A photograph of two acrobats performing a balancing act. One acrobat, wearing a blue leotard and a blue hood, stands with their back to the camera, supporting another acrobat on their shoulders. The second acrobat, wearing a red leotard and a red hood, is in a dynamic, inverted pose with one arm raised and legs spread wide. The background is a textured, reddish-brown wall.

Arts engagement in England 2008/09

Findings from the *Taking part* survey

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February 2010

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1 Introduction

1 In-depth analyses of 2005/06 data include an examination of the socio-demographic factors that affect arts engagement: Bunting, Catherine, Chan, Tak Wing, Goldthorpe, John, Keaney, Emily, and Oskala, Anni, *From indifference to enthusiasm: patterns of arts attendance in England*, Arts Council England, 2008, available at www.artscouncil.org.uk/takingpart, and *Arts audiences: insight*, Arts Council England, 2008, available at www.artscouncil.org.uk/audienceinsight, a detailed segmentation of English adults into arts engager types.

2 Oskala, Anni, and Bunting, Catherine, *Arts engagement in England from 2005/06 to 2007/08: findings from the first three years of the Taking part survey*, Arts Council England, 2009, available at www.artscouncil.org.uk/takingpart

Arts Council England is committed to getting great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives. Having a strong evidence base on the current patterns of engagement and non-engagement in the arts, and how people think and feel about the arts, is crucial to our work to achieve this ambition.

In recent years, we have gained a lot of information about arts engagement patterns from *Taking part*, a large-scale survey of cultural participation among adults in England that has been running since 2005. To date we have conducted extensive analysis of the first full year of data from 2005/06¹, and recently reported on trends in arts engagement over the three-year period 2005/06–2007/08.²

The latest *Taking part* dataset from 2008/09 is now available. This report is our first step in exploring the most recent statistics on arts engagement in England based on the 2008/09 dataset. Chapter 2 sets out the methodology of the *Taking part* survey. In chapter 3 we report on overall levels of arts engagement in England and explore how engagement varies by demographic subgroup. In chapter 4 we examine attendance at and participation in individual artforms. Chapter 5 explores how people rate their arts experiences, including the Arts Council's measure of the proportion of people who rate their experiences as 'high quality'. In chapter 6 we examine broad attitudes to the arts before going on to present some conclusions in chapter 7.

Full data on the levels and demographic breakdown of overall engagement, attendance and participation, perceptions of quality and attitudes to the arts are provided in the tables in Appendix 1, along with confidence intervals.

2 Methodology

3 Categories added into the survey include attendance at a public art display or installation and participation in book clubs, carnival, street arts and circus activities. In addition, attendance at ‘street arts or circus (not animals)’ was divided into two separate questions about attendance at ‘street arts’ and attendance at ‘circus (not animals)’. Similarly, ‘other theatre performances (for example musicals, pantomime)’ was divided into two separate questions on ‘musicals’ and ‘pantomime’. In addition, in years 1–3 of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate which arts events and activities they had engaged in *in their leisure time or as part of their voluntary work*. In 2008/09, however, people were first asked to indicate which activities they had done overall, and were then asked whether they had done the activities in their own time, for paid work, for academic study or as part of voluntary work.

2.1 About the *Taking part* survey

Taking part is a continuous survey of adults in England that has been running since 2005. It is commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in partnership with Arts Council England, Sport England, English Heritage and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. Every year it collects information from thousands of adults in England (aged 16 and over) in face-to-face interviews. In 2008/09 the survey had a sample of 14,452 people, providing a robust and statistically powerful dataset. The survey fieldwork is conducted by BMRB Social Research to high industry standards.

Respondents are asked about their engagement in culture, leisure and sport in the 12 months prior to interview. The questions cover their attendance at a wide variety of arts events, museums, galleries, libraries and heritage sites, and their participation in creative activities and sport. The survey also asks about motivations and barriers to cultural attendance and participation, and collects a large quantity of demographic information such as each respondent’s age, occupation, income, health and ethnicity.

In 2008/09 some additions and changes were made to the arts event and activity categories surveyed in *Taking part* and the question format was also slightly changed.³ These small changes have improved the scope and accuracy of the questionnaire. However, the changes mean that the ‘overall arts attendance’ and ‘overall arts participation’ variables from 2008/09 are not directly comparable to the aggregate attendance and participation figures from the previous years of the survey reported elsewhere.

2.2 Understanding the figures in this report

All charts and tables in the report present estimates along with a range that indicates the statistical margin of error for each estimate (also known as the 95 per cent confidence interval). We can be 95 per cent confident that the true percentage among the whole population falls within this range, assuming no bias in the sample. Each percentage estimate cited is the midpoint along the range. The actual figure in the population is most likely to be around the middle

4 Since this report was produced, DCMS has updated the weighting it uses to calculate estimates from *Taking part*. This was done in order to reflect updated population estimates. This small change accounts for any discrepancies between the figures quoted in this report and those reported by DCMS. See www.culture.gov.uk/images/research/PSA21_Technical_Note_Rolling_annual_report.pdf for more details of this change.

of the range, but it could be at either end. All percentages are weighted to be representative of the adult population in England.⁴

When making comparisons, we indicate whether the differences between any two figures are 'statistically significant'. Only statistically significant differences between estimates can be considered to be an indication of actual differences in the population. We have run our statistical tests at the 95 per cent confidence level, which means that the probability of any observed significant changes having happened by chance is low (one in 20). Please note that particularly when working with a large and statistically powerful dataset, a difference can be statistically significant without being very large in actual magnitude or significant in any practical or policy terms.

For ease of reference, all figures provided in the main body of the report are also included in summary tables in Appendix 1. The summary tables also show the sample sizes for each subgroup in the population in the 2008/09 dataset.

3 Overall levels of arts engagement

3.1 The Arts Council's overall engagement measure

The Taking part survey asks people about their engagement in 41 different categories of arts event and activity (attendance at 20 arts events and participation in 21 arts activities). The Arts Council aims to increase overall engagement in the arts and for the period 2008–11 we track progress using an aggregate measure of both attendance and participation.

To track overall engagement, the Arts Council calculates the proportion of people who engage in the arts **at least three times a year**, whether through attending some of the 20 arts events, participating in some of the 21 arts activities, or a mixture of both. Our measure takes into account the frequency of engagement: 'three or more' arts engagements can be achieved either by engaging in just one event/activity three or more times (for example going to the theatre three times a year), or by engaging in two or more events/

activities at a combined frequency of at least three times (for example playing a musical instrument twice and going to a craft exhibition once). To count towards this measure engagement must be for leisure or voluntary purposes, not for paid or academic work. Events and activities included in this 'three or more' measure are shown below.

Using this measure of overall arts engagement, through either attendance or participation, the *Taking part* survey tells us that in 2008/09 an estimated three-fifths (60 per cent) of adults in England had engaged in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months. A further nine per cent had engaged in the arts only once, and seven

Events and activities included in the 'three or more' measure

Events

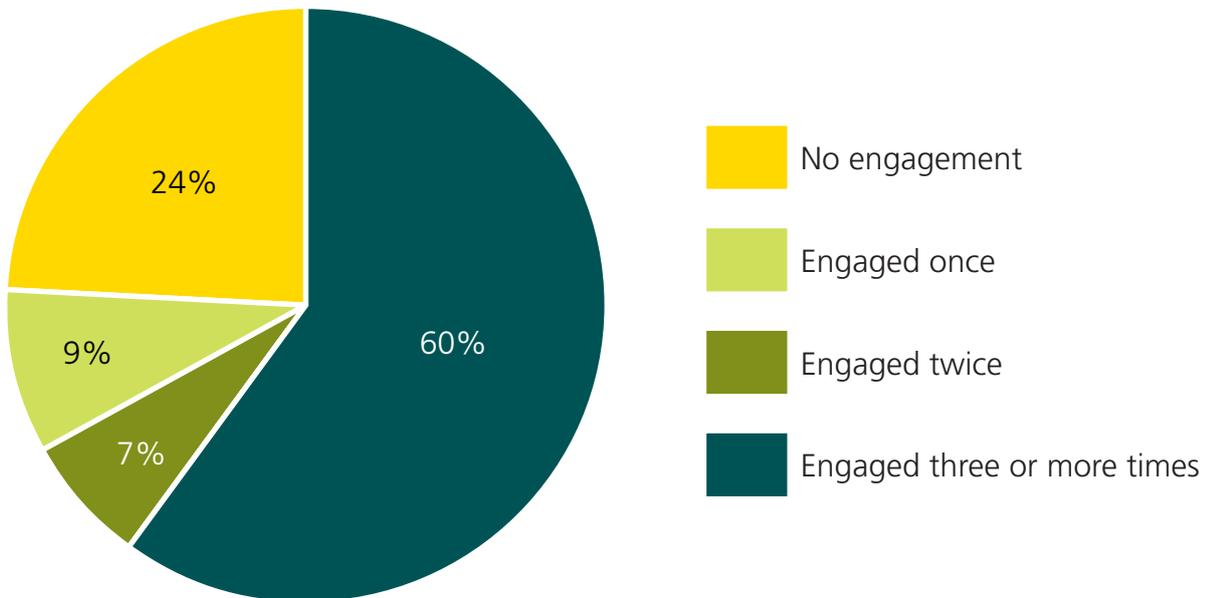
- Art/photography/sculpture exhibition
- Craft exhibition
- Public art display or installation
- Event including video/electronic art
- Event connected with books/writing
- Street arts
- Circus (not animals)
- Carnival
- Culturally-specific festival (eg Mela)
- Play/drama
- Pantomime
- Musical
- Opera/opera
- Classical music performance
- Jazz performance
- Other live music event
- Ballet
- Contemporary dance
- African/South Asian/Chinese dance
- Other live dance event

Activities

- Ballet
- Other dance (not for fitness)
- Singing to an audience
- Playing an instrument to an audience
- Playing an instrument for own pleasure
- Writing music
- Rehearsing/performing in a play/drama
- Rehearsing/performing in an opera/musical theatre
- Taken part in a carnival
- Taken part in street arts
- Learned or practised circus skills
- Painting, drawing etc
- Photography
- Making films or videos
- Using a computer to create artworks/animation
- Textile crafts
- Wood crafts
- Other crafts (eg pottery, jewellery)
- Writing stories or plays
- Writing poetry
- Being a member of a book club

per cent twice. Just under a quarter (24 per cent) of adults in England had not engaged in the arts at all in the past 12 months (Figure 1).⁵

Figure 1: Overall levels of arts engagement in the past 12 months, England, 2008/09



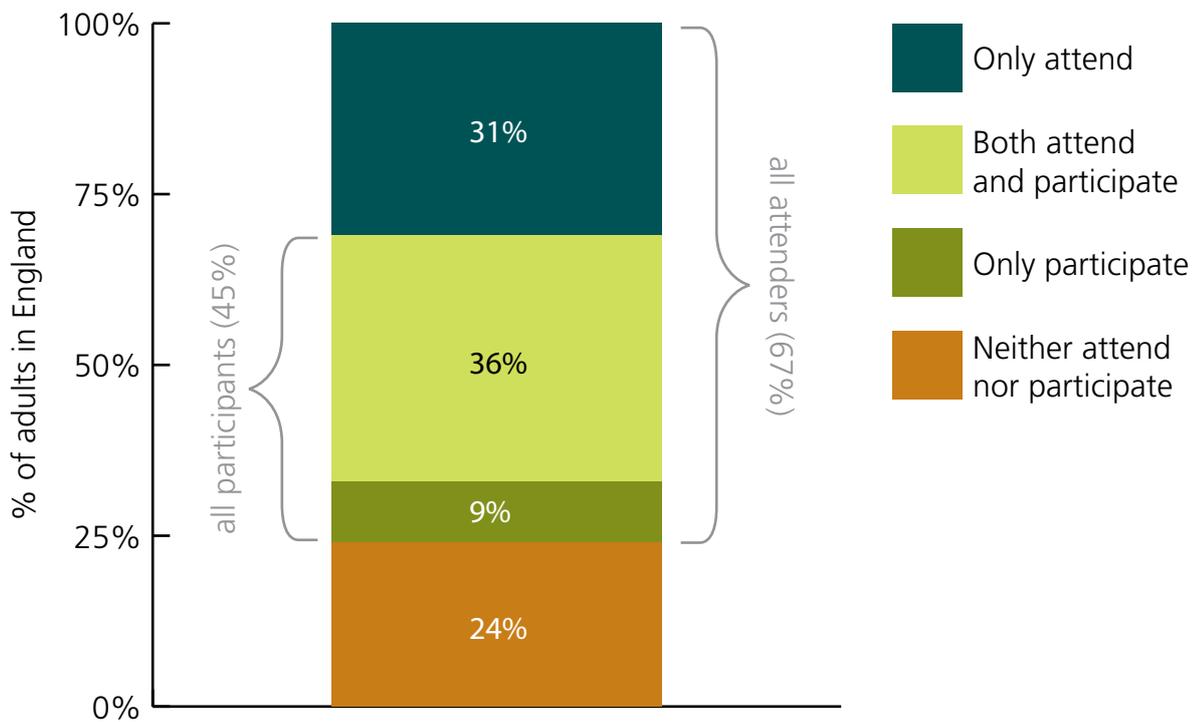
⁵ All figures discussed in this section are provided in full, along with confidence intervals, in Appendix 1.

As well as measuring overall engagement, we also calculate aggregate measures for overall attendance – whether people have gone to at least one of the 20 arts events listed above at least once in the past 12 months – and overall participation – whether people have done at least one of the 21 listed arts activities at least once in the past 12 months.

In 2008/09 two-thirds (67 per cent) of adults in England had gone to at least one of the 20 arts events surveyed in *Taking part* in the past 12 months, and nearly half (45 per cent) had participated in at least one of the 21 arts activities.

Figure 2 illustrates the overlap of attendance and participation. Most people who participate also attend the arts; and over half of those who attend also participate in the arts.

Figure 2: Proportion of adults in England attending and participating in the arts in the past 12 months, England, 2008/09



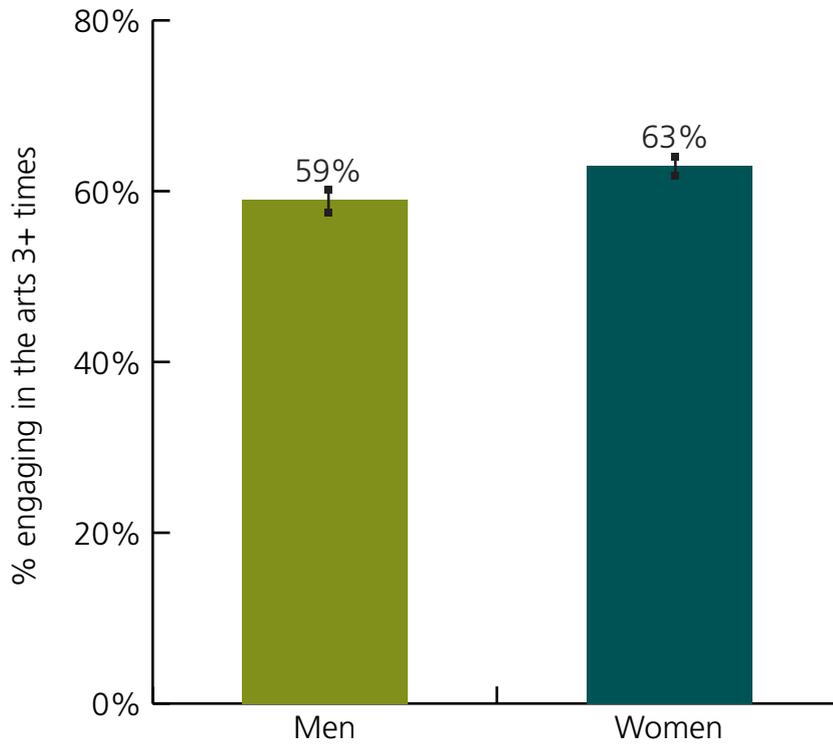
⁶ See Bunting, Catherine, Chan, Tak Wing, Goldthorpe, John, Keaney, Emily, and Oskala, Anni, *From indifference to enthusiasm: patterns of arts attendance in England*, Arts Council England, 2008, available at www.artscouncil.org.uk/takingpart

3.2 Demographic variation in arts engagement

To understand how engagement with the arts might best be increased it is useful to explore how overall engagement varies across key subgroups in the population. We have reported previously on the relative importance of different demographic factors in predicting arts engagement using the 2005/06 *Taking part* dataset.⁶

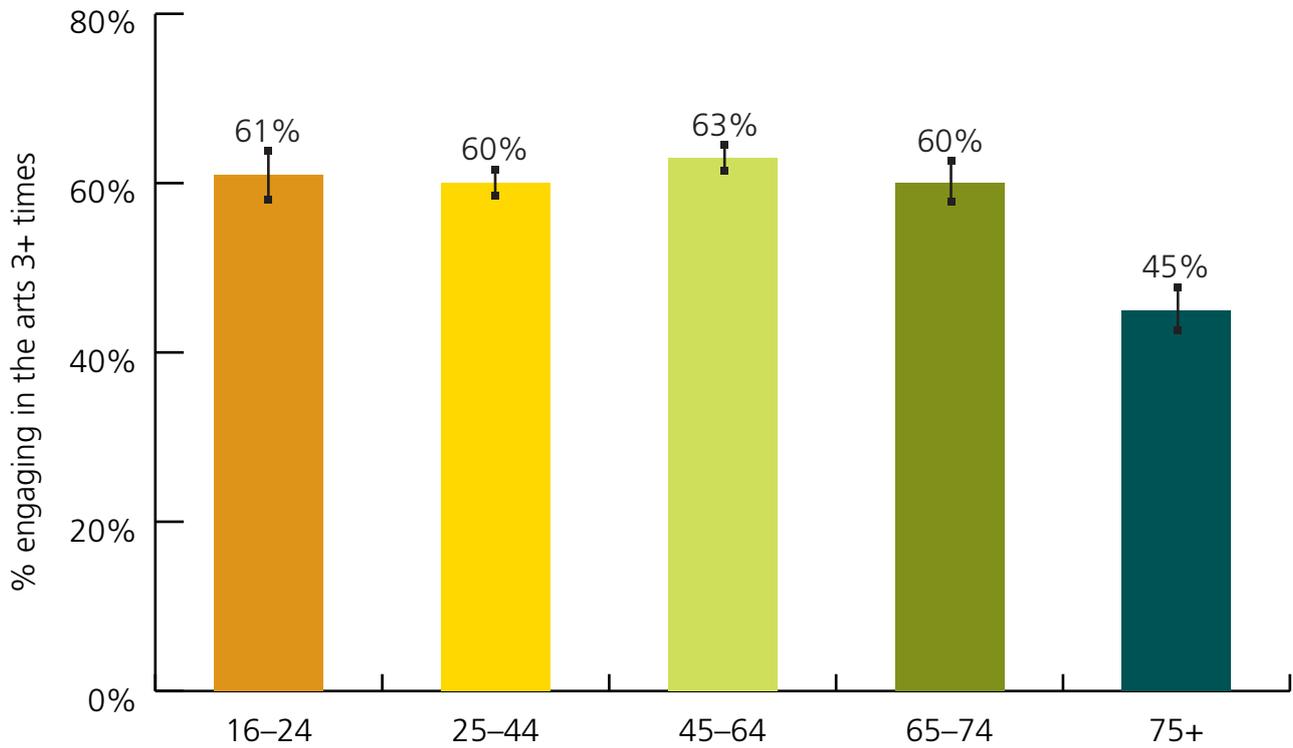
In 2008/09 we find that arts engagement continues to be associated with a number of key factors. We also know that patterns of attendance at arts events by different subgroups can be quite different to patterns of arts participation. In this section we report on attendance and participation data separately where the patterns differ to the overall 'three or more' engagement measure.

