

**amazon prime**  
presents

# **O WOMANIYA!**

**Advocating for Equitable Representation of Women in the  
Indian Entertainment Industry**

**FILM  
COMPANION  
STUDIOS**



# SETTING THE SCENE

## CONTENT

CREATIVE TALENT

BECHDEL TEST

OWOMANIYA! TOOLKIT

## MARKETING

TRAILER TALK TIME

## MARKETING

CORPORATE TALENT

COMPANY POLICIES

# END CREDITS

DOWNLOAD PDF

2023 REPORT | 2022 REPORT

# UNDERSTANDING INDIAN ENTERTAINMENT AND ITS EQUATION WITH GENDER EQUALITY

In its third year, the OWomaniya! 2024 Report aims to analyse the year-on-year growth in the representation of women in the Indian entertainment industry - whether its on-screen or behind it - including the corporate decision-makers. This helps identify the gaps, challenges, and opportunities for creating a more gender-balanced and inclusive industry.

Additionally, this year taking a step further from retrospection, we have introduced the OWomaniya! Toolkit which is a more solution-driven approach for gender equality in the industry. With this toolkit, the hope is to identify the disparity at the development stage for properties and take the necessary steps to rectify the imbalance in representation.

## CONTENT

Creative Talent Bechdel test



## CORPORATE

corporate talent company policies



## MARKETING

Trailer talk time



# A NOTE FROM OUR GENDER EXPERT



## SUNITHA RANGASWAMI

Independent  
Consultant - Gender  
and Women's Economic  
Empowerment.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sunitha Rangaswami".

Dear Reader,

Travelling in the hinterland of India earlier this year made me realize there is a new wind blowing - a young generation of women (and men) pushing forward determinedly, shaking the shackles and restraints that bind them, and seizing the day to prove their mettle in the real world running micro-businesses.... They talk animatedly about how their in-laws now consult them on all decisions especially economic and with pride of their young husbands batting for them as they chart their course out of deprivation and inequality...and I wonder if the 'other India' (urban, elite, educated, corporate) has caught a whiff of it?

Which brings me to this report.... a year on WHAT is different vis a vis the Indian Entertainment Industry and its performance on gender and diversity? Sadly enough, NO LEAPS and BOUNDS have been made on the gender stakes in the past year. Only inch by inch, step by step change wafting through the boardrooms and 'behind the scenes'.

I can barely keep my impatience in check, wanting much more than that which emerges in the report. And I catch myself thinking it is not all bad! There is a glimmer of hope in the 2% increase in Women Heads of Department and the 3% increase in senior management. Also, the increase in the share of female HODs from 17% to 22% 'in content greenlit by women commissioning-in-charge'. Perhaps these women are the vanguard, and year on year they will make room for other women to follow suit. The other piece of good news is, that the streaming films and series (the new kid on the block), are leaving theatricals behind with increases (however minor) in women's representation. Despite these changes, the content of cinema remains unequivocally gender inequitable with a regression in the properties that passed the Bechdel test!

This report provokes many questions. Why are there no women writers getting past the gatepost? When will women's stories and narratives get their day in the sun? Perhaps it will get men in board rooms, senior management and commission-in-charge to ask themselves are my criteria inflexible? Am I guilty of inherent male bias? Do I presume women have no

# FILMS & SERIES ANALYSED

RELEASED IN 2023

	THEATRICAL FILMS	STREAMING FILMS	STREAMING SERIES	TOTAL PROPERTIES
<b>HINDI</b>	18	26	50	94
<b>TAMIL</b>	12	01	06	19
<b>TELUGU</b>	17	02	05	24
<b>MALAYALAM</b>	08	01	02	11
<b>KANNADA</b>	04	00	01	05
<b>OTHERS</b> MARATHI, PUNJABI, BENGALI & GUJARATI	11	00	05	16
	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>169</b>

THEATRICAL FILMS  
SELECTED BASED ON  
FOOTFALLS STREAMING  
SERIES & FILMS SELECTED  
BASED ON ORMAX  
MEDIA'S VIEWERSHIP  
ESTIMATES PROPERTIES  
RELEASED IN 2023



# THE POWERS THAT BE

## CREW, COMPANY, AND CREATIVE TALENT

A whole lot of what happens in front of the camera is determined by the decisions made behind it.

When women are put in key decision-making roles, we observe a tangible shift towards more inclusive content, diverse storytelling, and an increasingly varied hiring policy. This much needed change will enable the generation to take command over the narrative, dismantle existing gender norms, and nudge the industry in the direction of equitable gender representation.

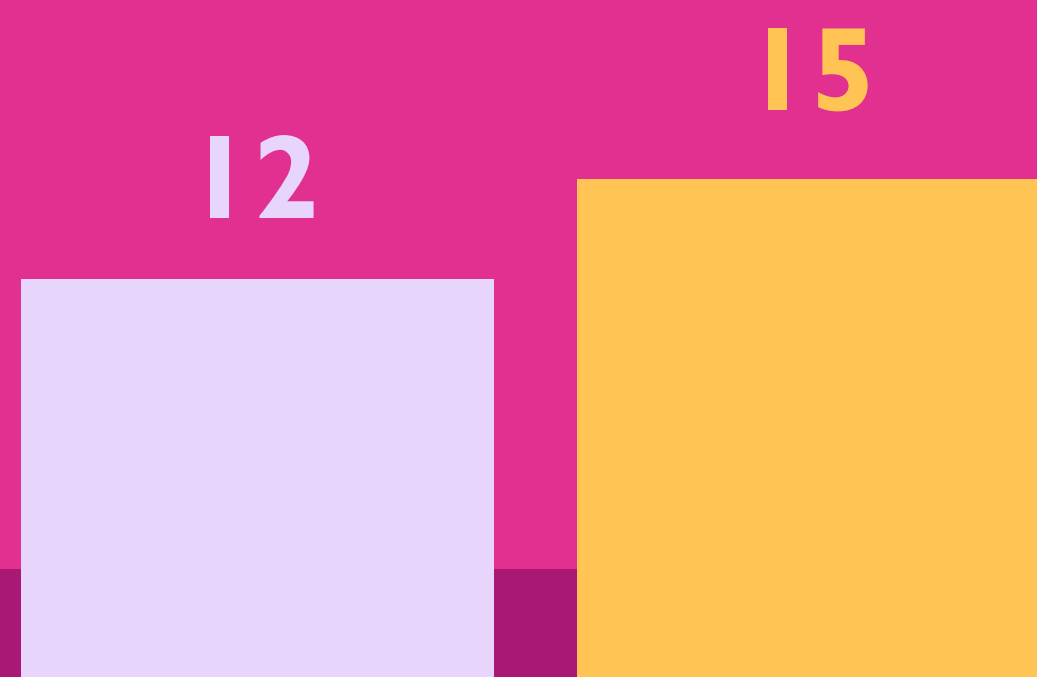
To measure the shift created by female representation in decision-making roles, we looked at the number of women in key Head of Department (HOD) positions across our selected 169 properties to understand the lay of the land in 2023.

HOD positions analysed: Direction |  
Cinematography | Editing | Writing |  
Production Design

# ARE WOMEN IN CHARGE?

## FEMALE REPRESENTATION ACROSS HOD POSITIONS

Sadly, no.  
A growth of 3 percentage points from last year to this year is not what we would call growth.



### FEMALE COMMISSIONING IN-CHARGE



\*All numbers are in percentage



# GLASS HALF FULL...OR EMPTY?

## FEMALE REPRESENTATION BY HOD POSITIONS

While production design, direction, writing, and cinematography see barely any growth in HOD representation, it is the editing department that tells a different story.

The significant increase is due to a surge of female writers and editors helming streaming content in 2023.



● 2022 ● 2023

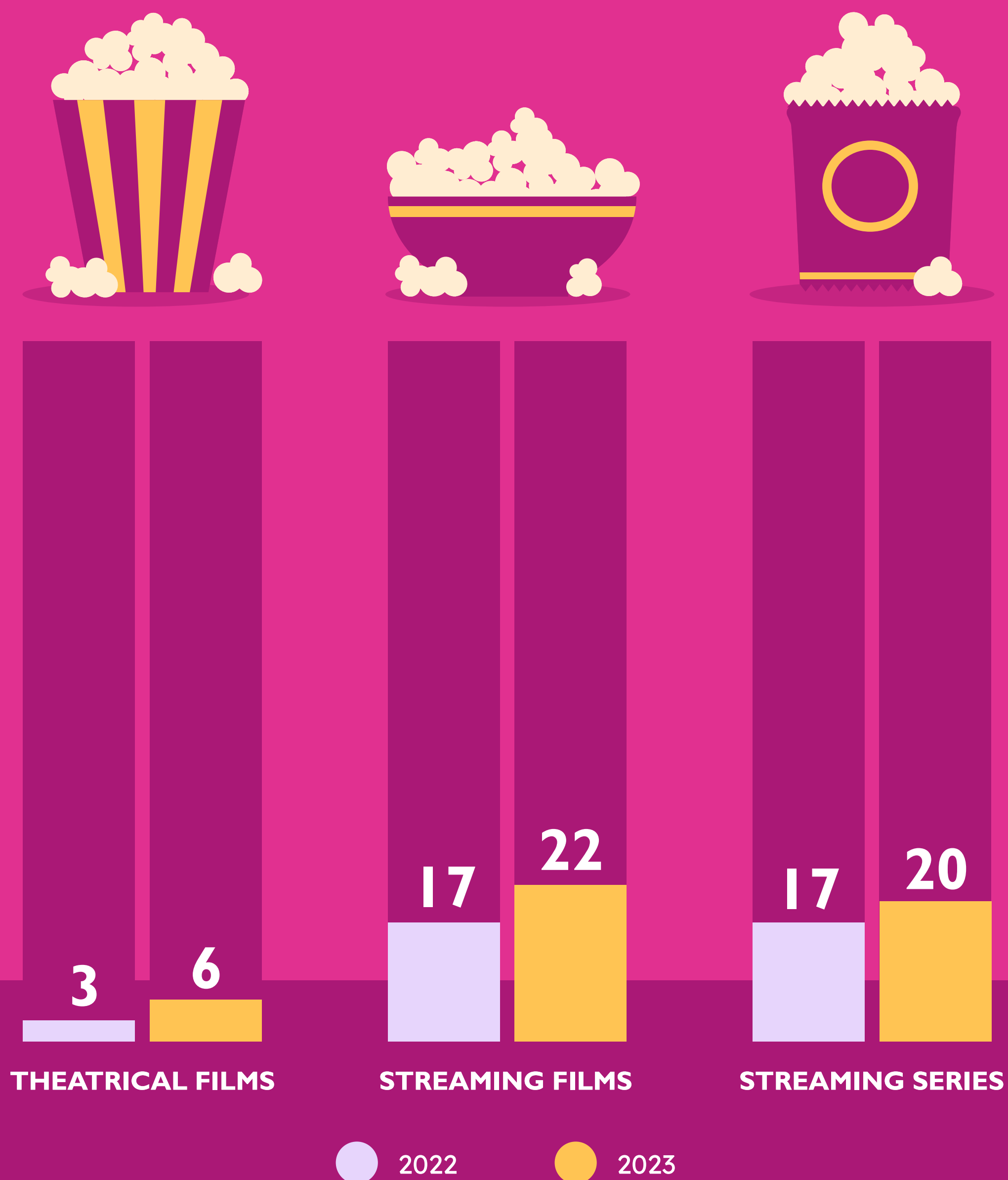
\*All numbers are in percentage

# LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE!

## FEMALE HOD REPRESENTATION BY FORMAT / DISTRIBUTION

We see an increase across formats, however marginal, so that's an improvement from 2022. However, the gap between theatrical and streaming properties continues to exist.

