



# Annexes to New News, Future News

Research and Evidence Base

This publication serves as an annex document to the main volume of Ofcom's report, *New News, Future News*. It contains fuller details of the quantitative and qualitative research that provided the evidence base for the analysis included in the main report.

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## Annex 1

# The Consumer Perspective

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## Summary of research findings

Research was conducted in autumn 2006 to assess the citizen and consumer perspective on news. It examined views about, and usage of, news in general, as well as on the specific media platforms of TV, the internet, newspapers, radio, and mobile phones. Behaviour and opinion were tracked against the 2003 ITC/BSC study *New News Old News* where applicable.

There were two main components: a face-to-face, nationally-representative quantitative survey of over 2000 adults, and a qualitative analysis amongst key groups of interest – younger people, and people from minority ethnic and faith groups.

### Consumption: Which news sources do people use?

- ◆ Terrestrial television news remains ubiquitous as a news source – 94 per cent of people say they use it at some time, similar to the 91 per cent in 2002.
- ◆ Reported use of the internet for news has doubled, from 15 per cent to 27 per cent. Highest internet use comes from the 25-44 age group (39 per cent).
- ◆ Use of the press and radio also show indicative changes since 2002<sup>1</sup>. Some 73 per cent of people claimed *ever* to use newspapers in 2006, compared to 67 per cent in 2002, and indications are that frequency of consumption has also decreased since 2002 - claimed daily use has gone from 43 per cent to 36 per cent. Similarly, use of the radio for news appears to have decreased overall (59 per cent to 52 per cent) and has also decreased in terms of claimed daily use (from 44 per cent to 35 per cent).
- ◆ Consumption by the 16-24 age group appears to have decreased, particularly for newspapers (78 per cent to 61 per cent) and radio (60 per cent to 44 per cent).
- ◆ English-language 24-hour TV channels are *ever* used by 36 per cent of the population, and foreign-language news channels by 4 per cent, which rises to 19 per cent of minority ethnic groups. Asians are more likely to use these (31 per cent) than either Black Africans or Black Caribbeans (6 per cent), reflecting the availability of particular channels.
- ◆ Three-quarters of internet news consumption is through straightforward reading of news stories online, with one in five watching clips or personalised news services. TV channel news websites are nominated as used most, with online-only news aggregators next. Blogs are rarely used (5 per cent of those who use the internet as a news source).
- ◆ Use of mobile devices for news is low at 4 per cent, although this is strongly differentiated by age – 7 per cent of 16-24s use them compared to 1 per cent of those aged over 45.
- ◆ People from minority ethnic groups are less likely to use most platforms for news than white respondents, with the exception of 24-hour news channels, the internet, and magazines. Asians are more likely to use the internet for news than Black Africans and

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the differences in survey design between 2002 and 2006, comparative findings have been checked according to a very rigorous method, with far stricter reporting than is usually necessary. This means that some changes reported as only “indicative” are likely to be significant if matching methodologies had been possible. Please see Methodology for more details.

Caribbeans, despite similar levels of penetration. People from minority ethnic groups use fewer sources of news overall.

### **The purpose of news: How is news defined? Why do people follow news?**

- ◆ Local or regional events are defined as news by 76 per cent of the population, compared to 71 per cent saying politics in the UK, region or worldwide is news. Some 29 per cent of people do not include politics in their definition of news.
- ◆ 16-24s are more likely to include celebrity topics in their definition (22 per cent compared to 16 per cent overall), and less likely to include consumer or regional issues.
- ◆ Minority ethnic groups are less likely to include local or regional topics as news, although Black Africans are more likely to than Asians.
- ◆ There are significant differences in the extent of personal interest in news topics. Local or regional news is of most personal interest overall. Just over one half (53 per cent) say they are interested in any type of politics. People in socio-economic group AB are far more likely than DEs to be interested in many 'traditional' news topics.
- ◆ The main reasons given for following news were to keep abreast of what is happening in the world (70 per cent) and in the UK (65 per cent) and also for personal interest (57 per cent). One quarter (26 per cent) said they did it as a duty, and 24 per cent as a habit. Following the news as a duty rises with age – 13 per cent of 16-19s nominate this as a reason, rising to 19 per cent of those aged 20-24, 24 per cent of 25-44s, and 31 per cent of over 45s.
- ◆ Qualitative research identified that the potential reasons for news consumption included being able to engage with society and peers, a sense of duty, professional or academic needs, for personal interest and for more practical knowledge. In addition those in minority ethnic groups also watched news to find out how their race, culture or faith were being portrayed.
- ◆ Young white people had little sense of a desire or need to follow the news – “we’ve got to be out” – although many acknowledged an expectation that this would change once they took on more responsibilities in terms of jobs and family.

### **Attitudes to news: Opinions about TV news coverage**

- ◆ News coverage on the PSB channels is seen as important by around three quarters of the population, and the vast majority of people who watch particular news programmes on the PSB channels rate the particular programmes they saw as being high quality (91 per cent).
- ◆ In terms of who is portrayed, however, celebrities are widely seen as getting too much airtime, and this concern has risen slightly since 2002 (65 per cent to 72 per cent). Levels of concern over airtime for politicians are next highest, although these have barely changed since 2002 (60 per cent to 57 per cent).
- ◆ People would like to see more ordinary people portrayed in the news. ‘People like me’ (46 per cent), ordinary people (45 per cent) and young people (40 per cent) were seen to get too little airtime.

### **Attitudes to news: Impartiality and trust**

- ◆ Impartiality is seen as important on TV and radio by nearly all respondents (87 per cent), although one in seven 16-24s (15 per cent) say it is not important.
- ◆ Perceived levels of impartiality are significantly lower for the main terrestrial TV news providers than they were in 2002. In 2006, BBC One was seen as impartial by 54 per cent of the sample (compared to 77 per cent in 2002), and ITV1 by 41 per cent, a decrease from 60 per cent in 2002. One in five people (19 per cent) felt that Channel 4's output was impartial in 2006, compared with 44 per cent in 2002.
- ◆ Some 11 per cent of people felt that the internet was impartial, rising to 19 per cent of those who used the internet as a news source.
- ◆ Levels of trust in news outlets tend to be higher than perceptions of impartiality, although levels of trust have decreased between 2002 and 2006 across the terrestrial TV channels. The internet is trusted by 29 per cent of the population, rising to 53 per cent of those that use the internet for news.
- ◆ The extent to which people feel the news is impartial or trustworthy is dependent on the type of 'granularity' of the question asked. When respondents are asked about the individual news programmes they have watched, much higher proportions of people say that the programmes are impartial and trustworthy.

### **Attitudes to news: Plurality, ownership and sponsorship**

- ◆ A significant majority of people (80 per cent) agree that it is a good thing that the main commercial TV channels are legally obliged to provide regular news, with only 5 per cent disagreeing.
- ◆ Over half (55 per cent) felt that it is still necessary to have news programmes on all five main channels despite the availability of 24-hour news channels, although one third (32 per cent) said that it was not necessary.
- ◆ When asked whether individual broadcasters should concentrate on other programmes and cut down on their news provision, over half felt that they should not – 61 per cent for the BBC, 56 per cent for ITV1, and 51 per cent for Channel 4. One quarter (25 per cent) thought that it would be acceptable to cut down on news provision. This is largely unchanged from 2002.
- ◆ Just over half (52 per cent) of respondents felt that the ownership of TV channels, radio stations, websites and newspapers did not matter providing the content was relevant to them.
- ◆ Opinions regarding news programme sponsorship were more neutral overall. Nearly a quarter (22 per cent) did not hold an opinion and an almost equal proportion agreed that it was acceptable to sponsor news and current affairs programmes (38 per cent) as disagreed (40 per cent).

### **Attitudes to news: Engagement and disengagement with news**

- ◆ Almost everyone agreed that it's important to keep up to date with the news (90 per cent) but one third (32 per cent) claimed only to follow the news when something important or interesting is happening.

- ◆ There are indications of greater levels of disconnect to the content of news. Some 55 per cent of people agreed that much of the news on TV was not relevant to them, up from 34 per cent in 2002. Indicatively, more people in 2006 than 2002 agreed that they only followed the news when something important or interesting was happening (26 per cent compared to 32 per cent).
- ◆ Some 22 per cent of the overall population can be classified as news absorbed (defined as using three or more platforms for news, and agreeing strongly with the statements “it’s important to keep up to date with news and current affairs” and “I like to use a variety of news sources so I can compare how they report stories”), and 13 per cent as news detached.
- ◆ Those aged 16-19 are least likely to be news absorbed, although those aged 20-24 and 25-44 show little difference between them, suggesting that the belief of younger people that they will ‘grow into’ news as they get older is a correct one. That said, it is of note that those aged 45-64 are more likely to be news absorbed, and less likely to be detached.
- ◆ Socio-economic group is also a factor in the extent to which people are news absorbed. Nearly one third of those in socio-economic group AB (29 per cent) can be classified this way, compared to 19 per cent of those in the DE group. Only 7 per cent of ABs can be classified as news detached, compared to nearly one in five (19 per cent) of DEs.
- ◆ While news helps just under half (43 per cent) feel part of the democratic process, almost as many (37 per cent) claimed that TV news puts them off politics.
- ◆ One third of people over 20 can be said to be politically/socially engaged (defined through taking into account voting behaviour and involvement in politics, local community issues or campaigns). They are more likely to be interested in ‘serious’ news topics. Overall, their ‘appetite’ for news is greater than the overall population, and they are more likely to have concerns about news ownership and sponsorship.
- ◆ This segment of the population is more likely to use newspapers and radio for their news consumption than the rest of the population. However, crucially, they are no more likely to use the internet for news than the politically disengaged. Younger people who are politically engaged are more likely than the younger disengaged to use the internet for news.
- ◆ While 16 per cent of 20-24s fall into the politically/socially engaged group, this rises to 40 per cent of those aged 45-65. Conversely, some 39 per cent of 20-24s are in the politically/socially disengaged segment, falling to 12 per cent of 45-64s.
- ◆ Qualitative research particularly focussed on disengagement with the young and minority ethnic groups and this elicited often very strong views on the UK media. It explored various reasons for disengagement with the media, including:
  - Apathy - Particularly evident in the young. A feeling that they did not need to know what was covered in the news given conflicting priorities faced.
  - Cynicism - Reservations about the editorial policies and controls behind story selection and presentation.
  - Lack of relevance - Low interest in news content that people felt had little or no impact on them.

- Disillusionment and distrust - Particularly amongst the minority ethnic groups arising from the perception that issues relating to their culture, race or faith were not treated fairly.
- Other cultural affiliation - Consuming alternative media relating to non-UK cultures or particular faiths meant less opportunity to consume mainstream UK media (particularly for those in extended, multi-generational households).

### **Attitudes to news: local/regional news**

- ◆ Nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of the UK population say they have lived in the same local area for ten years or more.
- ◆ People tend to say they like local/regional news. It was the type of news mentioned most by people as being within their definition of news, and also as a type of news that interested them – some 76 per cent of survey respondents considered any form of local or regional current events to be news. Two thirds (66 per cent) said they were interested in the topic themselves. Interest was lower, however, amongst 16-24s and respondents from minority ethnic groups.
- ◆ The regional press is the most widely used for local and regional news, with television second, although this varies across the UK.
- ◆ While some 44 per cent of people don't want more local news, 29 per cent say they would like more on television.
- ◆ Satisfaction with both BBC and ITV news and current affairs programmes is high amongst those who watch.

### **Attitudes to news: The view from the nations and regions**

- ◆ Attitudes and news habits varied across the Nations and English regions. People in Northern Ireland were most enthusiastic about news, particularly news relating to the province itself. People there were more likely to use word of mouth, and Teletext, as a news source than elsewhere.
- ◆ Respondents in Scotland were more likely to use television and the press for news than most other parts of the UK. They were more likely to use the press for regional news, and less likely to use TV. People in Wales were more likely to use TV for news, and were more likely to use English-language 24-hour news channels - in part an outcome of their deeper multi-channel penetration.
- ◆ People in the North West of England were less likely to be interested in news than other parts of the UK. There were few differences between the Nations in terms of politics and news, although within England, views were more polarised between Northern England and the South.

### **News and young people**

- ◆ The 16-24 year olds generally claimed less interest in news topics than their older counterparts. In particular, they were less interested in topics of a local or regional nature, current events, politics or business news than the older age groups. They were more interested in entertainment and celebrity news than older age-groups.

- ◆ Since 2002 there have been particular increases in young people claiming that they only watch news when something important or interesting is happening (33 per cent to 50 per cent) and that much of the news on TV is ‘not relevant to me’ has particularly increased (44 per cent to 64 per cent) – although this latter increase is similar to that for the UK population as a whole (34 per cent to 55 per cent).
- ◆ The qualitative research found that many young people were cynical about news coverage and the levels of bias and exaggeration in the media. They distanced themselves from current events, politics and world affairs.
- ◆ However, they tended to see this as being characteristic of their stage of life, and believed they would become more engaged as they got older and had more responsibilities. Some 81 per cent still say they think it’s important to keep up with news and current affairs.
- ◆ It is of note that young people were perceived not to appear onscreen enough in TV news programmes. While it is unsurprising that higher proportions of young people thought there were too few young people featured in news (53 per cent of 16-24 year olds), around 45 per cent of 35-54 year olds also thought the same.

### **News and people from minority ethnic groups**

- ◆ Respondents from minority ethnic groups were less likely to be interested in news – white respondents said they were interested in an average of 5.6 types of news, while people from minority ethnic groups were interested in an average of 4.1. Overall, there was less appetite for news across a variety of questions.
- ◆ Some 46 per cent of people from minority ethnic groups felt that ethnic minorities get too little airtime compared to half as many (23 per cent) white respondents. This point was particularly driven by Black respondents: while 25 per cent of Asian respondents felt that this was the case, the corresponding figures for Black Caribbean and Black African respondents were much higher at 60 per cent and 61 per cent respectively.
- ◆ People within specific ethnic groups had very different relationships with news. For example Black Africans were particularly interested in world-wide politics and current events – at 54 per cent this level of interest is significantly higher than that expressed by white and Asian respondents (both 41 per cent) and Black Caribbean respondents (36 per cent). Black Africans were also more likely to be interested in local/regional news than other minority groups. Asians were more likely to use the internet for news (36 per cent), whereas Black respondents were not particularly likely to use this platform (19 per cent).
- ◆ Minority ethnic groups also differ in terms of their news absorption or detachment. One quarter of Asians (25 per cent) can be classified as news absorbed, compared to 16 per cent of Black Africans and Caribbeans. Conversely, Asians are also more likely to be news detached – some 23 per cent can be classified in this way compared to 15 per cent of Black Africans and Caribbeans.
- ◆ Qualitative research identified a strong feeling of dissatisfaction with the mainstream media in the UK. There was a common belief that the different UK media sources had their own agendas and particular stances and tones of reporting, although bias was seen as different for each group:
  - Black Caribbeans and Black Africans – annoyance that reporting over-emphasised links with criminal activity and produced a negative tone.

- Muslims – dissatisfaction with coverage of terrorism and the Islamic faith.
- Indian Hindus and Sikhs – more satisfied with reporting of news relating to their communities, however there were objections to being classified as ‘Asians’ which they felt associated them with the negative portrayal of Muslims.
- Those living in multi-generation households, where the elder generation had control of the main TV/radio, indicated in qualitative research that they often had less control over the news they consumed and so tended to be exposed to more news from, and related to, their culture, homeland or faith and therefore less UK news coverage.

## Introduction

- A1.1 The quantitative and qualitative research conducted for this project examines news on television in particular, but places TV in the context of other platforms in order to better understand its role and resonance.
- A1.2 As well as understanding the motivations and patterns of usage amongst news consumers, it is also - perhaps increasingly - necessary to understand the issues and reasons behind *disengagement* with news, and the extent to which this may be related to political engagement.
- A1.3 The views of younger people, and people from some minority ethnic groups are considered in particular, to explore their relationship to mainstream and other types of news media. Whilst these groups are not the only ones that display some levels of disengagement, they are particularly important groups to understand – younger people because of the extent to which such views will endure into adulthood; and people from minority ethnic groups because of increased concern over issues of race and faith and their impact on UK society.
- A1.4 The main questions addressed are as follows:
- What is news?
  - Why do people follow the news?
  - Which news sources do they use?
  - What do people think of issues of impartiality, trust, sponsorship and plurality, and how has this changed over time?
  - What do people think of local and regional news?
  - What types of news delivery would they like in the future?
- A1.5 In addition, certain key groups were identified for particular analysis:
- Young people aged 16-24
  - People from minority ethnic groups and different faith backgrounds
  - People in the Nations and English regions

## Methodology

- A1.6 The main source of evidence in this annex is research carried out by Ofcom in autumn 2006: a face-to-face quantitative survey<sup>2</sup>, and qualitative groups amongst younger people and people from minority ethnic groups. Both pieces of research were conducted by the market research agency TNS.
- A1.7 The quantitative stage was designed to replicate research carried out for the 2003 ITC/BSC report *New News Old News* as far as possible. However, the questionnaire was developed to better capture the news landscape in 2006 and by necessity a different sampling approach was adopted<sup>3</sup>. The difference in methodology means that changes in response between 2002 and 2006 need to be of greater magnitude in order to be classified as statistically significant, although indicative changes are indicated where appropriate<sup>4</sup>.
- A1.8 The main survey comprised a nationally-representative sample of respondents aged 16+ in the UK with a boost of respondents within minority ethnic groups. A total of 2,216 interviews were conducted, 276 of which were with Asian respondents and 205 with Black African and Black Caribbean respondents. Twenty-minute interviews were conducted in-home between 6 September and 3 October 2006. All surveys were completed using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing). An additional survey was carried out in November/December 2006 further to explore opinions about impartiality and trust.
- A1.9 A series of qualitative focus groups to explore issues of disengagement were conducted with the two key groups mentioned above: 16-25 year olds within the white population and those in minority ethnic and faith groups (Caribbean, African Christian, Indian Hindus/ Sikhs and Pakistani Muslim ethnic groups aged 18-45). Groups were recruited so as to exclude people with views at either extremes – those who were completely content with their news offering, and those that had no interest or potential interest in following the news.
- A1.10 A total of 12 groups were conducted from 20-25 September 2006 in London, Leicester, Birmingham, Bradford, Cardiff and Glasgow. The Muslim groups were conducted as single-gender whereas the others were mixed gender.
- A1.11 Additional evidence is drawn from the following sources:
- Ofcom Residential Consumer Tracker study: Ofcom's tracking study which covers the range of telecoms and broadcast issues amongst UK adults (ongoing)
  - Ofcom PSB Tracker: Ofcom tracking study examining viewer opinions of how PSB purposes and characteristics apply to different PSB channels (ongoing)
  - Ofcom Media Literacy Audit: large-scale survey examining the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts (March 2006)

<sup>2</sup> Boosted by a further omnibus survey on impartiality and trust, carried out by TNS in Nov-Dec 2006.

<sup>3</sup> In the research used in the 2003 *New News Old News*, survey respondents were members of the Quest Panel, which involved filling out a questionnaire at home without the interviewer present. In 2006 a different methodology was necessary as the Quest panel no longer existed.

<sup>4</sup> Due to the differences in survey design between 2002 and 2006, comparative findings have been checked according to a very rigorous method, with far stricter reporting than is usually necessary. This means that some changes reported as only "indicative" are likely to be significant if matching methodologies had been possible. Please see final section on Methodology for more details.

- BBC GfK Pulse panel research: online research panel of 15,000 providing viewer opinions on programmes watched (ongoing)
- TNS Future of News: Qualitative research carried out by TNS in February 2006 looking at news consumption and attitudes amongst the UK adult population (Feb 2006)
- Ofcom Current Affairs research: Qualitative project examining opinions of television current affairs (March 2006)

A1.12 Within this Annex any data or findings from the additional sources of evidence is clearly footnoted. All other data is from Ofcom's qualitative and quantitative research commissioned specifically for this News project.

### The purpose of news

A1.13 Before detailing the specifics of news consumption practices – who uses which platform and news source, for how long – it is useful to understand what news consumers identify as news, and what they are personally interested by. “News” covers a wide range of areas or issues, and it is important to understand which people are more or less likely to see certain topics as legitimate types of news.

A1.14 The survey asked people to choose which topics they considered to be news, and then asked them which topics they were personally interested in.

### How is news defined?

A1.15 Respondents tended to have a very broad concept of news.

*“News is any information if it is informing you. If it is something you did not know, then it's news (Male, 21-34 years, Manchester)*

*“News is anything really. Basically everything. Whatever is happening around me and internationally (Indian Hindu/Sikh, 25-45 years, London)*

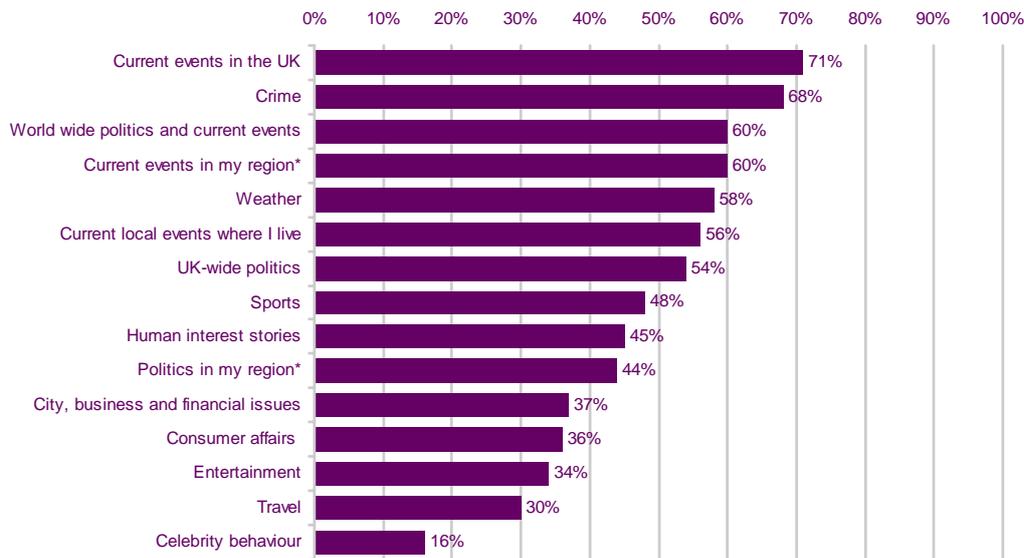
A1.16 That said, there was no universal agreement on which news topics were considered as news. For example, nearly one third of survey respondents didn't think that current events in the UK, or crime, were news (Figure A1.1).

A1.17 Three quarters (76 per cent) of the sample considered local/regional current events to be news and seven out of ten (71 per cent) selected politics (whether world, UK or regional). Conversely 24 per cent and 29 per cent respectively did not consider these topics to be included within a definition of 'news'. Women, the 16-24s and respondents from minority ethnic groups were less likely to include these two broad and arguably more 'traditional' news topics within their news definition.

A1.18 UK-wide politics was held to be a topic of news by 54 per cent of the sample, and regional politics by 44 per cent. These findings differ across the UK. For example, UK-wide politics was defined as a news topic by 40 per cent of people in Wales; conversely, regional/Nation politics was defined by 54 per cent of people in Scotland, rising to 71 per cent in Northern Ireland. These differences are examined in depth in the Nations and regions section at the end of this Annex.

**Figure A1.1: Topics considered as news**

Q1a) Thinking about news in general, which of the following areas or issues would you CONSIDER to be news?



Base: All adults 16+, 2216

\* note: my region replaced by appropriate country in Scotland, Wales and N.Ireland

### Differences by age

- A1.19 Celebrity behaviour was more likely to be considered a form of news by the 16-24 (22 per cent) and 25-34 (23 per cent) age-groups, compared to 16 per cent for all adults and to 7 per cent amongst 55-64s and 10 per cent of over 65s.
- A1.20 That said, the younger age groups were less likely to include the arguably 'softer' end of news topics within their definition - consumer affairs (24 per cent compared to 36 per cent overall) and human interest stories (31 per cent compared to 45 per cent). Regional or local current events were also less likely to be defined as news (50 per cent and 43 per cent respectively compared to 60 per cent and 56 per cent).
- A1.21 Grouping together some of the 'harder topics' of news (Politics and current events, and City, business and financial news) – 84 per cent of 16-24s included any of these in their definition compared to 90 per cent of 25-44s, 91 per cent of 45-64s and 90 per cent of 65+s.

### Differences by gender

- A1.22 There were also marked differences by gender in how people define news. Men were more likely than women to include sport, mentioned by 62 per cent of men compared to 38 per cent of women, and UK-wide politics (58 per cent compared to 51 per cent respectively). The same holds true for City/business/financial issues with 41 per cent of men including it in within their definition of news compared to 34 per cent of women. However, the greater likelihood of men to include UK politics within a 'news' definition does not extend to world and/or local politics with both genders equally likely to consider them news.
- A1.23 Women were more inclined to include current events relevant to their local area (59 per cent compared to 52 per cent of men) and human interest stories (48 per cent compared to 41 per cent of men) in their definition. Women were also more likely to

describe celebrity behaviour as news than men (20 per cent compared to 12 per cent of men).

### **Difference by socio-economic group**

A1.24 Those in the AB socio-economic group were more inclined to choose 'harder' news topics than the other groups (97 per cent compared to 92 per cent for C1s, 87 per cent for C2s, and 83 per cent for DEs). However, there was little difference in 'softer' news topics. For example, 37 per cent of ABs, 38 per cent of C1s, 38 per cent of C2s and 40 per cent of DEs included either celebrity news or entertainment.

### **Difference by Ethnicity**

A1.25 There is also a strong relationship between ethnicity and an individual's definition of news<sup>5</sup>. White respondents selected a greater number of topics within their definition of news, mentioning on average 7.3 topics compared to 5.7 topics from minority ethnic groups.

A1.26 White respondents and those from minority ethnic groups were equally as likely to include topics such as celebrity behaviour, entertainment and sports in their definition of news. And while white respondents were more likely to refer to current events and politics generally, there was no such difference for world wide politics and current events, with respondents from minority ethnic groups equally as likely to select these.

A1.27 Within the specific minority ethnic groups, Black African respondents were more likely (68 per cent) than Asian respondents (55 per cent) to nominate regional/local events as news. This was also the case for UK-wide politics (50 per cent) compared to 35 per cent for Asians. Black Africans were also more likely to consider entertainment stories as news (48 per cent) than Asian (33 per cent) and white (34 per cent) respondents.

A1.28 Overall, 58 per cent of non-white respondents mentioned any form of local or regional news within their definition compared to 77 per cent of white respondents.

### **How interested are people in news?**

A1.29 Respondents were also asked which news topics were of personal interest. Again, there were wide variations in responses amongst different groups.

A1.30 Overall, levels of personal interest in news topics were lower than the definitions of those topics as news. Two thirds (66 per cent) of the sample said they were personally interested in either local or regional news, compared to 76 per cent saying that they would define this as news. Similarly, just over half (53 per cent) expressed interest in any form of politics, compared to 71 per cent defining this as news.

A1.31 'Traditional' news topics, such as current events, politics, crime, city/business/financial news, when taken together were of personal interest to 89

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<sup>5</sup> As can be seen throughout this Annex, respondents from minority ethnic groups generally gave lower levels of responses to questions relating to news e.g. they named fewer topics within their definition of news, they were interested in fewer news topics, they used fewer news platforms and so on. This is potentially a function of lower engagement in news *per se*. Therefore throughout this Annex, the differences for respondents from minority ethnic groups have been commented on; however in some instances, the fact that the incidence levels are the same for respondents from minority ethnic groups as for the white respondents is, in itself, worthy of note.

per cent of the sample. ‘Softer’ news topics such as human interest, consumer affairs and/or travel were of interest to 56 per cent, and 37 per cent were interested by entertainment and/or celebrity behaviour.

## Differences by Age

- A1.32 Age is again a key factor in describing levels of interest in different news topics. The younger (16-24 year old) respondents overall were less interested in news compared to their older counterparts with an average of 4.3 topics mentioned compared to 5.5 for the total sample. Figure A1.2 illustrates how interest levels by topic vary by the different age bands.
- A1.33 The most popular topic amongst 16-24s was crime, with 52 per cent of them saying it was a topic in which they were interested. For other age-groups, the topics of most personal interest were linked to current events at a UK, regional or local level.
- A1.34 Nearly half (48 per cent) of 16-24 year olds said they were interested in entertainment news and one in five (20 per cent) in celebrity behaviour - both higher than for respondents aged over 35.

**Figure A1.2: Interest in news topics by age**

	Total (2216)	16-24 (352)	25-44 (917)	45-64 (575)	65+ (372)
Current events in the UK	55%	41%	56%	58%	59%
Current events in my region*	50%	30%	51%	53%	58%
Current local events where I live	48%	31%	45%	48%	58%
Weather	48%	37%	51%	50%	50%
Crime	47%	52%	51%	49%	34%
World wide politics and current events	41%	26%	40%	47%	46%
Sports	39%	43%	38%	38%	38%
Human interest stories	38%	27%	38%	42%	38%
UK-wide politics	37%	20%	37%	43%	38%
Entertainment	34%	48%	38%	28%	27%
Politics in my region*	28%	17%	23%	24%	34%
Travel	26%	15%	25%	30%	30%
Consumer affairs	23%	8%	21%	30%	28%
City, business and financial issues	19%	10%	18%	25%	18%
Celebrity behaviour	13%	20%	16%	8%	9%

Note: ‘my region’\* is replaced with Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland in those nations. Unweighted bases in brackets

- A1.35 The qualitative research confirmed this high level of interest in these areas for the young. Personality-led news stories were mentioned as being of interest in most of the focus groups, especially the Richard Hammond and Steve Irwin stories which were topical at the time when the focus groups were conducted<sup>6</sup>.
- A1.36 The 16-24 age group’s interest levels were significantly lower than those of older age groups for regional current events (30 per cent), local current events (31 per cent), world-wide politics and current events (26 per cent), human interest stories (27 per cent), UK-wide politics (20 per cent), consumer affairs (8 per cent) and city, business and financial issues (10 per cent).

<sup>6</sup> At the time of the research Richard Hammond, a presenter of television motoring programmes, had been involved in a serious car accident (20/09/06) and Steve Irwin, an Australian wildlife broadcaster had been killed (04/09/06).

A1.37 This group did not seem to consider news generally described as ‘local/regional’ to be of direct relevance to them<sup>7</sup>. However, it is worth noting that the qualitative research suggests that 16-24 year olds’ interests are linked to personal experience or impact, and some of the examples given of news relevant to them could indeed be classed as local/regional news.

*“If there was a shooting in a club I’d know not to go there” (Caribbean, 18-24 years, Birmingham)*

*“If they built a motorway at the back of my house” (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 18-24 years, Leicester)*

### Difference by socio-economic group

A1.38 People from socio-economic group AB expressed greater levels of interest in many of the ‘traditional’ news topics, and the average number of topics mentioned as being of interest was 6.5 compared to 5.5 for the total sample. Figure A1.3 illustrates interest levels for all news topics.

A1.39 The AB socio-economic group was over twice as likely to express an interest in UK-wide politics as the DE group (55 per cent and 25 per cent respectively) and nearly twice as likely to be interested in world-wide politics and current events (61 per cent and 31 per cent respectively). This difference in interest in politics also extended into regional politics: 36 per cent of ABs expressed an interest compared to 24 per cent of DEs. Conversely, crime was of slightly greater interest (48per cent) to those in the DE group than those in the AB group (45per cent).

**Figure A1.3: Interest in news topics by socio-economic group**

	Total (2216)	AB (340)	C1 (614)	C2 (459)	DE (803)
Current events in the UK	55%	70%	54%	53%	44%
Current events in my region*	50%	59%	46%	53%	44%
Current local events where I live	48%	52%	45%	48%	45%
Weather	48%	55%	51%	45%	42%
Crime	47%	45%	46%	51%	48%
World wide politics and current events	41%	61%	42%	30%	31%
Sports	39%	41%	40%	40%	34%
Human interest stories	38%	42%	34%	42%	36%
UK-wide politics	37%	55%	38%	28%	25%
Entertainment	34%	32%	36%	32%	36%
Politics in my region*	28%	36%	27%	24%	24%
Travel	26%	31%	26%	25%	22%
Consumer affairs	23%	32%	23%	18%	19%
City, business and financial issues	19%	30%	19%	15%	12%
Celebrity behaviour	13%	11%	14%	12%	14%

Note: ‘My region’\* is replaced with Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland in those nations. Unweighted bases in brackets

### Difference by gender

A1.40 Figure A1.4 illustrates differences in interest in topics by gender. More than half of men (58 per cent) said they were interested in any one of the politics topics (the same is true for regional, national and worldwide politics) compared to the 49 per cent of women who expressed an interest in the topic.

<sup>7</sup> Base sizes are too low for 16-24 year olds by region to look at whether this pattern differs in the Nations.

- A1.41 Men were twice as likely to express an interest in city, business and financial news than women (26 per cent and 13 per cent respectively) and were more likely to be interested in sports news (55 per cent vs.23 per cent).
- A1.42 Women expressed greater interest (52 per cent) in current events relevant to their local area than men (42 per cent). Human interest stories were more likely to be of interest to women (44 per cent) than men (32 per cent). Women were also more likely to claim an interest in news relating to celebrity behaviour than men (17 per cent as opposed to 9 per cent of men).

**Figure A1.4 Interest in news topics by gender**

%	Total (2216)	Male (1045)	Female (1171)
Current events in the UK	55	56	55
Current events in my region*	50	49	51
Current local events where I live	48	42	52
Weather	48	48	49
Crime	47	45	49
World wide politics and current events	41	47	36
Sports	39	55	23
Human interest stories	38	32	44
UK-wide politics	37	42	31
Entertainment	34	33	35
Politics in my region*	28	31	25
Travel	26	27	25
Consumer affairs	23	23	24
City, business and financial issues	19	26	13
Celebrity behaviour	13	9	17

Note: 'My region\*' is replaced with Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland in those nations. Unweighted bases in brackets

### Difference by ethnicity

- A1.43 People from minority ethnic groups showed marked differences in their interest levels in news topics. The average number of news topics in which they said they are interested was significantly lower: white respondents named 5.6 topics of interest whereas for respondents from minority ethnic groups the corresponding figure was 4.1. Figure A1.5 displays differences across all topics.
- A1.44 There was a greater level of claimed interest for the white respondents in a number of topics. Current events in the UK was a topic in which 56 per cent of white respondents expressed an interest compared to 43 per cent of respondents from minority ethnic groups. Current events in my region showed the same pattern at 52 per cent and 22 per cent respectively.
- A1.45 White respondents were more than twice as likely to be interested in current local events where they live. They also showed greater interest in human interest stories, UK-wide politics, politics in my region and travel. For consumer affairs, twice as many white respondents said they were interested in this topic (24 per cent compared to 12 per cent of respondents from minority ethnic groups).
- A1.46 However, people from minority ethnic groups were more likely to be interested in worldwide politics and current events (46 per cent) than white people (41 per cent).
- A1.47 Looking at responses within individual minority ethnic groups, a number of differences can be identified. Africans were more likely (53 per cent) to be interested in worldwide politics and current events than Caribbeans (36 per cent) or

Asians (41 per cent). Caribbeans were more likely (36 per cent) to be interested in current local events than either Asians or Africans (25 per cent).

