

STUDY OF GENDER DISTRIBUTION IN DANISH FILM 2020

Summary

This 2020 study examines the gender distribution in Danish film – as it appears behind the camera, in films and among audiences. The gender distribution in film is compared to the Danish labour market as a whole.

While there is gender balance in the Danish labour market, the share of women working in Danish film is quite a bit lower, at about 40%. In production and post-production, the rate is at around 30%, while there is gender balance in distribution and cinemas.

Behind the camera, there are major variations in the various occupations. While there is gender balance among set designers, producers and editors, only one third of directors and screenwriters are women. A lot more men work with cinematography, light and sound, while more women work in casting, continuity, costumes and makeup.

The gender distribution of applicants and recipients of Danish Film Institute funding reveals significant imbalances. Only about one in four feature film projects applying for and receiving funding has a woman as a director or screenwriter, while every other such project has a female producer. In documentaries, almost half of the projects applying for and receiving funding have a female director, while three in four have a female producer.

In the Danish Film Institute funding for features and documentaries, no imbalances are to be discerned. The average production grant, across budget sizes and fields, varies only very little and favours both genders. Development grants show a bit more variation.

Across film education programmes, there is a balanced distribution of male and female students, though the proportions vary widely at the individual schools and programmes. The directing programmes show the greatest differences. The National Film School and the independent schools saw higher admission of women in the present survey period than in the previous one. In the National Film School's two directing programmes, every third graduating fiction director is a woman, while three in four graduating documentary directors are women. In the National Film School's other programmes, an approximate gender balance is seen among graduating cinematographers, screenwriters and editors.

Among decision makers, the different groups show some variation. Gender balance is seen among decision makers at festivals and funders, while men are over-represented among film critics, on boards and in the National Film School's management. The Danish Film Institute is relatively balanced, yet with a large majority of men on the board and in management.

On screen, more women act in features, mainly in lead roles, than in the last survey period. In 2016-19, about 40% of all leads and supporting roles in features were played by women. In terms of both primary and secondary characters in documentaries, the rate of women has grown markedly, with the gender distribution today roughly matching the national average.

Among audiences, more than two-thirds of all Danes from age 15 watch films in the cinema at least once a year, and approximately every third at least quarterly. Especially men under 35 are active cinemagoers, as more than every third person in the age group goes to the cinema monthly or more. Women in the mature age groups go to the cinema more often than men, especially from 66 and upwards. Well over half of the men aged 66+ go to the cinema less than once a year or never. Almost 60% of the women have seen more than five Danish films in the 2016-18 period.

Danish Film Institute
2020

Further information:

Kirsten Barslund
Project Manager
kirstenb@dfi.dk
Tel. +45 3374 3526

DFI
DANISH FILM INSTITUTE