



Artists in Figures

– Statistics on Artists in Denmark

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| 1: BASIS FOR THE STATISTICS ON ARTISTS | 4 |
| Artists in figures and establishing data basis | 5 |
| The purpose of establishing statistics across art forms | 6 |
| Division of art forms in the statistics on artists | 7 |
| Definition of the population in the artist statistics | 8 |
| 2: STATISTICS ON ARTISTS IN DENMARK | 11 |
| The number of professional artists in Denmark | 12 |
| Proportion of income from artistic activities | 13 |
| “Writers need a sustainable economy” | |
| – Interview with the author Anne Zenon | 15 |
| Gender distribution among artists across art forms | 19 |
| “Early on, I found out that in the art world conditions are different for men and women” | |
| – Interview with the visual artist Mie Mørkeberg | 20 |
| “Statistics are a vital tool for addressing gender imbalance in the music world” | |
| – Interview with the musician Henrik Jansberg | 24 |
| Where in Denmark do artists live? | 27 |
| “Artists also pursue decent careers outside Copenhagen” | |
| – Interview with the actor Ashok Pramanik | 28 |
| Age composition of artists across art forms | 31 |
| “Making films demands stamina” | |
| – Interview with the film director Katrine Brocks | 32 |
| 3: SUMMARY AND FURTHER COURSE OF ACTION | 35 |
| From data about conditions for artists during COVID-19 to the present | 36 |
| Need for continuous data on artists | 39 |
| 4: SOURCES | 40 |

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Introduction

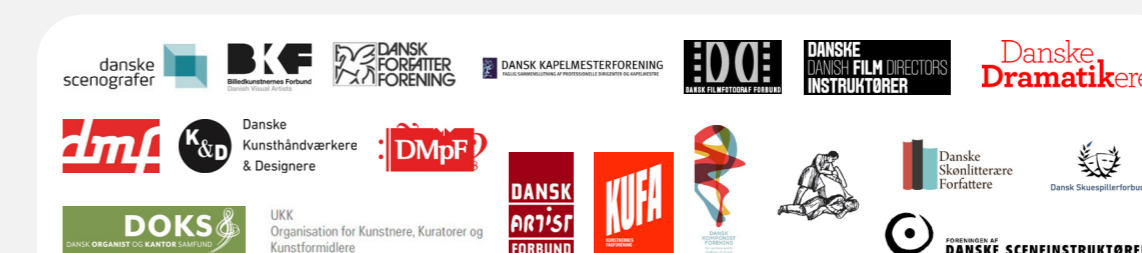
In December 2023, Statistics Denmark published the first comprehensive statistics on artists across art forms. The new statistics on artists are part of the *Artists in Figures (AiF)* development project – a close collaboration between Statistics Denmark, the Council of Danish Artists and 19 of the Council's member organisations.

This publication outlines what went into the development project, presents an overview of the statistical key figures and spotlights some of the artists' lives that the figures reflect.

We hope that *Artists in Figures – Statistics on Artists in Denmark* will be both beneficial and enjoyable for our partners, politicians, cultural decision-makers and everyone the statistics cover: artists and culture creators throughout Denmark.

Our thanks to Ministry of Culture Denmark for supporting the development project and to Statistics Denmark for their collaboration.

Council of Danish Artists
Copenhagen, March 2024



1. Basis for the statistics on artists

Artists in figures and establishing data basis

Until now, in Danish cultural policy there has been a lack of data-based knowledge about the conditions of artists. Societally, when it comes to data on artists as a collective group in the labour market, there has been a major knowledge gap. This was particularly evident during the Corona pandemic, when it turned out that politicians and public servants lacked knowledge about the conditions in which artists and culture creators work.

Accordingly, during the pandemic, the Council of Danish Artists, who for many years had wanted increased data on the conditions of artists, embarked upon *Artists in Figures (AiF)*, a joint data project with Statistics Denmark. The goal was to quantify, and continuously

compile statistics on the social and economic conditions of artists and culture creators.

From 2022 to 2023, this data work was consolidated in a collaboration to continuously compile aggregate statistics across art forms. In December 2023, Statistics Denmark published *Artists in Denmark* – the first version of the statistics on artists. The new statistics on artists are thereby part of the *Artists in Figures* development project – a close collaboration between Statistics Denmark, the Council of Danish Artists and 19 of the Council's member organisations.

The purpose of establishing statistics across art forms

The purpose of the *Artists in Figures* development project and the *Artists in Denmark* statistics is to expand knowledge about the conditions of professional artists in Denmark. In order to ensure breadth and understanding of the entire artistic field and the conditions of creatives and practising artists, it is vital for the Council of Danish Artists to have official statistics, published as part of Statistics Denmark's statistics on culture.

The prerequisite for establishing official statistics on artists is a precise definition

of the term 'professional artists', including a delimitation of the field. Consequently, the task of the Council of Danish Artists and the Council's member organisations was to create an unequivocal documentary basis to ensure transparency about the basis and coverage of the compilation.

Statistics Denmark prepared data tables based on the professional knowledge that representatives of the artist organisations contributed on an on-going basis. This publication is based on the joint data that forms the basis

for the first version of the statistics on artists published in December 2023.

What is really needed is continuous, broad knowledge about the field. So, this publication is intended to be the first in a series of on-going publications on the conditions of artists in Denmark.

Division of art forms in the statistics on artists

The collaboration with Statistics Denmark, the Council of Danish Artists and the Council's member organisations entailed a division of the art forms into key professional groups. We want users of the statistics to see what characterises the group of artists as a whole, and to be able to zoom in on differences between art forms. The divisions in the statistics on artists are:

- Fine Art and Design
- Film and TV
- Music
- Acting and Performing Arts
- Authors and Words



Definition of the population in the artist statistics

Given that 'artist' is not a protected title, much of the work on the first statistics on artists was to define the population. What makes a person an artist? Who are artists? In these statistics, 'an artist' is defined as someone who fulfils at least one of the following criteria:

- Membership of an organistaion under the aegis of the Council of Danish Artists.
- Receipt of copyright royalties for artistic work*
- Receipt of a bursary or project grant from the Danish Arts Foundation*
- Alternatively, an artistic studies graduate, if one of the other three criteria is also fulfilled.

* These are: the upper quartile of recipients of bursaries or project grants from the Danish Arts Foundation between 2014 and 2022; the upper quartile of library fees in 2021; and the upper quartile of recipients of copyright royalties from VISDA 2012-21, FILMEX 2019-2021, KODA and Gramex 2013-2022, and Performex 2008-2021. Source: Statistics Denmark's statistical documentation.

A prerequisite for establishing official statistics was a definition of professional artists in Denmark and the active participation of the artist organisations in this definition process.

The statistics on artists are based on data processing and delivery agreements between Statistics Denmark and 19 artist organisations under the aegis of the Council of Danish Artists.

We held several workshops and professional meetings with the organisations, in which the professionals agreed upon a definition of the term 'Danish artists'.

1. Basis for the statistics on artists



Professional meeting at the premises of the Council of Danish Artists with the Danish Authors' Society, the Danish Fiction Writers Society and Statistics Denmark, May 2023.



Between 2021 and 2023, the Council of Danish Artists, Statistics Denmark and representatives of the Council of Danish Artists' member organisations met regularly to discuss the *Artists in Figures (AiF)* development project and the data basis for the *Artists in Denmark* statistics. This took place both at workshops and professional meetings under the auspices of the Council of Danish Artists and at seminars held by the Council of Danish Artists. The first seminar took place in May 2022 at the Danish Agency for Culture (Copenhagen). Photos: The Council of Danish Artists.



In September 2023, the Council of Danish Artists organised a public data seminar, in which professionals from Statistics Denmark talked about the work on the *Artists in Denmark* statistics, and speakers from the world of culture and the business community shared their knowledge about data-based protection of interests.





