



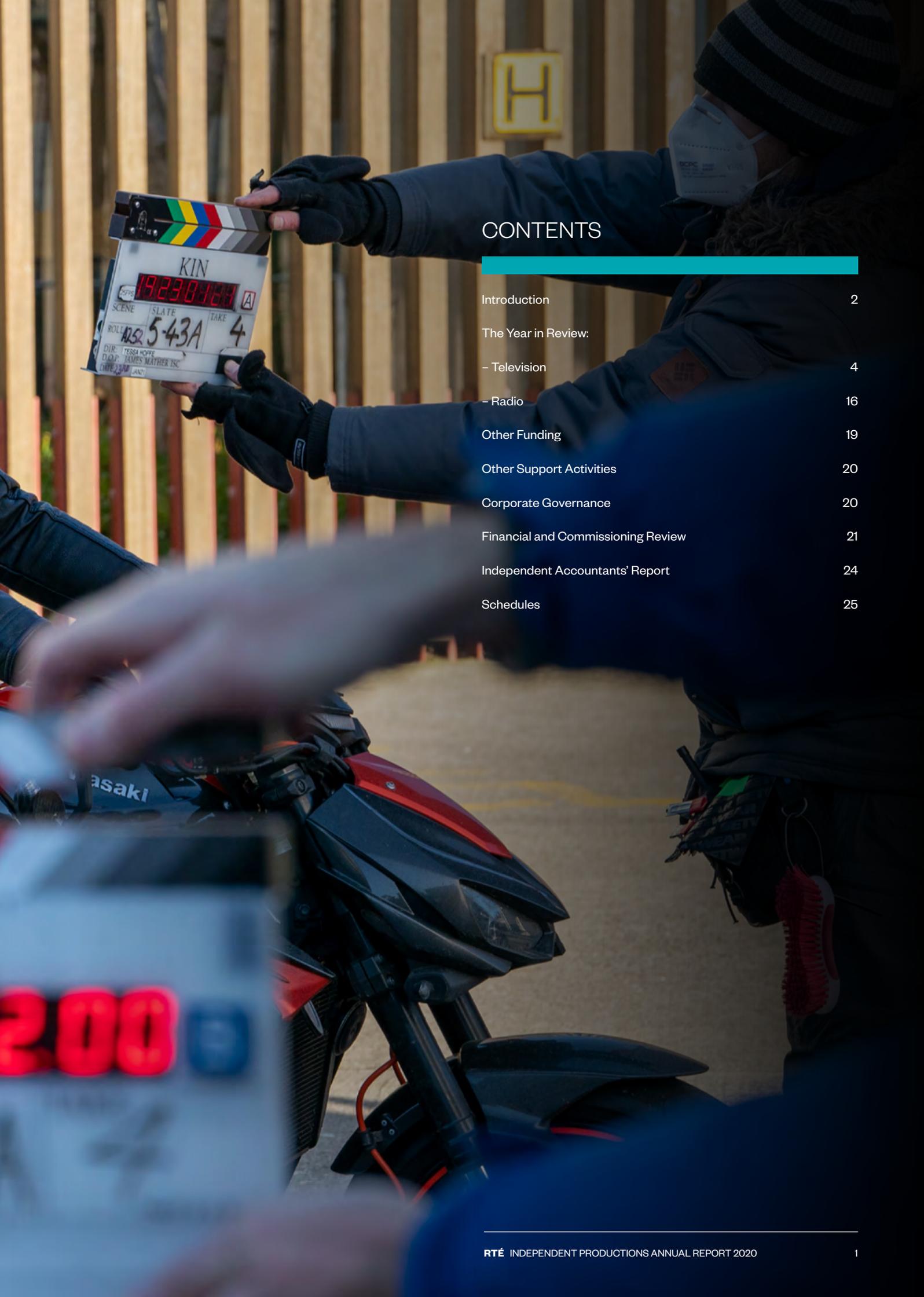
RTÉ

Independent Productions Annual Report 2020



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From lockdowns to working from home and remote learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, 2020 was a challenging year for everyone. As audience needs changed and evolved, RTÉ, together with the independent sector, rose to the challenge to ensure that quality Irish content was produced to inform, educate and entertain. From factual to entertainment, lifestyle, cláracha gaelige, drama, comedy and young people's, the sector responded to unprecedented changes to daily life in Ireland and across the world to produce relevant and distinctive content.

Audiences in Ireland connected with Irish content in increasing numbers across all genres, with RTÉ's all-day share of TV viewing increasing by 1.7% to 27.2%¹. RTÉ delivered 43 of the top 50 programmes on Irish television in 2020, with 14 being produced by the independent sector.

Independent productions such as *Ireland on Call* and *RTÉ's Home School Hub* played a pivotal role in meeting new audience needs and complemented News & Current Affairs content across TV, online and radio. As well as creating innovative new content and formats to meet these needs, the independent sector demonstrated great agility by adapting production models to comply with public health advice and restrictions. Series such as *Ireland's Fittest Family* and *Operation Transformation* used best-practice production methods to ensure their safe return to screens, while new programming such as *Gardening Together with Diarmuid Gavin*, *No Place Like Home* and *Open for Business* reflected shifts in audience lifestyle and needs during the pandemic.

Feelgood content brought people together while staying apart, with series such as *DIY SOS: The Big Build Ireland*, *The Great House Revival* and *Keys to My Life* attracting huge audiences and joining quality Irish productions in the Top 50 most-watched programmes of 2020 despite ever-increasing international competition.

¹ Consolidated national individuals: RTÉ One, RTÉ2, RTÉ One +1, RTÉ2 +1 and RTÉjr

Under the *Broadcasting Act 2009*, RTÉ has a statutory obligation to spend a predetermined minimum amount every year on independently produced television and radio programmes. This amount is lodged to a separate bank account, the Independent Programmes account. Part of RTÉ's obligation under the *Broadcasting Act* is to issue a report on that account. This report outlines how the funding in the account was used in 2020.

The statutory amount RTÉ was required to spend in 2020 was €40.2m (2019: €39.9m). Schedule 1 provides an explanation of this requirement. In 2020 RTÉ paid into the Independent Programmes account the full amount in accordance with the *Broadcasting Act 2009*. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the cancellation or postponement of many productions, RTÉ was not in a position to expend the full amount. While many productions were able to adapt their production methods, some types of programming were prevented by public health advice and pandemic restrictions. In 2020, total statutory expenditure was €36.5m, which was €3.7m below the statutory requirement. As per the *Broadcasting Act 2009*, any monies not expended in 2020 will be spent within the following two years.

In addition to expenditure through the Independent Programmes account, RTÉ incurred a further €1.3m on RTÉ attributable overhead and additional programming, bringing the total expenditure on commissioning activities in 2020 to €37.8m. The production of commissioned television and radio programmes is financially and contractually managed through RTÉ's Content division.



In 2020 RTÉ Television provided a wide array of trusted content, which informed and helped viewers navigate their way through the pandemic. RTÉ One in particular achieved record numbers as the go-to channel for this key information.

RTÉ One

RTÉ One had its highest performing year since 2011, with a significant increase of 3.3 national consolidated all-day share points year on year. While much of this can be put down to increased interest in news and current affairs during a pandemic, it also demonstrated that viewers want to go to a safe and trusted space when their world has been turned upside down. Life-affirming, informational and escapist programming all contributed to the mix of high performers.

DIY SOS: The Big Build Ireland, presented by Baz Ashmawy, is a case in point. It set out to renovate the homes of deserving families in only nine days, depending solely on the generosity of volunteers. The series outperformed all expectations with a 39.3% audience share on a Sunday evening.

Ireland on Call was a fast-turnaround information series presented by Katie Hannon and Brendan Courtney. It aired twice a week during the first lockdown and brought viewers up-to-the-minute information to guide them through the Covid crisis.

The *Operation Transformation* team returned with a special series aimed at keeping people fit and well at a time when doing exercise and keeping mentally positive was a real challenge to the nation. Like many programmes produced in the past year, the production had to quickly adapt to new shooting and presenting models while ensuring strict public health and safety practices and procedures were followed.

These series are excellent examples of how the independent sector adapted during the crisis and produced high-quality output under very challenging conditions, with a national consolidated peaktime share (RTÉ One, RTÉ One +1) of 28.7% of the audience, making it Ireland's number one channel. A total of 863 hours of independently produced programming contributed to the channel's success, with a unique mix of content from creative talent across the industry.

2020 also saw the commissioning and start of production on *Kin*, a major new eight-part crime drama series.



The South Westerlies



The Tommy Tiernan Show



Dancing with the Stars

Drama and Comedy

The South Westerlies was a brand new six-part light-hearted drama for RTÉ One. Set in west Cork and featuring an international cast, it followed the lives and events of a village divided over environmental issues, where loyalties and relationships are pushed to the limit. *The South Westerlies* was produced by Deadpan Pictures and funded by RTÉ, Acorn TV, ZDF Enterprises and Screen Ireland.

Another comedy drama, *Dead Still*, was a critical hit. A Canadian-Irish co-production, it explored the peculiar 1880s world of memorial photography: the photographing of the dead reveals a serial killer's work, which the trio of Brock, Nancy and Conall investigate. *Dead Still* was produced by Deadpan Pictures and Shaftesbury Films and funded by RTÉ, Acorn TV, ZDF Enterprises, Screen Ireland and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI).

2020 also saw the commissioning and start of production on *Kin*, a major new eight-part crime drama series. Several years in the making, this high-budget series is firmly based in Ireland but has huge international potential, a point recognised by US feature film company Bron Studios, which has backed the series together with Wicklow based Metropolitan Films and pan-Scandinavian streamer Viaplay. *Kin* is slated to launch in the second half of 2021 on RTÉ One.

