

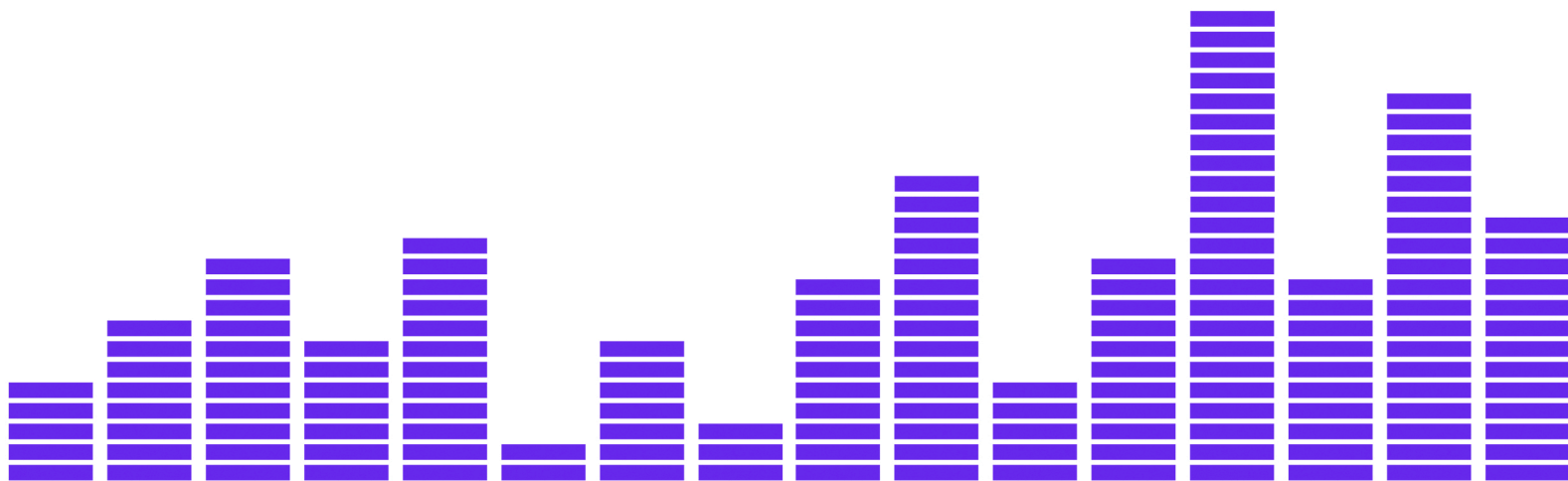
When Music Speaks: Mental Health and Next Steps in the Danish Music Industry

*Part 1 – Danish Music Creators' Subjective Wellbeing
and Mental Health*

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Disclaimer

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The views expressed are those of the authors and do not reflect the official position of the Partnership. Responsibility for the choice, analysis, and interpretation of the data and for the opinions presented in this report lies with the authors.

Report authored by Dr George Musgrave, Dr Sally Anne Gross and Dr Daniel Carney.

Preface by the Partnership for Sustainable Development in Music

This report constitutes part one of a large research study on the mental health and wellbeing of musicians and music creators in Denmark. The study intends to help the Danish music industry determine the next steps in its efforts to address the industry's collective mental health challenges, as well as to identify which interventions and solutions can deliver the best results for music makers and musicians.

Part one presents a quantitative analysis of a large dataset from a survey shared with the target group. This analysis sheds light on the mental health and wellbeing of broadly defined music creators in the Danish music industry.

The second part of the research will entail concrete recommendations and solution models that can drive social and cultural efforts to address mental health and wellbeing in the music industry. This is expected to be published in March 2024.

This project was commissioned by the Partnership for Sustainable Development in Music and completed by researchers Dr George Musgrave, Dr Sally Anne Gross and Dr Daniel Carney.

Special thanks to:

First and foremost, we would like to thank the musicians and music creators who have taken part in this study and given valuable input via the survey.

Secondly, a number of industry professionals, researchers and organisations have generously shared their knowledge about the Danish music business, providing key insights that have helped shape the survey and quantitative analysis:

Autor, DPA, the Danish Composers' Society, the Danish Music Publishers Association, the Danish Musicians' Association, SheCanPlay, The Bank, Danish Broadcasting Corporation, Another Life Community, MentalVoice, Danish Songwriting Academy, Music Export Denmark, the Band Academy, DiGiDi, scholar Henrik Marstal, and scholar Katrine Wallevik.

This research project has received funding from Velliv Foreningen. Velliv Foreningen owns the pension company Velliv. A portion of the association's surplus is allocated to charitable projects for mental health in the workplace with the purpose of preventing problems such as stress, anxiety, and depression.

Executive Summary

This report contains findings based on the largest ever study of musicians' and music creators' mental health in Scandinavia, with 1865 survey respondents.

Across our whole sample of musicians and more broadly defined music-makers in Denmark, subjective wellbeing is estimated to be worse than the wider Danish population based on our best approximation, with young music creators and women particularly badly affected.

Denmark was reported as being the second 'happiest country in the world' by the *World Happiness Report* based on the Gallup World Poll in 2023. This headline figure was based on an average subjective life evaluation score amongst the Danish population of 7.586:

- Amongst our respondents, the average score was 6.51¹. Statistical analysis shows this to be significantly lower (medium effect).
- For respondents under the age of 40 the average score was 5.92. Statistical analysis shows this to be significantly lower (*large* effect).

A report by the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2018 suggested that 3% of the Danish population were 'suffering', 5.1% were 'struggling', and 91.9% were 'thriving'.

Our sample of Danish musicians and music creators found the following statistics:

- 17.3% of respondents were 'suffering' - more than 5x (476%) higher than the wider population in the Nordic Council of Ministers' Report².
- 24.2% of respondents were 'struggling' - almost 5x (374.5%) higher than the wider population.
- 58.6% of respondents were 'thriving' – 36% less than the wider population.

The findings for our respondents under the age of 40 are particularly stark:

- 22.8% of respondents under the age of 40 were 'suffering'. This is nearly 7x (660%) higher than the wider population.
- 35% of respondents under the age of 40 were 'struggling'. This is nearly 7x (586%) higher than the wider population.
- 42.2% of respondents were thriving – 54% less than the wider population.

Overall, all groups in our sample are considerably *more* likely to be classified as 'suffering' or 'struggling', and considerably *less* likely to be classified as 'thriving' than those in the wider Danish population as per data from the Nordic Council of Ministers.

¹ Full details of this comparison can be found in Appendix B.

² Full details of this comparison can be found in Appendix C.

Levels of anxiety are high amongst our sample:

- 45.8% received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety.

However, age is significant variable here:

- For survey respondents under the age of 40, 68.7% received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety, with 42.8% reaching the threshold of clinical significance³.
- Anxiety was seen to be most acute in the age band 25-29 years. For those in this age band, 78.2% received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety, with 49.1% showing clinically significant anxiety, of which 15.5% scored severe, clinically significant, anxiety.

Gender is also a significant variable:

- For female respondents, 65.4% received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety (of which 41.2% reached the threshold of clinical significance) compared to 39.1% for men.⁴

Of those respondents who can be categorised as having abnormal anxiety, 61% of these considered music as their main career. This suggests, in line with other global studies, that *the music career itself* is a significant factor.

³ 25.8% mild, 31.8% moderate, 11% severe.

⁴ Female respondents: 24.3% mild, 27.6% moderate, 13.6% severe | Male respondents: 17.5% mild, 18.1% moderate, 3.5% severe.

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1. Introduction

This study - ‘*When Music Speaks*’⁵ - has been commissioned by the Danish Partnership for Sustainable Development in Music. This Partnership aims to be at the forefront of developing and bringing about change for musicians and more broadly defined music creators - encompassing songwriters, composers, producers, DJs, performers, and others - in Denmark. As part of this commitment, one of the Partnerships’ aims is to develop a wellbeing and mental health policy in the context of an ongoing initiative to professionalise and develop the music sector in Denmark, and in doing so, identify patterns and risk factors relating to the mental health of music creators. This report concludes part one of a larger study into musicians and music creators’ wellbeing and mental health in Denmark and is the largest ever study of its kind in Scandinavia.

1.1. Musicians, Music Creators and their Mental Health

The mental health and wellbeing challenges facing musicians, music creators, and indeed those working across the music industries supply chain, are now internationally recognised. Although much of the research on the subject has emanated from the Global North pre-pandemic⁶, there is evidence that these issues are shared across the international music sector⁷. There has been a general acceptance that many of the characteristic features of musical labour directly impact the wellbeing and mental health of the people that seek to make their living out of music, findings which have been seen in a range of genres from classical⁸ to Electronic Dance Music (EDM)⁹ and rock¹⁰. These features include: financial precarity¹¹; misogyny and the challenges facing female musicians¹²; racism and discrimination¹³; abuses within a labour market of informality (such as bullying)¹⁴; stresses and strains on interpersonal family relationships¹⁵; exposure and vulnerability from working online¹⁶; the economics of musicianship e.g. poor returns from streaming and the loss of earnings during the coronavirus pandemic¹⁷, and; the prevalence of cultures relating to drug and alcohol use¹⁸. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted and amplified many of these existing tensions both locally and globally¹⁹. Musicians can be well-evidenced as being an at-risk population with vulnerabilities towards not only mental ill-health, but also early mortality²⁰ and even suicide²¹. In this sense, many of the challenges are well known. The question this research seeks to address is: what now?

Ambitious research has recently been undertaken at a pan-European level on this topic, commissioned by the European Union, highlighting the fragmented nature of the music

⁵ The title of this report is inspired by the Danish author Hans Christian Andersen. In his work *What the Moon Saw, and Other Tales* he writes "where words fail, sounds can often speak" (1866: 38). However, as the 'sound' in this quote relates to the composition of a melody, it is often today translated as the beautiful expression: 'Where words fail, music speaks'.

