
Ofcom's Cross-Platform Media Tracker

Confirmation of changes to the 2022 survey

Overview

Whilst most Covid restrictions have now been lifted in the UK, we have decided it would still be advisable to delay returning to face-to-face fieldwork until the next wave (2024) for the cross-platform media tracker. Cases still remain high and there may be some reticence in answering the door to interviewers and conducting the questionnaire on the doorstep. We are also confident that alternative methodologies, such as those used in 2020, can still retrieve accurate data from a balanced sample.

Following the notification of changes we published in April, this document confirms the alternative methodology that we will use to complete fieldwork this year, the impact this will have on the 2022 data set, as well as the changes to the questionnaire for 2022. This also takes into account the cognitive testing we have done for both surveys.

A summary of changes – in brief

The sample for the adults survey will increase slightly to a representative sample of 2,330 UK adults.

For the adults survey, a mixed mode method 50% online and 50% post-to-web and post-to-post will replace the 50% face-to-face and 50% online design used prior to 2020. The 'post-to' element will help specifically target the roughly 6% of UK adults who are not online.

The teens survey will remain 100% online, however our sample will increase from 500 children aged 12-15 to 1,000 children aged 12-15.

We have made the following changes to the adults survey:

- Some questions have been removed to streamline the survey after a review of our needs. This is particularly the case for the demographic questions and questions around device use.
- Some question areas or formats have been updated to ensure they remain relevant. This is particularly the case for the online and on-demand section, as well as the advertising section.
- New questions have been added in order to enhance understanding in some areas of the questionnaire.

In the teens survey, we have made changes to the online and on-demand section and added in new questions around harm and offence on broadcast TV. In addition, we have incorporated some new questions on representation and portrayal, and opinions of PSB services.

Further information on our changes can be found below. If you have any queries about this survey or the changes made, please email market.research@ofcom.org.uk.

Background to survey

The Cross-Platform Media Tracker is a biennial survey that explores UK adults' attitudes and opinions towards television and radio broadcasting, and related areas such as programme standards, advertising and regulation. There is also a separate, but related, survey which explores the attitudes of teens, which focuses more specifically on television and on-demand.

The research findings from Ofcom's Media Tracker study provide a valuable source of information on consumers' attitudes and help inform Ofcom's work on broadcasting standards. Under the Communications Act 2003, Ofcom has a duty to draw up, and from time-to-time revise, a Code for television and radio services, covering programme standards. This includes the protection of under-18s, the application of generally accepted standards to provide adequate protection from the inclusion of harmful or offensive material, sponsorship, product placement in television programmes, and fairness and privacy.

Methodology

Methodology used for 2022

Up until 2020, the methodology used for the adults survey was a mixed mode combination of in-home face-to-face interviews and online survey completion. The outbreak of Covid-19 prevented the face-to-face element from continuing from 2020 onwards, so for the 2020 study, as fieldwork had already commenced prior to the outbreak of Covid-19, the sample was comprised of online, face-to-face and telephone methodologies.

In 2022, the methodology will be altered again. The methodology will now be 50% online and 50% post-to-web and post-to-post. The 'post-to' approach will help ensure we reach both low and non-internet users. Fieldwork will commence in late Spring 2022 and a second wave of fieldwork will be undertaken in late Autumn 2022. The nationally representative sample will also increase slightly from 2,000 to 2,330 UK adults.

The teens survey will remain 100% online in 2022, however our sample will increase from 500 children aged 12-15 to 1,000 children aged 12-15.

Impact on 2022 data

As an official statistic, this survey provides longitudinal data which helps us understand how behaviours and attitudes shift over time. The change in methodology means that we may not be able to directly compare trend data to previous years. We will be evaluating the extent of this once fieldwork is complete.

Changes to the Adults Tracker questionnaire

3.1 Questions removed

Below are the questions we have removed for the 2022 survey. Please note that question numbers refer to the 2020 questionnaire.

Demographics

These questions are no longer necessary for analysis purposes, so we will not need respondents to provide this information for the 2022 survey, as it is advised by the Market Research Society not to ask for any personal information unless it is relevant and necessary for the purposes of the research.

