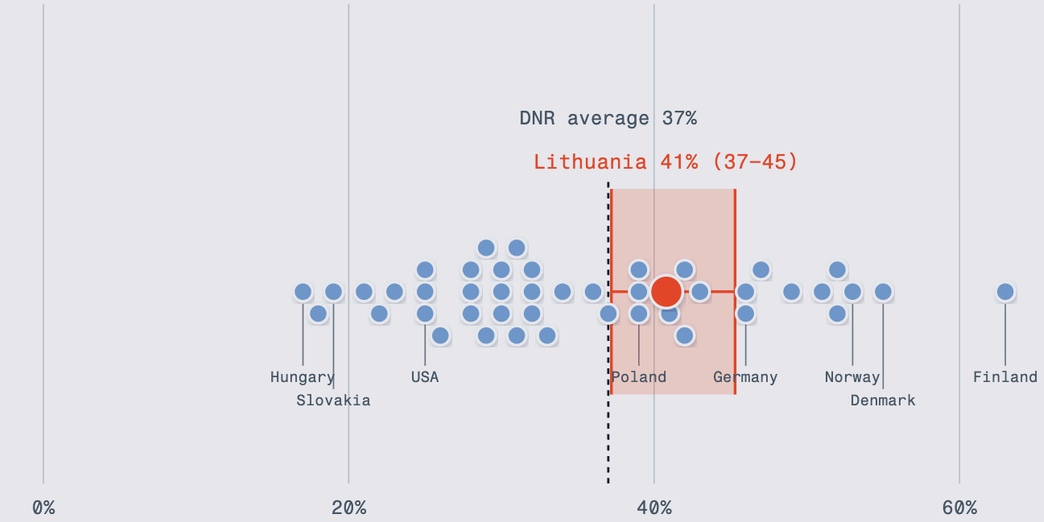
I · LITHUANIA IN THE WORLD

Above its region, not an outlier

At 41% (37–45), Lithuania sits in the DNR middle, a little above the average and level with Poland (39%). It is well above Czechia 31%, Slovakia 19% and Hungary 17%.

And DNR's global average of 37% is its lowest since tracking began.

Trust most news most of the time: 44 DNR markets



44 of 44 markets with data, one dot each

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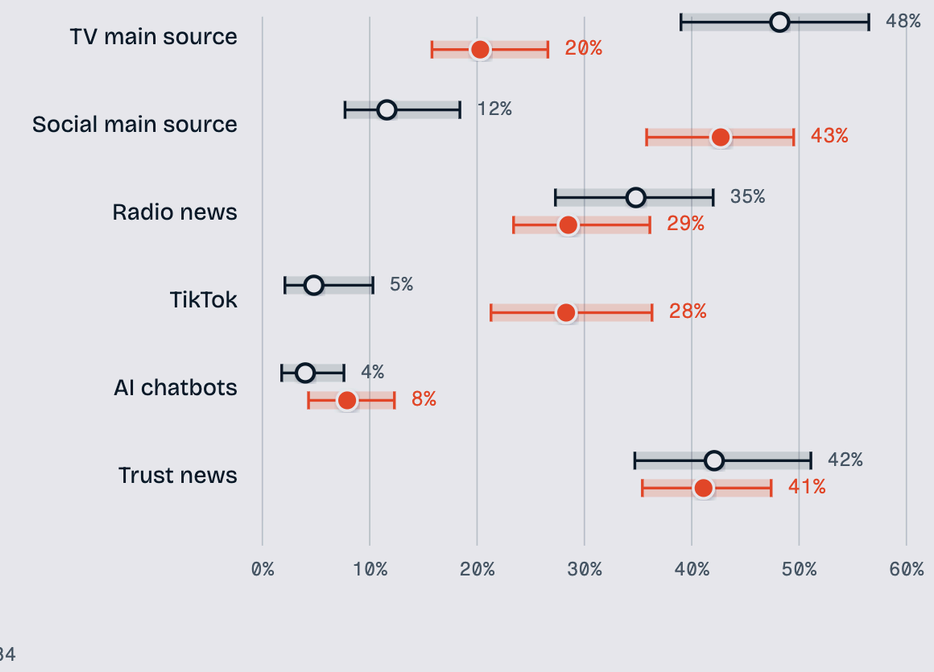
I · LITHUANIA IN THE WORLD

Two news countries, split by age

TV is the main source for 48% of over-65s and 20% of under-35s. Social media is the reverse: 12% and 43%.

Trust, though, does not divide by age: 41% and 42%.

