Audience Insights Overview

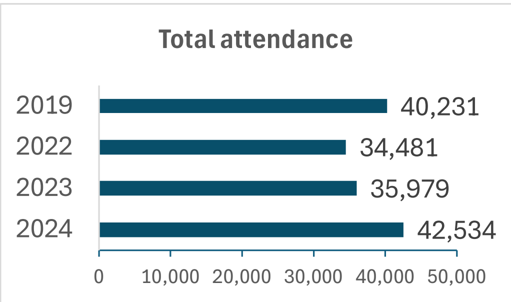
Audience Insights is a Performing Arts Forum project funded by the Arts Council to help arts organisations understand and develop their audiences by collecting, analysing and interpreting data.

This overview analyses the 309,000 people who spent €25 million on 1.1 million tickets for 7,600 events at 345 festivals, theatres and arts centres in Ireland in 2024. It compares results for 2024 with 2019, 2022 and 2023.

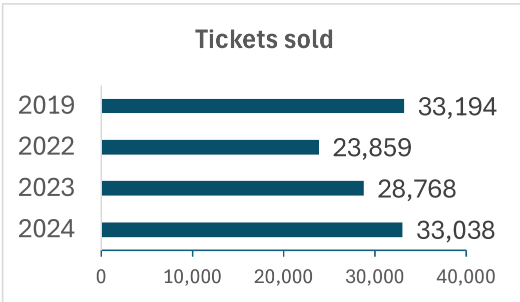
Charts in the first section show the average across all participating organisations for 13 key performance indicators, known as Insights. Those in the following sections show the averages for each organisation type. All but one of the percentage increases or decreases compare 2024 with 2023. (See page 12 for the definition of each Insight).

All participating organisations

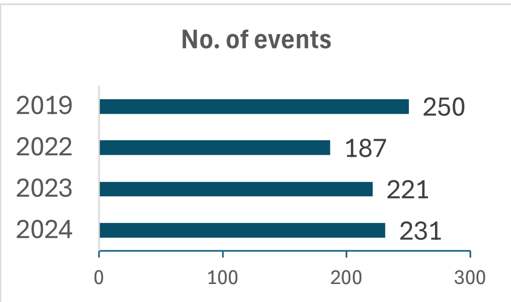
How is the performing arts infrastructure doing?



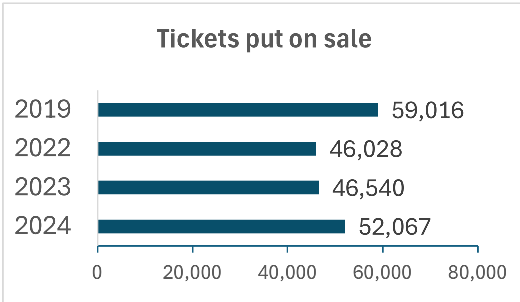
+18%



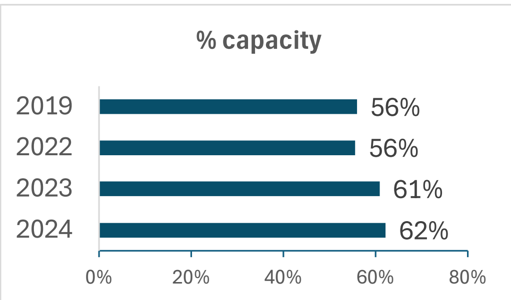
+15%



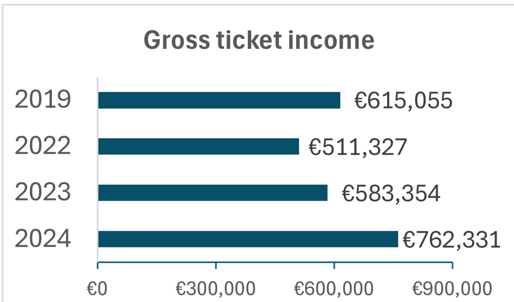
+5%



+12%

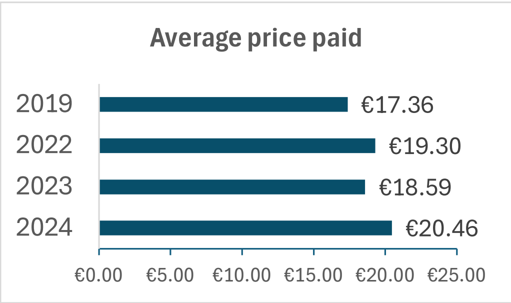


+2%

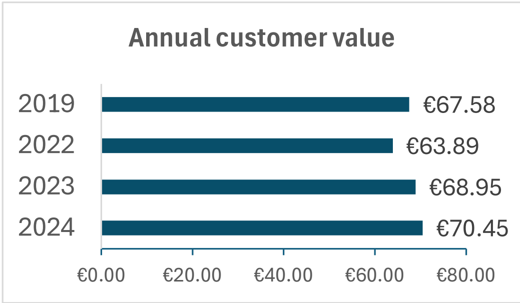


+31%

Is the sector maximising income?

