

Results from a survey
of artists' work environments,
conducted in autumn 2024

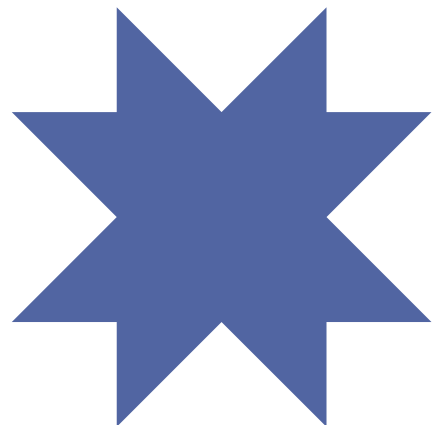
Artists' Work Environments



Konstnärsnämnden
The Swedish Arts Grants Committee

Artists' Work Environments

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of artists' work environments,
conducted in autumn 2024**



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Foreword

We would like to extend our warmest thanks to all the artists who took the time to complete the survey. The high response rate provides a valuable evidence base and strengthens the reliability of the findings.

Good working conditions are a key prerequisite for artists' professional development and for a cultural sector that is both vibrant and sustainable. Artistic practice is a professional field which, like other parts of the labour market, depends on a secure and sustainable work environment over the long term. Both working conditions and economic circumstances are crucial to the quality, diversity and resilience of artistic creation. These factors also shape the breadth and standard of the arts and cultural sector as a whole.

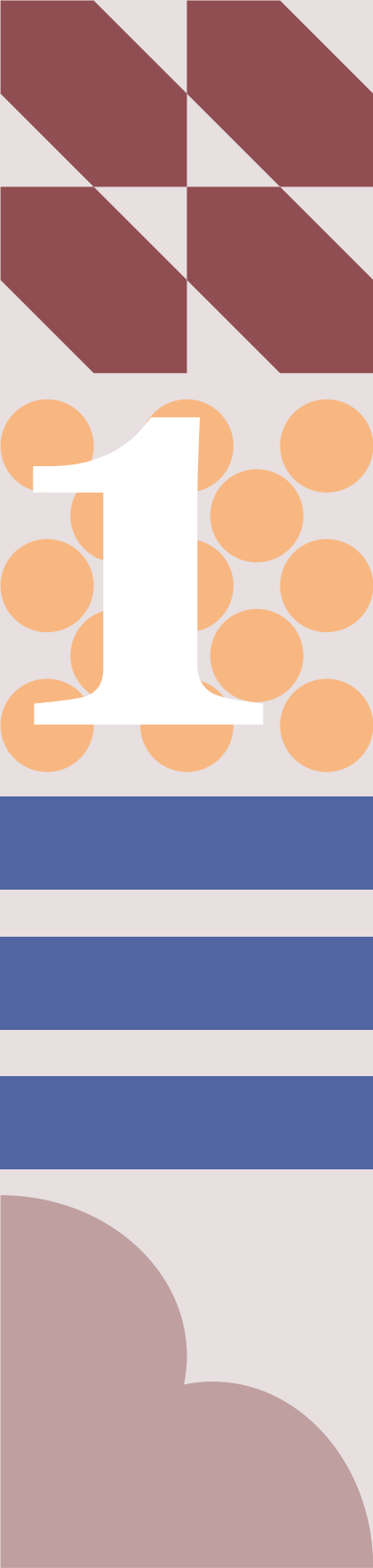
This survey, together with comparisons with our 2017 work environment report, allows us to track developments over time and build a stronger evidence base on artists' working conditions. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data provides a more nuanced understanding of these conditions. Comparisons with the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report on the work environment also make it possible to situate artists in relation to other occupational groups in the labour market.

The findings clearly show that conditions need to be improved. Many artists work as freelancers or are self-employed, often facing insecure commissions and financial uncertainty, combined with high levels of stress and working while ill. Overall, the survey indicates a continuing and substantial need for measures to strengthen working conditions in the sector.

There is a need to strengthen contractual frameworks, improve artists' bargaining position and ensure fair levels of remuneration. At the same time, social security systems must function more effectively for those who run their own businesses and those who combine running a business with salaried employment. The survey also highlights the need to improve occupational health and safety conditions, particularly in relation to personal security. Harassment and threats of violence are unacceptable and have a detrimental impact on the work environment.

Taken together, the findings underscore the importance of a continued strong policy for artists, with targeted measures at multiple levels to improve conditions for artists. This is essential for safeguarding artistic freedom.

Mika Romanus
Director, Konstnärsnämnden



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Summary

The Swedish Arts Grants Committee (Konstnärsnämnden) is tasked with analysing and disseminating knowledge about artists' social and economic conditions. As part of this work, we have conducted a survey of these conditions for the second time. It was carried out as an online questionnaire sent to artists who, during the period 2022–2024, had applied for funding from Konstnärsnämnden or the Swedish Authors' Fund (Författarfonden).

The questionnaire was developed in collaboration with Statistics Sweden (SCB). It draws partly on Konstnärsnämnden's 2017 survey¹ and partly on the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2022 survey.² This makes it possible to compare certain results over time and with other occupational groups. The questions covered both physical and psychosocial aspects of the work environment.

Purpose of the survey

The purpose of the survey and subsequent analysis is to identify the challenges artists face in their work environments. The report also provides a basis for understanding what measures Konstnärsnämnden, as a government authority, can take in order to support artists' opportunities to develop their practice.

1. Konstnärsnämnden (2017), *Konstnärers arbetsmiljö* ("Artists' work environments").
2. Swedish Work Environment Authority (2022), *The Work Environment 2021*.

Survey participants

The questionnaire was sent to 13,626 individuals. The population comprised artists working in the fields of visual arts and design, film, music, literary arts, and theatre and dance (including circus). A total of 4,262 people responded, corresponding to a response rate of 32 per cent.

Since the sample is drawn from applicants for stipends and grants, it does not capture the entire artistic community. In addition to artistic quality, the selection of funding recipients is also based on financial need. The survey therefore largely reflects the situation of freelancers, while only a small proportion of those in permanent employment or with higher incomes are represented.

Key findings

The survey shows that artists' working conditions are often characterised by precarious contractual arrangements, irregular income and financial insecurity, alongside relatively high fixed costs. Taken together with previous studies, the findings indicate a continued need for measures to improve artists' conditions and create more sustainable long-term frameworks for artistic practice.

Freelance work affects workload, stress and professional relationships

Many artists work alone and on a freelance basis. While this can offer considerable freedom, it also entails a high degree of individual responsibility. Although most respondents considered their workload manageable overall, periods of intense time pressure were common, and reported stress levels were higher than in the labour market as a whole.

Many artists also expressed concern about the future, particularly women, younger artists and those with a foreign background. Professional networks were an important source of support, but conflicts and difficulties in voicing concerns were also reported, especially in relation to clients.

Overall, the picture that emerges is one of autonomy combined with uncertainty, stress and dependency.

Discrimination and harassment occur, and to some extent threats and violence

Several artists reported having experienced discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment, and to a lesser extent threats and violence, most often within their own professional sphere. Although fewer respondents reported such experiences than in 2017, the incidence remains notable and is higher among artists with a foreign background.

At the same time, the proportion reporting sexual harassment has increased significantly, particularly among women and within theatre and dance. This may be linked to greater awareness following the #metoo movement.

Threats and violence were reported less frequently, but when they did occur they were typically associated with audiences or social media. This may restrict artistic freedom, and some artists reported refraining from performing for these reasons.

There are recurring shortcomings in the physical work environment

Artists' physical work environments continue to be characterised by recurring shortcomings and risks related to strain. These primarily concern workspace design and ergonomic factors, with patterns largely unchanged since 2017. Women consistently reported higher exposure to such risks than men.

Working from home was significantly more common among artists than in the wider labour market. This reflects freelance working patterns and variable workplaces, but may also contribute to deficiencies in working conditions. Financial insecurity and limited scope to refrain from work can also make it difficult to manage physical health issues when they arise.

Many artists work while ill

Artists worked while ill considerably more than others in the labour market. A key reason was the difficulty of finding replacements for work in progress. Financial risks associated with sick leave also played a role, particularly for those who were wholly or partly freelance. This is partly linked to the design of social security systems.

Both physical health problems and stress-related conditions were common, particularly among women. Overall, the pattern has remained largely unchanged over time, suggesting persistent financial pressure and challenges in balancing work and private life.

Artists have limited opportunities for skills development

Most artists felt that their skills matched the requirements of their work. However, opportunities for professional development through employers or clients are significantly more limited than in the wider labour market. This is likely linked to the high prevalence of self-employment, freelance assignments and project-based work.

Overall, responsibility for skills development appears to rest largely with the individual. At the same time, freelance and self-employed work often involves low and irregular income, limiting the ability to finance such development – unlike other groups of business owners with higher earnings.

How can artists' working conditions be improved?

This study identifies a number of shortcomings in artists' working conditions. Below, we examine some of these in more detail and outline possible measures.

Improve conditions for a safe and inclusive work environment

Discrimination, harassment and threats occur within artistic practice and can affect both working conditions and artistic freedom. Although discrimination appears to have declined over time, a significantly higher proportion of artists still report such experiences compared with the wider labour market.

Sexual harassment, by contrast, has increased. Women were more frequently affected, and perpetrators were often found within the artist's own professional sphere. At the same time, freelance work and insecure forms of engagement mean that many artists lacked clear structures for support and dialogue, making it more difficult to address conflicts and situations of vulnerability.

To reduce exposure to these risks, the following are required:

- Stronger collaboration between the authorities responsible for communicating about, preventing and combating discrimination, harassment and threats
- Greater responsibility on the part of employers and commissioning bodies to ensure safe and open work environments, including for freelance practitioners.

Strengthen business and support structures

Artists' professional practice relies heavily on running a business and receiving commissions from a variety of employers and clients. As a result, many artists are responsible for their own professional development, while both the time and financial resources for such development are often limited. A key challenge is that incomes are frequently too low to enable investment in development to the same extent as for business owners in other sectors.

To strengthen long-term prospects for artists and the sustainability of the cultural and creative sector, there is a need for:

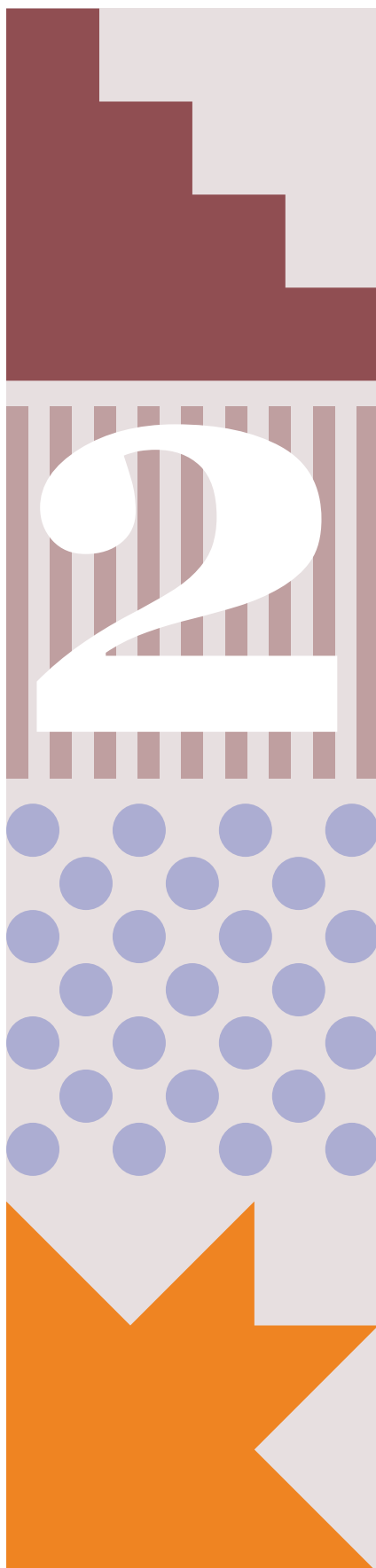
- Better-adapted support structures and more robust promotional measures, both within cultural policy and within policy towards business.

Adapt social security systems to business owners and freelancers

Artists' working conditions are often characterised by freelance work, project-based engagements and weak contractual arrangements. This makes it difficult to take time off when ill and contributes to significant financial pressure, particularly among business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs, who combine employment with running a business.

At the same time, shortcomings remain in the design of social security systems, especially for those with irregular incomes.

- The government inquiry *Ett trygghetssystem för alla* ("A social security system for all", SOU 2023:30) has analysed these issues and proposed reforms, but none have yet been implemented. Therefore, the question of how social security systems can be better adapted to business owners and freelancers remains pressing.



Introduction

The Swedish Arts Grants Committee (Konstnärdsnämnden) is tasked with analysing and disseminating knowledge about artists' economic and social conditions, as well as continuously monitoring the design and application of social security systems in relation to artists' professional practice. Furthermore, Konstnärdsnämnden monitors the conditions for artistic entrepreneurship within the cultural and creative sector. It also collaborates with relevant government authorities, institutions, civil society organisations and other stakeholders engaged in activities that are relevant for artists' conditions.

As part of this mission, we have conducted, for the second time, a survey of artists' work environments.

Background to the survey

Artists' professional practice is a fundamental prerequisite for a vibrant and diverse arts and cultural life, in line with national cultural policy objectives. Konstnärdsnämnden's overarching mandate is to promote artists' opportunities to develop their practice and to foster artistic development.

Artists' professional activities are often characterised by fixed-term commissions and employment, as well as self-employment. Many artists combine both forms of work and are thus referred to as hybrid entrepreneurs. This means that many artists have responsibilities beyond their artistic practice and often carry out this work independently. This gives rise to different work environment challenges than in parts of the labour market where permanent employment is more common.

A previous study by Konstnärsnämnden and the Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis (Kulturanalys) shows that artists' incomes are low compared with the rest of the labour market.³ A report by Konstnärsnämnden, *Konstnärernas demografi, inkomster och sociala villkor* ("Artists' demographics, incomes and social conditions"), also reveals that artists' working conditions can complicate the calculation and awarding of benefits within the social security system.⁴ These factors can affect the work environment by increasing stress and anxiety, and may lead to artists working even when they themselves or their children are ill.

Economic conditions can also affect the physical work environment. Low and irregular income may mean that expenses must be prioritised carefully, which can result in workspaces not being fully adapted and in a lack of necessary tools and equipment.

Problem statement

There is a lack of up-to-date and comparable information showing how common various occupational health and safety risks are in artists' day-to-day working lives, and how these risks vary among different groups of artists, for example across artistic disciplines and between business owners and employees. There is also a need for current knowledge about artists' exposure to harassment and threats, which Konstnärsnämnden is tasked with monitoring and reporting on. The most recent comprehensive survey of artists' work environments was conducted by Konstnärsnämnden in 2017.⁵

Without up-to-date knowledge of artists' work environments, it is difficult to identify potential problems and assess which measures are needed.

Purpose of the survey

The purpose of this survey is therefore to provide up-to-date and comparable information about artists' work environments and associated risks. The survey aims to shed light on occupational risks and exposure to harassment and threats in artists' day-to-day working lives, as well as how these conditions vary between different groups of artists.

Another aim of the survey is to strengthen the evidence base supporting Konstnärsnämnden's mission to monitor and analyse artists' economic and social conditions, identify needs, and facilitate the prioritisation of measures and initiatives. This may contribute to a more sustainable work environment and thereby strengthen artistic freedom and artists' opportunities to develop their practice.

3. Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis and Konstnärsnämnden (2025), *Artists' Incomes*.

4. Konstnärsnämnden (2016), *Konstnärernas demografi, inkomster och sociala villkor* ("Artists' demographics, incomes and social conditions").

5. Konstnärsnämnden (2017), *Konstnärers arbetsmiljö* ("Artists' work environments").



Method and implementation

The survey was conducted using an online questionnaire targeting artists who had applied for funding from the Swedish Arts Grants Committee (Konstnärsnämnden) or the Swedish Authors' Fund (Författarfonden) during the period 2022–2024. It covers practising artists working in the disciplines of visual arts and design, film, music, literary arts, and theatre and dance (including circus).⁶ The questionnaire was sent to the entire identified population, comprising 13,626 individuals. A total of 4,262 people responded, corresponding to a response rate of 32 per cent.

The survey questions were developed in collaboration with Statistics Sweden (SCB) and were based on Konstnärsnämnden's previous work environment survey from 2017⁷ and on the Swedish Work Environment Authority's survey from 2021.⁸ Some comparisons are also made with other reports from Konstnärsnämnden. This means that the results are highly comparable over time and with occupational groups other than artists. The questions covered both physical and psychosocial aspects of the work environment.

The questionnaire consisted of 41 numbered questions, several of which included sub-questions. In total, the survey comprised 70 questions.

6. As the artistic disciplines of dance and circus are numerically small, they have, for statistical reasons, been combined with theatre and are referred to in the study as the discipline of theatre and dance.

7. Konstnärsnämnden (2017), *Konstnärers arbetsmiljö* ("Artists' work environments").

8. Swedish Work Environment Authority (2022), *The Work Environment 2021*.

In addition to the survey responses, the following background data were retrieved from SCB's central registers:

- Legal gender (based on personal identity number)
- Age in 2024 (from the population register)
- Swedish or foreign background (from the population register)
- Artistic discipline (information from Konstnärsnämnden or Författarfonden).

Data collection

The survey was conducted as an online questionnaire with three reminders. Data collection took place between 16 October 2024 and 9 January 2025.

All invitations were sent by email and contained information about the survey as well as a link to the questionnaire. It was stated that participation was voluntary and that certain background data, such as gender, age, and Swedish or foreign background, would be obtained from registers. SCB compiled the responses into statistical form before passing the data on to Konstnärsnämnden. Artists could complete the questionnaire by logging in using e-identification or the username and password provided in the email.

Selection of the population

Konstnärsnämnden and Författarfonden each compiled a list of individuals who had applied for financial support during the period and submitted these to SCB. The list from Konstnärsnämnden contained 26,162 entries and the list from Författarfonden 3,322 entries. Both lists contained information on the artistic discipline to which the applicants belonged. If someone appeared on both lists, the discipline recorded in Konstnärsnämnden's list was used. In addition, the population was restricted to individuals aged 16–76 who were registered as residents in Sweden.

The lists of applicants contained duplicates, both of individuals and of email addresses shared by multiple individuals. SCB removed these duplicates and checked the data against current population registers. As a result, individuals who had died, emigrated or had invalid personal identity numbers (so-called "overcoverage") were also excluded from the dataset.

Table 1. Number of survey respondents by artistic discipline.

ARTISTIC DISCIPLINE	NUMBER IN THE POPULATION	OVERCOVERAGE
Visual arts and design	5,279	217
Film	1,155	32
Music	2,545	80
Literary arts	2,578	83
Theatre, dance and circus*	1,598	59
Total	13,155	471

* Since the disciplines of dance and circus are numerically small, they have, for statistical reasons, been combined with theatre and are referred to in the survey as the discipline of theatre and dance.

Response rates

A total of 4,262 people completed the questionnaire, corresponding to 32.4 per cent of the population. The response rate was generally higher among individuals born in Sweden and increased with age. Women responded to a greater extent than men.

The response rate also varied across artistic disciplines. Artists in visual arts and design had the highest response rate, while film had the lowest. Visual arts and design was also the largest discipline in terms of the number of artists in the population, while film was the smallest.

Table 2. Percentage of respondents by gender and age.

CATEGORY	RESPONSE RATE, %	RESPONSE, %	POPULATION
Women			
16–29	16.6%	1.6%	421
30–49	31.6%	31.4%	4,232
50–64	40.5%	20.7%	2,175
65+	47.7%	7.8%	698
Men			
16–29	12.3%	0.9%	309
30–49	24.1%	16.8%	2,963
50–64	36.4%	13.6%	1,591
65+	40.5%	7.3%	766

Table 3. Percentage of respondents by country of birth.

CATEGORY	RESPONSE RATE, %	RESPONSE, %	POPULATION
Sweden	33.7%	86.7%	10,973
Rest of the world	26.0%	13.3%	2,182

Table 4. Percentage of respondents by artistic discipline.

CATEGORY	RESPONSE RATE, %	RESPONSE, %	POPULATION
Visual arts and design	36.9%	45.7%	5,279
Film	21.9%	5.9%	1,155
Music	26.9%	16.1%	2,545
Literary arts	32.9%	19.9%	2,578
Theatre and dance	33.1%	12.4%	1,598

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Background variables

In addition to the survey questions relating to the work environment, a number of background questions were included to enable Konstnärsnämnden to monitor developments in artists' economic and social conditions over time. This chapter presents the responses to these questions and compares them with those from previous surveys.

All survey questions included in the study are compiled in Appendix 7.2.

Not currently active as a creative professional

The opening question was *"Have you worked as a professionally active artist, either full time or part time, in the past twelve months?"* A total of 117 respondents stated that they had not been active as artists and were therefore excluded from the subsequent analysis.

Among those who were no longer active, the most common reason was financial (59 respondents). This was followed by having started another occupation (23 respondents) and health reasons (16 respondents).

More women than men had ceased to be active creative professionals: 75 women compared with 42 men. The age group with the highest number of individuals who had left the profession was 30–49 years (29 individuals). In terms of artistic discipline, the largest number of those who had ceased to be active were in visual arts and design, where a total of 31 individuals had ended their artistic practice.

Occupational status

In response to the question *"In what capacity do you usually undertake your artistic work?"*, a majority stated that they worked exclusively as a business owner (58.9 per cent) or primarily as a business owner (25.8 per cent). In the

analysis, the five original response options have been grouped into three categories: employee, hybrid entrepreneur and self-employed. Together, these form the background variable “occupational status”, which is used throughout the analysis.

The 2025 report *Artists' Incomes*, published by Konstnärsnämnden and Kulturanalys, found that 65 per cent of artists were business owners or hybrid entrepreneurs. In this survey, the proportion was as high as 96 per cent, possibly due to its reliance on self-reporting rather than register data.⁹

Table 5. Percentage of respondents by occupational status.

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	POPULATION
Employee	4.4%	180
Business owner	58.9%	2,453
Hybrid entrepreneur	36.7%	1,484

Primary employer or client

When asked “Who is your primary employer or client in your artistic practice?”, the largest proportion of artists stated that their own business was their primary client (33.6 per cent). The smallest proportion cited the government (3.8 per cent).

The same question was asked in Konstnärsnämnden work environment report from 2017. At that time, 54 per cent reported their own business, while 6 per cent cited the government. At the same time, the proportion citing private clients increased, from 12 per cent in 2017 to 24 per cent in the current survey. This may indicate a shift towards a more privately funded commission structure.¹⁰

Table 6. Percentage of respondents by primary employer or client.

PRIMARY EMPLOYER OR CLIENT	PERCENTAGE, 2024	PERCENTAGE, 2017
Own business	33.6%	54%
Charitable or economic association	12.8%	14%
Private client	24.0%	12%
Region or municipality	16.4%	7%
Government	3.8%	6%
Other	9.4%	8%

9. Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis and Konstnärsnämnden (2025), *Artists' Incomes*.

10. Konstnärsnämnden (2017), *Konstnärers arbetsmiljö* (“Artists' work environments”).

Number of employers or clients

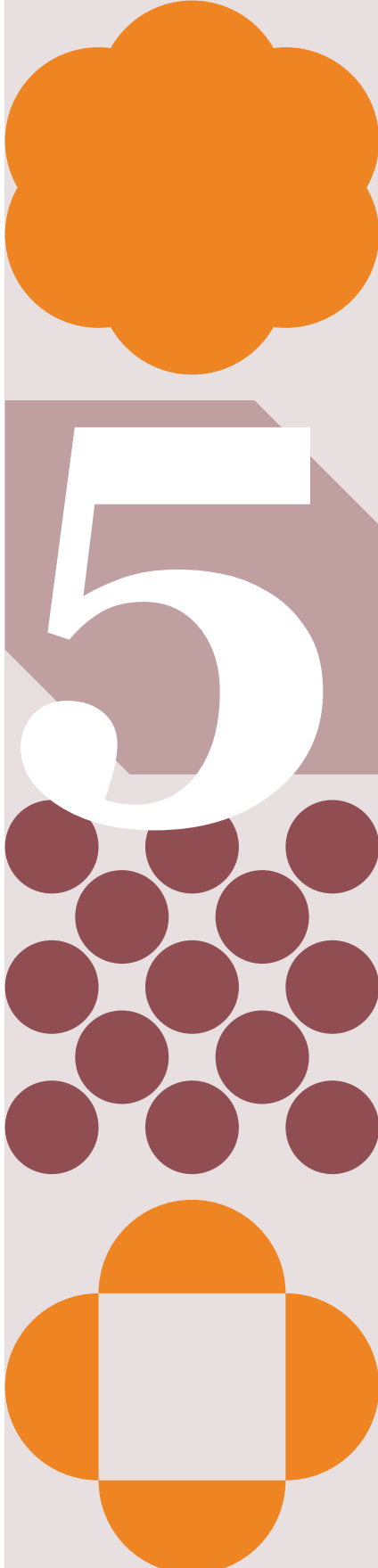
In response to the question “How many employers or clients have you had during the past 12 months?”, a majority stated that they had had 1–5 clients (65.3 per cent). At the same time, 379 respondents (9.3 per cent) reported having had more than 16 clients during the same period.

The same question was asked in the 2011 report *Konstnärernas inkomster, arbetsmarknad och försörjningsmönster* (“Artists’ incomes, labour market and livelihood patterns”). At that time, 66.2 per cent reported having 1–5 clients, while 6.4 per cent reported more than 20 clients. It should be noted, however, that the surveys used different thresholds for the maximum number of clients (more than 20 and 16 or more, respectively), meaning that the figures are not fully comparable. Nevertheless, despite the small difference, the results suggest that the proportion of artists with many clients has increased slightly over time, which may indicate a more fragmented commission structure.¹¹

Table 7. Percentage of respondents by number of employers or clients.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS OR CLIENTS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	POPULATION EXCL. OVERCOVERAGE
1–5	65.3%	2,658
6–10	17.8%	724
11–15	7.6%	309
16+	9.3%	379

11. Konstnärsnämnden (2011), *Konstnärernas inkomster, arbetsmarknad och försörjningsmönster* (“Artists’ incomes, labour market and livelihood patterns”).



Presentation of survey results

This chapter presents the responses to the survey questions relating to artists' work environments, covering both physical and psychosocial aspects. The results are presented in summary form here and are analysed in greater depth in Chapter 6. A selection of free-text responses from the final open-ended question is included throughout the chapter.

The questionnaire consisted of 41 questions, several of which contained sub-questions, giving a total of 70 questions in the survey. All questions are compiled in the appendix.

Demands, stress and social relationships

To assess various aspects of artists' social work environment, the questionnaire included a number of questions about demands, stress and social relationships.

Demands and stress

The survey included several questions on demands and stress in artistic work. These addressed, among other factors, access to support and assistance, and the extent to which artists could influence their workload and pace of work.

