

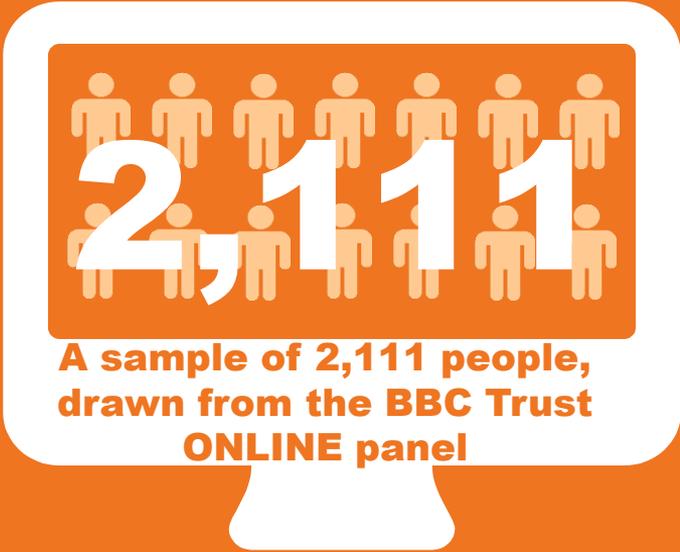
ICMUnlimited...

Future Priorities for the BBC: An Audience View

February 2015



Survey methodology



2,111

**A sample of 2,111 people,
drawn from the BBC Trust
ONLINE panel**

**Margin of error for questions
based on the full sample: +/-2.1%**



**England
Wales
Scotland
Northern Ireland**



**25th Nov
to
4th Dec 2014**

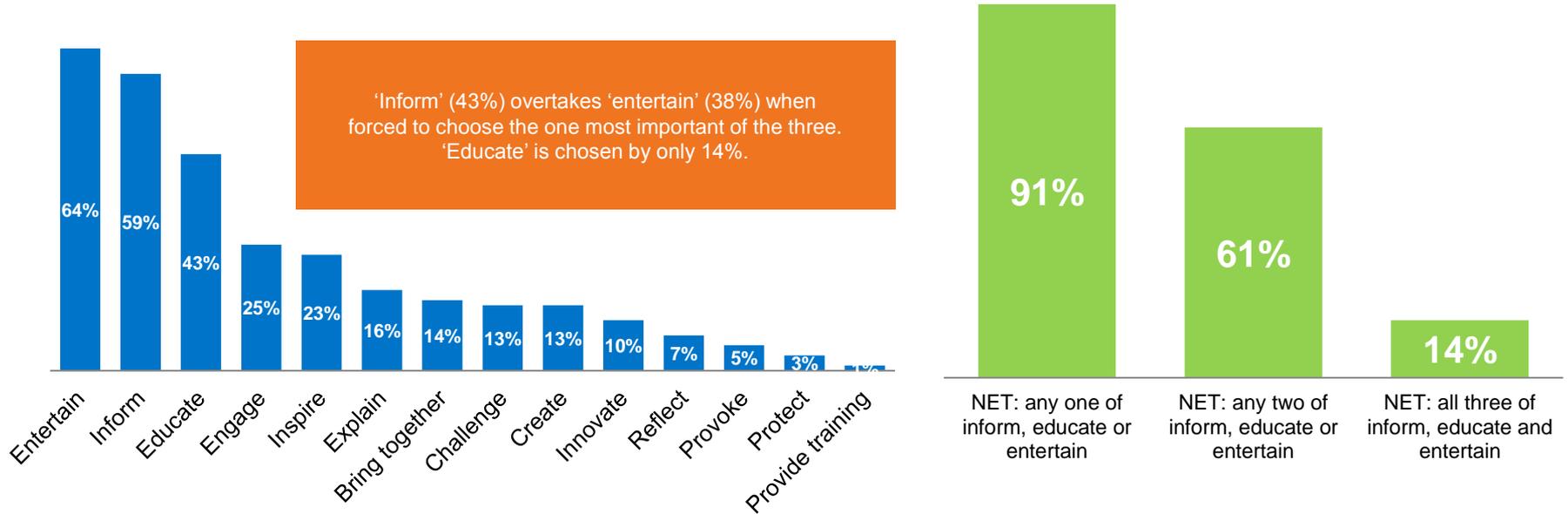
- **Quotas set by age, gender, nation and region**
- **Boost sample added for Northern Ireland**
- **Final dataset weighted to reflect UK population**

