Early effects of Covid-19 on TV viewing

22 April 2020

TV viewing in April so far is surpassing that of the last 5 years

With the majority of the country still at home every day, daily TV viewing has **continued to track above that of last year for most days in April so far**. This is true of both broadcast TV and viewing on the TV set that can not be matched to viewing from the broadcasters (known as 'unmatched viewing' consisting of a combination of SVoD, gaming, YouTube etc).
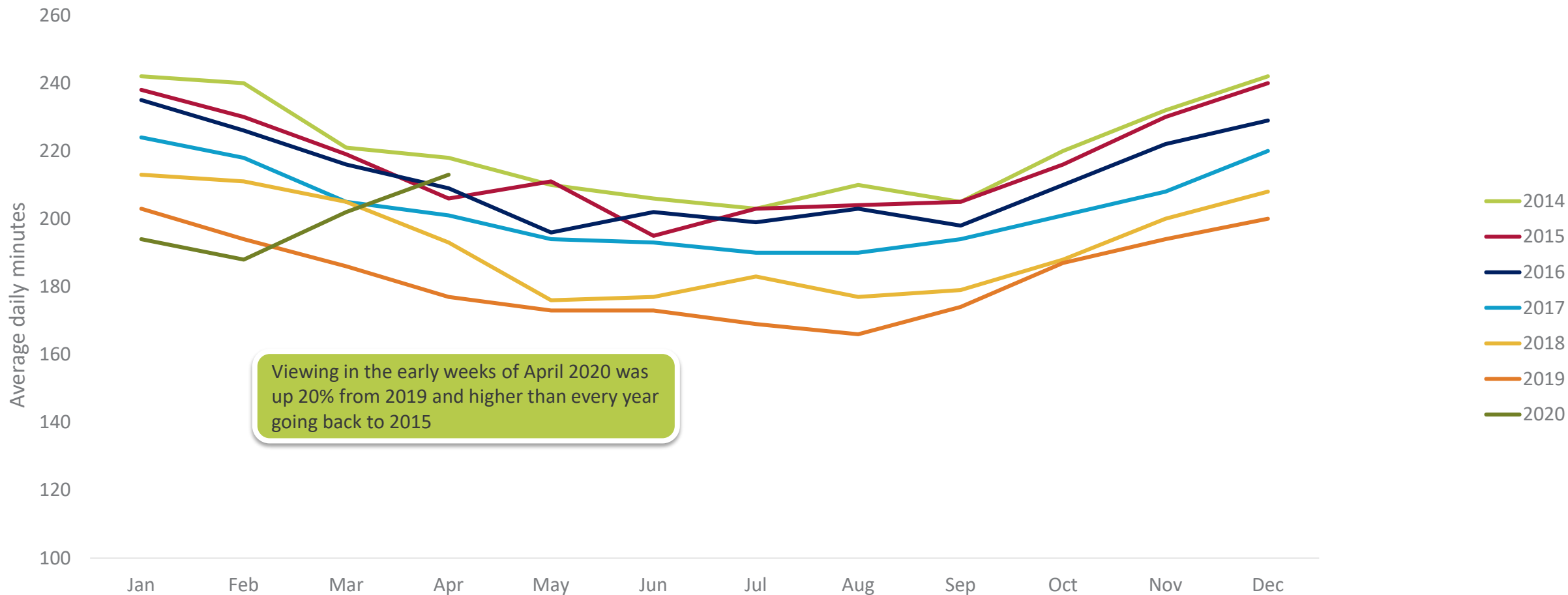
April so far this year is up 20% from 2019 and higher than every year going back to 2015.

BBC One's share of viewing remains high, helping to keep the share of all PSB channels at 58% of all viewing for the last couple of weeks.

News viewing on broadcast TV has seen spikes across all ages.

