Re-Framing the Picture: An International Comparative Assessment of Gender Equity Policies in the Film Sector Full Report Gender Equity Policy (GEP) Analysis Project

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Full Report

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Executive Summary

Re-Framing the Picture presents findings from the research project "Gender Equity Policy (GEP) Analysis", which set out to assess, understand, and model the impact of gender equity policies in the film sector. An international, multidisciplinary research team analyed three key industries: Germany, the UK and Canada. This report presents a detailed analysis of gender equity policies including extensive interviews conducted with a range of industry stakeholders. It further includes an evidence-based assessment of policy impact based on data representing film production activity in these jurisdictions between 2005 and 2020. The analyses are contextualised by a quantitative exploration of 34 film industries supported by the Eurimages fund.

This report presents several key findings:

Gender equity policies have notably increased in number since 2013/14.

This is true in all three jurisdictions we studied. From this time onwards, we also see a growing recognition in the policies that gender equity is a structural problem and not the result of women lacking skill or experience. Throughout, policies understand gender equity as a problem of representation, or more precisely: as the under-representation of women.

Improvements in gender equity across the film sector are occurring, but slowly.

None of the analysed countries demonstrates an equitable representation of men and women in key creative roles (directors, writers, producers). While women remain a minority in these positions across all analysed industries, each jurisdiction has its own particularities, and change is occurring at different speeds. At the current rate of progress, gender equity, where men occupy 50 percent of key creative positions, will only be achieved in the year 2215 in Canada (i.e. in nearly 200 years), in 2085 in the UK (in more than 60 years), and 2041 in Germany (nearly 20 years). Much work still needs to be done to ensure equitable representation of women and gender minorities in key creative roles. Policies, thus, need to adopt approaches that are intersectional, sustainable, and consider both short- and longer-term impacts.

Gains for women and gender minorities do not come at the expense of men.

The equity gains made by women and gender minorities within the industry have not come at the expense of the number of men. In other words, we found that the number of men has not fallen at all, while the number of women increased. Women's gains have, in part, occurred as a consequence of industry expansion, and men are not leaving the set to make way for women.

Men disproportionately or exclusively work with men.

Though all key creatives in Germany, the UK, and Canada work with many more men than with women and gender minorities, this is particularly the case for men. Men tend to primarily work with other men.

Change needs to occur numerically, relationally, and qualitatively.

Achieving equity in the industries we examined demands a significant increase in the number of women and gender minorities. Yet simply adding under-represented groups is not enough. According to our modelling, even increasing the participation of women and gender minorities within the existing industry structure would not result in a more equitable redistribution of power dynamics. We need policies which enable more women and members of gender minorities to access positions of power in the industry. Our modelling shows that interventions focused on giving women and gender minorities more projects (in particular the all-important second project) do show some generalised potential for accelerating overall equity.

There is a wide gap between what industry experts and the evidence suggest can work and the way policies are currently designed and evaluated.

Although efforts to boost the numerical representation of women in the industry are underway, current policies often fail to address the participation of women and their access to senior roles. Industry experts emphasise the importance of designing policies that not only tackle the symptoms but also address root causes of gender inequity. Moreover, they advocate for policies that go beyond mere performativity and instead actively drive changes in industry practices, involving a broader range of stakeholders than the conventional ones.

We find that, most policies have weak or no mechanisms for accountability and usually include no evaluation mechanisms to measure their effectiveness. They are often formulated in a way that opens them to faux compliance, partial compliance or non-compliance. Policies should set financial incentives, ensure enforceability and hold people accountable.

No one-size-fits-all solution exists.

Inequity might look the same statistically, but it operates differently across jurisdictions. Policies need to be attuned to these distinctions because what proves effective in certain industries may not yield the same results in others. When testing hypothetical interventions, we observe that different policies achieve varying degrees of success in different jurisdictions. For instance, eliminating all-male teams in a simulated model industry was most effective in redistributing relational power in the UK and Canada, but not in Germany. Policies need to recognise and incentivise what works and adjust what does not. For instance, our findings indicate that public funding instruments incorporating compliance mechanisms, such as the BFI Diversity Standards, have a positive impact on the representation of women in key creative positions.

The Report

Re-Framing the Picture presents research from the "Gender Equity Policy (GEP) Analysis" project. Building on a substantial corpus of studies and data evidencing the long history of gender inequity in the international film sector, the large team of researchers located in Germany, the UK and Canada has designed an innovative, interdisciplinary approach with the aim to "assess, understand, and model the impact of gender equity policies (GEP) in the film industry". To re-frame the picture of gender equity in the film industries, we studied the policies, practices and norms that constrain equitable industry structures.

The film sector exhibits marked gender inequity. Women are underrepresented in key creative positions; receive less pay; have fewer creative, managerial and financial opportunities than men; and are subjected to sexual harassment and bullying. Over the last three decades many policies have attempted to improve gender equity in the international film industries, but interventions by governments and industry stakeholders have produced minimal change. Change has

been slow and in some jurisdictions gender equity measures have in fact worsened.

What is needed, therefore, is a significant step-change in our understanding of the causes of gender inequity, and the development, design, implementation and evaluation of effective policies intended to promote gender equity in the international screen industries.

We approach this problem from three different perspectives (see fig. 1.1). We combine an in-depth analysis of existing gender equity policies, using a specifically designed policy analysis framework and interviews with industry experts, with a quantitative analysis that looks more closely at industry data and the structures it reveals. Finally, we use social network analysis to model the impact of hypothetical policies. This analysis helps us understand how effective different interventions are at reducing the dominance of men in the three film industries (Germany, the UK and Canada).

The report presents in-depth insights from these different perspectives in the following chapters.
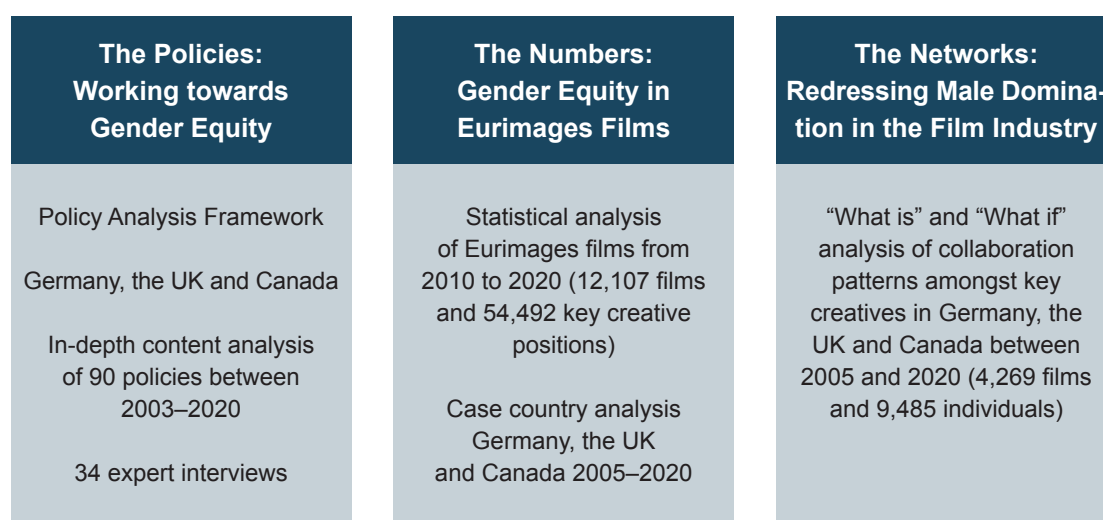
The Policies: Working towards Gender Equity	The Numbers: Gender Equity in Eurimages Films	The Networks: Redressing Male Domination in the Film Industry
Policy Analysis Framework Germany, the UK and Canada In-depth content analysis of 90 policies between 2003–2020 34 expert interviews	Statistical analysis of Eurimages films from 2010 to 2020 (12,107 films and 54,492 key creative positions) Case country analysis Germany, the UK and Canada 2005–2020	"What is" and "What if" analysis of collaboration patterns amongst key creatives in Germany, the UK and Canada between 2005 and 2020 (4,269 films and 9,485 individuals)

Figure 1.1: GEP Analysis Project Overview

The chapter **"The Policies: Working Towards Gender Equity"** presents an analysis of key gender equity policies – what they focus on and attempt to achieve, why they pursue gender equity and how they go about achieving it. The policy analysis team designed and applied a new bespoke Policy Analysis Framework to analyse 90 gender equity policies published between 2003 and 2021 across the three case countries; Germany (21 policies by 16 organisations), the UK (52 policies by 32 organisations) and Canada (17 policies by 12 organisations). The policies were published by governments and governmental agencies, advocacy groups, film funders, professional associations, non-profit organisations, unions, broadcasters and production companies.

To contextualise findings from the policy analysis, we conducted interviews with 34 film and TV industry experts in Germany (nine interviewees), the UK (12 interviewees) and

Canada (13 interviewees). The interviews discussed gender equity in film, the approaches to and imperatives for increasing gender equity, the effectiveness of existing policies and the change that industry professionals and policymakers would like to see.

For this analysis, policy is defined as a set of written statements or instructions for organisations intended to shape industry practice related to gender equity. Each policy works with an – implicit and/or explicit – understanding of gender equity and why it needs to be addressed (Bacchi 2012). To analyse a policy's understanding of gender, the policy analysis team considered terms more explicitly related to gender (e.g. woman, man, non-binary, genderfluid etc.) and terms often associated with genders (e.g. parenthood, pregnancy, family).

For the following two chapters, we change the perspective and methodological lens. Both chapters work with quantitative data gathered in a new **industry database** built by the statistical analysis team. Data was collected from the European Audiovisual Observatory's LUMIERE database.[1] LUMIERE is the only database containing up-to-date and complete data on films produced in all European countries as well as Canada, including film information and director names. These data comprise all feature films released between 2010 and 2020 in 34 European countries and Canada, which are part of the Eurimages support fund. This includes a total of 12,107 film projects and 54,492 key creative positions in directing, writing and producing. For these countries, complete data were collected on all fiction feature films (length of 75 minutes or more) with cinema theatrical release (excluding TV series, TV shows, TV movies) between 2010 and 2020, and with an extended time frame of 2005 to 2020/21 for our case countries Germany, the UK and Canada.

In some pockets of the film industries women are numerically well represented or even over-represented, e.g. more than 80 percent of the workforce in make-up and costume departments are women (Follows and Kreager 2016; Hochfeld et al. 2017). Similarly, other roles such as director of photography (DOP), editor, sound and costume designers also provide creative input. However, our quantitative analyses deliberately focus on the **three most prominent and influential creative roles, those of director, writer and producer.**

The chapter **"The Numbers: Gender Equity in Eurimages Films"** presents detailed statistical analysis of gendered participation in creative teams. Here, equity is understood in terms of numerical representation of women and men in key creative positions in the film industry and captured through two variables, namely (1) the share of key creative positions in a film project held by women and men, and (2) the gendered composition of key creative teams. To this end, the quantitative analysis team examined whether and how the status quo of the numerical representation of women and men in key creative positions changes over time for a number of countries. To understand and analyse the gendered structure of the film sector, we manually assigned gender categories to each unique director, writer and producer according to first names and pronouns. People were assigned the gender categories "woman", "man" or "in another way" (for details see "The Numbers" in the *Technical Appendix*: Prommer, Radziwill and Ehrich 2024).

In the chapter **"The Networks: Redressing Male Domination in the Film Industry"**, the network analysis team evaluated the industry's patterns of collaboration amongst key creatives and modelled the hypothetical impact of different policy interventions. Based on the analysis of 4,269 film projects and 9,485 individuals, the uneven distribution of power is analysed as an inherently "relational" problem that structurally privileges men in relation to women and gender minorities rather than as a problem solely defined by a lack of women.

In the final section of this report, the network analysis team measures equity in terms of relational power by describing how different gender categories are represented in the top one percent most central network positions, the "network elite". This *what is* analysis explores gendered patterns in the collaboration networks formed in the German, UK, and Canadian film industries between 2005 and 2020. These existing descriptions of relative access to the network elite are then compared with hypothetical networks that model the impact of different types of policy interventions. This *what if* analysis tests putative gender equity policies for their potential to equalise gendered relationships in the film industry collaboration networks.

For more information about methods please refer to the *Technical Appendix of the GEP Analysis Project Report "Re-Framing the Picture"* (Loist and Ehrich 2024).

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[1] Source: LUMIERE I European Audiovisual Observatory (European territories), ComScore (non-European territories).

The State of Gender Equity in the Film Industries of Germany, the UK and Canada

The statistical under-representation of women in the film industries of numerous countries has long been documented (see Aylett 2016; Liddy 2020; Simone 2023). Change has been slow and women still remain numerically under-represented as key creatives. Studies have evaluated the growing prominence of gender equity policies in the past years, yet cross-cutting 'what works' questions remain (see LeLab 2022). In addition, networked industry relations have been found to play a key role – depending on their gendered structures – in worsening or bettering gender equity in the film industries (Verhoeven et al. 2020). The GEP Analysis project contributes to this body of existing work by exploring the gender equity challenges in terms of the policies, the numbers and the networks within and across key jurisdictions.

To take an in-depth look into the mechanisms of gender inequity, we chose three case countries – Germany, the UK and Canada – to carry out policy analyses, conduct expert interviews, run longitudinal analyses of film productions from 2005–2020 (for Germany 2005–2021), and conduct network analyses to assess gendered cooperation and model potential interventions.

At first glance, all three case countries appear quite similar. Though the number of films released ranges from 724 in Canada to 1,427 in Germany and 1,487 in the UK respectively, the numerical over-representation of men in key creative positions as well as in the industries' network elites is similarly large. Only once we take a deep dive into the effect of public funding on gender equity, the policy landscapes and expert views on national policy landscapes, and the *what if* scenarios of equity interventions, do differences between the film industries become apparent. Solutions to gender equity need to attend to these differences.
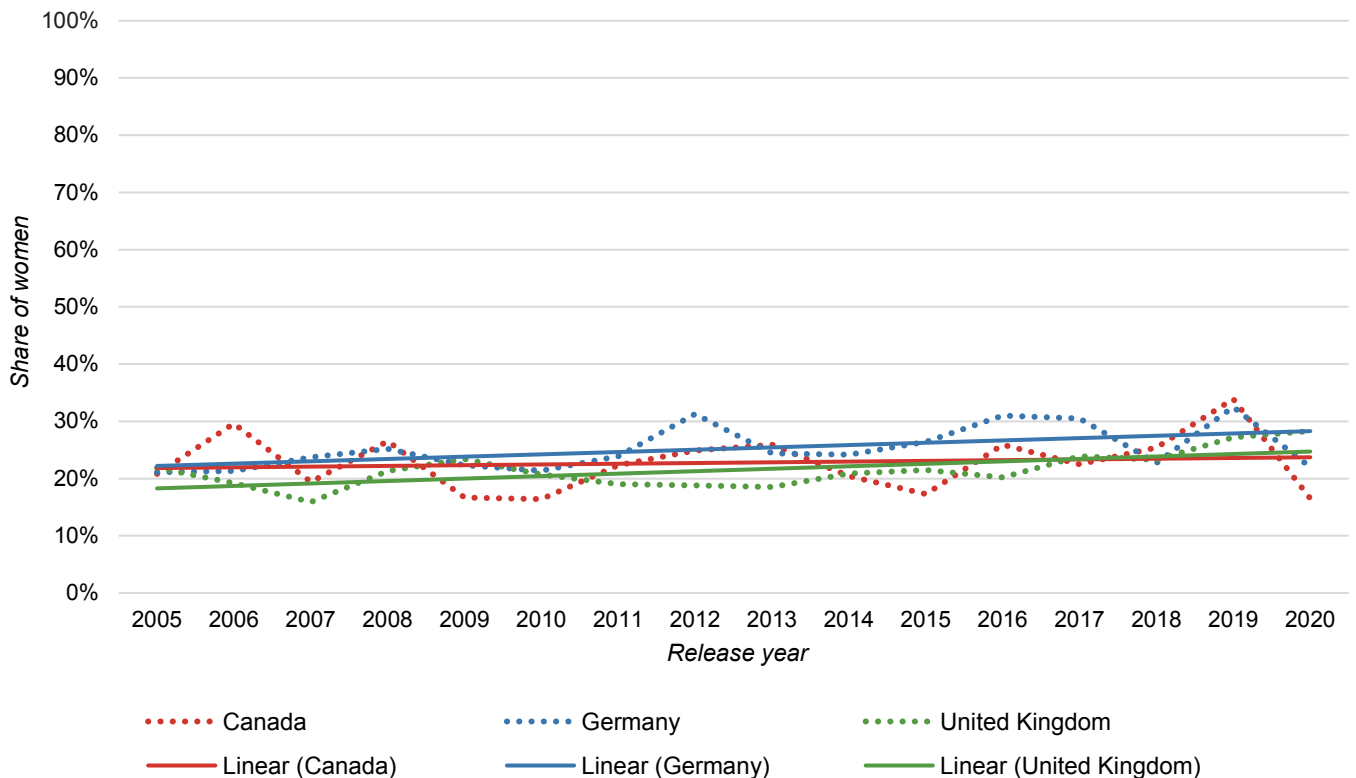

Figure 1.2: Slow progress
Percentage of key creatives (directors, writers, and producers) that are women per year and country plotted in dashed lines. Linear increase rates plotted per country in solid lines.

Germany

Between 2005 and 2021, 1,427 German feature films were released in cinemas. The German film industry relies heavily on public funding from both national and regional sources, which amounted to 445 million Euros in 2018 (Wiedemann 2020). So far no mandatory policies that make access to resources, such as funding, conditional on the fulfilment of gender equity or inclusion requirements exist in Germany. Debates about quotas for women are a particular prominent feature of the German policy conversation.

Key industry positions are dominated by men, who hold on average 74 percent of key creative positions and 86 percent of the network elite. The representation of women in key creative positions saw no significant improvements between 2005 and 2020 (see fig. 1.2). At the current pace of linear change, gender equity (where men occupy 50 percent of key creative positions) will only be achieved in the year 2041 in Germany – nearly 20 years from the time of writing this report.

UK

Between 2005 and 2020, 1,487 UK feature films were released in cinemas. The UK film industry primarily relies on private capital and tax relief. Only a small portion of film productions is directly funded by public funding agencies. In 2016, the UK took the pioneering step of introducing the BFI Diversity Standards. From 2018 onwards, applications for BFI film funding, the key source of public film funding in the UK, require the fulfilment of certain diversity criteria.

Key industry positions are dominated by men, who hold on average 78 percent of key creative positions and 81 percent of the network elite. The representation of women in key creative positions saw very little improvement between 2005 and 2020 (see fig. 1.2). At the current pace of linear change, gender equity (where men occupy 50 percent of key creative positions) will only be achieved in the year 2085 in the UK – more than 60 years from the time of writing this report.

Canada

Between 2005 and 2020, 724 Canadian feature films were released in cinemas. The Canadian film industry relies both on private financial capital as well as substantial public funding. So far there are no policies for the Canadian domestic feature film industry that make access to resources, such as funding, conditional on the fulfilment of gender equity or inclusion requirements. The Canadian film and television industries form a closely entwined production ecology, for which Canadian television, foreign service production and co-productions are the major drivers. Film and television professionals frequently work across these subsectors.

Key industry positions are dominated by men, who hold 77 percent of key creative positions and on average 82 percent of the network elite. The representation of women in key creative positions has grown slowly, with no significant improvements between 2005 and 2020 (see fig. 1.2). At the current pace of linear change, gender equity (where men occupy 50 percent of key creative positions) will only be achieved in the year 2215 in Canada – nearly 200 years from the time of writing this report.

The Policies:
Working towards Gender Equity

'Until everybody's made to do something, it will just be the rest of us trying to drag the others along'.

UK industry professional (UK 9)

The need to do something about gender equity in film is not news to policy makers and industry practitioners. Plenty of policies exist already to try and improve gender equity. In this part of the GEP project we identified the most important gender equity policies in Germany, the UK, and Canada, and subjected them to an in-depth, comparative analysis. We examined a total of 90 gender equity policies that were published between 2003 and 2021 (see table 2.1 at the end of this chapter). There is a significant overlap and interaction between film and TV production. For instance, individuals work across both industries and broadcasters fund film projects for cinematic release. We therefore analysed policies that explicitly covered film and TV and only excluded policies that solely applied to TV.

Our specifically designed Policy Analysis Framework (see "The Policies" in the *Technical Appendix*: Guyan, Eikhof and Coles 2024) comprised 57 questions about the design of the policies, their rationales, their understanding of gender inequity and their proposed interventions. We also interviewed 34 film and TV industry experts from the three countries to contextualise and cross-check our findings from the policy analysis. Our interviewees included individuals who write policies and are responsible for their implementation, individuals who advocate for new policies or changes to existing policies, and individuals who are the intended beneficiaries of policies.

In the following sections we explain what the policies proposed to do about gender equity, why they wanted to do it and how. For this analysis, by policy we mean written statements or instructions intended to shape industry practice related to gender equity. We also look at gender equity as both a symptom and an outcome, and at the structural challenges gender equity policy is up against.

Our findings give an overview of patterns in the policy landscape. Two points of note:

1. Numbers and patterns are useful, which is why we have looked at them. But they need context. For instance, depending on what policies cover or how they are designed, one individual policy (say, on funding) can be just as effective – or even more effective – than ten policies that cover other, smaller aspects of filmmaking. Our interviews with industry experts and our analysis below provide this important context.

