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Fact Sheet: News Media and Political Attitudes in Spain

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

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Pew Research Center, May, 2018, "In Western Europe, Public Attitudes Toward News Media More Divided by Populist Views Than Left-Right Ideology"

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News Media and Political Attitudes in Spain

Below are specific findings about news media attitudes and habits in Spain. The findings come from a Pew Research Center survey about news media and politics across eight Western European countries conducted from Oct. 30 to Dec. 20, 2017. The survey covered five countries in the north (Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom) and three in the south (France, Italy and Spain).

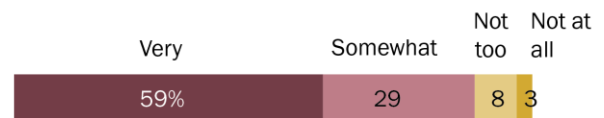
Views of the news media in Spain

The sense of importance of and trust in the news media vary considerably by country. In general, adults in northern European countries – for example, Sweden and Germany – are more likely to say the news media are very important and that they trust the news media, while people in France and Italy are the least likely to say this.

Spain is unique in that a majority of Spanish adults (59%) consider the news media *very* important to society, but a smaller portion (31%) say they trust the news media. This includes just 5% who trust the news media *a lot*.

Majority of Spanish adults believe the news media are very important; about three-in-ten trust the media

% of adults in Spain who say the news media are _____ important to the functioning of the country's society



% who trust the news media ...



Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

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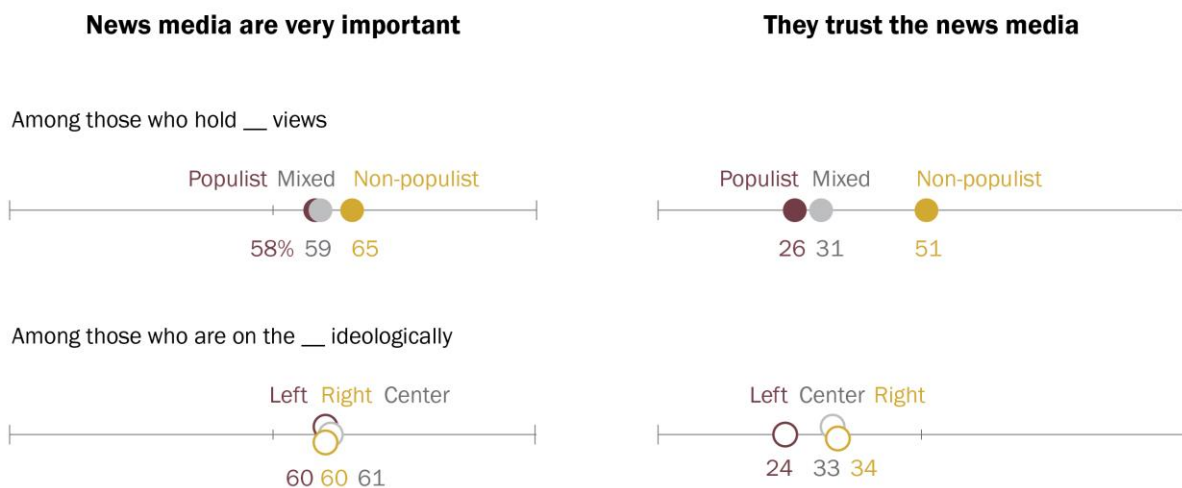
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In most of the countries surveyed, people who hold populist views are less likely to say the news media are important and to trust the news media than people who don't hold populist views. In general, the differences in these attitudes about the news media are small when comparing between people on the left and right of the ideological spectrum.

In Spain, there is a divide by populist views on trust in the news media: 26% of people with populist views say they trust the news media, compared with 51% of those without populist views. However, on the question of importance, a majority of both populists and non-populists in Spain say they think the news media are very important for society.

Divides in Spain between those with and without populist views in their attitudes toward the news media

% of adults in Spain who say ...



