

# From Callaghan to Kosovo:

CHANGING TRENDS IN BRITISH  
TELEVISION NEWS 1975–1999



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TELEVISION NEWS 1975–1999**

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# Introduction

This study was funded jointly by the BBC and the Independent Television Commission (ITC) to identify any changes in broadcast news content over the last quarter of the 20th century. Given the acknowledged and continuing role of television news in keeping the nation informed of national and international issues, we believe this research is an important contribution to the debate on whether broadcasting is heading 'downmarket'.

In total, our study analysed over 700 television news bulletins spanning 24 years (1975-1999) on the four mass audience television channels which have daily evening bulletins, including all four evening bulletins on the two main channels. It is the most comprehensive investigation to date on trends in television news, on whether content is changing and in which direction.

Our report has three main sections and four appendices. Section 1 is a brief explanation of how the study was done to ensure that results were representative of the years being studied. Section 2 contains results for each of the six bulletins analysed with some broad interpretations of the data. Section 3 consists of our overall interpretation of trends. More detailed descriptions of the sampling, coding frame, analysis and key events in the years being studied are contained in the four appendices.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank both the ITC and the BBC for agreeing to fund such an extensive longitudinal study of television news. We believe that the data resulting from this research will prove a valuable resource for policy makers and researchers not just in the UK but around the world. It will hopefully be used as a benchmark for comparative studies in other countries as well as for further research in the UK.

Although the ITC and BBC have seen and commented on our interpretations of the data, they have not sought to editorialise or influence our report. The analysis, interpretation and conclusions contained in this report are our responsibility alone.

We would also like to thank Bill Gabbett for his meticulous contribution to the coding work; staff at the BBC and ITN archives who were always friendly and helpful in responding to our requests for assistance; and staff at BBC news, BBC corporate and ITN who from the beginning welcomed us and allowed us access to the necessary offices and equipment. This project would not have been possible without their help.

Finally, our thanks to Bob Towler of the ITC for his support and encouragement throughout and for helping us to ensure that the results of this study reach as wide an audience as possible.

# 1. Methodology

## **i. Sampling**

Our priority was to ensure that we covered an even spread of years over a 25 year period, and that we avoided election years (which would distort the level of political news). The final years selected were therefore: 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 1999.

Within each year, we selected a random 25 days for analysis. The process used for selecting those days to ensure that they properly represented the whole year is described in Appendix 1.

Our study embraced all daily evening bulletins on terrestrial television. We therefore analysed the *BBC 6 o'clock and 9 o'clock news*; *ITN's Early Evening News* and *News at Ten* (subsequently *ITV Evening News* and *Nightly News*); *Channel 4 News*; and *Channel 5 News*.

Once the individual bulletins had been identified, for coding purposes we used the microfilm transcripts held in the BBC for every year except 1999, for which we were able to use the new computer system. For ITN, we used microfilm transcripts for 1975, 1980 and 1985 and archive recordings of bulletins for the remaining years.

## **ii. Coding**

Each story was coded for content and format. The content coding frame was piloted, refined and expanded to 31 categories. The final coding frames are given in Appendix 2.

Foreign news was separately coded by the following regions: USA; Europe; Third World; Rest of the World; International (for stories involving combinations or international organisations like UN, UNESCO etc.).

During the research process a representative 10% of randomly selected bulletins were coded by two researchers. Any variance was discussed and reviewed so that they could continue within an agreed framework. Initial variance was around 10%, which declined to virtually zero.

## **iii. Definitions and interpretation of data**

For better understanding of the long-term trends, we have bundled the 31 categories together at two levels:

- Level one: broadsheet; tabloid; foreign.
- Level two: political affairs (politics, European Union issues, and foreign relations); social policy (education, health, social affairs, environment, transport, and culture); and 'light' news (royalty, human interest, showbusiness and humour).

We are conscious that the terms ‘tabloid’ and ‘broadsheet’ carry particular connotations: the former is generally seen as pejorative, the latter as virtuous. We have tried to find some other descriptive terms which might be more obviously neutral and less open to such misinterpretation, but all synonymous paired opposites such as ‘light’ and ‘heavy’ or ‘popular’ and ‘serious’ suffer the same problem. We have therefore kept the broadsheet/tabloid dichotomy, but wish to emphasise from the outset that these are used throughout this report as neutral and descriptive rather than judgmental terms. The table below illustrates how each of the 31 coding categories was allocated to one of these headings.

<b>BROADSHEET</b>	<b>TABLOID</b>
<b>Politics/economic policy</b>	<b>Crime</b>
<b>Business/industry/finance</b>	<b>Consumer</b>
<b>Social affairs</b>	<b>Tragedy</b>
<b>Legal</b>	<b>Weather (general)</b>
<b>Foreign relations/diplomacy</b>	<b>Sport</b>
<b>European Union issues</b>	<b>Royalty</b>
<b>Unrest/civil disturbance</b>	<b>Showbiz/entertainment</b>
<b>War</b>	<b>Human interest/animal stories</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Humour/quirky stories</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>Expeditions/adventure</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Employment/industrial relations</b>	
<b>Environment/ecology/planning</b>	
<b>Natural disasters</b>	
<b>Science/technology</b>	
<b>Transport</b>	
<b>Religion</b>	
<b>Culture/media/arts</b>	
<b>Moral/ethical issues</b>	
<b>Military/national security</b>	

Inevitably, there are difficult subjective decisions to make about what might count as a ‘broadsheet’ or ‘tabloid’ story, and in making such a crude distinction some grey areas become cast as black or white. Some might question, for example, whether transport issues should be treated as ‘broadsheet’ or consumer affairs as ‘tabloid’.

