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21 May 2025

## Channel Four Television Corporation's Statement of Media Content Policy 2024

Dear Alex,

Please find enclosed our annual review of Channel Four Television Corporation's ('C4C') Statement of Media Content Policy (the 'SMCP'). This assessment continues to play an important role in how we hold C4C to account for its performance in delivering its public service remit and media content duties and I would like to take this opportunity to thank your team for their engagement on this work. As we look to implement the Media Act, consulting on a range of new regulatory duties and reporting requirements for C4C, we will consider whether a new approach may be necessary in future, to take account of these additional aspects of C4C's performance. We will share our decision with your successor and the team in due course.

We have brought forward our assessment this year to coincide with the earlier publication of your Annual Report and Accounts and the publication of your proposed Commissioning Guidelines. Parliament's decision to enable C4C to make its own content, alongside further reforms to support the long-term sustainability of C4C, marked a significant moment in Channel 4's evolution. Your publication today is another important milestone in both C4C's development and the implementation of your *Fast Forward* strategy.

We recognise that the rapidly changing media sector creates multiple challenges for C4C as you seek to reorganise the business in line with *Fast Forward*. We know that you and your teams are working hard to balance securing the long-term future of the organisation by diversifying your revenue streams, including by taking steps towards IP ownership and content production; along with delivering strongly against Channel 4's remit and duties for both streaming and linear audiences. We will continue to follow your plans in this area closely.

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### **As you step up the rollout of *Fast Forward*, you must closely monitor and transparently measure progress towards meeting the strategy's ambitious objectives.**

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Turning to this year's assessment, your annual report shows that you are accelerating the implementation of all aspects of *Fast Forward* to become a digital-first public service streamer by 2030. In an improved advertising market, you were able to offset a slight decline in your linear ad revenues with growth in digital advertising, although this was below the market average growth in 2024. You also made headway with plans to re-engineer the business by cutting a number of operational costs and achieving a large reduction in C4C's deficit. It is also positive to see further strong growth both in C4C's provision of streaming and social content, and in the proportion of viewing to these services.

However, the continued decline in linear reach to all the commercial PSBs in 2024 and the uncertain nature of the ad market, serve to underline the critically important role of *Fast Forward* in helping to secure the continued success of C4C. This leads me to reiterate the importance of C4C setting out more detail on how the overarching objectives in this plan will be met and developing metrics that

transparently and consistently track progress towards your goals. We at Ofcom look forward to seeing these put in place over the coming year.

### **C4C continued to deliver for audiences in 2024 with a solid performance against its remit and content duties.**

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C4C's content continues to be well regarded by audiences who consistently expressed high levels of satisfaction with its linear and streaming output. C4C's performance against measures for innovation, experimentation, distinctiveness and creativity generally remain in line with previous years. C4C has also performed relatively strongly against the measures you introduced in 2022 to better track performance against your remit and compared to your competitors.

In a year where the commissioning budget for originations shrank by 6%, C4C's content achieved a solid performance with audiences. Returning series like *The Great British Bake Off*, *Gogglebox*, *Married at First Sight* and *The Piano* continued to deliver some of C4C's biggest audiences. New programmes that performed strongly in 2024 included a number of crime focused titles, from the BAFTA winning *To Catch a Copper* and *The Jury: Murder Trial* to the RTS award winning *The Push: Murder on the Cliff*.

Your Annual Report clearly articulates the difficulty of attracting audiences to unfamiliar shows in a highly competitive environment and we do not underestimate this challenge. Last year we highlighted that C4C's transition to a digital-first commissioning strategy would be crucial in balancing established formats and taking risks on new commissions. We recognise there is always a lag between setting out plans and airing the resulting shows. As the commissioning strategy becomes more established, we urge you to ensure that C4C is embracing its decades-old tradition of being bold, as you seek to deliver hit shows for streaming and linear audiences that exemplify C4C's distinctive, innovative and risk taking brand.

The powerful coverage of the 2024 Paris Paralympics, spanning 1,300 hours across a range of platforms and reaching almost 20 million people embodied both the Channel 4 ethos and your organisation's broader commitment to on and off-screen diversity. C4C continued to air a range of thought-provoking shows that represented the culturally diverse nature of the UK on-screen and provided new insights and perspectives, including the documentaries *Me and the Voice in My Head*; *Defiance: Fighting the Far Right* and the eight part drama *Queenie*. Off-screen we welcome both the launch of your *Equity by Design* strategy and your strong performance as an employer in attracting diverse talent.

Turning to News, as people increasingly find news and information from diverse sources including social media, which is less trusted for accuracy or impartiality, the role that strong impartial news brands like *Channel 4 News* play in the wider news ecosystem becomes ever more important. C4C continued to perform well against its duty to provide news and current affairs to UK audiences in 2024, including through its ongoing coverage of the wars in Ukraine and Gaza and the elections in both the UK and the US. This was recognised in the Royal Television Journalism awards with a second consecutive win for *Channel 4 News* as Network Daily News Programme of the Year and with Cathy Newman winning both Network Television Journalist of the year award and Network Interview of the year. Our research shows that Channel 4's news offering remains highly valued by its audience, but the continuing decline in linear viewing underscores the importance of reaching new audiences with trusted and accurate news. We are encouraged to see the significant increase in the volume of news content you have made available in the last year across C4C's streaming and social platforms, and we welcome the growth in engagement amongst young audiences with this content. We are also pleased to see growth in viewing to C4C's long running current affairs strand *Dispatches*

in 2024 but note that its 16-34 audience generally declined, underlining the need for current affairs output that reaches and resonates with this age group.

We continue to follow C4C's expansion of its youth-focused YouTube channel, Channel 4.0, and newer content strands aimed at older children and younger adults, such as *Minor Issues*, *Worst in Class*, *Baddest in the World*. While the figures in your Annual Report on the growth of audiences to both Channel 4.0 and the *UNTOLD* current affairs strand appear to be encouraging, this is a good example of where more consistent data-supported reporting is required to more clearly demonstrate how well you are serving younger audiences. On the linear service it was positive to see the older children's show *Junior Taskmaster* winning the 2024 comedy entertainment award at the 2025 RTS Programme Awards.

### **C4C's updated 4 *All the UK* strategy places a renewed emphasis on commissioning from the nations and regions of the UK**

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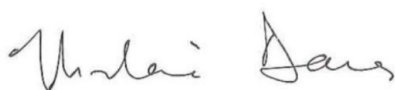
Although C4C spent 4% more on content originated outside London in 2024, investment in commissions from outside England fell for the second successive year, so we particularly welcome the latest push in the 4 *All the UK* initiative launched last October. Your updated nations and regions commissioning strategy will be vital in strengthening relationships with the production sector throughout the UK, as you work towards boosting the pipeline of Made outside England commissions ahead of meeting higher quotas from 2030.

We understand that the strategy has so far been met with a positive reception in parts of the sector and we are pleased to see the inclusion of some initial new data analysis in this year's Annual Report which enhances our understanding of C4C's performance in the nations and regions. We also welcome your decision to double the 4*Skills* investment in skills and career progression throughout the UK to £10m from 2025. This comes at a crucial time for supporting both the continuity of the production talent pipeline and the long-term sustainability of the UK production sector. In line with our commitment last year, Ofcom will continue to closely monitor C4C's work in the nations and regions ahead of the first full year of reporting on the new requirements in 2026.

Finally, as you to begin to prepare the way for a new Chief Executive to lead C4C, I'd like to extend my thanks to you for steering the organisation through a number of significant challenges that have faced Channel 4 and UK broadcasting during your tenure, including the Covid pandemic, potential privatisation, the slump in the advertising market, and the major disruption to the sector from the growth in global competition for commissions, talent and audiences. The latest phase of Channel 4's evolution presents opportunities for the new CEO and Chair to lead the organisation in connecting with a new generation of viewers and strengthening Channel 4's position as a highly distinctive and risk-taking broadcaster. I look forward to engaging with your successor and with the new Chair, once Ofcom has completed that appointment process.

I am copying this letter and review to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and the Chairs of the House of Commons Select Committee for Culture, Media and Sport, and the House of Lords Select Committee for Communications and Digital. We will also publish both documents on Ofcom's website.

Yours sincerely,



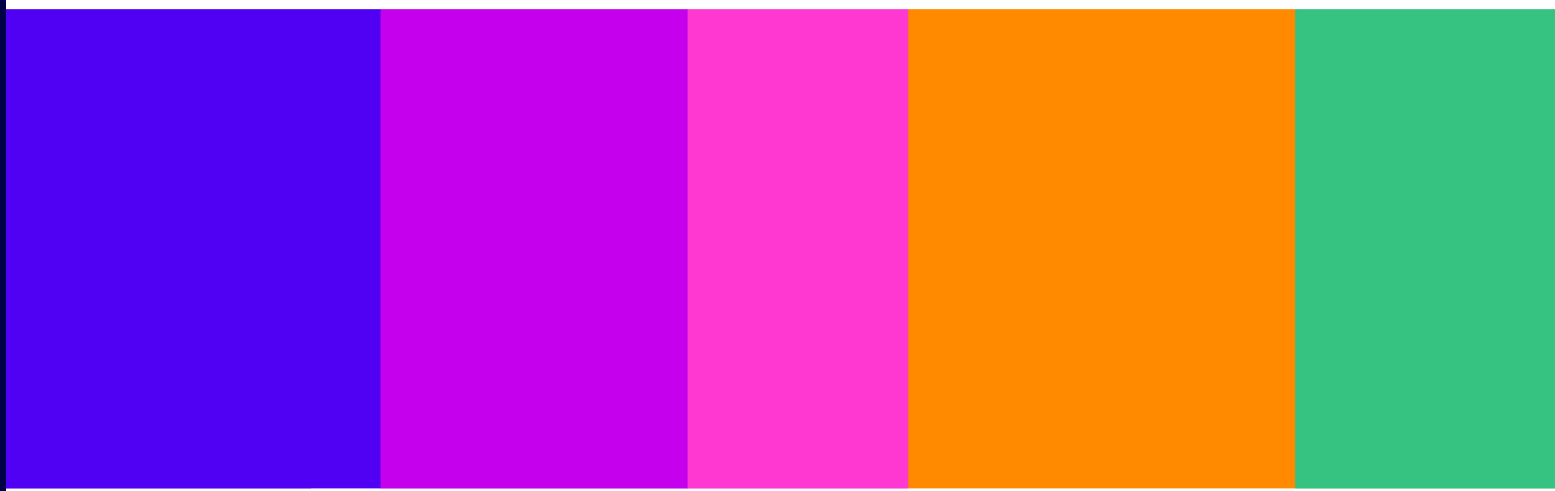
Melanie Dawes

# **Channel 4 Television Corporation's performance in delivering its remit and content duties in 2024**

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## **Report**

Published 21 May 2025



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# 1. Overview

## What we have found – in brief

This document is Ofcom’s response to Channel Four Television Corporation’s (‘C4C’) Statement of Media Content Policy and Statement of Programme Policy (referred to as the ‘SMCP’) which sets out C4C’s plans for meeting its remit and media content duties in the coming year and reports on its performance over the past year. As part of our Media Act implementation programme, we recently [consulted on new guidance](#) relating to C4C’s reporting, which will apply from 2026.

