

APPENDIX VII

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UK

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Introduction

This report is one of seven from countries participating in the research project set up by the European Women's Audiovisual Network, *Where are the women directors?* This has come about in response to growing concern about the marginalisation of female directors in world film culture and the belief that our societies benefit from inclusion, proportionate representation and plurality of voices.

The representation of women in film and television directing is low in comparison with other creative sectors. Creative Skillset's *Employment Census* of the creative media industries (2012) found that women represented 36% of the total workforce. In the same year a survey of female directors in the theatre found that they were 24% of those employed.¹ However, the British Film Institute's investigation found that the proportion of women directing UK independent film between 2010-2012 was a mere 11%.²

There have been periods in UK film and broadcasting history, notably in the 80s and 90s, when it seemed that the problem of gender discrimination was being addressed. However, for the years covered by this report, 2006 – 2013, this is manifestly not the case. Measures are now urgently needed to sustain female directors' careers in a very unbalanced marketplace and based on its findings this report makes fifteen recommendations for affirmative action, some based on best practice in other countries.

During the two years of this report's production several diversity initiatives have been set in motion to incentivise change, notably *Project Diamond* for the television industry and the British Film Institute's *Diversity Guidelines for Production*. These are welcome steps in the right direction but insufficient to address the deep-rooted problems identified here. Assuming there is the political will to achieve gender equality for UK directors, stronger, coordinated action will be needed across the film and television institutions. Ultimately inclusion can only be to the benefit of the industry. It will open it up to the full potential of female directors' talent and perspective.

¹ Charlotte Higgins, Stage & Screen, 10th December 2012

² Succès de Plume: Female Screenwriters & Directors of UK Film, 2012-2014

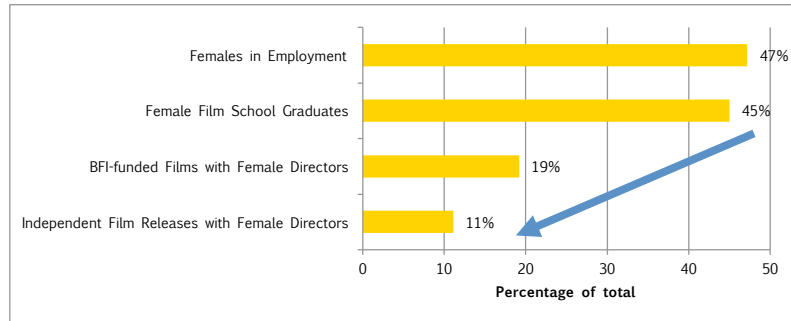
I. Executive Summary and Recommendations

In an overall population of 63 million people (2011), women in the UK comprise just over half. As women's share of those in employment is just over 5% less than men (47%) so the share of female directors graduating from film school (45%) is indicative of equality for entry into the industry. However there is a major decline thereafter with women accounting for about 22% of film directors registered by Directors UK, even though not all these are active.

In the UK 94% of respondents felt that gender inequality exists, one of the highest results amongst the seven participant countries.

The challenge faced by female directors is to sustain their careers in a male dominated market place, where men receive between 80 and 90% of national funding and female directed films are considered less commercially viable. This context perpetuates assumptions which are often unfavourable to women, and when aggravated by other factors, such as the freelance nature of the profession or the demands of parenting, deliver a very imbalanced film culture.

Figure 1: Women directors in the UK film industry



Source: EWA report database - Survey

The statistics needed to give a comparative understanding of what is happening across the regions and nations of the UK film and broadcasting industry do not exist. Where data does exist there is little evidence that it is being monitored or structured into coherent, institution-led policies for change. This is regrettable given that inequality for female directors has persisted throughout the period.

In spite of gender inequality, EWA's data for 2013 indicates that the critical reception for films directed by women is very positive: more films reached international festivals and won awards than did those directed by men. Also, between 2010 and 2013 in fiction, female directed films with BFI Lottery funding had higher average admissions per film than male directed films.

Education and Entry

Respondents to the questionnaire felt that by increasing the number of female directed films in the curriculum and in film clubs, and by affirming women's role in the industry, school students would be better prepared to take on the career.

Apart from attending film school the principle entry points for women directors are through making shorts and documentaries. A greater number than in other European countries also find their way in through directing theatre and television drama.

Funding

Competing for funding is a key challenge for women. Prejudice, conscious or unconscious, in favour of male directors and male-focused stories perpetuates inequality. Less opportunity to work means less experience, and a lower profile for female directed films.

In television, questionnaire respondents identified gender discrimination more with the private than the public sector, though it was recognised in both.

Female director's share of BFI Lottery funding averages 11%, with a slight increase in funding between the two periods of four years particularly for documentaries, although the number of documentaries supported is very low.

In public service television female directors accounted for only 13% of all episodes of 60' drama and documentary, and they are particularly absent in drama.

In feature films supported by television, BBC Films and Film 4 have commissioned 20% and 19% of female directors respectively.

The overall pattern shows very large fluctuations which can lead to years with no commissions from female directors given the low starting point for women. The number of films supported annually by the BFI Lottery Fund has normally been below five in both genres. At BBC Films and Film4, commissioning numbers are

erratic with little evidence of overall progression. In broadcast drama several drama series have never commissioned a female director.

Evidence from Film 4’s scheme for new directors, *Coming Up*, is encouraging, a beacon for what might be achieved, with women directors accounting for 41% of its productions. However, for other first entry schemes such as Creative England’s *iFeatures* and Film London’s *Microwave* the average share is under 23%.

Generally, where budgets are high, the presence of female directors decreases. In television, far fewer female directors get the chance to direct high-end drama. In film, female directors are least present in the high budget productions and their share of the average spend per film from the BFI Lottery fund is 14% less than the share for male directors.

In the questionnaire, women were aware that they needed greater support to break through into the higher budget (deemed more commercial) sector.

Significant public funds are being invested in film in the regions and nations – approximately £87.5 million over six years between 2006-12. However, there has been no systematic, gender-based monitoring of applicants or awards, even where funds claim to operate diversity and equality policies.

Most female directors who are parents are not discouraged by the competing demands of parenting itself. The problem is the industry’s lack of adjustment to the way in which it affects career progression, for instance when women re-enter the market after starting a family, or require childcare support during production.

Reaching the audience

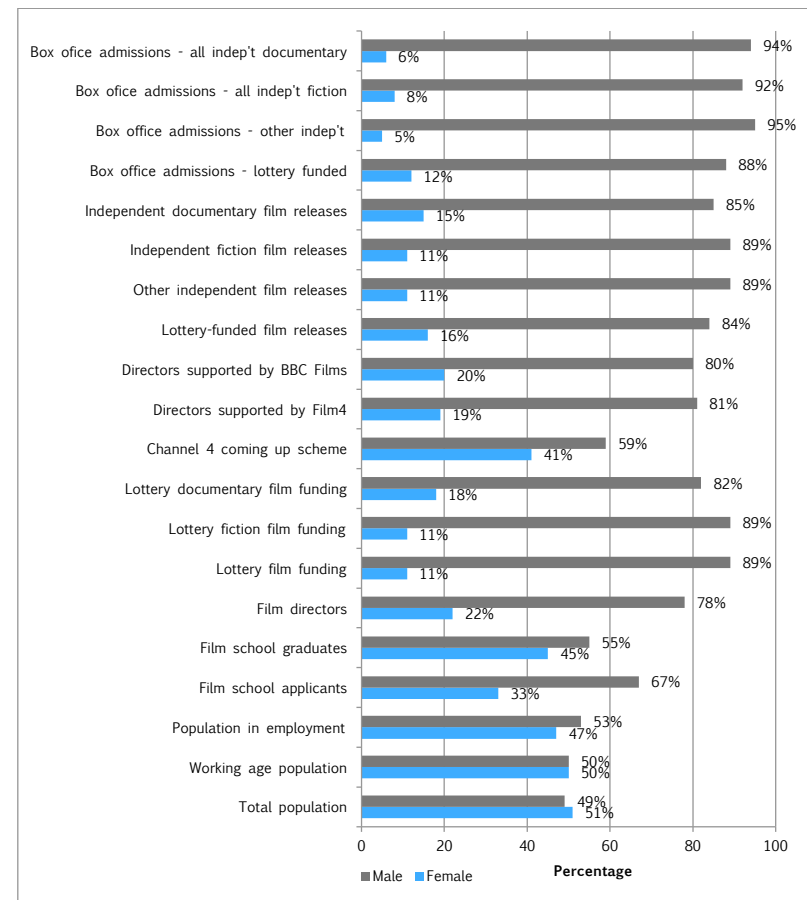
For the BFI lottery funded films, the share of female directed films released (16%) compares well in relation to their percentage share of production, (11%). The overall share of releases for all independent films is lower at 11%.

There has been a significant increase in the audience per film for female-directed, BFI fiction. Admissions per film have increased from approximately 85,000 to over 322,000 in the second four year period, just exceeding audiences per film for their male counterparts. For documentary, both female and male-directed films have seen a decline over the period, though relative to the number of releases, this has been steeper for male-directed films than for female-directed films.

The way forward

UK respondents to EWA’s questionnaire agree universally that increasing the number of female directed films would change the representation of women in UK society. The proportion of those feeling that this would increase the presence of women on our screens (96%), affect women’s status in society (94%), and impact positively on equality (92%) was significantly higher than EWA’s European averages.

Figure 2: UK Independent Film: Gender Shares Across Key Indicators



Source: EWA report database - Survey

Recommendations

1. A co-ordinated approach is needed to data gathering, policy development and policy implementation at national and regional level, with systems in place for annual monitoring and reporting.

Data Gathering

2. National and Regional funding organisations should systematise their data collection strategies to facilitate a nationwide analysis.
3. All education, commissioning, funding and distribution institutions should keep statistics on gender equality as a compulsory part of their programme. This should include data on applicants and commissioning teams as well as places/awards. Where applicable it should also include gender data on genre, budget and how many films the applicant/beneficiary has directed.
4. All broadcasters, whether public or private, terrestrial or on-line, should be required to publish statistics on gender equality in relation to commissions and acquisitions.
5. The BFI's Statistical Yearbook should include statistics on gender and diversity in the *Talent and Directors* section.

Education

6. More films directed by women should be included in the A-level syllabus and initiatives taken to promote female role models to younger students.

Production Funding

7. Minimum 40% targets should be set for all public funding, whether from the BFI or public service broadcasting, to be achieved by 2020. These could be assessed over 3 year periods to take into account annual variations in applications. Appropriate structures should be put in place to monitor progress.
8. Measures should be set up to support women wishing to direct higher budget genre films and drama, including mentor programmes and percentage targets for their inclusion in this level of production.
9. Gender parity should be observed on all commissioning panels and training provided to raise awareness of gender equality issues. Vigilance over commissioning trends is especially necessary given the erratic figures from year to year, and the fragility of recovery for female directors where it exists.

