

# USAGE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTIONS ON PORTALS

RESEARCH BY



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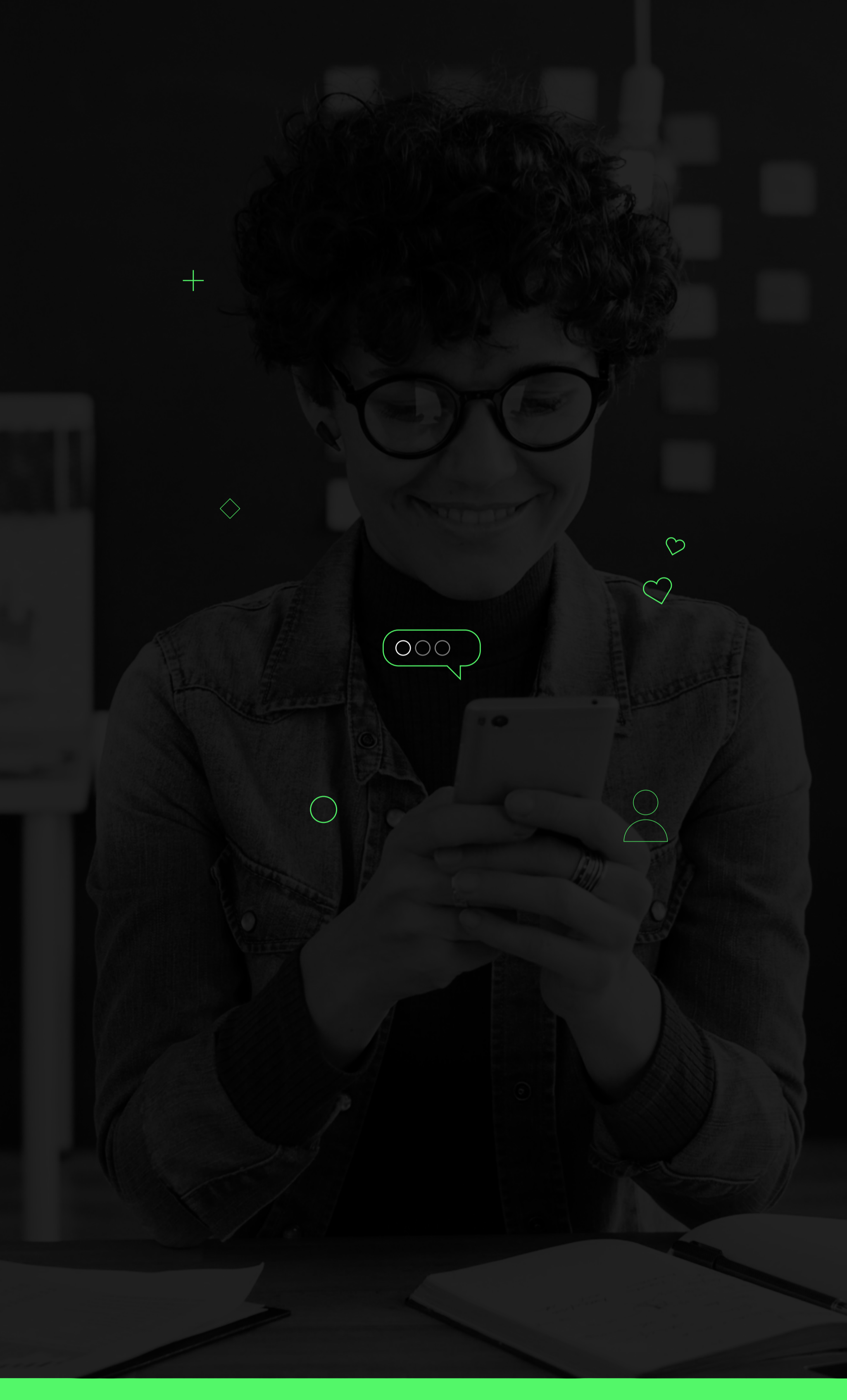
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**Examining the use and attitudes towards digital subscriptions on portals.**

**National representative Croatians between 18 and older who read portals at least once a week.**



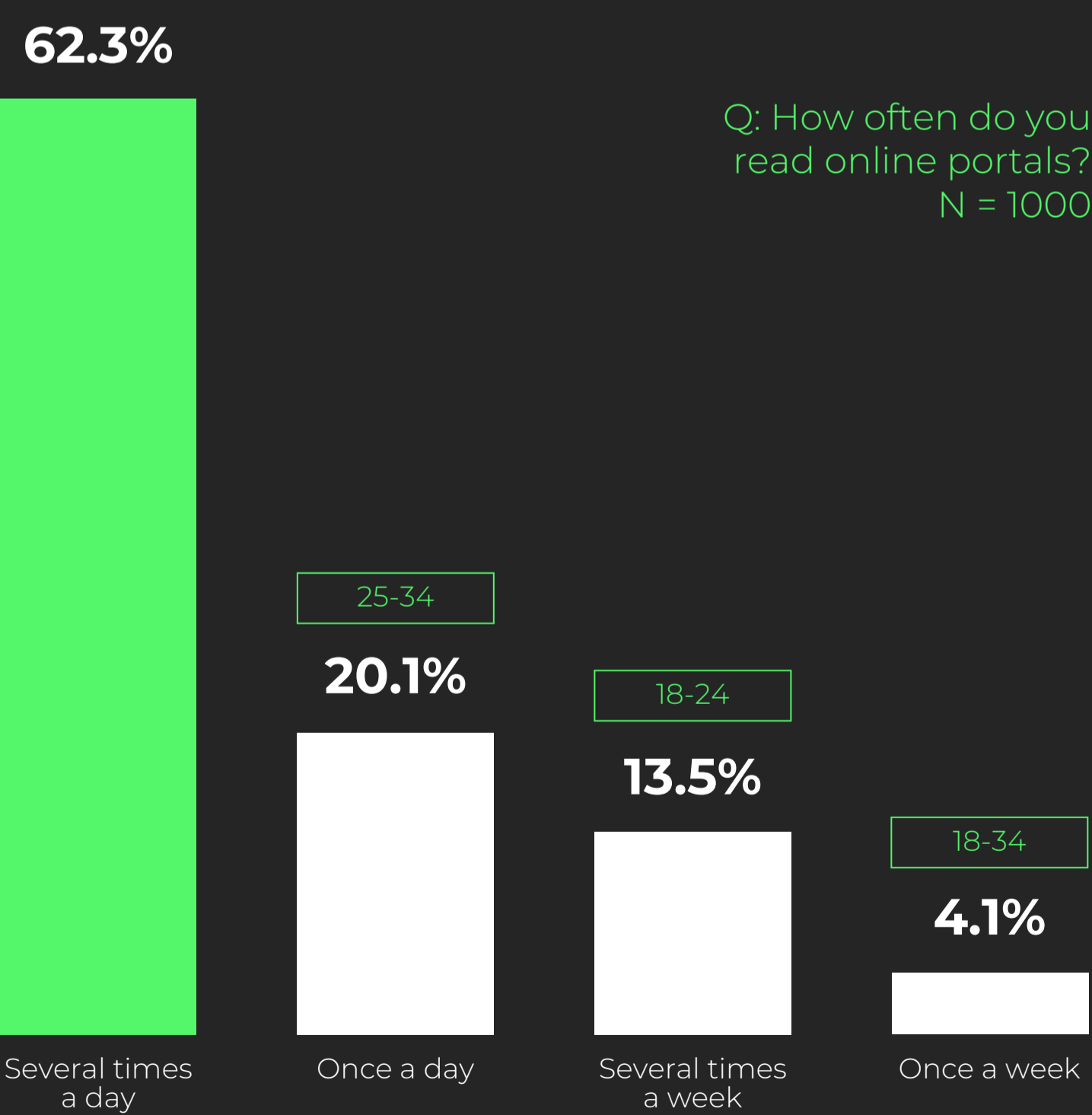
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**USAGE AND  
ATTITUDES**

