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RESEARCH ARTICLES

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## The Role and Development of Popular Science TV Programs During Times of Military Actions

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### ABSTRACT

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The article analyzes the number of popular science TV programs on the air of national TV channels in Ukraine. Popular science content is an important aspect of public life, especially as an element of distraction from news about military operations. The **goal** of this study was to find out whether there are popular science programs on national TV channels, to analyze the competitive features of Ukrainian popular science TV journalism, which combines the broadcasting traditions formed by practice and modern development trends. We used the following **methods**: content analysis of the broadcast network of 32 national TV channels in Ukraine. We analyzed their TV programs for the presence of popular science content on the air, as well as the thematic content of TV programs in accordance with historical background, and additionally studied the websites and YouTube pages of channels that were disconnected from broadcasting in 2022; literature analysis, which made it possible to identify gaps in the research of functioning of popular science TV programs in the Ukrainian media space. **Results**: out of 32 TV channels, 5 broadcast popular science programs. Among them, 4 produce their own content, and one broadcasts foreign programs, mostly in the natural sciences. Of the 4 channels that have their own popular science content, 3 broadcast historical programs, and "Піксель TV" produces a project for children about chemical experiments. As of 2023, the share of channels with popular science content is 15.6%. **Conclusions**: the level of popular science TV journalism in Ukraine is not increasing. At the same time, given the social preferences of the audience, we can say that this niche is not filled. Historical topics of video content are currently the most popular among viewers, which may be reflected in the growth in the number of viewers for channels that offer such content.

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## АНОТАЦІЯ

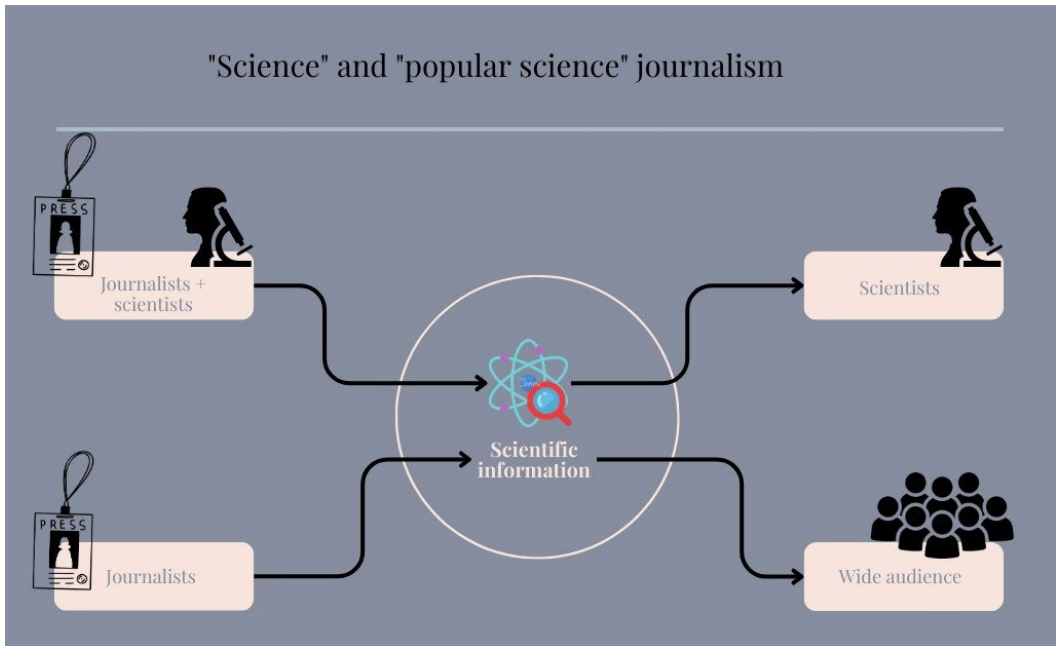
У статті аналізується кількість науково-популярних телепрограм в ефірі національних телеканалів України. Науково-популярний контент є важливою стороною суспільного життя, особливо як елемент відволікання від новин про військові дії. Метою цього дослідження було з'ясувати, чи є на національних телеканалах науково-популярні програми, проаналізувати конкурентоспроможність української науково-популярної тележурналістики, яка поєднує сформовані практикою традиції мовлення та сучасні тенденції розвитку. Використано такі методи: контент-аналіз мережі мовлення 32 національних телеканалів України. Ми проаналізували їхні телепрограми на предмет наявності в ефірі науково-популярного контенту, а також тематичного наповнення телепрограм відповідно до історичної довідки, а також додатково вивчили веб-сайти та YouTube-канали, які були відключені від ефірного мовлення у 2022 році; аналіз літератури, який дав змогу виявити прогалини у дослідженні функціонування науково-популярних телепрограм в українському медіапросторі. Результати: з 32 телеканалів 5 транслюють науково-популярні програми. Серед них 4 створюють власний контент, а один транслює іноземні програми, переважно природничі. З 4 каналів, які мають власний науково-популярний контент, 3 транслюють історичні програми, а «Піксель ТВ» випускає проєкт для дітей про хімічні дослідження. Станом на 2023 рік частка каналів з науково-популярним контентом становить 15,6%. Висновки: рівень науково-популярної тележурналістики в Україні не підвищується. Водночас, враховуючи соціальні уподобання аудиторії, можна сказати, що ця ніша не заповнена. Історичні теми відеоконтенту зараз є найпопулярнішими серед глядачів, що може відобразитися на зростанні кількості глядачів каналів, які пропонують такий контент.

**КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА:** науково-популярна журналістика, телебачення, соціальне замовлення, телепрограми.

## Introduction

Popular science journalism is a branch of journalism that aims to explain complex scientific concepts and discoveries to a wide audience. Its goal is to explain scientific phenomena or technologies in an accessible, understandable form for the general public. Popular science journalism serves as a bridge between the complex world of scientific discovery and the society. At the same time, popular science journalism is not only about simplifying scientific content, but also about making it relevant and contextualized for everyday life. The terms "popular science journalism" and "science journalism" should not be equated, as science journalism is primarily focused on covering scientific developments, research, and conclusions of the scientific community. It often targets an audience that has an education in a particular scientific field or is looking for in-depth scientific information. Oksana Kyrylova, in her work "Science and Popular Science Journalism: Difficulties in Defining Concepts and Typologizing Media," draws attention to the frequent confusion of these definitions, so the author offers the following definitions: "science journalism produces content with a focus on a trained audience without unnecessary use of infotainment methods to disseminate knowledge about events in the world of science. Popular science journalism is primarily concerned with popularizing scientific knowledge and science itself, using all available tools to attract the widest possible audience: infotainment, edutainment, science content, gaming content, etc." (Kyrylova, 2021, p.142). The key difference between these two concepts is the audience and the depth of scientific coverage. Science journalism is aimed at an audience that is already familiar with or deeply interested in scientific details, while popular science journalism aims to attract a wider audience by simplifying and presenting scientific information in an easily digestible form.

To simplify the distinction between the concepts of "popular science" and "science" journalism, we propose a visualized model of the transfer of scientific information from communicator to the audience (Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* The difference between communicators and audience in science and popular science journalism. Source: based on the scientific publication "Scientific and Popular Science Journalism: Difficulties in Defining Concepts and Typologizing Media".

Researchers have demonstrated the interconnection between modern media and the construction of national identity. Thus, TV content, with its audiovisual capabilities, has the potential to serve as a medium for representing the nation through its agents. Today, the global scientific community is debating the relationship between popular science journalism and national consciousness. One example of popular science content's impact on the self-identification of the population is the development of these TV programs in Israel. Merav Katz-Kimchi writes about this in detail in his article, noting that since 1968 - after the Six-Day War, from which Israel emerged victorious, having gained territories with a large Palestinian population - the state of Israel has deployed television not just to broadcast educational, entertainment, and information programs for its public, but as a propaganda tool aimed at the population of the occupied territories. And one of the elements that successfully played the role of positive propaganda for Israel was popular science programs. As the author notes, "thanks to the cooperation of the scientific and technological elite, the television broadcast of popular science programs in prime time made a huge contribution. With the help of these programs, the state spread a special image of the scientific and technological power of the nation". Science and technology began to play a prominent role in Zionism, which was established as a modern political movement in the late 19th century. The instrumental and practical Zionist movement, with its colonizing mission of settling Jews in Palestine and creating a state for the Jewish people, cherished science and technology as an important tool for exercising state power, examples of which include population management, army formation, mapping and engineering, and the provision of health care (Katz-Kimchi, 2012, p. 519).

