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community in Ireland.

# Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts in Ireland in 2019 and 2020

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## Key Findings

### The arts enrich all our lives

Living through the Covid-19 crisis has shown how we took the arts and entertainment for granted. Now we appreciate just how much going to a concert or exhibition, the cinema or a musical, theatre shows or pantomimes, singing in a choir or playing in a band enriches our lives. In this new socially distanced reality where so many freedoms are and will be curtailed, imaginative freedom seems more important than ever.

In line with the Strategic Investment Priorities of the *National Development Plan 2018–2027* and the *Life Worth Living Report* of the Arts and Culture Taskforce, we suggest that investment in the arts is an investment in giving communities the freedom of their imagination.

*"Plans for investment in culture and heritage recognise that high quality infrastructure is critical for a vibrant heritage and culture sector and that investment in our cultural heritage underpins social cohesion and supports strong, sustainable economic growth. In terms of regional objectives, specific priorities are to enhance arts and culture centres throughout the country, develop the sustainable tourism potential of our culture and heritage infrastructure and improve Ireland's outdoor recreation infrastructure and natural heritage."*

*The National Development Plan 2018 - 2027*

*"The quality of life in our regional towns and villages will play a key role in delivering a balanced regional economy as envisaged in the National Economic Plan."*

*The Taskforce believes that all across Ireland, there are spaces which can, with imagination and a well-funded capital improvement programme, be adapted to allow live performances in a safe environment, adhering to public health guidelines, and enriching life in our towns and villages and cities."*

*Life Worth Living: The Report of the Arts and Culture Recovery Taskforce*

If artists are to have the opportunity to make the art that enriches our lives and our communities, then the sector must heed the evidence in this and other reports and take responsibility for cultivating the conditions that allow artists, makers and creative practitioners to support themselves through their art.

*"Entering the arts, by and large, is not a sensible life choice in terms of the wellbeing gained from financial security."*

Director, production company (music)

### **Covid has pushed precariousness into penury**

**In 2019, 33% of artists, makers and creative practitioners relied on temporary work outside the arts to top up their income. This kind of work also experienced high levels of disruption during the pandemic so in 2020 only 15% were able to top up their income in this way. Just 44% were eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Payments.**

The Covid-19 pandemic heightened the precariousness of working in the arts to often intolerable levels with serious impact on many people's life choices:

*"I cannot live in a city, cannot afford new clothes, bills and, sometimes, groceries. Constant stress on mental health about finances. Cannot afford to start a family, buy a house (or even rent most of them). I'm working 16+ hours a day for less than the minimum wage."*

Performing artist working in the sector for four years

### **Fair pay and conditions**

**In 2019, 91% of artists, makers and creative practitioners earned less than the national average earnings for all employees of €40,283<sup>1</sup>. 22% earned less than the national minimum wage of €9.80 per hour.**

There is further inequity within the sector with freelance artists and arts workers more likely to have annual earnings below the national minimum wage, largely because they are paid flat fees that do not reflect the hours worked.

Alongside the Universal Basic Income pilot initiative and its much-needed rollout across the sector, a general overhaul of pay and conditions is urgently required to ensure they meet at the very least minimum acceptable standards such as the national living wage.<sup>2</sup> All organisations, including festivals, production companies, arts centres, venues, and their stakeholders must think and act collectively to ensure artists and arts workers are paid appropriately, mitigate the impact of precarious employment and promote wellbeing.

*"[Working as an artist] has meant an improvised life of penury."*

Director, writer and dramaturg working in the sector for 41 years

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<sup>1</sup> *Earnings and Labour Costs Annual Data 2019*, Central Statistics Office, <<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/elca/earningsandlabourcostsannualdata2019/>> [accessed 10.08.2021]

<sup>2</sup> see <https://www.livingwage.ie/> for more information

### **The hardest gig is not working**

**67% of theatres, arts centres and venues said they cut jobs in 2020. A projected 800 jobs were lost. 60% of these were temporary and freelance roles linked to the creation, production and presentation of live performance.**

Obviously, artists, makers and creative practitioners want to work. They compromise on pay and conditions and piece together a portfolio of jobs inside and outside the arts to continue doing so. If we are to retain talent and experience after the pandemic, the arts sector's employment framework must be re-engineered to eliminate the double whammy of poor pay for intermittent work and ensure artists enjoy parity of pay and esteem.

*"I'm actively looking to retrain at this point as my wife and I are thinking about having kids, and it just would not be feasible to continue to work in the arts as it stands without either a significant pay rise, or a reduction in crazy hours."*

Lighting designer working in the sector for 12 years

## Introduction

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the performing arts has been severe. A report commissioned by the Arts Council concluded:

*"In 2020, the [arts, entertainment and recreation] sector contracted by a staggering 54.4% compared to 2019. This is significantly higher than any other industry, and in stark contrast to the 3.4% growth which was recorded in the economy as a whole. This severe decline can be attributed to the fact that while sectors such as retail and hospitality were also forced to shut down for extended periods, they were in a position to reopen upon the easing of restrictions, which was not possible for the Arts sector."*<sup>3</sup>

As a result, the fault lines that already existed in the arts sector<sup>4</sup> have deepened, increasing the precariousness of artists, makers and creative practitioners' working lives.

2020's prolonged period of closure for live performance venues saw many organisations continuing to work by finding ways of migrating their work online. The initial rush into online publication and distribution of existing content left many artists unrewarded for their work. Subsequent online work was much reduced in scope and scale and so offered far fewer job opportunities with little thought given to paying artists adequately for work published in this way.

This research aims to assess the specific impacts of the pandemic on pay and conditions in the performing arts.

## Methodology

Theatre Forum surveyed its members in May 2021 to gather quantitative and qualitative information about pay and conditions in the performing arts in 2019 and 2020. 139 artists and creative practitioners and 90 festivals, production companies and venues from across Ireland responded.

<b>Organisation type</b>	<b>No. of organisations</b>	<b>% based outside Dublin</b>
Festivals	16	81%
Production companies	24	not applicable
Venues	50	75%
Total	90	

<sup>3</sup> Ernst & Young, *Employment and Economic Impact Assessment of Covid-19 on the Arts Sector in Ireland*, March 2021

<sup>4</sup> See the predecessor to this study published by Theatre Forum in January 2019

This analysis covers 646 jobs across the 90 organisations and focuses on salaries and fees for 58 specific roles occurring in at least two organisations within an organisation type.

The median career length of the artists, makers and creative practitioners responding was 15 years, ranging from three to 60 years.

### **Report structure**

This report is in four sections.

Section 1 analyses the pay and conditions from the point of view of artists, makers and creative practitioners, most of whom work independently or freelance for festivals, production companies and venues.

Section 2 analyses the trends in the pay and conditions offered by festivals, production companies and venues.

Section 3 lists the salaries, production fees, weekly fees, and hourly rates paid by festivals, production companies and venues for a wide range of jobs across the performing arts.

Section 4 sets out the qualitative information provided by artists, makers, creative practitioners, festivals, production companies and venues in response to the question "What impact does the nature of employment in the arts have on workers lives?"

### **Definitions**

*Venues* refers to professionally run theatres, arts centres and other performance spaces programming the professional performing arts year-round.

*Average* refers to the arithmetical mean unless otherwise stated. The analysis also uses *medians* – the mid-point in the data where half of the responses are higher and half lower – as the mean can be distorted by a small number of outliers which are much higher or much lower than the rest of the responses.

We used definitions of precariousness consistent with research commissioned by the Think Tank for Action on Social Change<sup>5</sup>. Precarious employment is defined as:

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<sup>5</sup> Alicja Bobek, Sinead Pembroke and James Wickham, *Living with Uncertainty: social implications of precarious work*, (Brussels and Dublin: Foundation for European Progressive Studies and TASC, 2018)

- Temporary full-time employment including fixed term or rolling contracts
- Temporary part time employment with regular hours each week including fixed term or rolling contracts
- Part time employment with variable hours each week
- Freelance contracts or self-employment
- Unpaid voluntary work including profit share

Non-precarious employment is defined as:

- Permanent full-time employment
- Permanent part time employment with regular hours each week





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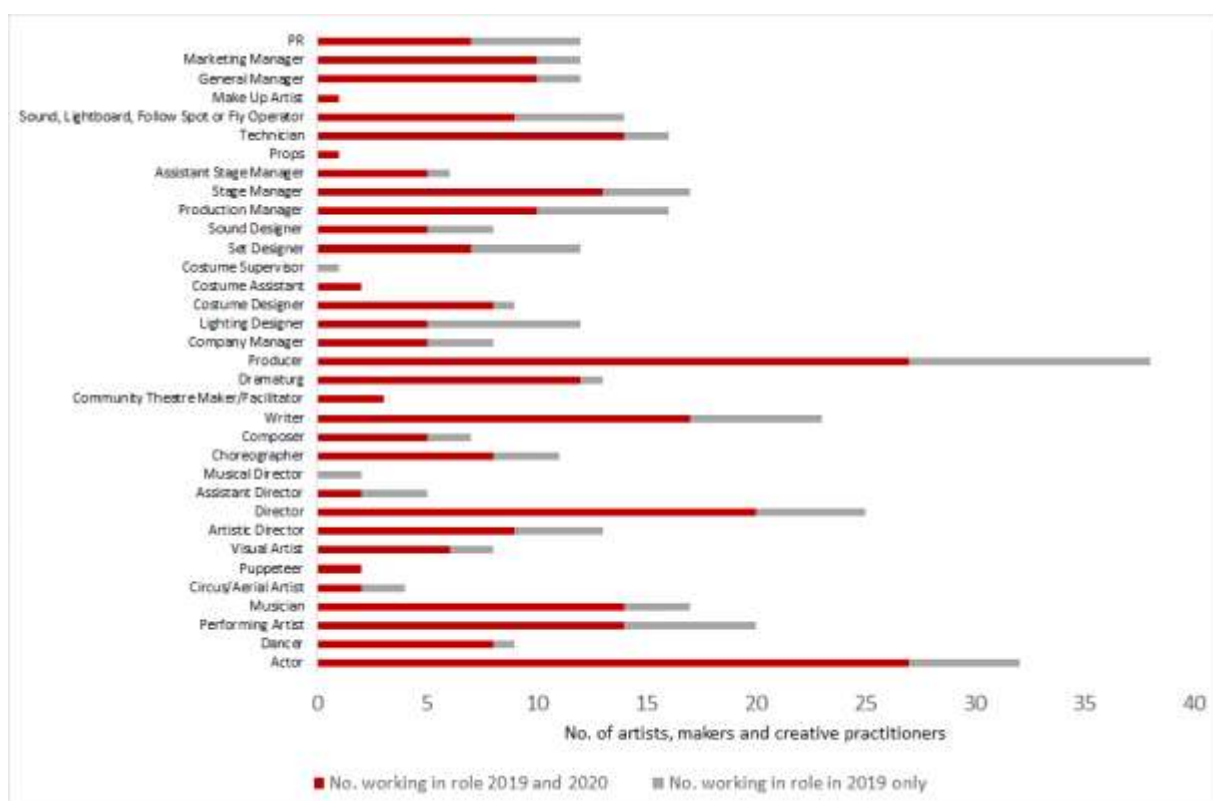
# Section One: Artists, Makers and Creative Practitioners

## Roles

The majority of artists, makers and creative practitioners responding to the survey multi-task, on average combining 3.2 professional roles in 2019 e.g., working as an actor, writer and director. Just 29% fulfilled one role only.

In 2020, those fulfilling multiple roles had to narrow their focus a little with the average number of roles falling to 3.0. In all, 31% fulfilled fewer roles. Conversely, some of those fulfilling just one role broadened their focus with the percentage falling from 29% to 21%.

*Number of respondents working in each role in 2019 and 2020:*

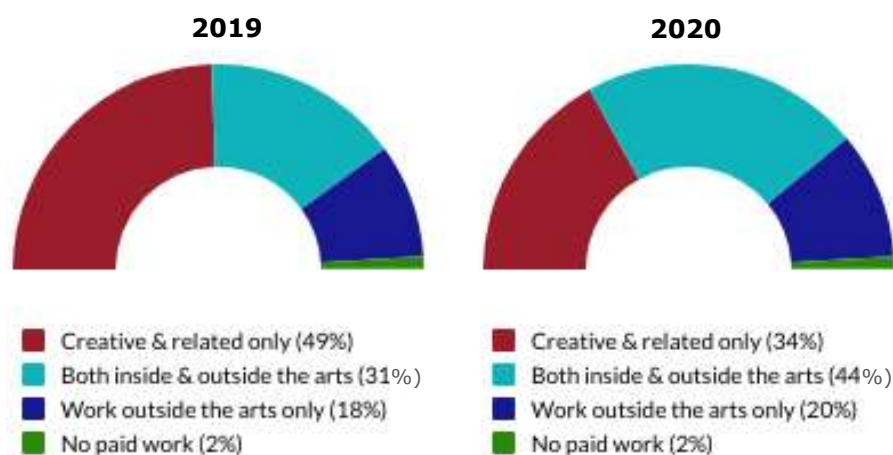


Those least likely to have worked in a particular role in 2020 as well as 2019 are freelancers involved in activities associated with individual new productions such as Lighting, Sound and Set Designers, Musical Directors, Production Managers, Costume Supervisors and Public Relations specialists.

## Sources of income

In 2019, 49% of respondents relied on income from creative practice and related activities (e.g., administration and teaching) only. In 2020, this fell to 34%. The percentage of respondents relying on income from both inside and outside the arts went up from 31% to 44%.

% of respondents relying on each source of income



In 2019, 52% of performing artists, makers and creative practitioners relied on work in the cultural sector beyond their creative practice such as teaching or project management.

## Income

Respondents' median annual earnings from all sources in 2019 was €21,210 with half of respondents earning less. This is 53% of the national average annual earnings for all employees in Ireland in 2019, including regular, overtime and irregular earnings, of €40,283<sup>6</sup>. 91% of all respondents earned less than the national average earnings for all employees.

*"I find myself in a position where if I play hardball on wages, companies or shows may either not hire me or move on from me in order to hire someone who will take less money, regardless of the difference in quality of work."*

Lighting designer working in the sector for 12 years

In 2020, respondents' median annual earnings from all sources including Covid-related supports such as Pandemic Unemployment Payments fell to €19,891, 49% of the national average.

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<sup>6</sup> *Earnings and Labour Costs Annual Data 2019*, Central Statistics Office, <<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/elca/earningsandlabourcostsannualdata2019/>> [accessed 10.08.2021]

	2019	2020
Median annual earnings 2020	€21,210	€19,891
% of the national average annual earnings for all employees in Ireland	<b>53%</b>	<b>49%</b>

### Hours worked

The median number of hours worked by respondents both inside and outside the arts went down from 1,865 in 2019 to 1,035 in 2020, a fall of 45%. The median hours worked in arts jobs went down from 990 to 440, a fall of 56%.

The percentage of respondents working the equivalent of part-time hours across the year (i.e., less than 30 hours a week) including work inside and outside the arts sector went up from 28% in 2019 to 58% in 2020.

The percentage working the equivalent of part-time hours in jobs within the arts sector went up from 58% in 2019 to 94% in 2020.

28% of respondents in 2019 and 31% in 2020 worked unpaid hours in a voluntary capacity.

### Hourly rates

Hourly rates were calculated by dividing the total income from arts jobs by the total number of hours worked on those jobs.

The median hourly rate earned by performing artists, makers and creative practitioners was €14.40 per hour in 2019, just 64% of the average hourly rate across all employment sectors, not just the arts, of €22.62<sup>7</sup>. This increased to €16.28 in 2020, 72% of the average hourly rate across all employment sectors (although the drop in actual hours worked should be noted).

*"I work as a Producer and earn a reasonable daily rate... I have stopped working for flat fees as these are always too low. In 2019 in one of my gigs I calculated my hours and had been working for €8 per hour, below the minimum wage."*

Producer working in the sector for 22 years

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<sup>7</sup> *Earnings and Labour Costs Annual Data 2019*, Central Statistics Office, <<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/elca/earningsandlabourcostsannualdata2019/>> [accessed 10.08.2021]

	2019	2020
Median hourly rate 2020	€14.40	€16.28
% of the national average annual hourly rate for all employment sectors in Ireland	64%	72%
% earning less than the national minimum wage	22%	28%

In 2019, 22% of respondents earned an hourly rate for work in the creative sector less than the national minimum wage of €9.80, increasing to 28% in 2020. 31% earned less than the national living wage of €12.30 increasing to 35% in 2020.

The low hourly rates are mainly because 81% were paid flat fees regardless of the number of hours worked. 28% did at least some work on a voluntary or profit share basis in 2019 including six out of the ten respondents with the lowest hourly rates. These six respondents appear not to be undertaking voluntary work because they wish to gain experience as they have worked in the sector between four and 33 years. Four out of the ten respondents with the lowest hourly rates fulfilled a wide range of roles in 2019, indicating that they ran small production companies.

A small number of respondents earned high hourly rates for a few hours work which distorts the average. This kind of work is difficult to sustain with just four of those with the ten highest hourly rates in 2019 among the top ten in 2020.

### **Working away from home**

67% of respondents worked away from home in 2019, spending an average of 16 nights away. 21% of them did not receive any subsistence support to help cover the cost of their meals or accommodation.

### **Reliance on other sources of income**

In 2019, 33% of artists, makers and creative practitioners relied on work outside the arts sector to top up their income. Only the lowest paid work, however, gives the flexibility that allows artists to take arts jobs when they are offered. This kind of work is mainly in the hospitality and retail sectors, which, like the arts sector, have experienced the highest levels of disruption during the

pandemic<sup>8</sup>. This is why the percentage of respondents relying on work outside the arts and entertainment sector fell to 15% in 2020.

In 2019, 35% of performing artists and creative practitioners relied on income earned by another member of their household, family or friends. Partners, family and friends were also affected by the pandemic and so this percentage dropped to 29% in 2020.

28% relied on social welfare payments or benefits in 2019, rising to 42% in 2020. Just 4% received housing benefits e.g., HAP or Rent Supplement in 2019 and 4% in 2020.

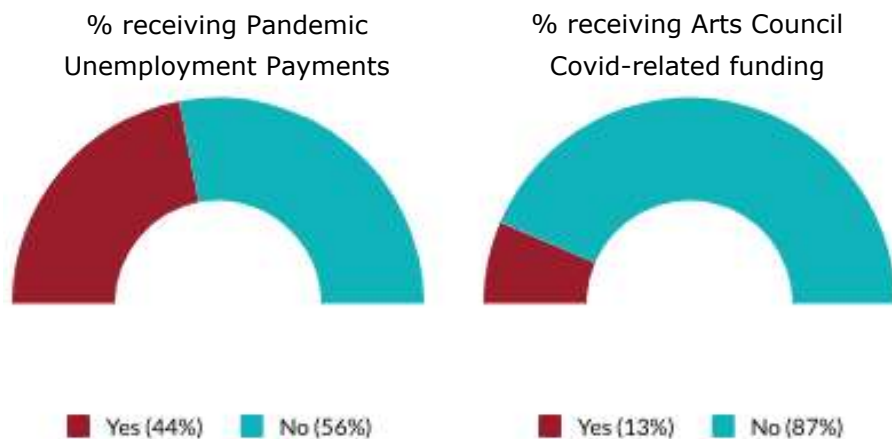
**Covid-related supports**

The analysis commissioned from Ernst & Young by the Arts Council reports that an estimated 26% of the pre-pandemic workforce in the arts sector was reliant on government income supports at the end of March 2021.

84% of respondents did at least some freelance work in 2019 and 41% only worked as a freelance so their entitlement to Covid-related supports was limited.

44% received Pandemic Unemployment Payments and just one respondent received payments under the Part-time Job Incentive Scheme for the Self-Employed.

13% received Covid-related funding from the Arts Council. 68% applied to the Arts Council for funding in 2020, making up to 28 applications with a median of two. 67% made at least one successful application but for 33% all applications were unsuccessful.



<sup>8</sup> *Employment and Economic Impact Assessment of Covid-19 on the Arts Sector in Ireland*, Ernst & Young, March 2021

## Precarious work

78% of those working in 2019 did so only in precarious jobs<sup>9</sup>. Just 16% did so only in jobs that were not precarious. 6% combined precarious and non-precarious jobs.

Our survey findings support the evidence of the 2018 TASC report<sup>10</sup> that precarious work is lacking in important benefits such as pension contributions, sick leave or parental leave.

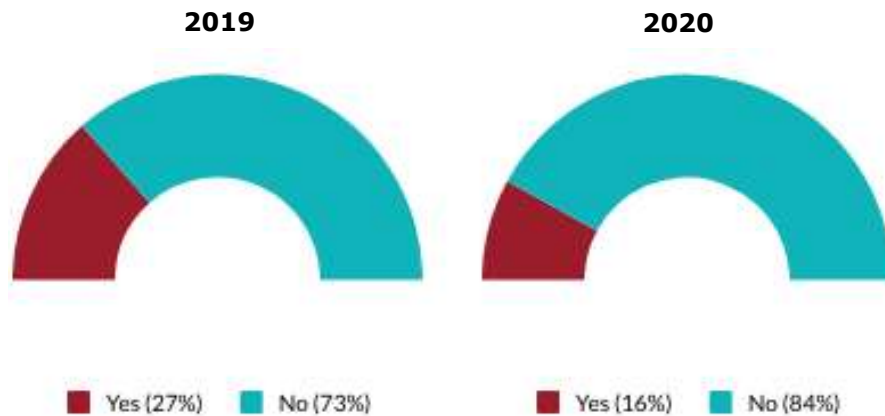
*"I'm constantly having to choose between leaving Ireland to get work that pays properly with the attached conditions such as health care and allowances or staying at home with my family and having to choose what I can afford to pay out of health insurance, car insurance, mortgage and other basic bills – [the kind] professionals in [other sectors in] Ireland expect to be able to afford after 17 years in an industry."*

Sound or lighting operator working for 17 years in the sector

In 2019, 63% of respondents were registered as self-employed with income over the PRSI threshold. Of these, 73% made no pension contributions.

In 2020, 49% were registered and had an income over the PRSI threshold. Of these, 84% made no pension contributions.

*% of eligible respondents making pension contributions:*



In 2019, 40% had health insurance and in 2020 45% had health insurance with two thirds being the policy holder.

<sup>9</sup> See the definitions on page 7

<sup>10</sup> Alicja Bobek, Sinead Pembroke and James Wickham, *Living with Uncertainty: social implications of precarious work*, (Brussels and Dublin: Foundation for European Progressive Studies and TASC, 2018)

## **Sustainable careers**

Respondents were asked what would enable them to sustain their career in the arts over the next five years.

### **Pay**

91% of respondents proposed actions to resolve issues around low pay including:

- the introduction of Universal Basic Income for arts workers as well as artists (38%)
- the introduction of a living wage across the arts (21%)
- industry standards for pay rates and working hours (15%)
- increased financial security, in particular the ability to afford rents (14%)
- incremental pay rises that recognise experience (3%)

### **Conditions**

17% sought an improvement in conditions including:

- a pension scheme for freelance workers or those working for arts organisations with no in-house scheme set up by the Arts Council or Actors' Equity together with contributions by employers (9%)
- affordable and flexible childcare e.g., through subsidies and for its inclusion as a budget line in funding applications (8%)

### **Arts funding**

31% of respondents raised issues around arts funding including:

- increased government funding for the arts (15%)
- a streamlined application process with more support for applicants (8%)
- longer term funding agreements to enable development (6%)
- decentralisation of funding to rural areas (3%)

### **Career development**

16% of respondents were frustrated by lack of opportunities to develop their careers and suggested a range of actions including job creation schemes, more training and continuing professional development, and increased opportunities for performers from diverse backgrounds.





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## Section Two: Festivals, Production Companies and Venues

## Jobs

### Job losses

83 organisations gave detailed information about their workforce in both 2019 and 2020.

At the end of December 2019, they together employed 3,450 people in paid jobs. At the end of December 2020, they employed 3,129 people, a drop of 9%.

	Festivals	Production Companies	Venues	All
Total jobs 2019	100	389	942	3,450
Total jobs 2020	98	347	664	3,129
Jobs lost	<b>-2</b>	<b>-42</b>	<b>-278</b>	<b>-321</b>
	-2%	-11%	-30%	-9%
% orgs. experiencing job losses	38%	32%	67%	53%

Overall, the Covid-19 pandemic impacted employment in the theatre, arts centre and venue sector more than in festivals and production companies. At the end of December 2019, they together employed 942 people in paid jobs. At the end of December 2020, they employed 664 people, a drop of 30% with 278 jobs lost. 67% of the venues responding have lost jobs compared to 38% of festivals and 32% of production companies.

The review of the sector commissioned by the Arts Council identified 138 professionally run theatres, arts centres and venues programming professional arts events year-round. If all of these organisations experienced the same range of impacts as those responding to the survey, the venue sector lost 800 jobs in 2020.

Planned organisational development in response to increases in funding and Covid-specific support meant that 23% of organisations saw a rise in the number of people they employed and 24% saw no change.

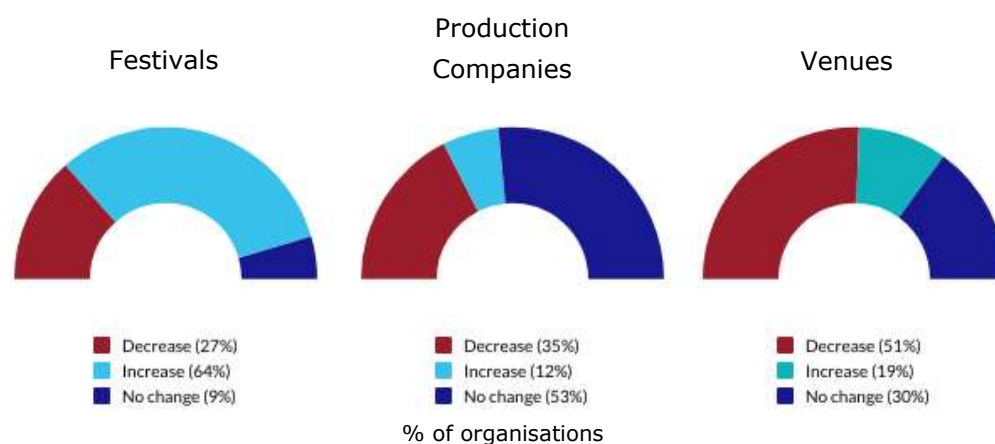
### Types of jobs lost

The pattern of job losses is different for festivals, production companies and venues. Festivals were more likely to lose permanent full-time and part-time jobs (-28%) but production companies and venues were most likely to lose temporary and casual jobs (-18% and -60% respectively).

	Festivals	Production Companies	Venues	All
Permanent full-time / part-time	<b>-19</b> -28%	<b>-2</b> -5%	<b>-26</b> -7%	<b>-42</b> -7%
Temporary / casual	<b>-2</b> -5%	<b>-44</b> -18%	<b>-243</b> -60%	<b>-289</b> -41%
CE and YESS Scheme	+2 +33%	-2 -50%	-9 -5%	-7 0%

### Working hours

Festivals were more likely to lose permanent full-time and part-time jobs and so were more likely to say that they had increased working hours for at least some full-time or part-time jobs in 2020 compared to 2019. Just over half of venues cut working hours.