Note: Respondents are classified as holding populist views if they answered: "Most elected officials don't care what people like me think" and "Ordinary people would do a better job solving the country's problems than elected officials."

Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

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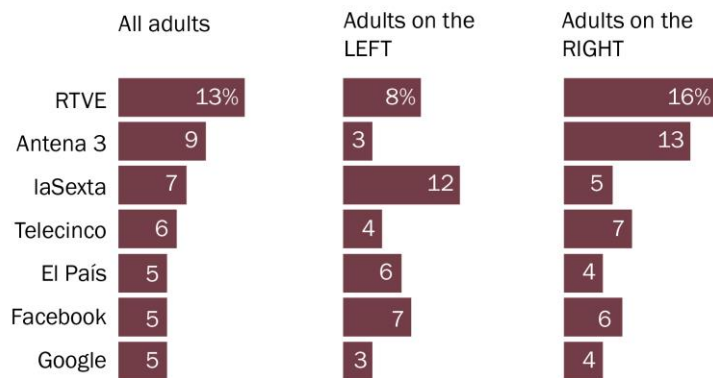
Main sources used for news in Spain

When it comes to the news sources people say they turn to most frequently, the divides between adults with and without populist leanings are not as strong as those seen for attitudes about the news media more generally. And in the southern countries, there tend to be larger divides in main news source preference between people on the left and right of the ideological spectrum than between those with and without populist views.

In Spain, those on the left and right differ substantially in the outlet they cite as their main news source. Among those on the ideological right, Radio y Televisión Española (RTVE) is the most cited main news source, while people on the left most often name laSexta.

Ideological split among Spaniards on main source used to get news

% of adults in Spain who name each outlet as their main news source



Note: Only sources named by 5% of adults or more are shown. Respondents were asked to name the outlet they turn to the most for news. For the purposes of this analysis, major channels or brands were grouped into their larger news organization. For example, in Spain, TVE, which is asked about specifically on a separate question, is coded as part of RTVE in this analysis of main news source. Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

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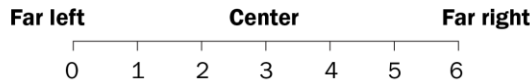
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Where users place outlets' ideologies, on the right and on the left

For many of the news outlets across the eight countries, people who use an outlet to get news tend to think the outlet is closer to their own left-right ideological position. In Spain, this is true for three outlets asked about: El Mundo, El Diario, and Público. For these outlets, news users on either the right or left tend to place them closer to their own ideology. For four news outlets – Televisión Española (TVE), Antena 3, El País and La Vanguardia – right-aligned and left-aligned news users generally agree on their left-right placement. ABC is not included in this analysis, because the outlet did not have a large enough sample of left or right users to analyze.

Ideological placement of news outlets in Spain

Users of each outlet were asked to place the outlet on a left-right scale



% of users on the left and right who place the outlet at position ...

Antena 3

78% of adults use this outlet at least once a week

PLACEMENT BY:



Left users and right users are NOT different in their placement of this outlet

El Diario

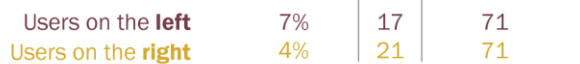
31% of adults use this outlet at least once a week



Left users and right users ARE different in their placement of this outlet

Televisión Española

74% of adults use this outlet at least once a week



Left users and right users are NOT different in their placement of this outlet

La Vanguardia

25% of adults use this outlet at least once a week



Left users and right users are NOT different in their placement of this outlet

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Note: Some outlets are not included, because their audience sample sizes are too small to analyze. Left and right users' outlet placements are considered different if the percentage of left and right users that place the outlet on the left (from 0 to 2), on the right (from 4 to 6), or both are significantly different. The survey asked respondents a series of questions about eight specific outlets in their country, which in some cases are part of a larger news organization. Therefore the outlets listed here may differ from the main news source outlets analyzed. For example, in Spain the survey asked specifically about TVE, which is part of RTVE.

