

# Navigating the infodemic

How people in six countries access and rate news and information about coronavirus

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# Three key findings

From our new report on how people in six countries access and rate news and information about coronavirus (covering Argentina, Germany, South Korea, Spain, the UK, and the US)

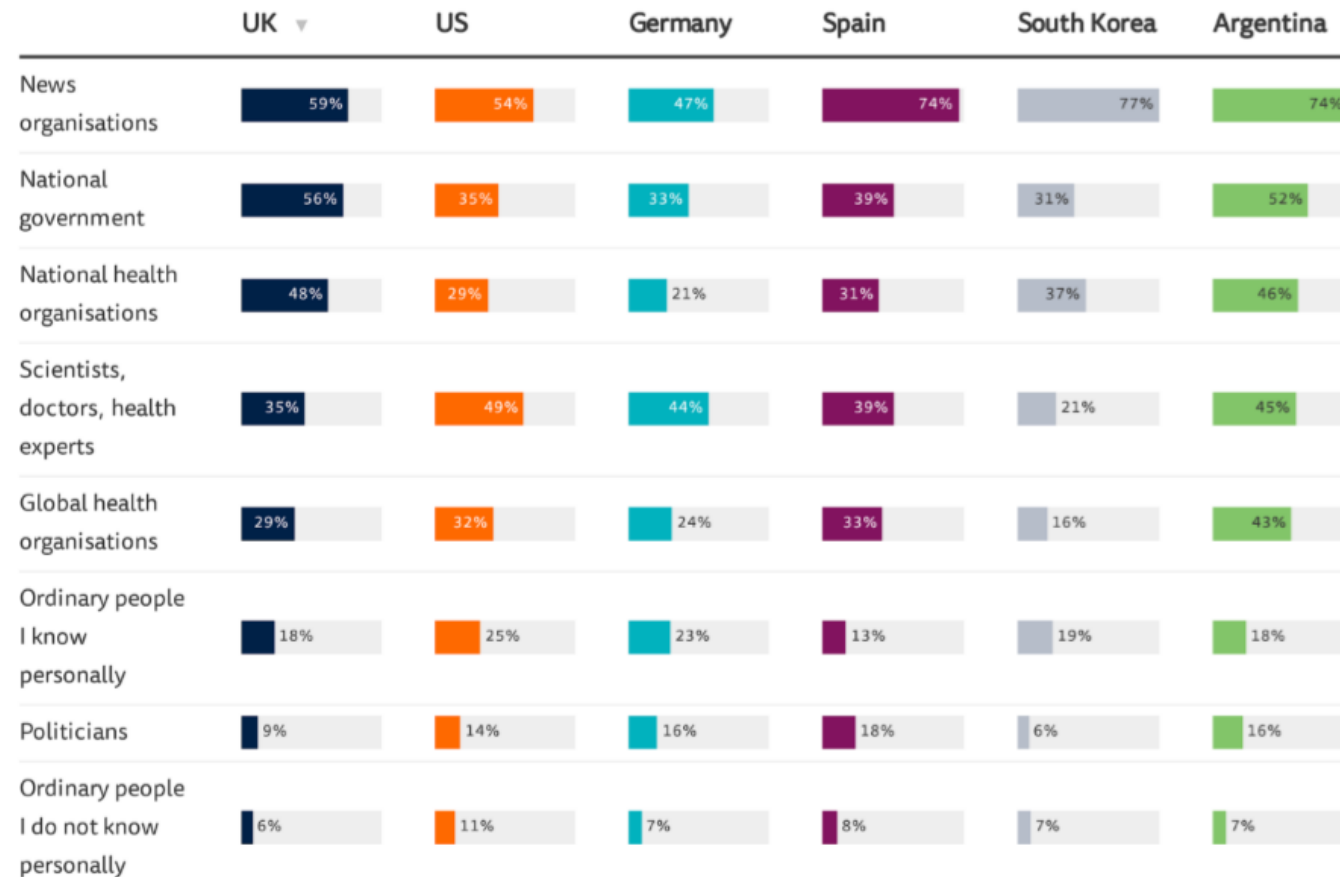
**FIRST**, most people rely on news organizations for news and information about coronavirus, most people consider news organizations a relatively trustworthy source of information, and in most countries, those who rely on news organizations know more about the coronavirus.

