



Statement of Media Content Policy 2023

This Statement of Media Content Policy ('SMCP') demonstrates Channel 4's successful remit delivery in 2023. Through key metrics and case studies across five chapters, it showcases the impact that our shows and initiatives had on viewers.

Pushing boundaries: page 30

Representing the UK: page 42

Engaging young viewers: page 56

Partnering with the creative industries: page 70

Tackling the climate emergency: page 90





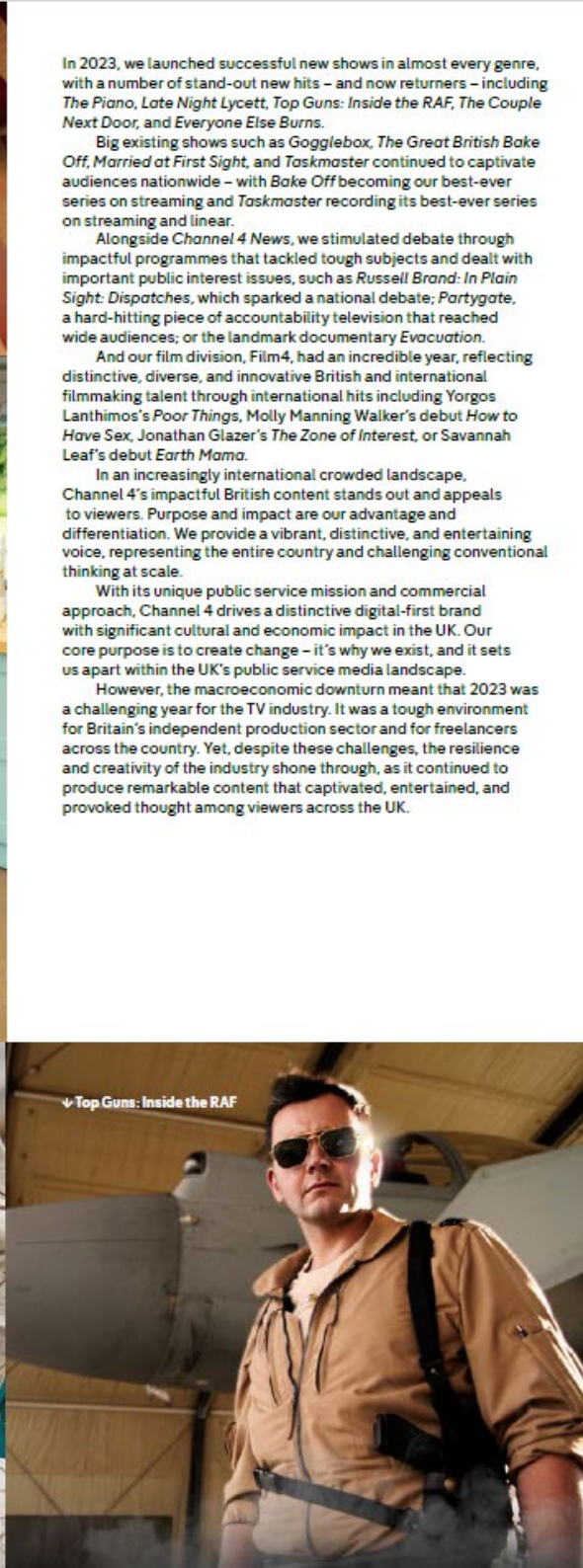
↓ Taskmaster



↓ The Great British Bake Off



↓ The Great Pottery Throw Down



↓ Top Guns: Inside the RAF

In 2023, we launched successful new shows in almost every genre, with a number of stand-out new hits – and now returners – including *The Piano*, *Late Night Lycett*, *Top Guns: Inside the RAF*, *The Couple Next Door*, and *Everyone Else Burns*.

Big existing shows such as *Gogglebox*, *The Great British Bake Off*, *Married at First Sight*, and *Taskmaster* continued to captivate audiences nationwide – with *Bake Off* becoming our best-ever series on streaming and *Taskmaster* recording its best-ever series on streaming and linear.

Alongside *Channel 4 News*, we stimulated debate through impactful programmes that tackled tough subjects and dealt with important public interest issues, such as *Russell Brand: In Plain Sight: Dispatches*, which sparked a national debate; *Partygate*, a hard-hitting piece of accountability television that reached wide audiences; or the landmark documentary *Evacuation*.

And our film division, Film4, had an incredible year, reflecting distinctive, diverse, and innovative British and international filmmaking talent through international hits including Yorgos Lanthimos's *Poor Things*, Molly Manning Walker's debut *How to Have Sex*, Jonathan Glazer's *The Zone of Interest*, or Savannah Leaf's debut *Earth Mama*.

In an increasingly international crowded landscape, Channel 4's impactful British content stands out and appeals to viewers. Purpose and impact are our advantage and differentiation. We provide a vibrant, distinctive, and entertaining voice, representing the entire country and challenging conventional thinking at scale.

With its unique public service mission and commercial approach, Channel 4 drives a distinctive digital-first brand with significant cultural and economic impact in the UK. Our core purpose is to create change – it's why we exist, and it sets us apart within the UK's public service media landscape.

However, the macroeconomic downturn meant that 2023 was a challenging year for the TV industry. It was a tough environment for Britain's independent production sector and for freelancers across the country. Yet, despite these challenges, the resilience and creativity of the industry shone through, as it continued to produce remarkable content that captivated, entertained, and provoked thought among viewers across the UK.

Pushing boundaries

Channel 4 challenges with purpose

Channel 4 is committed, as a central part of our remit, to engage mass audiences and challenge them to think differently. At their most impactful, Channel 4's shows expose the truth and act as a powerful catalyst for change. Through a range of programmes only Channel 4 would make, we're unafraid to take risks and tell the full story.





✓ Banged Up: Stars Behind Bars

This is evident in our award-winning news and current affairs coverage, which continues to innovate and grow audiences online, and our challenging documentaries and specialist factual programmes. The feature-length *Russell Brand: In Plain Sight: Dispatches* highlighted uncomfortable truths, its revelations leading to widespread coverage across the media, while the Kabul-set military thriller *Evacuation* told a complex international story with a depth rarely seen on mainstream TV channels.

It can also be seen in the distinctive merging of factual stories with other genres, which finds new ways to tell real-life stories and highlight important social issues. Searing docudrama *Partygate* vividly brought to life the findings of Sue Gray's report into the rule-breaking parties in 10 Downing Street during the Covid-19 pandemic to powerful and satirical effect, while the innovative constructed documentary format *Banged Up: Stars Behind Bars* showed what life is like in the prison system today.

24-point lead

Channel 4's lead over the average score of its competitor brands (other PSMs and streamers) when viewers were asked to what extent they associate each one with "pushing boundaries"

50%

Proportion of Channel 4 viewers who say its programming has inspired them to think differently or try something new. This strong performance across a range of genres is testament to Channel 4's ability to inspire change across its programming

1.2 billion

Number of views of *Channel 4 News* content globally, +57% year-on-year



Pushing boundaries *cont.*

Channel 4 News

Distinct and original journalism

After winning a BAFTA in 2023 for its Ukraine war reporting, *Channel 4 News* continued its proud record of outstanding foreign coverage. With rare access in Myanmar, Sudan, and the Darién Gap, the programme brought unparalleled insight and eyewitness journalism to underreported world conflicts and humanitarian crises.

Audiences flocked to its reporting from the Middle East in their droves following Hamas' attack on Israel on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent Israel-Gaza conflict, with over 180 million global views on all platforms from 180 countries, and *Channel 4 News*' weekly share also peaked in early October with an average of 632,000 viewers on linear, making it the programme's biggest news story of the year.

After winning a BAFTA in 2023 for its Ukraine war reporting, *Channel 4 News* continued its proud record of outstanding foreign coverage.

At home, a run of major exclusives placed *Channel 4 News* at the heart of some of the biggest stories of the day, from the crisis in policing to UK immigration. Engaging live programming and diverse reporting talent inspired debate about the way we live our lives.

Expanding our digital services

With 12.6 million social followers across all channels, *Channel 4 News* has established its position as one of the UK's leading digital-first news sources, particularly for young viewers – the largest segment of our audience.

In 2023, we expanded our platform-agnostic approach to make our content available wherever people are online. This has driven huge global viewership, generating a total of 1.2 billion content views in 2023, a significant growth of 57% year-on-year.

Channel 4 News brought its fact-checked, quality news content to audiences across all the major social platforms, with content designed for each platform. TikTok was a particular area of focus, as we sought to bring more young-skewing audiences to our output. There were 474 million views of *Channel 4 News* content on the platform in 2023, more than five times the corresponding 2022 figure. TikTok had the largest increase of the main social platforms in the number of views of *Channel 4 News* content, up by 381 million year-on-year. As of December 2023, 61% of our audience on TikTok was under 35, and the number of followers grew almost threefold during the year to over 950,000.

YouTube remains the largest digital platform for total time spent watching *Channel 4 News* content worldwide (amongst those platforms for which watch time data is available). 43% of our audience on YouTube is aged under 35. Viewing totalled almost 1.4 billion minutes this year on the platform, while views grew by 25% to 394 million.

↓ Channel 4 News: Israel-Gaza Special



↓ Matt Frei, Jackie Long,
Krishnan Guru-Murthy,
Cathy Newman



↓ Channel 4 News: Ukraine coverage



A destination for news

Channel 4 News' daily hour-long news programme, awarded Network Daily News Programme of the Year at the RTS Television Journalism Awards 2024, is transmitted in peak-time on the main public service media ("PSM") channels throughout the year, with an extended running time that enables stories to be covered in more depth and from different angles. It is also proportionally the youngest profiling news of the UK mainstream channels.

In 2023, the weekday evening programme was watched by an average of 517,000 viewers on linear. While this represents a 14% decline in viewing year-on-year, this is in line with a general trend of falling viewing to news programmes on the main PSM channels this year. These declines reflect the fact that 2022 was a particularly eventful year on the domestic and international fronts, with the Ukraine-Russia conflict dominating headlines for many months, alongside a volatile UK domestic political scene – with three Prime Ministers – and the death of Her Majesty the Queen. By contrast, most of 2023 was quieter overall in terms of major news events, up until the Israel-Gaza conflict erupted in October.

As a result, the BBC, ITV, and Channel 4 all experienced declines in their average levels of viewing to their evening news and current affairs bulletins in 2023. These year-on-year declines varied from 9% (for the *ITV Evening News*) up to 20% (for BBC Two's *Newsnight*), with the fall in viewing to *Channel 4 News* lying roughly at the mid-point of this range.

Notwithstanding the lower viewing levels, audiences continued to value high-quality TV news.

In the Reuters Institute's 2023 Digital News Report, 59% of UK adults who are aware of *Channel 4 News* said that they trust it, making it the second-most-trusted news brand in the UK (up from the third-most-trusted in 2022), behind only BBC News (with 61%).

Leeds: A digital-first newsroom

2023 saw the launch of *Channel 4 News'* new purpose-built studio in Leeds, as the programme became the first primetime television output to be dual-presented from two locations.

The first year alone has delivered significant editorial and digital success: the growth of a digital-first newsroom with the expansion of our data team; data-led investigations visualised through a state-of-the-art news wall; and bespoke digital content produced in Leeds.

Significant appointments in Leeds drove a run of award-winning exclusives, putting journalism from outside London at the centre of the programme. Communities Editor Darshna Soni broke stories on policing and migration, while a number of prominent investigations from the FactCheck unit were anchored from Leeds, fronted by a new data correspondent. Elsewhere, innovative live programming saw Leeds trial its first debate into the crisis in UK housing with a live studio audience.

This new base has demonstrated our role in supporting and evolving the local cultural economy in the North of England, and it remains a pillar of Channel 4's 4 All the UK strategy. This investment in regional production will only develop further as we make this newsroom a centrepiece of election coverage and debate, and add new newsroom appointments.



Top award

Network Daily News
Programme of the Year award
for *Channel 4 News* at the RTS
Television Journalism Awards

Trusted brand

Channel 4 News was the
second-most-trusted of 15
news brands in the UK, according
to the Reuters Institute's 2023
Digital News Report

12.6 million

social followers across
all channels

1.2 billion

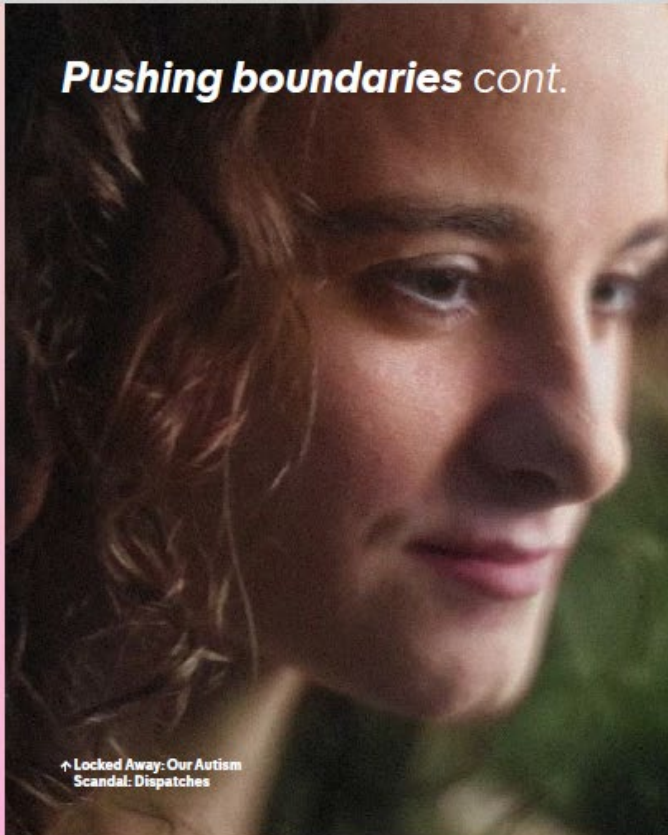
content views in 2023
(57% year-on-year growth)

474 million

views of *Channel 4 News*
content on TikTok in 2023



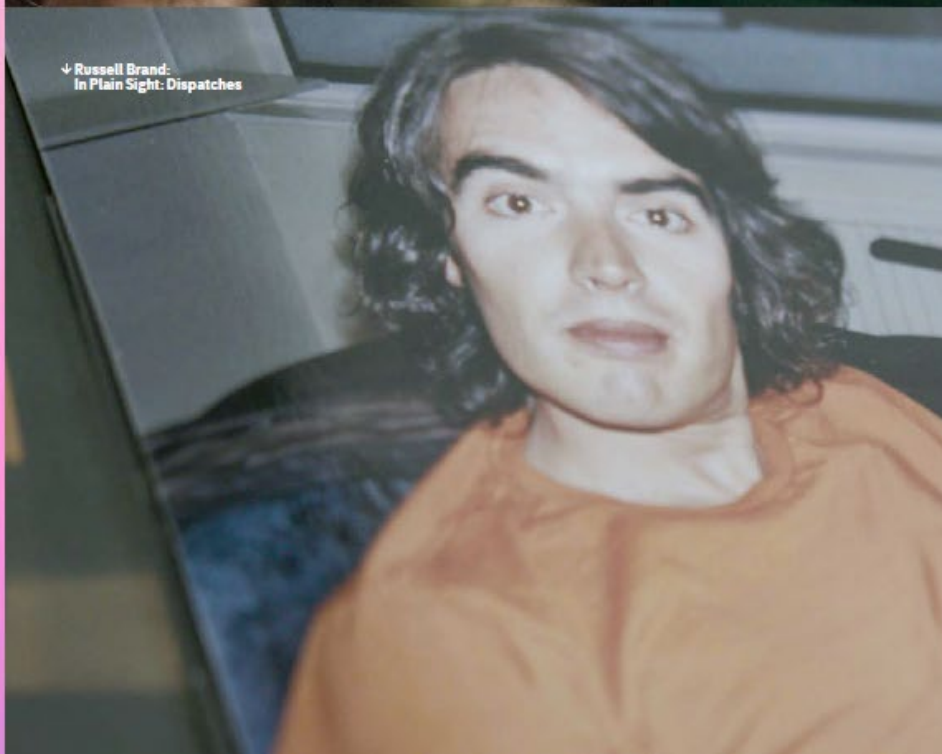
Pushing boundaries cont.