2. The policy ecologies in the three countries work in different ways. One outcome of these differences is that for the UK we found a much larger number of policies. But (see Point 1) what matters is not the overall number of policies but the patterns we found. We have included country-specific commentary to help make sense of these differences.

One further note on under-representation: the policies, our interviewees and this section of the report talk in very general terms about an under-representation of women in film (and TV). While that is, of course, true, it is important to remember that in some pockets of the film industry women are represented well numerically or are even vastly over-represented – most notably in the hair, make-up and wardrobe departments of film production (Follows and Kreager 2016; Hochfeld et al. 2017). In what follows we do not always have space for this nuance, hence noting it here.

Findings

There has been a surge of gender equity policies since 2017 in all three jurisdictions.
Gender equity is now recognised as a problem in need of addressing but, by and large, not regarded as "solved".

"Improving numerical representation" is the prime intended policy outcome.
Most policies perceive gender inequity as a problem of women's under-representation. But industry experts are increasingly aware of the limitations of "counting women" in positions of authority or generally. Our interviewees rejected the idea that the under-representation of women could be attributed to women lacking experience, skill, confidence or commitment.

Gender inequity is understood as "a structural problem".
Of the policies we examined, only a minority position an alleged deficit on part of the women (e.g. lacking skill, experience, confidence) as the cause of gender inequity. The "structural problem" has different layers to it, which are not yet well understood by industry. Firstly, gender inequity is both a cause and a symptom. Secondly, industry and societal structures act as obstacles to improving gender equity.

Mechanisms for compliance in most gender equity policies are weak and opportunities for faux compliance are considerable.
Policies with weak compliance mechanisms include those that work with targets or quotas.

Policy design is political and contested.
It is frequently a compromise, incremental and changing. Industry experts are split on how prescriptive policies need to be. Current and recent policies educate and incentivise more than prescribe change. The goals of improving gender equity and getting industry commitment for this work are shared across industry and policy. What varies are views on productive strategies for achieving these goals, in particular about the effectiveness of gender targets and quotas.

Policies and industry experts see the film industry as inseparable from its societal context and thus impacted by, for instance, the Black Lives Matter movement and COVID-19 pandemic.
They also see the structural context as the source of gender inequities (e.g. women's gendered role in the family) as well as a potential provider of solutions (e.g. STEM/technical education for girls). However, there is also a risk that policy makers position "structure" as a "thing that policy can't reach" and that opportunities to change structure through concrete, accountable actions are missed.

Data and evidence play a significant role in both documenting and driving change.
Data and evidence influence how gender equity is understood as a problem and how policies attempt to address it. Policy and industry increasingly recognise the complex nature of data, for instance of workforce statistics or funding data.

In the experience of industry experts, these design elements make policies more effective:
- addressing the root cause of a problem, not just the symptoms;
- instigating action and going beyond performativity;
- setting financial incentives, ensuring enforceability and holding people accountable;
- adopting intersectional, sustainable and longer term approaches;
- involving more than the usual suspects in their implementation and being associated with a prominent policy lead or champion.

What: Approaches, Interventions and Outcomes

Different policies do different things, and do things differently. But if we zoom out and look across policy authors, jurisdictions and years, we can see patterns in **what policies wanted to do about gender equity**: what they focused on, what solutions they proposed and what policy design elements they opted for.

First we looked at the **big picture outcomes** policies wanted to affect. We analysed whether policies aimed to (a) increase the number of women in the film industries; (b) increase the diversity of voices, i.e. bring more variety of perspectives and ideas into film making; (c) improve working conditions; or (d) redress historical injustices, i.e. redistribute opportunity to those who had historically been excluded (fig. 2.1).

In the UK and Canada, improving numerical representation and increasing the diversity of voices were the most prominent policy aims. German policies focused most on inclusive work practices. A notably high share of Canadian policies (five of 17) aimed to address historical injustices. Only ten UK policies (out of 52) and two German policies (out of 21) took that historical perspective. Given Canada's recent conversations about the colonisation of its Indigenous peoples, topics such as decolonisation and narrative sovereignty are much more prominent in the broader industry conversations about equity, inclusion and diversity, which may explain these notable differences.
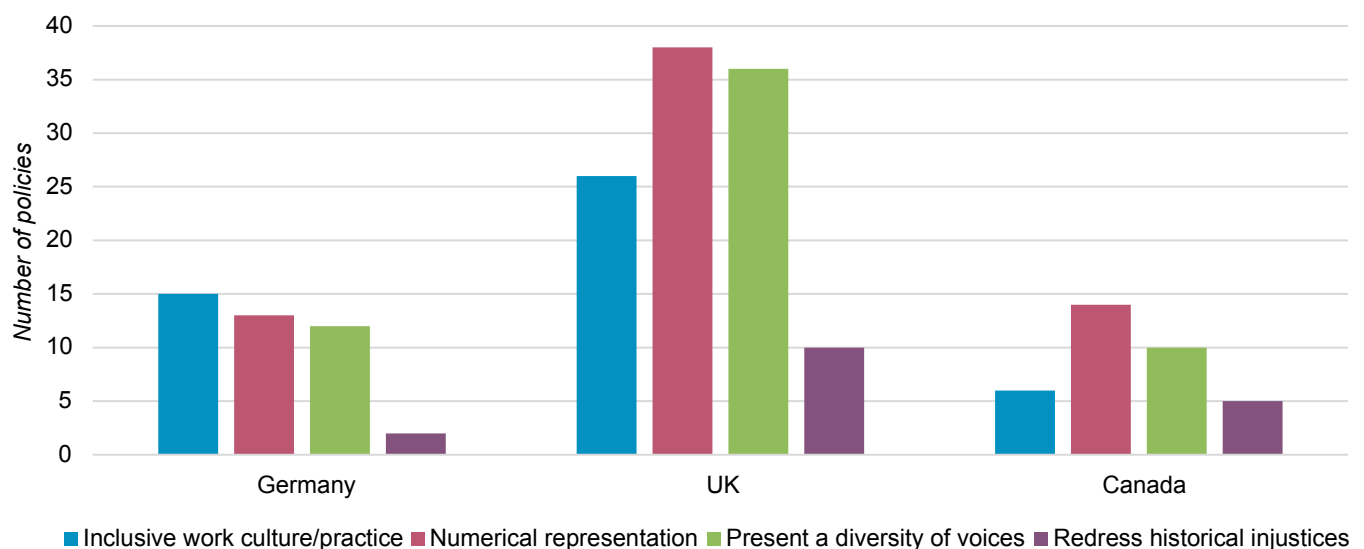

Figure 2.1: Big picture outcome(s)
Sample size: Germany n=21, UK n=52, Canada n=17. Multiple response options were possible.

What does this graph tell us? German policies regarded how people work together (inclusive work/culture practice), how women are represented in the film industry workforce (numerical representation) and whether filmmaking features a diversity of voices as the big issues to address. UK and Canadian policies had a stronger focus on women's representation and a diversity of voices. In Canada, redressing historical injustices was comparatively high on the policy agenda.

Next we analysed **what gender equity policies focused on** to achieve these big picture outcomes (fig. 2.2). In all three jurisdictions policies focused most frequently on industry access, recruitment and work and employment conditions. Policies might, for instance, aim to get more women into film, improve the fairness of hiring practices, reduce pay gaps or make employment conditions less problematic for women with caring responsibilities. Where policies sought to affect change in these areas, they typically looked towards production studios and broadcasters as key drivers of change.

German and Canadian policies also had a strong focus on funding and budgets (fig. 2.2). In Germany, this focus was mirrored by an emphasis on state and federal governments as drivers of change.

Markedly fewer policies targeted grievances; distribution; screening, exhibition and audiences; or awards. But the case of awards is a good example of the need to interpret frequencies cautiously: there are only a handful of influential awards, so it would not take a large number of policies to – influentially and impactfully – shape them with a view to gender equity. Similarly, a policy targeting budgets and issued by one industry-wide funder could be as effective for driving change as ten individual organisations' policies about inclusive recruitment. Nevertheless, **looking at frequency does give a flavour of what types of interventions attract attention across the policy landscapes.**
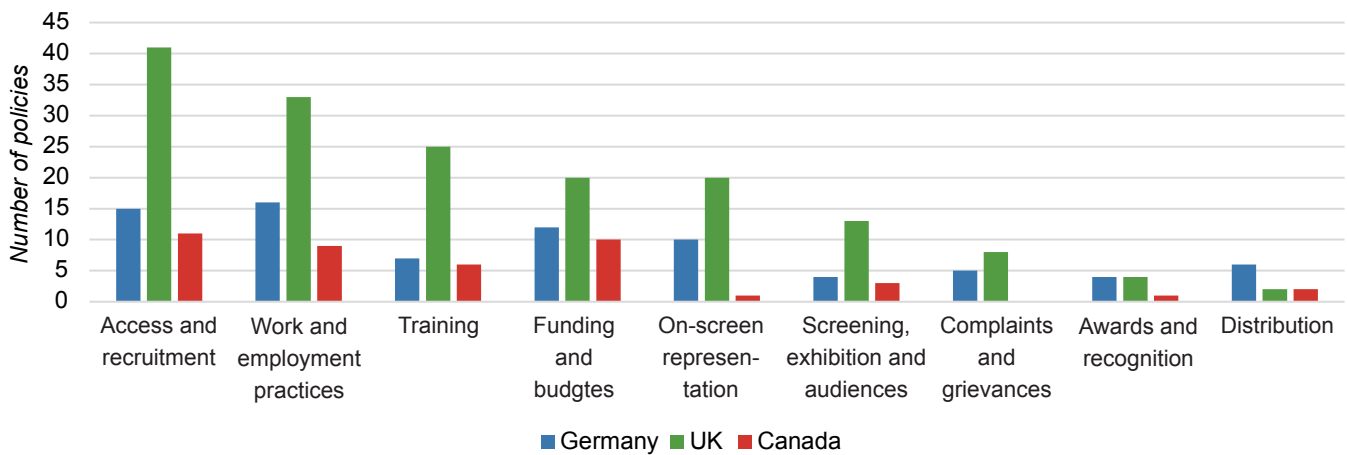
Figure 2.2: Where do policies seek to affect change?
Sample size: Germany n=21, UK n=52, Canada n=17. Multiple response options were possible.

What does this graph tell us? In all three jurisdictions, how people get into the film industries (access and recruitment) and the conditions in which they work (work and employment practices) are the most frequently targeted areas of change.

We then analysed **which solutions the policies proposed** to improve gender equity. On this point we found different patterns in the three jurisdictions (see fig. 2.3).

- German policies did not strongly favour any single solution. The most frequently suggested approach was to change industry practices and processes, for instance through diversity checklists or company-internal policies. The idea of mandating gender-balanced juries and funding boards also received a lot of policy attention – in marked contrast to Canada and the UK, where that solution was (much) less frequently proposed.

- UK policies focused strongly on diversity checklists, i.e. on actionable changes to industry practice and processes. Other solutions proposed included targets and training

- In Canada, targets and gender incentives (e.g. funding incentives for hiring women in key creative roles) featured prominently. Although we excluded policies that exclusively focused on training and mentorship, almost half of Canadian policies also proposed training or mentorship programmes for women in combination with other solutions.
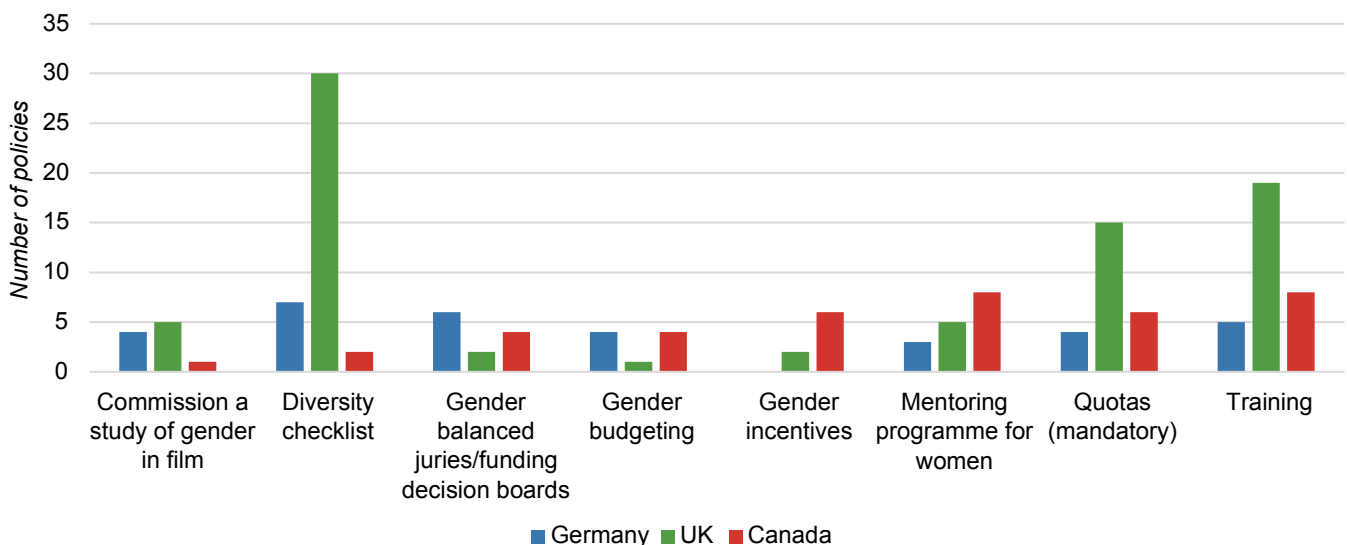

Figure 2.3: Proposed interventions
Sample size: Germany n=21, UK n=52, Canada n=17. Multiple response options were possible.

What does this graph tell us? In the UK, policies focused on diversity checklists much more than on other interventions. German and Canadian policies featured a more even spread of proposed interventions, including mentoring, mandatory quotas and training.

To understand the **overall direction of what policies propose to do**, we mapped them as empowering, equally empowering and transformative, or transformative (fig. 2.4). Empowering policies focus on individuals from underrepresented groups and aim to drive change via working with them – improving their skills through training, for instance, or connecting them into networks. Transformative policies seek to change structures, for instance through making recruitment processes more inclusive or changing the composition of juries for funding or awards.

The transformative approach is strong in the UK, with 34 policies taking this approach (fig. 2.4). Especially from 2018 onwards, UK policies focused on structural change.

In Germany and Canada, empowering approaches are more common, with nearly half of all policies taking an either solely or partly empowering approach.

The Canadian policy landscape showed yet another pattern (fig. 2.4). Six of the 17 policies proposed interventions that empower women but in ways that at the same time worked to transform structure: a funding incentive may seek to increase the number and profile of women writers and directors, for example, while at the same time encouraging production companies to expand and diversify their story and talent acquisition networks and hiring practices.
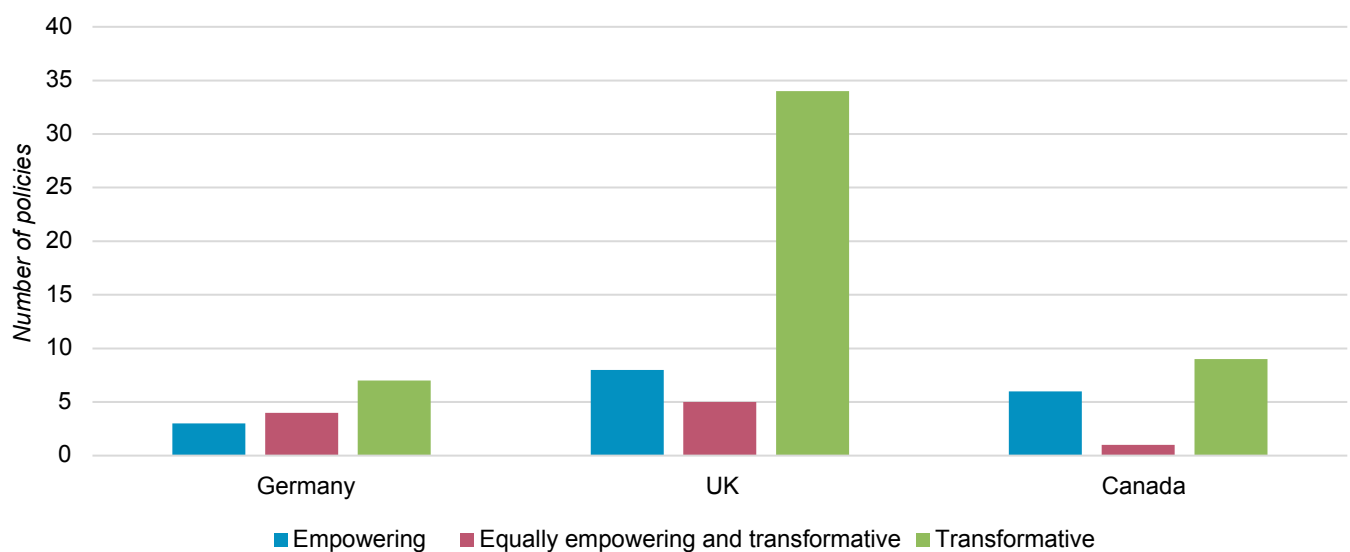

Figure 2.4: Empowering and transformative policy intentions[2]
Sample size: Germany n=21, UK n=52, Canada n=17. Chart omits policies where coders were not able to clearly identify an intention.

What does this graph tell us? In all three jurisdictions, policies that sought to change structures (transformative policies) made up the largest policy group. In the UK, the share of such transformative policies was particularly big in comparison to policies that (also) sought to empower people from underrepresented groups. In Canada, the share of policies that focused on empowering individuals was notably higher than in the UK and Germany.

Finally, we analysed other aspects of policy design:

Professional roles: Some policies focus on specific roles, e.g. requiring a certain proportion of a crew to be women. This approach was not a prominent one until 2018 but has since attracted considerable attention. Overall, 13 out of 17 Canadian policies directly targeted directors, producers and screenwriters. In Germany and the UK, only three and 11 policies, respectively, did so. Actors were only mentioned in four German policies (out of 21), 12 UK policies (out of 52), and three Canadian policies (out of 17).

Enforcement and compliance: Half of the 90 policies contained an element presented as 'mandatory', which typically links access to resources (especially funding) to the fulfilment of gender equity or inclusion requirements. The BFI Diversity Standards, for instance, make film funding conditional on the fulfilment of certain diversity criteria, including gender. Compliance with the remaining policies was 'voluntary' – a design element particularly prominent among Canadian policies. In Germany, although several policies call for 'mandatory' conditions linked to the provision of funding, with

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[2] Policies that solely related to training and mentorship programmes were excluded from the sample (for details see "The Policies" in the *Technical Appendix*: Guyan, Eikhof and Coles 2024). A policy was coded as 'affirming/empowering' if it included concrete affirming/empowering interventions alongside transformative, structural reform (e.g. ringfencing budgets for training women alongside ringfencing budgets for women-led productions).

the exception of MOIN's regional funding policy, more robust enforcement is uncommon. Most policies mention methods to enforce compliance such as funding or reputation. But whether compliance was actually enforced was less clear. Our analysis found that for 43 out of 52 UK policies and 12 out of 17 Canadian policies it would be possible to appear to comply with the policy but go against its "spirit" (there was not enough data on German policies to assess such potential for "faux compliance").

Evaluation: Only seven out of the 90 policies stated that their success would be externally evaluated (e.g. ITV's 2022 Commissioning Commitments describes the use of Creative Diversity Network's Diamond Data to evaluate the success of their policy). A further 41 policies mentioned internal/self-reported evaluation. Overall, most policies included no (or very little) information on plans to evaluate whether a policy has met its objectives.

Why: The Case for Gender Equity Policy

Most policies positioned gender inequity as a problem of unequal representation in key creative positions. In the UK and Canada, policies see this problem linked to industry practice or with individuals in power. German policies more frequently pointed towards society's expectations about women's roles and gendered divisions of labour in the home as underlying influences.

Figure 2.5 illustrates these findings: as the total number of gender equity policies grows over the years, policies increasingly shine the spotlight on industry and society structures, and on individuals in positions of power.