We have deliberately taken a fairly conservative view of what might be described as ‘broadsheet’. Our priority throughout was to make the research and analysis process transparent, so that any questioning of the findings could be undertaken on an informed basis. For those who wish to have access to the data in their original 31-category form, this will shortly be available on the University of Westminster web site and can be provided on request.

All percentages given in the report are the proportion of total news output for that bulletin for each year. This proportion is measured in terms of the amount of *time* devoted to stories, rather than the *number* of stories.

#### **iv. Qualifications**

As ever in content analysis, some stories were difficult to categorise. We rejected any double coding, so borderline stories were given a single content code based on focus and context. Coding was concerned only with content, and no account could be taken of differences in treatment either between channels or over time (see below).

Occasionally, bulletins on selected days for a particular channel were missing or incomplete. Where possible, we selected the equivalent day from the previous or following week. As a last resort, we omitted that bulletin altogether rather than have an incomplete picture – but this was a surprisingly rare occurrence. Out of 725 bulletins identified for analysis altogether, only eight had to be excluded without a substitute. Five of these were Channel 5 bulletins, for which the existence of recordings appeared to be more unreliable.

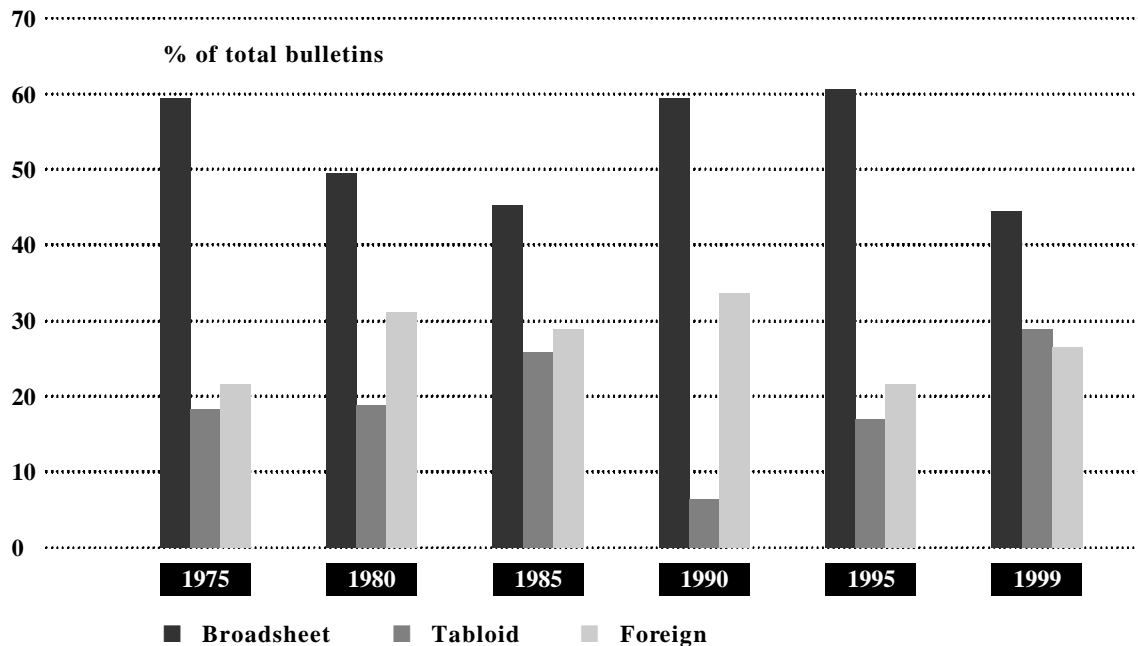
The *ITN Early Evening* and *News at Ten* figures for 1999 are based on four bulletins only, covering the month of February until the schedule changed. In presenting our data, we have shown the 1999 results separately for the old ITN bulletins and the new *ITV Evening and Nightly News* bulletins. In practice, as our published work for the ITC has shown, there has so far been little significant difference in content (details can be found on the ITC web site at: [www.itc.org.uk/documents/upl\\_222.doc](http://www.itc.org.uk/documents/upl_222.doc)).

Finally, it is important to point out the limitations of any content analysis which quantifies editorial content. Such studies do not, by definition, take into account more subjective issues such as presentation, language or treatment of stories. The same story could be covered for an identical period of time on two bulletins, but the manner in which they are approached, the pictures and commentary which accompany the story and the way in which they are introduced can vary significantly. Such variations will not be recorded in a quantified approach, and therefore content analysis alone will not give a complete story about trends in tabloidisation.

