

B
F
I



**TOP FILMS
IN 2019**

CONTENTS

Facts in focus	03
The top 20 films	04
The top 20 UK films	05
The top 30 UK independent films	06
Best weekend performance of UK films	08
Specialised films at the UK box office	09
Trends in specialised film	10
Non-English language films	11
Documentaries	13
Releases and box office by genre	14
Releases and box office by classification	16

FACTS IN FOCUS

Three of the top five films released at the UK box office in 2019 were UK qualifying productions. The year's top film, the UK studio-backed title *Avengers: Endgame*, set a new opening record with a take of over £43 million.

- The biggest film of the year was *Avengers: Endgame* with takings of £88.7 million.
- Seventeen films earned £20 million or over at the UK box office in 2019, the same number as in 2018.
- Nine UK qualifying films featured in the top 20 films of the year, one of which was an independent UK film.
- *Downton Abbey*, with takings of £28.2 million, was the highest earning independent UK film of the year.
- The top 20 UK films grossed £527 million, 41% of the total UK box office.
- Independent UK films accounted for 19% of the total box office for the top 20 UK films, compared with 17% in 2018.
- Fourteen UK qualifying films spent a total of 25 weeks at the top of the UK weekend box office charts.
- Specialised films made up over half (54%) of all theatrical releases in 2019; these titles earned £35 million, a 3% share of the overall box office.
- Action was the highest grossing genre of the year with takings of £328 million (25% of the total box office) from 13% of releases.
- There were more '15' releases than any other classification (45%), but '12A' films generated the largest single share of the box office (36%).

TOP FILMS IN 2019

THE TOP 20 FILMS

The top two performing releases at the box office in the UK and Republic of Ireland in 2019 were UK qualifying films (Table 1). *Avengers: Endgame* topped the box office chart with earnings of £89 million followed by *The Lion King* with £76 million. *Avengers: Endgame* is the territory's highest earning UK film since the 2015 release of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (£123 million) and *Spectre* (£95 million). In total, nine of the top 20 films in 2019 were UK qualifying productions, eight of which were UK studio-backed projects.

Seventeen films generated grosses of £20 million or over in 2019, the same number as in 2018. Sequels, 'live-action' remakes and franchise films accounted for 16 of the top 20 films (including all of the top 10), up from 15 such films in 2018.

Table 1 Box office results for the top 20 films released in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2019

Rank	Title	Country of origin	Box office gross (£ million)	Widest point of release	Opening weekend gross (£ million)	Distributor
1	Avengers: Endgame	UK/USA	88.7	683	43.4	Walt Disney
2	The Lion King	UK/USA	76.0	725	16.7	Walt Disney
3	Toy Story 4*	USA	66.2	699	13.3	Walt Disney
4	Joker*	USA/Can	58.1	684	12.6	Warner Bros
5	Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*	UK/USA	58.1	746	20.9	Walt Disney
6	Frozen II*	USA	53.1	727	15.2	Walt Disney
7	Captain Marvel	USA/Aus	39.5	659	12.7	Walt Disney
8	Spider-Man: Far from Home	UK/USA	37.3	646	14.2	Sony
9	Aladdin	UK/USA	37.2	660	7.1	Walt Disney
10	Jumanji: The Next Level*	USA	35.2	643	9.5	Sony
11	Downton Abbey*	UK/USA#	28.2	741	5.2	Universal
12	Dumbo	UK/USA	25.1	710	6.1	Walt Disney
13	Rocketman	UK/USA	23.4	719	5.3	Paramount
14	Once Upon a Time in Hollywood	USA/Chn	21.5	707	7.6	Sony
15	Little Women*	USA	21.3	703	3.6	Sony
16	Fast & Furious: Hobbs & Shaw	UK/USA	20.7	624	6.4	Universal
17	How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World	USA/Jpn	20.0	649	5.3	Universal
18	The Secret Life of Pets 2	USA/Fra/Jpn	19.8	627	3.5	Universal
19	It Chapter Two	USA/Can	18.9	656	7.4	Warner Bros
20	The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part	Den/Nor/Aus/USA	18.7	666	4.0	Warner Bros

Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

Box office gross = cumulative total up to 20 February 2020.

* Film still on release on 20 February 2020.

Film made with independent (non-studio) US support or with the independent arm of a US studio.

THE TOP 20 UK FILMS

The top 20 highest earning UK qualifying films of 2019, shown in Table 2, had a combined gross of £527 million, which was 41% of the total UK and Republic of Ireland box office. Sixteen UK films grossed £10 million or over in 2019, one more than in 2018. The top 20 is dominated by UK/USA collaborations, most of which were studio-backed productions. Eight of the titles were UK independent films, one more than in 2018, and they accounted for 19% of the total box office for the top 20 UK films.

Table 2 Box office results for the top 20 UK films released in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2019

Rank	Title	Country of origin	Box office gross (£ million)	Widest point of release	Opening weekend gross (£ million)	Distributor
1	Avengers: Endgame	UK/USA	88.7	683	43.4	Walt Disney
2	The Lion King	UK/USA	76.0	725	16.7	Walt Disney
3	Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*	UK/USA	58.1	746	20.9	Walt Disney
4	Spider-Man: Far from Home	UK/USA	37.3	646	14.2	Sony
5	Aladdin	UK/USA	37.2	660	7.1	Walt Disney
6	Downton Abbey*	UK/USA#	28.2	741	5.2	Universal
7	Dumbo	UK/USA/Aus/Can	25.1	710	6.1	Walt Disney
8	Rocketman	UK/USA/Can	23.4	719	5.3	Paramount
9	Fast & Furious: Hobbs & Shaw	UK/USA/Jpn	20.7	624	6.4	Universal
10	Last Christmas	UK/USA	18.1	682	2.7	Universal
11	The Favourite	UK/USA/Ire#	17.0	618	4.0	20th Century Fox
12	Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*	UK/USA/Can	14.8	622	3.3	Walt Disney
13	Yesterday	UK	14.0	681	2.2	Universal
14	Pokémon Detective Pikachu	UK/USA/Can/Jpn	13.8	604	4.9	Warner Bros
15	Cats*	UK/USA	11.9	657	3.2	Universal
16	Stan & Ollie	UK/USA/Can#	10.6	683	2.6	Entertainment One
17	Mary Queen of Scots	UK/USA#	9.3	553	2.1	Universal
18	Judy*	UK	8.2	665	2.1	Pathé
19	Angel Has Fallen*	UK/USA#	7.5	559	2.1	Lionsgate
20	Fisherman's Friends	UK	7.4	539	1.2	Entertainment Film Distributors

Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

Box office gross = cumulative total up to 20 February 2020.