**SECOND**, various different kinds of platforms, including search engines, social media, video sites, and messaging applications are also widely used as sources of news and information about coronavirus, most people trust these platforms less than they trust news organizations, and we find no consistent evidence that people who rely on them know more (or for that matter less) about the coronavirus.

**THIRD**, news and information matters, but social and political factors matter too. Take education as a social factor, in almost every country, those with lower levels of formal education know less about the coronavirus. In terms of politics, in four countries, respondents on the political right know less, and in every country, those who say “don’t know” when asked about their political views know much less.

# NEWS MEDIA - widely used

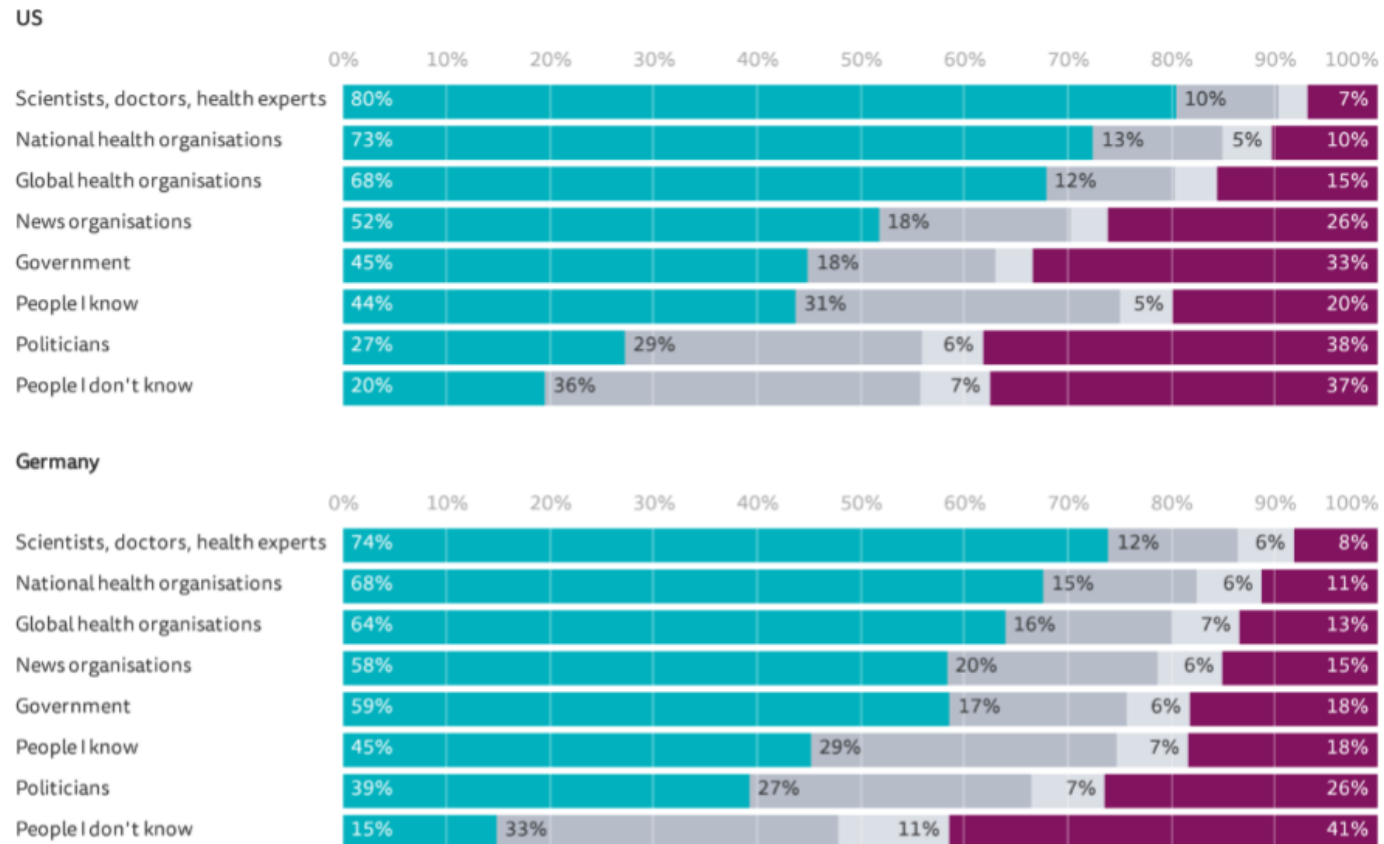
In almost every country, news is the most widely used source of information about coronavirus (and when people say they rely on government, health authorities, etc. it is almost certainly in part through news).