# 2. Results

## i. BBC Six o'clock News

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
<b>Broadsheet</b>	59.5	49.8	45.2	59.8	60.7	44.6
<b>Tabloid</b>	18.4	18.8	25.9	6.5	17.0	28.9
<b>Foreign</b>	21.7	31.2	28.9	33.7	21.6	26.5



The volume of broadsheet coverage on the BBC 6 fell gradually in the 1980s from a high of 60%, then rose to its former level in 1990 and 1995. The last period, however, saw a substantial fall to 45%, the lowest level of broadsheet news in 25 years. We believe there are two explanations for this shift.

First, real fluctuations in 'hard' political news: in 1975, for example, there was continuing conflict between government and trades unions, while 1990 saw the unfolding political drama which culminated in Mrs Thatcher's resignation. Second, there was almost certainly a deliberate shift in the BBC's editorial agenda for this bulletin following its News Review in the early nineties.

Trends in tabloid coverage on the 6 reinforce this assumption and suggest that the BBC news re-launch – itself perhaps a response to competition from Channel 5 and the new ITV bulletins – was taken as an opportunity to make the bulletin more suited to an early evening audience. After reaching an all-time low in 1990 (partly due to events and partly, we believe, to a new editorial direction for BBC news and current affairs in the late 1980s), tabloid content rose to a 25 year high in 1999. This is more

than twice the amount of tabloid news on the 9 o'clock news, and is the first time that the two bulletins contrast so significantly.

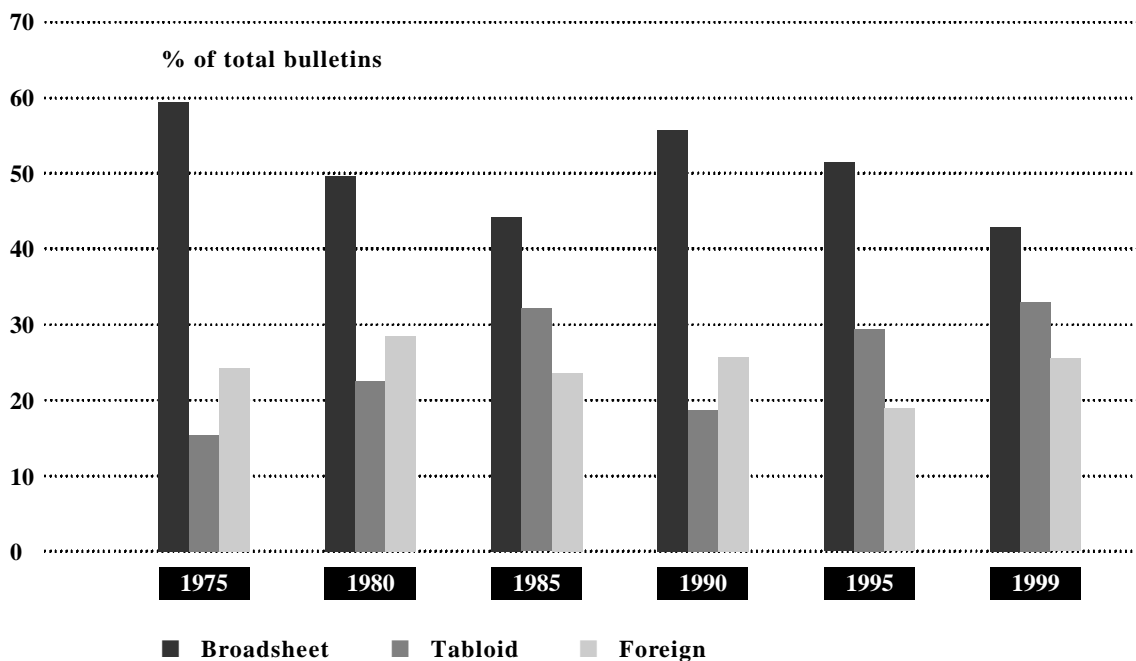
Nineteen ninety-nine stands out as the peak of foreign coverage on the 6, which is unsurprising, given the dominant foreign stories of that year: the Gulf war and the continuing collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. After falling slightly in 1995, the volume of foreign news had risen again by 1999. Given what appears to be a shift in editorial policy for the BBC 6, the continuing level of foreign coverage is impressive. It may have been distorted to some extent by the war in Kosovo and its repercussions, but it still remains true that over a quarter of the most watched news bulletin on television is devoted to foreign reporting and that – if anything – this has increased since the 1970s.

## ii. ITN Early Evening News

The pattern for broadsheet news on the *ITN Early Evening News* (EEN) is almost identical to the BBC 6 until 1990, also starting from an all-time high in 1975. There is the beginnings of a divergence in 1990 which accelerates in 1995, but by 1999 the figures have again converged. This is entirely because of the substantial drop in broadsheet reporting on the BBC 6. There has been a steady downward trend in broadsheet coverage on the EEN since 1990, and by 1999 it had reached its lowest point in 25 years.

Trends in tabloid coverage on the EEN mirror those for broadsheet news. From its lowest level in 1975, the proportion rises in 1980 and again in 1985 and dips during 1990 almost certainly because of the unusual amount of serious domestic and international news. There is then a steep rise in 1995 and again in 1999 to the point where it comprised one third of EEN bulletins – a trend that is apparently continued in the new *ITV Evening News* (see below).