Overall, we have concluded that despite the ongoing challenges facing C4C, it performed well against its remit and media content duties in 2024. In this year’s response, we recognise in particular:

- The updated nations and regions commissioning strategy, which we consider will be crucial to both strengthening C4C’s relationship with the production sector and boosting commissioning across the whole of the UK.
- C4C’s continued commitment to championing the diversity of the UK on and off-screen, notably with its extensive coverage of the 2024 Paris Paralympics and its investment in training new talent under its *4Skills* initiative.
- The ongoing digital-first drive to reach audiences through streaming, particularly through its YouTube provision and its efforts to attract younger audiences to its news content on social media platforms such as TikTok.

In our SMCP response [last year](#), we said that having set out its *Fast Forward* strategy to transition into a digital-first public service streamer, we expected C4C to provide more detail on how the plan would be implemented and to set itself targets to hold itself to account for delivery. In 2024, C4C accelerated the implementation of a number of aspects of its digital-first strategy but there is still limited detail on how it will meet its overarching *Fast Forward* objectives, and relatively few public measures that transparently and consistently track its progress. Recognising that the new incoming leaders at C4C will want to be involved in considering what these should be, we look forward to seeing further goals and metrics put in place over the coming year.

# 2. Ofcom's response to C4C's Statement of Media Content Policy

## About this review

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Channel Four Television Corporation ('C4C') is a publicly owned, not-for-profit body funded by commercial revenues. The main channel, Channel 4,<sup>1</sup> was launched in 1982 with the aim of extending the choice available to viewers, appealing to tastes and interests not generally catered for by other broadcasters, and in doing so, encouraging innovation and the development of the independent production sector. Over the years, C4C has launched a range of additional channels: E4, E4 Extra, More4, Film4, the seven Box channels,<sup>2</sup> and its own streaming service, formerly known as All4.

While C4C's main channel has a unique public service remit and should also contribute to the overall objectives of public service broadcasting ('PSB'), the Digital Economy Act 2010 extended C4C's obligations beyond the main channel by introducing media content duties which C4C can deliver across its full suite of services.

Under the Communications Act 2003, C4C must prepare a Statement of Programme Policy ('SoPP') in relation to its delivery of Channel 4's public service remit and licence obligations. C4C must also prepare an annual statement setting out its plans for meeting its media content duties in the coming year and reporting on its performance over the past year. C4C must consult with Ofcom in preparing the publication and have regard to [Ofcom guidance](#). In our guidance, we ask C4C to combine the statements in one document. For clarity, we refer to the combined document as C4C's Statement of Media Content Policy ('SMCP').

As part of the consultation process, C4C has shared draft copies of its 2024 Annual Report (which includes the SMCP) with Ofcom and has met with us to discuss its performance and strategies. This is an important mechanism in ensuring that C4C is effectively held to account for the delivery of its remit and media content duties. In addition, C4C is required to lay its Annual Report and Accounts before Parliament.

This review represents Ofcom's response to the 2024 SMCP, setting out our views on the delivery of C4C's remit, duties and its future strategy. C4C's report and our response are prepared on the basis of the existing guidance for completion of the SMCP. As part of our Media Act implementation programme, we [consulted on new guidance](#) for the commercial broadcasters' completion of their

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report we refer to "Channel 4" as "C4C's main channel".

<sup>2</sup> The Box channels were closed in July 2024, but originally included The Box, Box Upfront, 4seven, 4Music, Kerrang, Kiss TV and Magic TV.

SoPPs and, in the case of C4C, its SMCP. From 2026, new guidance will be in place for completion of these documents, and both we and C4C will adjust our processes accordingly.

## ***Fast Forward* is gaining momentum but transparent targets are still needed to measure its impact**

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Launched in 2024, [\*Fast Forward\*](#) builds on C4C's first digital strategy [\*Future4\*](#), and aims to diversify C4C's revenues and expediate its transformation into a digital-first "public service streamer" by 2030. The strategy focuses on modernising C4C's operations and responding to consumer trends as audiences continue to migrate to online services. In its first year, C4C has reported progress against all three pillars of its strategy:

**Digital growth and transformation:** C4C stated it would adopt a "digital-first" commissioning strategy, focusing on impactful content for streaming as well as targeting younger audiences on platforms such as YouTube. C4C's Leeds-based 4Studio is key to this element of *Fast Forward*, producing content for the main social platforms including YouTube, TikTok and Instagram.

C4C reported that 18% of total viewing of C4C content in 2024 was delivered via C4C's Video-on-Demand (VoD) content. Streaming views rose by 13% (to 1.8 billion) in 2024. Additionally, C4C increased the volume of its content on YouTube by 31% year-on-year and over the last 18 months grew its portfolio of channels on the platform from 15 to 29. C4C's overall UK YouTube views grew by 26% year-on-year in 2024, to over 340 million views.<sup>3</sup>

**Diversified new business:** C4C's strategy aims to diversify its revenue streams to reduce its dependency on linear advertising revenue. In 2024, C4C met its *Future4* target for 30% of revenue to come from digital advertising a year earlier than originally planned.<sup>4</sup> C4C has subsequently increased this target to 50% to be met by 2030 as part of *Fast Forward*.<sup>5</sup> While C4C reported that 9% of its 2024 revenues were from non-advertising sources,<sup>6</sup> down from 10% in 2023, its total diversified (non-linear) revenue was 39% (up 2 percentage points year-on-year).<sup>7</sup>

C4C has also said that a move into Intellectual Property ownership may help it meet broader aims to diversify C4C's revenue streams to support C4C's continued sustainability and remit delivery.<sup>8 9</sup>

**Re-engineering the business for a digital-first world:** C4C has stated its intention to cut operational costs. To date it has reduced its staff by around 150 and closed its suite of music channels.<sup>10</sup> It has also stated it plans to explore the sale of its London offices at Horseferry Road.

In our [SMCP response](#) last year, we welcomed C4C's development of its new strategy for which it has published a summary document. We also stated that as part of developing the detail of *Fast*

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<sup>3</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.11.

<sup>4</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.15.

<sup>5</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.102.

<sup>6</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.102., C4C's non-advertising sources include (but are not limited to) rights income, distribution, and theatrical revenues.

<sup>7</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.14.

<sup>8</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation, [Fast Forward](#), 2025, p.2.

<sup>9</sup> Alongside its 2024 Annual Report, C4C has published its proposed Commissioning Guidelines, setting out how it plans to protect fair and effective competition for commissions once its production plans are operational.

<sup>10</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.107. The Box network included The Box, 4Music, Kerrang!, Magic and Kiss. C4C has explained to us that these channels are no longer of sufficient scale to deliver meaningful return on investment and reflects changing audience consumption habits.



*Forward*, we expected C4C to set itself new targets – as it did for *Future4* – to publicly hold itself to account for the delivery of its goals. We are pleased to see that C4C is reporting progress on implementing its strategy in 2024, however we have not yet seen evidence in C4C’s Annual Report and SMCP that this additional layer of detail has been added to the summary plan or its data-supported reporting. Given the crucial role *Fast Forward* must play in helping to secure the continued success of C4C, we reiterate the importance of C4C being more transparent on the specifics of how the plan’s overarching objectives will be met; the timeframes for achieving these goals; and the metrics it will consistently use to report on the detail of the progress it is making. Recognising the need for the new incoming leaders at C4C to be involved in considering what these should be, we look forward to seeing these points addressed over the coming year.

## Financial performance

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### C4C achieved steady year-on-year revenues and cut its deficit in 2024

Following a challenging 2023, total TV advertising expenditure in the UK returned to growth in 2024, up 3.8% to £5.3 billion.<sup>11</sup> This was driven by 25.7% growth in VoD advertising which reached a record £1.3 billion,<sup>12</sup> buoyed mainly by increases in broadcasting video-on-demand (‘BVoD’)<sup>13</sup> advertising and partly by the launch and growth of ad-supported tiers on subscription video-on-demand (‘SVoD’) services.<sup>14</sup> SVoD advertising is still small but is growing rapidly from a small base. The growth in VoD advertising across the industry more than offset the 2% decline in linear advertising, as more broadcasters tried to shift more advertising revenue to their digital offerings.

As shown in Figure 1, C4C’s funding model is still predominately reliant on advertising. C4C’s total revenues increased by 1% to £1.036 billion in 2024 up from £1.02 billion in 2023,<sup>15</sup> however, this remains £104 million lower than 2022 levels (£1.14 billion). Linear advertising continued to make up the majority of C4C’s revenues in 2024, and while this fell 1% year-on-year to £635 million<sup>16</sup> the rate of decline slowed compared to 2022-23. This decline was slightly smaller than that experienced by the market as a whole.

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<sup>11</sup> AA/WARC.

<sup>12</sup> AA/WARC.

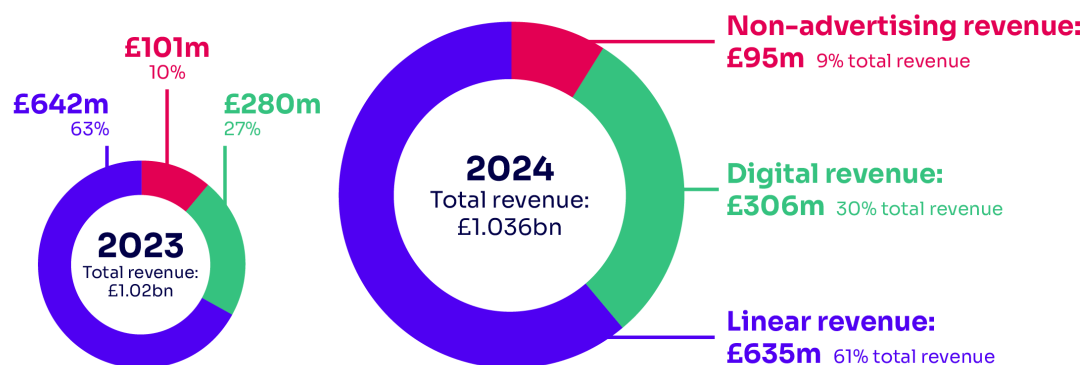
<sup>13</sup> Broadcasting video-on-demand (BVoD) refers to video content produced by traditional broadcasters (such as C4C) and is available online and on-demand.

<sup>14</sup> Subscription video-on-demand (SVoD) are paid-for subscription video-on-demand services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video.

<sup>15</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.171.

<sup>16</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.104.

