

BFI
Film
Forever



AUDIENCES

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The audience lies at the heart of a vibrant and successful film economy and culture, yet current insight still provides a limited perspective on audience engagement. While data on cinema-going is robust, new research is needed to show the full picture of the audience on all platforms.

FACTS IN FOCUS

- In 2016, 15-24 year olds made up the largest proportion of the UK cinema audience, at 29%.
- UK films were popular across all demographic groups, with a particularly strong appeal for those aged 45 and over. UK independent films were most popular among cinema-goers in this demographic.
- *The Conjuring 2* had the largest above-average audience share among the 15-24 age group, while *Dad's Army* had the largest share among cinema-goers aged 55 and over.
- A wide range of genres appealed to women, whereas men were drawn to films with a strong action element.
- UK films attracted above-average audiences across all nations and regions, except Scotland.

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In earlier editions of the Yearbook, we have been able to estimate the total size of the film audience based on data from a range of sources. In the last few years, however, while we have been able to track a significant growth in revenues for online services, we have been unable to define viewing figures for films accessed online via streaming or download-to-own, nor have we been able to define viewing figures for films watched on physical video such as DVD or Blu-ray. In 2016, television remained the most popular platform in the UK for watching film, while cinema-going outperformed physical and digital video sales, and remains the largest single revenue source for the film industry.

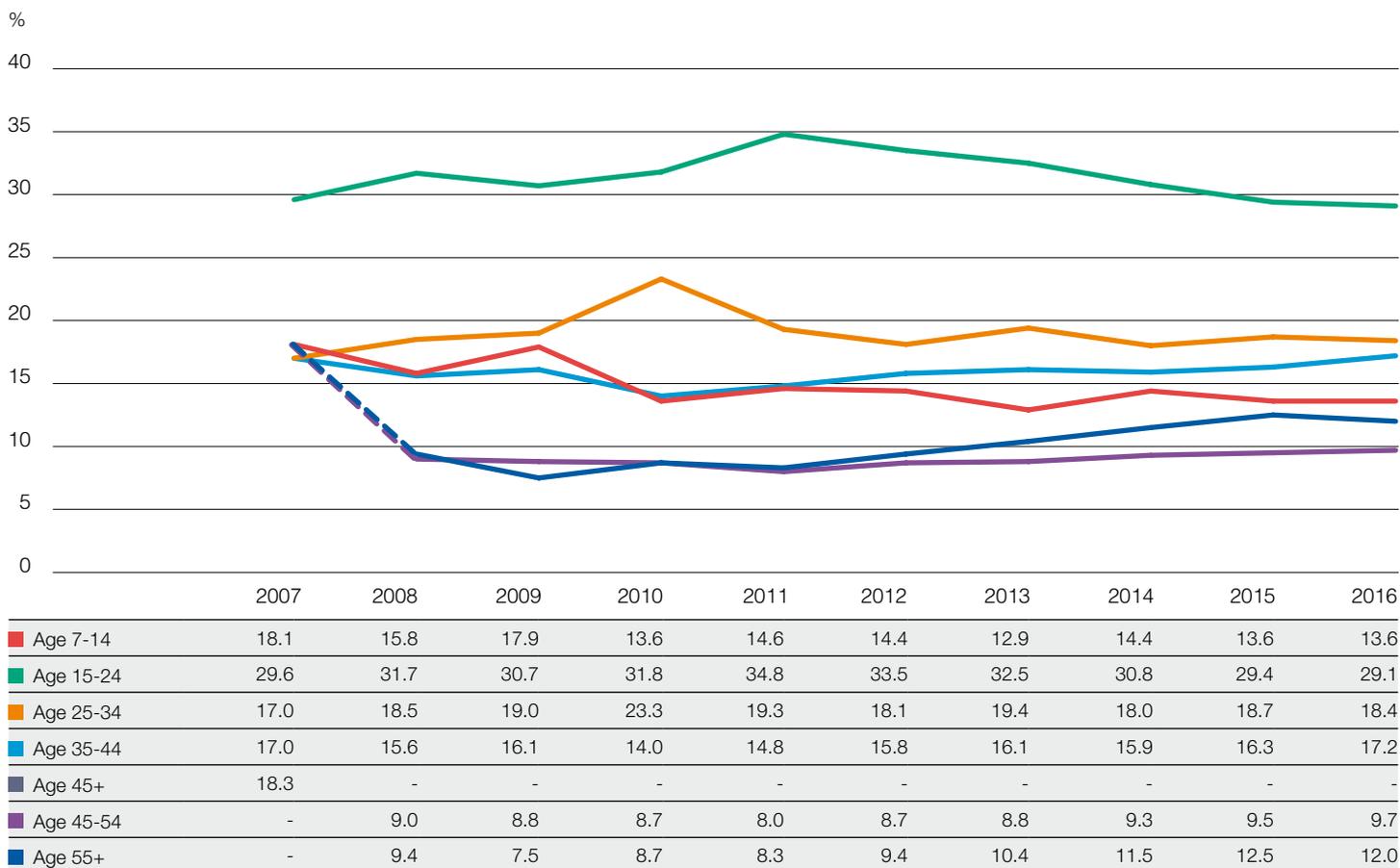
In this chapter, we look at UK cinema admissions by age, cinema-goers' film preferences by age, gender, geographical location and socio-economic status. Unlike in previous years, film consumption by ethnicity and disability is not covered.

