

Television takes the top spot

Poll gauges media viewing and listening habits

The second segment of Information International's opinion poll exploring the different media of communication, as well as cultural and literary habits in Lebanon, will focus on the media of TV and radio. Inclinations and perceptions of what's offered on local TV and satellite channels, as well as on radio stations, are studied below.

The poll is based on a sample of 600 Greater Beirut residents, with a gender distribution of 41.2% female and 58.8% male respondents. The poll showed that 99% of the respondents have a TV in their home, 92.5% have a radio and 79% have a satellite connection.

A look at TV viewing

Widespread TV viewing was detected by the poll, with almost 88% of respondents acknowledging regular TV viewing habits, as shown in **Graph 1**. This result reveals a prevalent TV culture when compared with the 63% readership figure explored in Part I of the poll (see Issue 12 for details).

Moreover, 81.3% of the respondents who had stated that they do not read owing to a lack of time were found to be watching an average of 1.7 hours of TV per day.

Time of day

The majority of viewers, or 62.2%, said they tune in during evening hours, whereas 35.3% watch TV at different hours of the day. The lowest viewership ratings were detected at noon, when a mere 1% of those polled tune in, followed by 1.5% who watch TV in the morning.

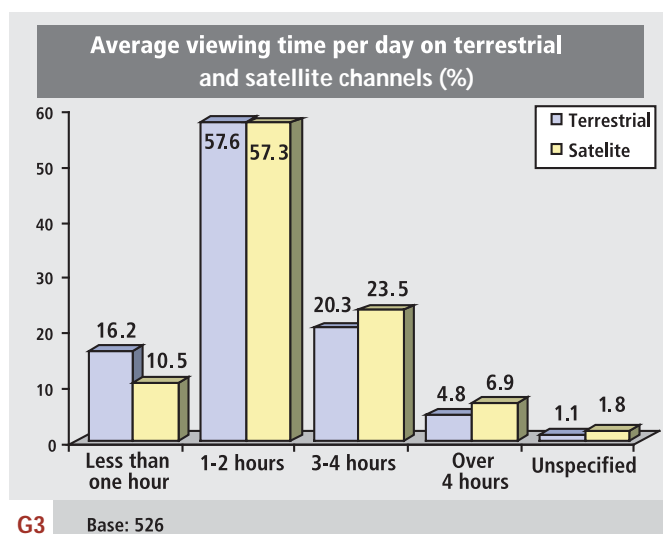
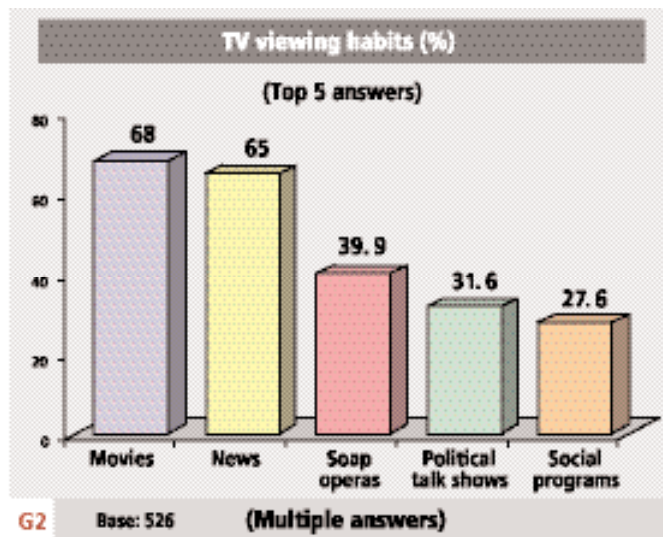
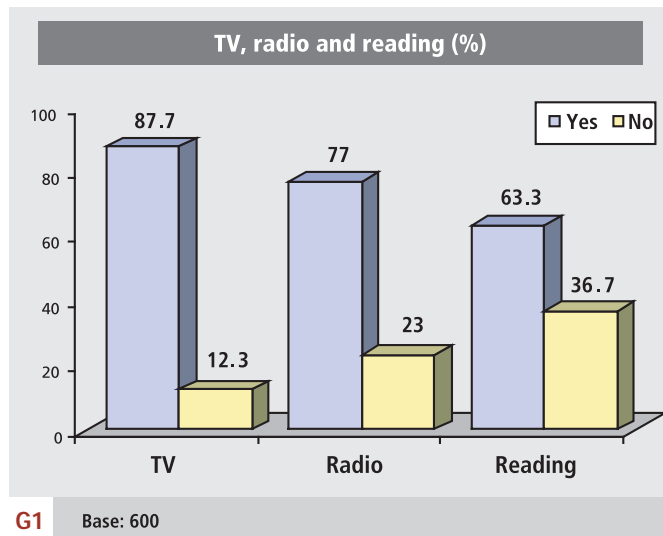
TV viewing by age

