

Magnus Brooke,
Group Director of Strategy, Policy & Regulation, ITV
Zoe Thomas,
Head of News and Programmes,
ITV Cymru Wales
By email only

13 February 2026

Public Service Broadcasting in Wales

Dear Magnus and Zoe,

Thank you for your appearance before the Committee on 15 January 2026. We have a number of recommendations and further queries which we set out below.

Network content

In our 2024 report, [State of Play](#), the Committee recommended:

Ofcom should include a requirement for the Channel 3 licence in Wales to produce a greater proportion of network content in Wales. It should report back to the Committee outlining how it will do this.

The current channel 3 licence in Wales, which was renewed in 2024 for ten years, does not include this requirement. The licence includes a broader requirement that at least 35 per cent of originated network content is made outside of the M25 area.

In 2024, according to Ofcom figures, ITV's network spend in Wales was 0.8 per cent of the UK total (see graph at Annex A), which was a slight increase from 2022, when the figure was close to 0.

We remain of the view that ITV's network spend in Wales is unacceptably low, and following our meeting, are not reassured that ITV has a meaningful plan to increase it.

You outlined two visits that ITV commissioners had to Wales, one to meet Creative Wales, and the other to meet producers. You described the positive effect of this work on network commissions from

Wales, and said “maybe we'll do another of those journeys, but I don't think we need to do it again quite so soon.” Rather than focusing on increasing the small proportion of network commissions from Wales you said that “the strategy very simply is to get the best ideas from wherever they come.” You said that you “don't have a target for any individual nation.”

You explained that the 2025 numbers will “confirm a very substantial increase” to network spend in Wales to “about 1.3 per cent”, and also that “we're massively over-delivering on our out-of-London content obligation.” The fact that you are “over-delivering” on making content beyond the M25 makes the low proportion of spend within Wales even more striking.

The BBC explained to us on 22 January how shifting network production out of London - to the extent that Wales now has a larger than population share of BBC UK network production by spend and hours – required long-term planning and senior executive focus. They told us that “having that leadership for a sustained period of time backing the principle has embedded it; it's baked it in now to the BBC.”

In 2017, our predecessor committee said:

“The sort of laissez faire approach described by ITV Cymru Wales has not led to Welsh voices being adequately represented on the ITV network.”¹

Unfortunately, almost a decade later, we think this analysis remains true. The outcome of this hands-off approach is largely stagnant spending levels in Wales, whilst network spending from the BBC and Channel 4 is either close to or above Wales’s UK population share of 5 per cent. The consequence of this is reduced economic activity in Wales, and an absence of Welsh representation across the UK network.

Recommendation 1: ITV should develop a strategy, with targets, to increase its network spend in Wales.

You told us about seed funding for “small independent producers, outside of London and the south-east, to come up to develop ideas.” This sounds like a promising initiative. We would be grateful if you could provide figures for how this funding has been distributed across UK nations.

¹ Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee [The Big Picture: The Committee's Initial Views on Broadcasting in Wales](#), February 2017, p 28

Content for audiences in Wales

The Channel 3 licence for Wales requires ITV to provide four hours of news and 90 minutes of non-news programming for Wales every week. This licence was renewed in 2024 for ten years, with the commitments for Wales maintained at the same level.

According to Ofcom data, ITV's annual spend on non-network, first-run, UK-originated content for Wales has remained around £6.3 million since 2018 (a real-terms decrease of 26 per cent) (see graph at Annex A).

This real-terms cut in spending, compounded by the rate of above-inflation increases in television production costs, can only have led to a diminution in the quality or quantity of ITV content for audiences in Wales.

Recommendation 2: ITV should increase its spend on content for Wales, and have a strategy to do so consistently across the rest of its licence period.

We discussed the prominence of ITV Wales content on your streaming service, ITVX. Your answers focused on the prominence of ITV Wales news content, saying:

"If you look at the news rail on ITVX, we made a decision to put regional news very prominently."

Audiences in Wales deserve to see their lives reflected on screen, in more than news content. Given the arguments ITV advances about the need for its content to be featured prominently on online platforms, including YouTube, we are disappointed that ITV does not seek to make all of its PSB content prominent on its own streaming service.

Recommendation 3: ITV should make all of its PSB content for audiences in Wales prominent on ITVX for users in Wales.

Network news

In our 2024 report, we recommended:

Network news providers, including the BBC and ITN, should keep driving improvements in their reporting of devolved policy issues.

We discussed the extent to which network news accurately reflects the devolved nature of the UK with Professor Stephen Cushion. He told us:

"Over recent years, standards have slipped a little bit, and it's perhaps a time to reset and to rethink again, particularly as we approach an election campaign in

Wales and Scotland coming up, to reset and to actually think through again how network news are presenting politics across the UK."

You described the work that ITV does to educate network news journalists about devolution, saying "There's constant dialogue between us (*in Wales*) and the network newsroom."

