



Press information

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Hong Kong public less enthusiastic about 2010 World Cup

Nevertheless it still appeals to almost three quarters

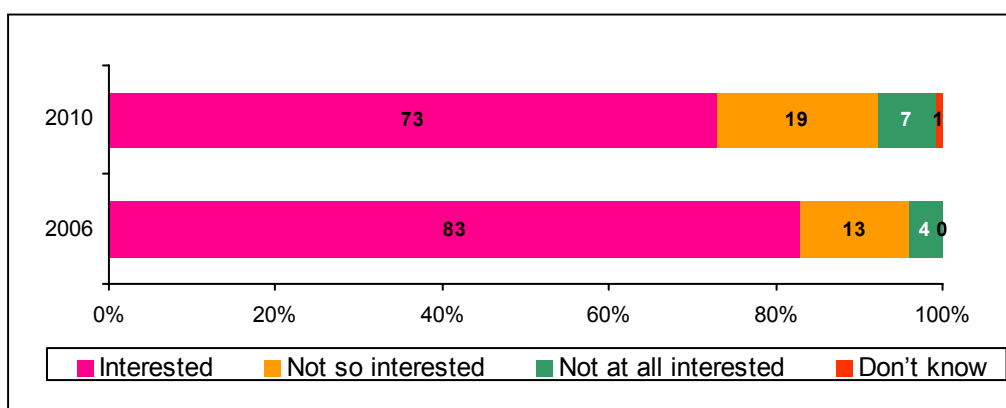
Hong Kong June 11, 2010 – 12% fewer Hong Kong people are interested in the 2010 World Cup than the last tournament held in Germany four years ago, according to an online opinion survey conducted by TNS, the world's largest custom research agency, using Lightspeed Research access panel. However, 73% of them still find the event appealing, compared with 83% in 2006.

“There could be several reasons for the decline in interest,” says Thomas Isaac, Director - Research Services, TNS. “For one thing, South Africa, this year's host, is less well known than Germany in Hong Kong, and the image most people have about the country is mainly associated with negative issues, such as crime and political instability.

“Soccer wise, it is not known for its soccer talent, unlike Germany who has a very successful soccer history and as host was one of the favourites in 2006.”

Mr. Isaac continues, “Moreover, publicity about the event in Hong Kong has also been quite slow until recently, possibly due to budget cuts by advertisers since the 2008 global financial crisis. Promotions have mostly been seen on online social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, rather than high-profile outdoor activities.”

As a result, the poll found fewer respondents keen to participate in World Cup-related activities, such as subscribing to i-Cable Communications to watch the games live on TV, betting on matches, or watching the final live.

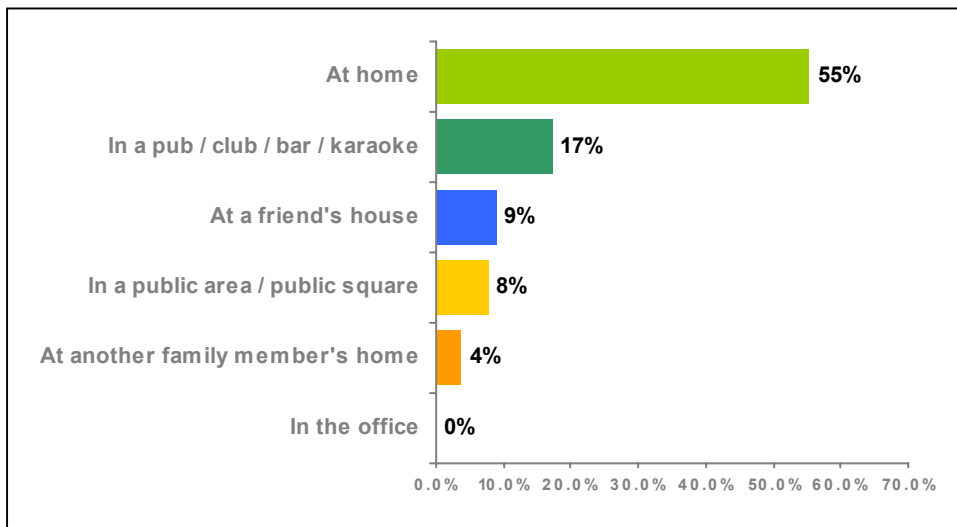


Less viewers for the final

Only half of Hong Kong's citizens expect to watch the final live, compared to 64% in 2006. However, this drop might be attributable to the fact that 42% have not yet made a decision about that, and they will do so closer to the match.

