2019 News Media Preferences and Issues Study

Sponsored by the Greater Montana Foundation

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Methods Summary

- Random, address-based sample of adult Montana residents using the "next birthday" method for random within residence selection

- Administered in February-March 2019

- Administered by mail and the internet

- 579 completions

- Response rate 36% (AAPOR 2016, RR 3)

- Sampling error rate +/- 4%

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Methods Summary - continued

- Weighted by gender, age, education, urban v. rural, and political party identification using data from U.S. Census Bureau and Gallup, Inc.

- Sample purchased from Dynata, Inc.

- Administered by UM BBER with questionnaire and analytical assistance from Nicole McCleskey of Public Opinion Strategies

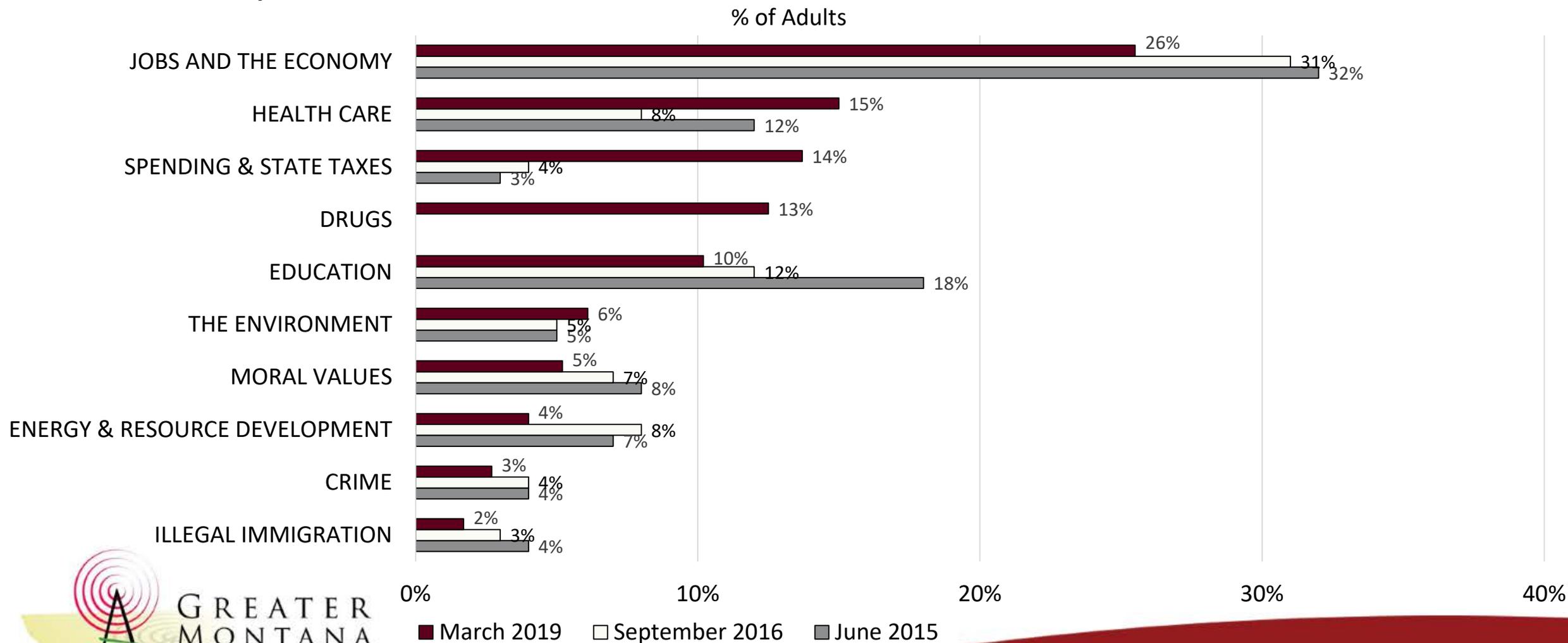- Full question wording may be obtained from John Baldridge of UM BBER: john.baldridge@umontana.edu

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Summary of the Greater Montana Foundation surveys

Year	Administration Method	Completions	Sampling Error Rate (+/-)	Response Rate (AAPOR #3)
2015	Telephone	526	4%	25%
2016	Telephone	567	4%	23%
2019	Mail - internet	579	4%	36%

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Key Findings

- News sources proliferated, total news consumption may have increased

- People consumed individual news sources more selectively

- News source credibility varied widely

- Local news was valued and trusted

- The importance of issues facing the state changed moderately over 4 years

- News "echo chamber" behaviors showed a mixed trend

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Which ONE of the following issues do you think is the most important issue in the state?

% of Adults

Issue	March 2019	September 2016	June 2015
JOBS AND THE ECONOMY	26%	31%	32%
HEALTH CARE	15%	8%	12%
SPENDING & STATE TAXES	14%	4%	3%
DRUGS	13%		
EDUCATION	10%	12%	18%
THE ENVIRONMENT	6%	5%	5%
MORAL VALUES	5%	7%	8%
ENERGY & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	4%	8%	7%
CRIME	3%	4%	4%
ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION	2%	3%	4%

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%

■ March 2019   ☐ September 2016   ■ June 2015

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Most important issue by gender and age

Issue	Male 18-49	Male 50+	Female 18-49	Female 50+
Jobs and the state economy	25%	29%	23%	26%
Health care	8%	17%	11%	24%
Spending & state taxes	18%	21%	13%	4%
Drugs	8%	10%	17%	15%
Education	15%	2%	15%	8%

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Most important issue by rural/urban and party

Issue	Rural	Urban	Democrat or leans	Independent	Republican or leans
Jobs and the state economy	27%	25%	19%	22%	33%
Health care	15%	15%	24%	12%	8%
Spending & state taxes	14%	14%	6%	10%	22%
Drugs	16%	11%	8%	28%	11%
Education	9%	11%	18%	6%	5%

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Internet use by adult Montanans increased

% of Adults

Respondent uses the internet at least occasionally

■ March 2019   ■ September 2016

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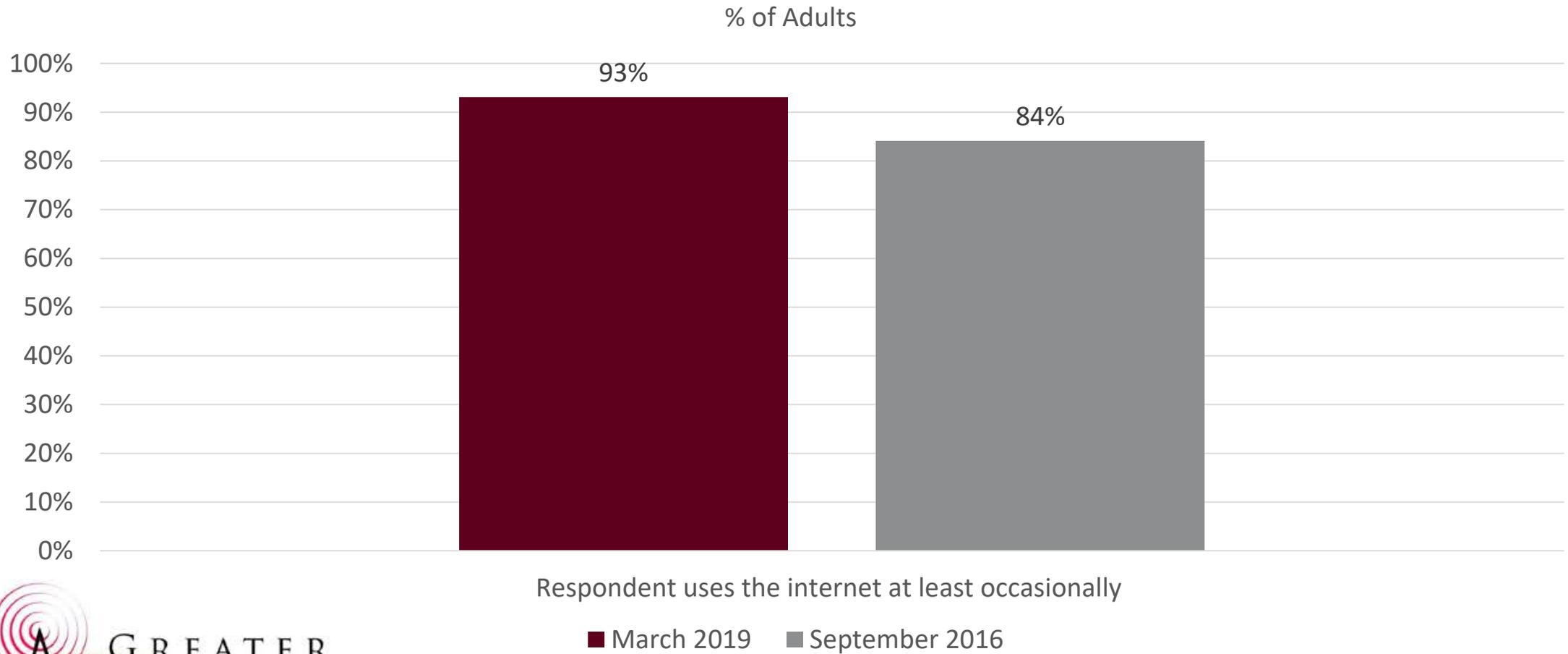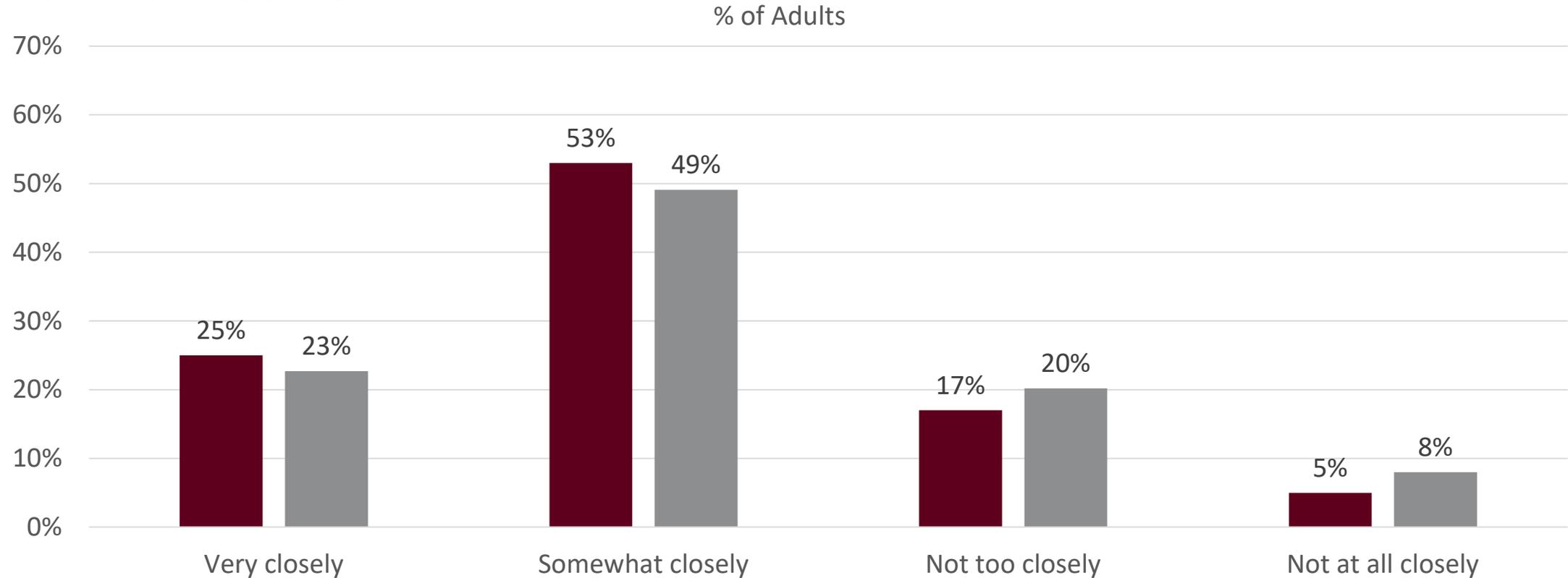
Which sources did you use to get most of your news in the past week?

% of Adults
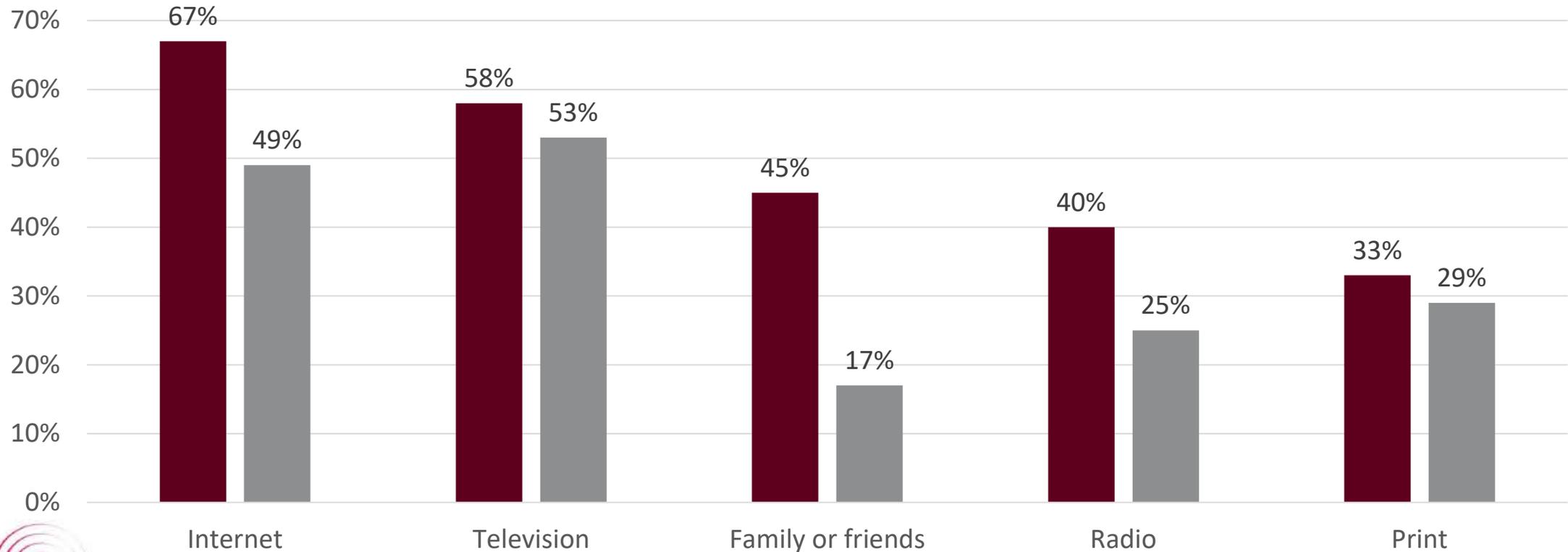
How credible are the following types of news source?

% Adults Who Rate the Source Absolutely or Mostly Credible

Source	March 2019
Local broadcast TV	66%
R's chosen websites	63%
Local weekly newspapers	55%
Montana daily newspapers	51%
Local radio	49%
Network broadcast TV	44%
National daily newspapers	36%
Cable news TV	33%
Sunday morning news talk shows	25%
News from social media sites	24%