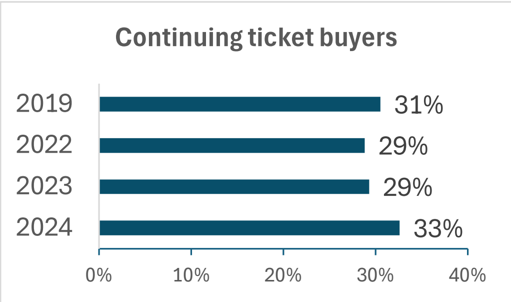


+10%

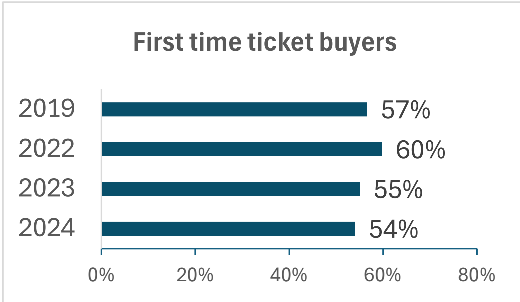


+2%

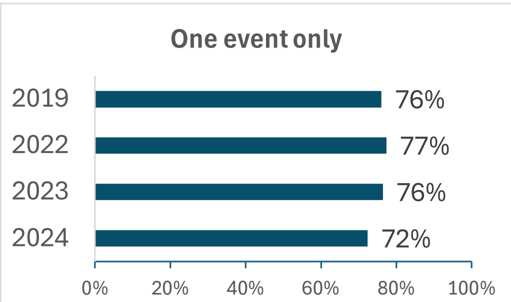
Audience engagement



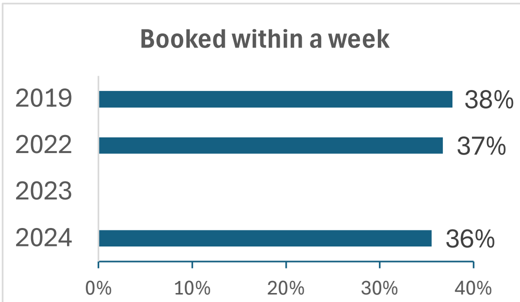
+11%



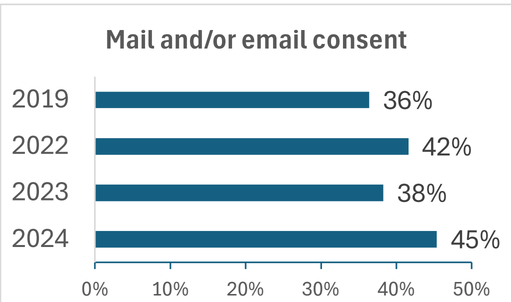
-2%



-5%



-3%



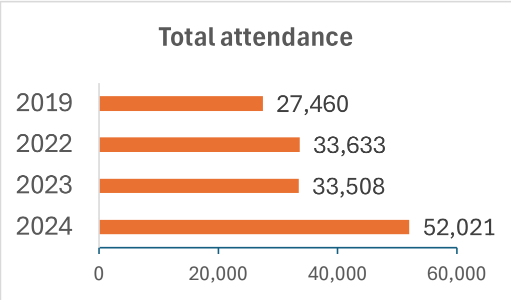
+19%

Overview by organisation type

Festivals
Venues under 500 seats in large urban areas
Large scale
Venues under 500 seats in urban areas

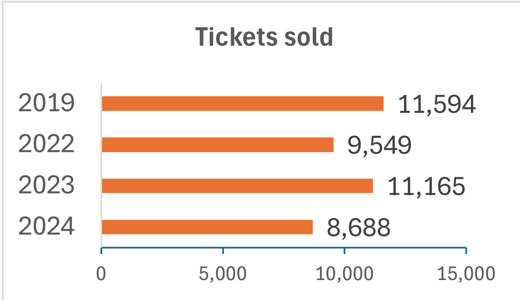
Festivals

How are they doing?