Too often, network news providers still broadcast as though doing so to audiences in England alone: that is, they explain that a certain UK Government policy applies only in England, but do not show the curiosity to explore what's happening in other UK nations. Reflecting the devolved nature of the UK isn't simply a case of adding "in England" to a news bulletin, but re-thinking how political news is presented to reflect the reality of how the UK is governed. This is an issue of accuracy, not just for audiences in Wales, but across the UK. We reiterate our previous recommendation:

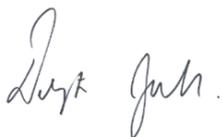
Recommendation 4: Network news providers, including the BBC and ITN, should keep driving improvements in their reporting of devolved policy issues.

Professor Stephen Cushion of Cardiff University's School of Journalism, Media and Culture, in his evidence to us, also mentioned ongoing research into how broadcasters' social media posts reflect devolution, noting that "there is an awful lot—far more than we've ever found before—of headlines that simply make devolution invisible."

Recommendation 5: ITV should take note of Professor Cushion's research into how news social media content reflects devolution across the UK and drive improvements in this area.

Thank you for your comments on Ofcom's current consultation on prominence rules, and the BBC Charter Review Green Paper. We will consider these comments in our responses to the Ofcom and UK Government on these matters.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS

Chair

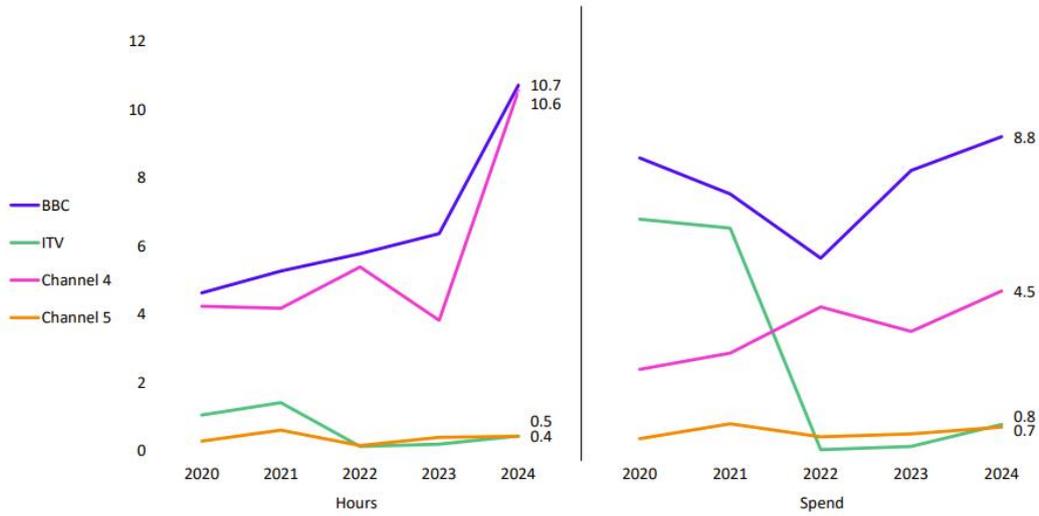
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex A

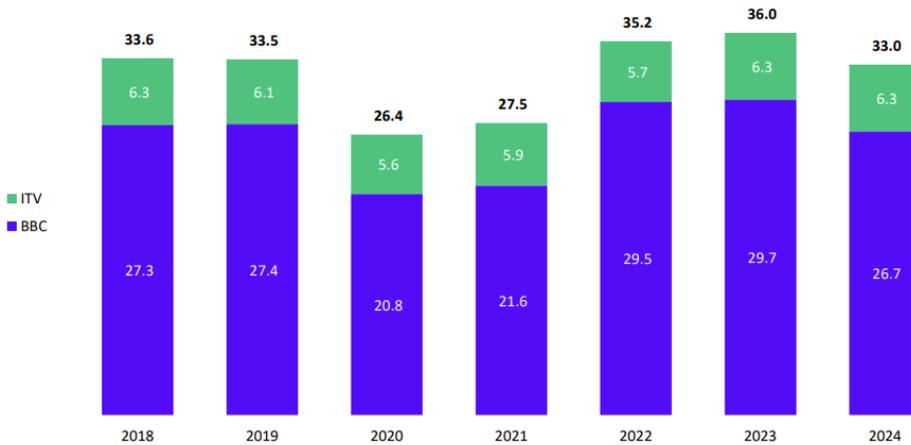
1. Proportion of qualifying network production allocated to Wales, by PSB: 2020-2024 (%)



Source: Ofcom/broadcasters.

Source: Ofcom, [Media Nations Wales 2025](#)

2. BBC and ITV Cymru Wales spend on non-network first-run UK-originated content for Wales: 2018-2024 (£m)



Source: Ofcom/broadcasters.

Source: Ofcom, [Media Nations Wales 2025](#)