

Working conditions of dancers in the contemporary dance sector

EDN workshop on dance production and funding in Europe
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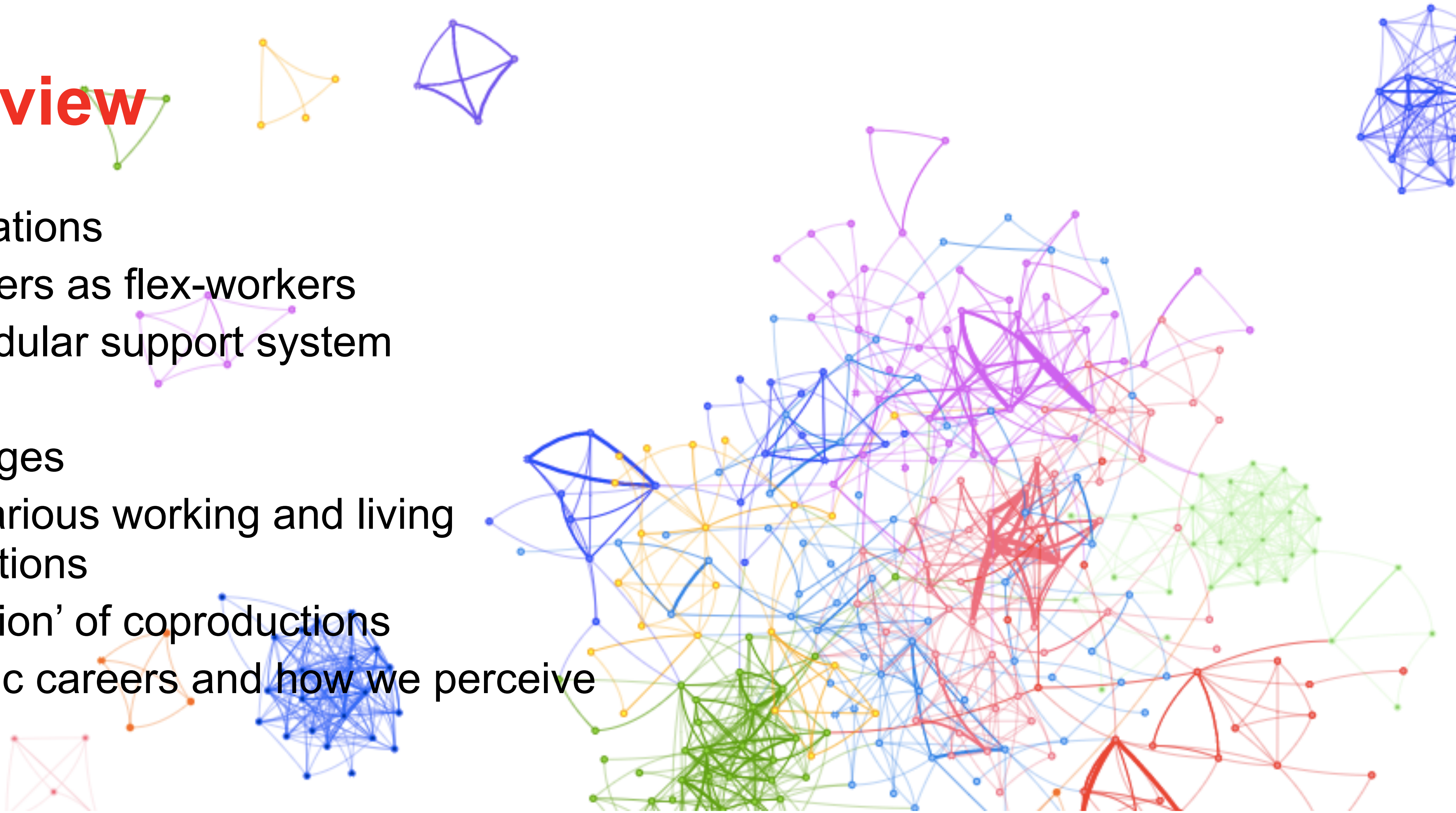
Overview

