UK Live Comedy Sector Survey Report 2024

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Forewords

The findings of the UK Live Comedy Sector Survey 2024 highlight the critical role live comedy plays in the cultural, social, and economic fabric of the UK. Comedy is not only a significant contributor to the night time economy but also a cornerstone of creativity and community cohesion. However, the sector faces enduring challenges, including pay stagnation, inequalities, and precarious working conditions exacerbated by the pandemic.

The data underscores the urgent need for comedy to be formally recognised as an art form, ensuring it receives the political and financial support necessary for sustainable growth. From regional disparities to barriers faced by underrepresented groups, these findings provide a roadmap for addressing systemic issues.

At the Night Time Industries Association, we fully support the recommendations outlined in this report and call for collaborative action to safeguard the future of live comedy for the benefit of artists, venues, and audiences alike.

Michael Kill, CEO Night Time Industries Association

I applaud the research and work of the LCA, and its partners, in comedy, especially of this scale. Never before have I come across research like this, that makes such a strong case for comedy; a case that comedians have been aware of for years.

This study is so beneficial for the circuit, as it will hopefully be the start of important conversations for other countries. The results clearly quantify the impact of comedy in the Arts, the economy and are a springboard for equality and equitable practices among artists and art forms. We are very happy to support the LCA in their ongoing work.

Ailish McCarthy, Irish Comedy Guide

The live comedy sector is a vital part of the UK's cultural economy, making key contributions to tourism and local creative ecosystems while fostering a strong community spirit. This, in turn, supports artists, promoters, and the venues that host them. Like grassroots music, comedy nurtures talent from the ground up, providing diverse platforms for emerging voices to grow and innovate.

However, much like grassroots music, this ecosystem is often overlooked and underfunded, leaving it vulnerable to economic challenges.

Supporting live comedy alongside other grassroots culture ensures a diverse cultural landscape that reflects and celebrates the UK's creativity and it is crucial that comedy's place alongside other art forms is recognised by the wider industry and Government. By investing in this sector, we preserve its ability to entertain, challenge societal norms, and bring people together.

The work of the Live Comedy Association, and its partners, is instrumental in securing comedy's continued contribution to the UK's vibrant cultural landscape.

Mark Davyd, CEO & Founder Music Venue Trust

Executive Summary

This report outlines the main findings of the UK Live Comedy Sector Survey 2024 conducted by the Centre for Comedy Studies Research (CCSR), the Live Comedy Association (LCA) and British Comedy Guide (BCG). Until now very little was known about the size, scale and impact of the UK live comedy sector. The survey provides detailed insights about the economics of the live comedy sector including its size and its longevity, numbers of shows and ticket sales, and turnover. It also provides insights into regional variations, venues used and performance types supported, and reveals inequalities and inequities prevalent in the sector. The survey serves to support and advocate live comedy in the UK politically, economically and socially.

366 people working in UK live comedy completed the survey. 67% of respondents were comedians. 33% of respondents were people working as comedy promoters, producers, venue managers, festival organisers or agents.

Key findings are grouped into 4 main themes from which a number of recommendations are drawn:

1. The **Economics of the Live Stand-up Comedy Sector** theme covers the size and longevity of live comedy, number of shows and ticket sales, and turnover and income from live comedy.

   The central pattern to emerge from the survey is that **while the comedy industry is economically very significant, it also suffers from precarity**. 64% of comedy organisations have been operating more than 10 years, and 57% of comedians have been performing live comedy for more than 10 years. Only 5% of comedy organisations have been operating less than 12 months, and 3% of comedians have been performing for less than 12 months.

   There is also evidence that comedy venues provide a popular art form, with 50% of comedy organisations promoting over 100 shows per year, 45% of comedy organisations reporting that they sell between 71%-90% of their tickets, and a third of comedians reported that they sell 71%-90% of their tickets.

   The survey data shows that average turnover (non-profit) for comedy organisations in the UK per annum is £962,212.50, which suggests that total turnover across the UK for live stand-up comedy could be over £1 billion.

   Comedians report facing economic challenges in recent years and pay stagnation was highlighted with respondents reporting that fees had not increased at some established venues. Precarity in the sector was reported as being exasperated by the pandemic. The average turnover for comedians in the UK is £26,778 per annum.

   With both the established and precarious nature of the comedy industry highlighted, the report recommends that we should **lobby for comedy to be recognised as an art form** and **promote training and development within the live comedy industry**. This would see the status and sustainability of the industry maximised.

2. The **Spaces and Places of Live Stand-up Comedy** theme considers regional characteristics of live comedy and performance spaces of live comedy.

   The central finding suggests that **London and the South East dominate the live stand-up comedy industry but there are also significant smaller regional economies**. Of single location organisations, 23% are situated in London and 7% in the South East. 20% of comedians reported working in London and 11% in the South East. 32% of comedians live in London and 16% live in the South East.

That said, the live stand-up comedy industry is vibrant across regions, and 35% of comedians reported they work in a variety of regions. There is also evidence of a significant industry in the North West, with 12% of comedians having most of their shows, and 16% living, in the North West.

For the most part, live stand-up comedy is an urban art form as only 2% of venue respondents are based in rural locations. The majority of venues draw local audiences, with 41% of venues attracting audiences from within 10 miles. Comedy organisations reported that most live comedy takes place in smaller venues with the majority of venue capacities between 51 and 250 people, and most comedians said that they perform the majority of their shows in smaller venues.

The recommendation that emerges from this theme is to **establish a database of UK comedy venues** in order to more clearly map and identify trends in the live comedy industry.

3. The **Social Impact of Live Stand-up Comedy** theme highlights important findings in relation to the **cultural impact of live stand-up comedy**.

   Survey findings reveal how 72% of comedy organisations consider that they contribute to a vibrant cultural offer. There is also substantial **charity work** taking place in the industry, with 80% of comedy organisations raising money for charity or hosting charity shows. 47% of comedy organisations offer volunteering opportunities. The recommendation generated by this theme is to further **research the impact of live comedy sector community projects**.

