

Viewers and Voters: Attitudes to television coverage of the 2005 General Election

**Research Study conducted by ICM Research on
behalf of Ofcom**

Please note that figures for Five and Sky News in Table 2 (Perceptions of fairness towards all parties on different channels, pre-Election survey) and Table 3 (Perceptions of fairness towards all parties on different channels, post-Election survey) on page 16 of the report have been amended to exclude those respondents who claimed they could not receive either channel in addition to those answering 'don't know' to the question.

Amended 15 September 2005

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Foreword

Sections 319 and 320 of the Communications Act require Ofcom to establish a code setting standards of 'due impartiality', on matters of current political controversy and relating to current public policy, on television services regulated by Ofcom, apart from those of the BBC which are funded from the licence fee. The current Ofcom Broadcasting Code came into effect in July 2005, but similar rules were included in the previous code, which was in force at the time of the General Election. Section 265 of the Act requires programmes on ITV, Channel 4 and Five to be of high quality. Section 333 of the Act requires ITV, Channel 4 and Five to observe rules set by Ofcom on the allocation of party political broadcasts. These rules were published in October 2004.

This research has been commissioned by Ofcom in order to understand the attitudes of viewers and voters to television coverage of the 2005 general election. Findings concerning the quality and effectiveness of coverage form a valuable part of Ofcom's assessment of the delivery of Public Service Broadcasting, while findings about fairness and impartiality inform the Broadcasting Code/standards area of work. The research follows previous General Election studies conducted by the Independent Television Commission, but uses updated methodology.

Research into attitudes to Party Election Broadcasts will inform the review of rules on party political broadcasting that Ofcom will conduct once the outcome of the government consultation on this subject is known.

The independent research detailed in this report was commissioned by Ofcom from ICM Research, a reputable research and polling organisation. The research was quantitative in nature and is representative of the UK population.

Section 1

Executive summary

The General Election of 2005 took place against a backdrop of declining levels of political interest and participation in politics across the board. Turnout in the preceding General Election of 2001 had dipped to a record low of 59%, political party memberships had dropped significantly in the meantime, and a general antipathy toward politicians and political processes has been generally observed by opinion pollsters and academics alike.

The Local Authority and European Parliament elections of 2004 suggested that the turnout 'floor' had been reached, even if the introduction of all-postal pilot schemes for voting was the mechanism for reacquainting some voters with the democratic process. As such, the 2005 General Election was eagerly anticipated by electoral administrators and political commentators alike. The contribution of the media to perceptions of campaign and the extent to which politics on television contributed to any developments in turnout was also of interest.

In March 2005 Ofcom commissioned ICM Research, an independent research agency, to undertake a programme of research that identified the views of the general public toward General Election broadcasting on television.

ICM Research interviewed a random sample of 1,438 people aged 18 years and over by telephone on the pre-Election survey (undertaken during 6-12th April), and 1,433 on the post-Election survey (undertaken during 6-16th May).

Political interest and voting behaviour

The survey showed that:

- Around four out of ten UK adults claimed to have a lot of interest in politics and one-half of the population were only interested a little. Those most interested in politics tended to be male, aged 45 years and above and in social groups AB.
- A range of different sources were used to obtain information on political issues, but television in general (four-fifths of respondents), and news programmes in particular (around one-half) were named as the main sources. Radio and national newspapers also came narrowly behind party campaign material, local newspapers, and conversations with other people.
- 60% of post wave respondents claimed they had decided how they would cast their vote before the campaign began and the date for the Election was set.
- However, a significant minority of the electorate (25%) decided how they would vote within the later stages of the Election campaign, including 16% in the last few days.
- The pre and post election surveys found that the Conservatives' share of voting intentions fell across the election campaign, with Liberal Democrats and smaller parties gaining and Labour stable.

Television coverage of the 2005 election

- Just over half of respondents felt that television channels as a whole devoted the right amount of time to Election coverage, but four-in-ten felt there was too much and a few felt there was too little. The majority reported that this coverage was fair to all political parties. Just under two-thirds reported that it covered the issues that were relevant to them.
- Respondents reported that television coverage explained issues either quite (55%) or very well (14%), and the majority believed that news coverage of the Election was fair, accurate, balanced, informative and impartial.
- Respondents also reported that television programmes were good at explaining each of the party's policies, though the programmes tended to spend too much time on the personalities of politicians.
- Around two-fifths of respondents reported that they paid a lot of attention to television news coverage of the Election, no matter which political parties were featured.
- BBC1's coverage was rated the most accurate, interesting and informative of all channels.

Party Election Broadcasts

- Around seven in ten respondents reported that Party Election Broadcasts were either 'very' or 'quite' important. Three-fifths (62%) reported that they had watched at least one Party Election Broadcast during the 2005 Election campaign and that it had influenced how they would vote either a little (39%) or a lot (16%). As already mentioned, many people had already made up their minds about which party to vote for, and the net effect of PEBs in many cases was merely to confirm or consolidate party preferences.
- Over three-quarters of respondents (78%) believed that Party Election Broadcasts should not be carried outside the five main terrestrial channels.
- Just over half (54%) believed that parties should remain unable to take paid advertising on television, but 38% believed this should be allowed either instead of or as well as PEBs.
- Three-fifths of respondents (60%) would like to see PEBs shortened, but 55% said if the broadcasts were shorter in length they would not like to see any more than there are at present.

Young adults

- The survey results suggested that more than one-half of 18-24 year olds (51%) did not vote in the 2005 General Election compared with the entire sample (28%).
- Higher proportions of younger people (18% aged 18-24 post election) reported that they had no interest in politics compared with all respondents (13% post election).
- While 63% of younger people used television news broadcasts as a primary source of information on politics, in general they did not think that television explained party policies very well (30% of 18-24 year olds compared with 25% of all respondents pre election), and that too little time was spent

covering opinion polls, the personalities of politicians and press conferences, walkabouts and other personal appearances by politicians.

- Younger people were also more likely to claim that Party Election Broadcasts were important (68% of all respondents claimed that PEBs were important compared with 75% of 18-24 year olds post election) and that they used them to help decide how to vote in the Election (56% of younger people stated this compared with 39% of all respondents).
- Younger voters (15%) believed that there were not enough Election Broadcasts on television compared with the entire sample of respondents (7%) and that they would prefer to see shorter PEBs, more PEBs and 'red button' i.e. interactive broadcasts instead of Election Broadcasts.

Section 2

Objectives and methodology

In March 2005, independent research agency, ICM Research was commissioned by Ofcom to undertake a programme of research that identified the views of the general public toward General Election broadcasting on television. The Election was called by the Prime Minister on 5th April 2005, with the fieldwork on the pre-Election stage of the research commencing the following day. The post-Election wave of research commenced on the 6th May 2005, the day after the General Election. The purpose of this fieldwork structure was to identify movements in the public's mood, understanding and awareness of political related broadcasting issues both before and after the Election¹.

ICM Research interviewed a random sample of 1,438 people aged 18 years and over by telephone on the pre-Election survey (undertaken during 6-12th April), and 1,433 on the post-Election survey (undertaken during 6-16th May). Booster interviews were conducted in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in order that a minimum of 200 interviews were obtained in each nation.

The regional distribution of interviews is outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Responses to the pre- and post-Election surveys by country and English region

Region	Un-weighted		Weighted			
	Pre-Election	Post Election	Pre-Election	Post-Election	Pre-Election	Post-Election
	Resp.	Resp.	Resp.	%	Resp.	%
England	833	833	1194	83	1190	83
North East	43	44	58	4	57	4
North West	114	115	173	12	172	12
Yorkshire & Humberside	84	84	115	8	115	8
East Midlands	73	72	101	7	100	7
West Midlands	90	90	129	9	129	9
Eastern	93	92	129	9	129	9
Greater London	115	115	173	12	172	12
South East	135	136	201	14	201	14
South West	86	85	115	8	115	8
Scotland	203	200	129	9	129	9
Wales	201	200	72	5	72	5
Northern Ireland	201	200	43	3	43	3
TOAL	1,438	1,433	1,438	100	1,434	100

¹ This research was initially intended to be a repeat of pre- and post-Election research undertaken by the Independent Television Commission during the 2001 General Election campaign. However, the methodological approach utilised on this occasion differs materially from that used in 2001. On the previous occasion, a panel approach was adopted, with a representative demographic sample from the panel – which was primarily comprised of TV viewers. For this project, a random telephone survey was considered more appropriate, as the panel methodology used in 2001 was likely to contain members that were more interested in politics and the media than 'typical' members of the public.

The weighted bases show the proportion of interviews that would have been conducted in each region (and each type of area) if the whole survey had been conducted in proportion to the distribution of the adult UK population. All results have been re-weighted to be representative of the UK population.

Section 3

Voting Behaviour and the 2005 General Election

The following section details the level of interest in politics, voting intentions and behaviours in the lead up to the General Election.

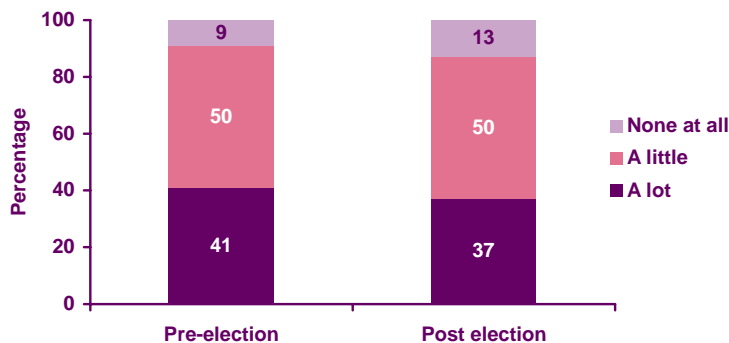
The Election survey indicated that four-in ten adults had a strong interest in the Election during the build up to Election Day. One-half of the population had a 'a little' interest in politics and the remaining one-in-ten had no interest at all. Interest levels waned slightly post election – this is likely to be due to post election fatigue.

More than one-half of UK adults in the research reported they were certain to vote in the 2005 General Election, and those that did vote had decided how they would cast their vote well before the date of the Election was set. However, around one-quarter of voters decided who they would vote for during the latter stages of the Election campaign.

Interest in politics

The chart below shows that around four-in-ten of those surveyed before and after the General Election reported that they had a strong interest in politics, while one-half stated that they were only a little interested. Around one-in-ten respondents reported that they had no interest at all in politics. There was a slight reduction in interest between the pre- and post-Election survey and this is most likely explained by a form of 'Election-fatigue' brought on by the coverage of the 2005 vote.

Chart 1: How much interest do you generally have in what is going on in politics?



Base: Pre-Election 1,438, post-Election 1,433

Those respondents in both the pre- and post-Election survey most interested in politics were likely to be²:

- Male (pre-Election 52%, post-Election 42%);
- Aged 45-64 years (pre-Election 47%, post-Election 42%) and 65 years and above (pre-Election 50%, post-Election 42%);
- In socio-economic groups AB (pre-Election 50%, post-Election 48%);
- In households without children (pre-Election 45%, post-Election 41%);
- More likely to vote (pre-Election 49%);
- Voted in the Election (post-Election 43%);
- Vote Conservative (pre-Election 53%, post-Election 50%) or Liberal Democrat (pre-Election 47%; post election 44%);
- Those who claim to pay a lot of attention to Party Election Broadcasts (pre-Election 69%, post-Election 67%).

Those describing themselves as having no interest in politics were likely to be:

- Aged 18-24 years (pre-Election 17%, post-Election 18%);
- Working part-time (pre-Election 14%);
- In socio-economic groups C2 (pre-Election 10%, post-Election 18%) and DE (pre-Election 11%, post-Election 15%);
- In households with children (pre-Election 13%, post-Election 17%);
- Certain not to vote in the Election (pre-Election 45%),
- Those that did not vote in the Election (post-Election 26%);
- Those claiming to pay no attention to Election campaign news broadcasts (pre-Election 46%, post-Election 45%).