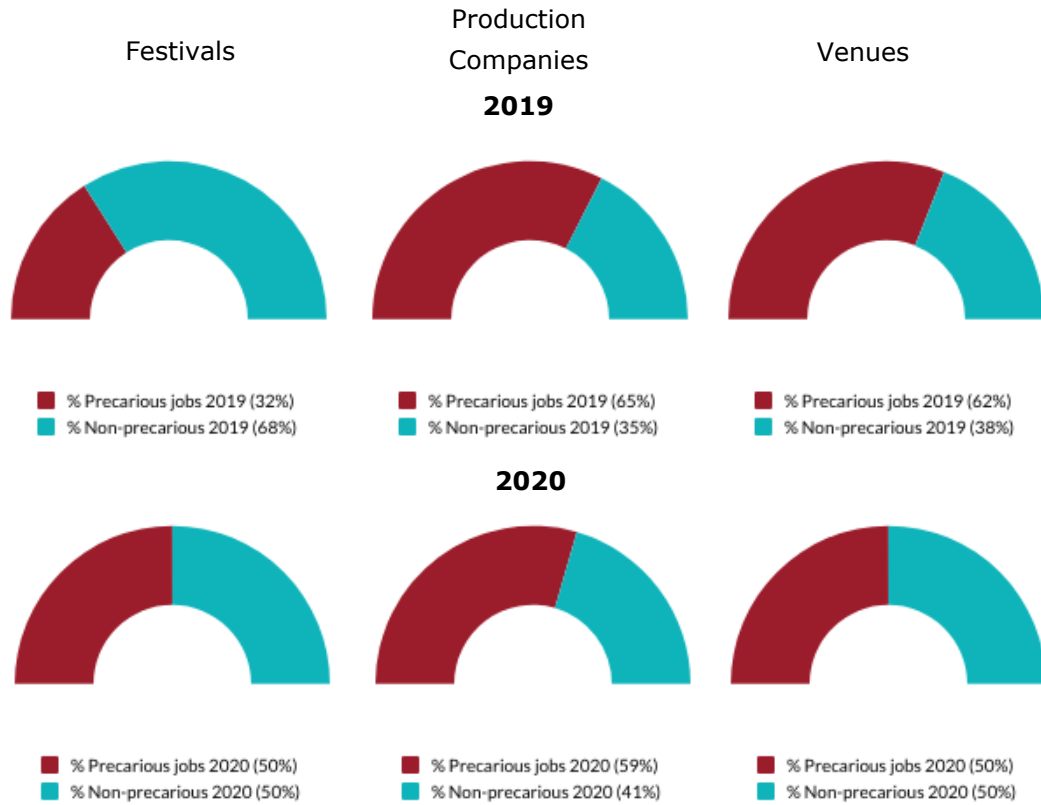


### Precarious work

Overall, 61% of all jobs in festivals, production companies and venues in 2019 are defined as precarious, that is they are temporary, offer irregular hours each week or are freelance contracts or a profit share.<sup>11</sup> This fell to 53% overall in 2020 because of the job losses among temporary and casual staff described below. The proportion of precarious jobs in 2020 differs between types of organisation depending on whether the bulk of job losses are among permanent or temporary and casual staff.

<sup>11</sup> See definitions on page 7

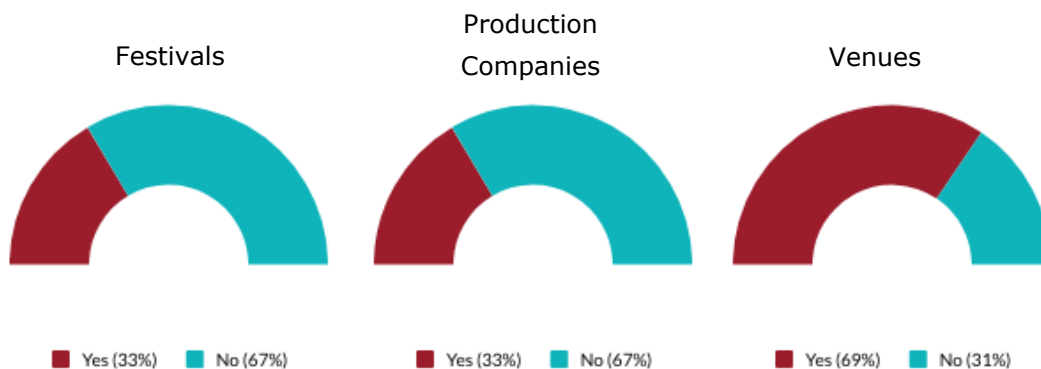
*% of jobs that are precarious:*



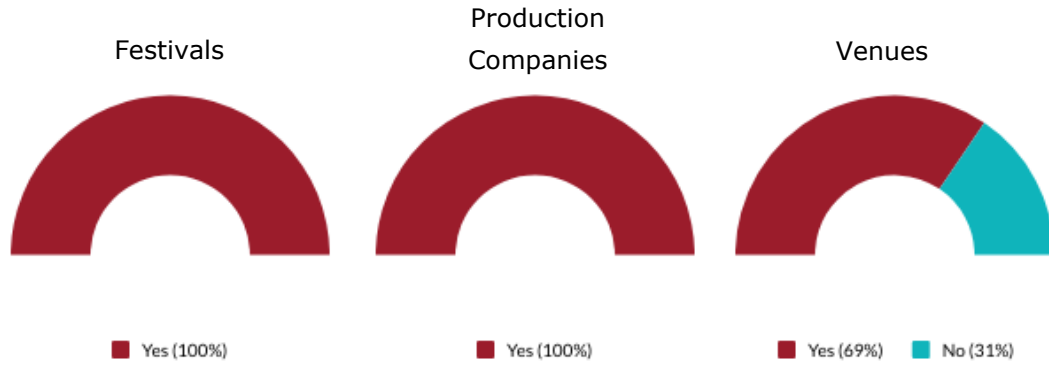
**Financial insecurity**

Section 4 gives an insight into the impact of precarious employment on the lives of sector workers. The key factors are low pay, irregular income and the resulting inability to plan for the future contributed to by the patchy provision of benefits such as pensions, maternity pay and paternity leave.

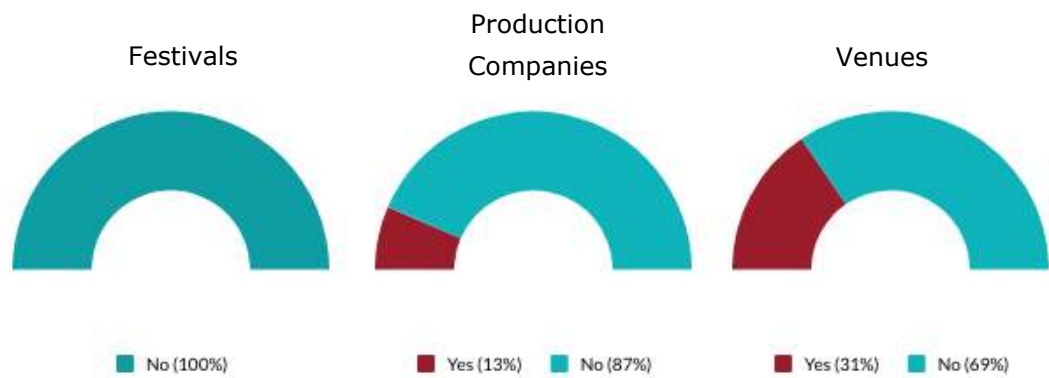
*% of organisations with a pension/PRSA arrangement in place for staff at the end of December 2019:*



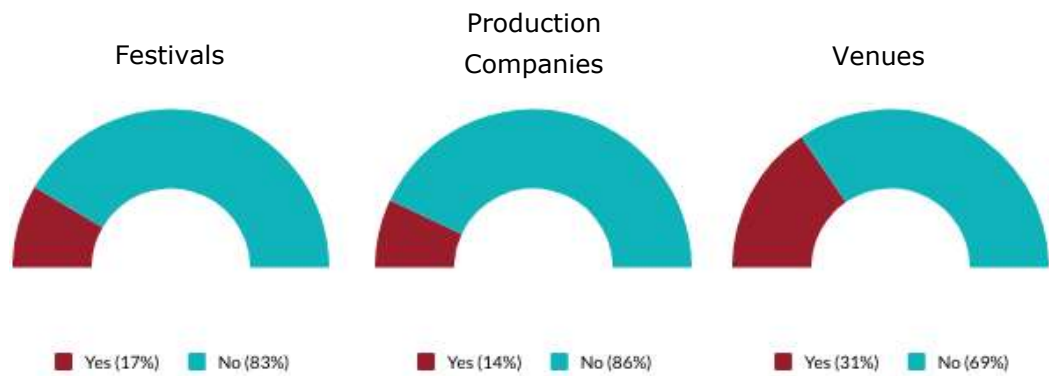
*% of organisations with a pension/PRSA arrangement making employer pension contributions:*



*% of organisations providing a top up to state maternity benefit*



*% of organisations offering paternity leave*



## Pay

### Expenditure on salaries and wages

58 organisations gave detailed information about their expenditure on wages and salaries in both 2019 and 2020. 74% spent less in 2020 than in 2019 with an overall total drop in expenditure of €3.7 million.

*Expenditure on salaries / wages:*

	Festivals	Production Companies	Venues	All
No. of respondents	9	14	35	58
2019	€1.8m	€7.9m	€12.9m	€22.6m
2020	€1.4m	€7.2m	€10.3m	€18.8m
Reduction	<b>-€0.4m</b> -21%	<b>-€0.7m</b> -9%	<b>-€2.6m</b> -20%	<b>-€3.7m</b> -17%

### Pay levels

The median annual earnings in festivals, production companies and venues in 2019 was €27,844, 69% of the average national annual earnings across all sectors in 2019 of €40,283.<sup>12</sup> 66% of PAYE jobs in these performing arts organisations pay less than this national average. PAYE salaries across the performing arts range between €10,000 and €76,000. The average and range for each role is detailed in Section 3.

	Festivals	Production Companies	Venues	All
Median annual earnings 2019	€26,455	€30,648	€26,428	€27,844

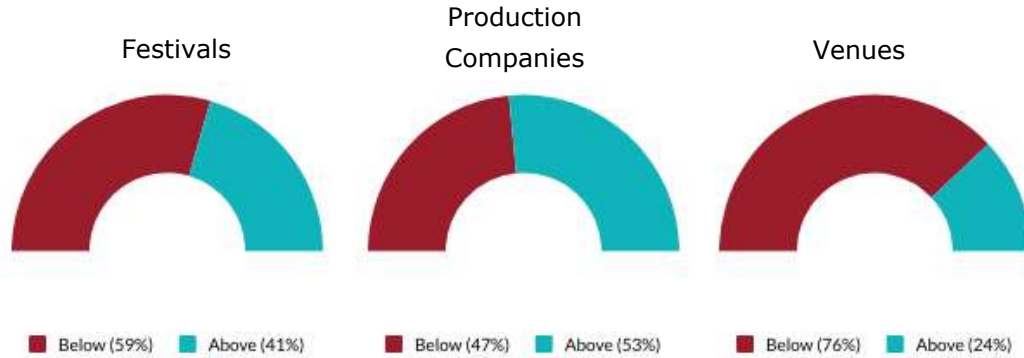
*"We do it because we love it. We are underpaid because we love it. We stop doing it not because we fall out of love but because we need to live."*

Venue manager

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<sup>12</sup> *Earnings and Labour Costs Annual Data 2019*, Central Statistics Office, <<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/elca/earningsandlabourcostsannualdata2019/>> [accessed 10.08.2021]

*% of 2019 PAYE salaries under the average national annual earnings:*



The reduction in expenditure on wages and salaries set out above was owing to job losses rather than reductions in pay. It would appear that those working for festivals and venues with salaries above the median in 2019 were more likely to keep their jobs as median annual earnings rose in 2020.

	Festivals	Production Companies	Venues
Median annual earnings 2020	€29,139	€27,535	€29,540
Difference in median annual earnings 2019 - 2020	<b>+€2,684</b>	<b>-€3,113</b>	<b>+€3,112</b>

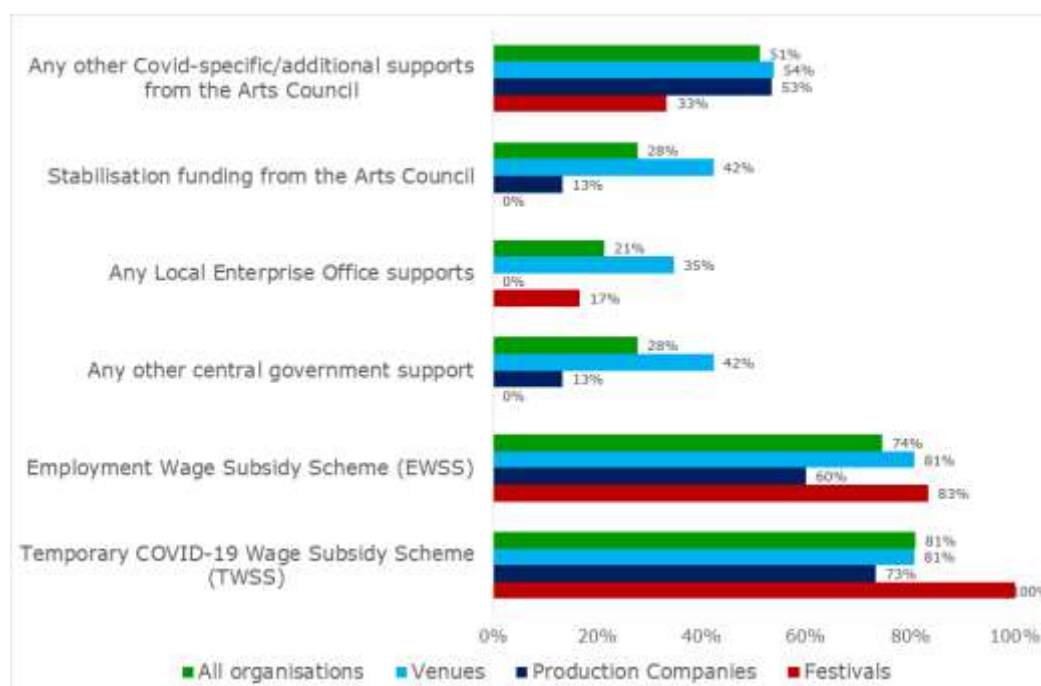
### **Covid-related support**

Just three out of the 47 organisations giving full details of their sources of funding in 2020 received no income from the following Covid-specific support schemes.

The Temporary Covid-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS) protected jobs in 81% of organisations and the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS) continued to do so in 74% of organisations. On average, the two schemes covered 24% of the payroll in Festivals, 23% in Production Companies and 39% in Venues. This ranged between 10% and 96%.

64% of organisations received Covid-specific support from the Arts Council including a third of festivals, two-thirds of production companies and 69% of venues.

% of organisations receiving support from the following schemes:



### Funding applications

A consequence of these new funding schemes is the considerable additional work required to apply to them. 50% of festivals, 60% of production companies and 96% of venues say that between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2020 there was a considerable increase in the number of applications they made. The median is 6, ranging between one and 28 applications.

Organisations have also supported a median of seven applications made by individual artists and makers and other organisations, ranging between one and 18.

*"The proliferation of bursaries and artists supports made in 2020 & 2021 from differing funding bodies and agencies in many respects require an Arts Centre or at a very minimum an administration "centre" to be part of the application process as a means of there being adequate controls/record keeping and ultimately accountability in the dissemination of funds for artists/projects. The result is that arts centres and venues are processing and pursuing numerous applications."*

Venue

*"It is a massive administrative load."*

Production Company

*"The number of applications made was roughly double. ... In addition there was a significant increase in the number of survey requests many of which were asking for the same information in different formats."*

Production Company





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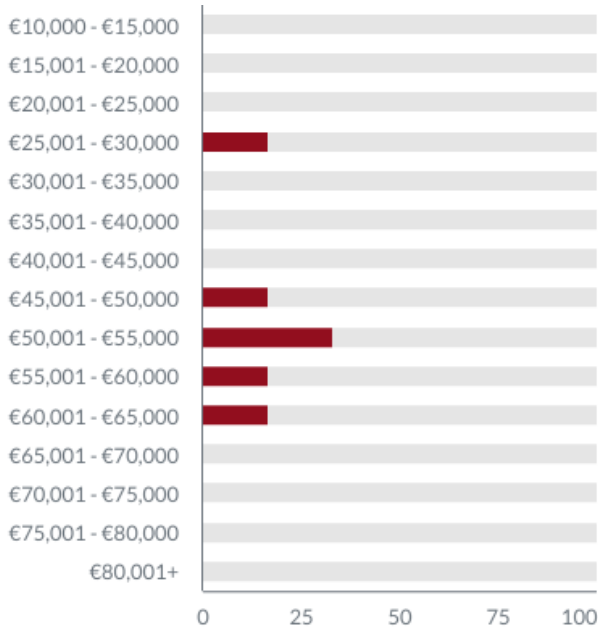
## Section Three: Salaries, Production Fees, Weekly Fees and Hourly Rates

### A: PAYE salaries

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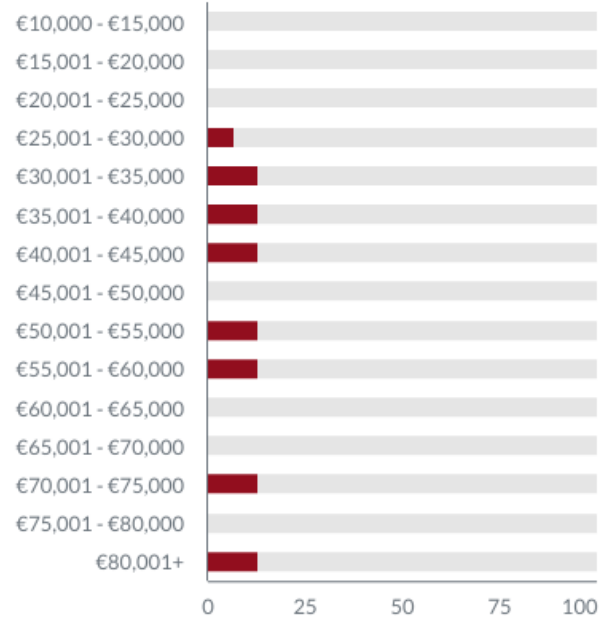
**Festivals**  
**Artistic Director/ Director/ CEO**

6 responses  
 Average pay: €51,210  
 Range: €30,000 - €61,000



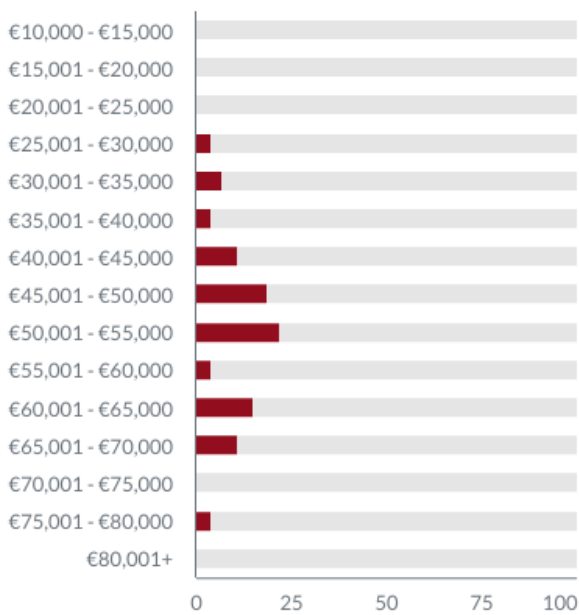
**Production Companies**  
**Artistic Director/ Director/ CEO**

15 responses  
 Average pay: €55,526  
 Range: €52,500 - €55,526



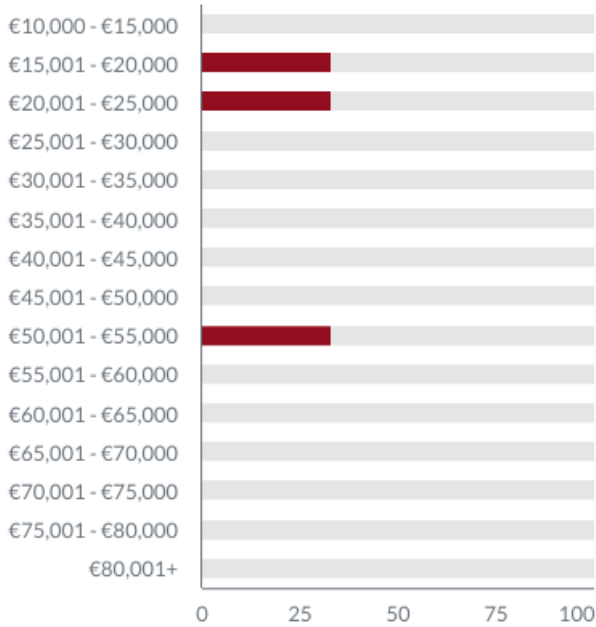
**Venues**  
**Artistic Director/ Director/ CEO**

27 responses  
 Average pay: €52,911  
 Range: €30,000 - €57,000



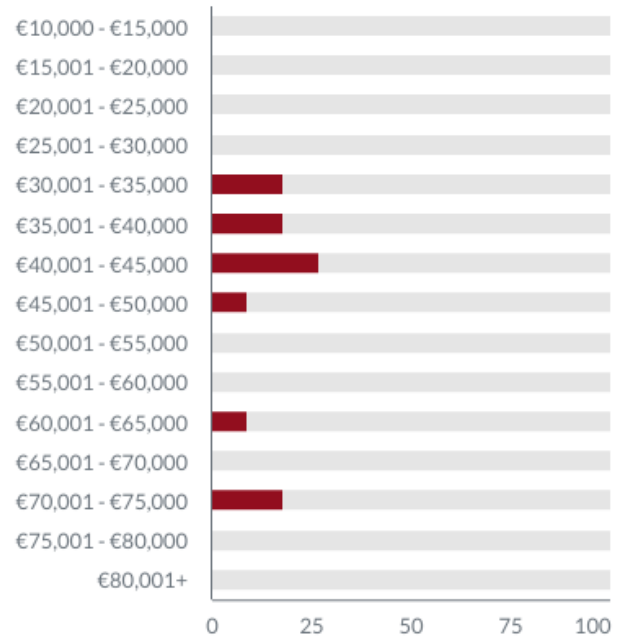
**Festivals  
General Manager**

3 responses  
Average pay: €31,573  
Range: €19,719 - €51,000



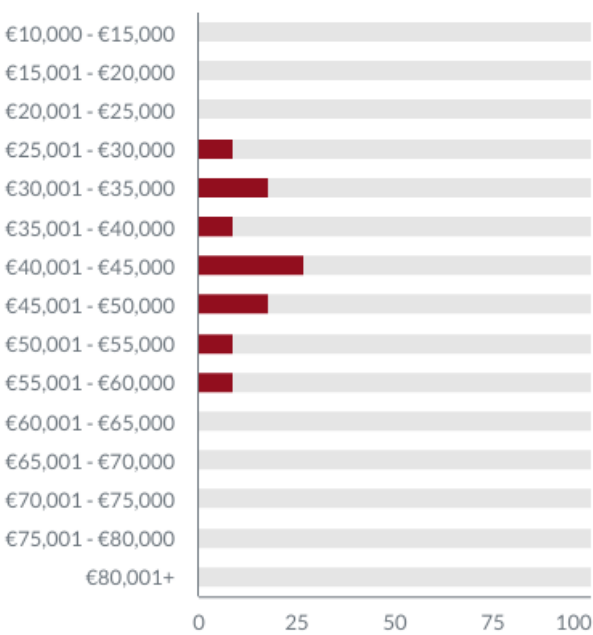
**Production Companies  
General Manager**

11 responses  
Average pay: €48,412  
Range: €35,000 - €75,000



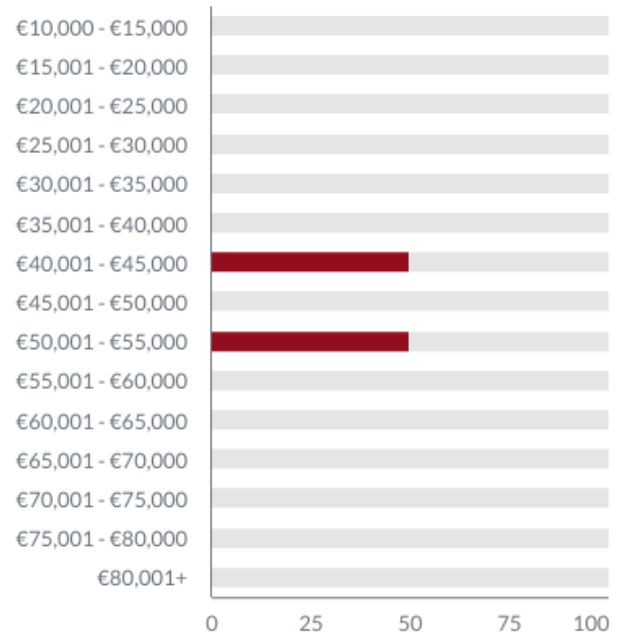
**Venues  
General Manager**

11 responses  
Average pay: €43,083  
Range: €30,000 - €57,000



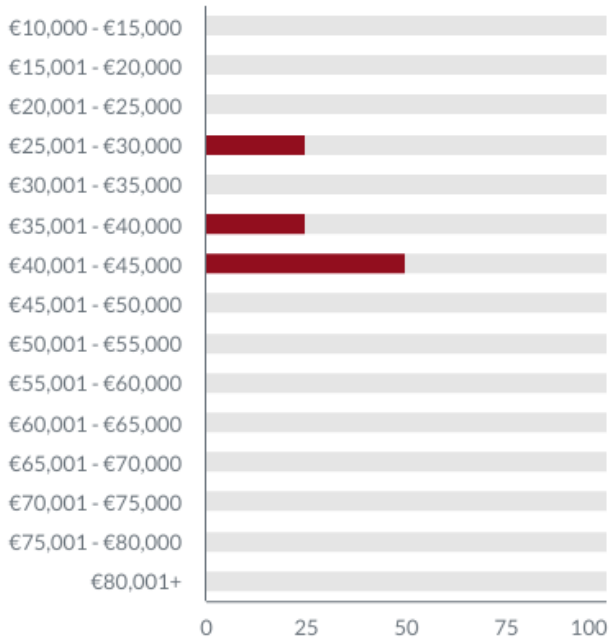
**Production Companies  
Company Manager**

