



**MUSICIANS
AUSTRALIA**

2025 Survey Report

CONTENTS

01.

Introduction

02.

Key Findings

03.

Next Steps

04.

Survey Data



**MUSICIANS
AUSTRALIA**

INTRODUCTION

MEAA Musicians Australia 2025 Survey exposes widespread exploitation in the music industry and strengthens the case for establishing a minimum fee and better industry conditions for musicians.

While the music industry generated \$8.78 billion in revenue last year, nearly half of Australia's musicians earned less than \$15,000 from their music careers, with 31% earning under \$6,900 annually. Almost 60% of musicians depend on their music income to survive.

The survey exposes systemic exploitation across the industry. One in four performances violate contract terms, 59% of gigs don't include superannuation, and 76% of musicians have experienced bullying or discrimination at work.

Musicians are highly skilled workers, with over 70% of respondents holding formal music qualifications and more than half having over 25 years of experience.

These findings paint a clear picture: musicians are overworked, underpaid, and undervalued. The situation is made dramatically worse by generative AI systems that threaten to displace musicians by stealing and reproducing their work.

Musicians have no choice but to take immediate action. The music industry and governments must respond to our calls for fair pay, safe conditions, and sustainable careers for musicians working in Australia.



KEY Findings

Economic insecurity is rampant

NEARLY HALF

of musicians earned less than \$15,000 last year, and 31% earned under \$6,900.

1 IN 4

contracts are broken.

59%

rely on music income to survive.

59%

of gigs don't include superannuation.



KEY Findings

**Time investment is high,
but returns are low**

61%

of musicians spend over 11 hours rehearsing per week. This is unpaid.

44%

are paid \$250 or less per performance.

**Musicians are highly
skilled**

73%

have post-secondary formal music education.

53%

have 25+ years of experience.



**MUSICIANS
AUSTRALIA**

KEY Findings

AI is an emerging threat

85%

of musicians are concerned about unauthorised licensing deals with AI companies.

ALMOST 3/4

feel copyright protections are inadequate.

Workplace safety and inclusion are lacking

OVER 70%

have experienced bullying or discrimination.

16%

feel the industry treats musicians fairly.



KEY Findings

Support systems are
failing

1%

of respondents accessed crisis
relief grants in the past year.

“

**We take all the risk,
bear all the cost, do
all the chasing for
gigs, marketing,
insurance, etc. and
walk away with
\$250. That might
pay the costs of
putting the gig on if
we're lucky.**



KEY Findings

**The minimum fee campaign is working.
More gigs are paying \$250 or above.**

In 2023

**60% of
musicians earn
less than \$250
per gig**

In 2025

**44% of
musicians earn
less than \$250
per gig**

[illegible]

PAY UP!

HEY SPOTIFY HEY BIG TECH HEY MUSIC INDUSTRY HEY SONY HEY WARNER HEY META HEY LIVE NATION HEY OPEN AI
 HEY SPOTIFY HEY BIG TECH HEY MUSIC INDUSTRY HEY SONY HEY WARNER HEY META HEY LIVE NATION HEY OPEN AI
 HEY SPOTIFY HEY BIG TECH HEY MUSIC INDUSTRY HEY SONY HEY WARNER HEY META HEY LIVE NATION HEY OPEN AI
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 HEY SPOTIFY HEY BIG TECH HEY MUSIC INDUSTRY HEY SONY HEY WARNER HEY META HEY LIVE NATION HEY OPEN AI

MINIMUM STANDARDS

**\$250
MINIMUM
FEE**

per musician, per gig

for all publicly-funded and
commercial live performances.

NT GOV

The NT government must
recognise the \$250
minimum fee as a condition
for public funding of live
entertainment: bringing it in
line with all other state and
territory governments, and
the Commonwealth.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

INDUSTRY CODE OF CONDUCT

The industry must come to the table to negotiate, with MEAA, an Industry Code of Conduct for commercial live performance that includes minimum rates of pay for musicians, with a threshold of \$250 per gig. This must be supported by governments through funding and policy.

The code will promote standards, practices and behaviours that will drive exploitative and anti-social activity to the margins and establish a platform for good practice at all levels of the industry.

POLICY AND LAW

CLOSING THE LOOPHOLES

Support Australia's musicians by extending Closing the Loopholes protections to workers in the creative and media industries, including musicians.

AI

Urgently strengthen frameworks against AI theft and unauthorised licensing. Regulate AI to ensure control, compensation, and consent for creative and media workers.

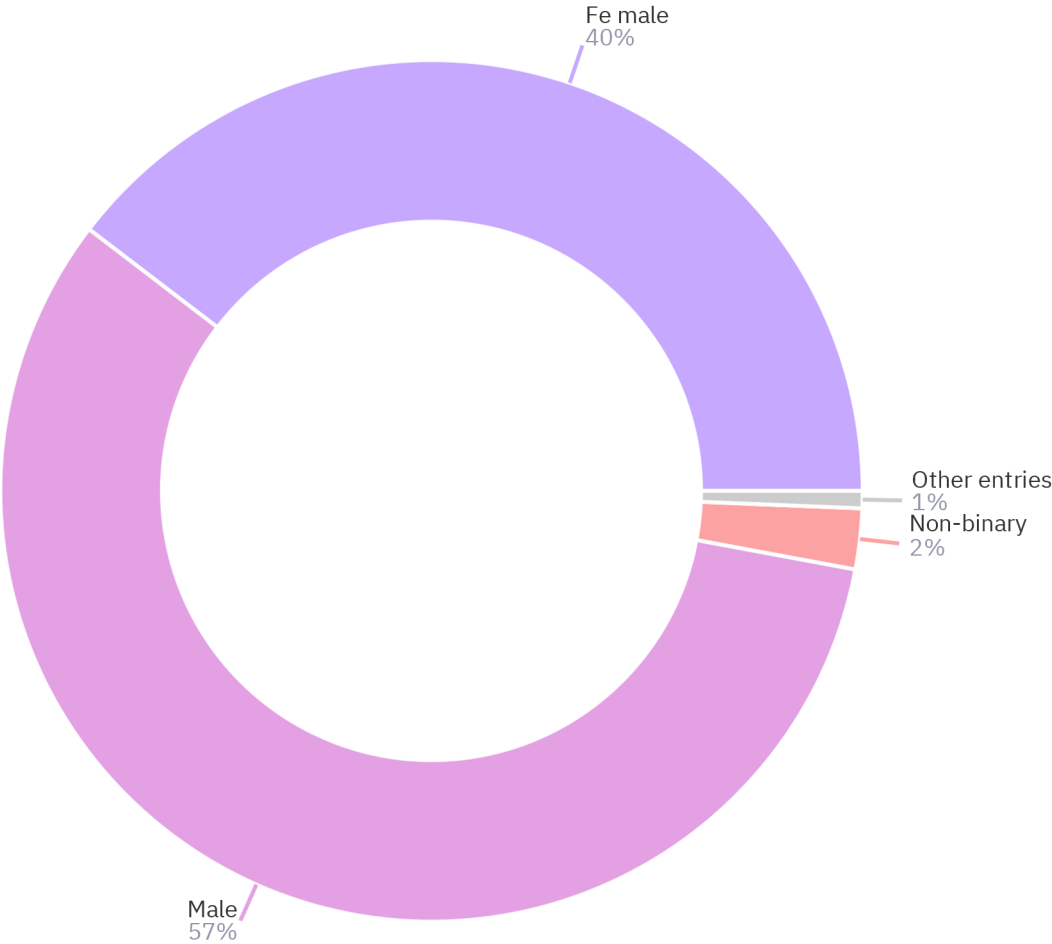
POLICY AND LAW

INQUIRY INTO RECORDING AND STREAMING

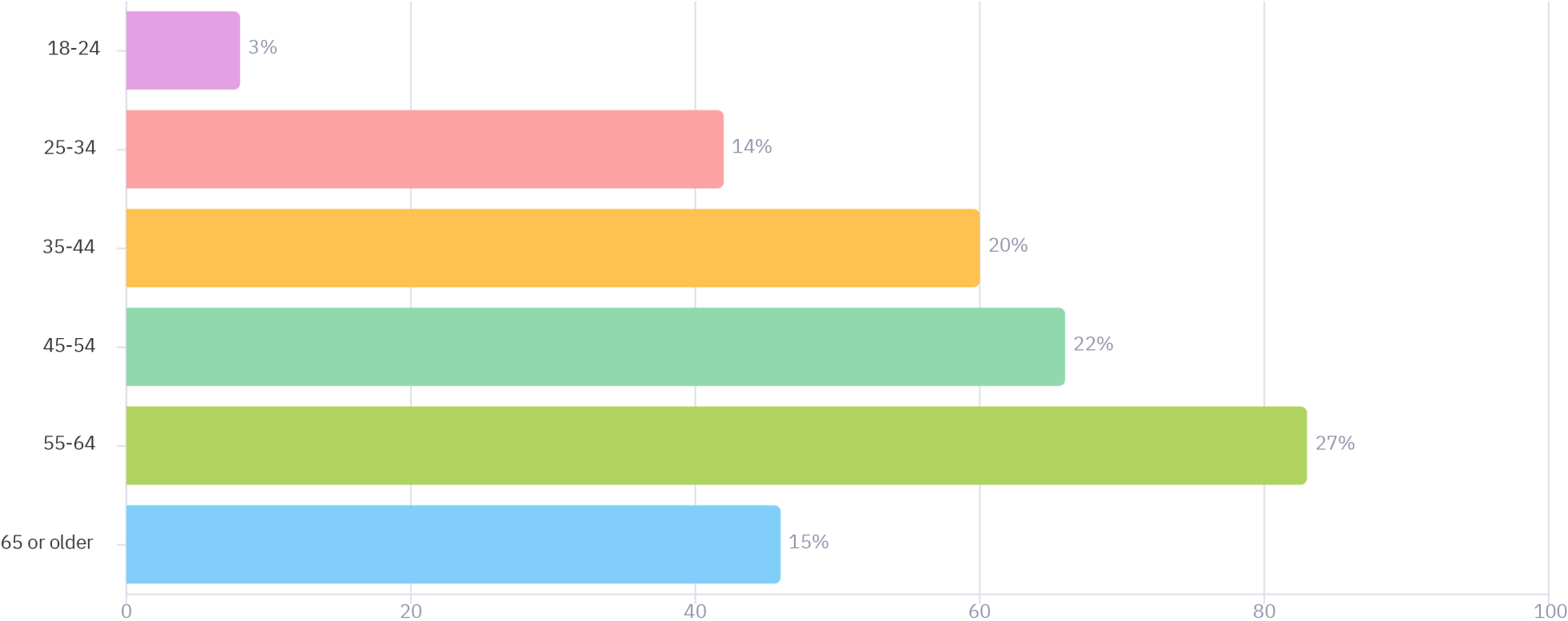
The Federal Government should establish an inquiry into the recorded and streaming industries.

SURVEY DATA

What is your gender?
308 Responses

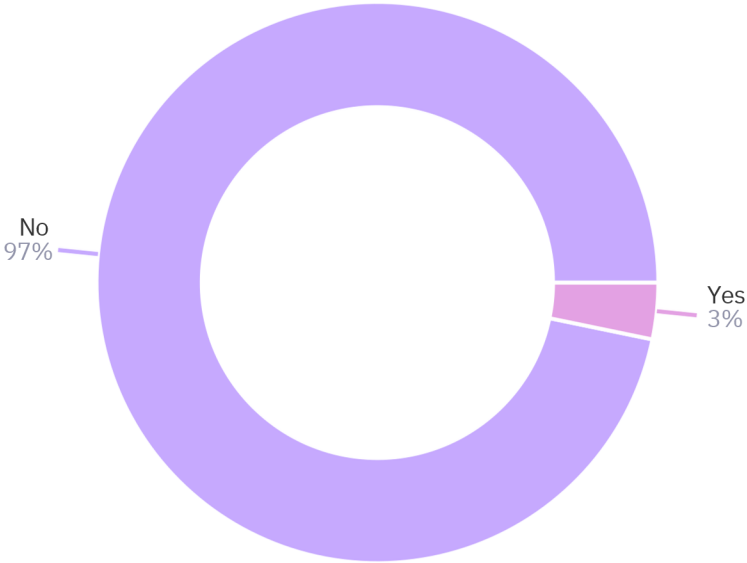


What is your age?
305 Responses



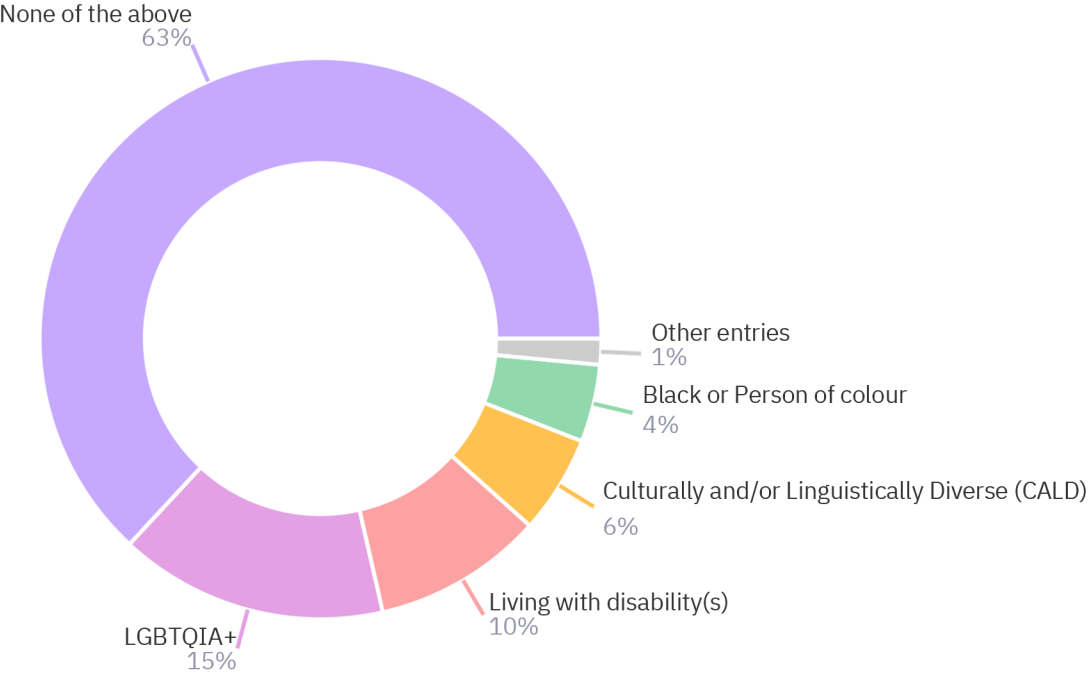
Are you Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

308 Responses



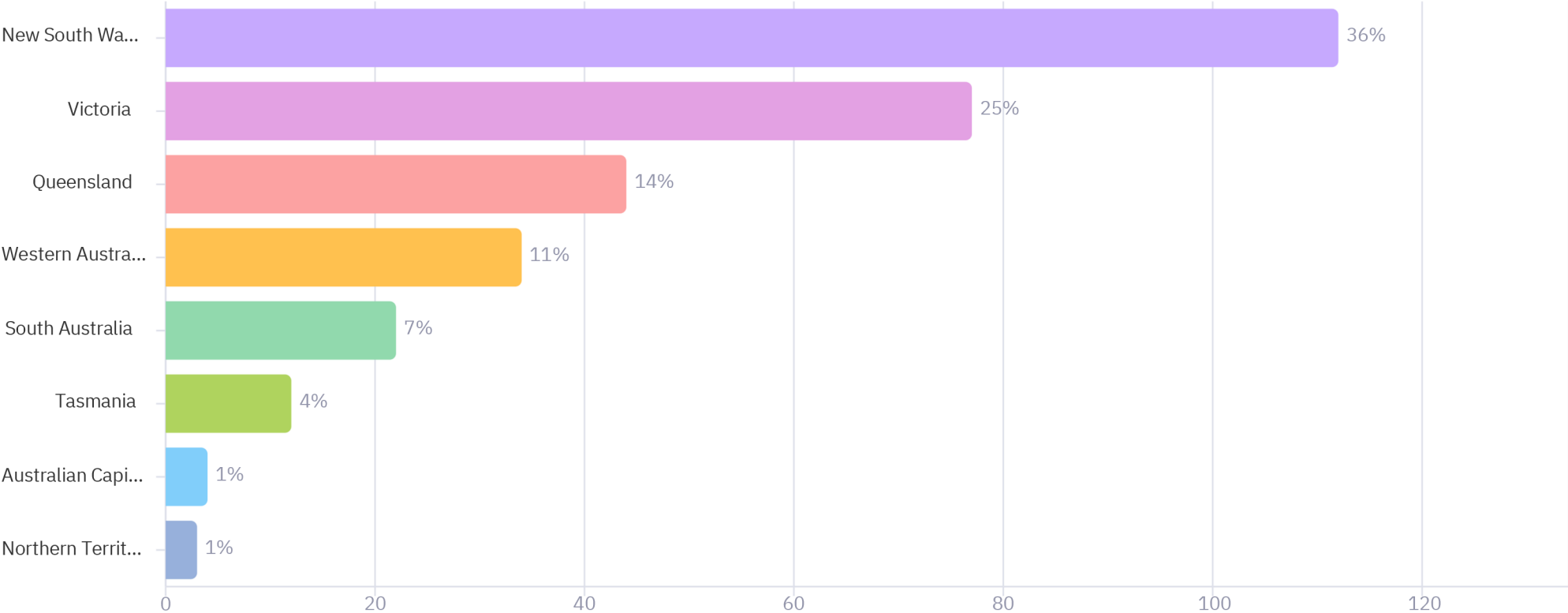
Do you identify with any of the following groups? (Select all that apply)

336 Responses



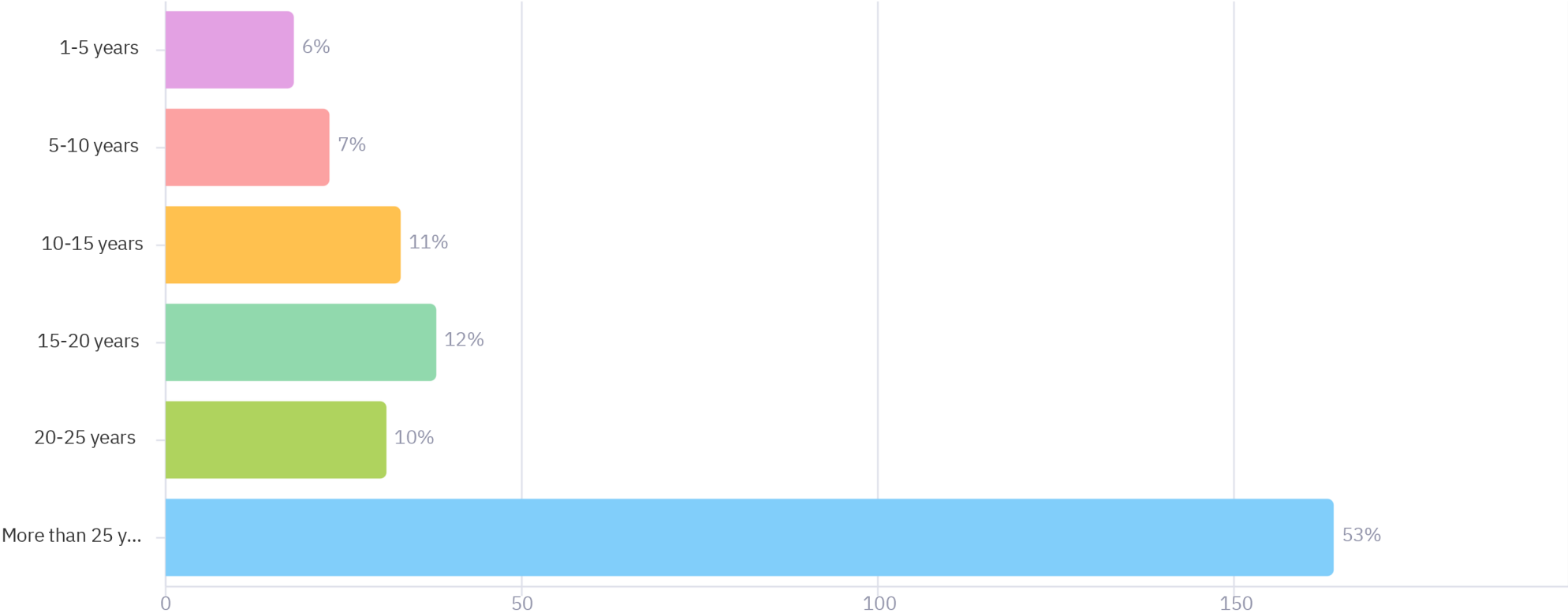
What state/territory do you live in?