Asked "where the problem lies", our interviewees added nuance. They, too, located the problem of unequal representation at industry- and society-level. At the same time, they acknowledged that women would benefit from technical training, management training and shadowing opportunities. However, the industry experts strongly rejected "Lean In"-style ideas that women's underrepresentation might be due to women lacking confidence, experience or skills.
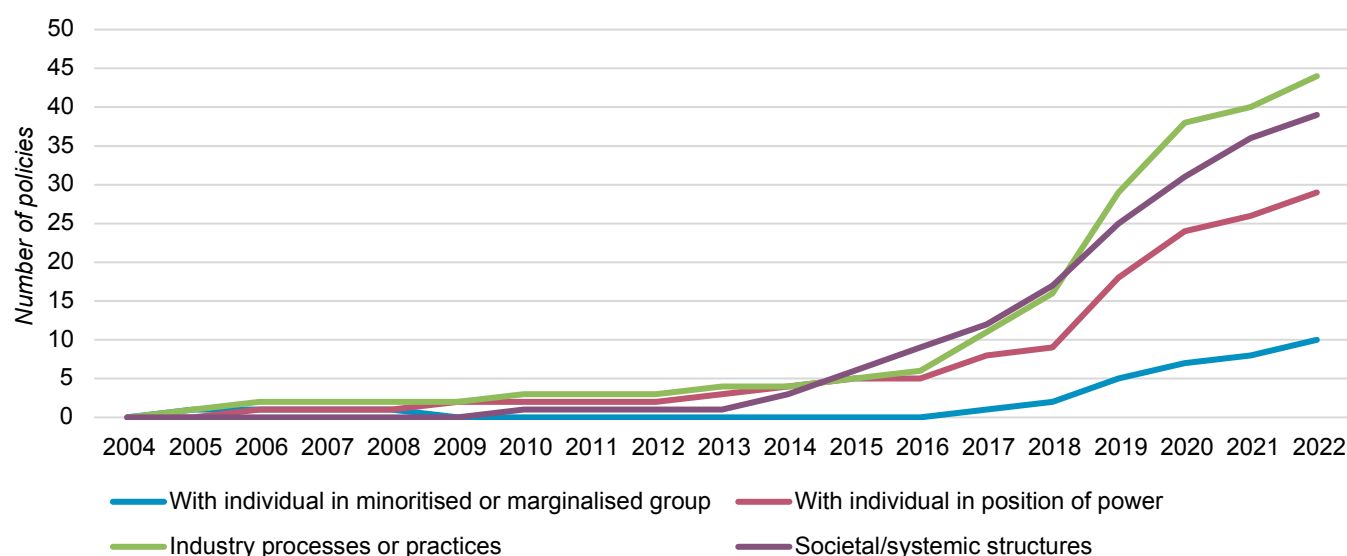

Figure 2.5: Where do policies locate the 'problem'?
Policies for all jurisdictions. Multiple response options were possible.

What does this graph tell us? From around 2013 onwards the number of policies in effect increases notably. The increase was particularly pronounced for policies that see gender inequity as a structural problem.

Against this backdrop, we wanted to understand the rationales policies and policy makers gave for improving gender equity. What was the "why", the case for gender equity? Our literature review suggested five rationales (fig. 2.6):

- moral/ethical case: striving for gender equity is the right thing to do;
- cultural case: better gender equity results in higher quality creative output;
- social case: better gender equity improves life opportunities and social cohesion across communities;
- business case: gender equity is a business asset and pays off financially;

- legal/regulatory case: improved gender equity is needed to comply with legislative requirements.

Looking at the policies, the "why" differed somewhat across jurisdictions. German and UK policies emphasised moral/ethical cases for pursuing better gender equity; business and legal/regulatory rationales were much less prominent. In Germany, the cultural case was also mentioned, which is consistent with public funding discourses in the industry. By contrast, Canadian policies emphasised the business case much more strongly and put the least emphasis on moral/ethical cases (fig. 2.6).
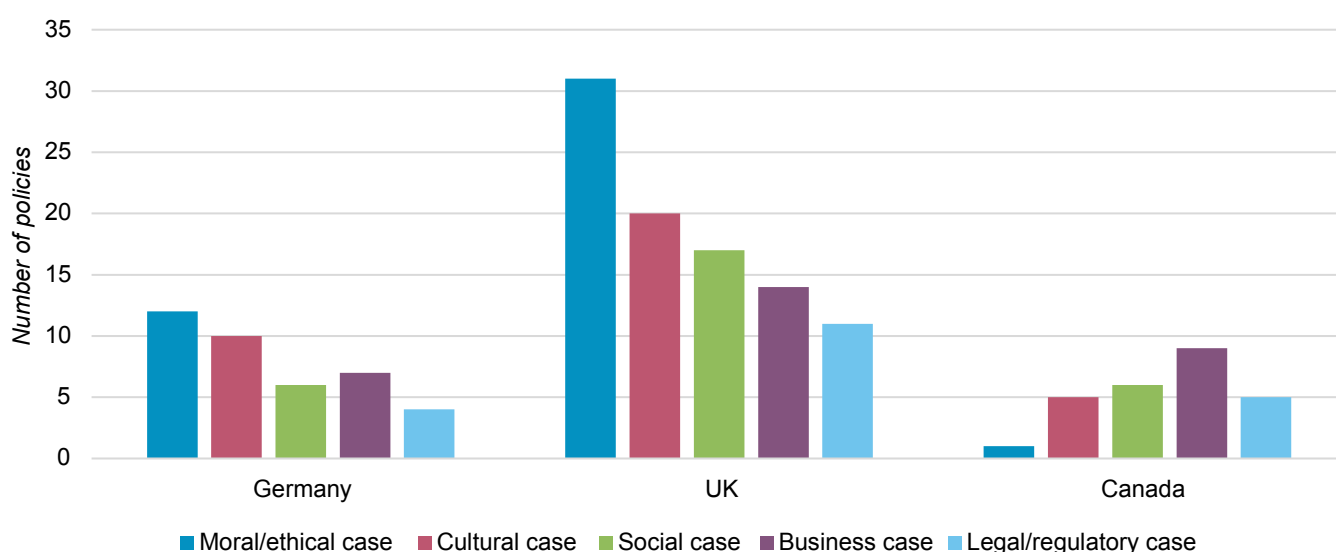

Figure 2.6: Rationales for pursuing gender equity
Sample size: Germany n=21, UK n=52, Canada n=17. Multiple response options were possible.

What does this graph tell us? In Germany and in the UK, the idea that ‚improving gender equity is the right thing to do' plays a key role. By contrast, Canadian policies strongly position better gender equity as a business asset.

In the interviews, we presented industry experts with the data we collected about rationales for pursuing gender equity in their respective jurisdiction. We asked whether the rationales identified in the policies reflected the real-life conversations they were part of. Contrary to what our policy analysis suggested, **interviewees from all countries saw industry debates about gender equity as primarily driven by moral or ethical cases for gender equity.** Versions of the "50/50 argument" – policies should aim to get women into half of all positions across the film industry because women make up half of society – featured strongly.

Interviewees were also clear that **legal or regulatory cases played an important part** ('gradually you can no longer escape them' (DE3)), especially for longer-term change: 'when there's requirements through either regulatory or legislative processes, then things can be more sustained' (CAN3).

UK interviewees emphasised the impact of the 2010 Equity Act and its public sector equity duty, which requires organisations that receive public funding to proactively advance gender equity.

On the business case our interviewees saw dynamics that were not visible from the policy analysis. They unanimously stated that **business rationales are impactful for gender equity work** – even if that was not so strongly reflected in the German or UK policies. As one interviewee put it: 'The film industry always has something to do with money' (DE2). But their opinions were split on whether business cases should be important. Not many interviewees agreed with one UK expert who bluntly stated: 'anybody who writes a policy in film that doesn't put business case first is a liar' (UK2).

It Takes an Ecology to Create a Policy

It is tempting to understand the relationship between gender equity policies and problems as causal and to assume that the impact of policies is to *solve* problems of inequity. But this perspective does not explain the full picture. We need to look beyond the immediate change to identify the impact of policies. For example, we need to look beyond whether a policy introduced to increase the number of women screenwriters in 2016 changed the numerical figures of women screenwriters working in the industry in 2018.

As the Spotlight BFI Diversity Standards below shows, the effectiveness of policies cannot solely be determined from the "teeth" of a policy, i.e. its scope, level of enforcement, size of authoring institution or economic backing. Small policies can achieve big things too (but in possibly less visible ways).

These effects of policy are best understood as resulting from the broader dynamics at play in the policy landscape. Policies do not emerge out of nowhere, they have a past, present and future that effects their legitimacy and effectiveness to change (or maintain) the status quo in the film industry. This wider analysis engages an idea called the Overton window, which describes what policies and actions are perceived as possible or impossible at a given time and place. The Spotlight BFI Diversity Standards shows how such an in-the-round perspective on how a policy came into being, what a policy seeks to achieve and where a policy has gone on to initiate change (e.g. policy footprints, assessment of impacts) creates a much more holistic understanding of policy effectiveness.

Spotlight BFI Diversity Standards

Introduced in 2016, the BFI Diversity Standards require funding applicants to demonstrate how they are improving diversity in film production. The policy's direct footprint is comparatively small: BFI-funded films account for less than ten percent of UK-funded films. But the impact of the Standards reaches well beyond the BFI's funding portfolio. BBC Film, Film4, Screen Scotland and Paramount Pictures have adopted the Diversity Standards for their funding applications. Achieving the Standards is also an eligibility requirement for various British categories in the BAFTA Film, Television and Games Awards and the British Independent Film Awards (BIFA).

Internationally MOIN Regional Film Fund in Germany has adapted the Standards principle for its funding applicants, and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has revised its eligibility criteria for the Oscars inspired by the BFI Diversity Standards and their adaptation in UK awards. The BFI Diversity Standards require those who produce film to reflect on and change how they work and who they work with. Through its web of adaptations this policy, which started off not even applying to every tenth film in UK production, has progressed policy conversations and industry practice in the UK and around the world.

How: What Works, What Doesn't Work and What Could Work?

Despite some statistical evidence to the contrary, our interviewees told us that in their views, gender equity policy has led to successes. Gender has been established as a concern in film policy making, as something that is paid attention to. But industry experts also emphasised that there remains a lot of work to do. The gap between the policies themselves and their implementation and regulation is seen as significant. This section addresses policy design and analyses what, according to our industry experts, does and does not work for improving gender equity.

Designing Gender Equity Policy

In our analysis of gender equity policies and interviews with industry experts a selection of policy design features appeared repeatedly. These features do not make a "one–size-fits-all" road map for designing gender equity policies. But they can – and should, we argue – inform industry thinking on future policy design decisions.

For gender equity policies to be effective they need to…

… address the root cause of a problem, not just the symptoms.
For instance, increasing the number of women in certain roles but with 'the expectation of them to replicate (a) what already exists and (b) the opportunities that they've had for people like them' (UK2) deals with the symptom (under-representation) but does not address the causes of gender inequity. Similarly, in relation to bullying and harassment:

> It's quite easy to put a phone number on something but actually, it's too late. If the only thing you're doing is putting a phone number on a call sheet: 'If you've been bullied, phone this number'. It's already happened. (UK1)

… take action.
Interviewees across all jurisdictions commented on the gap between policy rhetoric and policy action. They agreed that while 'everybody is talking about the problem' (DE1), meaningful action does not always follow and good intentions run up against 'the nature of the industry' (UK4). This aspect of the industryis seen as difficult to change.

… involve more than the usual suspects.
The work of putting gender equity policy into practice tends, interviewees said, to fall on 'the same old people that show up' (UK8). Reach is particularly slow where change of heads and mindsets is needed the most: 'until everybody's made to do something, it will just be the rest of us trying to drag the others along' (UK9).

… go beyond performativity and optics.
Policy efficiency is held back by the quality of industry engage-ment, industry experts said. Industry frequently engages with gender equity policies 'performative[ly]' (CAN8) or as a 'box ticking exercise' (UK12), because 'they think they ought to do it' (UK8) or be seen to be doing it:

> [Campaigning organisations] mostly run into closed doors or are admitted for a nice photo and a nice video, which you can put online somewhere but in the end nothing happens (DE1).

… set financial incentives.
'Change only happens 'when you put money in people's faces, either to fund them doing it or to reward them for doing it' (UK9). While this view was particularly strong amongst UK interviewees, there was a general recognition that 'there needs to be money behind the policies, there needs to be reward, incentive, funding, and time given for any[thing] to happen' (UK1). Financial investment is also an important signal that policies and actions matter.

… work intersectionally.
Across all three countries, interviewees highlighted that policies were most effective when they looked beyond the experiences of white, middle-class women: 'when you just go with numbers, male and female, you still promote the status quo, and you don't open up a wider range of people getting access to the funds' (CAN11).

… be sustainable.
Sustainable policies go beyond gender parity and ensure women have 'the same access to professional services, the same access to dollars, the same network, the same promo-tions' (CAN5). Yet, many initiatives only focus on career entry rather than supporting and developing careers:

> It's all well and good having these mentoring schemes and these training schemes, but we have to follow through by then creating opportunities for these people (UK10).

Interviewees highlighted that policies needed to support people 'to mature in our industry' (CAN2) and help them 'make their second and third film and progress as a more mature, filmmaker, producer, director, writer' (CAN2):

> So if you have an […] emerging black woman director, and you give her that shot on an episodic TV series […] how do you make that not a glass cliff, right? Like how do you set up not to fail? What does that support look like? (CAN4)

Sustainability also means taking perspectives beyond numerical representation: 'it is not only about numbers and when we talk about representation, it is also always about the question of who is represented and how, and stereotypes are used to tell the story' (DE3).

… be associated with individual leaders.
German interviewees in particular highlighted that policies were more effective when they were promoted by a specific thought leader, someone who was or became known for pioneering work on gender equity or diversity more broadly. There is, however, a trade-off between the beneficial impact of such "policy champions" and sustainability: the risk is that if a champion moves into another role, they take the policy impact with them.

… consider longer-term impacts.
Several interviewees highlighted a lack of policy evaluation, in particular for longer-term impacts: 'I don't think [evaluations] are done over a period, three years, five years of that particular individual.' (UK11) The lack of longitudinal follow-up was seen as equating to 'less sustainability' (UK5) and limited policy effectiveness.

… be enforced and hold people accountable.
While there was some hesitancy about forcing gender equity initiatives on individuals and organisations, interviewees also acknowledged that 'sometimes you have to have a coercive initiation, so to speak, so that something gets moving' (DE2). Accountability raises policy effectiveness: 'When people are held accountable publicly, you start to see the conversation and things shift' (CAN3). Without evaluation, accountability is limited though: 'people can just say stuff, and nobody checks whether or not and nobody monitors and nobody evaluates, there's no evaluation in place' (UK2).

Trainings, Targets and Checklists

Complementing our analysis of empowering and transforming approaches in the policies, we wanted to understand our experts' view about typical empowering interventions (e.g. training and development programmes) and trans-forming approaches (e.g. targets, quotas, checklists, diversity standards).

We started this conversation with a Quick Fire Round. We asked interviewees to rate the effectiveness of the types of interventions most frequently proposed in the policies (see fig 2.7), grouped into "training and development", "targets and quotas" and "checklists and standards". After interviewees rated these types of interventions on a scale from 'No point' to 'Would really shift the dial' (see fig. 2.7) we asked them to explain their ratings.
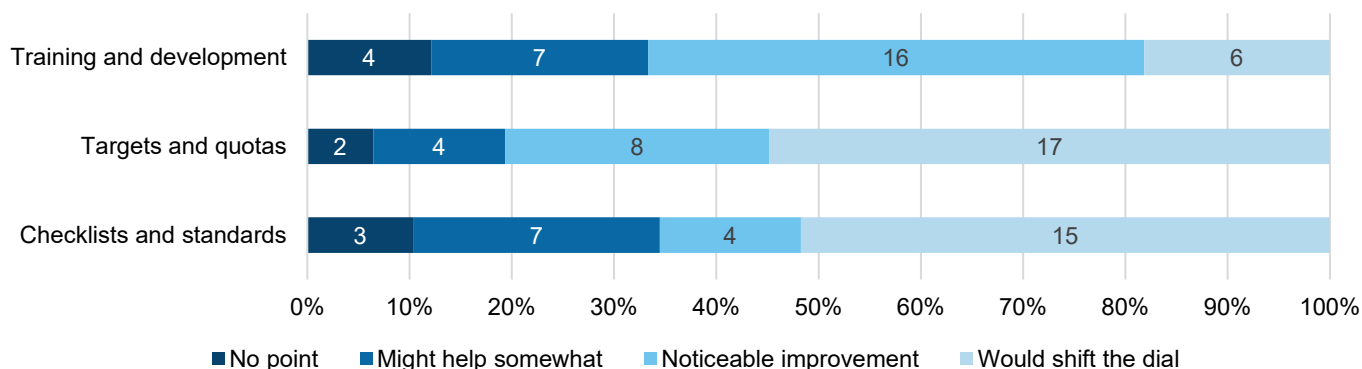

Figure 2.7: Quick Fire Round: Interviewees rate the effectiveness of intervention types
Responses from a total of 34 interviewees. The total number of responses were: checklists and standards (n=29), targets and quotas (n=31), training and development (n=33).

What does this graph tell us? Industry experts regard policies that directly influence companies' business practices – who they hire in which roles, how work and production are organised – as most likely to make a real difference to gender equity.

Despite the differences between jurisdictions that our policy analysis uncovered, there was notable alignment between industry experts on broader policy points. Interviewees were sceptical about training and development programmes that understand women as "the problem" and position "changing women's actions" as the solution. The general sense was that training and mentorship programmes were often 'just the band aid, and sometimes a very unhelpful one' as they failed to address bigger issues such as 'pay and working conditions, and culture and behaviours' (UK4). However, our industry experts did not argue for the abolition of all training and development interventions. German interviewees spoke particularly positively about training and mentorship programmes, and about the potential to address skill- and knowledge gaps in film school graduates. UK interviewees emphasised that training and mentorship programmes needed to be well-funded and designed effectively in order to be beneficial: 'it can be really effective but [only] if it's done properly' (UK10).

We then asked our industry experts why they viewed check-lists and standards (i.e. interventions that asked organisations to reflect on and adjust their practices) and quotas and targets (i.e. interventions that required specific representation of women) as most effective. Interviewees saw these policies as 'proactive, strategic approaches' (UK11) which were 'needed so that something changes quickly' (DE1). In the UK, several interviewees identified the BFI Diversity Standards

'as the most significant thing we've had in film' (UK3) and that, thanks to BAFTA requiring productions to meet the Diversity Standards to become eligible for certain awards categories, 'now apply to a much wider range of projects' (UK3). Other interviewees highlighted 'commissioning-related policies' (UK4) as resulting in 'quantifiable impact in terms of the number of underrepresented groups being on crew or as part of the creative team' (UK4).

What Works Best: the Carrot or the Stick?

A question for any type of policy is whether to incentivise desirable behaviour or punish undesirable behaviour. We discussed this question with our industry experts. Policies can act as a carrot and set incentives to improve gender equity (e.g. "if you meet this optional criterion we will award you an additional budget of X"), or they can act as a stick, taking a more punitive approach (e.g. "to be eligible for a budget you must meet condition Y"). Interviewees frequently used the metaphor of "carrot vs stick" to discuss which approach was more effective. The overall sense was that generally 'the carrot works much better than the stick' (UK7). In some situations, even just getting the carrot on the table was an achievement as 'if the carrot was not there then it would not go as fast as it is going' (CAN7). However, support

for incentives was caveated with the recognition that money and budgets were an important, if not the most important, lever for gender equity.

Related to the "carrot vs stick" perspective but emphasising a slightly different angle is the distinction between educational and prescriptive policy approaches. Educational approaches propose interventions that prompt, or require evidence of, reflection on an organisation's proposed or ongoing gender equity activities. The BFI Diversity Standards and MOIN Diversity Checklist are two prominent illustrations of this educational approach, with the phrasing of the BFI's Standards a little more binding than MOIN's Checklist. Prescriptive approaches stipulate a particular practice or outcome that has to be achieved, typically women's representation at a specific level, expressed as a gender target or quota. An example would be the FFA's use of gender quotas for its committees.

Interviewees who preferred educational approaches were concerned that stick approaches or prescriptive interventions would not bring about the 'inner realisation' (DE3) they hoped to foster. In their view, change for better gender equity required a learning that needed to come from individuals themselves rather than be forced upon them. Another argument for carrot rather than stick approaches was that the latter 'would lead to a lot of defensive reactions and too little connectivity' (DE3).

Interviewees in favour of prescriptive approaches spoke about targets or quotas as particularly effective policy interventions for forcing a more rapid pace of change. Most of them were conscious of the limitations of such policies: they especially understood that "simply adding diverse people" was not enough of a solution, and that targets and quotas did not necessarily foster the inner commitment to gender equity they would ideally like to see. However, these industry experts took the view that if prescribed targets or quotas increased women's representation then that was a result worth taking: 'if you do it voluntarily or if you do it because somebody tells you to do it, it's better than doing nothing' (DE7).

Reflecting on the industry conversation regarding prescriptive approaches, interviewees described opposition to quotas and targets as typically taking one of two stances. The first stance, which some of the interviewees took themselves, was supportive of gender equity but did not regard quotas and targets as the right tool for achieving it. It positioned these interventions as unfairly disadvantaging other identity groups, diminishing the status of women brought in via quotas or setting women up to fail in harmful or exclusionary workplaces. Interviewees recounted how women in decision-making positions would make statements such as 'I made it even without a quota […], those who are good will prevail' (DE1). Interviewees who took this stance did not argue with prescriptive approaches per se, they just did not think quotas or targets were the right tool to prescribe.

The second stance opposing quotas or targets was embedded in an opposition to any sort of prescriptive intervention. Our interviewees described that a sizeable share of the industry did not support gender equity work of any kind and instead regarded it as "anti-men" and positive discrimination: 'There is resistance everywhere' (DE2) and 'there continue to be the big behemoths in the industry that are fighting against anything that might smack of them losing some of the benefits that they've got now' (CAN1). The continued existence of these 'old structures' (DE2) meant that 'very old-fashioned hidebound men [continue to run] companies that seem to have little capacity for deep change' (CAN10).

What Could Work?

We asked interviewees a "magic wand" question that invited them to imagine any policy or intervention, by anyone, that would create a fundamental shift in terms of gender equity.

