

Coface Country Risk Conference, September 12, 2019

# How the Swiss population deals with «Fake News»

# Study design

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## Study design

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### Approach

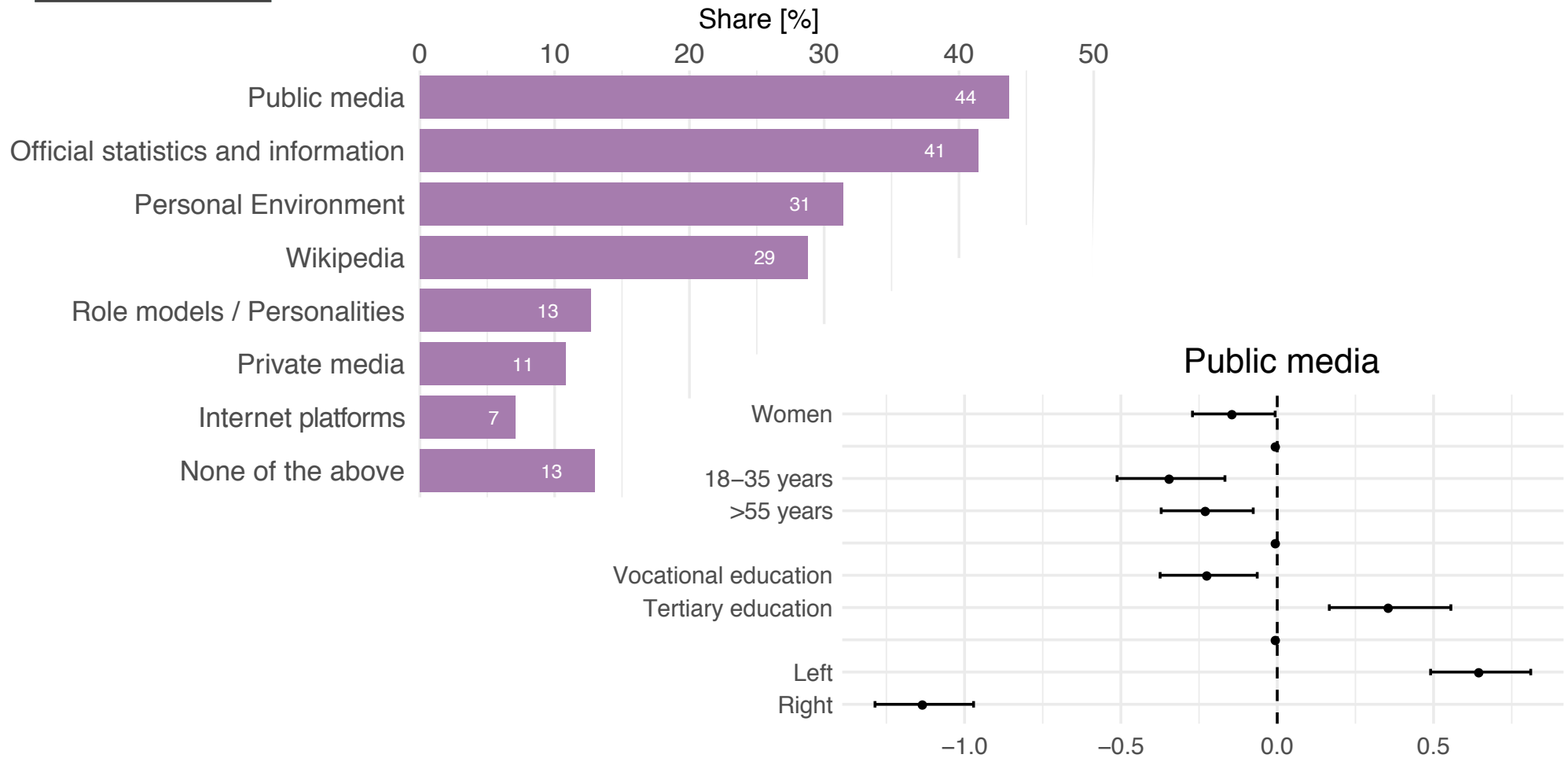
- Opt-in online survey on behalf of the Stapferhaus in Lenzburg
- 8'640 people in Switzerland from 18 to 30 July 2018
- Representatively weighted (sampling error  $\approx \pm 2$  percentage points)

