Dutch Live Music Venues and Festivals

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Introduction

As of June 2024, the Association of Dutch Music Venues and Festivals (VNPF) has 120 members, consisting of 70 venues and 50 festivals. This publication compares the performance of 48 of these venues from 2019 to 2023. It also includes data from the 50 festival members of the VNPF.

Due to the pandemic measures and effects during 2020, 2021, and 2022, which severely disrupted the programming, audiences, employment, and revenue of music venues and festivals, this publication compares the data of 2019 and 2023. In addition to the pandemic effects. other relevant developments in 2023 include the high inflation in 2022, which increased costs in 2023. Particularly costs for energy, employment, catering purchase, and artists. Higher income, such as increased audience income from ticket sales and catering sales, were necessary to compensate some of the rising costs. Additionally, the data show that many music venues received little to no indexation of municipal subsidies. These disguised cuts in pop culture meant that increases in fixed costs, such as personnel and housing costs, could not be fully compensated. As a result, many music venues had less money left for talent development and retaining good staff.

The 2023 data show a decrease in the number of artist performances, especially by international artists. Venues with smaller programme budgets sometimes have to be more cautious with financially uncertain or unprofitable programmes, such as programming artists at the beginning of their careers. Additionally, concerts, club nights, and festivals are becoming less accessible to large parts of the public due to higher ticket and catering prices. The plan to abolish the reduced VAT rate on concert and festival tickets and performances per 2026, as mentioned in the national government's coalition agreement 2024-2028 of PVV, VVD, NSC, and BBB, also contributes to less accessibility.

music venues

Events and performances

A music event, such as a concert or club night, is a programme where one or more artists perform music for a live audience. Multiple music performances can occur during a music event, such as a support act and main act at a concert, or a lineup of DJs/producers at a club night. During concerts, the audience is often fully focused on the musical performance. Club nights are more focused on dancing and social interaction and mainly take place late at night.

 In 2023, music venues organized
 17,362 events with a live audience, featuring 25,341 artist
 performances. After the pandemic measures and effects from March 2020 to March 2022 which let to limited programming, music venues organized 4% more events in 2023 than in 2019. Compared to 2019, music venues organized 9% more concerts and 8% more club nights in their own buildings in 2023. However, the number of music events at other locations decreased by 28%. Overall, artists gave 5% fewer performances in 2023 than in 2019. Both concerts and club nights saw a decrease in the average number of music performances per event, such as fewer support acts.

In 2023, 65% of the programme at music venues consisted of music events. Of all events, 40% were live concerts, 16% were club nights, and 9% were music events at other locations. Additionally, there were non-musical events (such as cinema, theater, and debate) and private letting events. During the pandemic years, the distribution of events changed mainly because there were virtually no club nights in those years. In 2023, the ratio was again comparable to 2019.

Development by type of event



music venues

(inter)national artists

- In 2023. 32% of the concert performances were by international artists, compared to 41% in 2019. During the pandemic years, the share of international acts in programming was lower due to travel restrictions and other pandemic measures that made international tours (almost) impossible. The fact that this share was (still) not the same in 2023 as in 2019 and previous years is likely due to the significant cost increases for both international artists and music venues to realize these performances.
- For club nights, the ratio between Dutch and international artists did not change much during the pandemic years. However, we see a slight increase of international acts at club nights in 2023. In 2019, 14% of the acts performing at club nights were from abroad, in 2023 this share increased to 16%.



Share of (inter)national artists at concerts

international artists 40.6%



international artists 21.7%



international artists 18.8%



international artists 32.3%



international artists 32.3%



Share of (inter)national artists at club nights

international artists 13.9%



international artists 13.9%



international artists 12.6%



international artists 12.6%



international artists 15.6%



Audience visits

- After two years of corona restrictions, during which music venues received very little audience, 2023 became a record year. In 2023, there were 5,772,273 visits to the music venues, 11% more than the 5,197,689 visits in 2019.
- In 2023, the number of paid visits increased by 18% compared to 2019, while the number of free visits decreased by 9%. In 2023, 87% of the audience paid admission fees compared to 84% in 2019.
- 88% of the audience visited music events in 2023, just as in 2019. The audience visiting music venues grew significantly: concert visits increased by 20%, and visits to club nights by 13%. However, visits to music events at other locations decreased by 30% due to fewer concerts being organized there.