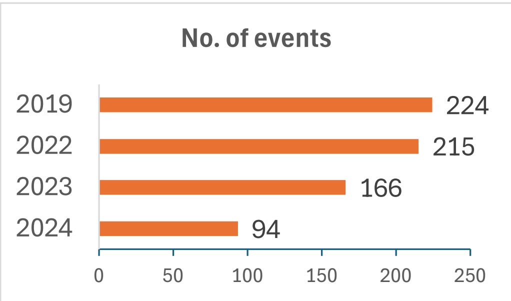
+55%

Range 2023: 12,326 - 75,632 Range 2024: 7,425 - 107,228



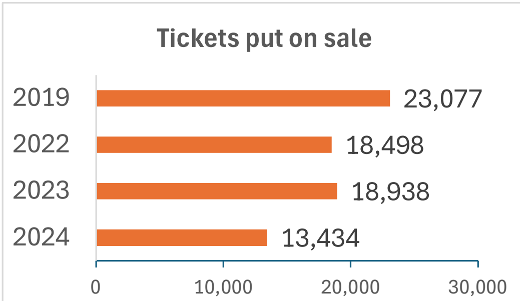
-22%

Range 2023: 3,545 - 25,897 Range 2024: 4,401 - 16,988



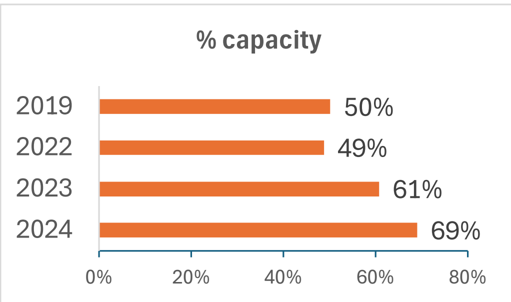
-44%

Range 2023: 34 - 478 Range 2024: 40 - 210



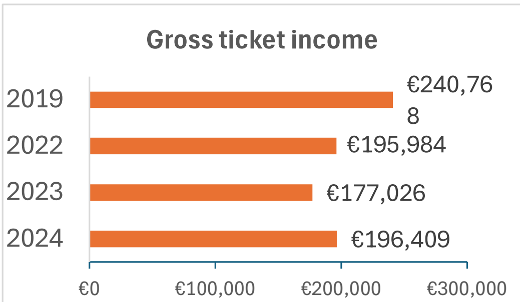
-29%

Range 2023: 5,886 - 44,831 Range 2024: 5,727 - 31,671



+14%

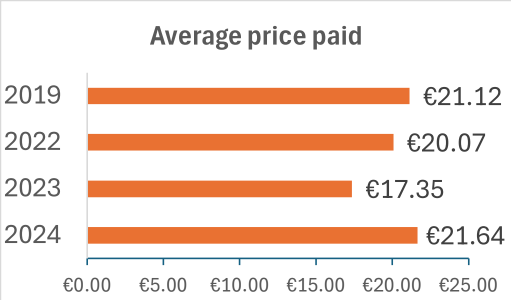
Range 2023: 51% - 73% Range 2024: 54% - 88%

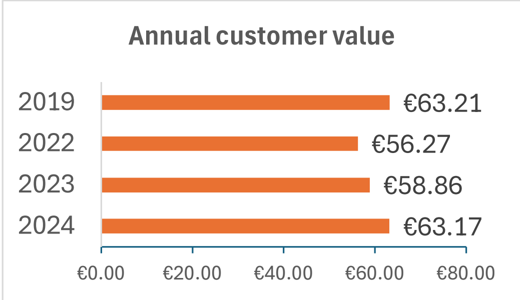


+11%

Range 2023: €43,261 - €394,223 Range 2024: €45,327 - €482,644

Are they maximising income?





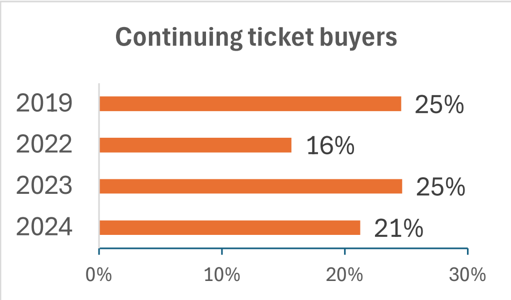
+25%

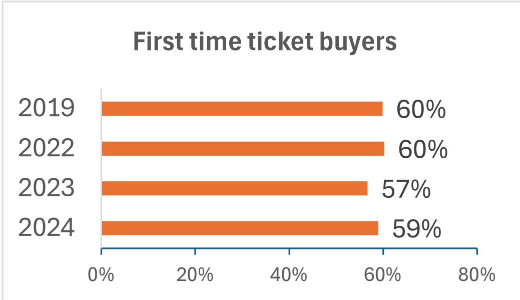
Range 2023: €8.05 - €24.85 Range 2024: €11.83 - €30.60

+7%

Range 2023: €40.05 - €101.48 Range 2024: €47.25 - €86.14

Audience engagement



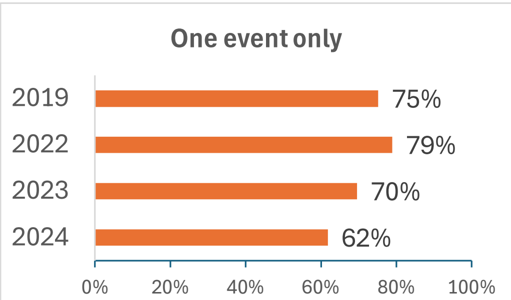


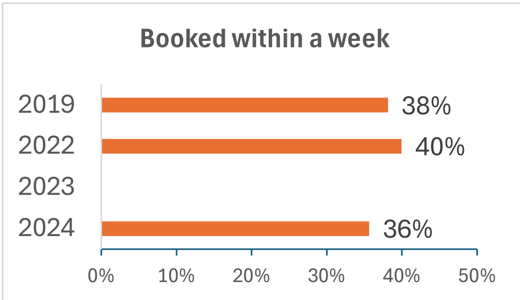
-14%

Range 2023: 19% - 38% Range 2024: 7% - 30%

+4%

Range 2023: 42% - 72% Range 2024: 43% - 93%



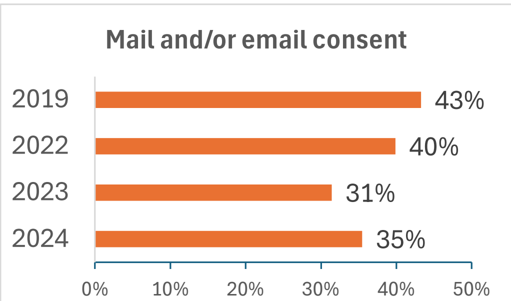


-11%

Range 2023: 52% - 85% Range 2024: 31% - 93%

-11%

Range 2022: 25% - 57% Range 2024: 21% - 50%

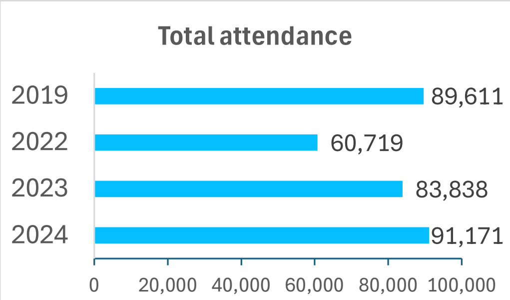


+13%

Range 2023: 18% - 53% Range 2024: 25% - 51%

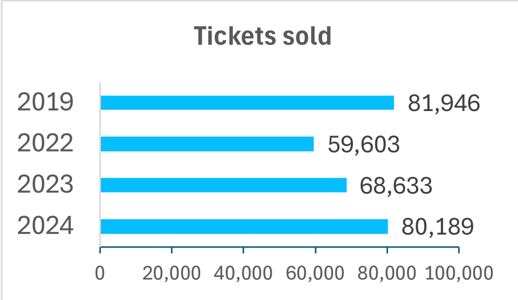
Large Scale Venues

How are they doing?