Main source and platform use, by age



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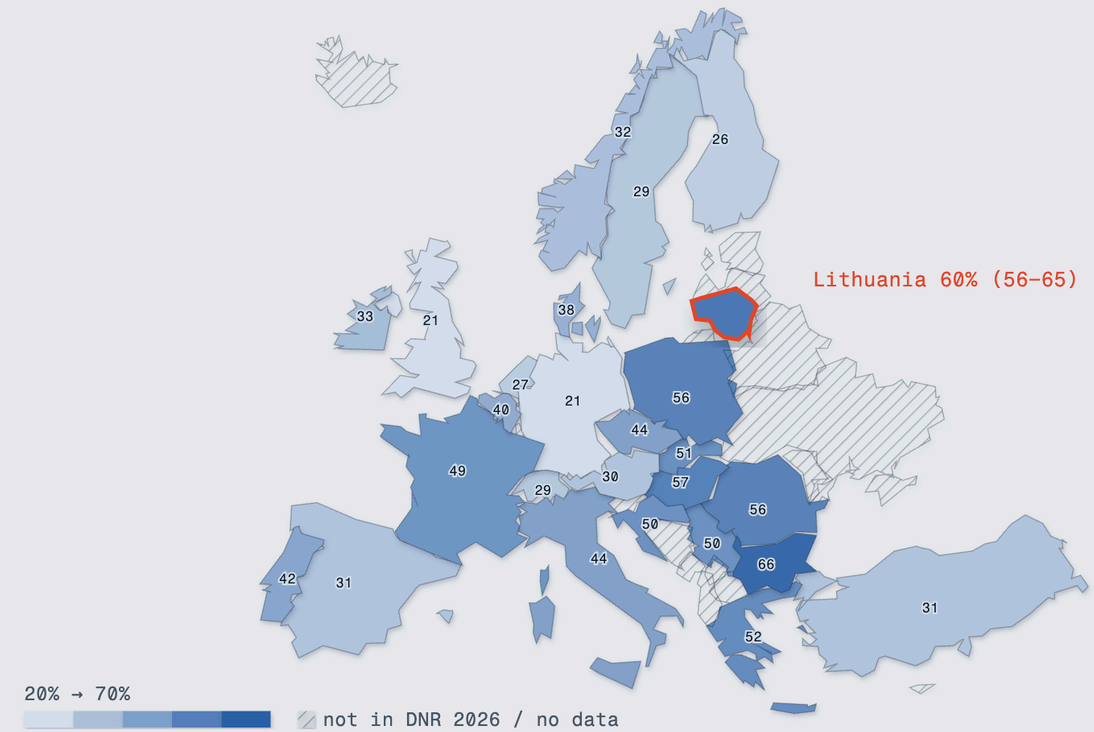
I · LITHUANIA IN THE WORLD

One of Europe's most Facebook-dependent news markets

60% use Facebook for news weekly, against 43% on average. In the EU only Bulgaria is higher at 66%.

YouTube follows at 36%. TikTok (14%) and Telegram (9%) are small.

Facebook for news, weekly



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I · LITHUANIA IN THE WORLD

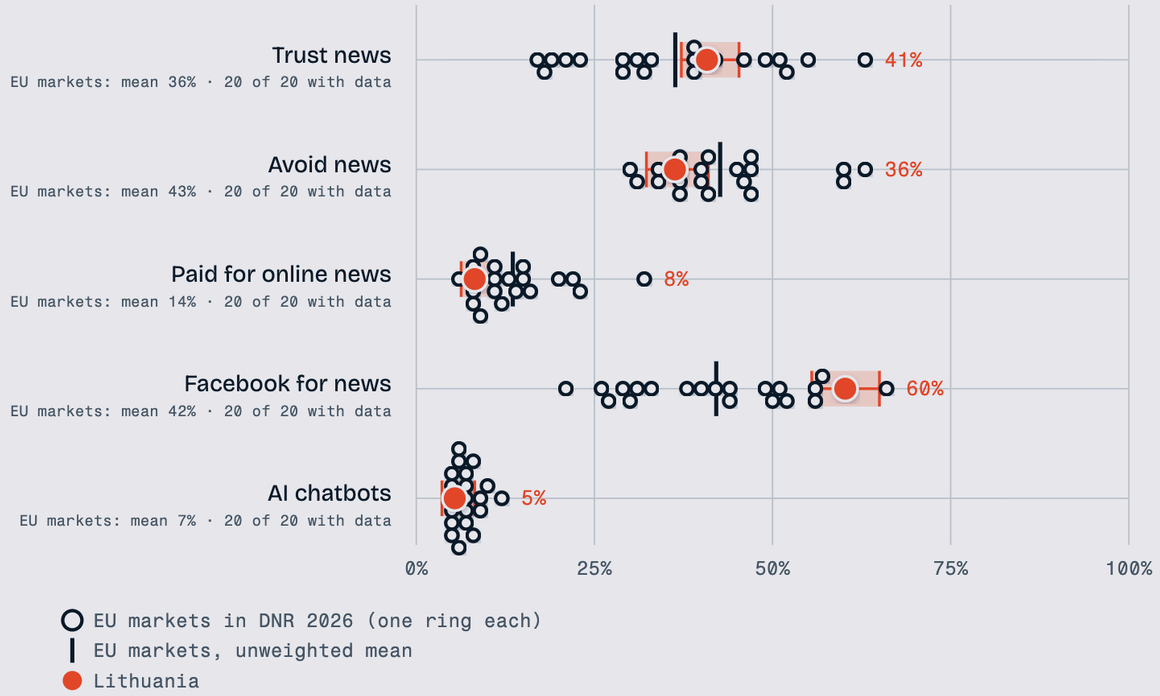
Lithuania among the EU's DNR markets

News avoidance is lower than its neighbours' at 36% (Czechia 41%, Poland 46%), at a Nordic level. Payment is low even for the region at 8%, far below the Nordics.

AI chatbots are a news source for 5% (4–8), half the DNR average, and only 18% trust their news answers.

So the summary of Part I: a broadcast-and-Facebook audience, somewhat more trusting than most.

