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From Invisibility to Inclusion:  
The First Wakamoso Tech Survey



# AGENDA

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# Acknowledgements

- This first Wakamoso Tech Survey and radio programme series would not have been possible without the collective effort of many people and partners
- We thank **Shelly Moroto**, our long-standing colleague and field manager in Mamelodi, whose tireless work in piloting Wakamoso laid the foundation for this launch
- We also acknowledge **Malusi Mazibuko**, candidate attorney and member of the Wakamoso team, for bringing legal and social justice perspectives into the conversation and **DJ Sam Nkogatse** from Mams Talk on Mams Radio 92.9, for bringing energy and local voice to the first broadcast
- We are grateful to the **Wakamoso Trailblazers** in Mamelodi who took the time to complete the survey and share their insights - their participation is what makes Wakamoso a living data commons, and their voices guide the questions we ask and the future we build
- Finally, we recognise the wider Wakamoso community of partners, past and present - companies, NGOs, universities, municipalities and development agencies - who have walked with us over the past two decades of community-based research
- A special thank you goes to **DSTI/EUD**, whose support has been instrumental in enabling this work to grow from pilot to scale



# Executive Summary

## Mams Radio 92.9 and Wakamoso Joins Forces

- The first Wakamoso Tech Survey with Mams Radio 92.9 marks the launch of a 26-episode community engagement series in Mamelodi. The survey was shared through people already registered on the Wakamoso platform, with additional responses coming after the first radio show. This report provides a comprehensive picture of those initial Trailblazers' voices.
- Findings show **Wakamoso Trailblazers** are digitally confident and resilient, using their phones and apps as gateways to jobs, income, learning and community life. Connectivity challenges and data costs remain the biggest barriers, but people find creative ways to stay online.



# Executive Summary

## Mams Radio 92.9 and Wakamoso Joins Forces

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- App use is widespread and diverse - with WhatsApp at the centre, alongside TikTok, Facebook, LinkedIn and banking tools. The internet is seen as essential for the future, though trust in online services is still conditional, shaped by concerns about scams and fraud.
- Wellbeing results highlight a polarised picture: many Trailblazers are optimistic and rate their lives highly, while a smaller group report stress, sadness or very low life ratings. This duality underscores the importance of pairing opportunity with support.
- Trailblazers actively use social media to find jobs, training and events, and most are ready to follow Wakamoso for ongoing connection. They also contributed ideas for future surveys, centring on jobs, skills, safety, fairness in services and community development.
- In short, the first survey demonstrates both the potential and the challenges: Wakamoso Trailblazers are ready to lead digitally, but stronger trust, affordability and inclusivity are needed to build towards a comprehensive Wakamoso Wellbeing Index as the radio series expands.

# Introduction

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- We launched the first of 26 bi-weekly radio programmes with Mams Radio 92.9 on 10 September 2025
- The survey was shared to people in Mamelodi who are already registered on Wakamoso as well as to people on community WhatsApp groups and people who responded after hearing the broadcast on Mams Radio
- The first show featured Malusi Mazibuko from the Wakamoso team, a candidate attorney, together with DJ Sam Nkogatse from Mams Talk
- This comprehensive report now captures all responses and insights from that launch

# Methodology

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- Over the past year Wakamoso was piloted in Mamelodi with our long-standing colleague and field manager, Shelly Moroto, who has tirelessly driven local testing and community engagement
- This groundwork gave us the base to launch the radio series, showing that only teamwork makes a digital movement possible
- This survey was distributed to 623 people via the Wakamoso platform, with participants completing it directly through WhatsApp
- In addition, links were shared on Mams Radio's social media pages and in select community WhatsApp groups, widening access and encouraging broad participation

# Survey Results

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- These findings reflect the voices of Wakamoso Trailblazers - people already registered on the platform in Mamelodi who joined the first survey and some people who joined due to the media exposure
- Note: This is not yet the full community picture
- Over the 26 radio episodes we aim to grow the sample and build a Wakamoso Wellbeing Index that truly reflects local experiences and aspirations
- The survey began by asking Trailblazers about their lives and wellbeing, then explored technology use and access - from confidence and barriers to the apps people rely on
- It ended with social media habits and suggestions for future questions

# Happiness Index

Most Trailblazers are positive  
(happy, high life scores)

But a **consistent minority signal**  
**stress, sadness or very low life**  
**ratings** - highlighting the need to  
capture both opportunity and  
vulnerability in future surveys





# Happiness rating

*If 0 = worst life and 10 = best life, what number shows your life today?*

**Mean:**  
7.3 out of  
10

## Key stats

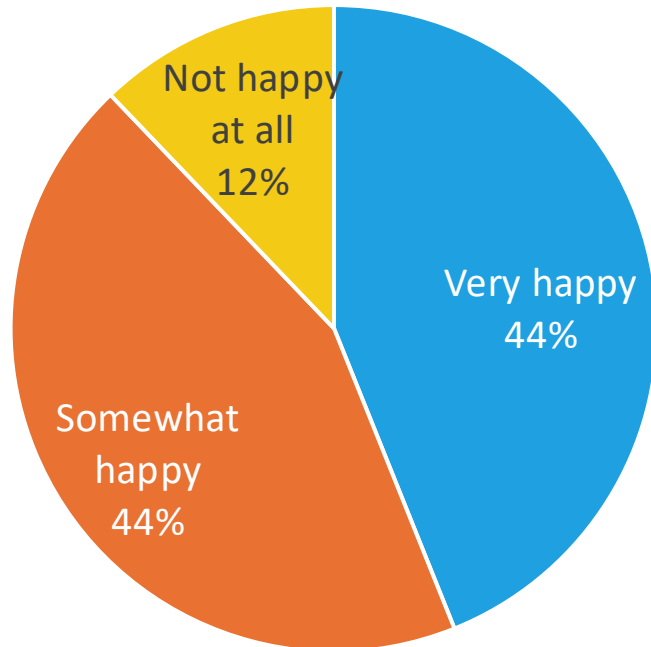
- **Range:** 0–10
- **Distribution:**
  - A majority chose **7–10** (high life ratings)
  - A notable minority selected **0** (worst possible rating)
  - Few responses fell in the middle (2–6)

## Interpretation

- Most Trailblazers feel their lives are **closer to the “best” end of the scale**, with strong clusters at 8, 9 and 10
- At the same time, a **small but important group report 0** - showing deep challenges and exclusion for some
- This dual pattern suggests a **polarisation of wellbeing**: many are optimistic and resilient, but a minority face severe hardship