↑ **Locked Away: Our Autism Scandal:** Dispatches



↑ **Undercover Ambulance: NHS Chaos:** Dispatches



↓ **Russell Brand: In Plain Sight:** Dispatches



Dispatches and Unreported World

Channel 4's award-winning current affairs series, *Dispatches*, tackles hard-hitting subjects that are investigative, agenda-setting, and seek to hold power to account. In 2023, across 12 episodes, standalone investigations explored important topics which often drove national conversations, ranging from the allegations against comedian Russell Brand (see opposite) to food prices and the state of the healthcare system.

Sri Lanka's Easter Bombings revealed shocking new evidence on Sri Lanka's deadly Easter bombings in 2019, while *Secrets and Power: China in the UK* investigated Chinese state interference with UK institutions and repression of dissidents on UK soil. With a focus on the health care system, *Locked Away: Our Autism Scandal* investigated why thousands of autistic people are being locked up in hospitals, and *Undercover Ambulance: NHS Chaos* used secret footage filmed by an ambulance crew worker to show how patients' health could be affected by the crisis facing the NHS.

With a dedicated YouTube channel that counts a global audience of over 1.4 million subscribers, *Unreported World's* pioneering journalism saw it pick up a prestigious Foreign Press Association award for the documentary film *Gaza: Daring to Dream*.

Unreported World, our critically acclaimed international affairs strand, continues to bring bold and distinctive storytelling to British and global audiences. This year, Channel 4 reporters met Taiwanese civilians preparing for Chinese invasion, while another episode explored how Sweden has become a deadly hot spot for drug-war gun crime. In the most viewed episode of 2023, *Kenya's Christian Death Cult*, Symeon Brown investigated how a cult preacher in Kenya may have led hundreds of people to their deaths.

With a dedicated YouTube channel that counts a global audience of over 1.4 million subscribers, *Unreported World's* pioneering journalism saw it pick up a prestigious Foreign Press Association award for the documentary film *Gaza: Daring to Dream*.

Russell Brand: In Plain Sight: Dispatches

The agenda-setting 90-minute *Russell Brand: In Plain Sight* was an extended *Dispatches* special outlining shocking allegations, including rape and sexual assault, by a number of women against the TV presenter and comedian over an extended period between 2006 and 2013. This was a time when Brand's career was on the rise, with appearances on various TV channels (including Channel 4) and in films, in which his bragging about his sexual encounters formed a defining part of his on-screen persona.

The issues raised had a big impact on viewers, with more than 50% of those surveyed describing it as "informative", "disturbing", and "troubling". 74% of viewers agreed the documentary "is an important piece of public service programming". And a substantial 52% of viewers claimed that "I have talked/ been motivated to talk to others specifically about the issues raised in the programme".

The programme was the top new title of 2023 on Channel 4 reaching 5.7 million across linear and streaming overall. It became the most-watched episode of *Dispatches* on record, attracting a 54% viewing share of 16-34-year-olds on linear, and also performed very well online, becoming Channel 4's third-most-streamed single episode (of any show) to date and the most streamed of 2023 overall.

Critics praised Channel 4 for airing the show. "This Russell Brand investigation was a stark reminder of the power of TV", wrote *The Telegraph*, adding that it "showed how individuals can feel powerless against the rich and famous".

Since the documentary aired, the BBC and Channel 4 have launched their own internal inquiries and the Metropolitan Police began investigating Brand in relation to alleged sexual offences.





Pushing boundaries *cont.*

Evacuation

Landmark documentary *Evacuation* told the inside story of the perilous campaign to evacuate Kabul in 2021, in which some 15,000 British nationals and eligible Afghans were airlifted out of the country in a matter of days.

The three-part series recounted these events through first-hand interviews with soldiers, pilots, and medics, who spoke with admirable candour and honesty. The programme was successful in pushing the boundaries of traditional storytelling, with viewers describing *Evacuation* as "informative", "honest", and "emotional" to watch.

At times uncomfortable viewing, due to some harrowing testimonies and images portrayed, an overwhelming proportion of viewers recognised the value of telling this story. A substantial 92% of viewers surveyed agreed that "it was important that Channel 4 showed the true reality of the evacuation from Afghanistan", and 88% agreed that "the programme revealed the reality of events in a frank and honest way". The series also changed perceptions of the military, with 69% saying that "the programme opened my eyes to the different and difficult challenges the army/military face that I wasn't fully aware of".

Partygate

Karaoke, suitcases of wine, ambush by cake... one of the most talked about political stories of recent times, *Partygate* was a searing factual drama detailing the events that took place inside 10 Downing Street during the periods in 2020-2021, when the Prime Minister imposed lockdowns across the UK to control the Covid-19 pandemic.

Based on meticulous research and the findings of the Government-commissioned Sue Gray report, this one-off film interweaved real-world footage with dramatised scenes set inside Number 10, including the now-infamous drunken parties and karaoke sessions.

Partygate struck a nerve with audiences, reaching 3.5 million people across streaming and linear, and was one of Channel 4's top 20 most streamed single episodes of 2023.

A huge 91% of viewers surveyed said that they were "glad Channel 4 aired *Partygate* to help inform viewers of the events that took place", and 95% of viewers agreed that "politicians should be held more accountable for what happened".

The drama was highly praised by critics. "The details may have faded from the mind," wrote *The Independent*, "but Channel 4's enthralling, emotionally draining *Partygate* is here to remind you of them in highly graphic form." The *Guardian* described it as "a giant, exploding grenade of a TV show".

↓ Evacuation



↓ Partygate



↓ Banged Up: Stars Behind Bars



Banged Up: Stars Behind Bars

Banged Up: Stars Behind Bars, a four-part constructed documentary series, saw a group of well-known names spend a week behind bars in the decommissioned HMP Shrewsbury, sharing a cell with former inmates who were instructed to behave as they would have done while serving their sentences.

The social experiment aimed to show – in the most authentic way possible – what life is really like behind bars. “For the first time, we have rigged a prison to find out what really happens in the cells after bang up. This series aims to enthrall and entertain, whilst kickstarting a national debate about crime and punishment,” said Tim Whitwell, Shine TV’s Creative Director.

Run by a former prison governor and former prison officers, the inmates – including Cabinet Minister Johnny Mercer, singer HRVY, former MP Neil Parish, and *Eastenders* actor Sid Owen – lived by current UK prison rules. They had the opportunity to interrogate their cellmates on their prison experiences and former crimes, as well as examine the impact of the system on them for better or worse.

Banged Up was our most-watched new series this year for 16-34-year-olds, performing 15% above the slot average for this demographic. Across all audiences, the series reached 5.6 million on streaming and linear. It performed particularly well online, ranking within Channel 4’s top ten most streamed shows of 2023.





Pushing boundaries cont.

SMCP metrics dashboard

Brand reputations: Pushing boundaries

51%[‡]

Proportion of respondents that believe that Channel 4 "pushes boundaries"

Channel 4 is the highest-scoring brand when audiences are asked to what extent they associate each one with "pushing boundaries". In 2023, 51% of respondents agreed that Channel 4 performed strongly* on this measure, giving it a strong lead over the other brands surveyed, whose scores ranged from 17% (Disney+) up to 40% (Netflix). Channel 4 had a substantial lead of 24 percentage points over the average score of the other brands, which was 27%. The other PSMs (the BBC, ITV, and Channel 5) had a slightly higher average score of 28%, giving Channel 4 a lead over them of 23 percentage points.

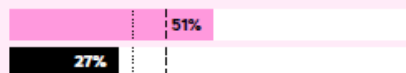
Channel 4's score exceeded that of the next-highest-scoring brand (Netflix) by 11 percentage points, while its lead over the next-highest-scoring PSM (the BBC, with 31%) was a substantial 20 percentage points.

There was very little variation year-on-year. Compared to the results for 2022, the proportion of respondents who agreed that Channel 4 performs strongly on this measure fell by 1 percentage point (2022: 52%). With second-placed Netflix's score also falling by 1 percentage point (from 41% in 2022), Channel 4's lead over the next-highest-scoring brand held steady. The average score for the other services was the same in both years (27%), meaning that Channel 4's lead over the average score of the other brands fell by 1 percentage point.

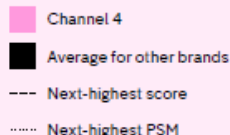
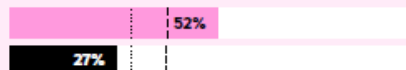
* We define a "strong performance" for a brand as one in which respondents give it a score of 7 or more on a 10-point scale.
‡ Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.

Strength of association of each brand with "pushing boundaries"

2023



2022



Inspiring viewers to think differently

50%‡

Proportion of viewers who say Channel 4's programmes make them think differently

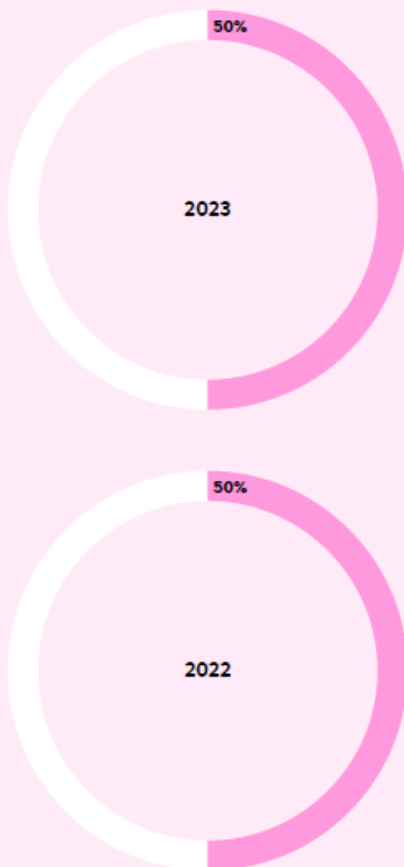
Channel 4's programming seeks to inspire people to think about things in new and different ways, to think about making changes in their lives and – at our most engaging – to actually try new or different things. These different ways of inspiring change are captured in three statements, responses which allow us to assess how inspiring Channel 4's programmes are each year.

Across the 79 most-viewed first-run programmes on the main channel in 2023 (in all genres other than films and sports), 50% of viewers said that Channel 4's programming inspired them in one or more ways this year. This figure, which is the same as in 2022, is impressive given that the programmes span a broad range of genres.

Broadly speaking, Documentaries have a higher tendency to include thought-provoking subject matter, and programmes in this genre accounted for five of the ten highest-scoring individual titles. But it is striking that the three highest-scoring individual titles, all with scores of 65% or over, were in three different genres: *Jamie's £1 Wonders* (68% of viewers – Hobbies and Leisure), *Know Your S**t: Inside Our Guts* (67% of viewers – Documentaries) and *The Great Climate Fight* (65% of viewers – Current Affairs).

These strong performances across a range of genres are testament to Channel 4's ability to inspire change across its schedules. Notable performances in other genres this year included *Banged Up: Stars Behind Bars* (62% of viewers – Entertainment) and *Partygate* (57% of viewers – Drama).

Proportion of viewers who say programmes on Channel 4's main channel inspired them in one or more ways





Pushing boundaries cont.

SMCP metrics dashboard

Reporting the news accurately and fairly

87%‡

Proportion of respondents who trust Channel 4 to report the news accurately and fairly

The impartial and authoritative news services provided by the mainstream broadcasters provide a vital counterweight to the unreliable sources that populate people's news feeds on social media platforms. The PSMs and Sky all perform strongly on this trust metric.

In 2023, 87% of Channel 4 News viewers agreed that they trust it to report the news accurately and fairly. This trust score was the second-highest of the news programmes on the PSMs and Sky, just ahead of the BBC (on 86%) but 2 percentage points behind Sky News (on 89%). With ITV and Channel 5 both achieving scores of 85%, Channel 4's score was 1 percentage point above the average of the other PSMs and Sky (which was 86%).

Year-on-year variations were small, with Channel 4 ranked by viewers as the second-most-trusted broadcaster for news in both years. Channel 4's trust score fell by 1 percentage point in 2023 (2022: 88%), returning to its 2021 level. The other broadcasters' average score held steady (2022: 86%), meaning that Channel 4's lead over the average score of the other channels fell by 1 percentage point year-on-year (from 2 percentage points in 2022 to 1 percentage point in 2023).