# READING HABITS

Most internet users in Croatia are frequent consumers of online news portals. More than 60% read them several times a day, while an additional 20% access them at least once per day. This indicates that over four out of five users visit news portals daily, highlighting their strong role as a primary and habitual source of information.

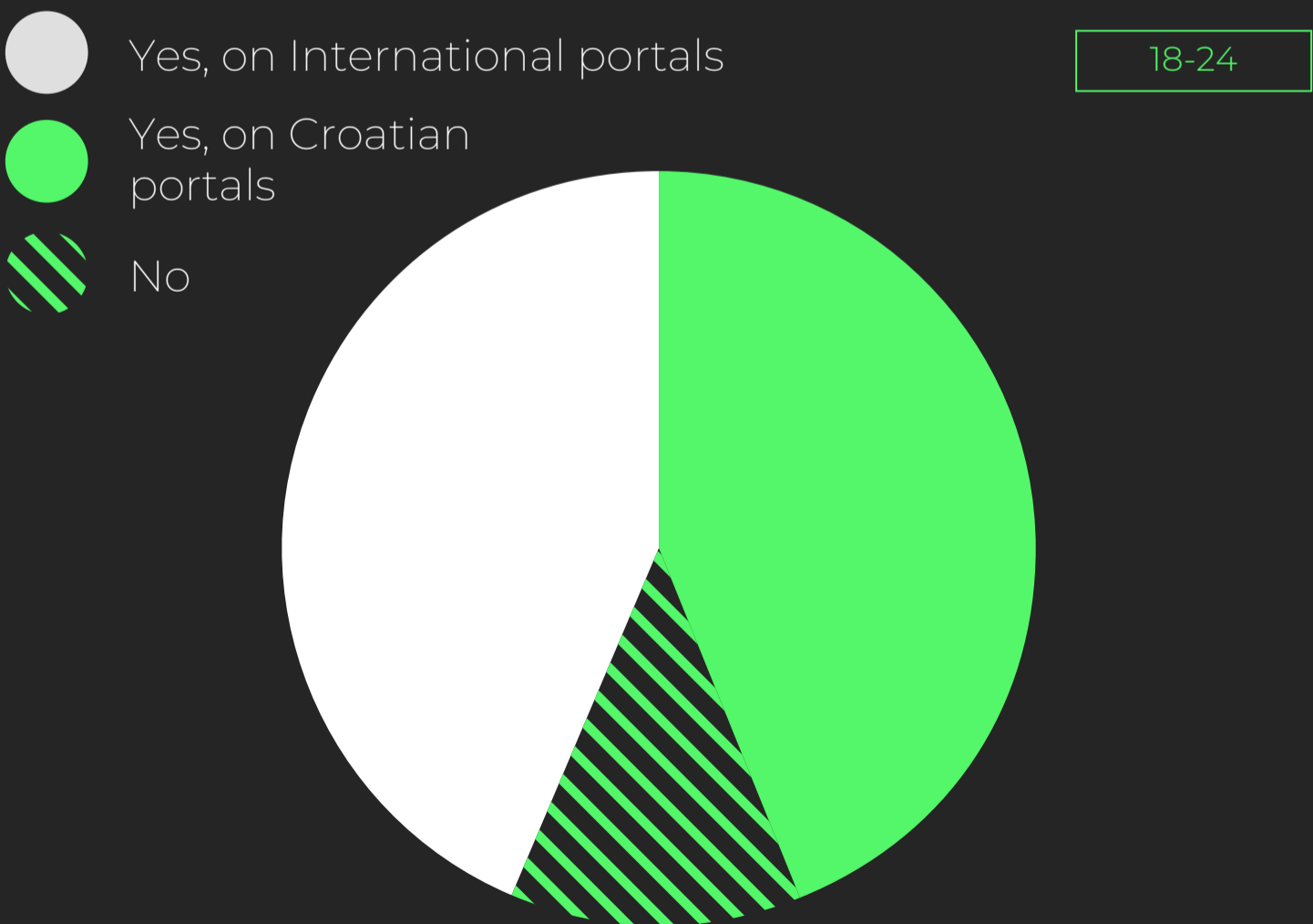
Younger readers read less on average than the rest of the respondents.



# REGISTERED USER ACCOUNT

Almost half of respondents (48.6%) have registered accounts on Croatian news portals, while a much smaller share (13.7%) use accounts on international portals. At the same time, nearly the same proportion (47.8%) state they have no registered accounts at all. This suggests that while registration is common, a significant part of the audience still consumes news without creating accounts, which may limit personalization, engagement, and opportunities for digital subscription models. Readers between the ages of 18 and 24 have significantly more registered accounts on international portals.