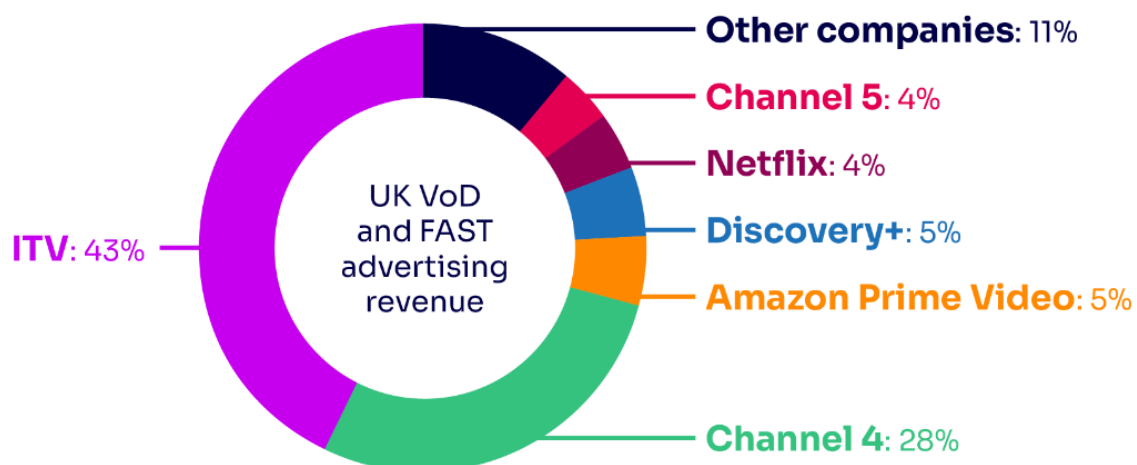
**Figure 1: Comparison of the proportion of C4C's revenue from linear, digital and non-advertising sources 2024 and 2023.**



Source: Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statement 2023 and 2024.

As mentioned above, in response to the challenges of generating revenue from linear advertising, C4C's *Fast Forward* strategy means that it is proactively diversifying its revenue streams. C4C highlights achieving a record high for its digital advertising revenues in 2024, generating £306 million (a 9% year-on-year increase).<sup>17</sup> This growth was lower than for the market as a whole, however, we note that C4C's established digital advertising strategy enabled it to attract almost a third of all UK VoD revenues in 2024 (as shown in Figure 2).

**Figure 2: UK video-on-demand advertising revenue, by company, 2024.<sup>18</sup>**



Source: Ampere Analysis Markets – Operators. Excludes online video advertising from social platforms.

<sup>17</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.21.

<sup>18</sup> Chart note: Ampere Analysis advertising data is not comparable to the AA/WARC Expenditure Report information so the % shares in this chart cannot be imposed on the AA/WARC VoD advertising expenditure figures cited in the text above. This information should be treated indicatively to understand the make-up of the key players in the UK VoD advertising market.

Digital advertising represented 30% of C4C's total revenues in 2024 which C4C says is more than double both UK and international commercial broadcasters' average digital advertising revenue.<sup>19</sup> In its latest Annual Report, C4C also said that its YouTube revenue has increased by 78%.<sup>20</sup> In total 39% of C4C's revenue came from non-linear sources in 2024 up 2 percentage points from 2023.

C4C reports that its focus on operational efficiency, which included cutting jobs and closing the Box channels, has resulted in a significant improvement to its pre-tax deficit from £52 million in 2023 to £2 million in 2024,<sup>21</sup> but this is still down from a £20 million surplus in 2022.

It is clear that C4C has already made headway with the "Re-engineering the business" pillar of *Fast Forward* and looks to be making progress in its accompanying goal to drive up digital ad growth, as part of its aim to diversify its revenue streams. It is encouraging to see C4C's strong current position in the VoD ad market. However, its slower digital advertising growth in 2024 compared to the market as a whole, and the potential for the new SVoDs entrants to attract advertising away from more established BVoDs means C4C will need to continue to push hard to stay ahead of other players and to reduce its reliance on linear advertising. C4C's goal to overhaul its own streaming service will be an important part of its plan to achieve this and we await more details with interest.

### C4C is striving to meet multiple goals with a shrinking content budget

Across the sector, broadcasters' content budgets are coming under considerable strain, in part due to inherent uncertainty in the advertising market and inflationary pressures in production costs. C4C reports that its total investment in content declined by 3% to £643 million in 2024, down from £663 million in 2023 and £713 million in 2022.<sup>22</sup> Total spend on originations fell 6% at £489 million, down from £520 million in 2023.<sup>23</sup> The main channel accounted for £429 million (88%) of originations spend, also down 6% year-on-year<sup>24</sup> and £12 million lower than the 2018-2019 pre-Covid average of £441 million.<sup>25</sup>

Investment in original content across C4C's portfolio of digital channels fell by 7.5% to £49 million (from £53 million in 2023).<sup>26</sup> C4C has told us that this decline in original content investment reflects a broader cost reduction applied across its portfolio in response to wider financial pressures.

C4C allocated almost a quarter of its total content budget to acquisitions in 2024.<sup>27</sup> It spent £154 million (up £11 million) year-on-year. C4C has told us that acquisitions play a strategic, complementary role to originations in its overall content strategy by enhancing viewer choice and helping to reach underserved audiences.

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<sup>19</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.21.

<sup>20</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.17.

<sup>21</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.11, before exceptional items.

<sup>22</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.79.

<sup>23</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.77.

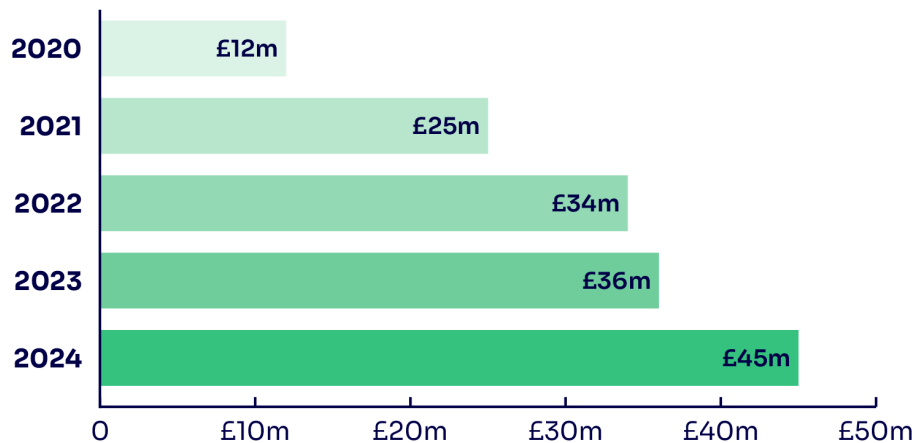
<sup>24</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.89.

<sup>25</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.77.

<sup>26</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.77.

<sup>27</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.77.

**Figure 3: C4C's investment in digital media content (2020-2024).**



Source: Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, 2021-2024.

As Figure 3 shows, C4C's total investment in digital media has steadily increased each year since 2020. In 2024, total spend on digital media was £45 million, up 25% from 2023.<sup>28</sup> Of this figure, investment in digital media content<sup>29</sup> also increased, by 22% to £11 million.<sup>30</sup>

We recognise that C4C's rebalancing of funding between linear and digital content in 2024 is a continuation of the approach it has taken since announcing its original *Future4* strategy. This is in line with the digital-first *Fast Forward* plan set out in 2024 and with its *Fast Forward* commissioning strategy outlined in the in its latest Annual Report. The strategy aims to deliver a smaller number of stronger new titles which can "cut-through" and achieve greater scale and impact, with a focus on genres that work on streaming including "scripted, reality and premium factual" and an emphasis on lifestyle on the linear service.<sup>31</sup>

C4C is keen to underline that it will be working to balance long-running favourites with new big hits.<sup>32</sup> This approach will inevitably accelerate the rebalancing of content spend from linear-focused to digital-focused commissions. Consequently, it will be critical that the performance of new digital and linear content can be adequately and consistently measured across all platforms and audience demographics and transparently shared to demonstrate the impact of the strategy and the continued fulfilment of C4C's remit and duties. This is a theme we return to throughout this report.

## Viewing performance

### The amount of time audiences spent watching C4C content remained stable in 2024 due to an increase in streaming viewing

Audiences spent an average of around 15 minutes per day watching C4C content across its linear and online services in 2024 (consistent with 2023). Just under 3 minutes of this time was spent with

<sup>28</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.79.

<sup>29</sup> This includes websites and cross-platform content.

<sup>30</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.77.

<sup>31</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.16.

<sup>32</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.16.

C4C's VoD content,<sup>33</sup> an increase of 14% from 2023. Viewing to VoD content accounted for 18% of total viewing time, up slightly (from 16%) in 2023, with linear viewing making up the remaining 82%. C4C's core target audience of 16-34-year-olds spent a total time of 7 minutes a day with C4C content (linear and streaming), down from 8 minutes in 2023.<sup>34</sup>

C4C's VoD content remains the fourth most watched of the broadcasters overall, both for all individuals and those aged 16-34, behind BBC, ITV and Sky. However, it continued to be the youngest skewing VoD PSB in the UK in 2024, with 16-24-year-olds making up 6.9% of its audience (compared to 6.7% for ITVX, 5.7% for BBC iPlayer and 3.4% for My5).<sup>35</sup>

In its latest Annual Report, C4C said that it has reached more viewers online than ever for a second consecutive year.<sup>36</sup> Reach to C4C's VoD content increased by 13% from 2023 to 6.2 million UK viewers on average a week, accounting for 9.6% of all individuals. The growth in viewers to C4C's VoD content was driven by older audiences whereas reach to its core target audiences of 16-34-year-olds and people from minority ethnic groups remained relatively unchanged from 2023. Breaking the younger age groups down further, we can see that the number of 25-34-year-olds watching C4C's VoD content declined slightly (-7%), while those aged 16-24 increased very slightly (4%).<sup>37</sup>

C4C increased the volume of its content on YouTube by 31% in 2024 and is making headway in attracting UK viewers to its growing number of channels.<sup>38</sup> During 2024, UK in-home viewing to C4C's measured YouTube content grew significantly for all age groups as well for as people from minority ethnic groups.<sup>39</sup> C4C's own data showed that UK YouTube views were up 26% in 2024 to over 340 million, and that UK viewing of long form full episodes of its content (30-60+ minutes) on YouTube increased by 169% (to over 110 million) in 2024.<sup>40</sup> As a result C4C says it plans to increase the amount of its long-form content on YouTube.<sup>41</sup>

C4C reported that on social media platforms C4C content generated an estimated 2.3 billion views in the UK, up 5.5% year-on-year, with younger UK audiences accounting for 1.2 billion of these views (up 3.4% year-on-year).<sup>42</sup> C4C said that its biggest platform for views was TikTok while Instagram was its fastest-growing platform with views seven times higher in 2024 compared to the previous year.<sup>43</sup>

However C4C's total reach fell, driven by declining linear audiences, underlining the importance of delivering *Fast Forward* successfully

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<sup>33</sup> This includes viewing to C4C's own BVoD service, viewing to its content via Sky Go/NOW and its Barb measured content on YouTube.