### Selected main research questions

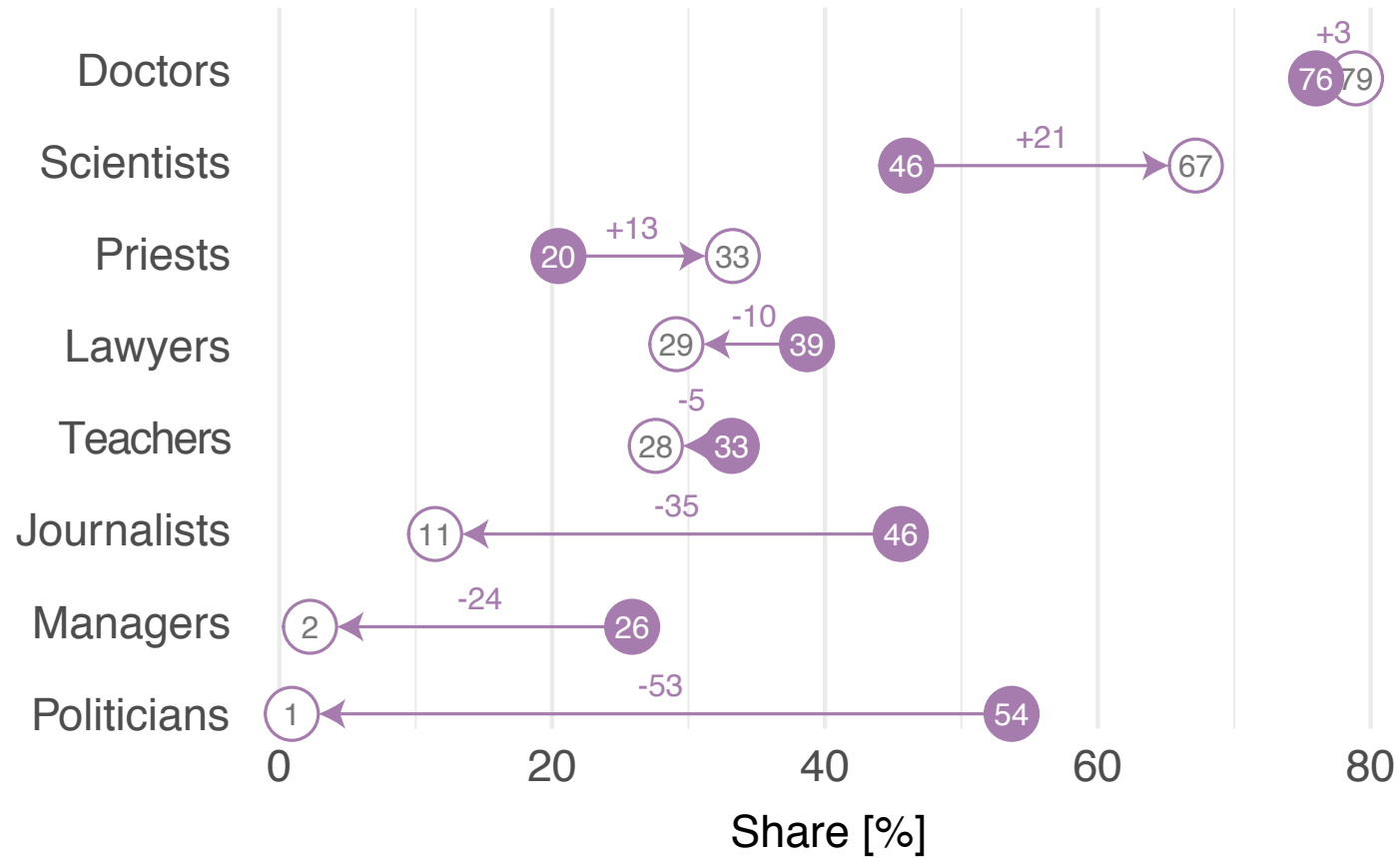
- How do people in Switzerland feel about the truth?
- In whom do they trust?
- In what way do they perceive «Fake News» as a risk?

