

Oireachtas Joint Committee on Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Working Conditions and Development in the Irish Film Industry.

Anyone who has stayed in a cinema after a film is over to watch the credits will know how many people it takes to make a film. People working on films include writers, directors, producers, actors, camera operators, set designers, costume designers, hair and makeup, electricians, set construction supervisors and crews, location managers, editors, post production supervisors, music composers and performers, animators and visual effects artists, equipment hire, transport and a range of specialist services depending on the particular needs of each feature film, TV drama or TV animation project.

These teams are assembled for each project and then work for varying lengths of time on the project both because of the particular needs of each project (e.g. an actor with a small part is only needed for a day or two) and because of the overall scale of the project. A lower budget feature film produced for €1.5 million and supported with IFB funding will have a four to six week pre-production period, a four week shoot and eight to twelve weeks post production. A 10x1 hour TV series made for more than \$2m an episode will have months of preproduction and a shooting period of at least six months and further months of post-production. A TV animation series can take two years to make. Each time the creative and technical team is assembled and then each member of the team go his or her separate ways when their particular part of the work is done and/or the overall project is completed.

Film studios do not employ on a full time long term basis all the creative and technical personnel needed for the production of films and TV dramas. In most places including Hollywood, film studios operate on the basis that a small team of staff manage the infrastructure of the studio and rent out the premises to production companies which then organise their creative and technical teams for the project which is using the studios. Sometimes service companies are based in the studios but they too are renters of the space. This is the case with all the studio space in the EU including the UK and Ireland. As demand for screen content has increased, there is a more regular if not a constant flow of production through the studios which results in regular work for many of those involved.

The competition in getting productions to locate in a particular territory is intense. As a result only those territories with strong skills bases, suitable infrastructure and competitive financial incentives are able to attract that work. Ireland has been very successful in this area in recent years. As well as a vibrant film production sector made primarily on location, it also has three major TV series one each in Ardmore Studios and Ashford Studios both in Wicklow and Troy Studios in Limerick. The feature film, TV drama and TV animation sector alone has an estimated annual spend in Ireland on personnel working in Ireland and goods and services sourced in Ireland of approximately €250m. This is on top of what broadcasters (including RTÉ) and other producers of screen content spend on the programmes they make largely for the local audience.

It is estimated that there are over seventeen thousand full time equivalent jobs in the sector and the Gross Value Added of the sector exceeds €1 billion annually. Detailed figures are expected to be published shortly in the Department of Culture commissioned Olsberg SPI Report. It is understood that this report will also make recommendations for the sector to promote its growth and development over the next five years.

Also recently published is the BAI/IFB Crowe Horwath Report in respect of a Strategy for the Development of Skills for the audiovisual sector. This report a copy of which is attached has a number of recommendations in relation to training which are being worked on by the Department of Culture in conjunction with the IFB and the BAI.

The Irish Film Board has a dual remit of supporting the culture of film and screen content production and the promotion of an industry for making film and screen content in Ireland. Last week we launched our Production Catalogue 2018

link: https://www.irishfilmboard.ie/images/uploads/general/IFB_2018_Production_Catalogue.pdf

In 2017 the IFB provided funding of the production of 16 feature films, 5 creative coproductions, 13 feature documentaries, 5 animation TV projects, 21 short films and the release of 27 feature films in Irish cinemas.

The IFB also provides development funding for all these forms of production and is the largest public funder of the creative development (like R&D funding) for the feature film, TV drama and TV animation sector. There has in addition been a particular focus on production in the regions with film and TV dramas shooting in Cork, Limerick, Galway and Roscommon as well as in the Dublin/Wicklow region.

The Irish Film Board also includes Screen Training Ireland which undertakes a range of activities in relation to training in the audiovisual production sector. In light of the Crowe Horwath Report Screen Training Ireland is working on plans for the development of training across the audiovisual production sector and is engaging with the Department of Culture in relation to the development of its training services. The IFB has published a report "Screen Training Ireland – A Year in Review 2017"

link: https://www.screentrainingireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/STI_Review_17.pdf

On the last two pages 47 and 48 under "Looking Ahead 2018 and Beyond" Screen Training Ireland sets out its work plan for 2018.

There are huge opportunities given the greatly increased demand for screen content worldwide (Netflix, Amazon, Apple etc.) for the development of the screen content production sector in Ireland. As the central part of the creative industries, the sector can create a strong developmental environment for growth and job creation in Ireland. In the five years from 2011 to 2016 employment at least doubled in film, television and animation production and it is anticipated that in the next five years it could double again. The IFB hopes that with the publication of the two reports referred to earlier and the implementation of the strategies set out in them, the sector will continue to deliver on Pillar 4 of the Creative Ireland programme of "making Ireland a centre of excellence for media production."

Thank you.