In comedy, 2020 saw the return of *The Tommy Tiernan Show*, produced by Power Pictures, to RTÉ One for its fourth series. Tommy brings his unique interviewing style to a line-up of guests from all walks of life. As he is unaware of who will be appearing on the show, he often does not know who they are or why they are there. The series is full of surprises for Tommy and his viewers, and continues to attract large audiences.

Amy Huberman returned to RTÉ One with a second series of her self-penned comedy *Finding Joy*, which follows Joy as she is reborn as an independent entrepreneur struggling to establish her online brand of finding happiness and fulfilment in everyday life.

Oliver Callan, best known for his RTÉ Radio 1 satirical series, took a look back at 2020 in the only way he can, by laughing at it, in *Callan Kicks the Year*.

Entertainment and Music

In 2020, despite the very difficult operating environment, RTÉ continued to develop and expand its slate of top-class output in these genres. This has maintained and consolidated RTÉ's reputation as a source of high-quality entertainment and music programming, delivering compelling content to large and diverse audiences. RTÉ is a major commissioner of prime-time entertainment programming from independent producers, and works in partnership with the sector to originate and produce world-class content.

Dancing with the Stars (Shinawil) returned for its fourth series in 2020 and once again proved very popular with audiences across all demographics on RTÉ One. Jennifer Zamparelli and Nicky Byrne presented the series, where an expert panel of judges gave their verdict on celebrities who paired up with professional dancers.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

TELEVISION

2020 also featured three hour-long episodes from the second series of Marty and Bernard's road trips. Featuring Marty Morrissey and Bernard O'Shea, 2020's incarnation titled *Marty and Bernard – On the Road Again* (Shinawil) saw the duo meet people who do remarkable things for their communities.

On RTÉ One the music continued with the ever-popular *Fleadh Cheoil* (Red Shoe Productions), which returned with a new series featuring music from concerts, competitions and pub sessions, as well as the usual plentiful supply of street entertainment from one of the biggest music gatherings in the world.

Viewers were given an insight into one of Ireland's biggest ever albums with *After A Woman's Heart* (Mind the Gap Films). 2020 also saw an array of special programmes commissioned across the independent sector, bringing viewers productions such as *Dancing with the Stars – Puttin' on the Glitz* (Shinawil) and the *New Year's Eve Countdown* show (Kite Entertainment) on RTÉ One.

The *RTÉ Does Comic Relief 2020* project had major input from the independent sector, and included inserts from Animo TV (*Comic Relief Insert*), Element (*Normal People*), Gable End (*Pat Shortt sketch*), Waka TV (*Katherine Lynch sketch*), Shinawil (*Dancing with the Stars Insert*) and Brothers Gonna Work It Out (*Bridget & Eamon Insert*).

Cláracha Gaeilge

In 2020 RTÉ continued to build considerably on its in-house Cláracha Gaeilge output with a broad range of projects commissioned from the independent sector. The Covid-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to some of these.

Réalta na Gaeltachta (Big Mountain Productions), the BAI-supported celebrity entertainment series based in the Donegal Gaeltacht, was postponed for Covid-related safety reasons. *Banríon Síogas* (Léirithe Rúnda), a BAI-supported one-off documentary featuring Mary Waugh Lamb, who has dedicated her life to educating disabled children, could not proceed as planned for the same reasons. We look forward to seeing both these projects get back into production and broadcast in autumn 2021.

My Tribe – Mo Threibh Series 2 (Mind the Gap Films) is a four-part bilingual BAI-supported series. This second series reveals the underground worlds of some of music's most defining youth culture movements – hip-hop, rockers, dance/rave culture and the indie scene. It delves into the archives to reveal the origins of these subcultures while also meeting modern-day members to find out what makes these tribes so enduring.

An Teach Seo Againne (Below the Radar Films), broadcast in autumn 2020 to critical acclaim, was a four-part observational documentary series following the lives of one-parent families across Ireland. The series witnessed the tough realities of bringing up a child as a lone parent and sharing co-parenting responsibilities, as well as many moments of joy. It was supported by the Irish Language Broadcast Fund (ILBF).



Marty and Bernard – On the Road Again



After A Women's Heart

In 2020 RTÉ continued to build considerably on its in-house Cláracha Gaeilge output with a broad range of projects commissioned from the independent sector.



My Tribe – Mo Threibh

Ireland's Lost Railways (Sonas Productions) sees former taoiseach Enda Kenny discovering the lost railway routes of Ireland while meeting local characters, historians and a few celebrities along the way. The six-part series was supported by the ILBF and will broadcast in 2021.

RTÉ also commissioned the following Cláracha Gaeilge series for TG4 broadcast in 2020: two series of *Réalta agus Gaolta*, *Slí na mBeaglaíoch*, *Cleas Act*, *Go Gasta* and *An Ríl Deal*. Two productions, *Cleas Act* and *Go Gasta*, were affected by Covid-19 and both productions are expected to be completed in 2021.

Factual

Documentaries and Series

2020 was a very productive year for Documentaries and Series, which provided over 45 hours of original peak-time programming to the schedule. The pandemic affected output and commissioning choices, but not the quality or quantity of programmes produced and delivered. Programmes changed editorial emphasis; some were delayed for practical reasons, others because they no longer chimed with the reality of viewers' lives. Programmes were broadcast to bigger audiences than ever, and there was an increased appetite for home production. Apart from a short period in late March, the independent production sector continued to produce programmes for the peak-time schedule throughout 2020.

Sunday nights in January began with *Dr Eva's Great Escape* from Tyrone Productions, which followed Dr Eva Orsmond and her husband Wyatt for two years as they attempted to build and open a boutique health resort in Portugal while rebuilding their marriage. Big audiences tuned in to see what Dermot Bannon achieved when designing his own house in *Room to Improve: Dermot's Home*, the first of two series fronted by the popular architect in 2020. The second, *Dermot Bannon's Incredible Homes*, also from Coco Content, was due to showcase the architect in four exotic locations. As a result of the pandemic the series was cut short and its two episodes featured homes in Canada and Ireland. *Burnt by the Sun*, a two-part documentary from Cornelia Street Productions, told the stories of Irish people's experiences with property purchases abroad during the boom. International production had been completed pre-lockdown.

Documentaries and Series responded to lockdown with two quick-turnaround series aimed at bridging gaps in public information and giving practical help to viewers. Starting in early April, *Ireland on Call*, produced by Indiepics and Scratch Films, was a live twice-weekly series broadcast from the Department of Health. A special series of *Operation Transformation* helped viewers with the practical tools needed to survive and thrive in a lockdown. As the year progressed, documentaries and series such as *Citizens of Boomtown* (Sideline Productions), *Abbeyfealegood* (Atom Films), *Dana: The Original Derry Girl* (Waddell Media) and *David Brophy's Unsung Heroes* (Tyrone Productions) proved popular diversions for captive audiences.



Ireland's Lost Railways

The pandemic affected output and commissioning choices, but not the quality or quantity of programmes produced and delivered.



Dr Eva's Great Escape



Ireland on Call

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

TELEVISION

In the final quarter of 2020, our run of single documentaries continued with *The John Delaney Story* from Frontline Films, *The Confessors* from Atom Films, *A Big Week in September* from Scratch Films, *The Francis Street Photographer* from That's A Wrap TV, *Fungie's Kingdom* from Mahy Media and *The Real Field* from Dearg Films. Two new hour-long series were also launched: *The Case I Can't Forget* from Rare TV and Green Inc and *DIY SOS: The Big Build Ireland* from JMACTWO Productions. Both performed well, with DIY SOS attracting more than 39.3% of the available audience through its mix of human stories and epic tales of voluntary effort.

Popular Factual and Factual Entertainment

2020 was a watershed year, with several new formats successfully developed and commissioned, primarily on RTÉ One but also on RTÉ2. A range of Covid-specific series were commissioned to which the audience responded in large numbers. These were a testament to the skill and dedication of the production companies involved.

On RTÉ One, *Keys to My Life*, presented by Brendan Courtney and produced by Waka TV, introduced a new way of telling celebrities' life stories through the homes they lived in. It proved popular with audiences and critics alike.

Instagrammers of all ages were the inspiration behind two new formats with new presenting talent. Suzanne Jackson and Eileen Smith brought their distinctive fashion sense to bear in *The Style Counsellors* from Indiepics. *Cheap Irish Homes*, presented by Maggie Molloy and Kieran McCarthy, featured options in the property market nationwide and proved popular with a locked-down audience. It was produced by Cork-based Cameo Productions.

A new take on travel, *High Road, Low Road* from Green Inc Productions, saw two celebrities travelling to the same destination, one going five-star and the other taking the cost-conscious route.

Travel closer to home featured in the first of three Covid-specific series: *No Place Like Home* (Frontier Films), presented by Kathryn Thomas assisted by her daughter Ella, took viewers on a road-trip throughout the country. *Open for Business*, presented by Richard Curran and Ella MacSweeney and produced by Coco Content, kept the nation up to date on how businesses were coping with lockdown. *Gardening Together with Diarmuid Gavin* tapped into the interest in gardening during lockdown and was a co-production between RTÉ and BBC Northern Ireland, produced by Waddell Productions.

Super Garden 2020 returned in a supersized one-hour version, and was produced by Vision Independent Productions (VIP).

Reintroducing animals long extinct in Ireland was the focus of observational series *Return of the Wild: Bearman of Buncrana* from Moondance Productions, which proved a big hit in the autumn schedule. Returning series *Home of the Year* from Shinawil and *How to be Good with Money* from Indiepics completed the line-up on RTÉ One.



