2021 Stage Manager Survey

Global Study

Conducted: October 2021
Report Published: January 2022
Lead Researcher: David J. McGraw
Assistant Researchers: Hannah Brown & Brianna Boucher
http://smsurvey.info

The Stage Manager Survey, now in its eighth edition, is a volunteer study seeking a better understanding of stage managers, their training, production practices, working conditions, and employment. The first seven editions of the survey, started in 2006, were limited to the United States; the 2021 edition has expanded to a global study. This report includes analysis from all respondents as well as country-specific responses and comparisons between American responses in 2021 to earlier editions. Anyone who had served as stage manager or assistant stage manager on at least three live audience productions were eligible to participate.

This edition of the survey holds the unfortunate significance of reflecting the impact of the first eighteen months of the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 survey included several pandemic-specific questions but the true impact of the pandemic can be seen in responses to long-standing questions about stage management demography, employment, training, and career trajectories. Overall, the survey was shortened for participants, including an abbreviated path for participants who indicated they had left the field during the pandemic but volunteered to offer feedback on why they left stage management.

This edition was not an easy study to conduct and I suspect that many long-time supporters of the survey were ambivalent about participating this year. The pandemic forced most of us to stop doing what we love most: stage management. But if we wish to move forward as a profession, we need to understand where we currently stand and who we have lost and may lose in the near future. As the lead researcher, my role is not to advocate for particular practices but to provide data for stage managers to process on their own and to make their own informed decisions. I hope you will discuss this report with your colleagues and friends.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in this study and promoted it among their peers. The Stage Managers' Association in the United States (www.stagemanagers.org) promoted the survey heavily among its membership (316 SMA members participated) and shared it with a new International Cohort, a group of stage managers from around the world with the goal of better understanding and supporting each other. This survey launched on International Stage Management Day to celebrate a global community of stage managers.

List of Figures

Section I: Stage Manager Demographics

This study previously collected data in the first three weeks of November with the goal of concluding prior to the start of the holiday season in the United States, a very busy work period for stage managers. With the expansion to a global study of stage managers, the start date moved to October 10th to coincide with International Stage Management Day.

The 2021 survey recorded 1,449 viable responses. The viability of the response is based on the participant completing at least 10% of the survey. Of the 1,517 responses collected from participants who consented to participate, 68 did not meet this requirement and averaged only 1 minute in duration. As a point of reference, if the viability threshold was raised to 47% (a thematic break in the survey), only an additional 43 responses would be discarded. This document analyzes the data from the 1,449 responses that passed the viability threshold.

Most data will be reported as percentages, but each question will also include how many participants responded. As an example, the figure for gender identity will list (n=1,226) where "n" is the number of responses. Since very few questions required a response, the number of responses will vary by question. For this reason, as well as uncertainties about the size of the global stage management community, this report does not include the margin of error or the confidence level of each question. To both preserve participant anonymity and to avoid skewed percentages, no second layer of analysis will be applied to groups smaller than 20 people. For instance, this document includes four responses from New Zealand so we will not then isolate how New Zealanders responded to other questions to avoid identifying individuals or creating skewed appraisals. If only three New Zealanders chose a response, it does not necessarily mean that a majority of New Zealanders agree. This same reporting threshold applies to other demographics beyond geography: age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

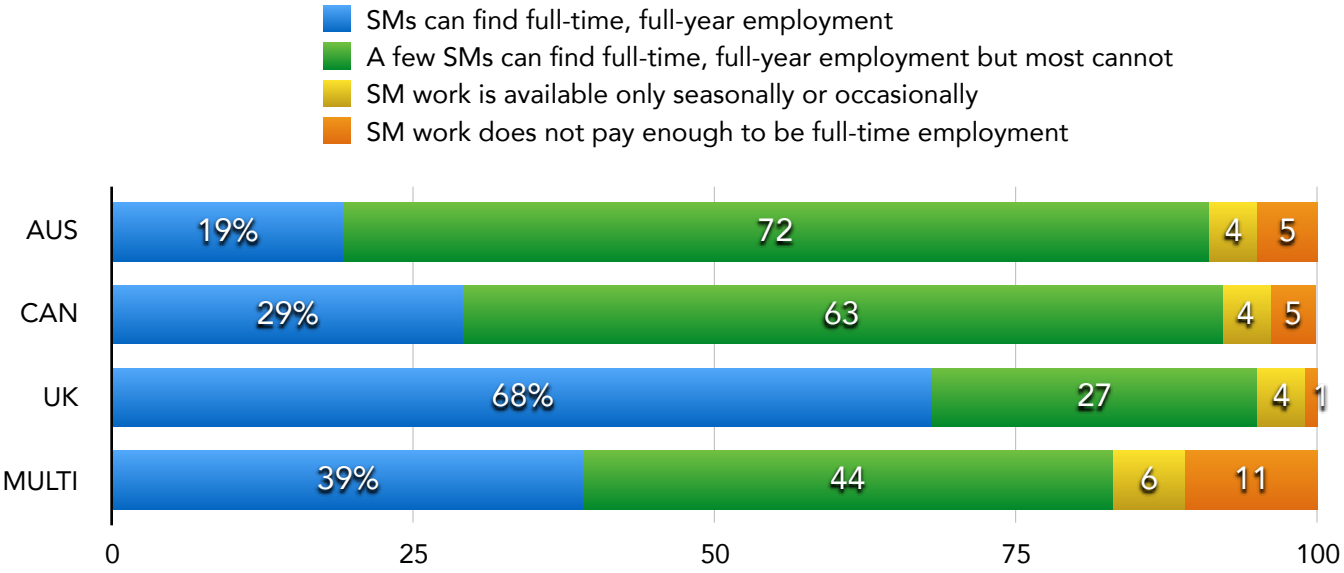
As this survey originated in the United States, the strong majority of participants identified as American: 1,163 work primarily in the United States or on tours originating in the United States, 286 work primarily in another country. For some questions in this report, responses will be delineated between American and International populations. In addition to the United States, 25 countries are represented in this survey. It should be noted that 12 participants indicated that they worked outside the United States but did not list their primary country. As many countries did not have at least 20 representatives in the survey, the following groupings and country abbreviations **[Figure 1]** will be used when countries/regions will be defined. The "Multinational" grouping includes 68 participants.

Figure 1: Primary Country and Country Groupings

Country	Participants	Grouping Abbreviation
Argentina	2	MULTI
Australia	59	AUS
Canada	81	CAN
China	1	MULTI
Colombia	1	MULTI
Denmark	5	MULTI
Germany	11	MULTI
Greece	2	MULTI
Hong Kong	1	MULTI
India	1	MULTI
Ireland	2	MULTI
Japan	3	MULTI
Lebanon	1	MULTI
Mexico	5	MULTI
Netherlands	4	MULTI
New Zealand	4	MULTI
Norway	3	MULTI
Philippines	1	MULTI
Romania	2	MULTI
South Africa	1	MULTI
Spain	1	MULTI
Sweden	2	MULTI
Trinidad and Tobago	2	MULTI
United Arab Emirates	1	MULTI
United Kingdom	78	UK
United States	1,163	USA
[Blank; non-US]	12	MULTI

Before progressing to other demographical questions, stage managers working outside of the United States were asked two additional questions. When asked the language that participants most often use to communicate with their teams, 89% (n=285) used English. It should be noted that, on this first entry as an international study, the survey was only available in English (we are already investigating how the 2023 survey could be offered in multiple languages). The second question **[Figure 2]** was about the amount of stage management work available in that country or region. The Multinational category percentages were strongly influenced by all 11 German responses stating that stage managers can find full-time, full-year employment in that country.

Figure 2: International - Employment Availability for Stage Managers (n=280)



All survey participants were asked to identify both their age **[Figure 3]** and the number of years they have worked as a stage manager **[Figure 4]**. The pie charts do not show stage managers older than 71 (14 participants); nor does it show participants with less than 1 year experience (11) or more than 50 years experience (7). **Figure 5** compares age brackets with years of experience. In general, the age/experience brackets have changed relatively little from the 2019 survey. It continues to be notable the number of stage managers who do not begin until their fifties.

In comparing age brackets by country/region **[Figure 6]**, Australia has the highest percentage of younger stage managers among its survey participants. As is the case with all regional comparisons, it needs to be stressed that this is the first year of the international survey and size of some samples may not accurately reflect the stage managers of that country. For instance, 8% of UK stage managers reported being under 21 years old, but that percentage is based on just six respondents.

Figure 3: Age Bracket (n=1223)

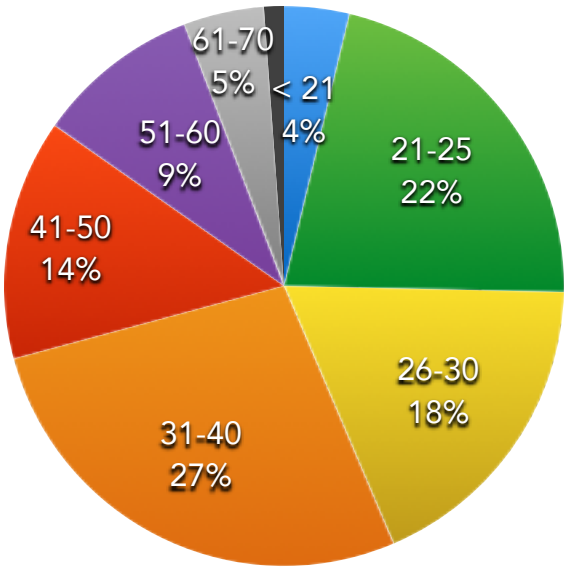


Figure 4: Years of Experience (n=1375)

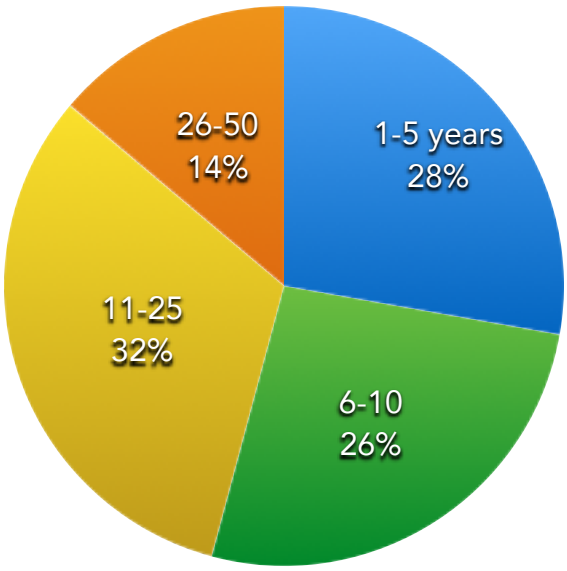
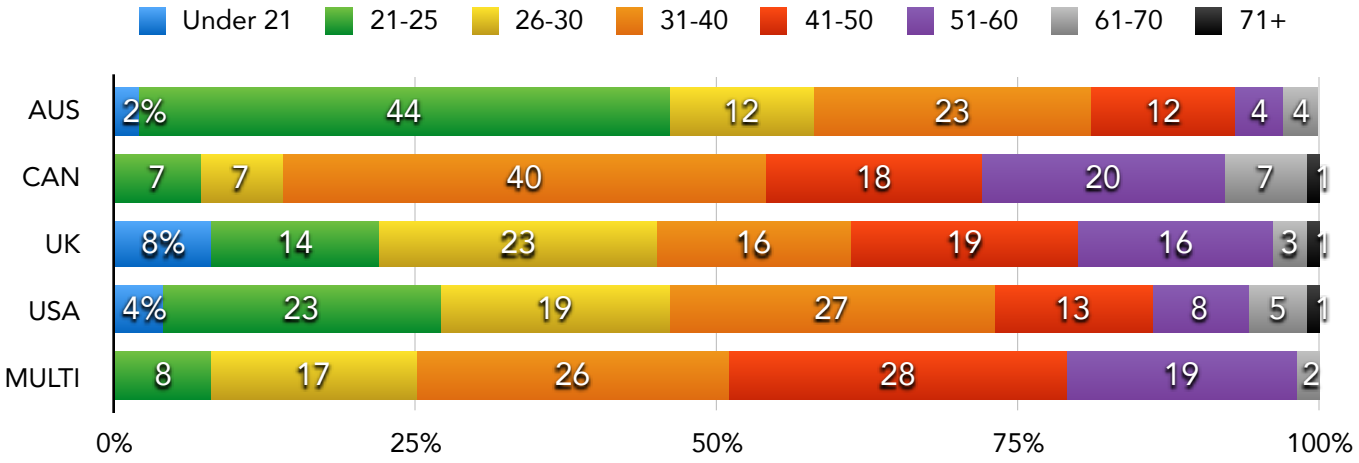


Figure 5: Age Brackets by Experience Levels (n=1222)

Age	SMs by Age Group	<1 Year as SM	1-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-25 Years	26-50 Years	51+ Years
Under 21	46	2%	87%	11%	—	—	—
21-25	264	3%	72%	25%	<1%	—	—
26-30	223	—	28%	59%	13%	—	—
31-40	362	—	6%	27%	65%	<1%	—
41-50	155	—	3%	12%	64%	21%	—
51-60	104	—	2%	8%	24%	66%	—
61-70	43	—	2%	—	9%	86%	4%
71+	13	—	—	7%	7%	71%	14%

Figure 6: Country/Region by Age Bracket (n=1223)

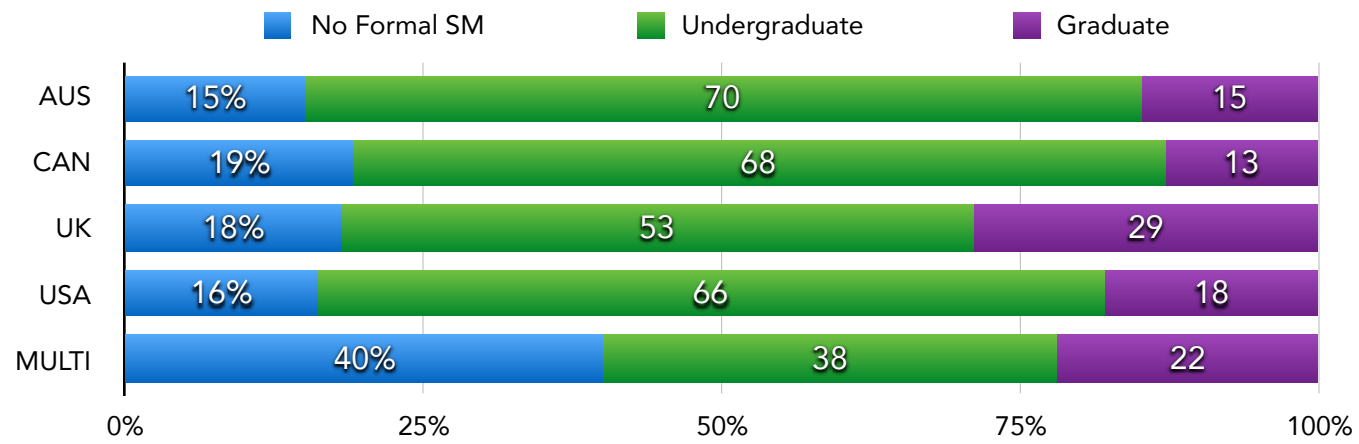


Formal education was a challenging topic to compare around the globe as both educational systems and their degree titles vary and some countries do not offer formal coursework in stage management. Based on survey comments, the need for formal education in stage management is still a matter of debate. In order to make comparisons across countries, three educational groupings were created for stage management education (n=1,248):

No formal SM education, participants could earn degrees in other fields: 18%
Undergraduate (whether courses or full degrees)/University: 64%
Graduate or post-graduate (whether courses or full degrees): 18%

As illustrated in Figure 7, participants from the Multinational grouping were most likely to have no formal education in stage management but they also had a sizable percentage of respondents who studied stage management at the graduate level, perhaps through studying abroad. In comparison with the 2019 survey for American stage managers, the ratio of US-based participants (n=987) with SM-specific degrees, the MFA in Stage Management and the BFA in Stage Management, remained the same at 10% and 18%, respectively.

Figure 7: Country/Region by SM Education Groupings (n=1248)



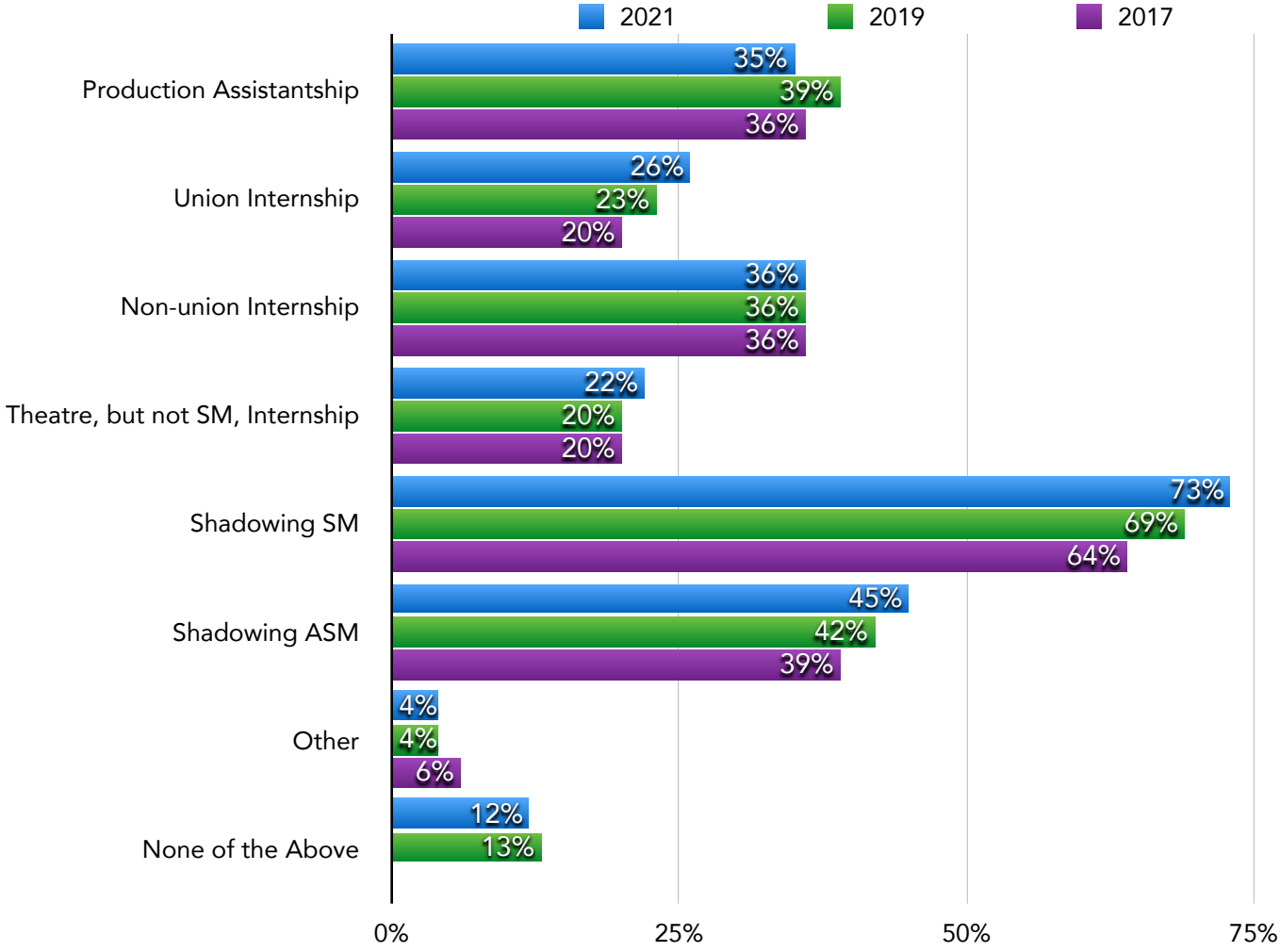
Formal education alone does not make a stage manager. Nearly 86% of responding participants (n=1,005) had taken part in on-site training, job observations (shadowing a stage manager at work), internships, and/or production assistantships. Internships are most common among Canadians (64%) and Americans (62%). Among the 14% who had not participated in any job training, there is a significant drop in SM-specific training among participants over age 40 [**Figure 8**]. What is even more noteworthy is the sudden drop in job training for participants under age 21. The global pandemic has interrupted career preparations - can this newest group of stage managers learn the career outside of these traditional means?

Figure 8: Stage Management Job Training by Age Bracket (n=993)

Age	Under 21	21-25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70
Any Job Training	84%	90%	95%	89%	77%	78%	82%

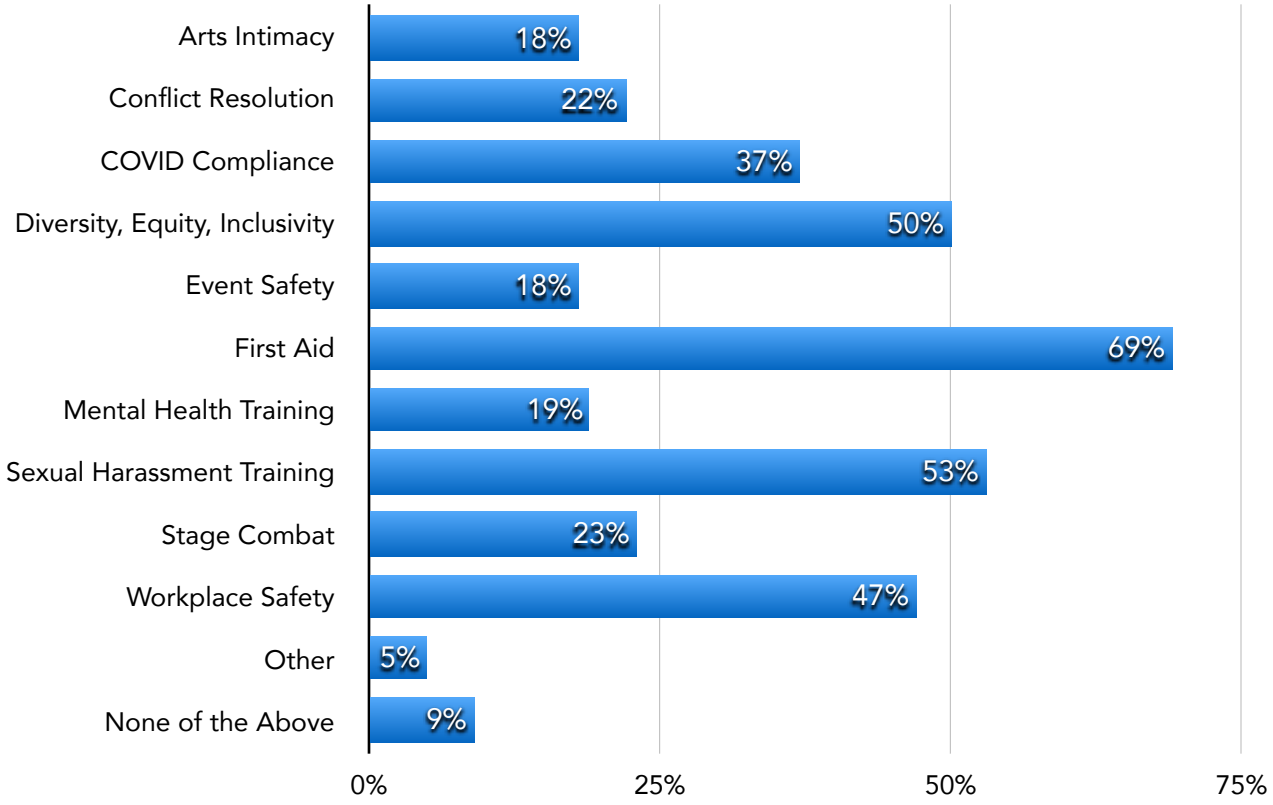
Figure 9 focuses on job training categories over the past three editions of the survey for American stage managers (participants could choose more than one type of training).

