

Voluntary Arts in the Netherlands

2015

Practitioners and facilities

LKCA is the national knowledge platform for professionals, administrators and policymakers in cultural education and cultural participation in the Netherlands. Through the dissemination of knowledge and research, we contribute to the quality of professional practice and policy. We encourage professional development in this field by facilitating meetings and debate. We also offer advice on issues of cultural education and cultural participation in the broadest sense of the term. Using information networks, conferences and digital resources, we provide insight into relevant developments in this field, both national and international. LKCA contributes to the development of government policy programmes for cultural education and cultural participation and supports their implementation.

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Introduction

This publication contains key data about the people actively involved in artistic and creative leisure activities in 2015, how they engage in these activities, and the facilities they use. The data come from LKCA's Voluntary Arts Monitor. From 2009 to 2012, the Monitor polled approximately 1000 people aged six and over in the Netherlands. In April 2013 and April 2015 this number was raised to approximately 5000 people aged six and older. In each case, a sample is taken from TNS NIPObase, a panel database that includes approximately 160,000 people. Results of the Voluntary Arts Monitor are representative of the Dutch population aged six and older in terms of gender, age, level of education, household size and region. The next survey will be held in April 2017.

The complete Monitor report has been published as a PDF and is downloadable from the LKCA website: *Kunstzinnig en creatief in de vrije tijd. Monitor Amateurkunst 2015*. (available only in Dutch language).

Practitioners and practice

The survey opens with the following description of the activities to which the questions refer:

‘Our definition of artistic or creative activities includes (but is not limited to) painting, drawing, pottery, jewellery making, tapestry, clothing design, music, singing in a choir, playing in an orchestra or a band, DJing, acting, participating in a dance group, writing poems, rapping, producing fan art on the internet, artistic photography or film-making and designing games.

Taking classes, attending a course or doing a workshop to learn or develop these skills are also covered by our definition. The definition only includes active participation and so does not include going to a concert, a film or another cultural event.’ The respondents were then asked to tick up to six types of activities in which they participated: visual arts, music (including singing in a choir or a band, etc.), dance, theatre, creative writing and artistic photography/video/film/computer art. If the

respondents mentioned another activity in addition to one of these six categories, their answer was put into the most appropriate of the six categories retrospectively. In most cases these alternative answers could be categorised as visual arts activities in the broadest sense, including (e.g.) various forms of textile arts and crafts.

How many people in the Netherlands do something artistic or creative in their leisure time?

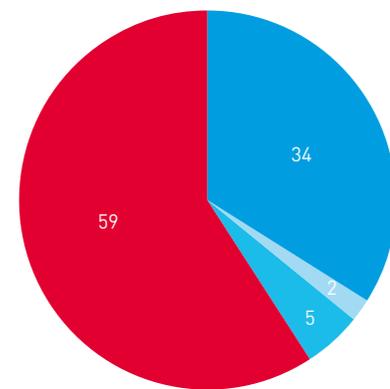


Figure 1. Practitioners and non-practitioners of artistic or creative leisure activities: percentage of the population aged six and older.

- Took part in artistic or creative leisure activities in April 2015 and the preceding twelve months
- Took part in artistic or creative leisure activities in April 2015 but not in the preceding twelve months
- Did not take part in artistic or creative leisure activities in April 2015 but did so in the preceding twelve months
- Did not take part in artistic or creative leisure activities in April 2015 or the preceding twelve months

On 1 January 2015, the population of the Netherlands numbered 15.7 million people aged six and older. Of this number, 41 percent – approximately 6.4 million people – took part in an artistic or creative leisure activity in

April 2015 and/or in the preceding twelve months. These activities included taking classes or attending a workshop in an artistic or creative pursuit.

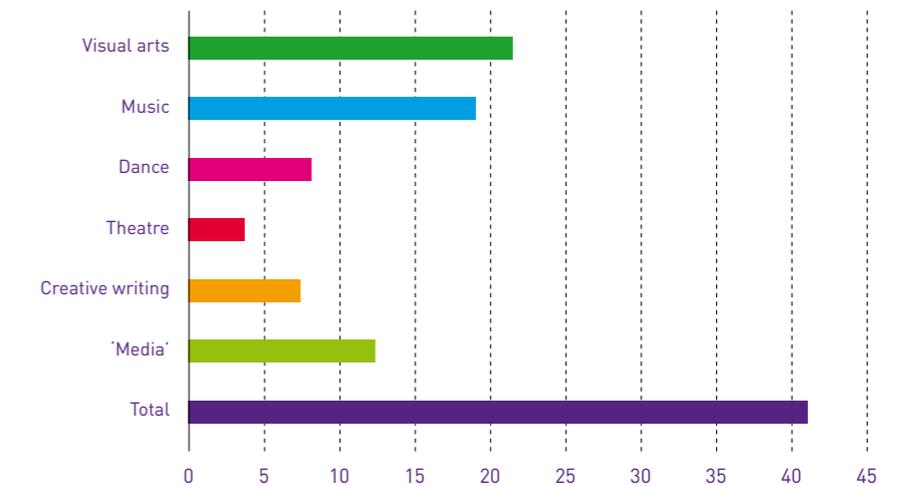
Which artistic and creative activities?

Artistic and creative activities include (1) visual arts activities in their broadest sense, (2) music (including singing in a choir or the like), (3) dance, (4) theatre, (5) creative writing, and (6) artistic photography, film, video or computer art. For the

sake of brevity, the last category is referred to as ‘media’ from here on, and creative writing is abridged to writing. Visual arts activities – very broadly defined – are the most widely practised, followed by music (and singing). Far fewer people are

actively involved in dance, theatre, creative writing or ‘media’. Almost 60% of practitioners participate in one of these activities, 25% in two activities and almost 20% in three or more.

Figure 2. Participation in artistic or creative activities in April 2015 and/or the preceding twelve months: percentage of the population aged six and older.



Jessy Siongers ‘Digital platforms are an important development’

‘The emergence of digital platforms is what really catches my eye. In Flanders, too, this is an important development, especially for amateur artists who used to have greater difficulty reaching a wider audience. Writers, for example. ‘The impact of public policy on participation is limited. The home environment is a very strong influence, as is education. And there we have two pillars that are extremely important in participation policy. Nor should we ignore financial obstacles. Figures from the Flemish

participation survey also show that obstacles of a financial nature are not seen as hugely important. Yet for some groups – albeit small groups – participating in the arts remains prohibitively expensive. However, respondents tend not to say this directly. They are more likely to say that they are not interested in the arts.’

Jessy Siongers is a researcher at the Support Desk for Culture Policy Research at the University of Ghent.

Is the number of practitioners increasing or decreasing?