The Francis Street Photographer

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No Place Like Home



Open for Business

Specialist Factual

History was central to the Specialist Factual slate in 2020. *Bloody Sunday, 1920* from Twopair Films looked at this important event on its centenary, and *Christy Ring: Man and Ball* from Crossing the Line Productions documented the life of the great hurler (born in 1920). Michael Portillo's *Hawks and Doves* (Midas Productions), a two-parter on the Irish War of Independence, *Cogadh Ar Mhná* (Forefront) and *74 Days: The Hunger Strike of Terence MacSwiney* (Forefront) used original state papers, notes and letters to create excellent, high-end, high-impact content for RTÉ One.

The two-parter on Jack Charlton's tenure as Republic of Ireland manager, *The Boys in Green* (Loosehorse), was a timely and fitting nod to an exceptional period in modern Irish history. *Redress – Breaking the Silence* (Loosehorse), on the compensation scheme for those who were abused while in schools under the aegis of the Irish state, was a far harder but no less important short series.

In partnership with Science Foundation Ireland, 2020 saw a second series of the environmental strand *What Planet Are You On ?* (VIP), and a debut series of *Big Life Fix* (Kite Entertainment), where Ireland's leading inventors created ingenious solutions to everyday problems for extraordinary people. During Science Week, *Future Island* (Loosehorse), hosted by Liz Bonnín and Professor Luke O'Neill, curated Ireland's most exciting and inspirational stories and voices into a family-friendly celebration of our nation's experts and innovators.

Music also featured strongly. *David Gray: Ireland's Greatest Hit* (Born Optimistic) was a nostalgia-soaked one-off about White Ladder, the biggest-selling album in Irish history, while *The Busk: A Decade of Christmas on Grafton Street* (The Collective) and *Ireland in Music* (Born Optimistic) were performance-led one-offs that concluded the year in song, capturing some of Ireland's finest performers at work in unfamiliar surroundings.

Religious Programmes

In 2020, *Life & Soul*, a four-part series RTÉ commissioned in 2019 from Scratch Films, won the main TV category of the USA's most prestigious religious media prize, The Wilburs – the second successive year in which RTÉ has achieved that feat. Another commission, Esras Films' *Guns & Rosaries* (also from 2019) won a prize at the 2020 Telly Awards.

Once again, RTÉ commissioned outside broadcast *Masses and Services* from Kairos Communications; in 2020, with churches shut due to the pandemic, these broadcasts acquired much greater significance. 248,200 (36.1% share) watched Kairos's coverage of the Solemn Liturgy for Good Friday from Christ the King Cathedral, Mullingar, and Midnight Mass from Clonard, Co. Meath on Christmas Eve was shown across Europe via the EBU. As Christmas approached, RTÉ commissioned from Bo Media an additional short programme for Christmas Eve and Day. *The Cork Nativity* put the 2000-year-old Gospel Nativity story into the mouths of people from all walks of contemporary Cork life.



Christy Ring: Man and Ball

The two-parter on Jack Charlton's tenure as Republic of Ireland manager, *The Boys in Green* (Loosehorse), was a timely and fitting nod to an exceptional period in modern Irish history.



The Busk: A Decade of Christmas on Grafton Street



Masses and Services

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

TELEVISION

Three other commissions went into production in 2020 for delivery and transmission in 2021. *Ireland's Dirty Laundry* is New Decade TV's two-part telling of the story of the Magdalene Laundries, a co-production with ARTE made with BAI support. *Tukdam: The Living Dead* is Wildfire Films' multi-partnered co-production examining a strange phenomenon whereby some Tibetan Buddhist monks seem able to postpone bodily decay at the point of death by entering a deep meditative state. And Lifeblood Films began production of *Dazzled by Daylight*, a BAI and Screen Ireland supported feature documentary about efforts to build an authentic Tibetan temple in Dzogchen Beara, West Cork, despite the fall-out from revelations about the predatory sexual behaviour and extravagant lifestyle of the Buddhist Master Sogyal Rinpoche, on whose teaching the community is founded.

Arts and Culture

In *Culture Night Inserts*, a Nationwide special on Culture Night, Dyehouse Films showcased a sample of the cultural activities that took place across the country. With an emphasis on diversity, it also produced additional content for rte.ie/culture and RTÉ Radio. The programme culminated in an original contemporary dance piece from choreographer Emma Martin and her company United Fall, along with traditional musicians and vocalist Soulé's performance of a specially commissioned musical arrangement based on Ó Riada's *Mise Éire*.

Creative Kids was a one-hour TV documentary inspired by the roll-out of Creative Schools, a pilot project focusing on creativity and the arts in primary and secondary schools all around Ireland, produced by Frontline Films and funded with the support of Creative Ireland. It followed five schools over the course of the academic year as they encouraged their pupils to think about the arts and creativity in a whole new way.

HERSTORY: Ireland's EPIC Women, a ground-breaking six-part documentary series with accompanying podcasts and digital resources, featured some of Ireland's most remarkable female pioneers in the fields of business, politics, science, the arts, aviation and technology. RTÉ partnered with the BAI, the women's history organisation Herstory, EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum and Underground Films to bring hitherto untold stories to Irish screens across RTÉ Television, RTÉ Digital and Young People's Programmes.

O'Casey in the Estate was a landmark two-part documentary produced by Shinawil for RTÉ and the BAI, which cast a spotlight on modern-day, urban Ireland through the prism of one of the country's most iconic modern plays. Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars* was to be performed by the people of East Wall, supported by the Abbey Theatre's Catriona McLoughlin and a host of leading lights in the arts. A century ago, O'Casey gave voice to this marginalised community through the play, and the series explored how many of the issues facing its residents then still have resonance today. People in East Wall auditioned, rehearsed and produced a one-off performance to take place in March at the Abbey Theatre, where the play had premiered. The performance had to be cancelled, but the series won many viewers' hearts during lockdown.

An Post Irish Book Awards, produced by Coco Content and presented by Miriam O'Callaghan, featured the top eight contenders for the An Post Irish Book of the Year award. Doireann Ní Ghríofa's *A Ghost in My Throat* was declared the overall winner.

Ireland's Dirty Laundry is New Decade TV's two-part telling of the story of the Magdalene Laundries, a co-production with ARTE made with BAI support.



[Ireland's Dirty Laundry](#)



[HERSTORY: Ireland's EPIC Women](#)



[Soundtrack to My Life](#)

In *Soundtrack to My Life* (Shinawil), fronted by Nicky Byrne, some of Ireland's top music and entertainment artists select and perform the songs that are most important to them, accompanied by the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. Each episode features special guests, chosen by the artists, delivering their versions of the selected songs. Episode 1 was broadcast on New Year's Eve, with three more episodes to follow in 2021.

Sport

New Gaels (Poolbeg Productions), commissioned in 2019 and broadcast in September 2020, looked at the wonderful diversity of modern Ireland and how so many of the recent generation of GAA players embraced the national games despite only being introduced to them on their arrival in this country. At a time when worldwide far-right and racist views dominated the news, the documentary featured those who came to this country seeking a better life. The cast shared their experiences on and off the pitch, discussing the highs and lows of life in modern Ireland.

RTÉ2

RTÉ2 had a very challenging year. 2020 had boded well, with the Euro 2020 championships, part of which was to be hosted in Dublin, and the Olympic Games from Tokyo promising to give the channel a significant boost. Their cancellation, combined with that of many other sporting events, led to a drop in national consolidated all-day share points (RTÉ2, RTÉ2 +1) from 6.3% to 4.9%. The spring lockdown also saw the postponement and cancellation of a number of series aimed at the channel.

However, some of the strongest properties on the channel did manage to get an airing, including *First Dates Ireland* and *Special Forces Ultimate Hell Week*. *The 2 Johnnies Do America* was the first TV series from the comedy duo from Tipperary, who have a huge podcast following. The series performed well above station average.

Drama and Comedy

On RTÉ2, *Laughter in the Eyre*, produced by Theocrest, featured the biggest names in international stand-up performing at the Galway Comedy Carnival.

While RTÉ continues to support and develop Irish comedy in both scripted and non-scripted content, 2021 will begin with a brand new panel show for RTÉ2. *Clear History*, produced by Kite Entertainment, will feature established and emerging comic talent on a panel show where embarrassing pasts can be deleted from the lives of the guests.

Entertainment and Music

The early part of 2020 saw the return of *Other Voices* (South Wind Blows), which brought us 10 hours of the best music from the church of St James in Dingle and beyond.

In March RTÉ marked another great 12 months of Irish music with the *RTÉ Choice Music Prize* (Southpaw Pictures) from Dublin's Vicar Street. And to highlight how Covid-19 had impacted the live music scene, *Songs from an Empty Room* (Shinawil) was a very special evening of performances from empty music venues around Ireland.



New Gaels



The 2 Johnnies Do America

The early part of 2020 saw the return of *Other Voices* (South Wind Blows), which brought us 10 hours of the best music from the church of St James in Dingle and beyond.



Songs from an Empty Room

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

TELEVISION

Popular Factual and Factual Entertainment

On RTÉ2, new talent The 2 Johnnies took a tour of the USA in their unique style and proved popular with viewers of a show produced by Straywave Productions.

Special Forces Ultimate Hell Week from JMACTWO Productions returned with another bunch of brave civilian recruits who took on the toughest, most gruelling challenges the Irish military puts its own forces through. It proved its worth with very solid ratings, particularly among younger cohorts.

In the latter part of the year, *Pulling with My Parents Series 2* from Alleycats Films went into production for transmission in early 2021. Once again it follows young singletons across the country who, foolishly or otherwise, give their parents access to their dating accounts.