From the Council of Danish Artists' 2023 data seminar – a panel discussion with Esben Danielsen (Director of Kulturens Analyseinstitut), Nis Rømer (Chair of the Council of Danish Artists) and Thomas Sandberg (Chair of the Danish Musicians' Association) – and a presentations on data-based protection of interests by Tali Mørch, Analyse & Tal. Photos: The Council of Danish Artists. Photos: The Council of Danish Artists.



2. STATISTICS ON ARTISTS IN DENMARK



What is the purpose of statistics on artists?

“To acquire better, more comprehensive knowledge about artists in Denmark, including the contexts in which art is created, and about the contribution of artists and culture creators to society. To underpin the formulation of efficient cultural policy and provide knowledge to the artist organisations.”

The Council of Danish Artists

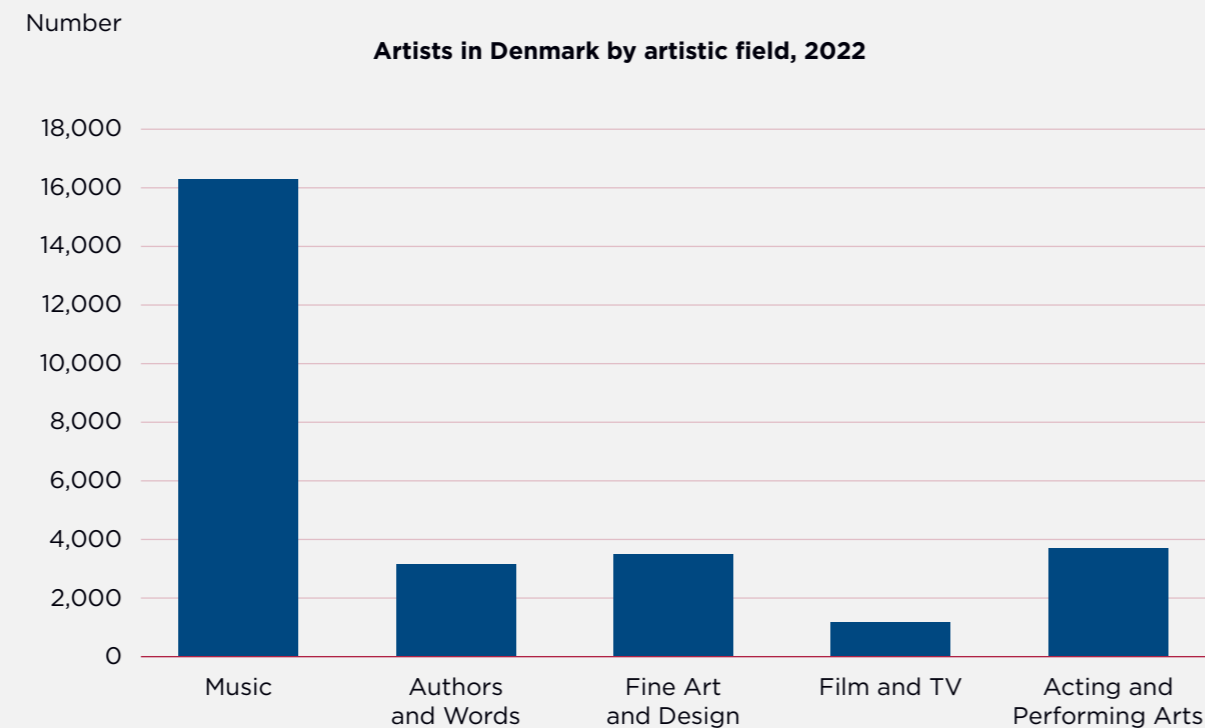
The number of professional artists in Denmark

The first version of the statistics on artists puts the total of artists in Denmark at just under 28,000.

The population in the statistics is divided into five artistic fields: Music, Authors and Words, Fine Art and Design, Film and TV, and Acting and Performing Arts.

The data extraction reveals that in 2022 there were a total of 27,731 artists in Denmark, corresponding to 0.6% of the population between the ages of 20 and 80.

Musicians account for 59% of the total population in the statistics, making it the largest professional group of artists in Denmark.



Source: www.statistikbanken.dk/kunst1

Proportion of income from artistic activities

The statistics show that, in certain artistic fields, only a very small minority of artists can make a living solely from their artistic work. Thus, around half of authors earn only between 1% and 25% of their total income from their artistic work.

In terms of fine artists and designers, only 15% earn more than 75% of their income from their artistic work.

The statistics show that artists in TV and Film group earn a large share of their total income from artistic work. Almost half of the them earn 75% or more of their total income from art.

In this context, 'artistic work' is defined here as income from companies in the cultural sector, the Council of Danish Artists' organisations, the Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces, national churches and companies that pay rights.

47 % of authors earn between 1% and 25% of their income from their artistic work.

15 % of fine artists and designers earn more than 75% of their total income from their artistic work.

47 % of artists in the fields of film and TV earn more than 75% of their total income from their artistic work.

33 % of artists in the fields of acting and the performing arts earn more than 75% of their total income from their artistic work.

24 % of artists in the music industry earn more than 75% of their total income from their artistic work.



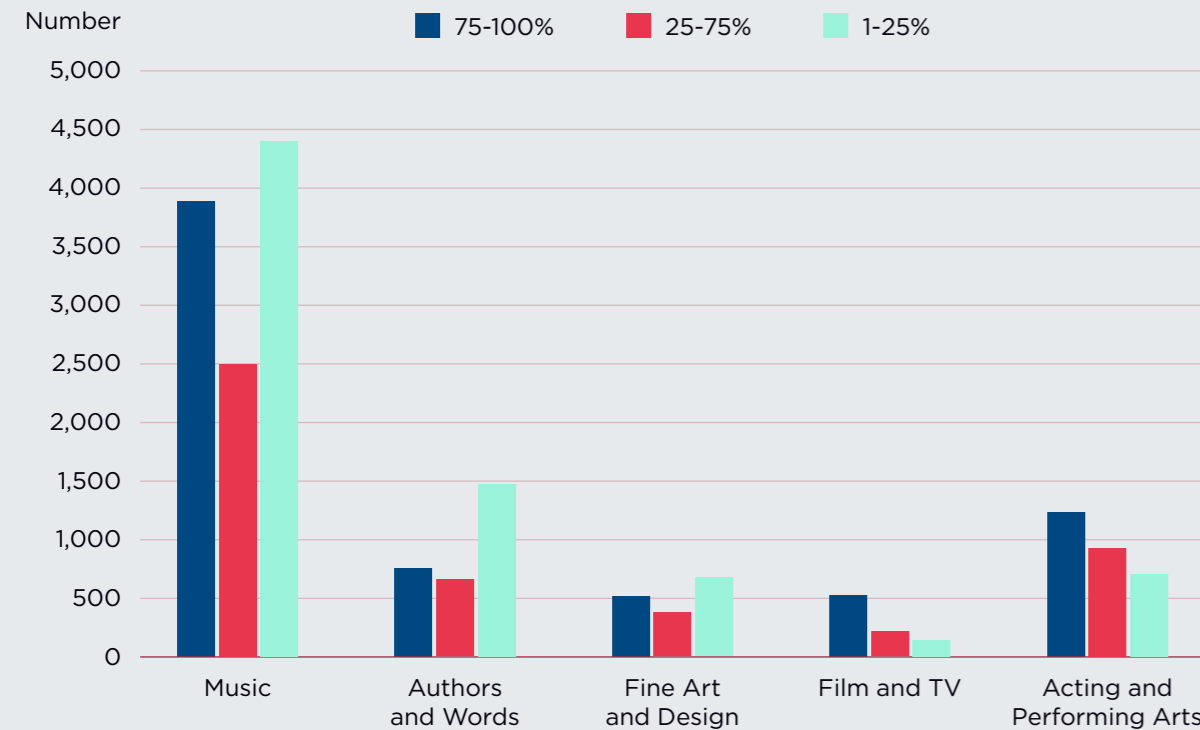
Who are the artists in the statistics?

