



# 2016 Eurobarometer

## On Media Pluralism and Democracy

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**The European Commission is fully committed to supporting media freedom. Media pluralism is an essential safeguard for a healthy democracy – together with the freedom of expression which is at the core of the fundamental democratic values of the European Union. These values are enshrined in the [Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union](#).**

The European Commission conducted a Eurobarometer survey to explore citizens' opinions about the diversity of views available in the media, their trust in the media and perceptions of its independence, and their experience of online news debates. The survey was conducted in late September and early October 2016 among 28,000 citizens in all 28 EU countries.

The survey's main findings highlight that, in the eyes of Europeans, there is still considerable work to be done in ensuring the independence of national media and instilling trust in the press. The widespread experience of hate speech, abuse and threats in online spaces also needs to be addressed to ensure all citizens feel free to safely express themselves on the internet.

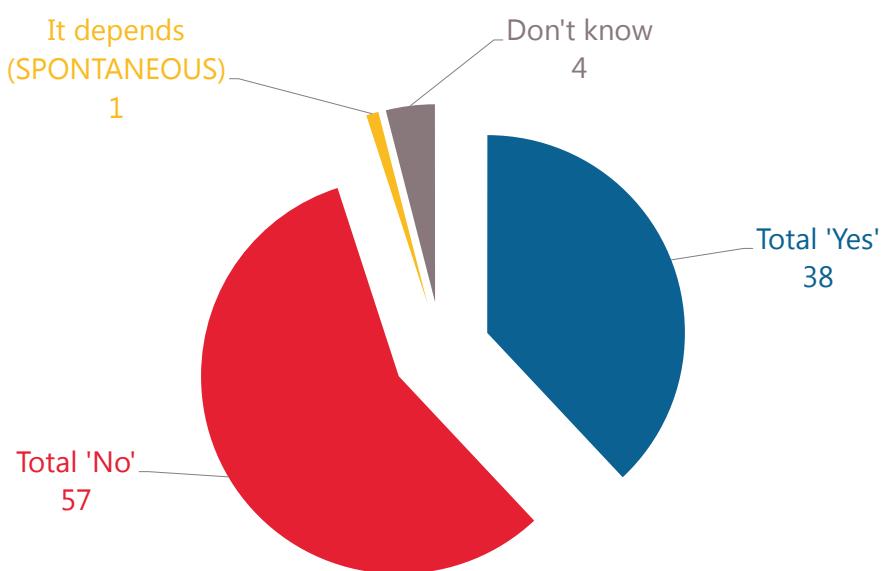
## Independence of the media

**A majority (57%) of respondents say their national media do not provide information free from political or commercial pressure.**

- Almost four in ten respondents (38%) consider that their national media provide information free from political or commercial pressure. Less than one in twenty respondents (4%) says they do not know.

**QC1.3** For each of the following statements, please tell me to what extent it corresponds or not to the situation of the (NATIONALITY) media:

(NATIONALITY) media provide information free from political or commercial pressure (% - EU)

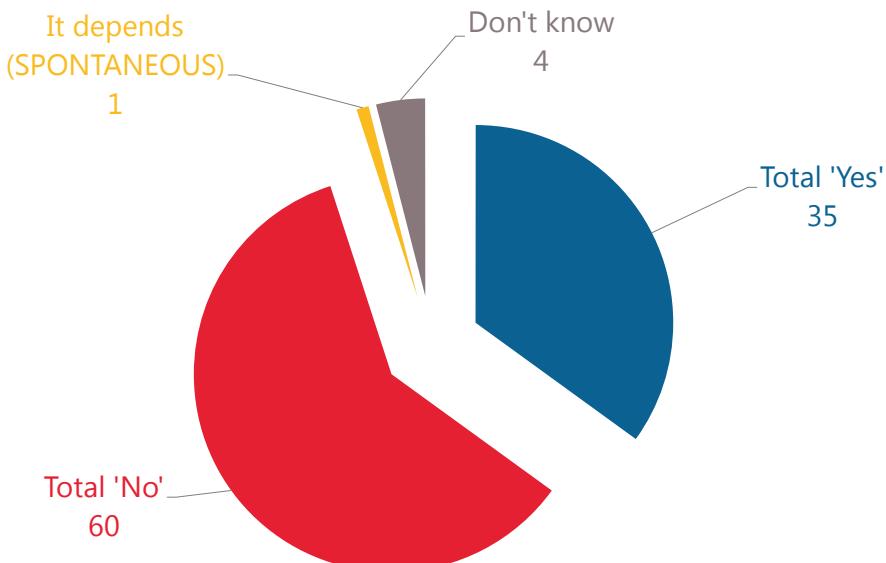


**A majority (60%) think their national public service media is not free from political pressure.**

- Just over a third of respondents consider their national public service media are free from political pressure (35%).