Observations

- Dancers as flex-workers
- A modular support system

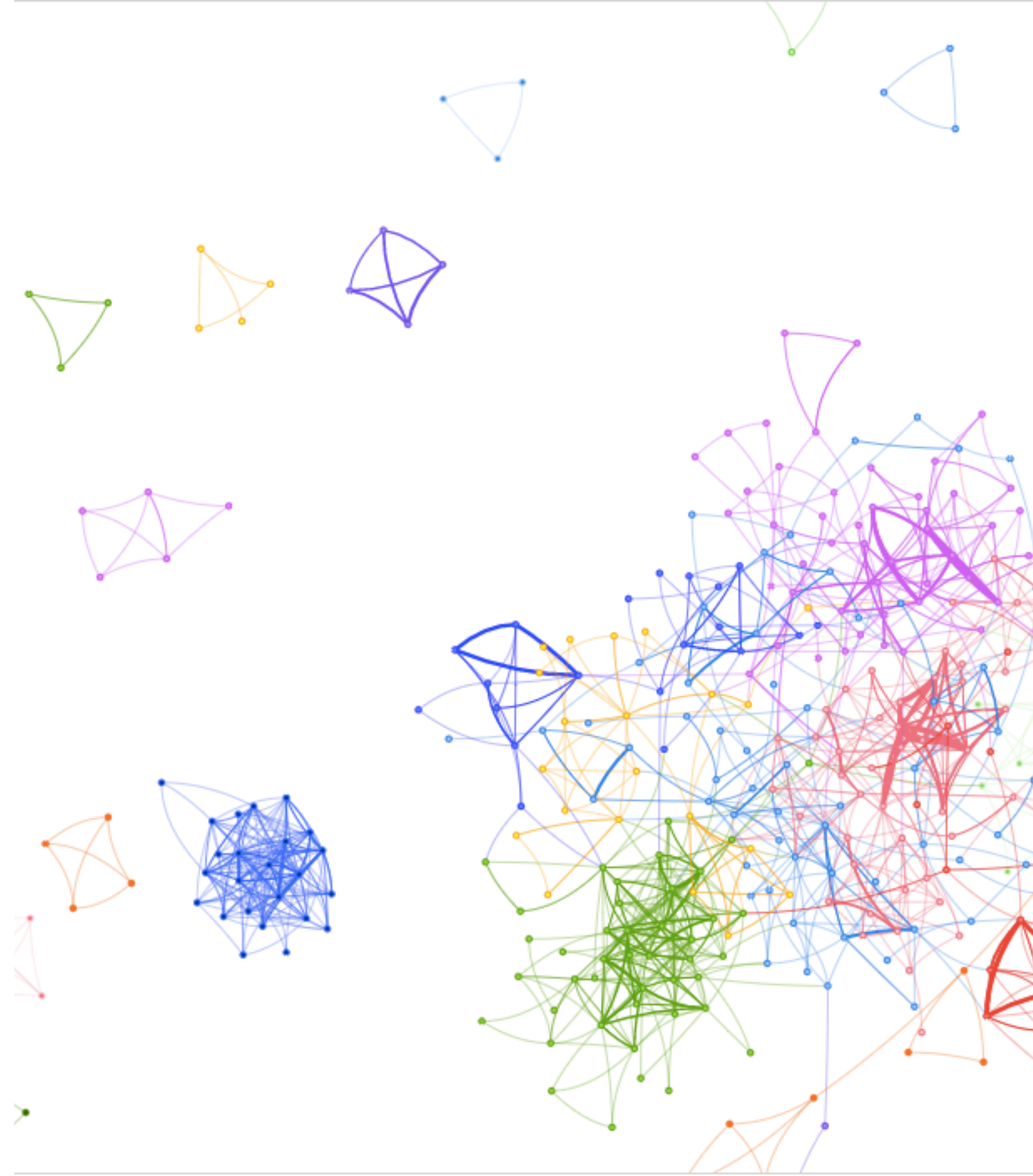
Challenges

- Precarious working and living conditions
- 'Inflation' of coproductions
- Artistic careers and how we perceive them



Dancers as flex-workers

- System change: from companies with ensembles and long-term engagements to project-based work
- ‘Boundaryless careers’
 - high mobilities
 - high demands for non-artistic skills
- ‘Multiple job holding’
 - inside and outside of the arts