■ March 2019

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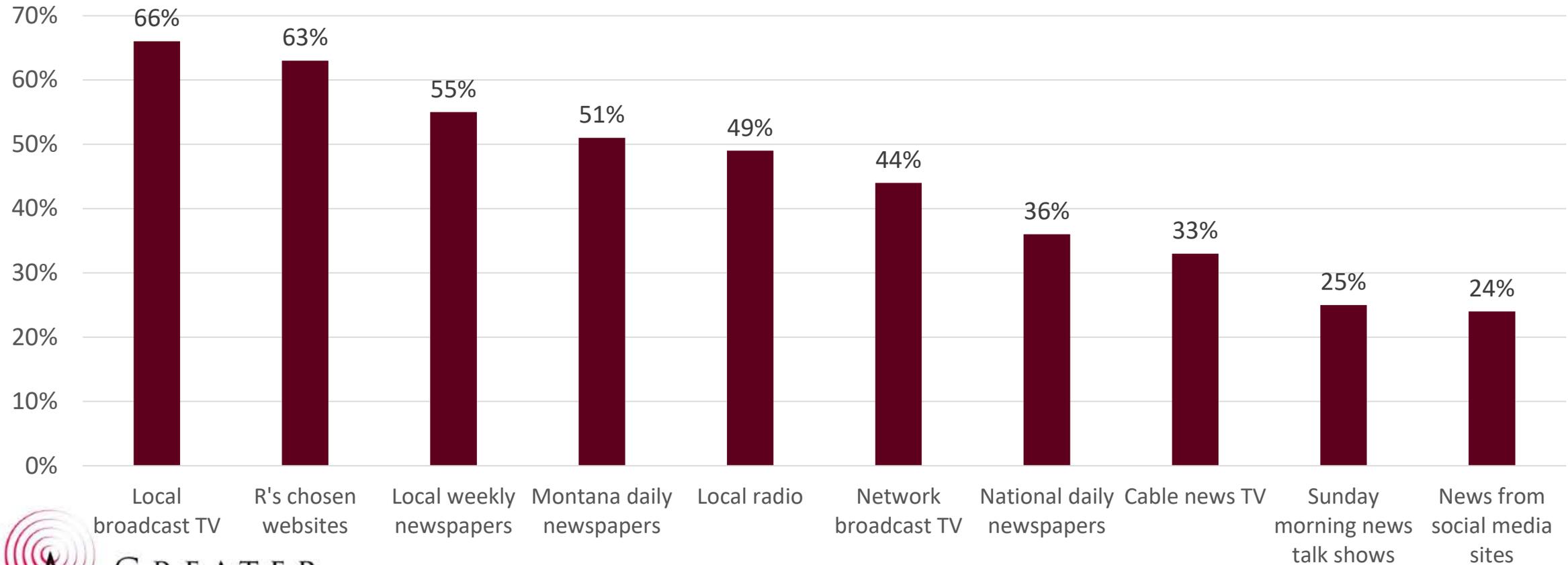
What specific news source do you consider the most trusted source of information?
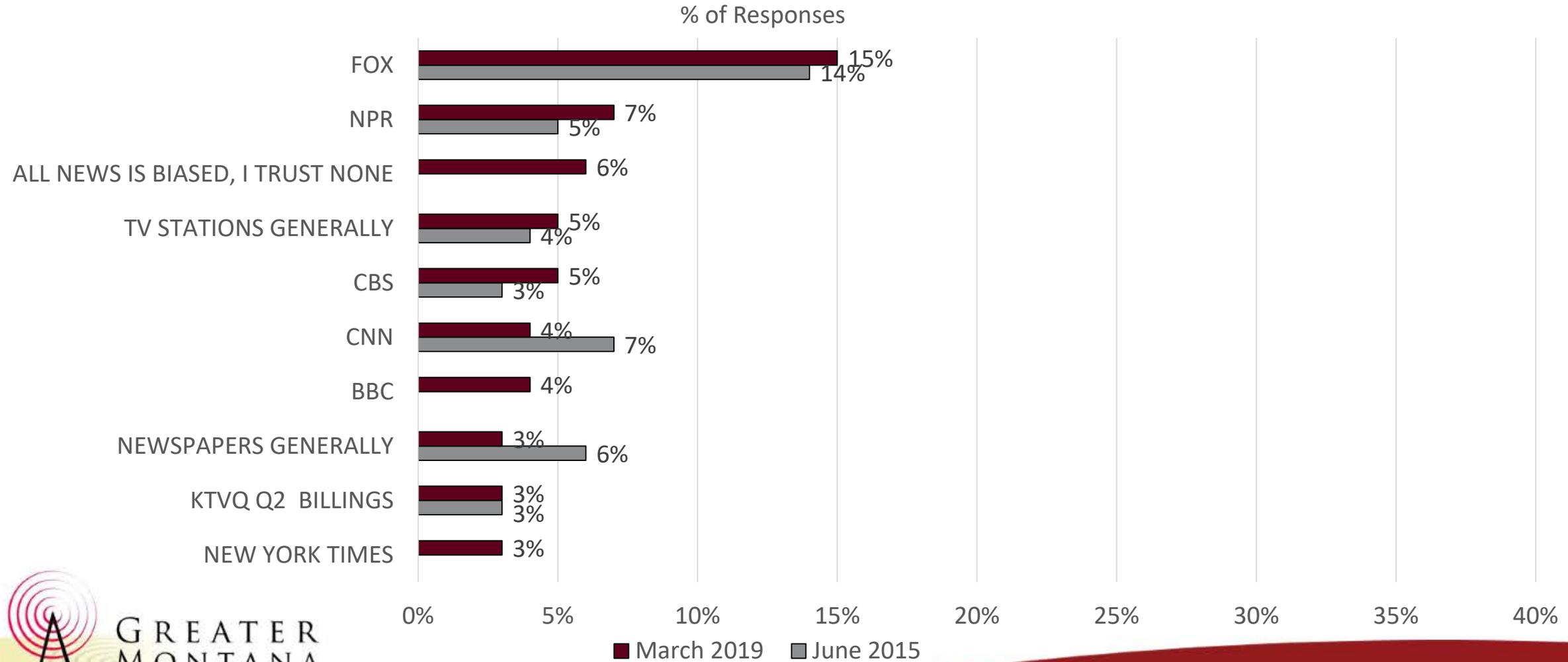
Trust in news sources is sharply divided by political party

% 2019 Respondents Who Rated the News Source as Most Trusted
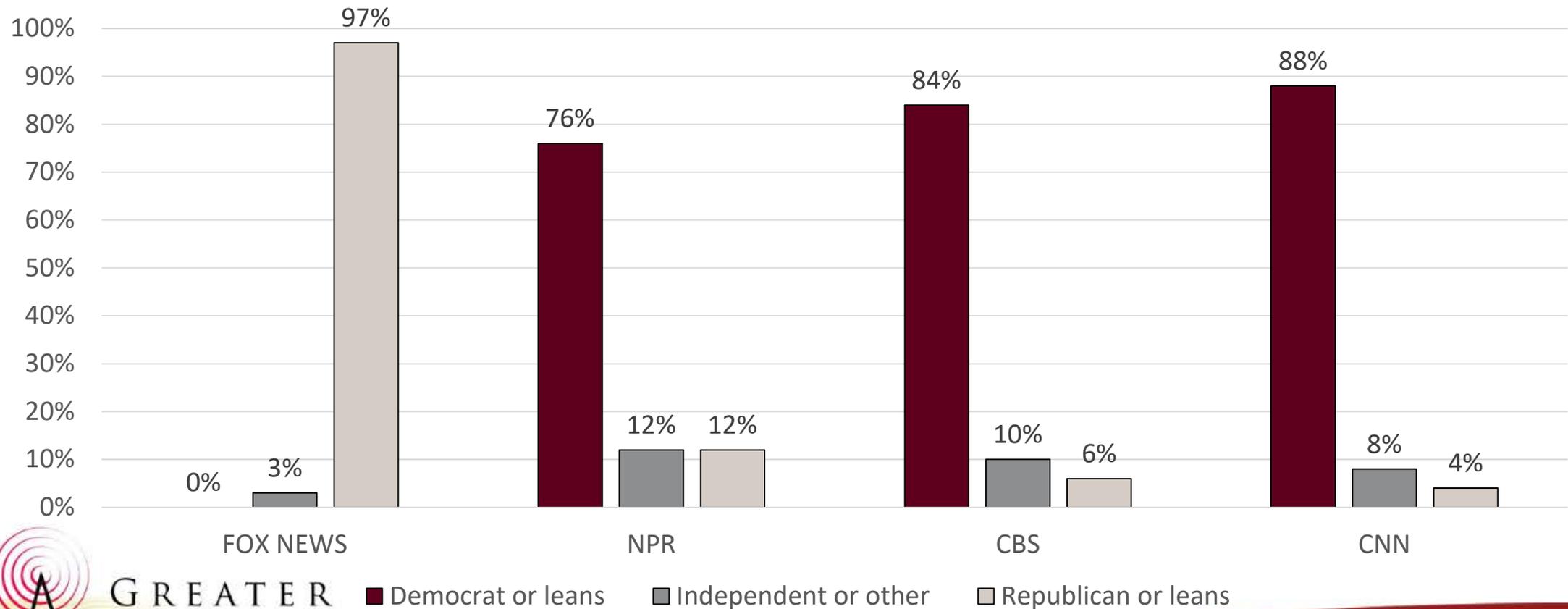
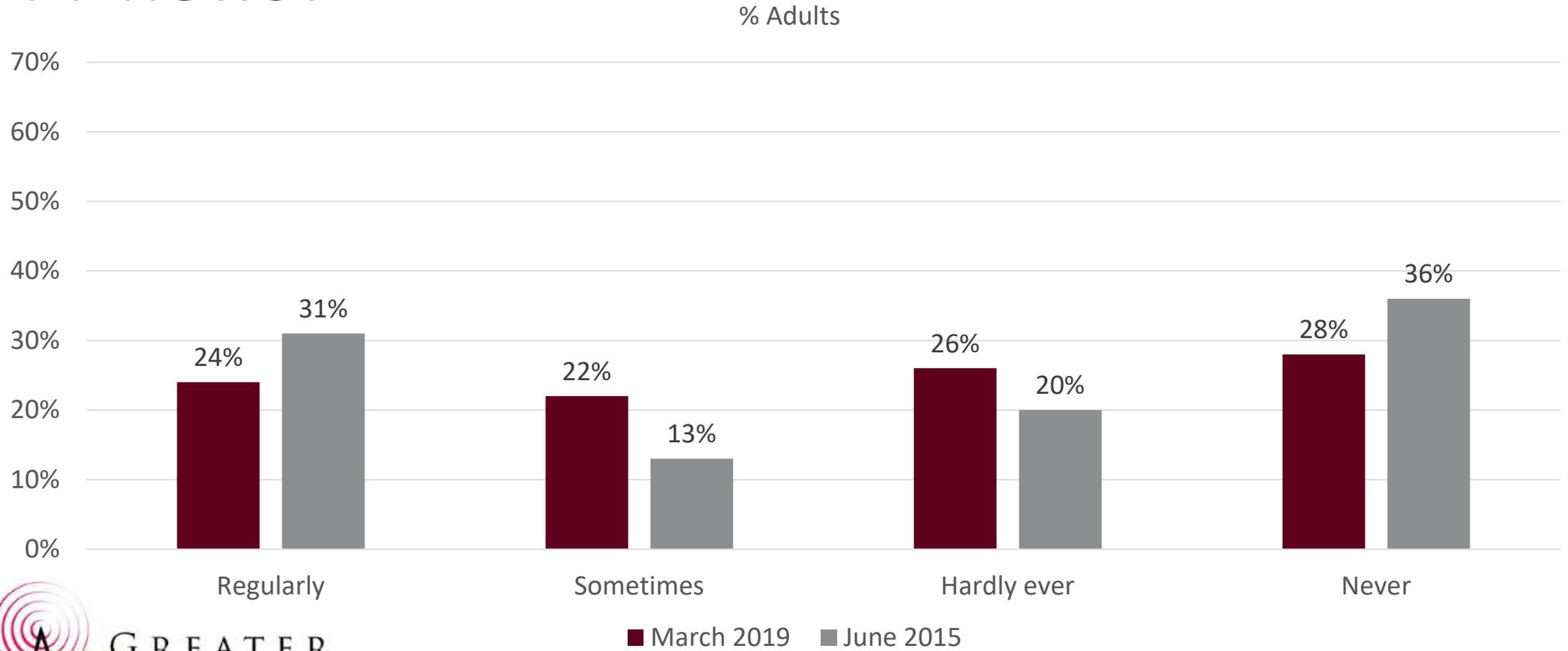# Trust in news sources is divided by rural or urban place of residence

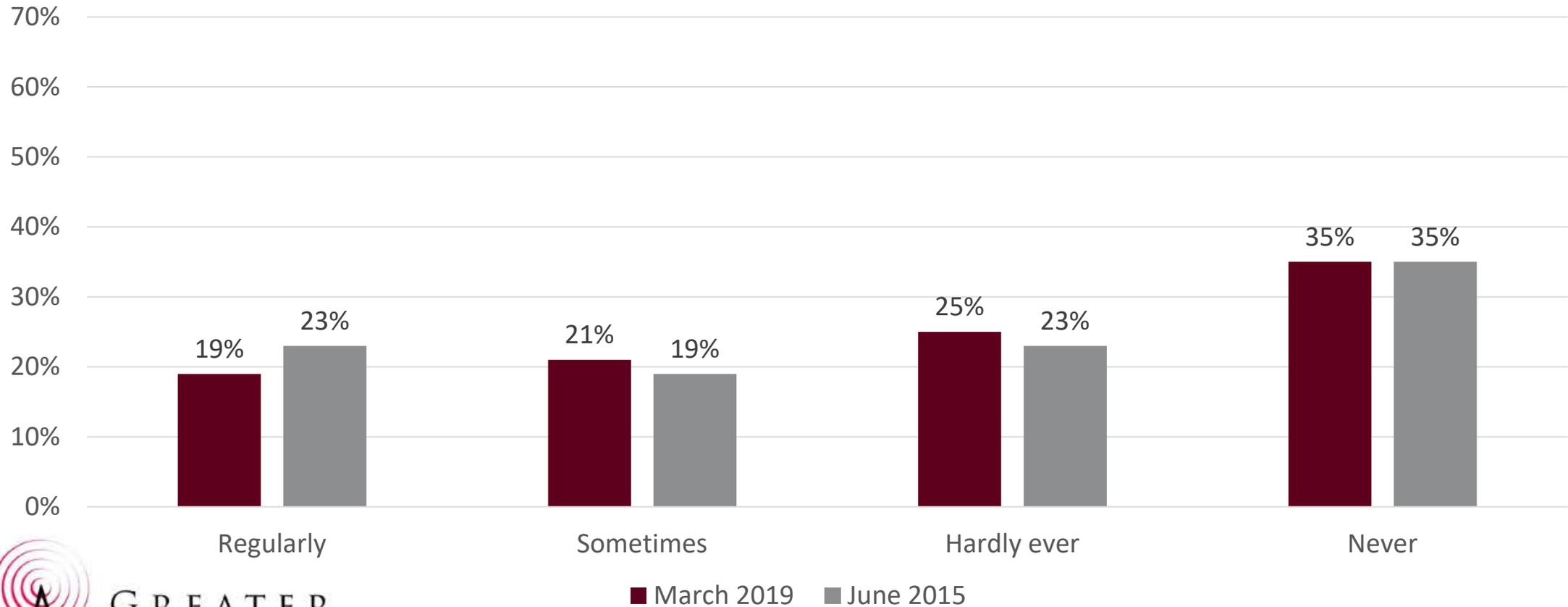% 2019 Respondents Who Rated the News Source as Most Trusted

Bar chart showing trust in news sources by place of residence:

News Source	Outside metro or micropolitan counties	Within metro or micropolitan counties
FOX NEWS	55%	45%
NPR	24%	76%
CBS	23%	77%
CNN	20%	80%

Legend:
- Outside metro or micropolitan counties
- Within metro or micropolitan counties

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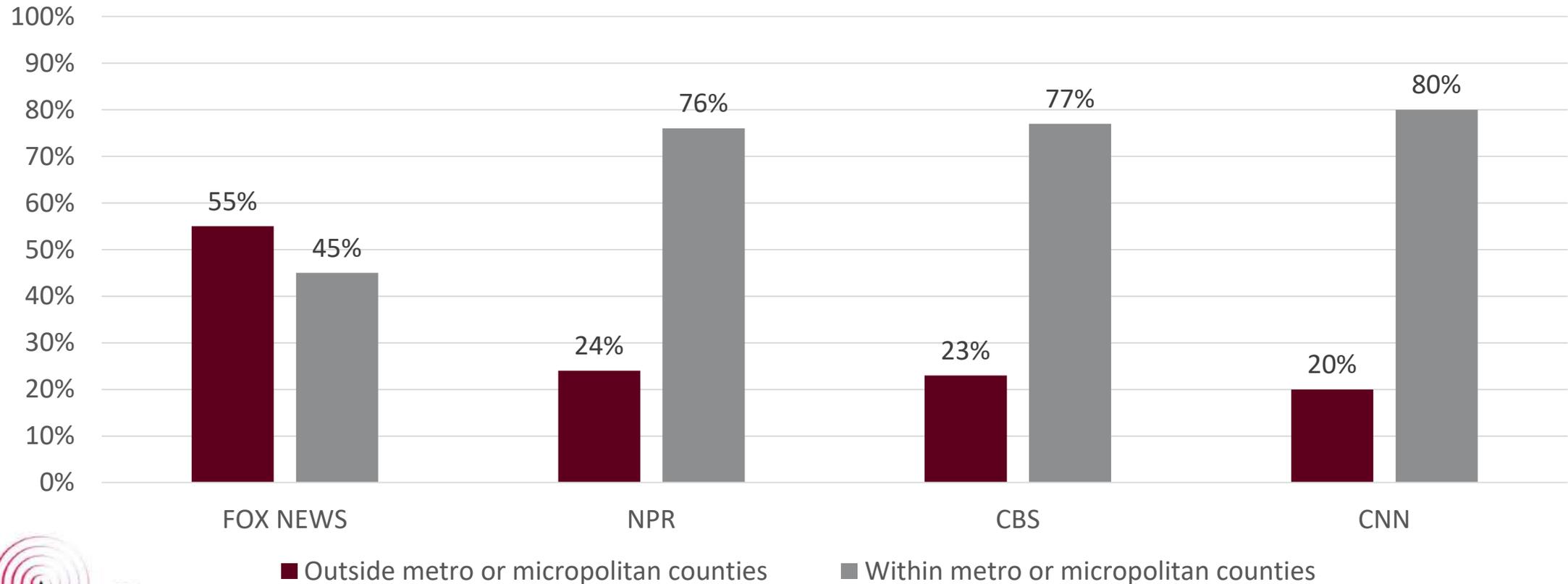
How often do you watch local TV news?