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
<b>Broadsheet</b>	59.5	49.8	44.3	55.8	51.4	43.0
<b>Tabloid</b>	15.4	22.6	32.2	18.7	29.5	33.0
<b>Foreign</b>	24.2	28.5	23.5	25.6	19	25.6

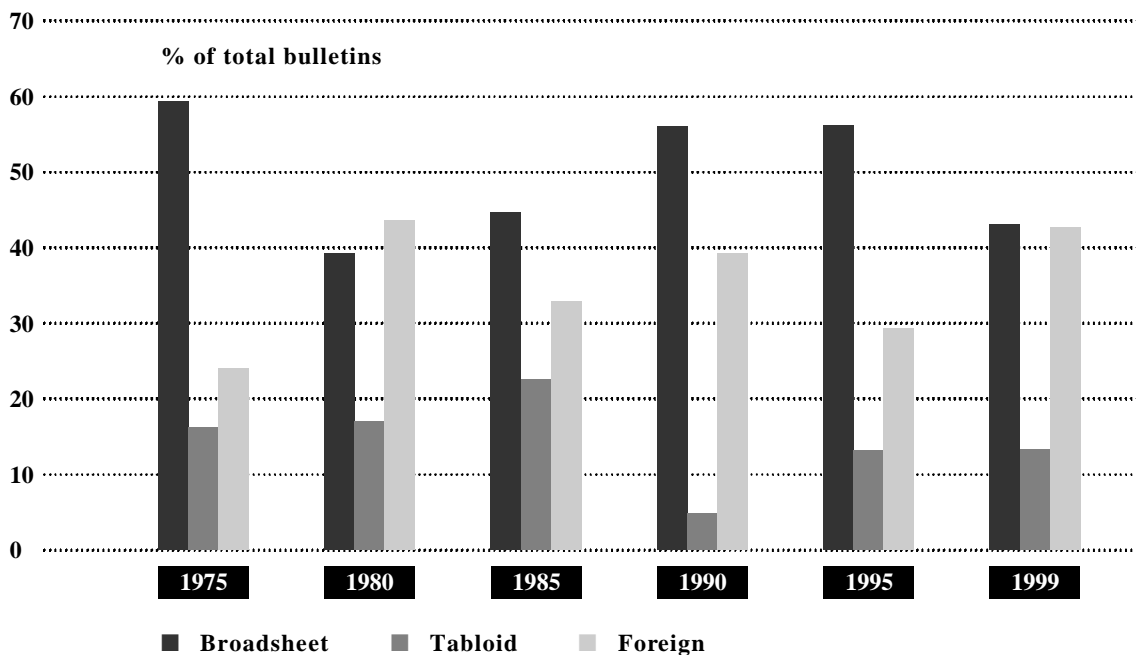


Although the pattern is much the same as the BBC 6, the path of divergence started earlier than with broadsheet news. From 1980 onwards, the EEN had significantly more tabloid news and only closed the gap in 1999 because of the demonstrable change in BBC coverage. The difference in the changes over time becomes clearer when the first and last years are compared: by 1999, ITN's EEN had more than twice as much tabloid coverage as it did in 1975 whereas the equivalent increase for the BBC was just over 50%.

The foreign news agenda for the EEN is identical to the fluctuations on the BBC 6 and overall only slightly lower. As with the BBC, the high coverage years are 1980 and 1990, the low point is 1995, and foreign news coverage in the final year was higher than in 1975. Both bulletins have therefore demonstrated their ability to accommodate important international stories when the need arises. More importantly, despite its apparent shift towards more tabloid domestic content, the EEN maintained a consistent level of around a quarter of bulletin devoted to foreign news over the whole 25 year period.

### iii. BBC Nine o'clock News

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
<b>Broadsheet</b>	59.7	39.2	44.6	56.0	56.3	43.0
<b>Tabloid</b>	16.2	17.1	22.6	4.9	13.2	13.3
<b>Foreign</b>	24.0	43.6	32.9	39.2	29.7	42.8



After a substantial dip between 1975 and 1980 – almost entirely due to the rise in foreign coverage – broadsheet coverage in the BBC 9 rose steadily until 1995, with a significant rise between 1985 and 1990. This was the period of reorganisation in news and current affairs, and probably reflects a deliberate policy shift towards a more serious agenda. The substantial drop in broadsheet coverage for 1999 should be read in conjunction with the steep rise in foreign reporting (see below).

The level of tabloid news in the BBC 9 over the last 25 years is perhaps the best indication of a continuing commitment by the BBC to covering serious issues. It has never comprised more than a quarter of the 9's bulletins, and dropped dramatically in 1990 to below 5% – reflecting the domestic and foreign political upheavals that dominated that year. Since then, it appears to have settled down to around 13% of bulletins, a little less than the 1970s.