⁶ Eynde et al. (2016); Gross & Musgrave (2016, 2020); Wills (2003)

⁷ Barbar et al. (2014); Loveday et al. (2023); Pallavi & Vijayan (2022); Seo et al. (2018)

⁸ Kegelaers et al. (2020)

⁹ Kegelaers et al. (2021); Ptatscheck (2021)

¹⁰ Raeburn (1987)

¹¹ Berg et al. (2022)

¹² Conor et al. (2015)

¹³ Black Lives in Music (2021)

¹⁴ Jones & Manoussaki (2022)

¹⁵ Musgrave (2023a)

¹⁶ Gross & Musgrave (2020)

¹⁷ Musgrave (2022)

¹⁸ Dobson (2011)

¹⁹ Musgrave (2022)

²⁰ Bellis. et al. (2012)

²¹ Kenny & Asher (2016)

sector, which has further contributed to the weakening of the position of musicians and music creators who, under these conditions, reported feeling frustrated, misunderstood, and under-represented²². This was particularly clear in terms of how musicians and music creators feel about their sphere of influence. The report also incisively notes: “Although the working conditions of artists is a topic that is high on the EU’s cooperation on culture policy agenda, neither the EU nor most member states have an explicit, coherent, and sector-specific policy regarding the health and wellbeing of music creators”²³. The research findings concerning music creators’ mental health and wellbeing presented in this report represent just one small part of the development of this ‘sector-specific policy’. However, in order to do so, the first stage was to collect robust evidence concerning the scale of the challenge in Denmark.

1.2. Music Creators’ Careers in Denmark

A large number of recent reports have highlighted the nature of contemporary music careers in Denmark, many focusing on music creators’ working lives and working conditions. Prominent examples include those by organisations including Another Life²⁴, DPA (Danish Popular Auteurs)²⁵, Ramboll Management Consulting/Council of Danish Artists²⁶, Statistics Denmark’s Restart Team for Culture and Sports, The Ministry of Culture, and researchers including Caroline Ravn²⁷ on Danish music managers and Sofie Sarlvit-Danielsen²⁸ on gender, alongside many others. This body of work has done much to enrich our understanding of how Danish music creators are experiencing their working lives, with many shared experiences from the international literature on the subject. Much of this research has driven forward a highly progressive agenda which acknowledges the affective stresses and strains of music creators working in Denmark, and where the focus of efforts and energies should be targeted moving forward. In this respect, the findings presented in *this* research on music creators’ mental health in Denmark should be understood as being informed by, and complementary to, this important ongoing work by offering a supplementary evidence base.

In the context of mental health specifically, whilst the conversation in Denmark is increasingly growing in urgency and volume²⁹, many of the studies have adopted an explicit focus on *classical music*³⁰ and/or have prioritised their focus predominantly on *physical* health such as musculoskeletal pain³¹. A small number of insightful contemporary, post-pandemic reports have begun to shine a light more specifically on the mental health experiences of music creators in Denmark such as by Mandag Morgen on the wellbeing of musicians and composers, and a survey by the organisation MentalVoice. More recently, work by Henrik Marstal has added textured, qualitative insight into the emotional strains emanating from the working lives of musicians³². However, there has, to date, been a relative absence of a report on this subject in Denmark which is able to bring together three key features: (1) statistical data informed by a large sample size, (2) using clinically verified screening tools for mental health and wellbeing, and (3) encompassing a range of genres. In this respect, it was important for a research project to establish the size, scale and nature of

²² Vermeersch et al. (2023)

²³ Vermeersch et al. (2023: 10)

²⁴ Another Life (2022)

²⁵ Danish Popular Auteurs/Why Consulting (2023)

²⁶ Ramboll Management Consulting/Council of Danish Artists (2022)

²⁷ Ravn (2020)

²⁸ Sarlvit-Danielsen (2020)

²⁹ Aalberg et al. (2019); Bonde et al. (2018); Detari et al. (2020); Record Union (2019); Saarikallio et al. (2020); Saksvik-Lehouillier et al. (2017); Vaag et al. (2016a); Vaag et al. (2016b); Vaag et al. (2014); Vaag et al. (2015); Vastamäki et al. (2023)

³⁰ Hasson et al. (2009); Holst et al. (2012); Kivimäki & Jokinen (1994); Liljeholm Johansson & Theorell (2003)

³¹ Hasson et al. (2009); Laitinen (2005); Laitinen & Poulsen (2008); Zetterberg et al. (1998)

³² Marstal (2023)

the wellbeing and mental health challenges faced by those working in the Danish music sector using internationally recognised measures. This data should be understood as the beginning. The longer-term aim of this research project, building on this evidence with further work, is to develop a series of recommendations that will contribute to the development of mental health and wellbeing initiatives for the participants of the music sector in Denmark, underpinned by further qualitative research and evaluations of mental health interventions.

1.3. Why Denmark? Why now?

Denmark as a territory presents an interesting case in which to examine the wellbeing of participants in the music sector given that it is internationally recognised as being a great place to live. Denmark is well known for having one of the happiest populations in the world with unusually high reported levels of what is referred to as ‘subjective wellbeing’ – defined by the United States National Library of Medicine as: “how people *experience and evaluate* their lives and specific domains and activities in their lives”³³. In 2023, it was reported that Denmark was the second ‘happiest country in the world’³⁴; an ‘imagery of Denmark’³⁵ which many have suggested masks inequalities and challenges for those in the country who might be suffering³⁶, and thus living ‘in the shadow of happiness’³⁷. Likewise, the unique cultural heritage of Denmark makes it a fascinating place to think about questions relating to music creators and their mental health. For example, what does a winner-take-all economy (like music³⁸) look like in a country known as possessing what has been called The Law of Jante; a “code of modesty”³⁹ rooted in egalitarianism and a disavowal of pronouncements of personal success and individualism? It is also clear that music is highly valued in Denmark, from the high level and variety of music education offerings to world-renowned music festivals, coupled with the fact that Danish music consumption per capita spending ranks amongst the highest in the world⁴⁰. These factors create an interesting opportunity in which to examine and understand the conditions of musical labour and how they might impact the wellbeing of music sector workers and inform strategies and tactics that bring about progressive developments across the music value chain.

Therefore, this report will present the findings of a survey of Danish musicians’ and music creators’ subjective wellbeing and mental health. The aim for this study was a relatively simple one: to acquire data using internationally recognised measures of wellbeing and clinically validated measures of mental health amongst as broad a range of musicians (and more broadly defined music-makers e.g. producers, composers, songwriters, etc.) living and working in Denmark (and the wider Kingdom of Denmark) as possible. The aim was to collect the most robust evidence possible and use this evidence to inform the later stages of this long-term project. The overarching goal is to help deliver meaningful change, so that those who produce the songs and sounds which are so powerful in the lives of so many, might live their happiest and most fulfilled lives. This is the reason we do the work we do.

³³ Stone and Mackie (2018)

³⁴ Helliwell et al. (2023)

³⁵ Andersen et al. (1997)

³⁶ In 2019, for instance, all five Nordic countries were in the European Economic Area top ten for the proportion of citizens reporting chronic depressive symptoms, with Iceland and Sweden in 1st and 3rd place respectively (Eurostat, 2022).

³⁷ Andreasson & Birkjær (2018)

³⁸ Albinsson (2013)

³⁹ Cappelen & Dahlberg (2018)

⁴⁰ Statista (2021)

2. Methodology

In an attempt to acquire a comprehensive overview of the Danish music sector, the research began with four roundtable discussions with a range of stakeholders from the Danish music industries in February 2023. These lively and informative discussions provided the research team with a better understanding of the needs and wants of those living and working in the Danish music sector. It is important to note that the findings and opinions expressed in this report are solely those of the authors and should in no way be understood as representing any of the persons who took part in these sessions. These roundtables took place with:

- Representatives of the Danish Partnership for Sustainable Development in Music.
- A selection of musicians and music creators working in Denmark representing a range of genres, ages and career stages.
- Danish music industry professionals.
- Scholars studying Danish music and Danish music working practices.

Following these initial meetings, reviews of literature around music creators' mental health in Denmark and Scandinavia, and wider mental health in Scandinavia amongst non-music creators, were undertaken. The huge scholarship from this region informed the construction of a survey which could isolate two variables to form the core of analysis based on existing studies: the impact of age⁴¹, and the impact of gender⁴². Other variables have been seen in studies in Denmark and wider Scandinavia too, including socioeconomic status⁴³ which we sought to try and capture by collecting data on income. Evidence of the impact of geographic region was found to be mixed and thus not a core focus of analysis⁴⁴, and whilst immigration status has been highlighted in a number of studies⁴⁵, GDPR laws in Denmark made the collection of data on this specific subject problematic, thus resulting in the analytical focus below on age and gender predominantly. This does, however, represent a crucial area for future research by others working in this field.

These two elements (stakeholder meetings and literature reviews) together informed the nature and scope of the survey design.

2.1. Survey Design

The survey was designed to have three distinct sections. The first was to collect demographic information such as age, gender, career stage, music education, and more – informed by our analysis of mental health literature from Scandinavia - as well as details about mental health diagnosis and mental health service usage to allow us to select interview candidates at a later stage. The second section focussed on wellbeing. Here, a decision was taken to use the identical methodology employed in reports which had presented Denmark as the 'second happiest country in the world': Cantril's ladder, also known as Cantril's self-anchoring striving scale. This asks respondents to think of their lives as rungs on a ladder and to then conceptualise their quality of their life. This is of particular interest for a study of music creators as the measure acts as a proxy for *success*, which early stakeholder meetings and

⁴¹ Andreasson & Birkjær (2018); The National Board of Social Services, Denmark (2022)

⁴² Ayuso-Mateos et al. (2001); Berntsson et al. (2006); Derdikman-Eiron et al. (2011); Kringle et al. (2001); Lehtinen et al. (1990)

⁴³ Björkenstam et al. (2017); Byrne et al. (2004); Pulkki-Råback et al. (2012a); Suokas et al. (2020)

⁴⁴ Kringle et al. (2006); Sandanger et al. (1999); Sundquist et al. (2004)

⁴⁵ Bayard-Burfield et al. (2000); Brydsten et al. (2019); Castaneda et al. (2015); Castaneda et al. (2020); Dalgard et al. (2006); Dunlavy & Rostila (2013); Ferrada-Noli (1997); Hollander et al. (2013); Johansson et al. (1997, 1998); Johnson et al. (2017); Lindström et al. (2001); Rask et al. (2016, 2018); Saraiva Leão et al. (2005); Sidorchuk et al. (2017); Sundquist (1994); Sundquist & Johansson (1997); Tinghög et al. (2007)

previous research⁴⁶ has identified as crucial to understanding wellbeing. Participants were presented with the identical wording from the *World Happiness Report*: “Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time?”. Participants were then awarded an overall score which was then compared to scores given for the country as a whole in the *World Happiness Report*. In addition, respondents were scored as either ‘suffering’ (indicated by a score of 0-4) ‘struggling’ (indicated by a score of 5-6) or ‘thriving’ (indicated by a score of 7-10). This suffering/struggling/thriving delineation was based on the Nordic-specific approach adopted by the authors of the report *In the Shadow of Happiness*. Whilst the datasets *do not allow for a precise like-for-like comparison*, these represented the closest methodological approximation to facilitate indicative benchmarking and areas for further research and enquiry. Further details can be found in the appendix.