Figure 3: *Proportion engaging in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months, by gender, England 2008/09*



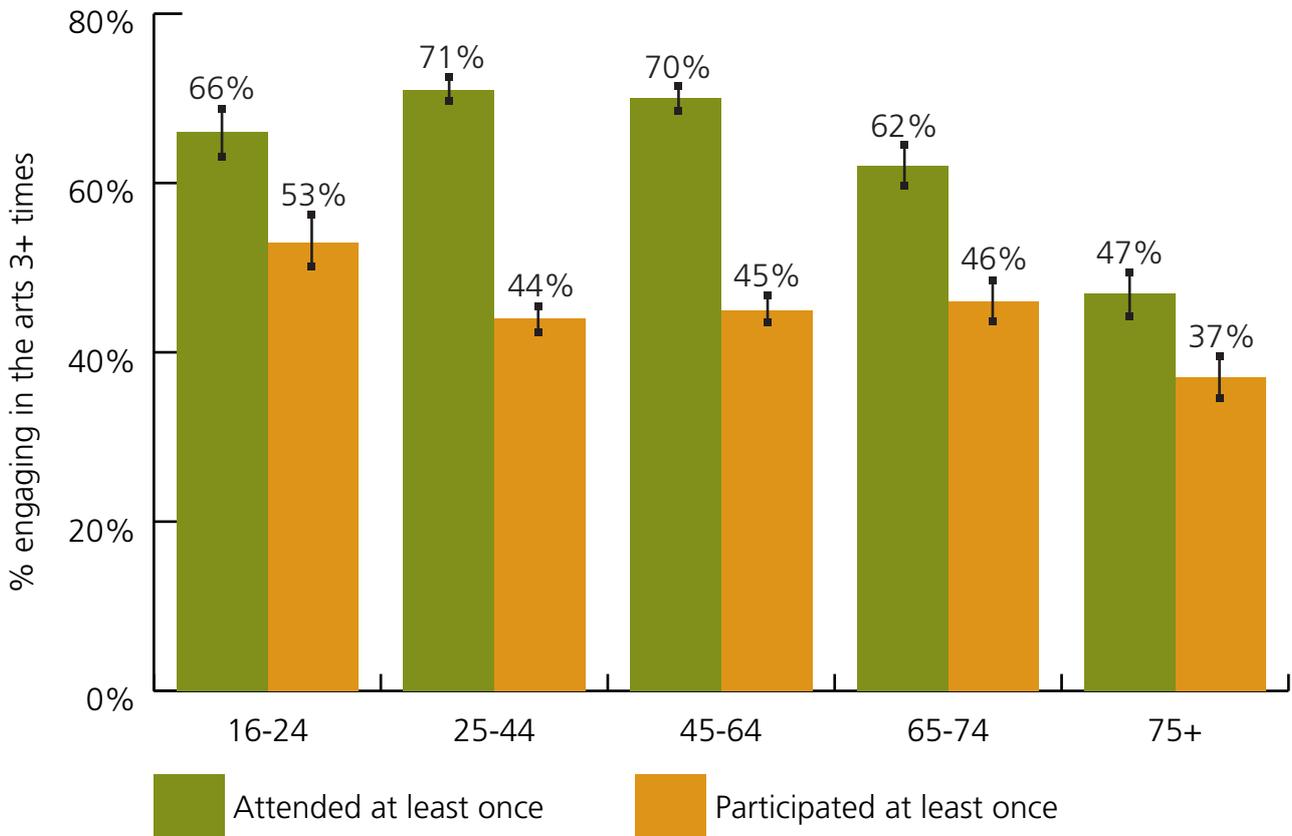
3.2.1 Gender

There is a strong gender pattern. Overall, women are significantly more likely to engage in the arts than men. In 2008/09, 63 per cent of women had engaged in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months, as compared with 56 per cent of men (Figure 3).

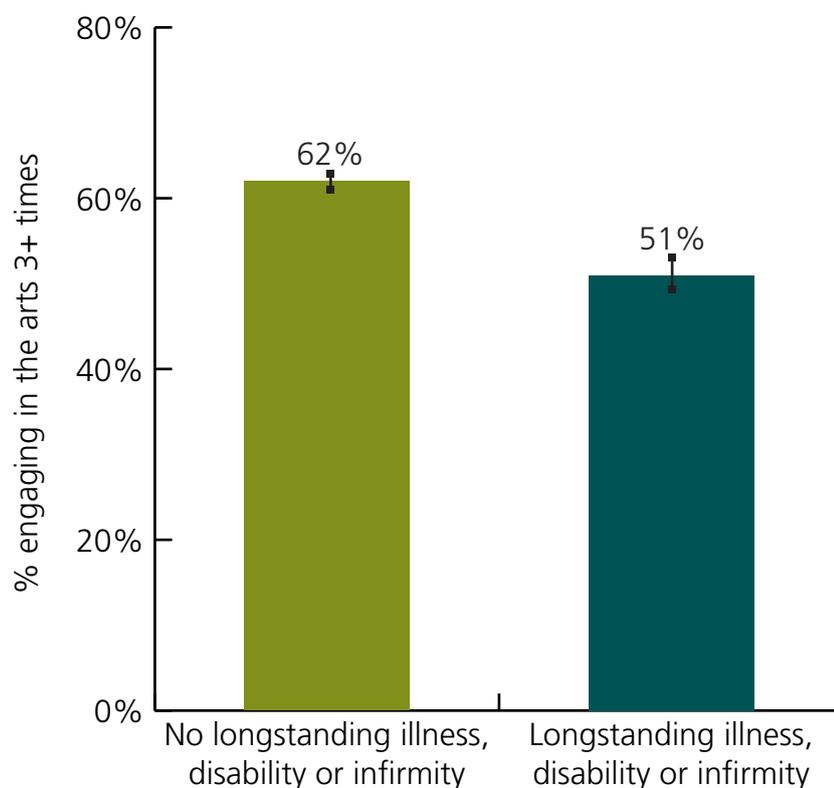
Figure 4: *Proportion engaging in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months, by age group, England 2008/09*

3.2.2 Age group

When we look at arts engagement across the board, there are few age group differences. The only statistically significant age difference in overall arts engagement is that those aged 75 and over are significantly less likely to engage in the arts three or more times a year than those in all other age groups (Figure 4).

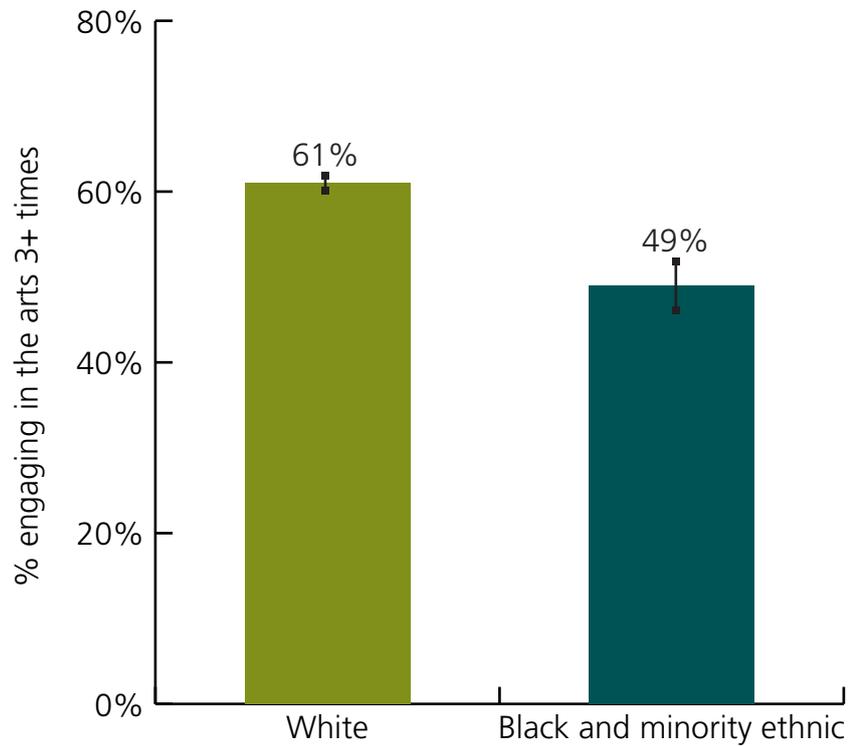
Figure 5: Proportion attending and participating in the arts in the past 12 months by age group, England 2008/09

The pattern is somewhat different when examining arts attendance and participation separately, however, particularly for young adults. Arts attendance is significantly lower among young adults aged 16–24 than among those aged 25–44. The opposite is true for active participation: young adults aged 16–24 have significantly higher rate of participation than those aged 25–44. In fact, young adults have the highest participation rate of all age groups.

Figure 6: *Proportion engaging in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months by disability status, England 2008/09*

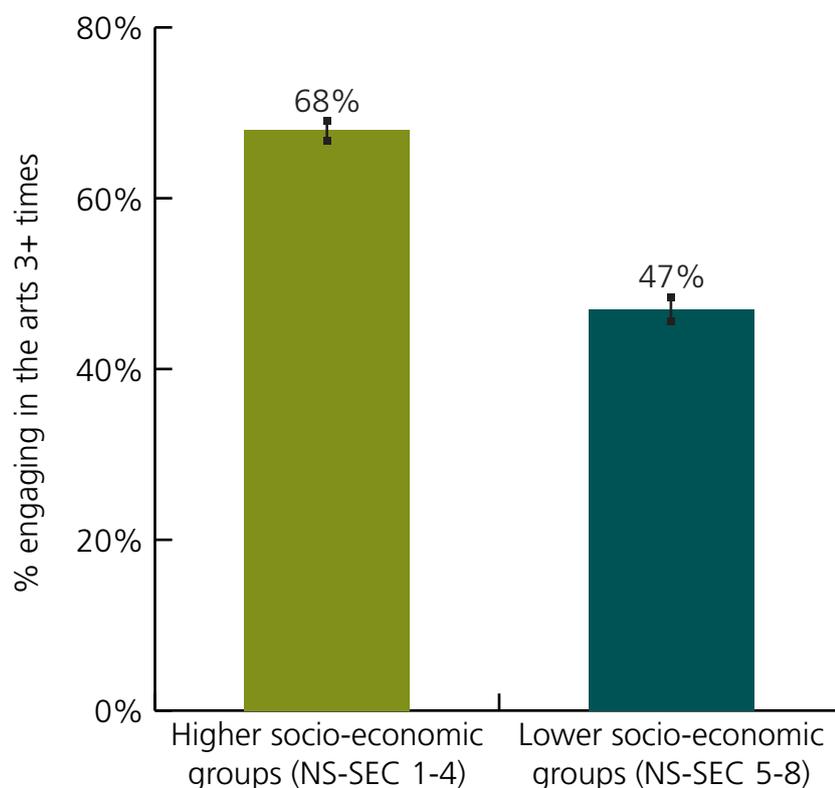
3.2.3 Disability status

Disability status is correlated with arts engagement. Sixty-two per cent of people with no longstanding limiting disability have engaged in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months, as compared with 51 per cent of those who have a longstanding limiting illness, disability or infirmity (Figure 6). The effect of disability status is most marked for arts attendance: there is a 17 percentage point difference between the arts attendance level of those with and without a limiting disability, illness or infirmity (53 and 70 per cent respectively). The difference is lower for arts participation, though still statistically significant: there is a four percentage point difference in arts participation among those with and without a limiting disability, illness or infirmity (42 and 46 per cent respectively).

Figure 7: *Proportion engaging in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months by ethnic group, England 2008/09*

3.2.4 Ethnic group

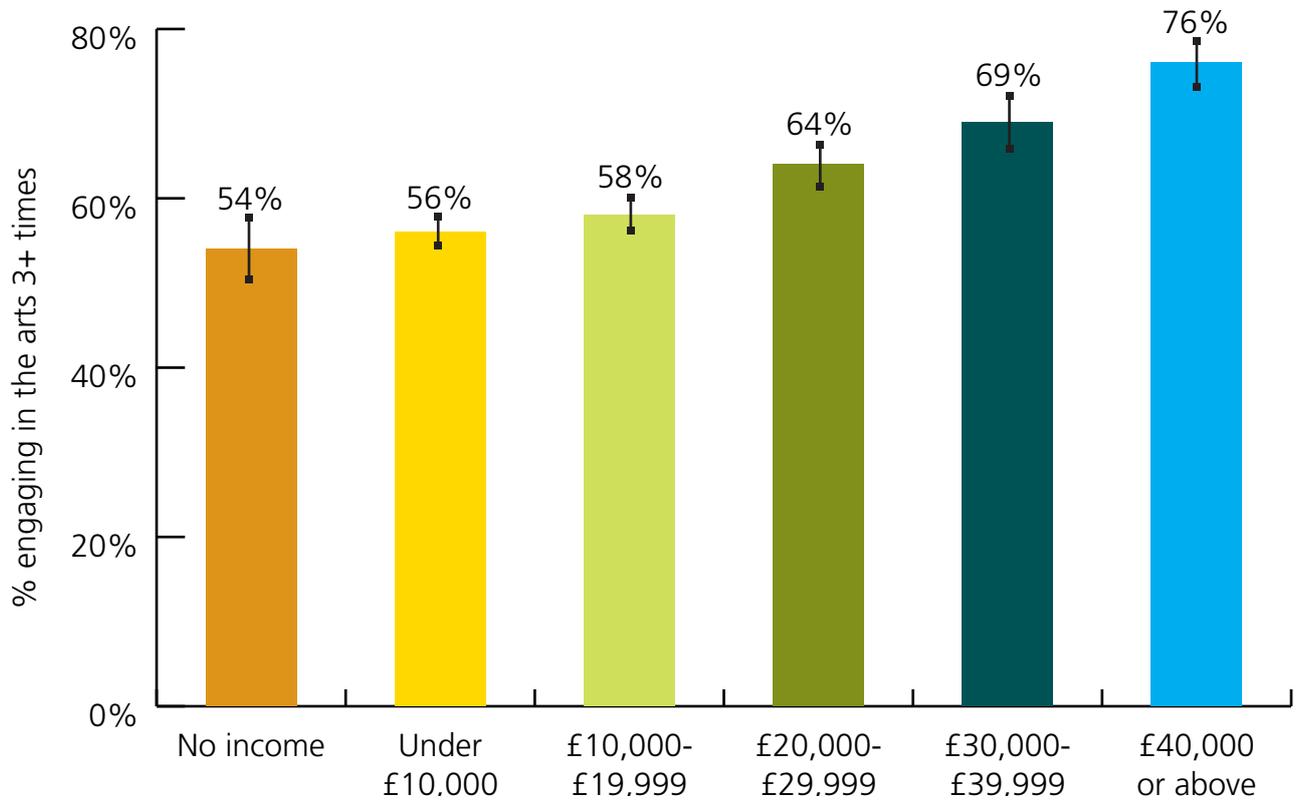
People who define their ethnic group as white are significantly more likely to have engaged in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months (61 per cent) than people from Black and minority ethnic groups (49 per cent) (Figure 7).

Figure 8: *Proportion engaging in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months by social class, England 2008/09*

3.2.5 Socio-economic indicators

We can also observe significant differences along socio-economic lines by examining how arts engagement varies by different indicators of socio-economic status, including the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC), personal income per annum and education level.

Starting with social class, 68 per cent of people from higher socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 1–4) have engaged in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months (Figure 8). This is 21 percentage points higher than the arts engagement level among those from lower socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 5–8), at 47 per cent. The difference is statistically significant.

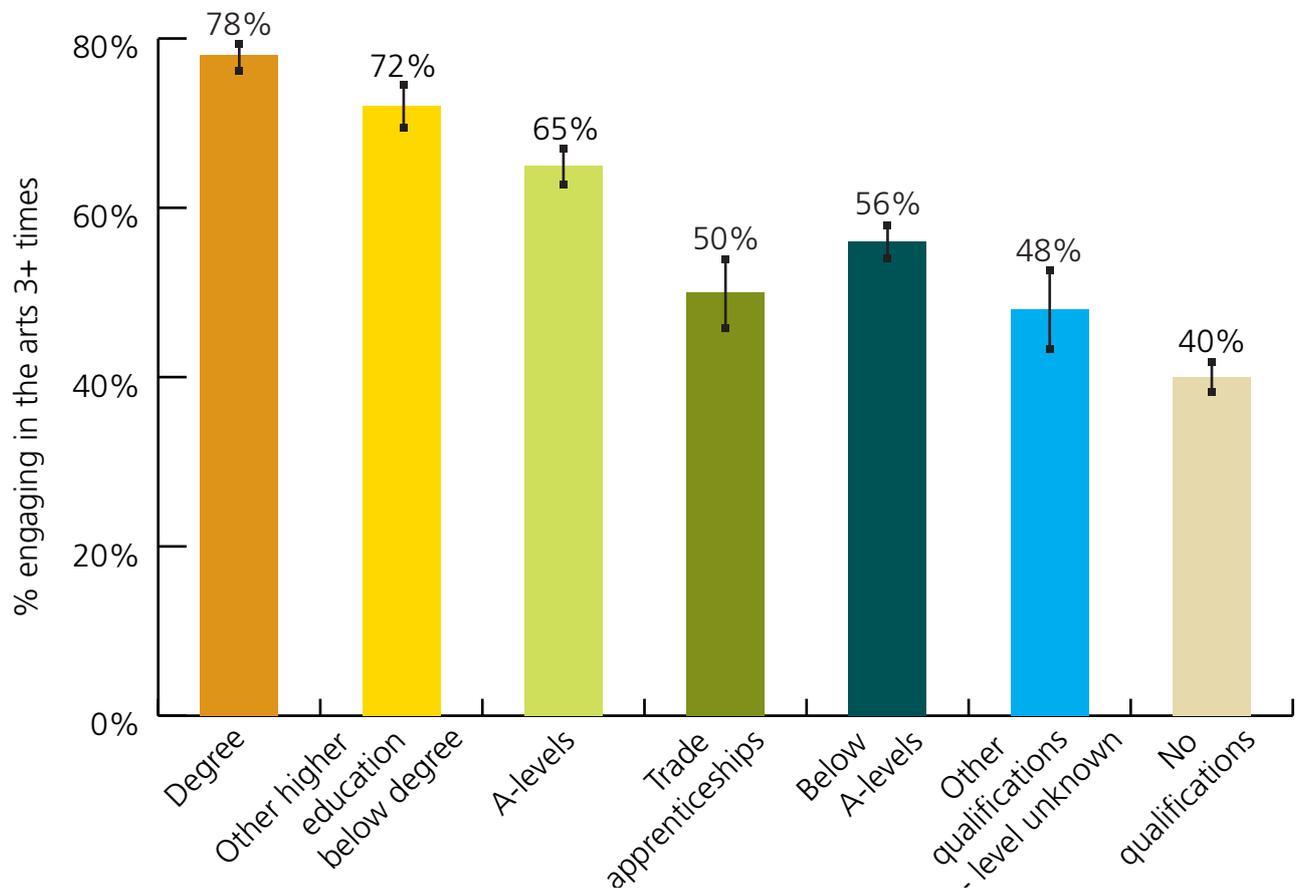
Figure 9: Proportion engaging in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months by income group, England 2008/09

There is also a correlation between personal income per annum and arts engagement (Figure 9). Those earning over £20,000 a year are significantly more likely to engage in the arts than those earning less than £20,000, and each higher income bracket above £20,000 is increasingly more likely to engage.

Figure 10: Proportion attending and participating in the arts in the past 12 months, by income group, England 2008/09

Here the patterns for arts attendance and participation are different. There is a consistent positive correlation between arts attendance and income, with a 26 percentage point difference in attendance between the lowest and the highest income bracket. Active participation, however, is fairly constant across the income range, only rising a few percentage points at the highest income brackets (Figure 10).

Figure 11: Proportion engaging in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months, by highest educational qualification, England 2008/09



Finally, educational level is most strongly correlated with arts engagement. The effect is marked and consistent (Figure 11). Holders of university degrees are almost twice as likely as those with no educational qualifications to have engaged in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months (78 per cent and 40 per cent respectively) – a 38 percentage point difference (Figure 10). All the percentage differences in Figure 10 are statistically significant except that between Trade apprenticeships and Other qualifications – level unknown.

Socio-economic variables and the other demographic factors discussed above are strongly interconnected. For example, a person with a degree is more likely to earn a high income than someone with lower educational qualifications. Previous research has examined the importance of different factors in predicting arts attendance and found that education has the strongest effect. In fact, once education has been taken into account, a person's income has little if any

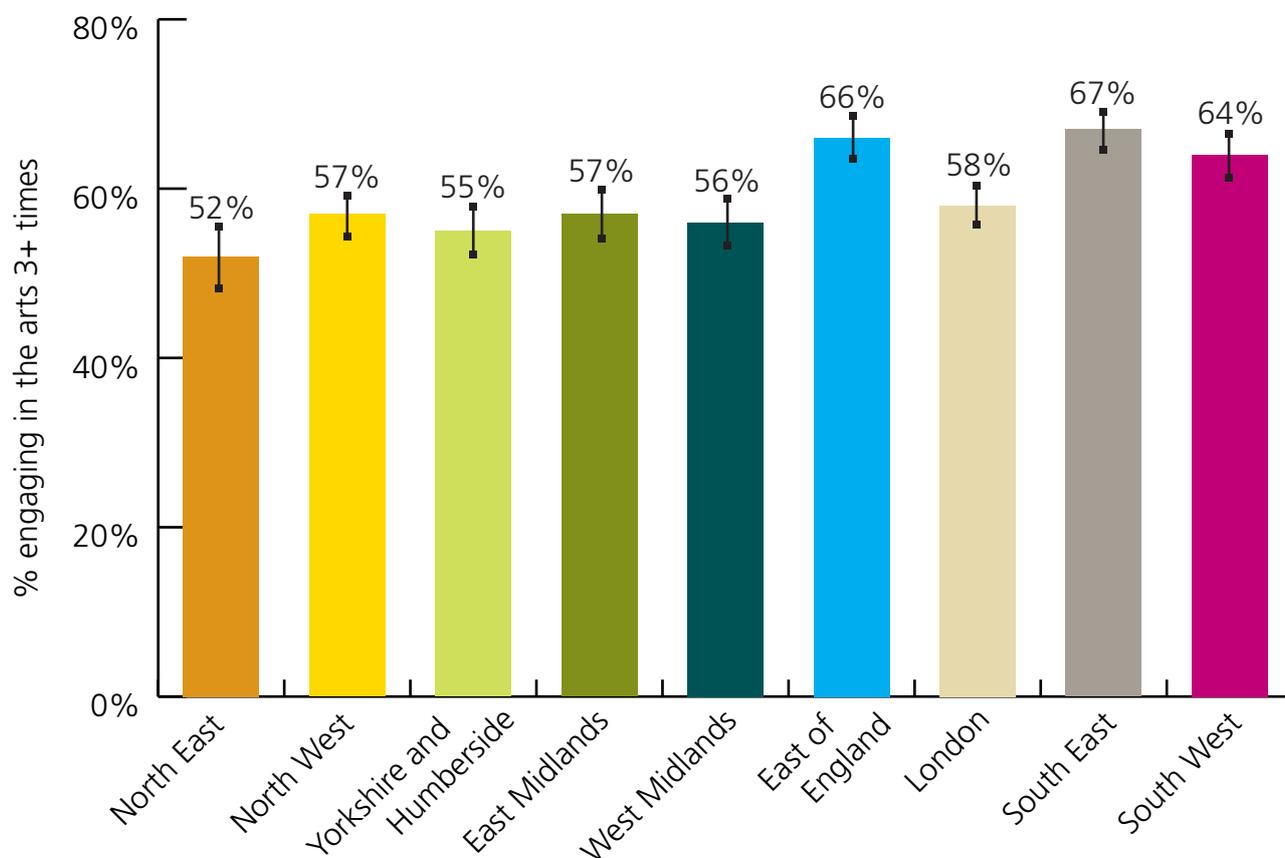
7 See pp. 40–61 of Bunting, Catherine, Chan, Tak Wing, Goldthorpe, John, Keaney, Emily, and Oskala, Anni, *From indifference to enthusiasm: patterns of arts attendance in England* Arts Council England, 2008, available at www.artscouncil.org.uk/takingpart (Arts Council England, 2008) and the related *Taking part* briefings 4–9, available at www.artscouncil.org.uk/takingpart

additional net impact on whether or not they are active arts attenders – and in the case of active participation, for some activities the lower the income the *more* likely people are to participate once other things have been taken into account⁷.