4. The **Inequalities and Inequities in the Live Comedy Sector** theme identifies a number of inequality and inequity issues in the live stand-up comedy sector that need attention.

   The survey demonstrates that **participants view sexism, gender wage inequality, ageism and barriers for LGBTQ+, BAME, disabled and working class comedians as issues of concern** for those working in the stand-up comedy sector. The key recommendations emerging from this theme are to **organise a consultation with the sector about a code of conduct and improving working conditions** and to further **explore the barriers to entry and inequalities that exist in live comedy**.

In order to facilitate the actioning of these recommendations the LCA will also explore possible resources and funding for further activities. The LCA, CCSR and BCG will repeat the survey each year, publishing the results, while also reviewing the survey questions and adding new ones in relevant areas according to the sector's needs and interests. We are interested in what you think, so if you would like to comment on this report or offer suggestions for future research into the UK live comedy sector, please email: Comedy.Studies@brunel.ac.uk

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Introducing the UK Live Comedy Sector Survey 2024

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the UK Live Comedy Sector Survey conducted by a partnership including the Centre for Comedy Studies Research (CCSR), the Live Comedy Association (LCA) and British Comedy Guide (BCG). The survey assesses the current size, scale and impact of the live comedy sector in the UK. This is the first time the live comedy sector in the UK has been surveyed and researched in this way.

While other UK creative industry sectors regularly conduct surveys to help understand their areas of work (e.g. see the Live Music Census 2017), little is known about the dynamics of the live comedy industry in the UK. Although the Live Comedy Association (LCA) conducted a survey of members in 2020 about the possible impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it excluded details about the broad economic, social and cultural benefits of the live comedy sector. The UK Live Comedy Sector Survey 2024 addresses this gap in knowledge and understanding to help support and promote UK live comedy. In addition to revealing new knowledge, insights and recommendations about the live comedy sector, the survey findings serve as a benchmark that can be a useful reference point for future research on the live comedy sector in the UK and internationally.

The survey took place online in the summer of 2024, between 13th June-7th July. The survey was purposefully scheduled during this time as it was just over a year since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that COVID-19 would cease to be listed as a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) and UK voters went to the polls on 4th July in the latest general election. Members of the LCA had been working in advance of the election to lobby the Labour party to recognise live comedy as an art form, and on their successful election, this lobbying has continued now Labour are the main English political party.

We know more work is needed to echo this work with other governments in other UK countries and we are mindful of this. In recent times, the Welsh Arts Council funded a programme to support the creation of new opportunities for emerging Welsh (and Wales-based) comedy talent to provide career development opportunities and open the door to potential future creative commissions. This project was led by Little Wander, in partnership with Channel 4 and S4C. We also know that Creative Scotland have publicly said "Individuals and organisations involved in comedy are welcome to apply to our Open Fund" but we need to do more as a sector to release funding for Scottish live comedy and across the UK.

It felt like a significant time for the live comedy sector; there are some green shoots which may hint at an improved environment for live comedy to grow and contribute to the overall growth in the UK. In order for the sector to build on recent positive movements (together with the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, which supported some working in live comedy), it was crucial to capture the contribution and impact of the UK live comedy sector in this economic, political and cultural landscape to aid this.

The survey was completed by 366 people working in UK live comedy*. 67% of respondents were comedians, and the other 33% were people working as comedy promoters, producers, venue managers, festival organisers or agents. The majority of survey insights focus on the economic aspects of live comedy and how this varies across the sector, with others examining the complexities of live comedy locations, venues and performance types and the important social and cultural impacts provided by the UK live comedy sector. The report presents the findings on these topics and supplements these findings with statements provided by respondents in the free text section of the survey.

** The UK Live Comedy Sector Survey was administered by Brunel University of London and ethical approval to conduct the survey was received from the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at Brunel University of London.*

The Economics of the Live Comedy Sector

Size and Longevity of Live Comedy

The survey showed there are a total of 1,566 people working in comedy organisations who responded. The average number of people working in a comedy organisations is 10.875, with the smallest organisation consisting of 1 person and the largest consisting 200 people. The live stand-up comedy sector has a range of economic structures that facilitate and support comedy organisations. 43% of respondents who work off stage in comedy organisations work on a sole trader basis, with the same percentage operating in a limited company capacity. 5% of workers in comedy organisations work for charities and 1% for local authorities. The remaining 8% of respondents working off stage in comedy organisations work in a variety of capacities including voluntarily, or in partnerships or collectives. The majority of comedians however are sole traders - with 93% of comedians reporting this as their set-up. Only 6% of comedians work as part of a comedy group or collective.

When looking at the number of people working in a comedy venue on a typical night, just over a third (34%) will have between 5-10 people working (which includes volunteers, staff, security, catering and technical crew). 19% will have between 11-20 people, whereas 11% will have less than 5. Only 13% will have more the 21 people working (8% have 21-30, 2% have 31-40 and 3% have 41 or above).

The length of time that comedy organisations have been working in live comedy in the UK varies, although just under two thirds (64%) have been operating more than 10 years and just over one third (36%) operating for 10 years and shorter. Breaking the figures down we see that 20% of comedy organisations have been operating between 11-15 years, 19% between 6-10 years and 9% between 16-20 years, another 9% between 26-30 years and another 9% between 31-35 years. 8% have been operating between 21-25 years and 7% between 3-5 years. Only 5% are newcomers and have been operating less than 12 months, with the same percentage operating slightly longer between 1-2 years. Only 3% of comedy organisation have been in operation between 36-40 years, with 6% operating for more than 40 years.

Similar patterns exist for comedians as just over half (57%) have been performing live comedy for more than 10 years and 42% performing less than 10 years. Breaking these figures down in more detail shows how the same percentage of comedians have been performing between 11-15 years and between 6-10 years - each with 21% of comedians reporting this as the length of time they've been performing. Similarly, the percentage of comedians performing between 16-20 years (14%) is almost the same as the percentage of comedians performing between 3-5 years (13%). Similar numbers of comedians have been performing between 21-25 years (9%) and between 26-30 years (7%). Only 3% of comedians have been performing for less than 12 months, and only 5% have been performing between 1-2 years. Similar small percentages were recorded for comedians who have performed between 31-35 years (1%), between 36-40 years (3%) and more than 40 years (2%).