# Truth and trust at different societal levels

# Truth and trust in society

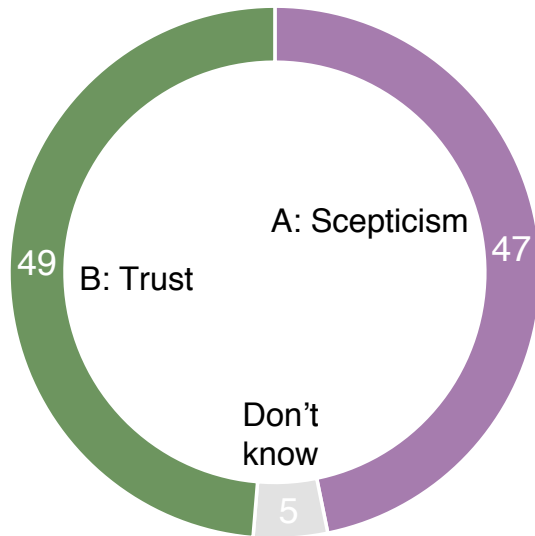


## Trust in professions



● It is important, that they tell the truth    ○ I trust them to tell the truth

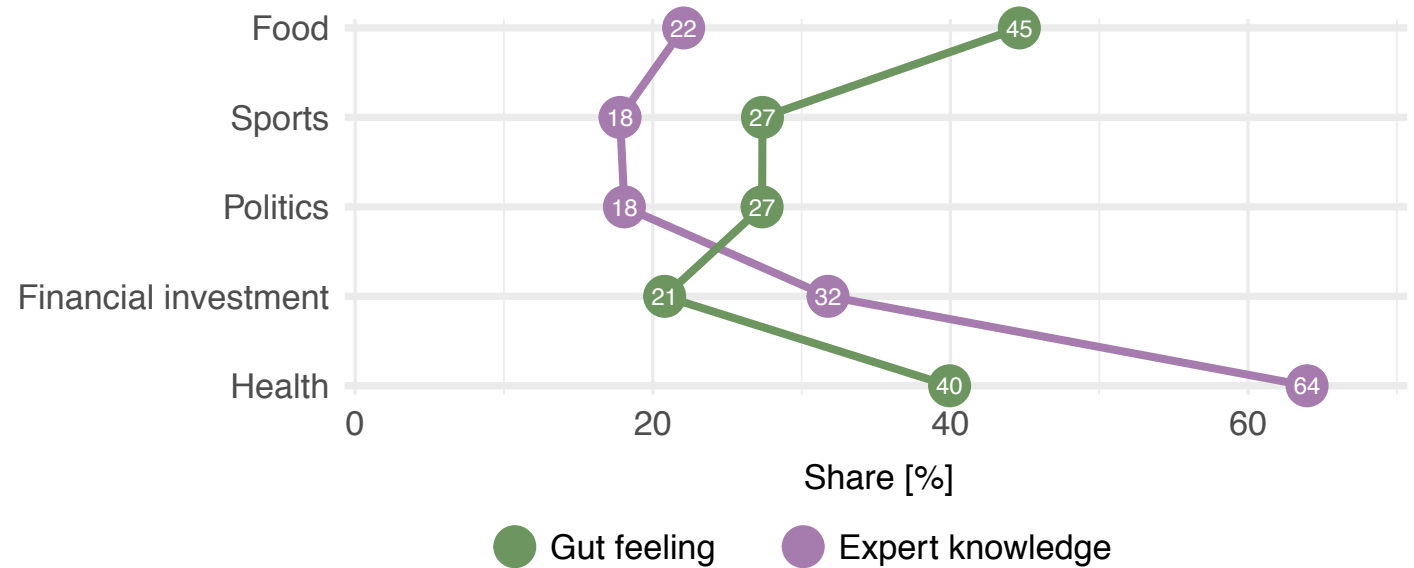
## Truth and trust at the personal level



In my everyday life...

A: ...I put the truth of statements quickly into question.

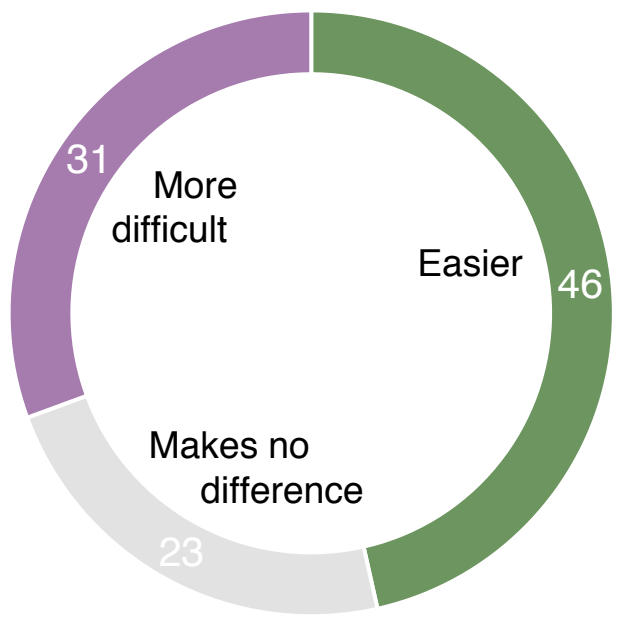
B: ...I usually assume that statements of others are true.