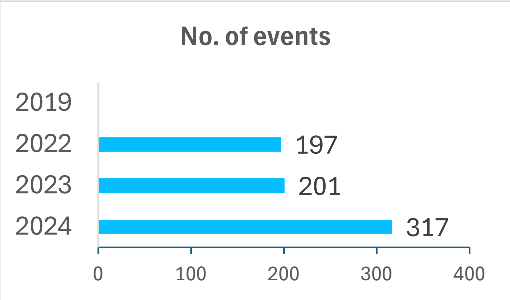
+9%

Range 2023: 35,657 - 113,671 Range 2024: 40,433 - 115,725



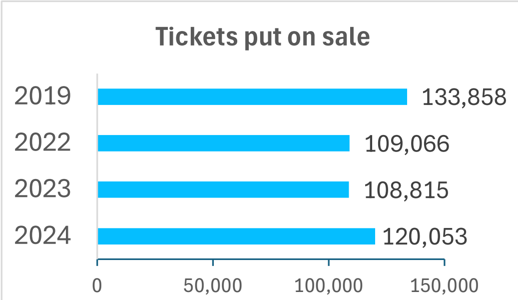
+17%

Range 2023: 35,177 - 97,835 Range 2024: 40,433 - 115,327



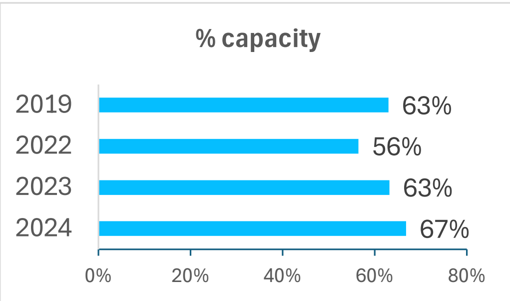
+58%

Range 2023: 112 - 281 Range 2024: 126 - 432



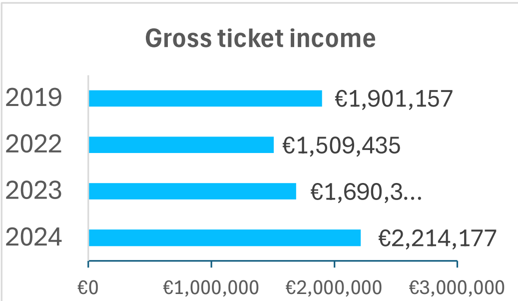
+10%

Range 2023: 57,389 - 160,720 Range 2024: 61,716 - 163,080



+6%

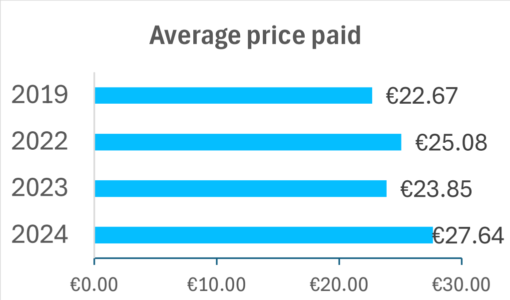
Range 2023: 59% - 67% Range 2024: 61% - 74%



+31%

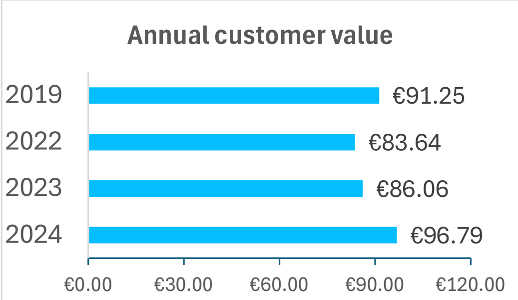
Range 2023: €726,577 - €2,653,4(Range 2024: €885,582 - €3,080,979

Are they maximising income?



+16%

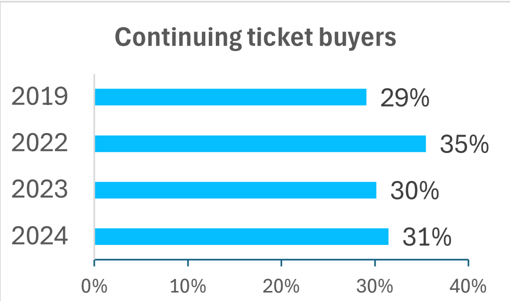
Range 2023: €20.65 - €27.12 Range 2024: €21.53 - €40.33



+12%

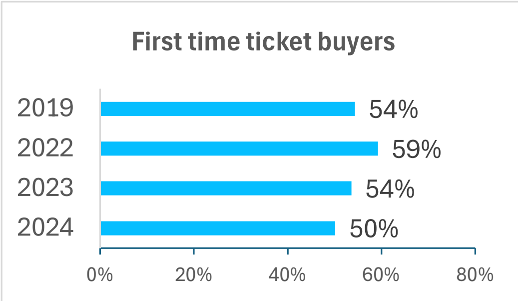
Range 2023: €69.84 - €100.34 Range 2024: €64.74 - €124.83