57%
OF COMICS HAVE BEEN PERFORMING FOR
10+ YEARS

64%
OF VENUES HAVE BEEN OPERATING FOR
10+ YEARS

45%
OF VENUES HAVE UP TO 10 STAFF WORKING EACH NIGHT

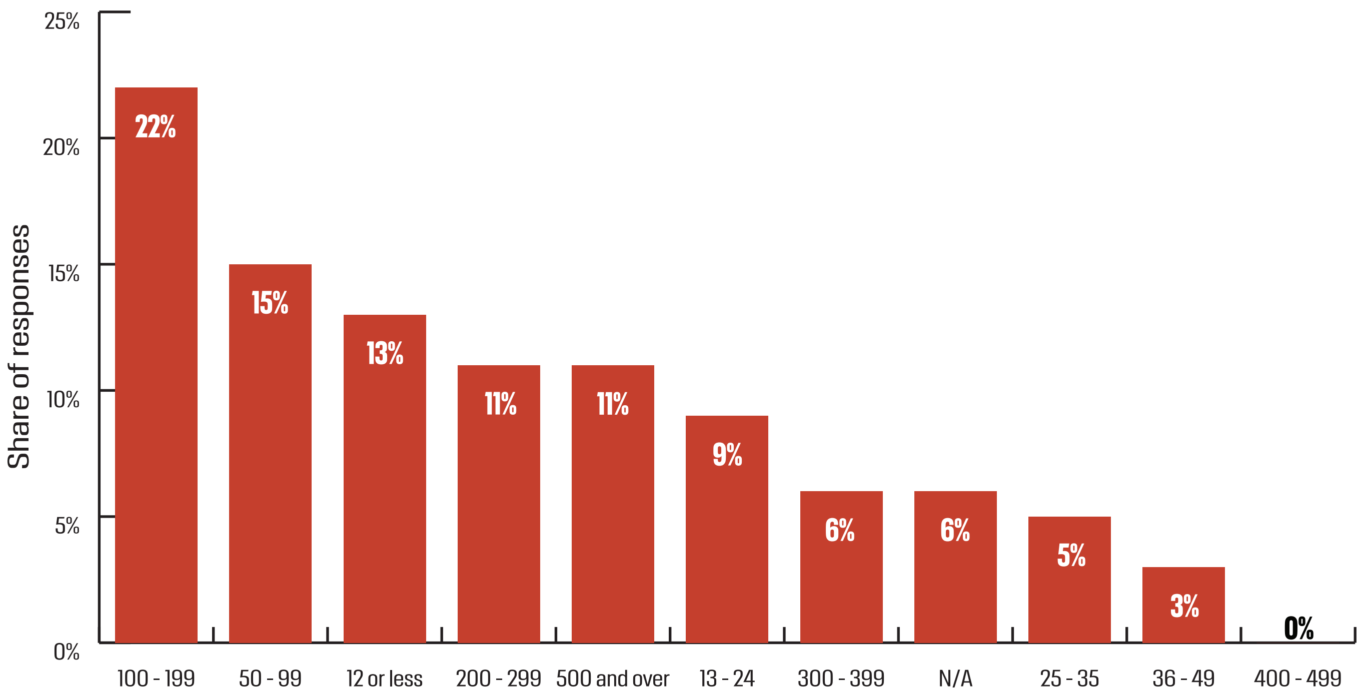
Shows and Ticket Sales in Live Comedy

The number of shows that different comedy organisations promote in a year varies, although overall 50% of organisations promote 100+ shows per year. The largest percentages are for between 100-199 shows (22%) and between 50-99 shows (15%). 11% promote between 200-299 shows and 11% promote 500+ shows, with 6% promoting 300-399 shows. 13% promote 12 or less shows, 9% between 13-24 shows, 5% between 25-35 shows and 3% between 36-49 shows.

The total number of shows performed by comedians who completed the survey each week is 757, with each comedian performing on average 3.2 shows per week. Almost two thirds (65%) of comedians gain most of their live comedy work from individual comedy bookers, whereas 14% generally perform and promote their own shows and 12% gain most of their live work from companies/organisations that book comedy shows. Only 4% of comedians gain most of their work from festivals. The remaining 5% largely obtain work from a combination of these sources. Only one third of comedians (33%) reported that they have an agent/manager/booker or anyone else who helps them secure live work.

Healthy ticket sales are reported by comedy organisations, with 45% reporting that they sell between 71%-90% of their tickets, 10% reporting that they sell between 91%-99% of their tickets, and 2% reporting consistent sell-outs. Only 2% of comedy organisations reported lower tickets sales of 25% or less and only 8% reported tickets sales of between 25%-50%. 23% of comedy organisations reported tickets sales of between 51%-70%. Comedians reported slightly less healthy tickets sales with a third (33%) reporting that they sell 71%-90% of their tickets, 6% reporting 91%-99% of tickets sold and 1% reporting that they always sell out. The largest percentage of tickets sold by comedians is 51%-70%, with 37% of comedians reporting this number. 9% of comedians reported ticket sales of 25% or less, and 15% reported selling 26%-50%.

Average ticket prices, as reported by comedy organisations, show a bunching with 33% of tickets prices between £5-£12 and 43% of tickets prices between £13-£18. 11% of tickets sell for between £19-£26. Only 2% of tickets are free, 2% are priced between £26-£35 and 2% are priced £36 and above. Similar ticket price patterns exist for comedians, with a bunching of 42% of comedians reporting that an average ticket price for their shows is between £5-£12 and 34% reporting between £13-£18. 6% are priced between £19-£25, with 2% priced less than £5, 1% priced between £26-£35, and less than 1% priced £36 and above. However, 14% of comedian tickets are free.