A1.48 In the survey 183 Muslim Asians and 93 non-Muslim Asians were interviewed, which is sufficient to allow some analysis of their results. Non-Muslim Asians expressed greater interest in current events in the UK (51 per cent compared to 38 per cent for Muslim Asians).

**Figure A1.5: Interest in selected news topics by ethnicity**

%	Total (2216)	White (1715)	Minority ethnic groups (496)	Asian (276)	Caribbean (98)	African (94)
Current events in the UK	50	56	43	43	50	52
Current events in my region*	47	52	22	23	32	18
Crime	47	48	41	38	47	45
Current local events where I live	44	49	23	25	36	25
World wide politics and current events	38	41	46	41	36	53
Human interest stories	36	39	28	24	29	33
Entertainment	33	34	31	29	22	38
UK-wide politics	32	37	30	28	28	36
Politics in my region*	27	29	16	18	27	22
Consumer affairs	20	24	12	13	15	17
City, business and financial issues	17	19	17	20	14	26
Celebrity behaviour	13	13	10	10	13	11

### **Motivations: Why do people follow the news?**

A1.49 In order to understand the role that news plays in people’s lives and the relative importance of its role, survey respondents were asked to identify their personal reasons for following news (Figure A1.6). The qualitative research also explored motivations and interests with young people and those from minority ethnic groups.

A1.50 The main reasons given were to know what’s going on in the world (70 per cent) and across the UK (65 per cent), and for personal interest (57 per cent). 16-24 year olds were less likely to mention the two main reasons than the older age groups (57 per cent said to know what’s going on around the world and 52 per cent in the UK), although they were still their most cited reasons. 16-24s were more likely to say they followed news for its entertainment value (26 per cent offered ‘for entertainment’ as a reason compared to 19 per cent of the overall sample). This again reflects their higher than average interest in topics such as entertainment and celebrity behaviour.

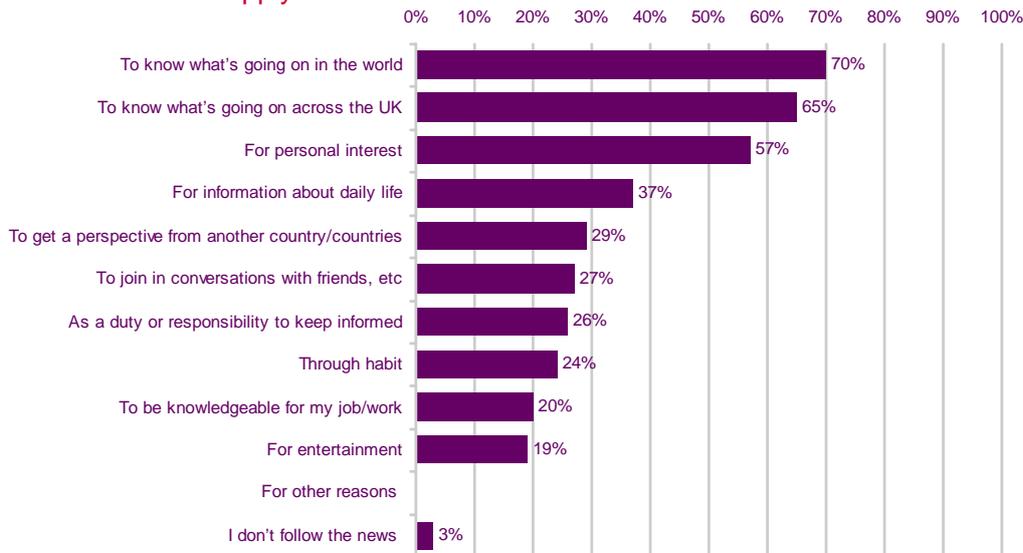
A1.51 Those that felt they had a duty or responsibility to keep informed comprise just over a quarter of the population (26 per cent). This motivation was more important to the older age groups. While 13 per cent of 16-19s cited it as a reason for following the news, this rose to 19 per cent of those aged 20-24, 24 per cent of 25-44 year olds, 31 per cent of 45-64s and 30 per cent of those aged over 65.

A1.52 Duty was less often cited as a reason for following the news by Asian respondents, mentioned by just under one fifth (18 per cent) compared to white respondents (26 per cent) and Black Africans (28 per cent).

A1.53 One in five respondents (20 per cent) said that they followed the news in order to be more knowledgeable at work or for their job. This was particularly pertinent amongst the AB social grade with one third (32 per cent) giving it as one of their reasons. One quarter (27 per cent) of respondents said that they followed the news in order to be able to join in conversations with friends. It was a motivation particularly cited by the AB social grade (34 per cent) but there were no other differences by gender, age or ethnicity.

**Figure A1.6: Reasons for following the news**

Q2) Thinking about some of the reasons people might have for following the news, which of these reasons apply to YOU?



Base: All adults 16+, 2216

A1.54 This use for news was echoed in the qualitative groups. Respondents said they used news to engage with society, their peer group and people they interacted with – family, friends work colleagues and acquaintances. It also helped them to fit in with their peer and social groups.

*“Say, when you are sitting inside a pub and someone will bring something up and start talking about something that’s happened in the news. And if you haven’t a clue about it, you’d be sat there like a doughnut thinking, ‘what are they on about? I don’t have a clue’.*  
(White, 19-24 years, Glasgow)

**Motivations and interest in news: views of young people and people from minority ethnic groups**

A1.55 The qualitative research provides rich detail of the varied motivations regarding news consumption in these two groups of the UK population.

Motivation and interest in news amongst 16-25s

A1.56 In focus groups, young people tended to distance themselves from current events, politics and world affairs. This lack of interest in what they perceived to be ‘serious news’ was something they were aware of themselves, and saw as a difference between themselves and ‘older people.’

- A1.57 Younger people saw not being interested in this type of news as a characteristic of their stage of life and general outlook - almost as a positive affirmation that they were behaving as people of their age should. They tended to imply that when they were older, they would be more interested in 'serious' news. This was to a certain extent confirmed in the research by the slightly older groups (19-24s compared to 16-18s) claiming increased interest in 'serious' news. It was clear that these respondents saw being interested in the news as fitting with having more responsibility, which in turn was something they associated with getting older.

*"We have not got there yet, like where it should bother us because we haven't got that responsibility, so it does not matter to us what happened. (White, 16-18 years, Bradford/ Leeds)*

*"I never used to bother with the news at all. It used to be on the telly and I didn't even look at it. As you grow up you want to know what is going on" (White, 19-24 years, Glasgow)*

### Minority ethnic group motivations and interest in news

- A1.58 A key motivation for following the news amongst people from minority ethnic groups was that of engaging with their family or culture in their country of origin. It is important to note that this was in addition to engaging with British society in general. This was expressed most strongly amongst the Indians and Muslims who tended to live in extended multi-generational households, which heightened their involvement with news, debates and issues affecting country or origin, religion and race.

*"If you would call someone back home you would hear that this has happened or that has happened and the British news would show a very little glimpse but you wouldn't get enough of it but now with the Zee news and Star news it is fantastic." (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 25-45 years, London)*

*"I get the news from Nigeria from my parents. They have family back there and they speak on the phone and tell us. It is important to know" (African Christian, 18-24 years, London)*

*"We are a bit lost here. It is good to keep the mother connection. And with other members of your community" (Caribbean, 25-45 years, Cardiff)*

- A1.59 Another reason for following the news was to know 'what is being said about us': how their race, religion and culture were portrayed in the news. This sentiment was most strongly expressed amongst Muslim and Black (African and Caribbean) respondents and to a lesser extent amongst Hindu and Sikh Indian respondents.
- A1.60 Being aware of how they were represented in the news media served two related purposes. It informed them what other elements of the population (non-Muslim, non-Black, non-Indian) thought of them. It also helped them understand why broader society held certain perceptions of their race or religion, and helped them to deal with and, possibly, tackle these perceptions.

*"I would say as a Muslim I would be more interested ... to see what they are saying we have got up to now" (Muslim, 20-40 years, Leicester)*

*“You are naturally going to feel about your own race... If they say negative news about the black community, then obviously there is going to be a stereotype... gun crime, rape” (Black African Christian, 18-24 years, London)*

- A1.61 In addition to the two above factors, specific interests were apparent within the individual minority ethnic groups.

### Muslims

- A1.62 Muslims in the groups were particularly interested in the news stories and analysis that covered Islam, news from the Muslim world, and its perceived connection with terrorism. There was a strong feeling that in recent years this had dominated most news agendas and had had a personal impact on them. Discussions indicated that they felt the media had tended to focus to an intrusive extent on them, the way they led their lives and the way the world viewed them.

- A1.63 Participants said they were often willing to go to different platforms to access all viewpoints on this issue as they felt that the British media would give just one point of view – the Western view.

*“They can see the bad light of the Muslim people. I think [the British media] take it out of context, everything they basically say.” (Muslim, 20-40, Leicester)*

- A1.64 Whilst the above news formed a major part of all the Muslim respondents' news agenda, they were also interested in issues in the UK such as education policy, crime and healthcare which affected their day to day life.

*“I am interested in this school lunch thing ... and the NHS. And crime ... I also like the entertainment. It is a type of escapism.” (Muslim, 20-40 years, Leicester)*

### Indian Hindus and Sikhs

- A1.65 The Indians in the groups felt culturally close to India and tended to refer to themselves as *“Indians living in UK”*. They accessed news sources, mainly TV, from India. This formed an important part of their news interest and included politics, sports and entertainment.

*“I am interested in what is happening in Kashmir ... and the prime minister in India is a Sikh so yes, I want to know how he is doing. It is the first time they have a Sikh prime minister” (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 18-24 years, Leicester)*

- A1.66 At a parallel level, they were interested in mainstream UK news, particularly relating to business / finance, headlines, current affairs and national/ international/ local news. They felt it was important to be up-to-date on these issues to contribute to and participate in British society. There was therefore some evidence of parallel co-existence of news from Britain and India.

*“We live here, work here and do business here. We have to know what is happening here” (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 25-45 years, London)*

## Black Caribbeans

- A1.67 The Black Caribbean people in the groups did not have access to news from “*the islands*” and apart from word of mouth or major news coverage by the mainstream media, they were not particularly interested in news from their country of origin. If there was a major event in their town of origin or if they had family there, they would follow the news by telephone calls or internet where accessible.

## Black African Christians

- A1.68 There was some difference between first and second generation Black Africans. The sample included many first generation Africans who had been highly educated in their homeland. They were very interested in more ‘serious’ news as they felt it increased their knowledge and gave them a better chance in British society. There was a strong interest around political issues especially immigration as it personally affected them.

*“Without news, you are nothing”  
“My motivation is trying to find out more about life, about others, as much information as I can so I can be ready to discuss about anything” (Black African Christian, 25-45 years, Birmingham)*

- A1.69 They were also very interested in news from their homeland which they accessed via word of mouth or the internet. Some subscribed to African satellite stations such as OBE (Ghana) or B.E.N (Senegal).
- A1.70 As with the Black Caribbean respondents, all Black Africans in the sample were interested in coverage of news related to black people and the way black people were portrayed in the media. The second generation younger Black Africans did not have the same hunger and interest for news as the first generation. Whilst they were interested in race issues and had some interest in news from their homeland (which they got via their family), it was not as strong as the first generation.

*“My parents are interested in what is happening back home and they tell us.” (Black African Christian, 18-24 years, London)*

## **Consumption: Which news sources do people use?**

- A1.71 The previous sections have described in detail the motivations people have for following news, and the types of topics that they classify as news. How does this translate into consumption habits, and the choice of different platforms for different types of news?
- A1.72 This section sets out how people consume news and the various platforms that are used for different types of news and current affairs information. It focuses also on change over time, and compares levels of consumption with those in 2002. As stated earlier, differences between the type of surveys used in 2002 and 2006 mean that a higher test of statistical significance was necessary in order to minimise any impact of the methodology upon the findings. In the text which follows, statistically significant findings at the 99% confidence level are given, with changes at the 95% level described as indicative.

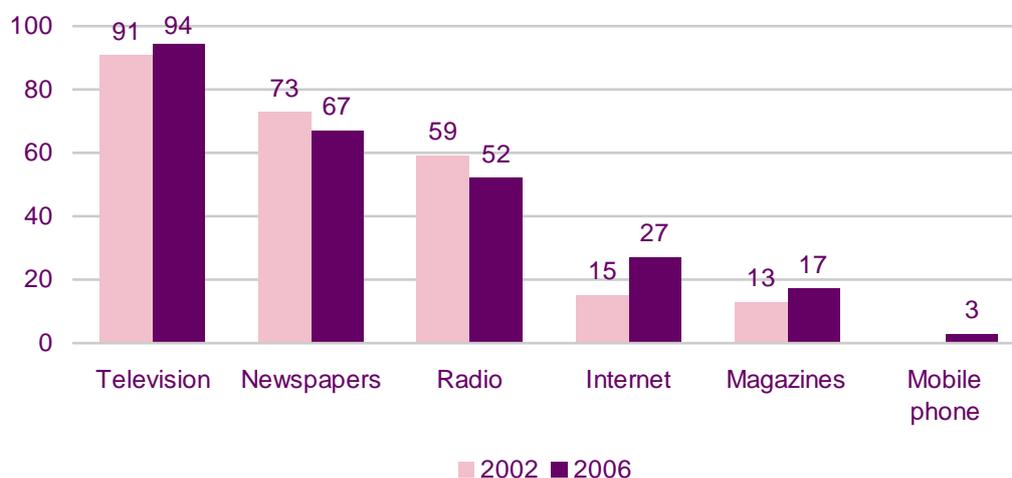
- A1.73 First, however, it is useful to be reminded of the varied ways that news is assimilated by people over a typical day or lifespan of a news event, and which sources are typically used. According to qualitative research conducted by TNS in February 2006, there are three main types:
- *Basic awareness*: registering that a story exists (the type of story and primary subject matter). This news can come from any source including radio bulletins, on-screen internet tickers, or information from friends, family, colleagues. This can trigger more active investigations.
  - *Passive gathering*: gradually encountering more detail and developing a broader knowledge. If the news is not of immediate personal importance or huge general significance, information will be gathered gradually and is fed by all news sources as they are encountered, and given the typical patterns of use means that TV and/or radio bulletins are often key sources.
  - *Active gathering*: seeking out further information, detail and clarification. When a consumer engages with a story more directly, finding out about the story becomes a more conscious process. The research found that the most obvious sources are those that are most immediately available and therefore the internet, TV rolling news channels or newspapers therefore often have a role to play. Multiple sources may be used, both formal and informal in an effort to build up a full picture.
- A1.74 The research indicated that those in the C2DE socio-economic groups tended to have more opportunities for passive gathering than those of BC1 groups. Thus, C2DEs tended to have news consumption spread more evenly throughout the day, but may be exposed to bulletins with relatively limited depth.
- A1.75 In comparison, people in BC1 groups tended to have their news exposure more focussed around particular times, with the news they then consumed being more concentrated and in-depth (e.g. watching a main evening TV news programme or listening to a news-focussed radio station).

### Sources of news – trends over time

- A1.76 Figure A1.7 shows how self-reported consumption patterns by platform have shifted over this time period. The platform that has seen the steepest rise in use for news is, not surprisingly, the internet which has almost doubled from 15 per cent to 27 per cent. This is in part a factor of the growth in internet access during this period – from 50 per cent to 60 per cent (Ofcom, The Communications Market 2006). Some 68 per cent of the sample in 2006 said they had internet access, and of these 34 per cent said they ever used the internet for news.
- A1.77 Television continues to be perceived by nearly all respondents as a source for their news consumption (91 per cent in 2002 and 94 per cent in 2006). Television was the sole source of news for 13 per cent of respondents.
- A1.78 Figures indicate that fewer people claimed to access news via the radio (down 7 percentage points), and a similar reduction is indicated in newspaper consumption – down from 73 per cent in 2002 to 67 per cent in 2006.
- A1.79 While the vast majority (98 per cent) of survey respondents said they followed news, 2 per cent claimed not to do so at all, equating to a population figure of around 830,000 adults in the UK. The profile of these ‘news rejecters’ had a female

(76 per cent) and under-35 (68 per cent) skew. To put this into perspective, however, 95 per cent of females under 35 years old said they followed the news; it is very much a small minority who choose not to do so. News in one form or another thus reaches all demographics without exception.

**Figure A1.7: Platforms used for news – 2002-2006**

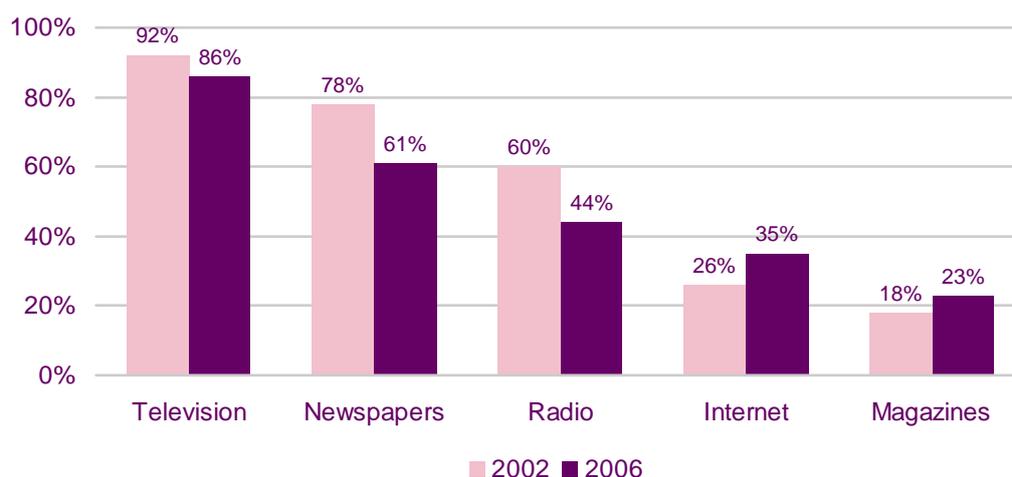


Q3a) Which of the following do you EVER use for news? Base: All adults 16+, 4662 (2002) and 2216 (2006)  
 Note1: 2002 question = Q1b) What OTHER sources do you use

A1.80 Figure A1.8 shows how the sources of news used by young people aged 16-24 have changed since 2002. While the changes are not statistically significant due to differences in methodology, use of newspapers and radio for news appear to be declining.

**Figure A1.8: Platforms used for news among 16-24s – 2002-2006**

Q3a) Which of the following do you EVER use for news?

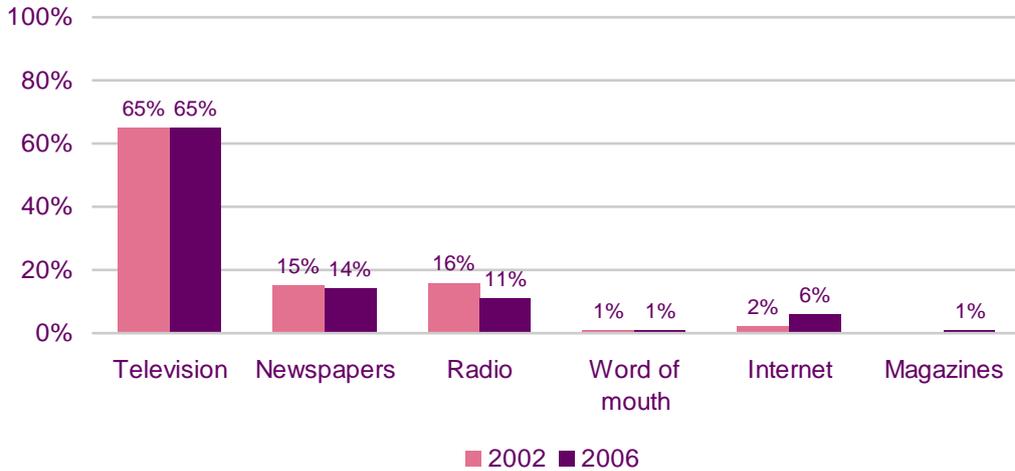


Base: All 16-24 year olds, 217 (2002) and 352 (2006)  
 Note1: 2002 question = Q1b) What OTHER sources do you use  
 Note2: 2002 Questionnaire was self completion so based on all who answered the question

A1.81 Returning to all UK adults, A1.9 shows that trends about the main source of news used are similar to responses about 'ever used' platforms, with radio falling (to 11 per cent), and internet rising (to 6 per cent).

A1.82 Finally, Figure A1.10 displays trends over time in terms of claimed daily use of news platforms. The trends are similar to those seen for overall usage, with an increase in daily usage of the Internet for news, but an indicative decline for radio and newspapers.

**Figure A1.9: Main platform used for news – 2002-2006**

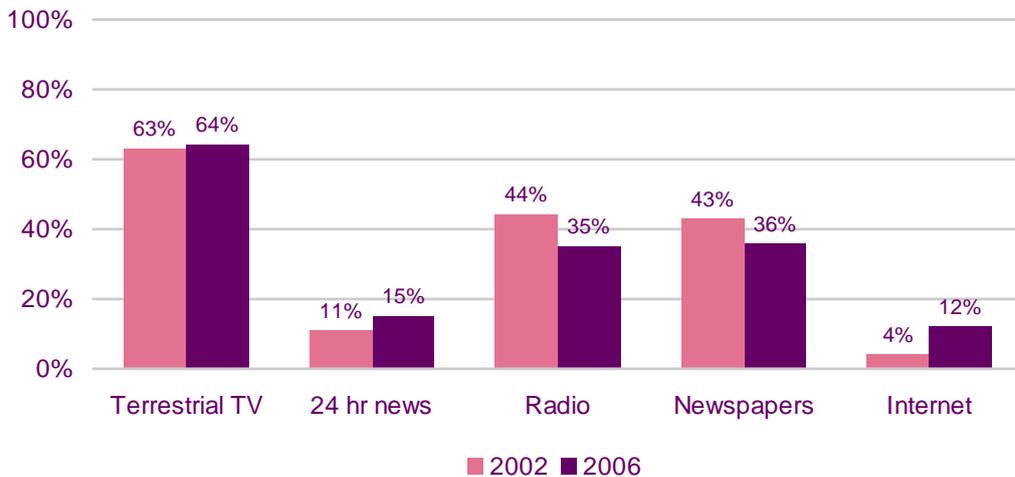


Base: All adults 16+, 2216

Note: 2002 question = Q1a) What is your one MAIN source that you use for news nowadays?

Note2: 2002 Questionnaire was self completion so based on all who answered the question

**Figure A1.10: Daily use of platforms for news – 2002-2006**



Base: All adults 16+, 2216

Note: 2002 figures net More than once a day and daily

A1.83 There are some key differences between ethnic groups regarding daily use of the different news media. Figure A1.11 summarises the differences between white and minority ethnic groups. Perhaps predictably, minority ethnic group survey respondents were more likely to say they use the English language 24-hour news channels, the internet and TV channels from other countries daily than white respondents.

A1.84 Minority ethnic group daily consumption of more mainstream news outlets is lower than for white adults – for example, while 66 per cent of white adults say they watch TV news daily on the five main channels, 47 per cent of minority ethnic groups do. Nineteen per cent of people from minority ethnic groups listen to the radio daily compared to 36 per cent of white respondents.

**Figure A1.11: Daily use of selected news platforms (2006)**

	DAILY USE (% of all adults in subgroup)		
	Base	Total (2216)	White (1715) Minority ethnic group (496)
TV news programmes on main 5 channels		64%	66% 47%
Newspapers		36%	37% 27%
Radio		35%	36% 19%
English language 24 hour news channels		15%	14% 24%
Internet (via a PC or laptop)		12%	11% 18%
Teletext		5%	6% 2%
TV news on channels from other countries		2%	1% 11%

### Detailed examination of platforms used for news

A1.85 While the comparisons with 2002 above showed the main platforms and their usage by the population, this section provides details of a wider range of news sources, and sub-group differences in consumption.

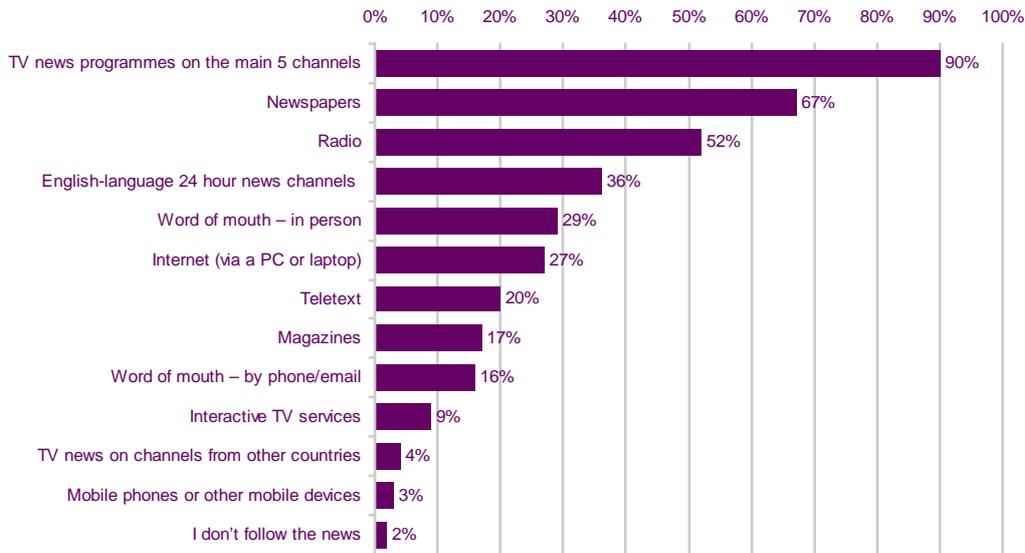
A1.86 As Figure A1.12 shows, the most popular general platform for news was TV news programmes on the main five channels (90 per cent). Newspapers (67 per cent) and Radio (52 per cent) were the only other two that are used for news by more than half of the respondents.

A1.87 English language 24-hour news channels are used by over one third of the UK population (36 per cent) and the internet, as seen earlier, by 27 per cent. Teletext is used by one in five people for news. Mobile phones or other mobile devices were used to access news by the lowest percentage on the list (3 per cent) though this does still equate to around 1.5 million adults in the UK.

A1.88 The average number of news platforms used was 3.8, although 30 per cent of the population used over five platforms for news. The number of platforms used for news varied by age and socio-economic group, which is likely to be because of the availability of such platforms within the groups – the over-65s and the 16-24s used a lower than average number of platforms for news (3.3 and 3.5 respectively), as did DEs (3.2) compared to ABs (4.6).

**Figure A1.12: Platforms ever use for news**

Q3a) Which of the following do you EVER use for news?



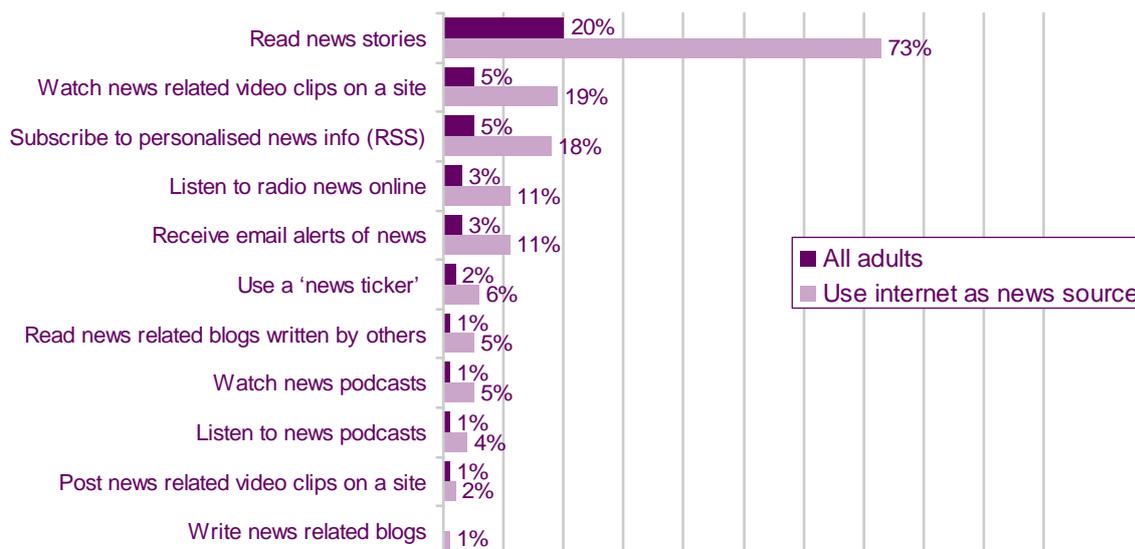
Base: All adults 16+, 2216

**Types of news accessed online**

A1.89 For two of the relatively new platforms for news, internet and via mobile devices, there are many different methods of accessing and even creating news<sup>8</sup>. However, as Figure A1.13 shows, almost three quarters (73 per cent) of those who used the internet as a news platform read news stories online in much the same way as for the more traditional print media.

**Figure A1.13: Types of ways to access news online**

Q6) In which types of ways do you access and use news online?



Base: All adults 16+, 2216 & Use as news source, 512

<sup>8</sup> 86 per cent of those who said that they ever used the internet for news were (self-defined) broadband users and hence these findings are almost entirely made up of broadband users.

- A1.90 One fifth (19 per cent) of internet news users claimed to watch news video clips online. A similar proportion (18 per cent) claimed to subscribe to RSS personalised news information. Very few people said they were using facilities such as podcasts and blogging.
- A1.91 Figure A1.14 illustrates that the news websites of TV channels are regularly used by just under half (46 per cent) of weekly internet news users; just over one third (35 per cent) used online-only news sites or aggregators such as AOL news, Google news or MSN news.
- A1.92 TV channel news websites had the highest mentions amongst the 25-34 year olds, with one quarter (24 per cent) of all people within this age range using them regularly, rising to 63 per cent of those in this age group who use the internet for news at least once a week. The profile of those who stated sports or entertainment web sites was very heavily skewed towards men (84 per cent).

**Figure A1.11: Daily use of selected news platforms (2006)**

	Base	DAILY USE (% of all adults in subgroup)		
		Total (2216)	White (1715)	Minority ethnic group (496)
TV news programmes on main 5 channels		64%	66%	47%
Newspapers		36%	37%	27%
Radio		35%	36%	19%
English language 24 hour news channels		15%	14%	24%
Internet (via a PC or laptop)		12%	11%	18%
Teletext		5%	6%	2%
TV news on channels from other countries		2%	1%	11%

### Types of news accessed via mobile phones

- A1.93 News access via mobile phones is still in its infancy, and as such the various methods of accessing news items were only used by a very small proportion of the population (3 per cent), as shown in Figure A1.15. Of those who did, the primary use of the mobile device was as a means of accessing news websites (45 per cent)<sup>9</sup>.

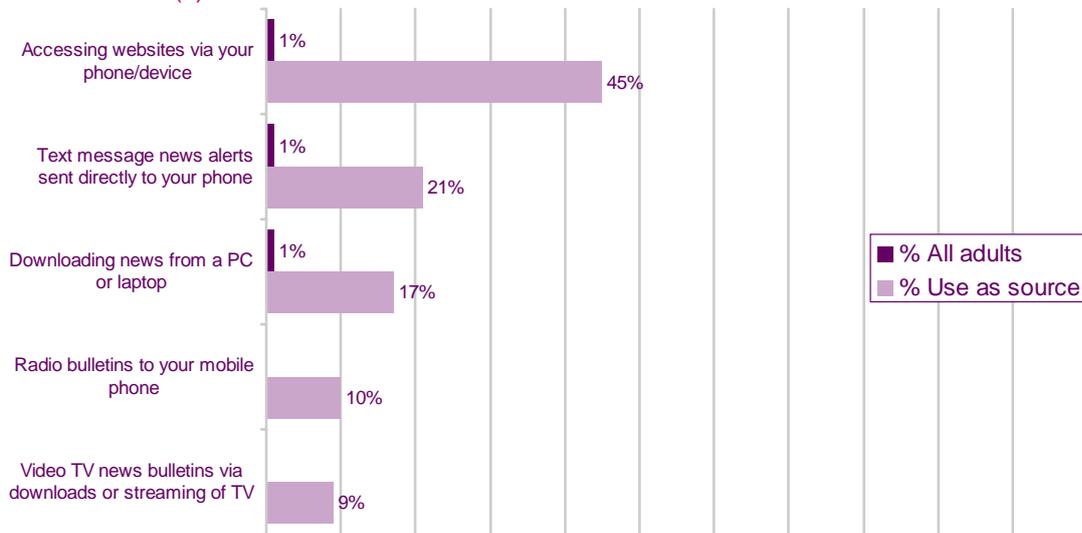
### Differences in use of news platforms by sub-groups

- A1.94 The key differences regarding the usage of different types of news platform amongst different groups are outlined below. Figure A1.16 summarises the differences in use by age.

<sup>9</sup> The base size is 78 and therefore results should be treated as indicative only.

**Figure A1.15: Ways to access news via mobile device**

Q7) In which types of ways do you access news via your mobile phone or other mobile device(s)?



Base: All adults 16+, 2216 & Use as news source, 78

**Figure A1.16: Platforms used for news, by age group**

%	Total (2216)	16-24 (352)	25-44 (917)	45-64 (575)	65+ (372)
TV news programmes on the main five channels	90	80	87	94	97
English-language 24 hour news channels	36	25	40	39	28
TV news on channels from other countries	4	3	7	4	1
Interactive TV services	9	7	11	9	5
Teletext	20	16	21	24	15
Radio	52	44	51	59	51
Internet (via a PC or laptop)	27	35	39	23	5
Newspapers	67	61	65	71	71
Magazines	17	23	20	17	10
Mobile phones or other mobile devices	3	7	4	2	1
I don't follow the news	2	4	3	1	1

### Main five TV channels

A1.95 TV news programmes on the five main TV channels were claimed as the most widely-used news platform overall and amongst all age groups, although the levels were lower amongst the 16-24s (80 per cent) than for older age-groups, as Figure A1.16 illustrates. 16-19 year-olds were somewhat less likely to watch daily/most days (58 per cent) compared to those aged 20-24 (70 per cent).

A1.96 There were also differences in use by ethnicity: 91 per cent of white respondents claimed to use the main five TV channels compared to 80 per cent for Asian respondents, 81 per cent for Black Caribbean and Black African respondents.

## Newspapers

- A1.97 Older people were more likely to say they accessed news through reading the newspapers: 71 per cent for over 45s, compared to 61 per cent for the 16-24s and 65 per cent for the 25-44s. ABs were also more likely to access news via newspapers than the three other socio-economic groups (74 per cent compared to 65 per cent for the other groups).
- A1.98 There were differences in use by ethnicity: Asian respondents were less likely to access news via newspapers (60 per cent compared to 68 per cent of white respondents).

