Media Trust in the Western Balkans: Together Apart

Key research findings

Trust in the media varies across the region, with citizens in Kosovo and Montenegro showing the highest levels of trust (64% and 76%, respectively), while citizens in Serbia and North Macedonia exhibit the lowest levels of trust (29% and 36%, respectively).

Television is the main source of news in the region, with citizens in Kosovo and Montenegro placing the highest level of trust in television stations (64% and 76%, respectively), while citizens in Serbia and North Macedonia show the lowest level of trust in television (29% and 36%, respectively).

Social networks are the second most trusted source of information on the level of the region, although there are significant differences between countries, with citizens in Kosovo showing the highest level of trust in social networks (60%), while citizens in Serbia and North Macedonia exhibit the lowest level of trust in social networks (29% and 36%, respectively).

Investigative reporting outlets are the second most trusted source of information in the region, with citizens in Kosovo showing the highest level of trust in investigative reporting outlets (64%), while citizens in Serbia and North Macedonia exhibit the lowest level of trust in investigative reporting outlets (29% and 36%, respectively).

The share of citizens who trust the public service broadcaster varies across the region, with citizens in Kosovo exhibiting the highest level of trust in the public service broadcaster (76%), while citizens in Serbia exhibit the lowest level of trust in the public service broadcaster (29%).

The results of the opinion poll carried out in six countries of the Western Balkans – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia – indicate strong polarization and division, with a high level of distrust against hate and propaganda narratives in the region.

The key research findings of the project “Together Apart” are published in a book titled “Media Trust in the Western Balkans: Together Apart,” which examines the level of trust in media across the region and the factors influencing it.