“'Artist' is not a protected title, but is defined here as a person who is a member of an organisation under the aegis of the Council of Danish Artists, who receives copyright royalties for their artistic work, who receives a bursary from the Danish Arts Foundation, or who is a graduate of an artistic study programme, if one of the other three criteria is also fulfilled.”

Statistics Denmark

Artists in Denmark by artistic field and income basis, 2022

Percentage of income from artistic work out of total income



Note: The above illustration includes a sample of the categories for the variable income basis. The illustration does not feature students, teachers of artistic subjects and others.

Source: www.statistikbanken.dk/kunst3

INTERVIEW

"Writers need a sustainable economy"

To succeed as a writer, just being a good writer isn't enough. You also need to earn money: "If we don't protect our financial interests, we cannot create the artistic freedom necessary for working as an author."

So says the author Anne Zenon, who made her debut in 2019 with the poetic novel *Ikke noget at tale om*. She has since published another poetic novel and a children's book. However, even though her books have been well received by readers, her writing has not yet generated enough income in itself to put food on the table. Or to pay the rent on the cosy 1-bedroom flat in Vesterbro, where the 49-year-old author lives with her youngest child.

"Financially, life may be more up and down. But there's nothing like being a creative artist. The joy of discovering that finally your writing is flowing – it's indescribable. It feels as if writing gives my life meaning: putting into words something that's important not just to me but also to others, and that's about

understanding ourselves as human beings," says Anne Zenon, who dreamed of becoming an author even as a child.

Anne Zenon wrote her first novel while working full time as a communications advisor. She describes how she used every available moment for writing:

"Most of the book was written at the back of bus 26 on the way to and from work," says Anne Zenon who, shortly after her debut, kissed goodbye to a monthly salary and pension scheme in order to make her dream of being an author come true.

She had some savings, so had a financial buffer for writing her next book. Then, to earn an income independent of the small, fluctuating earnings of an author, she set up her own company: HistorieAgenten, a PR agency. She uses her 20 years' experience as a communication consultant to help other authors get their books mentioned in the media.



The author Anne Zenon
Photo: Anders Giversen

Bio:

Anne Zenon (b. 1974)

Her first novel was *Der er nogen der siger*, published in 2019 by Brændpunkt. Since then she has published *Ikke noget at tale om* for the same publisher and, in collaboration with her son Elliot, the children's book *Rejsen efter en helt* for Wadskjær. Anne Zenon holds a Master's in communications and runs the PR agency HistorieAgenten. She is also associated with the consultancy company Den Kreative Forretning, which helps artists and self-employed creatives to develop their careers. Anne Zenon is a member of the fiction board of the Danish Authors' Society.

Read more: annezenon.dk

"That way I can combine my communications expertise with my knowledge of the book industry and earn a fairly stable living," says Anne Zenon, who felt she come up with a perfect idea for a financially sustainable working life as an author when she founded her own company.

Time is money

But today, around three years later, she feels that, in the long run, the work needed to pay her living expenses also risks undermining her writing.

"Working on colleagues' books, getting them mentioned in the media and creating visibility for them, is inspirational and extremely meaningful. But it's hard to find the time to write my own stuff, because being a solo freelancer also demands

a great deal of effort. Writing books requires contemplation, and contemplation requires peace of mind and continuity. That means I have to take time from the part of my working life that I actually earn money from," says Anne Zenon.

"But recently I went on a writing holiday, where I had nothing else to do but proceed with my next novel, which I'd been grappling with for a long time. Finally I managed to get the text off the ground. It was really great, and it shows me how important it is to have time for the writing process. Writing time costs money, and I never know if I'll succeed in writing something I'm satisfied with, or if it will give me a real income in the end. But I need to stop considering what I earn from my books. Otherwise, I wouldn't write them."

2. Statistics on Artists in Denmark

"I focus on the fact that writing is an inner necessity and a huge passion. I just can't help it. But seeing how little I earn from my books can be a bit annoying."

Nor could she help laughing when her publisher called to tell her that her debut novel had done well as an audiobook:

"Even though quite a lot of people had listened to it, the audiobook earned me so little in royalties that I said: 'Great. Thanks. I think I'll go out and celebrate with a caffè latte'," she says with a wry smile.

Many authors have patchy finances

Her estimate is that what she earns from her books accounts for between 5% and 10% of her total income. This patchy financial situation is something Anne Zenon has in common with many of her fellow authors. According to the *Artists in Denmark* statistics, nearly 50% of authors earn only between 1% and 25% of their total income from artistic work.

"Most writers I know need to have various day jobs to provide them with an income that makes it possible to continue writing. For example, as in my case, teaching or communication work, or unskilled jobs. But it's hard to get the time and energy for the writing process when you're under financial pressure."

She also believes that the book industry provides authors with very poor opportunities to make a living. "The streaming services are particularly cock-eyed.

Now that an increasing number of people are reading on those services, we need to find a fair model, so that authors get paid properly for people reading their audiobooks."

Anne Zenon would also like to see the marketing budgets of publishing houses prioritising all those writers who are not famous, but who write books that deserve a large readership.

"I respect the fact that publishers are having a tough time financially, but I think there's a sad trend that involves famous names being given big advertisements and fancy displays in bookshop windows, while lesser known authors don't get the opportunity their books deserve."

The art of earning money from art

Anne Zenon believes that structural changes in the book market are necessary. But this is not the only thing that can help create more sustainable working lives for authors. It is also about developing writers' own ways of relating to art and money. This what she concentrates on when, alongside her PR agency and her writing, she supervises colleagues in the company Den Kreative Forretning, with which she is associated as an advisor.

"My main advice to colleagues is to be in control of what motivates them to write. And to set ambitious, yet realistic goals. It's important to find a gentle way forward so that you continue to enjoy being a writer. Then you need to seize the opportunities that exist, and fight for your writing. Because there are many examples of how, if you keep at it, you'll eventually succeed. That's what I also tell myself," she smiles.

At home, Anne Zenon writes at her dining table. Photo: Private.



“Many of us can also could also get better at standing up for our value as authors. We shouldn’t be afraid of demanding a decent fee when we give talks, or negotiating better contracts with publishers. We must dare to stick up for ourselves! The moment the book is finished, we need to drop the notion that we only write for our own pleasure. Instead, we should get actively involved in the process of promoting the book to readers. This is necessary if we want to earn enough to money to create the time and artistic freedom to keep writing.”

Anne Zenon is no longer in any doubt as to what keeps her going as a writer:

“My motivation for writing is my own inner satisfaction. For a while I was too focused on the end result, and that dealt my creativity a blow. I need to write about something I have feelings for. When the book is finished, I work as professionally as I can to get it out and flying in the world. I still hope to earn some decent money from my books, but I have to write out of my love of writing, and nothing else.”

When she came out as a writer, she moved to a smaller home and cut back on all her expenses to give herself the greatest possible financial leeway.

Today, she sleeps on the sofa in the living room that forms part of the flat’s kitchen-living room. This is where she also sits day in and day out, working at the dining table. She has given her son the only separate bedroom in the flat, and she says it is hard to find room for the whole family, when her two grown-up daughters come for dinner.

“I pay a price for the opportunity to write. But it’s all worth it and I can’t imagine not doing it, because writing is the most important thing for me. I’ve had lots of conversations with myself about what gives me meaning and joy in life, and every time I chose art.”

