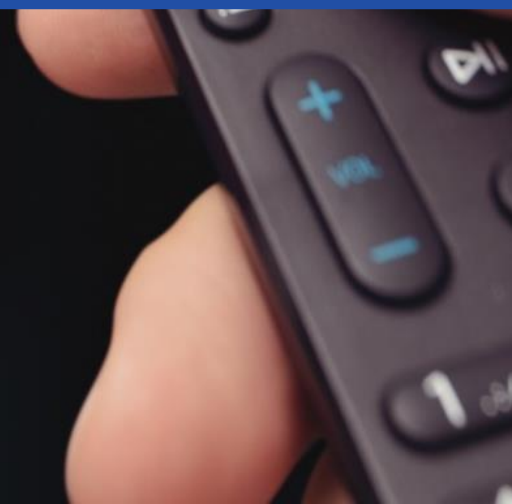




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Ofcom PSM Tracker 2021

Technical Report



Preface

This document contains details of the methodology, questionnaire, quotas, sampling and weighting for the 2021 Public Service Media tracker (PSM) study, run by BMG Research on behalf of Ofcom.

Based on the public service purposes presented in the 2003 Communications Act, Ofcom developed a range of PSB purposes and characteristics in its first PSB review in 2005. The PSB channels (the BBC channels, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5) are expected together to fulfil these purposes and characteristics, although each PSB channel has a specific remit.

The PSB purposes and characteristics were put into everyday language for the PSM Tracker survey, which asks respondents to give their opinions on the PSB statements, both in terms of the importance and the delivery of these by the PSB channels. Other perceptions and attitudes towards PSBs, BVoDs and SVoDs are also captured.

The PSM tracker was developed to reflect today's more complex media market and replaces the Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) tracker, which was last conducted in 2019. As a result, the 2021 data is not directly comparable with previous results of the PSB tracker. Ofcom consulted on these changes in 2021.

Methodology

In previous years the Public Service Broadcasting tracker had been conducted as an online / face to face blend, with fieldwork taking place in two waves. In 2021, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in common with other Ofcom tracking studies with an element of face-to-face interviewing, it was not possible to conduct the research in this way, so an alternative approach was adopted. The 2021 study was a combined 50:50 push-to-web and online panel approach, with the online panel being supplemented by river sampling and the push-to-web approach supplemented by a low connectivity boost.

Method	Number of completes
Push-to-web: Letter to address followed by completing online	1,500
Telephone: Letter to address followed by completing over the phone	68
Panel: Stratified random sample of online panel	1,392
River sampling: Recruiting respondents via panels who are not full panel members	155
Total	3,115

The fieldwork period was from 13th July to 17th December 2021, and took the form of five online panel batches and four push-to-web batches, enabling a continuous period of fieldwork. Initially, the push-to-web methodology was undertaken without an incentive, however after the first "batch" of letters was complete, an incentive was added which increased response rate from 7.5% to between 14-16% for subsequent batches. The overall cumulative response rate was 13%.

A total of 3,115 interviews were undertaken, including 2,140 in England, 313 in Scotland, 324 in Wales and 338 in Northern Ireland. Sample sizes at the devolved nation level were higher than the national proportion to allow for robust reporting for each nation.

Quotas

No hard quotas were included as part of the push-to-web approach. In the online survey, quotas were set on age, gender, social grade, region/country, and ethnicity, which were updated throughout fieldwork to work in tandem with the push-to-web approach to ensure sample balance.¹

Sample design

For the ‘main’ component of the push-to-web approach, the sample was drawn at a postcode level through stratification by Government Office Region, urban/rural designation, and IMD decile. Selection for each region was proportional to mid-year population estimates with the exception of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland which were purposefully oversampled.

For the ‘low connectivity boost’ component, the sample was selected by creating an index on the basis of the available demographic indicators of low connectivity, and selecting addresses at random within the upper decile of the custom index.

A letter was sent to each selected address inviting an adult in the household to take part in the survey. An initial reminder letter and a final reminder letter were sent to those who didn’t respond after two weeks and three weeks respectively.

A helpline option allowing respondents to complete via telephone was available to all those who received a letter. The ‘low connectivity boost’ sample’ made this option more prominent, given these letters were targeted at respondents with greater likelihood to have lower levels of connectivity. The table below sets out numbers of low internet use households that completed the survey after being sampled.

Level of internet use	Completes via ‘push-to’ components	% of total ‘push-to’ completes
No internet access at all	44	3%
Have access but don’t use at home	13	1%
Use up to 5 hours per week	142	9%
Total	199	13%

There were also minimum targets for certain groups in order to have a readable base size for each.