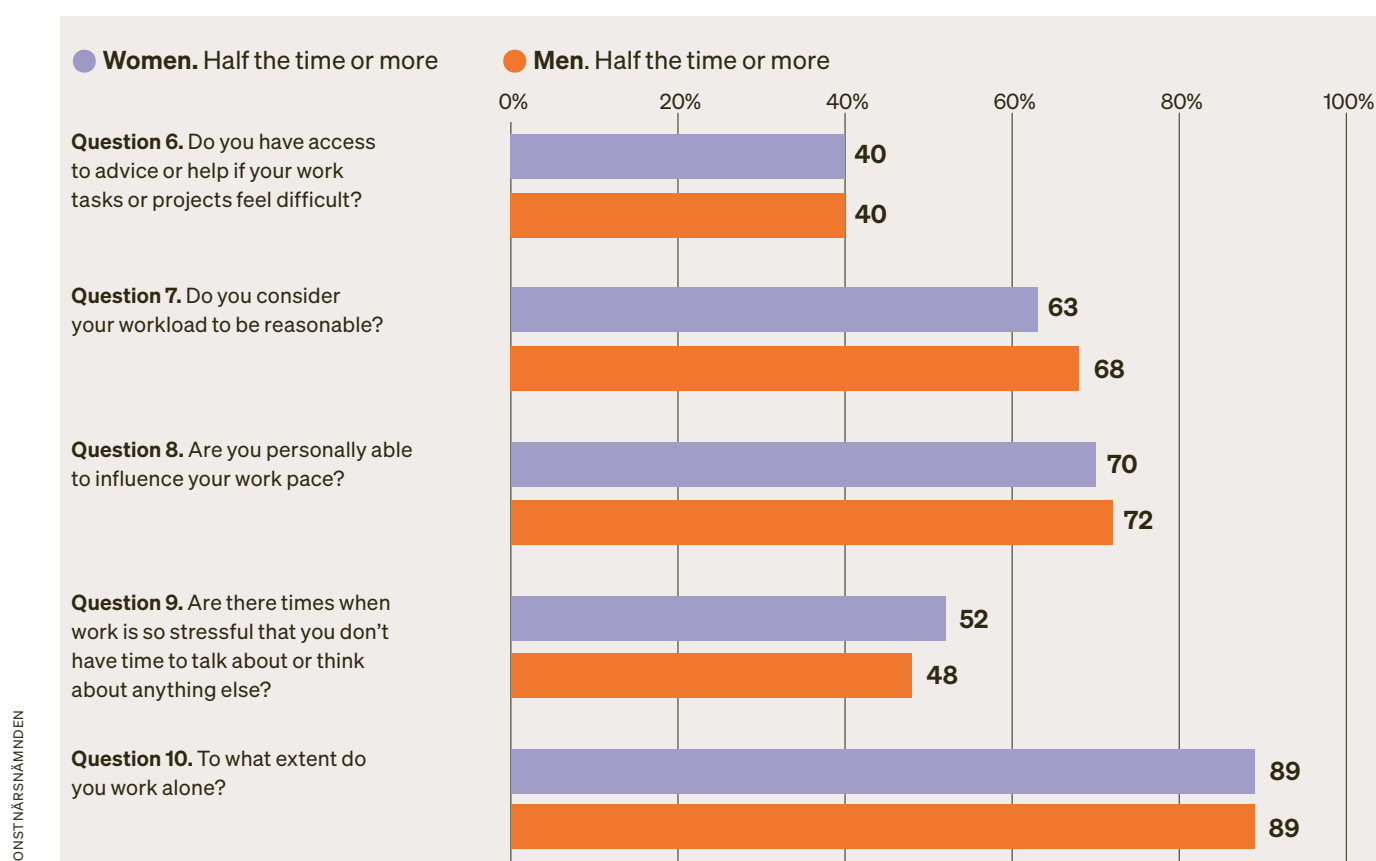
Differences between women and men were generally small (see Figure 1). However, some variation emerged in how women and men perceived their workload, the requirements of their work, and the extent to which they could obtain support or assistance with difficult tasks.

“The hardest thing to influence is the psychological work environment: living with financial insecurity year in, year out. Having children increases the sense of pressure; the parents around me are wage earners. There’s no one who understands how uncertain and pressured one feels. No paid holiday, for example! Being completely alone in your work is also very difficult to navigate.”

—Free-text response from an artist.

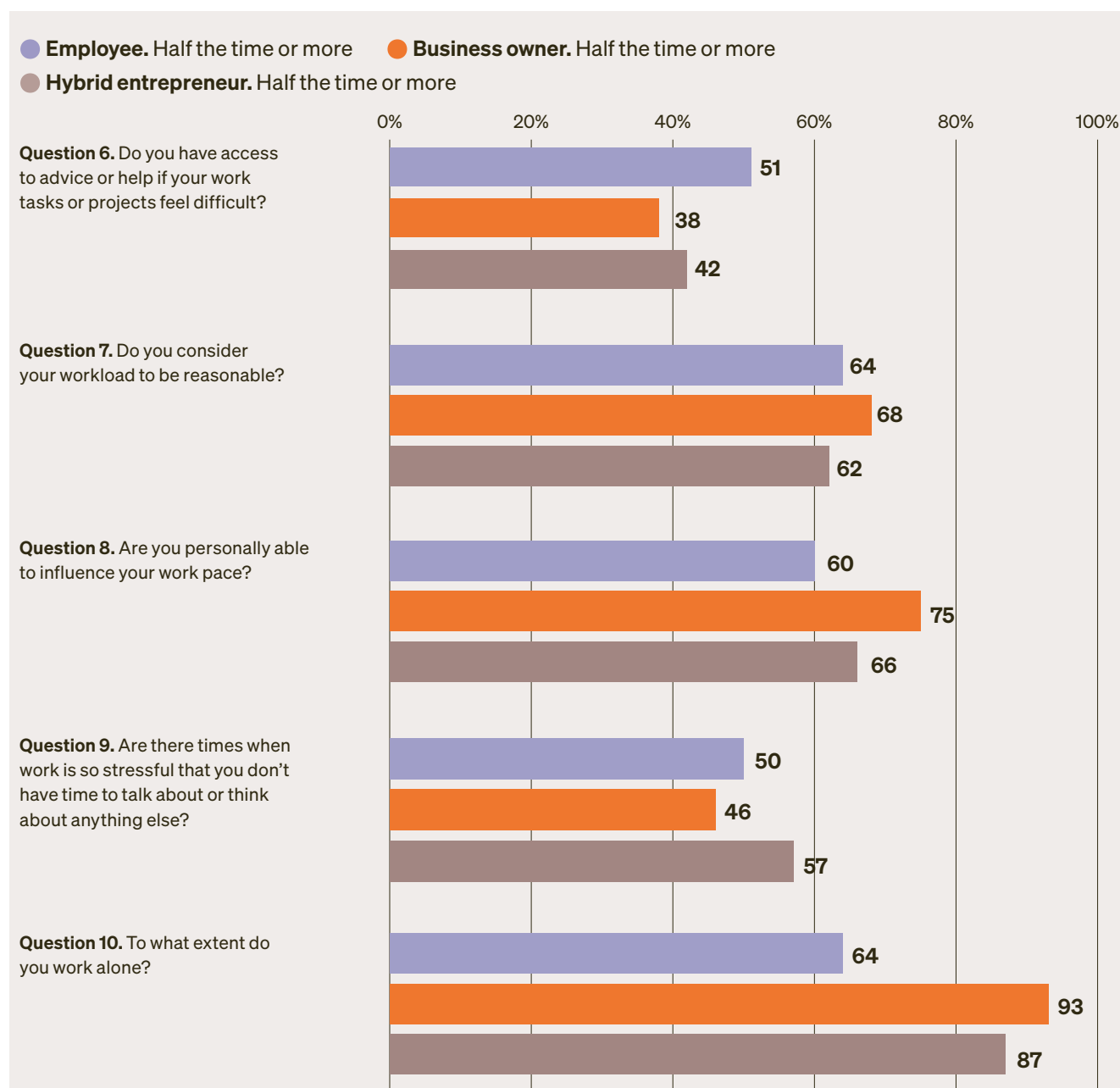
Overall, around two-thirds of artists responded that their workload was reasonable and that they could influence their own pace of work. At the same time, half reported that work was at times so stressful that they found it difficult to think about anything else. Furthermore, 89 per cent worked alone for at least half of their working time, while 40 per cent reported that they could obtain advice or assistance with difficult tasks or projects.

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing the following situations half of the time or more, by gender (multiple responses allowed).



There were clear differences between occupational status groups and forms of work (see Figure 2). Working alone was more common among business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs. Business owners were more likely to report that they could influence their pace of work, while employees were more likely to report that they could obtain advice or assistance in their work. Stress-related situations were reported across all occupational status groups and were particularly common among hybrid entrepreneurs.

Figure 2. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing the following situations half of the time or more, by occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



Concerns about the future

To capture current events – such as changes in the labour market, technological and digital developments, economic crises and the pandemic – we asked to what extent artists felt concerned about the future.

“As an artist, you’re really vulnerable and very alone. There is no safety net to fall back on in the event of illness or burnout. You have to learn to defend yourself, negotiate and assert your integrity and artistic expertise. The skills you need to acquire must be both broad and deep, extending far beyond just artistic creation. You need to be constantly alert and resilient, and to look after your own interests so that you don’t get steamrollered by clients or the industry.”

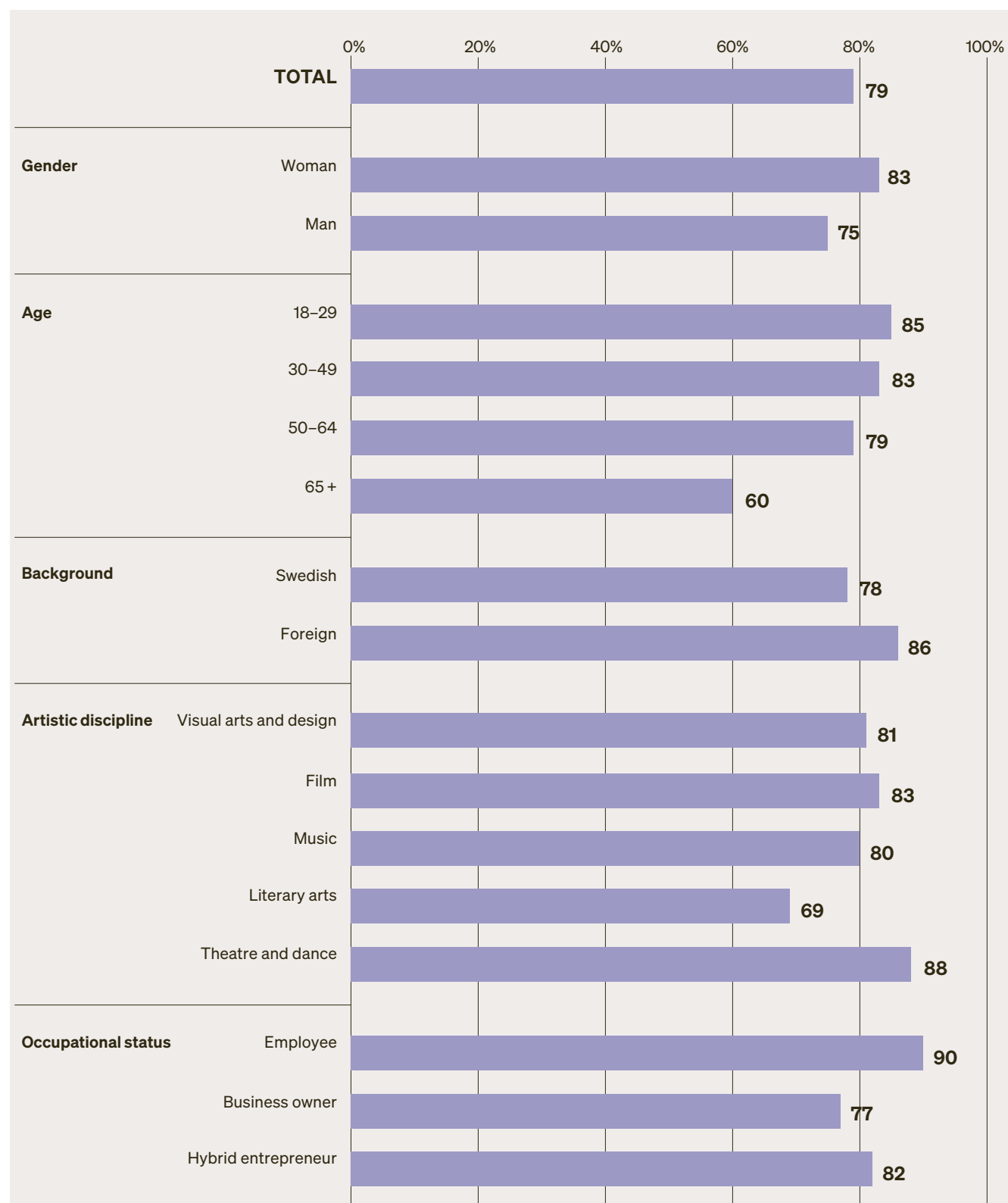
—Free-text response from an artist

A large proportion (79 per cent) of respondents reported feeling concerned at least half of the time, as shown in Figure 3. Women, younger artists and artists with a foreign background were more likely to report concern about the future. Artists who were 65 and older reported lower levels of concern than their younger counterparts.

When the results were analysed by artistic discipline, artists in theatre and dance had the highest levels of concern (88 per cent). This was followed by film, visual arts and design, and music, all at around or just above 80 per cent. The discipline of literary arts reported the lowest proportion, at 69 per cent.

Occupational status was another factor influencing the results. Employees consistently reported higher levels of concern (90 per cent) compared with business owners (77 per cent) and hybrid entrepreneurs (82 per cent).

Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who reported feeling concerned half of the time or more, by all background categories.



Conflicts and disputes

Artists were asked whether they had been involved in any type of conflict or dispute in their artistic practice during the past twelve months.

One in five respondents reported having been involved in such a situation (see Figure 4). The proportion was roughly the same between women and men, while artists in the 30–64 age group reported conflicts slightly more often than both younger and older groups. Artists with a foreign background were more likely than those with a Swedish background to report having been involved in conflicts.

There were also clear differences between artistic disciplines. Conflicts were most common in theatre and dance (32 per cent), followed by film (28 per cent). The lowest proportion was found in literary arts (14 per cent). When the results were analysed by occupational status, it emerged that employees and hybrid entrepreneurs reported conflicts more frequently than business owners.

Of those who reported having been involved in a conflict or dispute, 9 per cent replied that this occurred half of the time or more often, as shown in Figure 5. Differences between women and men were small, while older artists reported recurring conflicts more frequently than younger ones.

Variation was greatest between disciplines. In film, 18 per cent reported being involved in conflicts half of the time or more, which was the highest proportion, while music had the lowest proportion at 5 per cent.

“As an artist, you end up far down the hierarchy in construction projects. Artistic work has low status – electricity, ventilation, water, drainage and fire safety are more important. This affects the work environment because conflicts arise in projects between different spheres of interest.”

—Free-text response from an artist

Figure 4. Percentage of respondents who reported being involved in a conflict or dispute during the past 12 months, by all background categories.

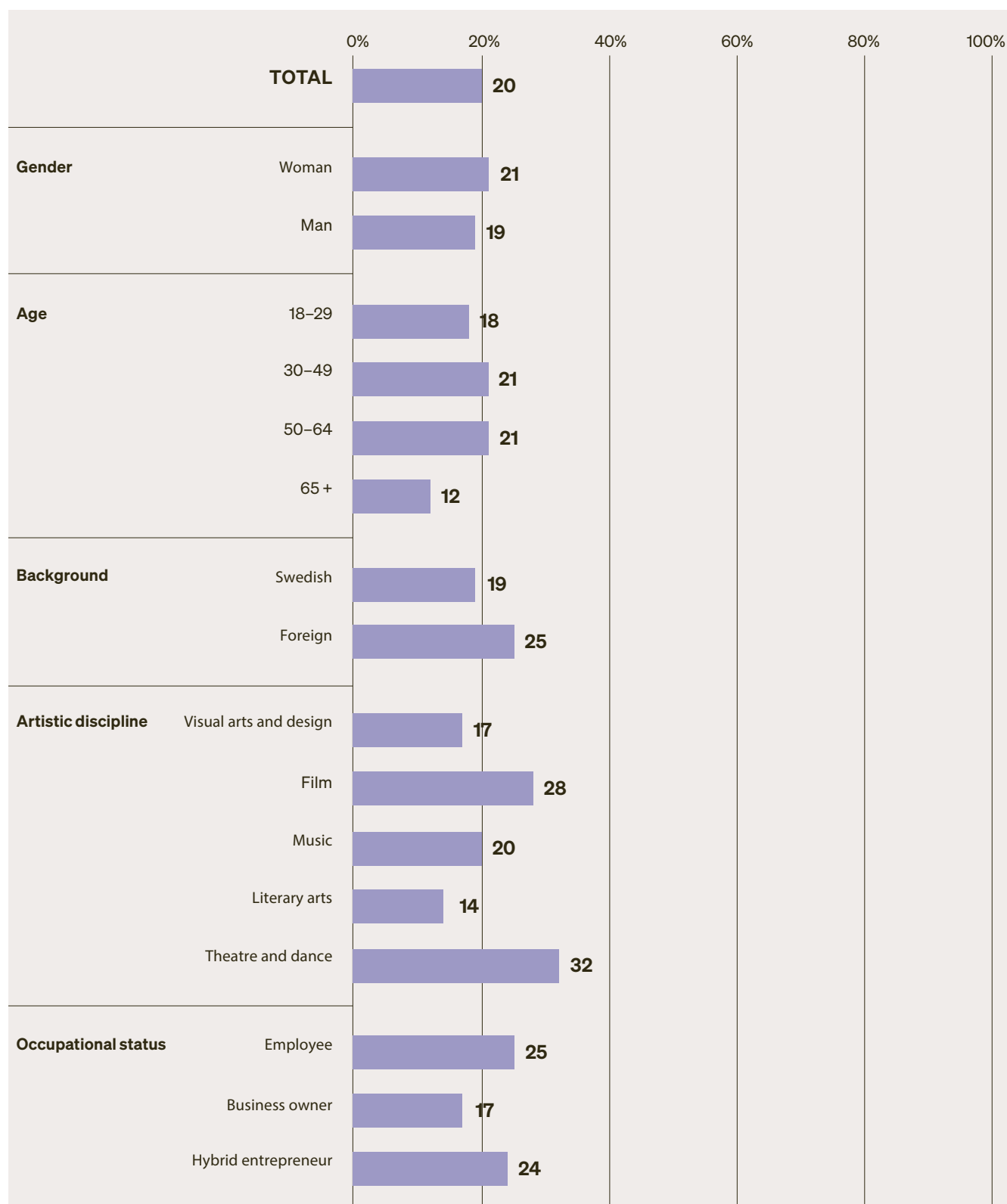
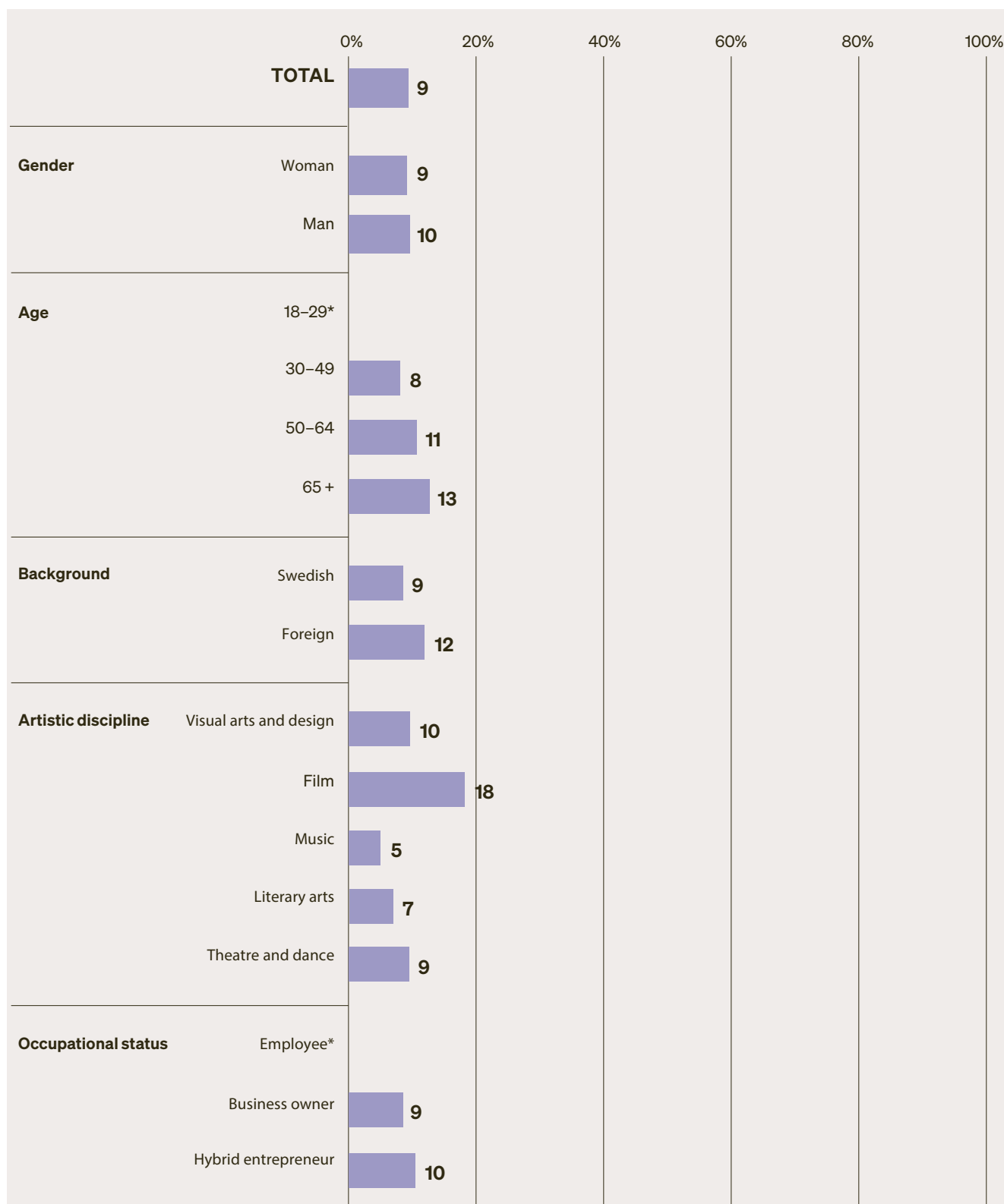


Figure 5. Percentage of respondents who reported being involved in a conflict or dispute during the past 12 months half of the time or more often, by all background categories.



*The 18-29 age group and "employees" are not reported due to a low response rate.

The survey responses show that conflicts or disputes often concerned relationships within one's own profession, most frequently with a manager, employer or client (see Figures 6 and 7). Significantly fewer artists reported conflicts with people outside the creative sector, such as audiences or the general public. A gender difference also emerges here, with 13 per cent of women, compared with 23 per cent of men, reporting conflicts or disputes with people outside the sector.

The pattern also differed between occupational statuses. Among employees, these mainly involved conflicts with colleagues, agents or similar, while business owners mainly reported conflicts with employers or clients. Because business owners are typically sole traders, this can be assumed to explain the lower proportion of conflicts with colleagues. Conflicts with people outside the professional circle were relatively uncommon across all occupational statuses.

Figure 6. Percentage of respondents who reported being involved in a conflict or dispute during the past 12 months, by conflict party and gender (multiple responses allowed).

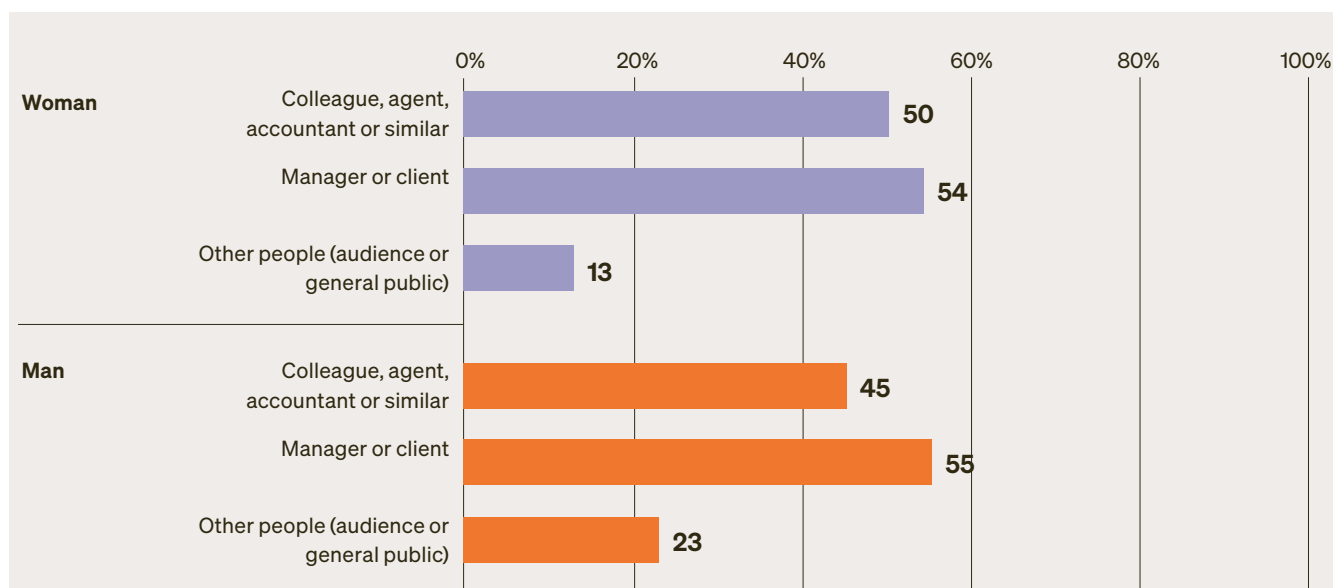
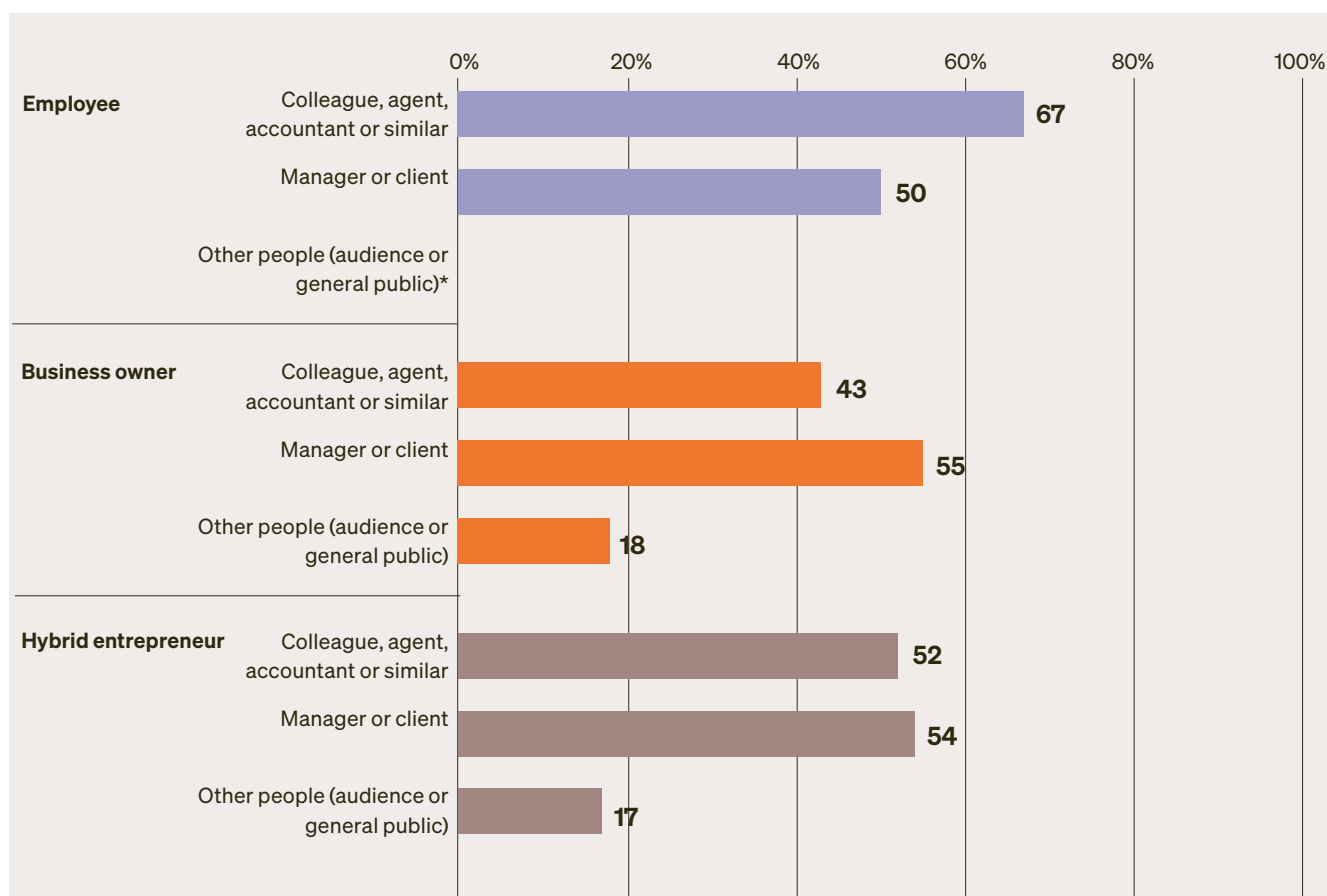


Figure 7. Percentage of respondents who reported being involved in a conflict or dispute during the past 12 months, by conflict party and occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



*The response option "With other people, e.g. the audience or the general public" is not reported for "employees" due to a low response rate.

Figure 8. Percentage of respondents who reported never, or mostly never, being able to express critical views, by all background categories.