Figure 9: Stage Management Job Training in the United States (n=798)



Job-training itself has expanded in recent years to include more skill-focused modules. All survey participants were asked about attending workshops and other training.

Figure 10: Job-related Workshops and Training (n=996)



Some of the Other workshops included child protection, management, software, union guidelines, and violence response training. Workplace Safety included sub-categories such as fall protection and the safe operation of automation and fly systems. As one survey participant noted, "I wish I had access to these other things sooner."

An identity that is increasing in responses rates among younger stage managers is reporting having a disability **[Figure 11]**. Among 1,226 responses, 11% identified as having a disability, an increase from 8% of responses in 2019 (an additional 2% indicated Prefer Not to Answer in 2021). It was noted by a participant that not all who have disabilities acknowledge or report them.

Figure 11: Disability by Age Bracket (n=1,223)

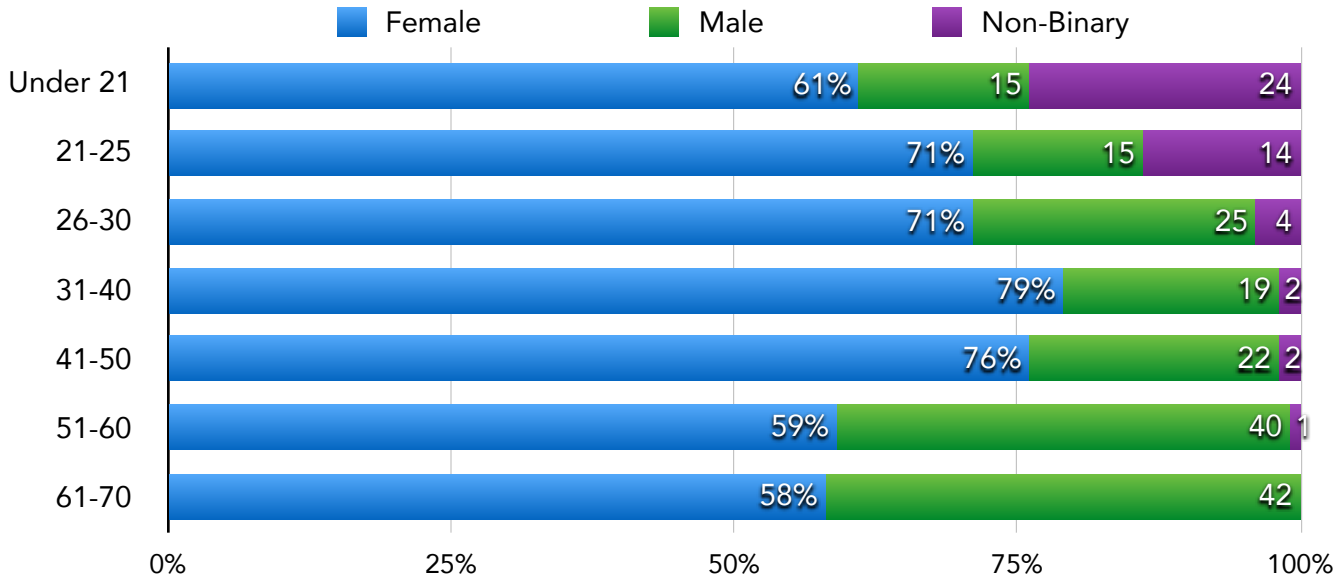
Age	Under 21	21-25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70
Have a Disability	33%	16%	9%	9%	7%	11%	11%

Gender identification has been a key area of study from the very first survey in 2006. **Figure 12** tracks gender along the eight editions of the survey (it is with great regret that identities beyond a binary division of gender were not offered until 2013 and then only reported as Transgender until 2017). In 2021, 12 participants selected Prefer Not to Answer and another 10 chose Another Identity such as Agender, Gender Fluid, and Genderqueer. **Figure 13** analyzes gender identities by age bracket; Another Identity and Prefer Not to Answer are not included as the sample sizes are not large enough to provide ratios. This gender ratio by age bracket analysis has been conducted since 2009; at that time, male-identifying stage managers were in the majority for all age brackets over 50. This shift over the past decade of surveys dispels the myth that primarily men continue in the profession as they grow older. Note: although the Age 71+ bracket is 29% female and 71% male, it is not included in figures as the age bracket is limited to 14 participants.

Figure 12: Gender Identity (2021 n=1226)

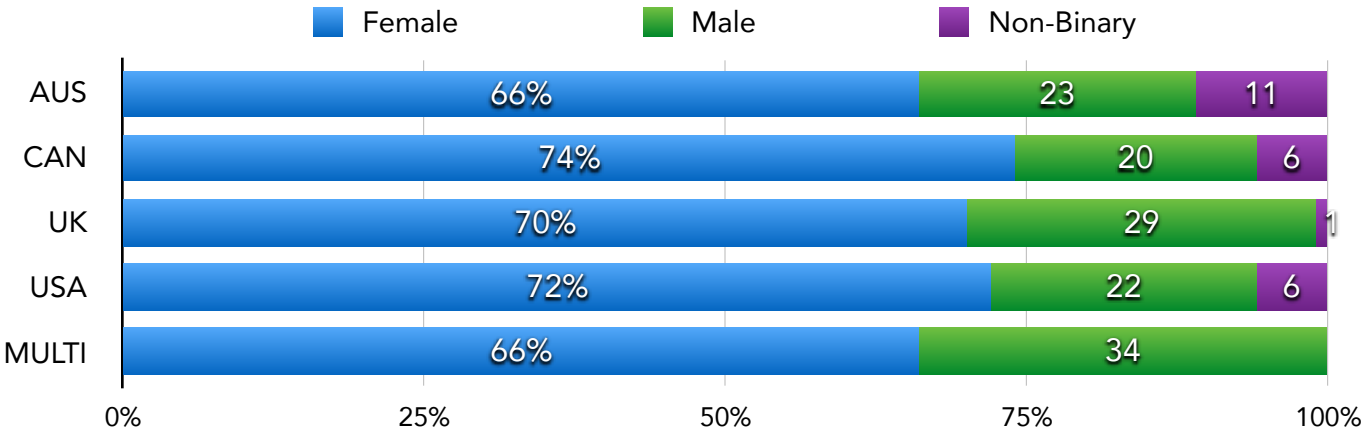
	Female	Male	Non-Binary
2021 Survey	70%	23%	6%
2019 Survey	71%	23%	4%
2017 Survey	70%	26%	2%
2015 Survey	73%	25%	< 1%
2013 Survey	69%	31%	< 1%
2011 Survey	70%	30%	No Data
2009 Survey	68%	32%	No Data
2006 Survey	66%	34%	No Data

Figure 13: Age Brackets by Gender Identity (n=1200)



Gender identification was also analyzed by country/region. **Figure 14** illustrates how stage managers are primarily female in all represented regions (AUS n=53, CAN n=74, UK n=69, USA n=955, MULTI n=53). It will be very interesting to see the gender ratios in other regions as hopefully more countries are represented in future surveys.

Figure 14: Country/Region by Gender Identity (n=1204)



A continuing trend has been the percentage of survey participants who identify themselves as part of the LGBTQIA community. Forty stage managers, or 3%, chose "Prefer Not to Answer."

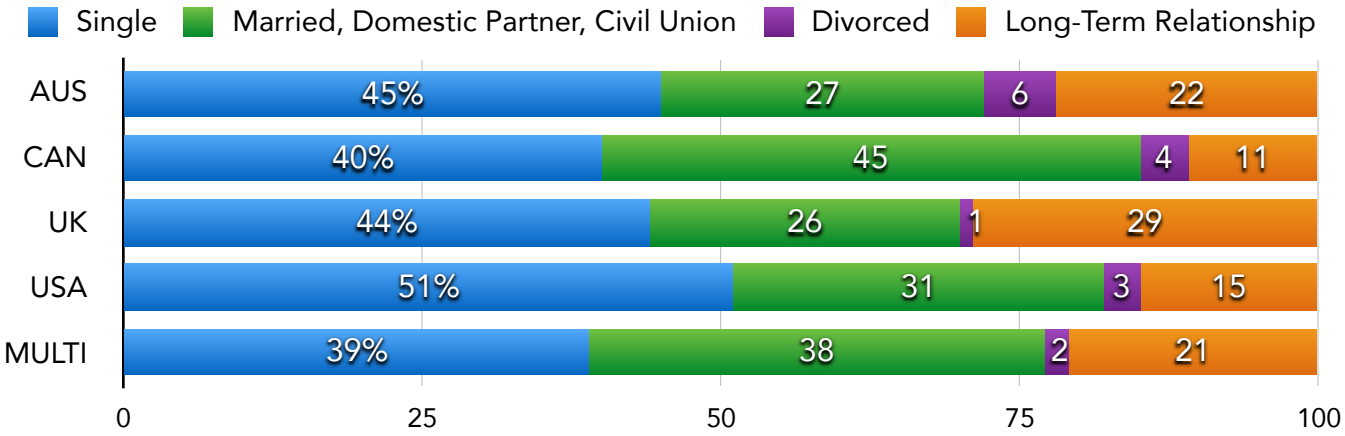
Figure 15: Identification as Part of the LGBTQIA Community (2021 n=1225)

	Affirmative
2021 Survey	43%
2019 Survey	41%
2017 Survey	35%
2015 Survey	30%
2013 Survey	27%

Analyzing by region, the United States had the highest representation of LGBTQIA stage managers (47%), followed by Australia (37%), the United Kingdom (32%), Canada (24%) and Multinational (23%). It should also be noted that no definition of LGBTQIA was provided in the survey, the term may not be commonly used in all regions of the world, and some participants may feel at risk to identify as part of this community. When cross-referenced with gender identities (n=1216), 54% of male stage managers identified themselves within the LGBTQIA community versus 35% of female-identifying stage managers. This is a change from 59% and 32%, respectively, in 2019, but the 2019 survey was limited to the United States.

In terms of relationships, the percentage of participants (n=1223) who indicated "Married, Domestic Partner, Civil Union" rose to 31%, compared to 29% in 2019 and 25% in 2017). This category can further be divided by Gender Identity (n=1209): 33% Female, 34% Male, and 15% Non-binary. These percentages are without "Widow/Widower" responses (4) and "Prefer Not to Answer" (8). **Figure 16** examines how countries/regions vary by marital status.

Figure 16: Country/Region by Marital Status (n=1,211)



Regardless of region, among the 382 survey participants with spouses or legal partners, 37% reported that their partners also work in the performing arts and another 21% reported that their partners had formerly worked in the performing arts, both rates increased from the 2019 study.

Survey participants were asked about children: 11% of 1,206 responding stage managers have dependents under the age of 18. Canada leads with the highest percentage of survey participants having children (20%), followed by the Multinational group (17%), the United States (11%), Australia (6%) and the United Kingdom (just under 6%). Analyzing by gender (n=1,204), 13% of female stage managers, 10% of male stage managers, and 2% of non-binary stage managers reported having children. When isolating to just responses from the United States (n=964), the parent percentages were 13% female, 9% male, and 2% non-binary, showing increases in all categories from 2019.

The demographical question about race and ethnicity was limited to the United States portion of the survey. In this first year of a global study, it was unknown during the design phase which countries would be represented and the appropriate terminology those countries use for racial/ethnic identity. The US question itself is problematic as the SM Survey has used the categories provided by the U.S. Census, which are very limited and used terms such as Caucasian. **Figure 17** shows the 2021 U.S. participants compared with 2019 and 2017 survey data. The U.S. Census categorizes "Hispanic/Latino(a)" as an ethnicity rather than a race; 6% of 957 participants indicated this identity, remaining steady with the 2019 survey data. While even newer racial identity terms such as Global Majority and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) are also being critiqued in regards to identity representation, it is critical to examine issues of race in stage management. For this report, a BIPOC/White lens will be applied to other questions regarding American stage managers (**Figures 18, 19, 58, 60, 64, 65,** and **66**).

Figure 17: Race (United States) (2021 n=957)

	White/ Caucasian	Black/ African-American	Asian	Native American	Multi-racial	Other	Prefer Not to Answer
2021 Survey	87%	2%	1%	>1%	6%	>1%	2%
2019 Survey	86%	2%	4%	1%	6%	1%	1%
2017 Survey	91%	3%	3%	1%	3%	—	1%

(n=939)

Figure 18: BIPOC Representation by Age Bracket (United States)

	Under 21	21-25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70
BIPOC	13%	19%	16%	11%	10%	14%	7%
White	87%	81%	84%	89%	90%	86%	93%
Total Responses	38	211	183	258	116	76	45

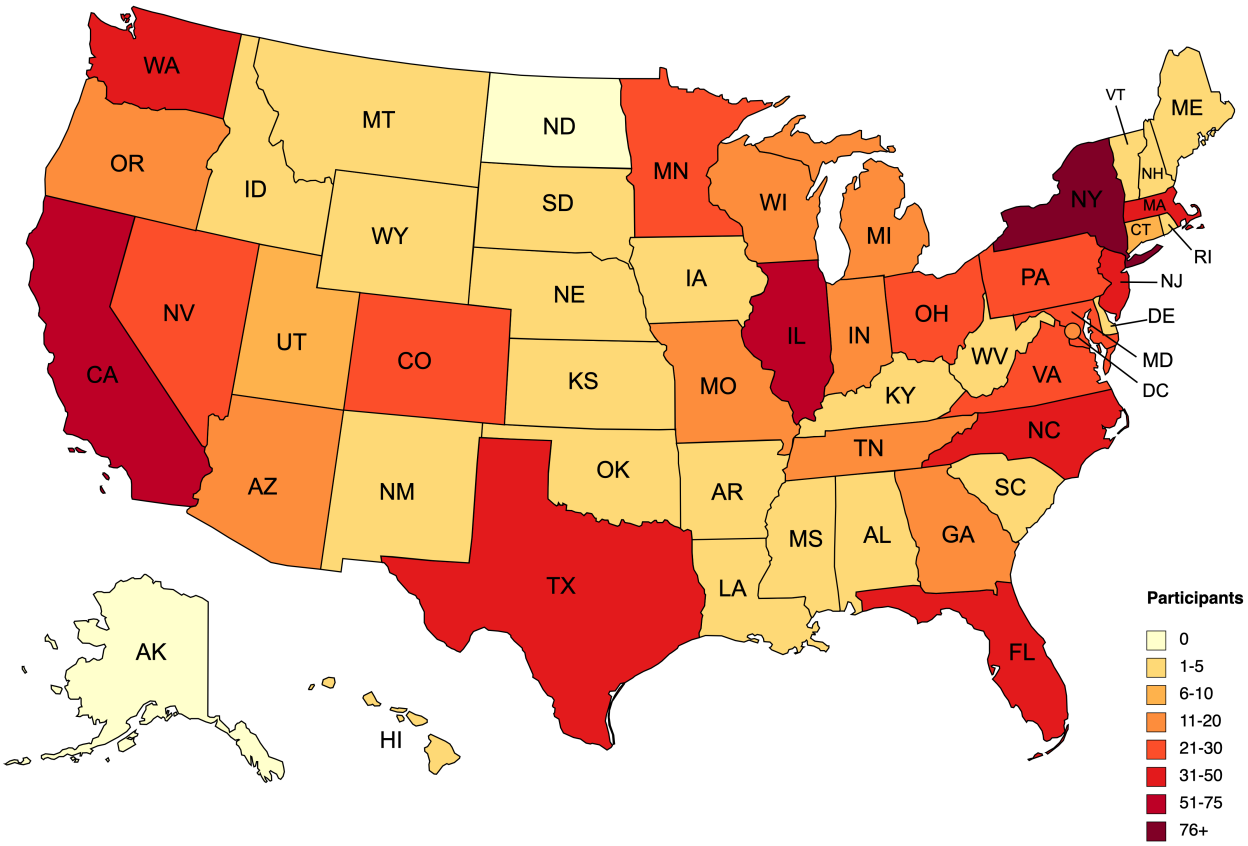
Figure 19: BIPOC Representation by Gender (United States) (n=939)

	Female	Male	Non-binary
BIPOC	12%	16%	25%
White	88%	84%	75%
Total Responses	661	206	55

Another demographic question limited to the United States in 2021 was union membership. In future editions of the survey, union representation will be asked of other countries, such as Equity in the United Kingdom and the Canadian Actors' Equity Association. Among 941 American stage managers, 49% did not belong to any union, 44% were members of Actors' Equity Association (AEA) , followed by 6% belonging to the American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA) and 4% being members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). It is possible to be a member of more than one union: 32 participants indicated they were members of both AEA and AGMA. When 546 American participants who were not part of AEA were asked if they plan to join the union, 24% answered in the affirmative, 34% negative, and 42% were unsure, indicating a decrease among survey participants in both membership and interest in membership. Anecdotally, several responded that they formerly were members of AEA, but there was no question directly asking non-union participants if they had left a union.

The last demographic question for American stage managers was where they resided. Participants of the 2021 survey resided in 48 states [**Figure 20,** map created with mapchart.net], with only Alaska and North Dakota not having representatives. As has been the case with all editions of the survey, the state of New York had the strongest representation with 172 responses, followed this year by California (75) and Illinois (56), Florida (50) and Massachusetts (48).

Figure 20: State of Residence (United States) (n=938)



Section II: Impact of Global Pandemic

Eighty percent of respondents (n=1,387) were working on a production when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world. While 4% of stage managers were able to finish their run at the start of the pandemic, 12% saw the venue close, 16% were waiting to resume work on the show, another 30% were unsure - even eighteen months later - if the production would return. Among the 409 stage managers whose shows did return, 12% were not hired back and 14% chose not to work on the project when it resumed operations. **Figures 21 and 22** examine income as a stage manager from April 2020 through April 2021, removing the 10% of responses who had not earned income as a stage manager prior to the pandemic. There were not significant differences in income changes based on gender, race, disability, or parental status.

Figure 21: SM Income (April 2020 - April 2021) by Country (n=1065)

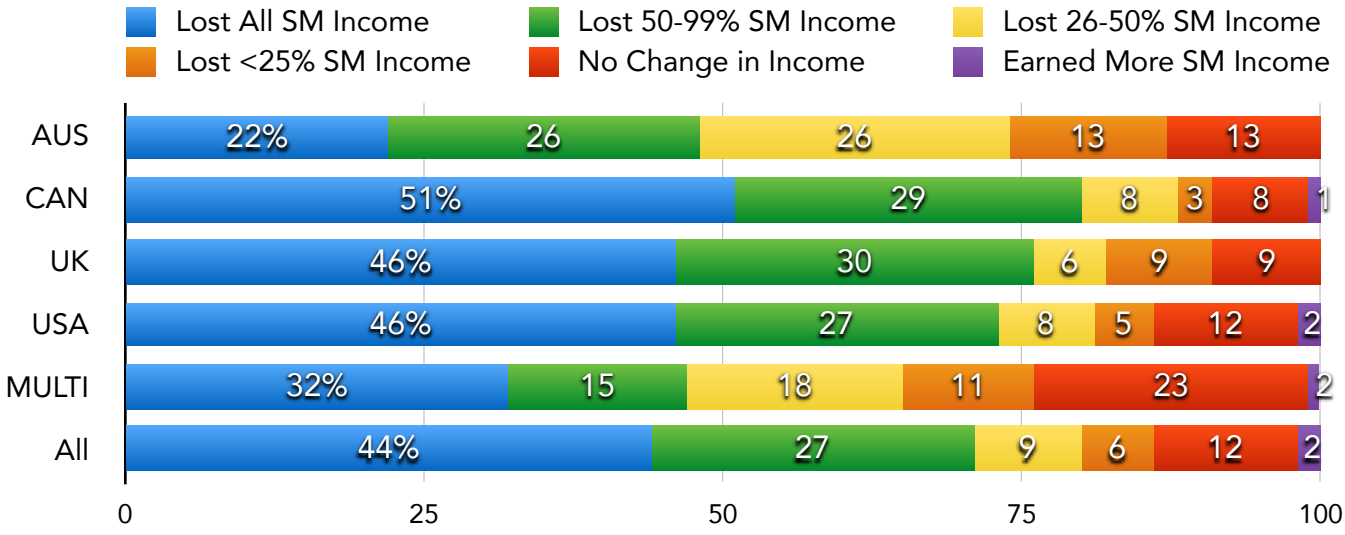
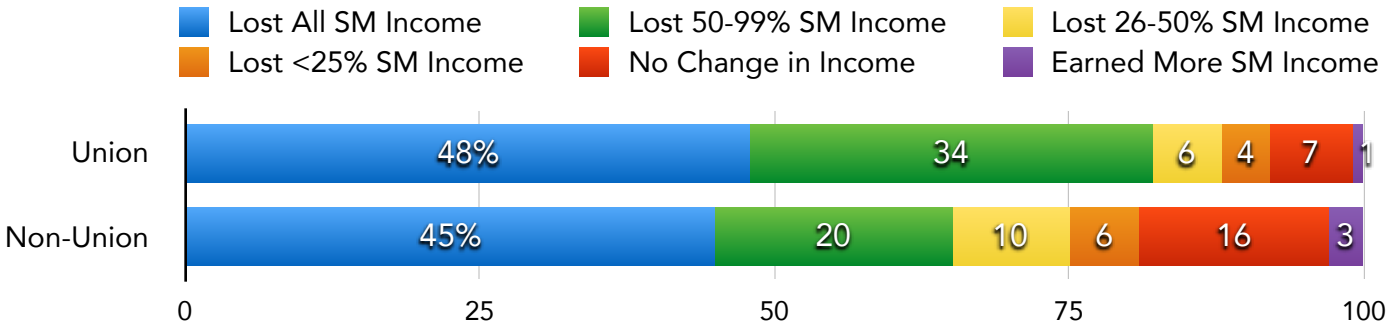


Figure 22: SM Income (April 2020 - April 2021) in USA by Union Status (n=938)



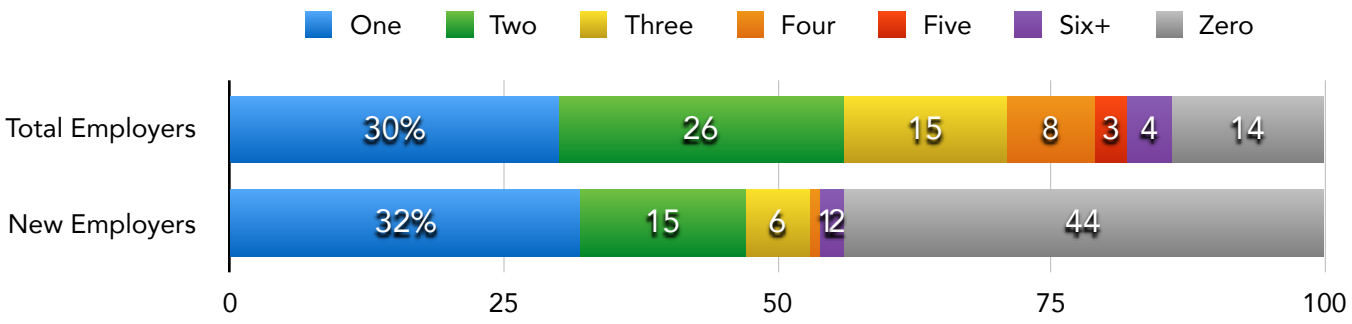
In addition to income, participants were also asked how many weeks they worked in a stage management position, in this case during the twelve months leading up to the survey (October 2020 - October 2021) **[Figure 23]**. This time frame has been used for questions of employment in previous editions of the survey. This was the first edition to include DSM (Deputy Stage Manager) as a position, which was reported primarily in the United Kingdom, but also Australia and some countries influenced by British theatre tradition. As to be expected, the number of weeks worked were drastically lower due to the pandemic. In fact, in a related question, the number of American stage managers who collected Unemployment in the twelve months leading up the the survey rose from 17% in 2019 to 51% in 2021 (n=611).

