



Ruthless Research

Final report:

Youth Theatre in Scotland Sector Review 2023

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Submitted by:
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About Ruthless Research

Ruthless Research is an Edinburgh-based independent research consultancy, through which Ruth Stevenson provides a range of qualitative and quantitative research solutions to organisations who work for the benefit of the community.

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Background and context

Background

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland (YTAS) wanted to undertake research to review the information that they hold about the youth theatre sector in Scotland, which will be used to inform their understanding of their stakeholders and explore ways to best engage with the youth theatre sector in Scotland.

A mapping exercise was undertaken to:

- Gather a comprehensive picture of youth theatre provision across Scotland;
- Identify gaps in provision;
- Provide a narrative report identifying key findings and detailed analysis of the provision;
- Compare findings to the previous Sector Reviews undertaken in 2015 and 2020.

The report that follows discusses the findings from the research, providing a snapshot of youth theatre provision in Scotland in 2023 and comparing it to the sector in 2015 and 2020.

Methodology

This mapping exercise was conducted by independent researcher Ruth Stevenson.

In 2023 representatives of youth theatres in Scotland were invited to complete a survey which was available online between 18th April and 6th July 2023. This form focused on asking the youth theatres for information about their activities during the previous financial year, described in the form as ‘the year April 2022 – March 2023’.

The questions used to set up this survey were similar to those used for the YTAS sector reviews in 2015 and 2020, with a view to enabling comparison between the years as much as possible. It is notable however that we asked the youth theatres to complete this similar form across all of the three years but in 2015 we also undertook a Google search to identify additional youth theatres, which explains why the number of youth theatres included in 2015 was higher. We were not, however, able to source complete data about these youth theatres so in 2020 and 2023 we chose to focus on more detailed data collection via the mapping form.

In 2023, 87 youth theatres provided information about their activities across 216 venues.

The dataset contains the results of a focused search for youth theatre venues and activities in Scotland, however it may be that some venues or activities were missed or incomplete information was recorded if information was not provided when asked.

The analysis of this dataset was conducted by Ruth Stevenson and the findings are provided in the following report. As part of the analysis, population figures have been based on [mid-year estimates 2021 from the Office for National Statistics](#).

Please note that throughout the report percentage totals may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

KEY FINDINGS

Mapping the sector - summary of findings

The national picture

The following table summarises data collected through the Sector Review across 2015, 2020 and 2023:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2015 Number	2020 Number	2023 Number
Number of youth theatres	221	99	87
Number of venues where these youth theatres operate	341	217	216
Average number of venues per youth theatre	1.5	2.2	2.5
Number of venues per person aged under 25 in Scotland	4,701	7,227	3,645

Please note that as the methodology for data collection differed in 2015 the figures shown in this table for 2015 are not directly comparable with the figures for 2020 and 2023.

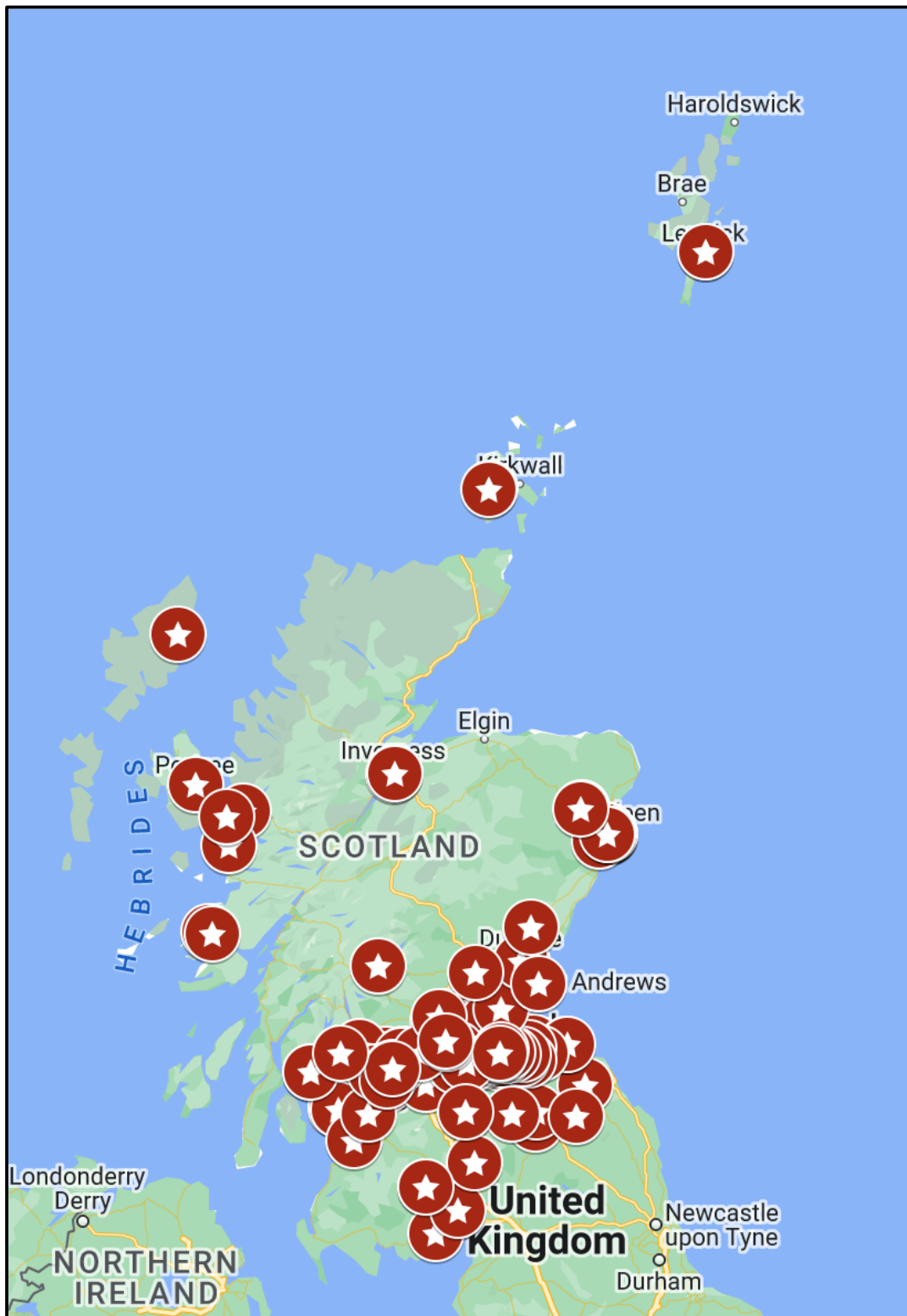
In 2023, 87 youth theatres were identified through the Sector Review and these youth theatres operated across 216 venues in Scotland.

Although slightly fewer youth theatres were identified in 2023 as compared to 2015 and 2020 it is also the case that the average number of venues operating per youth theatre has risen slightly across the years.

With a Scottish under 25 population of 787,313 and a database containing 216 venues, in 2023 the mapping process has identified one youth theatre venue for every 3,645 members of the Scottish population aged under 25. This compares favourably to one youth theatre venue for every 7,227 members of the Scottish population aged under 25 in 2020 and one youth theatre venue for every 4,701 members of the Scottish population aged under 25 in 2015, although this is likely due to a now smaller under 25 population.

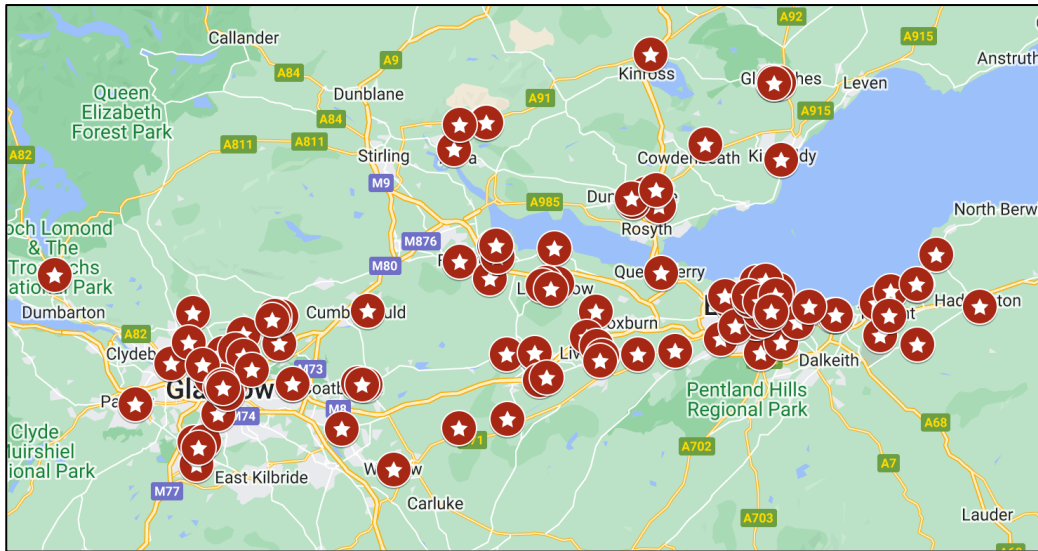
The geography of youth theatre

The following map shows the geographic distribution of the 216 youth theatre venues where activity was delivered in 2023.



As in 2015 and 2020, there was a reasonable spread of youth theatre activity across Scotland with a cluster in the Central Belt and up the east coast. In 2023 the most northerly venue was in Shetland.

The following map shows more detail for the Central Belt region, where the majority of activity was located in 2023.



This map is available online via [this link](#) where each venue where activity is delivered is labelled with the name of the corresponding youth theatre and it is possible to zoom in and out.

The following table lists the youth theatre organisations operating across four or more venues in 2023.

Organisation	Number of venues
Brunton Performing Arts Network	15
Mix Up Theatre	10
Scottish Youth Theatre	10
At the Root Theatre	9
Tron Youth Theatre	7
Borders Youth Theatre	6
Creative Spark Theatre Arts	6
The Drama Studio	6
Beacon Youth Theatre / Company / Participation Programme	5
Citymoves Dance Agency	5
Ignite Theatre	5
Strange Town Theatre Company	5
CentreStage	4
iNTER Performing Arts Academy / UK Theatre School	4
Live Drama	4
Performance Collective Stranraer	4

The youth theatre organisations operating across the greatest number of venues were national or based in the Central Belt:

- Brunton Performing Arts Network (East Lothian)
- Mix Up Theatre (Edinburgh)
- Scottish Youth Theatre (national)
- At the Root Theatre (West Lothian)
- Tron Youth Theatre (Glasgow)

Beyond this, there was more geographical distribution in youth theatres operating across multiple venues.

Youth theatre participation

We asked the youth theatres to tell us about the number of participants that were involved in their activities, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2015 (221) Number	2020 (99) Number	2023 (87) Number
Number of participants engaged weekly	16,777	13,851	10,753
Number of participants engaged in holiday or project activity	11,702	7,790	10,406
Total number of participants engaged	28,479	21,641	21,159
Average number of participants per youth theatre	128.9	218.6	245.7

In total we identified an estimated 21,159 young people involved in youth theatre in Scotland in 2023, as compared to 21,641 in 2020 and 28,479 in 2015. As fewer venues were identified in 2020 and 2023 it is no surprise that absolute participation figures were also lower. However, the average number of participants per youth theatre has risen across the years.

The following table details levels participation at YTAG member youth theatres:

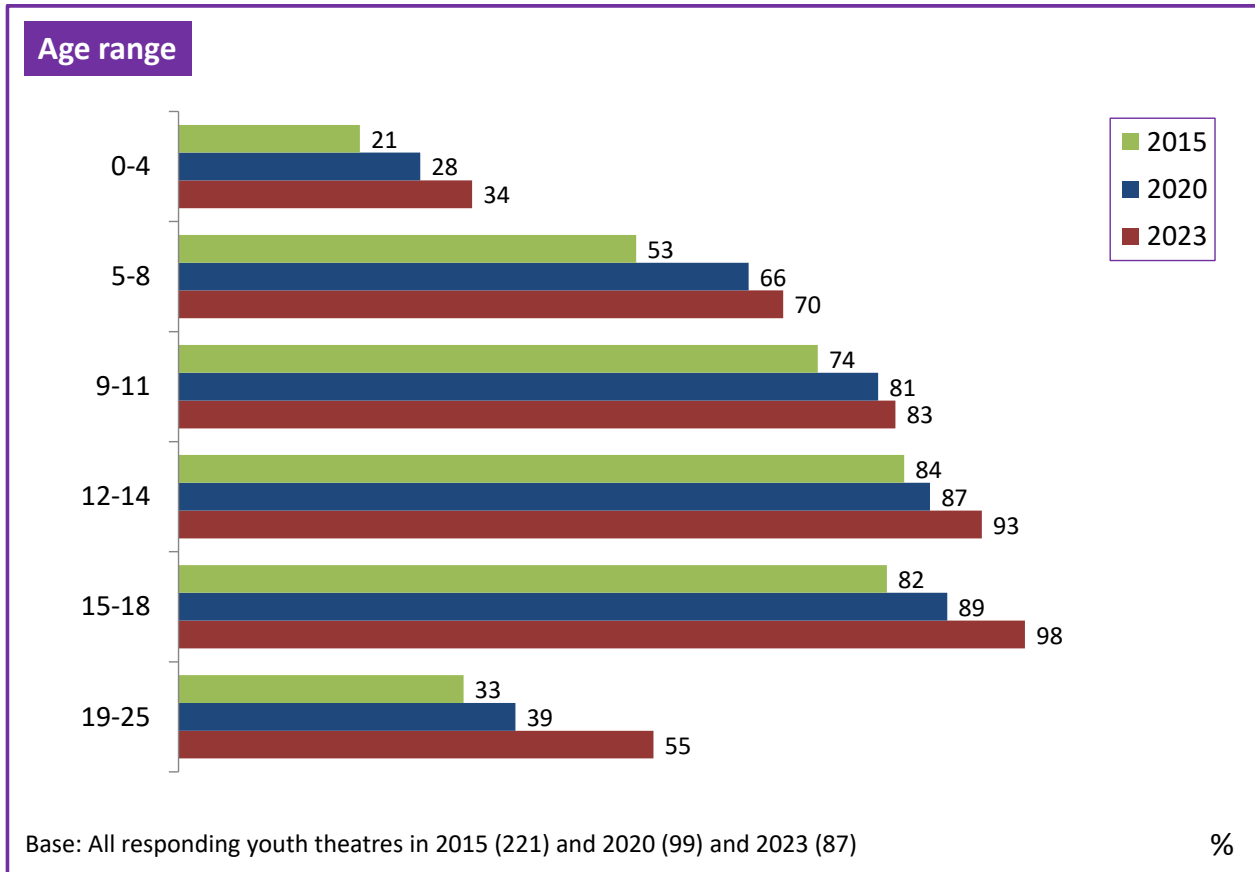
Base: All responding YTAG members	2015 Number	2020 Number	2023 Number
Number of participants engaged weekly	6,022	8,061	8,615
Number of participants engaged in holiday or project activity	6,433	5,366	9,163
Total number of participants engaged	12,455	13,427	17,778

The number of participants that we identified who were taking part at YTAG member youth theatres has risen across the years.

An estimated 17,778 young people attended activities run by YTAG members in 2023 (up from 12,455 in 2015 and 13,427 in 2020), of which 8,615 attend activities run by YTAG members weekly (up from 6,022 in 2015 and 8,061 in 2020).

We also asked the youth theatres to tell us more about the participants involved in their activities.

The following graph provides information about the ages of participants involved in youth theatre across Scotland.