The most consistent performer on RTÉ2, aside from sport, is *First Dates Ireland*. Series 5 played in early 2020 and its rich and diverse set of characters entertained the nation. After much research on how to shoot the series in a Covid-19 world, series 6 was filmed in the autumn and will run in early 2021.

Sport

Brick Films was commissioned in 2019 to produce and deliver *Horizon Tokyo*, a three-part series of one-hour documentaries for RTÉ2 plus nine shorts for RTÉ Player. Following a cast of top Irish athletes striving to make it to the Olympic and Paralympics Games in Japan in 2020, this was due to air in the summer of 2020. Postponement of events in Japan due to Covid-19 sees the narrative continue into 2021 when RTÉ2 will, hopefully, bring these exceptional stories to screen.

Younger Audiences

2020 began with a packed schedule of live action and animated content slated for both TRTÉ, our 8-12s content offering and RTÉjr, our pre-school channel. The main aim of 2020 was to further cement our hero content across our schedule and enhance our offering cross-platform. Popular series such as *RTÉjr Goes Dancing with the Stars* (Shinawil), *Body Brothers* (stop.watch) and *Bright Sparks* (Macalla) returned to engage, educate and entertain our youngest audiences.

With Christmas over, it was time for the juggernaut that is *Dancing with the Stars* to take to our screens. At the centre of it all, presenters Darragh & Darcy delivered another behind-the-scenes extravaganza of sequins and sparkle for *RTÉjr Goes Dancing with the Stars* (Shinawil).



Pulling with My Parents



First Dates Ireland

2020 began with a packed schedule of live action and animated content slated for both TRTÉ, our 8-12s content offering and RTÉjr, our pre-school channel.



RTÉjr Goes Dancing with the Stars

February saw the launch of *Herstory*, an initiative spearheaded by RTÉ Arts & Culture. RTÉ's Young People's department commissioned bespoke films from the animation sector telling the stories of Ireland's great female trailblazers to complement and underpin a huge success cross-platform.

As Ireland moved into its first lockdown phase, the impact on the audiovisual sector was far-reaching, resulting in a stalling of production on some of our content. As part of its response to Covid-19, the Government closed schools, colleges and childcare facilities.

The challenge was to meet the needs of primary school children and their parents with curriculum-based learning. RTÉ, as the national broadcaster, was uniquely positioned to provide a daily routine of high-quality education through the medium of TV. RTÉ Young People's department decided to commission *School on the Telly*, an 'eduainment' format that would serve children, parents and teachers alike. The building blocks were quickly identified, and RTÉ's *Home School Hub* was born. From March through to June, Macalla produced over 70 hours of content helping both kids and their parents through the crisis.

As we moved into autumn 2020 and through various lockdown tiers, RTÉ Young People's department commissioned a companion series to the original *RTÉ's Home School Hub: After School Hub*. Playing in the afternoon on RTÉ2 from October through to December, this series kept kids entertained with after-school activities, presented by our favourite teachers from *RTÉ's Home School Hub*.

Autumn 2020 was incredibly busy and saw the delivery of top-class kids' content produced in very challenging circumstances. New documentaries, podcasts, animation, dramas and series about science, sport, climate change and gaming all featured in a jam-packed line-up for children.



Herstory



RTÉ's Home School Hub



After School Hub

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

TELEVISION

TRTÉ

Martin's Shed (Fusion Films), a series of 'illegal' programmes hosted by Martin the pine marten & MC (Mary Claire Fitzpatrick), exploded onto our screens in August. Broadcasting from a hidden location in Laois, it was jam-packed with songs, lunacy and LOL moments. This was closely followed by brand new comedy drama series *Blasts from the Past*, created by Firebrand Productions. Featuring Emily Blast, played by Eleanor O'Brien, it followed the adventures of an ordinary teenager who could time-jump through Irish history.

Gamer Mode (Roundstone Media) was Ireland's first gaming TV show, made by gamers for gamers. *Squad Goals* (Kite Entertainment) was back for a second series with a new venue, new games and a new host, Anna Geary. *Ace My Space* (Tailored Films) also returned, giving kids the opportunity to score a bedroom makeover. YouTube stars Sean Treacy and MC (Mary Claire Fitzpatrick) were back transforming bedrooms across Ireland.

Tina Times Two, the latest drama production from Dyehouse Films, was a coming-of-age fable centred on Tina, a lonely young girl whose wish comes true when she discovers a magical friend who is an exact double of herself! The dream turns to a nightmare when the double wants to take on a life of her own.

My Story, RTÉ's children's documentary strand which explores stories that directly affect a young audience, delivered several films. *From Sheriff Street to Delphi* (Dyehouse Films) follows a group of kids from Dublin who go on an adventure of a lifetime and learn to catch fish in Co. Mayo; in *Tajus the Kickboxer* (Ronin Films), 12-year-old social media star Tajus dreams of becoming a professional kickboxer; and in *Dillon's Adventures* (Little Road Productions), 12-year-old Dillon Lynch, a coder, hiker and outdoor adventurer extraordinaire, takes on the ultimate challenge.

The animated series *Dorg Van Dango* premiered on RTÉ. Created by Cartoon Saloon and WildBrain, it follows the adventures of a regular teenager growing up in the town of Normill. Life takes a wild turn when four magical beings escape from Area 52 and crash-land in his back yard. Dorg takes them under his wing and disguises them as normal teenagers – but his new gang of best friends are anything but normal!

2020 also saw an exciting move for the Young People's department into commissioning content for a young adult audience. A new feature-length documentary, *Growing Up at the End of the World* (Brick Films), follows three teen climate change activists over a year and a half as they demand change in a bid to save their future.



Martin's Shed



Dorg Van Dango



Growing Up at the End of the World

RTÉjr

Our youngest viewers were served up a mix of animation and live action to keep them entertained throughout 2020. RTÉjr's science and dance show, *Body Brothers* (stop.watch), was back delivering animal facts and dance moves. *Bright Sparks* returned for another series with more fun, drama and laughter, inviting the audience into its world of mishaps and adventures with the residents of Bright's Park.

My Story: Sophie (Fubar Films) is a poignant film about eight-year-old Sophie Corley and the preparation for her end-of-year Glee club performance. *Donncha's Two Talented Christmas Special* (Adare Productions) brought the Christmas cheer to end the year: *Dancing with the Stars* judge Brian Redmond, *Fair City* actor Maclean Burke, *Irish Times* journalist Róisín Ingle and country & western singer Cliona Hagan were mentored by their talented youngsters to belt out Christmas favourites.

Highlights in animation for our pre-school viewers included new series *Hungry Bear Tales*, from Treehouse Republic in partnership with Bionaut Animation, which follows two best friends, Ned and Mikey. In new adventures, *Pablo* (Paper Owl Films) and the Book Animals figure out the challenges of the world, and *Ollie* (Ink and Light Films) was back with small stories about big issues like discovery, friendship, being alone and the importance of the little things in life.

Our specially commissioned animated strand *Shorts Yule Love*, a series of 10 animated shorts, featured stories about the spirit of Christmas.



Body Brothers

Our youngest viewers were served up a mix of animation and live action to keep them entertained throughout 2020.



Shorts Yule Love

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

RADIO



RTÉ Radio offered listeners immediate and important information-based programming, which proved invaluable during the Covid crisis. This was complemented by a wide range of arts and cultural programming, which supported artists in 2020.

The range of programming made by the independent radio sector continues to grow and vary. Popular returnable shows like *Callan's Kicks* and *The Business* have become stalwarts of the RTÉ Radio 1 schedule, with the latter now appearing in the JNLR's top programming list. The range of programming in the arts & culture space really expanded in 2020, from returning series like *The Book Show*, *The Poetry Programme* on RTÉ Radio 1, *Culture File* on RTÉ lyric fm and *Cúinne Dána* on RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta to brand new series such as *The Almanac of Ireland* and *Shine Your Light*, the one-off solstice programme that worked in tandem with a television partner programme.

RTÉ Radio 1

In 2020 RTÉ Radio 1 commissioned 13 programmes from 10 production companies in the independent sector. These enhanced the schedule throughout the year, with *The Business*, from Old Yard Productions – broadcast in a prominent Saturday slot – continuing to hold its own alongside in-house productions at the top of the Joint National Listenership Research (JNLR) figures.

Callan's Kicks (Catchy Title) continued to draw audiences and plaudits. *The History Show* (Pegasus Media and Consulting) remained an important part of the Sunday evening schedule. In terms of cultural programming, *The Poetry Programme* with Olivia O'Leary (Rockfinch Productions) returned to the schedule,



Callan's Kicks



The Book Show

RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta commissioned three series from the independent sector in 2020, focusing on the arts and music.



Cuireadh Chun Ceoil

while Ojo Productions took on responsibility for *The Book Show* with Rick O'Shea. *The South Wind Blows* (South Wind Blows) also continued its long run, coming out of the Dingle Peninsula. Athena Media's *Pantisocracy* returned to the airwaves during the summer and the same company provided a one-off *Shine Your Light - Solstice* programme, which was coordinated with the TV version on 20 December.

Other one-offs were *Gay Byrne Live on Stage* (Tyrone Productions) and *2020: A Quiz Looking Back on a Year Like No Other* (Pegasus Media & Consulting), both were broadcast during the Christmas schedule.

There were debuts too on RTÉ Radio 1: Manchán Magan's *The Almanac of Ireland* (Red Hare Media) and *Keywords* (New Normal Culture).

RTÉ Radio 1 also broadcast *Comedy Showhouse* and *Colm O'Regan Wants a Word* (Sideline Productions), both co-funded by the BAI.