The proportion of practitioners among the population aged six and older held steady at 41% from 2013 to 2015. Over the period 2009-2012, the percentage of practitioners fell slightly. In 2013, this downward trend dipped further but that may largely have been due to changes in the wording used to indicate certain activities: creative writing instead of writing and artistic photography rather than photography. Having said that, the percentages for

dance and theatre over the period 2009-2015 showed a slight decline as well. The decrease in the percentage of practitioners is not unique to artistic and creative leisure activities but can also be observed in other leisure pursuits. The percentage for participation in non-cultural hobbies decreased by almost a quarter over the period 2007-2011, according to an analysis of data on leisure pursuits

from the CentERdata panel Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences (LISS). It would appear that the use of internet, mobile telephony and social media in leisure time increased at the expense all the 'traditional' leisure activities.*

* Henk Vincken & Teunis IJdens (2015). De slag om de vrije tijd. [The Battle for Leisure Time.] In: T. IJdens & J.J. Knol (ed.), *Zicht op actieve cultuur- participatie 2014. Thema's en trends in praktijk en beleid* [Perspectives on Active Cultural Participation 2014. Themes and Trends in Practice and Policy.], Utrecht: LKCA/FCP.

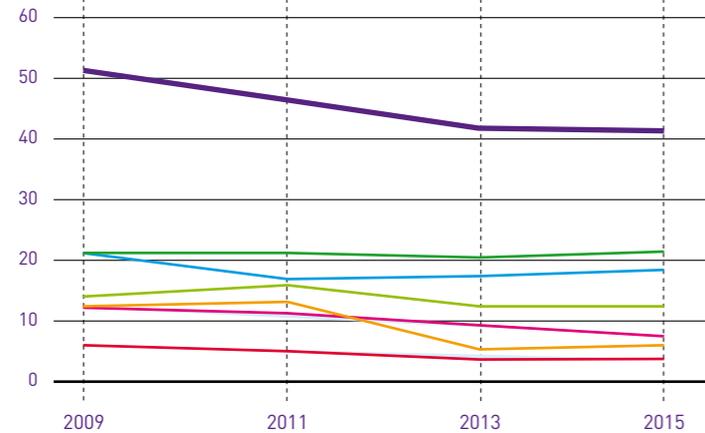


Figure 3. Participation in artistic or creative activities: percentage of the population aged six and older.

- Artistic or creative during leisure time: total
- Visual arts
- Music
- Dance
- Theatre
- Creative writing
- 'Media'

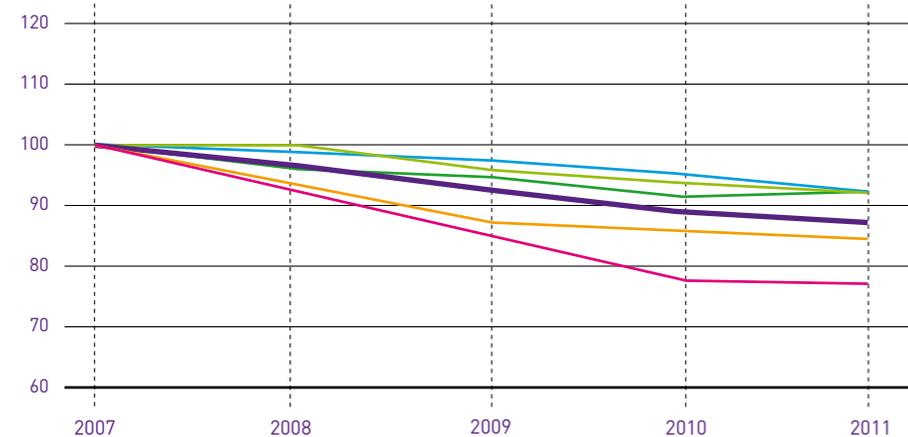
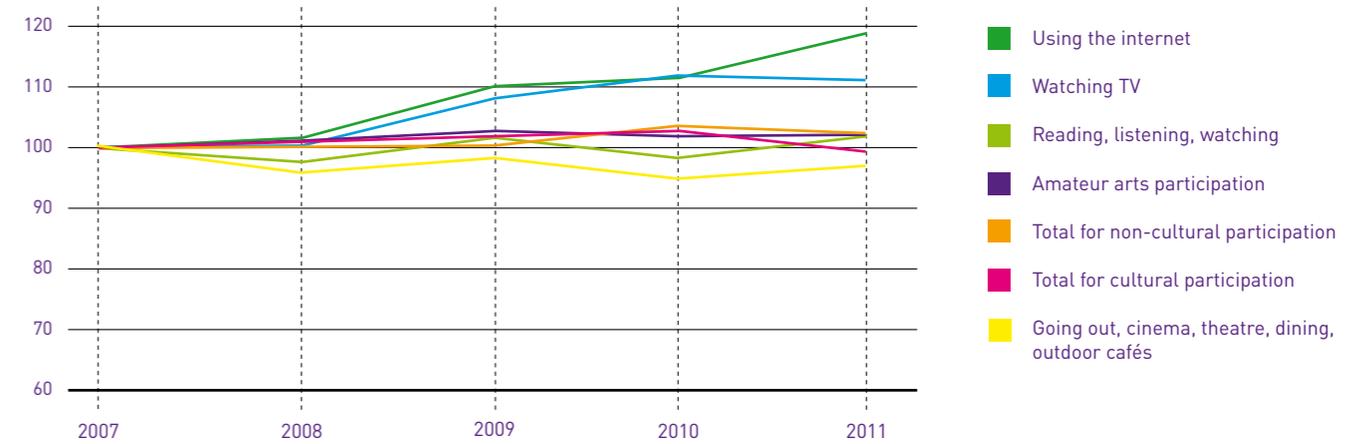


Figure 4. Participation in non-cultural leisure activities: percentage of the population aged 18 and older (index: 2007 = 100).

- Sports
- Shopping
- Caring for others
- Total for non-cultural participation
- Informal care and voluntary work
- Hobbies (non-cultural)

Figure 5. Time spent on various leisure activities: index (2007 = 100)



Do practitioners represent a cross-section of the population?

Practitioners of artistic or creative leisure activities come from all walks of life and all age groups. Girls and women are over-represented: half of all girls and women practise artistic or creative leisure activities, as opposed to one third of boys and men. The higher proportion of practitioners among girls and women is particularly true of the visual arts and dance, and less so for music, theatre and writing. However, it does not apply to the 'media' category. The proportion of practitioners among children and young people is considerably higher than among adults. Finally, adults with a higher level of education are slightly more likely to participate in an artistic or creative leisure activity than adults with an education at a middle or lower level. Income differentials are of very little influence.

Figure 6. Participation in artistic or creative activities: percentage of the male and female population aged six and older.