Multiple job holding

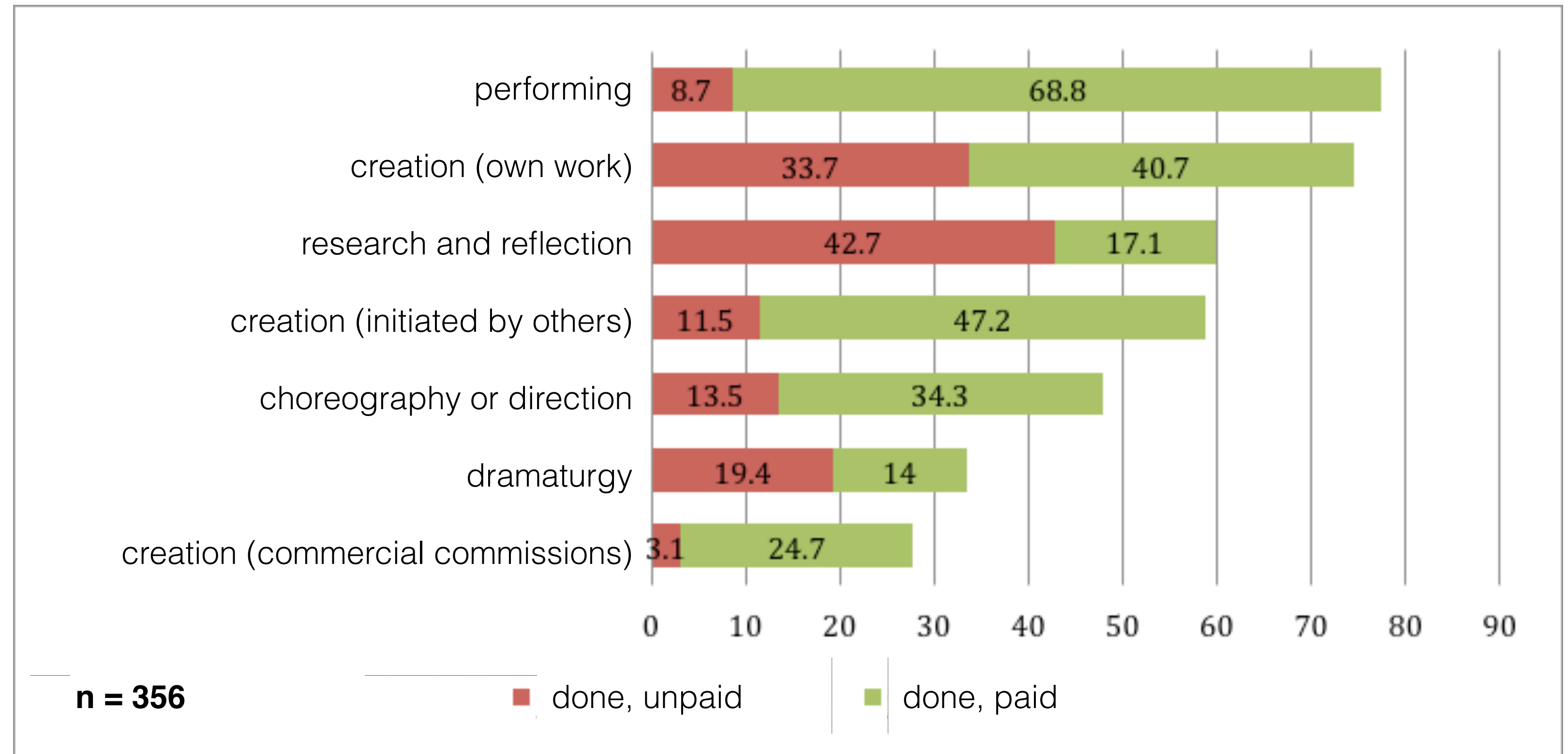
Performing artists in Flanders - *artistic activities in PA* (2014)

