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# THE COVID-19 VERIFICATION CHALLENGE



# VERIFICATION – GETTING IT RIGHT

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"In the end, the discipline of verification is what separates journalism from entertainment, propaganda, fiction, or art"

The Elements of Journalism

Kovach and Rosenstiel



# THE PROCESS OF VERIFICATION

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DO NOT ADD  
ANYTHING



DO NOT DECEIVE  
THE AUDIENCE



BE TRANSPARENT –  
METHODOLOGY  
AND SOURCES



ORIGINALITY – DO  
NOT PLAGIARISE



HUMILITY – YOU DO  
NOT KNOW  
EVERYTHING

# THE SOURCES

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- First, Second or Third Party Witnesses
- Quotes – Who said/claimed it?
- Why did they say/claim/assert it?
- Who is the best source?
- Who?

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**YOU!**

**SHE SAID HE SAW**

**SHE SAID**

**YOU**

**SOURCES**

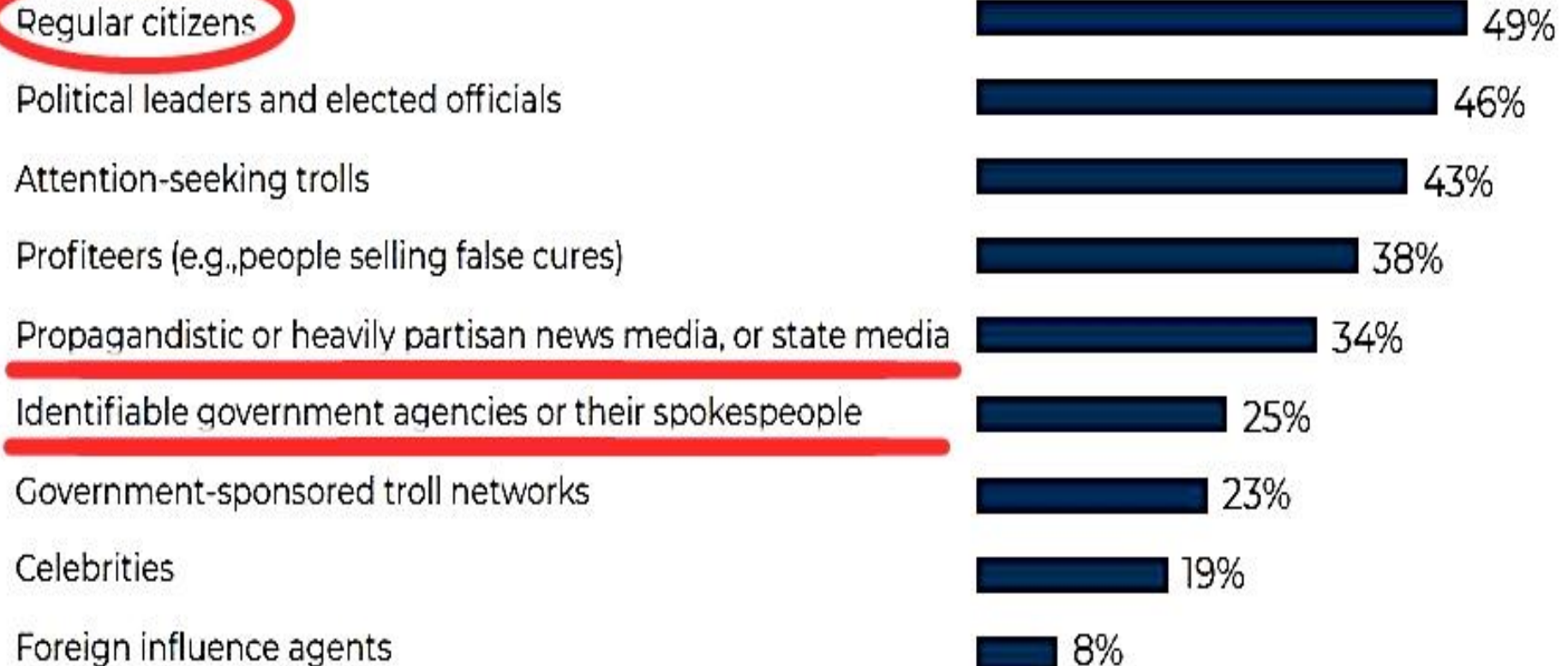
**SOURCES**





# SOURCES OF COVID-19 MISINFORMATION/DISINFORMATION

## WHO DO RESPONDENTS CITE AS TOP SOURCES OF DISINFORMATION?



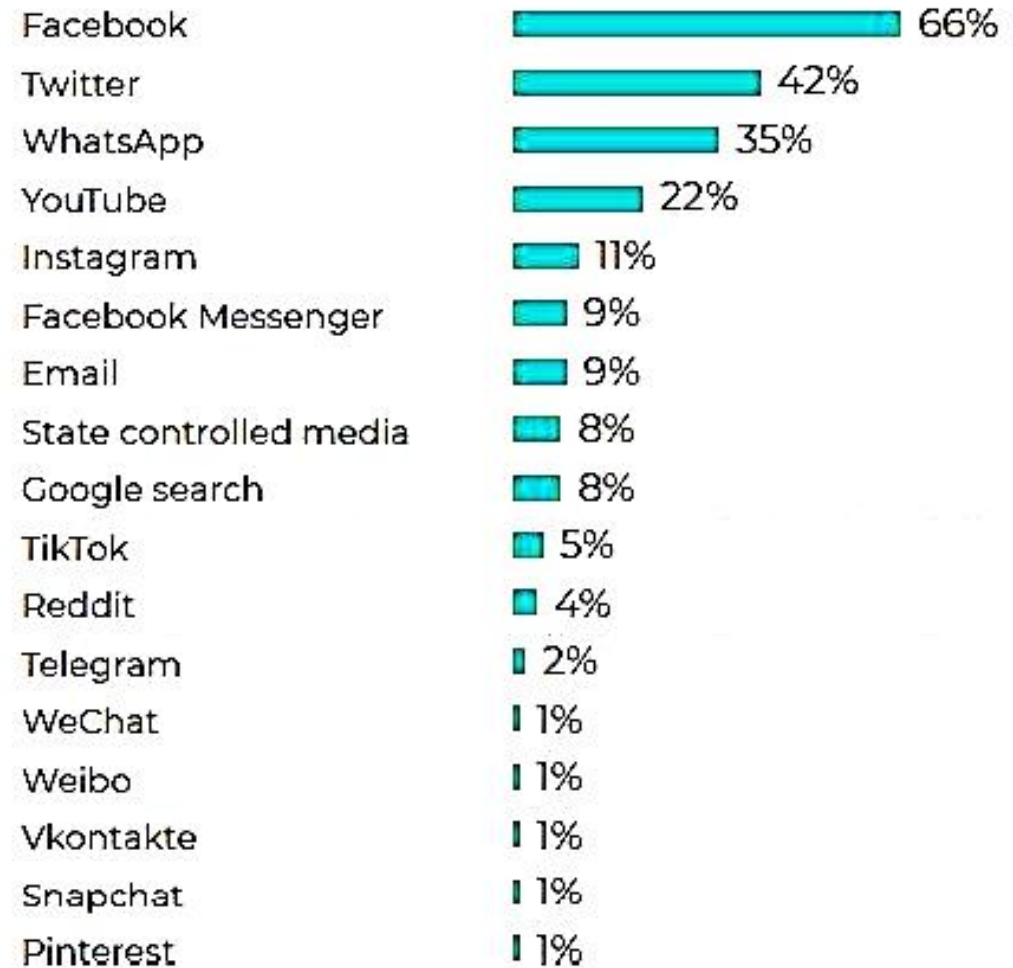
SOURCE: Journalism and the Pandemic Survey – ICFJ/Tow Center

# PREFERRED PLATFORMS

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Source: Journalism and the Pandemic Survey  
– ICFJ/Tow Centre