After the Soviet Union collapsed, Russian or foreign TV programs translated into Russian flooded the Ukrainian market, which could be one of the reasons for the stagnation of Ukrainian popular science content. In 2008, Mykhailo Kochergan warned that "television was occupied by Russian-language programs" and "the national information space was given to non-national media" (Kochergan, 2008, p. 19). In 2011, Halyna Usatenko drew attention to the broadcasting of foreign popular science programs in Russian, emphasizing that the issue of language in this context is a factor of the nation and the state as such. Educational TV channels do not use the Ukrainian language, and therefore do not contribute to the introduction of terminology that is being used in the scientific, educational, and mass use of the modern world, and therefore do not form a sense of Ukrainian presence in the development of the modern globalized world among citizens (Usatenko, 2011).

One of the author's previous studies showed that even a year after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, a certain percentage of viewers (7.7%) continue to watch Russian popular science programs (Flywheel of History, Notes of Cicero, Other History, Nauchpok, Topless, Utopia show, Geo, Loony, KOSMO, Nikolai Vavilov) (Kravchenko, 2023, p. 80). This prompted further research into the state of popular science content in Ukraine. Such trends require special attention from media professionals, because given the possible manipulation of historical facts in Russian content, the spread of Russian content to the Ukrainian audience may affect the Ukrainians' perception of events such as the annexation of Crimea and the occupation of Donbas. These results also indicate a lack of scientific content in Ukraine, which is why the audience continues to turn to Russian content.

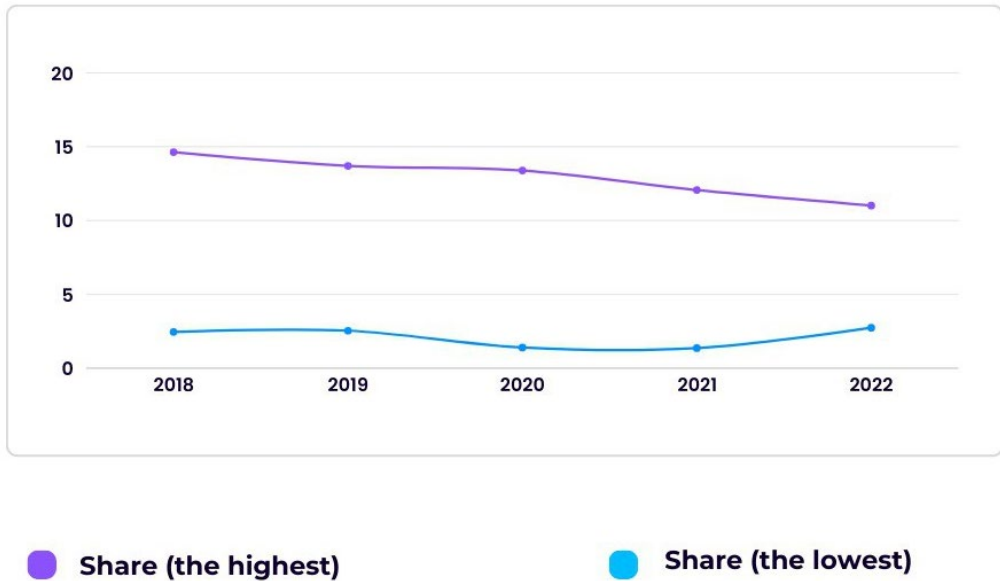
On classic linear television, popular science content is developing less than, for example, entertainment content (Goian & Kravchenko, 2021, p. 132). However, the problem of popular science TV projects' ratings is part of a broader problem - the decline in ratings on television in general. According to the results of TV viewing monitoring over the past 5 years, the share of the audience has been falling every year. E.g., according to the TV panel, the highest share of the top 10 most rated TV channels was 14.63 (Ukraine TV channel), and the lowest was 2.46 (Plus Plus TV channel). While in 2022, the highest share was 11.01 for 1+1 TV channel (Figure 2). The chart shows a consistent decline in the audience's interest in television in general. Since there are no annual public reports from a single monitoring group, we collected data from open sources: Television Industry Committee, Nielsen Ukraine, and Big Data UA. The ratings may have an error depending on the quarter or high-profile events, but the chart below generally shows the situation with TV viewing.