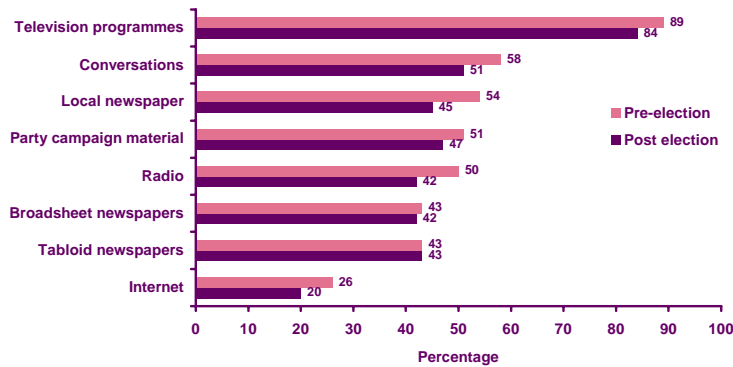
Sources of information on politics

Television was claimed to be the most common source of information on political issues before and during the General Election campaign. While 39% of respondents believed that there was too much television coverage of politics and the Election, the majority (69%) believed the coverage explained the issues well; was fair; accurate; balanced; informative and impartial. Around two-thirds of UK adults in the survey also reported that they had paid a lot of attention to television news coverage of the Election, no matter which political party was featured.

In common with previous research carried out by the Independent Television Commission, television was claimed to be the medium of choice for gathering information on political issues by a majority of the population. Over four-fifths of all adults in the survey claimed they used television as a source of information on political issues. The most popular sources of information and discussion for political issues and election news following television included conversations with friends, colleagues or relatives – these were mentioned by just over 50% of adults. Newspapers and the internet were also popular sources of political information for some respondents.

² Where sub-groups of respondents are highlighted in this report, the actions and attitudes of these groups are significantly different unless otherwise stated.

Chart 2: Sources of information on political issues during the Election



Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

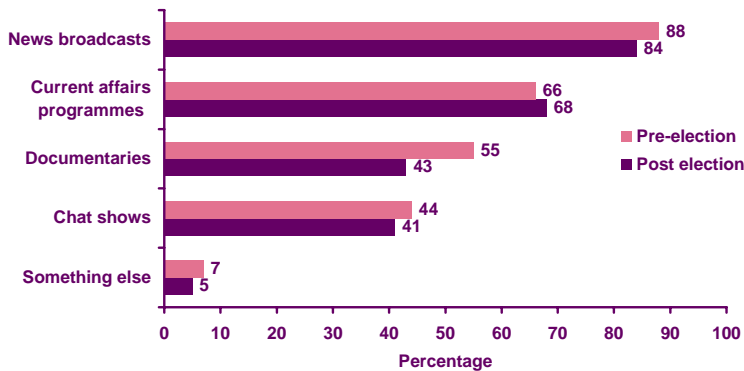
Sources of information used most often

Television was also reported to be the source of information on political matters used most often. More than one-half of those surveyed (51% pre/52% post) reported that they would use, or had used, television as their main source of information on political issues.

Programmes used to access information on political issues

When selecting from a pre-coded list, more than four-fifths of respondents claimed to have used television news broadcasts as a source of information, around two-thirds also watched current affairs programmes, such as *Question Time* or *Newsnight*. Other programmes viewed as a source of political information included documentaries, chat shows and discussion programmes.

Chart 3: Getting information on political issues from TV



Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

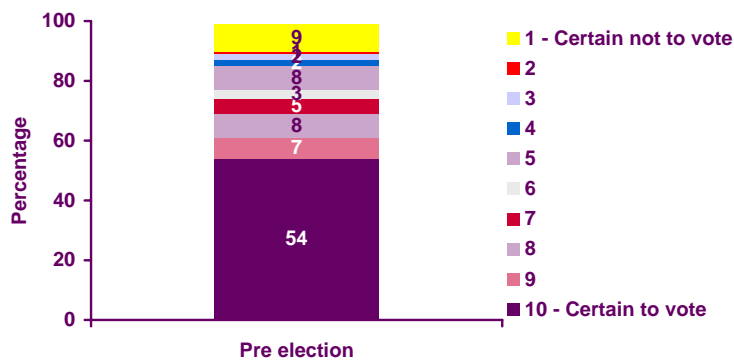
The single most used source of information on television on political issues was news broadcasts (52% pre/51% post), highlighted by one-half of respondents to the pre- and post-Election survey, followed by current affairs programmes (26% pre/30% post) which were used by just over one-quarter of respondents.

Further analysis of the data showed that news broadcasts were more likely to have been used as a source of political information by non-voters and those with less interest in politics.

Voting intentions in the 2005 General Election

During the pre-Election survey respondents were asked if they intended to vote in the 2005 Election using a ten-point scale, where “1” was “certain not to vote” and “10” was “absolutely certain to vote”. Respondents’ likelihood of voting is presented in Chart 4 below. Overall, just over one-half (54%) of respondents said they were certain to vote in the Election at the pre wave. When considering scores 8, 9 and 10 as strong voting intention, 61% of the electorate claimed they were certain to vote. Fewer than one in ten (9%) claimed they were certain not to vote.

Chart 4: Voting likelihood, pre-Election survey



Base: Pre-Election, 1,438

Respondents’ intention to vote increased with age – for example, only 30% of 18-24 year olds said they were certain to vote in the Election (a score of 10), compared with 73% of those aged 65 years and over. Those who reported they were most likely to vote in the Election included:

- Those not working (63%);
- Those without children in the household (57%);
- Conservatives and Labour voters (67% in each case);
- Those interested in politics “a lot” (72%);
- Those claiming to pay the most attention to campaign news broadcasts (69%).

72% of respondents reported they had voted in the 2005 Election (as recorded in the post-Election survey) - 11 percentage points higher than the actual turnout of the 2005 Election. By contrast, the proportion of those in the pre-Election survey who rated their likelihood of voting at “10” and “9” was 61% – the actual level of turn-out in the General Election of 2005. This over-recall of turnout post election is in line with expectations and is largely as a result of the accuracy of the Electoral Roll, as well as it being easier to locate and interview people who retain a level of interest in politics and voting (ie those that are more likely to have voted in the Election).

The proportions of those that reported they had voted in the Election increased with each age band, from 48% of 18-24 year olds to 86% of those aged 65 years and

over. In addition, those more likely to say they had voted in the 2005 General Election included:

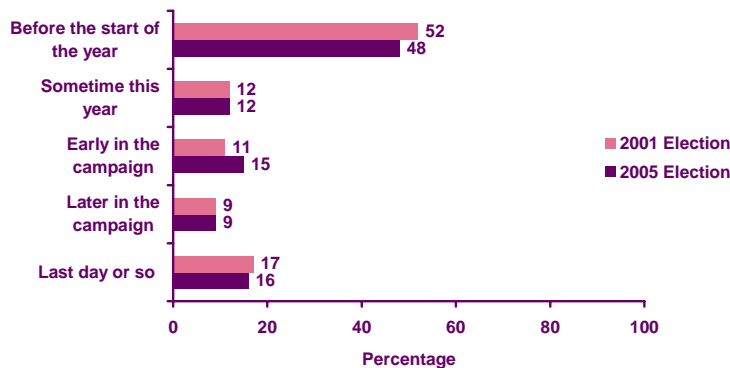
- Those not working (78%);
- Those without children in the household (75%);
- Those with a lot of interest in politics (83%);
- Those claiming to pay the most attention to campaign news broadcasts (81%).

These findings are very much in line with the work of other polling organisations. The profile of differential voters is very consistent across elections, and these results conform to patterns observed, for example, by ICM and MORI on behalf of The Electoral Commission over the last few years. (Explaining Turnout 2004. The Electoral Commission).

When did the electorate decide how they would vote?

Respondents in the post-Election survey who voted were asked to state when they decided how they would vote the way they did in the 2005 General Election (Chart 5). The majority of those who said they had voted (60%) said they had decided how they would vote before the 2005 General Election campaign had started – this may be an indicator of voter’s partisan attachment, whereby they strongly associate themselves with a particular political party and vote for that party no matter what the circumstances. Almost one-half of respondents (48%) reported that they had made up their mind before the start of 2005, while just over one in ten respondents (12%) decided how they would vote sometime during 2005. A fairly significant minority (25%) made up their minds quite late in the campaign indicating swing voting, mind changing and perhaps deciding whether to vote at all, right up until the last minute.

Chart 5: When respondents decided when they would vote in the 2001 and 2005 General Election



Base: 2005 Post-Election survey – voters (1,032); 2001 percentages taken from ITC’s ‘Election 2001’ report

Those groups most likely to have made the decision on how they would vote before the start of the year included:

- Adults aged 65 and over (59%);
- Those not working (55%);
- Respondents in social class DE (55%);
- With no children in the household (52%);
- Those that voted Conservative (57%);
- Living in Wales (57%).

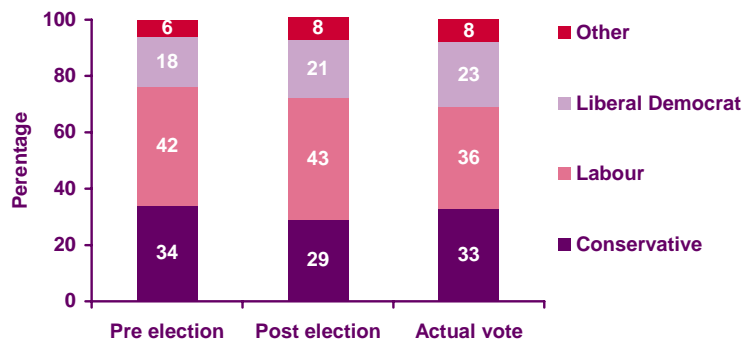
Respondents who had decided how they would vote in the days leading up to polling day included:

- Around one-quarter of those aged 18-24 years (28%) and 25-44 years (23%);
- 27% of those that were unemployed; and
- 19% of ABs and C1s.

Voting intention and actual voting in the 2005 Election

The chart below reveals the pre- and post-Election shares of the vote in addition to the actual vote distribution in the Election. The Labour party won the 2005 General Election with 36% of the vote, followed by the Conservatives (33%), the Liberal Democrats (23%) and other parties (8%). The pre-Election scores do not represent the ICM prediction, as the full set of ICM vote intention questions were not included on the questionnaire. This also applies to the slight post-Election voting imbalance. However, both pre- and post-Election surveys are satisfactorily in the expectation of response voting patterns given the questionnaire limitations described.

Chart 6: Shares of the vote



Base: Pre-Election – Expressing an intention to vote (865), post-Election – Reported vote behaviour (771)

The Conservatives declined in share of voting intentions across the campaign, with Liberal Democrats and smaller parties gaining and Labour stable.

Section 4

Television coverage of the 2005 General Election

The majority of respondents (60% pre election, 52% post election) believed television channels devoted sufficient time to Election coverage. The coverage was also considered, in general, fair to all political parties and covered the issues that were relevant to them. Respondents also felt that television programmes were good at explaining each of the party's policies, though the coverage tended to spend too much time on the personalities of politicians.

Some respondents (41% post wave) believed that there was too much coverage of politics and the Election on television. However, the majority reported that the coverage on the whole explained the issues well, was fair, accurate, balanced, informative and impartial. Respondents also claimed that they paid attention to television coverage of the Election, no matter which political party was featured.

Time devoted to coverage of the General Election on TV

Respondents were asked to consider how much time the main terrestrial television channels and the 24 hour news services provided by the BBC, ITV and Sky spent covering the Election.