Main findings

- There is strong support for the BBC's current main mission to "inform, educate and entertain". Not only is the BBC thought to be doing well in delivering this, but its core proposition is thought by an overwhelming majority to be worth retaining.
- Every single area of future focus for the BBC is considered to be important by a majority of the public, but being impartial in all news and current affairs programming does establish itself at the top of the importance hierarchy. Providing good quality programmes and licence fee value for money also score highly.
- News is considered to be the most important type of content for the BBC to provide, particularly at a UK level. People in the Nations also place more importance on affairs closer to home, than do English-based residents. There is also a very wide range of other types of content, which a majority feel it is important for the BBC to provide.
- The idea that government/MPs should take charge of any governance function is strongly rejected, even for functions where the government currently has responsibility, such as setting the level of the licence fee. An independent body is thought best placed to take most responsibilities, although the public think BBC management should retain those linked to problem-solving and innovation.

What should be the BBC's mission?

The BBC's current mission strongly reflects what people think it should do, with 'inform, educate & entertain' easily leading the list of spontaneous choice options (although not in that order).



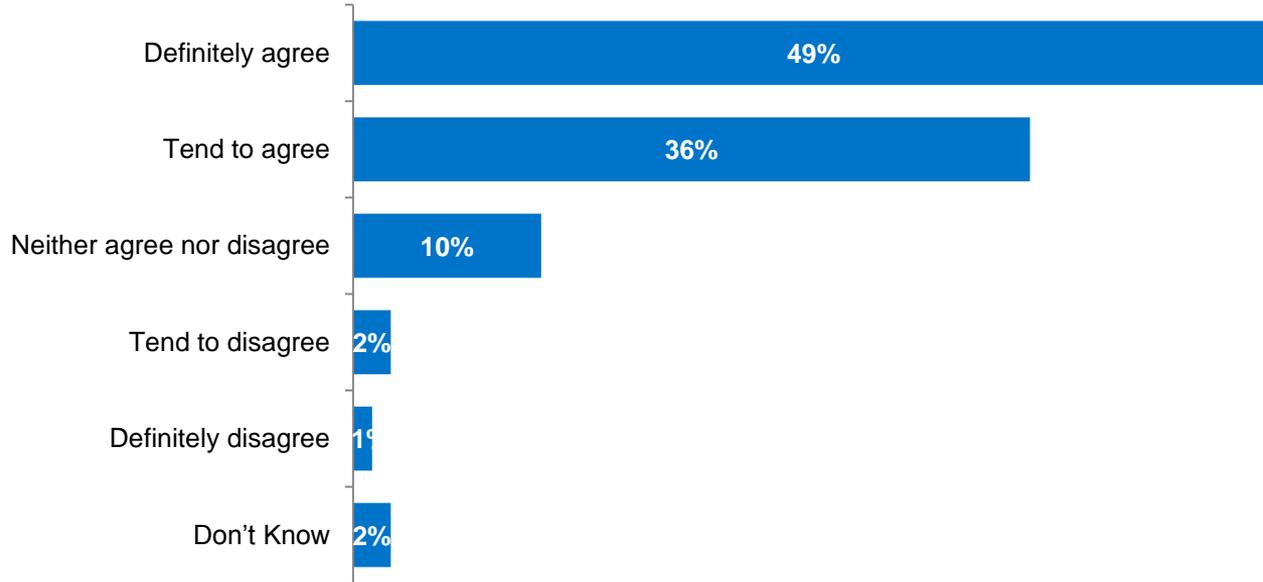
Q. I would like you to think generally about the BBC and what you think its mission should be. Here are some words that other people have used to describe what they feel the BBC should do. Please drop and drag up to three words that you think most apply?

Q. And if you had to choose from this list, which ONE of these three do you think is most important for the BBC to do? Randomise.

Base: All respondents (n=2,111)

Is 'inform, educate, entertain' the right mission for the BBC?

The public strongly believe the BBC ought to retain its mission to 'inform, educate & entertain' its audiences: in total, 85% agree that it should.