Targets	Target (minimum)	Final total
English regions	100 per region	At least 100 in each region including 104 in North East
Wales	300	324
Northern Ireland	300	338

¹ Ofcom set a number of additional minimum sample number requirements on groups such as Asian (Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese & Other Asian) and Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual, which were also monitored throughout.

Scotland	300	313
Over 65s with limiting condition	150	271
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual	150	189
Black (African, Caribbean & Other Black)	100	952
Asian (Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani & Other Asian)	200	221

Weighting

Results were weighted by the following variables:

- Region within England (using mid-2020 population estimates)
- Age by gender within each nation (using mid-2020 population estimates)
- Social grade within each nation (using 2011 census)
- Ethnicity within each nation (using 2017 annual population survey)
- Educational attainment at a UK level (using 2017 16+ annual population survey)

The weighting process was used to adjust for any differences between targets and fieldwork numbers and to down-weight the devolved nations (which were oversampled to ensure a robust sample size for these countries), to make the sample nationally representative. The final weight had an effective sample size of 80%.

A regression analysis was undertaken on four questions to measure mode impact. This controlled for demographic factors and found that there was either no impact or an extremely minimal driver of survey response depending on the variable. No weighting adjustments were necessary due to mode only having a very minimal impact on survey response.

Category	Achieved %	Weighted	Unweighted sample size	ESS
Total	100%	100%	3115	2486
GENDER				
Male	48%	48%	1480	1199
Female	51%	50%	1601	1258
AGE				
16-24	13%	13%	401	320
25-34	16%	17%	507	410
35-44	16%	16%	508	396
45-54	16%	16%	511	388
55-64	15%	15%	468	382
65-74	13%	12%	402	331
75+	10%	11%	318	263
SOCIAL GRADE				

² This was the only target where the minimum was not reached. However, a sample size of 95 is still in line with population estimates for Black ethnic groups (3.3% of the population).

ABC1	63%	53%	1964	1675
C2DE	36%	47%	1126	929
REGION				
England	69%	84%	2140	1935
East Midlands	5%	7%	150	141
West Midlands	8%	9%	234	210
East	8%	9%	244	220
London	11%	13%	347	315
North East	3%	4%	104	95
North West	9%	11%	276	249
South East	11%	14%	348	315
South West	8%	9%	240	217
Yorkshire and the Humber	6%	8%	197	180
Scotland	10%	8%	313	273
Wales	10%	5%	324	272
Northern Ireland	11%	3%	338	282
ETHNICITY				
White	86%	86%	2673	2121
Ethnic minority	14%	14%	422	348

Confidence interval

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at a confidence interval of 95%.

Effective Sample Size	10% or 90% ±	20% or 80% ±	30% or 70% ±	40% or 60% ±	50% ±
2,486 (Total)	1.18%	1.57%	1.80%	1.93%	1.97%
1,935 (England)	1.34%	1.78%	2.04%	2.18%	2.23%
1,258 (Female)	1.66%	2.21%	2.53%	2.71%	2.76%
348 (MEG Total)	3.15%	4.20%	4.81%	5.15%	5.25%

If 20% or 80% of a sample with an effective sample size of 2,486 gives a particular answer, in 95 out of 100 cases we would expect the “true” value to fall within the range of +/- 1.57 percentage points from the sample results.

Significant Differences

When comparing between two separate groups within a sample, the difference may be a “real” difference, or it may occur due to change (because not everyone within the two groups has been interviewed). To find whether a

difference is statistically significant we need the sample sizes of both groups, and the numbers of those groups giving a certain answer. To get to a 95% confidence interval the difference between the two % levels of answers must be greater than those given in the table below.

Effective Sample Size comparison	10% or 90% ±	20% or 80% ±	30% or 70% ±	40% or 60% ±	50% ±
1199 (Male) vs 1258 (Female)	2.3%	3.1%	3.6%	3.9%	4%
320 (16-24) vs 410 (25-34)	4%	5.5%	6.5%	7.1%	7.3%

For example, to check whether an answer of 20% for male and 24% for female is significant, the difference has to be greater than 3.1%.



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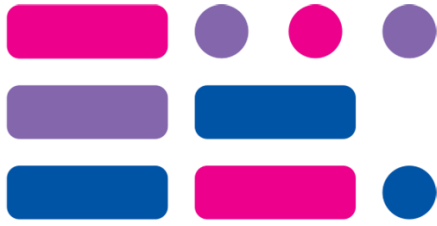
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