Youth theatre provision for all age groups has risen year-on-year. In all three years the majority of the youth theatres provided activities for high school aged children, with relatively fewer providing activities for older or younger age groups.

In addition to this, in 2023 33% of the youth theatres also worked with participants aged 26+.

In 2023 we also asked the youth theatres to tell us the age ranges which are their main focus (ticking all that applied), and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2023 (87) %
0-4	13
5-8	55
9-11	76
12-14	89
15-18	89
19-25	32

In line with the patterns in general provision, the majority of the youth theatres focused on providing activities for high school aged children, with relatively fewer providing activities for older or younger age groups.

Number of classes

In 2020 and 2023 we asked the youth theatres to tell us how many separate classes they provided, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2020 (99) %	2023 (87) %
0	8	7
1	12	13
2-5	32	36
6-10	19	17
11-20	18	17
21+	8	7
Data not provided	3	3
Average number of classes provided	9.4	9.1

We recorded this question in a different way in 2015, so findings are not directly comparable and have not been included.

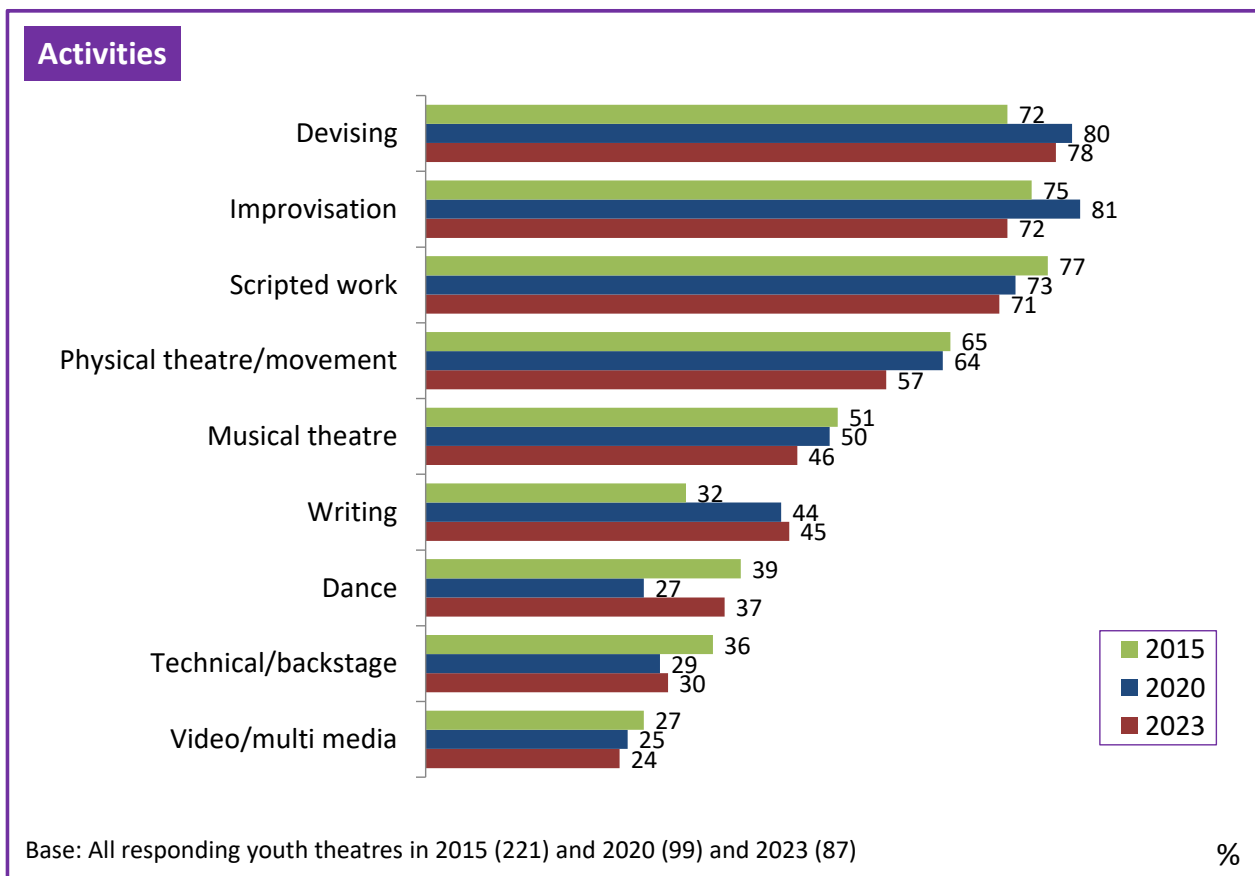
The pattern in provision of separate classes was very similar in 2023 compared to 2020.

Around one in ten of the youth theatres ran one class only (13% in 2023 and 12% in 2022), and just under one in ten ran more than 21 separate classes (7% in 2023 and 8% in 2020). The greatest proportion of the youth theatres ran 2-5 separate classes (36% in 2023 and 32% in 2020).

The average number of classes run by each youth theatre was just over nine (9.1 in 2023 and 9.4 in 2020).

Youth theatre activities

We asked the youth theatres to provide information about their activities, and findings are summarised in the following graph:



Patterns of provision of activities were broadly similar across the three years, with the greatest proportion of youth theatres providing devising (78%), improvisation (72%) and scripted work (71%) in 2023 albeit at marginally lower proportions than in 2020. The most notable difference was an increase in provision of dance, which at 37% in 2023 had returned to 2015 levels.

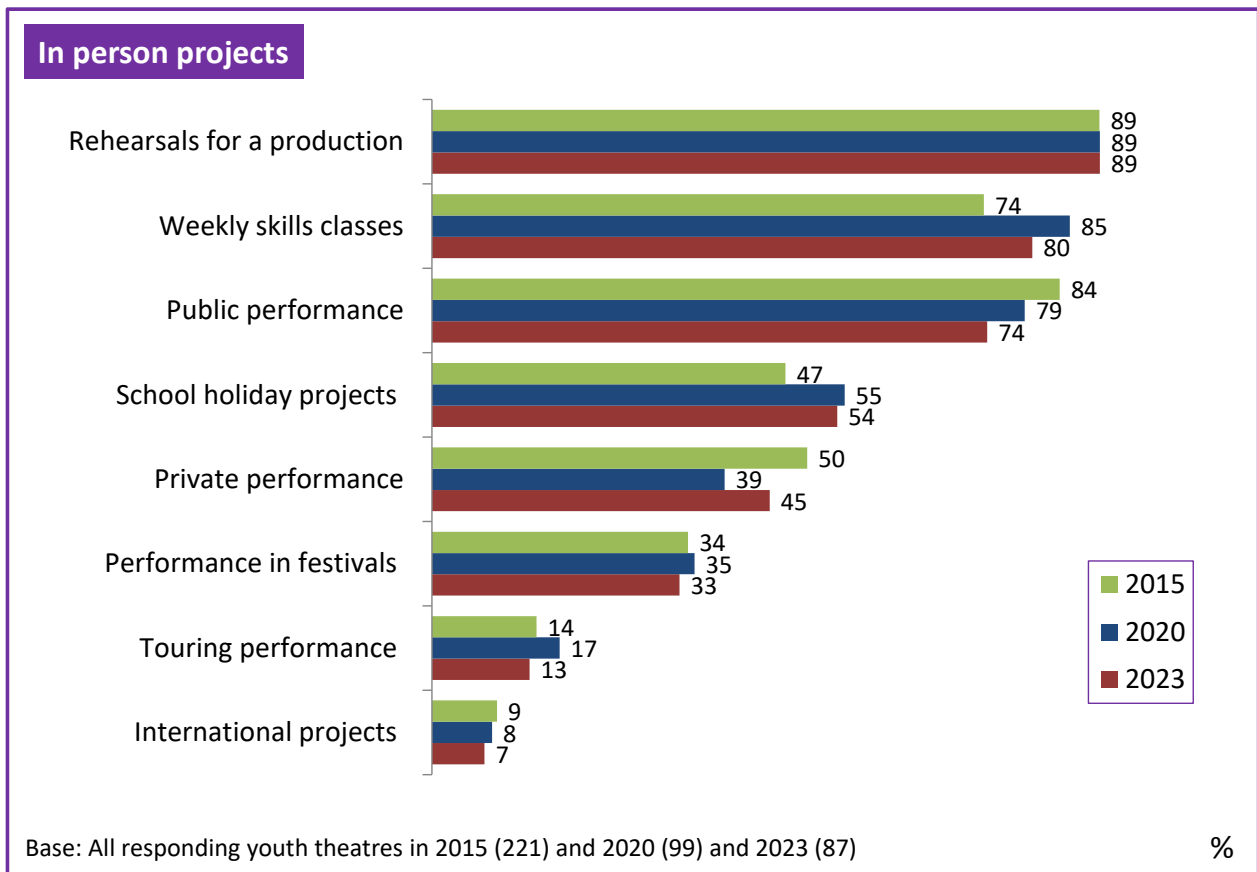
We asked the youth theatres to tell us the main focus of their activities, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2015 (221) %	2020 (99) %	2023 (87) %
Devising	29	35	36
Musical theatre	20	24	22
Scripted work	26	12	17
Improvisation	10	9	6
Dance	2	1	2
Physical theatre / movement	0	1	0
Video / multi media	1	0	1
Other	12	14	13

Across all three years the main focus of activity was most often devising, musical theatre or scripted work.

‘Other’ activities listed in 2023 were performance, putting on a production, and professional development. Six youth theatres told us that they had no specific main focus.

We asked the youth theatres to tell us about the type of in-person projects that they undertake, and findings are summarised in the following graph:



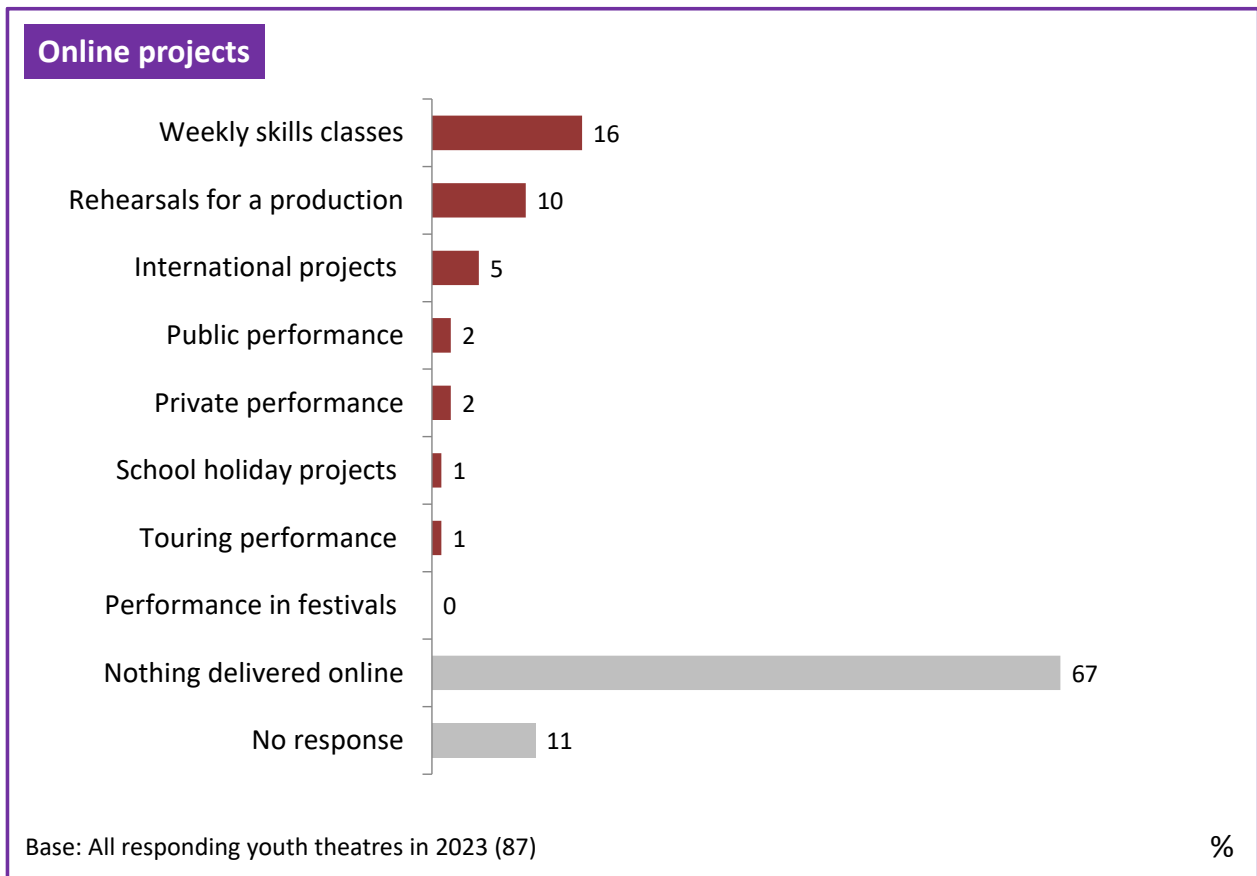
Patterns in the types of in-person projects undertaken were broadly similar across the three years, with the project types most frequently undertaken by youth theatres being rehearsals for a production, weekly skills classes, and public performances.

In 2023 we also asked the youth theatres to tell us whether they ever offered any online activities, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2023 (87) %
Yes, regularly	8
Yes, occasionally	52
No, never	40

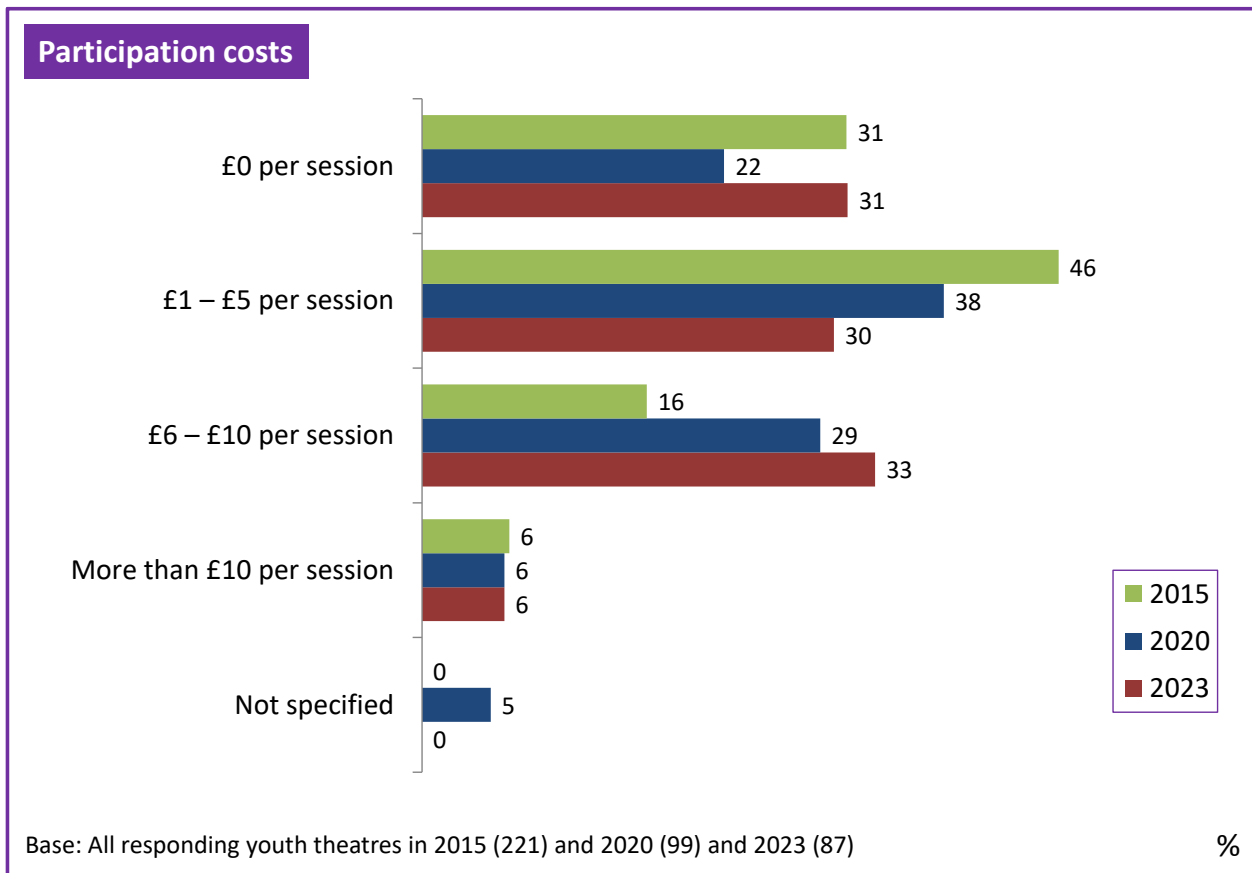
In total six in ten youth theatres (60%) ever offered online activities, including 8% that did so regularly and 52% that did so occasionally.