The third section of the survey employed screening measures of anxiety and depression to allow us to precisely, using internationally verified scales, estimate the levels of anxiety and depression amongst our sample. There are a range of mental health screening measures which are available. Selecting from these requires striking the balance between validity amongst the population, length of time required to complete the questions/participant involvement and other relevant considerations. The decision was taken to use the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) for four key reasons. Firstly, the scale has excellent validity. As Wu et al. (2021) note: “the depression subscale of the HADS (HADS-D) is the most commonly used screening tool for depression in medically ill patients and is one of several validated measures recommended for assessing the severity of depressive symptoms by the United Kingdom National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)... The cut-off values of the measure are well-established as standards in research and clinical practice”. Secondly, HADS has been shown to exhibit good sensitivity and accuracy⁴⁷. Thirdly, and crucially, HADS has already been translated into Danish⁴⁸. A range of studies from Denmark demonstrate this measure has Translation Validity⁴⁹. Finally, we had used this measure before in previous research⁵⁰ and were thus familiar with it as a tool.

The survey was written in English, translated (where necessary) into Danish, and hosted by data analytics company E analyzer. The survey was live between March 30th 2023 and May 15th 2023.

⁴⁶ Gross and Musgrave (2017, 2020); Loveday et al. (2023)

⁴⁷ Bjelland et al. (2002); Norton et al. (2013)

⁴⁸ Christensen et al. (2020)

⁴⁹ Berg et al. (2017); Berg et al. (2014); Hojskov (2016); Sibilitz (2015)

⁵⁰ Loveday et al. (2023)

3. Findings

3.1. Part One: Our Respondents

The survey received 1876 respondents. 11 of these were removed from the sample as they were under the age of 18 and thus ineligible, meaning the total number of respondents were 1865⁵¹. This makes the study the largest ever study of musicians' and music creators' mental health in Scandinavia⁵².

3.1.1. Demographic Data

Survey respondents were heavily skewed towards older music-makers. 63% were over the age of 40: 41.4% were over the age of 50, and 21.6% were between 41-50. As per other examples of research in this field⁵³, respondents also had a strong gender bias: 73.8% of respondents were male, 23.3% were female and 1.5% non-binary (1.5% declined to declare their gender).⁵⁴ It is important to state here that the small number of non-binary respondents means it is *not possible* to make comments regarding the statistical significance of the dataset as it relates to these respondents. Figures and tables below showing statistics concerning non-binary respondents are included by way of illustration only.

	n	%
18-24	98	6.3
25-29	143	9.3
30-35	185	12
36-40	227	8.2
41-50	333	21.6
Over 50	639	41.4
Prefer not to say	19	1.2
Total	1544	100
Missing	321	

Fig. 1. Demography by age

	n	%
Male	1138	73.8
Female	359	23.3
Non-binary	23	1.5
Prefer not to say	23	1.5
Total	1543	100
Missing	322	

Fig. 2. Demography by gender

⁵¹ Not every respondent answered every question, resulting in some of the included tables receiving a lower number of eligible responses than 1865.

⁵² The previous largest was by Jonas Vaag and colleagues (2016a) in Norway which had 1607 respondents.

⁵³ Kivimäki & Jokinen (1994)

⁵⁴ See Appendix A for a more detailed reflection on this gender bias in our sample.

As a first step, to make sense of this noticeable age and gender split, analysis was performed on the other demographic variables to reach the following conclusions about the sample. The sample from this survey contains a significant bias towards older respondents (which means in this instance those over the age of 40 i.e. the top two age bands of the survey) who were:

- More likely to be male⁵⁵.
- Almost twice as likely to select classical music⁵⁶ or country⁵⁷ as one of their genres, much more likely to select jazz⁵⁸, and significantly less likely to select genres such as hip hop⁵⁹, R&B⁶⁰ or indie music⁶¹.
- More likely to describe themselves as a ‘composer’ and less likely to describe themselves as a ‘performer’.
- More likely to have income in the highest three categories⁶².
- Less likely to be resident in the Capital region⁶³.
- Less likely to have an exclusive contract with a record label/publisher⁶⁴.
- Less likely to have had formal music education of any kind⁶⁵.
- Less likely to consider music as their music career⁶⁶.

The survey also contains a significant bias towards male respondents. Again, analysis shows that the male respondents to this survey were, statistically:

- More likely than females to be over the age of 50⁶⁷.
- More likely than females to report being self-taught/less likely to report formal education⁶⁸.
- Less likely to be reliant on music for income. Males were *more* likely than females to make 0-10% of their annual income from music, and *less* likely to rely on music for 91-100% of their annual earnings⁶⁹.
- Less likely to report viewing music as their main career⁷⁰.

In other words, what is observable amongst the survey respondents is a clear split between: an older, wealthier, male demographic, more represented in genres relating to classical music and jazz, with less of an emphasis on the performance of music, living outside of the Capital region, and less reliant on musical work as their career focus; contrasted with a younger sample of music creators who are less well-off, more varied in terms of gender, more likely to reside in the Capital region, more likely to be performers in specific genres of music which in Denmark might be referred to as ‘rhythmic music’⁷¹ (broadly, although not completely,

⁵⁵ $X^2[3, n=1539] = 40.35, p=.000, V=.16$

⁵⁶ 22.2% of over 40s vs 11.2% of under 40s

⁵⁷ 20.2% of over 40s vs 10.3% of under 40s

⁵⁸ 30.5% of over 40s vs 19.7% of under 40s

⁵⁹ 21.3% of under 40s vs 8.1% of over 40s

⁶⁰ 21.7% of under 40s vs 13.6% of over 40s

⁶¹ 29.7% of under 40s vs 14.9% of over 40s

⁶² $X^2[11, n=1417] = 147.30, p=.000, V=.32$.

⁶³ $X^2[6, n=1521] = 15.80, p=.015, V=.10$.

⁶⁴ $X^2[2, n=1447] = 26.81, p=.000, V=.1$

⁶⁵ ($X^2[1, n = 1526] = 10.14, p=.001, phi=-.08$).

⁶⁶ $X^2[df = 2, n = 1434] = 23.49, p=.000, V=-.13$).

⁶⁷ $X^2[10, n=1506]=60.90, p=.000, V=.14$

⁶⁸ $X^2[2, n=1500]=52.57, p=.000, V=.19$

⁶⁹ $X^2[18, n=1361]=42.32, p=.001, V=.13$

⁷⁰ $X^2[df = 2, n = 1407] = 26.90, p=.000, V=-.10$). In respect of this, we wondered whether this might mean that the female musicians had to feel more economically dependent on music than their male counterparts *before* they could define themselves as career musicians, and that this may represent an unseen gender bias.

⁷¹ Pedersen (2011)

analogous with international definitions of popular music⁷²), and who are more likely to view music-making as their main career. This split is *key* in informing the nature of the analysis undertaken with reference to mental health and wellbeing in the sections below.

3.1.2. Data on Professional Status

The data collected which attempted to make sense of professional status amongst the survey respondents was extremely interesting insofar as the findings – like other examples internationally⁷³ – highlight the insufficiency of simple definitions of professional vs non-professional musicians. In essence, data collection was driven by the hypothesis, informed by existing studies, that those who experience music-making as a *career* (which tended to be younger survey respondents) experience musicianship, and relatedly the (potentially negative, as well as positive) mental health and wellbeing implications of music-creation, entirely differently to those who pursue music for fun, leisure, recreation, or other reasons⁷⁴. Indeed, even the spread of answers to what appears to be a simple question - ‘Do you consider music to be your main/primary career’ - reveals this uncertainty.

Over one in ten of survey respondents were unsure how to answer this question, speaking to an extent of the subjectivities surrounding ‘career’ musicianship. Nonetheless, at least 35.2% of respondents felt confident to say music was *not* their primary career. However, this figure dropped to 27.2% for respondents under the age of 40 and those expressing certainty that music *was* their main career jumped from 50.9% to 59.1%⁷⁵ highlighting the stronger career orientation of younger respondents (and, interestingly, greater uncertainty over how they define the term ‘career’).

	n	%
Yes	777	53.7
No	509	35.2
Don't know	161	11.1
Total	1447	100
Missing	418	

Fig. 3. Do you consider music to be your main career?

⁷² Björnberg (1993: 71)

⁷³ Loveday et al. (2023).

⁷⁴ Fancourt et al. (2015); Grape et al. (2002); Loveday et al. (2023); Musgrave (2023b); Saarikallio et al. (2020)

⁷⁵ A chi-square test of association showed a significant relationship of *small* effect between age category and self-perceived music career status. Under 40s were *more* likely than over 40s to consider music their main career or to respond “don't know”, and correspondingly *less* likely to respond “no” ($X^2 [df = 2, n = 1434] = 23.49, p = .000, V = -.13$).