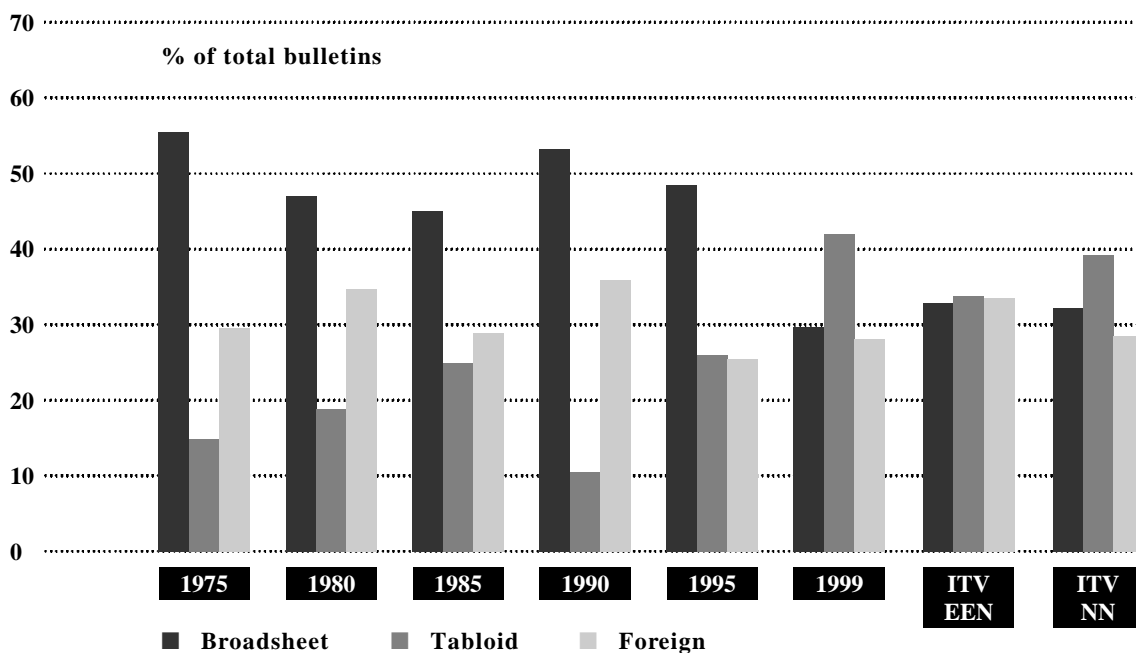
Foreign coverage on the 9 has fluctuated, apparently reflecting the nature and existence of foreign news stories. From a low of 24% in 1975, coverage almost doubled five years later in the wake of the American hostage crisis in Iran, the presidential elections, and the cold war implications of Russia's invasion of Afghanistan. Similarly, the figure of 43% in 1999 reflects extensive coverage of the war in Kosovo and the ensuing refugee and military problems.

Overall, the volume of serious coverage in the 9 has never dipped below three-quarters of total bulletins, and has consistently exceeded 80%. If there is any discernible change at all between now and 1975, it is an overall reduction of tabloid news with the balance distributed between serious domestic issues and foreign coverage depending on the news priorities of the moment. To maintain that level of serious-mindedness in the middle of peak viewing time in the context of a vigorously competitive (and expanding) broadcasting environment is a good example of the contribution that a public service broadcaster can make to democratic welfare.

#### iv. ITN News at Ten, ITV Evening News, Nightly News

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999	ITV EEN	ITV NN
<b>Broadsheet</b>	55.5	46.9	45.0	53.3	48.3	29.8	32.7	32.3
<b>Tabloid</b>	14.8	18.9	24.9	10.9	26.1	42.1	33.7	39.2*
<b>Foreign</b>	29.4	34.7	28.9	35.9	25.6	28	33.6	28.5

\*Tabloid figure for the *Nightly News* includes 6% of bulletins devoted to a review of the following day's newspapers. If this figure is deducted the amount of tabloid news is 33%.



From 1975 to 1990, the *News at Ten* (NaT) matched the BBC's 9 in its level of broadsheet coverage. By 1995, there were the first indications in 20 years of divergent news values, as the level in NaT dipped to below half. This accelerated considerably over the next measurement period, to the point where its level of broadsheet news – at just under 30% of the total – is by some margin the lowest in 25 years.

While the BBC's broadsheet coverage also dipped slightly in 1999, this was mainly due to increased foreign coverage. The tabloid news figures show that this is not the case for NaT where, again, the BBC was matched until 1990. By 1995, the level of tabloid coverage had exceeded a quarter for the first time, but the most dramatic change was between 1995 and 1999 from 26% to 42% of the total. At this point, the NaT had over three times as much tabloid news as the BBC 9 and substantially more than at any time in the previous 25 years.

While these figures might have been subject to some unpredictability because there were only four bulletins before the schedule change, the figures in the final two columns for the two successor bulletins show that little difference would be made by including them in the analysis. At best, one might estimate that at least a third of ITV's main evening bulletin can be defined as 'tabloid'.

NaT's commitment to foreign coverage, however, appears to have stayed remarkably consistent. Although reaching its lowest point in 1995, it still represented then over a quarter of total news coverage, and that figure rose in 1999 – especially if we include the new successor bulletins. This might to some extent be due to extensive coverage of Kosovo, and further research will be needed to monitor trends.