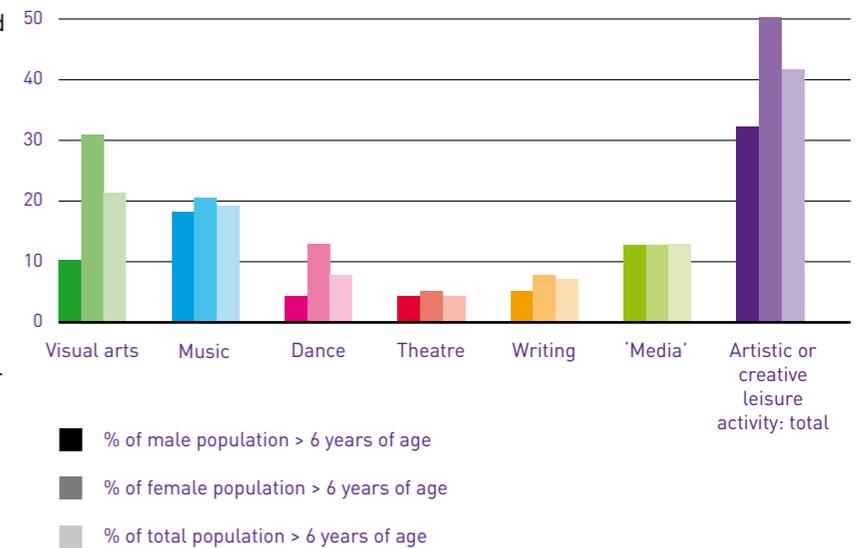
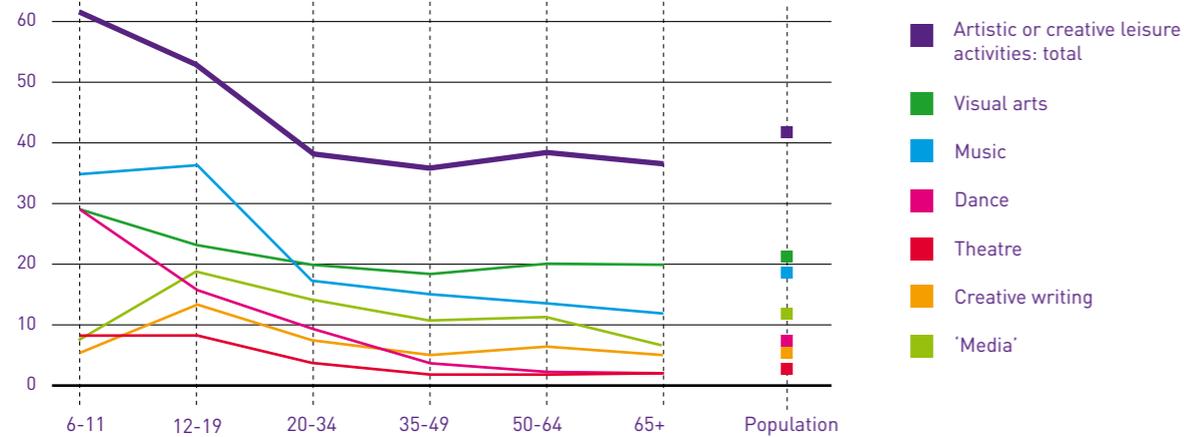


Figure 7. Participation in artistic and creative activities: percentage per age group of the population aged six or older.



Does the percentage of practitioners vary per province or between urban and rural areas?

It is often assumed that participation in the amateur arts is higher in non-urban areas than in large cities. However, the figures suggest otherwise. The distribution of practitioners across provinces, size of municipality and degree of urbanisation of the living environment hardly deviates from the distribution of non-practitioners and the Dutch population as a whole.

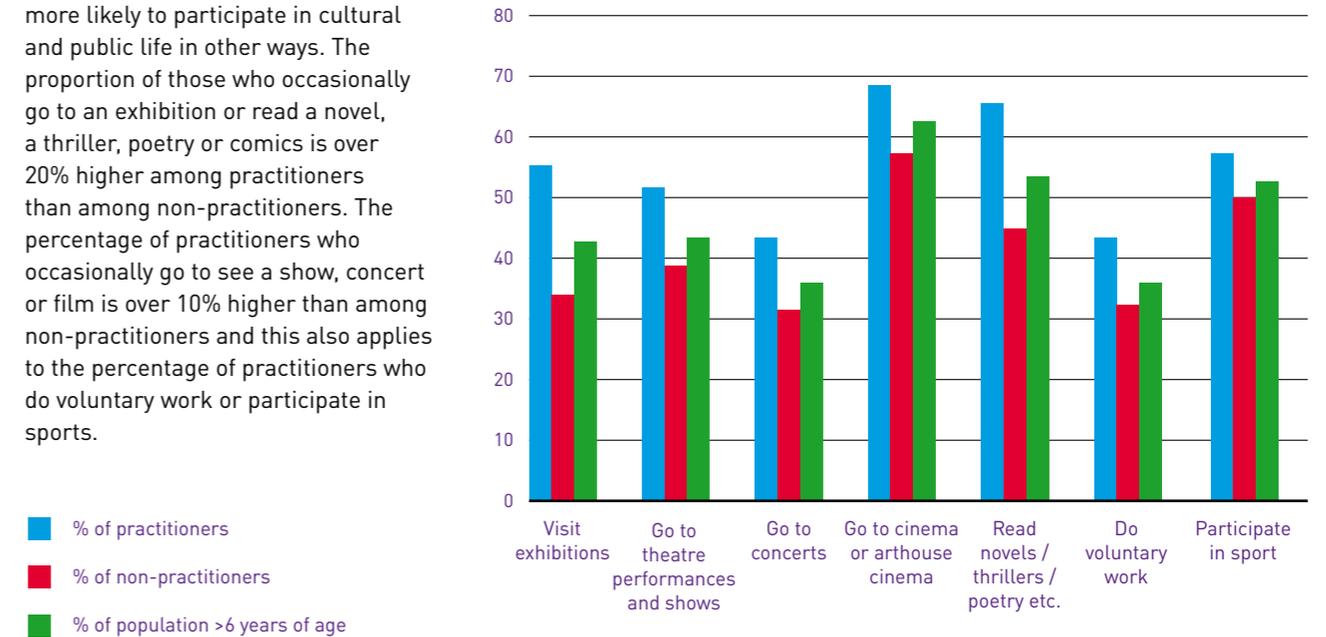


Figure 8. Percentage distribution of practitioners and non-practitioners of artistic and creative activities and of the total population aged six and over according to place of residence.

Do practitioners participate in other leisure activities more often than non-practitioners?

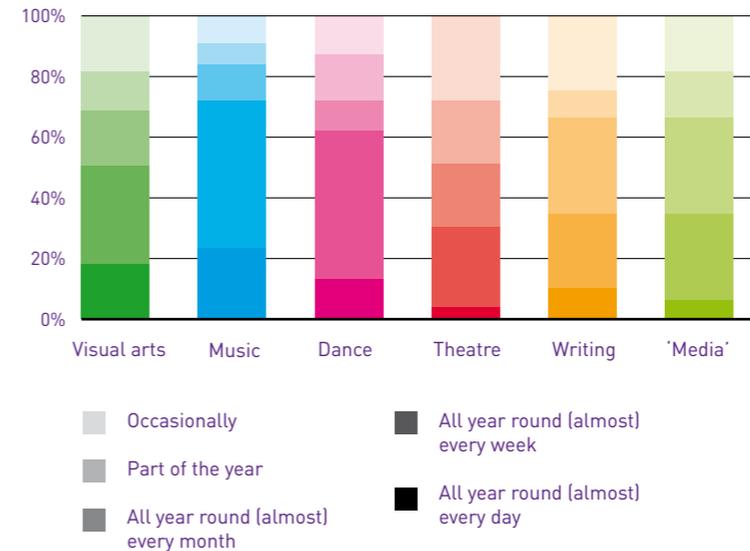
People who do something artistic or creative in their leisure time or who take classes in this field are generally more likely to participate in cultural and public life in other ways. The proportion of those who occasionally go to an exhibition or read a novel, a thriller, poetry or comics is over 20% higher among practitioners than among non-practitioners. The percentage of practitioners who occasionally go to see a show, concert or film is over 10% higher than among non-practitioners and this also applies to the percentage of practitioners who do voluntary work or participate in sports.