- **Q01** asking respondents what their national identity is
- **Q06** asking respondents with poor vision which specific sight issue they have
- **Q07** asking respondents with poor hearing which specific hearing issue they have
- **Q09** asking respondents about their home ownership status
- **Q015** asking respondents for their total household income
- **Q016** asking respondents about their use and knowledge of technology

TV section

- **QA2** asking respondents how many TVs they own. This information is captured by the Technology Tracker.
- **QA2i** asking respondents whether any of their TVs are smart TVs. This information is captured by the Technology Tracker.
- **QA7** asking respondents with a set top box receiver whether their set top box receiver has been connected to a broadband service in the last 12 months. This is no longer necessary as we merge viewing on set top boxes to viewing on streaming boxes/sticks.
- **QA8** asking respondents with satellite TV whether they pay a subscription or only receive free-to-air channels. This is no longer necessary as we ask about satellite TV provider and this information can be derived from that.
- **QA10** and **QA11** asking respondents which media devices they have connected to a TV set and/or broadband in the last 12 months. This information is captured by the Technology Tracker.
- **QA12** asking respondents which games consoles they have in their household. This information is captured by the Technology Tracker.
- **QA13** and **QA14** asking respondents which games consoles they have connected to a TV set and/or broadband in the home in the last 12 months. This is no longer relevant as we no longer ask any follow-up questions relating to specific services viewed on games consoles.
- **QA15i** and **QA17** asking respondents which communications devices they have connected to a TV set and/or broadband in the last 12 months. This information is captured by the Technology Tracker.

- **QA20** asking respondents which types of broadcast content they view on different kinds of communications devices. This is no longer relevant as we now ask about live broadcast TV having been watched on any device, not just a TV set.
- **QA21** asking respondents whether they have watched YouTube in the last 12 months. Online videos are no longer relevant to this research, only video on-demand.
- **QA22** asking which types of services their Smart TV has been used for. This is no longer relevant as we now ask about live broadcast TV having been watched on any device, not just a TV set.
- **QA23** asking respondents who watch broadband catch-up services the specific reasons why they watch broadcast catch-up services. This information is collected on other Ofcom tracking projects.
- **QA24** asking respondents who watch broadcast catch-up services the main reason why they watch broadband catch-up services. This information is collected on other Ofcom tracking projects.

TV advertising section

- **QC5** asking respondents with concerns about payday loan advertising what specific concerns they have about payday loan advertising on TV. Payday loan advertising is less of a specific concern and we have instead replaced it with questions about more recent concerns, which are detailed in the new questions section below.

Privacy section

We will no longer ask specifically about privacy and intrusion on this survey, as our questions about specific harms and offences on TV are now open-ended, meaning any concerns about privacy can be covered there instead – alongside other key concerns such as violence, nudity and bad language.

- **QJ1** asking respondents whether they agree with a set of statements about the rights of TV and radio broadcasters to broadcast programmes which scrutinise the lives of celebrities, public figures and members of the public
- **QJ2, QJ3 & QJ4** asking respondents which sources (e.g. print media, TV) they feel are the most, second most and third most intrusive into the lives of people in the public eye
- **QJ5, QJ6 & QJ7** asking respondents which sources (e.g. print media, TV) they feel are the most, second most and third most intrusive into the lives of members of the general public

Online and on-demand section

The online and on-demand section of this survey is changing substantially; more detail can be found in Section 3.2: Questions with substantial amends.

- **QL4** asking respondents who have seen something of concern on on-demand services in the last 12 months whether they also found it offensive. We are removing this question as the On-Demand Programme Service Rules do not differentiate between offence or concern in on-demand viewing; therefore it is not necessary to ask about both.

- **QL6** asking respondents which device they were using to watch the offensive content they viewed on on-demand services. This is no longer relevant to ask here as we are only interested in the service used, rather than the device.

On-demand regulation section:

These questions are being removed as they are no longer relevant to the types of services we ask about.

- **QM5** asking respondents whether they have noticed any reporting tools while using online or on-demand TV services
- **QM5a** asking respondents who have noticed any reporting tools while using online or on-demand TV services which services they have seen these on
- **QM6** asking respondents who have noticed any reporting tools while using online or on-demand TV services whether they have ever used them

ODO – device-based content regulation:

This section has been cut as it is no longer relevant to this survey and online gaming is covered by other surveys.

- **QN2** asking respondents whether they regularly play online games
- **QN3** asking respondents whether they have seen anything to cause them concern while online gaming
- **QN4** asking respondents what kinds of things caused them concern while online gaming

3.2 Questions with substantial amends

We have also edited some of the questions in the tracker.

General changes

- Some questions have now been made open-ended to allow respondents more freedom to describe their specific concerns about harmful (QF9) or offensive (QF2) programming, or advertising (QC3), or on how TV programmes have improved (QB2) or got worse (QB3). We have also made a question around which third party body was complained to regarding concerns about on-demand services (QL8) open-ended, to allow more options for the respondent.
- Questions relating to who is responsible for regulation for TV, radio and online and on-demand services will be updated with revised lists of organisations for respondents to choose from.

Demographics

- **QA1**, asking respondents whether they have and use broadband at home, will now ask about internet access at home, as some may use alternative methods such as mobile data or satellite internet.

