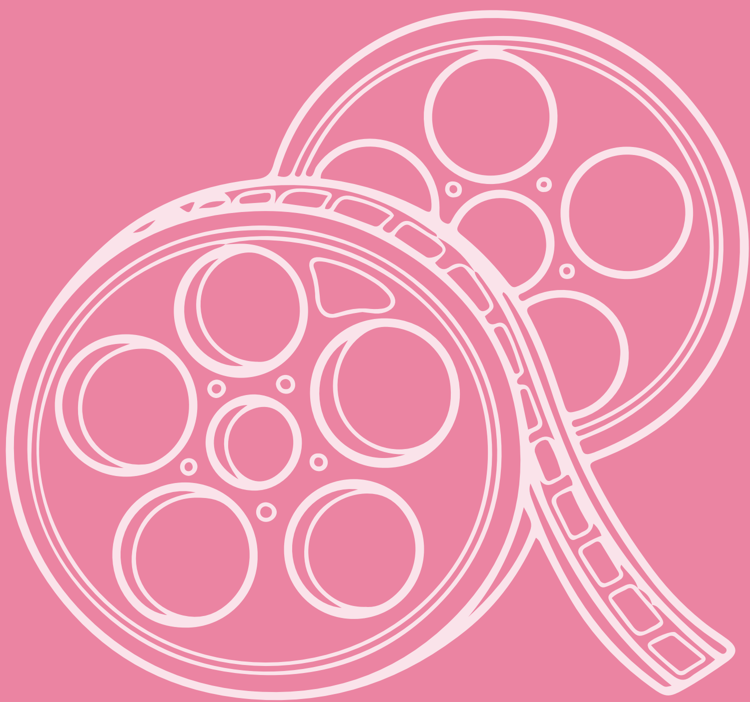
UK Audiovisual Performers (2024)

A survey of earnings and contracts



CREATe BECS

Researchers

Arthur Ehlinger, Researcher and Knowledge Exchange Officer
Amy Thomas, Lecturer in Intellectual Property and Information Law
Martin Kretschmer, Professor in Intellectual Property Law
Michele Battisti, Professor in Economics
Helena Saenz de Juano Ribes, Research Economist

Funding

This research was funded by the **British Equity Collecting Society (BECS)**. The research was independently designed and has been conducted to independent academic standards. The commissioner does not control the analysis.

Licence

Any enquiries about this report should be sent to Arthur Ehlinger (arthur.ehlinger@glasgow.ac.uk)

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Executive summary

This report was developed by CREATe, who were commissioned by The British Equity Collecting Society (BECS) to conduct independent research into the earnings and contracts of UK-based audiovisual performers. This report is situated amid other empirical research which captures earnings for creators in multiple creative industries.

BECS contacted 20,672 of its members to ask them to participate in this survey. Out of these, 2,469 responses were received. By comparing the survey responses about payments received from BECS with the anonymised distribution data of actual BECS payments, the sample accurately represents the broader population. All respondents have performed in audiovisual fixations, a prerequisite of BECS membership, but may have different levels of professional experience. The sample also includes performers who perform live on stage or in audio only recordings, if they also appeared in audiovisual works. This research included information on performers' earnings, including factors that affect earnings, such as contracts and performers' rights.

Demographics

- The level of diversity in the performing arts differs across demographic variables, suggesting that some communities are better served than others in this sector. There is a higher percentage of LGBT+ performers in this market than in the general UK population (7.7% compared with 1.9% in the UK labour force). On the other hand, Asian or Asian British performers are underrepresented in this population, compared with their presence in the UK labour force (1.9% compared with 7.8%).

- Performing is a privileged profession, with 52.7% of Primary Occupation performers coming from a household background associated with the highest levels of socio-economic privilege. This is more than double the proportion of professional background workers than in the UK labour force (23.3%).

- Women are underrepresented in the performing sector across the Full Sample (39.68%), dropping further when only women who spend their entire working time performing are considered (33.96%). This suggests there are barriers to women pursuing performing arts as a full-time career.

Earnings

- Typical median earnings [1] as a performer for Primary Occupation performers are £17,500 per annum, increasing to £22,500 per annum for those who spend all of their working time as a performer. This income is less than the typical (median) amount for individual UK workers (£34,963 in 2023),[2] and slightly less than minimum wage (assuming a 40 hour work-week - £23,795).

- Low earnings from work as a performer are subsidised by other income (a 'day job') and by other members of the household. Additional income from other (non-performing) work increases typical individual earnings to £22,500 for Primary Occupation performers, with a more substantial increase from other members of the household with typical earnings of £45,000.

- Scripted productions (which rely on scripts and pre-production rehearsals) are the most important source of income for performers. Very few performers receive income from the use of their content on digital platforms (12% of Primary Occupation performers), or receive additional income from new modes of distribution of their work (for example, only 25% of Primary Occupation performers received contractual royalties or residual payments from subscription services).

- Differences in income distribution between demographic groups are less than anticipated. For example, both men and women typically earn £17,500 per year in respect of their earnings as a performer, as do both heterosexual performers and LGBT+ performers, and white and black performers. Despite being an ostensibly 'privileged' profession, performers from professional backgrounds do not earn a higher income than those with less privilege (again, stabilising at around £17,500). However, there is a sizable difference in income between performers with disabilities (£7,500) and performers without disabilities (£17,500).

[1] The median, i.e. middle values of the distribution (of earnings in this case), implies that half of the respondents report a value higher than the median, and half of them lower.

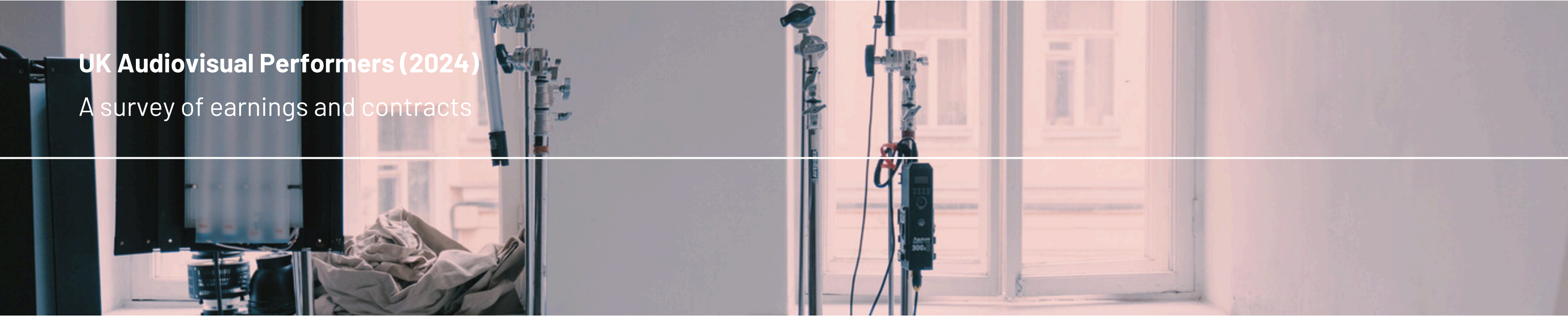
[2] Office for National Statistics, Employee earnings in the UK: 2023

Professional context

- Unlike other creators' markets in the UK, performers more frequently negotiate their contracts (56% of Primary Occupation performers) and are more frequently successful in changing those terms (89% of those Primary Occupation performers who attempted to do so).

- Performers perceive buy-outs as becoming more common (with 96% agreeing to this statement), and the scope of rights transferred to producers becoming more extensive (64%). In tandem with this perception is the view that the value of initial fees, residuals, and royalties have decreased over the past 5 years.

- Performers are very pessimistic about the potential impact of AI on their performing career. Just under a quarter of all performers surveyed have been asked to provide images or audio to create a digital lookalike or soundalike (19%). 8% of performers have had a digital lookalike or soundalike made without their consent.



Research context

This research, on the earnings and contracts of UK-based performers, is situated amid the broader context of research on creators' earnings and the factors which affect them. This includes UK-based [3] research by the CREATe centre, of which this report forms part, including a series of surveys of authors, freelance journalists and visual artists.[4] The impetus for this series of surveys is to document the economic position of individual creators through a standardised design. This data is often not adequately accounted for in official ONS income accounts of creative industries in the UK.[5] These figures are based on a percentage calculation of HMRC Pay As You Earn (PAYE) records, which do not capture self-employed earnings - and these earnings constitute an important source of income for creative workers, of whom 49% work as freelancers.[6] Therefore, while performers are included within the scope of ONS data collection, the picture of their typical earnings is likely to be distorted until self-employed earnings are accounted for.

Performers are a related, but distinct, sub-set of the creators which have been the focus of the above referenced research project.[7] Most empirical research [8] on the earnings of performers is more specifically in respect of musicians,[9] with a notable research strand by Towse.[10]

[3] See also series of research by David Throsby; The Author's Interest project by Rebecca Giblin; The Writers' Union of Canada (2015); Europe Economics, Guibault and Salamanca (2016); The Authors Guild (2019)

[4] See Thomas, Battisti and Kretschmer (2022; 2024); Ehlinger, Luca, and Thomas (2024); Kretschmer et al. (2011).

[5] See Towse (2023).

[6] Creator remuneration, Fifth Report of Session 2023–24

[7] The concept of a performance and its relationship to a primary work is discussed in more detail in Waelde and Schlesinger (2011); Aguilar (2018); Heredia-Carroza, Palma and Aguago (2019); McDonagh (2021).

[8] A full literature review on empirical evidence on earnings and performers' rights is available in Bouvard, Cooper, Thomas (2024).

[9] See DiCola (2013); Guiabault, Salamanca and von Gompel (2015); Buccafusco and Garcia (2021); Hesmondhalgh et al. (2021); Willeken et al. (2019); Garcia (2020).

[10] See Towse (1999; 2013; 2017; 2018; 2020).

This skew in interest towards music has been primarily motivated by new technologies and the new modes of distribution they have introduced, particularly digitalisation and streaming. Concerns around, e.g., revenue displacement through 'lost sales', or oversupply of musicians due to democratisation of creation tools, are evident themes throughout previous research.

However, the conclusions of this research suggests that new technologies in themselves are value neutral (that is, not in themselves a 'bad thing'), and rather that other market factors, such as the policies of key gatekeepers - like producers or publishers - in response to those technologies, are more important determinants of the diversity, sustainability, and quality of a market.

By contrast, research on other types of performers - e.g., audiovisual performers, like screen actors - is scant, with notable exceptions in research efforts by Pavis.[11] However, as musicians were the object of interest during the development of new technologies throughout the early 00s, audiovisual performers now likewise face a new technological challenge which prompts investigation: generative AI. Whilst many creative industries undergo an AI 'reckoning', this new technology has highlighted particular vulnerabilities in the performers' market, and their rights regime which, when compared with comparative offerings to 'primary' creators, is more limited (particularly in the UK which is yet to ratify the Beijing Treaty).[12] As a result, audiovisual performers may be at risk of having (a) audio and/or visual performances used for the purposes of training AI models without authorisation or payment, and/or at risk of (b) 'performance synthetisation' through the generation of AI soundalikes or lookalikes, which can threaten to 'replace' them as a human performer.

This research on the earnings of UK performers highlights gaps in official data, as self-employed earnings are often excluded from ONS figures.

[11] See Pavis (2020; 2021); Pavis, Tulti and Pye (2019).

[12] See Consultation on the Options for Implementing the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances, UK IPO, September 2023, which was open between September and November 2023. The result of this consultation is currently awaited.

Discussions on policy changes to the UK performers' regime in response to AI has been spearheaded by Equity, the UK actors' trade union, who offered two sets of proposals for changes to the protection of performers stipulated in Part II of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.[13] Whilst these proposals were examined by two parliamentary Select Committees in 2022 [14] and 2023, [15] they were ultimately shelved, with the conclusion that 'the impacts of AI technologies on performers remain unclear'.[16] Nonetheless, discussions around potential policy changes to performers' rights protection continue, as the House of Lords' Communications and Digital Committee published a report which encouraged the UK Government to consider legislative change 'to ensure copyright principles remain future proof' in the face of AI challenges.[17]

With a view to informing these discussions, this report forms an evidence base on 1) performers' earnings, in keeping with the principles and findings of previous UK-based and global research, and 2) offers a preliminary assessment of how performers are being affected by generative AI.

[13] See Equity 2022 campaign Stop AI Stealing the Show and Perot (2024).

[14] See Oral Evidence: A Creative Future', House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee.

[15] See Oral Evidence: Governance of Artificial Intelligence', House of Commons Science, Innovation and Technology Committee which led to the publication of The Governance of Artificial Intelligence: Interim Report: Ninth Report of Session 2022-23 but neither address the specific question of reform of Part II Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

[16] See UK Intellectual Property Office, Artificial Intelligence and Intellectual Property: copyright and patents: Government response to consultation.

[17] See House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee: Large Language Models and Generative AI (paragraph 247)

Methodolgy

Research design

This research was conducted adapting a standardised model used in previous longitudinal surveys of creators (authors, visual artists) who, as part of a publication-based cultural market, share similar characteristics to performers.[18] In adopting this standardised model, the report tracks trends over time and makes comparisons between different populations across other creative industries. The standardised model was lightly adapted where appropriate to take account of market specificities such as sources of earnings, and a more detailed demographic profile was implemented in line with metrics employed in national statistics. Starting from a common set of questions across surveys makes it possible to compare respondents of the different surveys.

The survey was divided into five sections:

1. Professional Profile
2. Earnings
3. Contracts
4. Artificial Intelligence
5. Demographics

The survey contained 58 questions, a copy of which is included in Appendix A, alongside the explanation which was given to potential recipients to encourage participation. At the end of the survey, an additional 8 non-essential questions were included, some of which had freeform fields. This structure was designed to ensure that the most important responses were captured while minimising the risk of deterring participants with survey fatigue. Income data (in GBP) were collected and organised across three different variables:

- Total Household Earnings: the respondent's report of combined earnings of all earners in the household.
- Total Individual Earnings: all earnings of the respondents, including earnings as a performer and income from any other activities.
- Earnings as a Performer: income solely from performing.

[18] See the other reports here.

Data collection - survey

The survey was implemented on an online survey management tool, Qualtrics, which is among the most used types of software for surveys of this type. Respondents were offered an incentive to complete the survey, with a randomised cash award of £500 distributed to one respondent. Whilst email addresses were gathered to identify awardees, for all other purposes, respondents remain anonymous.

On February 29, 2024, the survey was distributed to members of BECS. BECS is the UK collective management organisation (CMO) administering audiovisual performers' rights. Performers do not pay a fee to join and BECS administers their rights (aside from their contractual rights) which would be impossible or impractical for them to assert themselves, including rights to receive payments under private copying remuneration schemes, and statutory equitable remuneration for uses of their performances, in countries where such rights exist.

