



Skills shortages and gap in unscripted TV in the regions and nations

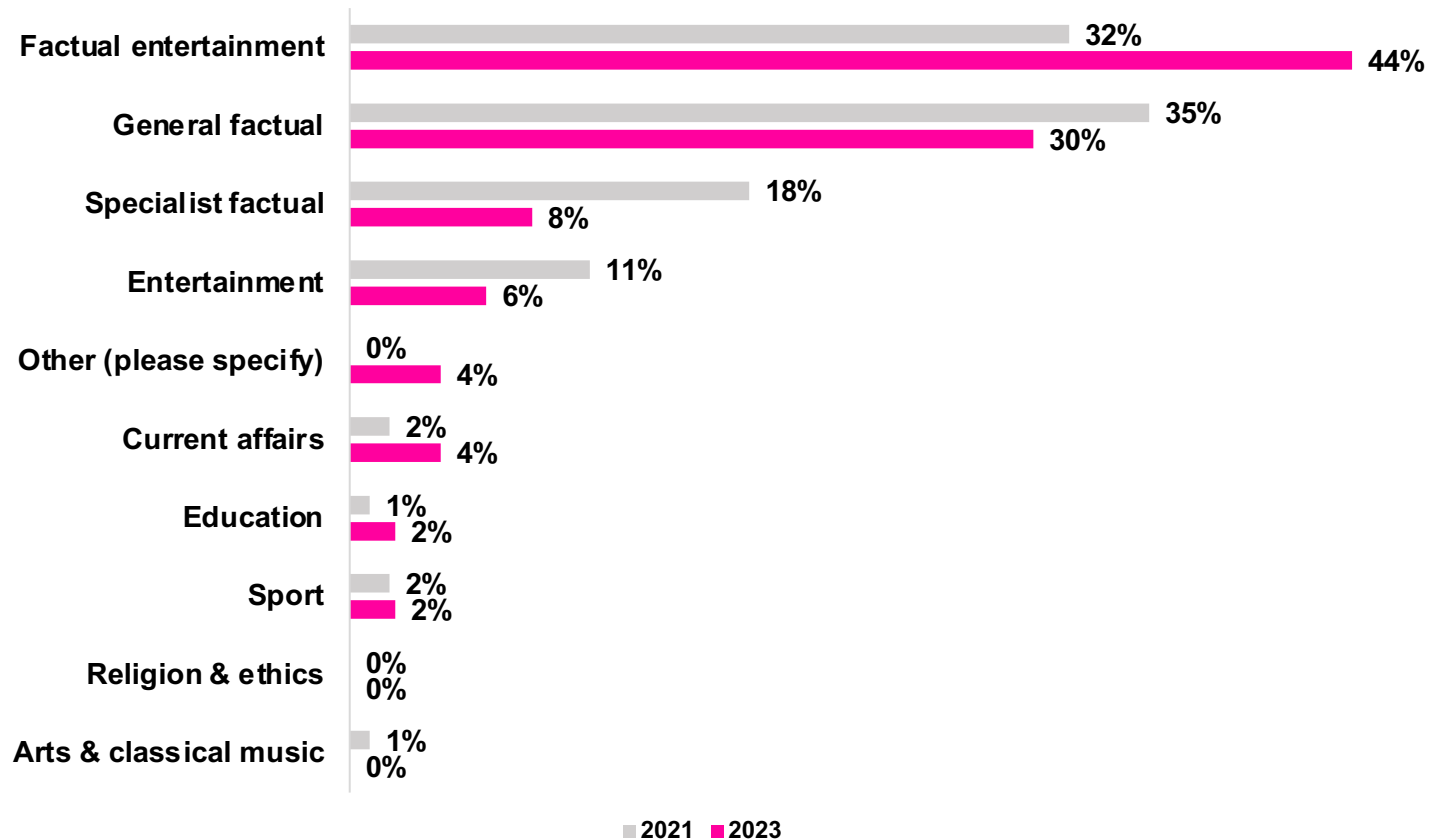
July 2023

- This report is based on a survey, whose fieldwork took place between February and April 2023.
 - Participants were asked up to 14 questions regarding skills gaps and about the USF.
 - The survey targeted productions companies and staff/freelancers involved in crewing up, in all parts of the UK making programmes across a range of genres in unscripted.
 - In total, it garnered 50 responses.
-