In 2023 we also asked the youth theatres to tell us about the type of online projects that they undertake, and findings are summarised in the following graph:



In 2023, 23% of the youth theatres had offered projects online – most often weekly skills classes (16% of all youth theatres) and rehearsals for a production (10% of all youth theatres).

We asked the youth theatres to tell us about participant costs for their activities, and findings are summarised in the following graph:



In 2023 there was a greater variation in participant costs across the youth theatres, with around a third charging £6-10 per session, around a third charging £1-5 per session, and around a third charging £0 per session. Whilst there is a clear trend towards increased costs (with the proportion charging £6-10 per session increasing year-on-year) 2023 also saw a greater proportion of youth theatres charging nothing as compared to 2020.

In 2020 and 2023 we asked the youth theatres to tell us whether they offered financial support for participants, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2020 (99) %	2023 (87) %
Yes	52	71
No	48	29

In 2023 around seven in ten youth theatres (71%) offered financial support for participants, which has risen substantially from 52% in 2020.

In 2023 we asked the youth theatres to provide more detail about this. In total an average of 38% of participants had utilised financial support across the youth theatres where it was offered, with a range from 1-100% of groups' participants.

Youth theatre staffing

We asked the youth theatres to tell us about the way that they staffed their organisations, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2015 (221) Number	2020 (99) Number	2023 (87) Number
Number of paid staff	903	686	678
Number of volunteers	913	401	587
Total number of staff / volunteers	1,816	1,087	1,265
Average staff per youth theatre	8.2	11.0	14.5

In total we identified an estimated 1,265 people working in youth theatres in Scotland in 2023, which is a higher figure than was recorded in 2020 but a lower figure than was recorded in 2015. As fewer venues were identified in 2020 and 2023 as compared to 2015 it is no surprise that staffing figures were also lower in absolute terms. However, we identified more staff members per youth theatre on average year-on-year (14.5 per youth theatre in 2023 as compared to 11.0 in 2020 and 8.2 in 2015).

It is notable that the recent rise can be attributed to a rise in volunteers (587 in 2023 as compared to 401 in 2020), with the number of paid staff recorded being very similar across both years. This returns the 2023 ratio to a very approximate 50/50 split between paid staff and volunteers, which is similar to 2015 but differs from 2020 where around two thirds of staff were paid and a third were volunteers.

In 2023 we introduced a new question to ask the youth theatres about the way that their paid staff members were contracted, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres who operate using paid staff	2023 (77) %	Range
Employed staff	24	0-100
Freelance staff	76	0-100

Across the youth theatres that operated using paid staff members, 24% of staff members were employed and 76% were freelance. The proportions varied substantially across the youth theatres, from 100% employed to 100% freelance along with different combinations of both.

In 2020 we asked the youth theatres to tell us about the fees that they paid their sessional workers, and we found that arrangements and roles varied substantially. We concluded that the average hourly rate typically paid to sessional workers in 2020 was £23.38, however it was difficult to analyse the data in a useful way.

Learning from this, in 2023 we asked the youth theatres to provide fee information in a more nuanced way and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres who operate using paid staff AND provided fee details (70)	Lowest £	2023 £	Highest £
Hourly rate for leaders / facilitators	£10	£28.99	£60
Hourly rate for assistant roles	£8	£14.88	£30
Sessional rate for leaders / facilitators	£20	£94.04	£275
Sessional rate for assistant roles	£10	£41.64	£80
Daily rate for leaders / facilitators	£100	£194.52	£350
Daily rate for assistant roles	£70	£106.96	£150

In 2023 the average hourly rate across the youth theatres was £14.88 for assistant roles and £28.99 for leaders / facilitators, which is broadly in line with the 2020 cross-role estimate. The range of rates contributing to these averages was wide.

In 2023 we identified that youth theatres tend to pay their leaders / facilitators approximately double the fee that they pay their assistants.

Sessional rates equated to approximately three hours at the hourly rate or a half day at the daily rate, which is internally consistent. It is acknowledged that in 2020 some youth theatres told us that their 'sessional rate' included a two-hour session and preparation time so this is likely to remain the case and again is consistent with the findings in the table and the findings below.

In 2020 and 2023 we asked the youth theatres to tell us the activities that sessional staff were paid for, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres who pay staff to deliver activities	2020 (63) %	2023 (70) %
Delivery of activities	100	100
Preparation time	46	74
Travel time	14	29

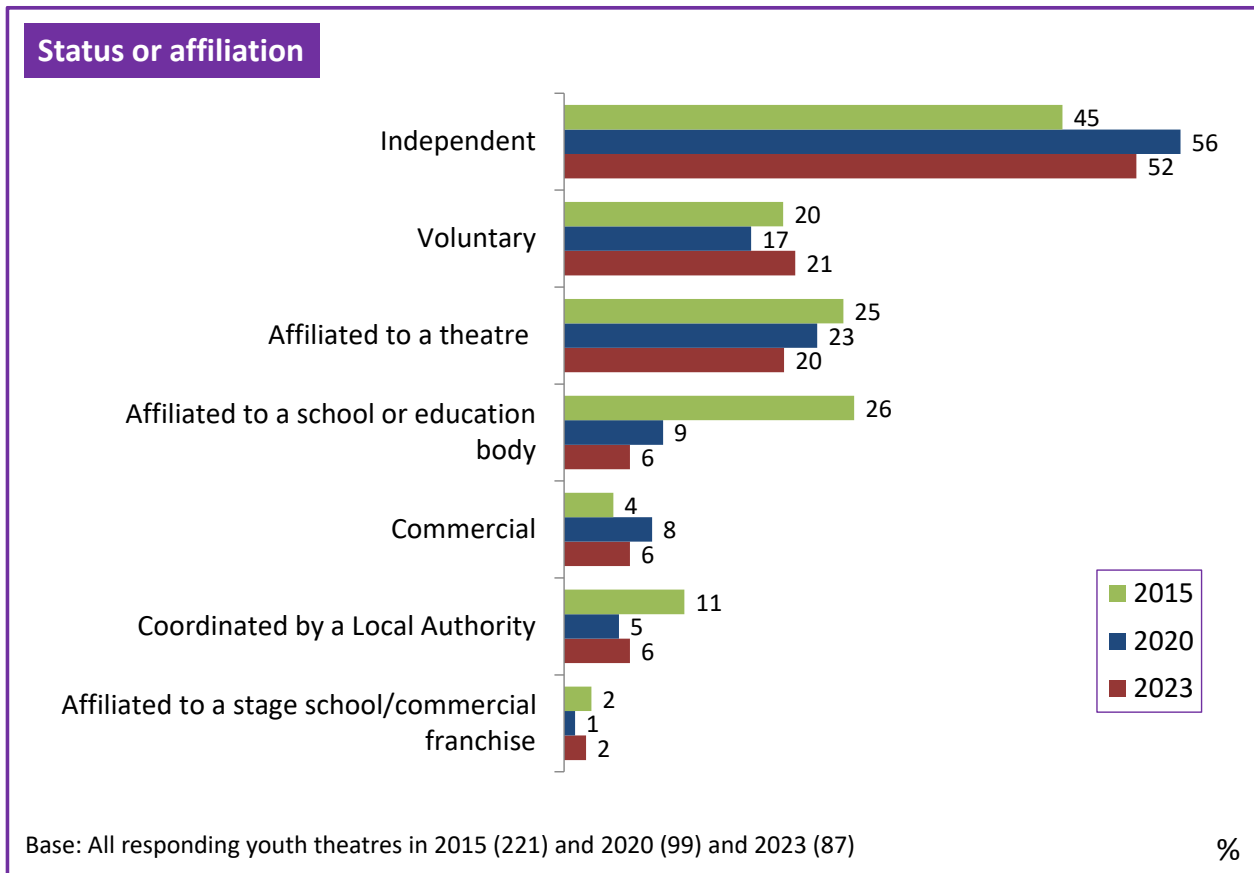
Please note the 2020 figures in this table have been re-based / re-calculated to be comparable to 2023 figures.

In 2023, in addition to paying their sessional staff for delivery of activities 74% paid their sessional staff for preparation time and 29% paid their sessional staff for travel time.

When comparing 2023 to 2020 the proportion of youth theatres paying sessional staff for preparation time had increased by 28 percentage points, and the proportion of youth theatres paying sessional staff for travel time had approximately doubled.

Youth theatre operations

The following graph provides information about the status or affiliation of the organisations offering youth theatre activity:



As in 2015 and 2020, in 2023 more than half of the youth theatre organisations (52%) were independent, and this categorisation was the most prevalent. More generally, the pattern in distribution of types of affiliation was similar in 2023 and 2020 with the next most prevalent types of affiliation being voluntary or affiliated to a theatre.

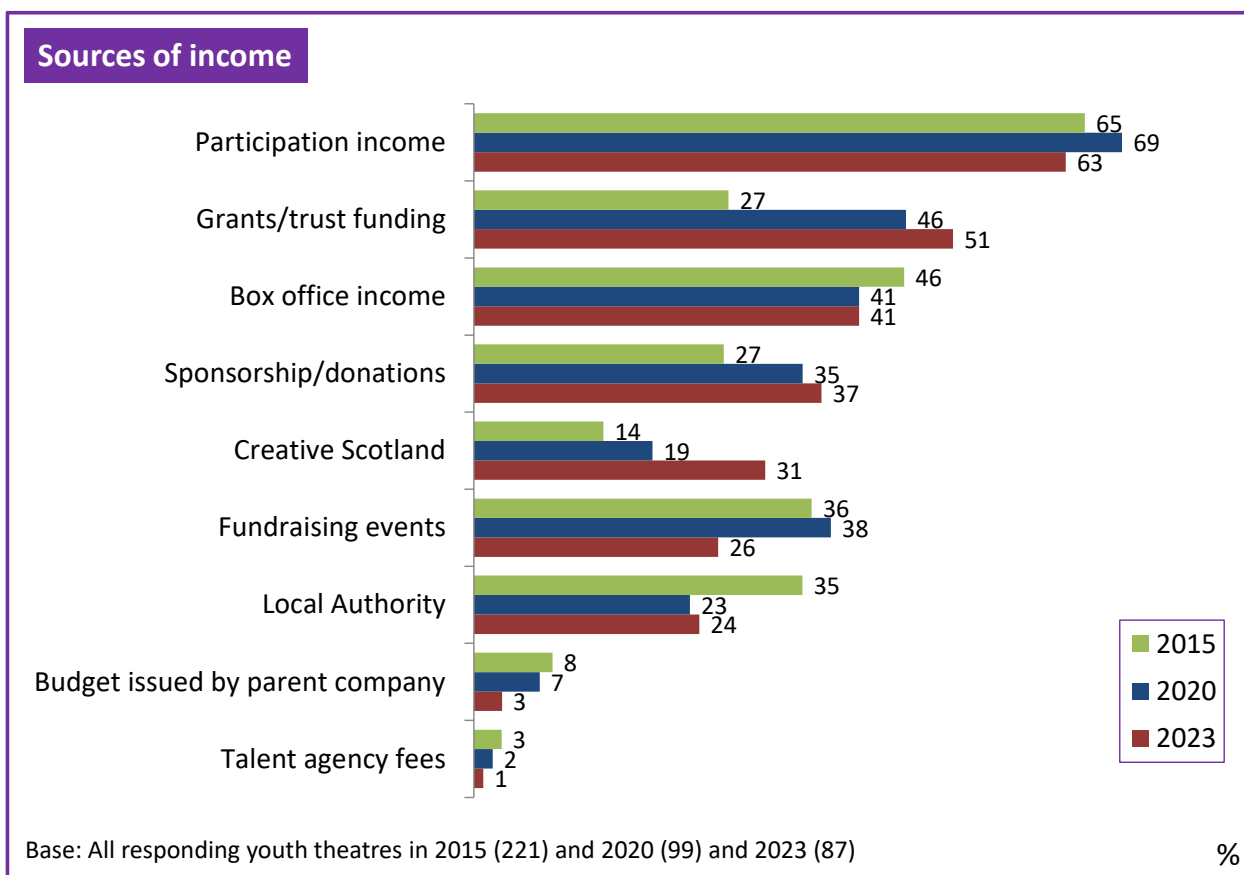
2020 saw a fall in the proportion of youth theatres affiliated with a school or education body or a Local Authority, and this reduction continued in 2023.

We asked the youth theatres to tell us whether they were registered charities and registered companies, or not, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2015 (221) %	2020 (99) %	2023 (87) %
Registered charity	Incomplete	50	61
Registered company	Incomplete	45	47

In 2023 around six in ten youth theatres were registered charities (61%), a rise from 50% in 2020. In both years just under half of the youth theatres were registered companies (47% in 2023 and 45% in 2020)

We asked the youth theatres to indicate their sources of income, and findings are summarised in the following graph:



Across all three years, the source of income used by the most youth theatres was participation income, although the proportion using this was marginally lower in 2023 (63%) as compared to the previous years. Notably, in 2023 proportionally more youth theatres acquired income through grants / trust funding (51%), sponsorship / donations (37%) and Creative Scotland (31%) as compared to previous years, and proportionally fewer had utilised fundraising events (26%).