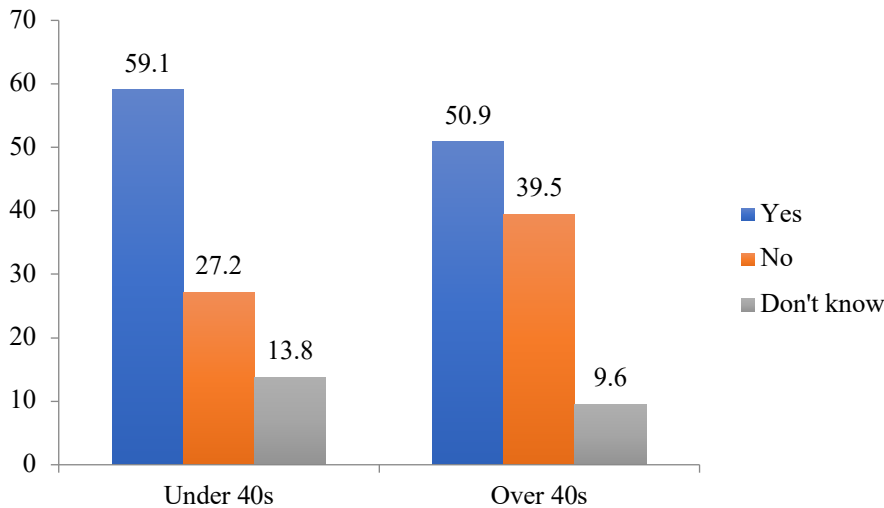


Fig. 4. Do you consider music to be your main career [2]

However, further data reinforces the complexities surrounding definitions of terms such as ‘career’ and ‘professional’ in this context. For example, across the entire sample 46.5% stated that they earned between 0-10% of their annual income from music, and indeed the majority of respondents - 53.8% - stated that they earned between 0-20% of their annual income from music. At the other end of the distribution, the next most represented band was that of 91-100% of earnings (25.1%). These percentages did not vary significantly by age. To an extent, this is unsurprising and reflects the huge income inequalities within music and what has been characterised as the ‘death of the long tail’⁷⁶ i.e. that the musical ‘middle class’ some heralded would emerge with the advent of digitalisation has not come to pass.

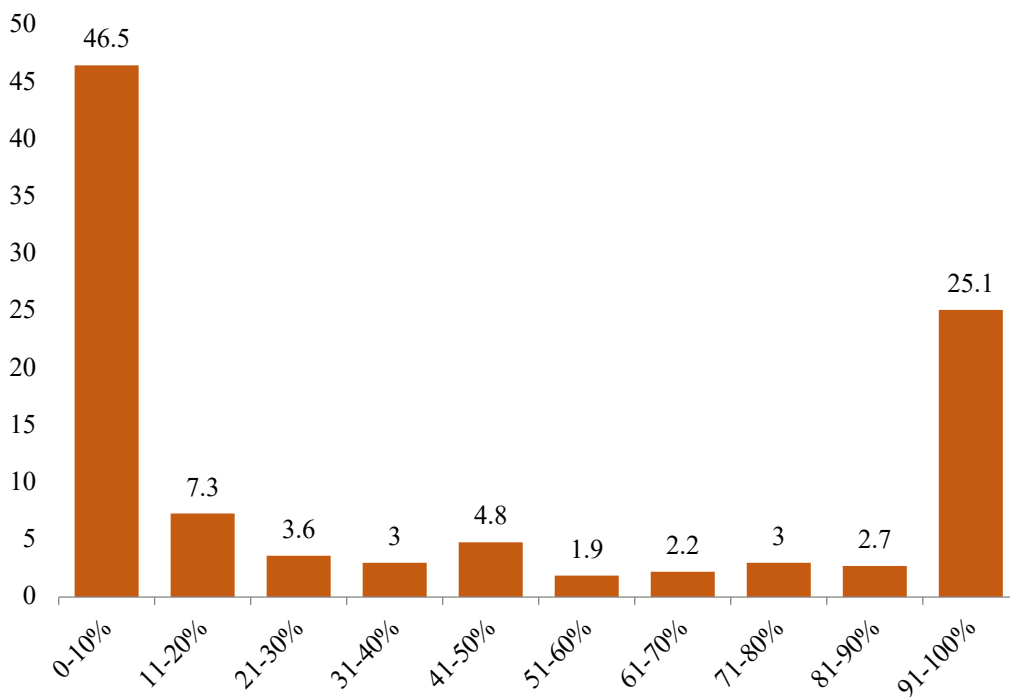


Fig. 5. Percentage of annual income earned from music

⁷⁶ Coelho & Mendes (2019)

However, these splits according to gender were even more interesting, revealing a greater proportion of female respondents who relied almost entirely on music as their source of income (32.3% compared to 23.3% of men), and a larger clustering of male respondents earning between 0-10% of their annual earnings from music (49.6% for men compared to 36.7% of women)⁷⁷.

	Male		Female		Non-binary	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
0-10%	507	49.6	116	36.7	10	45.5
11-20%	76	7.4	19	6	2	9.1
21-30%	39	3.8	10	3.2	0	0
31-40%	22	2.2	17	5.4	1	4.5
41-50%	49	4.8	15	4.7	1	4.5
51-60%	18	1.8	7	2.2	2	9.1
61-70%	19	1.9	11	3.5	0	0
71-80%	26	2.5	12	3.8	2	9.1
81-90%	29	2.8	7	2.2	1	4.5
91-100%	238	23.3	102	32.3	3	13.6
Total	1023	100	316	100	22	100
Missing	115		43		1	

Fig. 6. Percentage of annual income earned from music by gender

These findings reveal the confusions and paradoxes regarding definitions of professional status in the context of musical work. For example, in this dataset are a significant majority for whom music is *not* their primary source of income (65.2% of respondents earned less than 50% of their annual income from music) *and*, at the same time, a majority (particularly of young musicians; 59.1%) who *see* music as their main career. A truly fascinating statistic from our survey data is that if we take the group of respondents for whom music is definitively not their main source of income i.e. those who earn between 0% and 49% of their income from music, in this group 43.1% of respondents answered ‘Yes’ (27.2%) or ‘Don’t Know’ (15.9%) to the question: Do you consider music as your main/primary career’?

Likewise, whilst only 35.2% of the total respondents definitively did *not* consider music to be their main/primary career, 82.2% did not have an exclusive contract with a record label and/or publisher, reflecting that career musicianship is not connected to ‘getting signed’⁷⁸ per se given that ‘signed’ artists are a tiny fraction of this landscape. At the same time, it might be reasonable to infer a high level of professionalism amongst survey respondents as indicated by the very high levels of membership of professional organisations⁷⁹. In other words, it is worth reflecting on whether or not one’s membership of a professional body indicates a perception of professional status which may not be reflected financially. Descriptive statistics are seen below. The simple point here is as follows: categorising

⁷⁷ A chi-square test of association revealed a significant relationship of *small* effect between gender and percentage of income from music category ($X^2[18, n=1361]=42.32, p=.001, V=.13$). Males were *more* likely than females to make 0-10% of their annual income from music, and *less* likely to rely on music for 91-100% of their annual earnings. Non-binary participants were *less* likely than both groups to appear in the highest percentage category.

⁷⁸ Arditi (2020)

⁷⁹ Which is perhaps unsurprising given the method of survey distribution via Koda.

musicians as ‘professional’ or not is extremely complex and needs to be treated with great caution.

	n	%
AUTOR	205	13.4
DAF	126	8.2
DKF	40	2.6
DMF	351	22.9
DPA	124	8.1
GRAMEX	798	52.1
KODA	1273	83
Music publishers	12	0.8
Total	1533	n/a
Missing	332	

Fig. 7. Are you a member of any of the following organisations?

3.2. Part Two: Subjective Wellbeing and Danish Music Creators

The headline finding from the analysis of subjective wellbeing via our survey is as follows: across the whole sample of musicians and more broadly defined music creators, subjective wellbeing is estimated to be worse than the wider Danish population based on our best approximation⁸⁰, with young music creators and women particularly badly affected. Below, this will be unpacked over two sections.

3.2.1. Music Creators in the ‘Second Happiest Country in the World’

As stated in the introduction, the latest *World Happiness Report* (Gallup, 2023) suggested that Denmark was the second ‘happiest country in the world’. This declaration is based on an average subjective life evaluation score of 7.586 (out of a possible 10) using the measurement tool known as Cantril’s ladder. All of the participants in this distributed survey were asked to answer an identical question to that in the *World Happiness Report*. Amongst respondents, the average score was *lower* than that of the Danish population, at 6.51⁸¹. In the context of Nordic countries, a score of lower than 7 on this question has been suggested to represent a ‘deviation’⁸². This ‘deviation’ is immediately visible amongst survey respondents.

	<i>World Happiness Report (Denmark)</i>	Our survey respondents
Mean (<i>sd</i>)	7.59	6.51 (2.11)
Median		7
Min.		0
Max.		10
n		1274
Missing		591

Fig. 8. World Happiness Report (Denmark) vs our survey respondents

⁸⁰ This claim is made by comparing the results of respondents from our survey to those using the same measure of subjective wellbeing (Cantril’s ladder) used in two reports: The Gallup *World Happiness Report* and *In the Shadow of Happiness* by the Nordic Council of Ministers (Andreasson & Birkjær, 2018). Full details of these comparisons are found in Appendix B and C.

⁸¹ Further details about how we have undertaken this comparison and how the data should be interpreted more fully are found in Appendix B.

⁸² Andreasson & Birkjær (2018)

Subsequent analysis showed age to have an influence. The table below shows the scores of our respondents under the age of 40, and over the age of 40, compared to the average score from the *World Happiness Report* for Denmark of 7.59. For respondents over the age of 40, their score was 6.82. However, for respondents under the age of 40, life evaluation scores were *far* lower – their mean score was 5.92.