10. Measures should be taken to address the needs of parent directors including adjusting tax allowances, allowing budget lines for childcare during production, and observing age neutrality on schemes targeting first and second time directors or those wishing to re-enter the profession.

Reaching the audience

11. Strategies should be reviewed to create a more commercially viable environment:
 - Much greater support for publicity, advertising and distribution strategy
 - a Europa Cinema type network to enhance promotion, circulation and box office runs of successful films
 - percentage based subsidies to incentivise screenings of female directed films
 - Requirements that publicly funded publications and media observe greater gender parity to assist female directors' profile
12. Broadcasters should be encouraged to include more female-directed films on their channels and platforms

Further Research

13. Funds should be available to advance understanding of the factors for the low presence of female directors. Areas would include:
 - analysis of female directors' projects and their journey through the development and/or commissioning process
 - case studies of particular films and their route to market focussing on publicity, advertising and distribution
 - analysis of marketing spend in relation to gender of director
 - analysis of critical response and gender parity in press and media coverage
14. In general, measures to address gender inequality should not be subsumed in initiatives seeking to address under representation more widely.
15. To address the scope of these recommendations in a coherent way, EWA recommends that a national symposium be held for key stakeholders to respond to the report's findings and recommendations.

II. Methodology

The report's findings are based on two sources:

- 1) a quantitative survey with sixteen categories giving available data on the presence of women directors and their films in the UK industry from film school to cinema exhibition.
- 2) a questionnaire sent out through professional institutions to almost 900 respondents of which the UK respondents, male and female, comprised 111.

Findings from both sources are presented alongside in this report to build the emerging picture.

2.1 Quantitative survey

The research covers the period 2006 – 2013. To assess trends across highly variable annual statistics for film production and release, data from these eight years has been divided into two four-year groups.

The data covers documentary and fiction film of 60' and over, in both the film and public broadcasting sectors, although information on gender equality in the broadcasting sector has been difficult to access and is incomplete.

This report uses the country of origin allocated by the BFI Research and Statistics Unit.³

UK film is based on UK independent film i.e. films made without creative or financial input from the major US studio companies:⁴ It should be noted that evidence presented by the Geena Davis Institute at the London Film Festival, 2015, indicates that female directors' share of UK/US productions is significantly lower than their share of UK Independent productions.⁵

Data on national film funding is specific to the British Film Institute (BFI) Lottery Fund. There are national funds distributed through other national and regional

³ a UK film is one certified as such by the UK Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under Schedule 1 of the Films Act 1985, via the Cultural Test, under one of the UK's official co-production agreements or the European Convention on Cinematographic Coproduction

⁴ Fox Entertainment Group, NBC Universal, Paramount Motion Pictures Group, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Walt Disney Motion Pictures Group and Warner Bros Entertainment.

⁵ For the period studied by the Geena Davis Institute, womens' share was 9.1% of UK/US productions and 27.3% of UK independent production

agencies but these have been reorganised during the period and, with the exception of Northern Ireland, reliable statistics on gender are difficult to track.

Films with more than one director of different genders have been allocated proportionately.

Production and development funds can be allocated across more than one year. Since there is usually a two-year lag between production and release, production and release figures do not correspond exactly.

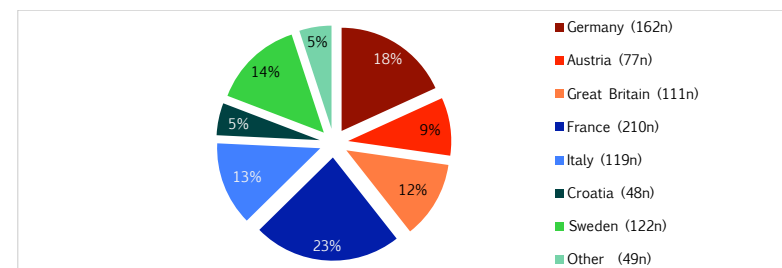
The survey's statistics for funding, releases and admissions have been provided by the British Film Institute Department for Statistics. Additional statistics have been sourced from company reports, Directors UK, the National Film and Television School, websites, and other national and regional agencies where relevant. Much of the data on gender has had to be mined specifically for this report.

The data has been analysed and processed by Sheffield Hallam University's Centre for Regional and Social Economic Research.

2.2 Qualitative Questionnaire

In July 2015, the questionnaire was distributed on-line through professional organisations of the industry including the union, BECTU, Directors UK, the National Film and Television School, the independent producers organisation, PACT, and Women in Film and Television, WFTV. One hundred and eleven respondents answered from the UK representing 12.5% of the total of 898 respondents.

Figure 3: Country Shares of Questionnaire Respondents



Source: EWA report database - Questionnaire

Of the respondents the majority have experience in three creative sectors: 62% described themselves as directors, 52% as screenwriters and 37% as producers. The rest are spread across all sectors of the industry including film funders, development executives, students and critics. The average age was 42 so most were experienced in the industry. Since only 8% of respondents were male we have not given gender breakdowns for specific answers.

Several questions invited respondents to select more than one option so results do not always add up to 100%. Where respondents select on a 1-4 scale, results are based on ‘applies fully’ and ‘applies’. Exceptions are noted.

The data has been analysed and processed by Rostock University’s Institute for Media Research. To take account of national contexts of interpretation, national researchers have made observations where relevant.

III. Women’s Presence in the industry

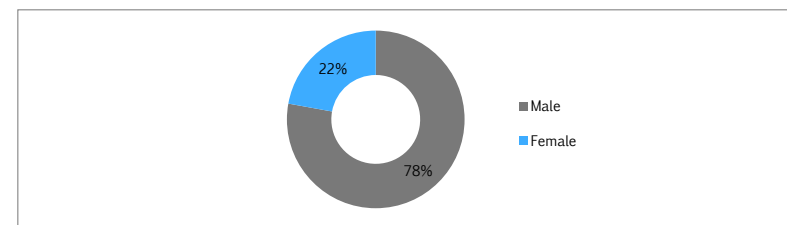
3.1 Does gender inequality exist?

In the UK 94% of respondents felt that gender inequality exists, one of the highest results from the 7 nations in the study.

3.2 Number of directors active in the industry

This can only be estimated. There is no registry of directors available. Female directors accounted for 107 (12%) of the 895 UK independent films released between 2006 – 13, with a higher share in documentaries (15%) than in fiction (11%). The numbers of female directors involved would be lower given that several would have directed more than one film. When “feature film directors” were selected from the members of the Directors UK website in July 2015, there were 456 listed, of which 101 were female and 355 were male, a proportion of just over 22%. This is indicative of those who are potentially active and the majority of these female directors appeared to be freelance and working in television rather than film.

Figure 4: Feature film directors, 2015, Directors UK



Source: EWA report database – Survey

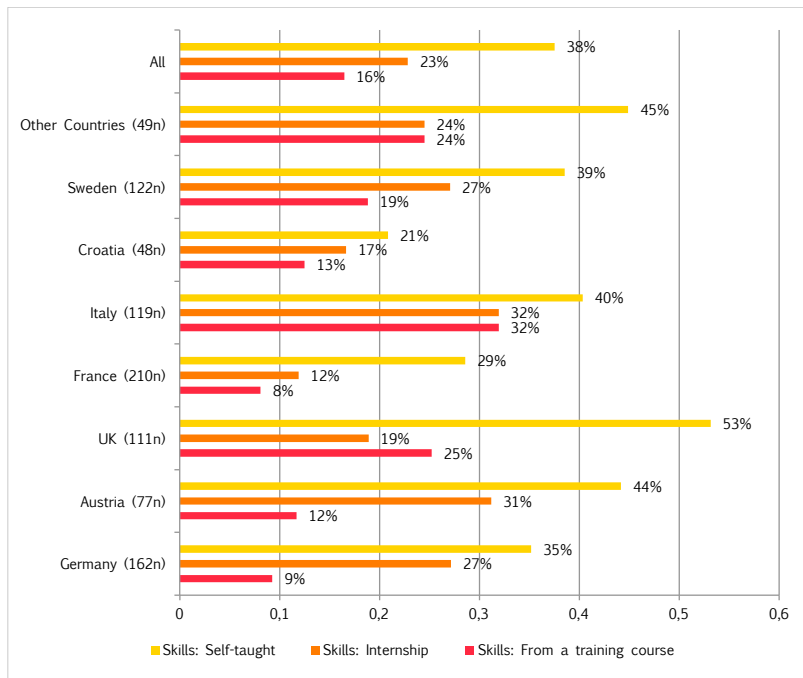
Base: Directors UK

IV. Entry into the industry

4.1 How did you get your skills?

Of the 69 directors responding to the questionnaire 51% trained at film school, 41% had attended a training course and 29% had learned through apprenticeship or media schemes. Of those who had not been to film school 35% had attended training courses, 24% had had internships in the media industries and most indicated that they were self taught through practice. France's figures for qualifying through film school (60%) are also significantly higher than in UK and other countries.

Figure 5: How did you learn directing skills? (Not film school graduates)

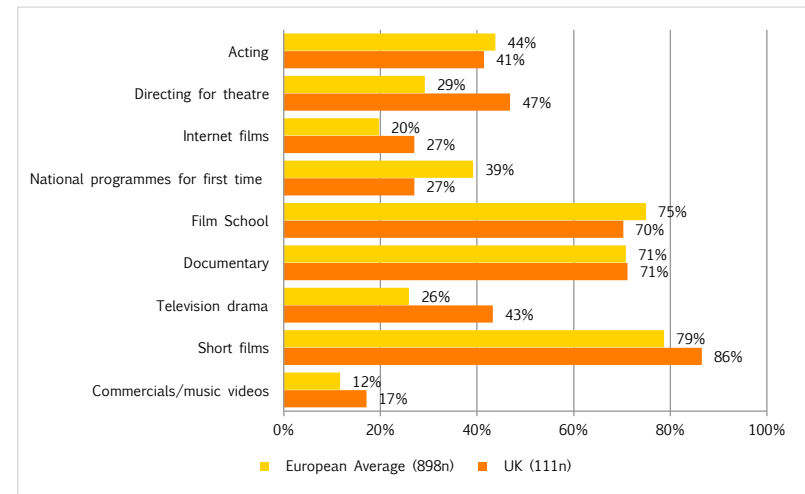


Source: EWA report database – Questionnaire
Note: n = number of respondents

4.2 Routes into the industry

Directors were asked which of a range of options are the best ways into the industry, and offered a yes/no option. Most respondents considered making shorts (87%) as the most important route with documentary film-making (78%) and film school (70%) in second and third place. In comparison to the other European countries there was also higher than average confidence in pathways through theatre (47%) and directing television drama (43%).

