

# Press release: Cairncross seeks views on threats to press

As the Cairncross Review heads to Brussels, polling has also revealed almost half of British adults (47%) believe that the quality of news available has declined in the last five years.

The fact-finding mission to Brussels, as part of the Review's Call for Evidence, will enable Chair Dame Frances Cairncross to explore threats to the sustainability of the news industry as a Europe-wide problem.

Dame Frances Cairncross said:

The challenges facing the press are not unique to the UK and it is vital that my Review listens to the experiences of other countries. I look forward to learning more in Brussels about the questions industry and policy makers are grappling with and the solutions they are considering to ensure the future of the free press is protected.

The independent review, commissioned by the Prime Minister in January, has been tasked with looking at ways to safeguard the future of the UK's free, independent and high-quality news in the digital age.

Dame Frances will seek to understand what European governments are doing to protect the creation and consumption of accurate and financially-sustainable journalism and will speak to key stakeholders, including from the European Publishers' Council and representatives of the Digital Economy in the European Commission.

With her final recommendations to Government and industry expected in the new year, she is particularly keen to gauge views in Europe on the buying and selling of advertising online and whether this could be made more transparent, as well as the appetite in the EU for regulation to counter the disrupting influence of online platforms on the press industry.

An online YouGov survey of British adults' newspaper habits has found that for the first time, more people are now regularly accessing content from national newspapers online, through apps and websites, than in print (28% to 22%). It also revealed:

- Two thirds (68%) of British online adults regularly access news through the internet.
- Almost half of those who regularly access news (47%) admit they are accessing news in more ways now, compared to five years ago
- Almost a third (31%) of those who regularly access news said they pay more attention to what they read in a printed newspaper than to news they read online, although most (55%) say they pay the same level of

attention to both

- TV and Radio remain the most popular platforms for accessing news – 58% regularly access news from TV and 43% from Radio
- This compares with 29% of adults online stating they access news through social media feeds such as Facebook, Twitter, or Snapchat

The Review has previously highlighted how a quarter of all regional and local newspapers have closed in the past decade. And while the survey results show local or regional news is important to 76% of those who regularly access news, just 13% of adults said they access news via a printed local or regional newspaper, and 13% saying they access a local newspaper online. However almost two thirds (61%) said enough local news was provided for them where they live. This further emphasises the challenge posed to local newspapers – there is a disconnect between those who think local news is important, and those who seek out such news via a local paper.

The Review is calling for evidence and views from both consumers and the industry itself on the issues under consideration, including how to create and support the conditions that will enable high quality journalism to continue and flourish.

### **Notes to Editors:**

1. Any evidence or information can be submitted to the Cairncross Review Secretariat at [Cairncrossreview@culture.gov.uk](mailto:Cairncrossreview@culture.gov.uk) or Cairncross Review Secretariat, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 4th floor, 100 Parliament Street, London, SW1A 2BQ. Responses will be published in full or summary form unless explicitly flagged 'not for publication', in which case they will be kept private.
2. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. The total sample size was 2020 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 23 – 24 August 2018. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).