

Social media maintains its massive—still-growing—audience

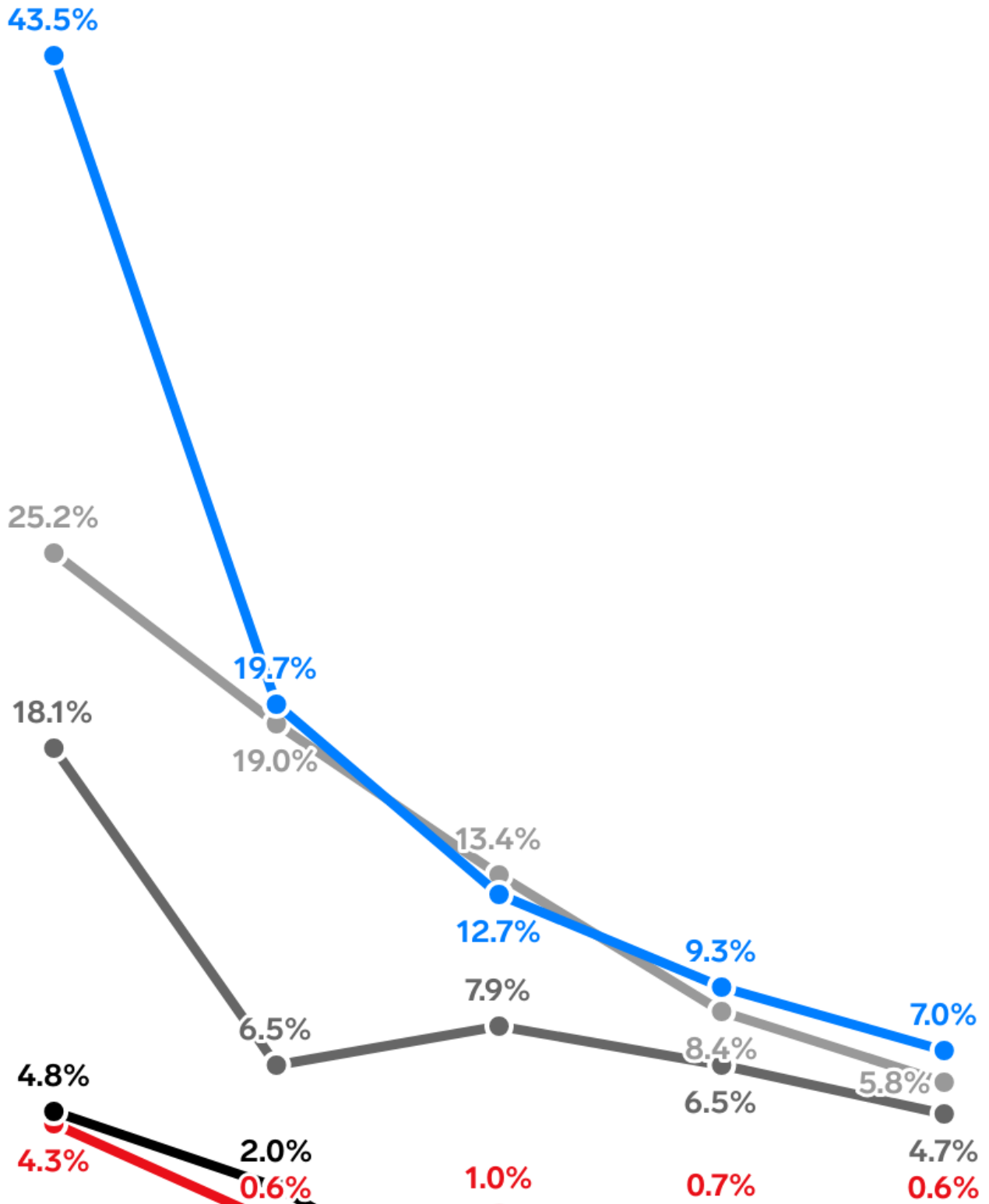
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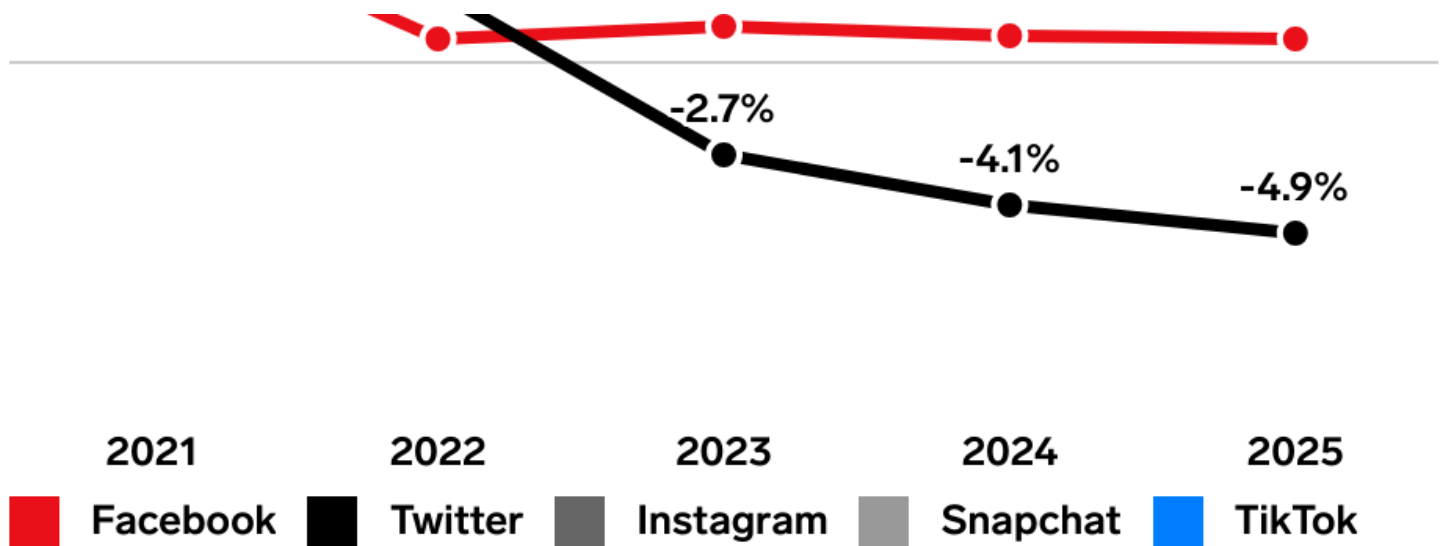
There will be 3.86 billion monthly social network users this year, equal to almost half (48.3%) of the world's population. Despite concerns about content moderation and data privacy that have plagued Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok—to name just a few—the social audience is still on the rise.