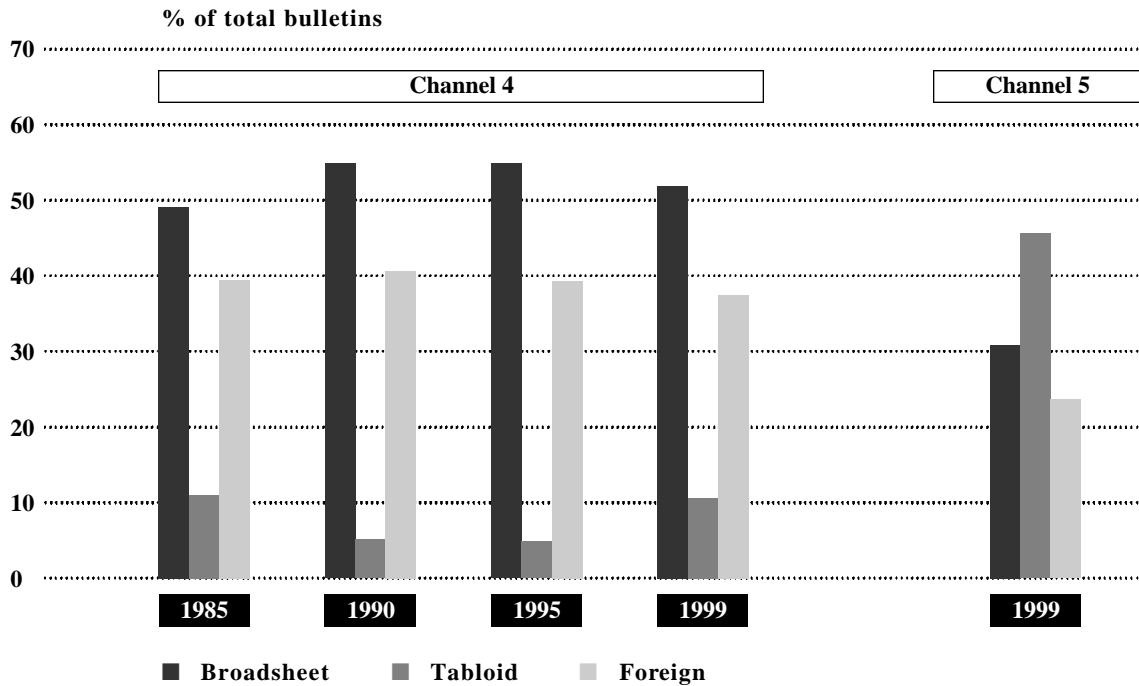
It is undeniable that the 1990s, and particularly the end of the 1990s saw a tangible and significant divergence between the BBC 9 and the NaT. In the context of its history, there is no question that the NaT agenda became more tabloid, and that this looks to be continuing (but not changing) with the *ITV Evening News*. In the context of commercial channels around the world, however, it is arguable that NaT did well to restrict its tabloid coverage to less than half of total output in an environment where the drive for ratings has become more difficult to resist.

## **v. Channel 4 News & Channel 5 News**

Two points are immediately striking about the results for *Channel 4 News*. The first is their astonishing consistency. While the four main bulletins fluctuated to varying degrees, depending on the nature of emerging stories and changing editorial values, Channel 4 has consistently devoted around 50-55% of its bulletins to domestic broadsheet issues, around 35-40% to foreign issues and around 5-10% to tabloid issues. Given the changes to its funding structure and the growth of competitive channels, it is a mark of its strong public service commitment to news that it has maintained these figures for the 7pm bulletin throughout its history.

The second point is to demonstrate how strong editorial commitment to emphasise broadsheet and foreign stories at the expense of tabloid can be imposed on a bulletin regardless of the marketplace in which it operates or, indeed, of the nature of breaking stories. A channel or bulletin in which there is a firmly delineated philosophy governing the kinds of issues it wants to cover can resist pressures to change – although of course it helps when audience size is not a major consideration.

	Channel 4: 1985 1990 1995 1999				Channel 5: 1999
Broadsheet	49.0	54.8	54.8	51.9	30.8
Tabloid	11.1	5.1	4.8	10.6	45.6
Foreign	39.4	40.7	39.3	37.5	23.6



Channel 5 demonstrates a complete contrast, as it has set out to do from its inception. Given its youth, there are no comparative data for its news bulletin, but the heavy preponderance of tabloid coverage – by far the highest of the six bulletins – is what we would expect given the ‘brand image’ of the channel. As the more detailed ‘level 2’ tables show, *Channel 5 News* is particularly strong on sport and crime.

Given that the results for Channels 4 and 5 are as we would have predicted from the outset – much more serious for the former, much lighter for the latter – these results also help to demonstrate the effectiveness of our methodology.

# 3. Conclusions

We believe there are two stories to tell from this study. First, taking an overarching view of what is available to British viewers on television news today, there is a healthy balance of serious, light and international coverage. This is particularly true in comparison to news bulletins in the United States, for example, or some European countries where highly commercialised channels produce news which is dominated by stories about crime, showbiz, trivia or human interest. Many of the premises of the increased tabloidisation of television news – that an emphasis on the sensational, the shallow and the parochial is driving out the complex, serious and outward-looking – cannot be applied to British television news. Even Channel 5, whose policy is to be unapologetically rooted in entertainment and the lighter touch, produce a bulletin where foreign and broadsheet coverage outweighs (just about) tabloid content.