A look within the different age brackets revealed that TV viewing within the 55-64 age group stood at 93.5%, which was the highest rate in relation to other brackets. TV viewing within the 35-44 age bracket was next with 93.3%, followed by the 18-24 age group with 88.5%.

Favored programs

Movies were rated as the number one attraction by 68% of respondents, as shown in **Graph 2**. More specifically, foreign films were preferred by 39.9%, compared with Arabic films at 28.1%. The number two viewership category was the news, according to 65% of those polled, followed by regular series such as soap operas, with 39.9% viewership.

In this category, it was revealed that audiences considered Arabic soaps preferable to Lebanese productions. Political talk shows were favorites for 31.6% of viewers; social programs came next at 27.6%, comedy shows at 21.5% and sports programs came last at 20.5%.



The majority of those who watch terrestrial channels recorded an average of 1–2 hours of viewing time per day. The result is comparable to the viewing time of the majority of satellite TV viewers, as indicated in [Graph 3](#).

An exercise in comparison

Foreign productions are generally perceived as superior to local ones by the majority of respondents. While one third of those polled characterized Lebanese programs as 'bad' or 'silly', the figure drops to 13% for foreign programs. In addition, a greater percentage of TV viewers described foreign shows as either 'excellent' or 'good', as indicated in [Graph 4](#).

Those who did not favor Lebanese programs said news, political programs and movies were their viewing preferences, and their viewing habits showed that the majority were tuning in to Al Jazeera and satellite movie channels.

Satisfaction with broadcasts on Lebanese channels was mostly average, according to 67% of viewers in the poll, compared with 12.5% who were very satisfied and 11.8% who were unsatisfied. The remaining 8.7% did not have an opinion on the matter.

Radio

Listeners represented 77% of the sample, as shown in [Graph 1](#), with 70.8% of the listeners tuning into the radio from their homes, 53.7% from their cars and 20.8% from the workplace (multiple answers shown). [Graph 5](#) illustrates the top listener preference as music, followed by news, religious broadcasts, political shows and sports broadcasts.

Out of those who listen to music, Arabic music was favored over Western tunes, at 96% and 51%, respectively (see [Graph 6](#)). In both cases, contemporary music was favored over songs from the past. Half of those who listen to Arab songs favored modern tunes, and 58% of those who tune in to foreign music also preferred the same. In the foreign music category, classical music ranked highest, with 51.7% of the listeners, followed by pop music (20.9%), rap (16.1%), rock (13.7%) and jazz (10%).

Favorite singers

The top three favored Arab singers from the past were Um Kalthoum, according to 26.2% of respondents, followed by Abdel Halim Hafez (20.8%) and Fayrouz (16.2%). In the contemporary Arab category, Fadel Shaker ranked highest (11.4%), with Asala next (9.7%), followed by George Wassouf (9.4%).

The top foreign vocalists from earlier times were Julio Iglesias (31.3%), Charles Aznavour (8.6%) and Dalida (6.3%). Shakira headed the contemporary list, with 24.3%, followed by Enrique Iglesias (14.2%) and Celine Dion (10.7%). n