Figure 9. Receptive cultural participation, voluntary work and sport: percentage of practitioners and non-practitioners in artistic and creative activities and of the total population aged six and older.



How often are artistic or creative activities practised, and how much time do practitioners spend on it?

Figure 10. Patterns of practice: percentage of practitioners per type of activity.



Over 80% of practitioners participate in their artistic or creative activities throughout the year: most of them (almost) every week, or even (almost) every day. Ten percent only do so for part of the year, and another ten percent only occasionally.

Those who were artistically or creatively active in the month before the survey devoted an average of between seven and eight hours a week to this activity, but half spent four hours or less.

Hester Tammes

'I always translate figures in terms of Amsterdam'

'The focus on the amateur arts in Amsterdam's Arts Plan is minimal. These figures show how widely the amateur arts are practised. I include that in my discussions with the municipality, during which I always translate the figures in terms of the city itself. Here, for example, a relatively large percentage of the over-60s participate in the amateur arts, urban art is strongly represented and fewer people are active members of an association.'

'Some amenities, such as De Engelenbak theatre, are no longer with us. Others face the threat of rising real estate prices, making the activities they provide too expensive for a growing section of the public. This is true of De Zondagsschilders arts centre, for example. That's an aspect I am eager to investigate.'

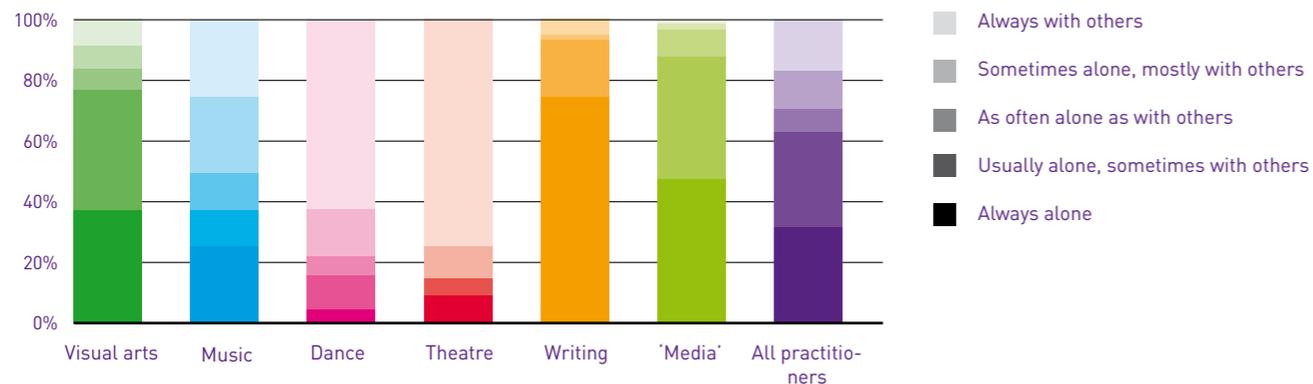
Hester Tammes is one of the driving forces behind SAKA, Amsterdam's amateur arts association.

Are people artistic or creative on their own, or together with others?

Doing or learning something artistic or creative in your leisure time is not necessarily a social activity. Two thirds of practitioners always or usually undertake their artistic or creative activities alone. This is especially true

of the categories visual arts, 'media' and creative writing. Those who dance or engage in the dramatic arts usually or always do so with others. Music is predominantly practised alone, but for a large minority it is a group activity too.

Figure 11. Alone or as part of a group: percentage of practitioners per type of activity.



How many practitioners are members of an association?

Almost a quarter of practitioners undertake their artistic or creative activities as a member of an association, which amounts to almost half a million people in the

Netherlands. One fifth are members of an informal group. The proportion of practitioners active as part of an association or an informal group is twice as high among those in dance,

theatre and music as those involved in the visual arts, 'media' or creative writing.

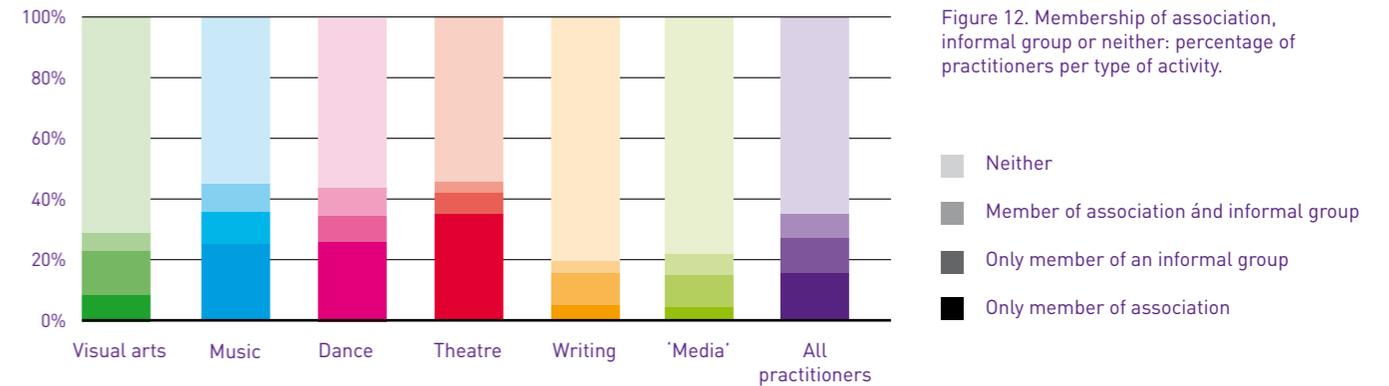


Figure 12. Membership of association, informal group or neither: percentage of practitioners per type of activity.

How much do practitioners spend on their activities, and do they earn any money?

Practitioners spend an average of €75 per month on tuition fees, memberships, transport and the like, while half spend €20 or less. This includes practitioners who spend nothing on their activities – approximately one-third. The total expenditure on artistic and creative leisure activities in the Netherlands is somewhere between one and a half billion euros (low estimate) and five billion euros (high estimate) on an annual basis. Only very few practitioners (6%) sometimes earn money from their artistic or creative hobby.