Figure 23: Weeks Served in a Stage Management Role in the Last Year (n=788)

	0 Weeks	1-2 Weeks	3-10 Weeks	11-20 Weeks	21-30 Weeks	31-40 Weeks	41-52 Weeks
ASM	40%	11%	27%	15%	4%	2%	1%
DSM	70%	6%	13%	8%	1%	1%	<1%
SM	52%	9%	22%	11%	3%	2%	1%
PSM	62%	8%	18%	9%	1%	1%	<1%

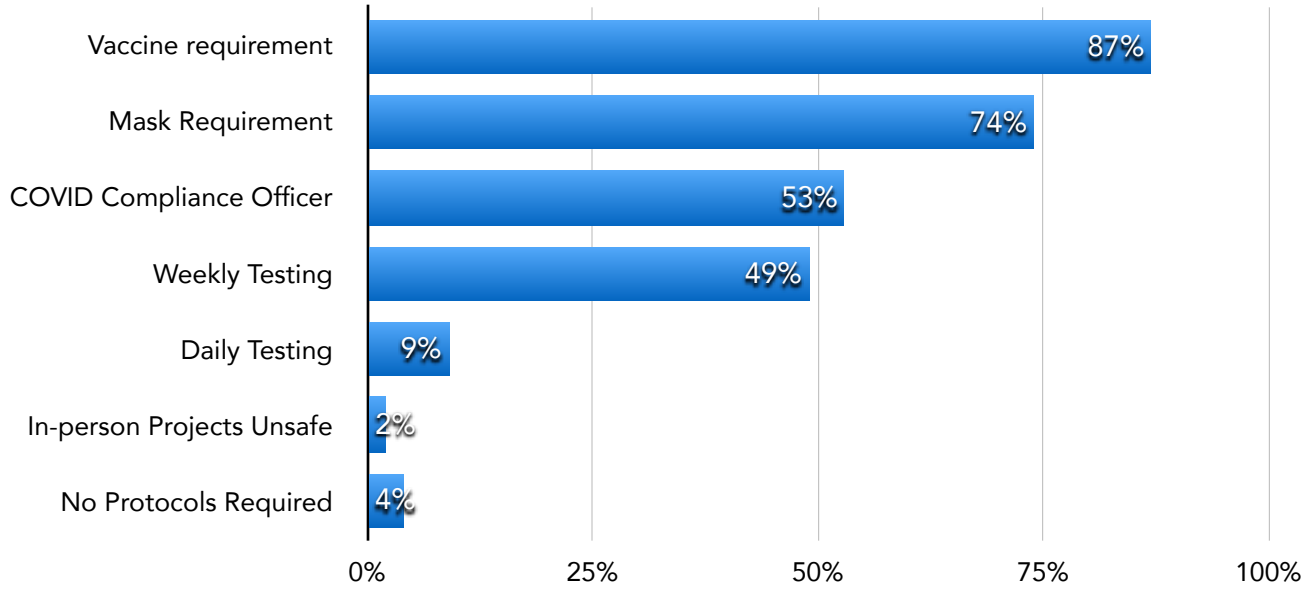
Globally, survey participants who were able to find work often compiled smaller jobs from multiple producers **[Figure 24]**. Even with so many closings, many participants even found new SM employment sources. Among 965 responses, 56% started working with at least one new producer in the twelve months leading up to the survey [**Figure 24**, smaller sample size].

Figure 24: Number of SM Employers and New Employers Over Past Twelve Months (n=1148/965)



Over the course of the pandemic, governments, producers, unions, and individual workers have debated what constitutes a safe working environment. **Figure 25** illustrates which COVID-19 protocols the survey participants believed were necessary to feel safe working on an in-person stage management project (participants could select more than one). Note: this survey was conducted between the Delta and Omicron variants of COVID-19.

Figure 25: COVID-19 Protocols Required to Feel Safe on In-Person Production (n=1316)



The loss of work during the early heights of the pandemic caused a number of stage managers to leave the profession: among 624 participants who listed their current occupation as something other than stage management, 192 (31%) left stage management as a profession. Among the 182 who provided reasons for leaving stage management at this time, 47% wanted a more stable/ secure job, 45% wanted better hours or work/life balance, 38% wanted better pay, 27% cited a lack of available work, while only 13% stated that they felt unsafe working as a stage manager (participants could choose more than one option).

Quite a few stage managers found work by pivoting online: 39% of 1,301 participants had stage managed an online performance since the start of the pandemic. But despite such a large group finding work online, nearly all longed to return to in-person performances. When 1,112 participants were asked, "In the future, if a stage management job was offered to you either as an online projects or an in-person project, which would you prefer (assume same pay, dates, co-workers, and employer)," 94% chose the in-person format.

Over three hundred participants shared their thoughts about online productions. Approximately a fifth of the responses questioned whether online performances should even be classified as theatre or a form of television or a new genre. Some noted the value of online performances as

filling a need at this time but hoped "in the future, only productions that are best suited for the medium remain virtual." Other participants were fully converted to the new distribution method ("Love them so much that I launched my own company…"), whereas another group was more resigned to the existence of online performances:

> The events world has moved virtual and will probably continue to be, at least partially, moving forward. Clients have realized they can do much of the logistics in a cheaper, online setting.

A number of comments focused on increased accessibility, but even when isolating two groups often cited to benefit from increase accessibility online, 94% of stage managers with disabilities (n=113) and 91% of stage managers with children (n=117) chose in-person over online employment. One quote summarized many stage managers' reaction to the switch online:

> My heart isn't in it, it's just not my medium. I was so burnt out and honestly mourning so much of the pandemic, I was having trouble engaging with the online platform.

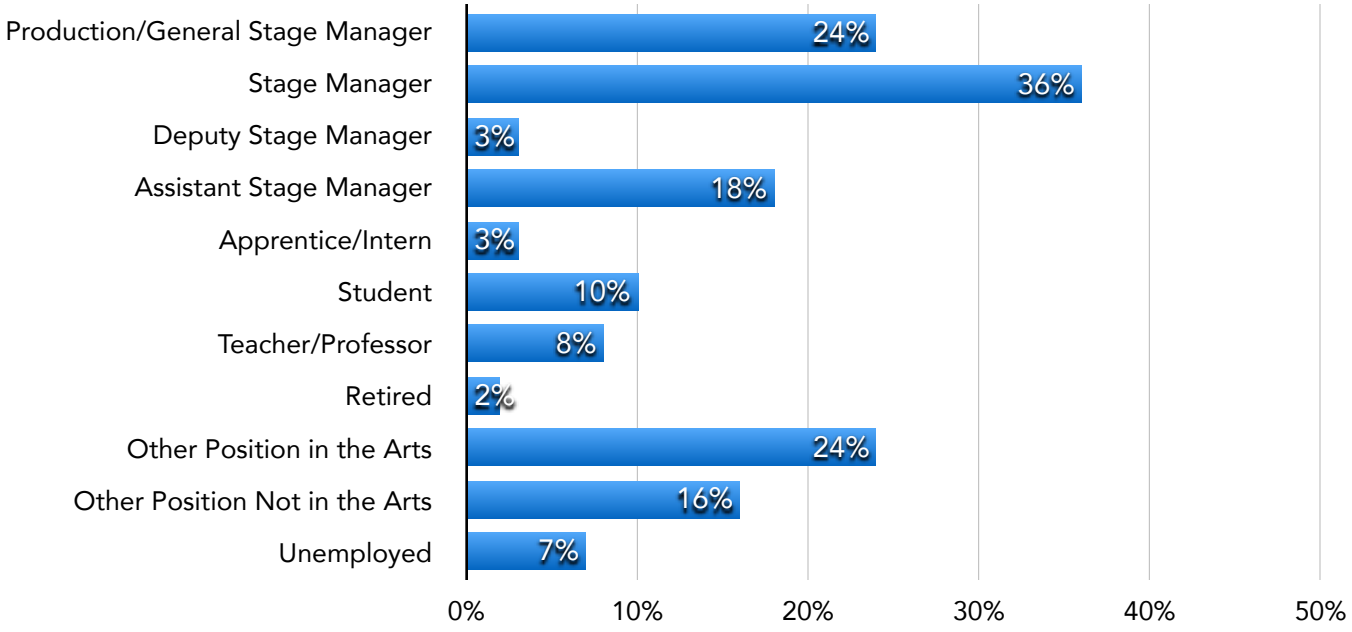
This burn-out and ongoing trauma is the main reason why the survey itself contained relatively few direct questions about the pandemic, which several participants noted. The pandemic's impact on the Performing Arts has evolved over time and can be better examined in waves such as the three-part *Return to the Stage* study conducted from July 2020 through July 2021 in the United States (www.returntothestage.com). [Full disclosure: the author of this study co-authored *RttS* with Meg Friedman.] The long-term impact of COVID-19 can be measured across many categories of this survey indirectly, so an effort was made to limit the questions and potential harm to participants trying to cope with a medical emergency that turned global within weeks.

Section III: Stage Management Responsibilities

The 2021 survey was open to anyone who had served as a stage manager or assistant stage manager on at least 3 live-audience productions. As noted in Section II, some survey participants left stage management due to the pandemic but were generous enough to still take the survey. All participants were asked their current occupation and could select more than one option in recognition that, especially during pandemic times, it may be necessary to diversify. For some later questions, responses will be limited to those currently working as ASM, DSM, SM, or PSM.

Figure 26: Current Occupation

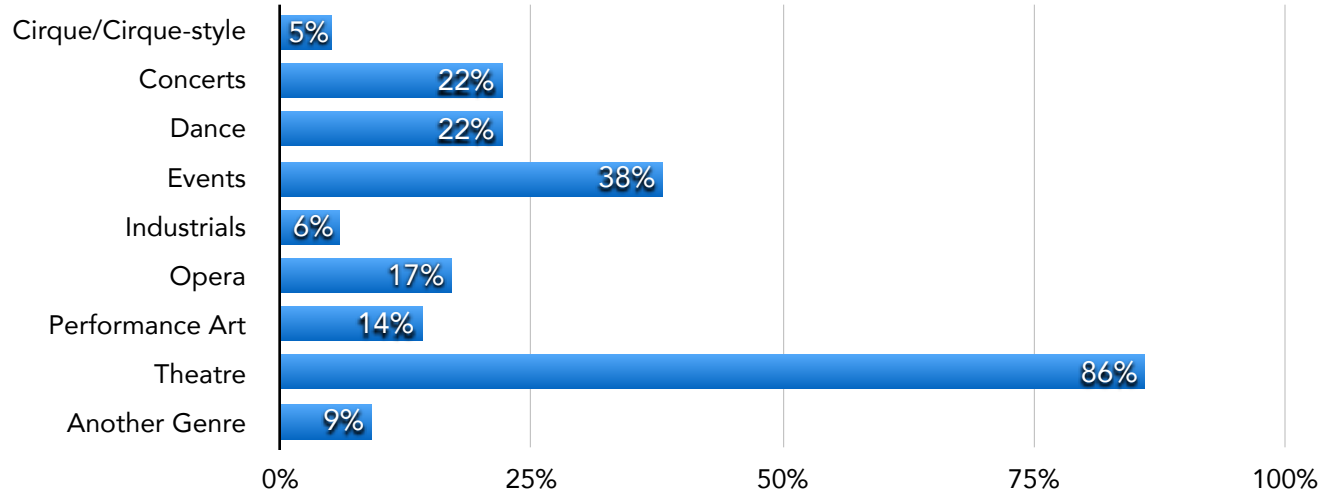
(n=1374)



Participants were also asked their preferred role to see how many preferred an ASM or DSM role over other options. Among 1,388 responses, 17% preferred ASM, 4% DSM, 42% SM, 31% PSM, 4% indicated No Preference and 2% listed other related job titles such as Show Caller, Company Stage Manager, and the German term Inspizient (which draws from elements of ASM and DSM).

A recurring question on the survey has focused on the art forms/genres that stage managers work. **Figure 27** analyzes the art forms/genres worked in the past two years (October 2019 - October 2021), a timespan almost entirely impacted by the pandemic. The majority of the "Another Genre" responses distinguished Musical Theatre from Theatre. An additional question about preferred art form/genre is not included in this report as a survey design flaw limited the available options to the responses given to Figure 27 and genres have been impacted by the pandemic to different degrees. This question will be corrected for the 2023 survey.

Figure 27: Art Forms/Genres of Stage Management Work in Past Two Years (n=1351)



Some responses to questions about preferred roles and genres noted that often they were the only person assigned to stage management on a production. **Figure 28** compares the stage management positions on all 2021 survey participants (n=1,112) on their most recent project to the responses of just the American participants in 2021 (n= 872) and the responses of Americans in 2019 (n=1,701). Overall, the stage management teams have fewer members than in 2019.

Figure 28: Stage Management Positions on Most Recent Project by Year (2021 n=1,112)

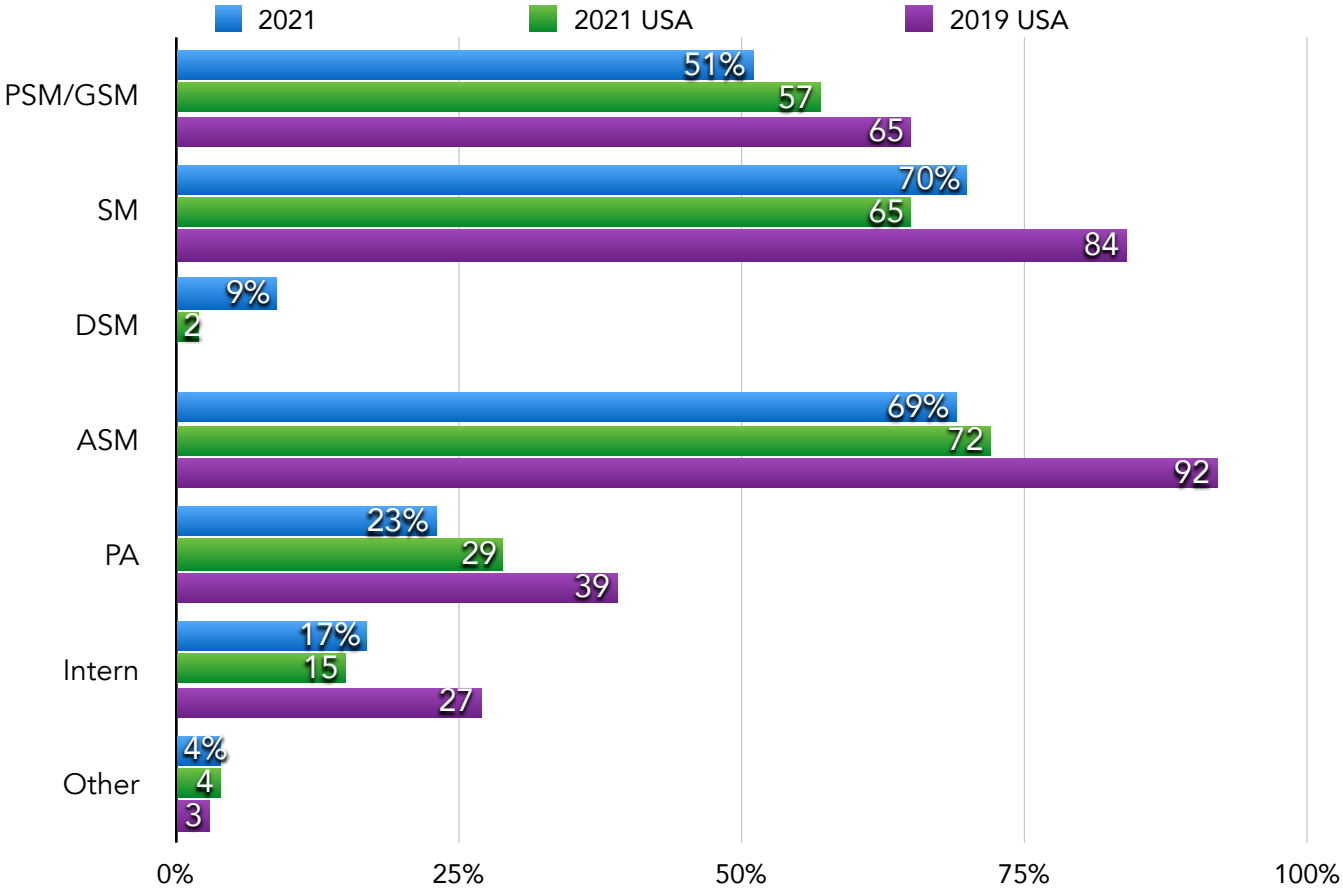
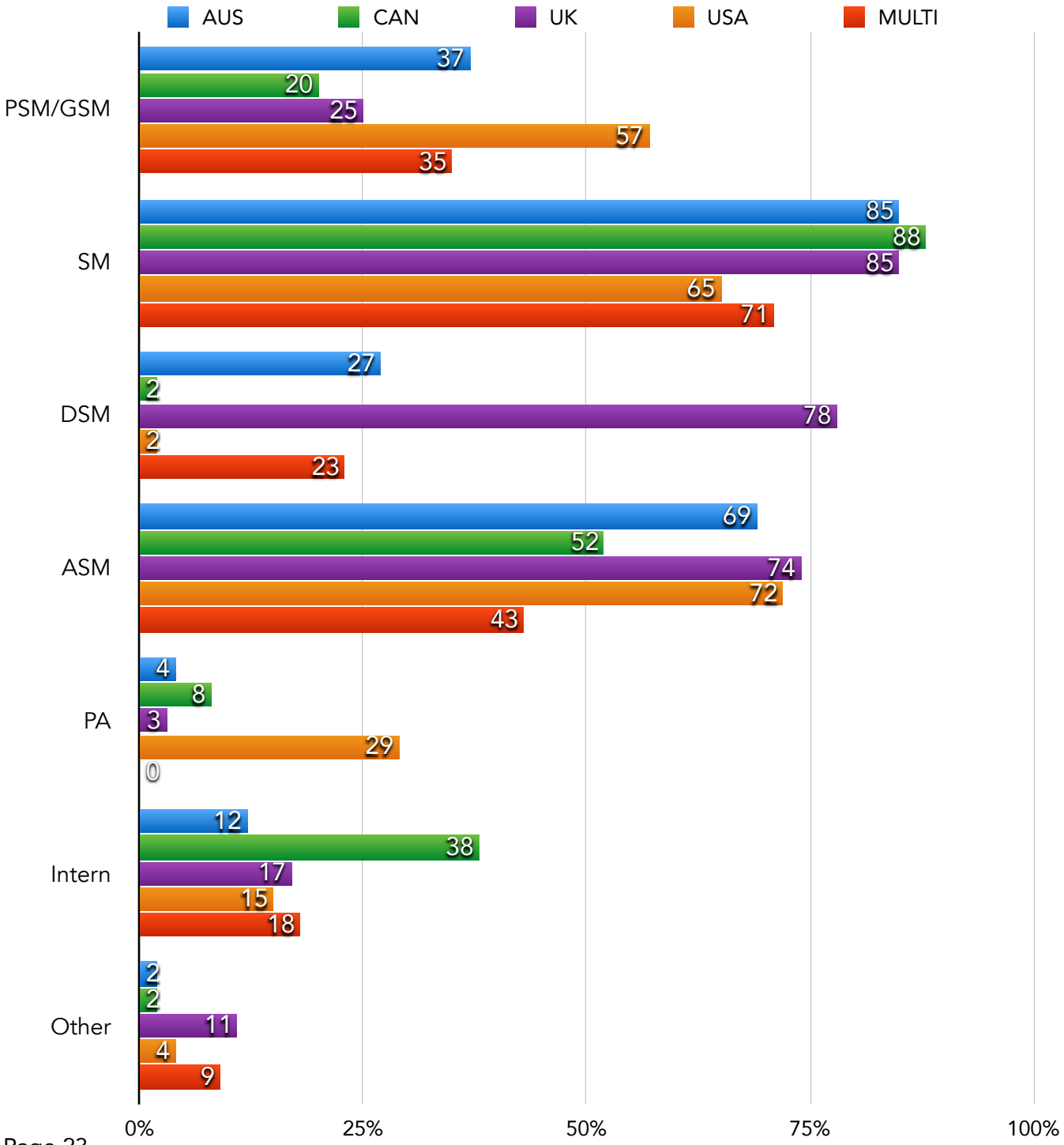


Figure 29 analyzes the roles on a project in 2021 by country/region. This comparison is based on 52 responses from Australia, 65 from Canada, 78 from the United Kingdom, 872 from the United States, and 68 from the Multinational group. American stage managers are most likely to use a PSM, often replacing the SM position; Canadians have the highest likelihood of interns or apprentices; and the regional use of the Deputy Stage Manager is quite clear. The most common Other role was the Company Stage Manager and the Assistant Director.

Figure 29: Stage Management Positions on Most Recent Project by Country (n=*see text*)



Job titles are not the only difference in stage management teams across the world. **Figures 30-34** break down the reported responsibilities by position for each of the 4 represented countries as well as the Multinational group. Managing Online Meetings (logins, troubleshooting, etc.) is a new pandemic-era category of responsibilities. An addition from previous editions of the survey is the Blank category. "Blank" could mean that the responsibility was not needed on the most recent production (e.g., a concert not requiring a fight call) or it could mean that someone outside the stage management team was responsible for that task. For instance, among the Australian responses, only 34% noted that understudy rehearsals were managed by the SM team.

Several regional differences emerge in the responsibilities of the stage management team:

- Australian SM teams reported fewer cases of recording blocking and providing line notes, but some responses may have been from non-theatrical productions (e.g, music concerts, etc.).
- Canadian SM teams are most likely to be responsible for giving notes to performers but least likely to lead understudy rehearsals.
- While the Deputy Stage Manager role appears in other countries, it is the primarily role for the greatest number of responsibilities in the United Kingdom.
- American SM teams, besides being most likely to use a Production Stage Manager or General Stage Manager, also have assigned the most responsibilities to this role. It should be noted that this role is not defined in American union contracts but has grown in popularity.
- While the Multinational group represents a range of traditions, many of the identified responsibilities are being performed by individuals outside the stage management team.

