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Life, Actually:
what Romanians hold on to now

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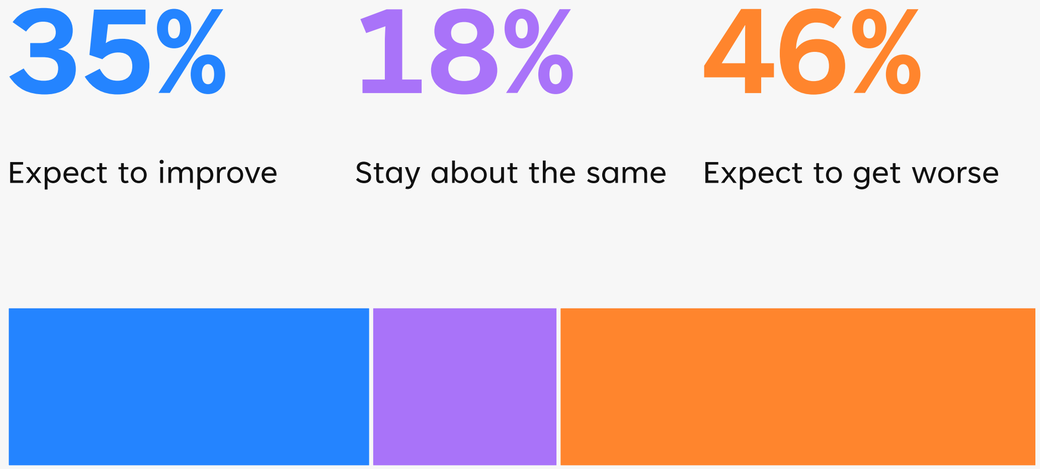
Romania is not pessimistic. It is split in two.

18% of Romanians expect the economy to stay about the same over the next 12 months.

Between those two camps sits **the thinnest middle ground in the region**: fewer than one in five expect next year to look much like this one.

In Czechia, half the population does.

A pessimistic market needs reassurance.
A divided market needs evidence.



Optimism and pessimism are growing here at the same time.

BAROMETR_02. Expectations for the national economy over the next 12 months. Romania n=800. Tested at 5%.

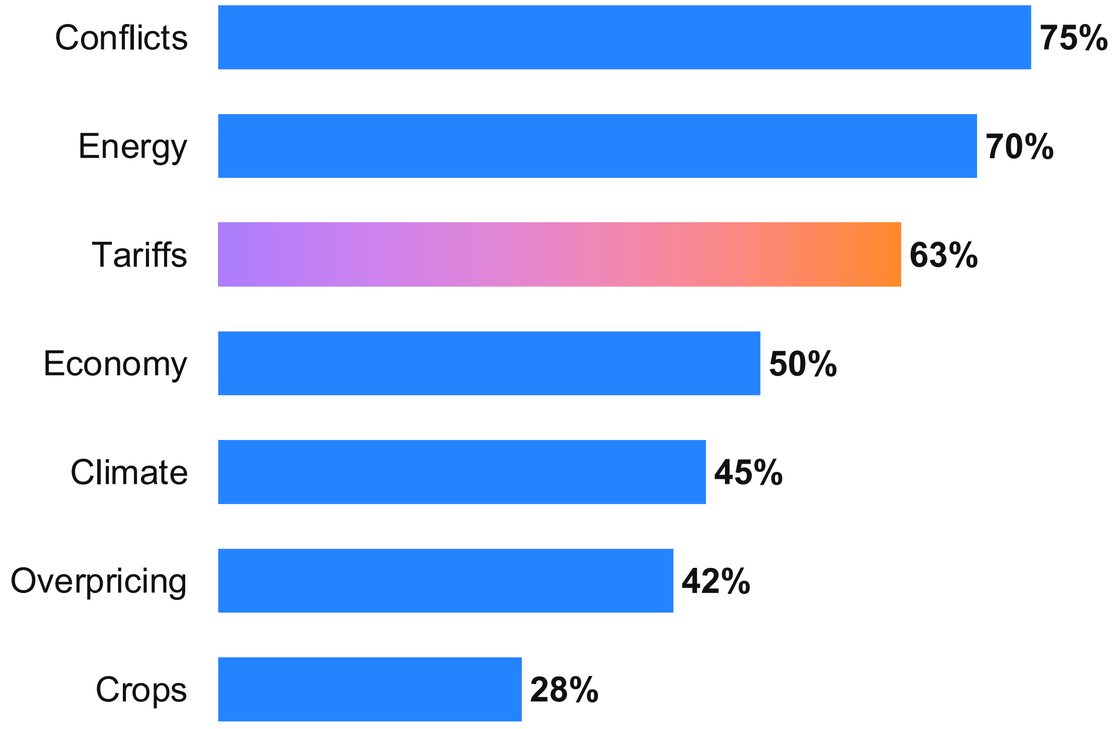
Geopolitics does not reach Romanians as news. It reaches them as a price.