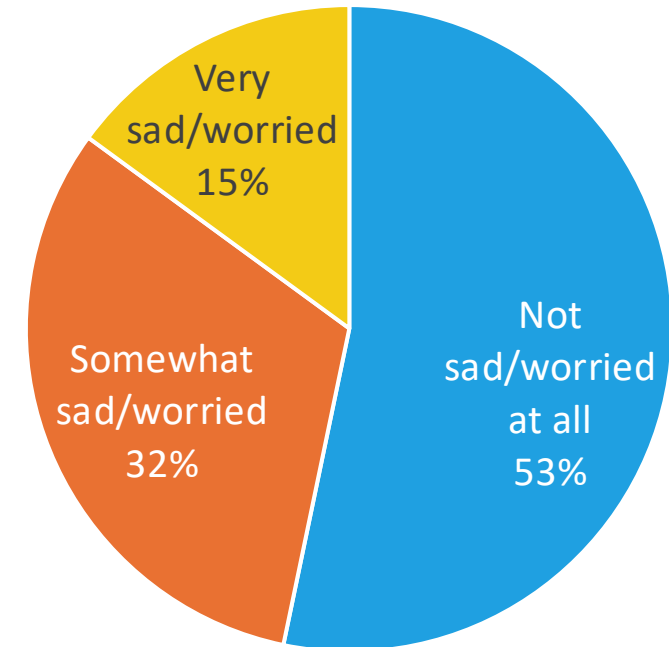
# Challenges

## Yesterday, did you feel happy?



- **Insight:** Nearly **9 in 10 Trailblazers** reported some level of happiness yesterday, but only **44% felt “very happy”**
- Around **1 in 8** were not happy at all

## Yesterday, did you feel worried or sad?



- **Insight:** Just over **half (53%)** felt no sadness or worry
- But **47% experienced some sadness/worry** yesterday - with **15% feeling very sad/worried**



# Does Happiness Influence Tech?

## Overall picture

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- **Happier Trailblazers** → More variety in favourite apps, lean on social (Facebook, TikTok) and WhatsApp
- **Less happy Trailblazers** → More focused on WhatsApp, LinkedIn, job apps and banking apps - i.e. apps tied to survival and opportunities rather than entertainment
- Suggests that **happiness shapes digital behaviour**:
  - Happy = more balanced mix of social + utility
  - Less happy = more functional, job- and finance-oriented
- Happiness doesn't decide whether Trailblazers are digitally active - they all are
- But it strongly shapes **how much they trust what they find online**
- Wakamoso's role is to **strengthen trust**, so that engagement translates into real opportunities

# Technology: Exploring use & perceptions

Trailblazers are digitally confident and use their skills to unlock opportunities. They face barriers like connectivity and data costs but stay resilient by finding ways to stay online.

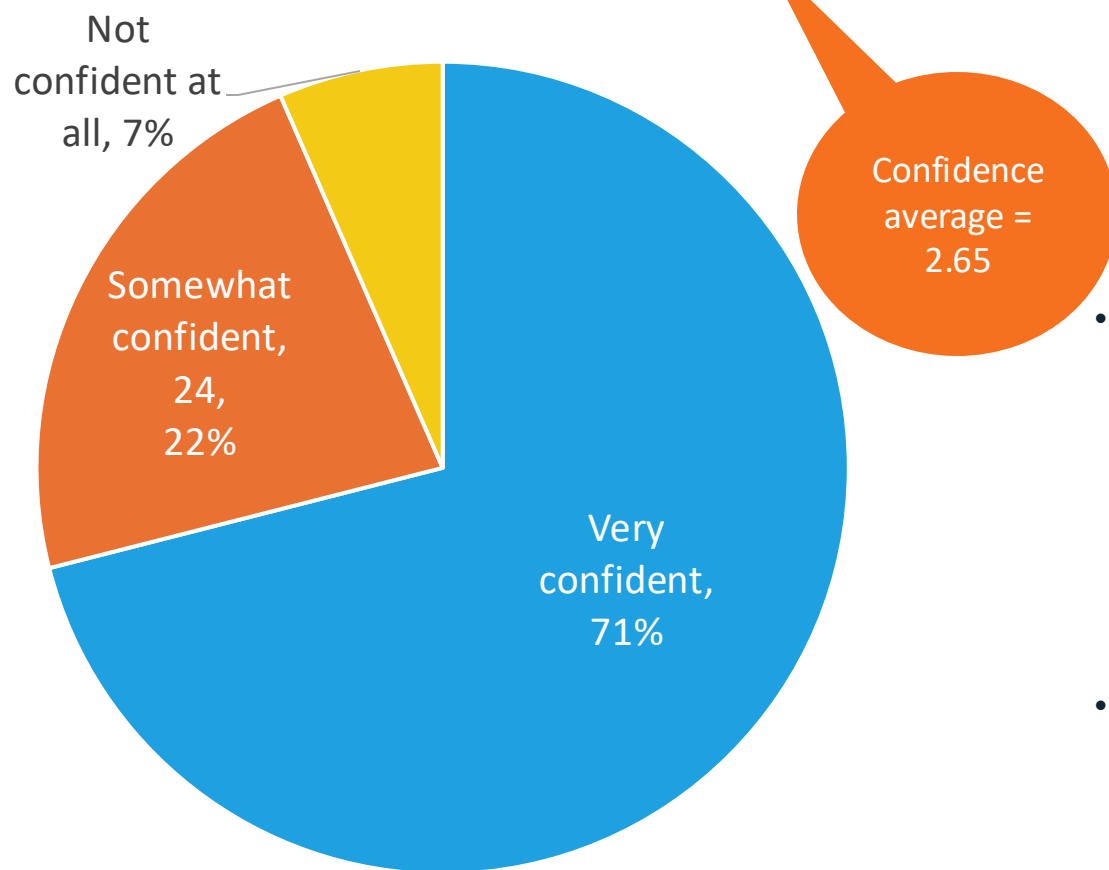
App use is widespread and diverse, with social, professional and functional tools all in play.

The internet is seen as essential for the future, though concerns about scams and safety keep trust conditional.



# Confidence

## How confident are you in using mobile apps or websites for tasks like job applications or starting a business?



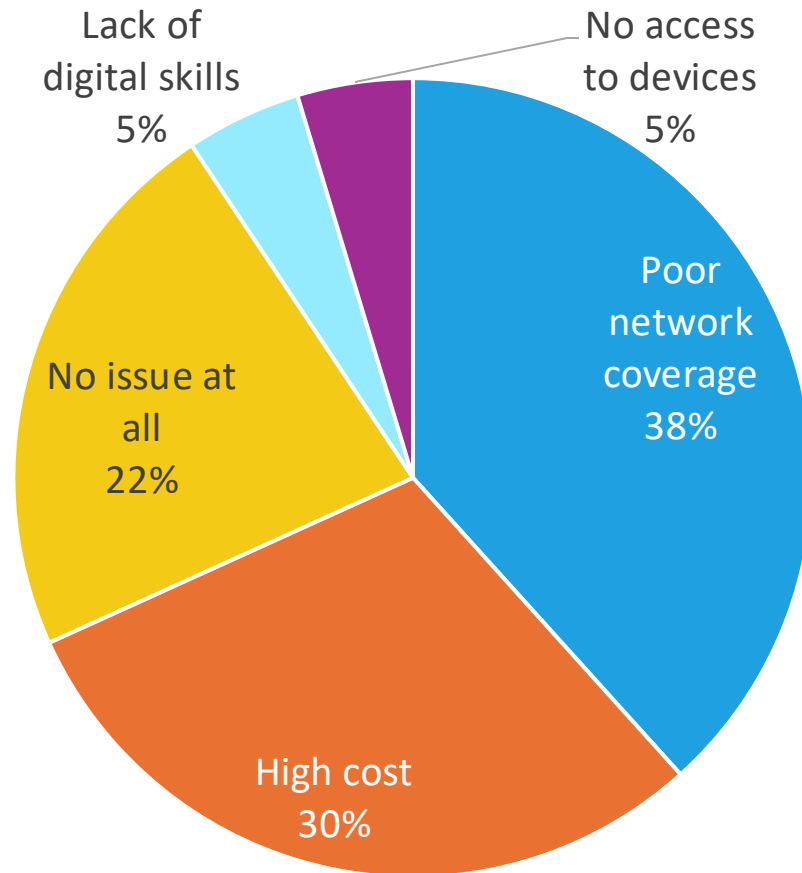
## Wakamoso Trailblazers: Digital Confidence in Action