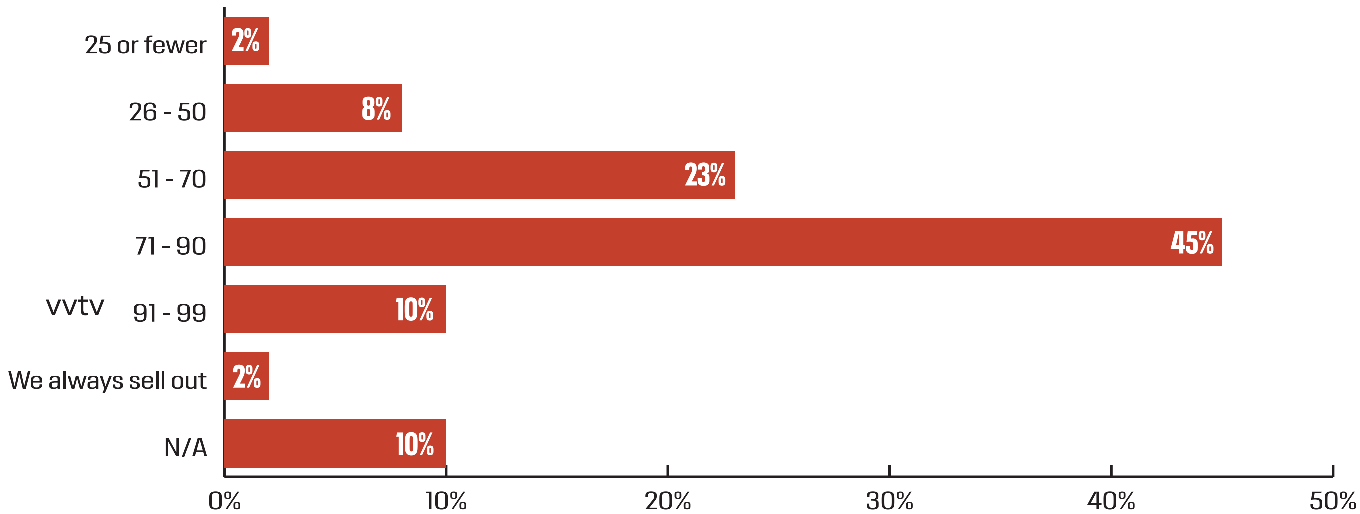


How many shows does your main organisation promote in one year?

Turnover and Income from Live Comedy

The total turnover (non-profit) of responding comedy organisations in the UK per annum is £76,977,000, with an average of £962,212.50. However, there is huge variation with some comedy organisations having zero turnover while others turn over £20,000,000. Total turnover for 219 comedians who provided their details is £5,864,459, with an average turnover of £26,778 per annum. Again, there is stark economic variation in the sector with some comedians having zero or £20 turnover and others reporting hundreds of thousands of pounds turnover e.g. £600,000.

Such economic variation is demonstrated through survey data about the percentage of comedians' incomes that come from their comedy. While 31% of comedians reported that between 91%-100% of their income comes from their comedy, 19% reported that between only 1%-10% of their income comes from comedy and 7% reported that none of their income comes from comedy. It is perhaps unsurprising that almost two-thirds of comedians (62%) have other paid employment.



For tickets that are charged for, what percentage are sold, on average?

The open survey comments provided additional insights into the economic precarity, variation and inequalities within the live comedy sector. For example, a number of points were made that drew attention to the ways in which the economics of the live comedy sector are skewed against stand-up comedians towards promoters and bookers. Pay stagnation was also highlighted with respondents highlighting that fees had not increased at some established venues, and circuit gig money was noted as stagnating for around 30 years. An issue of some promoters and venues not paying fees promptly was also raised by participants. Respondents highlighted the issue of lack of profit, the inability to earn a living and the unpredictability of income. Precarity was also reported as being exasperated by the pandemic with one participant noting that while they were earning a full-time salary before COVID-19, this had not been the case since the pandemic. Decreases in advance ticket sales and cancelled gigs were also noted as post-pandemic issues. The inflationary economy, rising travel costs, a chaotic public transport system and 'stupidly high' Edinburgh Fringe rents were noted by some participants as creating economic barriers, and limits, to their earning potential. A number of participants commented that they supplement their live comedy with social media presence (e.g. TikTok), acting, voice overs, improv, theatre gigs and/or comedy teaching, while another participant reported performing on cruise ships.

"The money a comedian gets for circuit gigs is almost EXACTLY the same as it was 30 years ago. It has barely gone up a penny while expenses have more or less tripled."

Open comments also offered solutions to the economic issues underpinning the live comedy sector. These included the need to nurture and support the grass roots of the industry, the need for a trade union, the desire for comedy to be recognised as an art form by policy makers, for free market economics to continue to dominate stand-up comedy, a suggestion that comedy should get funding from the Arts Council and that the industry should have a code of conduct. Another participant noted that Universal Credit/job centre staff do not understand or recognise comedy as a type of employment.

"OUR INDUSTRY SHOULD GET FUNDING FROM THE ARTS COUNCIL, LIKE BALLET AND OPERA. COMEDY IS AN ART FORM!"

"COMEDY FEES HAVE BEEN PRETTY STAGNANT OVER RECENT YEARS, WHICH MAKES IT VERY DIFFICULT TO EARN A LIVING"

"I AM IN THE CLOSING STAGES OF A 38-YEAR CAREER ... THE GRASS ROOTS NEED TO BE CAREFULLY NURTURED"

"MY CAREER HASN'T RECOVERED FROM THE PANDEMIC. I WAS EARNING A FULL TIME SALARY BEFORE EVERYTHING SHUT DOWN."

"THERE ARE REALLY ESTABLISHED VENUES IN THE UK WHERE TICKET PRICES HAVE INCREASED BUT FEES ARE THE SAME. NO ONE SAYS ANYTHING OUT OF FEAR THEY WILL LOSE WORK."