2 responses  
Average pay: €46,105  
Range: €41,000 - €51,209



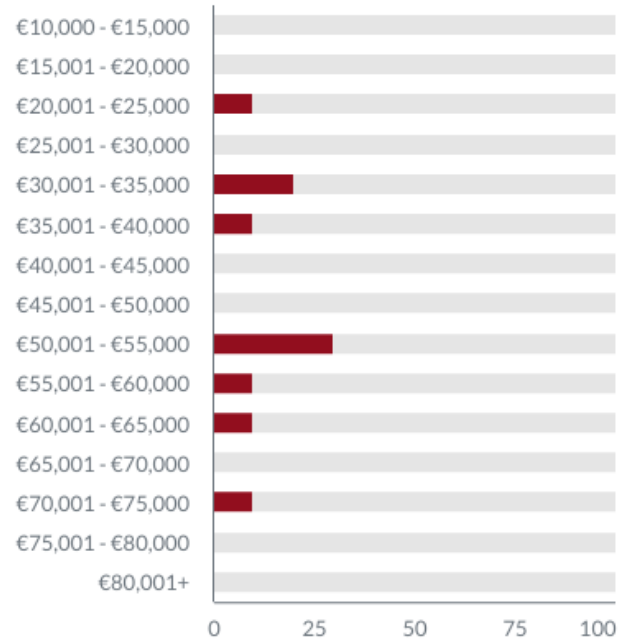
**Festivals  
Producer**

4 responses  
Average pay: €38,479  
Range: €30,000 - €44,688



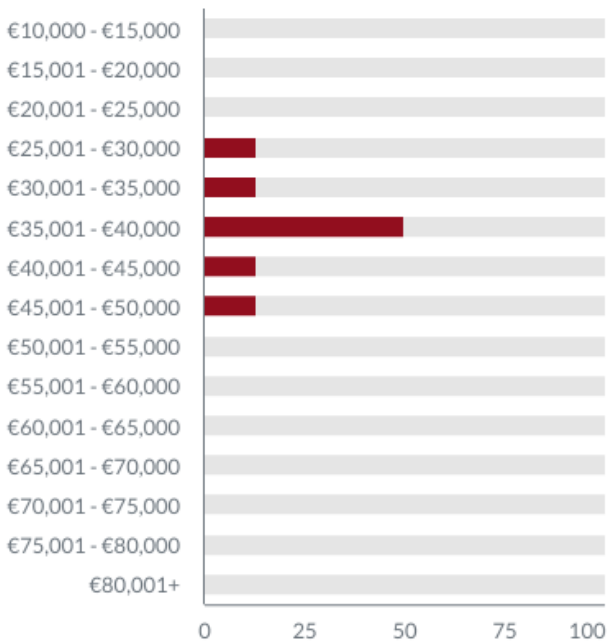
**Production Companies  
Executive Producer**

10 responses  
Average pay: €48,787  
Range: €24,000 - €75,000



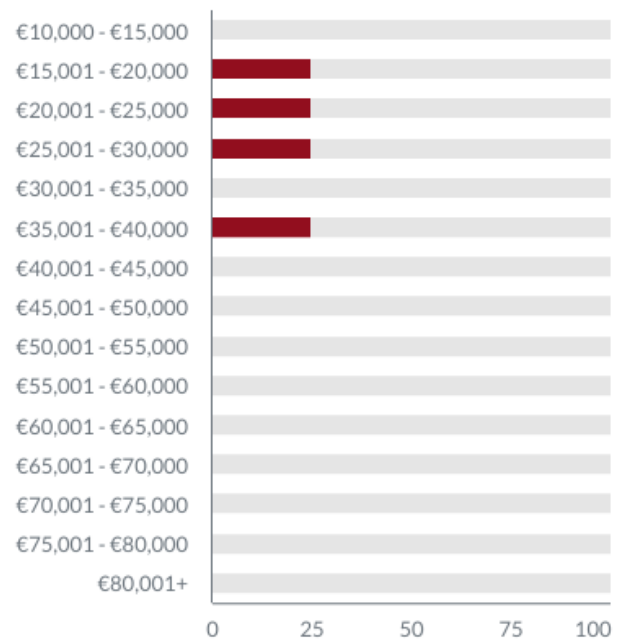
**Venues  
Programmer/ Programme Manager**

8 responses  
Average pay: €37,077  
Range: €26,102 - €49,500



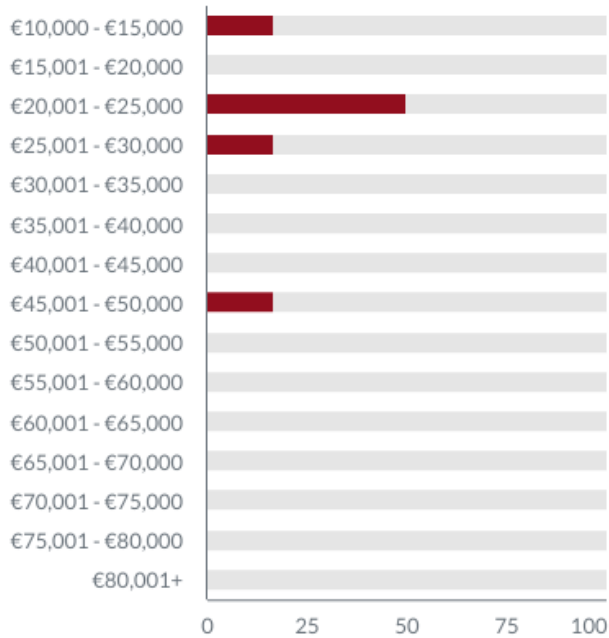
**Venues  
Gallery Manager/ Curator**

4 responses  
Average pay: €27,808  
Range: €19,744 - €38,719



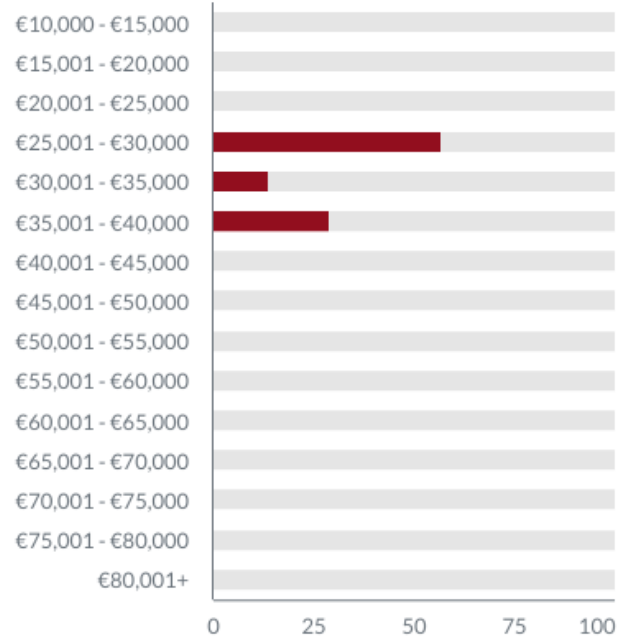
**Festivals  
Administrator**

6 responses  
Average pay: €28,689  
Range: €20,101 - €45,760



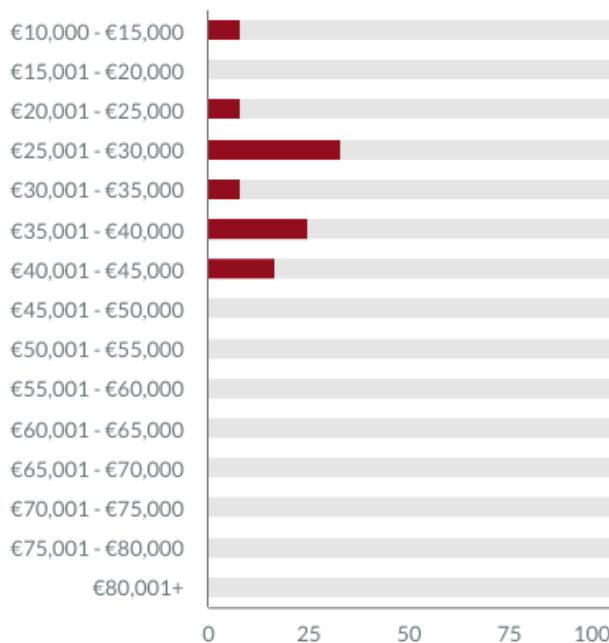
**Production Companies  
Administrator**

7 responses  
Average pay: €31,923  
Range: €28,875 - €38,000



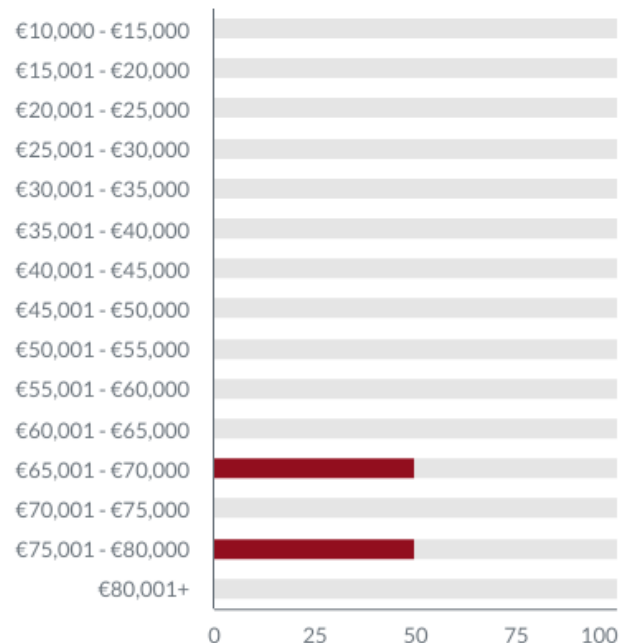
**Venues  
Administrator**

12 responses  
Average pay: €31,900  
Range: €15,000 - €44,095



**Production Companies  
Financial Controller/ Finance Director**

2 responses  
Average pay: €71,331  
Range: €66,000 - €76,661



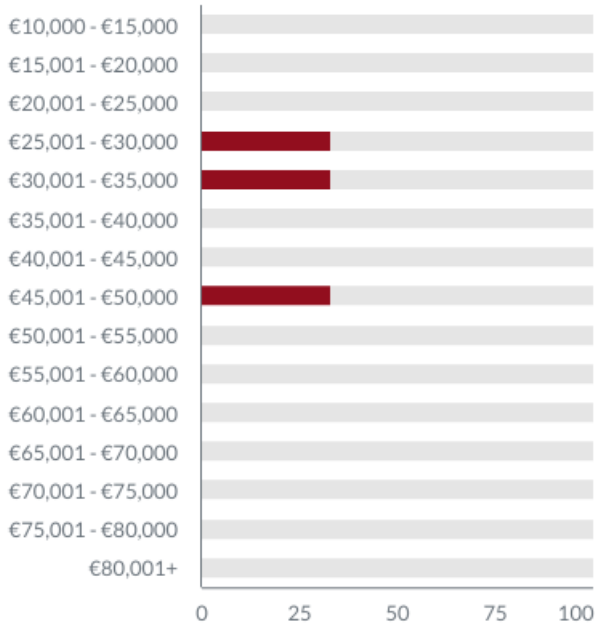
**Festivals**

**Finance Officer/ Book keeper**

3 responses

Average pay: €35,519

Range: €27,000 - €49,373



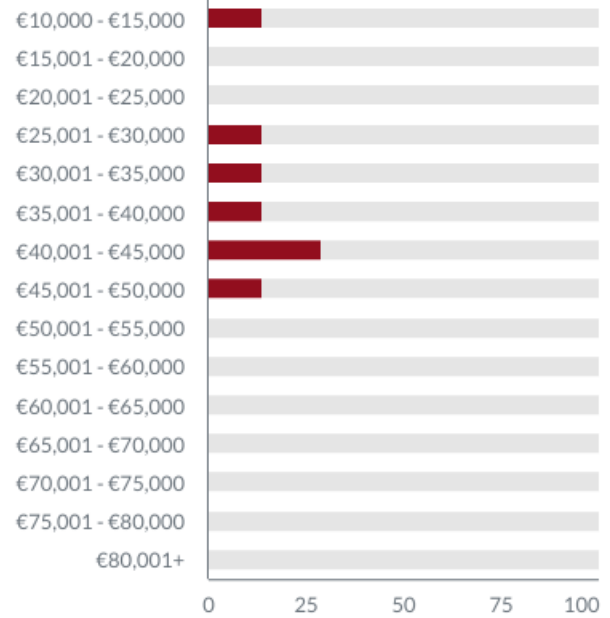
**Production Companies**

**Finance Officer/ Book keeper**

7 responses

Average pay: €35,050

Range: €12,000 - €45,580



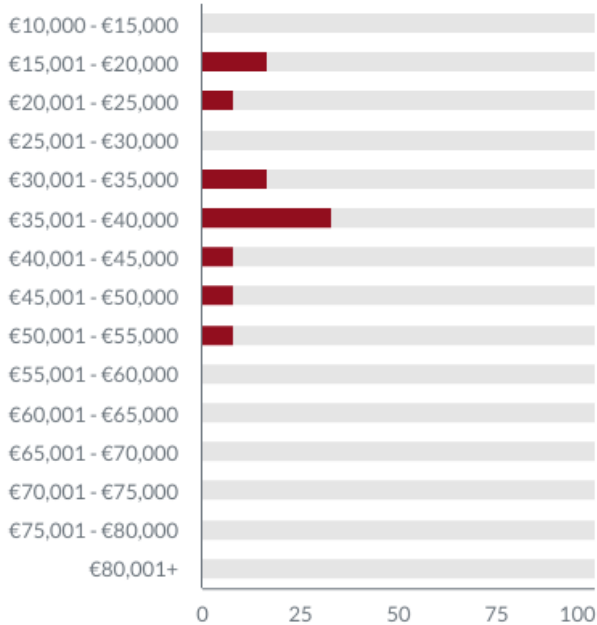
**Venues**

**Finance Officer/ Book keeper**

12 responses

Average pay: €35,253

Range: €16,786 - €54,999



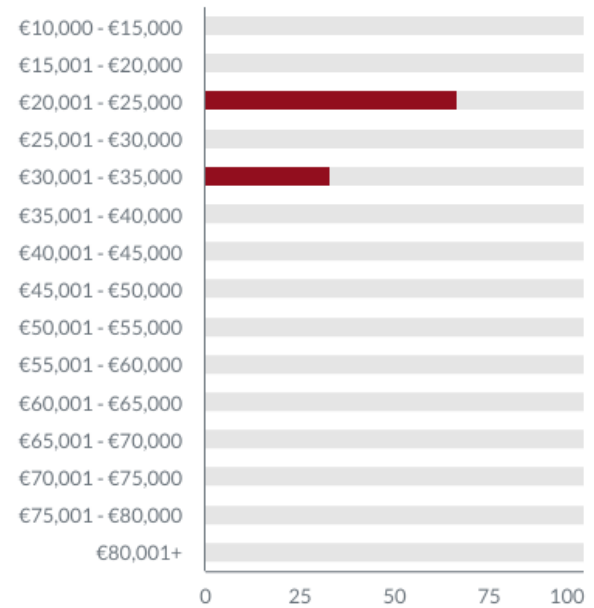
**Venues**

**Finance/ Administration Assistant**

3 responses

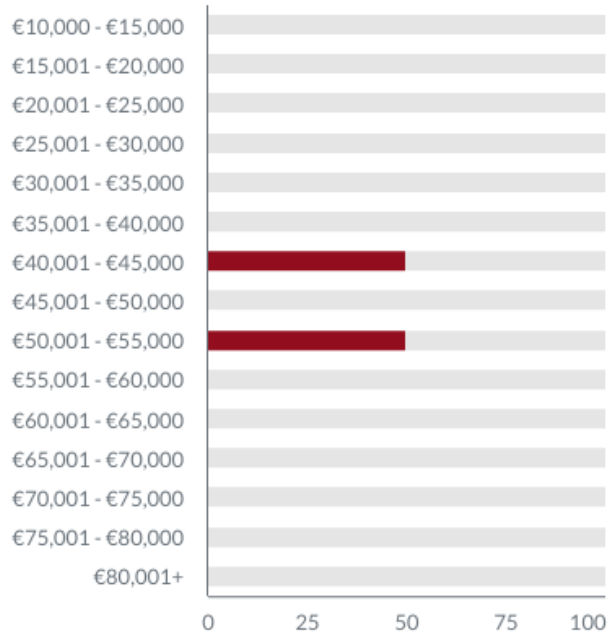
Average pay: €26,383

Range: €22,230 - €33,394



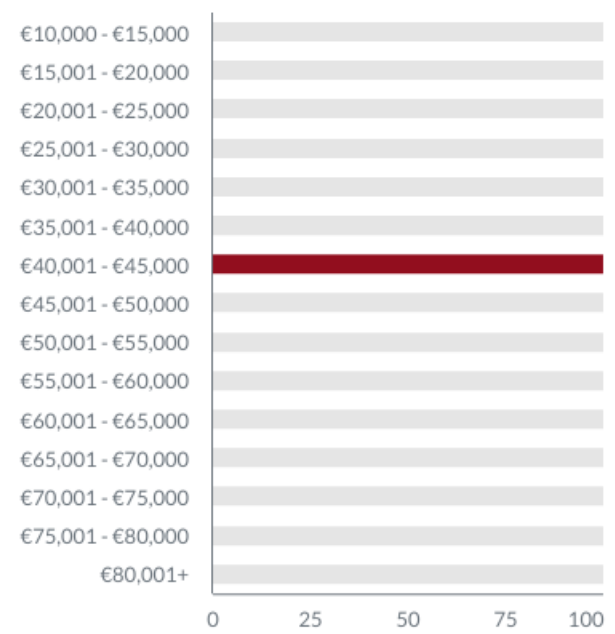
**Production Companies**  
**Production Manager**

2 responses  
Average pay: €45,819  
Range: €41,600 - €50,037



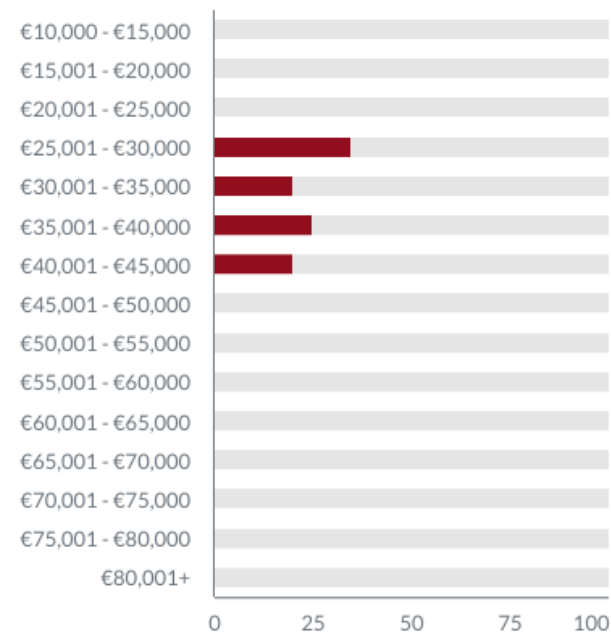
**Venues**  
**Production Manager**

2 responses  
Average pay: €44,500  
Range: €44,000 - €45,000



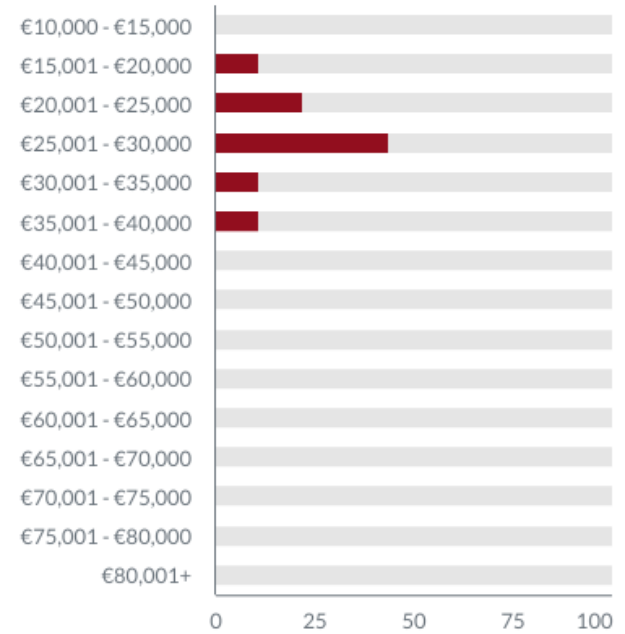
**Venues**  
**Technical Manager**

20 responses  
Average pay: €33,938  
Range: €26,097 - €43,724



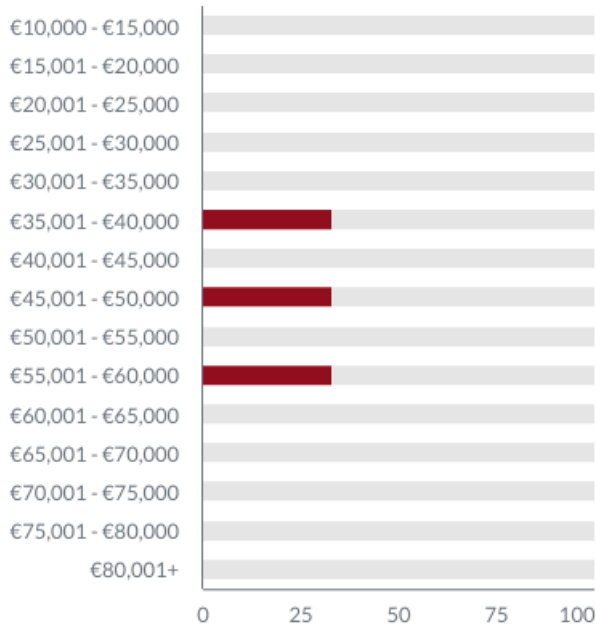
**Venues**  
**Technical Assistant**

9 responses  
Average pay: €27,718  
Range: €18,000 - €36,000



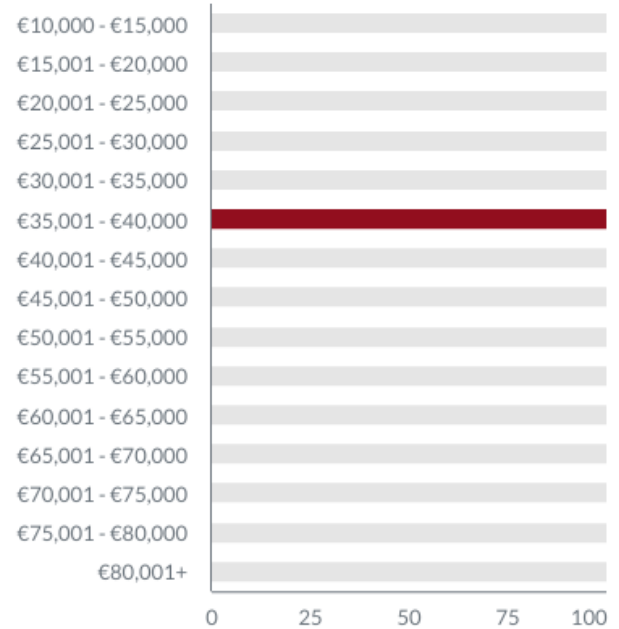
**Production Companies**  
**Fundraising/ Development Manager**

3 responses  
Average pay: €47,014  
Range: €36,000 - €55,041



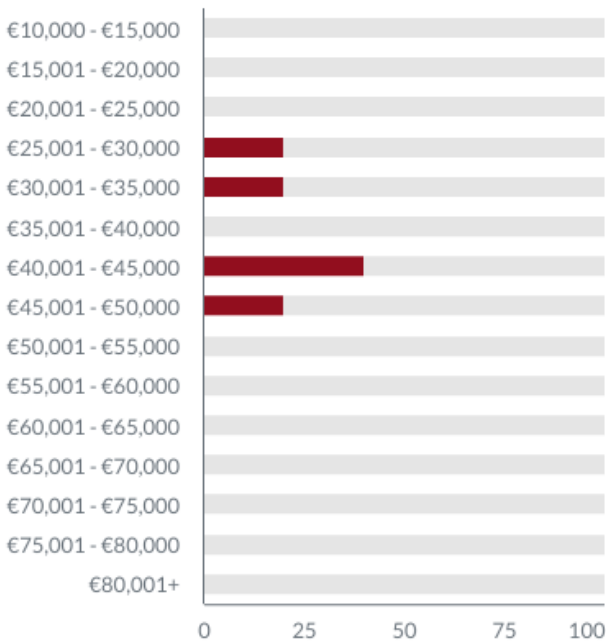
**Venues**  
**Fundraising/ Development Manager**

2 responses  
Average pay: €37,540  
Range: €37,080 - €38,000



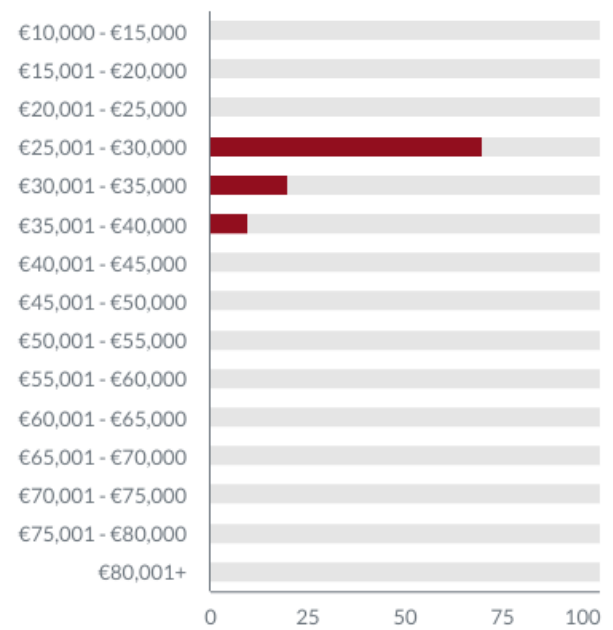
**Production Companies**  
**Education/ Outreach Officer**

5 responses  
Average pay: €39,033  
Range: €30,000 - €49,267



**Venues**  
**Education/ Outreach Officer**

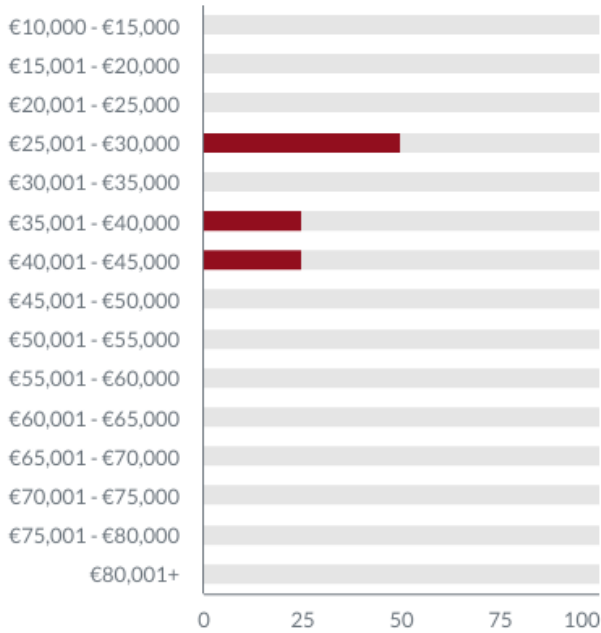
10 responses  
Average pay: €30,217  
Range: €26,910 - €38,000