% Adults

Legend: March 2019 (dark red), June 2015 (gray)

Response	March 2019	June 2015
Regularly	35%	41%
Sometimes	27%	23%
Hardly ever	20%	16%
Never	18%	20%

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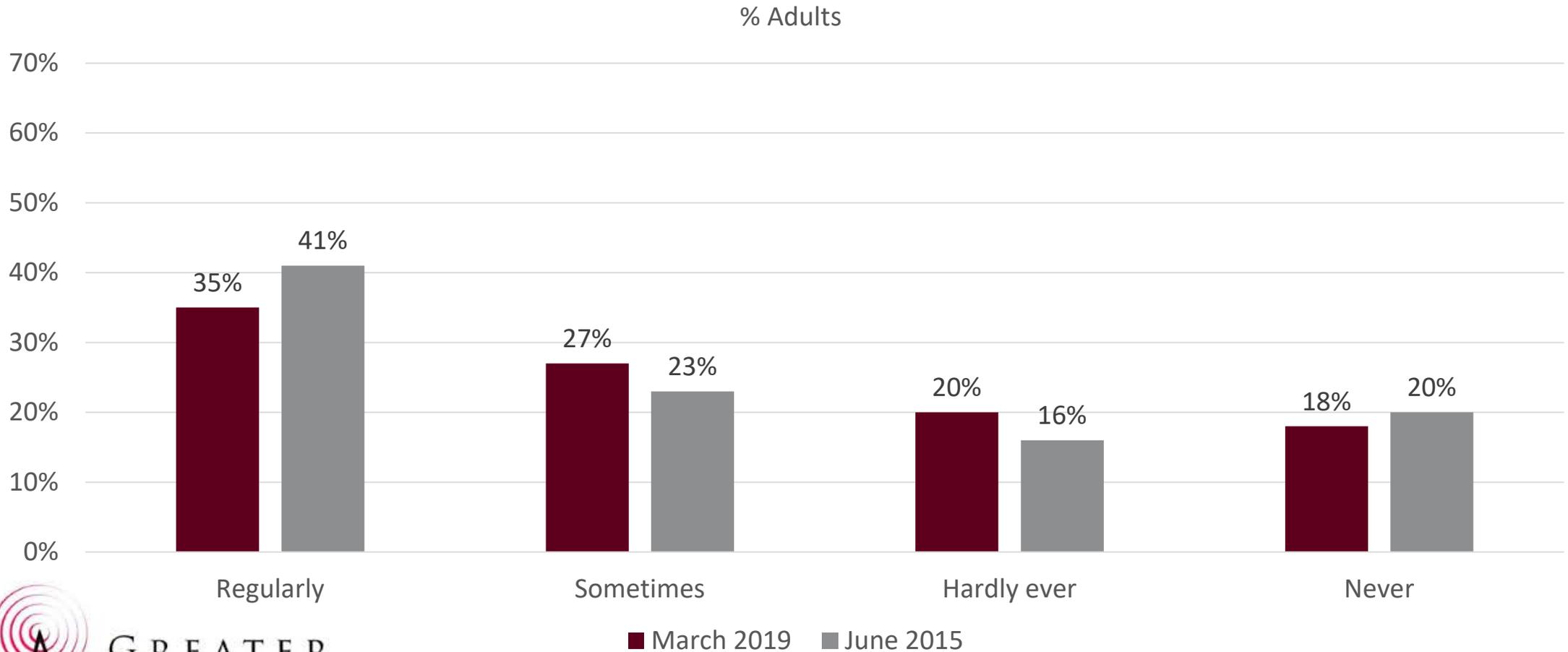
How often do you watch broadcast network TV news?

On which broadcast network or networks do you most often watch the nightly network news?

% of Adults Who Watch Broadcast Network News

	CBS	NBC	ABC	PBS
March 2019	43%	38%	27%	22%
June 2015	31%	27%	17%	10%

■ March 2019 ■ June 2015
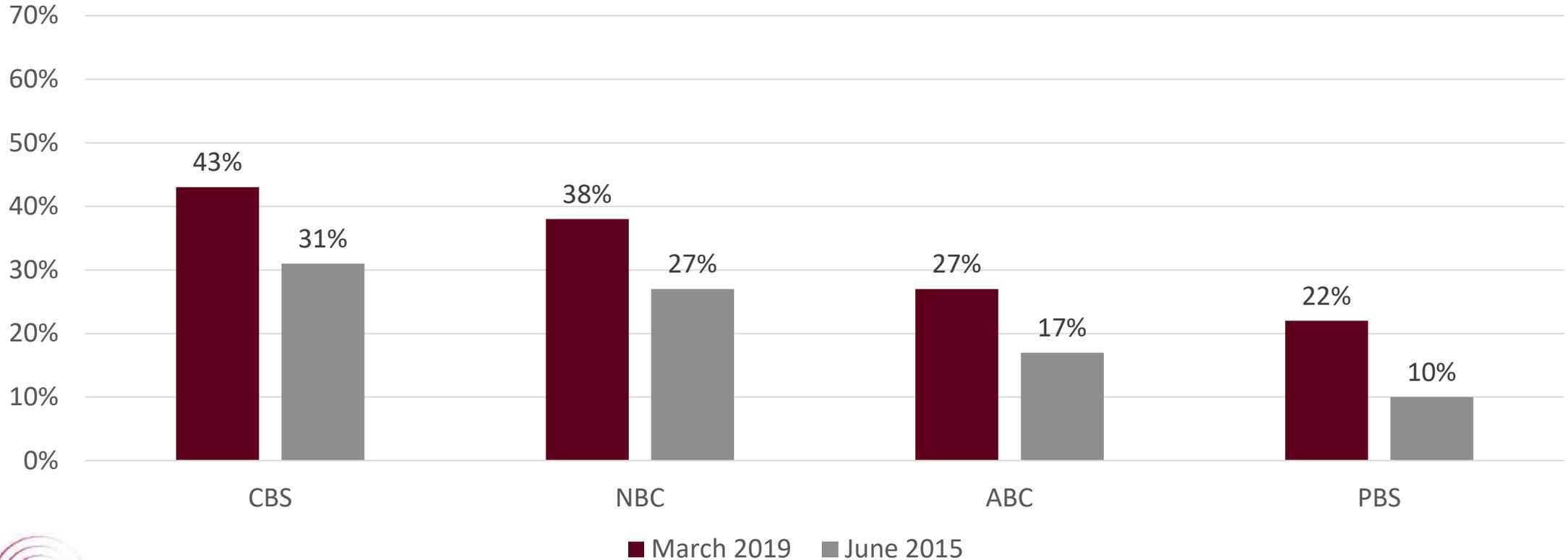
Which cable news channels do you watch?

% of Adults Who Watch Cable Network News

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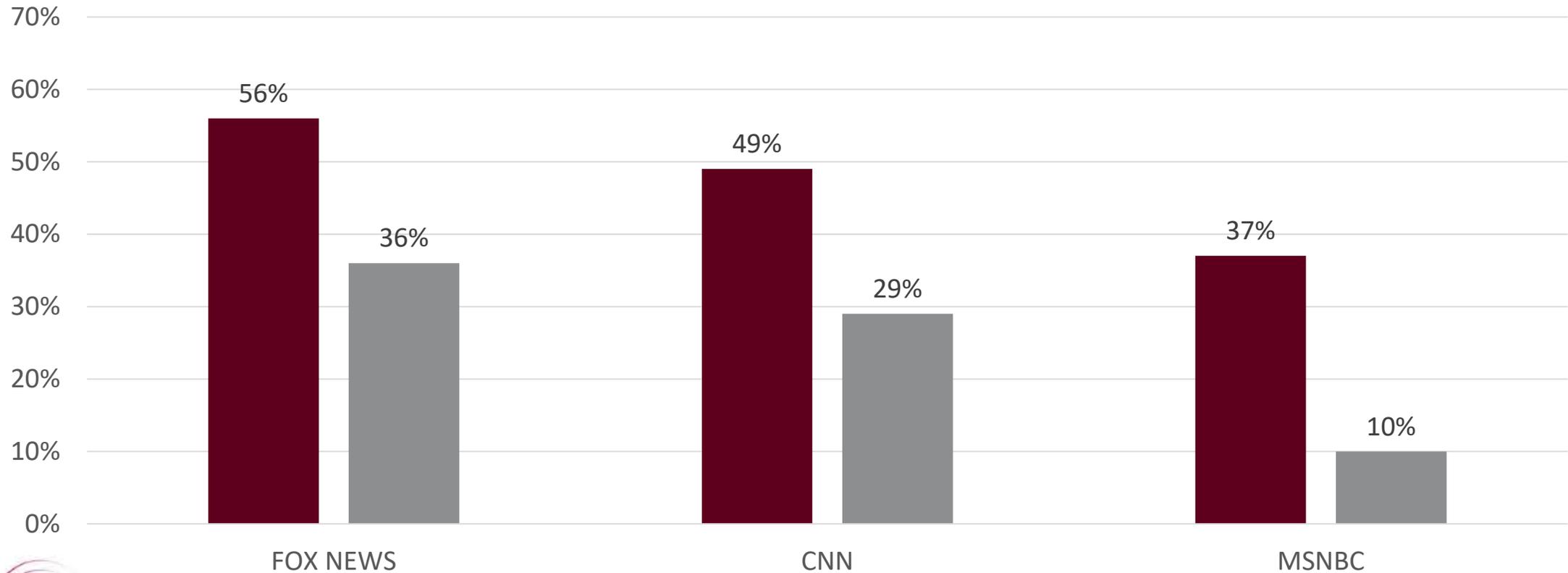
How often do you watch Sunday morning news talk shows?

% of Adults

Chart showing responses for March 2019 and June 2015:

Response	March 2019	June 2015
Regularly	6%	8%
Sometimes	17%	7%
Hardly ever	17%	18%
Never	60%	67%
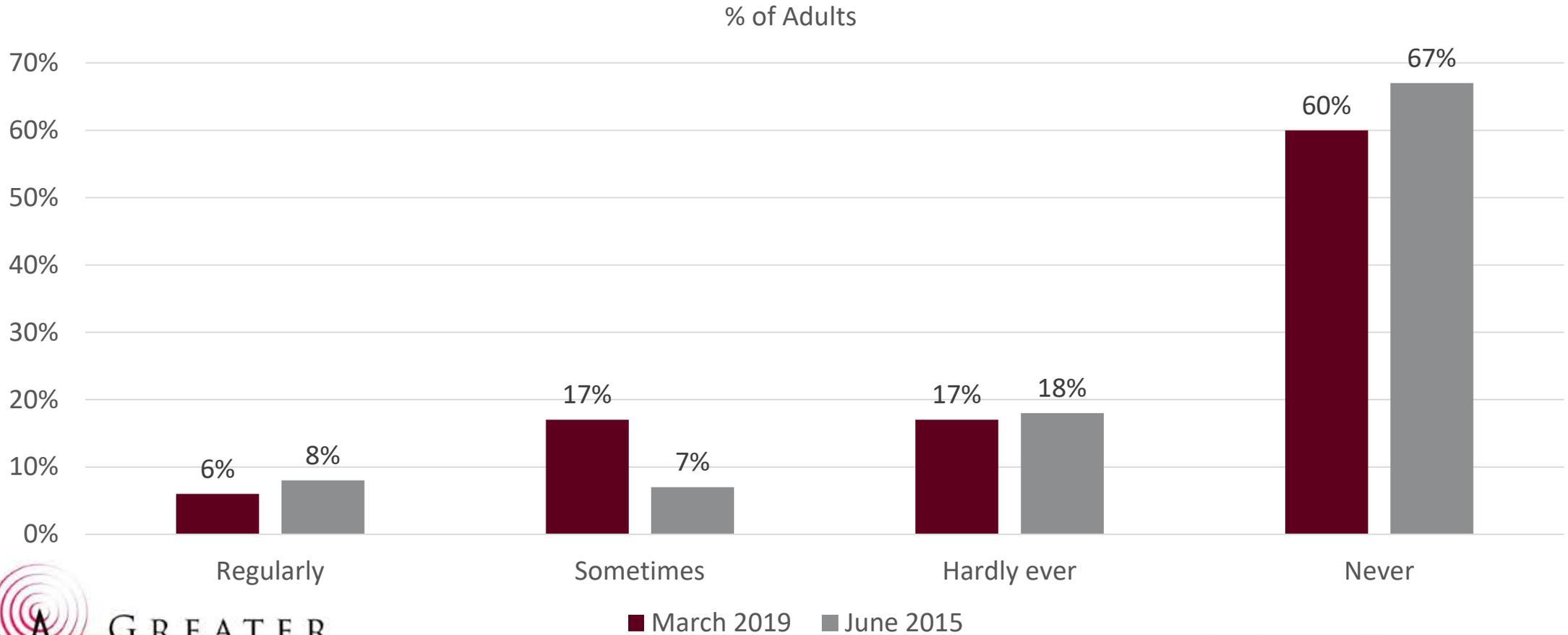
About how much time, if any, did you spend listening to the radio yesterday?

% of Adults

■ March 2019   ■ June 2015
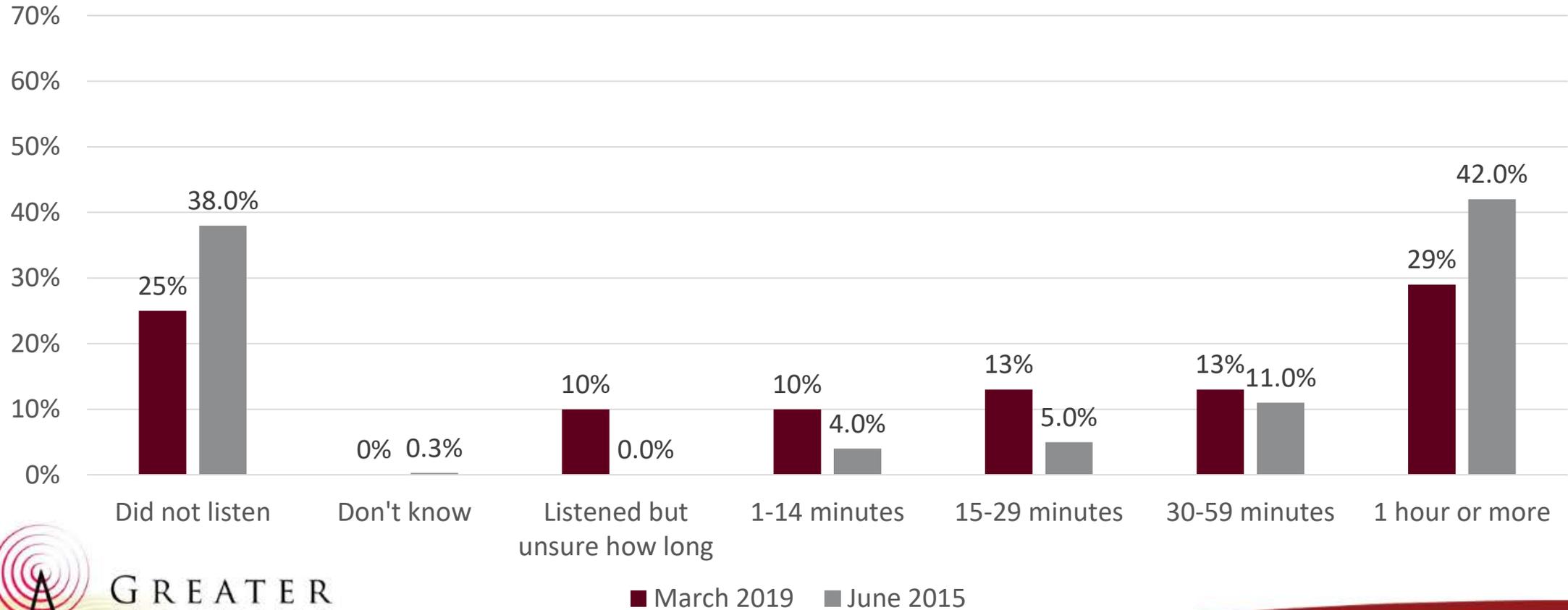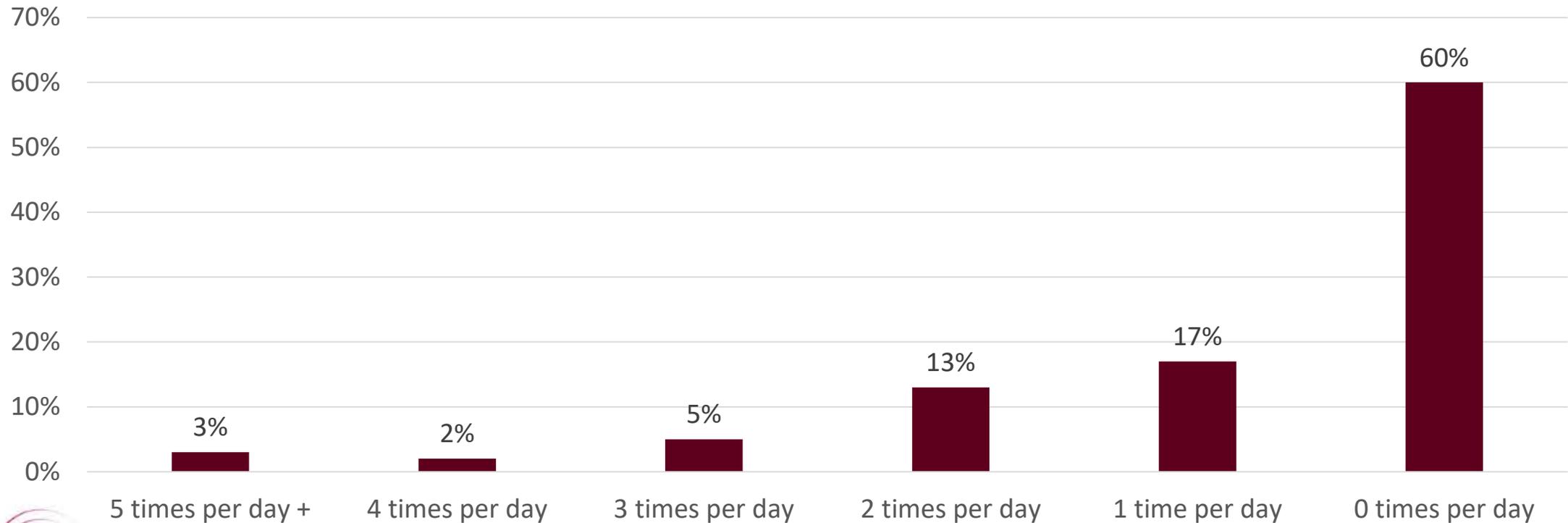
What one or two types of radio stations would you say you listen to most?