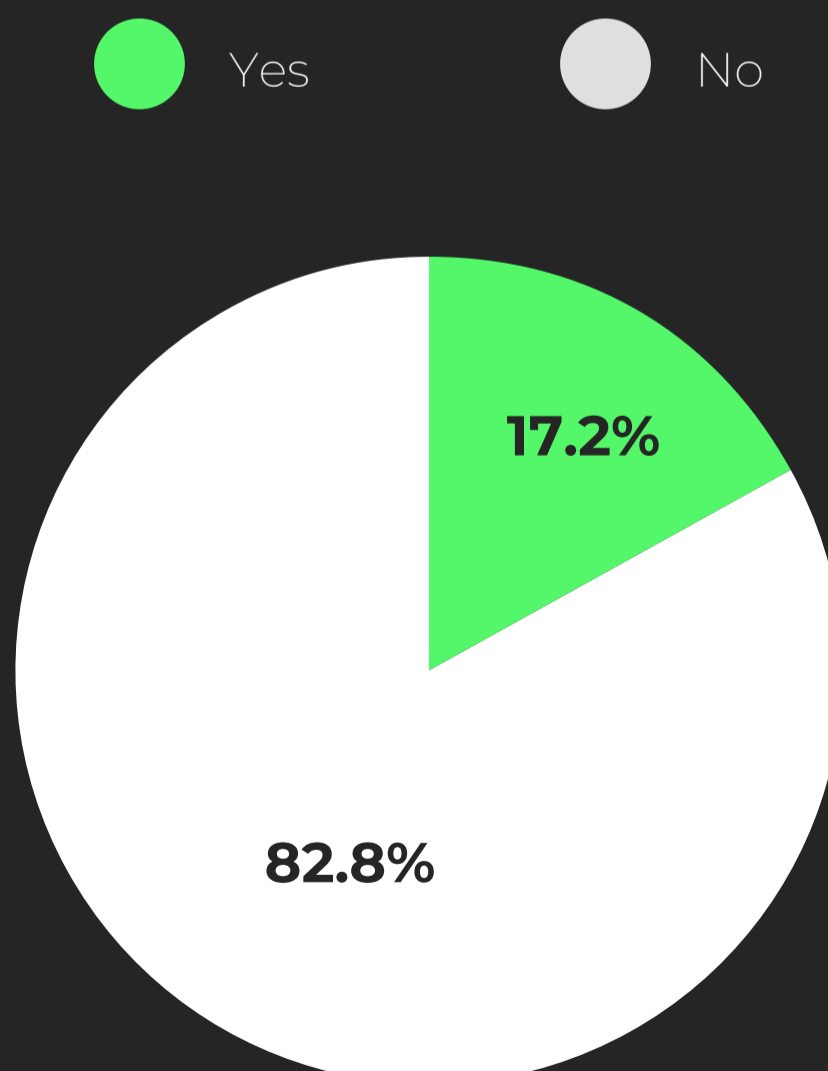
Q: Do you have a registered user account on any news portal?  
N = 1000



# INTERNATIONAL PORTALS

Only 17.2% of respondents hold subscriptions to international news portals, while the vast majority (82.8%) are not subscribed. This indicates that paid international news content has limited penetration among Croatian audiences, suggesting either low perceived value, language barriers, or strong reliance on free sources.

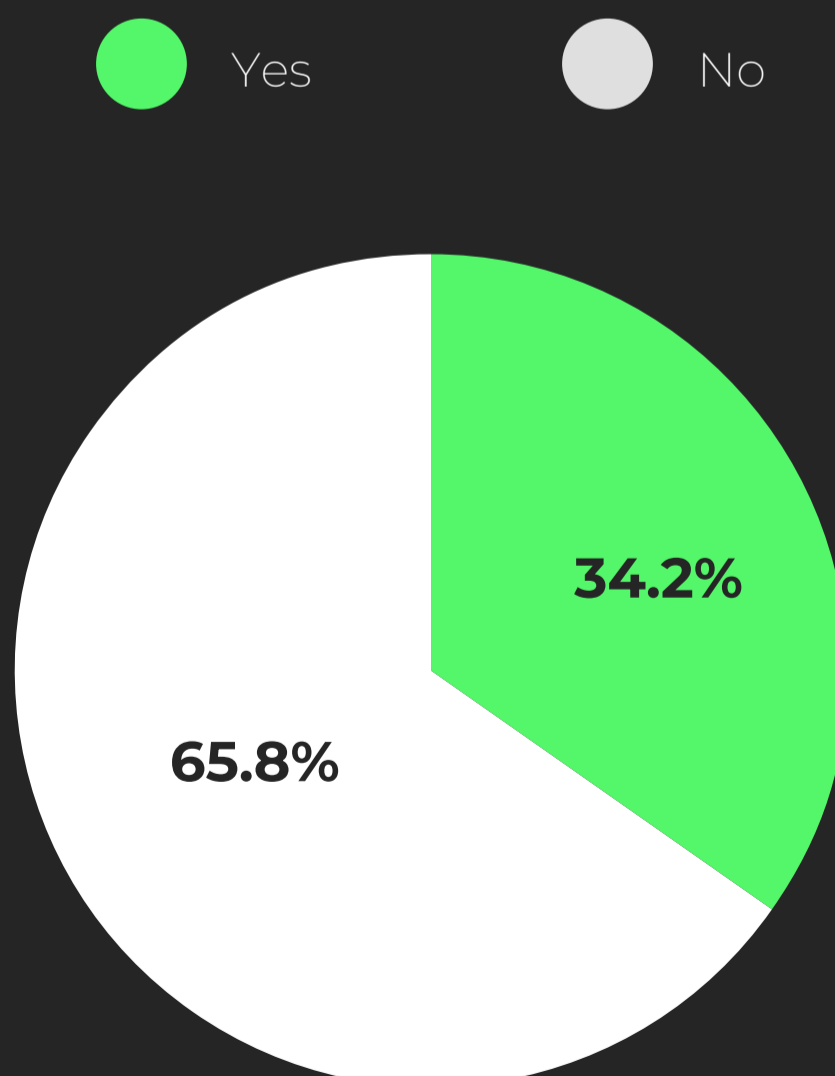
Q: Are you currently subscribed to any international portals?  
N = 1000



# CROATIAN PORTALS

About one-third of respondents (34.8%) report having an active subscription to Croatian news portals, while two-thirds (65.2%) are not subscribed. This shows that domestic portals have achieved a notably higher subscription uptake compared to international outlets, yet the majority of users still rely on free access. The figures point to both the progress made in developing a subscription culture in Croatia and the significant untapped potential for further growth.