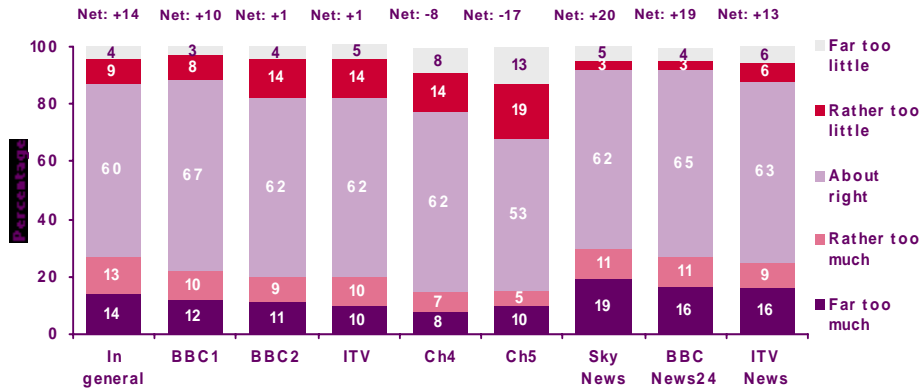
Respondents were asked to rate the amount of coverage using the following five-point scale:

- Far too much time;
- Rather too much time;
- About the right amount of time;
- Rather too little time; and
- Far too little time.

Chart 7 below illustrates respondents' view of the time devoted to television coverage of the Election, as well as a "net" figure. Where the net number is positive, this illustrates that a greater proportion of respondents believed there was too much time devoted to coverage of the Election compared to those that thought there was too little time.

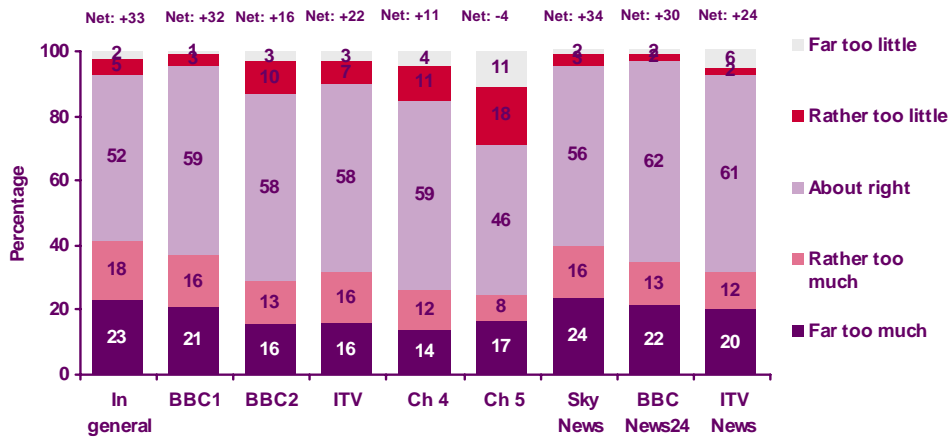
Just over half of post wave respondents (52%) reported that, overall, the amount of Election coverage on television was about right. However, significant proportions of post wave respondents (41%) felt that too much time was spent on television covering the General Election.

Chart 7: Respondents' perceptions of the amount of coverage on each channel, pre-Election survey



Base: All pre-Election respondents, excluding 'Don't knows'

Chart 8: Respondents' perceptions of the amount of coverage on each channel, post-Election survey



Base: All post-Election respondents, excluding 'Don't knows'

Fairness of television coverage

Respondents of the post-Election survey were asked to rate the fairness of each channel's coverage of the Election. After excluding those answering 'don't know', higher proportions of respondents rated Channel 4's and ITV's coverage of the Election as fair to all parties, compared with the BBC's coverage. Channel 5 and Sky News was rated lower than the other television channels – these figures may be affected by lower levels of familiarity with these channels.

There was very little movement in perceptions of fairness pre-post campaign.

This information is detailed in Table 2 and Table 3 below

Table 2: Perceptions of fairness towards all parties on different channels, pre-Election survey

Fairness	BBC channels (%)	ITV channels (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)
Fair to all parties	80	85	89	88	90
Unfair	20	15	11	12	10
Unfair to Liberal Democrats	8	6	3	5	5
Unfair to Labour	7	4	2	3	4
Unfair to Conservatives	6	3	4	3	1
Unfair to SNP	3	3	2	3	2
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	2	2	2	2	2
Unfair to other parties	7	7	5	5	4
Base	1,182	1,029	747	491	490

Notes: Excludes those saying 'Don't know' and don't receive C5 or Sky News

Table 3: Perceptions of fairness towards all parties on different channels, post-Election survey

Fairness	BBC channels (%)	ITV channels (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)
Fair to all parties	79	86	88	90	95
Unfair	21	14	12	10	5
Unfair to Liberal Democrats	7	5	3	3	1
Unfair to Labour	6	3	3	2	1
Unfair to Conservatives	6	3	3	4	2
Unfair to SNP	2	2	2	4	1
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	2	2	1	2	0
Unfair to other parties	8	6	5	4	2
Base	1,197	1,038	710	483	440

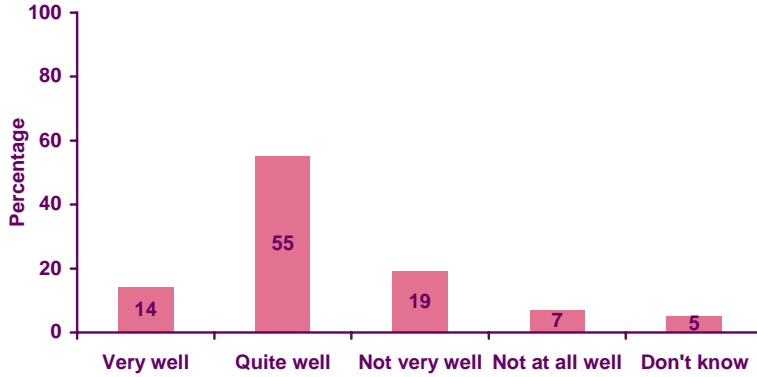
Notes: Excludes those saying 'Don't know' and don't receive C5 or Sky News

Explaining Party policies on television

Chart 9 below illustrates the extent to which respondents believed that the television coverage explained the policies of the political parties during the Election.

Over two-thirds of respondents remarked that this aspect of television coverage had been explained very or quite well, while over one-quarter reported that party policies had been described not very or not at all well.

Chart 9: How well TV explained parties' policies



Base: post-Election 1,433

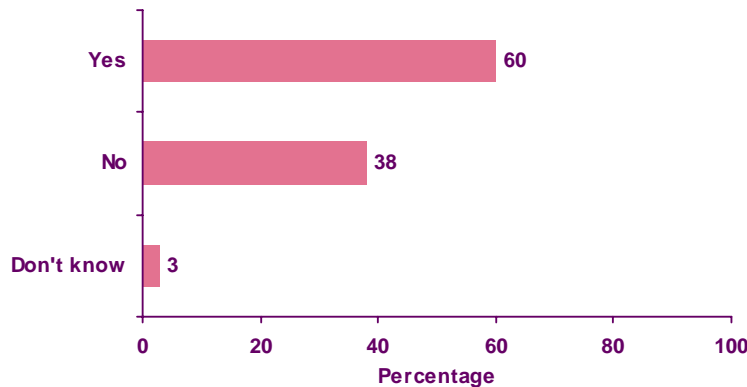
Sub-groups most likely to report that television explained party policies either very or quite well included:

- Those aged 65 year and over (75%);
- Those in Northern Ireland (78%);
- Those reporting “a little” interest in politics and in campaign broadcasts (74% in both cases).

Covering issues relevant to respondents

Respondents were asked the extent to which television covered issues in the Election that mattered to them personally. In total, three-fifths of those surveyed after the Election reported that topics that mattered to them personally were covered on television, compared with more than one-third reporting that it did not (Chart 10).

Chart 10: Did TV coverage contain topics that mattered to you personally?



Base: Post-Election 1,433.

An analysis of the data shows that when compared to the entire sample, higher proportions of those aged 18-24 years (57%), those unemployed (49%), those that did not vote in the Election (51%) and those with no interest in politics (67%) reported that television did not cover topics that mattered to them personally.

Time devoted to specific aspects of Election coverage

Respondents were asked their opinion using a five-point scale from ‘far too much time’ to ‘far too little time’ on six different aspects of television coverage on the General Election:

- The results of opinion polls;
- Personalities of politicians;
- Policies of the parties;
- Analysis by TV’s own political correspondents;
- Analysis by other outside experts (not politicians or television journalists); and
- Press conferences, walkabouts or other appearances by politicians.

Respondents’ views of the time devoted on television to these issues are presented Table 4. Across all aspects of coverage, respondents’ pre-Election views differed from those expressed in the post-Election survey, with the proportion of respondents believing that too much time was spent on issues increasing between the first and second wave of the research.

Respondents reported that too much time was spent on opinion poll results, analysis by political correspondents, press conferences and other personal appearances from politicians. Respondents highlighted that too much time was spent on the personalities of politicians in both the pre- (42%) and post-Election (52%) surveys. In contrast, 17% of respondents felt too much time was devoted to party policies and 27% felt ‘too little’ time was devoted to this area – this figures moved to 24% and 29% respectively after the Election.

Comparison data from the 2001 survey conducted for the Independent Television Commission is presented below.

Table 4: Perceptions of the amount of time devoted to different aspects of the coverage

Aspect of coverage	Pre-Election (2005)			Post-Election (2005)			ITC 2001 Election		
	Too much (%)	About right (%)	Too little (%)	Too much (%)	About right (%)	Too little (%)	Too much (%)	About right (%)	Too little (%)
Results of opinion polls	33	40	14	38	40	9	65	32	3
Personalities of politicians	42	36	12	47	34	10	67	29	11
Policies of the parties	17	48	27	22	44	27	46	35	19
Analysis by TV’s own political correspondents	25	55	11	29	54	6	61	35	3
Analysis by other outside experts (not politicians or TV journalists)	24	41	21	28	42	16	58	32	9
Press conferences, walkabouts or other appearances by politicians	30	41	18	35	39	13	66	30	4

Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433; 2001 results taken from ‘Election 2001’, ITC 2001

Views of channels' broadcasting during the Election

Survey respondents were asked to consider the General Election and state which channel's coverage was:

- Most interesting;
- Least biased;
- Most entertaining;
- Most accurate;
- Most thorough coverage;
- Best at explaining the issues;
- Most exciting;
- Most informative; and
- Most useful.

Table 5, Table 6 and the chart below illustrate respondents' views of particular aspects of the Election coverage on television. BBC1's coverage of the Election was rated the highest across all categories, including the most interesting, accurate and informative – this is a reflection, in part, of the size and the familiarity of the channel. The lower scores of the other channels reflect, at least in part, their lower levels of viewership.