Early years education: Interviewees across jurisdictions saw future benefits in engaging more girls and young women in STEM subjects: 'I would go back to the schools and make sure we […] encourage more women or more young girls to get involved in the technical subjects' (UK7); 'it's more about education and getting more females into STEM in general' (CAN7). Underlying these suggestions is an understanding of gender inequity as resulting from problems further up the pipeline, i.e. in an education system that does not nurture women's inclination or skills to "tell their stories" on par with men's. It is notable that engagement with technology rather than, for instance, with other forms of visualisation or storytelling was perceived to be crucial here.

Fundamental changes to structures that disadvantage women: Interviewees argued that 'we have to start to shift the way that we work' (UK3) and 'tear down all barriers to entry that have tried to preserve the screen industries for white, able-bodied straight men' (CAN9). The underlying assumption here is that gender inequity exists because the way that work, employment and production are currently arranged is not conducive to women.

Changing the role of women in society: Interviewees said that 'I would like women to be financially independent so that in a family context they no longer have the idea that they can't work as much as men' (DE4) and 'what I would like is people to be completely gender neutral in the way they treat each other. And for differences in sex, only to be noticed, when it's really important, and it's not important much' (UK8). This type of imagined solution, too, makes an assumption about gender inequity, namely that society's perceptions of women's roles and abilities limit how women are able to participate and advance.

German interviewees focused on quotas as their magic wand solution, e.g. '50 percent [gender] quota in every decision that is given in film funding […] both in terms of the number of projects as well as the money' (DE1) and 'I would simply wish for a strict quota that would lead to good results and not to nervousness' (DE2).

UK interviewees looked to complaints procedures and increased regulation as an answer to the industry's gender equity problems, e.g. 'an independent study body where you could report behaviours of concern' (UK12) and 'there needs to be regulation in the industry' (UK9).

Canadian interviewees emphasised economic levers as their magic wand solution, e.g. 'invest everything into television' (CAN10) and 'creating a DEI requirement for tax credits' (CAN9).

Understanding Gender Equity

Gender Inequity as Cause and Symptom

Our interviews showed that gender inequity is discussed as both a cause and a symptom. Gender inequity is visible in symptoms such as sexual harassment and pay gaps between women and men. At the same time, these symptoms of gender inequity in the film industry are caused by gender inequity: power relations, decision making processes and access to positions of influence that are stacked in favour of men. In another example, a writing team that has a misogynistic work culture might use derogatory, sexist language and shut down creative contributions from women. These features are tell-tale signs that something is wrong (symptoms). Yet, at the same time, these features further contribute to the perpetuation of gender inequities (causes) – they don't simply reflect an underlying problem but make it worse by discouraging women from joining the team and preventing women writers from flourishing in their roles.

Interviewees made clear that meaningful change will only follow when interventions respond to gender inequity as both a symptom and a cause. For example, an intervention that only focuses on appointing more women leaders in parts of the industry addresses the visible symptoms of gender inequity, but not its root cause (e.g. the biased perceptions of leadership skills that led to the lack of women leaders in the first place). The relationship between root causes and symptoms was discussed particularly in two aspects:

Work and employment conditions: Interviewees and policies emphasised how the prevalence of self-employment and freelance work (and its income insecurity, long working hours and frequent bullying and harassment) caused gender inequity. One interviewee explained how opaque freelance pay structures 'inevitably [lead] to lack of parity, and lack of transparency, and then lack of equity' (UK4). Both interviewees and policies also highlighted how working conditions make it difficult (if not impossible) for women with caring responsibilities to sustain a career.

Networking: Interviewees described film as 'an informal industry' in which 'networks matter' (UK3), where 'everyone is so networked together that everyone talks to everyone' (DE1) and where 'people hire who they know' (UK6). While that practice was described as 'hard to argue with from a human perspective' (CAN1) and 'understandable because people they know have established credentials or have a similar background that can be relied on' (CAN9), the networks were also described as nepotistic. Notably, while interviewees took the view that women lacked access to networks they were less clear about why access was missing or not being granted in the first place.

Structural Obstacles to Better Gender Equity

As outlined above, both interviewees and policies recognised gender inequity as a structural problem: film industry practice and processes as well as their societal context enable men's opportunities over women's. While strong in our findings, this issue is also not a new one to emerge. What is new though is that our study also found a recognition of **structures as obstacles** to improving gender equity. In other words, our study shows that structures both create gender inequity problems (a claim already well evidenced) and impede efforts to remedy gender inequity problems (a claim not as clearly evidenced).

In terms of the film industry itself, interviewees and some policies pointed towards structures, processes and the day-to-day practices that impede progress towards better gender equity. The key example here was the industry's business model of project-based production with typically short-term notice, high pace and high volume. This business model brings with it certain hiring practices, time management and perceptions of risk. These practices and perceptions are difficult to disrupt and change to improve gender equity. What is clear though is that industry structures also function as

obstacles to speaking up for better practice: the film industry's employment conditions make people reluctant to challenge bad behaviour and exclusionary practices.

Interviewees also explained how the structures of the policy ecosystem got in the way of improvements. Firstly, they talked about fragmentation: the 'fragmented' (UK12) set-up of the industry leads to 'adversarial ownership of different agendas' (UK12) and impedes meaningful work. In Canada, 'so many entities [create] opportunities for women that [are] not [linked up] with each other' (CAN4). In Germany, the country's federal structure further exacerbates 'everyone somehow making their own little things' (DE1).

Secondly, policy ecosystems have frequently shifting policy priorities. Gender equity work takes place in a policy context where 'it only takes a change of a minister, sometimes even a junior minister, or a key person somewhere very high up to actually change a whole set of priorities' (UK5), and where policymakers 'just kind of go round on the loop' (UK4) with attention directed towards issues that are 'fashionable' (DE1) but short-lived. In addition, UK interviewees especially

pointed out that the film industry was not an attractive priority given governments' preference for policy interventions with clear, short- to medium-term return-on-investments over longer-term cultural or societal outcomes. Regardless of what industry experts believe is the best course of action, the key role of public funding means that they are required to tailor their approach to gender equity to match the priorities of the government in charge.

Finally, interviewees highlighted how societal structures constrain efforts for better gender equity in film. They drew attention to women's financial context and to gendered expectations about family roles: 'gender equity is very tied up with economic factors. And a lot of it is to do with who's looking after the children' (UK8). References to societal structures typically pointed towards the work/family interface: 'You have to think about how to make this industry more family-friendly. And in general get this work-life balance thing right at some point. Because that doesn't work, it's never worked and it won't work' (DE1).

Table 2.1: List of policies analysed per jurisdiction by organisation and policy name*

*Some organisations published multiple iterations of the same policy (e.g. on an annual basis) and/or associated documents. To avoid counting each policy document as a unique policy, we use the term 'Policy Family' to describe these clusters of policy documents.

Organisation	Policy Family Name
Germany - total of 21 policies analysed	
Actors Guild BFFS	Positionspapier zur Situation der Schauspielerinnen in deutschsprachigen Film- und Fernsehproduktionen
Amazon	Amazon Studios' Inclusion Policy
Arte	Gleichstellung bei Arte
BKM	Richtlinie für die kulturelle Filmförderung der BKM
BKM	Protokoll Zweites Treffen des Runden Tisches 'Frauen in Kultur und Medien' am 30.03.2017 in Berlin
Charta der Vielfalt e.V.	Diversity Charter
Crew United	Fair Film Award
Deutsche Filmakademie	Diversity Statement
Deutscher Kulturrat	Forderungskatalog zur Herstellung von Geschlechtergerechtigkeit in Kultur und Medien (2020)
Deutscher Kulturrat	Project Office 'Frauen in Kultur & Medien'
FFA	Filmförderungsgesetz - FFG 2022
FFA	Fokus Gender
FFF Bayern	Richtlinien für die bayerische Film- und Fernsehförderung (Vergaberichtlinien)
HessenFilm und Medien	Richtlinie für die hessische Film- und Medienförderung durch die Hessen Film & Medien GmbH
MBB - Medienbord Berlin-Brandenburg	Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg: Förderrichtlinie
MOIN Film Fund Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein	Diversity Checklist Produktion Spielfilm
Nordmedia	Richtlinie zur kulturwirtschaftlichen Film- und Medienförderung der nordmedia – Film- und Mediengesellschaft Niedersachsen/Bremen mbH (nordmedia)
ProQuote Film	Forderungen
UFA	Diversity Circle
UFA	Diversitäts-Selbstverpflichtung
ver.di	Code of Practice
UK – total of 52 policies analysed	
BAFTA	Diversity requirements for film awards
BBC	BBC Diversity Commissioning Code of Practice
BBC	Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
BBC	Making the BBC a great workplace for women
BBC Studios	Valuing Difference Strategy, 2021–24
BECTU	Commercials Production Diversity Action Plan
BFI	Film Forever, 2012–2017
Birds Eye View	Equality and diversity policy
British Film Editors	Diversity policy
British Film Institute	BFI Diversity Standards
British Film Institute	BFI 2022: Supporting UK Film, BFI Plan 2017–2022
Casting Directors Guild	CDG statement on diversity
CDN	Doubling Disability
Change the Lens	Change the Lens Pledge
Channel 4	Commissioning Diversity Guidelines
Channel 4	Channel 4 and Motion Content Group Diverse Indies Fund
Channel 4	Disability Disruption Commission
Channel 4	360° Diversity Charter
Channel 4	RISE - Channel 4 Production Mentoring Initiative

Organisation	Policy Family Name
Creative Scotland	EDI outcomes 2021–22
Creative Scotland	Creative Scotland On Screen: Film Strategy, 2014–17
Creative Scotland	Investing in Scotland's Creative Future
Creative Scotland	Equalities in Creative Scotland
ERA 50:50	ERA 50:50 campaign
Film London	Return to Work in Production
Film London	All Voices - In Partnership With UKTV
F-Rated Films	F-Rated Films
GBCT	Equal opportunities policy
ITV	Commissioning Commitments
ITV	Social Purpose Impact Report
ITV	Step Up 60 programme
National Film and Television School	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
National Film and Television School	Black British Woman Cinematographer Scholarship Award
Netflix	Investment in three external DEI programmes
Pinewood	Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy
Raising Film	Raising Film Ribbons
Rise	Rise awards
S4C	Diversity, Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy
Scottish Screen	New Talent Development Initiative
Scottish Screen	Gender Equality Scheme
Screen Scotland	BFI Diversity Standards - Screen Scotland Pilot
Screenskills	How ScreenSkills champions diversity and inclusivity
Sky	Diversity and Inclusion Manifesto
Time's Up UK	#4PercentChallenge
Time's Up UK	Justice and Equality Fund
TV Mindset	Coalition for Change
UK Film Council	Equalities Charter for Film
UK Film Council	New Cinema Fund
UK Film Council	Our Second Three Year Plan
WGGB	Equality Writes Campaign
Women in Animation	50/50 by 2025
Women in Animation	Animation Studio Anti-Harassment Pledge

Canada – total of 17 policies analysed

Organisation	Policy Family Name
Bell Media	Women in Production Action Plan
Blue Ant Media	Gender Parity Plan
Canada Media Fund	Performance Envelope Manual 2021–2022
Canada Media Fund	Discretionary Funds
Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission	Gender Parity
CBC	CBC films
CBC	Women in Production Action Plan
Corus	Gender Parity in Key Creative Roles
Creative BC	Reel Focus BC Equity + Emerging Development Program
Creative BC	JEDDI practice: Justice, Equity, Decolonization, Diversity, Inclusion
National Film Board of Canada	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan
Ontario Creates	Funding Programs
Ontario Creates	Diversity Enhancement funding
Rogers	Gender Parity
Telefilm Canada	Equity and Representation Action Plan
Telefilm Canada	Feature Films Funding Programs
WildBrain Television	Women in Production

The Numbers:
Gender Equity in Eurimages Films

In this chapter of the report we take a close look at the numbers. Can we observe variation in the underrepresentation of women across different time periods and countries? Are there any noticeable deviations in specific national industries regarding women's representation, or does the scenario appear relatively consistent throughout? Do industry-specific factors affect women's numerical representation?

This chapter presents key findings to these questions by casting a glance at the European film industry. We analysed the numerical representation of women in key creative positions across the Eurimages film countries that have released at least ten films per year in 90 percent of all years from 2010 to 2020. Here, we present the analysis of 19 countries with an output of 11,099 films and 50,173 key creative positions. The results presented in this chapter refer to the released films of the respective country as the statistical population (equalling 100%). We provide additional in-depth analyses for the countries Austria, Denmark, France, the Netherlands and Sweden as these countries either display a high proportion of key creative positions held by women or have a track record of implementing gender equity incentives. Furthermore, we deep-dive into the data for the case countries Germany, the UK and Canada. The data of fifteen countries are omitted here due to the small number of releases during the collection period 2010–2020. Please refer to the *Numbers don't lie* report for all Eurimages data (Prommer and Radziwill 2024).

Films are typically produced and written, and sometimes directed, by teams. We were especially interested in the gender composition of creative teams. We assigned a gender to the people holding key creative team positions, including up to four producers, and up to three directors and screenwriters (for further information on the coding process please see "The Numbers" in the *Technical Appendix*: Prommer, Radziwill and Ehrich 2024). Given the very low case number of key creatives identified as gender minorities by our coding scheme (five people in 12 positions, as some positions are occupied by the same person) we chose to omit gender minorities in the overall analysis. Our analysis, thus, focusses on whether a given film was made by a woman alone, or a team made up exclusively of women, exclusively of men or a mixed-gender creative team.

In addition, we take a look at the relationship between gendered team compositions and funding structures.
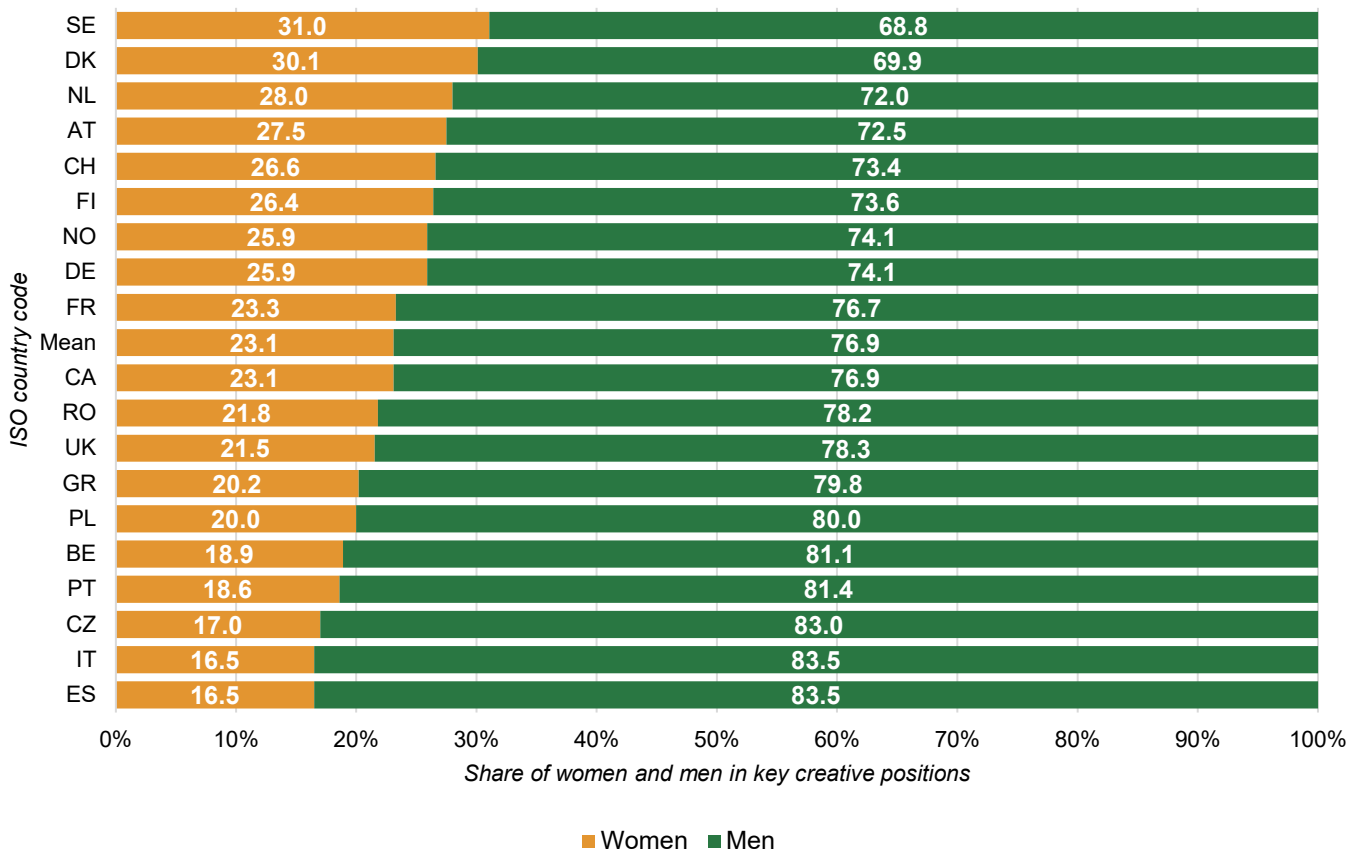

Figure 3.1: Nowhere near equal representation
Percentage of key creatives (directors, writers, and producers) that are women and men, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.

Findings

In our analysis of gender equity policies and interviews with industry experts, a selection of policy design features appeared repeatedly. These features do not make a 'one size fits all' road map for designing gender equity policies. But they can – and should, we argue – inform industry thinking on future policy design decisions.

Women remain a minority across jurisdictions and key creative positions.
None of the Eurimages countries shos an equal share of women and men across key creative positions averaged across all years. On average, only one in four key creative positions are occupied by women. Women hold the highest proportions of key creative roles in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and Austria and the lowest proportions of key creative roles in Spain, Italy, the Czech Republic, and Portugal (see fig. 3.1).

Compared to directing and writing, women are best represented in producing positions, which – in contrast to directing and writing – usually consists of more than three people.

Public funding instruments appear to have an effect on the numerical representation of women in Germany, the UK and Canada.
However, the impact of these funding instruments varies depending on the key creative function under consideration. In Canada, Telefilm funding, and in the UK, BFI funding, are positively associated with the participation of women in directing and producing. Though only a limited number of films are funded by the BFI in the UK, we do see a positive effect on the numerical representation of women in key creative positions for these funded films. In Germany, funding by the German Federal Film Board (FFA) does not appear to have an effect, whereas funding by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM) is positively associated with women's involvement in directing and writing.

Underrepresentation of Women in Eurimages Films

Women are underrepresented in all three key creative positions of directing, writing and producing across all analysed countries. Overall, about 77 percent of the positions we looked at are filled with men (fig. 3.1). Zooming in on the three creative positions, we see differences (fig. 3.2). Directing is a position that is usually held by one person and, on average, 81 percent of the films released between 2010 and 2020 are exclusively directed by men. Only 17 percent of films were directed solely by women, while two percent were directed in mixed-gendered teams.

We see striking differences between countries: while every fourth film released between 2010 and 2020 is exclusively directed by women in Austria (26.5 %), the Netherlands (26.1 %), Sweden (24.3 %) and Finland (23.7 %), only one in ten films was exclusively directed by women in Spain (10.7 %), Portugal (9.8 %), Greece (9.7 %) and Italy (8.7 %).