## Radio

- A1.99 Radio was a news medium used to a greater extent by 45-64 year olds, with 59 per cent accessing the news in this way compared to 51 per cent of both 25-44s and over 65s, and 44 per cent of 16-24s. As noted earlier, usage of the radio for news by 16-24s has declined since 2002 when the corresponding figure was 57 per cent (13 percentage points higher).
- A1.100 ABs were more likely (66 per cent) to access news on the radio than the three other groups, with 41 per cent of DEs saying they used radio in this way. Use of the radio for news was also more prevalent amongst men than women (56 per cent compared to 49 per cent).
- A1.101 Asian and Black respondents were less likely to have ever used the radio for news (36 per cent and 34 per cent respectively compared to 54 per cent of white respondents). These figures have remained relatively stable since 2002 (36 per cent for Black and 60 per cent for white respondents respectively). The figure for Asian respondents, on the other hand, has fallen significantly, from 52 per cent in 2002 to 36 per cent in 2006.

## English language 24-hour news channels

- A1.102 As access to English-language 24-hour news channels is restricted to those with multi-channel TV, it is important to look at use of these channels amongst people with access. Some 45 per cent of respondents living in a household with multi-channel TV said they ever used the 24-hour news channels, compared to 36 per cent of the overall sample.
- A1.103 English language 24-hour TV news channels were used as a news source more by 25-44-year olds and by those aged 45-64 (40 per cent and 39 per cent respectively) than 16-24s (25 per cent) and over-65s (28 per cent). Again, this is likely to be an outcome of differences in access to multi-channel TV.
- A1.104 ABs were more likely than those from socio-economic group C2 and DE to say they accessed news via the English language 24-hour TV news channels (43 per cent). Men also used the channels to a greater extent (41 per cent compared to 31 per cent of women). Use by Asian respondents was also high (44 per cent compared to 35 per cent of white respondents).

## Internet

- A1.105 News consumption via the internet was highest amongst 25-44s (39 per cent) and 16-24s (35 per cent). This is likely to have been driven in part by greater access to

the internet within these age groups – 87 per cent of 16-24s and of 25-34s said they had access compared to 72 per cent overall<sup>10</sup>.

- A1.106 According to the qualitative groups, the use of the medium for news appeared to be almost incidental for younger people:

*“When I log onto the internet, the first page that comes up has a little news bit on it. Sometimes a little picture pops up with a little headline, and if it’s interesting, I’ll click on it and have a little look.” (White, 16-18 years, Leeds)*

*“Usually, on Yahoo, when I’m searching for something, the news headlines are down the side, so if there’s something interesting then I’ll have a look.” (White, 19-24 years, Glasgow)*

*“Internet is good because it’s our choice. It’s not like when you’re in the middle of watching something and then the news will come on, and it’s a bit like having it thrown in your face. But if you want to go on the internet, then it’s like your choice.” (White, 16-18 years, Leeds)*

- A1.107 Within the quantitative findings, there was a sharp divide between socio-economic groups - ABs were much more likely to access news online (44per cent) than the three other socio-economic groups, in particular those in social group DE (14per cent). Men were also more likely to use the internet for news (32 per cent compared to 23 per cent of women).
- A1.108 Asian respondents were more likely to be using the internet for news (36 per cent compared to 27 per cent of white respondents). This is likely to be, in part, a function of greater access as 77 per cent of the Asian respondents reported having online access compared to 72 per cent of white respondents. This also reflects the findings from the 2002 research which showed the internet to be a popular platform of news for young Asians. (In 2002 28 per cent of Asian respondents claimed to use the Internet for news, twice as many as white respondents – 14 per cent).
- A1.109 Unlike the Asian respondents, black respondents (19 per cent) were less likely to use the internet for news than white people. However, this was not a function of lower internet access, as the Black sample had similar levels of online access as the white respondents. Use of the internet for news rose to 38 per cent amongst respondents with internet access, 44 per cent of those with broadband at home.
- A1.110 Qualitative research<sup>11</sup> found internet usage to be a dominant news source during the day amongst office workers, but that it featured less prominently at home, unless people were actively choosing to follow a particular story.

## TV text services

- A1.111 TV text services were a news medium fairly equally used by most groups at about one fifth of each, with the exception of the over-65s (15 per cent). ABs (27 per cent) were more likely to access news than the three other groups via text. Asian and Black respondents were both far less likely to use text for news (12 per cent and 4 per cent respectively) compared to 21 per cent for white respondents.

<sup>10</sup> Ofcom internet penetration figures from Q2 2006 show that 61 per cent of people in the UK had internet access at home. The 72 per cent figure here relates to all types of access, be it in-home or outside the home.

<sup>11</sup> TNS Future of News study, February 2006.

## Magazines

- A1.112 More than one fifth of women (22 per cent) said they ever used magazines for news compared to 13 per cent of men. Accessing news in magazines was more common among 16-24s (23 per cent) and 25-44s (20 per cent). This may be a reflection of their greater interest in news topics such as celebrity behaviour and entertainment. Use of magazines for news dropped to 10 per cent of the over-65s.
- A1.113 The AB socio-economic group also relied more heavily on magazines for news: at 23 per cent, their use was higher than the C1 and DE groups. This could be due to the 'serious' news magazines like the *Economist*, the *New Statesman*, and so on.

## Interactive TV services

- A1.114 Use of interactive TV services rises slightly to 11 per cent (from 9 per cent overall) of people living in households with multi-channel TV. Although in low numbers, men also have a greater tendency to access news via interactive TV services (10 per cent compared to 7 per cent).
- A1.115 Use of interactive TV services was lowest amongst respondents aged over 65. Again this is likely to be a function of lower access to multi-channel TV amongst the over 65s. Asian respondents were also less likely to access news via interactive TV services (3 per cent compared to 9 per cent of white respondents).
- A1.116 ABs were more likely to access news via interactive TV services (15 per cent) than the three other socio-economic groups.

## TV news channels from other countries

- A1.117 Unsurprisingly, respondents from minority ethnic groups are more likely to have used TV channels from other countries for news. 19 per cent of respondents from minority ethnic groups used these channels compared to 4 per cent of white respondents.
- A1.118 This was primarily driven by Asian respondents, with nearly one third (31 per cent) accessing news this way compared to less than one in ten Black African respondents (9 per cent) and half as many again Black Caribbean respondents (4 per cent). Albeit still at low levels, ABs were more likely than the C2s and DEs to access news via TV news channels from other countries (7 per cent).

## Mobile devices

- A1.119 Use of news via mobile devices was at 3 per cent overall and only at 4 per cent amongst all those with access, i.e. owning a mobile device. Some 7 per cent of 16-24 year olds claimed to use mobile devices for news compared to 1 per cent of 45-64 year olds.
- A1.120 Qualitative groups suggested that mobile access to news was for headlines only or almost incidental:

*"Obviously you get the main headline. It's the only news that I really hear about. [It's] shown in my face." (Black African Christian, 18-24 years, London)*

*"It's easy isn't it? It comes to you[r mobile phone] without you even having to ask. It's straight there." (White, 16-18 years, Leeds)*

## Attitudes: opinions about TV news coverage

A1.121 The importance of some key elements of public service broadcasting, as they relate to news coverage, are detailed here. These findings are from Ofcom's PSB Tracker (PSB Annual Report, March 2007) and also from the BBC GfK Pulse survey. In addition, views about the onscreen representation of certain types of people are reported, showing the extent of change from 2002.

### Opinions about TV news coverage

A1.122 In order to monitor audience views about public service broadcasting (PSB), Ofcom carries out tracking research<sup>12</sup> looking at UK viewers' perceptions of the main PSB channels<sup>13</sup>. Amongst other elements, the research asks for viewer opinions on the importance and delivery of the following statements:

- Their programmes help me understand what's going on in the world today
- Their news programmes are trustworthy
- They show news programmes and factual programmes that explain complicated issues clearly

A1.123 As Figure A1.17 illustrates, three-quarters of the UK population rate each of these statements as important for the PSB channels to achieve<sup>14</sup>. In terms of performance against these elements the PSB channels taken together were highly rated by over half of the sample of regular viewers<sup>15</sup>.

**Figure A1.17: Viewer opinions of importance and delivery of PSB news**

PSB statement	% rating statement as important	% rating purpose as applying to PSB channels
Their programmes help me understand what's going on in the world today	75	66
Their news programmes are trustworthy	75	62
They show news programmes and factual programmes that explain complicated issues clearly	74	60

Source: Ofcom PSB Tracker data, 2006

A1.124 The BBC also carries out its own in-depth research called the Pulse survey<sup>16</sup>. This research asks people to give feedback on specific programmes they have watched the day before. This survey therefore collects data on individual programmes, but the data can be aggregated together to provide data on different genres of programmes.

<sup>12</sup> Ofcom PSB Tracker.

<sup>13</sup> BBC One, BBC Two, ITV1, Channel 4, Five, BBC Three and BBC Four.

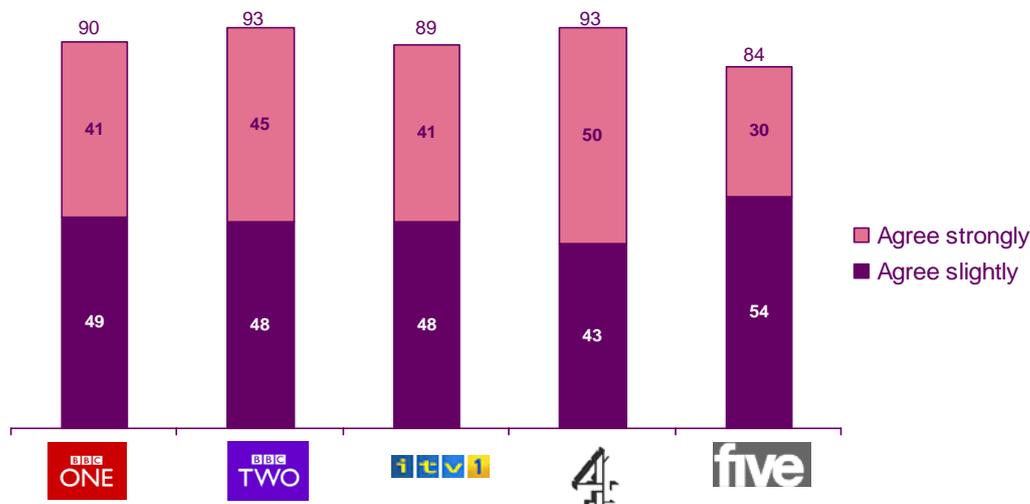
<sup>14</sup> 75 per cent, 75 per cent and 74 per cent rate each statement respectively as 7-10 out of 10 on the importance scale.

<sup>15</sup> In other words, rating 7-10 out of 10.

<sup>16</sup> Based on an online panel of 15,000. These findings were reported in Ofcom's PSB Annual Report (March 2007).

**Figure A1.18: Viewer opinions of news programme quality (Pulse survey)**

News: "This was a high quality programme"  
 % saying "Agree strongly/slightly"



Base for all responses to programmes watched in News genre as defined by BDS  
 Response figures: BBC One 386597, BBC Two 15110, ITV1 140044, Channel 4 16538, Five 7480  
 Source: BBC Pulse survey, fieldwork by GfK NOP, Jan-Dec 2006

A1.125 Figure A1.18 shows Pulse survey viewer opinions on the overall quality of news programmes during 2006. It illustrates that opinions of the particular news programmes watched on each of the PSB channels are very positive.

### Satisfaction with TV news coverage

A1.126 It is clear that TV news is seen as important, but to what extent are people satisfied with its delivery? The 2006 survey repeated a question asked in 2002 about whether certain types of people are given too much or too little airtime. The list of groups was longer in 2006, but nevertheless useful comparisons can be made.

A1.127 Figures A1.19 and A1.20 show comparative data between the two surveys – first for those groups widely felt to be given too much airtime (celebrities, politicians, experts and reporters) and then for those widely felt to be given too little (ethnic minorities, women and ‘ordinary people’).

A1.128 Overall, celebrities were considered as having too much airtime on TV and radio (72 per cent). Politicians were next, with 57 per cent, largely the same as 2002.

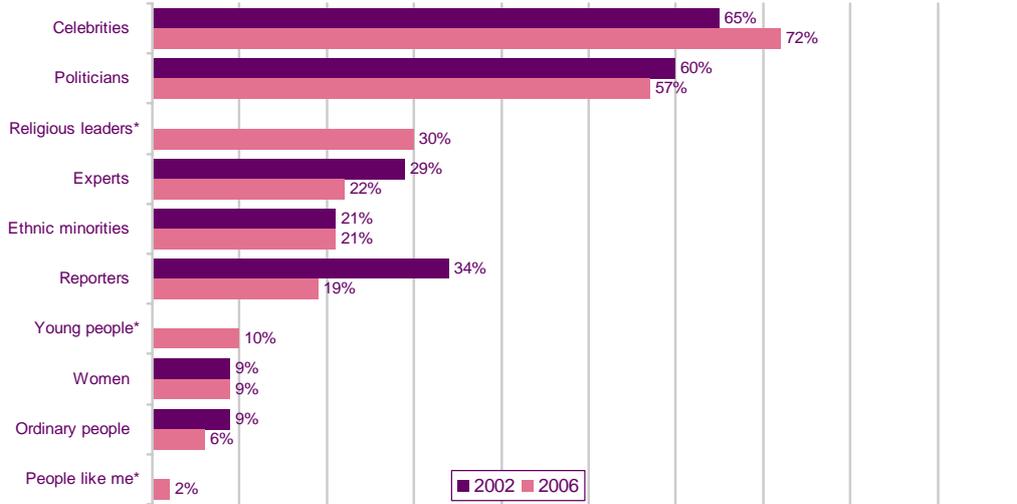
A1.129 All age bands were of the opinion that politicians get too much airtime (47 per cent of 16-24s, 50 per cent of 25-44s, 49 per cent of 45-64s and 54 per cent of over 65s). Even those people who expressed an interest in news about celebrity behaviour felt that celebrities got too much airtime on TV (45 per cent).

A1.130 Around one in five people felt that ethnic minorities received too much airtime – a figure unchanged since 2002. Some 31 per cent of white respondents thought that religious leaders received too much airtime, compared to 19 per cent of Asian and Black Caribbean respondents, and 14 per cent of Black African respondents. Fewer people in 2006 felt that reporters are given too much airtime – one in five (19 per cent) compared to one third (34 per cent) in 2002.

**Figure A1.19: Amount of TV airtime is too much (2002-2006)**

2002 Q12) Do you feel they receive too much or too little airtime?

2006 Q15) For the following types of people, do you feel they receive too much or too little airtime?



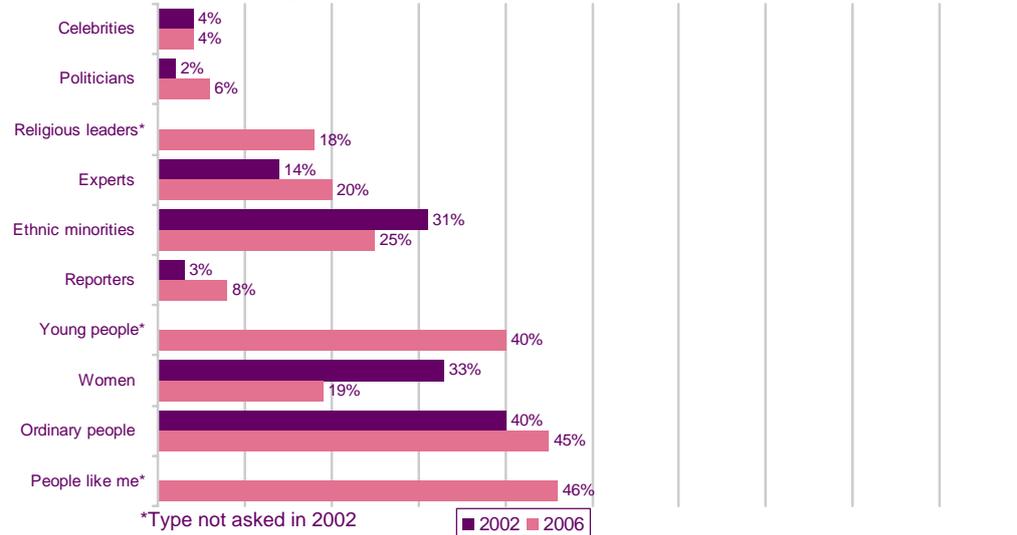
Base: All who answered question, 5169 (2002) and All adults 16+, 2216 (2006)

A1.131 Turning to responses about too little airtime, it is of note that ordinary people, young people and “people like me” were most likely to be seen as receiving too little airtime at 45 per cent, 40 per cent and 46 per cent respectively. While it is unsurprising that higher proportions of young people thought there were too few young people featured in news (53 per cent of 16-24 year olds), around 45 per cent of 35-54 year olds also thought the same.

**Figure A1.20: Amount of TV airtime is too little (2002-2006)**

2002 Q12) Do you feel they receive too much or too little airtime?

2006 Q15) For the following types of people, do you feel they receive too much or too little airtime?



Base: All who answered question, 5169 (2002) and All adults 16+, 2216 (2006)

A1.132 Some 46 per cent of people from minority ethnic groups felt that ethnic minorities get too little airtime compared to half as many (23 per cent) white respondents. This point is particularly driven by Black respondents: while 25 per cent of Asian respondents felt that this was the case, the corresponding figures for Black

Caribbean and Black African respondents were much higher at 60 per cent and 61 per cent respectively.

### Attitudes: Opinions on impartiality and trust

A1.133 Ofcom has a remit to ensure that news on TV and radio is reported with due accuracy and presented with due impartiality. Furthermore, the issue of impartiality and its role on future media platforms is a topic of some considerable debate.

A1.134 The extent to which people may trust the news is different to their perceptions about the impartiality of the news. People may trust news outlets that they readily recognise as being partial, if the ‘partiality’ of the outlet fits with their own view of reality or truth.

### The importance of impartiality across platforms and news sources

A1.135 Respondents were asked how important they felt it was that TV and radio news was accurate, and how important it was that it was impartial from outside interests (Figure A1.21). People continue to feel strongly that impartiality and accuracy on TV and radio news are important. There are signs of some decrease since 2002, especially relating to 16-24s and their perceptions of the importance of impartiality.

**Figure A1.21: Importance of accuracy and impartiality (2002-2006)**

% saying important to provide	All adults		16-24s	
	2002	2006	2002	2006
Accuracy	99	93	99	87
Impartiality	97	87	93	73

Source: 2002: Quest panel, n=4000; 2006: TNS omnibus survey n=1011

A1.136 Some 15 per cent of 16-24s in 2006 said that impartiality was not important, compared to 6 per cent of the rest of the age-groups.

### Perceived impartiality

A1.137 If impartiality remains an important factor for people on TV and radio, how is it seen to be delivered, and how has this changed over time?

A1.138 Perceptions about the delivery of impartiality appear to differ according to the ‘granularity’ of the question applied. There are three sources of data used in this section – the first, and least ‘granular’, is Ofcom’s Residential Tracker which asks respondents about the main news platforms and how impartial they find them; the second is from an additional survey conducted specifically for this research as an adjunct to the main survey, which replicates from 2002 a list of selected TV news outlets plus the internet for comparison. The third, most ‘granular’, survey is the BBC-GfK Pulse data, which asks viewers about the particular programmes they have watched, whose results are then aggregated into a channel ‘score’.

A1.139 Figure A1.22 shows how, comparing 2005 and 2006, there has been a decrease in perceived delivery of impartiality on the main audiovisual news platforms of TV, radio and Teletext. Overall, levels of perceived delivery of impartiality are relatively low, although audiovisual media are rated higher than other forms of news such as the internet, the press and magazines.

**Figure A1.22: Perceived impartiality of media platforms, 2005 - 6**

	All adults (% saying impartial)	
	2005	2006
TV	41	36
Radio	36	31
Teletext	30	22
Internet	16	13
Press	12	12
Magazines	11	9

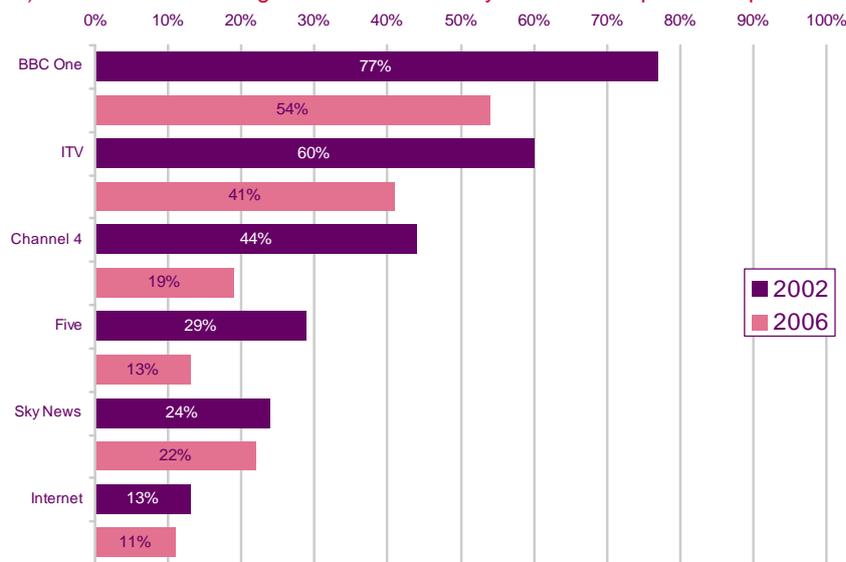
Q: How impartial do you think each of the following news sources is? (7 point scale; results collated on “impartial, very impartial, extremely impartial”

Source: Ofcom Residential Tracker, n=1400

A1.140 Turning to the TV channels more specifically, Figure A1.23 shows a selected list of TV news providers, with the internet for comparison, and the extent to which the responses about impartial coverage differ from those given in 2002.

**Figure A1.23: Delivery of impartiality 2002- 2006**

Q) Which of the following sources of news do you feel would provide impartial news coverage?



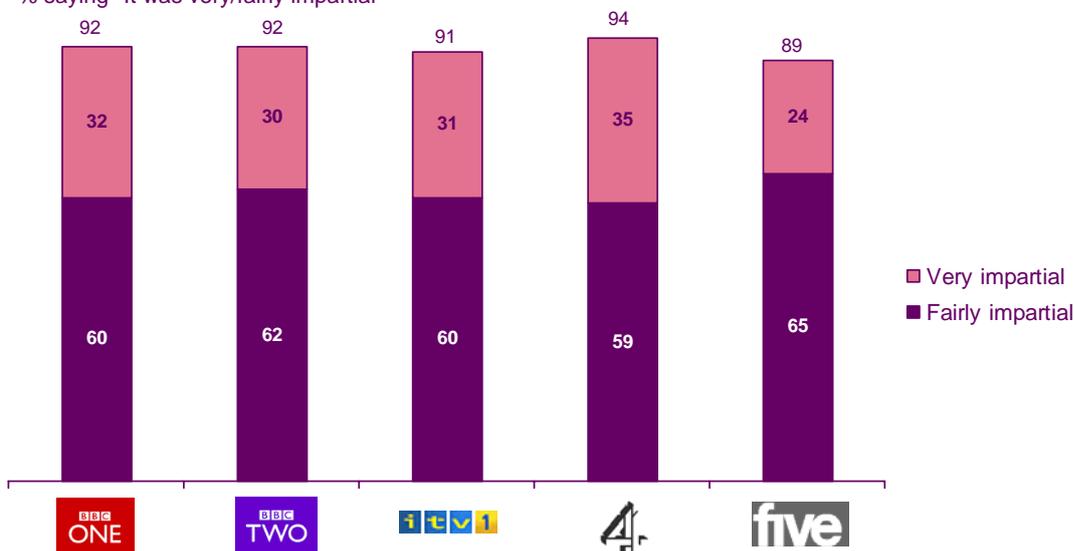
Base: All who answered question, 4938 (2002) and All adults 16+ (1011) (2006) TNS omnibus

A1.141 Perceived levels of impartiality are significantly lower for the terrestrial TV news providers than they were in 2002. In 2006, BBC One was seen as impartial by 54 per cent of the sample, and ITV1 by 41 per cent. One in five people (19 per cent) felt that Channel 4’s output was impartial.

**Figure A1.24: Delivery of impartiality 2006, Pulse data aggregated from individual news programmes**

News: "How impartial did you think this programme was?"

% saying "It was very/fairly impartial"



Base for all responses to programmes watched in News genre as defined by BDS  
 Response figures: BBC One 386597, BBC Two 15110, ITV1 140044, Channel 4 16538, Five 7480  
 Source: BBC Pulse survey, fieldwork by GfK NOP, Jan-Dec 2006

A1.142 Belief in the impartiality of a news source rises only slightly with familiarity – of those that use the channel as a news source, 56 per cent find the BBC impartial; 44 per cent ITV news; 24 per cent Channel 4 news; 17 per cent Five news, and 34 per cent Sky News. This latter is the only significant increase from the all-adult figures. Of those that use the internet for news, 19 per cent find it impartial compared to 11 per cent of all adults.

A1.143 The BBC GfK Pulse survey asked viewers of individual news programmes about how impartial they found the programmes, and results from this very granular level of analysis show that ratings of impartiality were very high in 2006 – 91 per cent for BBC One and BBC Two; 92 per cent for ITV1; 94 per cent for Channel 4 and 89 per cent for Five (Figure A1.24).

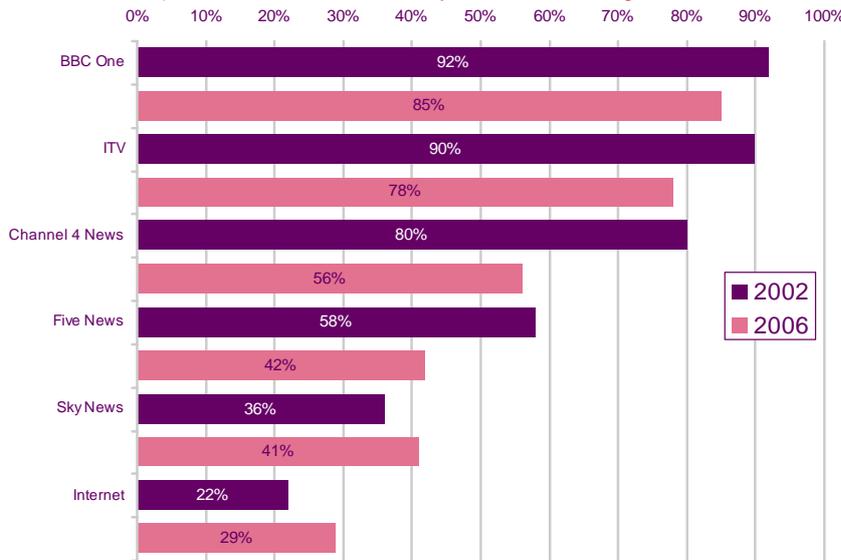
A1.144 In conclusion, opinions about the delivery of impartiality are mixed, and vary according to the type of question asked. While impartiality remains an important component of news provision for viewers, perceptions of the delivery of impartiality by different TV channels have declined since 2002. However, at a granular, individual programme level, viewers of particular programmes rate them highly. The difference in response between 2002 and 2006 points to a climate or attitude towards news provision which is arguably more sceptical – or realistic - about news sources and their ability to be impartial.

### Trust in news sources

A1.145 Figure A1.25 shows how levels of trust have altered – or not – over time. Levels of trust about all the terrestrial TV news outlets have diminished since 2002, with Channel 4 and Five showing a more substantial decrease. The results shown are for all UK adults – trust in the internet for those that use it as a news source rises to 53 per cent.

**Figure A1.25: Trust in news 2002 - 2006**

2002 and 2006 Q) How much or how little would you trust the following to tell the truth about the news?

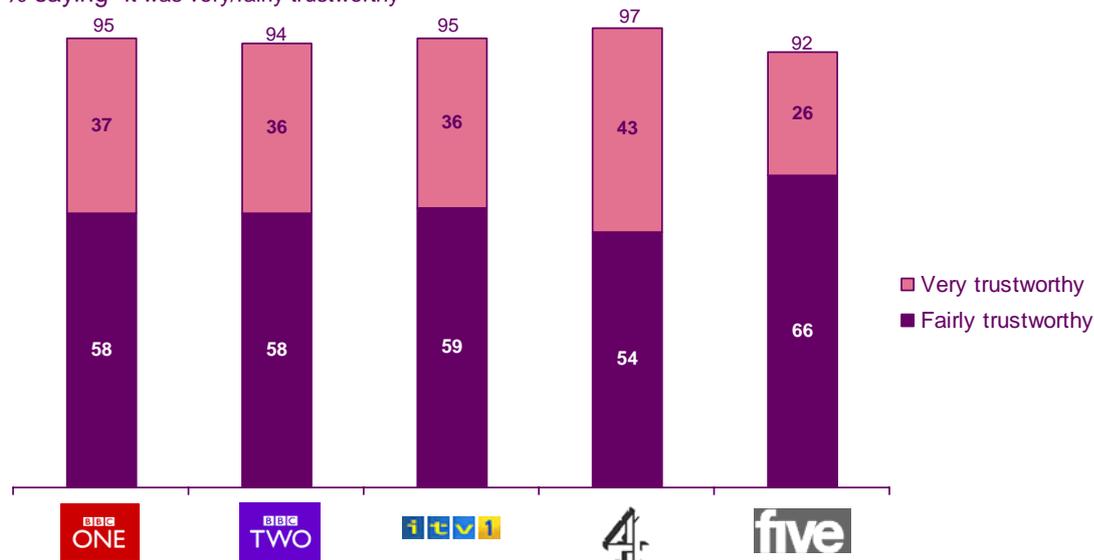


Base: All who answered question, 4938 (2002) and All adults 16+ (1011) (2006) TNS omnibus  
 Note: the increase in trust in Sky News is not significant at the 99% confidence level

A1.146 In the BBC GfK Pulse survey viewers of news programmes were also asked how trustworthy they thought the individual programmes they had watched were and this data is shown in Figure A1.26, aggregated for each channel. Levels of trust were very high amongst those that watch the news programmes – Channel 4 97 per cent, BBC One and ITV 96 per cent, BBC Two 95 per cent, and Five 92 per cent.

**Figure A1.26: Delivery of trustworthy news 2006, Pulse data**

News: "How trustworthy did you think this programme was?"  
 % saying "It was very/fairly trustworthy"



Base for all responses to programmes watched in News genre as defined by BDS  
 Response figures: BBC One 386597, BBC Two 15110, ITV1 140044, Channel 4 16538, Five 7480  
 Source: BBC Pulse survey, fieldwork by GfK NOP, Jan-Dec 2006

A1.147 Overall, levels of trust in news sources tend to be higher than levels of perceived impartiality of those sources. That said, levels of trust are also lower in 2006 than in

2002. Reasons for this decrease in trust amongst minority ethnic group and younger people were discussed in the qualitative focus groups, and set out below.

### Views about bias from young people and minority ethnic groups

A1.148 On the whole, respondents in the qualitative groups felt that the news they received was accurate since it concerned the factual reporting of events that had taken place. Most were aware that there were laws and guidelines regarding the accuracy of news and assumed that UK news providers were governed by these. However, across all the focus groups there was a common belief that the different UK media platforms had their own agendas, and that these would be reflected in the way they covered a story. This would mean that all stories are reported with some degree of bias. So, whilst what is reported was expected to be accurate, it might not be the whole truth.

*“It’s like two people watching a fight, it’s going to be different depending who you hear it from... it depends on the interpretation and what the person was thinking. It is never, ever going to be precise” (Black African, 18-24, London)*

A1.149 On the whole, whether respondents from minority ethnic groups looked for and found this bias depended on the extent to which a particular news story related to them in terms of their race, colour, religion, culture and news from their homeland. To some extent, it was also influenced by whether they had an alternative source of news that they felt was more trustworthy, for example people on the ground, or other platforms or media with a specific, appropriate ethnic agenda.

A1.150 When the stories being reported did not relate to issues bearing on the ethnicity, religion or country of origin of respondents, respondents seemed more likely to accept them. With the range of media available to them they felt that it was possible to gain a balanced perspective on such stories. If imbalance or inaccuracy were present it was felt to be at acceptable levels and, more importantly, not the effect of deliberately biased reporting. Furthermore, where the news in question was not felt to be of direct impact to them, any instances of inaccuracy or bias were felt to be of very limited importance.

A1.151 In contrast, where stories related to issues of direct relevance to the individual (e.g. their ethnic or religious group or ‘home’ country / country of origin) there was far greater sensitivity to inaccuracy and bias and an increased tendency to find these within the UK news media. The detailed impact of these perceptions varied by ethnic groups.

### Muslims

A1.152 In the Pakistani Muslim groups, news from Pakistan and news about their religion were seen as almost the same thing. The respondents felt that any news reported about Pakistan had a Muslim / Islam connection, particularly in the way it was portrayed in the British media.

A1.153 In the current news environment, they strongly felt that British news coverage was very biased and one-sided, with an anti-Muslim perspective. They felt that the British media as a whole had an agenda to make Muslims look bad in the eyes of the non-Muslim population. The perceived emphasis on the link between terrorism and Islam was the area where they were most critical of the British news media.

*“Terrorist does not have to be a Muslim terrorist all the time. When the headline comes as Muslim, it affects all of us. We are not all like that.” (Muslim, 20-40 years, Leicester)*

- A1.154 In addition it was felt that all reporting about the Muslim community was negative and that the media actively sought stories which portrayed Muslims in a poor light<sup>17</sup>.

*“Everything that you see is Islamophobic. The Pakistanis have had a rough time just in the stories I have seen in the last six weeks. There were raids in Walthamstow with Pakistani people involved, then you had the trial of this young guy recently who is Pakistani as well. Then in the local press we had the chap who took his daughter to Pakistan. Then you had the Pakistan cricket team...I felt shit inside. I did” (Muslim, 20-40 years, Glasgow)*

*“We were all Muslims before. Recently we have become Islamists. That is very, very subtle because it has only surfaced since we started talking about terrorism” (Muslim, 18-24 years, Bradford)*

- A1.155 Their response to perceived bias such as this was to be angry, frustrated and disillusioned with the British news media. This reinforced a desire to find alternative news platforms, with many talking about word of mouth, word “from the community” or Mosque or specifically Muslim or Pakistani media.
- A1.156 Although there was an overriding perception that news relating to Pakistan was felt to be primarily associated with terrorism or religion and therefore negative, an acknowledged exception to this was the reporting of the earthquake in October 2005, which was covered “fairly” by the British news media at the time.

### Indian Hindus and Sikhs

- A1.157 On the whole, the Hindu and Sikh respondents were more satisfied with the reporting of news related to their communities, religion and culture. Some respondents in the 25-40 group felt that there was a slight bias in how Indians and Indian-related stories were portrayed in the media but the views were not strongly expressed.
- A1.158 However, there were strong objections to the tendency for the media to speak in general terms about Asians. This was a classification which, they felt, brought with it some of the negativity associated with Muslims. Their preference was for the news media to draw clear distinctions between stories relating to Muslim countries or issues and those relating to Hindus, Sikhs or Indians. They did not want to be associated, albeit indirectly, with the labels attached by the media to Muslims: terrorism, fanaticism and extremism. Nor did they want to become targets of any backlash there might be against Muslims and their communities.
- A1.159 It was felt to be the responsibility of the news media to make these distinctions clear.

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<sup>17</sup> The specific stories referred to here include extensive UK police activity and arrests in connection with a suspected threat to air security (11/08/06), a father taking his teenage daughter from the Orkneys to Pakistan (29/08/06) and a ball tampering / match forfeiting story involving the Pakistan cricket team (20/08/06).