Survey research on the socioeconomic condition of artists in Flanders

Strong focus on activities and income

2016

Film, literature, visual arts, music, performing arts



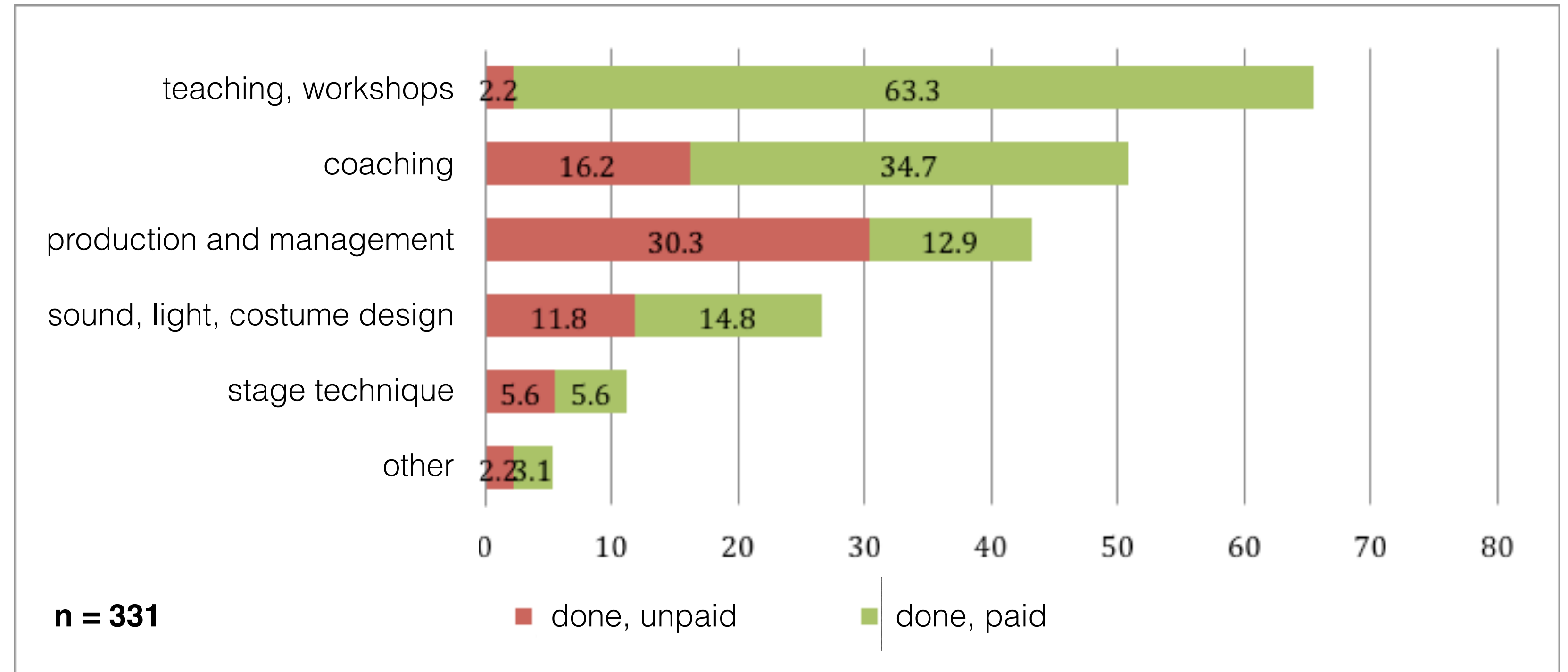
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Performing artists in Flanders - arts related activities in PA (2014)