Women are also underrepresented in writing positions (see fig. 3.3). Women writers are involved, solely or in a mixed-gender teams, in fewer than every third (31.6 %) film released between 2010 and 2020 across the analysed countries. A sole woman or a team of only women wrote 16 percent of the films, while mixed-gender teams wrote 15 percent of films. Therefore, in three out of four films, men are involved as screenwriters. Even in the Netherlands, the country with the highest percentage of films exclusively written by women (32.0 %), men are still involved in writing two in three films. The same is true for Austrian films. In, for example, Norway (74.3 %), Sweden (74.3 %), Canada (79.1 %), the UK (81.6 %) and Spain (85.7 %) men are involved in writing at least three in four screenplays.
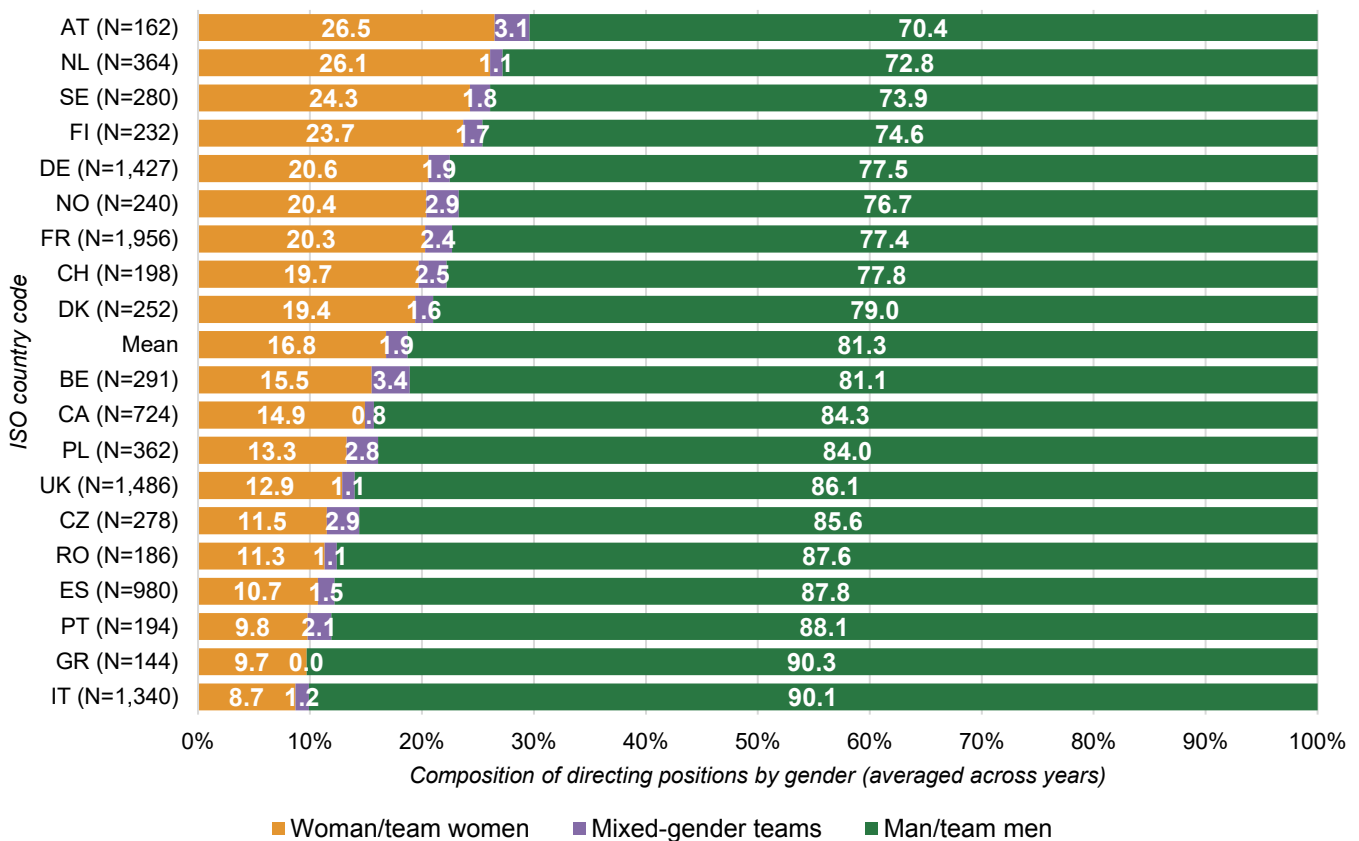
ISO country code	Woman/team women	Mixed-gender teams	Man/team men
AT (N=162)	26.5	3.1	70.4
NL (N=364)	26.1	1.1	72.8
SE (N=280)	24.3	1.8	73.9
FI (N=232)	23.7	1.7	74.6
DE (N=1,427)	20.6	1.9	77.5
NO (N=240)	20.4	2.9	76.7
FR (N=1,956)	20.3	2.4	77.4
CH (N=198)	19.7	2.5	77.8
DK (N=252)	19.4	1.6	79.0
Mean	16.8	1.9	81.3
BE (N=291)	15.5	3.4	81.1
CA (N=724)	14.9	0.8	84.3
PL (N=362)	13.3	2.8	84.0
UK (N=1,486)	12.9	1.1	86.1
CZ (N=278)	11.5	2.9	85.6
RO (N=186)	11.3	1.1	87.6
ES (N=980)	10.7	1.5	87.8
PT (N=194)	9.8	2.1	88.1
GR (N=144)	9.7	0.0	90.3
IT (N=1,340)	8.7	1.2	90.1

Composition of directing positions by gender (averaged across years)

■ Woman/team women   ■ Mixed-gender teams   ■ Man/team men

Figure 3.2: Gender in directing across Eurimages countries, 2010–2020
Percentage of films directed by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.
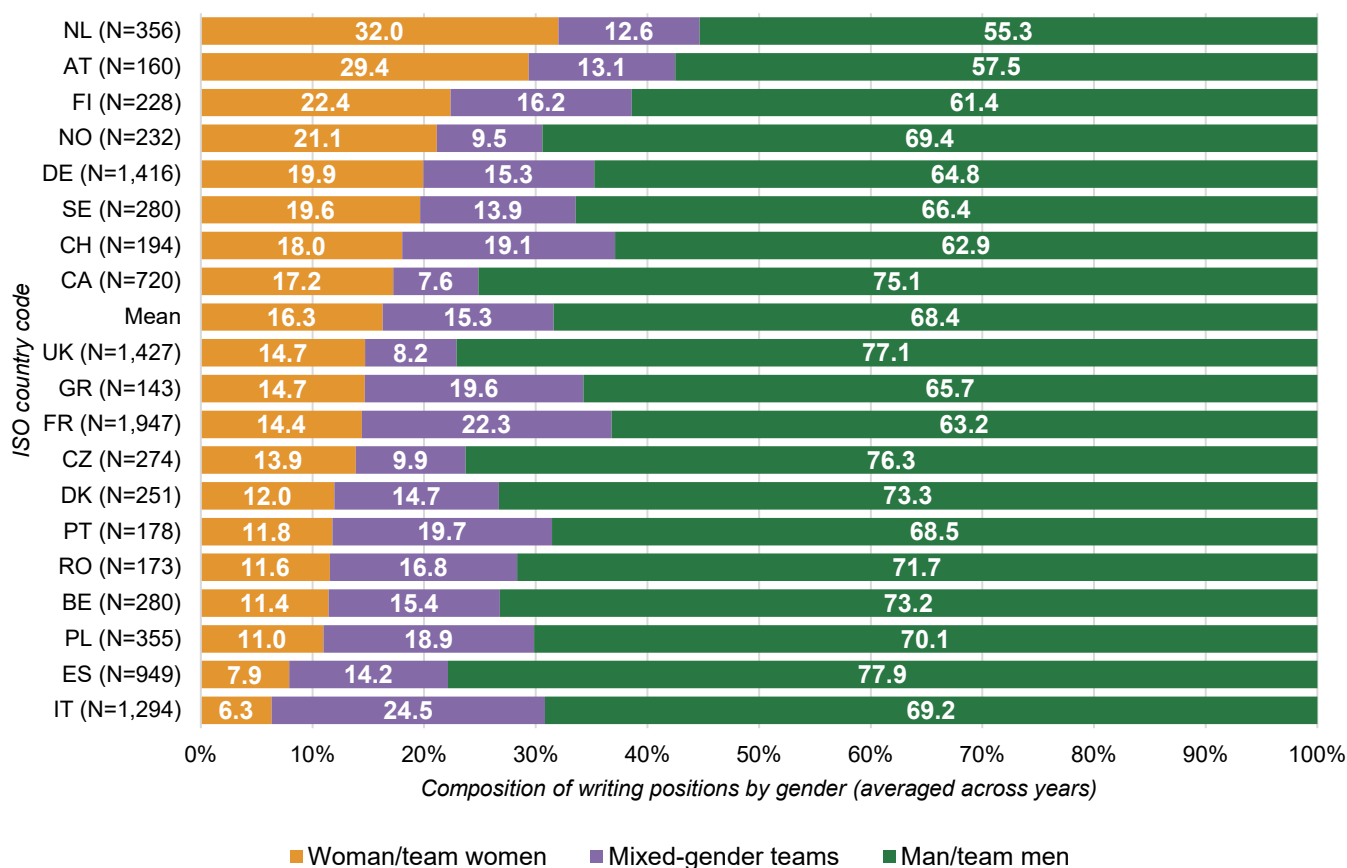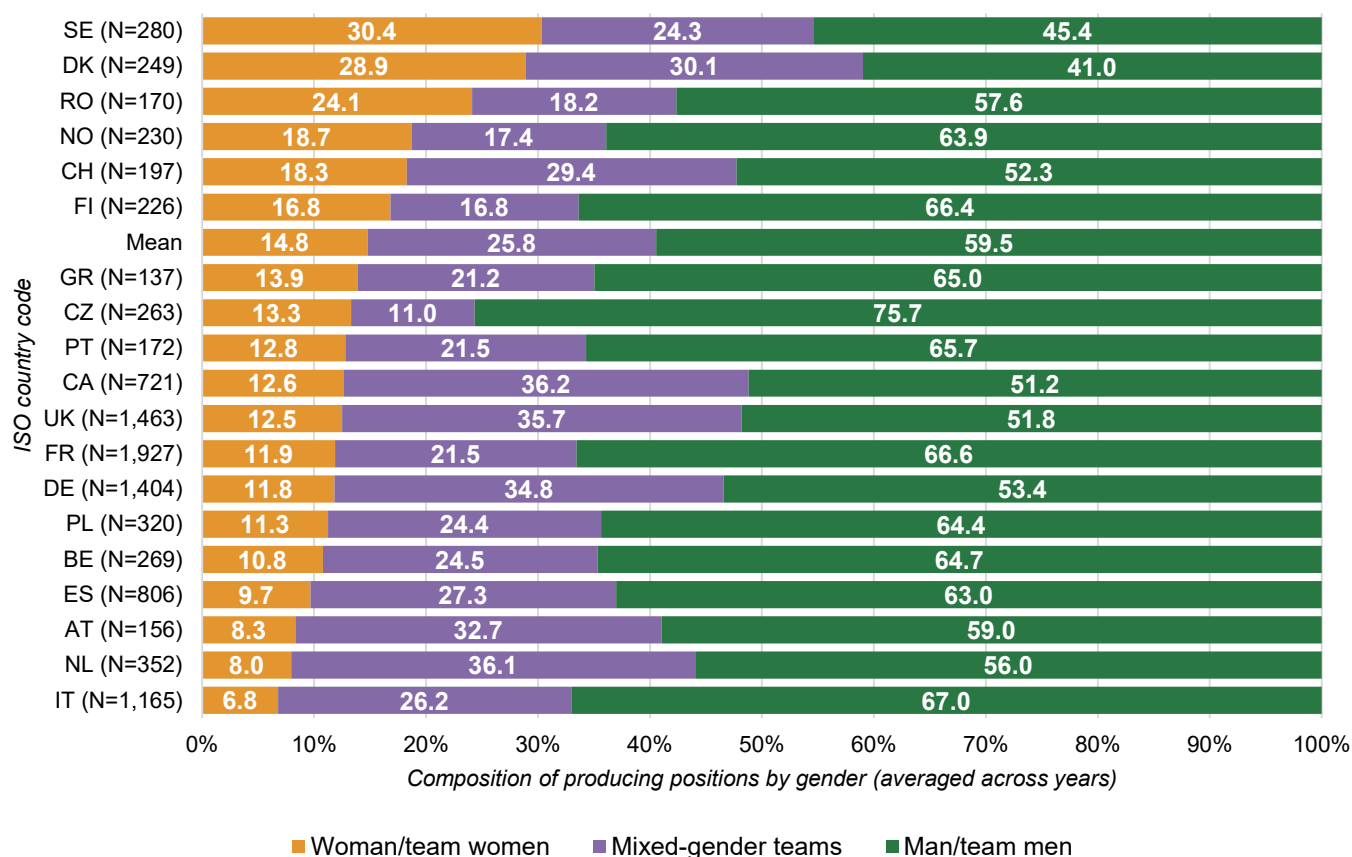
Figure 3.3: Gender in writing across Eurimages countries, 2010–2020
Percentage of films written by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.

Across all three key creative positions, the smallest proportion is that of films exclusively produced by women. On average, only 15 percent of films are exclusively produced by women (fig. 3.4). In contrast, men exclusively produced 60 percent of films. Producing is a position that is often shared by more than one person, therefore men are involved in producing more than four in five films.

The percentages for films exclusively produced by women differ by 24 percentage points between those countries with, on average, the smallest and those with the highest representation gap between women and men. In Sweden and Denmark, one in three films are exclusively produced by women and women are involved in producing 55 percent of films released. In contrast, men are involved in producing at least nine in ten films in Italy, the Netherlands, and Austria. The low proportion of films exclusively produced by women in the Netherlands and Austria is surprising as these countries score highly in terms of the percentage of directing and writing positions held by women.

Figure 3.4: Gender in producing across Eurimages countries, 2010–2020
Percentage of films produced by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.

Focus countries: Austria, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, and Sweden

Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden are the four countries with the largest share of key creative positions held by women. Several of those countries have implemented equality strategies and gender incentives (Tepper 2020). Sweden has a long history of gender equity work through their national film funds. The Swedish Film Institute has been promoting equality in the film industry with clear equality targets since 2006, and devised an action plan in 2013 threatening to implement quotas if the targets were not attained by 2016 (Jansson and Wallenberg 2020). Following the Council of Europe's Recommendation on Gender Equality in the Audiovisual Sector (CoE 2017), several countries followed with targeted initiatives. The Austrian Film Institute introduced a gender incentive in 2017 (Flicker and Vogelmann 2020). France followed suit and introduced a gender incentive with the French film fund CNC in 2018 (CNC 2018). Therefore, we particularly looked at changes in the representation of women and men in positions over time in these five countries (see fig. 3.5–3.7). It is important to note that these countries exhibit significant disparities in the number of feature films released. For instance, between 2010 and 2020, France released 1,956 feature films, whereas Austria, during the same period, had a much lower figure of only 162 film releases.

Similar to our findings for women in directing positions, Austria and the Netherlands also exhibit the largest proportion of films exclusively written by women (see fig. 3.6). In both countries, the percentage of films written exclusively by women exceeds 30 percent during the period 2016–20. The Netherlands has the largest percentage of films exclusively written by women (36.6 %). In Austria and the Netherlands, the proportion of films exclusively written by men actually decreases by around eight percentage points in both countries, while the share of women in mixed-gender teams remains similar.
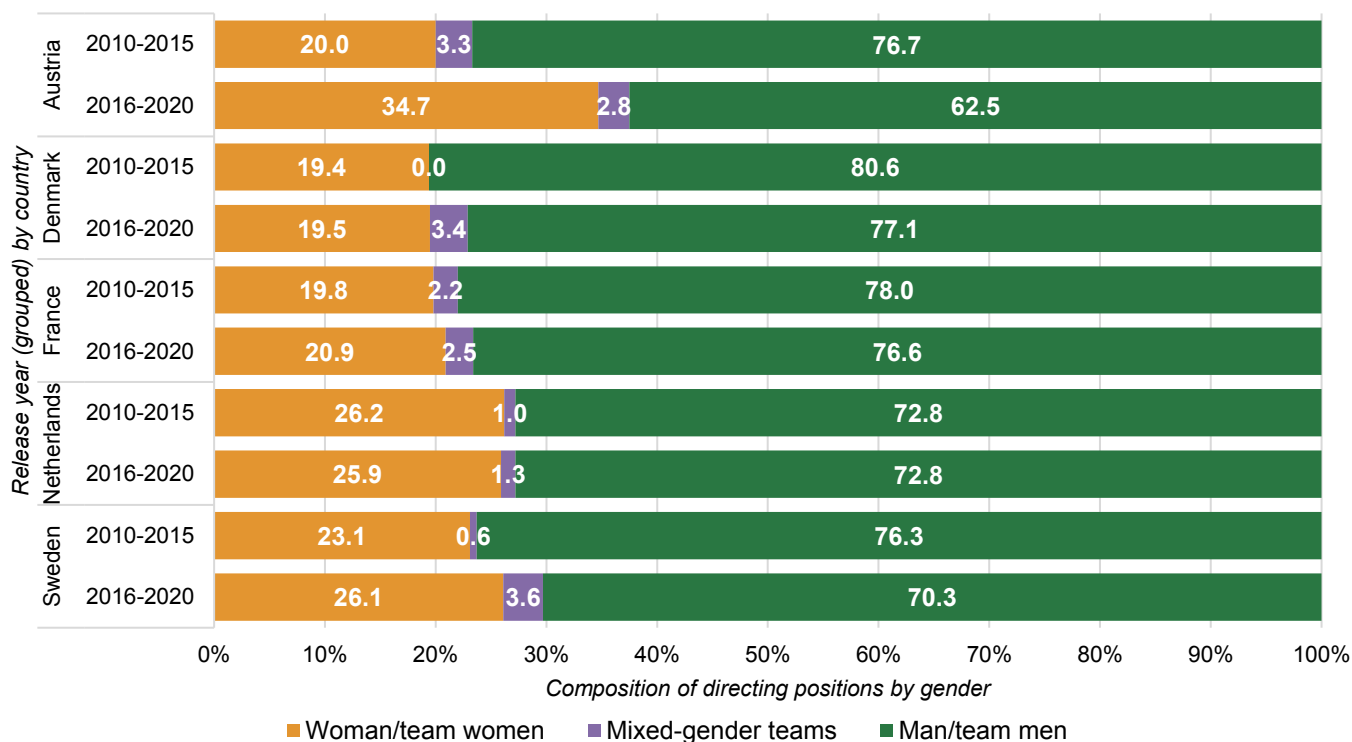
Figure 3.5: Gender in directing across Austria, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, grouped by years
Percentage of films directed by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.

In Denmark, we found a notable increase in the proportion of films exclusively written by women. The proportion jumps by almost ten percentage points between the first and the second period. At the same time, the proportion of films written by men decreases from 85 percent to 77 percent, while the proportion of women and men in mixed-gender teams remains similar. In France, the proportion of films exclusively written by women stagnates at around 14 percent. In Sweden, the proportion of films exclusively written by women decrease by nine percentage points.

When we look at the gender profile of producers (see fig. 3.7), again two countries are notable for their higher proportions of films exclusively produced by women: Denmark (31.0 %) and Sweden (30.6 %). In these countries around one in three films is exclusively produced by women. The same holds true for films in Denmark and Sweden that are exclusively produced by men (33.6 % and 36.9 %, respectively).

The proportion of films exclusively produced by women stagnates in France from 2010 onwards. In France, only one in eight films (about 11.8 %) is exclusively produced by women. Our analysis reveals that the Netherlands and Austria (the two countries with the highest percentage of films exclusively directed and written by women) rank lowest with around ten percent of producing positions occupied by women only.

The proportion of films produced by mixed-gender teams for Austria, the Netherlands and Denmark is notably higher (between 35–40 % during the period 2016–20) than in the other focus countries (between 22–30 % during the same period). In Denmark, France and Sweden men and women are nearly equally represented within mixed-gender teams. Across all five focus countries, numerical gains for women are mostly observed in their increasing involvement in mixed-gender production teams, rather than an increase in the proportion of projects that are produced only by women. Changes in statistics are driven by women collaborating with men.
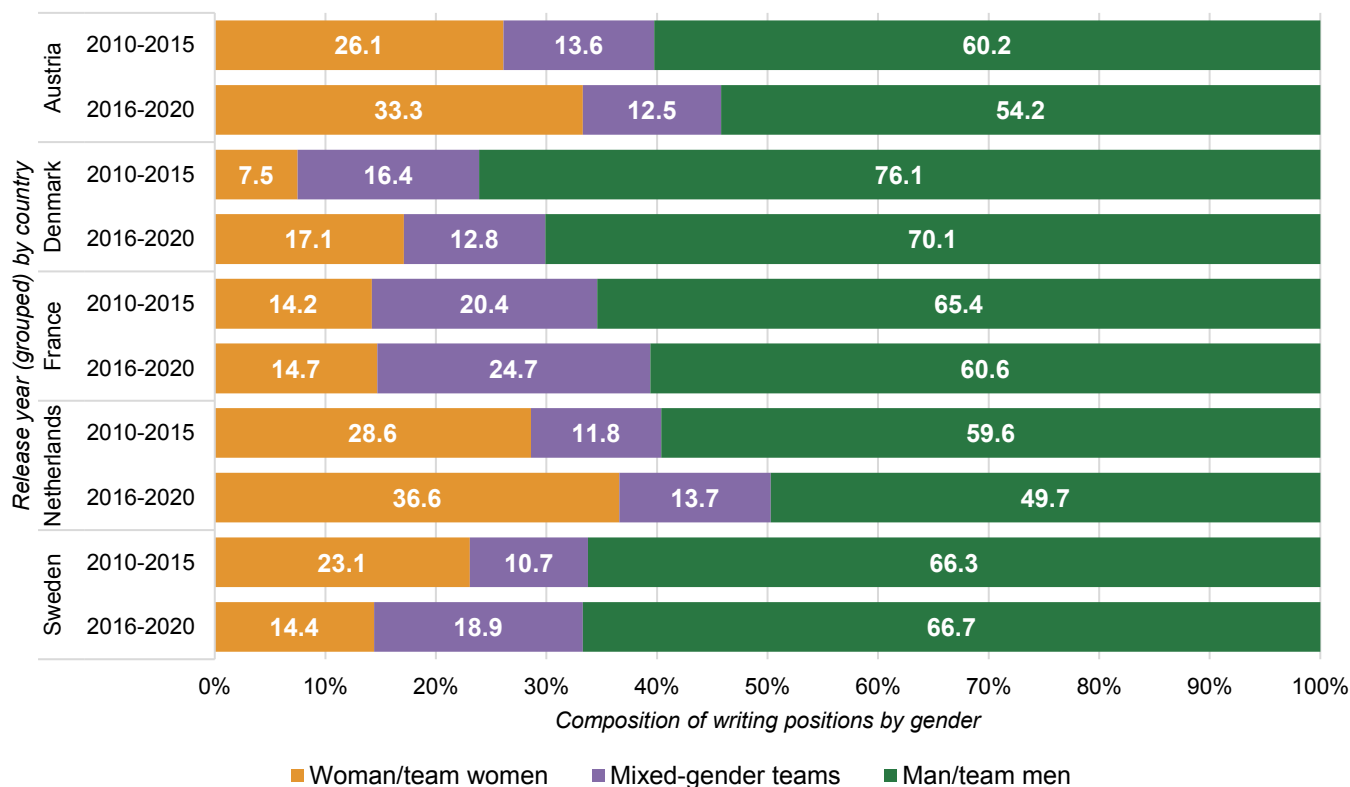
Figure 3.6: Gender in writing across Austria, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, grouped by years
Percentage of films written by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.
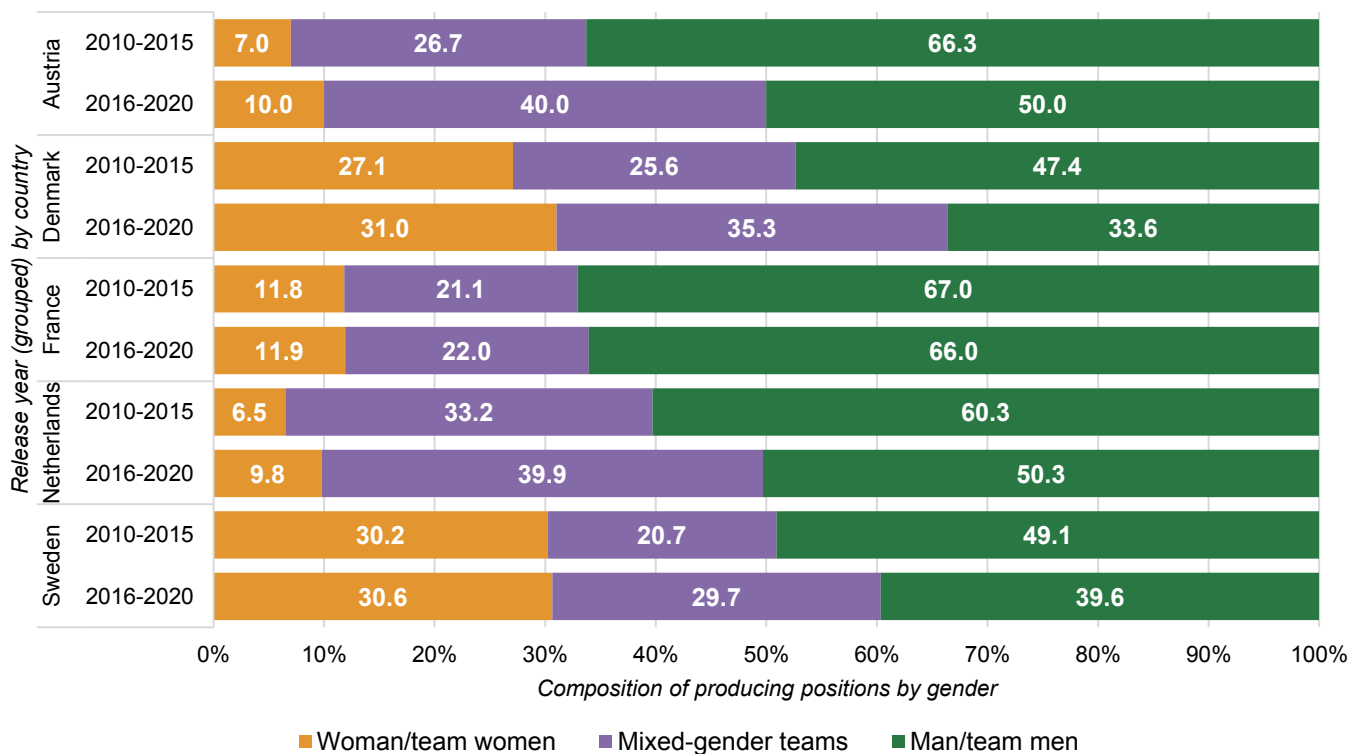

