



EMPLOYMENT IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

The UK film industry employs significant numbers of skilled individuals. In 2016, around 80,000 people were working across the industry's three main sectors with 69% of those involved in production.

FACTS IN FOCUS

- In 2016, around 80,000 people worked in the UK film industry, of whom 55,000 worked in film and video production.
- In 2016, 57% of the UK film and video production workforce was based in London and the South East.
- Just under half (49%) of people working in film and video production were freelance.
- Women made up 13% of directors and 16% of screenwriters of British films released in the UK in 2016 compared with 9% of directors and 14% of screenwriters in 2015.
- Most film industry businesses had low numbers of employees, in particular those involved in film and video production, where 97% of workplaces employed 10 people or fewer.

EMPLOYMENT IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

THE WORKFORCE

According to the Annual Population Survey (APS) conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), around 80,000 people worked in film and video production, film and video distribution, and film exhibition in the year 2016. The figures include full- and part-time workers. Table 1 shows the breakdown.

Table 1 Film industry workforce, 2016

Sector	Number in employment
Film and video production	55,000
Film and video distribution	7,000
Film exhibition	17,000
Total	80,000

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

Numbers in employment are taken from the Annual Population Survey for the period January to December 2016.

Figures are shown to the nearest 1,000.

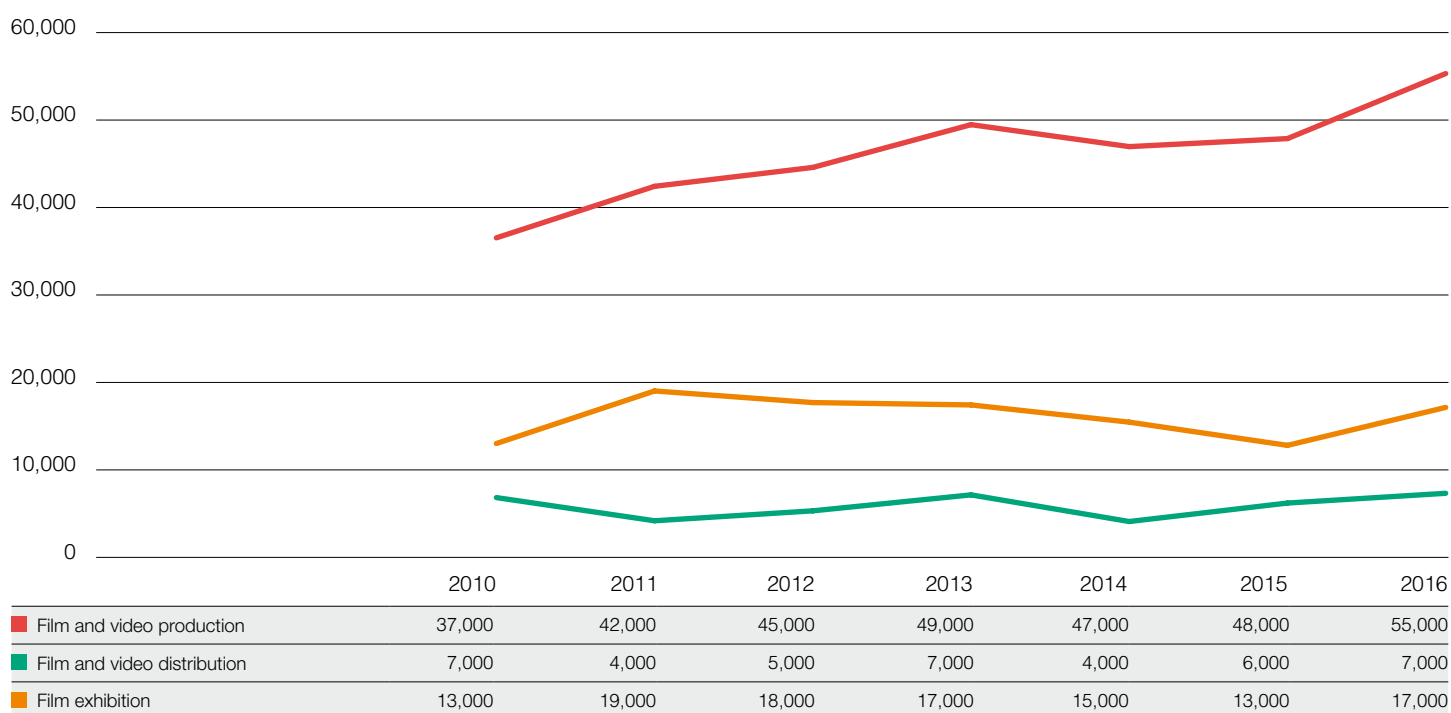
People in employment include individuals aged 16 or over who undertook paid work (as an employee or self-employed), those who had a job that they were temporarily away from, those on government-supported training and employment programmes, and those doing unpaid family work.