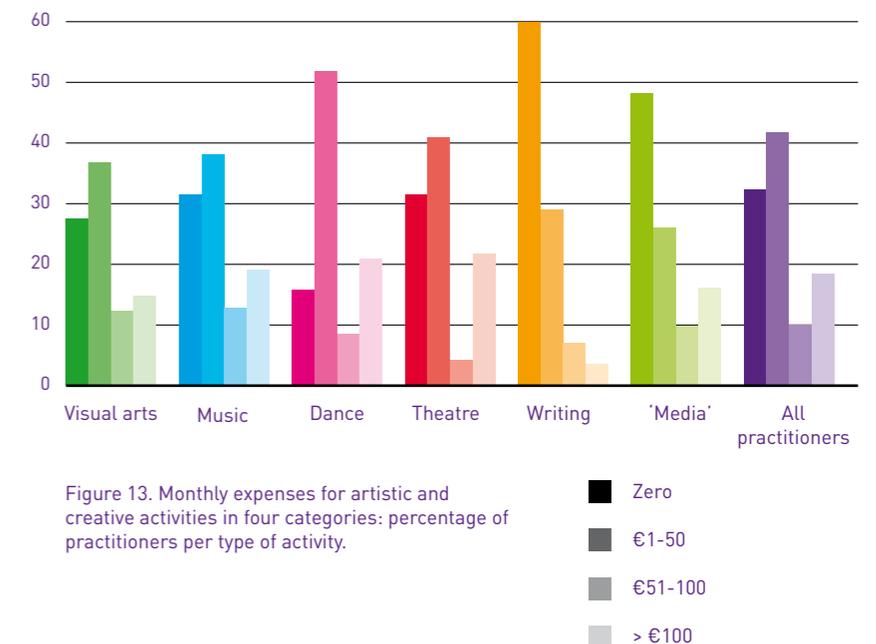


Figure 13. Monthly expenses for artistic and creative activities in four categories: percentage of practitioners per type of activity.

Facilities

Depending on type of activity, practitioners require different facilities: physical space in which to make, do or learn something; teachers and expert guidance to learn from and to help them improve; venues (physical and digital) so that they can share what they make or do with the public; and information

and knowledge to help them in their artistic and creative activities. In addition, they need resources such as instruments, tools, materials and in some cases special clothing.

Lydia Jongmans 'Quality needs our attention'

'Interestingly, people say they have hardly experienced any facilities disappearing, which one would expect now that municipalities are cutting down on funding for music schools and arts centres. In the cities this doesn't surprise me. In an urban setting, teachers who lose their job often continue their activities, albeit in less favourable working conditions. But I was afraid this would be different in rural areas. There, too, facilities have been subject to cutbacks, giving rise to the question of whether sufficient alternatives would be available. These figures

indicate that the quantity of supply remains unaffected. But what about the quality? The burning question for the municipalities now is: are facilities being maintained at a similar standard? As a municipality, do you believe it is enough for people to be occupied on a recreational basis, or are you aiming for more?'

Lydia Jongmans is a senior cultural policy advisor with the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG)

What kind of space do practitioners need and where do they find it?

Over 60 percent of practitioners do their activities in or adjacent to their own home without using facilities elsewhere. Others, nearly 40 percent, make use of (or also make use of) work spaces, rehearsal spaces or classrooms outside their own homes. Association premises, community centres, churches, someone else's home or a centre for the arts or a music school are the most frequently mentioned.

- Space elsewhere, outside own home
- Separate room in own home
- In own home (i.e. living space)

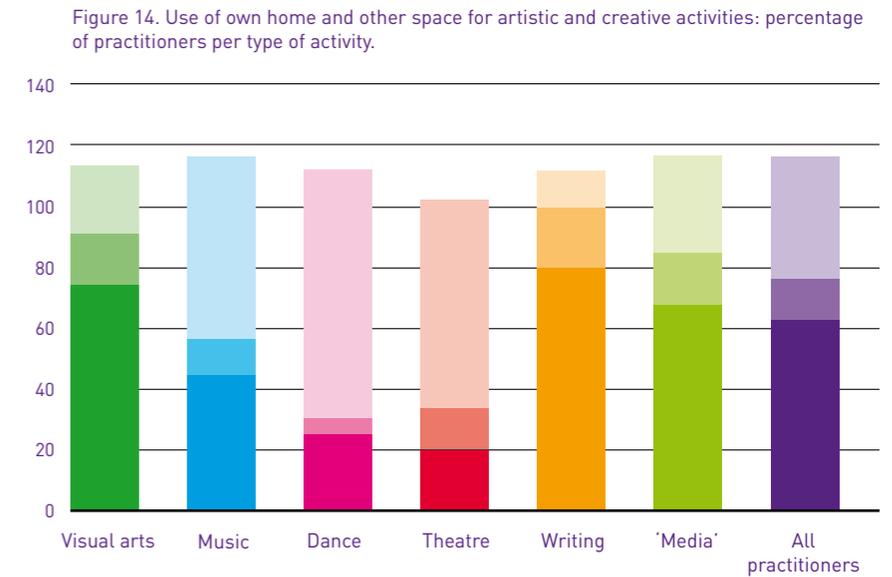
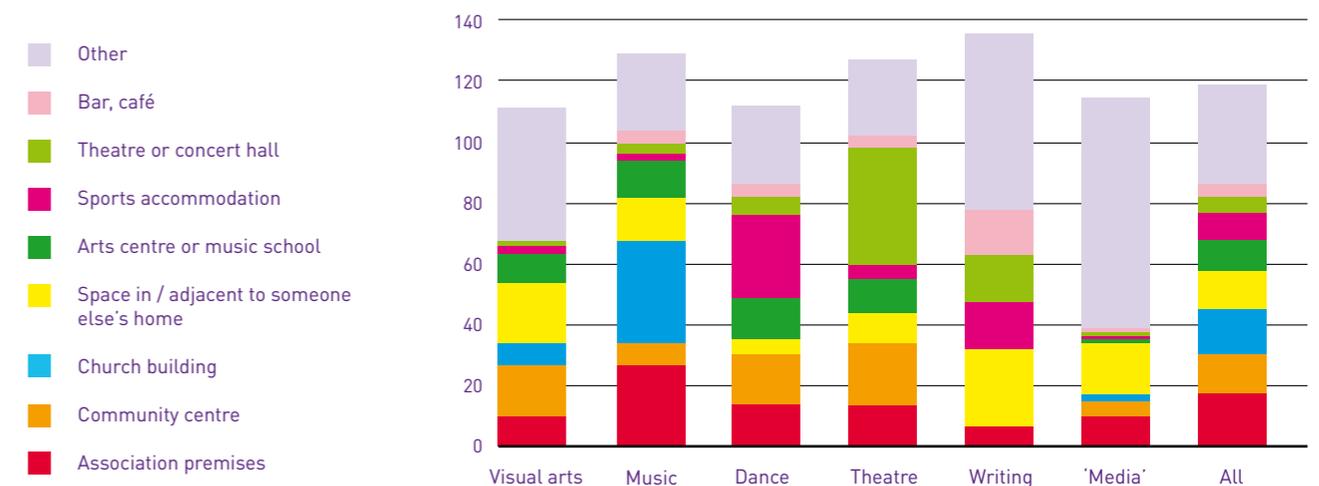


Figure 15. Use of space outside own home for artistic and creative activities: percentage of practitioners that use another space, per type of activity.



Arjen van El and Iris van de Kamp 'Subsidise the customers, not the suppliers'

'The monitor confirms the importance of activities offered by private, self-employed suppliers. No less than 80 percent of customers are already served by associations, freelance professionals or informal set-ups. In the future this percentage will increase. It is crucial that local authorities facilitate this development, and one way of doing so is to adapt their policy on subsidies. Instead of giving subsidies to institutions supplying lessons

and workshops, give them to customers. This enables customers to determine which professional they want to take classes from, and it puts freelancers in a fairer position when it comes to attracting income. Current subsidy regulations are disrupting the market.'