 The share of sold-out concerts and club nights was significantly higher in 2023 than in 2019. In 2019, 19% of all concerts and club nights were sold out. In 2023, this share was 27% for concerts and 28% for club nights.

Development of visits by type of event



nusic venues Online events

During the pandemic years 2020 and 2021 and early 2022, music venues developed more online events than ever before. Due to the restrictive corona measures, there was a necessity and demand for more online performances by artists and reaching an online audience.

- After the corona restrictions were lifted in 2022, venues largely stopped online events. They focused almost entirely on presenting live music for a physically present audience.
- In 2023, online events further decreased. Only 15% of the venues still organized hybrid events, and only 6% offered online events without a live audience. The number of online views was 95% lower than in the 2021 pandemic year.



music venues Employment

 In 2023, 8,372 persons worked for the music venues, including employed workers, temporary hired workers, freelancers, interns and volunteers. This number is 7% higher than in 2019, mainly due to an increase in paid staff.

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 In 2023, the number of employed workers increased by 17% and the number of hired workers increased by 12% compared to 2019. During the same period, there were 1% more volunteers and 6% more trainees working for the music venues.

In 2023, music venue workers performed 1,619 FTE of work. This was 8% more than in 2019. The share of unpaid work at music venues decreased in recent years, while the share of paid work increased.

 Especially smaller and mediumsized venues work with volunteers. These volunteers usually work during events, for example in catering and production. Many large venues have only paid workers. In 2019, 56% of all work was performed by employed workers. In 2023, this share rose to 63%. The share of working hours performed by hired workers decreased slightly from 17% in 2019 to 16% in 2023. Within this group, we saw an increase in the share of working hours performed by freelancers (from 8% in 2019 to 10% in 2023) and a decrease in the share of working hours performed by other hired workers, such as temporary workers and staff hired through a payroll organization (from 9% to 6%). The share of volunteer work decreased from 16% in 2019 to 11% in 2023. The share of working hours performed by interns and trainees remained basically the same.

Distribution of working hours by type of employment





Development of workers by type of employment



Development of working hours (in FTE) by type of employment



music venues

Function workers

 Half of all working hours in music venues in 2023 were spent on catering (27%) and production and technology (22%).

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 Overall, 17% of all working hours were devoted to programming and marketing, while management accounted for 3% of all work.

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 Other functions (30% of all working hours in 2023) included tasks in the field of education, cloakroom, cash register, security, and cleaning.

 The distribution of working hours by function has hardly changed in music venues in recent years.

Distribution of working hours per function



music venues

Expenditure

 Total expenditure by music venues amounted to €198.5 million in 2023, representing a 24% increase over 2019. Both fixed expenses (such as employment costs and accommodation costs) and variable expenses (such as programme costs) increased significantly. More information about this can be read on the next page.

 The distribution of the various expenses in 2023 was again similar to that of 2019, after the share of audience spendings (tickets and catering sales) dropped significantly during the pandemic years. In both 2019 and 2023, programme costs represented 35% of total expenditure. The share of employment costs increased from 33% to 36% during this period. Accommodation costs increased from 11% to 12% of the total expenditure. There is little difference in the distribution of expenses between small, medium-sized and large music venues, especially when looking at the share of employment costs in total expenses. However, large music venues have on average a slightly larger share of programme costs and a slightly smaller share of accommodation costs compared to small music venues.