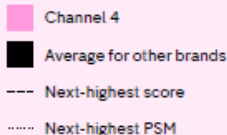
Channel 4's strong performance on this metric is consistent with the findings in the Reuters Institute's 2023 Digital News Report, in which Channel 4 News was the second-most-trusted of 15 news brands in the UK, as we reported on page 33.

Strength of association of each brand with "reporting the news accurately and fairly"

2023



2022



‡ Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.

Innovation in content

35%

Proportion of new Channel 4 content that includes one or more elements of innovation

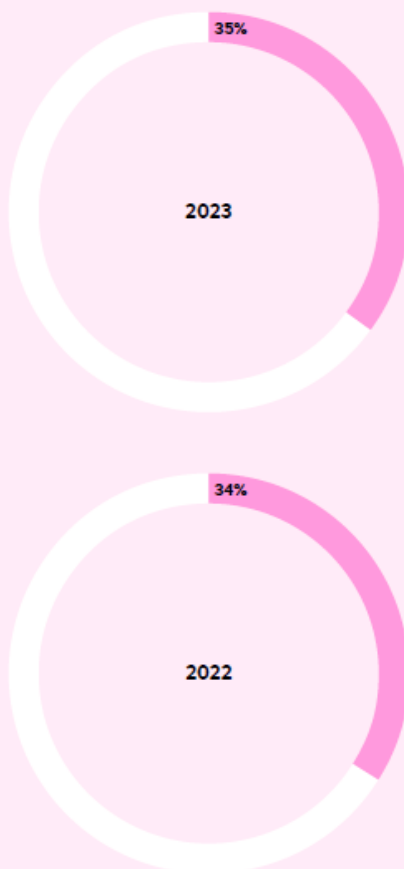
Channel 4's remit encourages the organisation to be innovative, and we innovate in our programming in a number of ways. Our content pushes the boundaries of storytelling, for example, with new formats, new or surprising talent, or new filmmaking approaches. We also innovate in terms of subject matter, dealing with content not typically featured on TV. And we seek technological and scheduling innovations.

In 2023, 35% of the new programmes across our TV channels and online services included at least one of these elements of innovation (64 out of a total of 181 new titles). This figure, which is 1 percentage point above the 2022 level (of 34%), is impressive given the competitive pressures that could leave many wanting to double down on known hits and established talent and offer audiences more of the same.

The most common type of innovation – present in 53% of Channel 4's innovative programmes – was for new or substantially redeveloped formats. Two other types of innovation were present in more than one-quarter of the innovative programmes: topics not typically featured on TV (30% of the total) and new or surprising talent (28%).

15 of this year's new titles exhibited more than one kind of innovation, with three programmes exhibiting as many as three different kinds of innovation: *Chris Packham: Is It Time to Break the Law?* and *The Unique Boutique* (both on Channel 4), and *Sam Thompson: Is This ADHD?* (on E4). Across our services, E4 was the most innovative in terms of the proportion of new titles containing an innovative element: there was innovation in 67% of its new titles in 2023 (six out of nine programmes).

Proportion of new Channel 4 content that is innovative



Representing the UK

Channel 4 reflects authentic modern Britain

As a mainstream public service broadcaster, Channel 4 is committed to representing the whole of the UK. With diversity at the heart of our remit, it's in our DNA.



Across our output, we seek to show people from all walks of life and to ensure that their portrayal is authentic. This can be seen in a range of provocative and often unflinching shows that challenge stereotypes, such as authored documentary *Rosie Jones: Am I a R*tard?*, or that highlight important issues facing people living in Britain today, such as Davina McCall's *Pill Revolution* – two programmes that went on to spark national conversations. It is also apparent in the heart-warming real life stories told in *The Piano* and in the unique Welsh-set drama *The Light in the Hall*, which was filmed in dual versions in both English and Welsh.

Diverse portrayal on-screen requires diverse representation amongst the programme makers off-screen, and Channel 4's Creative Equity team runs a slew of initiatives to improve diversity behind the camera, directed at under-represented groups in key roles.

22-point lead

Channel 4's lead over the average score of its competitor brands (other PSMs and streamers) when viewers were asked to what extent they associate each one with "showing different kinds of cultures and opinions in the UK"

13%

Proportion of Channel 4 suppliers that are ethnically diverse, on par with 2022, and helping to bring the perspectives of under-represented voices to UK audiences

78%

Proportion of viewers of *The Piano* who agreed that it "felt like a real celebration of diversity up and down the UK"



Representing the UK *cont.*

"Rosie Jones exposes abuse on social media... a powerful polemic."

The Sunday Times

↓ Rosie Jones: Am I a R*tard?





Representing diverse voices

Channel 4 has a long and proud history of inclusion and diversity. Ensuring that diverse voices are portrayed on screen, and in an authentic manner, is a key part of how we fulfil our public service remit. This includes representations of different types of lived experience, such as those defined by disability or gender, sexuality or ethnicity, or diversity of thought.

Illustrating the breadth of subject matter covered by Channel 4 this year, *Wonders of the World I Can't See* was a heartfelt and humorous travelogue with blind comedian Chris McCausland; Bridget Christie's sharp comedy drama *The Change* examined experiences of menopause; *George Michael: Outed* recounted the story of how a potentially career-crushing event became a defining moment for gay liberation; *Is Cricket Racist?* saw Adil Ray travel across England to explore the widespread issue of racism within cricket; and *Gender Wars* presented views from various sides of the debate about sex and gender.

Davina McCall's Pill Revolution investigated how much we really know about the contraceptive pill, asking if women are being given the care they need. In a survey conducted by Channel 4, a substantial 77% of respondents reported that they experienced side effects on the pill. Following transmission, 78% of viewers agreed that they felt "better informed about birth control options as a result of watching the programme" and 85% thought that the programme "should be discussed in schools/as part of the sex education curriculum".

In an unflinching and highly personal documentary, *Rosie Jones: Am I a R*tard?*, the comedian explored how prevalent disability trolling is in the UK. Viewers described it as "honest", "eye-opening", and "emotional", with 80% of those surveyed agreeing that the "programme discussed ableism and ableist abuse in a way I've not seen before on TV".





Representing the UK cont.

The Piano: Celebrating ordinary people with extraordinary talents

One of the most heartwarming programmes of the year across British TV, *The Piano* was a successful new reality format based on a simple premise. The series, hosted by Claudia Winkleman, set out to find some of the best amateur piano enthusiasts from across the UK, inviting them to play street piano at one of the main train stations without knowing their performances were being judged. Each week, internationally renowned pianist Lang Lang and popstar Mika chose a winner who would be invited to perform at the Royal Festival Hall.

One of the TV moments of the year was the incredible scene when Lucy, who is blind and neurodiverse, played a complex Chopin piece and stole the nation's hearts.

The diversity of the performers, and their back stories, added immeasurably to the joy of the series. Setting each episode in a station in a different city (London, Glasgow, Birmingham, and Leeds) ensured regional diversity. On top of that, Channel 4 – building on its long history of giving a platform to the under-represented – drew from a diverse group of surprising talents of all ages, from children to a 94-year-old widower, from an ex-raver to a schoolboy receiving Zoom lessons from Kyiv, to share their stories and music with the great British public.

One of the TV moments of the year was the incredible scene when Lucy, who is blind and neurodiverse, played a complex Chopin piece and stole the nation's hearts. Mika said, "Magical things happen with music that are against all odds and all limitations. When it happened in Leeds, when Lucy performed, it was jaw-dropping."

Over the course of its journey to the Royal Festival Hall, the series created a joyful and moving portrait of Britain, with 78% of viewers agreeing that *The Piano* "felt like a real celebration of diversity up and down the UK".

The Piano was Channel 4's best-rating new format since 2017, reaching an audience of 8.8 million viewers across the series on streaming and linear (10.1 million when including the Christmas special) and an additional 11.6 million views on social media. Viewers across the country heralded the uniqueness of the series and said it offered up a fresh perspective on music talent shows, with 88% of viewers agreeing that "it was different to other music/talent shows I've watched in the past".

84% of viewers felt "the show brought a classical instrument/classical music to audiences in an accessible way", and the series made a difference in many people's lives, with almost one in four saying that they were inspired "to want to learn to play (or revisit) the piano/another instrument". The Guardian wrote: "The chance to share ordinary people's extraordinary gifts is a fine prize."

↙ The Piano







Representing the UK *cont.*



↑ **The Light in the Hall**

"This production is providing invaluable paid trainee opportunities to future-proof our industry, stimulate investment into the local economy, and will showcase Welsh talent, language, and culture across the UK and internationally."

**Dawn Bowden, Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport,
Welsh Government**



The Light in the Hall/Y Golau: A bilingual drama

Airing on Channel 4 in early 2023, *The Light in the Hall* is a gripping murder-thriller starring Joanna Scanlan, Iwan Rheon, and Alexandra Roach. Written and created by Regina Moriarty, this six-part series follows the journey of Cat Donato, a young journalist from Llanemelyn, a town in west Wales, searching for answers about her best friend, Ela Roberts, who disappeared 18 years ago.

Aligned with Channel 4's commitment to representing more of the UK on screens and growing our off-screen impact across the Nations and Regions, the production was filmed and based entirely in Wales with a cast that features Welsh-born, bilingual actors in the main roles. A co-production with Welsh broadcaster S4C, the English-language version premiered on Channel 4 in January.

Across the UK, the programme averaged 2.5 million viewers per episode across streaming and linear. It performed especially well online, ranking as the all-time fourth best-ever drama title on streaming over the first seven days post-transmission, and Channel 4's sixth most streamed show of 2023 overall (based on average views per episode).

Amongst viewers in Wales, average viewing across the series was 25% higher than the 9pm slot average, and contributed to Channel 4 growing its total streaming viewing in Wales by 34% in 2023.

Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, Dawn Bowden, praised the role the series played in supporting the production sector in Wales, saying: "This production is providing invaluable paid trainee opportunities to future-proof our industry, stimulate investment into the local economy, and will showcase Welsh talent, language, and culture across the UK and internationally."



Representing the UK *cont.*

Creating meaningful change in the industry's workforce

Channel 4's Creative Equity team sit at the heart of Commissioning, working across all genres and platforms, with a goal to reflect the full diversity of contemporary Britain on and off screen.

This year, Channel 4 launched a new post-production placement scheme, 4PP, which aims to improve off-screen diversity in the broadcast industry's post-production sector. It offered six mid-to-senior-level people from under-represented backgrounds the chance to progress their careers in this field. This makes Channel 4 the first UK broadcaster to run a programme addressing the lack of representation in this field.

This year's Indie Accelerator scheme paired six independent production companies with commissioners across the channel – with 100% of the indies taking part stating that it provided them with valuable resources and development support. The Creative Equity team's outreach work also included: its flagship RISE disability mentoring scheme, which supported mid-to-senior-level disabled talent with career progression; race fluency training for Channel 4's Commissioning department across all its Creative Hubs; and Momentum, a nationwide mentoring and training programme for 60 Black TV, film, and content creators, with over 50% of this year's cohort coming from outside of London. This year also saw Channel 4 publish an updated series of best practice guidelines to help producers and indies improve how they work with disabled talent.

In partnership with the UK's biggest broadcasters and streamers, the TV Access Project held a live event in June 2023 to reflect on its progress (since forming in August 2022) in pushing the TV industry towards a goal of total disability inclusion by 2030.

We continued our £1 million Diversity in Advertising Award initiative, this year challenging the advertising industry to address the lack of authentic representation of LGBTQ+ communities in TV advertising across the UK. E45 and The&Partnership won the prize, with members of the judging panel praising the intelligence and sensitivity of the campaign, with their ad due to be broadcast in 2024.

The road to the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games

With exclusive broadcast rights of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, Channel 4 is planning a full-scale takeover across our channels and investing in a new production hub in Cardiff to bring audiences more live sport than ever before.

Following Channel 4's ground-breaking coverage of the London, Rio and Tokyo Summer Games, Channel 4 is thrilled to be delivering fully digital broadcast solutions in our coverage in Paris, and improving the reach and impact of our accessibility offering, with a mission to improve participation across disability sport.

Following a tender process run by Channel 4 in 2022 for the contract to produce its coverage of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, this year the Creative Equity team worked closely with independent production company Whisper that won the tender, to ensure that they meet their off-screen talent targets as they begin to recruit their production team.

In addition, the 4Skills Paralympics Production Training Scheme recruited 16 disabled trainees in its Unscripted cohort, offering the opportunity to launch their broadcast careers with 12-month placements. The scheme ensures that some of these trainees will go on to work on the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

"I am extremely grateful for the Channel 4 Paralympics Training Scheme for giving me an entirely new outlook on what I can achieve as a disabled person in this industry."

Maisie, Paralympics Production Training Scheme Trainee





Representing the UK cont.

SMCP metrics dashboard

Brand reputations: Showing different kinds of cultures and opinions in the UK

56%[‡]

Proportion of respondents that believe that Channel 4 "shows different kinds of cultures and opinions in the UK"

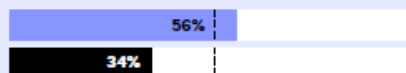
Channel 4 is the highest-scoring brand when audiences are asked to what extent they associate each one with "showing different kinds of cultures and opinions in the UK". In 2023, 56% of respondents agreed that Channel 4 performed strongly* on this measure.

This compares to an average score of 34% for the other brands surveyed, giving Channel 4 a significant lead of 22 percentage points over this average. The competitors' individual scores ranged from as low as 21% (Disney+) up to 51% (the BBC). UK broadcasters mostly performed better on this measure than the global streamers, with the other PSMs (the BBC, ITV, and Channel 5) having an average score of 41%. Channel 4's lead over the average of the other PSMs was still a significant 15 percentage points, while its lead over the next-highest-scoring brand (the BBC) was 5 percentage points.

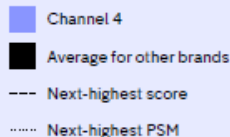
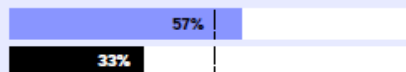
There were small year-on-year variations. Compared to the results for 2022, the proportion of respondents who agreed that Channel 4 performs strongly on this measure fell by 1 percentage point (2022: 57%). With the second-placed BBC's score holding steady (2022: 51%), Channel 4's lead over the next-highest-scoring brand also fell by 1 percentage point. The average score for the other services increased by 1 percentage point (from 33% in 2022), meaning that Channel 4's lead over the average score of the other brands fell by 2 percentage points.