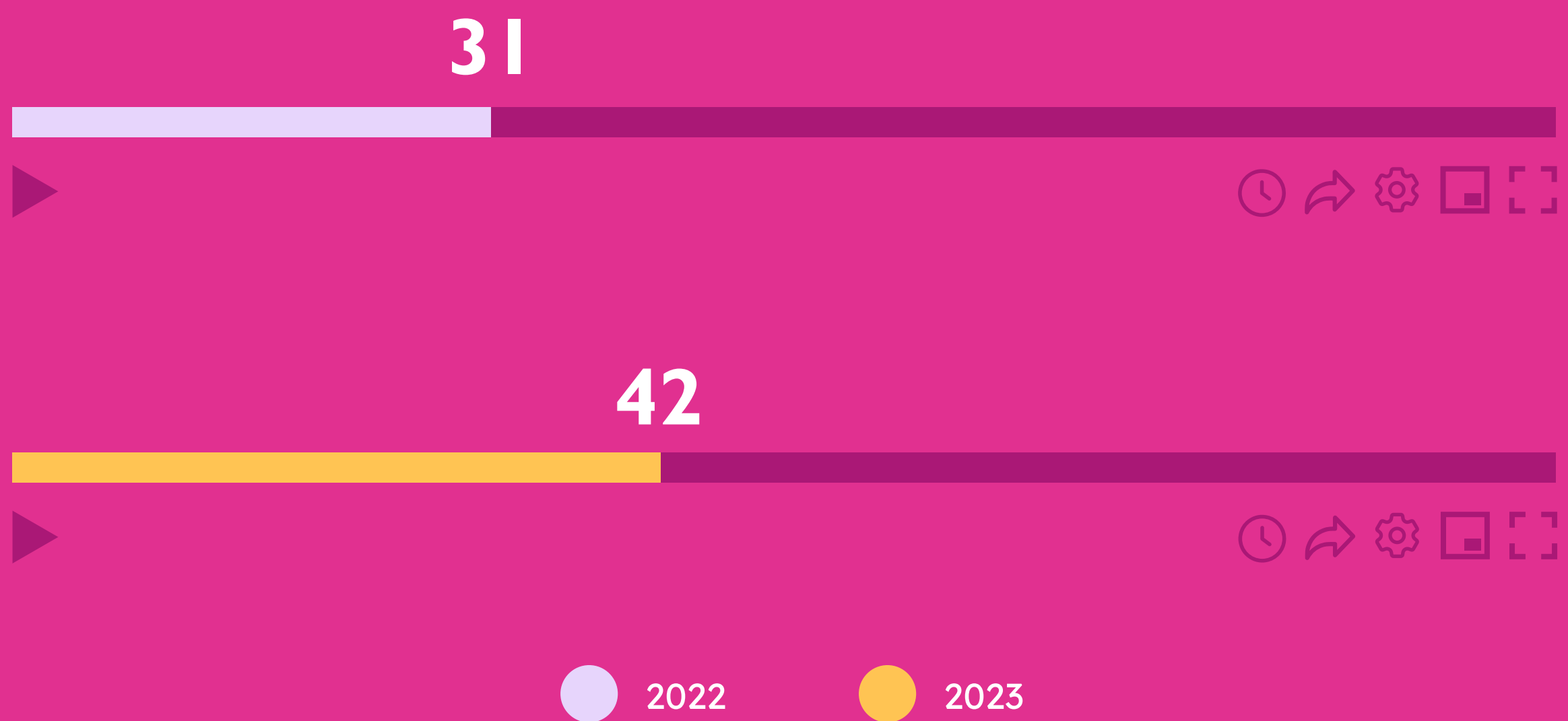
Streaming is leading the way with a 20-point percentage of female HOD representation while theatrical still needs to get with the programme.



\*All numbers are in percentage

# HERE COMES CHANGE!

## SHARE OF FEMALE COMMISSIONING IN-CHARGE



\*All numbers are in percentage

A significant increase from last year in the share of female commissioning in-charge is heartening to witness. The 11 percentage point increase indicates our hope to see more women take on this role across platforms.

# IT'S GOING SOUTH

## FEMALE HOD REPRESENTATION BY LANGUAGE

The good news: Hindi and other languages like Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, and Bengali have scored significantly better this year.

The bad news: Southern languages are faring worse than ever before. Which is quite in character for the historically male-dominated Southern film industries.



\*All numbers are in percentage

# WOMEN. HIRING. WOMEN.

## FEMALE HOD REPRESENTATION BY LANGUAGE

We observe an increase across both categories, albeit a minor one, which is definitely a positive.

However, one must note that while female HOD representation with male commissioning in-charge is still in single digits, those with women in charge are well in the 20s.

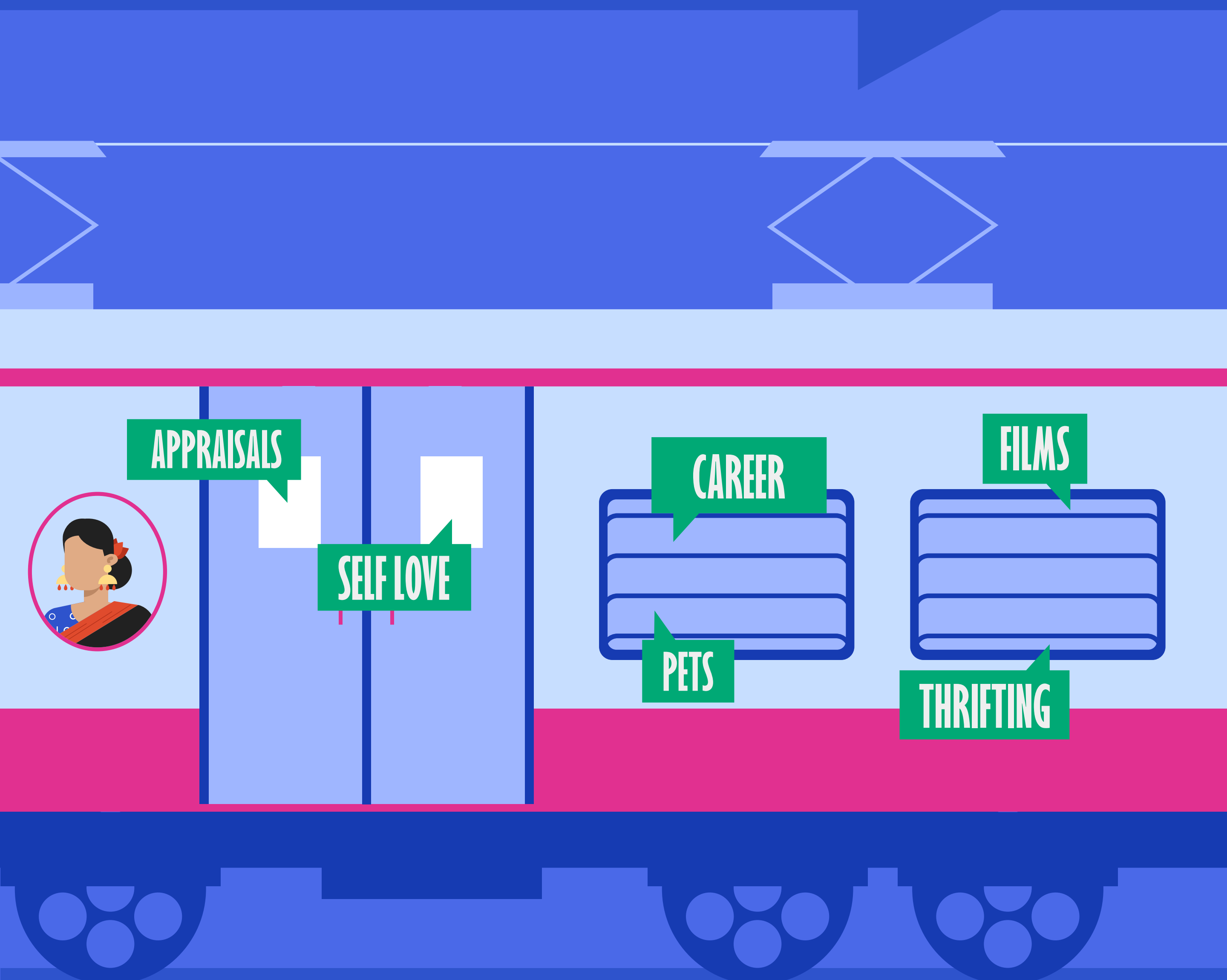


# BECHDEL TEST

We evaluated all 169 properties on the Bechdel Test, which is an internationally - accepted measure of female representation in cinema.

To pass the test, a film must have at least one scene where two named female characters are talking to each other about something other than a man or men.

Given their longer runtime, the criterion for streaming series was modified to 'at least three scenes'.