Out of the 32,000 members represented by BECS, the survey email was sent to 22,278 members. This excluded members for whom direct email addresses were not supplied, such as those whose emails are managed by their agents or accountants, and heir members of deceased performers. Of the emails sent, 20,672 were successfully delivered, with the remainder bouncing back. No other type of promotional campaigns for the survey were conducted.

The choice to distribute the survey to a defined population of performers belonging to BECS, as a professional body, allows for the widest population of interest, whilst also adding controls for assumed characteristics of 'serious' performers who are most relevant to policy.[19] To join BECS, members need to be either a "Performer where at least one of their performances has been, or is reasonably expected to be, broadcast or recorded and fixed for subsequent visual or audio-visual use; or a Performer Heir of such a Performer".[20] First, by limiting the analysis to those performers who are members of a professional body in the UK, the report introduces a proxy for a performer's career trajectory and earning potential. Second, as detailed below, further focussing on those performers who allocate at least half of their working time to their profession means that the survey captures people who have the ambition to sustain life as a performer.

[19] See further discussion in this article.

[20] See BECS Guidance Notes.

Data analysis - survey

The survey closed on March 29, 2024, with a total of 2,469 responses. This represents 11.95% of the successfully delivered emails. This is a satisfactory response rate for a survey of this kind. By comparing the survey responses about payments received from BECS with the anonymised distribution data of actual BECS payments, we can confirm that our sample accurately represents the population. As the survey was designed so that participants could skip irrelevant or uncomfortable questions, partial responses are also included as valid observations within this total. Therefore, some of the findings presented in this report may not account for 100% of all 2,469 responses. Throughout this report, in brackets next to each category, the numbers represent the 'observations' in each category, that is the number of respondents to that specific question.

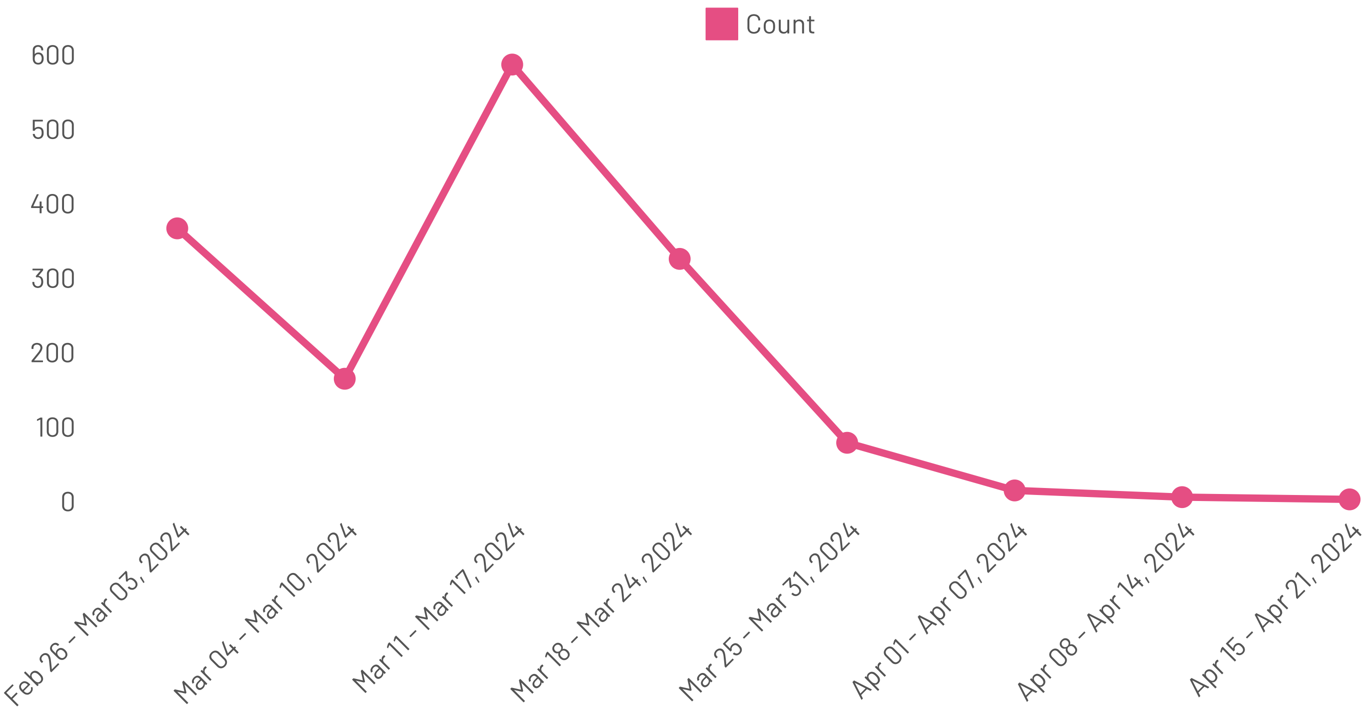


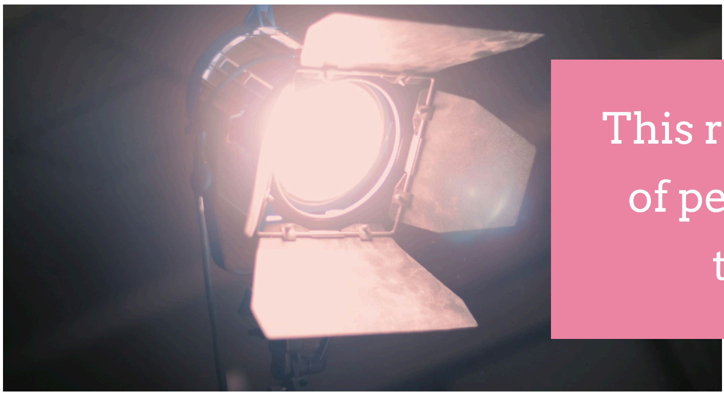
Figure 1: Survey response rates over time

All quantitative data, including earnings data, were analysed using Stata. Upon receipt of responses, no attempt was made to correct or amend any data, except for clearly erroneous answers, which were mostly in relation to freeform fields.

In a context like this, the average value (i.e., mean) is likely to be strongly affected by a few outliers reporting very large values (e.g., 'superstar' performers, and potentially of course errors in responses). To account for the skewness in the earnings profile, the income analysis in this report is based on median (typical) amounts, which are much less affected by the presence of outliers

The median (the value of the respondent that leaves half of the distribution above and half of the distribution below them) is often considered a more reliable statistic where data is highly skewed by nonrepresentative answers (outliers) which differ from the majority of respondents. Medians are calculated using income variables for which respondents picked ranges (down to £500 wide at lower levels, wider at higher levels). The mid-point for each range was selected, and £5,000,000 is used as the baseline for earnings of "£5,000,000 and above". The incomes reported below are before tax in the 2022/2023 tax year.

Despite efforts to control the population of potential respondents, due to the online format and shareability of the link, there is an inherent uncertainty as to who has access to the survey. No statistical weights were applied to make the survey more representative of the total population of performers, because the characteristics of the population are not known. The report focuses on the subsample of performers whose performing is their 'Primary Occupation' who are defined (across previous studies) as those who allocate at least 50% of their time to the profession under survey.



This report focuses on the subsample of performers whose performing is their 'Primary Occupation'

When calculating the percentages presented in this report, all respondents to each question were included in the total count, even if they chose "prefer not to say". However, for clarity and focus, the tables only display the responses of those who provided specific answers. This approach ensures that the overall response rates are accurately reflected in the percentages, while the tables remain streamlined and easy to interpret. As a result, some questions may not round to exactly 100%.

Where appropriate, the report makes comparative reference to findings from other surveys of creators' earnings in this series which employ the same methodology allowing for transferability of findings. The report also offers, where appropriate, contextualisation of the findings alongside data on the UK labour market, specifically considering the employed population aged 16 and over in the same year that the survey was conducted. Where data is not available for the UK labour market, the report applies data from the entire UK population aged 16 and over, regardless of employment status.

Sample

Overview

The report distinguishes between 3 different samples:

- Full sample: the sample of all respondents with non-missing values for the variable examined. There are 2,469 respondents in this sample.
- Primary occupation sample: the sample of respondents who answered "Yes" to the following question: "Is working as a performer your primary occupation? (For the purpose of this survey, this means: do you spend at least half of your working time as a performer?)". There are 1,548 observations in this sample.
- Only occupation sample: the sample of respondents who answered "Yes" to the following question: "Do you spend ALL your working time as a performer?". There are 875 observations in this sample.

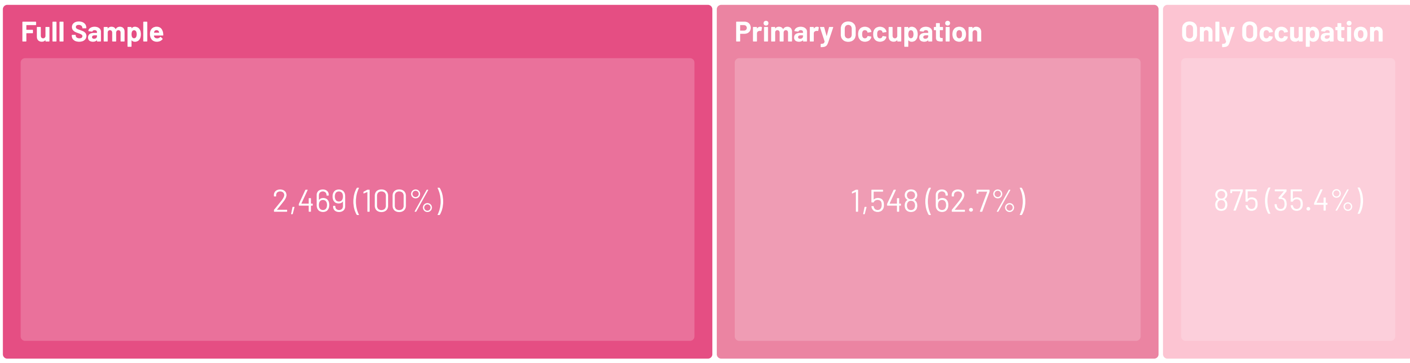
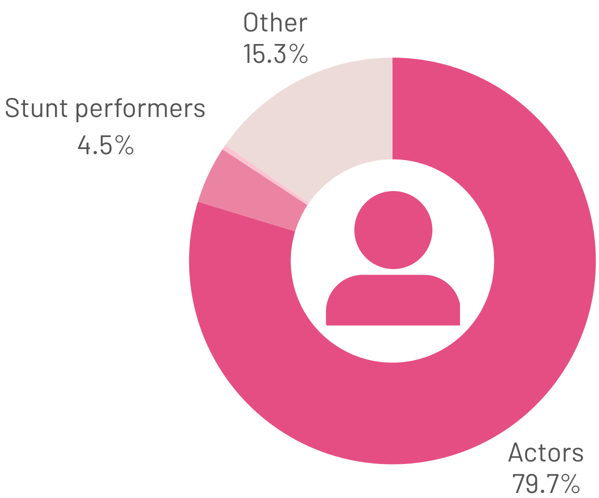


Figure 2: Percentage of respondents across samples

Main occupations

Based on the 1,548 responses to the survey regarding primary occupation, the data reveals the following distribution among performers:

- Actors: The majority of respondents, accounting for 78.1%, identified as actors.
- Stunt Performers: A smaller segment, 4.5%, reported being stunt performers.
- Dancers: An even smaller percentage, 0.4%, identified as dancers.
- Others: The remaining 15.1% of respondents fall into the 'others' category. This category is notably populated by many retired performers and individuals in other professions, often creative, who have performed at some point in their professional lives and are still registered with BECS.



	Primary Occupation
Actors	78.1% (1210)
Stunt performers	4.5% (69)
Dancers	0.4% (6)
Other	15.1% (233)

Figure 3: Doughnut chart and table showing distribution of main occupations of primary occupation performers

Half (50.0%) of performers in the Full Sample are involved in non-creative work when they are not performing. Other creative work is also significant, with 49.3% of the Full Sample participating in such activities. When focusing on performers whose Primary Occupation is performing, a slightly different pattern emerges: 44.6% engage in non-creative work, and 55.2% are involved in other creative work. Additionally, 22.9% of these performers take on other work related to film and TV, compared to 17.7% of the Full Sample.

This suggests that non-creative work remains an important source of income for many performers, regardless of the time they dedicate to their performing career given that it is not their Only Occupation. However, those who consider performing as their Primary Occupation are more likely to focus on other creative work and work related to film and TV, compared to the broader group of performers.

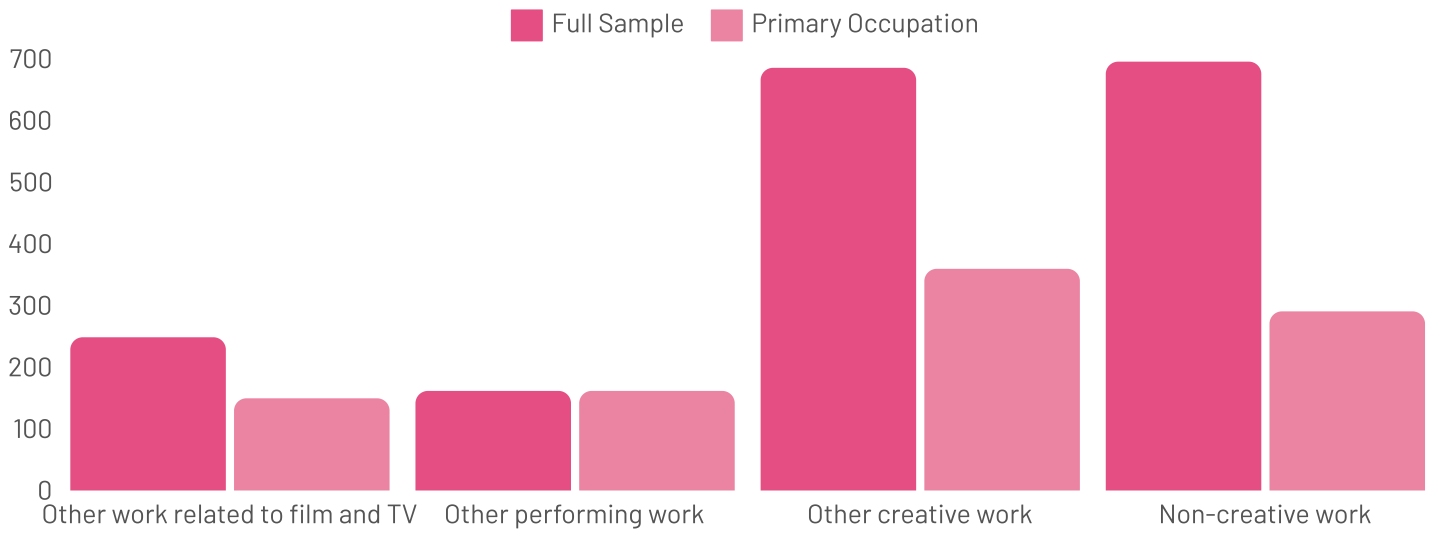
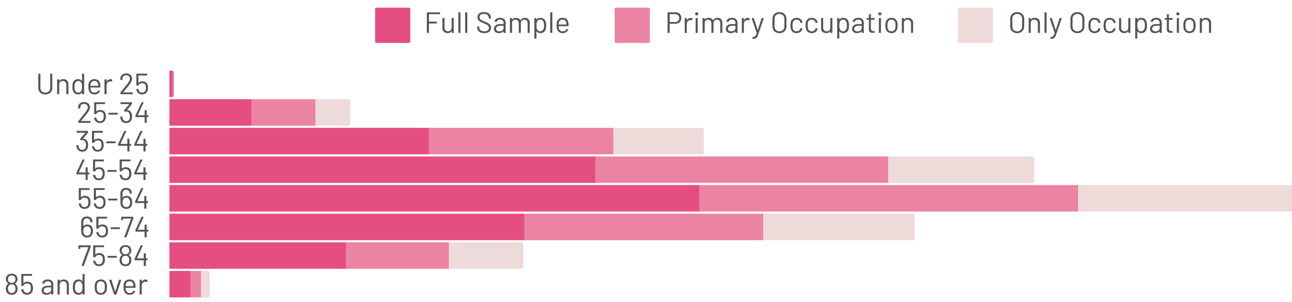


Figure 4: Bar chart showing types of work undertaken when not performing

Demographics

Age

The surveyed population is predominantly middle-aged to older adults, with fewer younger respondents. The lower representation of younger respondents in the survey may be because younger individuals are not necessarily registered with BECS, or they might not feel engaged or inclined to participate in such surveys.