	World Happiness Report (Denmark)	Our survey (Over 40s)	Our survey (Under 40s)
Mean (sd)	7.59	6.82 (2.14)	5.92 (1.91)
Median		7	6
Min.		0	0
Max.		10	10
n		833	434
Missing		158	119

Fig. 9. World Happiness Report (Denmark) vs Over and Under 40s in our sample

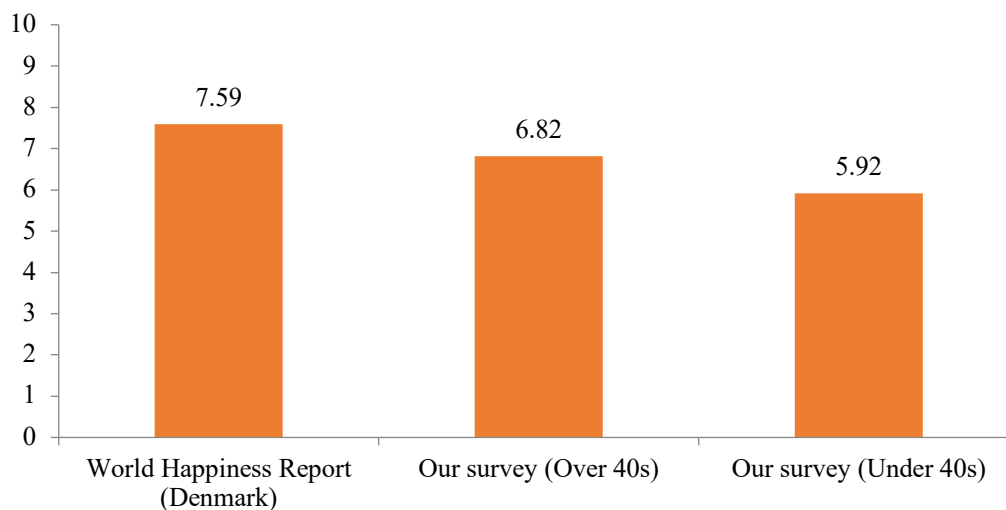


Fig. 10. World Happiness Report (Denmark) vs Over and Under 40s in our sample [2]

How meaningful are these differences? In order to explore this, statistical analysis was conducted. Firstly, it was indicated that the difference between the reported *World Happiness Report* mean score (7.59) and the mean score of the *overall* sample (6.51) – with the latter being lower - was *significant*⁸³. This means it is possible to infer that there is a high chance this difference reflects an *actually existing* difference in wellbeing between Danish music creators and the general Danish population; in other words, that Danish music creators are more likely to rate their wellbeing lower and that this would be observable beyond the sample in this survey.

In terms of the under 40 and over 40 age groups, the wellbeing ratings of younger respondents were found to be significantly lower than those of older individuals⁸⁴. Both the

⁸³ A one-sample t-test showed the mean Cantril wellbeing rating of the survey sample was significantly *lower* (*medium* effect) than the reported *World Happiness Report* mean score for Denmark ($t[1273]=-18.20, p=.000, d=-0.51$).

⁸⁴ An independent samples t-test showed the Cantril wellbeing ratings of respondents under 40 were significantly lower (*small* effect) than those of respondents over 40 ($t[1265]=-7.34, p=.000, d=0.44$).

difference between the *World Happiness Report* mean (7.59) and that of *over 40s* (6.82)⁸⁵, and the difference between the *World Happiness Report* mean (7.59) and that of *under 40s* (5.92)⁸⁶ were also significant, indicating that the observed discrepancy between the subjective wellbeing of Danish music creators and that of the general Danish population may be applicable to both older and younger musicians. However, the fact that the under 40s in the sample achieved the lowest wellbeing scores indicates that *this difference may be most pronounced with regard to younger music creators*, and that this group may be most at risk in terms of their wellbeing.

3.2.2. Delineating Happiness

In 2018, The Nordic Council of Ministers alongside The Happiness Research Institute produced a report entitled *In the Shadow of Happiness* (shortened in tables henceforth as ‘ITSOH’). This used an identical methodology to that of Gallup (Cantril’s ladder) with the aim of providing “a more nuanced picture of ‘the Happy Nordic region’”⁸⁷. This publication more forensically delineated the overall subjective wellbeing score reported in *The World Happiness Report* into three categories: Danes who were ‘suffering’ (indicated by a score of 0-4 on Cantril), ‘struggling’ (indicated by a score of 5-6), and ‘thriving’ (indicated by a score of 7-10)⁸⁸. In making these categorisations, drawing on data taken from the Danish population collected by the European Social Survey (ESS), the authors suggested that 3% of the Danish population were ‘suffering’, 5.1% were ‘struggling’, and 91.9% were ‘thriving’.

In contrast, amongst the sample of Danish musicians and music creators who responded to our survey – as seen in Figs. 11 and 12 below - we found the following startling statistics⁸⁹. In terms of the overall sample, 17.3% of respondents were ‘suffering’, more than 5x (476%) higher than the wider population based on this comparator. Additionally, 24.2% of respondents were ‘struggling’, almost 5x (374.5%) higher than the wider population. Finally, just 58.6% of respondents could be categorised as ‘thriving’ – 36% less than the wider population.

The findings for respondents under the age of 40 are particularly stark. 22.8% of respondents under the age of 40 were ‘suffering’. *This is nearly 7x (660%) higher than the wider population* based on this same comparator. Additionally, 35% of respondents under the age of 40 were ‘struggling’. This is nearly 7x (586%) higher than the wider population. Finally, just 42.2% of respondents were thriving – 54% less than the wider population. Based on inferential analysis, the under 40’s in our sample were less likely to be ‘thriving’, and more likely to be ‘struggling’ or ‘suffering’, than over 40s. This is in stark contrast to the figures given by the *In the Shadow of Happiness* report. More specifically, within the sample, the 18-24 group is *least* likely to be ‘thriving’ and *most* likely to be ‘suffering’. Although the likelihood of ‘thriving’ generally increases with age, the four oldest groups are markedly more likely than the three youngest groups to appear in this category⁹⁰.

⁸⁵ A one-sample t-test showed the mean Cantril wellbeing rating of respondents *over 40* was significantly *lower* (small effect) than the reported *World Happiness Report* mean score for Denmark ($t[832]=-10.41, p=.000, d=-0.36$).

⁸⁶ A one-sample t-test showed the mean Cantril wellbeing rating of respondents *under 40* (6, N=434) was significantly *lower* (large effect) than the reported *World Happiness Report* mean score for Denmark ($t[433]=-18.15, p=.000, d=-0.87$).

⁸⁷ Andreasson & Birkjær (2018: 7)

⁸⁸ This differs slightly from Gallup’s categorisation of suffering/struggling/thriving (which also includes future ratings), but the authors suggest their method was “meaningful from a Nordic perspective” (Andreasson & Birkjær, 2018: 14), hence our adoption of it.

⁸⁹ Again, further details about how we have undertaken this comparison and how the data should be interpreted more fully are found in Appendix C.

⁹⁰ $X^2 [4 n=4415] = 816.42, p=.000, V=.30$

	Suffering (0-4)		Struggling (5-6)		Thriving (7-10)		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Under 40s	99	22.8	152	35	183	42.2	434	100
Over 40s	119	14.3	156	18.7	558	67	833	100
ITSOH	94	3	161	5.1	2893	91.9	3148	100

Fig. 11. Cantril scores for suffering/struggling/thriving, by age, compared to ITSOH report

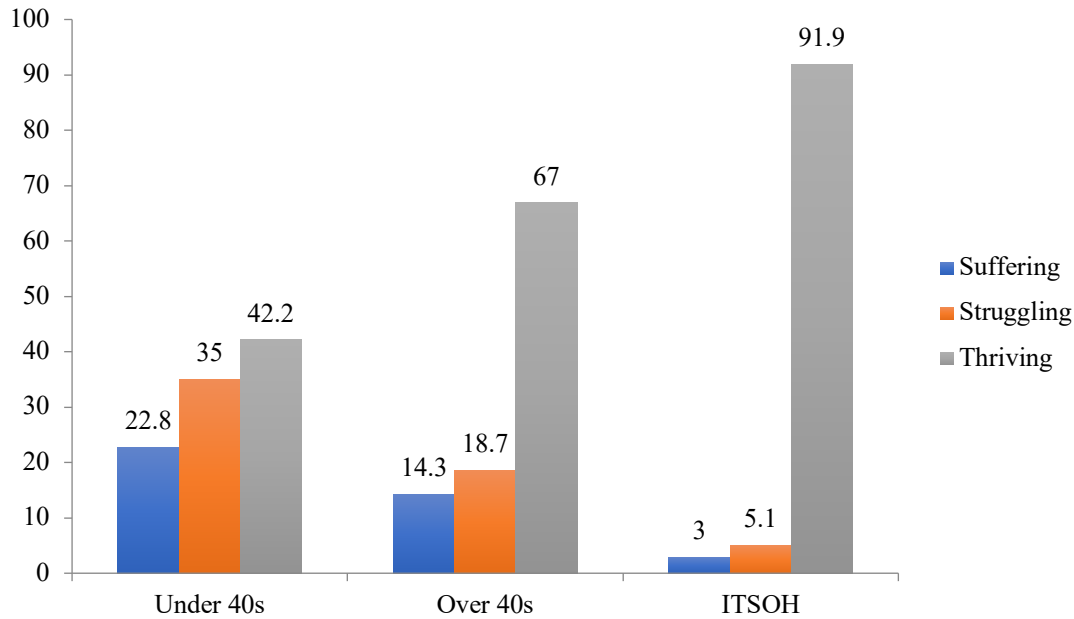


Fig. 12. Cantril scores for suffering/struggling/thriving, by age, compared to ITSOH report [2]

The findings with reference to gender are also marked. Female respondents were *less* likely to be ‘thriving’, and *more* likely to be ‘suffering’ than both males and non-binary individuals, and more likely to be ‘struggling’, than males⁹¹.

