



**MUSICIANS
AUSTRALIA**

2023 End Of Year Survey Report

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INTRODUCTION

MEAA Musicians Australia 2023 End Of Year Survey has highlighted an industry in crisis and escalated calls for a national minimum fee and improved working conditions for musicians.

Half of Australia's working musicians earned less than \$6,000 from the music industry last year – a mere 15% of the national minimum wage – forcing the majority to look for work outside of the music industry to make ends meet.

This confirms that musicians are the face of Australia's insecure work crisis. They are expected to get by on extraordinarily low incomes, inconsistent and often unpaid work and they very rarely receive superannuation which is a right for all workers.

The majority of musicians work multiple jobs and make sacrifices to pursue their music careers, having to fund their projects and artistic development, and that's on top of supporting themselves and their families.

Our members are telling us that conditions have worsened since the pandemic as converging issues range from venues closing or imposing rigid, one-sided fee arrangements, drying up, poor working conditions, and general cost of living concerns, which is threatening the viability of the industry.



KEY FINDINGS

Among the findings of the survey of 567 musicians:

- 49% of musicians earned less than \$5,999 from the music industry during the 2023 financial year, while 64% earned \$14,999 or less.
- Only one-in-five musicians derived all their income from their music career, with two-thirds forced to take up work outside the industry.
- More than half of musicians cite the lack of pay as the biggest barrier to working in music full-time.
- 40% of musicians earn income from two to three music jobs.
- 42% of musicians report playing unpaid gigs.
- 82% of musicians do not receive superannuation for gigs.
- 60% report being paid less than \$250 per gig, despite 39% of musicians spending up to 20 hours per week rehearsing, practicing, or preparing for a gig.

The survey also revealed that work insecurity and poor working conditions were taking a significant toll on musicians' health and wellbeing: one in five reported being injured at work, while 62% have been bullied, harassed, or discriminated.

The vast majority – 86%– said they felt musicians were treated unfairly by the industry.



49% of musicians earned less than \$5,999 from the music industry during the 2023 financial year, while 64% earned \$14,999 or less.

NEXT STEPS



Our success so far
wouldn't have been
possible without the
work of our
membership.

Since Musicians Australia launched its minimum fee campaign two years ago, six state and territory governments – South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, Victoria, NSW, and ACT – have endorsed a minimum fee of \$250 per musician per public-funded gig.

With the minimum fee established for taxpayer-subsidised gigs, our focus is now on negotiations between the union and commercial operators to roll it out across the industry, with the aim of having it adopted as part of broader industry solutions.

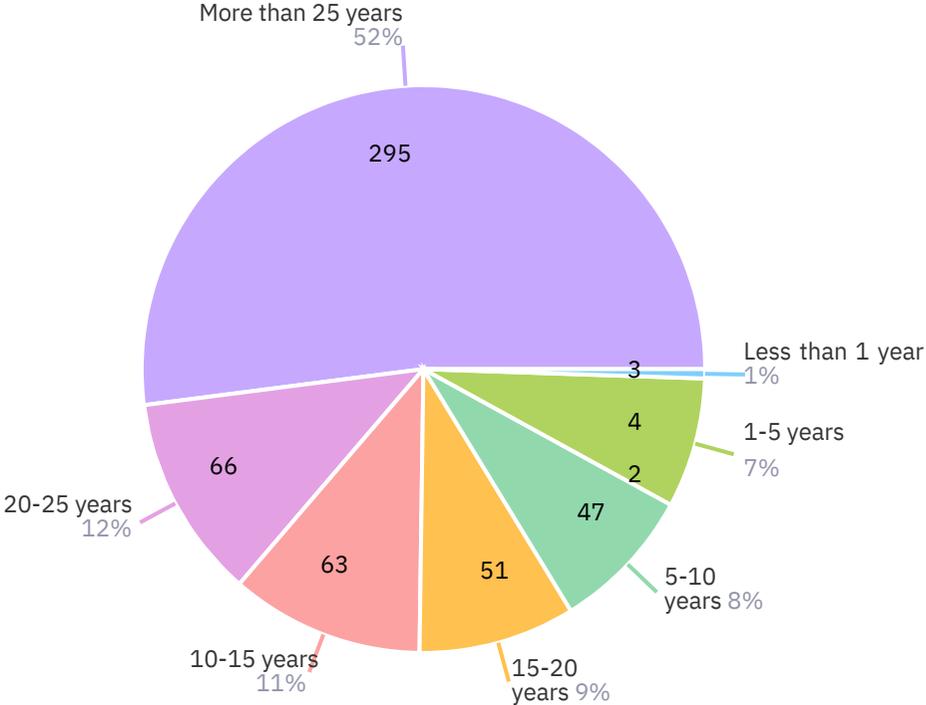
A sustainable music industry must support musicians as well as good music businesses.

The campaign has achieved its initial goal of winning recognition via government endorsement, which sends a powerful message to the industry. Our success so far wouldn't have been possible without the work of our membership, which continues to grow each year as more and more musicians stand together and fight for the work security and fair pay and conditions they deserve.

SURVEY DATA

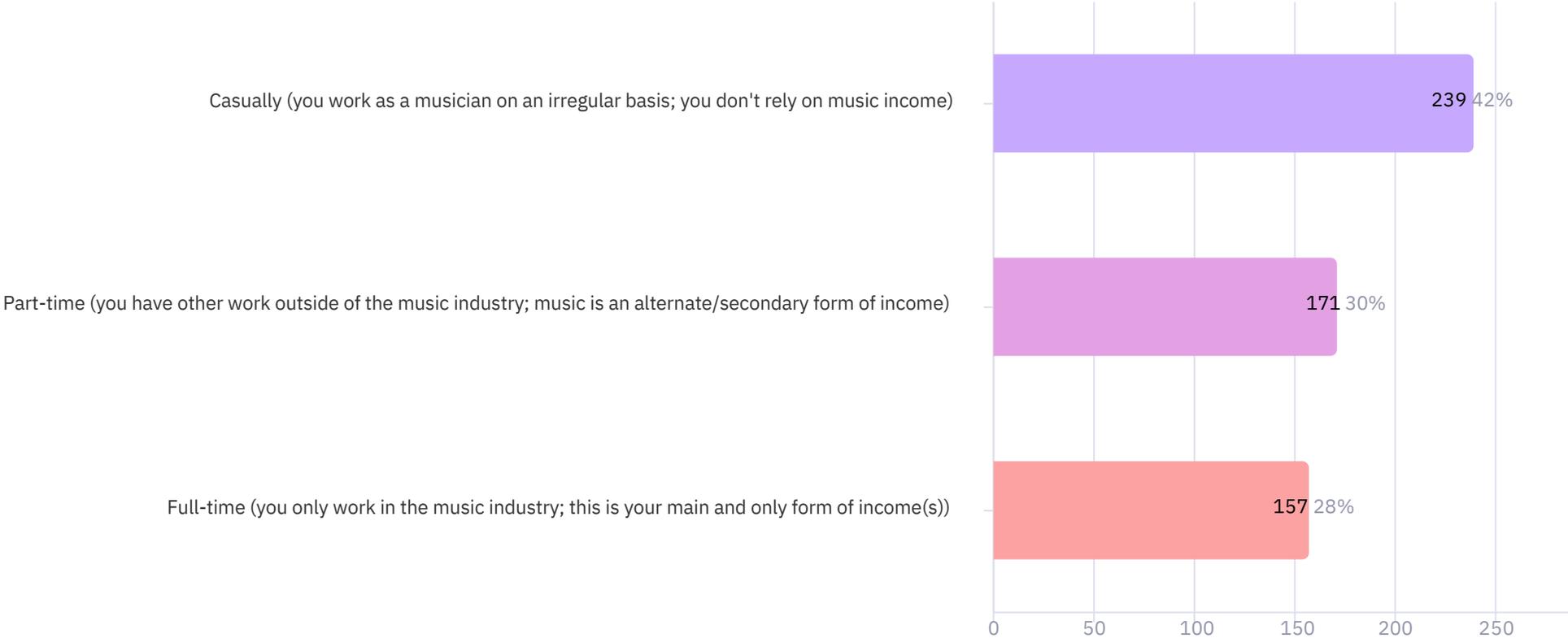
How many years of experience do you have working as a musician?