Strength of association of each brand with "showing different kinds of cultures and opinions in the UK"

2023



2022

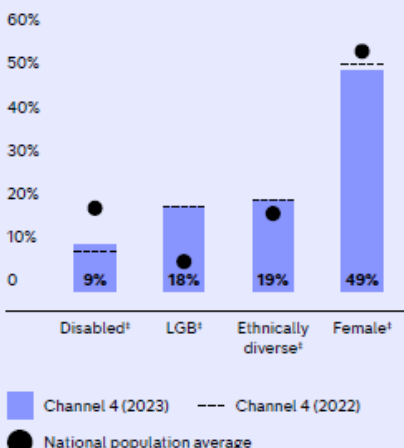


* We define a "strong performance" for a brand as one in which respondents give it a score of 7 or more on a 10-point scale.

[‡] Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.

Diversity of on-screen contributions[‡]

Proportion of on-screen contributions who are female, ethnically diverse, disabled, or LGB



Channel 4 strives to reflect the diversity of the UK in its programmes so that everyone watching may feel properly represented. As a mainstream broadcaster, this also enables it to bring the perspectives of minority groups – who are often under-represented on TV – to large audiences.

We assess our performance using data from the pan-broadcaster Diamond system that was developed by the PSMs and Sky (and operated by the Creative Diversity Network ('CDN')). The Diamond system works by asking anyone who is involved in the making of new UK television programmes to voluntarily supply information on their personal characteristics. This information is then anonymised and aggregated so that the performance of individual channels can be calculated.

In 2023, the Diamond system recorded almost 100,000 on-screen contributions across the programmes that Channel 4 transmitted in the year, representing a 32% completion rate. The results show that Channel 4's figures were close to the national population statistics[‡] for two of the four diversity characteristics:

- Ethnically diverse people accounted for 19% of on-screen contributions on Channel 4 (the same as the corresponding proportion in 2022), a figure that is 1 percentage point higher than the national population estimate of 18%
- Women represented 49% of all on-screen contributions, 2 percentage points below the 51% national population estimate and 1 percentage point down year-on-year (2022: 50%)

People who identified as being lesbian, gay, or bisexual ('LGB') represented 18% of on-screen contributions (again, the same as in 2022). This was an impressive 15 percentage points higher than the 3% of people who identified as LGB in the 2021 Census.

On the fourth metric, disabled people accounted for 9% of on-screen contributions to Channel 4's programmes. While this is a substantial 9 percentage points below the 18% of people identifying as disabled, Channel 4's figure is 1 percentage point higher than in 2022 (when it was 8%). These results remain concerning and reflect broader industry issues: the CDN has highlighted the under-representation of disabled people across UK programmes in general. However, we made a small step in the right direction this year, and Channel 4 will take further steps to drive change through its 'Engage & Enable' Disability Strategy (launched in 2021), new disability portrayal guidelines, and as part of CDN's Doubling Disability initiative.

¹ Figures for Channel 4 are based on those who shared their data with Diamond.

² The national population estimates are taken from the 2021 Census for England and Wales.

[‡] Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.



Representing the UK cont.

SMCP metrics dashboard

'Fresh Faces of 4': Developing new talent

Channel 4 is committed to building a sustainable pipeline of exciting new talent that reflects the changing face of Britain. Working in close partnership with our TV and digital teams, our strategy has three strands:

- seeking new talent with little or no previous experience in the industry;
- developing emerging talent so they can build their profile and strengthen their reputation; and
- offering established talent new opportunities to diversify and reach even wider audiences.

New faces

In 2023, Channel 4.0 and single documentaries played a particularly important role in launching and developing new Channel 4 talent.

Channel 4.0:

- Our new digital-first brand helped to establish Billy the Goat as an exciting new voice in the UK creator scene, starting with cameo and guest appearances, before commissioning two one-off stunts followed by his own hero series
- We worked with artist, skater, and cultural tastemaker Slawn on a stunt which involved him seeking to 'auction' his one-year-old son in the name of art
- Madame Joyce joined the Channel 4.0 ensemble, featuring as a panellist in new relationships format *It'll Never Last*
- Having previously appeared on Channel 4.0's *Harry Pinero's Worst in Class*, content creator and presenter GK Barry worked on a UFO stunt for us as well as starting to transition to linear TV on Channel 4's *Don't Look Down* for *SU2C*

Single documentaries:

- *UNTOLD*, our new youth-focused online investigative current affairs series spin off from *Dispatches*, included new talent Jackie Adedeji in her first presenting role. *My Big Boobs: UNTOLD* saw Jackie nominated in the New Voice Awards 2024 for Best Debut Presenter
- *Secrets of the Female Orgasm* provided Yewande Biala with her first presenting role, and Hollyoaks actor Joe Tracini made his first TV documentary commission with a programme about mental health and his experience of borderline personality disorder

Emerging faces

We supported emerging talent across a range of non-scripted genres this year, including Factual Entertainment. One of our key themes was to provide opportunities to develop emerging comedy talent in Entertainment and other genres. In News and Current Affairs, our teams worked with new talents that are building up their own production capabilities.

Factual Entertainment:

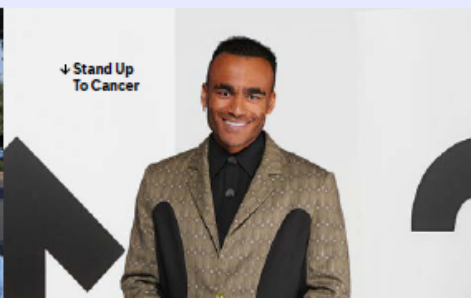
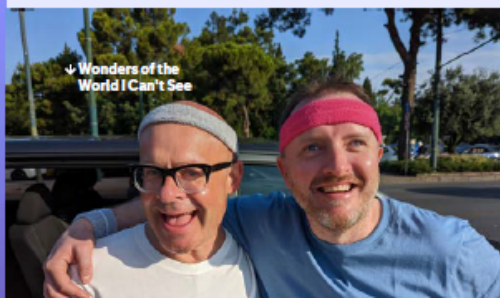
- We worked with Oobah Butler as he made the move from digital to linear TV with his first Channel 4 presenting role in *The Great Amazon Heist*, as well as an appearance in *The Big Climate Fight*
- Eddie Kadi and Guz Khan experienced the high life in Ghana in *My Super-Rich Holiday*, and Raveet Gill developed from being a judge on *Junior Bake Off* to her first role in a 9pm show with *Five Star Kitchen: Britain's Next Great Chef*

Development of emerging comedy talent:

- In Entertainment, Chris McCausland had his first Channel 4 commission with *Wonders of the World I Can't See*, while former *Taskmaster* competitors Rose Matafeo and Mike Wozniak became hosts of new spin off *Junior Taskmaster*
- We saw Munya Chawawa take on a live presenting role in *Stand Up To Cancer*, alongside a new documentary coming in 2024
- Rosie Jones continued to broaden her range on Channel 4, with hard-hitting documentary *Am I a R*tard?*, while her scripted Comedy Blap *Disability Benefits* has been commissioned by Channel 4 as a full series

News and Current Affairs:

- Following a second series of *Living Wild: How to Change Your Life* at the start of the year, we commissioned Sophie Morgan to front and produce a film documenting her disability travel campaign
- Ben Zand and his production company have made multiple Channel 4 documentaries, including *UNTOLD* films on incels, male escorts, and boy racers



Established faces

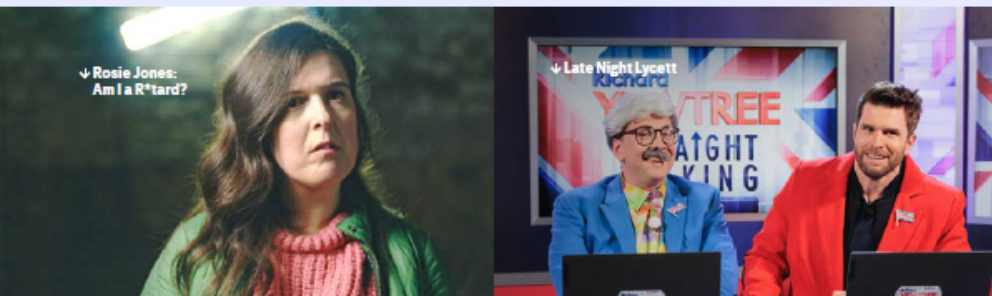
We continued to support more established talent to broaden the range of shows in which they appear. For established TV talent, this involved working on new shows, often in different genres. On Channel 4.0, we helped some of our most popular faces extend their range on the platform and, in some cases, make the transition to linear TV.

Established TV faces:

- Following the success of the first series and a Christmas special this year, Joe Lycett will return to Birmingham for another series of *Late Night Lycett* in 2024. A co-production between Rumpus Media and Joe's own production company My Options Were Limited, the show has been a powerful vehicle for bringing new talent from the West Midlands into production. Joe was also a host on our new look *Stand Up To Cancer* live show
- Alison Hammond's move into *The Great British Bake Off* tent saw her bring her charm and authenticity, helping to reinvigorate the series
- We commissioned a new Louis Theroux-style documentary with Ade Adepitan visiting a white-only community in South Africa, in *Whites Only: Ade's Extremist Adventure*. Ade also hosted *The Big British Beef Battle*, part of Channel 4's Change Climate season
- Danny Dyer showed his range this year, appearing in *Absolutely Dyer: Danny and Dani Do Italy* as well as a presenting role on big new reality format *Scared of the Dark*. Danny has filmed a new series on how to be a man for transmission in 2024
- Another of Channel 4's favourite faces, Paddy McGuinness, fronted two big new launches in 2023, *Tempting Fortune* and *Don't Look Down for SU2C*
- Tinie Tempah fronted another new series this year – *Bangers: Mad for Cars* – accompanied by Naomi Schiff, while a second series of his *Extraordinary Extensions* aired in February 2024
- Greg James hosted new series *Rise and Fall* and appeared as a contestant on *Taskmaster's New Year Treat* at the start of the year
- Harry Pinero appeared in a range of Channel 4.0's early commissions, including fronting the Broadcast Digital Award-nominated *Harry Pinero's Worst in Class*. This year, we showcased his charisma and adaptability on shows such as *The Filly and Harry Show* – nominated in the New Voice Awards 2024 for Best Social Series – *Crowd Sauce*, *The Infiltrators*, and *It'll Never Last*
- With *Nella Rose's Flight Mode*, Nella won a Broadcast Digital Award for Best Short-Form format. Her female-fronted prank show *Tapped Out* generated over 14.5 million views across socials in 2023, and she has appeared in *Harry Pinero's Worst in Class*, *Secret Sauce*, *Mist Driven*, and *Alone-ish*
- Actress, YouTuber and content creator Adeola Patronne has thrived in whatever role we have given her, whether it's pranking the public in *Tapped Out*, playing the fool in *Harry Pinero's Worst in Class* – or getting stuck in shovelling muck in *Ready or Not*, which earned her a New Voice Awards 2024 nomination for Best Debut Presenter
- Chloe Burrows' say-it-how-it-is personality has seen her guest on many shows, and this year she hosted her first show, *Bad Baby*. She also appeared on TV in E4's *Celebs Go Dating* and Channel 4's *Scared of the Dark*
- Makeup, fashion and lifestyle YouTuber Mariam Musa became a regular face on Channel 4.0, featuring in *Harry Pinero's Worst in Class*, *Crowd Sauce*, *Ready or Not*, *The Infiltrators*, and as part of the *Tapped Out* crew
- Rapper turned documentarian Konan threw himself into a range of Channel 4.0 formats, featuring in *King Konan's Trap Door*, *Harry Pinero's Worst in Class*, and *Secret Sauce*. He also made an *UNTOLD* film, *Konan: Trapped in Trauma*
- Darkest Man was a recurring guest on *Harry Pinero's Worst in Class* also featuring as a guest on Channel 4.0 shows including *Alone-ish*, *The Infiltrators*, *Secret Sauce*, and *Get in the Van*

↓ Rosie Jones:
Am I a R*tard?

↓ Late Night Lycett
Richard



Engaging young 😊 viewers

Telling stories that matter to young people

Channel 4 has always had a strong connection with young people, giving us a unique ability to engage them with public service content. Young audiences are at the vanguard of the fundamental changes we are seeing in audience behaviour, spending more of their time consuming digital media and less time watching traditional linear TV.





Through our Future4 strategy – and now Fast Forward strategy – we have been transforming the organisation to keep engaging with young audiences however and wherever they consume content – to become a genuinely digital public service streamer.

That means changing the types of content that we commission, for example, investing in short-form digital content alongside traditional TV programmes. And it means making our content available across multiple digital platforms as well as Channel 4's own services. What has not changed is what we are trying to achieve with our content: it is still about representing young people's voices, informing and educating them about contemporary issues, challenging preconceptions, and promoting debate.

A key part of our strategy this year was to use recognisable talent and creators to engage audiences with innovative and award-winning shows such as the likes of our *UNTOLD* series, *Kids* and *Naked Education*. Programming with appeal to young audiences included family-friendly shows like *Taskmaster* and *Gogglebox* as well as content specifically aimed at younger children, such as *Mog's Christmas* and *Junior Bake Off*.

Youngest-profiling PSM streaming service

16-34-year-olds accounted for 28% of viewing on Channel 4's streaming service, higher than the equivalent figures for iPlayer, ITVX, and My5

Youngest-profiling main PSM channel

Channel 4's main channel accounted for 15% of total viewing by 16-34-year-olds to the main PSM channels (BBC One, BBC Two, ITV, Channel 4, and Channel 5) – a substantially higher share of young viewing than the other PSMs

2.3 billion

Number of UK views of content produced by 4Studio, Channel 4's Leeds-based digital content unit, 10% up year-on-year



Engaging young viewers *cont.*



Engaging and entertaining teens and older children

Channel 4's streaming service reached an average of 4.8 million 16-34-year-olds every month in 2023, more than any of the other main UK commercial broadcaster services (ITVX, My5, and Sky/Now TV). Channel 4 was also the UK's youngest-profiling streaming service, with 16-34-year-olds accounting for 28% of viewing, compared to 23% for ITVX, 20% for the BBC iPlayer, and 14% for My5.

