

Policy Review Series: Class in the Creative industries – Paper No.01

Getting in and getting on

Class, participation and job quality in the UK Creative Industries

Heather Carey, Rebecca Florisson, Dave O'Brien and Neil Lee
August 2020

Executive summary

A recent DCMS Select Committee inquiry into the impact of Covid-19 suggests that the pandemic poses 'the biggest threat to the UK's cultural infrastructure, institutions and workforce in a generation'. Safeguarding the sustainability of the sector and restoring its position as one of the UK economy's greatest success stories is a critical priority. But while current focus is on offering much needed aid to the sector and unlocking its potential to support the wider recovery, it is important too to consider how we can rebuild creative industries and creative occupations for the better – in a way that benefits more people and places across the UK.

Prior to the pandemic, there were growing concerns that the opportunities created in this vibrant part of the economy were 'out of reach' for many. This paper represents the first phase of the PEC's Policy Review Series on Class in the Creative Industries. It aims to provide an up-to-date, quantitative picture of the participation, retention and progression of those of different class origin within the creative industries.

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“Those from a privileged background with a degree-level qualification are more than five times more likely to land a creative job than those from a working-class background only qualified to GCSE-level.”

5 key facts about class in the creative industries

1. There are widespread and persistent class imbalances in the Creative Industries

- The majority (52 per cent) of those working in creative occupations in 2019 were from privileged backgrounds, compared with a little over one-third (37 per cent) of the total UK workforce.
- In contrast, just 16 per cent of those employed in creative roles were from working-class backgrounds compared with 21 per cent of those in professional occupations and 29 per cent across all occupations
- Those from privileged backgrounds are more than twice (2.5 times) as likely to end up in Creative Occupations than their working-class peers. This suggests social mobility is a greater issue for the sector, given those from better-off backgrounds are 1.7 times more likely to land in any professional role in the UK economy.

2. Those from privileged backgrounds dominate key creative roles in the sector, shaping what goes on stage, page and screen

- **Advertising and marketing:** Advertising and PR directors (66 per cent of the workforce are privileged) and Marketing and sales directors (63 per cent).
- **Publishing:** Authors, writers and translators (59 per cent) and Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors (58 per cent).
- **IT, software and computer services:** such as IT and telecoms directors (57 per cent); and Programmers and software development professionals (54 per cent).

- **Film, TV, radio and photography:** Arts officers, producers and directors (54 per cent).

3. Those from working-class backgrounds experience less autonomy and control over their work, are less likely to have supervisory responsibility and to progress into managerial positions

- 78 per cent of those from working-class backgrounds report having some control over their work, compared to 87 per cent of those from privileged backgrounds. They also have less control over task order (87 per cent vs 94 per cent) and working hours (68 per cent vs 76 per cent).
- Those from working-class backgrounds are less likely to be managers or to have supervisory responsibility than their middle and upper middle-class peers, with a c.12 percentage point difference between the classes.

4. Class interacts with other factors – such as gender, ethnicity, disability and skill levels – to create ‘double disadvantage’

- Men from privileged backgrounds are 4.8 times more likely to secure work in creative occupations than working-class women.
- Someone of working-class background with a disability is more than 3 times less likely than their privileged, able-bodied counterparts to secure a job in a creative occupation.
- Those from a privileged background who are qualified to degree-level or above are 5.5 times as likely to secure a creative role than those of working-class background who are only skilled to GCSE-level.