Figure 3.7: Gender in producing across Austria, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, grouped by years
Percentage of films produced by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.

Case Countries: Germany, the UK and Canada

This section presents the findings from our analysis of changes over time in the numerical representation of women and men in key creative positions in our three case countries. In Germany, the UK and Canada the proportion of positions occupied by women per year increases very slowly and no meaningful improvements are evident between 2005 and 2020 (see fig. 1.2).

When we turn to examine the changes in the proportion of the creative roles held by women and men bundled into time periods (2005–09, 2010–15, and 2016–20), we still see that women remain numerically underrepresented and that change is slow or negligible.
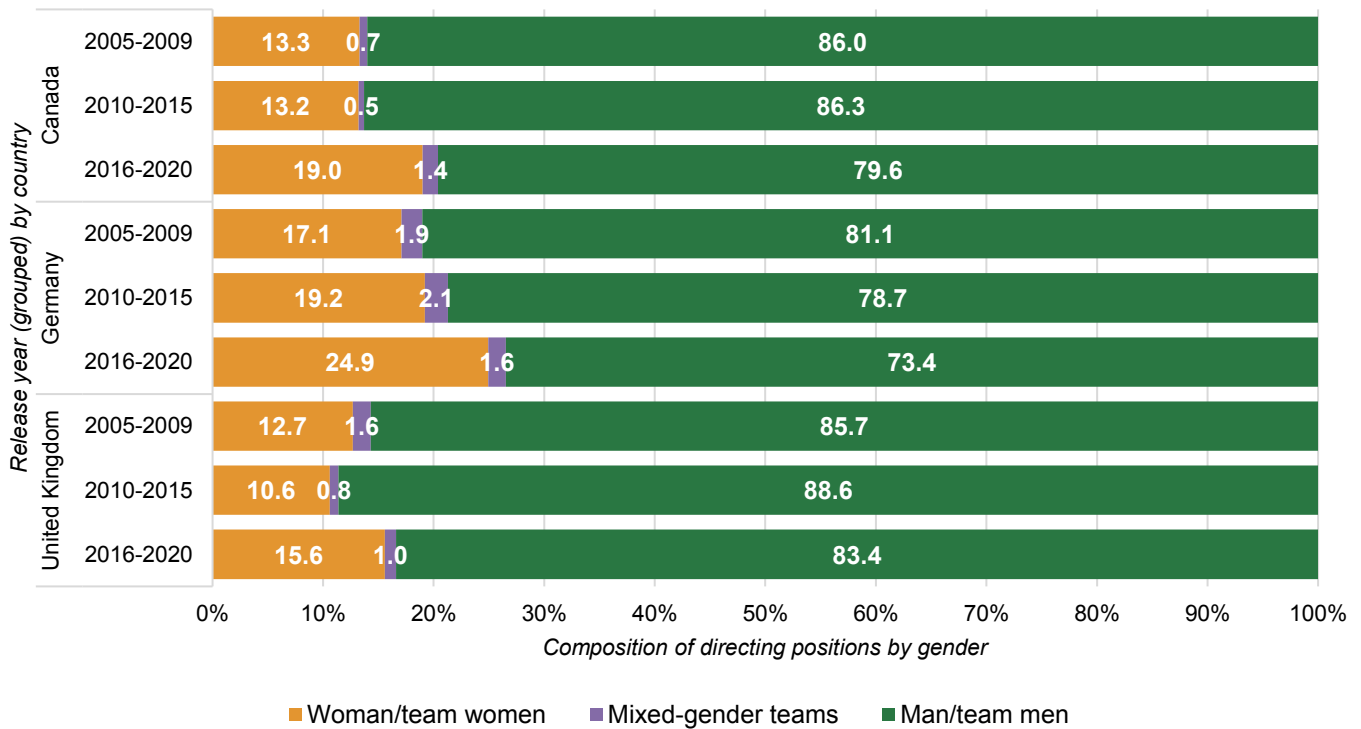
Figure 3.8: Gender in directing across Canada, Germany and the UK, grouped by years
Percentage of films directed by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.

In fact, the percentage of directing positions held by women varies across the countries (see fig. 3.8). In Canada, the percentage of films exclusively directed by women slowly rose from 13 percent during the periods 2005–09 and 2010–15 by a full six percentage points up to 19 percent in 2016–20. In the 2016–20 period, the UK had the lowest number of films directed solely by women (15.6 %) and the highest percentage of films directed solely by men (83.4 %). Germany has the highest percentage of films exclusively directed by women in the period 2016–20 (24.9 %), followed by Canada (19.0 %) and the UK (15.6 %).

The situation for women in writing positions shows the clearest trend of all three positions (see fig. 3.9). In fact, the percentage of films exclusively written by women increases across all three countries and all grouped years. Despite this upward trend, men remain involved in writing more than three quarters of all released films, due in part to their involvement

in mixed-gender teams. With Germany showing the largest proportion of films written exclusively by women for all three periods, the UK once again trails behind Germany and Canada, failing to exceed the Eurimages average of 16 percent of films exclusively written by women until the final period.

In our three case countries, gains for women in producer roles are only found when they work together with men. There is no increase in the proportion of films produced exclusively by women. With the focus countries, similar to the overall picture, we again see a large proportion of films produced by mixed-gender teams, increasing steadily across all countries and periods. The percentage of films exclusively produced by women is stagnant across all three countries and time periods (see fig. 3.10), stalling at 11–15 percent. Men exclusively produced between 45 and 58 percent of films in our case countries across time. Nonetheless, women were involved in the production of 40 to 50 percent of all films released.
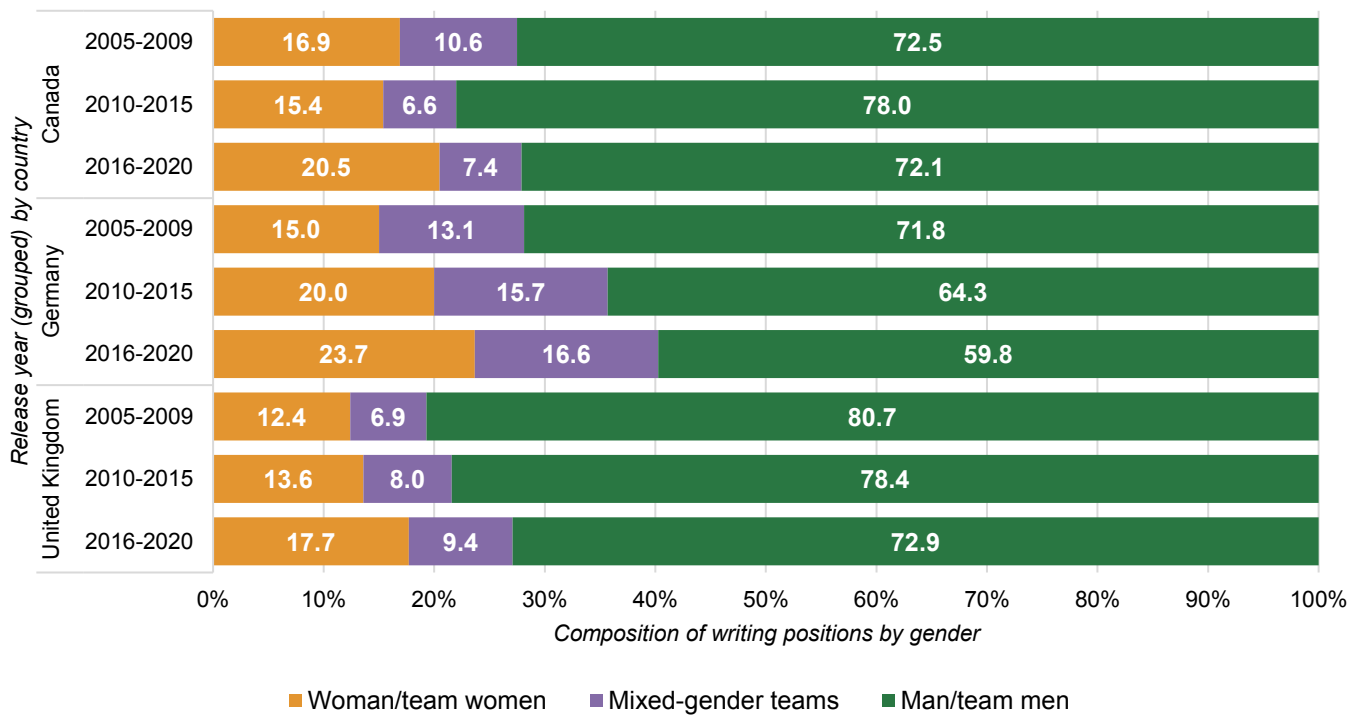
Figure 3.9: Gender in writing across Canada, Germany and the UK, grouped by years
Percentage of films written by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.
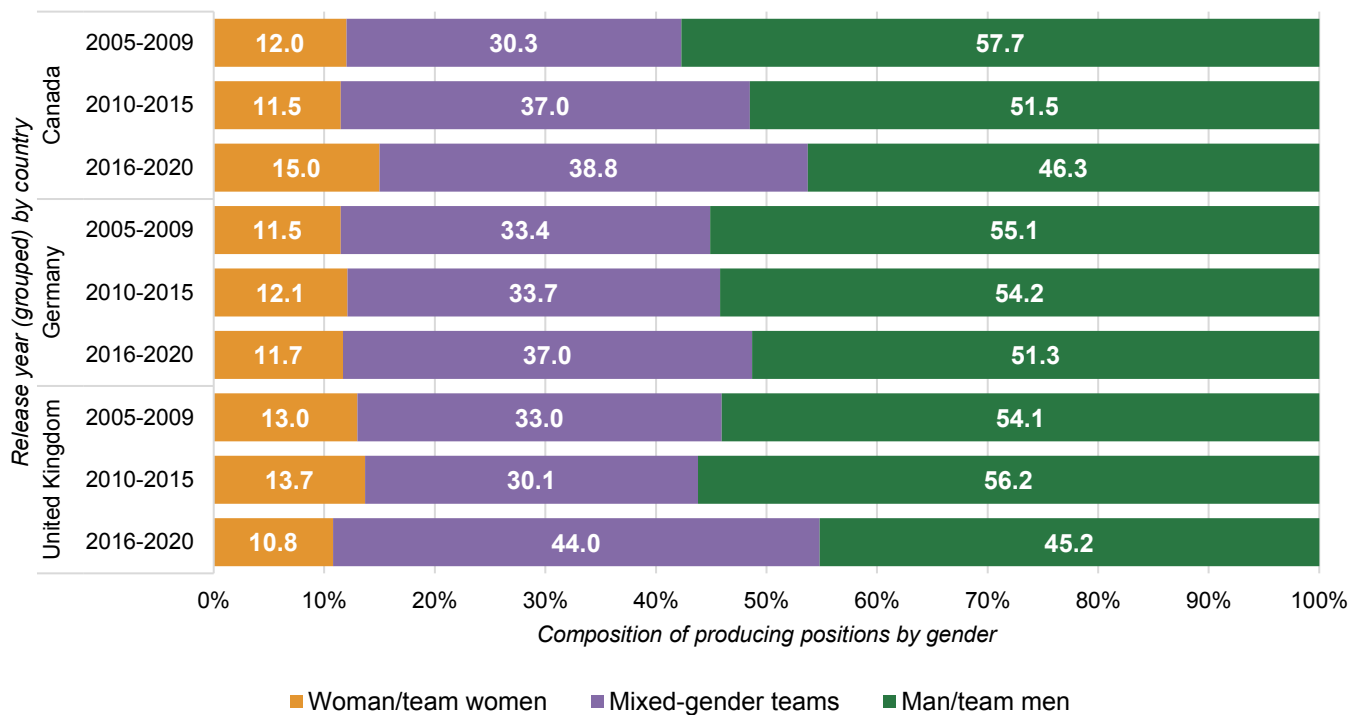

Figure 3.10: Gender in producing across Canada, Germany and the UK, grouped by years
Percentage of films produced by women, men and mixed-gender teams, calculated average for all years per country. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.

Funding Gender Equity?

In this section we turn to answering the question of whether industry-specific factors, namely film funding instruments, affect women's numerical representation.

Overall, we find that film funding by public agencies is associated with the share of key creatives that are women in the funded projects. We see the biggest effect for funding granted by the British Film Institute (BFI). If a film is funded by the BFI (only eight percent of the UK-produced films in our dataset), the mean share of key creatives that are women rises up to 34 percent compared to 20 percent without funding. A similar impact can be seen for funding by Telefilm Canada. In Germany, funding has the least visible impact.
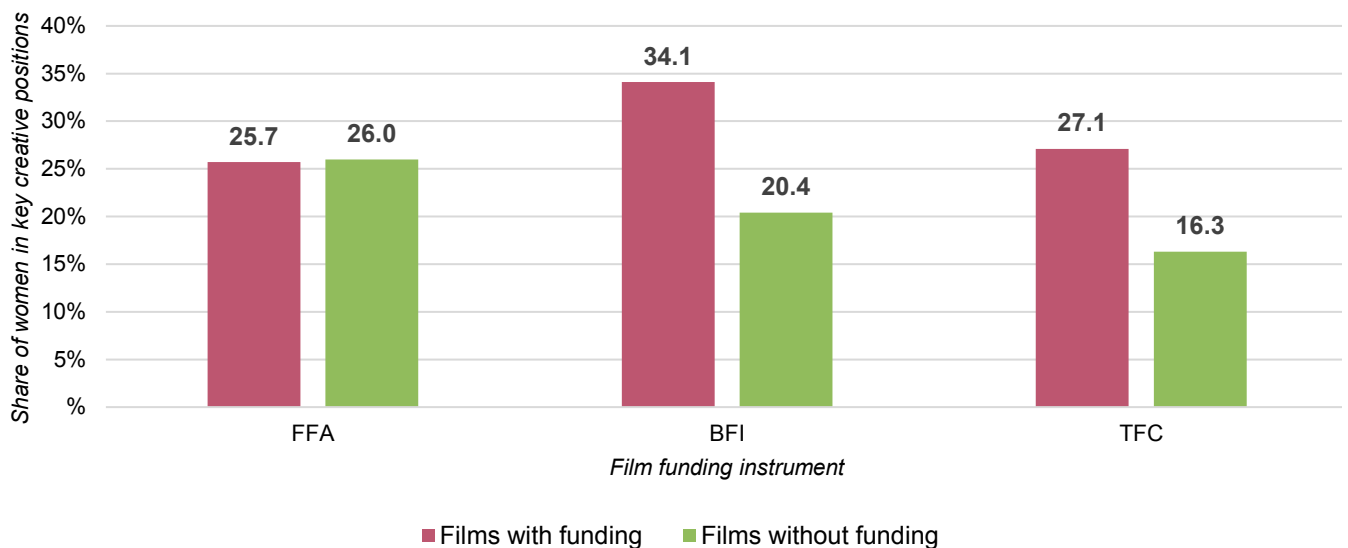

Figure 3.11: Funding gender equity
Share of key creatives (directors, writers, and producers) that are women per film funding instrument and country averaged for all years. Comparison of all films with funding to all films without funding.

The impact of BFI funding stands out as the most significant among the three countries in terms of advancing gender parity within key creative positions. On average, the share of key creatives that are women is 14 percentage points higher when a film received BFI funding compared to when it did not get funding (see fig. 3.13). When taking a closer look at the individual creative positions (see table 3.2), the most notable effect is in the representation of women in producing, with a substantial difference of 17 percentage points. This is followed by increases in both directing (ten percentage points) and writing (seven percentage points).

It's important to highlight that the BFI introduced its Diversity Standards as a checklist in 2016 and made it mandatory in 2018, even if they have not set concrete targets (Cobb and Williams 2020). If the measures used in BFI funding were applied to more than eight percent of feature films released, it could lead to substantial improvements in the gender composition of key creative teams within the industry.

In Germany, for films with funding by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM) there is a five percent higher share of key creatives who are women than without, yet there is no noticeable difference for funding by the German Federal Film Board (FFA) (see table 3.2). The BKM is known for supporting arthouse films with smaller budgets and prioritising cultural value over commercial success. However, the BKM, with its emphasis on cultural value, has consistently allocated its funding budget almost equally to women and men in directing positions, as evidenced by Prommer & Loist (2015, 11–12).

Table 3.1: Share of key creatives (directors, writers, and producers) who are women per film funding instrument and country averaged for all years
Cases with missing data are excluded from calculation. Percentages shown may not total 100 due to rounding.

		Canada (n=720)		UK (n=1,418)		Germany (n=1,400)			
		Not Telefilm funded (37 %, n=266)	Telefilm funded (63 %, n=454)	Not BFI funded (92 %, n=1,300)	BFI funded (8 %, n=118)	Not FFA funded (61 %, n=848)	FFA funded (39 %, n=552)	Not BKM funded (81 %, n=1,130)	BKM funded (19 %, n=270)
Percentage of key creatives that are women	Overall	16 %	27 %	20 %	34 %	26 %	26 %	25 %	30 %
	Directing	9 %	19 %	13 %	24 %	21 %	22 %	20 %	29 %
	Writing	16 %	23 %	17 %	29 %	27 %	29 %	26 %	34 %
	Producing	18 %	35 %	27 %	43 %	28 %	25 %	27 %	28 %

Funding by the FFA applies to 39 percent of feature films released between 2005 and 2020 in Germany. Until 2023, the FFA still has no gender equity policies other than a gender parity rule for grant-awarding juries. This absence of policies could explain why FFA funding has no impact on fostering positive changes in the gender composition of key creative teams.

The impact of Telefilm funding in Canada is significantly more pronounced. On average, the overall representation of women across all three key creative positions increases by a substantial 11 percentage points when a film receives Telefilm funding compared to when it does not. The most significant effect is observed in the proportion of women in producing, where there is a remarkable increase of 16 percentage points. This is followed by a notably higher share in both writing (12 percentage points) and directing (11 percentage points).