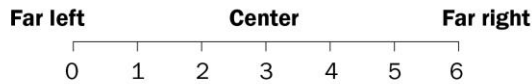
Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

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Ideological placement of news outlets in Spain (continued)

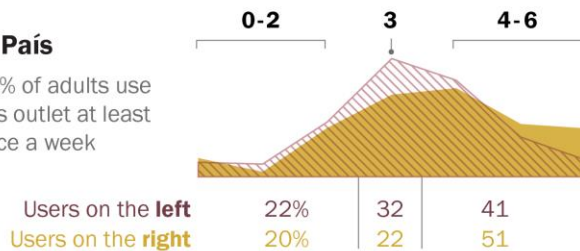
Users of each outlet were asked to place the outlet on a left-right scale



% of users on the left and right who place the outlet at position ...

El País

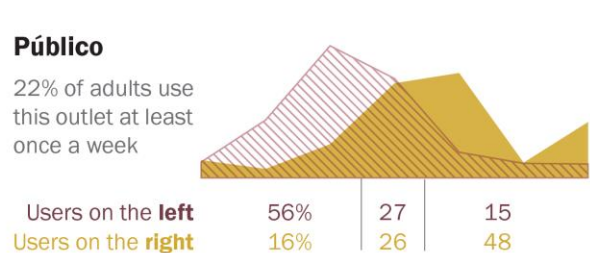
51% of adults use this outlet at least once a week



Left users and right users are NOT different in their placement of this outlet

Público

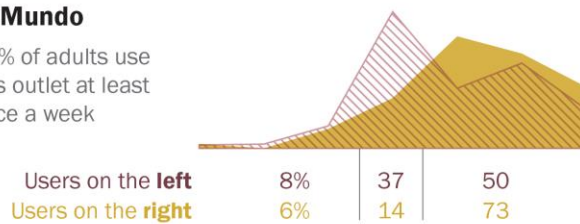
22% of adults use this outlet at least once a week



Left users and right users ARE different in their placement of this outlet

El Mundo

43% of adults use this outlet at least once a week



Left users and right users ARE different in their placement of this outlet

Note: Some outlets are not included, because their audience sample sizes are too small to analyze. Left and right users' outlet placements are considered different if the percentage of left and right users that place the outlet on the left (from 0 to 2), on the right (from 4 to 6), or both are significantly different. The survey asked respondents a series of questions about eight specific outlets in their country, which in some cases are part of a larger news organization. Therefore the outlets listed here may differ from the main news source outlets analyzed. For example, in Spain the survey asked specifically about TVE, which is part of RTVE.

Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

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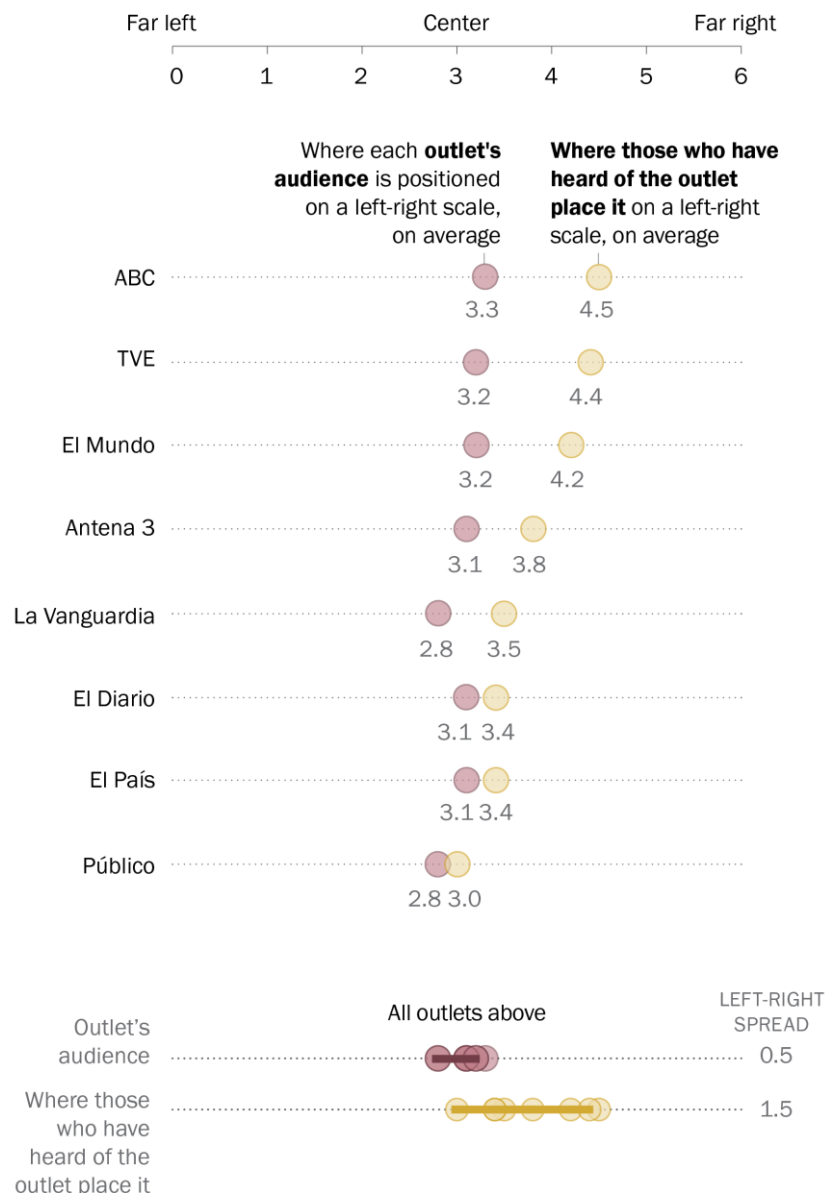
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In general, where the public places an outlet tends to differ from where the average audience actually sits ideologically. For each of the news outlets asked about in the survey, the average audience (based on self-reported usage) tends to fall near the ideological center. People who have heard of each outlet, however, tend to place the outlet either farther to the left or farther to the right than the actual ideological position of the outlet's audience.

This is true of many outlets in Spain: While their audiences are near the center, people who have heard of each news outlet tend to think the outlets lean slightly more to the right. TVE, for example, has an audience that sits at about the middle of the left-right spectrum (3.2 on the 0-to-6 scale), but when asked to place the outlet on the same left-right scale, people who have heard of TVE place it farther to the right (at 4.4).

Spaniards tend to think news outlets in Spain are more partisan than what their average audiences actually are

Mean placement of each outlet's audience on a 0-to-6 left-right scale compared with where those who have heard of the outlet place it on that same scale



Note: An outlet's audience is defined as respondents who say they get news regularly from that outlet. The survey asked respondents a series of questions about eight specific outlets in their country, which in some cases are part of a larger news organization. Therefore the outlets listed here may differ from the main news source outlets analyzed. For example, in Spain the survey asked specifically about TVE, which is part of RTVE. Left-right spread is the difference between the outlet farthest to the left and the outlet farthest to the right. Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