3.2.6 Region

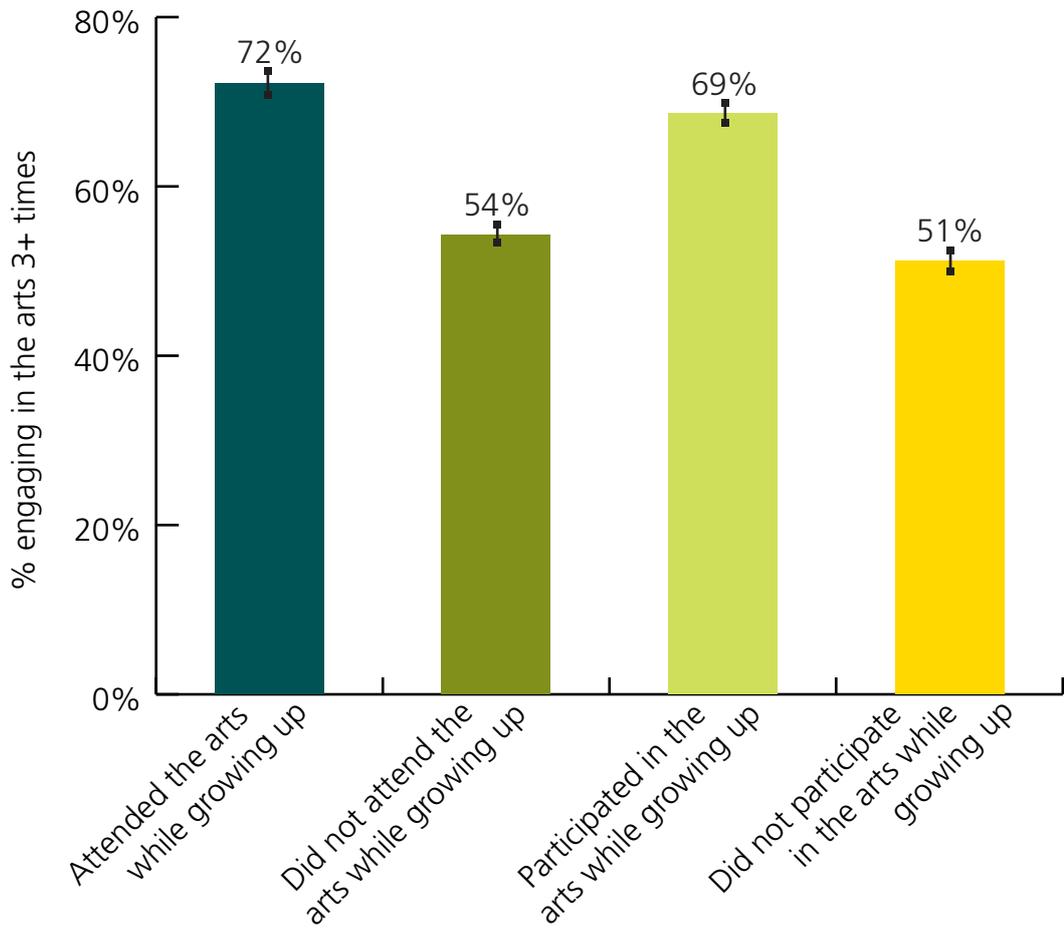
Levels of arts engagement also vary by English government office region (Figure 11), with some statistically significant differences: East, South East and the South West have significantly higher levels of arts engagement as compared with all other regions. The levels of arts engagement in these three regions are comparable, so there is no single region that has statistically the highest estimated level of overall arts engagement.

Arts engagement in the North East is significantly lower than in the East Midlands and London (as well as East, South East and South West as already noted). There is no statistically significant difference between arts engagement in the North East, North West, Yorkshire and the West Midlands, however, and therefore there is no single region that has statistically the lowest estimated level of overall arts engagement.

Figure 12: Proportion engaging in the arts at least three times in the past 12 months by region, England 2008/09

⁸ See *From indifference to enthusiasm* cited above, pp 55–56; and *Taking part* briefings 4-9 available at www.artscouncil.org.uk/takingpart

Previous research has shown that much of the variation between regions is linked to the different socio-demographic mix of people in each region. Once various socio-demographic characteristics of the population have been taken into account, there are very few regional differences in levels of arts engagement. The one consistent regional pattern that remains after controlling for socio-demographic differences is that people living in London are significantly more likely to attend a number of arts events than people living in other English regions.⁸

Figure 13: Proportion engaging with the arts three or more times in the last year by childhood engagement, 2008/09

⁹ See Oskala, Anni, Keaney, Emily, Wing Chan, Tak, and Bunting, Catherine: *Encourage children today to build audiences for tomorrow*, Arts Council England, 2009

3.2.7 Childhood experience

Taking part asks respondents about what arts activities they did while growing up. Those who attended the arts are identified by a question asking whether they attended dance, theatre or classical music performances while growing up. Childhood participation questions ask if respondents did drawing or painting, wrote stories, poems, plays or music, played a musical instrument, acted, or did dancing or singing while growing up.

The data from 2008/09 shows that those who attended or participated in the arts while growing up were significantly more likely to have attended the arts three or more times in the last year (Figure 13). This is in line with previous findings: the impact of childhood engagement with the arts on adult engagement patterns remains strong even when a wide range of other socio-economic factors have been taken into account.⁹

4 Popularity of individual arts events

and arts activities in 2008/09

This chapter looks beneath patterns in overall arts engagement and explores involvement in individual arts events and activities in 2008/09.

Table 1: Attendance at arts events by adults in England, 2008/09

Arts event	% attended at least once in the past 12 months	Range
Other live music event	27.4	+/- 0.9
Musical	22.4	+/- 0.8
Play or drama	21.0	+/- 0.8
Art/photography/sculpture exhibition	18.2	+/- 0.8
Pantomime	12.3	+/- 0.7
Carnival	12.1	+/- 0.7
A public art display or installation	11.7	+/- 0.6
Craft exhibition	11.2	+/- 0.6
Street arts	8.2	+/- 0.6
Classical music concert	8.1	+/- 0.5
Jazz performance	5.7	+/- 0.5
Other live dance event	4.5	+/- 0.4
Circus (not animals)	4.2	+/- 0.4
Opera or operetta	4.0	+/- 0.4
Event with video or electronic art	3.9	+/- 0.4
Culturally-specific festival (eg Mela)	3.8	+/- 0.4
Ballet	3.6	+/- 0.4
Event connected with books or writing	3.1	+/- 0.3
Contemporary dance	2.6	+/- 0.3
African/South Asian/Chinese dance	2.4	+/- 0.3

4.1 Engagement in different arts events and activities in 2008/09

Table 1 presents attendance by adults in England at the arts events covered by the *Taking part* survey in order of popularity in 2008/09. The highest proportion of people (27 per cent) reported having attended live music events (other than classical or jazz), followed by musicals (22 per cent) and plays/dramas (21 per cent).

A number of new questions were added into the *Taking part* survey in 2008/09. For the first time we now have statistics on the

proportion of adults in England who have attended a public art display or installation, and separate data for musical and pantomime attendances, which were previously asked about in one combined question. Similarly, for the first time we now have separate data for street arts and circus attendance.

Table 2: *Participation in arts activities by adults in England, 2008/09*

Arts activity	% participated at least once in the past 12 months	Range
Textile crafts	11.5	+/- 0.6
Painting/drawing/printmaking/sculpture	10.8	+/- 0.6
Playing an instrument for own pleasure	10.4	+/- 0.6
Photography	8.6	+/- 0.6
Computer art/animation	8.2	+/- 0.6
Other dance (not for fitness)	7.9	+/- 0.5
Other crafts (eg calligraphy, pottery)	4.1	+/- 0.4
Wood crafts	3.7	+/- 0.4
Playing an instrument to an audience	3.3	+/- 0.4
Singing to an audience (not karaoke)	3.1	+/- 0.3
Writing poetry	3.1	+/- 0.3
Writing stories or plays	2.8	+/- 0.3
Been a member of a book club	2.7	+/- 0.3
Writing music	2.4	+/- 0.3
Making films or videos	1.9	+/- 0.3
Rehearsed/performed in a play/drama	1.8	+/- 0.3
Taken part in a carnival	1.6	+/- 0.3
Learned or practised circus skills	1.3	+/- 0.2
Rehearsed/performed in an opera	0.9	+/- 0.2
Taken part in street arts	0.7	+/- 0.2
Ballet	0.4	+/- 0.1

Table 2 presents participation in arts activities in order of popularity. The highest proportion of people reported having done textile crafts (12 per cent), followed by painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture (11 per cent) and playing a musical instrument for pleasure (10 per cent). New arts activity categories were added into the *Taking part* survey in 2008/09, and Table 2 provides our first statistics on levels of adult participation in book clubs, carnival, street arts and circus activities in England.

4.2 Engagement in other cultural activities in 2008/09

In addition to going to arts events and doing arts activities, *Taking part* also collects information on a number of other forms of cultural engagement, as shown in Table 3.

Reading is relatively very popular. Three-fifths of adults in England (61 per cent) reported reading for pleasure in 2008/09, and two-fifths (41 per cent) had bought a novel or book of stories, poetry or plays for themselves in the past year. Cinema also engages many people. In 2008/09, half of adults in England had gone to the cinema at least once in the past 12 months.

A smaller number of people engage with the arts through buying crafts and works of art. In 2008/09, around one in seven people (13 per cent) had bought handmade crafts and around one in 17 (6 per cent) had bought original artworks for themselves in the past 12 months.

Finally, many people also volunteer in their free time, and *Taking part* asks whether people have done voluntary work related to the arts. In 2008/09, one in four adults in England (25 per cent) reported having done voluntary work in the past 12 months, with around 2 per cent – one in 50 – having done voluntary work specifically related to the arts.

Table 3: *Engagement in other cultural activities by adults in England, 2008/09*

Cultural activity	% who did this activity at least once in the past 12 months	Range
Reading for pleasure (not newspapers, magazines, comics)	61.0	+/- 1.0
Going to see a film at a cinema or other venue	50.2	+/- 1.0
Buying a novel or book of stories, poetry or plays for yourself	41.4	+/- 1.0
Buying original/handmade crafts for yourself	13.4	+/- 0.7
Buying original works of art for yourself	5.9	+/- 0.5
Volunteering in the arts	1.6	+/- 0.3

5 How do people rate their arts experiences?

This chapter examines what *Taking part* data can tell us about how respondents rate their experiences of the arts as attenders and as participants. For both attendance and participation, *Taking part* selects a random artform that a respondent has engaged in and asks a set of questions about their experience of that artform.

Participants are asked to rate their experience on a scale of 1–10 and to state what they liked and did not like about the experience. They are also asked how likely they are to attend/participate again and whether they have recommended attending/participating to a friend or family member. The Arts Council uses a combination of these questions as a proxy measure of quality of experience for arts attenders and participants.

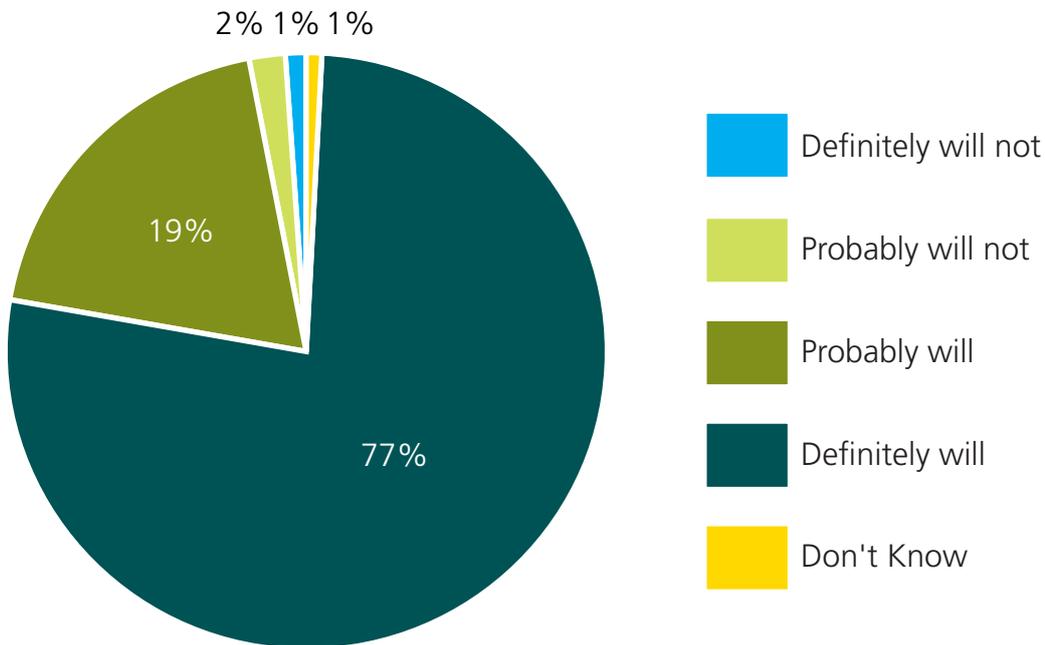
This section explores the ratings of respondents' most recent experiences as attenders and as participants and then analyses perceptions of quality in more detail in terms of demographic, socio-economic, regional and artform differences.

5.1 Rating of most recent arts experiences

Respondents gave high ratings to their most recent arts attendances. The 2008/09 data from *Taking part* show that on a scale of 1–10, 86 per cent of attenders rated their last attendance as 7 or higher and 31 per cent rated it 10 out of 10.

Respondents were also keen to attend again and likely to have recommended attending to friends or family members. As shown in figure 13, more than three-quarters (77 per cent) would definitely attend again while a further 19 per cent probably would go again. Just 1 per cent would definitely not attend again.

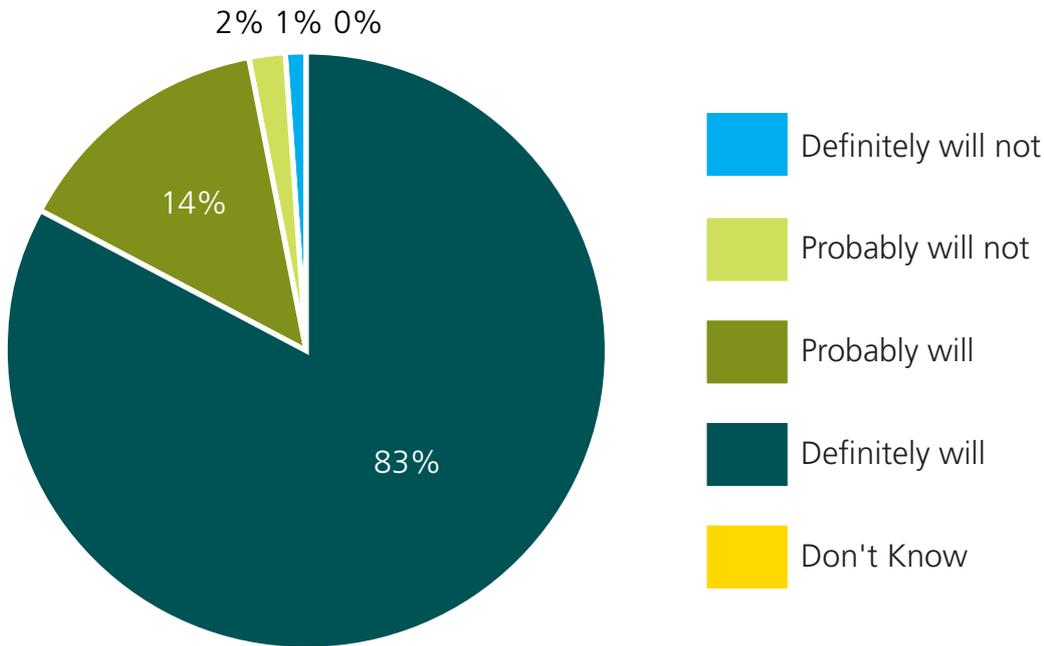
Figure 14: Respondents' likelihood of attending again, England 2008/09



Three-quarters of respondents said they had recommended the arts event to a friend or family member.

Participation in an arts activity was also highly rated by respondents, with 86 per cent rating it as 7 or higher out of 10 and 31 per cent rating it 10 out of 10.

Respondents were highly likely to participate in the activity again. Eighty-three per cent said they definitely would participate again and a further 14 per cent said that they would probably participate again. Fewer than 1 per cent said they definitely would not participate again (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Respondents' likelihood of participating again, England 2008/09

More than half of the respondents said they had recommended the activity to a friend or family member (58 per cent) although 42 per cent said they had not done so.

There are no significant differences between the proportion of attenders and participants rating their experience highly or the proportion saying they will either definitely or probably attend again. However, arts attenders are significantly more likely to say they have recommended the activity to a friend or family member than arts participants (75 per cent of attenders compared with 58 per cent of participants). Given the high ratings respondents gave to their enjoyment of participatory activities, it is likely that this is due to factors other than the quality of the experience such as the need for specialist equipment, skills or interests in order to participate.

5.2 High-quality arts experiences

The Arts Council uses *Taking part* data to provide an overall measure of the proportion of people rating their last arts experience as being of 'high quality'. The measure of a high-quality experience is calculated based on ratings of attendance at arts events only, and not participation in arts activities. The definition of a high-quality arts experience is that respondents rate it as 7 or higher out of 10, say

that they will definitely go again and that they have recommended attending to a friend or family member.

Based on this definition, in 2008/09 60 per cent of arts attenders had a high-quality arts experience at their last attendance. The questions on quality were also asked in the 2007/08 *Taking part* survey, which enables some initial tracking. Between 2007/08 and 2008/09 there was a statistically significant increase in the proportion rating their arts experience as high quality, from 57 to 60 per cent.

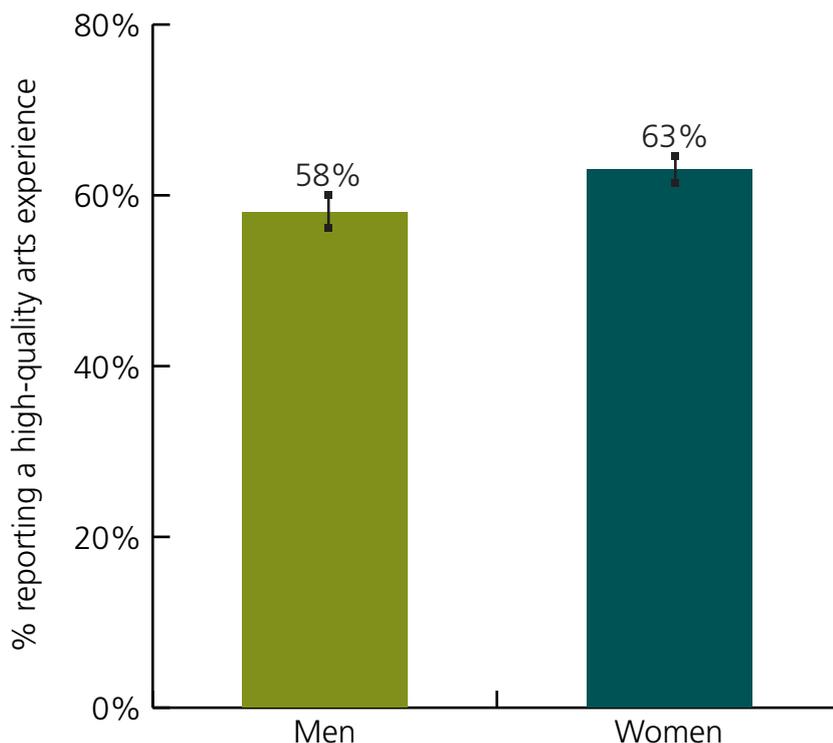
The high-quality measure can be analysed in terms of demographic, socio-economic, regional, engagement level and artform variations to provide greater insight into how different people experience the arts.

5.3 Demographic variation in high-quality arts experiences

5.3.1 Gender

Women are more likely than men to report a high-quality experience of the arts. In 2008/09, 63 per cent of women described their most recent experience as being of high-quality compared with 58 per cent of men. This difference is statistically significant (Figure 16).