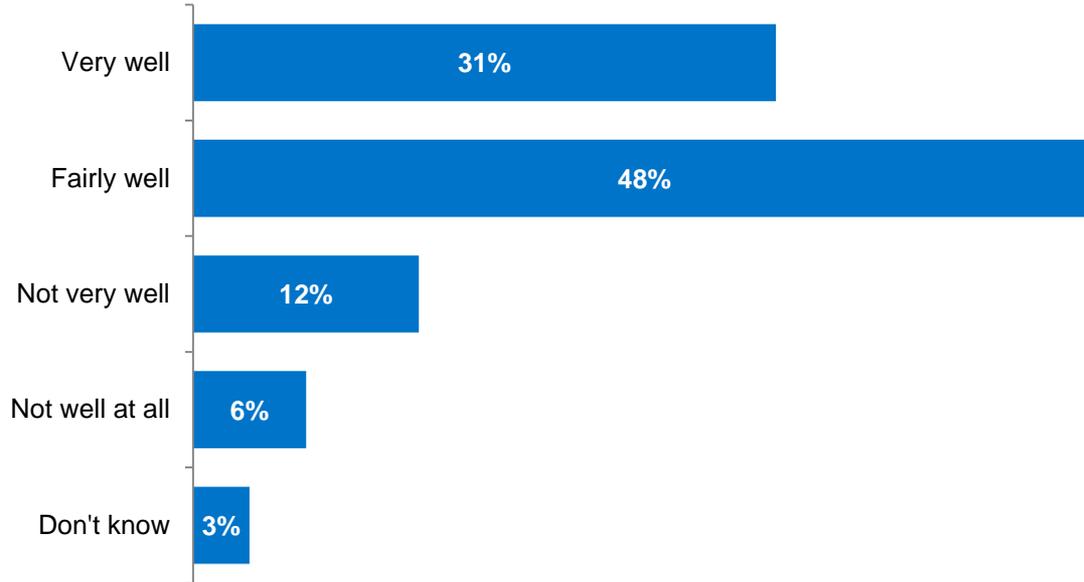


Q. The BBC's main mission is to "inform, educate and entertain" its audiences. To what extent do you agree or disagree that this should continue to be the BBC's main mission?

Base: All respondents (n=2,111)

How well does the BBC inform, educate, entertain?

Four in five think the BBC achieves its mission objectives.



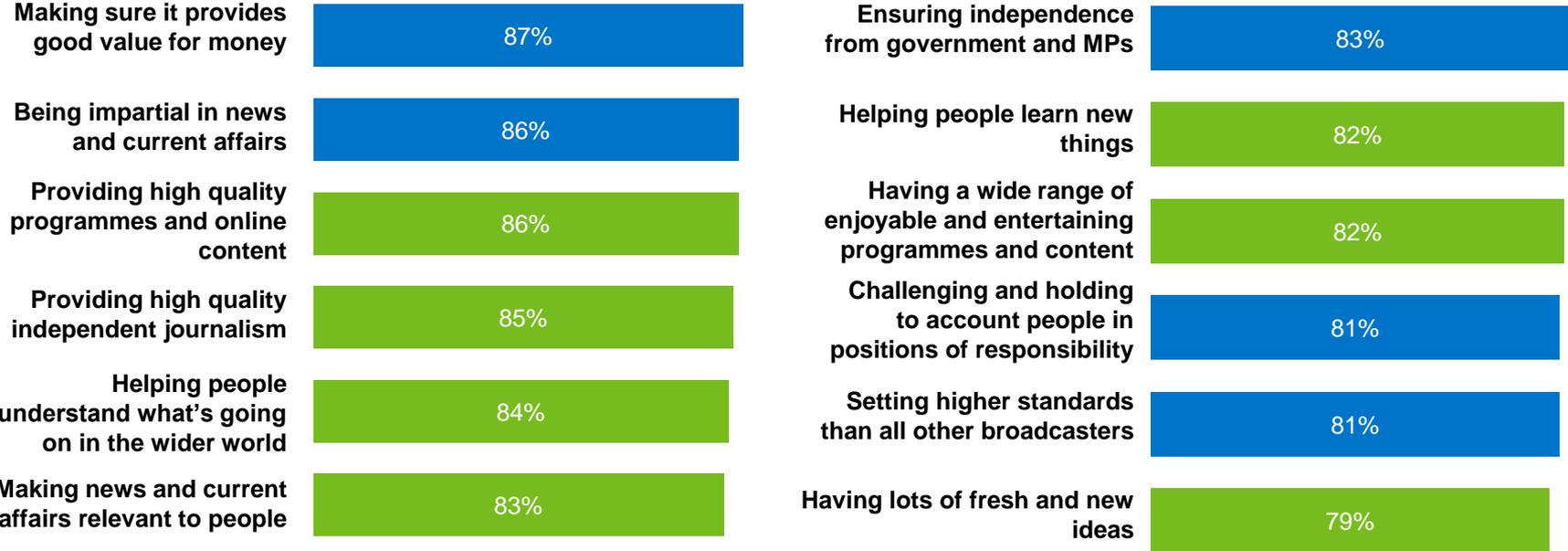
Q. And overall, how well do you think the BBC “informs, educates and entertains” its audiences through its TV and radio programmes and websites?