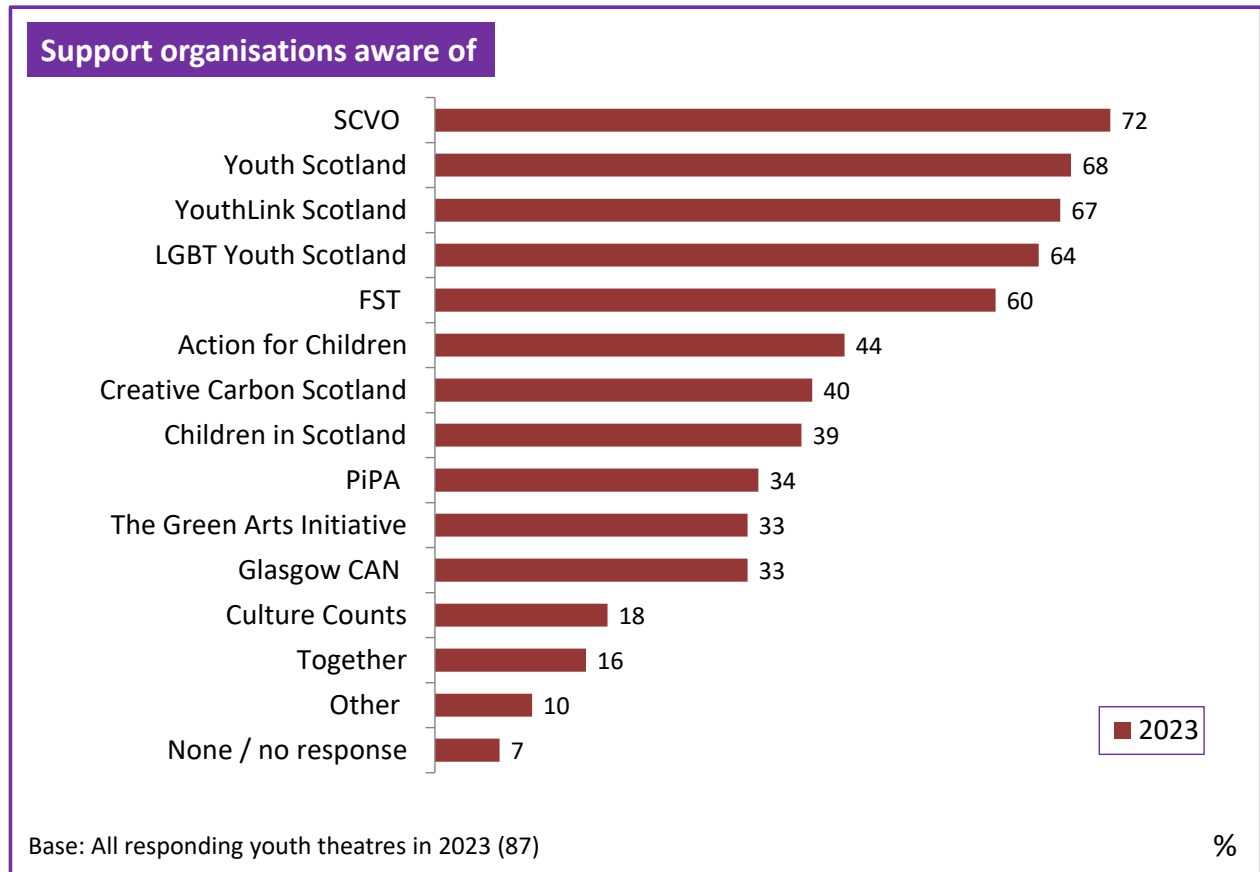
We asked the youth theatres to indicate their main sources of income, and findings are summarised in the following table:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2015 (221) %	2020 (99) %	2023 (87) %
Participation income	36	48	39
Grants/trust funding	4	15	22
Box office income	13	11	11
Creative Scotland	6	6	9
Local Authority	23	5	7
Fundraising events	7	3	0
Budget issued by parent company	4	2	0

Showing a similar pattern to sources of income generally, the main source of income for youth theatres in 2023 was most often participation income (although at 39% this is a lower proportion in 2023 as compared to 48% in 2020), followed by grants / trust funding (22%) which has risen year-on-year.

Sources of support

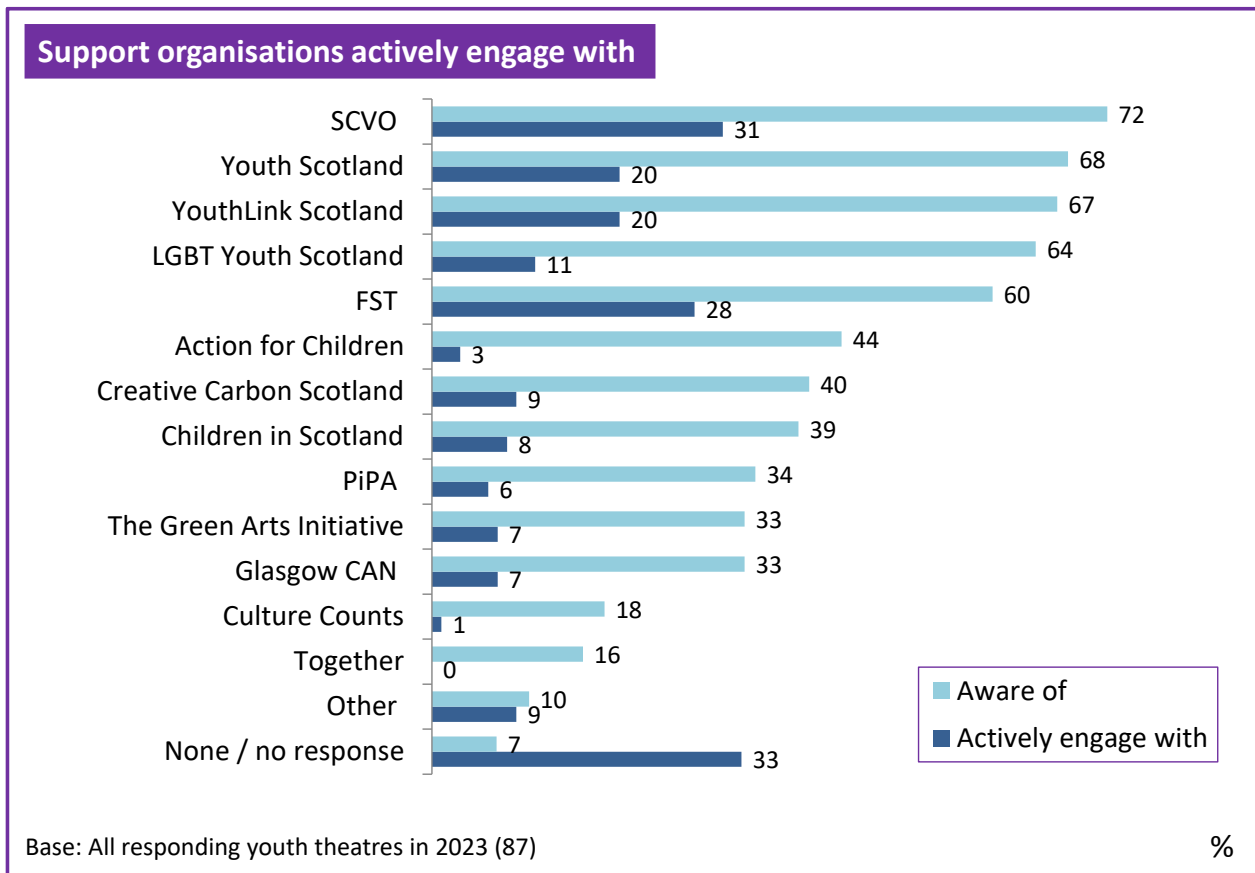
In 2023 we included a new question asking the youth theatres to tell us which support organisations they were aware of, and findings are summarised in the following graph:



The youth theatres were most often aware of Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) (72%), Youth Scotland (68%), YouthLink Scotland (67%), LGBT Youth Scotland (64%) and Federation of Scottish Theatre (FST) (60%).

On average each youth theatre selected 6.4 organisations from this list, indicating that they tended to be aware of multiple support organisations.

We also asked the youth theatres to tell us which support organisations they actively engaged with, and findings are summarised in the following graph:



In total 67% of the youth theatres told us that they actively engaged with support organisations and on average each youth theatre selected 1.6 organisations from this list.

In line with levels of awareness, the youth theatres most actively engaged with SCVO, Youth Scotland, YouthLink Scotland, LGBT Youth Scotland and Federation of Scottish Theatre.

Notably, 28% actively engaged with Federation of Scottish Theatre making this the second most actively engaged with support organisation despite being only fifth in terms of awareness.

When asked which other support organisations they engaged with, a range of organisations were listed. The following support organisations were listed by multiple youth theatres:

- National Operatic and Dramatic Association NODA (mentioned by 5 youth theatres)
- Dumfries & Galloway Third Sector (mentioned by 2 youth theatres)
- Scottish Community Drama Association SCDA (mentioned by 2 youth theatres)
- The Holywood Trust (mentioned by 2 youth theatres)
- The Stove Dumfries (mentioned by 2 youth theatres)

The following support organisations were listed by one youth theatre each:

- Achievement Bute
- Adoption UK
- Art Works Alliance
- Capital Theatres
- Creative Learning
- Creative Scotland
- Creativity Portal
- Deaf Action Scotland
- DG Unlimited
- East Ayrshire Council
- EDVA
- Engage Scotland
- ESOL
- Falkirk Arts Network
- Family Mediation
- Flexible ChildCare Scotland
- Funding Scotland
- GCVS
- GTC
- Haldane Youth Services
- Interest Link
- Kings & Theatre Royal
- Little Theatre Guild
- Lothian Autistic Society
- National Autistic Society
- National Theatre of Scotland
- One Parent Families
- Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
- Scottish Community Drama
- Scottish Opera
- Scottish Refugee Council
- The Usual Place (Dumfries)
- Third Sector Network
- Thrive Edinburgh
- UK Theatre
- Unlimited
- Upmo
- Visit Scotland
- Who Cares Scotland
- Y-Sort It

Looking forward

We asked the youth theatres to tell us about their priorities for the next 12 months. This was a free-text question, and responses have been summarised in the table below:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2023 %
Developing projects or productions	49
Funding and organisational sustainability	22
Building engagement	21
Expanding provision	17
Access and inclusion	13
Post Covid recovery	10
Administrative and strategic issues	10
Providing a quality experience for young people	9
Staffing	6
Affordable provision	5
Environmental impact	2

The priority identified by the greatest proportion of youth theatres (49%) was developing projects or productions, for example:

“Group performances every term.”

“A weekly programme working towards a festival where all groups can showcase their work.”

“Creating productions and opportunities for performance for our young people.”

Funding and organisational sustainability was a priority for 22% of the youth theatres, for example:

“Securing finance required to sustain our work.”

“Securing enough funds to make the work happen.”

Building engagement was a priority for 21% of the youth theatres, for example:

“We will continue to prioritise growing our numbers.”

“Further expanding access to young people we do not currently engage with.”

10% of the youth theatres also noted post-Covid recovery as a priority, for example:

“Recovering our participant numbers post pandemic.”

“To continue rebuilding my groups which have started to recover but, for certain age groups, are not back to pre-pandemic levels.”

We also asked the youth theatres to tell us about their main concerns for the next 12 months. This was a free-text question, and responses have been summarised in the table below:

Base: All responding youth theatres	2023 %
Funding and fundraising	47
Cost of living - increasing operating costs	18
Staffing issues	15
Venue and rehearsal space	11
Attracting participants	8
Cost of living - affordability for families	8
Programming	7
Financial viability	5
Meeting demand	5

The concern raised by the greatest proportion of youth theatres (47%) was funding and fundraising, for example:

“Securing funding to ensure that we can continue to deliver our work.”

“Securing enough income to avoid using reserves.”

Linked to this, other financial concerns related to the current cost of living crisis and the affect that this could have on operational costs (18%) and affordability for families (8%), for example:

“The cost of living situation is an issue. It costs a lot to deliver our classes and we're finding families are dropping out due to the rising costs.”

“Our main concern is financial - and how we will continue to operate with rising costs.”

“With the cost of living becoming so much higher families may not be able to afford classes and our main income is participant fees.”

Staffing issues were a key concern for 15% of the youth theatres, for example:

“Finding experienced artist-facilitators in our area is challenging, which can make staffing our activities hard at times.”

“Recruitment and retention of experienced freelance facilitators.”

Venue and rehearsal space was a key concern for 11% of the youth theatres, for example:

“Ensuring rehearsal and performance venues are available.”

“Economic threat to rural halls which host our work.”

“Future of the building we work from.”

The regional picture

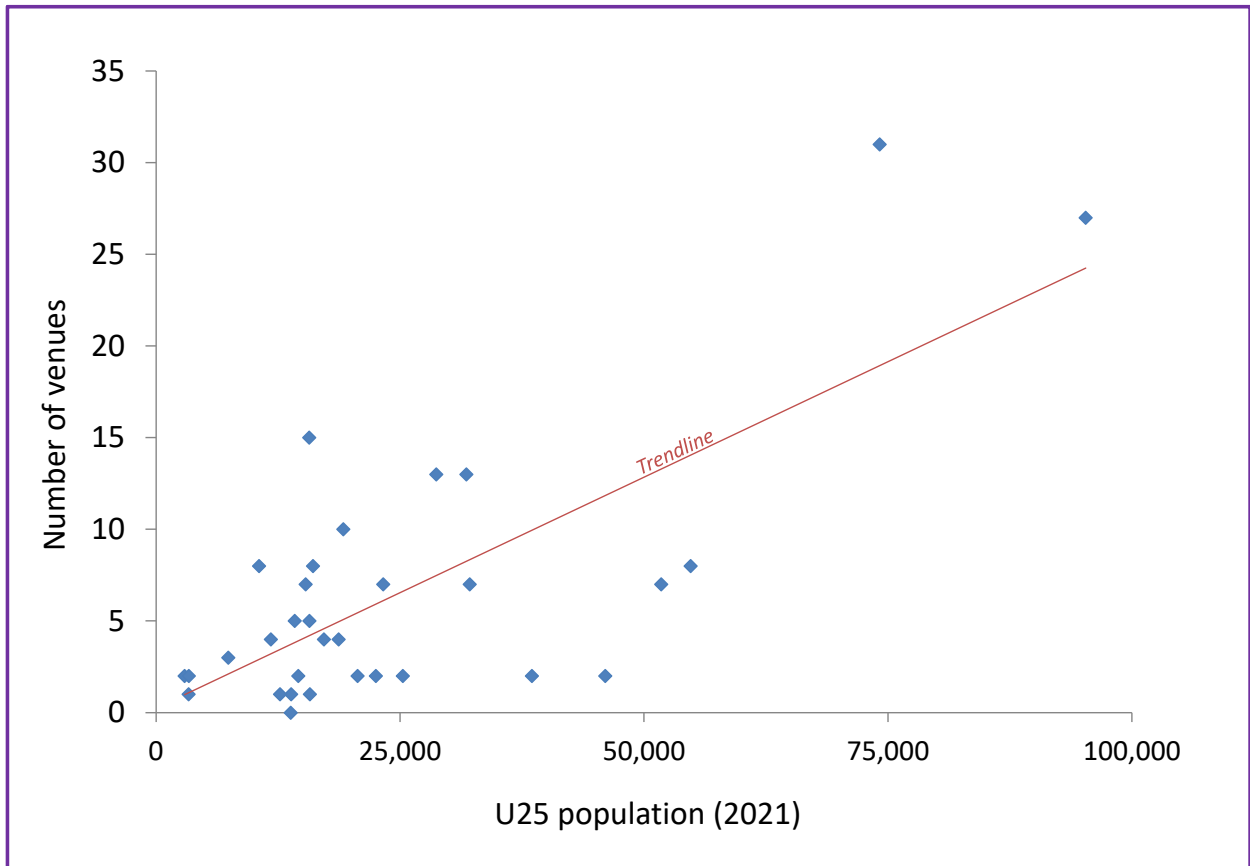
Number of venues by region

The following table details the number of youth theatre venues in each Local Authority region:

Region	2015	2020	2023	2023	Change since 2020
	%	%	%	Number	(% points)
Aberdeen Council	6	4	6	13	+2
Aberdeenshire Council	5	2	1	2	-1
Angus Council	2	*	*	1	0
Argyll and Bute Council	1	6	2	4	-4
City of Edinburgh Council	7	19	14	31	-5
Clackmannanshire Council	0	1	1	3	0
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	0	1	*	1	-1
Dumfries and Galloway Council	4	4	5	10	1
Dundee Council	1	4	1	2	-3
East Ayrshire Council	1	1	2	4	1
East Dunbartonshire Council	4	5	4	8	-1
East Lothian Council	4	4	7	15	+3
East Renfrewshire Council	1	*	2	5	+2
Falkirk Council	4	2	3	7	+1
Fife Council	6	4	4	8	0
Glasgow City Council	8	16	13	27	-3
Highland Council	11	*	3	7	+3
Inverclyde Council	1	2	4	8	+2
Midlothian Council	1	0	2	5	+2
Moray Council	4	*	0	0	0
North Ayrshire Council	1	3	2	4	-1
North Lanarkshire Council	4	4	3	7	-1
Orkney Council	1	2	1	2	-1
Perth and Kinross Council	4	1	1	2	0
Renfrewshire Council	3	1	1	2	0
Scottish Borders Council	4	4	3	7	-1
Shetland Council	1	0	1	2	+1
South Ayrshire Council	2	1	1	2	0
South Lanarkshire Council	3	1	1	2	0
Stirling Council	1	1	*	1	-1
West Dunbartonshire Council	3	*	*	1	0
West Lothian Council	4	5	6	13	+1
National (not specified)	-	-	5	10	-
Total number of venues	100	100	100	216	

In 2023 (as in 2020), the largest number of venues were recorded in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The number of venues recorded in each of the Local Authority regions was then analysed against recent under 25 population figures for the corresponding areas to find out whether population and youth theatre provision were related. Findings can be found in the graph below:



When recorded activities were compared to the populations of the areas, on the whole more youth theatre venues were available in areas with higher populations.