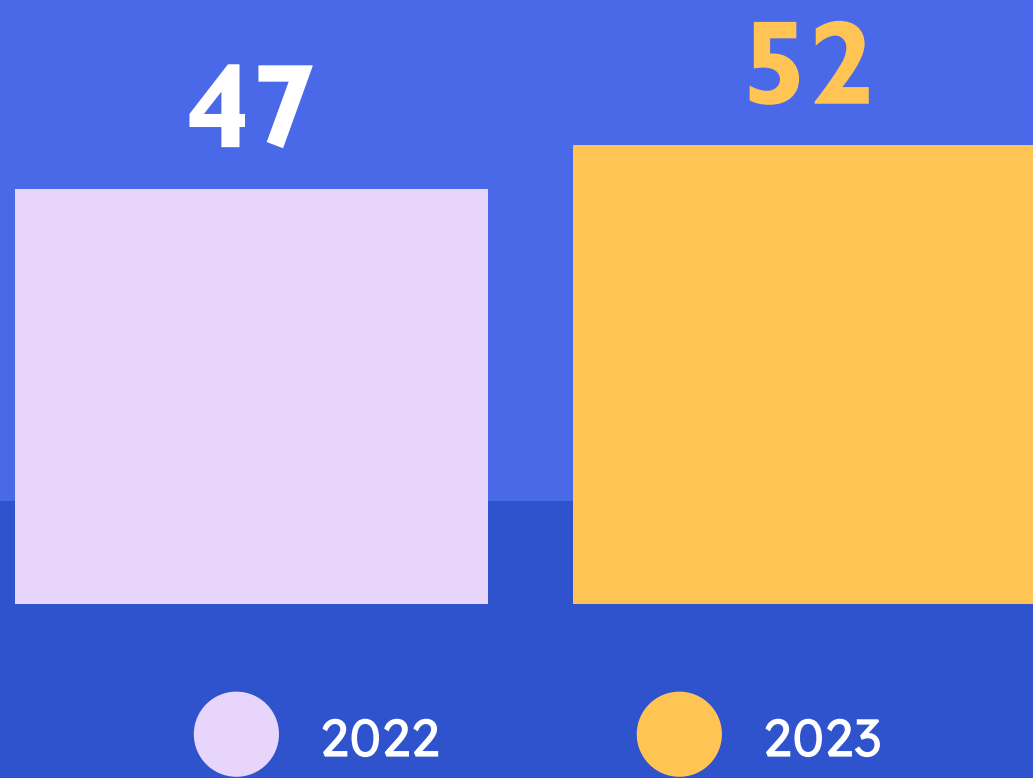


# A RAY OF HOPE

BECHDEL TEST (% PASSED)

A full **5%** increase on the Bechdel Test

means female characters this year have had more fulfilling arcs where their interest, opinions, and issues are part of the storyline, at least to an extent.



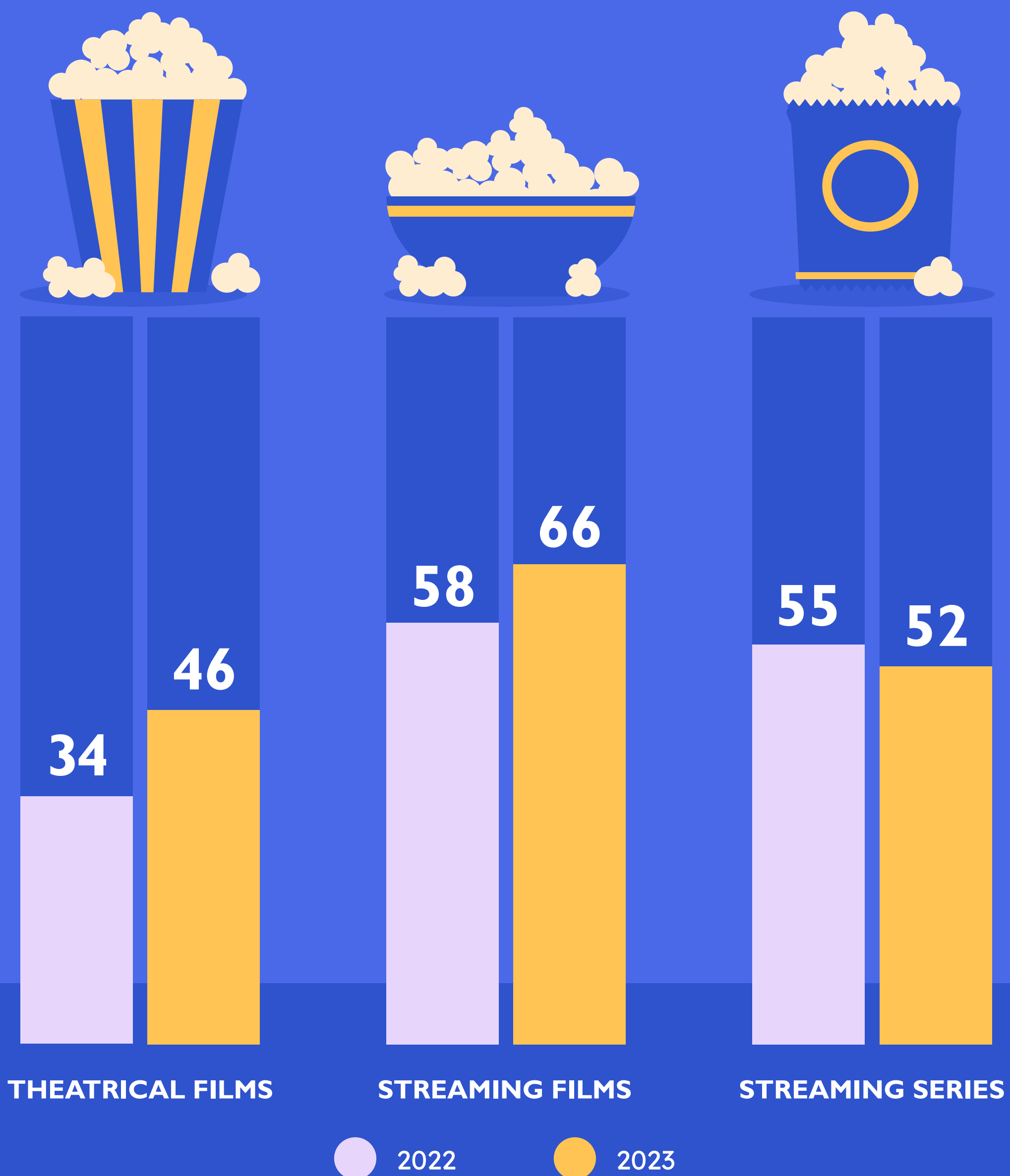
\*All numbers are in percentage



# THERE IS MORE TO A CHARACTER THAN THE MEN IN HER LIFE

## BECHDEL TEST BY FORMAT / DISTRIBUTION

The increase we see in the previous graph is largely owed to theatrical and streaming films where female characters seem to be faring better as compared to those in streaming series.

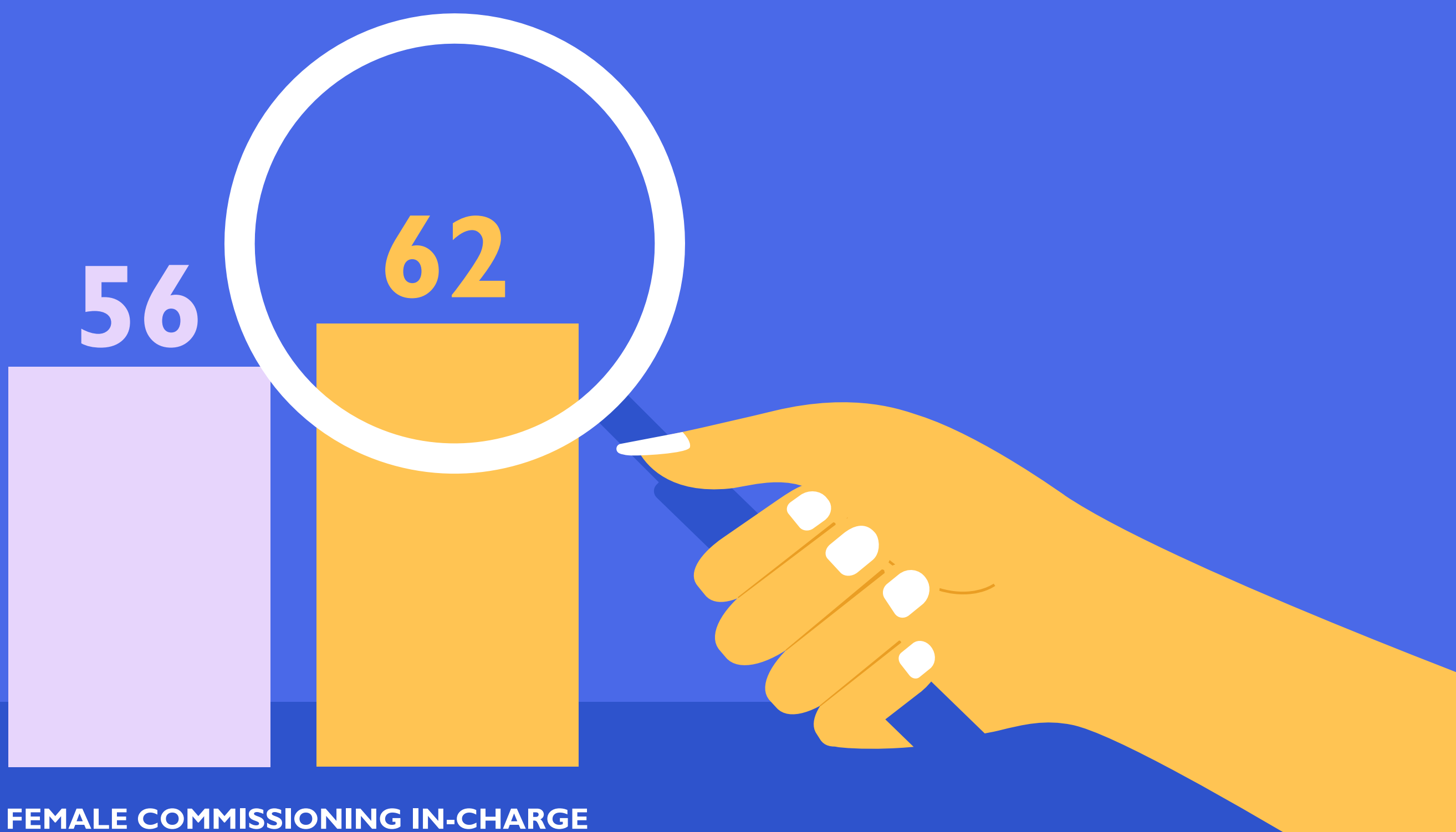
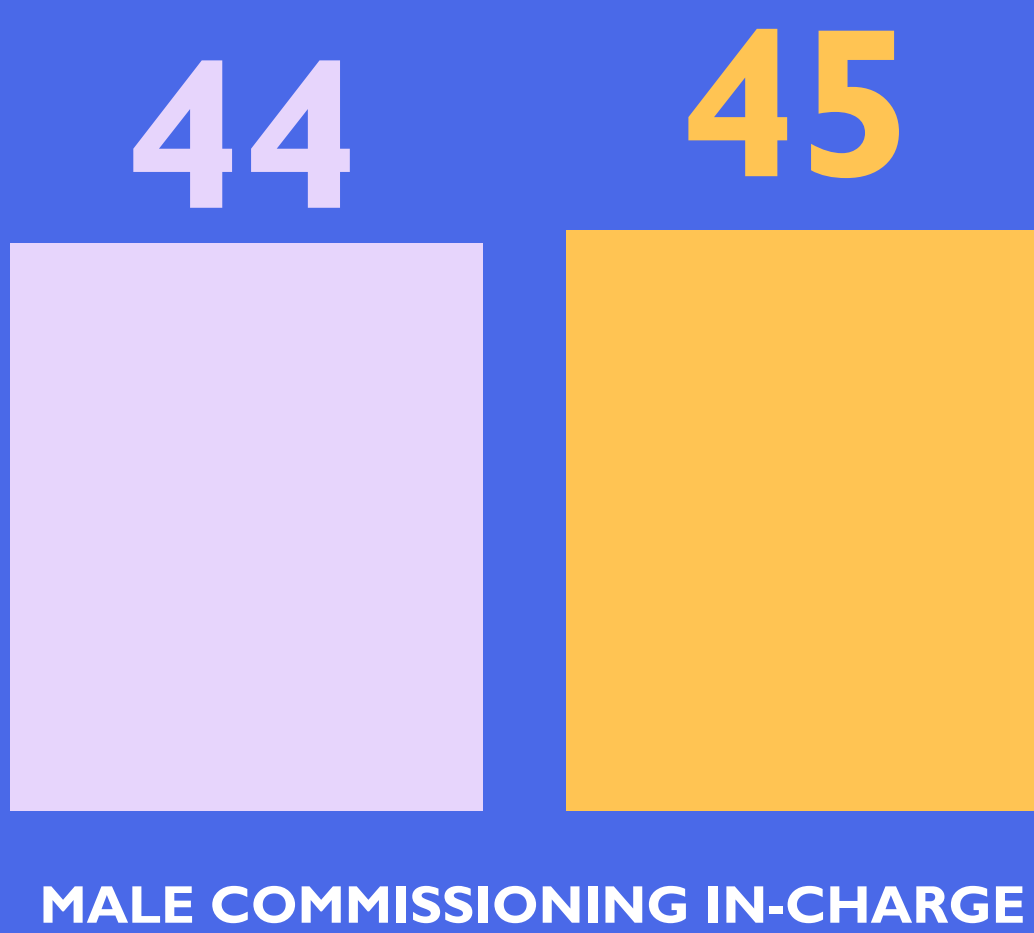