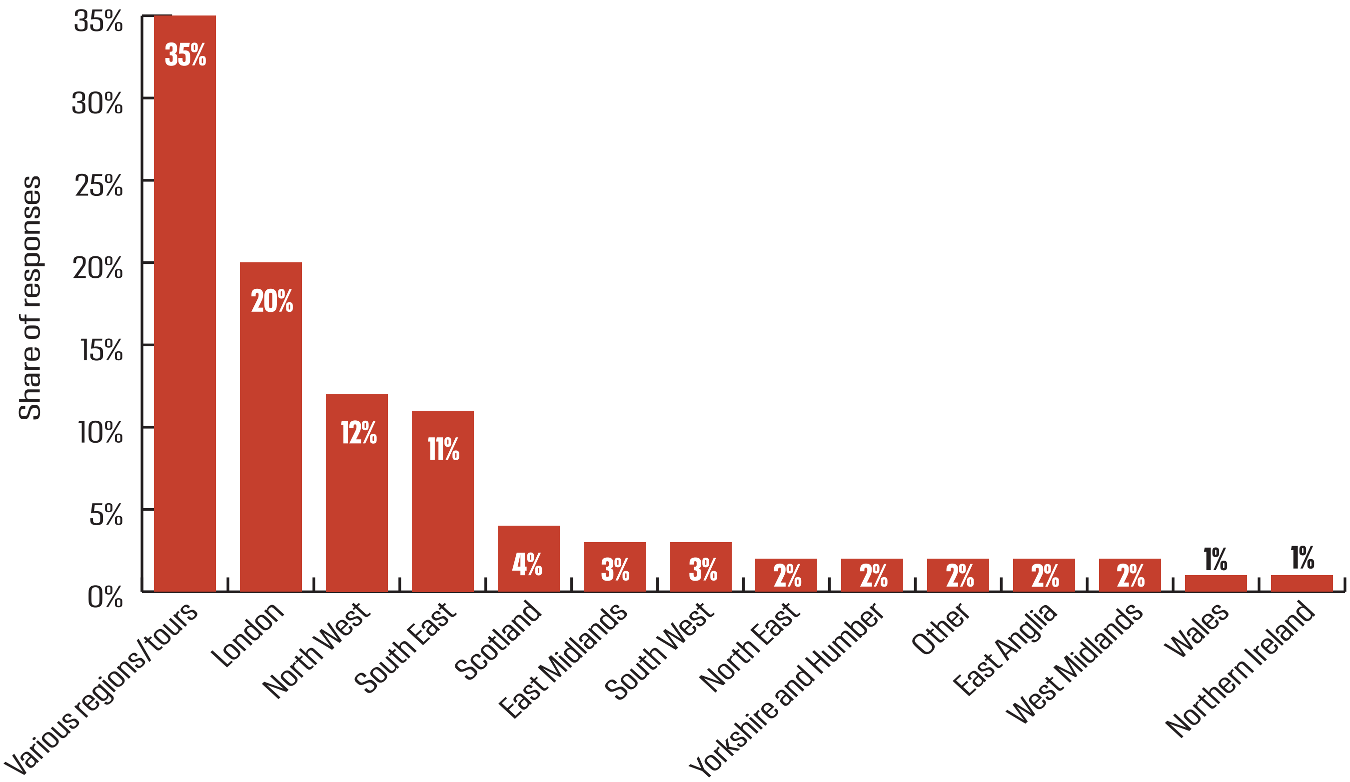
"It's getting harder to earn a living doing entertainment. With the cost of living, home entertainment, social media and shorter attention spans, we need a rethink of the whole comedy and entertainment industry."

The Spaces and Places of Live Comedy

Regional Characteristics of Live Comedy

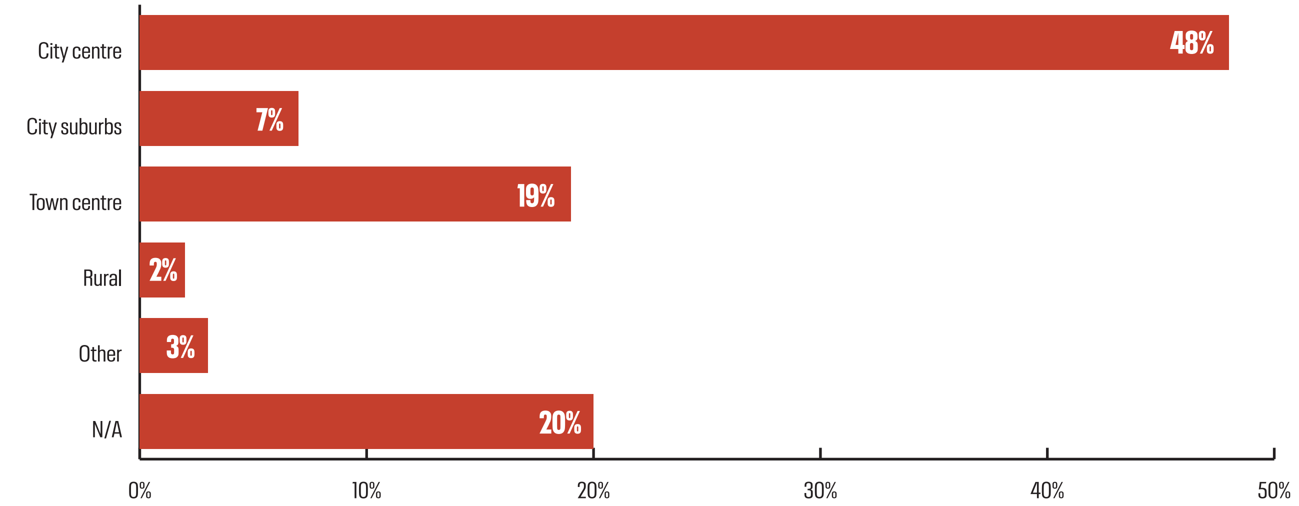
Live stand-up comedy is spread across the UK, although there are clear regional differences and London dominates as a location for the industry. Of single location organisations, 23% are situated in London and 7% in the South East. The North West, South West each have 8%, the East Midlands have 7% and Scotland has 6%. The North East and Wales are the least well represented, with only 2% of single location organisations each. The West Midlands and East Anglia only manage 3% each and Yorkshire and Humber have 4%. 19% of respondent organisations work across the UK.