**QC1.4** For each of the following statements, please tell me to what extent it corresponds or not to the situation of the (NATIONALITY) media:

(NATIONALITY) public service media are free from political pressure (% - EU)



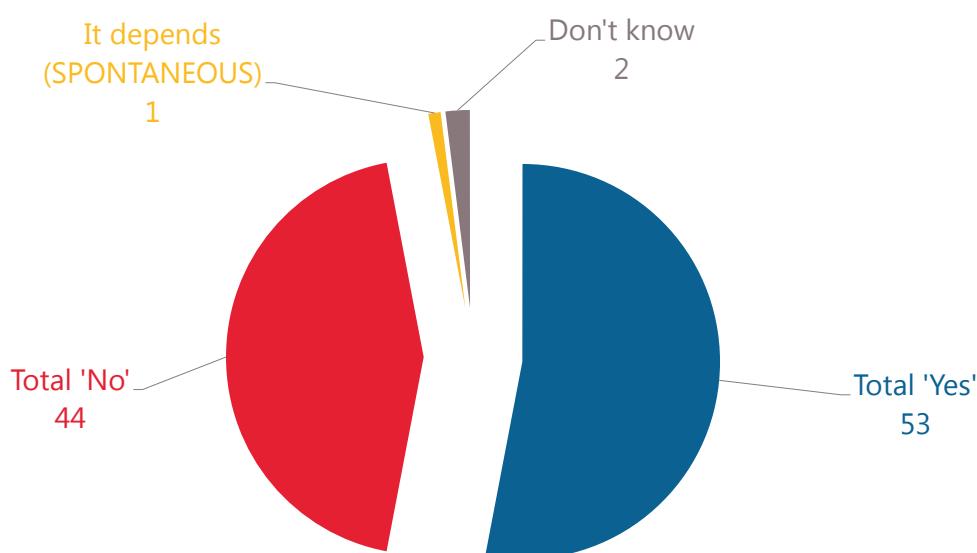
## Trust in the media

**Only a slight majority (53%) agree their national media provide trustworthy information.**

- A large number (44%) think it does not.

**QC1.1** For each of the following statements, please tell me to what extent it corresponds or not to the situation of the (NATIONALITY) media:

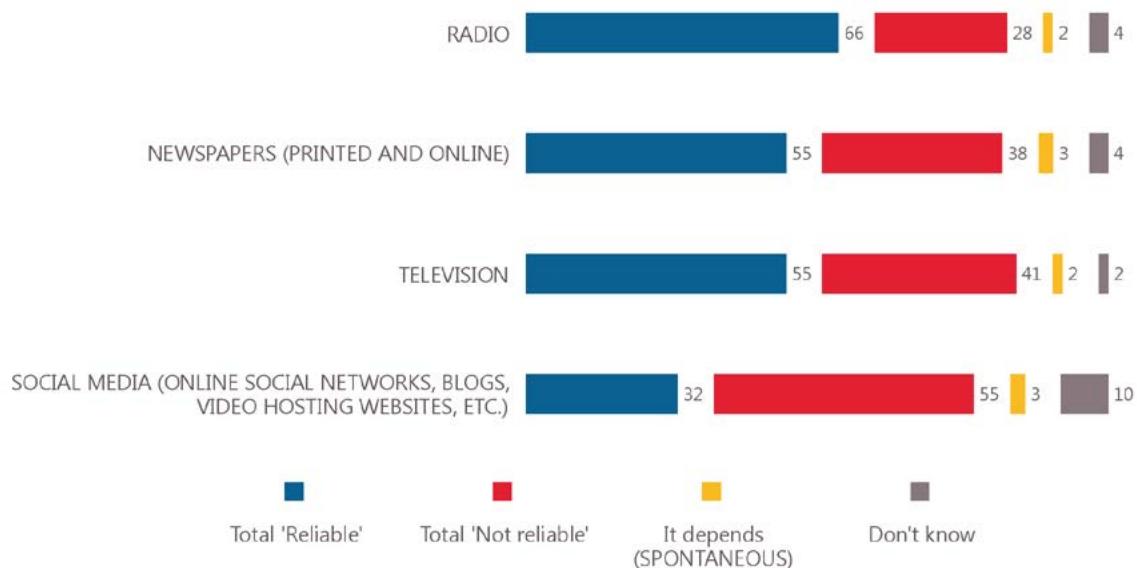
(NATIONALITY) media provide trustworthy information (% - EU)



**Radio is considered the most reliable form of national media.**

- Radio is the most likely to be considered reliable (66%), followed by television and newspapers (both 55%). Far fewer respondents consider social media to be reliable (32%) but 15-24 year olds (40%) tend to have more confidence in social media.
- Although young people trust social media proportionately more (40%), their trust in radio is even higher (68%) than among the general population.

