Matt Cooper and Gavan Reilly top #murraytweetindex

- **Leading 100 Irish journalists on Twitter increase followers 3% to 3.1m**
- **Category winners include Tony Connelly, Tom Lyons, and Una Mullally**
- **Fake followers and trust remain key issues of concern**
- **Marty Morrissey can party with highest 'golden ratio' of followers to following**

Today FM's Last Word presenter, Matt Cooper, and Virgin Media political correspondent Gavan Reilly have shared the number 1 spot in the latest *#murraytweetindex*, which ranks the most influential Irish journalists on Twitter. Matt Cooper also topped the broadcast category for a third year running, whilst Gavan Reilly was top political journalist for the fifth year in a row

In other category rankings, RTE's Europe Editor Tony Connelly topped the news category, helped by his close reporting of the Brexit process, with his followers rising by more than 23,000 in the past year.

Top business journalist on Twitter was former Sunday Business Post executive editor Tom Lyons, who has recently co-founded news website The Currency. The Irish Independent's Adrian Weckler retained his position as Ireland's most preeminent technology journalist on Twitter, whilst the Irish Times' Una Mullally was top columnist.

Despite Twitter's purge of fake followers on Twitter last July, the number of people following Ireland's top 100 journalists on Twitter rose 3% last year to almost 3.1m, and these journalists have collectively posted over 2.8m tweets since joining the social media platform.

In its 5th year of publication, the *#murraytweetindex,* compiled by communications consultancy Murray (@MurrayIRL), ranked over 700 journalists across six parameters*, measuring popularity, quality of engagement and level of activity. A composite index was then created to rank overall positions; the top 20 journalists in the overall rankings were:

TOP 20
MOST INFLUENTIAL
JOURNALISTS ON TWITTER

= 1.	@cooper_m Matt Cooper	11.	@sicarswell Simon Carswell
= 1.	@gavreilly Gavan Reilly	12.	@TomLyonsBiz Tom Lyons
3.	@WilliamsJon Jon Williams	13.	@amyohconnor Amy O'Connor
4.	@boucherhayes Philip Boucher-Hayes	14.	@DavQuinn David Quinn
5.	@oconnellhugh Hugh O'Connell	15.	@davidmcw David McWilliams
6.	@roisiningle Roisin Ingle	16.	@sallyhayd Sally Hayden
7.	@unamullally Una Mullally	17.	@ellenmcoyne Ellen Coyne
8.	@RealKevinPalmer Kevin Palmer	18.	@colettebrowne Colette Browne
9.	@tconnellyrte Tony Connelly	19.	@katieghannon Katie Hannon
10.	@newschambers Richard Chambers	20.	@jenoconnell Jennifer O'Connell

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MURRAY TWEETINDEX

In other categories, RTE's Managing Editor Jon Williams was top in Editorial, whilst the Irish Times' Conor Pope and the Irish Sun's Ken Sweeney remained number one in Consumer & Personal Finance and Entertainment respectively.

The full list of category winners follows:

MOST INFLUENTIAL
JOURNALISTS BY CATEGORY

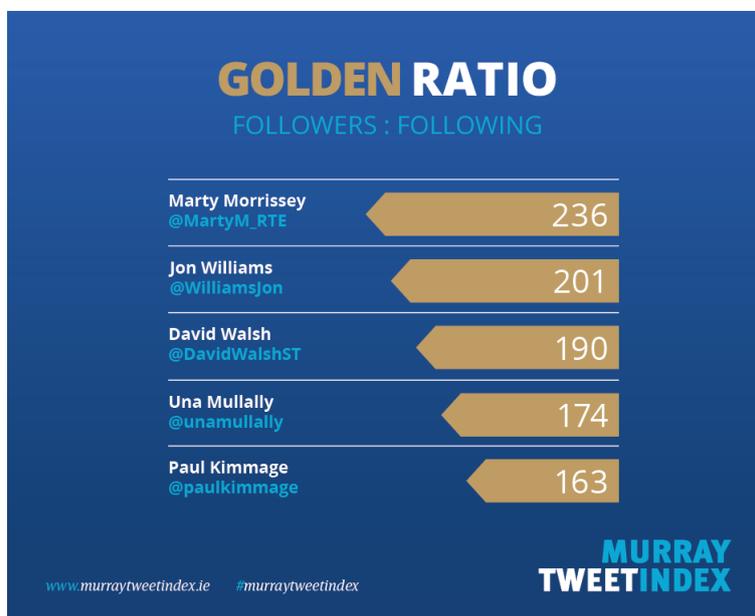| CATEGORY	JOURNALIST
NEWS	Tony Connelly @tconnellyrte
BUSINESS	Tom Lyons @TomLyonsBiz
SPORT	Kevin Palmer @RealKevinPalmer
POLITICS	Gavan Reilly @gavreilly
BROADCAST PRESENTER	Matt Cooper @cooper_m
CONSUMER/PERSONAL FINANCE	Conor Pope @conor_pope
AGRICULTURE/FARMING	Suzanne Campbell @campbellsuz
TECHNOLOGY	Adrian Weckler @adrianweckler
ENTERTAINMENT	Ken Sweeney @KenSweeney
COLUMNIST	Una Mullally @unamullally
HEALTH	Fergal Bowers @fergalbowers
FOOD & DRINK	Keith Mahon @MrKeithMahon
PROPERTY	Gabrielle Monaghan @gabbymonaghan
FASHION	Brendan Courtney @brendancourtney
EDITORIAL	Jon Williams @WilliamsJon
BEAUTY	Triona McCarthy @triona_ie
CRIME	Conor Gallagher @ConorGallaghe_r