Watching at home

Over half the population say they will watch the final on TV at home, as they did last time, although the number who will watch it in a public place has risen from 4% in 2006 to 8% this year. Even though the final will be shown live on local free-to-air TV channels TVB and ATV, lack of advance publicity about this fact means a number of viewers may think they will need to leave their homes to watch it. On the other hand, the reason could be that a greater number of people feel they will simply enjoy the excitement of watching the final in the company of other football fans.

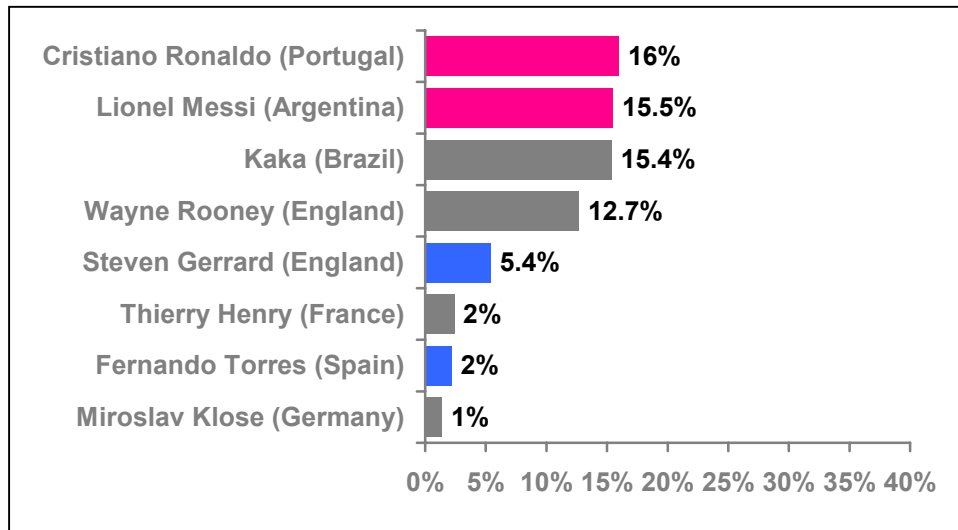


Few plan to change channels

A total of 66% of the respondents said they had not subscribed to i-Cable, the official Hong Kong World Cup broadcasters. Of the 28% who were now TV subscribers, only 10% planned to switch to i-Cable, 36% were unsure whether they would do so, and 54% would definitely not. This may be due to the fact that they do not want to commit themselves to an i-Cable subscription beyond the one-month World Cup period.

New star players step forward

Neither Ronaldinho nor Ronaldo who were the top two favourite players in the last World Cup will take part in the 2010 World Cup. "Their absence means there are no clear-cut favourites in the player popularity stakes this time around," Mr. Isaac remarks. Top favourites for this year include Cristiano Ronaldo of Portugal (16%), very closely trailed by Lionel Messi of Argentina (15.5%) and Kaka of Brazil (15.4%). The outstanding performances of players such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi with their club teams, Manchester United/Real Madrid and Barcelona respectively, since the last World Cup have transformed them into soccer superstars among fans.



Favourites for the final

As in 2006, the fans still favour Brazil (53%) and England (27%) in 2001 as the most likely teams to appear in the final. However, their views are more fragmented than last time, with many feeling that several other teams have become favourites as well. Germany's chances are now less favourable, seeing a decline from 27% four years ago to 15% today, most likely due to the fact that it will not be playing on home soil. Spain's prospects of appearing in the final have risen significantly, from 3% to 21%, most probably because they overcame their image as underachievers in the international football arena by winning the 2008 UEFA European Championship.

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About the TNS World Cup opinion poll

The poll was conducted online using Lightspeed Research access panel among a representative sample of 1,000 Hong Kong adults aged 15-54 from May 27 to Jun 6, 2010. Its results are presented with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/-3.2%.

About TNS

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