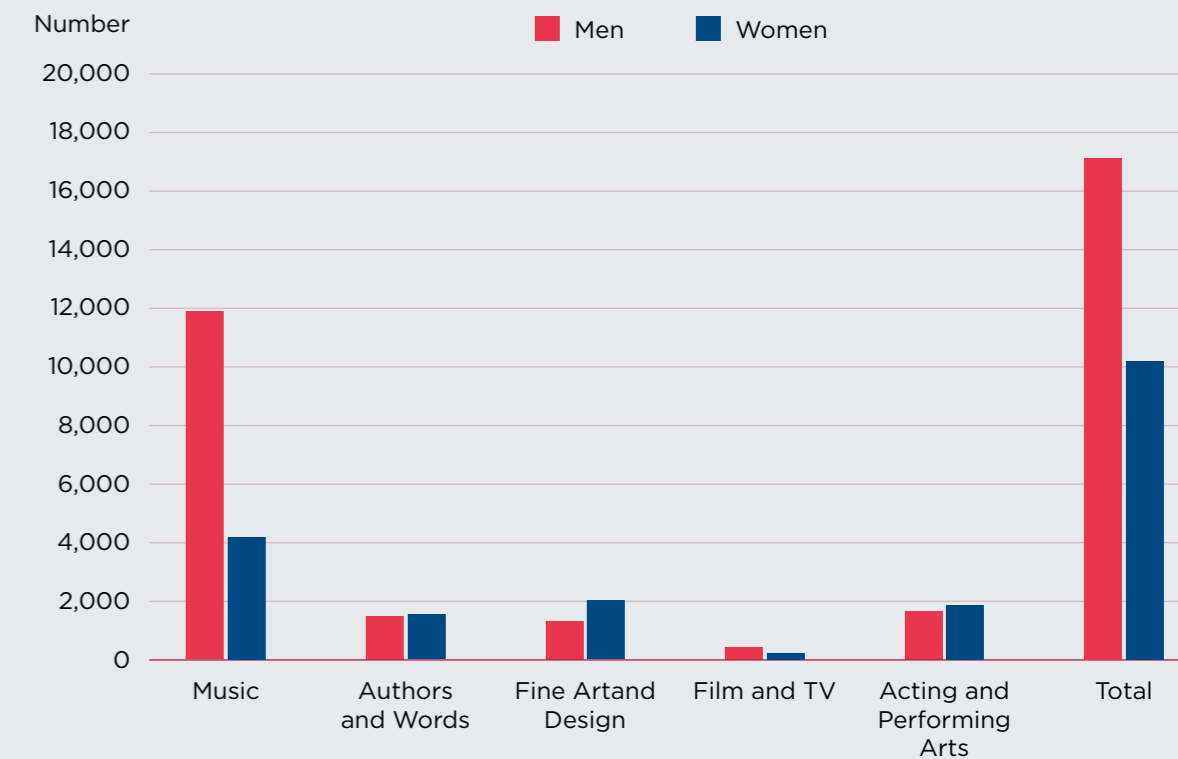
Gender distribution among artists across art forms

The *Artists in Denmark* statistics reveal that a large majority of musicians are men, while most fine artists and designers are women.

Thus the Music sector has the most men (73%), while Fine Art and Design has the largest proportion of women (61%).

Men make up 63% of the artists in the Film and TV industries, while in the fields of Authors and Words, and Acting and Performing Arts, the number of men and women is virtually equal.

Artists in Denmark by artistic field and gender, 2022



Source: www.statistikbanken.dk/kunst1

INTERVIEW

"At an early stage I found out that in the art world conditions are different for men and women"

The fine artist Mie Mørkeberg is currently involved in a thrilling artistic venture: painting a large group portrait for Christiansborg of 30 female politicians who made an impact on democracy in Denmark from 1915 to the present day.

The oldest politician in the painting is Nina Bang, Minister of Education for the Social Democratic Party from 1924 to 1926, and Denmark's first female minister. The youngest is Johanne Schmidt-Nielsen, former MP for the Red-Green Alliance party and the current secretary general of Save the Children Denmark.

For Mie Mørkeberg, the group portrait is a unique, highly significant task. She sees many parallels between the struggles for gender equality in political life and those in the art world. She says:

"As a woman, you encounter a special gaze, where you are assessed on the basis of your gender before being assessed on the basis of your work. Unfortunately, this applies to both

politicians and artists. I can see from my research for the group portrait how women were judged on the basis of their appearance from way back before 1918, when the first female politicians were elected to the Danish Parliament, up until today, when politicians such as Johanne Schmidt-Nielsen and Helle Thorning-Schmidt were subject to the same treatment," she says.

As an artist, she recognises the gendered gaze that politicians encounter.

"If you're a woman, you have to go through some extra layers to be taken seriously as an artist. Fortunately, the MeToo movement changed many of the ways in which we talk about the different conditions and opportunities for the sexes. But we are still a very long way from gender equality in the art world," she says.

The figures prove her right. Although the statistics on artists in *Artists in Denmark* show that there are more female than male



Mie Mørkeberg in her studio. Photo: Loaned by the artist.

Bio:

Mie Mørkeberg (b. 1980)

Mie Mørkeberg graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in 2006. She has exhibited in, and is represented by a large number of museums and galleries both in Denmark and abroad.

In 2022, she was invited by the Danish Parliament's Consultative Art Committee to paint a large portrait of 30 selected female politicians who played an important role for women's democratic activities in Denmark from 1915 to the present day. Mørkeberg was selected from five artists who submitted proposals for the commission.

Mie Mørkeberg is a member of the association Danish Visual Artists (BKF).

Read more: miemoerkeberg.dk

fine artists, inventories from museums and galleries over the past years reveal that most of the works on show and acquired are by male artists.

What do the figures tell you?

"That men and women still don't have equal opportunities in the art world," she says, pointing out that the bias has deep-rooted historical reasons.

"It's partly to do with the fact that for centuries men defined how we looked at art. And who could be an artist. Many art collectors are men, and my theory is that they buy works created by people with whom they can identify. That is

perhaps one of the reasons why traditionally galleries have mainly represented male artists. And galleries are among the places museums look when they need to find out what's going on in the art world," she says.

100 years is too long to wait for equality

In other words, many different mechanisms help maintain the imbalance. They need to be broken down, so that the art the public encounters does not reflect a narrow world of experience," Mie Mørkeberg believes.

"For example, if the public sees only works by male artists, they are missing out on a whole experiential dimension and awareness of the world. Which is therefore not taken seriously.



Sketch for the female politician group portrait. Photo: Loaned by the artist.

Just think of how, in their day, the floral motifs, child portraits and domestic interiors painted by 19th-century female artists were denigrated," she points out.

Mie Mørkeberg is in favour of introducing quotas for the acquisition and exhibition of art by museums, so that the genders would be represented more equally in the venues where the public encounters art.

"I think quotas can be the way forward for a period of time. Otherwise it will simply take too long to bring about change. We can't wait 100 years for art created by women to be given as much public space as art by men," she says.

However, there is currently no political support for quotas, and she believes that the debate of recent years on equality and diversity in cultural and artistic life is also a strong, vital factor in creating change.

"The debate should not be a competition about who has the hardest time, but should focus on how we can all get better conditions. Men should have the opportunity to spend more time with their children, and the entire talent pool of the art world must be involved," she says.

She says that she has learned a lot from the public discourse in recent years on the subject of gender and gender equality.

"I've become more aware that gender equality isn't only about equal conditions for the sexes, but also about equal conditions for minorities and other groups in society."

"I've also gained more understanding about what being a woman and an artist has meant for me personally. I got pregnant with my first child when I was at art school. At the beginning of the 00s, for a young artist – well, a female one – to have children was considered somewhat unwise. One of the popular schools was headed by a male professor with five children, and he was at the top of his career," explains Mie Mørkeberg.

Invisible mechanisms

When she graduated in 2006, the media were focusing on a new generation of prominent female painters, including Julie Nord and Katrine Ærtebjerg. She, who is around 10 years younger than them, was included.