63%

of Romanians name tariffs (read as taxes) among the biggest issues facing the world

The worry peaks at 76% among 30–44-year-olds, the people carrying mortgages, children and the largest weekly shop.

Biggest issues facing the world right now (% Romania)



BAROMETR_01. Overpricing = businesses profiting from the situation by overcharging. Romania n=800. Tested at 5%.

Romanians judge the people, not the system

67% name a lack of capable people in politics, the highest figure in the region

THE SCALE
86% Romanians say democracy is in crisis or under threat. Czechia 74%, Hungary 68%.

THE REGION READS IT DIFFERENTLY
Hungary: society polarisation
Slovakia: radicalisation, economic inequalities
Ukraine: external pressure.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR BRANDS
Nobody is asking you to pick a side. They are asking you to be competent.

What most threatens democracy, Romania (%)

Lack of capable people in politics	**67%**
Global crises and tensions	**60%**
Disinformation and what is true	**53%**
Lack of trust in institutions	**42%**
Foreign influence and propaganda	**40%**
Economic inequality and insecurity	**37%**
Negative impact of social media	**32%**

S32b / S34. Democracy in crisis, and what most threatens it. Base: Romanians who say democracy is in crisis. CZ 3,044; RO 800; SK 400; HU 400; UA 449. Tested at 5%.

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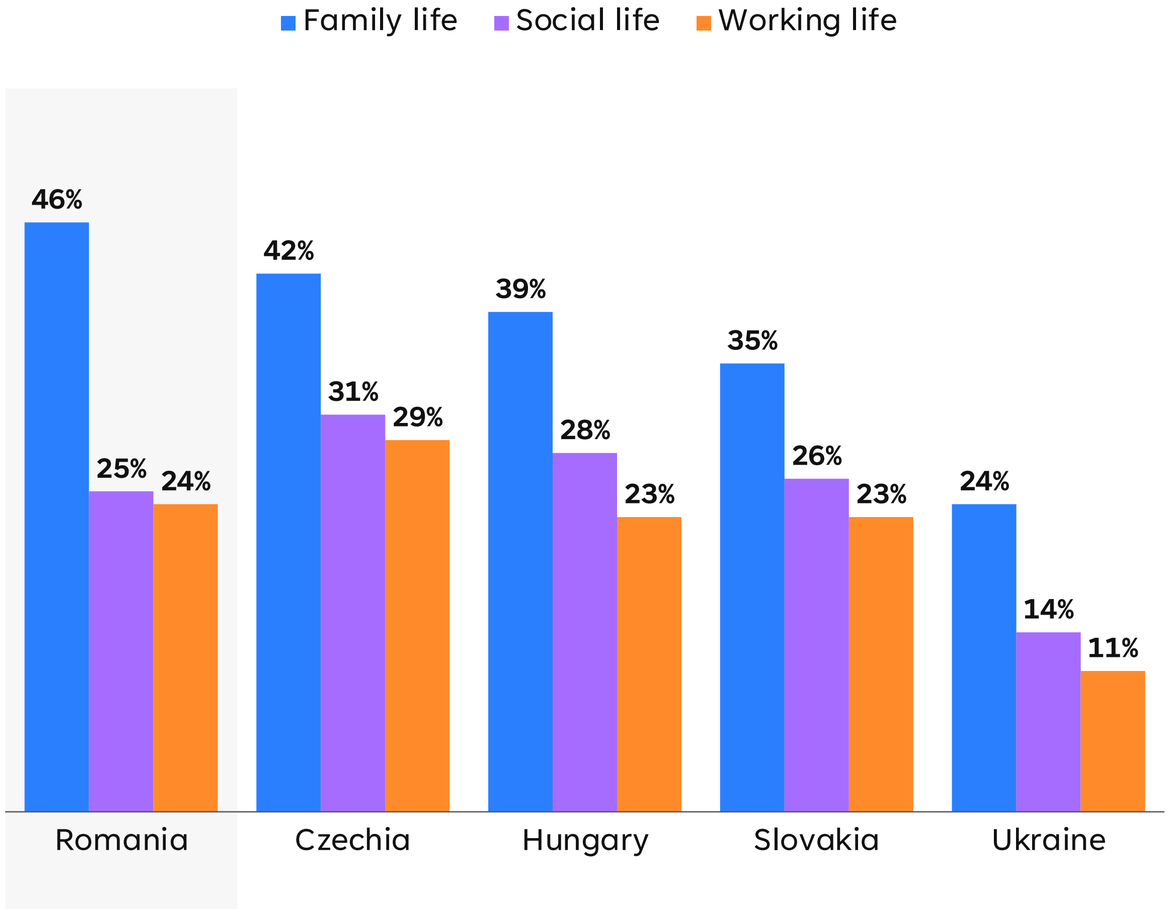
One number in Romania refuses to move