	Suffering (0-4)		Struggling (5-6)		Thriving (7-10)		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	155	16.5	205	21.8	580	61.7	940	100
Female	58	20.1	93	32.3	137	47.6	288	100
Non-binary	2	10.5	7	36.8	10	52.6	19	100
ITSOH	94	3	161	5.1	2893	91.9	3148	100

Fig. 13. Cantril scores for suffering/struggling/thriving, by gender, compared to ITSOH report

⁹¹ $\chi^2 [6, n=4395] = 732.29, p=.000, V=.29$

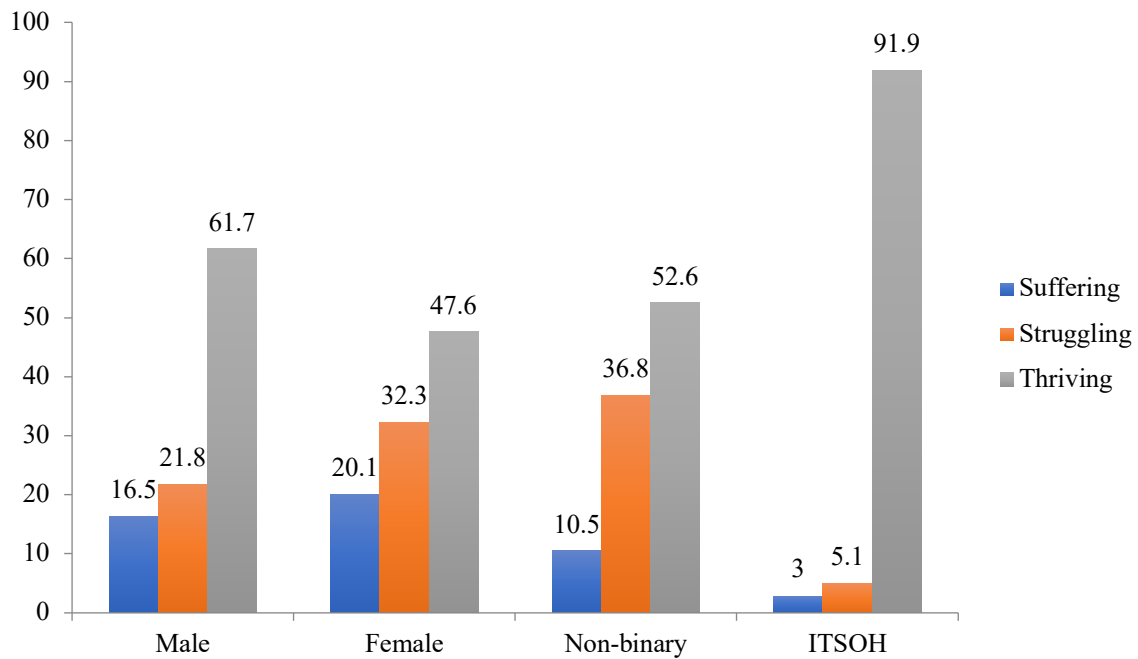


Fig. 14. Cantril scores for suffering/struggling/thriving, by gender, compared to ITSOH report [2]

In general, and unsurprisingly, our data suggests that ratings of wellbeing, and the likelihood of a score in the ‘thriving’ category, both increase with income (Fig.15). Additionally, ratings of wellbeing increase with years of experience in a consistent linear fashion. Those with 0-10 years of experience give the lowest ratings, and those with over 50 years of experience the highest (Fig.16). Overall, all groups in the sample are considerably *more* likely to score in the ‘suffering’ or ‘struggling’ categories, and considerably *less* likely to score in the ‘thriving’ category than those in the wider Danish population as per the report by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

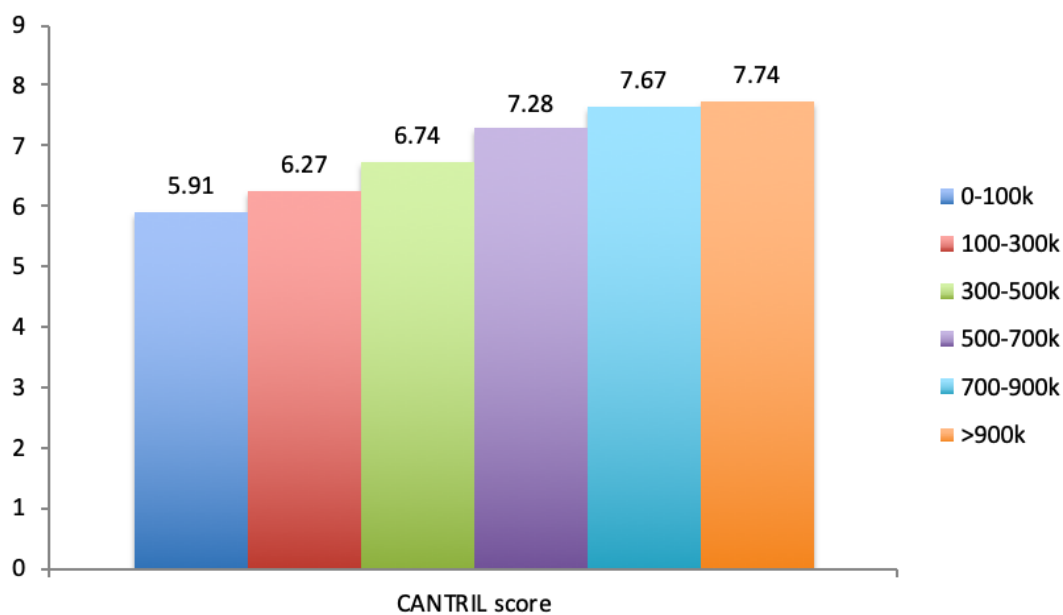


Fig. 15. Income and subjective wellbeing (Cantril's ladder score)

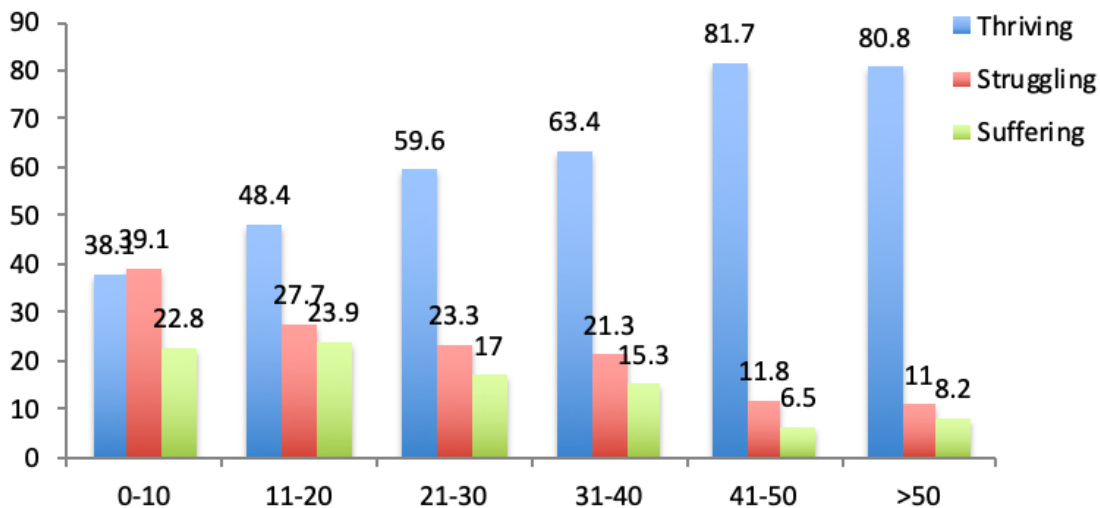


Fig.16. Years' experience and subjective wellbeing (Cantril's ladder score)

Overall, this data reveals the very real challenges for subjective wellbeing for Danish music creators, *particularly* for younger music creators and *particularly* for women, *and* that the wellbeing of music creators is worse than the wellbeing of the wider Danish population by our comparison. This suggests that there is something potentially distinct about music creators as a group warranting particular attention.

3.3. Part Three: Danish Music Creators' Mental Health

For the final part of the survey, information was collected on survey respondents' mental health using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS). This tool was developed to "provide clinicians with an acceptable, reliable, valid and easy to use practical tool for identifying and quantifying depression and anxiety".⁹² The measure *is not a stand-alone diagnostic tool* but "a means for identifying general hospital patients who need further psychiatric evaluation and assistance", and delineates both anxiety and depression into four categories: normal, mild, moderate and severe. Mild, moderate and severe represent thresholds indicating abnormal levels of anxiety or depression, and the categories of moderate and severe are considered to represent "a clinically significant disorder"⁹³.

Overall, survey data suggests anxiety to be particularly acute amongst respondents, particularly younger music creators and female music creators. Higher depression scores were less prevalent. For both anxiety and depression, it is hard to benchmark these scores against the wider Danish population as done above for wellbeing in the absence of a nationwide study employing an identical diagnostic tool with which to make inferential comparisons. The only study of anxiety and depression in the Danish population that could be found⁹⁴ used the Generalised Anxiety Disorder measure (GAD-7) and the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9). As such, given that the methodologies are distinct, direct comparisons are not possible. This represents an area for future research. That being said, the raw numbers reported below are, in some cases, startling and genuine cause for concern.

⁹² Zeltzer & Kloda (n.d)

⁹³ Hansson et al. (2009: 284)

⁹⁴ Strizzi et al. (2023)

3.3.1. Danish Music Creators and Anxiety

Across the entire sample 45.8% of respondents received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety i.e. anxiety outside of the normal range, and 26.8% indicated clinically significant levels of anxiety. 19% received scores indicating mild anxiety, 20.7% received scores indicating moderate anxiety, and 6.1% received scores indicating severe anxiety. On the one hand, these figures alone are striking enough. However, when these scores are explored by age and focus on younger music creators i.e. those who are statistically-speaking less well-off, more varied in terms of gender, more likely to reside in the Capital region, more likely to be performers in genres of rhythmic music⁹⁵, and who are more likely to conceptualise music-making as their main career – the findings are even more concerning.

For survey respondents under the age of 40, 68.7% received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety, and 42.8% *demonstrated clinically significant anxiety* (25.8% mild, 31.8% moderate, 11% severe). Interestingly, anxiety was seen to be most acute in the age band 25-29 years. For those in this age band, 78.2% *received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety*. 49.1% of 25–29-year-olds demonstrated clinically significant anxiety, with 15.5% of these scoring for severe, clinically significant anxiety. This is one of the largest effects across the entire sample and represents a very significant finding⁹⁶.