"These talented artists stood for something new, which gallerists and art critics found exciting. I became a part of it, even though my work did not feature the same narrative aspect. But just the fact that I was a woman and a painter was enough to connect me with them. We were all annoyed about

being pigeonholed as what journalists referred to as 'female artists in a fairy-tale girls' universe.' We wanted to be viewed as artists, not as 'female artists', and certainly not as 'girls'," she says.

She remembers that, at the time, many people believed that feminism was over and done with, and that women's struggle had long since been won. "But at an early stage I found out that in the art world conditions are different for men and women. There was simply no one in the 00s who wanted to hear about that," she says.

Mie Mørkeberg is firmly convinced that it is difficult for everyone, whatever their gender, to establish themselves as an artist. But, she adds, it is just a bit harder for women than for men. Partly because the mechanisms that create inequality are complex and invisible.

"As a female artist, you have to deal with many other layers in your professional life than simply doing your utmost to be good at your work. Now that I'm a bit older, it's nice to be able to sit back and trust that I have got to a good place in my career, and that I'm here because of my work," says Mie Mørkeberg, who is now 43 years old.

And both time and experience make their mark on her art.

"The conversation about feminism that has taken place in society in recent years has changed the way I express myself in my works. Previously, my motifs were entirely devoid of people. But a few years ago, I realised that I was actually afraid of contact. I stopped myself from painting people, and would absolutely not paint myself, because I had a subconscious fear



From Mie Mørkeberg's studio: The group portrait in process. The painting of the female politicians will measure 2.80 x 4.50 metres. It will hang in Christiansborg Palace and will be unveiled in November 2024. Photo: Loaned by the artist.

that my works would be viewed as 'gendered'. Today, women feature in many of my works. This reflects the age in which I'm

living. At the beginning of my career, it was a bit of a no go for a female artist to show femininity and express emotions. Fortunately that's not the case anymore!"

In terms of displaying gendered expressions, she sees the same barrier in the female politicians she is portraying in the group painting for Christiansborg Palace.

"Across the years, female politicians have had to stop themselves from being 'too female'. Perhaps the clearest example of this was Helle Thorning-Schmidt, who felt obliged to speak and dress in a different way, so she would not come across as 'too feminine'. This means that it was particularly important to paint these politicians in such a way that they come across as the whole people they are, with all their knowledge, strength and personality."

INTERVIEW

"Statistics are a vital tool for addressing gender imbalance in the music world"

The fact that as many as 73% of musicians in the *Artists in Denmark* statistics are men does not surprise the musician Henrik Jansberg. For the past ten years or so, he has been working on issues such as gender equality and diversity as a member of the main board of the Danish Musicians' Association and (from 2021) as chair of the association's Copenhagen branch.

"We know from earlier that there is a large majority of male professional musicians in Denmark. But so far there have only been one-off studies in this area. That's why it's so important for us now that Statistics Denmark will compile statistics on artists every year. This will enable us to follow the development systematically over time, so that we can see, for example, whether the gender equality measures the music industry is working on actually work," says Henrik Jansberg.

He says that gender inequality begins the moment you enter the music profession.

"Even though more girls than boys attend music school, it is clear that girls are starting to drop out when it comes to opting for higher music education and a career as a professional musician," says Henrik Jansberg.

What do we know about the reasons why many girls and women opt out of pursuing a career as a professional musician?

"Several studies indicate that the inequality is partly due to structural barriers such as uncertainty about pay, and maternity and pension conditions. Poor working conditions mean that a number of women take other paths in their education and working lives, even though they have both an interest in, and talent for music. But we can also see that gender inequality in music life is about loneliness and discrimination," he says, stressing that correcting the imbalance is a long haul.

Henrik Jansberg
Photo: Per Lange.



Bio:

Henrik Jansberg (b. 1977)

Graduated as a violinist from the folk music programme at the Danish National Academy of Music in 2004. An award-winning fiddler and composer, and a dedicated teacher at workshops and music schools. He has been nominated on several occasions for, and won Danish Music Awards for his recordings, which feature a blend of acoustic instrumental music with electronic elements.

He is politically engaged in the industry in several boards and committees of representatives, and is the Chair of the Copenhagen branch of the Danish Musicians' Association and Vice Chair of the national Danish Musicians' Association.

"We need to create a better framework and conditions for professional musicians if we are to get better at attracting all the talent out there. But we also need to counteract bias by talking about the challenges women and minorities face in the industry. It also helps to have policies on diversity, codes of conduct and, generally, to be aware of balances in booking and representation," he says.

Focus on gender equality

He points out that many efforts are being made in the music industry on behalf of gender equality. For example, a large number of music and cultural organisations, including the Danish Musicians' Association, are united in promoting the so-called 'gender balance goals', which are all about boosting gender equality in areas such as music education, pay, the role of gatekeeper and programming.

The goals that reflect the UN Sustainable Development Goal Number 5 are also about the culture that characterises parts of

the music industry and which creates a breeding ground for structural sexism.

One specific initiative in this context is the Trygt RUM helpline, which is sponsored by 13 music and cultural organisations, including the Danish Musicians’ Association and other member organisations of the Council of Danish Artists.

Yes to more female role models

Henrik Jansberg says that work on gender equality is also about ensuring that girls and young women with musical talent get more female role models.

“I think it’s incredibly important for girls and young women to see that music is something they can engage with as active performers, not just as an audience. It’s remarkable that, according to Dansk Live, 58% of all ticket buyers are women, while women account for a mere 27% of the musicians in the statistics on artists,” he says, adding that, even though the figures are crystal clear, when it comes to the skewed gender balance in music life, there are no simple solutions.

Creating change in this area takes time. The new statistics on artists represent an important new tool, because they can be repeated and expanded year after year. Hopefully, in the long run, they can also provide us with a better and more accurate picture of the pay and working conditions of professional musicians.”

He believes that more data on artists is especially important now, when technology is creating so many changes and when the artistic labour market is getting increasingly globalised.

“Not only can it improve our ability to argue objectively and put pressure on politicians and gatekeepers; it can also lead to common solutions to the challenges the industry is facing.”