Examined on a global basis, it is therefore arguable that we have an astonishingly diverse array of news programmes – from the more highbrow BBC 9 and *Channel 4 News*, to the slightly more populist ITV bulletins and the BBC 6, and the very populist and youth-oriented *Channel 5 News*. As we said in the methodology section, this study did not take into account issues of presentation, language or treatment which can sometimes vary significantly in the approaches of different bulletins to the same story. This was well illustrated recently by coverage of the floods in Mozambique: one approach concentrated on the story of a mother giving birth in a tree while others (notably the BBC 9 and Channel 4) took a more political, economic and historical approach to its coverage. The fact remains that ‘big’ domestic and international issues are still being covered across the board and that, particularly on foreign news, British viewers are being given as much exposure to the world beyond Britain as they were 25 years ago.

This diversity of news output is in stark contrast to 1975 when the four evening news bulletins were almost indistinguishable in the nature of their content. Today’s bulletins, in accordance with the growing emphasis on consumer-friendliness, are more tailored to a specific audience and more consciously ‘branded’. Our study demonstrates that news bulletins can indeed be determined by distinct editorial policies – to go for the highbrow, middlebrow or apathetic twenty-somethings. Television no longer speaks to the nation as one, and news bulletins are reflecting this trend.

The second story is that there has undoubtedly been a shift in most bulletins towards a more tabloid domestic agenda. In particular, the more detailed level 2 analysis given in Appendix 3 shows a decline across the board in coverage of political affairs. This shift has been particularly apparent over the last 10 years in the two ITN bulletins, and preceded the introduction of the new ITV bulletins – if anything, the new *ITV Evening News* may have a more broadsheet output than the old *News at Ten*, although it is too early for firm conclusions. It does not, however, apply to the BBC 9 or *Channel 4 News*.

Is this proof that there is indeed a degenerative process of ‘dumbing down’ in television news, or is it a much needed injection of accessibility into what 25 years ago was a deeply serious and dull approach to news? Has the increase in channels and competition given us greater diversity which enriches democracy or lower standards which denigrate public intelligence? Is the glass half-full or half-empty?

Given the dire warnings about the damaging effect of channel proliferation and market competition, we tend to the conclusion that the UK has maintained a remarkably robust and broadly serious approach to television news. Partly because of the presence of a well-funded public broadcaster and partly because of the regulatory obligations which allowed a strong commercial competitor to flourish, viewers on the mass audience channels still have access to serious coverage of important domestic and foreign issues alongside a reasonable proportion of lighter, more tabloid issues.

## **Some thoughts for the future**

This broadly positive conclusion, however, comes with a major qualification. The rise in sport and consumer stories, combined with the decline in political stories, gives some cause for concern. If it continues as a trend rather than a fluctuation, this could lead to the gradual marginalisation of serious and foreign reporting. We are a long way from that at the moment. All broadcasters, however, are under increasing pressure to rationalise their budgets, service more outlets and increase audiences at the very time that competition is growing not just from more channels but from on-line news sources. Arguments for prioritising accessibility and consumer-friendliness can quickly become arguments for expanding the number of 'catchy' stories about crime, Hollywood and sports stars, the Royal Family, and quirky trivialities.

At the moment, it seems that broadcasters understand the contribution that television news can make to expanding horizons, and creating a better-informed citizenry and therefore a healthier democracy. They take those responsibilities seriously in their approach to television news. It may, however, become increasingly difficult – particularly in the commercial sector – to resist the perceived mass audience appeal of less serious news items and thus accelerate the trend which seems to have started during the nineties. Given the impact of market pressures on other areas of television output, we are not wholly optimistic that 10 years from now television news will have maintained its current balanced and diversified approach.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: details of the sampling procedure

Within each year, we selected five periods of five weeks to ensure a proper spread of days throughout the year: February, April, June, September and November. The untypical periods of Christmas and summer holidays were therefore avoided.

Within each five week period, we randomly selected one weekday per week. This ensured that a) each day of the week was selected once only and b) results were not distorted by a single story dominating one week's news. The selection of weekdays was repeated identically in each year.

## Appendix 2: coding frames

### A) content

- 1 Politics/economic policy
- 2 Industry/business/city/finance/economic indicators
- 3 Crime/police
- 4 Social affairs: To include drugs, alcohol, prostitution, immigration, home affairs (excluding category 3)
- 5 Legal affairs
- 6 Consumer issues
- 7 Foreign affairs involving Britain, or Britain within the European Union (EU) (including diplomacy)/ diplomatic or political activity and relations between states, trade negotiations.
- 8 EU
- 9 Civil unrest, internal disorder/civil world demonstrations/threats or acts of terrorism or violence/state-sponsored murder
- 10 War/tensions between states
- 11 Northern Ireland
- 12 Health/medicine/medical profession
- 13 Education
- 14 Employment/industrial relations/trade union issues
- 15 Environment/ecology/energy/planning and development
- 16 Natural disasters/'acts of God'
- 17 Human tragedy/disaster
- 18 Weather (general)
- 19 Science/technology/IT
- 20 Transport issues
- 21 Religion
- 22 Sport

- 23 Culture, Media and the Arts
- 24 Royalty
- 25 Showbiz/entertainment
- 26 Moral/ethical issues
- 27 Human interest
- 28 Humour/quirky stories
- 29 Expedition/adventure
- 30 Military/espionage/national security
- 31 Other