Q: Are you currently subscribed to any Croatian portals?  
N = 1000





SUBSCRIBE

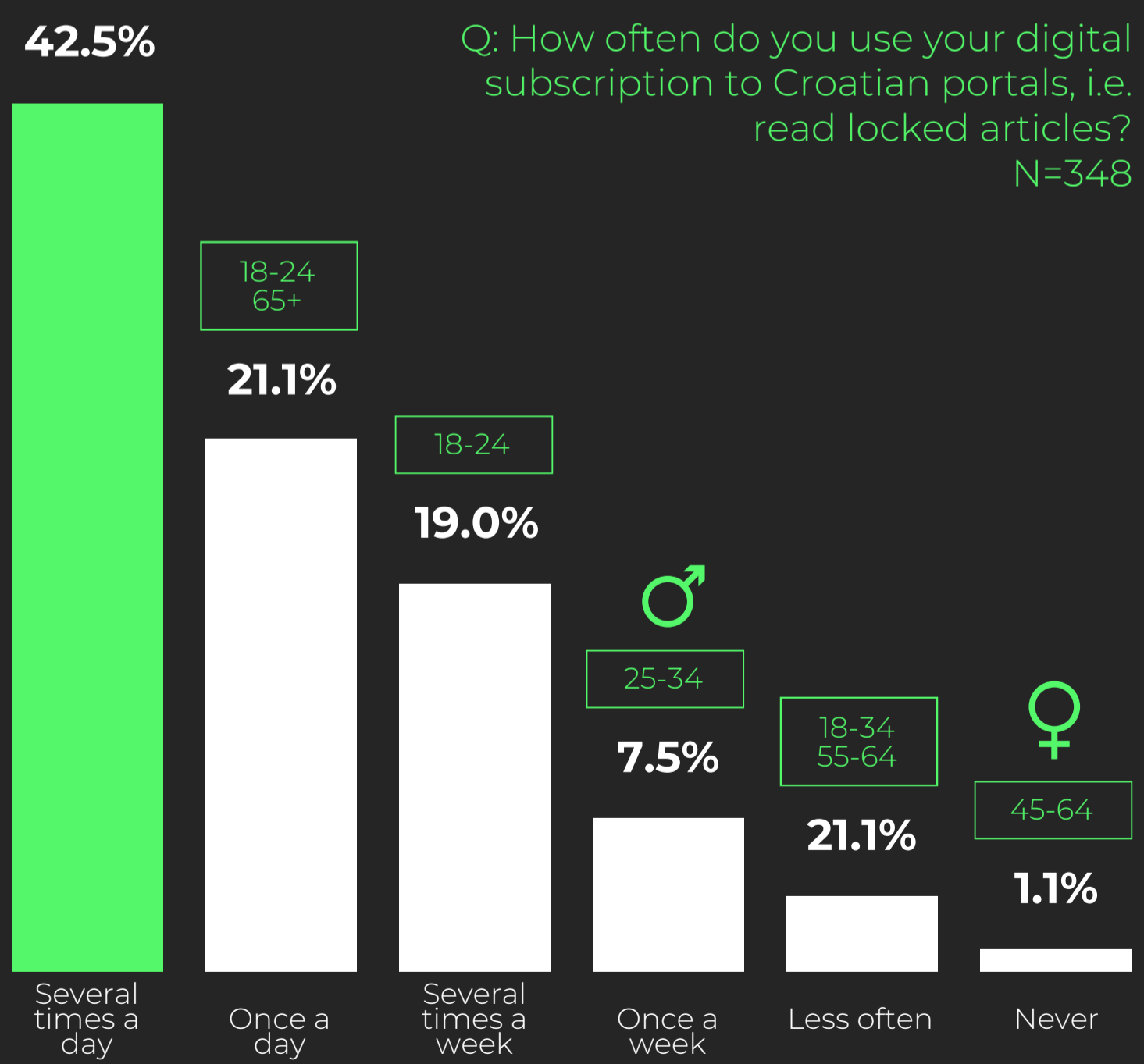
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**SUBSCRIBERS**