Comedians are more likely than organisations to work across the UK, with 35% saying that they work in a variety of regions. After that, London dominates, with 20% working in London and 11% in the South East. 12% of comedians have the majority of their shows in the North West. After that, all other regions account for 4% or less of any one comedian's shows, with the West Midlands and Wales gaining only 1% each. This suggests there are very few comedians who gain the majority of their work in regions other than London, the South East or North West. Comedians also tend to be based in similar locations. 32% of comedians live in London and 16% live in the South East. 16% live in the North West. All other regions have less than 5%. Wales, the North East and East Midlands had the fewest at 3% each.



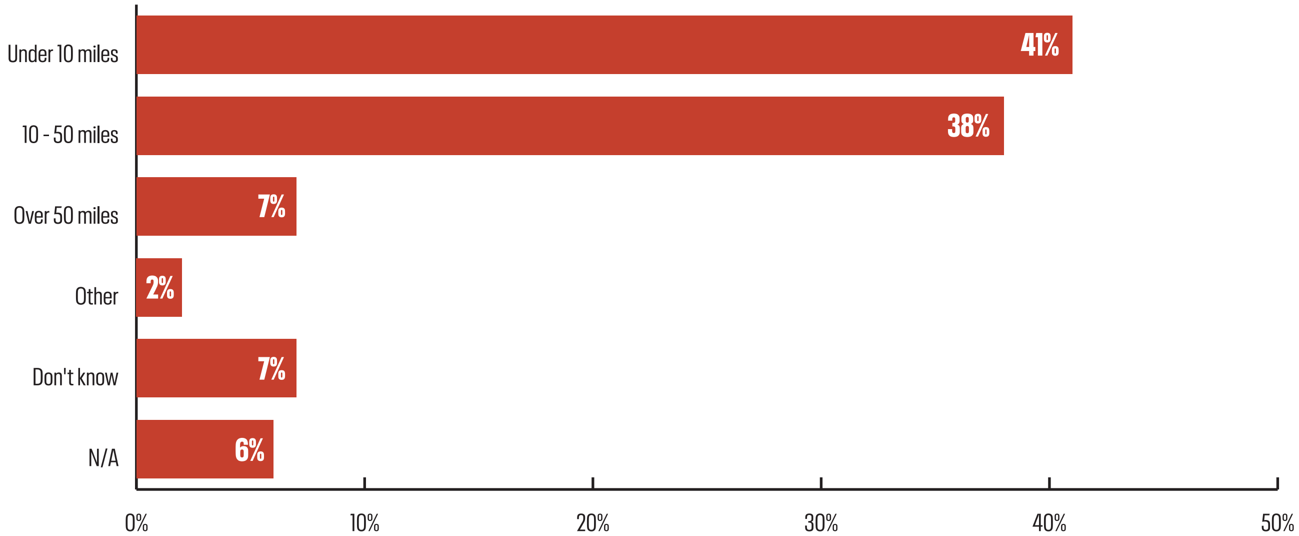
Where do the majority of your performances take place?

Live stand-up comedy is an urban leisure activity. Only 2% of venue respondents are from rural locations. City centre venues form 48% of respondents, 7% are situated in city suburbs and 19% are located in towns. While 35% of comedians responded that they perform in a variety of venues, 35% said most of their shows take place in city centres, and 5% in city suburbs. 9% tend to work in towns. Only 2% of comedians work mostly in rural areas.



Where is your main venue located?

The majority of venues draw local audiences. 41% of venues draw audience from within 10 miles, 38% from with 50 miles and only 7% are from over 50 miles. Some city centre venues will gain custom from tourists.



Roughly, from how far away do the majority of your audiences travel?

The Performance Spaces of Live Comedy

The organisations that responded told us that most live comedy takes place in smaller venues. The majority of venue capacities are between 51 and 250 people (59%), with 25% holding between 51 to 100 people. Only 11% hold more than 400 people.

Most of the comedians said that they perform the majority of their shows in smaller venues. 83% perform the majority of their shows to less than 200 people (21% to 50 or less; 18% to 51 to 80; 22% to 81-120; 22% to 121 to 200). 14% of comedians perform to audiences in the range of 201 to 500 and only 3% of comedians perform the majority of their shows to more than 500 people.

A majority of venues provide audiences with the opportunity to purchase food and drink with 92% offering drinks and 68% offering both.

Comedians perform a variety of length of shows. 84% said that they tend to perform 20-minute sets, 62% perform one-hour shows and 57% perform 30-minute shows. Many comedians perform for much less time though, with 42% taking part in open mic nights and 30% taking 5-minute slots.

