ASSESSMENT OF THE CREATIVE AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT OF ARTISTS

SUMMARY

2024

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CONTENT

the pregenual anterior cingulate cortex
to hear what lies beneath
the skin
with a new story
one of potential causes for excess of estrogen
the skin pours
(soak in)
into the day

INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, the lives and work of artists are surrounded by myths. Society often views them as especially creative, talented, sometimes even genius individuals. Their work process and search for inspiration are romanticized, and the artist's profession is sometimes equated with a calling. In today's world, the term “bohemia” is no longer commonly used when talking about artists; artists themselves tend to take a more rational view of their creative work. However, due to the specific nature of art creation and presentation, it is analysed according to particular parameters.

When choosing their profession, artists mostly do not rely on financial reasons. For creators, the freedom of self-expression that arises when creating and presenting artworks, the opportunity to shape public opinion, and being part of an artistic community are important. However, artists also face many challenges: researchers worldwide (this study analySed cases from Norway, Australia, Finland, Poland, the Netherlands, Denmark, and other countries) note that creators' earnings from artistic work are not competitive; that is, artists' remuneration from their work is insufficient to meet their personal needs, forcing them to seek additional income sources. Employment is often fragmented and based on short-term contracts.

Similar questions arise when looking at the Lithuanian context: what is the economic situation of artists? Do the existing financial instruments, cultural policy frameworks, institutional structures, activities of organizations representing and uniting artists, and the existing art market ensure—or can ensure—decent conditions for artists' creative work?

The first social and creative status study of artists in Lithuania in 20 years, presented in 2020, identified key aspects of creators' economic and creative life, highlighting economic challenges. This study continues the systematic analysis of Lithuanian creators' situation, and its results will allow evaluating the changes over four years and provide recommendations for measures that could improve artists' conditions.

The aim of the study is to analyse the current creative (physical and financial conditions for creating), economic, and social status of creators and compare it with the situation identified in the 2020 study, based on the methodology of the previous study.

The study consists of two main parts/reports. The first part — BACKGROUND — presents the artist's situation, looking at the country's legal framework, financial instruments applied to support artists' welfare, the activities of institutions representing creators, and the international context perspective. The second part — SURVEY — presents the results of a survey conducted among artists. This is a direct assessment of the current artist situation, based on results from over 1,600 completed artist surveys. For the first time in Lithuanian history, such a large sample of artists has been achieved, underscoring the relevance of this survey and allowing a detailed evaluation of the economic and social challenges faced by artists in 2024, as well as their assessment of future prospects.

BACKGROUND

1.

THE ARTIST: CONTEXT, LEGAL REGULATION, AND DEFINITION

The first part of the background reviews the definitions of artists in legal acts and academic literature. Summarising the conducted analysis and building upon the definition formulated in the first study on the social and creative status of artists (Kregždaitė and Godlevska, 2021), the latter is supplemented, leaving the following formulation:

Artist – a person who ACTIVELY AND SYSTEMATICALLY engages in creative activity: has acquired an education in the field of art and/or uniquely creates or recreates works of art and/or considers artistic creation and the CREATOR'S POSITION to be an essential part of their life and/or earns income from this activity and/or contributes to the development of art and culture and/or WHOSE WORK IS RECOGNISED BY PROFESSIONAL ART EXPERTS.

Table 1. Explanation of the definition of an artist (compiled by the authors).

Statement	Explanation
actively and systematically engages in creative activity	Creation is a deliberate choice. At the same time, creation is an ongoing process, consisting of a continuous creative flow – both in deepening knowledge and skills, and in seeking ways to realize one's creative vision. Active and systematic creative activity is also related to the artist's self-perception – the understanding of oneself as an artist and the sense of belonging to the artistic community.
has acquired an education in the field of art	Education is one of the criteria that can substantiate an artist's competencies and readiness to participate in the professional art scene. In today's constantly evolving art market, artists find various ways to acquire and develop artistic competencies (Throsby & Petetskaya, 2024). Formal education is not a necessary requirement for pursuing artistic practices, nor does it guarantee success (Hirvi-Ijäs et al., 2024). Some authors (Colvin, 2008) argue the opposite – emphasizing the importance of consistent and focused creative work over innate talent. Most of the practical skills essential for creative work are acquired through hands-on experience (Abbing, 2022). However, although formal education is not a necessary component of an artist's career, in many countries, artists tend to be more educated than the rest of the workforce (Throsby & Petetskaya, 2024; Hirvi-Ijäs, Renko, Sokka, & Leppänen, 2024). Additionally, individuals with an education in the arts are more likely to remain in the profession (Bille & Jensen, 2018).
uniquely creates or recreates works of art	Individuality, distinctiveness, and uniqueness set the artist apart, making them interesting and relevant to both the

	audience and the development of culture and art. The outcome of an artist's creative work or activity is a created artwork in one of the fields of art.
considers artistic creation and the creator's position to be an essential part of their life	The creator regards their artistic profession as an essential part of life and as a foundation that gives meaning to existence. Choosing the profession of an artist involves risk, but the potential for success and the satisfaction derived from creative work encourages individuals to take that risk. Although income from creative activity may be lower than in other fields, the non-monetary rewards of the creative profession help to compensate for this. When analysing artists, their dedication to creative activity is also important—even if it is not their primary source of income—what matters is whether creators perceive themselves as artists. (Throsby, 2001)
earns income from this activity	Income substantiates creative activity as a profession. One of the most important criteria for identifying a profession is income. Some studies (Throsby & Zednik, 2010; Ilczuk et al., 2015; Ilczuk et al., 2020) define a person as an artist if at least 50% of their income is earned from creative activity. However, more recent studies have moved away from this requirement. Creative work can be cyclical—for example, an artist may have sold a major work the previous year and have no income in the current year (Throsby & Petetskaya, 2024). A 2024 study of artists in Poland (Ilczuk, 2024) revealed that as many as 58% of respondents earned less than the minimum wage from their artistic activity. Similar trends were observed in the 2021 study of Lithuanian artists (Kregždaitė & Godlevska, 2021), which also highlights the distinctive nature of the creative labor market and shows that income should not be the primary criterion in defining the artist's profession.
contributes to the development of art and culture	Participates in the professional art scene, sees and understands their contribution to contemporary, relevant cultural development and the continuity of cultural history.
whose work is recognised by professional art experts	This factor is related to the desire to present one's works publicly and to be recognised as an artist within other professional communities (membership in creative unions, awards and prizes, granted status of professional art creator).

The second part of the context provides an overview of the labour market for artistic activities. It presents scientific studies of the social and creative status of artists in Lithuania and other countries, which are used to argue for the choice of profession and analyse work in several markets and income inequality.

The third part of the context is devoted to the population of artists in Lithuania. This part presents the number of artists in Lithuania and discusses the distribution of artists in the country by area, demographic indicators, participation in the system of funding for individual creators, and membership in various unions and associations.

There is no comprehensive database of artists in Lithuania, so the following databases containing information on artists were combined for the purposes of this study:

1. List of persons with the status of artist provided by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania (data obtained on July 30, 2024);
2. Lists of MKO members (data from the beginning of 2024, Landscape Architects' Union – data from the beginning of 2025, Design Union – data from the beginning of 2022);
3. List of LKT scholarship recipients for 2014–2025;
4. List of LKC scholarship recipients for 2018–2024;
5. List of AGATA members (data received on December 12, 2024) [1];
6. List of LATGA members (data received on December 16, 2024);
7. List of AVAKA members (data received on September 18, 2024);
8. List of members of other associations uniting creators (Architects' Chamber of Lithuania) (data received on April 24, 2025);
9. List of VMI support recipients (data received on November 17, 2024);
10. List of LRKM downtime allowance recipients (data received on November 13, 2024).

The selected databases and the lists of artists they provide made it possible to expand the population of artists counted in 2020 (Kregždaitė and Godlevska, 2021) by including creators who do not seek the status of an artist or claim state funding but are actively engaged in creative activities and receive remuneration for them through copyright or related rights management organizations.

The joint list of artists was compiled by combining all the information provided by the organizations and cross-referencing it with the death records of the Center of Registers (April 2025); underage creators were not included in the list. **Based on the summarized data, the population of artists in Lithuania in 2025 was 16,849 people.**

In 2022, when the war in Ukraine began, artists from that country were given the opportunity to create in Lithuania and receive grants for creative activities. A total of 210 creators applied for scholarships. They are an important part of the current cultural ecosystem in Lithuania, but since the aim of the study is to analyse the situation of Lithuanian artists, these creators are not included in the overall analysis.

The following is a breakdown of the Lithuanian artist population by status, union membership, and activity in applying for scholarships. This allows us to identify the complexity of the Lithuanian art field and link artists' creative practices to labour market theories. Based on this information, several groups of artists can be distinguished:

- **Those seeking to give meaning to their work and their status as creators (5,715 people in total)**, who value the public recognition and social guarantees that come with the status of art creator. There are 495 individuals who only have the status of an artist but do not belong to any other group of artists.

[1] Members who have received remuneration for the use of their work through AGATA at least once.

- **Creators who form communities affiliated professionals** and value the opportunities offered by membership in an artists' union **(4,567 individuals)**. This group alone comprises 206 individuals.
- Not only those engaged in creative activities, but also those **seeking opportunities to finance their individual creativity**, applying for scholarships **(4,083 persons)**. This group alone includes 1,360 individuals.
- **Those receiving income from the use of their creative work** through collective rights management associations **(11,027 persons)**. This group alone includes 7,859 creators, most of whom can be classified as representatives of popular genres;
- **Belonging to other organizations that bring together professionals from different fields (1,321 persons)**. This group alone includes 876 creators who are actively engaged in practical activities and do not need to finance them from state funding sources.

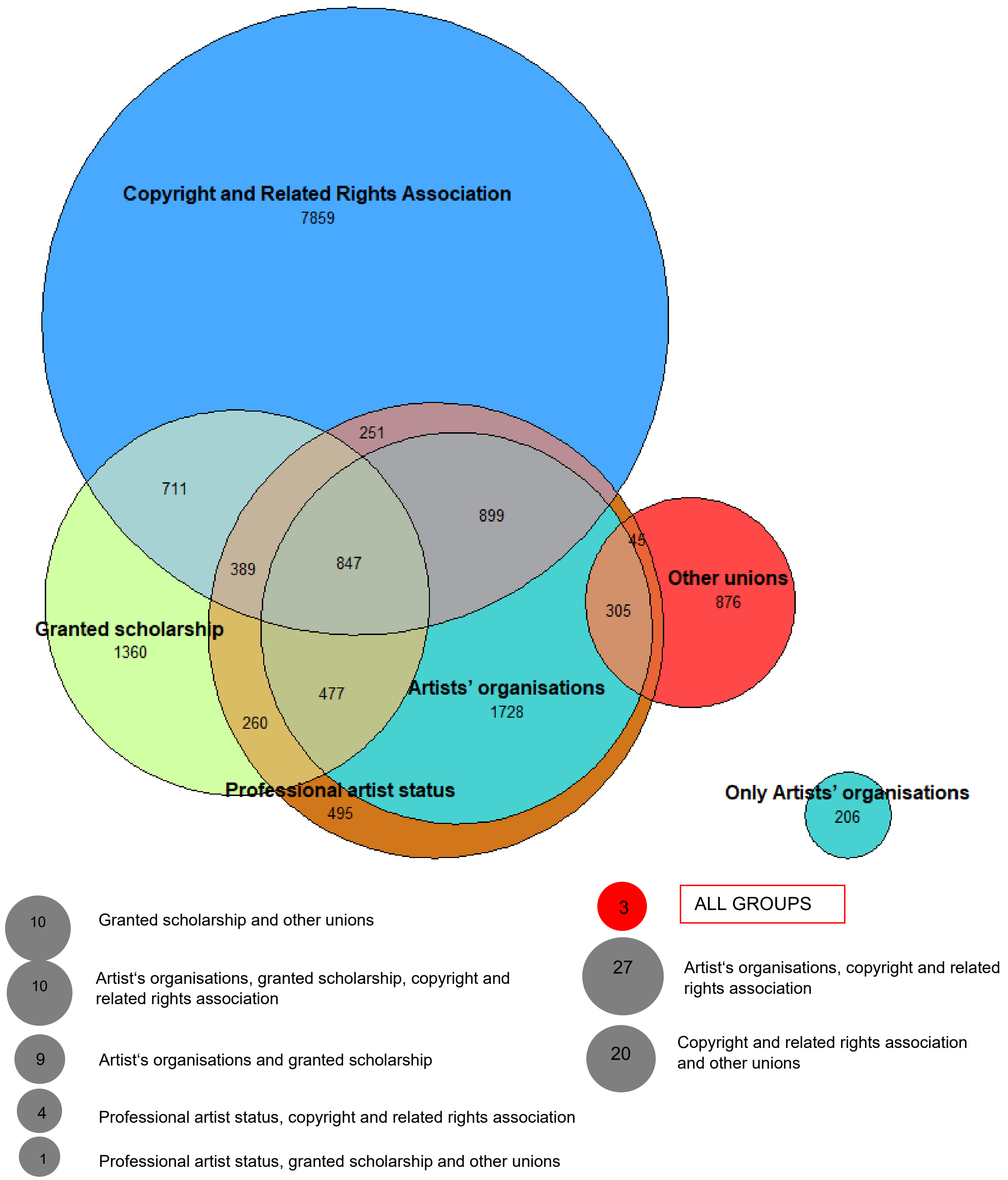

Figure 1. Lithuanian artist population in 2024. Compiled by the authors.

The fourth part of the context examines the representation of artists. This section discusses the major artists' unions, associations, and other organizations in order to assess how well artists are potentially represented and what kind of ecosystem related to artists is functioning.

The fifth part of the context is dedicated to the social and legal protection of artists. It reviews tax and social protection measures applied to artists and provides detailed indicators of social protection programs.

The sixth part of the context focuses on investments in artists. It reviews cultural consumption expenditures and, when assessing the economic situation of artists in Lithuania based on available data, considers different sources of income:

- Employment income;
- Scholarships (national, municipal, international): LKT, LKC;
- Project funding;
- Remuneration for the use of works: LATGA, AVAKA, AGATA;
- Status as a grant recipient: VMI;
- Private sponsorship.

The seventh part of the context is dedicated to fair compensation for creative work. The issue of fair remuneration for artists has been raised for many years by various institutions, such as the Lithuanian Artists' Union (LKT) and individual artists' associations. The discussions focus on questions such as: who should set guidelines for fair compensation (evaluating fees for different creative activities); how to assess activities/creations that are unique to each artist and depend on various circumstances, such as the artist's experience, professionalism, demand for their work, and so on; whether the proposed pricing guidelines might harm artists (for example, whether regardless of experience and recognition, only the minimum recommended fees would be accepted); and finally, how to ensure that the proposed pricing guidelines are adhered to.

On the other hand, discussions with artists about fair remuneration highlight the importance of publicly presenting possible pricing guidelines – this is especially important for young artists who are still unfamiliar with the art market and, in a way, do not know what fair pay would be. The importance of transparency was also emphasized during focus group discussions with artists, where it was noted that female artists tend to quote lower prices, and knowing what colleagues are paid can encourage setting fairer fees closer to market rates (Mažeikaitė & Čelutkaitė, 2022).

This section provides several examples – remuneration guidelines by field. When setting rates, the aim is to present generalized (mostly dominant) activities corresponding to each field.

SURVEY

1. METHODOLOGY

1.1 Research methodology

The research questionnaire was developed based on key factors that influence the status of artists. This allows for a comprehensive overview of the specifics of artists' activities, covering elements ranging from the time devoted to creative activities to the risks associated with this profession.

During the study, based on a 2021 study analysing the status of artists in Lithuania and other authors' studies, criteria for assessing the status of artists were established, a questionnaire was developed and tested with representatives of artists' associations and artists, and a representative survey of artists was conducted. The questionnaire consisted of 49 open and closed questions, grouped into categories of essential information about the artist, economic status, creative status, and social capital. Respondents were asked to provide answers about the year 2024. The questionnaire was submitted via the Microsoft Forms system, and artists were invited to participate in the survey through an active publicity campaign in the media, on social networks, and by personally sending information to LKT scholarship recipients and members of creators' unions and associations[2].[1]

The survey questionnaire was active from January 20 to March 1, 2025. During this period, 1,917 respondents completed the questionnaire, but after rejecting inaccurately completed questionnaires and those that did not meet the criteria for assessing the artist's profession set out in the survey, the responses of 1,633 artists were analysed. The context section of the survey provides information on the total population of artists in Lithuania, which consists of 16,849 creators, and the sample (1,633) reflects this population reliably, with 99% accuracy and a 3% margin of error. The most common level of reliability for this type of survey is 95% with a margin of error of 5%, which in this case would require a sample of 376 people, but the survey sample is more than four times larger. It also adequately reflects the country's artist population in various respects (field, gender, age, place of residence).

The survey analysed only the responses of artists who met at least one of the following criteria:

- Have the status of an artist;
- Belong to an artists' union;
- Have received a LTK or LKC scholarship at least once;
- Belong to an association that protects the rights of authors or performers (not applicable in the 2020 survey);
- Belong to another union or association that unites creators (not applicable in the 2020 survey);
- Has been awarded for creative activity (not applicable in the 2020 survey).

After collecting the responses from the creators, the data was analysed, the main indicators for assessing the situation were identified, conclusions about the situation of artists were presented, and recommendations for improving the current situation were prepared.

The analysis of the responses of the respondents who participated in the survey provides a comprehensive picture of the status of artists. All responses are presented in full tables with the overall distribution of responses and the distribution of responses by individual categories: field, age, gender, district of residence, and municipality. All this information is presented in the report, which allows readers to review the data in terms of their interests and use it for further analysis or to substantiate issues.

2 The Lithuanian Council for Culture was responsible for the strategies for reaching survey respondents and for collecting a representative sample of respondents.

The survey questionnaire consisted of 49 questions, most of which were closed-ended (with multiple choice answers). The questions were divided into groups: information about the artist; information about economic situation; information about creative situation; social capital questions. The questions allow for expanding knowledge about the artist population (e.g., artists were asked to indicate not only their field of activity but also their profession), understanding their modes of operation in the labor market, and assessing the conditions for creativity. The questions also allow for an objective assessment of the situation (e.g., by asking about artists' income) and a subjective assessment (e.g., by asking whether their income is sufficient to live on).