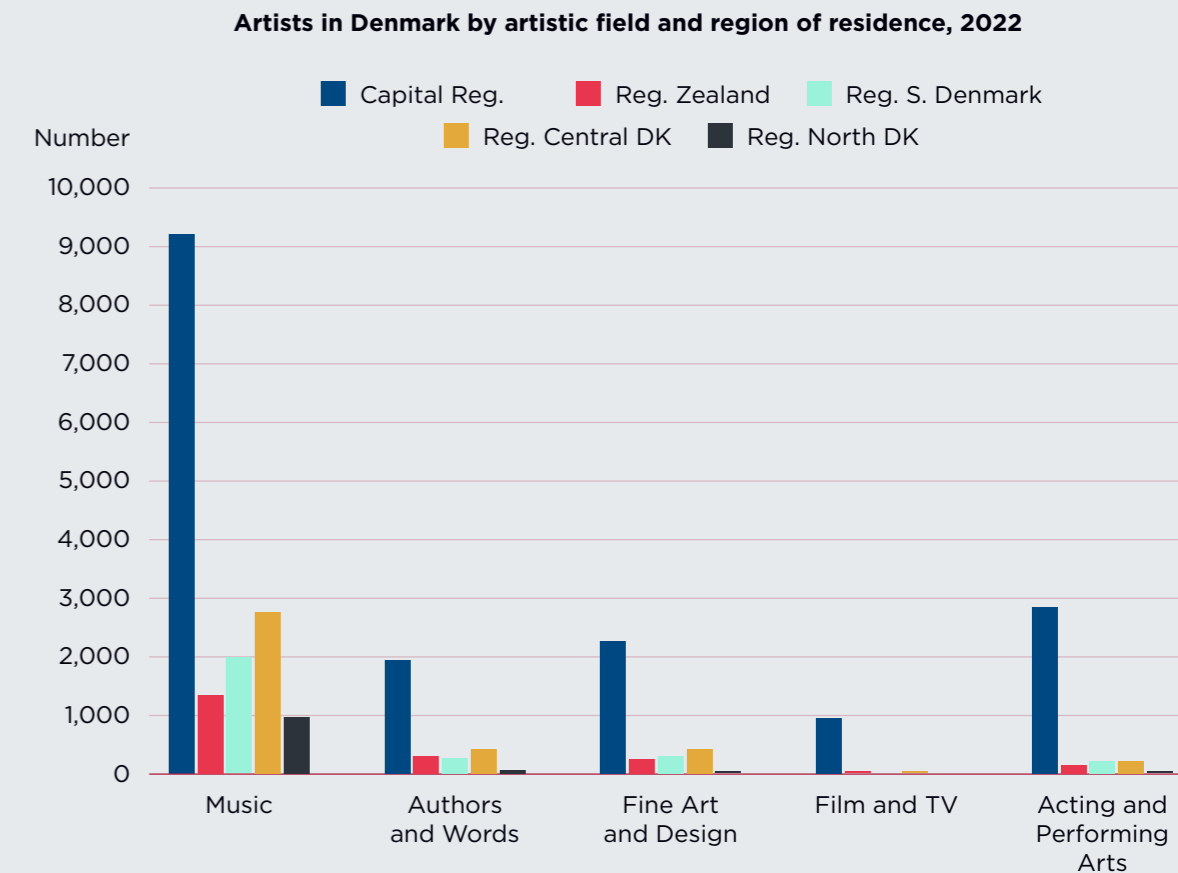
More diversity in cultural life

Work on gender equality in artistic and cultural life is not only about gender equality, but also about creating equal opportunities for all artists and culture professionals, regardless of sexual orientation, social and cultural background, and physical and mental functional variations etc. Virtually all of the Council of Danish Artists’ member organisations have formulated gender equality policies and initiated various measures to create more diversity and equal representation in artistic and cultural life.

Where in Denmark do artists live?

The statistics reveal that the majority of artists reside in the Capital Region of Denmark. This applies to all artistic fields.

Film and TV (88%) and Acting and Performing Arts (78%) have the highest percentages of artists living in the Capital Region of Denmark, while Music has the lowest percentage (57%).



Source: www.statistikbanken.dk/kunst2

INTERVIEW

Artists also pursue decent careers outside Copenhagen

The statistics in *Artists in Denmark* show that most artists live in the Capital Region of Denmark. But artists work all over the country and often travel for jobs in theatres, exhibition venues, music venues etc. They live mainly in the large towns and cities, because that is where the education and industry environments of cultural life are.

One of those who, unlike the majority of his colleagues, has chosen to live far from the theatre environment of the metropolitan area is the actor Ashok Pramanik. Together with his wife and their two children, he has been living for ten years in what he laughingly refers to as "a small one-horse town on the outskirts of Aarhus". And he loves everything about it.

"Here I get the best of both worlds. I get the security and freedom of living outside the city, while being close enough to the cultural life of the large cities to have a successful career as an actor," says Ashok Pramanik.

The 45-year-old actor, who graduated from Aarhus Theatre School in 2009, has been working freelance for the past ten

years: partly as an actor in productions throughout Denmark, and partly as an acting teacher and communications coach for both private and corporate clients.

Meanwhile he is based in his house in Solbjerg, a small urban community with about 5,000 inhabitants close to lake, forest and open landscapes. Here in this rural setting between Aarhus and Skanderborg, Ashok Pramanik has found a base that gives him the optimal framework for both family and career.

"When I was younger, like many other people I believed I had to live in Copenhagen if I was to 'succeed' as an actor. Immediately after acting school, I got a contract at Aarhus Theatre, where I was a member of the ensemble for four years. At the end of my contract, my wife and I decided to stay in the area. I felt I'd have to start from scratch if we moved to Copenhagen," he says.

"Plus, my view of what success means in this profession gradually changed. For me, being a famous actor isn't important. What's important is making a living from it and



The actor Ashok Pramanik lives in Solbjerg in central Jutland. Photos: Private

creating a permanent base for my family," says Ashok Pramanik, father of two children aged ten and fifteen. Together with his spouse, a self-employed translator, he was able to buy a nice house in Solbjerg for way under half of what a property of the same size would have cost in the Copenhagen area.

"Reducing financial stress is one clear advantage of living here. That's important – especially given the fluctuating income of a freelancer," says Ashok Pramanik, adding that there are numerous other benefits to living in Solbjerg: for example, the proximity to nature and a vibrant local community.

"Even though Solbjerg is a small town, it has all sorts of associations and clubs, which the entire family has been involved in. There are great running routes and a lake just behind our house. The children can



Bio:

Ashok Pramanik (b. 1978)

Graduated from the Acting School at Aarhus Theatre in 2009. He was then a member of the ensemble at Aarhus Theatre until 2013. As a freelancer, he has acted at the Royal Danish Theatre, Aalborg Theatre, Himmerlands Theatre, Filuren in Aarhus, and also returned to Aarhus Theatre.

Ashok Pramanik also works as a communications coach and acting teacher in theatres and folk high schools, and for a variety of private and public organisations. Ashok Pramanik is a member of the Danish Actors' Association.

Ashok Pramanik.
Photo: Emilia Therese/Aarhus Theatre.

walk from home to school. It only takes ten minutes. That means a lot in terms of everyday life," he says, and does not feel outside the theatre world just because he doesn't live in a big city.

"I don't necessarily need to attend all sorts of industry events and parties, or chat in cafés. Nor do I think I miss out on jobs by living here. The competition for jobs may even be a little less out here, because there are not so many actors,"he says.

"Initially, when we had just moved here, I spent a lot of time building networks and getting jobs. But today I am regularly offered work, which makes me really happy," he says. For example, in April he performed in the Royal Danish Theatre's production of *Ragnarok* at Moesgaard Museum.

However, he no longer applies his professionalism solely to theatre. In recent years, he has also become a sought-after teacher and communication coach: for example, teaching staff in the Prison Service, medical students and managers in the corporate world.

"As actors, we know a lot about communication, psychology, body language and conflict management. We can use that knowledge in many contexts other than on stage. I like expanding my professional horizons, and I get a lot out of teaching. As we usually say in rehearsals: 'Don't be afraid to try something new and make a fool of yourself!' A good career as an actor can mean all sorts of different things."