RTÉ 2fm

The Music Biz is a weekly information insert series broadcast on 2fm's nightly new music show, presented by Tara Stewart, and was produced by Tinpot Productions. Each week explores a different theme of the music industry, from sound engineering to band management, featuring interviews with music business leaders.

RTÉ lyric fm

Culture File (Soundsdoable), RTÉ lyric fm's daily arts and culture report, offers a unique and accessible take on music, media, technology, craft, art, play, comedy, food and design, featuring makers and creators from around Ireland and abroad. The *Culture File Debates* series with its panel of guests reflected on some of the major issues for the arts and creativity in this most challenging of years. The daily and weekly reports have an extensive online presence through daily podcasts, SoundCloud and Twitter. *Culture File* continues active talent-spotting, engaging and training a new generation of journalists, recordists and audio professionals, and expanding the skill pool not just for its own programming but to enrich the wider pool of Irish media.

RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta

RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta commissioned three series from the independent sector in 2020, focusing on the arts and music. *An Cúinne Dána* returned to the schedule, presented by Tristan Rosenstock, and provided a stage to publicise and discuss the arts scene – particularly the Irish language arts and literary scene – and make it accessible to an audience that may not usually associate itself with the arts.

Music is a strong part of the RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta identity, and traditional music is the standout genre for the station. *Cuireadh Chun Ceoil* (lontaoibheas Fodhla), presented by Peadar Ó Riada each Friday night, is an important part of the traditional music slot each evening from 7pm. This series, commissioned through Independent Radio Productions, attracts not only Irish language speakers who are interested in traditional music but also lovers of the music who have no Irish and many listeners who are abroad.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

RADIO

Indeed, it has created a community who actively engage with the series. The annual competition, Bonn Óir Sheáin Uí Riada, is an important part of the work that Peadar Ó Riada has done to strengthen that community spirit and offer a stage to musicians from all over who enter this prestigious competition.

Over the Christmas period, *An Seomra Glas* (Raven Productions) presented conversations that Fiachna Ó Braonáin had with musical guests, and the kind of music each of those guests listens to. The series allowed listeners to get to know some of the musicians who regularly perform 'as Gaeilge' and exposed them to music they might not come across on their own.

Over the Christmas period, *An Seomra Glas* presented conversations that Fiachna Ó Braonáin had with musical guests, and the kind of music each of those guests listens to.

[An Cúinne Dána](#)



OTHER FUNDING

The BAI Sound & Vision Scheme continued to be a key partner in RTÉ Television and Radio's commissioning output in 2020.

Fourteen television productions, which have been or will be broadcast on RTÉ, were commissioned with BAI support. These are: *74 Days: The Hunger Strike of Terence MacSwiney*, *Alva's World*, *Cold Case Collins*, *Dazzled by Daylight*, *Ireland's Dirty Laundry*, *Kin*, *My Tribe – Mo Threibh Series 2*, *Mya Go Series 2*, *North Sea Connection*, *Realtáí na Gaeltachta*, *Richie Sadlier – Let's Talk About Sex*, *The Epic West*, *The Island* and *Viking Empires*.

In addition to the radio programmes commissioned directly by RTÉ, 46 hours of programming with BAI Sound & Vision IV Radio funding were secured by Independent Producers for broadcast on RTÉ Radio in 2020. Programmes included; *Colm O'Regan Wants A Word*, *The Old Tune*, *Ireland Portrayed*, *Over Nine Waves*, *Morning*, *Noon and Night*, *Wild*, *Keywords*, *Buile Bhóthair* and *Spooky FM*.

RTÉ again worked closely with Science Foundation Ireland to commission programmes that engage new and wider audiences through real stories that are underpinned by science, engineering and technology. The projects supported in 2020 included *What Planet Are You On?* (VIP) and *Future Island* (Loosehorse). Both were broadcast during prime-time slots on RTÉ One.

Several drama, animation, scripted comedy and factual commissions benefited from funding from Section 481 and Screen Ireland. In 2020 RTÉ also entered into co-productions with BBC NI, ARTE and a number of other funders. An analysis of funding from other sources can be found on p.22.

Several drama, animation, scripted comedy and factual commissions benefited from funding from Section 481 and Screen Ireland.



Mya Go

OTHER SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

In 2020 RTÉ continued to offer practical support to the development of the independent production sector through its involvement in development schemes, by providing speakers for industry seminars and for film and television production training colleges, by participating in international co-production conferences, by providing support for producers seeking co-production partners and through meeting with and giving guidance to emerging companies.

Screen Producers Ireland, the representative body for independent producers in Ireland, is partly funded by a levy from its members on production budgets in respect of programmes commissioned by RTÉ. The levy is therefore a direct charge against the Independent Programmes account.

Animation Ireland is the trade association representing the interest of most animation studios in Ireland. RTÉ provides an annual contribution to Animation Ireland as part of its commitment to the development of the sector.

[Bloody Sunday, 1920](#)

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

RTÉ has complied with the 2016 *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* together with the corporate governance and other obligations imposed by the *Broadcasting Act 2009*, the *Ethics in Public Office Act 1995*, the *Standards in Public Office Act 2001* and the *Criminal Justice (Corruption Offences) Act 2018*.

RTÉ is committed to ensuring that the commissioning of independently produced programmes for public broadcast is performed in a transparent manner. RTÉ adheres to formal and clear procedures, which are available to independent producers on the RTÉ website, for the sourcing and commissioning, including re-commissioning, of independently produced television and radio programmes.

During the year RTÉ engaged Deloitte to perform specified procedures on the application of specified commissioning procedures to television and radio programme submissions in 2020. Deloitte performed their procedures and was satisfied that, for the sample of items tested, documentary evidence maintained by RTÉ reflected compliance with the relevant commissioning procedures.



FINANCIAL AND COMMISSIONING REVIEW

Summary of Expenditure 2020

RTÉ's 2020 statutory obligation for expenditure on independent commissions under the *Broadcasting Act 2009* was €40.2m, in respect of both television and radio. The total actual expenditure incurred, on television and radio commissioning activities during 2020 was €37.8m.

	2020 TV €'000	2020 Radio €'000	2020 Total €'000	2019 Total €'000
Expenditure Incurred				
Statutory Expenditure (Sch. 5)	35,225	1,241	36,466	40,071
Additional Expenditure (Sch. 6)	327	-	327	509
Direct Expenditure on Commissioned Programmes	35,552	1,241	36,793	40,580
RTÉ Attributable Overhead	939	32	971	994
Expenditure Incurred on Commissioning Activities	36,491	1,273	37,764	41,574

The statutory expenditure incurred on independent productions through the Independent Programmes account in 2020 in respect of commissioned programmes was €35.23m for television and €1.24m for radio, a total of €36.5m, and includes administration costs. This is €3.7m below the statutory amount of €40.2m. As per the *Broadcasting Act 2009*, any monies not expended in 2020 will be spent within the following two years.

A further €0.3m was incurred by RTÉ on television programmes, which was in addition to the expenditure recorded on the statutory Independent Programmes account and resulted in a total spend of €36.8m being incurred by television and radio on commissioned programmes during 2020 (2019: €40.6m), excluding RTÉ attributable overhead.

A total of 1,020 hours (521 radio, 499 television) was commissioned with the Independent Productions statutory expenditure in 2020, across a broad range of categories; these are detailed in Schedule 3. A further three hours of television programming was commissioned as part of the non-statutory independent production expenditure in 2020, as detailed in Schedule 4.

An analysis of expenditure incurred in 2020 by programme category is detailed in Schedule 5 for statutory expenditure and in Schedule 6 for non-statutory expenditure.

Commissioning and Overhead Spend 2020

An analysis of independent television and radio productions expenditure incurred by RTÉ in 2020 is contained in the table below. Further detail by genre is contained in Schedules 5 and 6.

	2020 TV €'000	2020 Radio €'000	2020 Total €'000	2019 Total €'000
Expenditure Incurred				
2019 Commissions Brought Forward	9,985	159	10,144	7,920
Change in Spend on 2019 Commissions ¹	(1,672)	(19)	(1,691)	(56)
2019 Commissions Brought Forward as Restated	8,313	140	8,453	7,864
New Commissions during 2020 (see below)	34,924	1,522	36,446	40,432
Less Commissions for Delivery in 2021	(9,939)	(466)	(10,405)	(10,144)
Administration Costs (Schedule 7)	3,142	77	3,219	3,216
Awards/Schemes	51	-	51	206
Expenditure Incurred on Commissioning Activities	36,491	1,273	37,764	41,574

¹ 2019 commissioned spend brought forward has been updated for cost variances and re-timing of programme commitments which occurred during 2020.

² RTÉ changed its accounting policy regarding the treatment of drama development agreements during 2020. This resulted in a one-off adjustment of €1.3m, reflecting the release of an accounting provision from prior periods.

FINANCIAL AND COMMISSIONING REVIEW

New commissions during 2020 of €36.4m (see table above) can be analysed as follows:

New Commissions	Statutory Spend		Non-statutory Spend		Total Spend	
	€'000	%	€'000	%	€'000	%
Television Commissions ^{1,2}	32,502	90%	329	100%	32,831	90%
Television Development ¹	190	1%	–	0%	190	1%
Television Completion ^{1,2}	1,903	5%	–	0%	1,903	5%
Television	34,595	96%	329	100%	34,924	96%
Radio	1,522	4%	–	0%	1,522	4%
RTÉ Total	36,117	100%	329	100%	36,446	100%

¹ See Schedule 1 for definition of commissions, development and completion funding.

² Includes RTÉ funding in respect of the BAI Sound & Vision Scheme.