1. Sample demographics

Sample demographics

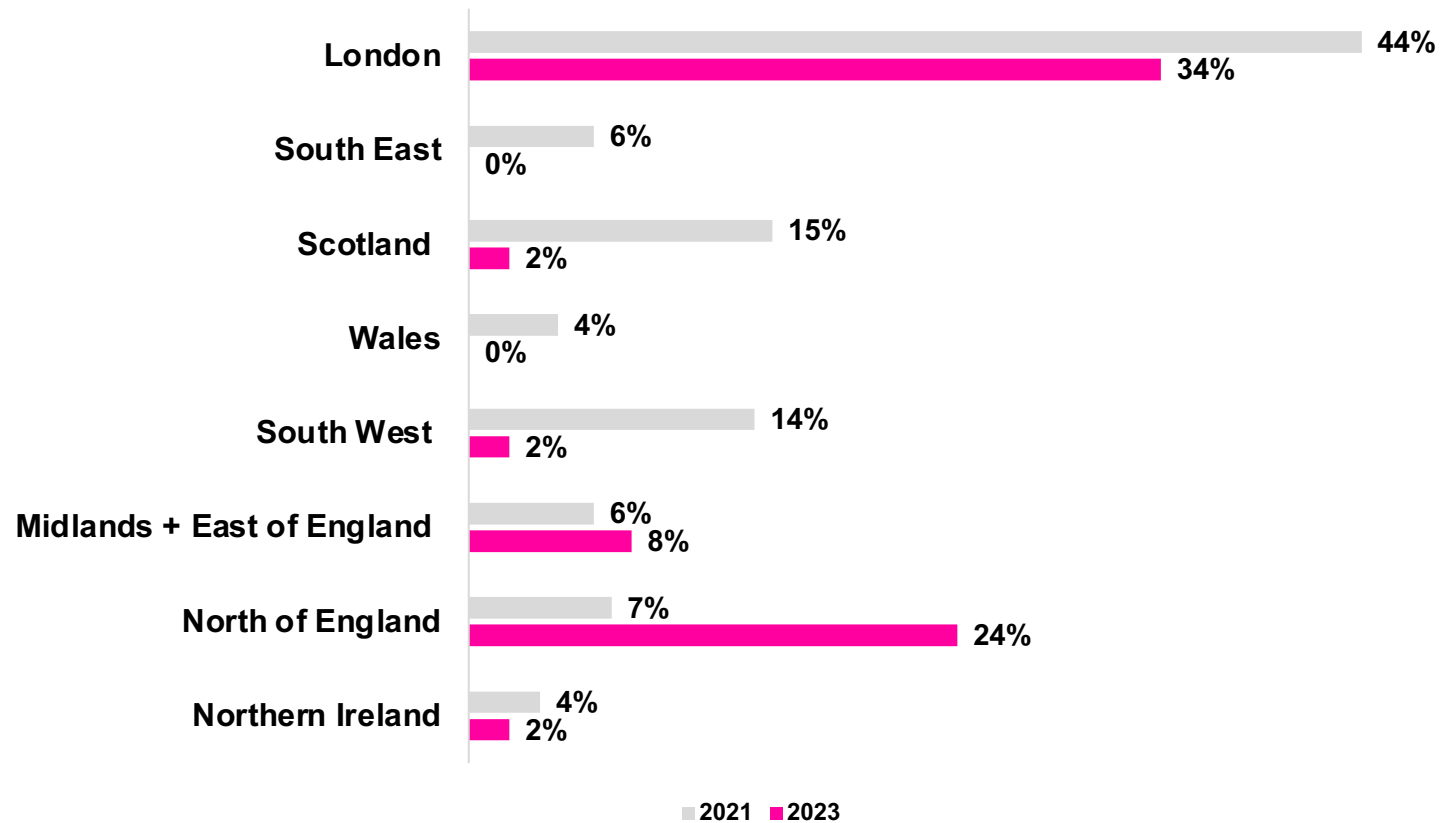
Please pick the genre you mostly work with most frequently



Base: all (n=114/n=50)

Sample demographics

Which region do you most frequently work in?



Base: all (n=50)

2. Skills shortages and gaps

Skills shortages – 2023

How did you find recruiting/crewing-up for the following job roles over the past 12 months?

Role (Total responses)	2023	NET difficulty (2023)
Production manager (37)	1.68	84%
Editor (45)	1.69	91%
Production coordinator (40)	1.73	85%
Archive producer (26)	2.15	62%
Production accountant (15)	2.27	67%
Archive researcher (21)	2.33	67%
Edit assistant (23)	2.39	65%
Production secretary (34)	2.41	59%
Exec producer (24)	2.46	54%
Series producer (39)	2.64	49%
Development producer (28)	2.75	46%
Sound assistant (21)	2.86	33%
Development AP (27)	2.89	33%
Shooting PD (43)	2.98	33%
Shooting AP (42)	2.98	40%
Gallery PA (7)	3	29%
Edit producer (45)	3.02	33%
Vision mixer (8)	3.13	38%
Camera operator (37)	3.22	30%
Researcher (43)	3.33	23%

The three most difficult roles to recruit for were **production manager** (84% of respondents said this was either very difficult or difficult), **editor** (91%) and **production coordinator** (85%). This would indicate a severe shortage in these roles at present.