Q7. Which, if any, of the following have you used in the last week as a source of news or information about coronavirus (COVID-19)?  
 Base: Total sample in each country.

# NEWS MEDIA - relatively trusted







In almost every country, news is relatively trusted, often more than government, and much more than individual politicians.



Q10. How trustworthy would you say news and information about coronavirus (COVID-19) from the following is? Please use the scale below, where 0 is 'not at all trustworthy' and 10 is 'completely trustworthy'. Base: Total sample in each country. Note: Trusts = 6-10; Neither = 5; Does not trust = 0-4.

# NEWS MEDIA - people learn from them

In most countries, those who rely on news organizations as a source of information about coronavirus know more than those who do not, controlling for other factors (see full OLS regression models in report).

|                              |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>News organisations</b>    | .22 (.05)***  | .47 (.07)***  | .25 (.06)***  | .15 (.08)   | .26 (.10)**   | .15 (.08)   |
| <b>Government</b>            | .20 (.05)***  | -.00 (.08)  | .30 (.07)***  | .15 (.08)   | .14 (.09)   | .06 (.08)   |
| <b>Politicians</b>           | -.10 (.09)  | -.05 (.11)  | -.16 (.08)  | -.05 (.10)  | -.39 (.18)*   | .02 (.10)   |
| <b>Global health orgs.</b>   | .06 (.06)   | .38 (.09)***  | .22 (.07)**   | -.02 (.09)  | -.05 (.12)  | -.08 (.08)  |
| <b>National health orgs.</b> | .22 (.06)***  | .03 (.09)   | .22 (.07)**   | .04 (.09)   | .35 (.09)***  | .08 (.08)   |
| <b>Scientists/experts</b>    | .15 (.06)**   | .36 (.08)***  | .18 (.06)**   | .26 (.08)**   | -.12 (.11)  | .18 (.08)*  |
| <b>People I know</b>         | .04 (.07)   | -.01 (.08)  | .03 (.07)   | .01 (.12)   | -.10 (.10)  | -.03 (.10)  |
| <b>People I don't know</b>   | -.25 (.11)*   | -.13 (.12)  | -.49 (.11)***   | -.20 (.15)  | -.05 (.16)  | -.08 (.15)  |

# PLATFORMS – various platforms are widely used

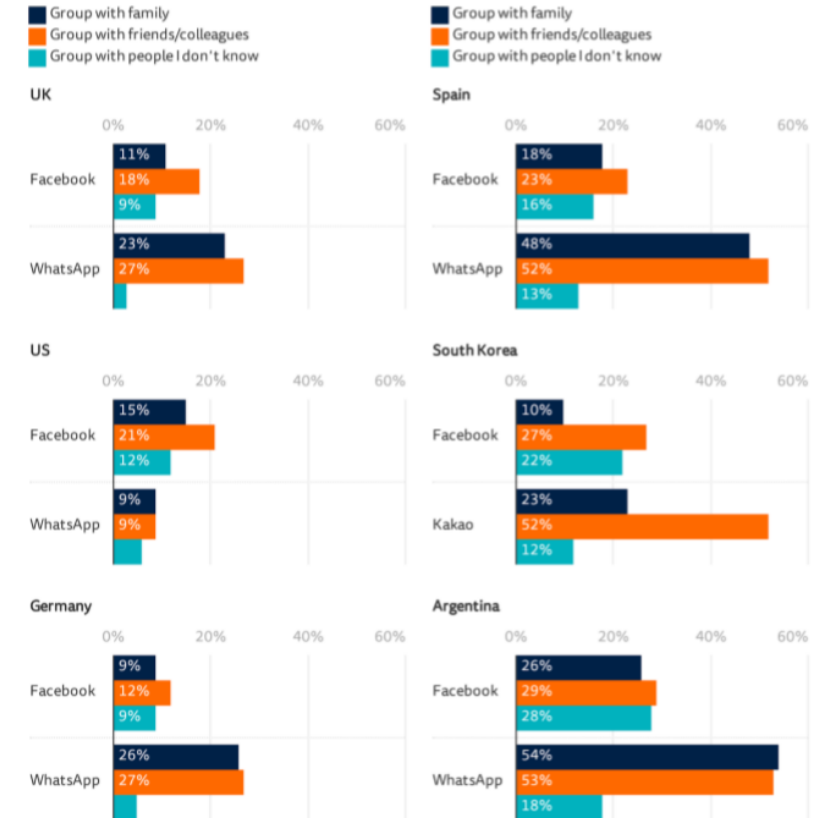
Various different kinds of platforms, including search engines, social media, video sites, and messaging applications are also widely used as sources of news and information about coronavirus.