At the same time, a 2021 study by O. Goian and R. Kravchenko shows that the Ukrainian audience has a high demand for popular science TV programs. Almost three-quarters of the respondents (73%) said they would turn on Ukrainian TV channels more often if these channels had popular science and educational content on the air (Goian & Kravchenko, 2021, p. 133).

Popular science journalism in Ukraine shows promising prospects for development, especially in social media and on the YouTube platform, where channels of this genre are growing and increasing their audiences. Within a year of full-scale Russian invasion, the viewership of popular science YouTube channels continued to grow, with some Ukrainian channels showing audience growth of +110% compared to 2022 (Kravchenko, 2023, p. 154). However, in contrast to YouTube, this niche remains largely undeveloped in the Ukrainian linear television landscape.

Popular foreign broadcasters' programs are transmitted by the Mera channel. In the article "Issues of science popular programs of the Mera channel," the author, D.A. Shevchenko, points out that the majority of the channel's programming (90%) consists of foreign-produced content, with only 10% being domestic popular science television content. The popular science themes are presented in four main categories: 45% of the content is historical-religious, 28% focuses on flora and fauna, 15% is related to interesting travels, adventures, and tourism, and only 12% are programs of a scientific and technical nature (Shevchenko & Kovtun, 2019, p. 352).

### TV viewing for the last 5 years (Top 10 TV channels)



Source: Television Industry Committee, Nielsen Ukraine, Big Data UA

*Figure 2.* Share of viewing of Ukrainian TV channels (2018-2022). Source: data from open sources: Television Industry Committee, Nielsen Ukraine, and Big Data UA.

The overall state of scientific programming in Ukraine was investigated by Maria Kuznetsova in her work "Thematic orientation and place in the modern Ukrainian television space of popular science programs." The author notes that as of 2016, out of 45 nationwide television channels, only 7 broadcast popular science programs, series, or films, including the "UA: Перший" channel. Among the niche channels specializing in this content, she mentions "Мера", "НЛО-TV", "Тоніс", and "ECO-TV". She concludes that the fact that only niche channels broadcast popular science shows indicates that Ukrainian television does not give due attention to this content (Kuznetsova, 2016, p. 323).

During times of armed conflict, popular science journalism also plays a crucial role. Research by R. Kravchenko in 2022 showed that Ukrainians sometimes need to be distracted from news about the war to psychologically recover. Survey results from 460 respondents revealed that almost 65% used popular science or entertainment content to divert their attention from the war (Kravchenko, 2022, p. 138). Despite these statistics, there has been no significant leap in the development of popular science content in the Ukrainian media space. One of the reasons is the lack of interest among journalists themselves in delving into popular science journalism.