The questions are divided into several main groups:

1. Information about the artist and their social status. This section contains questions that allow us to define the fields in which artists work and the distribution of creators by field, gender, age, and place of residence. These questions are related to the analysis of the structure of Lithuanian artists. In order to assess the activity of artists and find out how they evaluate their creative work, questions are asked about their status, scholarship applications and funding, and awards. Questions are also asked to reveal how artists perceive their position in society, how they evaluate their profession, and whether they are satisfied with it.

2. Information about the economic situation of artists. The section on economic situation reveals the structure of the artists' labour market (employment in the public sector, NGOs, self-employment), the time devoted to creative and other activities, the income derived from these activities, and the structure of artists' sources of income.

3. Information about the creative situation of artists. This section contains questions related to the results of creative work, its dissemination, qualification improvement, and the physical and psychological conditions for creative work.

4. Social capital issues. These are intended to assess the activity of artists in social and political life;

5. Creators' comments or suggestions regarding the situation of artists, its improvement, state intervention, etc. Artists are given the opportunity to provide information that was not mentioned in their answers to the questionnaire.

The research data is presented first by analysing the country's artistic field (actual information from various institutional databases). Next, the survey data is analysed: responses to questions related to the status of artists and questions that allow artists to express their views on their own status. The data analysis is presented in the report, with tables of all questions broken down by the following categories: field, age, gender, county, municipality.

1.2 The main characteristics of the artists who participated in the survey

Most of the respondents – 439, or 26.9 percent – indicated visual arts as their main field of creativity, 220, or 13.5 percent, indicated music, and 181, or 11.1 percent, indicated theatre. The survey had the fewest respondents from the least represented cultural fields – circus and journalism, with 8 and 26 people, respectively.

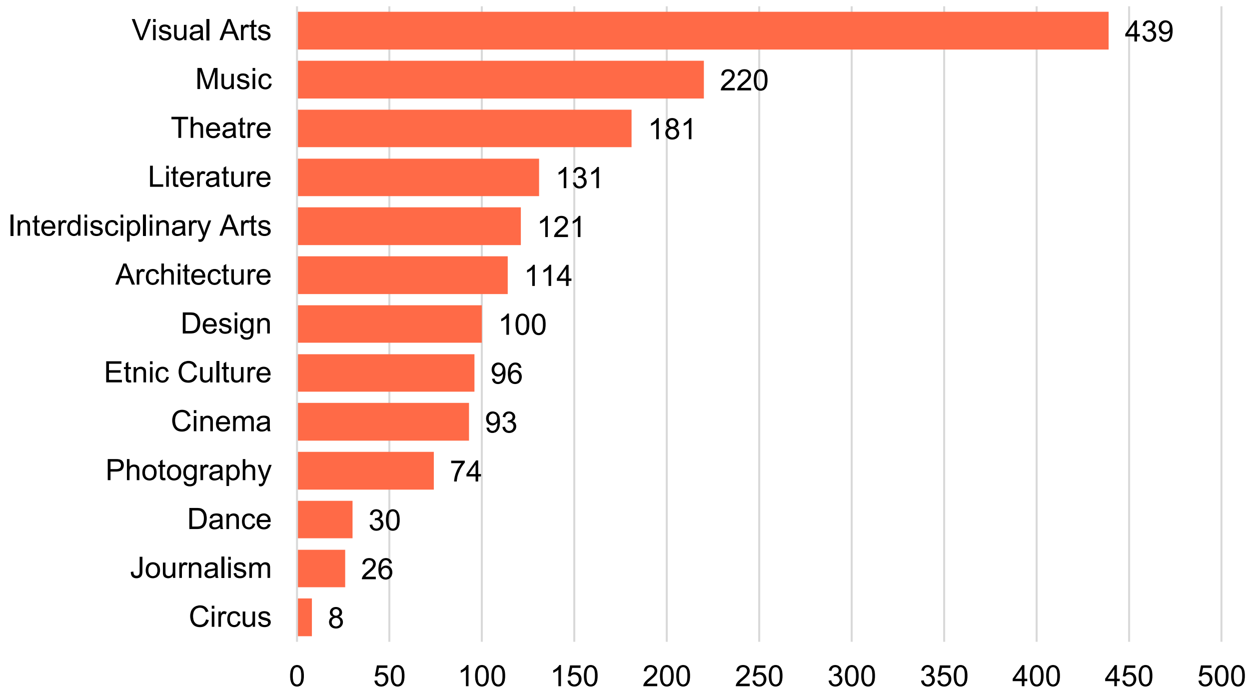

Figure 2. Number of artists participating in the survey by field, 2024

The survey involved 41% of men and 58% of women, with 1% of respondents indicating a non-binary gender identity (this option was not available in the 2021 survey).

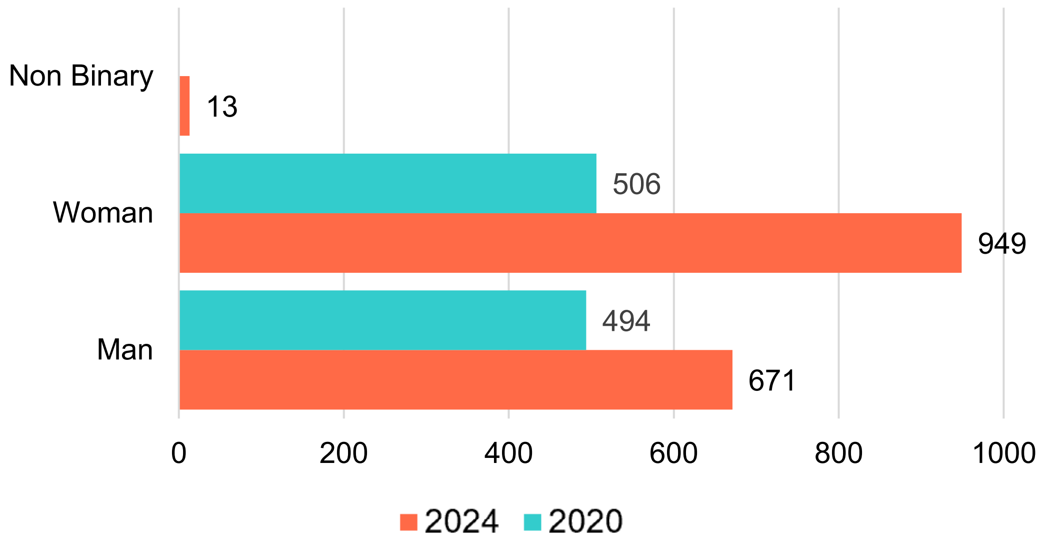

Figure 3. Number of artists participating in the survey by gender

People from all age groups participated in the survey, and the number of responses increased for all groups except the oldest (65 and older). Most of the respondents were in the 25–34 (398 people or 24.37%) and 35–44 (407 people or 24.92%) age groups. The smallest group of creators were those aged under 25 (45 people or 2.76%).

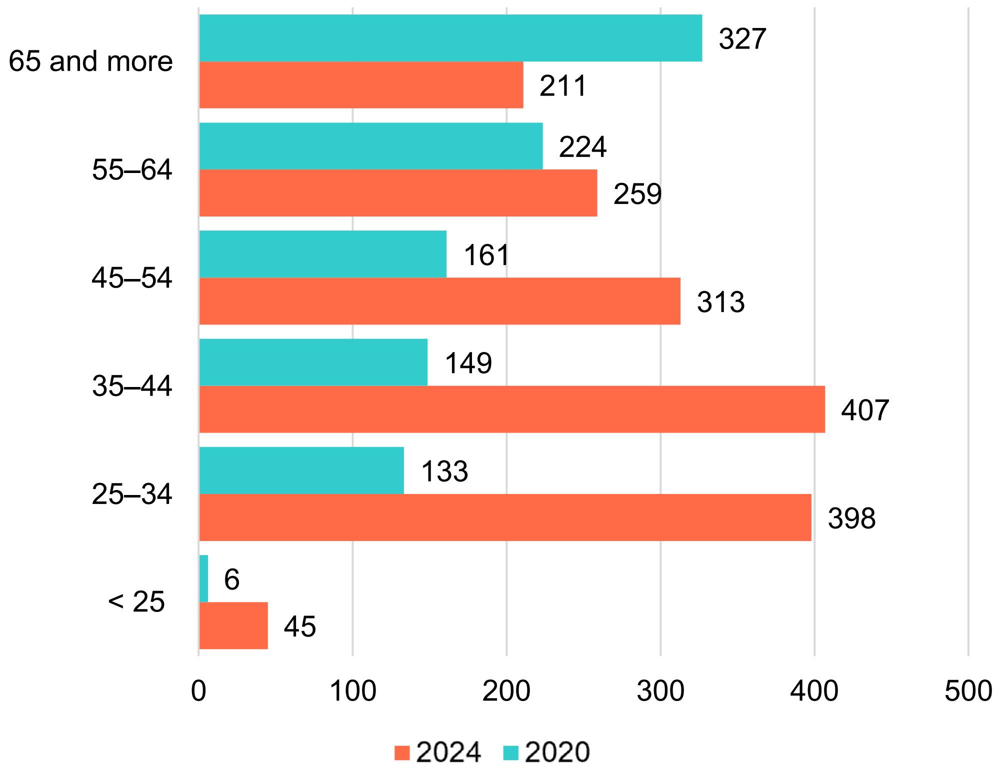

Figure 4. Number of artists participating in the survey by age

The majority of artists participating in the survey are Lithuanian (1,558 or 95%). Twenty-four respondents (1.47%) indicated that they are Ukrainian.

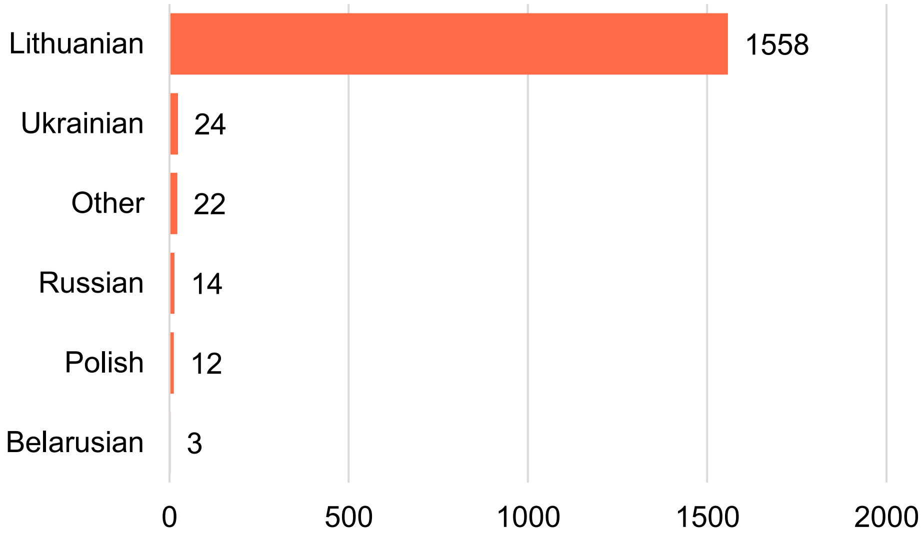

Figure 5. Number of artists participating in the survey by nationality

77.58% of the creators who participated in the survey indicated that they had obtained a university degree, 7.44% had obtained a non-university degree, and some artists were still studying.

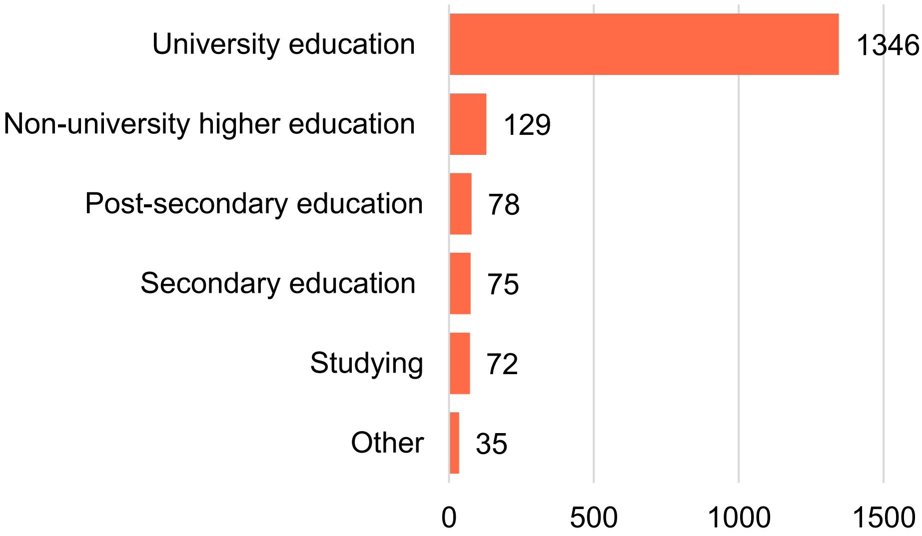

Figure 6. Number of artists participating in the survey by education

The majority of respondents live and work in Vilnius County (57%), followed by Kaunas (14%) and Klaipėda (8%) counties, with most creators working in the municipalities of these cities.

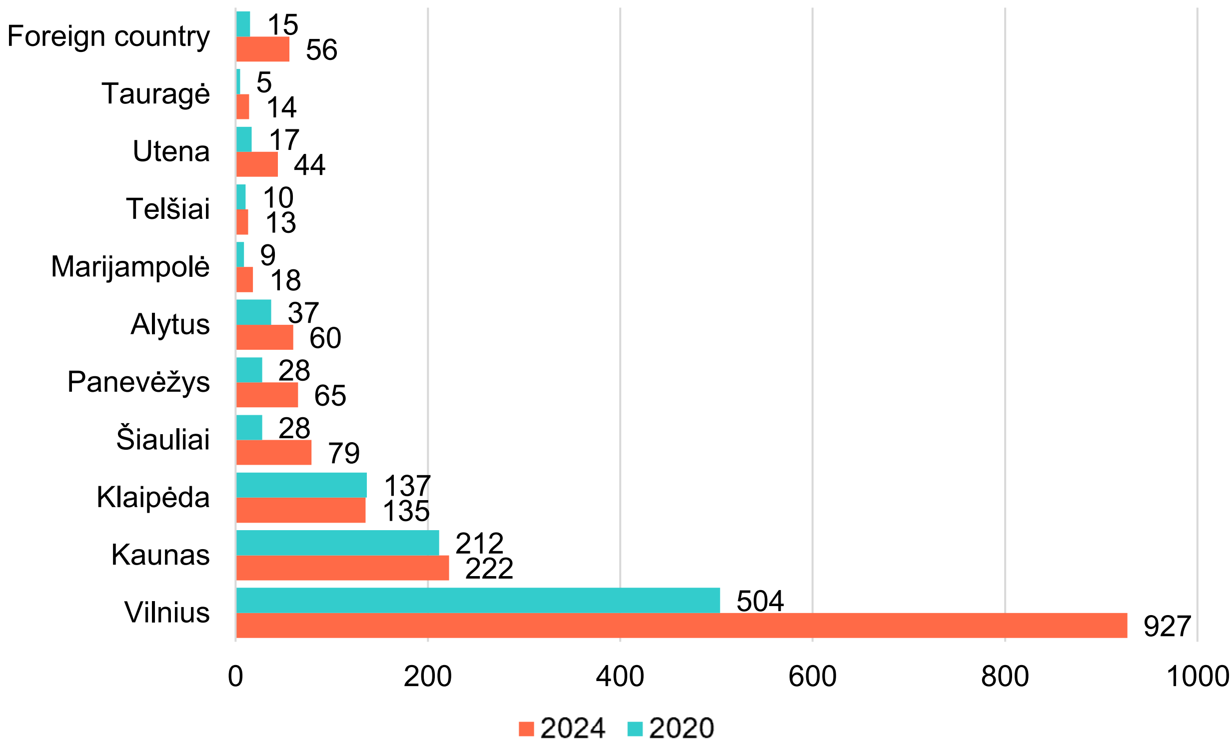

Figure 7. Number of artists participating in the survey by county

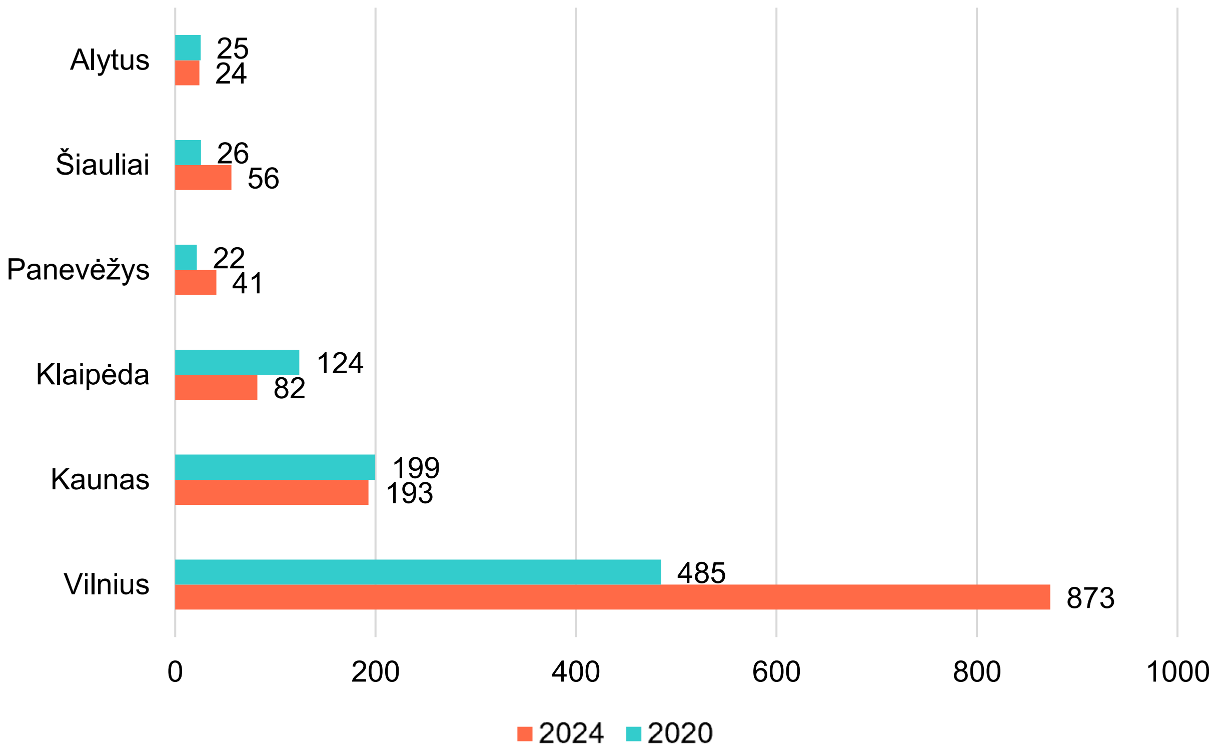

Figure 8. Number of artists participating in the survey by municipality

2.