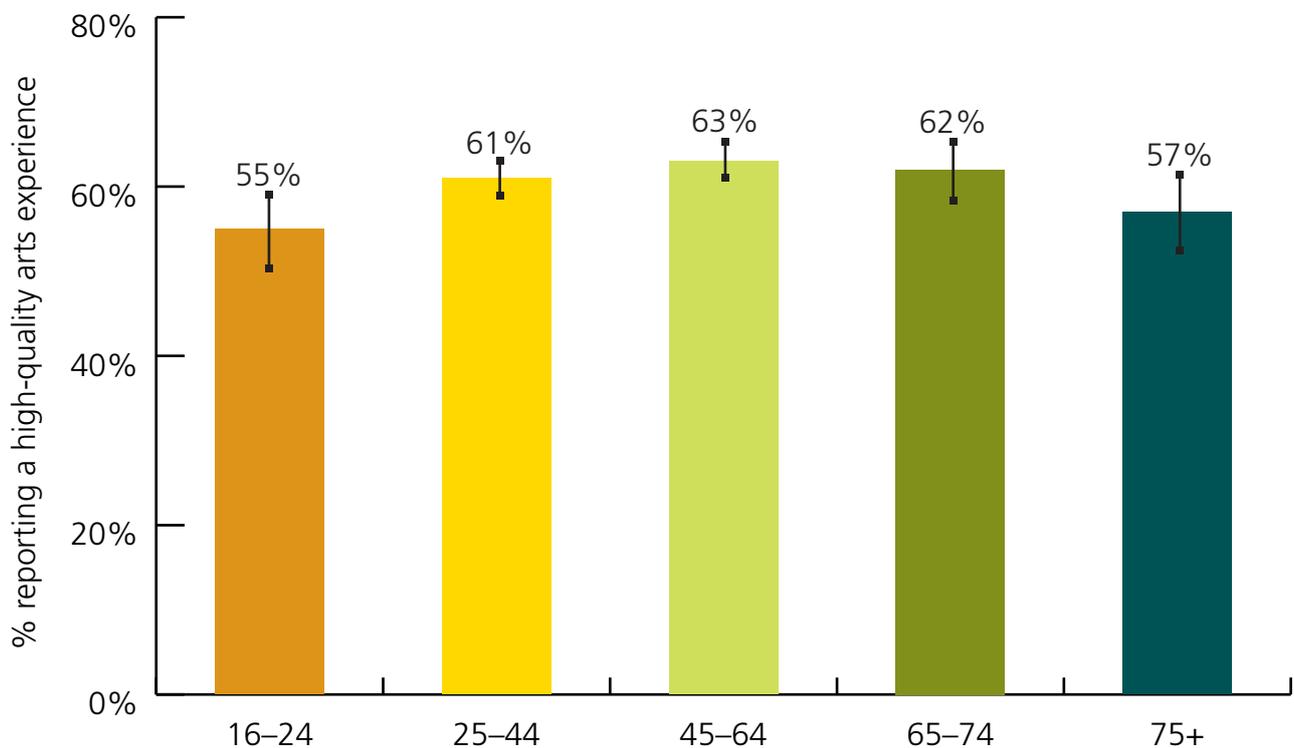
Figure 16: Proportion of attenders reporting a high-quality arts experience by gender, England 2008/09



5.3.2 Age

Respondents' age group also affected their likelihood of reporting a high-quality arts experience (Figure 17). Those aged 16–24 were significantly less likely to report a high-quality arts experience than all other age groups except those aged over 75. In addition, those aged 45–64 were significantly more likely to report a high-quality arts experience than those aged 75+.

Figure 17: Proportion of attenders reporting a high-quality arts experience by age group, England 2008/09



5.3.3 Disability

Having a limiting disability/illness had no statistically significant effect on respondents' likelihood of reporting a high-quality arts experience; 59 per cent of those with a limiting disability or illness rated their last arts attendance as being of high-quality compared with 61 per cent of those with a non-limiting disability or illness or no disability or illness.

5.3.4 Ethnicity

There is no statistically significant difference between the proportion of respondents who rate their last arts attendance as being of high quality based on whether respondents define their ethnic background as white or from Black and minority ethnic groups. Sixty-one per cent of white respondents rate their last arts attendance as being of high

quality compared with 57 per cent of respondents from Black and minority ethnic groups.

5.3.5 Socio-economic indicators

There is no significant difference between the proportion of people rating their most recent arts experience as being of high quality based on their socio-economic classification. Sixty-one per cent of those from socio-economic groups 1-4 rated their experience as being of high quality as do 61 per cent of those from socio-economic groups 5-8.

Similarly, income levels make no statistically significant difference to the likelihood of respondents reporting a high-quality experience at their last arts attendance (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Proportion of attenders reporting a high-quality experience by income level, England 2008/09

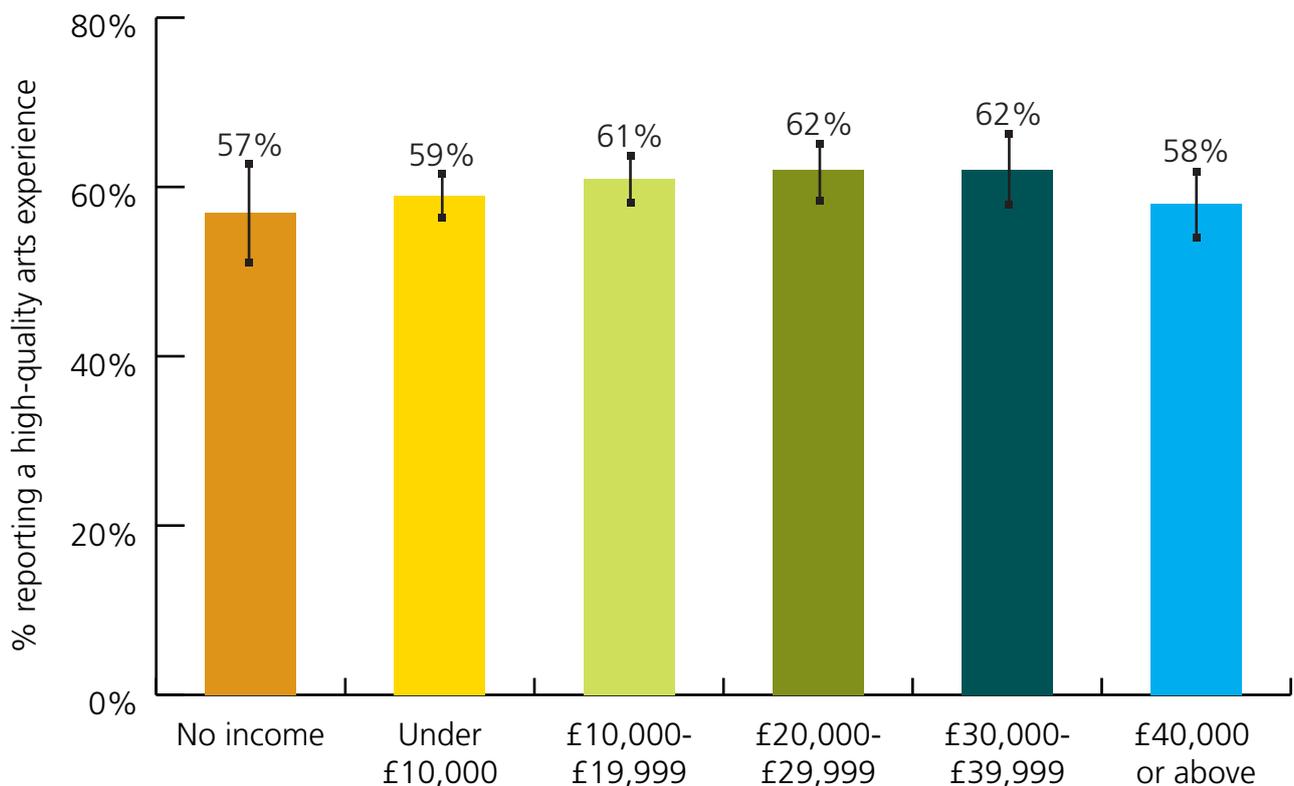
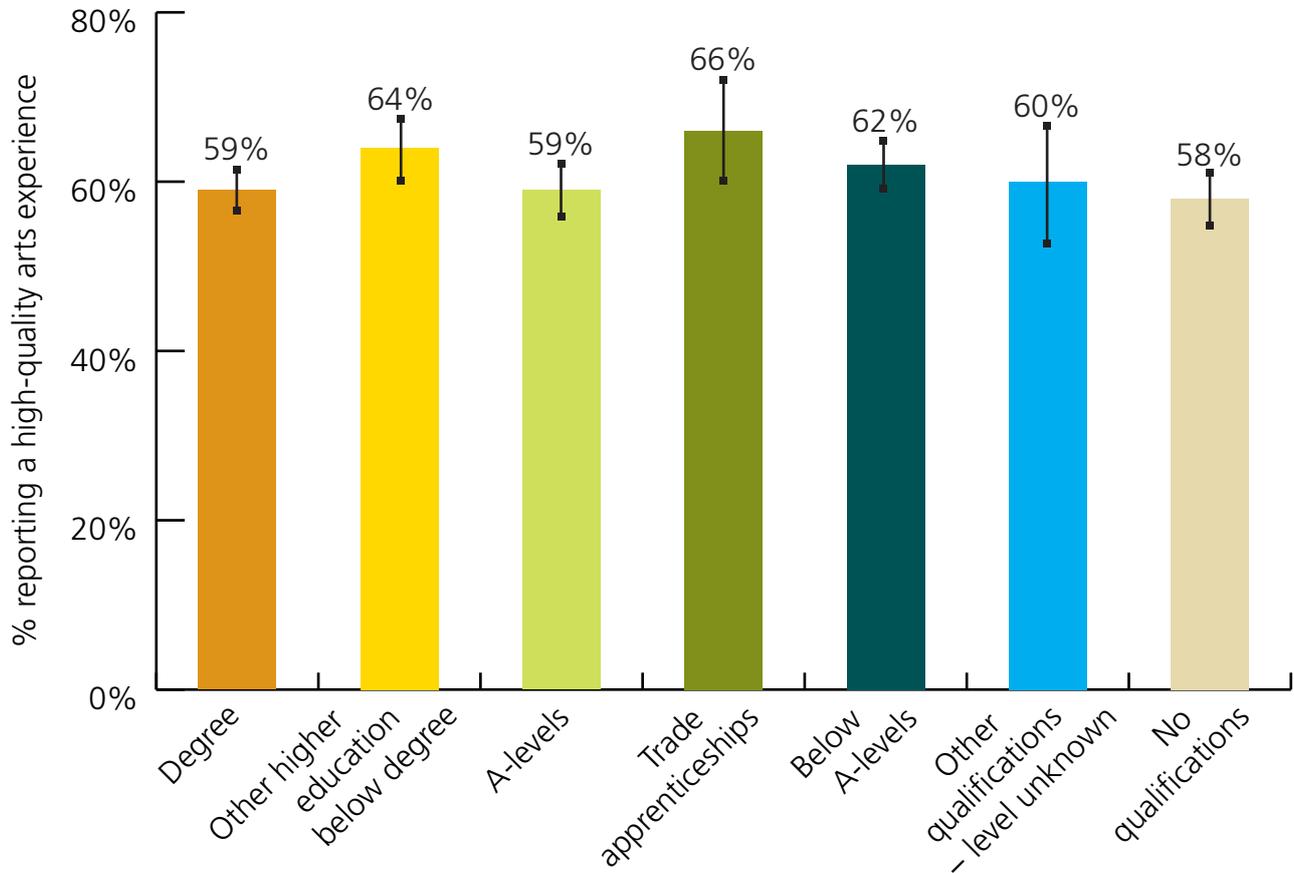
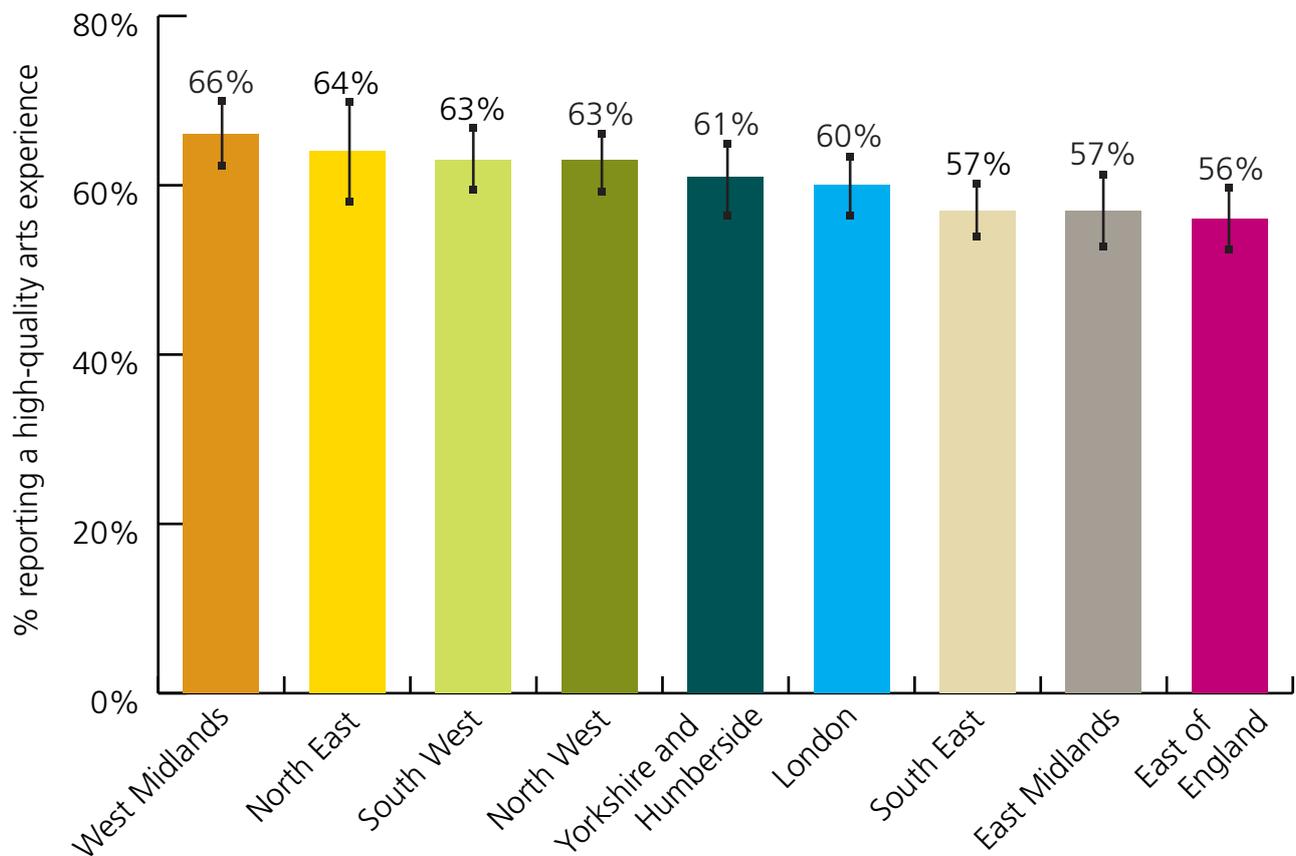


Figure 19: Proportion of attenders reporting a high-quality experience by education level, England 2008/09

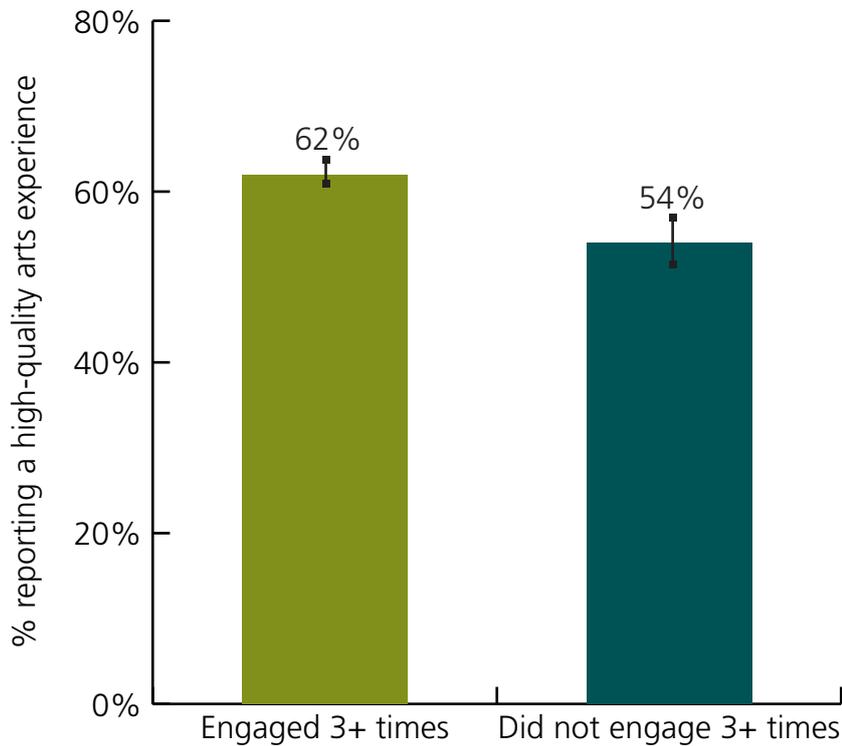
Education levels do have a small impact on the likelihood of reporting a high-quality arts experience although there is no clear directional trend. The proportion of people reporting a high-quality arts experience is significantly lower for those with no qualifications (58 per cent) than for those with trade apprenticeships (66 per cent) or other higher education below degree level (64 per cent). However, 59 per cent of people with a degree reported a high-quality arts experience and there is no significant difference between this figure and the proportion for people with no qualifications (Figure 19).

Figure 20: Proportion of attenders reporting a high-quality arts experience by region, England 2008/09

5.3.6 Region

The percentage of people who described their last arts experience as being of high quality varies regionally, as shown in Figure 20. While there is no single region that is overall highest or lowest in terms of quality ratings, there are some statistically significant differences:

- The proportion reporting a high-quality arts experience in the South East (57 per cent) is significantly lower than the proportion in the North West (63 per cent), West Midlands (66 per cent) and South West (63 per cent).
- The proportion reporting a high-quality arts experience in the East (56 per cent) is significantly lower than the proportions in the North West, South West and West Midlands.
- The proportion in London (60 per cent) is significantly lower than that in the West Midlands.
- The proportion in the East Midlands (57 per cent) is significantly lower than in the South West and the West Midlands.

Figure 21: *Proportion of attenders reporting a high-quality arts experience by level of engagement, England 2008/09*

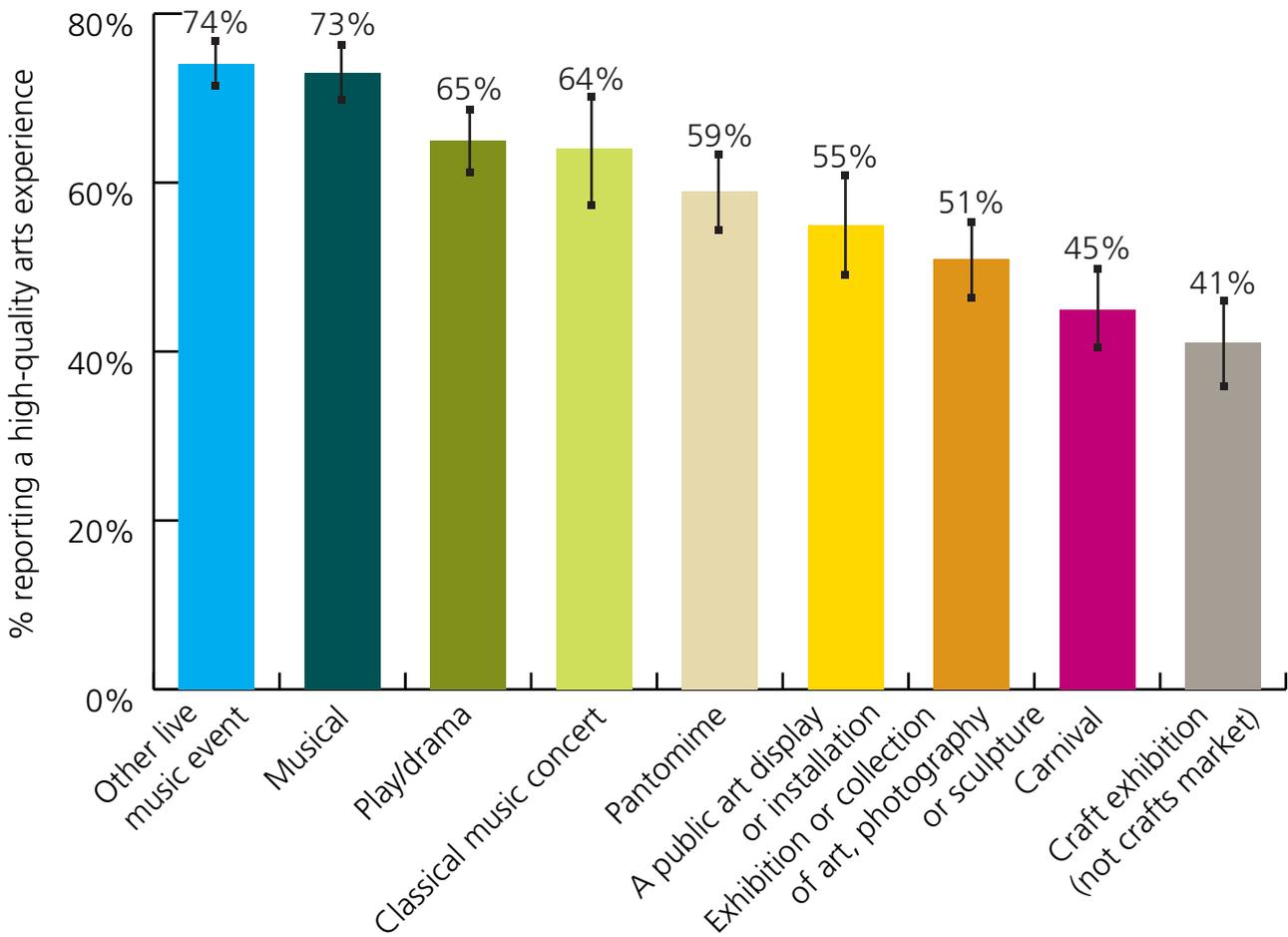
5.3.7 Level of engagement

Those who had engaged with the arts three or more times in the last 12 months were significantly more likely to describe their last arts experience as being of high quality: 62 per cent of those who engaged three or more times in the last year described their most recent experience as high quality, compared with 54 per cent of those who engaged less than three times a year.