Figure 6: Routes into directing

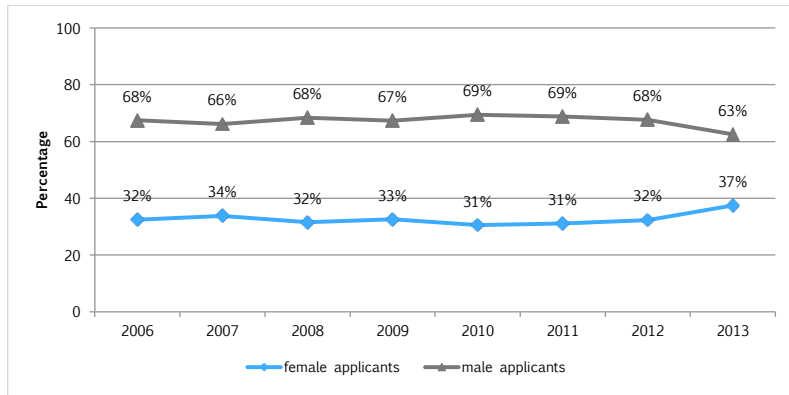


Source: EWA report database – Questionnaire
Note: n = number of respondents

4.3 Comparative performance at film school

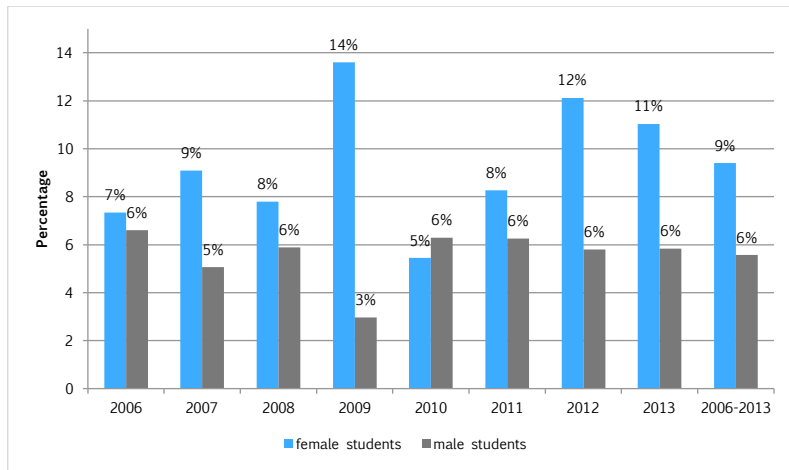
Figures were taken for applicants and students for all MA Directing courses at the National Film & Television School between 2006 – 13. The number of applicants is consistently far higher than places available for both men and women. Whereas women comprise on average 32.6% of the overall number of applicants they form 45% of the graduates, so the conversion rate from applicant to graduate is more favourable for women and has consistently remained so with the exception of one year, 2010.

Figure 7: Applicants to National Film and Television School, NFTS



Source: EWA report database - Survey

Figure 8: Applicant: Graduate Ratios, National Film and Television School



Source: EWA report database - Survey

V. National Funding

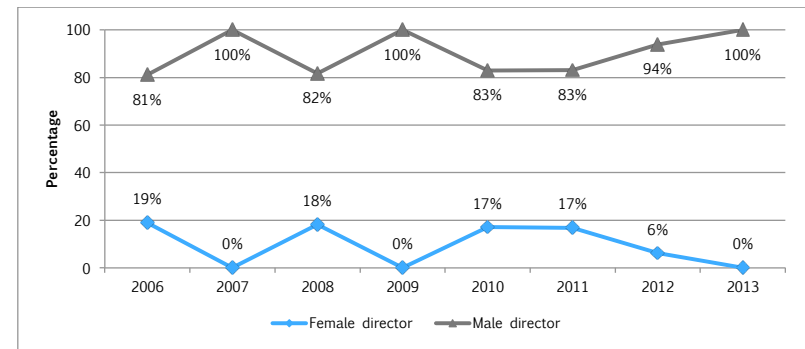
State funding for independent production is distributed primarily through the British Film Institute (BFI) but also through the agencies of the nations and regions. Given the difficulty of accessing comparative, gender-based statistics, this report has focused on the BFI lottery fund which is monitored by the BFI’s Research and Statistics Unit. We were unable to access figures on applications to funds to monitor changes in gender ratios of applicants to awards

This section also provides a limited reference to overall regional funding and to two production funds targeted at first time directors in 5.6 below

5.1 BFI Lottery Production Fund – Fiction & Documentary

Between 2006 and 13 a total of 177 films have been supported by the BFI Lottery Fund. Of these 151 are fiction and 26 are documentary. Most of the money has been awarded to male directors, who have enjoyed an overall share of 88.6% over the period. There have been some large annual fluctuations

Figure 9a: BFI Lottery Production Fund: Fiction

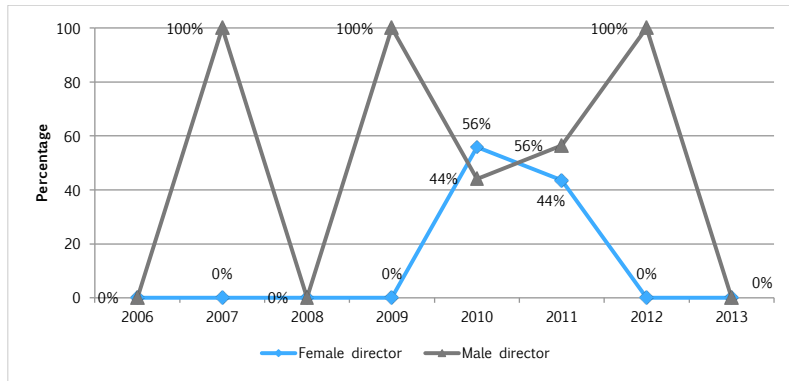


Source: EWA report database - Survey

Note: Best available annual figures: 0% indicative of less than 5 productions

Female directors’ share of fiction budgets averages at 11.3% and shows a decline.

Figure 9b: BFI lottery production fund: Documentaries



Source: EWA report database – Survey

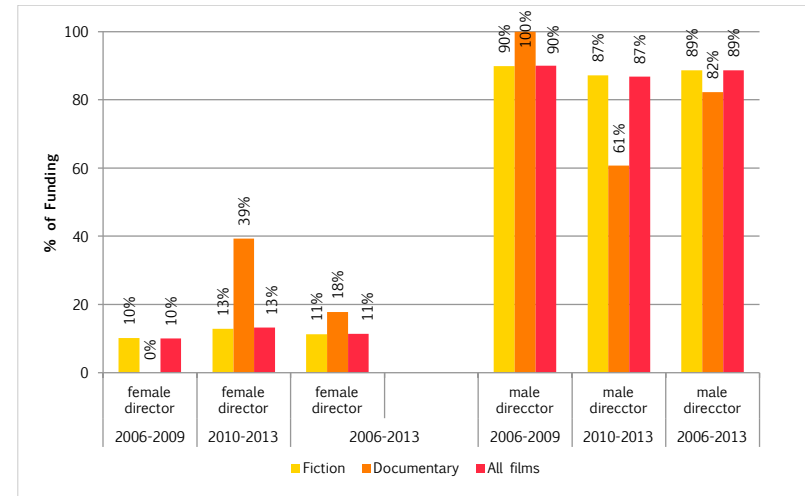
Note: Best available annual figures: 0% indicative of less than 5 productions

Female directors’ share of documentary budgets is higher at 17.8% although the numbers of films produced are small. Awards were only made in five of the eight years.

5.2 Progression of share of BFI lottery funding by film genre

There has been a slight increase in female director’s share of lottery funding for fiction, from 10.1% to 12.8%. However, between the two periods there was a 21.6% reduction in funding for fiction. The more significant upward trend has been in documentaries where female directors’ share increased from a minimal base to account for almost 40% of available funding. It should be noted however that the overall number of documentaries was low.

Figure 10: Progression of national lottery funding by film genre



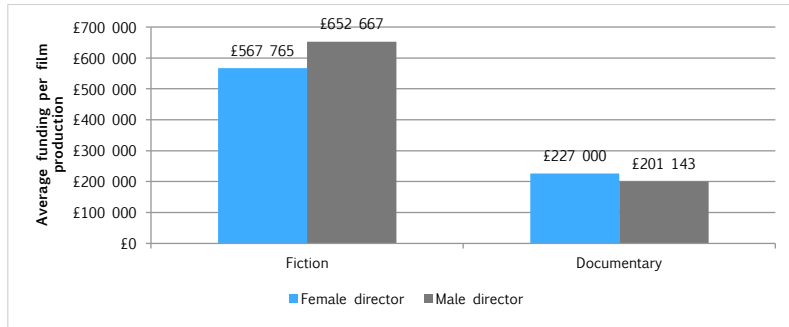
Source: EWA report database - Survey

Note: Best available annual figures: 0% indicative of less than 5 productions

5.3 Average national fund spend per film by gender

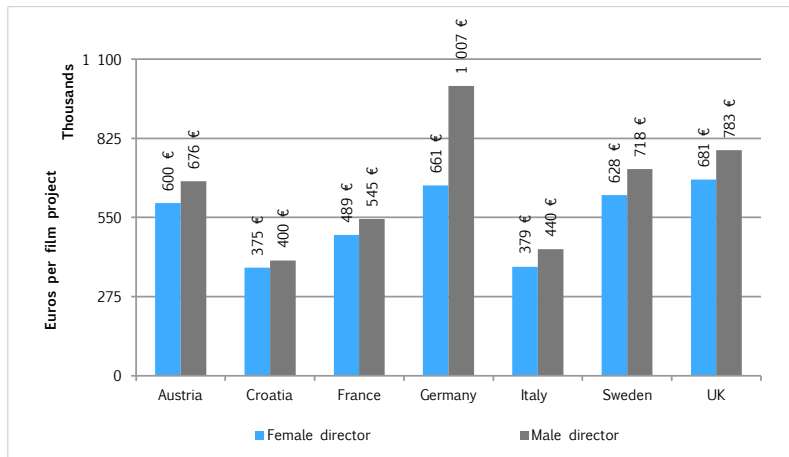
In fiction, female directed films have received on average about 13% less funding than male-directed films. In documentary, female directed films have received about 17% more funding per film although the numbers of documentaries involved are minimal.

Figure 11: Average share of national fund spend: gender and genre (2006-2013)



Source: EWA report database - Survey

Figure 12: European average national fund spend per fiction film (euros)



Source: EWA report database - Survey

Note: Figures for Croatia are for 2008-2013; and for Austria and Germany 2009-2013

Average spend by the BFI lottery fund for female fiction is the highest in Europe. In all countries the spend is lower for female directors than for male directors. The differential ranges from 6% in Croatia to 34% in Germany. Even where the differential is smallest, it should be remembered that female directed films account

for a far smaller proportion of overall national funding for fiction averaging at 16.1% of available funds.