THE ARTIST'S POSITION IN SOCIETY

This section discusses the social status of artists. It analyses how creators feel about their profession, how they perceive their role in society, and whether they feel appreciated for their work. The majority of the artists questioned indicate that their creative activity gives them creative and moral satisfaction, with 92.0% of all respondents agreeing with this statement.

When emphasizing the contribution of artists to the socio-cultural life of the country, it is important to assess the prestige of the artistic profession. Forty-eight-point one percent of creators agree that this profession is prestigious (question 18.4), which is significantly less than in 2021 (57.7 percent). The prestige of the profession is most clearly perceived by artists working in music (69% of creators agree that this profession is prestigious), architecture (68%), and circus (67%). The most pessimistic assessment of the prestige of the profession is given by creators working in design (38%) and journalism (40%).

Even fewer artists believe that society views their profession as prestigious, with 16.7% of survey respondents agreeing with this statement (question 18.5). The recognition of their profession in society is felt most strongly by journalists (27%) and filmmakers (26%).

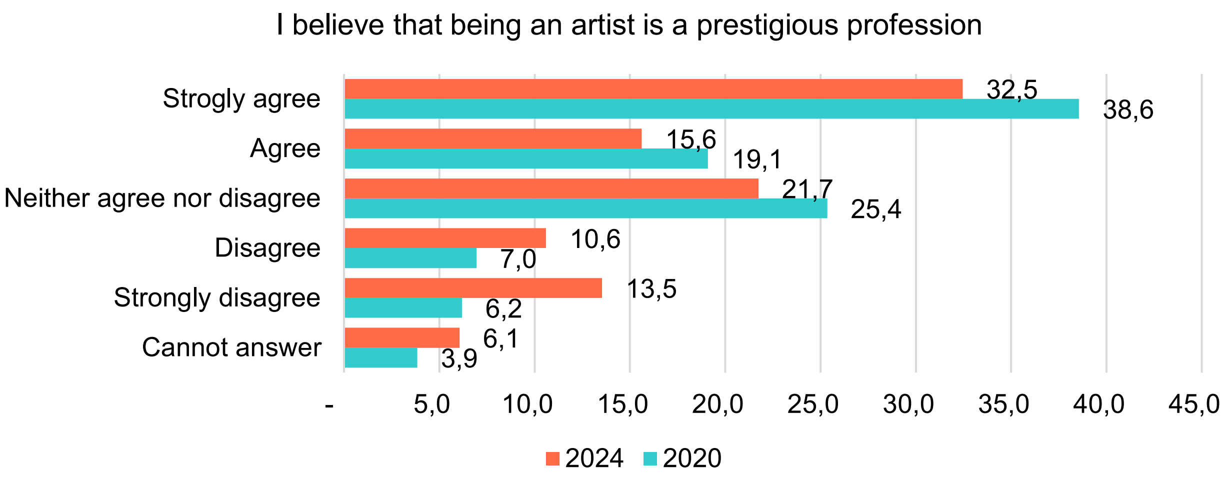

Figure 9. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "I think that the profession of an artist is prestigious" in 2020–2024 (percent) (compiled by the authors based on survey data)

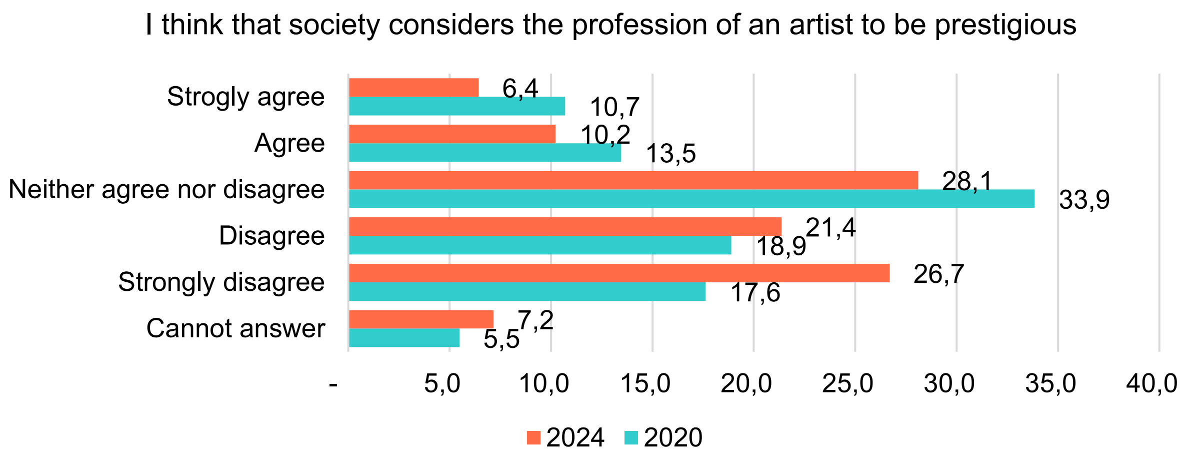

Figure 10. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "I think that society considers the profession of an artist to be prestigious" in 2020–2024 (per cent) (compiled by the authors based on survey data)

Table 2. I believe that the profession of an artist is prestigious (5 – strongly agree, 1 – strongly disagree).

	N	1	2	3	4	5	Cannot answer
	resp.	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	**1633**	**13,5**	**10,6**	**21,7**	**15,6**	**32,5**	**6,1**
Field							
Architecture	114	11,4	12,3	20,2	20,2	32,5	3,5
Circus	8	-	25,0	12,5	37,5	25,0	-
Design	100	12,0	12,0	14,0	23,0	29,0	10,0
Visual Arts	439	12,3	9,8	21,4	12,1	36,7	7,7
Photography	74	17,6	16,2	23,0	9,5	27,0	6,8
Literature	131	16,8	9,9	19,1	20,6	29,0	4,6
Music	220	11,4	7,3	21,8	16,8	40,0	2,7
Dance	30	10,0	6,7	23,3	16,7	40,0	3,3
Interdisciplinary Arts	121	15,7	11,6	21,5	11,6	28,9	10,7
Theatre	181	16,0	8,3	25,4	16,6	27,6	6,1
Etnic Culture	96	9,4	12,5	19,8	16,7	36,5	5,2
Journalism	26	15,4	11,5	30,8	11,5	23,1	7,7
Cinema	93	19,4	16,1	29,0	15,1	18,3	2,2
Gender							
Man	671	14,5	10,6	23,4	14,6	31,9	5,1
Woman	949	12,9	10,4	20,9	16,5	32,5	6,8
Non-binary	13	15,4	23,1	-	-	61,5	-
Age							
< 25	45	22,2	6,7	33,3	8,9	22,2	6,7
25–34	398	16,3	13,3	23,4	16,1	26,1	4,8
35–44	407	12,0	11,1	25,1	15,7	31,4	4,7
45–54	313	13,7	10,2	17,9	16,3	34,8	7,0
55–64	259	12,4	10,0	19,7	13,5	35,9	8,5
65 and more	211	10,4	6,6	18,0	17,5	40,8	6,6
County							
Vilnius	927	13,8	11,5	22,9	15,4	31,7	4,6
Kaunas	222	13,1	12,2	18,0	15,3	35,1	6,3
Klaipėda	135	17,8	5,2	18,5	17,0	32,6	8,9
Šiauliai	79	8,9	8,9	29,1	19,0	30,4	3,8
Panevėžys	65	16,9	6,2	21,5	10,8	36,9	7,7
Alytus	60	11,7	10,0	16,7	20,0	36,7	5,0
Marijampolė	18	-	16,7	16,7	16,7	44,4	5,6
Telšiai	13	-	-	46,2	15,4	38,5	-
Utena	44	18,2	9,1	11,4	13,6	27,3	20,5
Tauragė	14	14,3	7,1	14,3	21,4	35,7	7,1
Foreign country	56	8,9	12,5	26,8	12,5	25,0	14,3
Municipality							
Vilnius	873	13,9	11,8	23,3	15,0	31,0	5,0
Kaunas	193	14,5	13,0	17,6	15,5	33,2	6,2
Klaipėda	82	23,2	4,9	17,1	18,3	31,7	4,9
Panevėžys	41	17,1	4,9	29,3	12,2	29,3	7,3
Šiauliai	56	3,6	8,9	32,1	19,6	30,4	5,4
Alytus	24	8,3	12,5	16,7	12,5	45,8	4,2

Table 3. I believe that society considers the profession of an artist to be prestigious (5 – completely agree, 1 – completely disagree).

	N	1	2	3	4	5	Cannot answer
	resp.	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	**1633**	**26,7**	**21,4**	**28,1**	**10,2**	**6,4**	**7,2**
Field							
Architecture	114	29,8	21,1	28,9	11,4	4,4	4,4
Circus	8	25,0	25,0	37,5	-	-	12,5
Design	100	30,0	27,0	24,0	6,0	5,0	8,0
Visual Arts	439	26,9	20,5	27,3	8,9	6,4	10,0
Photography	74	36,5	13,5	27,0	12,2	5,4	5,4
Literature	131	22,9	20,6	33,6	10,7	3,8	8,4
Music	220	27,7	17,7	29,1	15,0	6,4	4,1
Dance	30	26,7	33,3	20,0	13,3	3,3	3,3
Interdisciplinary Arts	121	32,2	22,3	28,1	5,8	3,3	8,3
Theatre	181	23,2	24,3	30,9	8,3	8,3	5,0
Etnic Culture	96	12,5	26,0	32,3	10,4	10,4	8,3
Journalism	26	34,6	19,2	15,4	11,5	15,4	3,8
Cinema	93	25,8	20,4	21,5	15,1	10,8	6,5
Gender							
Man	671	28,2	22,7	28,9	10,6	4,9	4,8
Woman	949	25,6	20,3	27,6	10,1	7,5	8,9
Non-binary	13	30,8	30,8	23,1	-	7,7	7,7
Age							
< 25	45	26,7	28,9	20,0	11,1	6,7	6,7
25–34	398	34,9	21,9	23,4	8,8	6,3	4,8
35–44	407	25,1	24,3	26,5	10,3	6,9	6,9
45–54	313	27,8	18,2	31,9	9,6	6,4	6,1
55–64	259	21,6	19,3	32,8	10,0	5,8	10,4
65 and more	211	19,0	20,4	30,3	13,7	6,6	10,0
County							
Vilnius	927	28,2	22,1	27,1	10,5	5,9	6,3
Kaunas	222	27,9	23,4	27,5	9,0	5,4	6,8
Klaipėda	135	24,4	20,7	23,7	9,6	8,9	12,6
Šiauliai	79	25,3	20,3	30,4	8,9	10,1	5,1
Panevėžys	65	18,5	16,9	32,3	7,7	12,3	12,3
Alytus	60	15,0	21,7	36,7	18,3	3,3	5,0
Marijampolė	18	27,8	5,6	33,3	5,6	16,7	11,1
Telšiai	13	7,7	15,4	46,2	7,7	23,1	-
Utena	44	34,1	18,2	31,8	9,1	-	6,8
Tauragė	14	35,7	14,3	35,7	-	-	14,3
Foreign country	56	23,2	19,6	30,4	14,3	3,6	8,9
Municipality							
Vilnius	873	28,2	22,1	27,1	10,2	6,0	6,4
Kaunas	193	30,6	24,4	27,5	6,7	4,7	6,2
Klaipėda	82	26,8	22,0	24,4	9,8	12,2	4,9
Panevėžys	41	22,0	12,2	36,6	9,8	7,3	12,2
Šiauliai	56	23,2	23,2	28,6	8,9	8,9	7,1
Alytus	24	25,0	25,0	29,2	20,8	-	-

Artists are critical in their assessment of the state's attention to the artistic profession: 10.2% of creators see the state's efforts to raise the prestige of this profession (question 18.6). Only 8.8% of respondents agree that Lithuanian cultural policy highlights the importance of artists, which is less than in 2020 (when 15% agreed) (question 18.7). The state's efforts are most highly rated by creators of ethnic culture and folk art and interdisciplinary art, and most critically by theatre and film artists.

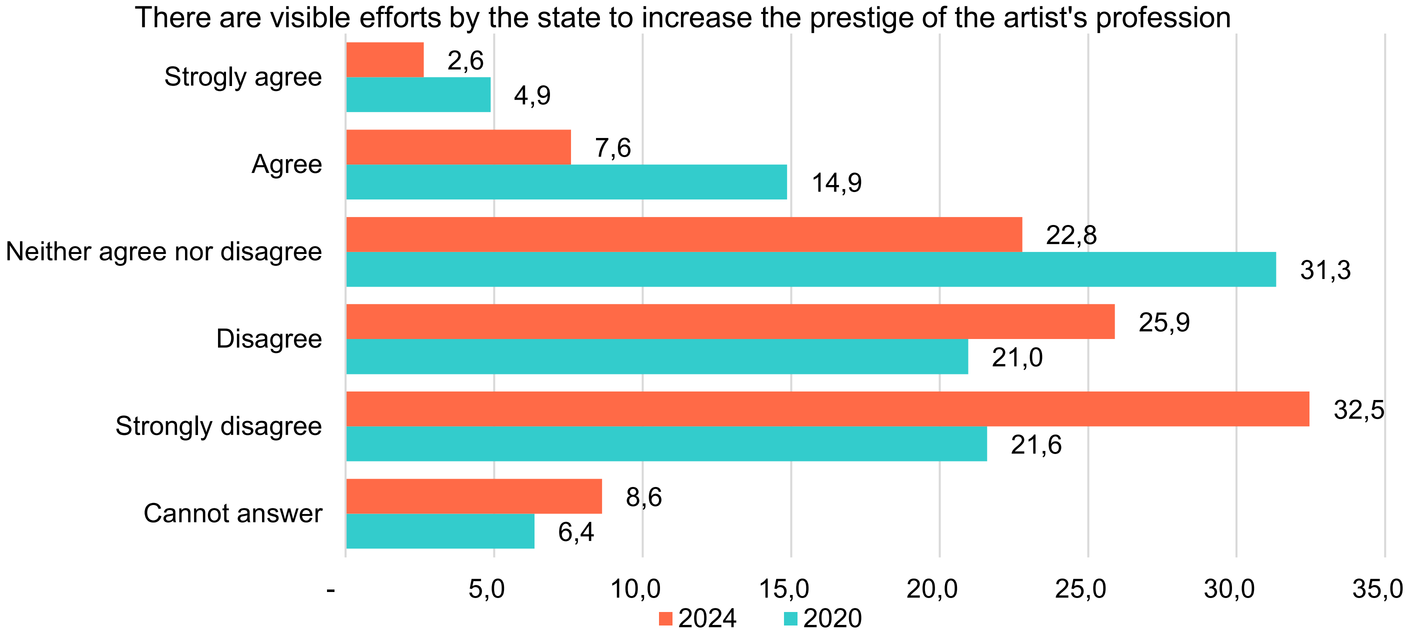

Figure 11. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "There are visible efforts by the state to increase the prestige of the artist profession" in 2020–2024 (in percent) (compiled by the authors based on survey data)

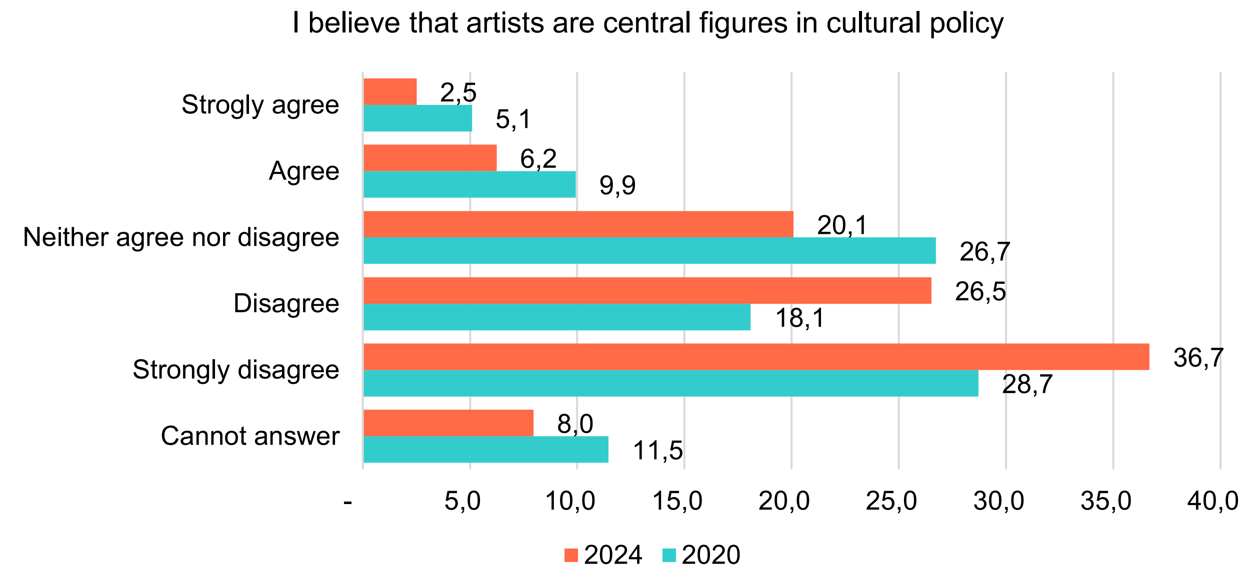

Figure 12. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "The importance of artists is highlighted in Lithuanian cultural policy" in 2020–2024 (per cent) (compiled by the authors based on survey data)

Note: In the 2020 survey, this question was formulated as follows: "I believe that artists are central figures in cultural policy."

