

→ Fast Facts

→ How Millennials get news

Social media platforms are major sources of news for Millennials (people aged 18 to 34). On average, those surveyed get news from more than three social media platforms—Facebook (88 percent), YouTube (83 percent), Instagram (50 percent), and Reddit (23 percent). “On 24 separate news and information topics probed, Facebook was the number 1 gateway to learn about 13 of those, and the second-most cited gateway for seven others.”

The Media Insight Project, “How Millennials Get News: Inside the Habits of America’s First Digital Generation,” March 2015, www.mediainsight.org/PDFs/Millennials/Millennials%20Report%20FINAL.pdf (retrieved April 14, 2015).

→ U.S. high school graduation rates

The four-year public high school graduation rate rose to 81 percent for the 2012-13 school year, up from 80 percent in 2011-12 and 79 percent in 2010-11. Most states show increases. Iowa is at the top of the list with a 90 percent adjusted cohort graduation rate. The District of Columbia, while improving over the last two years, is at the bottom of the list with a 62 percent graduation rate.

National Center for Education Statistics, “Public high school 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for the United States, the 50 states and the District of Columbia: School years 2010-11 to 2012-13,” January 16, 2015, http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/ipeds_datacenter/ipeds_datacenter.asp?table=ACGR_2010-11_to_2012-13 (retrieved February 4, 2015).

→ Civics knowledge

The Annenberg Public Policy Center conducted a survey finding that little more than a third of Americans polled (36 percent) could name all three branches of the U.S. government. Just as many (35 percent) could not name even one. Most Americans do not know which parties control the House and Senate.

The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania, “Americans know surprisingly little about their government, survey finds,” September 17, 2014, www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/americans-know-surprisingly-little-about-their-government-survey-finds (retrieved April 7, 2015).

→ Search result truthfulness

Google’s “Quick Answers” sometimes gets its facts wrong. “It is worrying enough that incorrect or poor quality information is being presented in the Quick Answers at the top of our results and in the Knowledge Graph to the right, but the rot could spread to the main results,” says Karen Blakeman. “Google may be looking at significantly changing the way in which it ranks websites by counting the number of false facts in a source and ranking by ‘truthfulness.’” It continues to be important to evaluate the sources that appear in search results. Karen Blakeman, “And you thought Google couldn’t get any worse,” March 2, 2015, Karen Blakeman’s Blog, www.rba.co.uk/wordpress/2015/03/02/and-you-thought-google-couldnt-get-any-worse (retrieved April 14, 2015).

→ Educational attainment

In the United States, 86 percent of the population that is over age 25 is a high school graduate or higher, and 28.8 percent earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. For the subset of the population 35 to 44 years old, those numbers are 87.6 percent high school graduate or higher and 32.3 percent with a bachelor’s degree or higher. This segment (35 to 44 years) has the highest percentage of bachelor’s degrees or higher.

United States Census Bureau, “S1501 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT,” U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey, http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/navigation/1.0/en/d_dataset%3AAACS_13_5YR/ (retrieved January 12, 2015).

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