<sup>34</sup> Barb as-viewed.

<sup>35</sup> Barb as-viewed.

<sup>36</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.11.

<sup>37</sup> Barb as-viewed. Reach criteria: 15+ consecutive minutes.

<sup>38</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.58.

<sup>39</sup> Barb as-viewed. The average time spent on C4C's YouTube content that is measured by Barb nearly doubled (98%) from 2023 to 2024 but we do not know if some of this increase could be down to advances in the method of measurement.

<sup>40</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.11.

<sup>41</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.15.

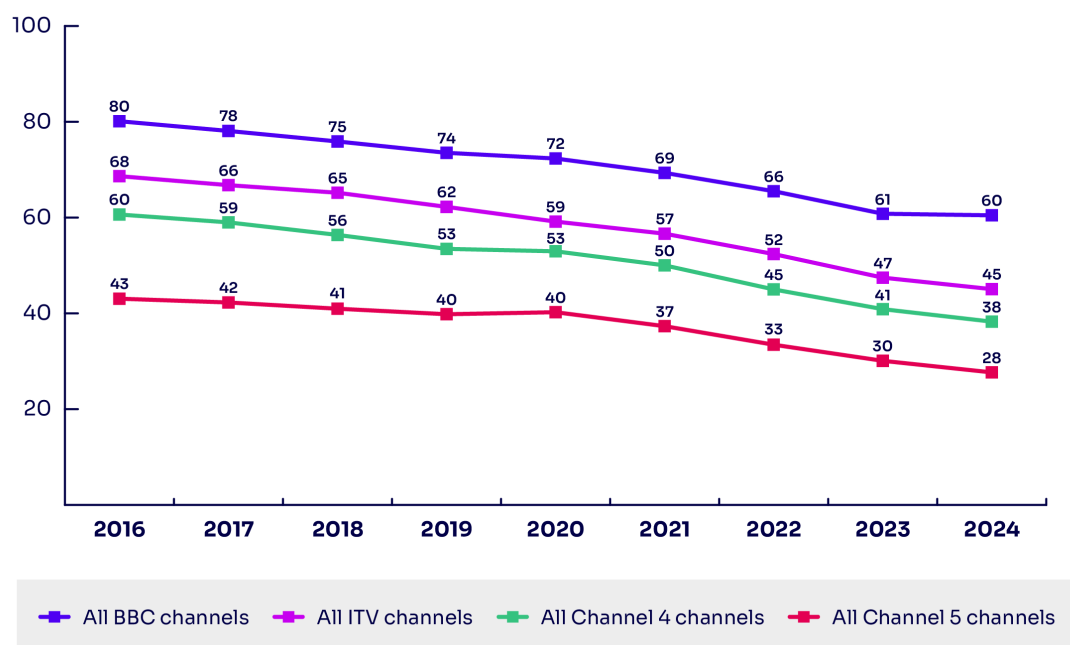
<sup>42</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.56, 'younger audiences' in this context refers to 13-34s.

<sup>43</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.58, this is a year-on-year increase of 231%.

Despite growth in the number of people watching C4C's VoD content in 2024, it was not enough to offset the decline in those watching linear regularly. The number of people watching any content from C4C (across linear and streaming) also declined by 7% year-on-year to 24.8 million on average per week (38.8% of all individuals).<sup>44</sup>

In 2024, reach to C4C's main channel amongst all audiences declined by 2 percentage points to 27.7% (from 29.7% in 2023). Figure 4 shows that the C4C's family of linear TV channels<sup>45</sup> the average weekly reach fell to 38.3% in 2024 (down from 40.9% in 2023). This is similar to the rate of decline experienced by Channel 5's, ITV's and Sky's channels groups, although the BBC's linear channels declined by only one percentage point from 2023 to 60% in 2024.<sup>46</sup>

**Figure 4: Average linear weekly reach by channel group (%): 2016-2024.**



Source: Barb 28-day consolidated, all individuals 4+. Reach criteria: 15+ consecutive minutes.

Viewers aged 16-34 continue to consume less broadcast television than ever. In 2024, average weekly reach for this age group across total broadcast TV fell again by 2.8 percentage points to 54.5%. The reach of C4C's main channel declined at a faster rate, down 2.7 percentage points year-on-year to 11.8% in 2024. The number of 16-34-year-olds watching C4C's family of channels each week on average in 2024 declined by 3.6 percentage points to 19.1% per week. As Figure 5 shows, this is a slightly lower rate of decline than Channel 5 and a faster rate than ITV, while BBC reach figures remained stable year-on-year.<sup>47</sup>

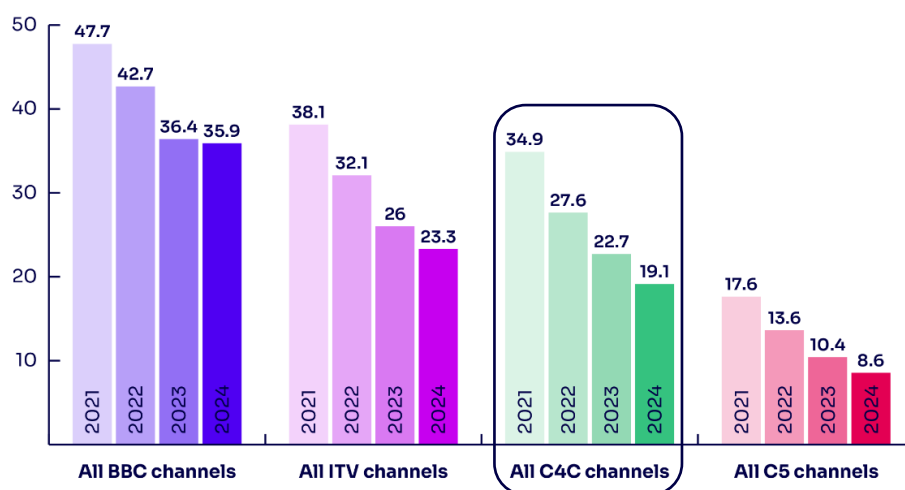
<sup>44</sup> Barb as-viewed.

<sup>45</sup> Channel 4's family of channels included Channel 4, Channel 4+1, E4, More4, Film 4, Box, E4 Extra, 4 Music, Kiss TV, Kerrang and Magic TV in 2024, although the Box channels closed in July 2024. Excluding the Box channels from the analysis, reach to Channel 4's family of channels still declined year-on-year.

<sup>46</sup> Barb. Total C4C reach uses as-viewed data. Channel 4's linear channels reach uses 28-day consolidated, TV sets only. Reach criteria: 15+ consecutive minutes.

<sup>47</sup> Barb 28-day consolidated, via TV sets only. Reach criteria 15+ consecutive minutes.

**Figure 5: Average linear weekly reach % by channel group for 16-34-year-olds: 2021-2024.**



Source: Barb 28-day consolidated, 16-34-year-olds. Reach criteria: 15+ consecutive minutes.

C4C's largest portfolio channel – youth-focused E4 – continued to face significant challenges in retaining its linear audience in 2024. While the weekly average reach for all audiences remained stable at 10%, it fell amongst its 16-34-year-old target audience to 6.5% (down from 7.2% in 2023). In 2024 the rate of decline in reach slowed compared to previous years.<sup>48</sup>

Children also watched C4C's linear channels less frequently in 2024. The average weekly reach for C4C's main channel fell to 9.3% (11.1% in 2023) for 10-14-year-olds and to 8.2% (9.3% in 2023) for 14-19-year-olds in 2024. However, for both audiences, this was a slower rate of decline than the previous year.<sup>49</sup>

Among people from minority ethnic backgrounds, the average weekly reach of C4C's main channel also continued to decline in 2024 to 14.5% (from 17.1% in 2023). 7.7% of C4's audience came from minority ethnic groups in 2024, joint highest of the five main PSBs alongside ITV1.<sup>50</sup>

Turning to share, the C4C's family of channels has achieved a consistent share of broadcast TV viewing at around 10% amongst all individuals since 2021, with the main channel also remaining stable at around 5% year-on-year.

The share of viewing to C4C's family of channels amongst 16-24-year-olds was higher (11.8%) compared to all individuals (10%) in 2024. However the share for the main channel amongst 16-34-year-olds was on a par with all individuals (5%) in 2024 due to the 16-34-year-olds share declining over time.<sup>51</sup> C4C's main channel continued to have the third largest share of 16-34-year-olds viewing behind BBC One (18%) and ITV1 (14.7%), both of which increased their share of this groups' viewing in 2024 year-on-year. C4C's main channel continued to have the highest 16-34 profile of the five

<sup>48</sup> Barb 28-day consolidated, via TV sets only. Reach criteria 15+ consecutive minutes.

<sup>49</sup> Barb 28-day consolidated, via TV sets only. Reach criteria 15+ consecutive minutes.

<sup>50</sup> BBC One 7%, Channel 5 6.4% and BBC Two 6%. Barb 28-day consolidated, via TV set only, Channel 4, ITV1 and Channel 5 excludes their +1 channels.

<sup>51</sup> 16-34-year-olds share for Channel 4 (the main channel) declined from 6.6% in 2022 to 5.8% in 2023 and then to 5% in [2024].



main PSB channels, with 8% of its audience falling into this age group (compared to 7% for ITV1, 6% for BBC One, and 5% for both BBC Two and Channel 5).<sup>52</sup>

C4C's reach to both linear and streaming audiences demonstrates why a digital-first commissioning strategy is essential if C4C is to achieve the scale of digital viewing necessary to offset the ongoing decline in linear audiences. We welcome the progress to date, including: C4C's expansion of the volume and range of its YouTube content, and the resulting growth in viewing for most age groups; as well as its decision to tap into the increasing number of people watching YouTube on TVs, by expanding the amount of long-form content it provides on the platform in future. We will follow this development with interest. It is also encouraging to see the growth in viewing to C4C's social media platforms for younger age groups and to C4C VoD content amongst older viewers, but clearly further significant growth will be required to change overall viewing trends. Positively, our research finds that just over three in five (63%) viewers say Channel 4's streaming service '*provides services that are easy to find my way around*' well.<sup>53</sup> C4C has stated its intention to make further improvements to its streaming platform and wider services over the next few years to further enhance the user and advertiser experience. As C4C continues to develop its streaming offering and progress its *Fast Forward* strategy, we will continue to monitor its progress and expect C4C to report on the outcomes for audiences using its digital services.