Table 4. I believe that artists are central figures in cultural policy (5 – completely agree, 1 – completely disagree).

	N	1	2	3	4	5	Cannot answer
	resp.	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	**1633**	**32,5**	**25,9**	**22,8**	**7,6**	**2,6**	**8,6**
Field							
Architecture	114	35,1	28,9	21,9	6,1	0,9	7,0
Circus	8	37,5	25,0	25,0	-	-	12,5
Design	100	28,0	23,0	26,0	8,0	1,0	14,0
Visual Arts	439	31,0	23,9	23,7	8,9	2,5	10,0
Photography	74	47,3	18,9	13,5	5,4	5,4	9,5
Literature	131	30,5	25,2	27,5	6,1	2,3	8,4
Music	220	31,4	23,2	25,9	6,4	5,0	8,2
Dance	30	26,7	26,7	26,7	10,0	3,3	6,7
Interdisciplinary Arts	121	33,9	25,6	17,4	13,2	3,3	6,6
Theatre	181	33,7	33,1	21,0	4,4	1,7	6,1
Etnic Culture	96	27,1	28,1	19,8	11,5	4,2	9,4
Journalism	26	42,3	23,1	30,8	3,8	-	-
Cinema	93	34,4	32,3	19,4	5,4	-	8,6
Gender							
Man	671	36,4	27,9	21,8	6,1	1,5	6,4
Woman	949	29,7	24,7	23,2	8,7	3,5	10,2
Non-binary	13	30,8	15,4	46,2	-	-	7,7
Age							
< 25	45	35,6	31,1	24,4	2,2	2,2	4,4
25–34	398	33,7	27,9	20,4	7,3	2,5	8,3
35–44	407	31,2	25,1	24,8	6,9	3,7	8,4
45–54	313	32,6	25,2	24,3	8,6	1,9	7,3
55–64	259	34,0	27,0	21,6	6,9	2,3	8,1
65 and more	211	29,9	22,3	22,3	10,0	2,4	13,3
County							
Vilnius	927	33,1	27,4	23,5	7,4	1,8	6,7
Kaunas	222	34,2	26,1	19,4	5,9	2,3	12,2
Klaipėda	135	28,9	20,7	23,7	6,7	8,1	11,9
Šiauliai	79	38,0	21,5	19,0	5,1	6,3	10,1
Panevėžys	65	33,8	23,1	18,5	9,2	3,1	12,3
Alytus	60	21,7	31,7	33,3	5,0	-	8,3
Marijampolė	18	27,8	11,1	22,2	22,2	-	16,7
Telšiai	13	23,1	-	30,8	30,8	7,7	7,7
Utena	44	27,3	31,8	22,7	6,8	-	11,4
Tauragė	14	57,1	7,1	14,3	7,1	-	14,3
Foreign country	56	26,8	26,8	21,4	14,3	3,6	7,1
Municipality							
Vilnius	873	33,1	27,0	23,7	7,7	1,6	6,9
Kaunas	193	36,3	25,4	19,7	4,7	2,1	11,9
Klaipėda	82	34,1	22,0	20,7	6,1	12,2	4,9
Panevėžys	41	31,7	24,4	19,5	9,8	2,4	12,2
Šiauliai	56	35,7	21,4	23,2	5,4	5,4	8,9
Alytus	24	**25,0**	**33,3**	**33,3**	**4,2**	**-**	**4,2**

Table 5. The importance of artists is highlighted in Lithuanian cultural policy (5 – completely agree, 1 – completely disagree).

	N	1	2	3	4	5	Cannot answer
	resp.	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	**1633**	**36,7**	**26,5**	**20,1**	**6,2**	**2,5**	**8,0**
Field							
Architecture	114	30,7	28,9	27,2	6,1	0,9	6,1
Circus	8	50,0	25,0	12,5	-	-	12,5
Design	100	40,0	24,0	18,0	4,0	2,0	12,0
Visual Arts	439	34,4	27,1	23,0	5,5	2,5	7,5
Photography	74	47,3	16,2	17,6	5,4	2,7	10,8
Literature	131	35,1	27,5	21,4	7,6	3,1	5,3
Music	220	35,9	25,5	17,7	8,2	4,1	8,6
Dance	30	36,7	26,7	26,7	6,7	-	3,3
Interdisciplinary Arts	121	40,5	24,0	16,5	8,3	2,5	8,3
Theatre	181	37,6	28,7	19,3	4,4	1,1	8,8
Etnic Culture	96	28,1	27,1	18,8	9,4	6,3	10,4
Journalism	26	46,2	30,8	15,4	7,7	-	-
Cinema	93	45,2	30,1	12,9	4,3	1,1	6,5
Gender							
Man	671	37,4	28,5	21,0	4,8	1,5	6,9
Woman	949	36,4	25,0	19,4	7,4	3,3	8,6
Non-binary	13	23,1	38,5	23,1	-	-	15,4
Age							
< 25	45	44,4	17,8	20,0	11,1	-	6,7
25–34	398	38,7	30,9	14,8	4,0	1,3	10,3
35–44	407	40,3	26,5	19,2	4,7	3,4	5,9
45–54	313	35,1	24,0	23,3	8,0	3,2	6,4
55–64	259	33,6	26,6	23,6	7,3	2,3	6,6
65 and more	211	30,3	23,7	22,7	8,5	2,8	11,8
County							
Vilnius	927	38,1	29,7	17,8	6,0	1,9	6,5
Kaunas	222	37,4	23,9	20,7	5,4	3,2	9,5
Klaipėda	135	37,0	17,0	23,0	5,9	4,4	12,6
Šiauliai	79	31,6	29,1	22,8	6,3	5,1	5,1
Panevėžys	65	33,8	21,5	21,5	6,2	6,2	10,8
Alytus	60	25,0	25,0	36,7	5,0	-	8,3
Marijampolė	18	27,8	22,2	22,2	16,7	-	11,1
Telšiai	13	-	7,7	53,8	30,8	7,7	-
Utena	44	40,9	22,7	15,9	6,8	-	13,6
Tauragė	14	50,0	14,3	14,3	-	-	21,4
Foreign country	56	37,5	23,2	21,4	7,1	1,8	8,9
Municipality							
Vilnius	873	38,0	29,4	17,6	6,1	1,7	7,1
Kaunas	193	38,9	24,9	21,8	4,7	2,6	7,3
Klaipėda	82	40,2	18,3	17,1	8,5	4,9	11,0
Panevėžys	41	31,7	26,8	22,0	4,9	4,9	9,8
Šiauliai	56	32,1	23,2	30,4	5,4	5,4	3,6
Alytus	24	37,5	20,8	33,3	4,2	0,0	4,2

The satisfaction derived from the profession, the artist's calling, and other factors motivating them to remain in the profession reveal that as many as 67.73% of all creators would choose this profession again. There is a general decline in artists' satisfaction with their profession (in 2020, 76.2% of all artists would still have chosen this profession, or 8.5 percentage points more). The most satisfied with their choice of profession and would not change it are creators in dance (83%), design (74%) and film (67%). Meanwhile, the highest number of respondents who said they would choose a different profession were among photographers and journalists.

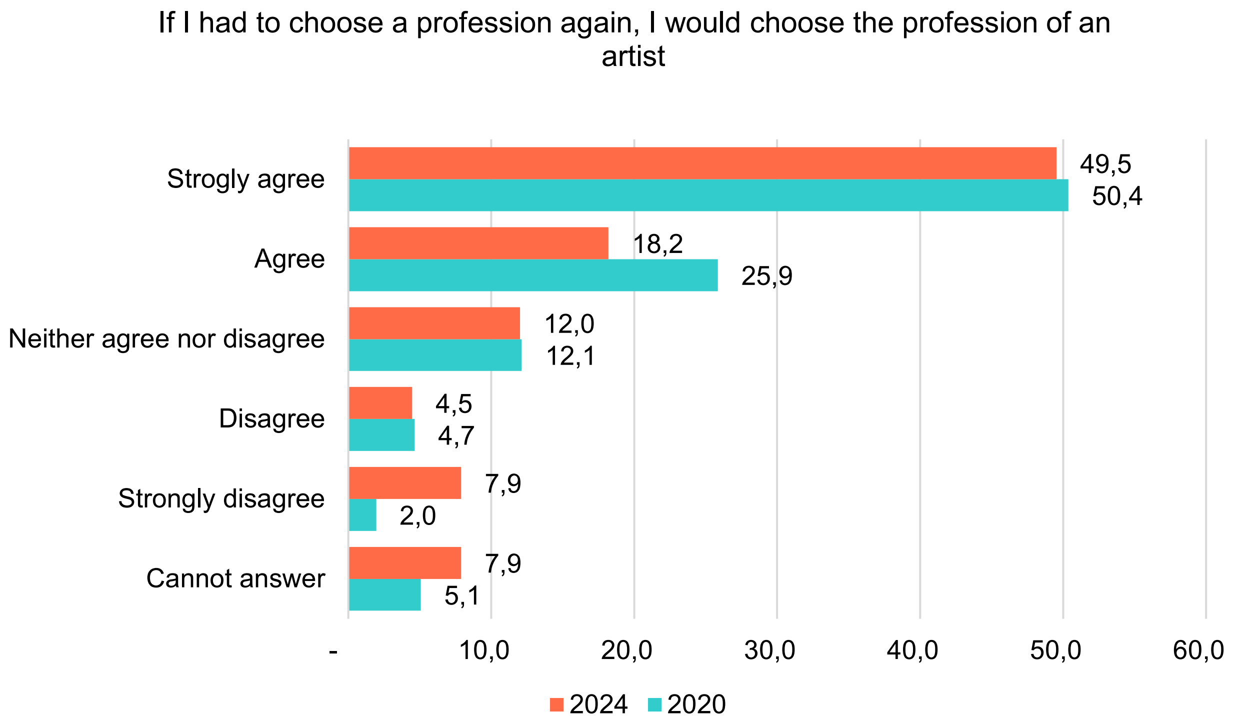

Figure 13. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "If I had to choose a profession again, I would choose the profession of an artist" in 2020–2024 (per cent) (compiled by the authors based on survey data)

3. ECONOMIC SITUATION

3.1 Working Hours

The average working week of an artist is 55 hours (ranging from 40 to 70 hours). When evaluating how an artist's working day or week is structured, the focus is on the combination of different types of work. The workweek consists of creative work, work related to creativity (e.g., education), and work not related to creativity.

On average, artists devote slightly more than half of their weekly working hours to creative work (20–30 hours per week), nearly 20% to work related to creativity (7–17 hours per week), and almost 30% to work unrelated to creativity (11–21 hours per week).

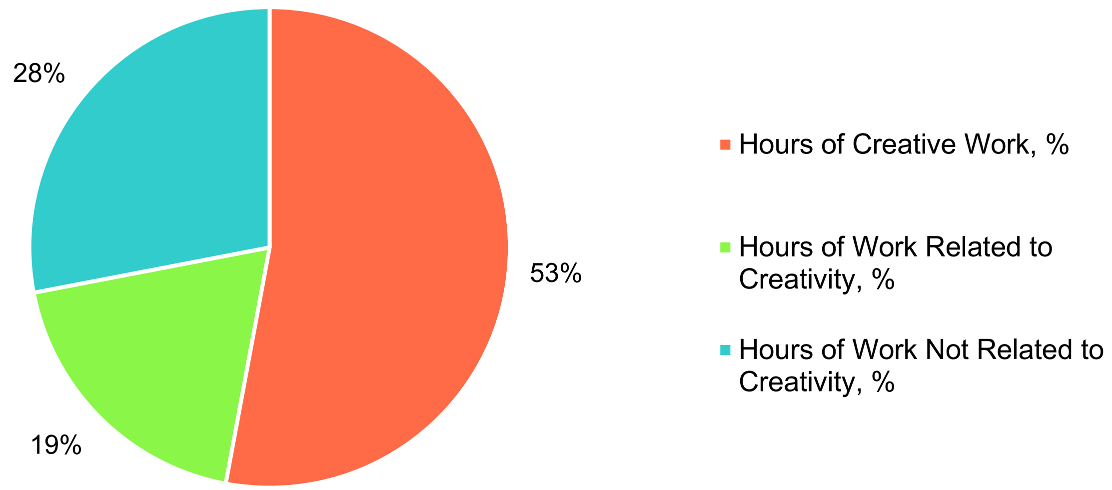

Figure 14. Distribution of Working Hours per Week in 2024 (%) (compiled by the authors based on survey data)

3.2 Creative Work Without Pay

When assessing whether artists had to engage in creative work without financial compensation during 2024, **just under 20%** of artists indicated that they **did not**. Around **80%** of creators experienced situations involving unpaid creative work (only about **300 out of 1,633** surveyed artists reported **not** encountering unpaid work).

Young artists (under 25 years old) were the most likely to face unpaid creative work. The analysed reasons for unpaid creative work include:

- It was voluntary work (charity);
- It was meant to increase my visibility or gain experience;
- It happened due to employer fraud;

- I was compensated in other ways, such as provided with workspace or coverage of expenses;
- I wanted to contribute to students' practical work;
- It was a barter-based collaboration.

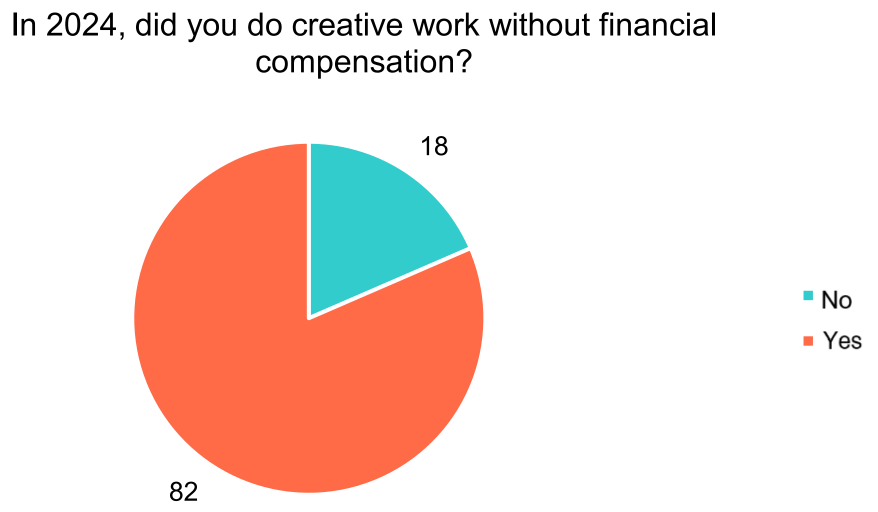

Figure 15. Comparison of Unpaid Creative Work in 2024 (%) (compiled by the authors based on survey data).

When evaluating individual art fields, a larger share of artists encounters unpaid creative work in the fields of photography**,** interdisciplinary art**,** ethnic culture**,** and journalism**.**

3.3 Income of the Artist

Artists were asked to indicate their average monthly income in 2024 (after taxes), in euros. The income brackets analysed were:

- up to €500
- €501–€1000
- €1001–€1500
- €1501–€2000
- €2001–€2500
- above €2501

When evaluating the midpoints of the income brackets, it is found that the **median income is €750/month**. The **average monthly income** is **€1,090**. The average income of an artist falls below the national average and amounts to approximately **78% of the country's average monthly salary**.

It is also worth noting that the cultural sector stands out for lower wages compared to other sectors. This is evident when comparing activities by NACE (EVRK) classification: for example, in the field of artistic, entertainment, and recreation activities, the average net wage in the fourth quarter of 2024 was about €1,250, making up slightly less than 90% of the national average wage. Nevertheless, the average income of artists still falls behind even the average income within the broader creative sector.

Analysing the distribution of artists by income, it is clear that the majority of artists are concentrated in the lower income brackets. Three-quarters of artists (76%) earn up to €1,500 per month. Even though the average artist's workweek is 55 hours (ranging from 40 to 70 hours), this does not guarantee higher earnings.

21 percent of artists, that is, every fifth artist, falls into the very lowest income bracket, earning less than the minimum wage — 500 euros (net). In April 2024, the State Data Agency presented the risk-of-poverty threshold for disposable income — 616 euros per month per person. The State Data Agency noted that 18 percent of urban residents had equivalent disposable incomes below the risk-of-poverty threshold (14.5 percent in the five largest cities, 24 percent in other cities), and 29.4 percent in rural areas.

Based on the artists' survey data, it is evident that more than one in five artists fall within the risk-of-poverty zone. The situation in the major cities is somewhat worse for artists compared to the country's overall trends: in Vilnius, more than 18 percent of artists, and in Kaunas, Klaipėda, and Šiauliai, more than 24 percent of artists fall into this category. More favorable trends, compared to other large cities, were observed in Panevėžys municipality, where on average every tenth artist falls into the risk-of-poverty zone.

When evaluating specific fields of culture and art, a particularly critical situation is noted in the fields of visual arts and ethnic culture, where every third artist falls into the lowest income bracket (income up to 500 euros).

30 percent of artists, or roughly every third artist, fall into the minimum wage bracket, with incomes ranging from 500 to 1,000 euros. A similar share of artists, about 30 percent, fall into the average wage bracket (incomes ranging from 1,000 to 1,500 euros).

Only 21 percent of creators earn incomes exceeding 1,500 euros, but only one in twenty artists falls into the highest income bracket examined — above 2,500 euros.