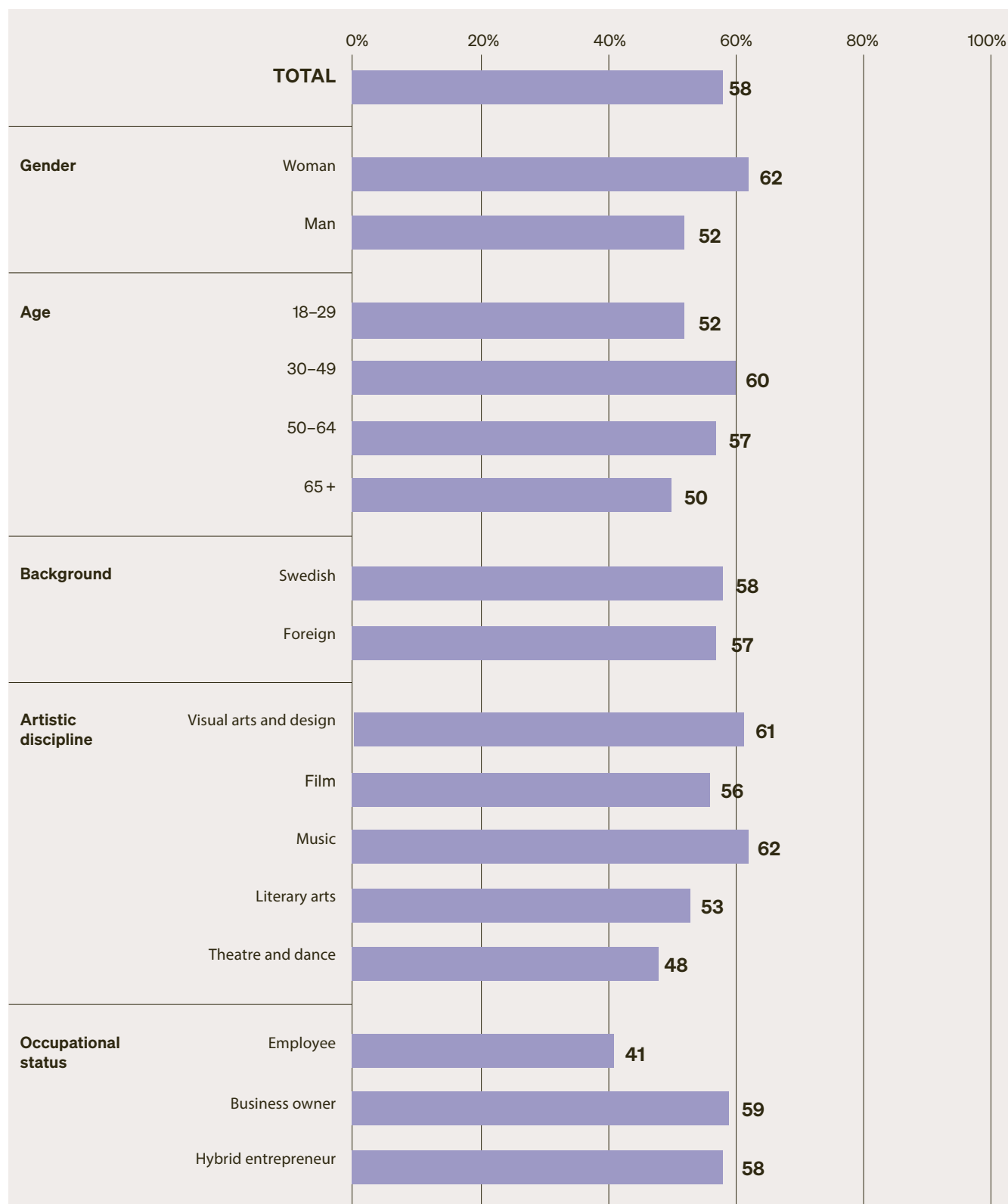


Figure 8 shows that a majority (58 per cent) of artists reported that they lacked the opportunity to express critical views. The proportion was slightly higher among women and among artists aged 30–49.

Variations between artistic disciplines were clear. In music and visual arts and design, a larger proportion lacked the opportunity to express critical views. In theatre and dance, the proportion lacking this opportunity was lowest, which may be related to the more collective practices of these disciplines.

Occupational status also played a role. Employees experienced such limitations to a significantly lesser extent, whereas a higher proportion of business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs lacked the opportunity to express criticism. This may partly be explained by a more project-based labour market for business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs, where relationships with employers or clients are often more temporary and therefore more insecure.

Discrimination, harassment, threats and violence

In the survey, we asked several related questions about discrimination, harassment, threats and violence linked to artistic practice. The questions concerned how often artists had been subjected to such treatment, by whom, and whether they had ever cancelled an exhibition or a performance as a result.

“The vulnerability of constantly having to make yourself marketable, and so being unable to speak out when something isn’t right. It’s not always about sexual harassment or abuse based on age, etc. It can also involve unreasonable demands or expectations from someone you are working for, or various forms of disrespectful treatment.”

—Free-text response from an artist

Discrimination

In this context, discrimination refers to situations where a person has been disadvantaged or subjected to abuse, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of age, gender, gender expression, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation. The question also covered online discrimination.

A notable proportion of artists reported that they had been subjected to discrimination in their artistic practice over the past twelve months (see Figure 9). Overall, this amounted to 16 per cent. No differences were observed between women and men, although oldest artists were slightly more exposed than younger ones. The proportion was also noticeably higher among artists with a foreign background (24 per cent) compared with 14 per cent among artists with a Swedish background. The proportions also varied between artistic disciplines, with the highest levels in film and music (20 per cent) and the lowest in literary arts (10 per cent).

”Freelance assignments where there are permanently employed musician colleagues mean that permanent staff can harass freelance staff, which I have both experienced myself and witnessed others being subjected to. Such harassment rarely comes to the employer’s attention – as freelancers don’t dare to speak up.

—Free-text response from an artist

Among artists who reported having experienced discrimination, 14 per cent stated that it occurred a few days per month or more frequently (see Figure 10). Younger artists reported recurring discrimination to a slightly greater extent than older artists. Among those who had experienced discrimination, 12 per cent of artists with a Swedish background and 18 per cent of those with a foreign background stated that it occurred regularly.

In the disciplines of film, music, and theatre and dance, around one in five artists who had experienced discrimination reported that it occurred a few days per month or more frequently. Employed artists reported significantly higher levels of recurring discrimination than business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs.

Figure 9. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing discrimination during the past 12 months, by all background categories.

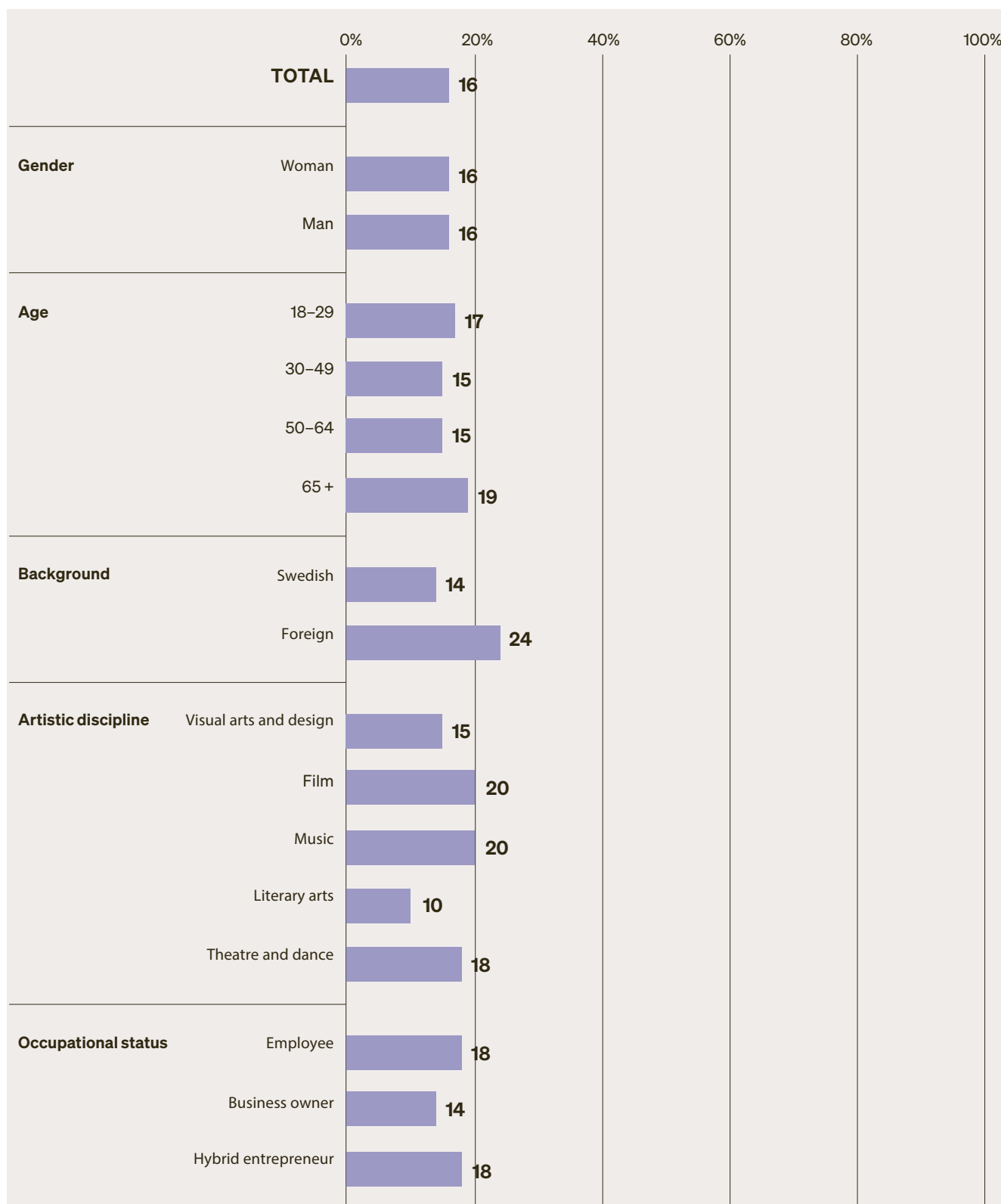
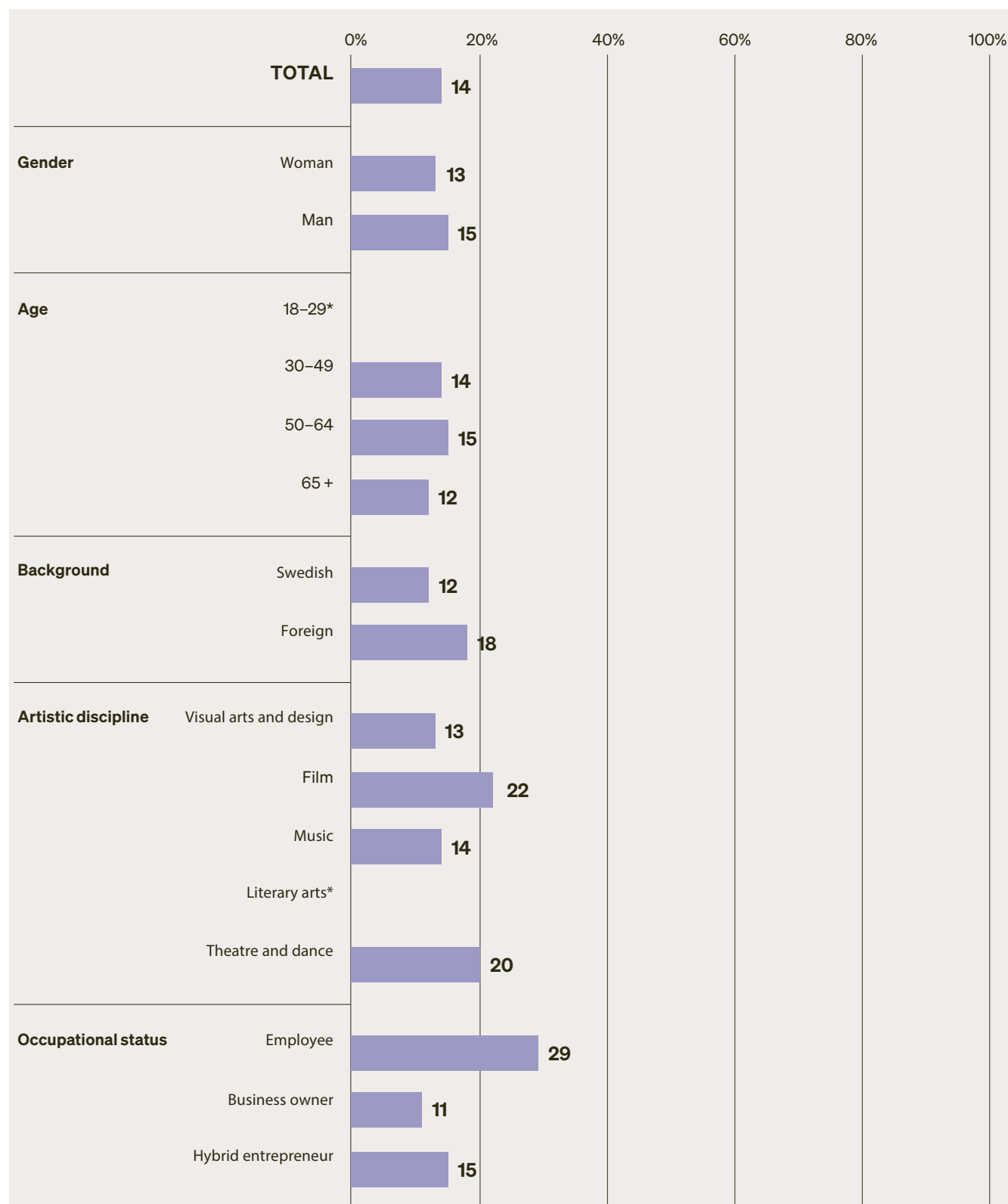
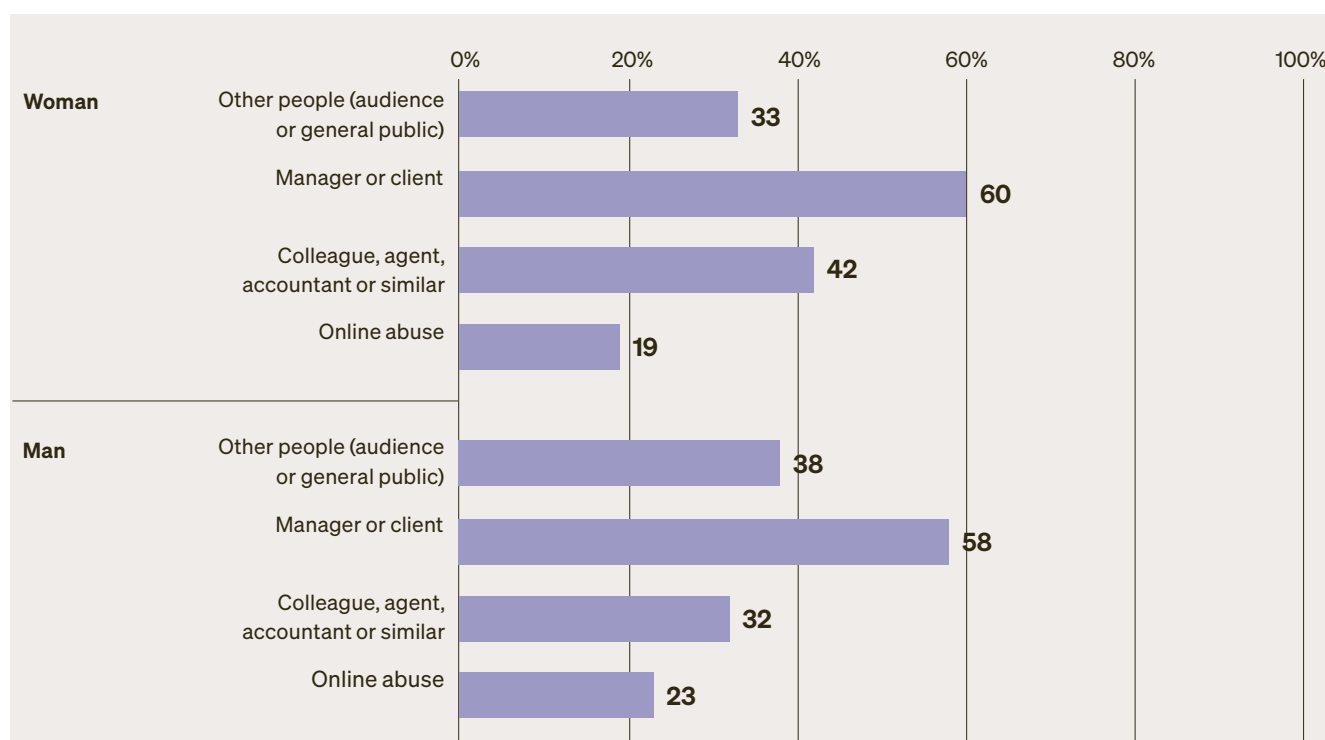


Figure 10. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing discrimination during the past 12 months a few days a month or more frequently, by all background categories.



*The 18-29 age group and literary arts category are not reported due to a low response rate.

Figure 11. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing discrimination during the past 12 months, by perpetrator and gender (multiple responses allowed).

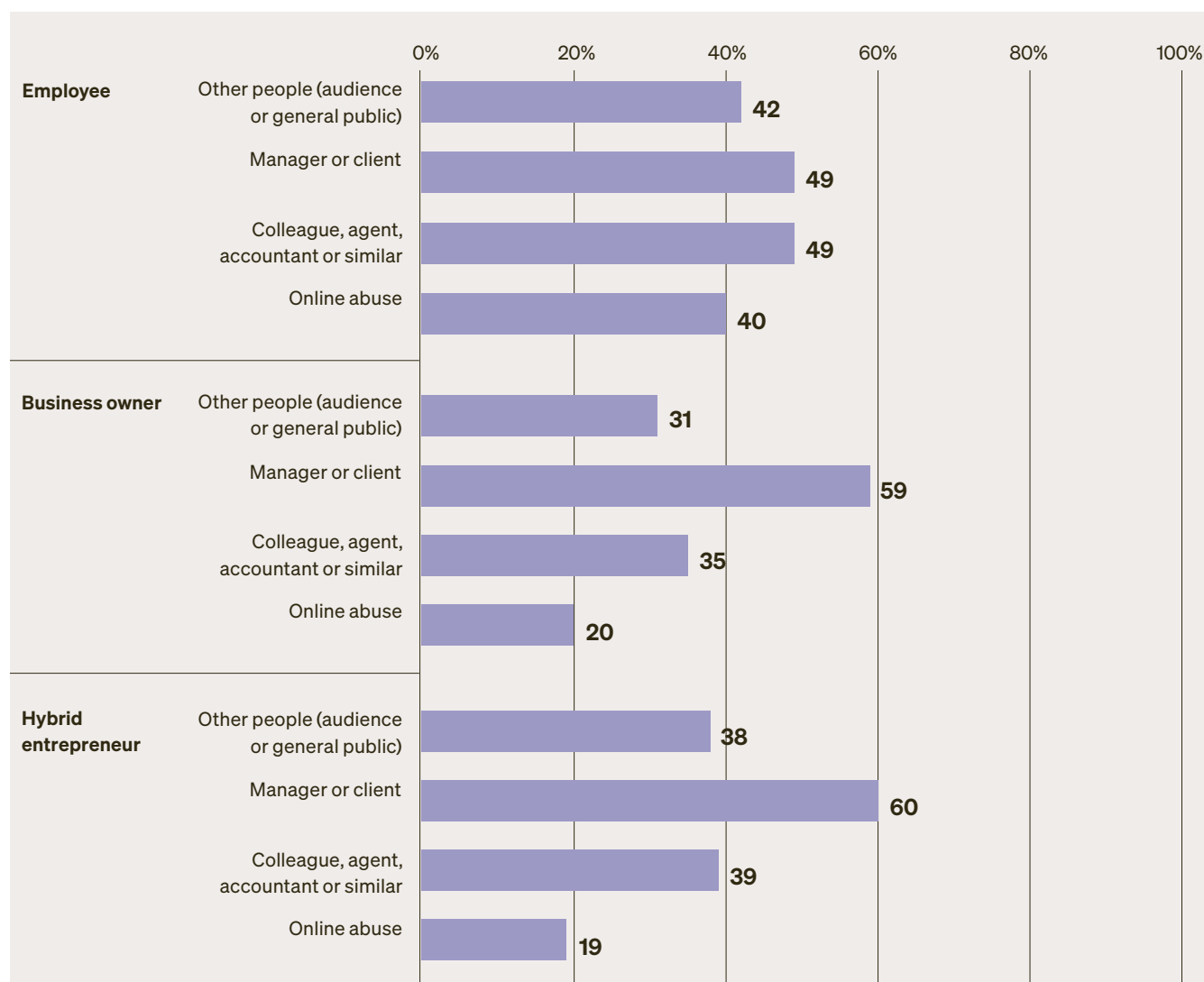


Differences between women and men were small (see Figure 11). Among artists who had experienced discrimination, around 60 per cent of both women and men stated that it came from an employer or a client. Around four in ten cited colleagues, agents or similar, while one-third cited the audience or general public, and about one-fifth cited social media or the internet. When the two public categories – audience or general public, and social media or online – are combined, it is evident that just over half of the women and a clear majority of the men had been subjected to discrimination by external actors.

Employees who reported having been subjected to discrimination indicated, to a similar extent, that it came from employers or clients as well as colleagues, agents or similar (see Figure 12). Many also cited the audience or general public, as well as social media or online. Overall, the results suggest that discrimination among employees mainly took place within the professional work environment and, to a somewhat lesser extent, in interactions with external actors.

For business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs, managers or clients were clearly the most common source of discrimination, followed by colleagues, mirroring the pattern observed among employees. Hybrid entrepreneurs reported to a slightly greater extent than business owners that discrimination came from colleagues and from the audience or general public.

Figure 12. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing discrimination during the past 12 months, by perpetrator and occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



Harassment and bullying

In this context, harassment and bullying refer to negative behaviour that is repeated over time. Such behaviour can, for example, take the form of hurtful words or actions, gossip, exclusion, stalking, isolation or sexual harassment.

“I think it’s important for people working in the cultural sector to try to treat each other fairly as much as possible, particularly given that these are difficult times. If the cultural sector sticks together, it will become stronger, and I think it will then be easier for other sectors to take the cultural sector more seriously.”

—Free-text response from an artist

A total of 8 per cent of artists reported having been subjected to harassment or bullying in the past year (see Figure 13). No differences between women and men were observed. However, differences were evident by background. Artists with a foreign background reported such experiences to a greater extent than those with a Swedish background: 14 per cent compared with 7 per cent.

Differences were also observed by occupational status. Employees were most likely to report having been subjected to harassment or bullying. Hybrid entrepreneurs reported higher levels of exposure than business owners, which may partly be explained by the fact that hybrid entrepreneurs are also more likely to hold employment. Variations were also evident between artistic disciplines, with film showing relatively high levels of exposure and a higher proportion of reported incidents.

Figure 13. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing harassment or bullying during the past 12 months, by all background categories.

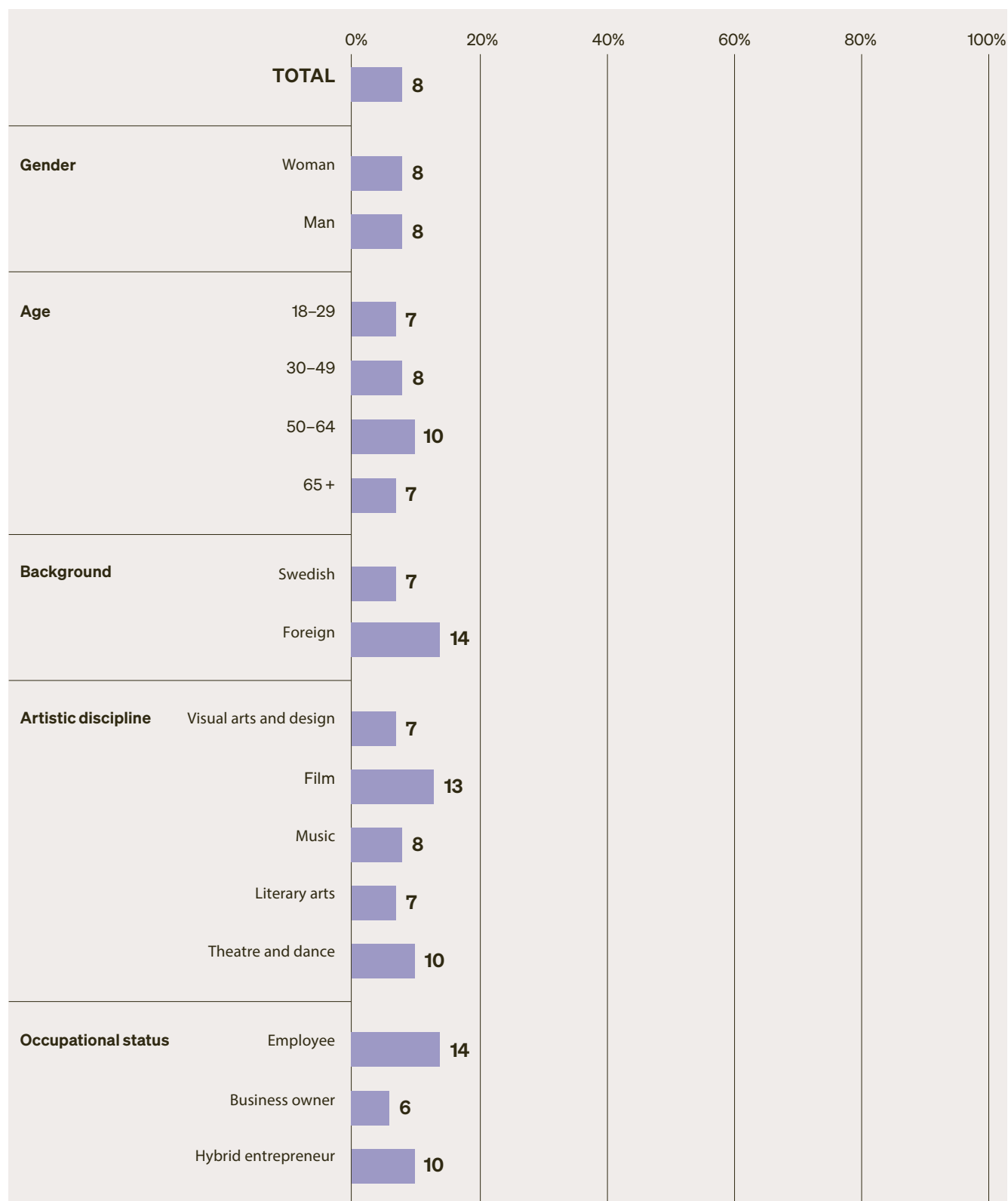
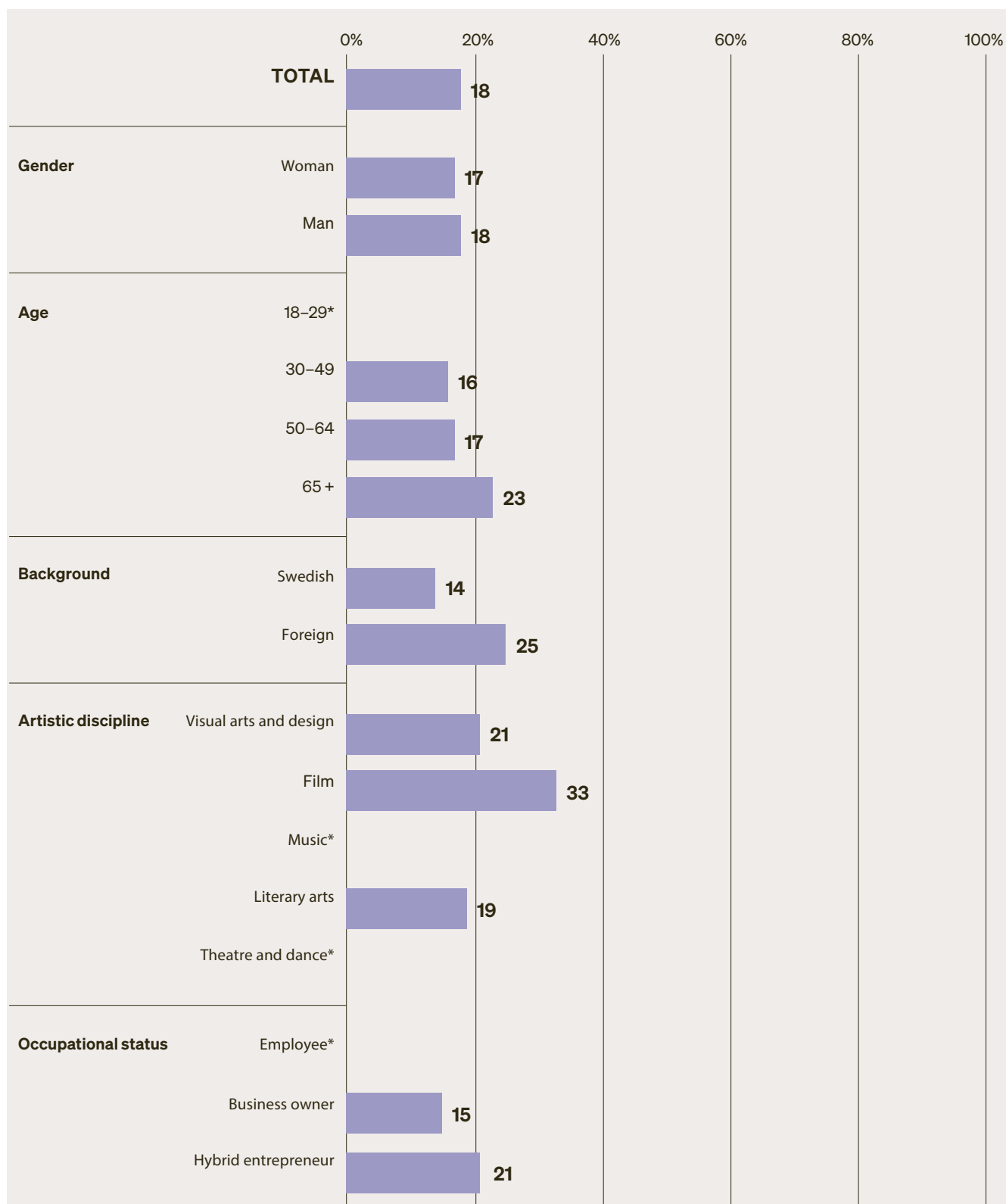
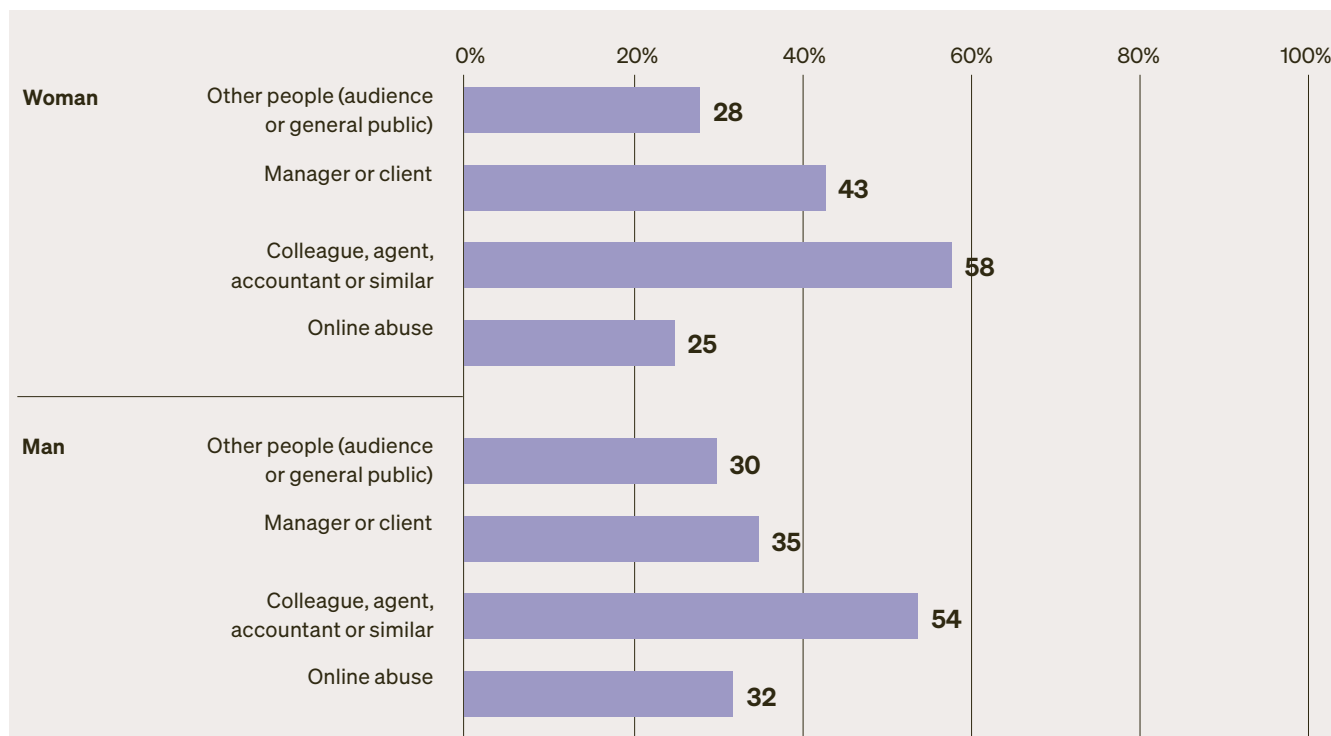