308 Responses



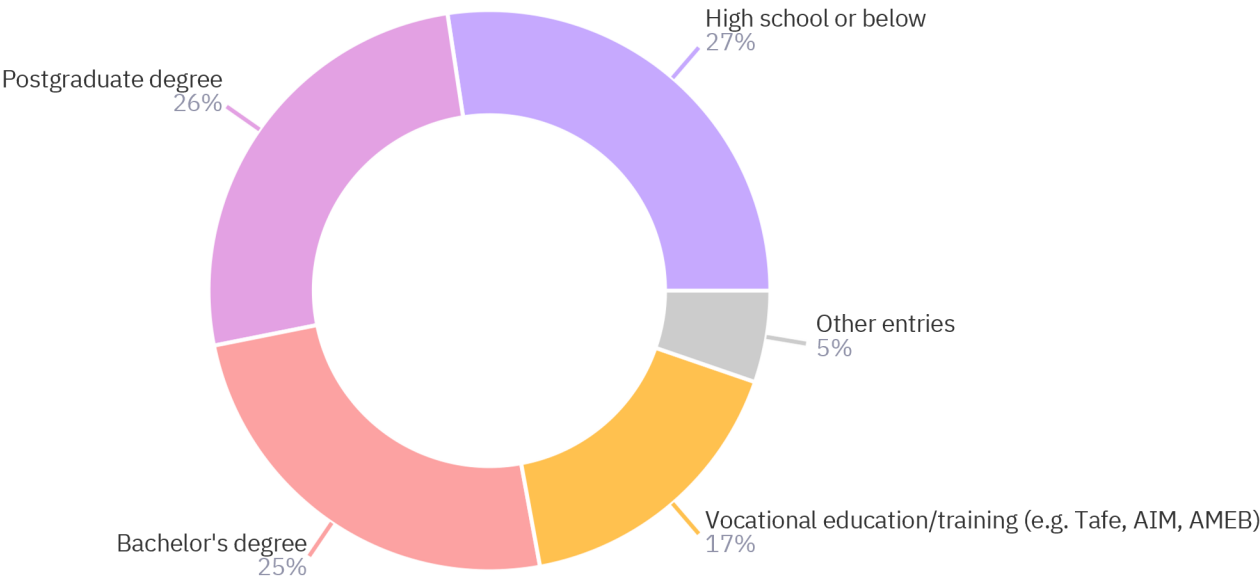
How many years of experience do you have working as a musician?

307 Responses



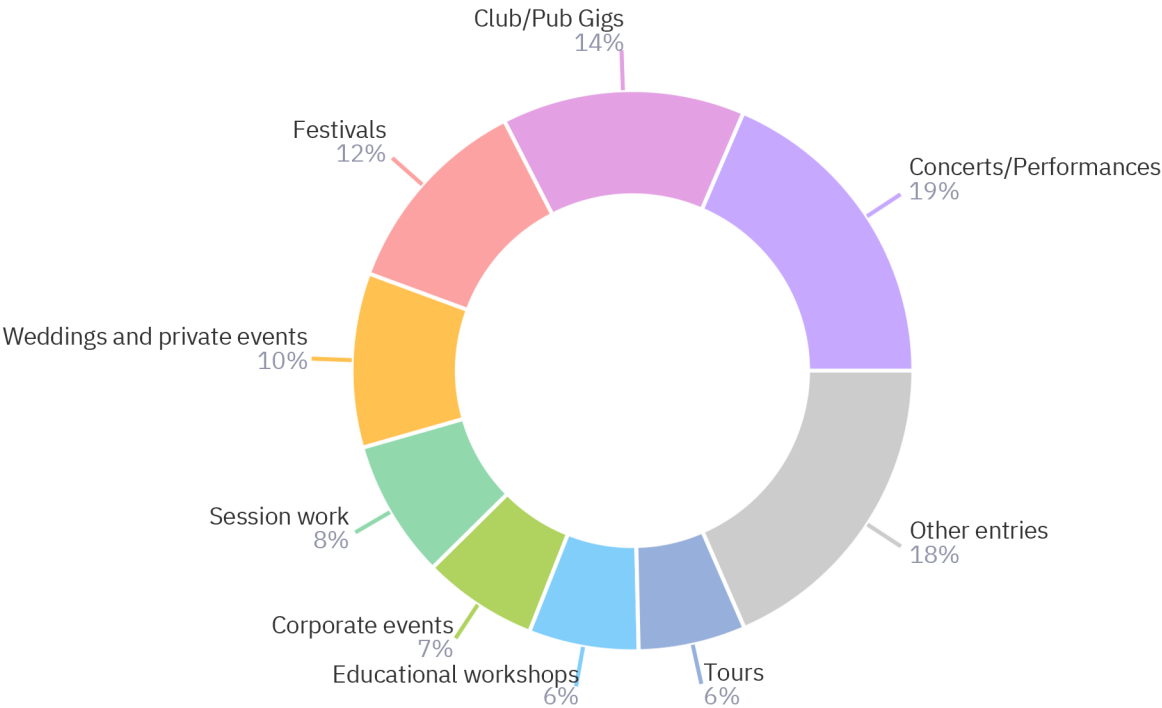
What is the highest *music related* education you have received?

303 Responses



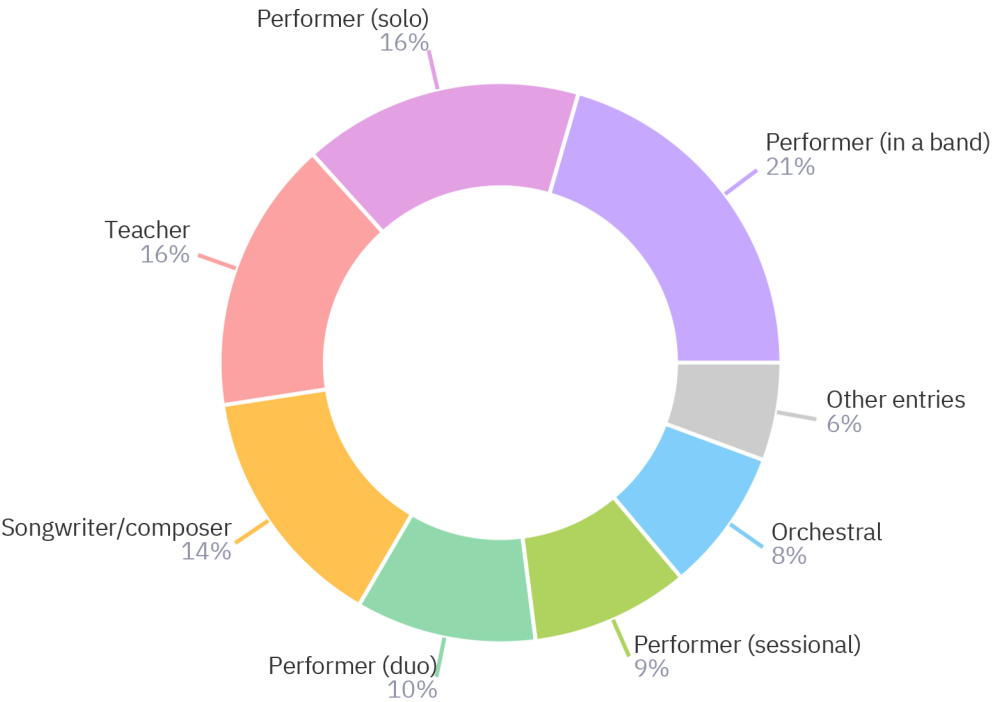
Which types of gigs do you usually play? (Select all that apply)

1343 Responses



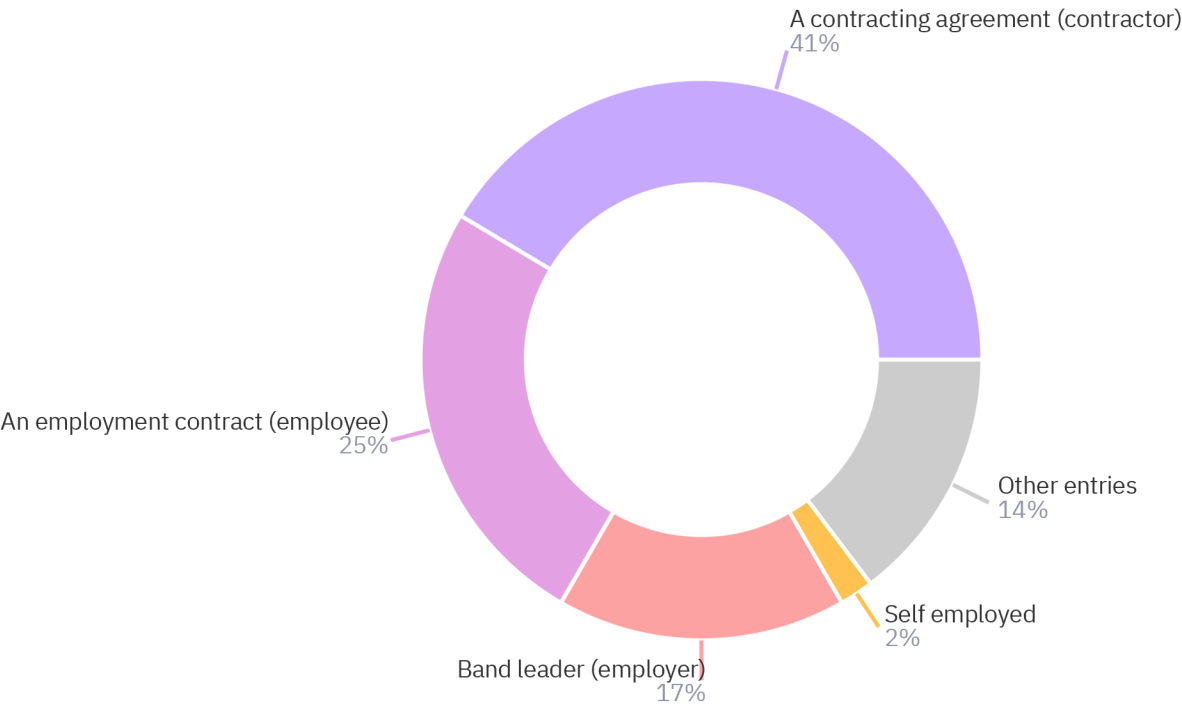
What roles do you currently undertake in the music industry? (Select all that apply)

1009 Responses



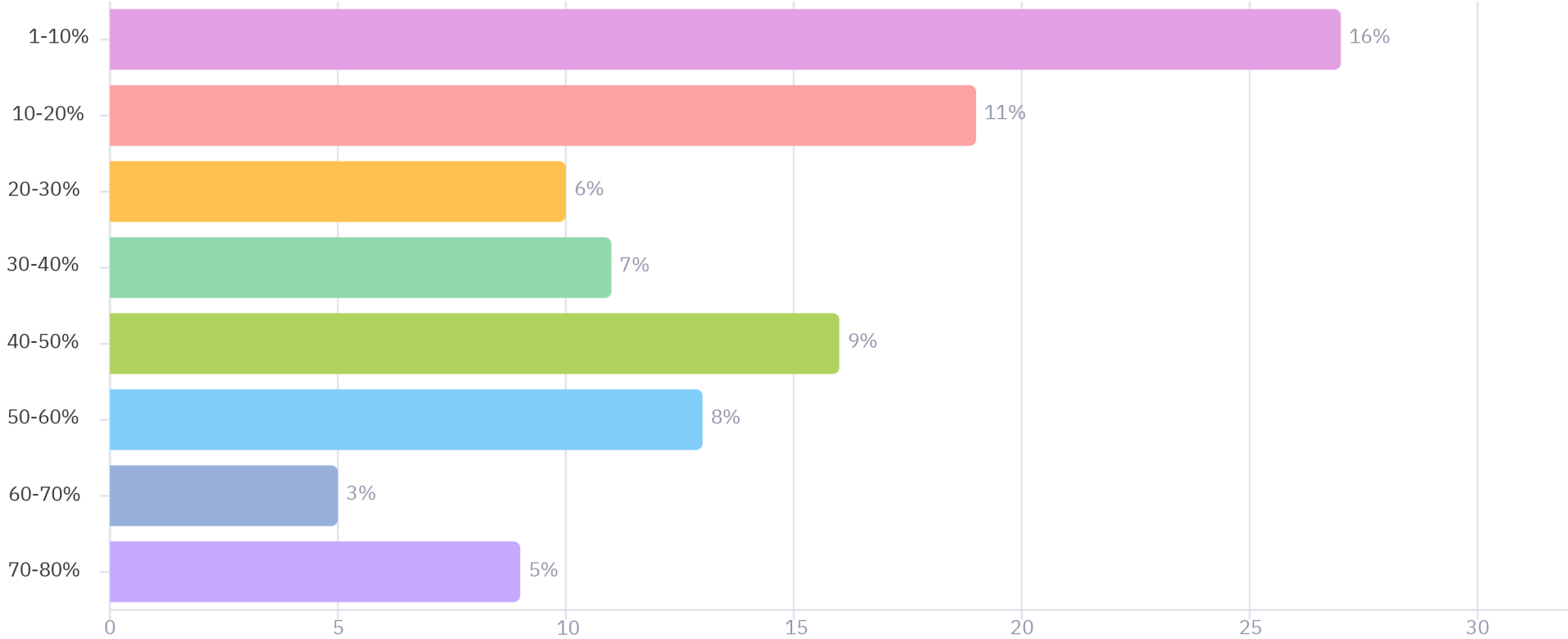
As a musician, are you employed under: (Select all that apply)

408 Responses



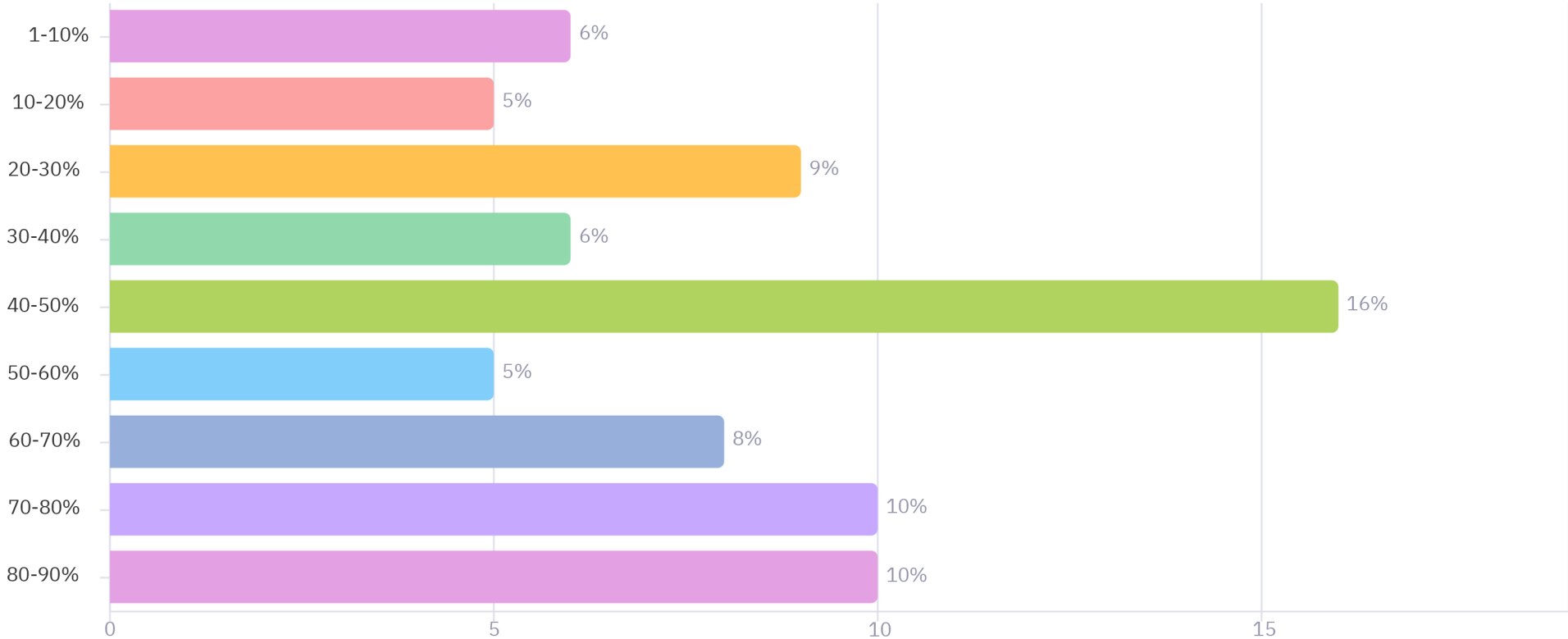
As a musician, what proportion of your working hours are spent as a contractor?

110 Responses- 139 Empty



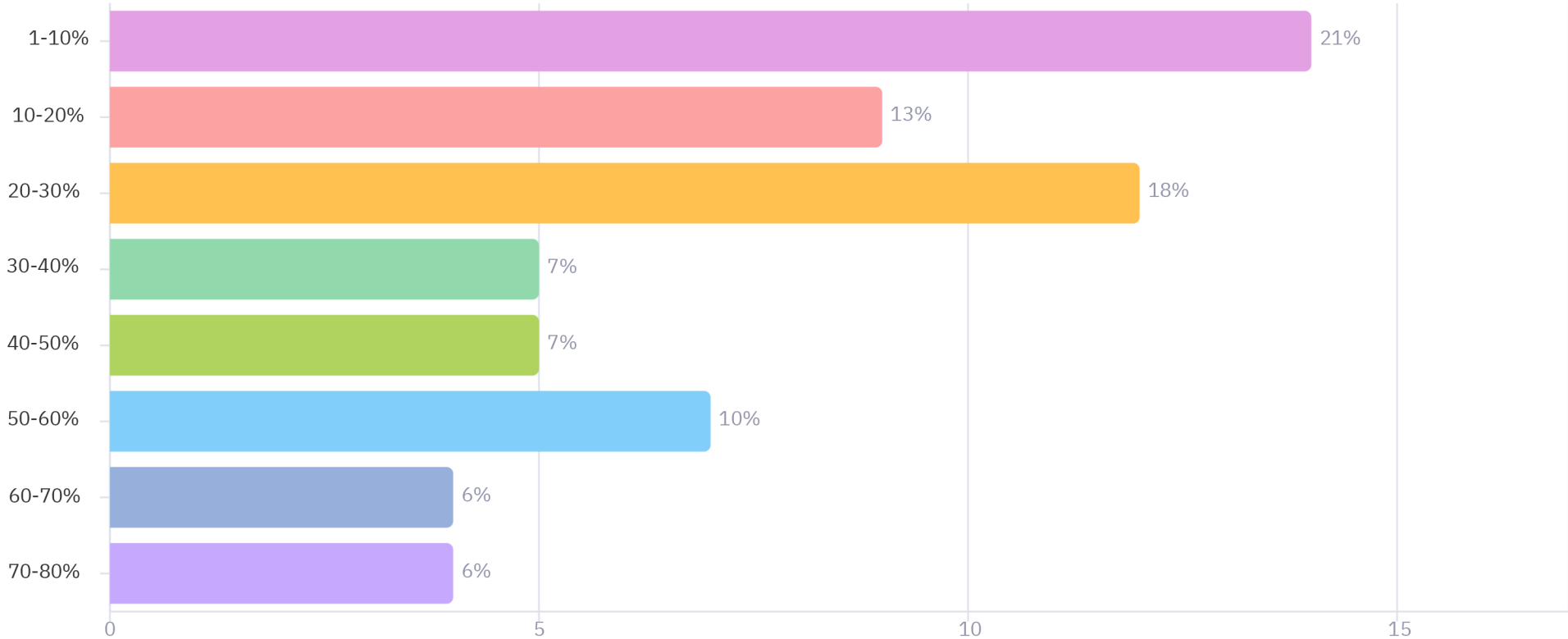
As a musician, what proportion of your working hours are spent as an employee?