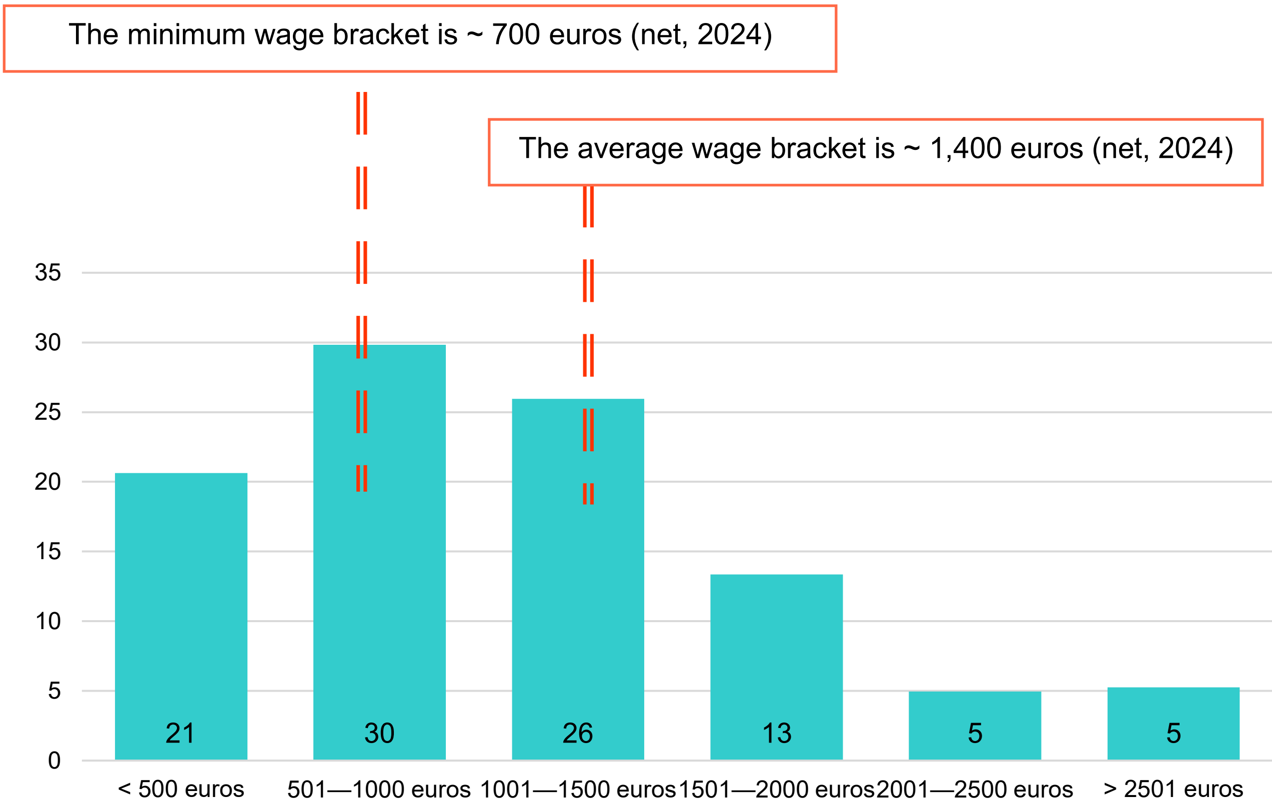

Figure 16. Income distribution in 2024 (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

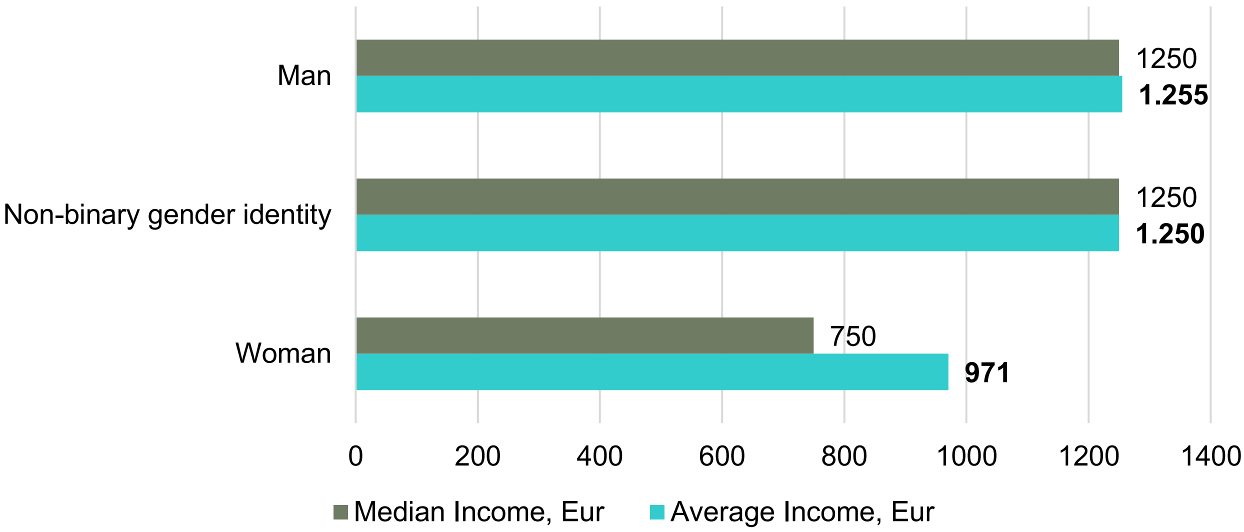

Figure 17. Distribution of average income by gender in 2024 (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

The survey data of artists highlight existing income gaps between men and women. When evaluating average incomes, women earn about 77% of the average income of men, or in other words, almost 23% less than men earn on average. When considering median incomes, the gap is even larger — women earn only about 60% of the median income of men.

More than half of the surveyed female artists (57%) earn up to 1,000 euros, while the share of men in the up to 1,000 euros income group is 16 percentage points lower. Similar proportions persist even in the lowest income brackets: 24% of women (more than one in five) earn up to 500 euros, while only 16% of men fall into the lowest income category — 8 percentage points less.

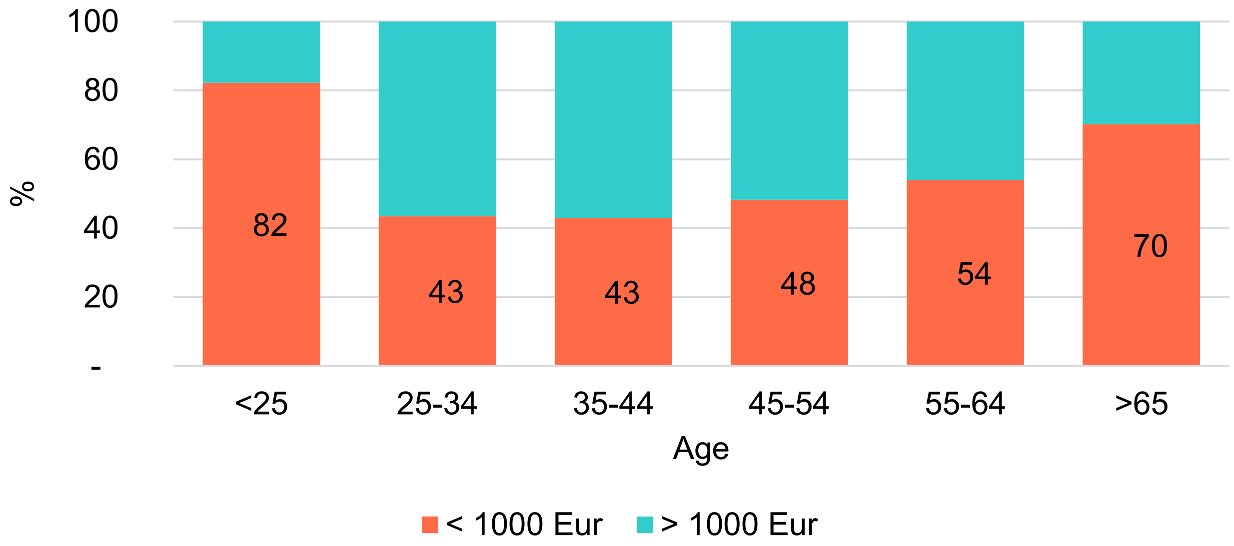

Figure 18. Income distribution by age, 2024 (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

When evaluating age groups and income, the greatest attention should be paid to the category of older artists (65 years and older). As many as 70 percent of creators belong to the income group earning up to 1,000 euros.

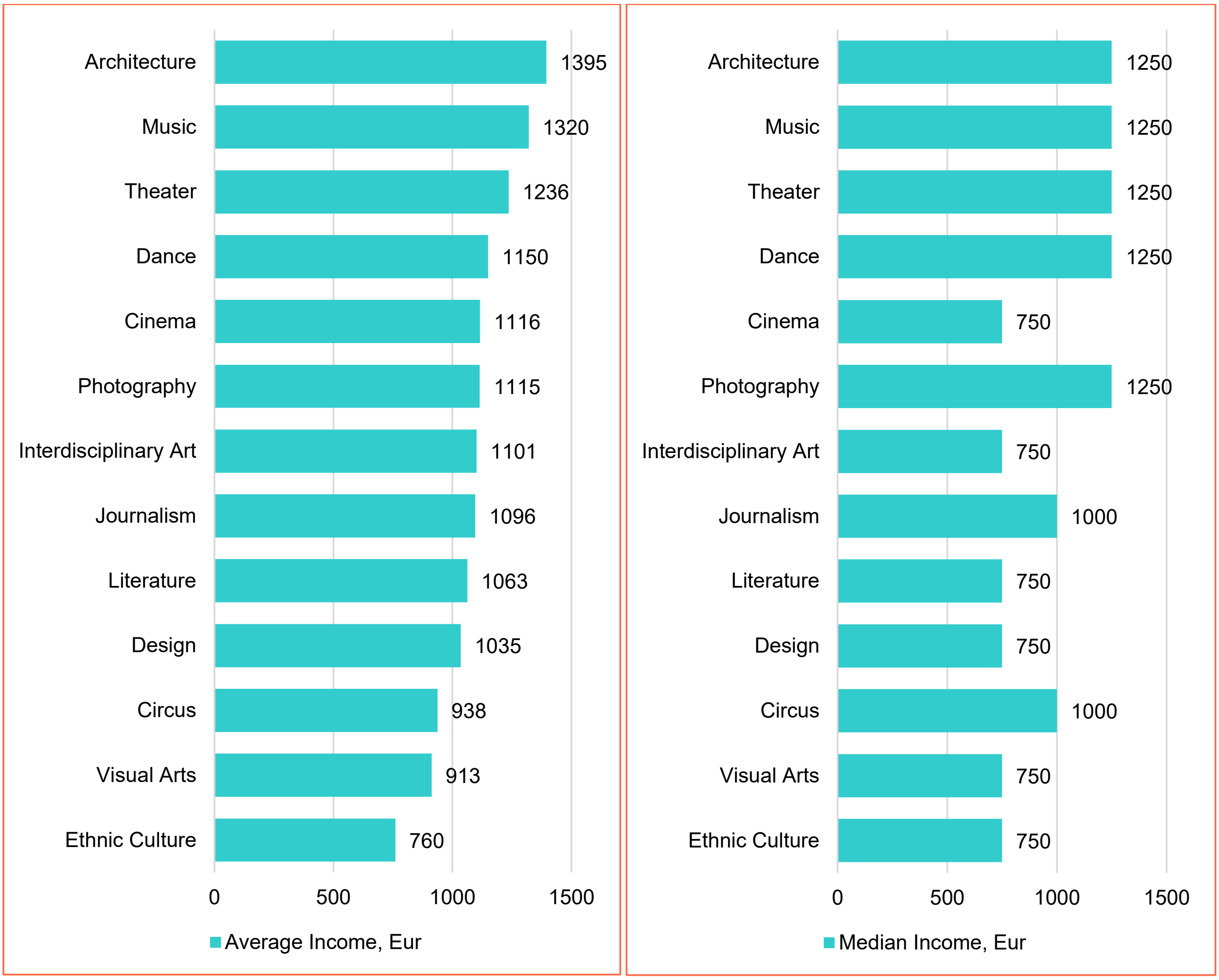

Figure 19. Average and median income by field, 2024 (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

When evaluating average incomes by specific fields, it is evident that creators in the field of ethnic culture receive the lowest incomes on average (both the average and median are around 750–760 euros). Creators in the visual arts field also stand out with particularly low incomes (average income — 913 euros, median income — 750 euros). Dance, theatre, music, and architecture are fields where average incomes are somewhat higher. For example, the average income of creators in architecture is about 1,400 euros, with a median of 1,250 euros. Similar average incomes are observed in the music field: average income — 1,320 euros, median income — 1,250 euros.

Almost 83 percent of the artists who participated in the survey have higher university education, yet the overall income level remains quite low. Comparing artists' incomes by education groups, it is evident that artists with higher university education earn incomes above 1,000 euros (average — about 1,100 euros, median — 1,250 euros). However, as mentioned, regardless of education, incomes remain low.

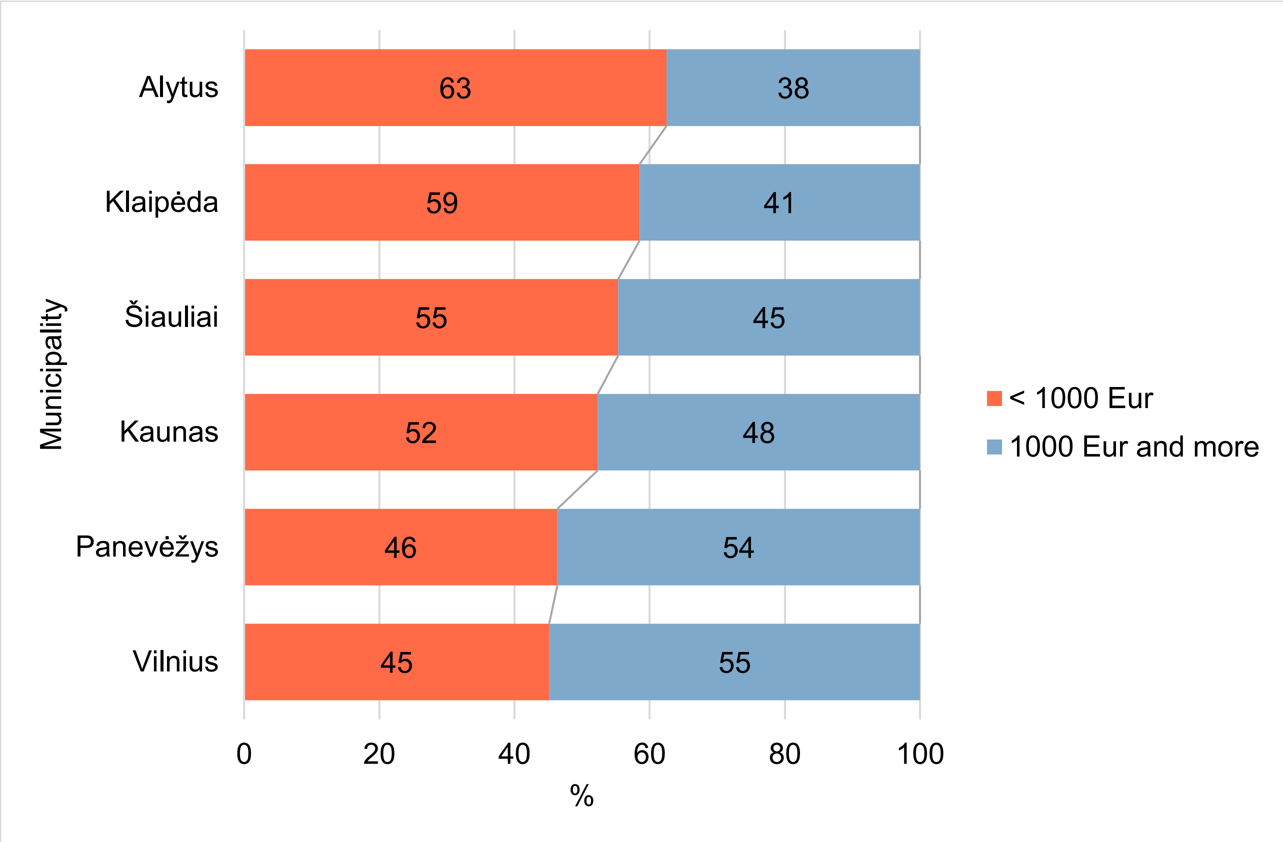

Figure 20. Income distribution by counties and municipalities in 2024 (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

The geographic breakdown reflects the established income situation — artists earning relatively low incomes dominate. This trend becomes clear when comparing artists earning up to 1,000 euros and those earning above 1,000 euros. More than half of those with incomes above 1,000 euros are located in the cities of Vilnius and Panevėžys. In other cities, artists belonging to the lower income group dominate.

Table 6. Please indicate your average monthly income during 2024 (after taxes), in euros:

	N	< 500 Eur	501—1000	1001—1500	1501—2000	2001—2500	> 2501 Eur
	resp.	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	**1633**	**20,6**	**29,8**	**26,0**	**13,3**	**5,0**	**5,3**
Field							
Architecture	114	8,8	20,2	33,3	17,5	11,4	8,8
Ciircus	8	25,0	25,0	37,5	12,5	-	-
Design	100	19,0	32,0	29,0	16,0	1,0	3,0
Visual Arts	439	29,4	34,4	21,4	8,2	2,3	4,3
Photography	74	21,6	27,0	24,3	16,2	5,4	5,4
Literature	131	24,4	29,8	22,1	10,7	8,4	4,6
Music	220	11,4	22,7	30,0	20,9	6,4	8,6
Dance	30	10,0	26,7	46,7	10,0	3,3	3,3
Interdisciplinary Arts	121	23,1	27,3	23,1	14,0	7,4	5,0
Theatre	181	8,8	29,3	35,9	14,4	5,0	6,6
Etnic Culture	96	34,4	39,6	18,8	4,2	3,1	-
Journalism	26	11,5	38,5	23,1	23,1	3,8	-
Cinema	93	22,6	30,1	17,2	18,3	5,4	6,5
Gender							
Man	671	16,1	25,2	24,9	18,6	5,8	9,4
Woman	949	23,7	33,4	26,8	9,6	4,2	2,3
Non-binary	13	30,8	7,7	23,1	15,4	15,4	7,7
Age							
< 25	45	46,7	35,6	6,7	8,9	2,2	-
25–34	398	13,1	30,4	30,4	16,8	4,3	5,0
35–44	407	14,0	29,0	28,5	14,5	7,1	6,9
45–54	313	20,4	27,8	24,9	15,7	6,4	4,8
55–64	259	27,4	26,6	27,4	8,9	3,5	6,2
65 and more	211	34,1	36,0	16,6	7,6	2,4	3,3
County							
Vilnius	927	18,1	27,3	26,4	15,6	5,8	6,7
Kaunas	222	25,2	27,9	26,1	11,3	5,9	3,6
Klaipėda	135	25,9	34,1	23,0	12,6	2,2	2,2
Šiauliai	79	25,3	25,3	27,8	16,5	3,8	1,3
Panevėžys	65	20,0	29,2	35,4	10,8	1,5	3,1
Alytus	60	28,3	45,0	11,7	8,3	1,7	5,0
Marijampolė	18	27,8	27,8	38,9	5,6	-	-
Telšiai	13	7,7	53,8	23,1	-	-	15,4
Utena	44	22,7	59,1	9,1	2,3	4,5	2,3
Tauragė	14	-	42,9	50,0	7,1	-	-
Foreign country	56	21,4	28,6	30,4	5,4	7,1	7,1
Municipality							
Vilnius	873	18,1	27,0	26,6	15,6	6,1	6,6
Kaunas	193	23,8	28,5	25,9	12,4	6,2	3,1
Klaipėda	82	24,4	34,1	23,2	13,4	3,7	1,2
Panevėžys	41	9,8	36,6	39,0	9,8	-	4,9
Šiauliai	56	28,6	26,8	26,8	12,5	3,6	1,8
Alytus	24	16,7	45,8	20,8	8,3	4,2	4,2

3.4 Artist's Economic Expectation

Artists were asked how their economic situation changed over the past year (2024). Nearly every second artist did not notice any change. 28 percent of artists indicated that their economic situation worsened over the past year. A positive change was felt by 23 percent of artists.