	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85 and over
Full Sample	0.2% (3)	4.4% (78)	13.9% (247)	22.8% (406)	28.3% (505)	19.0% (338)	9.4% (168)	1.1% (20)
Primary Occupation	0.1% (1)	5.0% (61)	14.4% (176)	22.8% (279)	29.5% (361)	18.6% (228)	8.0% (98)	0.8% (10)
Only Occupation	0.0% (0)	4.8% (33)	12.4% (86)	20.1% (139)	29.4% (204)	20.7% (144)	10.2% (71)	1.2% (8)

	Under 25	25-34	35-49	50-64	65 and over
UK Labour Force [21]	11.96%	22.70%	33.56%	28.30%	4.45%

Figure 5: Bar chart and table showing age of Primary Occupation respondents

[21] Office for National Statistics, A05 SA: Employment, unemployment and economic inactivity by age group (seasonally adjusted)

There is a gradual increase in the number of professionals entering the field from the 1950s through the early 2000s, with noticeable peaks in the years 1995 and 2000. Following 2000, there is a sharp decline, with fewer new professionals starting each year, particularly noticeable until today. This trend may indicate a saturation in the profession or changing industry dynamics affecting the entry of new professionals. It could also be an indication of the number of years required to become an established performer.

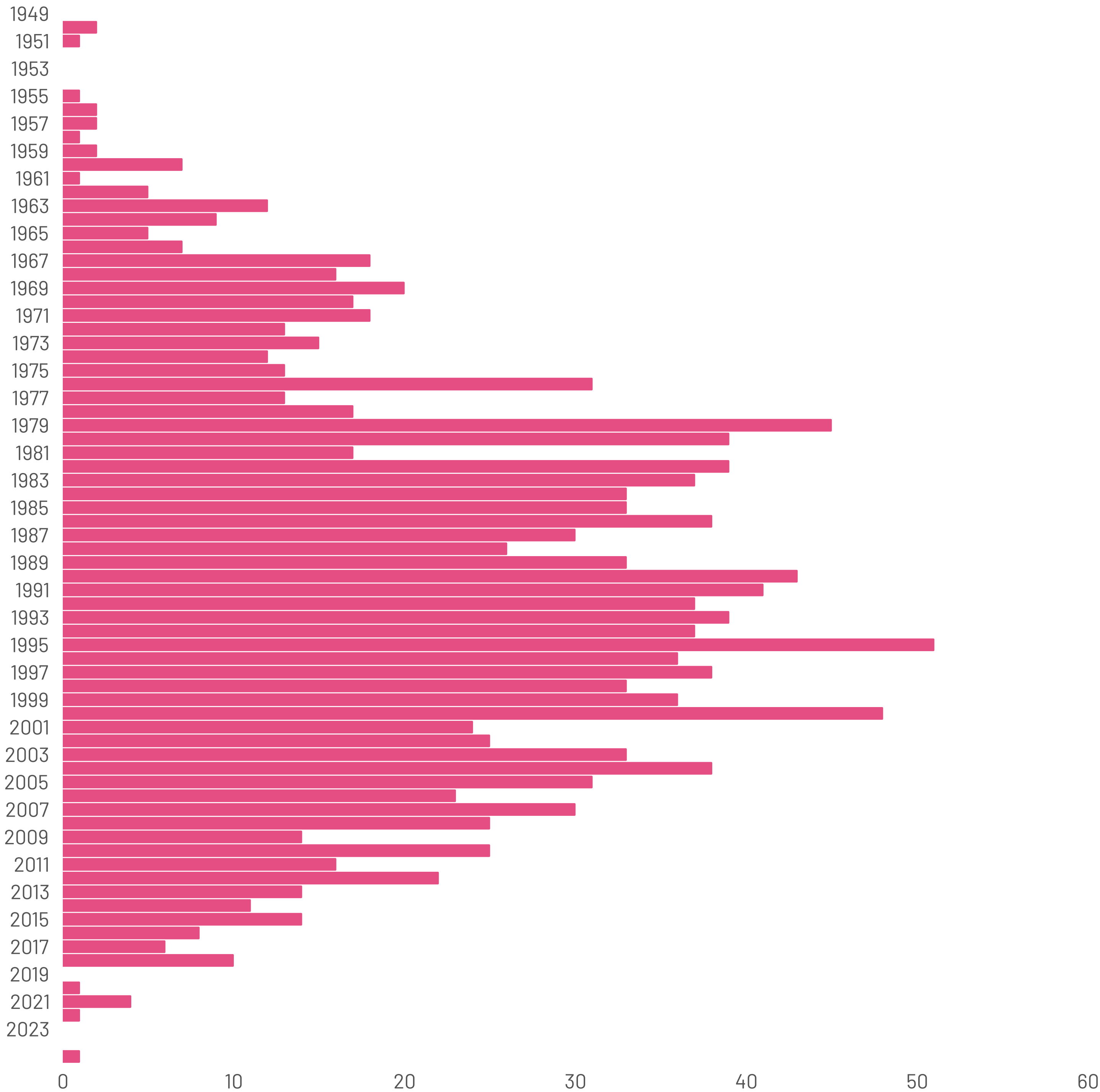


Figure 6: Line chart showing starting earning year for Primary Occupation performers

Disability

The data indicates that the proportion of individuals who consider themselves to be disabled is much lower among performers compared to the general UK labour force. In the Full Sample, only 6.2% reported having a disability, which drops further to 4.9% for those whose Primary Occupation is performing and 4.8% for those whose Only Occupation is performing. In contrast, 24.4% of the UK labour force reports having a disability. This disparity could indicate barriers to entry or to the ability to maintain a career in the sector for performers with disability.

	Non-Disability %	Disability %
Full Sample	91.2% (1,621)	6.2% (111)
Primary Occupation	93.0% (1,135)	4.9% (60)
Only Occupation	93.1% (644)	4.8% (33)
UK Labour Force [22]	65.6%	24.4%

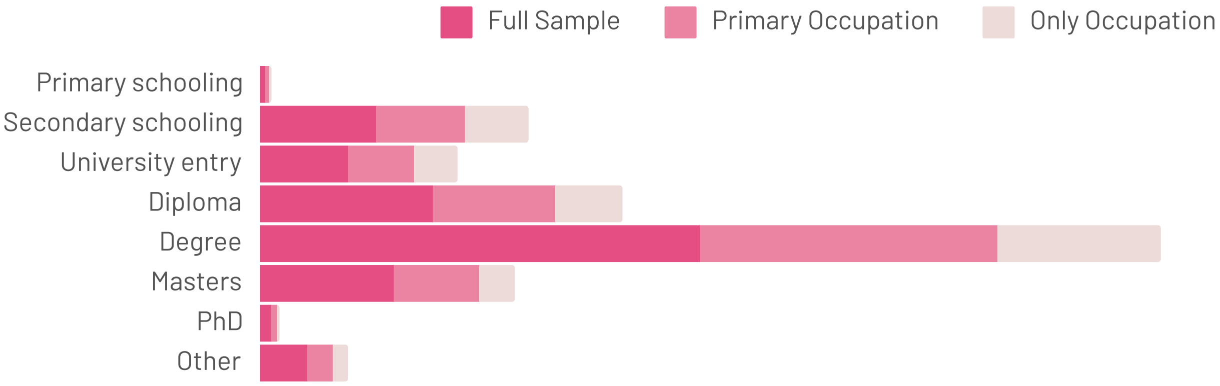
Figure 7: Table showing disability status of performers

Diversity in the performing arts varies significantly across different communities.

[22] Office for National Statistics, A08: Labour market status of disabled people
Note: This survey asks broadly whether a performer 'considers themselves to be disabled' and does not use the same qualifications as the Labour Force Survey (which is limited to physical or mental health conditions or illnesses expected to last 12 months or more).

Education

The data on education levels reveals diverse educational backgrounds among performers, reflecting the qualifications for performing arts in the UK. Notably, 73% of the population surveyed holds a diploma (17.6% in the Primary Occupation sample) or above (55.4% in the Primary Occupation sample), which is considerably higher than the number of people in the UK labour force who hold similar qualifications (42.01%).



	Primary schooling	Secondary schooling	University entry	Diploma	Degree	Masters	PhD	Other
Full Sample	0.4% (8)	11.3% (202)	8.6% (153)	16.9% (301)	43.1% (767)	13.1% (233)	1.1% (19)	4.6% (82)
Primary Occupation	0.6% (7)	12.7% (155)	9.4% (116)	17.5% (214)	42.5% (520)	12.2% (149)	0.8% (10)	3.6% (44)
Only Occupation	0.6% (4)	16.0% (111)	10.8% (75)	16.9% (117)	41.2% (285)	9.0% (62)	0.6% (4)	3.9% (27)
	No qualifications [23]	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Apprenticeship**	**Level 3**	**Level 4+ [24]**	**Other**	
UK Labour Force [25]	8.94%	9.06%	13.59%	4.65%	19.72%	42.01%	2.03%	

Figure 8: Bar chart and table showing performers' highest level of education attained

[23] See Appendix B for more details.

[24] This includes Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree and postgraduate qualifications, including PhDs.

[25] Office for National Statistics, Workforce qualification levels across England and Wales data: Census 2021

Formal training

The majority of respondents across all samples reported having formal training related to their activity as performers. This mirrors the results of the previous table and suggests that formal training is a common and possibly essential aspect of professional development in this field, regardless of whether performing is their only occupation.

	Yes	No
Full Sample	82.0% (1,460)	17.2% (307)
Primary Occupation	81.8% (1,001)	17.3% (212)
Only Occupation	79.6% (551)	19.5% (135)

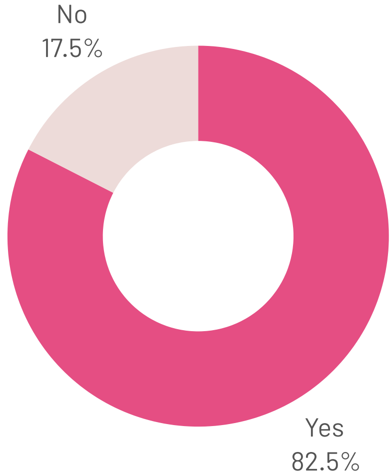


Figure 9: Pie chart (Primary Occupation only) and table showing performers' who have undertaken formal training

The data indicates that more than 75% of the respondents in the Primary Occupation sample have undergone at least 3 years of formal training. This trend is consistent across the other samples, suggesting the importance of formal training in preparing for a career in the performing industry.

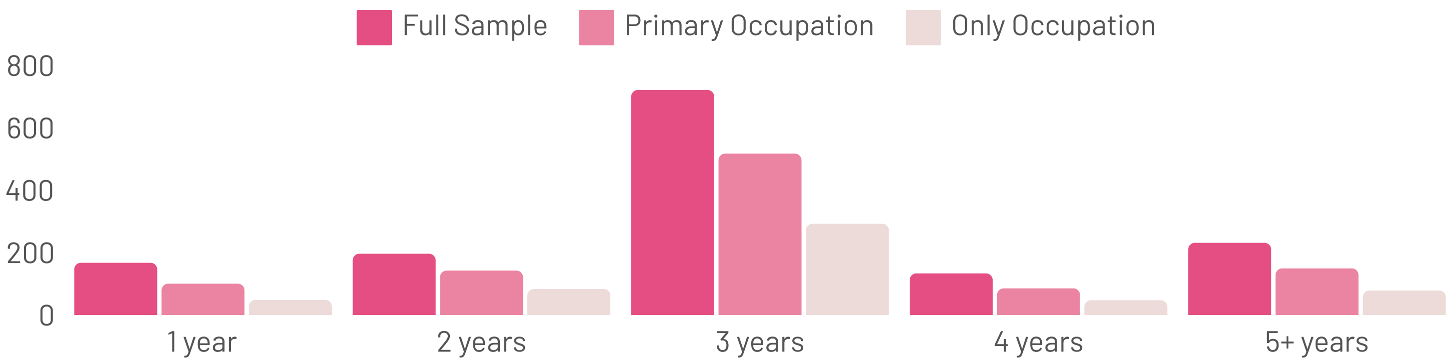
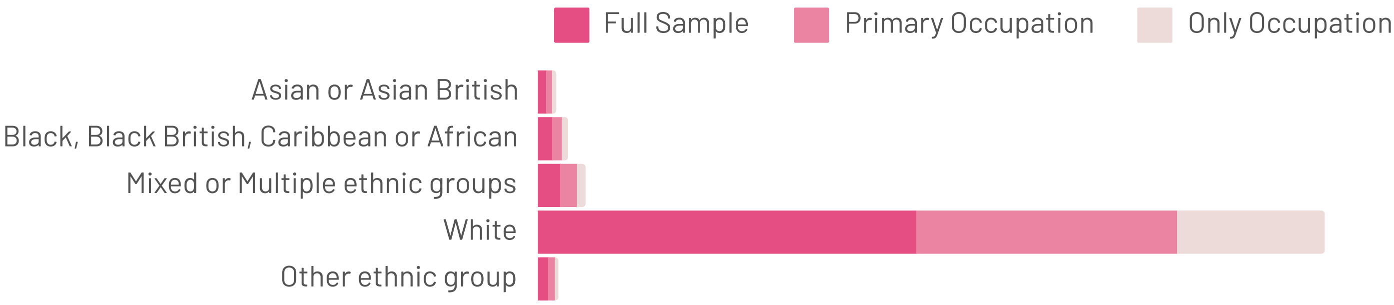


Figure 10: Line chart showing years of formal training undertaken

Ethnicity

Asian or Asian British performers are underrepresented (2%) compared to their presence in the UK Labour Force (7.8%). This disparity warrants further investigation into potential barriers or challenges faced by this demographic in the performing sector. At 3.2%, the representation of Black performers closely aligns with the UK Labour Force figure of 3.5%, suggesting proportional representation in the sector. Similarly, the proportion of White performers (84.5%) and other ethnic groups closely mirrors that of the UK Labour Force. Performers from mixed or multiple ethnic backgrounds show notably higher representation (5.1%) compared to the general workforce (1.6%). This could indicate that the performing sector provides more opportunities or is particularly attractive to individuals of mixed heritage.