Table 5: Perceptions of the way different channels covered the Election, pre-Election

Coverage	BBC1 (%)	BBC2 (%)	ITV (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)	BBC News 24 (%)	ITV 24hr News (%)
Most interesting (1,286)	50	7	21	8	1	7	6	1
Least biased (914)	34	10	24	15	7	7	4	1
Most entertaining (1,117)	35	7	33	11	3	8	3	1
Most accurate (993)	54	9	16	8	0	7	5	0
Most thorough (1,197)	52	11	15	9	0	7	5	1
Best at explaining (1,205)	51	9	20	9	1	6	4	0
Most exciting (983)	34	6	33	11	3	9	3	0
Most informative (1,272)	53	10	15	9	1	7	5	0
Most useful (1,248)	49	8	19	9	0	9	5	0

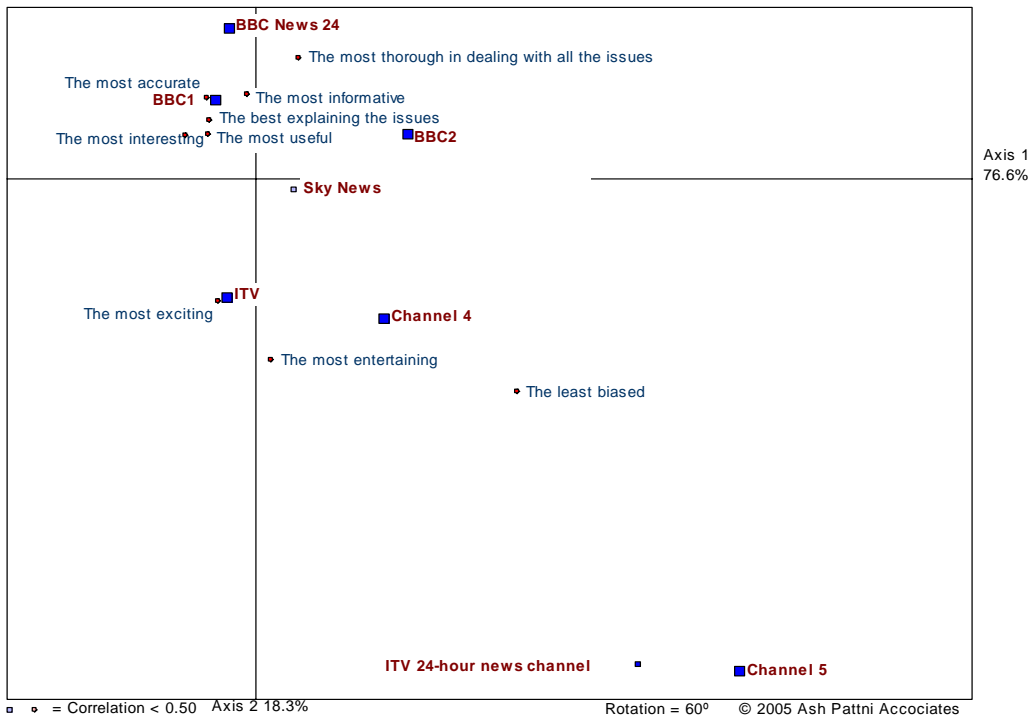
Base: Figures in brackets, excluding "don't knows"

Table 6: Perceptions of the way different channels covered the Election, post-Election

Coverage	BBC1 (%)	BBC2 (%)	ITV (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)	BBC News 24 (%)	ITV 24hr News (%)
Most interesting (1,227)	51	5	23	5	1	5	3	0
Least biased (934)	31	9	23	11	5	6	1	1
Most entertaining (1,023)	38	6	32	8	3	4	2	1
Most accurate (1,005)	49	6	20	5	1	4	3	0
Most thorough (1,116)	50	10	18	5	1	5	4	0
Best explaining (1,143)	51	7	22	6	1	5	3	0
Most exciting (970)	39	5	28	7	2	6	2	0
Most informative (1,202)	52	8	19	7	1	5	3	0
Most useful (1,174)	49	6	22	6	1	5	3	0

Base: Figures in brackets, excluding "don't knows"

The chart below shows the same information presented in tables 5 and 6- correlation analysis has been conducted to help illustrate how voters perceive each channel relative to the other channels. The square boxes represent television channels, while the smaller dots show the attributes of the coverage. The closer the smaller 'attribute' dots appear to the square channel boxes, the more respondents associate particular attributes to specific channels. For example, while BBC1's coverage is considered the 'most accurate' by viewers, they consider that Channel 4's is the least 'biased'. All the BBC channels are characterised by stronger perceptions regarding accuracy, thoroughness and being informative.



It can be seen that, in particular, ITV News and Channel 5 are not in close proximity to any of the attributes. The main reason for this is the inability of many people to express opinions about these news services due to lack of familiarity, rather than as a result of formulating seriously negative impressions of the news services provided.

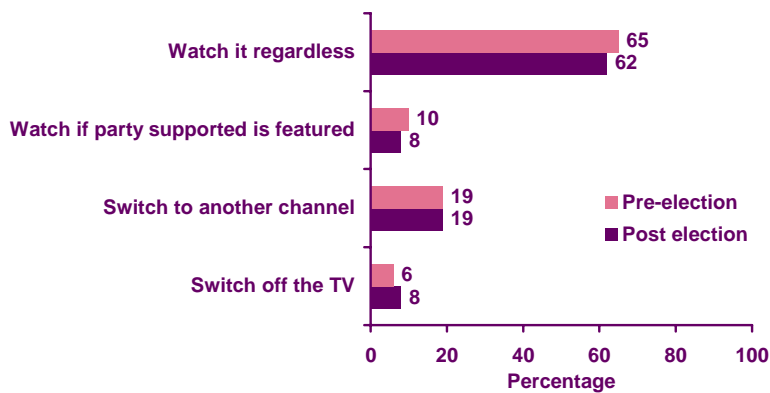
Television news coverage of the General Election

Viewer reaction to General Election coverage on television news

Respondents were asked what they did when Election coverage appeared on the television. Almost two-thirds of respondents at both the pre and post Election survey watched Election coverage regardless of which of the political parties it featured. In contrast, one-quarter either changed channel or switched the television set off altogether, while the remaining one in ten watched the coverage only if it featured the party they supported (Chart 11).

Research carried out by the ITC in 2001 reported that 45% of respondents watched Election coverage on the news no matter which party it featured, while 7% only watched the coverage if it featured the party they supported. 40% reported switching channels to void the coverage, while 8% switched-off the television altogether.

Chart 11: Viewer reaction to General Election coverage on TV news



Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

Watching regardless of which party was featured on the news

In the pre-Election survey, older respondents were more likely than younger viewers to watch news broadcasts no matter which party was featured. While this trend broadly remained in the post-Election survey, a smaller proportion of 18-24 year-olds and 45-66 year-olds reported that they watch Election coverage no matter which party was featured.

In both waves of the research, those in social class C2 and DE were less likely to watch the Election coverage in television news programmes than those in AB and C1 groups. Lower proportions of those who were part-time workers or unemployed tended to watch Election broadcasting when compared to full-time workers or those that were not working (Table 7).

Table 7: Watching television Election coverage on TV news no matter which party was featured

ATTRIBUTES	Pre-Election %	Post-Election %	ATTRIBUTES	Pre-Election %	Post-Election %
Total	65	62	Working status		
Gender			Full-time	67	62
Males	67	62	Part-time	59	56
Females	63	62	Unemployed	50	56
Age			Not working	67	64
18-24	59	46	Social class		
25-44	64	64	AB	67	67
45-64	66	61	C1	72	65
65+	68	68	C2	58	56
			DE	61	59

Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

An analysis of other respondent characteristics shows that compared with other political parties, those respondents who intended to vote Conservative in the General Election, along with those that did not know how they would vote, were most likely to watch Election coverage no matter which party was featured. While those that stated they were most interested in politics tended to watch Election broadcasts more than those who were less interested.

Switching channels and switching off

Around one-quarter of respondents reported that they either switched channels or switched the television set off when Election coverage was broadcast on news programmes. Younger respondents were more likely to take this action than older viewers, as well as those who worked part-time or did not work at all. Those in social classes C2 and DE were most likely to change channel or switch the set off altogether than watch Election broadcasts on news programmes (Table 8).

Table 8: Switching channels or switching off television Election coverage on television news programmes

ATTRIBUTES	Pre-Election %	Post-Election %	ATTRIBUTES	Pre-Election %	Post-Election %
Total	25	27	Working status		
Gender			Full-time	22	28
Males	21	28	Part-time	29	31
Females	27	27	Unemployed	32	35
Age			Not working	24	26
18-24	30	37	Social class		
25-44	24	25	AB	24	23
45-64	23	31	C1	20	27
65+	22	23	C2	25	34
			DE	28	30

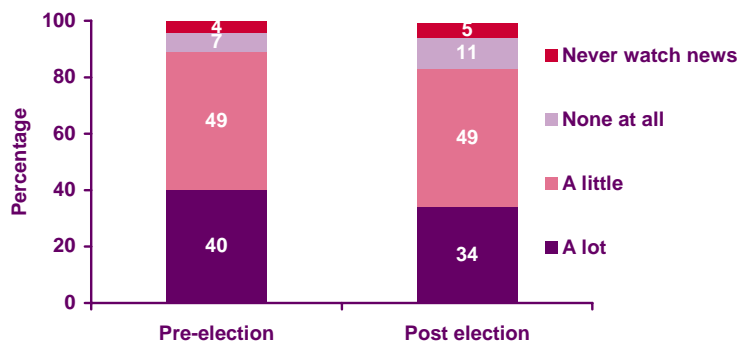
Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

Politics and General Election coverage on television news

Respondents were asked to state how much attention they paid to television news broadcasts on politics and the Election campaign. While two-fifths of respondents remarked that they paid a lot of attention to these items in the pre-Election survey, this proportion fell to just over one-third of post-Election respondents.

Almost one-half reported they gave a little attention to political items in news broadcasts in both the pre- and post-Election surveys, while more than one in ten said they paid no attention or never watched television news broadcasts (Chart 12). The 2001 survey carried out by the ITC showed that 5% of respondents paid a lot, 15% quite a bit, 25% some attention and 30% a little and 25% no attention to politics and the Election campaign.

Chart 12: Attention paid to politics and the Election campaign of TV



Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

Rating television news coverage

Respondents were asked to consider specific aspects of television news coverage – whether it was accurate, interesting, informative, balanced and impartial – using the following four-point scale:

- Just about always;
- Most of the time;
- Some of the time; and
- Never.

Around one-half of those surveyed both before and after the General Election stated that news coverage was accurate, balanced and informative most of the time, while around two-fifths of respondents reported that news coverage was impartial and interesting most of the time. Around one in ten respondents reported that television news coverage was accurate, interesting, impartial and balanced just about always, while a slightly higher proportion reported that news was just about always informative. This information is presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9: News coverage on television in general, pre-Election respondents

Rating	Accurate (%)	Interesting (%)	Informative (%)	Balanced (%)	Impartial (%)
Just about always	10	11	16	12	11
Most of the time	47	40	50	48	39
Some of the time	34	41	30	33	37
Never	2	6	2	3	6
Don't know	7	2	2	4	7

Base: Pre-Election 1,438

Table 10: News coverage on television in general, post-Election respondents

Rating	Accurate (%)	Interesting (%)	Informative (%)	Balanced (%)	Impartial (%)
Just about always	8	10	13	10	8
Most of the time	51	43	52	47	40
Some of the time	34	39	29	34	38
Never	2	6	3	5	7
Don't know	5	3	3	5	7

Base: Post-Election 1,433

Section 5

Party Election Broadcasts

The post-Election survey asked a series of questions on Party Election Broadcasts that were not contained within the pre-Election survey.

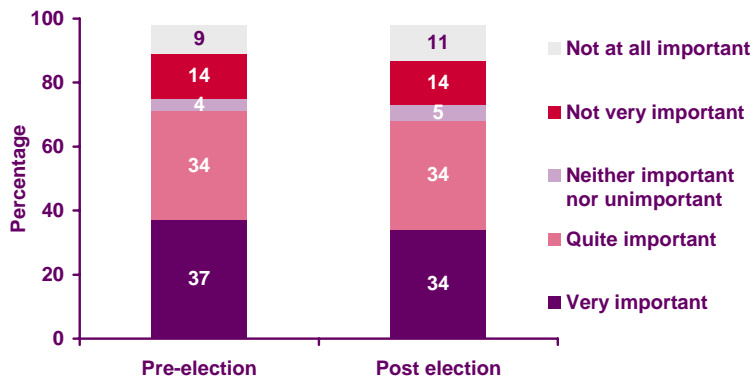
Seven-in-ten respondents reported that Party Election Broadcasts were important, and around two-thirds of UK adults claimed to have watched at least one broadcast during the 2005 Election campaign, which they thought had played a part in informing their voting intentions. A majority of respondents (78%) also believed that Party Broadcasts should not be carried outside the five main terrestrial channels and that parties should not be allowed to advertise. Respondents would like to see shorter Party Election Broadcasts, but no more than there are at present. There also appears to be a desire to see the use of the “red button” interactive services to either replace, or be provided in addition to Party Election Broadcasts when prompted about this.