75 Responses- 205 Empty



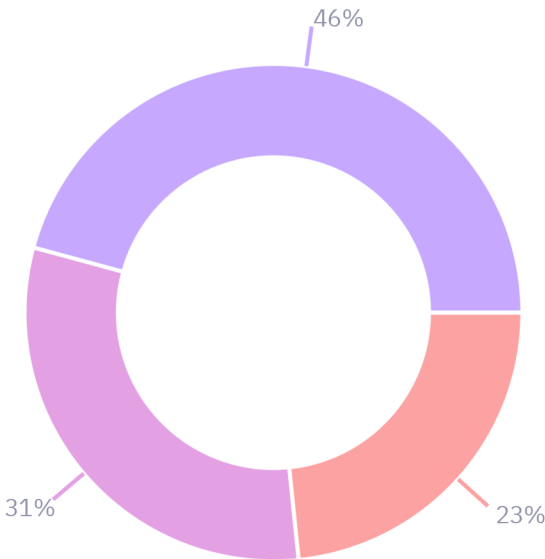
As a musician, what proportion of your working hours are spent as a band leader?

60 Responses- 240 Empty



Do you work in the music industry:

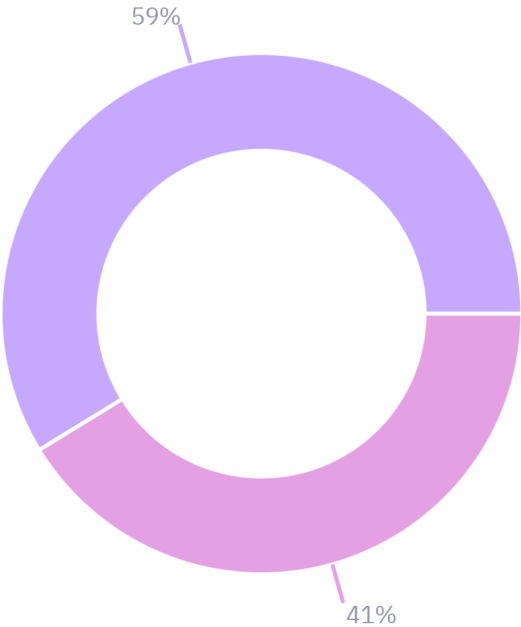
308 Responses



- Full-time (you only work in the music industry; this is your main and only form of income(s))
- Casually (you work as a musician on an irregular basis; you don't rely on music income)
- Part-time (you have other work outside of the music industry; music is an alternate/secondary form of income)

Select the one which applies to you:

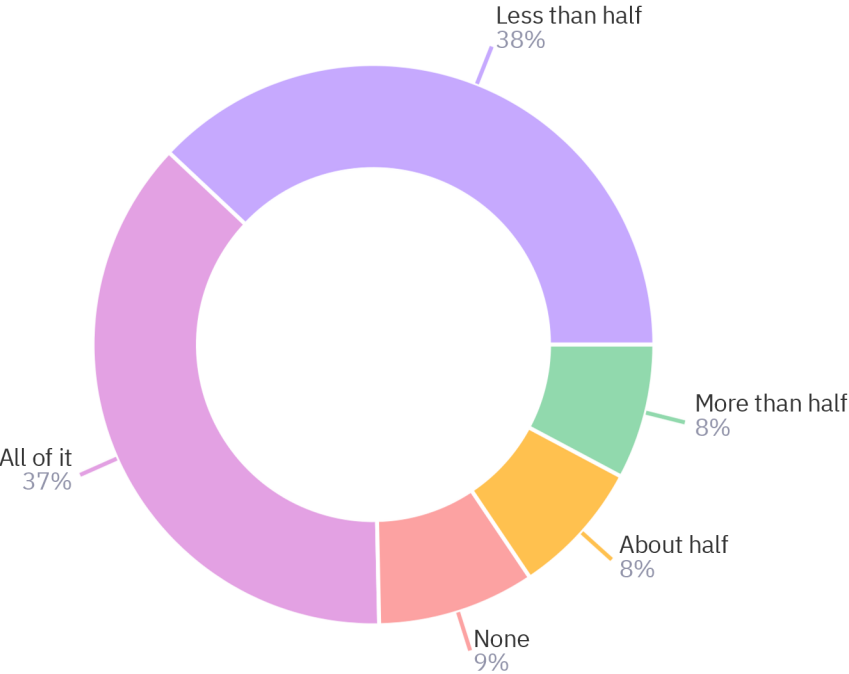
308 Responses



- I depend on the money I earn from being a musician to pay bills and survive
- I work as a musician for a bit of extra money and don't depend on the income

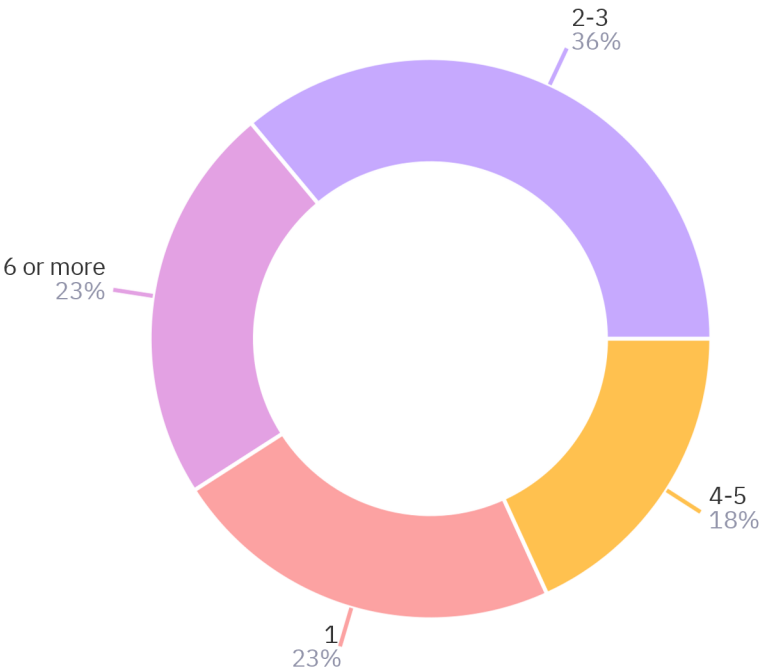
How much of your total income (including from non-music sources) comes from music?

308 Responses



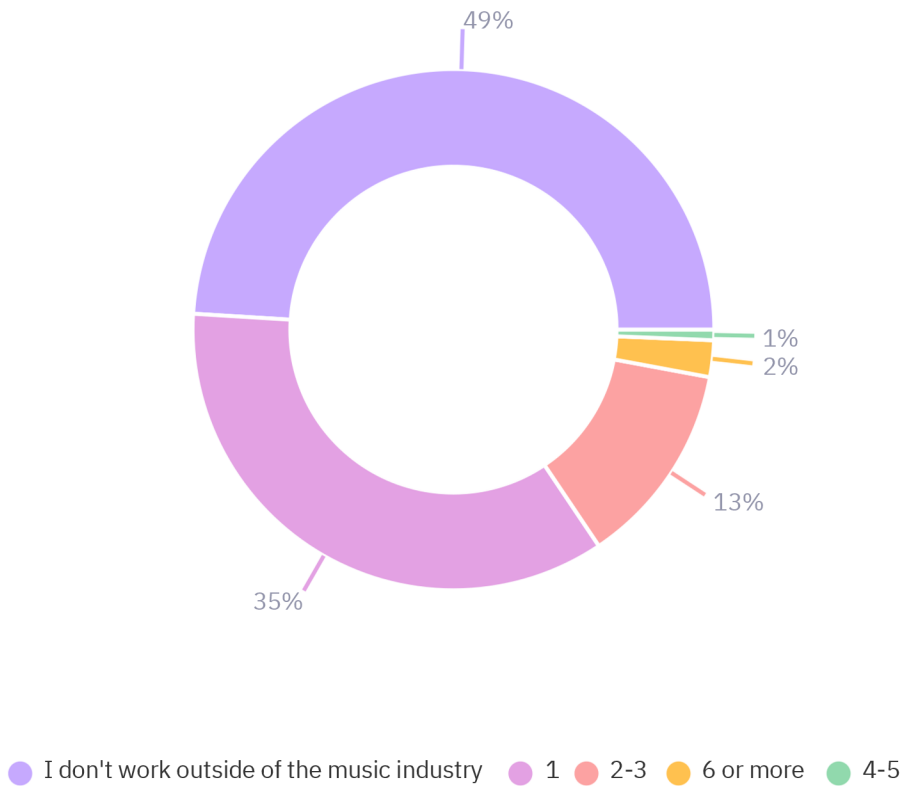
On average, how many music jobs do you earn income from?

308 Responses



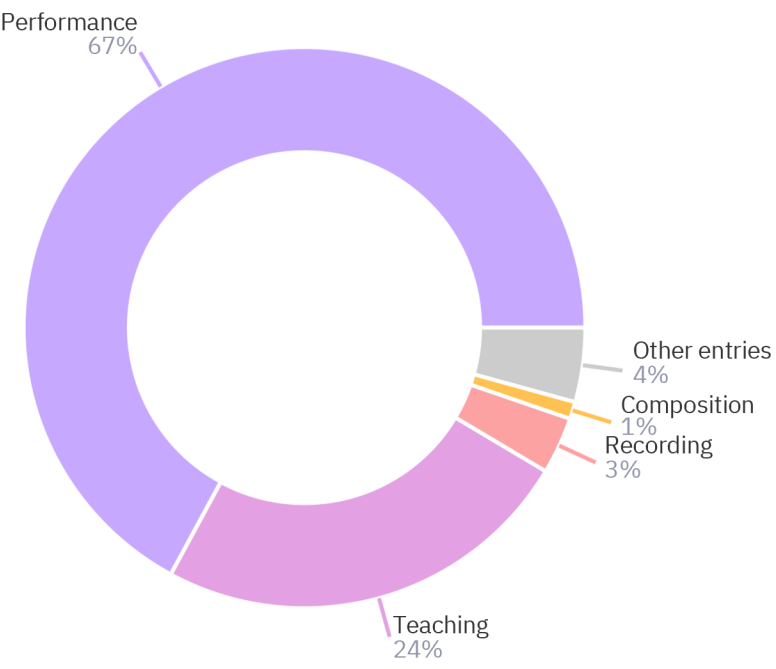
On average, how many non-music jobs do you earn income from?

308 Responses



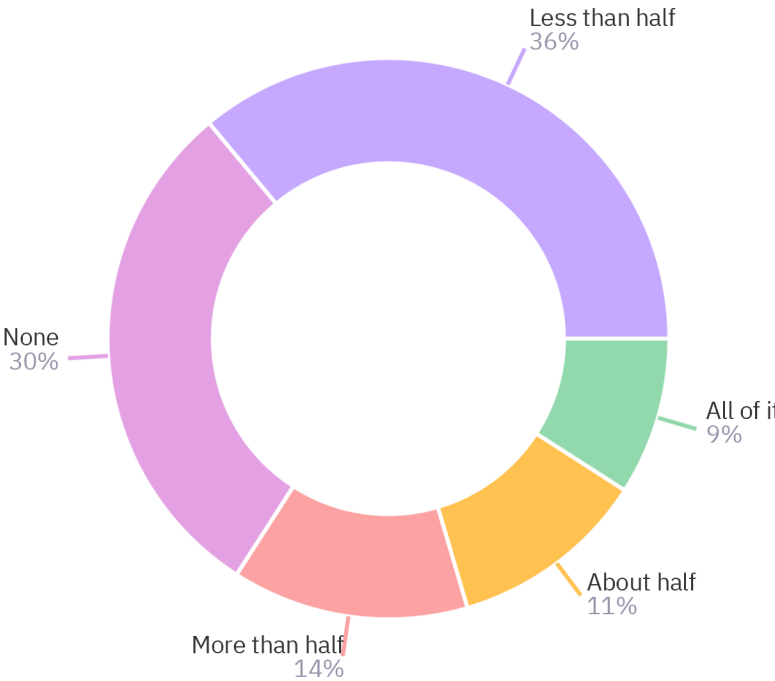
What area of the music industry do you get the bulk of your music income from?

304 Responses



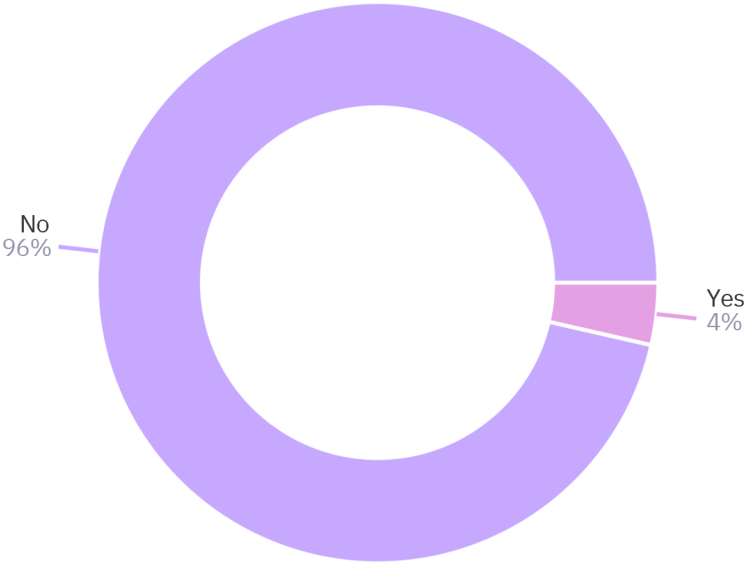
What proportion of your music work is spent on original content creation?

308 Responses



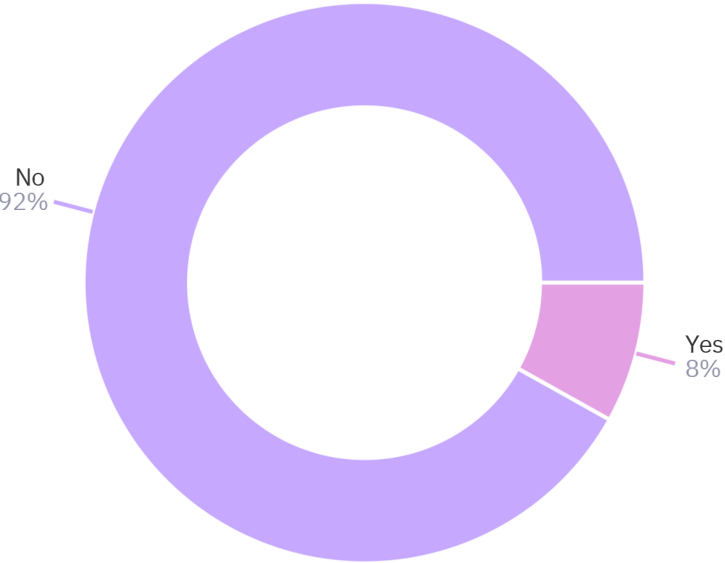
Are you signed to a record label?

308 Responses

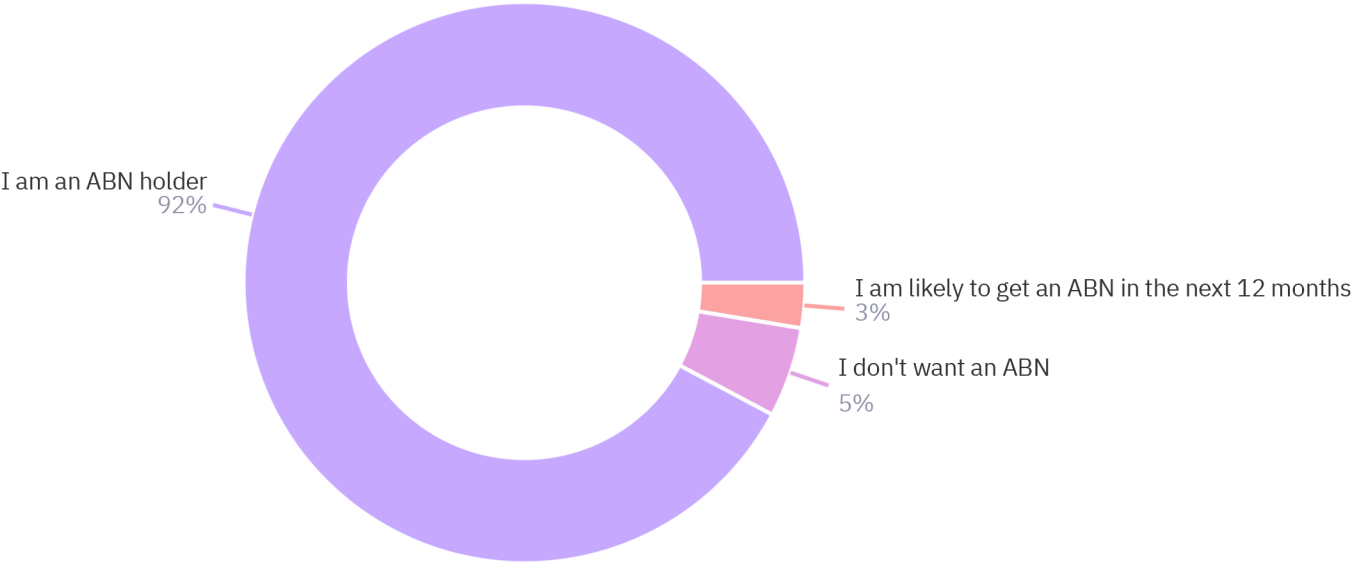


Are you signed to a publisher?

308 Responses

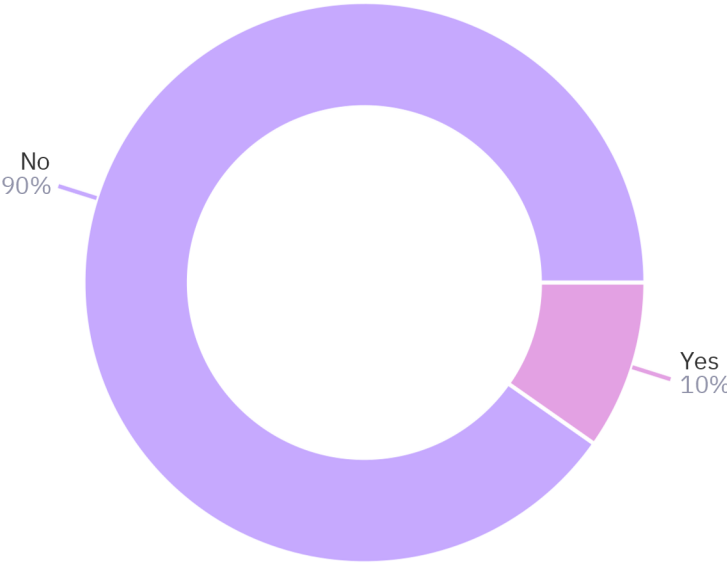


Business status:
308 Responses



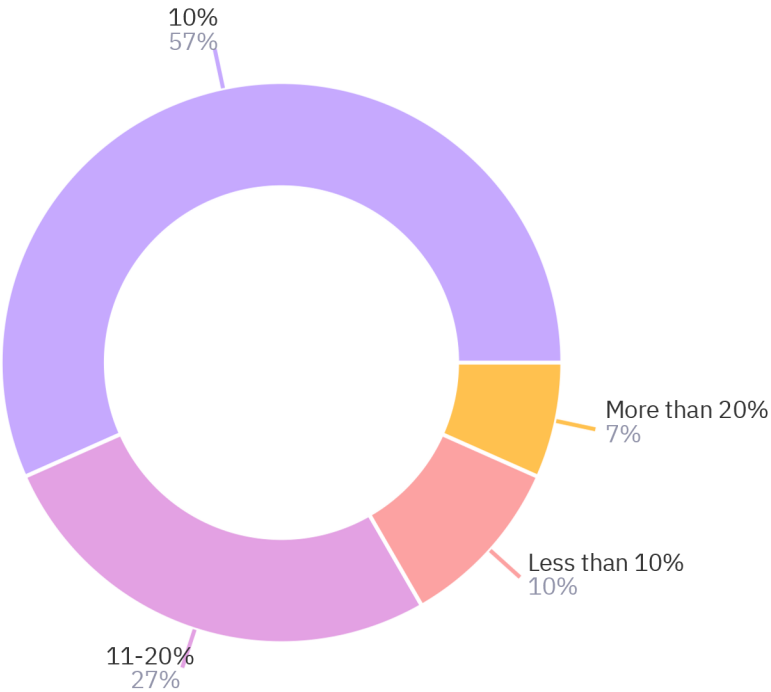
Do you have a booking agent?