Arjen van El and Iris van de Kamp are the initiators of Muziekhuis Deventer, a private set-up for music lessons

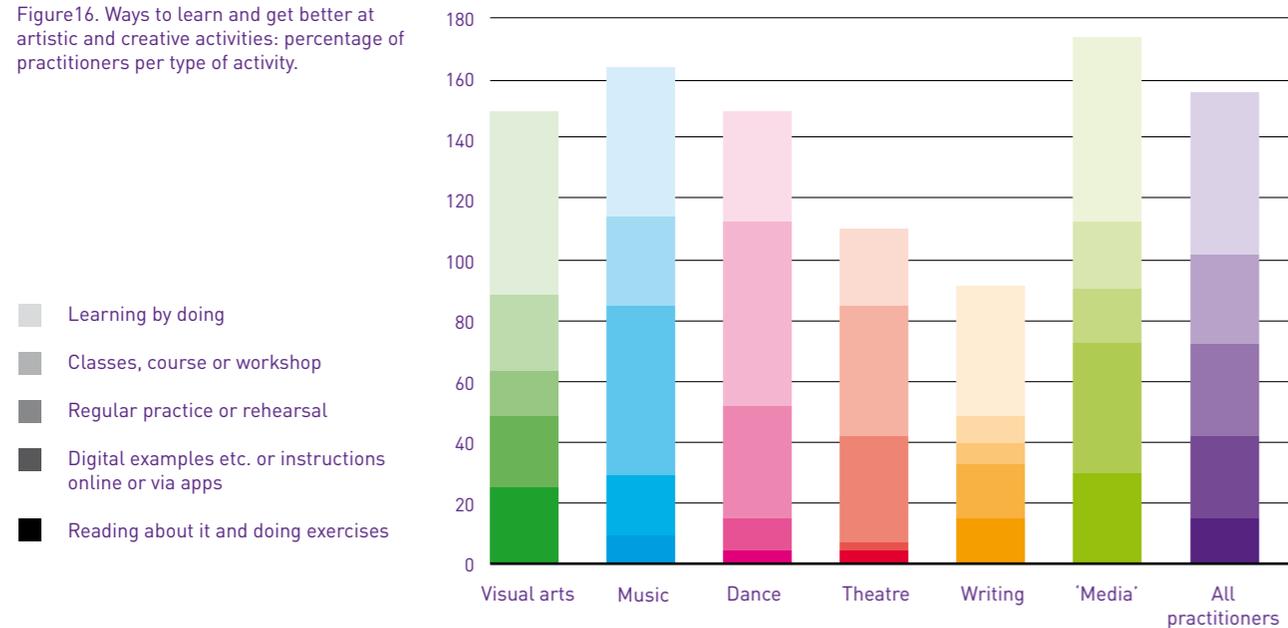
What action do practitioners take in order to learn and get better at what they do?

Practitioners take different and often multiple approaches to getting better at what they do and make. 'Learning by doing' is the most frequently mentioned approach: this applies to 45 percent of the practitioners. Nearly one third attend classes, take a course or have recently participated

in a workshop at some time, which amounts to almost two million people in the Netherlands. In addition, nearly one-third also practise or rehearse regularly to learn and improve. There are also provisions for individual learning, without or in combination with a teacher or artist, for example:

online examples, special apps or an online community, reading about it and doing exercises from a book, or by watching television or a DVD. Taken together, a third of all practitioners make use of digital teaching materials.

Figure 16. Ways to learn and get better at artistic and creative activities: percentage of practitioners per type of activity.



Who do practitioners go to for lessons or workshops?

Half of practitioners who attend classes, take a course or who have completed an occasional workshop do so with an independent, self-employed teacher or artist. Less than one fifth took classes etc. from a teacher at an arts centre, music school or creative centre. The rest – over one

third – learn from a teacher or artist working with another organisation, such as a dance school, an association or a cultural centre. Arts centres, music schools and creative centres – which generally speaking constitute the subsidised local infrastructure for out of school art education – serve

between 15 and 20 percent on estimate of the demand for classes, courses and workshops; that accounts for approximately 350,000 practitioners.

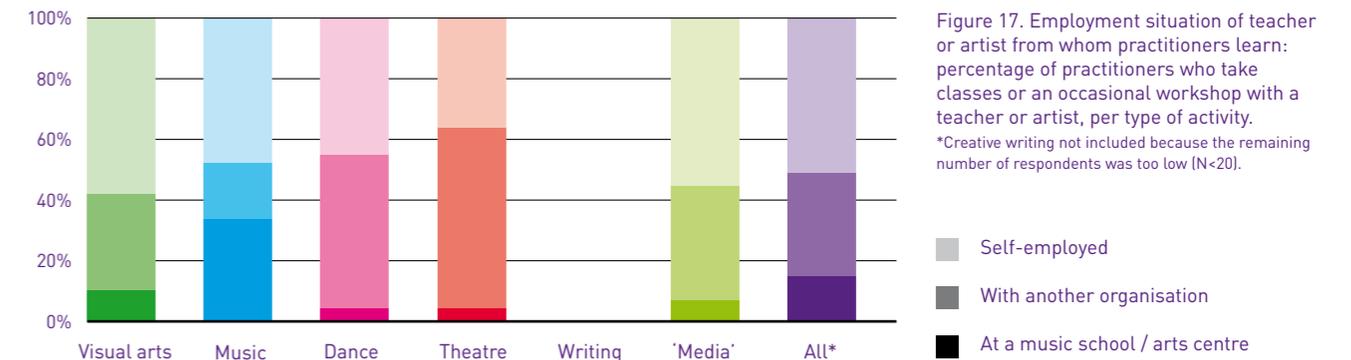
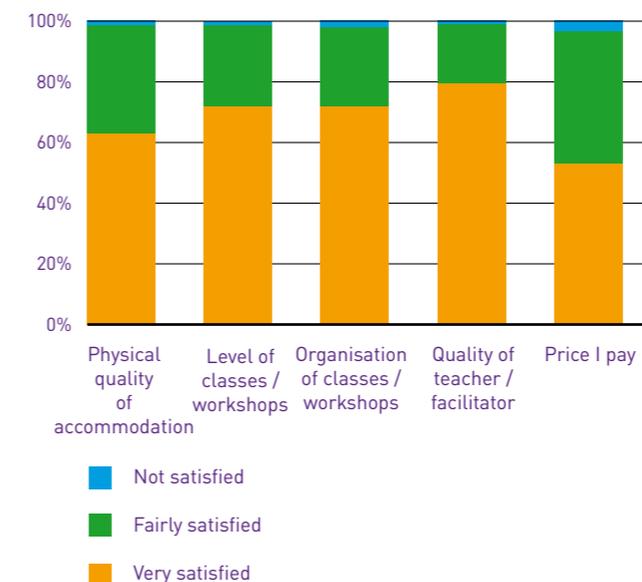


Figure 17. Employment situation of teacher or artist from whom practitioners learn: percentage of practitioners who take classes or an occasional workshop with a teacher or artist, per type of activity. *Creative writing not included because the remaining number of respondents was too low (N<20).

What do practitioners think of the classes, courses and workshops they take?

Figure 18. Satisfaction of practitioners with lessons, courses and workshops: percentage of practitioners who take classes or an occasional workshop with a teacher or artist.