Importance of Party Election Broadcasts

Around seven in ten respondents on the pre- and post-Election survey believed that Party Broadcasts were either very or quite important, while around one-quarter believed they were not very or not at all important (Chart 13).

Three-quarters of those aged 18-24 (75%) and seven in ten Labour voters (71%) rated Party Election Broadcasts as quite or very important post election.

Chart 13: Importance of Party Election Broadcasts during the General Election campaign

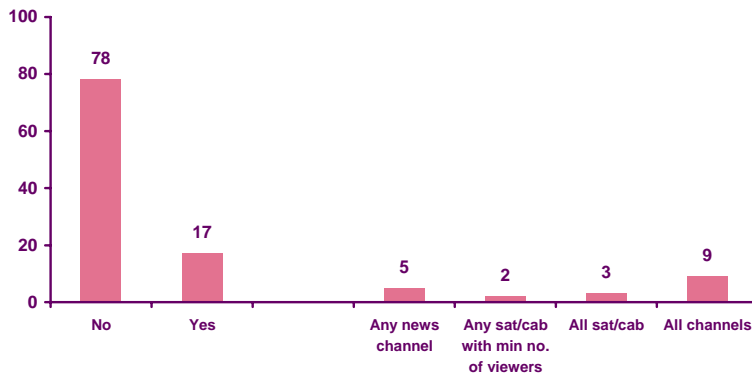


Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

Channels carrying Party Election Broadcasts

Post-Election survey respondents were asked if channels other than the five main terrestrial channels should be required to carry Party Election Broadcasts. In total, over three-quarters (78%) stated that Party Election Broadcasts should not be carried on these channels. Of the 17% who felt Party Election Broadcasts should be carried on other channels, the majority thought that all channels should carry them (9%), while 5% felt that only news channels should carry them.

Chart 14: Party Election Broadcasts outside the main terrestrial channels



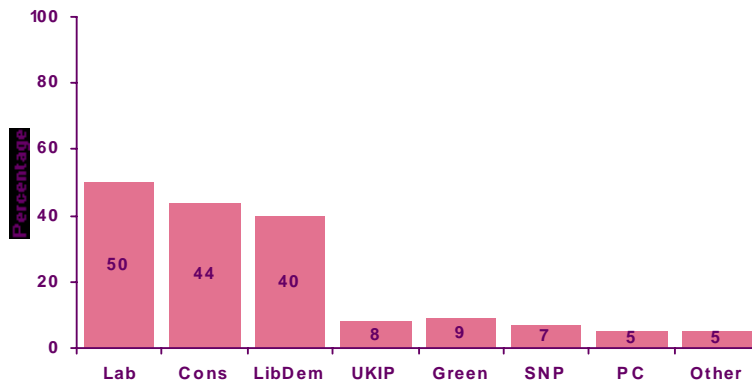
Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

Watching Party Election Broadcasts

Three-fifths (62%) of respondents on the post-Election survey reported that they had watched a Party Broadcast during the Election. One-half of all respondents reported that they had watched a Labour Party Broadcast, compared with around two-fifths that watched a Conservative or Liberal Democrat broadcast. Smaller proportions of respondents – between 5-10% – claimed to have watched broadcasts from other political parties.

When cross-analysed by voting intention, slightly more Labour intenders (63%) watched at least one of their parties' PEBs, compared to 60% of Conservative Party intenders and only 55% of those intending to vote Liberal Democrat.

Chart 15: Watching Party Election Broadcasts



Base: Post-Election 1,433

Overall, men (65%) were slightly more likely than women (60%) to watch Party Election Broadcasts, as were those who voted in the General Election (66%) when compared with those who did not vote (52%). A higher proportion of Labour voters (71%) watched any Party Election Broadcasts when compared with the other political parties, as did those with a lot of interest in politics (73%).

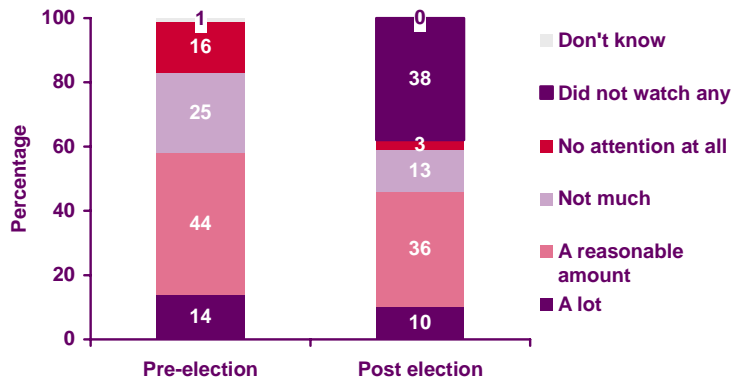
Attention to Party Election Broadcasts

When respondents were asked how much attention they paid to Party Election Broadcasts, there were differences in the data from the pre-Election and post-Election surveys. For example, almost three-fifths of respondents to the pre-Election survey believed that they would spend either a lot or a reasonable amount of attention to these broadcasts, this fell to less than one-half in the post-Election.

The biggest shift occurred among those with low/no interest in watching PEBs – at the pre wave 16% of UK adults from the survey claimed they would paid no attention to PEB's. At the post wave the number of people who that they didn't watch PEB's at all during the campaign climbed to 38%.

The survey shows that interest in politics was closely correlated to the amount of attention people paid to Election Broadcasts. Those paying most attention to Party Election Broadcasts were likely to more interested in politics. Of those that paid a lot of attention to politics, 22% of pre-Election respondents and 26% of post-Election respondents said they gave a lot of attention to Election Broadcasts. In contrast, 47% of pre-Election and 42% of post-Election respondents that said they had no interest in politics said they paid no attention at all to these broadcasts.

Chart 16: Attention paid to Party Election Broadcasts



Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

Party Political Broadcasts and voting decisions

Respondents were asked the extent to which Party Broadcasts influenced how they voted in the Election. While 44% stated that it had not affected their decision, more than one-half said it had affected their decision either a little (39%) or a lot (16%).

Higher proportions of those in social groups DE (24%), Labour voters (21%), those who reported that Party Election Broadcasts were important (20%) and those aged 45-64 years (19%) reported that Party Election Broadcasts affected their voting decision a lot.

Number and length of broadcasts

More than one-half of respondents (55%) taking part in the post-Election survey felt that the right number of Party Election Broadcasts had been shown, while a further 7% believed that there were not enough. In contrast, more than one-third (36%) believed there were too many Election broadcasts from political parties.

Respondents aged 45-64 years (41%) and 65 years and over (40%), those in social groups DE (42%) and those with a little or no interest in politics were more likely to report that there were too many Party Election Broadcasts on television.

At present, political parties are allowed to choose how long their Election Broadcasts last, either 160 seconds, 220 seconds, 280 seconds. Respondents were asked if they thought parties should be able to run shorter messages, for example, at lengths typically seen in paid for advertising.

Three-fifths of respondents (60%) believed that political parties should be able to run shorter clips, while the remaining two-fifths reported that they should not (34%) or didn't know (5%). However, when respondents were asked if parties should be allowed a greater number of shorter Election Broadcasts instead of fewer, longer ones, two-fifths (40%) supported this compared with 55% that did not, indicating a polarised view point on this matter.

Which parties should be given Party Election Broadcasts?

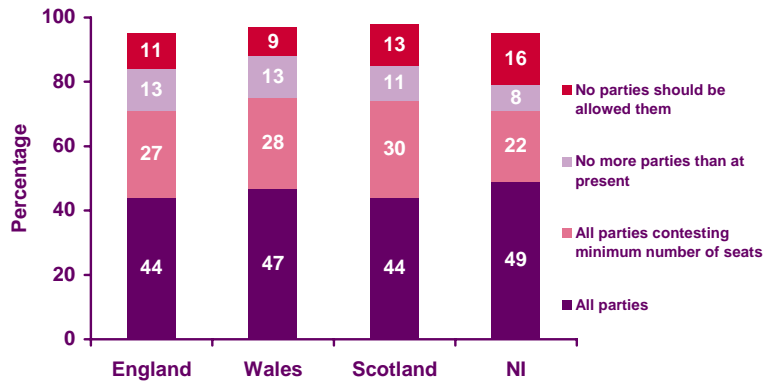
At present, Party Election Broadcasts are restricted to the main political parties in Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as other parties standing in at least one-sixth of the seats. Respondents were specifically asked if:

- All parties should be given Party Election Broadcasts;
- All parties contesting a minimum number of seats should be given Party Election Broadcasts;
- No more parties than at present should be given them;
- No parties should be given them; and
- Don't know.

Around one-half of respondents believed that all parties should be given Election Broadcasts across the UK, with higher proportions of those in Wales and Northern Ireland believing this should be the case. Around one-quarter of respondents in England, Wales and Scotland and just over one-fifth of those in Northern Ireland stated that all parties contesting a minimum number of seats should be given the opportunity.

Finally, around one in ten respondents in England and Wales believed that no parties should be allowed Party Election Broadcasts, while slightly higher proportions of those in Scotland (one in eight) and Northern Ireland (one in six) felt the same way.

Chart 17: Who should be allowed Party Election Broadcasts



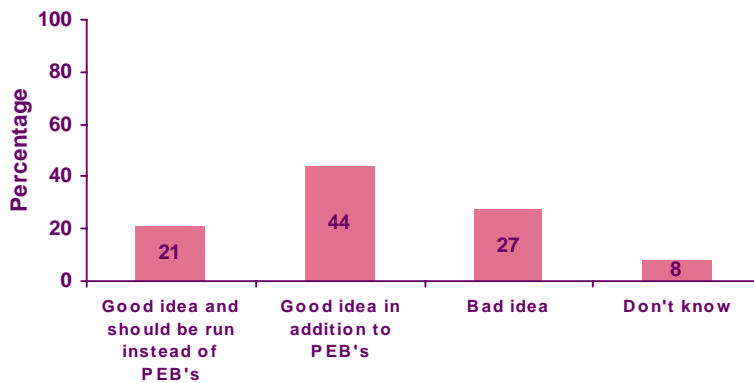
Base: Post-Election 1,433

Advertising and interactive services

The majority of respondents (54%) in the post-Election survey believed that parties should not be allowed to pay for television advertising. In comparison, almost one-quarter (24%) believed that parties should be able to pay for adverts in addition to Election Broadcasts, while 14% believe that they should be able to pay for adverts instead of Party Election Broadcasts.

Respondents were asked if they would like political parties to run broadcasts that could be accessed by digital television viewers using interactive facilities (using the “red button”). Although more than one-quarter did not support ‘red button’ Party Election Broadcasts, almost two-thirds believed that this was a good idea. More than two-fifths reporting that these broadcasts should be run in addition to Party Election Broadcasts, while one-fifth believed they should be run instead of Party Election Broadcasts (Chart 18).

Chart 18: Red-button Party Election Broadcasts



Base: post-Election 1,433

Section 6

Young adults and the Election

In recent years a debate has emerged about the political disengagement of 18-24 year olds. While this report was not commissioned to investigate this issue in its own right, some interesting findings emerged when data for this age group was analysed. The following section details the results from a limited number of questions from this survey.³

Voting in the Election and interest in politics

More than one-half (51%) of all 18-24 year olds did not vote in the 2005 General Election, compared with 28% of the entire post-Election sample. Of those reporting that they did not vote, 39% revealed that this was a result of not being registered to vote, compared with only 24% of the entire sample.