When asked about any other roles which were difficult to recruit for, line producers received a number of mentions, suggesting that there may also be a shortage.

Base: All (n=50)
This includes don't know responses which have been removed from the net score calculations

Very difficult (1) / Difficult (2) / Neutral (3) / Easy (4) / Very Easy (5)
Anything red = more difficult to recruit for in 2023.

Skills shortages – change over time

How did you find recruiting/crewing-up for the following job roles over the past 12 months?

Role (Total responses)	2023	2021	YoY Change	NET difficulty (2023)
Production manager (37)	1.68	1.44	0.24	84%
Editor (45)	1.69	1.86	-0.17	91%
Production coordinator (40)	1.73	1.40	0.33	85%
Archive producer (26)	2.15			62%
Production accountant (15)	2.27			67%
Archive researcher (21)	2.33			67%
Edit assistant (23)	2.39			65%
Production secretary (34)	2.41			59%
Exec producer (24)	2.46	2.25	0.21	54%
Series producer (39)	2.64	2.02	0.62	49%
Development producer (28)	2.75	2.26	0.49	46%
Sound assistant (21)	2.86			33%
Development AP (27)	2.89	2.65	0.24	33%
Shooting PD (43)	2.98	2.44	0.54	33%
Shooting AP (42)	2.98	2.68	0.30	40%
Gallery PA (7)	3			29%
Edit producer (45)	3.02	2.55	0.47	33%
Vision mixer (8)	3.13			38%
Camera operator (37)	3.22			30%
Researcher (43)	3.33	3.01	0.32	23%

Nearly all roles have become slightly easier to recruit for since 2021. The only exception is editor, which has become slightly more difficult to recruit – with 91% of respondents suggesting the role is difficult or very difficult to recruit for.

The easing of recruitment issues is broadly consistent across roles – but some have become more easier than others. The roles which have become most easier to recruit for are series producer (0.62 difference), shooting PD (0.54) and development producer (0.49)

Base: All (n=50)
This includes don't know responses which have been removed from the net score calculations

Very difficult (1) / Difficult (2) / Neutral (3) / Easy (4) / Very Easy (5)
Anything red = more difficult to recruit for in 2023 than 2021.

Due to the smaller sample size in 2023, it's difficult to gauge regional differences. Similarly, some roles had a high proportion of don't knows which means any regional analysis will be extremely partial and could only be used with a degree of caution – for this reason, regional splits are not outlined in this report.

However, what we can glean is that shortages are variable in each region/nation. For example, **Wales** is struggling to recruit for the easiest role to fill across the UK, researchers, and finding it more difficult than other regions in recruiting development producers. When asked if there's any other roles that were difficult to report for, a Welsh respondent said that: *“In Wales it is very difficult to find freelance researchers. Editors, PMs and PCs are always hard to come by and I think this has been an issue since the pandemic.”*

Most critical roles

Which of these roles is most critical to your business in the next 12 months?

