

After Years of Growth, the Use of Social Media for News Is Falling across the World | Nieman Journalism Lab

By Laura Hazard Owen

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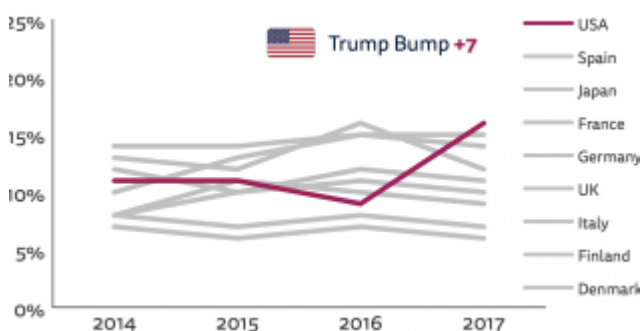
People are becoming disenchanted with Facebook for news. The “Trump bump” appears to be sustaining itself. And younger people are more likely to donate money to a news organization than older people.

These are some of the findings from a big new report out Thursday from Oxford’s Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. The Reuters Institute’s [Digital News Report for 2018](#) surveyed more than 74,000 people in 37 countries about their digital news consumption. (Included in the report for the first time this year: Bulgaria.)

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Here are some of the most interesting findings from the report:

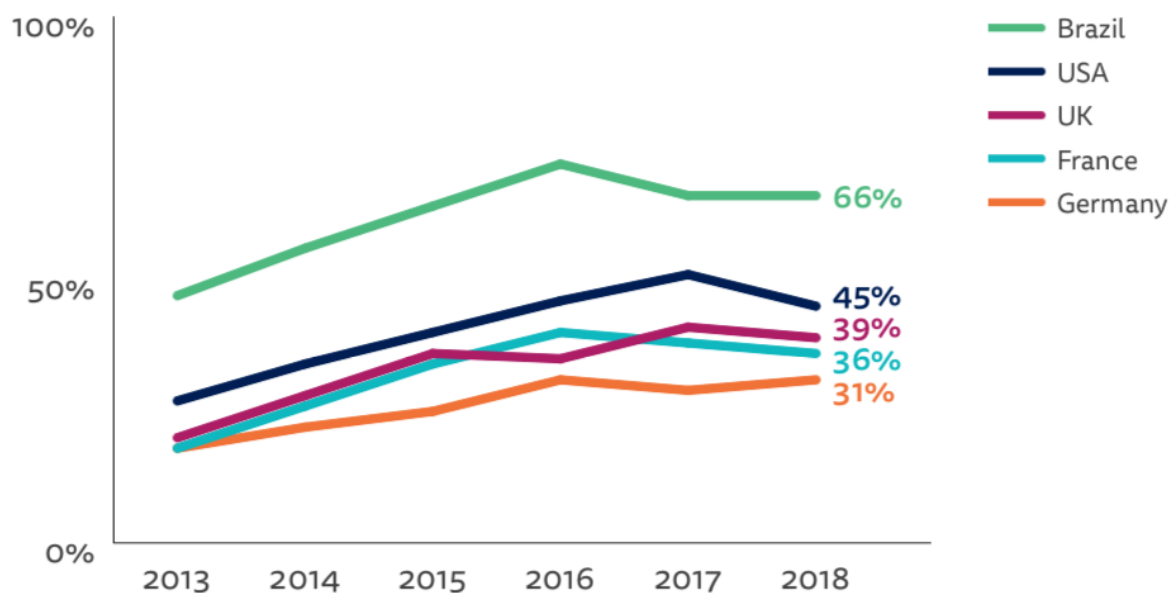
The use of social media (read: Facebook) for news is declining.



“For the last seven years we have tracked the key sources for news across major countries and have reported a picture of relentless growth in the use of social media for news,” the researchers write. “Now, in many countries, growth has stopped or gone into reverse.” This is almost entirely due to changes in Facebook habits. In the U.S., for instance, 39 percent of people said they used Facebook as a

source of news in 2018, down 9 percentage points from 2017. And if you look just at young people in the U.S., their use of Facebook for news is down by *20 percent* compared to 2017. This isn't true in all countries — “Facebook news usage is up significantly in Malaysia and the Czech Republic — but it's true in most of the ones Reuters looked at. This continues a trend that [began last year in countries outside the U.S.](#)

PROPORTION THAT USED SOCIAL MEDIA AS A SOURCE OF NEWS IN THE LAST WEEK (2013-18) - SELECTED MARKETS

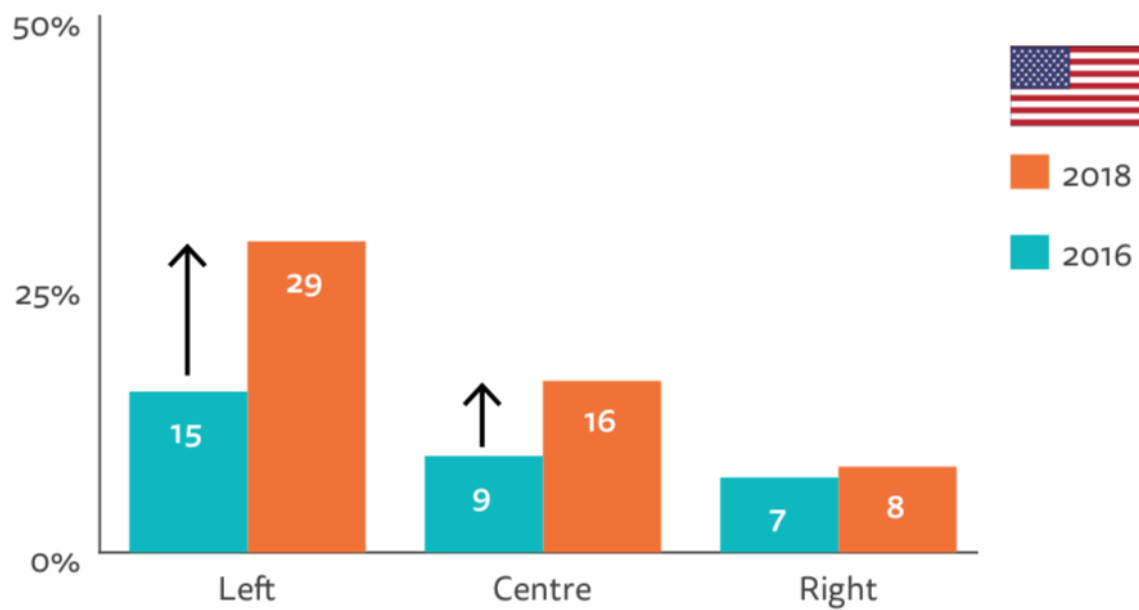


Q3. Which, if any, of the following have you used in the last week as a source of news?

Base: Total 2013-2018 sample in each market.



PROPORTION THAT HAVE PAID FOR ONLINE NEWS IN THE LAST YEAR BY POLITICAL LEANING (2016 AND 2018) – US



Q1F. Some people talk about 'left', 'right' and 'centre' to describe parties and politicians. With this in mind, where would you place yourself on the following scale? **Q7a.** Have you paid for ONLINE news content, or accessed a paid for ONLINE news service in the last year? (This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription or one off payment for an article or app or e-edition). Base: Left/right: 2016 = 476/591, 2018 = 567/550.

Source: [After years of growth, the use of social media for news is falling across the world | Nieman Journalism Lab](#)