CINEMA AUDIENCE BY AGE

Figure 1 shows the age trends of cinema admissions from 2007 to 2016. The relative proportion of admissions for each category has been broadly similar throughout the period, with fluctuations based on the release of a small number of successful titles with a strong appeal to particular age groups. However, between 2007 and 2011, there was an upward trend in the share of the audience drawn from the 15-24 year old age group, which rose from 30% to a peak of 35%. From 2012 the share for this group decreased, with 2016 recording a 10-year low of 29.1%. As a counter to this decline, the share of the audience associated with the older age groups (45 and over) has increased, most notably for cinema-goers aged 55 and over, due in part to the increased availability of films appealing to this demographic and their comparatively higher disposable income and leisure time.

Interestingly, for the first half of the period the shares of admissions for 7-14 and 35-44 year olds were very similar, which may have been due to parents and carers taking their children to the cinema. The subsequent divergence in shares may partly be explained by a greater number of films being released in recent years that appeal to older age groups.

Figure 1 Age distribution of admissions, 2007-2016



Source: CAA Film Monitor

Note: Before 2008, CAA reported 45 year olds and over as one category.

FILM PREFERENCES BY AGE

Tables 1-6 outline films with a statistically significant above-average audience share across different age groups to show the range of films that most appealed to each group in 2016. That is to say, highlighting films where the difference between the average audience attendance and each age group attendance for a particular film is greater than a standard statistical threshold. UK films had a significant appeal across all age groups, particularly the older age groups.

Family films and animated features appealed most to the 7-14 age group with *Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip*, *The Secret Life of Pets* and *The BFG* having the highest significant above-average audiences. Fantasies such as *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* and *The Huntsman: Winter's War* also appealed strongly to this group (Table 1). Action films based on comic books such as *Suicide Squad*, *Deadpool* and *Doctor Strange* dominated the list of films with the strongest appeal to 15-24 year olds, however, the horror sequel *The Conjuring 2* had the highest significant above-average audience (Table 2). Comic-based action films also appealed to 25-34 year olds, alongside adventure and drama titles *The Legend of Tarzan* and *The Revenant* (Table 3).

While family-friendly titles always attract above-average audiences from the 35-44 year old age group (which is made up of a high percentage of parents and carers) in 2016 action titles were the most popular films in this category, with *London Has Fallen*, *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* and *X-Men: Apocalypse* all having significant appeal (Table 4). A variety of genres were popular with cinema-goers in the two older age groups, both of which showed a strong preference for UK films (Tables 5 and 6). All of the films attracting above-average audiences from 45-54 year olds also appealed strongly to the 55+ age group, including *Bridget Jones's Baby*, *Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie* and *Eddie the Eagle*. The latest instalment in the Bridget Jones series was the most popular film among the 45-54 year old age group, while *Dad's Army* had the greatest appeal for 55+ audiences (which made up over half of the total audience for this film). UK independent films were particularly popular with audiences aged 55 or over: six of the nine UK films with an above-average audience share in this category were independent titles.

Table 1 Films with a significant above-average audience in the 7-14 age group, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	Age group % of film's total audience
Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip	43
The Secret Life of Pets	40
The BFG	35
Zootropolis	35
Trolls	34
Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children (UK)	33
Moana	31
Finding Dory	29
Alice Through the Looking Glass (UK)	27
The Jungle Book (UK)	21
The Huntsman: Winter's War (UK)	21
7-14 age group share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	20
7-14 age group in total survey population (%)	13

Source: CAA Film Monitor

Notes:

'Audience' in this table and throughout this chapter refers to film-going occasions. That is, if a person went to the cinema to see 10 films in the year, that person would have contributed 10 film-going occasions to the audience figures above, unless otherwise stated. Repeat visits to the same films are not recorded in Cinema Advertising Association (CAA) Film Monitor.

CAA Film Monitor included 94 film titles (mostly mainstream) of the 812 theatrical releases in 2016. The Film Monitor survey is carried out via a fortnightly omnibus survey of over 1,000 adults and children aged 7+, of those who had been to the cinema in the previous three months. Films are also age-filtered based on the film certificate.