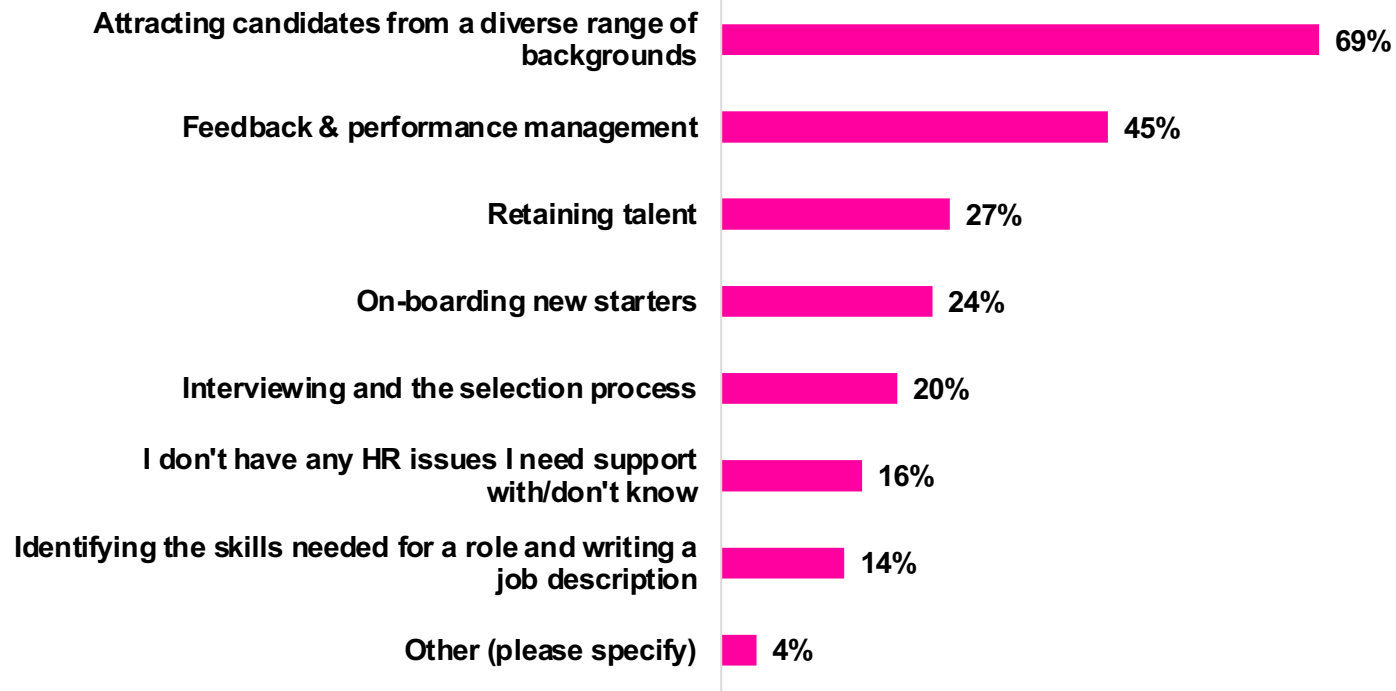
Role	%	n=
Production manager	69%	34
Editor	59%	29
Series producer	53%	26
Production coordinator	51%	25
Exec producer	33%	16
Shooting PD	24%	12
Production secretary	20%	10
Researcher	20%	10
Archive producer	20%	10
Edit producer	18%	9
Development producer	18%	9
Production accountant	18%	9
Development AP	14%	7
Camera operator	12%	6
Shooting AP	10%	5
Edit assistant	10%	5
Archive researcher	10%	5
Other (please specify)	8%	4
Sound assistant	6%	3
Vision mixer	4%	2
Gallery PA	2%	1

More than half of all respondents felt that production managers, editors, series producers, and production coordinators were most critical to their business in the next 12 months. Production manager was also identified as the most critical in 2021.

4 people who selected other all said ‘line producers’ – suggesting this could also be a critical role.

Although series producer wasn’t identified as a particularly difficult shortage in the past 12 months, this still looks to be business critical in the future.

Which of any of the following HR issues would you like the most help with?



Of the HR issues specified, nearly 7 out of 10 respondents would like help with attracting candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds – perhaps signalling an issue with diversity within the sector.

Nearly half (45%) suggested they would like help with feedback and performance management.

Which of the following skills would you like to see improved in the workforce/crew you work with

Answer Choices	2023	2021	YoY difference
Ability to organise work (time management skills, prioritising tasks, setting timelines)	47%	42%	5%
Ability to manage and support teams/crew remotely and in person	47%	52%	-5%
Resilience (e.g. perseverance, flexibility in solving problems)	43%	44%	-1%
Budget and finance	40%	46%	-5%
Leadership	38%		
Ability to develop or support new/emerging talent	36%	36%	0%
Ability to deliver/receive feedback	34%	30%	4%
Communication	32%		
Rights and clearance for archive	32%		
Project management skills	30%	46%	-16%
Team-working skills	30%	27%	3%
Delegation skills	30%	26%	3%
Self-shooting	26%		
Ability to set and communicate clear goals and instructions	23%	37%	-13%
Scheduling	21%	31%	-9%
Mentoring	21%	14%	7%
Ability to address unconscious bias	21%	23%	-2%
HR skills	21%	18%	3%
Interpersonal skills (e.g. empathy, mental health support)	17%	32%	-15%
Tackling bullying and harassment	17%		
Development	15%		
Research skills	15%		
Avid training	15%		
Other (please specify)	9%		
No skills need to be improved in the people I work with	2%		

