

## **Factsheet 5 – Audience opinions:**

This factsheet has been compiled by Ofcom and provides some background information to aid discussion at the 2015 Oxford Media Convention. It provides TV audience opinion data from Ofcom's PSB tracker and media tracker surveys for 2013 (the latest available data) as well as data from research conducted in 2014 on use and importance of the internet as a source of content, published in [Ofcom's PSB Annual Report 2014](#).

# Factsheet 5: Audience Opinion

## Market context

### Key points

- Ofcom's annual public service broadcaster (PSB) tracking survey reports the opinions of (self-defined) regular viewers of PSB channels, on delivery of PSB purposes and characteristics. Viewers were asked to rate the importance of the purposes and characteristics and their delivery by the PSBs.
- In 2013, Ofcom's annual PSB tracking survey found that 77% of those who ever watch any of the PSB channels claim to be quite, or very, satisfied with the PSB channels combined, higher than the 69% who were satisfied in 2008.
- Ratings for satisfaction with/delivery of the purposes and characteristics are much lower than the ratings for importance, perhaps partly because respondents are more likely to be able to express an opinion on importance than they are able to assess how well channels deliver on it.
- Between 2008 and 2013, the level of importance placed on the trustworthiness of news programmes remained relatively stable, although it was significantly higher in 2013 (87%) than in 2008, when 82% rated it as important (Figure 1).
- The level of importance placed on 'high quality programming' rose between 2008 and 2013, with 84% of respondents rating this measure highly in 2013 compared to 81% in 2008. Importance placed on other characteristics remained stable over the period (Figure 2).

**Figure 1: Main PSB channels combined, PSB purposes, importance vs. satisfaction: 2008-2013**

Purposes		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Its news programmes are trustworthy	Importance	82	82	84	81	85	87
	Satisfaction	64	62	65	62	64	65
Its programmes help me understand what's going on in the world today	Importance	81	78	81	78	80	79
	Satisfaction	67	66	67	61	58	63
Its regional news programmes provide a wide range of good quality news about my area	Importance	75	74	76	76	78	81
	Satisfaction	53	51	50	58	60	64
It shows interesting programmes about history, sciences or the arts	Importance	68	66	70	65	68	69
	Satisfaction	48	49	52	46	47	52
It portrays my region/Scotland/Northern Ireland/Wales fairly to the rest of the UK	Importance	58	59	60	63	66	68
	Satisfaction	34	34	33	43	40	44
Its programmes show different kinds of cultures within the UK	Importance	64	63	66	58	65	65
	Satisfaction	47	46	48	43	43	46
It shows high quality soaps or dramas made in the UK	Importance	50	52	54	53	57	58
	Satisfaction	49	50	52	47	47	51

Source: Ofcom's PSB Annual Report 2014. Base: All respondents who watch any main PSB channel regularly or occasionally.

**Figure 2: PSB characteristics: importance vs. satisfaction: 2008-2013**

Characteristics		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
It shows well-made, high quality programmes	Importance	81	82	84	79	82	84
	Satisfaction	58	57	62	59	59	65
It shows programmes I want to watch	Importance	78	78	79	77	78	79
	Satisfaction	50	49	52	52	51	56
It shows programmes that make me stop and think	Importance	74	71	76	67	71	74
	Satisfaction	49	48	50	43	44	49
It shows new programmes, made in the UK	Importance	68	74	76	68	68	73
	Satisfaction	41	42	45	47	46	53
It shows programmes with new ideas and different approaches	Importance	71	69	73	66	71	73
	Satisfaction	45	44	48	44	44	47

Source: Ofcom's PSB Annual Report 2014. Base: All respondents who watch any main PSB channel regularly or occasionally. 1