Nearly all practitioners are fairly satisfied, or very satisfied with the instruction they receive in classes, courses and workshops. This includes the physical quality of the accommodation, the level and the organisations of classes (etc.), the quality of the teacher or facilitator, and also the price. This does not differ according to type of provider, except when it comes to price: those who are taught by a teacher at an arts centre or music school tend to be somewhat less satisfied with the price they have to pay than practitioners who receive instruction from a self-employed, independent teacher or artist.

Which venues and platforms are used by practitioners to let others see, hear or read what they do and make?

Nearly a third of practitioners sometimes give a public performance, exhibit their work or let others see, hear or read their work through digital channels. For activities that are usually practised individually and at home (visual arts, writing, 'media') digital platforms are far more important than more or less professional physical venues which are mainly important to those who dance and act.

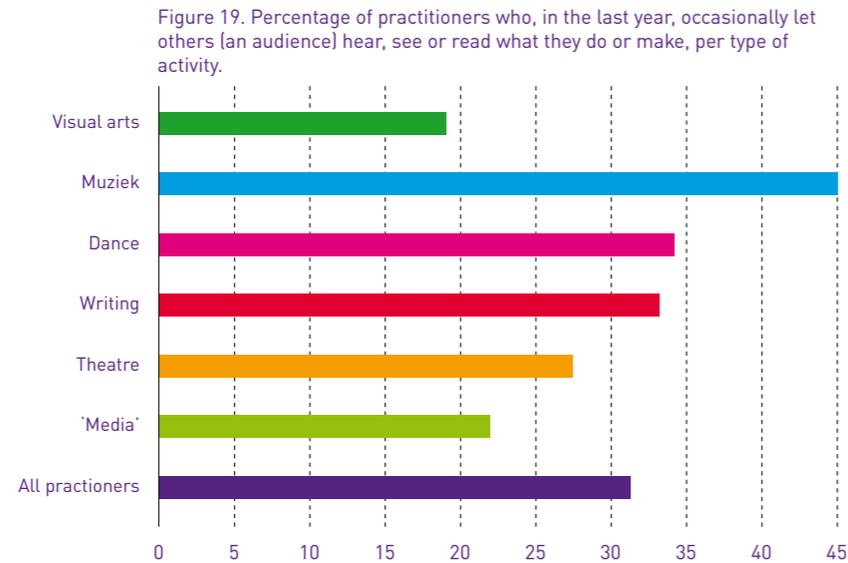
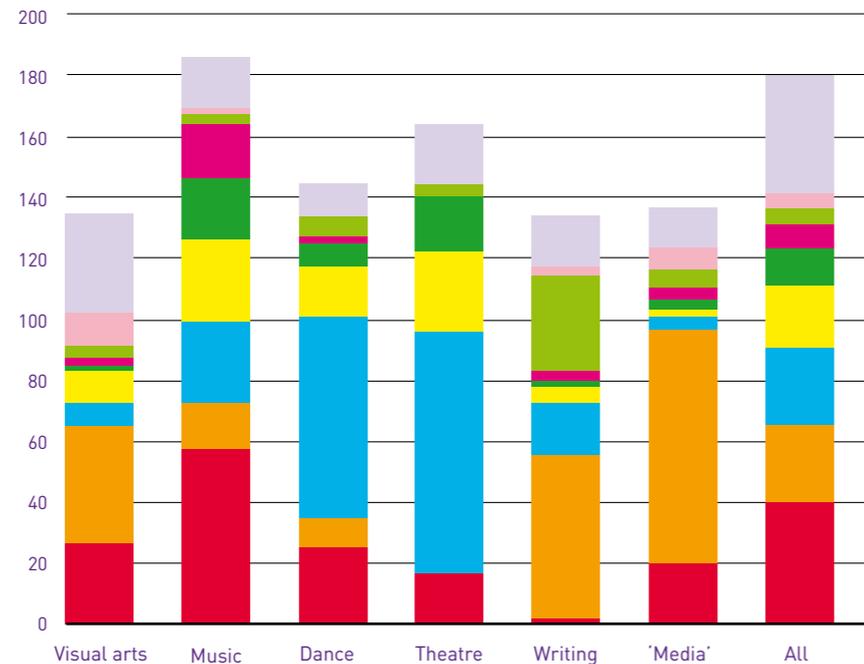


Figure 20. Venues or platforms where practitioners let others see, hear or read what they do or make: practitioners who did so in the previous twelve months, per type of activity.

- Other
- Gallery, museum, exhibition space
- Magazines, newspapers, print media
- Café, bar etc.
- Festivals, concours
- Outdoor public spaces
- Professional performing arts venue
- Digital podia, internet/communication
- Community centre, church etc.



Addy van Hemert
'Accessibility and quality remain important'

'The figures show the rise of private providers, but what about the accessibility and the quality of provision? As a province, we need to ensure that the infrastructure remains at an acceptable level and matches people's needs. This year, the decentralisation of care services took place, putting municipalities under serious financial pressure. As a result, municipalities cut their culture budget by an average of 20 per cent. From municipalities, I often hear an emotional, knee-jerk response: everything is

disappearing. There is a lot of political pressure on the provincial authorities to fill that gap, but first I want to see emotions backed up by facts. I am therefore very curious about the results of the next survey, which will hopefully be carried out before long.'

Addy van Hemert is a policy advisor on culture for the Province of Noord-Brabant

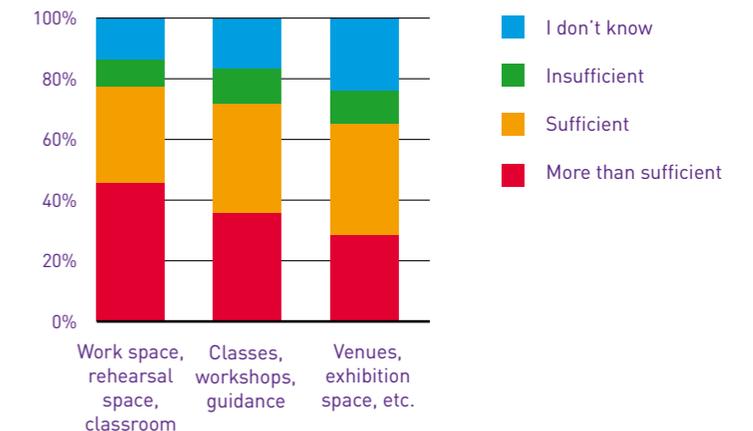
What do practitioners think of the availability and accessibility of services?

According to the vast majority of practitioners there are adequate provisions in the area: work space, rehearsal space or classrooms, classes and expert guidance and physical or digital platforms. Practitioners of theatre and 'media',

and practitioners in non-urban or low-density urban areas seem to encounter a shortage of work space and rehearsal space and a lack of provision as regards classes and guidance more often than practitioners. Practitioners in non-urban areas also

tend to think somewhat more often than practitioners in urban areas that there are insufficient appropriate venues. Incidentally, there are also practitioners who do not know whether there are sufficient facilities on offer.

Figure 21. Opinion of practitioners about the availability of services: percentage of practitioners, per type of facility.