% of Responses

	March 2019	June 2015
Country	41%	40%
Rock	31%	26%
Pop	21%	13%
Oldies	21%	7%
Public Radio	15%	11%
News / Talk	14%	14%
Religious	13%	10%
Sports	7%	5%
Classical	4%	1%

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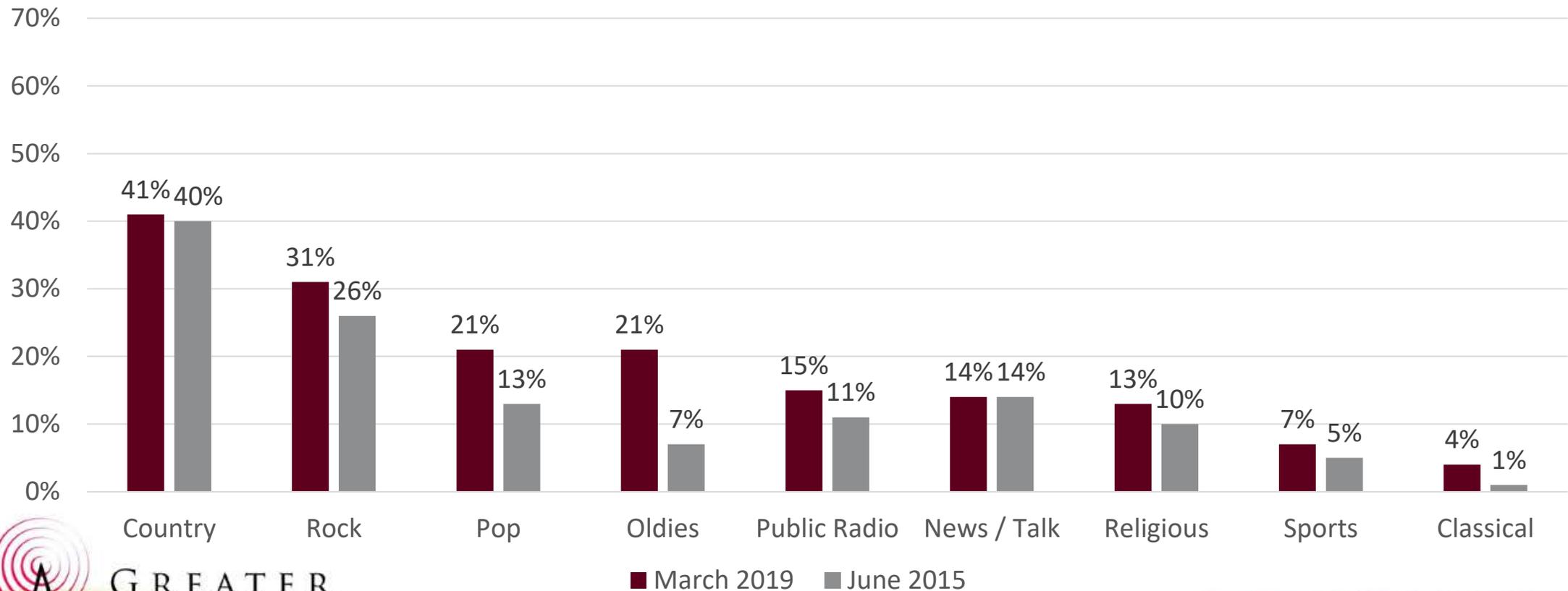
How often do you read a Montana daily newspaper?

% of Adults

Regularly: March 2019 25%, June 2015 36%
Sometimes: March 2019 23%, June 2015 27%
Hardly ever: March 2019 31%, June 2015 15%
Never: March 2019 21%, June 2015 22%

■ March 2019 ■ June 2015
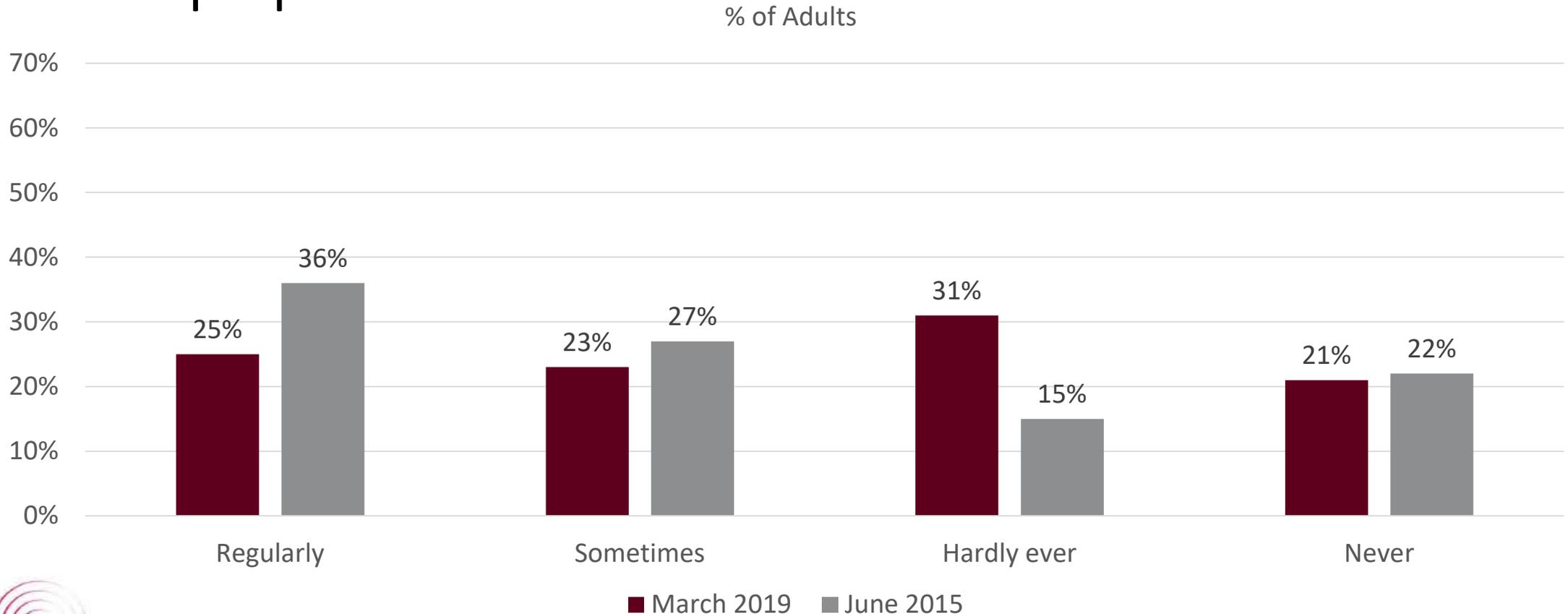
How often do you read a national daily newspaper, such as the New York Times or Wall Street Journal?
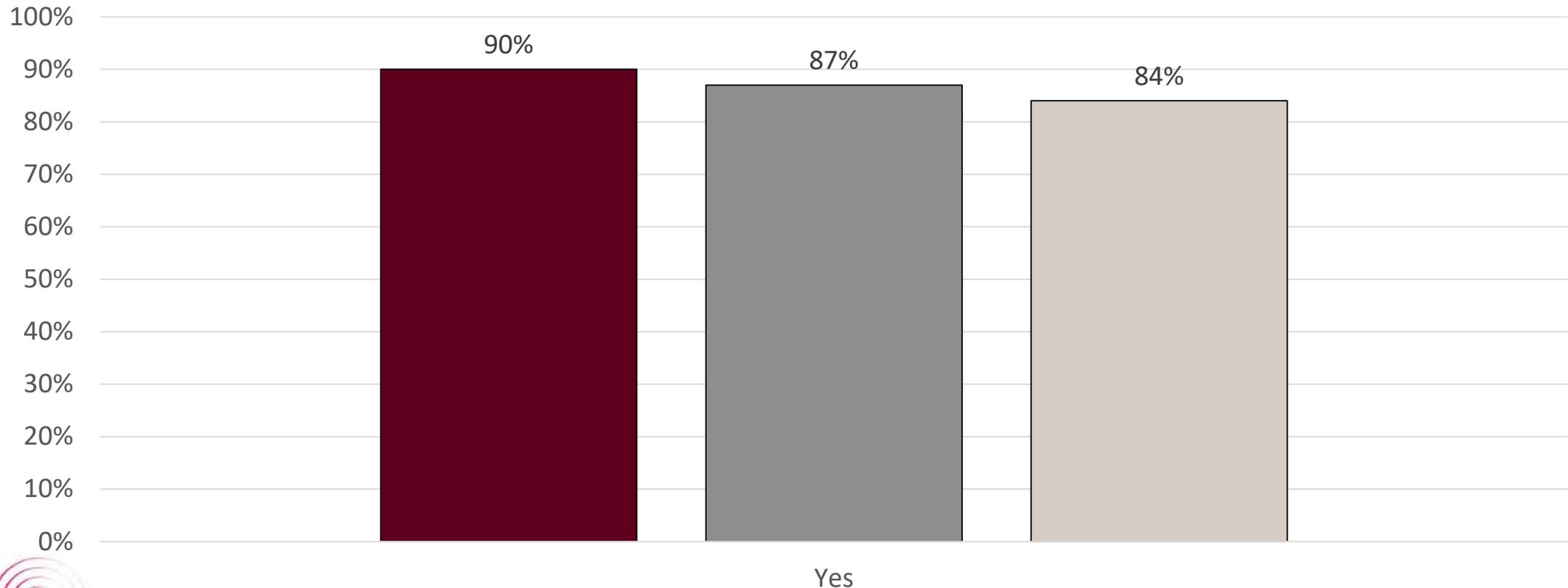
% of Adults

Chart showing responses by March 2019 and June 2015:
- Regularly: March 2019 6%, June 2015 3%
- Sometimes: March 2019 11%, June 2015 10%
- Hardly ever: March 2019 16%, June 2015 18%
- Never: March 2019 67%, June 2015 69%
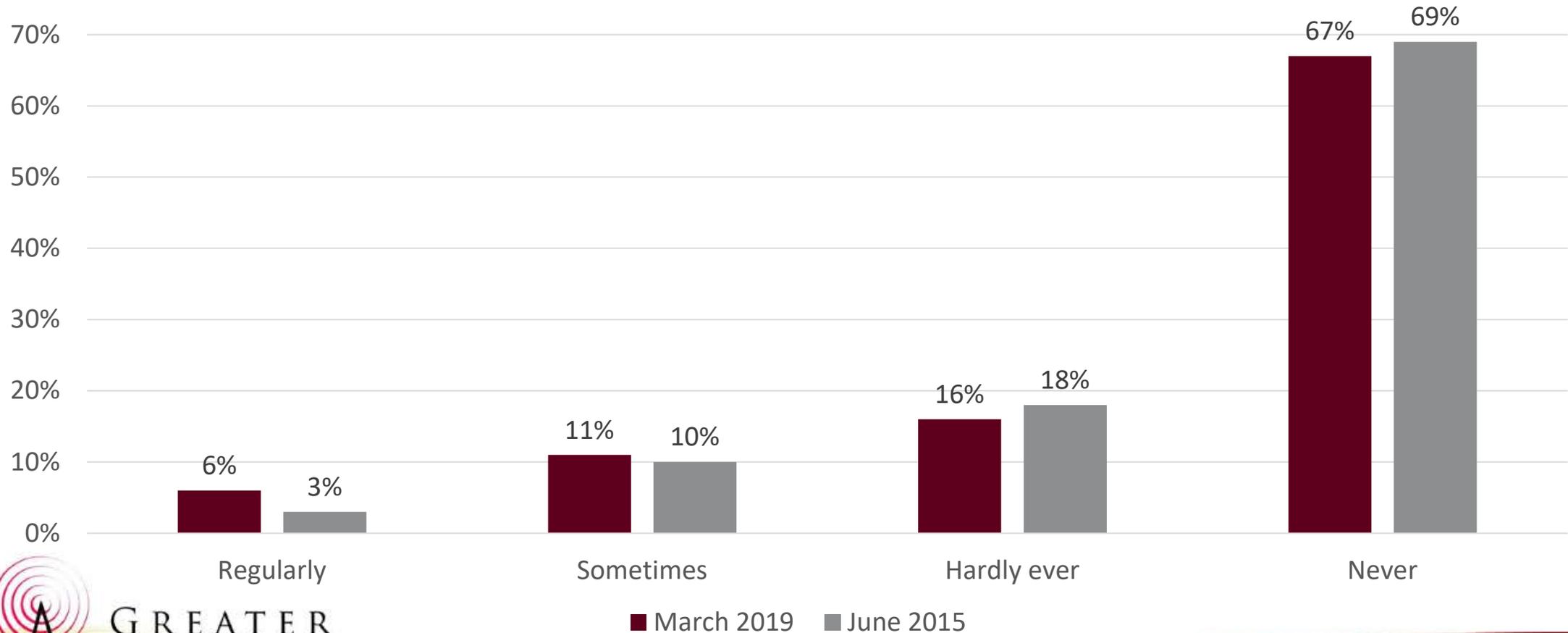
■ March 2019   ■ June 2015

Do you have internet access at your home?

% of Adults

- March 2019
- September 2016
- June 2015

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On average, which of the following best describes how often you are on the internet?

% of Adults
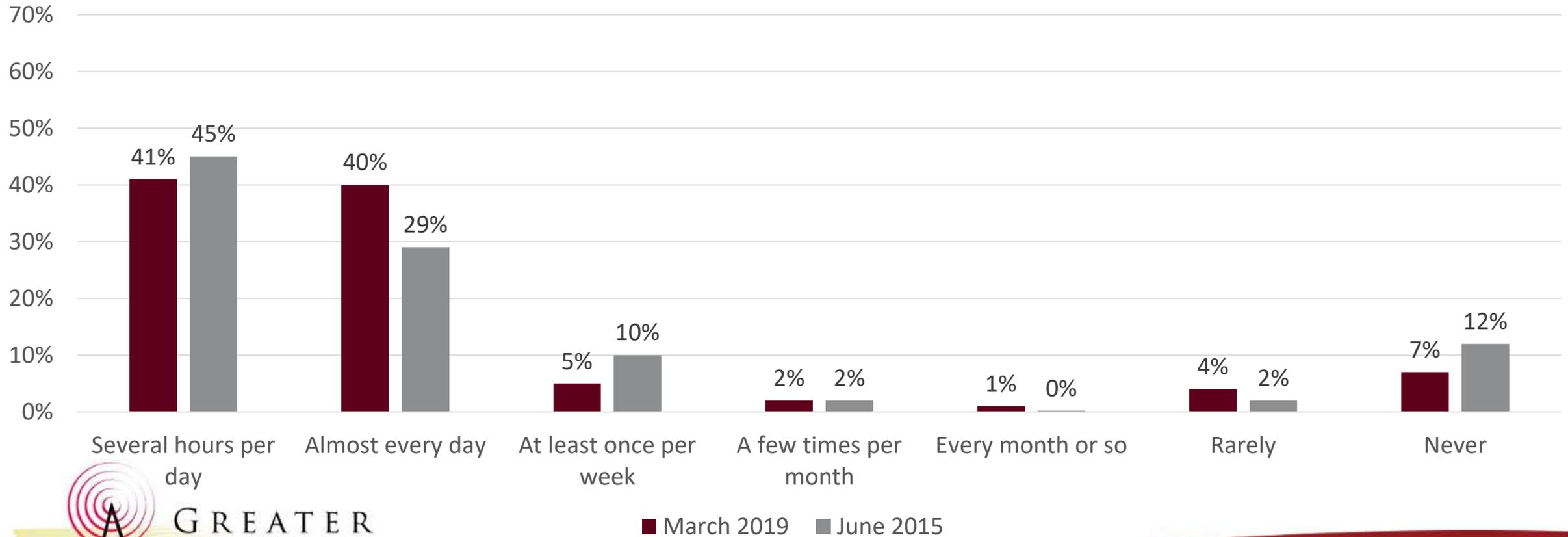
March 2019 · June 2015

	Several hours per day	Almost every day	At least once per week	A few times per month	Every month or so	Rarely	Never
March 2019	41%	40%	5%	2%	1%	4%	7%
June 2015	45%	29%	10%	2%	0%	2%	12%
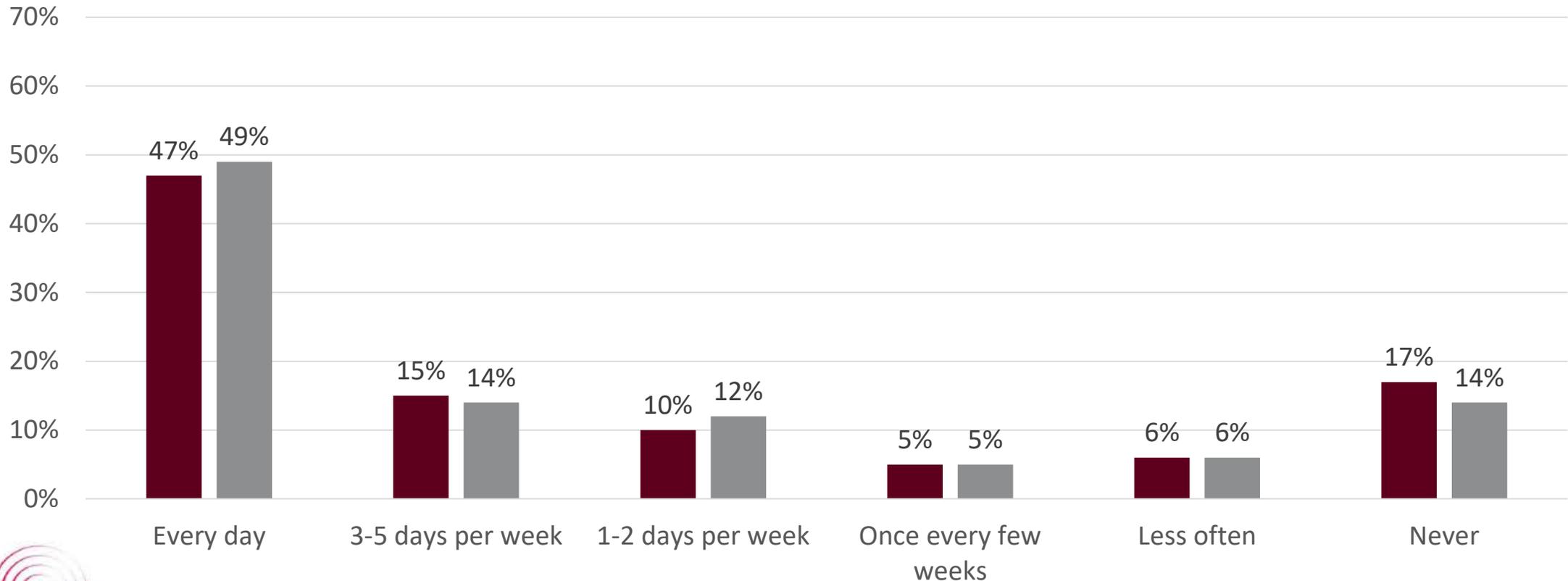
Do you get more of your online news using a computer or a mobile device?