Figure 30: Responsibilities by Position on Most Recent Project - Australia (n=46)

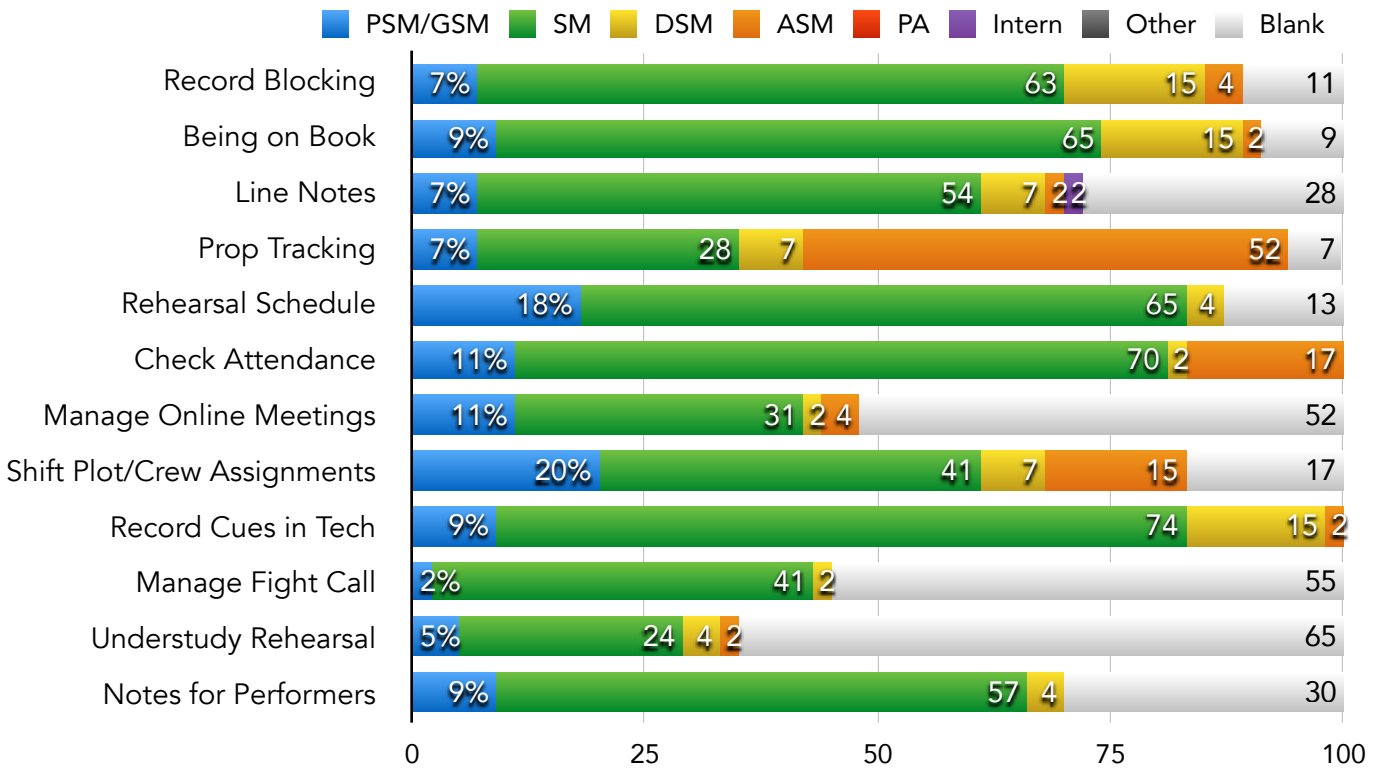


Figure 31: Responsibilities by Position on Most Recent Project - Canada (n=60)

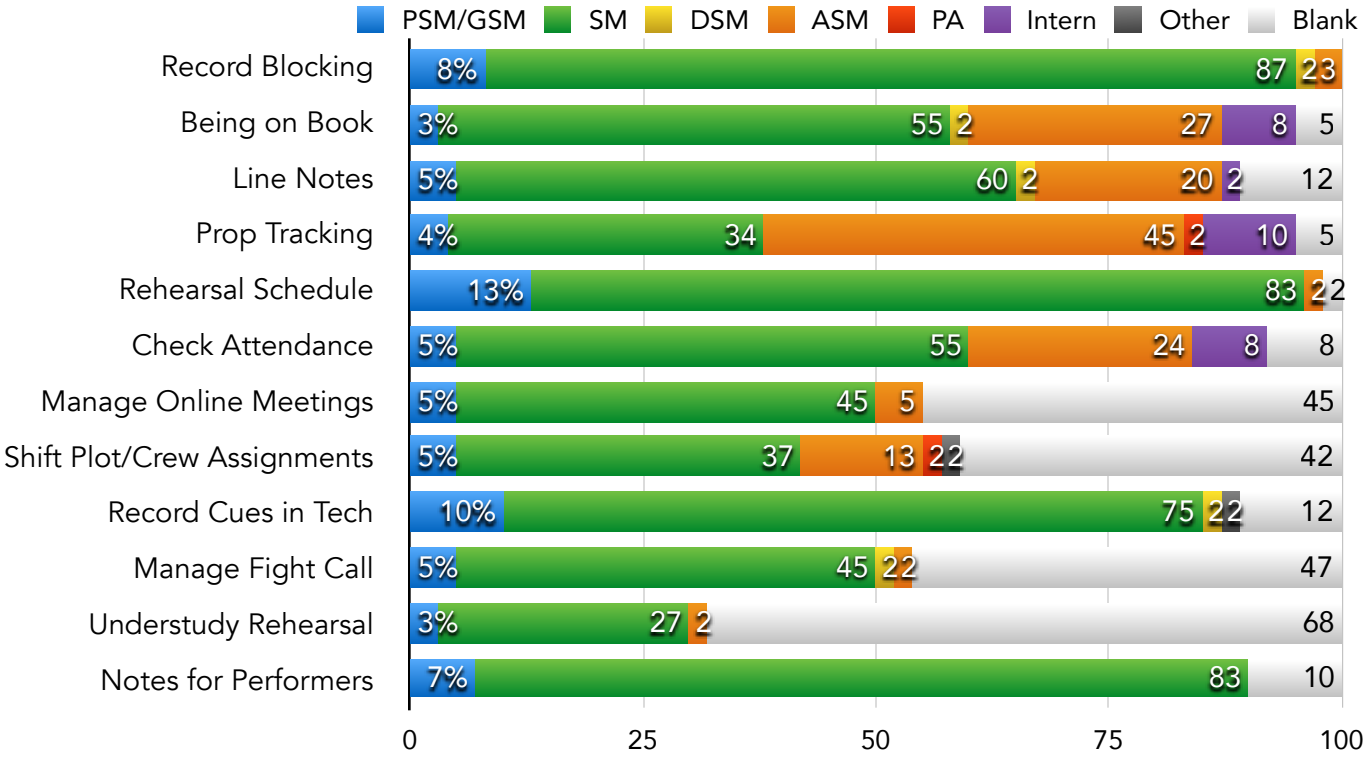


Figure 32: Responsibilities by Position on Most Recent Project - United Kingdom (n=61)

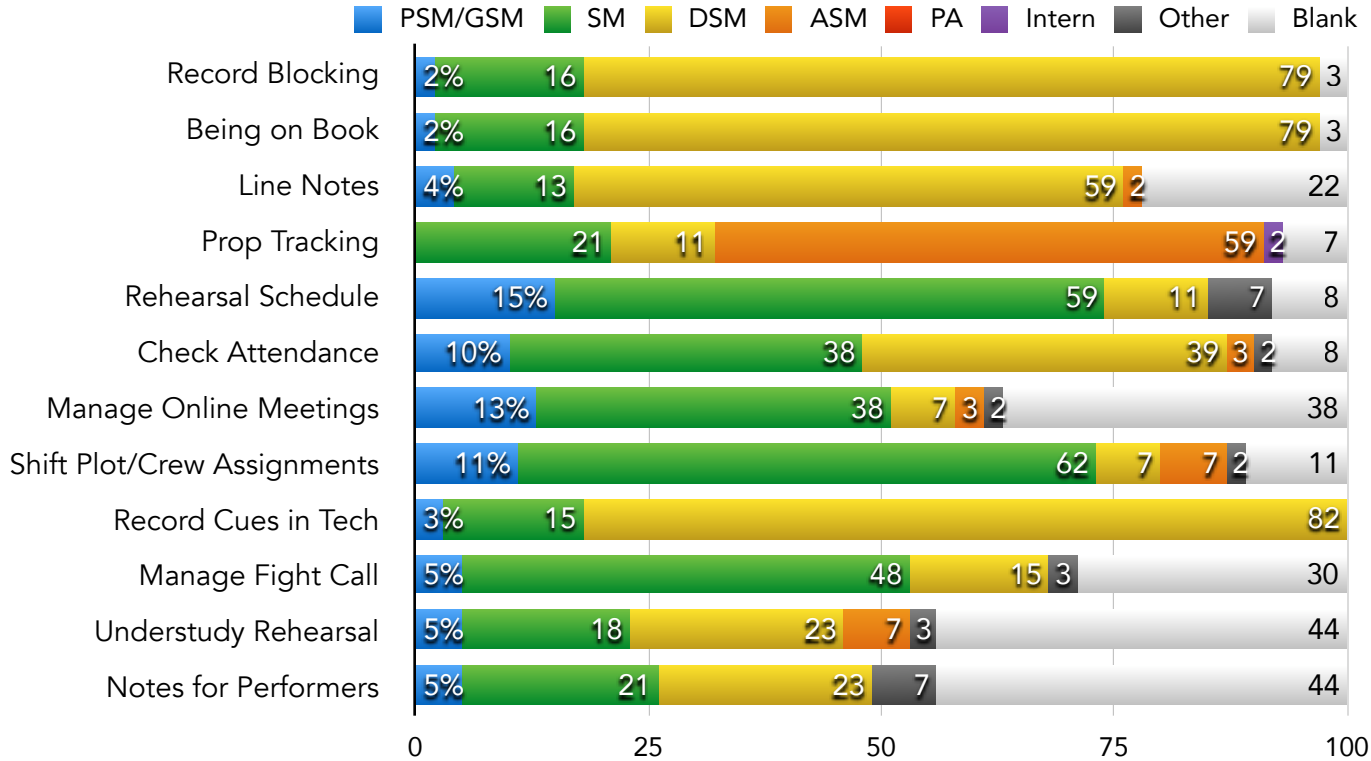


Figure 33: Responsibilities by Position on Most Recent Project - United States (n=772)

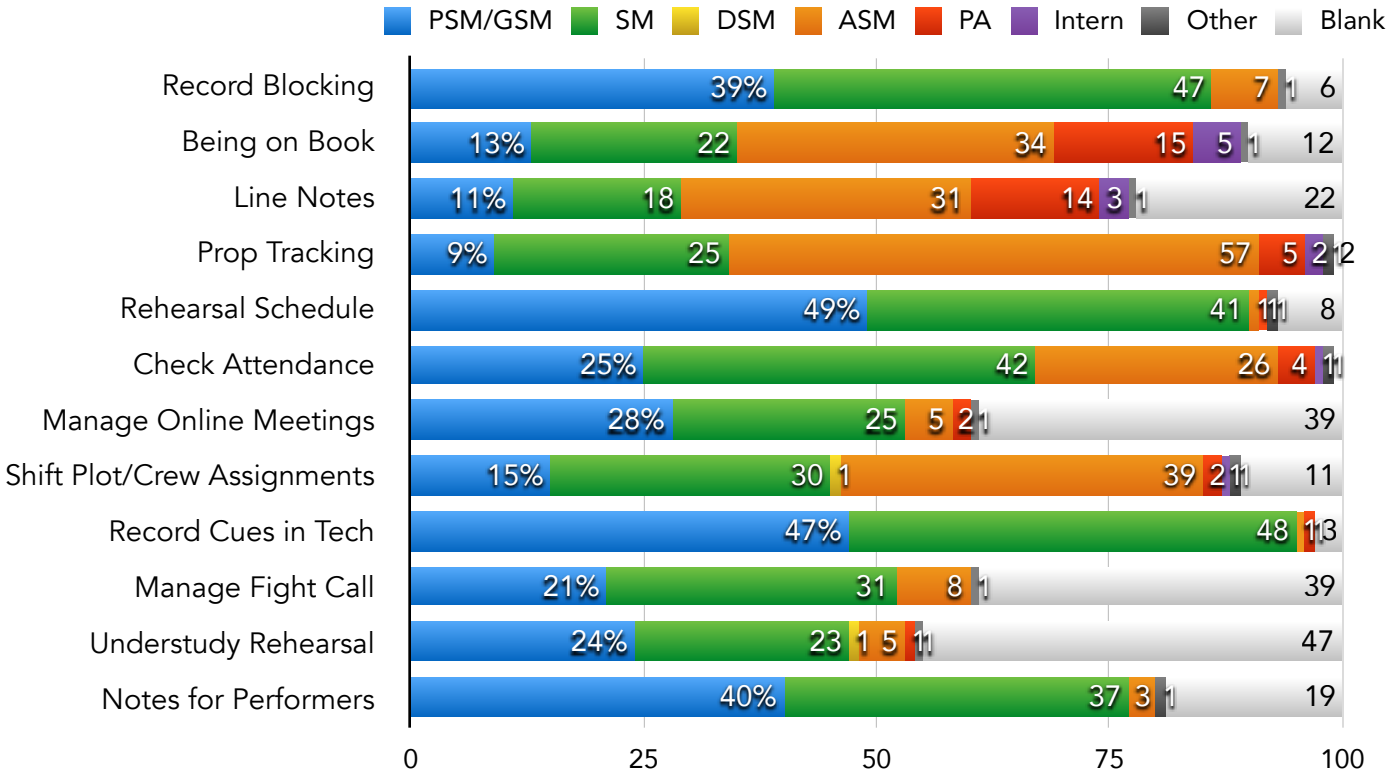
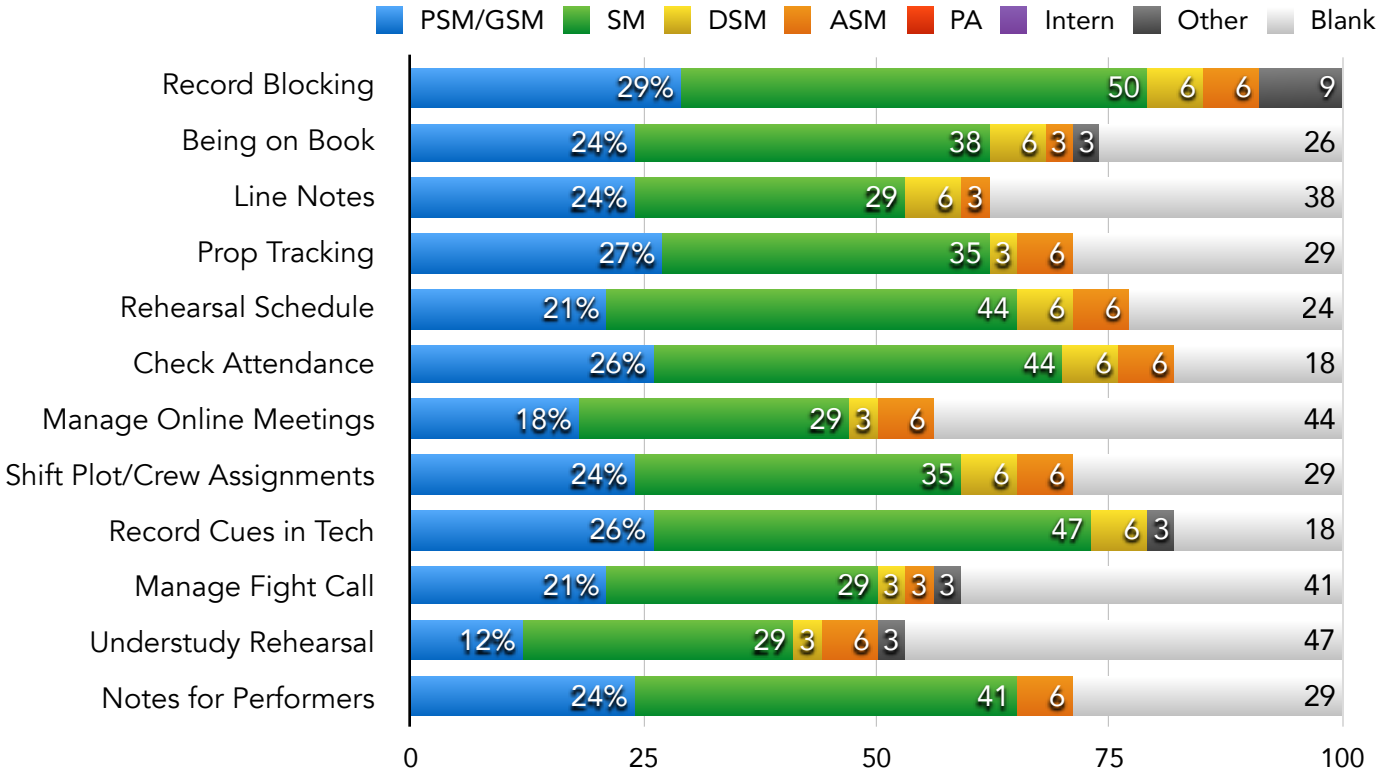


Figure 34: Responsibilities by Position on Most Recent Project - Multinational Group (n=34)



Among 1,080 survey participants, 83% responded that they "typically call cues to crew members." This percentage ranged from 92% among Canadian responses to 73% of responses from the UK, but it may be more a result of the size of stage management teams and individual responsibilities than a difference in cue calling per country. Such an explanation may also apply to the range in responses based on years of experience (76% of participants with 5 or fewer years, increasing to 90% of participants with at least 26 years of experience (n=1,067)). Changes in productions due to the pandemic may have also influenced crew size and the need to call cues.

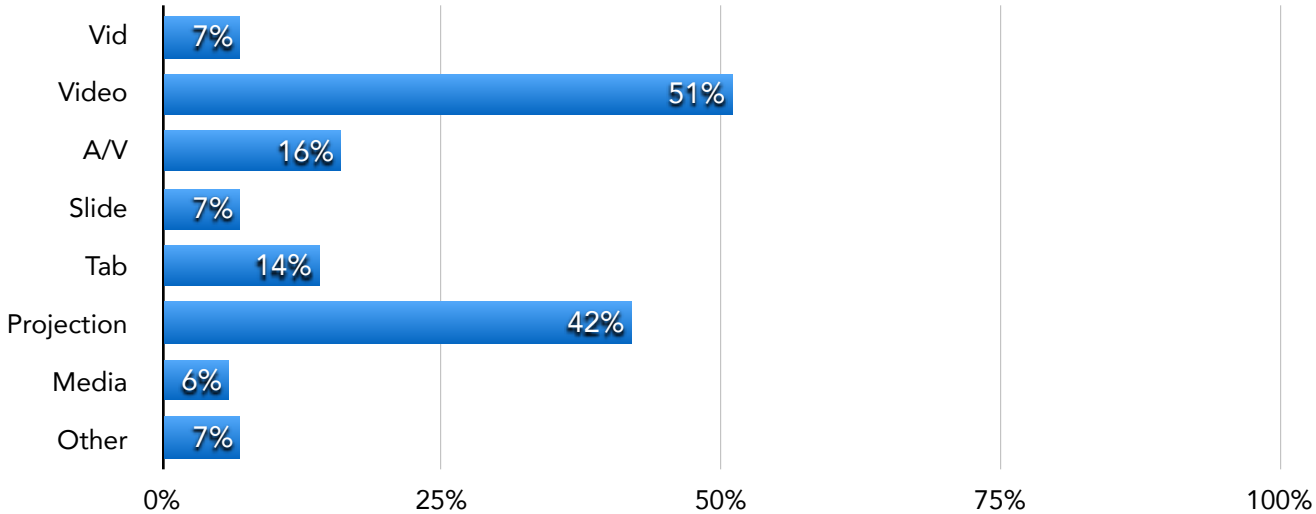
About half (52% of 1,152 responses) wrote their cues by hand in their most recent calling script. Other cue recording techniques used were stickers/paper flag/adhesive notes ("Post-It") at 21% and typed cues on a printed script (16%). Only 10% used a digital script on their most recent production. This question was changed from previous surveys to focus only the most recent production as most stage managers had reported trying a number of cue recording techniques.

Overall, experience using cue lights to signal crew members has remained steady: 80% in 2021 (n=884) compared to 78% among Americans in 2019. Analyzing by region, they are most familiar to stage managers in the United Kingdom (98% of participants indicated experience using cue lights) and least used by Australian stage managers (74%).

The survey also included several terminology questions. Even across national borders, 90% of stage managers calling cues in English name the announcement prior to calling a cue a "standby." This term has become standard over time, growing from 76% of responses in 2006 and largely replacing other English terms such as "warning" or "ready." "Achtung" was the most popular non-English term to alert crew to an upcoming cue.

A greater range of English terminology is used to name cues that include projections and/or video **[Figure 35]**. In addition to "Other" terms such as Multi-media, a number of participants noted that their projection and video cues were now run via the light or sound consoles, so they used light or sound cue designations.

Figure 35: Terminology for Projection and Video Cues (n=813)



A common skill expected of stage managers is the ability to read music. Although there is not test or process to measure proficiency, survey participants were asked about their comfort level in reading music **[Figure 36**, n=1,082) and training in music [**Figure 37,** n=1,081]. For the second survey edition in a row, the comfort levels have remained steady but the amount of musical training has declined slightly. It should be noted that there are a variety of ways to learn how to read music; this survey question asked about playing an instrument or taking voice classes.