*“For me there is one thing that sticks and this is when I think the riots were going on in Bradford and they [the media] would say ‘Asian community’. It was not the Asian community. It was the Muslim community.” (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 25-40, London)*

*“I object when they say Asian - they don’t say Sikh or Muslim. They make us all the same” (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 18-24 years, Leicester)*

A1.160 The Indian respondents in the focus groups felt culturally close to India and, as noted earlier, were very interested in news from India. The respondents appreciated that the British media could not cover all stories from India and, when they did, they would not be able to do so in great detail or depth. As a result they obtained such news via platforms from the sub-continent or the internet.

### Black Caribbean and Black African

A1.161 Both these groups of respondents had similar views on how black people are covered in the UK news media. Like the Muslims, they felt the media’s reporting was biased in the way it referred to Black Caribbean or African people, and over-emphasised criminal activity. They perceived that the news media adopt a negative tone when reporting stories involving members of the black ethnic minorities.

*“We were talking about black people being portrayed negatively... It is not like they [the news media] is saying that black people are bad and white people are good. But it is the way they say it. So, as soon as you think guns, you think black person.” (African, 18-24 years, London)*

A1.162 Another accusation levelled at the news media was that it did not report on positive black role models, focussing too much on the negative. For example, whilst the respondents accepted that gun crime was high in the black community and would be reported as such, they felt there was an absence of success stories reported. The specialist Black media, especially *The Voice*, was put forward as an example of a better reporting balance.

*“In the Daily Mail all you find out about black people is the negative side of things. The Voice is more about the positive.” (Caribbean, 25-45 years, Cardiff)*

A1.163 Respondents in all the African and Caribbean groups, especially those conducted in Birmingham, felt that the media actively ‘stirred things up’ and sensationalised stories, in order to cause news rather than report it. This attitude was linked to the Birmingham riots in October 2005, which they saw as being fanned by the media.

*“The media got hold of it, completely blew it out of proportion and as a result, we got the riots out of it.” (Caribbean, 18-24 years, Birmingham)*

*“The Birmingham riots is a perfect example [of the prejudices]. It was bad, but not as bad as the media were making out” (African, 25-45 years, Birmingham)*

A1.164 Respondents from the African and Caribbean minority ethnic groups differed in their views of how news from their countries of origin was reported. The Black Africans, especially first generation immigrants, were very interested in news from Africa in general and their home countries in particular. Whilst they acknowledged that African news would not feature highly on the British news agenda, they were disappointed by the type of African news that was reported: poverty, political upheaval, droughts and corruption. It was felt that such news was stereotypical and

presented a negative image of the continent. It was suggested that this was the media showing what ‘British people expect from Africa’.

- A1.165 Whilst some Africans in the sample pointed out that African news stories were not given particular prominence in terms of depth of coverage, they accepted that this was inevitable. They accepted that they would need to go to an African specialist source to get the level of information they required.

*“With UK channels, you get more UK news than international news. If you want Africa news, like during the hurricane, you ask your friend or listen to OBE or BEN channel.” (African, 25-45 years, Birmingham)*

- A1.166 Respondents from some countries in Africa, particularly Nigeria, admired the independence of the British news media. They compared this to the news platforms in their homeland which they felt were government-controlled and therefore reported news that the government wanted them to hear. This sentiment was also felt by some older Muslim respondents but was not as explicitly expressed.

*“I have concerns with news back home because the government has such control in Nigeria anyway. Such control over the news broadcast.” (African, 18-24 years, London)*

- A1.167 Respondents from the Black Caribbean minority ethnic group were the least concerned about news from their ‘home’ countries. However it should be noted that all the respondents were second and third generation. Whilst they expressed interest in ‘news from the islands’ and stated that they did not get enough news in the UK media, they did not appear to make particular efforts to supplement it. The topic was also not raised as a key issue or discussed at any length in either group.

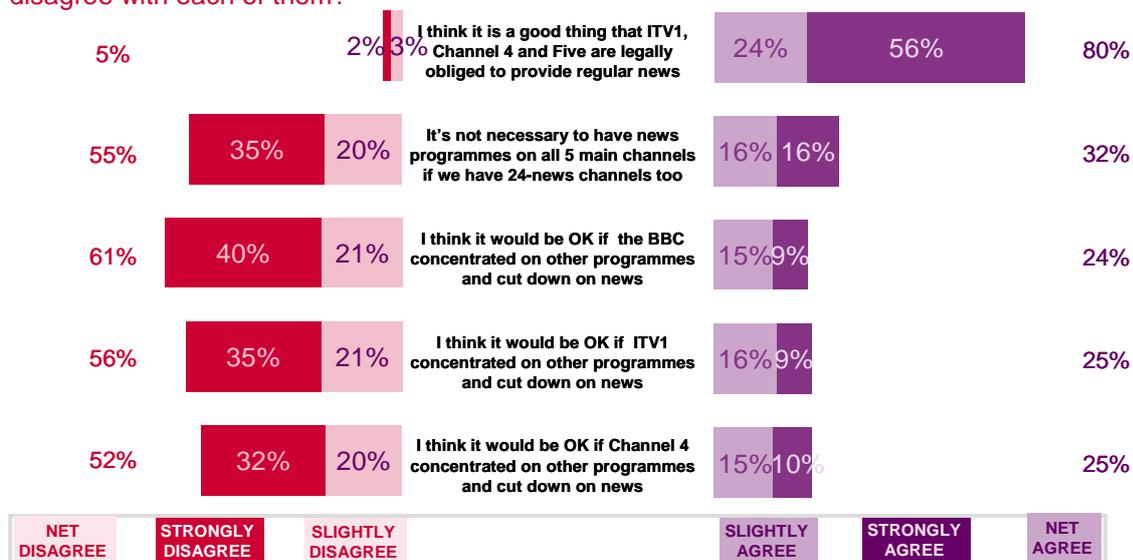
## **Attitudes: Plurality, ownership, and sponsorship**

### **Attitudes to plurality of TV news provision**

- A1.168 The issue of plurality in TV news provision is an important area of debate. Survey respondents were asked their opinions of a range of statements relating to issues of plural supply, in order to gauge the extent to which they felt it necessary, or whether they felt it something that could be relinquished. Results are shown in Figure A1.27.
- A1.169 A significant majority of people (80 per cent) agreed that it was a good thing that the main commercial TV channels are legally obliged to provide regular news, with only 5 per cent disagreeing. Over half (55 per cent) felt that it was still necessary to have news programmes on all five main channels despite the availability of 24-hour news channels, although one third (32 per cent) said that it was not necessary.
- A1.170 When asked whether individual broadcasters should concentrate on other programmes and cut down on their news provision, over half felt that they should not – 61 per cent for the BBC, 56 per cent for ITV1, and 52 per cent for Channel 4. One quarter (25 per cent) thought that it would be acceptable to cut down on news provision.
- A1.171 Older age groups were more likely than 16-24s to say that broadcasters should not cut back on their news provision. For example, 62 per cent of the over 65s and 60 per cent of the 25-44s felt that the BBC should not cut back on its news, compared to 48 per cent for the 16-24s.

**Figure A1.27: Attitude statements about plurality of TV news provision**

Q16) I am now going to read out some statements about news. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of them?



Base: All adults 16+, 2216

Note: Neither/nor and Don't Know responses were collected but not shown here

A1.172 It is of note that compared to 2002, when a similar question was asked about news provision on the commercial broadcasters as a whole<sup>18</sup>, 56 per cent disagreed, and 18 per cent agreed. Opinions on this issue therefore do not appear to have shifted – indeed, somewhat greater numbers in 2006 (25 per cent) were opposed to reduction of news on these channels than was the case in 2002 (18 per cent).

### Attitudes to ownership of media and sponsorship of programmes

A1.173 Responses to questions about the general ownership of media, and the sponsorship of TV news programmes, are shown in Figure A1.28. Just over half (52 per cent) of respondents felt that the ownership of TV channels, radio stations, websites and newspapers did not matter providing the content was relevant to them. DEs were more likely to feel this did not matter (60 per cent) compared to ABs (40 per cent). Younger people are only slightly more likely than older people to agree that ownership wasn't important – 57 per cent of 16-24s agreed compared to 51 per cent of those aged 25-44 and those aged over 45.

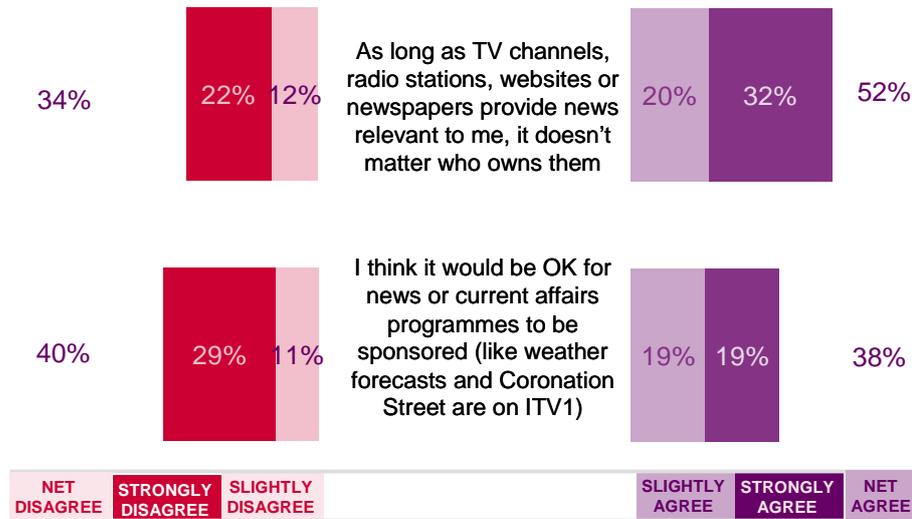
A1.174 Opinions regarding news programme sponsorship were more neutral overall. Nearly one quarter of respondents (22 per cent) did not hold an opinion and a similar proportion agreed that it was acceptable to sponsor news and current affairs programmes (38 per cent) as disagreed (40 per cent).

A1.175 That said, younger people were more likely to agree that sponsorship of news would be acceptable – some 46 per cent of 16-24s said this would be acceptable compared to 33 per cent of 25-44s and 36 per cent of over 45s.

<sup>18</sup> The question in 2002 was: "The law also requires that commercial broadcasters (e.g. ITV1, Channel 4 and Channel 5) provide regular news services. Some feel that they should instead concentrate on entertainment and cut down on news. How much do you agree or disagree that they should reduce their news coverage?"

### Figure A1.28: Ownership and sponsorship issues

Q16) I am now going to read out some statements about news. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of them?



Base: All adults 16+, 2216

### Engagement and disengagement with news

A1.176 A core objective of this research was to investigate levels of engagement with the news, and to build an understanding of what was driving disengagement in the news, particularly amongst the young and people from minority ethnic groups.

A1.177 A number of statements about the extent to which people felt engaged with news were given to the survey respondents, and their responses are shown in Figure A1.29. Responses from 16-24 year olds, and all adults, are compared, as is the extent of change from 2002.

#### It is important to keep up-to-date with news and current affairs

A1.178 The vast majority (90 per cent) of the sample agreed that it was important to keep up-to-date with news and current affairs, which is consistent with the 2002 findings. This is not to say that people who think it important do indeed keep up-to-date: some 23 per cent of those who agree this also say they only follow the news when something significant happens.

#### I follow the news only when something important or interesting is happening

A1.179 One in three (32 per cent) of respondents agreed that they only followed the news when something important or interesting was happening. This is indicatively higher than responses in 2002 (26 per cent). Just over one fifth (22 per cent) of ABs said they only followed the news in this way compared to 38 per cent of DEs.

A1.180 Among 16-24s, half (50 per cent) now say they only follow the news when something important was happening compared to one third (33 per cent) in 2002. Given the differences in methodology between the two surveys this is not statistically significant at the 99 per cent level, although indicatively it would seem to mark a change in attitude.

A1.181 Differences between white and non-white responses are significant – while some 30 per cent of white respondents say they only follow the news when important things

are happening, this rises to 50 per cent of those from minority ethnic groups. In 2002 these figures were 24 per cent and 42 per cent respectively, so similar increases have occurred for both groups.

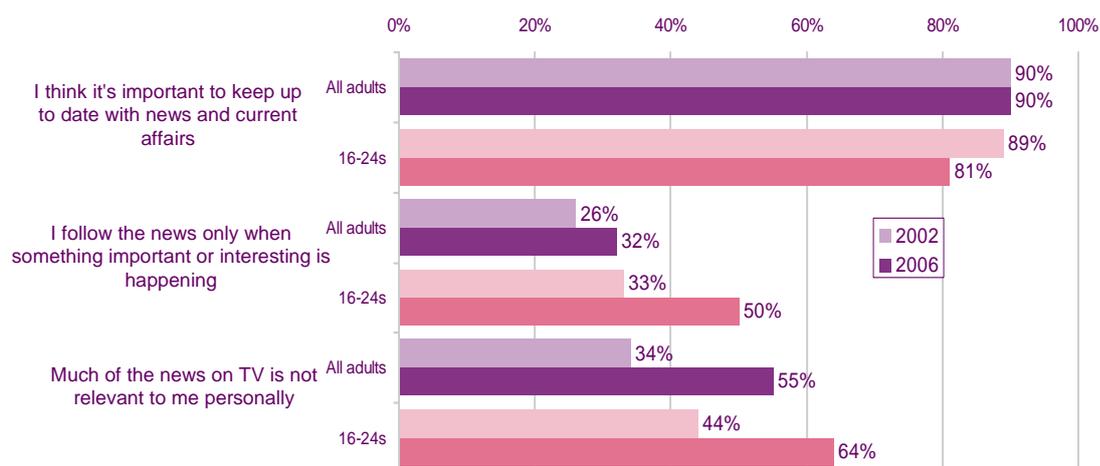
### Much of the news on TV is not relevant to me personally

A1.182 There has been a significant increase since the 2002 research in the number of people who feel that much of the news on TV is not relevant to them. This seems to be a trend across many sub-groups, particularly for 16-24 year olds. In 2002, just over one third of people (34 per cent) felt that the news lacked personal relevance. This rose in 2006 to over half (55 per cent). Responses from those aged 16-24 were 64 per cent in 2006 compared to 44 per cent in 2002 – again, while not statistically significant, the figures indicate a sizeable increase in feeling that news is irrelevant.

A1.183 It is important to note the increase in strength of opinion about this statement: whereas in 2002 6 per cent of respondents strongly agreed with the statement, this rose in 2006 to one in five (19 per cent) of respondents overall.

A1.184 In 2006 there was little difference between white respondents (56 per cent) and those from minority ethnic groups (48 per cent).

**Figure A1.29: Attitude statements on disengagement**



Q16: I am now going to read out some statements. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of them?  
 Base: 2006 - all adults 16+, 2216

A1.185 These statements were used to help formulate a way of categorising people according to whether they were 'news absorbed or 'news detached'. Survey respondents were classified as 'news absorbed' if they used three or more platforms for news, and agreed strongly with the statements 'it's important to keep up to date with news and current affairs' and 'I like to use a variety of news sources so I can compare how they report stories'. Figure A1.30 shows which types of people were more likely to be absorbed or detached.

A1.186 Some 22 per cent of the overall population can be classified as news absorbed according to this definition, and 13 per cent as news detached. Those aged 16-19 are least likely to be news absorbed, although those aged 20-24 and 25-44 show little difference between them, suggesting that the belief of younger people that they

will ‘grow into’ news as they get older is a correct one. That said, it is of note that those aged 45-64 are more likely to be news absorbed, and less likely to be detached.

- A1.187 Those aged over 65 are noticeably less likely to be news absorbed (19 per cent) than those in the slightly younger age-group (30 per cent). This runs somewhat counter to the trend that the older a person, the more likely they are to be interested in and oriented to news consumption.
- A1.188 Socio-economic group is also a factor in the extent to which people are news absorbed. Nearly one third of those in socio-economic group AB (29 per cent) can be classified this way, compared to 19 per cent of those in the DE group. Only 7 per cent of ABs can be classified as news detached, compared to nearly one in five (19 per cent) of DEs.
- A1.189 Finally, minority ethnic groups also differ in terms of their news absorption or detachment. One quarter of Asians (25 per cent) can be classified as news absorbed, compared to 16 per cent of Black Africans and Caribbeans. Conversely, Asians are also more likely to be news detached – some 23 per cent can be classified in this way compared to 15 per cent of Black Africans and Caribbeans.

**Figure A1.30: News absorption amongst demographic groups (per cent)**

%	Total (2216)	16-19 (166)	20-24 (186)	25-44 (917)	45-64 (575)	65+ (372)	AB (340)	C1 (614)	C2 (459)	DE (803)	Men (1045)	Women (1171)
Absorbed	22	10	21	22	26	19	29	18	23	19	24	19
Detached	13	30	16	13	10	13	7	11	16	19	12	15

## News and political engagement

- A1.190 Respondents were also asked about the role that news plays in terms of engaging them in politics (Figure A1.31).

### News on TV puts me off the idea of politics

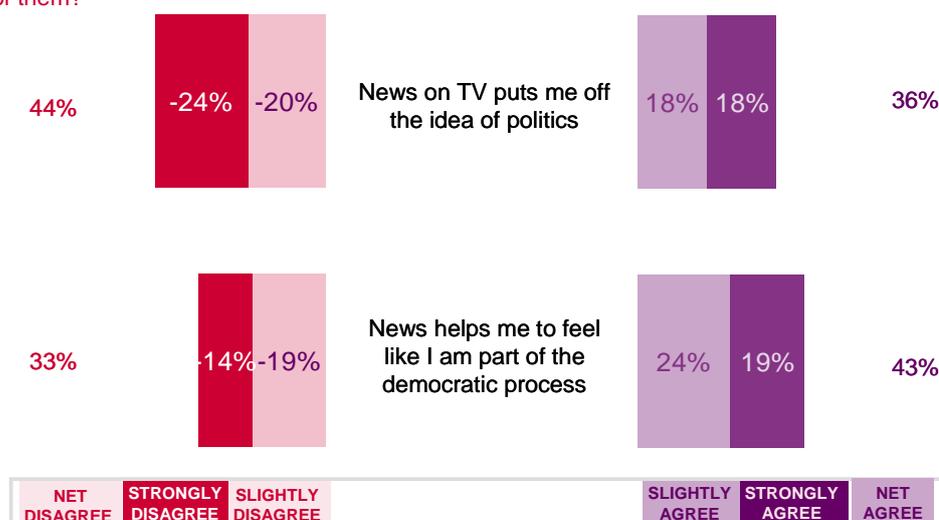
- A1.191 Over one third of respondents (36 per cent) agreed that news on TV put them off the idea of politics, although the proportion disagreeing was slightly higher at 44 per cent. Nearly half (46 per cent) of 16-24s felt that they were put off politics, compared to one third (34 per cent) of the over 45s. The DEs were the socio-economic group most likely to feel discouraged from politics with one quarter (26 per cent) agreeing strongly (compared to 18 per cent of C1s and 20 per cent of C2s).

### News helps me feel like I am part of the democratic process

- A1.192 Some 43 per cent of people agreed that news in general helped them feel part of the democratic process. That said, 30 per cent of these also agreed that news on television put them off the idea of politics. The 65+ age group was most likely to feel ‘included’ by news (61 per cent agreed), compared to 19 per cent of 16-19s and 35 per cent of 20-24s.
- A1.193 There were no differences in how people responded to this statement by gender or by ethnicity.

### Figure A1.31: Attitude statements on political disengagement and news

Q16) I am now going to read out some statements about news. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of them?



Base: All adults 16+, 2216

### How levels of engagement impact on consumption and attitudes

A1.194 A further way of identifying levels of engagement, and the extent to which correlations can be made with news consumption and attitudes, is through clustering survey respondents into those that can be defined as politically or socially engaged. Analysis can then examine the extent to which their views and behaviours differ both from respondents as a whole, and also from those who could be defined as politically or socially *disengaged*.

#### The politically and socially engaged

A1.195 Respondents were asked a number of questions in order to understand whether they were particularly engaged with or involved in politics or their community. They were asked whether they voted in the last general and local elections, and whether they considered themselves to be involved in their local community, in politics or in campaigning issues. Their responses to these questions were used to cluster respondents into groups at either ends of an 'engagement' scale as follows:

*Politically/socially engaged* – defined as having voted in both the last local and general elections and agreeing that they were involved in at least one of local community, politics or campaigning issues.

*Politically/socially disengaged* – defined as not having voted in either election and as not being involved in any of the above three areas

A1.196 The reason for grouping together these two set of questions was to cover a mixture of both behavioural and attitudinal dimensions. However, due to this the two cluster groups excluded anyone under the age of 20 years, as they may not have been able to vote in the last elections so would inevitably over-represent the disengaged cluster.

A1.197 34 per cent of those aged 20+ could be defined as being politically/socially engaged with 15 per cent disengaged. Figure A1.32 shows the proportions of the main sub-groups within the two groups (with the proportions of those that are news absorbed

or detached as reference). Those most likely to be politically/socially engaged are the AB socio-economic group, and those aged 65+. Those most likely to be politically/socially disengaged are young people aged 20-24 (39 per cent).

A1.198 Some 30 per cent of Asians are politically/socially engaged, compared with 22 per cent of Black Africans and Caribbeans. Black Africans and Caribbeans are more likely to be disengaged (27 per cent) than Asians (17 per cent).

**Figure A.32: Political/social engagement and News absorption amongst demographic groups (%)**

%	Total (2216)	16-19 (166)	20-24 (186)	25-44 (917)	45-64 (575)	65+ (372)	AB (340)	C1 (614)	C2 (459)	DE (803)	Men (1045)	Women (1171)
Engaged	31	n/a	16	27	40	43	44	30	25	26	30	33
Disengaged	15	n/a	39	19	12	6	9	16	17	16	15	15
Absorbed	22	10	21	22	26	19	29	18	23	19	24	19
Detached	13	30	16	13	10	13	7	11	16	19	12	15

### Interest in news topics

A1.199 Those that are *politically/socially engaged* are more interested in more types of news than those that are disengaged. Differences between the two are particularly marked for any form of current events and politics. Those that are *politically/socially disengaged* are slightly more likely to be interested in crime, entertainment and celebrity behaviour.

### Motivation for news consumption

A1.200 Those that are *politically/socially engaged* are much more likely than the disengaged to follow news as a duty or responsibility to keep informed (39 per cent of the *politically/socially engaged* compared to 16 per cent of the *disengaged*)

### Sources used for news

A1.201 The *politically/socially engaged* are more likely to use newspapers (73 per cent) and radio (60 per cent) for news, compared to 58 per cent and 41 per cent for the *disengaged*. Figure A1.33 shows the percentages of the two groups who use each platform at least once a week.

A1.202 The lack of difference between the two groups in terms of use of the internet for news is due to the fact that the age-profile for each group is very different, with the engaged group generally much older than the disengaged. Older people are less likely than younger people to use the internet. When the results are re-based on younger people only, there is a significant difference between the younger (under 34) engaged and disengaged in terms of their internet news consumption – 60 per cent compared to 28 per cent.

**Figure A1.33: Platforms used for news at least once a week by political/social engagement**

%	Total UK Aged 20+ (2050)	Engaged (663)	Disengaged (368)
TV news programmes on the main 5 channels	93	96	88
Newspapers	66	73	58
Radio	50	60	41
English-language 24 hour news channels	32	34	28
Internet (via a PC or laptop)	23	24	23
Teletext	16	14	14
Magazines	11	11	13
Interactive TV services	6	7	6
TV news on channels from other countries	3	4	3
Mobile phones or other mobile devices	2	2	2

### Views on satisfaction with type of news on TV

A1.203 There is little relationship between political and social engagement and the desire for more world politics news on TV: 29 per cent of people who were *politically and socially engaged* said they would like to see more compared to 25 per cent of the disengaged. This is also true for regional politics: 34 per cent of the *engaged* said they would like to see more of it on TV compared to 32 per cent of the *disengaged*. There is a difference, however, in terms of UK-wide politics with 23 per cent of the engaged saying they would like to see more of it on TV compared to 10 per cent of the *disengaged*.

### Views on plurality, sponsorship and ownership

A1.204 Respondents were asked whether they thought it would be acceptable for the BBC to cut down on news and concentrate on other programming. They were then asked the same thing for ITV1 and Channel 4. 70 per cent of the politically/socially engaged group disagreed for the BBC, 65 per cent for ITV1 and 59 per cent for Channel 4. Levels of disagreement were lower for the politically/socially disengaged – 45 per cent, 46 per cent and 42 per cent respectively.

A1.205 There was more resistance to news and current affairs sponsorship from the *politically/socially engaged* group. When asked whether they felt it would be acceptable for news and current affairs programmes to be commercially sponsored, 49 per cent of the *politically/socially engaged* disagreed, compared to 34 per cent of the overall sample. This was also the case for ownership of news media brands where 34 per cent disagreed that the ownership of TV channels, radio stations, websites and newspapers did not matter providing the content was relevant to them, compared to 17 per cent of the overall sample.

### Attitudes towards news and politics

A1.206 Three quarters (75 per cent) of the *politically/socially engaged* strongly agreed that it was important to keep up-to-date with news and current affairs, compared to 57 per cent of the disengaged and 67 per cent of the overall sample. Some 64 per cent

of the *politically/socially disengaged* agreed that much of the news on TV was not relevant to them, though 47 per cent of the *politically and socially engaged* also agreed that this was the case.

- A1.207 There is also a relationship between political/social engagement and the belief that news helps an individual feel part of the democratic process. 57 per cent of the *politically and socially engaged* felt that this was the case compared to 28 per cent of the *disengaged* and 42 per cent overall.
- A1.208 Overall, the *politically/socially engaged* differ from those who are *disengaged*, both in terms of attitudes towards news as well as consumption, although consumption of news by the two groups is less polarised.

### Qualitative analysis of disengagement amongst the young and minority ethnic groups

- A1.209 Within the groups conducted with young people, and with minority ethnic groups, there was clear evidence of disengagement from the UK news and news media. There were a number of facets involved, which were closely interwoven.

#### Apathy

- A1.210 This attitude was most evident amongst the youngest respondents in the qualitative study. It was not an issue amongst the older minority ethnic respondents. Those expressing apathy felt that, since they had no responsibilities, they did not need to know ‘what was happening in the world’. To some extent they felt that, as young people, there was an expectation that they be apathetic (although whether the expectation came from peers or from a broader source was unclear). Some also saw this as one of the ‘privileges’ of youth.

*“I don’t think we really care” (Caribbean, 18-24 years, Birmingham)*

*“Ignorance is bliss” (White, 18-24 years, Cardiff)*

- A1.211 There was a sense of peer pressure at work since a number talked about there being a social stigma attached to admitting interest in the news.

*“It is not cool to watch the news. There’s better things going on” (White, 18-24 years, Cardiff)*

- A1.212 Some rationalised their apathy, talking about the different priorities of their generation:

*“There is a lot more interest from older people than people our age because we don’t have time. We’ve got to be out” (White, 16-18 years, Bradford)*

- A1.213 This apathy did not, however, apply to all aspects of the news. There was interest in news about sports, celebrities or other news which was needed to engage with peer groups and youth culture. There was also interest in both major news such as the terrorist events of 7/7 and 9/11, and local news where they knew the people involved or were familiar with the location.

- A1.214 Apathy was therefore more apparent in their attitudes to current affairs, politics, national and international news. In these categories they only consumed news

passively - for example, a television or radio switched on by their parents, news in music, sport or other radio programmes or headlines they 'happened to see.'

- A1.215 Most acknowledged that this apathy was not a permanent state of mind and they anticipated that they would have to 'grow out of it' once they took on responsibilities relating to family or work.

*"As you grow older, you start watching more news" (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 18-24 years, Leicester)*

## Cynicism

- A1.216 The second aspect contributing to disengagement was cynicism about how the news was reported. This was evident amongst all the audiences, but was more apparent amongst the younger respondents (under 25) than those in the 25-40 age group.

- A1.217 This cynicism was displayed, in particular, towards the content of the news provided by the majority of the British news media. Whilst the respondents acknowledged that the facts of the stories were likely to be accurate, they expressed reservations about the editorial policies and controls that lay behind story selection and presentation. Most news platforms were perceived to be affiliated to or controlled by someone with vested interests.

*"The BBC is basically run by the government so you'll only hear on there what the government want you to hear" (White 18-24 years Cardiff)*

*"Rupert Murdoch... he has got a massive media empire and everything is controlled from him. Now you might read something and believe it but when you know where it has come from, you think differently" (African 18-24 years London)*

- A1.218 This cynicism tended to lead to an attitude that 'nothing is as it seems,' which, in turn, fed into the tendency to apathy; if the news was inherently untrustworthy, what was the point of engaging with it? The young in particular found it easy to see the news media as an extension of 'authority,' trying to control them. This cynicism was stronger when considering current affairs, politics and national and international news.

- A1.219 There seemed to be significantly less cynicism about local news coverage, because it was felt to state facts and, more importantly, respondents felt they had the power to verify the version of events presented.

*"They (local news) are not trying to influence people. It is just fact. Something happened in this village...in that village" (White, 18-25 years, Cardiff)*

- A1.220 Some felt that the internet offered a less biased alternative. Those with access to the internet felt, when getting news from this source, they were 'in control' and 'nobody could control their minds'. These views were based on the perception that they could access the stories they wanted (as opposed to being told the ones others deemed important) and consume as much or as little as they pleased.

*"I am quite sceptical about my sources... it can be modified to what the public gets. I go to the internet to get different sources and then digest." (African, 18-24 years, London)*

## Lack of Relevance

A1.221 Another recurring theme was that of the lack of relevance of the news. Once again this facet manifested itself across the whole qualitative sample but was most evident amongst the younger end of the audience. News was judged as irrelevant on one of two bases.

A1.222 *Content:* In many instances respondents claimed simply to be not interested in news which, they felt, had no impact on them directly. They tended to include politics and current affairs in this category. This reflects the finding from the quantitative stage that nearly two-thirds (64per cent) of 16-24s felt that much of the news on TV was not relevant to them.

*“Politics; you just don’t want to know. Because it does not affect us” (White, 16-18 years, Bradford)*

*“I am only interested in the news that affects me, for example the proposed smoking ban. If it does not affect me, I am not interested” (White, 18-24 years, Cardiff)*

A1.223 *Delivery:* The youngest respondents also found that the style and tone of much news reporting was hard for them to relate to. They felt it not only excluded them, but made the news very much the ‘older generation’s’ domain.

*“Watching the news is very boring. They do not make it fun for us to watch” (White, 16-18 years, Bradford)*

A1.224 A number of programmes were mentioned as offering news in styles and formats which appealed to this age group. These included *Newsround*, liked for its simple and straightforward reporting of stories and *The Big Breakfast* which was felt to have been aimed at younger audiences:

*“It was for young people and that’s probably why we all liked it. It was funny and it lightened up the news a wee bit. It made it a wee bit more amusing whereas it seems to be quite depressing.” (White, 19-24 years, Glasgow)*

## Disillusionment

A1.225 As described earlier in the Annex, this disillusionment was articulated primarily by minority ethnic groups, and arose from the perception that issues about their culture, faith or race were not treated fairly by the news media. Whilst it was evident amongst all four minority ethnic groups covered in the study, it was stronger amongst Muslims, and Black Caribbean and African respondents.

A1.226 Amongst the Muslims, the disillusionment from the perceived negative portrayal of Muslims and Islam was in the process of turning (or in some cases, had already turned) into active rejection and distrust of the mainstream news media.

A1.227 The Caribbean and African respondents were particularly concerned about the portrayal of black people in relation to crime; they did not tend to question the veracity of the story but the relevance of stating the criminal’s race or colour. The resultant disillusionment with the mainstream news media led them to look for a countering voice in Black media such as *The Voice*.

*"I get The Voice magazine – You don't get any of those stories on the news where it is not negative. I like to get the balance" (Caribbean, 25-45 years, Cardiff)*

*"I'll pick up The Voice magazine and I look for educational issues to do with black boys, whether it is negative, positive or in-between. I give my son the paper to read and we have a discussion about it" (Caribbean, 25-45 years, Cardiff)*

## **Distrust and Rejection**

A1.228 Complete rejection of some or all of the news related to the Muslim world and Muslim faith, delivered by the British news media was found in the Muslim groups and was most evident amongst Muslim men. The rejection and distrust stemmed from disillusionment and perceived negative portrayal of Muslims in the media. Similar rejections were not found in the other minority ethnic groups.

A1.229 In some instances respondents still consumed such news in the mainstream news media but this was primarily to find out 'what they think of us' or if there was a breaking story. Having taken stories from these sources, they would then go to other, more trusted sources to get further information and only then form an opinion. The 'more trusted' sources included specialist TV channels (including Prime TV, Geo TV, Islam Channel) and word of mouth or community discussions.

*"I discard a lot of things straight away. I hear it and I think bollocks." (Muslim, 18-24 years, Glasgow)*

*"I have actually switched off from a lot of the news. Actually switched off because all it is going to do is make me angry." (Muslim, 20-40 years, Glasgow)*

*"I used to go out of my way to look for news... But now, I have been put off the news." (Muslim, 20-40 years, Glasgow)*

A1.230 It should be noted that this distrust was not just focused on the news media. These respondents claimed to feel the same about the British authorities, government and police.

## **Cultural affiliation**

A1.231 Consumption of media relating to a particular culture was more evident amongst the Muslim, Indian and African respondents than amongst the Caribbean respondents. The primary impact of this behaviour was that consuming these alternative media left less time for the mainstream media and, as a result, contributed further to the overall level of disengagement.

A1.232 The Muslim respondents tended to see themselves first and foremost as Muslims and identified themselves with Muslim culture. This made them interested in news originating in the Muslim world and/or relating to Islam. This news was either not available in the mainstream British media or was reported in ways they found less acceptable.

A1.233 The Indian Hindu and Sikh respondents tended to see themselves as, to varying degrees, integrated into British society. However, at the same time, they aligned themselves strongly with Indian culture.

*"[We are] Indians living in UK." (Indian Hindu/ Sikh 20-40 years London)*

*"We are British, but Indian is still my mother tongue and that is what I hold on to. I am Indian. I know I was born here but my mother tongue is Indian and that is my country. That's my opinion" (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 18-24 years, Leicester)*

- A1.234 The Black African respondents were similar to the Indians in terms of their cultural affiliation.

*"When it comes to personal identity, we are Africans and Africans never forget where they come from." (African, 20-40 years, Birmingham)*

- A1.235 Both minority ethnic groups accessed alternative news sources to keep in touch with events in India or Africa, which would not be reported in the mainstream British media.

*"If they say something about Nigeria, I know I can go to O.B.E and find out more." (African, 20-40 years, Birmingham)*

*"I often go on the internet to look at what is happening in my country." (African, 18-24 years, London)*

## Generational influence

- A1.236 Finally, many of the Muslim and Indian respondents lived in extended, multi-generational households in which the head of the family had the primary influence over what was watched on the main / family television set. This multi-generational co-existence also influenced the cultural affiliation discussed above. The family head was often a first-generation immigrant and tended not to identify readily with the British news media, in some cases speaking little if any English. Their choice of news media was therefore based on that which was based in or focussed on the Indian subcontinent.

