

English-Speaking Canadians,
Protecting Canadian Culture, and News Balance:
National Broadcasting Policy Survey Conducted for
Friends of Canadian Broadcasting

COMPAS Inc.
Multi-Audience Research
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Background

Friends of Canadian Broadcasting engaged COMPAS to undertake a national, representative survey among 1000 Canadians.¹ The present document reports on English-speaking Canadians'² confidence in the different groups that may play a role in protecting Canadian identity and on their comparative views of major conventional television broadcasters. Other themes explored in the survey relate to perceived programming balance, confidence in the broadcasting system, and some cable-related issues currently before the Commission. Findings not reported herein can be found in previously released COMPAS/Friends reports.

Some key findings of fact are:

- English-speaking Canadians have the most confidence in the CBC to protect Canadian culture and identity. Among the private sector conventional broadcasters, CTV appears to elicit somewhat higher levels of confidence.
- English-speaking Canadians are inclined to feel that CTV is somewhat stronger than Global with respect to Canadian programming and spending on Canadian content while Global appears to be somewhat stronger when it comes to American programming;
- When just the two private sector networks are compared in respect of news trustworthiness, CTV emerges somewhat in the lead.

¹ Surveys of this size are deemed accurate to within 3.2 percentage points 19 times out of 20. Fieldwork was carried out by professional interviewers using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) during the period January 27-February 1, 2001. Principal investigators on this study are Conrad Winn, Ph.D. (613-237-4493) and Robert Laufer, MBA (416-598-0310).

² English-speaking Canadians represent n=775 of the respondents. Samples of this size are deemed accurate to within 3.8 percentage points 19 times out of 20.



CBC, Private Broadcasters, CRTC Lead in Public Trust

With respect to protecting Canadian culture and identity, the CBC leads in public trust while the private broadcasters and specialty channels follow in second place. Meanwhile the federal and provincial governments generate more modest levels of confidence, as evidenced in the table below.

“ I am going to read you the names of several groups. Please tell me how much confidence or trust you personally have in each group to protect Canadian culture and identity on television. You can do this by giving me a rating on a 7 point scale, where 7 means you have a very high level of trust or confidence and 1, the opposite...[rotate]”—Percent Scoring 5-7

	Anglos 2001
The CBC	74
The CTV Network	69
Specialty channels like Much Music/TSN or the History Channel	64
The Global TV Network	60
The CRTC	58
The federal government	45
Consumer groups	43
Your provincial government	41
Cable television companies	37
Telephone companies	36
Satellite television companies	30

Note: Items in the preceding table are rank-ordered by top three scores (i.e. 5-7 out of 7).



Comparing the TV Networks

CBC Ranks First in Confidence Followed by CTV and Global

English-speaking Canadians tend to have somewhat more confidence in the news reporting of the CBC than of the two private sector contenders. That is a reasonable inference to be drawn from findings that English-speakers are about as likely to choose the CBC as the “most balanced” of the three as they are to choose CTV or Global combined—40% CBC vs. 24% CTV and 18% Global with 16% having no opinion. Respondents were asked: “Comparing [rotate] CBC, CTV, and Global, which, if any, has the most balanced reporting of news about Canada's federal political parties?”

Comparing [rotate] CBC, CTV, and Global, which, if any, has the most balanced reporting of news about Canada's federal political parties

	Total of 1 st and 2 nd Responses
CBC	40
CTV	24
Global	18
UNPROMPTED: All the same	3
UNPROMPTED: None	3
UNPROMPTED: No opinion	16

Views on CTV and Global

Perceptions of the private sector networks were subsequently explored in more depth. CTV emerges as the network that English-speakers perceive as more effective at delivering Canadian programming while Global Television emerges as the network perceived as more effective at delivering American programming.

The actual question and distribution of responses are presented in the table below. Roughly half of English-speakers see CTV as stronger “when it comes to Canadian programming” and as “spend[ing] more on Canadian content.” About one-fourth see Global as the stronger of the two in these respects. By contrast, about half see Global



as “stronger when it comes to American programming” compared to one-fourth who name CTV as the stronger in this respect. It should be noted that about one-fifth offer no opinion, a finding that suggests that a sizeable number of Canadians have too opaque an image of the two networks to form an opinion.

Respondents were also asked to identify the private sector network that delivered the more “trusted news.” When respondents were requested to make such a distinction, CTV emerged with a lead—46% for CTV, Global 26%, same 7%, neither 2%, no opinion 19%.

Comparing only [rotate] CTV and Global, which do you think [rotate]

	CTV	Global	Both the same	Neither	No Opinion
Is stronger when it comes to Canadian programming	51	26	5	1	17
Is stronger when it comes to American programming	24	52	4	1	20
Spends more on Canadian content	52	21	4	1	23
Delivers the more trusted news	46	26	7	2	19

Note: The percentages shown in this table are row percentages

Conclusion

COMPAS’s national survey for the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting reports that among the private sector conventional broadcasters, English-speaking Canadians have somewhat higher confidence in CTV to protect Canadian culture and identity. English-speaking Canadians are also inclined to feel that CTV is stronger than Global with respect to Canadian programming and spending on Canadian content while Global appears to be stronger when it comes to American programming. Finally, when just the two private sector networks are compared in respect of news trustworthiness, CTV emerges somewhat in the lead.