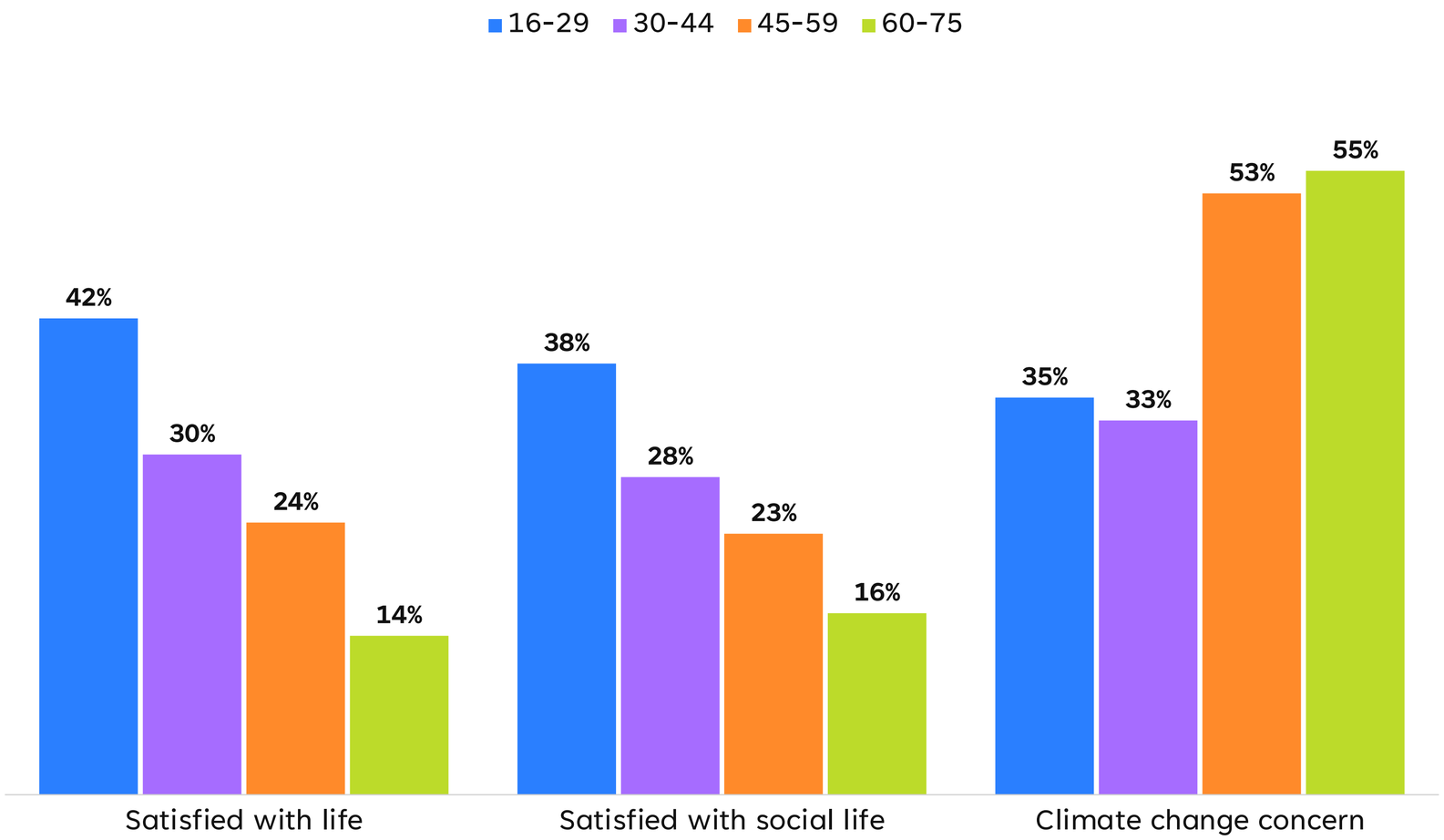
46% of Romanians are satisfied with their family life, the highest score of the five markets in this study.