Figure 14. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing harassment or bullying during the past 12 months, occurring a few days a month or more frequently, by all background categories.



*The groups aged 18-29, music, theatre and dance, and employees are not reported due to a low response rate.

Figure 15. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing harassment or bullying during the past 12 months, by perpetrator and gender (multiple responses allowed).



Among those who reported having been subjected to harassment or bullying, 18 per cent stated that this occurred several days per month or more frequently (see Figure 14). Exposure was broadly similar among women and men, but somewhat higher among artists aged 65 or over.

Differences between different groups were also clear. Among artists with a foreign background, 25 per cent stated that they had been subjected to such behaviour every month or more frequently, nearly twice the proportion among artists with a Swedish background. There were also variations between artistic disciplines. The film sector in particular showed high levels of exposure, followed by visual arts and design, while other disciplines reported lower levels.

Occupational status also played a role. Hybrid entrepreneurs reported harassment and bullying to a slightly greater extent than business owners. Due to a low response rate, the “employees” group is not included in these results.

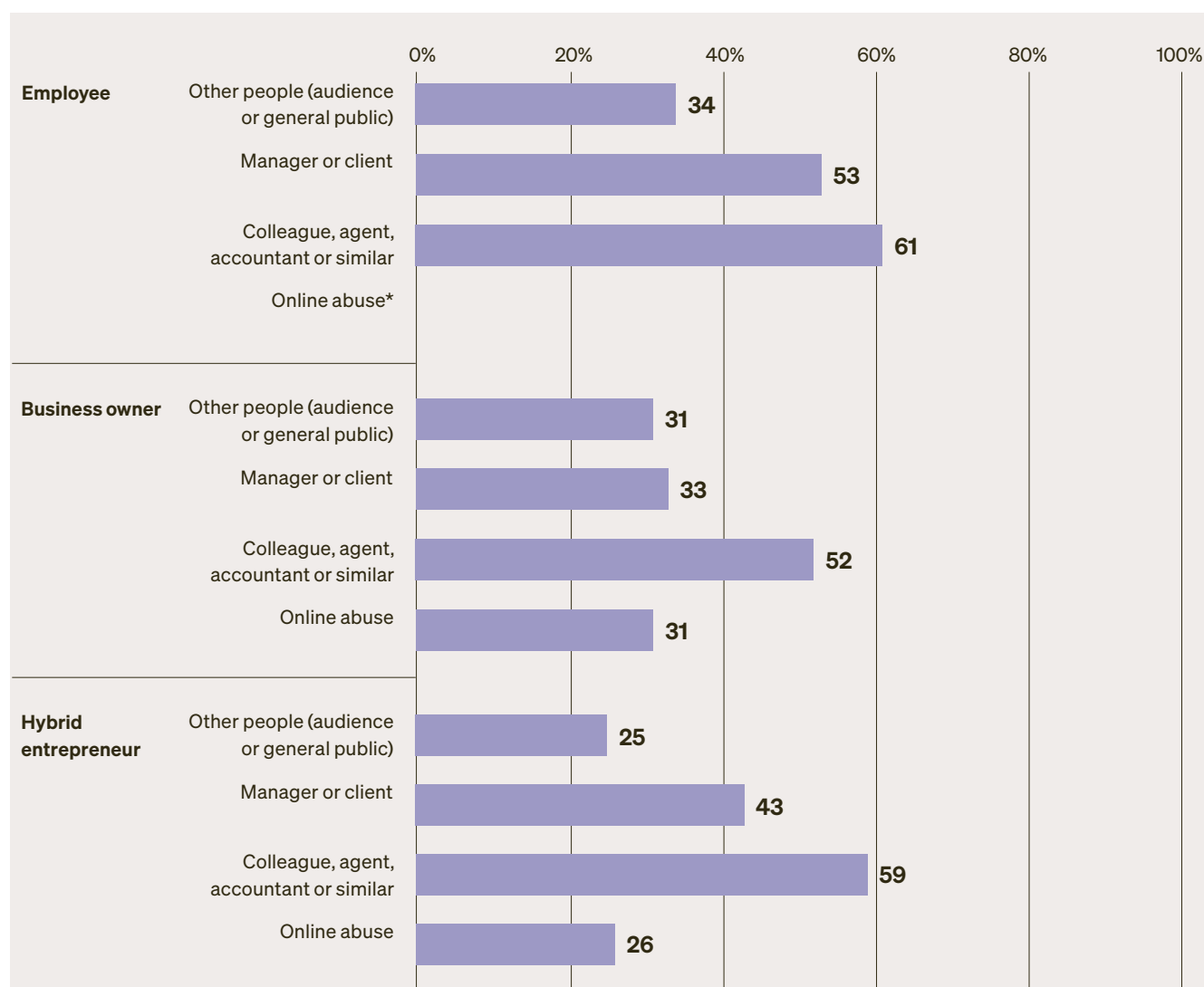
Among those who reported experiencing harassment or bullying, both women and men primarily stated that it was colleagues, agents or similar who had subjected them to such behaviour: 58 per cent and 54 per cent respectively (see Figure 15). Among women, 43 per cent also cited managers or clients as the source. Men reported to a slightly greater extent than women that the harassment came from the audience or general public, as well as via social media or online.

Broken down by occupational status, employees most commonly stated that it was colleagues, agents or similar who had subjected them to harassment (61 per cent, see Figure 16). Just over half (53 per cent) also cited

managers or clients. Business owners primarily cited colleagues or similar (52 per cent) and, secondarily, managers or clients (33 per cent). Around one in three (31 per cent) cited the audience or the general public, and an equal number cited social media or online. Among hybrid entrepreneurs, 59 per cent cited colleagues or similar, and 43 per cent cited managers or clients. Exposure from the audience or general public, as well as via social media or online, was slightly less common among hybrid entrepreneurs than in other groups.

Freelance artists, such as business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs, may be more reliant on their own social media channels to promote their work. This may lead to greater personal exposure and, consequently, an increased risk of harassment or other negative experiences via social media or other digital platforms. The fact that employees were less likely to cite such sources may be linked to the use of workplace digital channels, which can reduce the need to rely on personal ones.

Figure 16. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing harassment or bullying during the past 12 months, by perpetrator and occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



*The response "online abuse" is not reported for the "employees" group due to a low response rate.

Sexual harassment

We also asked several questions about sexual harassment. In this report, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome advances or conduct of a sexual nature that violates a person's dignity.

“Being seen a problem could mean that I won’t get a job with the same employer next time. The fact that I could be passed over at any moment creates enormous stress. That’s why I hold back when I’m considering raising issues of sexual harassment, high workloads or low pay.”

—Free-text response from an artist

A total of 17 per cent of artists reported experiencing sexual harassment during the past year (see Figure 17). There was a clear gender difference: 21 per cent of women reported having been subjected to sexual harassment, compared with 11 per cent of men.

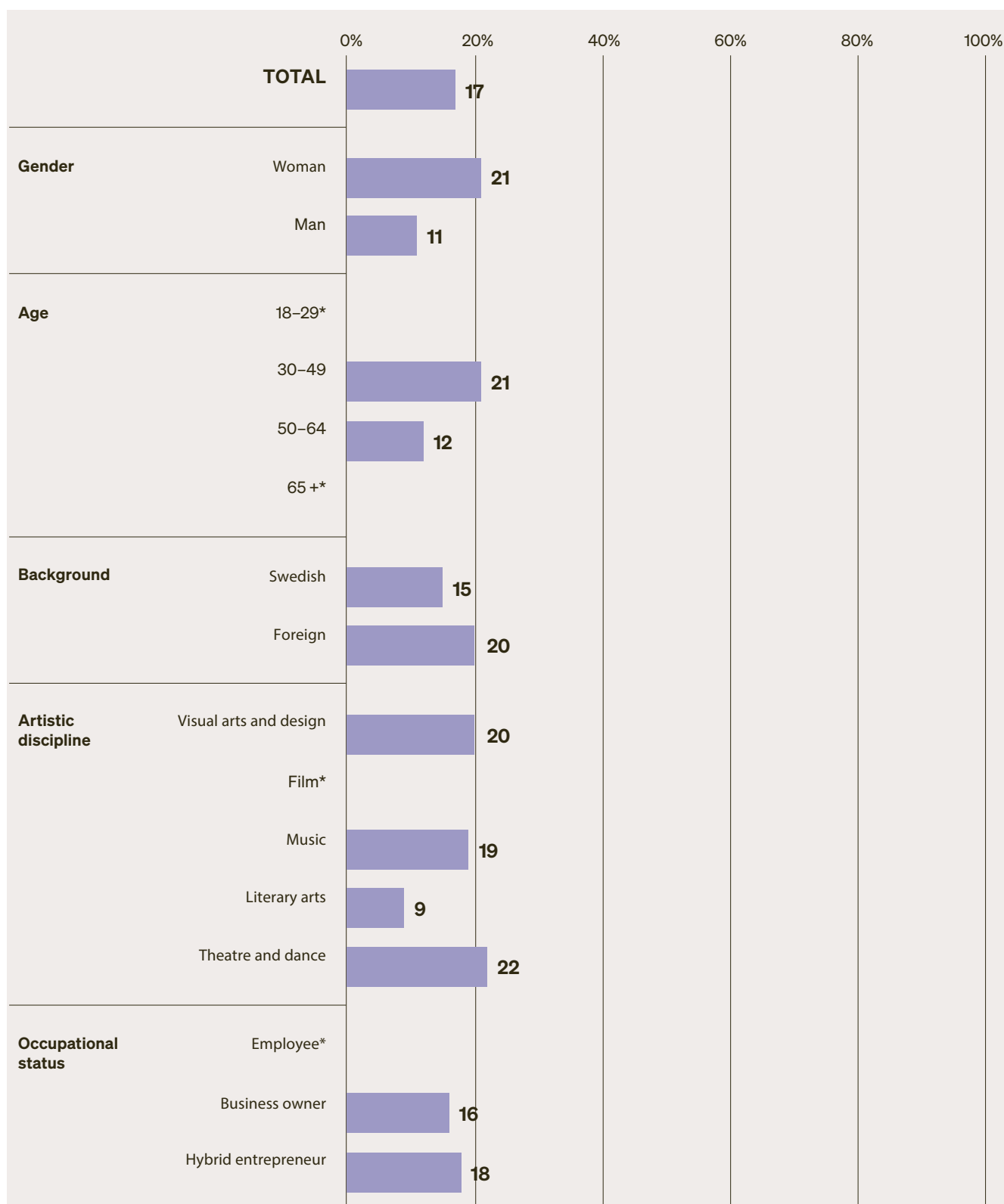
Other background factors also showed variation. Artists aged 30–49 reported higher levels of exposure, and artists with a foreign background were more exposed than those with a Swedish background. There were also clear differences between artistic disciplines: theatre and dance showed the highest proportion reporting exposure, followed by visual arts and design, while literary arts had the lowest proportion.

Occupational status also played a role, with hybrid entrepreneurs reporting slightly higher levels of exposure than business owners. Due to a low response rate, the “employees” group is not included in these results.

Among those who reported experiencing sexual harassment, 13 per cent stated that it had occurred a few days per month or more frequently. Among women, the corresponding proportion was 16 per cent. Due to a low response rate, no further groups can be reported based on background categories.

Half of the women who reported experiencing sexual harassment stated that it was colleagues, agents or similar who had subjected them to it. This was followed by the audience or general public (34 per cent) and sexual harassment via social media or online (31 per cent). A quarter (25 per cent) cited managers or clients. Men are not included in the figures due to a low response rate.

Figure 17. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing sexual harassment during the past 12 months, by all background categories.



*The groups aged 18–29, 65+, film and employees are not reported due to a low response rate.

Based on occupational status, 53 per cent of hybrid entrepreneurs reported experiencing sexual harassment by colleagues, agents or similar, followed by the audience or general public (39 per cent). Among business owners, no single party dominated. An equal number of artists with a business cited the audience or general public as they did colleagues or similar (41 per cent each). Sexual harassment via social media or online was reported by 36 per cent of business owners, compared with 26 per cent of hybrid entrepreneurs. The “employees” group is not reported due to a low response rate.

Threats and violence

We also asked whether artists had been subjected to threats or violence in their artistic practice over the past twelve months. Here, threats and violence refer to acts that exceed the boundaries of what is legal, socially acceptable or permissible.

“Threats and harassment from far-right groups are on the rise, and our employers’ preparedness to deal with these threats is low or non-existent.”

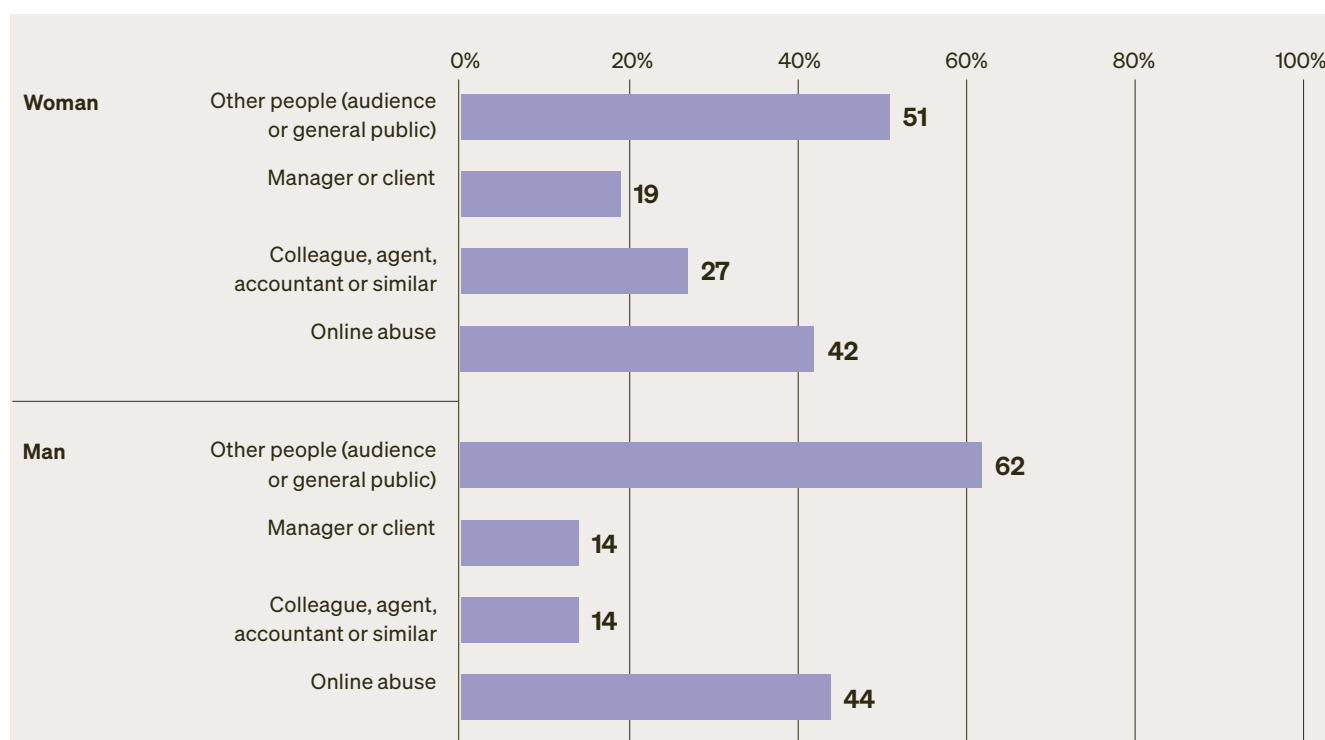
—Free-text response from an artist

A small proportion of artists reported experiencing threats or violence: 3 per cent overall. The incidence was broadly similar among women and men (3 per cent and 4 per cent respectively).

The most pronounced difference was observed between artists with a Swedish and those with a foreign background. Among the latter, 7 per cent reported having been subjected to threats or violence, more than three times the proportion among artists with a Swedish background.

There were also variations between artistic disciplines. Artists working in film reported higher levels of threats or violence (6 per cent), while other disciplines were at around 3 per cent. Differences were also evident by occupational status, with hybrid entrepreneurs reporting the highest levels of exposure and business owners the lowest. The “employees” group is not reported due to a low response rate.

Figure 18. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing threats or violence during the past 12 months, by perpetrator and gender (multiple responses allowed).

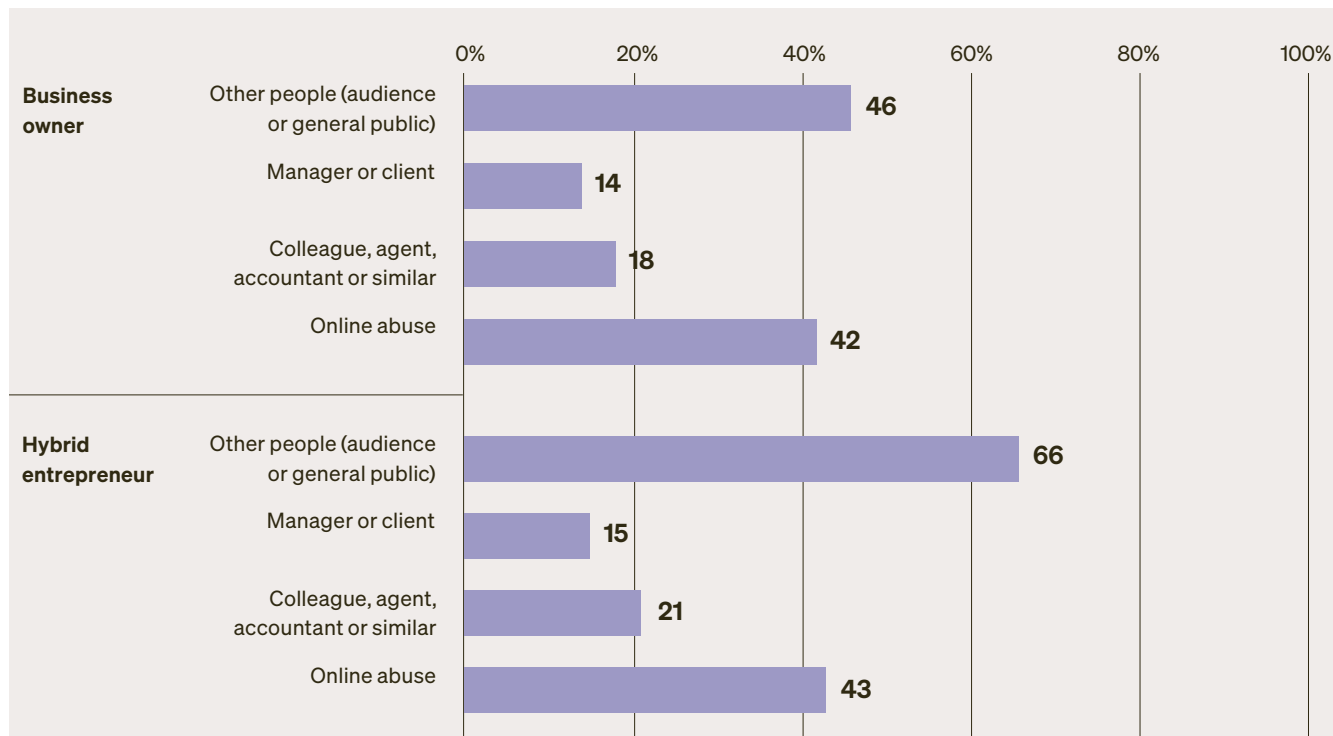


Among those who reported experiencing threats or violence, 6 per cent stated that this occurred a few days per month or more frequently. The proportion was slightly higher among women, with 7 per cent reporting recurring threats or violence.

Due to the low response rate, results can only be presented for a limited number of groups. The available data indicate that artists aged 50–64 were the group most likely to experience regular threats or violence (14 per cent). Artists with a foreign background also reported more frequent exposure than the average (8 per cent). Among business owners, 10 per cent of those who had experienced threats or violence stated that it had occurred a few days per month or more frequently.

Among those reported experiencing threats or violence, the most common source was the audience or general public (see Figure 18). This was reported by 51 per cent of women and 62 per cent of men. Threats or violence via social media or online were also common, reported by 42 per cent of women and 44 per cent of men. Women were slightly more likely than men to report that threats or violence came from within the professional context: 27 per cent cited colleagues or similar, and 19 per cent cited employers or clients.

Figure 19. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing threats or violence during the past 12 months, by perpetrator and occupational status (multiple responses allowed).*



* The "employees" group is not reported due to a low response rate.

When broken down by occupational status (see Figure 19), the results show that threats and violence primarily originated from external actors among those who reported exposure. This applied to both hybrid entrepreneurs and business owners. Results for employees are not reported due to the limited number of responses.

Among business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs who reported exposure to such behaviour, threats and violence most often came from the audience or general public, as well as via social media or online. The proportions were, however, somewhat higher among hybrid entrepreneurs: two-thirds (66 per cent) cited the audience or general public and 43 per cent cited social media or online. The corresponding figures among business owners were 46 and 42 per cent respectively. Exposure from colleagues or similar, as well as from managers or clients, occurred in both groups, but at significantly lower levels than exposure from external actors.

Refraining from artistic activity

We also examined the extent to which artists refrained from artistic activity – such as creating, performing, publishing or participating – due to discrimination, harassment, threats or violence.

“It may be that cultural writers and artists have, in general, have started to engage in self-censorship to a greater extent recently, due to the growing unrest in the wider world – war, heightened political polarisation and so on.”

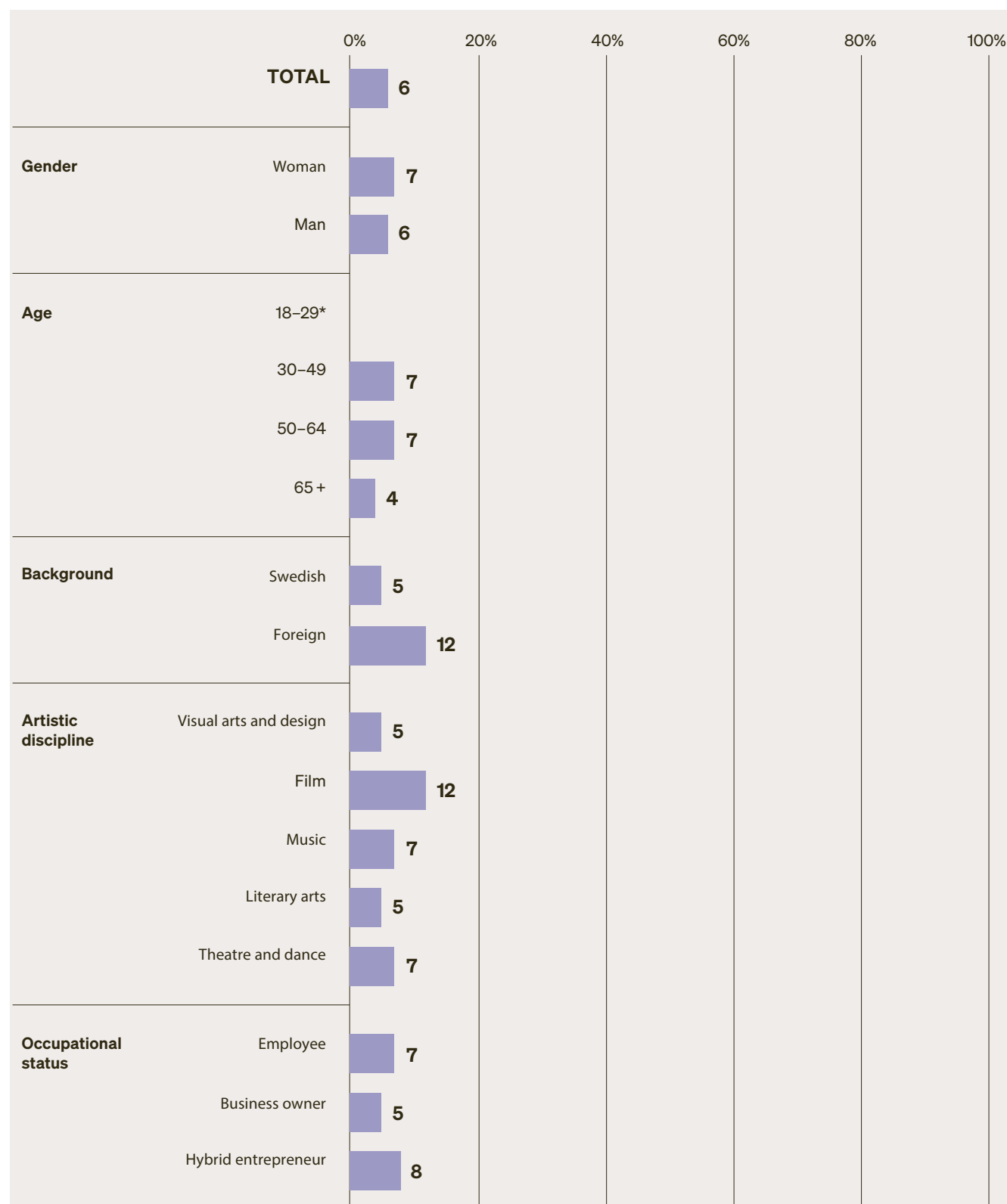
—Free-text response from an artist

When broken down by occupational status, hybrid entrepreneurs were most likely to refrain from artistic activity, followed by employees, while business owners were less likely to do so.