Distribution of expenditure



The largest increase in expenditure at music venues was in employment costs. These amounted to € 71 million, which is a 33% increase from the € 53 million in 2019. This increase was partly caused by more paid working hours, as the number of paid FTEs was 17% higher in 2023 than in 2019. In addition, higher wages for employed workers and higher rates for hired workers (such as freelancers), also contributed to the increase.

• Of all employment costs in 2023, 71% went to employed workers, 15% to freelancers, and 10% to other hired workers (such as temporary workers hired through a payroll organization).

■ In 2023, total programme costs were €70 million, an increase of 26% over 2019. Direct programme costs consisted for 66% of artist fees, 5% of copyright payments, and 29% of other artist expenses, such as costs for travel, catering, hotel, backline, decor, and booking fees.

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Accommodation costs also rose sharply in 2023, by 28% compared to 2019. This increase was mainly caused by higher energy costs.





€ 173.3

2022

million

€ 198.5

music venues

Income

In 2023, the total income of music venues was €199.9 million, which is a 25% increase over 2019. Both audience spendings (such as tickets and catering sales) and subsidies increased. More details about this can be found on the following pages.

 The distribution of income in 2023 was similar to that in 2019. In 2023, 38% of music venues' income consisted of ticket sales (36% in 2019) and 23% of catering sales (22% in 2019). The audience spendings made up more than half of all income for venues. For large music venues, this can reach more than 90% of their total income.



Distribution of income



The increase in income in 2023 compared to 2019 was party because of higher audience spendings, such as a 30% increase in ticket sales and 27% in catering sales. In total, these audience spendings amounted to €120.7 million.

 More private letting programmes were organized in 2023, such as conferences, educational activities and meetings of external parties. This provided 39% more income from private letting than in 2019, a total of €5.7 million.

Thanks to a generous donation of €2 million from the Cultuurfonds at the end of 2022, all music venues affiliated with the VNPF received a sum of €30,000 in early 2023. This money was intended to be spent on supporting young musicians and attracting young audiences.

 There was also an increase in government-related income in 2023. Subsidies increased 27% over 2019, to a total of €48.9 million. For more information on this, see page 16.

Development of income



- The average ticket sales per visit increased by 1.1% from €16.79 in 2019 to €16.98 in 2023. These amounts exclude VAT and include admission prices for concerts, club nights and other non-musical events.
- Average catering sales per visit increased by 15% from €6.86 in 2019 to €7.86 in 2023. These amounts exclude VAT. This increase was not caused by higher consumption, but mainly by rising catering purchasing costs (+23%) in the same period, and therefore higher selling prices.
- Large venues tend to have a higher share of income generated by audiences than small venues.
 This is because they have a larger audience capacity, allowing them to programme more well-known artists, charge higher ticket prices and attract more audiences. In 2023, large venues derived 41% of their total income from ticket sales, compared with 27% for mediumsized venues and 25% for small venues. In addition, large venues can also generate more income from private letting.



 For smaller venues, the (municipal) subsidy usually constitutes a larger share of their total income. In 2023, the average share of subsidy in the total income of large venues was 20%, while for medium-sized venues it was 40% and for small venues this was 45%.

Distribution of income by audience capacity







music venues Subsidy

- In 2023, 94% of all subsidies received by music venues came from municipalities, 5% from the national government through schemes such as the Performing Arts Fund NL, and 1% from provinces and European project subsidies.
- Total subsidies increased by 27% in 2023 compared to 2019, to a total of €48.9 million.
- Despite cost increases for employment and accommodation, 24% of the venues received no indexation of municipal subsidy in 2023 compared to 2022. For the venues that did receive indexation, the average was 5.3%. The average indexation of municipal subsidy for all venues was 4% in 2023.



 A year earlier, in 2022, the average indexation of subsidies was only 1.2%, with 40% of music venues receiving no indexation. Since many municipalities increase subsidies less than inflation, music venues' rising expenses are not fully covered. This makes it increasingly difficult for many venues to invest in talent development and retain good staff.