\*All numbers are in percentage

# WOMEN TO THE RESCUE!

## BECHDEL TEST BY GENDER OF COMMISSIONING IN-CHARGE

While the percentage for both genders of commissioning in-charge have increased, females in charge of commissioning content have really taken the lead. This makes it quite evident who is responsible for the improved Bechdel score this year.



● 2022 ● 2023

\*All numbers are in percentage

An illustration of a hand holding a suitcase handle. The hand is orange, wearing a white pearl bracelet, and is positioned on a dark green handle. The background is a solid teal color.

# NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

## NEW GENDER TEST

As with everything, our understanding of gender representation in Indian entertainment has evolved in the last few decades. Today, a few scenes or dialogues do not constitute an equitable representation. We now look for a well-developed arc, a variety of emotions, and maybe even an actual conflict to address.

Instead of looking back at the properties once they have already been made, we created a toolkit that could help writers, creators, or even producers maintain gender diversity in their properties right from the get-go.

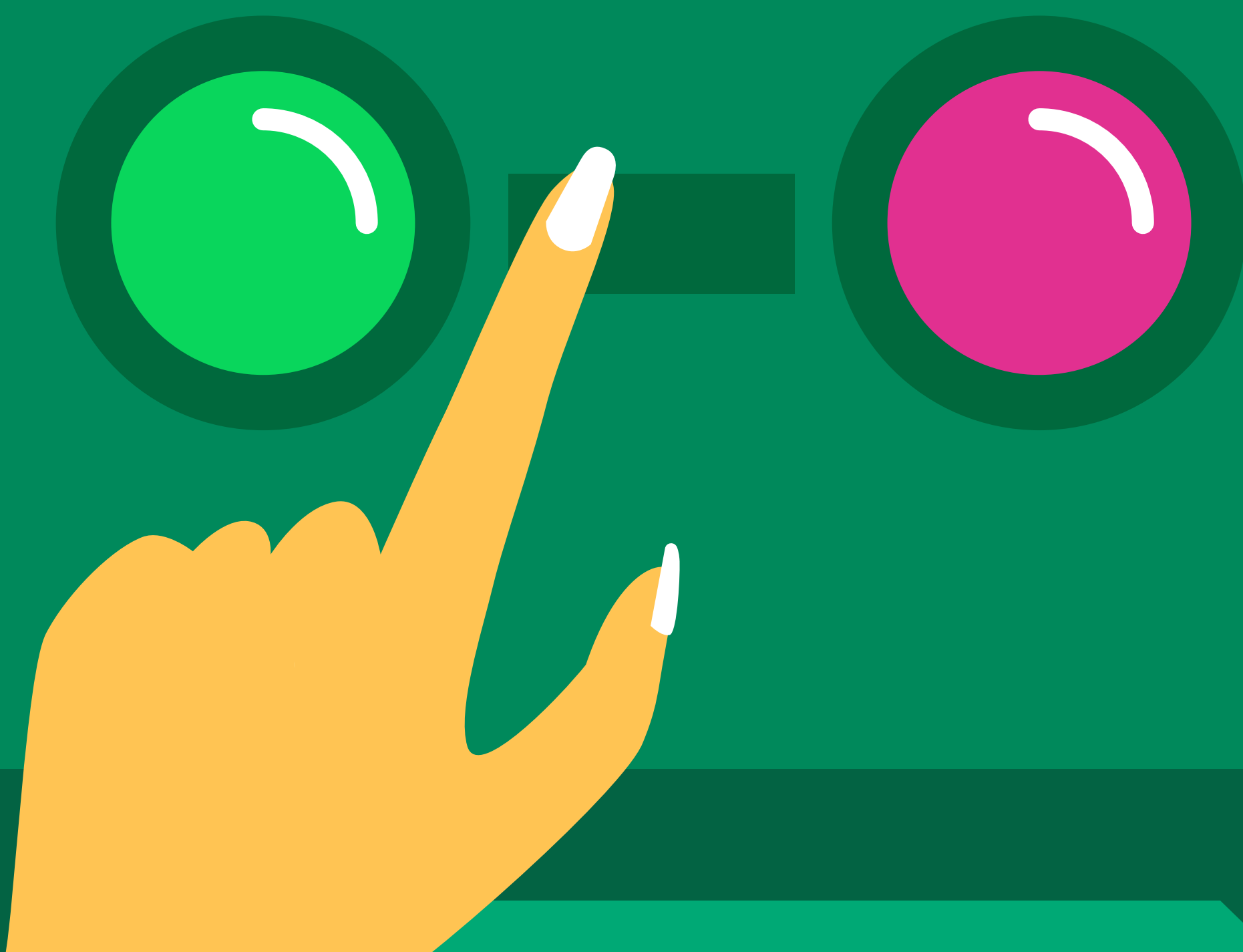
Through pointed questions, the OWomaniya! Toolkit helps identify gender representation in a property at the development stage. Because prevention is better than cure, isn't it?

Full disclosure, this is the first time we have created a test like this and applied it for OWomaniya! but someone had to do it.

To pass the OWomaniya! Toolkit, a property must reflect a positive response on all four of the following questions.

The positive or correct answer for the first three questions is 'Yes' while that for the fourth question is 'No'.

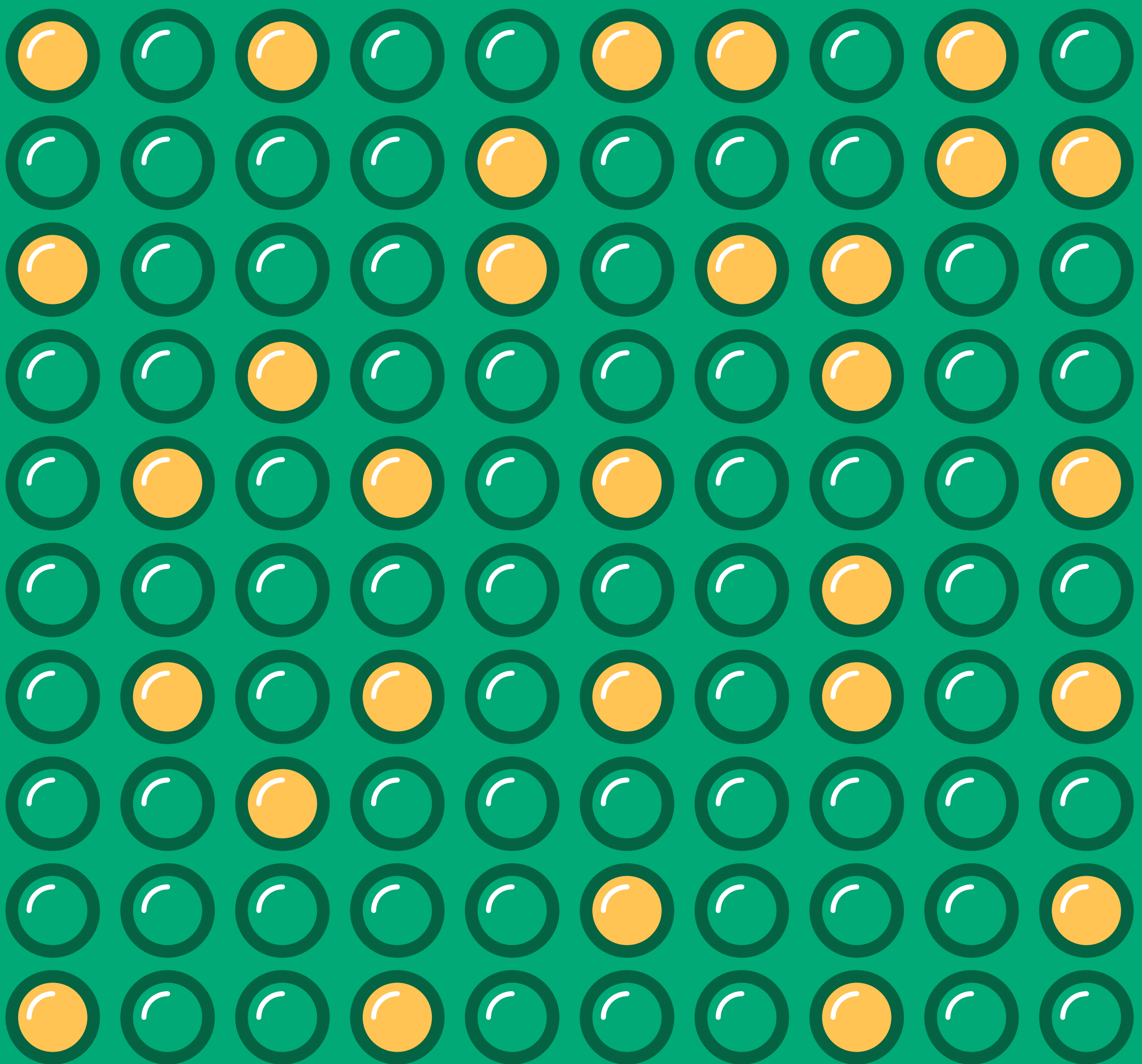
- Is there at least one named female character with at least one line of dialogue, who plays a role that's not romantically or familiarly connected to the male protagonist?
- Does at least one female character play an active role in taking economic, domestic and/or community decisions that are pivotal to the show's/film's story?
- Is there any point in the story where a female protagonist expresses a conflicting viewpoint to that of a male character, on an issue central to the plot?
- Does the show/film portray sexualization of women, and/or violence against women, as normal/acceptable?