The following table details the number of youth theatre venues compared to the under 25 population in each Local Authority region:

Region	Ratio of venue to u25 population (1 venue per ... population)
East Lothian Council	1,046
Inverclyde Council	1,319
Orkney Islands Council	1,472
Shetland Islands Council	1,684
Dumfries and Galloway Council	1,919
East Dunbartonshire Council	2,012
Scottish Borders Council	2,190
West Lothian Council	2,210
City of Edinburgh Council	2,392
Aberdeen City Council	2,446
Clackmannanshire Council	2,471
Midlothian Council	2,844
Argyll and Bute Council	2,944
East Renfrewshire Council	3,145
Falkirk Council	3,328
Na h-Eileanan Siar	3,337
Glasgow City Council	3,529
East Ayrshire Council	4,304
Highland Council	4,593
North Ayrshire Council	4,677
Fife Council	6,848
South Ayrshire Council	7,291
North Lanarkshire Council	7,397
Perth and Kinross Council	10,332
Dundee City Council	11,267
Renfrewshire Council	12,651
West Dunbartonshire Council	12,703
Stirling Council	13,861
Angus Council	15,774
Aberdeenshire Council	19,261
South Lanarkshire Council	23,016
Moray Council	No provision recorded

In 2023 the regions with the best ratios of youth theatre venues to population were East Lothian, Inverclyde and Orkney.

The regions with the least good ratios of youth theatre venues to population were Moray, South Lanarkshire and Aberdeenshire.

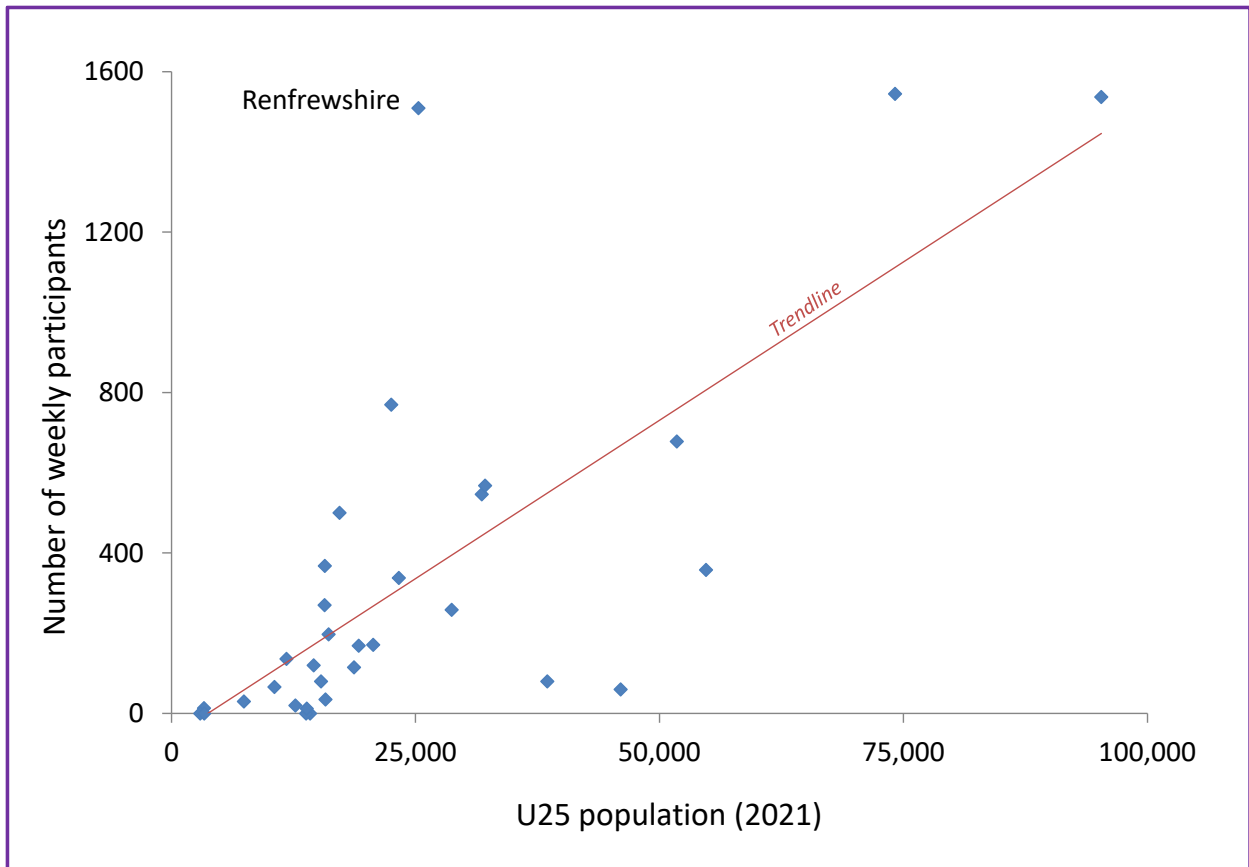
Number of weekly participants by region

The following table provides information about the number of weekly participants in each Local Authority region (where this information was provided):

Region	2015	2020	2023	2023	Change since 2020
	%	%	%	Number	(% points)
Aberdeen City Council	4	5	5	546	0
Aberdeenshire Council	3	1	1	80	0
Angus Council	1	0	*	35	0
Argyll and Bute Council	0	1	1	136	0
City of Edinburgh Council	10	15	15	1,545	0
Clackmannanshire Council	0	0	*	30	0
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	0	1	*	13	-1
Dumfries and Galloway Council	2	1	2	169	+1
Dundee City Council	2	4	7	770	+3
East Ayrshire Council	5	6	5	500	-1
East Dunbartonshire Council	1	3	2	197	-1
East Lothian Council	2	5	3	270	-2
East Renfrewshire Council	1	3	3	368	0
Falkirk Council	4	2	3	338	+1
Fife Council	8	4	3	358	-1
Glasgow City Council	10	17	15	1,537	-2
Highland Council	7	1	5	568	+4
Inverclyde Council	1	1	1	66	0
Midlothian Council	0	0	0	0	0
Moray Council	0	0	0	0	0
North Ayrshire Council	0	3	1	115	-2
North Lanarkshire Council	6	5	6	678	+1
Orkney Islands Council	0	0	0	0	0
Perth and Kinross Council	2	1	2	171	+1
Renfrewshire Council	10	11	14	1,509	+3
Scottish Borders Council	3	0	1	80	+1
Shetland Islands Council	0	0	0	0	0
South Ayrshire Council	4	4	1	120	-3
South Lanarkshire Council	2	1	1	60	0
Stirling Council	2	1	*	12	-1
West Dunbartonshire Council	0	0	*	20	0
West Lothian Council	3	5	2	258	-3
Total weekly participants	100	100	100	10,549	

In 2023 as in 2015 and 2020, the largest number of weekly participants engaged were recorded in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

The number of weekly participants recorded in each of the Local Authority regions was then analysed against under 25 population figures for the corresponding areas to find out whether population and weekly participation were related. Findings can be found in the graph below:



When recorded weekly participants were compared to the populations of the areas, it tended to be that more individuals participated weekly in areas with higher populations.

Renfrewshire was the exception, where a greater number of weekly participants were recorded than we might have expected when considering the size of population.

The following table details weekly attendance compared to the under 25 population in each Local Authority region:

Region	Ratio of w/attenders to u25 population (1 w/attender per ... population)
Renfrewshire Council	17
Dundee City Council	29
East Ayrshire Council	34
East Renfrewshire Council	43
City of Edinburgh Council	48
Highland Council	57
Aberdeen City Council	58
East Lothian Council	58
Glasgow City Council	62
Falkirk Council	69
North Lanarkshire Council	76
East Dunbartonshire Council	82
Argyll and Bute Council	87
West Lothian Council	111
Dumfries and Galloway Council	114
Perth and Kinross Council	121
South Ayrshire Council	122
Fife Council	153
Inverclyde Council	160
North Ayrshire Council	163
Scottish Borders Council	192
Clackmannanshire Council	247
Na h-Eileanan Siar	257
Angus Council	451
Aberdeenshire Council	482
West Dunbartonshire Council	635
South Lanarkshire Council	767
Stirling Council	1,155
Moray Council	No provision recorded
Midlothian Council	Incomplete data
Shetland Islands Council	Incomplete data
Orkney Islands Council	Incomplete data

In 2023 the regions with the best ratios of weekly attendance to population were Renfrewshire (as in 2015 and 2020), Dundee and East Ayrshire (as in 2015 and 2020).

In 2023, the regions with the least good ratios of weekly attendance to population were Moray, Stirling, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire.

Number of staff by region

The following table provides information about the number of paid youth theatre staff in each Local Authority region (where this information was provided):

Region	2015	2020	2023	2023	Change since 2020
	%	%	%	Number	(% points)
Aberdeen City Council	6	3	10	68	+7
Aberdeenshire Council	2	1	0	3	-1
Angus Council	0	0	0	1	0
Argyll and Bute Council	0	0	0	2	0
City of Edinburgh Council	11	9	11	71	+2
Clackmannanshire Council	0	0	0	3	0
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	0	0	0	0	0
Dumfries and Galloway Council	1	1	2	15	+1
Dundee City Council	1	5	2	16	-3
East Ayrshire Council	6	3	8	55	+5
East Dunbartonshire Council	1	1	3	17	+2
East Lothian Council	2	3	4	25	+1
East Renfrewshire Council	0	3	3	21	0
Falkirk Council	2	3	3	21	0
Fife Council	3	3	2	13	-1
Glasgow City Council	41	37	17	113	-20
Highland Council	4	1	4	25	+3
Inverclyde Council	0	1	3	19	+2
Midlothian Council	0	0	2	14	+2
Moray Council	1	0	0	0	0
North Ayrshire Council	0	2	1	5	-1
North Lanarkshire Council	5	3	4	24	+1
Orkney Islands Council	0	0	0	0	0
Perth and Kinross Council	2	1	4	25	+3
Renfrewshire Council	2	10	6	42	-4
Scottish Borders Council	3	0	4	25	+4
Shetland Islands Council	0	0	1	4	+1
South Ayrshire Council	0	0	1	6	+1
South Lanarkshire Council	2	1	1	5	0
Stirling Council	1	0	0	0	0
West Dunbartonshire Council	0	0	0	2	0
West Lothian Council	2	4	4	26	0
Total number of paid staff	100	100	100	666	

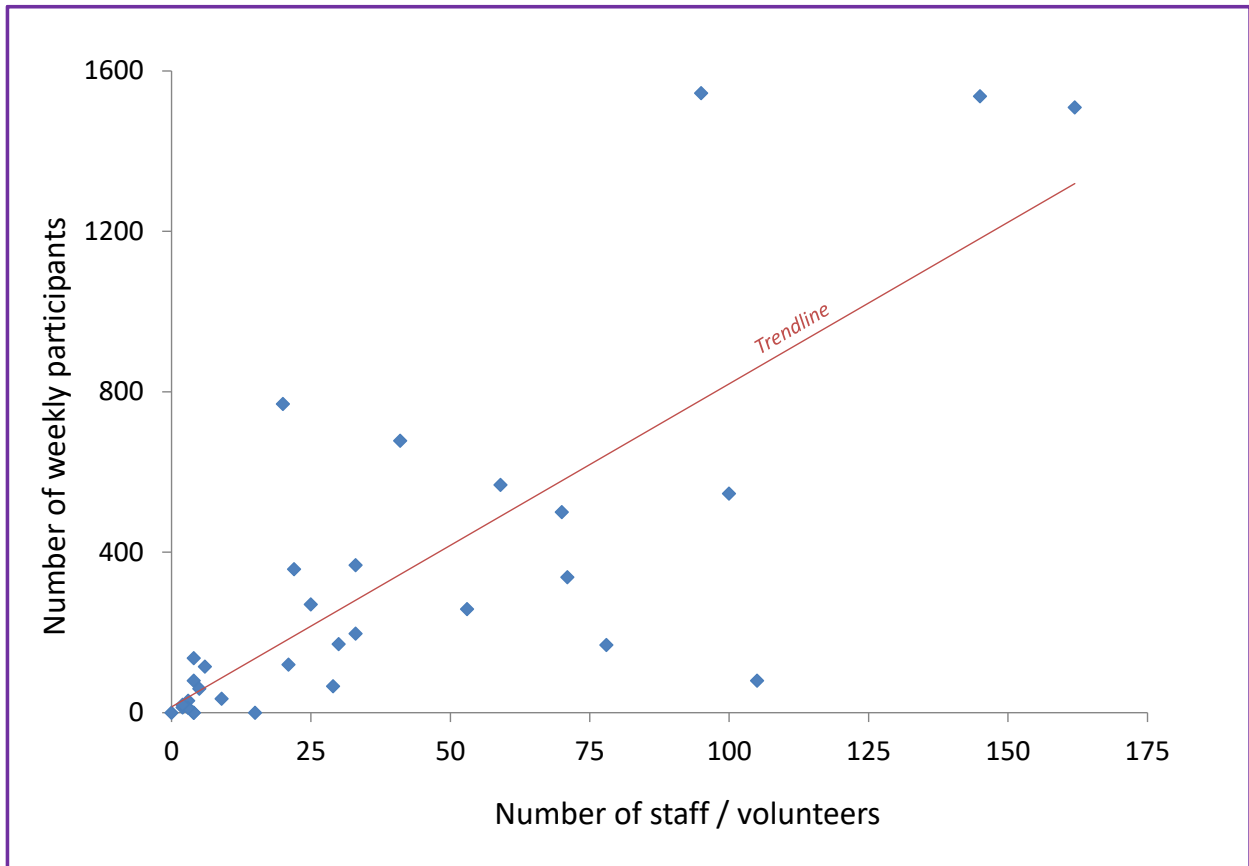
In 2023, the largest number of paid youth theatre staff were recorded in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, with Aberdeen having risen over time.