This year, our content engaged young people with themes that resonate deeply with them, such as mental health, sexuality, digital life, and climate change.

This year, our content engaged young people with themes that resonate deeply with them, such as mental health, sexuality, digital life, and climate change. *Big Boys*, Jack Rooke's acclaimed heart-warming comedy about two boys who forge an unlikely friendship at university, returned for a second series with an exclusive drop on subscription service Channel 4+ in December ahead of its TV premiere in January 2024. The series was widely praised for its sensitive handling of mental health, coming out, and masculinity.

Body positivity and physical and mental health were the core themes of our highly informative series *Naked Education*, with 74% of 16-34-year-old viewers agreeing that programmes like these "should be shown and discussed in schools as part of the curriculum". The programme succeeded in making viewers look at their bodies in a new light, with 71% of the same age group telling us "I feel better about my body image as a result of watching *Naked Education*".

We engage young people with a range of types of digital content on the online platforms where they spend so much of their time. Channel 4.0 is our dedicated one-stop destination for entertainment featuring major social media stars, providing a way into the Channel 4 brand, and encouraging young audiences to explore our full range of content (see page 60). *UNTOLD*, our digital current affairs strand, is specifically designed to appeal to younger audiences online (see page 62). And our Leeds-based 4Studio business continues to make bespoke social content aimed at Gen Z, bringing long-form programming to life on social platforms (see page 61).

While the core focus of our youth strategy is on teenagers, we also commission shows appealing to younger children. Based on Judith Kerr's treasured children's books, *Mog's Christmas* was a festive, fun-filled fable for the whole family. The film was the top transmission on Channel 4 across December, and was our biggest Christmas animation since *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*. Overall, the film reached 5.1 million across streaming and linear and ranked within Channel 4's top 20 most streamed shows of 2023. The latest series of *Junior Bake Off* set out to inspire children to get baking and achieved an 12.3% share of 10-14-year-olds in 2023, up a notable 79% compared to its weekday 5pm slot average for this young demographic. Overall, the series reached 6.6 million across streaming and linear. Following the success of *Taskmaster* since its launch in 2020, the first series of spin-off *Junior Taskmaster* has been commissioned for 2024 and will celebrate children's ingenuity in a hilarious and offbeat setting.





Engaging young viewers *cont.*

Channel 4.0

Since its launch on YouTube in October 2022, Channel 4.0 has established itself as a one-stop destination offering a regular dose of laughter and entertainment.

Channel 4.0 reflects Channel 4's DNA, bringing traditional storytelling to youth audiences with a strictly entertaining vibe and factual documentaries that make viewers laugh and think. But it also fluently speaks the language of YouTube and socials, bringing a refreshingly unapologetic energy through its casting, talent, nods to cultural nuances, and topline that are very different from programmes on the main linear channels. We have adopted a data-led approach and hired talent from the world of social content to ensure our approach is authentic, young, and socially driven.

We have commissioned a slate of 29 shows since Channel 4.0 launched. One of the highlights this year was *Tapped Out*, in which an all-female cast – comprising best mates and baddies Nella Rose, Chloe Burrows, Adeola Patronne, and Mariam Musa – see who can last the longest in a gauntlet of hilarious and cringeworthy situations, aiming to execute the wildest pranks possible. Across 2023, the first series achieved a remarkably high female audience of over 80%. *Tapped Out* returns for more mischief in spring 2024.

Harry Pinero's Worst in Class takes A-list creator talent back to school for some hard lessons in YouTube's swaggiest and most hectic detention. It's an 'F' all round for the likes of Darkest Man, Chloe Burrows, Yung Filly, Chunkz, and Mist as they (mostly) fail to redeem themselves against Harry's young star students in a new quiz format.

2023 also saw the launch of *Ready or Not*, our first branded sponsorship on Channel 4.0 with e.l.f. Cosmetics. This series follows Adeola Patronne and friends as they prepare – mentally and aesthetically – to dive into new worlds and experiences that open their eyes to extreme, and somewhat unglamorous, careers.

A vital element of Channel 4.0's strategy is to build community and create fandom of the Channel 4.0 brand itself over and above the individual shows. This has been achieved in part by making the shows relate to one another through a central tonality and using a connected ecosystem of creators across our content.

In 2023, content on Channel 4.0 generated 216 million global views across YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat, with 85% of viewers on YouTube aged under 34 – an indicator of our success in targeting and reaching younger demographics. In July 2023, the service expanded to TikTok and attracted 300,000 followers in under six months. By the end of the year, content on TikTok was averaging 4.5 million weekly views.

↓ Ready or Not





4Studio

4Studio, a Leeds-based team leading Channel 4's over-arching social strategy and content production, engages audiences with innovative and award-winning content across the main seven digital platforms – YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, X (formerly Twitter), and Threads – and dozens of social accounts. In 2023, 4Studio made and published over 39,000 pieces of digital content, an increase of 37% year-on-year. These generated 6.8 billion global views across 137 channels. In the UK, there were 2.3 billion views, 10% up year-on-year.

Performance was strong among 13-24-year-olds in the UK. There was a total of 530 million views by this group, again up 10% year-on-year. Vertical content proved especially popular, and on TikTok there was a 72% growth in views by this young demographic, powered by the launch of Channel 4.0, Sport, and Documentaries accounts, to sit alongside the existing Channel 4 and E4 accounts. YouTube's 'Shorts' format also proved popular with UK 13-24-year-olds, driving a 34% increase in views, while a refreshed strategy on Instagram saw the likes of *Married at First Sight UK* and *First Dates* contributing to almost a six-fold increase in views by these young audiences.

Our strategy involves playing to the strengths of the different digital platforms, for example, by making more use of YouTube to offer long-form video. In 2023, we expanded our offering of full episodes on the platform, making hundreds more hours available to our audiences, an approach which delivered over 44 million UK views – an increase of 405% year-on-year. Our Channel 4 Documentaries page in particular proved popular for those seeking longer viewing experiences on the platform, with just two episodes – *60 Days on the Estates* and *The Great Amazon Heist* – delivering over 5.4 million UK views between them.

The growth in output and audience equated to new revenue streams for Channel 4, with 4Studio generating double-digit millions in revenue across the year via a diversified commercial offering. We partnered with a host of new brands in our Branded Entertainment space, and we dipped into the world of e-commerce for the first time, through partnerships with e.l.f. Cosmetics and Boots. We also grew our Social Sponsorship and Direct Sales offerings, selling campaigns against 4Studio's YouTube and Snapchat audiences, and entering into a new third-party representation partnership with Banijay Rights.

Our digital video production unit, 4Studio Productions, doubled its output of fast turnaround social projects. The team is focused on creating stand-out social content from our studio in Leeds and across the UK, and was responsible for over 100 filming projects in 2023 across programme support, branded entertainment, and original series. These included profile documentaries, behind-the-scenes videos, and talent-fronted formats.

All this creativity led to another slew of awards. Channel 4.0 won the much-coveted Best Entertainment Channel at the Broadcast Digital Awards. The *Hollyoaks: The Long Walk Home* VR immersive experience won Best Digital Creativity at the RTS North West Awards, Best Digital Support for a Programme at the Broadcast Digital Awards, and Best Use of Augmented Reality at the Lovie Awards. And Channel 4 won its first-ever BAFTA for digital content in the shape of *How to Be a Person*, which was awarded Best Short Form Programme.



6.8 billion

global views across
137 channels

530 million

views of 4Studio content by
13-24-year-olds in the UK

72% growth

in views on TikTok by
13-24-year-olds in the UK

39,000

pieces of digital content made
and published by 4Studio



Engaging young viewers *cont.*

UNTOLD: Noisy, bold, youth-focused journalism

An offshoot of our longstanding *Dispatches* strand, *UNTOLD* is Channel 4's new current affairs show that delivers digital-first investigations for 16-34-year-olds. *UNTOLD* aims to hold power to account with intelligent, brave, compelling, and cheeky documentary making.

After a successful launch last year, *UNTOLD* returned in 2023 with two further seasons that achieved 2.2 million global views on YouTube across 14 episodes. With a further 2.3 million views for the first season (ten episodes), global views on YouTube totalled 4.5 million in 2023, 154% higher than in 2022. The vast majority of these views came from the UK, with 13-24-year-olds accounting for 30% of the total. On Channel 4 streaming 16-34-year-olds accounted for 39% of 3.8 million views.

Highlights of the second season include *The Secrets of UK Prisons*, which saw former prisoner David Navarro expose the tough reality of life inside prison using footage filmed by inmates on mobile phones they're not supposed to have. *Addicted to Drip* meets the big spenders who are increasingly buying luxury designer goods they often can't afford – and reveals that almost half of younger Brits have gone into debt after purchasing a luxury item. *OnlyFans Got Me Fired* investigates what OnlyFans creators' rights are, hearing from those who lost their jobs after their accounts were discovered.

And *My Big Boobs* sees body confidence champion Jackie Adejebi discover what life is like for women with larger breasts, exploring the rise in demand for breast reduction that has led to an upswing in privately funded surgery amongst 16-24-year-old women.

***UNTOLD* aims to hold power to account with intelligent, brave, compelling, and cheeky documentary making.**

UNTOLD returned for a third season in autumn 2023 with hard-hitting topics including *The Truth About Spiking*, which saw Daisy Maskell take part in a ground-breaking experiment, to find out for herself how it feels to be spiked, and investigate what the authorities are doing to prevent the crime. And with exclusive access to two very different fight clubs *UNTOLD* uncovers what really happens in and out of the ring and what motivates organisers and fighters in *The Secret World of Fight Clubs*.

➔ *My Big Boobs: UNTOLD*







Engaging young viewers cont.

↓ Consent

"*Kids* shines a light on young people navigating the care system... it succeeds, brilliantly, in giving them a voice."

The Telegraph

↓ Kids





Helping teens navigate complex issues that matter to them

Long-form programmes still play a powerful role as part of the content mix to engage mass audiences with content that speaks to young people, challenges them, and explores issues that matter in entertaining and engaging ways.

Kids was a raw and candid new documentary packed with humour and drama. With unprecedented access to young people in the care of Coventry Children's Services, the series followed six remarkable teenagers and their families as they entered a crucial year in their lives and prepared to leave the care system. The series performed well among 14-19-year-olds, with a 5.6% viewing share (5% higher than the Wednesday 9pm slot average) and reached 2.2 million overall across streaming and linear. "*Kids* shines a light on young people navigating the care system," wrote *The Telegraph* in its five-star review, adding that it "succeeds, brilliantly, in giving them a voice".

The clarity of the show's message was clear from the strength of viewer responses to it. 90% thought that "programmes like this help people to understand what 'consent' actually means", and among 16-34-year-olds specifically, 68% agreed that "they feel more comfortable asking questions on the issues raised after watching *Consent*". 41% also said that they "have been motivated to talk to others specifically about the issues raised in the programme".

Mainstream entertainment shows can also play a role in exploring important issues. *Married at First Sight UK* was Channel 4's biggest reality TV hit in 2023 across its TV portfolio. It reached 11.3 million across streaming and linear and 18.3% of 16-34-year-olds. During its nine-week run, the third series was bigger (in terms of total viewer minutes) than any other show on the main UK broadcasters' streaming services.

The contributors' experiences on the show sparked important conversations among viewers as representation in the cast broke new ground. This included the show's sensitive handling of Ella's coming out to the group, as *Married at First Sight UK*'s first trans bride, and Jay and Luke portraying how couples might navigate new relationships if one of them has a disability. The series was praised for how, in stark contrast to other dating formats, its experts intervened decisively when it became apparent that Brad and Shona's marriage was starting to become unhealthy for both of them.

90% of viewers thought that "programmes like *Consent* help people to understand what 'consent' actually means".

Consent was a searing and timely factual drama about rape culture in schools, which captured what it feels like for young people in an environment where sexual expectations are distorted by instant access to porn and where lines of consent are dangerously blurred. The one-off drama reached 1.2 million across streaming and linear.





Engaging young viewers *cont.*

SMCP metrics dashboard

Brand reputations: Always trying something new

48%[‡]

Proportion of respondents that believe that Channel 4 "is always trying something new"

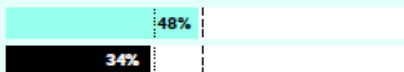
Channel 4 is one of the two leading brands that audiences associate most strongly with "always trying something new". In 2023, 48% of respondents agreed that Channel 4 performed strongly* on this measure, 2 percentage points behind Netflix, which scored 50%. These two brands were the clear leaders, with an 11-percentage-point gap between Channel 4 and the third-highest-scoring brand, Amazon Prime (whose score was 37%). The next-highest-scoring PSM was the BBC, whose 35% score was 13 percentage points below that of Channel 4.

Channel 4 enjoyed a lead of 14 percentage points over the 34% average score of the other brands surveyed (all except Channel 4). Aside from Netflix, their individual scores ranged from 27% (Channel 5 and Disney+) up to 37% (Amazon Prime). The average score for the other PSMs (the BBC, ITV, and Channel 5) was 31%, 17 percentage points behind Channel 4.

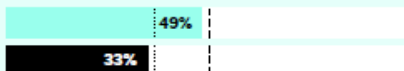
There were small year-on-year variations. Compared to the results for 2022, the proportion of respondents who agreed that Channel 4 performs strongly on this measure fell by 1 percentage point (2022: 49%). With Netflix's score also falling by 1 percentage point (from 51% in 2022), the gap between Channel 4 and the highest-scoring brand (Netflix in both years) held steady at 2 percentage points. The average score for the other services increased by 1 percentage point (from 33% in 2022), meaning that Channel 4's lead over the average score of the other brands fell by 2 percentage points.

Strength of association of each brand with "always trying something new"

2023



2022



Channel 4
Average for other brands
--- Next-highest score
..... Next-highest PSM

* We define a "strong performance" for a brand as one in which respondents give it a score of 7 or more on a 10-point scale.

‡ Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.

Young audiences' viewing of the main PSM channels

15%[‡]

Proportion of viewing by 16-34-year-olds to the main PSM channels accounted for Channel 4's main channel

Channel 4's main channel accounted for 15% of total viewing by 16-34-year-olds to the main PSM channels – BBC One, BBC Two, ITV, Channel 4, and Channel 5 – in 2023. This was 46% more than its corresponding share of viewing amongst all audiences to the main PSM channels (which was 10%), with all three figures at the same levels as in 2022.