* Film still on release on 20 February 2020.

Film made with independent (non-studio) US support or with the independent arm of a US studio.



Image: Downton Abbey © 2019 Focus Features LLC. All rights reserved. Courtesy of Universal Studios Licensing LLC

THE TOP 30 UK INDEPENDENT FILMS

Table 3 shows an extended box office chart detailing the top 30 highest grossing UK independent film releases of 2019. *Downton Abbey* was the year's top earner with a gross of £28 million, followed by *The Favourite* (£17 million) and *Yesterday* (£14 million). The list includes a number of independent productions which qualified as British under the cultural test for film but which were financed and produced by non-UK production entities. (Titles in this category include *Angel Has Fallen* and *Hellboy*.) For the second consecutive year, the top 30 features one documentary release: Asif Kapadia's biographical film *Diego Maradona* is in 29th place with earnings of £1 million.

The combined earnings of the top 20 films in the list accounted for 87% of the total box office for all independent UK films released in 2019. This is up from 2018, when the top 20 UK independent titles generated 77% of the overall gross for these films.

Table 3 Box office results for the top 30 UK independent films released in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2019

Rank	Title	Country of origin	Box office gross (£ million)	Widest point of release	Opening weekend gross (£ million)	Distributor
1	Downton Abbey*	UK/USA [#]	28.2	741	5.2	Universal
2	The Favourite	UK/USA/Ire [#]	17.0	618	4.0	20th Century Fox
3	Yesterday	UK	14.0	681	2.2	Universal
4	Stan & Ollie	UK/USA/Can [#]	10.6	683	2.6	Entertainment One
5	Mary Queen of Scots	UK/USA [#]	9.3	553	2.1	Universal
6	Judy*	UK	8.2	665	2.1	Pathé
7	Angel Has Fallen	UK/USA [#]	7.5	559	2.1	Lionsgate
8	Fisherman's Friends	UK	7.4	539	1.2	Entertainment Film Distributors
9	A Shaun the Sheep Movie: Farmageddon*	UK	7.1	644	1.3	StudioCanal
10	Fighting with My Family	UK/USA [#]	5.9	576	2.0	Lionsgate
11	Blue Story	UK	4.5	311	1.3	Paramount
12	The Kid Who Would Be King	UK/USA [#]	3.7	513	0.7	20th Century Fox
13	Blinded by the Light	UK/USA [#]	3.2	551	1.0	Entertainment One
14	Wild Rose	UK	2.9	478	0.8	Entertainment One
15	Horrible Histories: The Movie - Rotten Romans	UK	2.9	532	0.6	Altitude
16	Peppa Pig: Festival of Fun	UK	2.9	536	1.0	Entertainment One
17	Red Joan	UK	2.8	506	0.4	Lionsgate
18	Colette	UK/USA [#]	2.5	322	0.8	Lionsgate
19	Official Secrets	UK/USA [#]	2.4	380	0.5	Entertainment One
20	Cold Pursuit	UK/Can/Fra	2.0	418	0.6	StudioCanal
21	The Aftermath	UK/Ger	2.0	563	0.6	20th Century Fox
22	Hellboy	UK/USA [#]	1.9	491	1.0	Lionsgate
23	The Aeronauts*	UK/USA [#]	1.8	577	1.0	Entertainment One
24	Tolkien	UK/USA [#]	1.8	519	0.6	20th Century Fox
25	Sorry We Missed You	UK/Fra/Bel	1.3	236	0.4	Entertainment One
26	The White Crow	UK/Fra	1.2	139	0.3	StudioCanal
27	Mrs. Lowry and Son	UK	1.2	242	0.3	Vertigo
28	All Is True	UK	1.1	254	0.3	Sony
29	Diego Maradona	UK	1.0	199	0.3	Altitude
30	The Informer	UK/USA [#]	0.7	453	0.3	Warner Bros

Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

Box office gross = cumulative total up to 20 February 2020.

* Film still on release on 20 February 2020.

[#] Film made with independent (non-studio) US support or with the independent arm of a US studio.

BEST WEEKEND PERFORMANCE OF UK FILMS

A total of 26 different films topped the UK weekend box office charts over the course of 2019. Fourteen of these were UK titles, which spent a combined total of 25 weeks at number one (Table 4). The table includes theatrical grosses generated over the three-day weekend plus revenues from any previews. In 2018, 11 UK films achieved the number one slot in the weekend charts for a total of 22 weeks.

The UK film holding the top spot for the greatest number of weeks in 2019 was *Aladdin* with a four-week run. (In the overall rankings, however, the Walt Disney live-action remake was second to Warner Bros' *Joker*, which topped the weekend charts for six weeks.) Two UK films topped the chart for three weeks and four UK films topped the chart for two weeks, all of which, with the exception of *Downton Abbey*, were UK studio-backed titles. *Avengers: Endgame*, which held the top spot for two weeks, set a new all-time UK box office opening record with a four-day opening gross of £43.4 million as well as a new UK opening weekend record (Friday-Sunday) with a three-day gross of £31.5 million.

In addition to *Downton Abbey*, three other UK independent films topped the charts in 2019 – *Stan & Ollie*, *Fighting with My Family* and *Angel Has Fallen* – compared with just one – *Darkest Hour* – in 2018.

Table 4 UK films at number one in the weekend box office charts, 2019

Title	First week at top	Opening weekend gross (£ million)	Box office gross (£ million)	Distributor	Number of weeks at number one
Aladdin	24/05/2019	7.1	37.2	Walt Disney	4
The Lion King	19/07/2019	16.7	76.0	Walt Disney	3
Downton Abbey*	13/09/2019	5.2	28.2	Universal	3
Avengers: Endgame	26/04/2019	43.4	88.7	Walt Disney	2
Spider-Man: Far from Home	05/07/2019	14.2	37.3	Sony	2
Dumbo	29/03/2019	6.1	25.1	Walt Disney	2
Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*	20/12/2019	20.9	58.1	Walt Disney	2
Stan & Ollie	11/01/2019	2.6	10.6	Entertainment One	1
Fast & Furious: Hobbs & Shaw	02/08/2019	6.4	20.7	Universal	1
Pokémon Detective Pikachu	10/05/2019	4.9	13.8	Warner Bros	1
Fighting with My Family	01/03/2019	2.0	5.9	Lionsgate	1
Mary Poppins Returns	04/01/2019 [^]	8.2	43.4	Walt Disney	1
Angel Has Fallen	23/08/2019	2.1	7.5	Lionsgate	1
Last Christmas*	15/11/2019	2.7	18.1	Universal	1

Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

Box office gross = cumulative total up to 20 February 2020.