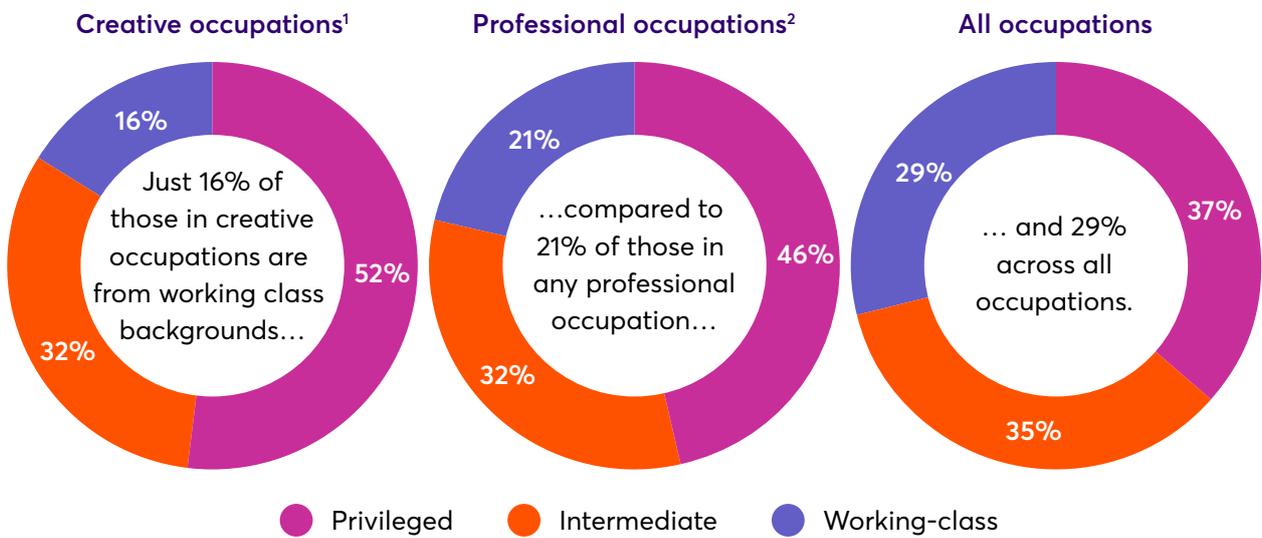
5. Despite growing awareness of the issue and action by business, Government and industry stakeholders to promote greater inclusion, the likelihood of someone from a working-class background finding work in a creative occupation has remained largely unchanged.

- In 2014, 17.6 per cent of those working in creative roles were of working-class origin compared to 16.2 per cent today.
- This raises the important question of how we can evolve and enhance the current approach so as to: shift the dial on diversity

in a significant and sustained way; build a genuinely open and inclusive creative economy that creates opportunities for all, maximises talent; and enables all workers to thrive, irrespective of their socio-economic background.

- The PEC's Policy Review Series on Class in the Creative Industries, which will continue for the next 2-3 years, aims to directly address this question and catalyse collaborative action – by industry, trade bodies, wider stakeholders and Government – to show leadership as an industry on the vital issue of social mobility in the UK.

Class origins of workers in creative , professional and all occupations, 2019



Source: Labour Force Survey, June – September 2019, ONS

1. All creative occupations, as outlined in Annex A of the main report. The vast majority of creative occupations are higher and lower professional and managerial (NS-SEC 1 and 2). If we look only at Professional and managerial creative occupations (NS-SEC 1 and 2) the percentage that are of working-class origin changes minimally, from 16.2 per cent to 16.0 per cent.

2. Includes higher and lower professional and managerial occupations (NS-SEC 1 and 2).

About the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) works to support the growth of the UK's Creative Industries through the production of independent and authoritative evidence and policy advice.

Led by Nesta and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of the UK Government's Industrial Strategy, the Centre comprises of a consortium of universities from across the UK (Birmingham; Cardiff; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Work Foundation at Lancaster University; LSE; Manchester; Newcastle; Sussex; Ulster). The PEC works with a diverse range of industry partners including the Creative Industries Federation.

For more details visit www.pec.ac.uk and [@CreativePEC](https://twitter.com/CreativePEC)

About Workstrand 2: Skills, Talent and Diversity

Work Advance leads the PEC's area of work on Skills, Talent and Diversity, in partnership with other researchers from across the PEC consortium – forming Workstrand 2. In particular, it is progressing work with Newcastle University, which leads the research strand on International Competitiveness, including immigration.

Together we are pursuing a dynamic and diverse research agenda., This seeks to: provide an authoritative overview of the current strategic skills demands for creative workers; understand the distribution of opportunities and barriers to labour market and career success for a range of underrepresented demographic and socio-economic groups; and, ultimately, develop policy tools to incentivise innovation in business practices and support stronger investment to grow the creative skills base and meet the needs of the UK's creative economy.

If you'd like this publication in an alternative format such as Braille, or large print, please contact us at: enquiries@pec.ac.uk

Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre

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Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC)
58 Victoria Embankment
London EC4Y 0DS
+44 (0)20 7438 2500
enquiries@pec.ac.uk
[@CreativePEC](https://twitter.com/CreativePEC)
www.pec.ac.uk

