

REMIT PERFORMANCE

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FOR SOCIAL
CHANGE



In a year of social and political upheavals, Channel 4 continued to play a crucial role in provoking debate, inspiring change and telling stories from contemporary Britain and a rapidly changing world.

Inspiring change

65%

of viewers said that Channel 4's factual programmes inspired change in their lives (=)

33%

of viewers said that Channel 4 is the TV channel they associate the most with challenging prejudice (=)

Alternative views

37%

of viewers said Channel 4 is the home for alternative voices (=)

34%

of viewers said that Channel 4 is the best channel to show the viewpoints of minority groups in society (=)

2018 ambitions

- As Britain navigates through political and economic uncertainty, we will continue to produce programmes that challenge viewers and stimulate debate, such as Jack Thorne's *Kiri*, a four-part drama set in Bristol about the abduction of a child, starring Sarah Lancashire.
- Through our flagship News and Current Affairs programmes, such as *Channel 4 News*, *Dispatches* and *Unreported World*, we will hold those in power to account, investigating key issues affecting people at home and further afield.
- We will also continue our support of parasport in 2018, with 100 hours of coverage of the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games in South Korea, plus ongoing parasport coverage across the year.

In News and Current Affairs, we pushed boundaries and took risks, continuing to deliver long-form programmes in peak-time whilst also forging new modes of connection with young people through digital platforms.

On the global stage, we tracked the highs and lows of the first tempestuous year of Donald Trump's presidency, continued to shine a light on the war in Syria, and exposed the plight of the Rohingya people in Myanmar.

Closer to home, across a mix of genres – including Drama, Documentaries and Factual – we provoked debate and offered a platform for alternative views. By stimulating debate and covering thought-provoking issues that affect people's day-to-day lives, our content is a powerful catalyst for social change.

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Channel 4's distinctive approach to News and Current Affairs – in terms of the form and subject matter of our programmes – allows us to provide alternative views and stimulate debate, particularly among younger viewers.



▲ Dispatches: Syria's Disappeared

Channel 4 News is the only hour-long news programme in peak-time on the main PSB channels; the extended running time enables stories to be covered in more depth and from more angles. Channel 4 News was watched by an average of 8.2 million viewers each month in 2017. It has particular appeal to young adults, with 16-34-year-olds making up 13% of viewers this year. The programme also performed well amongst BAME groups, who accounted for 15% of viewers. Its viewing share rose by 3% in 2017, a fourth consecutive year of growth.

Channel 4 News was the news programme that viewers most associated with being independent from Government and from the influence of big businesses in 2017, more than the news on the BBC, ITV or Sky.

A window on the world

The strength of our News and Current Affairs helped us to win our third International Emmy for News in five years. In 2017, this was for our coverage of the Syrian civil war, which featured exclusive reports from inside Syria that showed the turmoil and destruction of war and brought it to the attention of the wider British public.

One of our most impactful films was *Syria's Disappeared*, a documentary from our *Dispatches* series, which was transmitted in March. The film offered extraordinary access to survivors of detention, families of detainees, regime defectors and international war crimes investigators.

It told the hidden story of the tens of thousands of men, women and children who have been 'disappeared' in Syria by the Assad regime into a network of clandestine detention centres. Among those giving testimony were former captives Manzen Alhumada, a human rights activist who was brutally tortured, and Mansour al-Omari, who courageously smuggled out details of other prisoners written on scraps of cloth in rust and blood.

The *Inside Aleppo* films, produced by Channel 4 News' Waad al-Kateab, also had a major impact. Her coverage prompted discussion around the world, with the Deputy Secretary General of the UN, Amina Mohammed, stating they were "heart-breaking".

The reach of our award-winning investigative films was extended by our multi-platform strategy. Films were not only aired on Channel 4, they were also watchable online and were shared widely on social media, helping them to reach a younger audience. The *Inside Aleppo* films received close to half a billion views online and were shared millions of times on social media, which made them the most watched reports on Aleppo by a single filmmaker ever.

"Brilliant and sickening... important, superbly constructed and focused documentary... required viewing for MPs."

The Times

Across 28 films, our flagship *Dispatches* strand investigated the things that matter to communities that are often neglected by the state and ignored by the media. The programme aired almost entirely in a peak-time 8pm slot, bringing large audiences to its domestic investigations on topics such as the gig economy, the housing crisis and welfare reforms.

Across the year, *Dispatches* averaged 1.1 million viewers per episode, with the most successful programme, *Secrets of Coca-Cola* – about Coca-Cola's opposition to the sugar tax and its close ties to influential scientists – pulling in 1.7 million viewers.

28

Dispatches films were aired in 2017

1.7m Viewers of *Secrets of Coca-Cola*

Dispatches: Under Lock and Key

Under Lock and Key, which aired in March 2017, illustrates how our *Dispatches* films can have powerful real life impacts.

The film focused on life inside one of Britain's largest psychiatric hospitals, St Andrew's in Northampton, showing how people with learning disabilities and autism are still being held in institutions that do not meet their needs, make them better or – in some cases – even keep them safe.