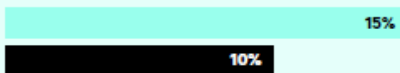
Channel 4 is the only main PSM channel for which 16-34-year-olds account for a substantially higher share of viewing than TV audiences in general. Only one other PSM channel over-indexed viewing by 16-34-year-olds in 2023: ITV's viewing share amongst this young demographic was 13% more than its all-audience share of viewing to the PSM channels. Meanwhile, BBC One, BBC Two, and Channel 5 all had lower shares of 16-34-year-old viewing than their all-audience viewing shares.

In terms of the absolute levels of viewing share, Channel 4 ranks as the third most popular of the main PSM channels for 16-34-year-olds. By dint of their sheer scale as mass-market channels, BBC One and ITV attracted the biggest overall shares of 16-34-year-olds (33% and 35%, respectively) in 2023. Channel 4's share comfortably exceeded that of BBC Two (10%) and Channel 5 (7%), in fourth and fifth place, respectively.

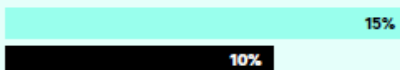
The figures reported for Channel 4 in this metric are affected by the broadcaster's Future4 and Fast Forward strategies, which aim to drive young viewers to watch more TV via streaming, e.g. through increased levels of box-setting content or watching programmes first on Channel 4 streaming before they are aired on linear TV. To the extent that the strategy succeeds in diverting viewing by 16-34-year-olds from Channel 4's main TV channel to its streaming services, this will (other things being equal) reduce the extent to which Channel 4's main channel over-indexes viewing by 16-34-year-olds.

Proportion of viewing to the main PSM channels accounted for Channel 4's main channel: all individuals and 16-34-year-olds

2023



2022



Viewing share: 16-34-year-olds

Viewing share: all individuals

[‡] Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.



Engaging young viewers *cont.*

SMCP metrics dashboard

Linear and online views

1.6bn[‡]

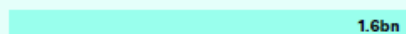
Total programme views on
Channel 4's streaming platforms

9.8%[‡]

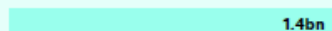
Channel 4 portfolio's share
of total linear TV viewing

Total streaming views (billion)

2023

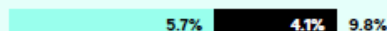


2022



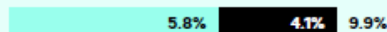
Linear TV viewing share (%)

2023



Total

2022



Main channel

Digital channels

In 2023, a record 1.6 billion programme views were initiated through Channel 4's streaming platforms, which include PCs, smartphones, tablets, games consoles, and connected TVs. This is the highest figure that Channel 4 has achieved on this metric, with views up by 14% year-on-year (2022: 1.4 billion).

This means that Channel 4's programme views continued their long-term trend of steady growth, which has been achieved in every year bar one since we started measuring this metric in 2014. The only year in which views dipped was 2022, because of the exceptional Covid-19 lockdown-related boost to viewing in 2021. This year's total exceeds 2021's previous record figure (of 1.5 billion views) by 0.1 billion.

Turning to traditional (linear) TV, Channel 4's channel portfolio attracted a 9.8% share of all TV viewing in 2023. This represented a very small year-on-year decline, of 0.1 percentage points (2022: 9.9%). This was equivalent to a 1% drop, smaller than the corresponding declines for the ITV and BBC channel portfolios, which fell by 2% and 4%, respectively. Channel 5 was the only PSM to increase its TV portfolio share (it rose by 5%, albeit from a lower base than the other PSMs).

The main channel's viewing share was 5.7% this year (58% of Channel 4's overall TV portfolio share). It was down by 0.1 percentage points year-on-year, equivalent to a 3% drop. Competition from the hundreds of digital TV channels impacted all the main PSM channels: the 3% decline experienced by Channel 4's main channel matched that of BBC One, BBC Two, and Channel 5 (all 3% down) and was less than ITV's decline of 4%.

Viewing to the digital channels was stable at 4.1% in 2023, level with the 2022 figure. Viewing was also stable at the individual channel level, with all channels (E4, More4, Film4, and 4Music) maintaining the same viewing shares as in 2022.

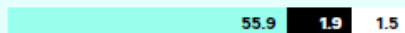
Viewing of content online

59.3bn[‡]

Total number of minutes spent viewing Channel 4 content on streaming and social channels

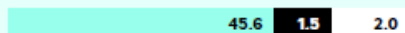
Total number of minutes spent viewing Channel 4 content on streaming and social channels (bn)

2023

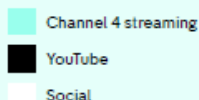


Total: 59.3

2022



Total: 49.1



Rounding differences may occur.

In 2023, audiences spent a total of 59.3 billion minutes viewing Channel 4's content on streaming and social channels. The large majority of this time – comprising 55.9 billion minutes, equivalent to 94% of the total – related to viewing on Channel 4's own streaming service, which is available as a mobile app, a TV app, and via web browsers. Channel 4 streaming offers viewers a mixture of catch-up, archive, and exclusive acquired content as well as live streams of Channel 4's linear TV channels.

On YouTube, Channel 4 offers viewers a mixture of full episodes of its programmes, clips, and dedicated digital-first content (such as the Channel 4.0 strand, which is home to new social formats from content creators). Channel 4 content on YouTube attracted 1.9 billion minutes of viewing this year (3% of the total). There was a further 1.5 billion minutes of viewing of Channel 4 content on Facebook and Snapchat (the two social channels for which reliable viewing data is available, accounting for 3% of the total).

There was substantial year-on-year growth in the time spent viewing Channel 4 content on streaming and social channels. The overall total grew by 21% this year (2022: 49.1 billion minutes of viewing), equivalent to an increase of 10.2 billion views in absolute terms. Growth on Channel 4 streaming was up by 23%, a rise of more than 10 billion views in absolute terms.

The percentage increase was even greater for viewing on YouTube, which rose by 27% (0.4 billion more views). Viewing on Facebook and Snapchat fell this year by 27%, due to a combination of algorithmic changes on the platforms and a sharper focus in our Fast Forward strategy on driving growth on YouTube. In absolute terms this represented a loss of just 0.5 billion views.

Note that notwithstanding the growth of viewing on social platforms, Channel 4 streaming continues to account for such a large proportion of the total for two reasons: first, it is an established service available across a large number of mobile and smart TV platforms. And second, most of the viewing on Channel 4 streaming is of full-length TV programmes, which remain the dominant form of content produced by Channel 4, and which are typically longer in duration than individual pieces of content made specifically for digital and social channels.

Note: 2022 data has been updated. The data providers for the Channel 4 streaming and YouTube figures restated the final data for that year. In addition, we have removed a small amount of duplication from the 2022 data (which accounted for 0.2% of the total). As a result, the total for 2022 has changed by 0.1 billion viewing minutes, from 49.2 billion as reported in last year's Annual Report to 49.1 billion reported here. See methodology document for further details.

‡ Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.

Partnering with the creative industries

Channel 4 opens up opportunities for all

Channel 4 supports the creative industries in multiple ways. Most directly, this comes from all the content we invest in, across TV, film, and digital media. Through our commissioning strategies and additional targeted industry initiatives, we support talent and work with independent production companies across the whole of the UK.



2023 presented significant challenges for the TV industry, particularly affecting independent producers and freelancers amid a tough economic climate. Throughout the year, Channel 4 sought effective ways to collaborate and support those most impacted.

We remain committed to supporting economic development across the Nations and Regions, and our 4 All the UK strategy ensures that Channel 4 authentically represents the voices and communities that make up the UK.

Our 4Skills initiative helps to ensure a pipeline of talent into the creative sector from a broad and diverse range of backgrounds, with the aim of improving representation within the industry and addressing specific sector skills gaps. Other schemes provide support for emerging talent and the freelance community that is the lifeblood of the production sector.

In 2023, our spending on content made outside of London reached £193 million, and we sourced 67% of hours of first-run originated programmes on the main channel from suppliers based in the Nations and Regions.

£520 million

Channel 4's investment in original content across its TV channels and online services, the second-highest figure in our history

£193 million

Channel 4's investment in content made in the Nations and the English Regions across the TV portfolio, the third-highest figure in our history

167 independent producers

Number of independent production companies that Channel 4 worked with out of a total of 317 content suppliers



Partnering with the creative industries *cont.*





4 All the UK

Our 4 All the UK strategy seeks to grow and develop the creative economy across the Nations and Regions. In 2023, our spending on originated content made outside London reached £193 million, including £42.6 million on content made in the devolved nations. On the main channel, 67% of first-run programming hours came from the Nations and Regions, while 51% of spending on first-run commissions came from outside London – both figures comfortably above the 35% Ofcom quotas and in line with our voluntary commitments of 50% spend and hours.

As well as supporting economic development across the Nations and Regions, our strategy aims to ensure that Channel 4 authentically represents the voices and communities that make up the United Kingdom.

Highlights this year included the story of 400 people in South Wales who split a £3.7 million jackpot in *The Welsh Valley That Won the Lottery*, unprecedented access to fighter jets and personnel at RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland in *Top Guns: Inside the RAF*, and the opportunity to revel in the chaos of family life in Hull-based sitcom *Hullraisers*. In November 2023, we won a Grierson Award for *Lyra*, our feature-length portrait of Lyra McKee, the remarkable young journalist murdered in Northern Ireland in 2019. And with our new permanent newsroom now operating in the heart of Leeds, *Channel 4 News* became the first national evening news programme to co-present from two locations (see page 33).

Bespoke interventions opened up opportunities in areas that are traditionally underserved by the creative economy. Building on the success of our partnership with Northern Ireland Screen, we partnered with North East Screen to forge new links between our Commissioners and local indies. Successful outcomes included an initiative that helped two local indies to pitch, develop, and ultimately secure digital commissions.

We collaborated with Screen Scotland to offer an opportunity to develop and pilot a new entertainment format, we partnered with Creative Wales on a number of training schemes including Factual Fast Track and Culture Connect, and organised a series of workshops and sessions for young people in the east of England in partnership with the National Film and Television Society and Norfolk Screen.

We continued to work closely with Create Central to forge stronger relationships with West Midlands indies. This region was also in the spotlight this year thanks to the launch of *Late Night Lycett*, our raucous comedy entertainment show transmitted live from Joe Lycett's hometown of Birmingham. A trainee programme jointly funded by the series producers, 4Skills, Film Birmingham, and Create Central gave several young people the chance to work on the show, which we hope will represent their first steps towards careers in the creative industries.





**Partnering with the
creative industries** *cont.*





Film4: A year of special recognition for outstanding contribution to UK film

Film4's productions continued to reflect the most distinctive and innovative British and international filmmaking talent, built on its longstanding reputation for nurturing relationships and championing diversity. The quality and creative ambition of our slates drives viewing on Channel 4's TV and streaming services domestically, and connects cinema lovers with British-made content all over the world. These achievements led Screen International to honour Film4 with a special recognition award in 2023 for its outstanding contribution to UK film.

In early 2023, William Oldroyd's *Eileen* and Savannah Leaf's debut feature *Earth Mama* celebrated their world premieres at the Sundance Film Festival, while Martin McDonagh's *The Banshees of Inisherin* collected four BAFTA Film Awards.

Multiple accolades for Film4 titles followed throughout the year, including two major awards at the Cannes Film Festival – the Grand Prix for Jonathan Glazer's *The Zone of Interest* and the Un Certain Regard prize for Molly Manning Walker's debut *How to Have Sex* – as well as the Golden Lion for Yorgos Lanthimos' *Poor Things* at the Venice International Film Festival.

In October, a record ten Film4-backed films premiered at the London Film Festival, including *Poor Things*, *The Zone of Interest*, Andrew Haigh's *All of Us Strangers*, and *Closing Night* film *The Kitchen* from Kibwe Tavares and Daniel Kaluuya, as well as a series of short films from deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent filmmakers.

There were further accolades as we moved into the 2024 awards season: Film4 titles won 14 BIFAs, including Best British Independent Film for *All of Us Strangers*, while *Poor Things* received two Golden Globes. Film4 celebrated nine award wins at the 2024 BAFTA Film Awards including Outstanding British Film and Film Not in the English Language for *The Zone of Interest*, Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer for *Earth Mama*, and five awards for *Poor Things*. Lead actress from *How to Have Sex*, Mia McKenna-Bruce, also received the EE Rising Star Award.

The Banshees of Inisherin performed strongly at the UK box office this year, grossing £10 million in ticket sales. Other Film4 releases in UK cinemas this year included *Enys Men*, *The Son*, *How to Have Sex*, *Eileen*, and *Earth Mama*.

Seven Film4 feature films went into production, including Karan Kandhari's *Sister Midnight*, Mike Leigh's *Hard Truths*, John Crowley's *We Live in Time*, Rebecca Lenkiewicz's debut *Hot Milk*, Thea Gajic's debut *Surviving Earth*, feature documentaries by Asif Kapadia (2073) and Arthur Cary (*Cecil*), and four short films.

Film4's track record for discovering new talent and nurturing deep relationships with filmmakers is exemplified by our slate this year. This includes acclaimed films from directors with whom we have strong long-term relationships, including Yorgos Lanthimos, Asif Kapadia, Rose Glass, Andrew Haigh, and Jonathan Glazer – started 23 years ago with his feature debut *Sexy Beast*.

In March 2024, there was more success for Film4-backed titles, with *Poor Things* and *The Zone of Interest* taking home six Oscar wins at the 96th Academy Awards, including Best Actress for Emma Stone and Best International Feature Film, respectively.



Partnering with the creative industries *cont.*



CASE STUDY

ClockWork Films

Leeds-based, diverse-led independent production company ClockWork Films joined the Emerging Indie Fund in 2022, making *Ramadan in Lockdown* for Channel 4, which won a prestigious Sandford St Martin Trustees' Award and was also nominated for RTS and Prix Europa awards.

"At ClockWork we look to bring diversity and representation to the mainstream – with people and their stories at the heart of what we do," says Director and Executive Producer, Heenan Bhatti. "We aim to bring a distinctive approach to our film-making: be it tone, a boldness in the story-telling or innovation."