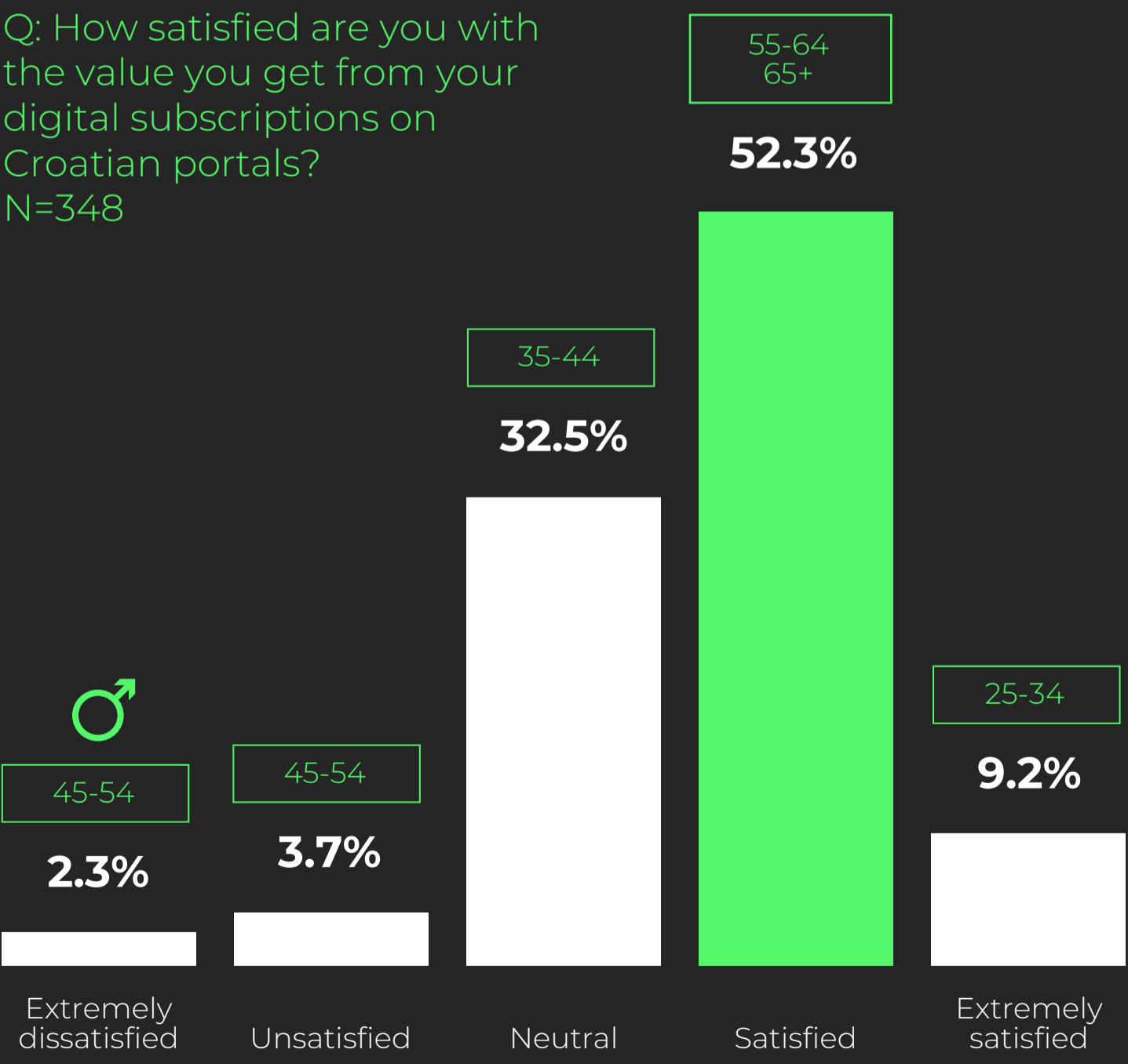
# DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION USAGE

Engagement with Croatian digital subscriptions is generally high. Nearly 70% of subscribers access paid content daily (42.5% several times a day and 26.1% once a day), and another 19% use it several times a week. Only a very small minority report rarely or never using their subscription. This suggests that once users commit to a subscription, they tend to use it actively and consistently, indicating strong loyalty and content relevance among paying readers. Readers of different age groups and genders show preferences towards digital subscription usage.



# SUBSCRIPTION VALUE

Satisfaction with Croatian digital subscriptions is generally high. More than 60% of subscribers are satisfied (52.3%) or extremely satisfied (9.2%) with the value they receive, while only a small minority (6%) express dissatisfaction. Around one-third remain neutral, which suggests that although most subscribers see clear value in their purchase, there is still room for publishers to strengthen perceived benefits and convert “neutral” users into highly satisfied, loyal subscribers. The age groups 55-64 and 65+ contribute the most to the group of satisfied people, while men in the age groups 45-54 are predominantly dissatisfied.



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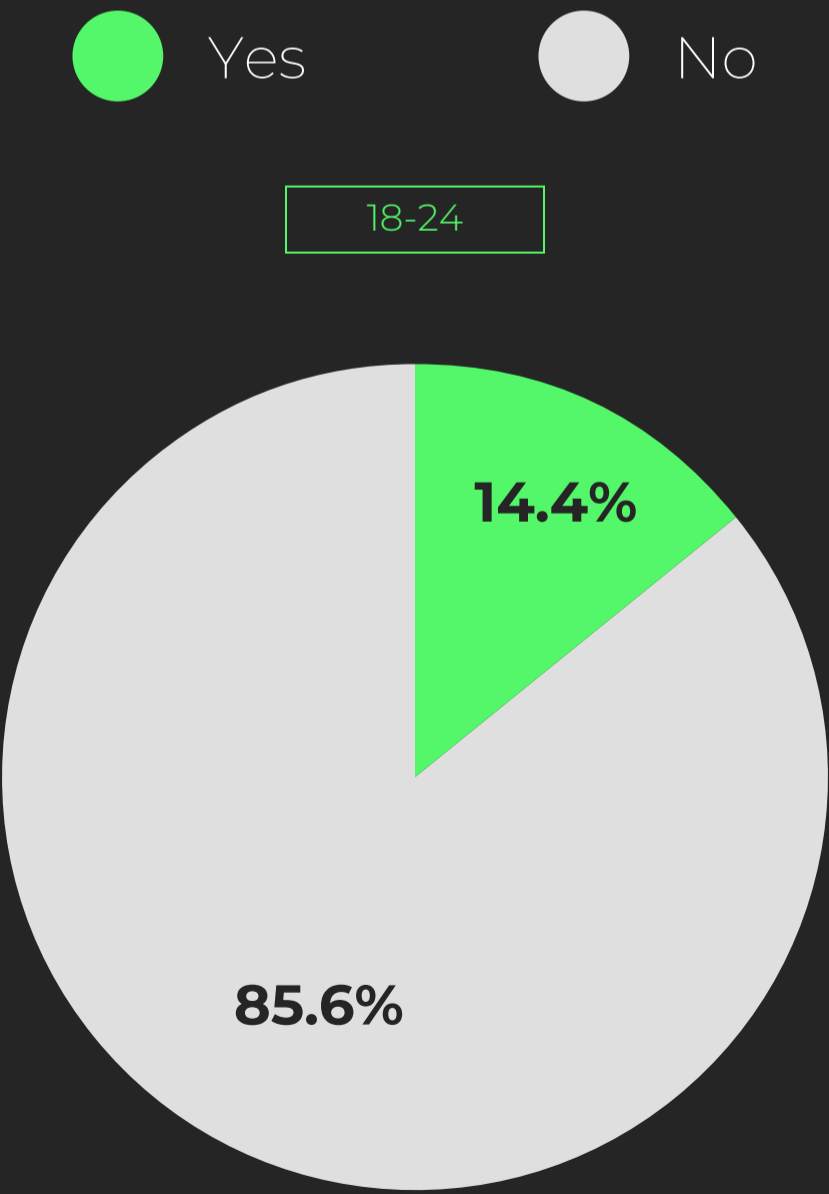
**SUBSCRIBERS**  
**VS.**  
**NON -**  
**SUBSCRIBERS**



# EARLIER SUBSCRIPTION

Only 14.4% of readers report having previously subscribed to a Croatian news portal, mostly younger readers, while the vast majority (85.6%) have never done so. This shows that subscription penetration in Croatia is still relatively low in historical terms, with limited experience among readers. However, it also highlights a large pool of potential first-time subscribers who represent an opportunity for market growth if publishers can effectively communicate value and remove adoption barriers.