5.3.8 Artform

The proportion of respondents describing their most recent arts experience as being of high quality varied significantly depending which artform they were asked about.

Respondents were asked the rating questions on which the high-quality measure is based about a randomly chosen artform that they had attended. The random selection of artforms meant that sample sizes were sometimes too small for analysis. The data presented below is for those artforms where the rating questions were answered by more than 250 respondents.

Figure 22: Proportion reporting a high-quality arts experience by artform, England 2008/09

¹⁰ All differences are significant except those between other live music and musicals, between other live music and classical music, between classical music and plays, between classical music and pantomimes, between classical music and public art, between plays and pantomimes, between pantomimes and public art, between public art and art exhibitions, between art exhibitions and carnival and between carnival and craft exhibitions.

The proportion of people who rated their experience as high quality across all artforms was 60 per cent. When broken down by artform, other live music (not classical or jazz) was most likely to be rated as being of high quality (74 per cent of respondents reported a high-quality experience) while craft exhibitions were the least likely to be rated as being of high quality (41 per cent reported a high-quality experience).

As can be seen in Figure 21, the small sample sizes for many artforms mean that the margins of error around the estimated proportion of people who rated their experience of as being of high quality are relatively large. Despite this, the majority of the differences seen in figure 21 are statistically significant.¹⁰

5.3.9 Childhood engagement

Those who attended the arts while growing up were significantly more likely to report a high-quality arts experience as an adult: 62 per cent of those who attended while growing up reported a high-quality arts experience compared with 59 per cent of those who did not attend while growing up.

6 Attitudes towards the arts

A number of attitudinal questions were introduced into *Taking part* in 2008/09. To ease the burden on interviewers and respondents, these questions were asked of a quarter of respondents only and we refer to this group as the attitudinal sub-sample. All questions were in the form of a set of statements and respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed/disagreed with each one.

Those in the attitudinal sub-sample who had engaged with the arts at least once in the last 12 months were asked about their reasons for engaging. All *Taking part* respondents who had not engaged with the arts were asked if there were any attendance or participation activities they would like to do. Respondents in the attitudinal sub-sample who said there were no activities they wanted to do were asked why.

Respondents in the sub-sample were asked a number of general attitudinal questions. Two of these questions are used by the Arts Council as proxy measures of the importance of psychological and practical barriers to the arts: the proportions agreeing with the statements, 'the arts are not for people like me', and, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want'.

This section gives an overview of data on motivations for those who currently engage and barriers for those that do not engage. It then examines the two attitudinal questions in more detail, identifying any demographic and regional differences.

Data from all questions has been aggregated to combine those who agree or agree strongly, disagree or disagree strongly and those who

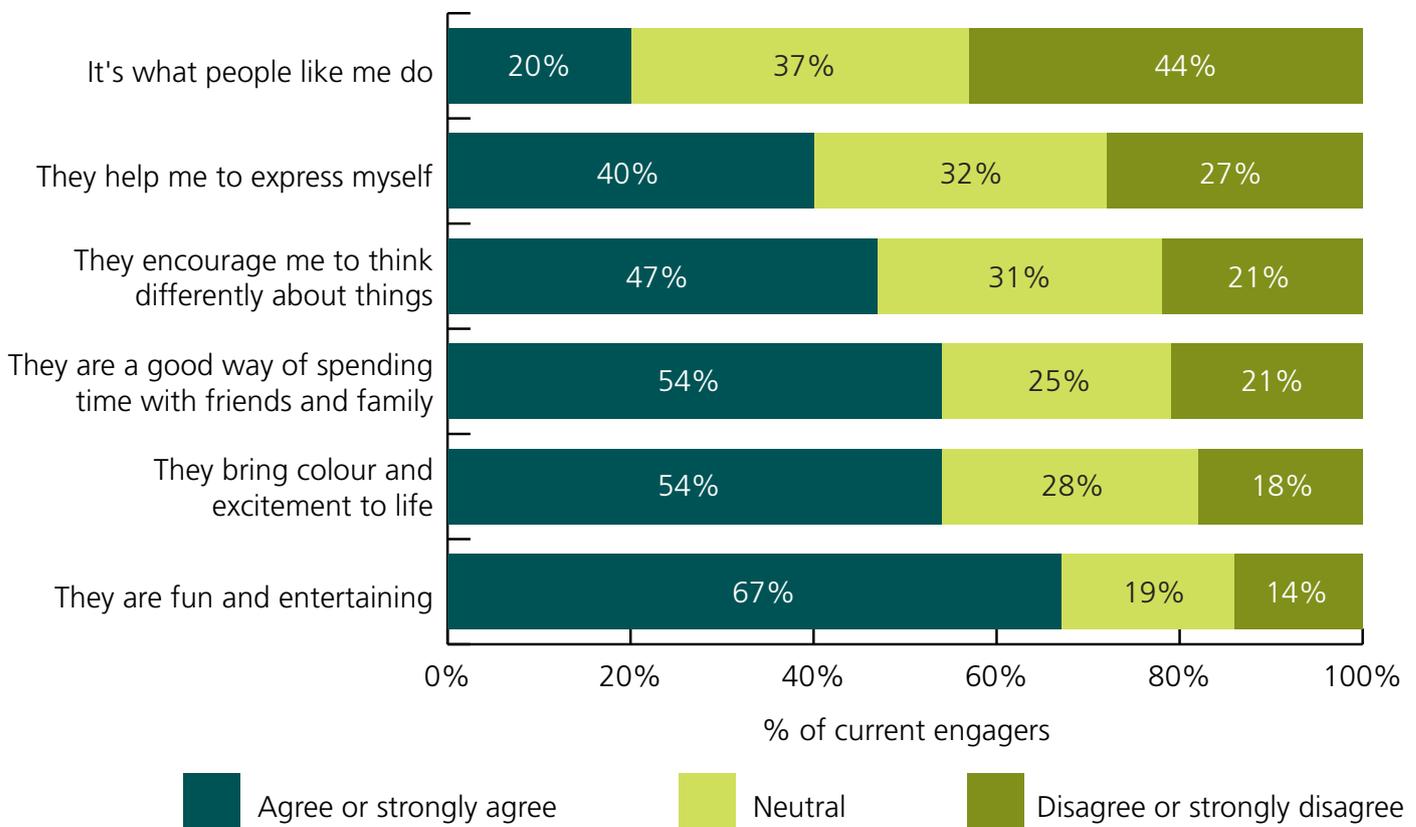
were neutral, which refers to respondents saying either, 'don't know' or 'neither agree nor disagree'.

In this section we refer to those who had engaged with the arts at least once in the past 12 months as current engagers and everyone else as non-engagers.

6.1 Motivation for engagement with the arts: current engagers

Those within the attitudinal sub-sample who had engaged with the arts at least once in the last 12 months were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding their motivations for engaging with the arts (Figure 23). There was general agreement that all statements represented motivations for being involved with the arts with the exception of, 'it's what people like me do' (20 per cent agreed).

Figure 23 Motivations for engagement with the arts, current engagers, England 2008/09



Two-thirds agreed that they were involved in the arts because 'they are fun and entertaining' and over half agreed that the arts 'bring

colour and excitement to life', and that 'they are a good way of spending time with friends and family'.

Responses were divided on the statement that the arts, 'help me to express myself' with 40 per cent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing but 27 per cent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

6.2 Barriers to engagement with the arts: non-engagers

People who said they had not attended or participated in any arts activities were asked if they would like to do any of the attendance or participation activities covered by Taking part (this was asked of the full survey sample). 38 per cent of those who had not attended any arts activities in the last 12 months said that they would like to attend. 26 per cent of those who had not participated in any arts activities said that they would like to do so.

Those in the attitudinal sub-sample who had not attended or participated in any arts activities in the last 12 months and said there were none they wanted to do (314 respondents) were asked if they agreed with a series of statements giving possible reasons for not wanting to engage with the arts. Two-thirds of the sample agreed that, 'there are other things I prefer to do in my leisure time' while 54 per cent agreed that the arts, 'don't mean anything to me' and 57 per cent said they 'wouldn't enjoy them'.

6.3 'The arts are not for people like me'

This section provides a detailed demographic breakdown of the attitudinal sub-sample in terms of the likelihood of respondents agreeing with the statement, 'the arts are not for people like me'. The Arts Council uses this question as a proxy measure of the importance of psychological barriers to the arts (for example feelings of exclusion or that the arts opportunities on offer have little relevance or appeal). In 2008/09 26 per cent of the full attitudinal sub-sample agreed or agreed strongly with this statement while just over half (53 per cent) disagreed.

6.3.1 Gender, disability, ethnicity and age

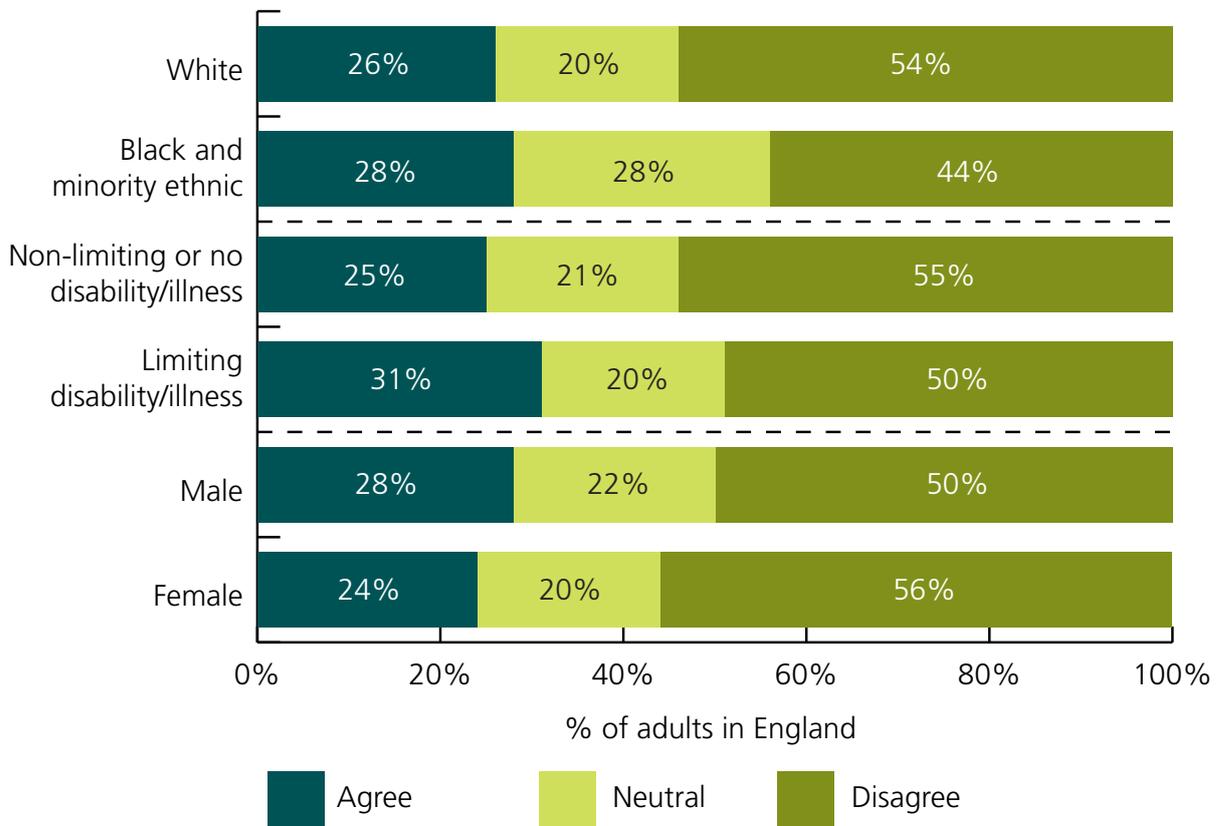
As shown in Figure 24, the proportion of respondents who agreed that 'the arts are not for people like me' varied by gender and

disability. The proportion of men who agreed that, 'the arts are not for people like me' is significantly higher than the proportion of women: 28 per cent of men in the sample agreed with this statement compared with 24 per cent of women.

The proportion of people with a limiting disability/illness who agreed that 'the arts are not for people like me' (31 per cent) is significantly higher than the proportion of people with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness (25 per cent).

However, there was no significant difference between the proportion of white respondents agreeing 'the arts are not for people like me' (26 per cent) and the proportion of respondents from Black and minority ethnic groups who agreed (28 per cent).

Figure 24: Responses to statement, 'the arts are not for people like me' by gender, disability and ethnicity, England 2008/09)

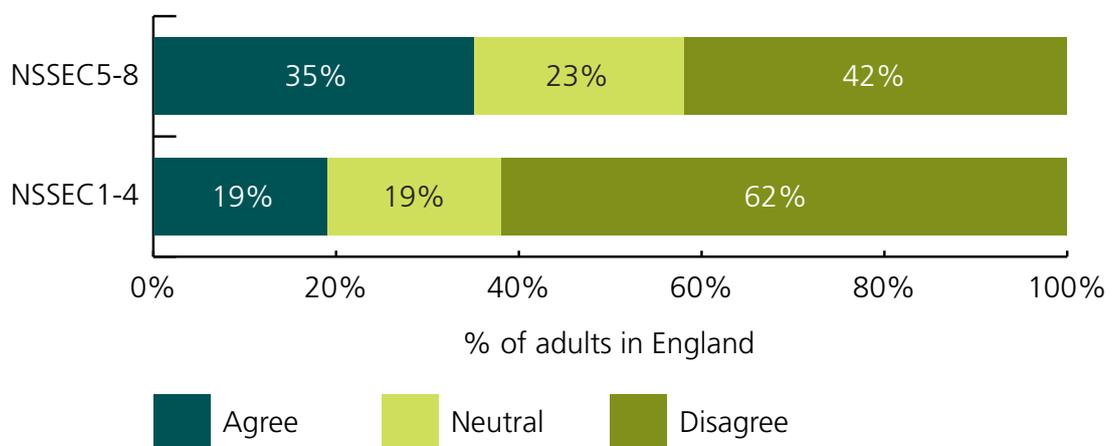


There were no statistically significant differences in the proportion agreeing that, 'the arts are not for people like me' across age groups.

6.3.2 Socio-economic factors

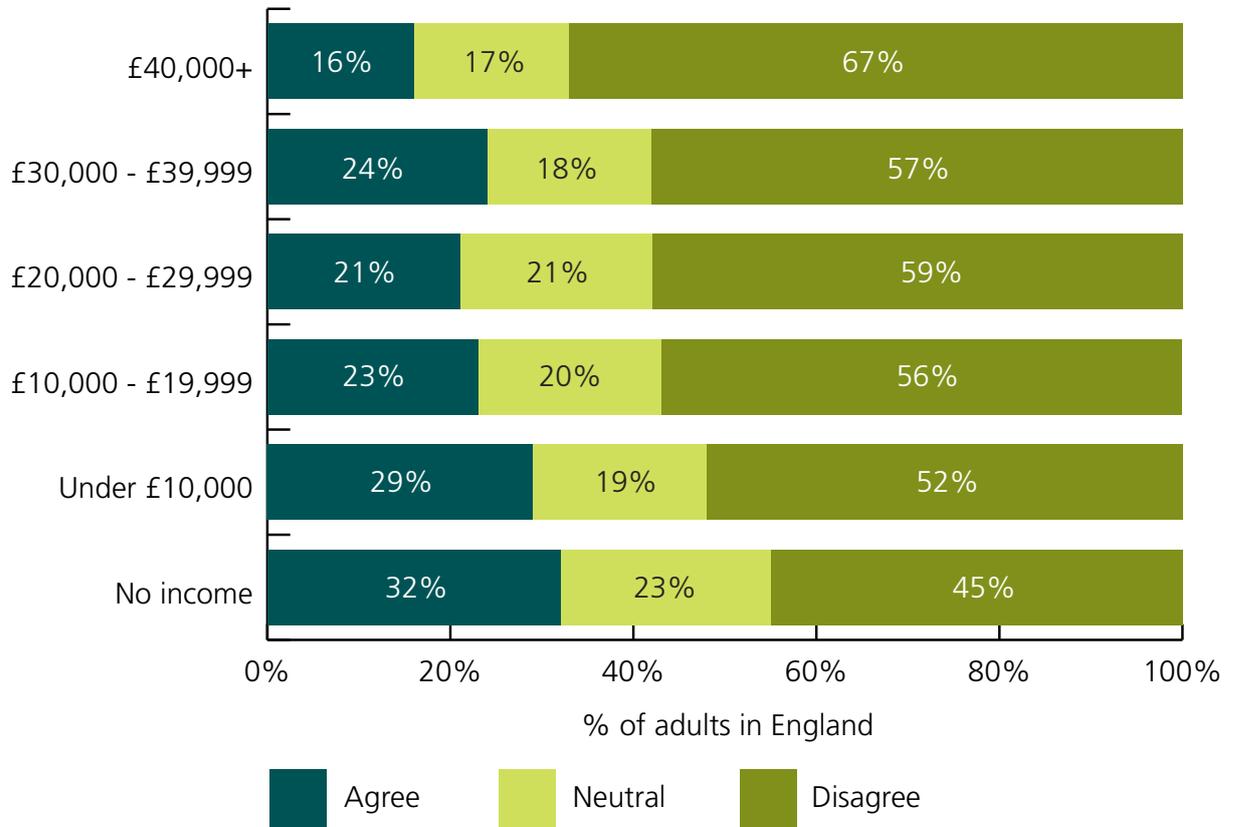
Socio-economic factors account for a significant and striking difference in the proportion of respondents agreeing that ‘the arts are not for people like me’: 19 per cent of those in higher socio-economic groups agreed that ‘the arts are not for people like me’ compared with 35 per cent of those in lower socio-economic groups (Figure 25).

Figure 25: Responses to statement ‘the arts are not for people like me’ by socio-economic group, England 2008/09



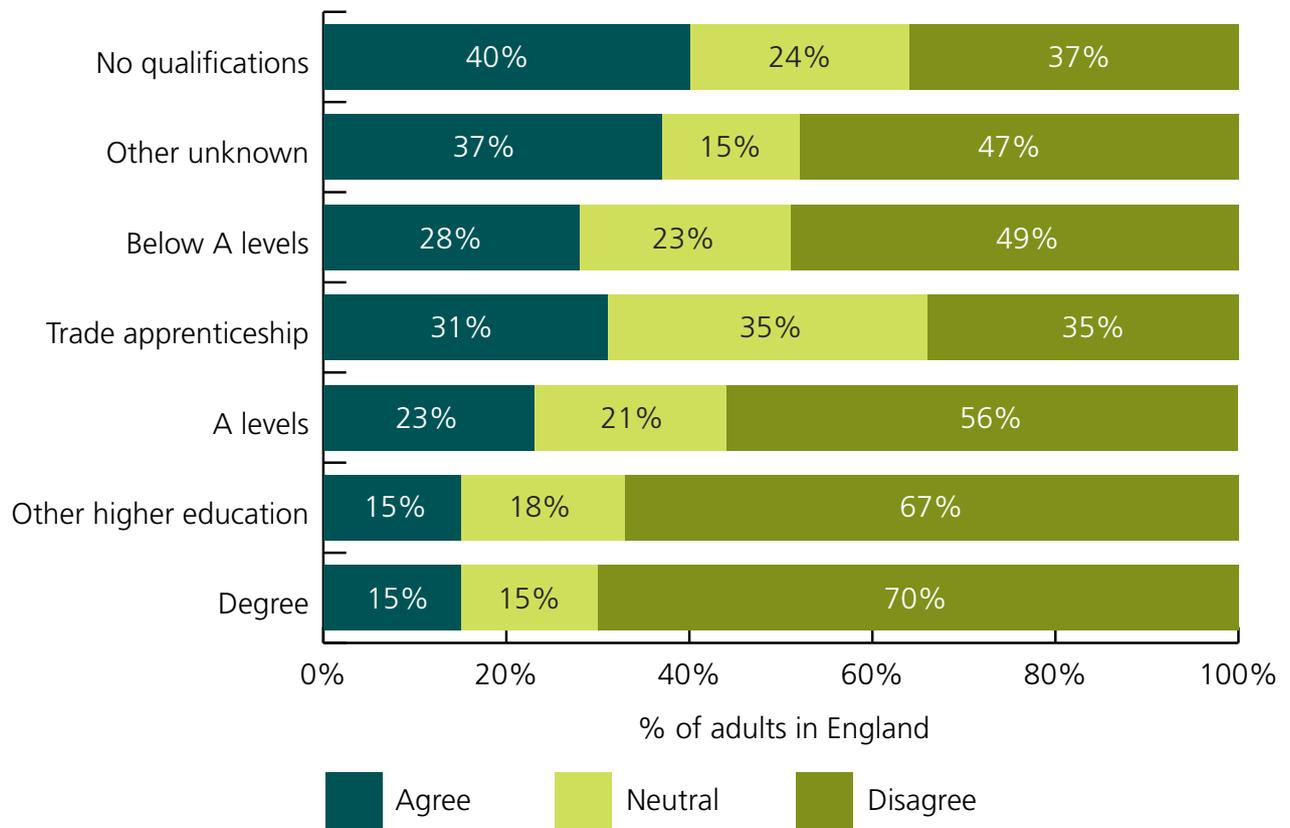
¹¹ In addition, those with no income are significantly more likely to agree with this statement than those with an income between £20,000 and £29,999. Those with an income under £10,000 were significantly more likely to agree with the statement than those on all other incomes, except those on no income and those in the £30,000–39,999 income group. Those with an income between £10,000 and £19,999 were significantly more likely to agree than those with an income over £40,000.