Opening weekend gross includes revenues from previews.

* Film still on release on 20 February 2020.

[^] *Mary Poppins Returns* was released in 2018 when it topped the weekend chart for the last two weeks in December. Its opening weekend and box office grosses were included in last year's edition of the Statistical Yearbook.

SPECIALISED FILMS AT THE UK BOX OFFICE

Specialised films offer audiences an experience of cinema that is very different from the titles that dominate the overall box office charts. The BFI's definition of 'specialised' is broad and relates to those films that do not sit easily within a mainstream and highly commercial genre. Many are from the independent production sector (although they may be handled by a mainstream, studio-based distributor) or are made with a low production budget (compared to a studio production) and may focus more on script and character than on effects and star names. Specifically, the BFI considers most subtitled foreign language films, documentaries and re-releases of archive/classic films to be specialised.

Non-mainstream films which do not fall into the three main categories but are also considered to be specialised are not included in the following data, due to the subjectivity regarding the categorisation of these films. Generally these films can be described as having a distinctive genre, hook or style, or are films which deal with more complex and challenging subject matter than the majority of mainstream films. (Non-feature film releases, such as recorded live performances, are not considered to be specialised; they are categorised as event cinema. For more information, see the Exhibition chapter.)

In total, 412 documentaries, foreign language films and re-releases of archive/classic films were shown at UK cinemas in 2019, representing 54% of all theatrical releases in the year (Table 5). These films grossed £35 million, a 3% share of total box office earnings.

Table 5 Documentaries, foreign language films and re-releases in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2019

Type	Number of releases	Share of releases (%)	Gross box office (£ million)	Share of gross box office (%)	Average widest point of release
Documentary	99	13.0	7.8	0.6	26
Foreign language	346	45.3	29.0	2.2	30
Re-release	41	5.4	3.0	0.2	108
All specialised films*	412	53.9	35.1	2.7	38
All films	764	100.0	1,300.9	100.0	121

Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

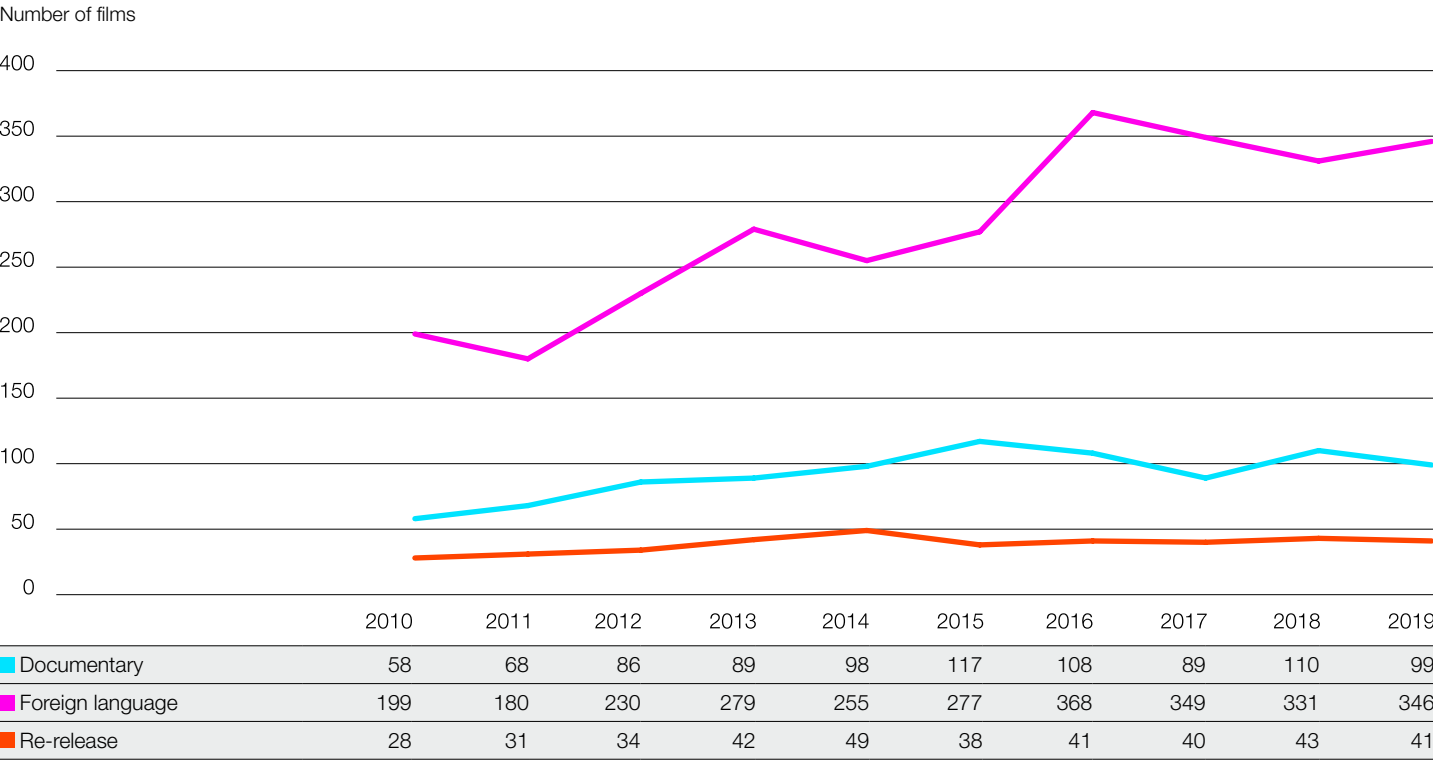
* Due to some overlap of categories (e.g. a film such as *Bergman: A Year in a Life* is categorised as a foreign language film and a documentary) this total refers to the number of specialised films, not the sum total of the categories in the table. This total does not include the category of 'other specialised films' which has been used in previous Yearbooks.

Figures as at 20 February 2020.

TRENDS IN SPECIALISED FILM

As Figure 1 shows, while annual numbers have fluctuated over the past decade there has been an overall upward trend in the volume of releases for all three categories of specialised film covered in the present analysis. The number of theatrically released feature documentaries increased from 58 in 2010 to 99 in 2019, while the number of classic/archive re-releases increased from 28 in 2010 to 41 in 2019. The greatest variation over the period was seen in foreign language films, which, despite a downward trend from 2017, increased by 44% over the period.