Key metrics against 20 EU markets



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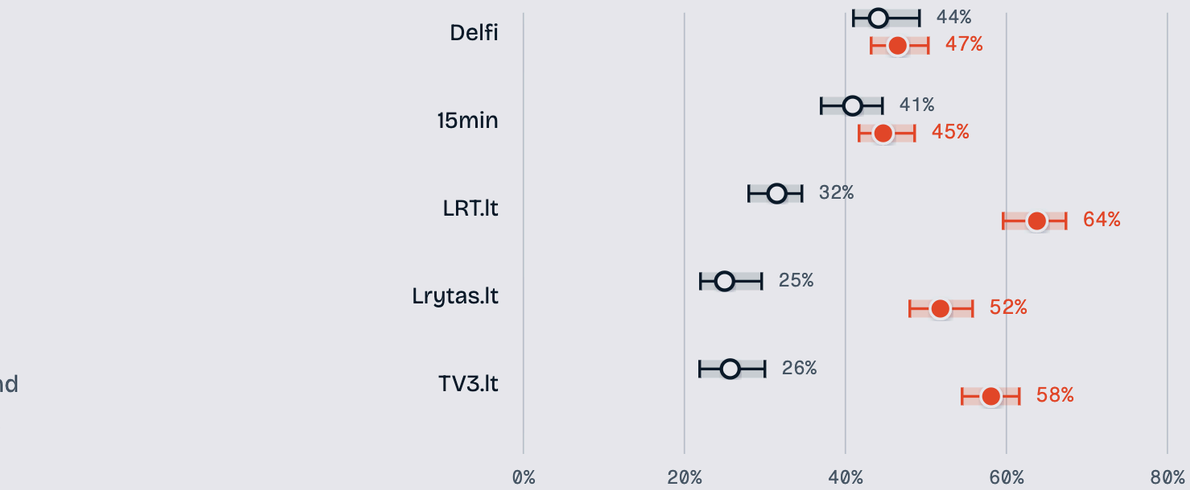
THE HINGE · TRUSTED AND DIVIDED

The most read are not the most trusted

Online, the commercial portals lead: 44% read Delfi and 41% read 15min each week, against 32% for LRT's site.

Trust runs the other way. Among those who know them, 47% trust Delfi and 45% trust 15min; 64% trust LRT.

News portals: weekly use and trust



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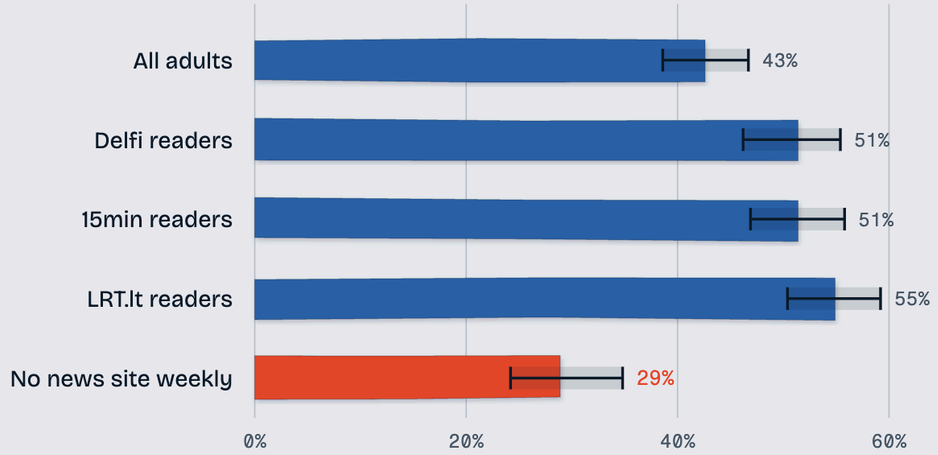
THE HINGE · TRUSTED AND DIVIDED

The divide is inside and outside the portals

Portal readers look much like the country, and trust news more than average: 51% of Delfi readers, 51% of 15min readers.

About a quarter (27%) read none of the news sites in a week. They trust news far less (29%) and judge public media harshly (net −22). The shared middle ground holds; the question is who is outside it.

Trust most news most of the time, by news-site use



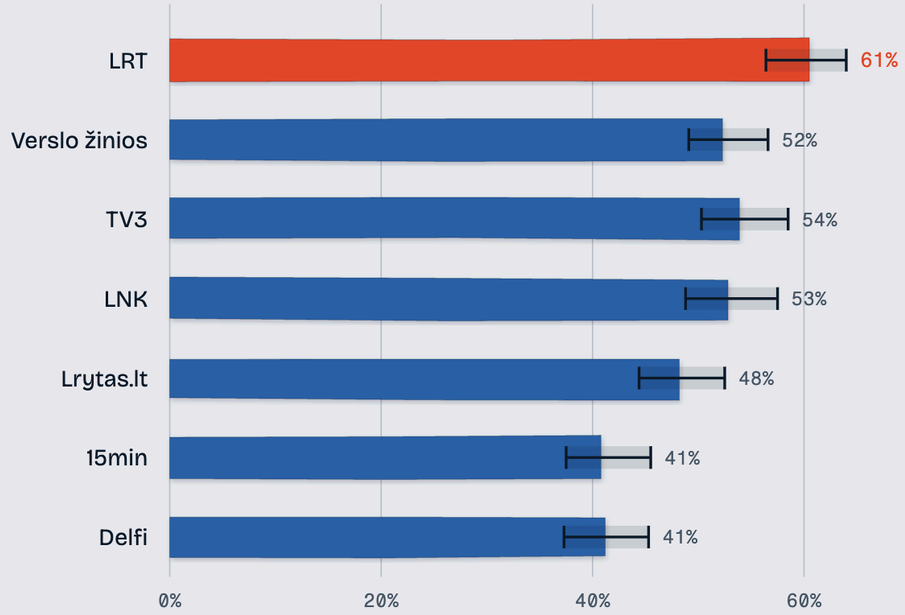
Lithuania: modelled (MRP) estimates, web and phone combined and calibrated to the 2024 Seimas vote; 1,003 web and 300 phone interviews, 13–30 Oct 2026. News-site use = any of the listed sites used for news in the past week. Shaded band = 95% credible interval.

