

Theatre Accessibility QSD on 11 June 2019

This briefing identifies relevant reports and useful documents, including recent parliamentary materials and press articles, which may be of assistance to Members in preparing for the following debate:

The Earl of Glasgow to ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the operation of the theatre market in (1) London, and (2) elsewhere in the United Kingdom; and what steps they are taking to ensure that theatre is accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

Copies of the materials are available for collection from the Library.

Key Information

- UK Theatre, '[2018 Sales Data Released by UK Theatre and Society of London Theatre](#)', 23 January 2019

Data on ticket sales and audience numbers collected by UK Theatre and Society of London Theatre from their member organisations in 2018. Overall, the data showed total audience numbers of over 34 million and ticket revenues of nearly £1.2 billion. London's West End attracted 15.5 million audience members whilst the rest of the country were responsible for 18.8 million, a figure slightly higher than 2017.

- Arts Council England, '[Analysis of Theatre in England](#)', 13 September 2016, pp 1–9 and 52–7

Summary and further detail on theatre audiences from a report commissioned by Arts Council England. The report gives an overview of the theatre sector and found that people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and people with disabilities are under-represented in theatre audiences, and that people from higher social groups are over-represented.

- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, '[Culture is Digital](#)', March 2018, pp 18–29

Chapter on audience engagement from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's report on digital culture. The chapter discusses how digital technology can be used to encourage a wider range and higher number of people to engage in cultural events, including theatre. For example, the chapter discusses the role of technology in enabling National Theatre Live to screen 30 productions internationally, giving "more people than could ever have physical access" the chance to experience theatre productions.

Parliamentary Debate, Statements and Questions

- [Oral Question on 'Leaving the EU: Performing Arts'](#), HC Hansard, 23 May 2019, cols 795–6
- [Oral Question on 'Theatre Tickets: London'](#), HL Hansard, 28 February 2019, cols 296–7

- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Theatres: Midlands](#)', 14 November 2018, 188267
- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Performing Arts: Young People](#)', 23 July 2018, 165577
- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Theatre](#)', 26 April 2018, 137101
- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Tickets: Touting](#)', 27 March 2018, 133953

Press Articles and Comment

- Mark Shenton, '[In Theatre, True Accessibility Is About Far More Than Cheap Tickets](#)', *Stage*, 3 October 2018
- Lyn Gardner, '[Regional Theatre May Be Thriving Creatively, But What About In Five Years?](#)', *Stage*, 22 October 2018
- Catherine Love, '[Power Has To Be Grasped: British Theatre Is Battling Its Class Problem](#)', *Guardian*, 13 March 2018

Further Information

- Department for Culture Media and Sport, [The Culture White Paper](#), March 2016, Cm 9218, pp 18–27
- HM Treasury, '[Theatre Tax Relief](#)', 25 July 2014
- National Theatre, '[In Our Audiences](#)', accessed 30 May 2019

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