Table 2 Films with a significant above-average audience in the 15-24 age group, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	Age group % of film's total audience
The Conjuring 2 (UK)	67
Suicide Squad	58
Deadpool	52
Grimsby (UK)	51
Me Before You (UK)	44
Passengers (UK)	44
Now You See Me 2 (UK)	43
Doctor Strange (UK)	41
Captain America: Civil War	40
Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice	34
X-Men: Apocalypse	33
15-24 age group share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	28
15-24 age group in total survey population (%)	29

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

Table 3 Films with a significant above-average audience in the 25-34 age group, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	Age group % of film's total audience
The Legend of Tarzan (UK)	27
Deadpool	26
The Revenant	24
X-Men: Apocalypse	24
Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice	24
Suicide Squad	24
25-34 age group share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	18
25-34 age group in total survey population (%)	18

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

Table 4 Films with a significant above-average audience in the 35-44 age group, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	Age group % of film's total audience
Trolls	30
London Has Fallen (UK)	24
Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice	23
Finding Dory	23
X-Men: Apocalypse	21
35-44 age group share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	18
35-44 age group in total survey population (%)	17

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

Table 5 Films with a significant above-average audience in the 45-54 age group, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	Age group % of film's total audience
Bridget Jones's Baby (UK)	19
Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (UK)	17
Eddie the Eagle (UK)	16
Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them (UK)	14
The Revenant	14
Jason Bourne (UK)	14
45-54 age group share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	10
45-54 age group in total survey population (%)	10

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

Table 6 Films with a significant above-average audience in the 55+ age group, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	Age group % of film's total audience
Dad's Army (UK)	52
Eye in the Sky (UK)	49
The Danish Girl (UK)	38
Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (UK)	37
A Street Cat Named Bob (UK)	33
The Girl on the Train	27
Bridget Jones's Baby (UK)	22
Jason Bourne (UK)	22
The Revenant	19
Eddie the Eagle (UK)	18
Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them (UK)	16
55+ age group share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	11
55+ age group in total survey population (%)	13

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

FILM PREFERENCES BY GENDER

The overall audience for the top 20 and top UK films in 2016 had a very slight bias towards males who made up 51% of total cinema-goers for these films. On an individual basis, some films attracted substantially more of one gender than the other. Table 7 shows the top six films with statistically significant above-average male and female audiences, and six films that had no significant gender appeal. Titles with a strong action element were popular among male audiences, with *Jason Bourne*, *Grimsby* and *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* heading the list of films with a greater appeal. Female audiences were drawn to a broader range of films. The most popular films were the comedies *Bridget Jones's Baby* and *Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie*, the romance *Me Before You* and the biopic *The Danish Girl*. Female audiences had a slightly stronger preference for UK films compared to male audiences, with five of the top six films with an above-average female audience share being British.

Table 7 Audience gender split, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Significant greater male audience share	Male %	Female %
Jason Bourne (UK)	73	27
Grimsby (UK)	70	30
Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice	68	32
Deadpool	67	33
London Has Fallen (UK)	67	33
Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (UK)	66	34

Significant greater female audience share	Male %	Female %
Bridget Jones's Baby (UK)	18	82
Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (UK)	21	79
Me Before You (UK)	21	79
The Danish Girl (UK)	31	69
The Girl on the Train	32	68
Alice Through the Looking Glass (UK)	32	68

Gender difference not significant	Male %	Female %
Eye in the Sky (UK)	54	46
Now You See Me 2 (UK)	52	48
The Conjuring 2 (UK)	51	49
Passengers (UK)	50	50
The Jungle Book (UK)	48	52
Eddie the Eagle (UK)	47	53
The Huntsman: Winter's War (UK)	44	56

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

FILM PREFERENCES BY SOCIAL GROUP

In 2016, a small number of films had significant above-average audiences across the social groups, and only the AB category showed a preference for UK films. Tables 8-11 outline the films with the strongest appeal to each group in the year.

Five releases attracted significant above-average audiences from the AB social group in 2016, with *Eye in the Sky*, *Bridget Jones's Baby* and *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* having the strongest appeal (Table 8). All five titles were UK qualifying films and three – *Eye in the Sky*, *Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie* and *Eddie the Eagle* – were UK independent films. (*Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* was the overall top earning film at the UK box office in 2016 and *Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie* was the top earning UK independent film.)

Table 8 Films with significant above-average AB audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	AB group % of film's total audience
Eye in the Sky (UK)	44
Bridget Jones's Baby (UK)	41
Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (UK)	41
Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (UK)	40
Eddie the Eagle (UK)	39
AB share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	32
AB in total survey population (%)	31

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

All of the three films attracting significant above-average audiences from the C1 social group in 2016 were titles based on comic books. The DC Comics title *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* had the greatest appeal (Table 9).

Table 9 Films with significant above-average C1 audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	C1 group % of film's total audience
Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice	39
Captain America: Civil War	38
Deadpool	38
C1 share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	33
C1 in total survey population (%)	33

Source: CAA Film Monitor.

