

# Film production in the UK – Jan to Sept 2009

UK Film Council Research and Statistics Unit

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Film production activity in the UK in the first nine months of 2009 was £857.2 million, the best first nine months since 2003. Production spend was up £345 million compared to Jan-Sept 2008 (£512.3m) and £114 million higher than Jan-Sept 2007 (£742.8m). The bulk of the activity (£686.4m) was accounted for by inward investment productions, that is films which are substantially financed and controlled from abroad (mostly from the USA) but shot in whole or part in the UK.

**Table 1: Film production in the UK, Jan-Sept 2007, 2008 and 2009**

	Jan-Sept 2007		Jan-Sept 2008		Jan-Sept 2009	
	Number of films	UK spend value £m	Number of films	UK spend value £m	Number of films	UK spend value £m
Co-productions	23	54.7	18	45.8	8	16.6
Domestic UK	52	127.4	61	182.8	62	154.2
Inward	27	560.8	22	283.7	28	686.4
Total	102	742.8	101	512.3	98	857.2

Source: UK Film Council

Data for films with budgets  $\geq$  £500k.

"Jan-Sept" means films commencing principal photography between 1 January and 30 September in each year.

Data are rounded to the nearest £0.1m so may not sum exactly to the totals shown.

See notes at the end of this release for the full definitions applied.

Significant inward investment titles shooting in Q3 2009 include *Inception*, *The Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, *Get Him to the Greek* and *Your Highness*, which join the already-reported titles *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part I*, *Untitled Robin Hood Adventure*, *Clash of the Titans*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *London Boulevard* and *Never Let Me Go* which were shot in H1 2009.

There were 62 UK domestic productions in Jan-Sept 2009, with a UK spend value of £154.2 million. Prominent UK domestic titles in Jan-Sept 2009 were *Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang*, *Paul*, *The Killer Inside Me*, *1-800-Love*, *Centurion*, *Blitz*, *Tamara Drewe*, *St Trinians II: The Legend of Fritton's Gold* and *The Great Ghost Rescue*.

Five co-productions began shooting in the third quarter of 2009, taking the Jan-Sept total to eight, with a UK spend value of £16.6 million. Significant co-productions shooting in Jan-Sept 2009 were *Mr Nice*, *The Ghost*, *Neds*, *Ice* and *Outcast*.

## Average Budgets 2003 to Sept 2009

The average budgets for the three categories of film are shown in Table 2. Inward investment films include big budget Hollywood productions and have much higher average budgets than the other two categories. While the average budgets of co-productions and inward investment films have risen, the average budget of domestic UK films has fallen from £5.6 million in 2003 to £3.1 million in the first nine months of 2009.

**Table 2: Average budgets by category of film**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009ytd
COP	5.3	5.0	4.6	5.6	5.7	5.2	6.9
DOM	5.6	3.5	3.9	3.8	2.7	3.3	3.1
INW total	27.3	28.7	12.1	34.1	31.2	30.7	52.8

Source: UK Film Council

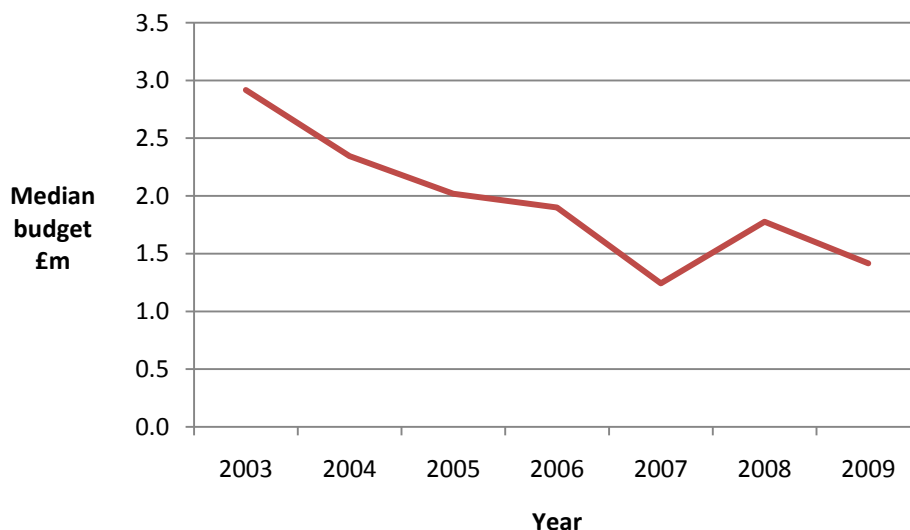
Data for films with budgets  $\geq$  £500k.