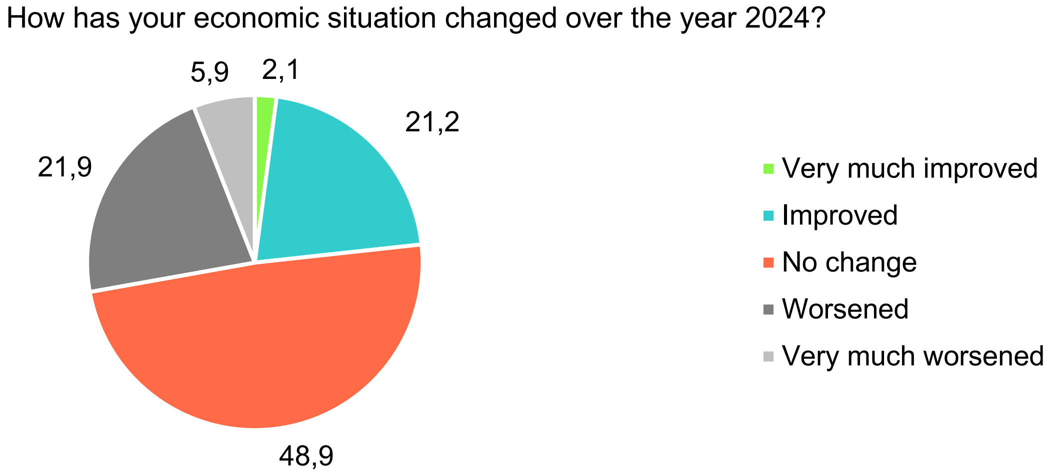

Figure 21. How did artists' economic situation change during 2024 (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

When assessing a longer time perspective, most artists indicate that their economic situation has improved: about half of them noticed a positive change. However, the other half is roughly evenly split between those who say their economic situation has not changed and those who say it has worsened.

Looking at future prospects, artists do not seem very optimistic — the trends are similar to those observed for the past period. Slightly less than half believe that the economic situation will improve. One in three artists thinks that the economic situation will remain unchanged. One in five artists believes that the economic situation will worsen.

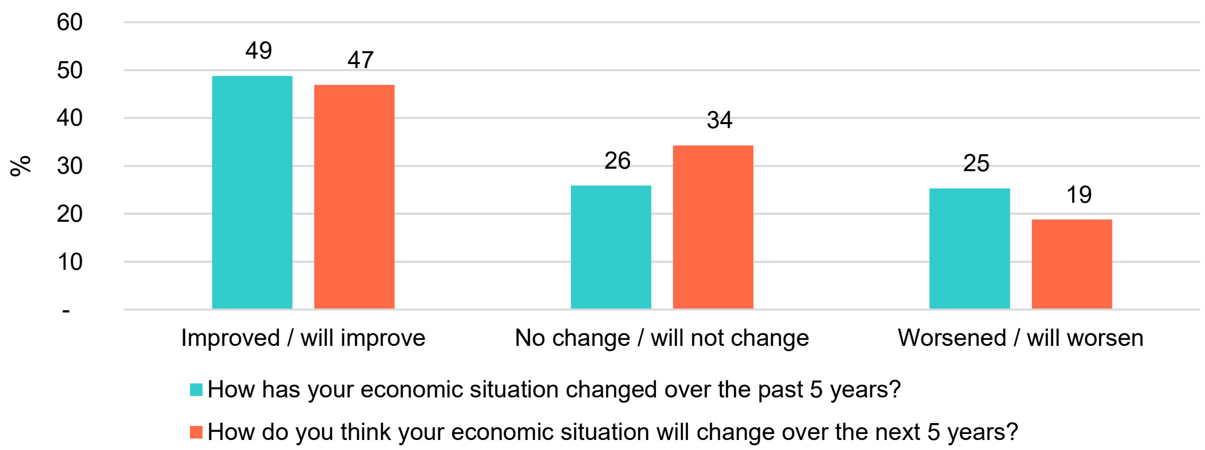

Figure 22. How your economic situation has changed over the past 5 years and how it will change, % (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

4. WORKING CONDITIONS

The study takes a comprehensive approach to analysing working conditions, covering both physical and psychosocial aspects. The physical aspect includes aspects such as the working environment and the risk of injury or trauma. The psychosocial dimension includes factors such as stress, discrimination, bullying, workplace violence, sexual harassment and other related phenomena. The 2024 survey additionally includes questions on work / leisure balance and "burnout".

For almost half of the artists, their home is their main creative space, while a quarter work from their personal studio. Compared to 2020, the number of artists working at home increased in 2024. For more than half of artists in literature, ethnic culture, journalism, film, interdisciplinary art, photography and design, home is the main creative space.

Artists in the visual arts, music and architecture are more likely to work in their personal studios than in other fields. Theatre artists are the most frequent artists working in the spaces of state / municipal organisations.

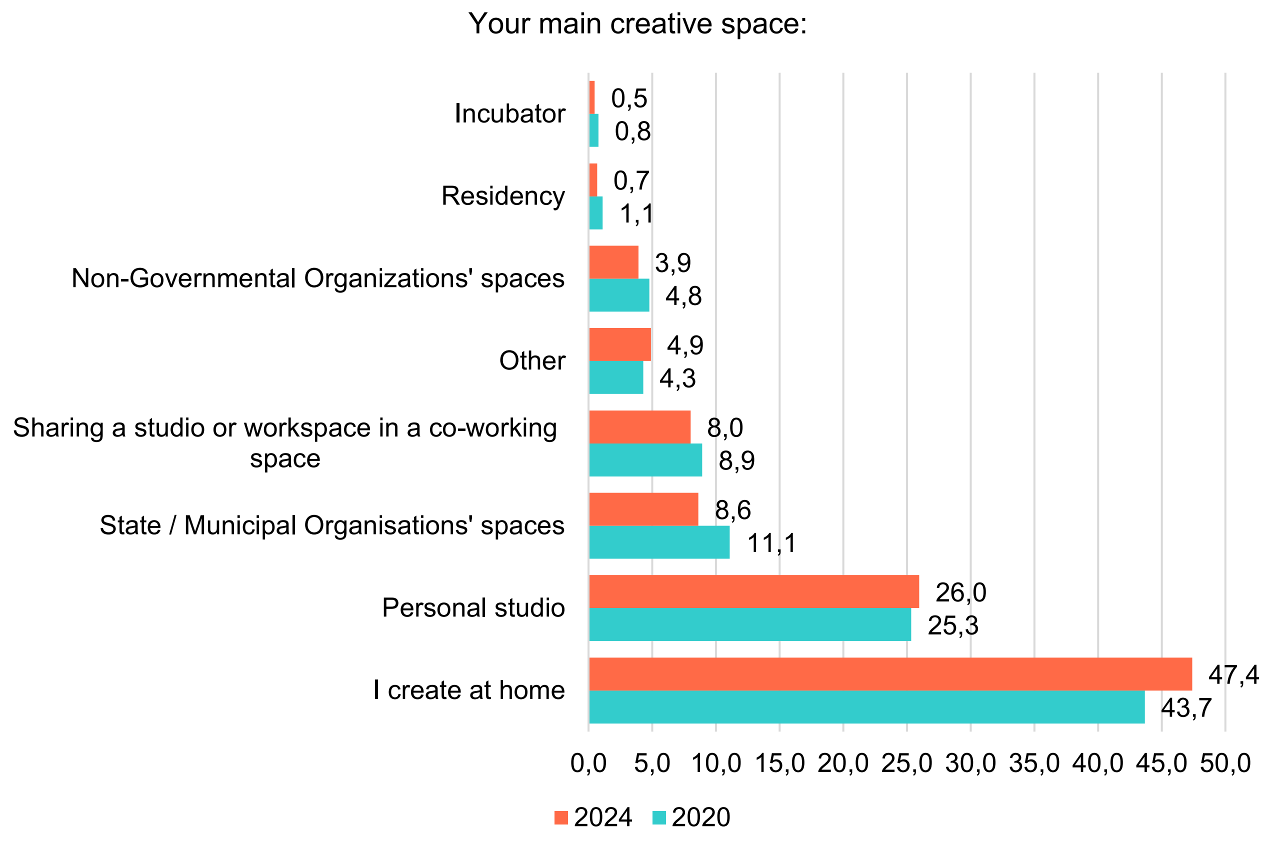

Figure 23. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "Your main creative space" for 2020-2024 (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

Just over half of artists are satisfied with the physical conditions of their working environment. Journalism, literature, music and dance, and older artists are more likely to be satisfied with the conditions than other fields. **One in five artists was not satisfied with the physical conditions of the working environment. The situation has worsened compared to 2020, with 12.6% of respondents in 2020 being dissatisfied with the conditions** (disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement that they were satisfied with conditions). In 2024, one in three fine art and interdisciplinary artists and one in four circus and theatre artists were dissatisfied with the physical conditions of their working environment.

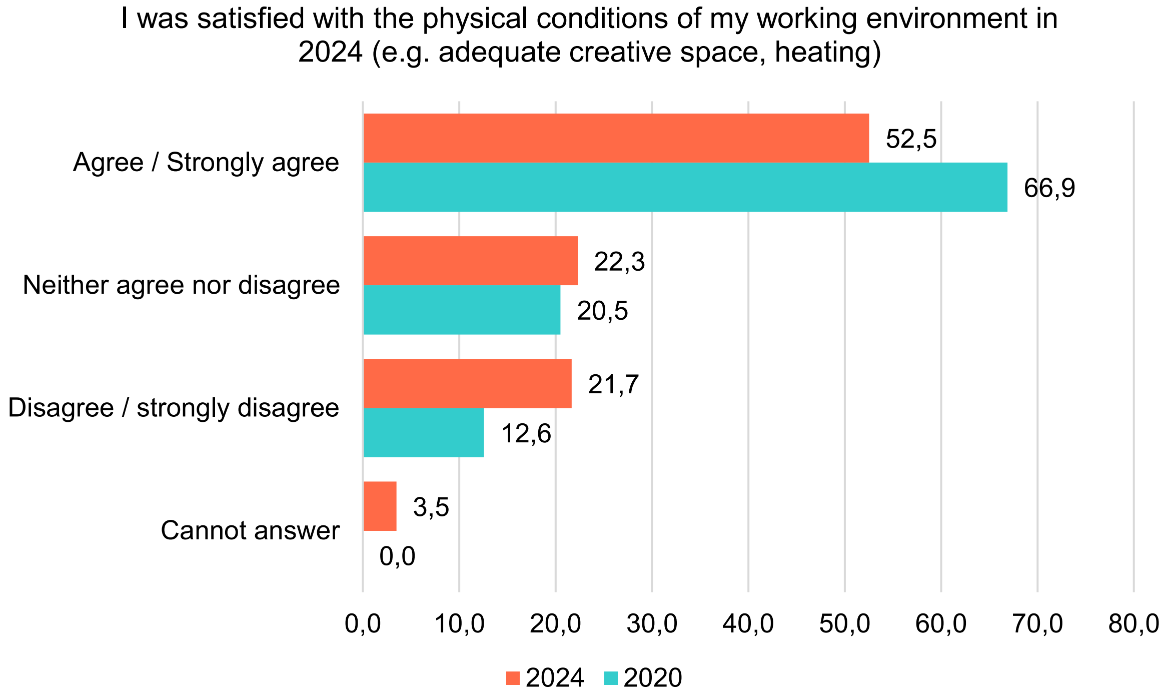

Figure 24. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "I was satisfied with the physical conditions of my working environment (e.g. adequate creative space, heating)" for 2020-2024 (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

Artists whose main creative space is in public / municipal organisation spaces (62% agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied) and in their personal studios (61%) are most satisfied with the physical conditions of their working environment.

5.

EVALUATION OF CREATIVE WORK

It is important for artists to be noticed and appreciated by professionals (critics, colleagues) and audience. The 2024 survey shows that artists increasingly feel undervalued. In 2024, the perception of receiving enough critical reviews or other forms of reflection on creative activity decreased significantly. In 2020, 34.3% of respondents agreed (agreed or strongly agreed), while in 2024 only 14.3% agreed. Correspondingly, 37.6% of respondents disagreed (disagreed or strongly disagreed) in 2020 and 56.6% in 2024. Agreement with receiving enough critical reviews or other forms of reflection decreased in all arts fields. Particularly, there was a decrease in photography (from 53.7% to 14.9%), fine arts (from 47.8% to 12.5%), literature (from 48% to 17.6%) and journalism (from 45.8% to 15.4%).

Compared to the evaluation of critics and colleagues, artists feel more appreciated by their audience. In 2024, 47.3% of artists agreed (agreed or strongly agreed) that they receive enough feedback on their work from their audience (viewers, readers, listeners, gallery visitors etc.). This is a decrease compared to 2020, when 57.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

The assessment varies by age, with just over half of older creators agreeing or strongly agreeing that they receive enough feedback from their audience, compared with just over a third of younger creators. Circus, architecture, film and design artists stand out from the rest because they don't get enough feedback from audiences on their work.

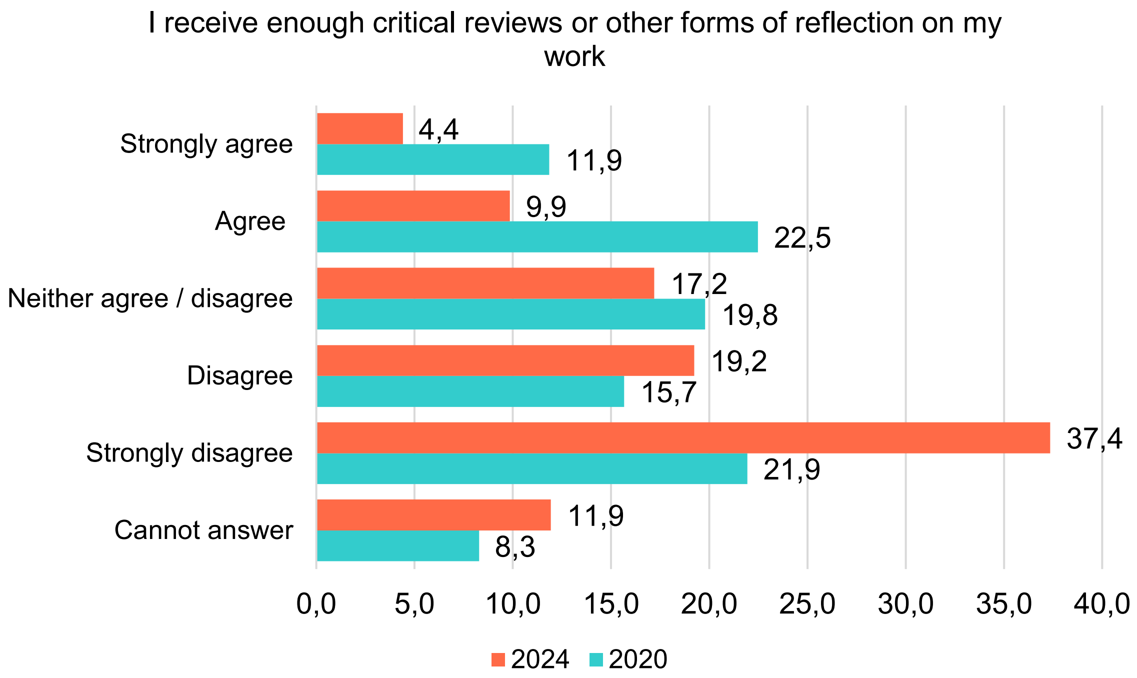

Figure 25. Distribution of respondents' answers in 2020-2024 (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data)

6. SOCIAL CAPITAL

Artists tend to have less trust in state institutions as a means to strengthen Lithuanian culture compared to the general population. The results of the survey "Participation in Culture and Satisfaction with Cultural Services" (KOG Institute, 2023) show that almost half of the population (46%) have full trust or confidence in cultural institutions as a factor that can strengthen Lithuanian culture, while only one-third (32.1%) of the artists do.

The most trusted artists are those working in interdisciplinary art, literature, circus and ethnic culture. Younger artists, under 25 and 25-34, are more likely to be trusted.