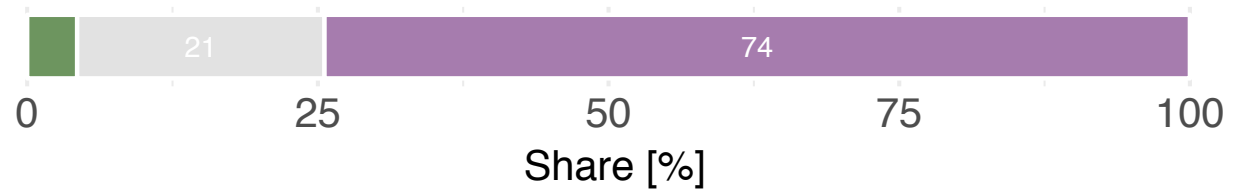
# «Fake News» as a challenge



# The Internet helps and harms

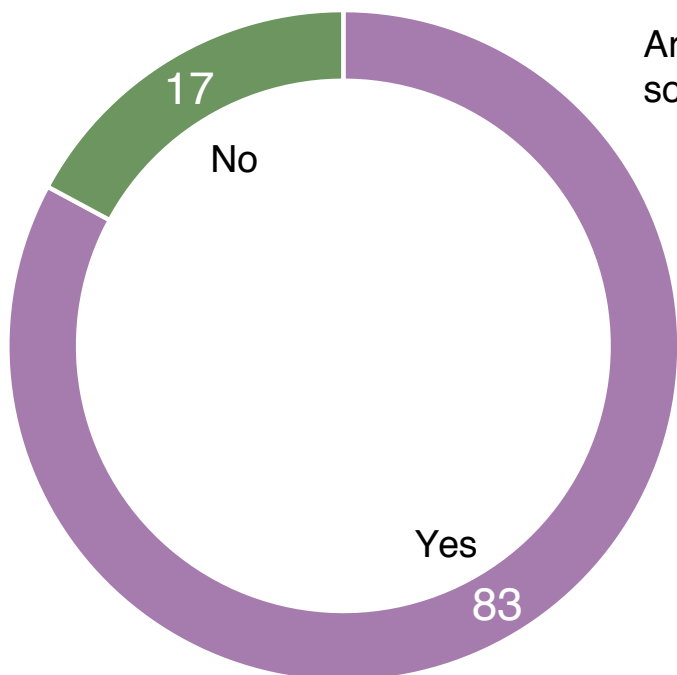


Has it become easier or more difficult with the Internet to identify untruths?