**QC4** For each of the following (NATIONALITY) media, please tell me if you think it is reliable or not: (% - EU)

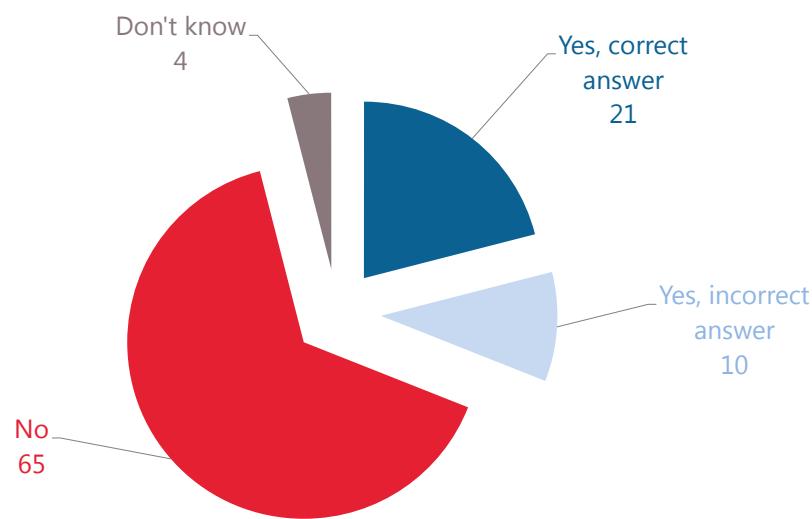


## Awareness of the national media regulator, and opinions about its independence

**Only one in five respondents spontaneously give the correct name of the body that oversees audio-visual media in their country.**

- Only three in ten (31%) respondents say they are aware of the body that oversees audio-visual media in their country. Almost eight in ten respondents either do not know this body, or give an incorrect answer (79%).

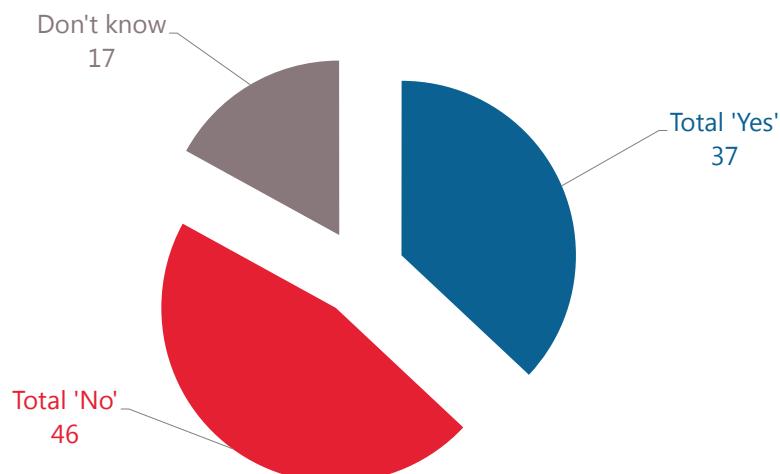
**QCS Are you aware of the body that oversees audio-visual media in your country? (% - EU)**



**Almost half of respondents (46%) consider that their national media regulator is not free and independent from political, governmental or commercial pressures.**

- Less than four in ten respondents (37%) think the body that oversees the audio-visual media in their country is free and independent from political, governmental or commercial pressures.
- There are significant geographic differences in the EU. In seventeen Member States of the EU, the majority of respondents say the body overseeing audio-visual media in their country is not free and independent.

**QCS Do you think that [NAME OF AUDIO-VISUAL NATIONAL MEDIA REGULATOR] is free and independent from political, governmental or commercial pressures? (% - EU)**