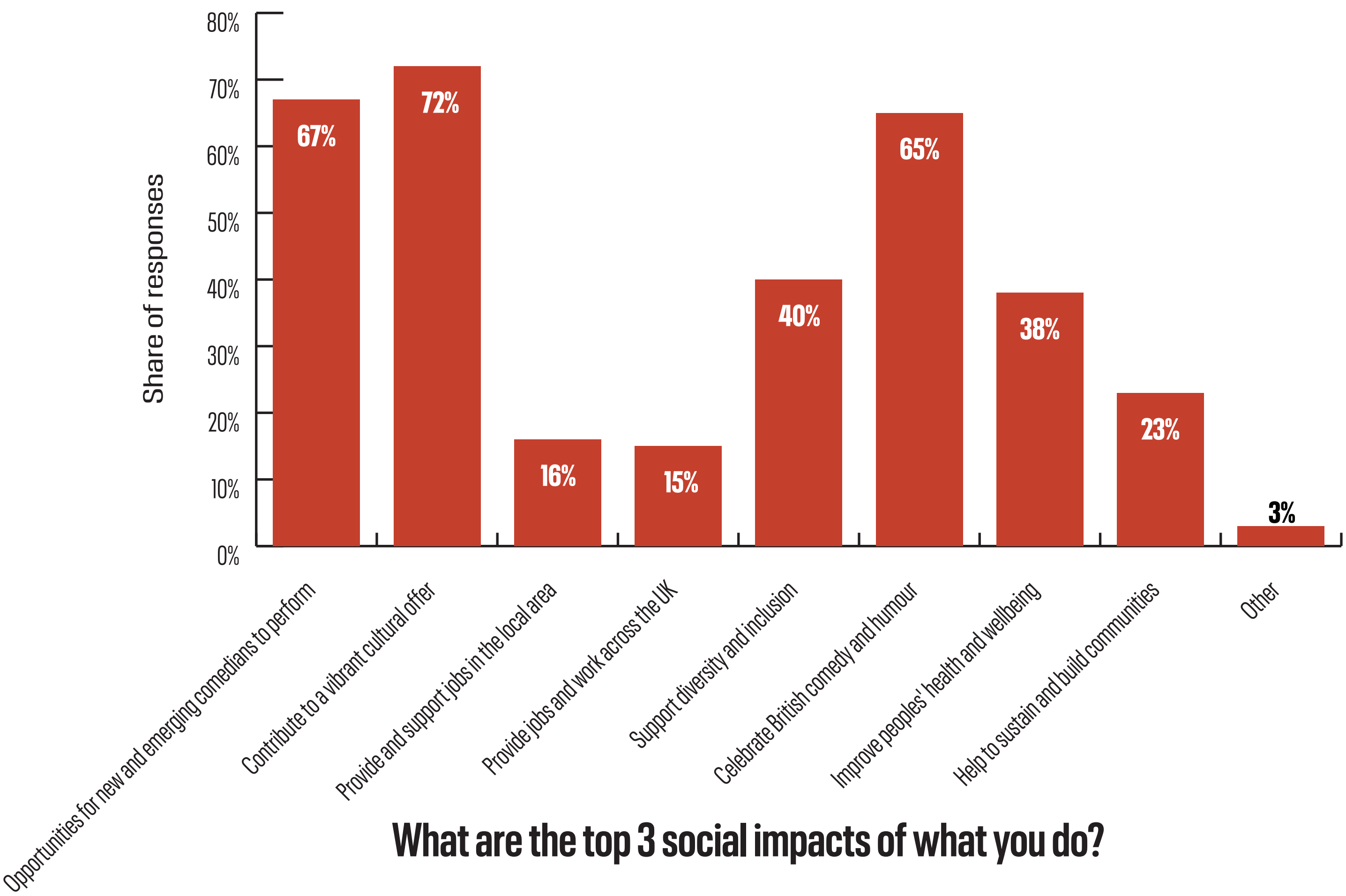
The Social Impact of Live Comedy

The social impact and importance of live comedy is highlighted in the survey results, and ranges from the impact of comedy as a cultural industry through to the charity work and support provided by the sector.

Organisations describe their social impact in a variety of ways. At a general level, 72% of organisations say they contribute to a vibrant cultural offer, and 65% recognise their impact in celebrating British comedy and humour. 38% also recognise that comedy improves people's health and wellbeing and 23% argue that it helps sustain and build communities.

There are significant overlaps between the comedy sector and the charity sector. 80% of organisations raise money for charity or host charity shows and 51% of organisations are involved in community projects and activities with schools or in other community settings. 5% of the organisations that responded are charities and two more commented that they were non-profit/community interest groups. 38% of comedians said that they had earned income from social/community comedy projects or comedy education activities.

There is significant evidence of not for profit work in the comedy sector. 47% of organisations offer volunteering opportunities with 31% acknowledging that this has helped the employment opportunities of volunteers. 67% say they provide opportunities for new or emerging comedians to perform and 57% provide training and development opportunities for off-stage roles. 41% of the organisations surveyed run workshops or masterclasses for emerging acts and 41% of comedians said that they had benefitted from such workshops or masterclasses. There is also significant opportunity to view comedy for free in the UK. 2% of organisations do not charge audiences for tickets and 14% of comedians perform shows that are free to attend.



What are the top 3 social impacts of what you do?

Inequalities and Inequities in the Live Comedy Sector

In the open comments section of the survey participants commented on the different ways in which inequality and inequity is manifest in the live comedy sector. Prejudice and discrimination were highlighted in some of the comments and it was suggested that they should form the focus of questions in future surveys.

Participants highlighted sexism, gender wage inequality, ageism, barriers for LGBTQ+, BAME, disabled and working-class comedians as issues in the sector. Sexism and ageism were noted as a particular concern within the industry by a number of respondents. Under-representation of women was specifically referred to and another participant referred to ageism as 'the big elephant in the room' as the sector is interested in 'up and coming' rather than 'hugely experienced'.

"WE HEAR A LOT ABOUT UNDER-REPRESENTATION IN OUR INDUSTRY BUT THE NARRATIVE OFTEN NEGLECTS CLASS"

"AGEISM, MUCH MORE THAN SEXISM, IS THE BIG ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM"

"WOMEN ARE STILL NOT RESPECTED WITHIN THE INDUSTRY AND HAVE TO WORK TWICE AS HARD AS MEN"

Some participants noted that class is neglected in sector discussions about under-representation in the industry and that the costs of travel to gigs and the cost of shows at Edinburgh disproportionally impact working class comedians. It was also noted that part-time comedians or comedians with other jobs are viewed as lower in status. The ways in which the economics of the live comedy sector negatively impacts mental health and wellbeing was raised by some participants.

Other inequalities noted referred to the prejudice of the live comedy sector favouring certain types of comic performance, with one participant noting limited opportunities for musical comedians due to TV and radio's interest in stand-up, sketches and sitcoms.

"There are huge wage disparities in terms of what women comedians are offered to gig, the scale of those gigs, and how experienced they are when offered them, compared to men."

UK Live Comedy Survey Recommendations

1. **Lobby for comedy to be recognised as an art form**
   Who? LCA & CCSR
   The LCA and CCSR have been working throughout 2024 to lobby for recognition of live comedy as an art form, alongside live music, dance, theatre and others. We will use the survey report, and other evidence, to continue this to gain recognition from Government, DCMS, Arts Councils and other related organisations. We will use the evidence base that exists to ensure all aspects of live comedy are considered, to emphasise the grassroots benefits of live comedy and advance the social impact and community/charitable work. We will target specific MPs, MSPs and MSs, and continue to work with partners including Music Venue Trust, Campaign for the Arts and Night Time Industries Association.
   Target date: On-going throughout 2025. We will update LCA members at the regular online meetings and newsletters.