Figure 1 Documentaries, foreign language films and re-releases in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2010-2019



Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

Note: There is some overlap in these categories as a small number of films are assigned to more than one specialised film category.

NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE FILMS

Films in 42 different languages (including English) were released in the UK and Republic of Ireland in 2019, three fewer than in 2018.

Foreign language films accounted for 45% of all theatrical releases in 2019 and earned £29 million (2% of the total box office). There were 346 foreign language film releases, up from 331 in 2018. These films were shown on average at 30 sites at their widest point of release compared to an average of 196 sites for English language films. After English, the most common languages, in terms of numbers of releases, were Hindi, Punjabi and Tamil (Table 6). If combined, the 194 cinema releases in the languages of the Indian sub-continent (11) would account for a quarter of all releases in 2019. There were 109 films in European languages (other than English) accounting for 14% of all releases. Hindi was again the top non-English language at the box office by value, with a 0.9% share of overall box office revenues, followed by Spanish (0.2%) and Polish (0.2%).

Table 6 Languages of films released in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2019 (ranked by gross box office)

	Main language	Number of releases	Gross box office (£ million)	Box office share (%)
	English	396	1,260.7	96.9
	English with others*	22	11.2	0.9
1	Hindi	65	12.2	0.9
2	Spanish	10	2.7	0.2
3	Polish	19	2.4	0.2
4	Punjabi	44	1.9	0.1
5	Tamil	41	1.6	0.1
6	Mandarin	18	1.3	0.1
7	Japanese	5	1.1	0.1
8	French	32	1.1	0.1
9	Arabic	7	0.8	<0.1
10	Malayalam	19	0.7	<0.1
	Other (31 languages)	86	3.2	0.2

Source: Comscore, BBFC, IMDb, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

* 'English with others' includes films for which the main language was English but with extensive use of other languages, such as *The White Crow* in English, Russian and French.

Figures as at 20 February 2020.

Table 7 shows the top 10 non-Hindi foreign language films of 2019. At number one in the list is Pedro Almodovar's semi-autobiographical film *Pain and Glory* (in Spanish), the overall top earning foreign language release of the year with earnings of £1.5 million. This is the first non-Hindi language release since *Untouchable* (£2.0 million) in 2012 to top the overall foreign language box office charts. In addition to *Pain and Glory*, which was nominated for the best foreign language film award at both the BAFTAs and Academy Awards® in 2020, the list includes a 2019 BAFTA and Oscar® nominee for best foreign language film, *Capernaum*. (The best foreign language film Oscar® was renamed the best international film award in 2020.)

In total, there are six European language releases in the non-Hindi top 10, including three titles in Polish, three releases in other languages from the Indian sub-continent and one release in Arabic.

Table 7 Top 10 foreign language films (excluding Hindi*) released in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2019

Rank	Title	Country of origin	Gross box office (£ million)	Distributor	Main language
1	Pain and Glory	Spa	1.5	20th Century Fox	Spanish
2	Polityka	Pol	0.6	Phoenix	Polish
3	Bigil	Ind	0.6	Sun Media	Tamil
4	Capernaum	Leb/Fra/USA	0.5	Picturehouse	Arabic
5	Everybody Knows	Spa/Fra/Ita/Ger	0.5	Universal	Spanish
6	Chal Mera Putt	Ind	0.4	Rhythm Boyz Entertainment	Punjabi
7	Women of Mafia 2	Pol	0.4	Phoenix	Polish
8	Woman at War	Ice/Fra/Ukr	0.3	Picturehouse	Icelandic
9	Underdog	Pol	0.3	Phoenix	Polish
10	Lucifer	Ind	0.3	RFT Films	Malayalam

Source: Comscore, BBFC, IMDb, BFI RSU analysis, distributor websites

Notes:

* For Hindi language titles, see Table 8.

Figures as at 20 February 2020.

Table 8 shows the top 10 Hindi language film releases of 2019. The list is headed by the comedy drama *Good Newwz*, one of two Hindi language releases to earn £1 million or over at the UK and Republic of Ireland box office in the year. The list features instalments from two long-running Bollywood franchises, the police action series *Dabangg* starring Salman Khan and the comedy series *Housefull* starring Akshay Kumar. *Housefull 4*, which appears in seventh place in the list, was partly filmed in the UK.

Table 8 Top 10 Hindi language films released in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2019

Rank	Title	Country of origin	UK box office total (£ million)	Distributor
1	Good Newwz	Ind	1.0	Zee Studios
2	Kalank	Ind	1.0	20th Century Fox
3	Bharat	Ind	0.9	Cinestaan AA
4	War	Ind	0.7	Yash Raj Films
5	Gully Boy	Ind	0.6	Cinestaan AA
6	Dabangg 3	Ind	0.6	Yash Raj Films
7	Housefull 4	Ind	0.6	Walt Disney
8	Total Dhamaal	Ind	0.5	20th Century Fox
9	Mission Mangal	Ind	0.5	20th Century Fox
10	Petta	Ind	0.4	Murugan Talkies

Source: Comscore, BBFC, IMDb, BFI RSU analysis

Note: Figures as at 20 February 2020.

DOCUMENTARIES

A total of 99 feature documentaries (13% of theatrical releases) were released in the UK and Republic of Ireland in 2019, down from 110 in 2018. These films earned £8 million which was 0.6% of the overall box office gross. Table 9 shows the year's top 10 highest earning documentaries. (In a change from previous editions of the Yearbook, concert and non-concert documentaries are not disaggregated.)

Two documentary features earned £1 million or over at the UK and Republic of Ireland box office in 2019: Todd Douglas Miller's *Apollo 11* (£1.4 million), which was released to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing, and Asif Kapadia's biographical film *Diego Maradona* (£1.0 million). Half of the top 10 are films about musical performers and performances, the most popular of which was the Aretha Franklin concert film *Amazing Grace*, which earned £0.8 million. The table includes a shorter large-format version of the year's top earning documentary, *Apollo 11: First Steps Edition* (£0.2 million), which was developed for IMAX and museum cinemas and aimed at younger audiences.

Four of the top 10 documentaries are UK films, including Nick Broomfield's *Marianne & Leonard: Words of Love* and the winner of the 2020 BAFTA best documentary award, *For Sama*.