- When we asked our Wakamoso Trailblazers how confident they feel using apps and websites for opportunities like jobs or starting a business, here's what they told us:
- The Results
  - 71% said they are very confident – already driving their digital journey
  - 22% said they are somewhat confident – on the path, but still building trust and skills
  - 6.5% admitted they are not confident at all – highlighting where extra support is needed
- The Big Picture
  - The Confidence Index scored 2.65 out of 3. This means most Trailblazers are already digitally ready - turning their phones into gateways to income, learning and business opportunities
  - This proves that when people are given tools like Wakamoso, they don't just participate - they lead. Trailblazers are showing that confidence grows quickly when the digital world is made accessible, rewarding and fun
- Our Takeaway
  - Wakamoso isn't just about data
  - It's about people - Trailblazers turning confidence into action and action into opportunity

# Challenges

## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

**If you have problems with getting internet access, what is the main issue?**



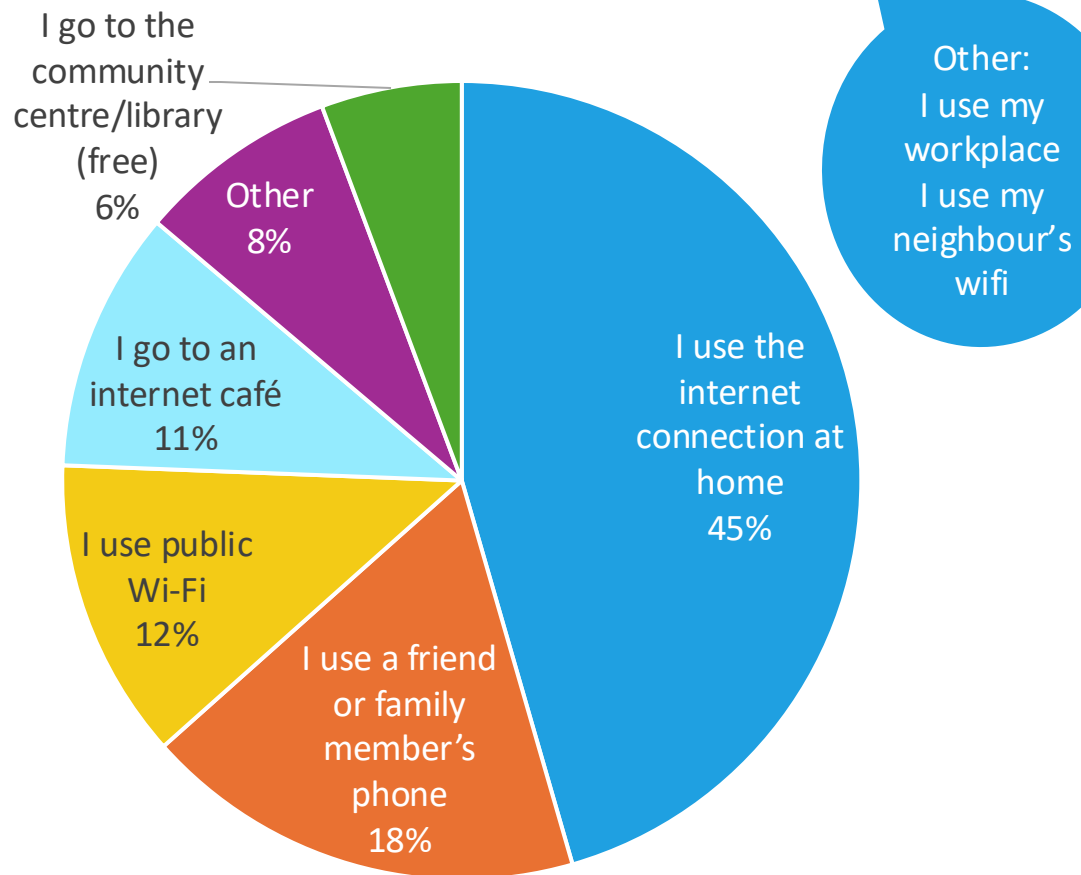
- Connectivity is king: Almost 40% said poor network coverage is their biggest barrier.
- Cost still bites: Nearly 1 in 3 (30%) struggle with the high cost of data.
- No barriers for some: Encouragingly, 22% report no issue at all, showing progress.
- Skills & devices are minority issues: Only 5% each mentioned lack of skills or no devices.

### Interpretation

- Wakamoso Trailblazers are ready to go digital, but infrastructure and affordability remain the real constraints. Skills and devices are not the biggest blockers - coverage and cost are.

# Make a Plan

## Making a plan when you don't have data



## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

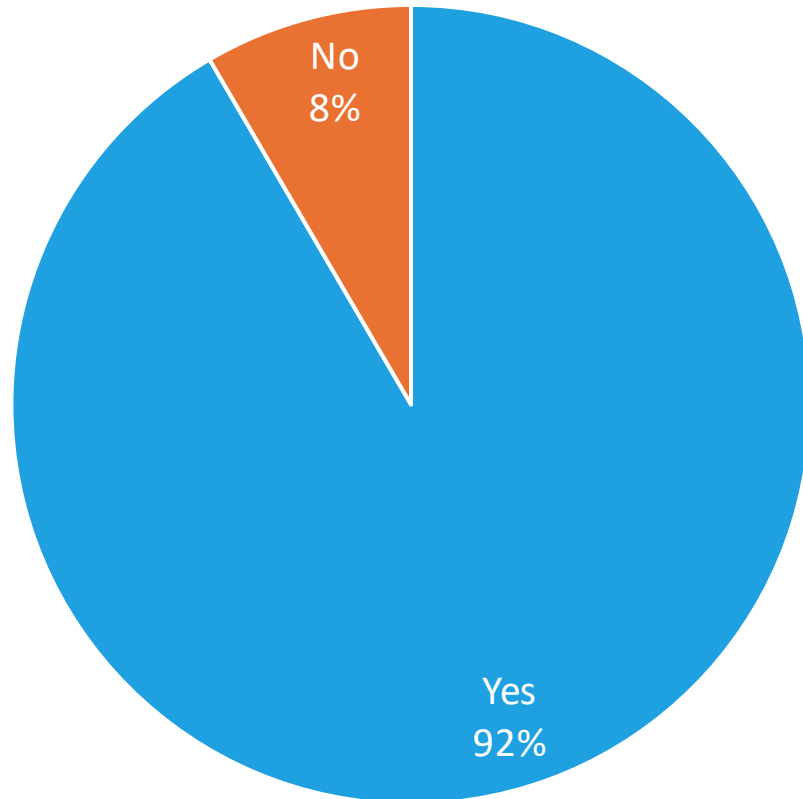
- Home rules: Almost 45% rely on internet at home - showing the central role of household access
- Social borrowing: Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) lean on friends/family phones to stay connected
- Public spaces matter: 12% use public Wi-Fi, 10% cafés, and 6% community centres/libraries - proving shared spaces are lifelines
- Other (8%) highlights creative solutions, from workplace access to hotspots

### Interpretation

- Trailblazers show resourcefulness in staying online. Even when data runs out, they don't drop off - they find alternative routes. This resilience is key: connectivity is not just personal, it's shared across families, communities and public spaces.