308 Responses



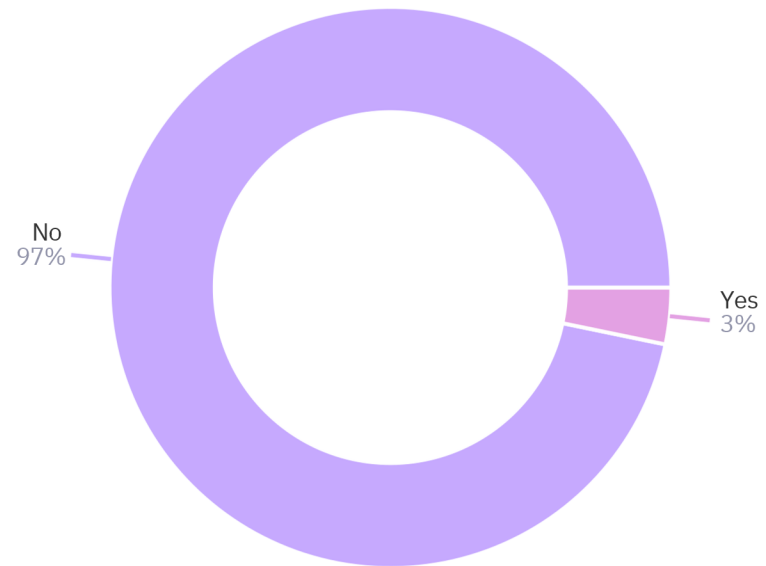
What percentage of fees does your agent take?

30 Responses- 278 Empty



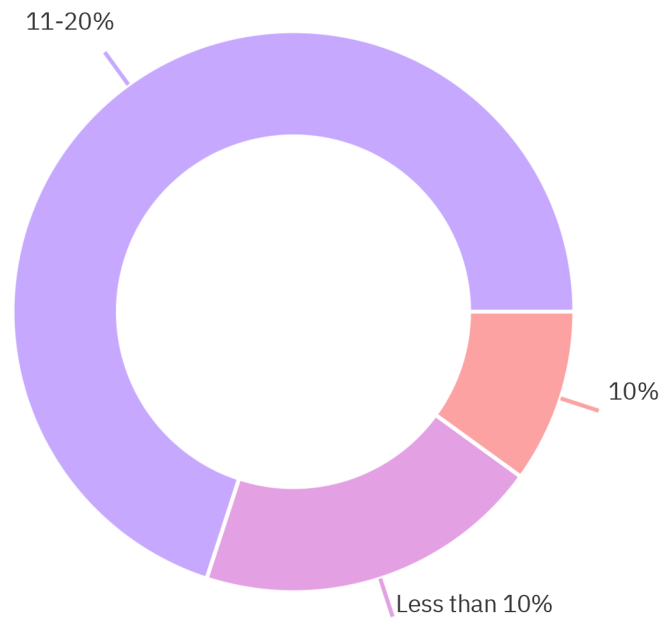
Do you have a manager?

308 Responses



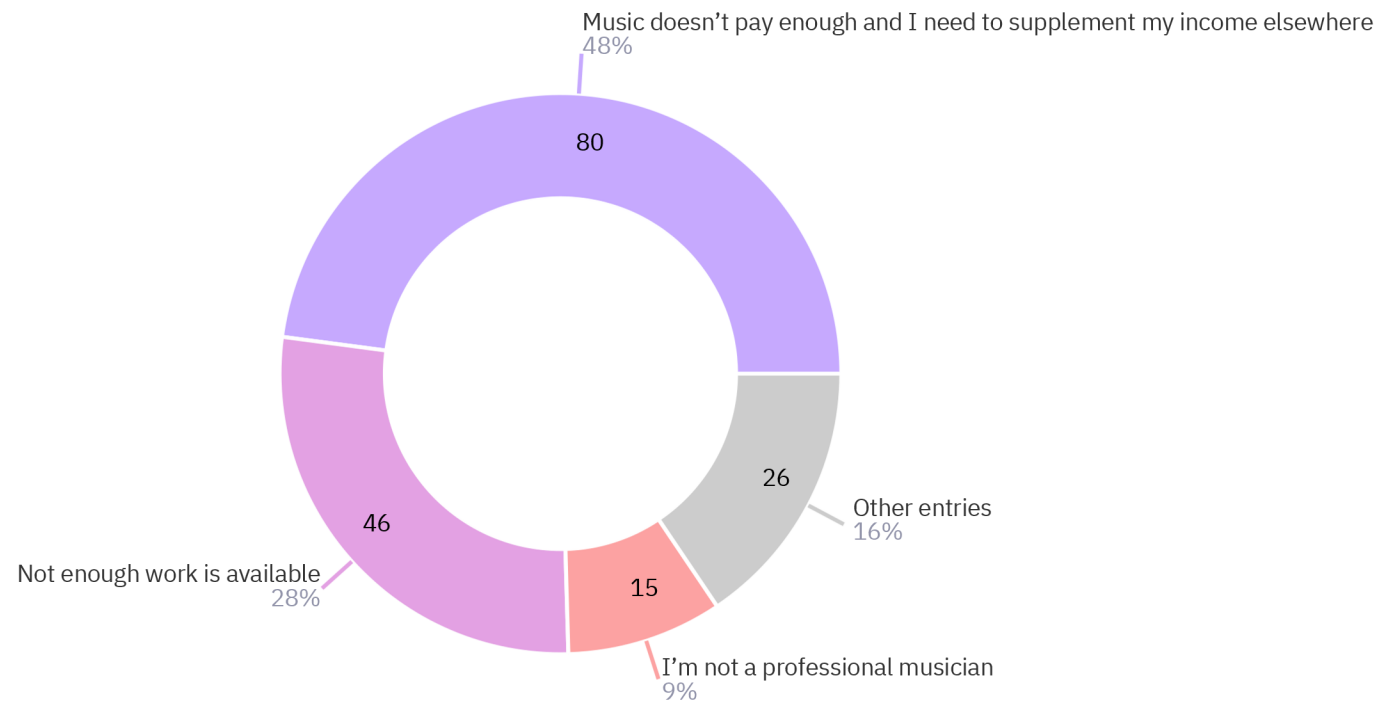
What percentage of fees does your manager take?

10 Responses- 298 Empty



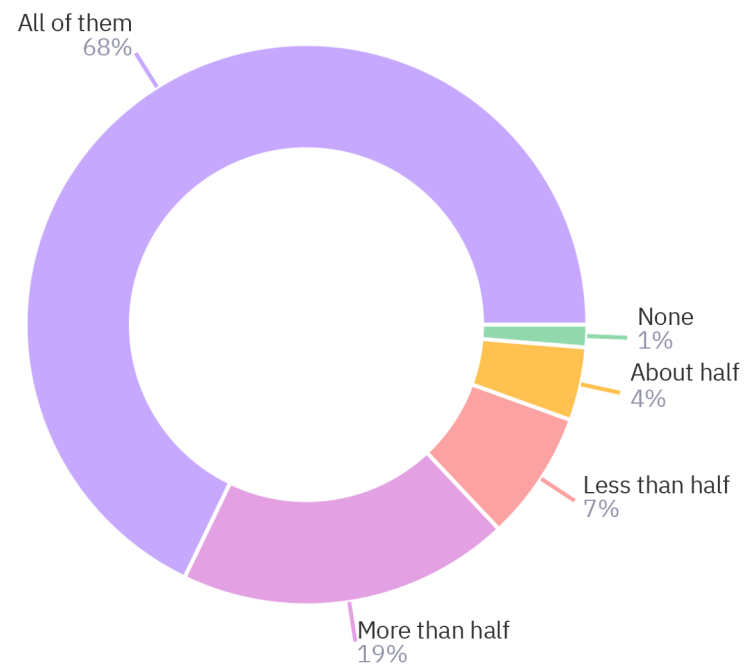
What are the main reasons/barriers to you working in music full-time?

167 Responses- 141 Empty



How many of your gigs are paid?

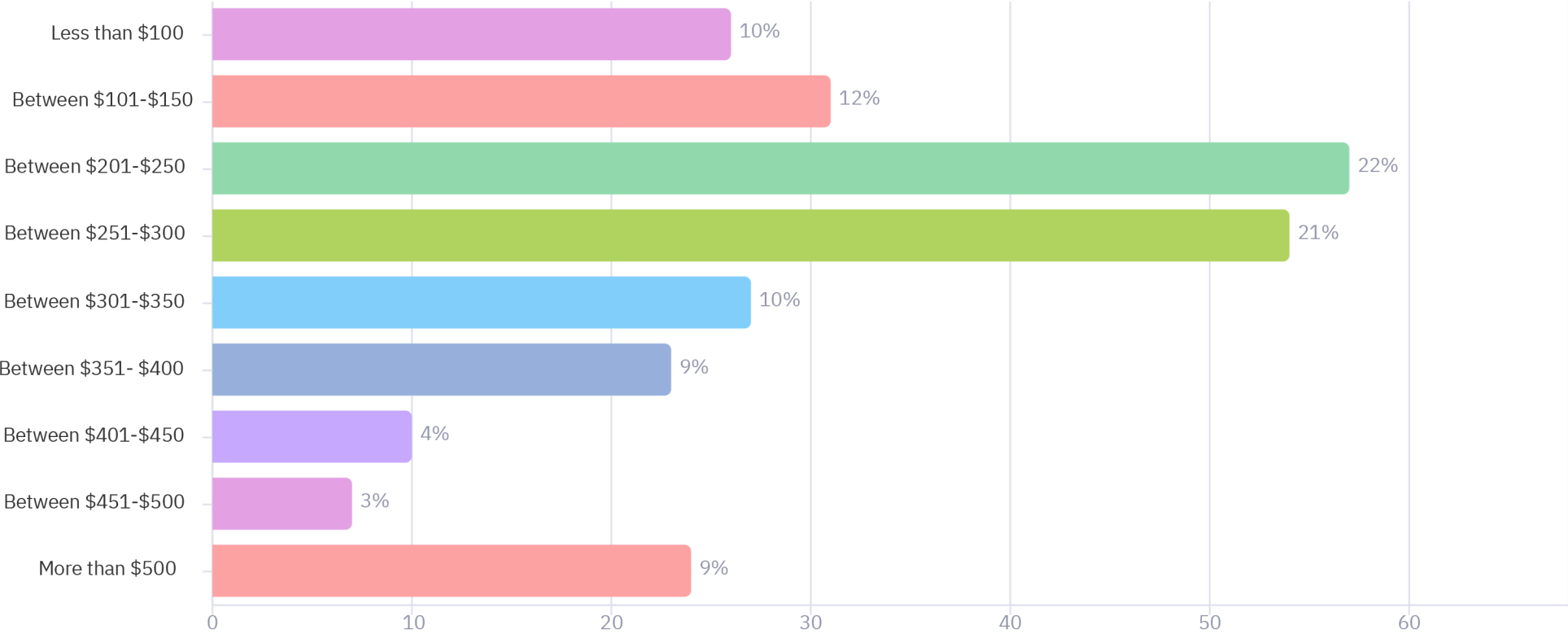
308 Responses



MEAA Musicians Australia 2025 Survey

On average, how much do you earn (as an individual) for a gig?

259 Responses

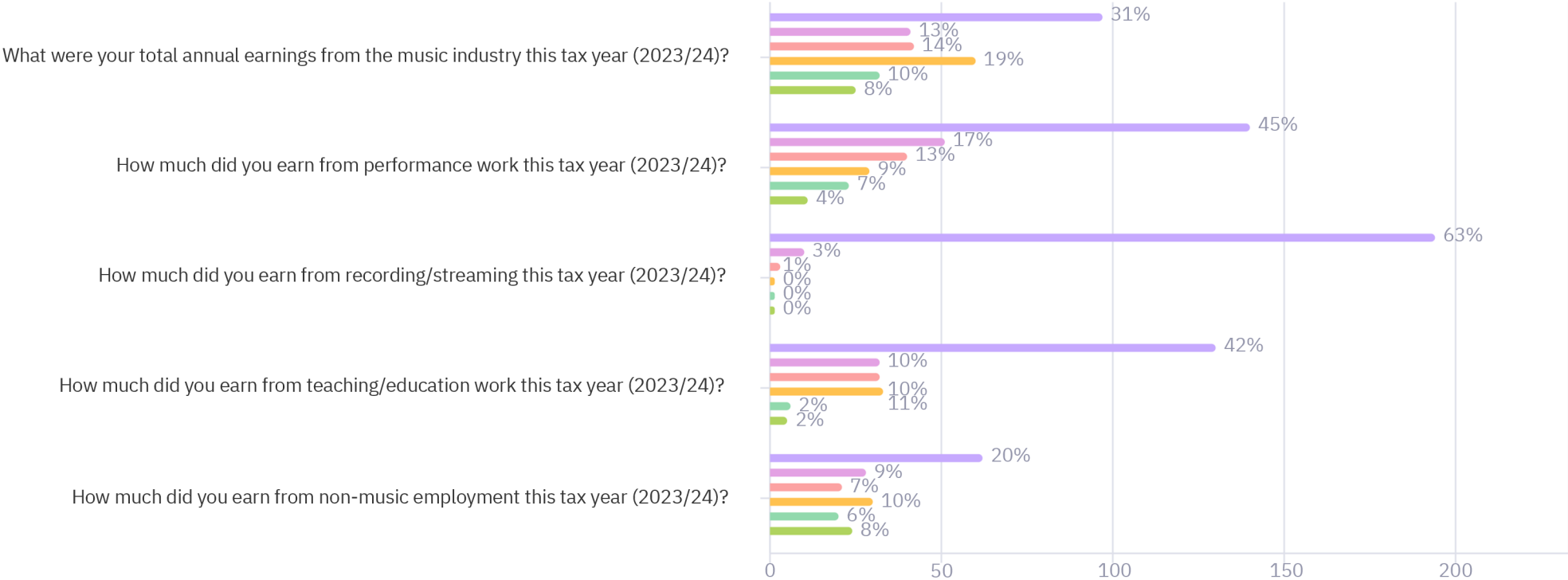


MEAA Musicians Australia 2025 Survey

Please estimate:

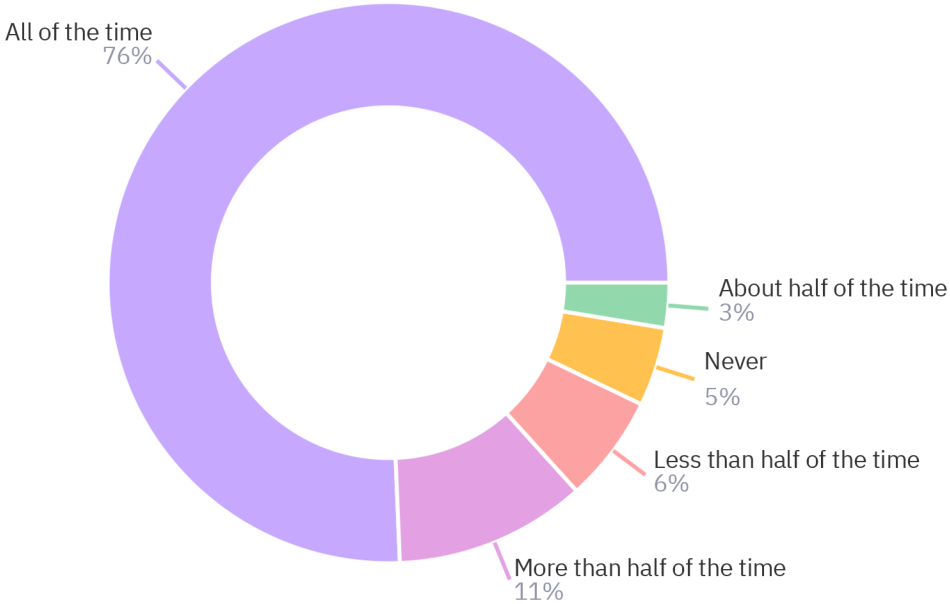
308 Responses

Under \$5,999 \$6 - \$14,999 \$15 - \$29,999 \$30 - \$78,999 \$79 - \$103,500 Over \$103,500



How often are you paid according to your performance agreement/contract?