567 Responses



Do you work in the music industry:

567 Responses



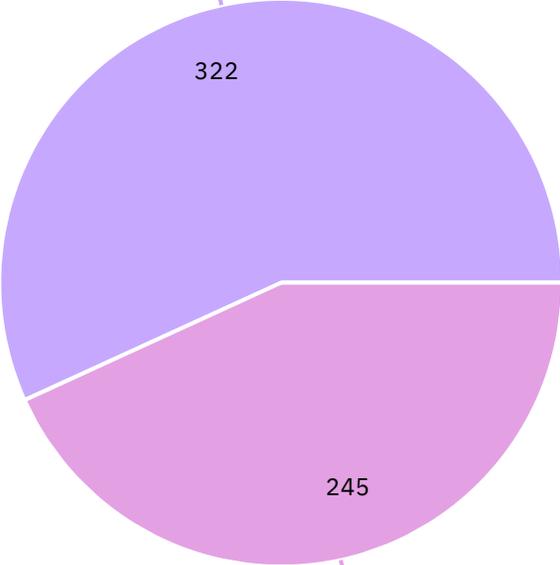
Select the one which applies to you:

567 Responses

I work as a musician for a bit of extra money and don't depend on the income

57%

322

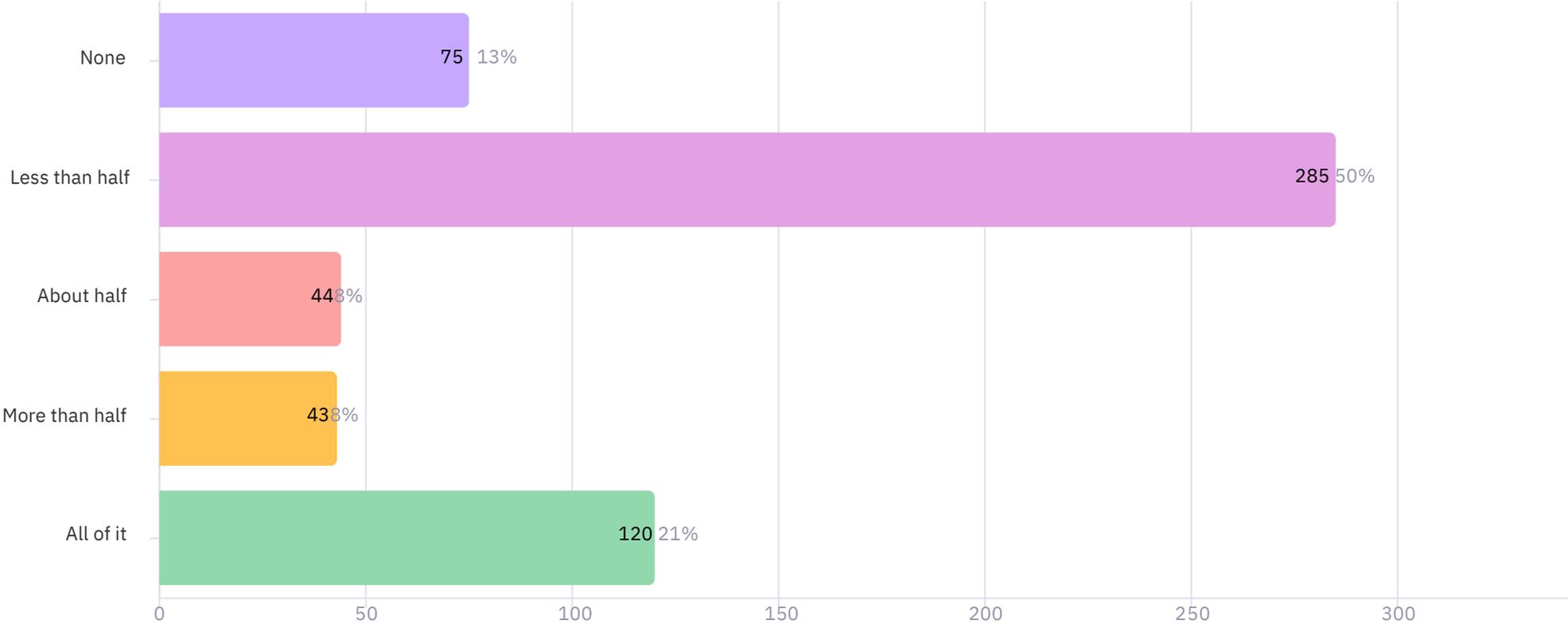


I depend on the money I earn from being a musician to pay bills and survive 43%

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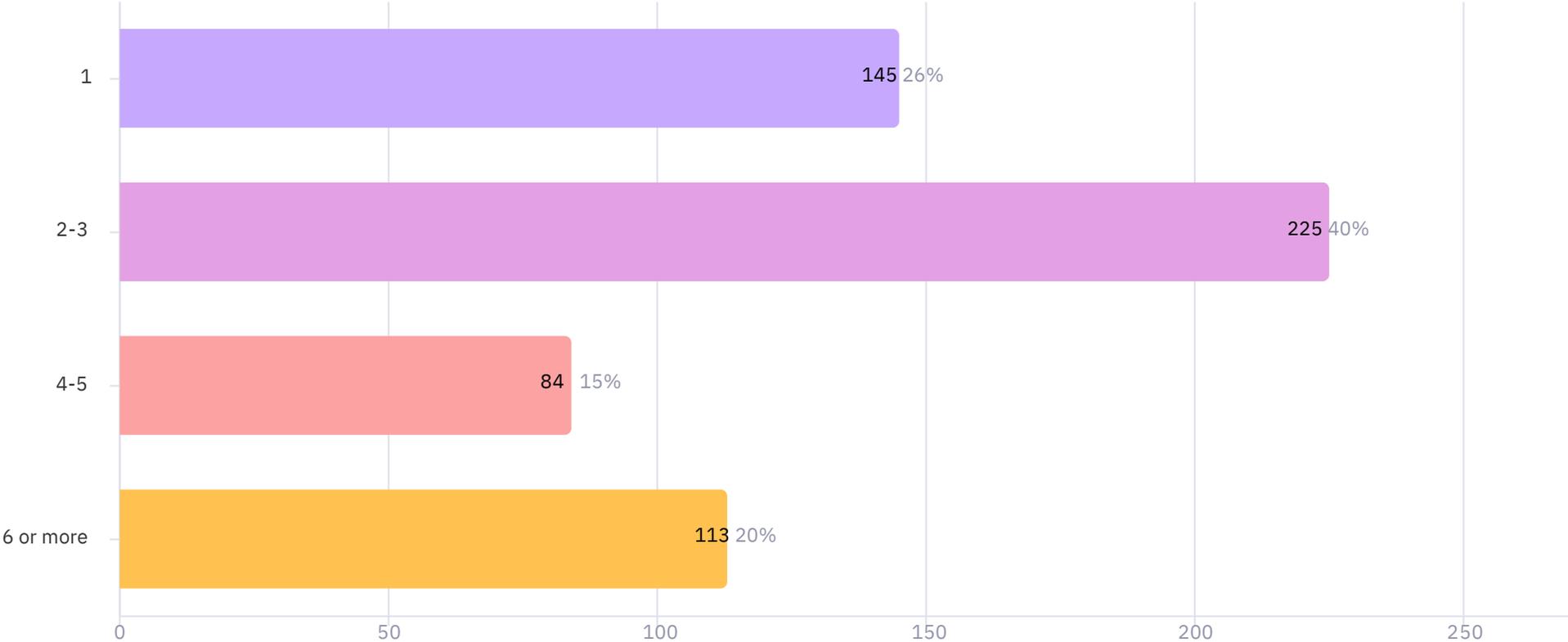
How much of your total income (including from non-music sources) comes from music?