% of Internet News Consumers

	March 2019	June 2015
Computer	23%	50%
Mobile device	58%	44%
Both equally	19%	6%

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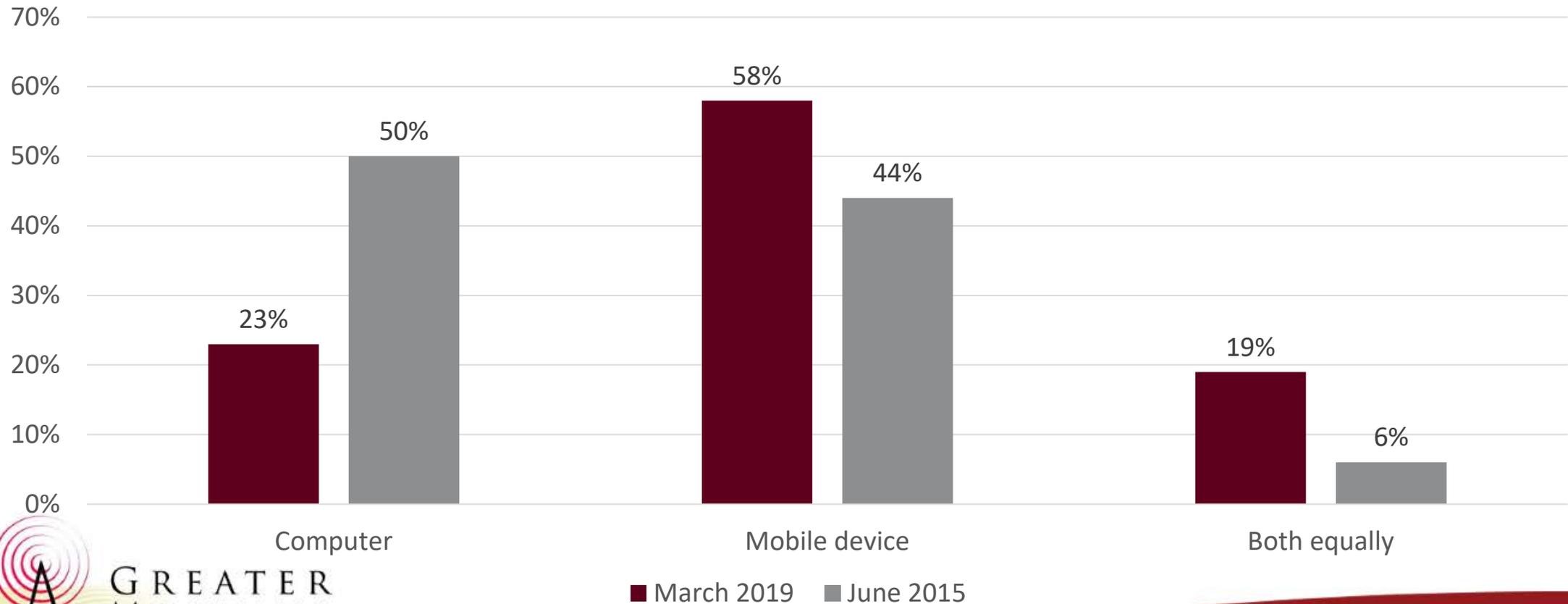
What are the one or two websites you use most frequently for news and information?

% of Responses

Website	March 2019
FOX NEWS	16%
GOOGLE	16%
BILLINGS GAZETTE	11%
CNN	9%
KPAX	8%
NPR	8%
KRTV	8%
NEW YORK TIMES	8%
KTVQ/ Q2	8%
MISSOULIAN	7%
BOZEMAN CHRONICLE	5%
GREAT FALLS TRIBUNE	5%
WASHINGTON POST	5%
CBS	5%
BBC	5%

■ March 2019   ■ June 2015

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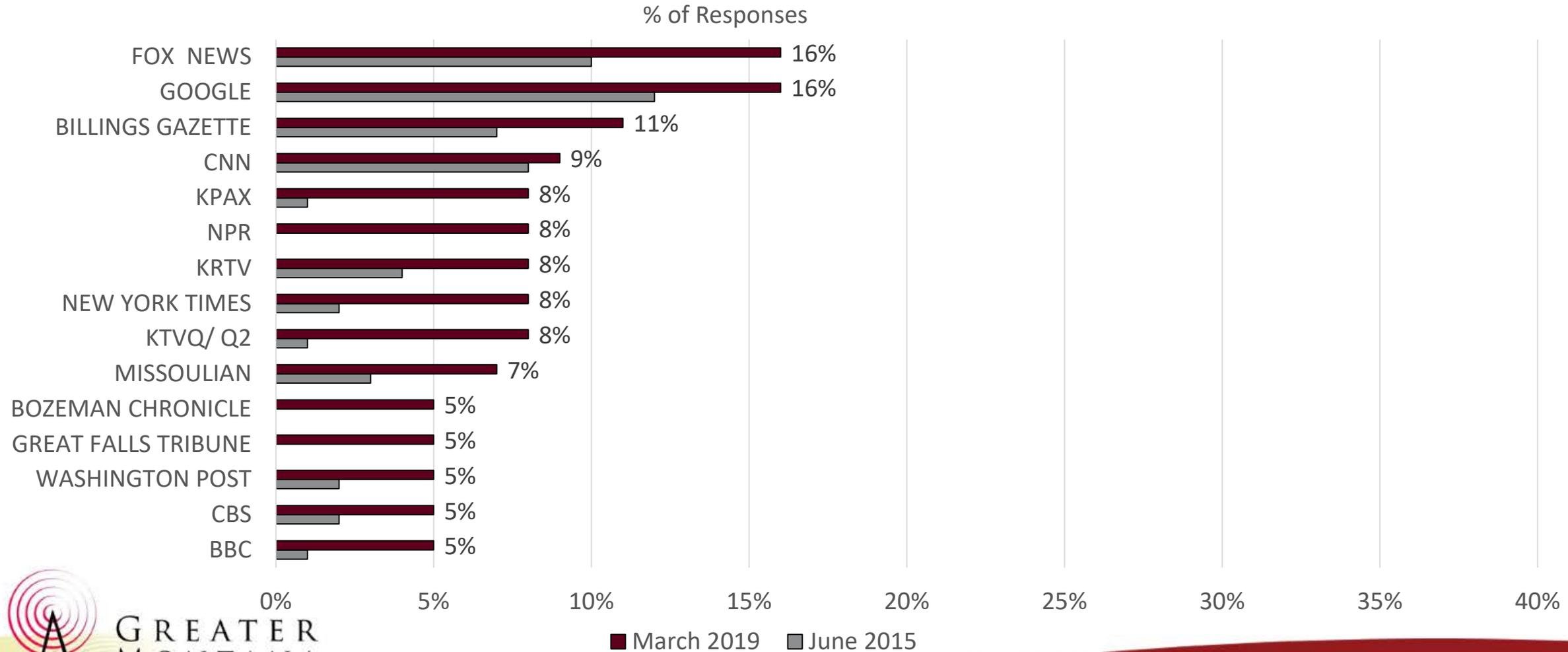
Consumers of CNN and FOX NEWS content are sharply divided by political party

% of Network's 2019 News Consumers

CNN TV — Democrat or leans: 64%, Independent or other: 15%, Republican or leans: 21%
CNN Web — Democrat or leans: 60%, Independent or other: 12%, Republican or leans: 28%
FOX News TV — Democrat or leans: 13%, Independent or other: 9%, Republican or leans: 78%
FOX News Web — Democrat or leans: 2%, Independent or other: 4%, Republican or leans: 94%

Legend: ■ Democrat or leans ■ Independent or other ■ Republican or leans

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The political party divide between CNN and FOX NEWS content consumers increased since 2015

% Change in Partisan Composition of Network's Consumers 2015-2019
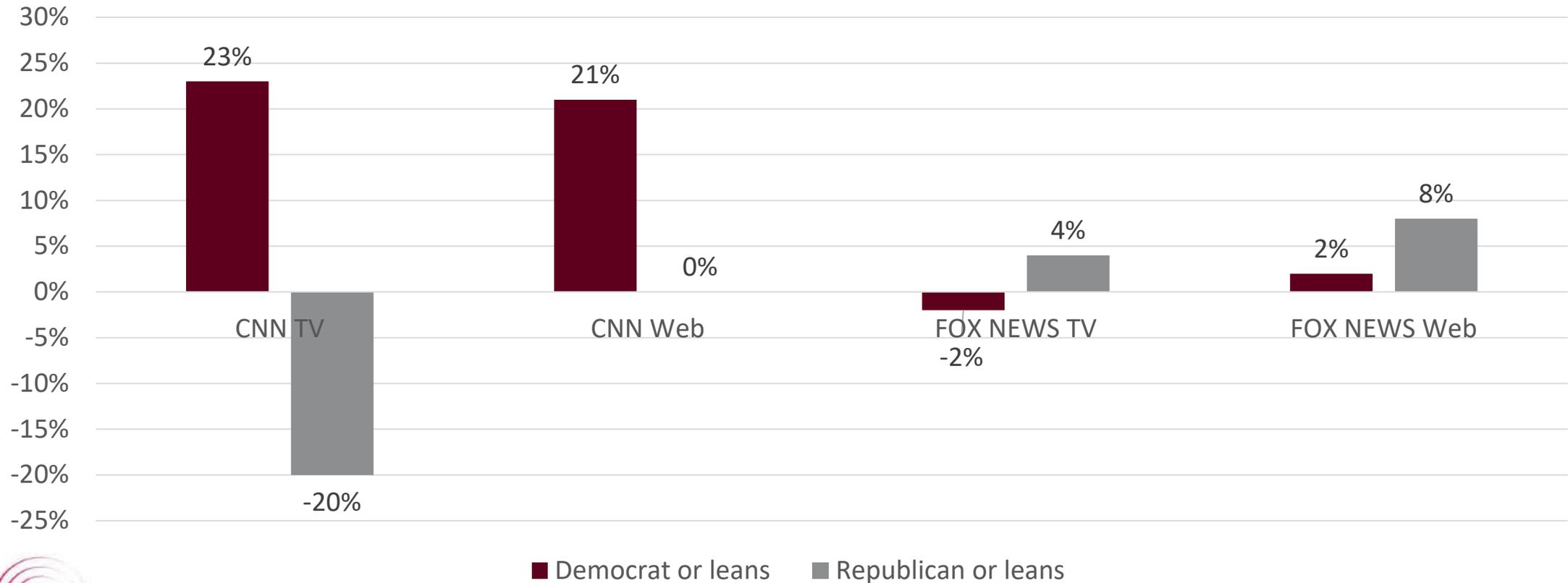
■ Democrat or leans   ■ Republican or leans

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Social media use

% of Adults

March 2019: 71%
June 2015: 62%

Yes

■ March 2019 ■ June 2015
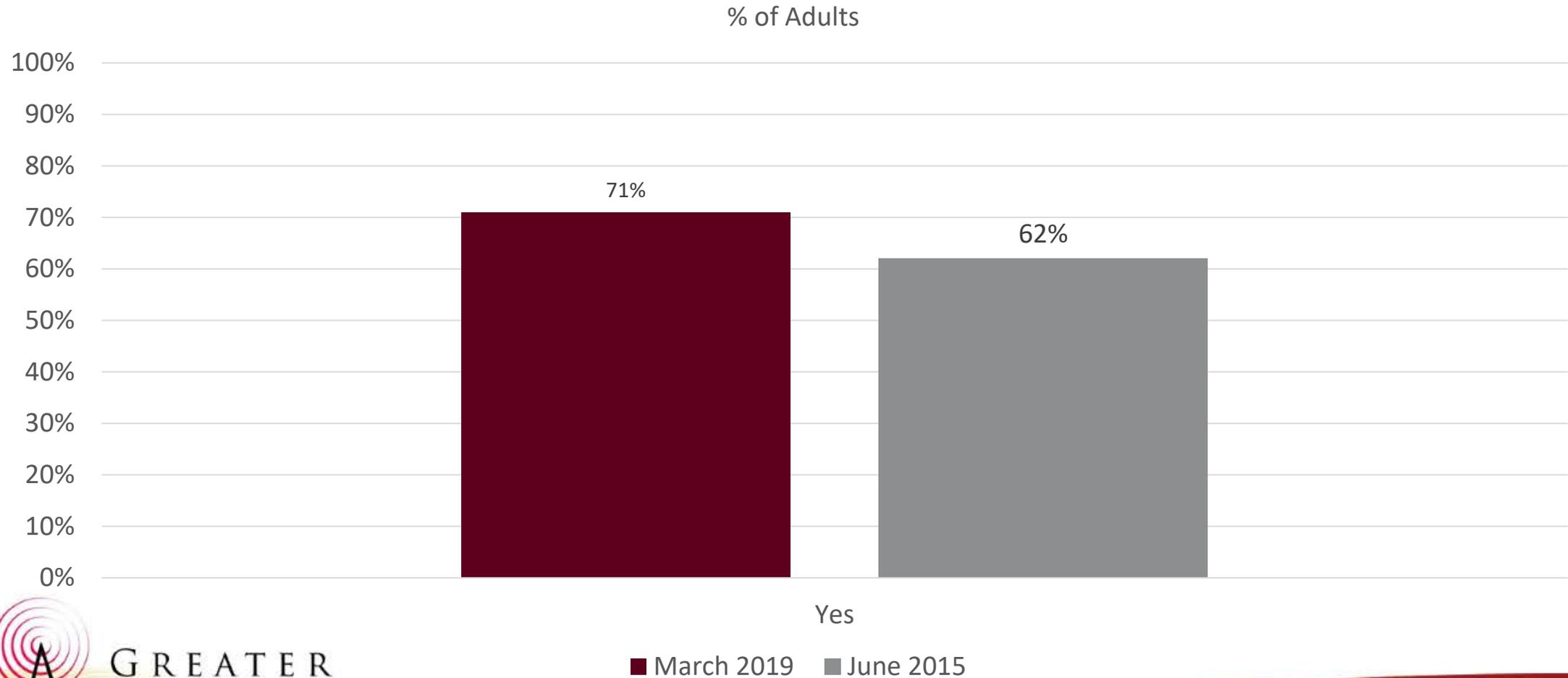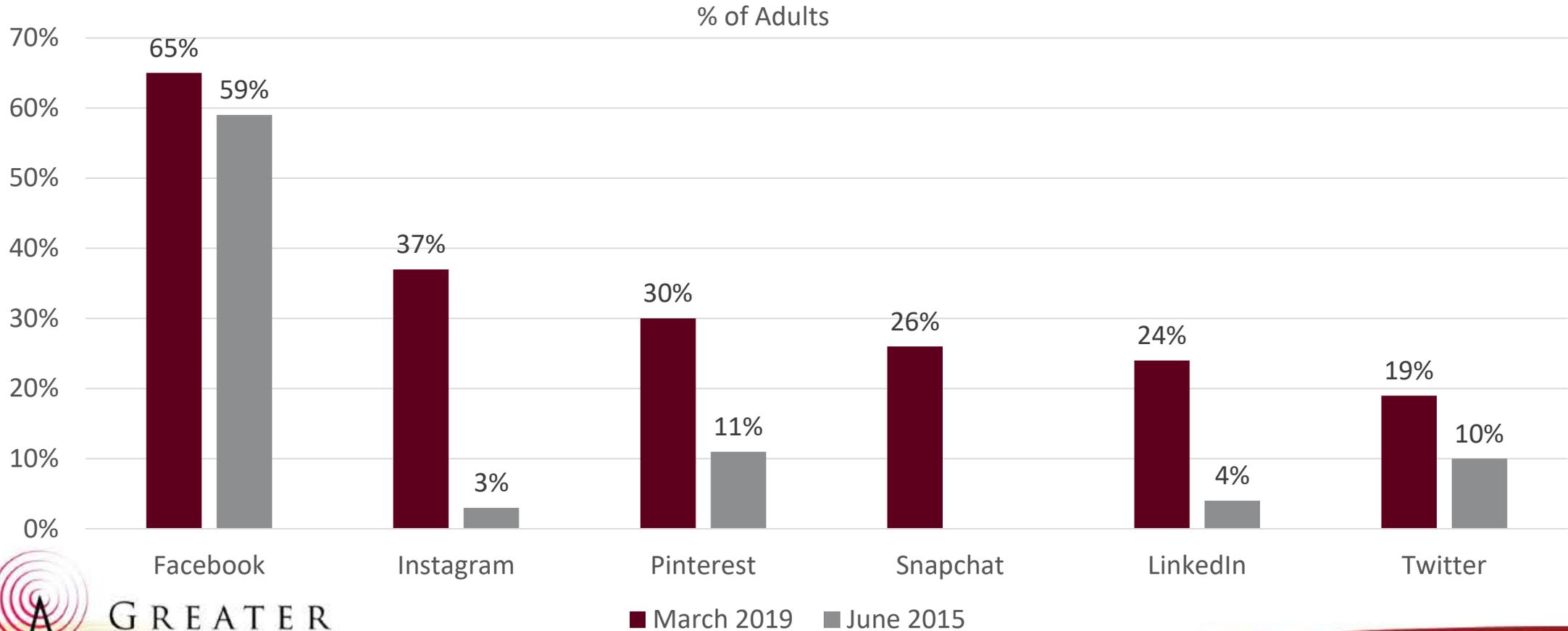
How often do you access a social networking site?