Age composition of artists across art forms

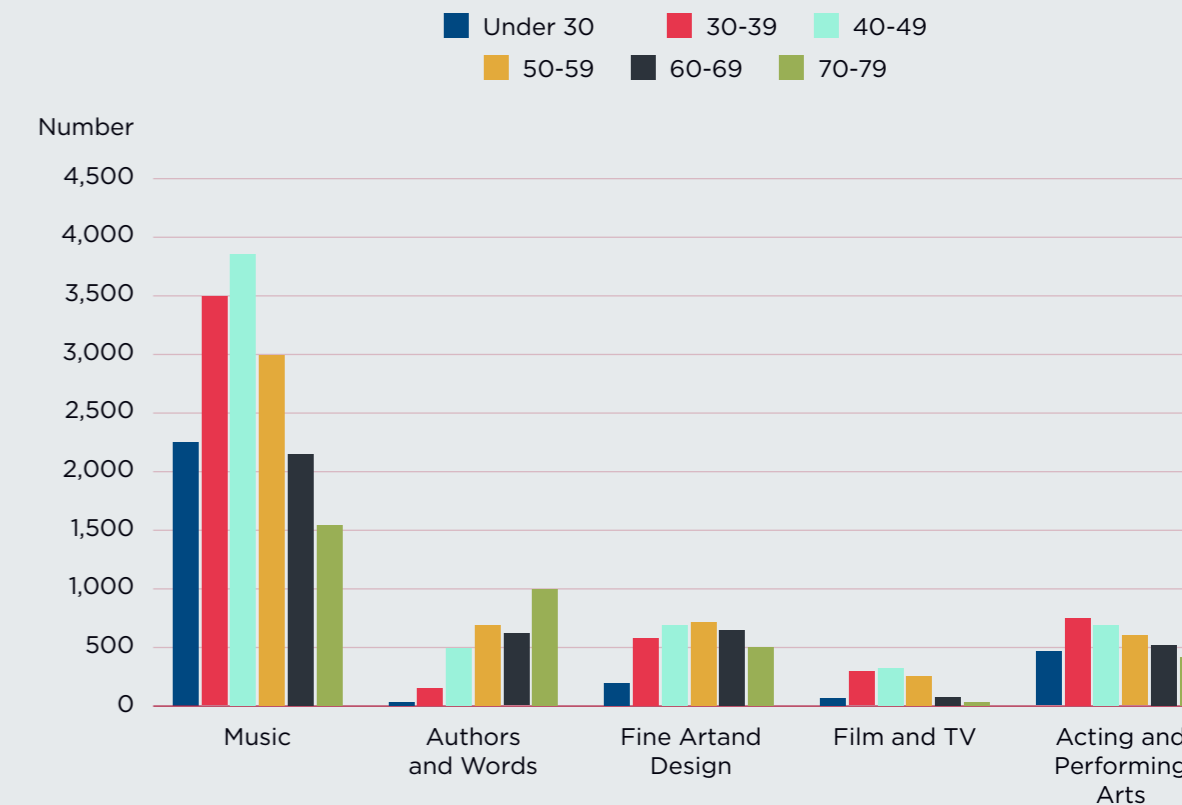
The statistics reveal that, in terms of age, there are significant variations among the artists in the various art forms.

Most of the older artists are authors. 32% of artists in the Authors and Words field are over 70.

Film and TV, Music, and Acting and Performing Arts have many artists in the younger age groups.

60% of artists in Film and TV are under the age of 50. This applies to 59% of artists in Music and 56% of artists in Acting and Performing Arts.

Artists in Denmark by artistic field and age group, 2022



Source: www.statistikbanken.dk/kunst1

INTERVIEW

"Making films demands stamina"

The film director Katrine Brocks doesn't spend much time thinking about age when working on scripts, directing actors or shooting a film.

However, according to the statistics in *Artists in Denmark*, in the Film and TV sector most artists are under the age of 50. 34-year-old Katrine Brocks recognises the picture the statistics paint.

"I can see that in the films I've made the average age has been pretty low, both behind and in front of the camera. At first I thought it was because, as a young film director you gravitate towards people of the same age and with similar experience. But I also think that it's because making films is so demanding, both mentally and physically. It demands all your focus and energy, and you need great flexibility from the people in your life. That's perhaps one of the reasons why there are many young artists in my industry. You need stamina to devote your whole life to working in the film industry," she says.

Katrine Brocks explains that, in recent years, the film industry has been focusing on attracting younger voices. She is an example of how that strategy works.

She made her debut as a feature film director in 2023 with *Den store stilhed*, which was partly funded by New Danish Screen. Under the aegis of the Danish Film Institute, this funding scheme was launched to give more novice film directors the opportunity to put their talent to the test in the industry. She believes that such schemes to encourage young voices are crucial.

"As a young director it's really hard to make your first film. There are many hurdles a film project has to overcome before it can be realised. We work for years to raise funding before we can get started," she says. Personally, her debut came relatively quickly. Three years after graduating from Film School, *Den store stilhed* premiered at the prestigious San Sebastián Film Festival.

She sees huge perseverance among up and coming colleagues in the industry at the moment, with not only younger, but also diverse voices being heard. "There's still a long way to go, but I'm witnessing an increase in diversity in the film industry. That's really positive and necessary," she says.



The film director Katrine Brocks.
Photo: The Danish Film Institute.

Bio:

Katrine Brocks (b. 1989)

Graduated as a director from the National Film School of Denmark in 2019. Katrine Brocks' graduation film, *Under bølgerne, over skyerne* (2019) was nominated for a Robert. She received the Robert for Best Short Film for *Uden at blinke* (2020), which also won the Best Danish Short Film award at the Odense Film Festival (OFF).

Katrine Brocks' debut feature film *Den store stilhed*, written with Marianne Lentz, had its theatrical release in Denmark in 2023. It was selected for the San Sebastián Film Festival and the main competition at the Gothenburg Film Festival. The film was nominated for seven Robert awards and six Bodils in 2024. Katrine Brocks is a member of Danish Film Directors.

Vital support

Katrine Brocks did not actually plan to become a film director. For many years, she thought she was going to be a musician, but the dream of becoming a musician faded when she failed the Musikalsk GrundKursus (MGK) entrance examination.

"Instead, I did film and media studies at university. I've always been a huge huge film nerd, but had no ambition to make films. When we produced small films on the undergraduate programme, I fell for the whole process. It was an eye-opener for me," she says.

Katrine Brocks went on to direct a short film at the Film Workshop in Copenhagen. This gained her admission to the National Film School of Denmark. She was admitted on her first attempt at the age of 24.

"If it hadn't been for the Film Workshop, I think I would never have got into the school," she says, adding that, like herself, many of her colleagues gained valuable experience and support from the Copenhagen Film Workshop.

"For a young aspiring director, it's very much about the small pats on the back you get along the way. It means a lot if you meet experienced people who say: 'We think what you're doing is great. We can see you have something to say, and we believe in you.'"

Even though she has managed to overcome some important hurdles, she can understand if the industry seems closed to young filmmakers. "The industry is very network-based. Right now, I work almost solely with people I know from Film School. But I've also found that there are actually inroads, if



Katrine Brocks' debut feature film *Den store stilhed* is about a young woman in a modern convent. Photo: Mia Mai Dengsø Graabæk, DFF.

you show that you're passionate about making films, that you want to collaborate and learn, and improve."

The films she is passionate about making are about investigating the murky aspects of humankind, as she did in her debut film *Den store stilhed*.

The film, which was well received by both reviewers and cinema audiences in Denmark, is about a young woman who lives a quiet life in a modern Catholic convent.

She is confronted with the past when her older brother unexpectedly seeks her out after years of separation.

"I'm fascinated by all the things we hide from each other – the things that also make us human. I want to turn that inside out and make movies about it," says Katrine Brocks.

"My first feature film was about guilt, shame and repressed trauma. The film for which I'm currently trying to raise funds is about psychological vulnerability – something of which I have personal experience. And what that can be like in a romantic relationship. I hope it will be an epic love film, while at the same time tackling a serious subject."

3. SUMMARY AND FURTHER COURSE OF ACTION

From data about conditions for artists during COVID-19 to the present

During the Corona pandemic, it became clear that politicians and cultural decision-makers lacked knowledge about the conditions in which artists and culture creators work. The government therefore asked the so-called 'Genstartsteam' (Fresh Start Team) to identify how cultural life, culture professionals and artists were affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

The Fresh Start Team launched two data and analysis projects, the aim of which was to shed light on the consequences of the crisis for artists and for artistic production and content. The project about the consequences of the crisis for artists was led by the Council of Danish Artists.

The study of the impact of the pandemic on the income, employment and production of artists was conducted

by the Council of Danish Artists in collaboration with Statistics Denmark and Rambøll Management Consulting, who devised a register-based study and questionnaire.

The results of the study, published in February 2022, covers the period from March 2020 to September 2021.

Data from existing statistical registers revealed how the COVID-19 lockdown affected the employment and earnings of unionised professional artists. In this context, 'unionised professional artists' were defined as members of an organisation under the aegis of the Council of Danish Artists.

The 26 member organisations of the Council of Danish Artists were invited to take part in the survey. 11 of these member organisations agreed to take

part by submitting the social security numbers of their members to Statistics Denmark. This means that the study only shed light on a subset of the professional artists.