## C4C's delivery of specific areas of C4's remit and content duties

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Channel 4 has a wide-ranging remit to provide a broad range of high quality and diverse programming which, in particular, demonstrates innovation, experiment and creativity; appeals to the tastes and interests of a culturally diverse society; makes a significant contribution to providing programming of an educational nature; and exhibits a distinctive character.<sup>54</sup>

In addition to delivering its remit through the linear Channel 4 service, C4C has a range of statutory media content duties which it can meet across all of its broadcast and online services.<sup>55</sup> Below we highlight key areas where C4C has either performed well or where we consider there is room for improvement.

### Audiences continue to value C4C's range of content on linear and streaming services

Throughout its 2024 Annual report and SMCP, C4C has cited a range of titles to illustrate its delivery of the core characteristics of its remit ranging from *Joe Lycett vs Sewage*, *We are Lady Parts* and *The Gathering*, to *The Piano*, *To Catch A Copper* and *Big Boys*. Both our and C4C's research shows that audiences continue to rate Channel 4 TV channels and the main streaming service highly for commissioning programming that delivers innovation, experimentation, creativity and distinctiveness.

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<sup>52</sup> Barb 28 day consolidated. The 'main channel' excludes Channel 4 +1 and +1 channels are also excluded for ITV1 and Channel 5 here.

<sup>53</sup> Ofcom, Public Service Media Tracker, 2024.

<sup>54</sup> See Annex 1 where we set C4C's public service remit out in full.

<sup>55</sup> C4C's media content duties are set out in Annex 1. The relevant online services are on-demand programme services and other services provided by means of the internet where there is a person who exercises editorial control over the material included in the service.



Ofcom's Public Service Media ('PSM') Tracker 2024 reported that around three-quarters of viewers in the last six months said they are satisfied with the main Channel 4 TV channel (77%); over seven in ten (72%) said the same for Channel 4's streaming service. Both remain broadly consistent with previous years.<sup>56</sup>

Audiences also continue to value the range of C4C's content. Among viewers, both Channel 4's streaming service and Channel 4 TV channels are seen to provide '*a wide range of different types of programmes, such as drama, comedy, entertainment or sport*' well (65% and 54% respectively). Similarly, both are seen to perform well for providing '*programmes that are relevant to me*' (60% and 51%) and for '*appeal[ing] to a wide range of different audiences*' (62% and 54%).<sup>57</sup>

Audiences also value C4C's distinctiveness. Over half of viewers said both Channel 4's streaming service and TV channels provide '*programmes that are different in their approach to other providers*' (58% and 50%) and '*programmes that help me see things from a different angle/perspective*' (56% and 51%) well.<sup>58</sup>

In 2022, C4C introduced a new measurement framework of its own, which includes audience tracker statements that are more closely aligned to elements of its public service remit while also aiming to assess performance across all of its services. C4C also now tracks its own performance relative to a wider competitor set, including Sky and the main SVoDs (including Netflix and Amazon Prime), alongside the other PSBs. We support the development of this framework as it helps C4C achieve a more rounded picture of its performance relative to other services that are popular among its target audience group of 16-34-year-olds.

Part of C4C's remit is to be innovative, to inspire change and offer a platform for alternative views. In its latest Annual Report, C4C reports that audiences associate its services with "*always trying something new*", with 47% of respondents agreeing that C4C performs well on this measure (48% in 2023). C4C was second only to Netflix on this metric (51% in 2024) and noticeably ahead of its nearest PSB competitor (the BBC with 35% in 2023). C4C also found that 50% of respondents think that C4C "*pushes boundaries*" (51% in 2023) ahead of its closest competitor Netflix (41%), and that 55% of respondents think C4C's programmes make them think differently (an increase on 50% in 2023).<sup>59</sup>

Many of C4C's returning series continue to be popular with audiences. In its fifteenth series, the first episode of *The Great British Bake Off* once again gave C4C its most watched single programme of the year, with 8.3 million viewers. Other audience favourites included *Gogglebox* and *Celebrity Gogglebox*, of which top performing episodes averaged over 4.5 million viewers. Returning staple of the E4 schedule, *Married at First Sight* continued to perform well and the UK version was the top performing show on the channel for the third year running.<sup>60</sup>

New programmes that performed well in 2024 and which C4C identified as contributing to its remit included three award winning crime focused titles.<sup>61</sup> *To Catch a Copper* tackled the issue of police misconduct and asked topical questions about how the police are held accountable. C4C said it

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<sup>56</sup> Ofcom, Public Service Media Tracker, 2024.

<sup>57</sup> Ofcom, Public Service Media Tracker, 2024.

<sup>58</sup> Ofcom, Public Service Media Tracker, 2024.

<sup>59</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.88.

<sup>60</sup> Top performing programmes based on the highest rated episode as viewed across linear and streaming services for all individuals 4+.

<sup>61</sup> *To Catch a Copper* and *The Jury: Murder Trial* won the awards Best Factual Series and Best Reality at the 2025 BAFTA TV awards, and *The Push: Murder on the Cliff* won Best Documentary Series at the 2025 RTS Programme awards.

performed particularly well among 16–34-year-olds.<sup>62</sup> *The Push: Murder on the Cliff* took viewers inside a murder trial in Edinburgh and addressed issues of domestic violence and coercive control. New true crime format, *The Jury: Murder Trial*, gave C4C its top-performing episode of a new series in 2024 with 3.5 million viewers watching the premier episode.<sup>63</sup>

Last year we highlighted that many of C4C's top-performing shows on linear and streaming were tried-and-tested formats, including those returning titles mentioned above. We said that as C4C transitions to a digital-first commissioning strategy through *Fast Forward*, it will be crucial to strike the right balance between established formats and taking risks on new commissions. In its latest Annual Report, C4C acknowledges that with so many competing entertainment sources, it is difficult to attract audiences to unfamiliar shows. As its new commissioning strategy becomes more established, we hope to see C4C firmly embracing its decades old tradition of being bold, to deliver more distinctive, innovative programmes with mass appeal that can drive viewing on both streaming and linear services.

### We welcome the renewed emphasis on commissioning from the nations and regions in C4C's updated 4 *All the UK* strategy

For a number of years in our responses to the SMCP we have encouraged C4C to ensure that its content investment has impact throughout the UK, and that people from across the nations and regions have the opportunity to see themselves represented in its output. [In our SMCP response](#) last year, we reiterated that the impact of C4C's investment is not being felt equally across the UK and highlighted that it could do more to represent the different UK nations and regions in its output and to track the impact of its commissioning across the UK.

In addition we set new reporting requirements in a [letter sent to C4C](#) in December 2024, after the publication of our relicensing [Statement](#), regarding C4C's commissioning outside of London, to improve its accountability to both us and wider stakeholders.

In October 2024 C4C released a new [strategy](#) for the nations and regions which forms the next phase of its 4 *All the UK* programme of work and has committed to:

- Increasing *4Skills* training and career development programme spending to £10 million per year including a new, two-year, £6 million career progression programme *Accelerate*.
- Increasing investment to strengthen C4C's out of London commissioning and the reorganisation of the commissioning teams to ensure a bespoke, strategic approach to commissioning in each nation.
- Aiming to increase its nations commissioning commitment by one-third – from 9% to 12% of main channel content spend and hours – in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales by 2028 ahead of new quotas coming in to force in 2030.
- Expanding C4C's workforce outside of London to 600 roles.

Alongside this, [C4C also announced](#) it had appointed Jo Street as Director of Commissioning for the nations and regions to work alongside Sinead Rocks, Managing Director for the nations and regions in order to boost commissioning outside London.

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<sup>62</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.58. Our own Barb analysis shows that episode 3 of *To Catch a Copper* appeared in the top 20 best performing episodes for 16-34-year-olds 14-19-year-olds (highest occurring title) across 2024 on C4C's linear channels and on-demand.

<sup>63</sup> Barb, as-viewed, across TV sets only.

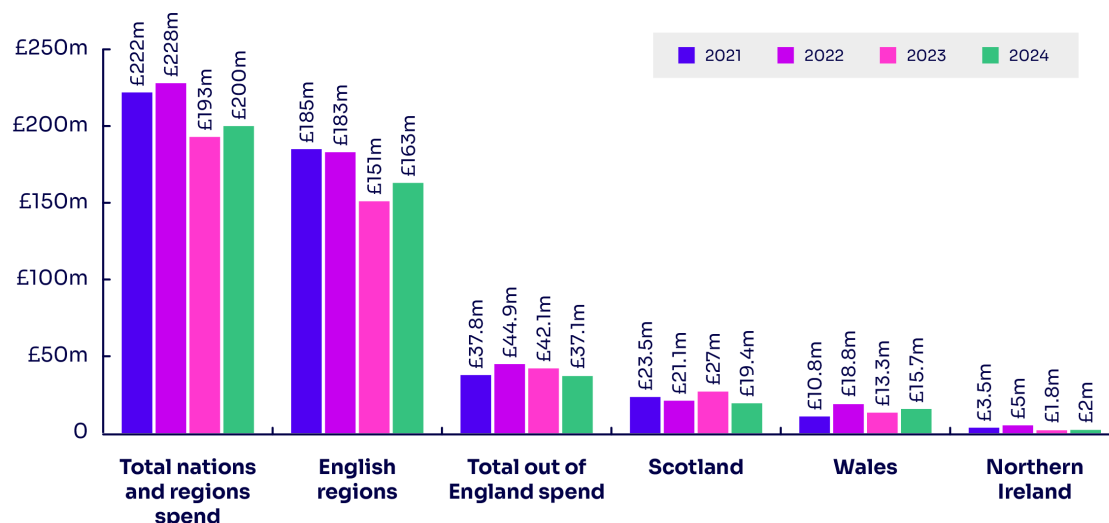
We welcome these plans and consider them to be a positive step towards strengthening commissioning outside of London and building stronger relationships with producers in the nations and regions. We have heard from some stakeholders of positive changes to the commissioning process in recent months and will continue to monitor this area ahead of C4C's first full year of reporting on the new requirements in 2026.

## C4C's commissioning spend in the nations and regions of the UK continued to fluctuate year-on-year

In contrast to the total originations budget which fell in 2024, C4C's commissioning spend for the nations and regions grew 4% to £200 million (up from £193 million in 2023).<sup>64</sup> However, spend outside England fell 12% to £37 million following a previous 6% drop in 2023. Expenditure in Scotland in 2024 was £19.4 million (down 28% year-on-year), accounting for 52% of the total nations spend. Conversely spend was up in both Wales to £15.7 million (up 18%) and Northern Ireland to £2 million (up 11%).<sup>65</sup>

C4C's TV portfolio spend on commissions in the English regions was up 8% reaching £163 million in 2024. C4C's SMCP stated that investment in the English regions was more evenly distributed, with less money being allocated to the North of England (£86.6 million) and more to the South of England (£58.2 million) and the Midlands (£6.5 million). An additional £11.3 million was spent on programmes made in more than one region.<sup>66</sup>

**Figure 6: C4C's spend on originated content in the nations and regions (2021-2024).**



Source: Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, 2021-2024.