% of Adults Who Use Social Media

Uses social media to access news and information

% of Adults

Bar chart showing percentage of adults who use social media to access news and information, answering "Yes": March 2019 = 47%, June 2015 = 34%.
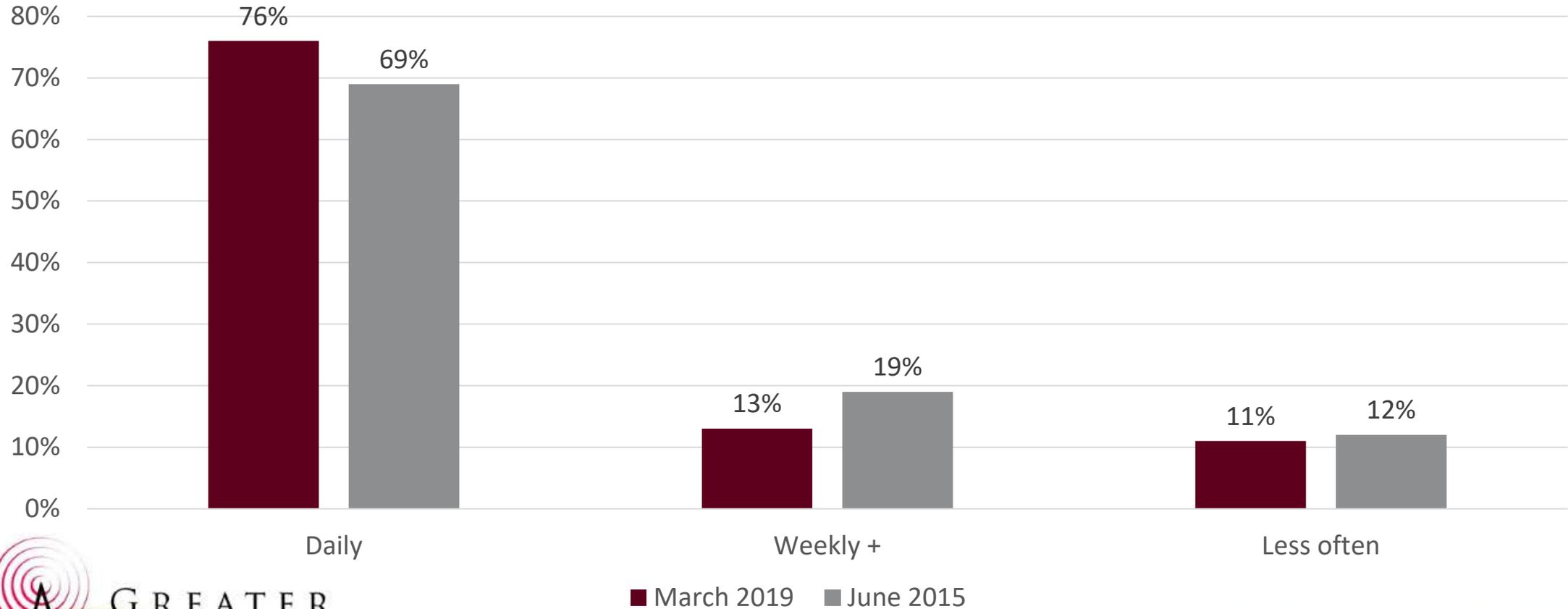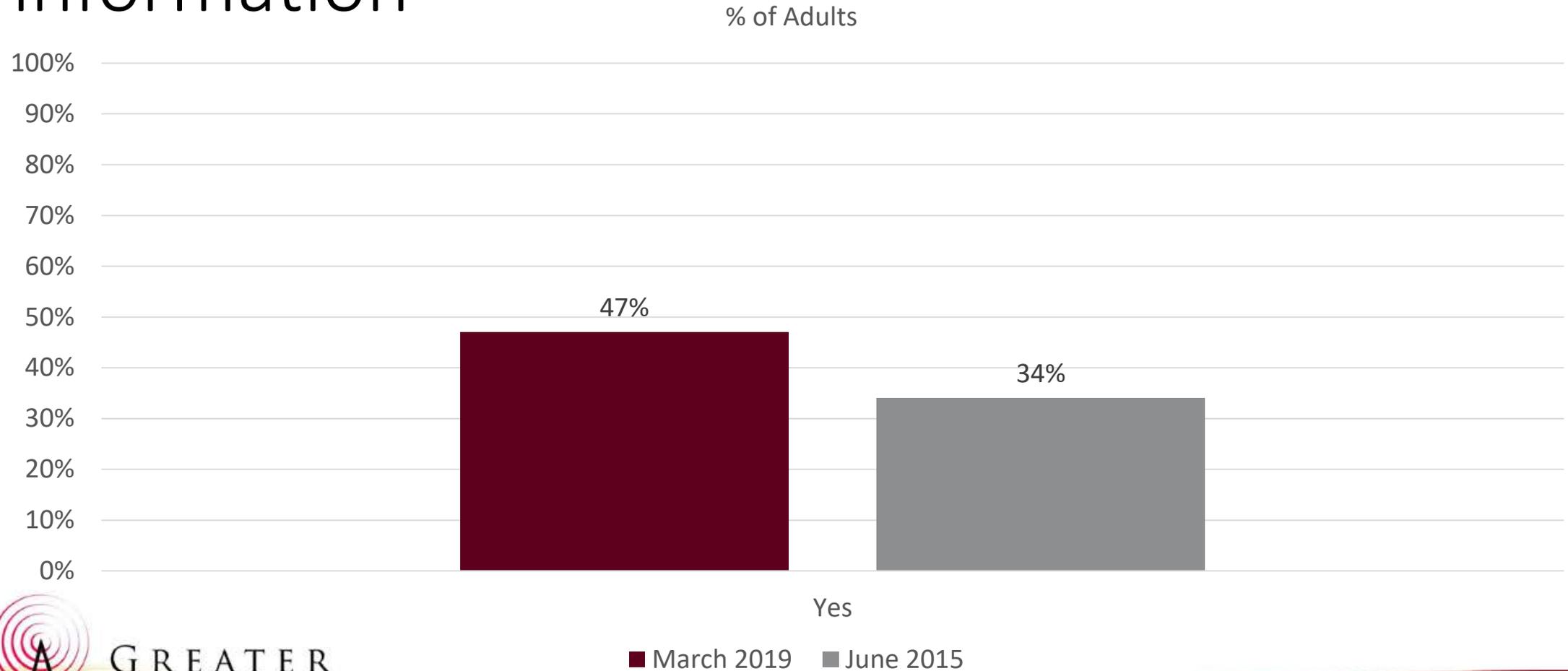
Do you use any of the following social media sites to access news or information?

% of Adults
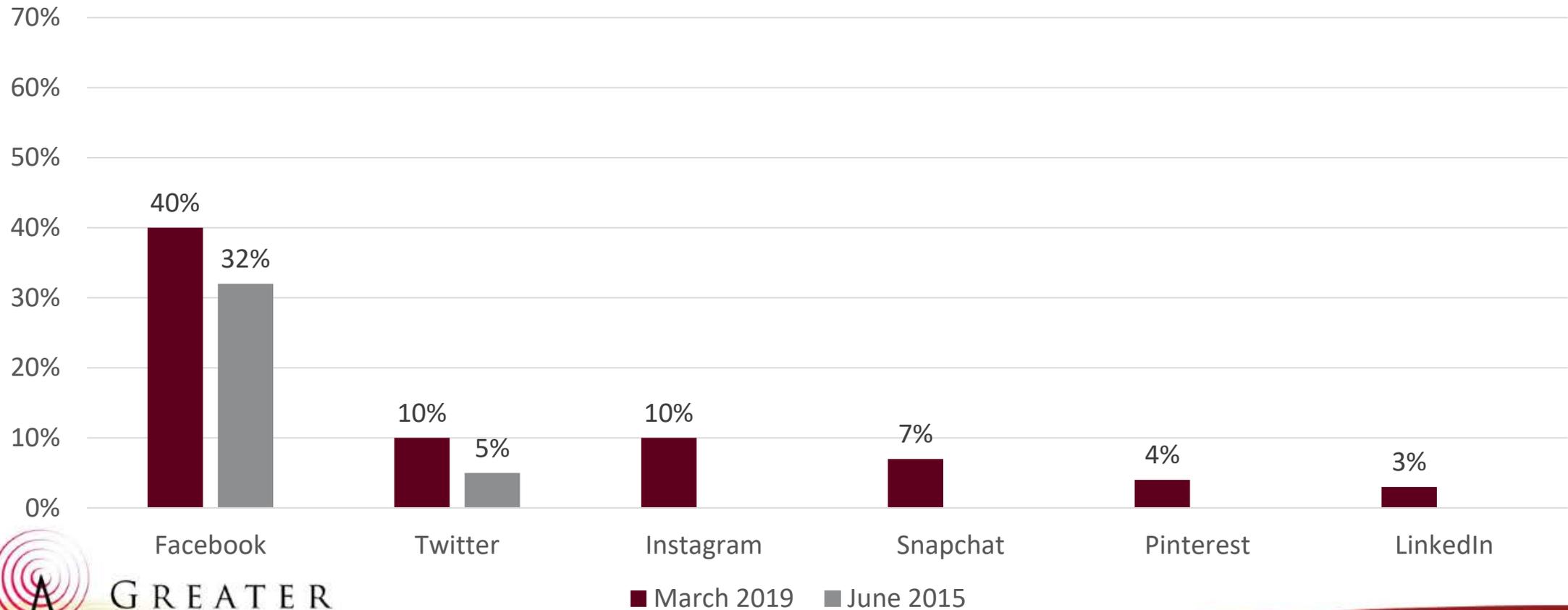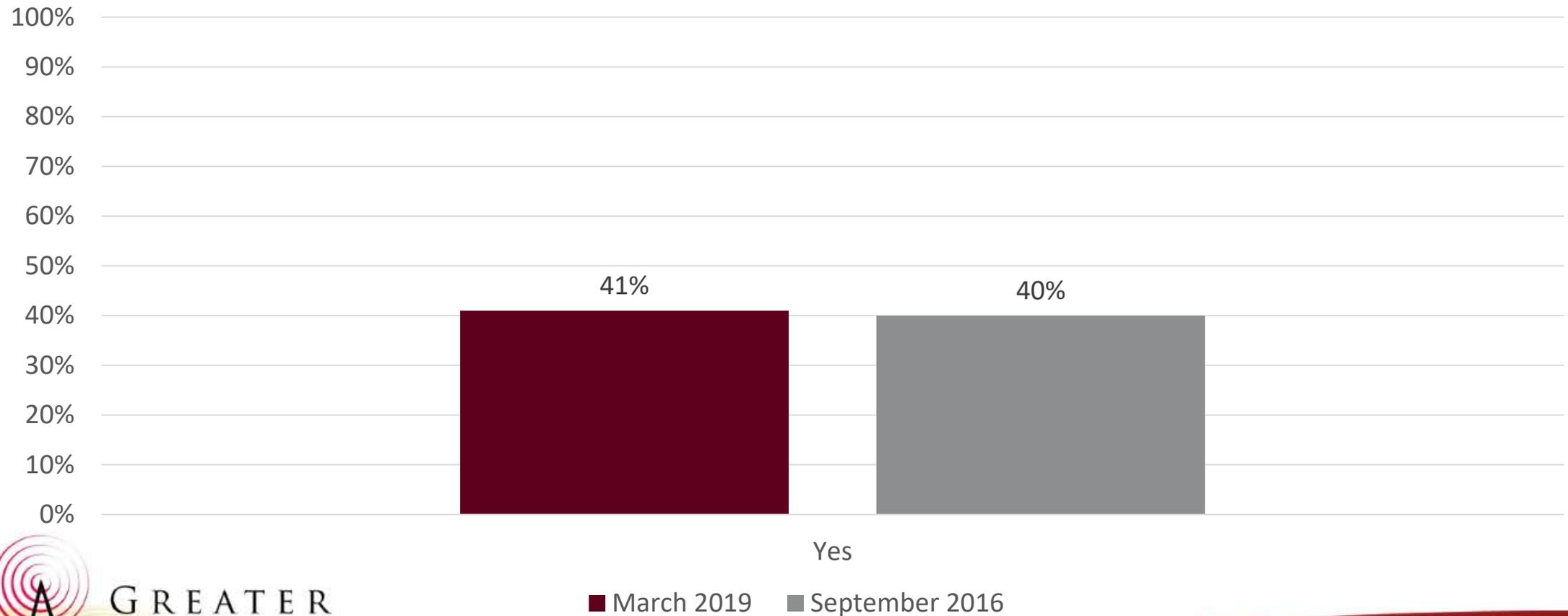
Uses social media to access news by age and gender
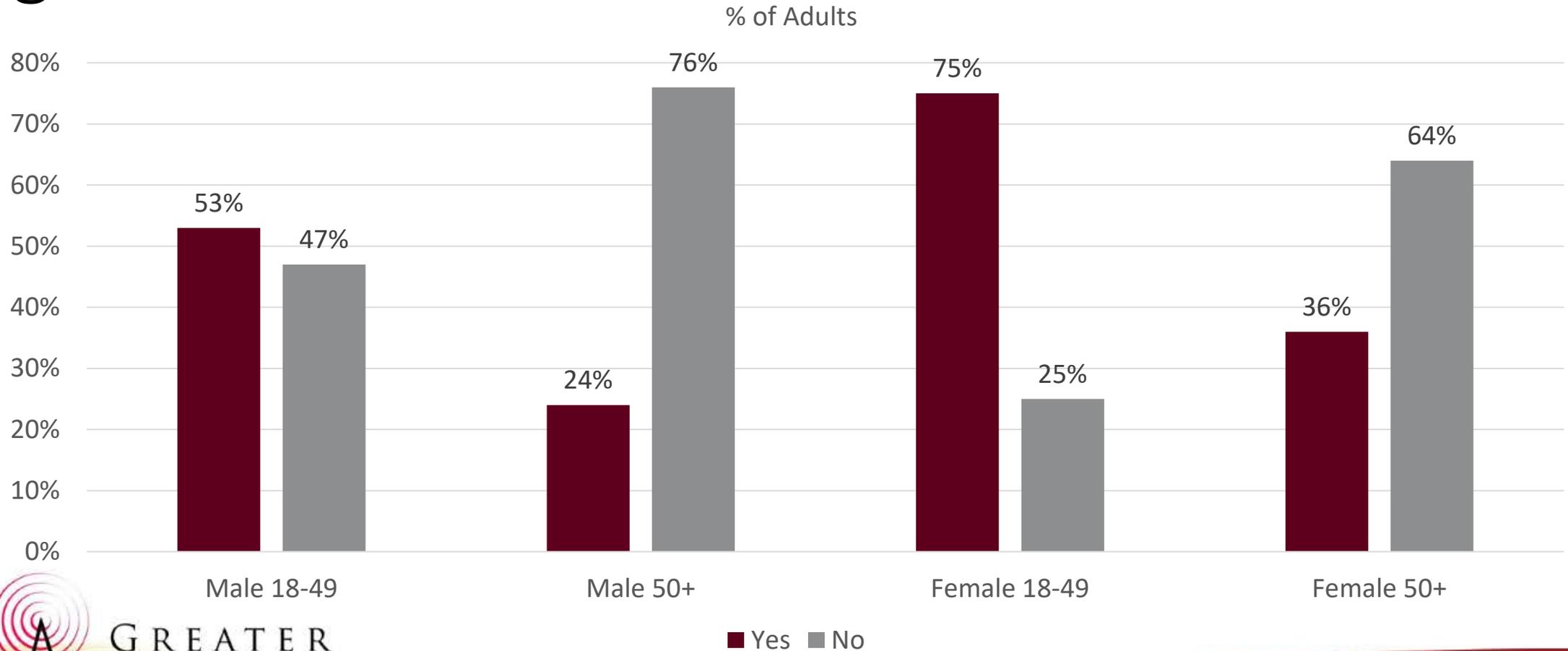
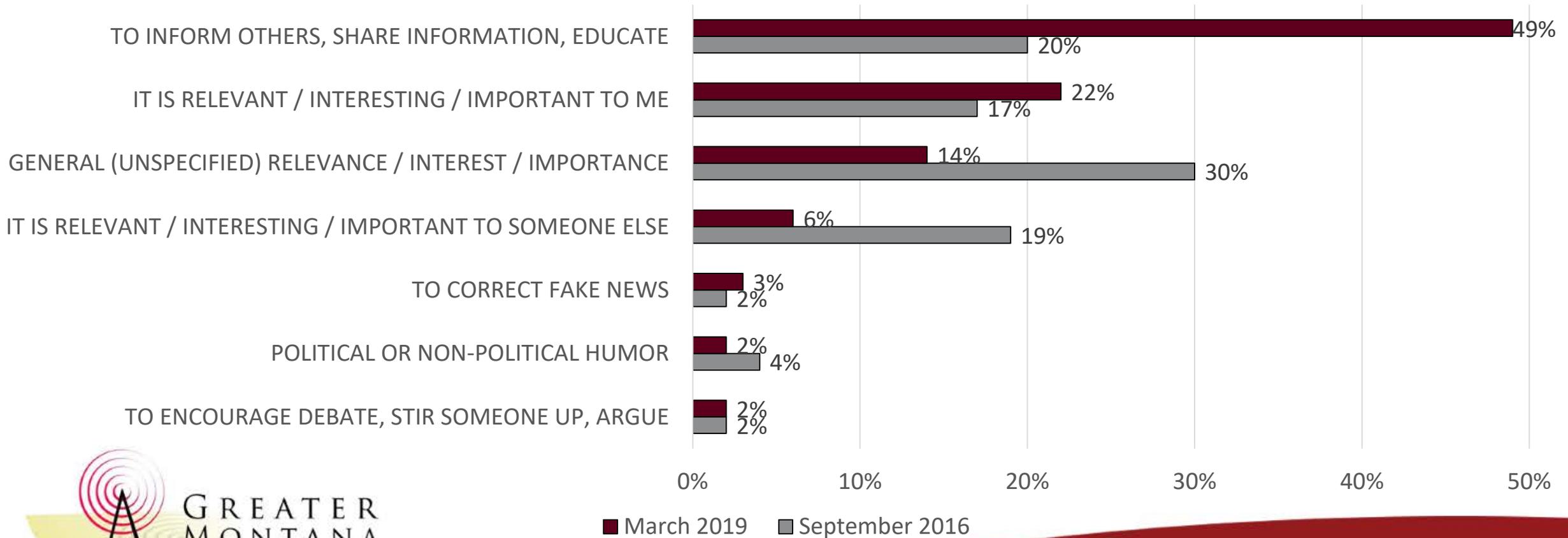# What are the types of internet news and information content that interest you most?