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MURRAY TWEETINDEX

Analysing the results by outlet showed RTE, at 18, with the most journalists in the top 100, followed by the Irish Times and Independent News & Media both with 13, the Sunday Business Post with 10, Newstalk with 8, the Sunday Times/The Times with 6, Joe.ie/Maximum Media with 3, and Virgin Media, the Irish Examiner, the Irish Daily Mail, and thejournal.ie all with 2.

TOP
MEDIA OUTLETS
& NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS IN TOP 100

RTÉ	18	thejournal.ie	2
Irish Times	13	Virgin Media	2
Independent News & Media	13	Irish Daily Mail	2
Sunday Business Post	10	Irish Daily Star	1
Newstalk	8	Irish Sun	1
Sunday Times / Times ROI	6	Today FM	1
Joe.ie / Maximum Media	3	Silicon Republic	1
Irish Examiner	2	Sunday World	1

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MURRAY TWEETINDEX

A new measurement introduced for this year's index was to look at the "golden ratio" of a handle's followers to accounts it is following**. A high positive ratio gives an indication of a person who is viewed as desirable or interesting to follow, showing that many more people want to hear from that person than the individual wants to follow. In our analysis RTE Sport's Marty Morrissey had the highest golden ratio, followed by RTE Managing Editor Jon Williams and Sunday Times sports journalist David Walsh.

GOLDEN RATIO
FOLLOWERS : FOLLOWING

Marty Morrissey @MartyM_RTE	236
Jon Williams @WilliamsJon	201
David Walsh @DavidWalshST	190
Una Mullally @unamullally	174
Paul Kimmage @paulkimmage	163

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MURRAY TWEETINDEX

Compared to last year, the biggest gainer in the index was Newstalk's courts correspondent Frank Greaney, up 365 positions to 28th place. Other gainers included Rosanna Cooney of The Times Ireland (up 351 places to 62nd), RTE Washington correspondent Brian O'Donovan (up 337 places to 56th), RTE Primetime political correspondent Katie Hannon (up 293 places to 19th) and Sunday Independent beauty columnist Triona McCarthy (up 265 places to 63rd).

TOP **5**
GAINERS
VS 2017

			PLACES GAINED
1	**Frank Greaney** @FrankGreaney Newstalk		365
2	**Rosanna Cooney** @RosannaCooney The Times Ireland		351
3	**Brian O'Donovan** @brianOD_News RTÉ		337
4	**Katie Hannon** @katieghannon RTÉ		293
5	**Triona McCarthy** @triona_ie Sunday Independent		265

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MURRAY TWEETINDEX

Twitter's role in journalism continues to be the subject of debate, with major issues in the last 12-18 months including:

- Social media's use as a source of news is growing, with over 53% of those surveyed in Ireland in the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2018 citing social media as a source of news, up from 49% in 2015. Print media has declined from 50% to 37% in the same 3-year period, however news from social media is viewed as less trust worthy. [1]

- In July 2018 Twitter sought to address concerns about 'fake followers' by removing locked accounts that it was unable to validate. The move resulted in a substantial reduction in the number of followers for many high-profile handles. According to the New York Times, former US President Barrack Obama lost 3 million followers overnight, Oprah Winfrey lost 1.4 million followers, and Twitter's main account lost 7.7m followers, about 12% of its total [2] [3] ***

- So-called "junk news" is on the rise in the US, according to research by the Oxford Internet Institute. Despite Twitter and Facebook's efforts to improve the quality of political news shared on the platforms since Donald Trump's election in 2016, the research found the proportion of "junk news" in circulation had risen by 5%. [4]

- The top Irish news hashtags in 2018 were: #repealthe8th, #brexit, #aras18, #beastfromtheeast, #gdpr [5]

Commenting on the #murraytweetindex, Doug Keatinge, Director at Murray, who led the research said:

"It was a too close to call in this year's index with prolific Twitter users Matt Cooper and Gavan Reilly sharing the honours at the top. Both use the channel to promote their journalism and programmes, and to engage and entertain their followers. With 53% of Irish people surveyed in the Reuters Digital News Report 2018 getting their news from social

media, it is an important platform for journalists and media outlets to communicate with their audiences.