5.4 Average budgets for films supported by BFI Lottery Fund

Film budgets for independent productions supported by the BFI lottery fund have ranged from about £440,000 (low) to about £6,600,000 (high) with the largest number of films in the highest budget category. The chart below tracks 135 films. For documentaries data is incomplete since numbers are low and information might be disclosive. Of the 109 fiction films, the figures show that male directors dominate in the high budget category (81.2%), and that female directors share is more proportionate in the low budget (35.3%) and medium budget (36.9%) category. They also show that of the 27.5 fiction films directed by women, the highest number (47.6%) were in the high budget category.

Figure 13: Budget Band for fiction and documentary films

Budget Band	Number of Films			Budget		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Total	39	27	69			
Fiction - total	17	23	69	7,454,281	118,941,243	459,974,604
female director	6	8.5	13	2,924,766	14,441,112	78,162,556
female share (%)	35.29	36.96	18.84	39.24	12.14	16.99
male director	11	14.5	56	4,529,515	104,500,132	381,812,049
male share (%)	64.71	63.04	81.16	60.76	87.86	83.01
Documentaries - total	22	4	0	c	c	0

Source: EWA report Database – Survey

Base: British Film Institute

Note: c indicates numbers withheld

5.5 Regional Funds

In 2006 under the UK Film Council there were 9 regional screen agencies functioning as independent companies in their own right. They all received national funds. This structure was abolished in 2010 and the BFI now distribute some film production funds between Creative England, Creative Scotland, Creative Wales and Northern Ireland Screen. Overall figures were available for 6 of the 8 years between 2006-2012 and indicate a total spend of £87,436,000, averaging about £14,500,000 per year, which is significant. However, there is no data published giving a gender or genre breakdown of how this money has been spent.

5.6 Targeted Development Funding

There have been several funding schemes targeted at first-time directors operating during the period. EWA analysed the figures for awards given by *Microwave*, run by Film London since 2008, and *iFeatures*, run by Creative England since 2010. Of eight films commissioned by *Microwave* only one is directed by a woman (12.5%). Out of seventeen films funded by *iFeatures*, four are directed by women (23.5%).

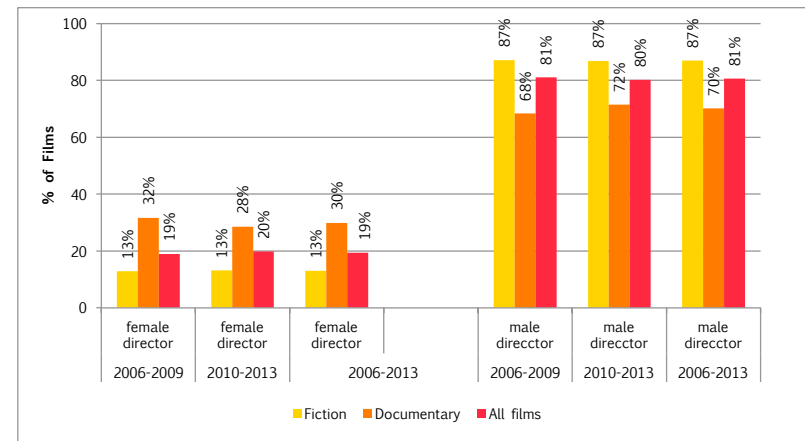
VI. Investment by broadcasters

Comprehensive data, giving a breakdown of gender and genre, is not currently available for this sector. EWA has used data from Directors UK’s monitoring of the terrestrial broadcasters, public and commercial, all of whom have some obligation to public service provision. The BBC and Channel Four, still publicly owned, carry the most extensive service. These two channels both invest in film through their own companies, BBC Films and Film 4, and EWA has analysed their back catalogues for this section.

6.1 Public service broadcast funding: 60’ Drama & Documentary

The following charts are based on data kept by Directors UK for the terrestrial broadcasters; BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5. The statistics show that overall women’s share has been 19.4% with a far stronger presence in documentary than in drama.

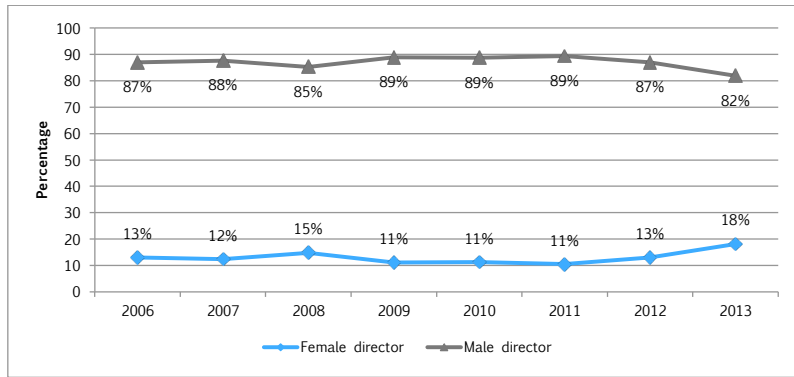
Figure 14a: Progression for television episodes of 60 minutes and over: by genre



Source: EWA report database – Survey

Across the two trend periods female directors’ share of drama has increased fractionally whilst the share of documentary has dropped by just over 3%.

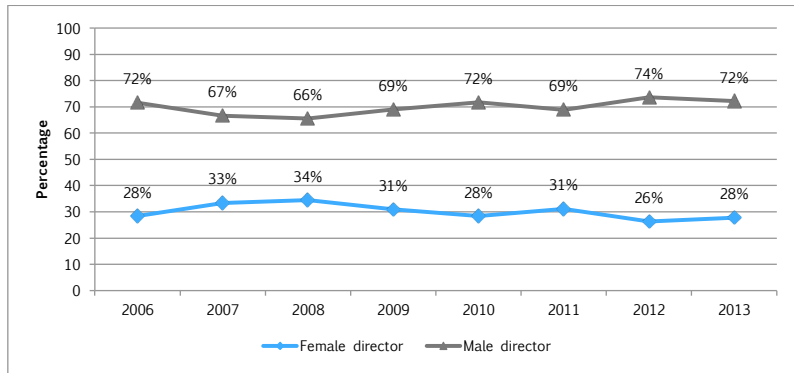
Figure 14b: Gender share of television drama 60 minutes and over



Source: EWA report database – Survey

In drama, female directors have accounted for approximately 13% of all episodes during the whole period, with their share dropping to a low in 2011 after which there has been a recovery, a rise of about 5% above the 2006 level though this still means that the share is only just above 18%.

Figure 14c: Gender share of documentaries 60 minutes and over



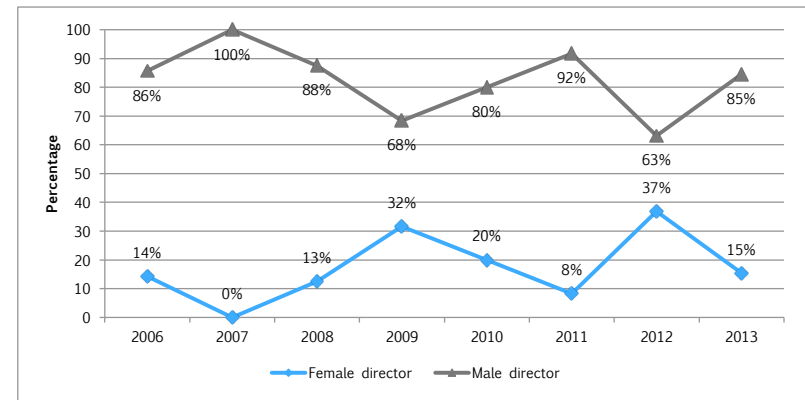
Source: EWA report database – Survey

In documentary, almost 30% of the episodes have been directed by women but in the past two years female directors’ share has dropped below the 2006 figure.

6.2 BBC Films

Over the period female directors have had a 20.4% share of productions. The highest years for production were 2009 and 2012 but the number of commissions has been very erratic with no sign of progression. For instance, after an encouraging recovery in 2012 where films by female directors represented a 36.8% share, the numbers fell back again.

Figure 15: Gender share of directors supported by BBC Films (2006-2013)

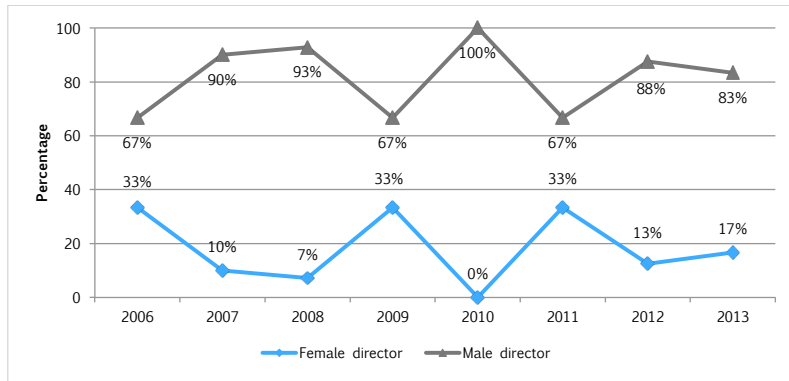


Source: EWA report database – Survey

6.3 Film 4

Female directors form 19.2% of those funded. There has been no increase in female directors either in numbers or in share of productions over the period. The highest number of films directed by women in any one year was in 1996 when there were 7 films supported. For men the highest has been 25 in 1988 and 2000.

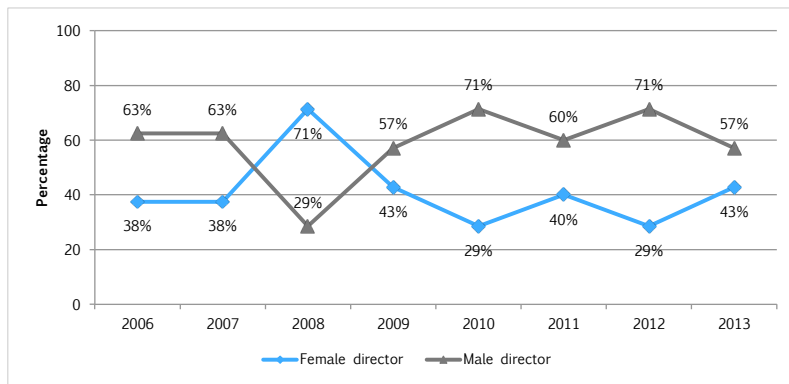
Figure 16: Gender share of directors supported by Film4



Source: EWA report database - Survey

Channel 4 also run a scheme called **COMING UP**, (through 4talent) which offers new writers and directors the opportunity to make an original 30-40 minute film with a guaranteed network broadcast on Channel 4. The % share for women directors has been consistently high with women accounting for 41.1% of funded projects. Amongst those who have benefitted are Andrea Arnold, Lindy Heymann, Destiny Ekaragha, Tinge Krishnann and Hope Dickson Leach, who have all gone on to receive funding for first features.