Those aged 18-24 years were also most likely to report that they had no interest in politics. 17% of 18-24 year old in the pre wave survey claimed they had no interest in politics compared to 9% among the total adult sample, representing an 8% point difference. The gap reduced post wave where 18% of 18-24 year old claimed they had no interest in politics compared to 13% among the total adult sample

Sources of information on politics

Younger people were most likely to use tabloid newspapers and news broadcasts as a source of information on political issues. While 43% of all respondents reported that they used tabloids to get their political information, a slightly higher proportion of 18-24 year olds (48%) reported the same. Younger people were also more likely to use television news broadcasts to get information on political issues. While just over one-half of all respondents (51%) in the pre- and post-Election survey reported that they used television news broadcasts most often to get information on politics, this rises to 63% of 18-24 year olds who used television in the same way

Broadcasting and younger people

Almost one-fifth of all respondents (19% in the pre- and post-Election survey) were likely to switch to another channel to avoid Election coverage on television. In contrast, 30% of 18-24 year olds to the pre-Election survey and 26% of 18-24 year olds to the post-Election survey did the same.

This is perhaps best explained by how younger people viewed television coverage of the Election. Not only did a greater proportion of younger people state that television did not explain party policies very well (30% of 18-24 year olds compared with 25% of all respondents), but that too little time was spent covering opinion polls, the personalities of politicians and press conferences, walkabouts and other personal appearances by politicians. This information is presented in table 11.

³ As the survey obtained responses from 135 18-24 year olds in the pre-Election Survey and 128 responses from the post-Election survey, this section only presents data that statistically significant.

Table 11: Too little time spent by television when covering Election

Aspect of coverage (too little time spent covering...)	All respondents		18-24 year olds	
	Pre-Election (%)	Post-Election (%)	Pre-Election (%)	Post-Election (%)
Opinion polls	14	9	22	20
Personalities of politicians	12	10	24	20
Press conferences, walkabouts etc	18	13	30	24

Party Election Broadcasts

The survey showed that younger people had widely differing views of Party Election Broadcasts when compared with the entire sample of respondents. While 71% of all pre-Election respondents claimed that PEBs were important, 81% of 18-24 year olds reported the same. Furthermore, post election younger people (56%) were more likely to report that Party Election Broadcasts helped them decide how they would vote when compared to all respondents (39%). Finally, twice as many younger voters (15%) believed that there were not enough Party Election Broadcasts on television compared with the entire sample of respondents (7%).

Younger people would also prefer shorter PEBs, more PEBs and 'red button' broadcasts than other respondents:

- 69% of 18-24 year olds reported they would like to shorter Party Election Broadcasts, while 60% of the entire sample would like to see the same;
- 59% of 18-24 year olds would like shorter and more PEBs, compared with 40% of all respondents; and
- 34% of 18-24 year olds would prefer 'red button' information instead of Party Election Broadcasts, compared with 21% of all respondents.

Appendix 1

Comparison: Perception of the way different channels covered the Election

Table from Independent Television Commission Survey in 2001 (p10)

Table 1: Perceptions of the way different channels covered the Election

Coverage	BBC1 (%)	BBC2 (%)	ITV (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)	No differ- ence (%)	No opin- ion (%)
Most interesting	20	6	6	4	1	3	27	35
Best at explaining	18	6	6	4	1	2	24	39
Most thorough	17	7	4	4	1	2	25	40
Most informative	17	6	5	4	*	3	25	40
Most accurate	14	4	4	3	*	2	28	45
Most useful	14	5	5	3	*	3	26	44
Least biased	12	5	8	5	1	2	27	40
Most entertaining	11	3	8	3	1	2	26	46
Most exciting	7	2	4	2	1	2	28	55

Notes: * Indicates less than 1%

** Information not collected on BBC News24 and ITV's 24 hour news service in 2001 survey

Comparable tables from 2005 survey

Table 5: Perceptions of the way different channels covered the Election, pre-Election

Coverage	BBC1 (%)	BBC2 (%)	ITV (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)	BBC News 24 (%)	ITV 24hr News (%)
Most interesting	50	7	21	8	1	7	6	1
Least biased	34	10	24	15	7	7	4	1
Most entertaining	35	7	33	11	3	8	3	1
Most accurate	54	9	16	8	0	7	5	0
Most thorough	52	11	15	9	0	7	5	1
Best at explaining	51	9	20	9	1	6	4	0
Most exciting	34	6	33	11	3	9	3	0
Most informative	53	10	15	9	1	7	5	0
Most useful	49	8	19	9	0	9	5	0

Base: Figures in brackets, including "don't knows"

Table 6: Perceptions of the way different channels covered the Election, post-Election

Coverage	BBC1 (%)	BBC2 (%)	ITV (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)	BBC News 24 (%)	ITV 24hr News (%)
Most interesting	51	5	23	5	1	5	3	0
Least biased	31	9	23	11	5	6	1	1
Most entertaining	38	6	32	8	3	4	2	1
Most accurate	49	6	20	5	1	4	3	0
Most thorough	50	10	18	5	1	5	4	0
Best explaining	51	7	22	6	1	5	3	0
Most exciting	39	5	28	7	2	6	2	0
Most informative	52	8	19	7	1	5	3	0
Most useful	49	6	22	6	1	5	3	0

Base: Figures in brackets, including "don't knows"

Appendix 2

Comparison: Perceptions of the amount of time devoted to different aspects of coverage

Table from Independent Television Commission Survey in 2001 (page 11)

Table 2: Perceptions of the amount of time devoted to different aspects of the coverage

Aspect of coverage	Too much (%)	About right (%)	Too little (%)
Results of opinion polls	65	32	3
Personalities of politicians	67	29	11
Policies of the parties	46	35	19
Analysis by TV's own political correspondents	61	35	3
Analysis by other outside experts (not politicians or TV journalists)	58	32	9
Press conferences, walkabouts or other appearances by politicians	66	30	4

Comparable tables from 2005 survey

Table 4: Perceptions of the amount of time devoted to different aspects of the coverage

Aspect of coverage	Pre-Election			Post-Election		
	Too much (%)	About right (%)	Too little (%)	Too much (%)	About right (%)	Too little (%)
Results of opinion polls	33	40	14	44	46	10
Personalities of politicians	42	36	12	52	38	11
Policies of the parties	17	48	27	24	48	29
Analysis by TV's own political correspondents	25	55	11	33	60	7
Analysis by other outside experts (not politicians or TV journalists)	24	41	21	32	49	18
Press conferences, walkabouts or other appearances by politicians	30	41	18	40	45	15

Base: pre-Election 1,438; post-Election 1,433

Appendix 3

Comparison: Perceptions of the amount of coverage on each channel

Table from Independent Television Commission Survey in 2001 (page 12)

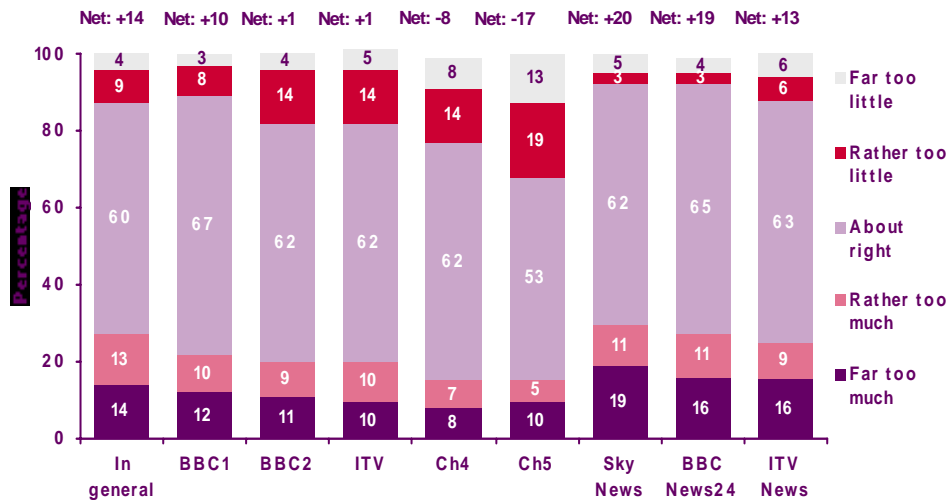
Table 3: Perceptions of the amount of coverage on each channel

Channel	Too much (%)	About right (%)	Too little (%)	Do not watch this channel (%)
BBC1	59	38	2	1
BBC2	42	45	4	9
ITV	53	37	4	6
Channel 4	34	41	6	18
Channel 5	23	27	7	43
Sky News	18	12	1	69

Notes: ** Information not collected on BBC News24 and ITV's 24 hour news service

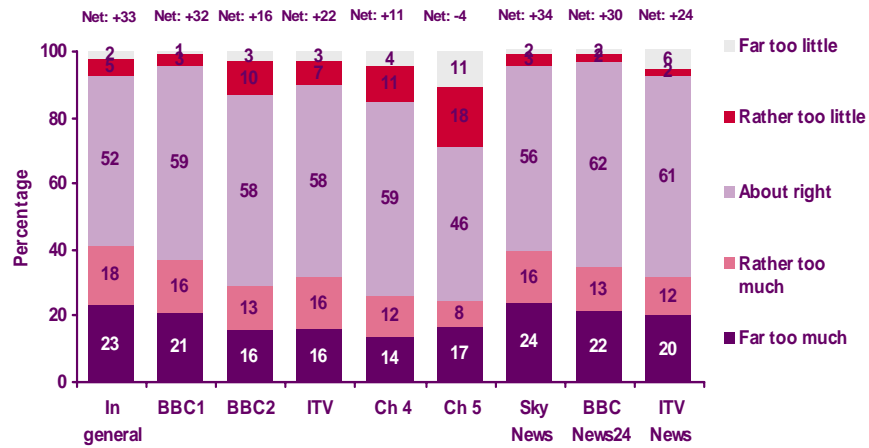
Comparable tables from 2005 survey

Chart 7: Perceptions of the amount of coverage on each channel



Base: All pre-Election respondents, excluding 'Don't knows'

Channel 8: Perceptions of the amount of coverage on each channel



Base: All post-Election respondents, excluding 'Don't knows'

Appendix 4

Comparison: Perceptions of fairness towards all parties on different channels

Table from Independent Television Commission Survey in 2001 (page 13)

Table 4: Perceptions of fairness towards all parties on different channels, pre-Election survey

	BBC		ITV		Ch 4		Ch 5	
	1997 (%)	2001 (%)	1997 (%)	2001 (%)	1997 (%)	2001 (%)	1997 (%)	2001 (%)
Fair to all parties	34	39	32	37	19	24	n/a	14
Unfair								
Unfair to LibDems	6	5	4	4	2	2	n/a	1
Unfair to Labour	4	3	2	2	1	1	n/a	.
Unfair to Conservatives	4	7	2	4	1	2	n/a	1
Unfair to SNP	10	7	8	6	4	3	n/a	2
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	10	8	9	6	4	4	n/a	2
Unfair to UK Independence	n/a	13	n/1	10	n/a	5	n/a	4
Unfair to Green Party	15	15	11	11	5	6	n/a	4
No opinion	45	41	51	50	64	68	n/a	81

Notes: ** Information not collected on BBC News24 and ITV's 24 hour news service

Comparable tables from 2005 survey

Table 2: Perceptions of fairness towards all parties on different channels, pre-Election survey

	BBC channels (%)	ITV channels (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)
Fair to all parties	80	85	89	70	54
Unfair	20	15	11	10	6
Unfair to LibDems	8	6	3	4	3
Unfair to Labour	7	4	2	3	3
Unfair to Conservatives	6	3	4	3	1
Unfair to SNP	3	3	2	2	1
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	2	2	2	2	1
Unfair to other parties	7	7	5	4	2
Base	1,182	1,029	747	619	815

Notes: Excludes those saying 'Don't know'
 21% of respondents did not receive Channel 5
 40% of respondents did not receive Sky News

Table 3: Perceptions of fairness towards all parties on different channels, post-Election survey

	BBC channels (%)	ITV channels (%)	Ch 4 (%)	Ch 5 (%)	Sky News (%)
Fair to all parties	79	86	88	77	59
Unfair	21	14	12	9	3
Unfair to LibDems	7	5	3	3	1
Unfair to Labour	6	3	3	2	1
Unfair to Conservatives	6	3	3	3	1
Unfair to SNP	2	2	2	3	1
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	2	2	1	2	0
Unfair to other parties	8	6	5	3	1
Base	1,197	1,038	710	568	700

Notes: Excludes those saying 'Don't know'
 15% of respondents did not receive Channel 5
 37% of respondents did not receive Sky News

Appendix 5

Interpretation of the data

It should be remembered at all times that a sample and not the entire population has been interviewed. Consequently, all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which mean that not all differences are statistically significant.