## B) foreign coverage

- A USA
- B EUROPE
- C THIRD WORLD
- D REST OF THE WORLD
- E INTERNATIONAL (Organisations or co-operation, excluding EU or cats. 7 & 8)

*(raw data on foreign stories will be available on the University of Westminster web site, and we hope to provide more detailed analysis and interpretation of these data in a subsequent publication).*

## Appendix 3: more detailed analyses

### i) Political affairs

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
BBC 6	25.6	15.2	14.1	32.6	20.8	14.6
BBC 9	31.6	22.1	19.0	32.8	22.1	15.3
EEN	22.2	17.9	16.2	31.3	19.7	17.4
NaT	30.2	24.7	18.9	30.0	19.9	16.3
C4N			17.6	33.3	25.4	15.8
ITV EN						12.6
ITV NN						10.1
C5N						5.8

### ii) Social policy

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
BBC 6	5.3	13.8	11.7	7.9	17.2	15.1
BBC 9	5.4	12.3	7.2	3.3	10.8	9.9
EEN	2.4	9.4	6.7	8.4	10.1	9.7
NaT	2.1	10.0	8.3	10.6	8.3	7.0
C4N						15.5
ITV EN						10.8
ITV NN						5.4
C5N						13.5

**iii) Sport**

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
BBC 6	3.9	7.7	4.7	3.0	3.3	8.7
BBC 9	5.9	9.5	3.9	1.9	3.0	3.8
EEN	4.3	9.9	7.9	5.0	4.6	7.5
NaT	7.5	9.2	7.1	4.2	5.0	12.8
C4N			2.4	0.3	0.6	1.6
ITV EN						8.8
ITV NN						10.8
C5N						13.5

**iv) Crime**

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
BBC 6	6.3	6.5	5.6	2.1	6.0	6.8
BBC 9	3.9	6.2	5.4	1.2	3.6	5.2
EEN	7.1	6.9	7.4	6.4	10.0	4.4
NaT	6.6	6.8	5.3	3.2	7.8	8.0
C4N			2.6	3.2	2.0	5.5
ITV EN						6.4
ITV NN						6.9
C5N						11.3

**v) 'Light' stories**

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
BBC 6	5.2	7.5	7.3	0.8	5.1	4.8
BBC 9	3.9	9.7	8.0	0.5	2.9	0.8
EEN	3.6	7.1	7.8	3.1	10.9	4.1
NaT	2.4	7.2	6.4	2.1	8.8	5.3
C4N			2.5	0.7	0.8	0.5
ITV EN						9.9
ITV NN						8.2
C5N						10.0

## **Appendix 4: key events for years covered**

### **1975**

Conservative leadership contest (Thatcher v Heath)  
Industrial disputes – coal, steel, rail, British Leyland, Glasgow dustcarts, etc.  
Cambodian civil war/Laos  
Guilford pub bombings trial, Prevention of Terrorism Act  
Referendum on Common Market  
US withdrawal from Vietnam  
£/inflation  
Industry Bill  
Middle East peace/Kissinger diplomacy  
Mozambique independence  
Conflict in the Lebanon  
North Sea oil  
Portugal/Spain – internal political upheaval

### **1980**

Industrial action – British Leyland, Rolls Royce, dockers, rail  
Rhodesian independence  
Russia invades Afghanistan – Cold War tension  
Moscow Olympics (diplomatic tensions over Afghanistan)  
Iran – US embassy hostage siege  
Economy in crisis  
Uganda famine  
Labour Party internal strife – Callaghan v Benn  
Iran-Iraq war

### **1985**

TWA hijack  
War in the Lebanon (terror, hostages, hijacking)  
South Africa – unrest/civil disturbance  
US-Soviet diplomacy (Geneva summit)  
Miner's strike  
Anglo-Irish Agreement  
Labour Party v Militant Tendency (Liverpool)

### **1990**

Political change in South Africa (rebel cricket tour, Nelson Mandela released)  
Unravelling of Soviet Union (internal Russian upheaval, breakaway republics, unrest in Eastern Europe)  
East-West German reunification  
Iraq invades Kuwait  
Strangeways riot & siege  
Politics: poll tax and supergun  
Salman Rushdie fatwa  
Soccer World Cup  
Mrs Thatcher resigns

## **1995**

Conflict in Bosnia (siege of Sarajevo, Dayton peace accord)

Rwandan refugees

Israeli PM Yitzak Rabin assassinated

Oklahoma bombing, USA

OJ Simpson verdict

50th Anniversary World War Two

Downing Street Declaration on Northern Ireland

Collapse of Barings bank

Tory Party Euro-splits

Blair & internal Labour Party reforms

John Major leadership challenge

Hugh Grant caught with prostitute

Princess Diana (general)

Rose West murder trial

## **1999**

Kosovo conflict (Serb-Albanian clashes, Rambouillet negotiations, Nato airstrikes, refugees)

International Kurdish demonstrations v Turkey

Indonesian elections (unrest in East Timor)

Northern Ireland peace negotiations (Mitchell review, etc.)

Macpherson report on Stephen Lawrence murder

GM crops

Jill Dando murder

Devolution (Scotland, Wales, London Mayor)

Cardinal Basil Hume dies

Ban on beef on the bone (GB v France)

General Pinochet extradition

Manchester United success