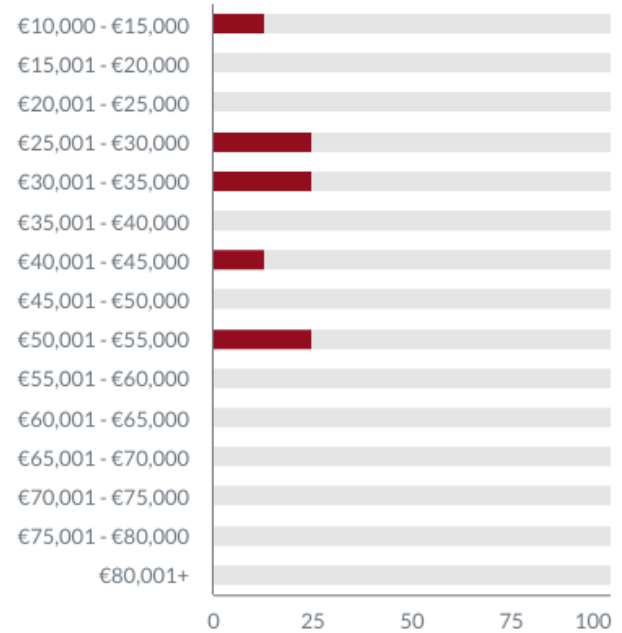
**Festivals**  
**Marketing Manager/ PR Manager**

4 responses  
Average pay: €33,268  
Range: €27,500 - €42,161



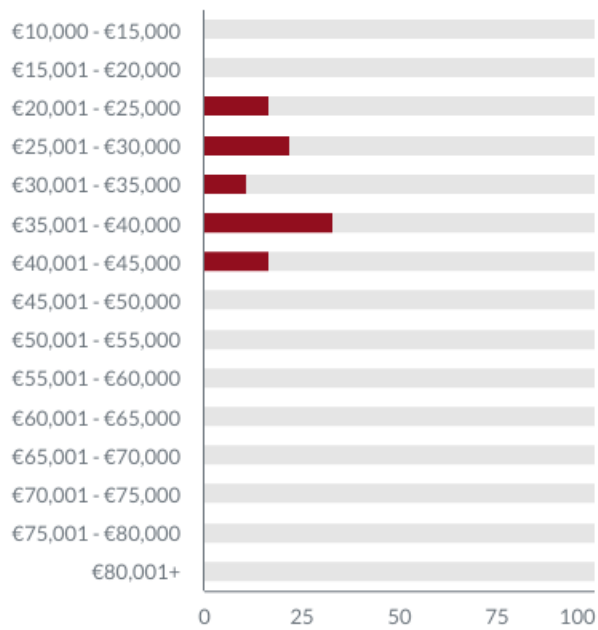
**Production Companies**  
**Marketing Manager/ PR Manager**

8 responses  
Average pay: €33,219  
Range: €10,000 - €51,210



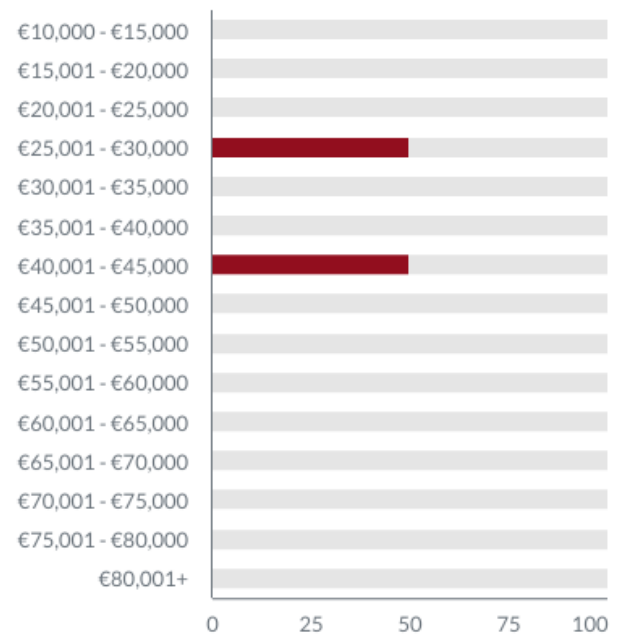
**Venues**  
**Marketing Manager/ PR Manager**

18 responses  
Average pay: €34,015  
Range: €22,016 - €44,095



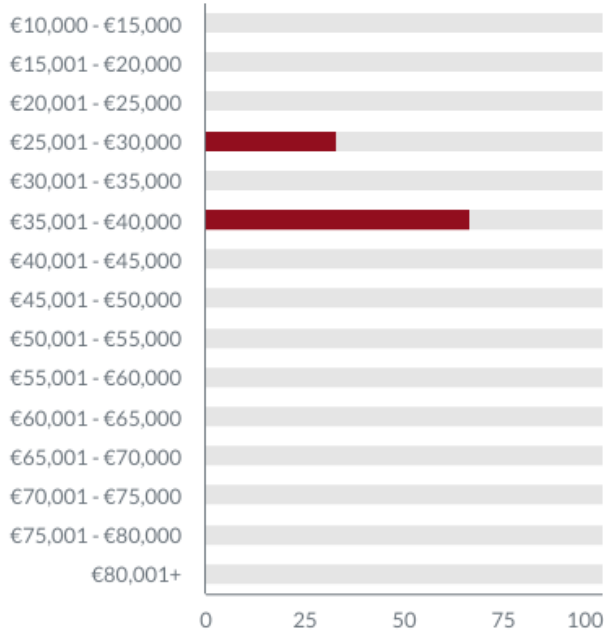
**Production Companies**  
**Digital Communications**

2 responses  
Average pay: €36,200  
Range: €30,000 - €42,400



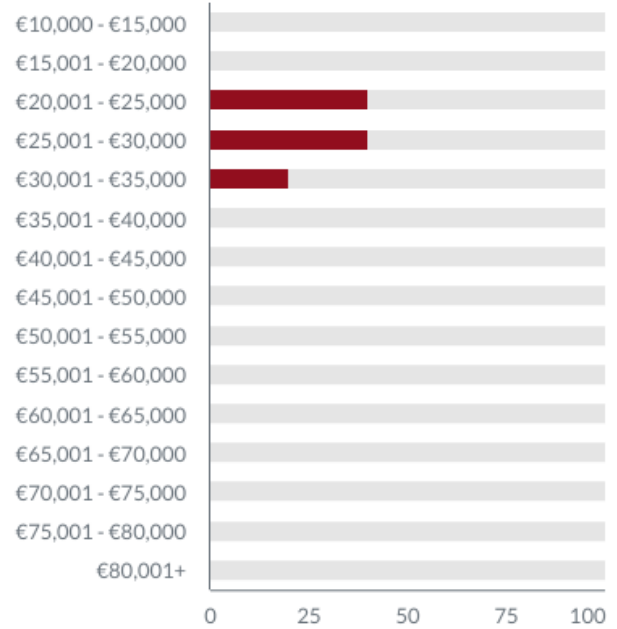
**Production Companies**  
**Marketing Officer**

3 responses  
Average pay: €35,376  
Range: €30,000 - €39,028



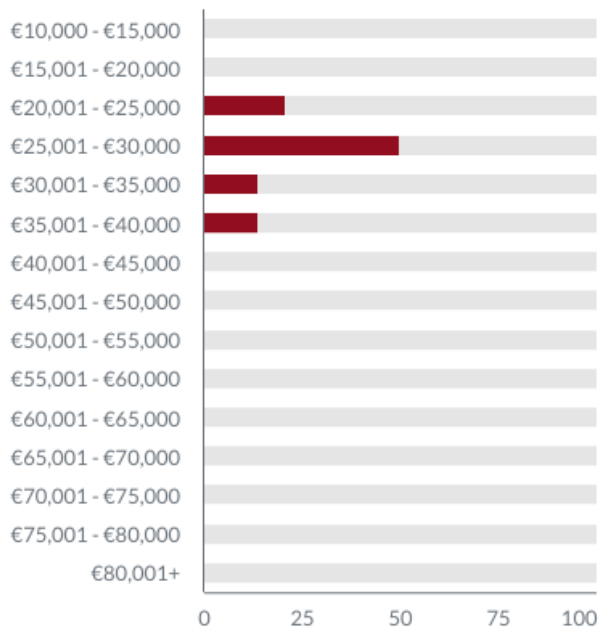
**Venues**  
**Marketing Assistant**

5 responses  
Average pay: €26,461  
Range: €22,389 - €30,314



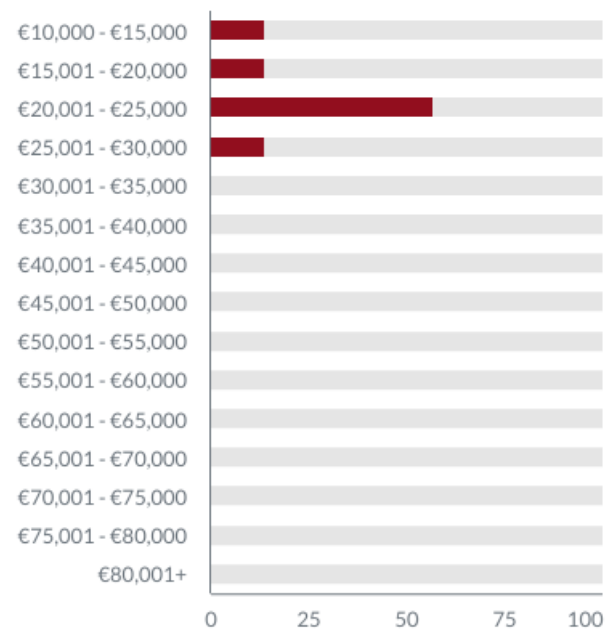
**Venues**  
**Box Office Manager/ Supervisor**

14 responses  
Average pay: €28,411  
Range: €20,337 - €37,089



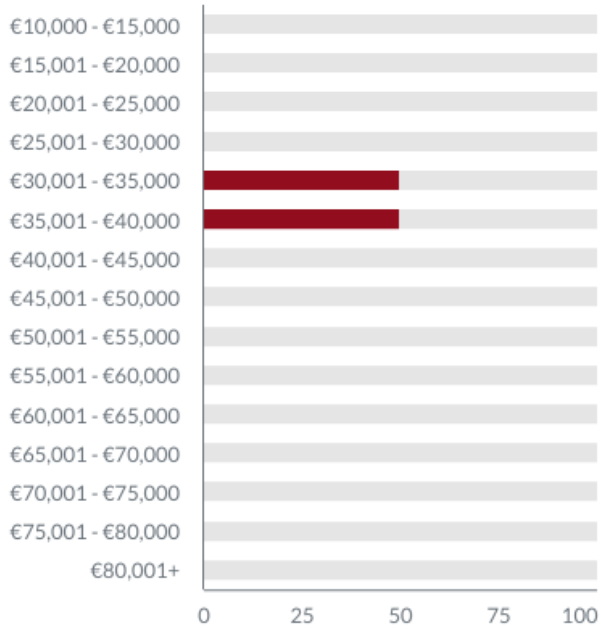
**Venues**  
**Box Office Assistant**

7 responses  
Average pay: €22,238  
Range: €14,560 - €26,000



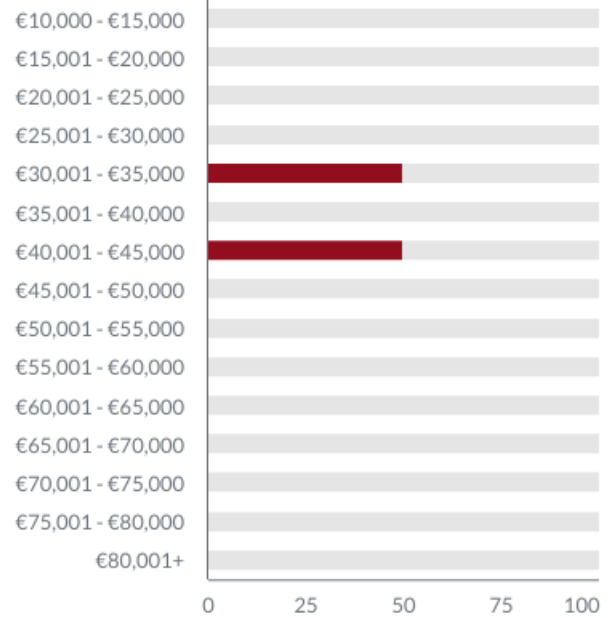
Venues  
**Operations Manager**

2 responses  
Average pay: €37,000  
Range: €34,000 - €40,000



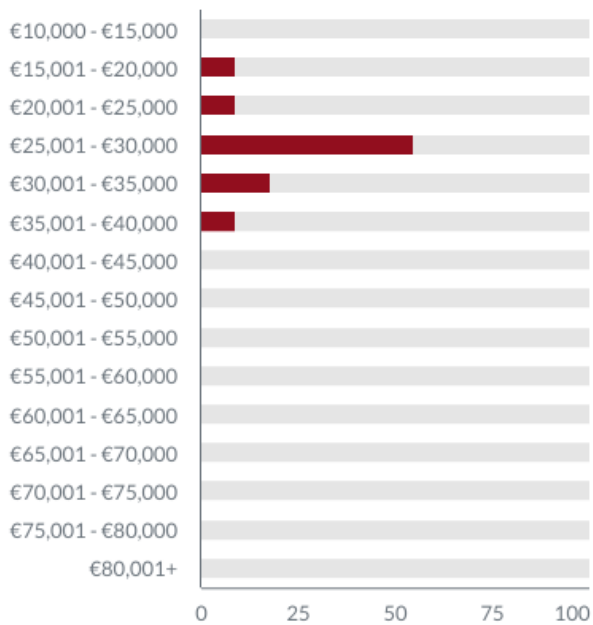
Production Companies  
**Front of House Manager**

2 responses  
Average pay: €36,578  
Range: €31,200 - €41,956



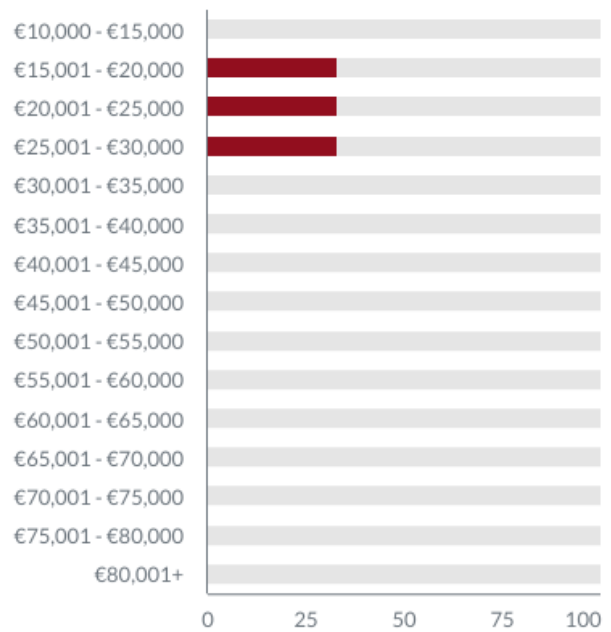
Venues  
**Front of House Manager**

11 responses  
Average pay: €27,946  
Range: €18,837 - €38,278



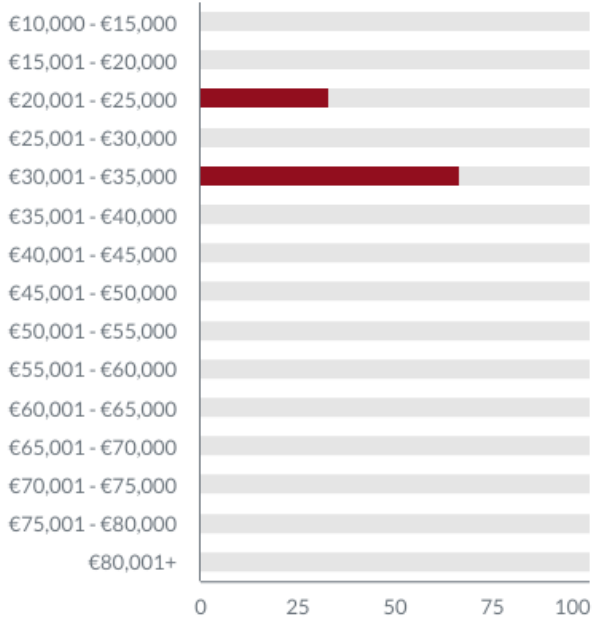
Venues  
**Usher**

3 responses  
Average pay: €23,536  
Range: €17,160 - €32,762



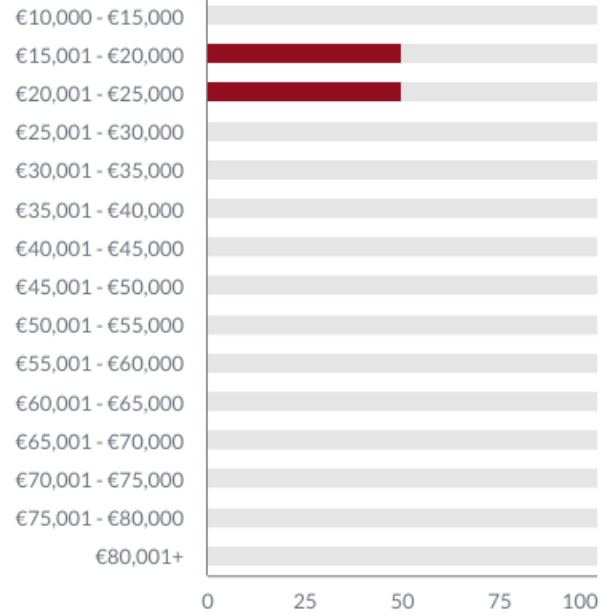
Venues  
**Bar/ Catering Manager/ Supervisor**

3 responses  
Average pay: €30,400  
Range: €25,000 - €35,000



Venues  
**Cleaner**

2 responses  
Average pay: €16,957  
Range: €16,957 - €21,045





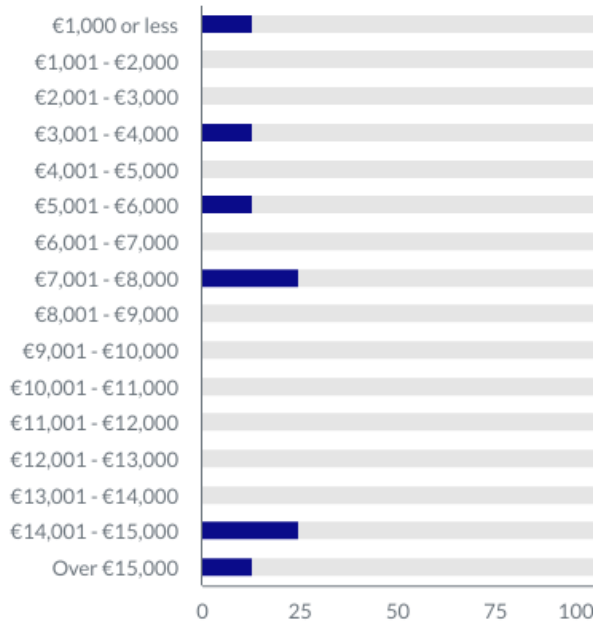
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community in Ireland.

Flat fees per production

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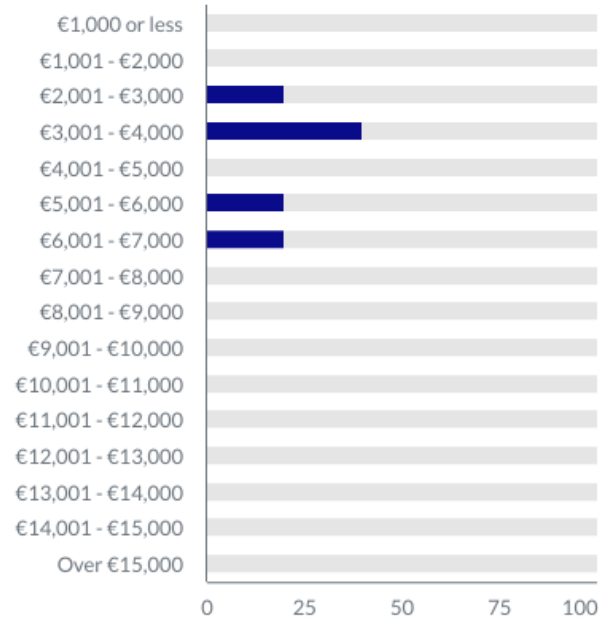
**Production Companies  
Director**

8 responses  
Average pay: €13,286  
Range: €2,000 - €50,000



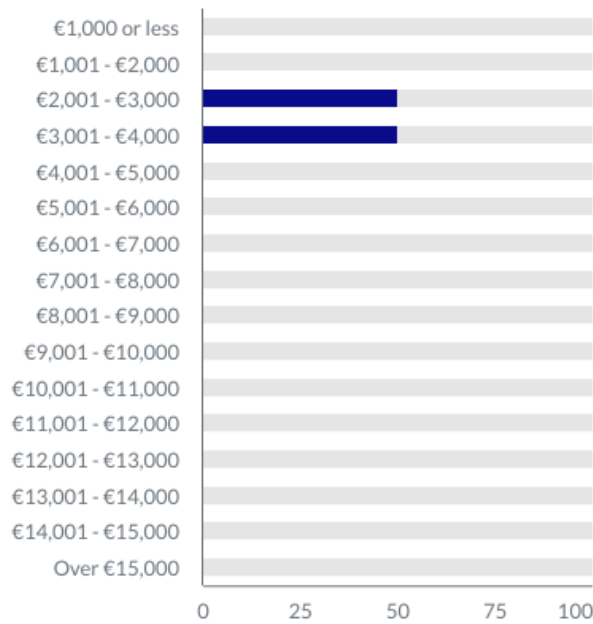
**Venues  
Director**

5 responses  
Average pay: €4,700  
Range: €3,000 - €7,000



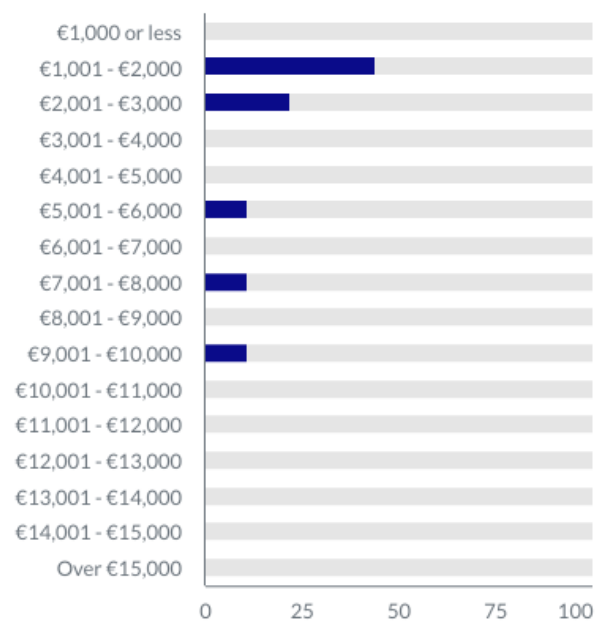
**Production Companies  
Assistant Director**

2 responses  
Average pay: €3,250  
Range: €3,000 - €3,500



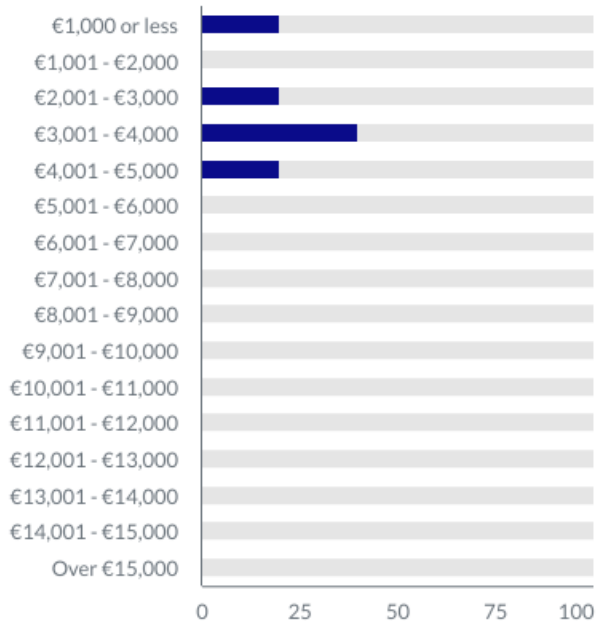
**Production Companies  
Choreographer**

9 responses  
Average pay: €4,325  
Range: €1,800 - €10,000



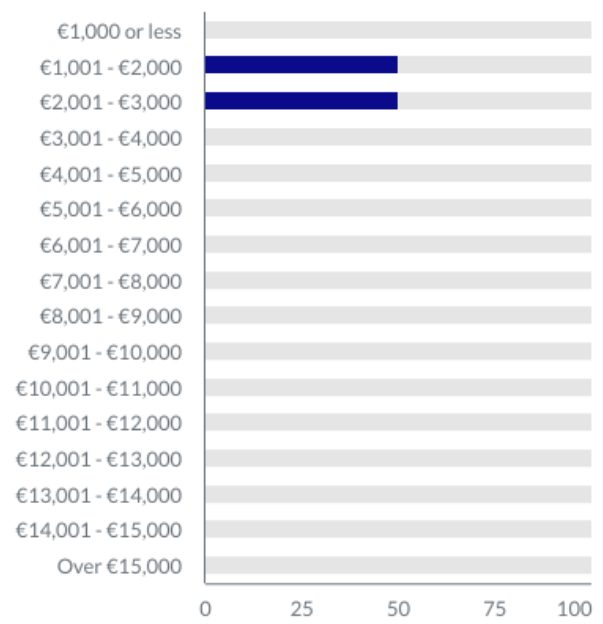
**Production Companies**  
**Composer**

5 responses  
Average pay: €3,150  
Range: €750 - €5,000



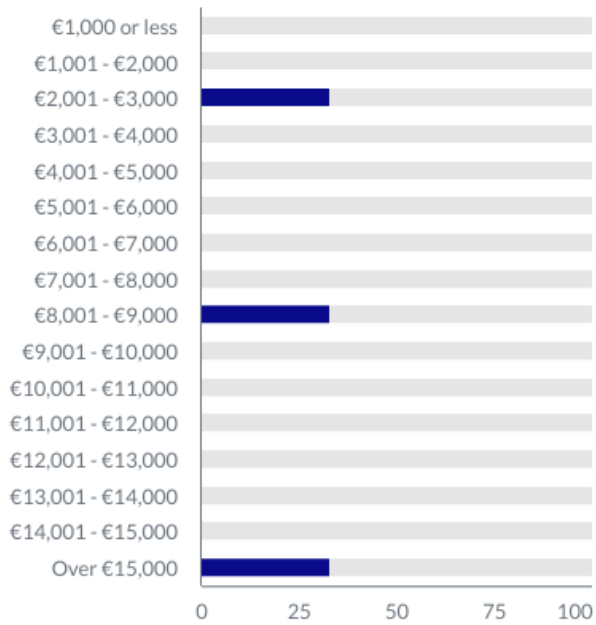
**Venues**  
**Composer**

2 responses  
Average pay: €2,500  
Range: €2,000 - €3,000



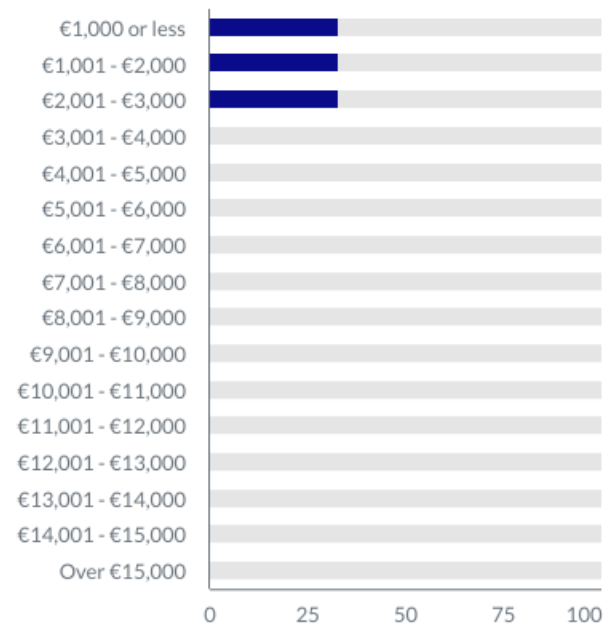
**Production Companies**  
**Writer**

3 responses  
Average pay: €10,800  
Range: €3,000 - €21,000



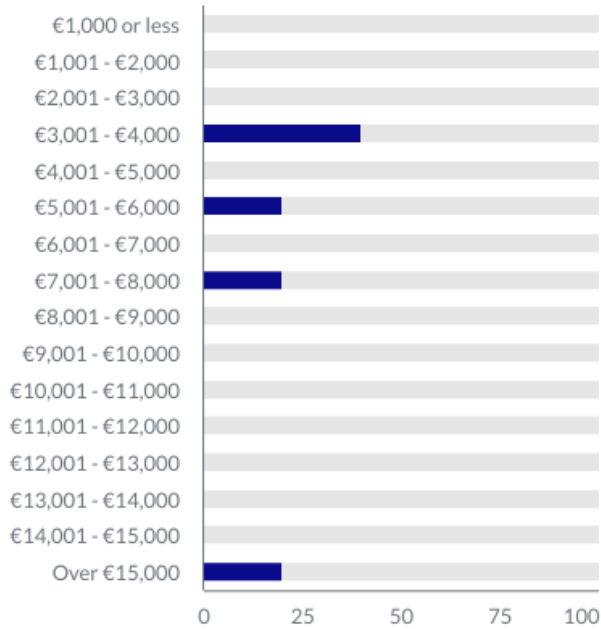
**Production Companies**  
**Dramaturg**