*"In my household, as soon as my mother-in-law wakes up, Sunrise radio and Star Plus are tag teaming around the house. All I want is to hear the weather report or traffic report, but don't get a chance..." (Indian/Sikh, 25-45 years, London)*

*"I want to watch Bloomberg and what the share prices are and they (parents) are all sitting down watching Star Plus" (Indian Hindu/ Sikh, 25-45 years, London)*

*"They watch the Urdu channel. We have to listen to it too." (Muslim, 20-40 years, Leicester)*

- A1.237 As a result of this, second or third generation respondents were constantly exposed to news from their homeland and became involved with it, leaving less 'space' for the British news media. Although this was not active disengagement, it nonetheless operated cumulatively with the various other factors discussed above.

- A1.238 In summary, a variety of elements of disengagement with news can be identified among younger and minority ethnic groups. The quantitative survey reflects these findings, for as stated earlier in this Annex, both groups display less overall 'appetite' for news than the UK average, and generally lower levels of consumption.

- A1.239 On the other hand, it is important to note that sizeable proportions of the young and of minority ethnic groups are ‘engaged’ – some 16 per cent of 20-24s are politically/socially engaged; 30 per cent of Asians, and 22 per cent of Black Africans and Caribbeans.
- A1.240 While consumption levels of news by minority ethnic groups are generally lower than the UK population as a whole, in certain areas they consume more – 24-hour TV news channels, and foreign-language news channels. In general, minority ethnic groups are less interested in the consumer affairs aspects of news, but are just as interested in international news as the UK population overall.

### **Attitudes: Local/regional news**

- A1.241 This section examines respondent views and consumption patterns relating to local and regional news<sup>19</sup>. In addition, in order to understand future local and regional news needs, people were asked whether they wanted to see more local and regional news on both television and in other forms of media.
- A1.242 The extent to which people stay in the same local area over time may have an impact on the extent to which their interest in local and regional news evolves and is maintained. According to research conducted by Ofcom in 2004, some 73 per cent of the UK population say they have lived in the same local area for ten years or more<sup>20</sup>. There are differences by Nation and region – 83 per cent of those in Wales say they have lived there for 10 years or more compared to 78 per cent in Northern Ireland, 73 per cent in England and 69 per cent in Scotland. Across England, people in Yorkshire, the North East and the North West are more likely to stay in the same place than those in East Anglia, London, and the West Country.
- A1.243 As mentioned earlier in this Annex, people say they like local/regional news. It was the type of news mentioned most by people as being within their definition of news, and also as a type of news that interested them – some 76 per cent of survey respondents considered any form of local or regional current events to be news. Two thirds (66 per cent) said they were interested in the topic themselves. Interest was lower amongst 16-24s and respondents from minority ethnic groups.

### **How people currently access local news**

- A1.244 Both local free newspapers and TV programmes are regularly used by just under half the respondents (46 per cent and 45 per cent respectively) as indicated in Figure A1.34. However, newspapers overall (combining local free, paid for and national newspapers) are the primary platform, regularly used by 74 per cent of respondents.
- A1.245 There were marked differences by age in the platforms used for local news. A higher proportion of 16-24 year olds (15 per cent) said they regularly used the internet for local news, more than any other age group. The percentages using this

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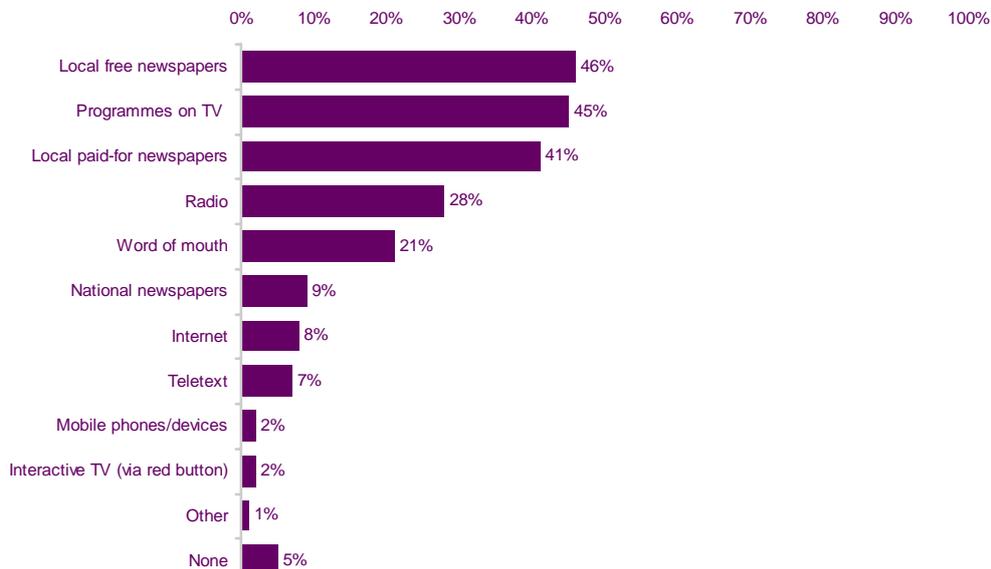
<sup>19</sup> While local, regional, and Nation-specific news comprise very different “footprints” and therefore represent very different types of news, it is at times necessary to conflate them, because respondents’ own categorisations are likely to overlap. For example, it is of note that respondents felt that programmes on TV provided them with news and information about the local area where they live (see below), as there is considerable debate about the extent to which the geographic footprint of current regional TV provision provides an adequate amount of local information. It may be more circumspect to conclude that respondents were thinking about regional news as well, not least because earlier parts of the survey had asked about regional news provision.

<sup>20</sup> Research was conducted in mid-2004, using the Ipsos Quest panel (n=4000).

news platform decreased as the age groups got older, mirroring the use of the platform generally for news.

**Figure A1.34: Local news platforms used regularly**

Q12a) Thinking just about local news and information about where you live, which of the following do you regularly use, if any?



Base: all adults (2216)

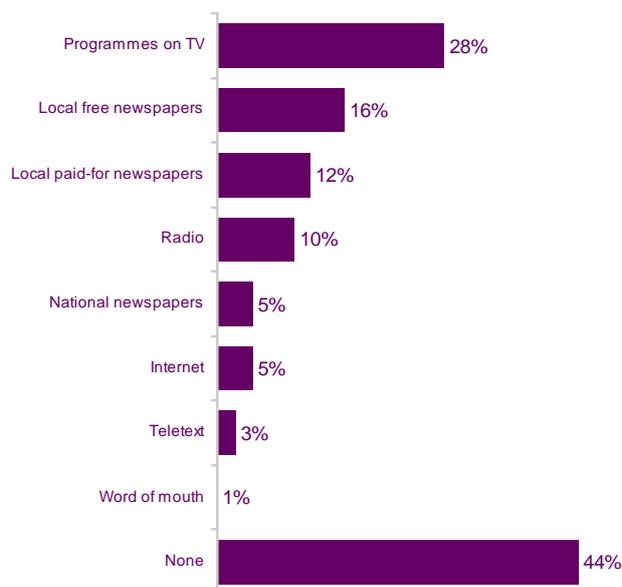
### Interest in more local news on different platforms

A1.246 Respondents were asked whether they would like to see a higher quantity of local news on various platforms. Figure A1.35 shows their responses.

A1.247 Some 44 per cent of those interested in local or regional news did not think it was necessary for any more local news to be available through any platform. Television was the platform nominated by the greatest number of respondents (29 per cent).

### Figure A1.35: Interest in more local news

Q12b) And would you like to see a higher quantity of local news on any of them?



Base: All adults (2216)

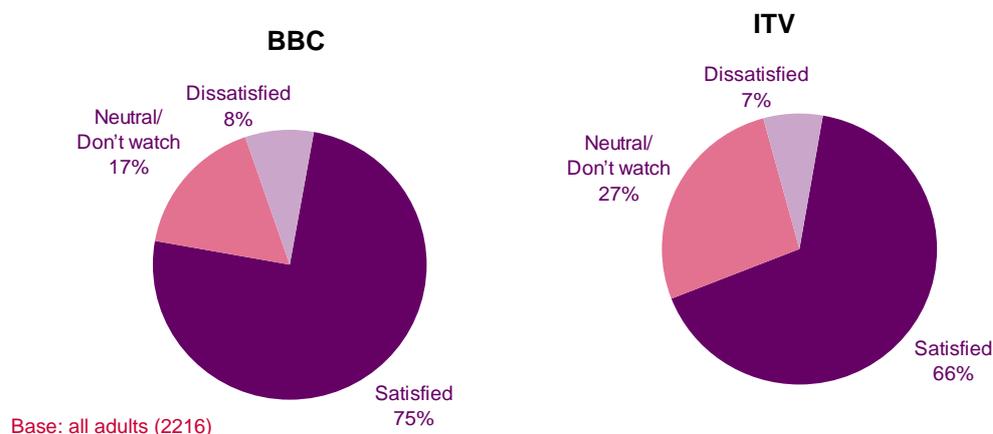
### Perceptions of regional news and current affairs coverage on the BBC and ITV

A1.248 Two issues were addressed in the survey - overall satisfaction with provision of regional news and current affairs by the BBC and ITV; and opinions of the BBC's and ITV's geographical spread/coverage.

A1.249 Both the BBC and ITV were rated as satisfactory overall by the vast majority of those interested in local/regional news (Figure A1.36) – 75 per cent and 66 per cent respectively. When based on those who gave a preference (in other words excluding 'don't watch' and neutral responses) these figures were 90 per cent and 91 per cent respectively.

### Figure A1.36: Satisfaction with regional news on BBC and ITV

Q13a) If you watch regional news and current affairs programmes on <CHANNEL>, how satisfied are you with them overall?

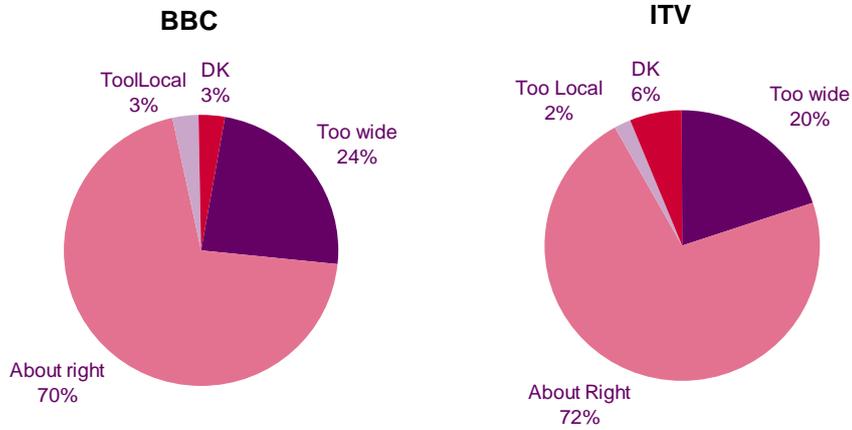


A1.250 Geographical spread was also considered to be about right on both channels by the majority of those that watched – 72 per cent for the BBC and 73 per cent for ITV

(Figure A1.37) – although one quarter (24 per cent) of respondents said that the BBC’s footprint was too wide, and 20 per cent said similarly about ITV.

**Figure A1.37: Opinion of geographical spread of BBC and ITV news programmes**

Q13b) And on <CHANNEL> do you think the geographic area that the regional TV news programmes cover is.....



Base: all respondents interested in local/regional news and regularly watch it on BBC (1326) and ITV (1229)

## The view from the Nations and regions

A1.251 This section compares how news consumption and attitudes to news vary across the Nations and English regions.

### Definition of news and interest in topics

A1.252 People in the Nations and English regions differ in their definitions and levels of interest in news. In particular there is variation in the extent to which those in the Nations consider regional issues, and UK-wide politics, to be news, as Figure A1.38 shows.

A1.253 People in Scotland and Northern Ireland are more likely to see current events in their Nation as news (70 per cent and 82 per cent) compared to those in England (58 per cent) or Wales (60 per cent). Similarly, politics in the region or Nation are more likely to be nominated as news by those in Scotland (52 per cent) and Northern Ireland (76 per cent) than England (42 per cent) and Wales (40 per cent).

A1.254 UK-wide politics is seen as news by 56 per cent of those in England, compared to 45 per cent of those in Scotland and 40 per cent of those in Wales.

### Figure A1.38: Topics considered as news

Q1a) Thinking about news in general, which of the following areas or issues would you consider to be news?

	Total	England	Scotland	Wales	NI
<b>Base</b>	<b>(2216)</b>	<b>(1703)</b>	<b>(172)</b>	<b>(171)</b>	<b>(170)</b>
Current events in UK	71%	72%	71%	57%	67%
Current events in my region*	60%	58%	70%	60%	82%
Current local events where I live	56%	56%	55%	49%	62%
UK-wide politics	54%	56%	45%	40%	51%
Politics in my region	44%	42%	54%	40%	76%

Note: 'My region\*' is replaced with Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland in those nations

A1.255 Interest levels in news topics follow a similar pattern, as Figure A1.39 illustrates. Again, people in Scotland and Northern Ireland were far more likely to see current events in their Nation as being of interest compared to England and Wales. Interest in local news was relatively standard across the Nations. Interest in politics was relatively low for all, with the exception of those in Northern Ireland, just over half of whom said they were interested in politics in their Nation, compared to 28 per cent for the UK as a whole.

### Figure A1.39: Topics of interest

Q1b) Which types of news are you PERSONALLY interested in?

Base	England (1,703)	Scotland (172)	Wales (171)	NI (170)
Current events in UK	55%	62%	46%	50%
Current events in my region/country*	47%	66%	54%	77%
Current local events where I live	47%	48%	46%	53%
UK-wide politics	38%	31%	32%	28%
Politics in my region/country*	27%	29%	31%	51%

Note: 'My region\*' is replaced with Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland in those nations

A1.256 Figure A1.40 sets out responses by English region.

A1.257 Respondents in London, the South West and South East were more likely to express an interest in any form of political news (64 per cent, 60 per cent and 58 per cent) than was the case in Yorkshire & Humberside (46 per cent), the North East (43 per cent) and the North West (42 per cent). Those in London (51 per cent) and the North West (50 per cent) were less interested in any form of local or regional news (politics or current events). Interest was highest in the South West (74 per cent).

A1.258 People in the North East and North West were less likely to be interested in UK-wide politics, worldwide issues, or regional politics than those in the other English regions. They were also less interested in city, business and financial issues (15 per cent and 8 per cent respectively compared to 27 per cent in the South West).

A1.259 Interest in entertainment news was greatest in the West Midlands at 47 per cent compared to 29 per cent in the East Midlands, East Anglia and North East. Interest in crime news was lowest in London (37 per cent) compared to 50 per cent in the South West.

### Figure A1.40: Topics of interest, by English region

Q1b) Which types of news are you PERSONALLY interested in?

Base	South East (193)	South West (170)	East Midlands (203)	West Midlands (198)	Yorks/ Humbs (175)	East Anglia (174)	North East (153)	North West (170)	London (271)
Current events in UK	65%	63%	55%	57%	56%	61%	43%	33%	56%
Current events in my region	52%	60%	47%	45%	51%	53%	50%	36%	36%
Current local events where I live	54%	59%	47%	49%	53%	49%	46%	34%	37%
UK-wide politics	42%	42%	39%	36%	34%	43%	23%	27%	44%
Worldwide politics and current events	44%	50%	45%	41%	34%	44%	29%	31%	56%
Politics in my region	29%	36%	26%	29%	28%	24%	24%	18%	26%

### The purpose and value of news

A1.260 Around one quarter of people in England (27 per cent), Wales (26 per cent) and Scotland (25 per cent) said they followed the news as a duty or responsibility to keep informed, but only 14 per cent of respondents in Northern Ireland nominated this as a reason. The desire to get a perspective from another country applied to 30 per cent of the sample in England, compared to 20 per cent of the Northern Ireland

sample, whose main interest in news, as discussed previously, was more local to them. However, people in Northern Ireland were more likely to say that they followed it for ‘personal interest’ (72 per cent compared to 57 per cent in England, 56 per cent in Scotland and 50 per cent in Wales).

A1.261 There were some differences in the reasons for accessing news across the English regions. Respondents in East Anglia were more likely to say they want to ‘know what’s going on in the world’ (76 per cent) than respondents in the South West and North West (both 63 per cent). People in the North West were also less likely to say they followed the news to get a perspective from other countries (21 per cent) than in East Anglia (45 per cent), the South East (38 per cent) and South West (32 per cent).

A1.262 Following the news for personal interest was less of a factor in the North East, North West and London (all 49 per cent) than in the South West (67 per cent), East Midlands (64 per cent) and 62 per cent in the South East.

### News and current affairs consumption habits

A1.263 Figure A1.41 sets out the platforms ever used for news, by Nation. People in Scotland and Wales were more likely to use the five main channels for news (95 per cent for both compared to 89 per cent in England). More people in Wales claimed to watch English-language 24-hour news channels (43 per cent) than any other UK nation, with those in Scotland having the lowest claimed usage (24 per cent). This is likely to be an outcome of the higher multi-channel penetration in Wales.

**Figure A1.41: Sources ever used for news, by Nation**

Q3a) Which of the following do you EVER use for news?

Base	England (1703)	Scotland (172)	Wales (171)	NI (170)
TV news programmes on the main 5 channels	89%	95%	95%	93%
Newspapers	66%	77%	73%	73%
Radio	52%	55%	51%	58%
English-language 24 hour news channels	37%	24%	43%	31%
Word of mouth - in person	29%	22%	32%	36%
Internet (via a PC or laptop)	28%	25%	23%	15%
Teletext	19%	22%	24%	40%
Word of mouth - by phone/email	17%	19%	13%	8%
Magazines	16%	24%	25%	17%
Interactive TV services (via the Red button)	9%	5%	9%	5%
TV news on channels from other countries	4%	3%	2%	3%
Mobile phones or other mobile devices	3%	2%	7%	3%
I don't follow the news	2%	1%	-	0%

Base: All adults 16+, 2216

A1.264 Use of the internet for news was lowest in Northern Ireland (15 per cent compared to 28 per cent in England). Claimed newspaper use was highest in Scotland (77 per cent) compared to the other three nations, and lowest in England at 66 per cent. People were more likely to use Teletext in Northern Ireland (39 per cent compared to 19 per cent in England, 22 per cent in Scotland and 24 per cent in Wales).

A1.265 There were also some marked differences within the English regions. Radio was nominated as a news source to a greater extent in the South East (63 per cent) compared to 41 per cent in London and 35 per cent in the North East. Use of

Teletext was lowest in London at 4 per cent compared to between 15 per cent and 29 per cent elsewhere. Viewing news on TV channels from other countries was highest in London at 11 per cent, perhaps reflecting the higher proportion of people from minority ethnic groups within the area.

### Local/regional news

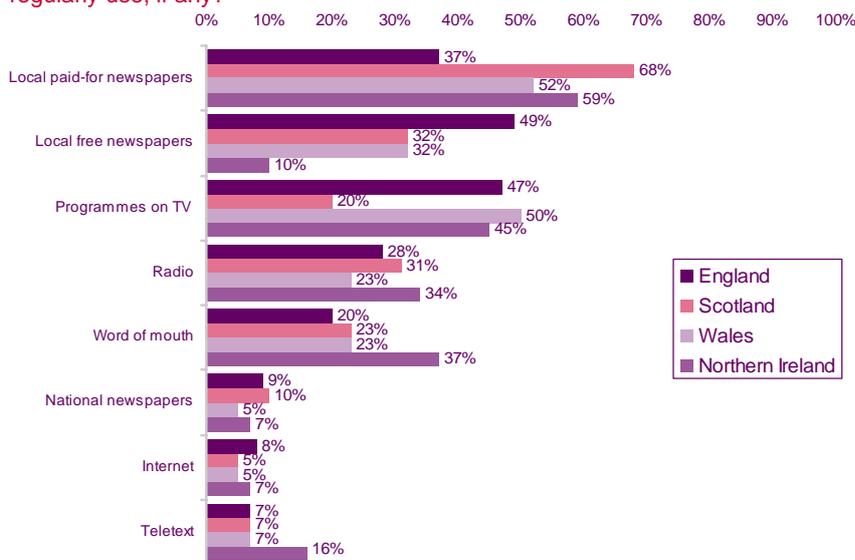
A1.266 Figure A1.42 illustrates the platforms used for accessing local news by those in each Nation. What is evident is the extent of difference between the Nations in terms of the types of media used for local news.

A1.267 People interested in local/regional news in England were more likely to use local free newspapers (49 per cent) than in Scotland and Wales (32 per cent). People in Northern Ireland were particularly unlikely to use this source for their local/regional news (10 per cent), due to the comparative lack of such titles there.

A1.268 People in Scotland are far more likely to use local paid-for newspapers (68 per cent) compared to 37 per cent in England. It is also of note that respondents in Scotland were less inclined to use programmes on TV for this type of news (20 per cent), while around half of the other Nations said they used TV for local news.

**Figure A1.42: Local news sources use regularly**

Q12a) Thinking just about local news and information about where you live, which of the following do you regularly use, if any?



Base: all adults

A1.269 Respondents in Northern Ireland relied heavily on word of mouth (37 per cent). They were also more likely to use Teletext (16 per cent) for local news.

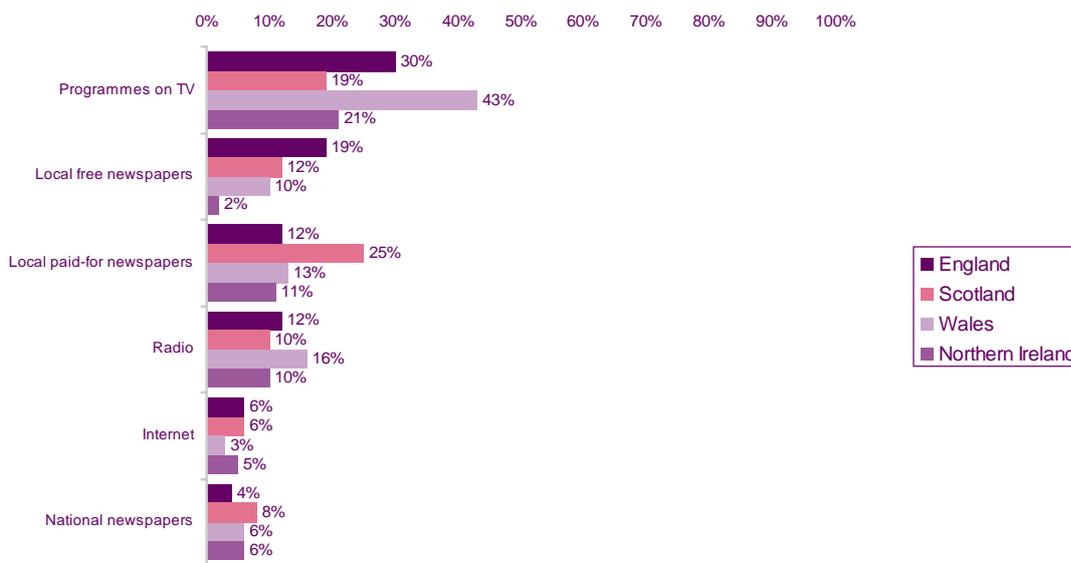
A1.270 Turning to the English regions, TV is least likely to be used for local news in London (35 per cent) and most likely in the South West (58 per cent). Similarly, Londoners are least likely to use local paid-for newspapers (7 per cent) and those in the South West most likely (60 per cent). Free newspapers are used most in the West Midlands and London (72 per cent and 60 per cent), and least in Yorkshire and the Humber (35 per cent).

## Interest in greater amounts of local news

A1.271 Respondents were asked whether they would like to see a higher quantity of local news on a number of media (Figure A1.43). Platforms for which people said they would like to see more local news were TV programmes (particularly in Wales) and local paid-for newspapers (in Scotland). This also reflects their platforms of choice for local news as shown previously in Figure A1.42.

**Figure A1.43: Platforms would like more local news on**

Q12b) And would you like to see a higher quantity of local news on any of them?



Base: all adults (2216)

## Opinions on geographic footprint of BBC and ITV regional services

A1.272 Figure A1.44 shows that respondents in Wales and England were more inclined to describe both broadcasters as having too wide a coverage, whereas respondents in Northern Ireland were generally more satisfied with the coverage.

**Figure A1.44: Opinions of geographical “footprint” of BBC and ITV news services, by nation**

%	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
Base	(1550)	(160)	(155)	(153)
<b>BBC</b>				
Too wide	23	14	23	6
About right	71	75	69	88
Too local	3	6	5	4
DK/Don't watch	3	5	3	1
<b>ITV</b>				
Too wide	19	11	16	5
About right	72	83	74	89
Too local	3	2	5	4
DK/Don't watch	6	4	5	2

## Engagement and disengagement with news

A1.273 There were few differences in the nations in terms of the politically/socially engaged, other than a greater proportion (17 per cent) of people in Northern Ireland were classified as *disengaged* than in Wales (8 per cent).

A1.274 As seen in Figure A1.45, there were more *politically engaged* people in the South East, South West and East Midlands (37 per cent) than in the West Midlands (28 per cent), North West (24 per cent) and Yorkshire & Humberside (21 per cent). Despite the higher proportion of *engaged* in the East Midlands, there was also a high proportion of *disengaged* (20 per cent), as was there in East Anglia (21 per cent).

**Figure A1.45: Political/social disengagement by English region**

	Base	South East (193)	South West (170)	East Midlands (203)	West Midlands (198)	Yorks/ Humbs (175)	East Anglia (174)	North East (153)	North West (170)	London (271)
Engaged		37%	37%	37%	28%	21%	30%	30%	24%	31%
Disengaged		12%	10%	20%	14%	15%	21%	16%	15%	16%

## Looking to the future

A1.275 The quantitative research asked some questions relating to news and likely news consumption in the future. However, it must be remembered that much depends upon the *current* perceptions of the public. It is often quite difficult for people to anticipate the future, especially in a structured quantitative interview when there is little opportunity to describe concepts or possibilities or indeed the potential benefits of these in any detail. Therefore, the following results should be treated as indicative only.

### Whether people would like to see more coverage on TV of news topics

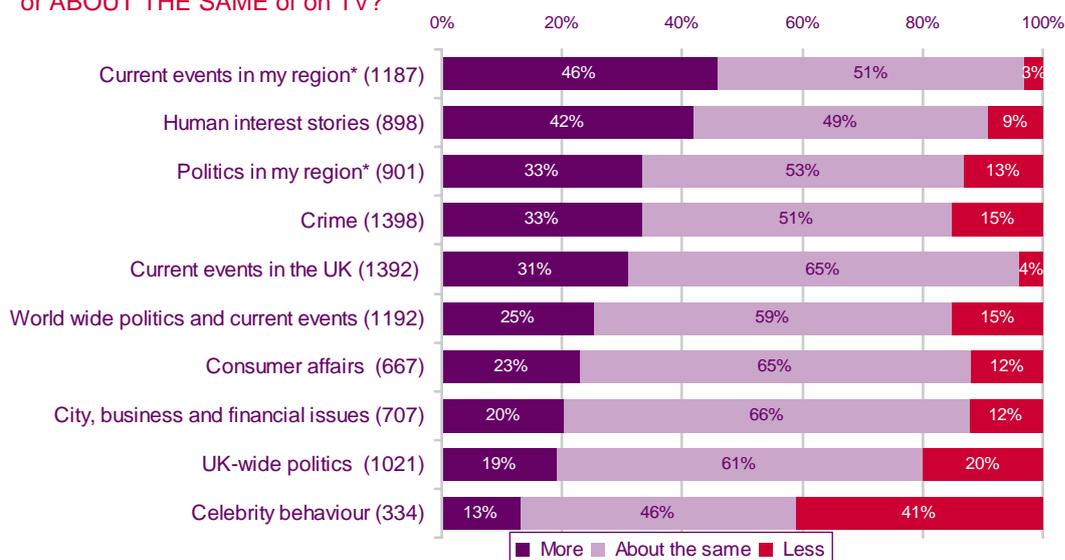
A1.276 Respondents who said they currently used the five main channels on television as a news source were asked, for each topic that they considered to be news, whether they would like to see more, less or about the same amount on TV (Figure A1.46).

A1.277 For the majority of subjects more than half of respondents who were asked the question stated 'about the same', suggesting that their current needs were being adequately met. That said, 'current events in my region/Nation' was the most popular nomination. This was particularly high for people in Scotland (58 per cent).

A1.278 More human interest stories were nominated by 42 per cent of the sample. Interest in more worldwide politics and current events was higher amongst respondents from ethnic minority groups (37 per cent compared to 24 per cent for whites).

**Figure A1.46: Types of topics desired on TV**

Q11) Please tell me for each one whether you would like to see MORE of, LESS of, or ABOUT THE SAME of on TV?



Base: All adults 16+ who use TV as a news source and consider topics to be news, n= see brackets

\* Note: 'my region' replaced by country in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

## Receptiveness to new news media

A1.279 As discussed previously, mobile phones, interactive TV and the internet were not as widely used for news compared to the more traditional media. Respondents who did not currently use each platform for news were asked how interested they would be in using them in the future, regardless of whether they currently owned the equipment or not (Figure A1.47).

A1.280 Overall, for each of the three platforms, one in five respondents who were not currently using the platform expressed an interest in future use of the platforms for news.

### Mobile devices

A1.281 18 per cent of respondents not currently doing so stated an interest in receiving news on their mobile, in one form or another. There was very little difference between the interest levels of each individual capability. Interest decreased by age – overall figures for interest in 'any mobile content' among current non-users ranged from 4 per cent for over-65s to 42 per cent for 16-24s, highlighting the important role this platform has amongst younger age groups. Men (8 per cent) were twice as likely as women (4 per cent) to show an interest in accessing websites for news via mobile devices.

### Interactive TV

A1.282 20 per cent of people who stated they didn't currently use Interactive TV for news said they would be interested in doing so in future. Unlike mobile devices, the figures were relatively consistent for all age bands up to 45 with interest subsequently dropping back amongst the over 45s: 28 per cent for 16-24s, 28 per cent for 25-44s, 17 per cent for 45-64s and 7 per cent for over 65s. Again men were more likely to express an interest than women (21 per cent compared to 16 per cent).

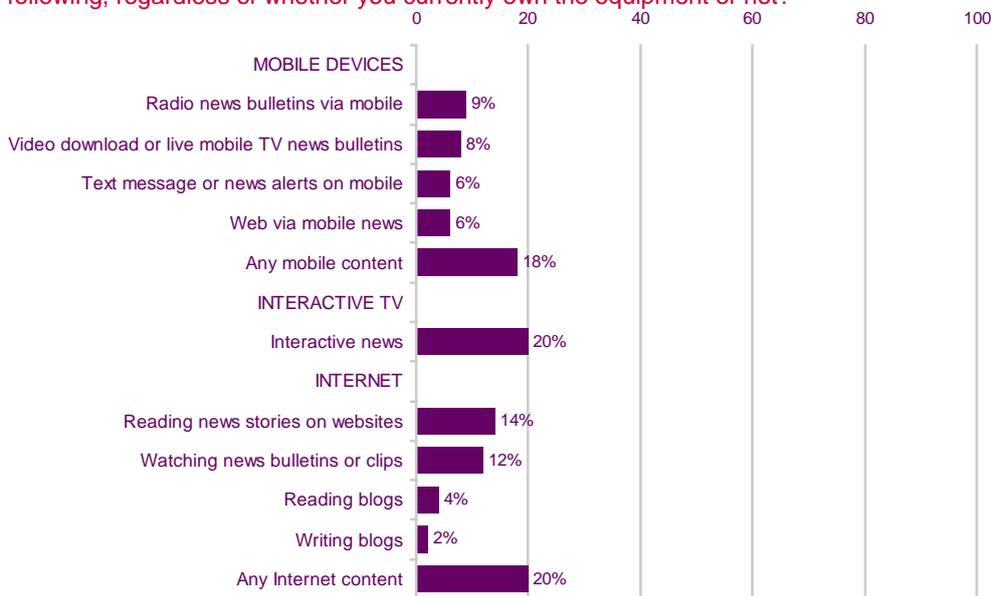
Internet

A1.283 The pattern seen for the internet was similar to that for interactive TV. Overall, one fifth (20 per cent) of current non-users were interested in any of the different ways of receiving news via this platform. Interest decreased with age: 26 per cent for 16-24s were interested, compared to 19 per cent for 25-44s, 15 per cent for 45-64s and 5 per cent for over 65s.

A1.284 There were also significant differences within the various options for accessing news on the internet – for instance, 25-44 year olds (18 per cent) year olds not using the internet for news were more likely to be interested in watching news bulletins or clips on websites than older age groups. 16-24 year olds were more likely to show interest in reading (11 per cent) or writing blogs (6 per cent) than any other age band.

**Figure A1.47: Future interest in new news platforms**

Q17) There are now various new ways of getting hold of news. Would you be interested in any of the following, regardless of whether you currently own the equipment or not?



Base: All adults 16+ who do not currently use source for news

## Concluding remarks

- A1.285 This Annex has provided a wealth of detail, much of it previously unmapped, of the variety of opinions that exist about news within the UK. Of particular interest are the differences of opinion between various groups within society – age-groups, minority ethnic groups, nations and regions, and also differences between socio-economic groups and between men and women.
- A1.286 That said, there are a number of areas of commonality. ‘Traditional’ news subjects are still of interest to the vast majority of people. The terrestrial TV bulletins continue to be most-nominated as the primary source of news. There is consensus that local and regional services are a good thing, and that local and regional news is among the most resonant types of news for people.
- A1.287 Just over half of respondents said they do not want sponsorship of their news programmes, and that the concept of plurality of news outlets is a good thing.
- A1.288 Belief in the importance of impartiality for TV and radio news has changed little since 2002, and is very high. That said, judgements as to its delivery are lower, as are levels of trust.
- A1.289 There has been an increase in people feeling that TV news is not of personal relevance to them – from 34 per cent in 2002 to 55 per cent in 2006. This disconnect is elsewhere mirrored by the finding that in terms of onscreen portrayal, there are too many celebrities and not enough ordinary people shown.
- A1.290 News remains important to people. Those that are politically/socially engaged comprise around one third of people aged over 20. This group has more appetite for news, and has stronger views about its ownership. In terms of their news consumption, they are more likely to use newspapers and the radio than the overall population. The younger engaged are also more likely to use the internet.
- A1.291 Younger people are less likely to be politically and socially engaged, and less likely to be “news absorbed”, than older people. That said, the news ‘detached’ are most likely to be aged 16-19, with younger people aged over 20 just as likely to be news absorbed as those aged 35-44. In other words, as younger people themselves noted, once they have more responsibilities, news consumption tends to increase. However, it should also be noted that there is a considerable difference between those aged under 45 and those aged 45-64 in terms of news absorption and political engagement – which is a potential sign of a generational shift in attitudes towards news, and towards politics.
- A1.292 People from different minority ethnic groups display quite different views on a number of issues relating to news, and also consume it quite differently – one quarter of Asians can be classified as news absorbed compared to 16 per cent of Black Caribbeans and Africans, and many more Asians (36 per cent) than Black respondents (19 per cent) were likely to use the internet for news. The qualitative research underlined strong dissatisfaction with mainstream UK media sources amongst many groups, for various reasons relating to how they felt they were portrayed.

## Methodology

### The Quantitative Survey

The 2006 quantitative sample was designed to be representative of the adult population aged 16+ in the United Kingdom. The survey population is estimated to have been almost 47 million across the UK.