Base: All respondents (n=2,111)

Focus for the future (1 of 2)

A majority think that every suggested area of focus for the BBC is important. The first two statements (value for money and impartiality) are values that are not explicit within the current six public purposes.

% saying this priority is (very or quite) important



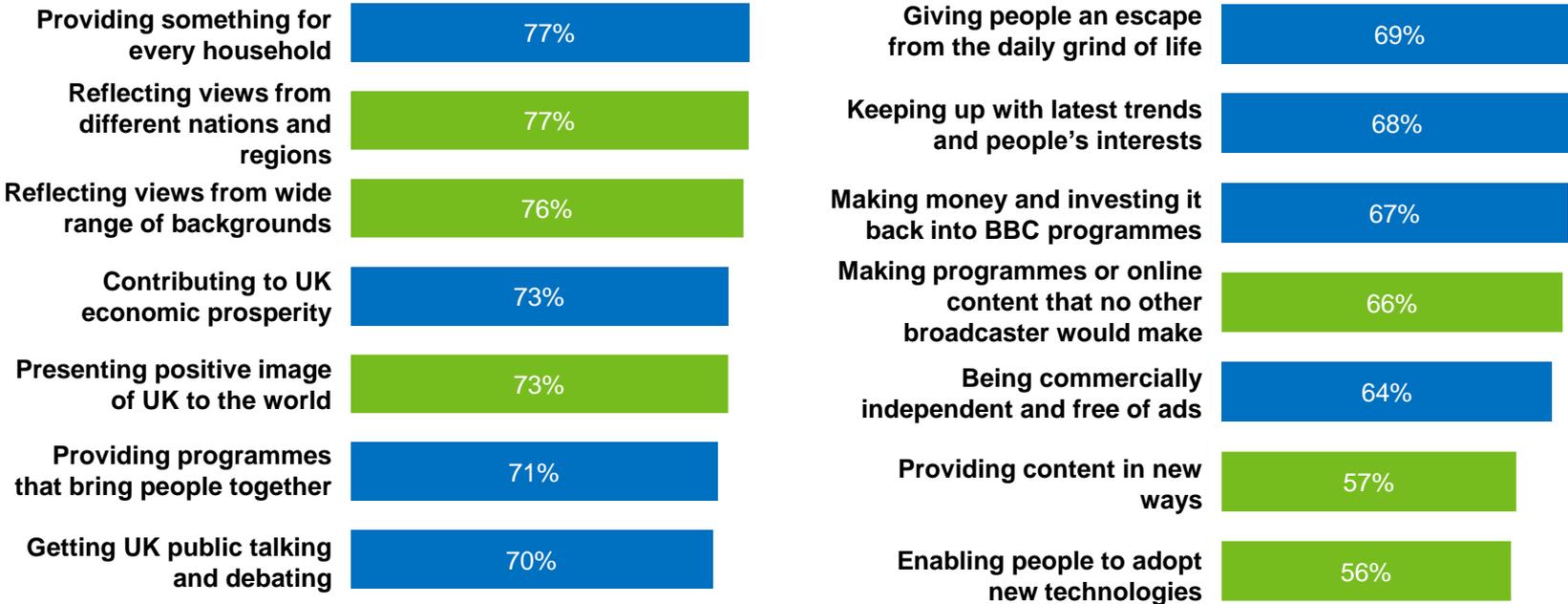
Q. When it comes to things that you think the BBC should focus on in the future, how important would you say each of the following are? Base: All respondents (n=2,111)

Existing purpose areas (blue bar) / Not covered in existing purposes (green bar)

Focus for the future (2/2)

Digital purposes are the two 'least' important areas of focus, but all priorities are still supported by a majority

% saying this priority is (very or quite) important



Q. When it comes to things that you think the BBC should focus on in the future, how important would you say each of the following are? Base: All respondents (n=2,111)