3 responses  
Average pay: €1,750  
Range: €1,000 - €3,000



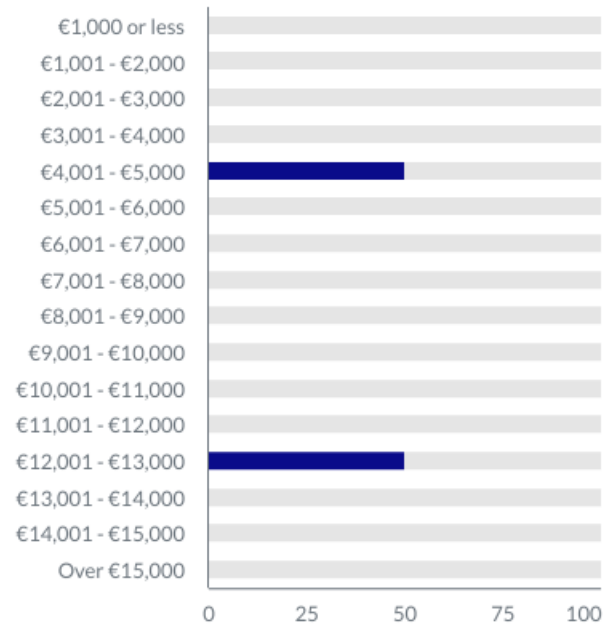
**Production Companies  
Producer**

5 responses  
Average pay: €16,300  
Range: €3,500 - €60,000



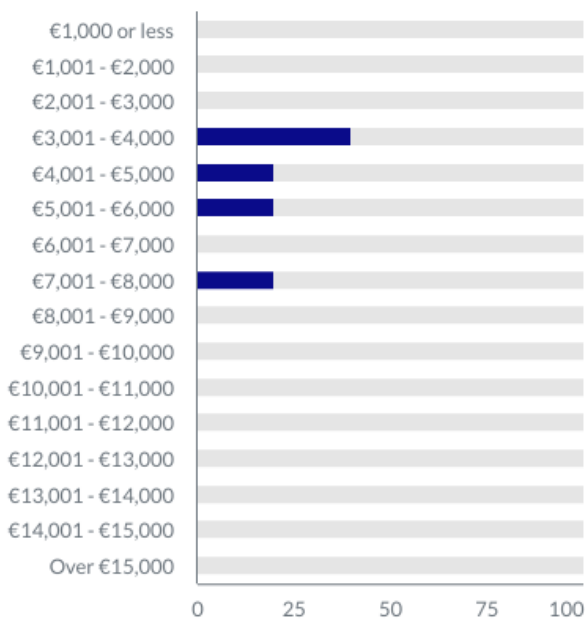
**Festivals  
Production Manager**

2 responses  
Average pay: €8,650  
Range: €5,000 - €12,300



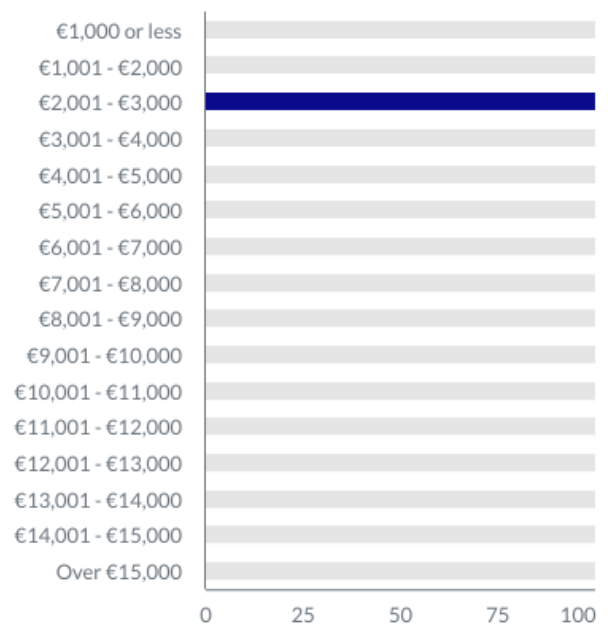
**Production Companies  
Production Manager**

5 responses  
Average pay: €5,200  
Range: €3,500 - €7,500



**Venues  
Production Manager**

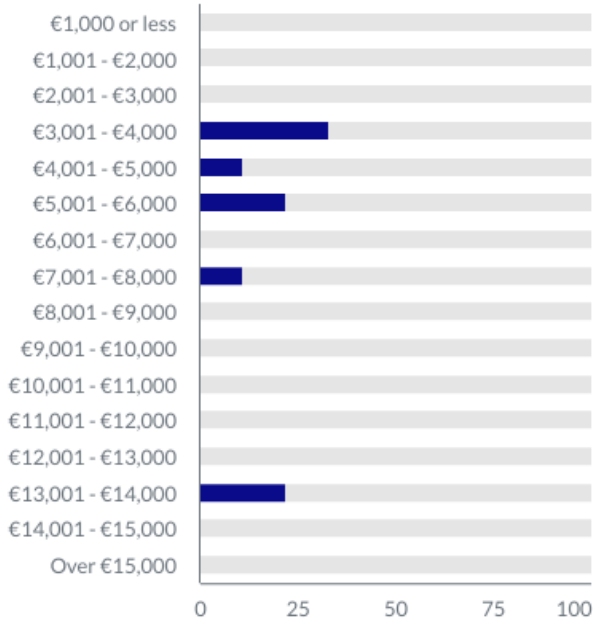
3 responses  
Average pay: €2,833  
Range: €2,500 - €3,000





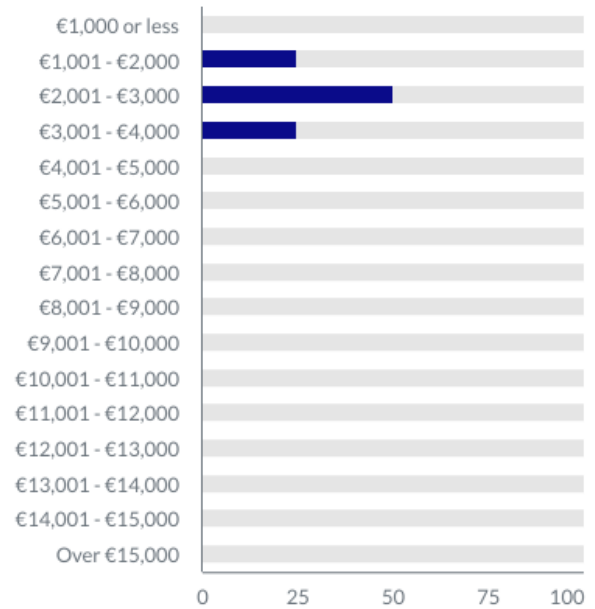
**Production Companies  
Set Designer**

9 responses  
Average pay: €6,125  
Range: €3,500 - €14,000



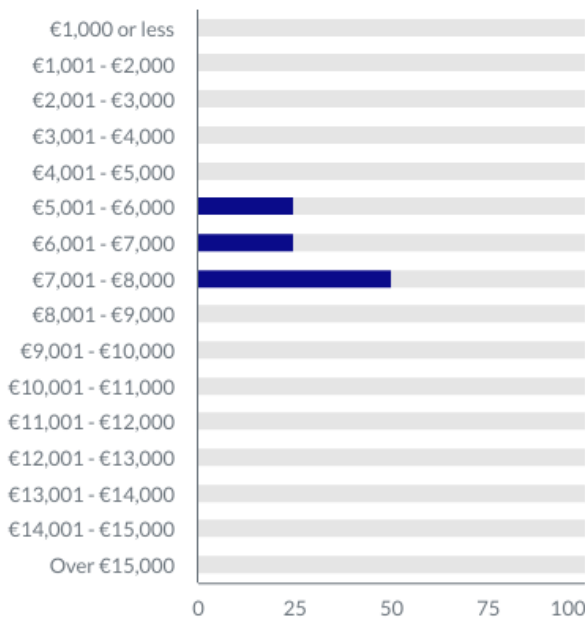
**Venues  
Set Designer**

4 responses  
Average pay: €2,750  
Range: €2,000 - €3,500



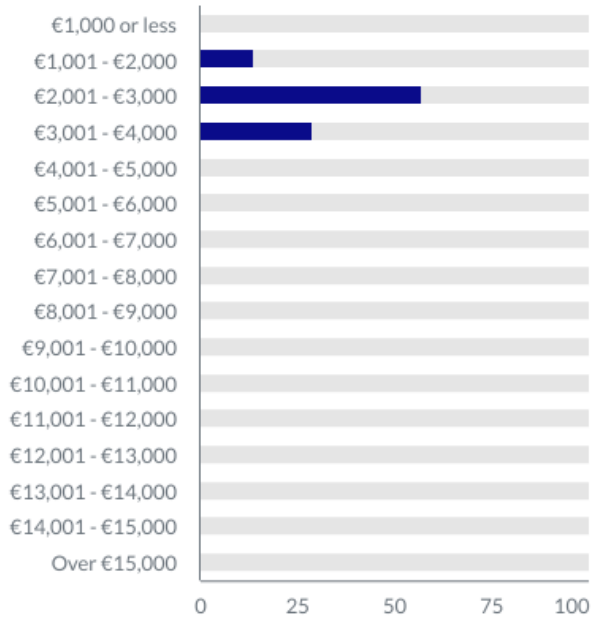
**Production Companies  
Set and Costume Designer**

4 responses  
Average pay: €6,750  
Range: €5,500 - €7,500



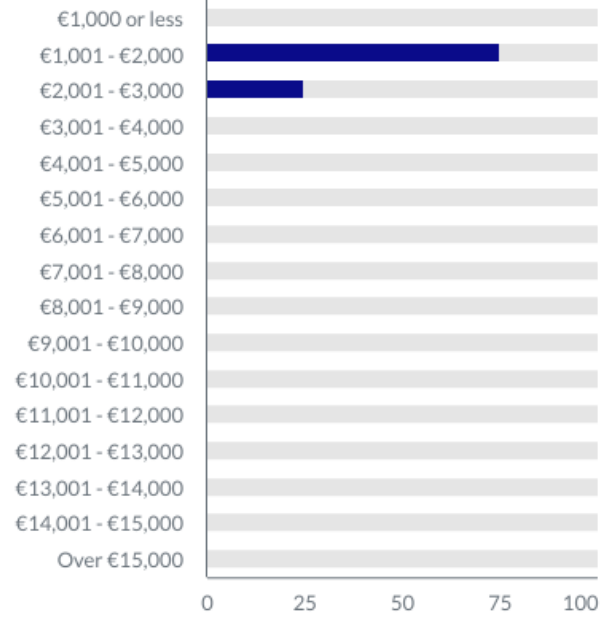
**Production Companies  
Costume Designer**

7 responses  
Average pay: €2,821  
Range: €1,800 - €3,500



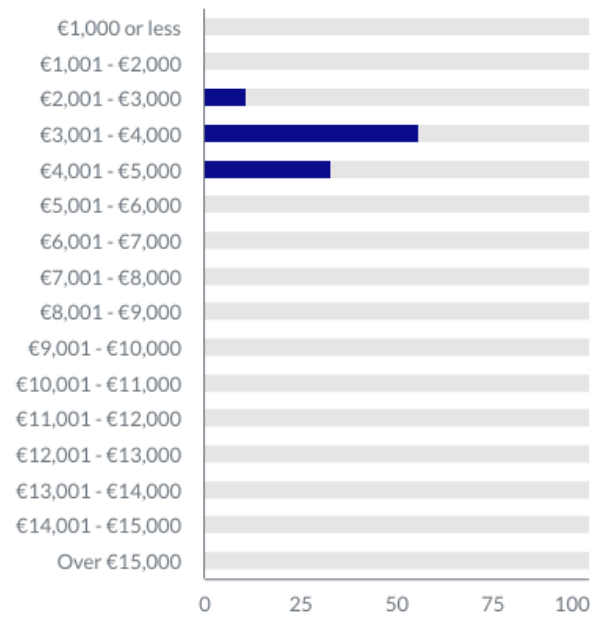
**Venues  
Costume Designer**

4 responses  
Average pay: €2,125  
Range: €2,000 - €2,500



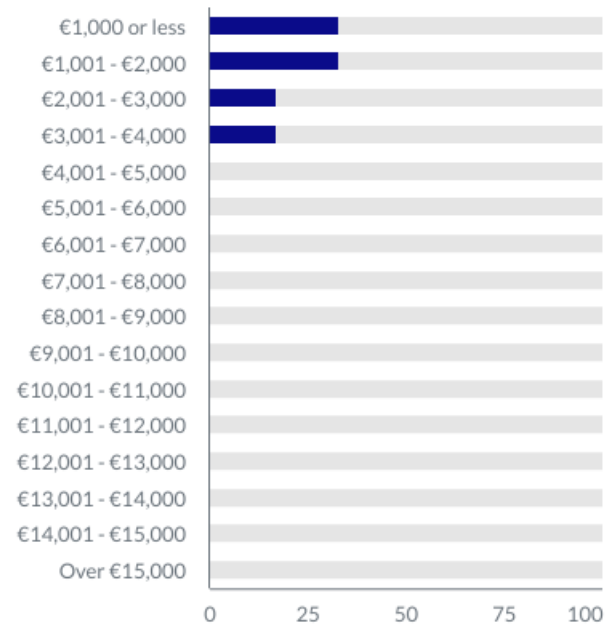
**Production Companies  
Lighting Designer**

9 responses  
Average pay: €3,828  
Range: €3,000 - €5,000



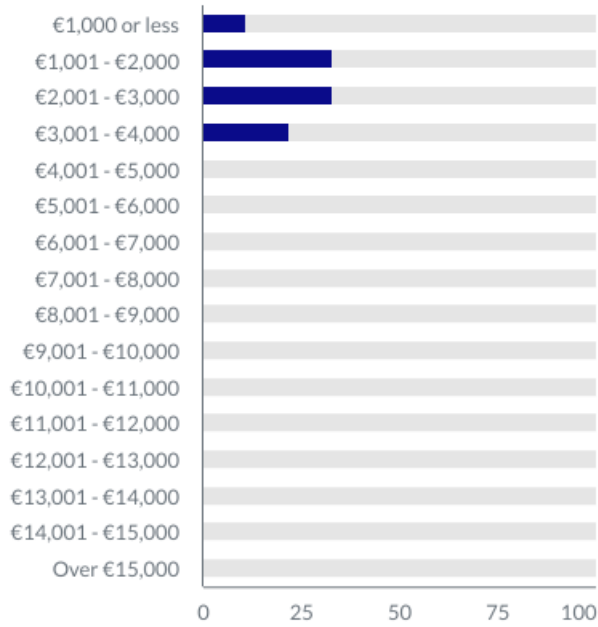
**Venues  
Lighting Designer**

6 responses  
Average pay: €1,803  
Range: €120 - €3,500



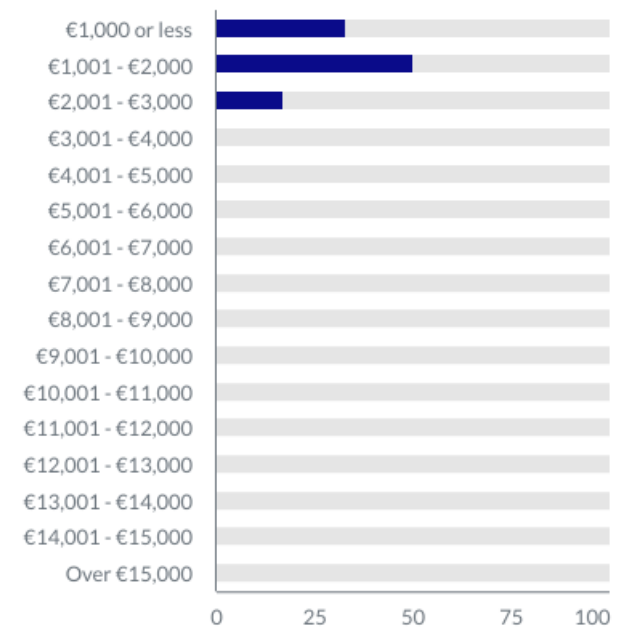
**Production Companies**  
**Sound Designer**

9 responses  
Average pay: €3,213  
Range: €1,500 - €5,000



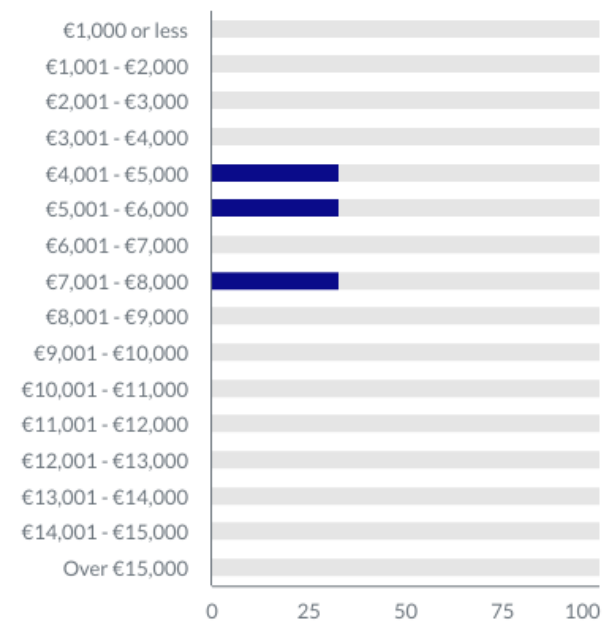
**Venues**  
**Sound Designer**

6 responses  
Average pay: €1,525  
Range: €150 - €2,500



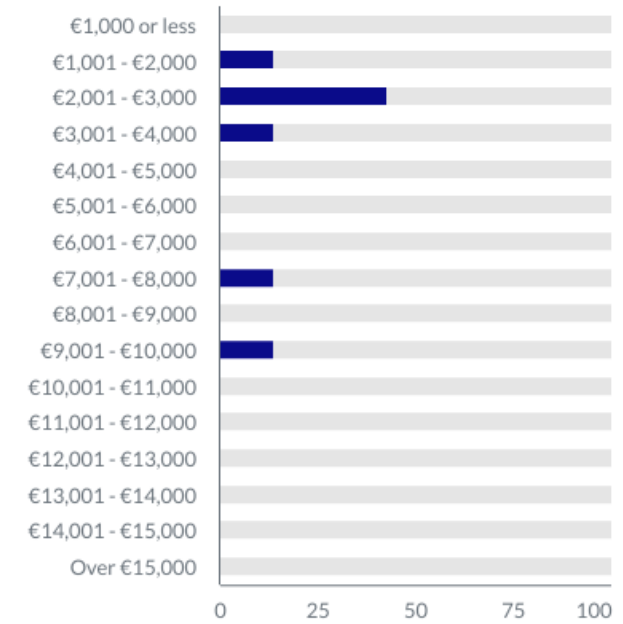
**Festival**  
**PR Manager**

3 responses  
Average pay: €6,167  
Range: €5,000 - €7,500



**Production Companies**  
**Marketing / PR**

7 responses  
Average pay: €4,571  
Range: €2,000 - €10,000





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## Weekly production fees

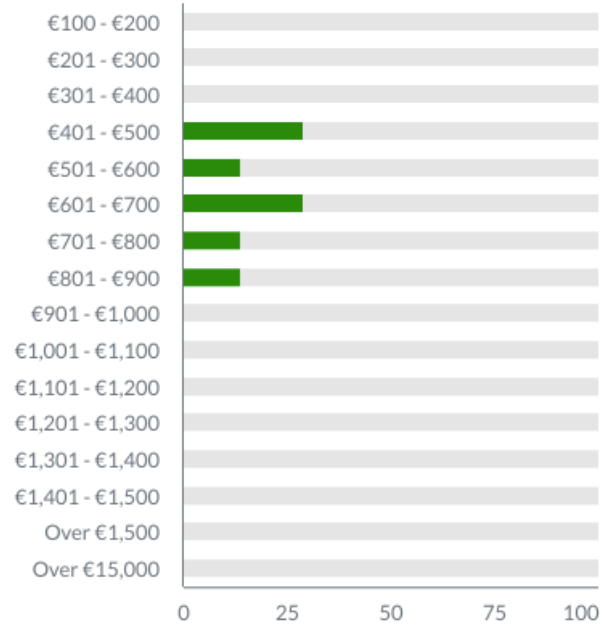
**Production company**  
**Actor**

9 responses  
Average pay: €779  
Range: €625 - €950



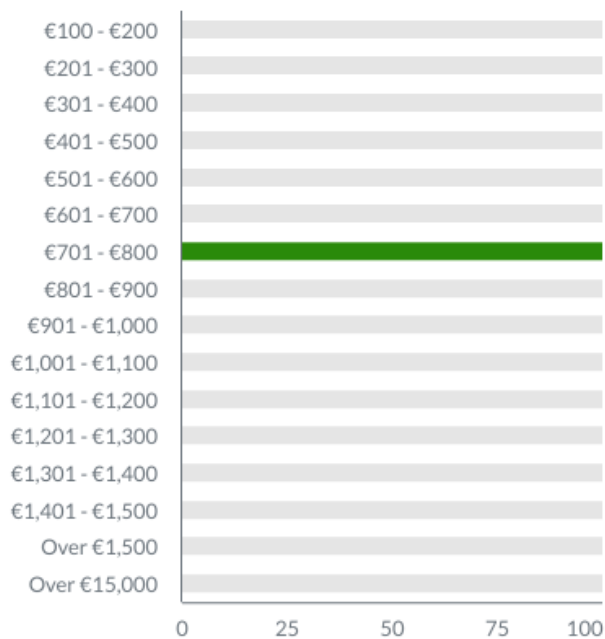
**Venue**  
**Actor**

7 responses  
Average pay: €650  
Range: €500 - €850



**Production company**  
**Dancer**

3 responses  
Average pay: €740  
Range: €720 - €750



**Venue**  
**Dancer**

2 responses  
Average pay: €625  
Range: €500 - €750



**Festival  
Musician**

3 responses  
 Average pay: €1,017  
 Range: €250 - €2,500



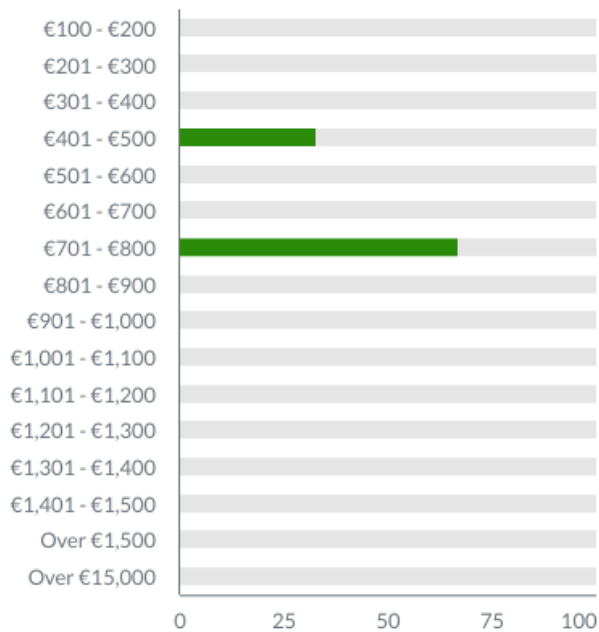
**Production company  
Musician**

2 responses  
 Average pay: €800  
 Range: €750 - €850



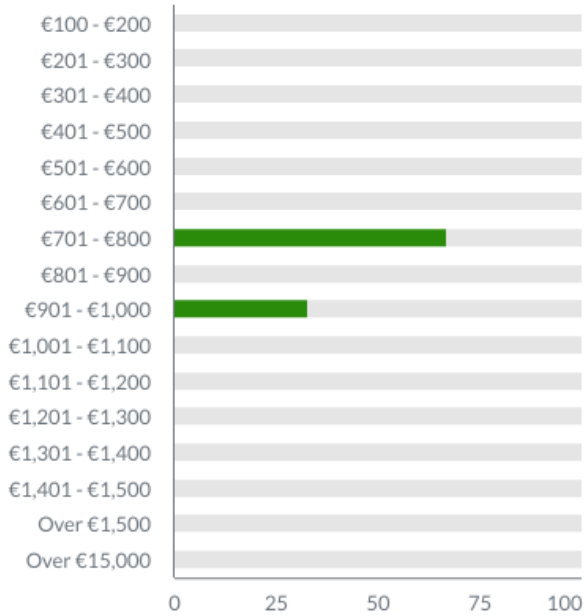
**Venue  
Musician**

3 responses  
 Average pay: €667  
 Range: €500 - €750



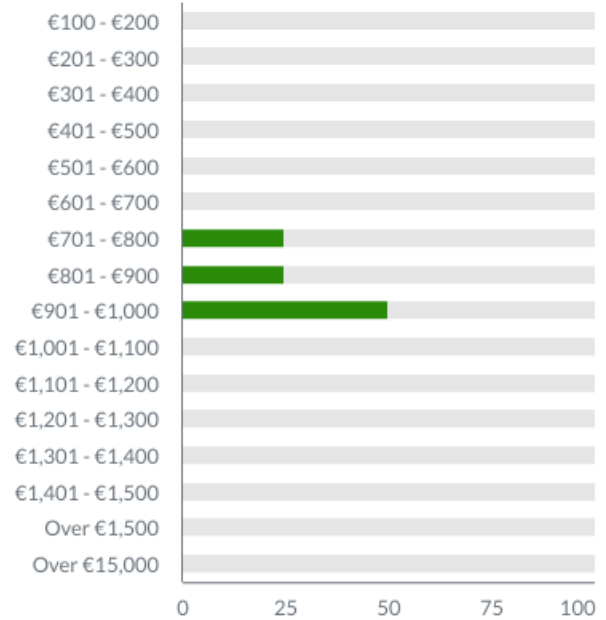
Production company  
**Stage Director**

3 responses  
Average pay: €850  
Range: €750 - €1,000



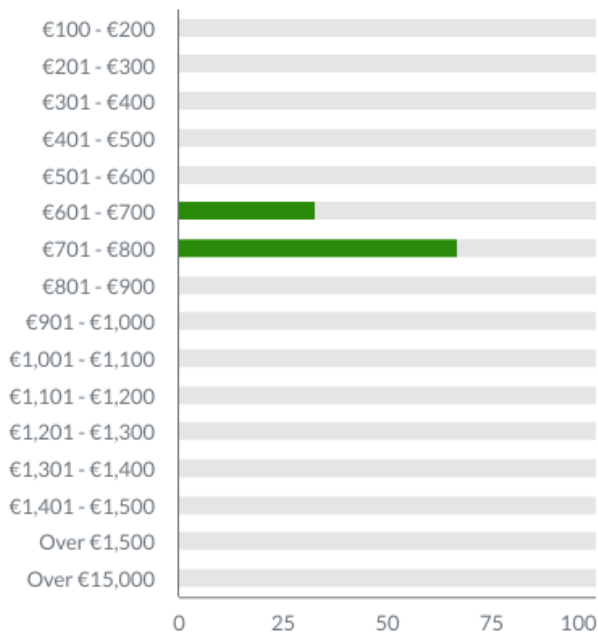
Production company  
**Production Manager**