	HADS-A									
	Normal (0-7)		Mild (8-10)		Moderate (11-15)		Severe (16-21)		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Under 40s	131	31.3	108	25.8	133	31.8	46	11	418	100
Over 40s	527	66.1	124	15.6	119	14.9	27	3.4	797	100

Fig. 17. Clinical thresholds for HADS-A (anxiety), under and over 40

	HADS-A									
	Normal (0-7)		Mild (8-10)		Moderate (11-15)		Severe (16-21)		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
18-24	20	31.7	15	23.8	24	38.1	4	6.3	63	100
25-29	24	21.8	32	29.1	37	33.6	17	15.5	110	100
30-35	44	29.7	36	24.3	47	31.8	21	14.2	148	100
36-40	43	44.3	25	25.8	25	25.8	4	4.1	97	100
41-50	134	50.6	52	19.6	62	23.4	17	6.4	265	100
>50	384	74.3	69	13.3	55	10.6	9	1.7	517	100

Fig. 18. Clinical thresholds for HADS-A (anxiety), all age bands

⁹⁵ A group of genres which Henrik Sveidahl (Principal at the Danish Rhythmic Music Conservatory) in an op-ed in the Danish newspaper Politiken (2023) has suggested has been considered “the proletariat of the arts” [kunsternes proletariat] and afforded significantly lower status than genres such as classical or jazz.

⁹⁶ $\chi^2 [15, n=1200]=207.50, p=.000, V=.24$.

Gender is also a significant variable⁹⁷. For female respondents, 65.4% received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety, of which 41.2% reached the level of clinical significance, compared to 39.1% for men (females: 24.3% mild, 27.6% moderate, 13.6% severe | males: 17.5% mild, 18.1% moderate, 3.5% severe). As only 1.5% of the total respondents to the survey were non-binary, wider inferences regarding anxiety levels in this group are impossible. The numbers are, however, notable. 94.4% of non-binary respondents received scores indicating abnormal levels of anxiety with 72.2% reaching the threshold of clinical significance – 22.2% mild, 44.4% moderate, and 27.8% scoring in the severe range. These findings indicate that more research is merited amongst this demographic.

	HADS-A									
	Normal (0-7)		Mild (8-10)		Moderate (11-15)		Severe (16-21)		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	552	60.9	159	17.5	164	18.1	32	3.5	907	100
Female	94	34.6	66	24.3	75	27.6	37	13.6	272	100
Non-binary	1	5.6	4	22.2	8	44.4	5	27.8	18	100

Fig. 19. Clinical thresholds for HADS-A (anxiety), by gender

This data clearly demonstrates a significant difference in incidences of anxiety by age and gender. However, as suggested by findings from Scandinavia (which are mirrored internationally, too), age, gender and, notably, precarious work⁹⁸ - which of course, music is - are *all* risk factors for the development of anxiety, and thus, figures like this may perhaps be unsurprising. In this respect, it was important to perform analysis to examine the impact of *career musicianship* as a key variable. That is, in looking at the data might we be able to infer that *the career as a music creator* is important as a factor to explain these high levels of anxiety, as opposed to simply respondents' age or gender or income, for example?

In order to explore this, the entire sample was split into two categories. The first were those whom, across the entire survey, scored 'normal' levels of anxiety, and the second were those who scored 'abnormal' levels of anxiety i.e. receiving a score in the mild, moderate or severe range. These groups were then compared to how respondents had responded to the question: 'Do you consider music to be your main/primary career?'. Comparing this data in such a way revealed that of those respondents who can be categorised as having abnormal anxiety, a large majority - 61% - considered music as their main career. In contrast, of those respondents who can be categorised as having normal anxiety, only 47.7% saw music making as their main career. In other words, those who saw music as their main career were more likely to have an abnormal level of anxiety than those who did not.

We can see this when we look at these figures another way too. Of those respondents with abnormal anxiety, 26.5% did not see music as their career, but of those respondents with normal anxiety, 41.8% did not see music as their main career. In other words, those who did

⁹⁷ A chi-square test of association showed a significant relationship of *medium* effect between gender and clinical HADS-A score category ($X^2 [6, n=1197]=102.08, p=.000, V=.21$). The scores of females and non-binary individuals were *less* likely than those of males to appear in the normal category, and *more* likely to appear in the mild, moderate and severe categories. The proportions of non-binary individuals in the moderate and severe categories was particularly high.

⁹⁸ Bernhard-Oettel et al. (2005); Byrne et al. (2004); Canivet et al. (2016); Elovainio et al. (2010); Ervasti et al. (2014); Hammarstrom et al. (2011); Hanson et al. (2015); Hellgren & Sverke (2003); Hellgren et al. (1999); Jonsson et al. (2021); Liukkonen et al. (2004); Rugulies et al. (2006; 2010); Storseth (2006); Virtanen et al. (2011); Vulkan et al. (2015); Waernerlund & Gustavsson (2011)

not see music as their main career were more likely to have normal levels of anxiety. Accordingly, this relationship – between self-perceived career status and HADS-A anxiety – is statistically significant⁹⁹. This suggests, therefore, that it is those who conceptualise music-making as their main career for whom anxiety is a risk factor i.e. it is not that music-making attracts those who are anxious, for example, given that anxiety is far less prevalent amongst those who do not see music creation as their career. This data suggests that *the career itself is a risk factor* for anxiety.

	HADS-A NORMAL		HADS-A MMS	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	314	47.7	341	61
No	275	41.8	148	26.5
Don't know	69	10.5	70	12.5
Total	658	100	559	100
Missing	3		0	

Fig. 20. Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scales for Anxiety (Normal vs Mild/Moderate/Severe) against responses to the question: Do you consider music to be your main/primary career?

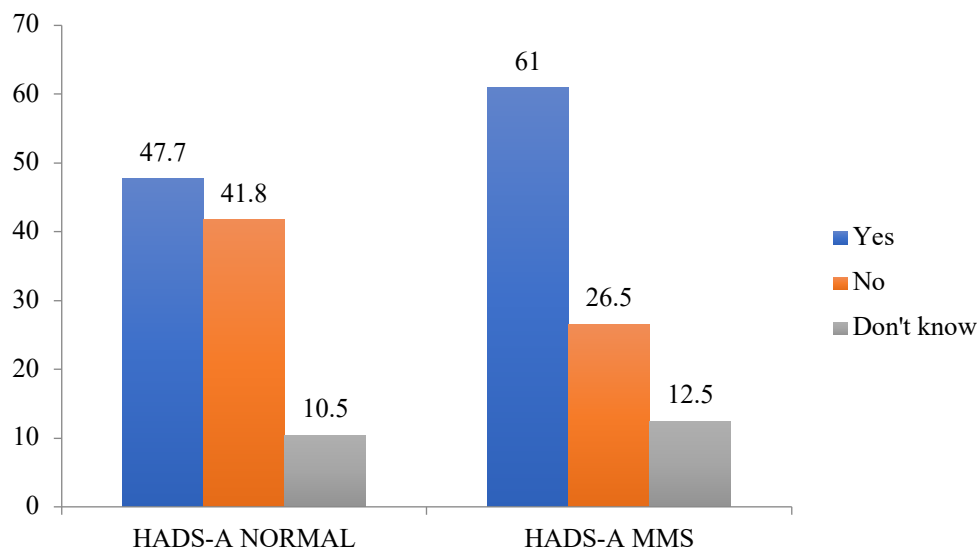


Fig. 21. Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scales for Anxiety (Normal vs Mild/Moderate/Severe) against responses to the question: Do you consider music to be your main/primary career? [2]

3.3.2. Danish Music Creators and Depression

Overall, amongst the entire sample, depression was notably less prevalent than anxiety. Raw descriptive scores suggest that 22.1% of respondents received scores indicating abnormal levels of depression i.e. depression outside of the normal range, with 7.97% reaching the threshold of clinical significance. 14.2% received scores indicating mild depression, 6.87% received scores indicating moderate depression, and 1.1% received scores indicating severe depression. However, again, age is a significant variable here: for survey respondents under the age of 40, 31.6% received scores indicating abnormal levels of

⁹⁹ A chi-square test of association showed a significant relationship of *small* effect between HADS-A normal/abnormal score category and self-perceived career status ($X^2[2, n=1217]=31.41, p=.000, V=.16$).

depression, with 12.7% reaching the threshold of clinical significance (18.9% mild, 11.7% mild, 1% severe).

Analysis showed significant relationships between age category and score category on both measures: over 40s were more likely than under 40s to achieve scores in the “normal” bracket on *both* the HADS-A¹⁰⁰ (seen in Fig.15 above) *and* the HADS-D¹⁰¹ (seen in Fig.22 below). Younger participants’ scores on measures of anxiety were more likely to appear in the ‘mild’, ‘moderate’, or ‘severe’ categories, and in the ‘mild’ or ‘moderate’ categories for depression. Gender was found to be significant, although the effect was not as strong, when analysing depression¹⁰².

	HADS-D									
	Normal (0-7)		Mild (8-10)		Moderate (11-15)		Severe (16-21)		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Under 40s	282	68.4	78	18.9	48	11.7	4	1	412	100
Over 40s	649	82.8	92	11.7	34	4.3	9	1.1	784	100

Fig. 22. Clinical thresholds for HADS-D (depression), by age

Interestingly, as per the analysis of those scoring abnormal levels of anxiety, of those respondents who can be categorised as having abnormal depression, 58.1% of these considered music as their main career. However, unlike the analysis earlier for anxiety, this relationship was *not* found to be statistically significant¹⁰³. This means that, in the context of this survey sample, it is reasonable to infer that while career musicianship does seem to be making young, career-orientated respondents anxious, it is not necessarily making them depressed. This is interesting and represents a fascinating avenue to explore in future research.