The study covered 9,339 professional artists: 52% of who were men, and 48% women. 43% of them were salaried employees, 16% were freelance, 14% were both salaried employees and freelance, and 28% were categorised as 'other'.

There were 6,764 employees (salaried employees, freelance or both). Of these, 56% of the population worked in an artistic field.

The survey showed that the COVID crisis affected professional artists in various ways. This was apparent in the increase in unemployment and the duration of unemployment. Freelancers were also

affected by significant fluctuations in their turnover. However, turnover returned to normal when society reopened, and unemployment fell.

The development must be viewed in the context of the compensation and activation schemes that were launched during the crisis, which directly or indirectly supported the artists and the institutions/companies they had worked for.

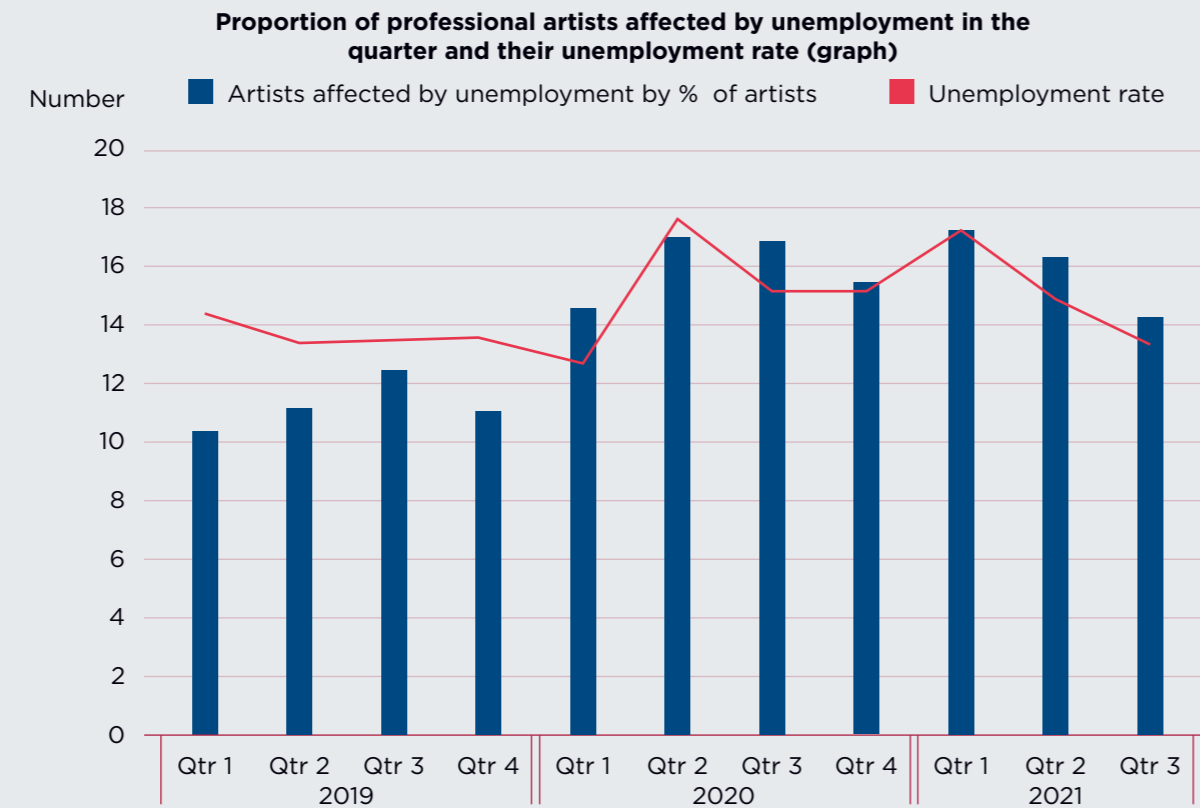


"Gathering data on the employment, income and content production of Danish artists is something new. I am delighted that the Fresh Start Team supported the proposal, whose importance we now see. The crisis affected artists in different ways, depending on the art form they work in, and nuanced knowledge is crucial if we are to create decent conditions for art and artists in Denmark. So, I hope this survey will not be the last of its kind."

Sara Indrio, member of the Fresh Start Team and leader of the project's reference group. Chair of Dansk Artist Forbund.

Conditions for artists during COVID-19

- In 2020 and 2021, the rate of unemployment among professional artists was higher than in 2019.
- The increase in the number of unemployed occurred in Qtrs 1 and 2 of 2020, and continued at a higher level until Qtrs 2 and 3 of 2021, when there was an incipient drop.
- Unemployment in 2021 was still higher than in 2019.
- The artists who became unemployed during the period were unemployed for a longer period of time, but in Qtr 3 of 2021 the unemployment rate was at the same level as in Qtr 3 of 2019.
- The Performing Arts and Music groups were particularly affected by higher unemployment than in 2019, but Fine Artists also experienced higher unemployment.



Source: 'Afrapportering af Covid-19 pandemiens indvirkning på kunstneres indtjening og beskæftigelse'. Statistics Denmark, 2022.

Need for continuous data on artists

The working lives of professional artists and culture creators are very diverse, yet have a lot in common.

In certain artistic fields – for example, Music and Performing Arts – there are many salaried employees: in orchestras and theatres etc. Meanwhile, in other artistic fields – Fine Art and Literature, for example – most are solo freelancers and combinatorians with a so-called patchwork economy. In all artistic fields there are many freelancers.

The work of artists and culture creators contributes to society: for example, by creating economic, commercial and technological development. But art and culture also create new perceptions, boost communities across social

divides and enhance our quality of life. Consequently, there is an on-going need to focus on the conditions in which art and culture are created. That way, we can create the best possible framework for successful art and cultural life in Denmark.

Until now, when compiling statistics on cultural life, the main focus was on cultural institutions. This is an important focus, but the Council of Danish Artists believes there is a huge need to build a strong analytical capacity in relation to artists.

Continuous, up-to-date data-based knowledge about the individuals who create art is crucial if we are to ensure good framework conditions for creating

and practising art in Denmark – even at a time when society is undergoing major changes. That way, we can continuously learn more about everything that art gives us and about how we can identify the development potential of art.

What is really needed is continuous, broad knowledge about the field. So, this publication is intended to be the first in a series of on-going publications on the conditions of artists in Denmark. In the coming years, the Council of Danish Artists looks forward to continuing, developing and expanding this data work in collaboration with Statistics Denmark and the Council's member organisations.

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4. Sources

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Kunstnervilkår under Corona

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Kunstnere i tal

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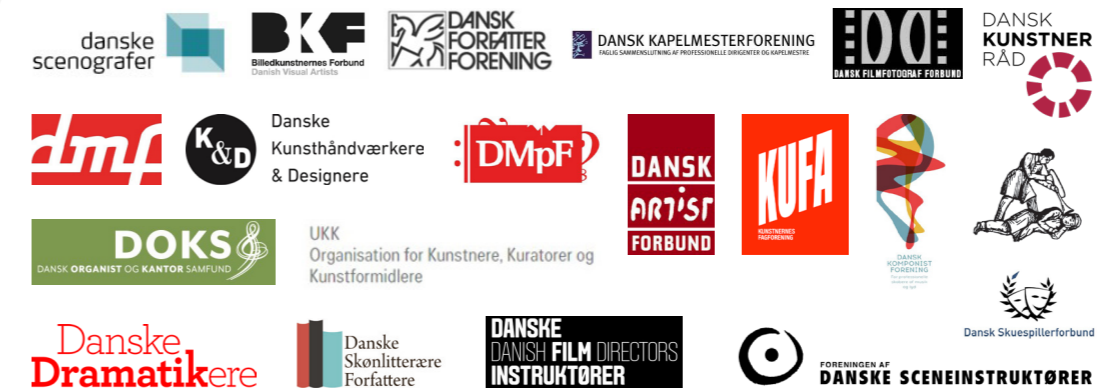
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