% of Adults

| | March 2019 | June 2015 |
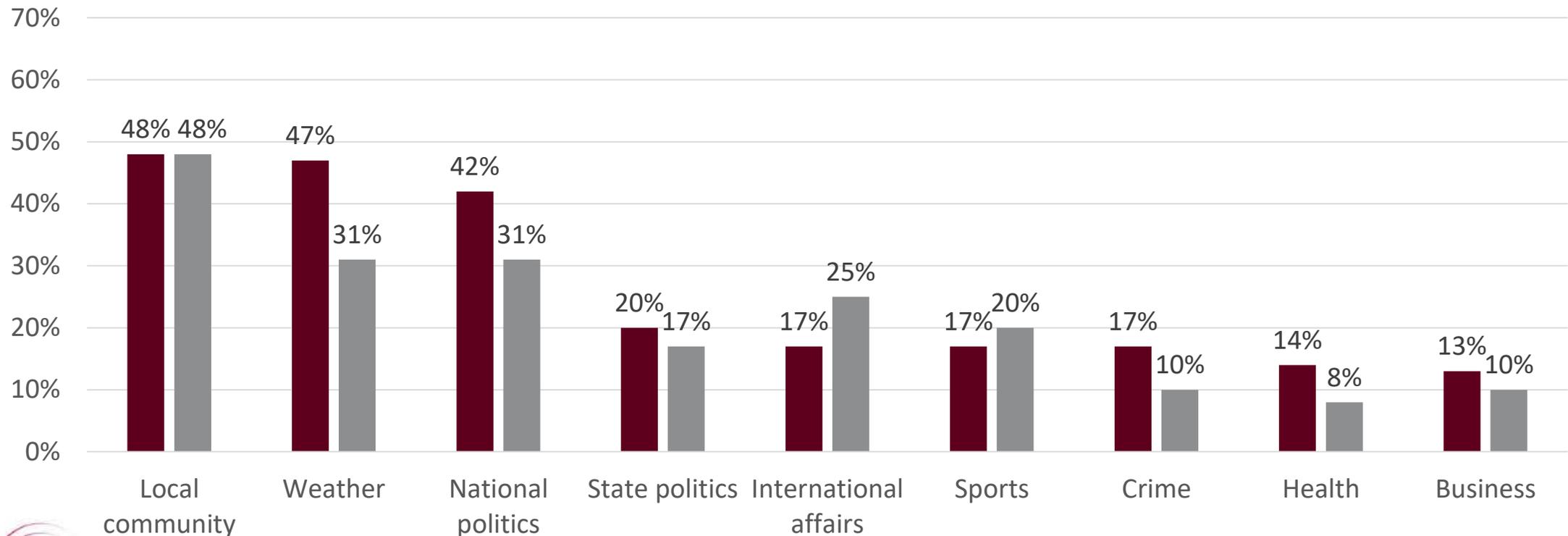
Have you ever shared a news article in an e-mail message or on a social media site like Facebook or Twitter?

% of Adults

■ March 2019	■ September 2016

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What would you say is the main reason you share a news item on the internet?

% Responses Among Those Who Share News Items

Category	March 2019	September 2016
TO INFORM OTHERS, SHARE INFORMATION, EDUCATE	49%	20%
IT IS RELEVANT / INTERESTING / IMPORTANT TO ME	22%	17%
GENERAL (UNSPECIFIED) RELEVANCE / INTEREST / IMPORTANCE	14%	30%
IT IS RELEVANT / INTERESTING / IMPORTANT TO SOMEONE ELSE	6%	19%
TO CORRECT FAKE NEWS	3%	2%
POLITICAL OR NON-POLITICAL HUMOR	2%	4%
TO ENCOURAGE DEBATE, STIR SOMEONE UP, ARGUE	2%	2%

■ March 2019   ■ September 2016

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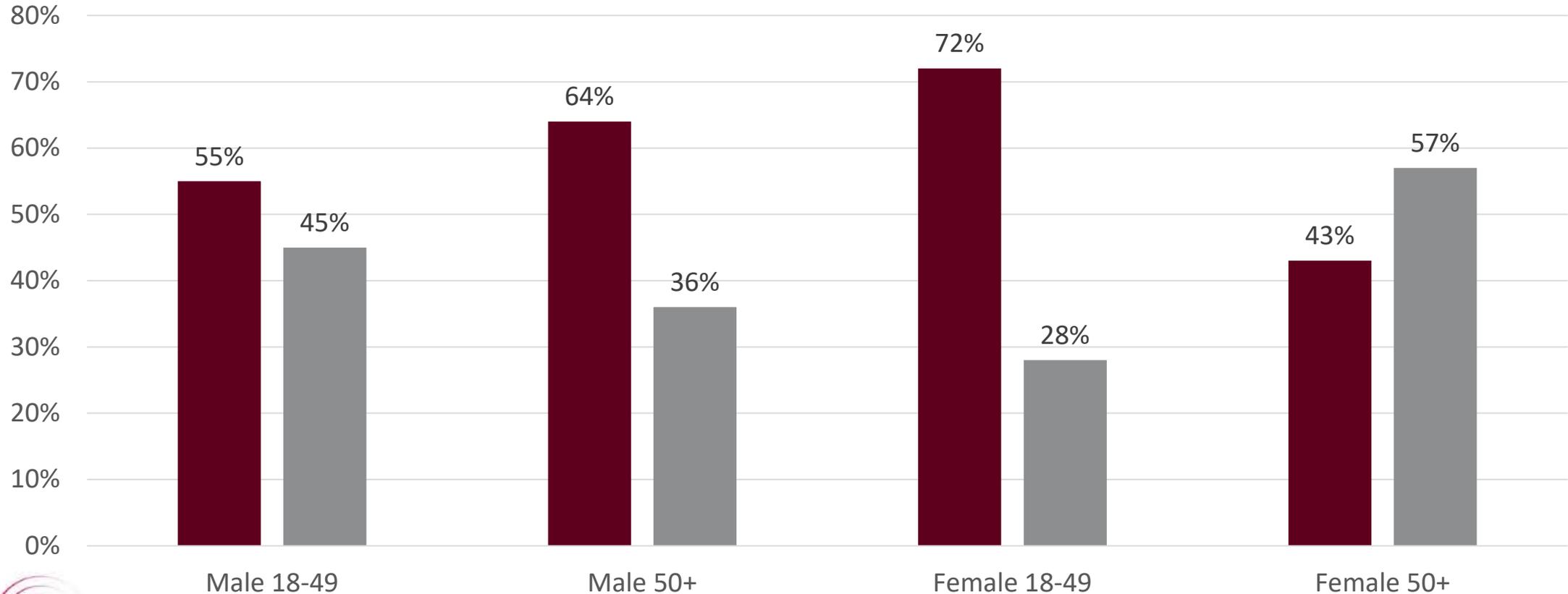
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Would you say you sometimes share a news item on the internet to influence others?

% of Responses Among Those Who Share News Items

March 2019: 63%
September 2016: 43%

■ March 2019 ■ September 2016
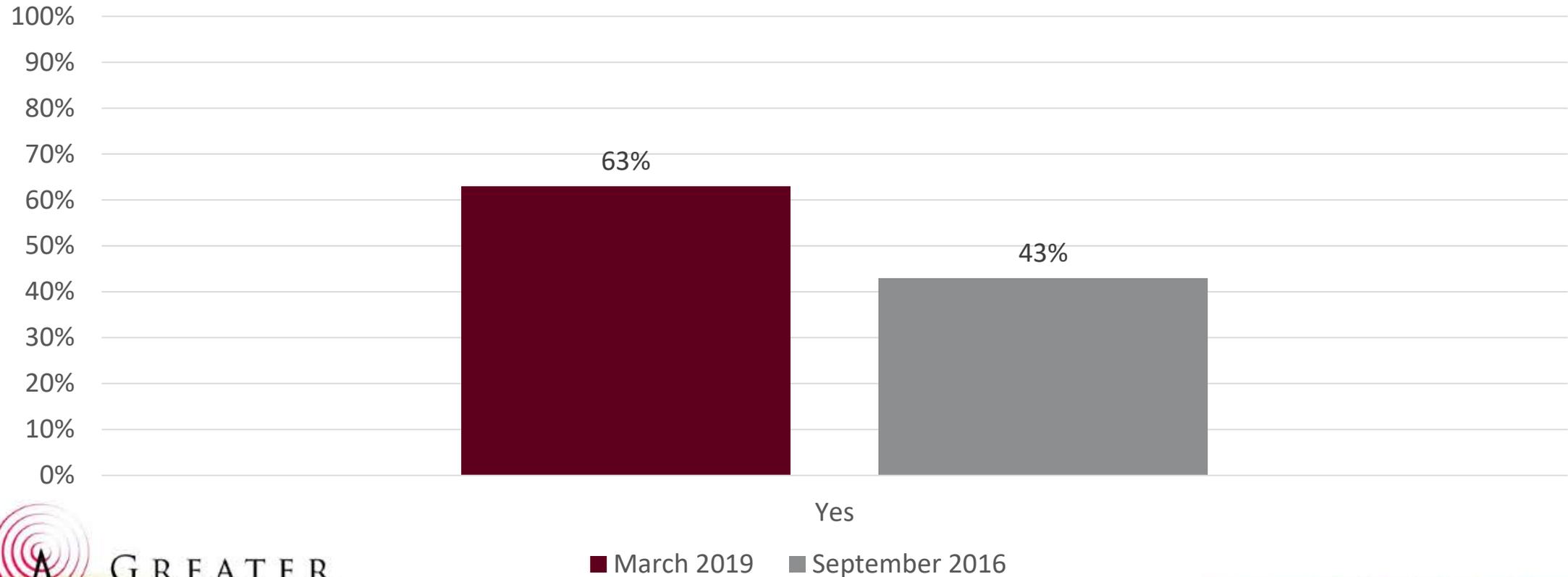
Shared news item to influence others by age and gender

% of Responses Among Those Who Share News Items

■ Yes ■ No
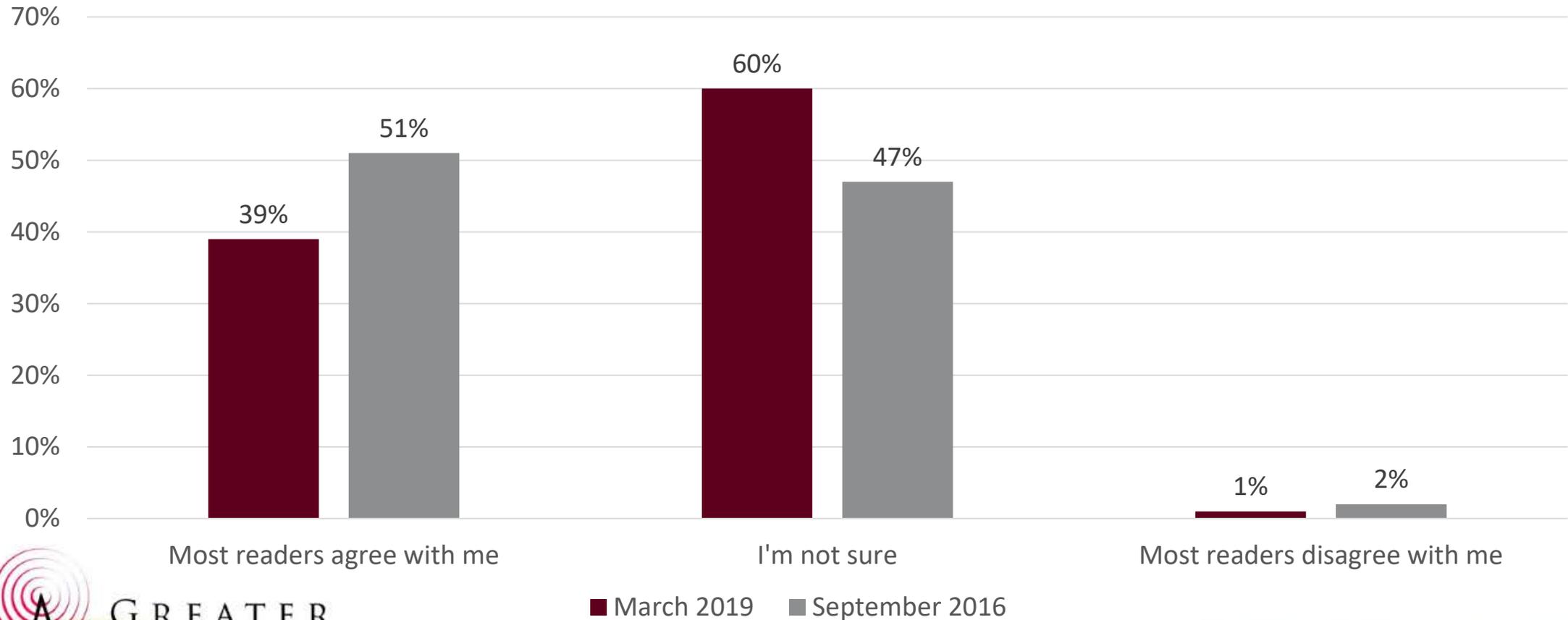
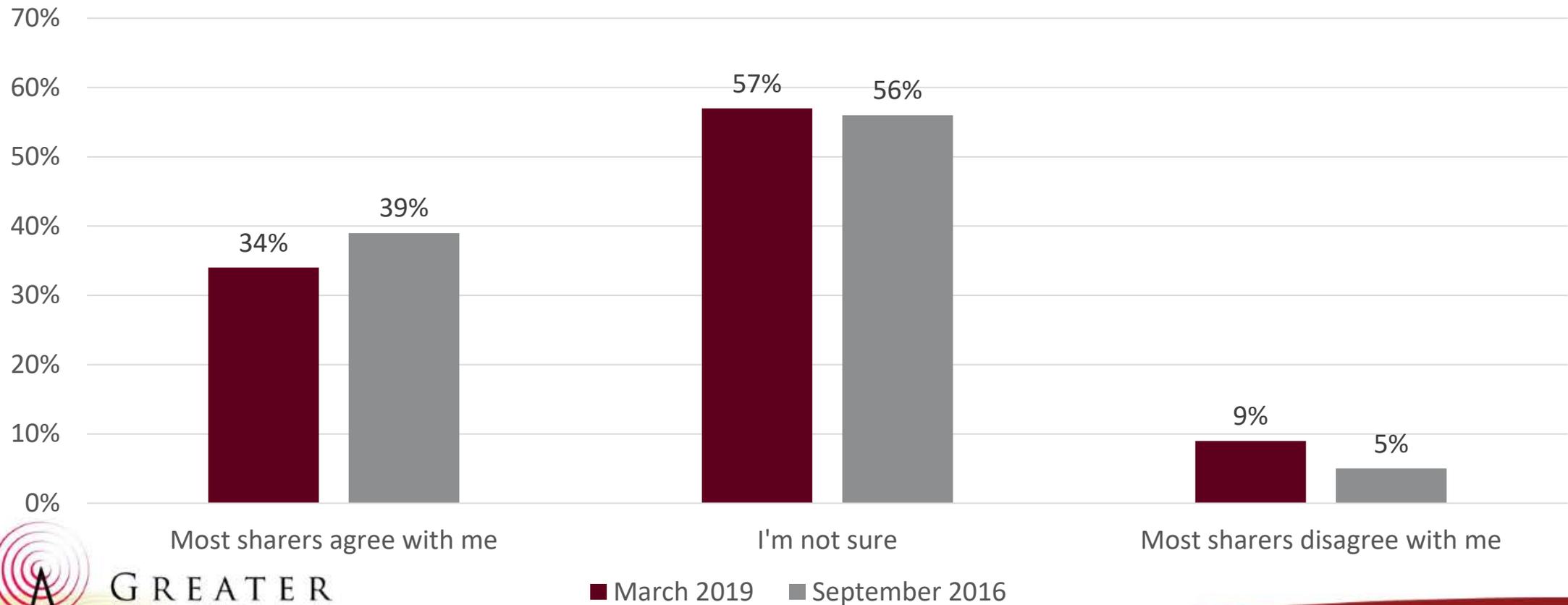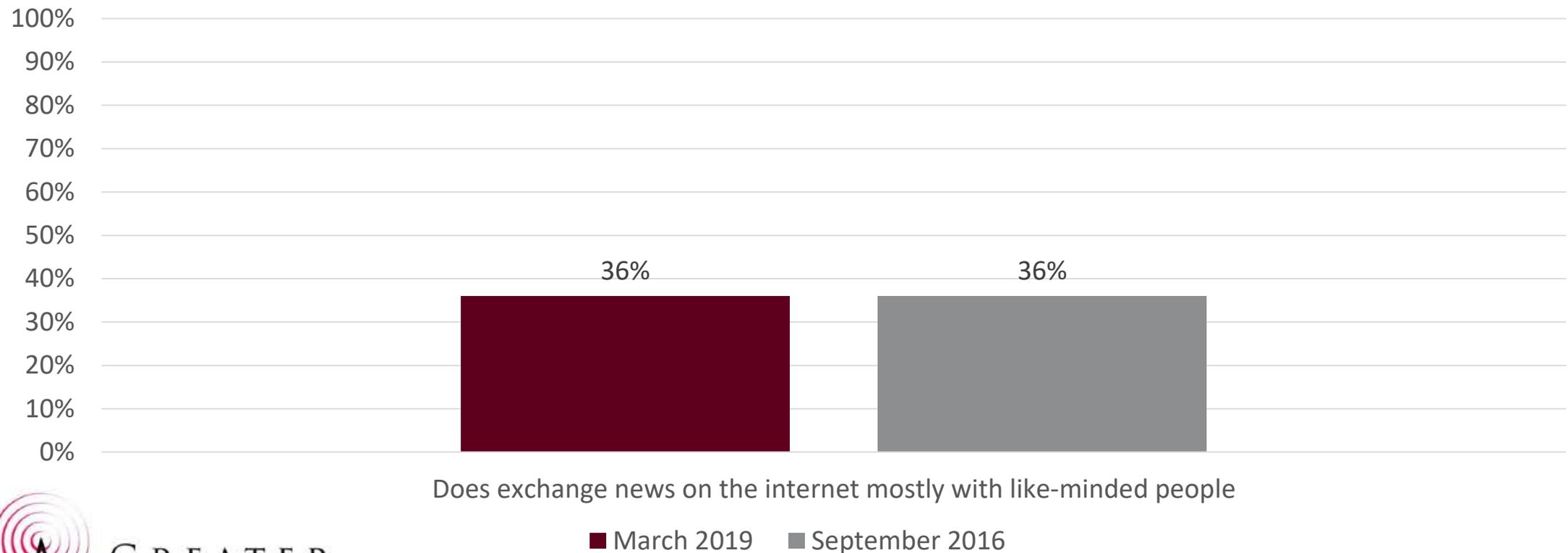When you read a news item that someone else has shared with you on the internet, would you say that person usually agrees with you on most issues?
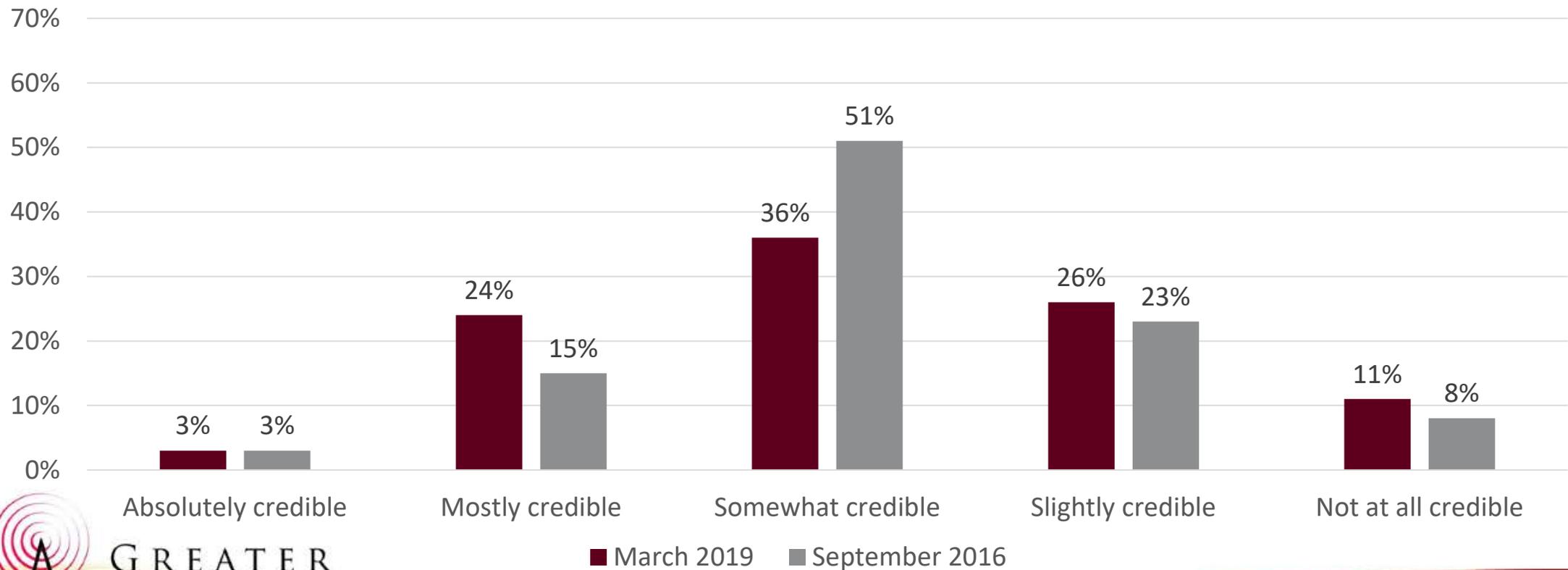
How many Montanans exchange news on the internet mostly with like-minded people?