Table 9 Top 10 feature documentaries released in the UK and Republic of Ireland, 2019

Rank	Title	Country of origin	Box office gross (£ million)	Widest point of release (sites)	Distributor
1	Apollo 11	USA	1.4	277	Dogwoof
2	Diego Maradona	UK	1.0	199	Altitude
3	Amazing Grace	USA	0.8	116	StudioCanal
4	Pavarotti	USA/Fra/Ita	0.7	126	Entertainment One
5	Marianne & Leonard: Words of Love	UK	0.7	65	Dogwoof
6	Western Stars	USA	0.4	376	Warner Bros
7	Liam Gallagher: As It Was	UK	0.4	24	Altitude
8	Apollo 11: First Steps Edition	USA	0.2	2	Independent
9	For Sama	UK/Syr/USA	0.1	35	Republic
10	RBG	USA	0.1	41	Dogwoof

Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

Note: Figures as at 20 February 2020.

Genre in the Statistical Yearbook

For statistical purposes, the BFI Research and Statistics Unit assigns a primary genre to every film released in the UK. This is not meant to be prescriptive but helps gauge the relative popularity of different genres on a consistent basis from year to year. The list of genres is based on conventions commonly used within the industry and by published sources such as the BFI's Collections Information Database, the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), Comscore, the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) and distributors' websites.

RELEASES AND BOX OFFICE BY GENRE

Table 10 shows the relative popularity of different genres at the box office in the UK and Republic of Ireland in 2019. The pattern of box office by genre each year is usually determined by a small number of high grossing releases. For the fifth consecutive year, action was the top earning genre with a combined gross of £328 million, followed by animation with £312 million. For the second consecutive year, drama was the third highest earning genre with revenues of £166 million. It is unusual for drama to feature in the top three earning genres although it typically represents the highest proportion of releases. In 2019, over one third of releases (35%) were dramas and these films generated 13% of the overall box office.

Twelve of the top performing titles by genre were UK qualifying films, which highlights the variety of story types which underpin British film success. In addition to the top grossing film of the year, *Avengers: Endgame*, these were *The Lion King*, *Downton Abbey*, *Yesterday*, *Rocketman*, *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*, *Aladdin*, *Dumbo*, *Last Christmas*, *Cats*, *The Souvenir* and *Gwen*.

Table 10 Films released in the UK and Republic of Ireland by genre, 2019 (ranked by gross box office)

Genre	Number of releases	% of releases	Gross box office (£ million)	% of total box office	Top performing title
Action	102	13.4	328.3	25.2	Avengers: Endgame
Animation	40	5.2	312.1	24.0	The Lion King
Drama	264	34.6	166.4	12.8	Downton Abbey
Comedy	136	17.8	83.5	6.4	Yesterday
Biopic	19	2.5	80.7	6.2	Rocketman
Thriller	20	2.6	75.3	5.8	Joker
Sci-fi	3	0.4	64.3	4.9	Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker
Horror	37	4.8	60.6	4.7	It Chapter Two
Adventure	8	1.0	44.5	3.4	Aladdin
Family	5	0.7	42.7	3.3	Dumbo
Romance	7	0.9	18.9	1.5	Last Christmas
Musical	8	1.0	12.3	0.9	Cats
Documentary	99	13.0	7.8	0.6	Apollo 11
Crime	11	1.4	2.8	0.2	21 Bridges
Mystery	1	0.1	0.5	<0.1	The Souvenir
War	2	0.3	0.1	<0.1	Saving Private Ryan (D-Day 75th Anniversary)
Fantasy	2	0.3	<0.1	<0.1	Gwen
Total	764	100.0	1,300.9	100.0	

Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

Note: Figures/percentages may not sum to totals due to rounding.



The pattern of genres ranked by the average number of sites at the widest point of release (WPR) is shown in Table 11. The top three genres by average WPR in 2019 were sci-fi, family and animation. The averages for the top two are skewed, however, by the low number of releases in these categories, and the inclusion of studio-backed titles which are typically released into more cinemas than other films.

The title released into the greatest number of cinemas in 2019 was the top earning sci-fi film of the year, *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*, which was shown at 746 sites at its widest point of release. This is the widest ever release in the UK and beats the previous record set by *Mary Poppins Returns* (742) in 2018.

Table 11 Films released in the UK and Republic of Ireland by genre, 2019 (ranked by average widest point of release)

Genre	Number of releases	Box office (£ million)	Average number of sites at widest point of release	Average number of weeks on release
Sci-fi	3	64.3	465	13
Family	5	42.7	447	21
Animation	40	312.1	328	16
Biopic	19	80.7	306	23
Adventure	8	44.5	250	14
Horror	37	60.6	241	8
Action	102	328.3	152	6
Thriller	20	75.3	125	8
Musical	8	12.3	122	8
Romance	7	18.9	121	11
Crime	11	2.8	107	5
Comedy	136	83.5	100	8
War	2	0.1	95	6
Drama	264	166.4	81	10
Mystery	1	0.5	67	24
Documentary	99	7.8	26	11
Fantasy	2	<0.1	13	9
Total	764	1,300.9	121	10

Source: Comscore, BFI RSU analysis

BBFC classification

All films in the UK must carry a classification indicating their suitability for exhibition in premises licensed for cinematic exhibition by local authorities. The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) provides age ratings for the majority of films aimed at theatrical release, although local authorities may grant their own classification if they decide to do so.

The symbols used by the BBFC, and their meanings, are given below.

U (Universal)	Suitable for all
PG (Parental Guidance)	General viewing, but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children
12A	No-one younger than 12 may see a '12A' film in a cinema unless accompanied by an adult
15	No-one younger than 15 may see a '15' film in a cinema
18	No-one younger than 18 may see an '18' film in a cinema

RELEASES AND BOX OFFICE BY CLASSIFICATION

Table 12 shows a breakdown of 2019 releases by BBFC film classification. It shows that, as in previous years, more '15' films (45%) were released than any other category, but the largest share of box office gross was earned by '12A' films (36%). The proportion of '15' rated films released was higher than in 2018 (42%) but was lower for '12A' films (32% compared with 34%). Films classified as '15' accounted for 22% of the overall box office gross in 2019 (the same as in 2018), a similar share to 'PG' rated films (down from 25% in 2018).

Table 12 All releases in the UK and Republic of Ireland by BBFC film classification, 2019

	Number of releases	% of all UK releases	Gross box office (£ million)	% of gross box office	Top performing title
U	31	4.1	222.7	17.1	Toy Story 4
PG	96	12.6	283.5	21.8	The Lion King
12A	248	32.5	473.6	36.4	Avengers: Endgame
15	343	44.9	290.1	22.3	Joker
18	35	4.6	31.0	2.4	Once Upon a Time in Hollywood
No classification	11	1.4	0.1	<0.1	Hale County This Morning, This Evening
Total	764	100.0	1,300.9	100.0	

Source: Comscore, BBFC, BFI RSU analysis

Note: Figures as at 20 February 2020.