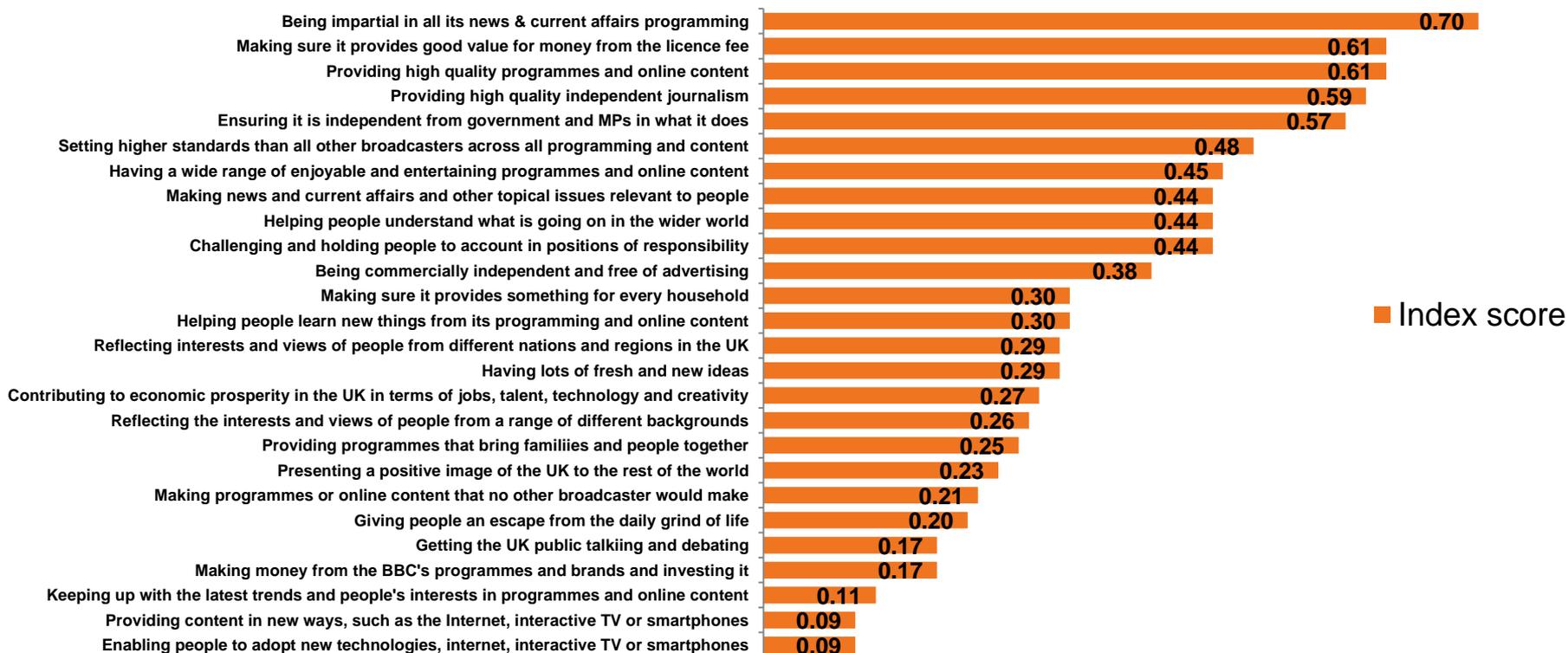
Existing purpose areas (green bar) | Not covered in existing purposes (blue bar)

Statistical techniques to understand importance

- Max Diff (Maximum Differentiation) designed for situations where all attributes are rated as important
- Helps cut through similarity in scores and determine which, in fact, are *most* (and *least*) important
- Model used the same priorities that had been rated for importance in the previous section
- Presented to respondents in multiple randomised sets of four, they had to select the most and the least important
- Repeated in a myriad of different combinations, until across sample all combinations were fully covered
- Output is an average importance score for each statement, shown as an index based on 0-1 (these are not percentages, and should not be read as such)
- Shows relative differences between the priorities tested e.g. Attribute A (score 0.7) is *twice* as important as Attribute B (score 0.35)