"Concerns over fake followers will continue to be discussed, and Twitter's purge last summer was a welcome attempt to address this issue. In an era of fake news, the reputation and credibility journalists can build on Twitter can go a long way to addressing the trustworthiness associated with news delivery on social media."

Pat Walsh, Managing Director of Murray said:

"Like readership, circulation or listenership, gauging followers or influence is not a definitive measure of journalism, but is it is a valid and objective measure of engagement and visibility, important considerations for media organisations and marketers alike.

"The beauty of followers is that they fan debate and aggregate audiences to sustain and complement great journalism, but only if that can be monetised. Much like the adage that 'turnover is vanity and profit is sanity' growing followers cannot be at the expense of driving the audience to paid-for content. That may require more discipline by media organisations in the period ahead but also an increasing say for journalists based on their ability to demonstrate with data their social media profile, and their personal connection and appeal to audiences."

In addition to the overall results and news category winners, the research looked at how journalists performed in each of the parameters by which they were measured. David McWilliams retained the position of having the most followers on Twitter, adding over 10,000 followers since last year. Sports journalist Ewan McKenna was the most prolific Tweeter with an average of 94 tweets or retweets per day. RTE's Jon Williams was the most retweeted journalist, ahead of Sunday Business Post political correspondent Hugh O'Connell.

The top-ranking journalists for each parameter are as follows:

The top 100 *#murraytweetindex* performers are displayed on an interactive website designed by Murray Creative, a division within Murray focussed on supporting clients' digital and social media needs.

www.murraytweetindex.ie

ENDS

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[1] http://www.digitalnewsreport.org/survey/analysis-by-country/2018/ireland-2018/
[2] https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/company/2018/Confidence-in-Follower-Counts.html
[3] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/12/technology/twitter-followers-nyt.html
[4] https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/news/releases/junk-news-dominating-coverage-of-us-midterms-on-social-media-new-research-finds/
[5] https://www.rte.ie/news/business/2018/1205/1015298-what-people-were-talking-about-on-twitter-in-2018/

Methodology

*The study was based on the analysis of the Twitter handles of over 700 journalists carried out in November and December 2018. Using the analysis tool Twitonomy, we gathered the following data for each of the journalists:

1. Total Number of Followers   30%
2. Total Number of Retweets   25%
3. % Retweeted   15%
4. Total Number of Favourites   15%
5. % of Favourited   5%
6. Tweets per day   10%

The data was based on the previous 3,200 tweets that the user had made (or if the user had yet to make 3,200 tweets then all their tweets to date). To calculate the overall rankings we attached a weighting to the users' ranking in each of the individual parameters. The percentages shown above indicate the weighting each parameter was given in the overall score. The factors that influence the overall ranking are:

- A person's absolute popularity on Twitter (as measured by number of followers)
- The quality of engagement the user has with followers (as measured by the absolute number of retweets and favourites, and the percentage of these in the tweets analysed)
- The level of activity on Twitter (as measured by Tweets per day)

Journalists who had tweeted less than 10 times during 2018 were excluded from the analysis due to their lack of activity. Journalists were allocated to the category we viewed as their primary responsibility during the year under review (e.g. Will Goodbody as a technology rather than business reporter). Journalists were attributed to the news organisation which they had worked with for the majority of the year even if they moved jobs during the year (e.g. Martina Fitzgerald/RTE, Dearbhail McDonald/INM, Tom Lyons/Sunday Business Post)

**The following to follower ratio – "Golden ratio" - was calculated by dividing the number of followers of a handle by the number of accounts it is following. Journalists following only one account were excluded from this analysis.

***The index has taken every journalists' Twitter followers at face value as recorded by Twitonomy. We have not come across a reliable method to ascertain with certainty if someone has acquired fake followers, and how many there might be, and therefore do not believe we can make that judgement call.