	Asian or Asian British	Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	White	Other ethnic group
Full Sample	1.9% (33)	3.2% (57)	5.1% (90)	84.5% (1,503)	2.3% (41)
Primary Occupation	2.0% (25)	3.2% (39)	5.3% (65)	84.8% (1,036)	2.1% (26)
Only Occupation	2.2% (15)	3.5% (24)	4.9% (34)	84.5% (585)	2.0% (14)
UK Labour Force [26]	7.8%	3.5%	1.6%	85.0%	2.1%

Figure 11: Bar chart and table showing ethnicity of performers

[26] Gov.uk, Ethnicity facts and figures: Employment

Household Background

This demographic category follows the Social Mobility Commission's recommendations for measuring socio-economic backgrounds (also known as 'class') which broadly correlate with more or less social and economic privilege. These categorisations are based on the occupation of the respondent's main household earner when they were aged approximately 14.

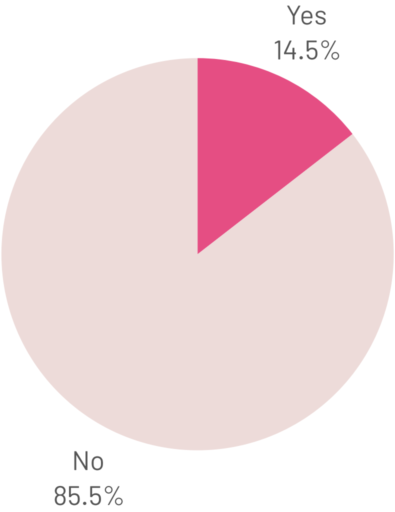
More than half of Primary Occupation performers come from a professional background, typically associated with the highest levels of social and economic privilege (52.7% - comprising 36% from modern professional backgrounds, and 16.7% from senior, middle managerial backgrounds). In comparison to the general UK population, of which only 23.3% come from this background, this indicates that performing is a 'privileged' profession. This is likewise reflected in lower numbers of performers from intermediate backgrounds than in the general population (13.2% of performers compared with 54.1% in the general population) but is relatively stable for performers from backgrounds with low levels of privilege (21.3% of performers compared with 22.6% in the general population).[27]

	Modern and traditional professional	Managers or administrators	Clerical	Technical and craft	Routine, semi-routine manual and service	Long-term unemployed	Small business owners	Other
Full Sample	35.1% (623)	16.9% (299)	5.6% (100)	9.8% (174)	10.4% (184)	1.4% (25)	7.7% (137)	7.0% (125)
Primary Occupation	36.1% (440)	16.7% (203)	5.3% (64)	10.6% (129)	9.6% (117)	1.1% (14)	8.0% (98)	6.4% (78)
Only Occupation	34.0% (235)	15.2% (105)	5.1% (35)	12.6% (87)	9.4% (65)	0.9% (6)	9.3% (64)	6.7% (47)

Figure 12: Table showing household background of performers

[27] Data is only available for England and Wales, noting also that census data groups the categories we use above in broader terms (professional, intermediate and lower) for reporting purposes.

Despite finding that performance is a 'privileged' profession, the majority of respondents do not have parents or extended family members in the industry. Specifically, 84.6% of those for whom performing is their Primary Occupation report not having family connections in the industry. This is consistent across other samples. Conversely, a smaller proportion of respondents (14.4%) do have family connections in the industry. This suggests that the (privileged) socio-economic background of a performer can act as a 'safety net' to allow entry into, and sustain, their career, without necessarily being a nepotistic profession per se.



	Yes	No
Full Sample	14.8% (263)	84.3% (1,496)
Primary Occupation	14.4% (175)	84.7% (1,032)
Only Occupation	15.5% (107)	83.2% (575)

Figure 13: Pie chart (Primary Occupation only) and table showing performers with extended family members in the industry

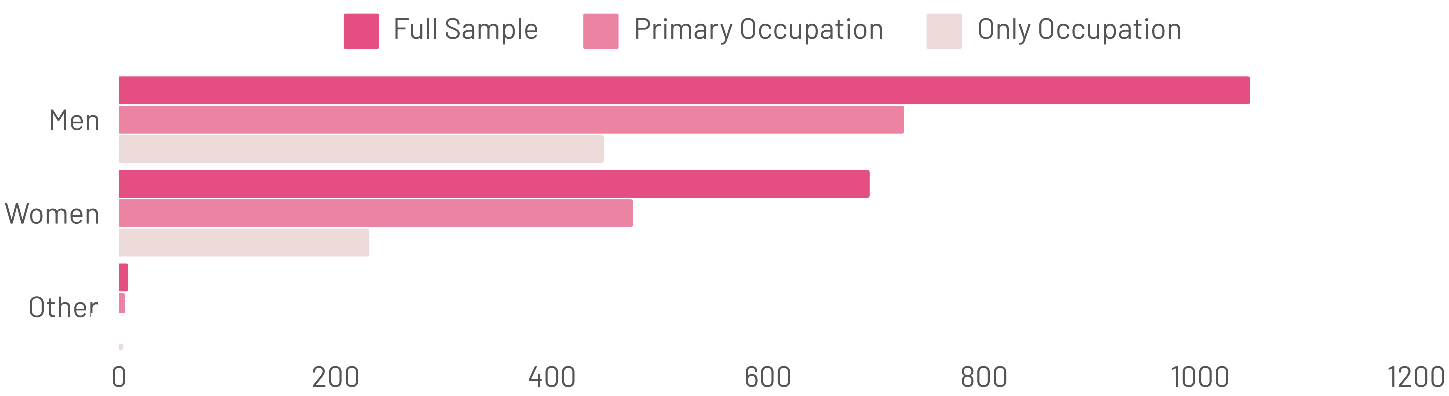
For those performers who do have parents or extended family members in the industry, their most common line of work is also in the performance industry. This ranges from 69.8% to 72.0%, indicating a strong intergenerational tendency for those few performers with connections. Production work is the second most common area, with 42.4% in the Full Sample. Writing (22.9% in Full Sample) and technical roles (14.9% in Full Sample) are lower although still sizable. The percentages remain relatively stable across Full Sample, Primary Occupation, and Only Occupation categories, with slight increases in performance and technical roles for those who consider it their Only Occupation.

	Performance	Production	Writing	Technical	Other
Full Sample	69.7% (182)	42.5% (111)	23.0% (60)	14.9% (39)	7.7% (20)
Primary Occupation	70.5% (122)	41.6% (72)	22.5% (39)	16.8% (29)	5.8% (10)
Only Occupation	72.0% (77)	43.9% (47)	22.4% (24)	19.6% (21)	5.6% (6)

Figure 14: Table showing line of work of performers' family members in the industry

Gender

There are gender disparities in the performing arts sector, with notable differences from the overall UK population. Men constitute 60.2% of the Primary Occupation sample, which is higher than their representation in the UK Population (48.3%) while women make up 39.4% of the Full Sample, far lower than their 51.7% share in the UK Population. The gender disparity becomes more pronounced among those women who consider performing their Primary or Only Occupation. This suggests that women may face greater challenges in pursuing performing arts as a full-time career. The survey includes a small percentage (0.4%) of performers who identify as neither men nor women that is consistent with their share in the UK population.



	Men	Women	Other [28]
Full Sample	59.8% (1,046)	39.7% (694)	0.5% (8)
Primary Occupation	60.2% (726)	39.4% (475)	0.4% (5)
Only Occupation	65.7% (448)	33.9% (231)	0.4% (3)
UK Population [29]	48.3%	51.7%	0.5%

Figure 15: Bar chart and table showing performers' gender

[28] Due to very low numbers of respondents in other gender categories, including trans* and non-binary perfrormers, these categories were aggregated under a single heading for the purposes of statistical analysis.

[29] Office for National Statistics, Gender identity (four categories) by sex, England and Wales: Census 2021

Location

Performers are very strongly concentrated in London, with 46.7% of Primary Occupation respondents being based in the UK capital, far exceeding London's 17.79% share of the UK Labour Force. This highlights a highly centralised industry, with London serving as the dominant hub, as anticipated in a creative and cultural sector. As a result, most regions outside London show notable underrepresentation compared to their share of the UK Labour Force. The regional distribution patterns remain largely consistent whether considering all performers, those who view it as their Primary Occupation, or those for whom it is their Only Occupation. Notably, Wales (2.4%), and Northern Ireland (0.5%) show relatively low representation, indicating potential challenges for performers in these nations.

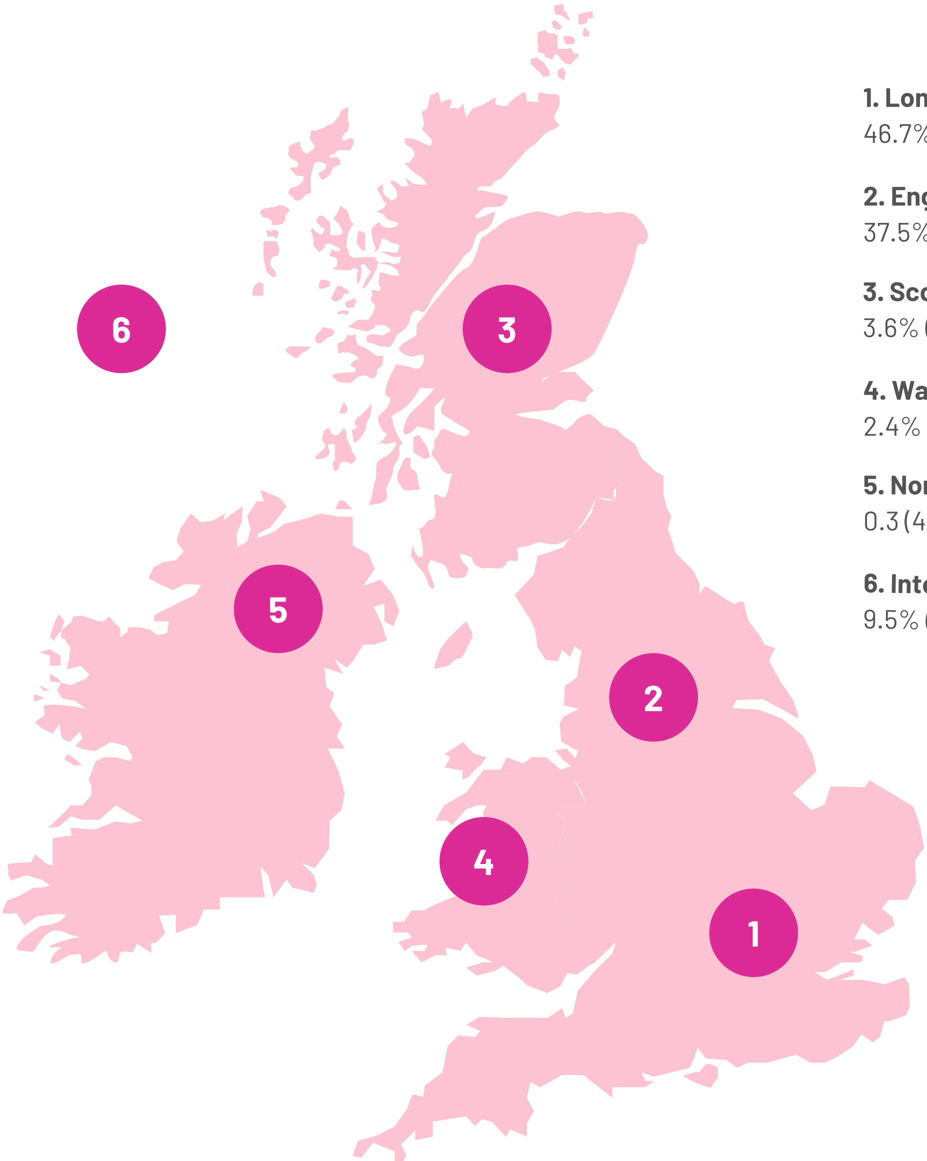


Figure 16: Map showing distribution of Primary Occupation performers by location

	England								
	North East	North West	Yorkshire and The Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East	London	South East	South West
Full Sample	1.0% (18)	5.5% (97)	2.8% (49)	2.0% (36)	2.0% (35)	3.5% (62)	42.8% (758)	14.8% (262)	7.3% (129)
Primary Occupation	0.7% (8)	5.6% (68)	2.6% (32)	1.3% (16)	1.7% (21)	3.3% (40)	46.7% (568)	15.0% (183)	6.3% (77)
Only Occupation	0.4% (3)	5.5% (38)	2.5% (17)	0.9% (6)	1.7% (12)	3.0% (21)	47.2% (326)	16.7% (115)	5.9% (41)
UK Labour Force	3.31%	10.54%	7.70%	6.76%	8.29%	8.69%	17.79%	13.90%	8.48%

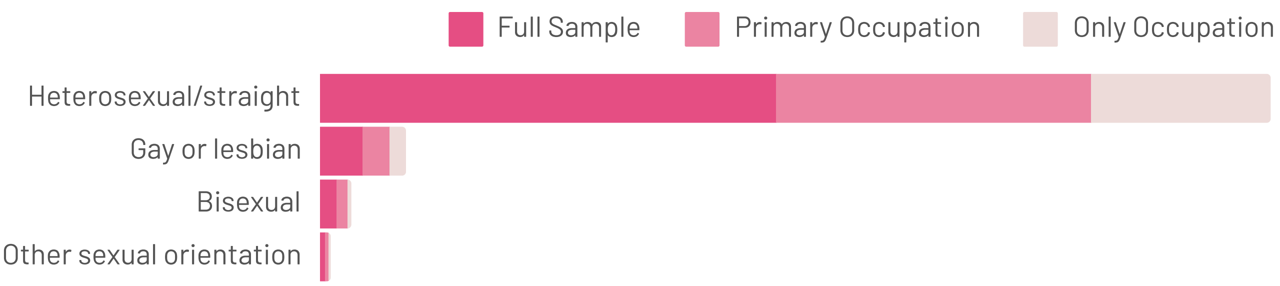
	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Outside of UK
Full Sample	2.4% (43)	4.3% (76)	0.5% (9)	10.2% (180)
Primary Occupation	2.4% (29)	3.6% (44)	0.3% (4)	9.5% (115)
Only Occupation	2.2% (15)	2.6% (18)	0.3% (2)	10.1% (70)
UK Labour Force [30]	4.14%	7.85%	2.53%	N/A

Figure 17: Table showing distribution of Primary Occupation performers by location

[30] Office for National Statistics, Labour market overview, UK: June 2024

Sexual orientation

There are notable differences in sexual orientation among performers compared to the general UK population. While heterosexual individuals form the majority (82.7%) of performers in the Primary Occupation sample, this is lower than their representation in the UK population (89.4%). A higher LGBT+ representation in the performing arts sector is evident: specifically, 7.0% of performers identify as gay or lesbian, compared to 1.5% in the UK population; 2.9% of performers identify as bisexual, versus 1.3% in the general population; 0.9% of performers identify with other sexual orientations, compared to 0.3% in the UK population. This higher representation may suggest that the performing arts sector is more accessible for LGBT+ individuals or that these communities are particularly drawn to the performing arts.