- **QA6**, asking respondents which TV service they consider the main way they watch TV, will now ask which TV service they consider their main way of watching live broadcast TV, as this is more relevant to this section of the questionnaire which is focused on live broadcast TV.
- **QA19**, asking respondents about different viewing activities will have some options altered slightly, with the first (live broadcast TV) now including live TV watched on a broadcaster on-demand service. Following cognitive testing, instead of condensing the online video code into one, we have decided to remove it altogether as it is no longer relevant to this survey.
- **QO12**, asking respondents whether there are any children under 18 in the household, will now ask whether there are any children under 16 in the household. This is to be consistent with other questions in the survey.

TV programmes

- The description of TV live at the time of broadcast in the TV Programmes section has now been updated to include live TV watched on a broadcaster on-demand service.

Advertising

- **QC4**, asking respondents what types of advertising they have concerns about, has now been updated to add adverts making environmental claims and adverts during children's programming.

TV: protection of children

- **QE4**, asking about the watershed, has been updated to only be asked of participants 18 years old or older, as the watershed is designed to protect those under 18 year olds.

TV: harm and offence

- The descriptions of harm and offence have now been updated to help respondents differentiate the two terms more clearly.

Radio

- **QG1**, asking about radio listening, has been updated to include community radio and to only cover radio listened to in the last 12 months

Online and on-demand/Online and on-demand regulation of services:

The online and on-demand section of this survey is changing substantially, with a change in the type of content we ask about here. None of the questions will be comparable to previous years data, however the changes are intended provide a clearer picture of experiences of concerning content on video-on-demand services and opinions about regulation.

The description of online or on-demand content in the ODO section will change to focus specifically on content on broadcaster catch-up services and subscription on-demand services – rather than the

more generic description of online or on-demand TV or video content (professionally produced audio or video programmes or clips of a quality similar to TV and/or radio stations).

- **QL1** will ask about content online or on-demand that has been concerning to yourself, other adults or children, more closely matching the TV Harm and Offence section of this questionnaire.
- **QL2**, asking what they have seen that is concerning, will become an open-ended question.
- **QL3A**, which asks which service the concerning content was seen on, will become an open-ended question.
- **QM1** will be edited to reflect the distinct regulatory environments between some video on-demand services and others. It will instead focus on broadcaster catch up services and online subscriptions services separately.
- **QM2** will be streamlined to only focus on broadcaster catch up services and online subscription services separately.
- **QM3** will now be focused only on broadcast catch up services to aid comprehension
- **QM4** will be streamlined to only focus on broadcaster catch up and online subscription services separately.

3.3 New questions to be added

We have also included some additional questions in the survey:

Demographics

- A new question asking respondents whether their gender is the same as that assigned at birth. This is because some groups may find certain content offensive that others may not and it is important to ensure we have a representative sample of the UK population.
- Two new questions asking respondents about their gender identity and their sexuality. This is to ensure we have a representative sample of the UK population.

TV section

- Three new questions asking respondents which specific TV channels or services they have watched in the last 12 months.
- A new question asking respondents which devices they have used to watch any kind of TV content, including both live broadcasts and on-demand services

TV advertising section

- A new question asking for further detail from respondents with concerns about inappropriate advertising in children's programming/ before the watershed.
- A new question asking for further detail from respondents with concerns about TV advertising involving environmental claims.

TV harms and offences section

- A new question asking respondents their views on when/where programmes depicting sexual violence should be shown.
- A new question asking respondents who are parents or guardians whether they are concerned about anything their child has watched on TV in the last 12 months.
- A new question asking respondents who are parents or guardians and are concerned about something their child has watched on TV in the last 12 months what it was that they found concerning.

Radio section

- Three new questions asking respondents who have heard something offensive on the radio in the last 12 months what it was that they found offensive, what type of programme they were listening to at the time, and how they reacted to it.

On-demand harms and offences section

- Two new questions asking respondents who are parents or guardians whether they are concerned about anything their child has watched on online or on-demand TV services in the last 12 months, and what it was that they found concerning.

On-demand regulation section

- A new question asking respondents what their views are on the current levels of regulation in online and on-demand services, compared to broadcast TV services.
- A new question asking respondents whether they use any PIN-controls on their television or online services.
- A new question asking respondents whether they were aware of UK broadcaster on-demand services offering information about the age suitability of programmes.

Changes to Teens Tracker questionnaire

4.1 Questions removed

TV section

Specific reasons for these cuts can be found in Section 3.1 above.