Figures may not sum to total due to rounding.

As Figure 1 shows, the film and video production workforce has increased from 37,000 in 2010 to 55,000 in 2016, while the number of workers in film and video distribution has been 7,000 or fewer during the period. The film exhibition workforce has increased from 13,000 in 2010 to 17,000 in 2016 but was as high as 18,000 in 2012 and 19,000 in 2011.

Figure 1 Size of the film workforce, 2010-2016

Number in employment



Source: Office for National Statistics

The film and video production sector has traditionally employed a high proportion of freelance workers. In 2016, 49% of those engaged in film and video production, a total of more than 27,000 people, were self-employed (Table 2). In comparison, only 15% of the total UK workforce was self-employed in 2016.

Table 2 Film and video production workforce, 2010-2016

Year	Total in employment	Self-employed	Self-employed as % of total
2010	37,000	20,000	54
2011	42,000	24,000	57
2012	45,000	22,000	49
2013	49,000	24,000	49
2014	47,000	28,000	61
2015	48,000	24,000	51
2016	55,000	27,000	49

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

Numbers in employment are shown to the nearest 1,000 but percentages are based on unrounded numbers.

See note to Figure 1.

THE GENDER OF WRITERS AND DIRECTORS OF UK FILMS

Since 2007, we have been tracking the gender of screenwriters and directors of UK films. In 2013, we published a report *Succès de plume? Female screenwriters and directors of UK films, 2010-2012*, which showed that although the numbers of female writers and directors of UK films that were released theatrically were consistently low, higher proportions of women had been associated with successful films in the time period covered in the study. Of the independent UK films released between 2010 and 2012, just 16% of the writers and 11% of the directors were women. However, for the top 20 UK independent films over the same period, women represented 37% of the writers and 18% of the directors. And for profitable UK independent films, 30% of the writers were women.

Female writers and directors of independent UK films released between 2007 and 2016 include: Bola Agbaje and Destiny Ekaragha (*Gone Too Far!*); Jane English and Dania Pasquini (*StreetDance, StreetDance 2*); Jane Goldman (*The Woman in Black, Kick-Ass*); Olivia Hetreed and Andrea Arnold (*Wuthering Heights*); Debbie Isitt (the *Nativity!* trilogy); Rebecca Johnson (*Honeytrap*); Abi Morgan (*The Iron Lady, Shame, The Invisible Woman, Suffragette*); Carol Morley (*Dreams of a Life, Edge, The Falling*); Lone Scherfig (*An Education, The Riot Club*); Emma Thompson (*Effie Gray*); and Lucinda Whiteley (*Horrid Henry: The Movie*).

In addition to independent UK films, a number of female writers and directors had success over the same period working on UK-USA studio titles. Examples include: Jane Goldman (*X-Men: First Class, Kingsman: the Secret Service*); Lone Scherfig (*One Day*); Sarah Smith (*Arthur Christmas*); and Emma Thompson and Susanna White (*Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang*).

In 2016, of the 233 identified writers of UK films released during the year, 38 (16%) were women (Table 3). Female writers associated with UK films released in the year include: Helen Fielding and Emma Thompson (*Bridget Jones's Baby*); Andrea Gibb (*Swallows and Amazons*); Jane Goldman (*Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*); Amy Jump (*High-Rise*); Jojo Moyes (*Me Before You*); Maria Nation (*A Street Cat Named Bob*); JK Rowling (*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*); and Jennifer Saunders (*Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie*).