The proportion of people who agreed that ‘the arts are not for people like me’ was also lower for respondents in higher income categories: 32 per cent of respondents with no income agreed with this statement compared with 16 per cent of those with a household income of over £40,000 (Figure 26). This difference is statistically significant.¹¹

Figure 26: Responses to statement, 'the arts are not for people like me' by income band, England 2008/09

¹² In addition, the proportion agreeing who have A levels (23 per cent) is significantly lower than the proportions who have no or unknown qualifications. The proportion agreeing who have qualifications below A level is significantly lower than the proportion agreeing who have no qualifications.

Education levels also have a large and significant effect on the likelihood of respondents agreeing that 'the arts are not for people like me'. Of respondents with a degree, 15 per cent agreed with the statement, compared to 40 per cent of those with no qualifications (Figure 27). Those with a degree or other higher education were significantly less likely to agree with the statement than those in all other education groups.¹²

Figure 27: Responses to statement, 'the arts are not for people like me' by education level, England 2008/09

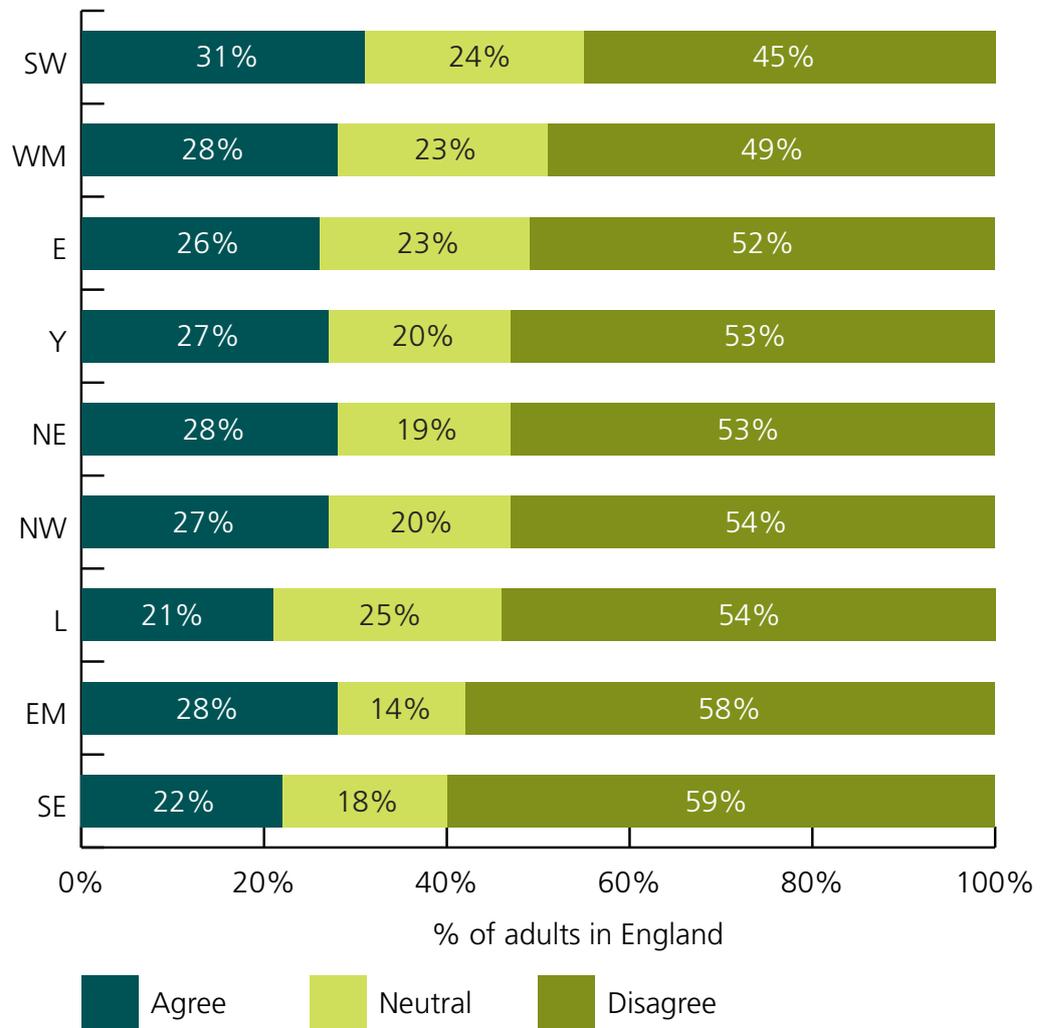
As observed previously, socio-economic group, income and education levels are all interrelated and more detailed analysis is needed in order to identify which factors are the most influential in determining attitudes towards the arts.

6.3.3 Region

There are very few statistically significant differences in the proportion of people agreeing that, 'the arts are not for people like me' based on respondents' region. The only exception is that significantly more people agreed that, 'the arts are not for people like me' in the South West (31 per cent) than in London (21 per cent) or the South East (22 per cent). This is a surprising finding given that actual levels of engagement in the arts are relatively high in the South West (see page 16 for details). It is possible that while many respondents may engage with activities such as musicals, carnivals and painting and craft-making, they do not consider this engagement within the scope of the term 'the arts'. It is also likely that differences in attitudes across regions can be explained at least in part by differences in the make-up of the population – further analysis

is required to confirm whether there are regional differences in attitudes once socio-economic factors have been taken into account.

Figure 28: Responses to statement, 'the arts are not for people like me' by region, England 2008/09



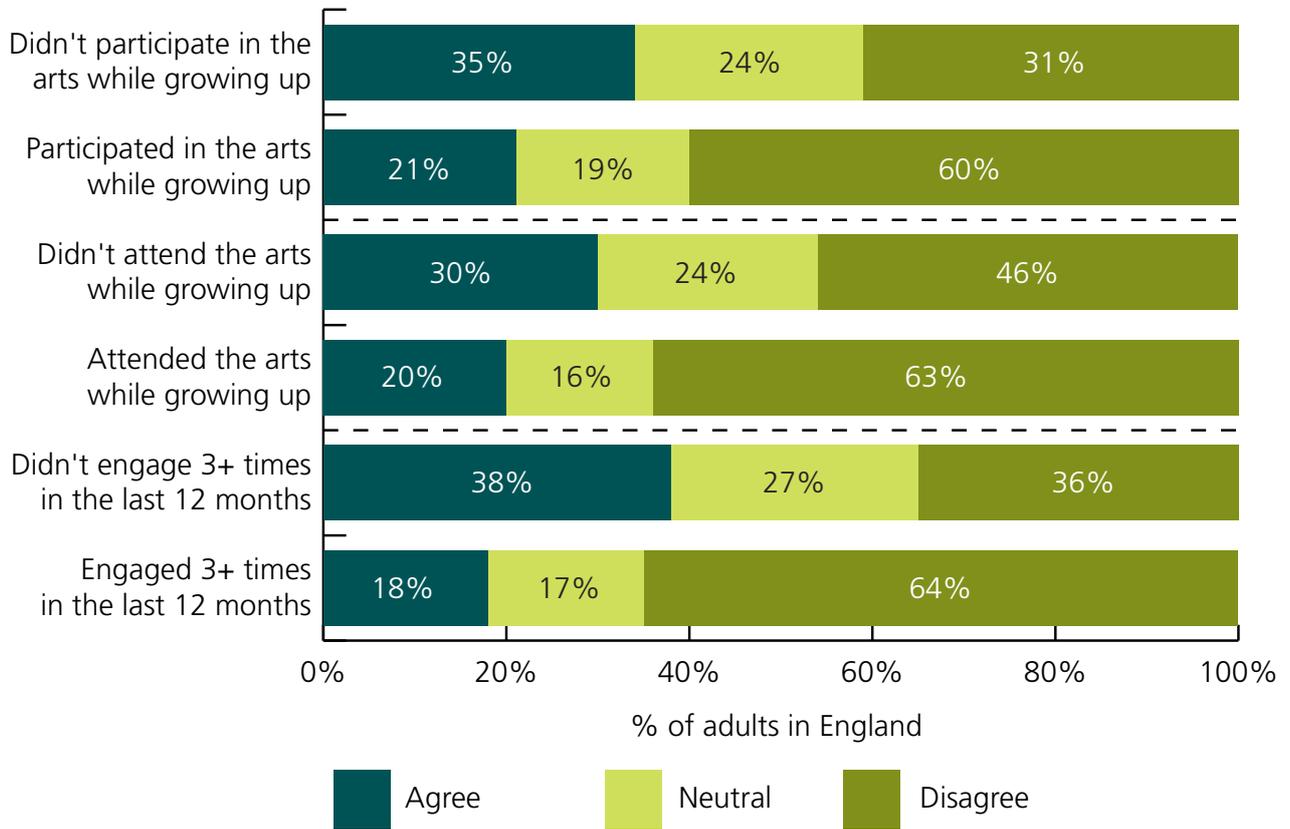
6.3.4 Level of engagement and childhood engagement

Unsurprisingly, respondents who had engaged with the arts at least three times in the last 12 months were significantly less likely to agree that the arts are not for people like them than those who do not: 18 per cent of those who engage at least three times a year agreed compared to 38 per cent of those who do not (Figure 29).

Those who said they attended the arts while growing up are also significantly less likely to agree with the statement (20 per cent of those that attended while growing up agreed compared with 30 per cent of those that did not), as are those who said they participated in the arts while growing up (22 per cent of those that participated

while growing up agreed compared with 34 per cent of those that did not).

Figure 29: Response to statement, 'the arts are not for people like me' by arts engagement patterns, England 2008/09



6.4 'There are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want'

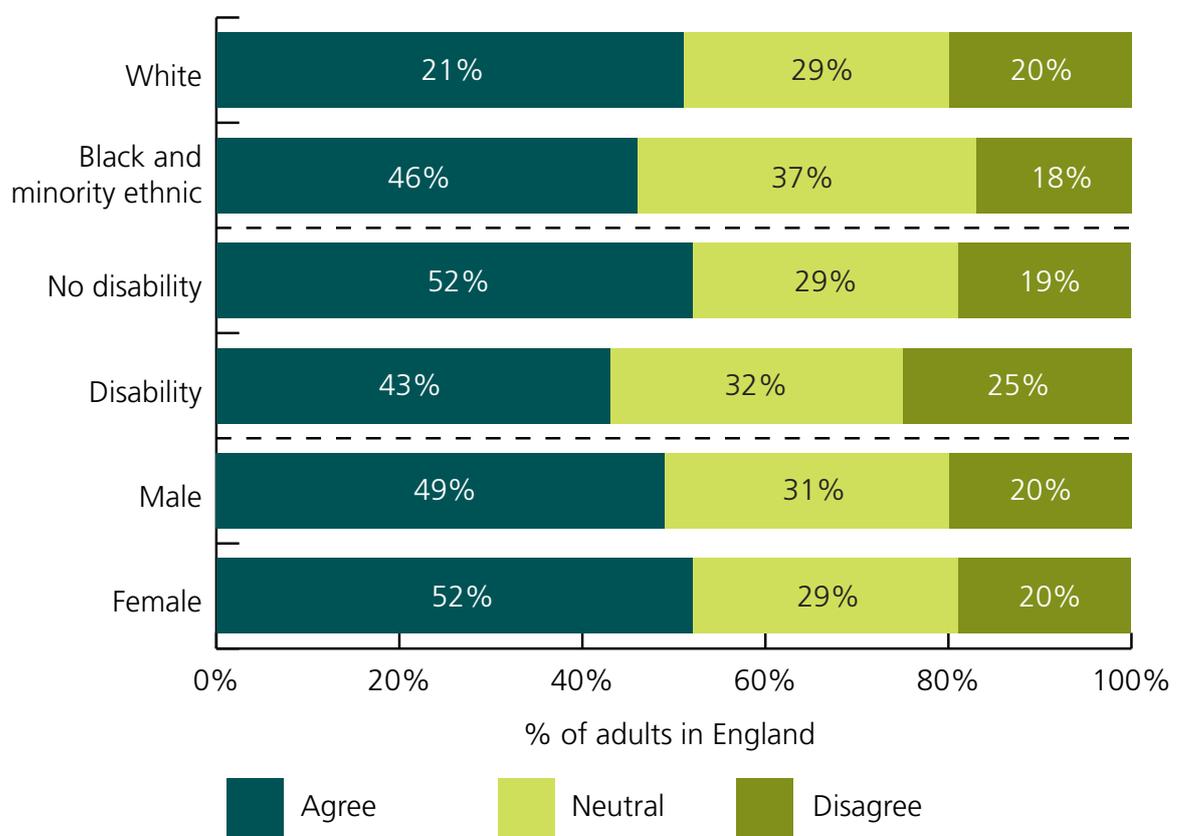
Respondents in the attitudinal sub-sample were asked how much they agreed with the statement, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want'. The Arts Council uses this as a proxy measure of practical barriers to engagement with the arts, such as limited access or lack of information about the opportunities available. In 2008/09 50 per cent of the full attitudinal sub-sample agreed with this statement while 20 per cent disagreed.

6.4.1 Gender, disability, ethnicity and age

There are no statistically significant differences in the proportion of respondents agreeing that, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want' based on the respondents' gender or their ethnic background.

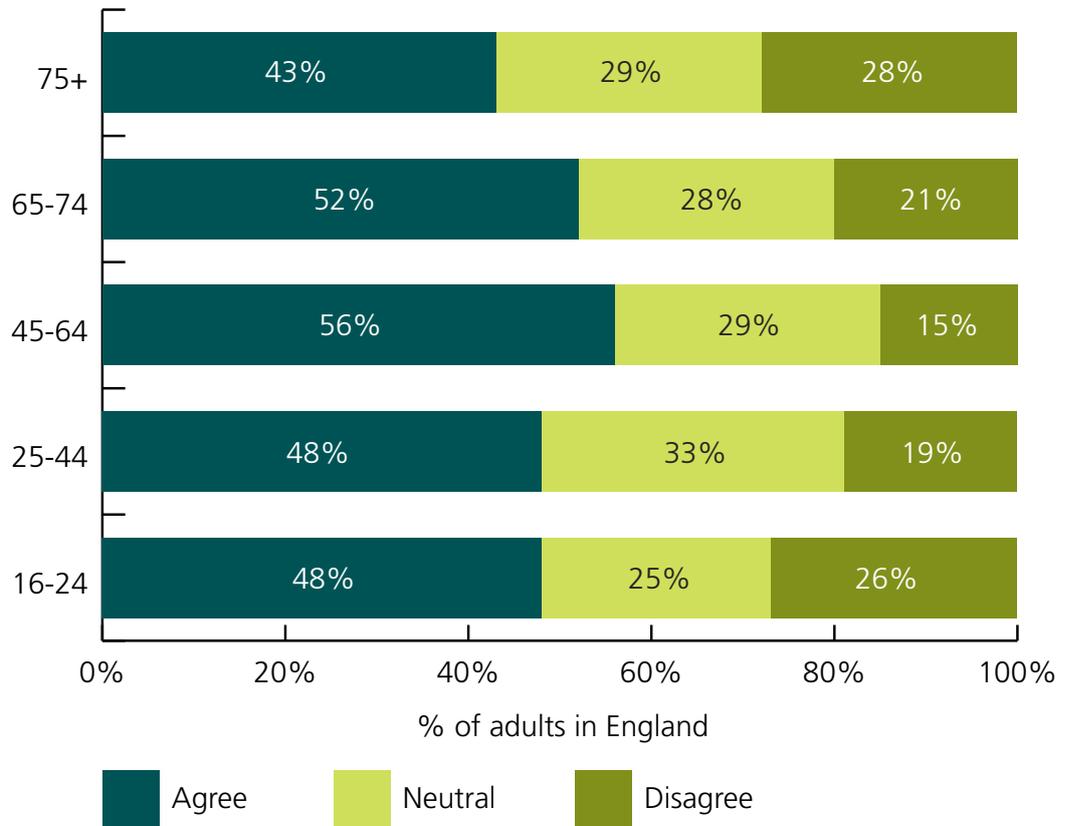
However, having a limiting disability/illness does have a significant effect on levels of agreement that, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want': 43 per cent of respondents with a limiting disability/illness agree with the statement compared with 52 per cent of those with a non-limiting disability/illness or no disability/illness.

Figure 30: Response to statement 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want' by gender, disability and ethnicity, England 2008/09



There are significant variations in levels of agreement that, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want' based on respondents' age group. Those aged 45–64 were most likely to agree that they have lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts – 56 per cent agreed, which is significantly higher than the proportion agreeing in either the 25–44 age group (48 per cent agree) or the over-75 age group. Just 43 per cent of those aged 75 and over agreed with the statement, which is also significantly lower than the proportion agreeing in the 65–74 age group (52 per cent).

Figure 31: Responses to statement, ‘there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want’ by age, England 2008/09



6.4.2 Socioeconomic factors

Socio-economic group has a significant effect on whether respondents agree that ‘there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want’: 55 per cent of people in socio-economic groups 1-4 agreed compared with 44 per cent of those in groups 5-8.

Figure 32: Responses to statement, ‘there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want’ by socio-economic category, England 2008/09

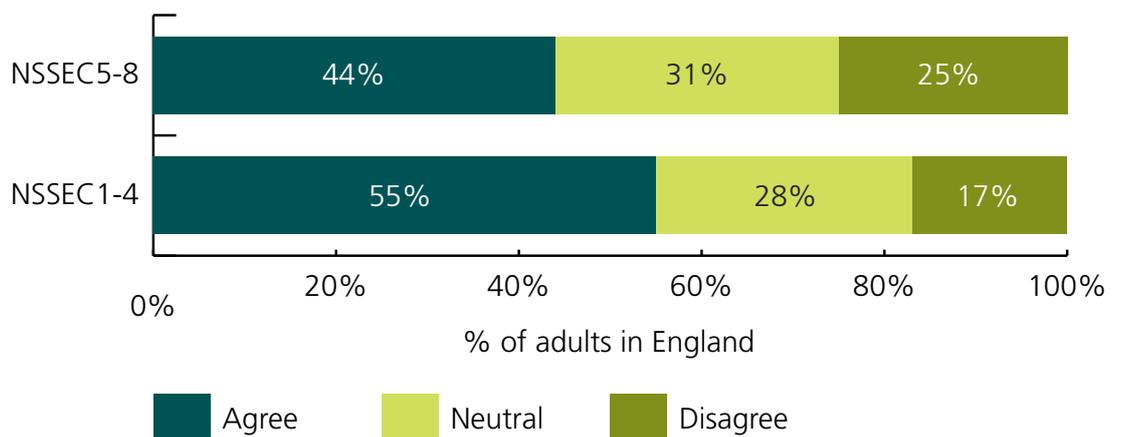
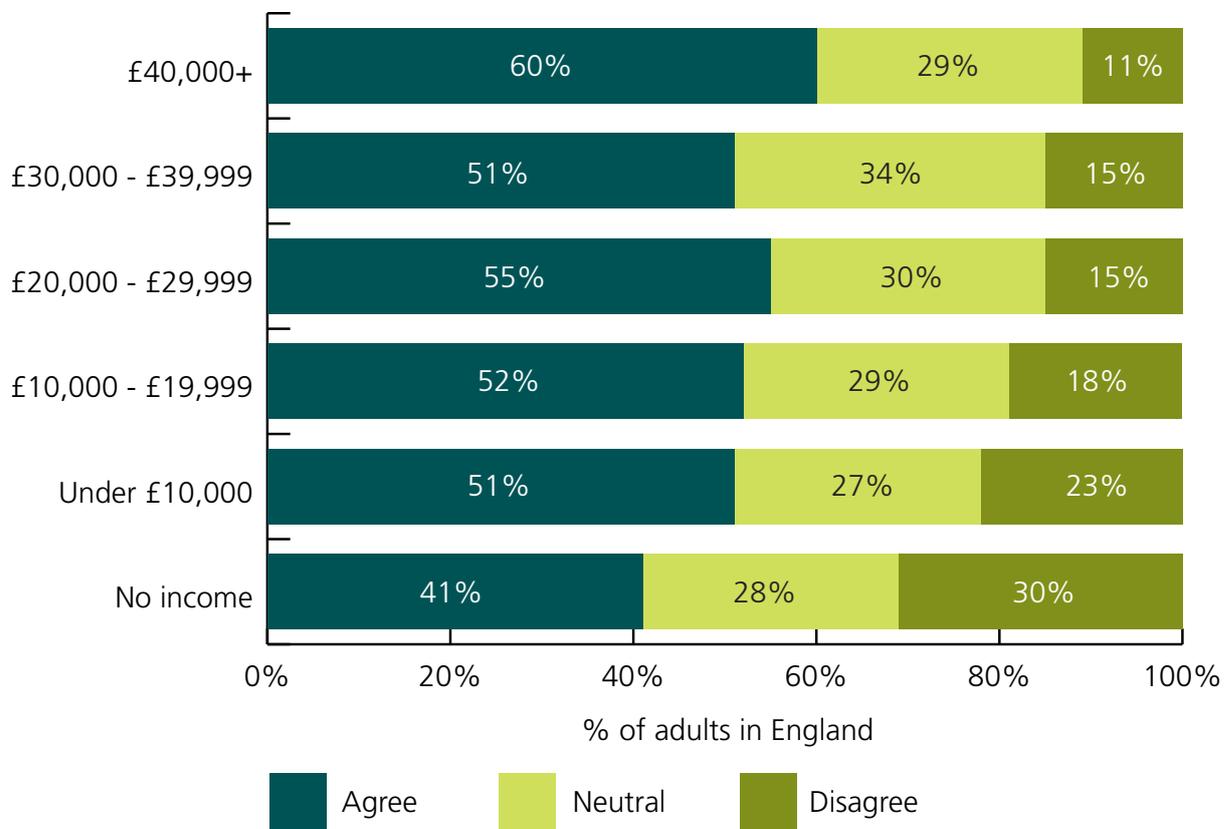