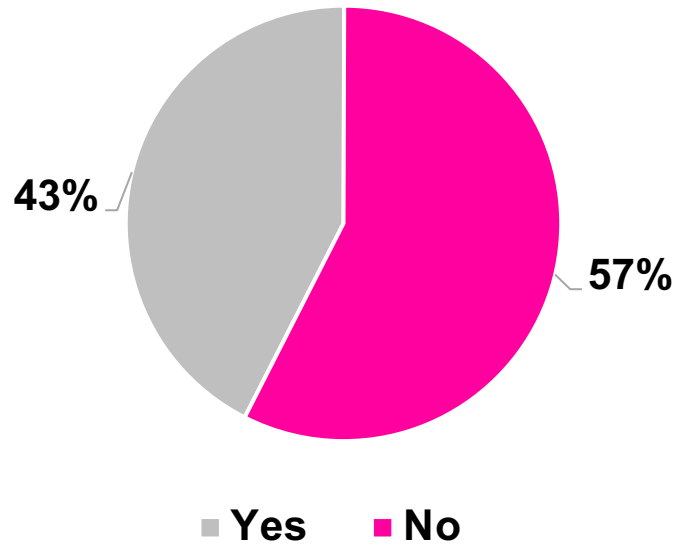
Results remain largely consistent, year-on-year.

However, there are some skills in which a lower percentage of respondents, compared to 2021, feel need improving, including:

- Project management skills
- Interpersonal skills
- The ability to set and communicate clear goals and instructions
- Scheduling

2. Awareness of USF

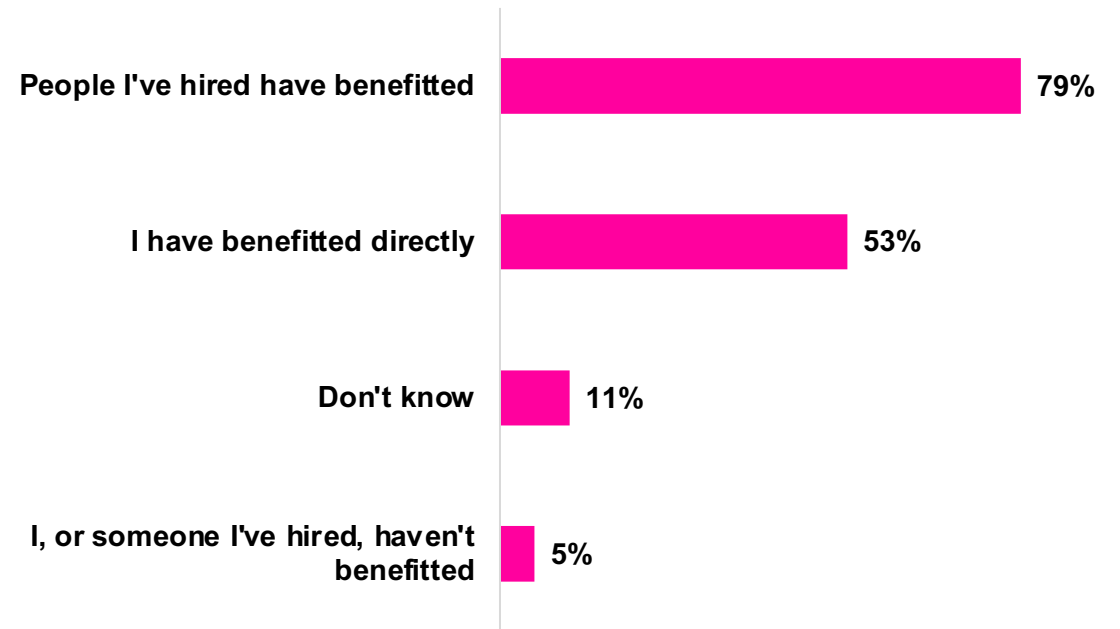
Were you aware of the USF before taking this survey?



Base: All (n=47)

Of the 27 people who said no, 24 signed-up to receive a training opportunities newsletter from the USF, demonstrating an interest in USF activity.

Which, if any, of the following have benefitted from either training programmes or free online training funded through the USF?



Note: This adds to more than 100% as respondents could pick more than one option, to reflect that they or people they've hired can benefit from the USF.

Base: Those aware of the USF (n=19)



Is there anything else you would like to see the USF do/not do to support unscripted tv?

“Companies and senior staff on productions (PM's and SP's) to find out about freelancers that we could offer placements to at the company through existing schemes.”

“I would note [to my previous answer] that I am on one of the panels for the USF and that is the only reason that I or people I work with have benefitted from it. It is not easy for freelancers to access/or know about outside of those already in the ScreenSkills network.”

“A course explaining to editorial what production management do. We are not there to do the work they don't want to do, we have our own duties without adding more editorial work to our plates!”