# NOT A PRETTY PICTURE

WE ANALYZED **169** PROPERTIES  
OUT OF WHICH ONLY **52** PASSED  
THE OWOMANIYA! TOOLKIT.

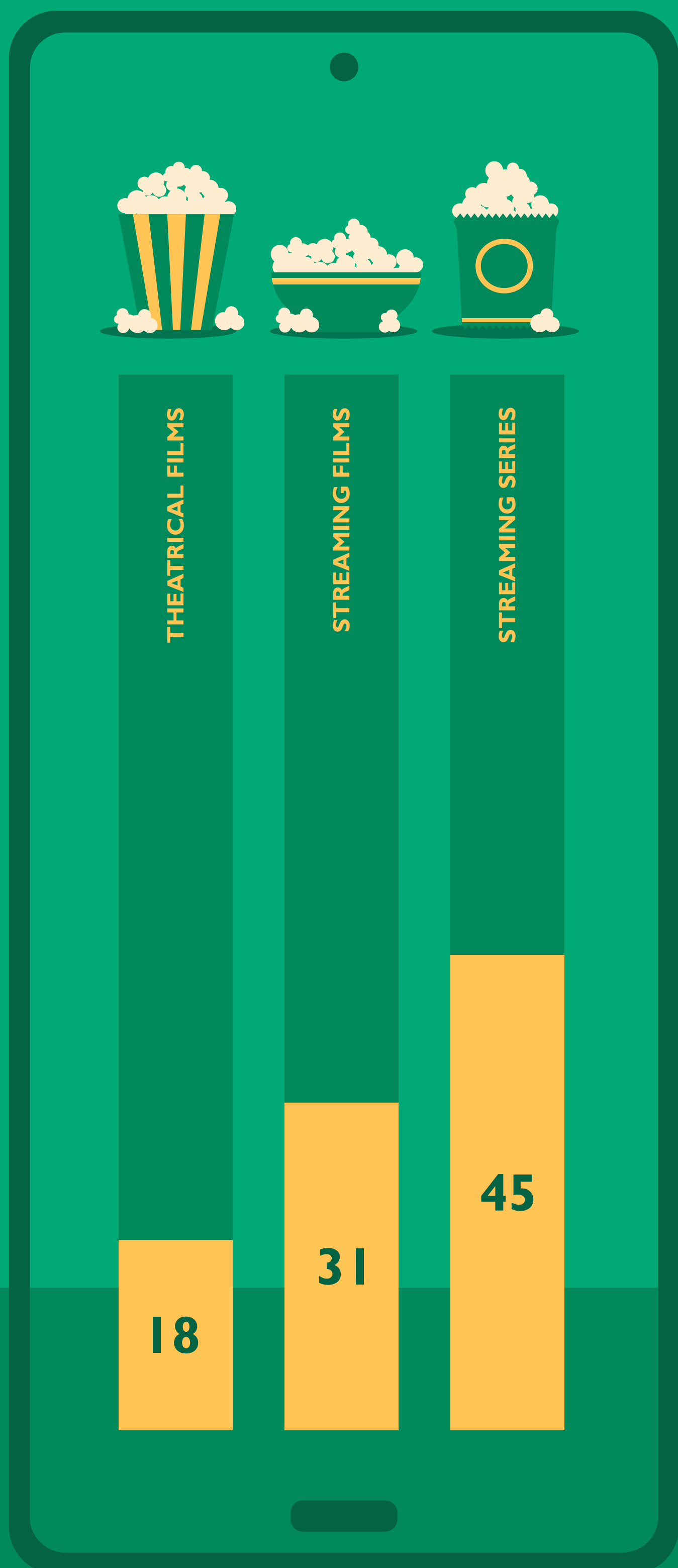
Less than **one out of three**  
properties in 2023 passed the test.



# OTT STEALS THE SHOW

## OWOMANIYA! TOOLKIT BY FORMAT/ DISTRIBUTION

Streaming series lead the way with the highest number of properties that pass the Toolkit and as expected, theatrical films come in last.



# THE BIG DIVIDE

## OWOMANIYA! TOOLKIT BY LANGUAGE

As with the HOD department, Hindi and other non-South language properties have performed well on the OWomaniya! Toolkit. Southern languages, on the other hand, still have a ways to go.

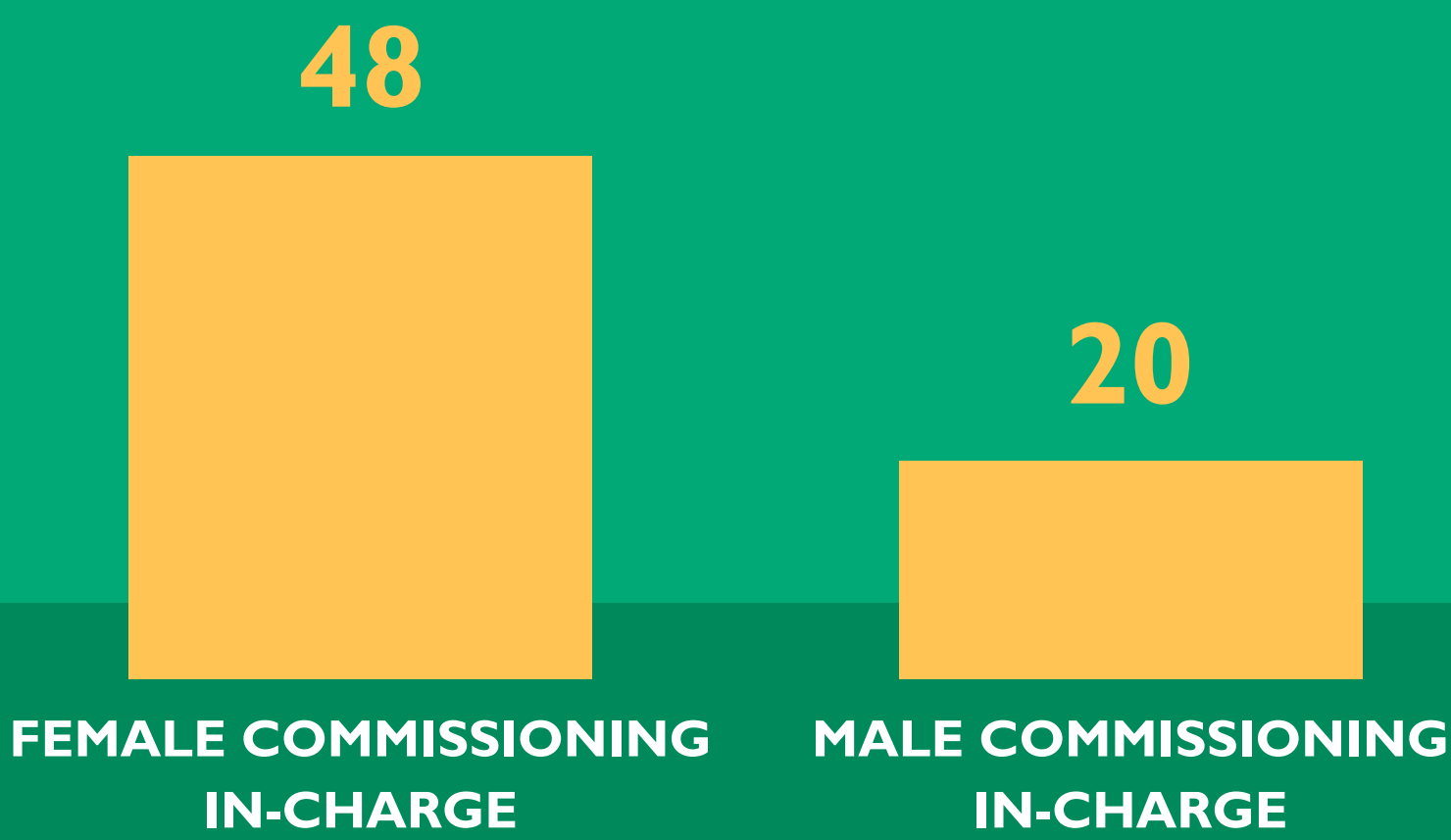


\*All numbers are in percentage

# TAKES ONE TO KNOW

## OWOMANIYA! TOOLKIT BY GENDER OF COMMISSIONING IN-CHARGE

As expected, female commissioning in-charges are more cognizant of the need for gender diversity and equal representation in content. The more than double difference between the female and male counterparts is a clear indication that men still don't take gender into account while commissioning content.



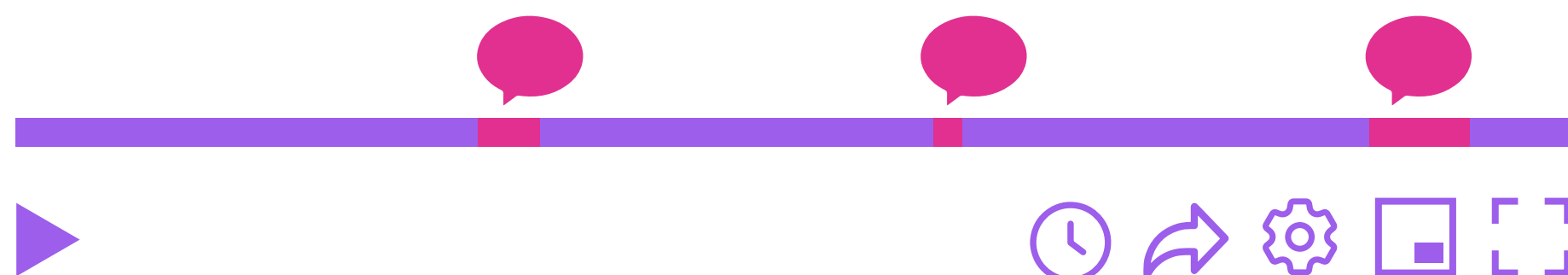
\*All numbers are in percentage



# THE TRAILER TALK TIME TEST

Along with a glimpse into the film or series to generate audience interest, trailers also give us an idea of how well women are represented in this important piece of promotional content. So, in order to gauge the inclusion and relevance of female characters in marketing a property, we perform the Trailer Talk Time Test.