# Apps

## Using Apps



## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

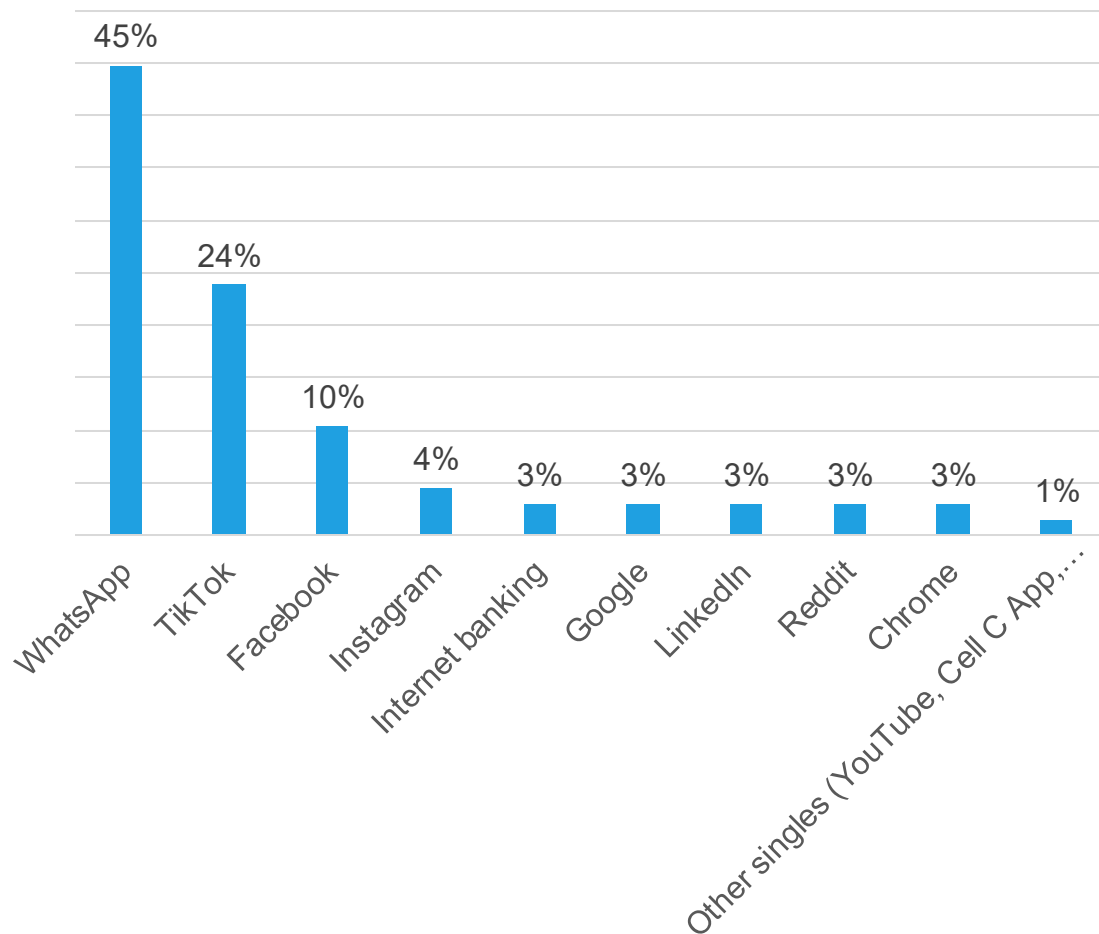
- Apps are mainstream: Nearly 92% of Trailblazers are already using mobile apps - proof that app-based solutions have reach and traction
- Small offline group: Only 8% are not using apps, a minority worth focusing on with basic “getting started” guidance

### Interpretation

- Trailblazers are overwhelmingly comfortable with apps, making Wakamoso’s digital pathways (CVs, business profiles, surveys, etc.) highly accessible
- The small non-user group signals the need for inclusive entry points, like WhatsApp-first or step-by-step app tutorials

# Favourite Social Media (open question)

## Favourites

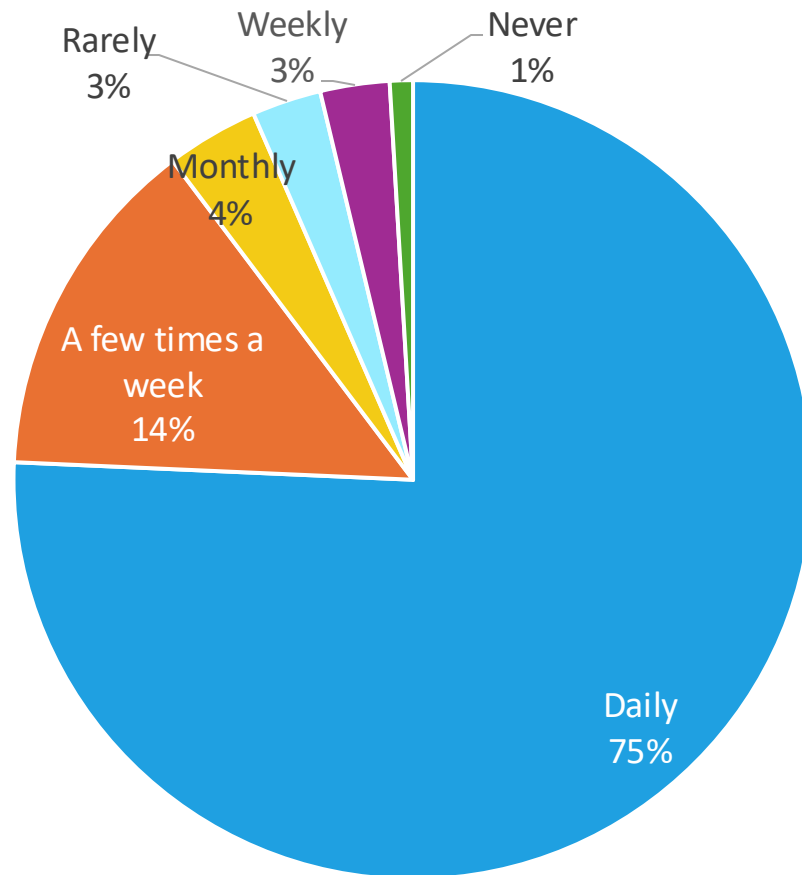


## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

- **WhatsApp dominates** – it's not just a chat tool, it's the hub for business, jobs and community
- **TikTok is next** – showing that Trailblazers mix opportunity with entertainment
- **Facebook** still matters, while **Instagram, LinkedIn, and banking apps** point to business and professional uses
- A **long tail** of apps (Reddit, Chrome, YouTube, niche apps) highlights diverse digital tastes