Q: Have you previously subscribed to any of the Croatian portals?  
N readers = 652



# PREFERED CONTENT

Subscribers to Croatian portals primarily use their subscriptions for domestic (73.3%) and world news (64.4%), while sports (33.6%) and lifestyle topics have a notable secondary audience.

Specialized content is read less often but reflects diverse interests beyond everyday news.

Most Croatian readers use portals mainly for daily information — domestic (81.1%) and international news (71.3%) prevail. In addition to news, one-third follow topics on travel, food, health, and sports, while about 30% read specialised areas such as economics, politics, and science, confirming a wide range of interests.

Both subscribers and non-subscribers mainly read domestic and international news, with a higher share among non-subscribers.

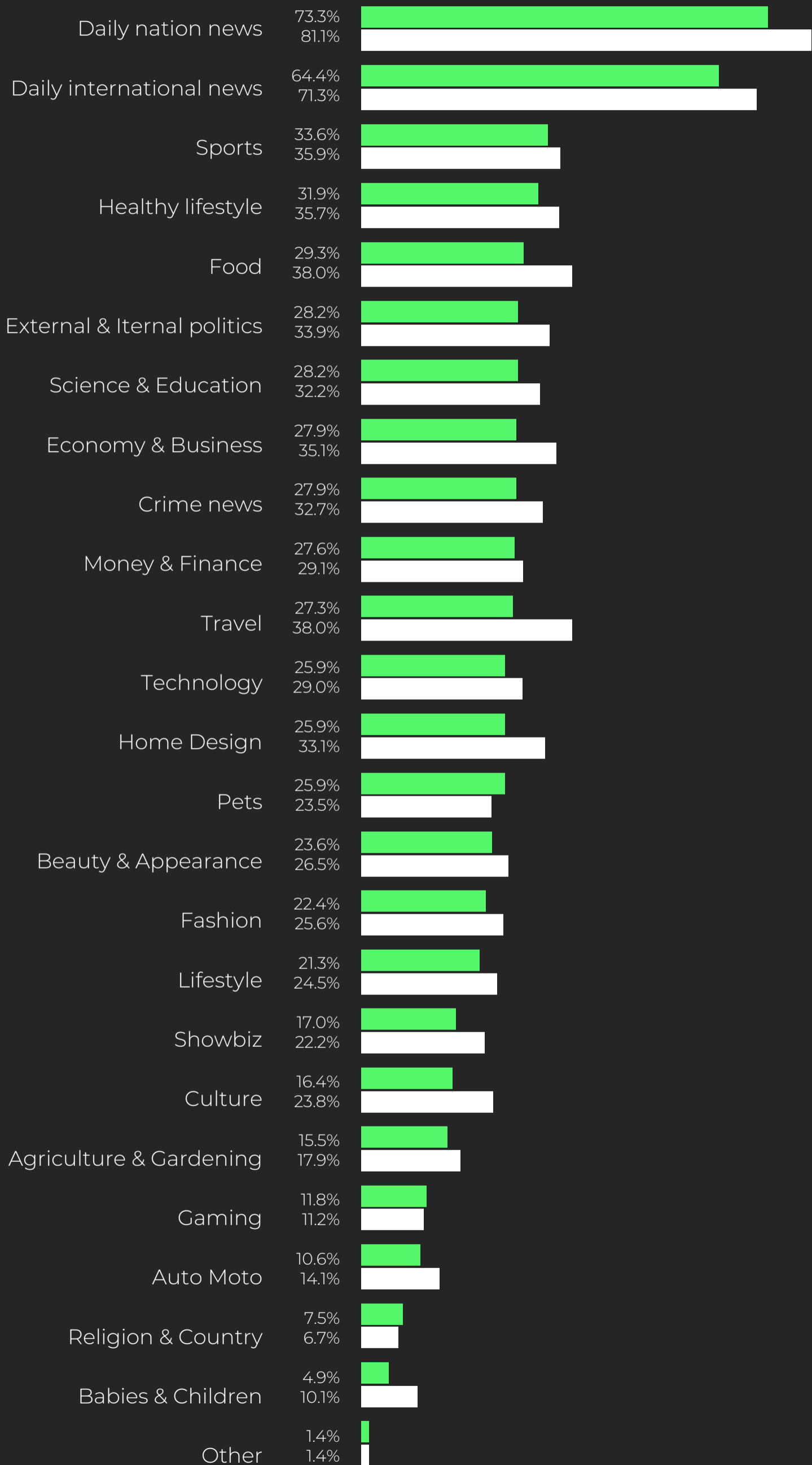
Non-subscribers are more interested in lifestyle and leisure, while subscribers tend to follow specialised topics such as finance, pets, and technology.

Q: What type of content do you usually read through your digital subscriptions on Croatian portals?

N subscribers = 348, N readers = 652

 subscribers

 non – subscribers



# FACTORS TO SUBSCRIBE

## SUBSCRIBERS VS. NON - SUBSCRIBERS

For Croatian digital subscribers, the main reasons for subscribing are price and content quality, with advertising, diversity, and ease of use as notable secondary motives. Younger users value additional perks more, while older users prioritize practicality and better value.

Among potential subscribers, price remains the key deciding factor, followed by content quality. Secondary motivators include fewer ads and content variety, while features like coupons, ease of use, or exclusivity appeal to smaller groups - younger readers emphasize diversity and benefits, and older ones focus on core value. Few are influenced by brand or entertainment extras.