Figure 36: Comfort Level in Reading Music (n=1,082)

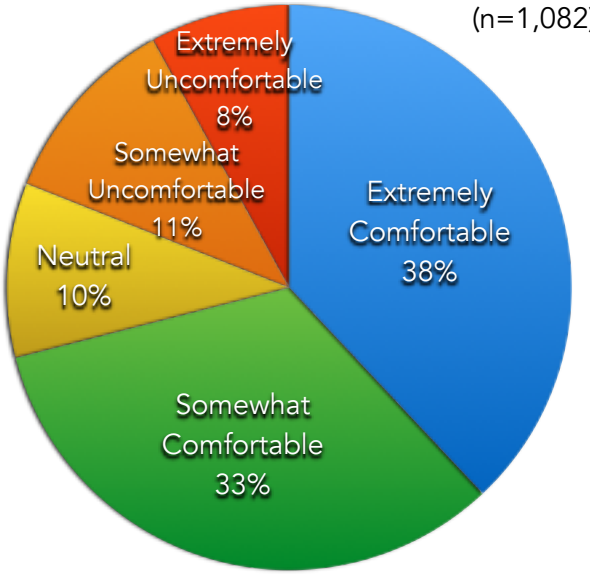
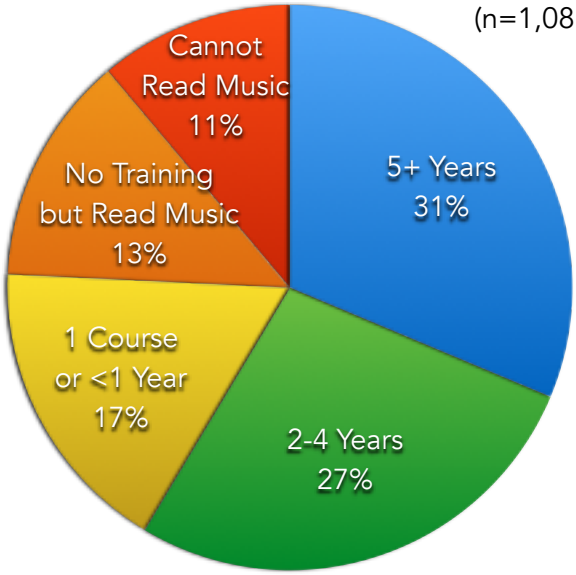


Figure 37: Training - Musical Instrument/Voice (n=1,081)

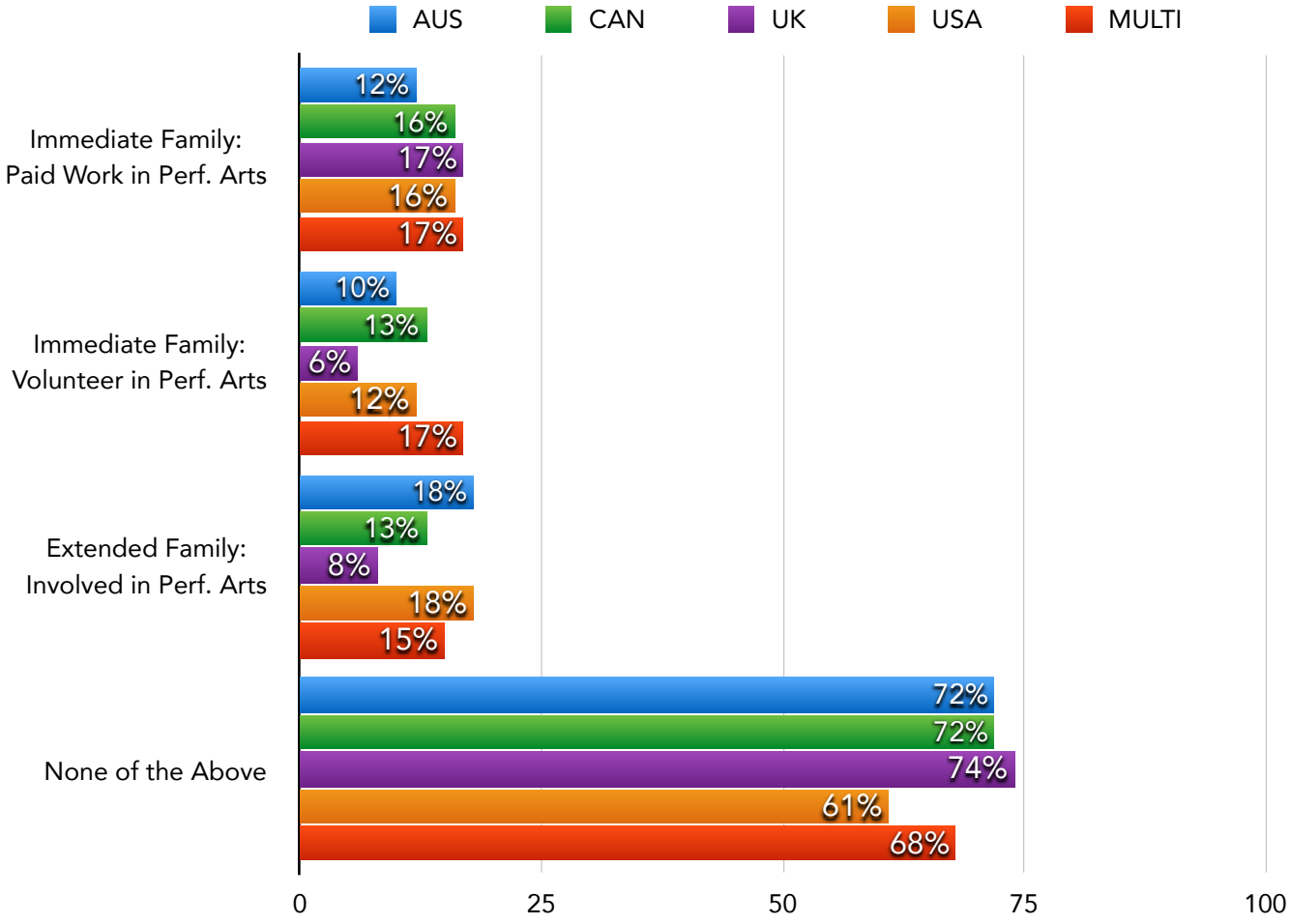


The survey inquired if participants had family connections to the performing arts to determine if involvement in the field was passed down through generations **[Figure 38]**. To a large degree, this was not the case. **Figure 39** shows, by country group, whether participants had immediate family members in the performing arts (paid vs. volunteer positions) or extended family members in the field (paid and volunteer combined). It was possible for participants to choose more than one field. Response rates to this question were Australia (50), Canada (64), UK (66), USA (874), and the Multinational group (53). This question was also analyzed by age brackets (n=1,138) to track trends over time. There was no decisive age trend among None of the Above responses.

Figure 38: No Family Connections to Performing Arts by Age Bracket (n=1,138)

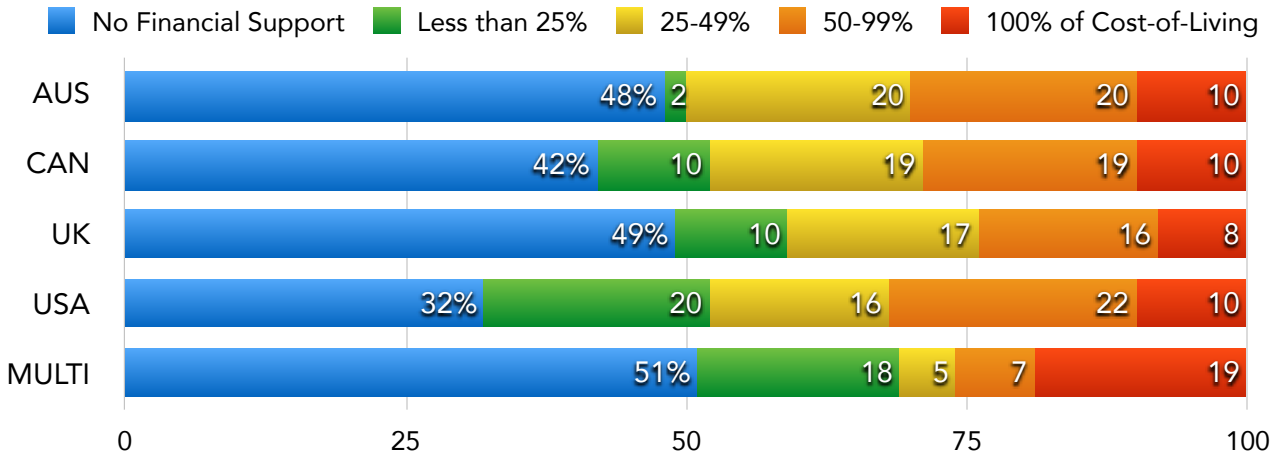
	Under 21	21-25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70
None of the Above	59%	57%	63%	55%	62%	56%	65%

Figure 39: Family Connections to the Performing Arts by Country (n=*see text*)



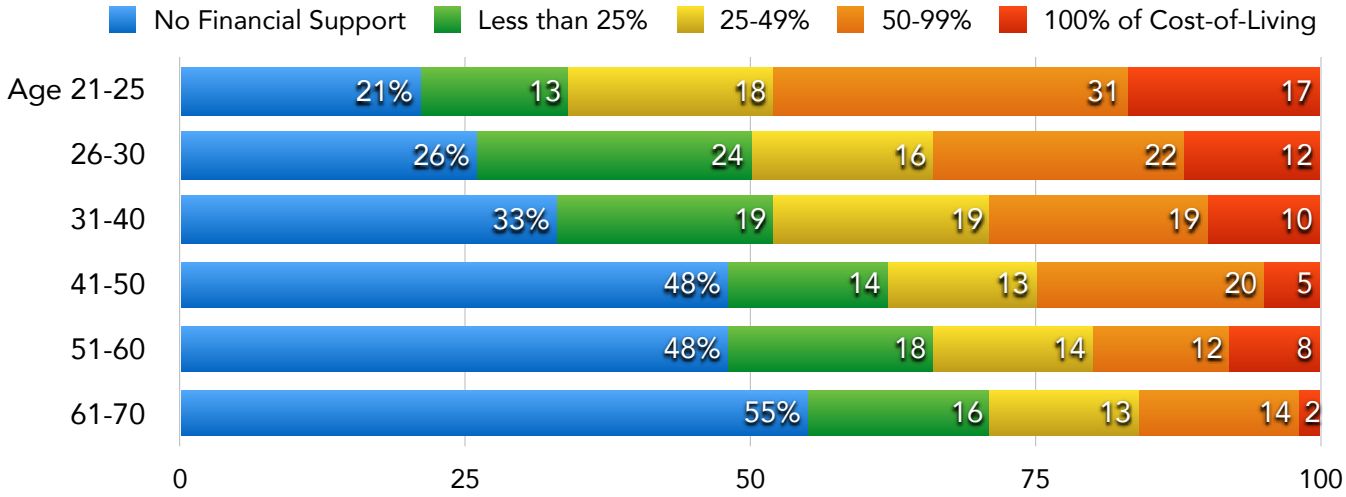
In addition to family connections to the performing arts, the survey also inquired about whether stage managers had received financial support from their families, spouses, and partners at the beginning of their careers (AUS n=40, CAN n=59, UK n=51, USA n=721, Multinational n=43).

Figure 40: Financial Support Received at Start of Career by Country (n=*see text*)



Even more striking, however, was the difference in financial support divided by age brackets:

Figure 41: Financial Support Received at Start of Career by Age Brackets (n=885)



Inversely, **Figure 42** shows how many other people are dependent on the stage manager's salary, as reported by country or region (AUS n=41, CAN n=44, UK n=52, USA n=600, MULTI n=44). These dependents could include children and spouses, but also parents and extended family members. This data can be compared to the 11% of participants who stated they had children or dependents under age 18 (page 14). The number of None, Only Myself responses may be underreported, particularly in the United States, as a number of participants did not answer this question. **Figure 43** cross-references the number of dependents by the stage manager's gender.

Figure 42: Number of People Dependent Upon Participant's Salary by Country (n=*see text*)

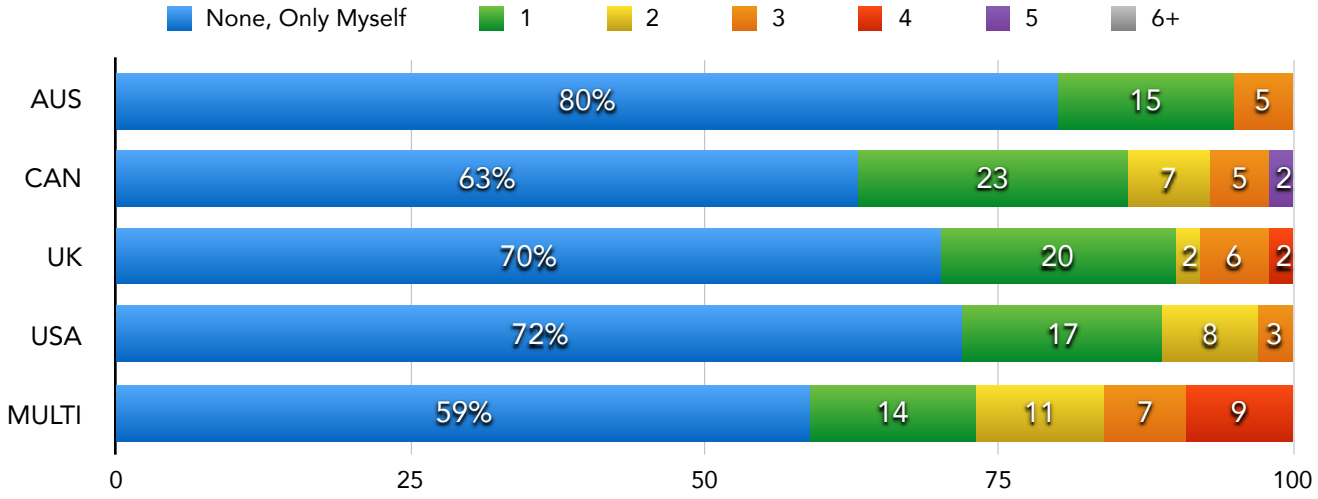


Figure 43: Number of People Dependent Upon Participant's Salary by Gender Identity (n=767)

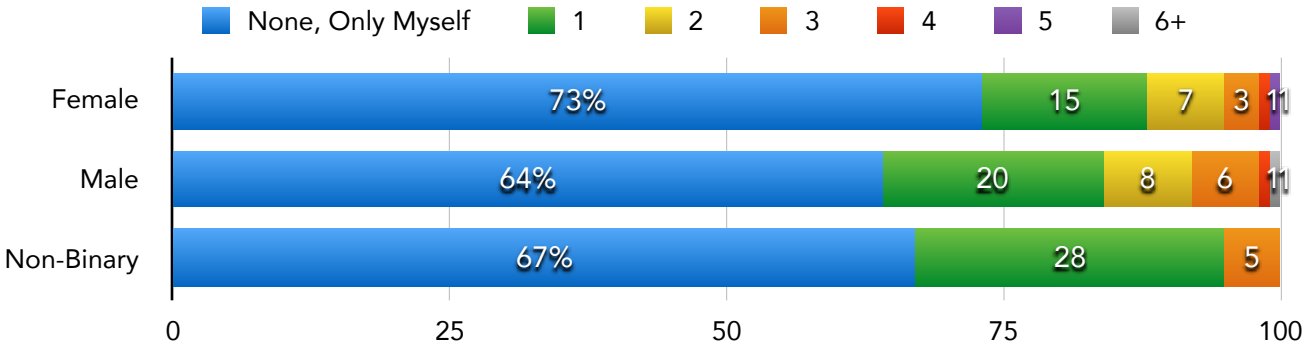
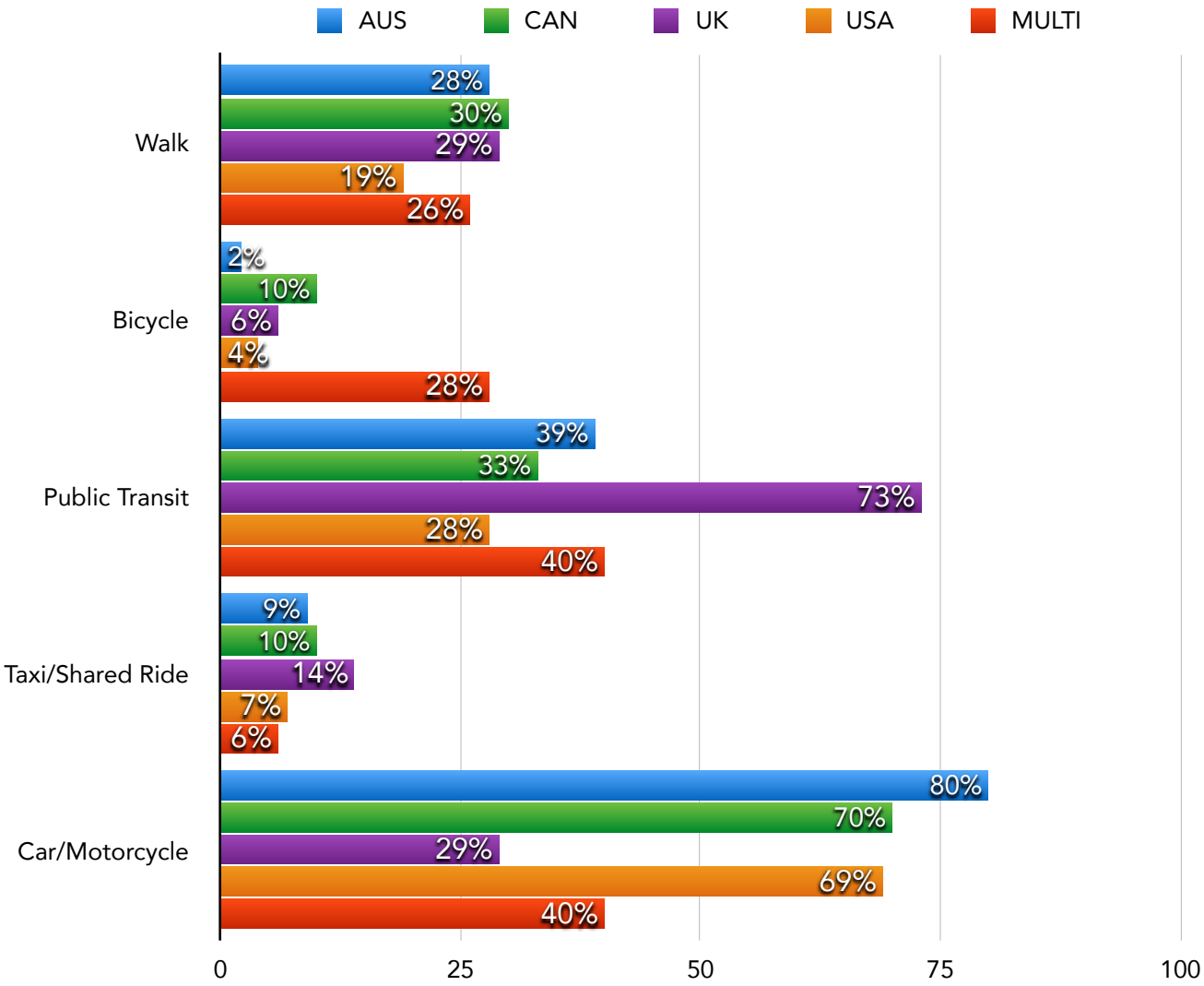


Figure 44 shows comparative data on commuting to work on their most recent stage management job by region (AUS n=41, CAN n=44, UK n=52, USA n=600, MULTI n=44). It was possible to select more than one method of transportation; additional methods included carpooling and tour buses.

Figure 44: Method of Work Commute on Most Recent Job (n=*see text*)



Finally, **Figures 45-49** compare the countries/regions by how much fast food, caffeinated beverages, and alcohol stage managers reported consuming in a regular work week, as well as how often they cook their own meals and exercise. Comparing American responses to the 2019 survey, the pandemic has not been kind: stage managers in the United States (and perhaps globally) reported consuming slightly more fast food, caffeinated beverages, and alcohol, while exercise rates are slightly down.

Figure 45: Food/Drink/Exercise in a Regular Work Week - Australia (n=50)

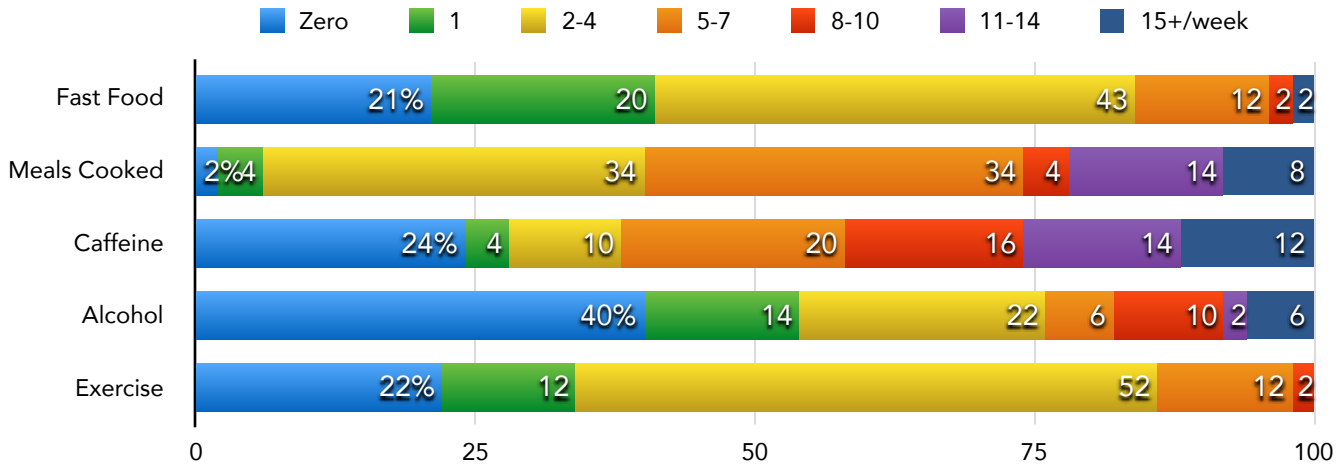


Figure 46: Food/Drink/Exercise in a Regular Work Week - Canada (n=71)

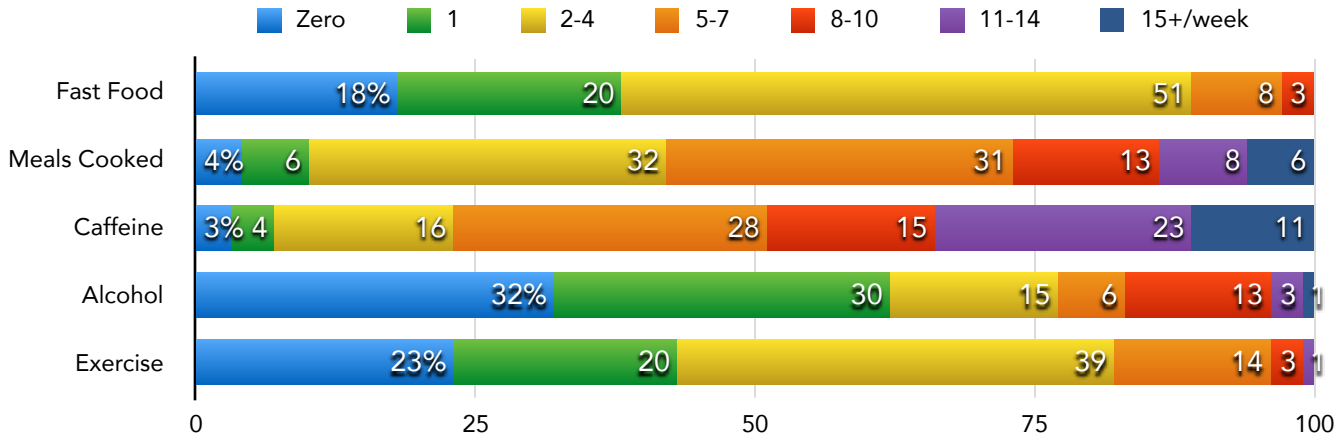


Figure 47: Food/Drink/Exercise in a Regular Work Week - United Kingdom (n=68)

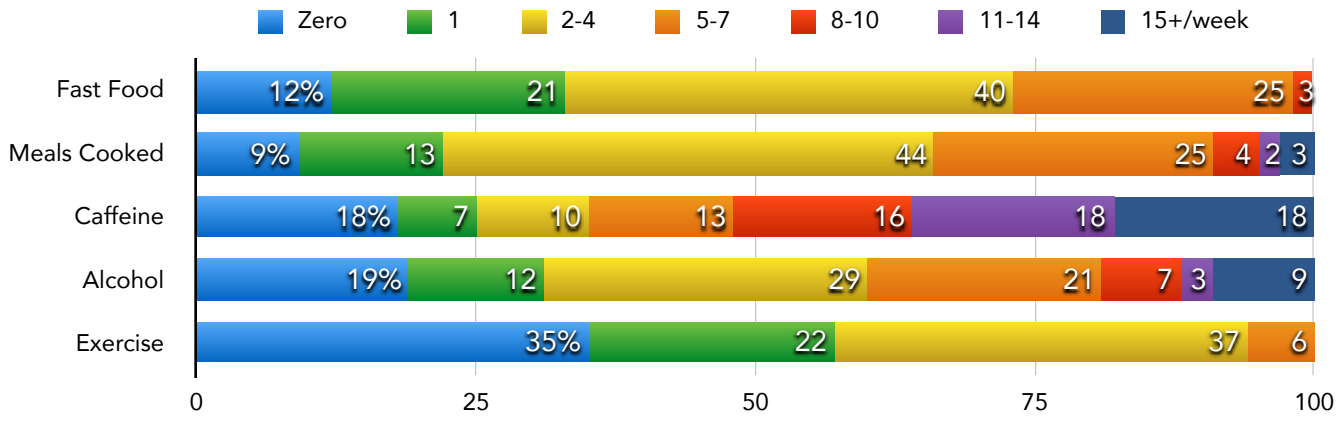


Figure 48: Food/Drink/Exercise in a Regular Work Week - United States (n=954)