Audience engagement



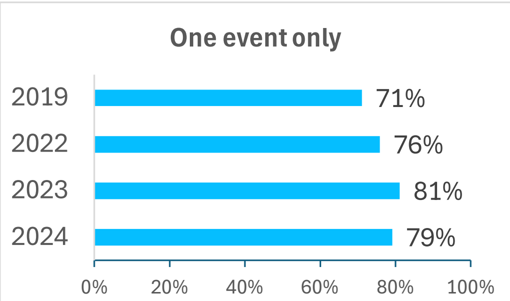
+4%

Range 2023: 24% - 37% Range 2024: 24% - 50%



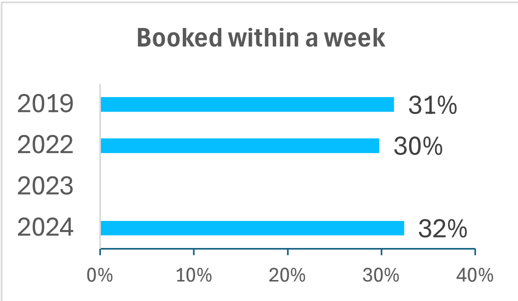
-6%

Range 2023: 37% - 71% Range 2024: 43% - 71%



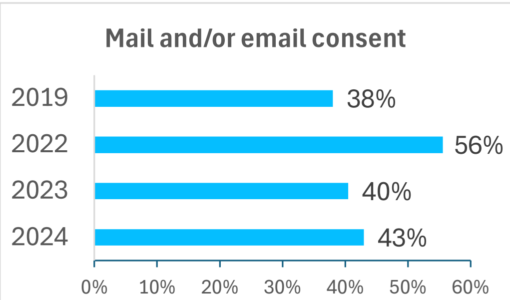
-2%

Range 2023: 75% - 85% Range 2024: 69% - 85%



+9%

Range 2022: 10% - 46% Range 2024: 21% - 56%

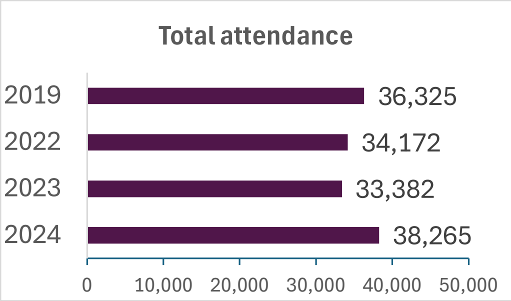


+6%

Range 2023: 20% - 54% Range 2024: 17% - 66%

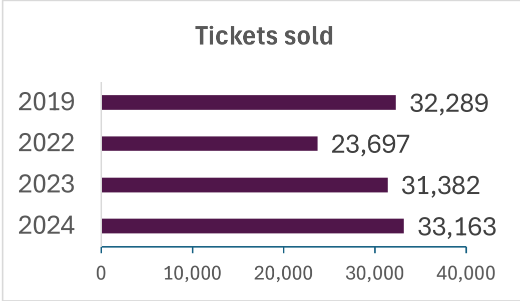
Venues with under 500 seats in large urban areas

How are they doing?



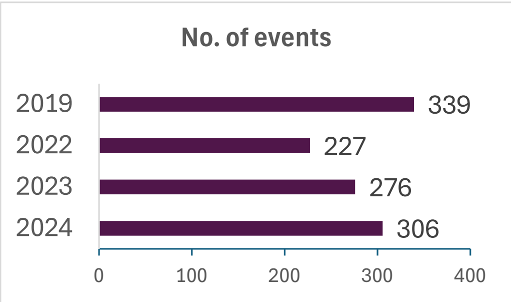
+15%

Range 2023: 8,780 - 80,248 Range 2024: 9,907 - 90,843



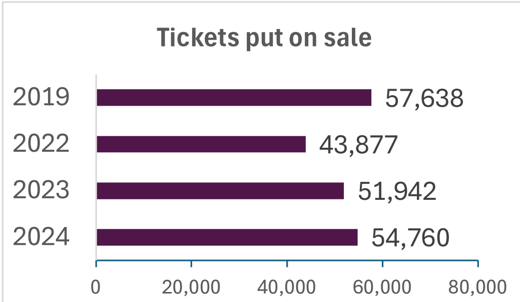
+6%

Range 2023: 8,480 - 80,123 Range 2024: 9,762 - 88,876



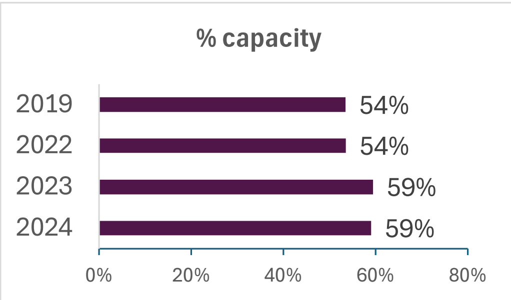
+11%

Range 2023: 159 - 502 Range 2024: 159 - 491



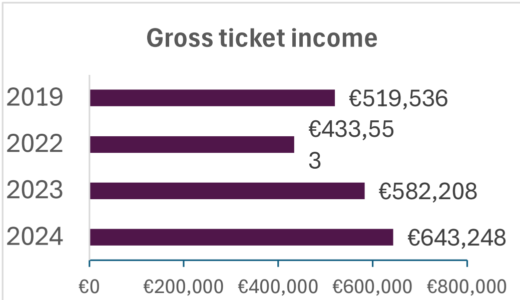
+5%

Range 2023: 14,729 - 108,794 Range 2024: 17,778 - 111,598



-1%

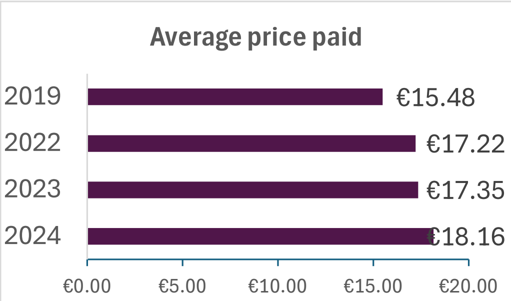
Range 2023: 24% - 82% Range 2024: 27% - 80%