We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the 'true' values (if everyone in the population had been interviewed) from knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times answers are given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 times out of 100 that the 'true' value will fall within a specified range. The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and the percentage results at the 95% confidence level.

Sample size	Sampling tolerances applicable to %'s at or near		
	10% or 90% + / -	30% or 70% + / -	50% + / -
100 interviews	5.88%	8.98%	9.8%
500 interviews	2.63%	4.02%	4.38%
1000 interviews	1.86%	2.84%	3.1%
1,433 (pre-wave)	1.55%	2.37%	2.59%

For example, with a sample size of 1,433 interviews where 50% (the worst case scenario as far as tolerances are concerned) give a particular answer, we can be 95% certain that the 'true' value will fall within the range of 2.59% from the sample result.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample (for example, between men and women), different results may be obtained. The difference may be 'real' or it may occur by chance (because a sample rather than the entire population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one, i.e. if it is 'statistically significant', we again have to know the size of the samples, the % giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume the 95% confidence level again, the differences between the results of two separate groups must be greater than the values given in the table below:

Sample sizes to be compared	Differences required to be statistically significant at or near		
	10% or 90% + / -	30% or 70% + / -	50% + / -
100 and 100	8.3%	12.7%	13.9%
200 and 200	5.9%	8.9%	9.8%
500 and 500	3.7%	5.7%	6.2%
1000 and 1000	2.6%	4.0%	4.4%
1431 and 1438	2.2%	3.4%	3.7%

Where percentages do not add up to 100, this may be due to rounding of raw numbers into percentages, the exclusion of 'don't know' categories or respondents providing more than one answer to a question.

Personal characteristics of respondents

Completed questionnaires were received from over 1,430 respondents in each of the two waves of the research. The personal characteristics of respondents are shown in the table below.

Personal characteristics of respondents to the pre- and post-Election surveys

Characteristics	Pre-Election		Post-Election	
	Number	%	Number	%
Sex				
Male	690	48	688	48
Female	748	52	745	52
Age				
18-24 years	158	11	158	11
25-34 years	245	17	244	17
35-44 years	288	20	287	20
45-54 years	245	17	244	17
55-59 years	115	8	123	9
60-64 years	100	7	92	6
65-74 years	177	12	167	12
75+ years	110	8	119	8
Working status				
Working Full time (30+ hours)	638	44	636	44
Working Part time (9-19 hrs)	161	11	160	11
Unemployed	58	4	76	5
Not working	372	26		
Retired	372	26	356	25
Looking after house/children	78	5	84	6
Invalid/disabled	33	2	35	2
Student	78	5	76	5
Other	21	1	9	1
Social class				
A	129	9	112	8
B	230	16	246	17
C1	417	29	416	29
C2	302	21	301	21
D	120	8	112	8
E	240	17	246	17
Housing tenure				
Owned outright	460	32	458	32
Owned with mortgage	590	41	588	41
Council rented	187	13	186	13
Housing association rented	62	4	74	5
Privately rented/other	139	10	126	9
Children in Household				
Yes	454	32	424	30
No	938	65	976	68
Refused	46	3	33	2

Social class definitions

In this report we make reference to social classification. Most market research projects classify the population into social grades, usually on the basis of the Market Research Society occupational groupings (MRS, 1991).

They are defined as follows:

- A. Professionals such as doctors, solicitors or dentists, chartered people like architects; fully qualified people with a large degree of responsibility such as senior civil servants, senior business executives and high

ranking grades within the armed forces. Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows.

- B.** People with very senior jobs such as university lecturers, heads of local government departments, middle management in business organisations, bank managers, police inspectors, and upper grades in the armed forces.
- C1.** All others doing non-manual jobs, including nurses, technicians, pharmacists, salesmen, publicans, clerical workers, police sergeants and middle ranks of the armed forces.
- C2.** Skilled manual workers, foremen, manual workers with special qualifications such as lorry drivers, security officers and lower grades of the armed forces.
- D.** Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, including labourers and those serving apprenticeships. Machine minders, farm labourers, lab assistants and postmen.
- E.** Those on the lowest levels of subsistence including all those dependent upon the state long-term. Casual workers, and those without a regular income.

Appendix 6

Survey questionnaires

Pre-Election survey

Q1 The Prime Minister has recently announced that the General Election will be held on 5th May. Some people have said they will not vote in the General Election, while others will vote. I would like to know how certain it is that you will actually cast your vote. On a ten point scale, if 10 would mean you would be absolutely certain to vote and 1 would mean you would be certain not to vote, how likely is it that you will vote?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 DK

⇒ **IF = 1**

Q2 Is that because you are not registered to vote or because you would decide not to go and vote?

Not registered	1
Decide not to go and vote	2
Don't know	3

⇒ **IF 2-10 IN ENGLAND/WALES/SCOTLAND ASK**

Q3a The Conservatives, Labour, the Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru (Wales only) / SNP (Scotland only) and other parties will fight the forthcoming General Election in your area. If the general election were tomorrow which party do you think you would vote for?

Conservative	1
Labour	2
Liberal Democrats	3
SNP	4
Plaid Cymru	5
Green	6
UKIP	7
Veritas	8
Scottish Socialist	9
Other	0
Don't know	X
Refuse	V

If 2-10 in northern Ireland ask

Q3a The Ulster Unionists (UUP), SDLP, DUP, Sinn Fein and other parties will fight the forthcoming General Election in your area. If the general election were tomorrow which party do you think you would vote for?

Ulster Unionists (UUP)	1
SDLP	2
DUP	3
Sinn Fein	4
Alliance	5
PUP	6
WP	7
Other	8
Don't know	9
Refuse	0

⇒ **IF REFUSE AT EITHER Q3A ASK**

Q3b Can I just ask, do you already know which party you will vote for in the General Election?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3
Refuse	4

⇒ **ASK ALL**

Q4 How much interest do you generally have in what is going on in politics? Would you say..... READ OUT.

A lot	1
A little	2
None at all	3
Don't know	4

Q5 Which, if any, of the following sources have you used or will you use to get information about political issues during the General Election campaign? READ OUT

Q6 And which one of those sources have you used or will you use the most often to get information about political issues during the General Election campaign? READ OUT IF NECESSARY

	Q5 All sources	Q6 Most often Used
Television programmes	1	1
Radio	2	2
Broadsheet newspapers like the Times, The Telegraph or The Guardian	3	3
Tabloid newspapers like The Sun, Mirror and Daily Mail	4	4
A local newspaper	5	5
The Internet	6	6
Campaign material from the political parties like leaflets etc	7	7
Conversations with friends, colleagues or relatives	8	8
Something else	9	9
None of them	0	0
Don't know	X	X

⇒ **IF HAVE NOT/WILL NOT USE TELEVISION PROGRAMMES AT Q5, GO TO Q9**

Q7 Thinking specifically about television programmes, from which, if any, of the following sources have you used or will you use to get information about political issues during the General Election campaign?

Q8 And which one of those sources have you used or will you use the most often to get information about political issues during the General Election campaign? READ OUT IF NECESSARY

	Q7 All sources	Q8 Most often used
Current affairs programmes eg Question Time or Newsnight	1	1
News broadcasts	2	2
Documentaries on specific issues	3	3
Chat shows/discussion programmes	4	4
Other	5	5
None of them	6	6
Don't know	7	7
Something else	9	9
Don't know	X	X

⇒ **ASK ALL**

Q9 In the lead up to the General Election, a lot of time on television news broadcasts (eg BBC 6 o' clock news) is being spent on politics and the election campaign. How much attention do you generally pay to these items? Would you say...READ OUT

A lot	1
A little	2
None at all	3
Never watch news broadcasts	4
Don't know	5

Q10 Which one of the following best describes what you usually do when election coverage appears on TV? READ OUT

Watch it regardless of which party is featured	1
Watch it only if the party you support is featured	2
Switch to another channel to avoid coverage	3
Switch the TV off	4
Don't know	5

Q11 Thinking about television coverage of the General Election so far, how much time do you think has been devoted to each of the following? Would you say.... RANDOMISE ORDER

- 1 = Far too much time
- 2 = Rather too much time
- 3 = About the right amount of time
- 4 = Rather too little time
- 5 = Far too little time

Results of opinion polls	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Personalities of politicians	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Policies of the parties	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Analysis by TV's own political correspondents	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Analysis by other outside experts (not politicians or TV journalists)	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Press conferences, walkabouts or other appearances by politicians	1 2 3 4 5 DK

Q12 Still thinking about television coverage of the General Election so far, how much time do you think has been devoted to it.....? Would you say....

- 1 = Far too much time
- 2 = Rather too much time
- 3 = About the right amount of time
- 4 = Rather too little time
- 5 = Far too little time

In general	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On BBC1	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On BBC2	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On ITV	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On Channel 4	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On Channel 5	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
On the 24 hour news channel Sky News	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
On the 24 hour news channel BBC News 24	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
On the 24 hour news channel ITV News	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA

Q13 And when it comes to election coverage, which of those TV channels do you think is... READ OUT TV CHANNELS AGAIN IF NECESSARY

- 1 = BBC1
- 2 = BBC2
- 3 = ITV
- 4 = Channel 4
- 5 = Channel 5
- 6 = The 24-hour news channel Sky News
- 7 = The 24 hour news channel BBC News 24
- 8 = The 24-hour news channel ITV News

The most interesting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The least biased	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most entertaining	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most accurate	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most thorough in dealing with all the issues	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The best explaining the issues	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
Then most exciting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most informative	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most useful	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK

Q14 Thinking now just about news coverage on television in general, how often do you think it is.....? Would you say.....READ OUT

- 1 = Just about always
- 2 = Most of the time
- 3 = Some of the time
- 4 = Never

Accurate	1 2 3 4 DK
Interesting	1 2 3 4 DK
Informative	1 2 3 4 DK
Balanced	1 2 3 4 DK
Impartial	1 2 3 4 DK

Q15 Thinking now about the election coverage only on BBC television (BBC1, BBC2, and BBC News24), would you say it has been fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't know	8

Q16 Thinking now about the election coverage only on ITV television (ITV1 and ITV News) would you say it has been fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't know	8

Q17 Thinking now about the election coverage only on Channel 4 would you say it has been fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't know	8

Q18 Thinking now about the election coverage only on Channel 5, would you say it has been fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't receive Channel 5	8
Don't know	9

Q19 Thinking now about the election coverage only on Sky News, would you say it has been fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't receive Sky News	8
Don't know	9

Q20 Television Party Political Broadcasts at election time aim to tell people what each political party stands for. However, some people say they are out of date because the media covers all necessary issues whilst others say they still have a role to play in getting political parties views across to the electorate. What about you? How important do you think it is for television to show Party Election Broadcasts during General Election Campaigns? Would you say....READ OUT

Very important	1
Quite important	2
Neither important nor unimportant	3
Not very important	4
Not at all important	5
Don't know	6

Q21 How much attention do you usually pay to Party Election Broadcasts?

A lot of attention	1
A reasonable amount of attention	2
Not much attention	3
No attention at all	4
Don't know	5

Q22 Do you receive a multi-channel TV service, whether through Sky, Freeview, or a cable provider, such as NTL or Telewest at home. By multi-channel TV service, I mean any service where you receive more than the four or five main terrestrial channels (BBC1, BBC2, ITV1, Channel 4, Five)?