4 responses  
Average pay: €887  
Range: €800 - €962



Production company  
**Properties Supervisor**

3 responses  
Average pay: €715  
Range: €650 - €780



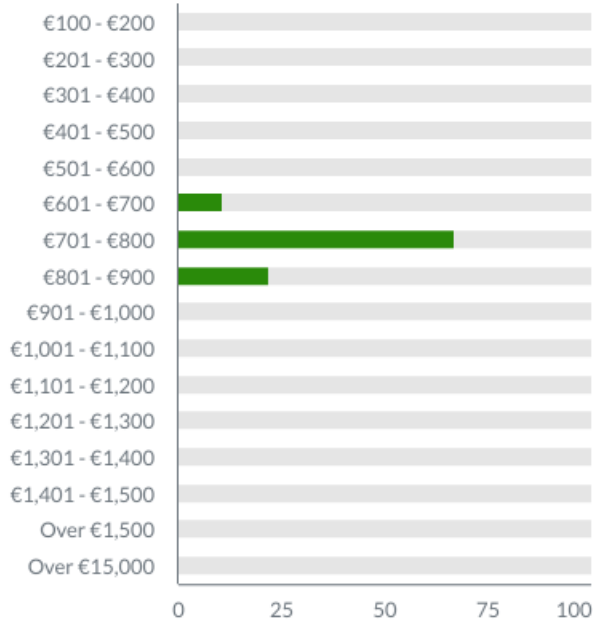
Production company  
**Costume Assistant**

8 responses  
Average pay: €700  
Range: €600 - €1,000



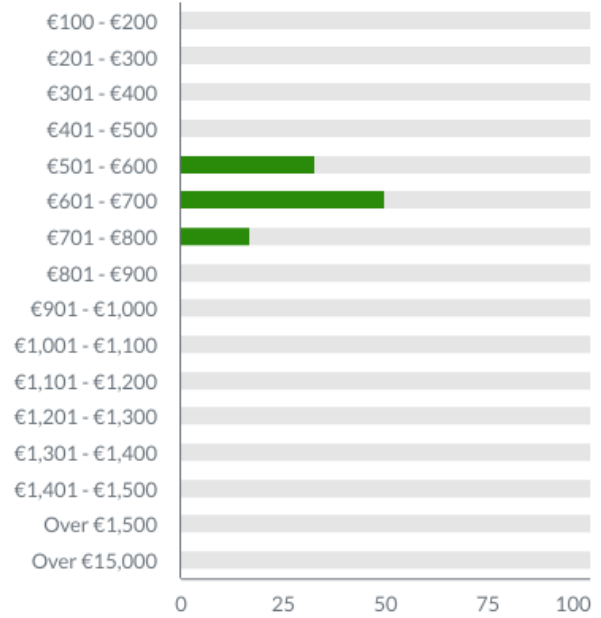
Production company  
**Stage Manager**

9 responses  
Average pay: €758  
Range: €700 - €813



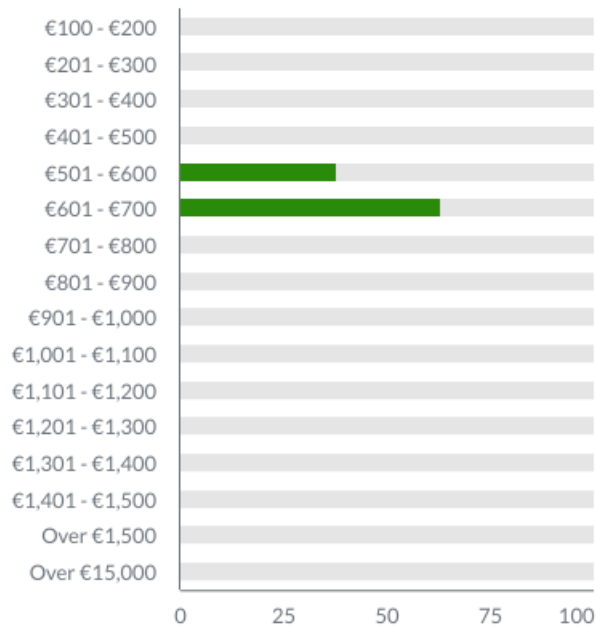
Venue  
**Stage Manager**

6 responses  
Average pay: €650  
Range: €550 - €800



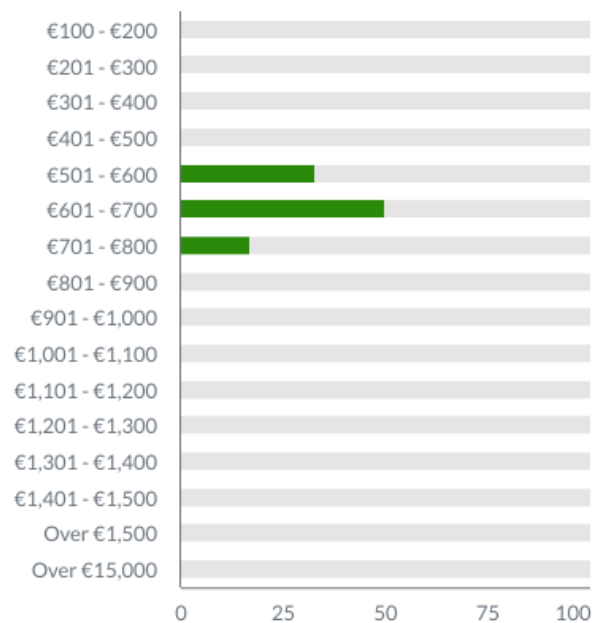
Production company  
**Assistant Stage Manager**

8 responses  
Average pay: €623  
Range: €550 - €675



Venue  
**Assistant Stage Manager**

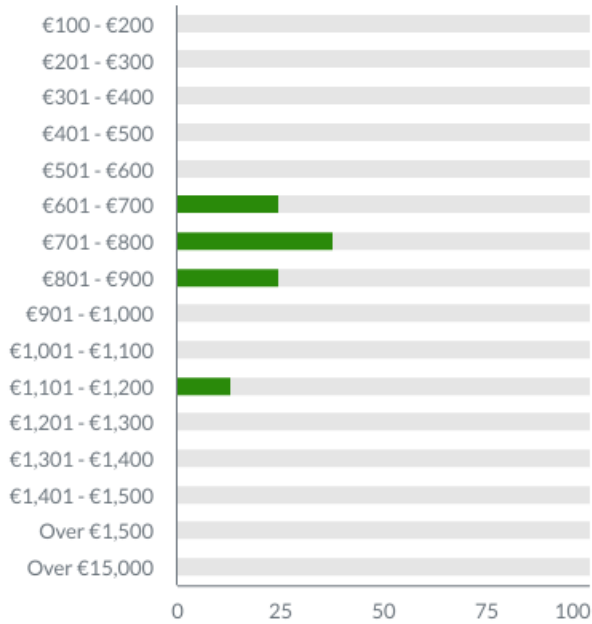
4 responses  
Average pay: €525  
Range: €450 - €650





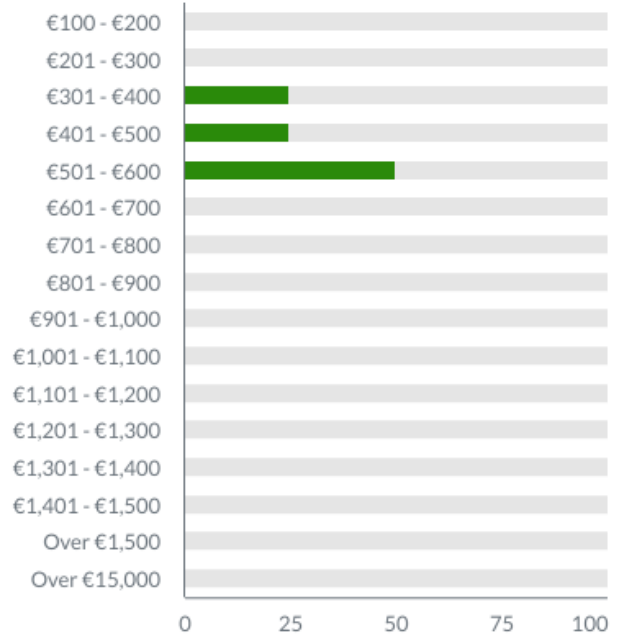
Production company  
**Lighting Operator**

8 responses  
Average pay: €830  
Range: €660 - €1,100



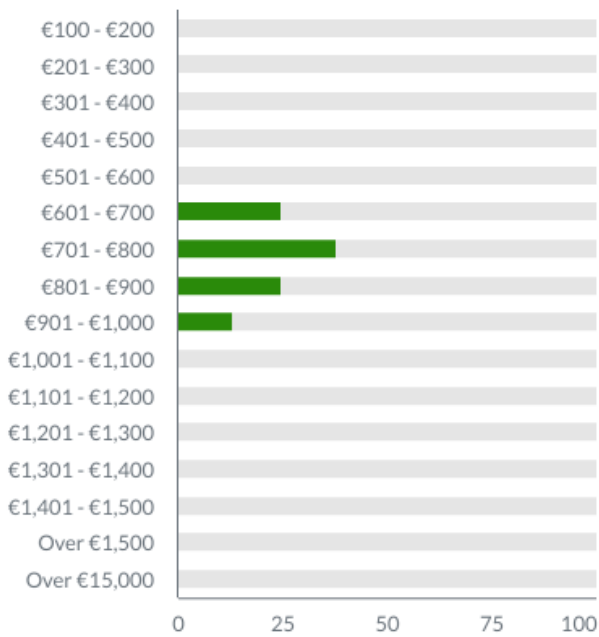
Venue  
**Lighting Operator**

4 responses  
Average pay: €494  
Range: €400 - €550



Production company  
**Sound Operator**

8 responses  
Average pay: €816  
Range: €660 - €1,000



Venue  
**Sound Operator**

5 responses  
Average pay: €515  
Range: €400 - €600





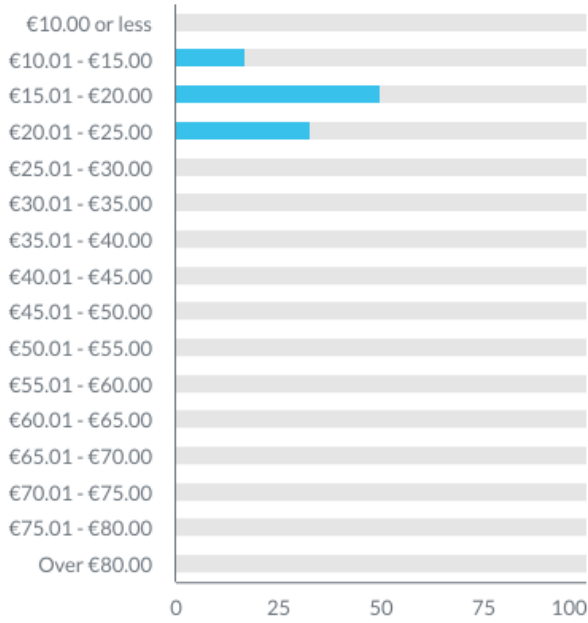
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## Hourly rates

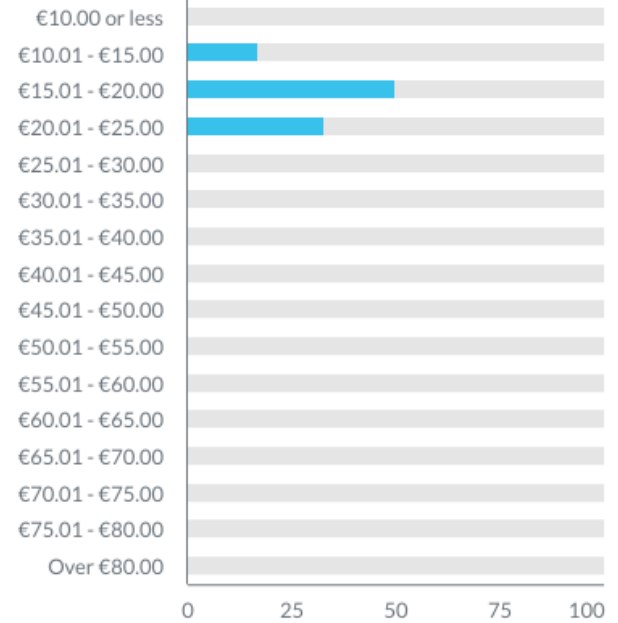
Production Companies  
**Lightboard Operator**

6 responses  
Range: €14.49 - €25.00  
Average range: €18.87 - €19.92

Minimum



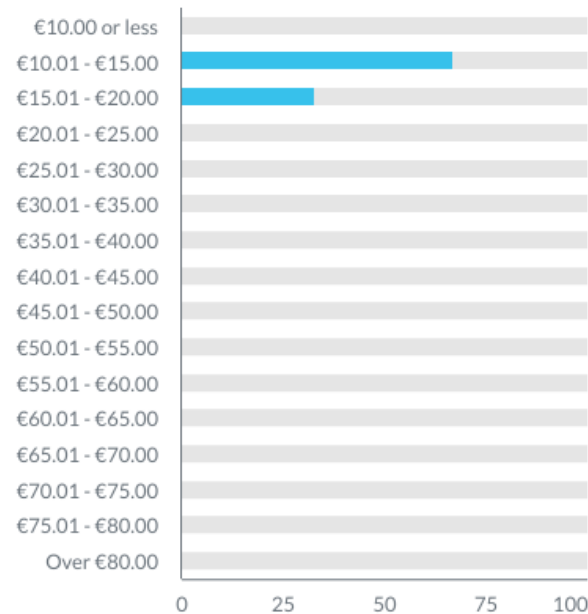
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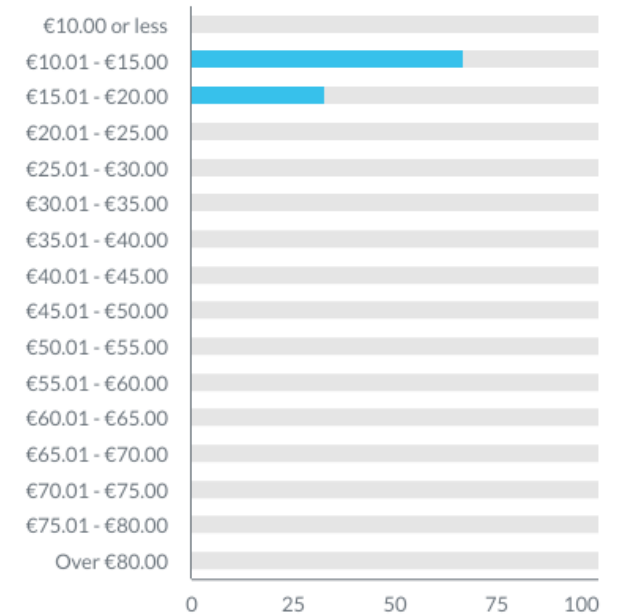
Production Companies  
**Follow Spot Operator**

3 responses  
Range: €14.49 - €17.50  
Average range: €15.66 - €15.66

Minimum



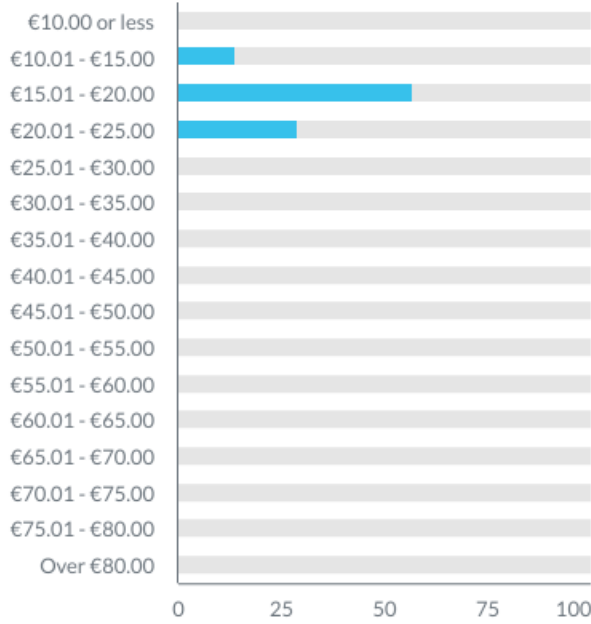
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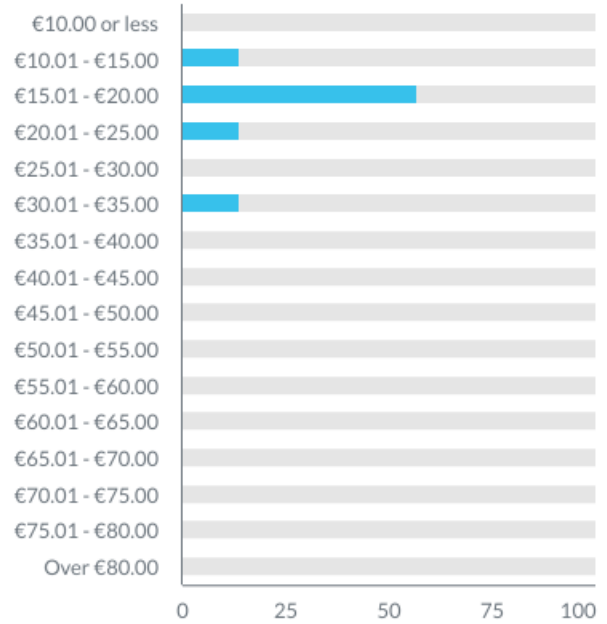
Production Companies  
**Sound Operator**

7 responses  
Range: €17.50 - €31.25  
Average range: €18.56 - €20.70

Minimum



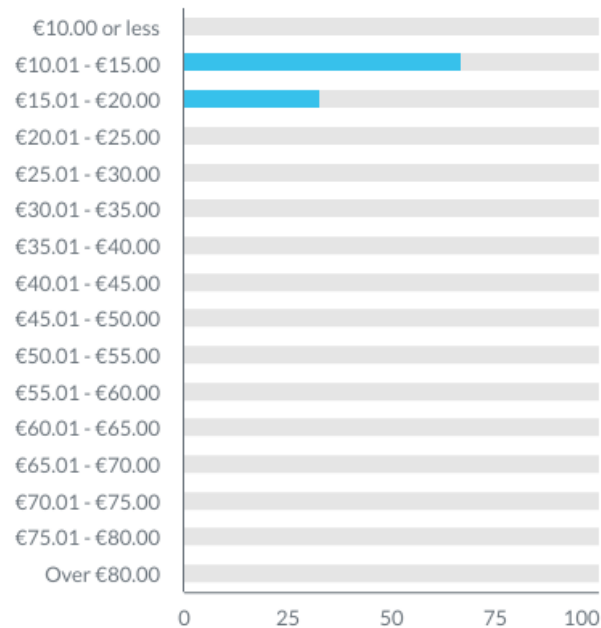
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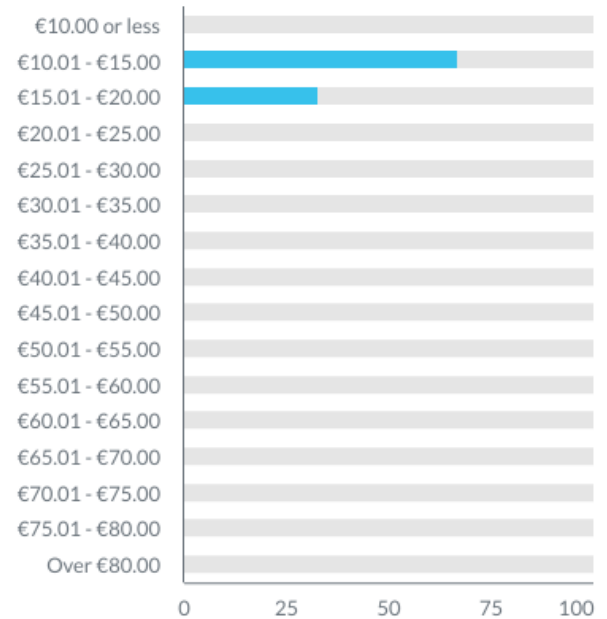
Production Companies  
**Fly Operator**

3 responses  
Range: €14.49 - €17.50  
Average range: €15.66 - €15.66

Minimum



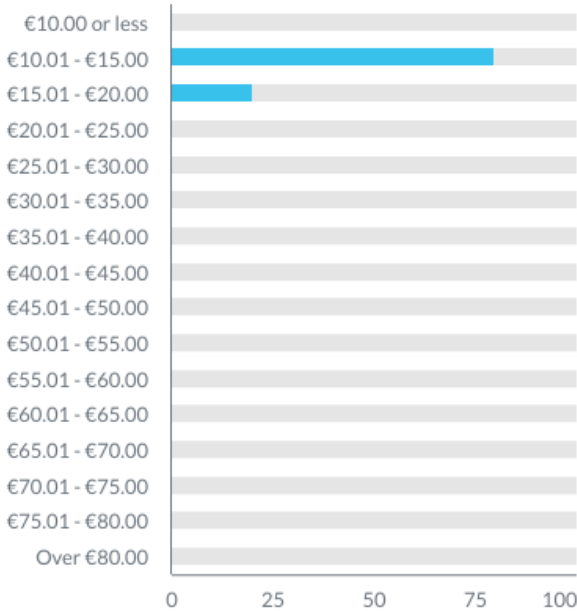
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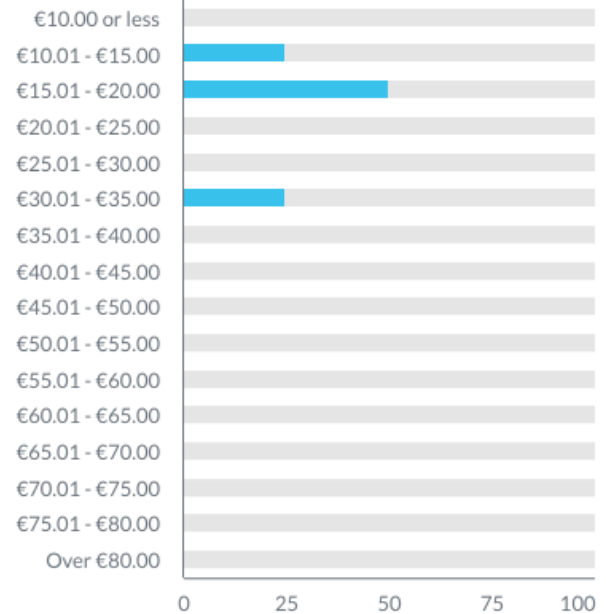
**Festivals**  
**General Technical Staff**

5 responses  
Range: €11.43 - €31.00  
Average range: €14.29 - €20.64

Minimum



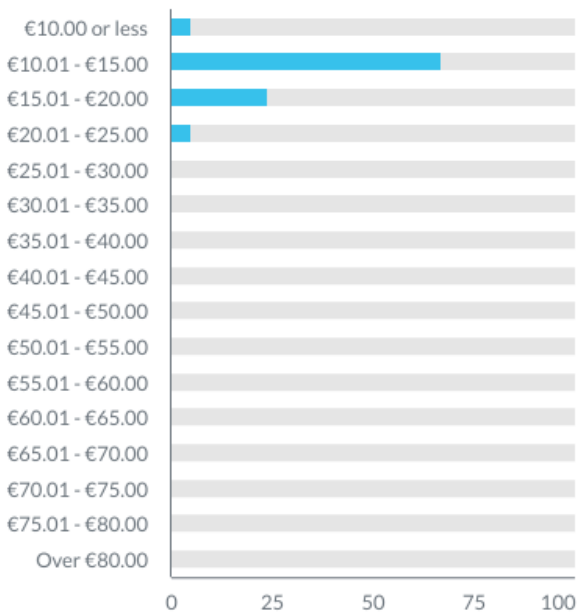
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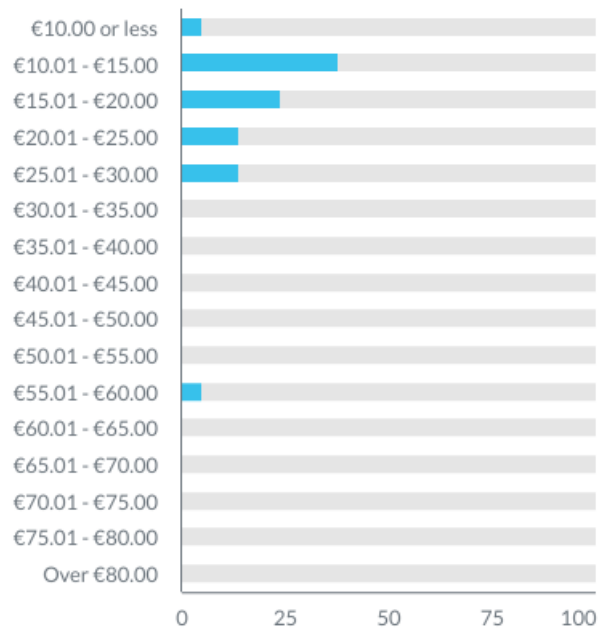
**Venues**  
**Technical staff e.g., operators**