Television commissions with a value of €13.8m, representing 40% of the value of new 2020 television commissions, were awarded to six independent production companies, and a further sum of €7.2m or 21% was awarded to a further six independent production companies.

Commissioning Activities 2020

Geographical origin of proposals for commissions received in 2020 is detailed below:

Location	No. of Companies		No. of Proposals Received		No. of Commissions Awarded		No. of Hours Commissioned	
	TV	Radio	TV	Radio	TV	Radio	TV	Radio
Dublin	131	28	592	41	87	17	394	245
Rest of Republic of Ireland	82	11	199	12	22	6	63	276
Northern Ireland	14	–	73	–	14	–	37	–
Great Britain	7	1	10	1	1	–	8	–
Others	5	–	8	–	–	–	–	–
Total	239	40	882	54	124	23	502	521

Other Sources of Funding to the Sector

In addition to the €34.9m committed by RTÉ to new television commissions in 2020, producers of RTÉ commissioned programmes attracted funding from other sources. The total value of this additional funding on 2020 contracts was €31.7m, analysed as follows:

Sources of Funding	Drama and Animation €'000	Other Genres €'000	Total Third-Party Funding €'000
Co-funding	18,504	2,436	20,940
Section 481	6,160	1,001	7,161
BAI Funding	1,750	1,894	3,644
Total	26,414	5,331	31,745

Thus, the total value of RTÉ independent television programming activities in 2020, inclusive of all third-party funding, was €66.6m. In the case of programmes categorised as drama or animation, or part-funded by the BAI Sound & Vision Scheme, the amounts for other sources of funding above include projects where RTÉ provided development/completion funding only.

Administration Costs

A full analysis of administration costs is detailed in Schedule 7. In 2020, direct administration costs incurred by RTÉ Independent Productions amounted to €2.2m, which represents 6% of the total Independent Productions direct expenditure incurred on commissioned programmes in 2020.

RTÉ Independent Productions relies on a range of RTÉ services including, for example, office space and related utilities, information technology and systems, consumables, technical services and human resources. An appropriate full-cost absorption/usage allocation basis is used to reflect a fair and reasonable cost of these interdivisional services consumed by RTÉ Independent Productions amounting to €1.0m for 2020 (2019: €1.0m).

FINANCIAL AND COMMISSIONING REVIEW

International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)

RTÉ's 2020 Annual Report and Group Financial Statements (RTÉ Annual Report) have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and their interpretations approved by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) as adopted by the European Union.

Under IFRS, RTÉ records the cost of transmitted commissioned programmes rather than the expenditure incurred on commissioning activities. The RTÉ Annual Report records the level of programme inventories held, that is programmes made and for which costs have been incurred during the period but which have not been transmitted at the period end.

As required under the Broadcasting Act 2009, the Independent Productions Annual Report details RTÉ's activities with regard to commissioning of independent television and sound programmes during the year and the operation by RTÉ of the Independent Programmes bank account. It is not deemed appropriate to adopt IFRS for the purposes of the Independent Productions Annual Report. A reconciliation of the expenditure incurred on commissioning activities, detailed in this report, with programme costs, as reported in the 2020 RTÉ Annual Report, is set out below.

2020 Reconciliation	TV €'000	Radio €'000	Total €'000
Independent Productions Annual Report:			
Expenditure incurred on Commissioning Activities ¹	36,491	1,273	37,764
Add: Opening Stock of Programmes	15,522	–	15,522
Less: Closing Stock of Programmes	(16,230)	–	(16,230)
Total Cost of Transmitted Programmes	35,783	1,273	37,056
RTÉ Annual Report:			
Cost of Transmitted Programmes			
Commissioned Programmes Costs ²	35,783	1,273	37,056
Total Cost of Transmitted Programmes	35,783	1,273	37,056

¹ See Table on p. 21.

² 2020 RTÉ Annual Report and Group Financial Statements, Note 2(d).

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

Independent Accountants' Agreed upon Procedures Report to the RTÉ Board in Respect of the RTÉ Independent Productions Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

We have performed the procedures agreed with you and enumerated below with respect to the RTÉ Independent Productions Annual Report ('the Annual Report') and Schedules ('the Schedules') for the year ended 31 December 2020. Our engagement was undertaken in accordance with the International Standard on Related Services (ISRS 4400) applicable to agreed upon procedures engagements. The procedures were performed solely to assist you in evaluating your compliance with your statutory obligations with regard to Independent Productions Reporting Requirements.

These procedures have been undertaken based upon financial information provided by the management of RTÉ and are the responsibility of the RTÉ Board. The procedures which we have undertaken and our findings are as set out below:

Procedures

1. We have checked that the information included in Schedule 2 'Operation of the Independent Programmes Bank Account for the year ended 31 December 2020' has been correctly extracted from the detailed general ledger transactions of the Independent Programmes bank account for the year ended 31 December 2020.
2. We have checked that the information included in Schedules 5, 6 and 7 has been correctly extracted from the underlying records and detailed analysis prepared for the purposes of the preparation of the Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2020.
3. We have checked the mathematical accuracy of the Schedules.

Findings

We have performed the procedures set out in 1-3 above and noted no exceptions arising from our work.

Because the above procedures do not constitute either an audit or a review made in accordance with International Standards on Auditing or International Standards on Review Engagements, we do not express any assurance on the RTÉ Independent Productions Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Our report is solely for the purposes set out in the first paragraph of this report and for your information and is not to be used for any other purpose. This report relates only to the items specified above and does not extend to any financial statements of RTÉ taken as a whole.



Richard Howard
For and on behalf of Deloitte Ireland LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm
Deloitte & Touche House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2

31 March 2021

SCHEDULE 1: RTÉ'S STATUTORY OBLIGATION WITH REGARD TO INDEPENDENT PRODUCTIONS

1. Expenditure Requirement

Under Section 116, subsection (2) of the *Broadcasting Act 2009*, RTÉ has a statutory obligation to spend a predetermined minimum amount (the statutory amount) each year on independently produced television and radio programmes and to lodge this money to a separate account known as the Independent Programmes account (the account).

Statutory Expenditure	2020 €'000	2019 €'000
Total Statutory Expenditure	40,185	39,909

The statutory amount for 2009 was €40m, and for subsequent years the amount varied in line with the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) measured from August 2008 to August immediately preceding the financial year concerned. Since CPI measured from August 2008 to August 2019 was +0.5%, the statutory amount for 2020 was increased accordingly. Under Section 116, the minimum percentage to be spent on sound broadcasting in 2020 is 3% (€1.206m).

2. Reporting Requirement

As required under Section 116, subsection (9) of the *Broadcasting Act 2009*, RTÉ shall not later than three months after the end of each financial year make a report to the minister of:

- its activities during that financial year as respects commissioning the making of independent television or sound broadcasting programmes
- the name or corporate identity of persons commissioned to make independent television or sound broadcasting programmes
- the operation by it of the account during that financial year (details of the operation of the account for 2020 are set out in Schedule 2) and
- any other matters as the minister may direct regarding the above.

3. Definition of Commissions, Development and Completion Funding

The sum identified as expended on 'Commissions' is defined pursuant to the requirement as per Section 116, subsection (11) of the *Broadcasting Act 2009*, that in order for a programme to be regarded as having been commissioned, RTÉ must incur 'a legal obligation to pay at least 25% of the cost' of making a television programme in advance of work on the making of the programme commencing.

The sums identified as expended on 'Development' and 'Completion' are defined as per Section 116, subsections (2)(a)(ii) and (2)(a)(iii), namely respectively 'procuring the formulation by persons of proposals' for independent television or radio programmes for commission by RTÉ and 'assisting the completion of independent television or sound broadcasting programmes the making of which has not been commissioned by RTÉ'.

SCHEDULE 2: OPERATION OF THE INDEPENDENT PROGRAMMES BANK
ACCOUNT FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

	€'000
Opening balance as per RTÉ at 1 January 2020	9,223
Lodgements	
Receipts from RTÉ, including bank interest received	40,185
Less Payments	
Payments	(44,238)
Closing balance as per RTÉ at 31 December 2020	5,170