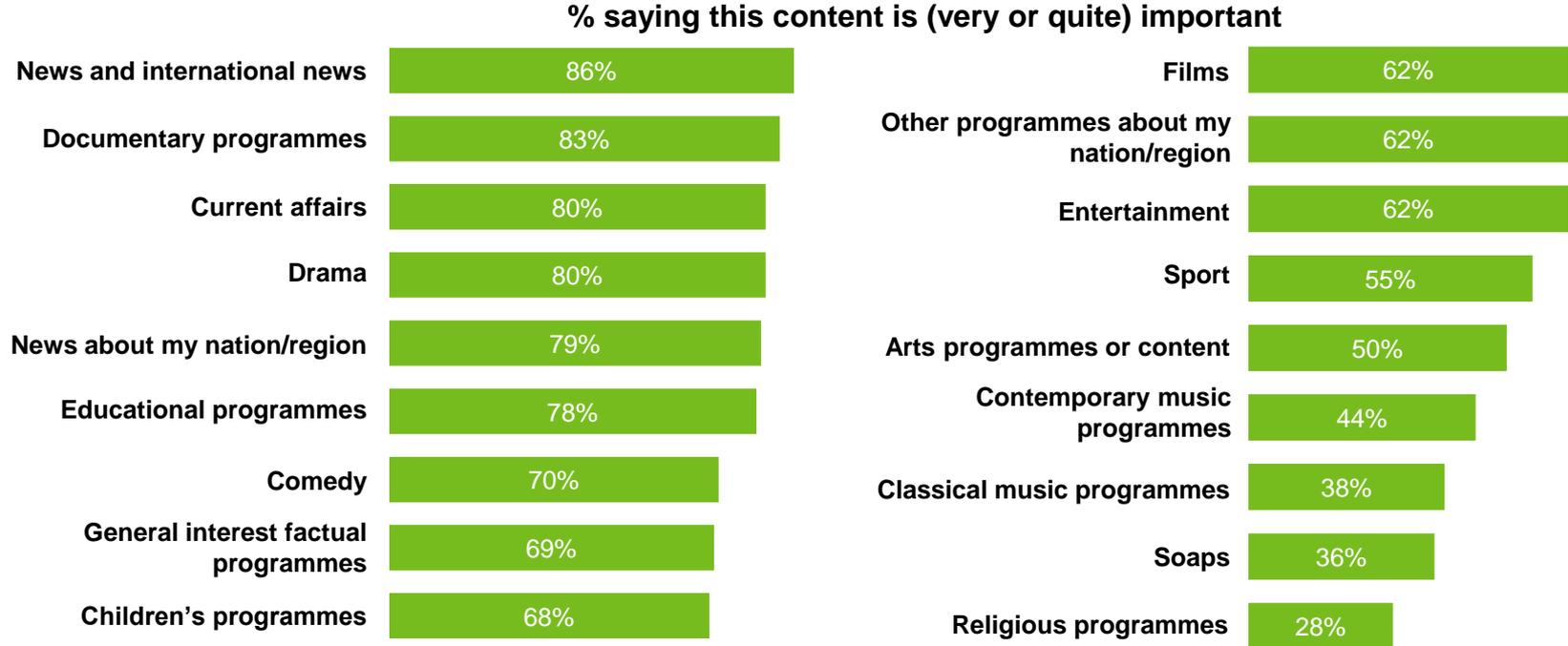
Max Diff Importance Scores

So, what is really important to people? There is clear separation between 'impartiality' and the rest, with value for money dropping to joint second. High quality programmes and journalism remain high on the list, as does independence from government. Setting higher standards than all other broadcasters moves up, to rank sixth.



Most important content

News is central, but many other types of content are also important, including documentary, current affairs, drama and educational programming. 14 out of the 18 areas are rated as important by at least 50%. Findings appear to reflect a 'citizen' rather than a 'consumer' perspective: Soaps and Sport score less highly, despite being watched by many.