During their time with the Emerging Indie Fund, the company, which works across all factual genres, has also created a number of short appeal films for *Stand Up To Cancer* and the RTS-nominated *Princess Anne: The Plot to Kidnap a Royal* – an innovative single documentary described by The Telegraph as "inspired" and by The Times as "strangely mesmerising".

"The Emerging Indie Fund has been greatly beneficial in supporting ClockWork's continued growth," says Heenan. "It's proved invaluable in giving the time and space to take a strategic overview of the company – from distilling the brand to reviewing development and business strategy – through both group sessions and one-to-one consultancies."

↓ Scared of the Dark

Driving innovation through investment

Indie Growth Fund

The Indie Growth Fund has a remit to generate commercial returns for Channel 4 by investing in primarily early-stage production companies, focusing on the Nations and Regions, diverse entrepreneurs, and digital content producers. Profits from the fund's ventures are invested back into the delivery of Channel 4's public service remit.

Now nine years old, the fund has invested in 29 companies to date, with 11 exits so far. 18 companies remained in the fund at the end of 2023, the largest figure since the fund's inception. Of these, 11 are based out of London, three are led by ethnically diverse founders, eight have female founders, one has a founder with a disability and one is a digital-first company. The fund invested in one new company in 2023 – Studio Crook (there were no exits this year). The uniquely challenging market environment in 2023 had an adverse impact on the independent producers in the fund and a number of them remain financially vulnerable and at potential risk of failure.

Emerging Indie Fund

The Emerging Indie Fund aims to nurture emerging indie talent from the Nations and Regions, helping them to grow their business through commissioner support, funding, and training.

Running for its fourth year, the 2023 cohort comprised 14 awards, which ranged up to £18,000. The selected main awardees are each paired with a Commissioning Editor and receive support through slate development funding, business, and slate development consultancy, and commissioner one-to-one sessions over a period of six months. They also join the 4Producers Network – a regular meetup of participating indies from current and previous years of the Fund, the Indie Accelerator, and the Indie Growth Fund. Discretionary awardees receive up to £4,500, and access to the 4Producers Network and Head of Indie Relations.

The Emerging Indie Fund has proved to be a successful catalyst for companies, with participating companies over the last four years going on to secure more than £14 million in developments and commissions.

Channel 4 Ventures

Channel 4 Ventures invests in high-growth consumer businesses, offering media airtime in exchange for equity. The fund now has 24 active investments which had a balance sheet value of £50 million at 31 December 2023 (up from £45 million at the end of 2022) – please see further detail on page 212.

The venture capital markets continued to remain subdued in 2023, resulting in a decrease in the value of Channel 4 Ventures' existing investments in year; however, this was more than offset by new deals closed by the fund, consisting of five new investments and two follow-on investments.

Companies added to the portfolio included: Oddbox, a sustainable vegetable box business; Airtasker, a local services marketplace; and Raylo, a circular economy platform for consumer electronics. Channel 4 Ventures also made a follow-on investment into Strike, following its acquisition of Purplebricks earlier in 2023.

Global Format Fund

As part of our Future4 strategy, we launched the Global Format Fund in 2020. The fund comprises ringfenced spend designed to stimulate the creation of original new formats from UK-based indies, focusing on genres with the greatest potential for success with domestic and international audiences. Using a rigorous R&D approach, the fund guarantees minimum runs and recommissioning triggers upfront, as well as minimum levels of marketing support. It leverages Channel 4's creative, marketing and audience insights to support producers with their international exploitation of the format.

The fund invested £11 million in 2023. Three new Global Format Fund series aired on Channel 4 this year: innovative celebrity reality competition *Scared of the Dark* (which became one of our most-streamed series of the year), thrilling new antiques and collectibles format *The Greatest Auction* and supersized canine training show *The Dog Academy* (our fourth-best 8pm series launch of the year). Overall, *The Dog Academy* reached 6.2 million across streaming and linear, and has already been recommissioned for a second series.

Also this year, the second series of *Open House: The Great Sex Experiment* – a social experiment that follows committed monogamous couples as they explore open relationships, has gone from strength to strength on Channel 4 streaming with average views per episode up 117% compared to the first series. It has been optioned and/or acquired in many territories across the world.





Partnering with the creative industries *cont.*

Seeking out the next generation of diverse talent

Now in its fourth year, the 4Skills programme provides training opportunities to people across the UK. The Leeds-based initiative reaches out to untapped talent pools to attract people from under-represented groups who might not typically consider a career in the creative industry. The programme's budget in 2023 was £5 million and is set to double to £10 million a year by 2025.

This year, 4Skills provided over 57,000 training, development, and learning opportunities to people from across the UK, more than double last year's total of 28,000. Our schemes focused on young people and those from lower socioeconomic and diverse backgrounds, and on providing opportunities for the freelance community.

The largest individual scheme, 4Schools, works with schools to open up the creative and digital industries to 11-16-year-olds. The project has thrived since it launched in 2022, reaching over 40,000 students this year (up from over 23,000 in 2022), and operating in 122 schools. Expansion of the programme in 2023 ensured that it covered almost twice as many schools in England, Scotland, and Wales compared to 2022, and the plan is to expand further to include schools in Northern Ireland in 2024. The project prioritises schools with a higher percentage of pupils receiving free school meals, to maximise its impact by focusing on areas that can benefit the most from social mobility.

For the second year, Channel 4's expanded Production Training Scheme supported two cohorts in 2023, one focused on Scripted companies and the other on Unscripted. The year-long, fully paid training programme placed 28 trainees at independent production companies across the UK.

Our Apprenticeship Programme plays a central role in our strategy to advance equity and inclusion at Channel 4. This year, a record 41 apprentices embarked on long-term apprenticeships, strategically based across all our offices in Leeds, Glasgow, Bristol, Manchester, and London.

This year, a record 41 apprentices embarked on long-term apprenticeships, strategically based across all our offices in Leeds, Glasgow, Bristol, Manchester, and London.

In its second full year, the 4Skills grassroots talent scheme, Content Creatives expanded to a six-month programme (up from 14 weeks in 2022), with 30 placements in Leeds and Manchester. Over 80 trainees have been through the scheme in total (since the launch of the pilot in 2021) and have gone on to creative careers with 4Studio and ITN and digital agencies such as We Are The Allies, McCann, Dubit, and Dentsu, as well as roles in TV production.

In January 2023, we introduced a virtual work experience programme in an effort to enhance accessibility and engage with a larger audience. More than 2,000 individuals successfully completed the self-paced programme, which is offered free of charge. We have relaunched the initiative in January 2024, now featuring expanded content and modules to drive further engagement.

↓ Channel 4 apprentices



↓ Paralympics Production Training Scheme trainees



↓ Channel 4 and National Film and Television School masterclass



↓ 4Schools





Partnering with the creative industries *cont.*

Supporting the freelance community

Alongside its various programmes for new entrants, Channel 4 has an ongoing, long-term commitment to the UK freelance community, on whom the entire independent production sector is dependent.

At a time of macroeconomic uncertainty, with the TV production sector facing unprecedented challenges, many broadcasters had to slow down commissioning while global streamers significantly reduced their budgets. We felt it was vital to do more to support the freelance community to make it easier for them to navigate the crisis. Our focus was on supportive interventions, and we assembled a package of measures to address the challenges facing people working in production.

In addition to making an additional financial contribution to the Film & TV Charity's hardship fund supporting freelancers, our 4Skills team worked with the National Film and Television School ('NFTS') to offer additional support through masterclasses, workshops, and training sessions.

Channel 4 has a longstanding partnership with the NFTS to deliver training opportunities to those already in the industry. As a new component of this, in October 2023 we launched Freelancer Focus, a two-week programme for freelancers covering everything from pitching to CVs to finance to wellbeing. Take-up for the programme was high, with over 7,200 attendances across the 20 sessions.

Other Channel 4 initiatives aimed to provide new skillsets to help freelancers effectively navigate through the economic crisis included Channel 4 'Open Days' in Newcastle, Belfast, and Cardiff, which were held online and face-to-face with a mix of skills, workshops, and commissioner meetings, including networking mornings for freelancers at Channel 4 offices, and additional wellbeing and mental health initiatives for freelancers.

We also launched 4Skills Business Boost, a specialist training and business support programme, to nine independent production companies based in the Nations and Regions, which focused on leadership and management, slate development and revenue diversification. And we delivered two weeks of free online training sessions and masterclasses covering topics focused on business leadership and management in TV production, and storytelling and script development. Over 3,200 opportunities were available to engage in the diverse range of sessions, featuring insights from industry professionals.

"Channel 4's steadfast support helps us to create meaningful impact and widen opportunities for under-represented talent into our industry," said Claire Scally, Managing Director of TRC. "Their commitment to supporting training initiatives across the Nations and Regions has been invaluable."





Stand Up To Cancer: A lifesaving ten year partnership

Stand Up To Cancer, the national campaign to support life-saving cancer research, celebrated a decade of successful fundraising this year. Over the last ten years, the campaign – a partnership between Channel 4 and Cancer Research UK – has raised more than £113 million.

Since launching in 2012, it has funded more than 60 clinical trials and research projects involving more than 13,000 cancer patients, with some breakthroughs in treatment. From trials into kinder testing for breast cancer to a new treatment for advanced bile duct cancer now available on the NHS, the cash raised by *Stand Up To Cancer* has demonstrably saved lives.

Since launching in 2012, it has funded more than 60 clinical trials and research projects involving more than 13,000 cancer patients.

The centrepiece of Channel 4's celebrations of *Stand Up To Cancer*'s anniversary was a star-studded night of live TV in November featuring Davina McCall, Joe Lycett, Adam Hills, Rhod Gilbert, and Munya Chawawa. They were joined by other famous faces and guests for a night of comedy, insights into cancer research, and emotional stories shared by cancer patients and their families.

The programme resonated strongly with audiences, who recognised the campaign's impact. 90% of viewers agreed that "events like *Stand Up To Cancer* are exceptionally important in raising money for good causes", while 87% of viewers told us that "the programme(s) helped raise awareness of the different challenges cancer patients/their families face", and 85% agreed that "programming like this helps to remove some of the stigma surrounding cancer".





Partnering with the creative industries *cont.*

SMCP metrics dashboard

Content investment: Total spend

£663m[‡]

Total investment in content across Channel 4's TV's channels and online services

Total spend on content (£m)

2023

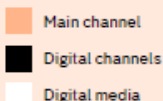


Total: 663

2022



Total: 713



Rounding differences may occur.

As a public service media organisation, Channel 4 delivers its public remit primarily through the original content that it invests in. Channel 4 manages its finances in a responsible and sustainable way, and in 2023 it sought to preserve investment in content and strategic objectives where possible.

In 2023, Channel 4 spent £663 million on content (originations and acquisitions) across its services. This is 7% below the all-time record figure of £713 million spent in 2022.

The year-on-year decline reflects challenges in the TV advertising market, which required Channel 4 to rephase some scheduling and production, and to slow down commissioning during periods where it was already well-stocked. By taking short-term measures, Channel 4 is able to preserve its longer-term level of overall investment, remit delivery, and financial sustainability.

Despite the decrease this year, Channel 4's content investment was at the top end of the spending range over the five years prior to 2022, i.e. 2017-2021, during which period it ranged from £522 million up to £675 million.

The main channel's content budget was £509 million this year, a year-on-year decline of 7%. The main channel accounted for 77% of total content spend – this is the same proportion as in 2022 and 6 percentage points below the corresponding figure of 83% from five years ago (in 2018), reflecting the gradual rebalancing of spend from the main channel to digital services.

Spend on the digital TV channels totalled £119 million, 8% down year-on-year (a £10 million decrease in absolute terms). The one area of content investment to increase this year was in digital media: spend rose by 3% to £36 million (a £2 million increase), reflecting the importance of Channel 4's ongoing strategy to drive viewing to its streaming services. This includes offering more exclusive acquisitions (such as *The X-Files* and *Alias*) to sit alongside our commissioned content, helping us to grow our content offer and carve out a distinctive reputation in the highly competitive market for streaming services.

[‡] Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.

Content investment: Originations

£520m†

Total investment in originated content across
Channel 4's TV's channels and online services

Spend on originated content (£m)

2023

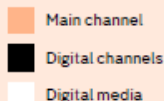


Total: 520

2022



Total: 570



The total value of Channel 4's investment in original content (first-run transmissions and repeats) across its TV channels and online services in 2023 was £520 million. While this is 9% below 2022's all-time record £570 million investment, it is still the second-highest figure in Channel 4's history.

The value of investment in originated content on the main channel this year was £458 million (88% of the total). This represented a decrease of 7% year-on-year, slightly less than the percentage fall in total investment in original content. The 2023 figure for originated content investment on the main channel was again the second-highest-ever value in Channel 4's history.

Investment in original content on the digital TV channels was £53 million this year, 21% below the 2022 level (a drop of £14 million). E4 accounted for the bulk of this decline, as Channel 4 prioritised investment on streaming and the delivery of its digital strategy. After almost doubling in 2022 to £52 million, its originated content budget fell by £11 million to £41 million in 2023 – still more than 50% higher than its 2021 originations budget of £27 million.

With the broadcaster's Future4 and Fast Forward strategies seeking to drive more viewing via streaming, Channel 4 protected its spend on digital media content (including websites and cross-platform content). Total investment remained at £9 million this year, level with 2022 (based on the exact figures, there was a very small decline of 2%).



Partnering with the creative industries *cont.*

SMCP metrics dashboard

Content investment: Originations spend in the Nations and Regions

£193m[‡]

Total investment in originated content
in the Nations and Regions

Spend on originated content in the Nations and Regions (£m)

2023



Total: 193

2022



Total: 228

English Regions

Nations

Channel 4 spent £193 million across its TV portfolio on content commissioned from production companies based in the Nations and Regions in 2023. This represented a decline of 16% on the all-time record investment level of £228 million in 2022 (a £35 million drop in absolute terms). This decline was greater than that for Channel 4's total investment in originated content (see page 83) as 2022 saw the final series of major out-of-London commissions such as *Derry Girls* and *Ackley Bridge*, while a number of other series did not return this year or returned with shorter runs. Notwithstanding this decline, originated spend outside London remained higher than in any year prior to 2021.