The following table provides information about the number of youth theatre volunteers in each Local Authority region (where this information was provided):

Region	2015	2020	2023	2023	Change since 2020
	%	%	%	Number	(% points)
Aberdeen City Council	6	10	5	32	-5
Aberdeenshire Council	5	1	*	1	-1
Angus Council	1	1	1	8	0
Argyll and Bute Council	0	1	0	2	-1
City of Edinburgh Council	3	2	4	24	+2
Clackmannanshire Council	0	0	0	0	0
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	0	2	*	2	-2
Dumfries and Galloway Council	3	3	11	63	+8
Dundee City Council	4	6	1	4	-5
East Ayrshire Council	9	8	3	15	-5
East Dunbartonshire Council	1	9	3	16	-6
East Lothian Council	1	1	0	0	-1
East Renfrewshire Council	2	0	2	12	+2
Falkirk Council	6	5	9	50	+4
Fife Council	4	4	2	9	-2
Glasgow City Council	11	13	5	32	-8
Highland Council	0	0	6	34	+6
Inverclyde Council	1	1	2	10	+1
Midlothian Council	0	0	*	1	0
Moray Council	2	0	0	0	0
North Ayrshire Council	0	4	0	1	-4
North Lanarkshire Council	0	4	3	17	-1
Orkney Islands Council	1	3	1	4	-2
Perth and Kinross Council	1	2	1	5	-1
Renfrewshire Council	2	0	20	120	+20
Scottish Borders Council	12	0	14	80	+14
Shetland Islands Council	0	0	0	0	0
South Ayrshire Council	0	0	3	15	+3
South Lanarkshire Council	7	6	0	0	-6
Stirling Council	0	1	1	3	0
West Dunbartonshire Council	0	0	0	0	0
West Lothian Council	4	9	5	27	-4
Total number of volunteers	100	100	100	587	

In 2023, the largest number of youth theatre volunteers were recorded in Renfrewshire, Scottish Borders, and Dumfries and Galloway – all of which rose from the number of volunteers recorded in these regions in previous years.

The number of staff/volunteers recorded in each of the Local Authority regions was then analysed against weekly attendance figures for the corresponding areas. Findings can be found in the graph below:



When recorded weekly participants were compared to the provision of staff/volunteers, on the whole more staff/volunteers were employed in areas where more individuals participated weekly.

The following table provides information about the number of staff/volunteers compared to the weekly attendance in each Local Authority region:

Region	Number of weekly attenders for each staff/volunteer
Scottish Borders Council	0.76
Dumfries and Galloway Council	2.17
Inverclyde Council	2.28
Angus Council	3.89
Stirling Council	4.00
Falkirk Council	4.76
West Lothian Council	4.87
Aberdeen City Council	5.46
Perth and Kinross Council	5.70
South Ayrshire Council	5.71
East Dunbartonshire Council	5.97
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	6.50
East Ayrshire Council	7.14
Renfrewshire Council	9.31
Highland Council	9.63
Clackmannanshire Council	10.00
West Dunbartonshire Council	10.00
Glasgow City Council	10.60
East Lothian Council	10.80
East Renfrewshire Council	11.15
South Lanarkshire Council	12.00
City of Edinburgh Council	16.26
Fife Council	16.27
North Lanarkshire Council	16.54
North Ayrshire Council	19.17
Aberdeenshire Council	20.00
Argyll and Bute Council	34.00
Dundee City Council	38.50
Moray Council	No provision recorded
Shetland Islands Council	Incomplete data
Orkney Islands Council	Incomplete data
Midlothian Council	Incomplete data

The regions with the best staff/volunteers to participant ratios were Scottish Borders Council and Dumfries and Galloway (as in 2020), Inverclyde, and Angus (as in 2020).

The regions with the least good staff/volunteers to participant ratios were Dundee, Argyll and Bute, and Aberdeenshire.

Gaps in regional provision

The following table summarises the regional information provided in this report, in a way which is intended to give an indication of which regions have better than average provision, and which have lower than average provision. To do this, regions appearing in the top half of each ratio table have been given a tick, and the total number of ticks has been added together.

Region	Venue to pop. ratio	Weekly attends to pop. ratio	Staff/ vols to pop. ratio	Sum of ticks
Aberdeen City Council	✓	✓	✓	3
Dumfries and Galloway Council	✓	✓	✓	3
East Dunbartonshire Council	✓	✓	✓	3
Falkirk Council	✓	✓	✓	3
West Lothian Council	✓	✓	✓	3
Argyll and Bute Council	✓	✓		2
City of Edinburgh Council	✓	✓		2
Clackmannanshire Council	✓		✓	2
East Ayrshire Council		✓	✓	2
East Lothian Council	✓	✓		2
East Renfrewshire Council	✓	✓		2
Highland Council		✓	✓	2
Inverclyde Council	✓		✓	2
Perth and Kinross Council		✓	✓	2
Renfrewshire Council		✓	✓	2
Scottish Borders Council	✓		✓	2
Angus Council			✓	1
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar			✓	1
Dundee City Council		✓		1
Glasgow City Council		✓		1
Midlothian Council	✓			1
North Lanarkshire Council		✓		1
Orkney Islands Council	✓			1
Shetland Islands Council	✓			1
South Ayrshire Council			✓	1
Stirling Council			✓	1
Aberdeenshire Council				0
Fife Council				0
Moray Council				0
North Ayrshire Council				0
South Lanarkshire Council				0
West Dunbartonshire Council				0

Using this metric, gaps in provision may be evident in regions falling into the shaded section – with highest priority being Aberdeenshire, Fife and West Dunbartonshire (as in 2020) as well as Moray, North Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire.

However, it may be that our mapping exercise did not identify venues in these regions. Gaps in provision may also be evident in any area where ticks are not recorded.

Equalities, diversity and inclusion in the sector - summary of findings

Context

YTAS believes that every young person in Scotland should be able to enjoy a quality youth theatre experience and should not encounter barriers to access, and to enable that it can be useful to understand who the sector is already reaching. YTAS therefore wanted to understand more about the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) characteristics of the young people participating in youth theatre in Scotland to help them to better support and develop the sector, and to provide a sector-wide overview to funders and partners such as Creative Scotland.

As part of the wider sector survey, questions were asked to gauge the type and range of demographic information (if any) collected by the youth theatre sector in Scotland during the last financial year (April 2022 to March 2023).

The survey asked the following about each of several pre-determined characteristics:

- In the year April 2022 – March 2023, have you collected any information about your participants that relates to [characteristic]? [yes/no/don't know]

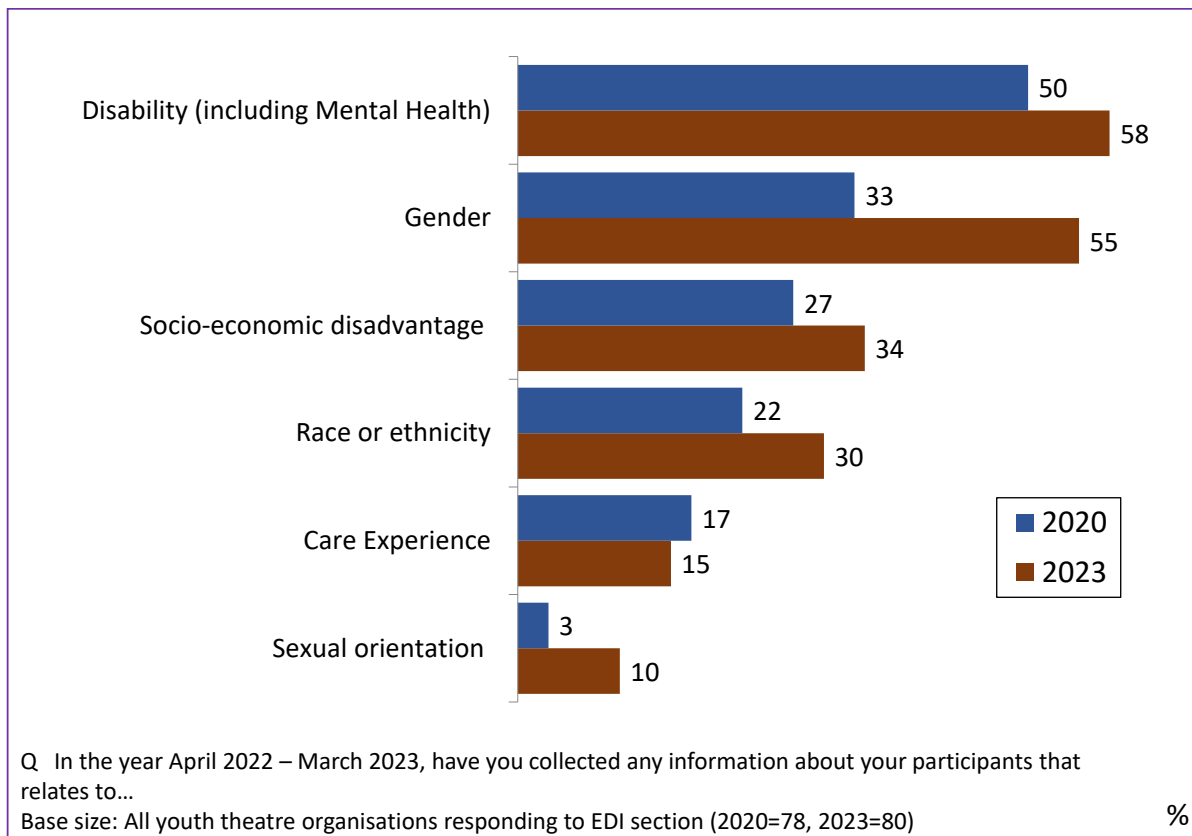
IF YES...

- What methods do you use to gather information about [characteristic]? What do you ask, and how do you ask it? [free text]
- If your organisation is able to share any [characteristic] statistics about your participants as a group for the last financial year (Apr 2022 to Mar 2023), please provide this in the box below. [free text]

Throughout this report the 'free text' answers have been coded up into recurring themes to give an indication of the content and breadth of response. This information should be considered indicative rather than absolute, as all respondents did not provide the same depth of information.

Overview of EDI data collected

The youth theatres were asked to tell us whether or not they had collected any information about various characteristics of their participants in the past financial year, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



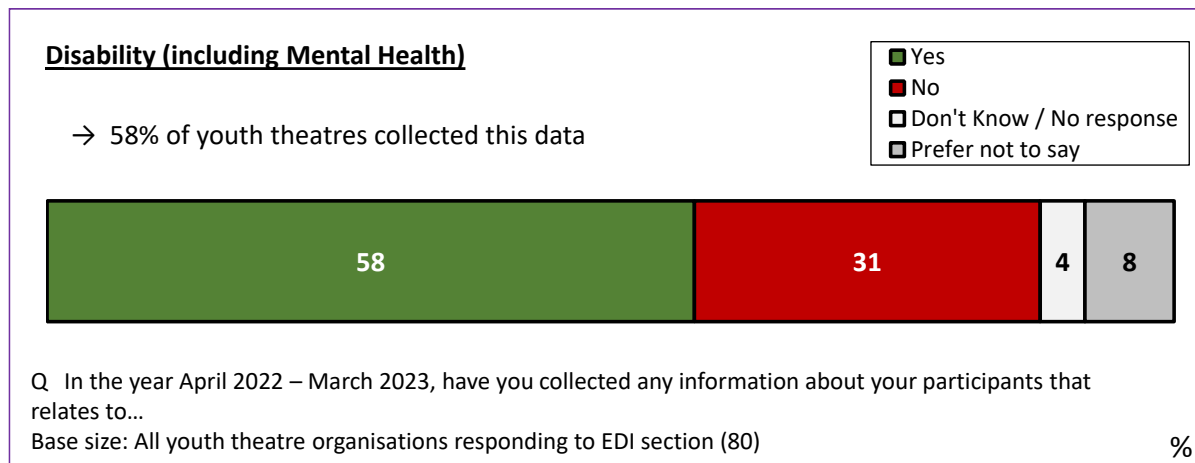
In 2023, 23% of youth theatres had not collected any EDI data, which compares favourably to 35% in 2020.

Patterns in collection of EDI data were very similar in 2020 and 2023, but more youth theatres had collected each type of EDI data (with the exception of care experience) in 2023. In 2023 more than half of the youth theatres had collected disability and gender data, but fewer than half collected the other types of EDI data.

In 2023 as in 2020, data collection was highest for disability (including mental health) for which just over half of the youth theatres had collected information (58%, as compared to 50% in 2020). The next highest level of data collection was for gender, where just over half of the youth theatres had collected information (55%, as compared to 33% in 2020 – a substantial rise). The lowest level of data collection was for sexual orientation, where 10% of youth theatres had collected information in 2023 which is a rise as compared to 3% in 2020. Patterns in data collection for each of these characteristics is discussed in more detail in the following section of the report.

Collection of data about disability (including mental health)

The youth theatres were asked to tell us whether or not they had collected any information about their participants relating to disability (including mental health) in the past financial year, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



In total, 58% of the youth theatres told us that they had collected information about disability (including mental health) in the past financial year, as compared to 50% in 2020.

Those that had collected this data used the following methods to gather the information:

Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (44) %	2023 (46) %
Participant registration form	66	59
Other form / survey	4	11
Meeting with parents	4	6
Via supportive conversation	6	2
Info held on file that is regularly updated	2	0
Referral information	2	0

The youth theatres most often collected data about disability (including mental health) through participant registration forms (59% in 2023, slightly lower than 66% in 2020).

In practice these forms generally used either tick boxes or open-ended questions to collect this data, and the provider of this information might be the participant or parent or another supportive adult.

Having been asked to tell us about 'disability (including mental health)', the youth theatres broadly defined this to include various aspects of health and wellbeing.

The youth theatres told us that in the past financial year they had asked for information about the following aspects of health and wellbeing:

Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (44) %	2023 (46) %
Access or support needs	32	33
Health or medical conditions	30	33
Disability	18	15
Mental health	12	7
Allergies	8	2
Learning disabilities	6	2
Neurodiversity	0	2

Many of the youth theatres framed their questions about health and wellbeing around providing bespoke support, for example:

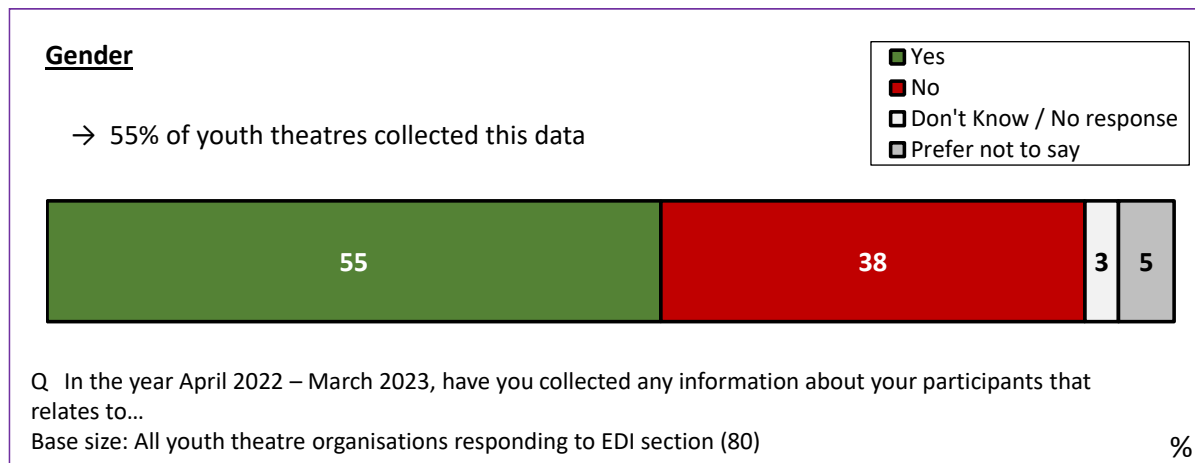
“We ask bookers to give us either medical/confidential information which could help us to ensure the best experience for the young people we work with.”