+10%

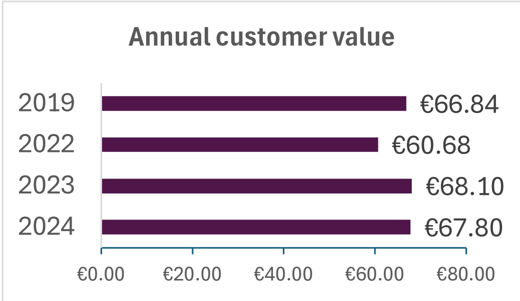
Range 2023: €131,752 - €1,657,4(Range 2024: €172,354 - €1,836,679

Are they maximising income?



+5%

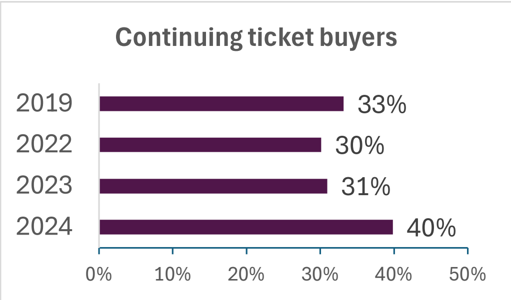
Range 2023: €11.45 - €23.34 Range 2024: €12.83 - €25.99



0%

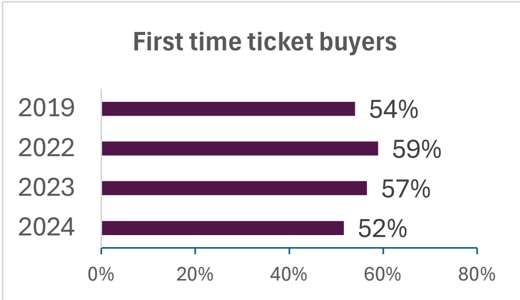
Range 2023: €37.57 - €106.40 Range 2024: €38.55 - €101.67

Audience engagement



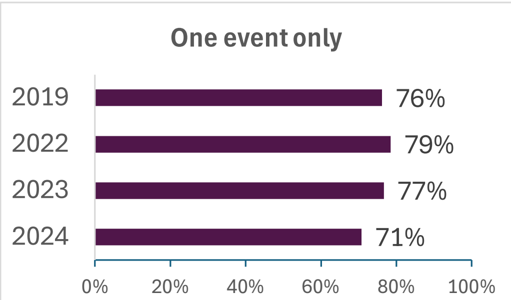
+29%

Range 2023: 18% - 38% Range 2024: 20% - 120%



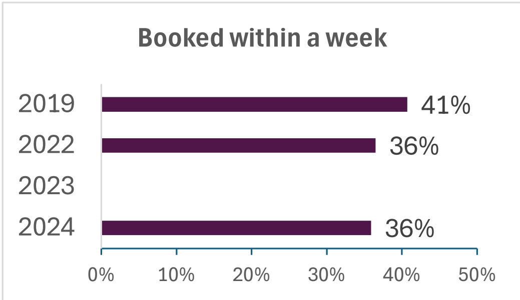
-9%

Range 2023: 44% - 68% Range 2024: 39% - 66%



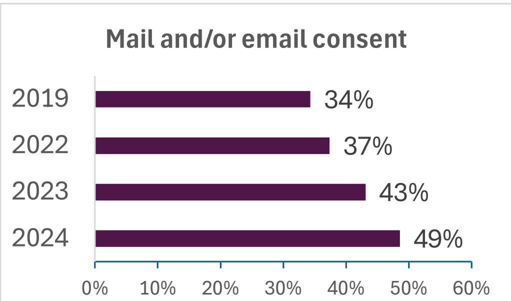
-8%

Range 2023: 70% - 83% Range 2024: 5% - 84%



-2%

Range 2022: 2% - 73% Range 2024: 15% - 67%

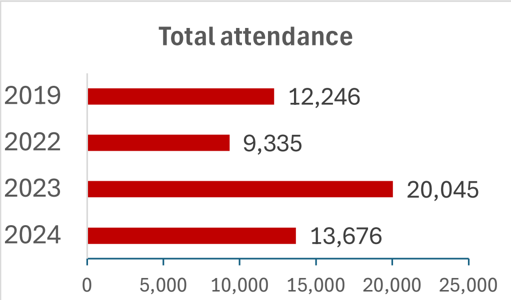


+13%

Range 2023: 10% - 69% Range 2024: 28% - 77%

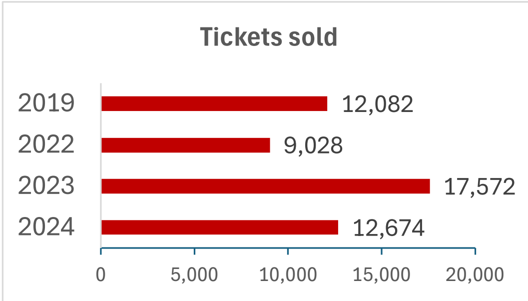
Venues with under 500 seats in urban areas

How are they doing?