After the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, according to presidential decrees №151/2022 and №152/2022, as well as the National Council for Television and Radio Broadcasting's announcement, during the state of war, all nationwide TV channels were required to unite and broadcast the telethon "Unified News #UkraineTogether 24/7". This telethon aimed to implement a unified information policy during the war. As a result, six nationwide TV channels (Suspilne ("UA:Перший"), "ICTV", "Ми-Україна", "1+1", "Інтер", "Рада") joined forces and broadcasted the telethon, while other channels included segments of the telethon in their programming (Ukaz prezidenta Ukrainy №151/2022, Ukaz prezidenta Ukrainy №152/2022). In April 2022, it became

known that some oppositional TV channels were disconnected from digital broadcasting. The State Special Communications Service explained that the disconnection from digital broadcasting was due to decisions made by the National Security and Defense Council. However, the Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council, Oleksiy Danilov, stated that these channels allegedly refused to participate in the unified telethon, and the decision was made not due to censorship but for security reasons. The director-general of the 5th channel, Volodymyr Mzhelsky, stated that these broadcasters were asked to broadcast the telethon without participating in its production, effectively paying for the broadcasting of someone else's content (Tsyfrovyi efir "Espresso", 2022).

As of May 2023, the 5th channel, Прямий, and Еспресо are no longer available on digital television. However, their transmission continues on the internet, satellite, certain OTT platforms, and cable networks. Despite changes in the television schedules of nationwide TV channels, we have decided to examine the presence or absence of popular science content in their broadcasts. Projects were analyzed both directly on television and through the publication of content on websites, YouTube channels, and social media platforms of the television channels.

One of the working hypotheses of this study was that popular science journalism is not sufficiently developed on Ukrainian linear television. This is due to several reasons, including the priority given to war programs in the media and the lack of qualified personnel.

The **aim** of this study is to investigate the state of popular science journalism in the Ukrainian television market. For further comprehensive research into the functioning of popular science journalism in the Ukrainian television space, we sought to clarify the thematic orientation of popular science programs. In order to explore the potential and diversity of Ukrainian popular science content, we **set out** to conduct a content analysis of 32 national TV channels, additionally, the publication of television materials on the platforms of these TV channels was worked out. This was done because some TV channels were disconnected from broadcasting in 2022 and temporarily switched to digital platforms.

## Method

As of 2023, there are 32 nationwide television channels in Ukraine: "UA: Перший", "Рада", "1+1", "ICTV", "СТБ", "Інтер", "УНІАН-TV", "Бігуді", "Армія TV", "Новий Channel", "ТЕТ", "2+2", "М1", "НТН", "Мера", "ПлюсПлюс", "Ми-Україна", "1+1 Україна", "ICTV2", "ОЦЕ-TV", "К1", "К2", "Zoom", "Еспресо", "XSPORT", "Enter-фільм", "Піксель", "5 Channel", "ТАК TV", "Сонце", "Суспільне Культура", "Прямий". Through content analysis, the programming grid of each channel was examined. As channels such as 5 Channel and Прямий were disconnected from digital broadcasting, their websites and YouTube channels were also analyzed among the 32 television channels. The presence or absence of popular science content in the broadcasts was studied, irrespective of the time slot. Additionally, it was determined whether the content was domestically produced or a retransmission of foreign programs. The thematic specificity of the projects was described. Special attention was given to Suspilne ("UA: Перший"), as a media outlet obligated to broadcast such content. Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine "On Public Media of Ukraine" states that one of the main tasks of the National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine (Suspilne) is to contribute to the fullest satisfaction of the informational, cultural, and educational needs of the Ukrainian population, including the creation and dissemination of educational and cognitive programs, as well as providing citizens of Ukraine with requested information products not available on the commercial market (Pro suspilni media Ukrainy : Zakon Ukrainy, 2021). Дослідження проводилося за період від 24 лютого 2022 року до 25 липня 2023 року.

The dataset may be found by the link: Mendeley Data, <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/ISNBTM>

## Results

Through content analysis, it was found that among the 32 nationwide TV channels, popular science content is broadcasted on 5 channels: "Мера", "Ми-Україна", "Enter-фільм", "5 Channel", and "Піксель". Occasionally, interviews with scientists can also be seen on "Суспільне

Культура”. Previously, popular science content was also present on Suspilne (“UA: Перший”), “1+1”, “ПлюсПлюс”, and “5 Channel”.

Below is a more detailed description of the qualitative and quantitative content related to popular science on television channels.