567 Responses



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

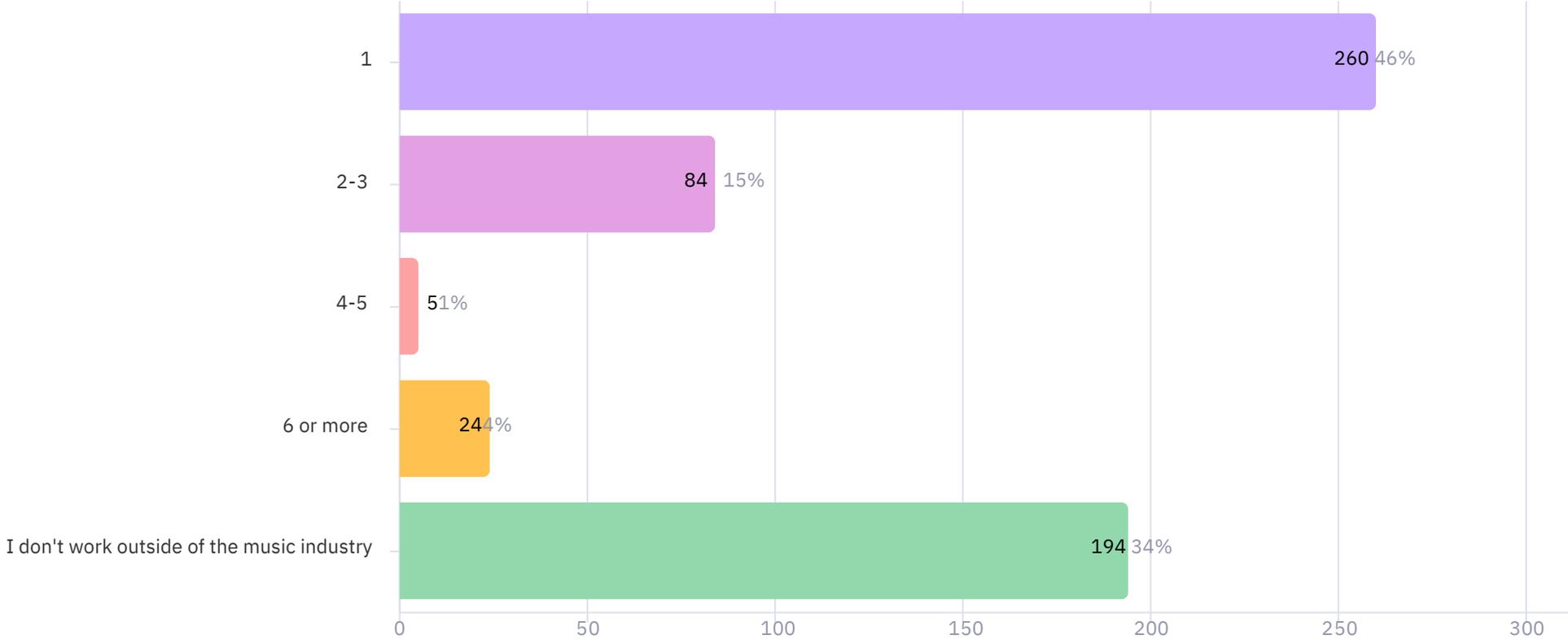
567 Responses



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

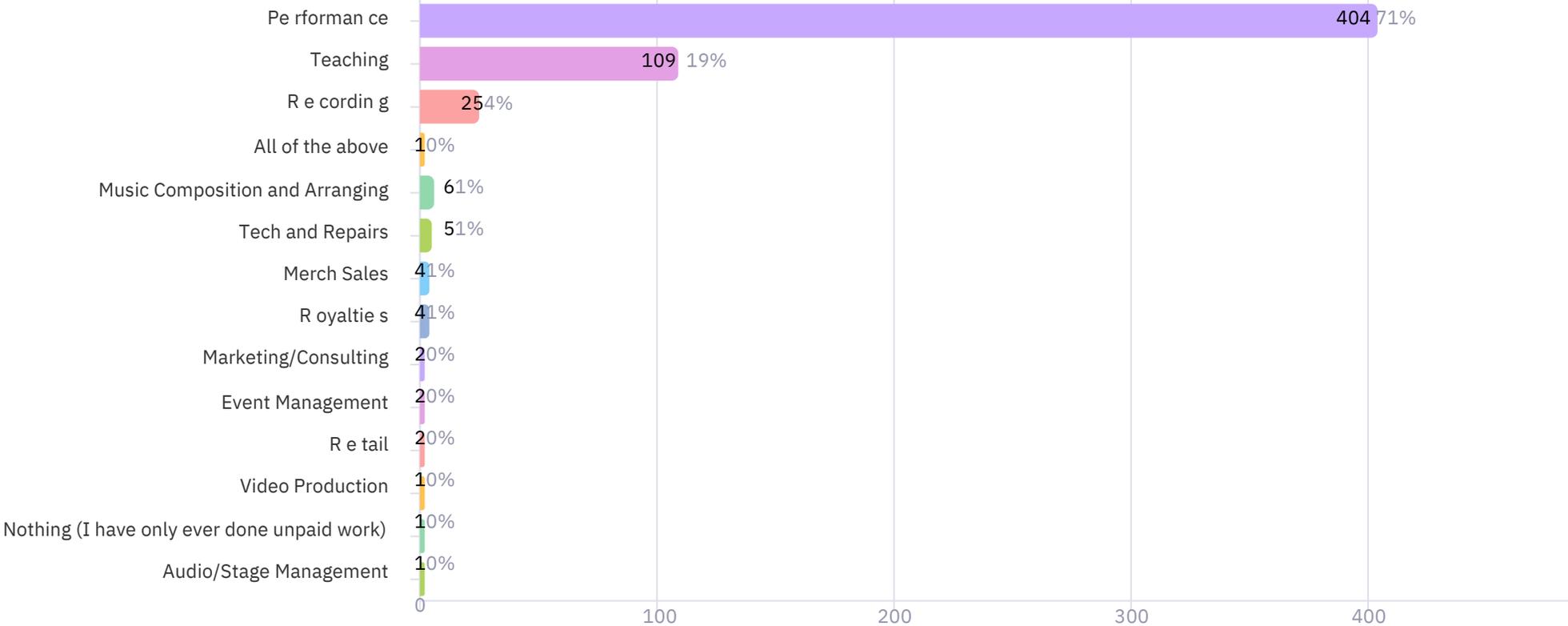
567 Responses



MEAA Musicians Australia 2023 End Of Year Survey Report

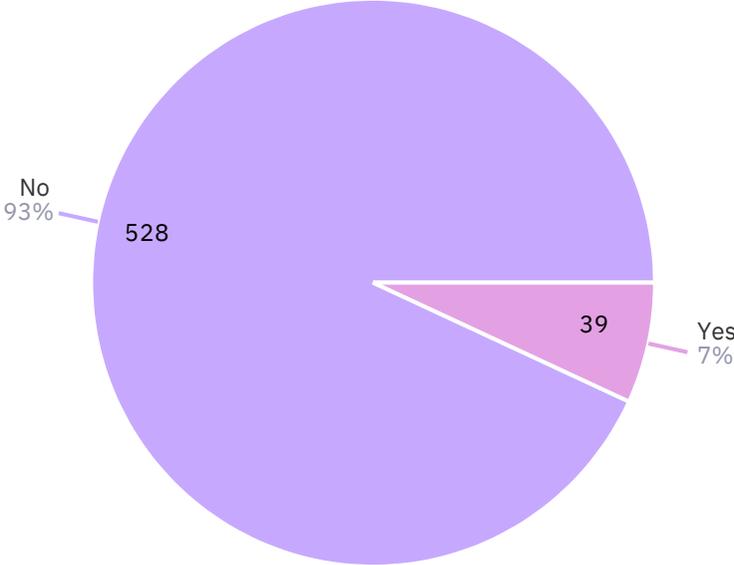
What area of the music industry do you get the bulk of your music income from?