|   | UK            |     | US            |     | Germany       |
|---|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | Google search | 35% | Google search | 38% | Google search |
| 2 | Facebook      | 33% | Facebook      | 36% | Facebook      |
| 3 | Twitter       | 19% | YouTube       | 26% | YouTube       |
| 4 | YouTube       | 15% | Twitter       | 18% | Instagram     |
| 5 | Instagram     | 9%  | Instagram     | 12% | Twitter       |

|   | Spain         |     | South Korea   |     | Argentina     |
|---|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------|
| 1 | Google search | 55% | Naver         | 63% | Google search |
| 2 | Facebook      | 42% | YouTube       | 46% | Facebook      |
| 3 | Twitter       | 30% | Daum          | 34% | YouTube       |
| 4 | YouTube       | 26% | Google search | 27% | Instagram     |
| 5 | Instagram     | 21% | Facebook      | 20% | Twitter       |

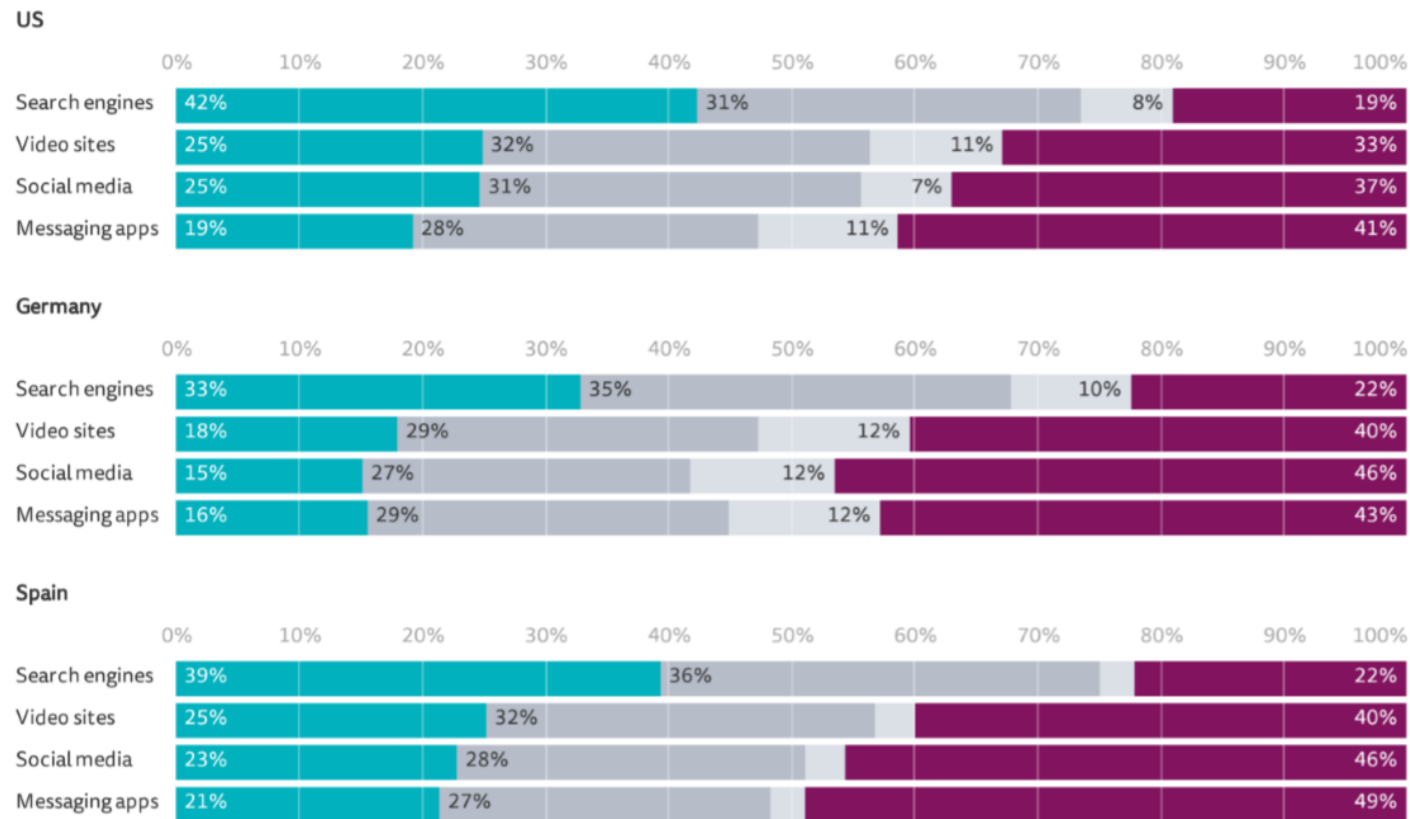
Q8. Which, if any, of the following have you used in the last week as a source of news or information about coronavirus (COVID-19)?  
Base: Total sample in each country.