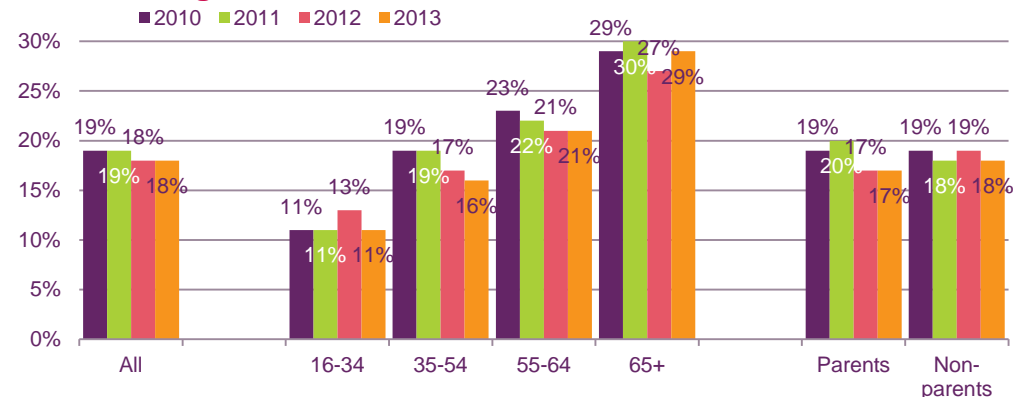
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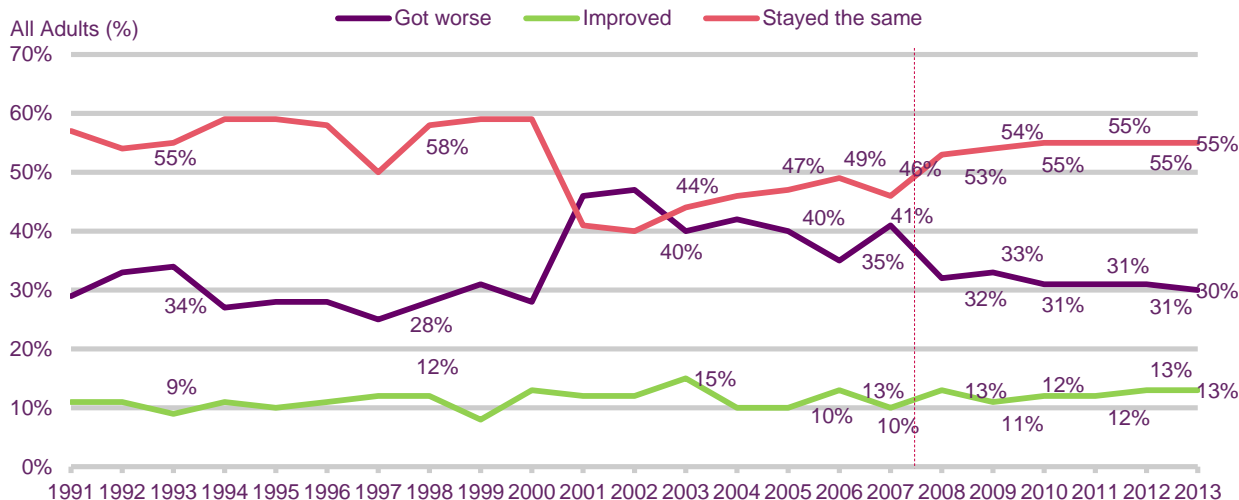
- Perceived quality of TV programmes:** As shown in Figure 3, Ofcom research in 2013 found that when asked whether TV programmes had improved, stayed the same or worsened in the past 12 months, over half (55%) of UK adults who watch TV said they had 'stayed the same'; a similar proportion to the findings in 2008 (53%).
- Three in ten (30%) adult viewers said TV programmes had 'got worse'. As in 2012, older respondents were more likely than younger people to say that programmes had got worse (47% of TV watching over-65s compared to 20% among TV watching 16-34s).
- Among those who said programmes had got worse, the top two reasons given were 'more repeats' (70%) and 'lack of variety' (52%, a significant increase from 43% in 2011).

**Fig 4: Overall % of respondents who have been offended by something on TV**



Source: Ofcom's UK audience attitudes to the broadcast media report 2014. Base: All with a TV but excluding those never watching.

**Fig 3: Opinion on the quality of programmes over the last 12 months**



Source: Ofcom's UK audience attitudes to the broadcast media report 2014. Base: All with a TV but excluding those never watching. Changes in methodology between 2007 and 2008. As a result comparisons over time should be made with caution and treated as indicative only, as variances in the results may be due in part to changes in methodology, and not necessarily indicate a shift in consumer attitudes. (see dotted line).