Overall, around one in twenty artists reported refraining from an artistic activity during the past year for these reasons (see Figure 20). Women did so to a slightly greater extent than men. In most age groups, the proportion was around 7 per cent, while artists aged 65 or over were less likely to refrain.

Artists with a foreign background were more likely to have refrained from artistic activity than those with a Swedish background (12 per cent and 5 per cent respectively). Differences were also observed between artistic disciplines, with artists working in film more likely to have refrained than those in other disciplines.

Figure 20. Percentage of respondents who reported refraining from artistic performance during the past 12 months because of discrimination, harassment, threats or violence, by all background categories.



The group aged 18–29 is not reported due to a low response rate.

The physical work environment

The survey included several questions about artists' physical work environment. These covered, among other topics, exposure to noise, dust and chemicals, lack of access to equipment, and the occurrence of work-related injuries.

Physical work conditions

Women reported to a greater extent than men that they experienced disruptions and shortcomings in the physical work environment for half of their working time or more (see Figure 21). The differences were particularly pronounced in relation to workplace design, where 43 per cent of women reported recurring problems, compared with 32 per cent of men. Temperature-related issues, poor ventilation and shortcomings in the IT and computer environment were also reported more frequently by women.

The only category in which a higher proportion of men reported shortcomings was noise or disruptive sound. Here, 19 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women reported being affected half of the time or more often. In other categories, such as inadequate equipment and exposure to chemicals, women consistently reported slightly higher levels than men.

“There’s an acute shortage of proper workspaces for artists. In my case, rehearsal rooms for musicians. We are relegated to industrial areas, basements, derelict buildings with poor lighting, poor ventilation, etc.”

—Free-text response from an artist

The prevalence of problems in the physical work environment also varied by occupational status (see Figure 22). Hybrid entrepreneurs were consistently the most exposed group, reporting the highest levels of recurring issues related to, for example, workplace design, inadequate equipment and unsatisfactory IT and computer environments.

Employees were most affected by noise, poor lighting and inadequate ventilation, while business owners reported lower levels in most categories. Temperature-related problems were common among both hybrid entrepreneurs and employees, with around one-third reporting that they were affected half of the time or more.

That business owners reported lower levels in several categories can partly be explained by the fact that they are often responsible for their own work premises. At the same time, this responsibility may limit their ability to raise concerns about shortcomings, as there is no employer to whom they can direct criticism or from whom they can demand remedial measures.

Figure 21. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing the following disturbances half of the time or more, by gender (multiple responses allowed).

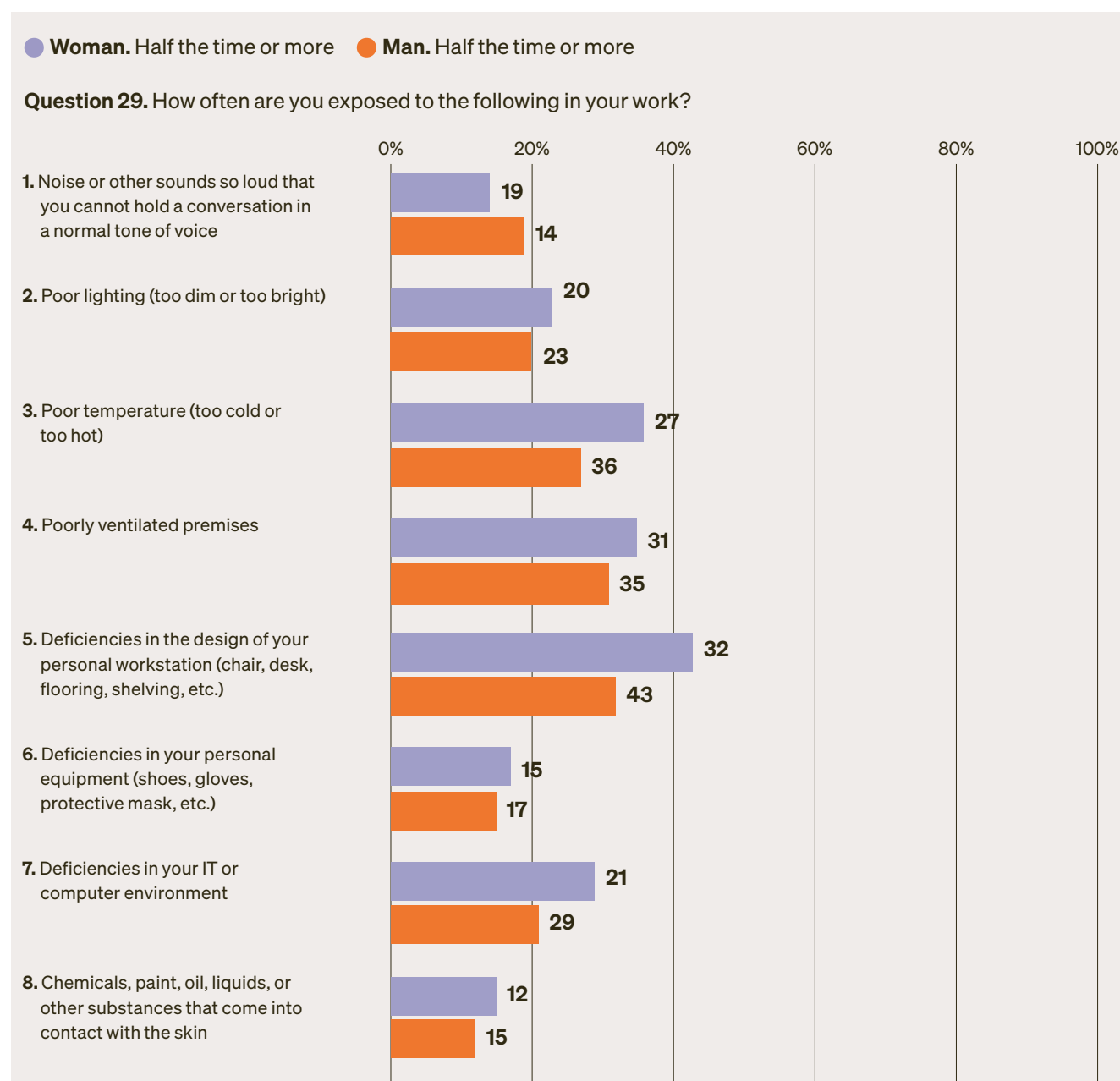
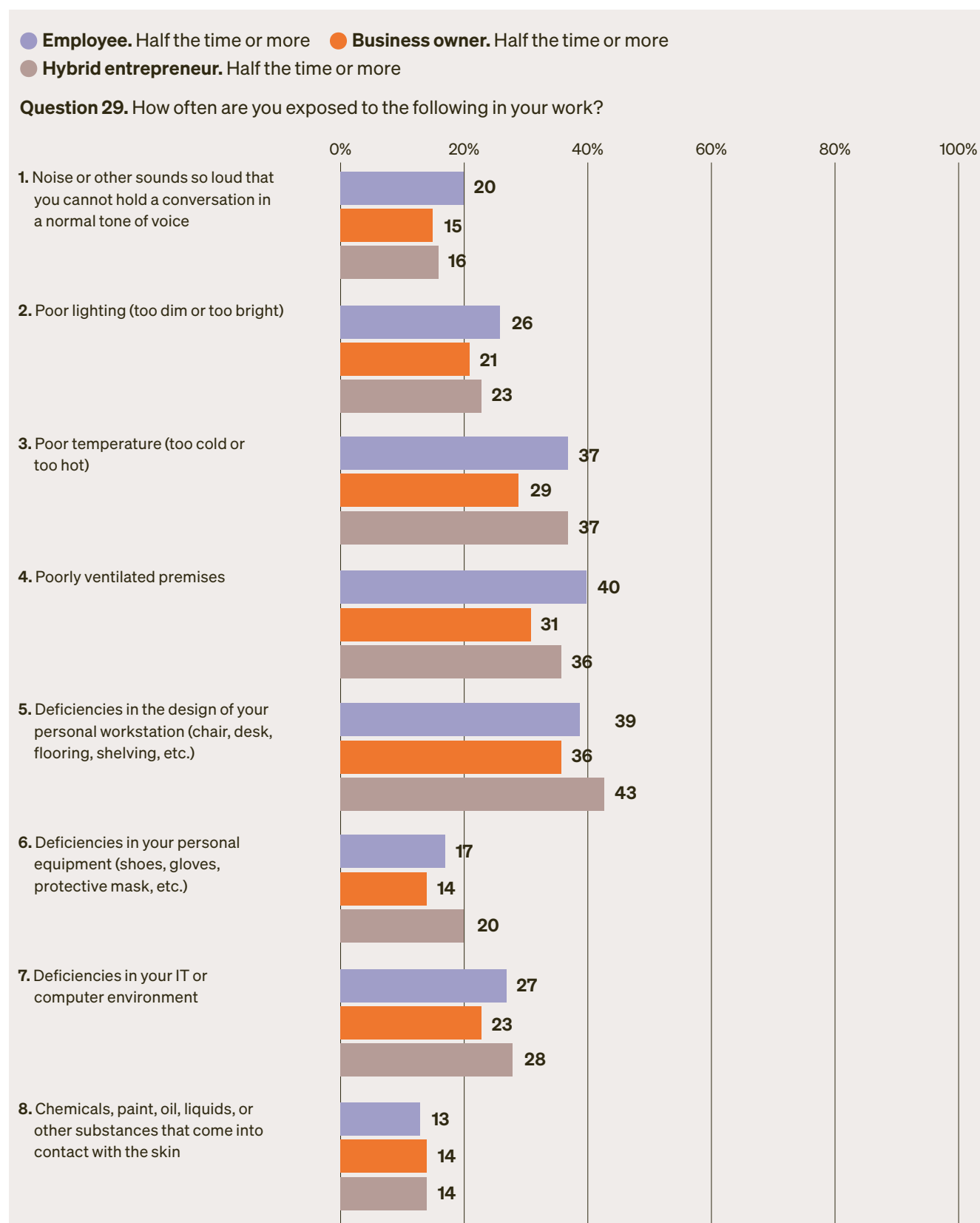


Figure 22. Percentage of respondents who reported being exposed to the following disturbances half of the time or more, by occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



Air quality

Problems in the physical work environment can also be related to airborne substances, such as dust, gases, vapours or solvents, which artists can be exposed to in their work.

“Since I own my own business, many of these questions are phrased in ways that make them hard to answer. If we want to get extra training, improve our workplace environment, receive reasonable sick pay, have adequate equipment or opportunities to discuss our work, we have to sort this out for ourselves. But these are things that are rarely prioritised, as all income is needed simply to get by”.

—Free-text response from an artist

Exposure to airborne particles and chemical substances in the work environment was relatively limited overall, although some gender differences were observed (see Figure 23). Women reported slightly higher levels of exposure than men to dust from textiles, wood or similar materials half of the time or more (19 per cent compared with 16 per cent). Differences were small, however, in relation to dust from metals, stone or minerals, as well as for airborne chemicals.

When broken down by occupational status, dust from textiles, wood or similar materials was the most common form of exposure in all groups (see Figure 24). Between 17 and 20 per cent reported exposure half the time or more.

Exposure to dust from metals, stone, quartz, cement, asbestos or mineral wool was less common and was reported mainly by hybrid entrepreneurs. Exposure to chemicals was also limited, with only minor differences between occupational groups.

Figure 23. Percentage of respondents who reported being exposed to the following disturbances half of the time or more often, by gender (multiple responses allowed).

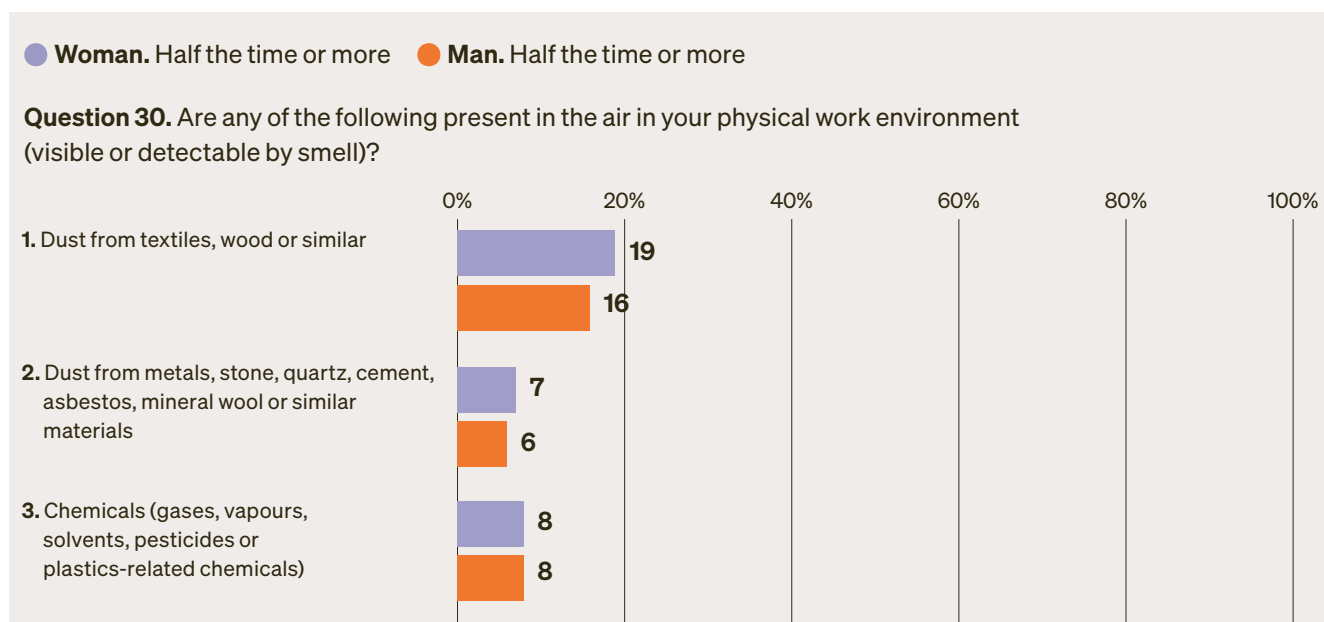
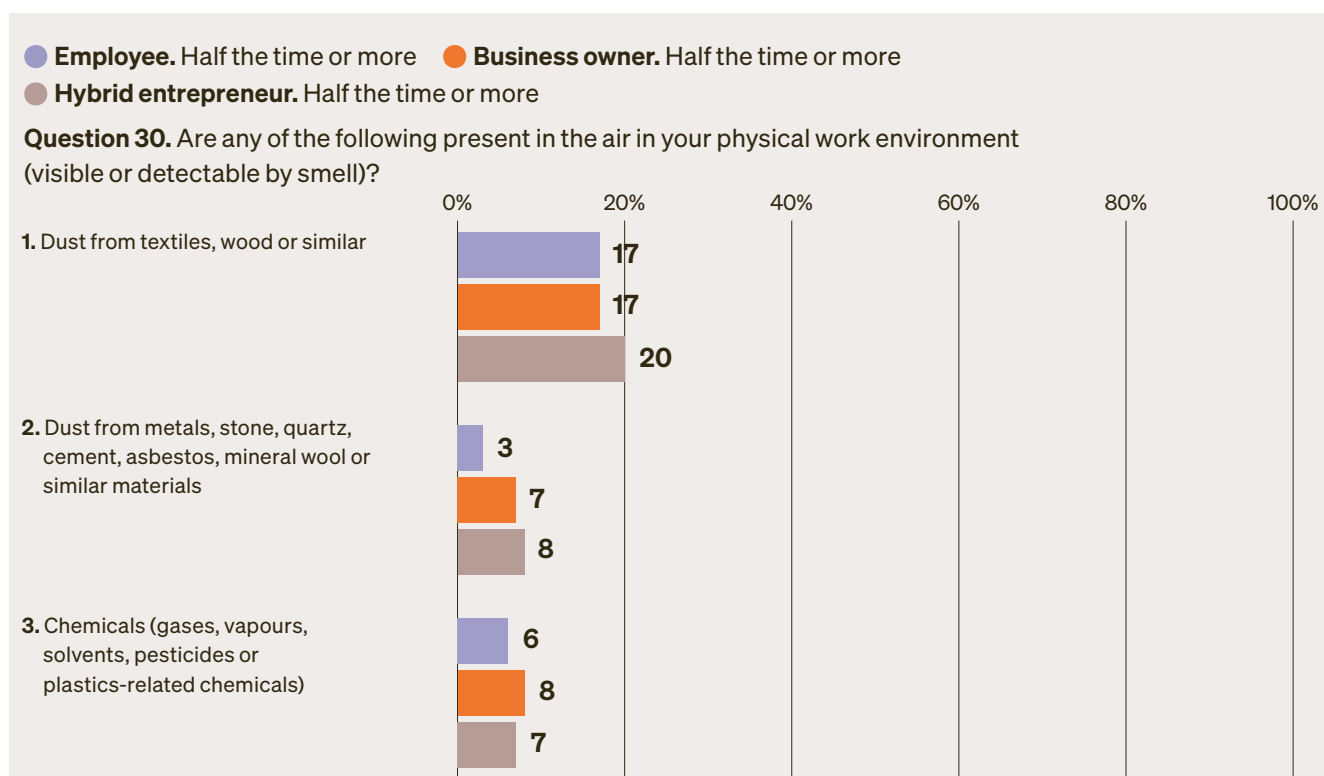


Figure 24. Percentage of respondents who reported being exposed to the following disturbances half of the time or more often, by occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



Working postures and movements

Deficiencies in the physical work environment can, in the worst case, lead to occupational injuries. We therefore included questions on heavy lifting, repetitive movements, static loading and other conditions that may affect artists' health over time.

“As a freelance circus artist, constant travel – especially within Europe – creates a complex everyday reality, where dealing with insurance, taxes and sick pay is often complicated and time-consuming. The physically demanding work environment means that access to good healthcare and the possibility of taking sick leave are crucial. But high costs and uncertainty regarding compensation for injuries create constant stress, which has a huge impact on security and working conditions.”

—Free-text response from an artist.

Figure 25. Percentage of respondents who reported a risk of sustaining injuries at work, by gender (multiple responses allowed).

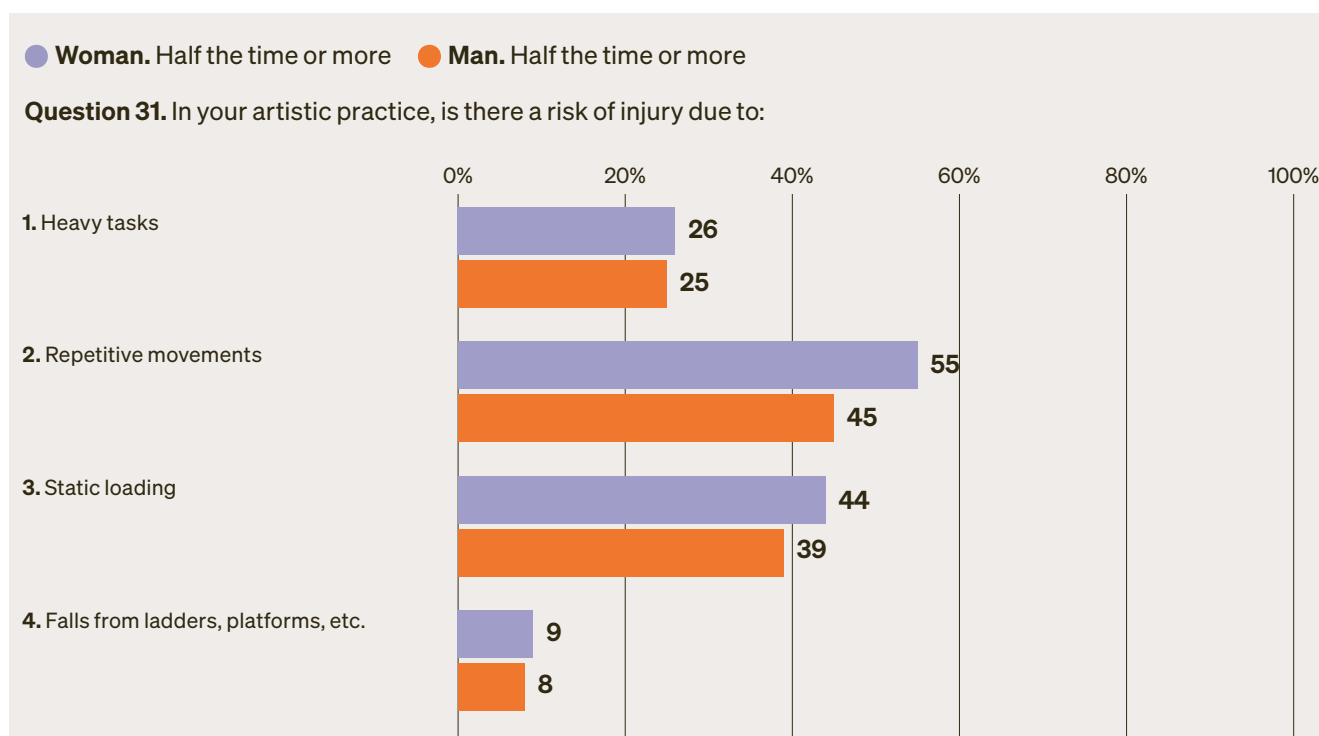


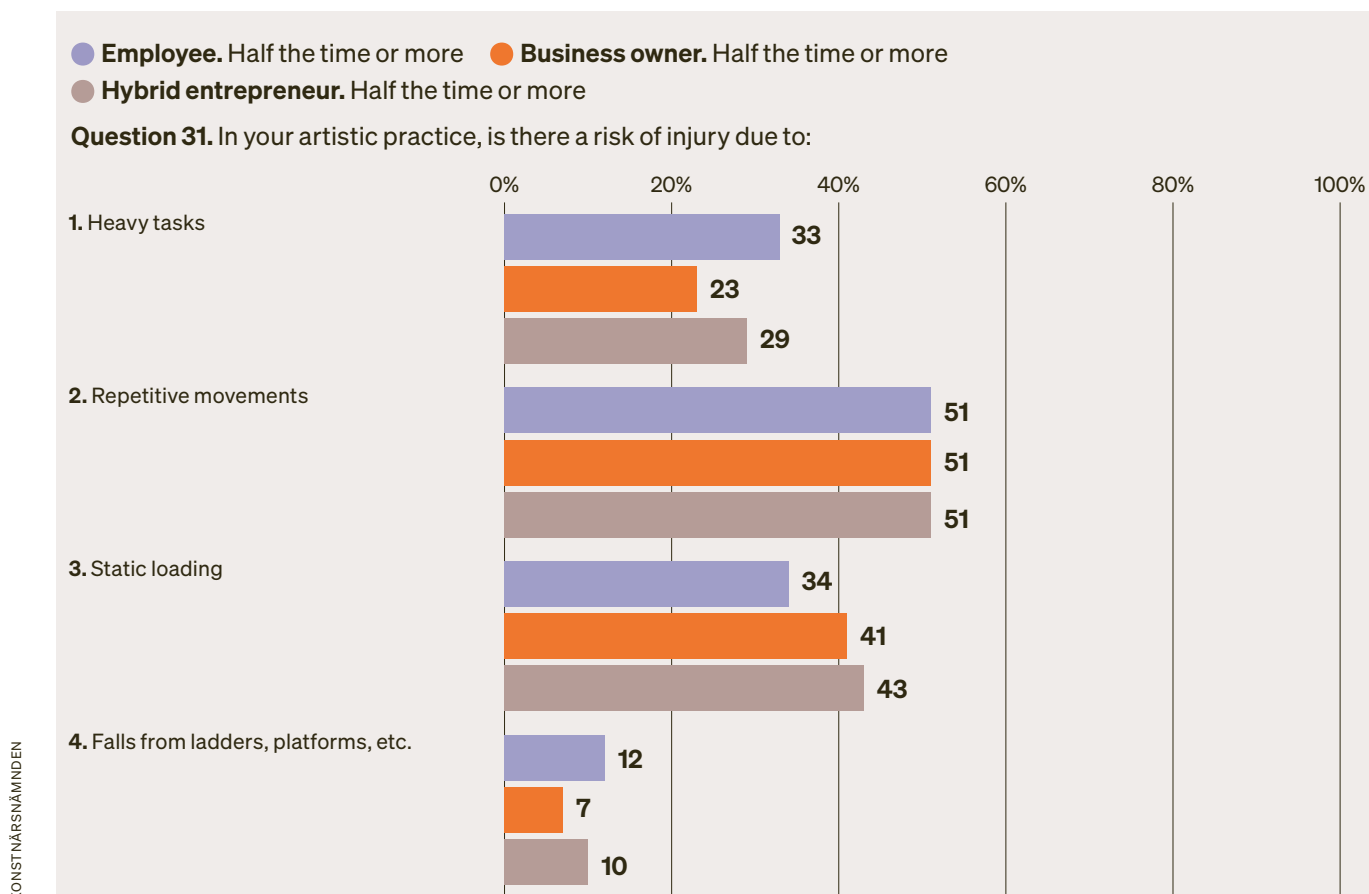
Figure 25 shows that artists reported varying levels of exposure to different types of injury risk in their work, with women consistently reporting higher levels than men. The risk of injury due to repetitive movements was most widespread: 55 per cent of women and 45 per cent of men reported working under such conditions half of the time or more. Static loading was also common, with 44 per cent of women and 39 per cent of men reporting exposure half of the time or more.

Heavy manual work and the risk of falls were reported less frequently, although women again reported slightly higher levels of exposure than men.

By occupational status, Figure 26 shows that the most common risks were associated with repetitive movements, with 51 per cent of hybrid entrepreneurs, business owners and employees reporting exposure half of the time or more. Static loading was also common and was reported by 43 per cent of hybrid entrepreneurs, 41 per cent of business owners and 34 per cent of employees.

Hybrid entrepreneurs also reported a slightly higher risk of heavy manual work (29 per cent) compared with business owners (23 per cent), while 12 per cent of employees reported regular exposure to fall risks, for example from ladders or platforms.

Figure 26. Percentage of respondents who reported a risk of sustaining injuries at work, by occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



Working from home

We asked whether artists had carried out their artistic work entirely or partly from home over the past twelve months.

Working from home was very common among artists. Around four in five reported that they had worked entirely or partly from home over the past twelve months (see Figure 27). Women and men reported almost identical levels (82 and 81 per cent respectively). Differences between age groups were small: the youngest artists worked from home slightly more often, while those aged 65 and over did so somewhat less often.

Variations were more pronounced across artistic disciplines. In literary arts, 95 per cent reported working from home, while visual arts and design had the lowest proportion at 73 per cent. In terms of occupational status, business owners reported slightly higher levels of home working than employees and hybrid entrepreneurs.

“Many of us artists work from home because we can’t afford big studios, and as support for the cultural sector declines, more of us are creating workspaces in our homes. This is leading to an unhealthy blurring of boundaries between work and private life.”

—Free-text response from an artist

Among those who worked from home, seven in ten stated that it accounted for at least half of their working time (see Figure 28). The figures were similar among women and men (71 per cent and 69 per cent respectively). The share increased slightly with age, and among artists aged 65 or older, the highest proportion reported working from home at least half of the time (80 per cent).

Here too, differences were observed between disciplines. In literary arts, 87 per cent reported working from home for at least half of their working time, while theatre and dance had the lowest proportion at 59 per cent. Business owners worked from home at least half of their working time to a slightly greater extent than employees and hybrid entrepreneurs. This may be because business owners often do not have a workplace provided by an employer or client.

Figure 27. Percentage of respondents who reported working from home either entirely or partly during the past 12 months, by all background categories.