567 Responses



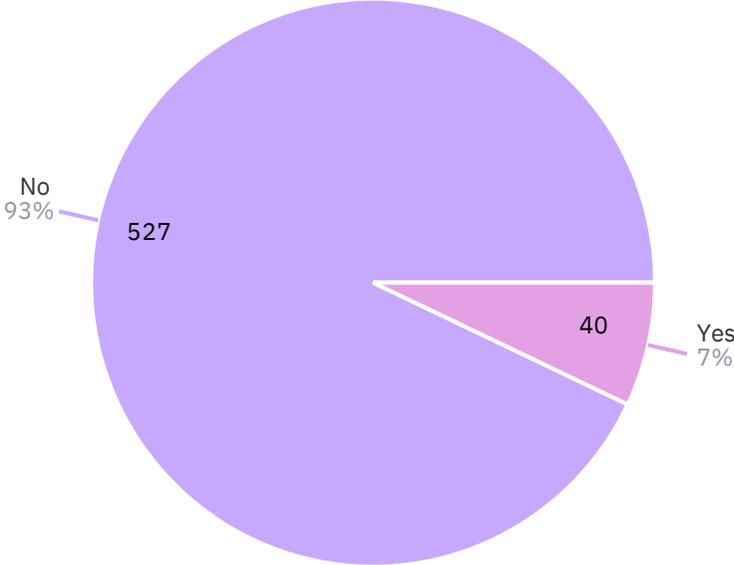
Are you signed to a record label?

567 Responses



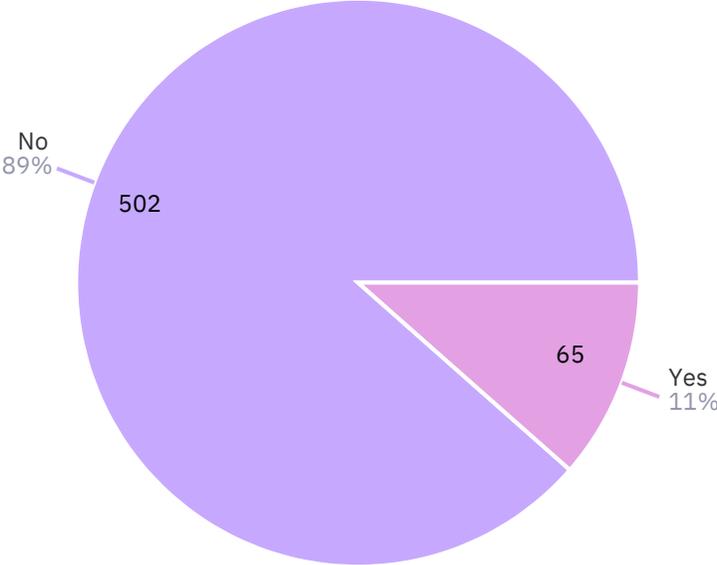
Are you signed to a publisher?

567 Responses



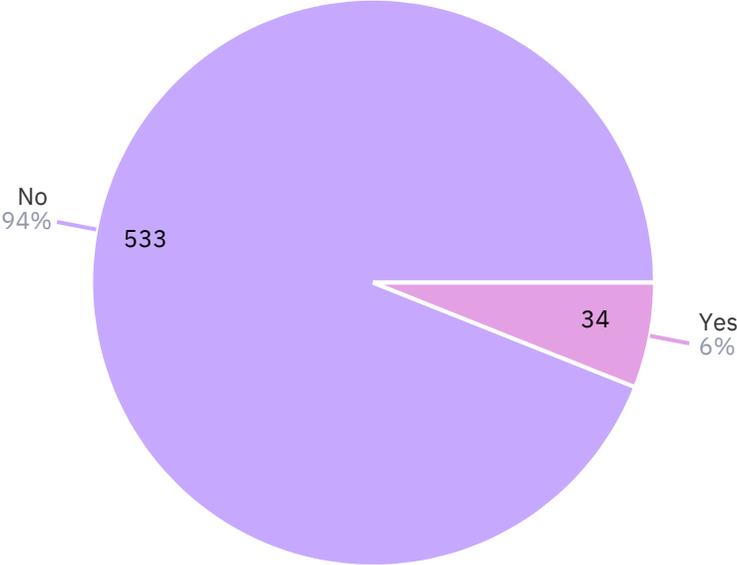
Do you have a booking agent?

567 Responses



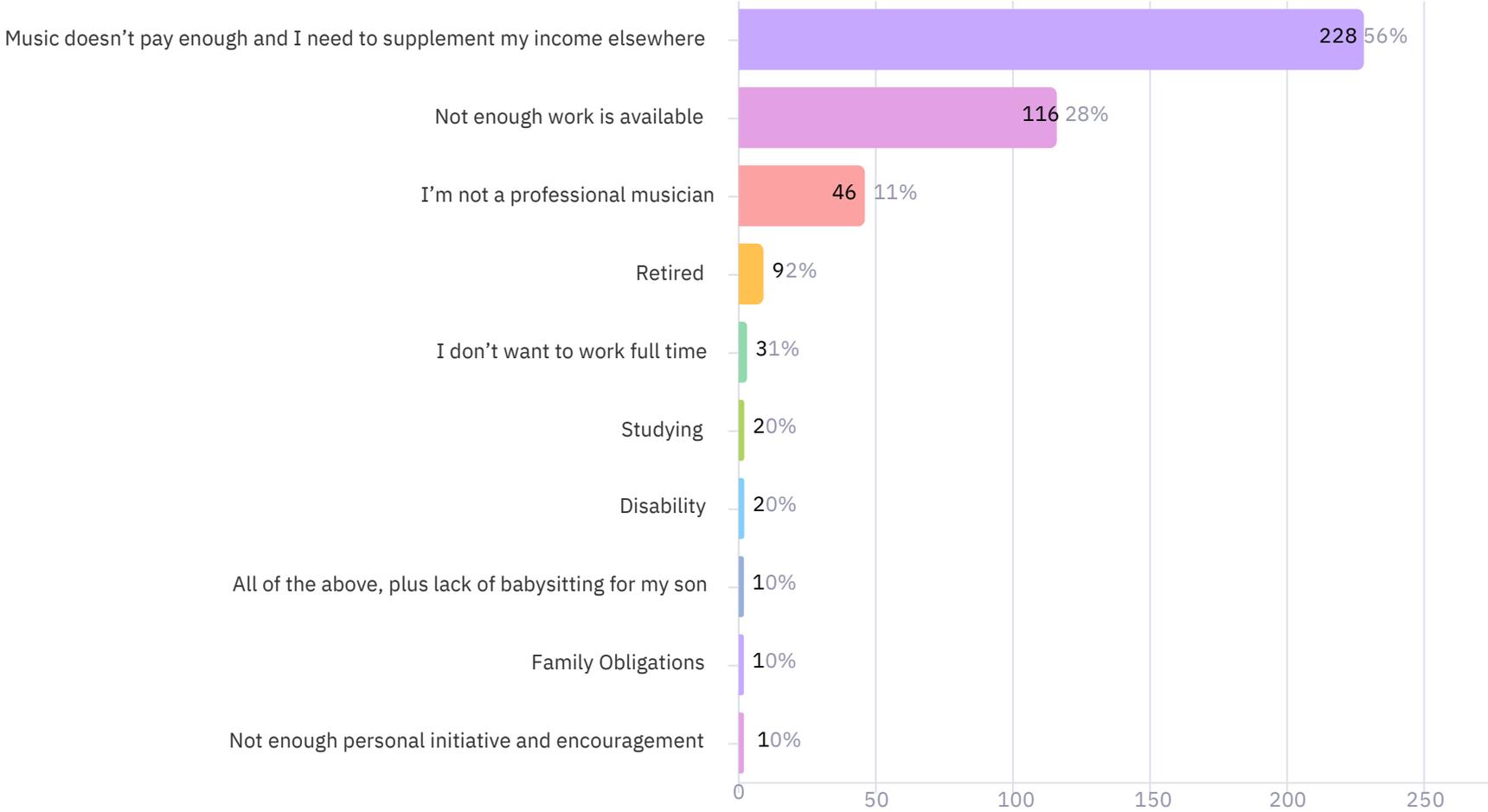
Do you have a manager?

