

To Ofcom regarding WALES: in the Review of Regional TV
Production and Programming Guidance: Consultation

I am writing in response to Ofcom's consultation on its review of regional TV production and programming guidance. I am very disappointed that on-screen talent is excluded from the criteria for a production to qualify as regional. This includes productions made in the UK's nations, in particular in my nation of Wales!

I am writing to strongly urge Ofcom to include opportunities for on-screen talent in its revised guidance and explanatory notes for public service broadcasters on regional TV production and TV production in the UK's nations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

While Ofcom recognises that on-screen talent is an important, if not essential part of the production industry and recognises also the benefits of local casting initiatives, it is extremely disappointing that the only reference in the amended guidance to on-screen talent is that it's exempt from the criteria!

I can only speak for Wales, when I say that there is enormous diversity of first class performing talent in this nation and local castings and auditions would give these artists the opportunity to be seen and considered for work where they reside. Not all performers, actors, dancers, singers etc. have the desire or even the possibility to live in London, the capital of a different nation! They reside in Wales because it is their land, by choice or birth, and they wish to work here as much as possible.

Wales also boasts a number of excellent, world class training establishments for actors and singers (amongst which The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama) and foundation and dance degree courses for professional dancers. It is rather

shameful that the energy, expertise and finance expended in these establishments is simply ignored when it comes to their graduates being able to find television or film work in Wales.

For some time Wales has attracted TV and film production companies from London and from outside the UK, our locations are superb and costs are considerably lower than in centres like London. Also, there are additional financial incentives to attract production companies to Wales. It is somewhat insulting to us that, when it comes to artists before the camera, excellent Welsh based on-screen talent is being ignored and the opportunities and castings are offered elsewhere, whilst the companies in question profit from everything else that we have to offer.

The purpose of this regulatory structure is to strengthen regional and national production centres and the creative and cultural economies across the UK, including helping to disperse job opportunities in the sector. Actors, performers, singers and dancers are a key part of UK creative economies in the nations and regions. They are, in fact, an essential factor in the success of productions.

I strongly urge you to include opportunities for on-screen talent in the guidance and explanatory notes on regional production, and look forward to your response to this consultation.

Yours sincerely,

Jenni Barbieri

(Dancer, actress, choreographer and Equity member)