Channel 4's expenditure on originated content in the Nations was £42 million this year. This fell by 6% year-on-year (equivalent to £3 million) relative to last year's record £45 million figure. This was a lower decline in percentage terms than the overall reduction in Channel 4's out-of-London spend and ensured that our originated content spend in the Nations remained higher than in any year other than 2022.

Expenditure in Scotland was £27.0 million, equivalent to 64% of the total Nations spend in 2023. The next-biggest Nation was Wales, with a spend of £13.3 million (32% of the Nations total). The remaining £1.8 million of the Nations' spend (4% of the total) was in Northern Ireland. Scotland was the one Nation that saw a rise in investment this year, thanks to a range of new launches such as *Strangers on a Plane*, *Tool Club*, and *PopMaster TV*.

Channel 4's TV portfolio spend on commissions from the English Regions was £151 million in 2023, down from £183 million in 2022 (a drop of 18% or £32 million in absolute terms).

Investment in the North of England was £93.2 million in 2023, equivalent to 62% of the total spent in the English Regions. While spend fell in each of the English Regions, the decline in the North of England was only marginal (a £0.1 million drop), helped by the move of *Formula 1* production to this region (from the South). The South of England remained the next-biggest region, with £48.1 million spend (32% of the total). With £5.9 million of spend, the Midlands accounted for 4% of the total. The remaining 2% of spend in the English Regions was on programmes made in more than one region, which accounted for £3.4 million investment.

[‡] Selected metrics were subject to independent limited assurance by Deloitte LLP.

Opportunities provided by 4Skills

57k+‡

Number of training, development, and learning opportunities provided by 4Skills across its programmes

Actual and target number of opportunities provided by 4Skills

2023

57,000+

41,000

2022

28,000+

15,000

Opportunities provided

Target

Channel 4 launched 4Skills in 2020 to help nurture and grow the UK's next generation of creative talent. Based in Leeds and with a budget in 2023 of £5 million (set to double to £10 million a year by 2025), the 4Skills programme provides opportunities to people across the UK, reaching out to untapped talent pools to attract people from under-represented groups who might never have considered careers in the creative industries.

This year, 4Skills provided more than 57,000 training, development, and learning opportunities, with a focus on young people and those from under-represented backgrounds. This figure is more than double the corresponding number for 2022 (around 28,000 opportunities), a very impressive year-on-year growth rate. It exceeds by some distance the target set for the year of almost 41,000 opportunities.

4Schools is the largest component of the 4Skills programme, working with schools to raise awareness of careers in television and the creative and digital industries to 11-16-year-olds. A total of 122 schools took part in 2023 (almost twice as many as in 2022), enabling the programme to engage directly with more than 40,000 students across the year (2022: 23,000+ students), through face-to-face careers workshops, school assemblies, and a range of online content and resources such as videos, lesson plans, and quizzes.

Other components of 4Skills target different age groups and career paths. They include work experience and industry training placements, as well as apprenticeships, both at Channel 4 itself and at suppliers and other organisations that we partner with. Highlights in 2023 included a two-week Freelancer Focus programme to support the freelance community, run in partnership with the NFTS and BBC, which saw more than 7,200 attendances across 20 sessions. And Content Creatives, which is aimed at young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds with a passion for creating digital content, returned for its second full year with an expanded six-month programme (up from 14 weeks in 2022).



Partnering with the creative industries *cont.*

SMCP metrics dashboard

Diversity of suppliers

13%

Proportion of Channel 4's total supplier base who are ethnically diverse

33%

Proportion of Channel 4's total supplier base who are based in the Nations and Regions

Proportion of suppliers who are ethnically diverse

2023

13%

2022

13%

Proportion of suppliers who are based in the Nations and Regions

2023

33%

2022

29%

Channel 4 plays a disproportionately important role in supporting the independent production sector, with all its TV programmes being sourced from external suppliers. Following consolidation in the production sector (some of the biggest companies are parts of global media groups that are considerably bigger than Channel 4 itself), our role has evolved over time. In particular, our support for the sector has become more targeted so it can achieve the greatest impact.

Two priority areas for support are suppliers that are 'diverse' – defined as being production companies for which the main shareholders, leading decision makers or creative leaders comprise people from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds – and suppliers that are based in the Nations and Regions. We report here the degree of representation of diverse and Nations and Regions companies within the total of 143 suppliers that worked on programmes commissioned by Channel 4 in 2023.

This year, 13% of Channel 4's total supplier base (19 of the 143 companies) were diverse. The most significant diverse companies, in terms of their non-sports commissions from Channel 4, were Gold Wala (whose commissions included *Sounds Like the 80s*), Nine Lives Media (*Ricky, Sue and a Trip or Two*), and Rogan Productions (*Defiance: Fighting the Far Right*). The proportion of Channel 4's supplier base that comprises diverse suppliers is the same as last year (2022: 13% of the total).

Companies based in the Nations and Regions represented 33% of Channel 4's total supplier base in 2023 (47 of the 143 companies). The Nations and Regions companies with the largest value of commissions this year were Lime Pictures (whose commissions included *Hollyoaks*), The Forge Entertainment Limited (*Generation Z*) and True North (*Top Guns: Inside the RAF*). The proportion of companies based in the Nations and Regions rose by 4 percentage points year-on-year (from 29% of the total supplier base in 2022).



Meeting Channel 4's licence obligations

	Measure	Daypart	Quota	2023 Actuals
News	Average hours per week	Peak (6-10.30pm)	4	4
Current Affairs	Average hours per week	All day	4	4
	Average hours per week	Peak (6-10.30pm)	2	2
Schools	Hours per year	All day	1	5
Origination production	% of hours	All day	56	64
	% of hours	Peak (6-10.30pm)	70	79
Independent production	% of first-run origination	All day	25	54
European independent production	% of origination hours	All day	10	31
European origin	% of origination hours	All day	50	67
Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing	% of hours	All day	90	100
Audio description	% of hours	All day	10	52
Signing	% of hours	All day	5	11
Regional production	% of first-run origination	All day	35	51
Regional hours	% of first-run origination	All day	35	67
Production in the Nations	% of first-run origination	All day	9	11
Nations hours	% of first-run origination	All day	9	11



Tackling the ⚡ climate emergency

**Channel 4 engages with
viewers to create a debate
on the need for change**

With a remit to inspire change in how we lead our lives, Channel 4 is committed to using its programming to empower viewers to take positive actions to live more sustainable lives, and to shine a light on the worsening impacts of the climate emergency.





✓ Chris Packham: Is it Time to Break the Law?

In 2023, a bold season of programmes sought to explore solutions to the climate crisis, with input from some of the most respected climate experts in the world. And outside the season, we shined a light on climate issues across our output in different ways. Amongst the most impactful shows was a series on our digital platforms looking at how to make sustainable fashion choices, repositioning second-hand clothing as 'pre-loved'. We also used the reach and strength of Channel 4's brand to start a conversation on the need for change, with a striking creative campaign questioning whether those in power are doing enough, stirring a heated debate in the process.

Off-screen, we strengthened our corporate climate commitments and reviewed our internal processes and supplier relationships with the aim of minimising emissions across the value chain.

Strengthened commitments

We aligned to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) to set more robust company-wide emission reduction targets

86%

Proportion of viewers of our Change Climate season who agreed that shows like these "are important for raising awareness of issues related to the climate crisis"

Driving off-screen sustainability

We require all production companies to use the cross-industry albert scheme to measure and take steps to reduce their carbon footprint, and work with the Carbon Disclosure Project to gather sustainability data for suppliers in our wider supply chain



Tackling the climate emergency *cont.*

CHANGE CLIMATE

In 2023, Channel 4 aired a series of programmes dedicated to exploring solutions to the climate crisis. This campaign was delivered with a twist, calling out the actions (or inactions) of politicians and large corporations.

The series included *Chris Packham: Is It Time to Break the Law?*, an intensely personal authored film that asked if the severity of the threat of climate change means that law-breaking can be ethically justified. *The Great Climate Fight* saw Kevin McCloud, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, and Mary Portas try to kickstart real change by identifying the practical steps that governments and big business can take to eliminate our carbon emissions. And *The Big British Beef Battle* examined the impact of diet on climate change, with Ade Adepitan asking whether shifting from beef to chicken could make a meaningful impact towards lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

The programmes in the season together reached 4.1 million viewers overall across streaming and linear. When viewers were asked what they thought of the shows they highlighted that the season brought complex but important issues to audiences in a balanced and engaging way.

An overwhelming 86% of viewers of programmes in the season agreed that shows like these “are important for raising awareness of issues related to the climate crisis”. 90% agreed that “the Government should be doing more to support and fund the production of sustainable energy in the UK”, and 65% said that they “now feel more aware of the immense changes needed to reach net zero, beyond individual action”. A remarkable 50% of viewers claimed to have spoken to others about the issues raised in the programmes.

A remarkable 50% of viewers claimed to have spoken to others about the issues raised in the programmes.

Respondents also recognised the value of Channel 4’s remit in inspiring audiences to engage with social issues, create conversations, and raise awareness, with one viewer saying, “The Change Climate season shows us how desperately we need to protect our local publicly-funded broadcasters. They are unique and essential. They can do things that global entertainment companies are not set up to do.”

Our focus on climate issues went beyond the dedicated season and was apparent in other programmes across the year. One notable example was *Guy Martin’s Great British Power Trip*, which investigated how Britain generates its power and why it costs so much. The three-part season reached 4.4 million viewers, with 66% of those surveyed claiming it made them “think about what more we can do as a society to reduce our carbon footprint and make “greener choices”, while 81% agreed that “the show gave a balanced view on the complexities of energy production”.



4.1 million

viewers overall across
streaming and linear

86%

of viewers of programmes in the
season agreed that shows like these
"are important for raising awareness
of issues related to the climate crisis"

90%

agreed that "the Government should
be doing more to support and fund
the production of sustainable
energy in the UK"

50%

of viewers claimed to have spoken
to others about the issues raised
in the programmes





Tackling the climate emergency *cont.*





Working together to shift perceptions

Channel 4 partnered with pre-loved fashion platform Vinted on a trailblazing cross-platform branded campaign that sought to empower viewers to simultaneously make a positive impact on their wallet and on the environment.

The four-part digital series, *Second Hand Style-Up* was fronted by *Hollyoaks* star Jorgie Porter and stylist Emma Winder. It debuted on Channel 4's YouTube channel and was subsequently released across our Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok accounts. Four fashion lovers facing the cost-of-living crisis were treated to a wardrobe makeover, selling the clothes they no longer love and buying new pre-loved items – thereby showcasing how Vinted's circular economy creates a more sustainable fashion industry.

The series garnered more than 7.8 million views and more than 40,000 hours of watch time on YouTube. It succeeded in shifting negative perceptions around second-hand clothing, with 74% of lapsed Vinted users saying they were re-considering selling clothes on the platform after watching the series.

Provoking debate to drive change

Channel 4 is often at its best when it adopts an irreverent tone to highlight a serious issue: the dissonance jolts people awake and forces them to confront issues that they might prefer to ignore. This year's campaign for the Change Climate season – featuring images of those in a position of power in carbon skid-marked pants – illustrated this well.

The bold campaign reached more than 50% of the population and sparked conversations across the UK. 77% of viewers of the trails agreed that "Channel 4 isn't afraid to take risks", and 70% agreed that "you wouldn't find a campaign like this from any other broadcaster".

There was an overwhelming consensus that the fundamental objective behind the ad campaign – to shift focus onto Government and corporations – was the correct one, with 81% of viewers acknowledging that "corporations should be doing more to combat the climate crisis".

The campaign was inevitably divisive. Many viewers loved it, welcoming its humorous approach, with one describing it as, "Brilliant. Hard-hitting and quite disturbing which is what it should be. One of the best campaigns I've seen for anything. Great use of shock tactics". Others recognised that it achieved cut-through in a way that a more typically earnest or preachy trail would not do. Not everyone appreciated the humour, and that cut through resulted in the trails becoming Channel 4's most complained about content of the year – itself becoming a news story and helping to further shine a light on the choices of those in power.

Taking action

At COP26 in November 2021, Channel 4 was amongst the 12 UK media organisations that signed the Climate Content Pledge to recognise their responsibility to support audiences' understanding of climate change and inspire greener choices. The Pledge commits broadcasters, amongst other things, to reach more of their audiences with content that helps everyone understand and navigate the path to net zero.

14% of UK adults surveyed this year were aware that Channel 4 recently tackled the subject of climate change either through their programming or a TV advert or campaign. This was the second-highest level of awareness amongst all the broadcasters and services that signed the Pledge, behind only the BBC.

As part of our Climate Content Pledge commitments, CEOs from Channel 4, the BBC, ITV, Paramount, Sky, and STV collaborated on an event this year that centred on how storytelling can inspire climate action. In partnership with Chatham House, the event began with an in-person fireside chat with Bill Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Founder of Breakthrough Energy, and brought together leaders from business, Government and civil society to explore what climate-related stories need to be told to achieve systemic change at scale.



Tackling the climate emergency *cont.*

Empowering our employees and suppliers

In order to move towards a sustainable future, it is vital that our impact on emissions becomes a part of every decision and process we undertake, from the content we showcase to our office operations and the partnerships we enter.

The biggest contributor to our emissions relates to our supply chain, and in particular the production of the programmes that we commission from independent production companies. We work closely with our production partners to better understand where emissions are coming from and how we can collaborate on reductions. And we participate in the cross-industry BAFTA albert scheme, with all production companies required to measure their carbon footprint and make active steps to reduce it using the albert tools. For suppliers in our wider supply chain, we work with the Carbon Disclosure Project ('CDP') to gather sustainability data.

This year, we carefully reviewed our commissioning processes to encourage the presentation of climate themes on-screen and to improve off-screen sustainability. We implemented new systems to ensure that climate themes are taken into consideration in every commission and tracked throughout every production.

As part of this, we formed a cross-genre commissioning group tasked with weaving climate themes across more of our shows.

All new joiners at Channel 4 are required to complete a 'How to go net zero' training course, and are auto-enrolled onto an Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance ('ESG') pension. Our Employee Resource Group, 4Earth, also engages employees with sustainability messaging through a regular programme of events, panel discussions, and talks.



↓ Guy Martin's Great British Power Trip



↓ Change Climate campaign