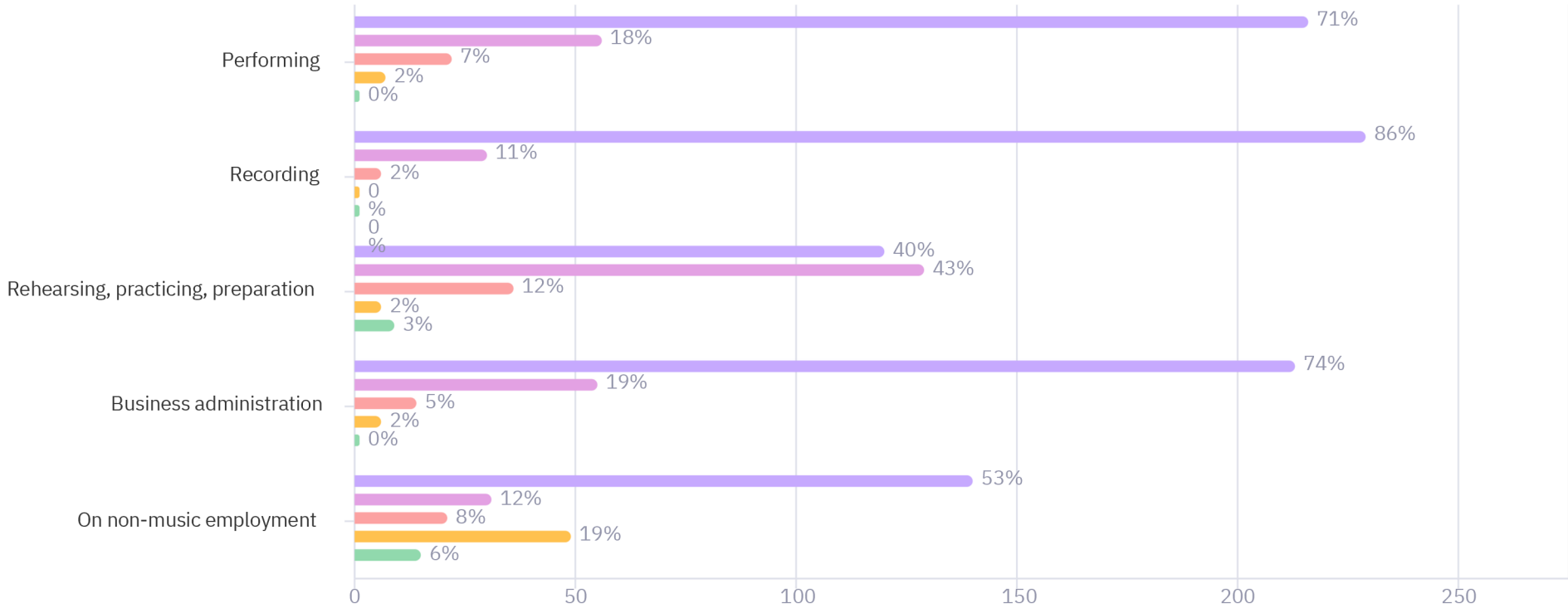
308 Responses



Approximately, how many hours per week do you spend:

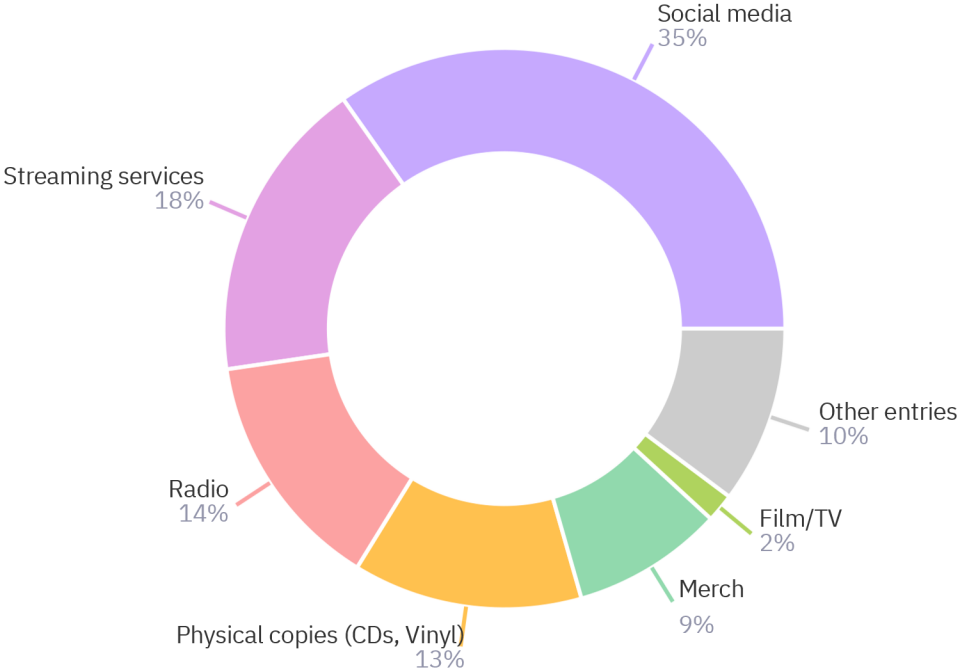
308 Responses

Under 10 11-20 21-30 31-40 41-50



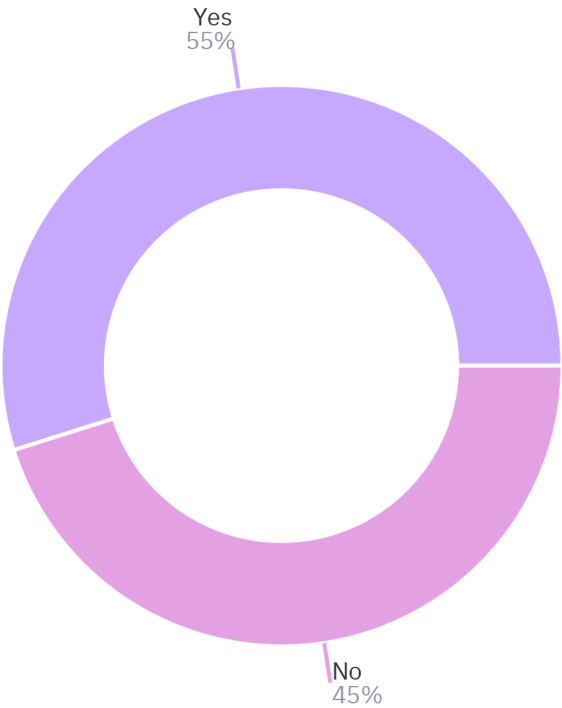
How do you promote and market your music? (Select all that apply)

734 Responses



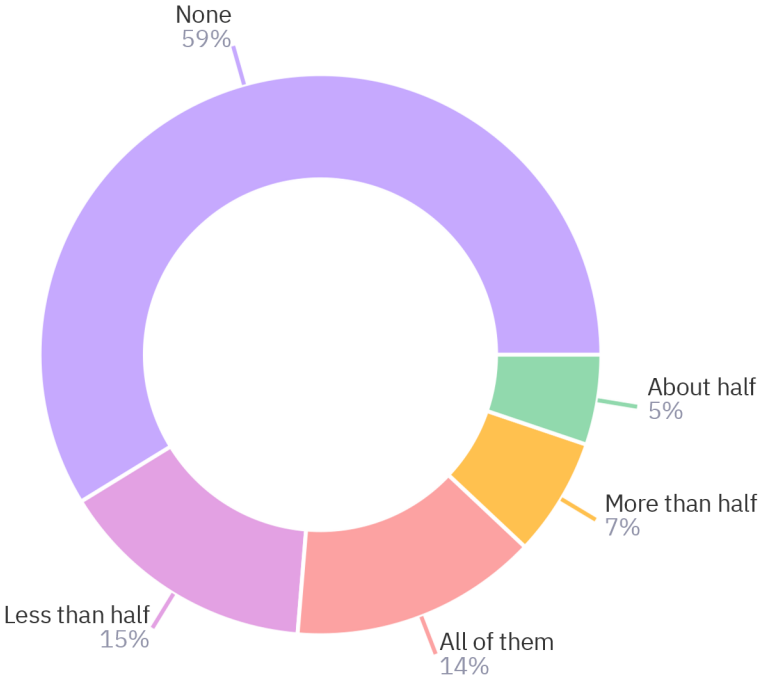
Are you aware that musicians are eligible to receive the superannuation guarantee?

308 Responses



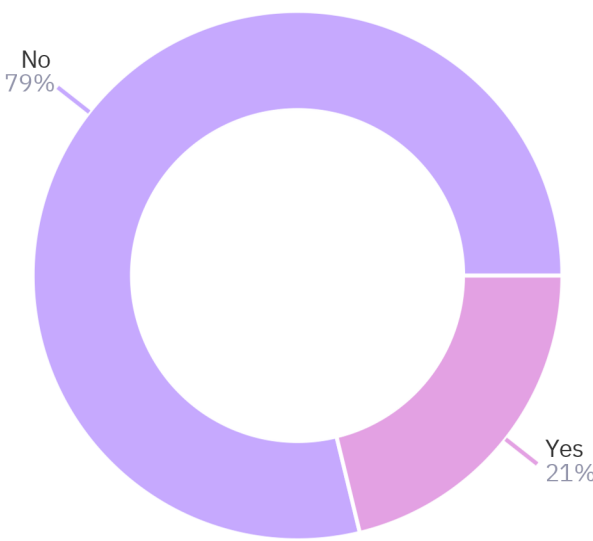
What proportion of gigs do you receive the superannuation guarantee for?

308 Responses



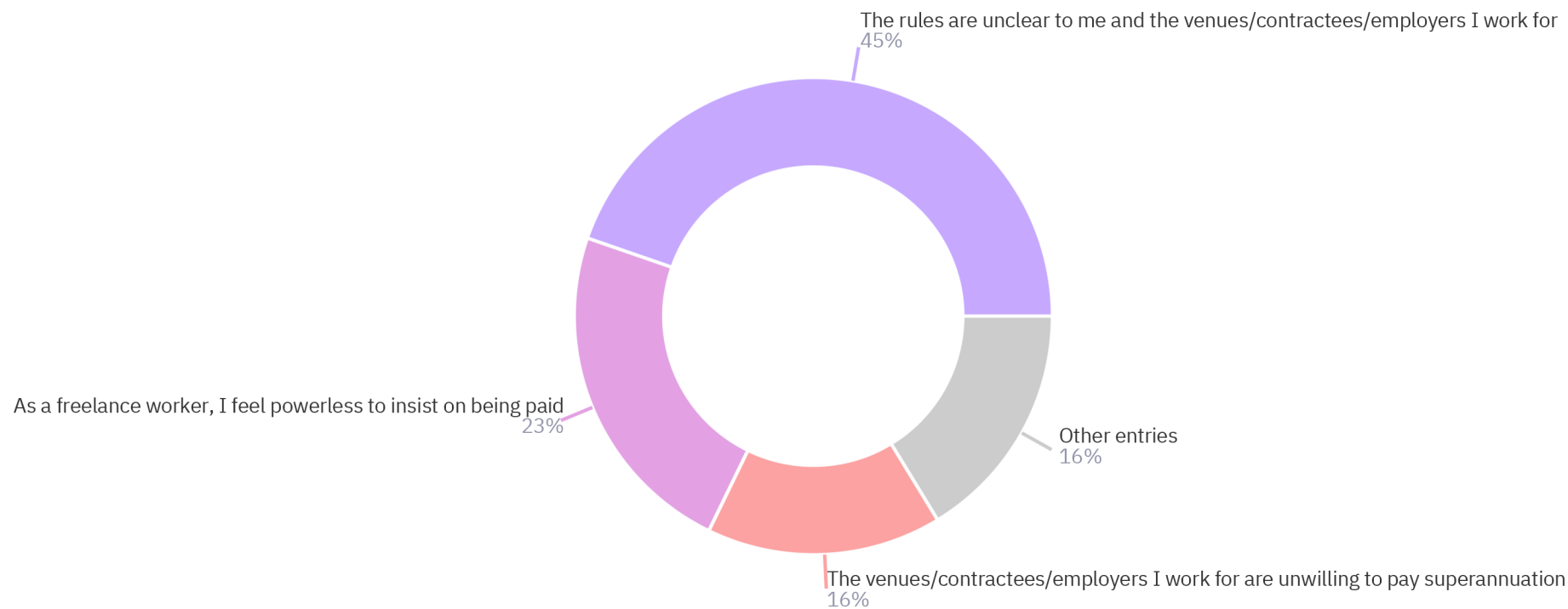
When venues/contractees/employers don't pay the superannuation guarantee, do you make any personal super contributions for your music work?

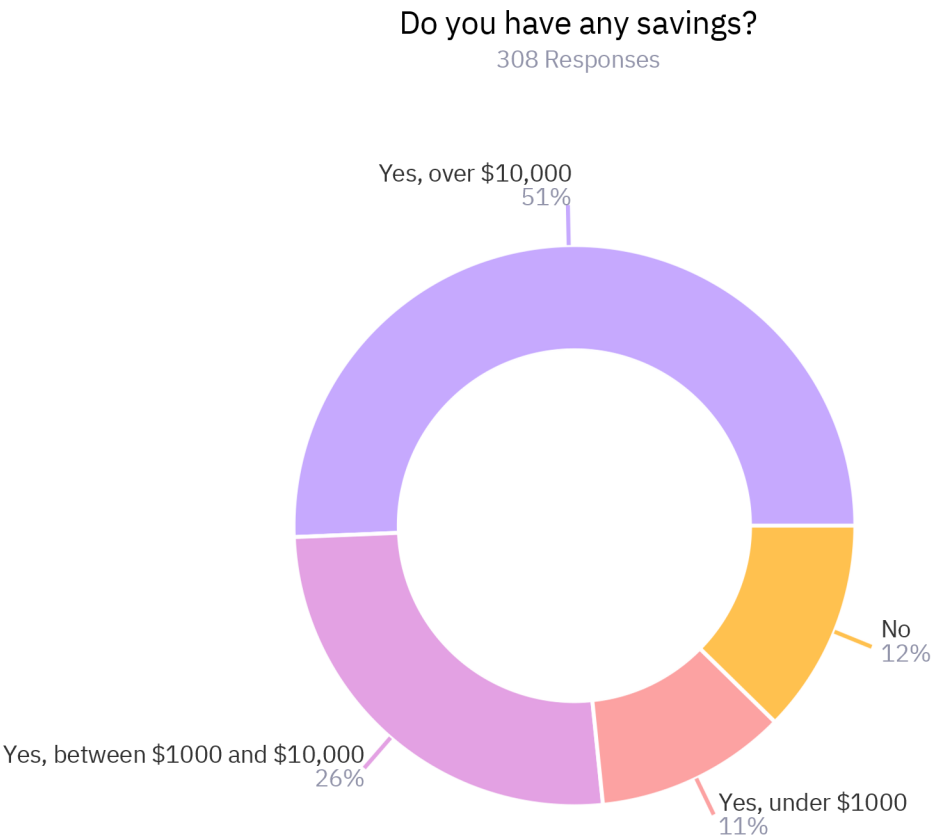
264 Responses- 44 Empty



In your opinion, why do you think venues/contractees/employers don't pay the superannuation guarantee?

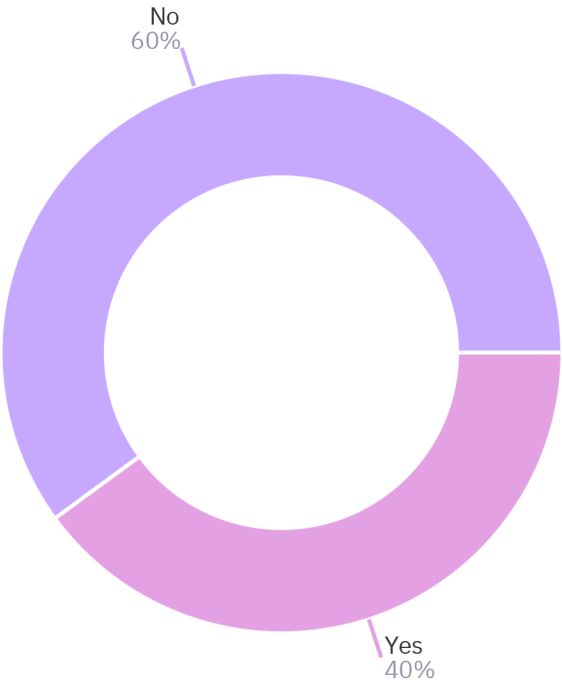
264 Responses- 44 Empty





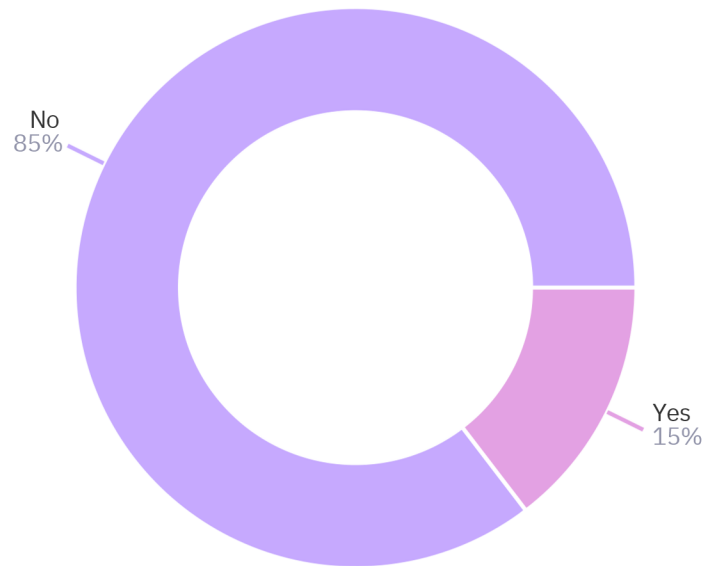
Did you earn royalties distributed by APRA AMCOS in the year 2023/24?

308 Responses



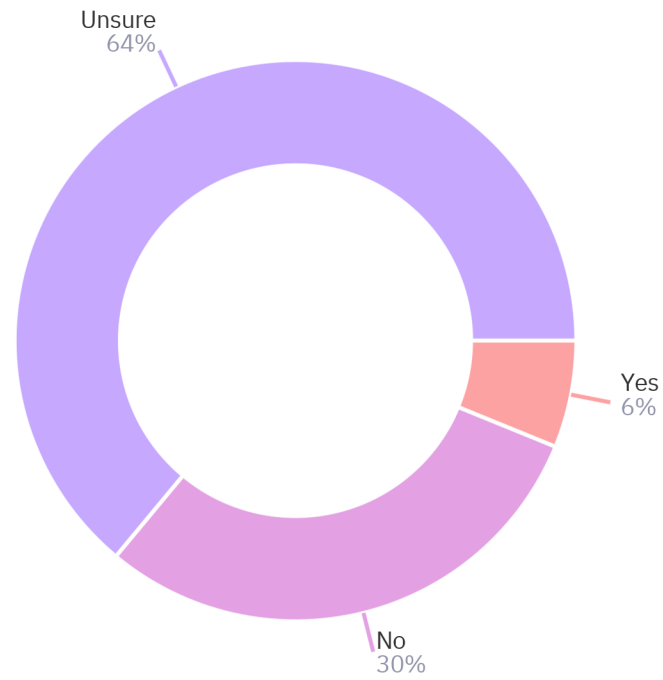
Did you earn sound recording royalties distributed by PPCA in the year 2023/24?

308 Responses



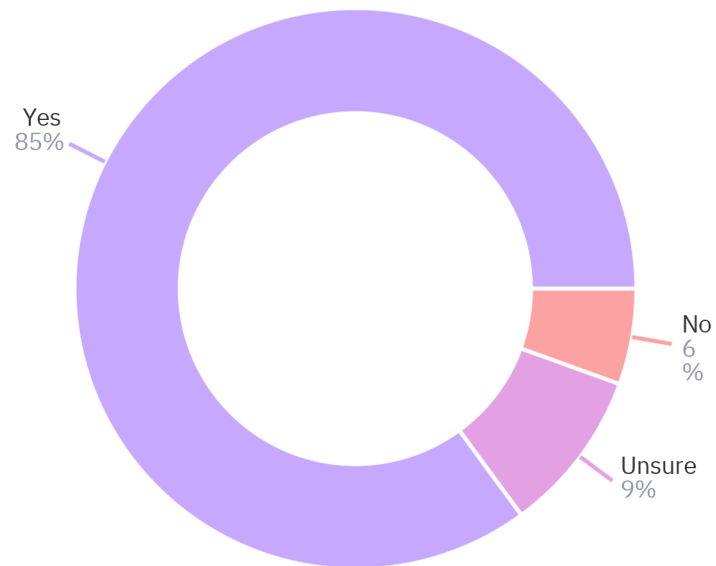
Has your music been scraped for the purposes of training AI?

308 Responses



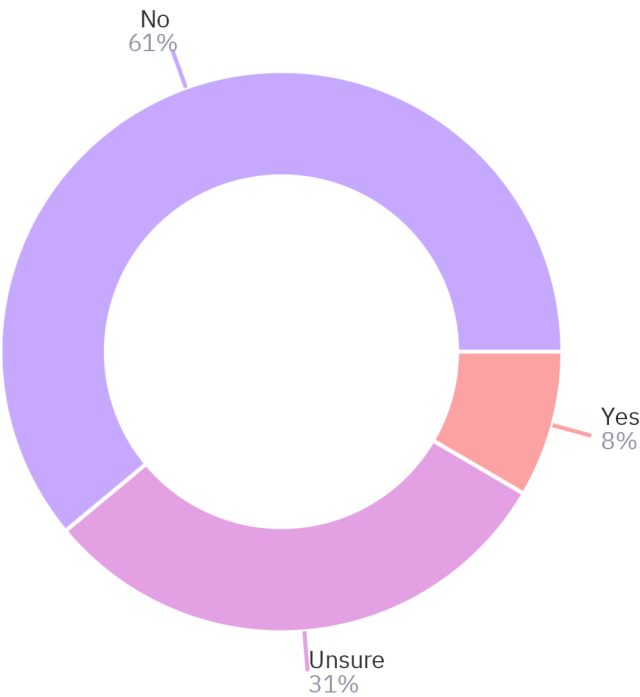
Are you concerned about record labels entering into license agreements with AI developers to use music without the consent of artists?