2. **Consult with the sector about a code of conduct and improving working conditions**
   Who? LCA & CCSR
   Survey findings highlight there are many challenges for those working in live comedy, and that things aren't always done in a way that those working in the sector would like. Whilst there are often calls for a code of conduct, the challenges of introducing and enforcing such a code across the sector are also recognised. We will research and examine other similar codes in other sectors and consult with the comedy sector about how and whether something could be introduced for LCA members and others. We will learn from those who are improving working conditions (safe travel schemes, access improvements and more) and promote these via our websites and other communication channels.
   Target date: June 2025.

3. **Researching the impact of live comedy sector community projects**
   Who? LCA & partners
   The live comedy survey highlights that more than 50% of organisations engage with community projects, including but not limited to, work in schools and community organisations. This work highlights some of the equality, diversity and inclusion work being done in the sector and the 'good things' done to contribute to society. More information is needed on the wider nature and impact of this work. We want to find out more about this and will work with LCA members and others to build a database of best practice, publishing case studies on our website, at events and in documents.
   Target date: September 2025.

4. **Promote training and development within the live comedy industry**
   Who? LCA & partners
   It is clear from the survey that the sector provides many opportunities for training and development, with more than half of organisations offering training in some form. These are mostly informal opportunities but there is some evidence of formal training and development schemes. Often people helping out at clubs, perhaps on a volunteer basis, go on to paid work (maybe at festivals) and then build permanent careers in the sector and broader comedy industries (e.g. in TV, film, and digital industries). We want to record and promote these opportunities and use the evidence as part of our overall lobbying and advocacy strategy. We will include some case studies on the LCA website, at events and in documents.
   Target date: September 2025.

5. **Explore the barriers to entry and inequalities that exist in live comedy**
   Who? LCA & CCSR
   We know there exist various barriers to entry for people who want to work in the sector, and those

who want to progress and develop. The survey data highlights that respondents identify barriers and inequalities in relation to sexism, gender, LGBTQ+, ageism, BAME, disability, social class and wage inequality and stagnation. We want to know more about this and will work with members and partners to explore more about what the LCA can do to address these inequalities. We will seek resources to support activities and interventions which are already happening, and new initiatives which could help address barriers to entry.
Target date: On-going throughout 2025. We will update LCA members at the regular online meetings and newsletters.

6. **Establish a database of UK comedy venues**
   Who? LCA
   Having a database of UK comedy venues will help to measure the size, scale and economic impact of the live comedy industry. We know from the 2024 survey that not everyone working in live comedy is a member of the LCA. Our reach is only as good as our membership and whilst we are proud of the number of members we have, we want to do more. We especially want to ensure our membership is more reflective of the entire UK comedy sector including venues, acts, promoters and others. We want to engage with people who are performing live comedy in community settings, and in other non-traditional places (for example, in prisons and hospitals). A database of UK comedy venues will form a key method of mapping the live comedy industry.
   Target date: On-going.

7. **Explore possible resources and funding**
   Who? LCA
   At the moment the LCA is operating on a shoestring budget and has incredibly limited resource and capacity. The successes of the LCA so far are testament to the hard work and dedication of the Directors. To fully implement the recommendations of this report, additional resource is going to be necessary. Whilst this may assist the sustainability and development of the LCA itself, any resource that is secured will also feed directly into the live comedy sector in a similar way to the #SaveLiveComedy campaign which distributed money directly to those impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. There is much the LCA can learn from other similar membership organisations who support people working in different but aligned sectors.
   Target date: On-going.

8. **Repeat the survey each year & publish results**
   Who? LCA, CCSR & BCG
   In order to build on the results of this survey and begin to gather longitudinal data on the live comedy industry, the UK Live Comedy survey will be repeated in 2025. We will distribute it to LCA members and a wider community of people working in live comedy, using social media and other relevant databases and networks. An initial report will be published with key headline results, and then a detailed report will be published. The complete report will be available online and distributed to members, stakeholders and policy makers.
   Target date: Survey to be launched in June and initial results available in July 2025. The full report will be published in February 2026.

9. **Review the survey questions and add new ones in relevant areas**
   Who? LCA & CCSR
   The LCA in partnership with the CCSR will review the live comedy sector survey questions and explore the potential of adding in new questions, as well as possible revisions of the 2024 questions. We will use the responses from the 2024 survey to guide this review, together with surveys from other sectors to aid the benchmarking of live comedy alongside sectors (such as live music and others). These recommendations will be used as a guide for new questions, with particular focus placed on collecting data on charity and community work, training, inequalities, and the extent and impact of the live comedy industry.
   Target date: March/April 2025.

Appendix One: Methodology

The study used a survey to collect data from 366 participants.

Data was collected using the JISC Online survey platform. Research ethics approval for the study was gained from the College of Business, Arts, Social Sciences Research Ethnics Committee at Brunel University of London. Initial questions directed participants to record informed consent and to engage with a participant information sheet that explained what would happen to the data collected.

The survey is split into two parts or streams. One stream of questions were answered by comedians (67% of participants), the other by other industry professions, such as agents, promotors or representatives of venues in the comedy industry (33%). An initial question recorded the occupation of the participant which then directed them to the correct stream.

Questions numbered 31 for the comedians stream and 33 for the industry professionals stream. Questions focused on a number of areas that are reflected in the data analysis. The survey sought to record the economic conditions of the live stand-up comedy industry, with the aim of measuring the size and scale of the industry. Questions focused on the other activities within the voluntary, charity and third sector that live stand-up comedy workers are involved with. Questions also focused on the national and regional geography of the comedy industry and on the characteristics of venues and performance spaces. There was also the opportunity for qualitative comments to be added which allowed participants to raise industry focused issues that were not addressed in the other parts of the survey.

The survey was open from 13th June to 7th July 2024. The survey was distributed through industry press and a number of industry distribution lists and networks. Survey data was analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

The UK Live Comedy Sector Survey 2024 was jointly conducted by the Centre for Comedy Studies Research at Brunel University, the Live Comedy Association, and British Comedy Guide.