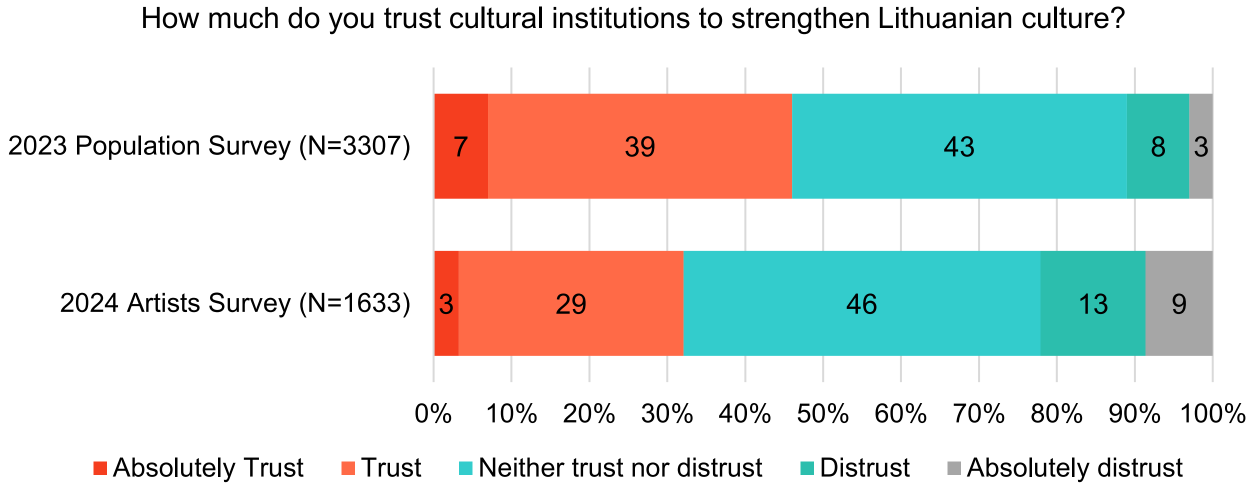

Figure 26. Distribution of respondents' answers (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data, and according to the survey "Participation in Culture and Satisfaction with Cultural Services" (KOG Institute, 2023))

64.2% of artists felt happy or very happy in 2024. Compared to the results of the "Participation in Culture and Satisfaction with Cultural Services" (KOG Institute, 2023), artists are more likely to feel not very happy or unhappy than the general Lithuanian population. Creators aged 65+ feel the happiest, although the opposite trend is true among the Lithuanian population, with younger people feeling happier and older people feeling unhappy.

The happiest creators were those in dance (80% were very happy or happy), journalism (73.1%) and music (70.5%). Among the regions, there were slightly more people saying they were happy in Telšiai County (92.3%), Alytus City Municipality (91.7%) and Alytus County (83.3%), while fewer happy artists were in Tauragė County (50%) and Klaipėda City Municipality (53.7%).

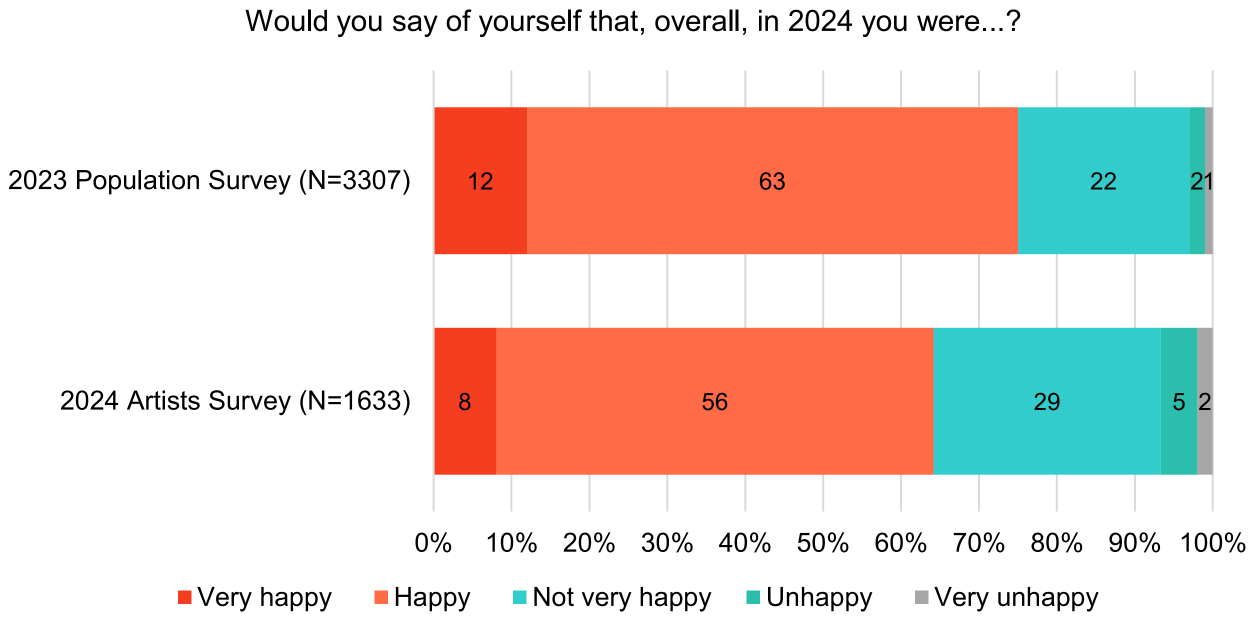

Figure 27. Distribution of respondents' answers (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data, and according to the survey "Participation in Culture and Satisfaction with Cultural Services" (KOG Institute, 2023))

Only 9% of developers feel able to influence decisions in their municipality or country. A similar situation was recorded in the population survey, where 14% of respondents indicated that they have a great deal or a lot of influence on decisions.

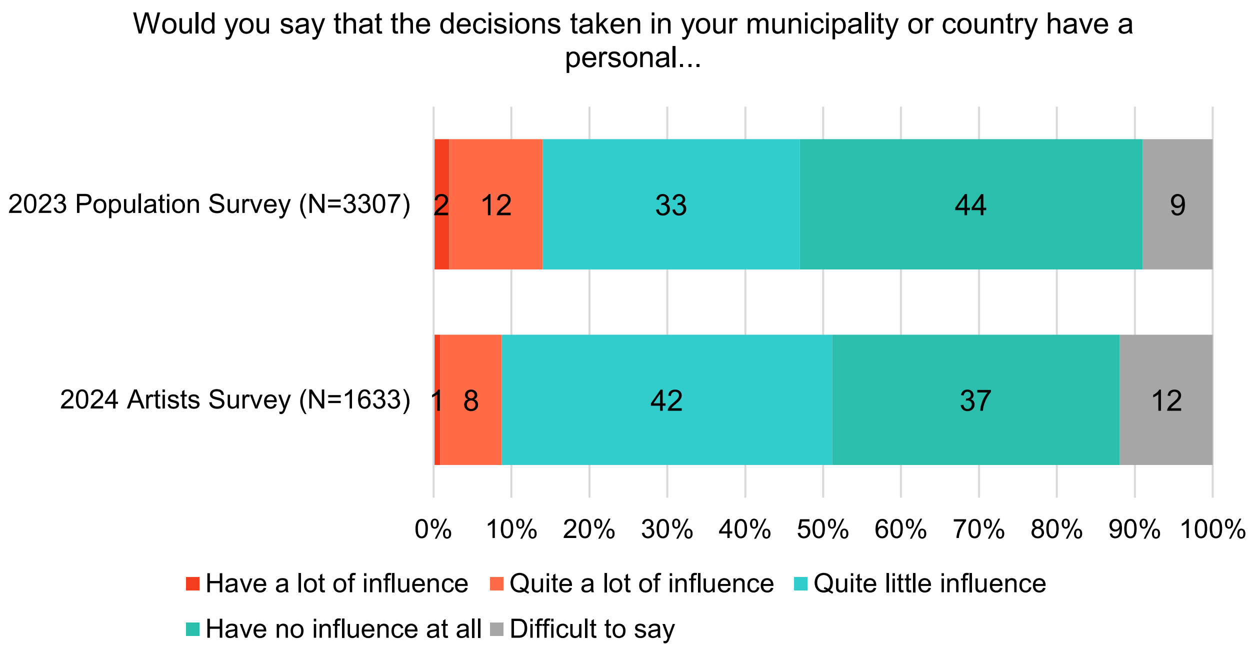

Figure 28. Distribution of respondents' answers (%) (compiled by the authors, based on survey data, and according to the survey "Participation in Culture and Satisfaction with Cultural Services" (KOG Institute, 2023))

7. COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION OF ARTISTS IN LITHUANIA

In order to achieve creative productivity and high-quality artistic works, it is important to ensure appropriate conditions for a safe and inspiring creative process that guarantees the psychological satisfaction of artists, a comfortable creative environment, and fair financial remuneration. This section provides recommendations for key indicators for monitoring the status of artists, covering the most important factors affecting the status of creators.

A system of indicators is presented for a comprehensive assessment of the status of artists in Lithuania, which defines the most important conditions for artists' creativity: attention to the creator, conditions for creativity, and financial remuneration. The selected indicators are based on the logic of conditions that improve the status of artists, and indicators are also identified that need to be monitored according to the results of the artist survey, which reflect the weakest components of the status of Lithuanian artists. In an effort to highlight the weakest aspects of the status of artists and to make suggestions for areas for improvement, the indicators are presented as areas for improvement, with the aim of minimizing the significance of most of them.

ATTENTION TO THE CREATOR

This group of indicators reveals the artist's position in society: the respect of the state and community for the creator and his or her work, as well as the attention paid to the work by professionals, colleagues, and the audience, expressed through formal and informal feedback.

This group includes the following indicators[3]:

- **Does not feel valued by society:** The percentage of artists who believe that society's attitude towards artists is negative (question 18.9 of the questionnaire: "I believe that society's attitude towards artists is positive").
- **Do not feel noticed by the state:** The proportion of artists who do not see the state's efforts to raise the prestige of the artistic profession (question 18.6 of the questionnaire: "I see the state's efforts to raise the prestige of the artistic profession").
- **Lack of attention from critics:** The proportion of artists who do not receive sufficient attention from critics (question 35.8 of the questionnaire: "I receive sufficient professional reviews or other feedback on my creative work").
- **Lack of attention from colleagues:** Percentage of artists who do not receive sufficient attention from colleagues (question 35.9 of the questionnaire: "I receive sufficient evaluations of my work from colleagues (artists in my field)").
- **Lack of audience attention:** The proportion of artists who do not receive enough attention from the audience (question 35.10 of the questionnaire: "I receive enough feedback from the audience (viewers, readers, listeners, gallery visitors, etc.) about my work").

The artist survey data reveals that only 10.2% of respondents feel that the state pays attention to them and that politicians are making efforts to raise the prestige of the artistic profession. Furthermore, only 14.3% of creators indicated that they receive sufficient professional critical

[3] For each indicator (except 36.4), the proportion of artists who have a negative opinion of the aspect analyzed (marked 1 or 2 (strongly disagree and disagree)) is assessed.

attention. Most respondents feel visible among their audience, visitors, or exhibition attendees. The criteria for the visibility of artists and their work reveal fundamental systemic gaps—creators do not feel that they are an important part of cultural policy. The lack of attention from critics and art historians reveals another problem: not all creators' works are noticed and analysed, which is largely due to the lack of cultural and art analysts and limited funding for art media.

Comparing the respondents' answers with the results from 2020, it is clear that artists feel they are receiving less attention from the public, the state, critics, and their colleagues.

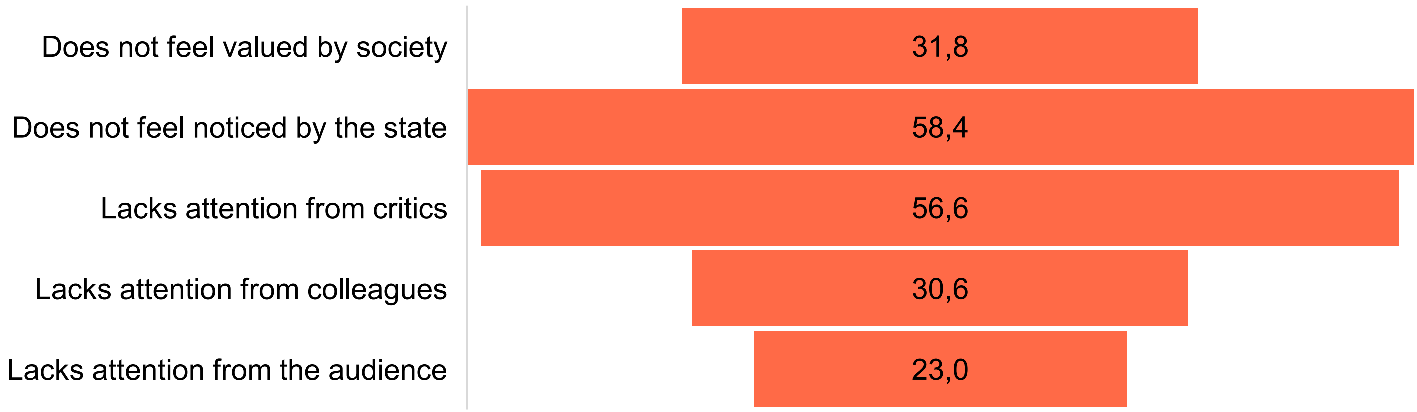

Figure 29. Indicators for attention to the creator

CREATIVE ENVIRONMENT

A safe and inspiring working environment is important in every profession, but it has an even greater impact on creative activities, which are particularly emotionally and physically demanding. This group includes indicators that reflect the physical conditions for creative work and elements of the psychological climate. When discussing the conditions for artists' creative work, the contribution of managers/communication specialists is also very important, as it allows artists to focus solely on their profession and not on other creative organizational activities.

Indicators of conditions for creative work:

- **Dissatisfied with working conditions:** Percentage of artists dissatisfied with their working environment (question 39.1 of the questionnaire: "I was satisfied with the physical conditions of my working environment in 2024 (e.g., creative space that meets my needs, heating).")
- **Experienced stress:** Percentage of artists experiencing stress in their working environment (question 39.3 of the questionnaire: "I experienced a lot of stress in my working environment").
- **Experienced discrimination:** Percentage of artists who experienced discrimination in their working environment (question 39.4 of the questionnaire: "I experienced discrimination in my working environment due to gender, age, etc.").
- **Felt "burnout":** Percentage of artists who felt burnout (question 39.10 of the questionnaire: "I felt 'burned out'").
- **Performed management functions:** Percentage of artists who perform management and communication functions in their projects (question 36.4 of the questionnaire: "I perform most of the management and communication functions in my projects myself").

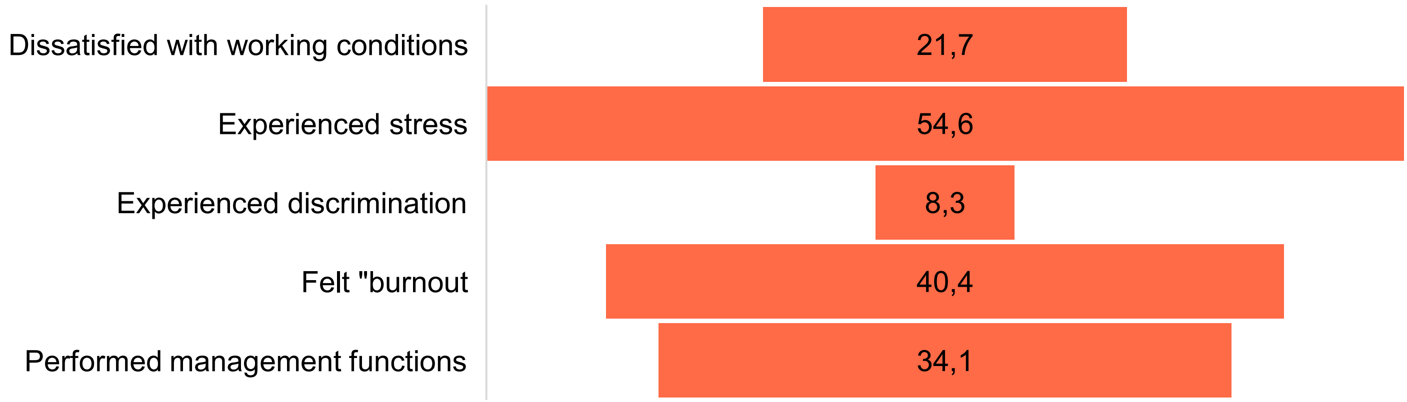

Figure 30. Indicators for attention to the creative environment

An assessment of artists' working conditions reveals that approximately half of all creators are satisfied with the physical conditions of their work. Creators constantly face stress, as indicated by 54.6% of survey respondents, and experience burnout (40.4%). This indicates that working in a creative profession in the long term is detrimental to emotional health and stability. The burnout rate may also be related to the fact that about one-third of creators perform additional management functions alongside their creative activities. 8.3% of creators reported experiencing workplace toxicity and discrimination in the creative environment.

Compared to 2020, the proportion of creators experiencing stress in their work environment has more than doubled (from 21.4%). There has also been a positive change in the category of creative conditions: fewer creators experienced discrimination (in 2020, this figure was 13.4%), and half as many creators reported performing management functions on a regular basis.

FINANCIAL REMUNERATION

The artistic profession is characterized by financial instability: few creators have permanent contracts, their income fluctuates constantly, and many are unable to survive on their creative activities alone. Therefore, one of the most important indicators of the situation is the income of creators, their sources of income, and the stability of their income.

The share of financial remuneration includes the following indicators:

- **Ratio of artists' income to the national average income:** Average monthly income of creators after taxes compared to the average income in the country (question 24 of the questionnaire, "Indicate your average monthly income in 2024 (after taxes), in euros"), compared to the average income in the country.
- **Ratio of women's income to men's income** (question 24 of the questionnaire, "Indicate your average monthly income in 2024 (after tax) in euros"), converted to show what proportion of men's income is accounted for by women's income.
- **Share of income from creative activities:** Average income from creative activities compared to the average income of creators (question 26 of the questionnaire:

Indicate how your average monthly income (after taxes) from creative activities was distributed in 2024)

- **Can live solely from creative activities:** Share of artists whose income is sufficient to live on (question 25.1 of the questionnaire: My income from creative activities is sufficient to live on).
- **Worked in creative work without remuneration**: Percentage of artists who indicated that they worked in creative work without remuneration (question 22 of the questionnaire: "Did you work in creative work without financial remuneration in 2024?").

Figure 31. Indicators for financial renumeration

The problem of financial stability is mentioned periodically in the report, as it is one of the weakest aspects of the artists' situation. It can be seen that the income of creators accounts for approximately 80% of the average national wage, while income from creative activities accounts for just over half of all creators' income. Another pressing issue is the gender pay gap, with female artists earning on average 77% of the income earned by their male counterparts.