Figure 17: Gender share, Channel 4's Coming Up



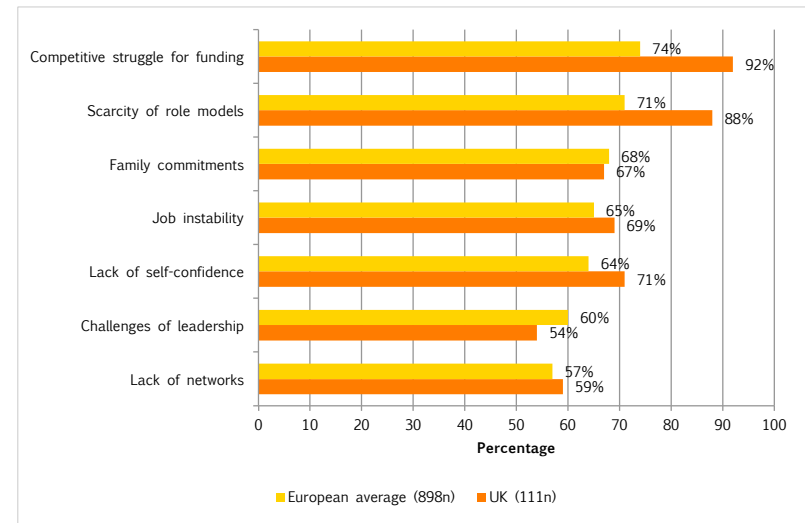
Source: EWA report database - Survey

VII. The challenges faced by female directors

7.1 What factors discourage women?

Respondents were given a number of options to consider and invited to make additional observations. Most UK respondents identify the Competitive Struggle to Secure Funding as the biggest challenge (92%) followed by Scarcity of Role Models (88%).

Figure 18: Comparative chart: Factors discouraging women



Source: EWA report database - Questionnaire

Interpretation of “the competitive struggle for funding” can be drawn from respondents’ additional comments. Firstly, several refer to the wider context of discrimination in our society: this translates into false assumptions by commissioners that “men can do it better”. Secondly, respondents refer to assumed norms of storytelling which exclude women through the stereotyping of main characters, and a “persistent bias around “universal” white male narratives”.

Additional Comments

“The main reason isn’t even listed. Culturally producers and studio heads shy away from hiring women for deeply ingrained cultural reasons. False ideas of what makes a good leader. Basic assumption that men can do it better.”

“I think the issue is that funders subconsciously have less confidence in women rather than that women do not have confidence in themselves”

“Sexism in the industry. Refusal to acknowledge female filmmakers’ level of experience in favor of male directors of similar experience. Pulling up male directors from obscurity/short film circuit and ignoring women of comparable quality. Women are consistently seen as “risky” in a way men are not.”

“Freelance directing is very hard to combine with engaging and funding regular childcare especially for work in the television industry.”

“Being able to claim for Child Care as an expense as self employed or limited company is the single most important thing that could be done to help women directors.”

“The strongest hindrance for female directors is the “norms” of storytelling we have; the strong ideas that the financiers share, no matter their genre, on which themes are “important” and which are not”

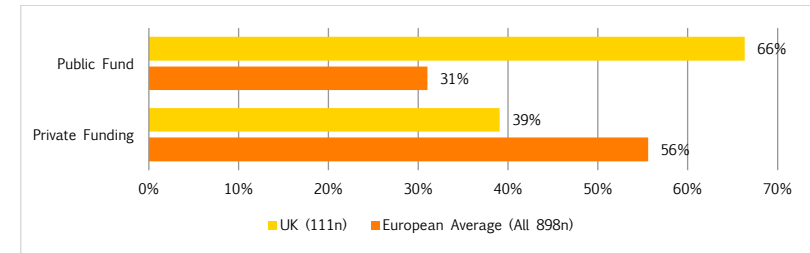
“Marginalisation - what kind of main characters are suitable for feature films? Whose story is worth telling? etc. Before we can break these stereotype norms, the reality will not change.”

7.2 Does gender affect funders’ decisions?

Two thirds of UK respondents, the highest in comparison to other national results, believe that private funders react negatively to projects directed by women. In the additional comments various reasons are suggested: that women are seen as “high risk” particularly for higher budget productions, and that there is a bias towards certain narratives such as action drama, and male-led story lines. The response is more positive regarding public funders where less than half, 39%, consider there is gender bias.

In each category a quarter of respondents recorded that they don’t consider gender relevant in either case.

Figure 19: Comparative Chart: Impact of gender on funders’ decisions



Source: EWA report database – Questionnaire

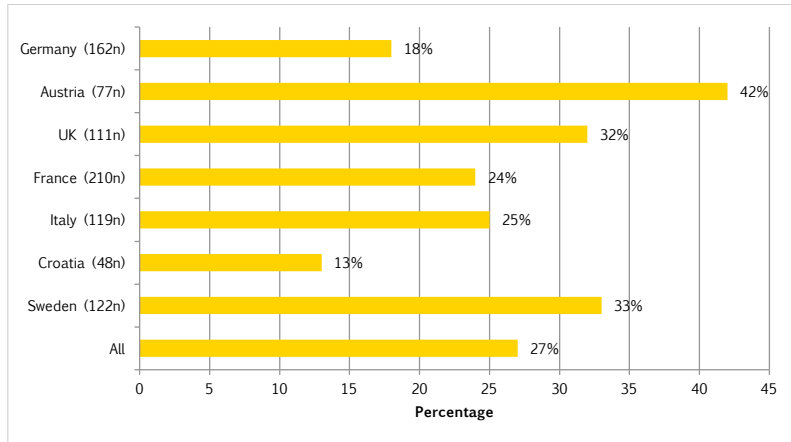
Note: n = number of respondents

7.3 What is the impact of being a parent?

42% of directors in the UK survey were parents, including 2 men, but less than a third of these, 32%, felt that being a parent had discouraged them from directing films. However, in comments given both on policy for change and factors discouraging female directors other perspectives emerge. Women feel disadvantaged by breaking their careers to start a family, both in the way they are regarded by commissioners and in their eligibility for development support. For instance, schemes intended to assist women’s early careers do not take account that women are often older when applying. Several respondents also felt that all parents should be supported, especially during shoot periods, by making childcare a budget line.

Compared to the other European countries, figures in the UK were the third highest, after Austria and Sweden, for those who considered being a parent a discouraging factor

Figure 20: Comparative Chart: Does being parent discourage directors? Yes.



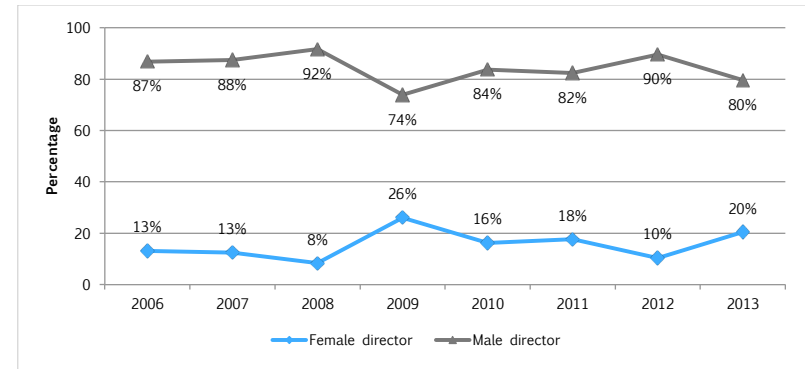
Source: EWA report database – Questionnaire
 Note: n = number of respondents

VIII. Releases

8.1 BFI Lottery funded releases

Female directors overall share of releases is 16.2%, indicating an average of one in six films are directed by women. This is higher than the proportion for all independent releases. However, it is low for fiction and without the improved releases for documentary which have almost doubled in the period, from 8% to 22%, women’s overall share would be in decline.

Figure 21: All lottery-funded film releases

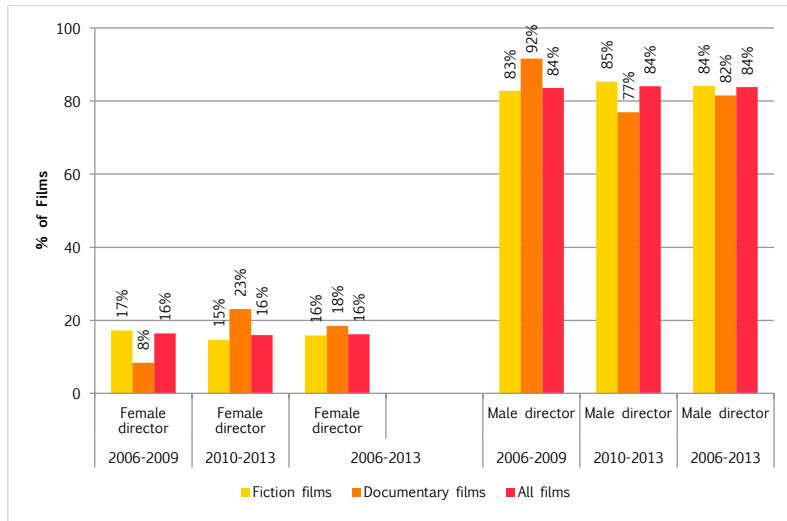


Source: EWA report database - Survey

8.2 Progression of BFI lottery funded releases

Fiction releases have declined slightly over the period by 2.5% to a 14.7% share. The high point was 2009 with 5 films released in 2009. The average for documentary releases over the period is higher (18.4%) than that of fiction (15.9%) and it increased by 4.8%.

Figure 22: Progression of BFI lottery funded releases

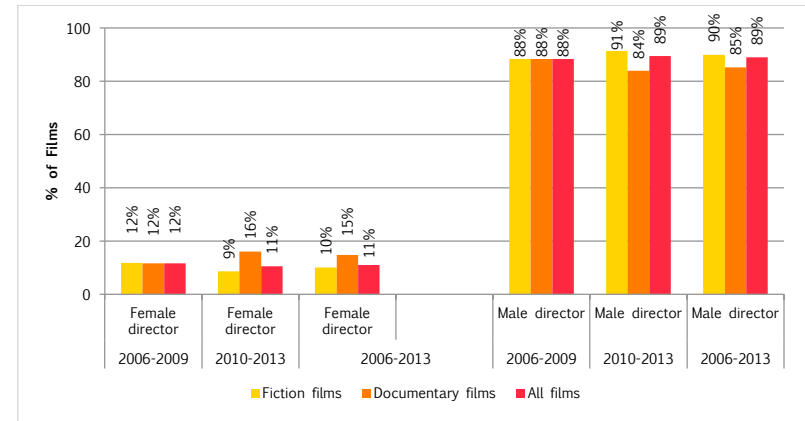


Source: EWA report database - Survey

8.3 Progression for all UK Independent releases – documentary and fiction

When BFI Lottery releases are taken together with all other UK Independent releases the female directors' overall share is only 11%, just over one in ten of films released. The progression is similar to that for Lottery Funded releases where an increase in the release of documentaries in the second period compensates for the decline in fiction to an 8.6% share. Though figures for documentary have improved at 16.1% in the second period, they remain below a quarter of the number directed by men.