Viewing of broadcast television has increased significantly since 'lock down' - reversing the long-term trend of year-on-year decline
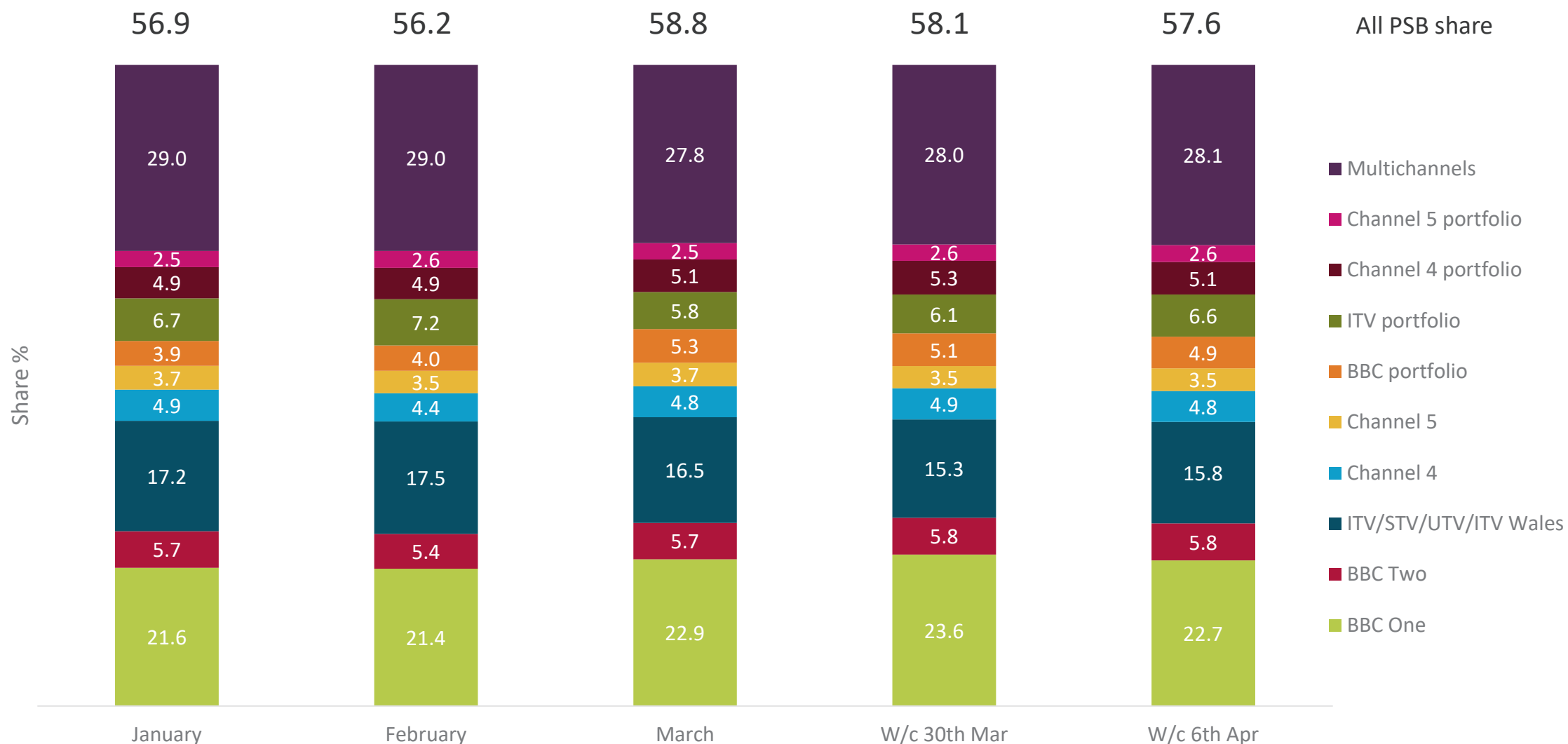
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Total TV average daily minutes by month

Viewing in the early weeks of April 2020 was up 20% from 2019 and higher than every year going back to 2015

Legend: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

Y-axis: Average daily minutes (100 to 260)
X-axis: Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec

Source: BARB. Total TV, all individuals (4+). April's figure for this year is consolidated up to 8 April and part-consolidated to 15 April. The 'early weeks of April' = weeks 14 and 15 each year.

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BBC1's share of viewing has increased during the Covid-19 pandemic

Average share of viewing by channel / channel group 2020

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	January	February	March	W/c 30th Mar	W/c 6th Apr
All PSB share	56.9	56.2	58.8	58.1	57.6
Multichannels	29.0	29.0	27.8	28.0	28.1
Channel 5 portfolio	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.6
Channel 4 portfolio	4.9	4.9	5.1	5.3	5.1
ITV portfolio	6.7	7.2	5.8	6.1	6.6
BBC portfolio	3.9	4.0	5.3	5.1	4.9
Channel 5	3.7	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.5
Channel 4	4.9	4.4	4.8	4.9	4.8
ITV/STV/UTV/ITV Wales	17.2	17.5	16.5	15.3	15.8
BBC Two	5.7	5.4	5.7	5.8	5.8
BBC One	21.6	21.4	22.9	23.6	22.7

Share %

Source: BARB. Total TV, all individuals (4+). PSB +1s are included in their portfolio groups. All PSB share includes the main 5 (excluding +1s) and all BBC channels. Figures for 9th April onwards are not fully consolidated.