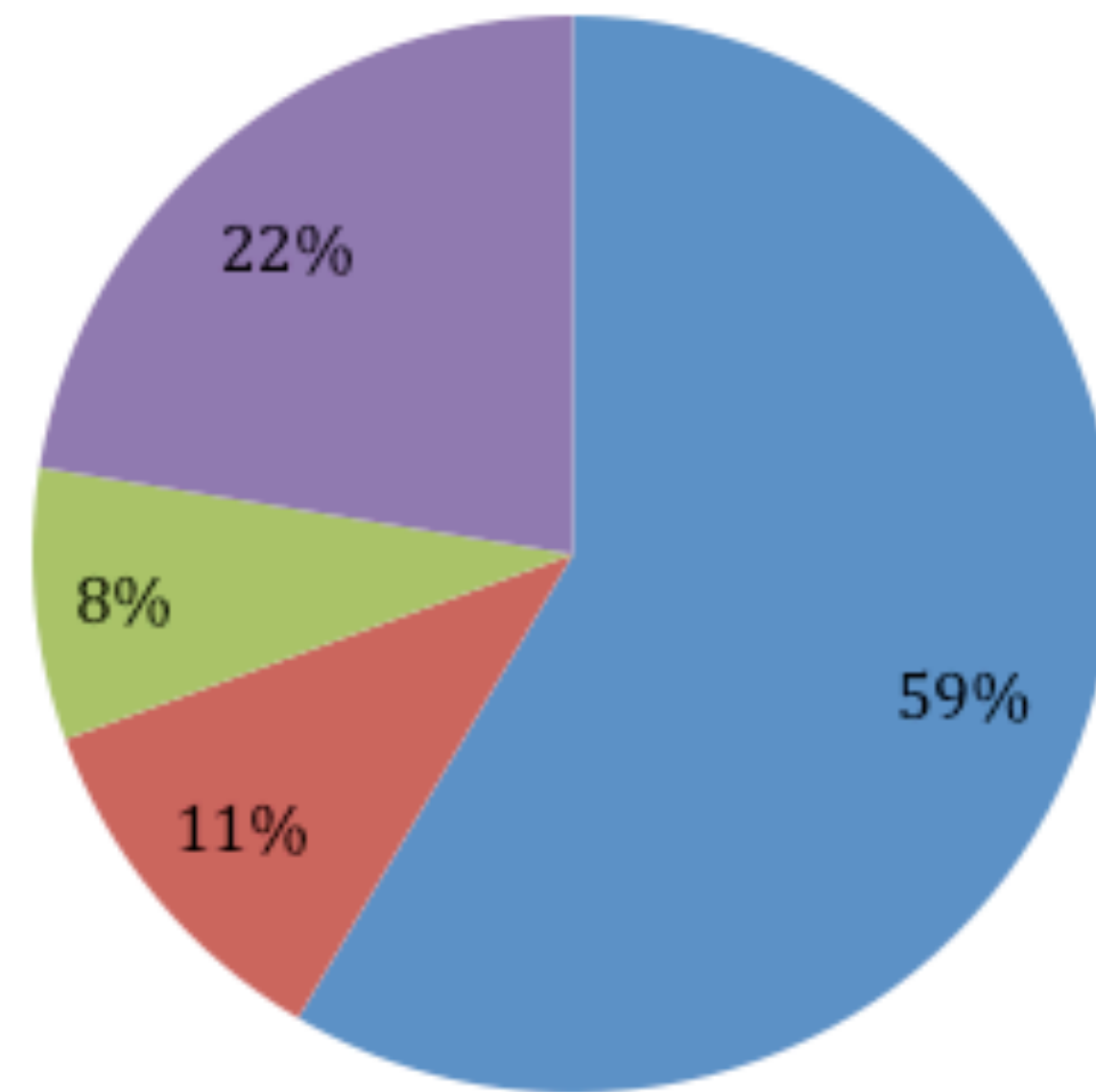
Survey research on the socioeconomic condition of artists in Flanders

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Performing artists in Flanders - *distribution of work time* (2014)



- artistic activities in the performing arts
- related activities in the performing arts
- artistic activities in other disciplines
- non-artistic work

n = 347




a story of *diversification*

- diverse ways of working
- diverse aspirations
- diverse trajectories/careers
- diverse needs

A modular support system

Parallel evolutions in the field of support structures

- Different models for support of artistic research, production and presentation
 - Modular support system in order to create tailor-made solutions for diverse projects and trajectories of artists
 - Specialisation of functions
 - Collaborations
 - dance companies
 - theatres
 - production houses
 - workspaces
 - management offices
 - sales offices
 - artist-run support structures
 - ...
- 

Challenges

- Precarious working and living conditions for artists
- 'Inflation' of coproductions
- Artistic careers and how we perceive them



Precarious working and living conditions for artists

Net income artists in Flanders - employees (2014)

	Film makers	Visual artists	Writers & illustrators	Musicians & composers	Performing artists	Actors (2014)
Average	24.965	14.715	21.752	22.877	17.504	19.952
PC 25	12.600	7.000	12.000	12.000	11.360	14.017
Median	18.000	13.786	20.670	20.000	17.142	19.000
PC 75	26.000	20.000	29.850	29.700	24.000	24.000
Number	139	211	97	305	166	173

Flex-working =

- low overall income
- high uncertainty

International mobility adds risks - 'guest workers'