SCHEDULE 3: 2020 STATUTORY TELEVISION PROGRAMMES / HOURS COMMISSIONED, COMPLETED AND DEVELOPED

Category	Production Company	Programme Title	Total Hours
Factual	Coco Content	First Dates Ireland Series 6	14.0
	JMACTWO Productions	Special Forces Ultimate Hell Week Series 3 & Series 4	12.0
	Rare TV / Green Inc	Crimecall Series 17	10.0
	Indiepics	Ear to the Ground Series 28	8.0
	Vision Independent Productions	Operation Transformation Series 14	8.0
	Coco Content	Room to Improve Series 13	7.0
	Indiepics / Scratch Films	Ireland on Call	6.5
	Alleycats TV	Pulling with My Parents Series 2	6.0
	Animo TV Productions	The Great House Revival Series 3	6.0
	Scratch Films	The Rotunda Series 3	6.0
	Vision Independent Productions	Super Garden 2020	6.0
	JMACTWO Productions	Build Your Own Home	5.0
	Kairos Communications	Masses and Services 2020	4.5
	Animo TV Productions	From Blight to Bliss – Story of the Irish Bungalow	4.0
	Cameo Productions	Cheap Irish Houses Series 2	4.0
	Indiepics	How to be Good with Money Series 3	4.0
	Inproduction / Telegael	Great Lighthouses of Ireland Series 2	4.0
	Moondance Productions	The Zoo	4.0
	New Decade TV	The Island: 1.8 Billion Years in the Making ^{1(Compl)}	4.0
	Shinawil	Home of the Year Series 7	4.0
	Vision Independent Productions	Operation Transformation – Keeping Well Apart	4.0
	Vision Independent Productions	What Planet Are You On ? Series 2	4.0
	Waddell Media	At Your Service Goes Large	4.0
	Waka TV	Keys to My Life Series 2	4.0
	Coco Content	Home Rescue Series 3	3.0
	Coco Content	Open for Business	3.0
	Crossing the Line Productions	Islands ^(Compl)	3.0
	Indiepics	The Style Counsellors Series 2	3.0
	Loosehorse	Future Island	3.0
	Mahy Media	Wingman Series 2	3.0
	Pounce Pictures	Dr Cassidy's Case Book	3.0
	Rare TV / Green Inc	The Case I Can't Forget	3.0
	Straywave Media	The 2 Johnnies Do America	3.0
	Waddell Media	Gardening Together with Diarmuid Gavin	3.0
	Waka TV	The Way We Were	3.0
	Sideline Productions	Citizens of Boomtown ^(Compl)	2.0
	Frontier Films	No Place Like Home	2.0
	Moondance Productions	Return of the Wild: Bearman of Buncrana	2.0
	New Decade TV	Ireland's Dirty Laundry ^{1(Compl)}	2.0
	Tile Films	Viking Empires ¹	2.0
	Tyrone Productions	Richie Sadlier – Let's Talk About Sex ^{1(Compl)}	2.0
	Waddell Media	The Rich List 2020	2.0
	Drumlin Pictures	Marian	1.5
	Loosehorse	Cold Case Collins ^{1(Compl)}	1.5
	Wildfire Film and Television	Tukdam: The Living Dead ^(Compl)	1.5
	Lifeblood Films	Dazzled by Daylight ^{1(Compl)}	1.3
	Atom Films	The Toy Shop	1.0
	Angelo Films	Let the Rest of the World Go By	1.0

SCHEDULE 3: 2020 STATUTORY TELEVISION PROGRAMMES / HOURS COMMISSIONED, COMPLETED AND DEVELOPED

CONTINUED

Category	Production Company	Programme Title	Total Hours
	Born Optimistic	Ireland in Music ^(Comp)	1.0
	Broadstone Films	What Happened to Eircom?	1.0
	The Collective	The Busk: A Decade of Christmas on Grafton Street	1.0
	Crossing the Line Productions	Christy Ring: Man and Ball	1.0
	Dearg Films	The Real Field	1.0
	Forefront Productions	74 Days: The Hunger Strike of Terence MacSwiney ^{1(Comp)}	1.0
	Frontline Films	The John Delaney Story	1.0
	Loosehorse	Holy F***	1.0
	Loosehorse	The Other Side	1.0
	Mahy Media	Baz and Nancy's Last Days	1.0
	Mahy Media	Fungie's Kingdom	1.0
	Scratch Films	A Big Week in September	1.0
	Screenworks	The Dead Zoo	1.0
	Soilsiu Teo	Young Plato ^(Comp)	1.0
	Twopair Films	Bloody Sunday, 1920	1.0
	Venom Productions	Cocooned	1.0
	Waddell Media	Dana: The Original Derry Girl	1.0
	Bo Media	The Cork Nativity	0.1
	Various development contracts with Bang Bang Teo, Camel Productions, The Collective, Cornelia St Productions, Curious Dog, Finepoint, Frontline Films, Indiepics, Little Wing Films, New Decade TV, Red Pepper, Scratch Films, Tyrone Productions, Waddell Media and Waka TV		
			214.9
Arts and Culture	Shinawil	Soundtrack to My Life	4.0
	Crossing the Line Productions	The Epic West ^{1(Comp)}	2.0
	Below the Radar Films	Colm Tóibín	1.0
	Coco Content	An Post Irish Book Awards	1.0
	Dyehouse Films	Culture Night Inserts	0.3
			8.3
Cláracha Gaeilge	Tyrone Productions	An Cúinne Cheoil	10.0
	Adare Productions	Réalta agus Gaolta Series 3	8.0
	Sonas Productions	Ireland's Lost Railways	3.0
	Big Mountain Productions	Réaltaí na Gaeltachta ^{1(Comp)}	2.0
	Mind the Gap Films	My Tribe - Mo Threibh Series 2 ^{1(Comp)}	2.0
			25.0

SCHEDULE 3: 2020 STATUTORY TELEVISION PROGRAMMES / HOURS
 COMMISSIONED, COMPLETED AND DEVELOPED
 CONTINUED

Category	Production Company	Programme Title	Total Hours	
Entertainment and Music	Animo TV Productions	Ireland's Fittest Family Series 8	11.0	
	South Wind Blows	Other Voices Series 19	10.0	
	Shinawil	Songs from An Empty Room	2.0	
	Kite Entertainment	New Year's Eve Countdown	1.5	
	Shinawil	Dancing with the Stars – Puttin' On The Glitz	1.0	
	Southpaw Pictures	RTÉ Choice Music Prize 2020	1.0	
	Straywave Media	The 2 Johnnies Christmas Spectacular	1.0	
	RTÉ Does Comic Relief Inserts			1.0
	Animo TV Productions	Comic Relief Inserts		
	Brothers Gonna Work It Out	Bridget & Eamon		
	Element Pictures	Normal People		
	Gable End Media	Pat Shortt		
	Shinawil	Dancing with the Stars		
Waka TV	Katherine Lynch			
			28.5	
Drama and Comedy	Power Pictures	The Tommy Tiernan Show Series 5	10.0	
	Bron Releasing UK Ltd	Kin ¹	8.0	
	Mopar Media Group / Subotica	North Sea Connection ^{1 (Compl)}	6.0	
	Kite Entertainment	Clear History	4.0	
	Wonky Chair Media	Callan Kicks the Year	1.0	
	Various development contracts with Deadpan Pictures, Grand Pictures, Kite Entertainment, Merman, O'Sullivan Productions, Peer Pressure, PGM TV, Screenworks, The Film Workshop, Treasure Entertainment and Waka TV			
			29.0	

SCHEDULE 3: 2020 STATUTORY TELEVISION PROGRAMMES / HOURS COMMISSIONED, COMPLETED AND DEVELOPED

CONTINUED

Category	Production Company	Programme Title	Total Hours	
Young People	Macalla Teo	RTÉ's Home School Hub	72.5	
	Macalla Teo	After School Hub	45.0	
	Kavaleer Productions	Alva's World ^{1(Compl)}	11.0	
	Adare Productions	Donncha's Two Talented Series 3	8.0	
	Kite Entertainment	Squad Goals Series 2	8.0	
	Fusion Films	After School Hub Inserts	6.0	
	Piranha Bar	Mya Go Series 2 ^{1(Compl)}	5.5	
	JAM Media	Nova Jones	5.0	
	Stopwatch Television	Let's Find Out Series 2	5.0	
	Tailored Films	Ace My Space Series 2	5.0	
	Macalla Teo	Bright Sparks Series 3	3.0	
	Macalla Teo	Keep It Up	3.0	
	Stopwatch Television	Body Brothers Animals Series 2	2.9	
	Fusion Films	Martin's Shed	2.5	
	Fubar Films	Wild Atlantic Kids	2.0	
	Turnip & Duck	Critters TV Series 2 ^(Compl)	2.0	
	Treehouse Republic	Hungry Bear Tales ^(Compl)	1.5	
	Brick Films	Growing Up at the End of the World	1.0	
	Event Fuel	Junk Kouture	1.0	
	Ladybird and Bee Series One Ltd	Bóin Dé agus an Beach ^(Compl)	1.0	
	Macalla Teo	Tar Linn ar RTÉjr	1.0	
	Ronin Films	My Story – Tajus the Kickboxer	0.3	
	Tailored Films	Tell Me A Secret: X Marks the Spot	0.3	
		Shorts Yule Love		0.5
		Alt Animation	Little	
		Cardel Entertainment	Gunter Falls in Love	
		Flickerpix	Da Humbug	
		JAM Media	Mistletoe & Stubbs	
		Magpie 6 Media	The Wee Littles Christmas Eve Eve	
		Pink Kong Studios	Urban Tails: The Big Christmas Song	
		Studio 9	An Oíche is Speisialta	
		Studio Meala	Bear With Me	
	Treehouse Republic	Naughty vs Nice		
	Turnip & Duck	Critters TV: Tiny's Santa List		
	Various development contracts with Crawford McCann, Adare Productions, EZ Films, Kite Entertainment, Little Moon Animation, Lucky Punch Productions, Michael Walsh Productions and Tailored Films			
			193.0	

TOTAL 2020 STATUTORY TELEVISION HOURS COMMISSIONED

499

¹ Commissions which were part-funded by the BAI Sound and Vision Scheme.
(Compl) Denotes Completion Contracts.