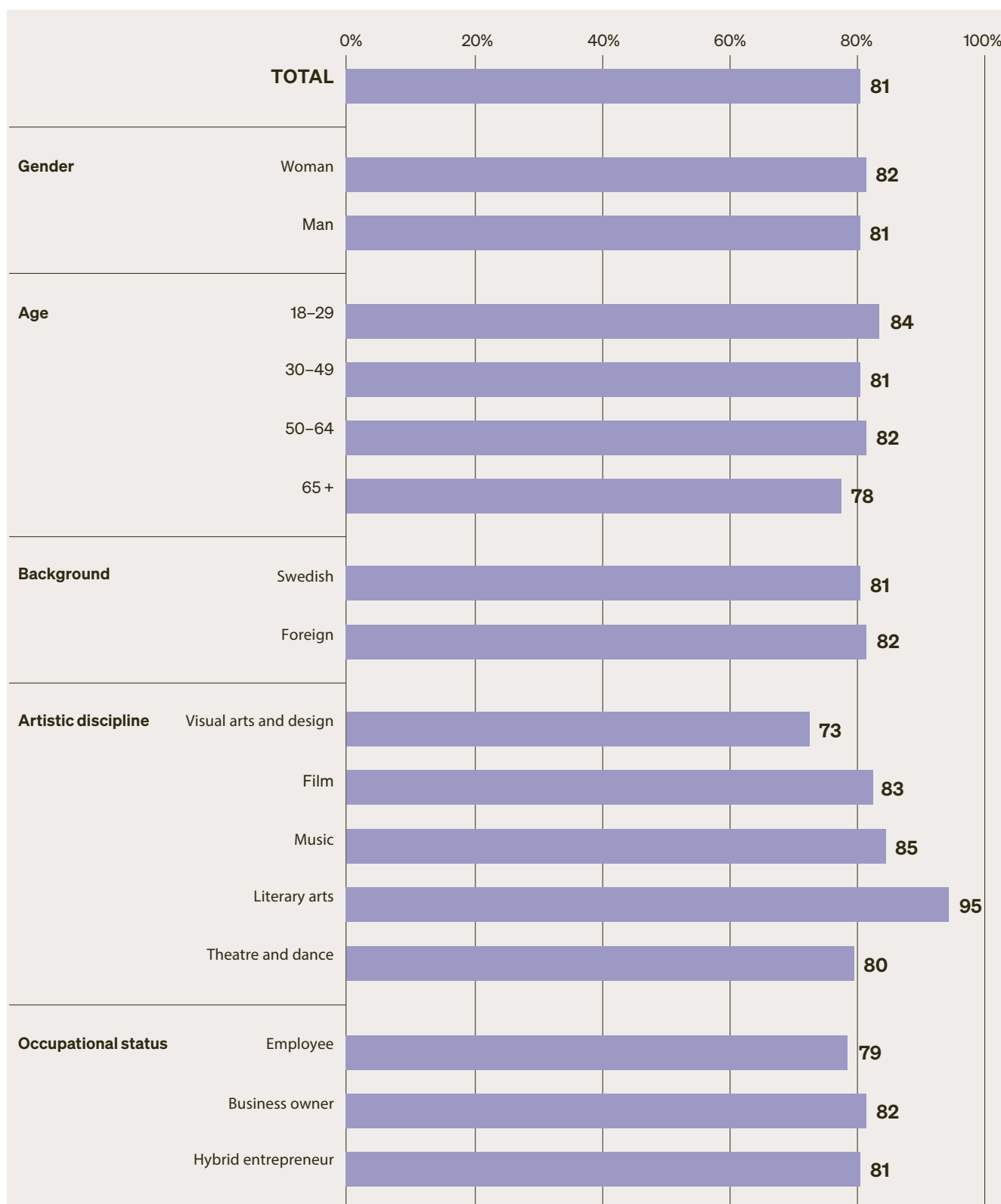
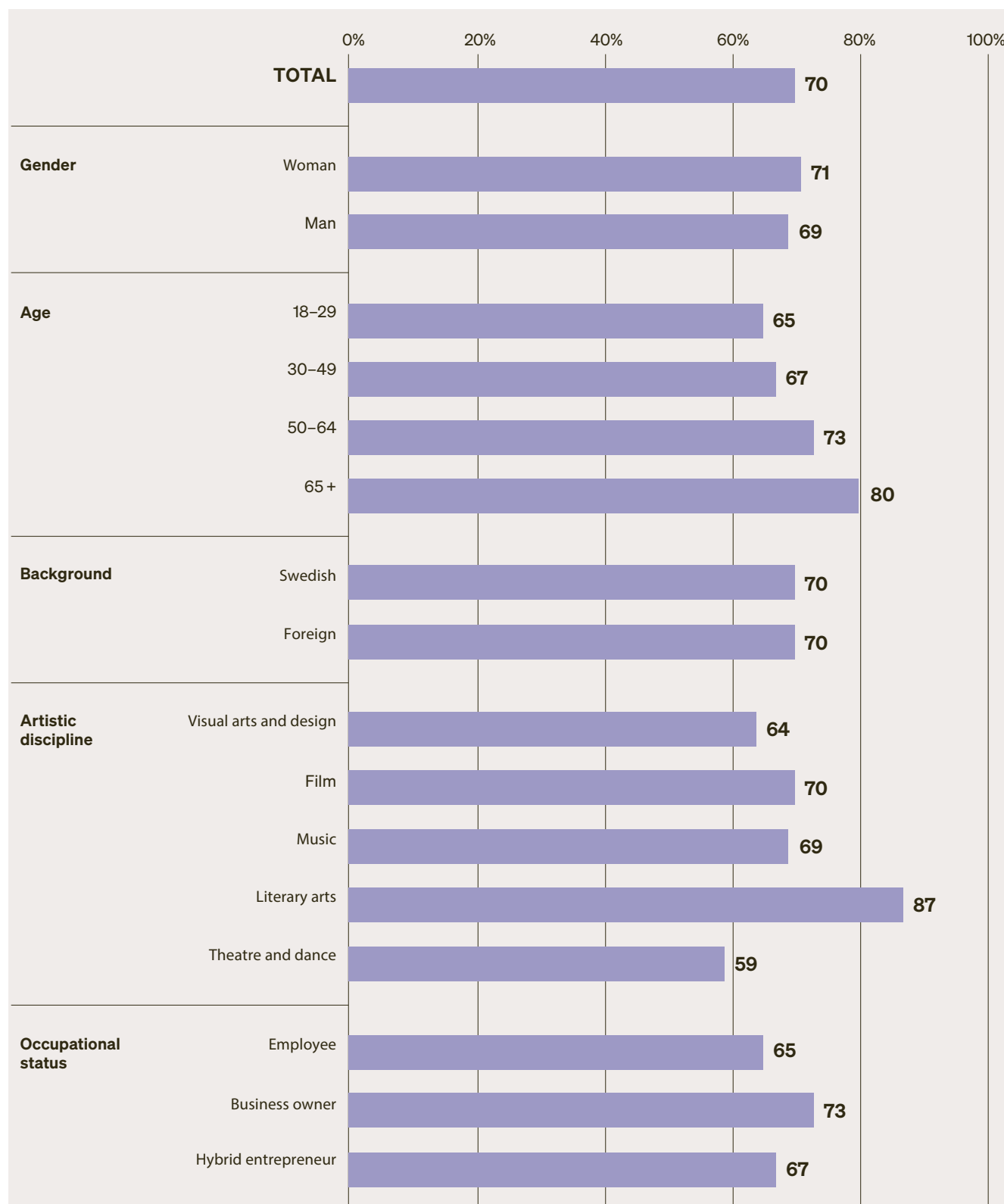


Figure 28. Percentage of respondents who reported working from home during the past 12 months half the time or more often, by all background categories.



Sickness presenteeism, illness and injuries

To assess different aspects of artists' health, we asked several questions regarding sickness presenteeism (working while ill), the occurrence of illness, and work-related risks or injuries.

“I run a sole trader business and have never even applied for sick pay or parental leave (despite having three children who, naturally, get sick from time to time). As someone who is self-employed, I contribute to the public purse through my own contributions and taxes, but have no access to sick pay or parental benefits myself.”

—Free-form response from an artist

Sickness presenteeism

It was common for artists to work despite being ill, as shown in Figure 29. In total, 41 per cent had worked while ill four times or more in the past twelve months, and a further 33 per cent had done so two to three times. Only a small proportion (15 per cent) reported that they had never worked while ill.

Differences between women and men were small, although a slightly higher proportion of women reported working while ill on several occasions. The youngest artists reported the highest levels of presenteeism, whereas artists over 65 were more likely to report that they had rarely or never worked while ill.

Variations were also observed between artistic disciplines. Presenteeism was highest in film and music, where almost half had worked despite being ill on at least four occasions. Across occupational groups, business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs reported slightly higher levels of presenteeism than employees. This can be partly explained by the fact that business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs often find it more difficult to qualify for compensation on the same terms as employees.

Financial and practical considerations appear to be key reasons why many artists worked while ill (see Figure 30). The most common reason, cited by 80 per cent of respondents, was that no one else could carry out the work. Almost half stated that they could not afford to take sick leave, and 44 per cent cited fear of losing work or commissions. In addition, nearly three in ten reported difficulties in obtaining correctly calculated sickness benefit.

Differences between background groups were relatively small in terms of reasons for presenteeism. However, younger artists were more likely to report fear of losing commissions, and business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs reported slightly greater financial pressure than employees. In the disciplines of theatre and dance, financial reasons appeared to be particularly significant.

Figure 29. Percentage of respondents who reported working while ill during the past 12 months, by frequency and all background categories.

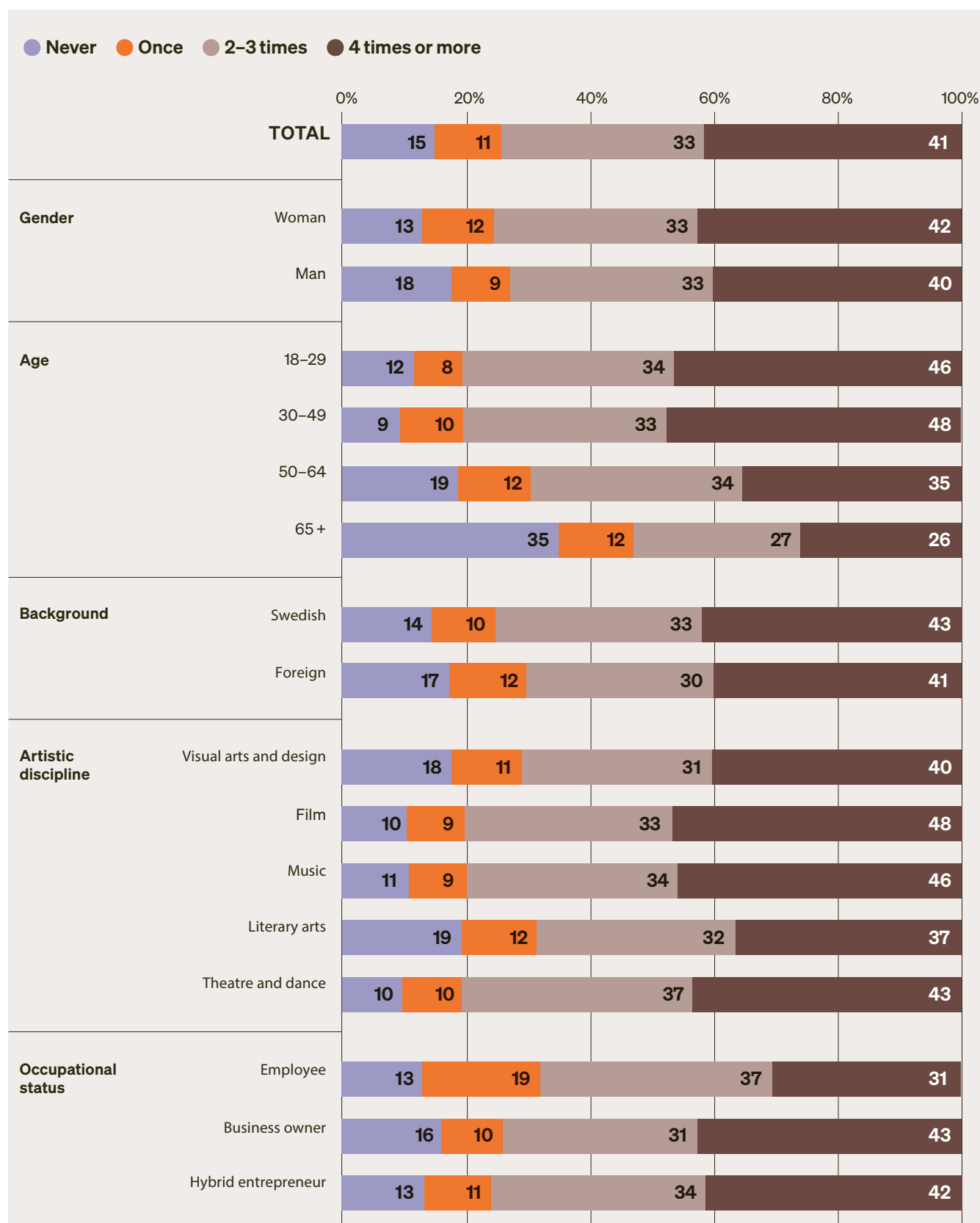
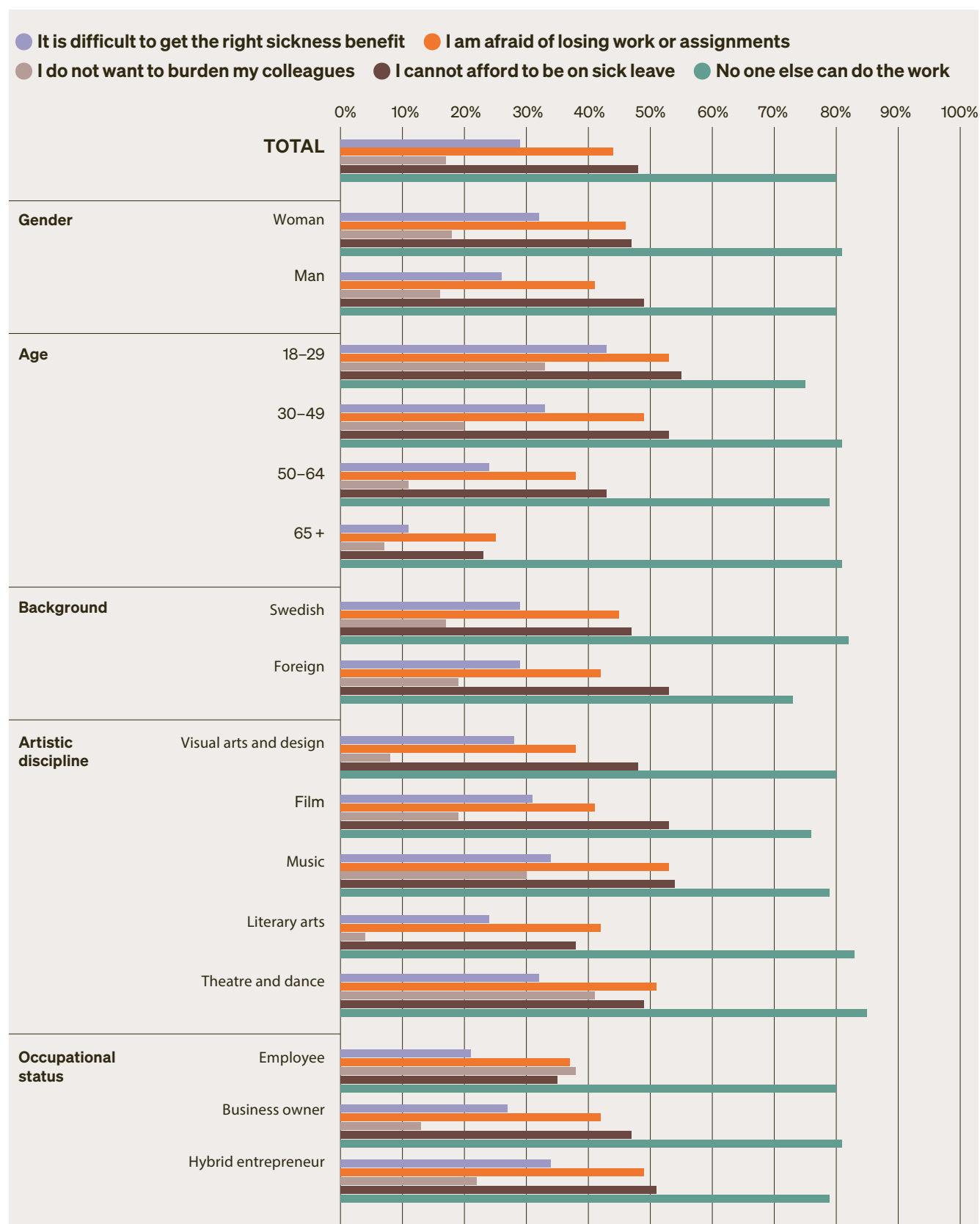


Figure 30. Percentage of respondents who reported working while ill during the past 12 months, by reason and all background categories (multiple responses allowed).



Work-related and physical complaints

To gain an understanding of artists' physical complaints, the questionnaire included a question about their physical health – specifically, whether they had experienced pain in any part of their body during the past three months.

“My financial situation means I have to accept every commission, buy slightly inferior tools and protective equipment, and work despite the pain in my body.”

—Free-text response from an artist.

Figure 31. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing pain during the last 3 months a few days per week or more often, by gender (multiple responses allowed).

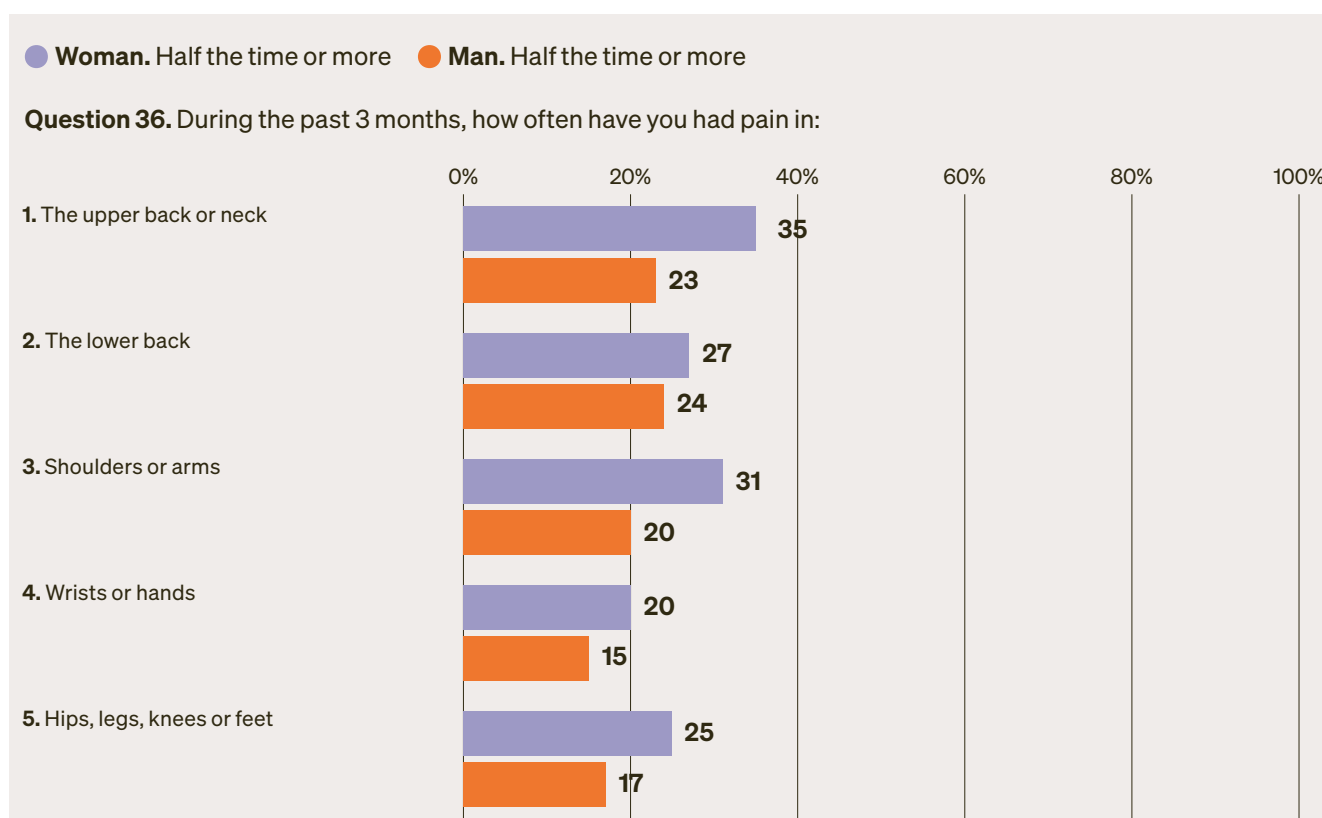
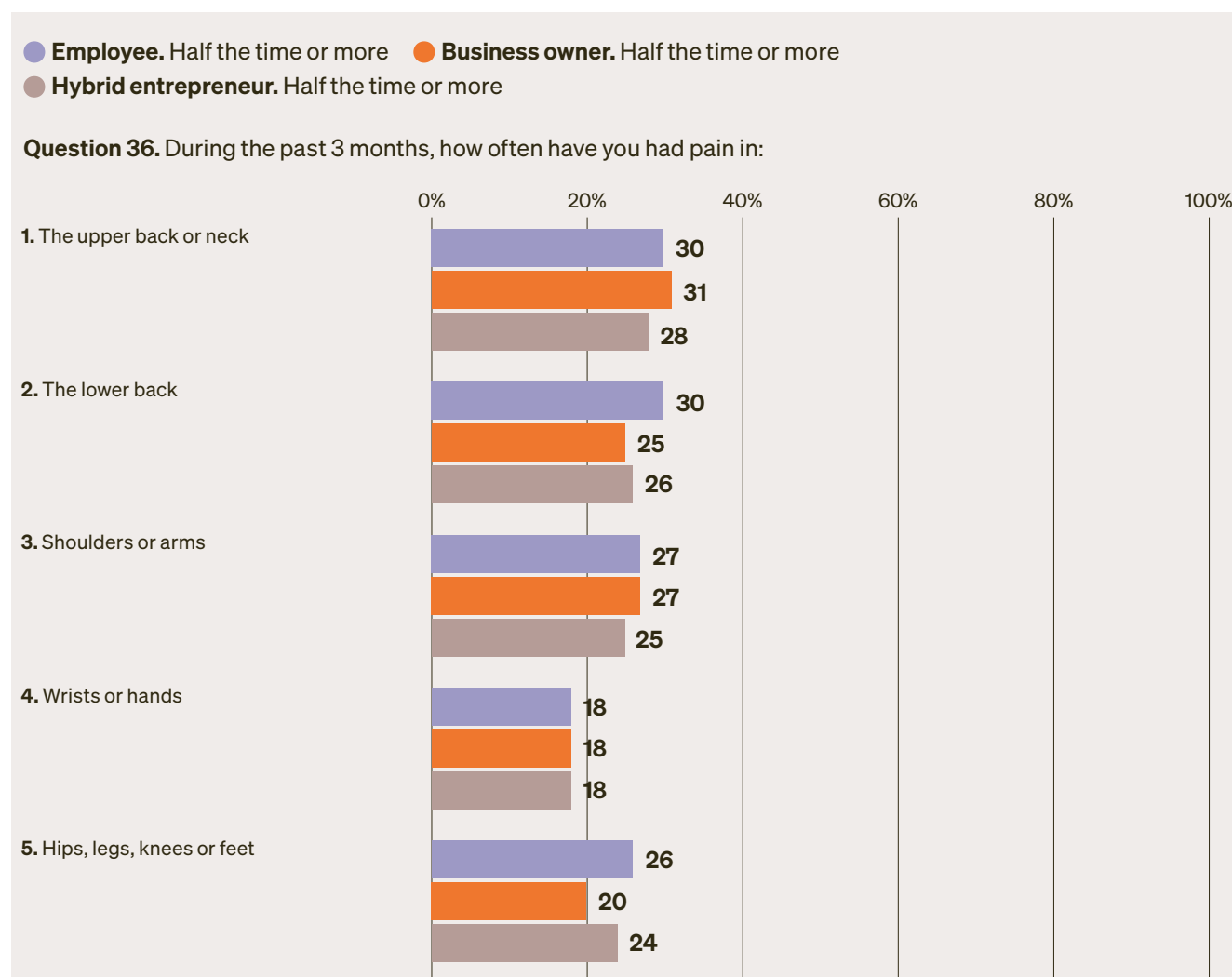


Figure 32. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing pain during the last 3 months a few days per week or more often, by occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



A significant proportion of artists reported experiencing recurring pain several days a week or more often, and women were more affected than men (see Figure 31). Women consistently reported higher levels of discomfort across all parts of the body. The most common problems were pain in the upper back or neck, where 35 per cent reported recurring discomfort, and pain in the shoulders or arms, at 31 per cent.

Men generally reported pain less frequently, although around a quarter experienced pain in the lower back and in the hips, legs or feet.

Differences between employees, hybrid entrepreneurs and business owners were generally small and broadly followed the same pattern (see Figure 32). This suggests that occupational status in itself has limited significance for physical complaints. Instead, differences in how artistic work affects artists physically are more likely to be linked to the artistic discipline and the nature of the work itself.

Work-related psychosocial problems

Physical complaints do not necessarily have purely physical causes. The psychosocial work environment can also cause various forms of physical symptoms. We therefore asked whether artists had felt tired and lacking in energy over the past three months.

“This was part of a question about whether people worked even when they were physically ill. It also applies to working even when you’re mentally exhausted, which happens quite a lot. As a freelancer, you always have to say yes to jobs – otherwise, you risk losing clients.”

—Free-text response from an artist

Fatigue, low energy and sleep difficulties over the past three months were the most common complaints among both women and men (see Figure 33). Women consistently reported these issues to a slightly greater extent than men, particularly in relation to fatigue, sleep difficulties and difficulty unwinding after the workday.

Differences between women and men were smaller in relation to headaches, stomach pain and reluctance to go to work.

Across all occupational groups, the most common problems were fatigue and low energy, sleep difficulties, and being too tired after work or lacking time for family, friends or leisure activities (see Figure 34). Differences between employees, business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs were generally small. Hybrid entrepreneurs reported slightly higher levels of fatigue, difficulty unwinding after the workday, and feelings of inadequacy in their work performance, while employees reported slightly higher levels of sleep difficulties.

Figure 33. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing the following symptoms during the last 3 months a few days per week or more often, by gender (multiple responses allowed).