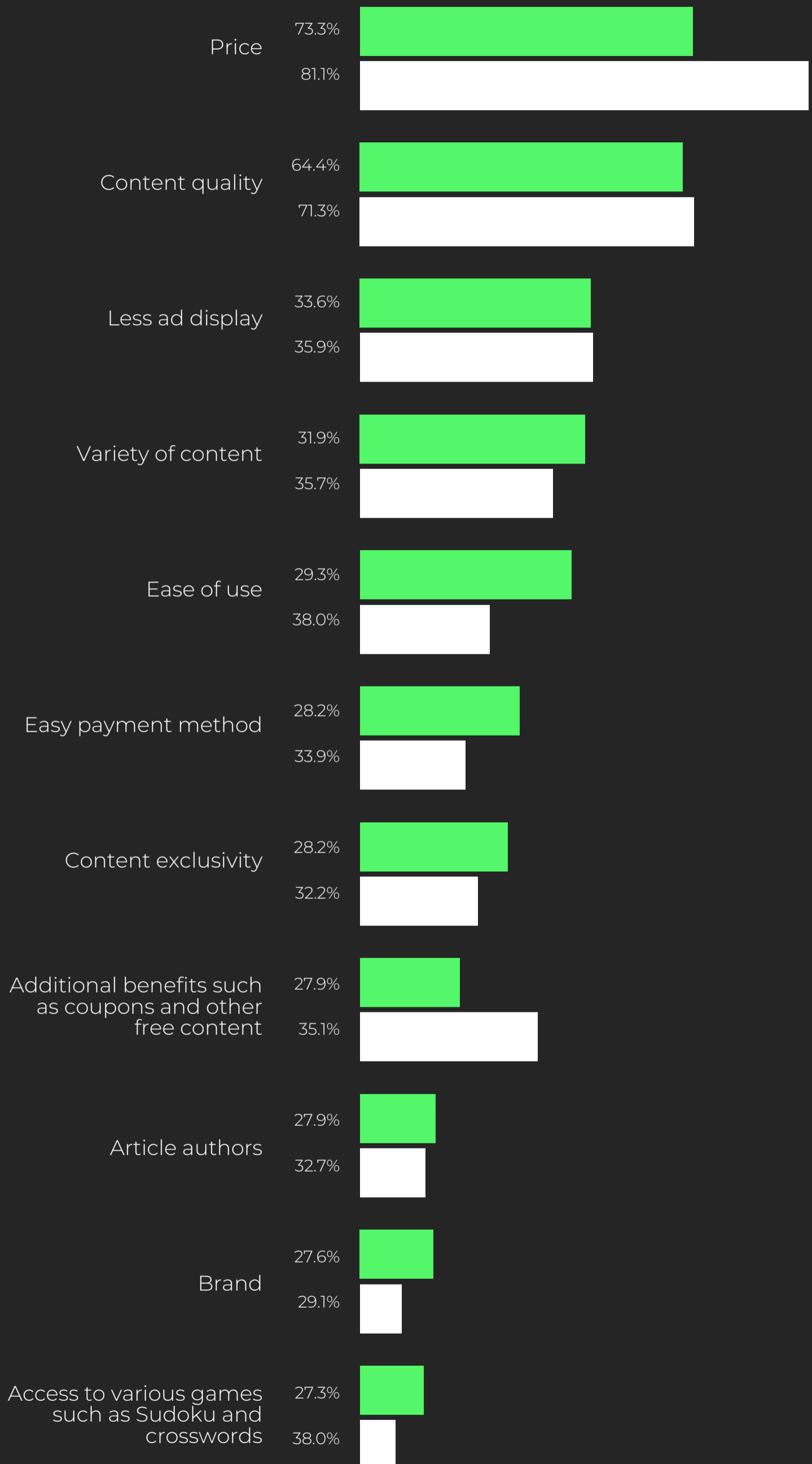
Findings suggest that acquisition strategies should focus on affordability and incentives, while retention should highlight convenience, exclusivity, and high-quality content.

Q: What factors are most important to you when deciding whether to subscribe to a digital service from Croatian portals?

N subscribers = 348, N readers = 652

 subscribers

 non – subscribers



# SUBSCRIBERS VS. READERS KEY FINDINGS

- **Core News Preference:**

Both subscribers and non-subscribers primarily seek domestic and international news—but the share is higher among non-subscribers (domestic: 81.1% vs. 73.3%, international: 71.3% vs. 64.4%).

- **Lifestyle vs. Specialized Interests:**

Non – subscribers favour lifestyle and leisure content (travel, food, healthy living), while subscribers are more likely to consume specialized content such as money and finance, pets, and technology.





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**WAY  
FORWARD**

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The research on digital subscriptions for news portals in Croatia reveals strong daily user engagement and a solid subscriber base, but also numerous obstacles to further growth - such as perceptions of value and price, the prevalence of free content, and limited trust in payment security. **The following are key recommended actions for publishers and the industry.**

# WAY FORWARD

## 1. Enhancing Perceived Value and Differentiation of Subscriptions

- Clearly communicate the advantages of subscriber content compared to free offerings, emphasizing exclusive topics, journalism quality, and personalized services.
- Reduce the volume of ads for subscribers and strengthen the “ad-light” experience, which more than half of users are seeking.

## 2. Adapting and Innovating Pricing and Subscription Plans

- Develop more flexible pricing models—such as seasonal or “try and buy” campaigns—with a focus on price transparency and clear price ranges (optimal: €25 annual, €9 monthly).
- Target sales efforts on undecided users (21.8%), offering limited free trials and easy subscription cancellation.

## 3. Educating and Building Trust in Online Payments

- Intensify communication and educational content regarding online transaction security, as nearly 68% of users have abandoned a subscription purchase due to payment security concerns.
- Partner with reliable technology and financial providers to further boost trust.