What is particularly noteworthy is that 63 percent of Canada-produced films in our dataset received Telefilm funding, indicating that this funding source has a substantial reach and impact on a significant number of films produced in the country. Our analysis suggests that if Telefilm Canada were to include mandatory policies to increase gender equity, this substantive share of Canada-produced films could show increased shares of women in key creative positions.

The Networks:
Redressing Male Domination
in the Film Industry

This chapter of the report presents detailed relational analysis of the three case country film industry employment networks: Germany, the UK and Canada. We analyse the relative behaviours of men (M) and women and gender minorities (WGM; including women and non-binary people) who worked in these film industries in key creative roles. Although we use two categories to analyse gender proportionally in the networks we do not analyse gender itself as a binary. Our primary research aim is to understand the persistently dominant positions of men in film industry networks and to devise and assess hypothetical strategies to redress male domination (fig. 4.1).

We focus our investigation along two axes:

What is. We present data and findings describing the industry networks as they were arranged in the period 2005–2020. In this section of our analysis we focus on what has and has not changed in relation to gender equity throughout the course of the period we studied.

What if. We present data and findings based on hypothetical or experimental scenarios. In this section of our analysis we identify what might have been or indeed, what may yet be, through different policy interventions and project their relative effectiveness for gender equity.

Key creative networks in our three case studies shared a number of features. In particular, a substantial amount of film industry employment across all three jurisdictions is what we would call "one and done". These are people who appear in our data just the once because – during the period we studied – they only worked on one film in a key creative role. The sense of structure created by the fleeting appearance of these people can skew network analysis, which depends entirely on measuring relationships. For example, in network analysis, the structural benefits conferred by relationships are typically measured by defining the "centrality" of a person relative to other people in the network (see "The Networks" in the *Technical Appendix* for a more detailed explanation: Jones, Dadlani and Verhoeven 2024). Very few people have high centrality scores in the film industries we studied, and the vast majority of people have scores that are very low or zero, in large part because they did not comparatively make many collaborative connections working on just one film project. As a result, we focused our findings by looking at the composition of what we call the "network elite". These are the film creatives who occupy the top 1 % ranking of all people in each country's film collaboration network, according to various centrality scores. Lastly it is important to note that the average team size for film projects is similarly small (Germany 3.74; UK 3.84; Canada, 3.71) which, in combination with the prevalence of "one and done", presents a challenge for collaboration analysis.
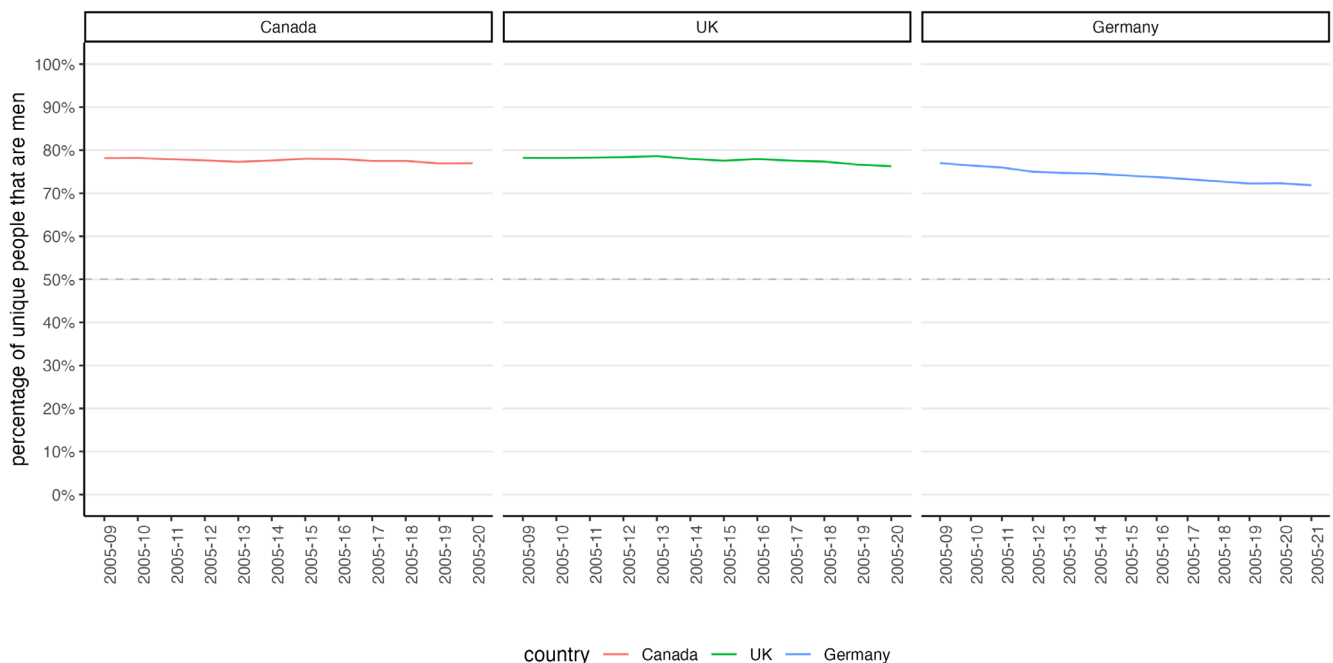

Figure 4.1: Male dominance over time
The percentage of unique people in each moving time window that are men in the film industry networks of each country.

Findings

Current rates of progress vary wildly.

At the current rate of change, gender equity where men occupy only 50 percent of key creative positions will not be achieved until the year 2215 in Canada, in 2085 in the UK, and 2041 in Germany.

Simply preventing men from dominating the composition of key creative teams does not necessarily disrupt men's dominance of the strongest network positions.

This is an important distinction. It means that lining up the numbers of men and WGM to be more statistically balanced does not directly translate into reducing men's centrality (or power) in the industry. Improving the number of women in the industry networks is critical, but it needs to be accompanied by strategies that also improve their position in the networks.

Interventions that ensure women get a "second shot" seem to show promise.

In particular, we found that shadowing schemes targeted at newly entering WGM effectively opened up the network elite to be less dominated by men, primarily because these schemes give WGM an extra project at a point of their career where most would otherwise exit the industry.

Even accounting for the strong statistical skew to men in the collaboration networks, all three industries we studied showed that many men tend to work with each other in preference to working with women.

Rather than study the proliferation of different kinds of project teams (women-only, mixed, men-only) we analysed the collaborative behaviours of men and WGM across the projects they worked on. To ensure the soundness of our analysis we needed to account for a combination of specific features in the film industry networks: small average team sizes and the overwhelming statistical domination of men. We used a specific technique to substantiate the significance of our findings (see technical report) and confirmed that men display a definite and disproportionate tendency to work with other men.

Interventions directed at people entering the network need to consider that at any given time around 70 percent of key creatives are "one and done".

This means that most of these creatives are unable to change the way the industry operates because they are unlikely to make it to a second project. Policies that target new entrants are investing energy in the very people who are shut out from the sites of power rather than those who are in a position to effect change quickly through industry networks. This is therefore also the slowest pathway to change.

Preventing all-male creative teams might make an impact:

We modelled the effects of retrospectively removing all the films in which all the key creative roles were occupied only by men. By removing all the men who worked on these projects we dramatically reduced the overall number of men in the network (in the case of the UK and Canada almost half the film industry's men vanished). Even doing this, men still dominated the numbers (more than 60 % of key creatives) in each industry but their access to the network elite was significantly reduced in the UK and Canada, less so in Germany. We infer from this modelling that policies based on the dramatic reduction of men in the network, and perhaps specifically, men who are prone to working on men-only projects, can make an impact for improving WGM's centrality in some industries.

Understanding Gendered Collaboration Patterns in the Existing Networks

What is ...

In order to identify the best way to change industry networks, we first need to understand how they operate. We used the data on which key creatives collaborated with each other on German, UK and Canadian projects to analyse the gendered mechanisms that underpin the three key creative networks.

…the pattern of who works with whom?

Simply looking at the numbers shows that despite an increase of WGM in the three networks over time, the proportion of men has barely shifted, with Germany showing the greatest improvement in proportional equity. At the project team level, in all three countries, the dominance of men in team constelltions is similar, with all-men creative teams being the most common composition. We also find that the propensity for working with familiar people is not necessarily gendered in Germany and Canada, though WGM in the UK appear to favour working with people they have worked with before a little more than men do.

When we zoom in on projects with more than four key creatives on them, Germany is the least likely to be all-men. Whether looking at projects with five or more key creatives or all projects, the UK is the country where the highest proportion of film projects are helmed by men-only creative teams; in both cases, Germany has the highest percentage of gender-balanced key creative teams. Table 4.1 demonstrates that, in each case country, between 21 and 26 percent of all projects have at least as many WGM as men in key creative positions, but when looking at projects with five or more people on them, this falls to nine to 13 percent. Larger key creative teams have more space for WGM, but this does not translate to more WGM-led projects.

Table 4.1: Frequency of key creative teams having at least as many WGM as men in each country

		Number of films with at least as many WGM as men	Percentage of films with at least as many WGM as men
Germany	All films	189	21.67 %
	Films with 5+ people	22	9.21 %
UK	All films	354	20.95 %
	Films with 5+ people	49	9.28 %
Canada	All films	505	25.95 %
	Films with 5+ people	76	13.77 %

In all three countries, WGM work with a substantially lower proportion of men than do men. In Canada, 80 percent of men's collaboration partners are men on average, while 68.4 percent of WGM's collaboration partners are men on average. In the UK, the mean percentage of men among men's collaboration partners is 79 percent, while among WGM it is 70.1 percent. In Germany, 75.9 percent of men's collaboration partners are men on average, while 67.7 percent of WGM's collaborators are men on average. Conversely, in Canada 11.1 percent of WGM work on projects where there are no men in key creative positions, as do 7.5 percent of WGM in the UK and 8.8 percent of WGM in Germany. By contrast, only 2.8 percent of men in Canada work on projects with no other men, as do 3.5 percent of men in the UK, and 3.9 percent of men in Germany. This indicates that all key creatives in these film industries work with many more men than WGM, but that this is particularly the case for men. In fact, even after accounting for the underlying number of men and WGM who work in each year, we still find that many men disproportionately or exclusively work with men.

The role that most accommodates the presence of WGM is producer, likely related to the fact that producers are the most numerous role on a project in general. In all three countries, the more producers there are, the more likely that at least one

of them is not a man. Nevertheless, producer teams where WGM outnumber men are extremely uncommon, occurring in less than ten percent of cases in all three countries.

We used two metrics of the importance of connections in a network to explore key collaborative ties between people: the number of times each pair of people has worked together in key creative teams, and the extent to which collaborations between people form bridges between otherwise unconnected parts of the networks. By these metrics, relationships between producers, compared to all other positions, are the most durable in all three countries. Mixed-gender producer teams are among the most durable collaborative relationships in the Canadian film industry. In Germany and the UK, men-men producer teams are among the most durable collaborative relationships. In all three countries, men form at least one part of almost all of the most significant relationships for potentially controlling information flow in the network.

…the position of men in the network elite?

There are different ways to measure influence in gendered film industry teams. We examine a variety of relational approaches that describe different kinds of social capital throughout the network. Network centrality measures help us to understand which people occupy structurally important positions within a network based on their relative importance. Because most people in networks like the three we analysed (where most people work on only one project) have very little power from a network perspective, we focus our attention on the top 1 % of people ranked by each centrality score – the "network elite". These are the people most able to change the network from a structural point of view.

If access to the "network elite" were unrelated to gender, we would expect that the gender composition of the top 1 % of ranked centrality scores would be the same as the gender composition of the overall network population. On the contrary, the network elite's gender composition shows that WGM are underrepresented in these top ranks when compared with their presence overall in the network. The only exceptions to this are Canada, where slightly more WGM are in the highest ranks by degree centrality than we would expect if gender were not a relevant factor, and the UK where the same is true for eigenvector centrality - though in both cases WGM are still hugely outnumbered by men (fig. 4.2). This suggests that access to important and influential network positions is even more dominated by men than the overall headcounts are.

What do centrality measures tell us in film collaboration networks?

Degree centrality – Degree is the number of people someone has worked with at the key creative level, and a high degree indicates that a person has many contacts and a relatively high profile among their peers.

Eigenvector centrality – A person with high eigenvector centrality has worked with particularly well-connected people.

Betweenness centrality – A person with high betweenness is in a strong position to mediate and control the flow of information through a network.
- Binary: only considers whether people have worked with one another before or not
- Weighted: considers the number of times people have worked together on projects

Closeness centrality – A person with high closeness centrality is somebody whose collaborations position them such that they could contact another person in the network by going through few intermediary contacts. Hence, the higher the closeness centrality of a person, the greater their ability to access and influence other people in the network.
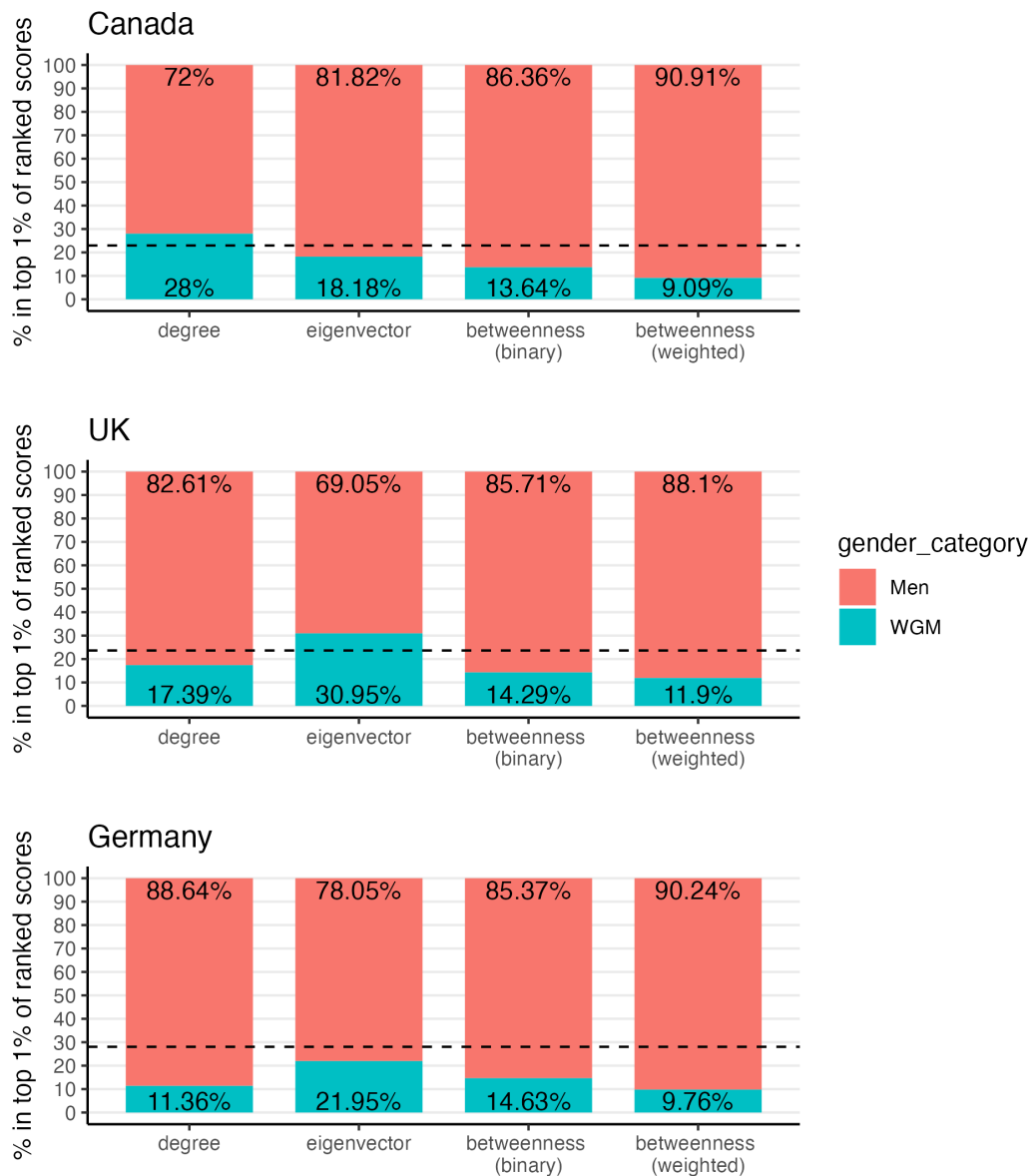
Figure 4.2: Percentage of people in the top 1 % in each country by gender category
The dashed reference line indicates the underlying percentage of people overall in the network that are not men.

…the rate of change for each industry?

To evaluate how the network patterns and mechanisms change over time, we use an overlapping four-year moving window to define time slices for the network.

In Canada, the percentage of people in the network that are men changes very little over time, remaining between 75 percent and 80 percent throughout. In the UK, a similar pattern is observed until the penultimate 2015–2018 window, at which point the proportion of men starts to fall more sharply. This loosely coincides with the introduction of significant gender equity policies in the UK (see the chapter "The Policies: Working Towards Gender Equity") though we need to be mindful of the lag between policy formation and promulgation.

In Germany, there is a clear and steady decline in the proportion of men across the whole data period, decreasing from close to 80 percent in the first window to under 70 percent in the final window.

Despite the high percentage of personnel leaving the country networks with each time slice, in all three countries, the proportion of men producers changes little over the data period. This indicates that the new cohorts entering the networks look a lot like the cohorts exiting the networks, contributing to the lack of compositional change. In each country there is a small decrease in the predominance of men among writers over time and, to an even lesser extent, among directors. Overall, we found that new people are not being disproportionately concentrated in any particular positions over others.

Rolling window approach

This approach takes all films within a four-year period and the people that worked on them and constructs the network from these projects. As such, it assumes that the most relevant ties are those that occurred in the last few years, with older collaborations no longer being included in the network. Each moving window moves forward two years, so that the final two years of each window is the first two years in the next window. Across the entire 2005–2020 period we have seven overlapping or "rolling" windows. In choosing four years as the temporal basis for defining windows we were guided by several factors:
- The length of time it takes to develop and produce a project
- The use of rolling windows in other national industry reporting
- The number of nodes (people) available in each time-period for analysis

In each country, only around 10–15 percent of people in any given time window also appeared on a different project in the previous window. In the UK and Canada, the percentage of people in each window who are new (not observed in any prior window) is consistently high for both men and WGM. In Germany, there is an uptick in returnees (people who did not appear in the previous window but did in a prior window) in the most recent time windows.

In Canada, access to the network elite follows the same pattern across the moving windows for each centrality measure: in the first three windows, men occupy all of the network elite positions, over the next three windows this falls to be close to the underlying percentage of men, and in the final window the predominance of men in the network elite increases again. In the UK, the gender balance of the network elite tracks the underlying overall gender balance of people quite closely over time, though men become over–represented for betweenness centrality in the later time windows. In Germany, men are over-represented among the highest degree nodes, and this increases over time; eigenvector tracks the under-lying gender composition quite closely, and men's prevalence among high betweenness nodes decreases over time but men are over-represented throughout.
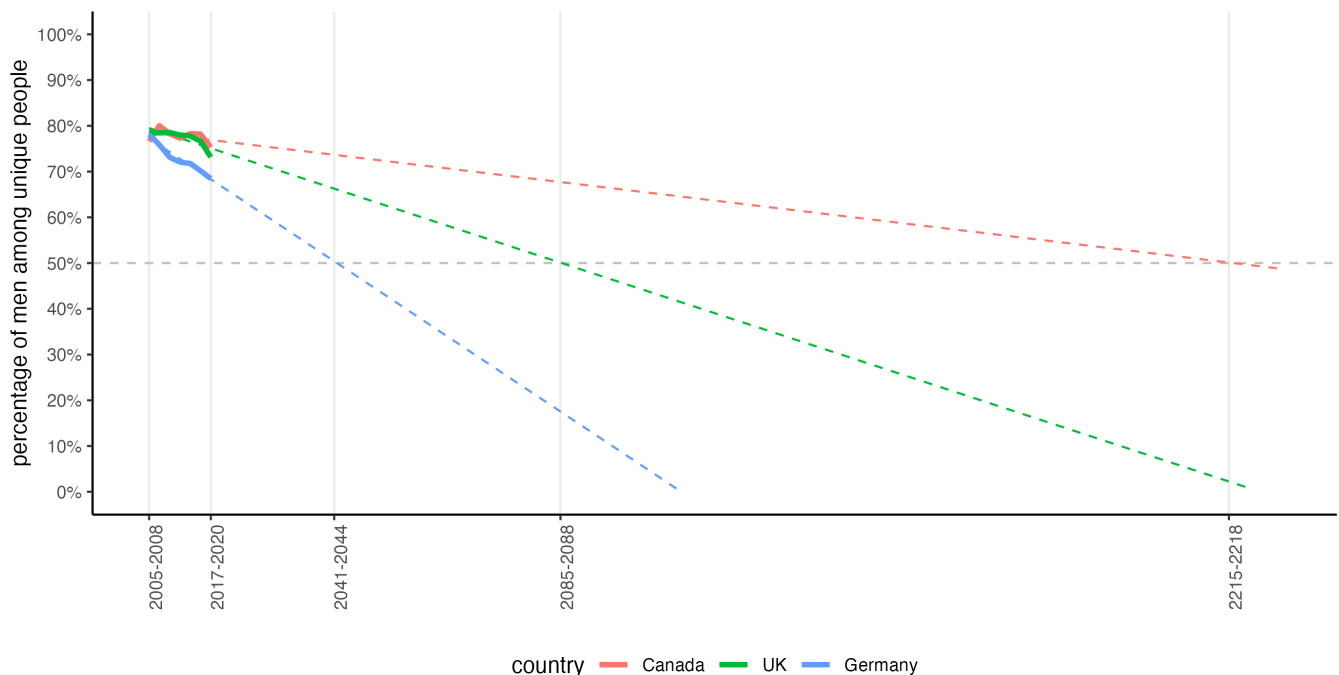

Figure 4.3: Male dominance over time
Simple linear regression line fitted to the lines for each country representing the proportion of people in each moving time window that are men. The dashed lines represent the predictions from the regression model for each country.