Yes	1
No	2
Refuse	3

⇒ **IF NO, DON'T KNOW, GO TO CLASSIFICATION**

Q23 How do you receive the additional channels on your main set? ONLY READ OUT IF NECESSARY

Satellite (usually Sky Digital) and pay monthly subscription	1
Satellite (usually Sky Digital) and no monthly subscription (sometimes known as Freesat)	2
Freeview - through a set top box or digibox	3
Freeview - integrated TV (TV with built in Freeview - don't need a set top box)	4
Cable - usually NTL or Telewest	5
Other (specify)	6
Don't know	9

Post-Election survey

Q1 I would like you to think back, very carefully to the general election on May 5th. Many people we have spoken to were not able to go and vote in the election. Did you actually cast your vote in the general election?

Yes – voted	1
No – did not vote	2
Refuse/DK	3

⇒ **IF DID NOT VOTE**

Q2 Is that because you are not registered to vote or because you decided not to go and vote?

Not registered	1
Decide not to go and vote	2
Don't know	3

⇒ **IF VOTED IN GB ASK**

Q3a Could you tell me the party you actually voted for? Was it the Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru/SNP or another party?

Conservative	1
Labour	2
Liberal Democrats	3
SNP	4
Plaid Cymru	5
Green	6
UKIP	7
Veritas	8
Scottish Socialist	9
Other	0
Don't know	X
Refuse	V

⇒ **IF VOTED IN NORTHERN IRELAND ASK**

Q3a Could you tell me the party you actually voted for? Was it the Ulster Unionists, SDLP, DUP, Sinn Fein or for another party?

Ulster Unionists (UUP)	1
SDLP	2
DUP	3
Sinn Fein	4
Alliance	5
PUP	6
WP	7
Other	8
Don't know	9
Refuse	0

⇒ **ASK ALL VOTERS:**

Q3B How long ago did you decide that you would definitely vote the way you did? Was it...READ OUT

Before the start of this year	1
Sometime this year	2
Early in the campaign	3
Later in the campaign	4
Only in the last day or so	5
Don't know	6

⇒ **ASK ALL**

Q4 How much interest do you generally have in what is going on in politics? Would you say..... READ OUT.

A lot	1
A little	2
None at all	3
Don't know	4

Q5 Which, if any, of the following sources did you use to get information about political issues during the General Election campaign? READ OUT

Q6 And which one of those sources did you use most often to get information about political issues during the General Election campaign? READ OUT IF NECESSARY

	Q5 All sources	Q6 Most often used
Television programmes	1	1
Radio	2	2
Broadsheet newspapers like the Times, The Telegraph or The Guardian	3	3
Tabloid newspapers like The Sun, Mirror and Daily Mail	4	4
A local newspaper	5	5
The Internet	6	6
Campaign material from the political parties like leaflets etc	7	7
Conversations with friends, colleagues or relatives	8	8
Something else	9	9
None of them	0	0
Don't know	X	X

⇒ **IF HAVE NOT/WILL NOT USE TELEVISION PROGRAMMES AT Q5, GO TO Q9**

Q7 Thinking specifically about television programmes, from which, if any, of the following sources did you use to get information about political issues during the General Election campaign?

Q8 And which one of those sources did you use the most often to get information about political issues during the General Election campaign? READ OUT IF NECESSARY

	Q7 All sources	Q8 Most often used
Current affairs programmes eg Question Time or Newsnight	1	1
News broadcasts	2	2
Documentaries on specific issues	3	3
Chat shows/ discussion programmes	4	4
Other	5	5
None of them	6	6
Don't know	7	7
Something else	9	9
Don't know	X	X

⇒ **ASK ALL**

Q9 During the General Election, a lot of time on television news broadcasts (eg BBC 6 o' clock news) was spent on politics and the election campaign. How much attention did you generally pay to these items? Would you say...READ OUT

A lot	1
A little	2
None at all	3
Never watch news broadcasts	4
Don't know	5

Q10 Which one of the following best describes what you usually did when election coverage appeared on TV? READ OUT

Watched it regardless of which party is featured	1
Watched it only if the party you support is featured	2
Switched to another channel to avoid coverage	3
Switched the TV off	4
Don't know	5

Q Thinking about television coverage of the General Election campaign, did television coverage contain topics that mattered to you personally?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Q11 Thinking about television coverage of the General Election campaign, how much time do you think was devoted to each of the following? Would you say.... RANDOMISE ORDER

- 1 = Far too much time
- 2 = Rather too much time
- 3 = About the right amount of time
- 4 = Rather too little time
- 5 = Far too little time

Results of opinion polls	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Personalities of politicians	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Policies of the parties	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Analysis by TV's own political correspondents	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Analysis by other outside experts (not politicians or TV journalists)	1 2 3 4 5 DK
Press conferences, walkabouts or other appearances by politicians	1 2 3 4 5 DK

Q12 Still thinking about television coverage of the General Election campaign, how much time do you think was devoted to it.....? Would you say....

- 1 = Far too much time
- 2 = Rather too much time
- 3 = About the right amount of time
- 4 = Rather too little time
- 5 = Far too little time

In general	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On BBC1	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On BBC2	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On ITV	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On Channel 4	1 2 3 4 5 DK
On Channel 5	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
On the 24 hour news channel Sky News	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
On the 24 hour news channel BBC News 24	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
On the 24 hour news channel ITV News	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA

Q13 And when it came to election coverage, which of those TV channels do you think was... READ OUT TV CHANNELS AGAIN IF NECESSARY

- 1 = BBC1
- 2 = BBC2
- 3 = ITV
- 4 = Channel 4
- 5 = Channel 5
- 6 = The 24-hour news channel Sky News
- 7 = The 24 hour news channel BBC News 24
- 8 = The 24-hour news channel ITV News

The most interesting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The least biased	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most entertaining	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most accurate	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most thorough in dealing with all the issues	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The best explaining the issues	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
Then most exciting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most informative	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK
The most useful	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 DK

Q14 Thinking now just about news coverage on television in general, how often do you think it is.....? Would you say.....READ OUT

- 1 = Just about always
- 2 = Most of the time
- 3 = Some of the time
- 4 = Never

Accurate	1 2 3 4 DK
Interesting	1 2 3 4 DK
Informative	1 2 3 4 DK
Balanced	1 2 3 4 DK
Impartial	1 2 3 4 DK

Q15 Thinking now about the election coverage only on BBC television (BBC1, BBC2, and BBC News24), would you say it was fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't know	8

Q16 Thinking now about the election coverage only on ITV television (ITV1 and ITV News) would you say it was fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't know	8

Q17 Thinking now about the election coverage only on Channel 4 would you say it was fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't know	8

Q18 Thinking now about the election coverage only on Channel 5, would you say it was fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't receive Channel 5	8
Don't know	9

Q19 Thinking now about the election coverage only on Sky News, would you say it was fair to all the political parties or unfair to one or more of them? If unfair: Which one(s)?

Fair to all parties	1
Unfair to Labour	2
Unfair to the Conservatives	3
Unfair to the Liberal Democrats	4
Unfair to the SNP	5
Unfair to Plaid Cymru	6
Unfair to other parties	7
Don't receive Sky News	8
Don't know	9

Q20 Generally speaking, do you think party policies were explained in television coverage of the General Election...READ OUT

Very well	1
Quite well	2
Not very well	3
Not at all well	4
Don't know	5

PEB'S

Q21 Television Party Political Broadcasts at election time aim to tell people what each political party stands for. However, some people say they are out of date because the media covers all necessary issues whilst others say they still have a role to play in getting political parties views across to the electorate. What about you? How important do you think it was for television to show Party Election Broadcasts during the General Election Campaign? Would you say it was....READ OUT

Very important	1
Quite important	2
Neither important nor unimportant	3
Not very important	4
Not at all important	5
Don't know	6

Q22 DELETED

Q23 Do you think there are too many party election broadcasts shown on television, not enough or about the right number?

Too many	1
Not enough	2
About the right number	3
Don't know	4

Q24 Did you watch a PEB during the General Election campaign? IF YES: Which party's did you watch?

No – none watched	0
Yes - The Labour Party	1
Yes - The Conservative Party	2
Yes - The Liberal Democrats	3
Yes - UKIP	4
Yes - The Green Party	5
Yes - The SNP	6
Yes - Plaid Cymru	7
Yes - another party	8
Don't know	9

⇒ **IF NONE WATCHED, GO TO Q27**

Q25 How much attention did you usually pay to Party Election Broadcasts?

A lot of attention	1
A reasonable amount of attention	2
Not much attention	3
No attention at all	4
Don't know	5

Q26 How much would you say Party Election Broadcasts helped you to make up your mind on which party to vote for? Would you say...READ OUT

A lot	1
A little	2
Not at all	3
Don't know	5

⇒ **ASK ALL**

Q27 At present, only the five main channels are required to carry party election broadcasts, although some others like Sky News may carry them voluntarily. Do you think that other channels should be made to carry Party Election Broadcasts? IF YES: Which channels do you think should be made to carry them? PROMPT IF NECESSARY

No	1
Yes – any news channel	2
Yes – any cable or satellite channel which has a minimum number of viewers	3
Yes – All cable and satellite channels providing factual based programmes, like the History Channel	4
All channels	5
Don't know	6

Q28 In the United States, political parties are allowed to pay for election advertising. Do you think that in Britain political parties should...READ OUT. CODE ONE

Pay for advertising instead of having Party Election Broadcasts	1
Pay for advertising in addition to their Party Election Broadcasts	2
Not be allowed to pay for advertising at all	3
Don't know	4

⇒ **IF IN NORTHERN IRELAND, GO TO Q29B**

Q29a At present, Party Election Broadcasts are restricted to the main parties- Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrats, (IF SCOTLAND) the SNP, (OR IF WALES) Plaid Cymru plus other parties standing in at least one sixth of the seats in Great Britain. Which one of the following do you agree with most? READ OUT

All parties should be given PEB's	1
All parties contesting a minimum number of seats should be given PEB's	2
No more parties than at present should be given them	3
No parties should be given them	4
Don't know	4

⇒ **IF IN GB, GO TO Q30**

Q29b At present, Party Election Broadcasts are restricted to the main parties – the DUP, UUP, SDLP and Sinn Fein, plus other parties standing in at least one sixth of the seats in Great Britain. Which one of the following do you agree with most? READ OUT

All parties should be given PEB's	1
All parties contesting a minimum number of seats should be given PEB's	2
No parties should be given them	3
Don't know	4

⇒ **ASK ALL**

Q30 At present, political parties are allowed to choose how long their Party Election Broadcasts last. They may run for 2 mins 40 seconds, 3 mins 40s, or 4 mins 40s. Do you think parties should be able to run shorter messages, for example, at lengths most often seen in paid for TV advertising?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Q31 If parties choose to run shorter election broadcasts, do you think they should be allowed to have more broadcasts instead of fewer, longer one's?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Q32 It will soon be possible for political parties to run broadcasts that would be accessed by digital TV viewers via the red/interactive button. Do you think...READ OUT

It is a good idea and should be run instead of Party Election Broadcasts	1
It is a good idea and should be run in addition to PEB's	2
It is a bad idea	3
Don't know	4

Q33 Do you receive a multi-channel TV service, whether through Sky, Freeview, or a cable provider, such as NTL or Telewest at home. By multi-channel TV service, I mean any service where you receive more than the four or five main terrestrial channels (BBC1, BBC2, ITV1, Channel 4, Five)?

Yes	1
No	2
Refuse	3

⇒ **IF NO/DK, GO TO CLASSIFICATION**

Q34 How do you receive the additional channels on your main set? ONLY READ OUT IF NECESSARY

Satellite (usually Sky Digital) and pay monthly subscription	1
Satellite (usually Sky Digital) and no monthly subscription (sometimes known as Freesat)	2
Freeview - through a set top box or digibox	3
Freeview - integrated TV (TV with built in)	4
Freeview - don't need a set top box)	
Cable - usually NTL or Telewest	5
Other (specify)	6
Don't know	9