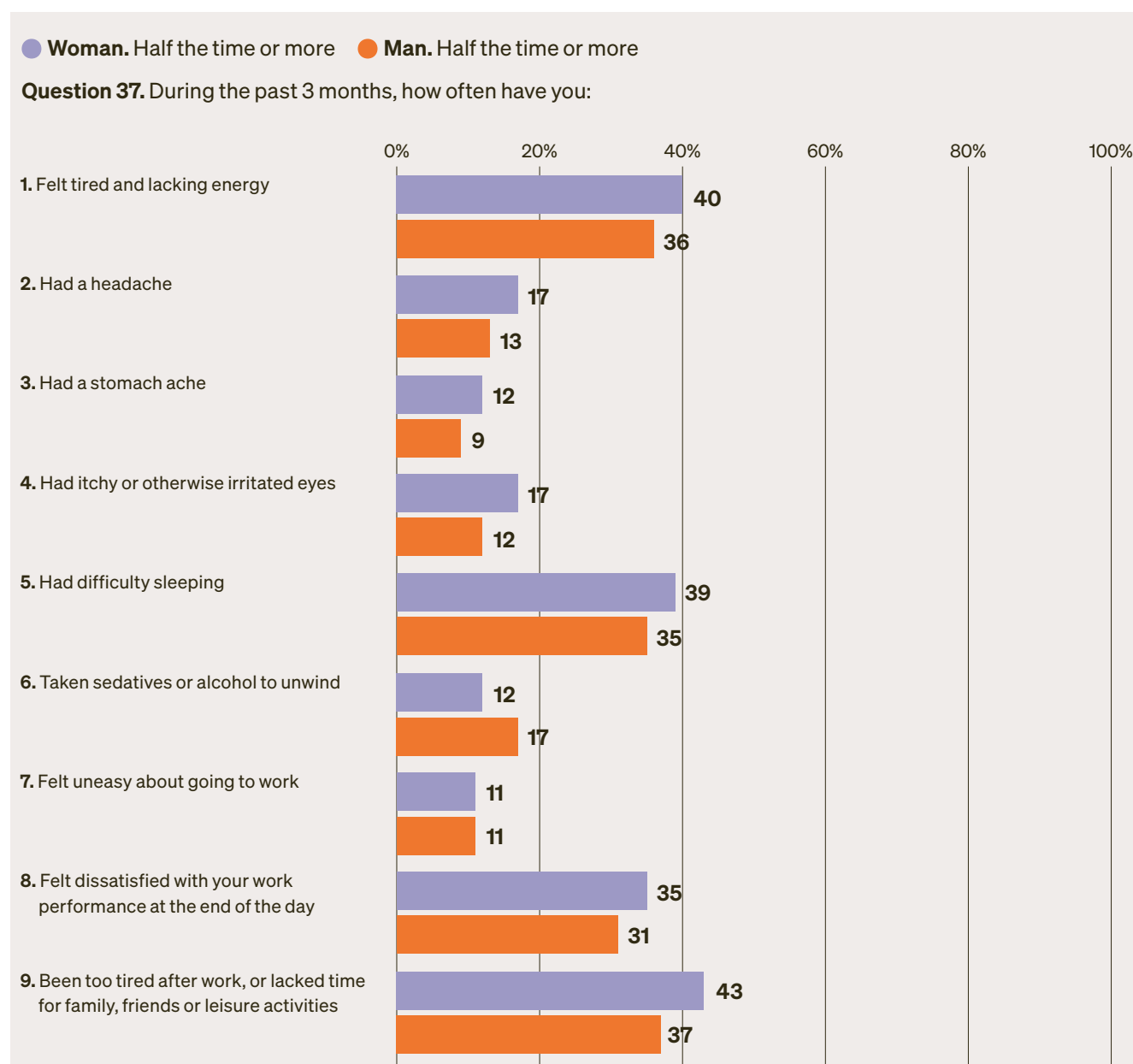
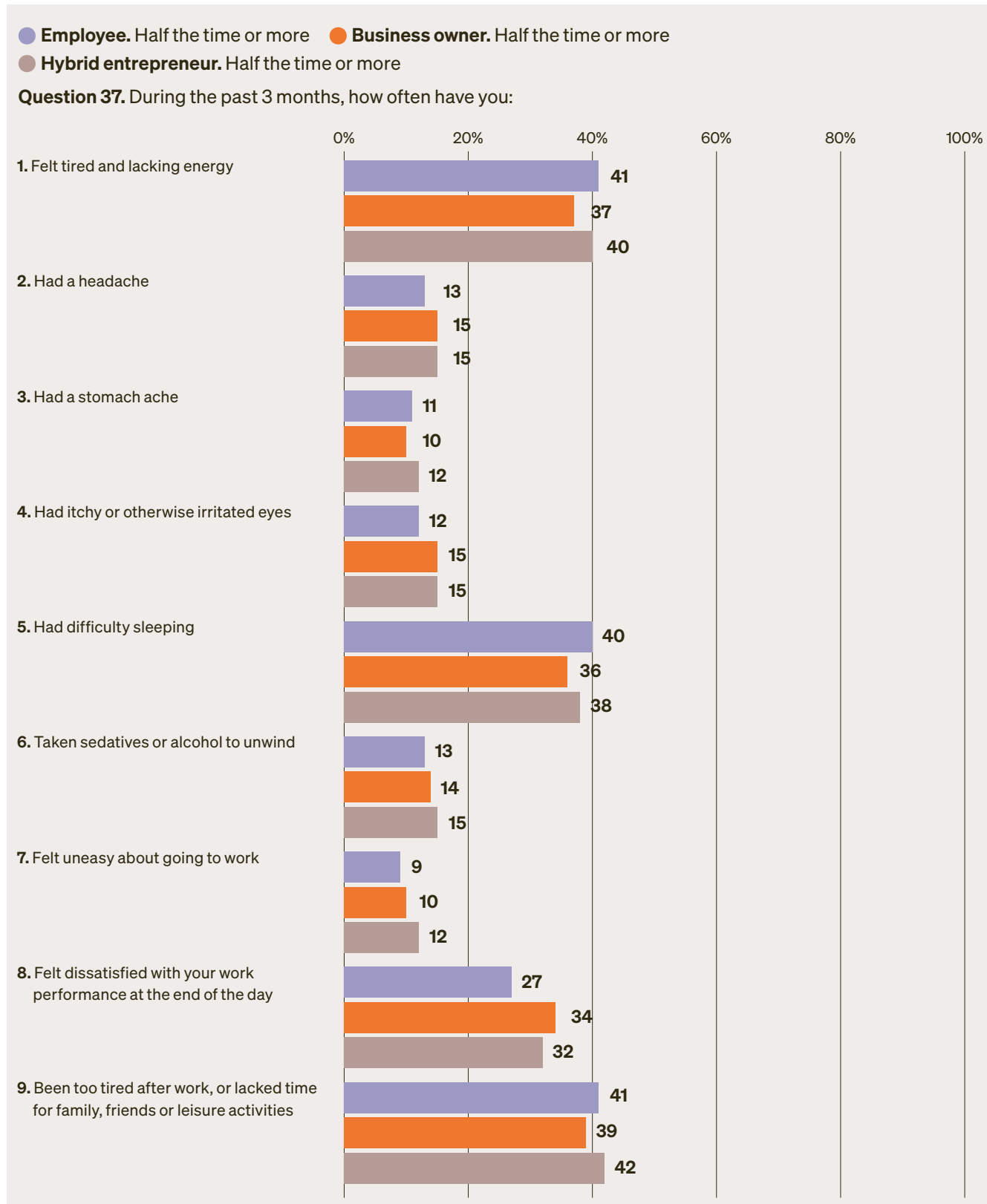


Figure 34. Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing the following symptoms during the last 3 months a few days per week or more often, by occupational status (multiple responses allowed).



Education and learning

Artists as a group are generally well-educated, but their careers are often long, which typically entails a need for ongoing education and skills development. The survey therefore included a question on the extent to which artists had received training or skills development from an employer or client during the past twelve months.

“Work involving several tasks for which I lack the skills or training – for example, bookkeeping, marketing, social media, production and so on – which we as freelance musicians are expected to handle ourselves.”

—Free-text response from an artist

Training and skills development

The proportion of artists who received training or skills development through an employer or client during the past twelve months was low (see Figure 35). Overall, 11 per cent reported that they had taken part in training initiatives. Women had received skills development to a slightly greater extent than men, and the proportion was higher among younger artists than among older ones.

Clear differences emerged between artistic disciplines. Within theatre and dance, 20 per cent reported having received skills development – the highest proportion – followed by film. Within visual arts and design, music and literary arts, the proportions were lower.

Employees and hybrid entrepreneurs had received skills development to a greater extent than business owners. This is to be expected, as they are more likely to have an employer or a client who can take responsibility for and finance such initiatives, while business owners are more often expected to take responsibility for their own training.

The skills development undertaken by artists during the past twelve months was generally of short duration (see Figure 36). Around two-thirds had received no more than four days of training: 30 per cent for less than two days and 36 per cent between two and four days. Only 20 per cent reported that the training amounted to ten days or more.

Differences between background categories were relatively small, although certain patterns can be observed. Artists with a foreign background and business owners were more likely to report that their training amounted to ten days or more, while hybrid entrepreneurs had mainly taken part in shorter activities. Employees stood out in that a larger proportion had received training lasting between five and nine days.

Figure 35. Percentage of respondents who reported receiving training or skills development during the past 12 months, by all background categories.

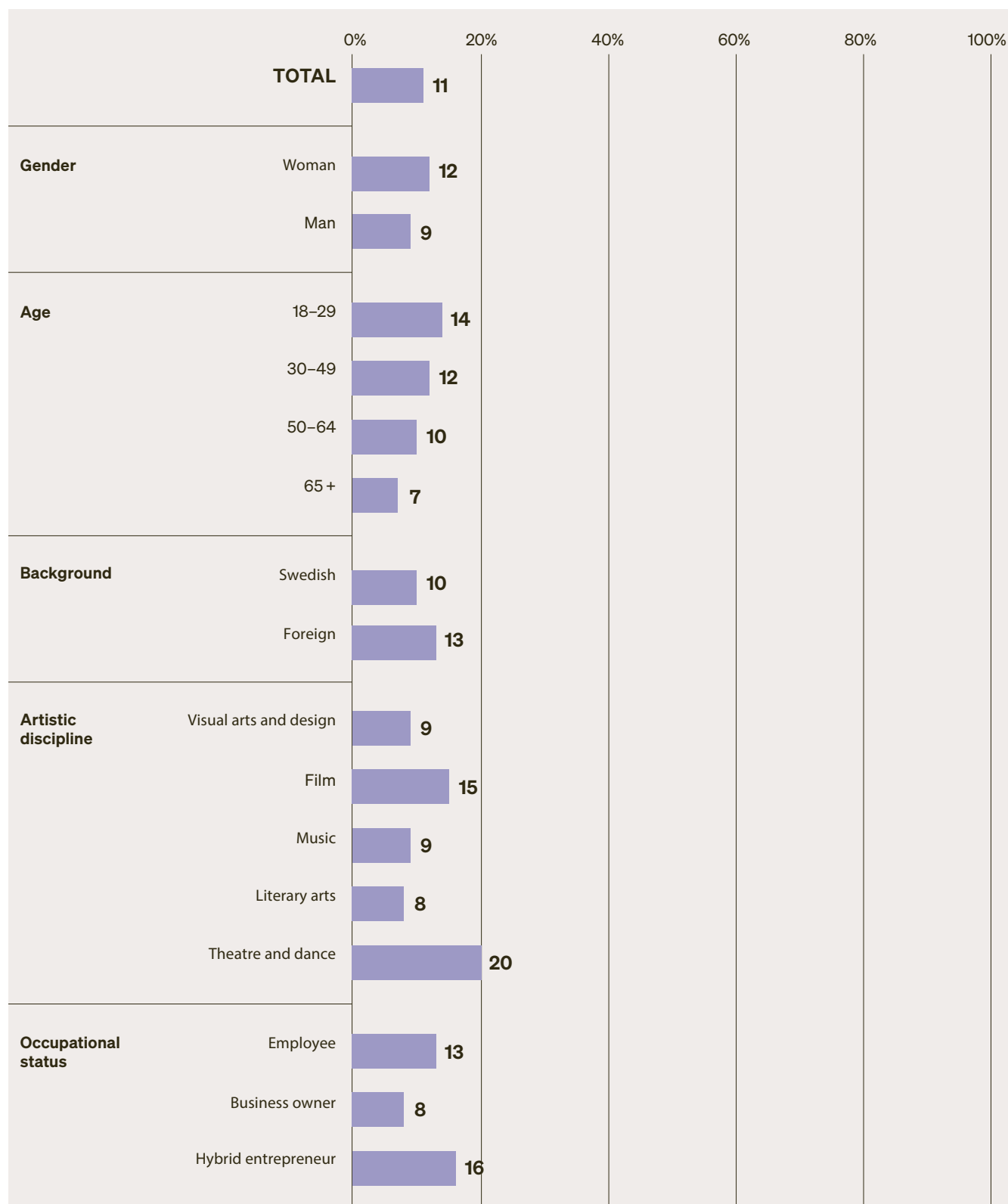
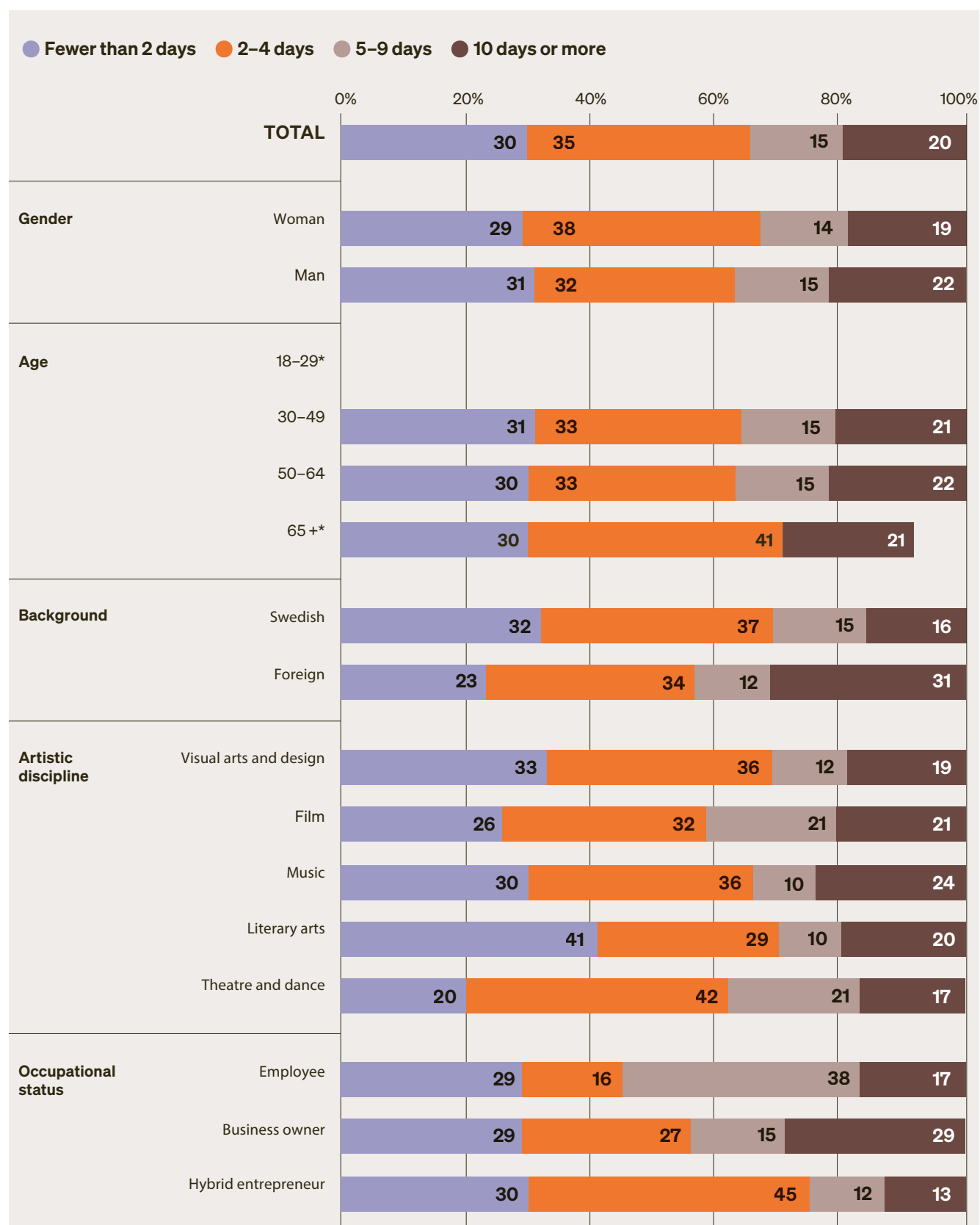


Figure 36. Percentage of respondents who reported receiving training or skills development during the past 12 months, by frequency and all background categories.



*The 18-29 age group is not reported for quality reasons. For the 65+ age group, not all response options are reported for quality reasons.

Skills and job requirements

To assess whether artists feel that their knowledge and skills match the requirements of their work, a question on this topic was included.

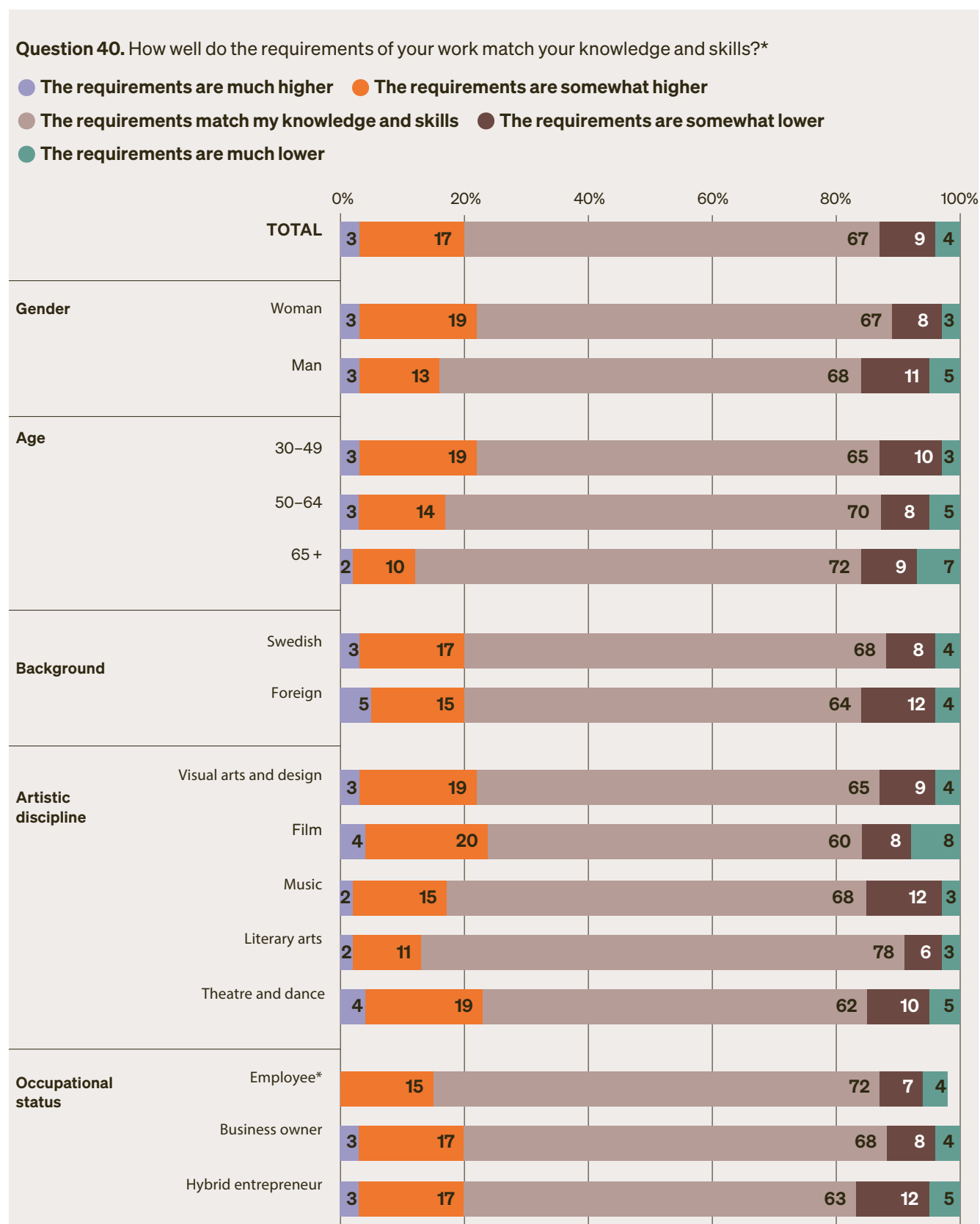
Figure 37 shows that a clear majority felt that their skills matched the requirements of their work, amounting to 67 per cent. A smaller proportion felt that the requirements exceeded their own skills, while an even smaller proportion felt that the requirements were lower than their skills.

Differences between genders, age groups, backgrounds, artistic disciplines and occupational statuses were generally small. This suggests that perceptions of how well skills match job requirements are relatively similar across different groups of artists.

“Concerning whether the requirements match my skills, it’s incredibly difficult to answer because assignments vary so much. Sometimes I’m overqualified, and at other times I feel that I’m barely able to do the assignment I’ve taken on. This requires a lot of flexibility: sometimes doing work that is simple, boring or repetitive (because it gives you income), and sometimes taking on tasks that require extensive preparation and are slightly beyond what you feel capable of. It’s difficult to strike the right balance, and it’s not always possible to influence the situation, as the work often cannot be adapted to suit me but rather has to be adapted to the client.”

—Free-text response from an artist.

Figure 37. Percentage of respondents who reported that their knowledge and skills matched their tasks, by all background categories.



*The 18–29 age group is not reported due to a low response rate. For quality reasons, not all response options are reported in the “Employee” group.

Summary of the survey's open-ended question

The survey concluded with an open-ended question asking whether there were any aspects of the work environment that had not been addressed in the other questions. A total of 1,750 free-text responses were received, providing a complementary picture of artists' work environments and how they are experienced. The responses also formed an important basis for the analyses and conclusions presented in this report. A selection of these responses is included in the main text of Chapter 5, where the survey findings are reported.

Many artists described financial insecurity linked to precarious contractual terms, low fees and fierce competition for public funding. This insecurity was exacerbated by the fact that social security systems are only partially adapted to the circumstances of business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs.

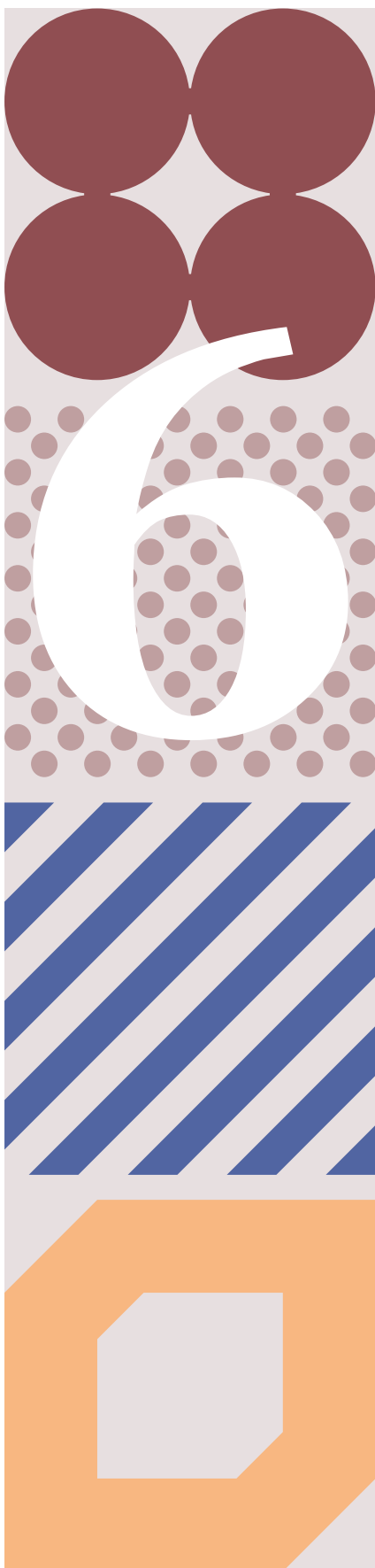
Several responses highlighted that the dual roles of being both an artist and a business owner contributed to a high workload. Financial insecurity also meant that many needed to supplement their artistic practice with other jobs.

Working alone, combined with insecure employment and contractual terms, contributed to many – particularly freelancers – experiencing social and professional vulnerability. Several respondents also described experiences involving threats, harassment, discrimination and bullying, both from colleagues and clients and from people outside the sector.

To reduce costs, many reported working in premises that were not fully suited to their activities, such as spaces with inadequate ventilation or insufficient protective equipment.

Overall, the free-text responses describe a work environment characterised by high workloads, insecure conditions and financial stress.

In some respects, the free-text responses differed from the structured survey responses. For example, workload was generally perceived as reasonable in the survey results, and a majority felt that their skills matched job requirements. At the same time, artists' exposure to harassment and threats emerges more clearly and consistently in the survey data than in the free-text responses.



Conclusions and need for action

This chapter presents the conclusions and analyses that can be drawn from the survey responses. It also includes comparisons with Konstnärsnämnden's 2017 report and the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report in order to highlight developments over time.

Background to the analyses

The questionnaire was sent to artists who had applied for funding from the Swedish Arts Grants Committee (Konstnärsnämnden) or the Swedish Authors' Fund (Författarfonden). The selection of grant recipients was based not only on the quality of their artistic work but also on the applicant's financial need.

As a result, the survey largely covers artists working as freelancers, while only a very small proportion of permanent employees and individuals with higher incomes responded. Overall, this means that the results primarily reflect the conditions for freelance artists.

A key challenge for freelance artists is that there is often no single employer with overall responsibility for the work environment. Hybrid entrepreneurs may have parallel employment and thus several employers, which can result in more complex working conditions. This differs from the labour market as a whole, where permanent employment still predominates. At the same time, freelance work is increasing in other sectors, often under conditions similar to those of artists. An understanding of artists' work environments therefore also provides valuable insights into developments in other sectors.

By comparing the results of this study with Konstnärsnämnden's 2017 report, it is possible to track how artists' work environments have changed over time. The data provides a more in-depth picture of artists' conditions and shows how the work environment affects their opportunities to develop their practice.

Conclusions and analysis

This section presents the conclusions and analyses that can be drawn from the survey responses. It also includes comparisons with Konstnärsnämnden's 2017 report and the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report in order to highlight developments over time.

Conclusions regarding the background questions

The results confirm findings from previous surveys: artists largely work as self-employed business owners, primarily as sole traders or in closely held companies.¹² Together with hybrid entrepreneurs, they constitute the dominant form of employment in this survey. This means that many freelance artists bear sole responsibility for their work and often lack colleagues with whom to share the workload, in contrast to permanent employees.

In the wider labour market, 94 per cent of employees had between one and four employers over the past three years. Among artists, a majority had between one and five employers or clients over the past year, while 35 per cent had five or more. This represents an increase compared with the survey published by Konstnärsnämnden in 2011.¹³

For many artists who run a business, having multiple clients entails an increased administrative workload. Tasks such as invoicing, bookkeeping, preparing quotations and marketing are often handled within their own business. At the same time, fee levels are relatively low, meaning that remuneration does not always cover the time spent on these tasks. Overall, the results suggest that a significant proportion of working time may be unpaid. This may contribute to increased stress and financial insecurity and, in the long run, affect both sickness presenteeism and the production of artistic work.

Conclusions on demands, stress and social relationships

Many artists work alone for half of their working time or more. Two-thirds reported that their workload was reasonable and that they could influence the pace of their work, while around half reported periods of significant time pressure. Compared with Konstnärsnämnden's 2017 report and the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report, it is above all artists' stress levels that stand out. The percentage of artists who were at times so stressed

12. A closely held company is a limited company in which four or fewer shareholders control more than 50% of the voting rights.

13. Konstnärsnämnden (2011). *Konstnärernas inkomster, arbetsmarknad och försörjningsmönster* ("Artists' incomes, labour market and livelihood patterns"), p. 36

that they could think of nothing but work has increased since 2017. It was also clearly higher than in the labour market overall, despite the fact that perceived workload remained largely unchanged.

The finding that business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs tend to work alone, while employees are more likely to have support in their work, is expected. Freelance work can give individual artists greater freedom to control their work hours, but it can also entail greater individual responsibility and thus an increased risk of stress.

“As an artist, I spend 85 per cent of my time on other work – such as admin, sales, bookkeeping, marketing, applications and so on – and very little time doing what I’m actually good at: being an artist.”

—Free-text response from an artist

Around 40 per cent of artists reported having access to advice or support. This suggests that professional networks are an important source of support. This finding is consistent with research showing that businesses in the cultural and creative sector tend to grow through networks rather than through increasing numbers of employees. The results also highlight the importance of support structures within the cultural sector, such as resource centres (Centrumbildningar), cultural incubators, artists’ organisations and artist-run initiatives, including production spaces and studio associations.

A majority of respondents reported feeling worried for half of their working time or more. Levels of concern were highest among women, younger artists and artists with a foreign background. The higher levels among younger artists may be linked to the fact that they have not yet established themselves in the labour market. The responses also reveal differences between artistic disciplines, with artists in theatre and dance reporting the highest levels of concern, while those in literary arts reporting the lowest. The higher levels within theatre and dance might be linked to reports in recent years of reduced resources in the independent cultural sector and in performing arts institutions, although causal relationships cannot be established on the basis of the survey data.

One-fifth of respondents reported having been involved in a conflict or dispute related to their professional practice during the past year. This was most common in theatre and dance and in film, and least common in literary arts, which is likely related to the fact that performing arts and film are generally collective art forms.

Most conflicts concerned relationships with managers, clients or colleagues. Compared with the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 findings, conflicts with managers were significantly more common among artists, while conflicts with colleagues were at roughly the same level as in the labour market overall. Employed artists also reported internal conflicts slightly more often than business owners. This may be because business owners tend to work alone and have fewer collegial contacts, unless they are part of an institutional setting and therefore a workplace community.

A majority of artists also reported that they lacked opportunities to express critical views in connection with their work. This applied in particular to women, artists aged 30–49, and business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs, while employed artists more often reported that they were able to express criticism. The greater difficulty among business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs may be linked to their dependence on clients, where relationships are sometimes characterised by a “the customer is always right” dynamic.