**“UA: Перший”** is the central channel of the National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine. In July 2020, the program “Що? Як?” was launched on the channel. It was a popular science show for children and teenagers, where the robot Yuki and her assistant, geneticist, and gerontologist Oleksandr Kolyada, explained various phenomena from a scientific point of view. A total of 12 episodes were produced, but production was discontinued in August.

**“Рада”** is a nationwide state information and analytical television channel that covers the activities of the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine, its committees, commissions, and Ukrainian MPs. Its programming does not include the creation of popular science content.

**“1+1”** is a nationwide channel that broadcasts programs of various genres. In December 2021, it produced a series of four popular science films called “Mysterious Manuscripts. Ukraine. The Return of Its History.”

**“Суспільне Культура”** is a nationwide public television channel and online media outlet under the National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine, focused on cultural and educational topics. It creates the program “Культурний інстинкт” (Cultural Instinct), and occasionally features popularizers of history, such as Oleksandr Alfiorov and Volodymyr Viatrovych.

**“ICTV”** is a nationwide television channel belonging to the media holding company “Starlight Media.” It does not have any popular science programs.

**“СТБ”**, like ICTV, is a nationwide television channel owned by the media holding company “Starlight Media.” It also lacks popular science programs.

**“Інтер”** is an information and entertainment television channel in Ukraine, owned by oligarch Dmytro Firtash and politician Serhii Lyovochkin. It does not broadcast any popular science programs.

**“УНІАН-TV”** is positioned as a Ukrainian enlightening-informational television channel. It is part of “1+1 Media,” which is owned by Ukrainian oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky. Despite this, it does not have any popular science programs.

**“Бігуді”**. Part of “1+1 Media.” The TV channel is oriented towards a female audience. Its programming includes Ukrainian and foreign TV series and cartoons. Scientific and educational programs are not present on the channel.

**“Армія TV”**. A nationwide state-owned TV channel focused on military themes, owned by the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine. The channel's specific content does not include scientific or educational material.

**“Новий Channel”**. A Ukrainian entertainment TV channel. It is part of the media holding “Starlight Media,” owned by Ukrainian oligarch Viktor Pinchuk. Scientific and educational programs are not broadcasted on this channel.

**“ТЕТ”**. A nationwide entertainment TV channel, part of the media conglomerate “1+1 Media.” Scientific and educational content is not available on this channel.

**“2+2”**. A nationwide TV channel belonging to the media conglomerate “1+1 Media,” which is owned by oligarch Igor Kolomoisky. The channel is aimed at viewers aged 18 to 35. Scientific and educational programs are absent on this channel.

**“М1”**. A nationwide music TV channel that broadcasts music videos and entertainment programs. It is part of the media holdings “Starlight Media” and “TAVR Media.” The channel's nature does not involve the creation of scientific or educational content.

**“НТН”**. A Ukrainian nationwide TV channel belonging to the media conglomerate Inter Media Group. Scientific and educational content is not present on this channel.

**“Мега”**. This is a Ukrainian popular science channel under the “Inter Media Group” holding. It airs informative documentary series, original projects, fiction films, and historical TV shows

from international networks like BBC, National Geographic Channel, History, Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, and Cineflix. Some of the popular science programs on this channel include:

- "Unexpected History" - a historical documentary project produced jointly by the UK and the USA, created in 2013.
- "How the Universe Works" - a scientific documentary series that was originally broadcast on the Discovery Channel in 2010.
- "Ukraine: Forgotten History" - a Ukrainian documentary series about the history of Ukraine, presented by Andriy Romanidi, with scriptwriting by Iryna Chmola. Each episode delves into significant events in Ukrainian history using reconstructions and commentary from Ukrainian political scientists, historians, cultural experts, and journalists. Production took place in 2012-2013.
- "Secrets of the Deep with Jeremy Wade" - an American project exploring seas and oceans, filmed in 2020-2022.