- Levels of offence on TV:** In 2013, less than a fifth (18%) of adult viewers said they had been offended by something on TV in the previous 12 months – a similar proportion to the findings in 2012 (18%) (figure 4).
- Younger respondents were less likely than older people to say they had been offended (11% among TV watching 16-34s compared to 29% among TV watching over-65s).
- Among those offended, bad language (47%), violence (39%) and sexual content (39%) were the most common causes of offence. Almost a quarter (24%) of those who said they'd seen something offensive cited anti-social behaviour as the cause, a significant increase from 16% in 2011.

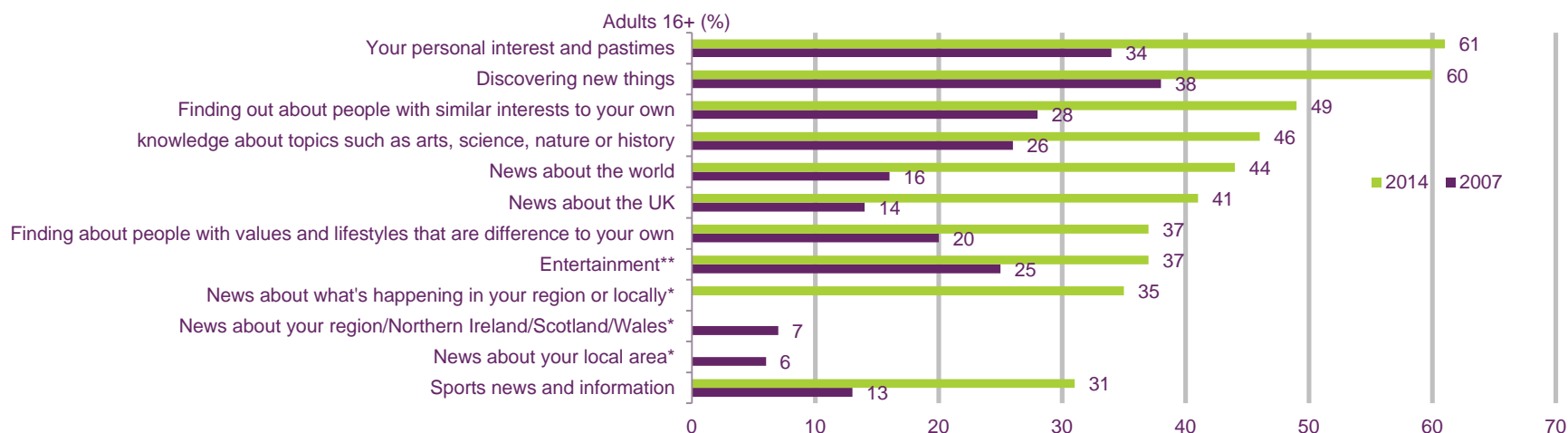
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- Internet as a source of content:** Increased internet take-up and consumption has been mirrored in the popularity of the internet as a source for different types of content. As seen in Figure 5, in 2014 the internet was a more popular source than in 2007 for all types of content asked about in our consumer research. In 2014, content about ‘your personal interests and pastimes’ was the most popular content sourced from the internet (61%). Of the types of content in Figure 5, the popularity of the internet as a source for all types of news increased the most between 2007 and 2014. The proportion of the adult population who claim to use the internet for “news about what’s happening in your region or locally” and “news about the world” was up 28 percentage points, while “news about the UK” was up 27 percentage points.

**Fig 5: Types of content for which the internet is a source: 2007 and 2014**



Source: Ofcom 's PSB Annual Report 2014. Base: All adults 16+ Q. Which of these different types of media available to you would you say you ever use as a source for...

- Importance of the internet:** Given a choice of media, Ofcom research found that around half of adults claimed that the internet was their most important source for “discovering new things” (51%) and their “personal interest and pastimes” (49%).
- Attitudes towards platforms:** Ofcom research found that a significant minority of consumers prefer Video on Demand (‘VoD’) services to broadcast audio-visual content. Respondents were asked to choose between two scenarios; only on-demand services where you choose from a library of programmes that can be watched when you want and only scheduled TV, where you choose between programmes shown at any one time across a range of TV channels. Around half of respondents (49%) chose the linear world, while 38% of respondents chose to have only VoD services.