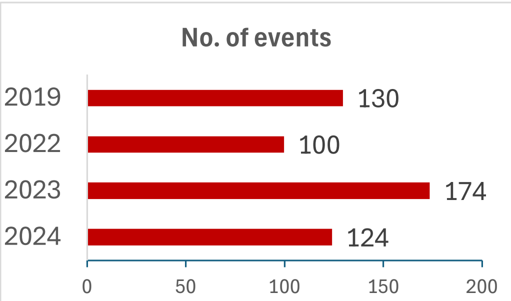
-32%

Range 2023: 2,647 - 54,725 Range 2024: 2,882 - 41,175



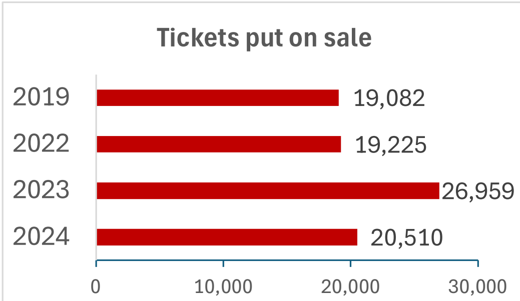
-28%

Range 2023: 2,647 - 45,725 Range 2024: 2,882 - 38,875



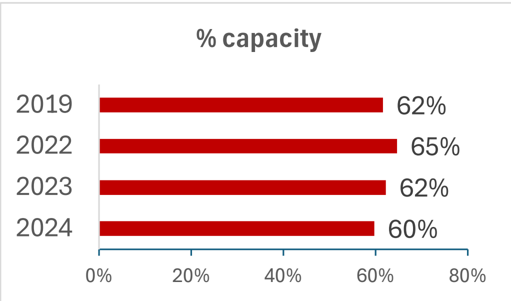
-29%

Range 2023: 80 - 662 Range 2024: 66 - 174



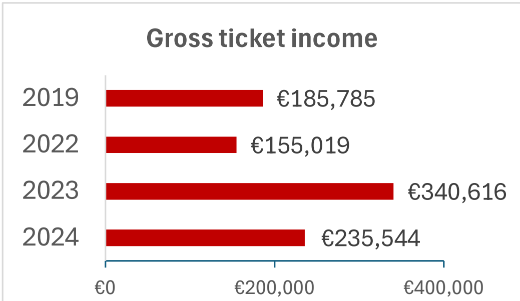
-24%

Range 2023: 9,519 - 65,221 Range 2024: 5,150 - 60,231



-4%

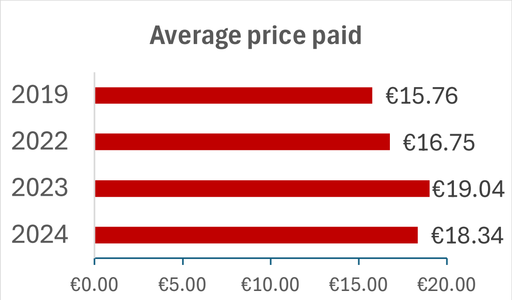
Range 2023: 28% - 84% Range 2024: 40% - 76%



-31%

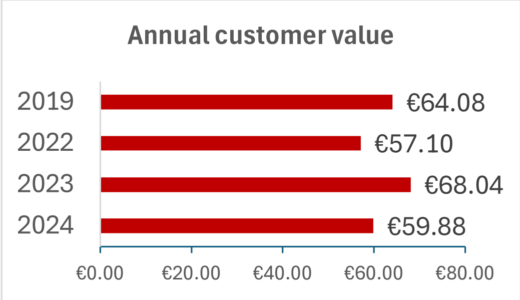
Range 2023: €38,344 - €929,155 Range 2024: €49,223 - €735,981

Is the sector maximising income?



-4%

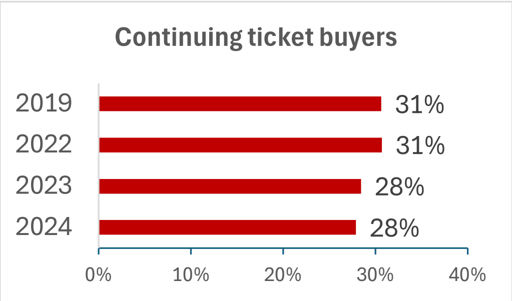
Range 2023: €14.49 - €26.20 Range 2024: €16.47 - €22.86



-12%

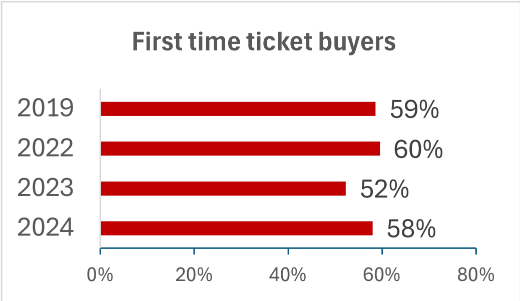
Range 2023: €43.69 - €95.42 Range 2024: €40.17 - €77.03