In a country uneasy about almost everything outside the front door, family it is the only emotional infrastructure still standing.



B6. Satisfaction with family, social and working life. Romania n=800. Tested at 5%.

Life is sweeter at 20. At 60, the phone rings less



42% → 14%

Three times happier at 20 than at 60+.

35% → 55%

Grandparents worry about the climate more than their grandchildren.

Satisfied with life and with social life. Climate change concern = names climate change a top global issue. Romania n=800.

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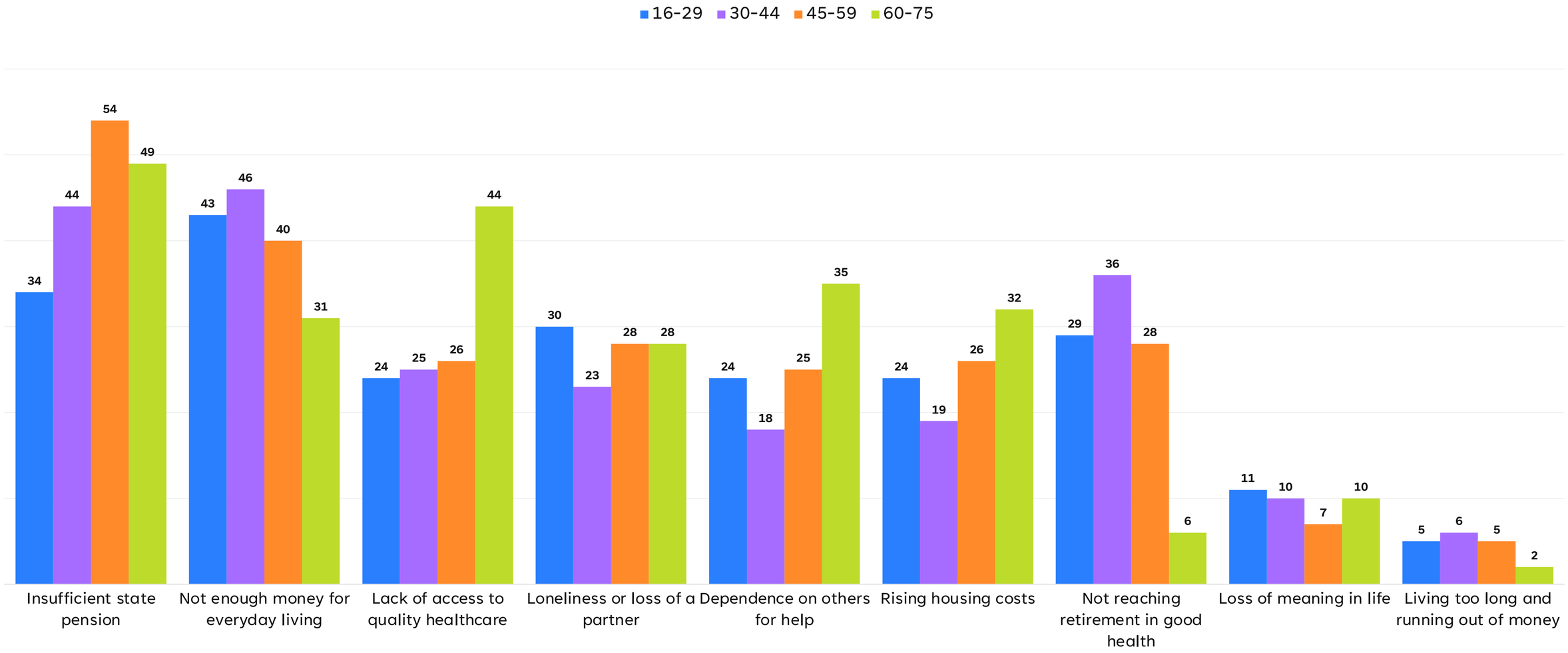
Retirement fears in Romania are specific and financial



What concerns do you have in relation to retirement? % by age group, Romania.