	Heterosexual / straight	Gay or lesbian	Bisexual	Other
Full Sample	82.2% (1,460)	7.7% (136)	2.9% (52)	0.8% (15)
Primary Occupation	82.7% (1,009)	7.0% (86)	2.9% (35)	0.9% (11)
Only Occupation	83.1% (574)	7.5% (52)	1.7% (12)	1.0% (7)
UK Population [31]	89.4%	1.5%	1.3%	0.3%

Figure 18: Bar chart and table showing distribution of performers by sexual orientation

[31] Office for National Statistics, Sexual orientation, further personal characteristics, England and Wales: Census 2021

Income

Overview

In respect of their performance work, Primary Occupation performers report median earnings of £17,500 per annum before tax. Only Occupation performers typically earn slightly higher, with a median of£22,500 per annum. This indicates that income from performance work alone, even where this constitutes 50% or more of a performer's working time, cannot sustain an income commensurate with a typical median wage in the UK (£34,963 in 2023), nor indeed a minimum wage (assuming a 40 hour work-week - £23,795). For Primary Occupation performers, and in regard to individual earnings, 65.64% earned below the national median wage (£34,963) and 50.24% below the minimum wage (£23,795).

Due to this low income trajectory, earnings from performances are supplemented by earnings from other non-performing work, bringing the typical median individual income to £22,500, with a more substantial supplement in income from other members of the household (median household income for Full Sample is £45,000).

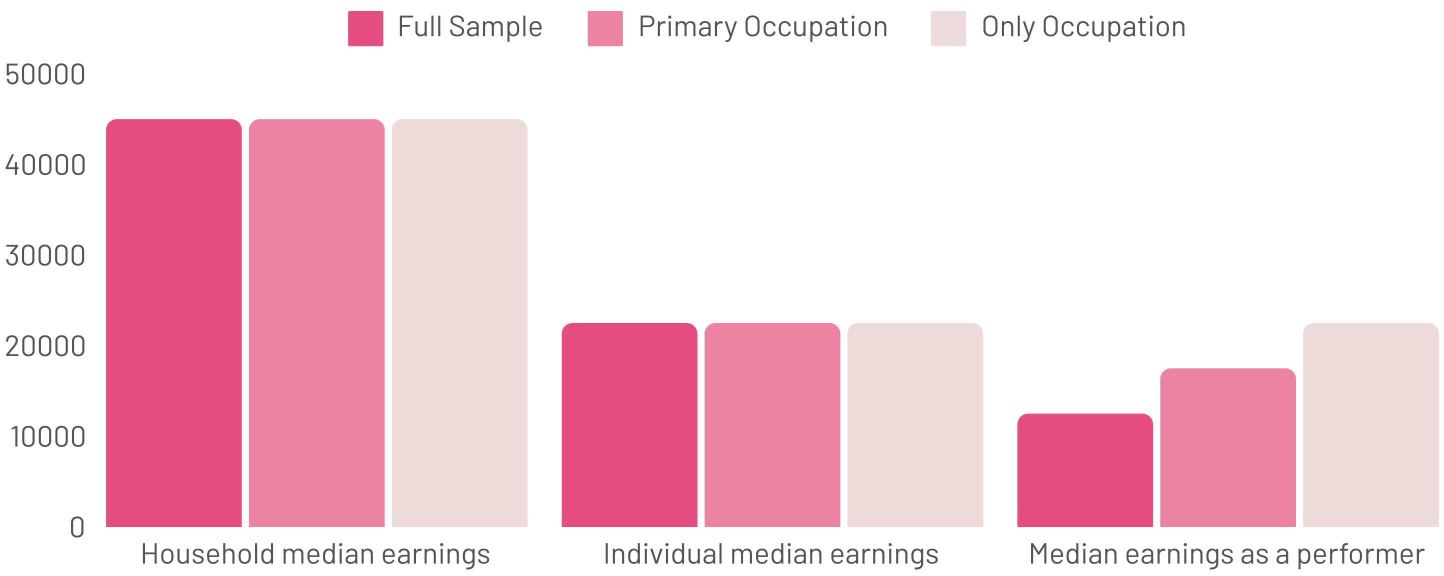


Figure 19: Typical (median) earnings of performers across all samples

	Household median earnings	Household mean earnings	Observations	Gini coefficient [32]
Full Sample	45,000	77,205	1,796	0.58
Primary Occupation	45,000	82,687	1,241	0.59
Only Occupation	45,000	98,866	701	0.63
	Individual Median Earnings	**Individual Mean Earnings**	**Observations**	**Gini Coefficient**
Full Sample	22,500	47,769	1,776	0.64
Primary Occupation	22,500	51,597	1,228	0.64
	Median Earnings as a Performer	**Mean earnings as a Performer**	**Observations**	**Gini Coefficient**
Full Sample	12,500	31,578	1,752	0.73
Primary Occupation	17,500	42,574	1,201	0.68
Only Occupation	22,500	57,179	675	0.69

Figure 20: Overview of income across all samples

[32] Office for National Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey, January - March, 2023.

Income distribution

As anticipated, the performers market is 'winner-takes-all', with a highly unequal distribution of income between superstar earners, who account for a disproportionately larger 'slice' of the overall earnings 'pie' (net worth), versus the majority of 'typical' earning performers, who earn far lower. Earnings of Primary Occupation performers have a Gini coefficient of 0.68, rising to 0.73 in the Full Sample. This is a far higher coefficient than in the general UK population, at 0.37, indicating a highly skewed distribution of income in the performance sector.[33] This is not an unexpected finding as this distribution is typical of cultural markets, where network effects mean that established names command more interest, and resultantly, more income.

The Lorenz curves on the following page visualise the distribution of wealth across performers, where the x axis represents the share of performers, ordered from lowest to highest income, and the y axis represents the cumulative share of income earned. When comparing the Lorenz curves between performer's earning sources and the UK Labour Force Survey (LFS), the difference in income distribution becomes noticeably apparent. The LFS Lorenz curve lies much closer to the line of equality, reflecting a more equitable distribution of income across the UK population. In contrast, the median household, individual and performer's earnings deviate more markedly from the line of equality, particularly the earnings as performers show a substantial concentration of income among a smaller proportion of the population. Even the Lorenz curve of the household earnings demonstrates greater inequality than the LFS curve, although it is closer in comparison.

The performers market is 'winner-takes-all', with a highly unequal distribution of income

[33] Office for National Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey, January - March, 2023.

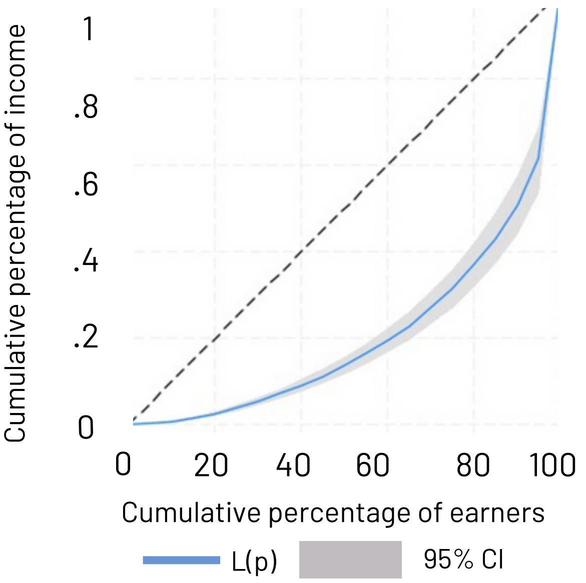


Figure 21: Lorenz curve showing distribution of income for Household earnings

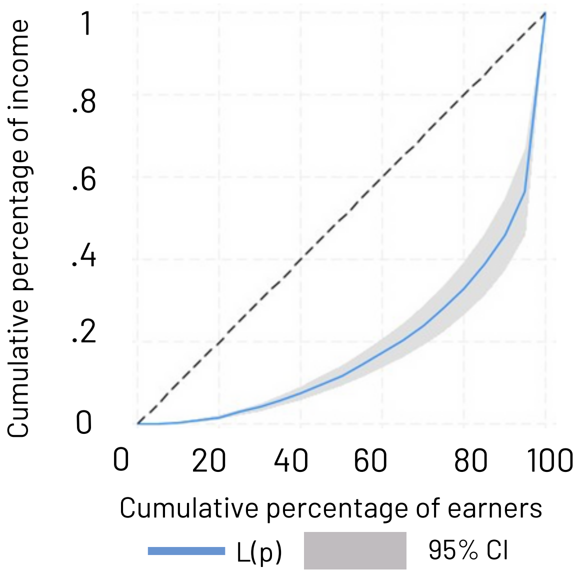


Figure 22: Lorenz curve showing distribution of income for Individual median earnings

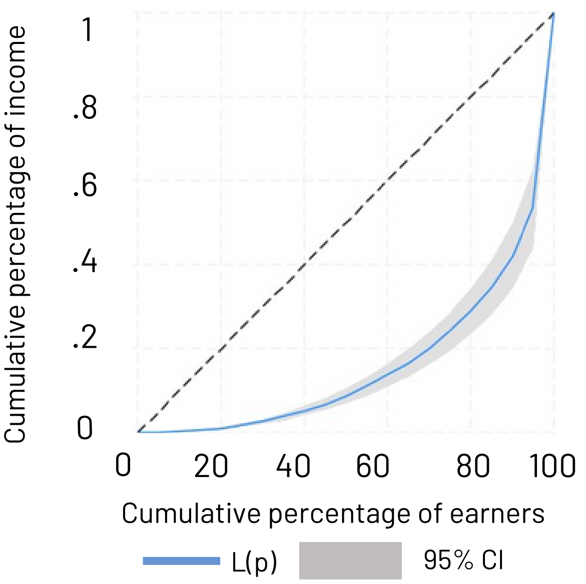


Figure 23: Lorenz curve showing distribution of income for earnings as a performer

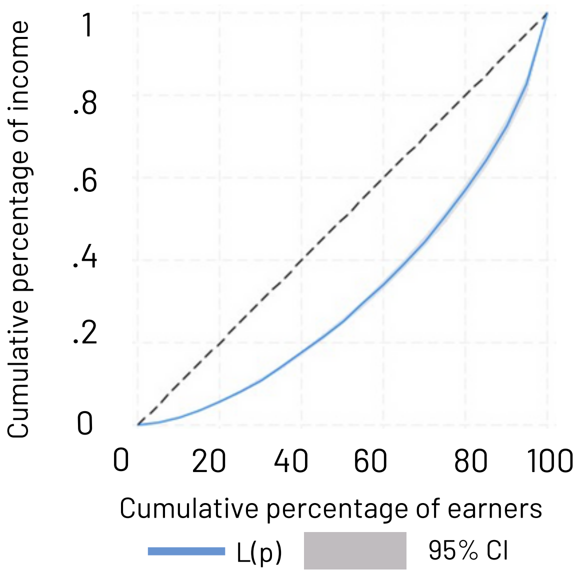


Figure 24: Lorenz curve showing distribution of income for UK labour force median earnings [34]

[34] This Lorenz curve has been depicted from the dataset of the Labour Force Survey (Data set: 9097 Quarterly Labour Force Survey, April - June, 2023) using the Gross weekly pay variable for all the employed population. The sample contains 6,664 observations which reports a median gross weekly pay 558.

Sources of earnings

Categories of work/sales channels

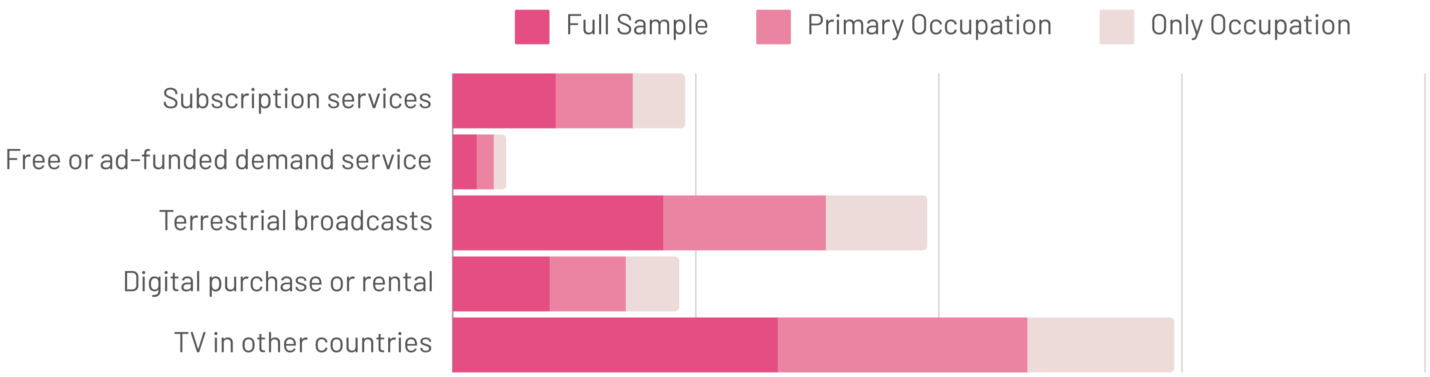
Performers consider 'Scripted productions' to be the most important source of their income, followed by 'Theatre' and 'Audio-only' work. 'Film for theatrical release' and 'TV commercials' are also considered important, though less so. 'Unscripted productions' and 'Video games' are the least frequently cited as important sources of income. These categories vary slightly across the three samples. In the 'Other' category, respondents detailed a variety of other performance types, mainly consisting of corporate role play (e.g., as actors who simulate situations in training workshops) and interactive shows (e.g., murder mystery shows).