- **QA2** asking respondents how many TVs they own
- **QA2i** asking respondents whether any of their TVs are smart TVs
- **QA7** asking respondents with a set top box receiver whether their set top box receiver has been connected to a broadband service in the last 12 months
- **QA8** asking respondents with satellite TV whether they pay a subscription or only receive free-to-air channels
- **QA10** asking respondents which media devices they have connected to a TV set in the last 12 months
- **QA11** asking respondents which media devices they have connected to a broadband service as well as a TV set in the last 12 months
- **QA12** asking respondents which games consoles they have in their household
- **QA13** asking which games consoles they have connected to a TV set in the home in the last 12 months
- **QA14** asking which games consoles they have connected to a broadband service, as well as a TV set, in the last 12 months
- **QA15i** asking respondents which communications devices they have connected to a broadband service in the last 12 months
- **QA17** asking respondents which communications devices they have connected to a broadband service as well as a TV set in the last 12 months
- **QA21** asking respondents whether they have watched YouTube in the last 12 months
- **QA23** asking respondents who watch broadband catch-up services the specific reasons why they watch broadcast catch-up services.
- **QA24** asking respondents who watch broadcast catch-up services the main reason why they watch broadband catch-up services.

On-demand harms and offences section

- **QL6** asking respondents which device they were using to watch the offensive content they viewed on on-demand services.

On-demand regulation section

These questions are being removed as they are no longer relevant to the types of services we ask about.

- **QM5** asking respondents whether they have noticed any reporting tools while using on-line or on-demand TV services

- **QM5a** asking respondents who have noticed any reporting tools while using on-line or on-demand TV services which services they have seen these on
- **QM6** asking respondents who have noticed any reporting tools while using on-line or on-demand TV services whether they have ever used them

ODO – Device-based content regulation

This section has been cut as it is no longer relevant to the purposes of this survey.

- **QN2** asking respondents whether they regularly play online games
- **QN3** asking respondents whether they have seen anything to cause them concern while online gaming
- **QN4** asking respondents what kinds of things caused them concern while online gaming

4.2 Questions with substantial amends

- **QA1**, asking respondents whether they have and use broadband at home, will now ask about internet access at home, as some may use alternative methods such as mobile data or satellite internet.
- **QA6**, asking respondents which TV service they consider the main way they watch TV, will now ask which TV service they consider their main way of watching live broadcast TV, as this is more relevant to this section of the questionnaire which is focused on live broadcast TV.
- **QA19**, asking respondents about different viewing activities, will have some options altered slightly, with the first (live broadcast TV) now including live TV watched on a broadcaster on-demand service. Following cognitive testing, instead of condensing the online video code into one, we have decided to remove it altogether as it is no longer relevant to this survey.

The online and on-demand section of this survey is changing substantially, with a change in the type of content we ask about here. None of the questions will be comparable to previous years data, however it should provide a clearer picture of experiences of concerning content on video-on-demand services, and opinions about regulation.

- The description of online or on-demand content in the ODO section will change to focus specifically on content on broadcaster or subscription on-demand services – rather than the more generic description of online or on-demand TV or video content (professionally produced audio or video programmes or clips of a quality similar to TV and/or radio stations).
- **QL2** and **QL3A** will become open-ended questions.
- **QM1** will be edited to reflect the distinct regulatory environments between some video-on-demand services and others. It will instead focus on broadcaster catch up services and online subscriptions services separately.
- **QM2** will be streamlined to only focus on broadcaster catch-up services and online subscription services separately.
- **QM3** will now be focused only on broadcast catch up services to aide comprehension.

4.3 New questions to be added

Views of PSBs, on-demand and online content

- A new question asking respondents whether they agree or disagree with a set of statements about PSB/BVoD content.
- A new question asking respondents how important they feel it is for there to be appropriate or relevant programmes for children
- New questions asking respondents whether they feel there are enough appropriate or relevant programmes for children on different TV services/channels.

TV section

- A new question asking respondents which specific TV channels or services they have watched in the last 12 months.

TV harms and offences section

- This section already exists in its entirety in the adults tracker but has now been added to the teens tracker in order to make the surveys more consistent and to capture more information around harms and offences experienced by under-18s on live broadcast TV, which is a key focus of the Broadcasting Code.
- New questions asking respondents whether they have seen something offensive on TV in the last 12 months, what it was that offended them, what kind of show they were watching at the time, and whether they took any action as a result
- New questions asking respondents whether they have seen something harmful on TV in the last 12 months, what it was that they found harmful, what kind of show they were watching at the time, and whether they took any action as a result

On-demand regulation section

- In our notification of changes, we proposed a new question asking respondents what their views are on the current levels of regulation in on-demand TV services, compared to broadcast TV services. However, cognitive testing revealed challenges in comprehension; therefore, we will not be including it going forward.