C4C reported that 47 out of the 150 production companies that C4C commissioned were based in the nations and regions, the same number as in 2023, but this represented 31% of C4C's supplier base in 2024, slightly down year-on-year (from 33%).<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.13.

<sup>65</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.78.

<sup>66</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.78.

<sup>67</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.81.

Alongside tracking C4C's investment in the nations and regions of the UK year-on-year, we also monitor compliance with C4C's licence conditions. C4C currently has quotas for production outside of London (35% of spend and hours) and outside of England (9% of spend and hours) which apply to the main channel, Channel 4.<sup>68</sup> In 2024, C4C exceeded its quotas, with 63% of qualifying hours and 54% of qualifying spend allocated outside of London, and 15% of qualifying hours and 10% of qualifying spend allocated outside of England.<sup>69</sup>

## The new reporting requirements shed light on how C4C is refining its approach to commissioning in the nations and regions

In the [letter sent to Channel 4](#) after the publication of our [relicensing statement](#) we set out new reporting requirements,<sup>70</sup> asking C4C to show:

- How its approach to commissioning outside of England supports and stimulates the TV production sector in the nations;
- Its strategy for commissioning in each individual nation over the next year and how it delivered its strategy for the previous year; and
- Its plans to engage with stakeholders and audiences in the nations in the next year and how it engaged with them over the previous year.

We also said we expected C4C to report on its year-on-year progress towards the new Made outside England quotas, in terms of the proportion of hours and spend allocated to each nation outside of England ahead of these coming into force in 2030.

C4C has reported on these requirements for the first time in its latest Annual Report. C4C has identified genre "cold spots" in each nation and in the English regions and we are encouraged to see that it has put in place strategies to address these. It has also identified drama as a key genre that contributes to the aims of *Fast Forward* and that will be prioritised across all of the nations and regions. C4C highlights that its ambition with drama commissions is to work with local producers where possible and to ensure that every production has a significant local impact.<sup>71</sup>

We are pleased to see that the new strategy includes multiple entry points to C4C for producers to gain access to commissioning opportunities including: via More4; through a digital commissioning programme match-funded by nations' screen agencies; and through established commissioning pipelines. All have the aim of building scale and ensuring that over time more high-tariff commissions and returning series come from the nations and regions of the UK.<sup>72</sup>

In terms of highlights from individual nations it is good to see that C4C has built on the success of last year's innovative bilingual drama from Wales *Y Golau/The Light in the Hall* with new commission *Un Nos Ola Leuad/One Moonlit Night*, a Welsh-language opera. C4C has also said it will further develop Cardiff's fully accessible Cymru Broadcast Centre, established initially for the Paris 2024

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<sup>68</sup> We have retained these quotas from C4C's previous licence, however as noted above Channel 4's Made outside England quotas will rise to 12% of hours and spend from 2030.

<sup>69</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.90.

<sup>70</sup> These new reporting requirements updated the current guidance on C4C's Combined Statement of Programme and Media Content Policy and will remain in place until they are replaced by new guidance, which is expected to apply from 2026. We [consulted](#) on the new guidance in February 2024.

<sup>71</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.28.

<sup>72</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.28.

Paralympic Games and that this production hub will become the home of C4C's F1 coverage from 2025.<sup>73</sup>

We have previously highlighted relatively low levels of drama spend in Scotland and we are pleased to see C4C has invested in forthcoming six-part drama *Summerwater*, as well as in a new competitive knitting show *Game of Wool: Britain's Best Knitter* (working title) which has the potential to become a returning series.<sup>74</sup>

C4C has also committed to several new dramas from the English regions including *Tip Toe*, Russell T Davies's follow-up to 2021's *It's a Sin*, and an updated adaptation of Barbara Taylor Bradford's *A Woman of Substance*, originally broadcast on Channel 4 in 1985.<sup>75</sup>

We have previously said that C4C needed to do more to invest in content from Northern Ireland, where drama spend in particular has been low since *Derry Girls* came to an end in 2022. C4C's latest Annual Report highlights upcoming drama productions *Trespasses* and *In Flight*.<sup>76</sup> In the coming years we expect to see C4C increase its efforts to invest in and consider its commitment to representation and portrayal in Northern Ireland.

It is encouraging to see the initial data C4C has included in its Annual Report this year on its approach to nations and regions commissioning. This greater transparency enables stakeholders to better understand C4C's overarching strategy for the nations and regions, and to hold it to account for progress against *4 All the UK*. We will closely monitor the new titles mentioned above to see how they help to deliver the Made outside England and Made Outside London quotas in the coming years.<sup>77</sup>

## C4C continues to support skills development and training across the UK

In its SMCP C4C points to a range of schemes under the umbrella of *4Skills* to demonstrate how it supports the development of creative talent across the UK. The Leeds-based *4Skills* programme was launched in 2020 and aims to provide training and development for people building a career in the media sector, with particular focus on groups which have been historically under-represented in the industry. In 2024 its initiatives included: partnering with the National Film and Television School on 3,800 freelance training and scholarship places; providing over 2000 young people over 14 with online work experience to understand the UK media industry; and working with 22,632 students across 68 UK schools including, for the first time, schools in Northern Ireland.<sup>78</sup>

In total C4C reported that *4Skills* provided more than 34,900 training, development and learning opportunities in 2024, down 39% year-on-year. C4C attributed this fall to a shift in its *4Schools* strategy to prioritise deeper engagement with students by cutting the number of schools involved in the scheme and adding more value with return visits to the same schools and students. C4C has committed to doubling the *4Skills* budget to £10 million in 2025.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.30.

<sup>74</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.29.

<sup>75</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.29.

<sup>76</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.29.

<sup>77</sup> We will be converting the proportional regional production quotas to absolute numbers as part of our implementation of Part 1a of the Media Act. We propose to set absolute quota levels that broadly maintain the current requirements. For more information on our proposals, see our [Consultation: Proposals to update the PSB quotas](#).

<sup>78</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.44.

<sup>79</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.44.

We welcome the commitment that C4C has shown to training and progressing new talent through its *4Skills* initiative. Supporting the production talent pipeline is important for the long-term sustainability of the UK production sector, so we are particularly pleased to see C4C's decision to double the *4Skills budget* to £10 million from 2025. We will follow C4C's work in this area with interest.

## C4C remains dedicated to promoting diversity both on and off-screen

As part of its remit, C4C must appeal to the tastes and interests of a culturally diverse society. C4C states that championing inclusion and equitable representation is a key part of this role and highlighted a range of programmes from 2024 that captured diverse stories from across the UK including: the award winning *Me and the Voice in My Head* which showcased Joe Tracini's journey with borderline personality disorder;<sup>80</sup> *Defiance: Fighting the Far Right* a three part series showcasing how Britain's South Asian community resisted far-right extremism between 1976 and 1981; the eight part drama *Queenie*, which addressed race, identity, culture and community; and the 2024 Paris Paralympics, which embodied C4C's commitment to on and off-screen diversity.<sup>81</sup>

### Case study: C4C's coverage of the 2024 Paralympic Games

Since 2012, C4C has been the official UK broadcaster of the Paralympic Games and we have regularly highlighted its commitment to widening access to the Games and innovating in terms of its coverage in our annual responses to C4C's SMCPs.

For the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, C4C reports delivering 1,300 hours of live coverage of the Games over two linear channels and 18 simulcast streams.<sup>82</sup> In its latest Annual Report, C4C said that 91% of its on-screen talent and 23% of its production crews were disabled.<sup>83</sup> Rose Ayling-Ellis co-anchored the live coverage as the first deaf presenter to work live on the Games and was recognised alongside Claire Balding in the RTS awards as Best Sports Presenter/Commentator/Pundit. In the lead up to the Games, C4C's production training scheme provided 12-month placements across the UK for 16 disabled trainees.

C4C's awarding winning coverage<sup>84</sup> reached 19.9 million people, equivalent to 31% of the UK TV population across its linear channels and on-demand. The coverage achieved 6.1 billion viewer minutes, up from 4.9 billion in Tokyo 2020.<sup>85</sup> C4C's reports that its live streaming of the Games on its dedicated Paralympics YouTube channel reached 2.5 million views global views. On its social media platforms, C4C stated that it also generated over 65 million global views across Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> *Me and the Voice in My Head* -Winner of Best Single Drama Winner of Best Documentary Presenter – the Grierson Documentary Awards.

<sup>81</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.64.

<sup>82</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, p. 63.

<sup>83</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, p. 63.

<sup>84</sup> RTS Award Winner 2025 - Sports Programme.

<sup>85</sup> Barb as-viewed, all devices. Reach criteria: all those who watched at least 3 consecutive minutes of any programming filtered by all those titles containing the words 'Paralympic' or 'Paris' over the dates the competition was on and up to 28 days afterwards.

<sup>86</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, p. 63.



C4C monitors the diversity of the off-screen and on-screen contributors to its programmes, using data from the Diamond system, operated by the Creative Diversity Network (CDN).<sup>87</sup> In 2024, this data suggests that on Channel 4 people from minority ethnic groups were represented on-screen 2.2 percentage points above the national population average of 18.3%. Similarly, LGB representation on-screen stood at 16.7% (well above the national population estimate of 3.2%) this is slightly lower than 2023. As was the case last year, on-screen representation of women remains slightly under the 50.1% national population average at 49.5% in 2024. We note there has been a small increase in on-screen representation of disabled people up from 8% in 2023 to 9.6% in content outside the Paralympics, however levels remain significantly under the national population average of 17.7%.<sup>88</sup> C4C has acknowledged this under-representation of disabled people on-screen and states that it aims to improve both the quality and quantity of disability representation through the Disability Code of Portrayal, the TV Access Project, and other initiatives – including resources and support for productions.<sup>89</sup>

In its latest Annual Report, C4C states that it also built on its *Fresh Faces of 4* strategy in 2024. This supports individuals who are new to television with the aim of creating a pipeline of talent that reflects the diversity of the UK. The strategy has three strands: seeking new talent with little or no previous experience in the industry; developing emerging talent so they can build their profile and strengthen their reputation; and offering established talent new opportunities to diversify and reach even wider audiences. According to C4C, Channel 4.0 has become a prime destination for launching new talent to a youth audience. In 2024, C4C showcased over 50 new creators on the channel, some of the more than 150 faces showcased since its launch in 2022.<sup>90</sup>

Our research indicates that audiences feel that C4C does well to reflect the diversity of the UK, with over half (56%) of viewers in the last six months saying that Channel 4 TV channels provide ‘programmes which feature people from different backgrounds’ well, broadly in line with 2023 (55%) and with other PSBs. A growing number of viewers (34%) also say Channel 4 TV channels provide ‘programmes that feature my region/country’ well.<sup>91</sup>

According to C4C’s own research, it ranked highest among brands when it asked audiences to what extent they associate its programming with “showing different kinds of cultures and opinions in the UK.” In 2024, 55% of respondents agreed that C4C performed strongly on this measure, 3 percentage points ahead of the BBC (the next-highest-scoring brand) and 13 percentage points over the average (42%).<sup>92</sup>

C4C also recognises that to achieve authentic diverse portrayal onscreen, diverse talent is also needed off-screen. C4C recorded working with 27 production companies it classes as “ethnically diverse”,<sup>93</sup> representing 18% of its supplier base in 2024.<sup>94</sup> C4C also reported that it continued to undertake a wide range of EDI initiatives in 2024 including: building on two of its mentoring programmes, *Momentum* for black film makers and content creators and *Rise* for mid-senior level

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<sup>87</sup> According C4C’s 2024 Annual Report, Diamond recorded nearly 100,000 on-screen contributions for Channel 4 programmes, at a 32% completion rate in 2024.