Categories of work	Full Sample	Primary Occupation	Only Occupation
Scripted productions	1,556	1,118	655
Theatre	1,130	879	493
Audio only	938	733	424
Film for theatrical release	935	698	414
TV commercials	726	529	289
Video games	385	321	202
Other	358	241	119
Unscripted productions	228	167	102

Figure 25: Table showing categories of work rated most important to performers based on earnings

Income from modes of distribution of work

The data indicates that many performers receive additional royalty or residual payments after their initial fee from various distribution channels. For the Full Sample, 22.5% received income from subscription services, 6.5% from free or ad-funded demand services, 43.5% from terrestrial broadcasts, 24.5% from digital purchases or rentals, and 59.9% from TV in other countries. These trends are more pronounced among performers whose Primary or Only Occupation is performing, with higher percentages in each category, especially from terrestrial broadcasts and TV in other countries. This suggests that performers who dedicate more time to their profession are more likely to benefit from additional payments through a variety of distribution channels, with international TV broadcasts being a particularly important source of income.

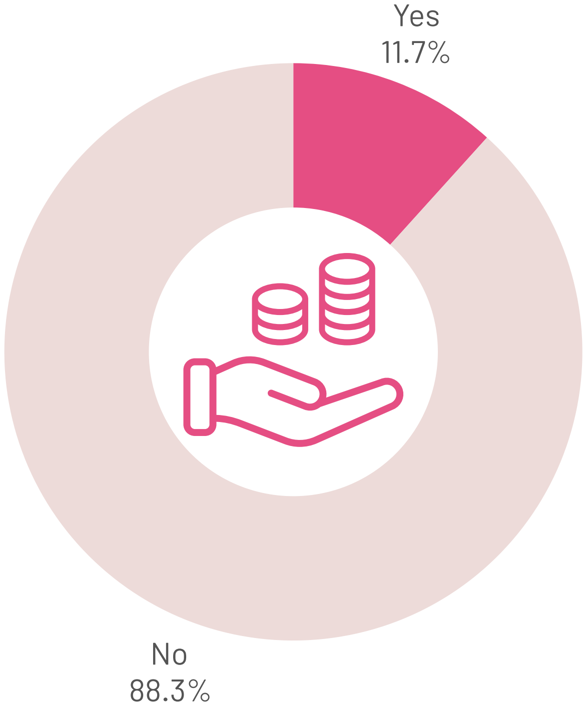


Source of royalty & residual payments	Subscription services	Free or ad-funded demand service	Terrestrial broadcasts	Digital purchase or rental	TV in other countries
Full Sample	22.5% (212)	6.5% (50)	43.5% (433)	24.6% (200)	59.9% (669)
Primary Occupation	25.1% (159)	6.9% (35)	49.6% (335)	29.1% (156)	66.5% (513)
Only Occupation	30.1% (107)	9.0% (25)	53.7% (208)	35.3% (110)	69.3% (302)

Figure 26: Bar chart and table showing categories of work rated most important to performers based on earnings

Income from user-uploaded platforms

The data indicates that a minority (around 10%) of respondents across all samples reported receiving income from user-uploaded platforms like YouTube or TikTok. Conversely, almost 90% across all samples reported not receiving income from digital platforms.



Income from user-uploaded platforms	Yes	No
Full Sample	10.0% (75)	89.2% (668)
Primary Occupation	11.6% (61)	87.8% (461)
Only Occupation	11.4% (35)	87.6% (268)

Figure 27: Pie chart (Primary Occupation only) and table showing number of performers who have recieved income from user-uploaded platforms

When cross-checked with the parties responsible for uploading work (figure 59), the data reveals that 21% of performers received additional remuneration from digital platforms when producers or broadcasters included this as part of their content distribution. This percentage drops to 13% when performers uploaded the content themselves, and further decreases to 6% when the content was uploaded by users not officially affiliated with the producer or broadcaster. These findings suggest that there is potential for performers to generate additional revenue through digital platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, or TikTok when the projects are managed by a professional entity.

Factors affecting earnings

Median earnings by demographic characteristics

Differences in distributions of income between demographic groups are less extreme than anticipated. For example, both men and women typically earn £17,500 per year in respect of their earnings as a performer. The absence of a gender pay gap in this data differentiates the performers' market from other creators' markets surveyed using the model employed in this report. For instance, in the 2022 study on authors, women earned 41.4% less than men.[35]

Gender	Individual Median Earnings	Median Earnings as a Performer
Men	27,500 (664)	17,500 (657)
Women	22,500 (444)	17,500 (444)
Other	25,000 (4)	22,500 (4)
Prefer not to say [36]	17,500 (6)	17,500 (6)

Figure 28: Table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by gender

The absence of a gender pay gap in this data differentiates the performers' market from other creators' markets surveyed.

[35] See UK Authors' Earnings and Contracts (2022)

[36] As norms and recognition of changing gender identities continue to develop, and continue to be politically sensitive, respondents who selected "prefer not to say" are included for this demographic variable, ensuring that their responses are represented alongside those of other gender groups.

Both heterosexual performers and LGBT+ performers likewise typically earn £17,500 per year in respect of their earnings as a performer. This is largely consistent with findings from other creators' markets, particularly independent authors, where LGBT+ creators often earn more than their heterosexual counterparts.

Sexual Orientation	Individual Median Earnings	Median Earnings as a Performer
Bisexual	27,500 (34)	15,000 (34)
Gay or lesbian	27,500 (83)	17,500 (83)
Heterosexual/straight	22,500 (930)	17,500 (924)
Other sexual orientation	17,500 (11)	12,500 (11)

Figure 29: Table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by sexual orientation

There is a notable difference in income between performers with disabilities (typical earnings of £7,500 per annum) and performers without disabilities (£17,500 per annum). The income of performers with disabilities is 57.1% lower than that of performers without disabilities

Disability Status	Individual Median Earnings	Median Earnings as a Performer
Non-Disabled	27,500 (1051)	17,500 (1042)
Disabled	12,500 (55)	7,500 (56)

Figure 31: Table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by disability status

Both black and white performers also report typical earnings of £17,500 per annum. The absence of a pay gap between black and white performers differentiates this market from other creators' markets surveyed using the model employed in this report. Notably, Asian or Asian British performers typically earn the most from their performances - £32,500 per annum. This finding may correspond to the relative rarity of performers of this ethnicity in the broader demographic of performers surveyed.

Ethnicity	Individual Median Earnings	Median Earnings as a Performer
Asian or Asian British	37,500 (21)	32,500 (22)
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	22,500 (33)	17,500 (34)
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	27,500 (62)	22,500 (62)
White	22,500 (960)	17,500 (953)
Other ethnic group	22,500 (26)	22,500 (25)

Figure 30: Table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by ethnicity

Differences in income distribution between demographic groups are less than anticipated.

Very young (under 25) and very old (85 and over) performers typically earn the least from their performances (£1,750 per annum respectively). However, this interpretation should be treated with caution due to very small sample sizes for each of these age categories. Earnings peak for performers in the 25-34 bracket (£27,500); this is consistent with surveys of other creators conducted using the model employed in this report.

Age Group	Individual Median Earnings	Median Earnings as a Performer
Under 25	1,750 (1)	1,750 (1)
25-34	32,500 (60)	27,500 (59)
35-44	32,500 (169)	22,500 (168)
45-54	32,500 (255)	22,500 (257)
55-64	22,500 (331)	17,500 (326)
65-74	17,500 (212)	12,500 (215)
75-84	17,500 (87)	7,500 (82)
85 and over	7,500 (9)	1,750 (9)

Figure 32: Table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by age

Typical incomes for Primary Occupation performers stagnate at £17,500 per annum for performers with education levels at University Entry level upwards. However, earnings are not improved by having qualifications higher than masters' level (performers with PhDs typically earn less at £12,500 per annum). This is a different trajectory from other findings from previous surveys of other creators' markets, where PhDs tend to be associated with the highest levels of income.

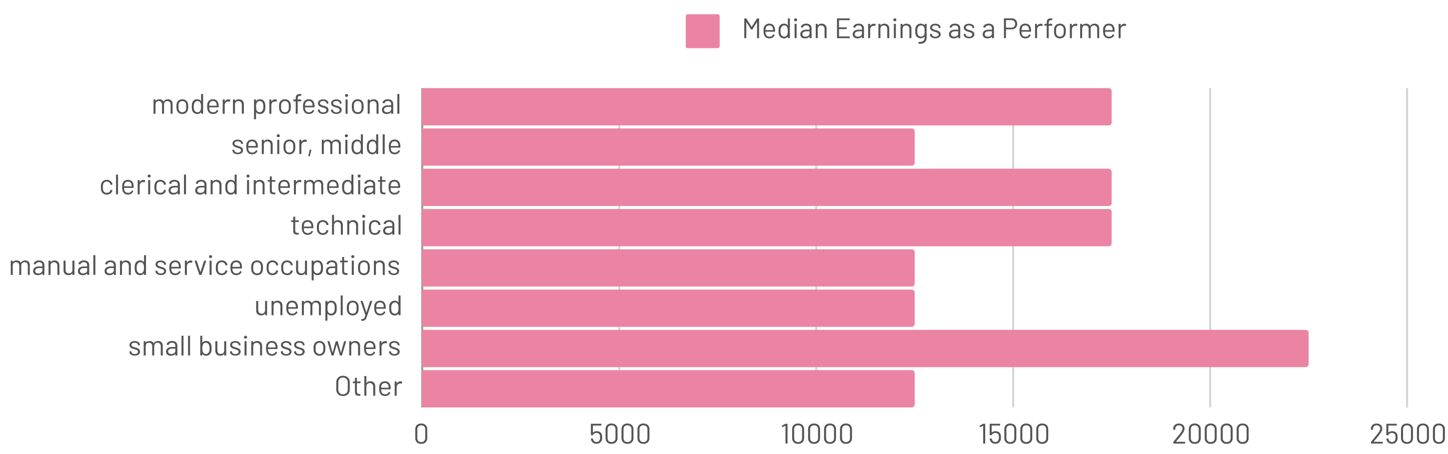
Education Level	Individual Median Earnings	Median Earnings as a Performer
Primary schooling	28,375 (6) [37]	2,750 (6)
Secondary schooling	22,500 (135)	12,500 (136)
University entry	22,500 (107)	17,500 (105)
Diploma	22,500 (194)	17,500 (194)
Degree	22,500 (485)	17,500 (482)
Masters	27,500 (144)	17,500 (142)
PhD	27,500 (7)	12,500 (8)
Other	22,500 (43)	12,500 (42)

Figure 33: Table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by highest level of education attained

Earnings are not improved by having qualifications higher than masters' level

[37] This variation is due to the small sample size and the wide range of earnings among respondents in this specific sub-category.

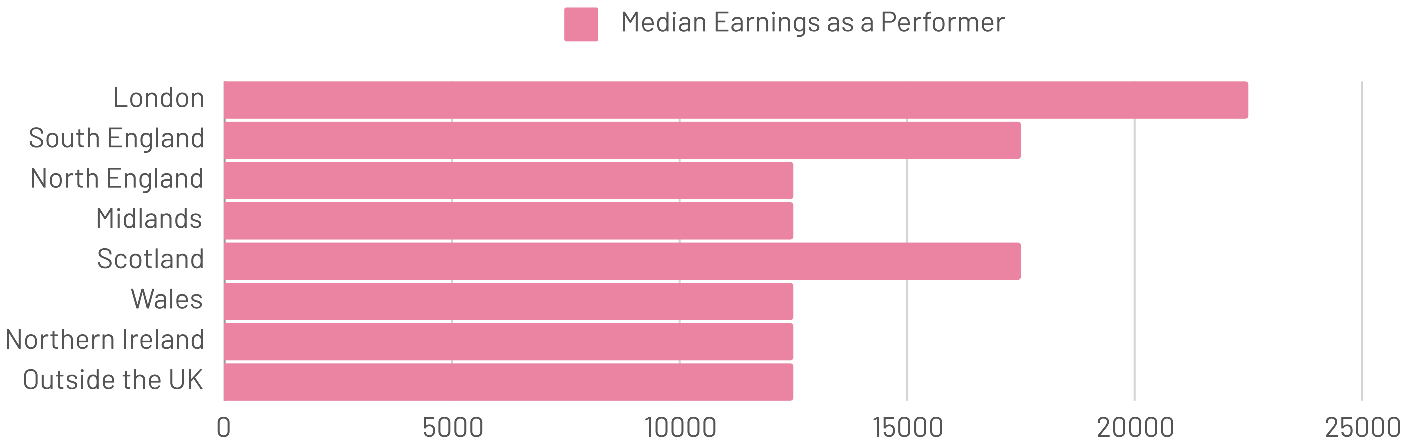
Despite being an ostensibly 'privileged' profession, performers from professional backgrounds do not per se earn a higher income than those with less privilege (with earnings from performances again, stabilising at around £17,500).



Household Background	Individual Median Earnings	Median Earnings as a Performer
modern professional	27,500 (413)	17,500 (413)
senior, middle or junior managers	22,500 (189)	12,500 (191)
clerical and intermediate	22,500 (62)	17,500 (62)
technical	22,500 (120)	17,500 (117)
manual and service occupations	22,500 (109)	12,500 (105)
unemployed	45,000 (14)	12,500 (14)
small business owners	27,500 (91)	22,500 (91)
Other	22,500 (72)	12,500 (71)

Figure 34: Bar chart and table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by household background

As anticipated, given the skew in population towards favouring London as a cultural and economic hub for performers, London-based Primary Occupation performers typically earn the highest in respect of their earnings from performing (£22,500) when compared with other regions. By contrast, performers from Northern England, the Midlands, Wales and Northern Ireland overall earn less (£12,500 per annum).