The test is simple - From the main trailer of each property we identified and measured the length of the spoken parts by male and female characters. What we see is the result in percentage of talk time allotted to female characters (including transgender characters) in these trailers.

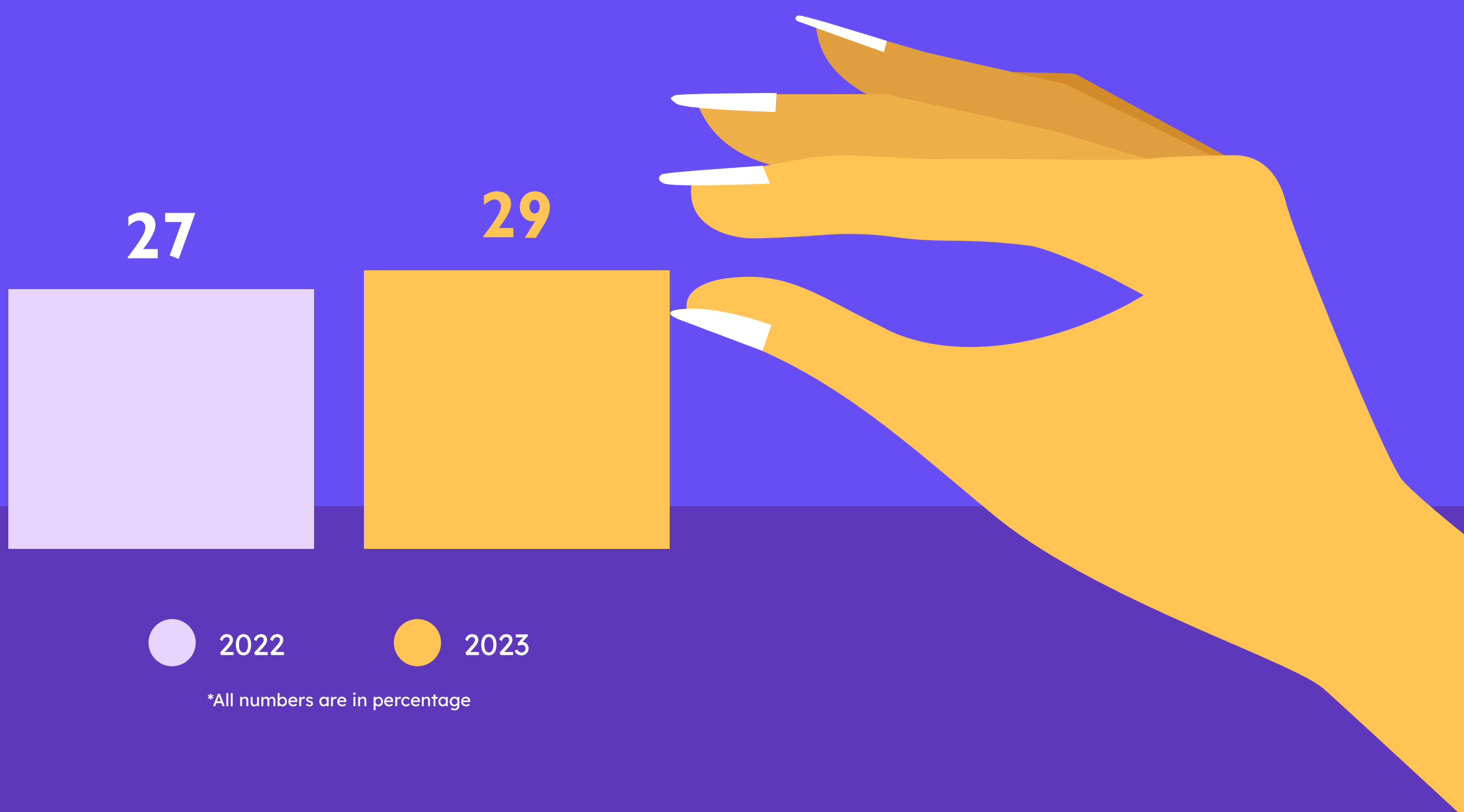


# TWO LITTLE, TOO LATE

## TRAILER TALK TIME

Women now have **29%** talk time in trailers across 169 properties

This is a meagre 2 percentage point increase from last year. And while an increase in talk time is a positive, the low share of voice is hardly good news.

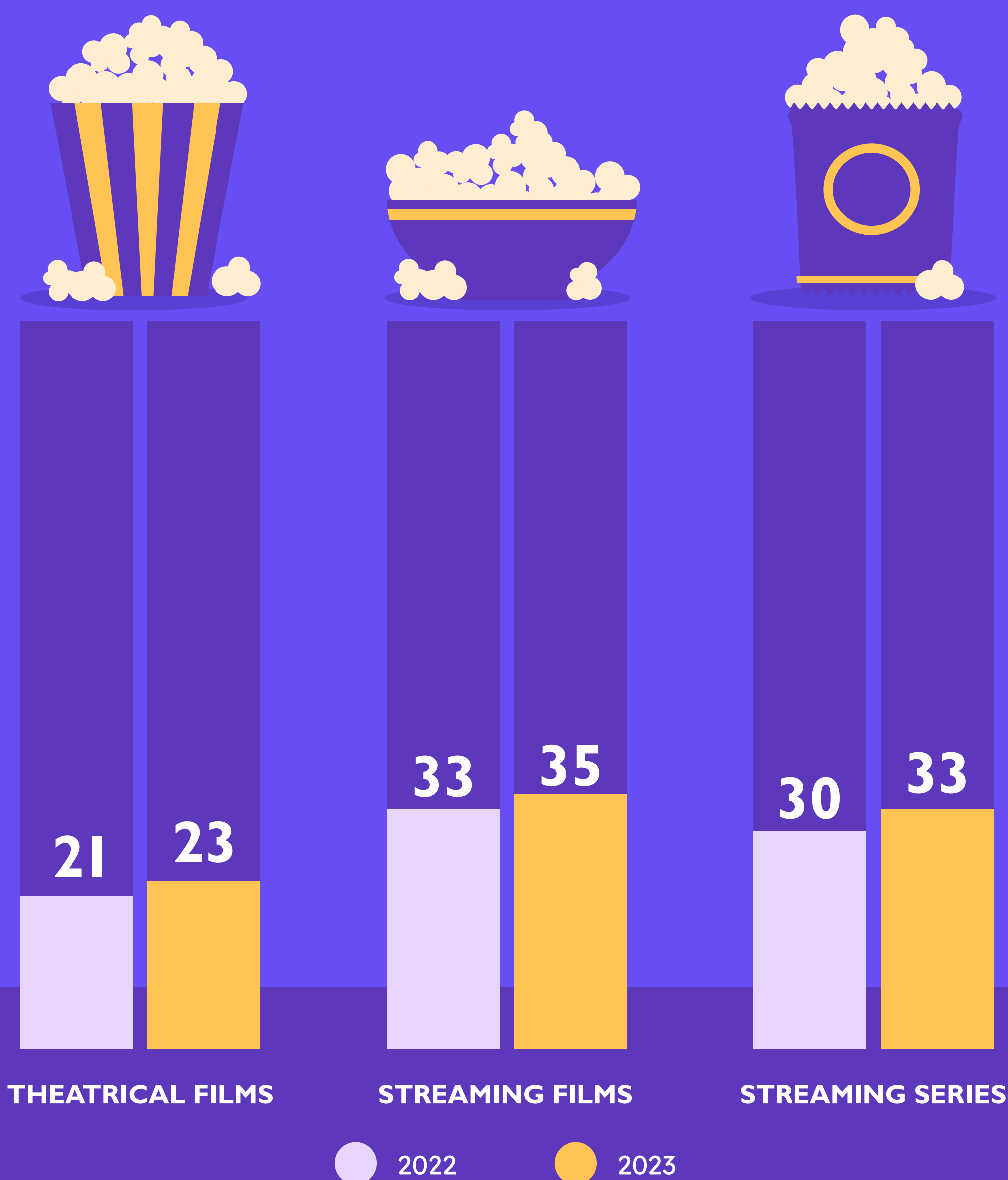


\*All numbers are in percentage

# FOR GROWTH'S SAKE

## TRAILER TALK TIME BY FORMAT/ DISTRIBUTION

Each format has seen a nominal growth at best. Even in streaming trailers, which are performing better than theatrical trailers, just about 1/3rd of the total speaking time is allotted to female characters.