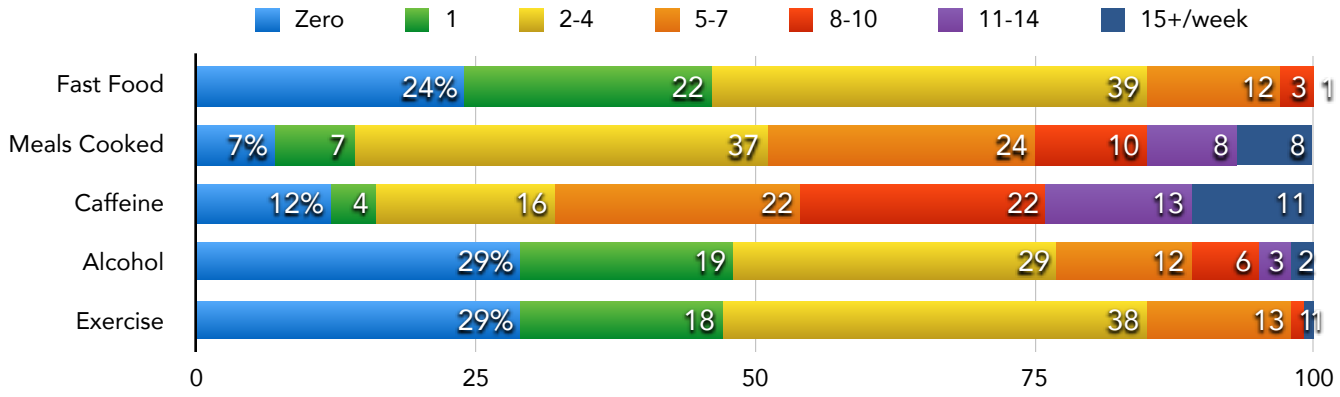
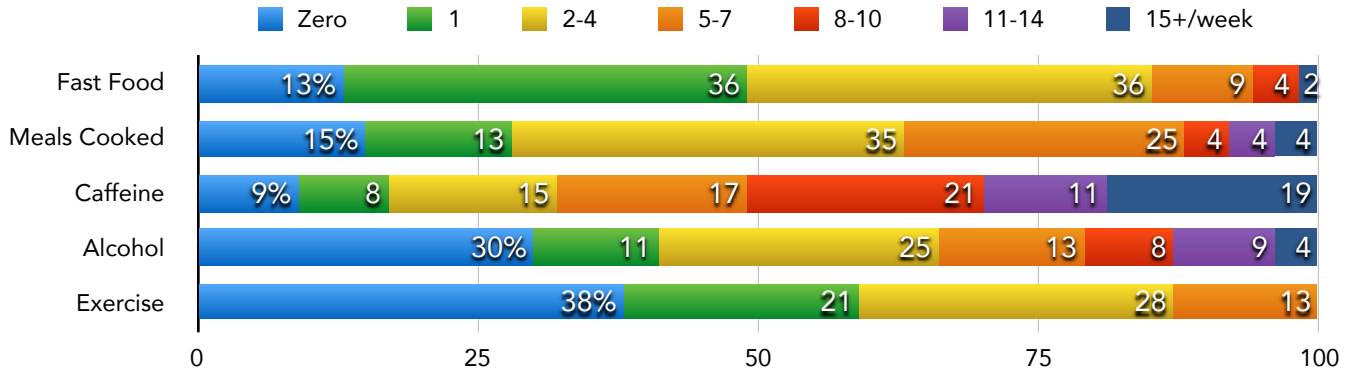


Figure 49: Food/Drink/Exercise in a Regular Work Week - Multinational Group (n=53)



Section IV: Employment

In addition to asking about whether the pandemic reduced or increased their stage management income (**Figure 21** for country and **Figure 22** for American union status), participants were asked how much of their income from the previous twelve months (October 2020 - October 2021) came from stage management work. **Figure 50** shows the percentage of annual income factored by country/region (AUS n=41, CAN n=44, UK n=52, USA n=602, MULTI n=44). The 44 participants in the Multinational group reported the highest percentages of income from stage management. As a pre-COVID comparison, 32% of American participants in 2019 (n=950) reported earning all of their income from stage management. **Figure 51** factors percentage of annual income in the USA by non-union status (n=270) and union membership (n=314). Prior to the pandemic, unionized participants reported much higher percentages of their annual income from stage management.

Figure 50: Percentage of Annual Income from Stage Management by Country (n=*see text*)

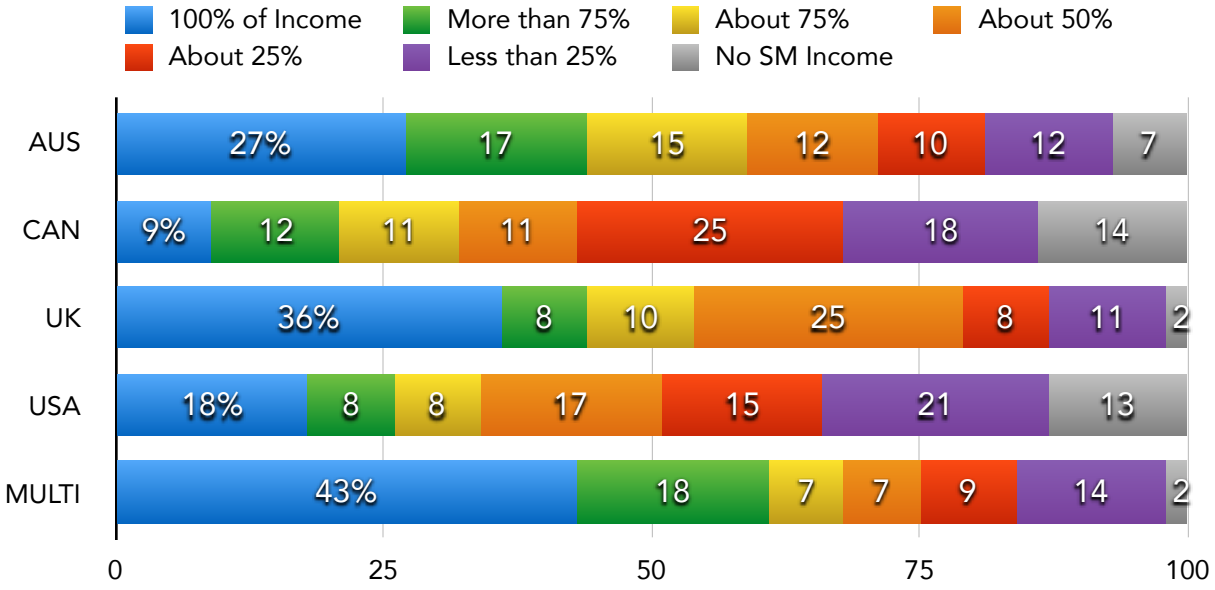
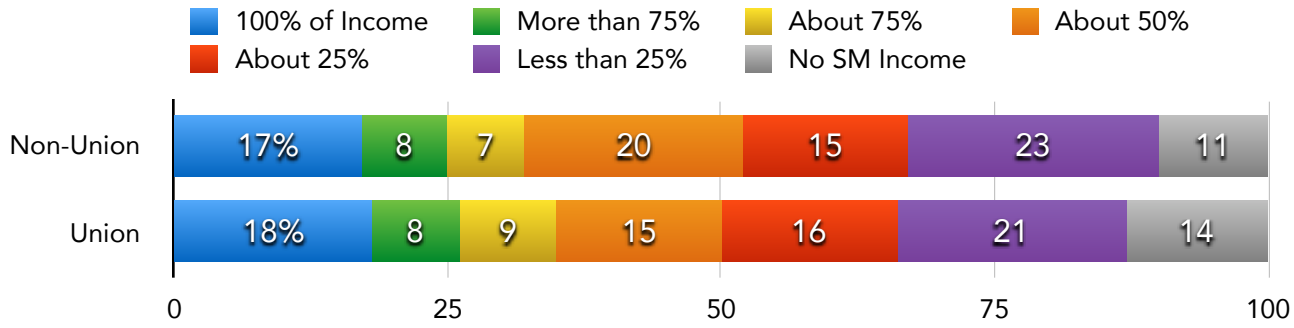


Figure 51: Percentage of Annual Income from Stage Management by Union Status (USA) (n=*see text*)



It would be very difficult to compare salaries between countries beyond the issue of currency exchange as taxes and cost-of-living expenses would also need to be considered. **Figure 52** shows the weekly salary for American stage managers on their most recent project to October 2021. If the stage manager was paid a single fee, they were asked to calculate a weekly rate. Like Figure 51, the division was made between non-union (n=251) and union (n=298); union status included AEA as well as other performing arts unions. Figure 52 tells a much different story than Figure 51 as the weekly salaries are notably higher.

Figure 52: Weekly Pay on Most Recent Project by Union Status (USA) (n=*see text*)

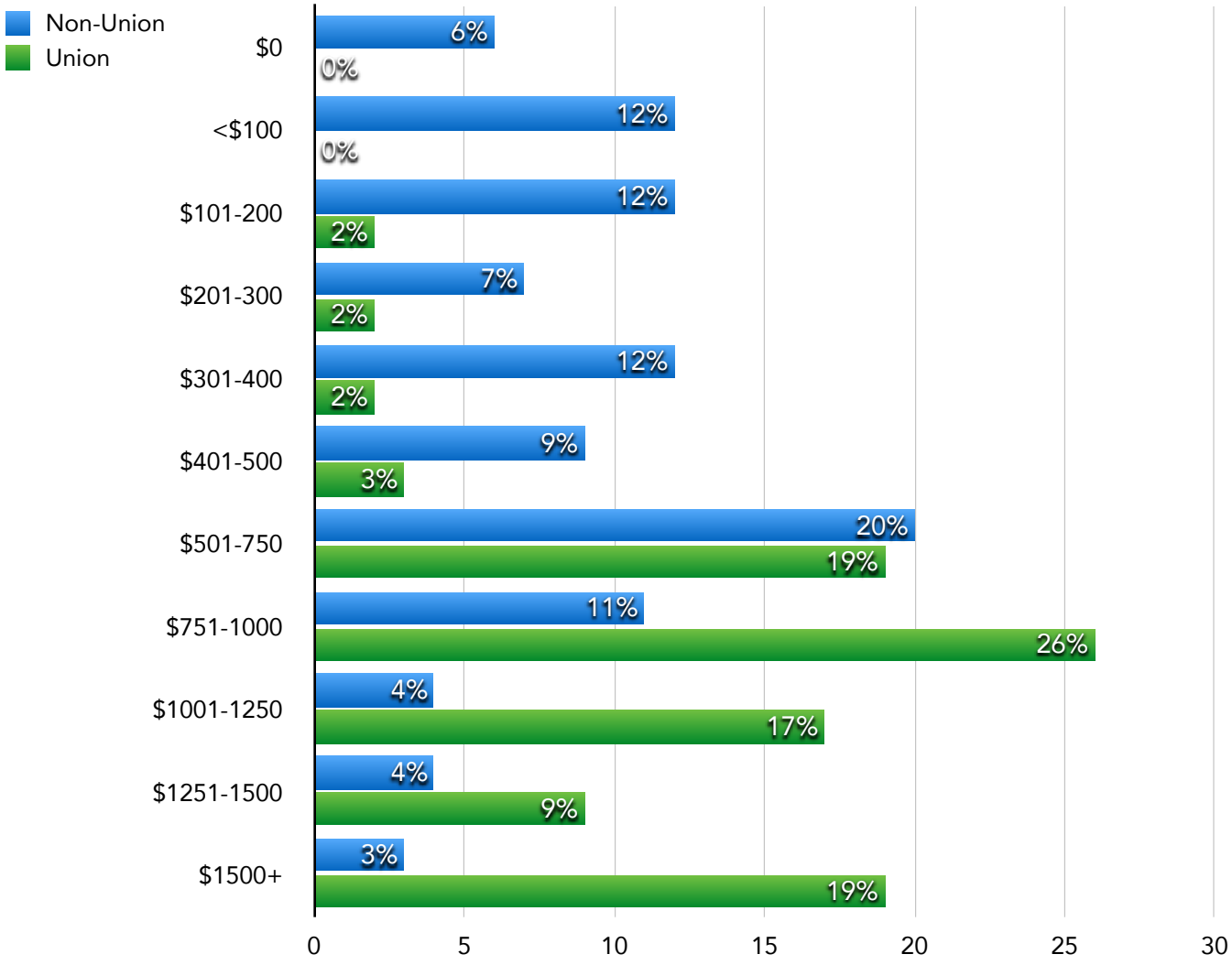
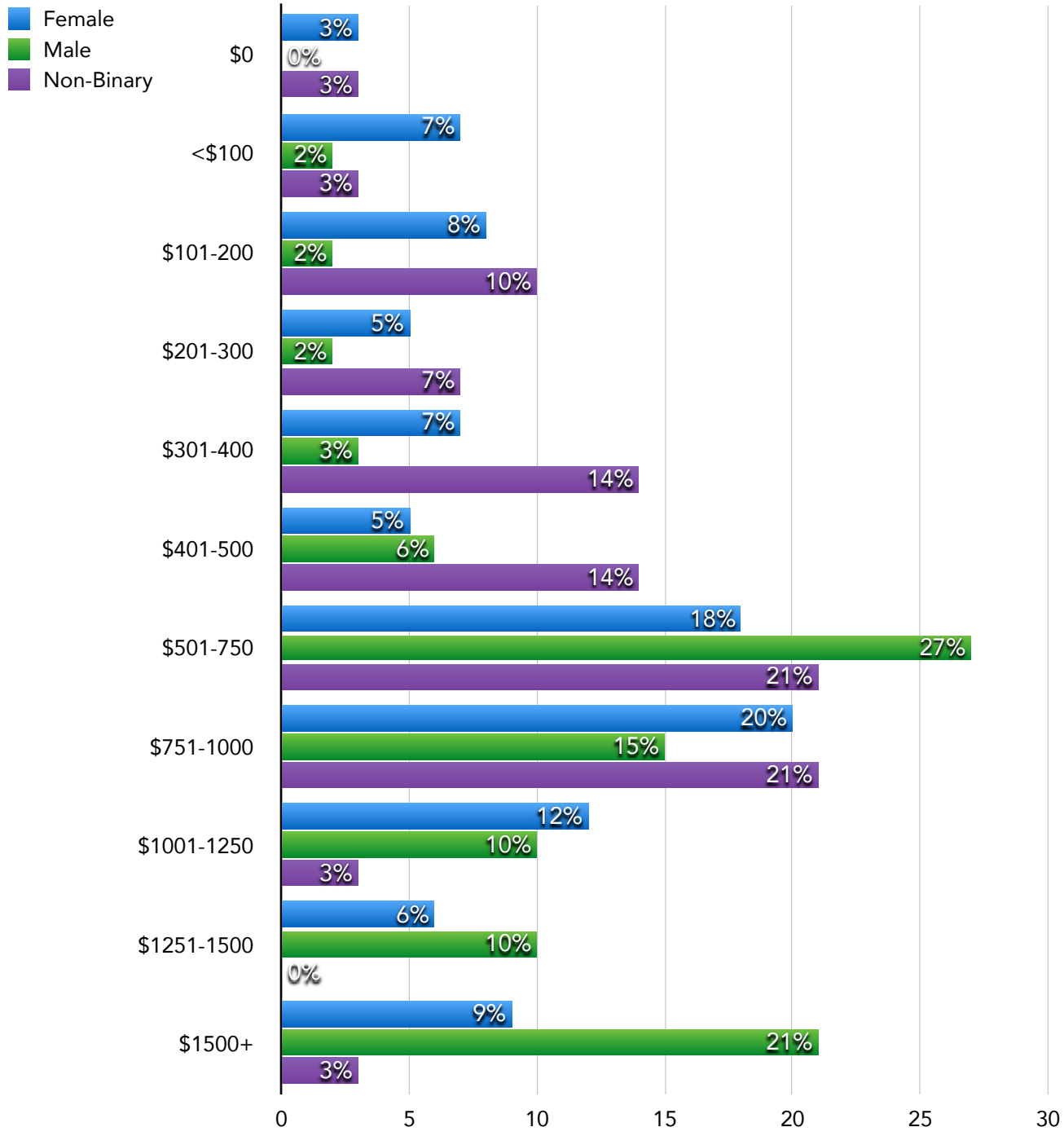


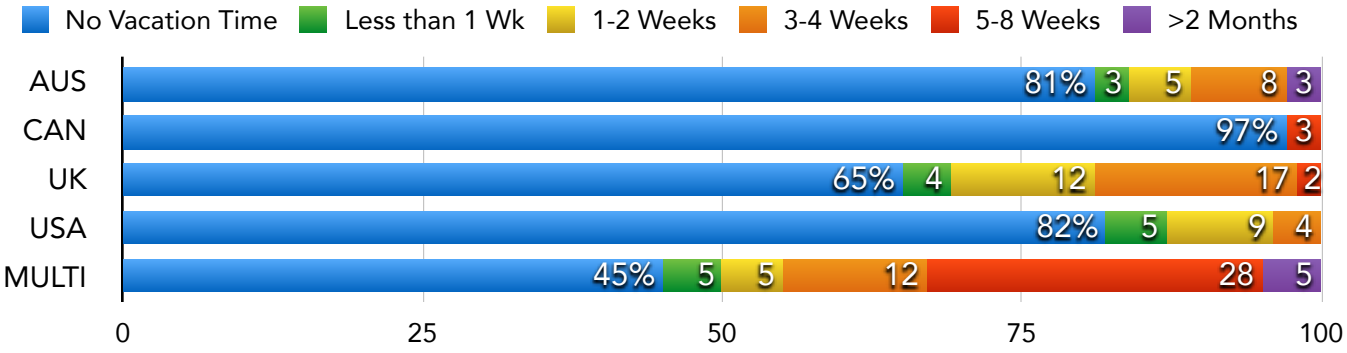
Figure 53 examines weekly pay by gender identity. While a factor analysis (accounting for union status, experience level, job title, etc.) is needed, it is clear that male-identifying American stage managers earn more than their female counterparts: 41% of male SMs earned more than $1,000/ week compared to 27% of females. Examining weekly pay by race, White and BIPOC groups were within 2 percentage points, including an identical 12% earning more than $1,500 week.

Figure 53: Weekly Pay on Most Recent Project by Gender (USA) (n=550)



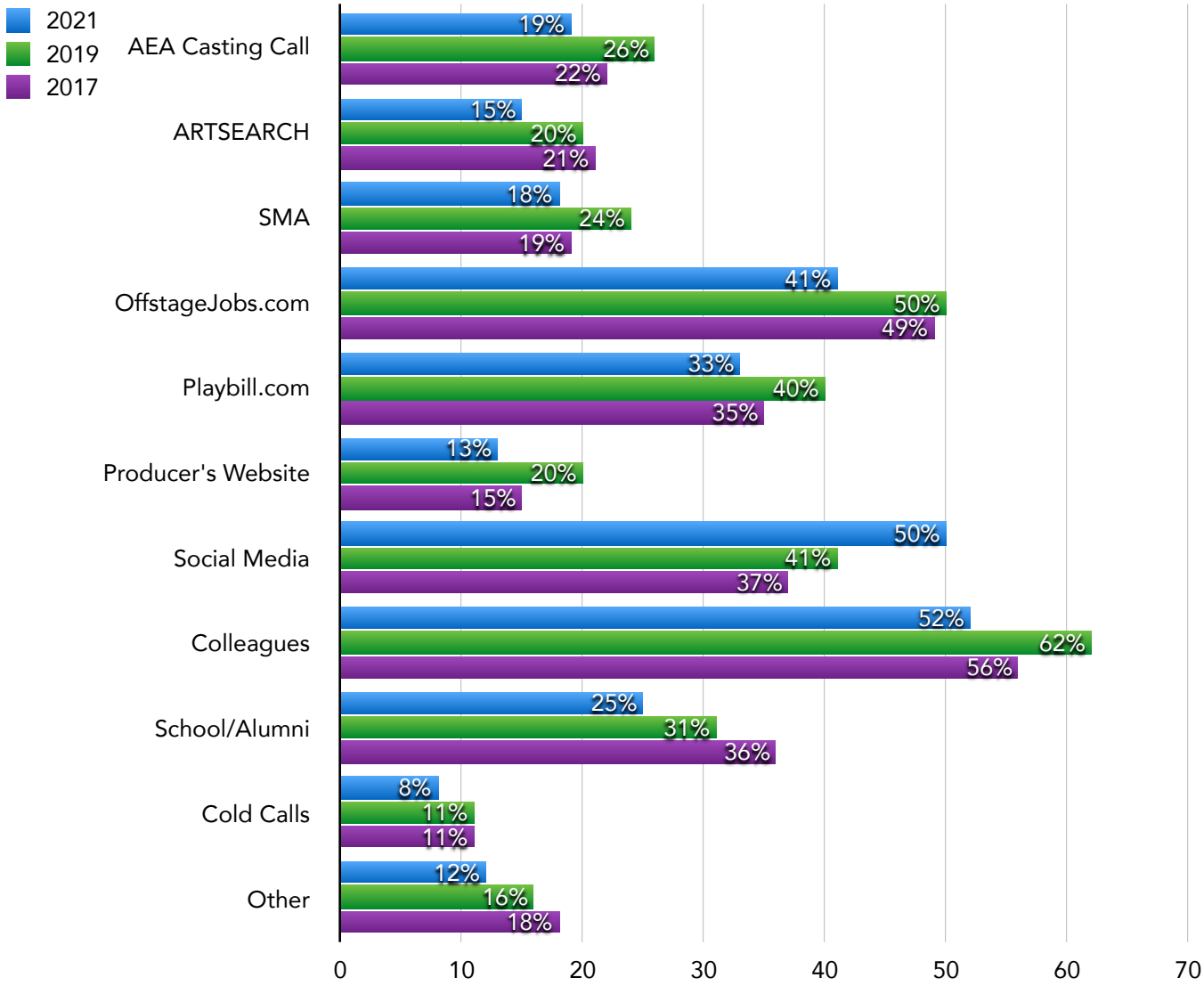
For the sake of continuity with previous editions of the survey, a question about paid vacation was included even though the pandemic forced far more unemployment than vacation. Responses were limited to vacation in stage management jobs and were factored by country (AUS n=37, CAN n=40, UK n=48, USA n=482, MULTI n=40). It will be very interesting to compare this question as we emerge from the pandemic and hopefully include additional countries.

Figure 54: Vacation Time in the Past 12 Months by Country (n=*see text*)



American stage managers increasingly used social media to find work, as well as the new category of city/regional associations (17%) such as the League of Chicago Theatre (41 responses).

Figure 55: Sources Used to Find Stage Management Work in USA (2021 n=817)



A major focal point of the Stage Manager Survey has been job negotiations. **Figure 56** tracks the frequency and success rates of conducting salary negotiations over participants' last three jobs. The trend of negotiation has continued to grow, even prior to what is being called the Great Resignation. **Figure 57** analyzes the data by gender with comparative data from 2019; stage managers who identify as non-binary reported the biggest gains in both negotiation frequency and success. **Figure 58** examines the United States data with a BIPOC/White lens to see a slight difference in frequency but a larger difference in success rates, **Figure 59** examines the data by country/region (AUS n=48, CAN n=71, UK n=66, USA n=867, MULTI n=53). In this last model, the 53 members of the Multinational group demonstrated the highest frequency of negotiations but the group from the United Kingdom reported the highest success rates. **Figure 60** examines how much more was earned on the most recent successful negotiation.