See notes to Table 1.

Only one film generated a significant above-average audience from the C2 social group: *Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip*. This film, which is the fourth instalment in the Alvin and the Chipmunks series, also had the greatest appeal for the DE social group (Tables 10 and 11).

Table 10 Films with significant above-average C2 audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	C2 group % of film's total audience
Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip	26
C2 share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	20
C2 in total survey population (%)	20

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

Table 11 Films with significant above-average DE audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	DE group % of film's total audience
Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip	20
Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice	19
DE share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	15
DE in total survey population (%)	15

Source: CAA Film Monitor

See notes to Table 1.

FILM PREFERENCES BY NATION OR REGION

The national and regional distribution of audiences for the 2016 top 20 films and top UK films focuses on releases that attracted an above-average audience in each ISBA television region as defined by the Cinema Advertising Association (for ease of understanding the data are presented by geographic region). The survey which provides this data does not include Northern Ireland.

Every television region covered by the survey had at least one film which attracted significant above-average audiences, with the exception of Scotland, where no 2016 release had an above-average appeal. Tables 12-16 show the four regions (East of England, North West, London and the home counties, and South East) which had four or more films with a significant above-average audience and Wales (which had three films with an above-average audience) to give an impression of the range of films that appealed most in these areas.

The East of England had the highest number of releases with a significant above-average audience in 2016, with seven films including *The Conjuring 2*, *The Danish Girl* and *The Huntsman: Winter's War* (Table 12). Four of the seven titles with significant appeal were UK films.

Table 12 Films with a significant above-average East of England audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	East of England % of film's total audience
The Conjuring 2 (UK)	11
The Danish Girl (UK)	10
The Huntsman: Winter's War (UK)	10
Suicide Squad	10
Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip	10
London Has Fallen (UK)	9
The BFG	8
East of England share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	6
East of England in total survey population (%)	6

Source: CAA Film Monitor

East of England corresponds to the ISBA Anglia region.

See notes to Table 1.

Five films achieved significant above-average audiences in the North West, including the family-friendly releases *The Secret Life of Pets* and *The BFG* (Table 13). Two of the five films were UK studio-backed titles.

Table 13 Films with significant above-average North West audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	North West % of film's total audience
The Secret Life of Pets	18
The BFG	17
Doctor Strange (UK)	16
Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them (UK)	16
The Revenant	16
North West share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	12
North West in total survey population (%)	12

Source: CAA Film Monitor

North West corresponds to the ISBA Granada region.

See notes to Table 1.

The adventure film *The Legend of Tarzan* attracted the highest significant above-average audience in London and the home counties in 2016, followed by action and animation titles *X-Men: Apocalypse*, *Jason Bourne* and *Trolls* (Table 14). Two of the titles were UK studio-backed films.

Table 14 Films with significant above-average London and the home counties audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	London/home counties % of film's total audience
The Legend of Tarzan (UK)	36
X-Men: Apocalypse	28
Jason Bourne (UK)	27
Trolls	27
London and the home counties share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	21
London and the home counties in total survey population (%)	22

Source: CAA Film Monitor

London and the home counties corresponds to the LWT Carlton region.

See notes to Table 1.

Three of the four films with a significant above-average audience in the South East were UK films, and two of these were UK independent titles (Table 15). The list is headed by *Eye in the Sky*, the only independent title to head one of the national/regional tables for significant above-average audiences.

Table 15 Films with significant above-average South East audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	South East % of film's total audience
Eye in the Sky (UK)	24
Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (UK)	17
Bridget Jones's Baby (UK)	16
Finding Dory	14
South East share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	10
South East in total survey population (%)	11

Source: CAA Film Monitor

South East corresponds to the ISBA Meridian region.

See notes to Table 1.

Two of the three releases to achieve significant above-average audiences in Wales were UK films, one of which was an independent UK film (Tables 16).

Table 16 Films with significant above-average Wales audience share, 2016 top 20 films and top UK films

Title	Wales % of film's total audience
London Has Fallen (UK)	12
Dad's Army (UK)	12
Zootropolis	10
Wales share of top 20 and top UK audience (%)	6
Wales in total survey population (%)	7

Source: CAA Film Monitor

Wales corresponds to the ISBA HTV region.

See notes to Table 1.

Of the remaining regions, the Midlands had three films with a significant above-average audience, the South West and Yorkshire and The Humber had two each, and the North East had one. The film with the highest above-average appeal in the Midlands was *The Girl on the Train*, in the South West it was *Eddie the Eagle* and in Yorkshire and The Humber it was *Moana*. *Alice Through the Looking Glass* was the only film to attract a significant above-average audience in the North East.

While no films attracted a significant above-average audience in Scotland, the film with the largest Scottish share of total audience was *Now You See Me 2*.



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