For the main survey the sample frame was defined as all adults aged 16+ resident within the United Kingdom. A sample of 112 primary sampling units (PSUs) was drawn disproportionate to the populations of each Government Office Region (GOR) to give similar numbers in each GOR. This produced between 9 and 10 PSUs per GOR.

TNS utilised the Census 2001 and the Post Office Address File (PAF) to define its random location sampling points. Within each selected PSU, a ward was selected probability proportionate to aged 16+ and from within the selected ward a starting address was issued to the interviewer.

The boost survey was designed to provide sample for areas of high ethnic minorities. The sample frame used in the main survey was augmented to provide data for two ethnic categories – Black and Asian. The Census 2001 ethnicity definitions and data were used to classify wards as either Black or Asian based upon their penetration of the respective ethnic groups. Within each of these ethnically coded wards 16 Black and 16 Asian PSUs were sampled with probability proportionate to either Black or Asian Census 2001 counts. Again interviewers were issued with starter addresses.

In total 2,216 interviews were conducted proportionately in the nine English governmental regions, as well as the other 3 UK nations as follows:

- London = 269
- South East = 193
- South West = 170
- East Midlands = 203
- West Midlands = 197
- East Anglia = 174
- North East = 153
- North West = 170
- Yorkshire & Humberside = 174
- Scotland = 172
- Wales = 171
- Northern Ireland = 170

In order to achieve these numbers a minimum quota of 150 interviews was assigned to each region, with further target quotas set on age and gender. In addition to this a significant proportion were assigned to be conducted amongst non white ethnic minorities in order to gain a robust sample for these groups of people. This was constructed as follows:

- Asian = 276 (200 minimum quota)
- Black Africans/Black Caribbean = 205 (200 minimum quota)

Twenty minute interviews for the quantitative survey were conducted in-home between the 6<sup>th</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2006. The individual regions were spread out across the fieldwork period so as to avoid any regional issues relating to a given time period. All surveys were completed using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) and were carried out by members of TNS Field's panel of interviewers on behalf of TNS Media. These interviewers work to specific professional standards, and the company is a member of the MRS Interviewer Card Scheme and the IQCS, whose professional standards are either met or exceeded.

There were concerns by both Ofcom and TNS that due to the subject matter, parts of the survey may have had social desirability issues. In other words respondents may have wanted to give answers that they believed they should say, rather than what they actually felt to be the case. In order to minimise this, the following elements were introduced -

- Interviewers were instructed to encourage respondents to be completely honest, without offering any influence on responses.
- The interview began with an introductory question on general interests, in order that respondents were not aware at the outset that the overall subject was news.
- For the opening two questions, which covered opinions on the definition of news, respondents were asked to fill in the answers themselves on the screen without prompting so as to remove some of the interviewer bias.

There was also some concern regarding interviewing minority ethnic groups, particularly in light of some of the recent issues in the political environment. To address this, interviewers were asked to encourage honesty and to be extra careful not to offend. Furthermore, ethnic Interviewers were assigned to similar ethnic backgrounds where possible.

Other important field controls were also put in place in order to generate a robust and reliable sample:

- Interviewers were assigned to appropriate sample points to achieve the most interviews possible in given areas.
- Quotas were not fixed but they were monitored closely to ensure they were achieved. Each interviewer was assigned an individual quota to complete, which is monitored through the Field Management System.
- A percentage of all work was validated and work from almost all interviewers was back checked. Interviews were deleted for this survey on the basis that the information given from the respondent was not accurately recorded by the interviewer.
- When problems arose regarding interviewers, the missing surveys were all re-allocated by sample point to ensure the correct coverage of all areas.

### 2002 survey

The 2002 survey was carried out using the Quest panel, administered by the research agency Ipsos. The panel comprised 4,000 members who filled out a self-completion booklet each week on a variety of topics, and also completed a weekly booklet detailing their television viewing consumption.

The Quest panel when compared to other comparable studies (both panel-based and face to face) at particular times during its existence displayed no discernable discrepancies of statistical significance in terms of take-up or attitudes to media communications technologies.

### Comparing the 2002 and 2006 survey results

Given the difference in methodologies and questionnaire design, it was necessary to apply a more stringent test of statistical significance than is normally necessary.

When undertaking confidence testing between samples, the aim is to identify whether or not two samples could come from the same population. To say that two results are significantly different at the 95% confidence interval means that if you repeated the exercise 100 times, in 5 cases it would not be possible to say that the samples are not from the same population.

Based on testing and checks by Ipsos, it is reasonable to believe that the Quest panel was representative of the 2002 UK population in terms of demographics, access and attitudes. Likewise the 2006 TNS omnibus is weighted to be representative of the 2006 UK population. Therefore a significant difference between results means that the 2002 UK population holds significantly different views than the 2006 population.

However, it must be recognised that panel and omnibus methodologies differ and that this will impact on the results. In the absence of definitive information about design effects, it was decided to report in the text only upon those differences where there is strong reason to believe they are significant. At 99% significance, 99% of the values of a result that could come from the sample will fall within 2.76

standard deviations of the mean. This means that only those results which lie outside 2.76 standard deviations of the mean will be considered as significantly different. To reflect the design effects, only those results which lie outside 10 standard deviations of the mean have been considered robust, and those that lie outside 5 standard deviations of the mean have been considered indicative.

It should be noted that this is a particularly cautious approach, and may mean that some differences which are indeed significant have not been categorised as such in the text.

### Qualitative Research

Qualitative group depths were also conducted among 16-45 year olds within the white (16-24), Caribbean, African Christian, Indian (Non Muslim) and Muslim ethnic groups, in order to record underlying news consumption behaviours and attitudes which may otherwise have not been picked up at the quantitative stage, and to examine further reasons for disaffection with news.

TNS worked in consultation with an Ethnic research specialist agency – Ethnic Focus - who helped design the recruitment sample and recommended appropriate moderators. The groups were conducted from 20 – 25 September 2006 in London, Leicester, Birmingham, Bradford, Cardiff and Glasgow. The groups lasted 1.5 hours.

A total of 12 focus group discussions were conducted as follows

Group 1	Black Africans – Christian 25-45, Mixed gender	Birmingham
Group 2	Caribbean 18-24, Mixed gender	
Group 3	White 16-18, Mixed gender	Bradford
Group 4	Muslim 18-24, Male	
Group 5	Indian( Non Muslim) 18-24, Mixed gender	Leicester
Group 6	Pakistani - Muslim 20-40, Female	
Group 7	White 19-24, Mixed gender	Glasgow
Group 8	Pakistani - Muslim 20-40, Male	
Group 9	White 19-24, Mixed gender	Cardiff
Group 10	Caribbean 25-45, Mixed gender	
Group 11	Black African - Christians 18-24, Mixed gender	London
Group 12	Indian ( Non Muslim) 25-45, Mixed gender	

## Annex 2

# Consumption Data

## Introduction

A2.1 This annex presents an analysis of trends in news consumption on television, radio and online. It is based on the data provided through the industry audience measurement systems - BARB for changes in television news viewing; RAJAR for developments in audiences to flagship radio news programmes; and Nielsen/NetRatings for the use of online news and information websites. It is worth noting some reservations in using analysis between different media:

- There are methodological differences between measurement systems, with variations in data collection methods and metrics employed;
- Substantial variations in news consumption depending on real-life local, national and (especially) international events mean that trend data on news viewing should be used with caution; one example is the increase in news viewing during the 2003 Iraq war);
- There maybe simultaneous media engagement, for example, using the internet while watching television or listening to the radio; and
- Seasonality of news consumption, as in the case of radio listening, which is higher during the winter.

## Summary – key trends

- Viewing of national news on the main terrestrial channels has followed a slow downward trend over the past decade; an average individual watched 16 per cent less in 2006 compared to 1994.
- The six years between 2001 and 2006 saw a 12 per cent decline in viewing of national news on the main terrestrials, from 103 hours to 91 hours per individual. However, 2001 viewing was unusually high due to the events of September 11; when compared to 2002, the drop is much lower, at 3 per cent.
- National news viewing on the main terrestrials has declined at a slower rate than total viewing: taken together, BBC One and Two, ITV1, Channel 4 and Five had an 18 per cent decline in viewing of all genres since 2001.
- ITV1 accounted for the largest share of the decline in national news viewing, dropping by 9 hours or 25 per cent. Viewing of national news on BBC One was broadly constant, at around 53 hours per individual, while BBC Two saw a decline of 1.4 hours, to just under 4 hours per individual in 2006.
- News viewing on Channel 4 remained at around 5 hours per individual over the six years. News on Five saw average viewing decline by almost an hour, to 3 hours per individual.
- Broadly speaking, the older the viewer the more national news she or he watches on the main terrestrials. Among adults, the 16-24 year olds had the lowest

consumption, at 33 hours per individual, in 2006, while those aged 65 or over watched almost six times more.

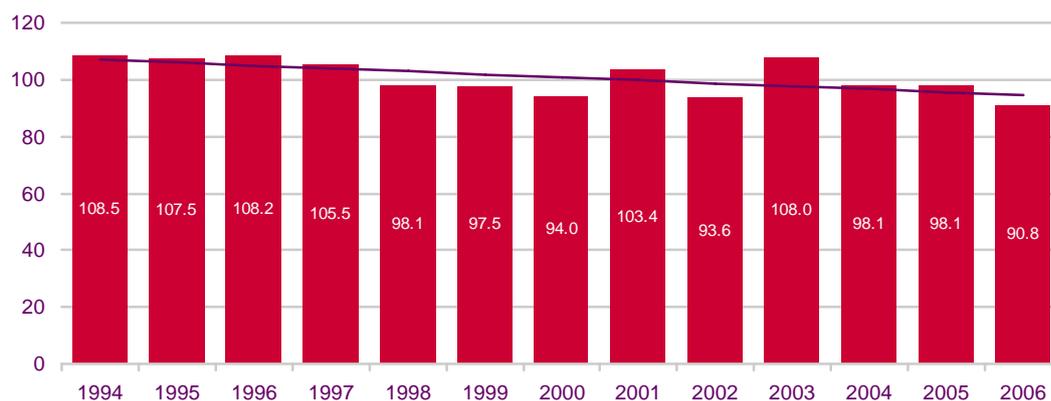
- Viewing of national news on the five terrestrial channels is much lower in multi-channel homes, at 77 hours per individual in 2006, compared to analogue homes with 135 hours.
- Around 15 per cent of all news viewing (excluding regional news) in multi-channel homes goes to channels other than the five main terrestrials. Average audiences for the two main continuous news providers - Sky News and BBC News 24 - increased by over 90 per cent, from 49,000 viewers in 2001 to 94,000 in 2006.
- The total share of viewing commanded by both ITV and BBC for their main evening regional news programmes has declined over the past six years: ITV was down by 5 percentage points to 20 per cent, and BBC down by 4 percentage points, to 28 per cent.
- There has been little change in radio news listening over the past five years. Because most stations provide regular updates on at least an hourly basis, almost all listeners are exposed to some radio news. Total radio reach has stayed stable at around 90 per cent over the past five years, while total listening hours declined slightly (from 4.7 to 4.6 million). In the third quarter of 2006, an average listener tuned in for 21 hours per week.
- Within total listening, the share of hours taken up by BBC services had increased to 54 per cent in the third quarter of 2006 from 52 per cent in the same quarter of 2001. There has been a corresponding decline in commercial radio share. Within commercial radio, local services saw a 5 percentage point decline in share of listening over the five years, to 32.6 per cent.
- There has been little change in share, reach and average listening to flagship radio news programmes on the BBC. Programmes such as *Today*, *The World at One* etc on Radio 4 and *Breakfast* on Five Live are more appealing to older audiences, while reach among 16-24 year olds remains marginal.
- Around 30 per cent of the UK population go online for some news. In September 2006, nearly 18 million people accessed 'news and information' websites – a 54 per cent increase since 2003. Within this total, 12 million visited a more narrowly defined category of 'current events and global news' websites.
- Around two-thirds of active internet users visited 'news and information' websites in September 2006, and 46 per cent accessed 'current events and global news' sites.
- On average, online news users spent around 40 minutes surfing news and information websites, with half an hour dedicated to 'current news and global events' category.
- BBC News website is by far the most popular among online news providers, with 5.8 million unique visitors in September 2006. Guardian Unlimited was second, with 2 million visitors, followed by Yahoo! News with 1.9 million.

## 1. Television

A2.2 Viewing of national news on the main terrestrial channels has followed a slow downward trend over the past decade. While viewing levels tend to vary heavily depending on national and international events (as can be seen with 2001 and 2003 peaks which coincided with September 11 and the Iraq war respectively), national news on the five terrestrials in 2006 was at its lowest since 1994, at 91 hours per individual.

**Fig A2.1 Viewing of national news on PSB channels**

Hours per individual (4+ years old)



Source: BARB, all homes

**Fig A2.2 Viewing of national news on the main terrestrial channels**

Hours per individual (4+ years old)



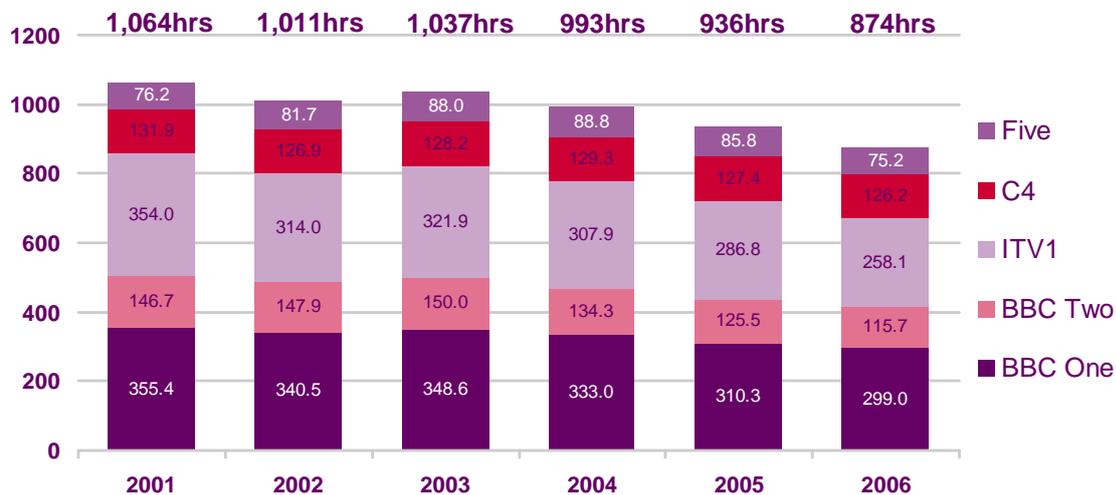
Source: BARB, all homes

A2.3 This section focuses on consumption trends between 2001 and 2006; during this period, national news viewing on the main terrestrials dropped by 12 per cent (Figure A2.1). However, as noted above, 2001 was an unusually high viewing year – when compared to 2002, the drop seen in 2006 is much lower, at 3 hours per individual or 3 per cent.

A2.4 National news viewing has outperformed other genres on the main terrestrials: taken together, BBC One and Two, ITV1, Channel 4 and Five saw an 18 per cent decline in total viewing (Figure A2.3) compared with the 12 per cent decline in national news viewing between 2001 and 2006.

**Fig A2.3 Viewing of the main terrestrial channels in all homes (all genres)**

Hours per individual (4+ years old)



Source: BARB, all homes

A2.5 National news viewing on ITV1 accounted for the largest share of the decline between 2001 and 2006, dropping by 9 hours or 25 per cent. Some of this may be due to public confusion over the timing of the late evening news programme which was re-scheduled several times during the period. The decline in news viewing on ITV1 was broadly in line with that of the total viewing of the channel, which dropped by 27 per cent over the period, to 258 hours.

A2.6 National news viewing on BBC One was broadly constant, at around 53 hours per individual, despite the overall 16 per cent drop in viewing of the channel over the six years, to 299 hours. The levels of viewing on BBC Two varied over the period, with a drop to 3.9 hours in 2006 – 26 per cent below the 2001 level. The overall viewing of the channel went down by 21 per cent over the period.

A2.7 News viewing on Channel 4 remained at around 5 hours per individual, with a slight decline in 2006. Overall viewing has also stayed broadly constant for the channel, at around 130 hours per year. Average viewing of Five News has also declined, by almost an hour (23 per cent), to 3 hours in 2006, while overall viewing of the channel was broadly level over the six years.

A2.8 ABC1 viewers accounted for the majority of the decline in national news viewing on the main terrestrial channels between 2001 and 2006, with a 21-hour (21 per cent) drop, to just under 80 hours. This echoed the overall decline in ABC1's viewing of the main terrestrials of 23 per cent over the period (from 945 hours to 724 hours per ABC1 individual).

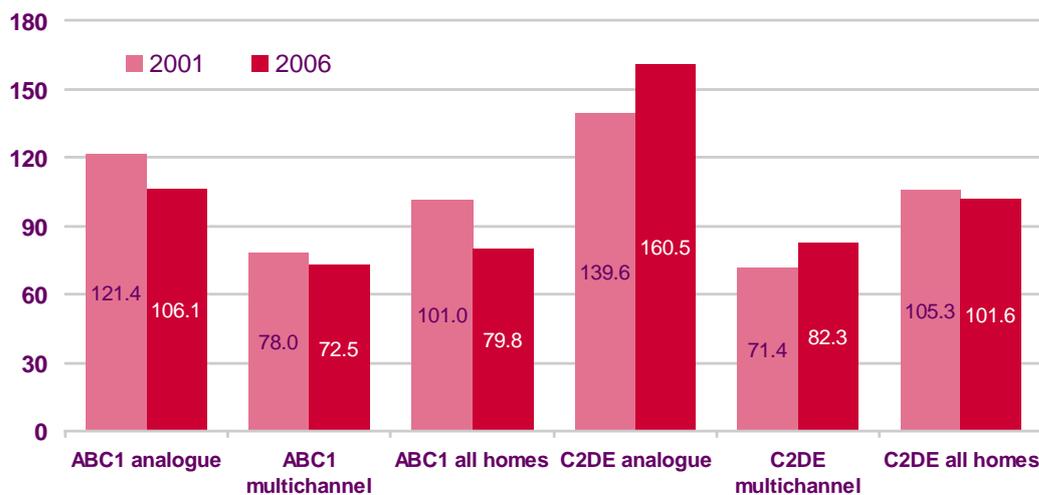
A2.9 While average national news viewing levels dropped among ABC1 individuals in both multi-channel and analogue terrestrial (ATT) households, the decline was especially pronounced among analogue terrestrial ABC1 viewers.

A2.10 In contrast, separate figures for average viewing of national news on the five main channels have increased in both analogue terrestrial and multi-channel C2DE households. However, the combined figure shows a decline by around 4 per cent, to 101.6 hours per individual. This apparent contradiction is a quirk caused by the high volume of migration to multi-channel television (from 46 per cent of all C2DE viewers to over 70 per cent over the period).

A2.11 This slight reduction in news viewing was considerably below the overall drop in viewing of the five channels among this group, which went down by 13 per cent over the period (from 1,168 to 1,021 hours per individual).

**Fig A2.4 Viewing of news on the main terrestrial channels by social group**

Hours per individual (4+ years old)



Source: BARB

A2.12 In terms of age differences, the older the viewers the more national news they watch on the main terrestrial channels (Figure A2.5). 16-24 year olds have the lowest average viewing, at 33 hours, down by 33 per cent since 2001 – the highest relative decline among all age groups. Moreover, 16-24 year olds were the only group which did not exceed the 2001 average viewing levels during the 2003 peak.

**Fig A2.5 National news viewing on the main terrestrial channels by age**

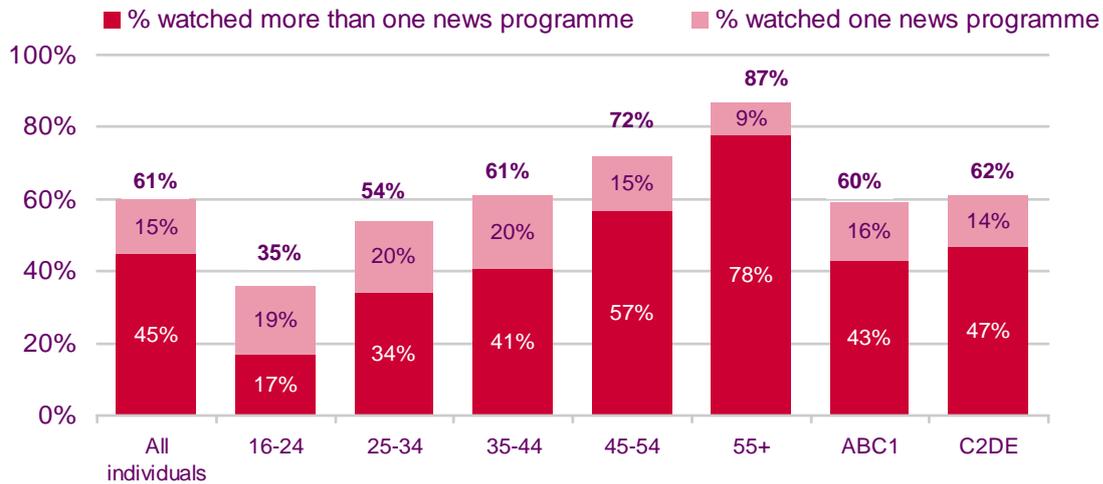
Hours per year

Source: BARB



A2.13 Similarly, multiple news viewing varies significantly by age: while 45 per cent of all individuals watched more than one programme on terrestrial channels during a sample week in October 2006, this figure was much higher for adults over 55 years old, at 78 per cent (Figure A2.6). In contrast, 19 per cent of 16-24 year olds (over half of all news viewers in this age group) confined themselves to only one news programme.

**Fig A2.6 Weekly reach of national news programmes on terrestrial channels**



Source: BARB

Note: analysis for week commencing 10/10/2006; reach is based on 15 mins consecutive viewing

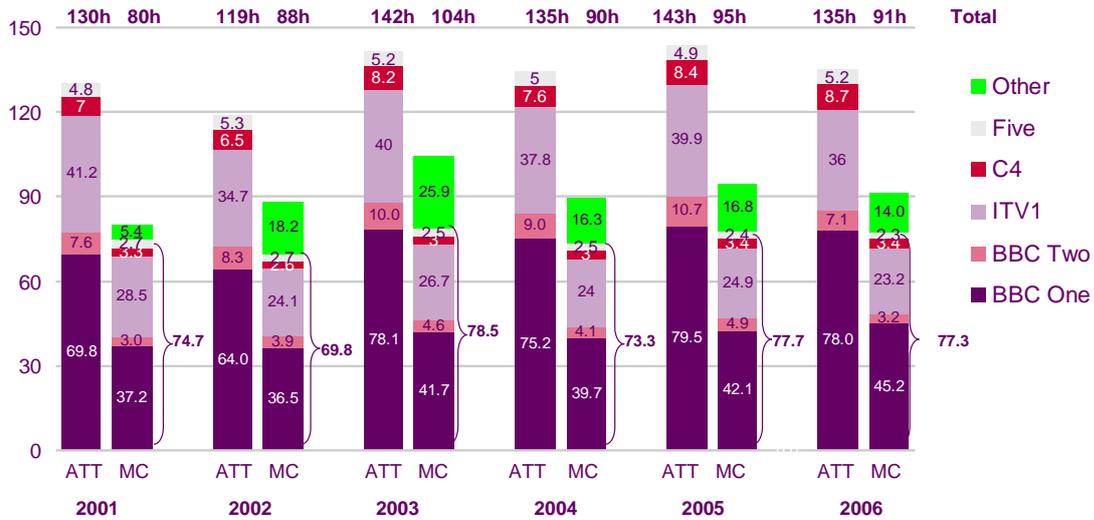
A2.14 Viewing of national news on the main terrestrials was much lower among individuals in multi-channel homes, at around 77 hours in 2006, compared to individuals with analogue terrestrial TV only, who watched 135 hours (Fig A2.7).

A2.15 When analysed separately, viewing of national news on the main terrestrial channels increased for both ATT and multi-channel viewers between 2001 and 2006, by 4 per cent and 3 per cent respectively. However, because multi-channel homes form a growing proportion of all TV households (from around 47 per cent in 2001 to 70 per cent in 2006 according to BARB) and because multi-channel viewers consume less news on the main terrestrials, this results in an overall decline in viewing across all households.

A2.16 In 2006, around 15 per cent of national news viewing in multi-channel homes was accounted for by channels other than the main terrestrials. Viewing on 'Other' channels mostly consists of 24-hour news channel viewing: in 2006, 13.5 hours were accounted for by BBC News 24 and Sky News, and around 0.5 hours went to non-UK originated news channels (such as Fox and foreign language channels) and digital channels (such as BBC Three and More4)

**Fig A2.7 National news viewing in analogue terrestrial and multi-channel homes**

Hours per individual



Source: BARB

Note: excludes regional news on analogue terrestrial channels; 2001 data for 'other' channels is not directly comparable to following years due to changes in BARB coding.

A2.17 Figure A2.8 below shows viewing of national news in the UK, including viewing on 24-hour news channels averaged across all households (year 2001 is not included in this chart as data for 24-hour news channels is not comparable to following years due to BARB methodology changes). It shows that for the past five years around one in ten hours of news watched in the UK went to continuous news channels.

**Fig A2.8 National news viewing in all homes**

Hours per individual



Source: BARB

Note: 24-hour channel viewing is for BBC News 24, Sky News and ITV News channel (up to its closure in 2005) combined; viewing is averaged across all TV households.

A2.18 The decline in national news viewing hours on the main terrestrial channels is reflected in trends within the share of viewing commanded by key evening news programmes on ITV1 and BBC One (Figure A2.9). BBC One's *Six O'Clock News*' share dropped by 8 percentage points between 2001 and 2006, while its late evening counterpart (*Ten O'Clock News*) saw its share of viewing decline by 3

percentage points. The corresponding declines for ITV early and late evening news were 6 and 9 percentage points.

A2.19 Channel 4 evening news share stayed largely stable, at around 5 per cent over the five years, while Five evening news share grew marginally to around 3 per cent in 2006.

**Fig A2.9 Share of viewing to main news programmes**

Share of all individuals viewing ( )



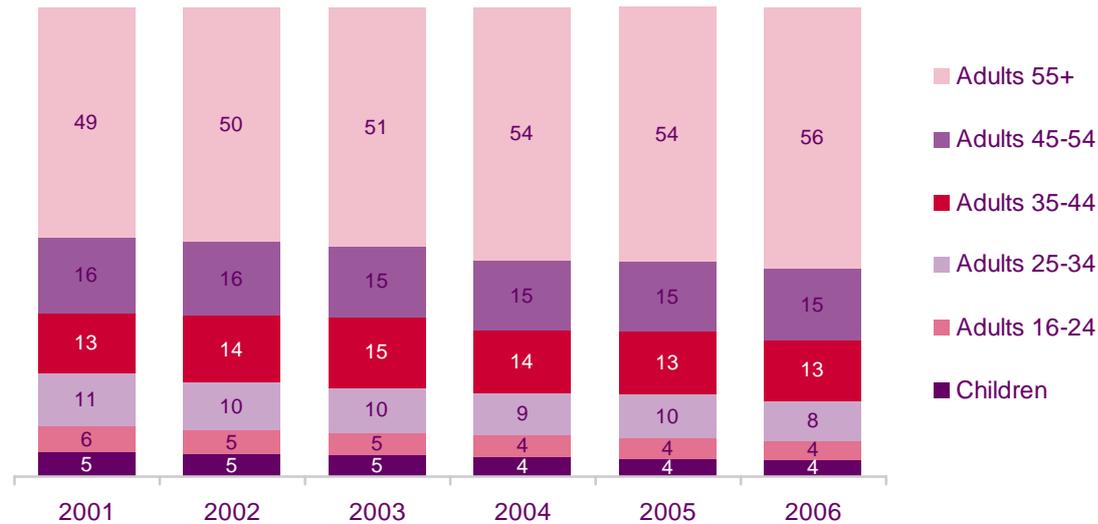
Source: BARB

Note: Share figures are not directly comparable, as programmes are shown at different times, and the underlying absolute audiences are different throughout the day.

A2.20 The age profile of audiences of national news on the main terrestrial channels is changing. The proportion of adults aged 55 or over grew from under half in 2001 to 56 per cent in 2006, while younger age groups saw corresponding declines in their share of audience (Figure A2.10).

**Fig A2.10 2001-2006 comparative profiles for news programme audiences**

% of audience



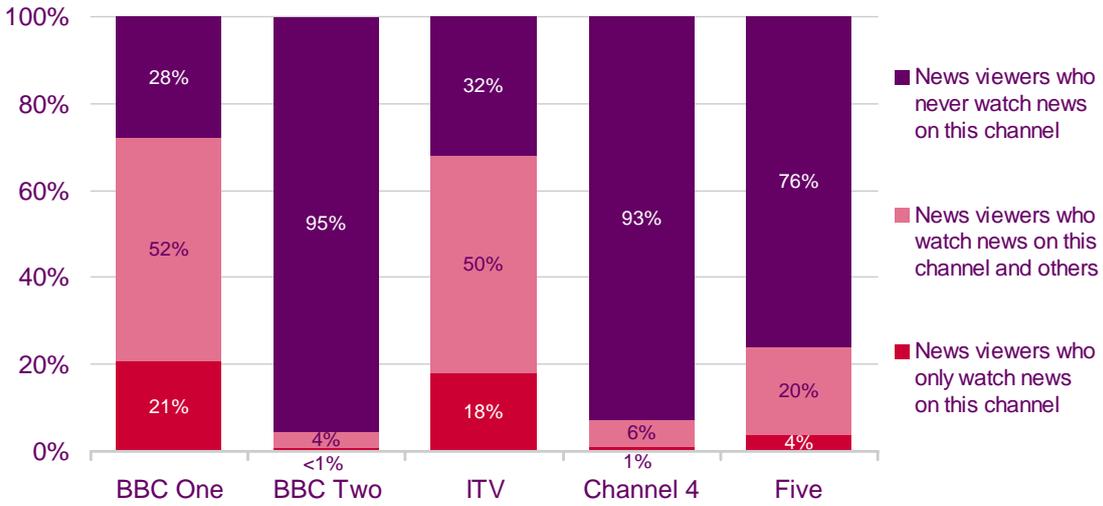
Source: BARB

A2.21 While increase in the proportion of older audiences has been evident across the board, there are significant differences in audience composition between channels (Figure A2.11). Audiences of BBC1's *Six O'Clock News* have the highest proportion



**Fig A2.12 Unique viewing of news by channel, October 2006**

% of all news viewers

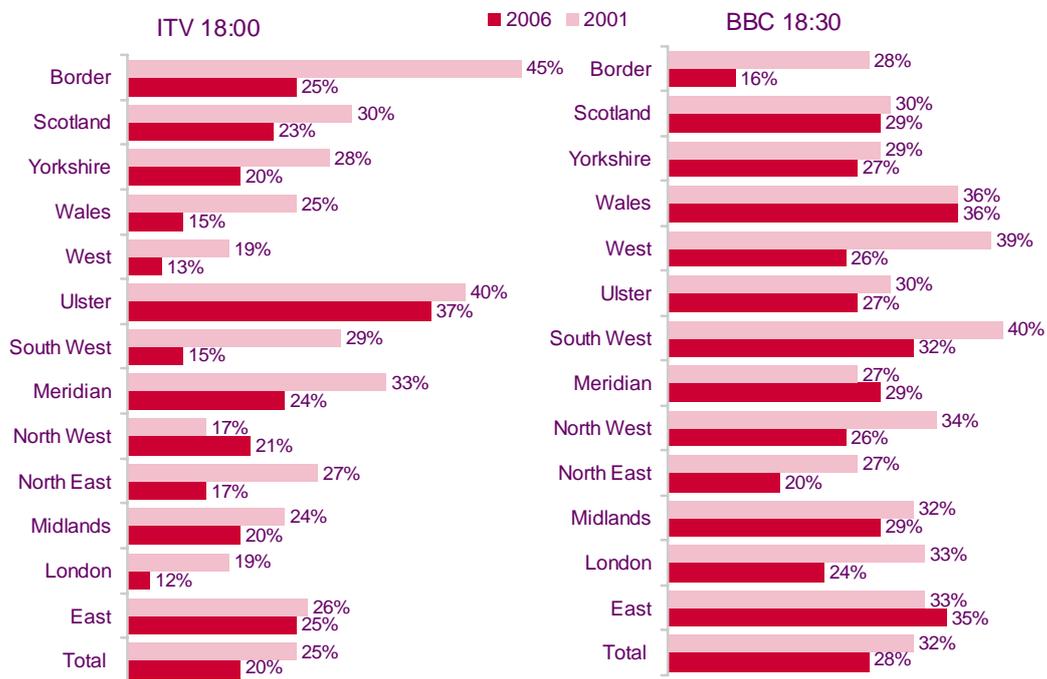


Source: BARB

Note: Based on those viewing at least 75% of a broadcast

**Fig A2.13 Share of viewing for regional news programmes**

Share of viewing %



Source: BARB

Note: The chart uses regions as defined for ITV hence the numbers are not directly comparable between the two providers.

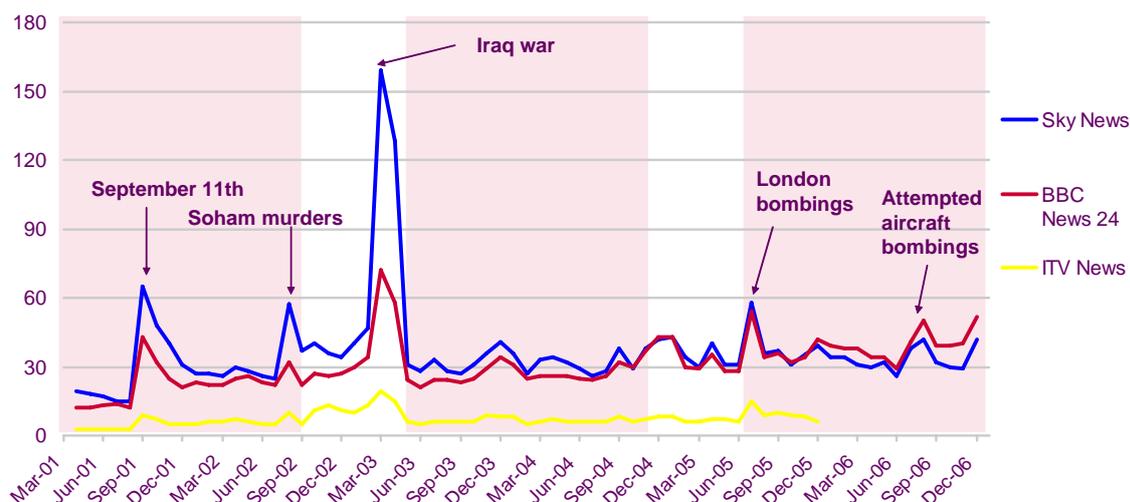
## Audiences for 24-hour news channels

A2.25 Audiences of the 24-hour news channels have increased rapidly over the past six years. The combined average audiences for the main continuous news providers grew by over 90 per cent, from 57,000 viewers in December 2001 to 94,000 in 2006. It is worth noting, however, that the December 2006 audience was unusually high due to several major international and national news stories.