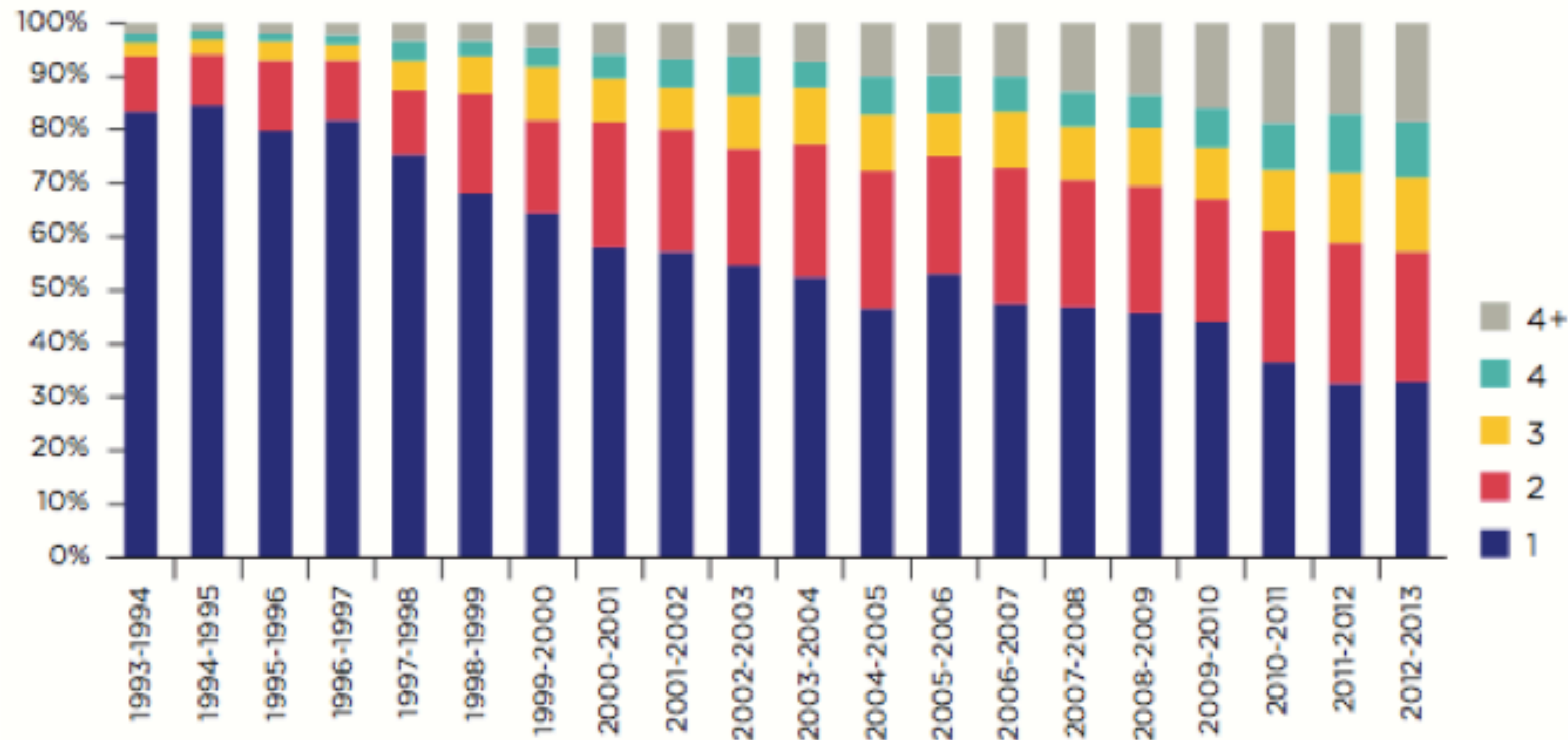
Average time spent on core artistic work = 60% >< average income from these activities = 47%

Performing artists living solely from core artistic work = 10%
Performing artists living solely from work in the arts sector = 27%
(lowest percentages of all disciplines in Flanders)

Performing artists more than other artists consider to quit: 50%
considers it from time to time, 9% often

'Inflation' of coproductions

Number of coproducers / production - Flemish PA - 1993-2013



Increase in collaborations
><
fragmentation of means

More partners =

- more coordination
- risk of thinner engagements

Source: production database performing arts FAI - VTi

Artistic careers and how we perceive them

- How to build a sustainable artistic career in the flex-work context?
- How to support artists careers longer term in the flex-work context?
- Diversification --> careers are non-linear and do not necessarily grow
 - How to think 'success' away from the growth model?

Read more
on flandersartsinstitute.be