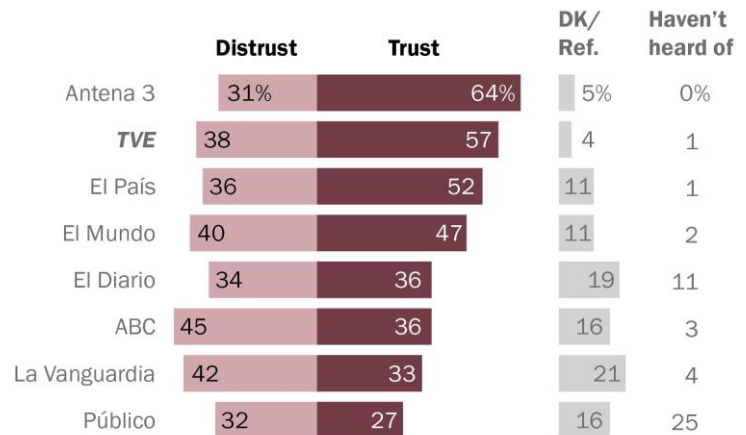
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Trust in news media outlets

In seven of the eight countries surveyed, the most trusted news outlet asked about is the public news organization in each country. The exception is Spain: While a majority of adults (57%) say they trust the public broadcaster TVE, 64% say the same about Antena 3, a private television station owned by Atresmedia.

Antena 3 and TVE are among the most trusted outlets in Spain

% of adults in Spain who generally trust or distrust each news outlet



Note: People who said they had not heard of an outlet or refused to respond to the question about whether they get news from an outlet are grouped under "Haven't heard of" here. Respondents were asked about eight specific outlets, which in some cases are part of a larger news organization. In Spain the survey asked specifically about the television news channel TVE, which is part of the larger Radio y Televisión Española (RTVE) family of channels. Public broadcaster is in **bold**. Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

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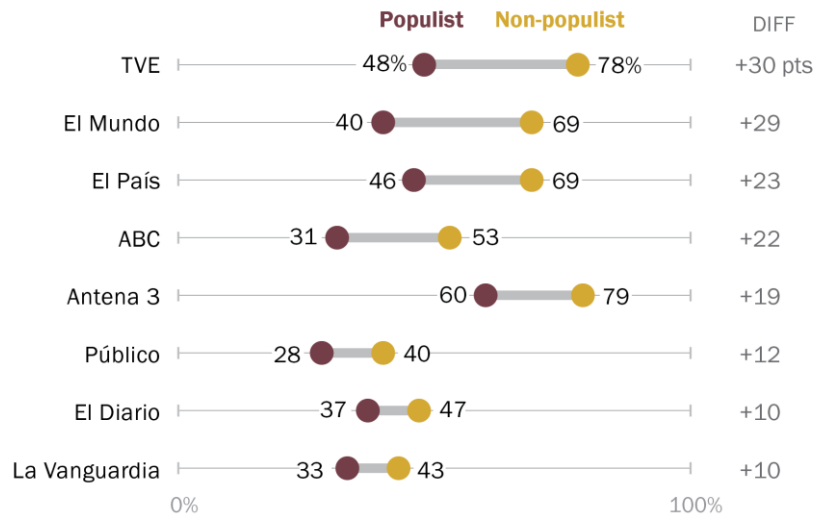
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As with trust in the news media generally, trust in specific outlets varies by populist leanings, with those who hold populist views expressing lower levels of trust than those who don't.

In Spain, these differences are stark. For example, those with populist leanings are 30 percentage points less likely than those with non-populist views to say they trust TVE. However, trust is also divided along the left-right ideological spectrum in Spain – those who place themselves on the left of the 0-to-6 ideological scale are 42 percentage points less likely than people on the right to trust TVE.