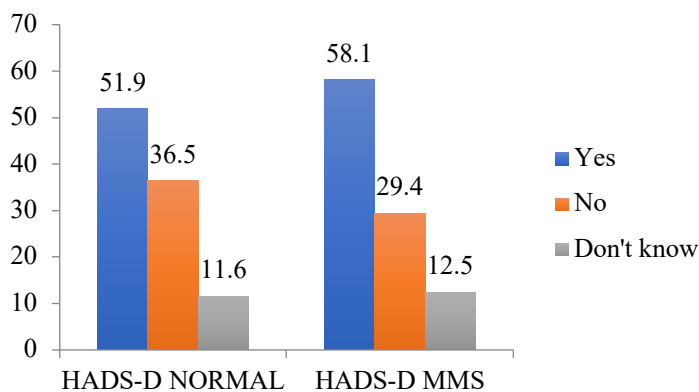


Fig. 23. Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scales for Depression (Normal vs Mild/Moderate Severe) against responses to the question: Do you consider music to be your main/primary career?

¹⁰⁰ $\chi^2 [3, n=1215]=140.61, p=.001$

¹⁰¹ $\chi^2 [3, n= 1196]=38.12, p=.000$.

¹⁰² A chi-square test of association showed a significant relationship of *small* effect between gender and clinical HADS-D score category ($\chi^2 [6, n=1179]=14.05, p=.029, V=.08$). The scores of the female and non-binary groups were less likely than those of males to appear in the normal category, and more likely to appear in the other three categories. The proportion of non-binary individuals in these categories was higher than those of the other two groups.

¹⁰³ A chi-square test of association showed the relationship between HADS-D normal/abnormal score category and self-perceived career status was *not* significant ($\chi^2 [2, n=1199]=4.58, p=.101, V=.06$).

4. Conclusions

How might the findings of this wide-ranging survey be synthesised? The data analysed above represents the largest ever study of musicians' and music creators' mental health and wellbeing in Denmark and more widely in Scandinavia, and it shows music creators to be deeply divided, enormously unequal, and often profoundly struggling in terms of their subjective wellbeing and mental health in huge numbers. Crucially, it highlights the key role played by music as a *career* as being a significantly negative impacting factor. This is in line with all international evidence on the subject, but is here, for the first time in Denmark, demonstrated using international measures to articulate the size and scale of the problem. The survey data paints a picture of music creation being divided between those for whom music is primarily an act of playing, enjoying, and creating, contrasted with those for whom music creation has a *career orientation*¹⁰⁴. For this latter group, once again we can see huge inequalities and divisions in terms of incomes earned, and, interestingly, that income alone is not the central or even core determinant of whether a music creator *sees themselves* as a career musician. The other key division was that of age, where the data showed an older, wealthier male demographic with significantly higher levels of subjective wellbeing and lower scores for anxiety. This group were less likely to see music as their main career and more likely to be working in genres such as classical and jazz. This group stands in sharp and stark contrast to a young musical workforce, working in genres such as indie, hip hop, R&B, and others who very much see music making as their main career despite it often earning them very little money, for whom levels of subjective wellbeing are significantly lower and for whom levels of anxiety are significantly higher. The final key division was that of gender, where younger female music creators, working across a highly diverse range of *all* genres, and more likely to earn almost all of their annual income from music, are struggling with low levels of wellbeing and high levels of anxiety.

This data is crucial in highlighting where the focus of research going forward needs to be targeted. It is imperative that we better understand the needs and wants of the most at-risk groups identified in this report in the context of a new and developing mental health intervention landscape both in Denmark and around the world. What do those whom this report has identified as struggling in very real and tangible ways – principally, young career-oriented music creators - want and need? Indeed, what does the evidence tell us about what might 'work' for this at-risk group whom the data shows are not just *feeling* anxious but are often experiencing high levels of demonstrable and for some *clinically significant* anxiety, and indeed what does 'working' in the context of mental health interventions *mean*? How is it being measured, by whom, and indeed how *should* or *could* it be measured? In short, this survey data reveals a highly at-risk population in the context of a country famed for high levels of wellbeing. The next question to be addressed is: how can we help these identified groups? The data and the evidence base are now clear for all to see, and much of it is highly alarming. Thus, what should the next steps for mental health in the Danish music industry be? This will be the focus of subsequent reports.

¹⁰⁴ This same division has been observed in the work of Bonde et al. (2018), as well as Loveday et al. (2023), Musgrave (2023b), and reflected in Grape et al. (2022), and Fancourt et al. (2015).

Appendix A: Methodology and Survey Design

It is important to note that 83% of respondents to this survey were members of Koda, which is to be expected given that this organisation represented the primary method of survey circulation. However, in this context, and given this high response rate from their membership, it is crucial to acknowledge information regarding Koda's membership as this directly informs the nature of our survey responses. Koda is a Danish collective management organisation with a large member base comprising composers and songwriters. Further, Koda represents one member of the wider Danish Partnership for Sustainable Development in Music. According to the organisations' *Gender Statistics Report 2023*, membership of Koda at this time was 80% male and 20% female – a huge skewing which was indeed reflected in our survey respondents. Likewise, Koda's membership is heavily skewed towards older music creators; as of 2020, 27% of the organisations' members were between 40-49 years old (the largest age group represented amongst their membership), and the organisation has more members over the age of 40 than under the age of 40. Again, this demographic bias is reflected in our survey respondents, and informed how we analysed our data.

Appendix B: Comparing our survey data with data in the *World Happiness Report*

It is important that we qualify and contextualise the comparison we have made above between our survey respondents and the *World Happiness Report*. The *World Happiness Report* score of 7.586 for Denmark is an average score based on data collected in 2020 (1002 respondents), 2021 (1006 respondents) and 2022 (1000 respondents) (n=3008). This is undertaken as part of the Gallup World Poll. Whilst we asked our respondents an identically worded question there are, however, important differences it is crucial to acknowledge. Firstly, our sample size (n=1267, who completed this particular question in full) is of course smaller than that of Gallup. Secondly, our data is a snapshot of music creators in Denmark in 2023, whereas Gallup use a three-year average. Thirdly, the Gallup score is weighted so as to be nationally representative, whereas our sample cannot reasonably be said to be representative of all music creators in Denmark. However, it is not methodologically possible to obtain a nationally representative sample of music creators in Denmark given the relative paucity of data on musician numbers and the absence of a database as such. It is also crucial to note that our sample likely reflects a self-selection bias in that those with strong feelings or experiences around mental health and wellbeing are more likely to have taken part. Finally, exploratory analyses (e.g. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests) indicated that the data for both the under 40s and over 40s Cantril scores were abnormally distributed. This means that mean scores should be treated with caution as they may be less representative of groups, and also influences the choice of inferential statistical tests employed to undertake group comparisons. For abnormally distributed data, it is generally recommended that less powerful non-parametric tests, which make no assumption regarding the normality of distributions, are employed. However, due to the comparatively large survey sample, and the fact that larger samples are generally considered more robust to violations of the assumption of normality, it was decided to use parametric tests – in this case one-sample and independent samples t-tests - to undertake these group comparisons. These are the statistics reported in the relevant section. Equivalent non-parametric analyses (one-sample Wilcoxon signed rank and Mann-Whitney U tests) conducted on the data in question were significant at the same levels - with comparable effect sizes – as the parametric analyses.

Appendix C: Comparing our survey data with data from *In the Shadow of Happiness*

The Nordic Council of Ministers/The Happiness Research Institute report *In the Shadow of Happiness* (ITSOH) is based on data taken from the Danish population collected by the European Social Survey (ESS) between 2012 and 2014. This includes persons 15 years of age or older who are resident in Denmark whereas our survey concerned those 18 years of age or older. This is of course an important difference to emphasise given data which highlights age as being a key risk factor for mental health and wellbeing, suggesting ITSOH captured a range of younger people who might be classified as suffering or struggling. However, this in fact means that the numbers in ITSOH which can be compared with our sample (that is, those over the age of 18) are likely *higher* given the inclusion of adolescents which might be increasing their suggested percentages of struggling/suffering and lowering their suggested percentage of thriving, suggesting (by this metric at least) that our comparison might be too conservative. It is important to note too, that ITSOH was based on a sample size of 2,250 which is larger than ours (n=1267 who answered the question on Cantril's ladder). Crucially, of course, their data was collected before the onset of coronavirus. On the one hand, one would intuitively suspect that the coronavirus epidemic would drastically change the ways in which subjective wellbeing was reported in population surveys, damaging the extent which comparisons were reasonable. However, data from Gallup suggests that subjective wellbeing evaluations in Denmark have remained remarkably stable over this time period. In their statistical appendix to the 2023 report, Gallup notes on their trajectory plots that the wider population of Denmark's overall Cantril's ladder score never dropped below a score of 7 between 2008 and 2022 – even during the Covid-19 years (2020-2022) (Fig. 2, seen on page 12). This is numerically calculated by suggesting that between 2008 and 2022, Denmark's 'Change in Happiness' (Fig. 10, seen on page 26) was one of the smallest in the world (a change of -0.160). In this sense, when the authors of *In the Shadow of Happiness* note: "In the five Nordic countries it is the norm for people to report 7, 8 or 9 when evaluating life satisfaction on a scale from 0 to 10. A value of less than 7 can therefore be seen as a deviation" (Andreasson and Birkjær, 2018: 8), this is indeed reflected in long term data from Gallup *even during the coronavirus epidemic*. This also reaffirms that the scores of our survey respondents do indeed represent a 'deviation'. In this respect, one might reasonably infer that the data from *In the Shadow of Happiness* reflecting suffering, struggling and thriving are likely to be stable too. On the other hand however, whilst Gallup have not publicly published their own data breakdown of suffering/struggling/thriving since 2010, they did report in 2014 that the percentage of Danes classified as 'Thriving' had dropped from 83% in 2006 to 67% in 2014 (significantly lower than ITSOH's score for 'Thriving' of 91.9%), albeit based on a higher threshold of scoring than that used in the Nordic-specific ITSOH. On balance, we cannot therefore claim that our struggling/suffering/thriving comparators are a perfect like-for-like benchmark compared to the wider Danish population, and thus should be read as indicative numbers.

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