Q9. Facebook and WhatsApp allow you to set up, join and participate in groups, where you can discuss news or related topics with likeminded people. Which, if any, of the following have you used in the last week to discuss coronavirus (COVID-19)? Base: Total sample in each country.

# PLATFORMS – less trusted than news







Most people trust various platforms less than they trust news organizations



Q11. How trustworthy would you say news and information about coronavirus (COVID-19) on each of the following is? Please use the scale below, where 0 is 'not at all trustworthy' and 10 is 'completely trustworthy'. Base: Total sample in each country. Note: Trusts = 6-10; Neither = 5; Does not trust = 0-4.

# PLATFORMS – no consistent relation with knowledge

Across the six countries, there is no consistent evidence that people who rely on various platforms know more (or for that matter less) about the coronavirus controlling for other factors (see full OLS regression models in report).

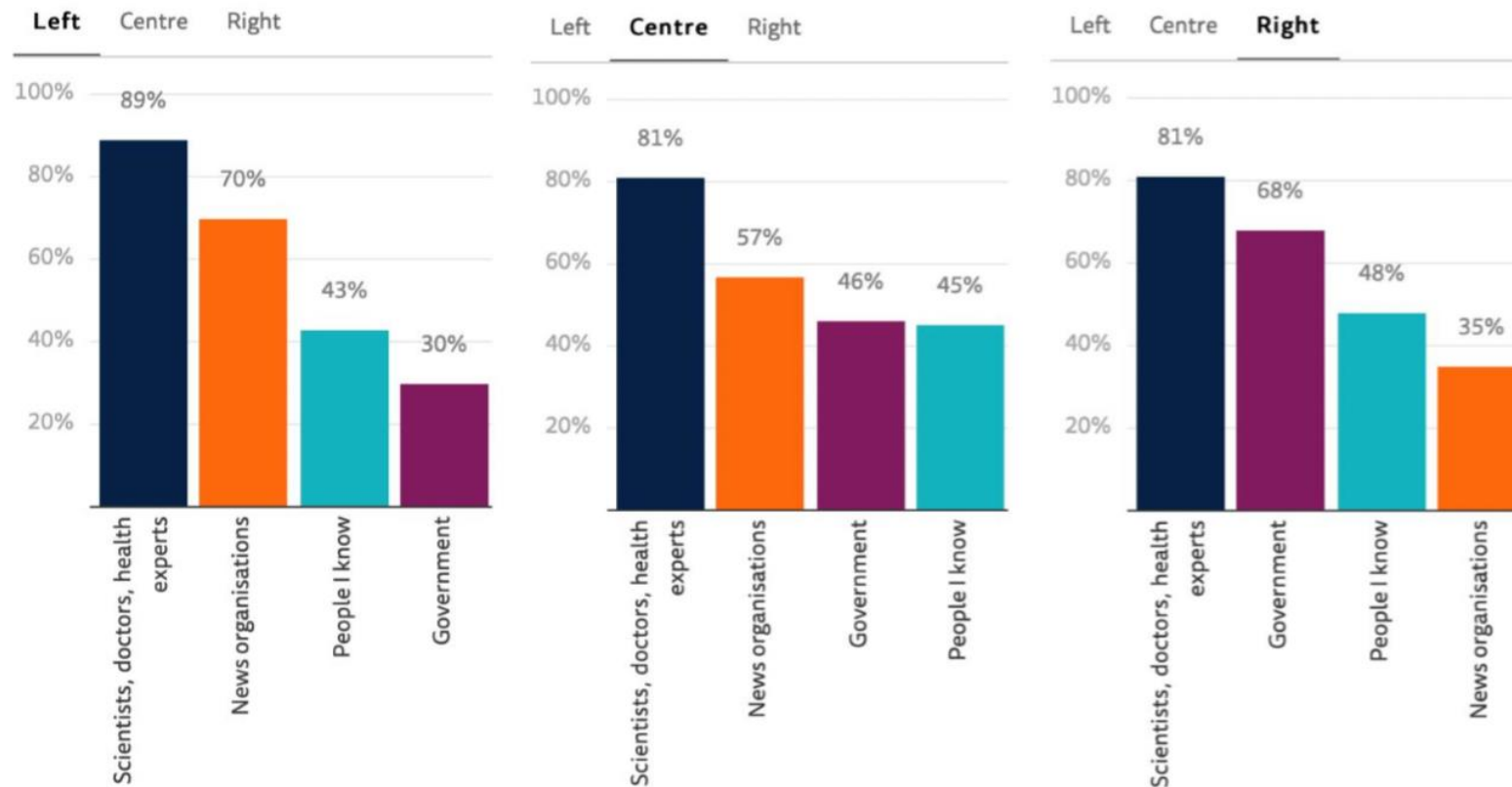
|                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>News organisations</b> | .22 (.05)***  | .47 (.07)***  | .25 (.06)***  | .15 (.08)   | .26 (.10)**   | .15 (.08)   |
| <b>Government</b>         | .20 (.05)***  | -.00 (.08)  | .30 (.07)***  | .15 (.08)   | .14 (.09)   | .06 (.08)   |
| <b>Politicians</b>        | -.10 (.09)  | -.05 (.11)  | -.16 (.08)  | -.05 (.10)  | -.39 (.18)*   | .02 (.10)   |
| <b>Search engines</b>     | .05 (.05)   | .12 (.08)   | .13 (.06)*  | .08 (.08)   | .11 (.10)   | .23 (.08)**   |
| <b>Social media</b>       | .02 (.05)   | -.08 (.08)  | -.04 (.07)  | .09 (.08)   | .00 (.09)   | .12 (.08)   |
| <b>Video sites</b>        | -.07 (.07)  | -.06 (.09)  | -.14 (.07)  | -.28 (.09)**  | -.10 (.08)  | -.07 (.08)  |
| <b>Messaging apps</b>     | -.08 (.06)  | -.40 (.10)***   | -.20 (.07)**  | -.13 (.08)  | -.07 (.09)  | -.13 (.08)  |





# SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FACTORS – linked to trust







Trust in different sources very polarized in the United States and Spain, less so in some other countries.



**Q10.** How trustworthy would you say news and information about coronavirus (COVID-19) from each of the following is? Please use the scale below, where 0 is 'not at all trustworthy' and 10 is 'completely trustworthy'. Base: Left/centre/right in the US: Left = 293, Centre = 490, Right = 309. Note: Trusts = 6-10.

# SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FACTORS – linked to knowledge

In almost every country, those with lower levels of formal education know less about the coronavirus. In four countries, respondents on the political right know less, and in every country, those who say “don’t know” when asked about their political views know much less (see full OLS regression models in report).

|                                |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Age Group</b>               | .02 (.02)   | .03 (.03)   | .05 (.02)*  | -.02 (.03)  | .00 (.03)   | -.08 (.03)**  |
| <b>Female (ref=Male)</b>       | .02 (.05)   | .06 (.07)   | -.11 (.06)  | .06 (.07)   | -.14 (.08)  | -.06 (.07)  |
| <b>Education</b>               | .07 (.01)***  | .09 (.02)***  | .09 (.01)***  | .03 (.02)   | .10 (.03)***  | .04 (.02)*  |
| <b>Political leaning</b>       |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| <b>- Centre (ref=Left)</b>     | -.15 (.06)*   | -.30 (.09)**  | -.09 (.09)  | .10 (.09)   | -.35 (.10)***   | -.01 (.13)  |
| <b>- Right (ref=Left)</b>      | -.32 (.08)***   | -.54 (.11)***   | -.32 (.13)*   | -.42 (.13)**  | -.25 (.14)  | -.29 (.15)  |
| <b>- Don't know (ref=Left)</b> | -.72 (.09)***   | -.99 (.13)***   | -.82 (.11)***   | -.52 (.12)***   | -.60 (.19)**  | -.44 (.14)**  |