

Media trust in North Macedonia – Professional journalism and media literacy crucial for increasing trust in media



Television is the most commonly used source of information on a daily basis for 75% of the interviewed citizens in North Macedonia. The second most commonly used source of information for the population (18+) on a daily basis are social networks (54%). Other traditional media are far behind - only 7.3% of citizens read the news in printed newspapers and magazines every day and 16% listen to the radio.

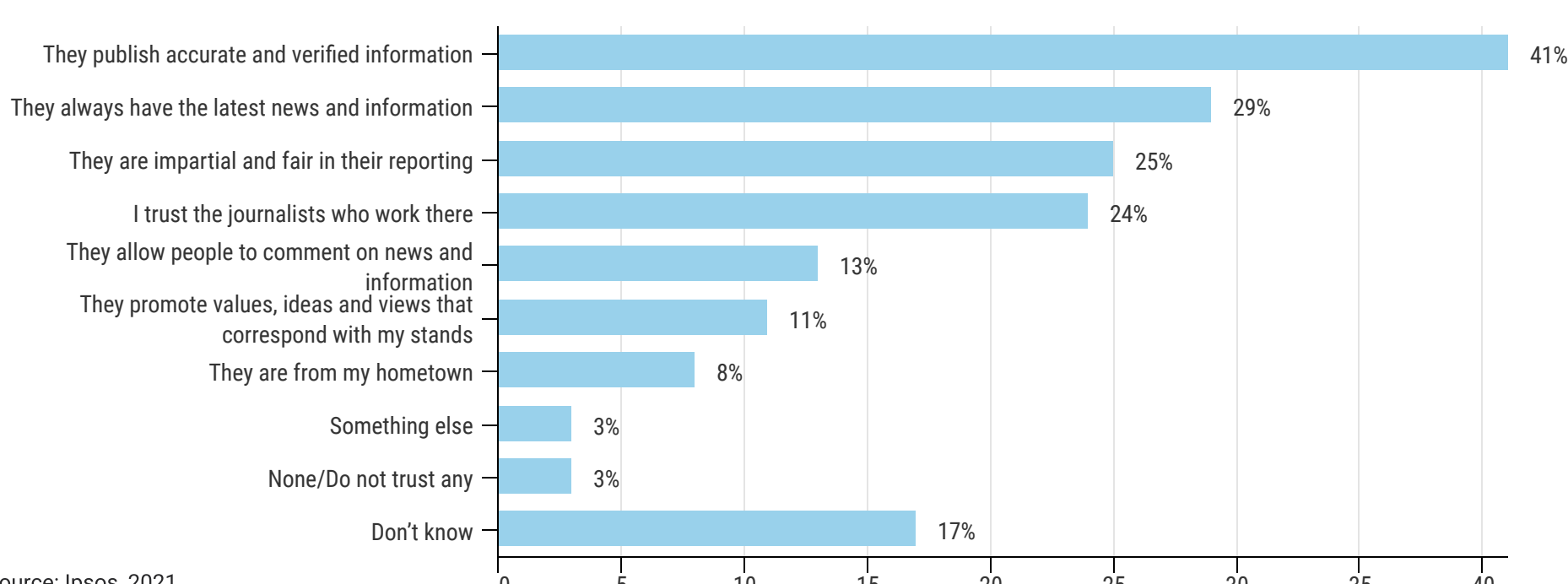


The respondents are evenly divided over trust in media reporting in North Macedonia. In total, 49% of respondents said they have trust in the media and equal portion of respondents (49%) expressed distrust in the media.

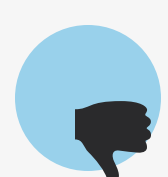


Citizens have the most confidence in the information they receive through television as a reliable source of news and information (61%). International media outlets are ranked in second place (42%), on third place are online media (37% while approximately one third of respondents trust sources such as investigative reporting outlets, radio and the press (36%, 31% and 29%, respectively).

Main reasons for trust in the media (all answers)