#### **4. Actively Managing Password Sharing and Value Balance**

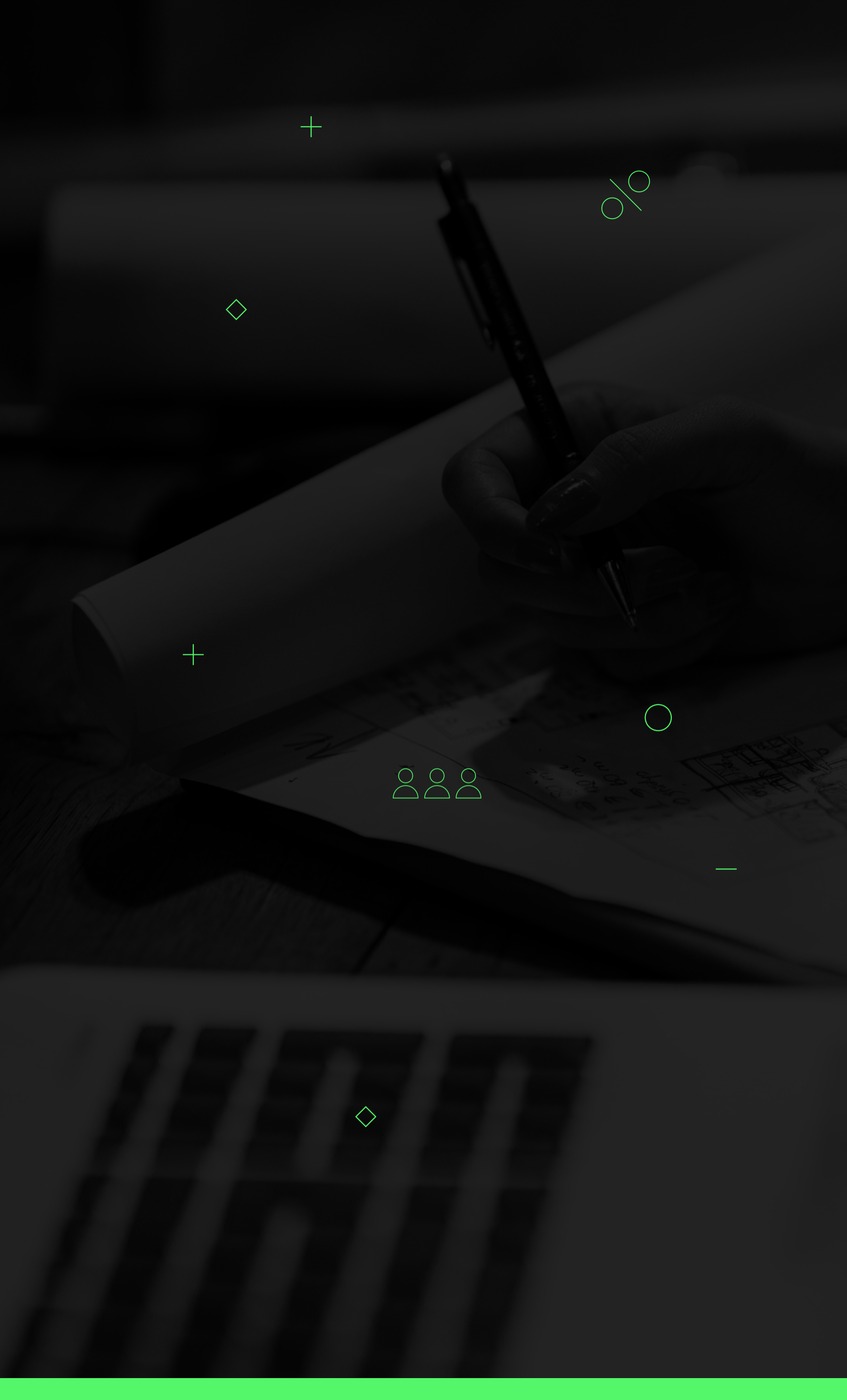
- Develop strategies to limit abuse around password sharing, while not undermining user freedom and positive experiences.

#### **5. Ongoing User Research and Content Segmentation**

- Expand the thematic palette with lifestyle, specialized, and personalized sections, since subscribers still seek additional value beyond core news.
- Regularly conduct satisfaction and behavioral surveys to react promptly to changes in user habits and expectations.

#### **6. Leveraging Local Strengths, Exploring European Trends**

- Build on local trust in brands and relevance, but also introduce innovations based on best practices from other European markets-especially in content, user experience, and additional services.



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A grayscale background image showing a hand holding a smartphone. The screen of the phone displays a survey form with various checkboxes and text fields. The overall image is dark, with the text overlaid in bright colors.

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## **DEMOGRAPHY & METHODOLOGY**

# DEMOGRAPHY

Are you currently subscribed to any of the Croatian portals?

|                 |                    | Total | Yes   | No    |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                 | N                  | 1000  | 348   | 652   |
| Sex             | Male               | 44.5% | 47.1% | 43.1% |
|                 | Female             | 55.5% | 52.9% | 56.9% |
| Age             | From 18 to 24      | 14.8% | 17.0% | 13.7% |
|                 | From 25 to 34      | 20.1% | 21.3% | 19.5% |
|                 | From 35 to 44      | 25.2% | 26.7% | 24.4% |
|                 | From 45 to 54      | 22.2% | 21.0% | 22.9% |
|                 | From 55 to 64      | 12.8% | 11.2% | 13.7% |
|                 | 65 and over        | 4.9%  | 2.9%  | 6.0%  |
| Region          | Zagreb             | 34.9% | 36.5% | 34.0% |
|                 | Northern Croatia   | 15.6% | 15.5% | 15.6% |
|                 | Slavonia           | 20.4% | 21.6% | 19.8% |
|                 | Lika and Banovina  | 2.8%  | 2.6%  | 2.9%  |
|                 | Istra and Kvarner  | 11.7% | 8.6%  | 13.3% |
|                 | Dalmatia           | 14.6% | 15.2% | 14.3% |
| Personal income | Up to 1.000 €      | 32.8% | 26.5% | 36.2% |
|                 | 1.000 € to 1.500 € | 36.0% | 36.7% | 35.6% |
|                 | More than 1.500 €  | 31.2% | 36.7% | 28.2% |

# METHODOLOGY

## GOALS

Examining the use and attitudes towards digital subscriptions on portals

## QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consists of the following modules:

- Media usage and attitudes
- Subscribers
- Non-subscribers
- Demography

## DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Online survey.

## SAMPLING

Quota sample via online panel

## SAMPLE

Croatian portal readers who read at least once a week

## SURVEY PERIOD

from June 18<sup>th</sup> to June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

# DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION TEAM MEMBERS

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Ovdje smo da zajedno  
kreiramo budućnost  
digitalnog oglašavanja u  
Hrvatskoj