567 Responses



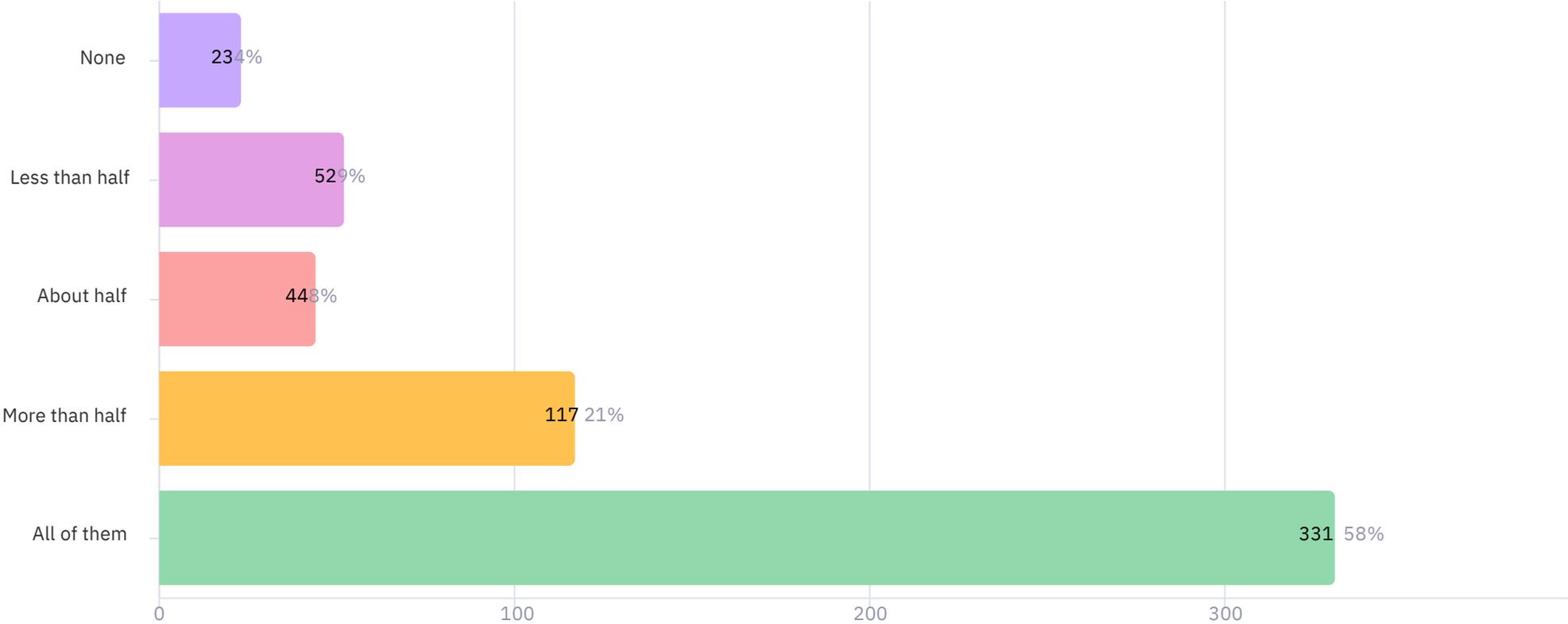
What are the main reasons/barriers to you working in music full-time?

409 Responses- 158 Empty



How many of your gigs are paid?