<sup>88</sup> These figures exclude the Paralympics coverage as sport is not captured by Diamond.

<sup>89</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.82.

<sup>90</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.89.

<sup>91</sup> Ofcom, Public Service Media Tracker, 2024.

<sup>92</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.80.

<sup>93</sup> C4C states in its 2024 Annual Report that it considers “ethnically diverse” production companies as having the main shareholders, leading decision makers or creative leaders are from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds.

<sup>94</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.81.

disabled talent; as well as launching race fluency training for senior leaders at 36 production companies.

Within its own organisation, C4C's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work entered a new phase in 2024. C4C reported that it had run a successful communication campaign in 2023 to encourage its employees to share their diversity information with the organisation. C4C saw a 90% increase in staff members sharing that they had a neurodiverse condition, impairment, or long-term condition. Consequently, C4C was able to reach or exceed all of its diversity targets ahead of schedule. In 2024 it replaced targets with diversity "baselines" for employee representation, which it states it will always aim to stay above. C4C reported that as of December 2024, it remained well above all its baselines.<sup>95</sup>

This achievement was also reflected in the C4C data in [our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Broadcasting Report 2023/24](#). The data showed that C4C performed strongly compared to other major broadcasters including on the representation of women both in senior roles and more widely, people from minority ethnic groups in senior roles and disabled people within its workforce. Of those employees that disclosed data, the proportion of women (58%) and people from minority ethnic groups (22%) in C4C's workforce is above working population averages (48% and 16% respectively). In senior roles women (53%) and people from minority ethnic groups (21%) also remain well represented and well above the TV industry average (of 44% and 12% respectively). C4C continued to lead the industry for representation of disabled people within the workforce. 23% of those C4C employees who disclosed data were disabled, 5 percentage points higher than the next large broadcaster (STV). Employees from working class backgrounds represented 32% of C4C's workforce (who disclosed data). Although this remained lower than the population average of 39%, representation at C4C was higher the broadcasting sector average (27%).

Additionally, C4C launched its first equity specific strategy *Equity by Design* which aims to create fair outcomes for all employees and accelerate industry wide change. The strategy is built on six strategic principles; make informed choices, design for inclusion, choose inclusive partners, treat people right, create opportunity and lead on social impact.

2024 represented a strong year for C4C's wide portfolio of on and off-screen EDI work. From its success with the Paralympic Games, and its involvement in a wide range of self-generated and industry wide initiatives, to achieving a step change in its EDI workforce data to deliver targets and clear the way for a new chapter in its work on inclusion within the organisation. We will continue to follow its progress with interest.

### **[Channel 4 News continues to rate highly with its audiences and C4C is expanding its online news offering to engage younger viewers](#)**

C4C performed strongly against its duty to provide news and current affairs to UK audiences in 2024. Looking at news specifically, we consider that noteworthy coverage throughout 2024 included: C4C's continuing coverage of the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, as well as the fall of Assad in Syria; domestic stories such as Reform's Clacton campaign and the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury; and the elections in both the UK and the US. This was recognised with a second consecutive win as *Network Daily News Programme of the Year* in the Royal Television Journalism Awards, with Cathy Newman picking up both the *Network Television Journalist of the year* award and *Network Interview of the year* award.

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<sup>95</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.108.



In 2024, the total audience for C4C's main evening news programme, *Channel 4 News*, remained stable with a 3.5% share of all broadcast viewing on the main channel.<sup>96</sup> Among 16-34-year-olds the average audience declined by 10% year-on-year, as younger viewers are watching less broadcast TV overall, however *Channel 4 News*' share of 16-34-year-olds remained stable at just under 3%. While the 16-34 profile of *Channel 4 News* declined slightly again (by less than 1 percentage point) to 5.5%, the programme was still the youngest-skewing long-form weekday peak news programme of the main five PSB channels. *Channel 4 News* remains popular with minority ethnic groups and maintained the highest profile for this audience of the main five PSB channels.<sup>97</sup>

Given the changing news consumption habits in the UK C4C has done well to maintain the audience to its early evening news programme, in line with both its news<sup>98</sup> and broader content strategies<sup>99</sup> to place News at the heart of its output and continue to grow the presence of *Channel 4 News* on digital platforms. Our latest data shows that in 2025 70% of all adults are consuming news online. Among 16-24-year-olds 81% are consuming news online, primarily driven by their use of social media for news, this is down from 88% in 2024 but remains significantly higher than for broadcast TV, which is used by 43% of 16-24-year-olds.<sup>100</sup>

C4C reported that 2024 was a record year of growth for *Channel 4 News* content online, citing YouTube as the top platform for audiences consuming *Channel 4 News* and TikTok as the fastest-growing platform for *Channel 4 News* in 2024. In particular, C4C has identified YouTube and TikTok as key to attracting younger viewers to its news output and reports that 67% of its audience to news on TikTok was under 35 in 2024, up from 61% in 2023.<sup>101</sup>

Our research shows that audiences continue to rate *Channel 4 News* highly for quality, accuracy and trustworthiness. Our latest News Consumption Survey data shows that 72% of regular users continued to rate *Channel 4 News* highly for trust, the highest score of all the PSBs, and 70% rated it highly for accuracy, joint-highest with the BBC.<sup>102</sup> 75% considered *Channel 4 News* to be "high quality," again the highest scoring of the PSBs and 74% said "it helps me understand what is going on in the world today" second only to the BBC (75%).

C4C's own data shows that in 2024, 88% of *Channel 4 News* viewers agreed that they trust it to report news accurately and fairly, which is a 1 percentage point improvement on 2023 (87%).<sup>103</sup>

In its 2024 Annual Report, C4C also reported that it is trialling a new way of exploring audiences' trust in a range of news sources, including perceptions of news on social media and from newspapers.<sup>104</sup> This new methodology could provide valuable context for understanding the role that *Channel 4 News* content plays in the wider news landscape, and we will continue to monitor this in future years when comparable data is available.

We are pleased to see the high scores awarded to *Channel 4 News* by its audiences for trust and accuracy and high-quality news. The importance of strong news brands like *Channel 4 News*

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<sup>96</sup> Barb, 28 day consolidated. This is for Channel 4 linear channel only, excluding Channel 4 +1 that added another 43,000 viewers to the average.

<sup>97</sup> The profile for this audience increased by 1 percentage point in 2024 to 15% -Barb 28-day consolidated. Main linear channels only (excluding +1s).

<sup>98</sup> [C4C response to Ofcom's Consultation on the proposals for the new Channel 4 licence February 2024](#) p10

<sup>99</sup> [C4C response to Ofcom's Consultation on the proposals for the new Channel 4 licence February 2024](#) p11

<sup>100</sup> Ofcom [News Consumption Survey 2025 data tables](#).

<sup>101</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, p. 51.

<sup>102</sup> Ofcom [News Consumption Survey 2025 data tables](#).

<sup>103</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, p. 86.

<sup>104</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, p. 86.

continues to grow in a world where people increasingly find their news and information from diverse sources including social media, which is less trusted for accuracy or impartiality. As part of our review of Public Service Media (PSM), we have been considering the role that the UK's public service broadcasters, including C4C, play in the provision of trusted and accurate news. In summer 2025, we will publish the findings from our review, which will consider opportunities to support the availability of high quality and accurate news that audiences can trust.

While *Channel 4 News* maintained its audience share on TV in the 7pm slot in 2024, the absolute number of viewers to the programme continued to fall as fewer people watched television year-on-year.<sup>105</sup> This underscores the importance of C4C developing a strong digital news following and we are encouraged to see C4C's ongoing drive to attract audiences to its news content online, using a range of platforms. C4C has reported very large increases in both the number of global views to its news content and the volume of followers or subscribers to its news services. We welcome this and recognise the potential opportunities this may provide for C4C to build a new international news audience for some of its high-quality content. To date C4C has reported very little data to show what proportion of its global news views are from UK audiences and specifically younger UK audiences. Given the importance of reaching this group with news, in future we would like C4C to provide more information on its strategy for delivering this specific goal and further metrics to illustrate the progress made. We will seek further engagement with C4C on this matter.

### Channel 4's current affairs strand *Dispatches* performed well with audiences in 2024

C4C provides current affairs primarily through its long-running series *Dispatches* and *Unreported World*, and through its relatively new, youth-focused documentary series *UNTOLD*. Each year, C4C also airs a number of one-off current affairs documentaries, including the BAFTA award winning *State of Rage* in 2024.

This year, overall average linear viewing figures for *Dispatches* grew strongly for total viewers (+46%) but slipped 14% year-on-year among 16-34-year-olds.<sup>106</sup> *Dispatches'* most-viewed episode overall was *Britain's Benefits Scandal: Dispatches*, attracting 1 million viewers on C4C's main channel. The top-performing episode among 16-34-year-olds was *Undercover A&E: NHS in Crisis*, attracting an average of 91,000 viewers on C4C's main channel. The strand also included the powerful multi award winning *Kill Zone: Inside Gaza – Dispatches*.<sup>107</sup>

In contrast *Unreported World* saw an 18% decline among total viewers, and a 48% decline among 16-34-year-olds in 2024. Its most-viewed episode overall was *Homeless in Sin City*, attracting 520,000 viewers across linear and C4C VoD content<sup>108</sup>, whilst among 16-34-year-olds *Inside the K-pop Dream Machine* was the top-performing episode, attracting 35,000 viewers across C4C's main channel.<sup>109</sup> We note that *Unreported World* has a dedicated YouTube channel with 1.5 million global subscribers. We would welcome C4C providing data on UK views to this service in its future Annual Reports for a more complete picture of its performance across all platforms.

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<sup>105</sup> Barb 28-day consolidated, all individuals 4+.

<sup>106</sup> In 2023, *Dispatches* had huge success with *Russell Brand: In Plain Sight*, which performed particularly well among younger audiences. We have excluded this episode from our calculation of the average viewing figures to *Dispatches*, because it skews the average figures significantly.

<sup>107</sup> Barb 28-day consolidated.

<sup>108</sup> Barb as-viewed.

<sup>109</sup> Barb 28-day consolidated. Excludes Channel 4 +1.