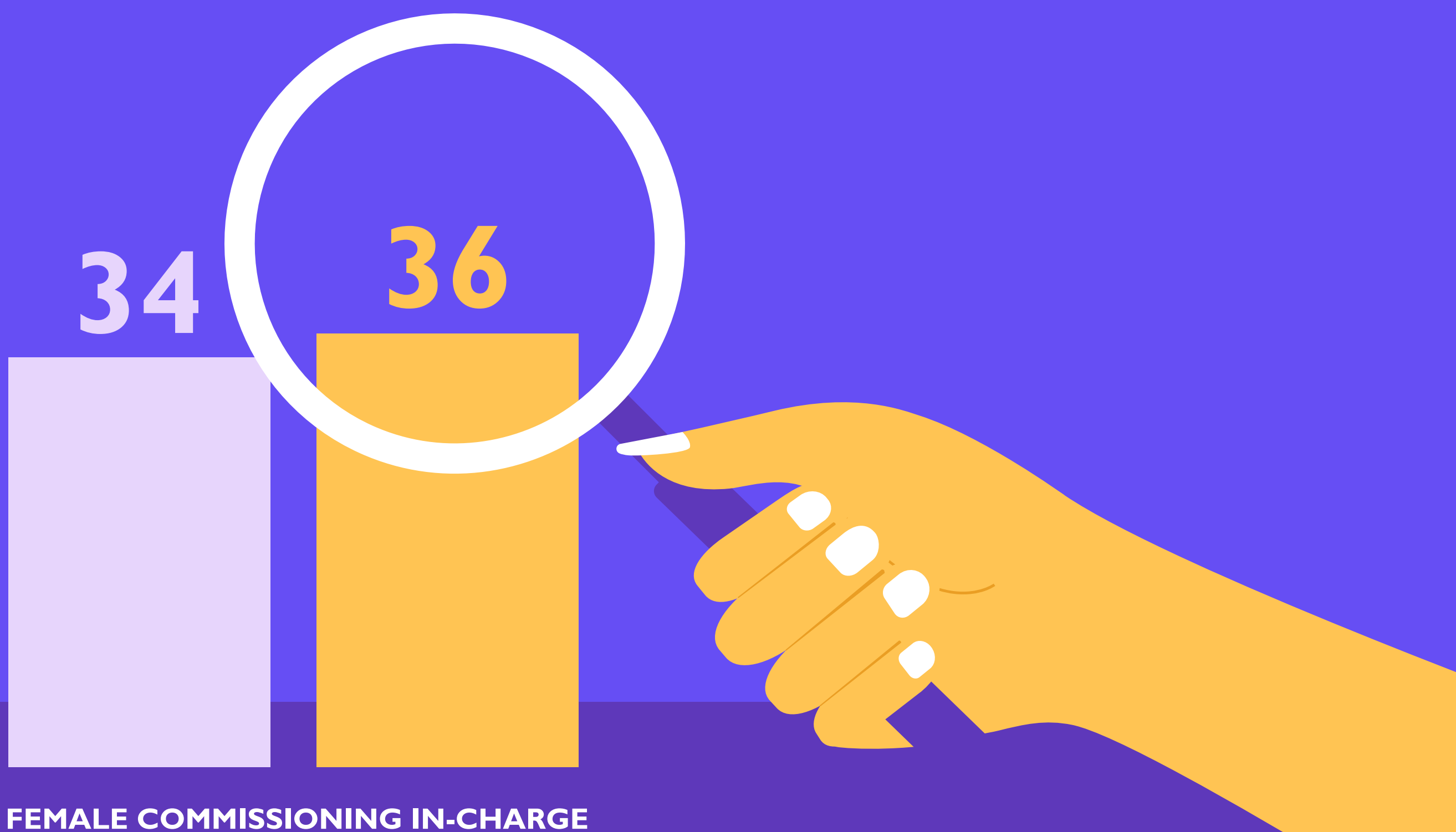
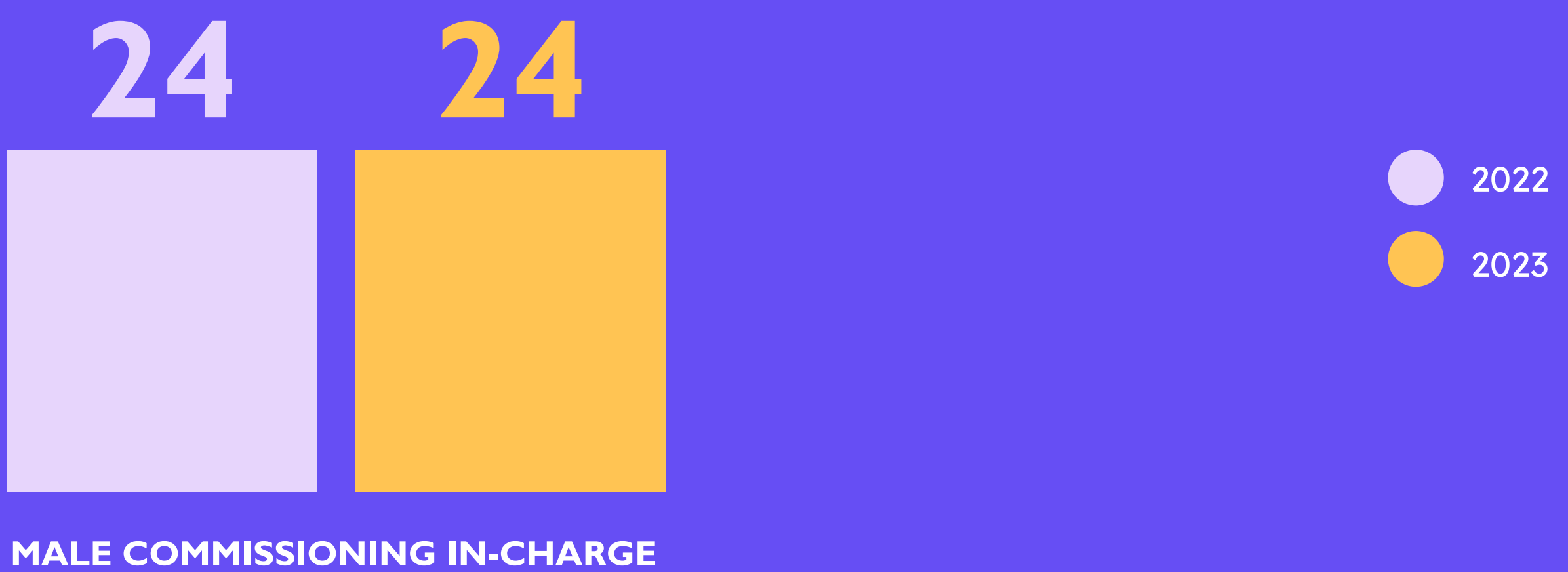


\*All numbers are in percentage

# SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

## TRAILER TALK TIME BY GENDER OF COMMISSIONING IN-CHARGE

We see just a marginal growth in the past year in trailer talk time for properties commissioned by women. On the other hand, the growth rate of trailer talk time for properties commissioned by men sees no change at all.



# HALL OF FAME

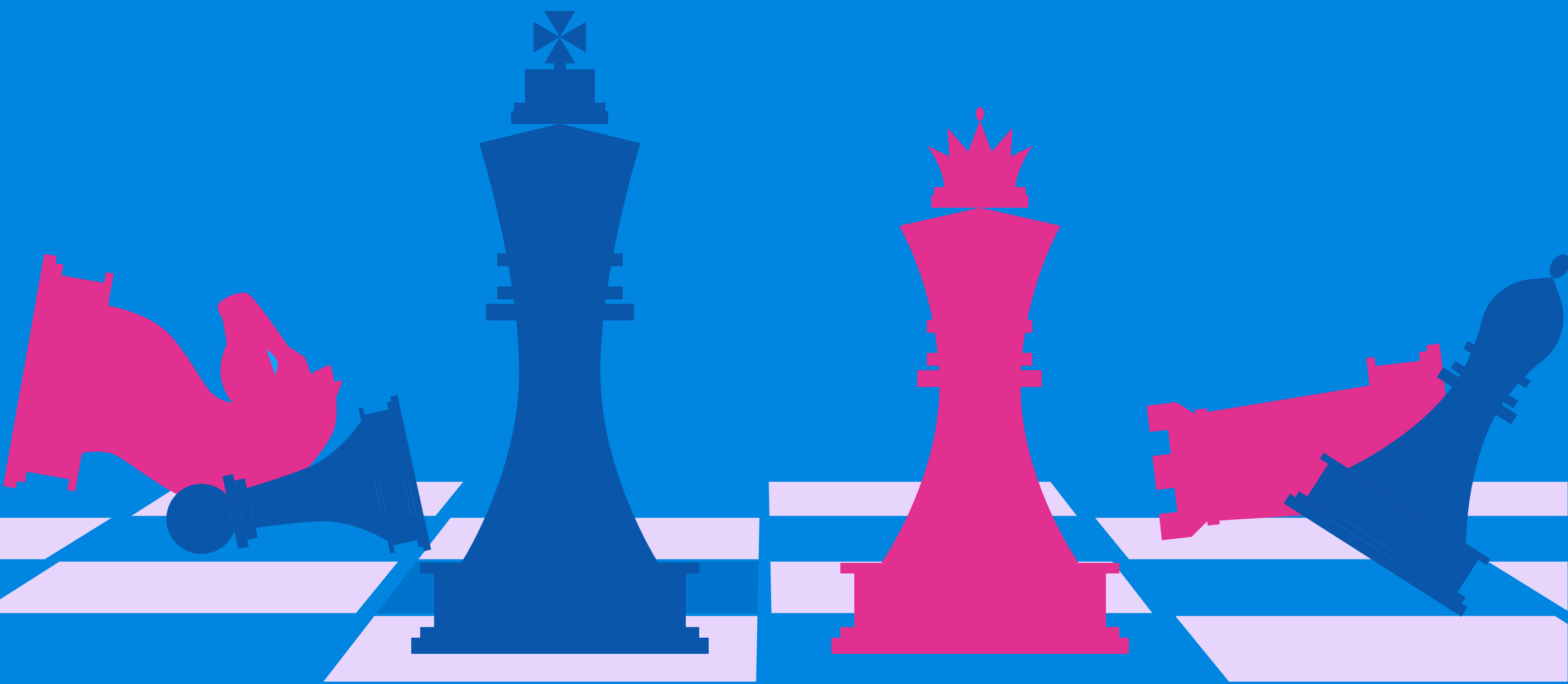
55%+ FEMALE TRAILER TALK TIME

A graphic of a clapperboard with a black border and white diagonal stripes on the top bar. The text is centered on the white background of the clapperboard.

Boo | Jhimma 2 | Taali | Rainbow Rishta  
Baipan Bhari Deva | Made In Heaven S2  
Wedding.con | Lust Stories 2 | Sweet Kaaram Coffee  
Gaslight | Kumari Srimathi | Jhansi S2  
Saas Bahu Aur Flamingo | Aarya S3  
Sapta Sagaradaache | Ello Side-A | Baby  
Chhatriwali | The Kerala Story  
Masterpeace | Jaane Jaan | PI Meena |  
One Friday Night | Hi Nanna

# WHO RUNS THE WORLD?

CORPORATE TALENT | CORPORATE POLICIES






# WHO RUNS THE WORLD?

To understand how deep gender disparity runs in the Indian entertainment industry we analysed 144 Director and CXO positions across 25 top media and entertainment companies.

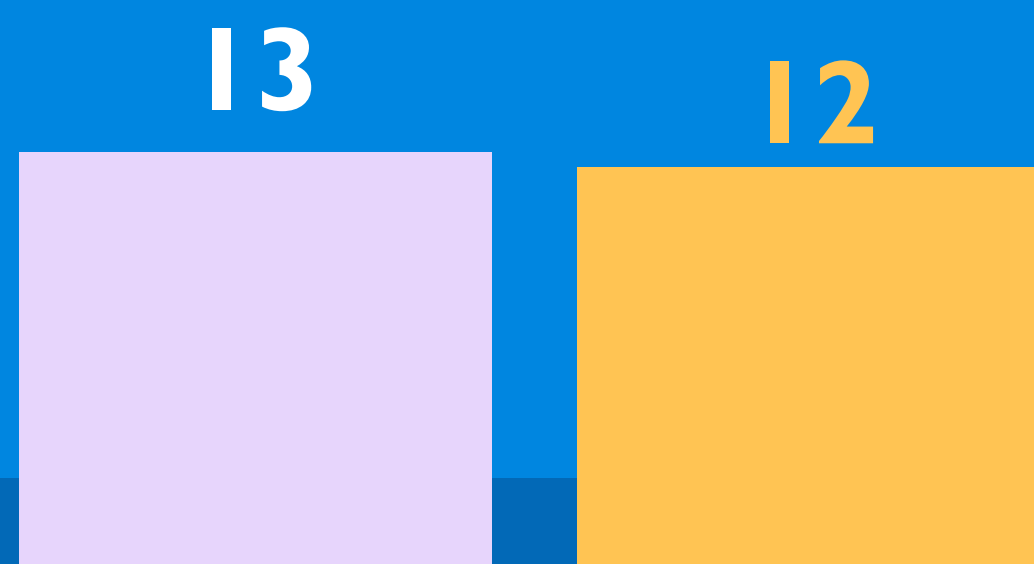
Representation at the top level is crucial to understand because of the systemic nature of gender equality in the industry. When the table is shared with underrepresented voices and communities, we see a shift in the content we consume, and values we applaud, as a society. This is also a good marker for the amount of opportunities the industry provides to those whose stories and voices need to be heard for change to take place. Because when real change begins at the top, the trickle-down effect will be much more evident and impactful.