Distribution of subsidies



music venues Financial

- result
- Due to the non-profit nature of all the music venues whose figures are included in this publication, they do not strive to achieve a positive financial result in their operations, but rather to fulfill their public mission: presenting artistic quality and promoting talent development.
- The 2023 figures show that the music venues collectively generated nearly 8% more income from ticket sales than was spent on programme costs. However, this ratio varies by venue and concert hall. For small venues, ticket sales cover only 90% of programme costs, while for medium-sized venues it is almost 100% and for large venues it is 110%.
- On average, music venues achieved a positive financial result of 0.7% of their total income in 2023. This was lower than the average of 1.8% in 2022.

To what extent do ticket sales cover programme costs?



2023

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However, 38% of the venues achieved

a negative financial result in 2023.

Many of these venues, also in 2024,

face significant cost increases and

municipal subsidies that have not

yet been sufficiently indexed. This

will result in more frequent deficits

in the future and force venues to

make necessary cuts. It is therefore

crucial to assess the situation of

venues individually so that they can

obtain the necessary subsidies and support to continue fulfilling their role as a music venue properly in the

future.

music festivals

Events and performances

 In 2023, 46 of the 50 VNPF festival members organized a festival edition with a live audience. After a ban on festivals as a COVID restricted measurement from March 2020 through March 2022, which made organizing festivals virtually impossible, almost all festival organizations were able to organize a festival edition again in 2023.

- 65% of the festival editions took place entirely outdoors, 15% entirely indoors, and 20% of the festivals used a combination of indoor and outdoor locations.
- 39% were one-day festivals and 61% were multi-day festivals in 2023.
- A total of 3,441 live music performances were presented at 433 music stages.

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Distribution of one-day and multi-day festivals



Audience visits

- Festivals attracted a total of 2.6 million visits on all festival days in 2023.
- 54% of the festivals charged an admission fee to the public, 30% of the festivals had a completely free admission, and 15% of the festivals offered the public a combination of events with an admission fee and free admission.
- In 2023, over 615,000 tickets were sold for festival days with an admission fee. Overall, 43% of the audience paid an admission fee and 57% of the audience attended the festivals for free.

Distribution of festivals with free admission

2023







free admission 30.4%

19

paid admission 54.3% combination free admission / paid admission 15.2%

Distribution of audience visits with free admission





Members map june 2024

Music venues	70
Music festivals	50
Total VNPF-members	120



VNPF music venues

013 Tilburg www.013.nl

Astrant Ede www.astrant-ede.nl

Baroeg Rotterdam www.baroeg.nl

Beest, 't Goes www.tbeest.nl

Bibelot Dordrecht www.bibelot.net

BIRD Rotterdam www.bird-rotterdam.nl

Boerderij Zoetermeer www.poppodiumboerderij.nl

Bolwerk Sneek www.hetbolwerk.nl

Bosuil, De Weert www.debosuil.nl **Burgerweeshuis** Deventer www.burgerweeshuis.nl

C. Poppodium Hoofddorp <u>www.cpunt.nl</u>

Cacaofabriek, De Helmond www.cacaofabriek.nl

Capsloc Capelle aan den IJssel www.capsloc.nl

Cinetol Amsterdam www.cinetol.nl

Corneel Lelystad www.corneel.nl

dB's Utrecht www.dbstudio.nl

Doornroosje Nijmegen <u>www.doornroosje.nl</u>

ECI Cultuurfabriek Roermond www.ecicultuurfabriek.nl **Effenaar** Eindhoven www.effenaar.nl