Only 12% of creators said they could make a living from their main profession, i.e., creative work. One of the specific features of the artists' labor market is unpaid work, which arises for various reasons: almost 40% of creators indicated that they had created works without financial remuneration.

In terms of financial income, the problem of income inequality is becoming more pronounced compared to 2020. Artists' remuneration grew more slowly than the country's overall income growth (in 2020, artists earned 84% of the country's income, in 2024 only 80%), and the gap between men's and women's incomes widened (in 2020, women's income accounted for 82% of the average income of men, in 2024 – 77%). of men's average wages in 2020, 77% in 2024). There is a positive change in that in 2024, a larger share of artists' total income will come from creative activities (54% in 2024, compared to 44% in 2020).

Figure 32. Comprehensive assessment of artists' status

CONCLUSIONS

I. There is no single definition of a *professional artist* in Lithuania. The field of architecture stands out (due to the specific nature of its activities and the necessary legal regulation) as having defined the concept and activities of an architect by law. However, when talking about professional artists in general, cultural policy legislation uses the terms *artist*, *cultural participant*, or *creative worker*. There is also no established division between the fields of culture and art (only the Lithuanian council for culture systematized data distinguishes between different fields, depending on the competition), which complicates consistent monitoring in the long run and makes data incomparable. The lack of a clear definition of terms also carries over to the monitoring of the situation of professional artists. There is no centralized official database of artists in Lithuania; information about creators is collected by individual organizations for different purposes, and the consolidation and systematization of data is complex and time-consuming. As a result, there is no unified monitoring of the number of artists, their distribution by field, place of residence, and other indicators, and this information is collected only when conducting research. **In other words, without regularly updated and easily accessible data and a definition of the term 'artist', it is difficult to ensure objective monitoring and to plan relevant instruments that can contribute meaningfully to the well-being of artists.**

II. Artists are an important part of society, their works are essential for cultural development and the preservation of memory, the formation of values among the population, and they send important socio-cultural messages. This is also determined by the artists' own attitude towards their profession – they understand and appreciate the importance of their work in the life of the country. The creative freedom and opportunities to express their ideas and present them to an audience are also important to artists. **Cultural policy researchers refer to this as the non-financial return on activity. However, this should not be used as an argument to justify the emerging financial challenges faced by artists:** creators' incomes are unstable, they often have to work several jobs to make ends meet, and in order to live with dignity, they have to work not only in creative professions but also in other fields. They not only create, but also organize, disseminate, and promote their creative work.

III. **Based on available data sources, there were 16,849 artists working in Lithuania in 2024.** These creators work in different forms; for some of them, it is important to give meaning to their work and obtain official status as artists, while for others, it is important to join artists' unions or obtain state funding for their activities. This study includes creators who do not participate in state funding mechanisms but are also an important part of the cultural ecosystem, i.e., individuals who express themselves in the commercial sector.

IV. Most Lithuanian artists (38%) work in the field of music, followed by a large proportion in the visual arts (12%), architecture (11%), and literature and cinema (10% each). There are more male creators in the field of art (51.68%), and the distribution of artists by age is fairly even. Although the entire population is fairly evenly distributed by gender and age, differences emerge when analysing individual fields, e.g., women make up the vast majority of creators in the field of dance, while older artists predominate among creators of ethnic culture and folk art.

V. Artists are not evenly distributed throughout Lithuania. **Almost two-thirds of all creators in the country (60.5%) live and work in Vilnius County, which also has the highest**

ratio of artists per thousand inhabitants – 9. In the next county, Kaunas, this ratio is almost a third lower, at 3.67. The fewest artists are in Tauragė County, accounting for 0.41% of all artists in the country, which is less than one artist per thousand inhabitants.

VI. 33.92% of all artists in the country have obtained the status of artist. Based on the proportion of persons holding this status in individual fields, it can be said that it is most relevant to artists working in the fields of fine arts, ethnic culture, and folk art. It should be noted that creators gain this status due to their social situation and the emphasis on their position as creators, as not all of those who have this status take advantage of the opportunities and guarantees it offers; for example, only one-third (31.58%) of those who have this status have gained the status of support recipient.

VII. The specific nature of an artist's work is inseparable from unstable, uncertain income, financial uncertainty, short-term employment contracts, and the need to balance creative and other work. In this case, state funding for artists becomes particularly important. However, an assessment of the scholarships awarded by the Lithuanian council forculture shows that over the decade (2014–2024), 4,271 artists (out of a population of more than 16,000 artists) received a scholarship at least once. More than a third (36%) of artists who participated in LKT scholarship competitions over the decade received funding of up to €2,000. Only 516 artists (about 10% of all scholarship recipients) received scholarships worth €10,000 or more over a 10-year period. Finally, only 76 artists, or 1.8% of all artists who received scholarships over the decade, are in the highest scholarship bracket (€20,000 to €32,000). **This means that scholarships contribute only fragmentarily to the well-being of artists and are not currently an instrument that can ensure financial security.** Similar trends can be observed in the case of Lithuanian film centre scholarships. Approximately 1.7% of Lithuanian artists or 10.1% of all creators in the field of cinema have received a scholarship from the Lithuanian Film Center. **The funding allocated to individual creators can be considered sporadic, as almost 90% of all artists who received Lithuanian film centre scholarships were awarded up to two such scholarships during the period 2018–2024.** Seventy percent of individual artists who received Lithuanian film centre funding during the period under review were allocated a total of up to €4,000. When assessing both Lithuanian council for culture and Lithuanian film centre scholarship recipients by gender, a predominance of female artists is observed (especially among recipients of educational/mobility scholarships); for example, in the case of the Lithuanian film centre, educational scholarships were awarded to approximately 73% of female artists. Meanwhile, the distribution of individual scholarship recipients by gender is more even. This confirms the assumption that in Lithuania, as in Norway (Askvik et al., 2022), women may be more dependent on state funding due to existing income inequality in the labor market.

VIII. In 2024, the Lithuanian council for cultrue and Lithuanian film centre together awarded around 700 grants to artists across the country. In addition, the monthly amounts awarded (in the case of individual grants) remained lower than the average wage in the country. This indicates significant gaps between funding opportunities and the existing artist population. National funding could be supplemented by other initiatives, such as private initiatives or patronage (based on the experience of other countries, a privately funded residency program could serve as an example, providing space for creativity, e.g., for a period of one year, with a paid scholarship).

IX. The analysis of the artist population confirmed the significant gaps between large cities recorded in the Municipal Culture Index. Around 60% of professional artists (more than 7,000 people) live and work in Vilnius, while in Kaunas there are around 1,700 (only around 13%), and in Klaipėda around 650 (less than 5%). The gaps are even greater in the remaining three major cities: around 330 people (2.5%) work in Šiauliai, less than 200 (1.5%) in Panevėžys, and less than 100 (0.5%) in Alytus.

X. In the period 2004–2024, women accounted for about 34% and men for about 66% of AGATA recipients. Men received compensation slightly more often than women. Among creators of both genders, compensation was most often received once during the entire period: 16% of women received remuneration once, compared to 14% of men; accordingly, between 2004 and 2024, fewer women than men received remuneration each year (2% of women and 3.4% of men received remuneration each year). In the period 2004–2024, the remuneration paid to individual creators most often amounted to up to EUR 100 per year, while remuneration exceeding EUR 1,300 accounted for almost 6% of all remuneration payments. **For the majority of creators, remuneration does not constitute a significant part of their income and is rather considered a symbolic income.**

XI. During the period 2015-2023, **an average of 189 artists, or 3.4% of artists registered in the register of artists, received creative downtime payments each year.** The largest jump in the use of this measure was during the COVID-19 pandemic (in 2020 and 2021), when the number of artists receiving downtime payments increased more than sevenfold compared to the previous year's average. **During the period 2015-2023, the average creative downtime allowance per creator increased by almost 2.5 times, reaching around EUR 2,333 per year in 2023.**

XII. **Although the state intervenes by allocating a portion of the income tax paid by residents to artists (individuals) who have beneficiary status, this type of private support is not popular. In 2023, approximately 1% of the total estimated personal income tax was allocated to artists. The average amount allocated to an individual creator varies little from year to year and amounts to approximately EUR 248 per person.**

XIII. The problem of stagnant spending on culture remains. The share of average leisure and cultural spending per household member in the total expenditure basket has not changed significantly over the last two decades (fluctuating around 6%). This means that changes in the welfare of artists cannot depend on the population's consumption of culture. With a small art market, greater responsibility falls on state institutions.

XIV. Unable to secure the income necessary for their livelihood from creative activities, artists often combine different sources of income, work with different institutions, and combine creative activities with additional income. **This means that** the working week consists of creative, creative-related (e.g., educational) and non-creative work. However, even when all sources of income are combined, the total income remains relatively low. **The average total monthly income of an artist is €1,090 (take-home pay) (median income – €750). The average monthly income of an artist lags behind the national average (around €1,400) and accounts for around 78% of the national average monthly wage.** The average monthly income of artists is also lower than the average for the creative sector –

the average salary in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector is around €1,250 (after tax), meaning that the monthly income of artists is less than 90% of the average for the creative sector. Neither longer working weeks (around 55 hours, ranging from 40 to 70 hours on average) nor qualifications (the majority of artists, 83% of those surveyed, have a university degree) contribute to higher income.

XV. **One in five artists falls into the lowest income group, earning less than the minimum wage of €500 (after tax), which is below the poverty risk threshold (€616 per month for one person). When assessing individual areas of culture and art, a particularly acute situation can be observed in the fields of fine arts and ethnic culture, where every third artist falls into the lowest income group (income up to €500).** Thirty percent of the artists surveyed, or roughly one in three, fall into the minimum wage bracket, with incomes ranging from €500 to €1,000. A similar proportion of artists, around 30%, fall into the average wage bracket (income ranging from €1,000 to €1,500). Twenty-one percent of creators earn more than €1,500, but only one in twenty artists fall into the highest income group under consideration, earning more than €2,500.

XVI. **There is significant income inequality by gender in the cultural sector. Women earn about 77% of men's average income, or in other words, almost 23% less than men on average.** When looking at median income, the gap is even wider – women earn only about 60% of men's median income.

XVII. Artists are aware of the importance of their profession and its position in society, and consider it to be prestigious (48% of creators consider their profession to be prestigious). However, the prevailing opinion among artists is that society does not value this profession, with only 17% of creators believing that others consider their work prestigious. Artists believe that there is a lack of understanding about the artistic profession in society, that the work of creators is undervalued and often treated as a hobby. Creators are critical of the state's attention to enhancing the prestige of artists: only one-tenth of creators see the state's efforts to increase the prestige of this profession, and only 9% of survey respondents agree that Lithuanian cultural policy highlights the importance of artists (15% agreed in 2020). survey respondents agree that Lithuanian cultural policy highlights the importance of artists (in 2020, 15% agreed with this).

XVIII. **A comparison of the responses of creators in 2020 and 2024 shows that the income gap problem is deepening.** Artists' remuneration has increased, but at a slower rate than the country's overall income growth (in 2020, artists earned 84% of the national average income, compared to only 80% in 2024). An analysis of the income structure shows a positive change in the income creators receive from creative activities (in 2020, it accounted for 44% of total income, and in 2024, 54%).

XIX. Compared to 2020, the situation has deteriorated: in 2020, one in eight creators was dissatisfied with the conditions. In 2024, one in three visual and interdisciplinary artists and one in four circus and theater artists will be dissatisfied with the physical conditions of their working environment.

XX. Every second artist experienced a lot of stress in their working environment in 2024. The artists experiencing the most stress is in the fields of cinema, architecture, photography, music, and theater. In 2020, every fifth artist experienced stress, so the situation has deteriorated significantly in recent years. More stress than in 2020 was experienced by creators of all age groups, all regions, and regardless of gender.

XXI. The survey results show that around 40% of artists feel "burnt out" and around 40% are unable to maintain a work-life balance. More than half of creators aged 25-34 and 35-44 feel "burnt out," as do more than half of those working in circus, film, interdisciplinary art, and dance. More than half of the younger generation of artists (under 25 and 25-34) are unable to maintain a work-life balance.

XXII. Artists increasingly feel unappreciated by critics, colleagues, and audiences. In 2024, there was a significant decline in the perception that there were enough critical reviews or other forms of reflection on creative activity. Artists in the fields of circus, design, photography, cinema, and architecture feel the lack of critical evaluation the most.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Ensuring Fair Compensation for Creators. Artists' remuneration is directly linked to the state-of-the-art market, their representation, and cultural policy implementation. It is recommended to:

a. Establish and publicly disclose minimum rates for key creative activities, especially in the visual arts, where low or unpaid fees are still common. This would strengthen artists' bargaining power, reduce gender-based pay gaps, and especially support younger artists who lack negotiation experience. Publicising rates should remain a responsibility of artists' organizations.
b. Review the priorities of the Lithuanian Council for Culture (LCC) scholarships to focus more on free creative work and longer-term scholarships, as currently artists often have to fulfill dissemination obligations unpaid.
c. Promote the expansion of funding models at the municipal level, particularly in Vilnius city municipality, where over half of Lithuania's professional artists live and work.
d. Encourage artists to create and present their work in other regions through initiatives such as residencies (e.g., year-long), which provide favorable creative conditions and benefit local communities through professional contemporary art, artistic research related to the location, and networking opportunities.
e. Promote the use of existing support instruments for artists—currently, only about one-third of artists with professional status access available benefits.
f. Monitor and encourage cultural consumption and cultural education, as artists' incomes depend on the intensity of public participation in culture. Culture should become an integral, everyday part of people's lives as a long-term sustainable priority.

II. Consistent Monitoring of Artists. There is a need to clearly define who is considered a professional artist to collect accurate data supplementing official statistics, which currently focus mostly on amateur art representatives. Economic and social well-being indicators for artists should become key metrics for evaluating cultural policy outcomes (e.g., the wage gap between artists and the national average).

III. Reviewing the Prize and Award System. It is recommended to link prize amounts to the national living standards and regularly increase their financial value, especially for major awards like the National and Government Culture Prizes. Encourage cultural institutions and festivals to actively award artists to reduce disparities in prize distribution among different art fields

IV. Enhancing the Prestige of the Artist Profession. Promote public recognition of artists' work and creative processes, and change societal attitudes to strengthen the social status of artists. This would boost motivation to create and present work and encourage private support, such as the allocation of a portion of personal income tax to support creative activities.

V. Strengthening the Network of Creative Producers, Curators, and Managers. To enable artists to focus on their creative work, it is important to develop a professional network of producers, curators, and managers, providing opportunities for education, practical experience, and retraining through formal and informal learning pathways.

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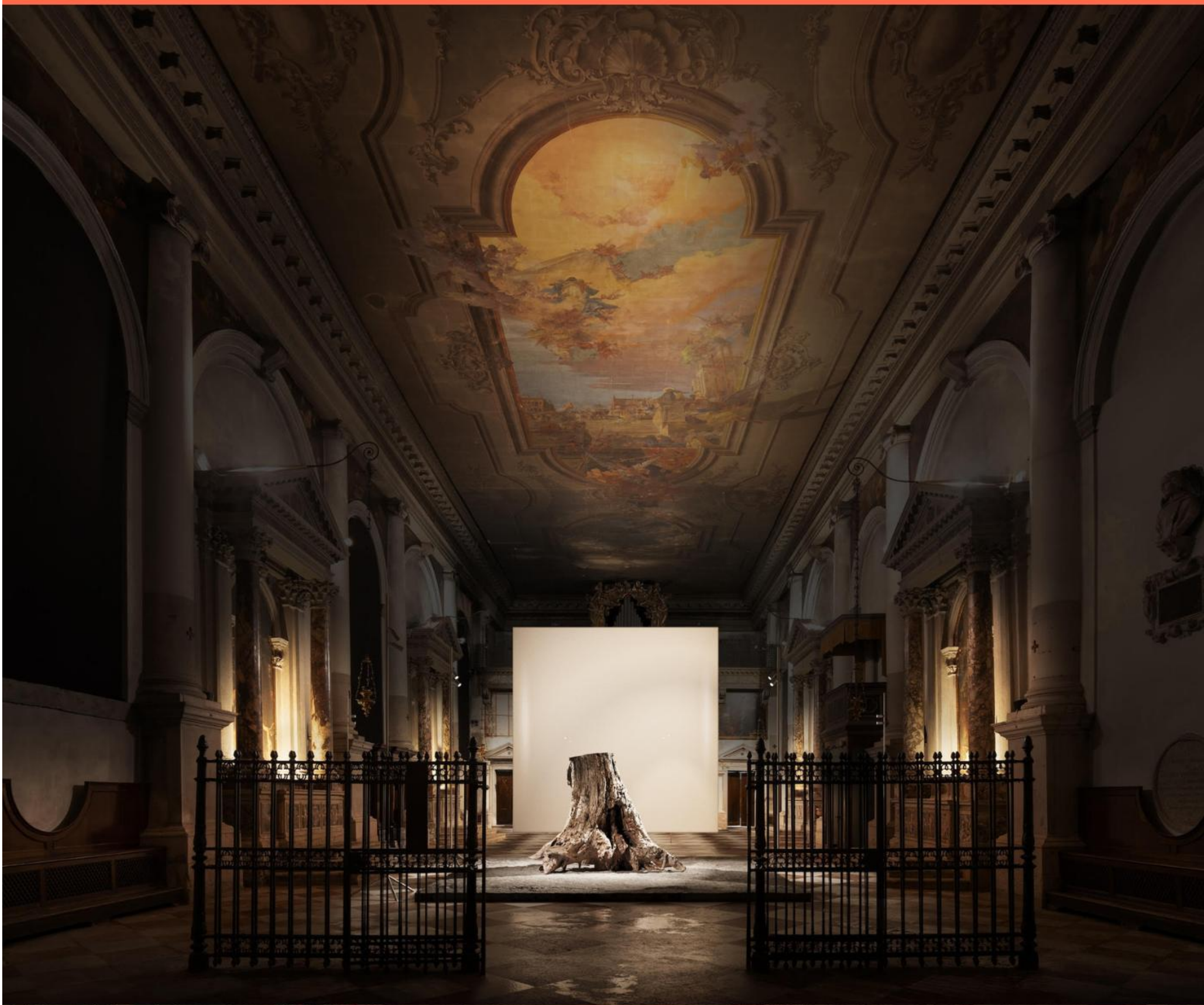

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