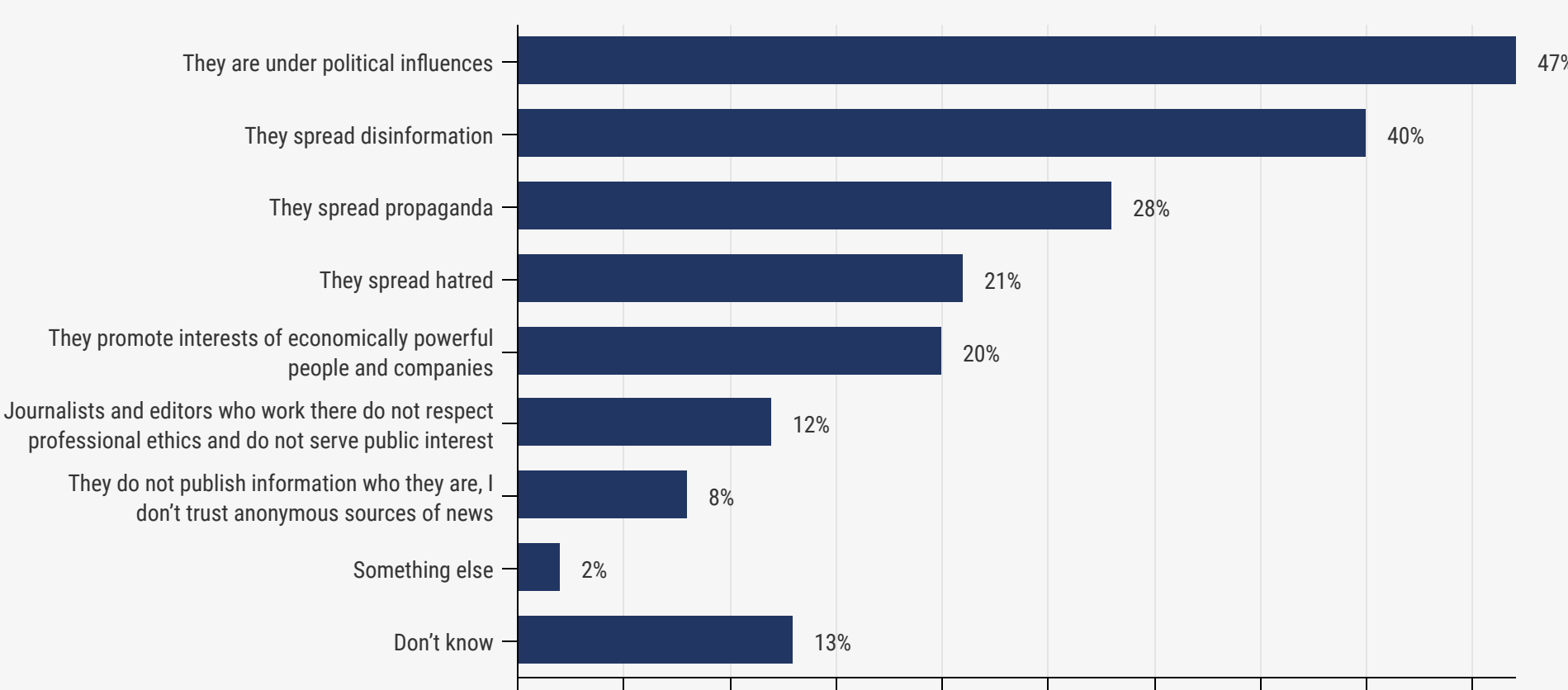


Source: Ipsos, 2021.



Citizens expressed the biggest levels of distrust for social networks (47%) and online media (41%) as reliable sources of news and information. Around one third of respondents do not consider the investigative reporting outlets, radio and the press reliable sources of news and information (35%, 32% and 32%, respectively).

Main reasons for distrust in the media (all answers)