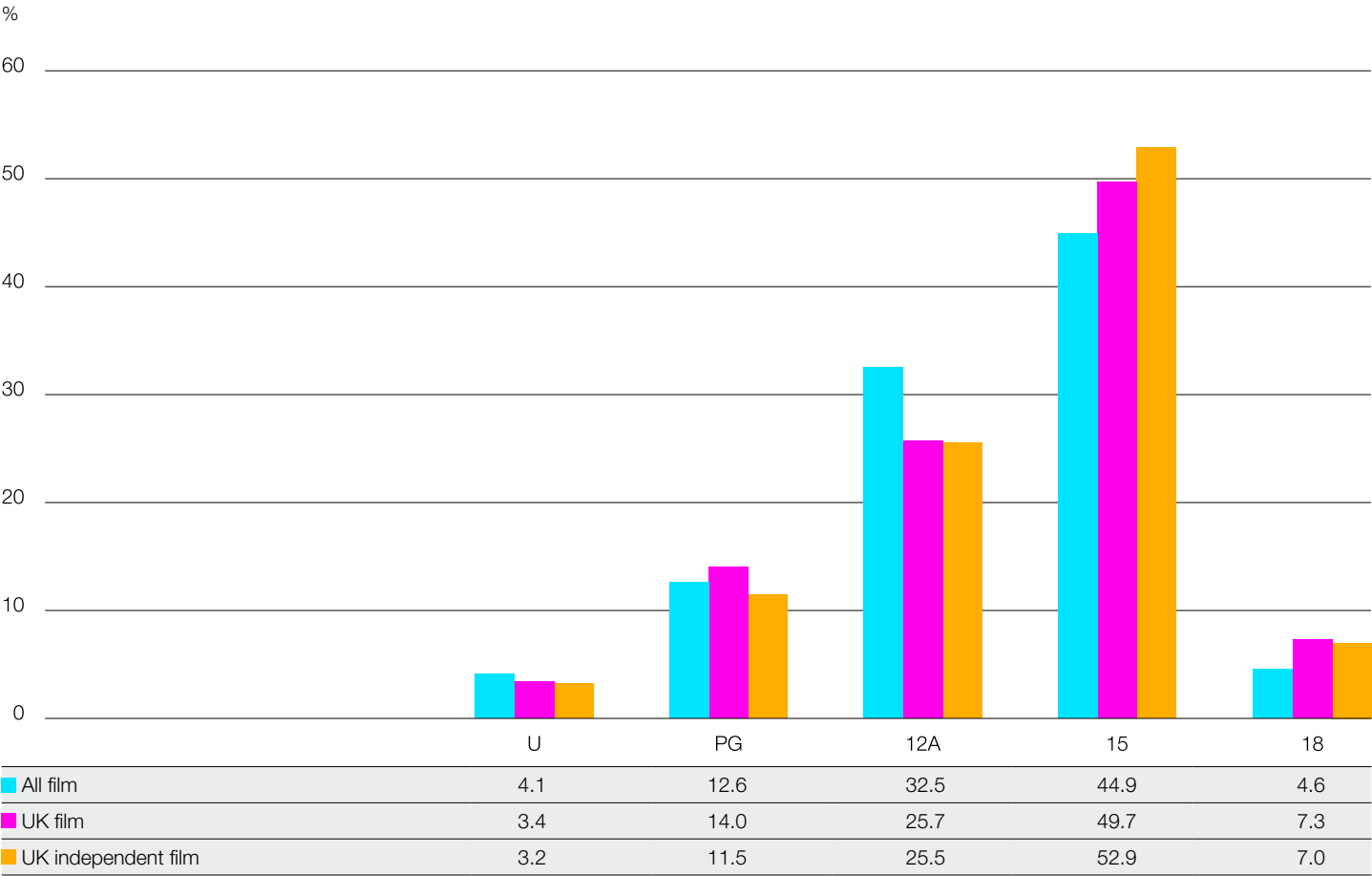
Figures 2 and 3 show a comparison of the share of releases and gross box office by BBFC classification for all films, UK films and UK independent films in 2019. The rankings in terms of release share by classification are the same across all three categories of film type, with titles with a ‘15’ classification accounting for the highest proportion of releases, followed by ‘12A’ and ‘PG’. However, there were differences in the proportion of box office takings by classification between the three categories.

For all films and UK films the highest earning classification was ‘12A’, with ‘15’ the second highest earner for all films and ‘PG’ the second highest earner for UK films. For UK independent films the highest earning classification was ‘15’ followed by ‘PG’. Films with a ‘12A’ classification generated 36% of the total box office for all films and 46% of the total box office for UK films, compared to 29% for UK independent films, while films with a ‘15’ classification generated 34.5% of the total box office for UK independent films compared to 22% for all films and 14% for UK films.

Five of the top 10 earning films overall in 2019 were ‘12A’ titles and five of the top 10 earning UK films were ‘12A’ titles, including three titles common to both categories - *Avengers: Endgame*, *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* and *SpiderMan: Far from Home*. Three of the top 10 earning UK independent films released in 2019 were ‘15’ rated titles, including the second highest grossing independent film of the year, *The Favourite*.