308 Responses



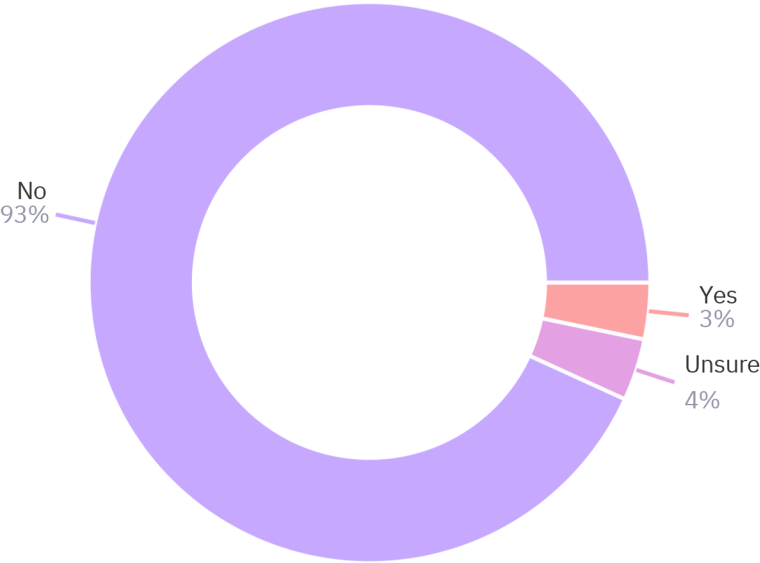
Have you noticed any actual decline in your income associated with the emergence of synthetic music generated via AI?

308 Responses



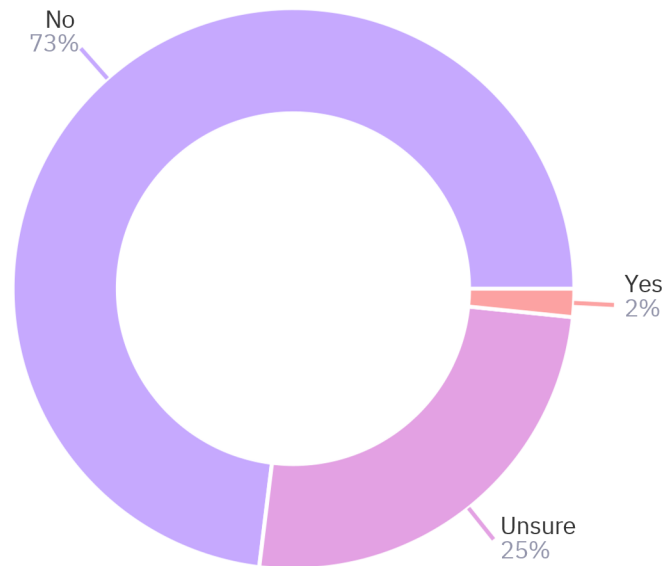
Are you incorporating the use of generative AI (genAI) into your music practice?

308 Responses



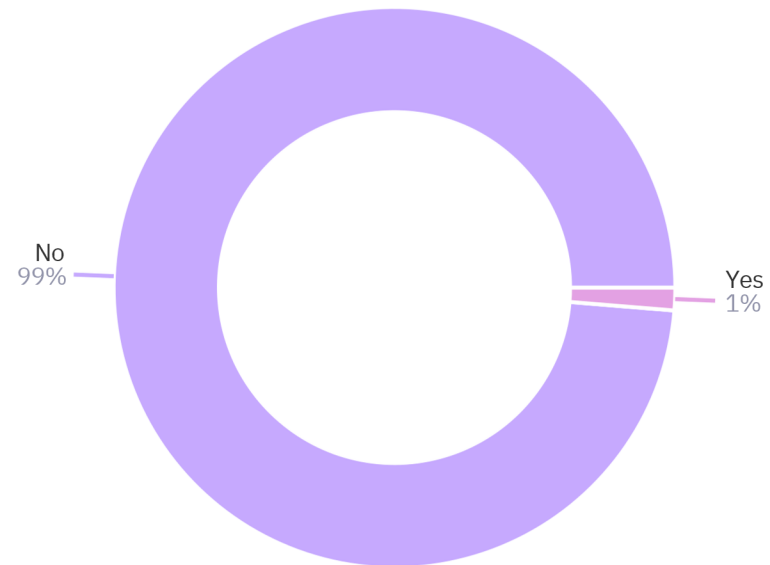
Do you feel that copyright provides enough protections for musicians against exploitation from AI?

308 Responses



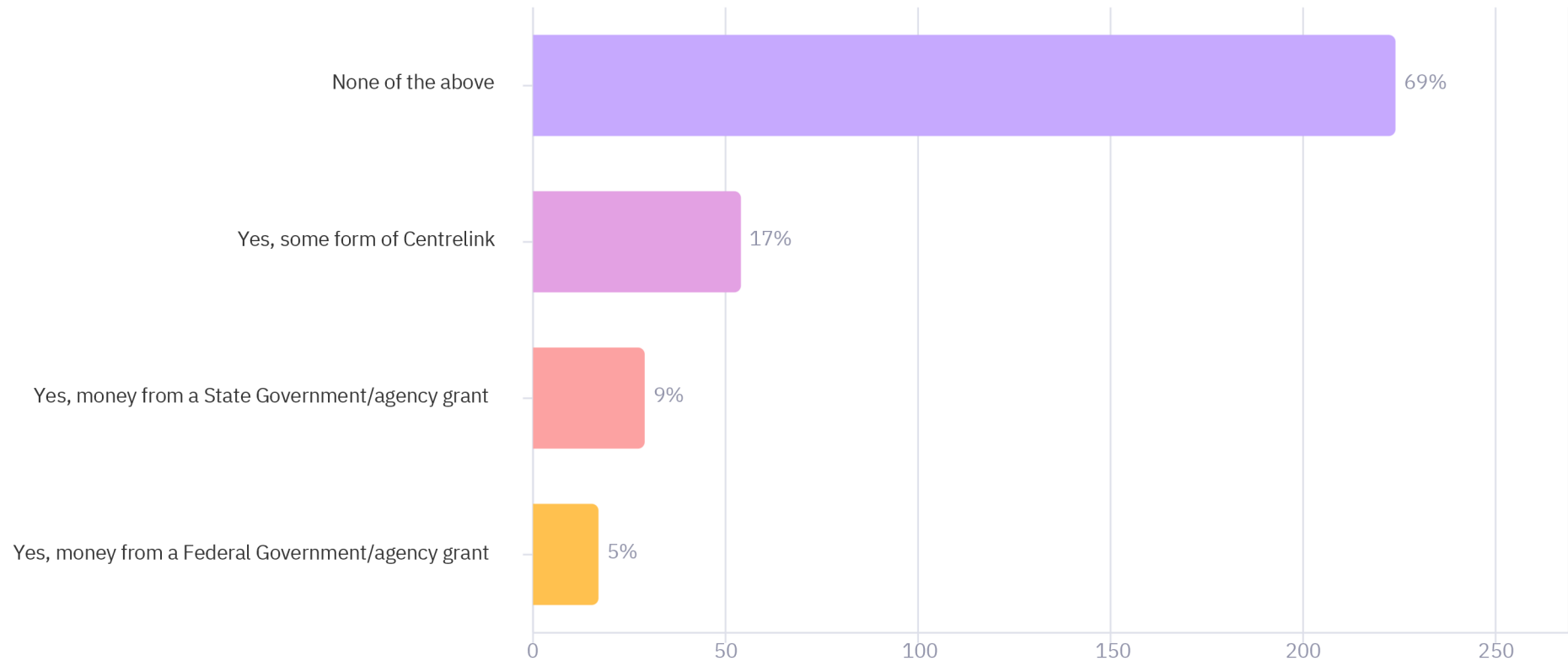
Within the last 12 months, did you receive any crisis relief grants from Support Act?

308 Responses



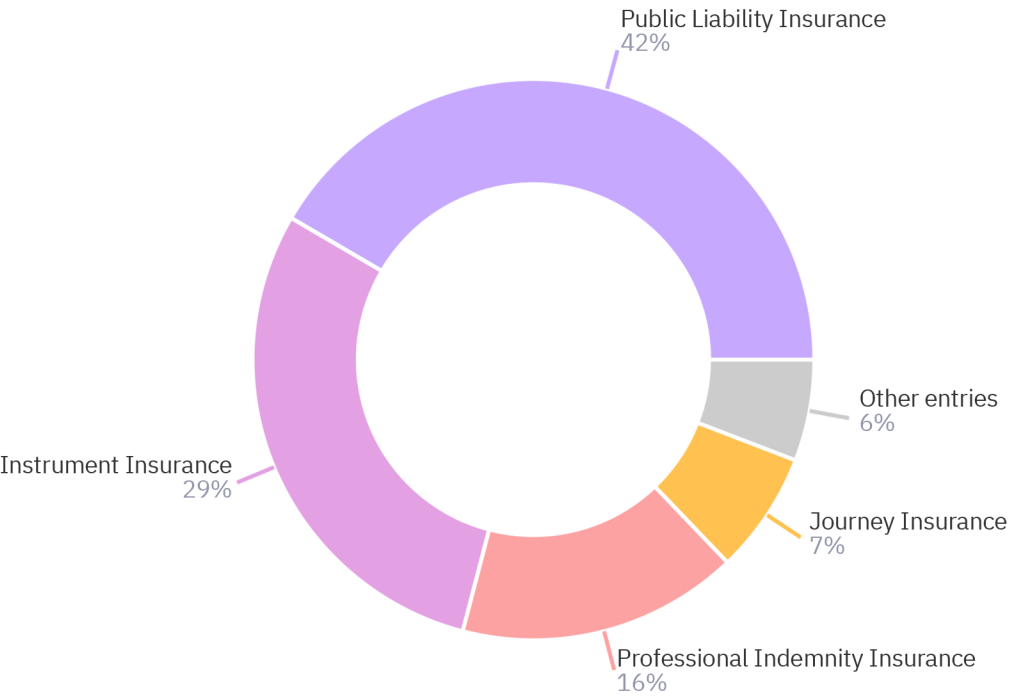
In the last year, have you received any money from the Government? (Select all that apply)

324 Responses



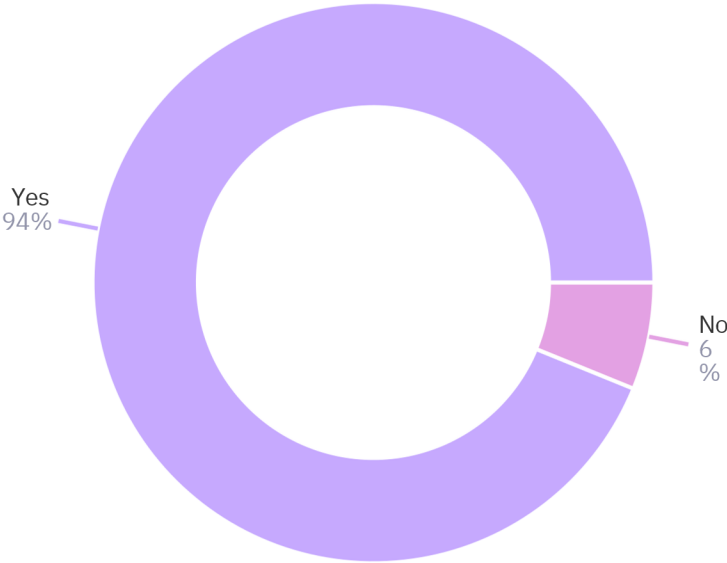
What insurances do you require for your work as a musician? (Select all that apply)

599 Responses



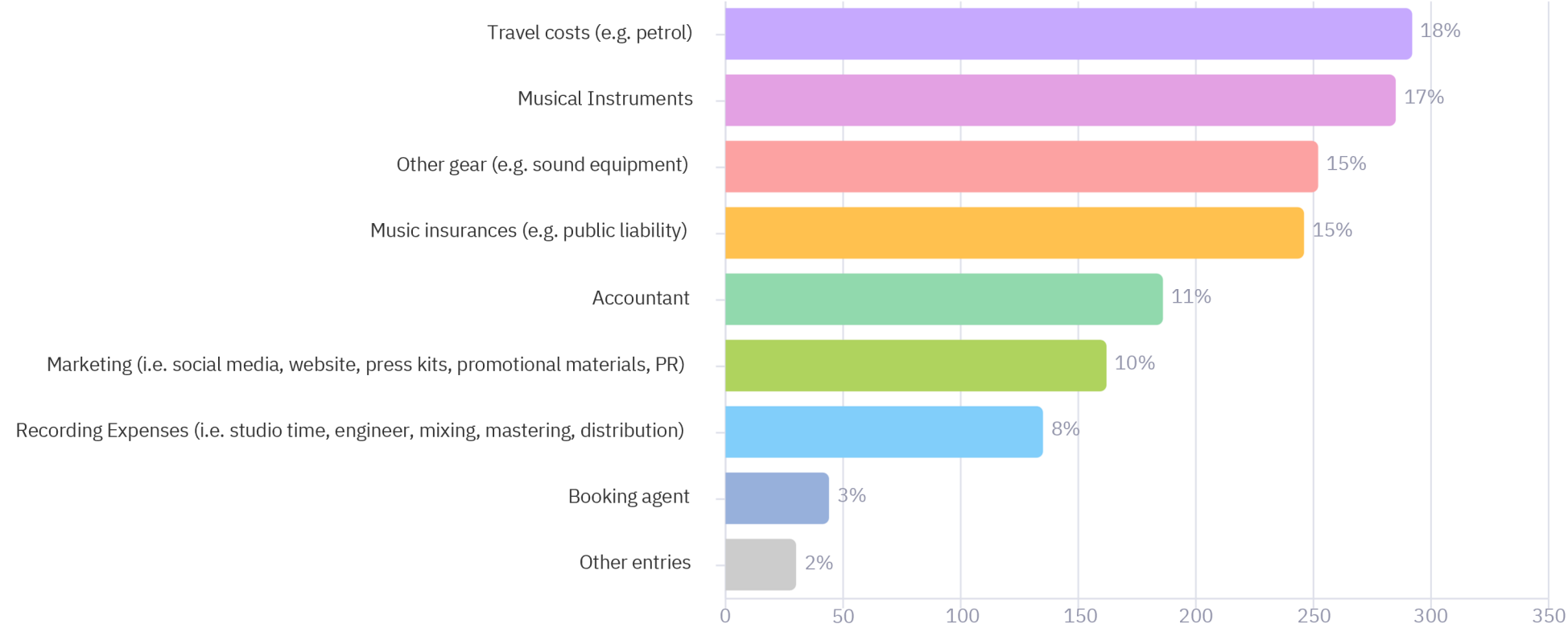
As a musician, do you manage your own financial affairs?

308 Responses



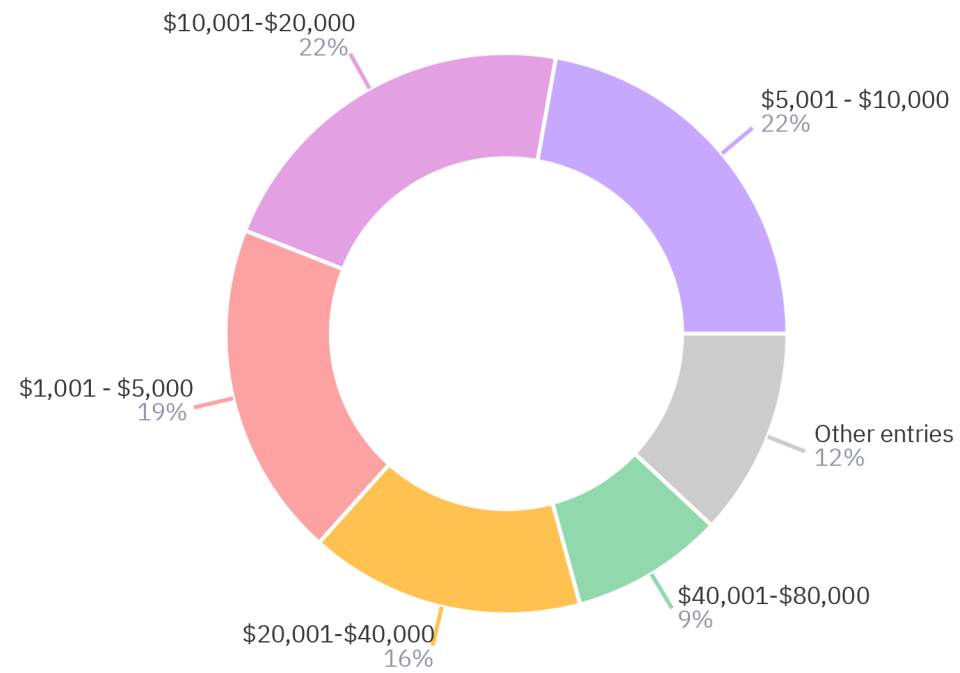
What costs do you incur as a musician?

1632 Responses



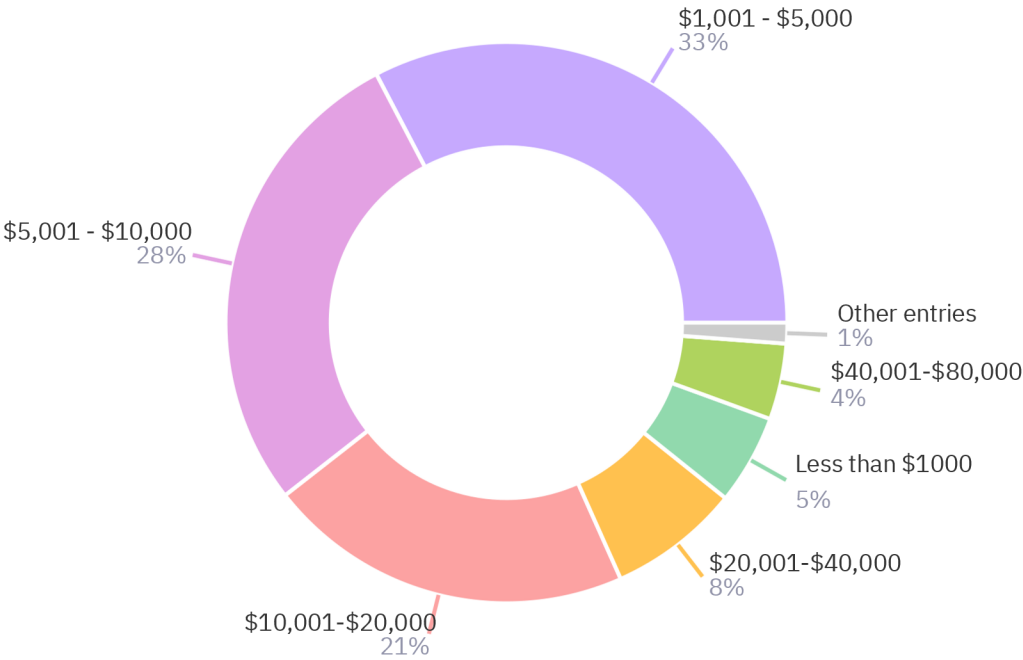
What is the approximate total cost of the musical instruments you use to earn an income?