Figure 33: Responses to statement, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want' by income level, England 2008/09



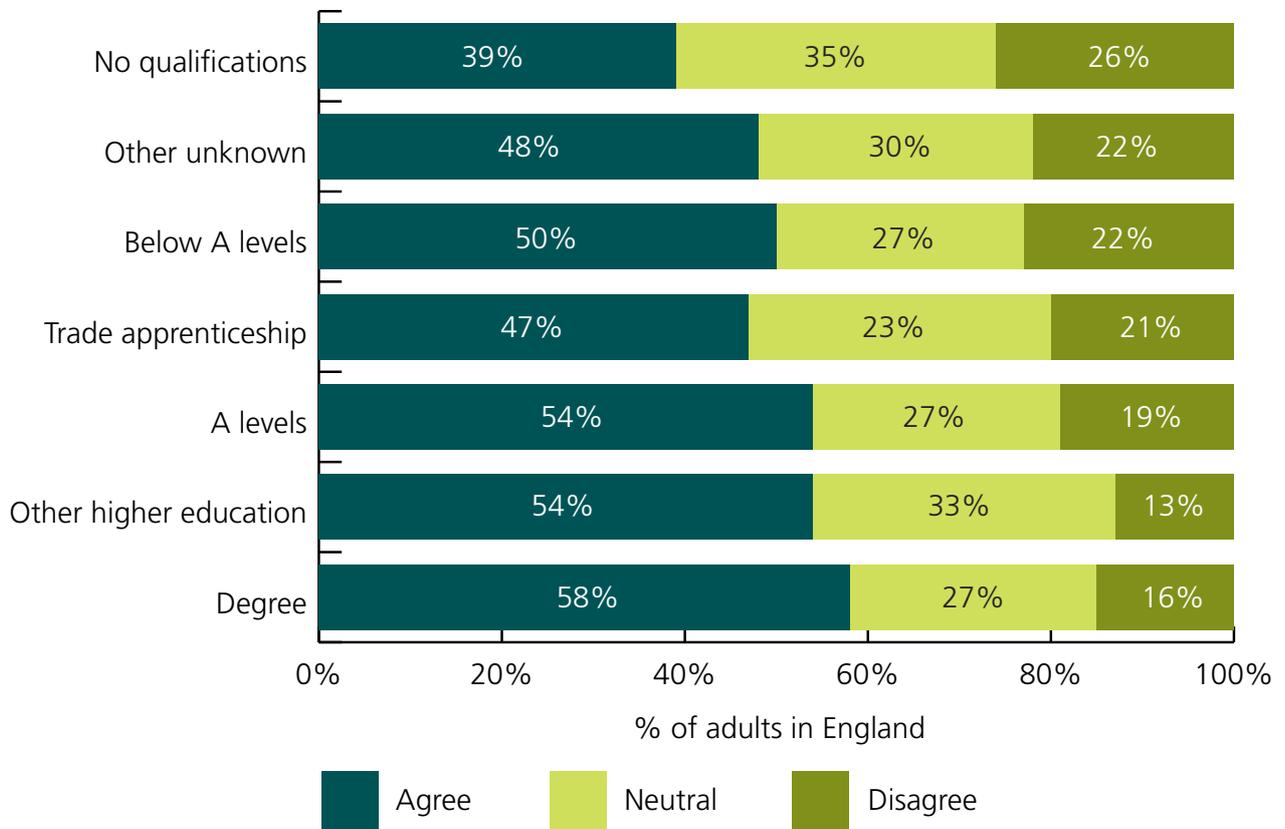
¹³ Those who have a degree are statistically more likely to agree that there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts than those who have qualifications below A level; those who have 'other higher education level' qualifications (54 per cent) are statistically more likely to agree than those with no qualifications; those with A levels (54 per cent) are statistically more likely to agree than those with qualifications below A levels (50 per cent) or >

Income also has an effect on the likelihood of respondents agreeing that, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want': 41 per cent of those with no income agree compared with 60 per cent of those with an income over £40,000 (Figure 33). This difference is statistically significant.

There are also statistically significant differences between the proportion of respondents agreeing who have no income and who have incomes of £10,000–19,999 (52 per cent) and £20,000–29,999 (55 per cent). No other differences based on income are statistically significant.

Qualification levels also have an impact on the likelihood of respondents agreeing that, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want': 58 per cent of those with a degree agreed with the statement compared with 39 per cent of those with no qualifications (Figure 34). This difference is statistically significant.¹³

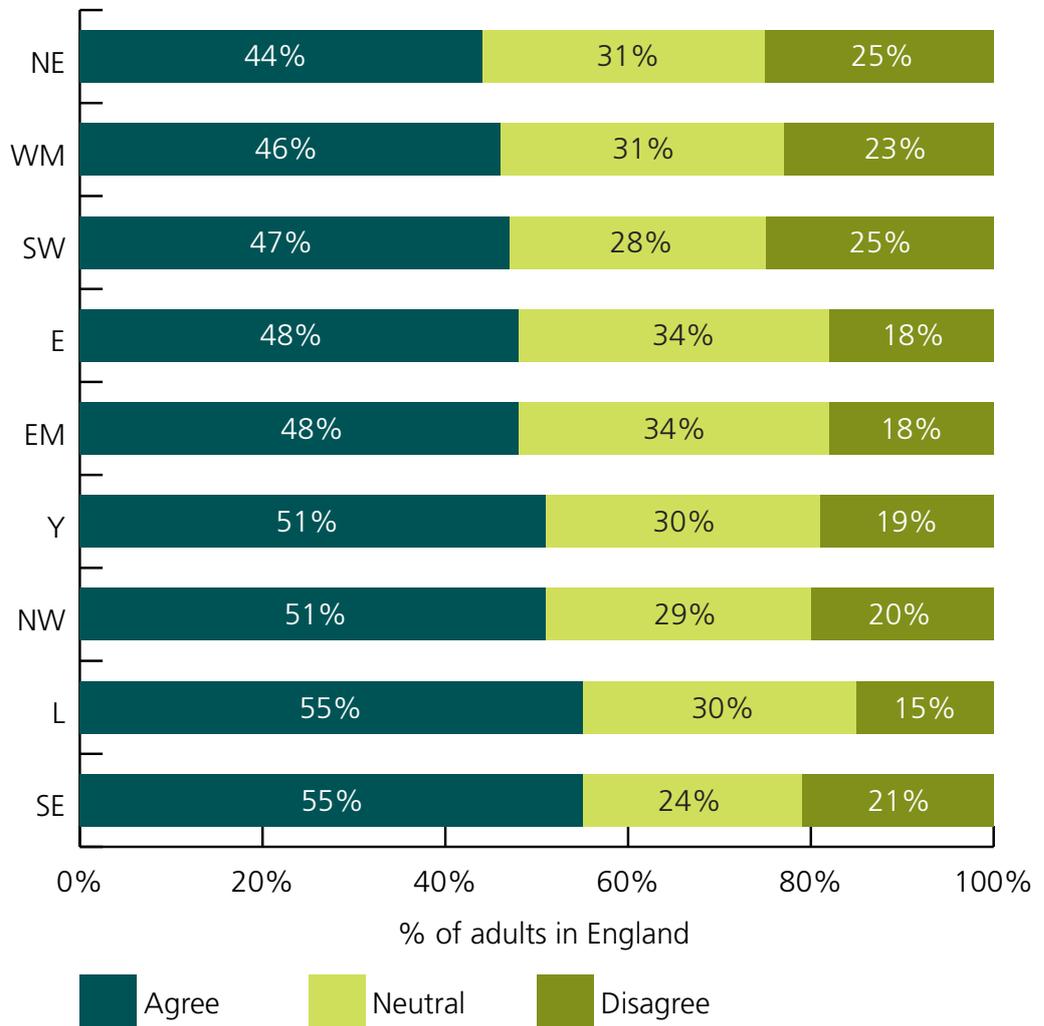
Figure 34: Responses to statement, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want' by education level, England 2008/09



> no qualifications; those with qualifications below A level are statistically more likely to agree than those with no qualifications or those with 'other qualifications level unknown' (37 per cent).

As observed previously, socio-economic group, income and education levels are closely related. Multivariate analysis would be needed to identify which of these factors has most influence on levels of agreement that, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want'.

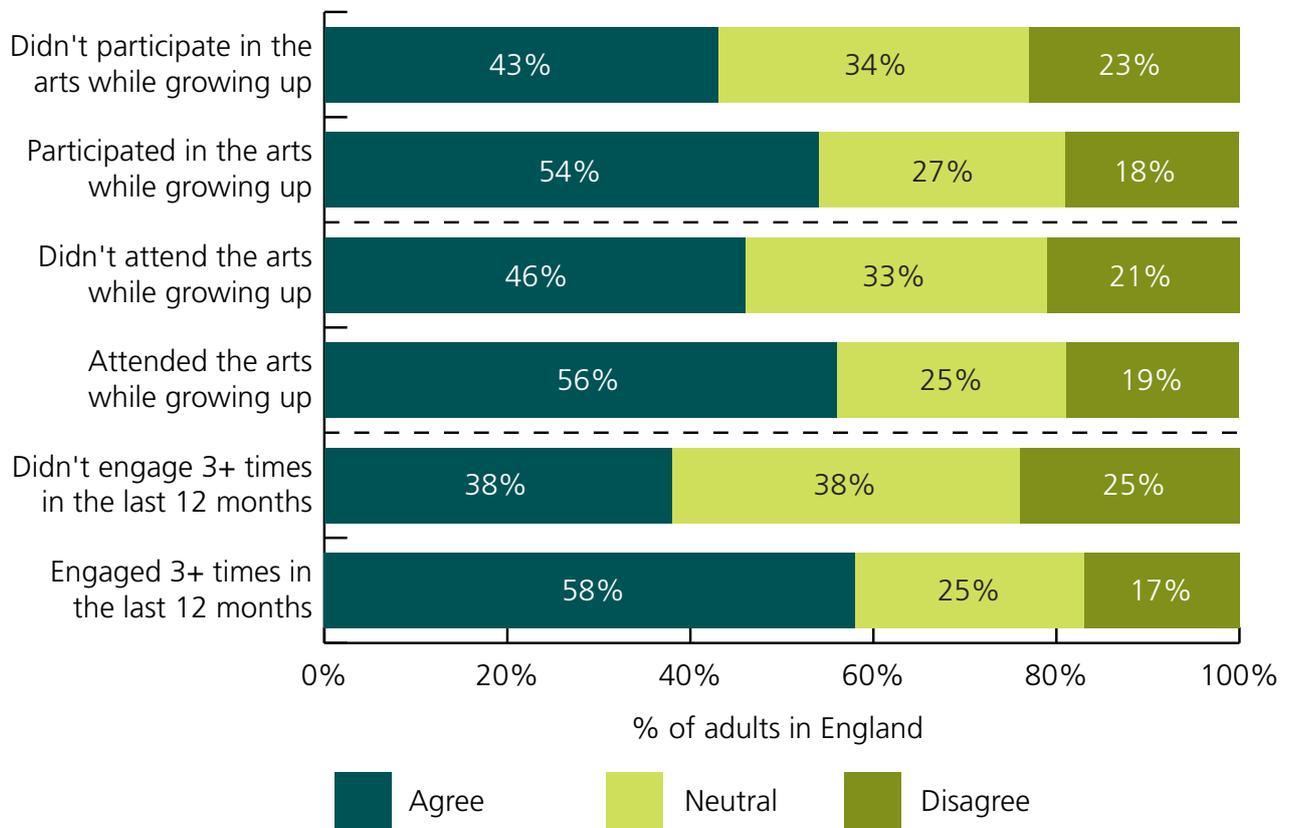
Figure 35: Responses to statement, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want' by region, England 2008/09



6.4.3 Region

There is some regional variation in the proportion of people agreeing with the statement, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want' (Figure 35); however, none of these differences are statistically significant. Again, perceptions of whether there are opportunities to get involved with the arts may be influenced more by socio-economic factors than by geography and further analysis is required to establish whether this is the case.

Figure 36: Responses to statement, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want' by arts engagement patterns, England 2008/09



6.4.4 Level of engagement and childhood engagement

Those who regularly engage with the arts are significantly more likely to agree that, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want': 58 per cent of those who engaged with the arts three or more times in the last 12 months agreed, compared to 38 per cent of those who engaged less often (Figure 36).

Childhood experiences were also correlated with perceptions of the availability of arts opportunities. Those who said they attended the arts while growing up were significantly more likely to agree they had opportunities to get involved with the arts (56 per cent of those who attended while growing up agreed compared with 46 per cent of those that did not) as were those who said that they participated in the arts while growing up (54 per cent of those who participated while growing up agreed compared with 43 per cent of those that did not).

7 Conclusions

This section summarises and interprets the findings of each of the previous sections, bringing together some conclusions about the data and recommendations for future research.

7.1 Ongoing inequalities in arts engagement

The 2008/09 *Taking part* survey shows that levels of engagement with the arts are affected by a range of demographic and socio-economic factors. Patterns observed in previous years continue; women are significantly more likely to engage than men and those with disabilities or from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds are significantly less likely to engage. Those from lower socio-economic groups, on lower incomes or with lower education levels are also significantly less likely to engage. Those with childhood experience of the arts are more likely to engage as adults.

These factors are interrelated and it is not surprising that the 2008/09 data continues to show that education and childhood engagement are among the strongest predictors of adult engagement with the arts, even when other factors are held constant.

The continuing inequalities in levels of arts engagement remind us that they are longstanding and deep-seated and reflect inequalities in many other aspects of public life, from employment to voting. The findings from the 2008/09 survey illustrate the ongoing importance of policy initiatives and audience development activities that seek to reach out to people with lower levels of engagement with the arts.

7.2 Understanding quality

The 2008/09 *Taking part* survey shows how people rate their arts experiences; these ratings can be used as a proxy measure for perceptions of quality. While a quantitative survey may be a blunt tool for understanding quality, the data offers some insight into how perceptions and experiences vary across the population.

First, there is a relationship between level of engagement with the arts and perceptions of quality, with those who engage three or more times a year significantly more likely to report a high-quality arts

experience than those who do not. What the data cannot explain is how this effect operates. Clearly, a high-quality experience would provide a motivation to engage again, and intention to engage in an activity again is one of the components of the indicator of high quality. Thus high-quality arts experiences are likely to result in increased engagement.

At the same time, it is possible that increased engagement with the arts makes a high-quality experience more likely, through building up knowledge or skills which may help a respondent get the most out of their experience. Thus the relationship may also work the other way, with increased engagement leading to greater enjoyment.

When analysing the Arts Council's measure of high-quality experience in more detail, there are few significant differences on demographic lines or on socio-economic lines. This suggests that once people have been motivated to attend or participate in the arts, their personal background has little effect on whether they have a high-quality experience.

The only significant differences on demographic lines are that women are more likely to report a high-quality arts experience than men and those aged 16-24 or 75+ are significantly less likely to than those in other age groups. It is possible that this is linked to arts engagement levels being higher for women and lower for those in the 16-24 and 75+ age groups and that the effect on quality ratings is a 'by-product' of men and younger and older people having less engagement with the arts.

However, the fact that other factors associated with lower levels of arts engagement (such as disability and socio-economic group) do not produce the same effects on quality ratings suggest that age and gender may have an effect on perceptions of quality, even when level of engagement has been taken into account. Again, the data cannot tell us how these effects operate. Do women simply enjoy arts experiences more than men and if so, why?

One possible explanation for differences in quality ratings is the inclusion of the question of whether the respondent would

recommend the activity to a friend or family member as part of the measure of a high-quality experience. It may be that despite enjoying their experience, respondents in some demographic groups (for example, men) are reluctant to recommend it to others, or feel that people they know would not be interested. This effect was seen in the ratings of arts participation, where the activity was enjoyed as much as arts attendance but levels of recommendation were significantly lower than for arts attendance.

Multivariate analysis with the 2008/09 data could explore which factors are most important in determining whether a respondent describes their experience as high quality and the interaction between a person's perception of quality, their demographic and socio-economic status, their attendance patterns and the arts activity they experience.

The variation in quality ratings by artform suggests that other factors such as the nature of the occasion may also have an influence. Live music events and musicals were the most likely to be described as high quality, with craft exhibitions and carnivals least likely to be described as high quality. This may be because attendance at live music events or musicals is likely to be planned in advance, chosen because of previous knowledge of artists and forming part of a special night out, where engagement at other artforms may not have this level of advance planning and 'investment' on the part of the audience.

While these findings provide some initial insight into how people view their arts experiences, the measure of high quality is fairly simplistic, namely whether or not a respondent would attend again and has recommended the event to others. Quality of experience in the arts is likely to be based on a wide range of complex factors including personal motivations, expectations, the nature of the arts event itself and the context in which it takes place. What is more, arts experiences are subjective, personal and emotional in nature and a quantitative survey is limited in its ability to measure them. Further qualitative research would help to identify the components of a high-quality arts experience and how far these can be measured.

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7.3 Exclusion, access and choice

The analysis of attitudes to the arts focused on two general attitudinal statements: ‘the arts are not for people like me’ and, ‘there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want’. These two statements can be seen as representing two sets of potential barriers to engagement with the arts. ‘The arts are not for people like me’ is an example of more psychological barriers to arts engagement while, ‘there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want’ can be seen as a proxy for more practical barriers to engagement with the arts.

The 2008/09 *Taking part* data indicates that both types of barriers continue to be important, with over a quarter of the sample agreeing that the arts are not for people like them and a fifth who do not feel that they have opportunities to get involved with the arts. More detailed analysis of responses provides some indication of the relative importance of barriers across different population groups.

Unsurprisingly, there is a link between higher levels of engagement with the arts and lower levels of agreement that, ‘the arts are not for people like me’. However, 18 per cent of those who engaged with the arts three or more times in the last year also agreed that, ‘the arts are not for people like me’. Similarly, agreement with this statement is higher in the South West which also has relatively high levels of engagement with the arts. This suggests that the problem may be one of people’s perception of what is included in the arts. As reported in previous research¹⁴ it may be that the term ‘the arts’ suggests a fairly narrow and traditional set of activities. As such people may report having done some of the arts activities included in the *Taking part* survey but not themselves consider what they have done as ‘the arts’.

Following on from this, the demographic and socio-economic factors that lead to higher numbers of people agreeing that, ‘the arts are not for people like me’ are broadly the same as those that lead to lower levels of engagement with the arts. The effects of education and income level are particularly marked: people with few educational qualifications and on low incomes are much more likely to feel that the arts are not for people like them. This suggests a sense of

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irrelevance or exclusion from 'the arts' experienced by those in less privileged parts of society that will continue to be important to tackle.

The importance of practical barriers to the arts reflected in the statement, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want' appears to be influenced by age and health, with those aged 75 and over and those with a disability less likely to agree. Socio-economic group and income also affect whether people feel they have opportunities to get involved with the arts. This may be because those on lower incomes feel that the cost of arts activities is prohibitively expensive, effectively placing the arts out of reach. It may also be that there are fewer opportunities to engage with the arts in less affluent parts of the country. Interestingly, there are no significant regional differences in responses to this question. However, it may be that geographical factors operate at a much more local level and that when responding to this question people are considering their home town or village; the *Taking part* sample is not large enough to pick up this level of geographic variation.

Education is also correlated with degree of agreement with the statement, 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved with the arts if I want'. However, the effect of education is less marked than for the statement, 'the arts are not for people like me'. This suggests that education is important in familiarising people with the arts and in shaping notions of identity and status that influence whether people think the arts are for them. Further research is required to understand exactly why education is such an important factor in determining levels of engagement with the arts.

To conclude, the 2008/09 *Taking part* survey suggests that both practical and psychological barriers continue to be important in determining levels of arts engagement and that different types of barriers have different degrees of importance for different population groups. Previous qualitative research¹⁵ has found that although people may cite practical barriers as their reason for not engaging, they themselves agree that with sufficient motivation, they would be able to overcome many of these barriers.

Psychological barriers, such as the fear of not feeling welcome or of not understanding the artwork, are the factors that are most influential on their motivation to engage and therefore on their levels of engagement. Finding ways to address these psychological barriers will be a key component of any campaign to increase levels of engagement in the arts.

