- More than half of British social media users (57.7 percent) came across news in the past month on social media that they thought was not fully accurate.

- 42.8 percent of news sharers admit to sharing inaccurate or false news; 17.3 percent admit to sharing news they thought was made up when they shared it. These users are more likely to be male, younger, and more interested in politics.

- A substantial amount of the sharing on social media of inaccurate or made up news goes unchallenged. Fewer social media users (33.8 percent) report being corrected by other social media users than admit to sharing false or exaggerated news (42.8 percent). And 26.4 percent of those who shared inaccurate or made up news were not corrected. There are some grounds for optimism if we see this particular glass as half full: after all, almost three quarters of respondents who shared news that was exaggerated or made up also reported being reprimanded by other social media users.

- However, the most problematic news sharing does not stimulate many social media users to correct the sharers: in to
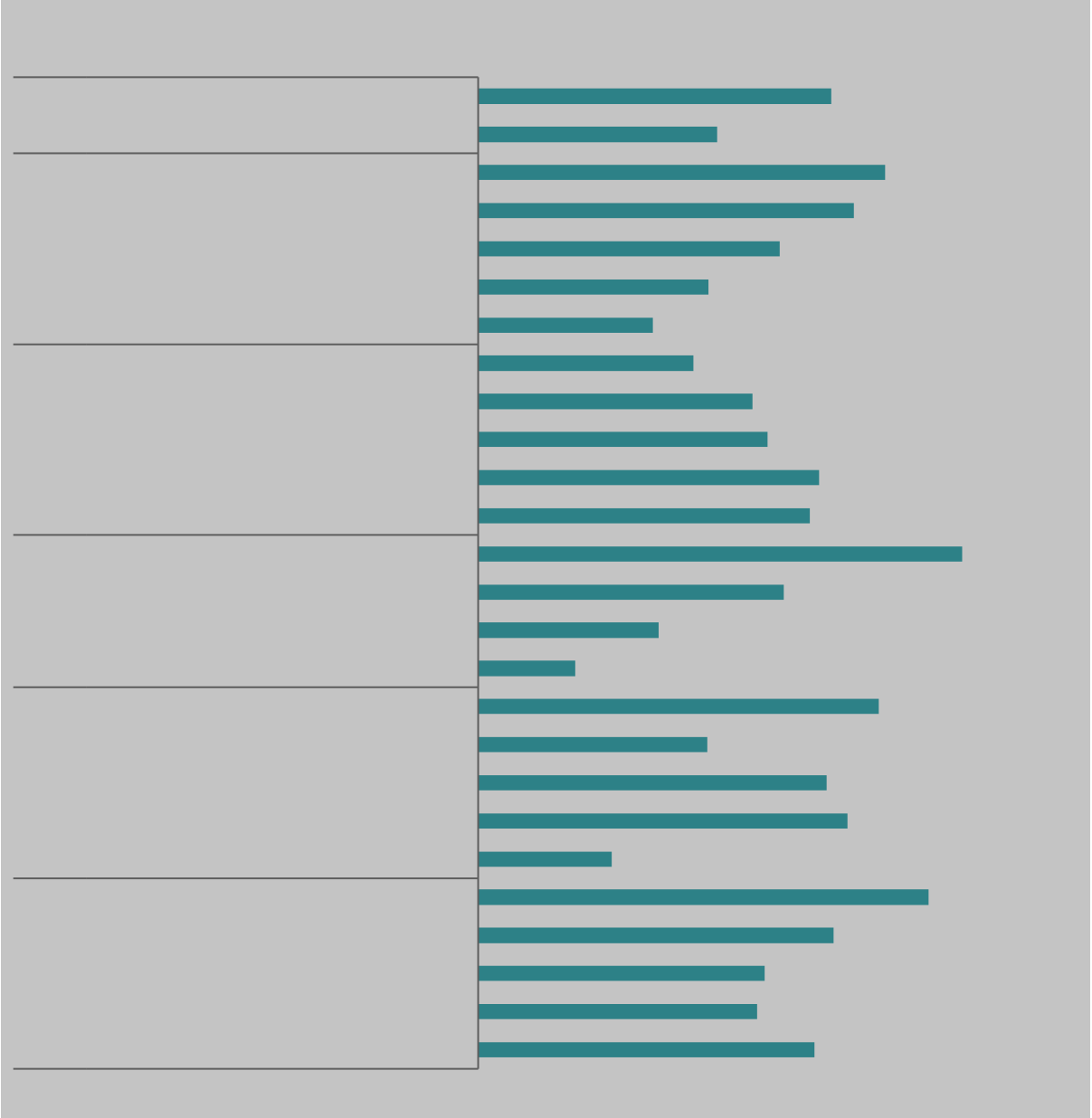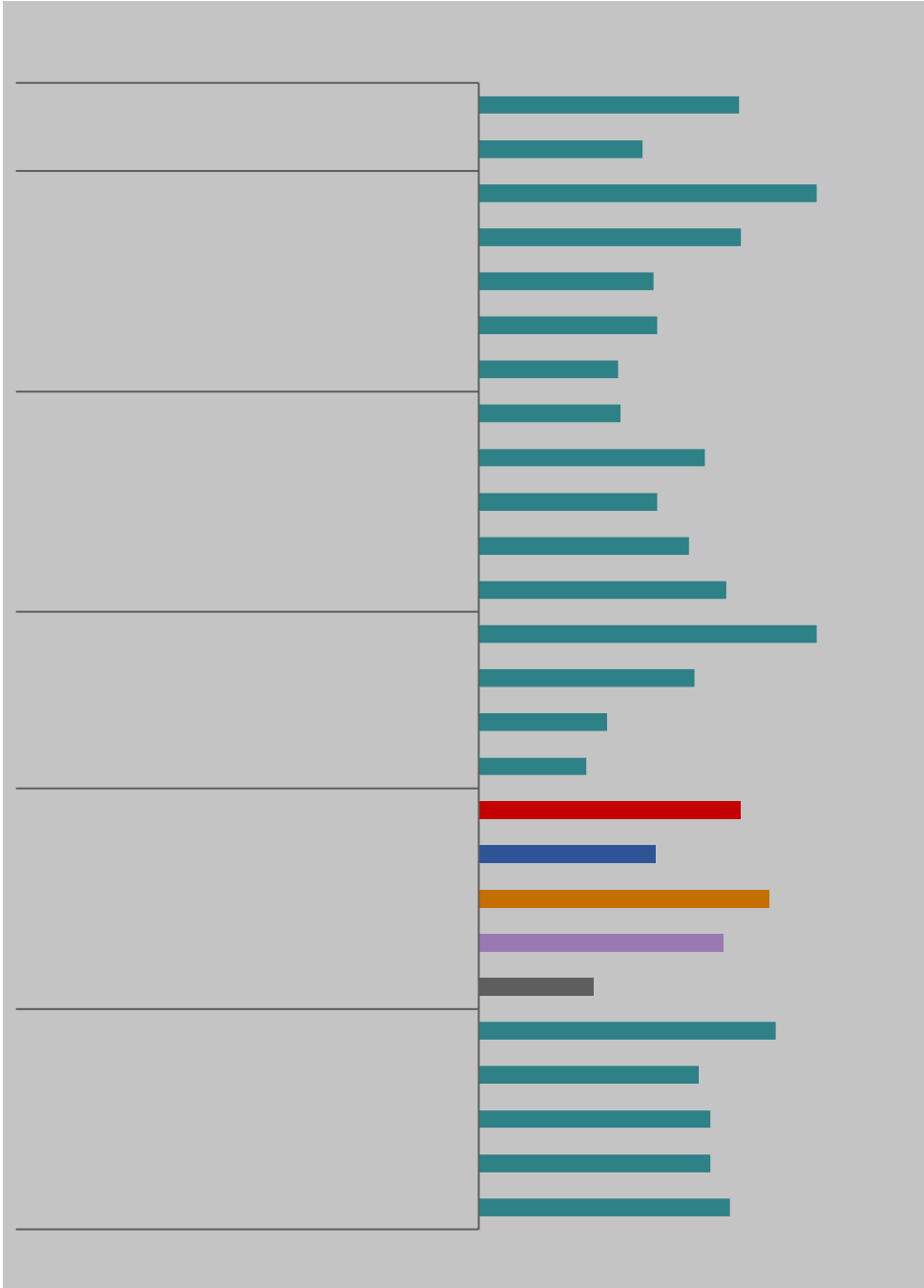
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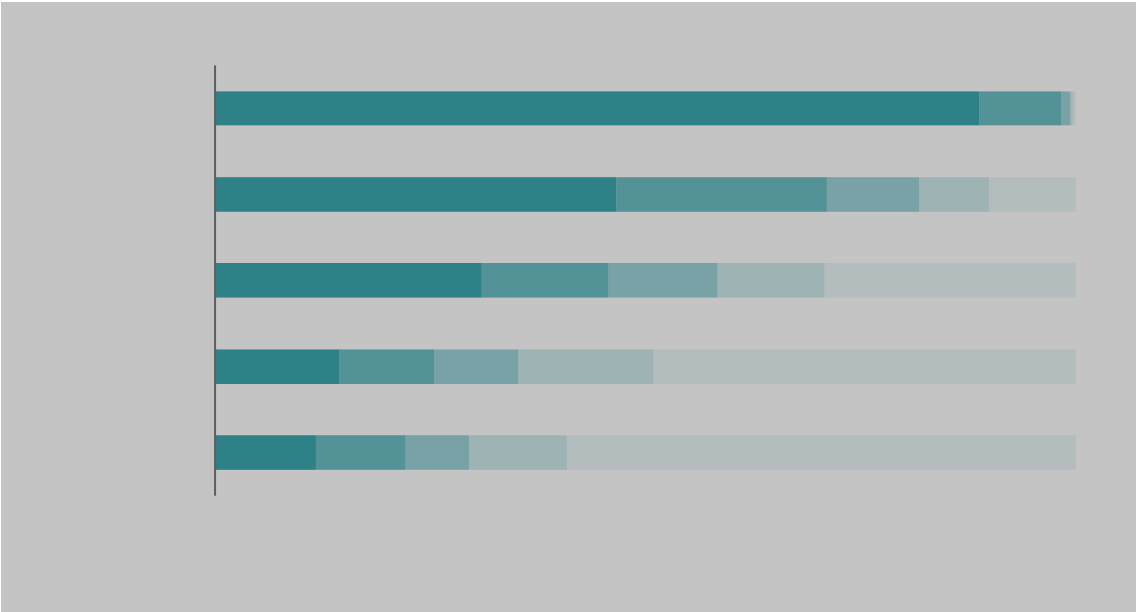
About the Online Civic Culture Centre (O3C)