THE HINGE · TRUSTED AND DIVIDED

LRT is the most trusted name in Lithuanian news

61% trust LRT, ahead of every commercial brand. Among public broadcasters that is behind Finland's Yle (83%) level with Czech TV (59%) and well above Poland's TVP (35%) or Hungary's MTV (21%).

Trust in news brands (6–10 on a 0–10 scale)



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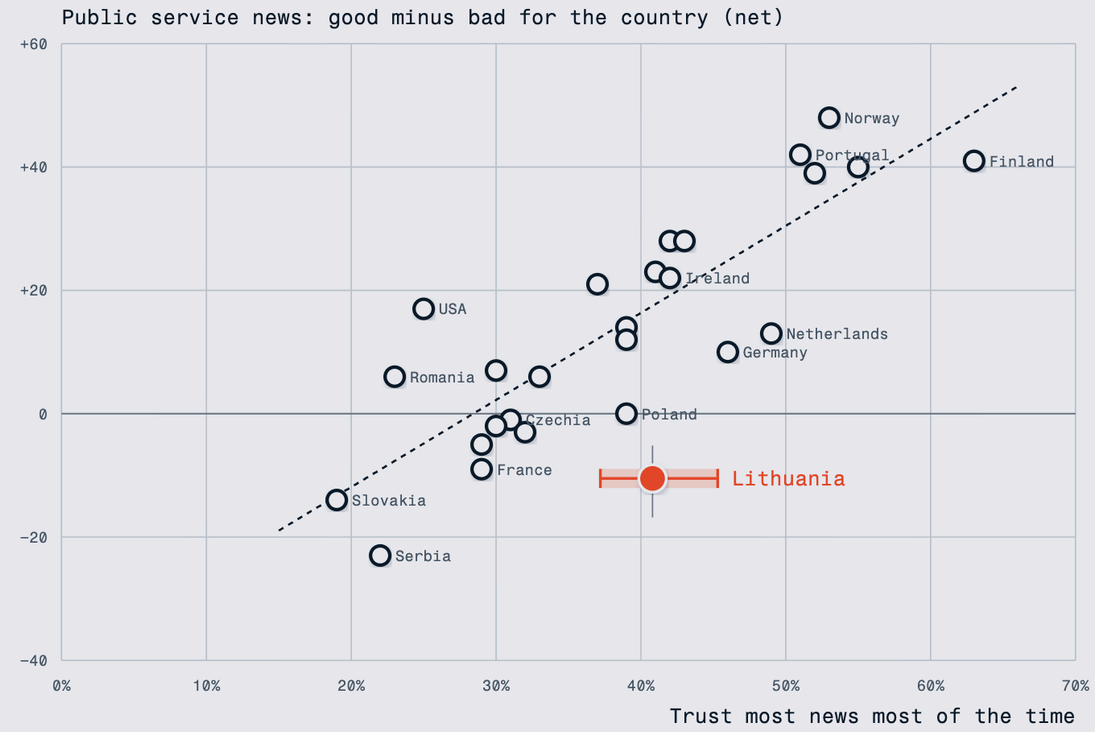
THE HINGE · TRUSTED AND DIVIDED

But Lithuania falls below the line

Across DNR, countries that trust news more also think public media does them good. At Lithuania's level of trust you would expect a clearly positive verdict, around that of Ireland.

Instead it is −10 (−17 to −5), below Poland and Czechia and close to France (−9), far below the +15 DNR average.

Trust in news and the verdict on public service news



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THE HINGE · TRUSTED AND DIVIDED

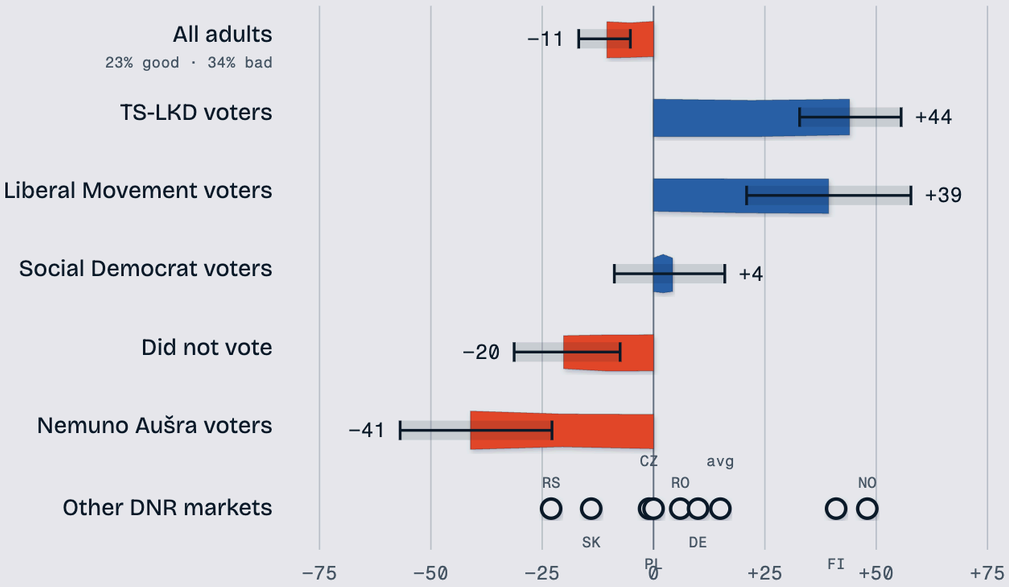
Where trust breaks: politics

The average hides two countries. TS-LKD voters score it +44. Nemuno Aušra voters score it −41.

And it is LRT that divides them, not the media: the same voters are far apart on LRT (90% against 40% trust it), much less on Delfi (59% against 33%).

Age divides too, but far less, and the other way from what platform stories suggest: under-35s −2, over-65s −15.