“On our participation sign up form we have a section for any health condition we should be aware of in order to make sure every person who attends the group feels safe and comfortable. We clearly state that this includes mental health.”

“We invite all participants and carers to complete an emergency consent form with space to provide information about access needs and requirements - currently working to develop an access rider document for artists and participants that invites everyone to consider if they have everything they need to make a positive contribution or whether there might be anything that the group or organisation could offer/support or provide to aid their experience and improve the conditions required for them to thrive.”

Collection of data about gender

The youth theatres were asked to tell us whether or not they had collected any information about their participants relating to gender in the past financial year, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



In total, 55% of the youth theatres told us that they had collected information about gender in the past financial year, as compared to 33% in 2020.

Those that had collected this data used the following methods to gather the information:

Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (44) %	2023 (27) %
Participant registration form	81	64
Via supportive conversation	23	27
Other form / survey	4	16

The youth theatres most often collected data about gender through participant registration forms (64% in 2023, lower than 81% in 2020). The provider of this information varied, including the participant or parent or another supportive adult.

Many of the youth theatres provided information about the wording of the questions that they had used relating to gender:

Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (44) %	2023 (27) %
Male or female <u>only</u>	9	0
Other or non-binary options included	21	23
Option to write gender in own words	9	11
Sharing of pronouns	23	41

In 2023, none of the youth theatres told us that they collect only male/female data with no further options beyond this.

In both 2020 and 2023, around two in ten youth theatres told us that they include other or non-binary options within their forms (23% in 2023, similar to 21% in 2020) and around one in ten told us that they leave a blank space where gender could be self-defined (11% in 2023, similar to 9% in 2020). The range of options varied substantially, for example:

“Gender: Male, Female or Other.”

“Male, Female or Other (specify)”

“Gender Male/Female/Non binary/gender queer/prefer not to say.”

“Male, Female, Intersex, Non-binary, Prefer not to say with an option to add their own gender identity.”

“Male, Female, Transgender, Intersex, Non-binary, Agender, Gender Fluid, Gender Neutral, Questioning, Other (with option to provide more detail), Prefer to self-describe (with option to add more detail), Prefer not to say.”

In 2023 a much greater proportion of the youth theatres mentioned gathering pronoun information (41% in 2023 as compared to 23% in 2020) and there was a change in the way that this was described, moving towards a respectful ‘sharing’ of pronouns being a regular and standard part of their practice.

“Students are asked at the beginning of sessions to say their names and pronouns if comfortable.”

“We have done check ins at the beginning of sessions. We ask who is comfortable with it to tell us their pronouns. We also check in with all our team to make sure we are being respectful of their gender.”

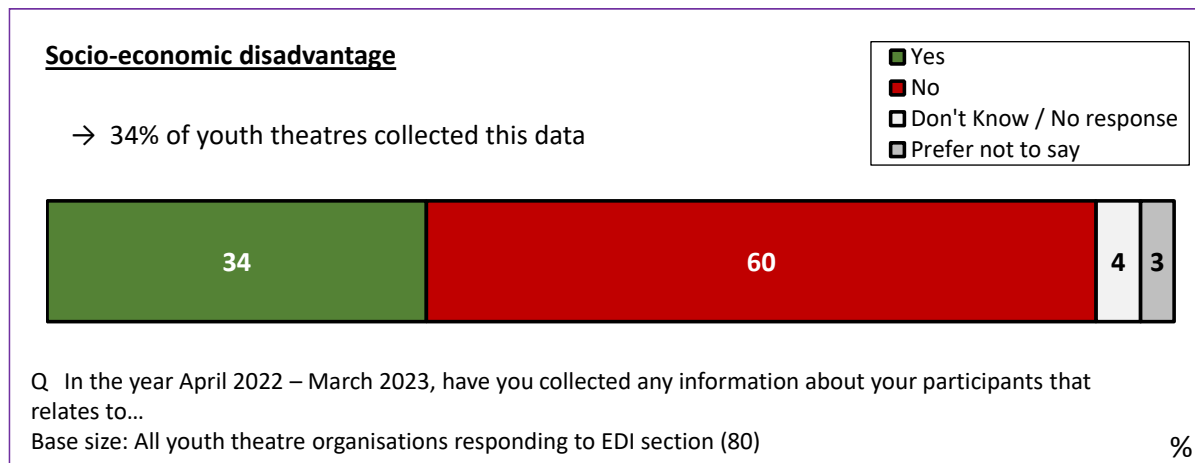
“We invite participants to share gender pronouns with us in sessions - these sometimes differ to the pronouns their parent/carers use. We make a note in their profile, use their preferred pronoun at youth theatre, and have a conversation about what pronoun they would like us to use when talking to their parent/carer.”

“We provide an optional pronouns question in our membership sign-up form, which can be updated by our group leaders in the event of any changes.”

It was also notable that in 2023 only four of the youth theatres used the term ‘preferred pronouns’, with the rest simply referring to ‘pronouns’ – again indicating a change in terminology and approach.

Collection of data about socio economic disadvantage

The youth theatres were asked to tell us whether or not they had collected any information about their participants relating to socio economic disadvantage in the past financial year, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



In total, 34% of the youth theatres told us that they had collected information about socio-economic disadvantage in the past financial year, as compared to 27% in 2020.

Those that had collected this data used the following methods to gather the information:

Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (21) %	2023 (27) %
Participant registration form	14	30
As part of a bursary process	52	15
Other form / survey	10	4
Referral information	10	4

In 2023 the greatest proportion of youth theatres collected data about socio-economic disadvantage via participant registration forms (30% in 2023, a rise from 14% in 2020) and far fewer told us that they collected this data via a bursary process (15% in 2023, as compared to 52% in 2020).

The following information was collected about socio economic disadvantage:

Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (21) %	2023 (27) %
Postcodes	48	59
SIMD analysis	19	33
Stats about grants or bursaries provided	52	7
Information relating to household income	14	0
Eligibility for free school meals	5	0

In 2023, the majority of the youth theatres told us that they collected information about socio economic disadvantage via postcodes (59% in 2023, a rise from 48% in 2020) and many told us that they used this for SIMD analysis (33% in 2023 as compared to 19% in 2020). For example:

“We gather address information and can use this to correlate this with SIMD mapping.”

“Postcodes are asked for in relation to SIMD”.

“We use postcodes to map SIMD rating of our participants.”

Consistent with responses in 2020, in 2023 several youth theatres told us that they deliberately do not overtly ask about socio-economic disadvantage, for example:

“We do not ask, we gather this information through postcode analysis to avoid stigma.”

It was also notable that in 2023 five youth theatres told us that they primarily undertake work in areas of socio-economic disadvantage, for example:

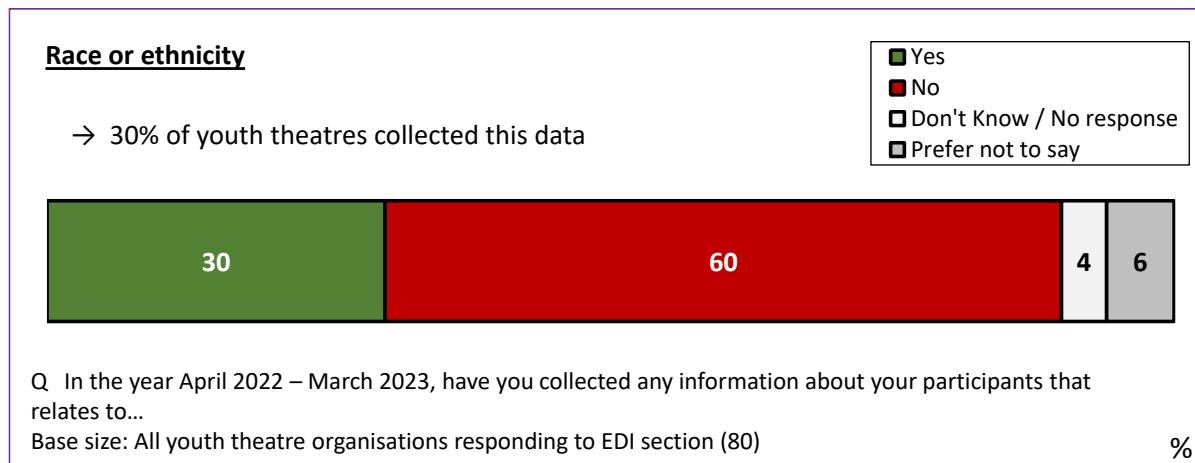
“We work primarily in areas where residents are facing these challenges.”

“We work in SIMD areas of deprivation.”

“We work with some deprived areas and subsidise tickets and class fees for young people from these areas.”

Collection of data about race or ethnicity

The youth theatres were asked to tell us whether or not they had collected any information about their participants relating to race or ethnicity in the past financial year, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



In total, 30% of the youth theatres told us that they had collected information about race or ethnicity in the past financial year, as compared to 22% in 2020.

Those that had collected this data used the following methods to gather the information:

Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (17) %	2023 (23) %
Participant registration form	53	52
Other form / survey	12	22
Equal opportunities form	12	9
Via supportive conversation	6	9
Referral information	6	0
Casting form	6	0
Project evaluation	6	0

In both 2020 and 2023 the youth theatres most often collected data about race or ethnicity through participant registration forms (52% in 2023 as compared to 53% in 2020), and in 2023 22% collected this data via another form / survey.

In 2023, it was notable that some youth theatres who provided information about how they asked about race or ethnicity told us that they encouraged their members to self-identify rather than providing a set of options to select from. For example:

"Ethnicity: _____' where they can write if they would like to."

"Data box is free form typing."

Wording of more detailed response options, where specified, included:

“We ask: what is your ethnic group? We offer 14 options, including 'prefer not to say' and 'other'.”

“Ethnic Background?

African / African Scottish / African British

Any other ethnic group

Any other white background

Asian / Asian Scottish / Asian British

Black / Black Scottish / Black British.

Caribbean / Caribbean Scottish / Caribbean British

White Scottish / White British

Multiple Ethnic Groups

Prefer not to say”

“Participants were given a wide range of options under the headings of

Asian or British Asian,

Black, African, Caribbean or Black British

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups

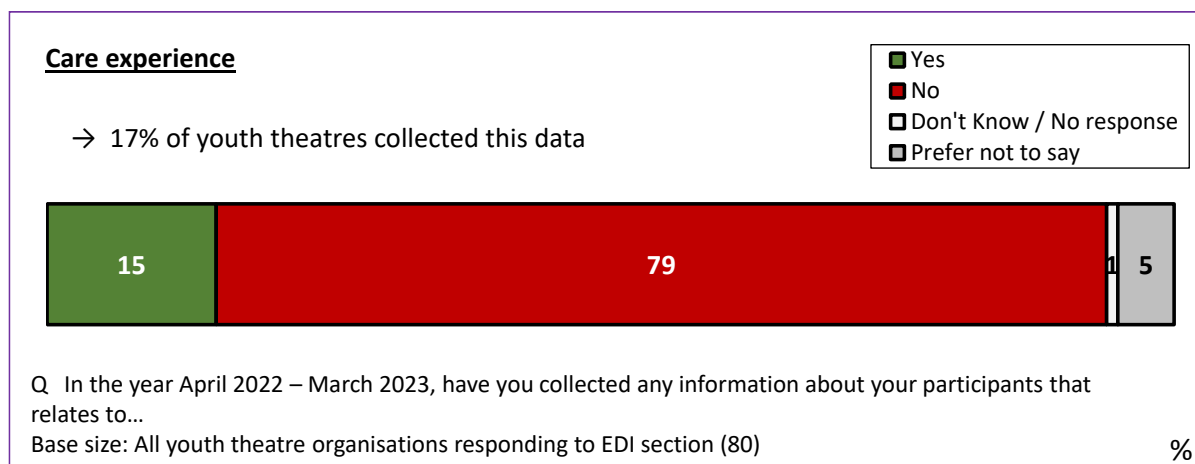
White

Other”

One youth theatre specified that they asked about “ethnicity as categorised by Creative Scotland”.

Collection of data about care experience

The youth theatres were asked to tell us whether or not they had collected any information about their participants relating to care experience in the past financial year, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



In total, 15% of the youth theatres told us that they had collected information about care experience in the past financial year, as compared to 17% in 2020.

Those that had collected this data used the following methods to gather the information:

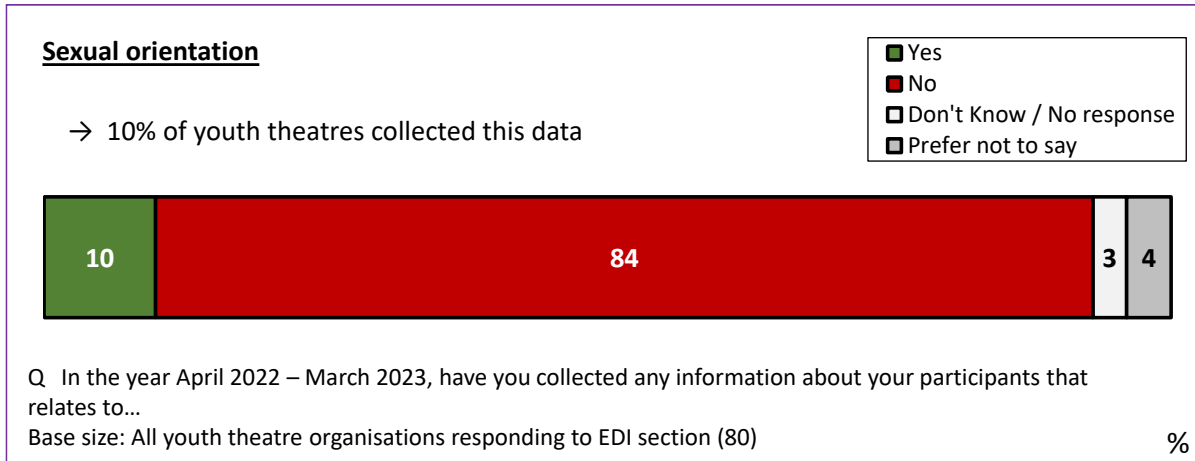
Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (13) %	2023 (10) %
Referral information	54	30
Via supportive conversation	8	30
Information provided by Partner organisations	0	30
Disclosed in conversation with parent / guardian	0	20
Feedback survey	8	10
Participant registration form	31	0
Online suggestion box	8	0

In both 2020 and 2023 the youth theatres most often collected data about care experience through referral information (30% in 2023 as compared to 54% in 2020). Referral information was provided via “partner organisations” and “schools”.

In 2023, information about care experience was also provided in conversation with the young people (for example “verbal disclosure from a participant”) or with a parent / guardian (for example “parents and guardians sometimes disclose it.”) One youth theatre also noted that this could arise due to “the nature of the theatre-making in progress, autobiographical elements”.

Collection of data about sexual orientation

The youth theatres were asked to tell us whether or not they had collected any information about their participants relating to sexual orientation in the past financial year, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



In total, 10% of the youth theatres told us that they had collected information about sexual orientation in the past financial year, as compared to 3% in 2020.

Those that had collected this data used the following methods to gather the information:

Base: Those that collect this information	2020 (2) %	2023 (8) %
Participant registration form	50	38
Via supportive conversation	50	38
Other survey / form	50	25

In 2023 the youth theatres most often collected data about sexual orientation through participant registration forms (38%, for example “self identification on enrolment form and at initial session”) or through supportive conversations (38%).

25% used other surveys or forms, for example “our anonymous equal opportunities form”.

One youth theatre had discussed support around sexual orientation in more detail with their members:

“We have had discussions with our members around forming a group to support LGBTQIA+ people.”