284 Responses- 24 Empty



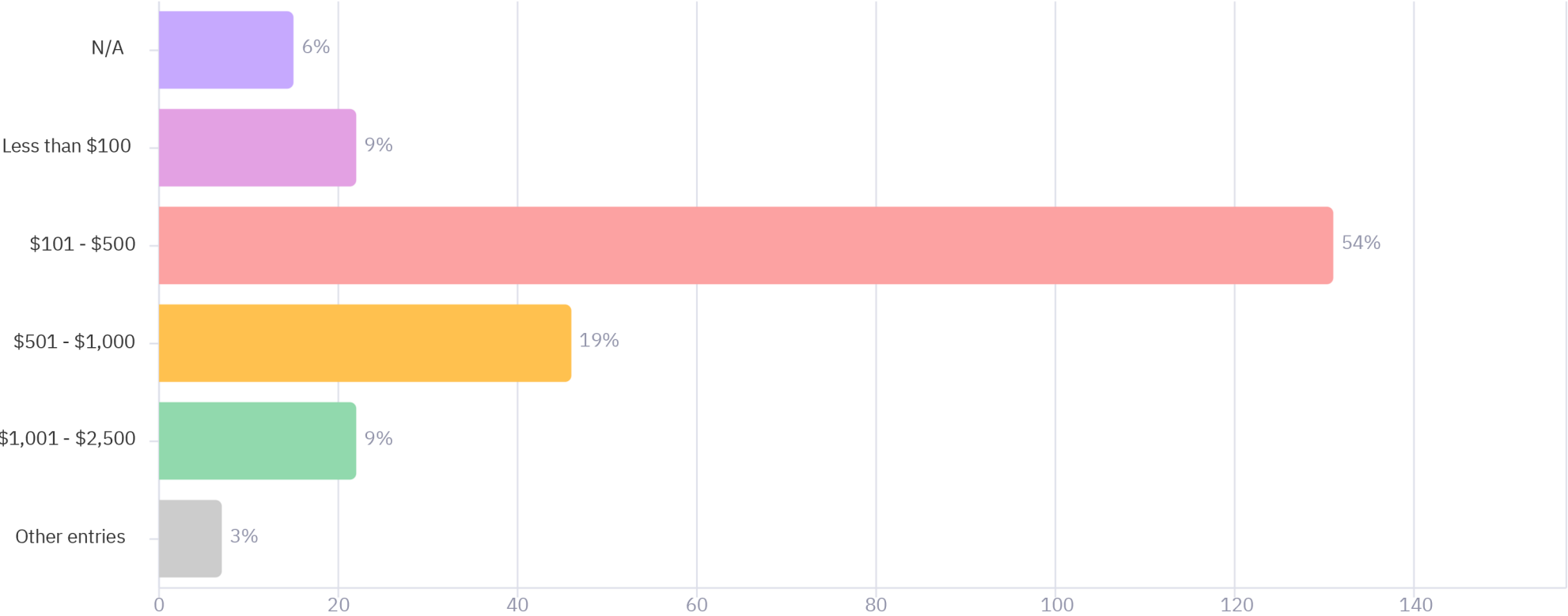
What is the approximate combined cost of the other gear (e.g. sound equipment) you use to earn an income?

251 Responses- 57 Empty



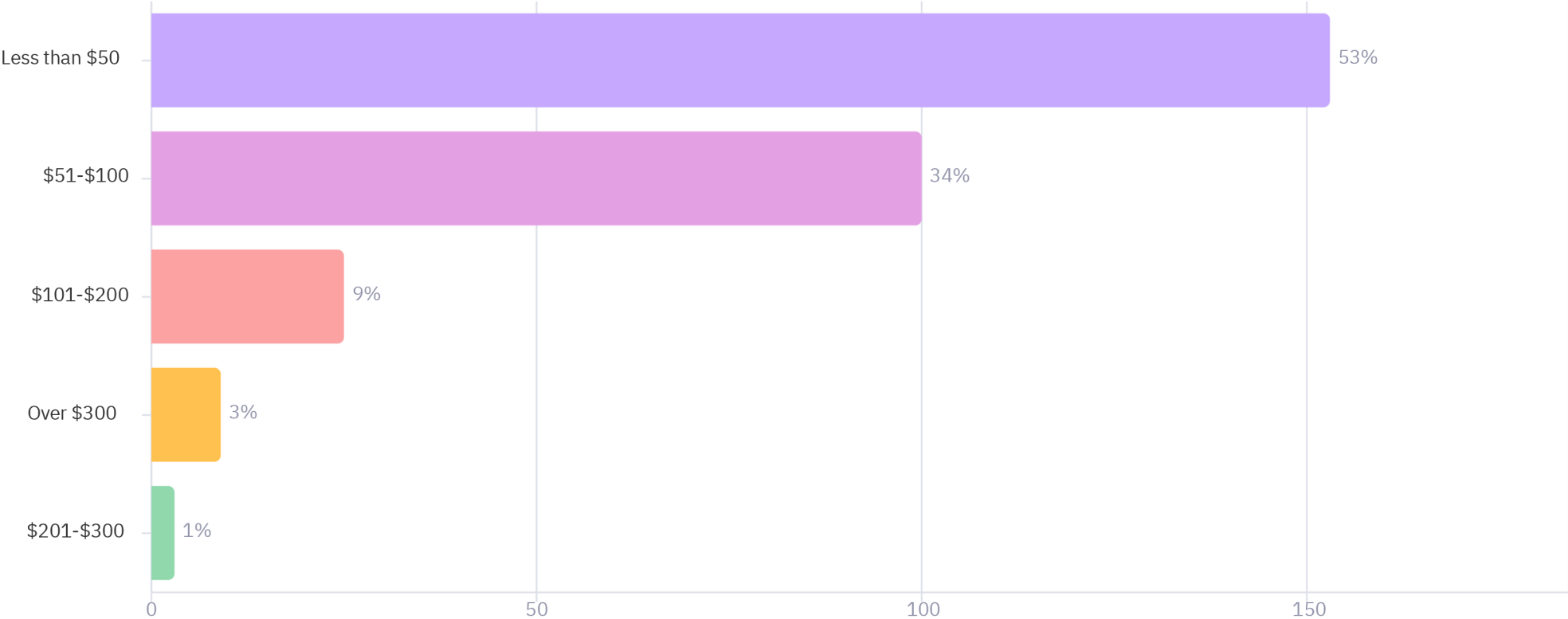
What is the *annual* cost of your Music insurances (e.g. public liability)?

243 Responses- 65 Empty



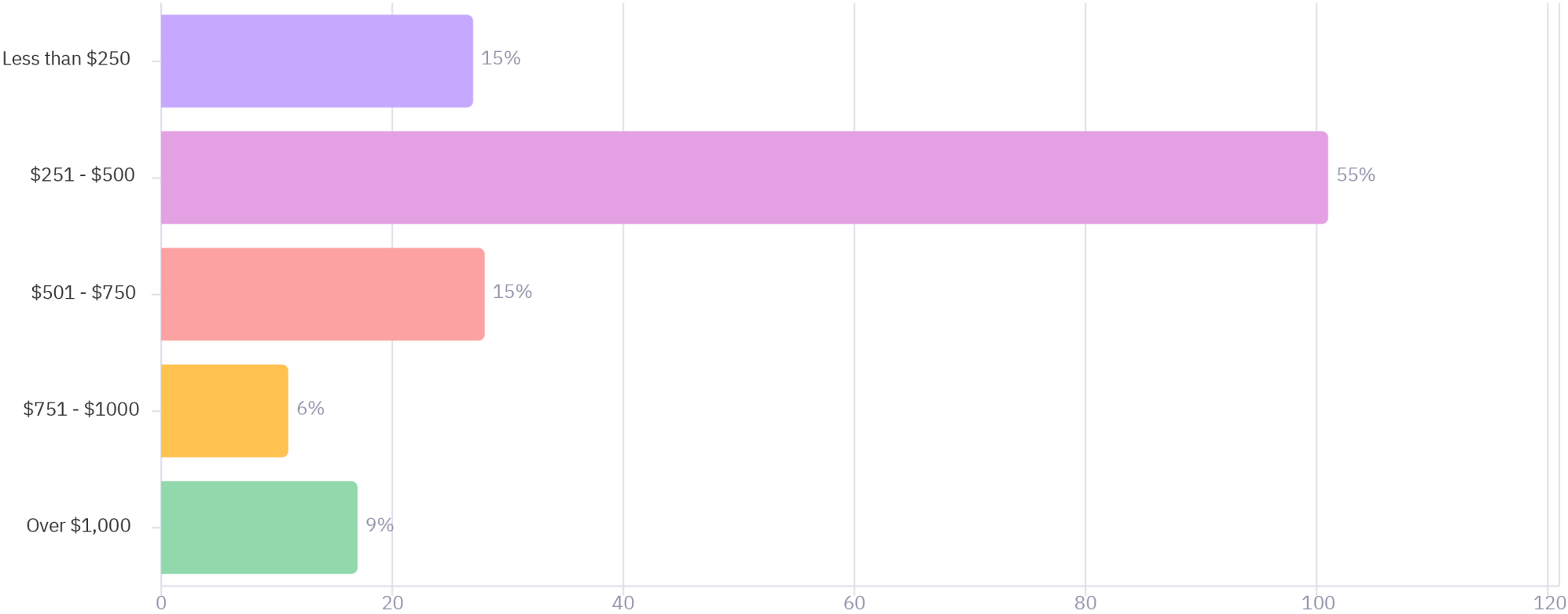
On average, what are your *per gig* travel costs (e.g. petrol, parking, public transport, etc)?

290 Responses- 18 Empty



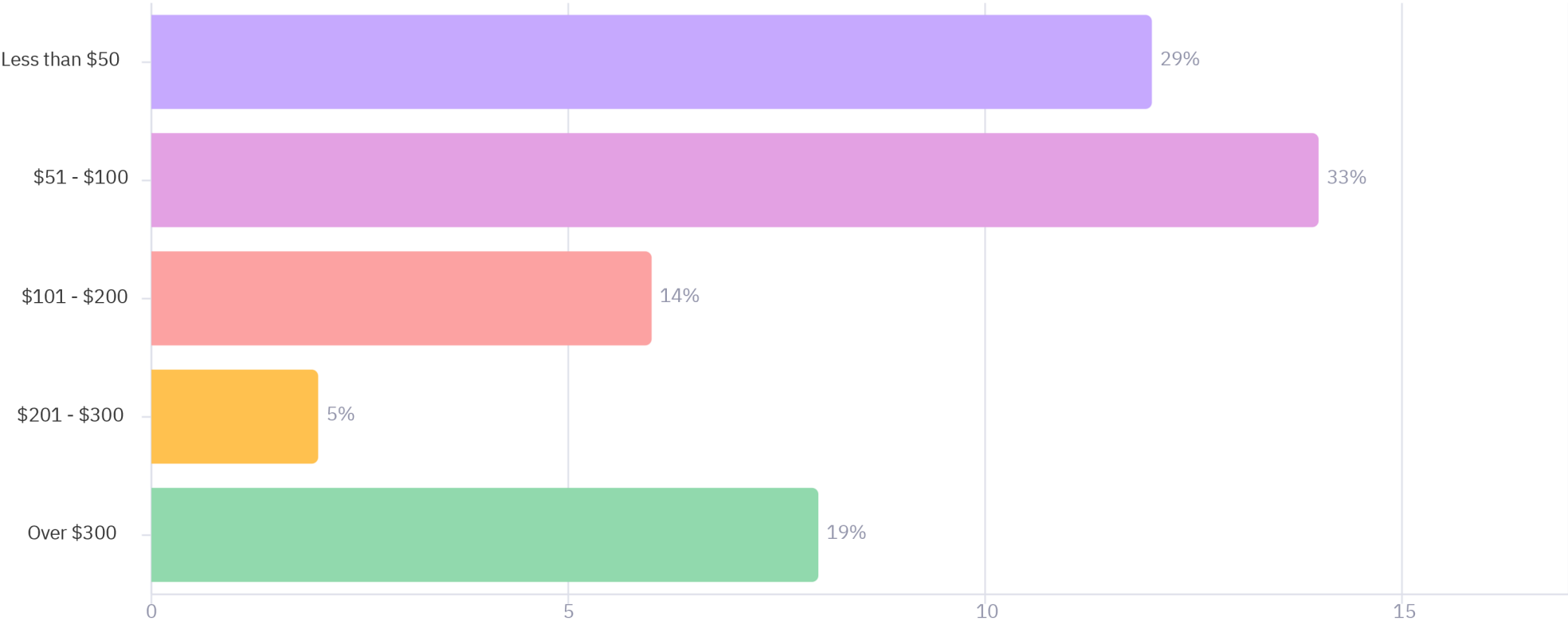
What is the *annual* cost of your accountant?

184 Responses- 124 Empty



On average, what is the *per gig* cost of your Booking Agent?

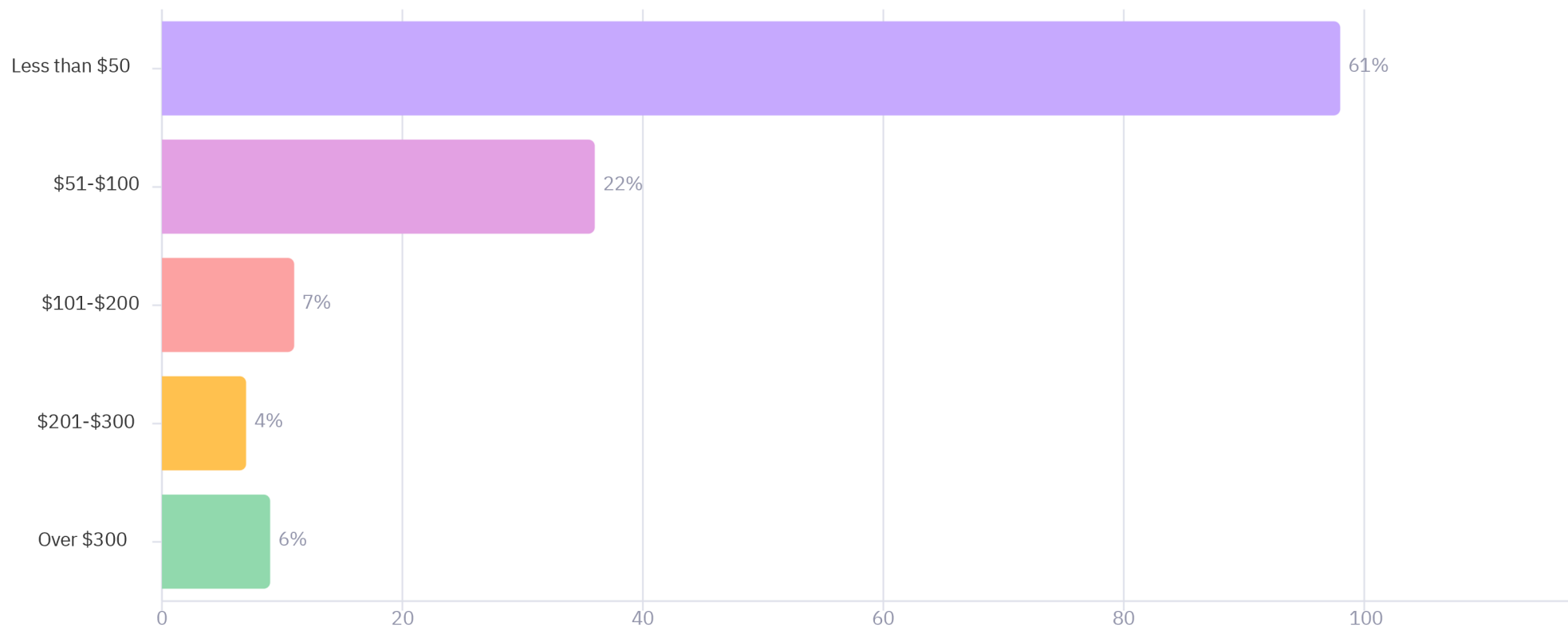
42 Responses- 266 Empty



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On average, how much do you spend each *month* on marketing (i.e. social media, website, press kits, promotional materials, PR)?

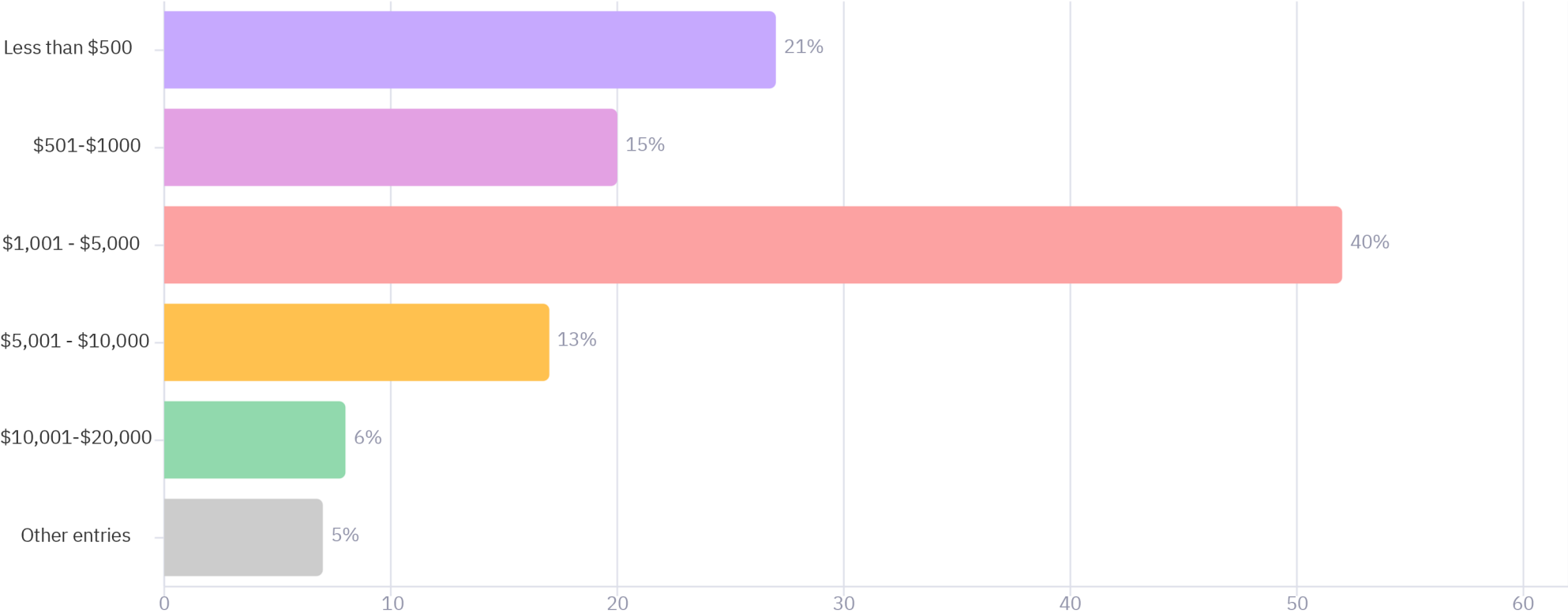
161 Responses- 147 Empty



MEAA Musicians Australia 2025 Survey

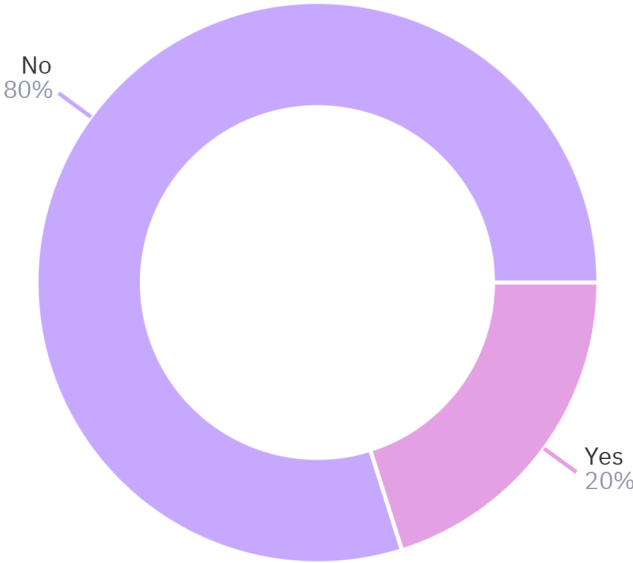
On average, what are your *annual* recording expenses (i.e. studio time, engineer, mixing, mastering, distribution)?