Is public service news good or bad for the country? (net)



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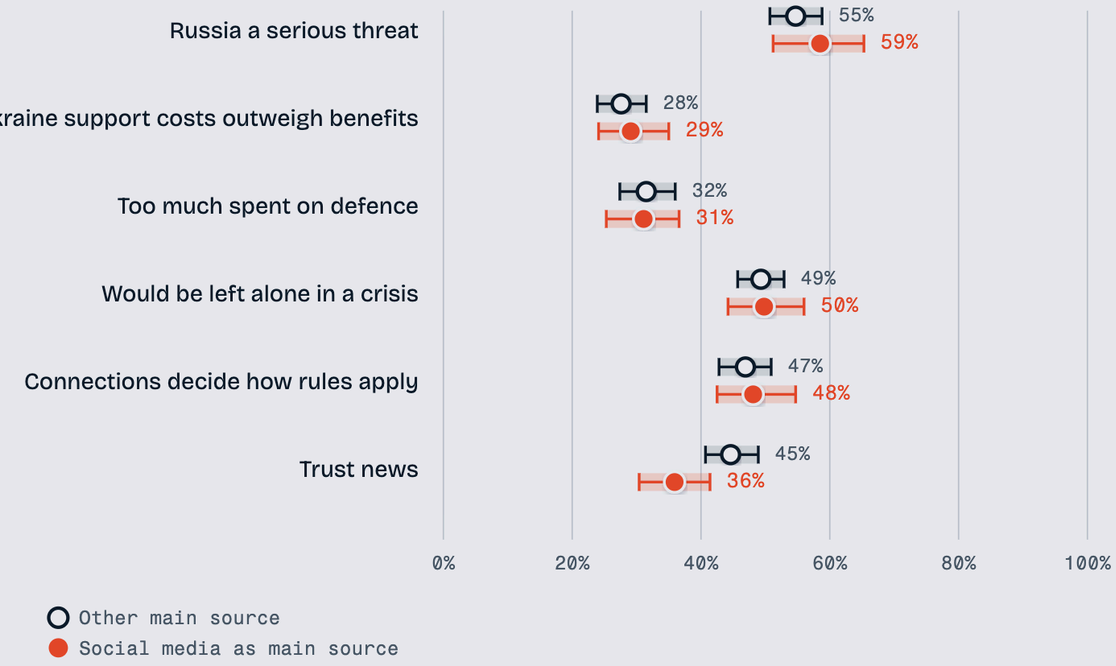
II · WHERE THE CRACKS ARE

Platforms are not the fault line

The usual story blames the feed. In our data, people who rely mainly on social media look much like everyone else on security and institutions: Russia a serious threat, 59% against 55%; left alone in a crisis, 50% against 49%.

They do trust news less: 36% against 45%.

By main news source



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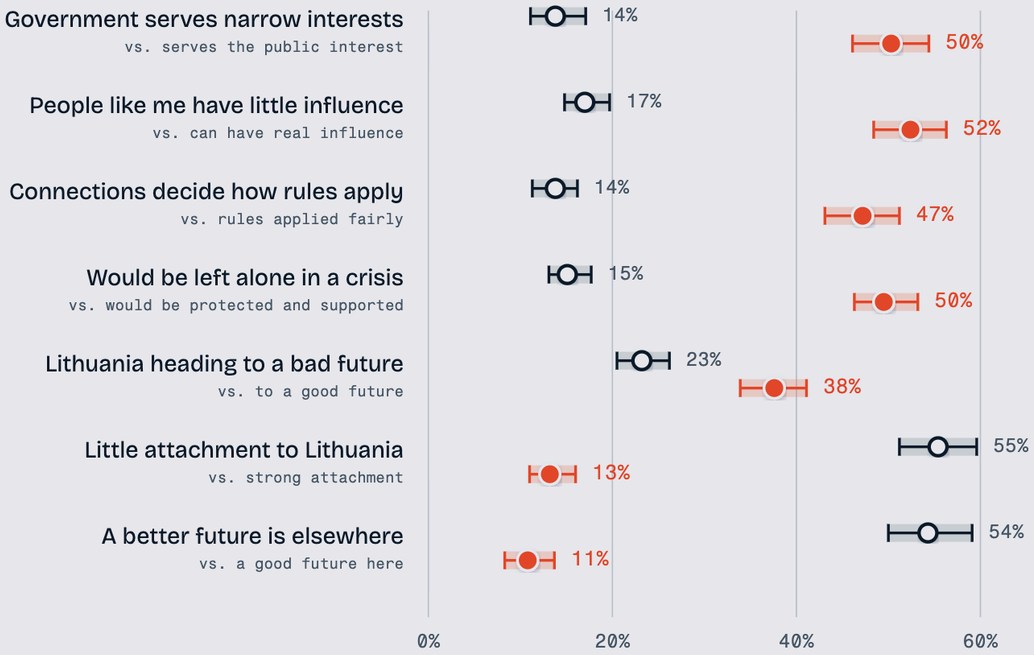
II · WHERE THE CRACKS ARE

The weak point is institutions, not media

People trust the news more than they trust the state to be fair. 50% say government serves narrow interests and 47% that connections decide how rules apply. 50% expect to be left alone in a crisis; only 15% expect protection.

But attachment is strong: only 13% feel little attachment to Lithuania.

Which statement is closer to your view?