Average budgets are for full years 2003 to 2008 and Jan-Sept 2009

### Falling median budgets for domestic UK films

This result is confirmed by looking at the median budgets for UK domestic films, which have fallen from £2.9 million in 2003 to £1.4 million in the first nine months of 2009. The median budget is lower than the average budget because it is the middle value, not subject to an upward skew from a small number of high budget films. The falling median budget of UK domestic films reflects market and financing pressures to make films at lower budget levels than a few years ago.

**Chart 1: Median budgets for UK domestic films 2003 to Sept 2009, £m**



Source: UK Film Council

Note: data relate to films with budgets  $\geq$  £500k only.

Full year medians for 2003 to 2008; first nine months for 2009.

**Table 3: Film production in the UK Jan-Sept 2003 to Jan-Sept 2009**

	Jan-Sept 2003		Jan-Sept 2004		Jan-Sept 2005		Jan-Sept 2006		Jan-Sept 2007		Jan-Sept 2008		Jan-Sept 2009	
	Number	Value £m	Number	Value £m	Number	Value £m	Number	Value £m	Number	Value £m	Number	Value £m	Number	Value £m
COP	80	126.0	81	119.5	48	73.5	46	100.9	23	54.7	18	45.8	8	16.6
DOM	39	184.9	31	104.8	40	125.4	45	146.1	52	127.4	61	182.8	62	154.2
INW total	35	608.9	20	538.1	28	246.2	20	431.5	27	560.8	22	283.7	28	686.4
Total	154	919.9	132	762.4	116	445.0	111	678.5	102	742.8	101	512.3	98	857.2

Source: UK Film Council

COP = co-productions

DOM = UK domestic films

INW total = sum of Inward, inward co-production and VFX-only.

"Value" = UK spend value in £ millions.

Revisions: Production tracking is a continuous process and numbers are updated each quarter to reflect newly tracked films, updated budget or UK spend information and postponements/cancellations. Adjustments apply to previous periods as well as the most recent reported period. During the summer of 2009 the Research and Statistics Unit conducted a reconciliation exercise between British film certification data for 2003 and 2004 and production records for the same period. This resulted in significant revisions to the data for 2003 and 2004. The revised full year numbers will be published in January 2010, with the first report on full year 2009 production.

For more information on UK film production, see *UK Film Council 2009 Statistical Yearbook*, Chapter 17, page 134.

## Notes

### 1. UK Film Council production tracking

The UK Film Council production tracking system attempts to track all films with budgets greater than £500k produced in whole or part in the UK (i.e. it is a census, not a sample).

Sources of information include industry tracking forums, Skillset, trade press and internet sources, the Office of the British Film Commissioner, UK film certification data and direct approaches to film producers.

Some films with budgets less than £500k are picked up as a result of this process, but we do not have comprehensive coverage of very low budget films so we publish data only on films with budgets of £500k+

Only productions with some UK spend on shooting, visual effects or post-production are included.

Spend is allocated to the year, half year and quarter in which principal photography starts.

### 2. Definitions

A **domestic** (indigenous) UK feature is a feature made by a UK production company that is produced wholly or partly in the UK

A **UK co-production** is a co-production (other than an inward co-production) involving the UK and other country partners usually under the terms of a bilateral co-production agreement or the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production.

An **inward feature** is defined as a feature film which is substantially financed and controlled from outside the UK and where the production is attracted to the UK because of script requirements, the UK's infrastructure or UK tax incentives. Many (but not all) inward features are UK films by virtue of their UK cultural content and the fact that they pass the Cultural Test administered by the UK Film Council Certification Unit on behalf of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

An **inward feature co-production** is an official co-production that originates from outside the co-production treaty countries (usually from the USA) and which is attracted to the UK because of script requirements, the UK's infrastructure or UK tax incentives

**Inward investment (INW)** is the total of inward features, inward feature co-productions and VFX-only inward investment films. These are summed as the number of inward co-productions is usually low, so showing their budgets or UK spend separately would be disclosive.

### Pre-release Access

Under the terms of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, statutory 24 hours pre-release access to this statistical release was granted to the following:

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