Audience engagement



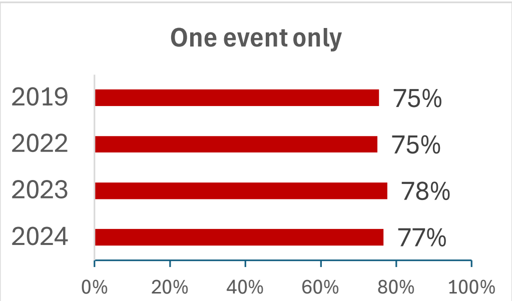
-2%

Range 2023: 14% - 42% Range 2024: 1% - 44%



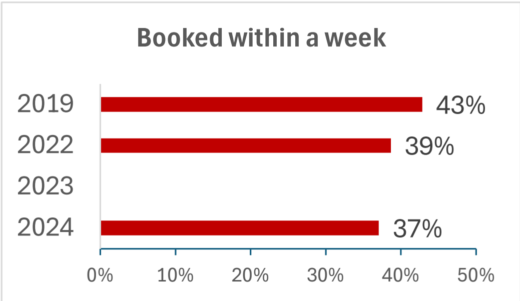
+11%

Range 2023: 7% - 77% Range 2024: 33% - 96%



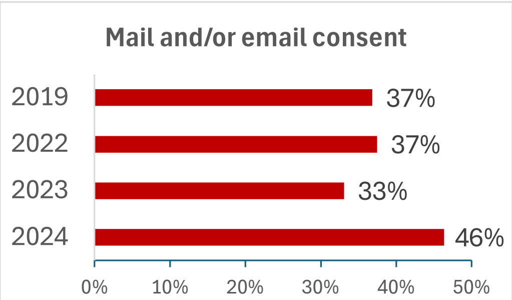
-1%

Range 2023: 68% - 91% Range 2024: 46% - 96%



-4%

Range 2022: 21% - 64% Range 2024: 21% - 66%



0%

Range 2023: 3% - 67% Range 2024: 24% - 82%

About the Audience Insights

Audience Insights analyses the data held on participating organisations' ticketing systems about customers who bought tickets for events taking place in the calendar years 2019, 2022, 2023 and 2024. All the Insights except Total attendance exclude customers who were issued with complimentary tickets only. This is intended to exclude from analysis attenders who are not customers e.g. press, staff, stakeholders etc.

Events: the number of performances, film screenings, talks, workshops and participatory activities in any artform
Attendances: total tickets sold plus attendances at free events and total tickets sold by third parties on behalf of the organisation
Tickets sold: excluding complimentary tickets
% capacity: the percentage of tickets put on sale that were actually sold excluding complimentary tickets
Gross ticket income: the total taken at the box office before deductions for tax, credit card charges etc.
Average price paid: also known as ticket yield
Annual customer value: the average total spent on tickets in that year per customer
Continuing ticket buyers: the percentage of customers who also bought tickets the previous year
One event only: the percentage of customers who bought tickets for just one event that year
Within 7 days: the percentage of transactions made within a week of the event in 2024 compared to 2022
Mail and/or email consent: the percentage of customers who have opted in to receive marketing communications by email and/or post
Average: the arithmetical mean for all participating organisations of that type and scale
Range: the lowest and highest values each year among all participating organisations of that type and scale
Increase/decrease: the percentage difference between 2023 and 2024.The marketing consent Insight was omitted from the 2023 Insights so the comparison is with 2022.

Participating organisations

34 organisations participated in this year's Audience Insights project. All sell tickets through box office computer systems so consistently collect information about their ticket transactions and customers. The organisations have been divided into groups by the type and scale so that comparisons between organisations are helpful.

Large scale venues either have an auditorium with 500 or more seats or are one of the national producing venues.

Venues with fewer than 500 seats have been divided into those in towns or cities with a population of 20,000 or more (referred to as Large Urban areas) and those in less densely populated towns (Urban areas). These venues have varying capacities and configurations: some are small theatres, others are arts centres offering a range of visual and performing arts.

The participating venues with fewer than 500 seats are:

Large urban areas:
An Táin Arts Centre, Dundalk; Belltable, Limerick; The Civic, Tallaght; Draíocht, Blanchardstown; Dunamaise Arts Centre, Portlaoise; Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray; Pavilion Theatre, Dún Laoghaire; Project Arts Centre, Dublin; Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge; Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin; Theatre Royal, Waterford; Triskel Arts Centre, Cork; Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny and Wexford Arts Centre.

Urban areas:
An Grianán Theatre, Letterkenny; Backstage Theatre, Longford; Ballina Arts Centre, The Dock, Carrick-on-Shannon; The Glens Centre, Manorhamilton; The Linenhall Arts Centre, Castlebar; Roscommon Arts Centre; The Seamus Ennis Cultural Centre, Naul.

The participating **Large scale** venues are**:**
Abbey Theatre, Dublin; The Everyman, Cork; The Gate Theatre, Dublin; Lime Tree Theatre, Limerick; The National Opera House, Wexford; Town Hall Theatre, Galway.

The participating **Festivals** are:
Cork Midsummer Festival; Dublin Dance Festival; Dublin Theatre Festival; Earagail Art Festival, Donegal; Kilkenny Arts Festival; Wexford Festival Opera.

About benchmarking

Benchmarking aims to measure an organisation's processes, outputs and their outcomes and make comparisons with similar organisations to see where it is doing well and what works better elsewhere. Benchmarks need to be:
- comparable
- broad brush, as they only need to be good enough to spot where an organisation can improve
- easily calculated, because they need to be repeated regularly and consistently
- interesting and meaningful to organisations and stakeholders.

Although it is helpful to test the robustness of the benchmarks, they are not an end in themselves. It is most helpful to focus on spotting differences and discuss the reasons behind them. The point is to spot where other organisations are doing better, look at how they are doing it and learn from them.