…the result of doing nothing?

The status quo of the networks in these three countries illustrates why intervention is necessary. However, we wanted to understand whether there is any credence to the notion that the industry is on the right path and is naturally evolving towards a more equitable state. Given the current policy environments and observed rates of change in the three industries, when will we see an equitable balance of WGM and men and their access to valuable network positions?

The results are interesting in their divergence even at the headcount level. Fitting a simple linear regression line to the percentage of people that are men (fig. 4.3) estimates that at the current rate of progress over the 2005–2020 span, men will only occupy 50 percent of key creatives in the year 2215 in Canada, in 2085 in the UK, and 2041 in Germany.

In addition to projecting when the headcounts will be equitable, we also project the composition of the network elite (fig. 4.4). Here, the picture is a little better, with most measures becoming balanced in each country in the next 10–20 years, meaning that both men and WGM will have access to the network elite in equal parts. However, high betweenness positions in the UK are actually becoming more men-dominated over time, as are high degree positions in Germany, so these positions are projected to become entirely occupied by men in the next decade.
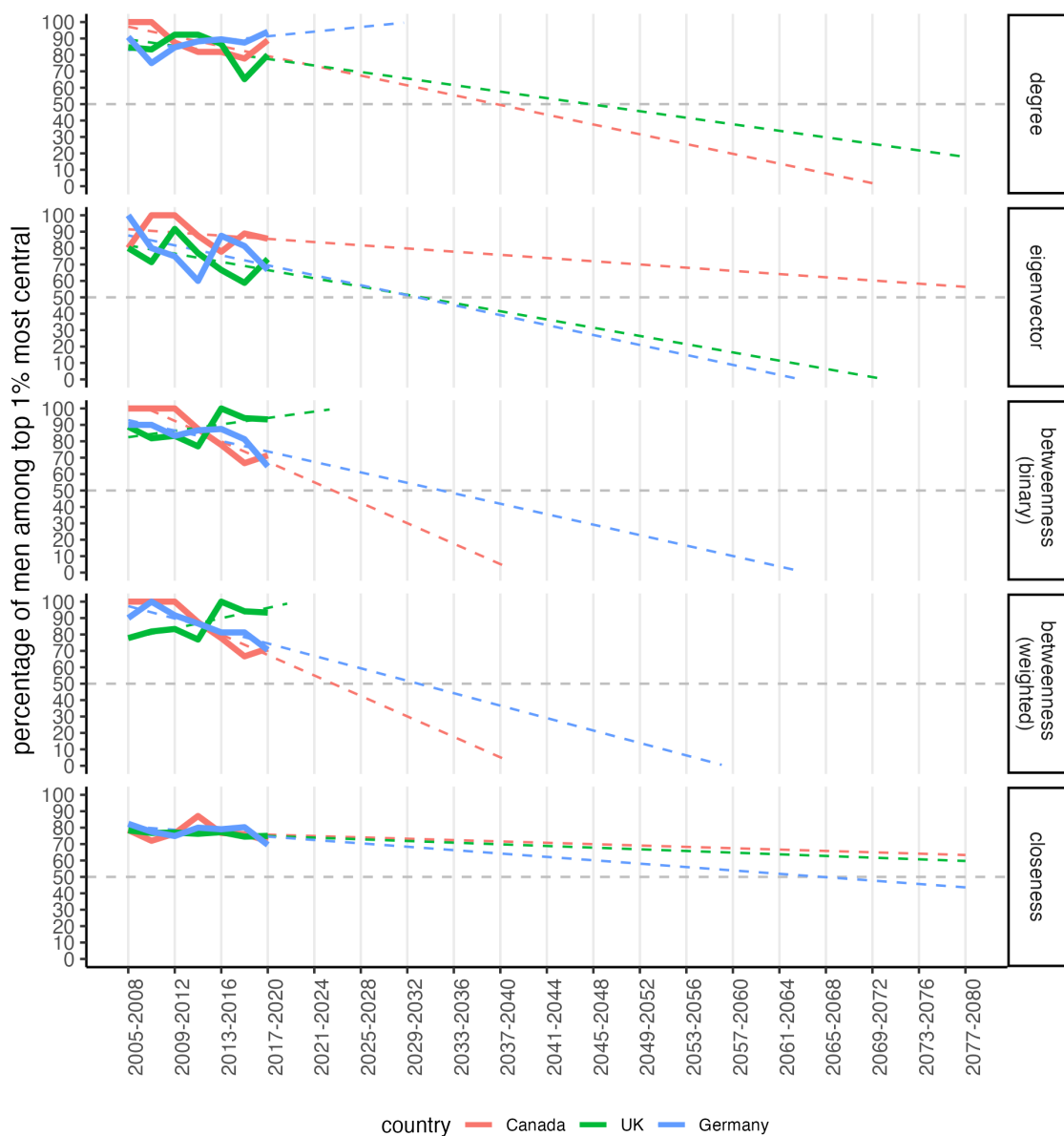

Figure 4.4: Percentage of men among top 1 % per centrality measure
Simple linear regression line fitted to the lines for each country representing the proportion of people in the top 1 % of centrality scores in each moving time window that are men. The dashed lines represent the predictions from the regression model for each country.

What if…

To explore some potential responses to the status quo identified in our *what if* analysis, we assess several "what-if" scenarios that loosely align with equity interventions in the project-based interactions of directors, writers and producers:

- What if women and gender minorities entering the industry were connected to an influential man (and vice versa) ("shadowing")?
- What if films could only be made if they included a WGM on the team ("gender inclusive quotas"), or equal numbers of WGM and men ("gender equity quotas")?
- What if the most influential ("central") people in the industry networks step aside?
- What if mediocre men producers were denied funding (removing mediocre men producers)?
- What if films with all-men creative teams were not possible (removing all-men projects)?

We wanted to know how well each of these hypothetical interventions is able to disrupt men's outsized predominance in the network elite relative to their overall prevalence in the network. If there's no increase in WGM's access to the social capital afforded by the network elite positions after an intervention, then this effectively means that the new network is not better for WGM than the old, unaltered network.

… we introduce shadowing?

Intuitively, establishing connections between newly entering WGM and influential men producers should have a positive impact on the overall position of WGM. This is because, in addition to their own projects, they instantly become connected to everyone within the teams led by the shadowed men producers. We indeed find positive outcomes for the gender composition of the network elite: by shadowing newly entering WGM to central men producers, we can realise a more balanced distribution between men and WGM among the industry's network elite, indicating more equitable access to network positions at earlier projected times.

In order to understand the extent to which the apparent success of shadowing was simply due to the fact that it gives a second project to WGM entering the network, we also implemented several other versions of the intervention. When we replace the actual project the newly entering WGM worked on with the hypothetical shadowing project (instead of adding the hypothetical project in addition to the real one), the disruptive effect disappeared. Moreover, when we shadowed WGM entrants to already-central WGM (instead of men) in addition to their actual first project, or shadowed WGM entrants to any random additional project regardless of who was on it, we found that the network elite was once again made more equitable. This implies that shadowing is successful as a gender equity intervention primarily because it gives shadows an extra project.

If the shadowing intervention we tested had been implemented in the industry after the initial time window in our data (2005–2008), the composition of the network elite would have already achieved gender equity in Canada and the UK.

… we introduce gender inclusive quotas?

Quotas and targets are commonly raised as potential methods for improving gender equity in the film industry. We implement this intervention as a hypothetical requirement by artificially toggling the gender category of one man on each all-male team to "WGM" - as though the project had hired a WGM instead of the man.

This obviously boosts the number and proportion of people who are labelled WGM in the networks, but the intervention's effect on the representation of WGM within the network elite is negligible in all three countries. From a network perspective, the introduction of inclusive quotas as a means to address gender-related disparities within the network elite appears to be largely ineffective.

… we introduce gender equity quotas?

We also assess the impact of "50-50" interventions (measuring men and WGM) by imposing a balanced gender distribution in every men-dominated project. For each film with more men than WGM in the key creative team, we randomly selected men and changed their gender to WGM until the team composition reached a 50 percent equity threshold. This resulted in us modifying the composition of 81.8 percent of films produced in Canada, 82.9 percent of films produced in the UK, and 76.2 percent of German-produced films.

The substantial replacement of men with WGM through introducing equity quotas reduced the prevalence of men to nearly 40 percent in all three networks. However, men's over-representation in accessing the network elite remains intact compared to their overall presence in the three jurisdictions. Balancing the gender proportion in men-dominated projects does not disrupt men's disproportionate dominance in the network elite. In other words, although there is a reduction in the overall number of men compared to WGM, men continue to disproportionately occupy the most structurally important network positions

… the network's most central people step aside?

In our "targeted" interventions, our objective is to identify individuals within the network based on specific structural characteristics they possess, remove them from the network and then assess the impact of this intervention. In the first instance, we remove "key players" from the network - a set of nodes who, when taken as a group, are particularly central in the network structure.

In Germany, this strategy appears to balance the proportion of men and WGM in the network elite. Despite this observed effect, removing influential people only provides promising projections towards achieving gender equity in the eigenvector score for Germany.

Overall, the removal of key players proposed here does not lead to a power shift between genders in all three jurisdictions.

… mediocre men producers are removed?

It is sometimes said that the biggest beneficiaries of patriarchy are mediocre men who take up the space that is denied to women. We aim to explore the impact of removing projects by "mediocre men" producers, which we defined as male producers who have worked on exactly two projects and have no projects in the first and last time slice of the network (2005–2008 and 2017–2021). In seeking to quantify a definition of "mediocre" we used a simple metric; men who worked on more films than the majority (i.e. they made more than one movie) but who also did not separate themselves from the majority of their peers during the collection period (i.e. they did not make more than two films). Since we couldn't assume that filmmakers present in the first time slice did not have a preceding trove of projects and nor could we assume that men isolated to the last time-slice would not proceed to further potential projects, we excluded those men who were only active in these time-slices from the definition of "mediocre".

If a mediocre man producer is the sole producer of a project, we eliminate the entire project from the network. This however, does not entail removing all the people associated with that particular film from the network if they participate in other projects. If a project involves a team of producers, we selectively remove only the mediocre men producer from the project while retaining the rest of the individuals involved.

The impact of removing mediocre men producers on the overall network sizes is minimal. Germany had the most people eliminated from the network (43 men and seven WGM), followed by the UK (34 men and one WGM), and then Canada (25 men and one WGM). Moreover, it does not reduce the over-representation of men in the network elite. Men who hold structural power in the network are least affected by this strategy and thus continue to dominate the strongest network positions in all jurisdictions for almost all centrality scores.

The removal of mediocre men producers and their projects has minimal effect since mediocre men were unlikely to be in the network elite to begin with. Accordingly, the removal does not lead to any significant improvement in the ability of WGM to access the network elite.

… all-men creative teams are removed?

We retroactively simulated a policy that disallows films with only men occupying all the positions of writer, director and producer on a film (the film equivalent of a "manel"). Table 4.2 outlines the statistical impact of such a policy on each network. We found that, under this scenario, some 42 percent of films in the Canadian and UK film industry would not have been made, removing almost half of all the men from the network. In Germany, a lower percentage of films would have been prevented (36.5 percent), leading to a lower percentage of men being deleted overall (38.9 percent). Statistically this would have a significant impact on the number of men in the networks of each industry. But what would the effect be on their network position?

Table 4.2: The number and percentage of projects and men removed from the original networks as a result of deleting projects with men-only key creative teams

	Canada	UK	Germany
Number (%) of films with all-men creative teams	366 (42 %)	720 (42.6 %)	710 (36.5 %)
Number (%) of men removed	783 (45.7 %)	1,454 (44.6 %)	1,155 (38.9 %)

When evaluating the network impact of this strategy, we consider the composition of the overall network as well as the network elite in the new networks where all projects have at least one WGM in a key creative role. Even after deleting all-men projects and, thus, so many men, the networks still remain men-dominated, with men accounting for 64 percent of people in the Canadian network and the UK network, and 61 percent of the German network (fig. 4.5). However, men's capacity to access the network elite at a greater rate than their overall prevalence is significantly reduced when looking at the networks covering the whole data period:

- In Germany, the gender composition of the top 1 % of centrality scores is almost the same as the overall gender composition of the network, deviating by less than five percent on each measure. This suggests that, in Germany,

removing men-only projects does have the effect of also disrupting men's disproportionate dominance of the network elite in the overall network covering the full data period.

- In the UK, WGM overperform their headcounts by improving to account for 40–50 percent of the top ranked scores across each measure except eigenvector.
- In Canada, men continue to overperform on eigenvector and betweenness centrality, but WGM account for almost 60 percent of the top 1 % of ranked degree scores.

Looking at the network elite over time, we find that the over-abundance of men in these positions is largely eliminated in the UK and Canada, where the percentage of the network
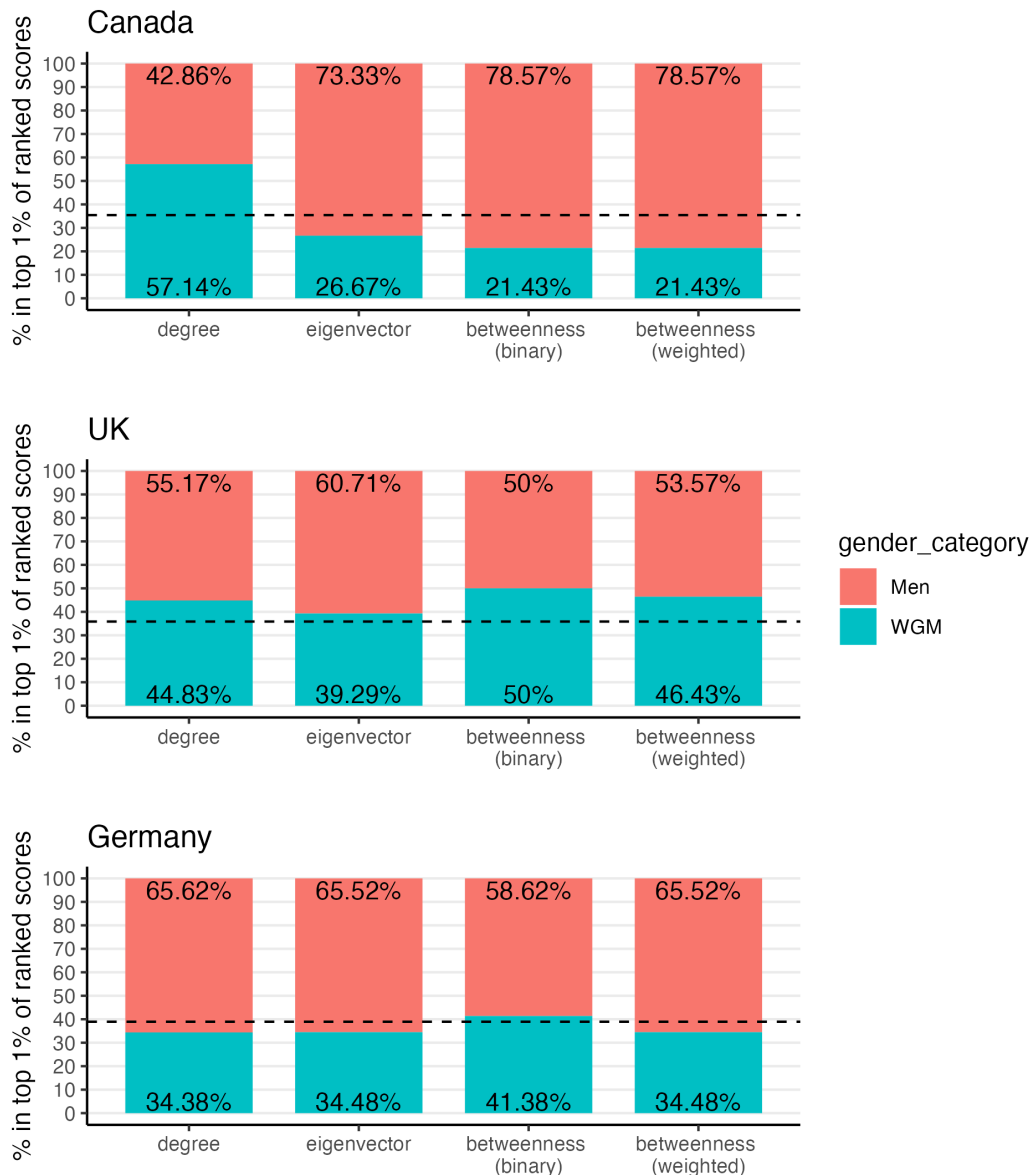
elite that are men decreases to levels that are consistent with or below the overall percentage of men in the network. In Germany, there is less improvement in terms of the composition of the network elite, as men actually increase their share of the top network positions over time, and are still over-represented for degree and eigenvector centrality. Thus, the effectiveness of this strategy in opening up access to the network elite in Germany is only observed in the full network aggregating across all projects, while the state of each individual time window does not improve much.

Figure 4.5: Percentage of people in the top 1 % in each country by gender category after removing men-only projects
Dashed reference line indicates the underlying percentage of people overall in the network that are not men after removing men-only projects.

What Next?

This report presented the findings from the research project "Gender Equity Policy (GEP) Analysis", which combined findings from a detailed analysis of gender equity policies, quantitative analysis of industry data and the gendered structures it reveals, and social network modelling of hypothetical policy interventions to increase gender equity. The project focused on three national film industries (Germany, the UK and Canada), supplemented with a quantitative analysis of 34 film industries supported by the Eurimages fund.

Our findings can be condensed into three core messages, which translate into a number of concrete suggestions for policy design.

Fighting gender inequity remains a long-haul endeavour

Women have remained a minority in key industry positions between 2005 and 2020. On average, only one in four key creative positions were occupied by women with the highest proportions for Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and Austria, and the lowest proportions for Spain, Italy, the Czech Republic, and Portugal. Much work still needs to be done to ensure equitable representation of women in key creative roles.

Yet, simply adding women is not enough. Balancing the numerical representation of men and women will not directly translate into achieving gender balance in network elites. In our network analysis men displayed a definite and disproportionate tendency to work with other men.

Policies need to pay attention to how women and gender minorities are able to participate in the industry and how positions of power in the network elite can be accessed at equitable rates. Interventions that ensure women and gender minorities get a "second shot" and policies that prevent all-male creative teams seem particularly promising for improving gender equity.

No one-size-fits-all solution exists

Inequity might look the same statistically, but our modelling shows that each jurisdiction has its own particularities. Change occurs at different speeds in different industries for example. At the current rate of change in the film industries, gender equity where men occupy 50 percent of key creative positions will not be achieved until the year 2215 in Canada, in 2085 in the UK, and 2041 in Germany.

Policies need to be attentive towards these differences. What may work in some industries may not work in others. Policies need to be agile, accountable and adjustable when necessary: encourage what works and amend what does not.

Policies need to be intentional and structural

Current policy conceives gender inequity through the lens of women's numerical underrepresentation. But as our policy analysis, interviews and network modelling show, what happens once women enter the industry is crucial for improving gender equity.

There is a growing recognition that gender inequity is a structural problem. This recognition is yet to be translated into structural solutions. To this end, policies need to also be more intentional about how they seek to bring about gender equity. Our research suggests that industry change should not focus on individual women, but on the behaviours of those who facilitate or obstruct women's careers in film.

Expand policy levers, reach and focus

Public funding instruments, such as the BFI Diversity Standards which make film funding conditional on the fulfilment of certain diversity criteria, are positively associated with the share of women in key creative positions. On this basis, we recommend expanding the reach of policies that make access to, for instance, funding or awards nominations dependent on progress towards gender equity. Ideally such policies would apply to the majority of film productions. Policies should include clear compliance mechanisms in order to reduce opportunities for faux compliance.

Our data modelling also shows that interventions that focus on changing the behaviours of the very people who are currently excluded from the sites of power are the slowest pathway to change. Similarly, strategies that only make a numerical impact (adding women and gender minorities, removing men) are of limited value. Instead strategies based on connecting under-represented groups (women and gender minorities) to the network elite show greater promise. Thus, we suggest that policy interventions redirect their attention to creating more inclusive behaviours in those industry professionals who dominate the network elites: mostly men, and almost entirely people who have worked on multiple projects.

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List of Abbreviations

BFI   British Film Institute

BKM   Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien = Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media

DFG   Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft = German Research Foundation

ESRC   The Economic and Social Research Council

FFA   Filmförderanstalt = German Federal Film Board

GEP   Gender Equity Policy

ORA   Open Research Area for the Social Sciences

SSHRC The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

STEM   Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

WGM   Women and gender minorities

Imprint

Re-Framing the Picture: An International Comparative Assessment of Gender Equity Policies in the Film Sector

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