Figure 56: Frequency of Negotiation and Negotiation Success (2021 n=1105)

	Negotiated All 3 Times	Negotiated at least Once	Never Negotiated	Always Succeeded	Sometimes Succeeded	Never Succeeded
2021	14%	31%	55%	31%	53%	16%
2019	10%	33%	56%	34%	47%	19%
2017	8%	26%	66%	29%	51%	20%
2015	8%	33%	59%	24%	69%	7%

Figure 57: Frequency of Negotiation and Negotiation Success by Gender (n=1083)

	Negotiated All 3 Times	Negotiated at least Once	Never Negotiated	Always Succeeded	Sometimes Succeeded	Never Succeeded
Female '21	12%	29%	59%	32%	51%	18%
Female '19	8%	34%	58%	34%	44%	22%
Male '21	20%	35%	45%	32%	56%	12%
Male '19	19%	34%	47%	33%	52%	15%
Non-Binary '21	11%	36%	53%	24%	48%	29%
Non-Binary '19	2%	26%	72%	Not enough data	Not enough data	Not enough data

Figure 58: Frequency of Negotiation and Negotiation Success by Race (USA) (n=836)

	Negotiated All 3 Times	Negotiated at least Once	Never Negotiated	Always Succeeded	Sometimes Succeeded	Never Succeeded
BIPOC	11%	33%	56%	28%	47%	25%
White	15%	32%	53%	33%	50%	16%

Figure 59: Frequency of Negotiation and Negotiation Success by Country (n=*see text*)

	Negotiated All 3 Times	Negotiated at least Once	Never Negotiated	Always Succeeded	Sometimes Succeeded	Never Succeeded
AUS	10%	21%	69%	20%	73%	7%
CAN	17%	21%	62%	19%	56%	26%
UK	11%	30%	59%	41%	52%	7%
USA	14%	31%	55%	32%	51%	17%
MULTI	21%	37%	42%	22%	68%	10%

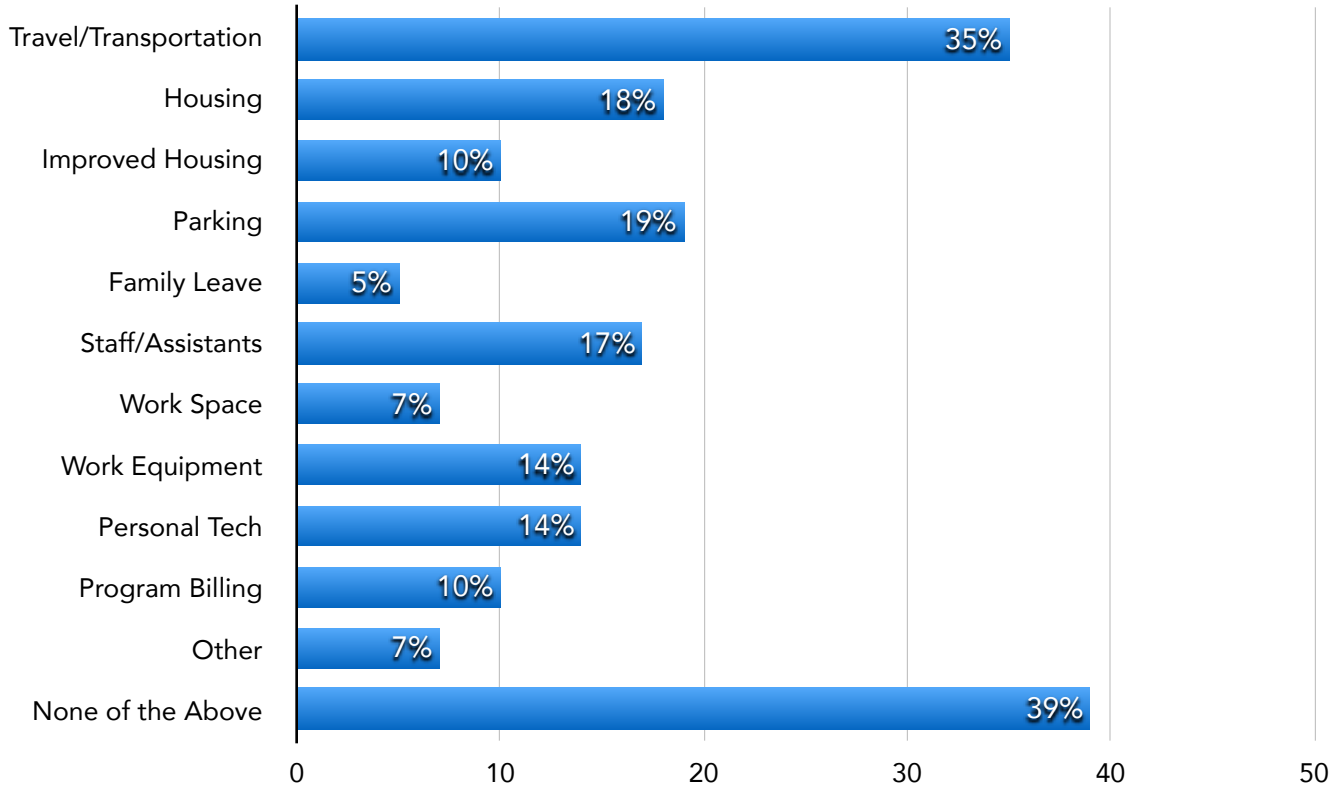
Figure 60: Additional Earnings of Last Successful Negotiation (Overall n=410)

	Up to 5% of Salary	6-10% of Salary	11-20% of Salary	>20% of Salary
Overall	45%	36%	11%	8%
Female	49%	33%	9%	9%
Male	36%	45%	15%	4%
Non-Binary	47%	13%	13%	27%
BIPOC (USA)	38%	35%	10%	18%
White (USA)	46%	36%	11%	7%
AUS	50%	43%	0%	7%
CAN	80%	10%	5%	5%
UK	28%	48%	12%	12%
USA	44%	37%	11%	8%
MULTI	46%	29%	18%	7%

The additional earnings question was limited to the participants most recent successful negotiation. Compared to the 2019 survey data, the overall percentage of salary increase was lower in 2021, but the end of 2021 and beginning of 2022 has witnessed stronger negotiating positions for workers.

Negotiations frequently included more than just salaries. Participants listed items beyond salaries that they had negotiated **[Figure 61]**. "Improved housing" included a location closer to the venue or a larger space; personal tech included cell phone plans. Some of the other negotiated items included vacations, work schedules, meals, and supplies.

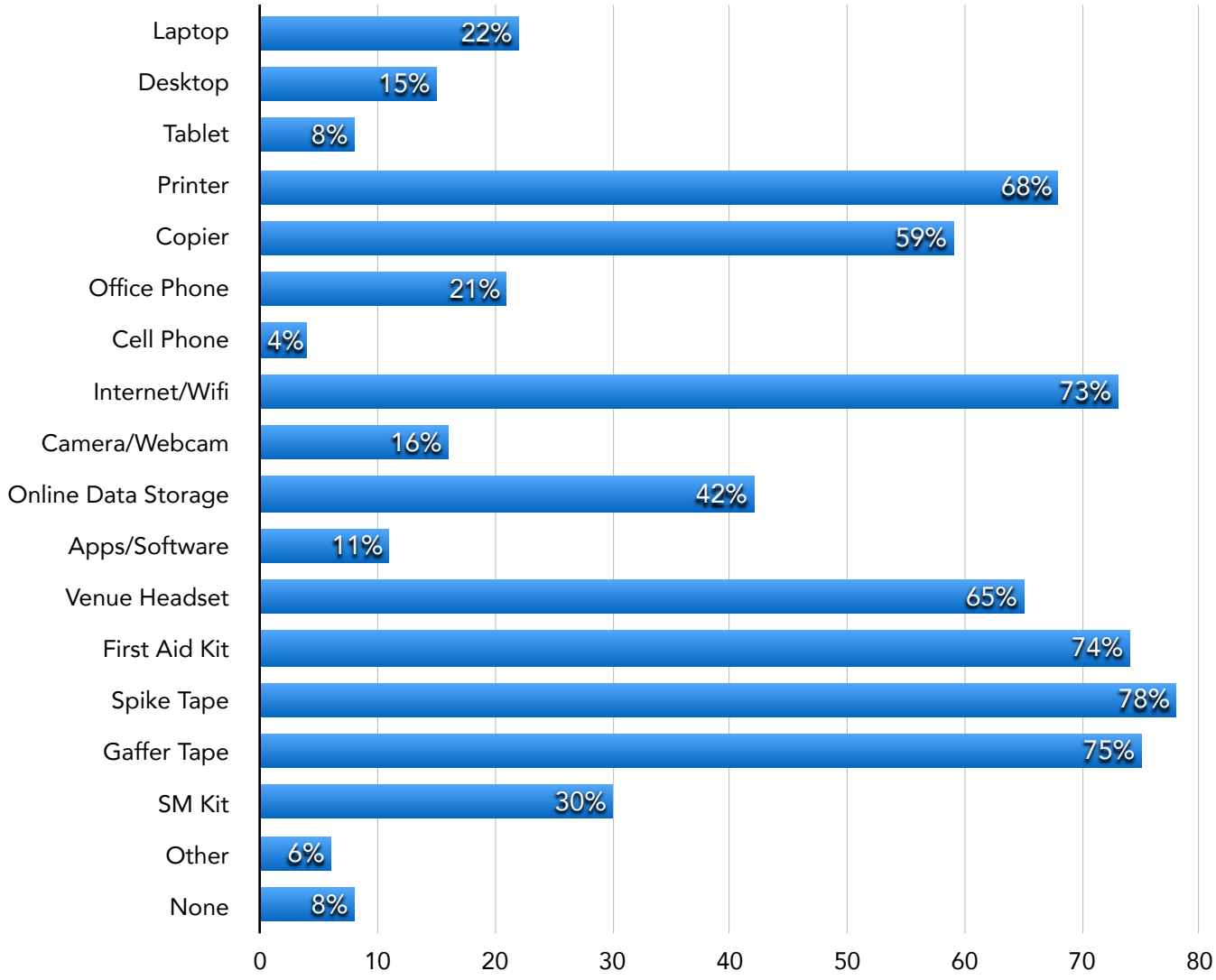
Figure 61: Non-Salary Items Negotiated on Stage Management Jobs (n=1,058)



As noted above, some participants negotiated for assistants or larger staff. A total of 244 survey participants reported that they were in a position to hire stage management team members and 236 shared the average number of applications received for advertised stage management positions: 58% reported receiving just 1-10 applications, 27% received 11-25 applications, 9% received 26-50 applications, 3% received 51-75 applications, and 3% reported receiving over 75 applications for an advertised stage management position. These percentages are steady with 2019 in the United States other than a modest (3-4 percent point change) decrease in 11-25 applications and corresponding increase in 26-50 applications. This group of hiring respondents was too small to divide among county divisions while maintaining anonymity of responses.

Regardless of negotiations, some producers provide their SM teams with technical equipment. **Figure 62** lists the technical equipment provided by the producer on the participant's most recent project. Some of the Other Equipment included headsets for online work (26 responses) and general office equipment.

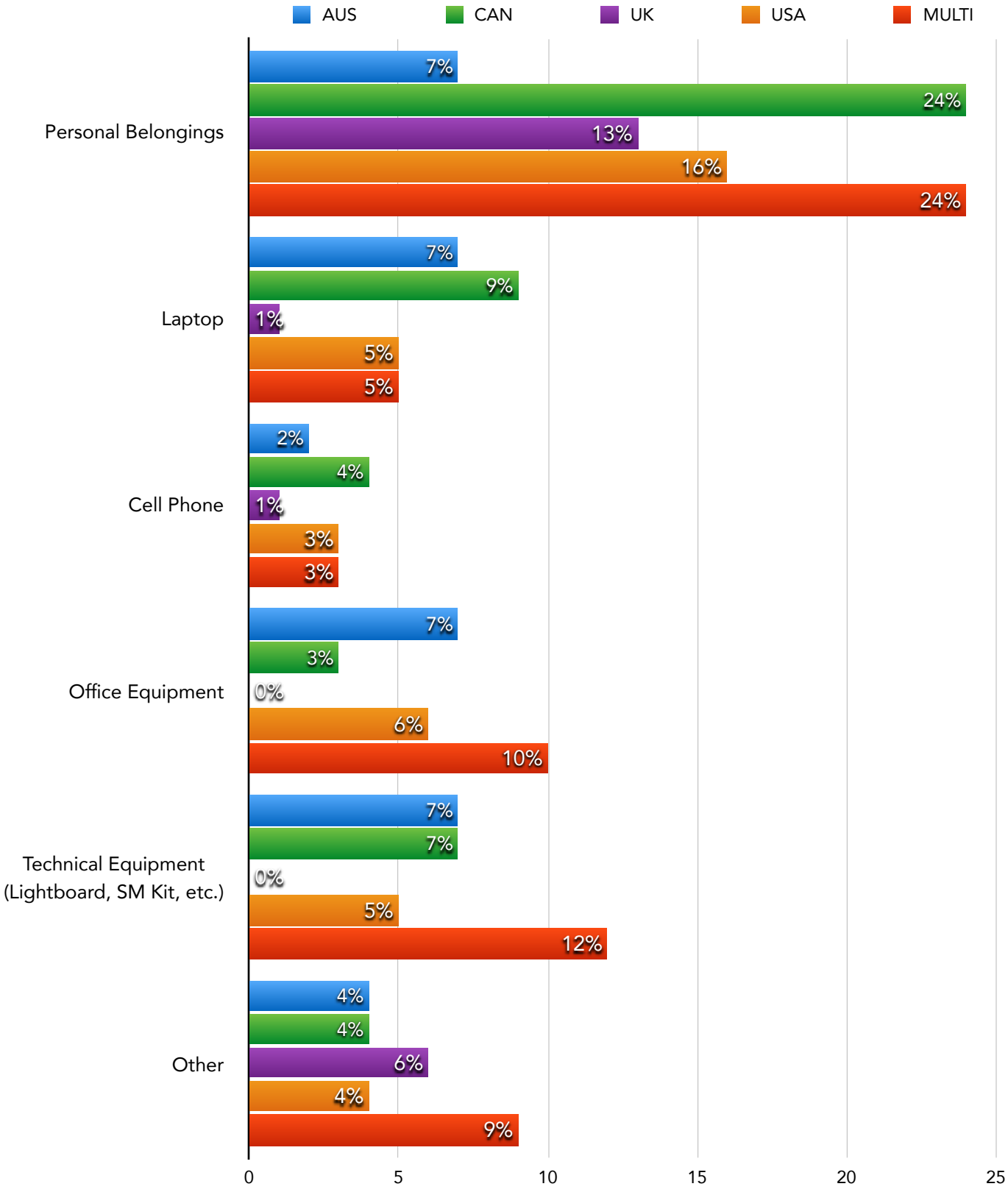
Figure 62: Technical Equipment Proved by Most Recent Producer (n=1243)



In 2019, a new survey question was introduced about theft in the workplace. While a majority of participants reported either no theft or were unaware of any workplace theft (76% AUS, 72% CAN, 81% UK, 77% USA, 58% MULTI) **Figure 63** lists the types of items stolen in by country (AUS n=55, CAN n=75, UK n=72, USA n=980, MULTI n=58). The most common "Other" items were props and costumes, but several participants noted major theft from venues during COVID shutdowns. The percentage of reported workplace theft among American respondents were lower than the 2019 survey data.

Figure 63: Theft in the Workplace in Past 5 Years

(n=1,240)



Hiring discrimination continues to be a major issue facing stage managers. Among 1,212 responses, 51% reported that identity discrimination had impacted their ability to get work at some point in their stage management career and another 4% preferred to not answer. Overall, 30% cited gender discrimination, 26% age discrimination, 9% race discrimination, 5% sexual orientation, 3% disability, and 5% "Other" such as physical size, parental status, and religion. It should be noted that these percentages are based on all 1,212 responses to this question and not those who identify with specific groups. For instance, 38% of stage managers with disabilities who answered this question reported identity discrimination in the hiring process. Gender discrimination in hiring was reported by 42% of Non-Binary, 34% of Female, and 17% of Male stage managers. In the same manner, 28% of BIPOC stage managers answering this question reported discrimination due to race compared to 6% of responding White participants. Notably, a higher percentage (28-29%) of stage managers in their twenties reported age discrimination in hiring than stage managers in their fifties (24%).

A quarter of responding members of the LGBTQIA community (n=535) reported feeling unsafe in a performing arts community at some point in their career.

All survey participants were asked about sexual harassment in their stage management work. In a group of 1,227 stage managers, 58% had witnessed sexual harassment at work (3% chose Prefer Not to Answer) and 40% had experienced sexual harassment themselves (3% chose Prefer Not to Answer).

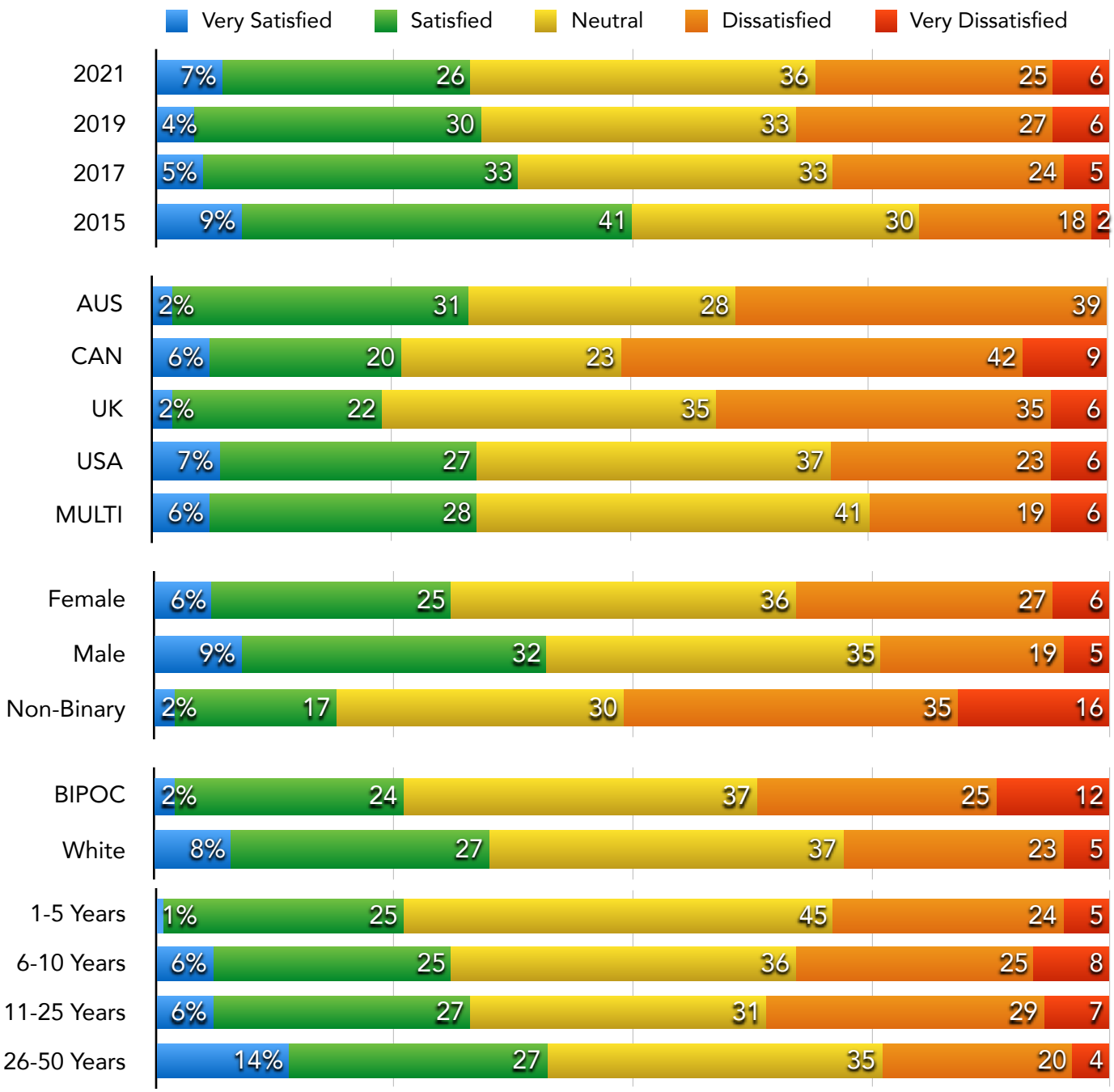
As reported in Figure 10, 53% of responding stage managers attended workshops on sexual harassment, but this data does not indicate whether all members of a production team participated in the workshop or the impact of such training. Another way that the performing arts community has attempted to address widespread workplace sexual harassment has been the introduction of Arts Intimacy guidance: 18% of respondents (Figure 10) attended Arts Intimacy workshops and 42% (n=1,225) have worked on a project with an Arts Intimacy coach or consultant. The survey defined Arts Intimacy to include staging scenes with physical intimacy, nudity, and/or sexual violence.

This survey confirms what practitioners have known for a long time: there is an epidemic of hiring discrimination and workplace harassment. What steps will stage managers take to address this epidemic?

SECTION V: LONG-TERM OUTLOOK

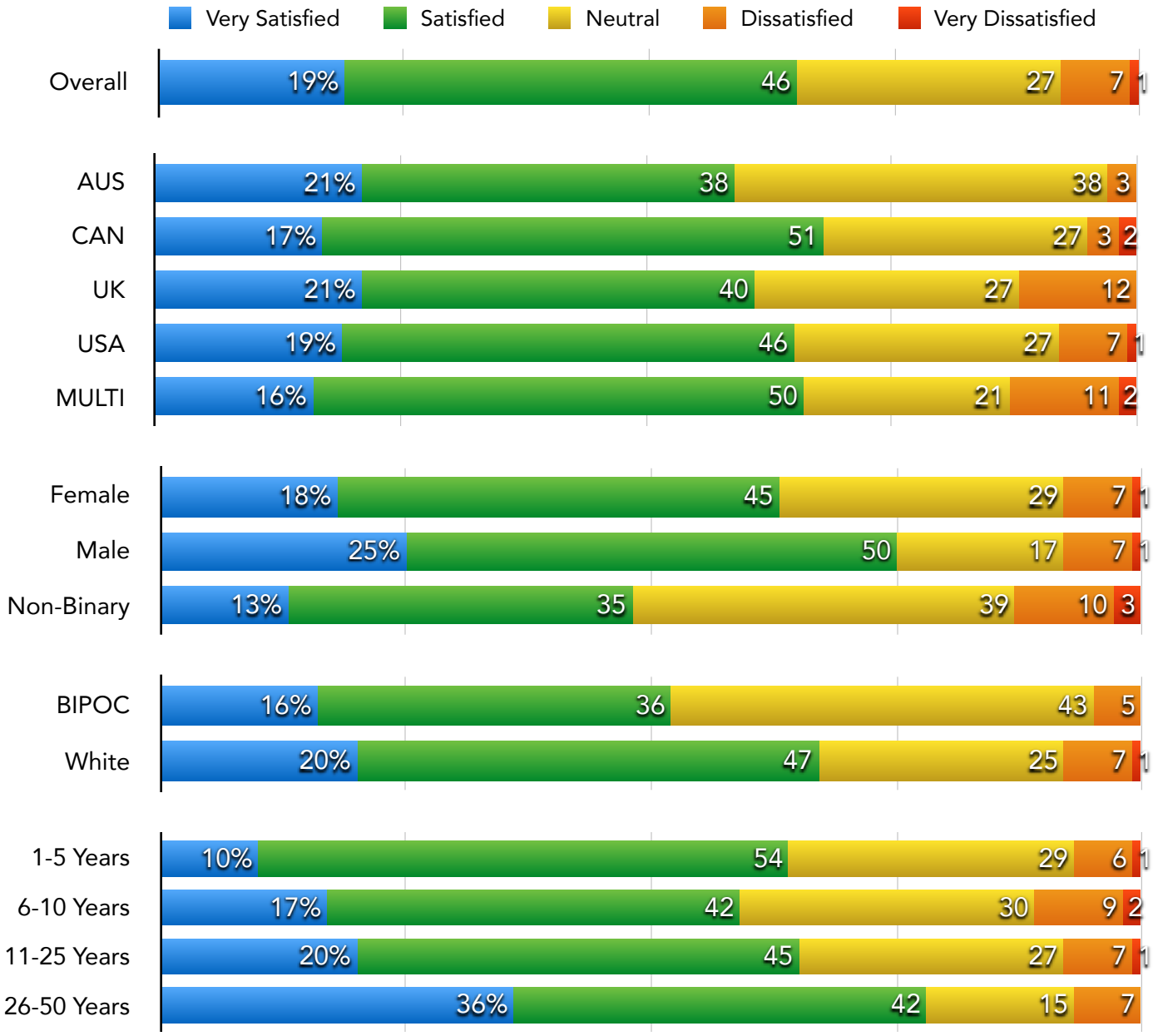
Has the pandemic actually helped stage managers realign their priorities between work and their personal lives? Satisfaction with work/life balance declined from 2015 through 2019, but showed a slight improvement in 2021. **Figure 64** displays this satisfaction by survey year (2021 n=1,089), country/region (AUS n=46, CAN n=69, UK n=63, USA n=858, MULTI n=53), gender identity (n=1,067), race in the United States (n=834), and years of experience (n=1,077).