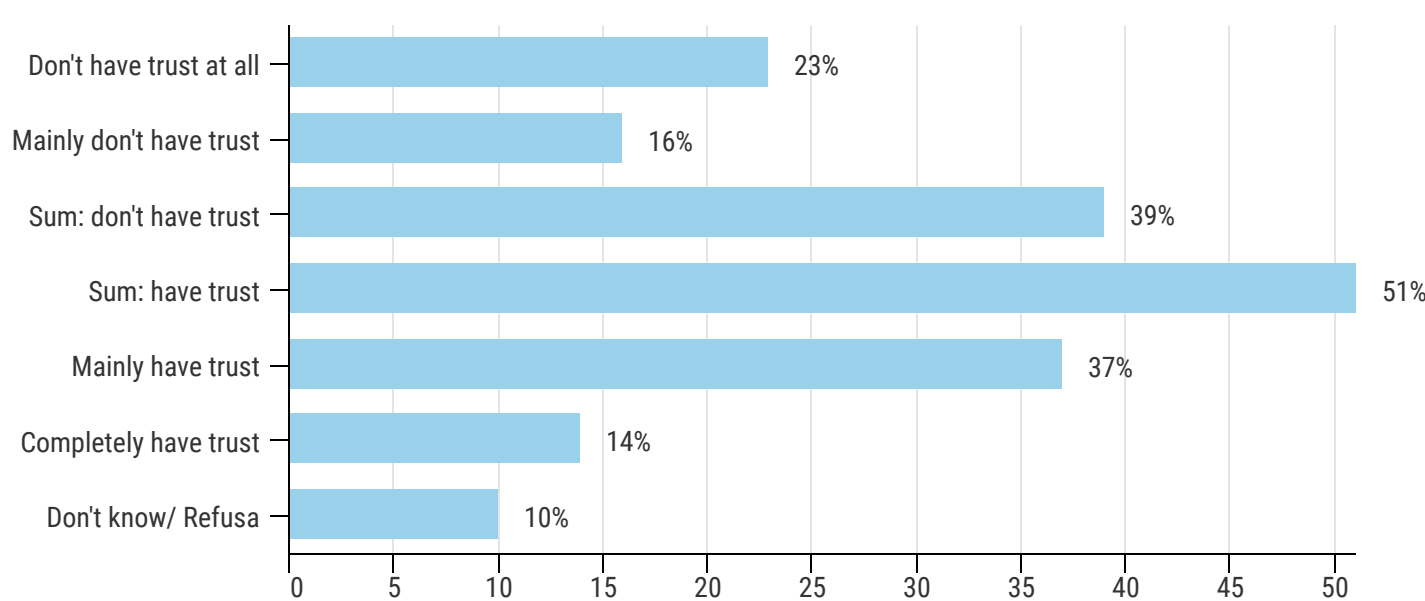


Source: Ipsos, 2021.

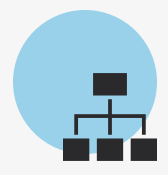


The respondents have divided trust in the public service broadcaster Macedonian Radio and Television when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately and fairly: in total, 51% have trust and 39% do not have trust in the PSB MRT.

On a scale from 1 to 4, how much trust do you have in the PBS MRT, when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately and fairly?

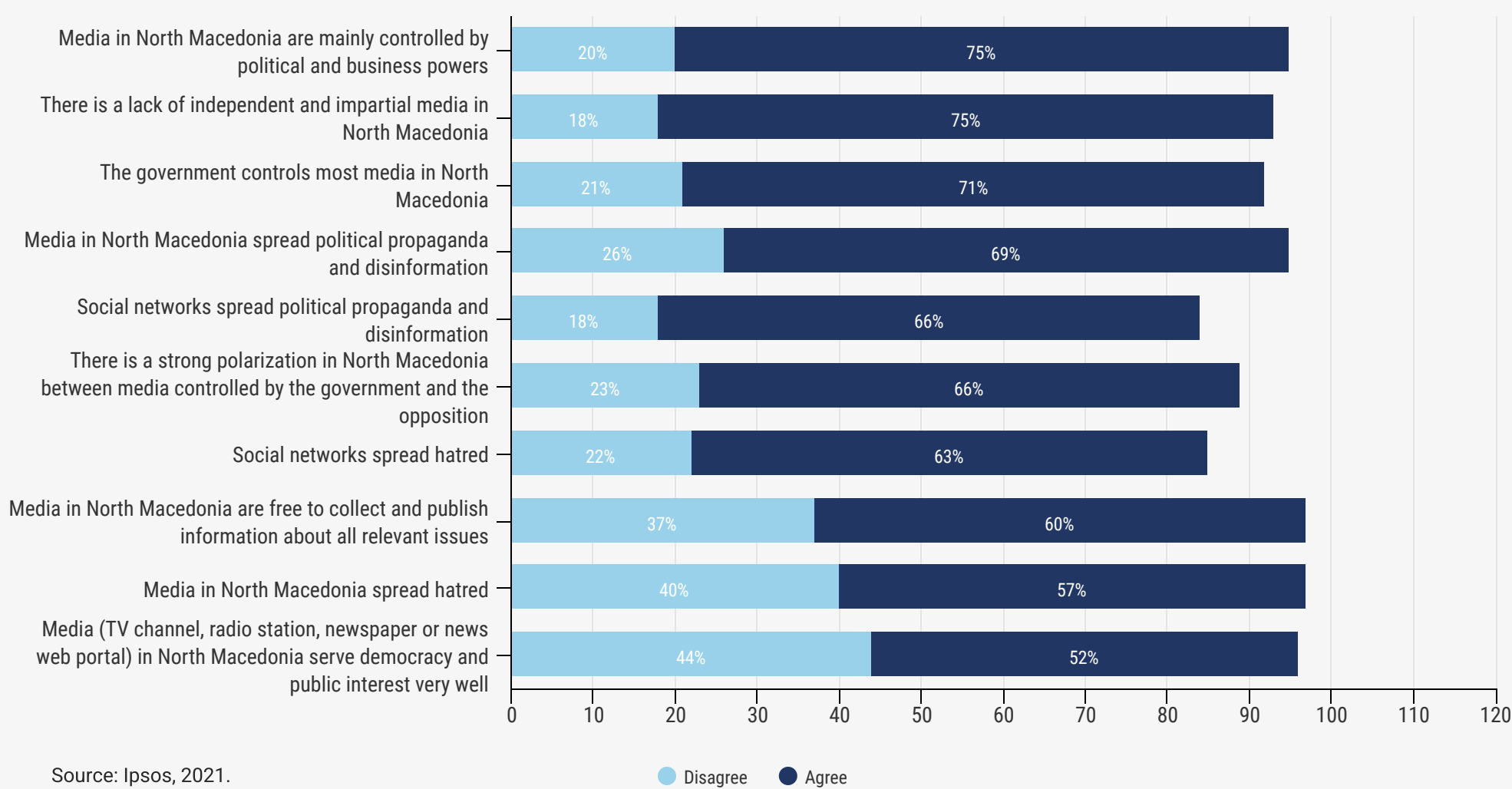


Source: Ipsos, 2021.