Table 3 Gender of writers of UK films released in the UK, 2007-2016

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of UK films released in the UK	108	111	114	119	127	162	139	154	209	176
Number of writers associated with these films	169	168	140	143	159	187	155	211	285	233
Number of male writers	149	139	117	126	129	162	133	181	244	195
Number of female writers	20	29	23	17	30	25	22	30	41	38
% male	88.2	82.7	83.6	88.1	81.1	86.6	85.8	85.8	85.6	83.7
% female	11.8	17.3	16.4	11.9	18.9	13.4	14.2	14.2	14.4	16.3

Source: BFI

Table 4 shows directors by gender for UK films released in the UK between 2007 and 2016. The proportion of female directors in 2016 was the fourth highest of the period. Some of the female directors associated with UK films released in the year are: Andrea Arnold (*American Honey*); Amma Asante (*A United Kingdom*); Mandie Fletcher (*Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie*); Philippa Lowthorpe (*Swallows and Amazons*); Sharon Maguire (*Bridget Jones's Baby*); Thea Sharrock (*Me Before You*); Rachel Tunnard (*Adult Life Skills*); and Susanna White (*Our Kind of Traitor*). Andrea Arnold and Rachel Tunnard wrote the scripts of their films as well as directing them.

Table 4 Gender of directors of UK films released in the UK, 2007-2016

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of UK films released in the UK	108	111	114	119	127	162	139	154	209	176
Number of directors associated with these films	117	113	123	133	140	179	149	165	224	188
Number of male directors	110	100	102	116	119	165	128	148	203	163
Number of female directors	7	13	21	17	21	14	21	17	21	25
% male	94.0	88.5	82.9	87.2	85.0	92.2	85.9	89.7	90.6	86.7
% female	6.0	11.5	17.1	12.8	15.0	7.8	14.1	10.3	9.4	13.3

Source: BFI

THE WORKPLACE LOCATION

In 2016, 57% of the UK film and video production workforce was based in London and the South East, compared with 30% of the workforce as a whole (Table 5).

Table 5 London and South East employment as percentage of total, 2016

Sector	Total UK employment	London and South East employment	London and South East as % of UK total
UK all industries	31,000,000	9,000,000	30.0
Film and video production	55,000	31,000	56.8

Source: Office for National Statistics

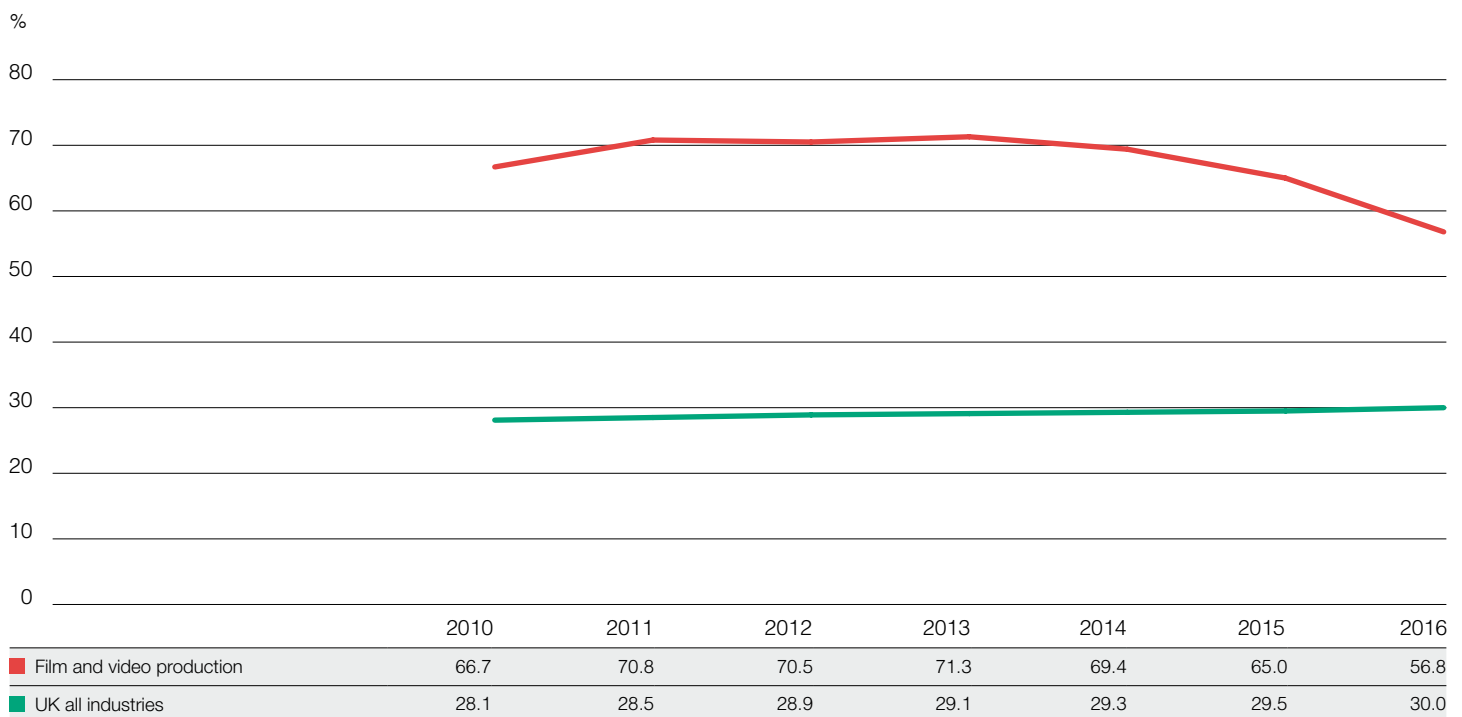
Notes:

The South East region wraps around London so includes the major studios to the west of the city.

Totals shown in this table are for the calendar year 2016.

Numbers in employment in the film industry are shown to the nearest 1,000 and for all UK industries are shown to the nearest 1,000,000 but percentages are based on unrounded numbers.

As Figure 2 shows, the London and South East share of the film and video production workforce is consistently higher than the proportion for all UK industries, although this share has declined in recent years. While the data would seem to reflect the differing levels of production activity based in the capital and the surrounding major studios, in part the variation arises from the small sample size of the survey at industry sub-sector level. In 2016, the London and South East share of the film and video production workforce was just under 57% compared with 65% in 2015. The percentage of the total workforce based in London and the South East has remained fairly stable at around 28%-30%.

Figure 2 London and South East percentage share of the film and video production and total workforce, 2010-2016

Source: Office for National Statistics

Note: Figures have been updated since publication of the 2016 Statistical Yearbook.

THE SCALE OF THE WORKPLACE

Tables 6 to 8 show the numbers of employees, by size of workplace, for film and video production, film and video distribution, and film exhibition.

EMPLOYMENT DATA

The data in tables 6 to 8 are from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), which is maintained by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). These data differ from the estimates shown in the previous sections, which are based on the Annual Population Survey (APS). The APS counts the number of people employed whereas the IDBR, which is updated from administrative sources and from surveys of employers, includes numbers of jobs. The numbers of jobs and the numbers of people employed are not the same thing, and the data come from different sources, but the estimates arising from them should be similar. However, as the figures for 2016 show, this is not always the case. The ONS has identified a number of reasons for differences between the estimates, but the two most important ones when looking at particular industry sub-sectors are likely to be sampling error arising from the small APS sample size at industry sub-sector level and the fact that there are two classification processes involved. In the APS, individuals are classified by industry depending on the industrial information they give, whereas in the IDBR the classification is based on companies' activities. As people and companies often work across more than one industry (television and film, for example) this gives rise to unpredictable variations between the APS and the IDBR measures.

In 2016, the film and video production sector had a very high number of workplaces with low numbers of employees. As Table 6 shows, workplaces with 1-10 employees accounted for 97% of all workplaces in the sector and almost half of its total workforce (48%). At the other end of the scale, there were a small number of workplaces with a high numbers of employees. The 75 workplaces with 50 or more employees accounted for over 13,700 employees, an average of 183 each.

Table 6 Numbers of employees in film and video production by size of workplace for the UK, 2016

Workplace size band	Number of workplaces in band	% of total workplaces	Number of employees in band	% of total employees
50+	75	0.6	13,716	35.3
11 - 49	320	2.7	6,429	16.5
1 - 10	11,300	96.6	18,759	48.2
Total	11,695	100.0	38,904	100.0

Source: Office for National Statistics

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Employment in the film and video distribution sector in 2016 was less concentrated in small workplaces than the production sector, with 83.5% of employees based in workplaces with 11 or more employees and 66% of employees based in workplaces with 50 or more employees (Table 7).