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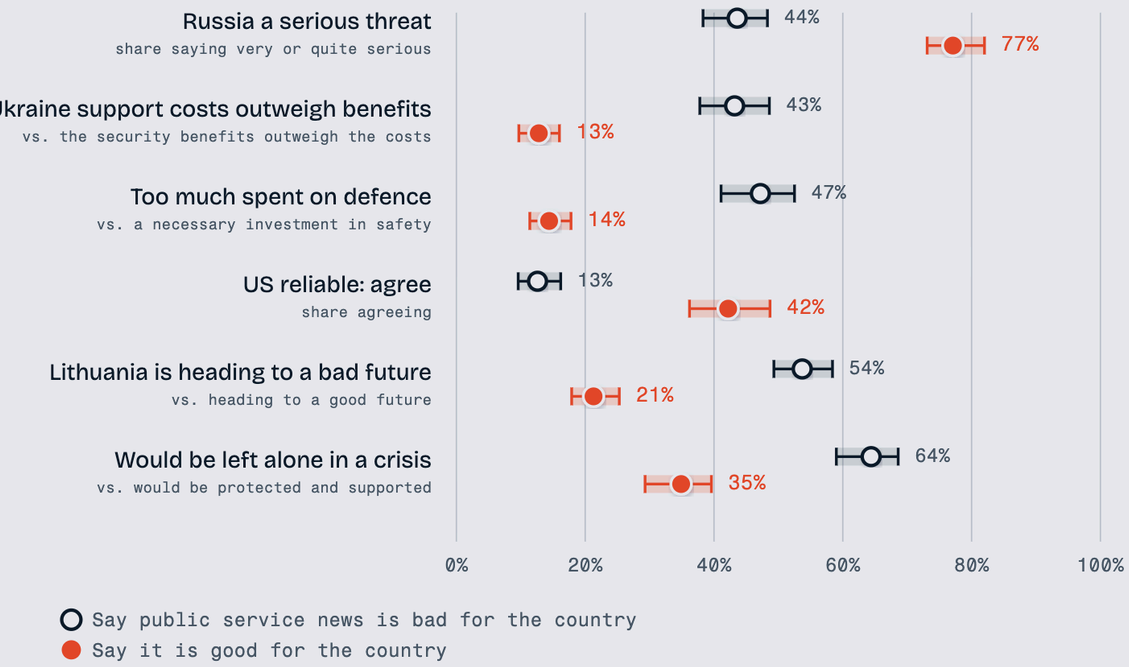
II · WHERE THE CRACKS ARE

The same divide runs through security

The split over public media is not only about public media. Among those who say public service news is good for the country (25% of adults), 77% see Russia as a serious threat. Among those who say it is bad (31%), 44% do.

The gap is as wide on Ukraine (13% against 43% say supporting it costs more than it is worth), on defence spending and on the future. Doubt about the shared broadcaster and doubt about the security consensus go together.

Security and institutions, by verdict on public service news



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II · WHERE THE CRACKS ARE

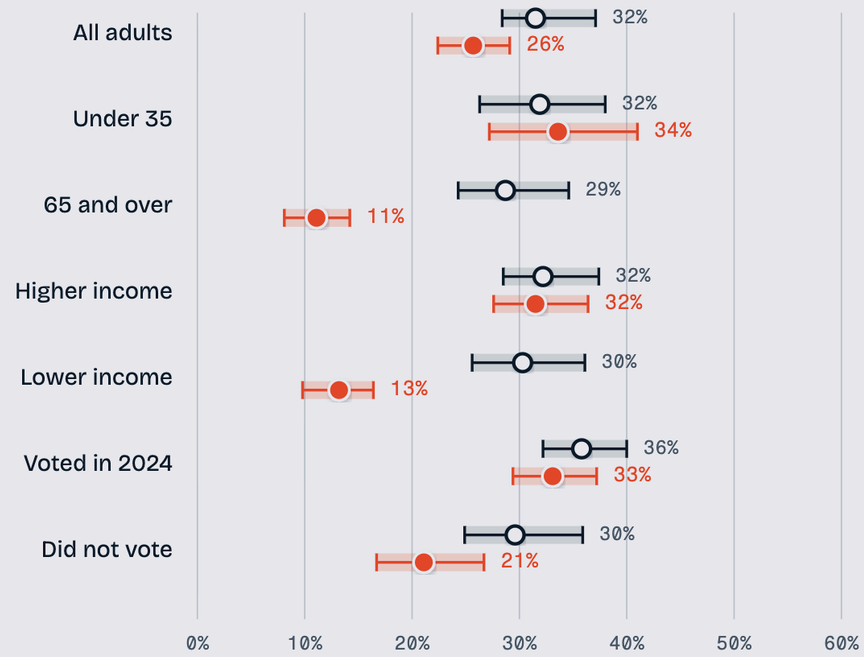
The bias is everywhere. The habit is not.

32% say claims they agree with need less checking, at about the same rate in every group.

Checking itself is uneven: 34% of under-35s often compare with another source, 11% of over-65s. Older people check less whether their news comes from TV and radio or online.

The people who check least are reached mainly through TV and radio.

