

AMERICAN VIEWS 2022: Part 2, TRUST MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY | Knight Foundation

By Knight Foundation and Gallup

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Democracy in America relies on an independent press to inform citizens with accurate information. Yet today, two forces pose significant challenges to this function: the growing struggle of news organizations to maintain financial independence and the growing distrust of news among the public.

In [Part 1 of the American Views 2022](#) report, Gallup and Knight Foundation offer insights into how Americans think about the motivations of news executives and how news is funded. Most believe that the news media put business needs ahead of serving the public. However, those who think news organizations balance civic purpose with corporate needs are more likely to have paid for news in the past and be willing to do so in the future. This finding suggests that the news media's future financial sustainability ties directly to Americans' perception that journalism organizations are fulfilling their democratic role in society.

Gallup and Knight have been tracking the decline of trust in the news media since 2017. Gallup's long-term trend on this measure hit a record low in 2020, when the share of Americans with no confidence in the news media surpassed that of people with at least some confidence for the first time in 40 years. Furthermore, findings from the American Views 2020 report showed that Americans were "very concerned" about increasing political bias in news coverage and the perception that news organizations "push an agenda."

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