A2.26 As Figure A2.14 shows, Sky News was in the lead in terms of share of viewing until 2005, when BBC News 24 overtook it following the closure of ITV News channel in December 2005. As with the news on the main PSB channels, there was a substantial increase in viewing of 24-hour news during the build up to the Iraq war and subsequent events in 2003. Sky News was clearly the leader, with a three-fold increase in audience during March of that year. BBC News 24 followed with a 2-fold increase, while the increase in the ITV News channel audience was lower.

**Fig A2.14 Audiences of 24-hour news channels**

Audience (thousands)

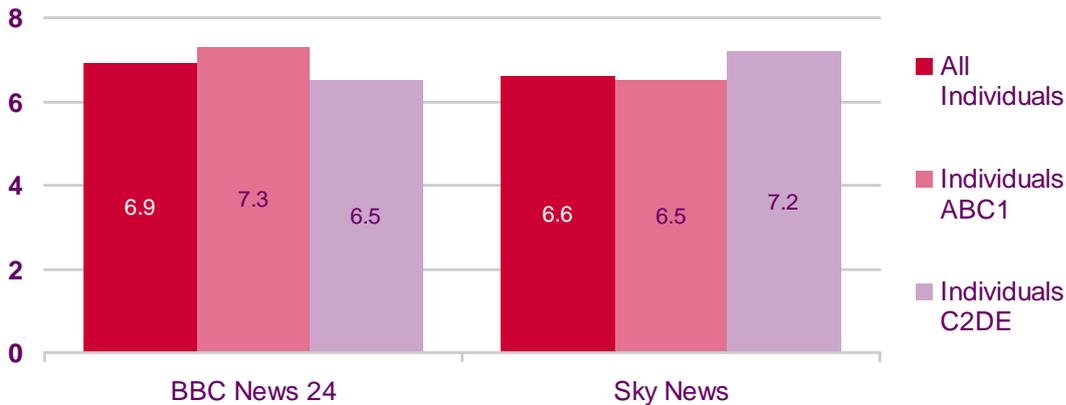


Source: BARB

A2.27 The two leading providers, BBC News 24 and Sky News together attracted 13.5 hours of news viewing per individual in multi-channel homes in 2006. Viewing of BBC News 24 stood at just under seven hours per individual. Viewing was higher among the ABC1 group, at 7.3 hours. Sky News attracted 6.6 hours per individual, and was more popular with C2DEs who watched 7.2 hours in 2006.

**Fig A2.15 2006 viewing of 24-hour news channels**

Hours per individual

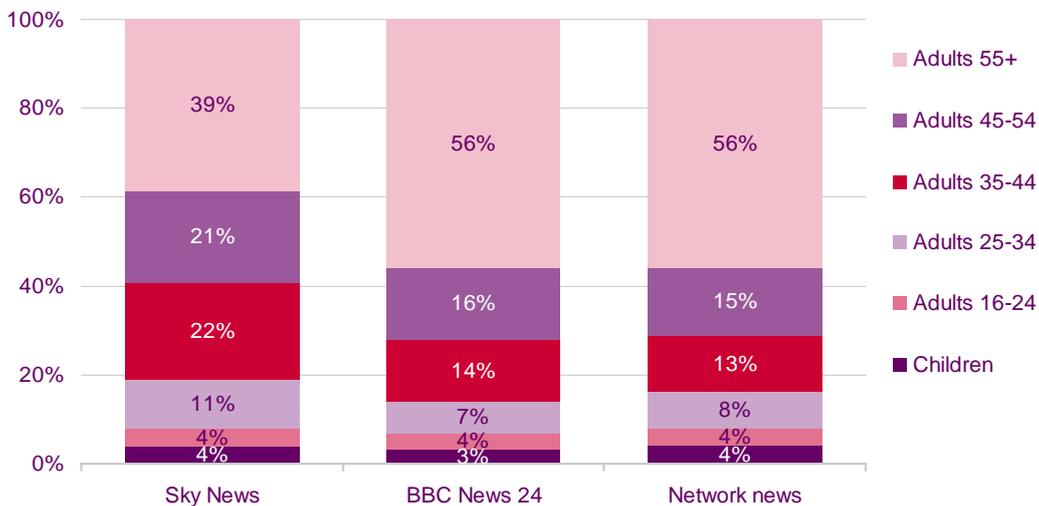


Source: BARB, multi-channel homes

**A2.28** An analysis of the age profile of thematic news channels’ audiences reveals some variation between them (Figure A2.16). Sky News attracts a younger audience and a lower percentage of its audience in the 55+ age group than BBC News. The profile of BBC News 24 viewers was not dissimilar to that of national news viewers on the main terrestrial channels, with well over half of its audience aged 55 or over, while 16-34 year olds comprised only 11 per cent of its audience, compared to Sky News’ 15 per cent.

**A2.16 2006 comparative age profiles for Sky News and BBC News 24**

% of audience



Source: BARB

Note: national terrestrial news profile is for all individuals, including those in households with analogue –only TV

## 2. Radio

**A2.29** Analysis of developments in radio news consumption is based on data provided by the industry measurement system, RAJAR. As regular news updates feature in most stations’ schedules, most radio listeners are exposed to news on at least an

hourly basis. For this reason, the analysis has looked at the developments in reach and share of radio programming by sector over the past five years.

A2.30 In addition, the trends in share and reach of the flagship radio news broadcasts on the BBC, focusing on specific time-slots occupied by the programmes have been examined. These included *Today*, *The World at One* and the 1800 News on Radio 4; as well as the 0800 - 0815 slot on the *Breakfast* programme on Five Live.

### A2.17 Share of radio listening by sector

% of listening hours

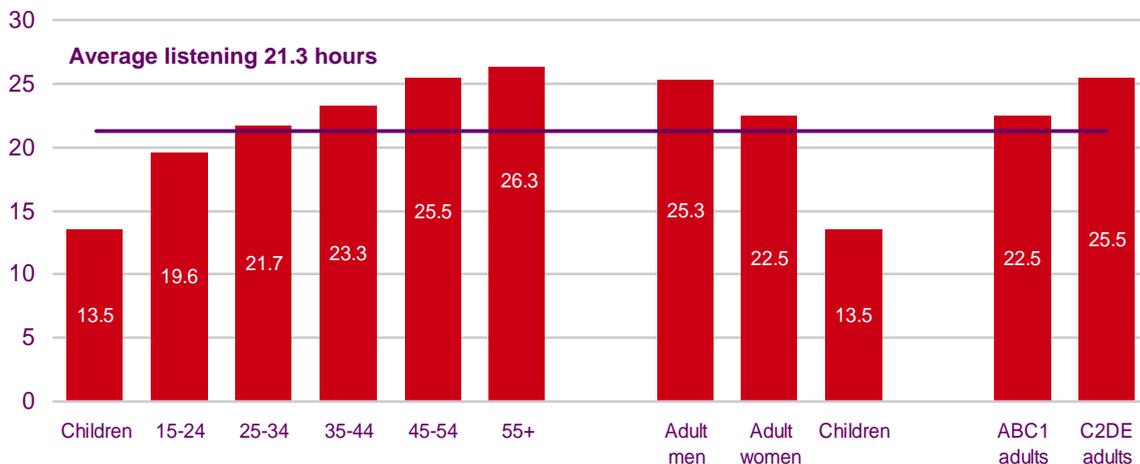


Source: RAJAR

A2.31 Overall, radio has retained its audience over the past five years, despite the ever-increasing array of alternative media choices, such as multi-channel television and the internet. Weekly reach of radio services remained stable, at around 90 per cent, while total hours of listening in the UK had declined very marginally, from 4.7m hours in 2001 to 4.6 hours in 2005. Within this total, the share of hours taken up by BBC services has increased from around 52 per cent in 2001 to 54 per cent in 2006 while commercial share of listening has seen a corresponding decline (Figure A2.17). Local commercial radio was particularly affected by this trend, with a six percentage point drop over the period.

### A2.18 Average listening hours, Q3 2006

Hours per week



Source: RAJAR

A2.32 On average, radio listeners tune in for 21 hours a week, an equivalent of around three hours a day (Figure A2.18). Average listening rises with age – in the third quarter of 2006, listeners aged 55 or over listened to nearly seven hours more a week than did the 16-24 year olds. Men are higher listeners than women, and C2DEs listen to more radio than ABC1 group adults.

A2.33 There are significant variations in the age profiles of different types of radio stations (Figure A2.19). While those aged 55 or over make up nearly half of BBC radio listening (45 per cent), the figure is much lower for national commercial radio, at around a third, although older listeners are still the dominant age group. The split of hours between age groups is more equal for local commercial radio services, which attract the highest share of 15-24 year olds, with 17 per cent, in contrast to only 9 per cent for the BBC.

**Fig A2.19 Profile of audience by age for different station types, 2005**

Proportion of hours



Source: RAJAR

A2.34 The analysis of listening to flagship radio programmes over the past five years indicates that there has been little change in share, reach and average listening. These programmes remain clearly more appealing to older audiences, while reach among 16-24 year olds remains marginal – partly a reflection of a generally much lower share of younger adults among BBC listeners. Another clear trend is that, like overall radio listening, listening to flagship news programmes is subject to seasonal variations, with lower listening in the summer quarters.

A2.35 As Figure A2.20 below shows, weekly reach for the *Today* programme during the Mon-Fri 0630 – 0900 slot remained at around 14 per cent over the last five years showing a very slight downward trend over the past two years. Similarly, the share of listening hours commanded by the programme has stayed largely stable, at around 15 per cent, but with a slight decline in mid-2005, to 14 per cent.

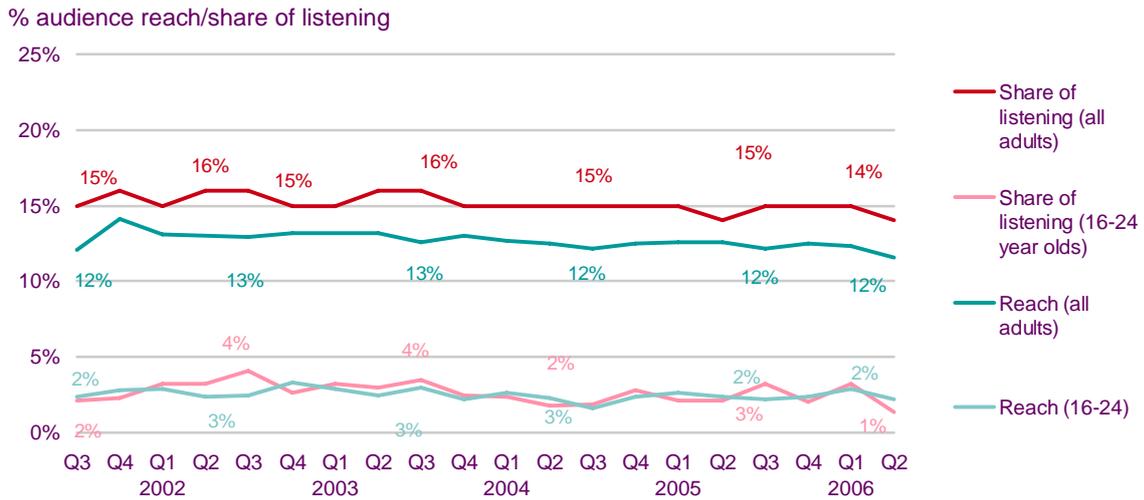
A2.36 Looking at broad developments in reach and share of listening, there is a clear contrast between the youngest and the oldest age groups. The reach and share among 16-24 year olds was only around 2-3 per cent, with share of listening dropping to 1 per cent in the second quarter of 2006.

A2.37 Share of listening commanded by the *Today* programme was much higher among the 65+ age group, at around 25 per cent during the survey period, and it reached around 12 per cent of listeners in this age group. The average reach for all radio

during the same slot over the five years stood at around 74 per cent of adults, while it was lower for 16-24 year-olds (at around 67 per cent) and the 65+ age group (at around 68 per cent).

A2.38 Average weekly hours among those listening the *Today* programme has remained stable during the period, at around 4.5 hours for all age groups; for 16-24 year old listeners it stood at around three hours, while those over 65 tuned in for more than five hours a week.

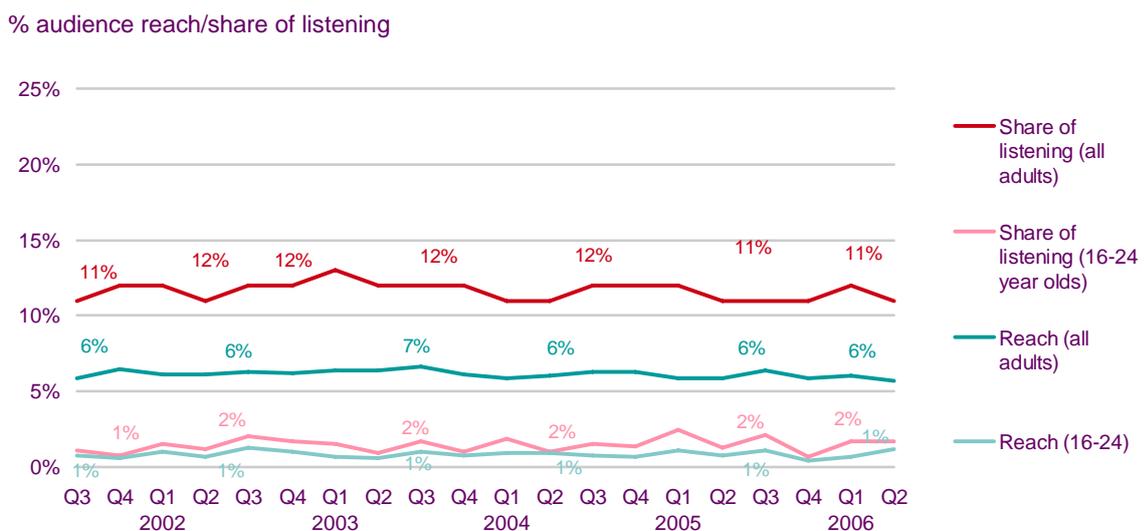
**Fig A2.20 Share and reach of Radio 4 Today programme**



Source: RAJAR  
 Note: reach and share for Radio 4 Mon-Fri 06.30 – 09.00 slot

A2.39 Similarly, listening to *The World at One* on Radio 4 remained stable throughout the period, with share of hours varying between 11 and 12 per cent, reaching around 6 per cent of adults. The share of listening hours among the 16-24 year olds was again much lower, at around 1 to 2 per cent with reach of just below 1 per cent.

**A2.21 Share and reach of Radio 4 The World at One**



Source: RAJAR  
 Note: reach and share for Radio 4 Mon-Fri 13.00 – 13.30 slot

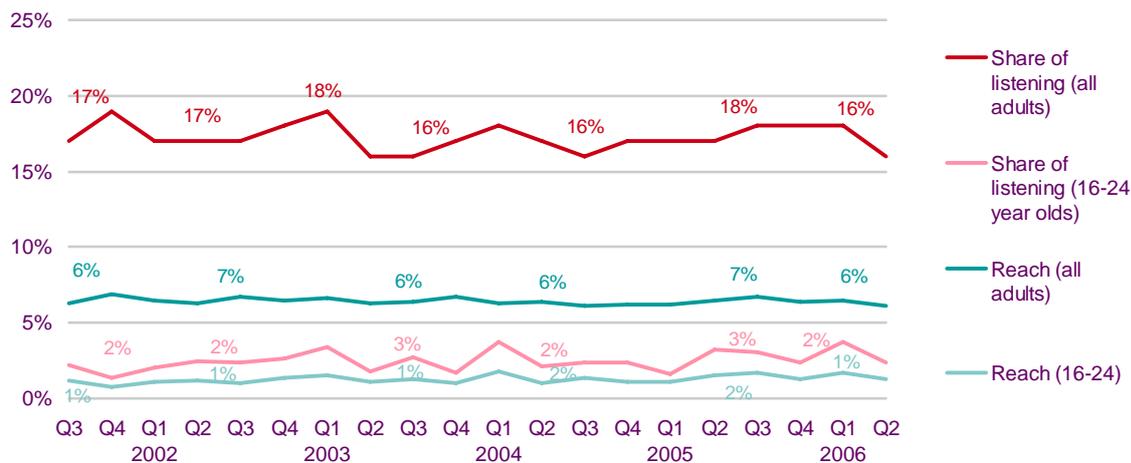
A2.40 The share of listening hours was again much higher for the 65+ age group, at around 25 per cent, with high reach of around 12 per cent of population in this age

group. The overall radio reach during the slot occupied by *The World at One* in 2005 was 44 per cent among all age groups, 42 per cent among 16-24 year olds and 43 per cent for the 65+ age group.

- A2.41 The differences between age groups persisted in average listening to the programme, with all adults listening to 1 hour a week in the second quarter of 2006, while the youngest age group listened to around 40 minutes, and adults over 65 years old listened to 1.1 hours.
- A2.42 The half hour 1800 news bulletin on Radio 4 attracts around 17 per cent of listening hours, with an average weekly reach of around 6.5 per cent of adults. Its share of listening among the youngest age group varied between 2 and 3 per cent, and it attracted little more than 1 per cent of the population aged 16-24; although that is a slight increase in both reach and share among this age group over the period. Among the 65+ age group, the bulletin attracted a third of all listening hours and had a reach of around 9 per cent.
- A2.43 Average listening to the bulletin stood unchanged, at one hour per week, throughout the period analysed. The youngest age group listened to around 45 minutes a week, while listeners aged over 65 enjoyed an average of 66 minutes a week.

### A2.22 Share and reach of 6 pm News on Radio 4

% audience reach/share of listening



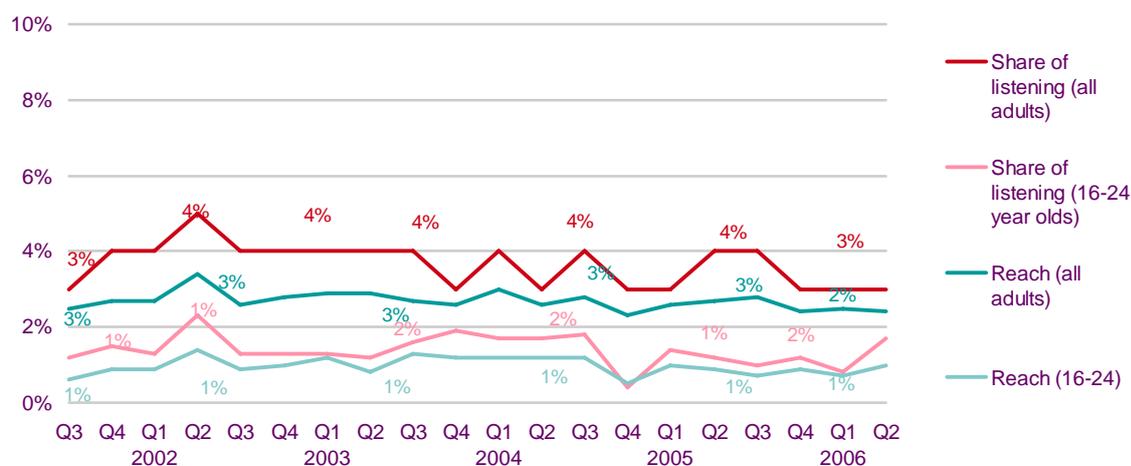
Source: RAJAR

Note: reach and share for Radio 4 Mon-Fri 18.00 – 18.30 slot

- A2.44 The 0800 – 0815 slot on the Five Live *Breakfast* show had a stable share of 3-4 per cent between 2001 and 2005, and it reached around 3 per cent of adults during the period. Again, share (1.5 per cent) and reach (1 per cent) were lower among 16-24 year olds, and much higher among adults aged 65 or over, with 3 per cent and 2.4 per cent respectively.
- A2.45 Average listening remained stable at around 40 minutes per week for all age groups, half an hour for 16-24 year olds and more than twice that among the 65+ age group, of over an hour.

## A2.23 Share and reach of Five Live Breakfast, 8-8.15 am slot

% audience reach/share of listening



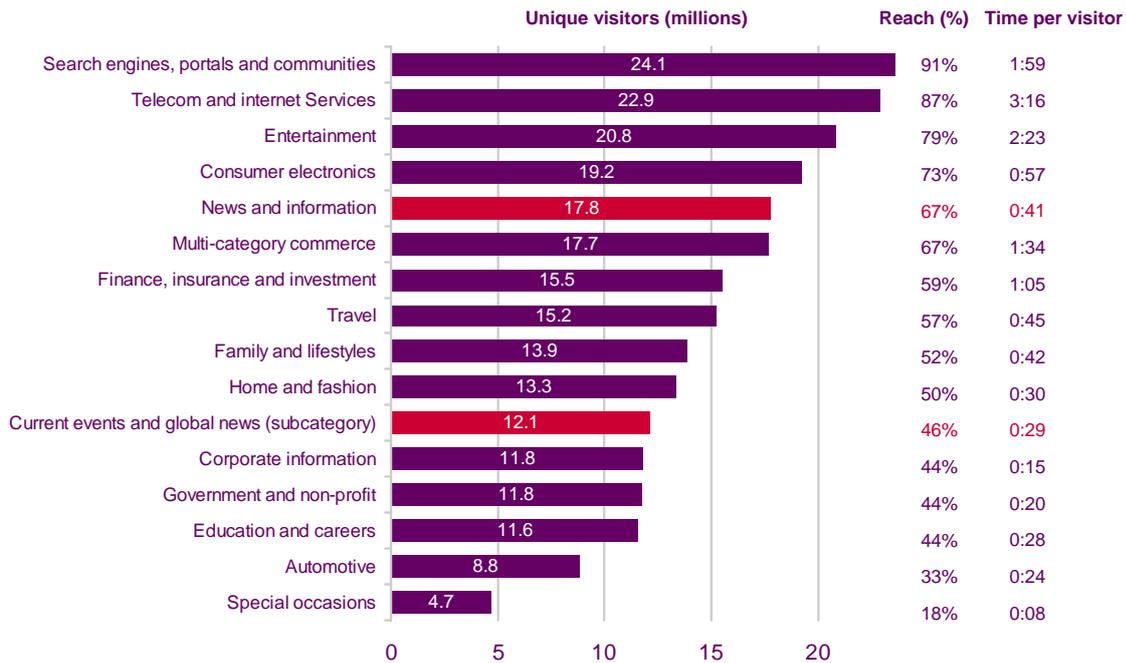
Source: RAJAR

Note: reach and share for Five Live Mon-Fri 08.00 – 8.15 slot

## 3. Online news

- A2.46 The past few years have seen a big increase in the number of people going online for news, albeit from a low base figure. In September 2006, websites classified as 'news and information' by Nielsen//NetRatings attracted almost 18 million unique visitors, representing 30 per cent of the UK population and a 54 per cent increase since September 2003. Within the 'news and information' category, more than 12 million people visited websites classified in the 'current events and global news' subcategory - an 82 per cent increase over three years.
- A2.47 The growth has not only been in absolute numbers of people using these sites, but also in reach (the share of online audiences using news websites): more than two-thirds of internet users visited news and information websites in September 2006, up from 52 per cent three years ago. The increase in reach of 'current events and global news' sites was even more pronounced, growing from 30 per cent in September 2003 to 46 per cent in September 2006.
- A2.48 Figure A2.24 below shows that 'news and information' is the fifth most visited category online (out of 15), with an audience below that of 'entertainment' and 'commerce' but higher than for 'travel' and 'home and fashion' categories.
- A2.49 In September 2006, an average visitor spent just over 40 minutes using news and information sites (within which 29 minutes were spent on 'current events and global news' sites). Time spent on news and information was nearly five times lower than for 'telecoms and internet services' sites, and 3.5 times lower than time spent on entertainment sites, but well above the averages for home- and fashion- related pages and government/non-profit websites.

**Fig A2.24 Internet audiences by website category, September 2006**



Source: Nielsen//NetRatings

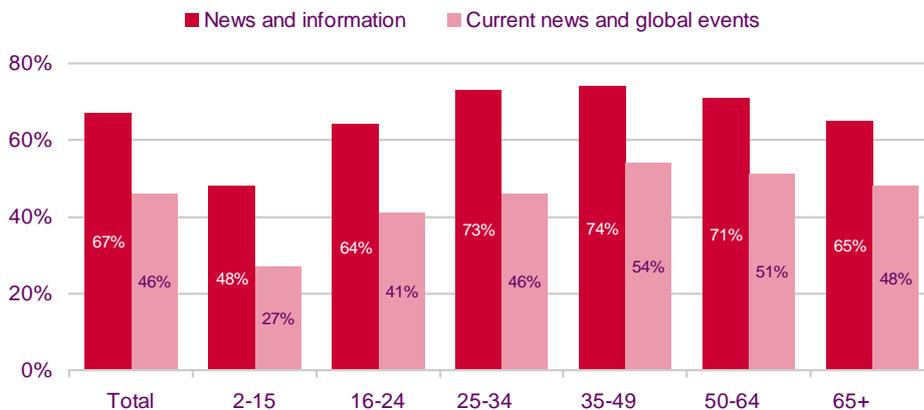
Note: 'Current events and global news' is a sub-category within the News and information category which also includes websites classified as 'directories and local guides', 'multi-category news and information', 'research tools', 'special interest news' and 'weather'.

Note: Reach is defined as the proportion of internet users who have used the internet in the last month at home or at work and excludes access at other places.

**A2.50** Use of news websites is broadly similar among the different adult age groups with around seven in ten active internet users visiting the generic 'news and information' category sites, and around half using 'current news and global events'. Take-up is much lower among children, with less than half visiting news and information websites, and just over a quarter using 'current news and global events' sites.

**A2.25 Use of news websites by gender and age group**

% of active internet users in September 2006



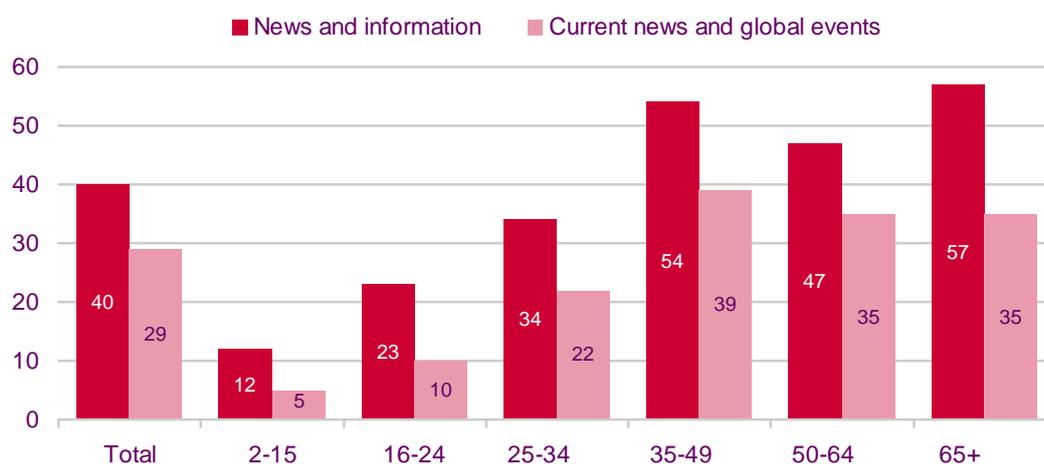
Source: Nielsen//NetRatings

Note: Active internet users are defined as those who used the internet in the last month at home or at work and excludes access at other places.

A2.51 Those aged 65 or over are the highest users of news in terms of average time spent on websites, with nearly an hour a month for ‘news and information’ websites. They are followed by 35-49 year olds, with 54 minutes, who also show the highest use of the narrower ‘current news and global events’ subcategory, at 39 minutes. 16-24 year olds spend the least time browsing either category, with 23 and 10 minutes respectively.

### A2.26 Time spent per month using news websites by age (September 2006)

Minutes of use



Source: Nielsen//NetRatings

Note: Average time spent is for home and work use and excludes internet access at other places

A2.52 It is important to note, however, that the analysis does not include access at places other than home or work, such as libraries and universities, so it may understate time average time spent among the 16-24 age group as this age group includes a large share of students.

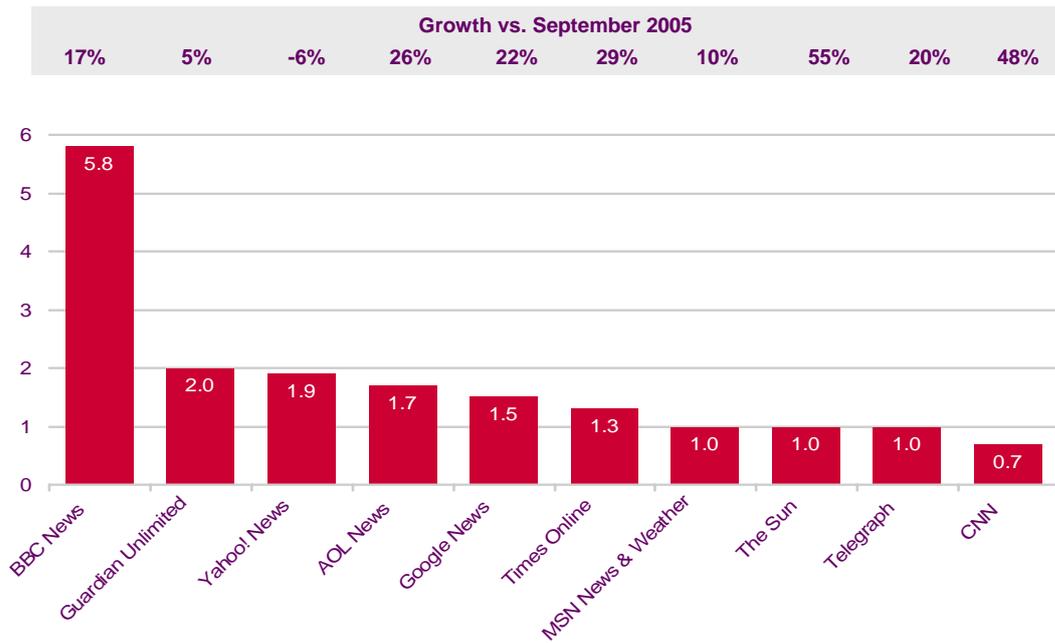
A2.53 There is some indication of a gender gap in the use of online news, with males slightly more likely to visit news websites, and also to spend more time using them. In September 2006, 70 per cent of male internet users accessed news and information websites, compared to 65 per cent of female users.

A2.54 The difference was similar for the current events and global news category (48 per cent and 43 per cent respectively). Males also spent nearly 30 per cent more time on average using news and information websites, at 45 minutes compared to 35 minutes for female users. Interestingly, time spent using ‘current events and global news’ websites was similar for both genders, at around 29 minutes, suggesting little difference in the level of engagement by gender among those who use the internet for political and international news.

A2.55 As Figure A2.27 below shows, the major providers of online news come from a diverse mix of institutional backgrounds, with two major broadcasters and four each of leading new media brands and established newspapers.

A2.56 The BBC News website is by far the most popular, with almost 6 million unique visitors in September 2006 – nearly three times more than the second most popular website, Guardian Unlimited, with 2 million. Yahoo! News was third, with 1.9 million visitors.

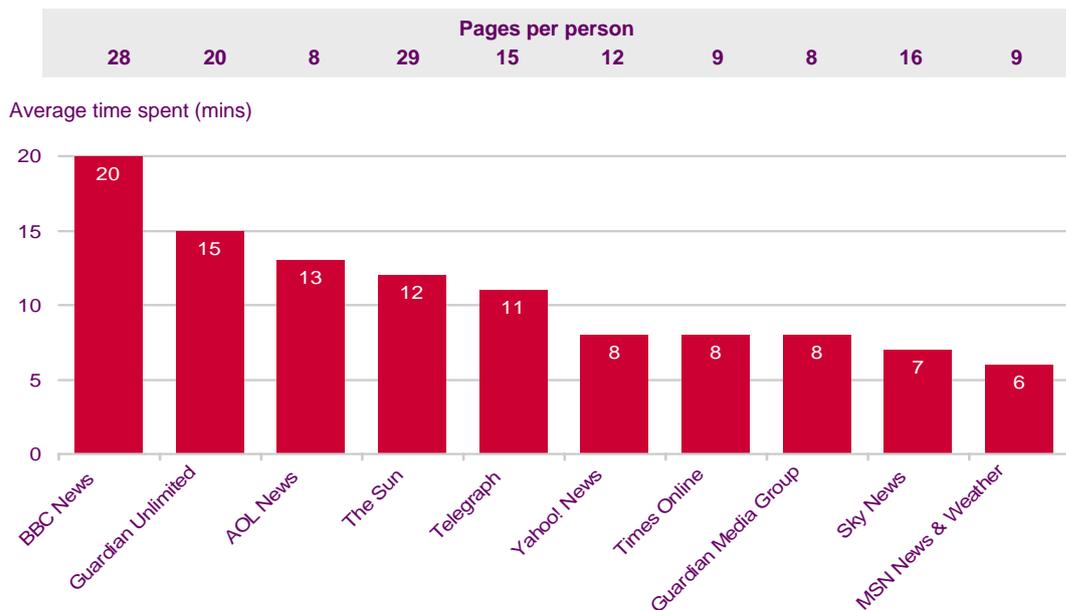
**Fug A2.27 Top ten news websites by unique visitors, September 2006**



Source: Nielsen//NetRatings

A2.57 While BBC’s online news presence clearly appeals to the largest number of UK internet users, it is not the fastest growing among the top ten; the Sun experienced a 55 per cent increase in its online audience since September 2005, and AOL News, Times Online and Google news also experienced strong growth over the past year. Yahoo News was the only site among the top ten with a marginally lower audience in September 2006 compared to a year ago.

**Fig A2.28 Top ten news websites by average time spent, September 2006**



Source: Nielsen//NetRatings

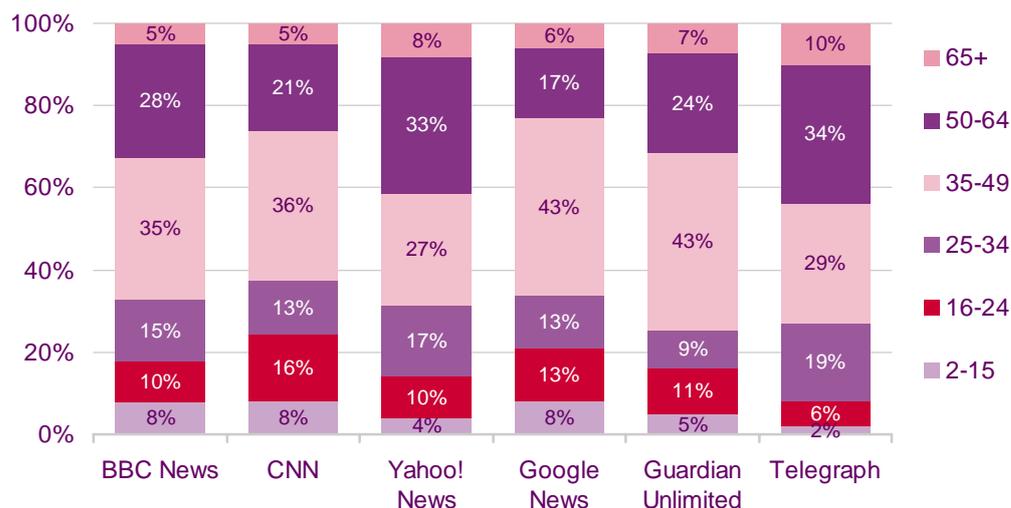
A2.58 While the BBC News website is also the leader in terms of time spent by an average visitor (20 minutes in September 2006), the order was somewhat different

for the rest. Guardian Unlimited was second, with visitors spending 15 minutes on the site in September 2006, followed by AOL news, with 13 minutes.