Checking habits by group



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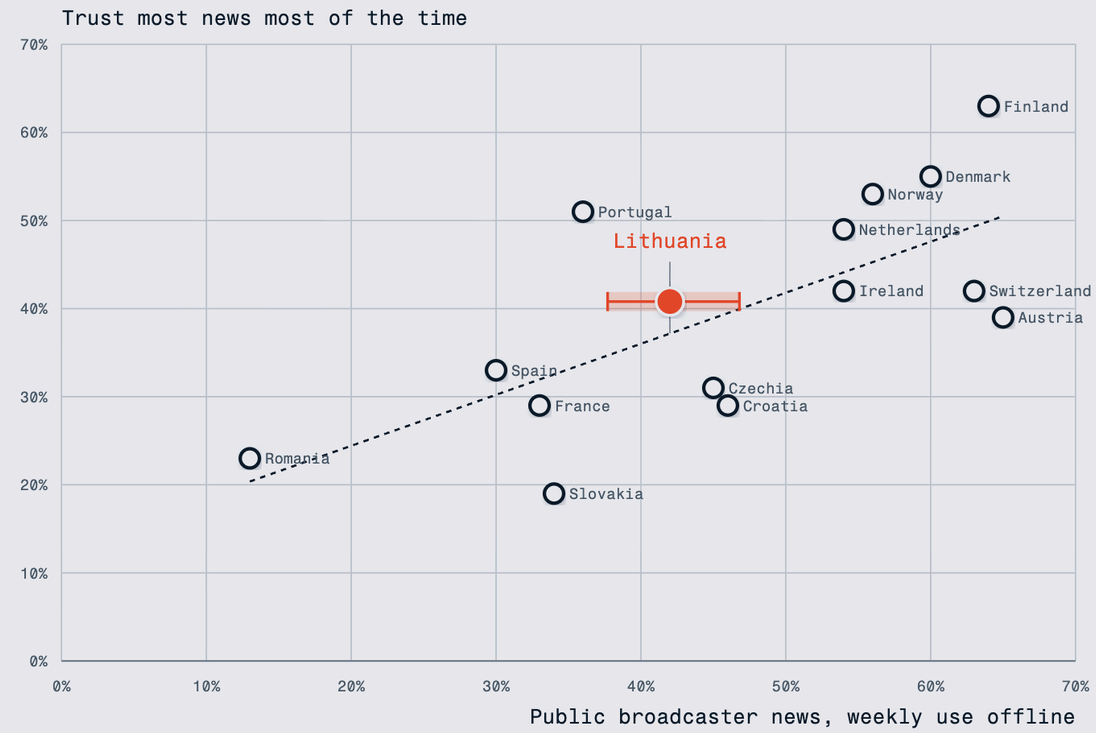
WHY IT MATTERS

Lithuania still has time for an orderly transition

Across Europe, lower trust in news goes with more platform news and less public media. Where public media reaches most people every week, trust is higher: Finland 64% reach and 63% trust, Romania 13% and 23%. Where TikTok carries more news, trust is lower. Lithuania sits on the line: LRT reaches 42%, and 41% trust most news.

The relationship likely runs both ways: platforms gain where shared channels and trust are weak, and weaken them further as they gain. Cohesive societies keep shared, trusted channels, and those channels keep them cohesive.

Europe's DNR markets: public media reach and trust in news



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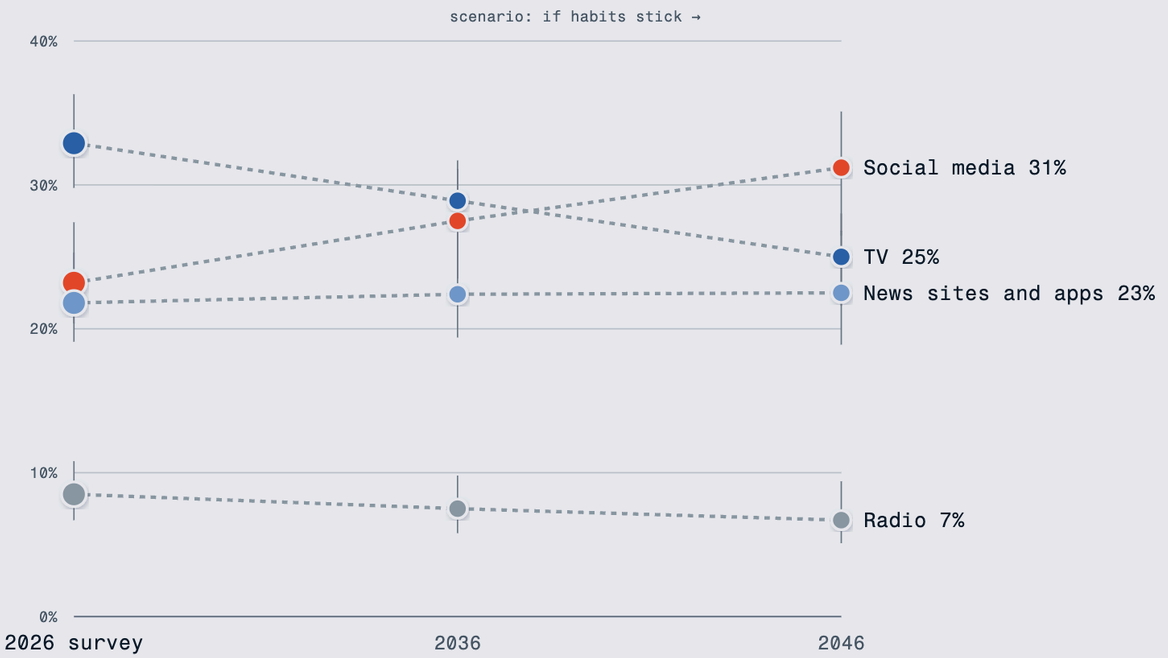
WHAT LIES AHEAD

The mix will change. Trust doesn't have to.

Not a prediction. If each generation simply kept today's habits, social media would still overtake TV around the late 2030s. And habits change too.

Yet today's under-35s, who already lean on social media, trust news about as much as over-65s (42% and 44%), and LRT probably more (69% against 60%).

Main news source in Lithuania: survey 2026, and a scenario to 2046



Lithuania 2026: modelled (MRP) estimates, web and phone combined and calibrated to the 2024 Seimas vote; 1,003 web and 300 phone interviews, 13–30 Oct 2026. 2036 and 2046: one scenario based on today's generational differences, not a forecast. Each five-year age group keeps its 2026 main source as it ages; adults by age from Eurostat EUROPOP2023 (baseline). Whiskers = 95% credible intervals for the model only, not for the scenario.