Table 7 Numbers of employees in film and video distribution by size of workplace for the UK, 2016

Workplace size band	Number of workplaces in band	% of total workplaces	Number of employees in band	% of total employees
50+	15	3.4	3,608	65.7
11 - 49	45	10.2	978	17.8
1 - 10	380	86.4	908	16.5
Total	440	100.0	5,494	100.0

Source: Office for National Statistics

Table 8 shows that the film exhibition sector had a concentration that was the reverse of the production sector, with 46% of employees in workplaces of 50 or more and only 4% in workplaces in the 1-10 employee band.

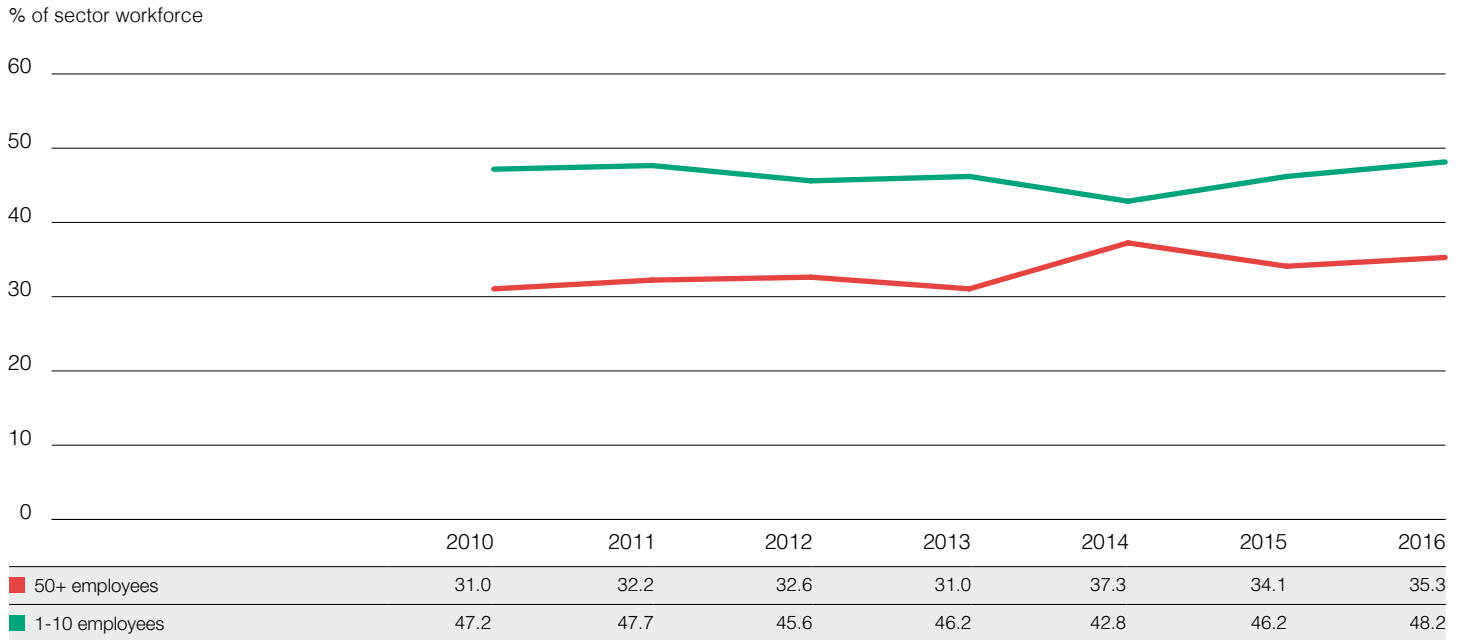
Table 8 Numbers of employees in film exhibition by size of workplace for the UK, 2016

Workplace size band	Number of workplaces in band	% of total workplaces	Number of employees in band	% of total employees
50+	125	18.9	9,001	45.6
11 - 49	355	53.8	10,020	50.7
1 - 10	180	27.3	734	3.7
Total	660	100.0	19,755	100.0

Source: Office for National Statistics

Figure 3 shows the percentage of employees in workplaces with 1-10 employees and the percentage in workplaces with 50 or more employees in the film and video production sector from 2010 to 2016. At the start of the period, 47% of the workforce was employed in workplaces with 1-10 employees and 31% of the workforce was employed in workplaces with 50 or more employees. Since then, the proportion of the workforce based in the smallest workplaces has remained approximately the same, generally falling between 46%-48%, while the proportion of employees in the largest workplaces has seen a rising trend, increasing to 35% in 2016.