21 responses  
Range: €10.00 - €60.00  
Average range: €15.22 - €20.83

Minimum



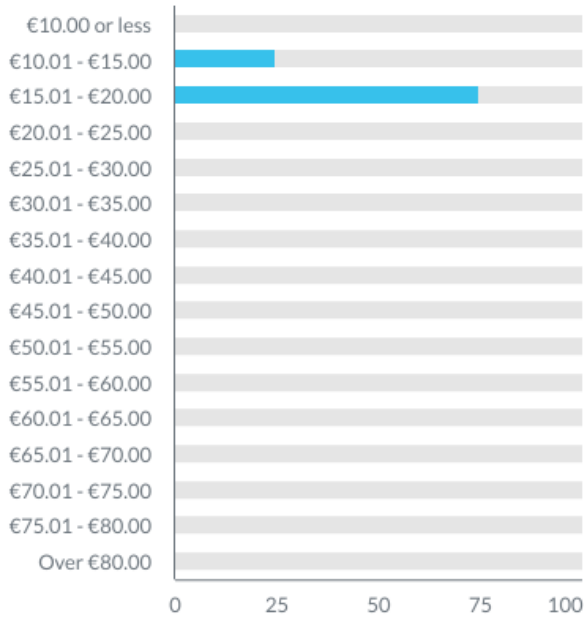
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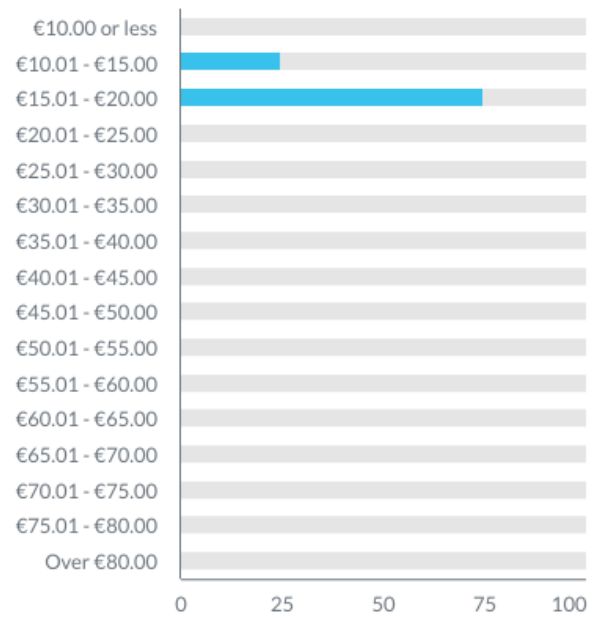
Production Companies  
**Carpenter / Set**

4 responses  
Range: €14.49 - €20.00  
Average range: €17.37 - €18.00

Minimum



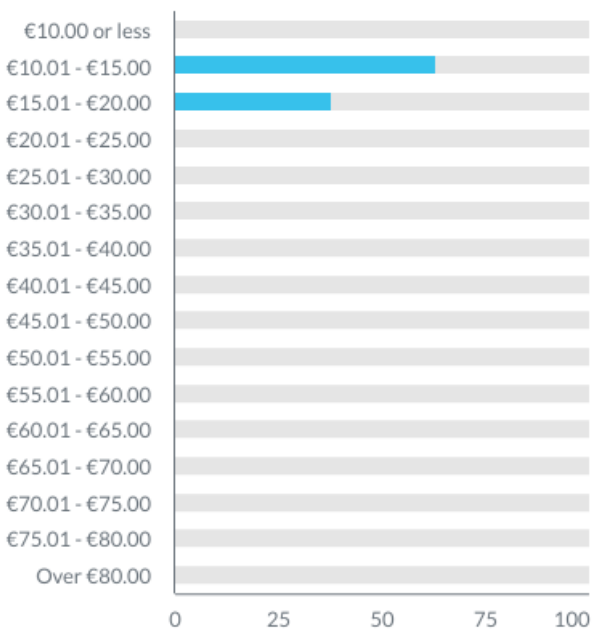
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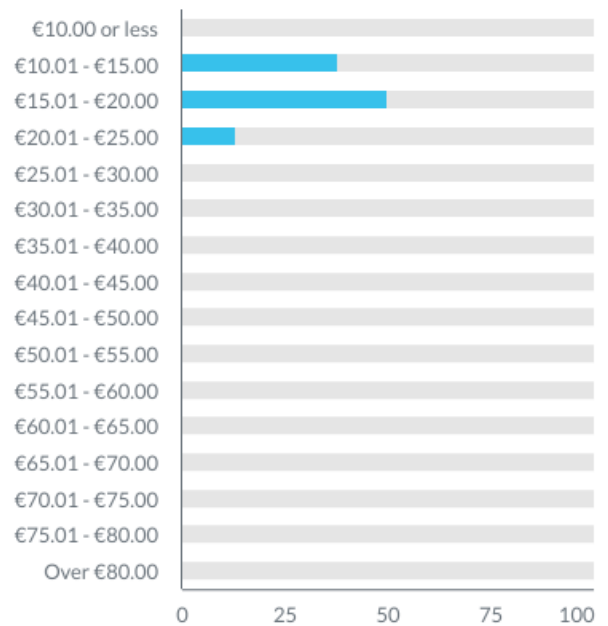
Production Companies  
**Get-in / Get-out Crew**

8 responses  
Range: €14.49 - €25.00  
Average range: €15.87 - €17.75

Minimum



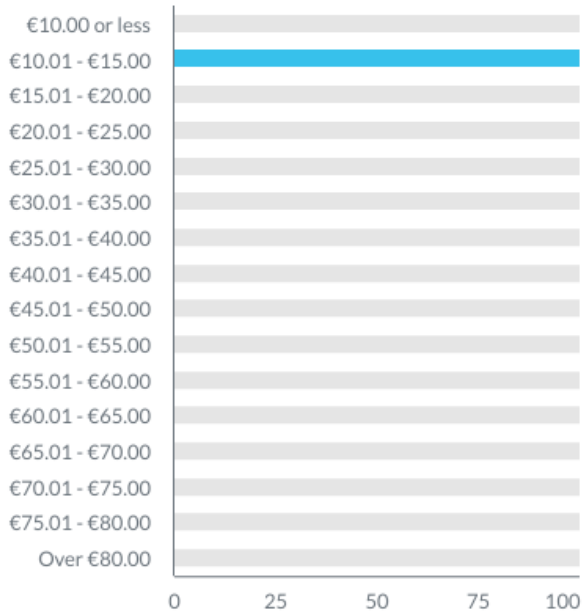
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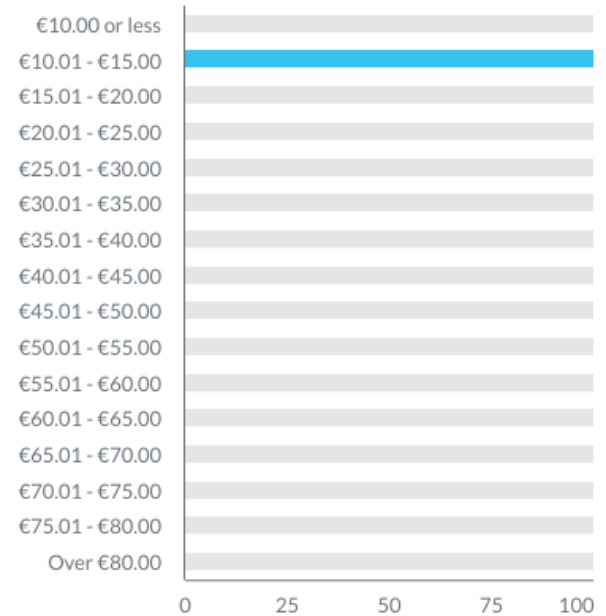
Venues  
**Duty Manager**

9 responses  
Range: €11.00 - €15.00  
Average range: €13.27 - €14.27

Minimum



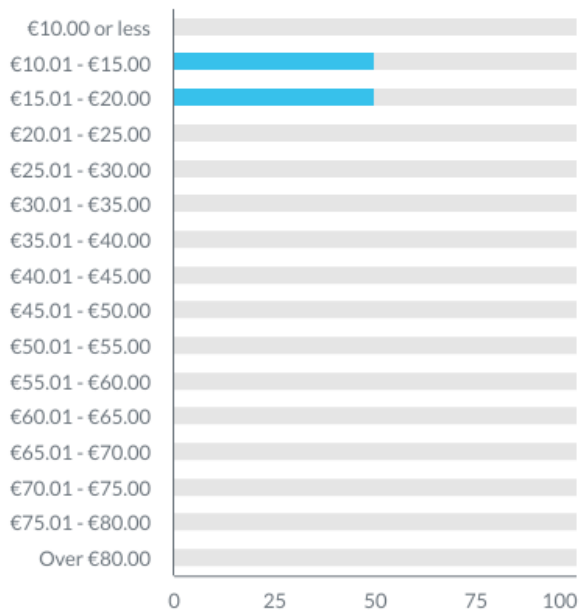
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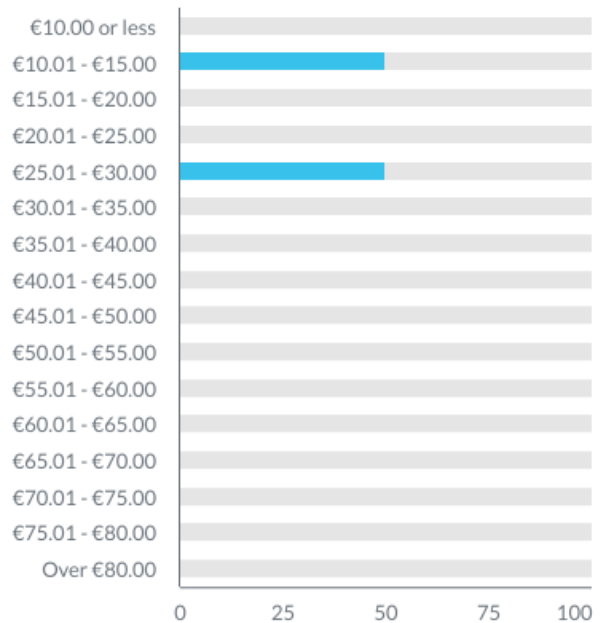
Festivals  
**Box Office Staff**

2 responses  
Range: €12.00 - €28.00  
Average range: €15.00 - €20.00

Minimum



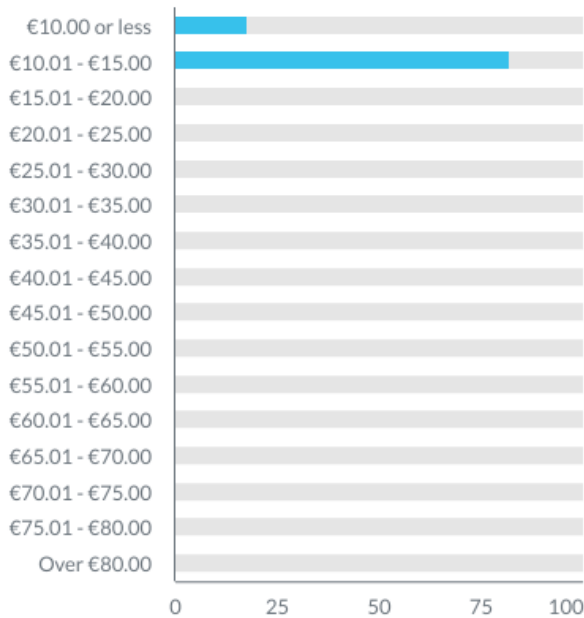
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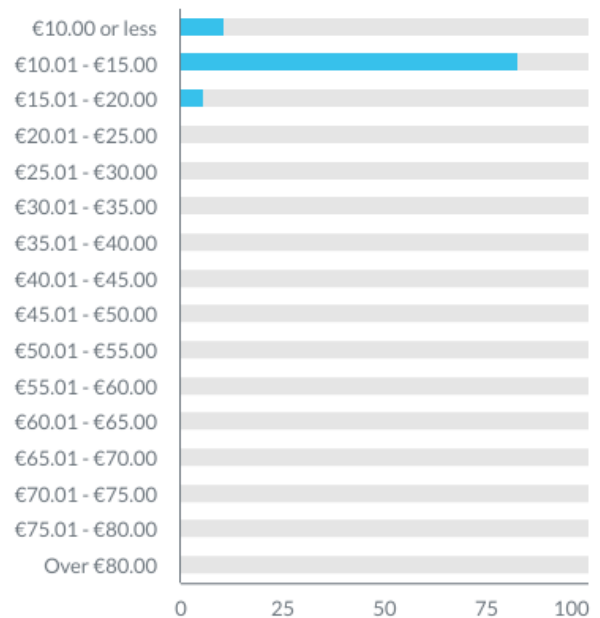
Venues  
**Box Office Staff**

17 responses  
Range: €9.80 - €16.00  
Average range: €11.32 - €12.75

Minimum



Maximum



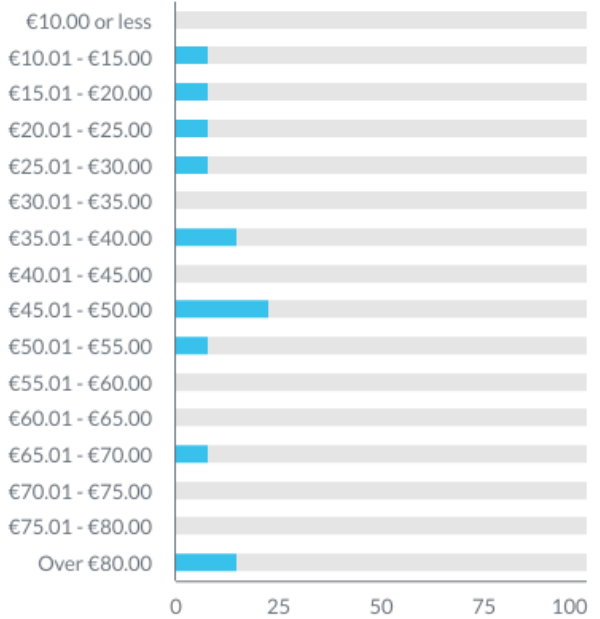
Venues  
**Education/Workshop Leaders**

13 responses  
Range: €14.00 - €150.00  
Average range: €34.15 - €53.08

Minimum



Maximum

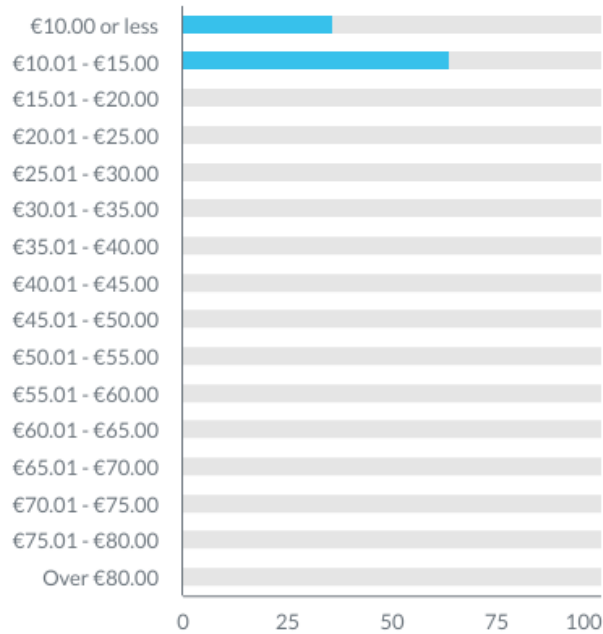




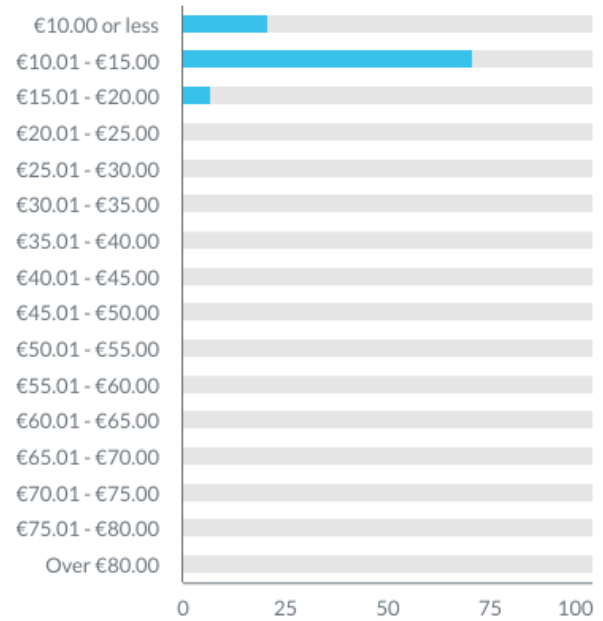
Venues  
**Usher**

14 responses  
Range: €9.80 - €16.00  
Average range: €10.58 - €11.35

Minimum



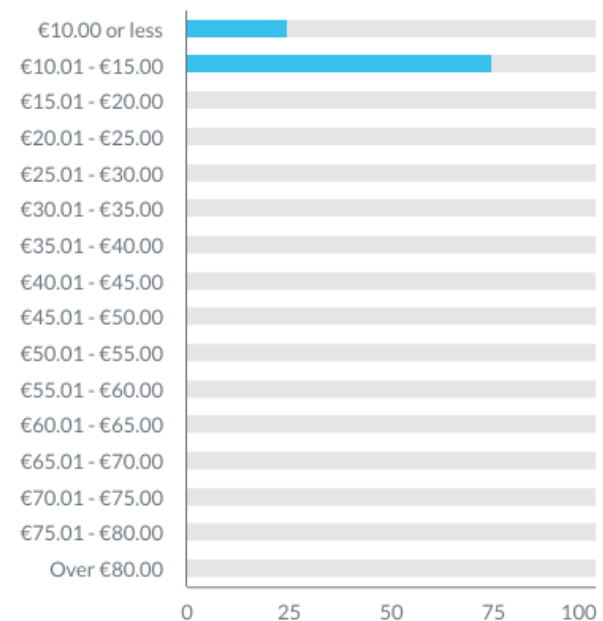
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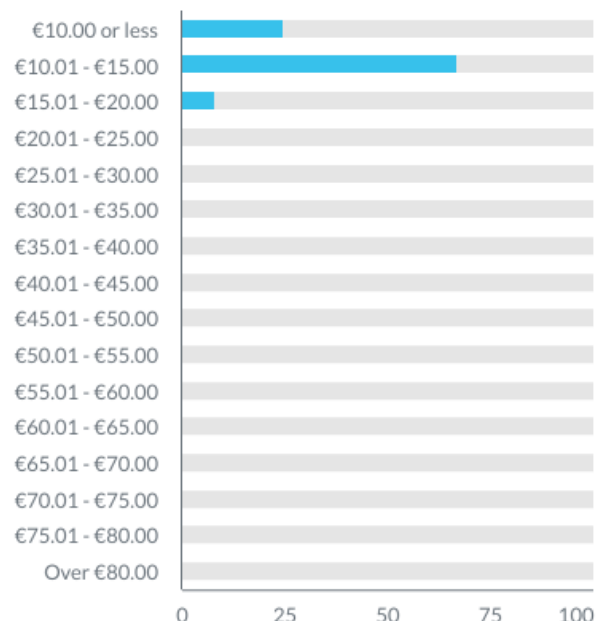
Venues  
**Bar staff**

12 responses  
Range: €9.80 - €16.00  
Average range: €11.02 - €12.63

Minimum



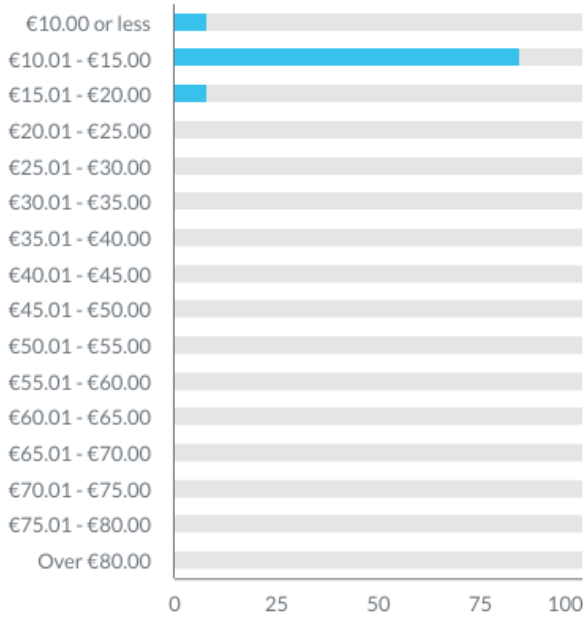
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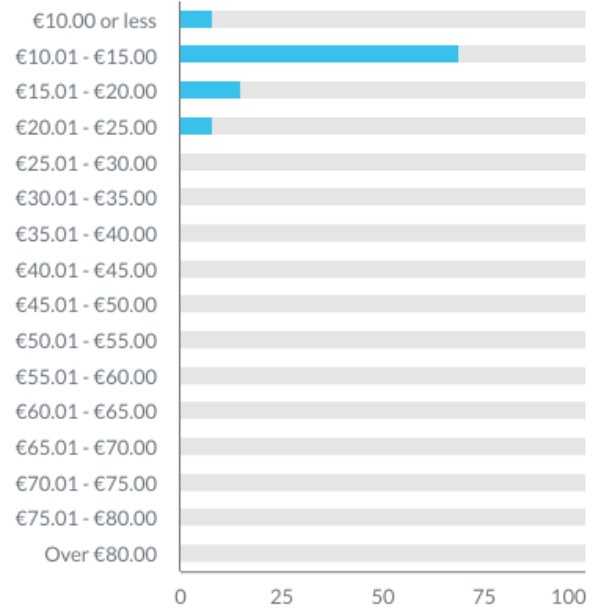
Venues  
**Cleaner**

13 responses  
Range: €10.00 - €25.00  
Average range: €12.01 - €13.79

Minimum



Maximum





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## Section Four: Qualitative Data

## **Artists, makers and creative practitioners**

We asked respondents "What impact does the nature of your employment in the arts have on your life?" These are their responses edited for spelling only:

- A life of uncertainty, instability. Unable to afford a pension, insurance, or college tuition for my children. Greater risk of impaired health working with paints, textiles chemicals. Gig work and various income streams made it impossible to qualify for state assistance like PUP. Unable to obtain mortgage or prove eligibility for rent or financial borrowing. General disdain from "real artists" and general disdain from "real sectors" of industry.
- A massive impact on mental health (anxiety) and pressure on relationships due to working hours.
- As a person with a disability, my art has kept me on the planet. In the broad embrace of the arts, I am not regarded in terms of my disability but as an artist. I am regarded as what I want to say and how I say it. I am not seen in terms of what I can't do... That is indispensable. I kind of risk everything for that as it's a life. Otherwise, it's not. At the same time, practising my art means every day I'm afraid that I lose my blind pension support as the State does not understand a disabled person attempting to grow and thrive as an artist... The stress is corrosive. But I believe the arts must reflect the whole spectrum of human experience ... including those who have disabilities ... it would increase audiences if it did ... but the State does not agree with my thinking. I struggle and worry ALL the time about money and my health which impacts my art ... I have a kind landlord and people have been very, very good to me ... especially people outside of Ireland who have facilitated my touring by giving me accommodation and meals.
- Cannot dedicate myself to writing if I cannot feed my family.
- Cannot live in a city, cannot afford new clothes, bills and sometimes groceries. Constant stress on mental health about finances. Cannot afford to start a family, buy a house, (or even rent most). Working 16+ hours a day for under minimum wage.
- Constantly having to choose between leaving Ireland to get work that pays properly with the attached conditions such as health care and allowances or staying at home with my family and choosing what I can afford to pay between health insurance, car insurance, mortgage and other basic bills other professionals in Ireland expect to be able to afford after 17 years in an industry.

- Constantly stressed about money, worried about paying the rent and bills, missing payments. Saying yes to every job because I'm afraid of how saying no will impact on my future prospects. Sometimes not having enough money to buy food and being hungry and not being able to concentrate on work. Or not having enough money for petrol to drive to a job. It's a constant worry: worrying about being able to afford to go to work. Not being able to take any time off because I can't afford it (and that you can't just take time off a show). It has had a huge impact on my mental health. I have a hormonal condition that affects my mental health and the stress from my financial situation makes it worse and I have felt suicidal many times. I have had the experience of not being able to afford to go to the doctor. I would like children, but my financial situation is too precarious to make that decision right now. I feel like I am constantly working every hour. I don't take holidays. But I can't understand how I am constantly broke.
- COVID helped me to realise that my body has been wrecked for the last 5+ years. Nobody should work this hard for table scraps, especially when I feel more as I enter my mid 30's. Plus the lack of social life isn't great. Thankfully my wife is supportive, but I would rather spend my evenings with her at this point than in hours 10-12 of work, and I think she would as well.
- Difficult work/life balance at times because of scheduling problems - often many projects happen simultaneously.
- Due to low pay and lack of permanent contracts, if you don't work you don't get paid. It is very hard to plan within a family like this. The pay gap between general staff and management is huge. The fact we all work unsociable hours is not recognised financially. I am currently looking for work outside the arts although I am highly qualified and love the arts.
- Endless short-term thinking. Difficulty in taking breaks and holidays. Constant low-level anxiety about future work. Difficulty in creating a healthy routine since I've often had to take on the maximum work than I can handle, or feel I need to always keep working. That leads to less focus on my health and fitness, and on maintaining a healthy diet. Regular worries that I should change work, that I should get a more stable job and move away from the arts. Ditto regular thinking that I should leave Ireland. Being used to a generally frugal lifestyle. I rent out a spare room in my home for short term guests, which impacts on my use of my home, but gives me a bit of a steady-ish income. I've been lucky in that I've got to a stage where I can often choose the work I take on, which usually improves the quality of my work and the experience of it. The pandemic, and the small amount of time I was on the PUP, was a bit of a revelation. The experience of working a bit less and not having the stress of uncertain income was extraordinary. I

could see that the work of being an artist and arts worker in that kind of a situation would feel entirely different.

- Every month paying our mortgage and our bills is a challenge. We have little or no surplus income. We regularly get by on less than we need. New shoes or clothes or haircuts are a rare luxury.
- Extremely stressful, extremely long hours, poor work-life balance
- Family is a very difficult one as there is little or no maternity/paternity benefits for those who are self-employed in the arts. I am 33 now and would like to start a family but can't afford to lose the work I would lose as I am a physical performer.
- Financially, it has been my only source of income for the past 11 years and has equated to half of my household's income in the year 2019. It has also been a place where most of my social circles stem from due to unsociable hours worked and the sense of companionship felt whilst working on a production.
- Health and well being
- Health-burn out, stress, anxiety
- Huge. Life choices regarding family, accommodation and travel are utterly affected. I need to save like a squirrel in order to maintain any sort of long-term security. It affects my mental health hugely as worries about employment are so common.
- I am lucky coming from another career I have some money to sustain me for a little while but 2020 and 2021 to date have meant I have to be more careful. I am lucky I can commit to the arts for another year or so and if things pick up, I will be fine. 2020 was starting very well for me but as for all of us that disappeared and the challenge to build again is a concern as people are not familiar with me.
- I am the sole breadwinner in my household. My family does not have health insurance or private pensions. I work long hours and cannot afford to go on holidays. I am unable to get a mortgage - fortunately we are on HAP and so it is only due to that we are able to rent in Dublin city centre, so that my commute is 30 mins each day.
- I can't separate my choice of employment from myself. It has meant an improvised life of penury.
- I don't earn a lot, but I don't spend a lot. The idea of having children would certainly be daunting but being single, I am also not likely to do that any time soon.