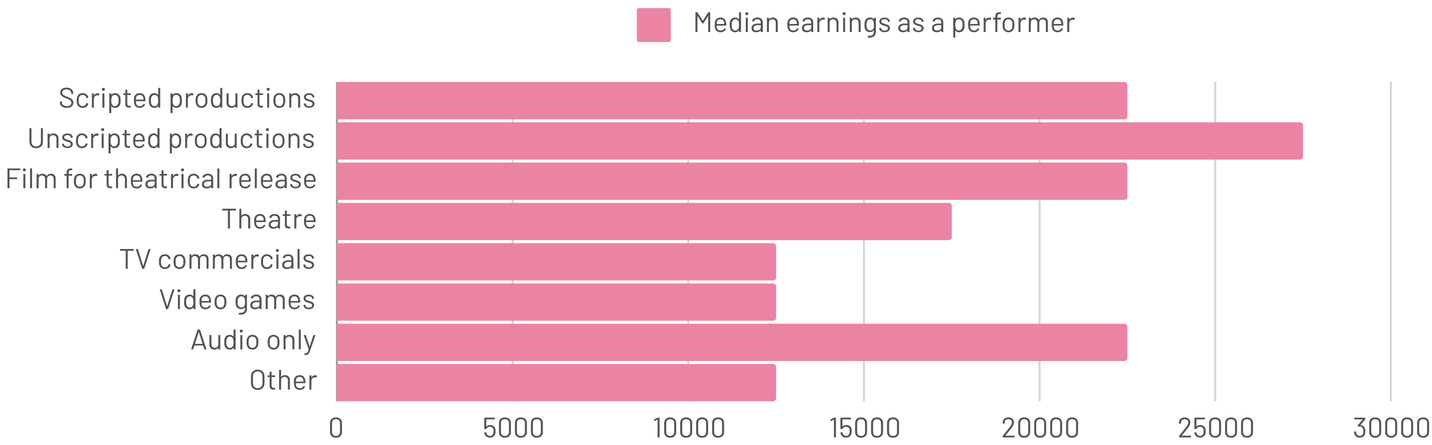


Location	Individual Median Earnings	Median Earnings as a Performer
London	27,500 (531)	22,500 (525)
South England	22,500 (230)	17,500 (231)
North England	12,500 (73)	12,500 (72)
Midlands	22,500 (104)	12,500 (105)
Scotland	17,500 (42)	17,500 (40)
Wales	22,500 (25)	12,500 (26)
Northern Ireland	12,500 (4)	12,500 (4)
Outside the UK	32,500 (102)	12,500 (101)

Figure 35: Bar chart and table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by location

Median earnings against categories of work

Unscripted productions are associated with the highest earnings for Primary Occupation performers in respect of their performances (£27,500), though very few performers are engaged with this category of work (n = 17). For Only Occupation performers, scripted productions, which make up the bulk of categories of work undertaken, are instead associated with higher earnings (£32,500).



Categories of work	Median earnings as a performer
Scripted productions	22,500 (496)
Unscripted productions	27,500 (17)
Film for theatrical release	22,500 (102)
Theatre	17,500 (223)
TV commercials	12,500 (113)
Video games	12,500 (10)
Audio only	22,500 (124)
Other	12,500 (74)

Figure 36: Bar chart and table showing earnings of Primary Occupation performers by category of work

Professional context

Advice and representation

Most Primary Occupation performers have access to an agent in the past 5 years (86%).

"Have you had an agent in the last 5 years?"	Yes	No
Full Sample (1,894)	77.3% (1,427)	21.9% (405)
Primary Occupation (1,265)	86.1% (1,088)	13.3% (168)
Only Occupation (717)	84.8% (607)	14.8% (106)

Figure 37: Table showing responses to the question: "Have you had an agent in the last 5 years?"

Most Primary Occupation performers (70.9%) have not taken legal or professional advice before signing a contract in the last 5 years.

"In the last 5 years, did you take legal/professional advice before signing a contract?"	Yes	No
Full Sample (1,845)	23.1% (425)	75.6% (1,392)
Primary Occupation (1,262)	27.8% (350)	70.9% (893)
Only Occupation (705)	29.1% (208)	69.5% (496)

Figure 38: Table showing responses to the question: "In the last 5 years, did you take legal/professional advice before signing a contract?"

Those who did receive legal or professional advice mostly consulted their agent (81%), or professional body or union (33%), including Equity.

'From whom have you taken legal/professional advice?"	Lawyer	Work Colleagues	Agent	Friends	Professional Body / Union	Other
Full Sample	18.6% (79)	15.3% (65)	78.8% (335)	10.01% (43)	32.9% (140)	3.5% (15)
Primary Occupation	19.1% (67)	15.4% (54)	81.1% (284)	10.0% (35)	32.6% (114)	3.1% (11)
Only Occupation	24.0% (50)	15.9% (33)	80.3% (167)	6.3% (13)	34.1% (71)	2.4% (5)

Figure 39: Table showing responses to the question: "From whom have you taken legal/professional advice?"

More than 50% of the performers reported they had little to no confidence that they understood the fee structures and rights granted to producers in their contracts.

Contracts

Negotiations

More than half of Primary Occupation performers have attempted to negotiate a contract in the past 5 years (56.2%). This is consistent across the three samples and marks a notable difference from other creators surveyed using this model, particularly authors, of whom only 24% attempted to negotiate a contract term in 2022/23.

"During the last 5 years, did you or your agent attempt to change the terms of a contract you were offered?"	Yes	No
Full Sample (1,842)	46.8% (860)	50.7% (933)
Primary Occupation (1,262)	56.2% (708)	41.6% (524)
Only Occupation (714)	56.5% (403)	41.2% (294)

Figure 40: Table showing responses to the question: "During the last 5 years, did you or your agent attempt to change the terms of a contract you were offered?"

Unlike other creators' markets in the UK, performers more frequently negotiate their contracts and are more successful in changing those terms

Of those that did attempt to change a contract term, 88% were successful; this is again a stark difference from survey evidence from authors, of whom only 28% were successful in changing a contract term.

"Have you succeeded in changing the terms of a contract?'	Yes	No
Full Sample (859)	88.5% (759)	10.3% (88)
Primary Occupation (706)	89.4% (631)	9.5% (67)
Only Occupation (397)	90.3% (362)	8.7% (35)

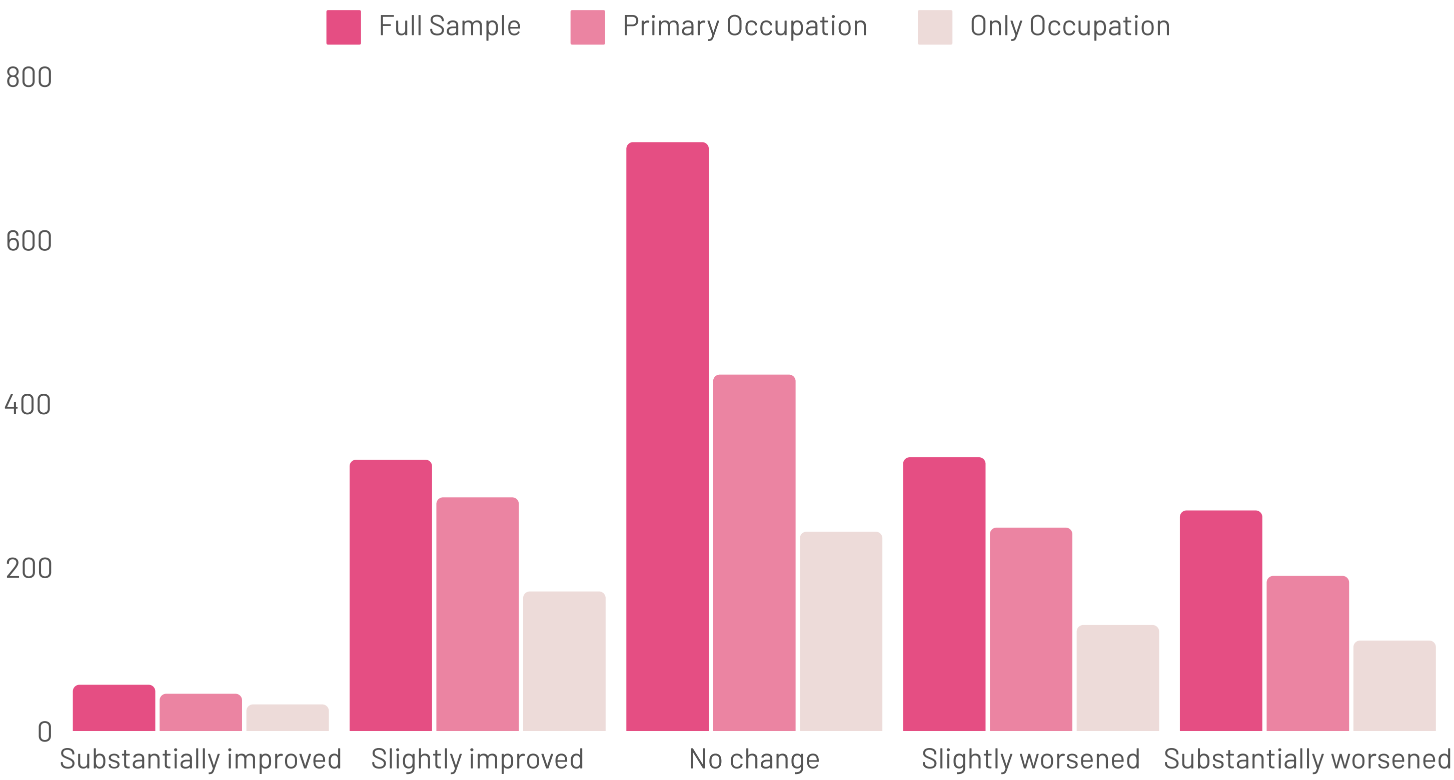
Figure 41: Doughnut chart and table showing responses to the question: "Have you or your agent succeeded in changing the terms of a contract you were offered?"

The most commonly negotiated items are the initial fee. 'Other' items included: travel fees, accommodation fees, indemnities and liabilities, and holiday pay. It is noteworthy that clauses related to AI are already negotiated in over 10% of contracts, reflecting the rapid integration of AI into the industry despite its relatively recent emergence.

"What did you attempt to negotiate?"	Initial fee	Royalty rate	Residuals	Rights/uses granted to the producer	Clauses related to AI	Other
Full Sample	80.1% (687)	14.3% (123)	18.5% (159)	23.7% (203)	12.1% (104)	17.6% (151)
Primary Occupation	80.6% (569)	14.2% (100)	18.6% (131)	24.2% (171)	13.6% (96)	16.9% (119)
Only Occupation	82.0% (329)	14.2% (57)	19.2% (77)	24.7% (99)	14.0% (56)	15.2% (61)

Figure 42: Table showing responses to the question: "Please indicate what you attempted to negotiate."

Most Primary Occupation performers feel that their negotiation position has not changed in the past 5 years (35%), or has worsened (35.6%). Only just above of quarter of performers surveyed feel that their negotiation position has improved (23.2%) or substantially improved (3.7%).



"Has your negotiation position changed?"	Substantially improved	Slightly improved	No change	Slightly worsened	Substantially worsened
Full Sample	3.1% (56)	18.5% (331)	719 (40.2%)	18.7% (334)	15.0% (269)
Primary Occupation	3.7% (45)	23.2% (285)	35.4% (435)	20.2% (248)	15.4% (189)
Only Occupation	4.6% (32)	24.5% (170)	35.0% (243)	18.6% (129)	15.8% (110)

Figure 43: Line chart and table showing responses to the question: "As a performer, has your negotiation position changed over the last 5 years?"

Contract forms

63% of Primary Occupation performers estimate that only 0-9% of their contracts are non-Equity contracts, suggesting that Equity continues to have a strong influence in setting standard contracts for performers in the industry. Approximately 5% appear to systematically sign non-Equity contracts, accounting for between 90 - 100% of the contracts they sign.

Frequency of non-Equity contracts	90-100%	75-89%	50-74%	25-49%	10-24%	0-9%
Full Sample	5.0% (91)	3.8% (69)	5.5% (99)	6.5% (118)	7.1% (128)	63.0% (1,139)
Primary Occupation	4.6% (57)	4.5% (56)	6.2% (77)	7.5% (93)	8.6% (106)	59.9% (742)
Only Occupation	5.0% (35)	3.6% (25)	4.0% (28)	6.6% (46)	8.5% (59)	62.5% (435)

Figure 44: Table showing responses to the question: "In the last 5 years, in relation to film and scripted TV work, how often have you signed non-Equity contracts?"

Performers perceive that buy-outs are becoming more common.

25% of the performers who signed non-Equity contracts, systematically did so as buy-out contracts (constituting 90-100% of the non-Equity contracts they signed). By contrast, 42% of performers who signed non-Equity contracts estimated that only 0-9% of these contracts were buy-outs, suggesting that the predominant reason behind signing non-Equity contracts is not per se to facilitate a buy-out. It is also possible that those non-Equity contracts which were also not buy-outs may have otherwise conformed to minimum terms set by industry representatives (e.g., Screen Actors Guild contracts).

Frequency of buy-outs	90-100%	75-89%	50-74%	25-49%	10-24%	0-9%
Full Sample	22.3% (379)	4.6% (78)	4.5% (77)	3.3% (56)	2.5% (42)	45.0% (765)
Primary Occupation	24.5% (281)	5.4% (62)	5.1% (59)	3.9% (45)	2.2% (25)	41.6% (477)
Only Occupation	24.3% (157)	4.3% (28)	4.3% (28)	3.3% (21)	1.7% (11)	42.6% (275)

Figure 45: Table showing responses to the question: "Of the non-Equity contacts you've signed, what percentage have been buy-outs?"

Nonetheless, the majority of Primary Occupation performers perceive that buy-outs are becoming more common (with 96% agreeing to this statement).

"Are buy-out contracts becoming more common?"	Yes	No
Full Sample	95.4% (1,195)	3.8% (47)
Primary Occupation	95.6% (891)	4.0% (37)
Only Occupation	95.6% (496)	3.9% (20)

Figure 46: Table showing responses to the question:"In your experience, are buy-out contracts becoming more common?"

Scope of rights transferred

Most Primary Occupation performers agree that the initial period and scope of rights clearance required by producers has increased in the last 5 years (64%).

"Has the initial period and scope of right clearance increased?"	Yes	No
Full Sample	63.3% (292)	34.1% (157)
Primary Occupation	64.0% (229)	34.4% (123)
Only Occupation	63.9% (129)	34.2% (69)

Figure 47: Table showing responses to the question: "Has the initial period and scope of right clearance that producers require (within the initial fee paid) increased in the last 5 years?"

Most performers indicate that they do not waive their moral rights (the right to be attributed and to object to derogatory use of a performance) in their performances, with 65% confirming they never do this in their contracts with producers. However, it is possible that for many of the performers surveyed such contracts never did contain a waiver in the first instance, as moral rights only apply to live performances, broadcasts of live performances, and sound recordings of performances in the UK. It is unclear whether performers believed (erroneously) that moral rights which did apply were never waived, or rather that no waiver was ever contained because they did not apply.

"Do you ever waive the moral rights in your work?"	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Full Sample	2.0% (24)	4.4% (53)	9.8% (119)	16.2% (197)	65.8% (798)
Primary Occupation	1.8% (15)	4.7% (40)	10.2% (86)	17.1% (145)	64.9% (549)
Only Occupation	2.3% (11)	3.9% (19)	9.3% (45)	16.3% (79)	67.3% (327)

Figure 48: Table showing responses to the question: "Do you ever waive the moral rights in your works?"

69.3% of performers believe that the value of initial fees is decreasing, with 41% of Primary Occupation performers rating this as a 'moderate' decrease, and 27.3% considering it a 'substantial' decrease.