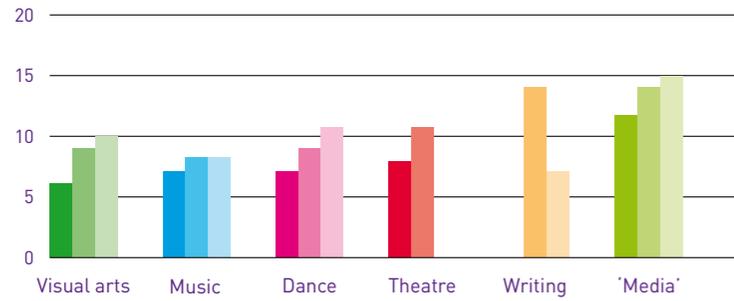


Figure 22. Practitioners who think there are too few facilities in their area: percentage of practitioners who use these facilities, per type of activity.

- Too little work space, etc.
- Too few classes or too little coaching
- Too few venues/platforms

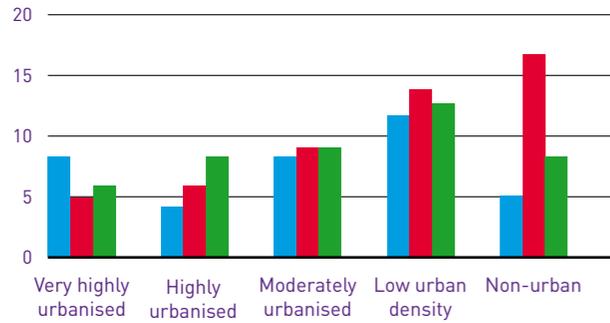


Figure 23. Practitioners who think there are too few facilities in their area: percentage of practitioners who use these facilities, according to the urban density of their place of residence (according to Statistics Netherlands categorisation)

- Too little work space, etc.
- Too few classes or too little coaching
- Too few venues/platforms

Over three quarters (venues) to over 80 percent (classes and guidance) and 85 percent (work space, rehearsal space and classrooms) of the practitioners who make use of these facilities are satisfied with their accessibility. This varies only slightly or not at all according to the degree of urbanisation of the residential environment.

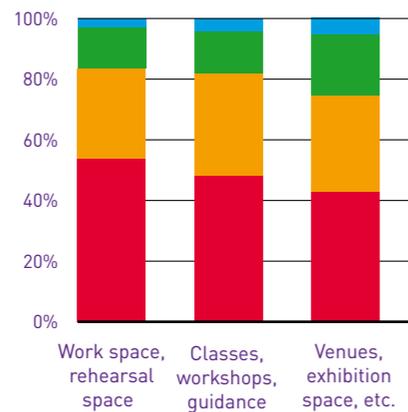


Figure 24. Opinion of practitioners about the accessibility of facilities per type of facility: percentage of practitioners using these facilities, per type of facility.

- Not satisfied
- Neutral
- Fairly satisfied
- Very satisfied

Have facilities disappeared in the past two years?

Four percent of practitioners report that facilities have disappeared in the past two years (space, classes and coaching, or venues/platforms), while half say this is not the case. Others do not know or do not make use of external facilities.

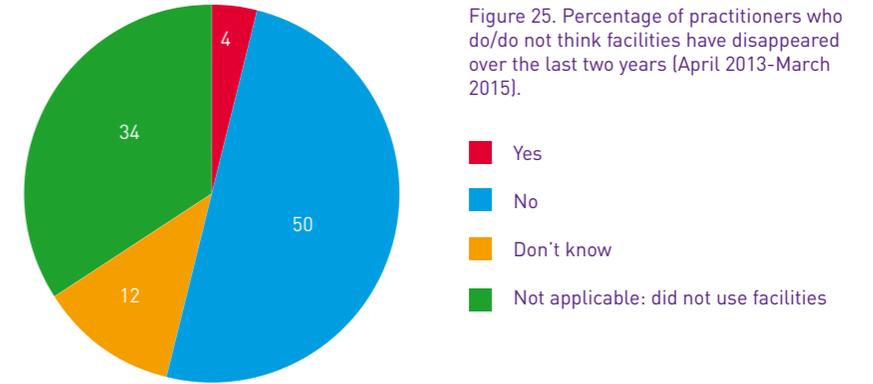
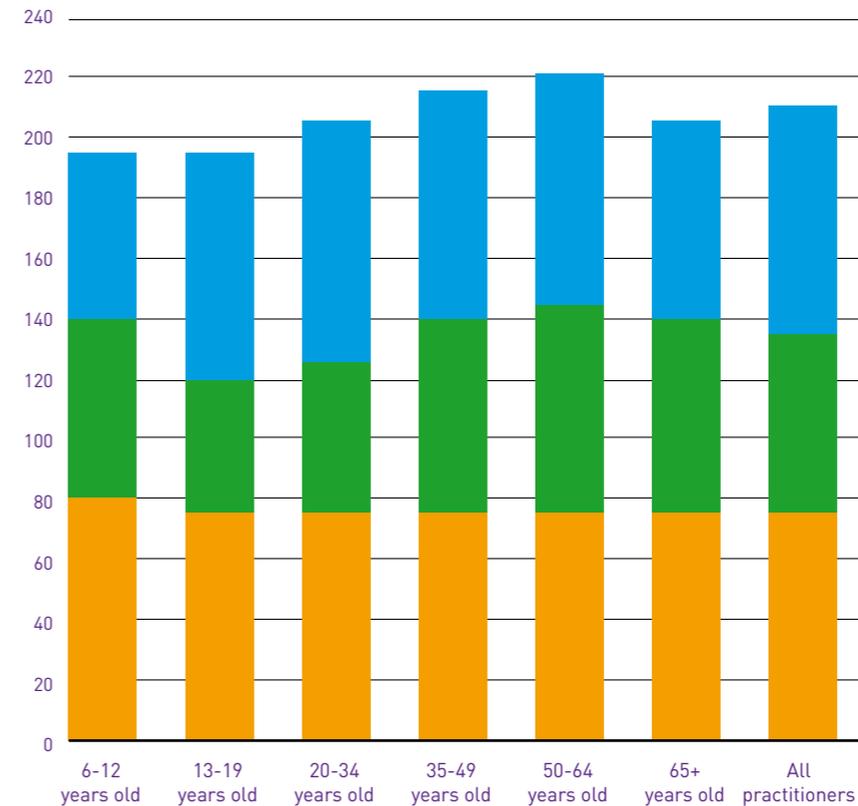


Figure 25. Percentage of practitioners who do/do not think facilities have disappeared over the last two years (April 2013-March 2015).

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable: did not use facilities

How do practitioners obtain information for their activities?



Over 80 percent of practitioners mention friends, acquaintances and family as a source of information about their artistic and creative activities. Three quarters (also) use digital media – association websites, Facebook and other websites. More than half (also) obtain information from daily newspapers and free local papers. The use of digital media has come to occupy a clear place in the provision of information, knowledge and inspiration to practitioners about artistic and creative activities and as a platform to share what one does and makes with others.

Figure 26. Use of various information sources about artistic and creative activities: percentage of practitioners, by age group.

- Digital media
- Newspapers and free local papers
- Friends, acquaintances, family

Colophon

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