In total, 75% of citizens agree with the opinion that there is a lack of independent and impartial media, as much as those who said that media are mainly controlled by political and business powers. Two thirds of the respondents think that the government controls most of the media in the country (71%).

On a scale from 1 to 4, assess how much you agree with the following statements:



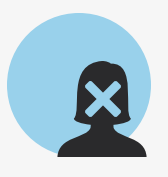
Source: Ipsos, 2021.



Seven out of ten citizens think that the media in North Macedonia spread political propaganda and disinformation (69%). There is less agreement among citizens when it comes to spreading hatred in the media. Namely, while more than half of citizens agree that the media in Macedonia spread hatred (57%), the opposite attitude is shared by four out of ten (40%).

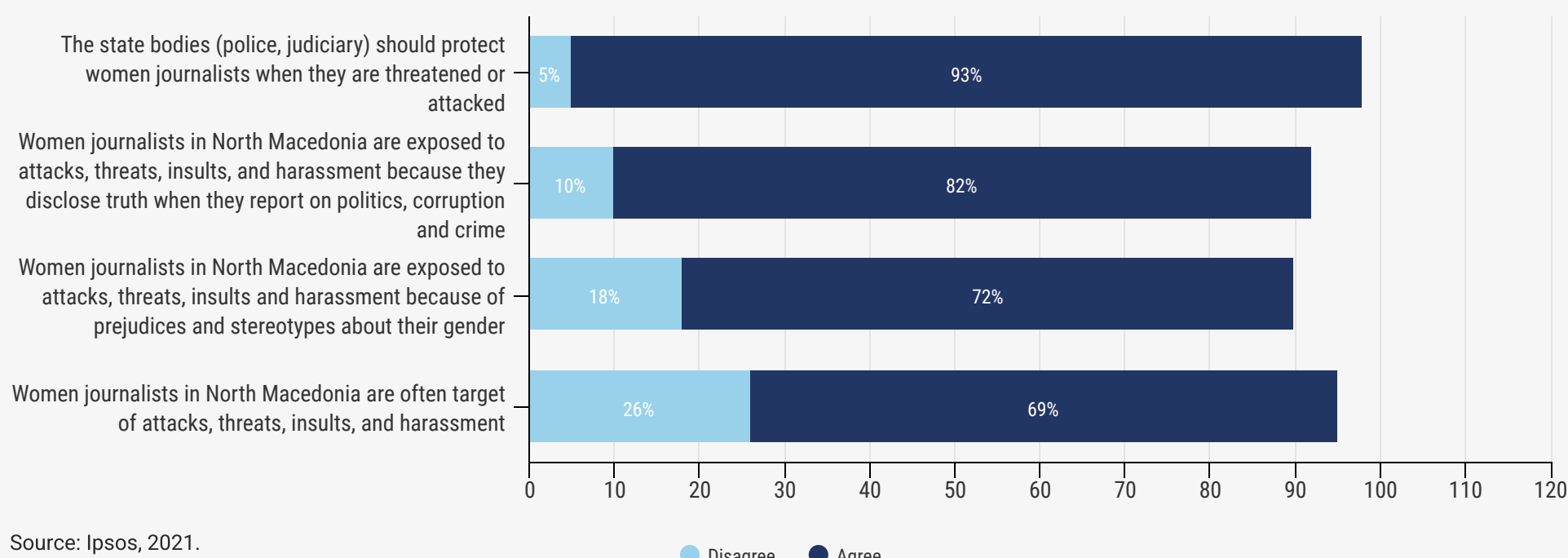


About two thirds of the respondents think the social networks spread political propaganda and disinformation, while a smaller percentage think they spread hatred (66% and 63%, respectively).



The majority of citizens perceive the position of women journalists in Macedonia as unfavourable. There is almost unanimous agreement among the citizens that the state bodies (police, judiciary) should protect women journalists when they are threatened or attacked (93%).

The following statements refer to the position of women journalists in North Macedonia. On a scale from 1 to 4, how much do you agree with each?



Source: Ipsos, 2021.



These are the findings of the research on media trust in North Macedonia conducted in 2021 within the project "Resilience – Civil society action to reaffirm media freedom and counter disinformation and hateful propaganda in the Western Balkans and Turkey" in seven countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.



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