- **Asia-Pacific is home to almost 60% of the world's social users.** In 2023, it will have more than five times the number of users as second-ranked Latin America—and more users than all other regions combined. The top five countries for social media penetration among internet users will be in Asia—the Philippines, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Thailand. In the Philippines, 98.6% of internet users will be on social this year, 11.6 percentage points higher than the regional average.
- **Social media usage in Asia-Pacific is unique.** For example, in China, many Western platforms are blocked, paving the way for homegrown sites like Douyin to proliferate. In India, TikTok was banned in 2020, leading to a higher rate of penetration for Snapchat. Additionally, the penetration rate for social users in India is relatively low due to the country's more rural population and slower adoption of devices with internet connectivity. Social users in India will grow 6.9% in 2023, outpacing the region as a whole by a wide margin.
- **In the West, social user growth is flattening more than in other regions.** In North America and Western Europe, growth rates will be in the low single digits this year—1.9% and 1.8%, respectively—as social nears a penetration ceiling. In these markets, TikTok is accounting for much of the remaining growth, offsetting the declines for Facebook and Twitter.
- **The Middle East and Africa will be the fastest-growing region, at 5.4%.** Slower to adopt social media early on and with limited access in developing countries, the region is now playing catch-up.

Social Network User Growth Worldwide, by Platform, 2021-2025

% change





Note: internet users of any age who access their account via any device at least once per month

Source: eMarketer, May 2023

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- **Snapchat will overtake TikTok as the fastest-growing platform worldwide.** Snapchat user growth in 2023 will be 13.4%, while TikTok will come in at a close second with 12.7%. We revised our forecast for this year to account for stronger-than-expected growth for Snapchat, factoring in the platform's performance in India, its largest market.
- **Facebook is still the most used social network, reaching 54.6% of users worldwide in 2023.** Facebook is most popular in Latin America and the Middle East and Africa—where 84.1% and 86.9% of social network users, respectively, will use it at least once a month. However, the overall global trend is negative, with the platform expected to see penetration of 51.5% by 2027. Its user base is still growing in Asia-Pacific and the Middle East and Africa, but it's declining elsewhere. Marketers have been aware of Facebook's decline for years, especially among Gen Z—a lucrative audience that should be targeted elsewhere.

Report by Paul Briggs Jun 27, 2023

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