Conclusions on discrimination, harassment, threats and violence

The proportion of artists who reported having been subjected to discrimination has decreased since 2017, from 25 per cent to 16 per cent in this survey. However, the proportion still appears higher than in the labour market as a whole. According to figures from the Discrimination Ombudsman for 2025, around 9 per cent of those in employment reported experiencing discrimination in the workplace.¹⁴ Against this background, the proportion among artists remains relatively high.

In the 2017 survey, gender and age were the most commonly cited grounds for discrimination. In this survey, however, artists with a foreign background emerge as the most exposed group. Discrimination primarily occurred within the artists' own professional sphere. Among those who reported experiencing discrimination, 59 per cent stated that it came from employers or clients, although colleagues, audiences or the general public, as well as social media or online channels, were also identified as sources.

The proportion reporting harassment and bullying has also decreased since 2017, from 15 per cent to 8 per cent. At the same time, the patterns have shifted. In the earlier survey, age was the most common reported basis for such treatment, followed by gender and then foreign background. In the present survey, artists with a foreign background reported higher levels of exposure than other groups, and levels were also slightly higher in the 50–64 age group.

As with discrimination, harassment and bullying were primarily linked to relationships within the professional sphere. Those affected most often reported colleagues as the source, but employers and clients were also frequently mentioned. Employed artists reported a higher exposure to

14. Discrimination Ombudsman (2025), *Förekomst av diskriminering 2025* (“Prevalence of Discrimination 2025”)

harassment from colleagues and managers, while business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs described a broader pattern that also included audiences and social media.

Sexual harassment stands out, with a sharp increase over time. In this survey, 17 per cent reported having been subjected to sexual harassment in the past year, compared with 4 per cent in 2017. Women were clearly more exposed than men, and levels were particularly high among artists aged 30–49, artists with a foreign background, and those working in theatre and dance. Perpetrators were most often found within the professional sphere, particularly colleagues or similar roles. Among women who reported exposure, half stated that the harassment came from colleagues, agents or similar, in line with the 2017 findings. Business owners more often reported that the harassment came from the general public or via online channels.

Since Konstnärsnämnden's 2017 report, the cultural sector has been influenced by the #metoo movement and sector-specific initiatives. The increase in reported sexual harassment may partly reflect greater awareness of what constitutes such behaviour and reduced tolerance for it. These developments may also have made it easier to speak out, as shame and responsibility have increasingly shifted from those affected to those responsible.

In this survey, 3 per cent of artists reported having been subjected to threats or violence over the past year in connection with their professional practice. Exposure was higher among artists with a foreign background. Repeated threats or violence were most commonly reported by business owners and those aged 50–64. Such incidents most often originated from audiences, the general public or via social media and online channels. However, overall levels were lower than in the labour market as a whole. According to the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report, 13 per cent reported exposure to violence or threats of violence at work.

Although threats and violence were reported to a relatively limited extent, it is nonetheless serious that artists experience such incidents. They may constitute one of the most tangible constraints on artistic freedom. Around one in 20 artists reported having refrained from an artistic performance due to discrimination, harassment, threats or violence.

Conclusions on the physical work environment

According to the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report, noise and temperature were the most commonly reported problems in the work environment. In contrast, artists in this and earlier surveys more often pointed to shortcomings related to the design and suitability of their workspaces. Women reported recurring shortcomings in the physical work environment more frequently than men. Overall, the findings are broadly consistent with those of the 2017 survey.

The risk of strain-related injuries was also common, particularly in the form of repetitive movements and static loading. Women reported higher exposure than men. Risks associated with heavy physical tasks and falls from

platforms were more frequently reported within theatre and dance (including circus), while static loading and repetitive movements were more commonly reported within music and in visual arts and design. Compared with the labour market overall, the levels were broadly similar; however, gender differences appear more pronounced among artists, with women reporting higher exposure. The levels of repetitive movements and static loading are also roughly similar to those observed in 2017, suggesting that these ergonomic risks are persistent.

Working from home was very common among artists. Four out of five reported that they had worked entirely or partly from home during the past twelve months. This high proportion is likely linked to the large share of freelancers among respondents. A direct comparison with 2017 is not possible, as the 2017 survey did not include a corresponding question. However, working from home was considerably more common among artists than in the wider labour market; according to the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report, just under half reported working from home. Working from home also varied across artistic disciplines. It was most common within literary arts and less common within visual arts and design, as well as within theatre and dance – disciplines that more often require specialised premises.

Overall, the physical work environment and physical demands vary considerably between artistic disciplines and types of assignments. When work leads to physical complaints, it may nevertheless be difficult for artists to refrain from working, as the loss of income can be substantial and social security systems are not always adapted to freelance work. This, in turn, may contribute to high levels of sickness presenteeism.

Conclusions on sickness presenteeism, illness and injuries

Working while ill was common among artists. In this survey, 41 per cent reported that they had worked while ill four times or more during the past year. The corresponding figure for the wider labour market was 17 per cent, according to a report by the Swedish Work Environment Authority. Differences between women and men were small, but younger artists reported higher levels of sickness presenteeism than older artists. Levels were also higher among business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs than among employees. Although the questions in our 2017 report are not fully comparable, the results suggest that levels of presenteeism have remained relatively high over time.

The most common reasons for working while ill were that no one else could take over the work and financial factors, such as not being able to afford to take sick leave or concerns about losing commissions. Many also mentioned problems related to how sickness benefit is calculated. Financial pressure was particularly evident among business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs, as well as within theatre and dance.

Physical complaints were also common, and the pattern has remained fairly stable over time. In this survey, pain in the neck or upper back was the most frequently reported complaint, followed by pain in the shoulders or

arms. The same pattern emerged in the 2017 report. Compared with the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report, the prevalence and types of complaints are broadly similar to those in the wider labour market. In all surveys, women reported more pain than men.

Stress-related complaints were also common, particularly fatigue, low energy and sleep difficulties. Women reported such complaints to a greater extent, particularly fatigue, sleep problems and difficulty unwinding after the workday. Differences between occupational groups were small. In this survey, 40 per cent reported that they were often too tired to think about anything other than work or lacked time for family, friends and leisure activities. This was despite two-thirds perceiving their workload as reasonable. Compared with 2017, this suggests a shift towards increased time pressure and greater difficulty achieving a work-life balance.

Overall, the results show that sickness presenteeism and various forms of physical and mental health issues were recurring features of artists' working conditions.

Conclusions on education and learning

A clear majority of artists felt that their skills matched the requirements of their work, and only a small proportion felt that the requirements exceeded their own capabilities. The pattern was similar regardless of gender, age, background, artistic discipline or occupational status. Since most respondents were business owners, it is possible that tasks perceived as falling outside their competence relate more to business management than to the artistic work for which they are trained.

A similar proportion of artists and workers in the wider labour market felt that job requirements exceeded their capabilities: 20 per cent among artists and 22 per cent according to the Swedish Work Environment Authority's 2021 report. However, gender differences were more pronounced among artists. Women were more likely than men to feel that requirements exceeded their capabilities, while gender differences in that report were small.

Skills development provided by employers or clients was uncommon among artists. In this survey, 11 per cent reported that they had received training or skills development in the past year, and even among employees the proportion was low, at 13 per cent. Where such professional development did occur, it was typically brief in duration, often lasting no more than a few days. This differs markedly from other groups in the labour market. Although the comparison between the populations is not entirely equivalent, data from the Swedish Work Environment Authority indicate that 52 per cent of the working population had received training during paid work hours. No comparison with 2017 is possible, as the question was not included at that time. Overall, the results suggest that skills development is largely an individual responsibility for freelance artists, reflecting the prevalence of self-employment, fixed-term contracts and project-based working arrangements.

How can artists' working conditions be improved?

The survey identified a number of shortcomings in artists' work environments. Here, we examine some of these in more detail and discuss possible remedial measures.

Previous reports and analyses by Konstnärsnämnden show that artists' levels of remuneration need to be improved and that social security systems need to function more effectively in relation to artists' actual working conditions. This is important in order to reduce the stress and anxiety experienced by many artists. More stable financial conditions could also enable freelance artists to engage more easily in open dialogue, express critical views and choose production environments that are better suited to their professional practice – something many lack, according to this study.

Improve conditions for a safe and supportive work environment

Increase collaboration between authorities

Konstnärsnämnden is tasked with raising awareness of artists' vulnerability to threats and harassment in relation to their professional practice. The Swedish Agency for the Media has a corresponding mandate with regard to journalists. Although journalists are considerably more exposed than artists, there are several similarities in the working conditions of the two professions, not least because many work as freelancers. Konstnärsnämnden has therefore initiated collaboration with this agency to exchange knowledge and experiences.

Konstnärsnämnden is also engaged in dialogue with the Police Authority and Victim Support Sweden with the aim of strengthening the understanding of artists who are subjected to threats and harassment. When threats and violence are directed at professional artists in the course of their work, the Police Authority classifies this as offences intended to influence democratic institutions. The *Guide for Artists* on Konstnärsnämnden's website provides information on where artists who are under threat can seek support.

However, there is a need for broader collaboration between public authorities to counter discrimination, harassment and threats – particularly those occurring online.

Work systematically to combat sexual harassment

Sexual harassment stands out in the survey, showing a clear increase over time. It is primarily women who report having been affected, and the perpetrator is most often said to be within their own professional circle, for example colleagues.

The increase may be partly linked to the #metoo movement, as more people now recognise what constitutes sexual harassment, tolerance for such behaviour has decreased, and it has become easier to speak out.

At the same time, employers and clients need to examine whether this increase mainly reflects greater awareness or whether incidents of harassment have in fact become more common. Regardless of the cause, employers and clients must continue to work systematically to prevent harassment and other forms of victimisation.

Create opportunities for dialogue, including for freelance artists

Freelance artists often lack colleagues in the same way as permanent employees. In many cases, the relationship with superiors resembles a client-contractor relationship, where the counterpart is a commissioning body rather than an employer. This applies to business owners, and even for those on fixed-term contracts, dialogue and relationships with superiors and colleagues may differ from workplaces where the majority are permanently employed.

If artists and other freelancers are unable to voice criticism, there is a risk that the work environment will deteriorate, which in turn may hinder the development of both organisations and artistic practice. It is therefore important that both employers and clients create opportunities for dialogue, regardless of employment status, as the creative and culture sector is largely characterised by freelance work.

Strengthen artists' entrepreneurship and support measures

Running a business is a necessity for many artists

A large majority of professionally active artists work wholly or partly through their own businesses. Starting and running a business is often a prerequisite for practising an artistic profession, and historically, owning a business has been the dominant form of work for visual artists and writers. Even in artistic professions where permanent employment previously existed, such roles have been declining over a long period.

This survey also shows that the number of employers and clients per artist has increased. The reasons for this trend are difficult to determine, but several factors may be at play. Rising costs and inflation may mean that artists need to take on more commissions and combine multiple income sources. At the same time, digitalisation and developments within the cultural and creative sector (CCS) may have increased the demand for artistic skills.

For many artists, running a business also involves having primary responsibility for their own professional development. When opportunities for skills development are limited – for example for financial reasons – artists may, over time, struggle to remain competitive as the market evolves even if their current skills are sufficient. In addition, self-employment requires competencies beyond core artistic practice, such as business skills.

Strengthen support measures for self-employed business owners

The Government's strategy for the cultural and creative sector emphasises that artists' skills and professional practice are the sector's fundamental resources.¹⁵ It is therefore essential that artists gain access to ongoing professional development in order to keep pace with developments in their

15. Government Communication 2023/24:111. *Strategy for businesses in the cultural and creative industries.*

field. This strengthens the long-term sustainability of the sector in terms of artistic quality, diversity of expression and competitiveness.

Support structures for artists already exist at national, regional and local levels. At national level, these include resource centres (Centrumbildningar) and performing arts alliances, while at regional and local levels they include incubators, advisers and other support mechanisms. However, these initiatives often have limited resources compared with business-oriented support systems. Moreover, the Government notes in its CCS strategy that support measures funded through industrial policy are not always adapted to the needs and circumstances of freelance artists.

Overall, this indicates a need to strengthen both systems: to increase resources for cultural support structures and to enhance understanding of artists' conditions within business support systems. This is in line with one of the strategic objectives of the CCS strategy.

Adapt the social security system to the conditions of business owners and freelancers

The results of our survey suggest that artists' working conditions – often characterised by freelance work and insecure contractual relationships – can make it more difficult to refrain from working when ill. Financial pressure was particularly evident among business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs, as well as in the discipline of theatre and dance.

It is well established, both in Sweden and at European level, that social security systems are not well adapted to the working conditions of self-employed business owners and freelancers. Against this background, the Government appointed a special investigator to review the regulations governing qualifying income for sickness benefits (SGI) and the income base for sickness and parental benefits.¹⁶ The inquiry *Ett trygghetssystem för alla* ("A social security system for all", SOU 2023:30) analysed how the Swedish social insurance system functions for individuals with variable and irregular incomes, such as self-employed business owners, hybrid entrepreneurs and others who have project-based work.

The inquiry's report was submitted to the Government on 20 June 2023 and has since been circulated for consultation. However, no legislative proposal to reform the SGI system has yet been presented. The question of how social security systems can be better adapted to business owners and hybrid entrepreneurs therefore remains relevant – particularly for occupational groups such as artists, whose working conditions are often characterised by project-based employment, commission-based work and fluctuating incomes.

16. Committee Directive 2021:90, *Översyn av regelverket för sjukpenninggrundande inkomst för ökad trygghet och förutsebarhet* ("Review of the regulations governing qualifying income for sickness benefits to increase security and predictability").



Appendices

Quality and weighting

In this appendix, we present tables that examine in greater depth and detail issues relating to overcoverage, non-response and response rates.

Overcoverage

In addition to the overcoverage described in Chapter 3, “Method and implementation”, it emerged during the data collection phase that a further 132 individuals from the lists of applicants did not belong to the survey population. Of these, 118 stated that they had not been active as artists during the past twelve months (Question 1 in the questionnaire), while 15 indicated in other ways that they were no longer active.

These individuals are reported as respondents and non-respondents, respectively, in the description of data collection in this appendix but have been classified as overcoverage in the statistical analysis.

Non-response

Non-response in the survey consisted partly of individuals who did not complete the questionnaire at all (unit non-response) and partly of those who chose not to answer individual questions (item non-response). If non-respondents differ from respondents in the characteristics measured, the results might be systematically biased, as they are based solely on the responses received. To reduce this bias, weights were calculated using calibration estimation (see Section 7.1.3 of this appendix).

Unit non-response may arise for several reasons, for example if the individual did not wish to participate in the survey, could not be reached, or was unable to take part. The extent of unit non-response is shown in Table B:1.

Table B:1. Description of unit non-response.

CATEGORY	NUMBER
No response (reason unknown)	8,605
Declined to participate	30
Unable to participate	2
Not reached	34
Incorrect email address (bounce-back)	203
Promised to respond	1
Total	8,893

The categories for unit non-response are defined as follows:

- “No response (reason unknown)” refers to individuals for whom no information was obtained regarding why the questionnaire was not completed.
- “Declined to participate” indicates that the individual informed Statistics Sweden that they did not wish to take part in the survey.
- “Unable to participate” refers to individuals who could not take part due to language difficulties or disability.
- “Not reached” includes individuals who could not be contacted, for example due to a confidential address or protected identity in the Total Population Register.

Item non-response can occur if a question is perceived as difficult to understand or sensitive, or if the respondent unintentionally fails to answer it. Item non-response ranged between 0 and 1 per cent for most questions. The highest item non-response rate, at 2 per cent, was found for Question 15: “How often are you able to express critical views on your working conditions to your employer or client?”.

Weighting

If everyone included in the survey had completed the questionnaire, no weighting would have been necessary, as we would then have had complete information on the entire population. However, when some individuals do not respond, non-response arises, meaning that the results are based on fewer responses than intended. This introduces a degree of uncertainty. Moreover, if non-respondents differ from respondents with regard to the variables being studied, the results might be biased – a phenomenon known as non-response bias.

To reduce the risk of such bias, the results have been weighted using a method known as calibration estimation. This involves using register data containing known background characteristics of the entire population, such as gender or age. The weights are then adjusted so that the distribution in the sample corresponds to that of the population. In this way, the results become more representative.

According to Statistics Sweden (SCB), register variables are suitable for weighting if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. The variable is correlated with response propensity, thereby helping to reduce non-response bias in the estimates.
2. The variable is correlated with the target variables, thereby reducing both non-response bias and variance in the estimates.
3. The variable defines importing reporting groups, which may contribute to lower variance in the estimates for these groups.

Prior to the calculation of weights, several register variables were analysed. Table B:2 presents the variables that were selected and used in the calibration. The selection was made with the aim of either reducing non-response bias or increasing the precision of the estimates by reducing variance.

Table B:2. Register variables included in the calibration.

VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	SOURCE
Gender x age, 8 groups	Male/female grouped by	RTB 30 November 2024
	16–29 years	
	30–49	
	50–64	
	65+	
Country of birth, 2 groups	Sweden	RTB 30 November 2024
	Other	
Level of education, 3 groups	Pre-secondary and unknown	UREG 1 January 2023
	Upper secondary	
	Post-secondary	
Voter turnout in local, regional and parliamentary elections, 3 groups	Eligible to vote but not voting	VAL 2022
	Voters	
	Others	
Artists' sector, 5 groups	Visual arts and design	Konstnärsnämnden
	Film	
	Music	
	Literary arts	
	Theatre, dance and circus	

Response rates

The questionnaire was distributed on four occasions to the selected population. The number of responses received after each survey wave is shown in Table B:3.

Table B:3. Number and percentage of responses by survey wave.

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
After the first wave	2,158	16.4%
After the second wave	993	7.5%
After the third wave	729	5.5%
After the fourth wave	382	2.9%
Total number of responses	4,262	32.4%
Non-response	8,893	67.6%
Excluding overcoverage	13,155	100%

Individuals with a higher level of education responded to a greater extent than those with a lower level, as shown in Table B:4.

Table B:4. Percentage of respondents by level of education.

CATEGORY	RESPONSE RATE, %	SHARE OF RESPONSES, %	POPULATION EXCL. OVERCOVERAGE
Pre-secondary or unknown level	24.3%	2.1%	370
Upper secondary	27.4%	13.0%	2,018
Post-secondary	33.6%	85.0%	10,767

Individuals who voted in any of the 2022 elections had a higher response rate than those who did not vote or were not eligible to vote, as shown in Table B:5.

Table B:5. Percentage of respondents by voter participation.

CATEGORY	RESPONSE RATE, %	SHARE OF RESPONDENTS, %	POPULATION EXCL. OVERCOVERAGE
Not eligible to vote in the 2022 election	17.6%	1.4%	336
Eligible voters who did not vote	16.4%	2.3%	596
Voters	33.6%	96.3%	12,223

Survey of artists' work environments

Introductory questions about your artistic activity during the past 12 months

Question 1. Have you been artistically active, either wholly or in part, during the past 12 months? *(If Yes, go to Question 3; if No, go to Question 2)*

- Yes
- No

Question 2. What is the main reason why you have not been artistically active during the past 12 months? *(If No to Question 1, this is the final question)*

- Financial reasons
- Parental leave
- Other family reasons
- Loss of motivation or interest
- Health reasons
- Started working in another field

Question 3. In what capacity do you usually undertake your artistic work?

- Exclusively as an employee
- Mainly as an employee
- Roughly equally as an employee and as a business owner
- Mainly as a business owner
- Exclusively as a business owner

Question 4. Who is your primary employer or client in your artistic practice? *(If you have several employers or clients, please select the one you work for most often).*

- Central government
- Region or municipality
- Private client
- Non-profit or economic association
- Own business
- Other

Question 5. How many employers or clients have you had during the past 12 months?

- 1–5
- 6–10
- 11–15
- 16 or more

Questions about demands, stress and social relationships

The following questions concern the extent to which you experience demands and stress in your artistic work.

Question 6. Do you have access to advice or help if your work tasks or projects feel difficult?

- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Very rarely or not at all

Question 7. Do you consider your workload to be reasonable?

- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Very rarely or not at all

Question 8. Are you personally able to influence your work pace?

- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Very rarely or not at all

Question 9. Are there times when work is so stressful that you don't have time to talk about or think about anything else?

- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Very rarely or not at all

Question 10. To what extent do you work alone?

- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Very rarely or not at all

Question 11. Do you feel concerned about the future of your artistic practice? *This can refer to changes in the labour market, technological developments, economic crises, pandemics, etc.*

- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Very rarely or not at all

Question 12. Have you been involved in any kind of conflict or dispute in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If No, go to Question 15)*

- Yes
- No

Question 13. How often have you been involved in any kind of conflict or dispute in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 12)*

- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Very rarely or not at all

Question 14. With whom have you been involved in any kind of conflict or dispute in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 12, you can select more than one answer)*

- With a manager, employer or client
- With colleagues, an agent, an accountant or similar
- With other people, such as the audience or the general public

Question 15. How often are you able to express critical views on your working conditions to your employer or client?

- Always
- Most of the time
- Most of the time not
- Never

Questions about discrimination, harassment, threats and violence

Question 16. Have you experienced discrimination in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? Discrimination here means that you have been, directly or indirectly, disadvantaged or treated unfairly on the grounds of age, gender, gender expression, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation. This also includes discrimination via online channels. *(If No, go to Question 19)*

- Yes
- No

Question 17. How often have you experienced discrimination in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 16)*

- A few days per week
- A few days per month
- A few times in the past 3 months
- A few times in the past 12 months

Question 18. By whom have you experienced discrimination in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 16, you can select more than one answer)*

- By a manager, employer or client
- By colleagues, an agent, an accountant or similar
- By other people, such as the audience or the general public
- Via social media or online (online abuse)

Question 19. Have you experienced harassment or bullying in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? Harassment and bullying refer to negative behaviour that is repeated over time. This can take the form of hurtful words or actions, gossip, exclusion, harassment, stalking, isolation or sexual harassment. *(If No, go to Question 22)*

- Yes
- No

Question 20. How often have you experienced harassment or bullying in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 19)*

- A few days per week
- A few days per month
- A few times in the past 3 months
- A few times in the past 12 months

Question 21. By whom have you been subjected to harassment or bullying in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 19, you can select more than one answer)*

- By a manager, employer or client
- By colleagues, an agent, an accountant or similar
- By other people, such as the audience or the general public
- Via social media or online (online abuse)

Question 22. Have you experienced sexual harassment in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? Sexual harassment refers to unwelcome advances or offensive remarks of a sexual nature. *(If No, go to Question 25)*

- Yes
- No

Question 23. How often have you experienced sexual harassment in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 22)*

- A few days per week
- A few days per month
- A few times in the past 3 months
- A few times in the past 12 months

Question 24. By whom have you been subjected to sexual harassment in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 22, you can select more than one answer)*

- By a manager, employer or client
- By colleagues, an agent, an accountant or similar
- By other people, such as the audience or the general public
- Via social media or online (online abuse)

Question 25. Have you experienced threats or violence in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If No, go to Question 28)*

- Yes
- No

Question 26. How often have you experienced threats or violence in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 25)*

- A few days per week
- A few days per month
- A few times in the past 3 months
- A few times in the past 12 months

Question 27. By whom have you been subjected to threats or violence in your artistic practice during the past 12 months? *(If you answered Yes to Question 25, you can select more than one answer)*

- By a manager, employer or client
- By colleagues, an agent, an accountant or similar
- By other people, such as the audience or the general public
- Via social media or online (online abuse)

Question 28. Have you refrained from artistic activity during the past 12 months due to discrimination, harassment, threats or violence? The activity can refer to creating, performing, publishing or participating.

- Yes
- No

Questions about conditions in your physical work environment

Question 29. How often are you exposed to the following in your work?
(Multiple answers can be selected)

- 29.1** Noise or other sounds so loud that you cannot hold a conversation in a normal tone of voice
 - 29.2** Poor lighting (too dim or too bright)
 - 29.3** Poor temperature (too cold or too hot)
 - 29.4** Poorly ventilated premises
 - 29.5** Deficiencies in the design of your personal workstation (chair, desk, flooring, shelving, etc.)
 - 29.6** Deficiencies in your personal equipment (shoes, gloves, protective mask, etc.)
 - 29.7** Deficiencies in your IT or computer environment
 - 29.8** Chemicals, paint, oil, liquids, or other substances that come into contact with the skin
- Most of the time
 - Half the time
 - Rarely
 - Not at all

Question 30. Are any of the following present in the air in your physical work environment (visible or detectable by smell)? (Multiple answers can be selected)

- 30.1** Dust from textiles, wood, flour or plants
 - 30.2** Dust from metals, stone, quartz, cement, asbestos, mineral wool or similar materials
 - 30.3** Chemicals (gases, vapours, solvents, pesticides or plastics-related chemicals)
- Most of the time
 - Half the time
 - Rarely
 - Not at all

Question 31. In your artistic practice, is there a risk of injury due to:
(Multiple answers can be selected)

- 31.1** Heavy tasks
- 31.2** Repetitive movements
- 31.3** Static loading
- 31.4** Falls from ladders, platforms, etc.

- Most of the time
- Half the time
- Rarely
- Not at all

Other questions about your physical work environment

Question 32. In your artistic practice during the past 12 months, have you carried out your work entirely or partly at home? (If No, go to Question 34)

- Yes
- No

Question 33. How often did you work at home during the past 12 months?
(If you answered Yes to Question 32)

- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Less than half the time
- Very rarely or not at all

Questions about illness or injury

Question 34. During the past 12 months, have you worked in your artistic practice despite being ill? (If Never, go to Question 36)

- Never
- Once
- Two or three times
- Four times or more

Question 35. Why have you worked despite being ill? *(If you answered Yes to Question 34, you can select more than one answer)*

- No one else can do the work
- I cannot afford to be on sick leave
- It is difficult to get the right sickness benefit
- I do not want to burden my colleagues
- I am afraid of losing work or assignments

Your situation during the past three months

Question 36. During the past 3 months, how often have you had pain in: *(Multiple answers can be selected)*

- 36.1** The upper back or neck
- 36.2** The lower back
- 36.3** Shoulders or arms
- 36.4** Wrists or hands
- 36.5** Hips, legs, knees or feet

- Every day
- A few days per week
- A few days per month
- Not at all, or rarely, in the last 3 months

Question 37. During the past 3 months, how often have you: *(Multiple answers can be selected)*

- 37.1** Felt tired and lacking energy
- 37.2** Had a headache
- 37.3** Had a stomach ache
- 37.4** Had itchy or otherwise irritated eyes
- 37.5** Had difficulty sleeping
- 37.6** Taken sedatives or alcohol to unwind
- 37.7** Felt uneasy about going to work
- 37.8** Felt dissatisfied with your work performance at the end of the day
- 37.9** Been too tired after work, or lacked time for family, friends or leisure activities

- Every day
- A few days per week
- A few days per month
- Not at all, or rarely, in the past 3 months

Questions about training and learning

Question 38. In your artistic practice during the past 12 months, have you received training or skills development from your employer or client?

(If No, go to Question 40)

- Yes
- No

Question 39. To what extent have you received training or skills development from your employer or client? *(If you answered Yes to Question 38)*

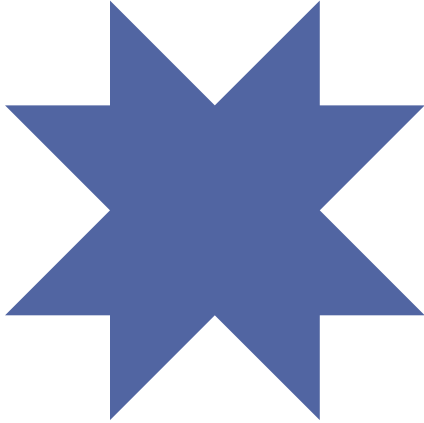
- Fewer than 2 days
- 2–4 days
- 5–9 days
- 10 days or more

Question 40. How well do the requirements of your work match your knowledge and skills?

- The requirements are much higher than my knowledge and skills
- The requirements are somewhat higher than my knowledge and skills
- The requirements match my knowledge and skills
- The requirements are somewhat lower than my knowledge and skills
- The requirements are much lower than my knowledge and skills

Final question

Question 41. Is there anything you consider relevant to your workplace as an artist that has not been covered in this survey? *(Optional question with free-text response possible)*



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*Översyn av regelverket för sjukpenninggrundande inkomst för
ökad trygghet och förutsebarhet*

About the Swedish Arts Grants Committee

The Swedish Arts Grants Committee is a government agency that promotes artistic development and innovation. Our remit covers practising artists throughout the country, across all artistic disciplines. We award grants and subsidies, promote international artistic exchange, and analyse and disseminate knowledge about artists' economic and social conditions. We collaborate regionally, nationally and internationally with authorities and organisations, both within the sector and across sectors.



Konstnärsnämnden
The Swedish Arts Grants Committee