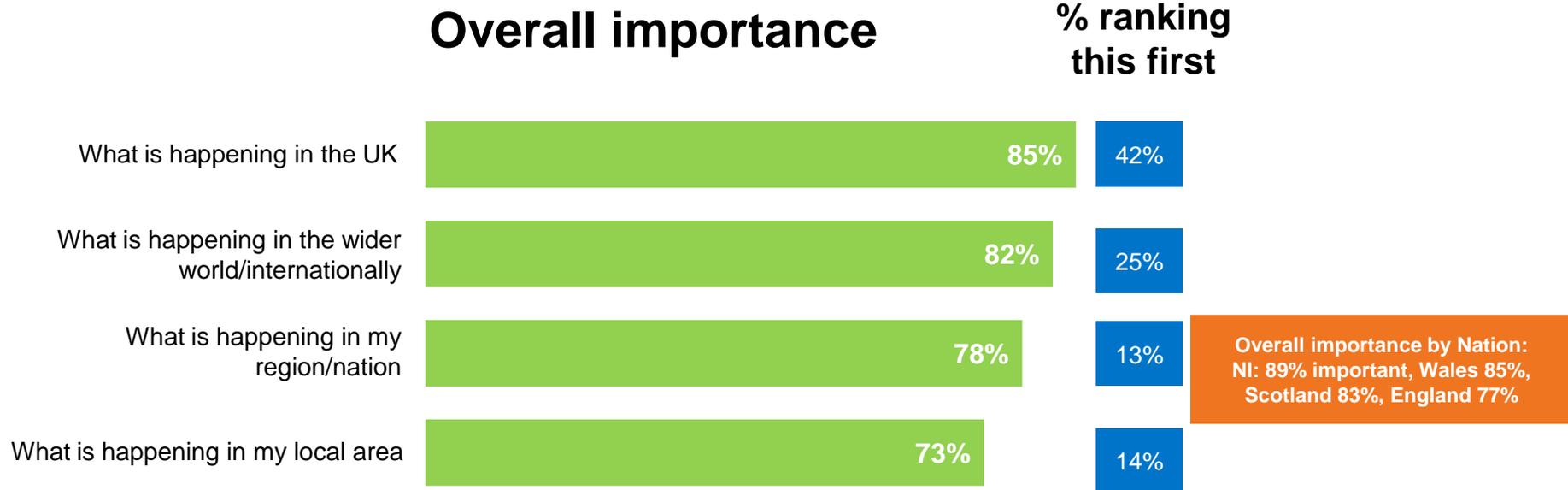


Q. How important do you think it is for the BBC as a whole to provide this type of programme or content?

Base: All respondents (n=2,111)

The importance of understanding what is happening in different geographies

The public strongly believe that all levels of geography should be fully covered by the BBC, but UK wide content is most important to people overall. The importance of nations and regions content is particularly high in the devolved nations of Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland.



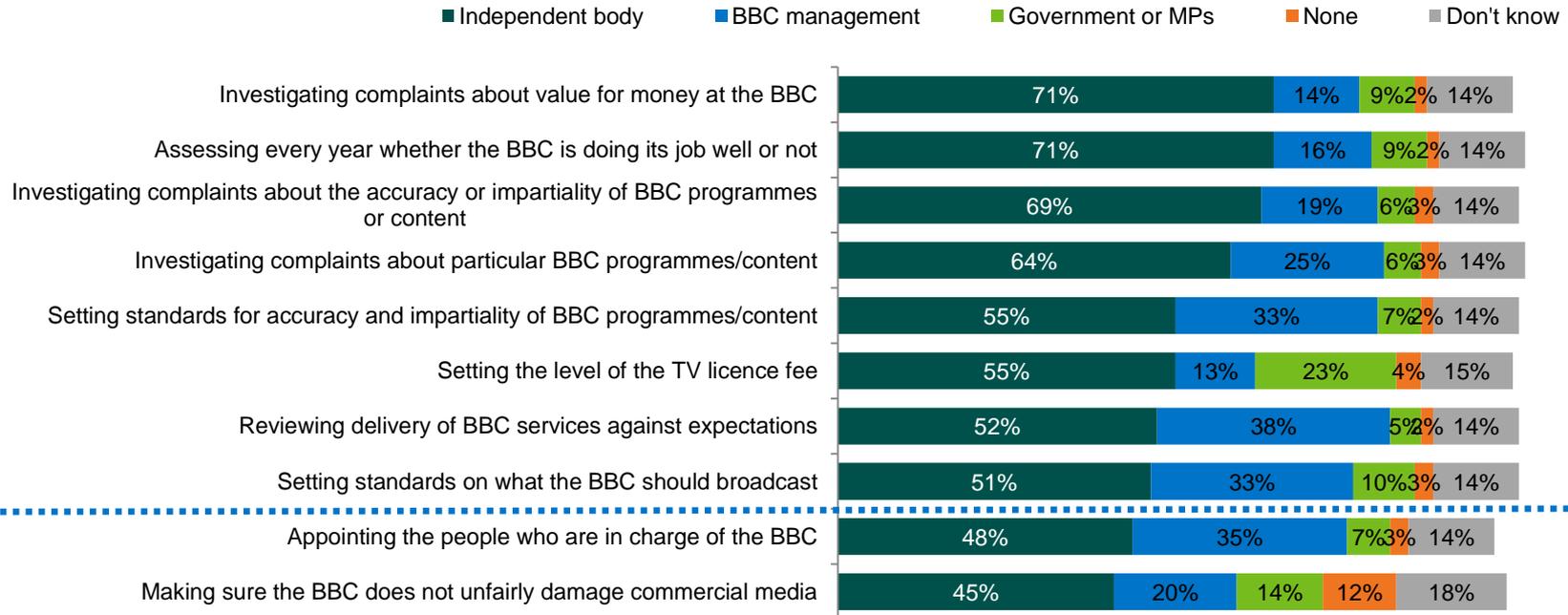
Q. How important do you think it is for the BBC (as a whole) to do each of the following things?
NB For option 3 'my region/nation', the questionnaire substituted either Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland or the respondent's region of England into the question. Base: All respondents (n=2,111)

Governance of the BBC in the future

- We asked about which different types of bodies should have responsibility for each of a list of 14 governance functions.
- Respondents were able to choose from (one or more of) the following options for each function:
 - The management of the BBC
 - An independent body representing licence fee payers
 - Government or MPs
 - Or none of the above three alternatives.
- We looked at principles, rather than detail (so no mentions of existing bodies such as the BBC Trust, Ofcom etc.)
- Most people chose only one of the options - only c10% of respondents opted to choose more than one.