131 Responses- 177 Empty



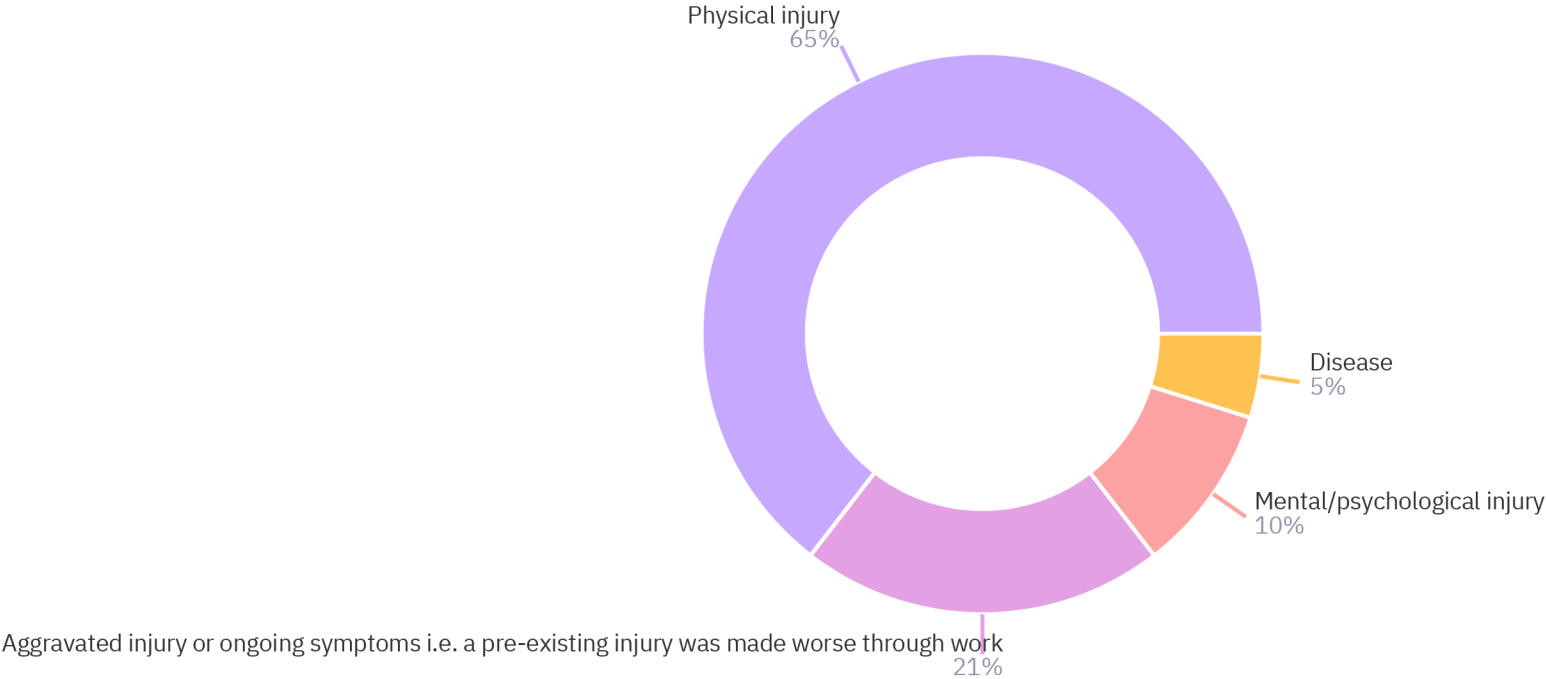
Have you ever been injured at work or while travelling to and from work?

308 Responses



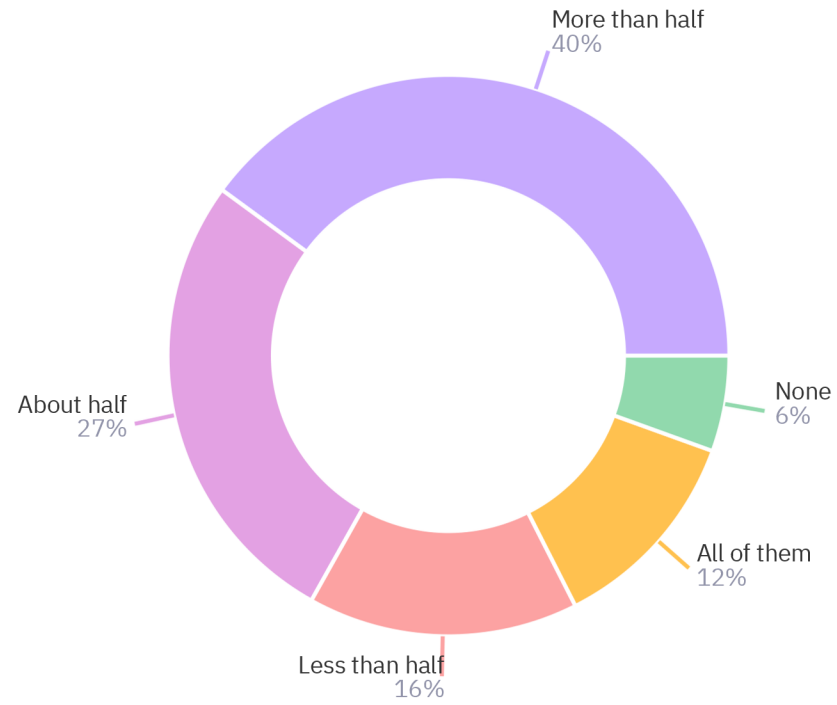
What types of injury did you suffer from?

62 Responses- 246 Empty



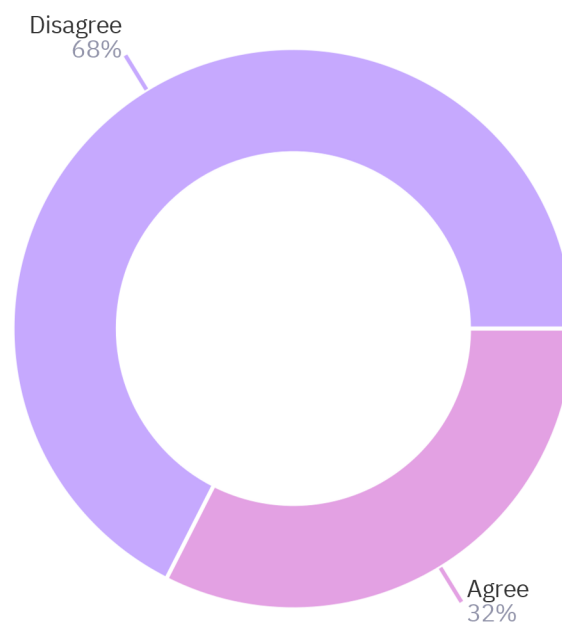
What proportion of venues/gigs do you think provide safe workplaces for musicians?

308 Responses



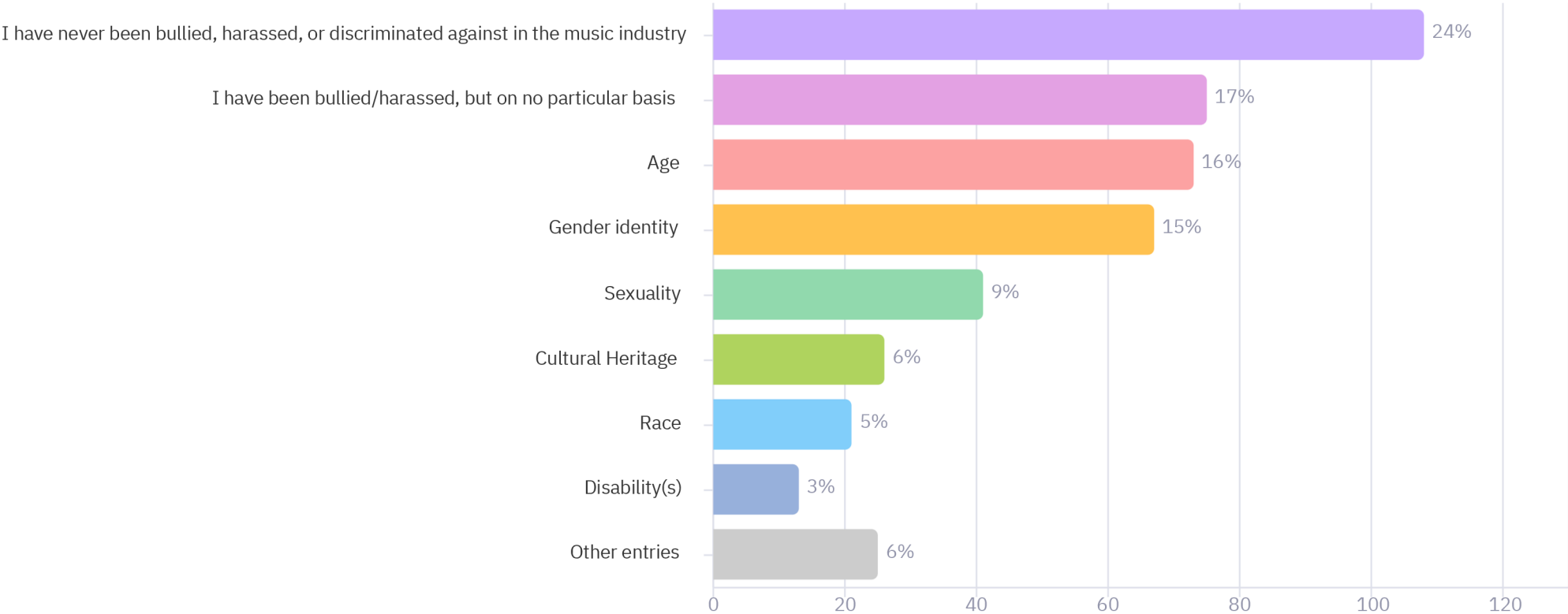
Would you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Working as a gigging musician is inherently unsafe/dangerous."

308 Responses



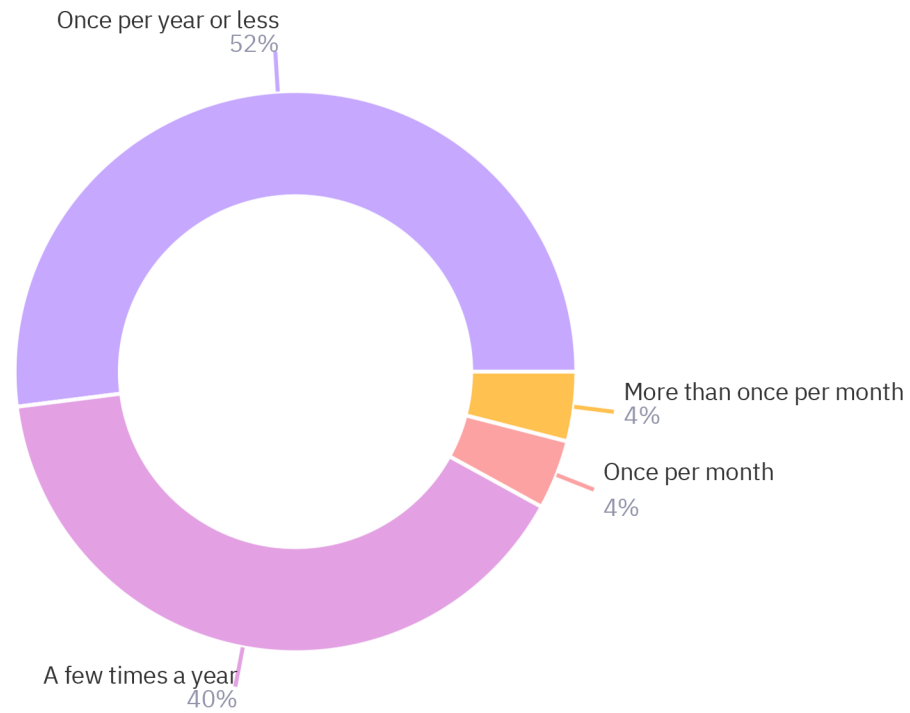
Have you been bullied, harassed, or discriminated against in the music industry? If so, on what basis?

449 Responses



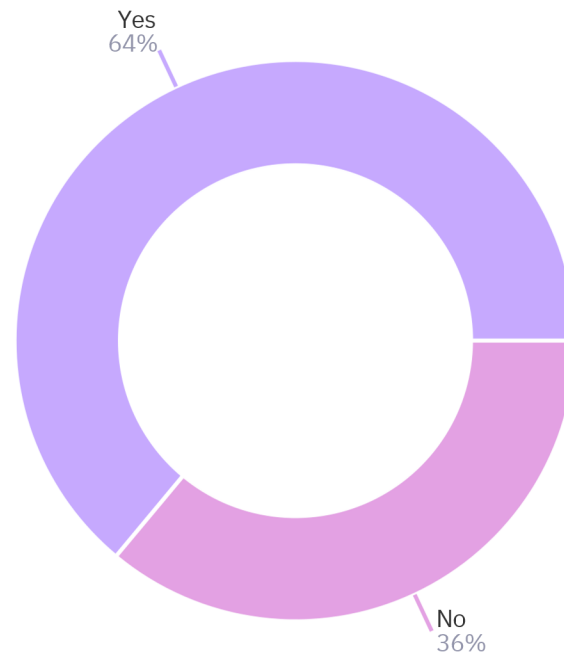
How often have you experienced this?

200 Responses- 108 Empty



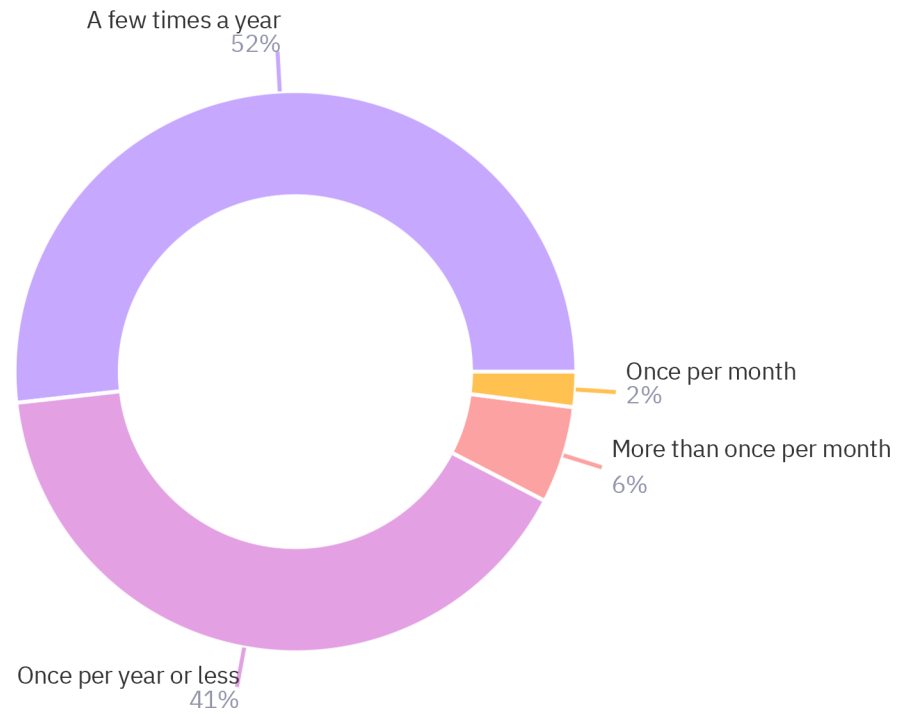
Have you ever witnessed bullying, harassment, or discrimination in the music industry?

308 Responses



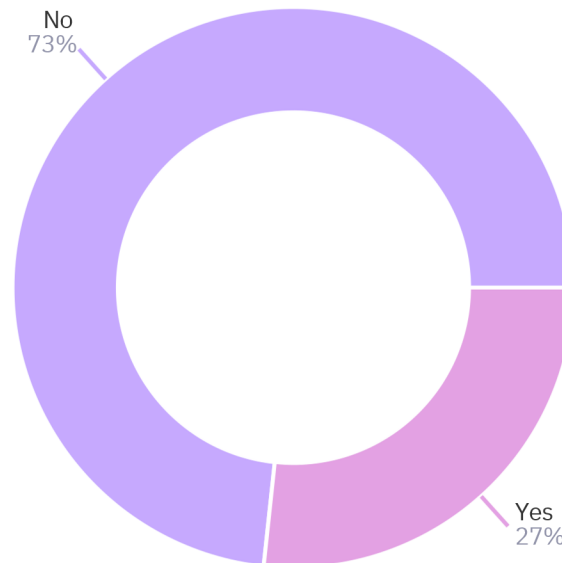
How often have you witnessed this?

197 Responses- 111 Empty



For any of the above, did you report the incident to the venue/contractee/employer?

236 Responses- 72 Empty



Overall, do you think the music industry treats working musicians fairly?

Best Response

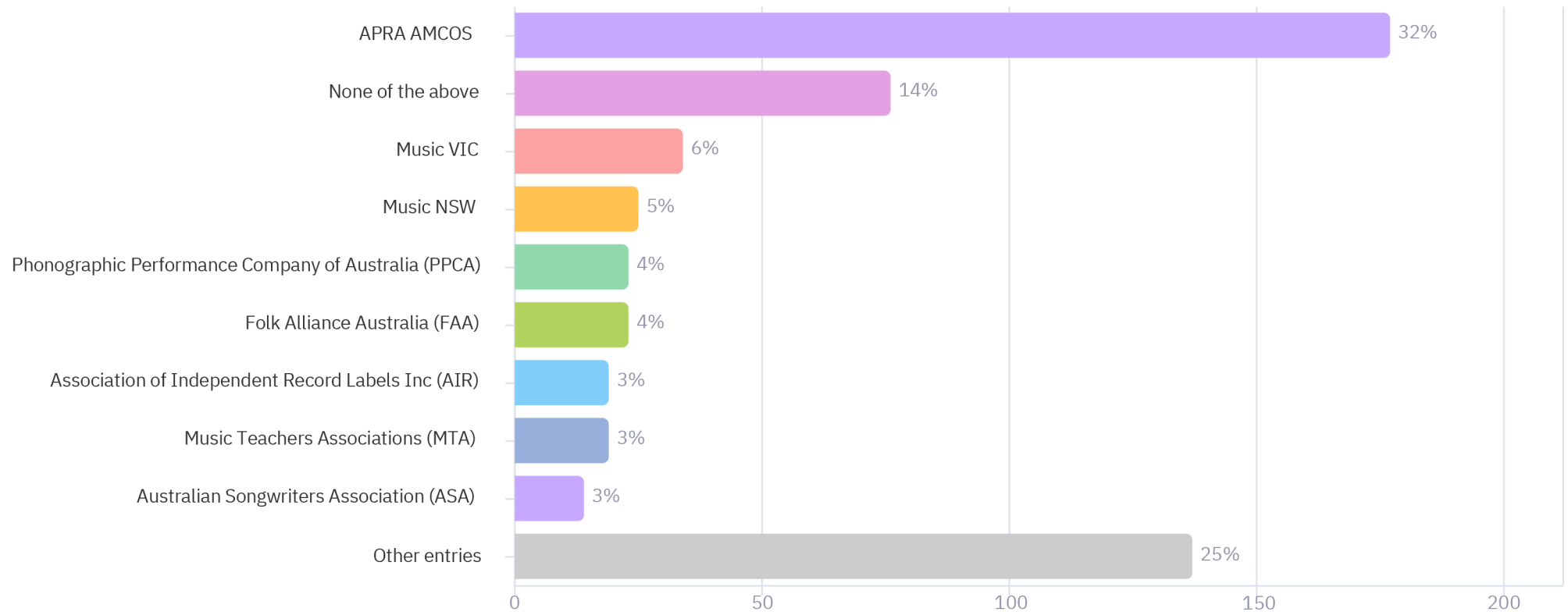
No

83%
Percentage

308
Responses

What other music organisations are you a member of? (Select all that apply)

547 Responses



Do you support MEAA/Musicians Australia initiating industry-level discussions in order to achieve a minimum fee and better conditions for working musicians?

Best Response

Yes

97%
Percentage

308
Responses

Are you a MEAA/Musicians Australia member?

Best Response

Yes

71%
Percentage

308
Responses

Thank you to everyone who participated in this survey. Your input has highlighted the key issues facing working musicians and escalated calls for a national minimum fee and improved working conditions for musicians.

By working together through MEAA Musicians Australia we can make a better music industry for everyone. If you're not already a member, **join your union today.**



www.musiciansaustralia.org.au