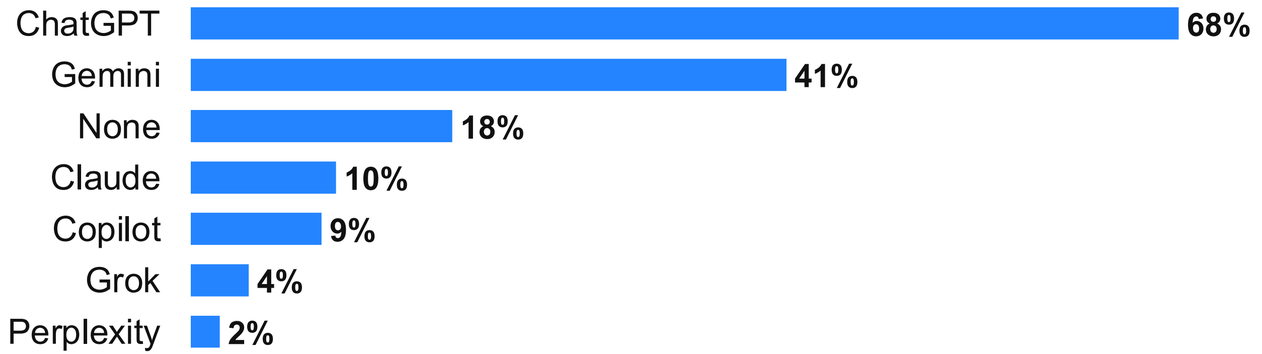
AI is already mass behaviour here. Trust does not follow a clean line.

68%

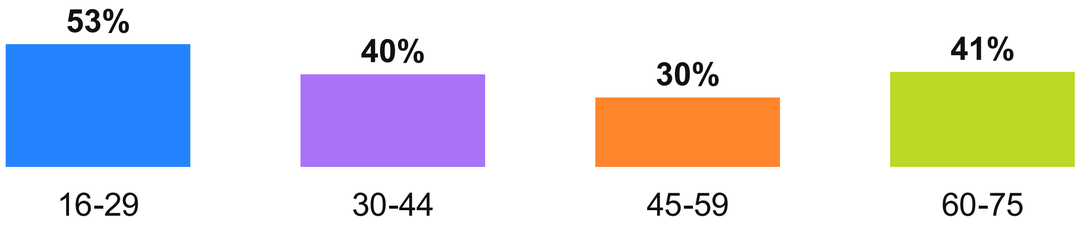
of Romanians have used ChatGPT in the past six months, rising to 82% among those aged 16-29.

The most sceptical group is not the oldest: 41% of 60-75s call AI a partner, against 30% of 45-59 year-olds.

AI tools used in the past six months (%)



Partner I relate to (agree, %)



Romania-only module, n=800. 'None' = used no AI chat tool in the past six months.

The ad break is now a prompt window

79%

watch TV with a second screen

Of Romanians who watched traditional television yesterday, 79% were using a laptop, phone or tablet at the same time. Shared attention is now the normal condition of a television audience, not the exception to it. The single screen is already a historical idea.

47%

of them were somewhere else entirely

Among those second-screening, 47% spent no time at all on anything connected to what was on the television. The programme was running in the room. The attention had left it. Presence in front of a set is no longer evidence of an audience.

43%

use it to get through the ad break

The most common reason Romanians give for picking up a second device while the television is on is to fill the time during the advertising breaks. The break is no longer a moment of low attention. It is a moment of redirected attention.

20%

asked an AI about the programme

One in five used an AI chat tool to get explanations or clarifications about what they were watching. The advertisement is no longer competing with the next advertisement. It is competing with a conversation already under way.

Romania-only module. Second-screening n=372; TV-related activity n=294; reasons n=156, a small base, indicative.

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Romania on one page: two moods, one anchor

18% expect next year to be about the same: the thinnest middle in the region

46% expect the economy to get worse, against 35% who expect it to improve

63% name tariffs and taxes among the world's biggest issues (Hungary: 14%)

42% already believe businesses are overcharging

67% blame a lack of capable people in politics: judge the people, not the system



Sell certainty about the day, not about the world.

Anchor in family | **Be specific about money** | **Be useful with AI**

46% satisfied with family life: highest of five markets, strong at every age

42→14% life satisfaction, 16-29 vs 60-75: three times happier at 20

54% of 45-59s fear an insufficient state pension: fears are specific and financial

68% used ChatGPT in six months, yet only 41% see AI as a partner

79% watch TV with a second screen: the ad break is now a prompt window

Kantar Lifestyle 2026. Romania n=800. Differences tested at the 5% level.

Thank you!



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