SCHEDULE 3: 2020 STATUTORY RADIO PROGRAMMES / HOURS
 COMMISSIONED, COMPLETED AND DEVELOPED
 CONTINUED

Category	Production Company	Programme Title	Total Hours
Factual	Old Yard Productions	The Business 2020/2021	43.0
	Pegasus Media and Consulting	The History Show	23.0
	Ojo Productions	The Book Show	9.0
	Athena Media	Pantisocracy	8.0
	Old Yard Productions	The Business 2019/2020 (Extension)	6.0
			89.0
Arts and Culture	Soundsdoable	Culture File 2021	56.0
	South Wind Blows	South Wind Blows	52.0
	Soundsdoable	Culture File Weekly 2020	26.0
	Rockfinch	The Poetry Programme 2020	11.5
	Rockfinch	The Poetry Programme 2021	10.0
	New Normal Culture	Keywords	4.0
	Athena Media	Shine Your Light – Solstice	1.0
			160.5
Cláracha Gaeilge	Iontaoibheas Fodhla	Cuireadh Chun Ceoil 2021	104.0
	Iontaoibheas Fodhla	Cuireadh Chun Ceoil 2020	92.0
	Tristan Rosenstock	An Cúinne Dána 2021	25.5
	Raven Productions	An Seomra Glas	16.0
	Tristan Rosenstock	An Cúinne Dána 2020	15.5
			253.0
Entertainment and Music	Sideline Productions	Colm O'Regan Wants A Word	3.0
	Tinpot Productions	The Music Biz	1.5
	Pegasus Media and Consulting	2020: A Quiz Looking Back on a Year Like No Other	1.0
	Tyrone Productions	Gay Byrne Live on Stage	1.0
			6.5
Drama and Comedy	Catchy Title	Callan's Kicks Spring 2020	6.0
	Catchy Title	Callan's Kicks Autumn 2020	6.0
			12.0
TOTAL 2020 STATUTORY RADIO HOURS COMMISSIONED			521

SCHEDULE 4: 2020 NON-STATUTORY TELEVISION PROGRAMMES / HOURS
COMMISSIONED, COMPLETED AND DEVELOPED

Category	Production Company	Programme Title	Total Hours
Factual	Stellify Media	Goodbye House Series 2	3.0
	Firebrand Productions	Brain Hacks	0.3
TOTAL 2020 NON-STATUTORY TELEVISION HOURS COMMISSIONED			3

SCHEDULE 5: 2020 STATUTORY EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON COMMISSIONED PROGRAMMES BY PROGRAMME CATEGORY

TELEVISION

Programme Category	Total Hours	2019 Commissions Carried Forward €'000	2020 New Commissions €'000	2020 Commissions Carried Forward €'000	2020 Total Cost €'000
Factual	214.9	4,372	20,754	(6,662)	18,464
Arts and Culture	8.3	124	657	(439)	342
Cláracha Gaeilge	25.0	1,552	831	(439)	1,944
Entertainment and Music	28.5	2,305	2,995	(75)	5,225
Drama and Comedy	29.0	(781)	3,742	(1,125)	1,836
Sport	-	170	-	(55)	115
Young People	193.0	573	5,616	(1,144)	5,045
Overall Totals:	499	8,315	34,595	(9,939)	32,971
Awards – Schemes					51
Overheads and other costs (Schedule 7)					2,203
Direct Expenditure Incurred					35,225

RADIO

Programme Category	Total Hours	2019 Commissions Carried Forward €'000	2020 New Commissions €'000	2020 Commissions Carried Forward €'000	2020 Total Cost €'000
Factual	89.0	87	542	(140)	489
Arts and Culture	160.5	43	433	(187)	289
Cláracha Gaeilge	253.0	14	216	(128)	102
Entertainment and Music	6.5	(2)	64	(11)	51
Drama and Comedy	12.0	(2)	267	-	265
Sport	-	-	-	-	-
Young People	-	-	-	-	-
Overall Totals:	521	140	1,522	(466)	1,196
Overheads and other costs (Schedule 7)					45
Direct Expenditure Incurred					1,241

DIRECT EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON COMMISSIONED PROGRAMMES

TELEVISION & RADIO	36,466
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Note 1: Costs are inclusive of non-recoverable VAT (NRV)

Note 2: 2019 Commissions have been restated for cost variances and the re-timing of programme commitments

Note 3: RTÉ changed its accounting policy regarding the treatment of drama development agreements during 2020, this resulted in a one-off adjustment of €1.3m, reflecting the release of an accounting provision from prior periods

Note 4: Figures in table do not include RTÉ attributable overhead

SCHEDULE 6: 2020 NON-STATUTORY EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON COMMISSIONED PROGRAMMES BY PROGRAMME CATEGORY

TELEVISION

Programme Category	Total Hours	2019 Commissions Carried Forward €'000	2020 New Commissions €'000	2020 Commissions Carried Forward €'000	2020 Total Cost €'000
Factual	3.2	(2)	329	-	327
Overall Totals:	3	(2)	329	-	327
Awards – Schemes					-
Direct Expenditure Incurred					327

Note 1: Costs are inclusive of non-recoverable VAT (NRV)

Note 2: 2019 Commissions have been restated for cost variances and the re-timing of programme commitments

Note 3: Figures in table do not include RTÉ attributable overhead

Note 4: Non-statutory expenditure includes costs for commissions that are not allowable to be charged to the Statutory Account under the Broadcasting Act 2009

SCHEDULE 7: 2020 ADMINISTRATION COSTS AND ATTRIBUTABLE ORGANISATIONAL OVERHEAD

Expenditure Description	Television €'000	Radio €'000	Total €'000
Payroll Costs	1,812	39	1,851
Festivals / Industry Contributions	254	-	254
Set Storage	101	-	101
Advertising and Consultancy Costs	23	6	29
Office and Miscellaneous	13	-	13
Sub-total:	2,203	45	2,248
Attributable Organisational Overhead	939	32	971
Overall Total:	3,142	77	3,219

SCHEDULE 8: 2020 AWARDS

	Production Company	Programme Title
	(a) Frameworks	
1	And Maps and Plans	Bardo
2	Memento Mori Productions	Memento Mori
3	My Aunt Sally Productions	Park

SCHEDULE 9: 2020 TOP 50 PROGRAMMES

Rank	Programme Title	Channel	Transmission Date
1	Late Late Toy Show, The	RTÉ One	27-11-2020
2	Taoiseach Leo Varadkar Ministerial Broadcast	RTÉ One	17-03-2020
3	RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock	RTÉ One	17-03-2020
4	RTÉ News: Six One	RTÉ One	30-12-2020
5	Saturday Game Live (All Ireland Football Final): Dublin v Mayo	RTÉ2	19-12-2020
6	Late Late Show, The	RTÉ One	27-03-2020
7	Guinness 6 Nations Live: France v Ireland	Virgin Media One	31-10-2020
8	RTÉ News Special	RTÉ One	27-03-2020
9	Room To Improve: Dermot's Home	RTÉ One	05-01-2020
10	Sunday Game Live (All Ireland Hurling Final): Limerick v Waterford	RTÉ2	13-12-2020
11	Dancing With The Stars	RTÉ One	15-03-2020
12	Prime Time	RTÉ One	17-03-2020
13	Prime Time – The Leaders' Debate	RTÉ One	04-02-2020
14	Reeling In The Years	RTÉ One	17-03-2020
15	Claire Byrne Live	RTÉ One	19-10-2020
16	I'm a Celebrity Get Me out of Here	Virgin Media One	15-11-2020
17	Guinness 6 Nations Live: Ireland v Scotland	Virgin Media One	01-02-2020
18	Guinness 6 Nations Live: England v Ireland	Virgin Media One	23-02-2020
19	DIY SOS: The Big Build Ireland	RTÉ One	25-10-2020
20	Mrs Brown's Boys: Mammy's Memories?	RTÉ One	31-12-2020
21	Guinness 6 Nations Live: Ireland v Wales	Virgin Media One	08-02-2020
22	Election 2020	RTÉ One	09-02-2020
23	NYE Countdown Show	RTÉ One	31-12-2020
24	European Qualifier Play-Off Live: Slovakia v Ireland	RTÉ2	08-10-2020
25	Gerry Ryan: A Legacy	RTÉ One	26-04-2020
26	Home of the Year	RTÉ One	17-03-2020
27	Guinness 6 Nations Live: Ireland v Italy	Virgin Media One	24-10-2020
28	Crimecall	RTÉ One	23-03-2020
29	Sunday Game Live (Semi-Final Hurling): Limerick v Galway	RTÉ2	29-11-2020
30	Sunday Game Live (Semi-Final Football): Mayo v Tipperary	RTÉ2	06-12-2020
31	Operation Transformation	RTÉ One	15-01-2020
32	Great House Revival, The	RTÉ One	15-03-2020
33	Fair City	RTÉ One	15-03-2020
34	Tommy Tiernan Show, The	RTÉ One	29-02-2020
35	RTÉ Investigates: Inside Ireland's Covid Battle	RTÉ One	30-06-2020
36	Guinness Series Live: Ireland v Wales	RTÉ2	13-11-2020
37	Keys to My Life	RTÉ One	29-03-2020
38	Saturday Game Live (Semi-Final Football): Dublin v Cavan	RTÉ2	05-12-2020
39	Burnt by the Sun	RTÉ One	30-03-2020
40	Guinness Series Live: England v Ireland	RTÉ One	21-11-2020
41	Normal People	RTÉ One	12-05-2020
42	Claire Byrne Live Leaders' Debate	RTÉ One	27-01-2020
43	MayDay – 24 Hours In Ireland's Lockdown	RTÉ One	07-05-2020
44	All Round to Mrs Brown's	RTÉ One	21-03-2020
45	Boys in Green, The	RTÉ One	16-03-2020
46	Hunger: The Story of the Irish Famine, The	RTÉ One	30-11-2020
47	Young Offenders, The	RTÉ One	24-07-2020
48	RTÉ Does Comic Relief	RTÉ One	26-06-2020
49	Late Late Toy Show Singalong, The	RTÉ One	27-11-2020
50	Coronation Street	Virgin Media One	14-12-2020

Source: TAM Ireland Ltd/Nielsen TAM.

Top Programmes based on Individuals 4+, All Subscribing Channels, Averaging Option: Any Day, Any Time, Best Episode, Minimum Duration 10 Minutes, Consolidated data, 1 Jan 2020–31 Dec 2020. Please note: This list uses best episode of a series.





NOTES



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