Figure 23: Progression of other independent releases by film genre

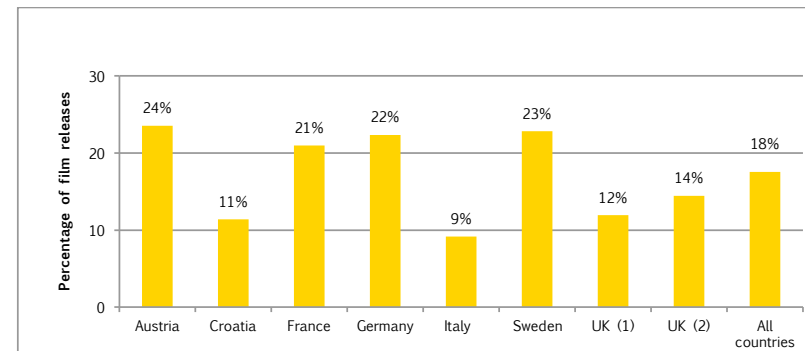


Source: EWA report database - Survey

8.4 Comparative chart: share of UK and European cinema releases

UK falls below the European average for female directors' releases along with Croatia and Italy. This chart also shows that female directors have a slightly greater proportion of releases of BFI Lottery funded films than of all independent releases.

Figure 24: Share of film releases with female directors (2006-2013)



Source: EWA report database - Survey

Note: UK(1) is all independent releases; UK(2) is BFI lottery funded releases

8.5 The perceived share of film releases in Europe for female directors

The majority of respondents, 89%, reckon correctly that films directed by women form less than 20% of all British films released. They were more realistic than the average for their European counterparts where only two thirds thought female-directed releases were this low. Respondents were not asked to distinguish between documentary or fiction films.

On the share of female directed films amongst all European films released, there was more confidence in the UK, although 67% still thought, correctly, that women's share would be less than 20%. This was almost in line with the European average of 64%. (According to the European Observatory Study between 2003 and 2012 the share of female directed films was 19.52%)

IX. Awards and Critical Reception

Tracking critical reception in the press and media has been beyond the scope of this report but given the relative success of female directed films evidenced below, it is noted how rarely films by women are lead films either for broadsheet reviews or media review programmes.

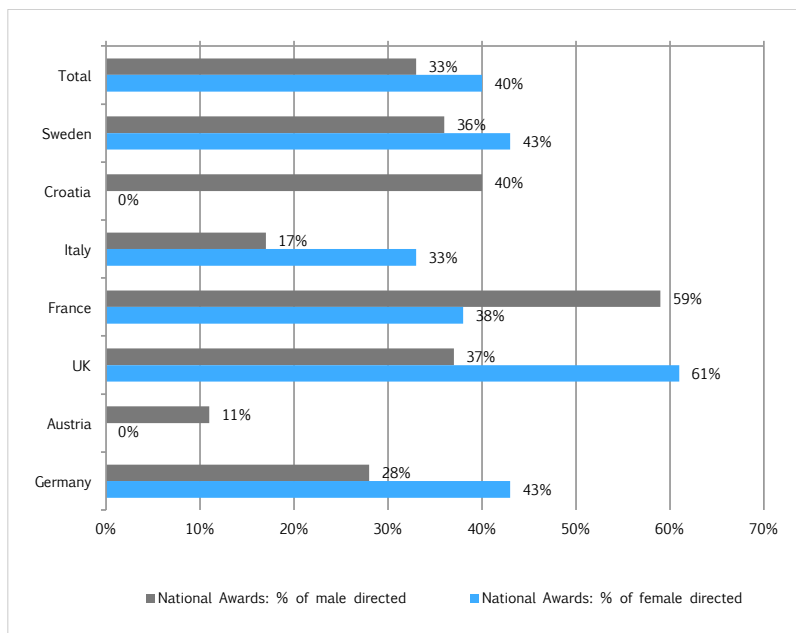
9.1 Nominations and awards, 2013

EWA analysed the 116 films released in 2013 according to gender and the national and international nominations and awards which each film received. Of the 116 films 16% were directed by women and 84% by men. The results show that films directed by women were more likely to gain a nomination and/or award than those directed by men.

The gender differential for national awards is largest in the UK. Overall, according to the European average, a film with a female director will receive and/or be nominated for 2.3 awards (vs. 2.0 for male directors)⁶.

⁶ No data on festival nominations for UK

Figure 25a: Comparative Chart: National awards for all films released in 2013



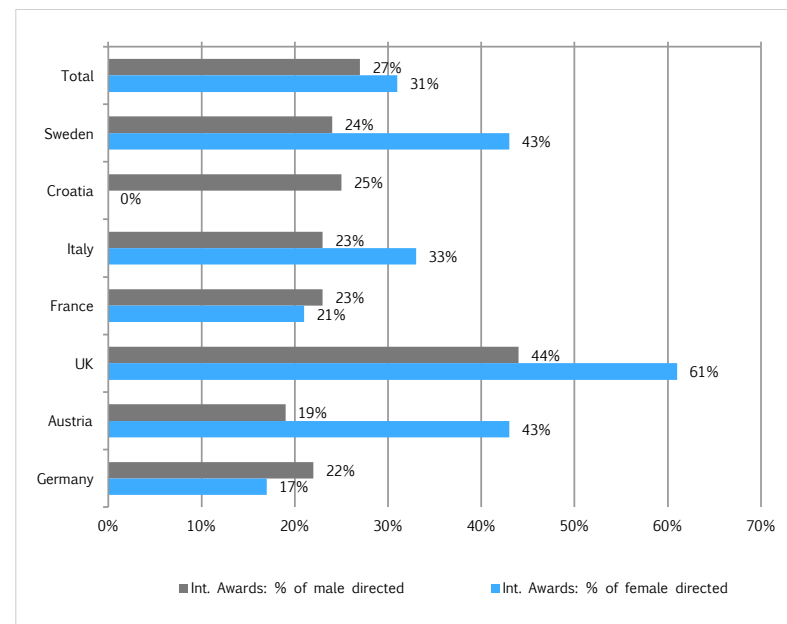
Source: EWA report database – Festivals and awards

Notes:

1. The percentage refers to the total of all films either directed by men or women.
2. No data on festival nominations for UK
3. No data on national festivals for Austria
4. Croatian sample extended to 2010-13

Overall, results show that films by female directors win proportionately more international awards and are shown at international festivals with more success than those by male directors. Of the seven countries, female directors in the UK enjoy the highest proportion of awards in comparison with male directors.

Figure 25b: Comparative Chart: International awards for all films released in 2013



Source: EWA report database – Festivals and awards

Notes:

1. The percentage refers to the total of all films either directed by men or women.
2. No data on festivals from the UK
3. No data on national festivals for Austria
4. Croatian sample extended to 2010-13

9.2 Festival A list awards, 2009-13

Between the years 2009 and 2013 four films directed by women won five A list festival awards, namely *FishTank*, Andrea Arnold; *Wasteland*, Lucy Walker; *My Brother the Devil*, Sally El Hosaini; and *The Selfish Giant*, Clio Barnard.

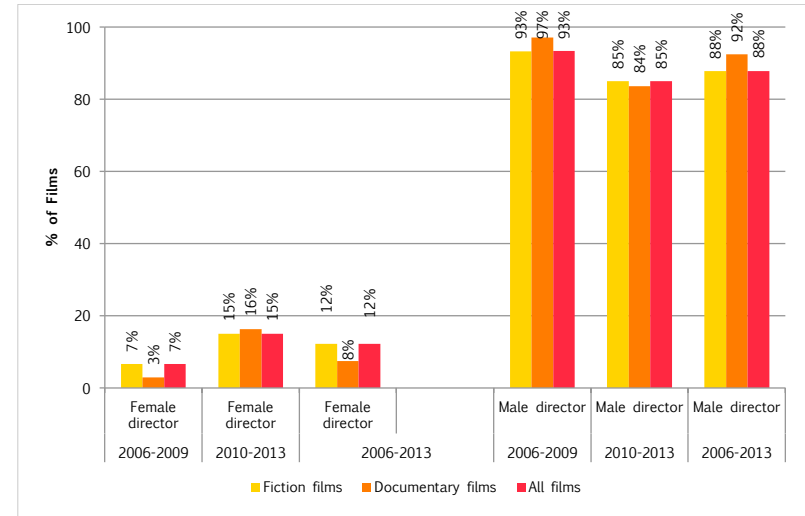
X. Admissions

The BFI Unit of Research and Statistics does not keep admissions figures. Instead the share of the box office for each year is divided by an agreed average ticket price to arrive at figures which can be compared with other European countries. Although we have taken 4 year periods to monitor trends the success of outlier films in particular years can still distort figures.

10.1 Progression of admissions for BFI lottery funded films by genre

The share of box office admissions for lottery funded films with a female director has varied considerably from year to year in both genres, but has remained comparative with levels of production averaging 12.2% over the period. There has been significant progression for female directors across the two periods. Fiction films have increased their overall share of admissions by over 50% from a 6.7% share to a 15% share. This is slightly above their share of releases for the equivalent period (14.7%) and above their share of production funds (12.8%). Documentaries have increased their overall share significantly from 2.9% to 16.3%. However this is significantly lower than their share of releases (39.3%) and their share of production funding (39.3%). However, there are many contexts affecting the route to market which need further investigation, and it is universally agreed by respondents to the questionnaire that far more measures should be taken to ensure female directed films reach their audience.

Figure 26: Progression of box office admissions to BFI lottery funded releases by genre

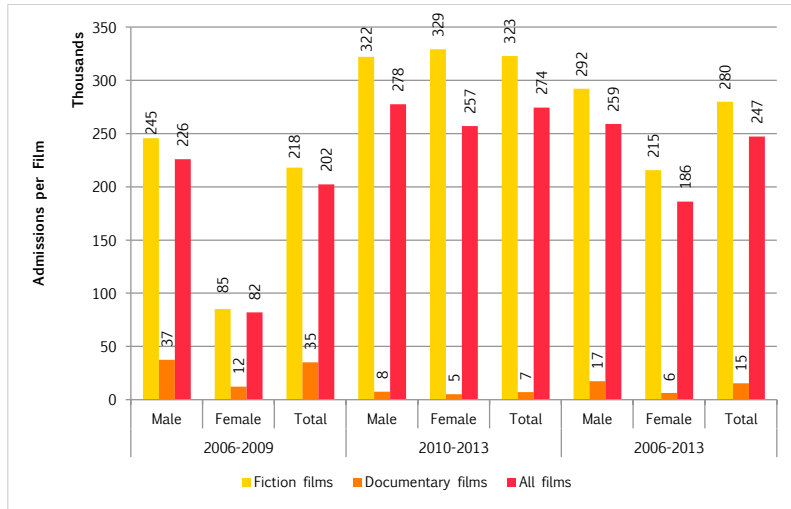


Source: EWA report database - Survey

10.2 Progression for average box office admissions per lottery funded film

When the number of admissions per film is calculated, the average for female-directed fiction increases from 80,000 to 350,000 in the second period just exceeding the number per film for male-directed fiction. For documentary with small production numbers for both male and female directors, the audience numbers decline slightly, though not as much as for the male-directed films.