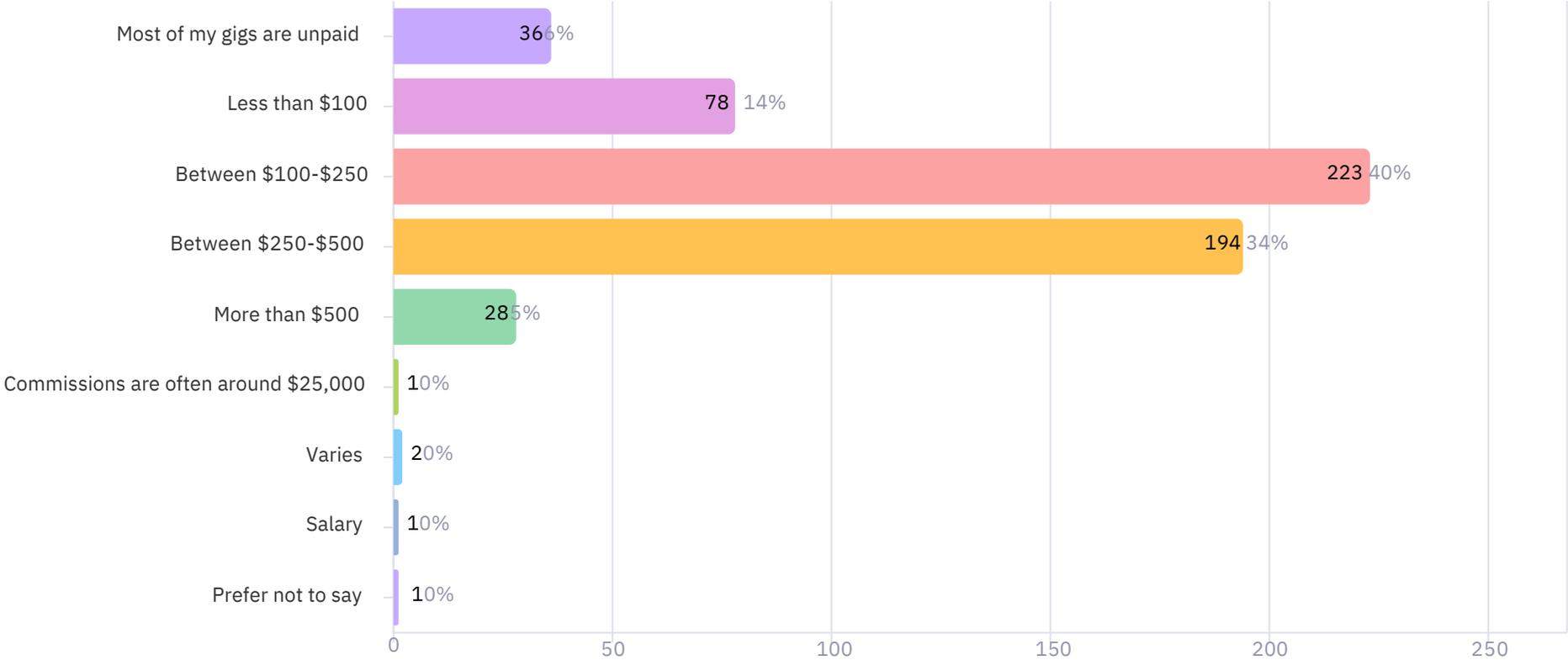
567 Responses



MEAA Musicians Australia 2023 End Of Year Survey Report

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

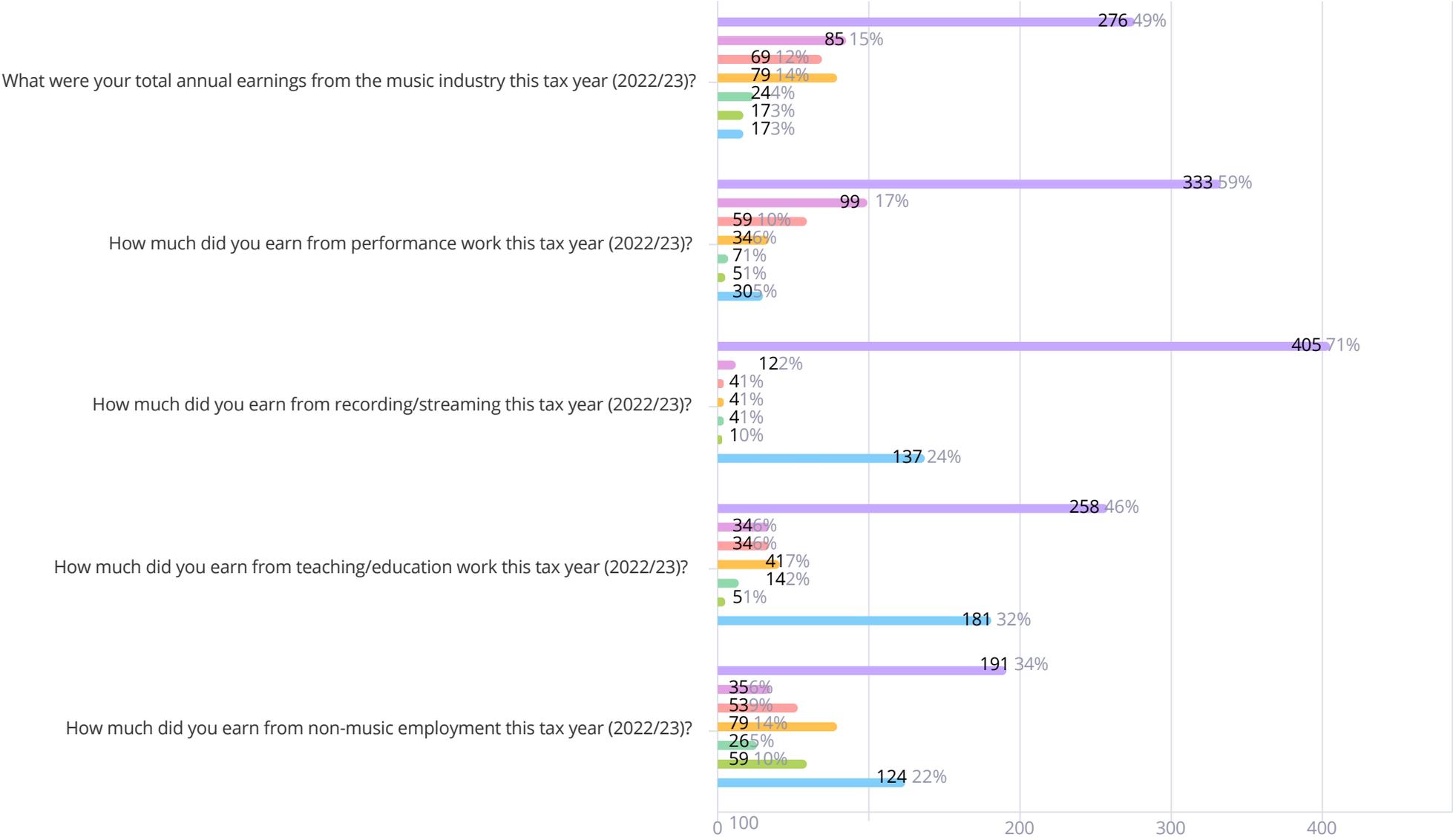
564 Responses- 3 Empty



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Please estimate:

567 Responses

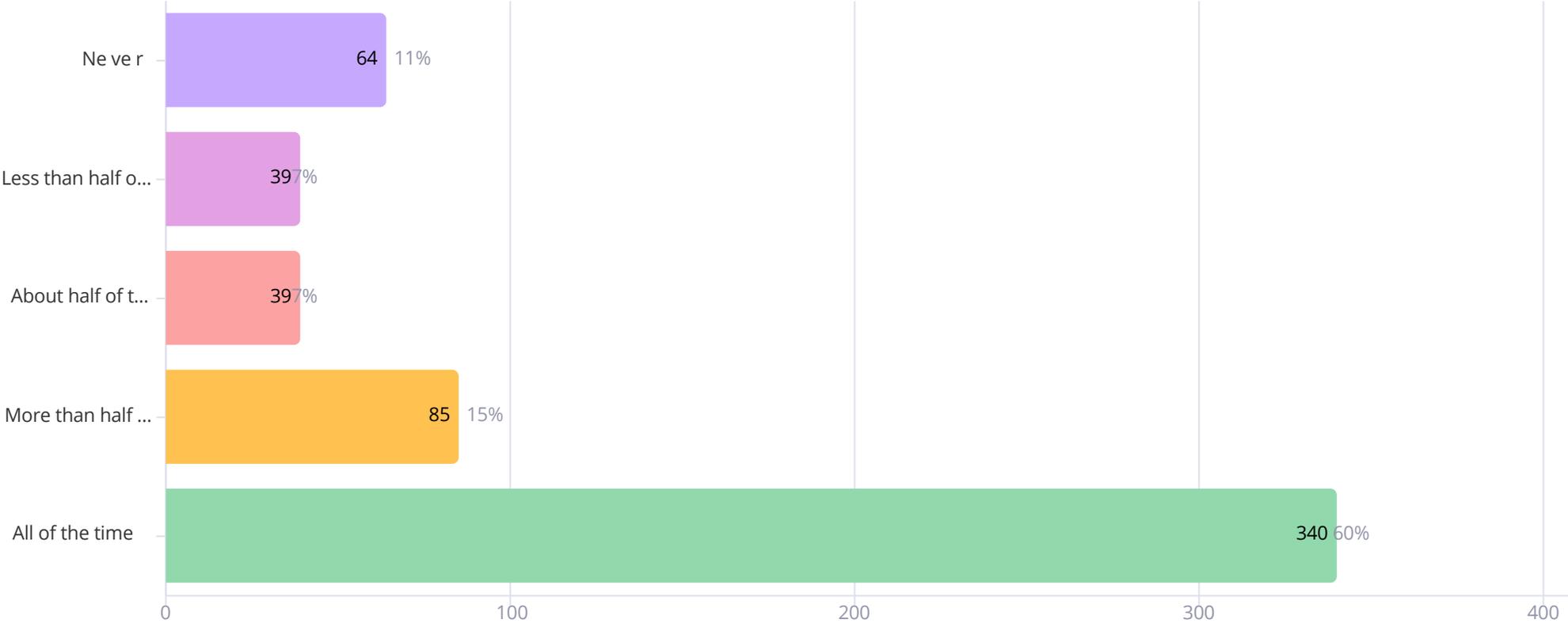


● Under \$5,999
 ● \$6 - \$14,999
 ● \$15 - \$29,999
 ● \$30 - \$78,999
 ● \$79 - \$103,500
 ● Over \$103,500
 ● N/A

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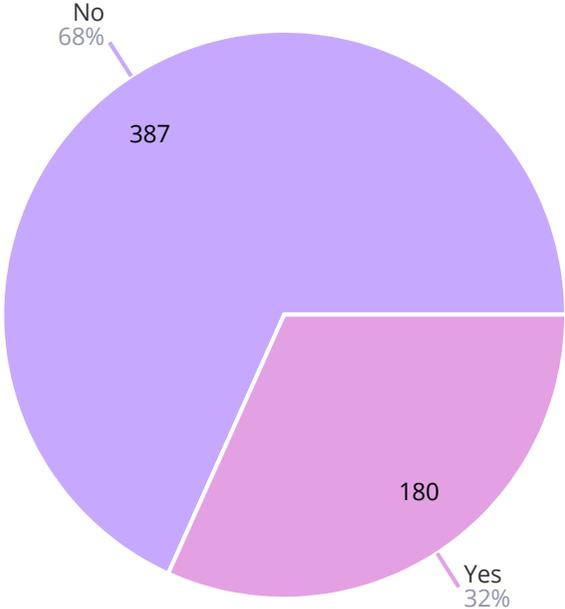
How often are you paid according to your performance agreement/contract?