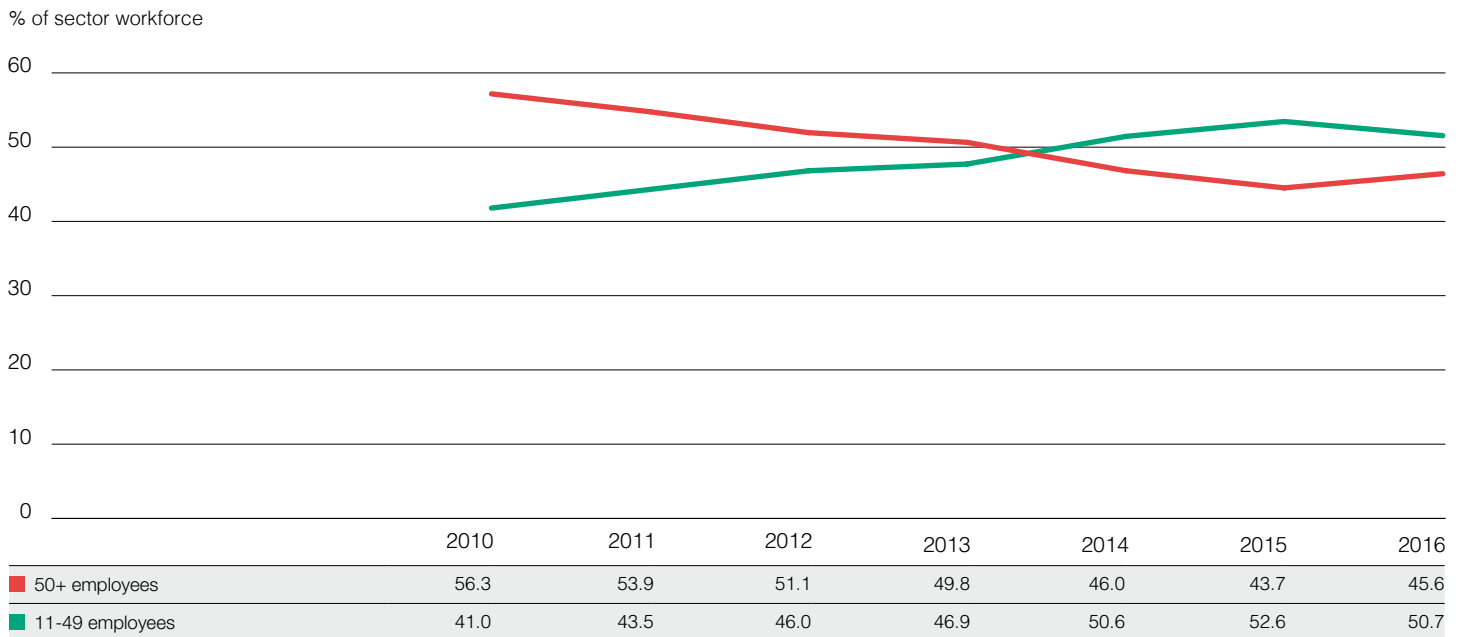
Figure 3 Film and video production employees by workplace size band, percentage of total, 2010-2016



Source: Office for National Statistics

As Figure 4 shows, in the film exhibition sector the proportion of employees in workplaces with 50 or more workers has declined from 56% in 2010 to 46% in 2016. Conversely, the proportion of employees in workplaces with 11-49 employees has risen from 41% to 51% during the period.

Figure 4 Film exhibition employees by workplace size band, percentage of total, 2010-2016



Source: Office for National Statistics



Research & Statistics Unit

21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN

bfi.org.uk/statistics