Figure 27: Progression of average box-office admissions per lottery-funded release by film genre

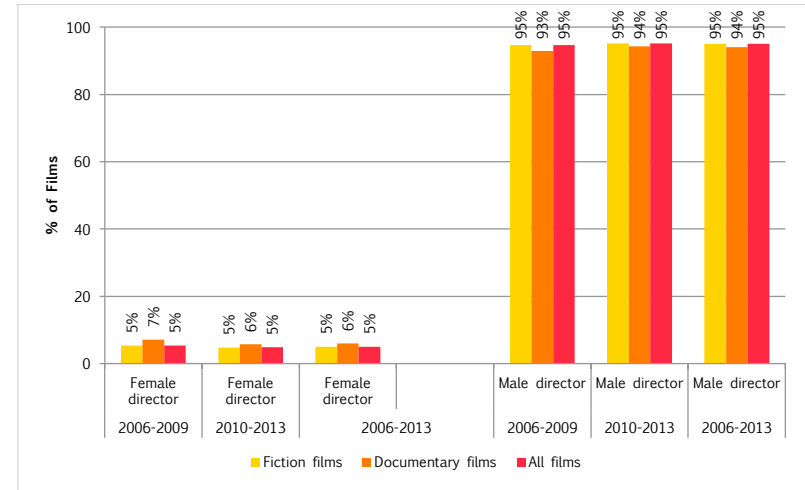


Source: EWA report database - Survey

10.3 Progression of admissions share for all independent films

Overall female directors’ share of admissions for all independent films (5%) is lower than that for BFI lottery funded productions (12.2%). There is little progression over the two periods, with 2010-13 showing a slight decline for both fiction (.5%) and documentary (1.5%) directed by women.

Figure 28: Progression of box-office admissions per independent release by film genre

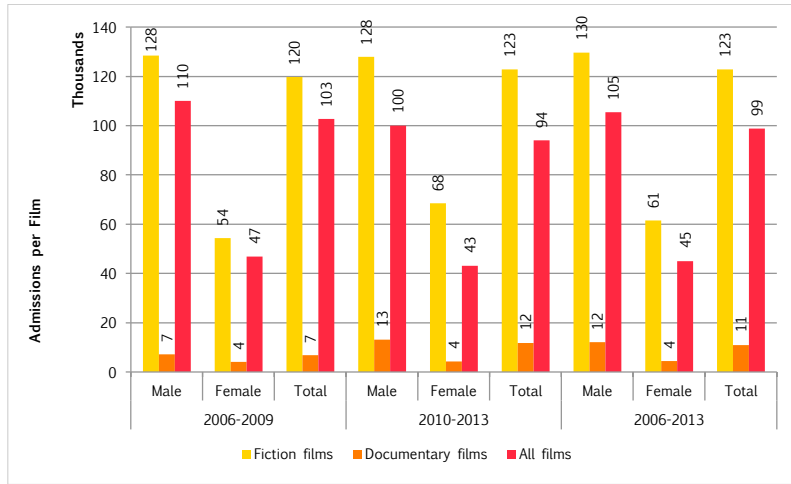


Source: EWA report database - Survey

10.4 Progression for average box office admissions per independent film

Female directors’ admissions share per independent fiction film increases between the two time periods. This is similar to BFI lottery funded films though the maximum audience figure for independent releases is significantly lower at 68,400. Admissions for documentary stay more or less the same. Over the full period admissions for female directed fiction remain about 50% of the figure for male directed fiction and about a third of the figure for male directed documentary.

Figure 29: Progression of average box-office admissions per independent release by film genre



Source: EWA report database - Survey

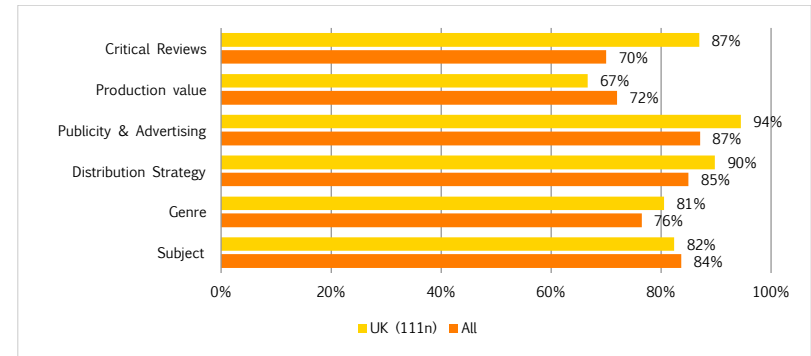
10.5 Share of top 20 UK Independent Films

Female directed films averaged 5.3% of the most successful UK independent films over the full period. 2012 was a particularly successful year with a 14.3% share of box office. The successful films were directed by 6 directors: Diane English, Max Giwa, Catherine Hardwicke, Debbie Issit, Phyllida Lloyd and Lynn Ramsey. Max Giwa and Debbie Issit both had two films which entered the top 20.

10.6 What affects box-office performance?

Respondents were asked to consider a range of factors in relation to achieving success with the audience. UK respondents were most convinced by the importance of publicity and advertising (94%) and effective distribution strategy (90%). This was also raised in several of the additional observations. More UK respondents also recognise the impact of critical reviews (87%) than their European counterparts.

Figure 30 Comparative chart: what affects box-office performance?



Source: EWA report database – Questionnaire
 Note: n = number of respondents

Other Comments

Several respondents felt there was a mismatch between the films women wish to direct and what is popularly conceived as a “commercial” or a “box-office serving film”. They also felt that female directors do not gain the experience to direct this type of film. Another factor mentioned several times was the importance given to having lead male actors whatever the intrinsic nature of the script.

“Having just worked with 8 female writer-directors they tell personal stories which may be a challenge to get financed as they will be seen as not commercial and if they do make them they struggle to find distribution.”

“We need to encourage female directors who are in the commercial world to tell commercial stories. Whether the film is ‘good’ or not is key, but women aren’t given as much opportunity to direct box-office serving films.”

“Niche distribution is THE WORST: summer releases, for instance during sports tournaments; poorly-edited trailers that undersell films;

lack of coverage based on persistent perception that only male auteurs sell papers/magazines”

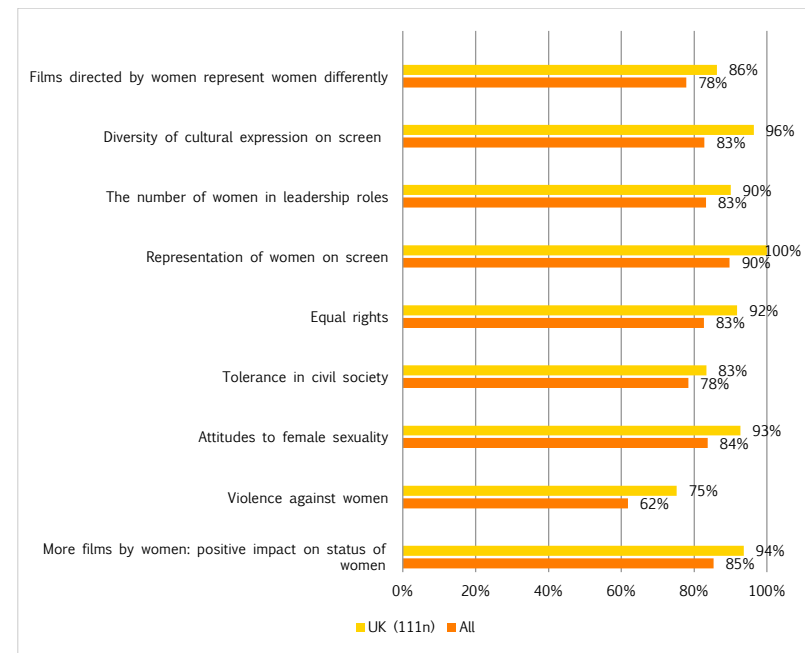
10.7 How does gender affect the choice of film?

Under a third of UK respondents considered this to be significant. However, 68% recognised that the gender of the director would affect the way a story is told. This was a similar response to other European respondents although a larger proportion, almost 75%, felt that gender affects a film’s treatment.

XI. The social impact of more films directed by women

Respondents were asked to consider a range of issues in society which might be affected were more films directed by women. All felt that this would change the way women are represented, and almost all felt that it would achieve greater diversity of representation on our screens (96%). There was also almost universal agreement that this would raise the status of women in society (94%). In general the UK response was slightly more affirmative than the average European response in all cases. Respondents in all countries also felt less convinced that more films in circulation would in itself affect the level of violence against women.

Figure 31: How would more women’s films impact on current social issues?



Source: EWA report database – Questionnaire
 Note: n = number of respondents

XII. Changing the Picture – Policies for Change

12.1 Existing measures for gender equality in the industry

There is great disparity in the statistics kept on gender equality, and many institutions do not keep databases with this information. Even where the data exists it is not being monitored either to measure progression or to inform policy. There is some evidence of change in recent years but little evidence of a co-ordinated approach across institutions. In some cases gender equality is being subsumed within wider diversity agendas and sufficient measures are not being taken to address the scale of the gender discrimination.

In the BFI’s statistical yearbook, since 2007, there is some evidence that gender equality is being tracked, particularly in the sections on talent and directing. However this is patchy and anecdotal.

In the regions, prior to 2010 the regional screen agencies were evolving a combined approach but this ended when they were abolished in 2010. The agencies now active in the regions and nations have various initiatives. Some, such as Creative England, have a generic Diversity and Equality Policy for both clients and employees. Others stated that gender is part of the “cross cutting theme of equality”. In recent years there are some statistics appearing in annual reports but they do not address the full range of activity which needs to be monitored.

In the broadcasting sector, which plays a key role in sustaining female directors’ careers, there has been no data available. Instead EWA has relied on data collected by Directors UK. The launch of *Project Diamond*, Creative Diversity Network’s diversity monitoring scheme is a welcome initiative whose effectiveness can be assessed once the range of its data is made available this year.