567 Responses



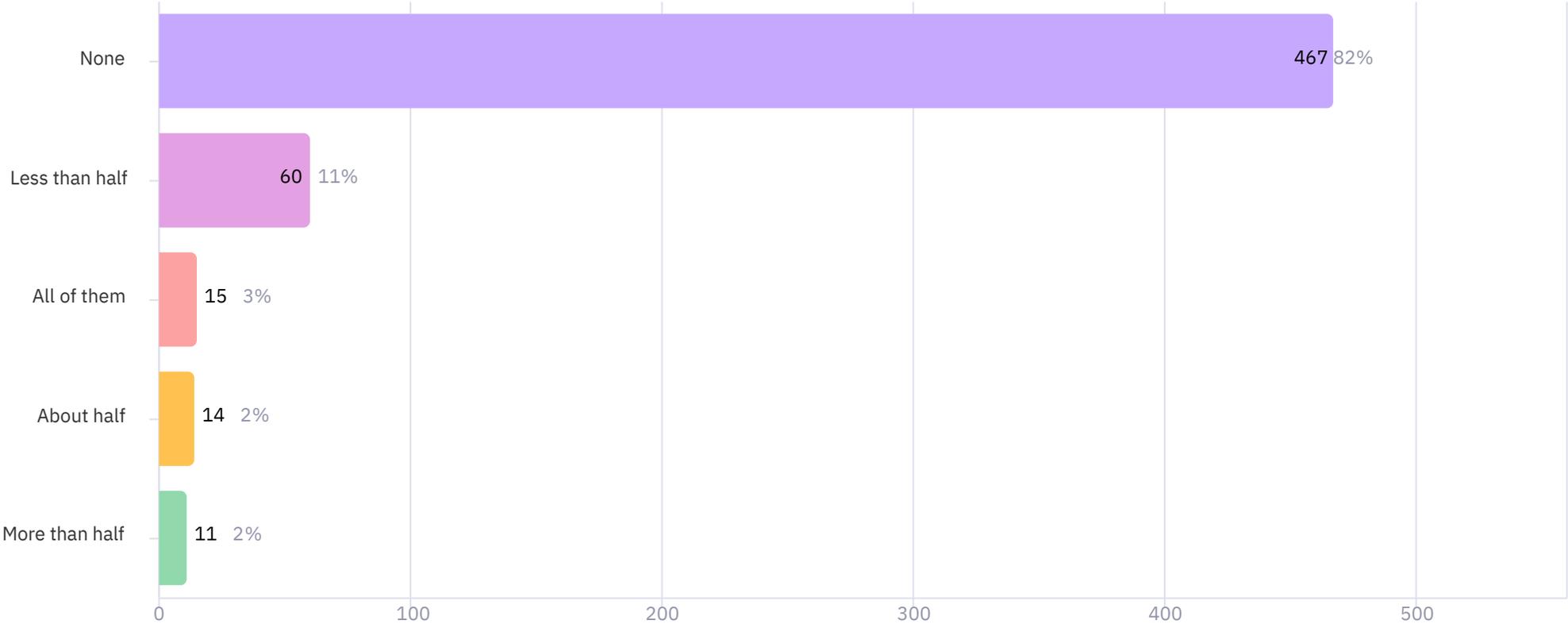
Are you aware that musicians are eligible to receive the superannuation guarantee?

567 Responses



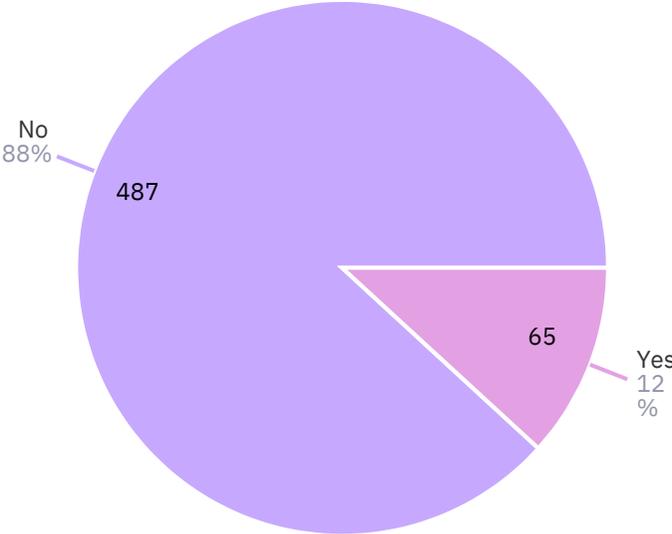
What proportion of gigs do you receive the superannuation guarantee for?

567 Responses



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

552 Responses- 15 Empty



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

544 Responses- 23 Empty

Best Response

The rules are unclear to me and the venues/contractees/employers I work for

45% 544

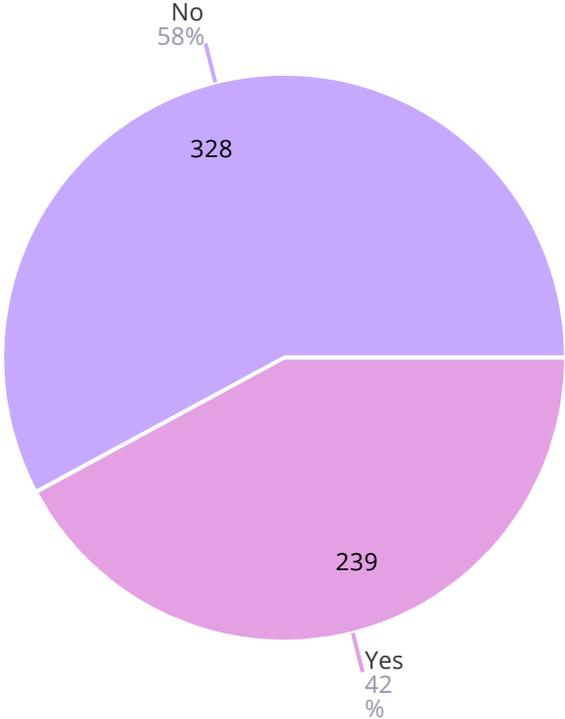
Percentage

Responses

| Data | Response | % |
|---|----------|-----|
| The rules are unclear to me and the venues/contractees/employers I ... | 245 | 45% |
| As a freelance worker, I feel powerless to insist on being paid | 126 | 23% |
| The venues/contractees/employers I work for are unwilling to pay sup... | 110 | 20% |
| I don't want to be paid superannuation so I don't ask | 57 | 10% |
| I make my own contributions | 4 | 1% |
| It varies, some want to pay, others don't | 2 | 0% |

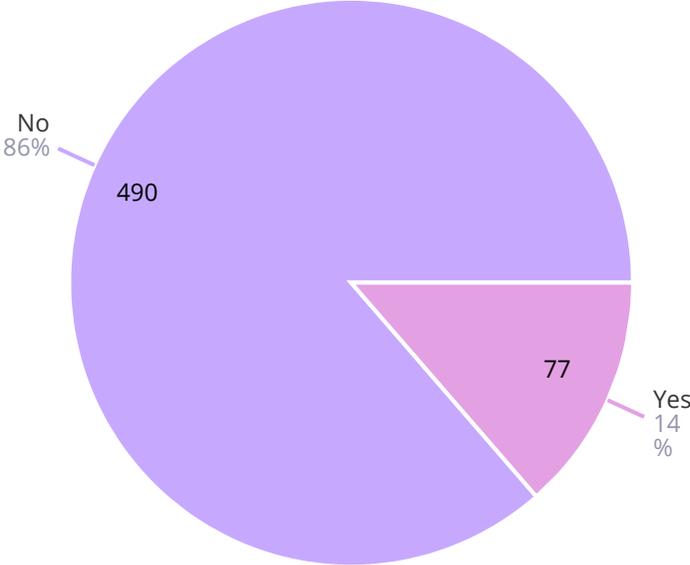
Did you earn royalties distributed by APRA AMCOS in the year 2022/23?

567 Responses



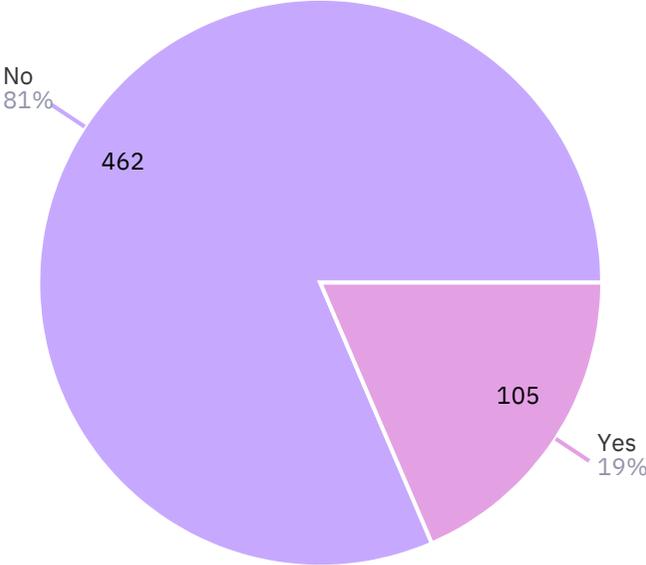
Did you earn sound recording royalties distributed by PPCA in the year 2022/23?