Finally, the 2008/09 data reminds us that beyond barriers, some people may actively choose not to engage with the arts, despite being aware of the opportunities; two-thirds of people who did not engage with the arts and did not want to do so said that this was because they preferred to do other things in their leisure time. Further research is needed to understand in detail the factors that influence choices about leisure time and whether and how the arts might need to change to reflect and resonate more closely with peoples' lives today.

8 Finding out more

Visit our *Taking part* website, www.artscouncil.org.uk/takingpart, to access all our latest publications and for more information on the *Taking part* survey.

You can also email us at takingpart@artscouncil.org.uk if you have any questions or suggestions for further study.

9 Appendix 1: Arts engagement statistics

from the 2008/09 *Taking part* survey

Table 1 Overall arts engagement among adults in England, 2008/09

Table 2 Proportion of adults in England engaging in the arts three or more times in the past 12 months by demographic subgroup, 2008/09

Table 3 Proportion of adults in England attending at least one arts event in the past 12 months by demographic subgroup, 2008/09

Table 4 Proportion of adults in England participating in at least one arts activity in the past 12 months by demographic subgroup, 2008/09

Table 5 Ratings of most recent arts attendance and participation by adult arts audiences, 2008/09

Table 6 Proportion of adult arts attenders reporting a high-quality experience at their most recent attendance, 2008/09

Table 7 Attitudes to the arts among adults in England, 2008/09 (attitudinal sub-sample only)

Table 8 Attitude towards future engagement among those not currently engaged, 2008/09

Table 9 Percentage agreement that 'the arts are not for people like me' by demographic subgroup, 2008/09

Table 10 Percentage agreement that 'there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want' by demographic subgroup, 2008/09

Table 1: *Overall arts engagement among adults in England, 2008/09*

	% of adults in England	Range
Engaged in the arts 3 or more times in the past 12 months	59.8	+/- 1.1
Engaged in the arts twice in the past 12 months	7.0	+/- 0.6
Engaged in the arts once in the past 12 months	8.9	+/- 0.7
No engagement in the arts in the past 12 months	24.3	+/- 1.0
Attended		
Attended at least one arts event in the past 12 months	66.6	+/- 0.9
Didn't attend any arts events in the past 12 months	33.4	+/- 0.9
Participated		
Participated in at least one arts activity in the past 12 months	45.0	+/- 1.0
Didn't participate in any arts activities in the past 12 months	55.0	+/- 1.0
Engagement types		
Only attended	30.7	+/- 0.9
Only participated	9.1	+/- 0.6
Both attended AND participated	35.9	+/- 1.0
Neither attended NOR participated	24.3	+/- 0.9
Overall sample size	14,452	

Table 2: *Proportion of adults in England engaging in the arts three or more times in the past 12 months by demographic subgroup, 2008/09*

	%	Range	Sample size
Gender			
Men	56.2	+/- 1.5	6,438
Women	63.3	+/- 1.3	8,014
Age group			
16–24	61.4	+/- 3.3	1,275
25–44	60.5	+/- 1.7	4,990
45–64	62.9	+/- 1.7	4,537
65–74	60.1	+/- 2.7	1,935
75+	45.3	+/- 2.9	1,712
Disability status			
No long-standing disability/illness/infirmity	62.0	+/- 1.1	11,023
Longstanding disability, illness or infirmity	51.1	+/- 2.1	3,388
Government region			
North East	52.0	+/- 4.1	868
North West	56.8	+/- 2.7	1,913
Yorkshire & Humber	54.9	+/- 3.2	1,407
East Midlands	57.4	+/- 3.2	1,365
West Midlands	55.7	+/- 3.1	1,543
East of England	66.1	+/- 2.8	1,638
London	57.8	+/- 2.6	2,037
South East	67.1	+/- 2.5	2,072
South West	63.6	+/- 2.9	1,609
Ethnic group			
White	60.9	+/- 1.0	12,979
Black or minority ethnic	49.5	+/- 3.2	1,451
Socio-economic group (NS-SEC)			
Higher socio-economic group (1–4)	68.3	+/- 1.3	7,796
Lower socio-economic group (5–8)	47.4	+/- 1.6	5,855
Highest educational qualification			
Degree	78.0	+/- 1.8	3,120
Other higher education below degree	72.5	+/- 2.9	1,385
A-levels	65.0	+/- 2.4	2,220
Trade apprenticeships	50.3	+/- 4.6	680
Below A-levels	55.6	+/- 2.2	2,867
Other qualifications – level unknown	48.1	+/- 5.2	540

Table 2 <i>Continued...</i>	%	Range	Sample size
No qualifications	39.7	+/- 2.0	3,616
Personal income per annum			
No income / no work or scheme	54.4	+/- 4.1	849
Under £10,000	56.0	+/- 1.9	3,885
£10,000 – £19,999	58.0	+/- 2.2	3,041
£20,000 – £29,999	64.3	+/- 2.8	1,761
£30,000 – £39,999	69.2	+/- 3.5	1,003
Over £40,000	75.7	+/- 3.0	1,212
Engagement while growing up			
Attended the arts while growing up	72.2	+/- 1.6	4,363
Didn't attend the arts while growing up	54.3	+/- 1.2	10,089
Participated in the arts while growing up	68.6	+/- 1.3	7,016
Didn't participate in the arts while growing up	51.2	+/- 1.4	7,436

Table 3: *Proportion of adults in England attending at least one arts event in the past 12 months by demographic subgroup, 2008/09*

	%	Range	Sample size
Gender			
Men	63.8	+/- 1.4	6,438
Women	69.3	+/- 1.2	8,014
Age group			
16–24	66.3	+/- 3.2	1,275
25–44	70.7	+/- 1.6	4,990
45–64	69.8	+/- 1.6	4,537
65–74	61.6	+/- 2.7	1,935
75+	47.0	+/- 2.9	1,712
Disability status			
No longstanding disability/illness/infirmity	70.1	+/- 1.1	11,023
Longstanding disability/illness/infirmity	52.7	+/- 2.1	3,388
Government region			
North East	59.5	+/- 4.0	868
North West	64.6	+/- 2.6	1,913
Yorkshire & Humber	61.9	+/- 3.1	1,407
East Midlands	63.1	+/- 3.2	1,365
West Midlands	62.1	+/- 3.0	1,543
East of England	71.5	+/- 2.7	1,638
London	64.4	+/- 2.6	2,037
South East	73.9	+/- 2.3	2,072
South West	71.1	+/- 2.7	1,609
Ethnic group			
White	67.4	+/- 1.0	12,979
Black or minority ethnic	58.9	+/- 3.1	1,451
Socio-economic group (NS-SEC)			
Higher socio-economic group	75.5	+/- 1.2	7,796
Lower socio-economic group	53.3	+/- 1.6	5,855
Highest educational qualification			
Degree	83.3	+/- 1.6	3,120
Other higher education below degree	77.3	+/- 2.7	1,385
A-levels	73.5	+/- 2.3	2,220
Trade apprenticeships	57.9	+/- 4.6	680
Below A levels	64.9	+/- 2.2	2,867
Other qualifications – level unknown	57.4	+/- 5.1	540
No qualifications	44.2	+/- 2.0	3,616

Table 3 *Continued...*

	%	Range	Sample size
Personal income per annum			
No income / no work or scheme	56.5	+/- 4.1	849
Under £10,000	61.0	+/- 1.9	3,885
£10,000 – £19,999	65.3	+/- 2.1	3,041
£20,000 – £29,999	75.2	+/- 2.5	1,761
£30,000 – £39,999	79.2	+/- 3.1	1,003
Over £40,000	82.4	+/- 2.6	1,212
Engagement while growing up			
Attended the arts while growing up	77.5	+/- 1.5	4,363
Didn't attend the arts while growing up	61.7	+/- 1.2	10,089
Participated in the arts while growing up	73	+/- 1.3	7,016
Didn't participate in the arts while growing up	60.3	+/- 1.4	7,436

Table 4: *Proportion of adults in England participating in at least one arts activity in the past 12 months by demographic subgroup, 2008/09*

	%	Range	Sample size
Gender			
Men	41.5	+/- 1.5	6,438
Women	48.4	+/- 1.3	8,014
Age group			
16–24	52.7	+/- 3.4	1,275
25–44	43.6	+/- 1.7	4,990
45–64	45.2	+/- 1.8	4,537
65–74	45.8	+/- 2.7	1,935
75+	36.9	+/- 2.8	1,712
Disability status			
No longstanding disability/illness/infirmity	45.8	+/- 1.1	11,023
Longstanding disability, illness or infirmity	41.7	+/- 2.0	3,388
Government region			
North East	38.9	+/- 4.0	868
North West	40.4	+/- 2.7	1,913
Yorkshire & Humber	42.2	+/- 3.2	1,407
East Midlands	43.5	+/- 3.2	1,365
West Midlands	42.7	+/- 3.0	1,543
East of England	52.0	+/- 3.0	1,638
London	41.9	+/- 2.6	2,037
South East	51.2	+/- 2.7	2,072
South West	47.6	+/- 3.0	1,609
Ethnic group			
White	45.7	+/- 1.1	12,979
Black or minority ethnic	38.8	+/- 3.1	1,451
Socio-economic group (NS-SEC)			
Higher socio-economic group	49.8	+/- 1.4	7,796
Lower socio-economic group	36.5	+/- 1.5	5,855
Highest educational qualification			
Degree	58.2	+/- 2.1	3,120
Other higher education below degree	54.0	+/- 3.2	1,385
A levels	48.6	+/- 2.6	2,220
Trade apprenticeships	35.2	+/- 4.4	680
Below A levels	41.6	+/- 2.2	2,867
Other qualifications – level unknown	36.9	+/- 5.0	540
No qualifications	31.4	+/- 1.9	3,616

Table 4 *Continued...*

	%	Range	Sample size
Personal income per annum			
No income / no work or scheme	45.8	+/- 4.1	849
Under £10,000	45.7	+/- 1.9	3,885
£10,000 – £19,999	44.6	+/- 2.2	3,041
£20,000 – £29,999	43.6	+/- 2.9	1,761
£30,000 – £39,999	48.5	+/- 3.8	1,003
Over £40,000	49.6	+/- 3.5	1,212
Engagement while growing up			
Attended the arts while growing up	54.8	+/- 1.8	4,363
Didn't attend the arts while growing up	40.6	+/- 1.2	10,089
Participated in the arts while growing up	54.0	+/- 1.4	7,016
Didn't participate in the arts while growing up	36.2	+/- 1.3	7,436

Table 5: *Ratings of most recent arts attendance and participation by adult arts audiences, 2008/09*

	%	Range	Sample size
Rating of most recent attendance			
Rated 7 or higher	85.5	+/- 1.0	6,973
Rated 10 out of 10	30.7	+/- 1.3	6,973
Definitely will attend again	77.2	+/- 1.2	6,973
Probably will attend again	19.1	+/- 1.1	6,973
Have recommended attending to friend or family member	74.9	+/- 1.3	6,973
Rated attendance 7 or higher by artform (where sample size is greater than 250)			
Art exhibition	82.1	+/- 3.9	573
Craft exhibition	70.0	+/- 5.3	440
Public art	82.2	+/- 5.1	333
Carnival	71.3	+/- 4.8	527
Play/drama	89.1	+/- 2.7	767
Pantomime	86.0	+/- 3.5	565
Musical	91.7	+/- 2.2	909
Classical music	91.5	+/- 4.2	256
Other live music	92.5	+/- 1.8	1,226
Rating of most recent participation			
Rated 7 or higher	85.8	+/- 1.3	4,409
Rated 10 out of 10	31.0	+/- 1.7	4,409
Definitely will participate again	83.3	+/- 1.4	4,409
Probably will participate again	13.6	+/- 1.2	4,409
Have recommended participating to a friend or family member	57.8	+/- 1.8	4,409

Table 6: *Proportion of adult arts attenders reporting a high-quality experience at their most recent attendance, 2008/09*

	%	Range	Sample size
Full sample	60.3	+/- 1.4	6,973
Gender			
Men	57.7	+/- 2.2	2,955
Women	62.6	+/- 1.8	4,018
Age group			
16–24	55.1	+/- 4.9	609
25–44	60.7	+/- 2.3	2,564
45–64	62.5	+/- 2.4	2,337
65–74	61.8	+/- 3.9	884
75+	56.9	+/- 5.0	579
Disability status			
No longstanding disability/illness/infirmity	60.6	+/- 1.6	5,677
Longstanding disability, illness or infirmity	58.7	+/- 3.3	1,283
Government region			
North East	63.5	+/- 6.6	315
North West	62.6	+/- 3.8	942
Yorkshire & Humber	60.6	+/- 4.8	605
East Midlands	56.6	+/- 4.8	614
West Midlands	66.4	+/- 4.3	691
East of England	56.4	+/- 4.1	850
London	60.0	+/- 3.9	939
South East	57.3	+/- 3.5	1,195
South West	63.2	+/- 4.1	822
Ethnic group			
White	60.6	+/- 1.5	6,377
Black or minority ethnic	57.2	+/- 4.9	585
Socio-economic group (NS-SEC)			
Higher socio-economic group	61.0	+/- 1.8	4,348
Lower socio-economic group	60.8	+/- 2.5	2,206
Highest educational qualification			
Degree	59.2	+/- 2.7	1,935
Other higher education below degree	63.7	+/- 4.1	822
A levels	58.6	+/- 3.5	1,183
Trade apprenticeships	65.6	+/- 6.7	293
Below A levels	62.4	+/- 3.2	1,361
Other qualifications – level unknown	60.2	+/- 7.8	228

Table 6 *Continued...*

	%	Range	Sample size
No qualifications	57.8	+/- 3.5	1,141
Personal income per annum			
No income / no work or scheme	57.4	+/- 6.5	333
Under £10,000	58.9	+/- 2.9	1,645
£10,000 – £19,999	60.8	+/- 3.1	1,465
£20,000 – £29,999	61.6	+/- 3.8	966
£30,000 – £39,999	61.8	+/- 4.7	612
Over £40,000	57.6	+/- 4.4	738
Engagement in the arts			
Engaged 3 or more times in the last 12 months	62.0	+/- 1.6	5,466
Did not engage 3 or more times in the last 12 months	54.3	+/- 3.1	1,507
Engagement while growing up			
Attended the arts while growing up	61.9	+/- 2.0	3,345
Didn't attend the arts while growing up	58.9	+/- 2.0	3,628
Participated in the arts while growing up	61.3	+/- 1.7	5,056
Didn't participate in the arts while growing up	59.9	+/- 2.7	1,917
Artform			
Exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture	50.5	+/- 5.0	573
Craft exhibition (not crafts market)	40.6	+/- 5.7	440
A public art display or installation	54.6	+/- 6.6	333
Carnival	45.1	+/- 5.2	527
Play/drama	64.6	+/- 4.2	767
Pantomime	59.1	+/- 5.0	565
Musical	73.0	+/- 3.6	909
Classical music concert	64.3	+/- 7.2	256
Other live music event	74.2	+/- 3.0	1,226

Table 7: *Attitudes to the arts among adults in England, 2008/09 (attitudinal sub-sample only)*

	%	Range	Sample size
Reasons for engagement: % agreement among current arts engagers			
It's what people like me do	19.5	+/- 2.1	2,006
They are fun and entertaining	36.9	+/- 2.5	2,006
They bring colour and excitement to life	54.1	+/- 2.7	2,006
They help me to express myself	40.4	+/- 2.6	2,006
They encourage me to think differently about things	47.2	+/- 2.7	2,006
They are a good way of spending time with friends and family	56.5	+/- 2.7	2,006
Reasons for non engagement: % agreement among current non-engagers who do not want to engage			
I wouldn't enjoy them	56.5	+/- 6.5	338
They don't mean anything to me	54.2	+/- 6.5	338
There are other things I prefer to do in my leisure time	65.6	+/- 6.2	338

Table 8: *Attitude towards future engagement among those not currently engaged, 2008/09*

	%	Range	Sample size
Future attendance			
Would like to attend	37.6	+/- 1.6	5,036
Would not like to attend	61.9	+/- 1.7	5,036
Future participation			
Would like to participate	26.0	+/- 1.2	8,050
Would not like to participate	71.0	+/- 1.2	8,050

Table 9: *Percentage agreement that ‘the arts are not for people like me’ by demographic subgroup, 2008/09*

	%	Range	Sample size
Full sample	25.8	+/- 2.0	2,702
Gender			
Men	28.2	+/- 3.2	1,179
Women	23.7	+/- 2.6	1,523
Age group			
16–24	27.2	+/- 7.2	220
25–44	23.7	+/- 3.3	945
45–64	24.5	+/- 3.6	827
65–74	24.3	+/- 5.3	377
75+	25.9	+/- 5.8	333
Disability status			
No longstanding disability/illness/infirmity	24.6	+/- 2.3	2,037
Longstanding disability, illness or infirmity	30.5	+/- 4.3	660
Government region			
North East	28.2	+/- 8.8	151
North West	26.8	+/- 5.5	383
Yorkshire & Humber	27.0	+/- 6.7	253
East Midlands	27.9	+/- 7.0	240
West Midlands	27.9	+/- 6.5	279
East of England	25.6	+/- 6.0	307
London	21.4	+/- 5.2	357
South East	22.2	+/- 4.8	432
South West	30.9	+/- 6.4	300
Ethnic group			
White	25.5	+/- 2.1	2,463
Black or minority ethnic	28.3	+/- 7.1	235
Socio-economic group (NS-SEC)			
Higher socio-economic group	18.9	+/- 2.5	1,448
Lower socio-economic group	34.5	+/- 3.4	1,116
Highest educational qualification			
Degree	14.9	+/- 3.5	588
Other higher education below degree	15.0	+/- 5.4	260
A levels	23.4	+/- 4.9	428
Trade apprenticeships	30.8	+/- 9.2	146
Below A levels	28.0	+/- 4.7	542
Other qualifications – level unknown	37.2	+/- 12.5	87
No qualifications	39.6	+/- 4.6	646

Table 9 *Continued...*

	%	Range	Sample size
Personal income per annum			
No income / no work or scheme	31.9	+/- 8.9	159
Under £10,000	29.3	+/- 4.1	732
£10,000 – £19,999	23.3	+/- 4.3	571
£20,000 – £29,999	20.8	+/- 5.4	324
£30,000 – £39,999	24.3	+/- 7.7	183
Over £40,000	15.6	+/- 5.9	222
Engagement in the arts			
Engaged 3 or more times in the last 12 months	18.3	+/- 2.9	1,073
Did not engage 3 or more times in the last 12 months	37.9	+/- 2.9	1,629
Engagement while growing up			
Attended the arts while growing up	20.0	+/- 2.9	1,082
Didn't attend the arts while growing up	29.9	+/- 2.7	1,620
Participated in the arts while growing up	21.5	+/- 3.2	943
Didn't participate in the arts while growing up	34.2	+/- 2.7	1,759

Table 10: *Percentage agreement that ‘there are lots of opportunities to get involved in the arts if I want’ by demographic subgroup, 2008/09*

	%	Range	Sample size
Full sample	50.3	+/- 2.3	2,702
Gender			
Men	48.8	+/- 3.5	1,179
Women	51.6	+/- 3.1	1,523
Age group			
16–24	48.2	+/- 8.1	220
25–44	48.2	+/- 3.9	945
45–64	55.9	+/- 4.2	827
65–74	51.9	+/- 6.2	377
75+	42.8	+/- 6.6	333
Disability status			
No longstanding disability/illness/infirmity	52.2	+/- 2.7	2,037
Longstanding disability, illness or infirmity	43.3	+/- 4.7	660
Government region			
North East	44.0	+/- 9.8	151
North West	51.1	+/- 6.2	383
Yorkshire & Humber	50.8	+/- 7.6	253
East Midlands	48.2	+/- 7.8	240
West Midlands	46.1	+/- 7.2	279
East of England	47.8	+/- 6.9	307
London	54.5	+/- 6.4	357
South East	54.9	+/- 5.8	432
South West	47.1	+/- 7.0	300
Ethnic group			
White	50.6	+/- 2.4	2,463
Black or minority ethnic	46.1	+/- 7.9	235
Socio-economic group (NS-SEC)			
Higher socio-economic group	54.8	+/- 3.2	1,448
Lower socio-economic group	44.4	+/- 3.6	1,116
Highest educational qualification			
Degree	57.7	+/- 4.9	588
Other higher education below degree	54.3	+/- 7.5	260
A levels	54.1	+/- 5.8	428
Trade apprenticeships	46.6	+/- 10.0	146
Below A levels	50.4	+/- 5.2	542
Other qualifications – level unknown	48.1	+/- 12.9	87

Table 10 *Continued...*

	%	Range	Sample size
No qualifications	38.6	+/- 4.6	646
Personal income per annum			
No income / no work or scheme	41.4	+/- 9.4	159
Under £10,000	50.9	+/- 4.5	732
£10,000 – £19,999	52.3	+/- 5.1	571
£20,000 – £29,999	54.9	+/- 6.7	324
£30,000 – £39,999	50.8	+/- 8.9	183
Over £40,000	60.0	+/- 7.9	222
Engagement in the arts			
Engaged 3 or more times in the last 12 months	58.2	+/- 3.6	1,073
Did not engage 3 or more times in the last 12 months	37.6	+/- 2.9	1,629
Engagement while growing up			
Attended the arts while growing up	55.9	+/- 3.6	1,082
Didn't attend the arts while growing up	46.3	+/- 3.0	1,620
Participated in the arts while growing up	54.3	+/- 3.9	943
Didn't participate in the arts while growing up	42.7	+/- 2.8	1,759

Notes

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