# THIS IS NOT A DRILL

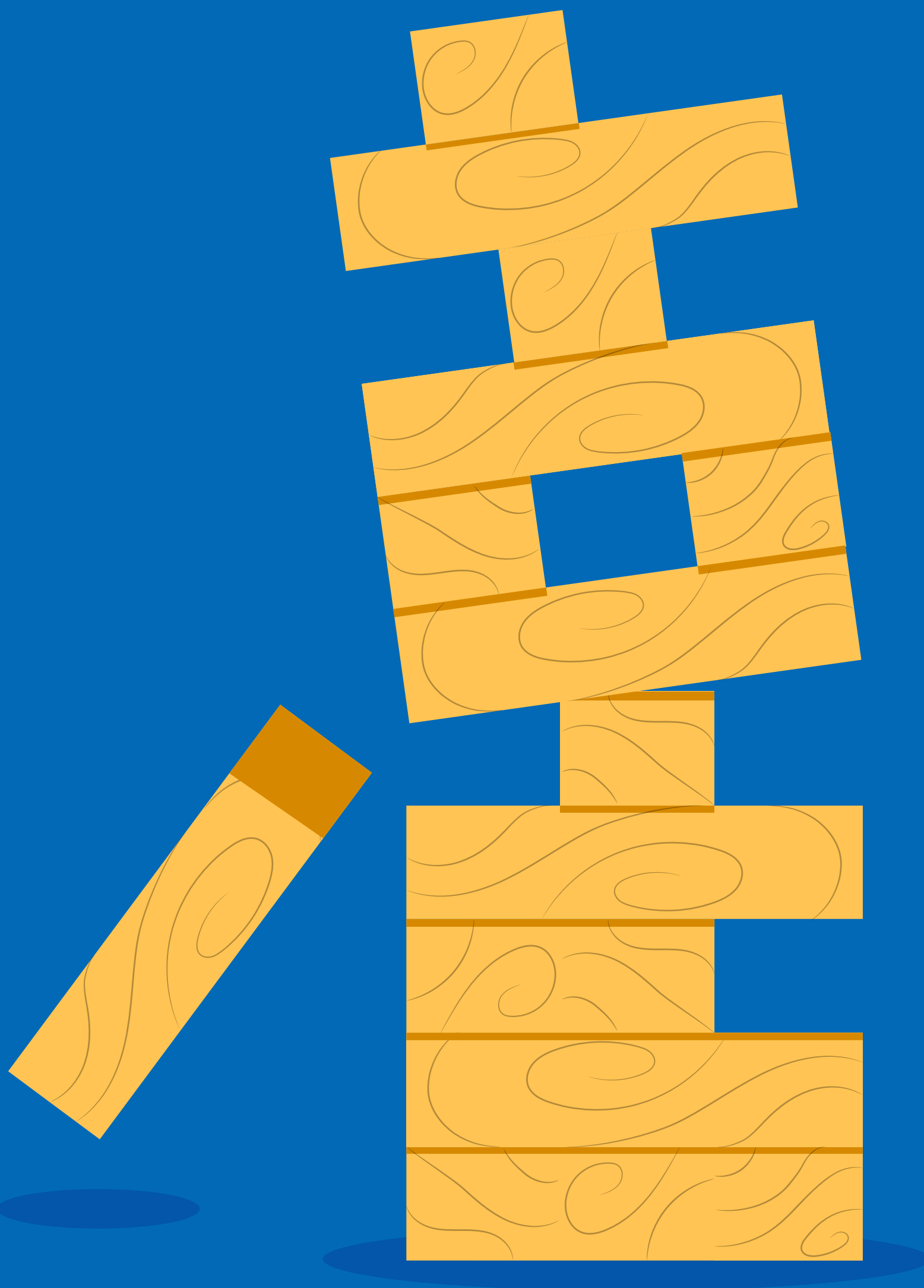
## FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Unfortunately, women representation in the higher corporate positions has reduced by 1 percentage point in the last year.



● 2022 ● 2023

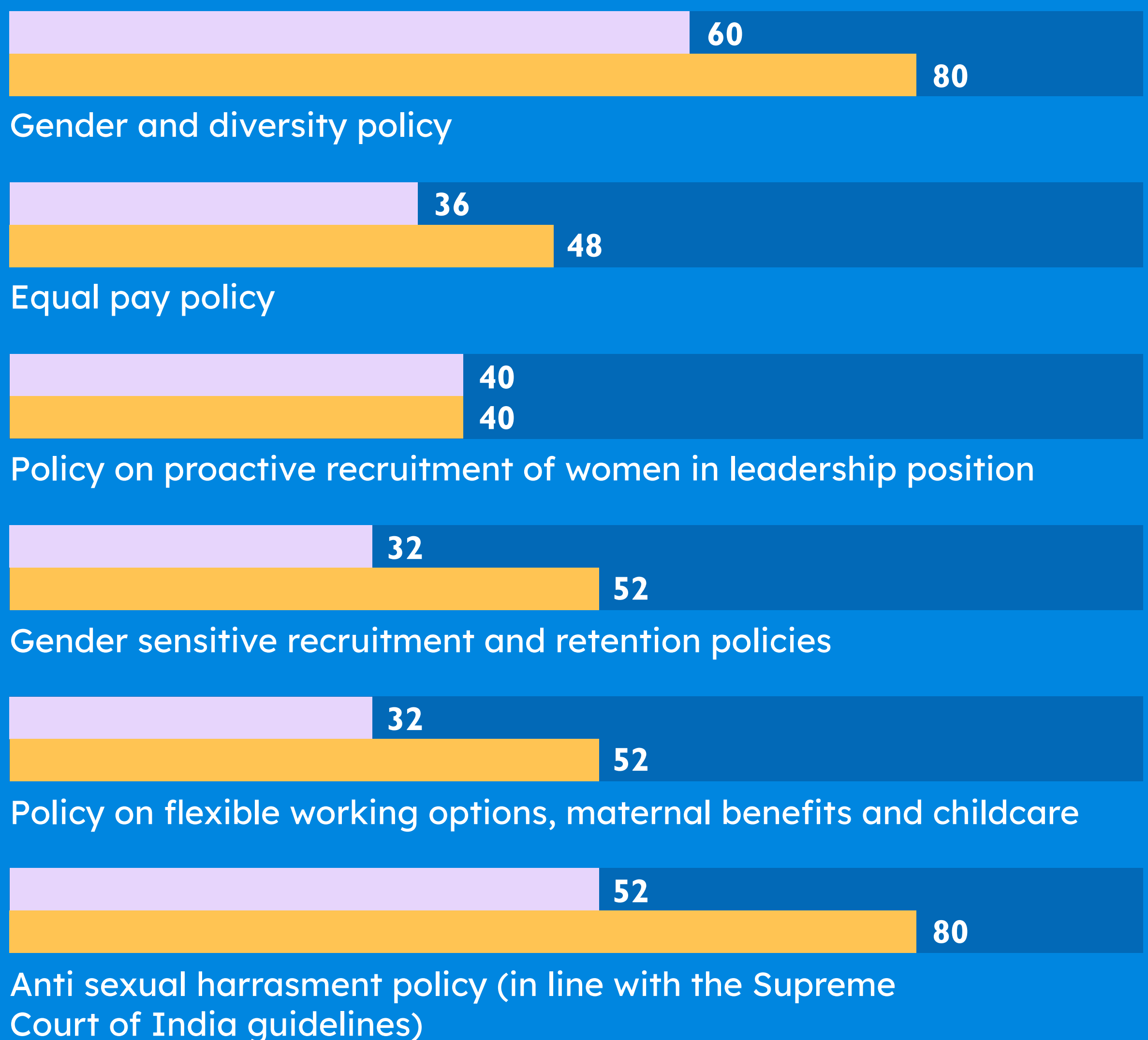
\*All numbers are in percentage



# NOW WE'RE TALKING!

## ACCESS TO POLICIES IN PUBLIC DOMAIN (WEBSITE/ BLOGS/ ANNUAL REPORTS)

On a positive note, there has been significant improvement in establishing and enabling gender positive corporate policies in the last one year. We definitely like to see this!

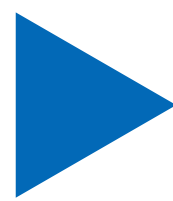


● 2022 ● 2023

\*All numbers are in percentage

# ROUNDTABLE

For OWomaniya! 2023, we invited various artists from different walks of filmmaking for a roundtable. We wanted to get from them concrete suggestions that would spur tangible change to shift the needle for representation of women in film. We also wanted to highlight gender biases they have noticed/experienced around them while breaking into the industry and how they conquered it. Here's a notable conversation between some of the country's finest filmmakers, actors, studio heads and writers pouring their hearts out on how we can make cinema more inclusive.



# END CREDITS

This report is the result of the tireless efforts of several teams — from conception to execution. We would like to acknowledge the contribution of each member of the O Womaniya! Project.

In time, we hope this study will help move the needle of representation in Indian cinema, creating meaningful protagonists and inclusive platforms for women long hidden in the shadows.

[DOWNLOAD PDF](#)  
[2023 REPORT](#) | [2022 REPORT](#)

## PRIME VIDEO INDIA

Stuti Ramachandra  
Ananta Das  
Anshul Raj

## ORMAX MEDIA

Shailesh Kapoor  
Keerat Grewal  
Amit Bhatia  
Abhinav Chandekar  
Vikas Johri  
Shreya Ramakrishnan  
Aakriti Bhatia  
Nabil Shaikh  
Dilip Hadawale  
Nirankar Kudalkar  
Sidaq Batra  
Riddhesh Sadariwala  
Mahikaa Chhibber  
Dvija Mandava  
Rohan Babu  
Swayam Kumar  
Nandini Agrawal  
Visakh Roji  
Vidit Singh  
Keerti Maheshwari  
Tarukh Kaul  
Pranav Saraswatula  
Sakshi Saxena

## FILM COMPANION STUDIOS

Anupama Chopra  
Megha Mathur  
Megha Srinivasan  
Tanvi Ajinkya  
Ayush Gupta

**Copywriting and Design:**  
Independent Creators and Co

**Development:**  
Ideamagix