567 Responses



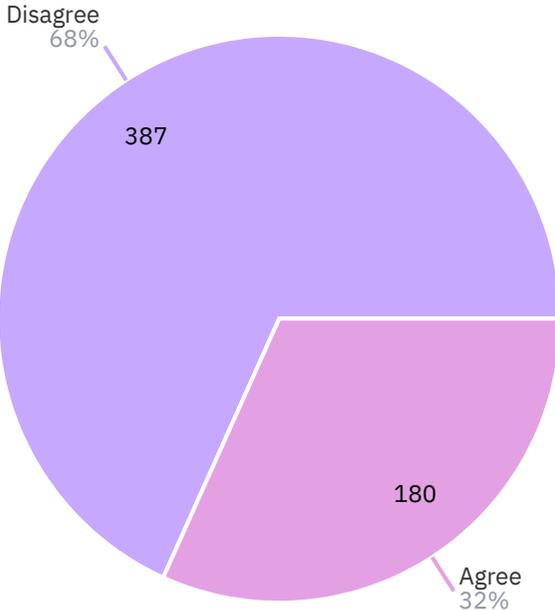
Have you ever been injured at work or while travelling to and from work?

567 Responses



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

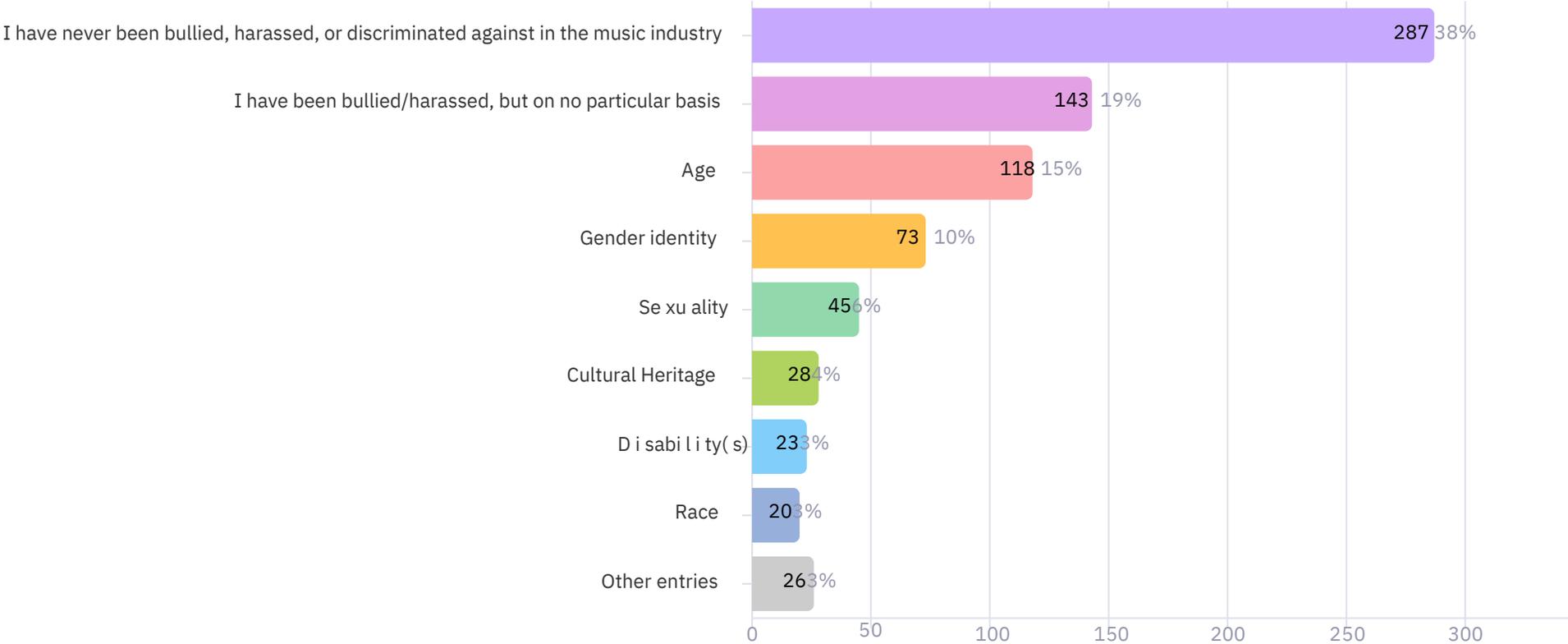
567 Responses



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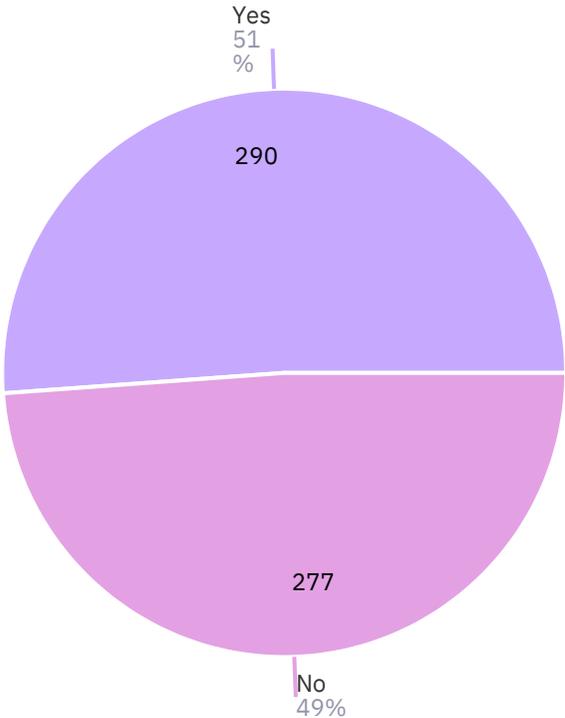
Have you been bullied, harassed, or discriminated against in the music industry? If so, on what basis?

763 Responses- 3 Empty



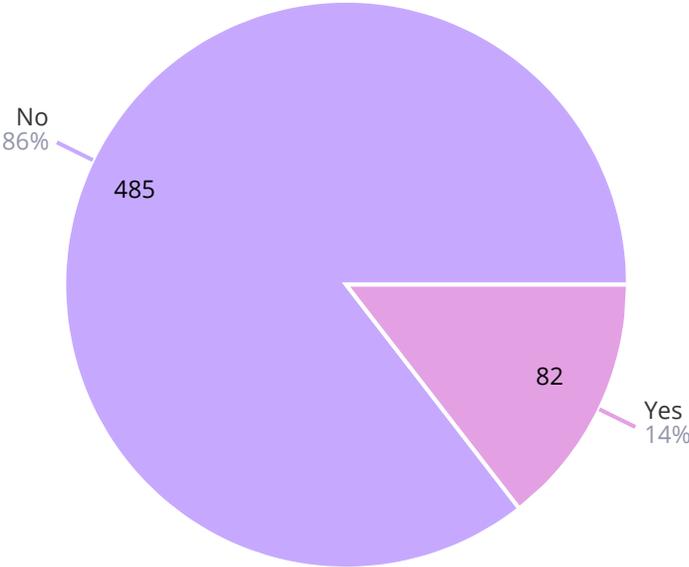
Have you ever witnessed bullying, harassment, or discrimination in the music industry?

567 Responses



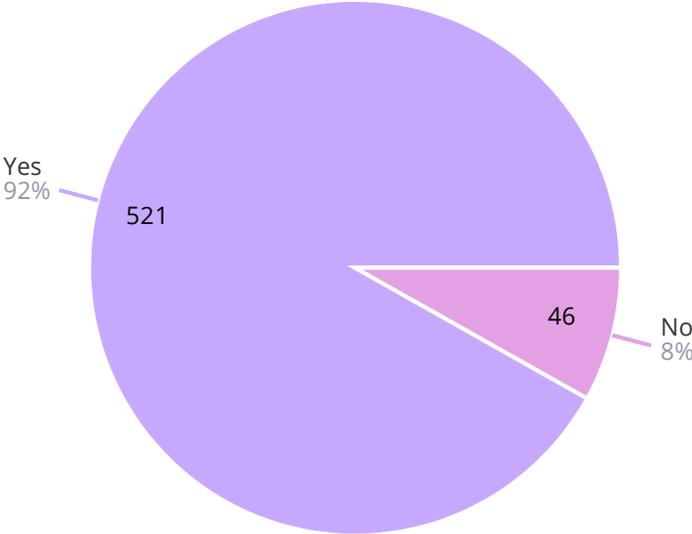
Overall, do you think the music industry treats working musicians fairly?

567 Responses



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

567 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