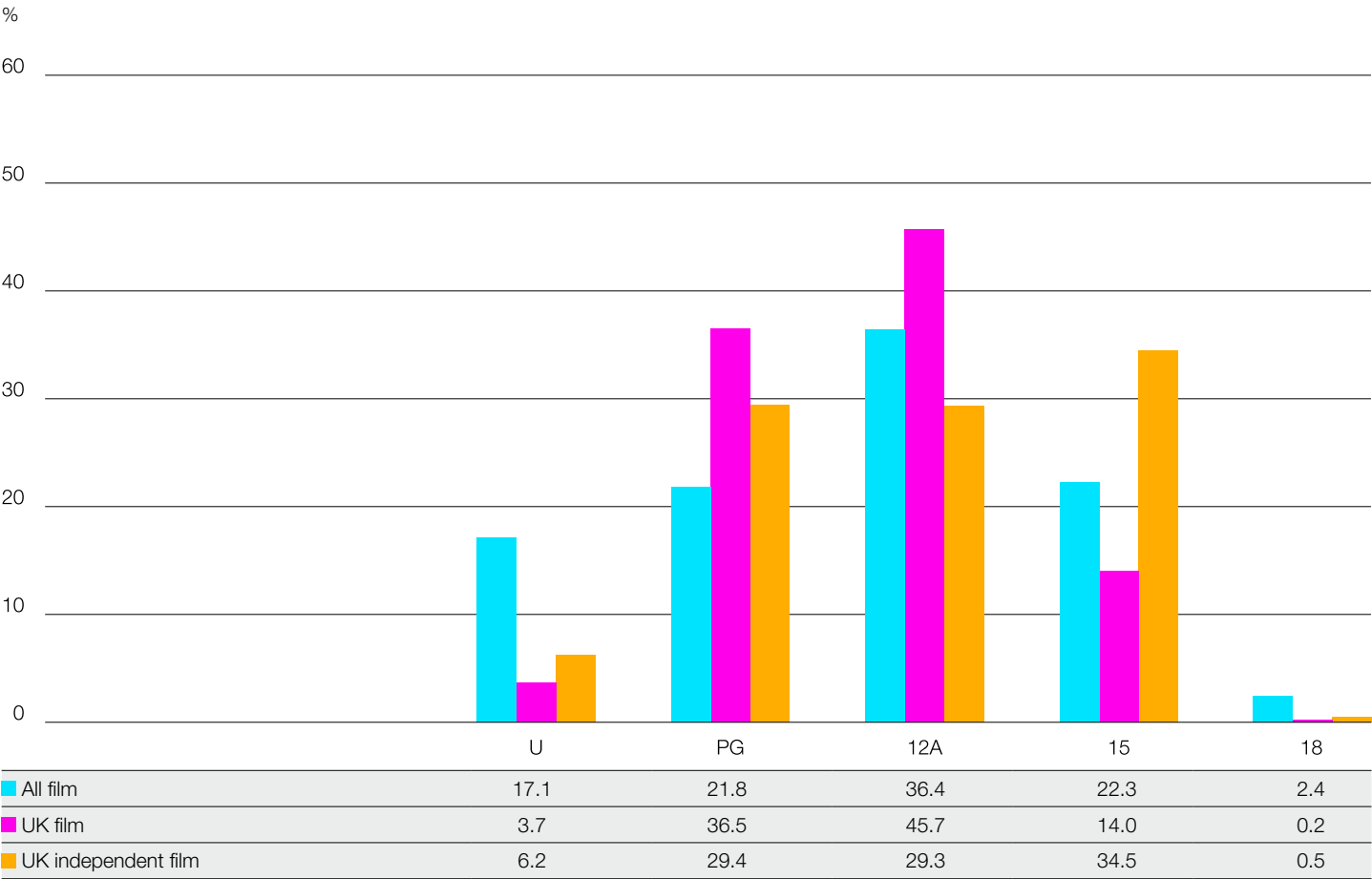
The ‘U’ classification generated a larger proportion of total box office for all films compared with UK films and UK independent films. This is a fixed trend as ‘U’ rated releases consistently include a significant number of high earning animated titles produced by the US majors which, in 2019, included *Toy Story 4*, *Frozen 2* and *The Secret Life of Pets 2*.

Figure 2 Percentage of releases by BBFC film classification for all films, UK films and UK independent films, 2019



Source: Comscore, BBFC, BFI RSU analysis
 Note: Figures as at 20 February 2020.

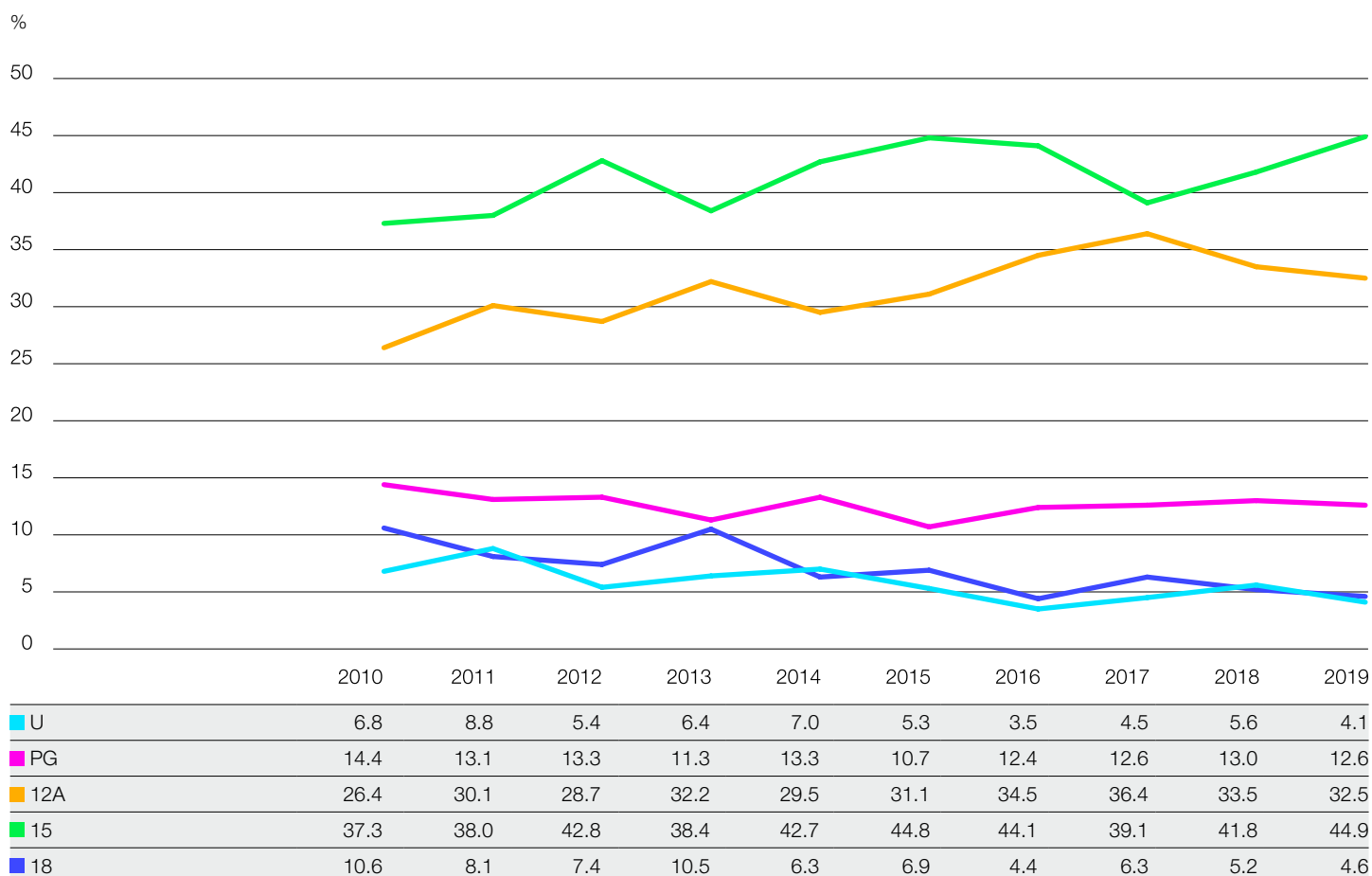
Figure 3 Percentage of gross box office by BBFC film classification for all films, UK films and UK independent films, 2019



Source: Comscore, BBFC, BFI RSU analysis
Note: Figures as at 20 February 2020.

