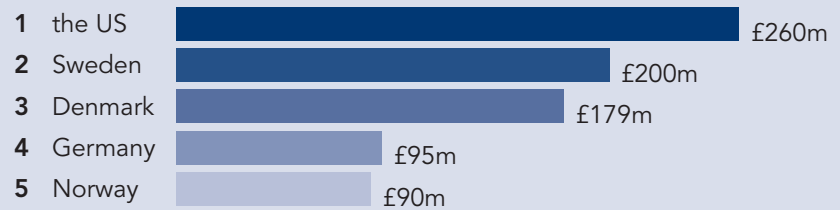


The global influence of TV

1 Work with a partner. Look at the infographic. What does it tell you about British TV programmes?

2a Read the text from a TV guide. What do you think *imported TV programmes* means?

Top Countries for British TV Exports:



THE GLOBAL INFLUENCE OF TV

The chances are that a lot of what you watch on TV isn't made in your country. We know that TV series from the US such as *The Simpsons*, *Friends* and *The Big Bang Theory* have been enormously successful and spread American culture around the world. However, programmes might also come from the UK, Japan, Turkey and many more parts of the world, and this can give us an insight into different cultures. But although entertaining and fun, TV shows from other countries don't always show a true picture of what life is like there. Let's look at some of the popular programmes that have been imported from abroad.



British TV

Currently, the most popular British TV show watched overseas is *Downton Abbey*. It's shown in 250 countries around the world including Russia, South Korea, Sweden and the Middle East. With more than 160 million viewers globally, it presents the British as polite, hard-working and a bit cold. Of course, British people aren't all really like this, but it might be the reason why the show is so popular. Another British show that's a global phenomenon is *Sherlock*, a modern version of the famous detective, Sherlock Holmes. It's watched in more than 200 countries, and is in particularly high demand in China where more than 60 million viewers watched it online last year.



Scandinavian shows

It's not just British television that is doing well internationally. In recent years there has been a rise in the global popularity of TV dramas from countries like Denmark and Sweden. Shows like *Wallander* (Sweden) and *Borgen* (Denmark) are now watched worldwide from Brazil to South Korea for their gripping storylines. And it seems that viewers also love the atmospheric images of these northern European countries.

Japanese cartoons

Japan is famous for its anime shows, animated cartoons, which are also hugely popular in Western countries. The anime boom began in the 1990s, and TV series like *Dragon Ball Z* and *Naruto* have helped show parts of Japanese culture, like martial arts, to the world. However, the shows are not a true representation of Japan either because not all Japanese people do martial arts, of course!

Turkish dramas

After the US, Turkey is globally the second highest exporter of TV series abroad. In Turkey, a TV series called *Magnificent Century* earns more than \$130 million a year. You might not have heard of it, but across the Arabic-speaking world people are glued to this historical drama which follows the life of Suleiman the Magnificent, the longest-serving Sultan of Turkey. By looking at what life was like in the past, the TV show can talk about issues that might be important now.

So does watching all these imported shows teach us about different cultures or does it give us the wrong impression of those countries? Whatever the answer, it seems we cannot escape the rise in foreign shows on our TV screens. And with digital TV and online media always growing, we will continue to have more and more access to programmes from all over the world.

2b Read the text again and decide if the sentences are True (T) or False (F).

- 1 Every TV programme we watch is from another country. T/F
- 2 The politeness of the actors in *Downton Abbey* is a true representation of British people. T/F
- 3 The British detective show *Sherlock* is exported to over 200 countries worldwide. T/F
- 4 Scandinavian dramas are becoming successful abroad partly due to the visual impact of the shows. T/F
- 5 Martial arts and fighting are important in the lives of all people from Japan. T/F
- 6 *Magnificent Century* is an historical drama broadcast globally. T/F
- 7 Imported TV programmes can give us incorrect ideas about a country. T/F

2c Read the sentences and write the country.

- 1 is a South American country that enjoys Danish dramas.
- 2 A very successful TV programme from is watched in much of the Arab world.
- 3 The hugely popular British TV export *Sherlock* is probably loved best in
- 4 is a country which is very famous for producing animated TV series.
- 5 is a big fan of British TV show *Downton Abbey*, but this country also exports its own very popular TV drama.
- 6 is probably the biggest global exporter of TV shows, which has resulted in a certain amount of cultural influence worldwide.

Gateway to culture

3a Work with a partner and discuss the questions.

- 1 Which foreign TV programmes are broadcast in your country? What are the translations of the programme titles in your language? Are the programmes translated into your language or subtitled?
- 2 Are imported TV shows popular in your country? If so, why do you think they are?
- 3 Do you know of any TV shows from your country that are watched in other countries?

PROJECT

3b You are going to work on a presentation about the influence of TV from other countries on your culture. Read the questions and prepare your project research.

- 1 Work in small groups. Choose a popular TV show from another country that you all enjoy. Do some research on the Internet to find out the following information about the show:
 - which country it comes from
 - what it is about
 - which actors are in it
 - how many people watch the show worldwide
 - which countries it is most popular in
 - why you think it is so popular
 - your views on whether the show is true to life in that country
- 2 Decide who in your group will talk about each of the points above. Add in any additional information to make your presentation more interesting.

3c In your groups, use your notes to give a presentation to the rest of the class on your TV show. Your presentation should be around three minutes long.