EKKO Utrecht www.ekko.nl

Estrado Harderwijk www.estrado.nl

FLUOR Amersfoort www.fluor033.nl

Flux, De Zaandam www.podiumdeflux.nl

Gebouw-T Bergen op Zoom www.gebouw-t.nl

Gelderlandfabriek, De Culemborg www.degelderlandfabriek.nl

GIGANT Apeldoorn <u>www.gigant.nl</u>

Grenswerk Venlo www.grenswerk.nl **Groene Engel** Oss www.groene-engel.nl

Hall of Fame Tilburg www.hall-fame.nl

Hedon Zwolle www.hedon-zwolle.nl

Helling, De Utrecht www.dehelling.nl

Iduna Drachten www.iduna.nl

Kroepoekfabriek Vlaardingen www.kroepoekfabriek.nl

LantarenVenster Rotterdam www.lantarenvenster.nl

Luxor Live Arnhem www.luxorlive.nl

Manifesto Hoorn www.manifesto-hoorn.nl **Meester, De** Almere www.demeesteralmere.nl

Melkweg Amsterdam www.melkweg.nl

Merleyn Nijmegen www.doornroosje.nl/merleyn

Metropool Hengelo www.metropool.nl

Mezz Breda www.mezz.nl

Muziekgieterij Maastricht www.muziekgieterij.nl

Neushoorn Leeuwarden www.neushoorn.nl

Nieuwe Nor Heerlen www.nieuwenor.nl

Nobel Leiden www.nobel.nl

P3 Purmerend www.p3purmerend.nl **P60** Amstelveen www.p60.nl

PAARD Den Haag <u>www.paard.nl</u>

Paradiso Amsterdam www.paradiso.nl

Patronaat Haarlem www.patronaat.nl

Peppel, De Zeist www.peppel-zeist.nl

Piek, De Vlissingen www.depiek.nl

Podium, Het Hoogeveen www.hetpodium.nl

Pul, De Uden www.livepul.com

PX Volendam <u>www.pxvolendam.nl</u>

Q-factory Amsterdam www.q-factory-amsterdam.nl **Rotown** Rotterdam www.rotown.nl

Simplon Groningen www.simplon.nl

So What! Gouda www.so-what.nl

SPOT / De Oosterpoort Groningen www.spotgroningen.nl

Spot, De Middelburg www.despotmiddelburg.nl

TivoliVredenburg Utrecht www.tivolivredenburg.nl

Tolhuistuin Amsterdam www.tolhuistuin.nl

Vera Groningen www.vera-groningen.nl

Victorie Alkmaar www.podiumvictorie.nl

Volt Sittard www.poppodium-<u>volt.nl</u> Hilversum www.devorstin.nl

Vorstin. De

Willem Twee Den Bosch www.willem-twee.nl

Willemeen Arnhem www.willemeen.nl

WORM Rotterdam www.worm.org

VNPF music festivals

Baroeg Open Air Rotterdam www.baroegopenair.nl

Best Kept Secret Hilvarenbeek www.bestkeptsecret.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Amsterdam Het Vrije Westen Amsterdam www.4en5meiamsterdam.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Brabant Den Bosch www.bevrijdingsfestivalbrabant.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Flevoland Almere www.bevrijdingsfestivalflevoland.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Fryslân Leeuwarden www.bevrijdingsfestivalfryslan.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Gelderland Wageningen www.bevrijdingsfestivalgelderland.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Groningen Groningen www.bevrijdingsfestivalgroningen.nl

- Bevrijdingsfestival Nijmegen Nijmegen www.4en5mei-nijmegen.nl
- Bevrijdingsfestival Overijssel Zwolle www.bevrijdingsfestivaloverijssel.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Utrecht Utrecht www.bevrijdingsfestivalutrecht.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Zeeland Vlissingen www.bevrijdingsfestivalzeeland.nl

Bevrijdingsfestival Zuid-Holland Rotterdam www.bevrijdingsfestivalzh.nl

Bevrijdingspop Haarlem Haarlem www.bevrijdingspop.nl

Booster Festival Enschede www.boosterfestival.nl

Bospop Weert <u>www.bospop.nl</u>

- Bridge Eindhoven Guitar Festival Eindhoven www.bridgefestival.com
- C2C: Country to Country Amsterdam www.c2c-countrytocountry.nl