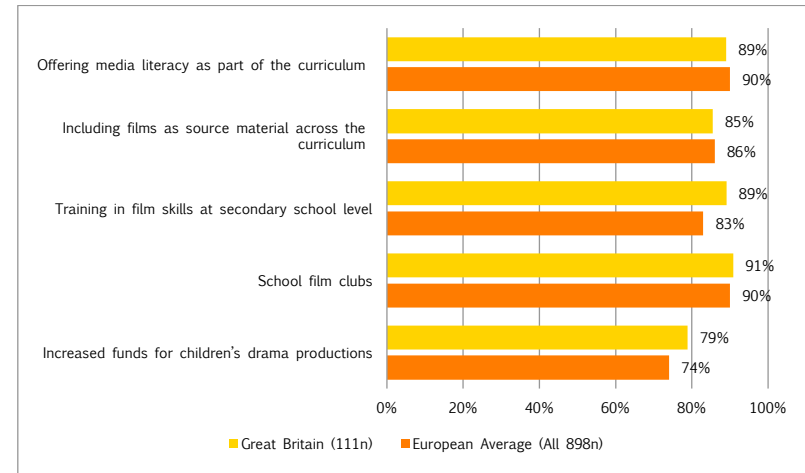
12.2 Preparing the ground in school education.

From the demographics given in EWA’s questionnaire only 13% of directors said they had decided on their career before the age of 11, and almost all had made their first film after the age of 11.

90% felt that it was important to focus on film education and media literacy in order to orient girls towards becoming female directors and 86% felt there should be more films as source material in the curriculum. There was also widespread

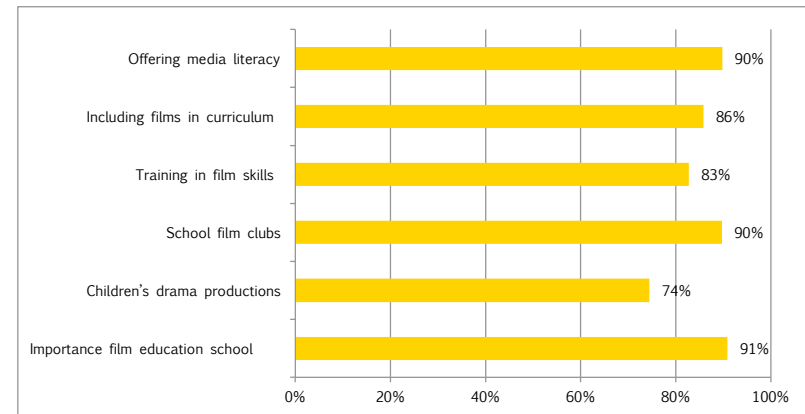
support for film clubs to inspire girls to take up directing. On the importance of school education the UK respondents largely echoed their European counterparts.

Figure 32: Comparative Chart: Measures to be taken in schools



Source: EWA report database - Questionnaire
 Notes: Percentage basis: UK 111 = 100%; European average 898 = 100%

Figure 33: Importance of film education

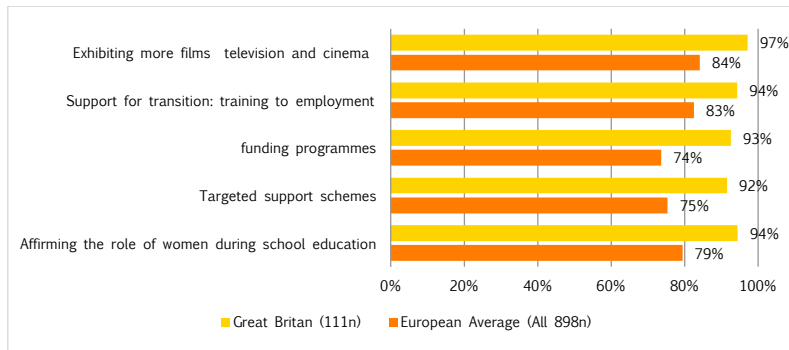


Source: EWA report database - Questionnaire

12.3 Measures to encourage potential women directors

Several measures were presented to respondents. UK’s response was notably more affirmative in each case than the response in other European countries. Exhibiting more films directed by women had nearly universal support (97%) indicative that measures to incentivise greater circulation should be taken. There was also high support, over 90%, for measures to affirm women’s presence at every stage of their early careers – in education, in their transition from training into their careers, and in developing more film projects - were all very strongly affirmed.

Figure 34: Measures to encourage women directors into the industry



Source: EWA report database - Questionnaire

Notes: Percentage basis: UK 111 = 100%; European average 898 = 100%

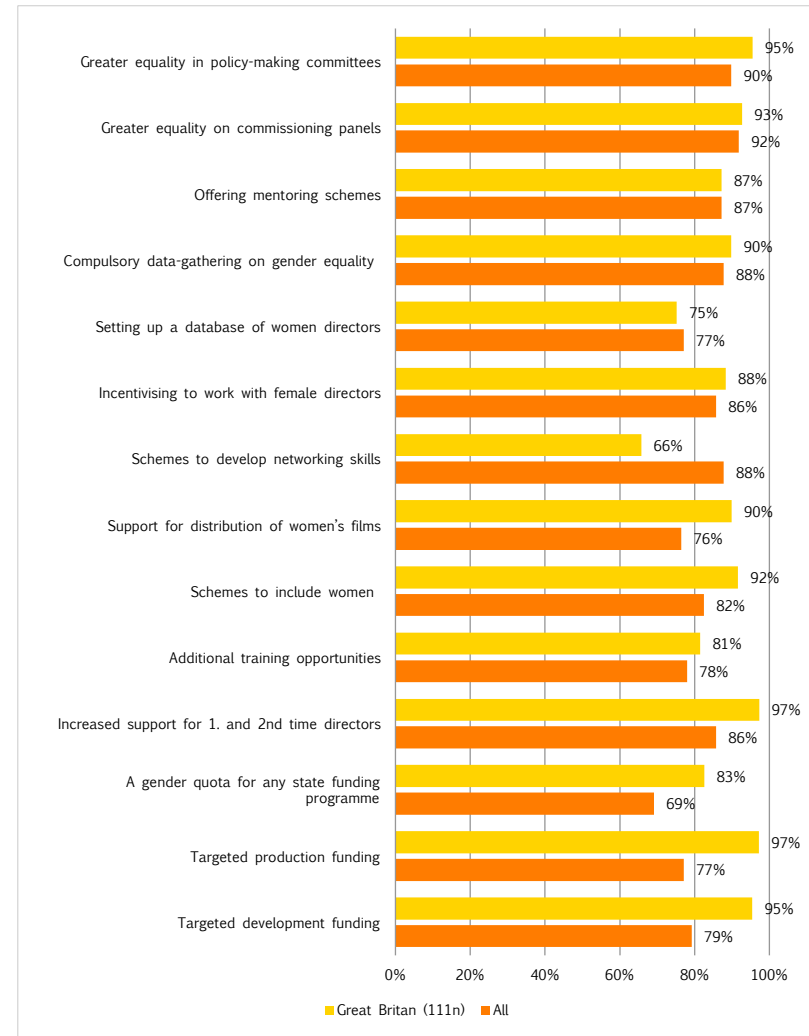
12.4 Policies to sustain female directors’ careers

Support for policies for change was higher in the UK across all options than in other European countries including support for targets (quotas) to be set to transform the current situation. Only in Sweden do these already exist, part of a coordinated 5 year action plan which is delivering positive results.

Support for making the 1st and 2nd films and targeted production funds for women were considered the most important measures, together with achieving gender equality on commissioning panels and putting targets on development funds.

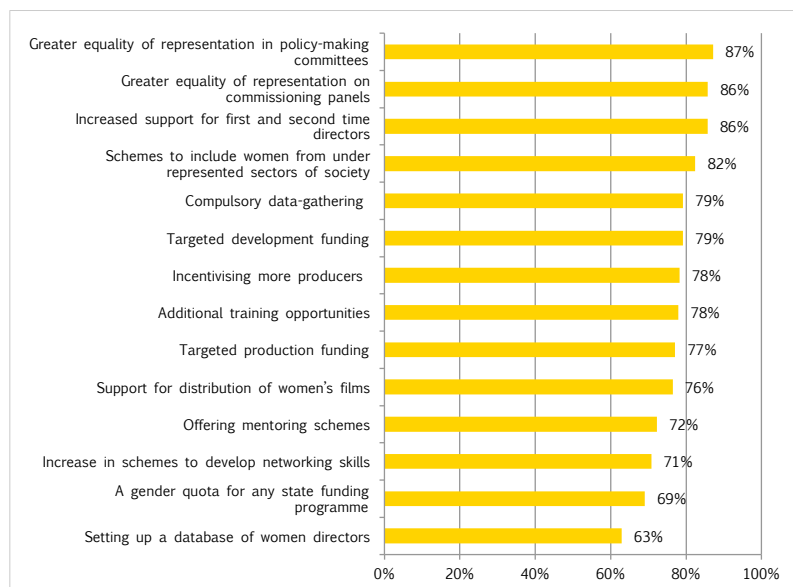
There were also many additional suggestions, several of which focused on the need to take into account the particular demands of parenting and the distinctive progression of women’s careers.

Figure 35: Policy measures to sustain female directors’ careers?



Source: EWA report database - Questionnaire

Notes: Percentage basis: UK 111 = 100%; European average 898 = 100%

Figure 36: Policy measures

Source: EWA report database - Questionnaire

Other comments

“The problem isn’t lack of desire or lack of female directors (don’t put it on them). It’s producers/funders lack of desire to hire the myriad of female directors already out there. In my film school graduating class women were 60%. Most of them can’t get work.”

“It needs to be illegal to have an entire series of a TV show, directed by multiple directors and not to include women. It needs to be illegal for a film production company to have an entire slate of films for several years and to have no female directors (or people of colour) on that slate as directors.”

“Many first and second time director schemes have age limits and for many women the journey to become a director takes a longer time than for men and also family hinders many. So more possibilities are needed for women over 35. New talent programmes should focus on interesting new voices, not on age.”

“I don’t think there should be targeted funding or schemes, which are women only. I

think ALL schemes should make a concerted effort to ensure the outcome of the scheme benefits 50% female and 50% male participants across the board (reflective of society)”

“We need to encourage hiring women directors for genre/big budget entertainment.”

“It is ridiculous that I could claim for a chauffeur, make-up artist, masseuse or PA but I cannot claim my child care as a business expense.”

“Being able to claim for child care as an expense as a self employed person or a limited company is the single most important thing that could be done to help women directors”

“It’s time to educate financiers and other gate keepers on diversity issues and to help them understand their own prejudice.”

“Executives, producers and people in positions of power need educating. Change the grammar and achieve ways to employ more female directors.”

“We need to increase critical and marketing support for films by women: certainly subjects deemed more ‘feminine’ (e.g. domestic drama) are harder to finance.”

“Why is film so far behind in gender equality? Is it the levels of finance involved? The way women are viewed in many films is still sexist and demeaning. I have been 30 years in the business. It’s time to wake up!”