## ON WHICH PLATFORMS/APPS IS COVID-19 DISINFORMATION SPREADING PROLIFICALLY ACCORDING TO RESPONDENTS?



# PROBLEMATIC SOCIAL MEDIA

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- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Whatsapp \*



# CLEARING THE CLUTTER

- Be Sceptical
- Examine primary and secondary sources
- The medium is the message
- Establish bona fides of the medium
- Research, research, research

# ‘PERVASIVE AMBIGUITY’

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- Political/partisan fragmentation of the public space
- Environment of distrust
- Evolution of propaganda and disinformation
- An atmosphere of uncertainty

# RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING SCEPTICISM

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- [Snopes.com](http://Snopes.com)
- [Hoax-slayer.net](http://Hoax-slayer.net)
- [Hashtagify.me](http://Hashtagify.me)
- [Veri.ly](http://Veri.ly) (for disasters)
- [Storyful.com](http://Storyful.com) (PAID SERVICE)

# RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING SCEPTICISM

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- Trace the primary source – including authoritative sources
- Websites – HTTP vs HTTPS – (hypertext transfer protocol)
- Click the “padlock”



# TIPS

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- Identify and verify the original source and content (including location, date and approximate time)
- Run Google Reverse Image check on photos
- Check videos on InVid - [www.invid-project.eu](http://www.invid-project.eu)
- Be sceptical

# THANK YOU !