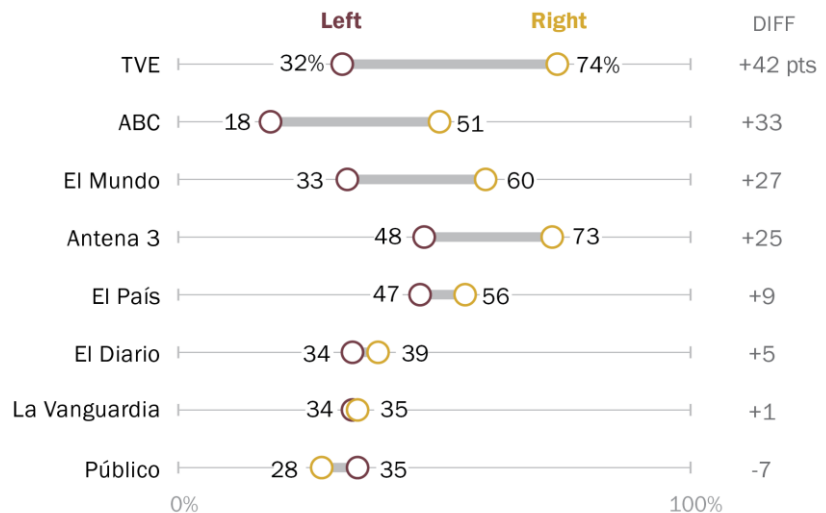
In Spain, those with populist views consistently trust news outlets less than those without such views

% of adults in Spain who hold ____ views and generally trust each news outlet



Trust is also divided along the left-right spectrum

% of adults in each ideological group who generally trust each news outlet



Note: Respondents are classified as holding populist views if they answered: "Most elected officials don't care what people like me think" and "Ordinary people would do a better job solving the country's problems than elected officials." Respondents were asked about eight specific outlets, which in some cases are part of a larger news organization. In Spain the survey asked specifically about the television news channel TVE, which is part of the larger Radio y Televisión Española (RTVE) family of channels.

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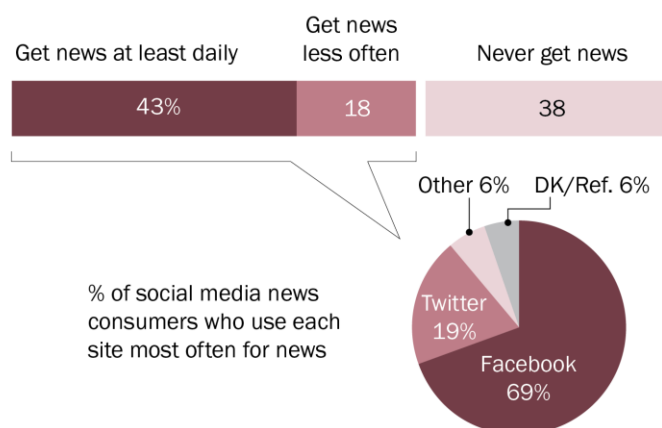
Social media usage and views

Many people in Western Europe get news through social media, with Facebook cited as the most widely used platform for news.

A majority of adults in Spain (61%) get news on social media, including 43% who get news on social media *daily*. Facebook is the most common social network used for news. In Spain, young people (those 18 to 29 years old) are more likely to get news on social media daily than those 50 and older (65% vs. 32%).

Majority of Spaniards get news on social media, mainly from Facebook

% of adults in Spain who _____ from social media



Note: "Other" includes social media sites mentioned by 5% or less of respondents across all countries studied. Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding. Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

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About half or more social media news consumers in each of the eight countries surveyed say they are familiar with the sources they see on social media. Still, sizeable minorities say they typically do not pay attention to the source of the news they encounter there.

Social media news consumers in Spain are similar to other Western Europeans – 63% are familiar with the news sources they find on social media, but roughly a quarter (26%) do not pay attention to the sources there.

About a quarter of Spaniards who get news on social media don't pay attention to sources there

% of social media news consumers in Spain who say most of the news they see on social media comes from news source they ...



Note: "Don't know" responses not shown. Question asked: "In general, does most of the news you see on social media come from news sources you are familiar with, sources you are not familiar with, or do you not pay attention to the sources?"

Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

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Find out more

Read the full report online for the methodology and more on Spain:

<https://pewrsr.ch/WesternEuropeNewsAttitudes>.

To view this information online, as well as data on the seven other Western European countries included in the survey, visit: <https://pewrsr.ch/SpainNewsAttitudes>.