Beat: Politics

National politics is the issue that arouses the greatest interest in Europe

TV is the preferred medium

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USPA NEWS - National politics is the issue that arouses the greatest interest among European citizens. This is indicated by the Eurobarometer, according to which 50 % of those surveyed are interested in national politics, closely followed by European and international news (46 %), very close to local news (47 %). 72 % of those surveyed recall having recently read, seen or heard news about the European Union, whether in the press, on the internet, on television or on the radio. This figure stands at 57 % in the case of news related to the European Parliament (EP). The impact of information on the EU ranges from 57 % in France to 90 % in Romania, while for the EP it ranges from 39 % in France to 85 % in Malta.

Television is the most used media to follow the news, especially by those over 55 years of age. Following far behind are online news platforms (43 %), radio (39 %), and social media and blogs (26 %). Print media ranks fifth: newspapers and magazines are the main source of news for one in five respondents (21 %). On the other hand, the younger the age, the more marked is the tendency to follow current events through social network platforms and blogs. This figure reaches 46 % of young people between 15 and 24 years old compared to 15 % of those over 55 years old.

Although traditional media — particularly television — play an important role, 88 % of those surveyed say they receive at least some news online via mobile, PC or laptop. 43 % of respondents use the website of the news outlet (for example, the digital edition of a newspaper) to consult the news, and 31 % read articles or publications that reach them via social networks. Young people are the population group that is most informed on social networks (43 % of people between 15 and 24 years old compared to 24 % of those surveyed over 55 years old). Paying for news online remains the exception. 70 % of users are only willing to access these contents or information services on the Internet for free.

Citizens trust traditional media (TV, radio and press), including their electronic versions, more than internet news platforms and social media channels. Regardless of whether it is the traditional format or the electronic version, 49 % of those surveyed trust public television and radio to offer truthful information. The written press ranks second in the ranking with 39 %. Radio stations and private television channels reach a trust index of 27 %.

Poland is the only Member State where private television and radio stations top the ranking. Hungary, for its part, is the EU country in which citizens first trust the people, groups or friends they follow on social networks as a source of information. The importance of trust is also evident in respondents' responses to the question of what prompts them to open a news article online. While 54 % cite as a reason that the headline fits with their interests, 37 % highlight as important their trust in the media that publishes the news.

More than a quarter of respondents (28 %) believe they have been exposed to disinformation or hoaxes often or very often in the last seven days. This figure is highest in Bulgaria (55 %), while the Netherlands is lowest (3 % of respondents selected the category “very often” and 9 % “often”). Most respondents feel they can recognize misinformation and hoaxes with confidence: 12 % say they can do so with high confidence and 52 % with some confidence. Confidence in differentiating between real news and fake news decreases with age and increases with educational level.

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