"Has the value of initial fees paid by producers or broadcasters changed"	Substantially decreased	Moderately decreased	No change	Moderately increased	Substantially increased
Full Sample	29.6% (342)	39.7% (459)	11.7% (136)	16.4% (190)	2.6% (31)
Primary Occupation	27.3% (226)	40.9% (339)	10.7% (89)	18.5% (153)	2.6% (21)
Only Occupation	26.5% (124)	37.5% (175)	12.8% (60)	19.6% (91)	3.6% (17)

Figure 49: Table showing responses to the question: "Has the value of initial fees paid by producers/broadcasters changed over the last 5 years?"

65% of performers never waive their moral rights where they apply, suggesting this is an important protective mechanism for performers.

A further heightened perception of the decreasing value of residuals and royalties is evident, with 84% of Primary Occupation performers either moderately (42%) or substantially (42%) perceiving this.

"Has the value of residuals or royalties paid by producers or broadcasters changed"	Substantially decreased	Moderately decreased	No change	Moderately increased	Substantially increased
Full Sample	43.3% (504)	40.4% (472)	8.9% (104)	6.3% (74)	1.1% (12)
Primary Occupation	41.8% (352)	41.5% (350)	9.3% (78)	6.6% (56)	0.8% (7)
Only Occupation	41.1% (192)	40% (187)	10.7% (50)	7% (33)	1.2% (5)

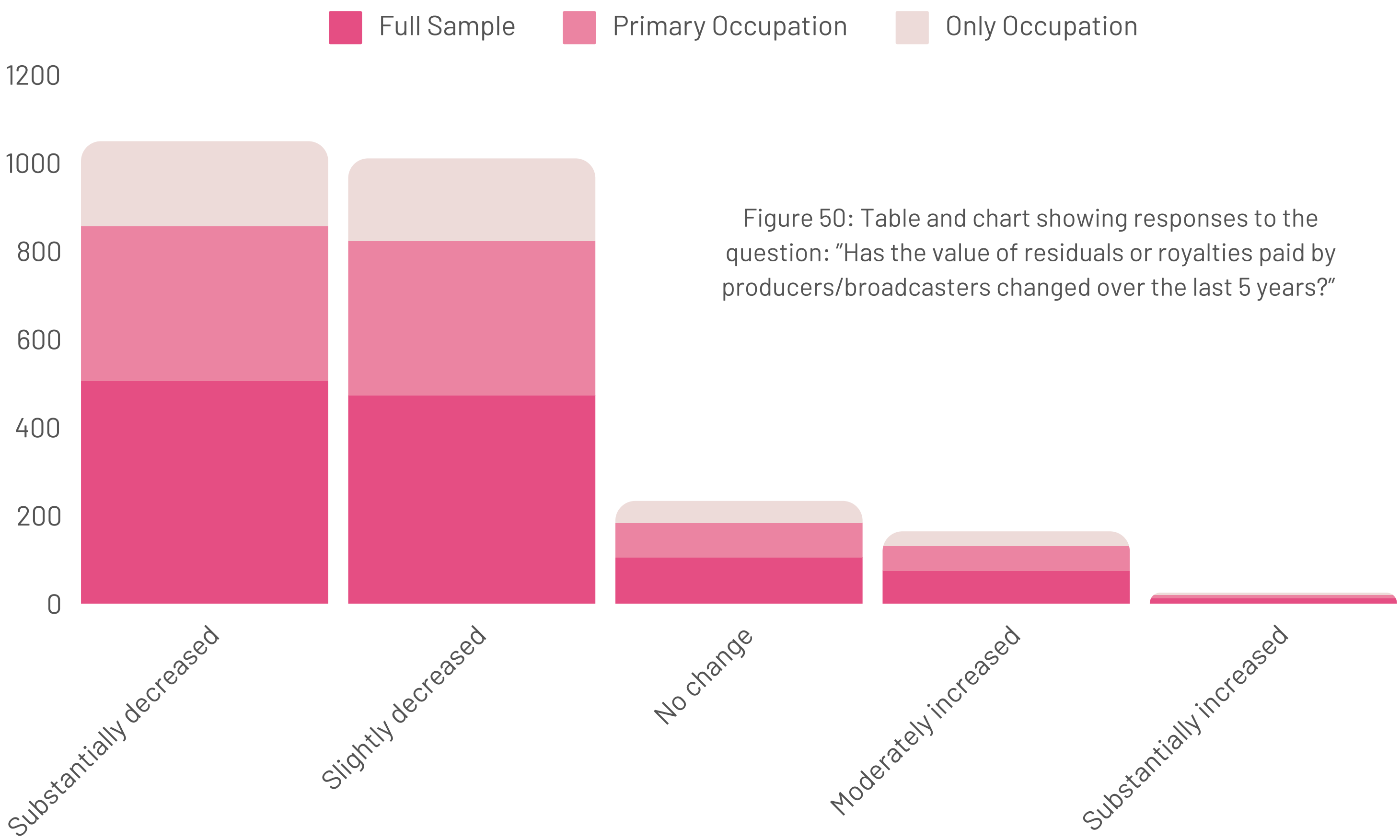


Figure 50: Table and chart showing responses to the question: "Has the value of residuals or royalties paid by producers/broadcasters changed over the last 5 years?"

Confidence in contracts

Many Primary Occupation performers are not confident that they receive all fees, royalties and residuals due to them under their contracts (63.8%).

"How confident are you that you receive all due royalties?"	Very little confidence	Less confident	Neutral	Somewhat confident	Very confident
Full Sample	36.4% (539)	27.3% (403)	5.3% (78)	17.3% (255)	13.7% (204)
Primary Occupation	33.9% (344)	29.9% (303)	6.1% (62)	16.3% (164)	13.8% (68)
Only Occupation	34.8% (250)	27.7% (157)	8.5% (48)	13.8% (78)	15.2% (86)

Figure 51: Table showing responses to the question: "How confident are you that you receive all fees, royalties and residuals due to you under your contracts?"

Most performers are not confident that they receive all fees, royalties and residuals due to them under their contracts

Likewise, many Primary Occupation performers are not confident that they understand the fee structure and rights granted to producers in their contracts (60.3%). This may include, for example, permissions granted over different types of media, time periods, and territories of distribution of the performance.

"Are you confident that you understand the fee structure and rights granted to producers?"	Very little confidence	Less confident	Neutral	Somewhat confident	Very confident
Full Sample	37.6% (571)	24.4% (369)	5.5% (84)	20.1% (304)	12.4% (186)
Primary Occupation	34.3% (356)	26% (269)	5.6% (58)	22.1% (229)	12% (126)
Only Occupation	35% (205)	25% (147)	6.3% (37)	21.6% (126)	12.1% (71)

Figure 52: Table showing responses to the question: "Are you confident that you understand the fee structure and rights granted under your contracts with producers?"

Finally, many Primary Occupation performers are not confident in their understanding of copyright and/or performers' rights (55.1%). This is a much lower estimate than given by creators in other reports in this series (with 56% of authors in 2022/23 considering themselves 'moderately confident' in their knowledge of copyright).

"How confident are you in your knowledge of copyright/statutory rights?"	Very little confidence	Less confident	Neutral	Somewhat confident	Very confident
Full Sample	34.5% (527)	23.9% (364)	6.7% (102)	24.2% (369)	10.7% (164)
Primary Occupation	30.7% (318)	24.4% (253)	7.7% (80)	25.6% (265)	11.6% (121)
Only Occupation	29.1% (172)	23.6% (140)	8.6% (51)	26.5% (157)	12.2% (72)

Figure 53: Table showing responses to the question: "In relation to your activity as a performer, how confident are you in your knowledge of copyright/performers' statutory rights?"

AI

Most Primary Occupation performers are very pessimistic about the potential impact of AI on their performing activities (64.8%) with 29.8% being somewhat pessimistic - by contrast only 1.6% and 1.4% respectively are 'somewhat' or 'very' optimistic about AI's impact.

"How confident are you in your knowledge of copyright/statutory rights?"	Very pessimistic	Somewhat pessimistic	Neutral	Somewhat optimistic	Very optimistic
Full Sample	64.4% (981)	29.1% (443)	3.2% (48)	2% (29)	1.3% (22)
Primary Occupation	64.8% (704)	29.8% (323)	2.4% (26)	1.6% (18)	1.4% (15)
Only Occupation	67.3% (410)	26.9% (164)	2.8% (17)	1.5% (9)	1.5% (9)

Figure 54: Table showing responses to the question: "How do you feel about the potential impact of AI on your performing activities?"

Most Primary occupation performers have not experienced having a digital lookalike/soundalike made of them without their consent (88%).

"Has anyone ever used a digital lookalike/soundalike of you without your consent?"	Yes	No
Full Sample	6.9% (124)	88.8% (1,588)
Primary Occupation	8.0% (98)	88.0% (1,081)
Only Occupation	8.1% (56)	87.9% (611)

Figure 30: Doughnut chart and table showing responses to the question: "Has anyone ever used a digital lookalike/soundalike of you without your consent?"

Of those who had a digital lookalike/soundalike made of them, almost half were made by a professional producer (38%).

"Has a professional producer ever done that?"	Yes	No
Full Sample	41.1% (51)	47.6% (59)
Primary Occupation	37.8% (37)	51.0% (50)
Only Occupation	44.6% (25)	42.9% (24)

Figure 55: Table showing responses to the question: "Has a professional producer ever done that?"

Most Primary Occupation performers have not been asked to provide images or audio to create digital replicas of their image or voice (79%).

"Have you been asked by producers to provide images or audio that can be used to create digital replicas?"	Yes	No
Full Sample	16.1% (287)	82.3% (1,473)
Primary Occupation	19.2% (236)	79.1% (973)
Only Occupation	19.9% (138)	77.9% (541)

Figure 56: Table showing responses to the question: "Have you been asked by producers to provide images or audio that can be used to create digital replicas of your person or voice?"

Of those who had been asked to provide this, the majority had been asked to sign an explicit consent to this (62%).

"Were you asked to sign a consent relating to that?"	Yes	No
Full Sample	61.3% (176)	33.1% (95)
Primary Occupation	61.9% (146)	32.6% (77)
Only Occupation	62.3% (86)	31.9% (44)

Figure 30: Table showing responses to the question:"Were you asked to sign a consent relating to that?"

More frequently, those contracts were limited to the specific use under that contract, rather than general consent.

"Was their use limited by contract to that production or a more general consent?"	Limited use	General consent
Full Sample	64.2% (113)	33.5% (59)
Primary Occupation	62.3% (91)	34.9% (51)
Only Occupation	61.6% (53)	37.2% (32)

Figure 57: Table showing responses to the question: "Was their use limited by contract to that production or a more general consent?"

User-uploaded platforms

Most Primary Occupation performers are aware that their work is accessible on digital platforms, like YouTube or TikTok (52%).

"Are you aware of your work being accessible on user-uploaded platforms?"	Yes	No
Full Sample	52.4% (970)	45.7% (846)
Primary Occupation	54.1% (686)	44.1% (560)
Only Occupation	56.3% (405)	41.9% (302)

Figure 58: Table showing responses to the question: "Are you aware of your work being accessible on digital platforms where users can upload content such as YouTube, Instagram, or TikTok?"

Most often, this work was uploaded by a producer or broadcaster, followed by unaffiliated users.

"Do you know the party responsible for uploading your work?"	Producer/broadcaster	Unaffiliated user	Me [the respondent]
Full Sample	36.7% (355)	21.2% (205)	14.5% (140)
Primary Occupation	40.2% (275)	20.9% (143)	15.1% (103)
Only Occupation	42.4% (171)	21.3% (86)	14.4% (58)

Figure 59: Table showing responses to the question: "Do you know the party responsible for uploading your work?"

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Appendix A

A copy of the survey can be found here.

Appendix B

Workforce qualification levels across England and Wales data: Census 2021

- no qualifications: no formal qualifications
- Level 1: one to four GCSEs passes (for example grade A* to C or grade 4 and above) and any other GCSEs at other grades, or equivalent qualifications
- Level 2: five or more GCSE passes (for example grade A* to C or grade 4 and above) or equivalent qualifications
- apprenticeships
- Level 3: two or more A levels or equivalent qualifications
- Level 4 or above: Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree, or postgraduate qualifications
- other qualifications, of unknown level

Appendix C

Payments received from BECS (survey responses and actual BECS distribution)

	Median	Mean	25th percentile	75th percentile	Gini Coefficient
Survey	£200	£998	£20	£772	0.76
BECS	£100-149	£648	£25-49	£250-499	0.79

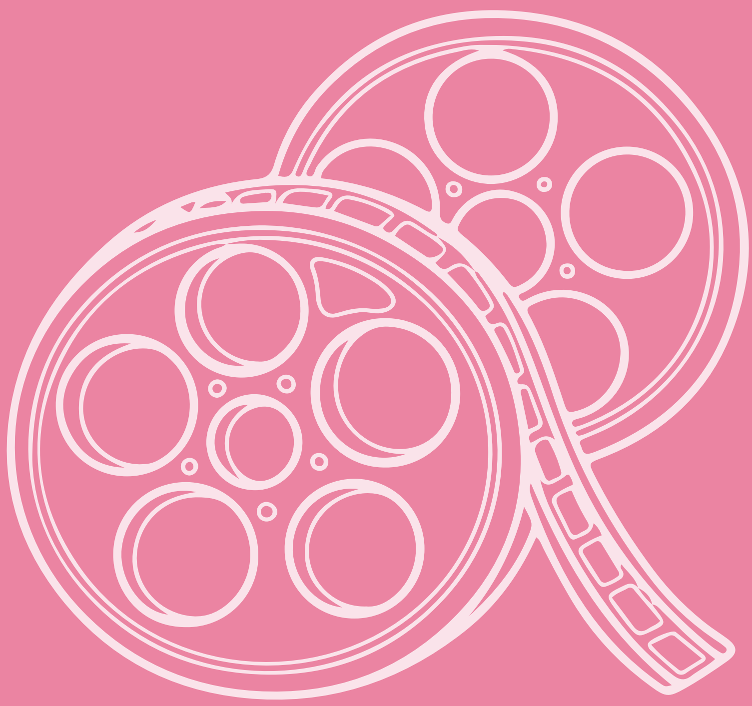
Figure 60: Table comparing the money reported by survey respondents as received from BECS (Survey) with the actual distribution of payments made by BECS to their members (BECS)

BECS Number of payees (2022/23): 13,607
BECS Total payment (2022/23): £8,820,923

In order to place the sample of respondents to the survey into the context of the population of all performers receiving payments from BECS, we asked BECS to calculate their payment distribution in an anonymised format, standardised by revenue band. This acts as a control for the representativeness of the survey.

For ease of reference, we provide median, mean, lower and upper quartiles and Gini coefficients, allowing comparison with other income data. We used the BECS distribution data available, nearest to the data collection points of the survey conducted.

This survey was conducted between February and March 2024 and report incomes before tax in the 2022/2023 tax year. The BECS reported in the table payments are for the tax year 2022/2023.



CREATe BECS