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Although viewing of news programmes was lower in the first two weeks of April than in the first week of lockdown, it was about double that of the equivalent weeks in 2019

All channels – average daily mins per person to national/international news
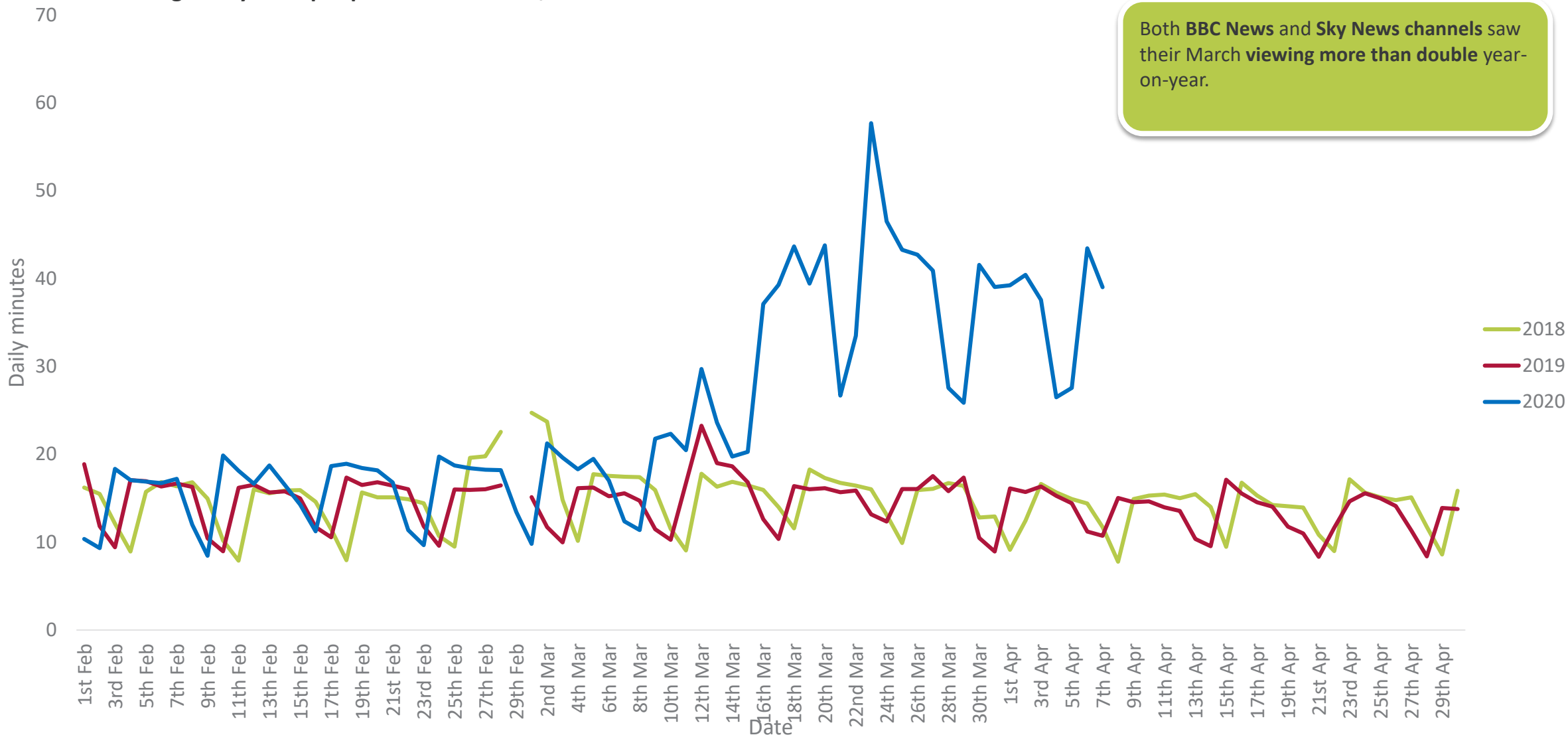
Both **BBC News** and **Sky News channels** saw their March **viewing more than double** year-on-year.

Source: BARB. Total TV, all individuals (4+). Consolidated up to 7 days

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