Without being granted personal access to the hospital, filmmaker Alison Millar relied on three families to tell their stories from outside the hospital's walls. The film painted a damning picture of medical neglect, inadequate treatment and the exclusion of families from decision making.

Following its transmission, the Government was pressed in Parliament about the investigation, with Minister for Care David Mowat acknowledging that the current care situation was "not good enough". Chief Nursing Officer Jane Cummings convened the programme's key contributors to discuss the issues raised in the film. The programme is now being used as a teaching resource across the care industry to help change the way that vulnerable adults are treated.



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“Intriguing – and potentially pivotal. One lethal, unexpected question, or one fluffed answer, can undo the best-laid plans.”

The Observer
(*May vs Corbyn Live: The Battle for Number 10*)



5.3m

Viewers of *May vs Corbyn Live: The Battle for Number 10*

Engaging young people in the election

Compared to the relatively traditional coverage on other channels, Channel 4 seeks new ways to bring elections to life, particularly for younger audiences. Our programming in the run up to the 2017 General Election combined tough talking current affairs with comedy and entertainment to engage viewers and stimulate debate on the big issues.

The centrepiece of our pre-election coverage was *May vs Corbyn Live: The Battle for Number 10*, in which Jeremy Paxman interviewed the chief contenders for Prime Minister. The 90-minute live programme, which was broadcast simultaneously on Channel 4 and Sky News, allowed viewers to hear directly from the two party leaders, who answered questions from a live studio audience. The programme succeeded in informing and engaging viewers, particular younger ones amongst whom the propensity to

vote proved especially important in this election. It reached a total of 5.3 million viewers over its 90 minutes on Channel 4. Viewing share was a substantial 40% above slot average for 16-34 year olds.

Research conducted after the programme aired found that the majority of 18-24 year old viewers felt more engaged with the General Election after watching the programme. 69% of them said that they felt more informed about the Labour and Conservative policies. And 20% of 18-24 year olds stated that they were more likely to go out and vote having watched the programme.

On the night of the election, our *Alternative Election Night* programme was hosted by Jeremy Paxman, David Mitchell and Richard Osman, with additional guests in the studio and across the country plus the *Channel 4 News* team on the ground in key electoral battlegrounds. This all-night feast of reaction, comment and analysis offered a lively and irreverent alternative to the more staid coverage elsewhere. It reached 3.8 million people, with a viewing share of 8.1% amongst 16-34 year olds.

Challenging perceptions

Beyond News and Current Affairs, our Drama commissions also helped to stimulate debate among the British public in 2017. *The State* followed the experiences of four British men and women who joined Isis in Syria. It reached 5.5 million viewers and was largely credited as being a thought-provoking, gripping and “frighteningly realistic” piece of drama by critics and viewers. Although a challenging watch, 69% of viewers polled by research agency Other Lines – and 76% of Muslim viewers – agreed that the programme had value for society as a whole, as programmes like these serve to open up discussions surrounding the radicalisation of young British Muslims in society today.

Many of our documentaries also raised thought-provoking or challenging issues. Filmed at the height of the junior doctors’ crisis at the NHS, during which one in every ten junior doctors quit over a system they felt was being pushed to breaking point, *Confessions of a Junior Doctor* raised important questions over the future of the NHS.

Confessions of a Junior Doctor ▶

The four-episode series, transmitted in April, reached 5.9 million people (9.9% of the TV-viewing population). Nine out of ten viewers said that the programme succeeded in raising awareness of the increasing pressures that young doctors face, while 55% said that their opinion of NHS staff had improved as a result of the programme.

In March, we challenged perceptions of Muslim people in a three-part documentary series *Extremely British Muslims*.

Filmed over a year, the series captured the day-to-day lives of Birmingham Central

Mosque’s 6,000 worshippers. It focused on three themes: finding a partner, the identity crisis facing young Muslim men, and the challenges faced by some British Muslims as they try to reconcile the rules of their faith with life in Britain.

With eight out of ten Muslim people feeling unfairly represented by mainstream PSBs, this programme helped to dispel myths and stereotypes. The series drew a large audience, reaching close to four million people. 85% of Muslim viewers agreed that programmes such as this one helped to overcome prejudice and break taboos.



Food Unwrapped ▼



Food for thought

Our lifestyle programming can also act as a catalyst for change in people’s lives. In 2017, a range of informative series set out to reflect how we live now and how we can live life better, inspiring positive change among our viewers.

Healthy living was a key theme across the year. New series *How to Get Fit Fast* aimed to help viewers find the most effective exercise regime, reaching 3.4 million across the series. 36% of those surveyed stated that the programme made them think about changing something in their own life.

The promotion of positive lifestyles also featured in popular returning series *Food Unwrapped*, *How To Lose Weight Well* and *Superfoods: The Real Story*. These health-focused lifestyle programmes together reached a remarkable 28 million people across 2017 (47% of the UK TV-viewing population).