

Who produces, writes and directs?

GENDER RATIO IN THE INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S TV INDUSTRY

Maya Götz, Manda Mlapa

An IZI study shows that women are significantly under-represented in executive positions as directors, authors and producers in children's television.

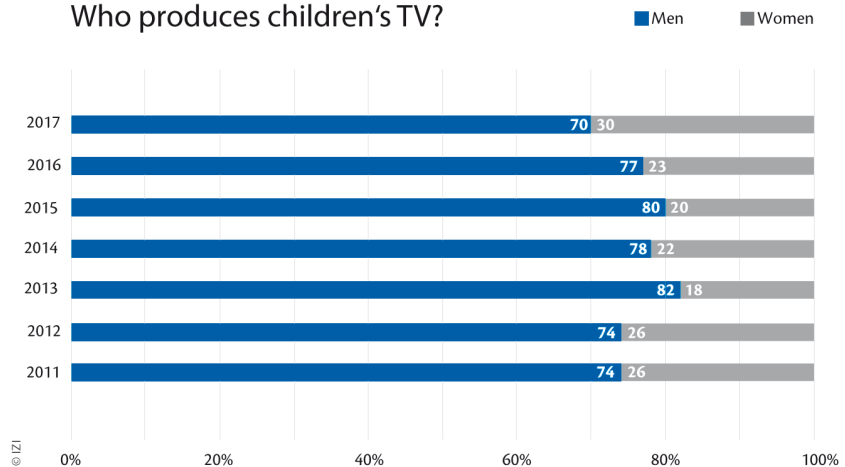
The human race consists of approximately 50 % women and 50 % men (in addition to this, there is a proportion of people who do not fit so clearly into this gender division). In most industrial countries, equality between women and men is a legal requirement and gender equality is one of the official political goals. But is this the case in children's television production worldwide? Who is producing the stories our children are growing up with?

In order to address this question, over the last 10 years the IZI has analysed the catalogue of the MIPJunior, the best-known trade fair worldwide for children's programming, which takes place every year in Cannes (France). The annual catalogue presents at least 900 formats from over 50 countries. The majority (2017: 76 %) are animation programmes, a further 18 % are live-action programmes in 2017. In addition, there are various smaller categories.

By researching the websites of the production companies, we tried to establish, as far as possible, whether the producer, head author and director positions were occupied by men or women (Ill. 1-3). The following analysis includes only those positions that were verifiable and could be unequivocally assigned to one gender.

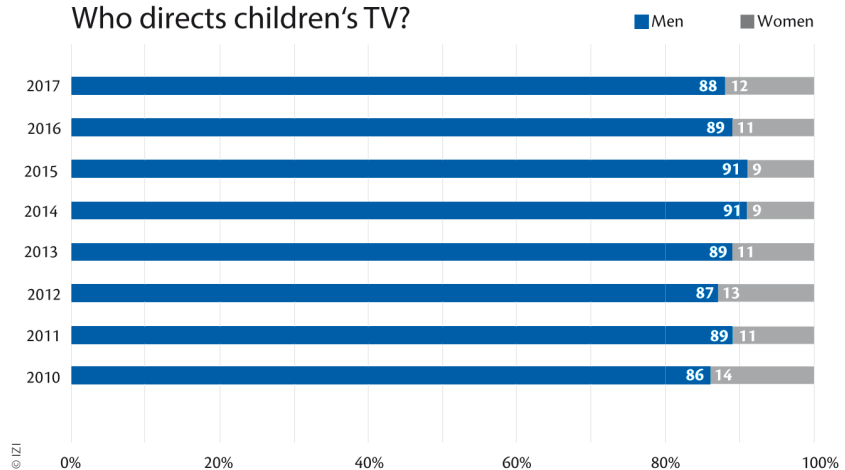
For the year 2015 we were able to unequivocally establish and analyse the gender of the directors, authors and producers of 643¹ programmes, for the

Who produces children's TV?



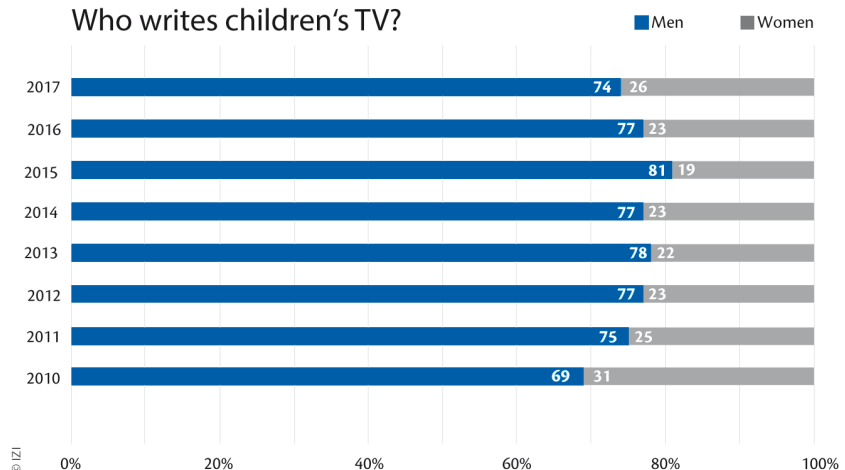
Ill. 1: Gender distribution among producers 2011-2017⁵

Who directs children's TV?