For comments or suggestions on the methodology, or to suggest a name that was not included and should have been, please email us at <u>tweetindex@murraygroup.ie</u>

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TOP 100

=1	Matt Cooper	@cooper_m
=1	Gavan Reilly	@gavreilly
3	Jon Williams	@WilliamsJon
4	Philip Boucher-Hayes	@boucherhayes
5	Hugh O'Connell	@oconnellhugh
6	Roisin Ingle	@roisiningle
7	Una Mullally	@unamullally
8	Kevin Palmer	@RealKevinPalmer
9	Tony Connelly	@tconnellyrte
10	Richard Chambers	@newschambers
11	Simon Carswell	@sicarswell
12	Tom Lyons	@TomLyonsBiz
13	Amy O'Connor	@amyohconnor
14	David Quinn	@DavQuinn
15	David McWilliams	@davidmcw
16	Sally Hayden	@sallyhayd
17	Ellen Coyne	@ellenmcoyne
18	Colette Brown	@colettebrowne
19	Katie Hannon	@katieghannon
20	Jennifer O'Connell	@jenoconnell
21	Des Cahill	@sportsdes
22	Colm Parkinson	@Woolberto
23	Pat Kenny	@patkennynt
24	Kevin Doyle	@KevDoyle_Indo
25	Fergal Bowers	@fergalbowers
26	Caitriona Perry	@caitrionaperry
27	Daniel McDonnell	@McDonnellDan
28	Frank Greaney	@FrankGreaney
29	Jim Carroll	@byjimcarroll
30	Adrian Weckler	@adrianweckler
31	Will Goodbody	@willgoodbody
32	Naomi O'Leary	@NaomiOhReally
33	Jonathan Healy	@jonathanhealy
34	Conor Pope	@conor_pope
35	Susan Mitchell	@susmitchellSBP
36	Dan O'Brien	@danobrien20
37	Ivan Yates	@IvanYatesNT
38	Dearbhail McDonald	@DearbhailDibs
39	Sinead Ryan	@sinead_ryan
40	Charlie Weston	@CWeston_Indo
41	Rosita Boland	@RositaBoland
42	Kitty Holland	@kittyhollandit
43	Gavin Sheridan	@gavinsblog
44	Pól Ó Conghaile	@poloconghaile
45	Orla Tinsley	@orlatinsley
46	Colette Sexton	@colette_sexton
47	John Fogarty	@JohnFogartyIrl
48	Paul O'Donoghue	@paulodonoghue93
49	Martina Fitzgerald	@martinafitzg
50	Sinead O'Carroll	@SineadOCarroll

51	Rosemary McCabe	@RosemaryMacCabe
52	Conor Gallagher	@ConorGallaghe_r
53	Philip Bromwell	@philipbromwell
54	Keith Mahon	@MrKeithMahon
55	Kieran Cunningham	@KCsixtyseven
56	Brian O'Donovan	@brianOD_News
57	Miguel Delaney	@MiguelDelaney
58	Nadine O'Regan	@NadineORegan
59	Frank Fitzgibbon	@franksuntimes
60	Gillian Nelis	@gnelis
61	Pat Leahy	@PatLeahyIT
62	Rosanna Cooney	@RosannaCooney
63	Triona McCarthy	@triona_ie
64	Sean Defoe	@SeanDefoe
65	Alison O'Connor	@alisonoconn
66	Miriam O'Callaghan	@miriamocal
67	Neil O'Riordan	@noriordan
68	Suzanne Campbell	@campbellsuz
69	Ruth Dudley Edwards	@RuthDE
70	Malachy Clerkin	@malachyclerkin
71	Bobby Kerr	@bobbykerr
72	Evanne Ní Chuilinn	@EvanneNiC
73	Shane Beatty	@ShaneBeattyNews
74	Fintan O'Toole	@fotoole
75	Susan Daly	@BiddyEarly
76	Ronan Murphy	@swearimnotpaul
77	Michael Brennan	@obraonain
78	Cian Tracey	@CianTracey1
79	Philip Nolan	@philipnolan1
80	Rúaidhrí O'Connor	@RuaidhriOC
81	Nathan Murphy	@nathanmurf
82	Hugh Linehan	@hlinehan
83	Justine Stafford	@Justinestafford
84	Elaine Byrne	@elainebyrne
85	Shona Murray	@ShonaMurray_
86	Damien O'Meara	@damien_omeara
87	Eric Lalor	@ericlalor
88	Ian Guider	@ianguider
89	Deirdre O'Shaughnessy	@deshocks
90	Orla O'Donnell	@orlaodo
91	John Kennedy	@MrJohnFKennedy
92	Henry McKean	@HenryMcKean
93	Stephen Kinsella	@stephenkinsella
94	Mark Tighe	@marktigheST
95	Marie-Claire Digby	@mcdigby
96	Cathal Mac Coille	@CMacCoille
97	Michael Corcoran	@michaelc_rte
98	Alison Comyn	@alisoncomyn
99	Tom Doorley	@tomdoorley
100	Peter Carroll	@PetesyCarroll

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