**"ПлюсПлюс"**. This is a nationwide children's channel owned by the "1+1 Media" media conglomerate. The channel used to broadcast the following popular science projects:

- "The World Awaits Discovery" - an animated series about various scientific discoveries around the world, concluded in 2019.
- "ЕКО ПлюсПлюс" - short educational stories about the harm we cause to the environment every day, concluded in 2020.

**"Ми — Україна"**. This is a nationwide information channel composed of former employees of the closed channels "Ukraine" and "Ukraine 24," previously owned by Ukrainian oligarch Rinat Akhmetov. The channel produces its own popular science program: "Paragraph" - an author's project by Ukrainian TV presenter Yulia Halushka. It reveals the historical truth behind the eternal contradictions between Ukraine and Russia.

**"1+1 Україна"**. A nationwide television channel. It is part of the media conglomerate "1+1 Media." Scientific-popular content is absent on the channel.

**"ICTV2"**. An entertainment channel belonging to the media conglomerate "Starlight Media." Scientific-popular content is absent on the channel.

**"ОЦЕ TV"**. A nationwide entertainment channel that is part of the media conglomerate "Starlight Media." It was created as a rebranding of the "QTV" channel in 2017. Scientific-popular content is absent on the channel.

**"K1"**. A nationwide entertainment channel targeted towards a young audience. It belongs to the media conglomerate "Inter Media Group." Scientific-popular content is absent on the channel.

**"K2"**. A Ukrainian women's channel, targeting women aged 18-50. It belongs to the media conglomerate "Inter Media Group." Scientific-popular content is absent on the channel.

**"Zoom"**. A Ukrainian entertainment channel of the media conglomerate "Inter Media Group." Scientific-popular content is absent on the channel.

**"Прямий"**. A Ukrainian informational channel created on August 24, 2017, in place of the "Tonis" channel, operating in the infotainment format. Scientific-popular content is absent on the channel.

**"Еспресо TV"**. A nationwide informational channel established in November 2013. Scientific-popular content is absent on the channel.

**"XSPORT"**. A nationwide sports and educational channel. The channel's nature does not involve creating scientific-popular content.

**"Enter-фільм"**. A nationwide film channel. It is part of the media conglomerate "Inter Media Group." The channel airs the series "Ukraine: The Forgotten History." It is a Ukrainian documentary series about the history of Ukraine, hosted by Andriy Romanidi. The series premiered in 2012 and was filmed until 2013.

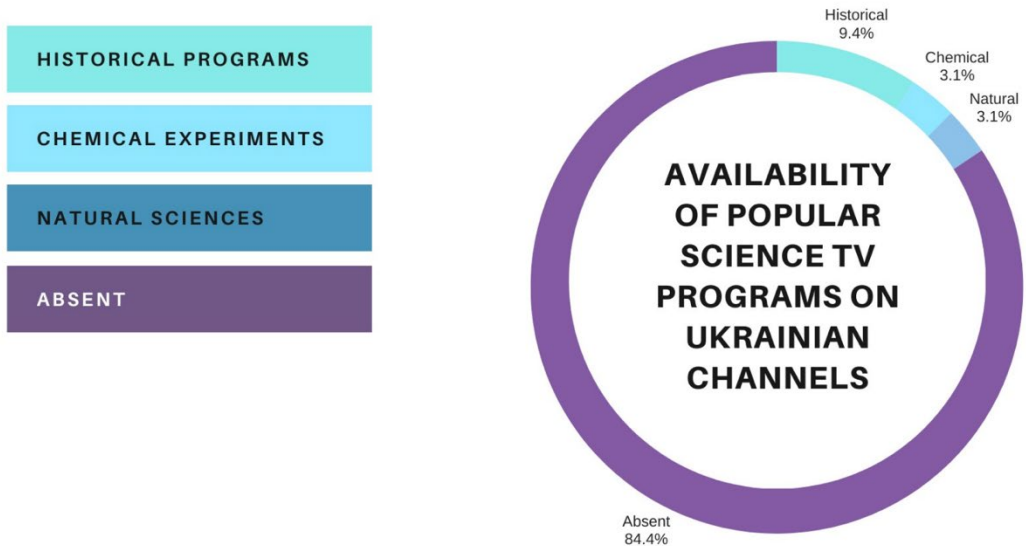
**"Піксель TV"**. A Ukrainian children's television channel. It belongs to the Inter Media Group. The channel broadcasts the Ukrainian-produced program "I Want to Know Everything" for children.