Ill. 2: Gender distribution among directors 2010-2017⁶

Who writes children's TV?



Ill. 3: Gender distribution among head authors 2010-2017⁷

year 2016 it was 665,² and for the year 2017 it was 685.³

The analysis shows: The proportion of female head authors was 26 % in 2017, 23 % in 2016 and 19 % in 2015.

The proportion of female producers in 2017 was just under a third (30 %) (Ill. 1). Whereas in animation the percentage has tended to decline over the years, the proportion of female producers in live-action films has been rising. In terms of directing, in 2017 only 12 % of all children's programmes on offer were directed by a woman (Ill. 2).

Over the years we have analysed thus far, there has been no discernible improvement at all with respect to directing and script-writing. In 2017, for the first time, just under a third of formats were produced by women.

Across all decision-making positions on the production side of internationally marketed children's formats, in 2017 there was also a gender ratio of 80 % men to 20 % women.

WOULD PROMOTING FEMALE PRODUCERS HELP TO CHANGE THIS?

The contexts within which tasks are assigned and head author and director positions are appointed are certainly complex, and it is not uncommon for e.g. the editorial board on the broadcaster's side to play a key role in this. These contexts cannot be easily gleaned from the catalogue. What can be detected, however, is whether the commissioning of female producers has a statistically significant influence on the gender ratio among head authors and directors.

Here we find that in 2015, in over half of cases, female producers engaged female head authors (52 %), whereas male producers engaged female head authors in only 12 % of formats. The statistical analyses confirm that in 2015, as well as in every year under study, there was a significant relationship⁴ between the gender of the producers

and the gender of the head authors. The proportion of female directors was also higher under female producers than it was under male producers. A third (33 %) of all directors under female producers were likewise women. Only 5 % of all directors collaborating with male producers were women. The statistical analyses from 2012 to 2017 confirm there was a relationship here, one which – with a chi-squared value of 0.000 in each individual year – is highly significant and therefore cannot be attributed to chance. The commissioning of female producers therefore brings with it a significantly higher proportion of female authors and directors.

This correlates with the results for the film industry. In an analysis of the relationship between the creative positions, the strongest relationship was linked to female producers: female producers were doubly likely to choose female directors, and 2.5 times more likely to choose a female scriptwriter. Furthermore, female directors were more likely than male directors to work with female scriptwriters and camera women (Hochfeld et al., 2017).

As in film and television for adults (e.g. Eurimages, 2016; Smith, Pieper & Choueiti, 2017), women are considerably under-represented in the executive positions of director, author and producer in children's TV, and this is most pronounced in the field of directing. Any changes in this respect over the years have been merely marginal and not always for the better. ■

NOTES

¹ Of the 876 programmes on offer in 2015, it was possible to unequivocally establish the gender of the directors of 643 programmes, the gender of the head authors of 362 programmes, and the gender of the producers of 280 formats.

² Of the 945 programmes on offer in 2016, it was possible to unequivocally establish the gender of the directors of 665 programmes, the gender of the authors of 382 programmes, and the gender of the producers of 326 formats.

³ Of the 954 programmes on offer in 2017, it was possible to unequivocally establish the gender of the directors of 685 programmes, the gender of the head authors of 379 programmes, and the gender of the producers of 300 formats.

⁴ Chi-squared value 2017 = 0.000: relationship is highly significant, chi-squared value 2016 = 0.003: relationship is very significant, chi-squared value 2015 = 0.000: relationship is highly significant, chi-squared value 2014 = 0.001: relationship is very significant, chi-squared value 2013 = 0.010: relationship is significant, chi-squared value 2012 = 0.005: relationship is very significant, chi-squared value 2011 = 0.001: relationship is very significant.

⁵ Source: Analysis of the catalogues of MIP Junior: 2011: n = 268; 2012: n = 281; 2013: n = 342; 2014: n = 337; 2015: n = 280; 2016: n = 326; 2017: n = 300

⁶ Source: Analysis of the catalogues of MIP Junior: 2010: n = 473; 2011: n = 516; 2012: n = 567; 2013: n = 732; 2014: n = 726; 2015: n = 643; 2016: n = 665; 2017: n = 685

⁷ Source: Analysis of the catalogues of MIP Junior: 2010: n = 473; 2011: n = 418; 2012: n = 411; 2013: n = 392; 2014: n = 434; 2015: n = 362; 2016: n = 382; 2017: n = 379¹

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THE AUTHORS



Dr Maya Götz is the head of the IZI and the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL, Munich, Germany.

Manda Mlapa, Psychologist (B.Sc.), is a freelancer at the IZI in Munich, Germany.