% of Responses Among Those Who Share News Items

Does exchange news on the internet mostly with like-minded people
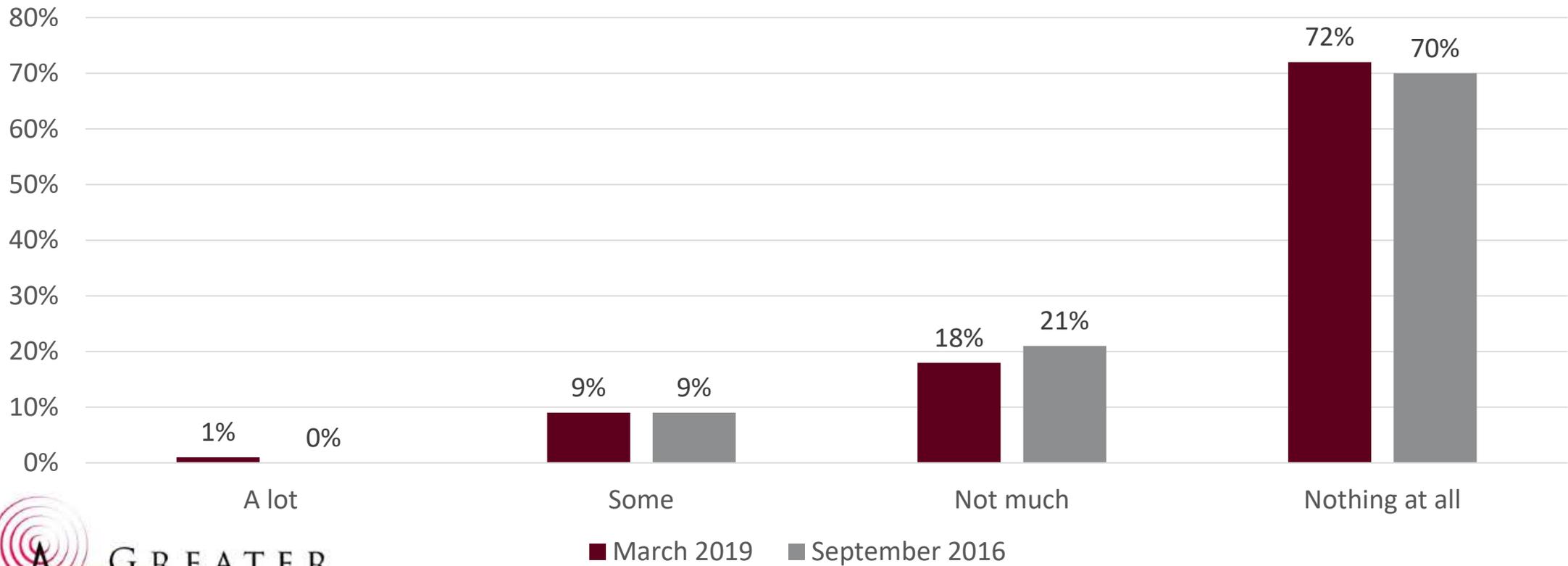
■ March 2019   ■ September 2016

Generally speaking, when you read a news item that someone else has shared with you on the internet, would you say that item is?
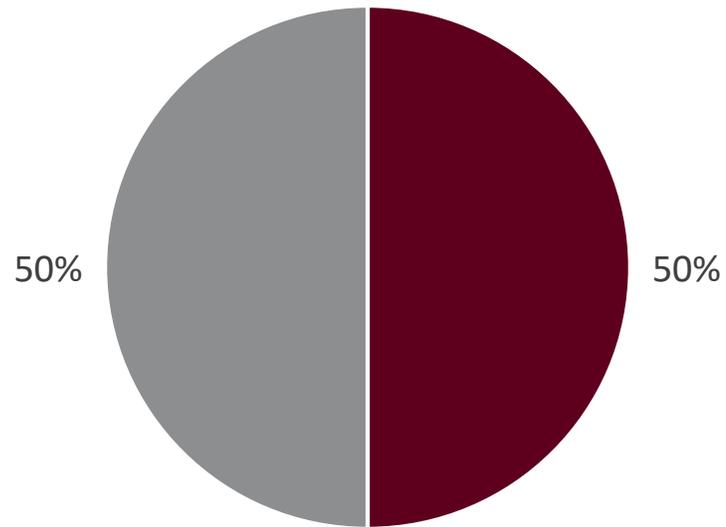

% of Adults

Chart showing percentages by credibility rating:

Category	March 2019	September 2016
Absolutely credible	3%	3%
Mostly credible	24%	15%
Somewhat credible	36%	51%
Slightly credible	26%	23%
Not at all credible	11%	8%

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How much have you seen, read or heard about the Greater Montana Foundation?

% of Adults

Demographics

Gender

50%   50%

■ Male ■ Female

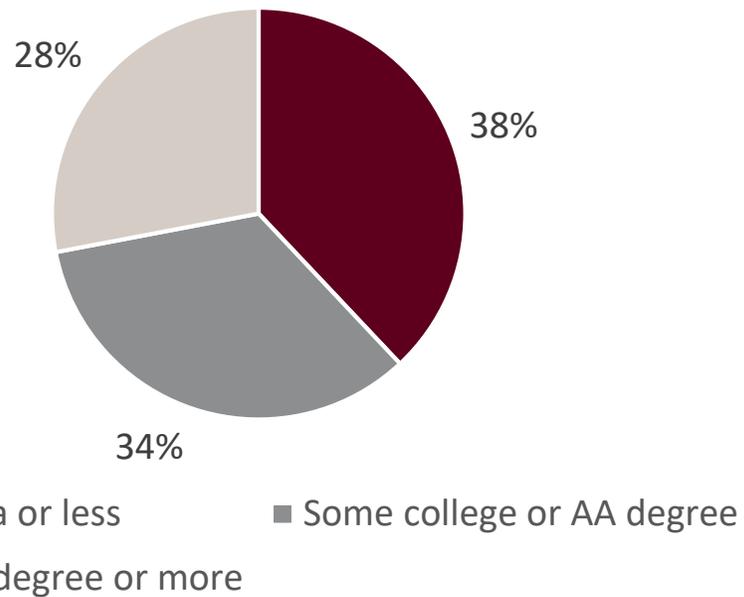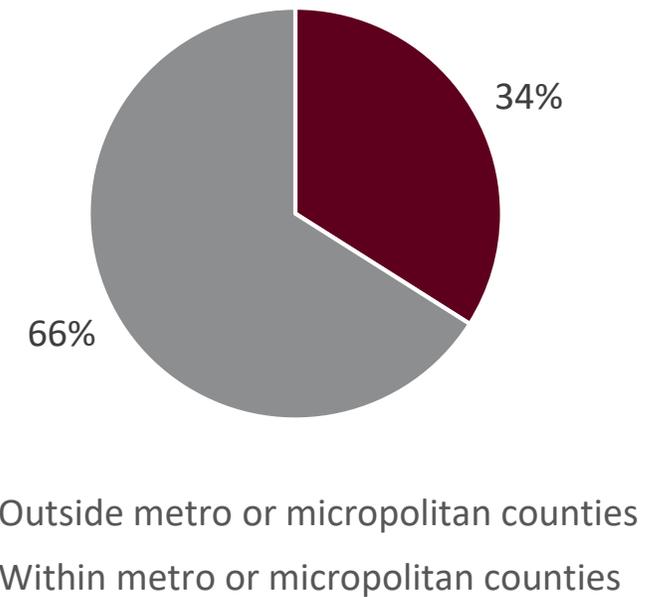Age

22%   29%

27%   22%
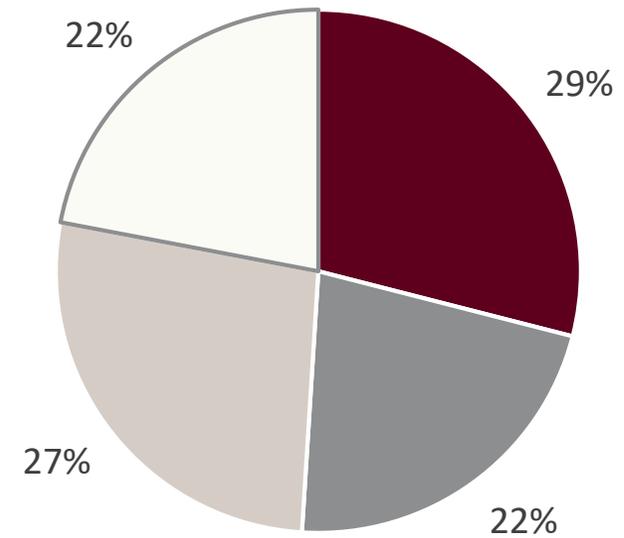
■ 18-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 □ 65+

Demographics

Educational attainment

28%

38%

34%

- HS diploma or less
- Some college or AA degree
- Bachelors degree or more

Urban or rural

34%

66%

- Outside metro or micropolitan counties
- Within metro or micropolitan counties

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Demographics

Political party identification

39%

15%

46%

- Democrat or leans
- Independent or something else
- Republican or leans

Registered voter

10%

90%

- Registered
- Not registered

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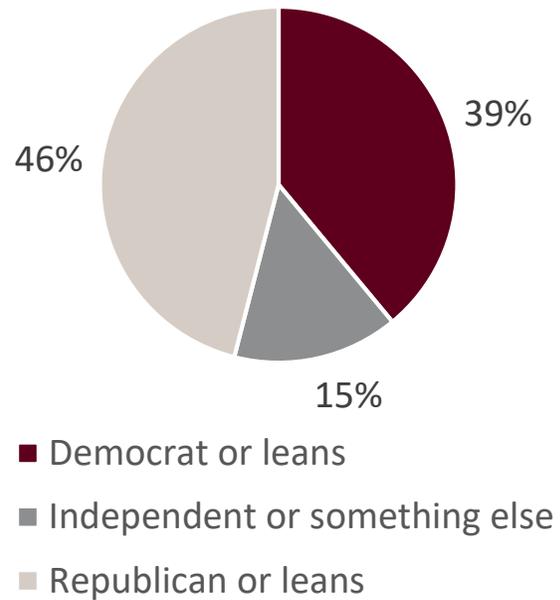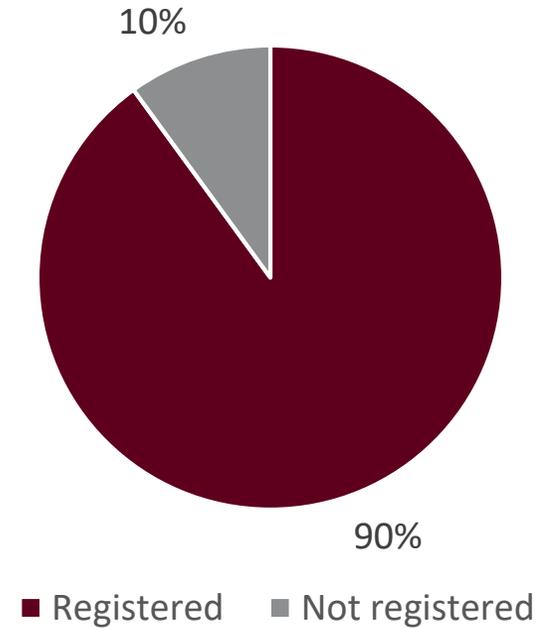
Political party identification in Montana

Gender

Party	Male	Female	Total
Democrat or leans	32%	45%	39%
Independent or other	9%	21%	15%
Republican or leans	59%	34%	46%
	100%	100%	100%

Age

Party	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Total
Democrat or leans	44%	32%	33%	48%	39%
Independent or other	18%	16%	14%	10%	15%
Republican or leans	38%	52%	53%	42%	46%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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Political party identification in Montana

Educational attainment

Party	HS diploma or less	Some college or AA degree	Bachelors degree or more	Total
Democrat or leans	41%	26%	53%	39%
Independent or other	16%	18%	11%	15%
Republican or leans	43%	56%	36%	46%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

Voter registration

Party	Yes	No	Total
Democrat or leans	41%	28%	39%
Independent or other	12%	43%	15%
Republican or leans	47%	29%	46%
	100%	100%	100%

GREATER MONTANA FOUNDATION

BUREAU OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Demographics