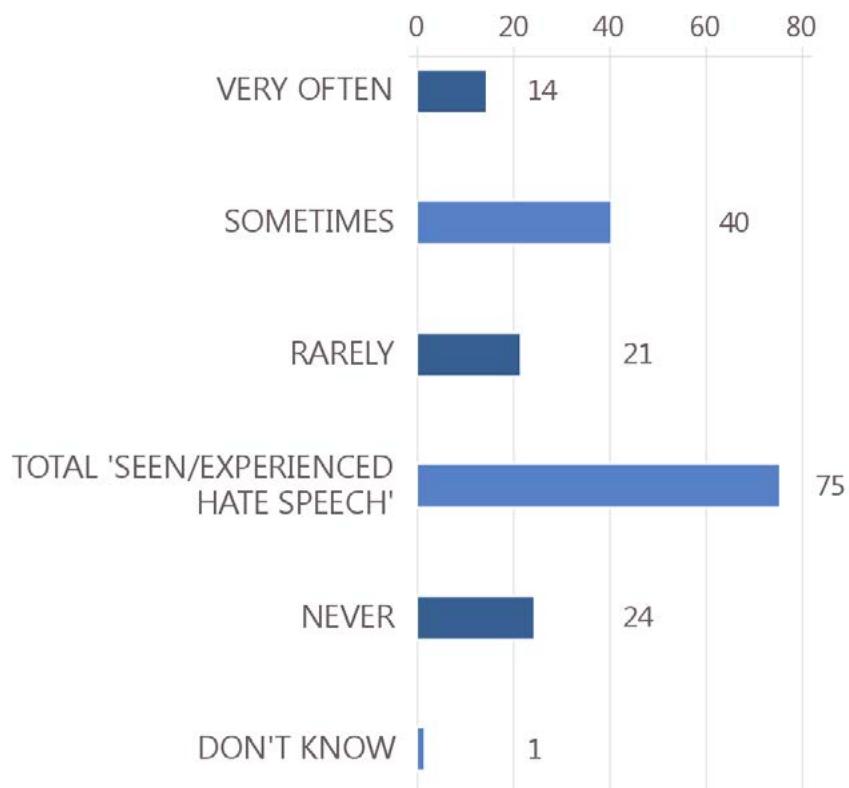


## Online encounters of hate speech and threats, and the influence this has on social media participation

**75% of respondents have experienced abuse, hate speech or threats directed at journalists, bloggers or people active on social media.**

- A large majority of those who follow or participate in debates have heard, read, seen or themselves experienced cases where abuse, hate speech or threats are directed at journalists/bloggers/people active on social media (75%).
- Just under a quarter of this group of respondents say they have never heard, read, seen or experienced this (24%).

**QC9 Have you ever heard, read, seen or yourself experienced cases where abuse, hate speech or threats were directed at journalists/bloggers/people active on social media?**  
(% - EU)



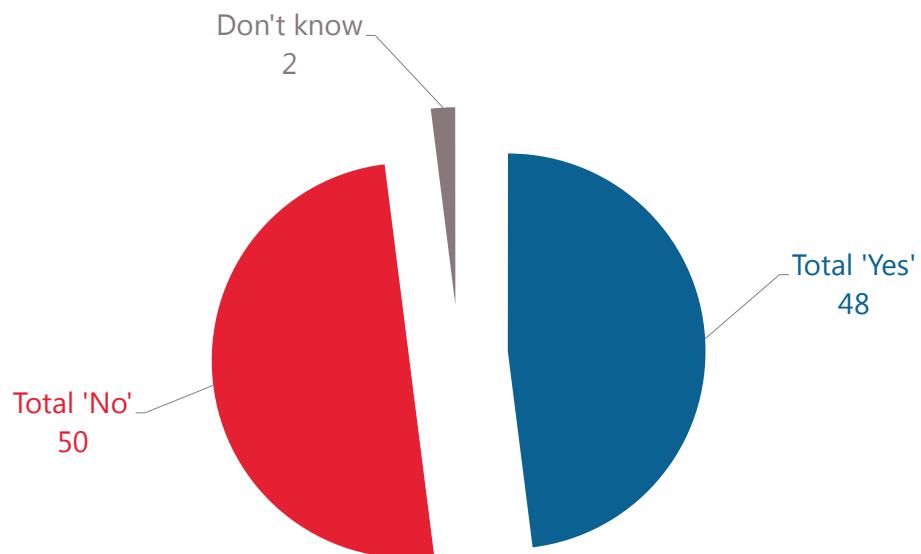
Base: respondents who follow or participate in debates (N=14,992)

### Almost half of affected respondents hesitate to engage in debates as a result.

- Close to half of the respondents (48%) who have heard, read, seen or experienced cases of hate speech or threats on social media say such cases make them hesitate to engage in social media debates. For women this figure rises to 52% of respondents.

**QC10 Do such cases make you hesitate to engage in such debates?**

(% - EU)



Base: respondents who have heard, read, seen or experienced cases of hate speech or threats on social media (N=11,176)

[Eurobarometer survey](#)

[2016 Colloquium on Fundamental Rights on Media Pluralism and Democracy](#)