Figure 4 looks at the pattern of releases by classification between 2010 and 2019. Throughout the period, the share of releases for the most common classification ‘15’ has mainly been around 40%, but was as high as 45% in 2015 and 2019. The second and third most common classifications ‘12A’ and ‘PG’ have together generally accounted for between 40%-45% of releases since 2010, but was as high as 49% in 2017. The ‘U’ and ‘18’ classifications have consistently accounted for the smallest percentages of releases over the period. In 2011, 2014 and 2018, there were slightly more ‘U’ films released than ‘18’ films, but in all other years, more ‘18’ films than ‘U’ films were released.

Figure 4 Percentage of releases in the UK and Republic of Ireland by film classification, 2009-2019

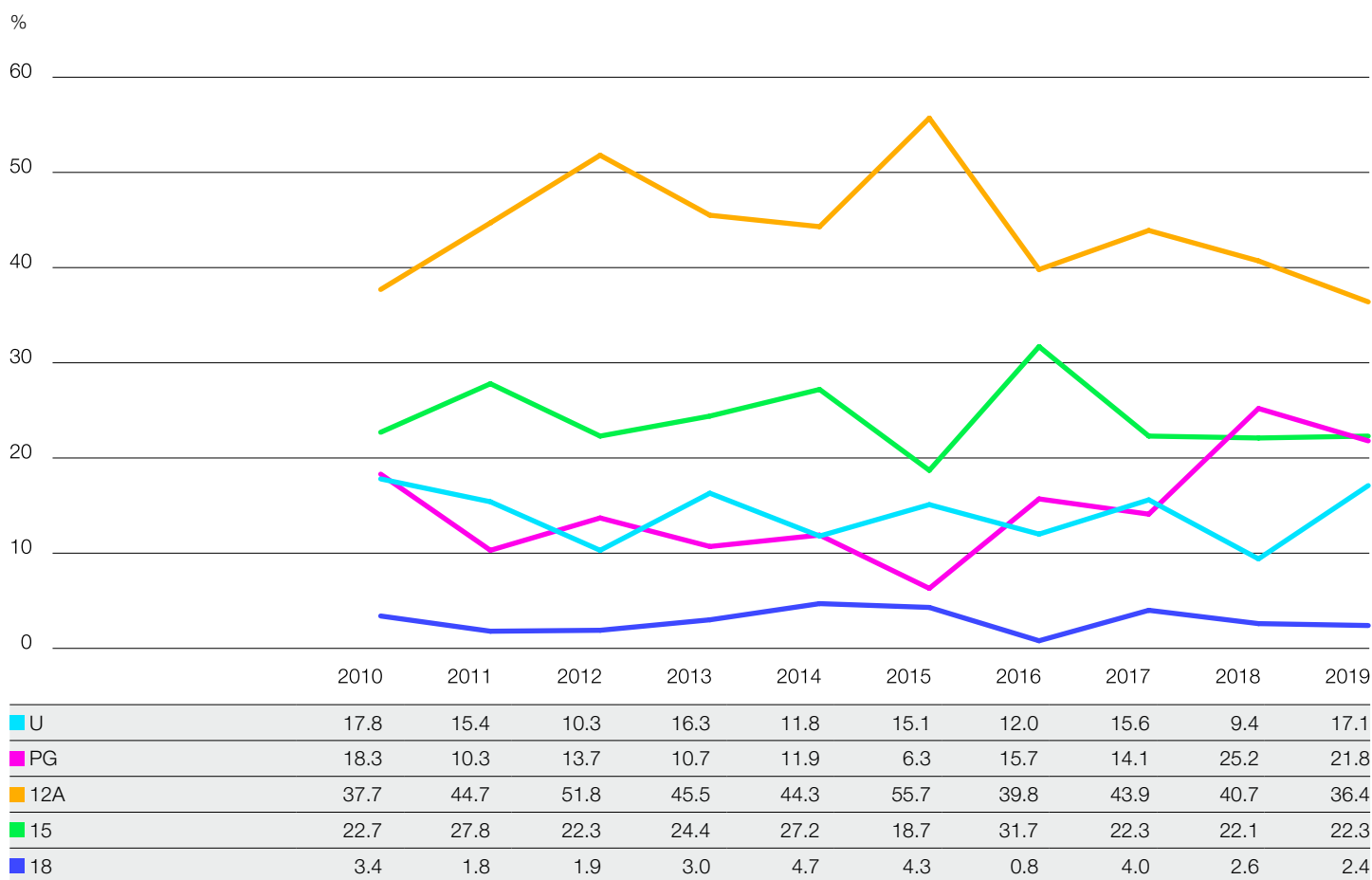


Source: Comscore, BBFC, BFI RSU analysis

Note: Figures as at 20 February 2020.

The shares of box office by film classification vary from year to year as demonstrated in Figure 5. However, the box office ranking of the classifications has remained fairly constant over time; the top earner being '12A', with '18' the lowest earner. With the exception of 2018, the '15' classification has been the second highest earning rating over the decade covered in the chart. (The greater box office share for the 'PG' classification in 2018 was primarily due to the performance of *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* and *Incredibles 2*, which were respectively the year's second and third highest earning releases). For the majority of the period, however, the 'PG' classification exchanged third and fourth place with the 'U' classification. The smaller number of releases associated with these two classifications (this is also true of the '18' classification) means that their share of the box office is more susceptible to the effects of a few high earning titles.

Figure 5 Percentage of gross box office of releases in the UK and Republic of Ireland by film classification, 2010-2019



Source: Comscore, BBFC, BFI RSU analysis

Note: Figures as at 20 February 2020.



Research & Statistics Unit
21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN
bfi.org.uk/statistics