A2.59 In September 2006, The Sun’s website was the most extensively used in terms of the average number of pages viewed (at 29) while BBC news site visitors browsed 28 pages. AOL news and Guardian Media Group’s sites had the lowest average number of pages browsed, at 8 per person.

**Fig A2.29 Composition of audiences to major news websites**

*% of visitors in September 2006*



*Source: Nielsen//NetRatings*

A2.60 There are clear differences between online news providers in terms of audience composition. Figure A2.29 above depicts the percentage of users of some of the major news websites by age. CNN attracts the highest share of users under 24 years old, at 24 per cent; this contrasts with the Telegraph’s website with only 8 per cent. Conversely, the Telegraph attracted the highest share of 50+ users, who accounted for 44 per cent of its visitors.

## Annex 3

# Content Analysis

- A3.1 Detailed content analysis was conducted in autumn 2006 of the programme content of both the PSB national/international bulletins; and the programmes transmitted by ITV1 and BBC1 for the nations and regions. The aim was to assess the range, depth and quality of current PSB news provision.
- A3.2 The analysis was tracked against previous studies conducted by Ofcom and earlier by the ITC. The national and international news provision was also tracked against the findings revealed in *New News, Old News*. It is acknowledged that the period chosen represents only a random snapshot, but there is no reason to believe the sample programmes were unrepresentative.
- A3.3 The analysis examined the key ingredients in the bulletins including the number of stories; the balance between hard and soft news; the amount of political coverage; and the balance between domestic and international news in the network bulletins. It also considered the manner of coverage, such as the number of VTR packages; live links; studio interviews; location reports etc.
- A3.4 For the purposes of this analysis ‘hard’ news is defined as the reporting of topical news stories relating to areas such as politics, public policy (e.g. education, the NHS, transport), economic or business stories, crime, and significant events (e.g. trials, crashes, explosions, extreme weather etc.). Items are classified as ‘soft’ if they have no time related element to them, have a features-type content and treatment; deal with entertainment; or are quirky/humorous.

## National and International News

- A3.5 The UK national/international content assessment was based on evening news provision on four PSB channels – BBC One; ITV1; Channel 4 and Five<sup>21</sup>. It covered a period of three weeks from Monday 9 October to Sun 29 October 2006. The audit looked at the following weekday bulletins, plus the equivalent evening weekend news bulletins:

BBC One	6.00 – 6.30pm and 10.00 – 10.30pm
ITV	6.30 – 7.00pm and 10.30 – 11.00pm
Channel 4	7.00 – 7.55pm
Five	5.30 – 6.00pm

- A3.6 The key findings of the analysis were:
- News provision by PSB channels differs in style, but all the broadcasters offer a similar range of news stories delivered through a similar variety of methods. Hard news is the foundation of all the news bulletins;
  - Channel 4 News features the highest number of international stories of any of the bulletins surveyed, but international news is an important part of the news agenda for all channels;

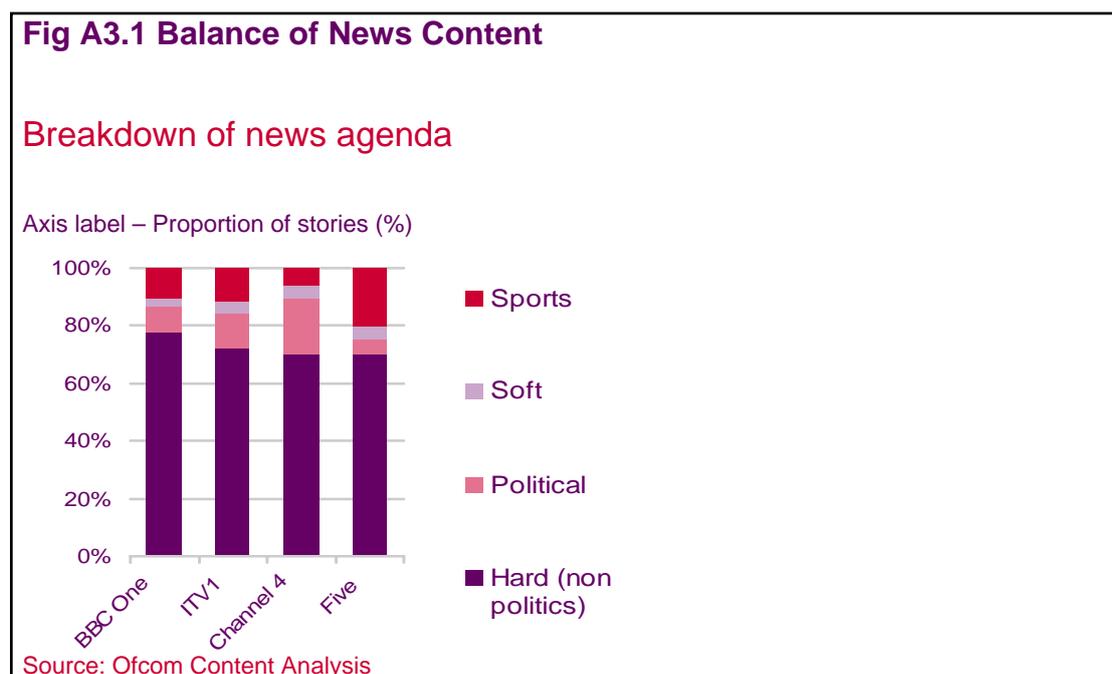
<sup>21</sup> Monitoring of the rolling news output of Sky News was also conducted, but the results were found not to be comparable with bulletin formats on PSB channels due to the nature of 24 hour news.

- A greater proportion of time was devoted to major political stories in 2006 than in 2002 – even though the analysis was not conducted during a conference season, a leadership campaign, an election period, or other significant political event;
- All the broadcasters devoted significant resources to on screen news presentation through the use of VT, graphics, location reports and live links.
- Soft news made up a very small percentage of news stories. Five showed the largest number of soft stories, but this was never more than one or two per bulletin.

### Analysis of programme content

A3.7 The study revealed that bulletins on all channels covered a diverse range of news e.g. from party politics to entertainment stories. But there was no evidence that PSB evening news bulletins are following a soft or ‘dumbed down’ agenda.

A3.8 By far the majority of stories across all the news bulletins were hard news, as defined by the analysis. Fig A3.1 illustrates the balance of content on the main early evening news bulletins. Channel 4 shows the highest proportion of both hard news and politics. Five shows the highest proportion of sports news.



A3.9 The range of news on all channels included domestic and international stories as well as politics and social affairs. The hard news category also comprised some economic items including the buyout of steel company Corus, and Google’s purchase of YouTube. However, other economic news was often reported through a consumer or social interest angle. Daily stock market reports were given on Channel 4 News and often on ITV’s late evening bulletin. Stocks were not routinely reported in either of the BBC’s evening bulletins.

A3.10 During the analysis period, there were a number of high profile international stories. Most prominent were: the nuclear test conducted by North Korea and the

international response; the military situation in Iraq and Afghanistan; Madonna's attempt to adopt a boy from Malawi; and the deaths of two British children in a Corfu hotel.

- A3.11 All of the news bulletins in the study covered all of these international stories in depth. In most cases this was through VT packages filmed overseas in addition to live links to reporters based on location. The analysis revealed that Channel 4 News transmits the highest number of international stories, followed by the BBC's 2200 bulletin, and ITV's 2230 bulletin.
- A3.12 Stories defined as soft in this period were predominantly entertainment or celebrity focussed. Examples included: the premiere of Sacha Baron Cohen's film '*Borat*' Eric Idle's '*Spamalot*' musical, and the businessman who ruined a Picasso painting by making a hole in it with his elbow. (N.B. It is worth noting that the distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' news is starker in network news than in regions/nations news where there can be a larger grey area).
- A3.13 Stories were classified as political news if they included a significant political or party political angle; some political analysis; and/or noteworthy input from politicians. Examples of political stories covered by all the broadcasters were: the tax cut proposed by the Conservative Party; General Sir Richard Dannatt's comments regarding British policy in Iraq; and the Government's response and the 'Muslim veil' controversy.
- A3.14 On the whole, key stories across the period appear to be treated with similar prominence by all channels. Some significant international stories - including the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan – were generally towards the top of the news agenda. And although there were differences between channels about which story was the 'lead', it was often the case that – whatever the precise order – the top three stories were consistent across the broadcasters.
- A3.15 A sample of the three top stories across one evening's news bulletins is show Figure A3.2 below:

**Fig A3.2 Monday 9 October – Top 3 Stories**

**BBC 6.00pm**

- North Korea nuclear test and international response
- Irish Archbishop meets Ian Paisley
- BA resignations over price fixing allegations

**ITV 6.30pm**

- North Korea nuclear test and international response
- Manslaughter verdict in Damilola Taylor trial
- Prison overcrowding

**Channel 4**

- North Korea nuclear test and international response
- Manslaughter verdict in Damilola Taylor trial
- Prison overcrowding

**Five**

- Joanne Lees I/V on Australian TV
- North Korean nuclear test and international response
- National ID scheme

**Style and approach by channel**

A3.16 There are some key differences in the presentational styles of the broadcasters. Five's news bulletins were the most informal, whereas Channel 4 News had a notably international and multicultural feel – demonstrated by the number of overseas stories and by the range of on screen presenters and interviewees.

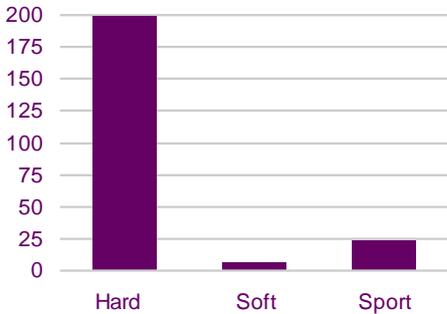
A3.17 All of the news providers covered stories in a variety of ways, combining VT with live links and interviews, either in the studio or down the line. The BBC and ITV feature significantly more live links than either Channel 4 or Five. Channel 4 on the other hand is much more likely to include an in depth studio interview in its analysis of a story.

The BBC

A3.18 On average the BBC *Six O'Clock News* carried 11 stories per programme. The story count was fewer than ten on only two occasions (both in one of the shorter Saturday bulletins). Approximately one quarter of the stories that featured on the BBC's early evening news were international. There were very few soft stories; an example of a lighter item was a story about a pelican eating a pigeon in St James's Park.

**Fig A3.3 BBC early evening news – Balance of Stories**

**Range of News Stories**



Source: Ofcom Content Analysis 2006

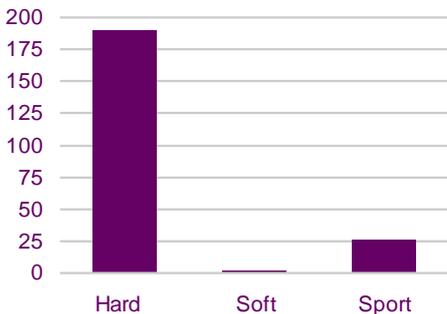
**Balance of News**

- Overwhelming majority of stories classified as hard news
- Out of 229 news stories 199 are described as 'hard'. This includes 21 political stories
- There are only 6 'soft' news stories in the audit period
- 24 sports stories most of which feature in the weekend bulletins

A3.19 The BBC's 2200 news has a similar average story count to the earlier bulletin and featured slightly fewer soft stories. The later evening bulletin was also more international in feel than the earlier news, with about 35 per cent of the total story count comprising international news items.

**Fig A3.4 BBC late evening news – Balance of Stories**

**Range of News Stories**



Source: Ofcom Content Analysis

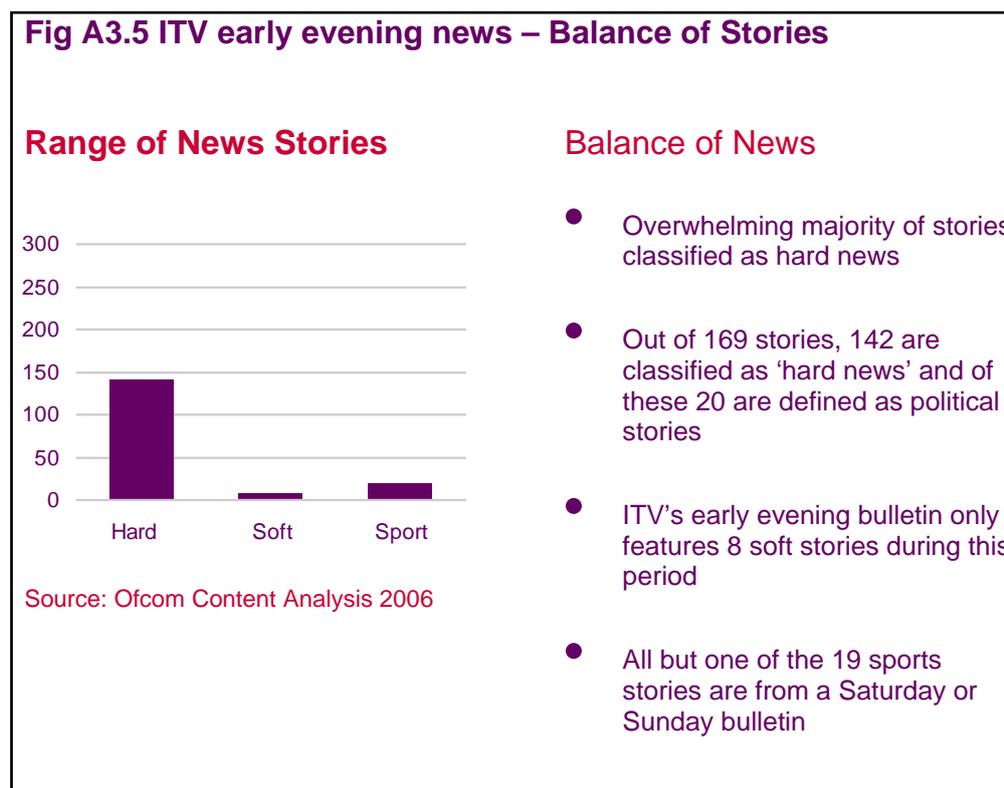
**Balance of News**

- Overwhelming majority of stories classified as hard news
- 190 stories are classified as 'hard' news. Including 21 'political' stories
- Only 2 stories are described as 'soft'
- The majority of the 25 sports stories feature in the weekend bulletins

A3.20 Almost every BBC news bulletin concludes with a promotion for BBC News 24 detailing what is coming up and illustrating it with a few seconds of footage.

## ITV News

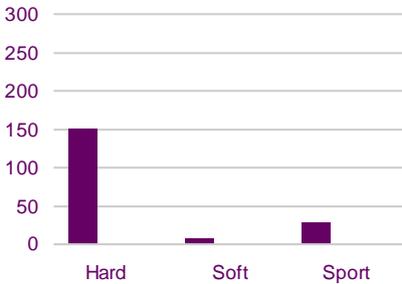
A3.21 On average ITV's early news bulletin featured eight stories per programme. The story count was as high as 14 on one occasion and never fell below five. About a quarter of the total number of items featured were international news stories. Sports stories were usually only included in the weekend bulletins. There were very few soft stories. Examples of soft news stories in the period analysed include: Michael Jackson's appearance at the World Music Awards; and a roller skating stunt performed in India.



A3.22 ITV's late evening news bulletin had an average story count of nine stories per bulletin. During the period of the content analysis there were never fewer than six stories in the later evening news. International stories made up 32 per cent of the total story count. Once again, most of the news was classified as hard, with soft news making up less than 5 per cent of the total story count.

**Fig A3.6 ITV late evening news – Balance of Stories**

**Range of News Stories**



Source: Ofcom Content Analysis 2006

**Balance of News**

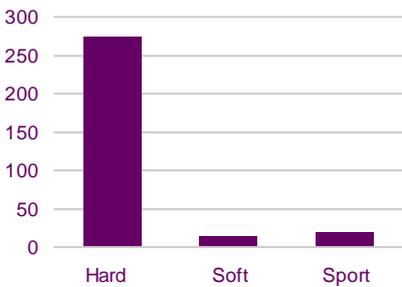
- Overwhelming majority of stories classified as hard news. Out of 187 stories a total of 151 are classified as hard news. 23 of these are political
- Only 8 soft stories in the period analysed
- There are 28 sports stories in ITV's late night news bulletins. These are distributed fairly evenly between weekday and weekend bulletins

Channel 4 News

A3.23 Unsurprisingly considering its longer running time, Channel 4 News at 1900 had the highest average story count at around 14 stories per programme. International news stories comprised 42 per cent of the total story count on Channel 4 News.

**Fig A3.7 Channel 4 News – Balance of Stories**

**Stories**



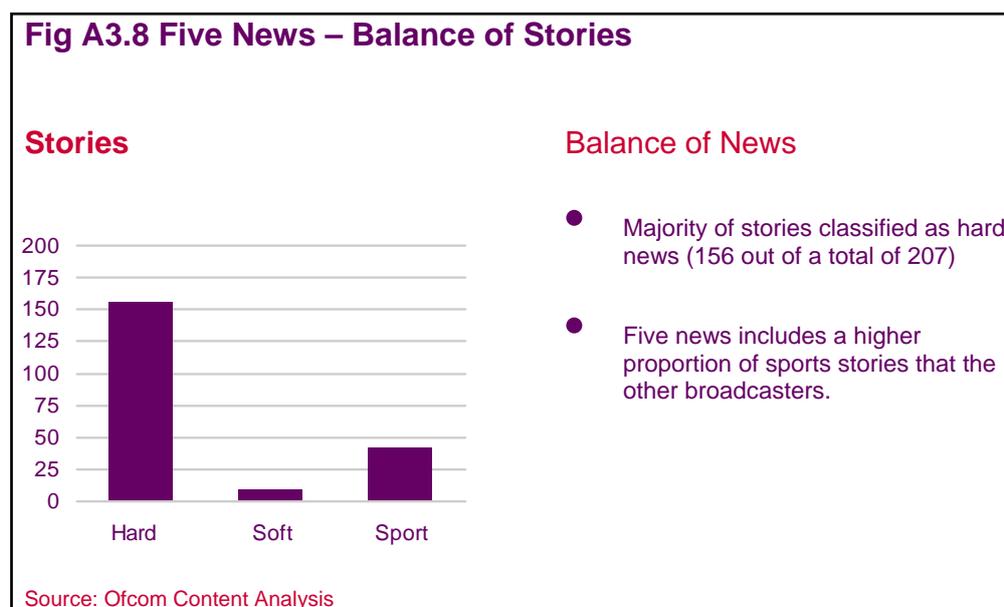
Source: Ofcom Content Analysis

**Balance of News**

- Overwhelming majority of stories classified as hard news (273 out of a total story count of 305)
- Soft news stories and Sports stories comprise just over 10% of the total

A3.24 Channel 4 News traditionally offers more long form news than the other broadcasters with more substantial analysis. Many of the items that featured in the sample period were covered in depth. This can be seen in the amount of time devoted to the lead stories. Channel 4 often devoted more than ten minutes of air time to the top story, and provided analysis through a variety of methods include video packages, studio interviews, live links and graphics.

### Five News



A3.25 Five’s average story count in the period analysed was ten stories per programme. Five differs from the other broadcasters as it presents its news in a more informal style and offers a slightly ‘softer’ agenda. This is indicated by the higher proportion of soft stories and sports items. Five also had a slightly less international agenda than the other broadcasters. The survey revealed about 20 per cent news stories carried were international.

A3.26 Most of Five’s evening bulletins included a request for viewers’ emails and stories. However, in the period analysed there was little evidence of user generated content.

A3.27 Five’s contract with Sky offers the channel access to the suppliers’ reporters and broader news network, and this was seen in the number of live links - particularly on foreign stories - featured in each bulletin (usually one or two daily). Over the period of the analysis, some of the video packages that appeared on the Five early evening news bulletins also featured on Sky’s rolling news service. This was particularly the case with more feature style stories. One example was an item about a British man jailed in Bangkok, which featured on both Five and Sky News on 13 October.

## Trends Over Time - Comparisons with New News Old News

- A3.28 Anecdotal comment about UK news content suggests the agenda is becoming softer or more ‘tabloid’. The 2002 study *New News, Old News* aimed to examine this proposition. One of the methods used was to identify the priority of different television news services by examining the lead stories in different bulletins.
- A3.29 *New News, Old News* conducted this analysis on the main evening bulletins across a 10 week period from May to July 2002. Ofcom’s 2006 content analysis differs in length – three weeks - and in the time of year studied – October. But by comparing the percentage of time given to different types of lead stories in the 2002 study with the 2006 findings, it is possible to offer some indication as to whether priorities have shifted in the four years since the *New News, Old News* analysis.
- A3.30 Figure A3.9 shows the amount of time dedicated to the lead stories in each of the featured bulletins. One of the conclusions of *New News Old News* was that there was “*a measurable drift away from the priority given to UK politics in television news*”. The results of this content analysis indicate that in terms of ‘lead stories’ this drift has not continued. In 2006 all the news services dedicated a higher percentage of time to ‘leading’ political stories than in the 2002 survey.
- A3.31 All the broadcasters apart from the BBC, devoted a higher proportion of time to lead international stories in 2006 than they did in 2002. The amount of time dedicated to international lead stories on the BBC bulletins was slightly lower than that found by *New News, Old News*.
- A3.32 In comparing the amount of time ITV devoted to ‘lead’ international stories in contrast to the BBC it is important to offer some caveats. Firstly, the BBC’s news bulletins tended to have a higher story count (10 or 11 stories on average compared to 8 or 9 on ITV).
- A3.33 There are also other factors that might help to account for the difference in time devoted to international ‘lead’ stories on the ITV versus the BBC’s early evening bulletin. In the sample period, the ITV early evening news led more often on the deaths of the British children in Corfu and on the Madonna adoption story than the BBC early evening news. Both these stories could be described as ‘human interest’, although they were clearly important hard stories at the time.
- A3.34 In addition, on one occasion, ITV’s early evening bulletin led with the inquest into the death of the ITN journalist Terry Lloyd (including the international angles) a story to which it devoted approximately 11 minutes.

**Fig A3.9 Lead stories by type: 9 – 29 October 2006 v May – July 2002 (% of time allocated)****Lead Stories****BBC (by percentage of time allocated)**

Subject	BBC Early (2002)	BBC Early (2006)	BBC Late (2002)	BBC Late (2006)
International	38%	27%	54%	43%
Politics	11%	16%	16%	37%

**ITV (by percentage of time allocated)**

Subject	ITV Early (2002)	ITV Early (2006)	ITV Late (2002)	ITV Late (2006)
International	28%	52%	40%	52%
Politics	10%	13%	12%	17%

**Channel 4 (by percentage of time allocated)**

Subject	Channel 4 (2002)	Channel 4 (2006)
International	53%	58%
Politics	16%	25%

**Five (by percentage of time allocated)**

Subject	Five (2002)	Five (2006)
International	18%	39%
Politics	10%	11%

**Programmes in the UK Nations and Regions**

A3.35 Analysis of news in the UK nations and regions was based on an in depth assessment of the early evening<sup>22</sup> non network news services provided on ITV1 and BBC One during the course of the week commencing 11 September 2006. The assessment represents a detailed snapshot of a particular – but not untypical – week of regions/nations news programming. It follows on from similar exercises conducted by Ofcom and the ITC, making it possible to identify some longer term trends.

A3.36 Variations in footprint mean that not all regions/nations news programmes are directly comparable, but as far as possible the same regions/nations and sub regions as those included in past Ofcom and ITC studies have been analysed<sup>23</sup>. In

<sup>22</sup> ITV's early evening regional news is Broadcast at 18:00, and the BBC's at 18.30

<sup>23</sup> The following services were included in the assessment: BBC Northern Ireland, UTV, BBC Wales, ITV Wales, BBC Scotland, stv Central, stv North, ITV Border, BBC North East and Cumbria, ITV Tyne Tees, BBC North West, ITV Granada, BBC Yorkshire, ITV Yorkshire (West sub region), ITV Central

all, 30 national, regional and sub regional services were included, representing 75 hours of news.

A3.37 As with the national/international study, the nations and regions analysis looked at the number of stories, the nature and treatment of those stories, and the balance of hard to soft news. The assessment looked at differences in style and approach from one service to another, and at how far the news agendas adopted by ITV and the BBC differ from each other.

A3.38 The key findings of the analysis were:

- The average story count in ITV nations/regions bulletins had fallen from 15 stories per programme during the assessment period two years ago to 13 per programme in the 2006 assessment, with ITV focussing more on in depth reporting and substantial features than in the past. The BBC's average story count was 12 stories per programme, representing no change from previous assessments.
- Hard news remained the core of regions/nations news programmes on both ITV and the BBC, with three hard stories to every soft feature on average across the UK. News agendas in the Nations were particularly hard edged, with an average of just one-and-a-half soft stories per programme.
- Softer features did, however, have an established place within regions/nations news - particularly in the English regions - and seemed to play an important role in representing what was distinct or particular to an individual region. Soft items featured during the assessment encompassed a wide range of subjects and were not limited to '...and finally' items.
- Some overall differences of style and approach were discernable between the regions/nations broadcasters. The evidence suggests that ITV services pursue a more populist agenda and feature a higher proportion of human interest stories; while the BBC takes a more formal approach to the structure and tone of its reports and covers a greater proportion of public policy stories.
- Despite these differences of approach, both the BBC and ITV demonstrated evidence of high quality journalism and the deployment of significant resources.
- On all programmes there is a range of hard news stories with less populist areas, such as political and economic news, being covered alongside the core nations/regions news territories of crime, health, education, transport, and disasters/events.
- Sport also continues to play a significant role in nations/regions news programming, particularly on ITV and in those nations/regions where sporting loyalties are strong.
- Although there is no evidence that the major news stories of the day were being missed, the proportion of stories featured by both the BBC and ITV on the same evening was relatively low - at an average of just two hard stories per

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(West and East sub regions), BBC West Midlands, BBC East Midlands, ITV Anglia (East sub region), BBC East, ITV Meridian (South and South East sub regions), BBC South, BBC South East, ITV London, BBC London, ITV West, BBC West, ITV Westcountry, and BBC South West.

programme, rising to four in the nations. This may suggest that the BBC and ITV are providing different services which offer audiences a genuine choice in terms of the range of stories presented and the treatment of those stories.

- Nations/regions news services made significantly more use of viewer interactivity, in the form of emails and viewers' photographs, than they did two years ago.

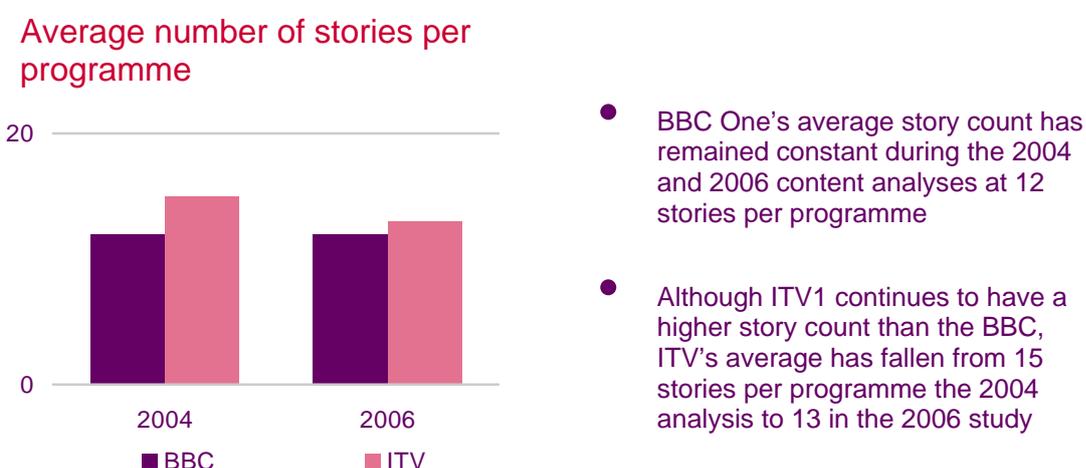
### Analysis of programme content

A3.39 Past evidence has indicated that while the BBC and ITV each provide substantial coverage of the top stories of the day, ITV's nations/regions news programmes have generally had a higher story count than the BBC's. However, as Figure A3.10 below indicates, during the 2006 assessment period ITV's story count fell (from 15 in 2004) to 13 stories per programme, compared with the BBC's average of 12 per programme.

A3.40 Within this picture there is some variation across the UK, although this is not unexpected given regional differences. BBC London, for example, had an average of nine stories per programme during the 2006 assessment period, and ITV London and BBC West 10 per programme. At the other end of the scale UTV and ITV Central (East) each had an average of 16 stories per programme.

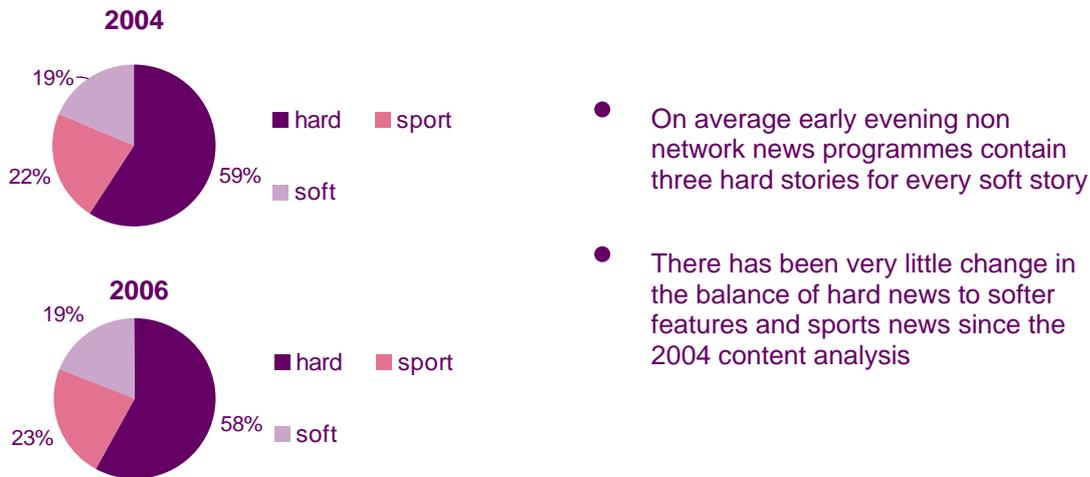
A3.41 Clearly these differences in story count affect the pace and style of nations/regions news programmes. However, there was no evidence to suggest either that the important stories of the day were being missed by those services with a lower story count, or that there was a lack of in depth reporting in those services with a higher than average number of stories.

**Fig A3.10 Story count: early evening non network news**



Source: Ofcom Nations and regions content analysis

A3.42 As is seen in Figure A3.11, hard news remained the core of non network news programmes, with an average of three hard stories for every soft story. Within this overall picture there was considerable variation from one part of the UK to another. But this variation tended to reflect nations/regions differences (e.g. balance of city/rural) rather than a significant difference of approach between ITV and the BBC, with both broadcasters being equally likely to feature soft stories overall.

**Fig A3.11 Balance of hard, soft and sports news**

Source: Ofcom Nations and regions content analysis

- A3.43 Previous Ofcom and ITC studies have found that news services in the nations have a harder agenda than those in most of the English regions, reflecting their political status. This trend continued during the current assessment period, with services in the nations covering an average of one-and-a-half soft stories per programme and services in the English regions covering around three per programme.
- A3.44 It is worth noting that not all stories classified as soft fall into the ‘and finally’ category; many programmes – particularly those in the English regions - have a well established ‘news magazine’ tradition encompassing hard news and news features alongside softer, but nevertheless significant and well resourced items.
- A3.45 The level of sports coverage varied widely from one region to another, with strong football areas such as the North West and North East England producing considerably more sports stories than soft stories. Other regions, such as the East of England provided less sport and more features material. ITV were more likely to include sports stories than the BBC. It was also noted that many nations/regions news programmes were making efforts to extend sports coverage beyond the traditional football/rugby/cricket triumvirate, with coverage of golf, boxing, cycling and a number of other local activities.

### Content and treatment of stories

- A3.46 The data suggests that nations/regions audiences are provided with a healthy range of subject matter, with less populist areas, such as political and economic news being covered – by both ITV and the BBC - alongside the more populist news territories of crime, health, education, and disasters/events.
- A3.47 Past assessments have found that the BBC tends to focus more of its in depth coverage on public policy issues, while ITV tends to adopt a pacier, more populist style and agenda, with a higher proportion of human interest stories. And although there is inevitably some variation from one part of the UK to another, the current assessment confirms these overall differences in approach.

- A3.48 Although ITV tackled a number of important public policy stories, the evidence suggests that ITV nations/regions news programmes continue to be more likely to take a human interest approach to stories, centred around interviews with the people and families involved. The BBC, meanwhile, continued to lean towards a more formal, 'mission to explain' approach, typically producing more background packages and interviews with experts or its own reporters, and with a higher proportion of stories relating to matters of public policy.
- A3.49 The most common story format was the filmed location report. Across ITV and the BBC more than two thirds of the stories of the day were told either in this way and/or via the use of like links, demonstrating the use of some significant resources. The proportion of studio based interviews was fairly low, both on the BBC and ITV, at less than a third of stories on average.
- A3.50 A relatively low number of hard news stories were featured by both the BBC and ITV on the same evening in the same nation or region during the assessment period. Across the UK an average of just two hard stories per day were featured by both broadcasters. In the nations, the volume of hard stories in common was higher, at around four per day, reflecting the particular purposes and characteristics of non network news in the Nations.
- A3.51 In the regions of England there was considerable variation from one place to another. In the North West and the South of England around 50 per cent of hard stories were featured by both broadcasters on the same day, whereas in the North East, the West Midlands, and the West of England the proportion of hard stories in common was much lower, reflecting the different agendas and news priorities adopted by the regional broadcasters in those regions.
- A3.52 The data suggests that on a day when a major regional story breaks both the BBC and ITV tended to cover that story, although with different treatments and emphasis. But on a slower news day and in the middle ranges of the running order, the news agendas of the two broadcasters were generally very different, suggesting that the BBC and ITV are providing different services offering a genuine choice in terms of the range and treatment.
- A3.53 Although interactivity, in the form of e-mail comments and amateur video or photographs, still makes up a relatively small proportion of nations/regions news programmes, the output made significantly more use of viewer interactivity during the current assessment period than they did two years ago.
- A3.54 There was evidence of some sharing of reports across regional boundaries, both on the BBC and ITV. Such stories were generally shared because they took place in a transmission overlap area where some viewers receive one service and some another, depending on topography.
- A3.55 The evidence suggests that there has been a modest increase in the use of shared reports since Ofcom's 2004 assessment. In a number of cases the sharing of reports meant that programmes benefited from extra resources – such as a live link or a detailed location report – that would not otherwise have been at their disposal. There was no evidence to suggest that reports were being shared simply in order to cut costs, although clearly a significant further increase in future might signal this.