- I have a family and work in the arts brings a lot of time and financial pressure. I try to balance that as best I can as this is my own choice but last year has been horrendous and prospect of sudden cut of PUP before normal working world resumes is very difficult.
- I have a small amount of flexibility in terms of working a 4 day rather than a full working week. It enables me to be at home for my family on one day.
- I have a very supportive partner which allows me to continue working in the arts. It has impacted our ability to get a mortgage. In terms of family planning, I will put off having children for as long as possible as I don't feel I will be able to sustain a career in the arts while raising a family.
- I have health insurance because my mother pays for it. I have missed so many birthdays and family get togethers because I was working on a show or a production. I haven't had any sustainability or security in my adult life working in the arts and while the work has been fulfilling, it has been hard to see a future in it, which is why I'm opting to get more secure employment.
- I have no pension. I will simply not be able to buy a house, single or in a relationship. Options for furthering career are very limited.
- I have often put work over health and life choices. This is problematic but when work is so precarious that you feel obliged in doing so. However, there is a constant fear for people with disabilities working in this sector. They can only earn €120 per week without benefits such as Disability Allowance, Blind Allowance etc being affected. These benefits are the only financial security that many artists with disabilities can avail of unlike their peers who can take on jobs like bar work etc. There is also a fear of disclosing disability to an organisation/company for fear of not getting hired.
- I have to move out of my home in Dublin because of the reasons above. I think I'm going to change sector. If the corporate world is exploitative, the arts sector is adopting a model that is even more dehumanised. So disappointed and disheartened. My mental health is severely affected by all this. I can't believe we are treated like this.
- I have to regularly justify my choice to live precariously working in the arts to my family and friends. It has a huge toll on my mental health and my personal dignity. I have had to make difficult choices in life not to start a family (I can't afford to), and I worry what the future holds as I have no security and no pension. Living in Ireland is becoming increasingly unsustainable.
- I know I cannot have children, I cannot afford them. I may never own my own home. I know ultimately this may be unsustainable.

- I love it. It would be nice to have more funding opportunities especially in the jazz world.
- I love my job but I'm a 36-year-old woman who has no health insurance or pension. I have put parts of my life on hold, like having a family, because there is no work/life balance in this industry and it is so financially precarious. I have been saving with my partner, also working in the Arts, for a mortgage for the last 5 years. We have rented together for over 13 years and we cannot get a mortgage. Earlier this year, Dublin City Council refused to take my 2020 earnings into account on our Rebuilding Ireland Mortgage application because I had come on and off the PUP. I asked them to not include my PUP "earnings" and only take my actual earnings from my work into account, they refused and told me I was viewed as unemployed. I was not unemployed last year, I have been unemployed before and I can safely say last year was not that! I am a relatively good earner (for the Arts) with 14 years in the industry, if I am finding it this difficult to find an affordable place to live, in the city I grew up in, then how are less experienced Arts Workers supposed to survive?
- I love my job. Pre Covid-19, I worked hard, work flexible hours, am obliging, will always row in to help others. During Covid, I worked full time, though lesser than if we were open as not attending events but learned a lot along the way and upskilled significantly. At times, this does affect my personal life, but that's the nature of the Arts and I am not complaining about that - it's my choice. Sustainability is another story. Cost of living is rising hugely yet my salary has barely budged in 5 years. The Arts sector must improve salaries - Why is my 40hrs in administration worth so much less than others in similar admin jobs in the private sector?
- I prioritised health insurance as I needed it for personal reasons. I had to borrow money to pay for it ... I have in 2020 started a masters in teaching as I need to provide for my child and also not work endlessly so I can also parent my child. I need reliable work and regular hours, which outside of maybe one organisation, is impossible to find in my sector. The hours spent looking for/drumming up work, maintaining websites, networking, meetings and emails about potential work, general admin, writing applications etc. are all hours that are unpaid and constitute a large portion of freelancers working time. The stress of this constant striving, together with the relatively low pay and lack of other benefits and supports like holiday pay, job share, parental leave, maternity benefit, etc. etc., means I am quite disillusioned with the arts as an employment sector. It is completely unsustainable for single parents, despite it being populated with endlessly kind, generous and supportive colleagues.



- I really love the work that I do. In the past year I have grown dramatically. I have created a good business for myself, connected with other professionals and expanded my repertoire. I am very frugal so I can manage money very well, but I hate that I have to be. Working in the arts has directly impacted on my life choices, for example I cannot build a proper house as I will not be able to secure a mortgage and it has made me think that it would be unfair of me to have a family considering my income is so erratic, being self-employed I would not get maternity leave or support. Over the past year I have had more time to focus on my mental and physical health because I have not had to travel on top of all my other work, this is something I would like to stay on top of. I am very grateful to have a medical card.
- I stay because I love the work but as an industry, we are under resourced meaning I have to work waaaay outside of the 40 hours a week I am paid at a lower rate than peers in other industries. I don't have enough pairs of hands in my team - meaning my team are exhausted and at constant risk of burn out and we have to do everything to a lesser standard than we are capable of. Although, again, I speak from a position of privilege in a salaried job, my salary is still not enough to get me a decent mortgage to buy a place of my own in the city which I live and work in. I'm looking at friends doing the same job as me in the corporate sector who have houses, no financial worries and breeze in and never have to work outside of their 40 hours a week.
- I think that my work in the arts has influenced my children as two of them are singers and songwriters! They obviously have not been turned off. The financial insecurity has not been good for marriage and family life and has led to me doing a lot of filler jobs which will never develop into a career or long-term way of life. I have done everything from window cleaning to factory work and community interviewing to try and make some money. All of this work was welcome, but I feel that it caused me to look at my artistic talent as a sideshow rather than something I should be developing to the highest level. I even retrained as a secondary school teacher and worked for ten years in reasonably regular employment, but I could not get a full-time permanent job. At this stage I feel the rest of my life should be dedicated to fully developing my artistic work and making a living from it.
- I won't be able to have children, I lived on a boat for 5 years to afford living in Dublin.
- I work 'behind the scenes' in the arts as that allows for a more consistent and sustainable income stream. It also facilitates a work schedule that is family friendly, which is essential for me as I solo parent. I am lucky to work in an arts organisation that supported its employees throughout the

Covid lockdown. In addition, my Creative Associate work continued with schools, albeit remotely. I opted last year to change from full-time to part-time work, which allows me to continue to work but without the pressure that full-time brings - particularly when coupled with occasional evening and weekend work. I choose to pursue my personal artistic practice in a voluntary way.

- I'm very lucky, I live and come from Dublin and have family support and my partner has a steady income. Our rent is also very low, thanks to family support. I'm 38 and have only recently gotten health insurance and I still struggle to pay it. Holidays only happen if I can get a loan. Basic health suffers due to the stress, stress of not having enough money coming in, stress of not being able to juggle all the balls. Owning a house is a near impossibility, having children equally so.
- If it wasn't for the income of my husband, we would not be in a position to buy a home. We have mortgage approval based on his income not mine. I have not had a pay increase for 12 years of the 16 years that I have been working in the arts. We are trying for a family but as I won't get paid maternity leave through my job it is another financial burden that many of my peers working in other industries do not face. There is no pension. These things were not as important in my twenties and early thirties. As I now enter my forties, I realise how bad the pay and conditions are and I do consider if I can continue to work in this industry if it will prevent me from achieving my life goals of owning a home, starting a family. It's just not sustainable. It also feels rotten to know that I am one of the lucky ones in my industry and my friends and colleagues who are freelance are even worse off. My concerns do not feel valid, but they are real to me in my life.
- I'm doing something I love so I'm happy even if it is tight financially.
- I'm seriously considering leaving the arts because I know I want children and I don't see how this could be possible in my precarious circumstances. It breaks my heart.
- It determines where I live, which city/country, therefore what my social life can be, my romantic partners, and my impact on the environment, access to family. It determines everything else.
- It impacts every part of my life - housing, family, friends, sustainability, health (food choices etc.)
- It impacts every part of my life. I cannot afford to rent never mind own a house as a single person with no children. I am in my mid 30's living with my parents. I don't have basic life choices because of working in the arts. It is deeply upsetting & annoying.

- It is a source of stress in my family due to the limited money it brings in, therefore detrimental to a content home.
- It is difficult to plan time off (more than a few days) as like all self-employment you need to keep new opportunities coming and don't want to let down or lose any existing work relationships. Maintaining a steady income is very challenging and near impossible as every year there are quiet periods where a project, you're ready to begin work on doesn't get funded. A good proportion of my work I can do from home though which is very positive and means I'm available to family much more.
- It is not sustainable. I work away from home which can put a strain on personal relationship. Due to the precarious nature of the work and low wages, living with people I do not wish to be living with. I have no prospect of being able to start a family, due to costs and nature of work. I have no health insurance. I am largely stuck in the same position I was in 5 years ago and only marginally better than where I was 10 years ago.
- It is so very precarious and a source of anxiety- I am now expecting my first child and once the 6 months of maternity benefit is over, I cannot foresee how I can continue to work as I have done - constantly travelling up and down to Dublin for auditions, renting digs for a few weeks in order to work with companies in other areas of Ireland. The costs of childcare should I secure work are also a huge issue. I am researching college courses in order to retrain for more stable employment, I love being an actor, but I can't see how I can continue to do so with a baby. I envy those in the PAYE sector who can take sick days - we have to struggle through as freelancers- if we don't work, we don't get paid. I worry about the future. The PUP is the first time I successfully accessed social welfare supports- INTREO fail to understand that one can be PAYE and self-employed in the arts. As a self-employed actress, even when I have no income for months, I have only succeeded in accessing jobseeker's credits. Because it is means-tested and my husband works, I can never access a payment.
- It largely prevents me planning for the future - home ownership and starting a family seem out of financial reach due to the unpredictable or sporadic nature of earning. Cost of housing is largely prohibitive in living where the majority of the arts and cultural work is.
- It massively limits your choices. It creates unnecessary fear about ageing.
- It results in living two lives, one where I work to earn a living and support my artistic life. The other where I make a small amount for much hard work and hustle. It is a choice between some form of security and a roll of the dice. It decides where I might live, it creates stress and anxiety and uncertainty regarding my future. At some point I feel it will be either, a

home and a family or my life in the arts. It doesn't feel like I can have both without working myself into the ground or constantly being concerned about money, and hence health and housing.

- It's a very difficult life. I feel the work I do is financially undervalued. I cannot foresee a future in which I will support myself entirely by working in the arts due to the changeable nature of the industry and the stagnant, low wages. This sector tends to be viewed negatively by financial institutions and I cannot get mortgage approval, despite being employed on a full-time basis.
- It's everything I do. The passion I have for this drives me to dedicate every waking moment to this work. I travel to wherever the work is, which in 2019 was not Ireland. Every minute I have I spend working on this. I have openly chosen to never to commit to a relationship again, I know I will never have kids. It is literally impossible for me to buy even the tiniest house this year. I cannot afford a car. This year has been the literal worst in my life. And between the chronic pain of the spine injury, (which happened at work teaching circus), and the extraordinarily new low levels depression from the pandemic and being told by society, you don't matter, you aren't essential... it took a HUGE toll on my sense of self. And that has never happened before to this extent. What's sillier even still is that Art actually makes everyone feel more connected, and connection increases our bonding hormone oxytocin: which is an anti-viral, anti-inflammatory and huge immunity booster. It was even tested in clinical studies this last year against covid with superbly positive results at helping fight it off. So ART would have helped lots of people live and beat the infection. It lowers Cortisol even, which is a big culprit for inflammation, and most illness is inflammation. If you are curious to learn more, just google "the Oxytocin project" research and contact them.
- It's hard to juggle the multiple creative jobs for little money. You end up juggling lots of projects so you can afford to live and get stressed out because you're not giving any of them the attention you think they deserve. It affects all of my life choices, being available for family gatherings, it's exhausting, prospect of having to move out of Dublin where my family and friends are is very real.
- It's my only source of income in "normal times"
- It's often all-consuming and can leave little time for anything else; my partner having worked in the same industry for all of his life understands the demands but if we had had children, it would not have been sustainable for us both to work in the arts; one would have had to have paid employment in a sector that was more lucrative and that offered better hours and benefits.

I was fortunate in that personal circumstances enabled me to buy a property very young, that is now enabling me to contemplate retiring as we'll have an alternative income stream - without that at least one of us would need to be working for the rest of our lives!

- Lack of security, constantly dependent on public funding being secured to remain in employment. I haven't had health insurance in 15 years, nor have I made any pension contributions in that time. I have had to move out of Dublin as I could no longer afford my rent, so my future in my current role is uncertain post-Covid.
- Mainly detrimental apart from the general low pay relative to qualification level, I'm firmly in middle age now and all my life choices in relationships, having a family, home buying, upskilling and training have all been delayed. The single most detrimental effect is the lack of health insurance. I've never been able to afford health cover. I am now dealing with issues decades later because I have family cover through my husband's job. I am also acutely aware and stressed by my lack of pension and time running out in starting one now. Paradoxically as a homeowner I am equally aware that my pay rate and my situation is one of extreme privilege compared to many of my fellow theatre colleagues.
- Means I have never had any solid financial footing, except for a few periods where I had full-time, but lowly paid, regular employment.
- Mental health suffers due to constant anxiety about money. Can't afford decent transport so constant worry if van will break down at an event. Probably more but I can't think at the moment.
- Mostly good but it can be a struggle financially.
- My arts income is completely erratic, and I can only rely on it to sustain one off payments in the household. My husband's job covers all the regular and crucial payments like healthcare, mortgage etc.
- My partner and I both work in the arts, and we feel one of us would have to seek employment in a different sector if we wished to have children. Income is far too unpredictable in the arts in order to plan and save for the future.
- My work is a profession, so every aspect of my life is affected by it.
- One of the reasons I know I will need to find regular employment in the future is that I'm in my early thirties, I'd like to start thinking about a future of having a family and a secure home. At the moment, the idea of being able to do any of those things seems impossible. My income is too low and irregular to get a mortgage. I'm single so there are no possibilities of having children but even if I was in a long-term relationship, I'd worry about taking

time out to have a child and being able to find work again afterwards. Working in the arts often requires a lot of flexibility in your time, having a child or children limits that flexibility. I also don't have health insurance because I can't afford it. I've finally started my pension this year but I'm putting a minuscule amount in each month. I worry that working so precariously now limits my future plans, but I love what I do. I feel like I've just gotten to a place where I can finally earn enough not to have to subsidise it with another non-art related income, that took ten years of hard work.

- Passionate about arts Wellbeing Collaboration Health Community health
- Precariousness of income is stressful, particularly as a parent.
- PUP reduced on July 6th 2020 to €203. While paying €262 of my PUP each month to pension. Declined small business grant to cover business costs incurred while closed, because I could not give a start date to work and they wanted me to sign off PUP.
- Recently - and even before the pandemic - my mental and physical health has suffered due to becoming burned out and exhausted. This has led to my being less fit to pursue work, needing to step back from maintaining the pace of work I had been pursuing. On top of this, years of freelancing have taken their toll on things like security of home and future plans, i.e. I don't own my own home and I don't have a pension, even though I am over 50. It's a precarious life, which feels OK for the first decade or two. After this though, folk crave some stability and security, which are simply not available as a freelance creative practitioner.
- Single. Live with elderly parent.
- The biggest impact is around housing. Not having a steady secure income means not being able to get a mortgage. Rents are higher than mortgages and I can no longer afford to pay them where I live. Eventually all the artists will be forced out of the urban centres, which trade on the creative life we bring to those places. I also worry about my financial security and wellbeing as I grow older without a good pension or health insurance.
- The constant feeling of being undervalued grinds me down. The injustices in our industry frustrate and depress me. It has impacted on my self-esteem, my confidence and my mental health in general. I have seen friends in the freelance sector lose their homes when landlords raise rents and they are unable to pay. I know far too many people who were placed in impossible situations with bullying and harassment at work, with no one to turn to for support. I have many freelance friends who have had serious struggles with mental health which have seen them hospitalised. People who have had

serious injuries at work which have left them with permanent medical problems, unable to work while recovering and struggling to keep their homes: ultimately receiving no compensation. I know people who gave their lives to this industry who effectively found themselves homeless when they reached retirement age and were unable to continue renting. I know people who had to stay in hostels for a time because they had nowhere to go. I have a tiny pension and no debt which puts me in a privileged position compared to so many others in this industry but it's really not a lot to show for 26 years hard graft. During my early freelance career and into my full-time position I have missed birthdays, weddings, funerals, holidays, confirmations and communions in my family. In later years my job has made me unreliable among my siblings when it comes to caring for our elderly parents, leading to resentment on their part and guilt on mine. My career has impacted on my relationships and friendships. It shouldn't be like this. Thank you for trying to take it on.

- The grants available do not provide a living wage and I feel constantly undervalued in my work, even though I see the positive effects of my work in the communities I work with. This has an impact on my relationship with my partner and my self-esteem. I feel that even though I'm very good at my work, the fact that the pay is so poor that it doesn't seem like a valid career choice.
- The impact the nature of my employment has cost me greatly in health, both physical and mental as well as financially. The money I have spent in healthcare because of not only the precarious nature of my employment but the lack of support for me as an individual because I chose to work in this sector by other kinds of professionals and our government. This has caused serious damage to my mental and physical health, the cost of which is second only to the living costs I have to pay in this country to even have basic necessities. For me to be able to work a gig, usually a profit share, I have to spend hundreds of my own money to even be able to complete the job. I am so poorly compensated for the work I do, I don't expect to be able to ever support myself for a seriously long time because every job can take twice as much out of my pocket as I get to put back in.
- The nature of employment in the arts has a huge impact on life choices, health and family for those involved, which impacts the sustainability of such a lifestyle in itself. The ongoing uncertainty of employment in the arts, the lack of core funding to allow these organisations to have a comfortable staff capacity to carry out their yearly programme, the need to 'justify your existence' through constant reporting and multiple annual developmental projects without said capacity to support leads to a culture of anxiety and stress within the people carrying out these tasks. It is commonly known

throughout the management sector in the arts that this is a part of these roles and if this is the sector you wish to work in then you have to accept this. The lack of staff supports such as EAP's, sick leave, pension contributions within these areas also serves to increase these issues.

- The stress burnt me out and I can't operate like I did in my twenties anymore: working three jobs, sleeping 6 hours a night. My health conditions literally won't allow it. I have put off having a family and told myself I can't afford it, particularly now as a woman investigating single parenthood by choice. I regret this and will not be waiting any longer. If this means relinquishing my arts career, I bid it a fond farewell. What the current arts funding ecosystem creates, particularly as actors and theatre makers, is a phenomenon in which our financial security is tethered to other people's approval of us, or how well we hit certain benchmarks, use buzzwords, or play the game of convincing other people we are doing good work. All while operating in a broader societal context in which the deck is stacked against sustainable living both in the short-term (rent) and long-term (homeownership, retirement). Early last year, just pre-pandemic, I made a declaration to myself and all those with whom I imagine I would work in the future that the security and meaning in my life would no longer be tethered to other people's approval or their perception of how well I tick the boxes of what they have decided I am and should be. Nor will I accept less pay for work than what I genuinely need on the most basic baseline level for my health needs. I am no longer in a position to pick up the slack of broader economic and societal failures that are not my responsibility when it's clear that the harm that does is to my physical person and my ability to have the full human experience. My life dramatically changed as a result and I established financial solvency and security for the first time in my whole adult life. I'm not going back from that, even if it means I don't ever consider myself a full-time artist again.
- The uncertainty around the next job is a regular concern. The knowledge that the industry will be properly funded in the future would help to allay some of that fear. Living outside a main city has proved challenging while working in the arts but I've finally started to make contacts with local institutions and can see how that can have a positive impact on my work/life balance. There is no way I could have raised my family in a city on an income from the arts. To sustain a career I had to move outside to a more affordable area. When there are guaranteed jobs and knowledge that work is available, there is great pleasure in having a career in the arts and the prospect of each new project brings great hope and appreciation for the life I've chosen.



- There is no way to plan ahead. Funding is all so last minute, you don't know what you are going to be doing in 6 months' time. This is very problematic particularly for childcare and other types of family carers and a very stressful way to live. If companies could be funded to have more long-term planning even 2 years, this would lead to a much more stable work/life balance for artists and arts workers.
- This is the life I have chosen and I love working in the performing arts. I work hard, and am under pressure a lot of the time, however, this is not any different to many, many sectors. I chose to move from full time employment to have more time with my family and for my creative practice. Right now, this career is relatively sustainable and aligned with my life choices. It is likely, at some point in the future, that I will have to re-enter full time employment.
- To this point my life has revolved around my work in the arts.
- We basically don't get to have a life outside work as we're both working all the time to try to survive & cover basic bills.
- With a family, choices have to be made regards travel, time away from home and will it end up costing me more than I'm earning. Hoping you get enough lucrative employment to make the year a success. The commute to Dublin adding to congestion and poor rural transport options lead to frustration and extra cost. I love the arts and think they are essential part of the world we live in. We are resilient and passionate. As one gets older the energy is not as infinite. The rejections, the bills, the pandemic take a heavy toll on the belief system and the enthusiasm wanes and the doubt sets in. The hardest gig is not working.
- Without my HAP payment and medical card, I would have to leave the sector. Before I received HAP I was very stressed meeting my €1450 rental, as my partner is also an arts worker and we have 2 children. Without this support - we would have to leave the sector. However, HAP has its downside - I still feel like a suck on the system, rather than the system supporting me properly by being properly funded and more sustainable work made available to enable me to save and go for a mortgage - probably too late for that now - as I'm closing on 50.
- Working as a stage manager is very precarious as there are only so many productions here a year. Low standard of living, unable to get mortgage approval and can't afford a pension or health insurance. Forced to rent for years and since the pandemic had to move home to parents' home as I was unable to keep up with finances. I am now considering leaving the cultural sector to pursue a more stable job that will allow me to start a family with my partner.

- Working unsociable hours impacts on family life. Pay is very poor which impacts on family life and life choices and mental health at times.

### **Festivals, production companies and venues**

We asked the organisations surveyed “What impact does the nature of employment in the arts have on workers' lives?” These are their responses, edited for spelling only.

- Many people are working beyond their capacity, organisations cannot afford to hire enough people so every employee ends up wearing several hats. Trying to balance that with a family is very difficult. We are lucky in that we have started a small pension scheme but many do not have one in place. We don't have assistance with health insurance.
- It can have a very little impact or very much depending if one works in Arts admin or similar as salaried employee, or in a creative, technical position or arts job on freelance basis. Also, whether funding is secure and regular.
- It creates uncertainty due to the overwhelmingly freelance nature of it. On a practical level, mortgages are impossible to get meaning money is spent on rent.
- Working in the Arts is largely unsustainable. For those who do end up in liveable salaried employment within the sector there are many sacrifices that must be made including time spent with family, stress levels affecting mental and physical health and the freedom to make alternative life choices are limited to what is possible with the little free time or head space a person has left after effectively completing their work week. For Artists and practitioners, it is mostly hand to mouth, embedding a culture of scrambling for the next job to ensure the bills are paid. This constant scrambling for the next project limits the progression of true creative development within the sector due to the time and mental space used to find the next paying job. The lack of security, over a long period of time will inevitably affect ones mental and physical health leaving very little left for the creation of new and innovative art. Those who are able to push through to keep creating are at risk of burn out, mental health issues and in time unemployment and financial insecurity if the next project is not what the organisation/ funding application are looking for.
- We believe public attitudes around employment in the arts has improved and the ability to make life choices such as getting a mortgage is better now

than it was, but we have a way to go in order to provide sustainability, especially for freelance workers.

- Unimaginable - Houses are being sold - Companies closed down - Children's school arrangements changed - All the attendant stresses of a financial crisis - People out of work.
- Precarity is probably the most important word to use although that is variable. As a music organisation, some musicians (educationalists) can get stable and well-paying government or government-supported jobs. Others, who pursue similar work outside a number of key institutions live with much lower wages and precarious employment conditions. Entering the arts, by and large, is not a sensible life choice in terms of the wellbeing gained from financial security.
  - 1. Unstable accommodation options
  - 2. Sporadic periods of working intensely beyond family life expectations
  - 3. Erratic earning affecting family stability
  - 4. Limited options to borrow money leading to lack of choices in downtime
  - 5. Not included in long term health schemes or pensions.
- Employment in the arts usually has a flexibility that can support family life and the creative process. Employment in the arts is often at minimum wage and it doesn't have a big financial trajectory as your career progresses. The expense of living in Dublin means that maintaining a creative career within the city is very difficult.
- Full time opportunities have positive impact for art workers versus part time/casual provides security for workers. Need to ensure pay is aligned with best practice industry standard. More executive and governance demand on management staff needs to be compensated adequately. Need for pension contributions. Additional requirements on core costs for H&S and recording/livestreaming.
- I think that artists have changed their views on being employed since the beginning of 2020, as before Covid and lockdowns, we found it difficult to find teachers and staff willing to commit to a certain number of hours every week and days per week but since the Arts are slowly starting to plan to open things up again and are advertising, our application numbers have tripled as I think artists are now looking for something more permanent.
- It can lead to a very unpredictable and stressful position for many. Future planning especially family is difficult and, in many cases, it is an either/or decision for women. Many have more than one job to make ends meet which can hinder creativity and availability to opportunities to develop their work. Passion is no longer an acceptable approach to sustain arts, we need to

focus on developing a creative ecology. Cultivate the conditions that allow artists support themselves by making art.

- Low salaries restrict lifestyle options and family opportunities
- Planning, knowing in advance, working impact (do you need to invest in where you work or will you never be back again), social connection at work and with work colleagues may be missing or less etc etc.
- Sustainability is something which effects many working in the arts. The nature of funded arts venues - who receive funding and notification of that funding on a year-by-year basis - leads to constant worry about 'will we have enough money next year?' It is difficult to feel secure in such a situation.
- The lack of a consistent income for freelance arts workers results in a lack of life planning and presents difficulty with ensuring that basic life needs are considered and met, i.e., own home, health and dental care, pension and future security. The stresses related to the inability of future planning and the insecurities borne from this have profound effects not just on the individual but the community surrounding them. Without healthy and vibrant arts workers there cannot be a healthy and vibrant creation of arts and culture.
- There are very few stable employment opportunities in the arts, which makes it difficult for those trying to raise families, get mortgages, health insurance, pensions etc. The hours can be long & anti-social and the financial rewards low. Talent can be fostered in CE staff & interns, but organisations are generally not in a financial position to offer permanent paid positions to any emerging talent. Working in the arts has to be a vocation.
- We are sponsoring our own sector essentially with the extra time above our official hours per week it regularly demands. This last 14 months has been particularly challenging and have regularly questioned if I can continue to lead an organisation with the demands it entails whilst juggling young children. It has impact on my family when I am attending a venue (pre-Covid) and online meetings (in Covid) - often when venue running need to commit 2 evenings per week/at weekend plus 40/45 hours in daytime, and this can leave very little energy and time for family and domestic life. Irregularly this would be manageable but is very challenging when most weeks each year. The work can be rewarding undoubtedly but is stressful and all encompassing. Stress is particularly high around Arts Council annual submission and the level of detail and reporting is unwieldy and disproportionate to other grants and support. Payment is too low generally in the arts, particularly given the commitment and demands it makes, and

there is a very limited range of progression for most roles, with limited scope to expand or move widely and regularly.

- We do it because we love it. We are underpaid because we love it. We stop doing it not because we fall out of love but because we need to live.