**“5 Channel”.** A Ukrainian informational and educational channel. From 2003 to 2021, it was owned by the 5th President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko. Currently, the channel airs the scientific-popular project "Time Machine." It is a historical program that talks about significant figures that influenced history, featuring unique archival documents shedding light on modern history.

**“TAK TV”.** A Ukrainian informational channel. Scientific-popular programs are absent on the channel.

**“Сонце”.** A nationwide entertainment channel. Scientific-popular programs are absent on the channel.



*Figure 3.* Availability of popular science TV programs on Ukrainian channels. Source: own research

Thus, we found that currently on Ukrainian television, science-popular programs are only broadcasted on 5 channels (15.6%). Among them, 4 channels produce their own content (“Ми-Україна”, “Enter фільм”, “Піксель TV”, “5 Channel”), out of which 3 channels air historical programs, and “Піксель TV” creates a project for children about chemical experiments. The “Мера” channel broadcasts foreign-produced programs mainly related to natural sciences. The remaining 27 channels produce entertainment or news content, while specialized channels like “XSPORT” or “М1” air sports and music programs, respectively (Figure 3).

On the “Ми-Україна” channel, the "Paragraph" project is broadcasted on the channel's YouTube page, since the television airtime is filled with the informational marathon "Yedyni Novyny".

The “5 Channel” airs the program "Time Machine" every Sunday at 8:00 PM (prime time) and on their YouTube channel (a separate version was not created for the YouTube channel, but the entire television episode was published).

The “Мера” channel is not present in the marathon, and throughout the day, the channel broadcasts scientific-popular projects, mostly of foreign production. However, their YouTube channel has been inactive for the past year.

“Enter-фільм”, like “Мера”, is not part of the United Marathon. It broadcasts the historical series "Ukraine: The Forgotten History" every day at 8:45 AM.

“Піксель TV” also does not participate in the television marathon. It broadcasts the program for children of Ukrainian production "I Want to Know Everything" every day at 1:50 AM and 10:30 AM.

## Conclusions

The research revealed that only 5 out of 32 television channels broadcast scientific-popular programs, which constitutes 15.6% of the total number of channels. This percentage matches the results obtained by Maria Kuznetsova in 2016, indicating that the increase in scientific-popular content on linear television is not happening. Additionally, 3 out of 5 (60%) of these channels air exclusively historical programs, while the Mera channel also has a significant portion of historical programs, but it also broadcasts programs related to natural and technical sciences. This imbalance with a focus on historical themes can be explained by the increased interest among Ukrainians in the context of certain events after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and the full-scale war in 2022.

The analysis of the broadcast schedule of the channels showed that only two channels broadcast science-popular programs during prime time. Such a low percentage of scientific-popular content presence on television and its almost complete absence during prime time indicates that Ukrainian television does not give due attention to such projects.

It was also found that only one channel, “Mera”, broadcasts foreign-produced content, while the other four channels produce their own content. This trend shows that journalists are trying to develop scientific-popular programs, but for now, they are mainly focused on historical topics.

The analysis of literature has shown that popular science television programs around the world have been used not only as a tool for educating the population, but also as a significant political influence tool to emphasize the prestige of the country. Besides, it helped to shape national identity. A strong case of this is Israel, which, after the Six Day War, deployed television in the occupied lands inhabited by Palestinians. One of the elements that served as positive propaganda for Israel was the popular science programs that were broadcast in prime time. Literature data also showed that a certain percentage of viewers (7.7%) continue to consume Russian popular science content, including historical programs, which requires special attention from media professionals.

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## Data Availability

Dataset file is available from: the Mendeley Data <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/ISNBTM>

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