# Access

## Frequency of Access of the Internet



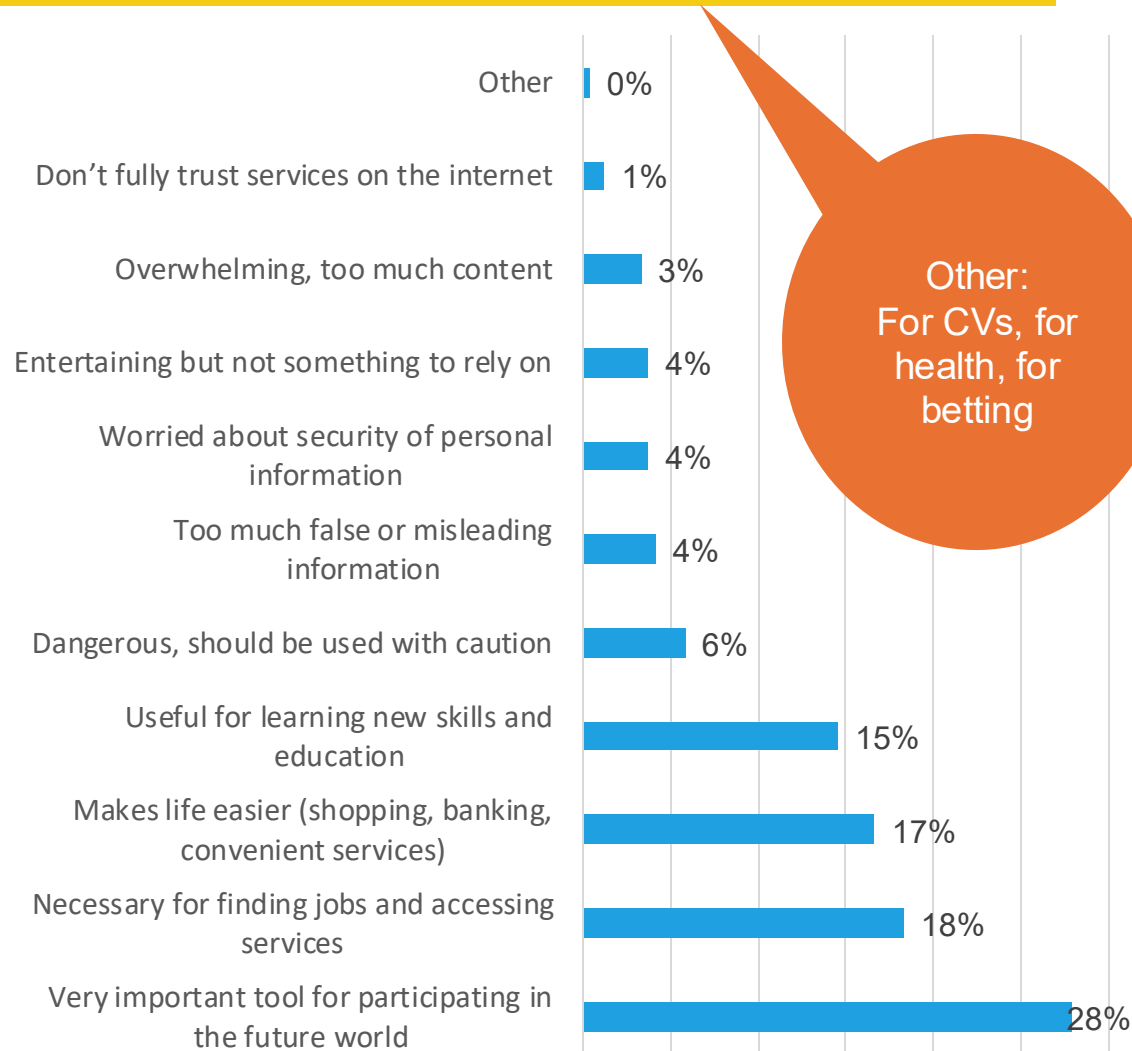
## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

- **Daily digital life:** Over **3 in 4 Trailblazers (76%)** are online every single day
- **Regular but not daily:** 14% log on a few times a week, showing solid access
- **Small margins:** Less than 10% use the internet only monthly, rarely, or never

# Internet

## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

### What do you think of the internet?



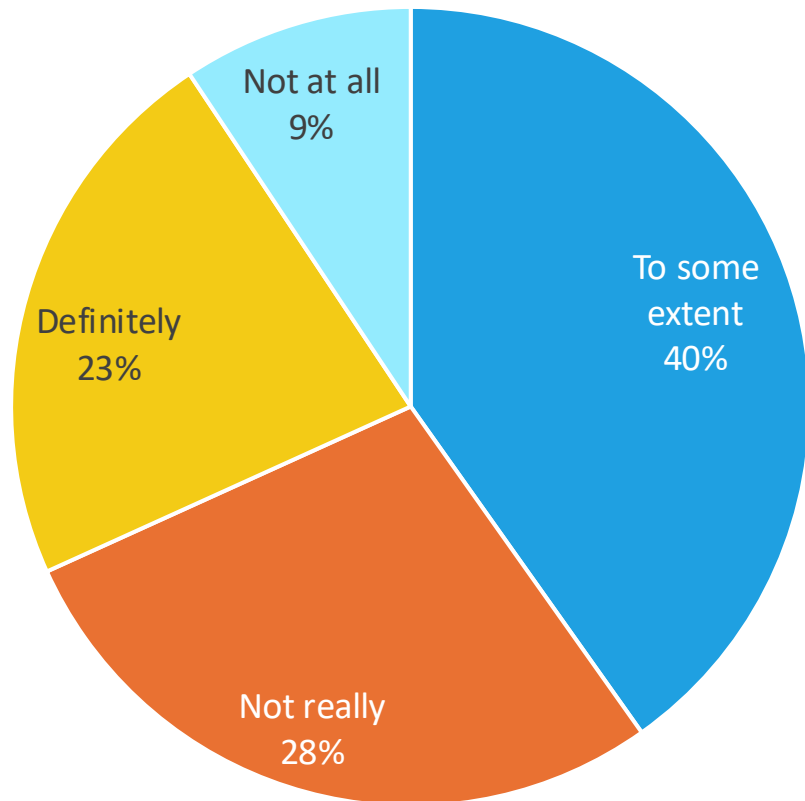
- **Positive majority:** Most Trailblazers see the internet as **empowering and essential** - for future participation (21%), jobs/services (14%), and everyday convenience (13%)
- **Learning matters:** 11% emphasise its role in education and upskilling
- **Caution flags:** A smaller group voice **concerns about safety, misinformation, and overload** - together around 13%

### Interpretation

- Trailblazers are **future-focused:** they see the internet as a gateway to jobs, opportunity, and learning. But a thoughtful minority is aware of risks - security, scams, misinformation - showing that digital literacy and online safety must go hand-in-hand with access