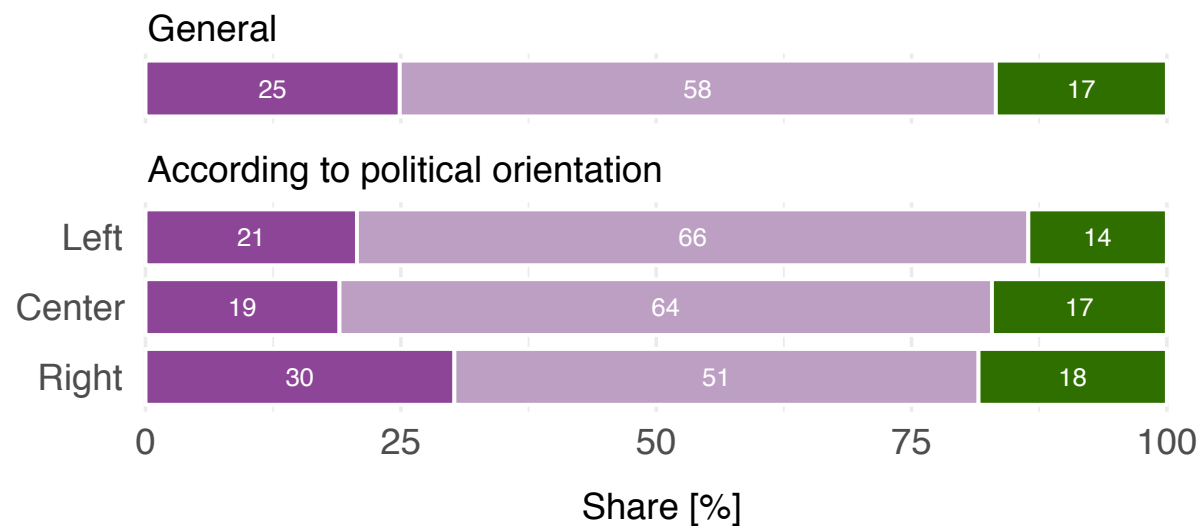


Share of untruths after the arrival of the Internet: ■ smaller ■ equal ■ larger

## «Fake News» as a risk for democracy



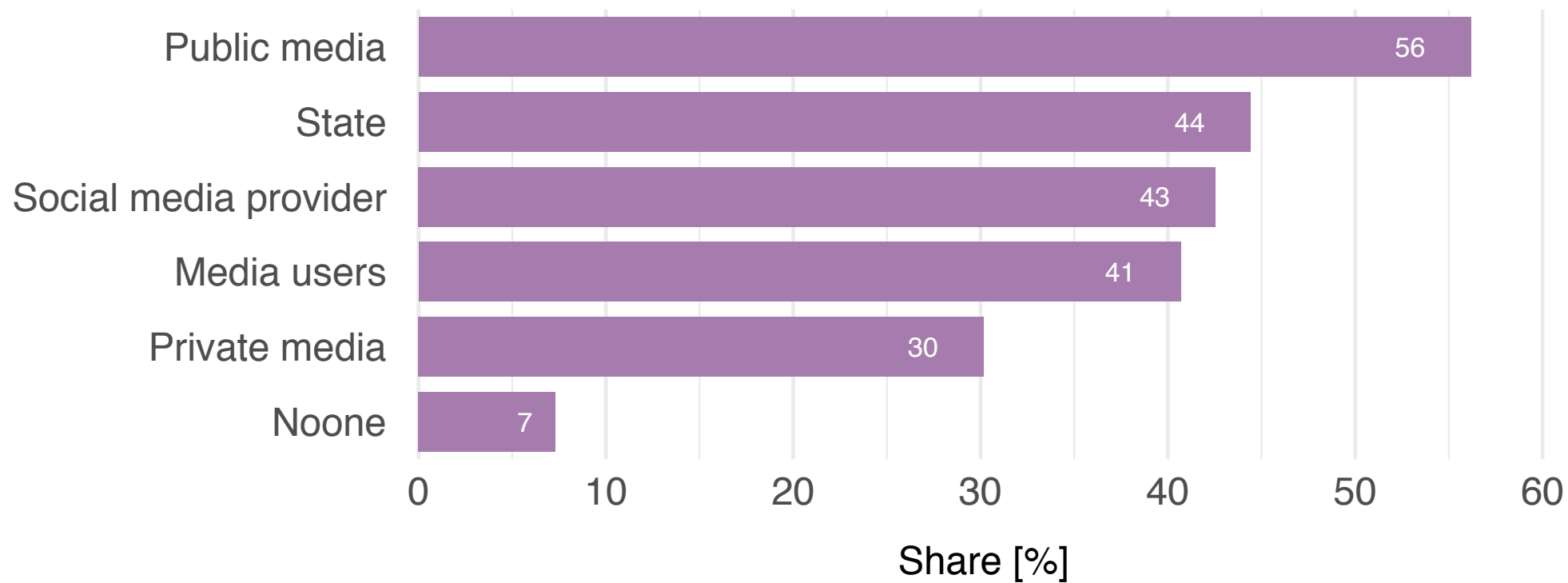
Are «Fake News» a danger to democracy and social cohesion?



Disrupted by false news in political opinion formation: ■ Frequently ■ Sometimes ■ Never

## Who is responsible to counter «Fake News»?

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## Key elements

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### Truth and trust

- *Public institutions* enjoy the highest level of *trust*.
- *Journalists, managers* and especially *politicians* suffer the worst balance of confidence.
- Only when it comes to *financial and health issues* do people feel that they need to rely on *expert knowledge*.

## Key elements

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### Fake News

- The relationship between *false news* and the *Internet* is highly *ambiguous*.
- *False news* are clearly seen as a *danger to democracy*.
- The *public media* (and not private enterprise) are the ones most *held responsible* for doing something about false news.

Thank you for your attention