

2019 IPR DISINFORMATION IN SOCIETY REPORT

*How Americans perceive intentionally
misleading news or information*

Sixty-three percent of Americans
view **DISINFORMATION** as a
“major” problem in society, on par
with **gun violence** (63%) and
terrorism (66%)

Trustworthiness of Sources

The most trustworthy sources of information: family (74%), people like me (72%), and friends (70%).

Of media sources, local newspapers (62%) and local broadcast news (62%) fared well for perceptions of trustworthiness and the ability to provide accurate news and information.

Democrats are more likely to trust mainstream media sources than Republicans, showcasing a wide gap between the two political parties. Compared to Republicans, Democrats were more likely to trust *The New York Times* (+38 percentage points), *The Washington Post* (+38 percentage points), and *MSNBC* (+36 percentage points). The exception is *Fox News* as Republicans were more likely to trust than Democrats (+32 percentage points).

Responsibilities for Spreading and Combatting Disinformation

Forty percent of respondents deemed President Trump to be “very responsible” for spreading disinformation (40%), along with fake accounts (55%) and politicians in general (45%).

For social media platforms, 64% of respondents said Facebook was “somewhat” responsible for spreading disinformation; more than half also said Twitter (55%).

Among groups and individuals trying to combat disinformation in the news, Americans give the most credit to “people like me” (55%), the Supreme Court (51%) and fact-checking websites (49%).

Seventy-two percent of Americans believe President Trump should be most responsible for combatting disinformation, but only 36 percent say he is doing at least “somewhat” well in combatting it. Similar gaps were found with the government (72% vs. 33%) and Congress (67% vs. 29%). Journalists saw a smaller gap as 64% said they should be responsible for combatting disinformation, but 44% said journalists were helping to combat it.

Methodology

2,200 adults surveyed online between March 19-24, 2019 by Morning Consult among a national sample of 2,200 adults. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

For a link to the full study, please visit:

<http://instituteforpr.org/ipr-disinformation-study/>