WHAT CAN BE DONE

Three levels, three kinds of responsibility

The findings point beyond what any regulator can fix alone. Our reading, as judgement rather than data:

THE REGULATOR

Measure and coordinate

- Keep broadcast in focus: it is still the main source for most older Lithuanians
- Work with RRT and the Commission on platforms: Facebook is the biggest gateway, and outside LRTK's direct remit
- Back media literacy: feeling you know practical ways to check goes with 15–20 points more checking and more openness to correction, and it falls from about half of under-35s to one in five over-65s
- Repeat this survey in two modes

MEDIA AND LRT

Earn trust across the divide

- Treat low trust among the disengaged, and among those who read no news site, as the audience problem, not an insult
- Show what public service news does for those who doubt it
- Reach under-35s where they are, without giving up direct relationships

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

Fix what media can't

- Keep public broadcasting out of party conflict: its legitimacy is the asset under pressure
- Make fairness and crisis protection visible, since that's where confidence is lowest
- Argue about Ukraine and defence openly, before someone else frames it

LESSONS BEYOND LITHUANIA

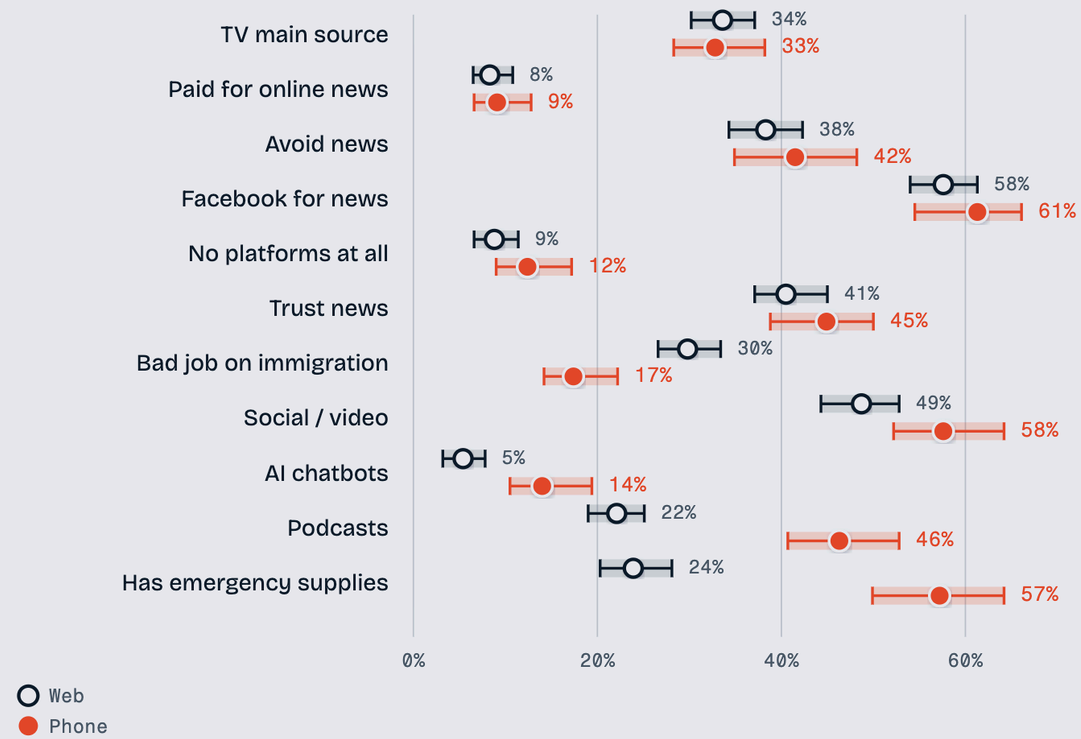
Test your instrument: one country, two modes

DNR is web-only, and cannot see what that does to its numbers. We asked both ways, in one country.

People on phone are less connected: 12% use no platform at all, against 9% on web. Main source, paying and avoidance hardly move. Read-out lists and attitudes move a lot: podcasts 22% against 46%.

And one Reuters finding flips outright. On web, Lithuanians judge immigration coverage badly, net −10, close to DNR's −11. On phone it is +10.

Same population, asked by web and by phone



Lithuania: modelled (MRP) estimates for the same population under each mode, so demographics are held equal; 1,003 web and 300 phone interviews, 13–30 Oct 2026. Shaded bands = 95% credible intervals. The gap mixes who is reached with how they are asked.



LESSONS BEYOND LITHUANIA

Three hypotheses for other countries

One country can't prove these. But each one can be tested elsewhere, and should be.

1

Trust doesn't protect public media

High trust in news and in the broadcaster can coexist with a divided verdict on it. Track both.

2

Look past the platforms

Resilience may depend more on whether people think institutions are fair than on where they get news.

3

Test your instrument

If you only ask online, you can't see what that does. Run one wave in two modes before believing your levels.

Lithuania's news audience is in better shape than its region's. Its weak points are elsewhere: in institutions, in politics, and in a public broadcaster trusted by many but not on behalf of all.

Media policy alone cannot fix that, but it can see it clearly. Thank you.

SALK

SOURCES

Lithuania: LRTK / SALK survey, 1,003 web and 300 phone interviews, 13–30 October 2026; modelled (MRP) estimates calibrated to the 2024 Seimas vote, with 95% credible intervals. Comparisons: Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026 (YouGov online panels, January–February 2026). LRT law: LRT English service; Venice Commission. Remit: rtk.lt, RRT.

AUTHOR

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