We have previously reported that *UNTOLD* has performed well since its launch in 2022, and we consider it is a valuable addition to C4C's current affairs programming, as it is designed explicitly to appeal to younger viewers. C4C has said that *UNTOLD* also plays a key role as a launchpad for new talent in line with its *Fresh Faces of 4* strategy. Fewer episodes of *UNTOLD* were aired in 2024 (10, compared to 14 across 2023) and not all episodes were released on all of C4C's services (linear, C4C VoD content, and socials), so it is difficult to compare year-on-year performance of the strand. C4C reports that in 2024, *Magaluf Undercover: Predators and Parties* was the top-performing *UNTOLD* episode on C4C VoD content and on YouTube and that overall, the *UNTOLD* strand reached 5.5 million UK views on YouTube for full episodes.<sup>110</sup>

We are pleased to see the strong performance of *Dispatches* in 2024 as it continued to document important stories with impact. Given the importance of *UNTOLD* to C4C's overall news and current affairs strategy for reaching younger people, and the innovative approach it seeks to take to issues that matter to this audience, we would like to see more information on how the strand is performing with its target audience across its various platforms in future years.

### C4C continues to refine its digital-first approach to reaching and serving older children and younger adults

One of C4C's media content duties is to make "relevant media content that appeals to the tastes and interests of older children and young adults". As the viewing habits of younger audiences continue to move away from traditional broadcasting, this part of C4C's remit is now more important than ever.

Over the last few years C4C has introduced a number of new initiatives aimed at serving these audiences and we have continued to monitor these areas of C4C's provision to ensure they are delivering for these groups. In particular, we have been following initiatives such as the expansion of its youth-focused YouTube channel, Channel 4.0, and new content strands aimed at older children and younger adults.

#### Case study: Channel 4.0

C4C launched its youth-focused YouTube Channel, Channel 4.0, on YouTube and on social media platforms in 2022. C4C has said that content for Channel 4.0 has been developed to be distinct from programmes on its larger linear channels, in order to appeal to younger audiences. C4C's SMCP includes a number of figures indicating large increases in global views to Channel 4.0 across a range of platforms from an audience that is predominantly aged under 35. However, the size and make up of views from UK audiences on these platforms is unclear. Popular Channel 4.0 shows continue to include *Minor Issues*, *Tapped Out*, *Harry Pinero's Worst in Class*, *Hear Me Out*, and *Baddest in the World*.

As discussed above, C4C reports that the return of its youth-orientated news and current affairs series *UNTOLD*, achieved 5.5 million UK views on YouTube for full episodes. This is a 32% increase on the previous year's figures.<sup>111</sup>

In its Annual Report this year C4C highlighted *Hollyoaks* as the first of the main PSBs established soaps to transition fully to a digital-first model. It showed how the *Fast Forward* strategy can be

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<sup>110</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements, p.58

<sup>111</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.58.

applied to its pre-existing linear content where this might better serve its target audiences. In September 2024, C4C shifted the programme to a three-episode weekly format with shorter episodes which aimed to align the show with changing audience viewing habits. In the first six months following the revamp, [C4C reported](#) that *Hollyoaks* experienced a 23% year-on-year increase in total viewing and an 11% rise among viewers aged 16–34. Digital engagement also grew, with a 71% increase in views per episode and a 20% rise in YouTube watch time, which suggests progress towards C4C’s targets to reach younger audiences through digital platforms.<sup>112</sup>

We support C4C’s proactive approach to getting more of its content in front of its target audiences on the services they already use, in particular by putting more of its entertainment, current affairs and news content on YouTube and other VSPs and social media services.

Given the sheer volume of content C4C is now distributing on these services and the highly personalised nature of the viewer experience, we recognise it is difficult for C4C to achieve the “cut through” it needs to keep audiences engaged with the brand. We know that the competition for content prominence is a challenge facing all of the PSBs and we are considering how we can support audiences’ access to high quality UK-made PSM content as part of our 2025 PSM review.

We also appreciate that measuring the performance of content on online services to identify successful programmes can be difficult. However, we urge C4C to make moves to standardise how it reports on the performance of its online content in relation to UK audiences in future Annual Reports. As C4C continues to innovate for younger UK audiences using online services, it is also crucial that it sets itself bold targets for content provision and viewing and transparently reports on the progress it is making towards them.

### Film4-backed films performed well in the 2024 awards season

C4C has a duty to make, broadcast and distribute high-quality films, which it does primarily through its film production arm, Film4. In last year’s SMCP response we said that Film4 had a hugely successful year, with a number of films released in 2023 winning awards in the 2024 awards season including, notably, Yorgos Lanthimos’s *Poor Things* and Jonathan Glazer’s *The Zone of Interest*.

Film4-backed films released in 2024 include *Love Lies Bleeding* and *Wicked Little Letters* whilst the release of *Hard Truths* marked Film4’s thirteenth collaboration with British director Mike Leigh. C4C’s Annual Report notes that a further 14 feature films entered production in 2024 including literary adaptations *The Thing with Feathers* (which premiered at the Sundance film festival in January 2025) and *Midwinter Break*, and an adaptation of Helen MacDonald’s 2014 memoir *H is for Hawk*.<sup>113</sup>

## Conclusion

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2024 continued to present financial challenges for C4C. In response, C4C has accelerated the implementation of its *Fast Forward* strategy to align the business with shifting audience behaviours and wider financial considerations. C4C’s performance in 2024 demonstrates it is making progress in its digital-first approach. We welcome innovations such as the transition of *Hollyoaks* from a linear-first to digital-first show and the expansion of C4C’s digital content creation as examples of C4C’s

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<sup>112</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation, ‘[Hollyoaks surges in ratings as schedule revamp and gripping storylines resonate with viewers](#)’, May 2025.

<sup>113</sup> Channel 4 Television Corporation Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, p.47.

continued drive to reach and serve audiences with high quality, entertaining and thought provoking PSM output, wherever they choose to find their content.

Looking ahead, we realise the coming year will bring more change at Channel 4, with the appointment of both a new CEO and Chair and with the unveiling of its new Intellectual Property ownership plans. As the UK's broadcasting sector continues to evolve, the coming year will inevitably bring challenges and opportunities. Given the crucial role of *Fast Forward* to C4C's future - its financial sustainability and the delivery of its statutory remit, we have again made clear that C4C needs to provide more detail on how it plans to deliver its overarching *Fast Forward* objectives, as well as set itself targets to hold itself to account for achieving them over the coming year. Additionally, we expect C4C to transparently report on the outcomes for those using its digital and online services, to ensure that C4C continues to deliver for all audiences across the UK.

# A1 Annex 1

## Legal framework

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2. Section 198B of the Communications Act 2003 ('the Act') requires C4C to prepare an annual Statement of Media Content Policy, setting out how it will discharge its media content duties (as set out in section 198A of the Act, see below) across all its services in the coming year and how it performed in discharging its duties in the previous year.<sup>114</sup>
3. In producing the Statement, C4C must have regard to guidance given by Ofcom, and consult Ofcom. In accordance with [Ofcom's guidance](#), C4C publishes a combined Statement of Programme Policy and Media Content Policy (the Statement) which also covers delivery of its public service remit and quotas on its main channel, Channel 4.<sup>115</sup>
4. Although the Act does not require it, we have responded to C4C's previous Statements setting out our views on its performance. This allows us to publicly hold C4C to account for the delivery of its remit and media content duties.
5. It is important to note that this is just one of the mechanisms through which we assess C4C's performance and hold it to account. We also:
  - relicense the main channel at the end of each licence period, setting the terms of that licence. The current licence was recently [renewed](#) for a term of ten years, from 1 January 2025 until 31 December 2034.
  - carry out an in-depth review of C4C's delivery of its media content duties every five years, alongside a PSB Review. This was last conducted in 2024 in our [Review of Public Service Media \(2019-2023\)](#); and
  - report on C4C's compliance with the Channel 4 quotas on an annual basis.

## C4C's public service remit and media content duties

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### Public service remit (section 265(3) of the Act) – applies to main channel

6. The public service remit for Channel 4 is the provision of a broad range of high-quality and diverse programming which, in particular:
  - a) demonstrates innovation, experiment and creativity in the form and content of programmes;
  - b) appeals to the tastes and interests of a culturally diverse society;

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<sup>114</sup> The Media Act 2024 will amend C4C's duties under section 198B of the Act to require it to prepare a statement of commissioning policy at the same time as it prepares the Statement of Media Content Policy. This amendment is not yet in force, except in so far as to enable Ofcom to take preparatory steps for this new duty.

<sup>115</sup> Further to amendments introduced by the Media Act 2024, we recently [consulted](#) on [revised guidance](#) relating to C4C's combined Statement. We expect to publish a statement and final guidance in due course, and for the guidance to come into force in 2026. This document has been prepared taking account of the existing guidance.

- c) makes a significant contribution to meeting the need for the licensed public service channels to include programmes of an educational nature and other programmes of educative value; and
- d) exhibits a distinctive character.<sup>116</sup>

## **Media content duties (section 198A of the Act) – apply across a range of services**

7. C4C must participate in:

- a) the making of a broad range of relevant media content of high-quality that, taken as a whole, appeals to the tastes and interests of a culturally diverse society;
- b) the making of high-quality films intended to be shown to the general public at the cinema in the United Kingdom; and
- c) the broadcasting and distribution of such content and films.

8. C4C must, in particular, participate in:

- a) the making of relevant media content that consists of news and current affairs;
- b) the making of relevant content that appeals to the tastes and interests of older children and young adults;
- c) the broadcasting or distribution by means of electronic communications networks of feature films that reflect cultural activity in the United Kingdom (including third party films); and
- d) the broadcasting or distribution of relevant media content by means of a range of different types of electronic communications networks.

9. In performing its media content duties as set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 of this Annex, C4C must:

- a) promote measures intended to secure that people are well-informed and motivated to participate in society in a variety of ways; and
- b) contribute towards the fulfilment of the public service objectives (as defined in section 264A of the Act).

10. In performing the above C4C must:

- a) support the development of people with creative talent, in particular –
  - i) people at the beginning of their careers in relevant media content or films; and
  - ii) people involved in the making of innovative content and films.
- b) support and stimulate well-informed debate on a wide range of issues, including by providing access to information and views from around the world and by challenging established views;
- c) promote alternative views and new perspectives; and
- d) provide access to material that is intended to inspire people to make changes in their lives.

11. In performing the media content duties set out in paragraphs 6 to 9 of this Annex, C4C must have regard to the desirability of:

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<sup>116</sup> The Media Act 2024 will amend the public service remit set out in section 265(3) of the Act. However, this amendment is not yet in force expect in so far as to enable Ofcom to undertake preparatory work. We therefore reference the version of the Act currently in force.

- a) working with cultural organisations;
- b) encouraging innovation in the means by which relevant media content is broadcast or distributed; and
- c) promoting access to and awareness of services provided in digital form.