Established in 2018 through Loughborough University's Adventure Research Programme, the Online Civic Culture Centre (O3C) applies concepts and methods from social science and information science to understand the role of social media in shaping our civic culture. Led by Professor Andrew Chadwick, it features academic staff and doctoral researchers drawn from the disciplines of communication, information science, social psychology, and sociology. O3C enables interdisciplinary teams of researchers to work together on issues of misinformation, disinformation, and the rise of hate speech and intolerance online. It develops evidence-based knowledge to mitigate the democratically-dysfunctional aspects of social media. At the same time, it identifies and promotes the positive civic engagement benefits of social media. For more information, visit the O3C website and follow us on Twitter.

O3C Researchers

- Professor Andrew Chadwick, Professor of Political Communication, Department of Communication and Media, O3C Director
- Rachel Armitage, doctoral researcher
- Catherine Baker, doctoral researcher
- Professor Louise Cooke Professor of Information & Knowledge Management, Centre for Information Management (CIM)
- Professor John Downey, Professor of Media and Communication, Department of Communication and Media
- Dr Suzanne Elayan, Postdoctoral Researcher, CIM.
- Professor Tom Jackson, Professor of Information and Knowledge Management, CIM
- Dr Simone Natale, Lecturer in Media and Communication, Department of Communicaton and Media
- Dr Line Nyhagen, Reader in Sociology

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Notes

[1] See, for example, Wardle, C. & Derakhshan, H. (2017). Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy Making. Council of Europe; European Commission (2018). Final Report of the High Level Expert Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation. LSE Commission on Truth, Trust and Technology (2018). Tackling the Information Crisis: A Policy Framework for Media System Resilience. UK Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and Home Department (2019). Online Harms White Paper; House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media & Sport Committee (2019). Disinformation and ÒFake NewsÓ: Final Report

[2] Online Civic Culture Centre (O3C), Loughborough University. https://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/online-civic-culture-centre/about/

[3] See for example Bennett, W. L., & Livingston, S. (2018). The Disinformation Order: Disruptive Communication and the Decline of Democratic Institutions. European Journal of Communication, 33(2), 122Ð139; Chadwick, A. (2017). The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power. New York: Oxford University Press, Second edition; Van Aelst, P. et al. (2017). Political Communication in a High-Choice Media Environment: A Challenge for Democracy? Annals of the International Communication Association 41(1), 3Ð27; Thorson, K. & Wells, C. (2015). Curated Flows: A Framework for Mapping Media Exposure in the Digital Age. Communication Theory, 26(3), 309Ð328; Tucker, J., Guess, A., Barberá, P., Vacari, C., Siegel, A., Sanovich, S., Stukal, D., & Nyhan, B. (2018). Social Media, Political Polarization, and Political Disinformation: A Review of the Scientific Literature. Hewlett Foundation; Waisbord, S. (2018). Truth is What Happens to News: On Journalism, Fake News, and Post-truth. Journalism Studies, 19(13), 1866Ð1878; Woolley, S. & Howard, P. (Eds) (2018). Computational Propaganda: Political Parties, Politicians, and Political Manipulation on Social Media. New York: Oxford University Press; Chadwick, A. (2006). Internet Politics: States, Citizens, and New Communication Technologies. New York: Oxford University Press.

[4] For the negative view, see, for example, Suler, J. (2004). The Online Disinhibition Effect. Cyberpsychology & Behavior, 7(3), 321Ð326. For a more positive view, see, for example, Papacharissi, Z.

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Online Civic Culture Centre (O3C)
School of Social Science
Loughborough University
Loughborough LE11 3TT
United Kingdom

@O3CLboro

lboro.ac.uk/research/online-civic-culture-cent