Functions which should be carried out by an independent body

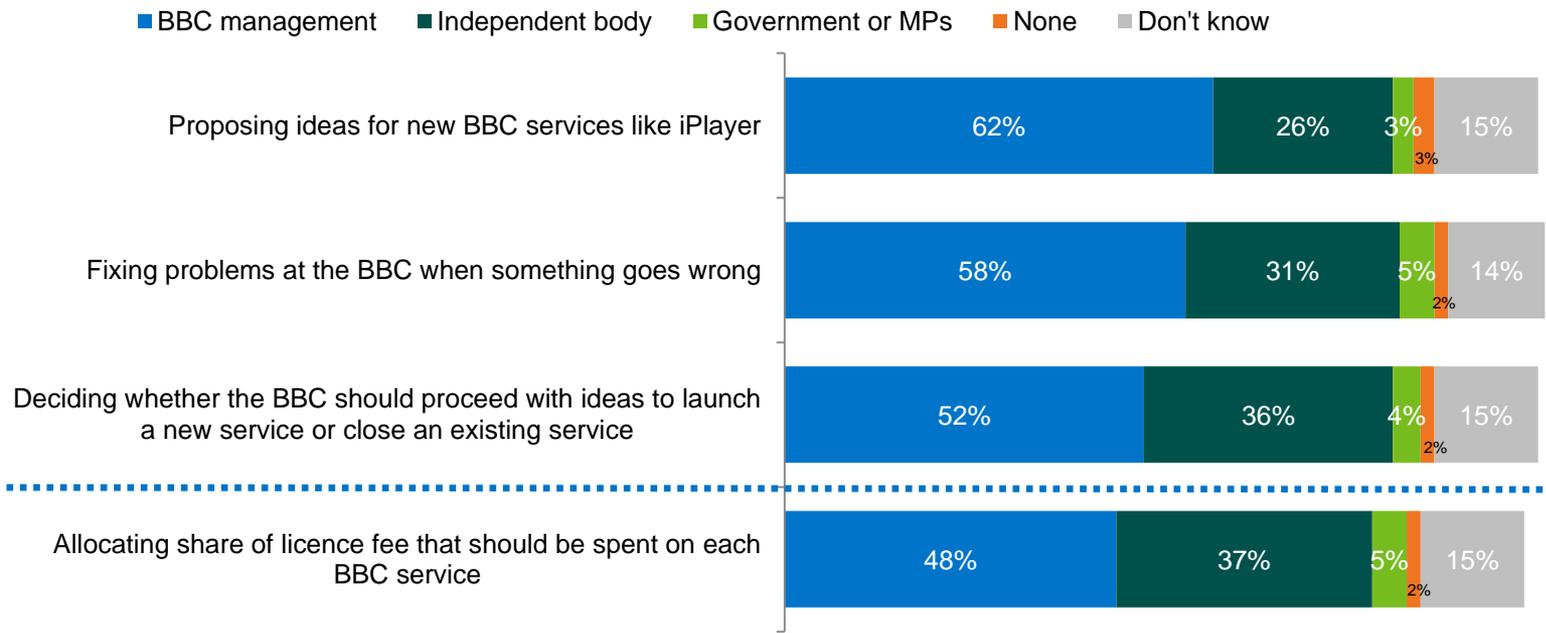
What is clear: the public do not want government to take control of any governance function (even those it currently has, such as setting the level of the licence fee). An independent body is largely first choice, particularly around complaint handling.



Q. I am going to show you a list of possible ways of holding the BBC to account, when it comes to what the BBC does and how it spends the Licence Fee. For each suggestion, please indicate which, if any, of the bodies you think should do this. Base: All respondents (n=2,111)
 Chart shows all the functions where an independent body was the highest answer given. Responses below the dotted line have no outright majority response.

Functions which should be carried out by BBC management

The public feel that BBC management should assume control over issues linked to innovation and problem solving – including launching/closing services.



Q. I am going to show you a list of possible ways of holding the BBC to account, when it comes to what the BBC does and how it spends the Licence Fee. For each suggestion, please indicate which, if any, of the bodies you think should do this. Base: All respondents (n=2,111)
Chart shows all the functions where BBC management was the highest answer given. Responses below the dotted line have no outright majority response.