# Online services

**Do you trust online services (like recruitment and banking services)?**



## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

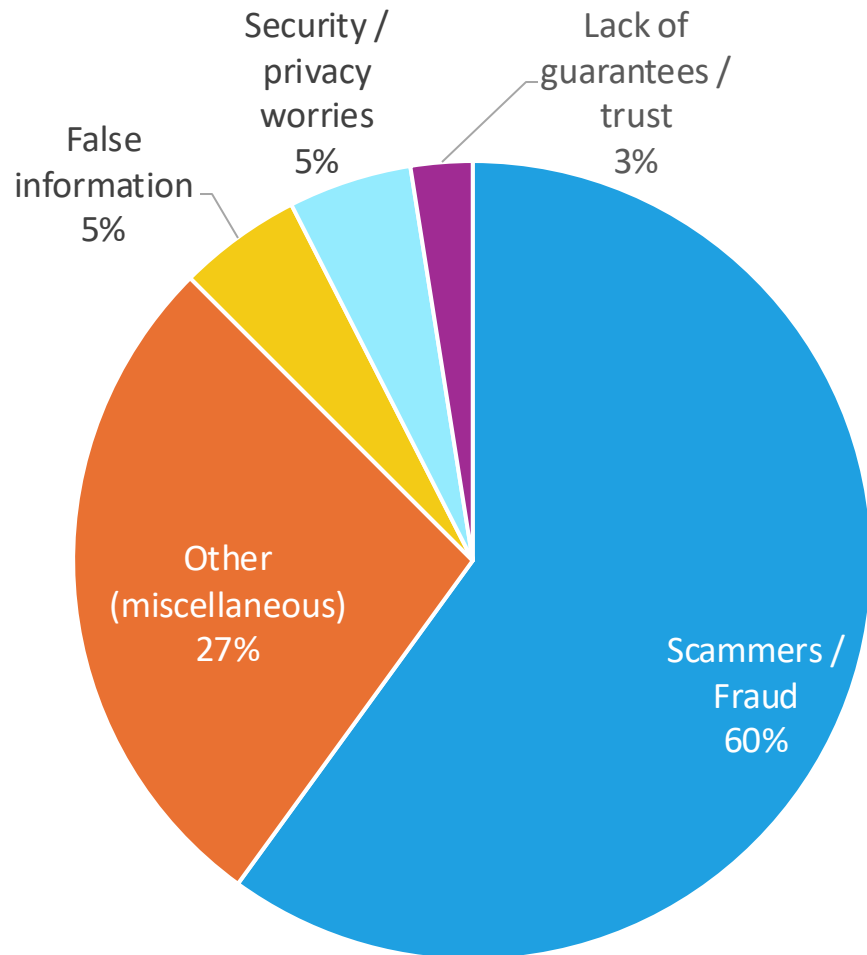
- **Trust is conditional:** The largest group (**40%**) only trust online services *to some extent*
- **Caution outweighs certainty:** More Trailblazers say “*not really*” (28%) than “*definitely*” (22%)
- **9% reject online trust completely**, showing a pocket of strong scepticism

### Interpretation

- Trailblazers are **digitally active but cautious**
- Trust is fragile: while a minority (22%) feel fully secure online, most balance optimism with doubt
- This highlights the importance of **safe, transparent, and community-endorsed digital platforms** like Wakamoso

# Trust

## What makes you feel you can't trust digital services?



## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

- **Scams dominate trust issues:** 6 in 10 Trailblazers who doubt digital services point straight to **scammers and fraud** as the main reason
- **Other worries** (28%) include a mix of unclear experiences, rumours, and vague unease.
- **False information and privacy/security** concerns are smaller but still notable
- Very few cited structural issues like guarantees (2.5%), showing that **fear of scams is the overwhelming barrier**

### Interpretation

- For Trailblazers, digital trust is shaped by **lived encounters with scams and fraud** - fake messages, spam, fraudsters, and unreliable services
- While coverage and cost limit access, it's **fear of scams that limits trust**
- Building trust will depend on **visibility, transparency, and community endorsement** of platforms like Wakamoso



# Social Media: Exploring likes and uses

Trailblazers actively register on platforms for jobs and opportunities, using both local and international channels

They rely heavily on social media to find work, training and events, making it a core gateway to opportunity

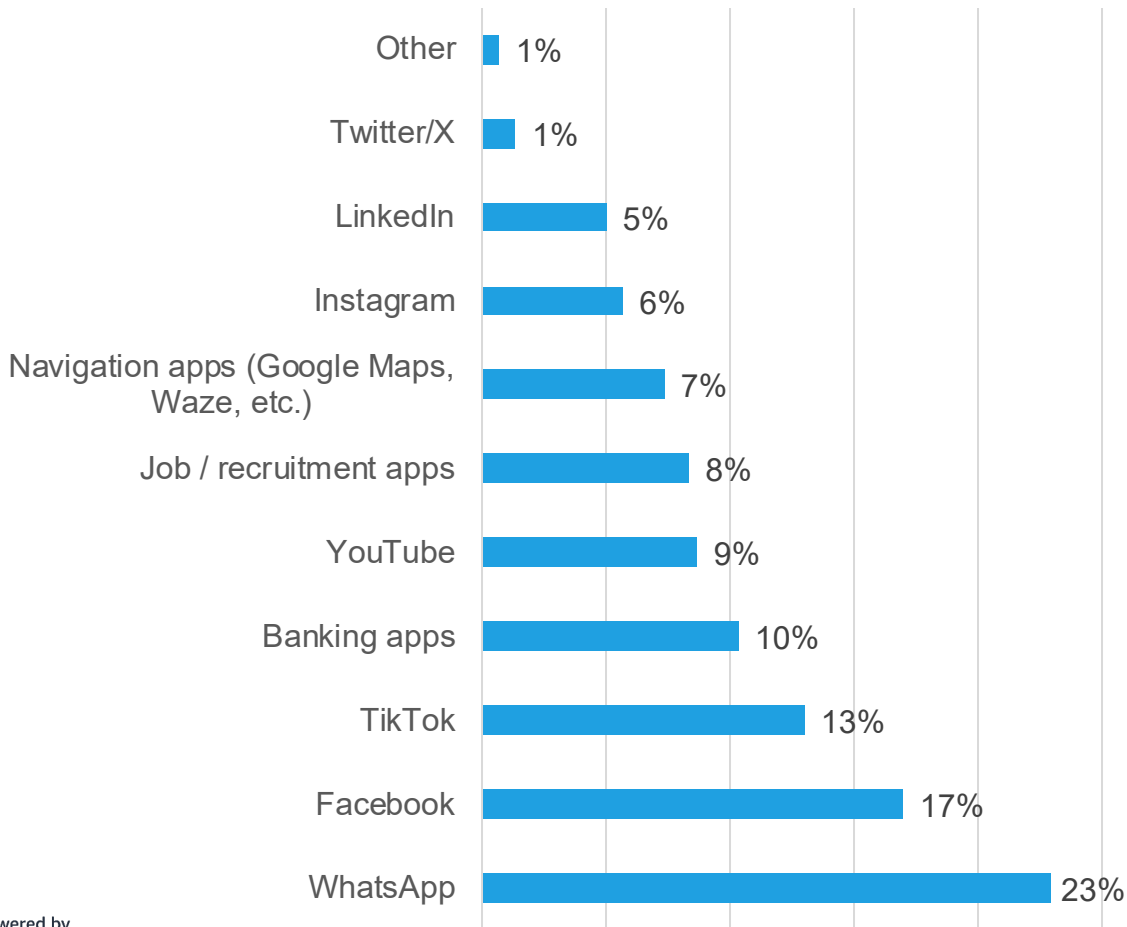
Most are eager to follow Wakamoso on social media, showing appetite for continued engagement

They also suggest new questions for future surveys, focusing on jobs, skills, safety, community issues and fairness in services



# Regular use

Which of the following apps do you use or follow regularly?



## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

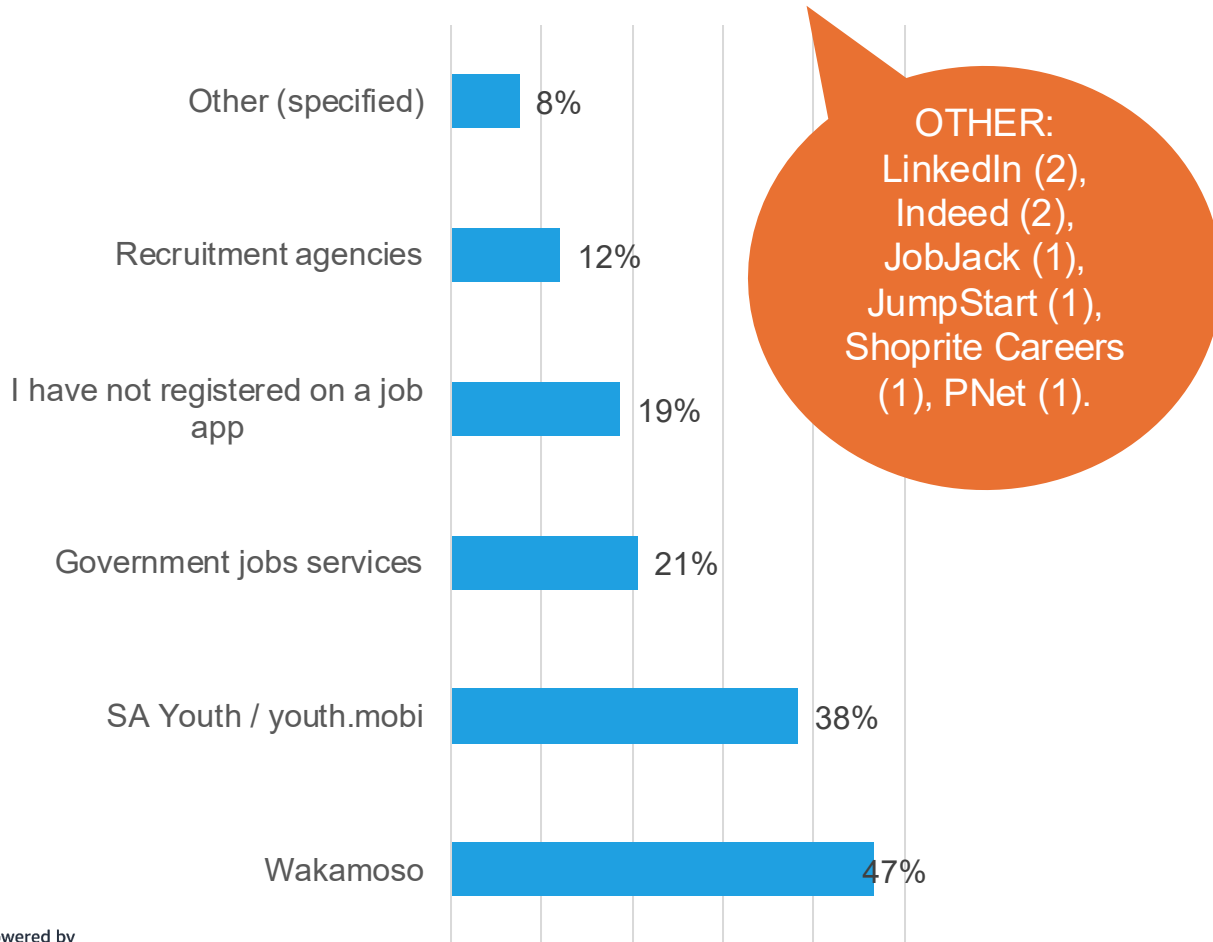
- **WhatsApp is king (23%)** – the heartbeat of digital life.=
- **Facebook (17%) and TikTok (13%)** show Trailblazers are both social and entertainment-driven.=
- **Serious digital tools matter too:**
  - **Banking apps (10%)** for financial management
  - **Job/recruitment apps (8%)** for opportunities
  - **Navigation apps (7%)** for mobility and access
- **LinkedIn and Instagram** are strong for professional and lifestyle engagement
- **Twitter/X** is barely used (1%), showing limited traction

### Interpretation

- Trailblazers are not just online - they are **multi-platform users**, blending **social, entertainment, financial, and opportunity-driven apps**
- WhatsApp anchors daily life, but the diversity of app usage shows they are **digitally versatile**, comfortable navigating both playful and professional spaces

# Jobs Employment

## Which job opportunity or employment platform(s) have you registered on?

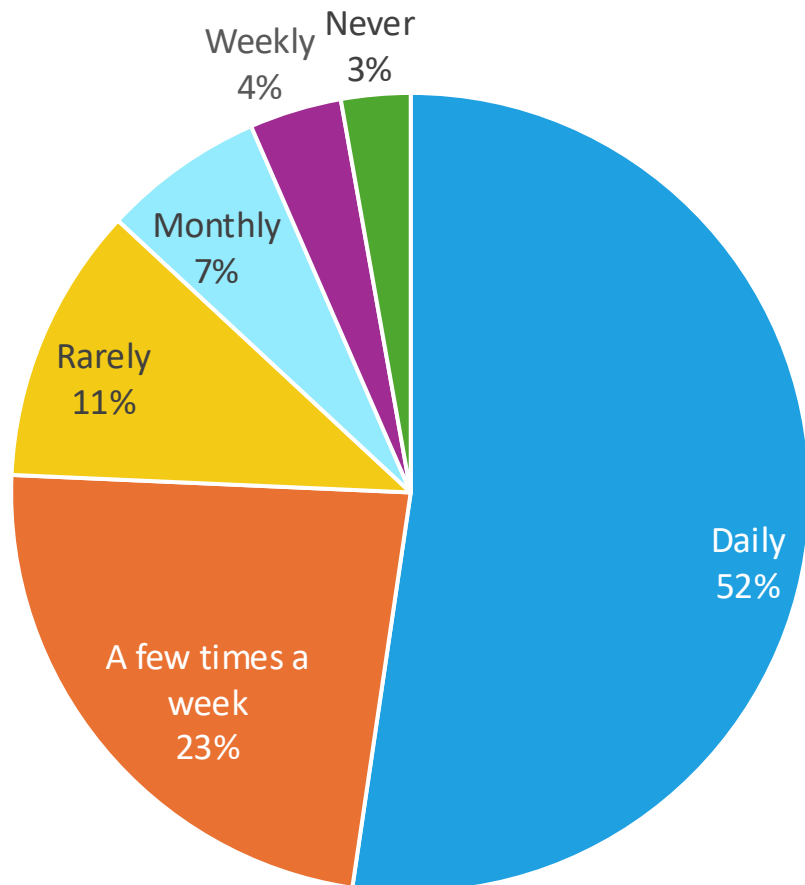


## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

- Bearing in mind that the survey is about Wakamoso Trailblazer, Wakamoso leads (47%) and SA Youth / youth.mobi is strong (38%) - Trailblazers are already plugged into local pathways
- 1 in 5 use government job services; 1 in 8 engage recruitment agencies
- 18.7% say they haven't registered anywhere yet - a clear on-ramp audience for guided sign-ups
- The Other specifics show experimentation with LinkedIn, Indeed, JobJack, JumpStart, PNet and employer portals (Shoprite), i.e., a mix of global, local, and direct-to-employer routes