Catch Utrecht www.catchfestival.nl

Concert at SEA Brouwersdam www.concertatsea.nl

Down The Rabbit Hole Beuningen www.downtherabbithole.nl

ESNS Groningen www.esns.nl

- Grasnapolsky Scheemda www.grasnapolsky.nl
- Grauzone Den Haag www.grauzonefestival.nl

⁷ **Haringrock** Katwijk www.haringrock.nl

Holland International
 Blues Festival
 Grolloo
 www.hollandinternational
 bluesfestival.com

Indian Summer Langedijk www.indiansummerfestival.nl

Into The Great Wide Open Vlieland www.intothegreatwideopen.nl

Jera On Air Ysselsteyn www.jeraonair.nl

Le Guess Who? Utrecht www.leguesswho.nl

Left of the Dial Rotterdam www.leftofthedial.nl

Lowlands Biddinghuizen www.lowlands.nl **Motel Mozaïque** Rotterdam www.motelmozaique.nl

Moulin Blues Festival Ospel www.moulinblues.nl

Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei 12 provincies hoofd- & hofstad www.4en5mei.nl

NN North Sea Jazz Festival Rotterdam www.northseajazz.nl

Oranjepop Nijmegen <u>www.oranjepop-nijmegen.nl</u>

Pinkpop Landgraaf www.pinkpop.nl

Popronde Diverse steden <u>www.popronde.nl</u>

Rewire Den Haag www.rewirefestival.nl

Roadburn Festival Tilburg www.roadburn.com

Rockit Groningen www.spotgroningen.nl/events/rockit **Rotterdam Bluegrass Festival** Rotterdam www.bluegrassfestival.nl

Rotterdam Unlimited Rotterdam www.rotterdamunlimited.com

Royal Park Baarn <u>www.royalparklive.nl</u>

So What's Next? Eindhoven www.sowhatsnext.nl

Spoorpark Live Tilburg www.spoorparklive.nl

Transition Festival Utrecht www.tivolivredenburg.nl

Valkhof Festival Nijmegen www.valkhoffestival.nl

Zomerparkfeest Venlo www.zomerparkfeest.nl



VNPF information

The Vereniging Nederlandse Poppodia en -Festivals (VNPF) is the industry association of music venues and festivals in the Netherlands. In June 2024 the VNPF has 120 members. consisting of 70 music venues and 50 festivals. In the interest of its members the VNPF exerts influence on legislation and (government) policy. Important topics include, amongst others, cultural policy, working conditions, sustainability, professionalization, safety, diversity, inclusion and accesibility. The VNPF optimizes conditions for members wherever possible. The association develops services for its members to improve their performance. With the figures in this publication, the online benchmark module 'Poppodium Analyse Systeem (PAS)' is also made available to members. Thanks to collective agreements with suppliers, VNPF-members may receive discounts on various products and services. Together with partners, the VNPF organizes the annual conference *Congres Podia Festivals Evenementen*, a well-attended and leading conference for the Dutch live music sector. In doing so, it promotes the exchange of knowledge and connects professionals and organizations in the live music sector. For more information see www.vnpf.nl.

WNPF

The VNPF office also runs the secretariat of the *Dutch Employers' Association of Music Venues and Festivals* (WNPF), which deals with employment conditions and has developed the industry's own collective bargaining agreement NPF. For more information see www.caopoppodiaenfestivals.nl.

Colofon

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Graphic design Versluis + Vitalie Vormgevers www.versluisvitalie.nl

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Methodology

In June 2024, 70 music venues and 50 music festivals were members of the VNPF. The figures in this publication relate to a panel of 48 music venues and 46 festivals.

All amounts in this publication are excluded VAT.

Disclaimer

Despite all the care devoted to the editing of this publication, the publisher cannot accept liability for any damage that is the result of any error in this publication. The VNPF also likes to emphasize that the figures are totals and averages and therefore no statements can be made about individual music venues and festivals.

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Dutch Music Venues and **Festivals** Facts and Figures