Figure 64: Satisfaction with Work/Life Balance (n=*see text*)



A related question was satisfaction with stage management as a career. Even if participants wanted a better work/life balance, most were satisfied with their careers. Responses to this question were limited to participants who identified their current profession as PSM/GSM, SM, DSM, and ASM, so overall response sizes are lower than the work/life balance question: 2021 overall (n=731), country/region (AUS n=37, CAN n=41, UK n=48, USA n=561, MULTI n=44), gender identity (n=717), race in the United States (n=546), and years of experience (n=725).

Figure 65: Satisfaction with Stage Management Career (n=*see text*)



Representative comments on the factors contributing to career satisfaction included:

- I love my job; I've never wanted to do anything else, and I still can't believe they pay me to do this. It's a bummer that we couldn't make theater for so long this past year and a half, and now that we can, I'm doing a job that I don't particularly like because my show didn't re-open. But I know that I'll get back into a show as a stage manager before too long.
- Feeling like I am able to make an impact on the community.
- I have finally reached a point where I feel comfortable in my own skin, as a person and as a stage manager. Both ASM and PSM roles appeal to me and I'm just happy and very fortunate to be working.
- I'm blessed with a full time job and benefits. I'm working with amazing performing artists, who are great performers and people. I've had the opportunity to build my crew/team and appreciate their dedication to my goals. I am supported by management. It's been a very different experience that a majority of my freelance work experiences.
- I absolutely loved what I do, the community of theatre, and I am good at my job - there is just not enough work in New Zealand to support an industry where you can grow and get continuous work. Companies often hire inexperienced people because they charge less, then don't think SMs are that important because the 'don't do that much.'
- I love my job and my colleagues and I love playing a different city each week as it keeps things moving and no two days are alike.
- Variety of work, applied mix of technical and artistic skills, very good employment chances and conditions in Germany
- There is a sense of excitement, catharsis, and the work feels meaningful working in theater. This has become even more apparent for me after working outside of theater for a year. I am not working in stage management again (yet?), so that is the reason I'm not "very satisfied."
- The pandemic has caused me to reset and reflect, so I have a hard time answering questions like this at the moment. I''m happy with the producers for which I work, and the company I'm part of…I'm privileged to have a full time job in stage management when so many shows closed during the pandemic. I've also had full time positions on long running shows for several years now, so while I am blessed, Im always re-evaluating how I feel about where I am in life and career.
- It's not a desk job. I get to do musical theatre for a living so that's satisfying.

Some of the responses on the factors contributing to career dissatisfaction included:

- Being put in the crossfire of making decisions without time/pay/support for persons other than myself and constantly being put in the position to take on more responsibility than my role. If I object, I am "difficult to work with", if I accept, then I am just setting the bar for others to be in the same trap. The constant culture of every facet of theater being "high-stakes" needs to change.
- I have to work several jobs to make ends meet and I'm tired all the time.
- I have hardly every been paid a living wage, it's too hard to find work that pays a living wage, and it's not sustainable for mental or physical health to wait around for the "good" jobs that pay while working unstable side hustles. There is also not enough consideration for all of the things

that stage managers do outside of the "work day" that are unpaid or not paid for enough, like extra emails, paperwork, rehearsal room setup and tear down, and so many more.

- Discrimination from other members of my “team.”
- I worry not enough changes have been made by those above us (most of whom have not lost income like we have). My first contract "back"/live production with an audience was a twilight zone-esque situation, where they were attempting to do everything like we used to, with fewer people and no planning or sense that they were aware of the type of conversations (about equitably, safety, working conditions, etc) that stage managers have been having the entire pandemic. I took that contract after turning down a big one because of similar issues. I know there are some companies that have made meaningful changes and are working to move forward, but I am losing faith. I love my job. The pandemic/shut down couldn't extinguish that passion out of me, but if things don't change, this return might.
- Being passed over for broadway jobs in favor of younger, male people.
- I enjoy a lot of the skills and tasks associated with stage management, but not the way that stage management and other crew are typically treated, in particular the lack of consideration that a 12-hour day for actors is not actually a 12-hour day for SMs and crew, but a 14-16 hour day.
- I live and work in a community where SMs are usually on their own, lucky if you have a warm body for an intern. Difficult to be the best when you are doing all the work that should normally be done by a team and with little resources provided. I turn down so much because our community is so physically spread out. I have to turn down work for because of religious holidays as stated. Have also had too many bad experiences at this point. Don't feel supported by AEA half the time.
- The pandemic caused many of us to reevaluate our career, what we want to see in theatre, how the industry treats everyone and what changes we want to see. I have shifted my priorities and am no longer receiving health insurance from theatre, this will allow me to only take shows that support the value structure I want to uphold in the community and the labor practices that I want to see in the industry. My first show back has been eye opening in highlighting just how very far apart the goals for the industry are from the current realities.

As noted in previous surveys, dissatisfaction levels may be underreported as some stage managers who are dissatisfied with their work/life balance or their careers may not be inclined to take a 15-20 minute survey. A volunteer survey captures those who are invested in their profession. Nevertheless, the Stage Manager Survey includes a question about career attrition: “what is the likelihood that you will be leaving the field of Stage Management in the next five years?” The events of the past two years are proof enough that we cannot confidently predict our futures, but this question does provide a glimpse of who is considering an exit from the field. It also provides the stage management community with an opportunity to address issues of inequity before it leads to the loss of valuable members. In 2019, 6% were very likely and 12% were likely to leave the field within five years. Figure 66 breaks down career attrition likelihood by overall total (n=634), country/region (AUS n=30, CAN n=40, UK n=46, USA n=478, MULTI n=40), gender identity (n=621), race in the United States (n=468), years of experience (n=628), and union status in the United States (n=466).

Figure 66: Likelihood of Leaving Stage Management within Next Five Years (n=*see text*)

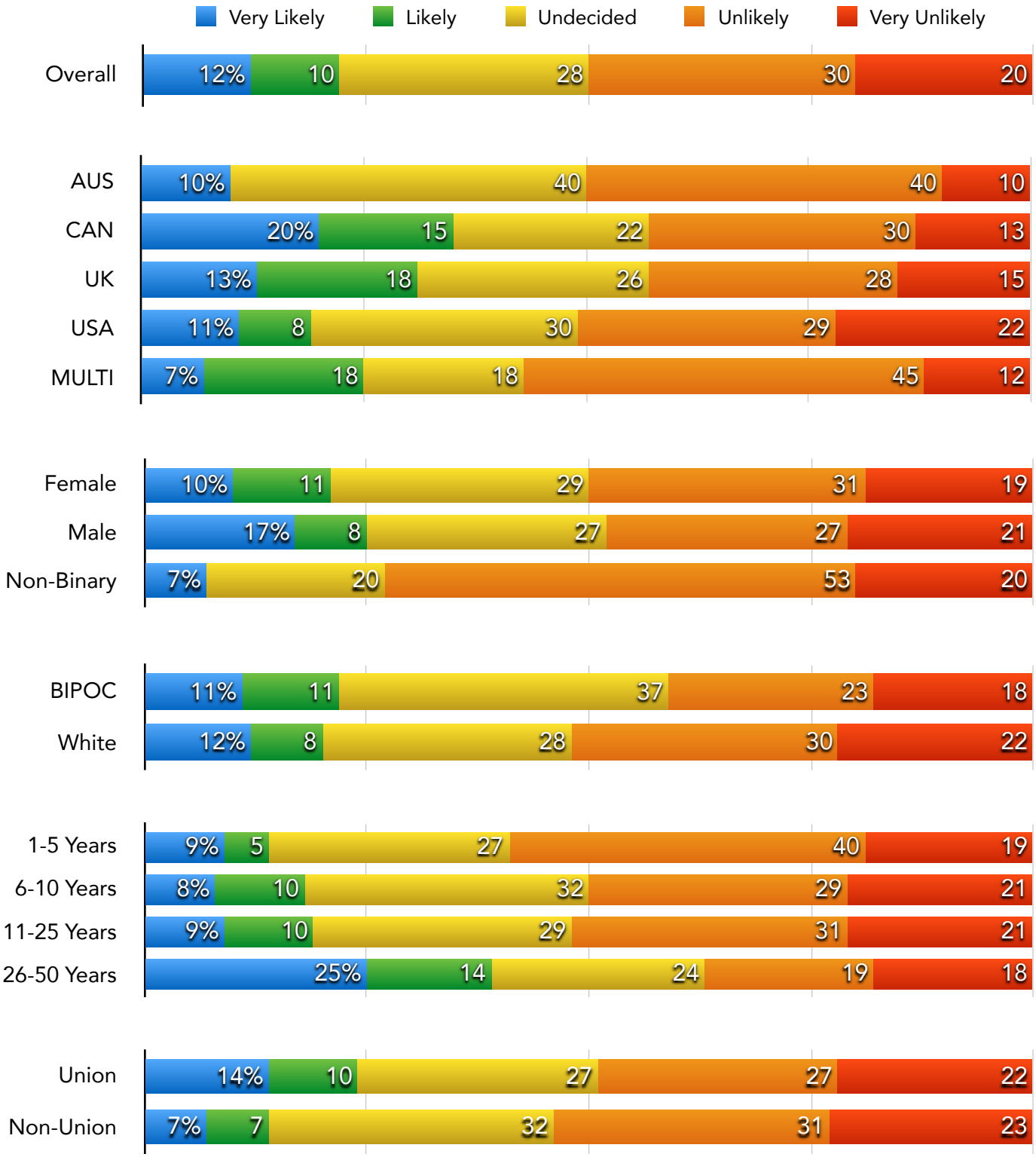
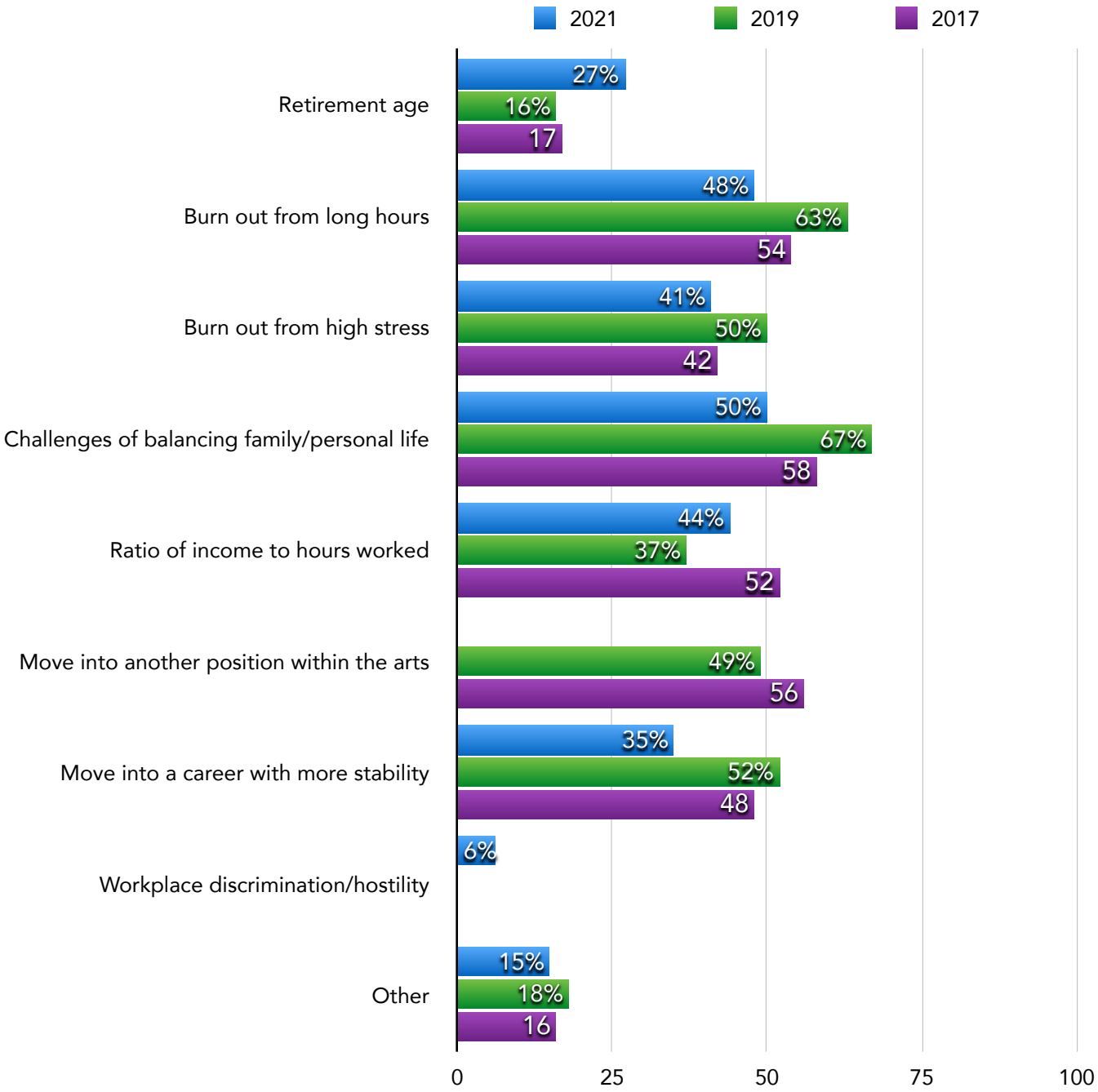


Figure 67 shows the primary reasons for leaving stage management for those who indicated they were Very Likely or Likely to leave stage management. Participants could indicate more than one reason; all categories are percentages based on that year. Based on write-in responses from previous years, the category Workplace Discrimination/Hostility was added. The category Move into Another Position in the Arts was removed in 2021 as it is more an outcome than a reason. The majority of "Other" reasons were based on spending more time with family; only one participant noted a safety concern.

Figure 67: Contributing Factors in Likelihood to Leave Stage Management (2021 n=135)

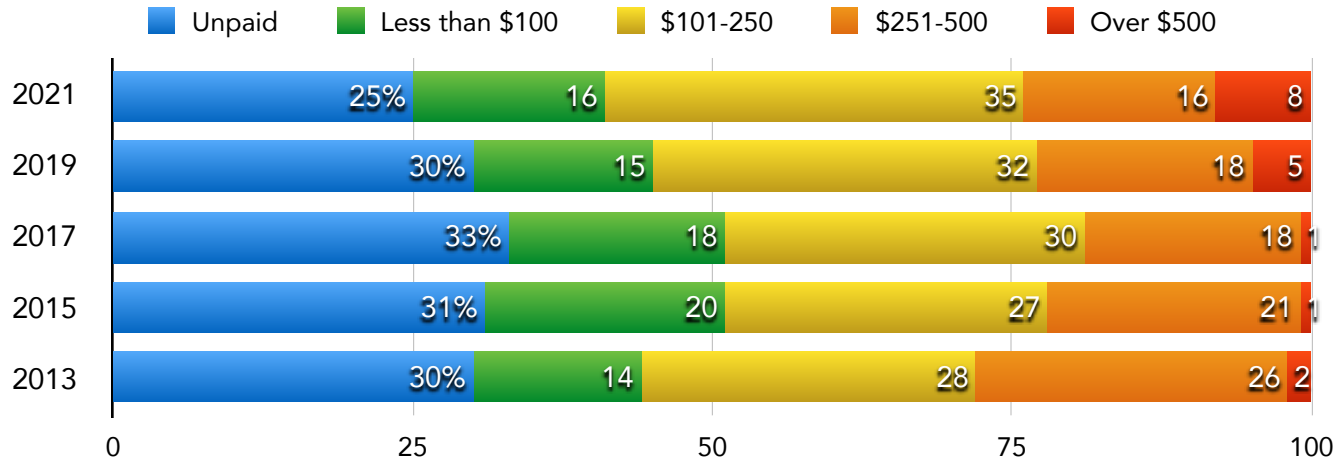


A long-term outlook on the profession should include not just those who may soon leave the field, but also those who are entering it. Students and current interns were asked how likely they were to pursue a career in stage management: among 131 responses, 68% were Extremely Likely and another 23% were Likely to pursue a career in stage management. This actually represents a very slight (1%) increase over 2019 responses; 5% of the 2021 responses were uncertain at the time of the survey.

Will the interruption of internships and career training opportunities have a long term impact on the stage management community? The SM2030 Project is a 10-year longitudinal study focusing on American stage managers who graduated college in Spring 2020 and may be the best indicator of whether we will experience a 'lost generation' of stage managers. The initial SM2030 reports are available at www.smsurvey.info.

This survey included a section for those who served as an intern or apprentice in the United States in the past two years (October 2019 - October 2021). **Figure 68** compares how much these 142 Americans earned each week compared to survey responses from previous years (2019 n=207, 2017 n=312, 2015 n=420, 2013 n-204). It should be noted that 2021 was the first year that no participant reported that they had to pay the producer in order to apprentice. There is an initiative in the United States to end unpaid internships as they limit the possibility of starting a stage management career to a very small group. Among American interns who were paid (n=109), 18% reported earning overtime pay, which matches 2019 survey data.

Figure 68: Weekly Payment for Most Recent Internship/Apprenticeship (USA) (n=*see text*)



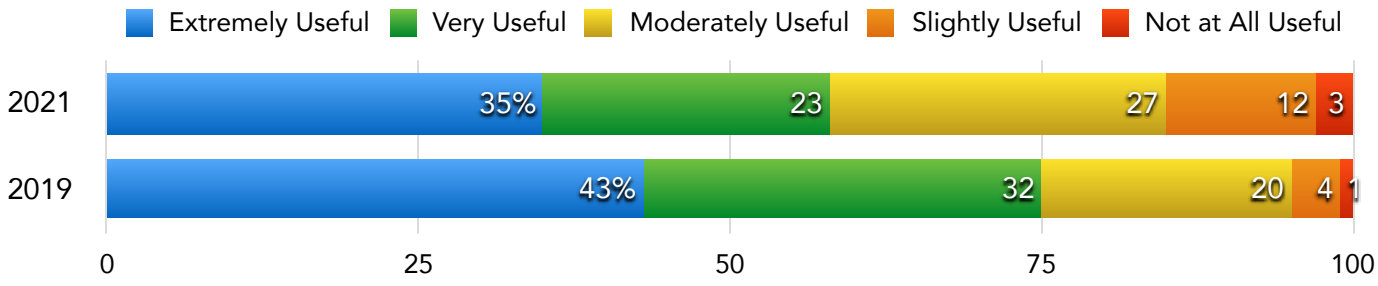
Almost half of these internships/apprenticeships (47%) offered non-monetary compensation of some kind, but rates have plummeted due in part to many internships moving online for this time period. **Figure 69** details whether these early career stage managers received housing (either fully provided or at a discounted rent), meals (beyond 2-Show Day company meals), reimbursement for local transportation, or travel if they were interning away from home.

Figure 69: Interns/Apprentice Non-Pay Compensation Based on Weekly Pay (n=142)

Weekly Pay Category	Housing	Discounted Housing	Meals	Local Transport	Contract Travel
Unpaid	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Less than $100	5%	0%	1%	0%	1%
$101-250	22%	2%	7%	3%	3%
$251-500	8%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Over $500	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%

Only 32% of the 142 participants felt that their internship/apprenticeship compensation was fair, down from 44% in 2019. There was also a significant decline in the their appraisal of the value of the internships **[Figure 70]**. Prior to the pandemic, the demand for internships was strong enough to transform them into sources of cheap (or free) labor. If the goal of internships is truly to prepare the next generation of stage managers, then the compensation and usefulness of these experiences need to be reconsidered.

Figure 70: Usefulness of Internship/Apprenticeship in Past Two Years (n=142)



The Stage Manager Survey always ends with an opportunity for participants to share advice for new stage managers breaking into the professional industry:

- You are not a parent or superior to your coworkers. You are a facilitator. You are not inferior to anyone. You are also an artist - you use both sides of your brain. Learn a little bit about all of your colleagues' disciplines to be a more thoughtful and effective communicator. Audition sometimes. It's hard - it's an important reminder what the cast goes through and the vulnerability they bring.
- Really take the time to think about what you need in terms of compensation in order to make Stage Management work
- Save money if you can, don't be ashamed to have a day job to help pay bills.
- Find a mentor in your community who is able to help mold your skills as well as help you network.
- Make work life balance a priority and don’t sacrifice yourself family or relationships. Stand up for yourself.
- Always read your entire contract thoroughly. Ensure that your contract identifies your position as stage manager, includes a schedule of rehearsals and performances, addresses your rate and pay schedule, and addresses additional payments for extended runs or added performances. Never sign a contract that says "other duties as assigned. Either strike the line from the contract or add to the end of the line "and mutually agreed upon".
- Make genuine connections with people. I’ve gotten more jobs from knowing someone than applying for them.
- Always do your very best work. Don't get sloppy. Pay attention in rehearsal and jump up to help immediately. Be self-motivated. Do what needs to be done without someone having to tell you do it.
- Apply for every job that you are available for. I keep resumes that pique my interest on file, even if that person isn't right for that particular job. I have later reached back out when another opening came up, and filled that position from a resume I received a year ago.
- Cultivate curiosity about the work that is going on, the people who are creating it, and then express that interest to folks to learn and grow.
- Remember that paperwork isn't everything. Theater was being made long before technology.
- Keep jumping at new opportunities. Being passive will not bring you work. You have to find the right people, do workshops, build connections, try things that are out of your comfort zone.
- Remember that your skills are rare and valuable.

Conclusion

There is so much that we can learn from each other. My goal in creating this survey in 2006 was to help stage managers discover that we are not alone in our experiences and to grow as a community. Many, many thanks go to the 1,449 stage managers who volunteered over 500 hours collectively to provide candid responses about their careers. Thanks also go to all of the stage management advocates who made this an international study. My original goal was 100 participants outside of the United States; we nearly tripled this number in the first ever international study. I thank all of the non-US-based participants for their patience and generosity as I discovered my own biases and ignorance of other practices in trying to create questions that would be applicable to all. I also hope that participants in countries that did not have their own data lines in the report will recruit others in 2023 so that we can publish an even more comprehensive report.

I wish to also thank Elon University for not only providing access to the Qualtrics software needed to run a survey of this magnitude, but also supporting this research. This survey is truly a volunteer effort and I am very grateful to the Elon students and former students from both Elon and the University of Iowa for developing this survey over the years.

If you have any questions about the data or would like to make a recommendation for a future survey, please e-mail info@sm-sim.com with "SM Survey" in the subject line. Each survey cycle starts with corrections and improvements based on your suggestions. If you would like to participate in future surveys, please join the mailing list at http://smsurvey.info. The survey and its mailing lists are managed by SM-Sim, LLC, for which I am the sole owner/operator. The mailing list is used solely for the survey invitations and reports. The next survey will be conducted in October 2023.