# Frequency

**How often do you use social media to find information about job opportunities, training, or community events?**



## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

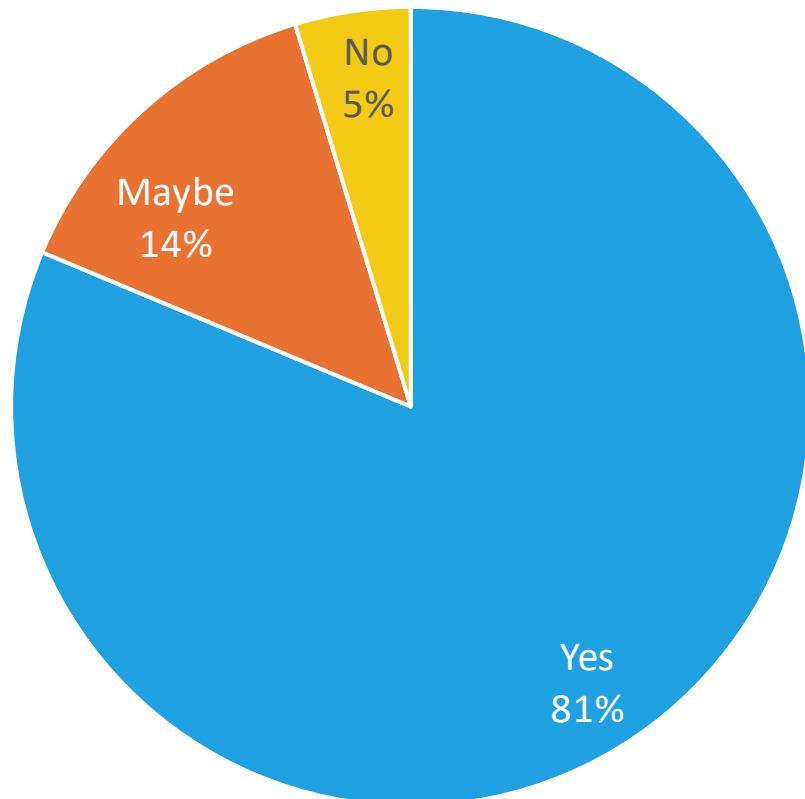
- **Social media = daily job board:** Over half (52%) use it **every day** to track jobs, training, and events
- **Three-quarters (75%)** use it at least weekly, showing strong reliance
- **11% rarely**, and a small **3% never**, suggesting nearly everyone turns to social media for opportunities at some point

### Interpretation

- For Trailblazers, social media is more than entertainment - it's a **primary channel for economic and community opportunities**
- This positions Wakamoso well: by meeting Trailblazers where they already are, it can **bridge from “scrolling” to “earning and learning”**

# Digital community

**Would you follow Wakamoso on social media?**



## Key Insights for Wakamoso Trailblazers

- A resounding 81% are ready to follow Wakamoso - showing strong appetite for ongoing connection
- 14% are on the fence (“Maybe”) - this group can be converted through engaging, useful, and fun content
- Just 5% said No, indicating very low resistance

### Interpretation

- Trailblazers clearly want more Wakamoso in their digital lives
- With four in five already inclined to follow, the opportunity is to turn “Yes” into active engagement and “Maybe” into “Yes” through consistent value - job leads, community stories, digital tips

# Exploring what to ask in future surveys

This section shows what Trailblazers want Wakamoso to ask next

Their main focus is on **jobs and unemployment**, followed by **skills training, safety, and fairness in services**

They also raised issues around **business opportunities, mental health, social media risks and community improvements**.

In short: Trailblazers are asking for questions that connect directly to **work, wellbeing and safer communities**



# Future Questions suggested by Trailblazers

## Top themes (in order of mentions):

- **Jobs & Income** (vacancies, learnerships, apprenticeships, local hiring channels)
- **Connectivity & Cost** (data/airtime affordability, network coverage, Wi-Fi access points)
- **Skills & Training** (digital skills, short courses, certificates, “how-to” guidance)
- **Government & Services** (SASSA, IDs/Home Affairs, service delivery, housing/title deeds)
- **Business & Markets** (registering businesses, buying circles, prices, supplier links)
- **Safety, Scams & Trust** (job scams, platform legitimacy, privacy & security)
- **Finance & Banking** (loans, grants, savings, basic banking help)
- **Youth & Community** (events, programmes, local opportunities)
- **Digital Assets & Documents** (CVs, proof of residence, affidavits)
- **Transport & Logistics** (taxis/buses/routes; occasional power/load-shedding mentions)

## Patterns in what they asked for

- **Jobs & unemployment:** by far the most repeated theme (“job creation”, “job opportunities”, “why don’t we get hired”, etc.)
- **Skills & training:** strong demand for skills programmes, CV/interview training, and career readiness
- **Community safety:** crime, women’s safety, drugs, tavern hours.
- **Youth issues:** culture, morals, high unemployment
- **Government & fairness:** school fee issues, standard of living, service delivery (street lights, waste)
- **Business & entrepreneurship:** how to start/strengthen businesses, agriculture, markets
- **Health:** mental health, depression, anxiety
- **Digital & social media:** LinkedIn delays, social media addiction, alternatives to WhatsApp

# Ad verbatim: What should we ask about?

- About jobs
- About the economy and standard of living
- About youth unemployment
- Agriculture and local development
- Are you going to help us to find jobs?
- Ask about their health: people are quite suffering with depression, anxiety, things like that (mental health)
- Assist the community to find jobs the easiest way
- Children safety
- Create jobs
- Crime
- Does Wakamoso also help graduates with internships?
- Entrepreneurship
- First help the community with skills training programmes so that they'll be able to find jobs, having tools for small jobs to feed their families
- Helping find jobs, and teaching youth how to be grown and get educated
- Helping with business
- How can we help all the unemployed to get employed?
- How do we create jobs?
- How do you cope with unemployment 🤖 while you have kids to feed?
- How to create a good quality CV and mistakes we make when creating a CV, how to answer interview questions
- How to improve our community and keep it safe
- How to start a business
- Human trafficking
- If you owe the university school fees, why are you not allowed to get your results back? That's not fair
- Improving youth with many skills training, also preparing high school learners for career readiness
- Is social media addictive? If yes, how can we prevent it?
- Job creation
- Job creation
- Job opportunities, training and skills development, community development programmes, and further education for the disadvantaged
- Job opportunity
- Morals and culture
- Prevention of unemployment rate
- Street lights and jobs
- As a community let's create more jobs because most youth are unemployed
- The murdering of women around Mamelodi
- The scourge of littering and illegal dumping - causes and solutions
- They must not use drugs
- Unemployment topic
- Unemployment, safety of Uber/Bolt and so many other things
- Until when must we live in fear for our lives as ladies?
- What changes would they like to see happening in different sections of our community?
- Which other platforms can be used to make more youth engage with Wakamoso than WhatsApp (for those without smartphones)?
- Why do apps like LinkedIn take so long to respond when one applies for jobs?
- Why must event organisers and taverns still keep doing events late into the night when that's when youth get into trouble?
- Why South Africa youth are not taken seriously when they want jobs?
- Why we over 35 yrs don't get hired? What can we do to improve our lives as we are struggling?
- Work and developing jobs here at Mamelodi

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# Thank You.

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