Other requests for EDI data

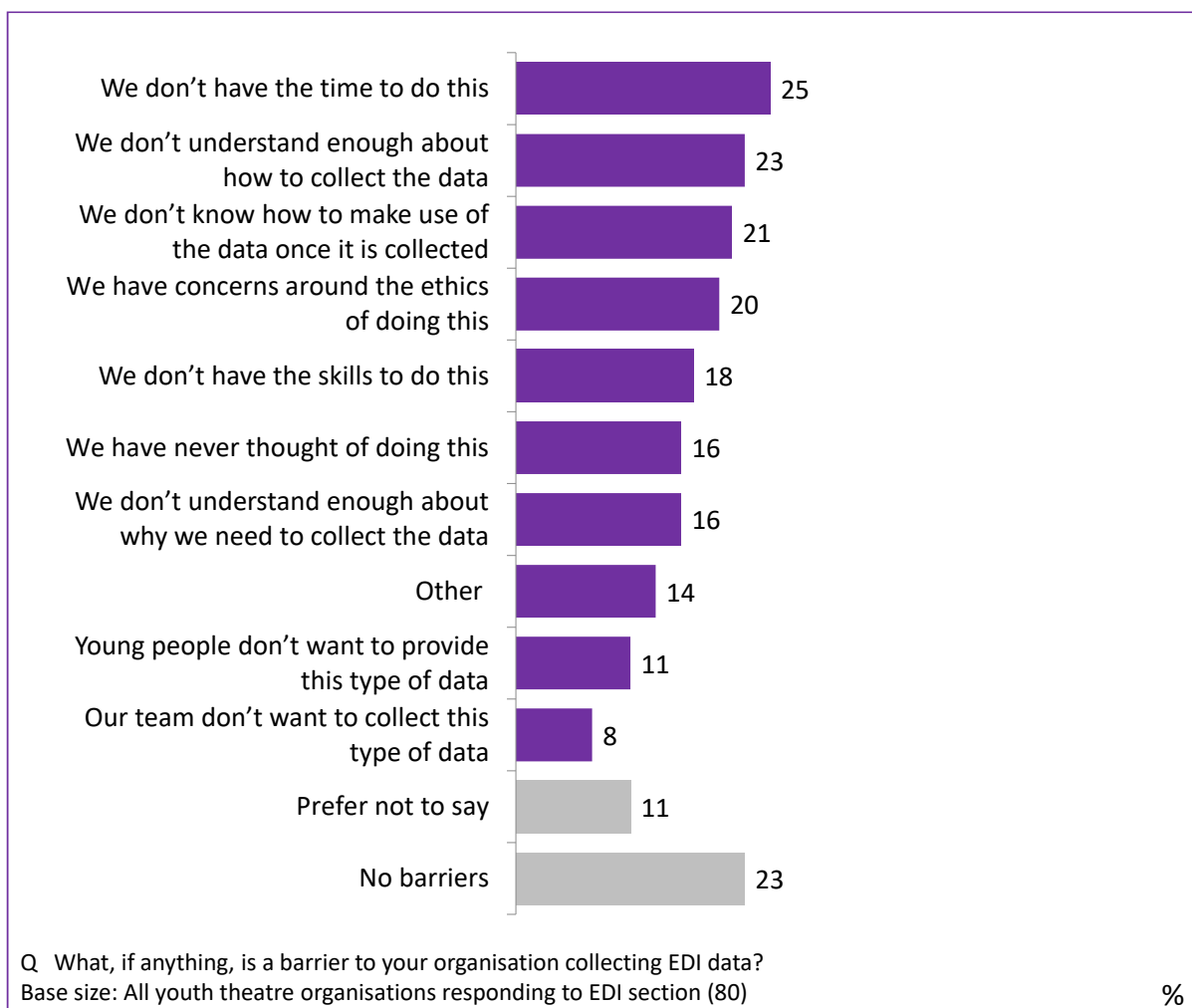
In 2023 the youth theatres were asked to tell us other than through surveys from YTAS, if anyone external to their organisation ever asked them to collect or provide EDI data. Findings are summarised in the table below:

Base: All responding to EDI section (80)		%
Yes		35
No		58
Don't know		8

Around a third of the youth theatres (35%) had ever been asked to provide EDI data by an external organisation other than YTAS.

Barriers to collecting EDI data

The youth theatres were asked to tell us what, if anything, is a barrier to their organisation collecting EDI data, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



The list of response options for this question was expanded in 2023, so this question is not directly comparable year-on-year.

Around two thirds of the youth theatres told us about barriers that they experienced when collecting EDI data, with around a quarter (23%) saying that they experienced no barriers.

The barriers were most often lack of time (25%), not understanding how to collect the data (23%), not knowing how to make use of the data (21%) and concerns around ethics (20%).

Several youth theatres expanded on their answers, largely in relation to feeling that EDI questions were intrusive:

"We believe that some information is private and sensitive, so don't collect."

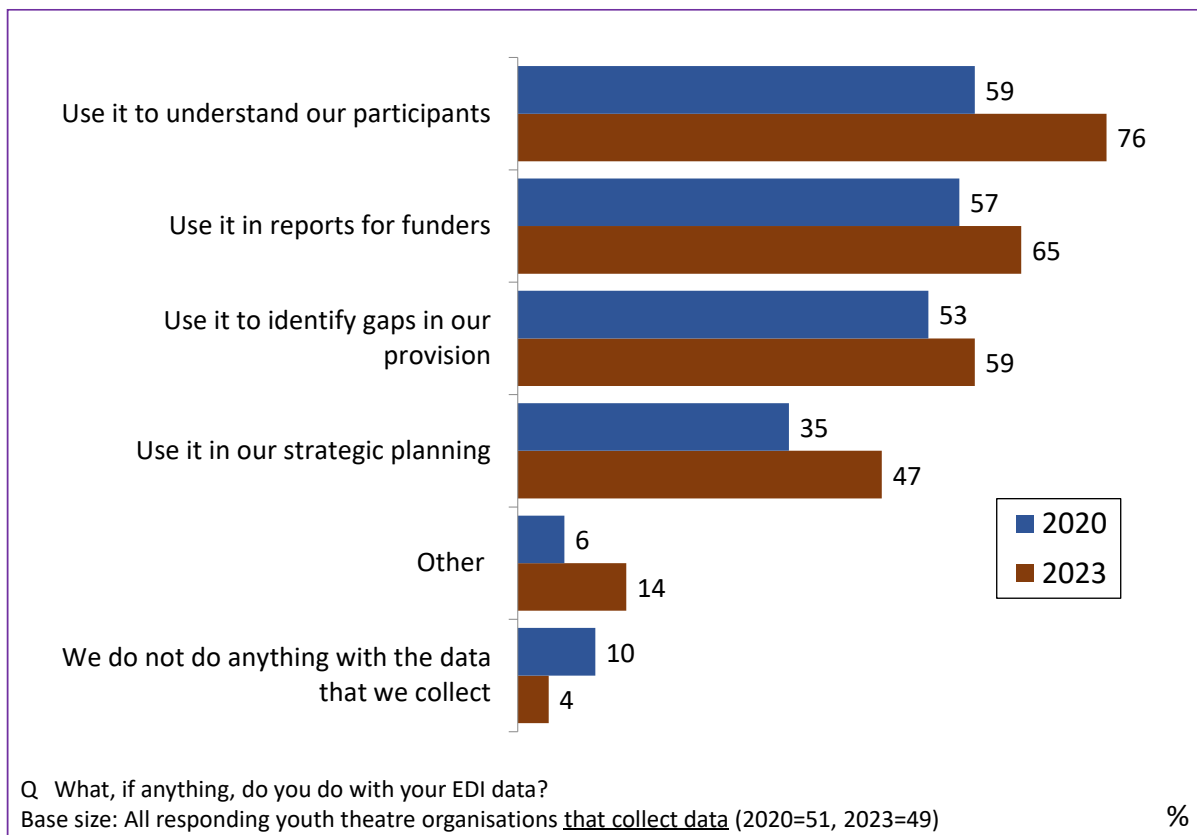
"Not sure it's something I would want to do. I think may put off parents who would be asking why we are asking for personal information."

"We generally have to gather what the funder wants rather than what we might want to gather and understand as an organisation. We felt some of the questions the funder asked were intrusive."

Perhaps related to this, it is also notable that 11% of the youth theatres gave a 'prefer not to say' response to this question.

Usage of EDI data

The youth theatres were asked to tell us what, if anything, they do with their EDI data, and findings are summarised in the graph below:



Patterns in collection of EDI data were very similar in 2020 and 2023, but more youth theatres used their EDI data in each of the specified ways in 2023.

Of those youth theatres that collect EDI data, this was most frequently used to understand participants (76%, as compared to 59% in 2020), to report to funders (65%, as compared to 55% in 2020) or to identify gaps in provision (59%, as compared to 53% in 2020).

Almost half (47%) of the youth theatres have used the information to inform strategic planning, as compared to only around a third (35%) in 2020.

Other uses for EDI data as specified by the youth theatres were:

- To remove barriers to participation
- As support for bursary applications
- Internal use

Only 4% of the youth theatres that collect EDI data told us that they do not do anything with it, which is lower than the 10% that said this in 2020.

How YTAS could help

The youth theatres were asked to tell us whether they had ever used YTAS's sector research for their own purposes, and findings are summarised in the table below:

Base: All responding to EDI section (80)		%
Yes		36
No		48
Don't know		16

Around a third of the youth theatres (36%) had ever used YTAS's sector research for their own purposes.

We asked the youth theatres to tell us how they had used YTAS's sector research for their own purposes, and findings are summarised in the table below:

Base: All who had used YTAS's sector research (29)		%
Evidence in a funding application		38
To feel better informed about our sector		76
To share information with others		14
To recruit new participants		7
To recruit new staff		0

Those that had used YTAS's sector research for their own purposes had most often used it to feel better informed about the sector (76%) or as evidence in a funding application (38%).

The youth theatres were asked whether there was anything YTAS could do to support them in collecting or learning from this type of EDI information, and their 'free text' answers have been coded up into recurring themes.

In 2023, only 23 youth theatres responded to this question and it is notable that one youth theatre responded that YTAS could "stop asking for it". The youth theatres told us that they would like YTAS to provide support in the following ways:

Base: All responding to EDI section	2020 (78) %	2023 (80) %
Resources (e.g. templates, good practice examples)	13	8
Support and advice	4	8
Training	15	6
Networking and discussions	3	1
Signposting to external expertise	1	3

Support and advice (8% in 2023, a rise from 4% in 2020) and resources (8% in 2023, down from 13% in 2020) were most often mentioned as ways that YTAS could provide support around EDI

data. Proportionally fewer suggested that they would like YTAS to provide training in 2023 (6%) as compared to 2020 (15%).

The youth theatres told us that they could benefit from support around the following topics:

Base: All responding to EDI section	2020 (78) %	2023 (80) %
Data collection methodologies	13	11
Use of collected data	9	6
Best practice	4	5
The importance of collecting this data	8	1
Ethical concerns	5	1
Data protection	1	1

In both 2023 and 2020 the topics most often mentioned as requiring support were methodologies for collecting EDI data (11% in 2023 as compared to 13% in 2020), followed by ways of using data that had been collected (6% in 2023 as compared to 9% in 2020). For example:

“Examples of best practice, how to word questions, methods of gathering data.”

“Continue offering training in EDI data collection and usage.”

A theme arising from the responses in 2023 was a concern for collecting and using EDI data in a respectful way. For example:

“Maybe guidance on how to collect this respectfully.”

“Training on equitable language to use in the collection of data - how to collect this data in a way that is not racist, ableist etc.”

“Having a template to work from can be most helpful. I spend time ensuring the way we capture data is sensitive and respectful to identity markers however it is often not youth-friendly and not particularly engaging as an activity.”

“Proforma form to help us phrase questions in a sensitive and appropriate way.”

“Help with good practice in identifying areas of under-provision without labelling our participants.”

One youth theatre also suggested that it would be helpful for them to have some guidance around communicating about EDI with parents.

“Explanations to parents about why we want this info.”

In summary

In 2023 a total of 87 youth theatres were identified as operating across 216 venues, which is broadly comparable to the spread of youth theatres identified in 2020 (99 organisations operating over 217 venues) when we used the same methodology and is fewer than the spread identified in 2015 (221 organisations operating over 341 venues) when we used a different methodology.

To summarise **some key statistics** about the Scottish youth theatre sector in 2022/2023:

- We identified one youth theatre venue for every 3,645 members of the Scottish population aged under 25.
- The youth theatres that we identified operated across an average of 2.5 venues and offered an average of 9.1 separate classes each.
- We estimated that 21,159 young people were involved in youth theatre in Scotland this year, including 8,615 attending weekly activities run by YTAS members.
- We estimated that 1,265 people worked in Scotland's youth theatre sector this year.
- The most venues, staffing and weekly attendance were recorded across the Central Belt.

On the whole, patterns in youth theatre provision were broadly similar across 2015, 2020 and 2023:

- The source of income used by the most youth theatres was participation income.
- The main focus of activity was most often devising or musical theatre.
- The project types undertaken by most youth theatres were rehearsals for a production, weekly skills classes, and public performances.

In 2023, 23% of the youth theatres had offered projects online, which is something that we did not ask about previously however we know anecdotally that online provision was minimal pre-Covid.

In 2023 we observed some change in the way that youth theatres are resourced:

- We identified more staff members per youth theatre on average year-on-year (14.5 per youth theatre in 2023 as compared to 11.0 in 2020 and 8.2 in 2015).
- This change can be attributed to a rise in the use of volunteers (587 in 2023 as compared to 401 in 2020).

Fees for paid staff appear to have remained fairly similar. In 2023 the average hourly rate across the youth theatres was £14.88 for assistant roles and £28.99 for leaders / facilitators, which is broadly in line with the 2020 cross-role average of £23.38 per hour.

As well as delivery, the issues of sustainability, fundraising and the cost-of-living crisis (and its affect on operating costs and affordability for families) were identified by youth theatres as being both their key priorities and concerns for the coming year.

These financial issues are also reflected in some of the differences key observed this year:

- 2023 saw a greater proportion of youth theatres charging nothing for participation as compared to 2020, but it also saw a greater proportion of youth theatres charging £6-10 for participation indicating some had raised their prices.
- In 2023 71% of the youth theatres offered financial support for participants, which has risen substantially from 52% in 2020.

Levels of collection of information relating to equalities, diversity and inclusion continued to be relatively low in the youth theatre sector in Scotland, with 23% telling us that they don't collect any EDI data at all and only half or fewer collecting data about each individual EDI characteristic. That said, the level of collection of EDI data had risen as compared to 2020.

Again similarly to responses in 2020, around two thirds of the youth theatres told us that they experienced barriers when collecting EDI data, and these barriers typically included ethical concerns, and limited understanding around how to undertake this task, what could be achieved by doing so, and why doing so might be important or useful.

2023 saw a shift in tone and terminology around gender, with the sharing of pronouns now being more prevalent and routine in youth theatre environments.

It is notable that few youth theatres made specific reference to neurodiversity in their responses, and it may be that this does not sit neatly within the categories that we presented and warrants its own category in the future.

The findings from this survey indicate a continued need and a demand for more education around the value of collecting EDI data (to youth theatres and funders, and ultimately to participants and their families) along with guidance or training around collecting and using this data ethically. There was certainly a desire amongst youth theatres to understand how to do this sensitively and respectfully, coupled by resistance from others who do not believe that this is possible or necessary.

YTAS would continue to be well placed to provide or champion this kind of support for the youth theatre sector in Scotland.