



The Canada Council | Le Conseil des Arts
for the Arts | du Canada

Arts Sector Profile #3

**Performing Arts Companies
Funded by the Canada Council:
10-Year Audience Trend**

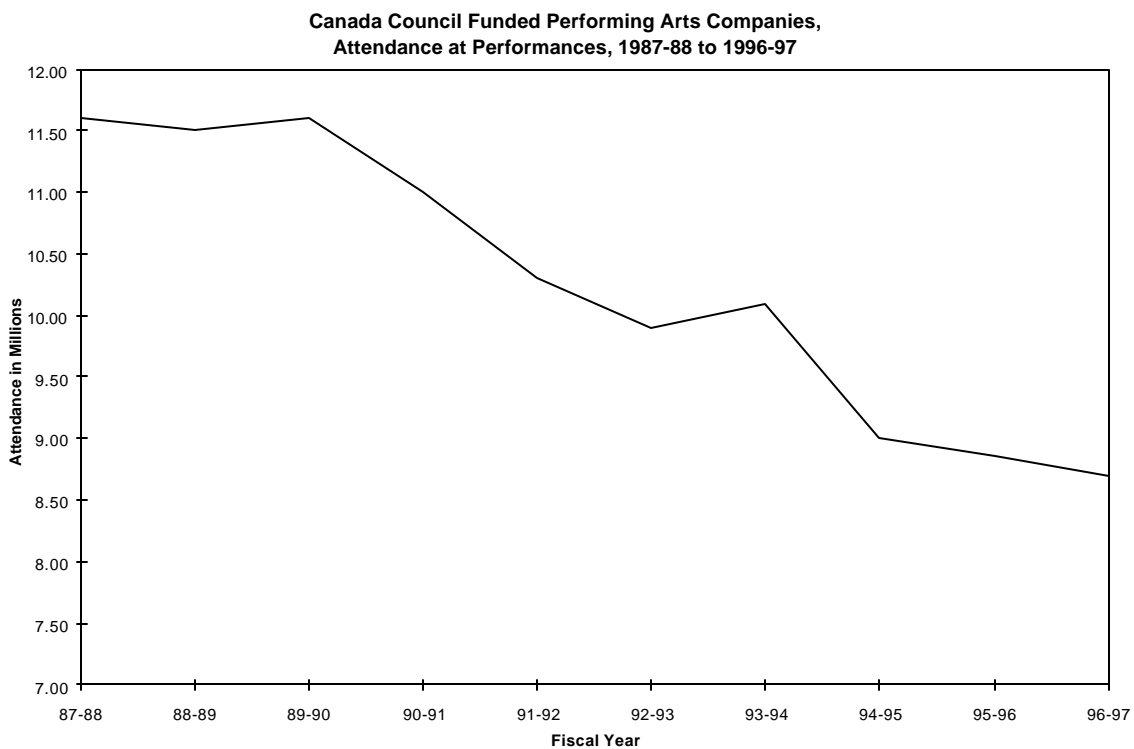
*Planning and Research
The Canada Council for the Arts
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Performing Arts Companies Funded by the Canada Council: 10-Year Audience Trend

Overview: Decrease in Attendance and Performances

Canadians bought close to 9 million tickets to performances given by performing arts companies funded by the Canada Council in 1996-97¹.

Although the number of tickets sold is high, it is about 25% lower than 10 years earlier. Over the period 1987-88 to 1996-97², attendance fell more than 25% from 11.6 million to 8.7 million.



There are several possible reasons for this decline in attendance. First, there are fewer performances available to see. Performing arts companies are facing cutbacks in public funding at all levels of government (public funding makes up a significant 30% of the revenues of performing arts companies). For example, between 1993-94 and 1994-95 attendance fell by 11% while the number of performances dropped by more than 9%. Also over these two years, Council grant programs were cut by over \$8 million. During the whole period 1987-88 to 1996-97, the number of performances given by Council-funded companies fell by 25%, virtually the same percentage decrease as for attendance.

¹ This analysis covers 270 Canada Council funded performing arts companies that are surveyed in the Statistics Canada Survey of Performing Arts Companies (see Appendix 1 for more detail).

² Data for 1995-96 are interpolated as the survey became biennial after 1994-95.

The second explanation for the drop in attendance is the recession of the early 1990's which had an impact on discretionary consumer spending such as the purchase of performing arts tickets.

Third, competition from other leisure activities and growth in the commercial performing arts also undoubtedly had an impact on consumers' buying habits.

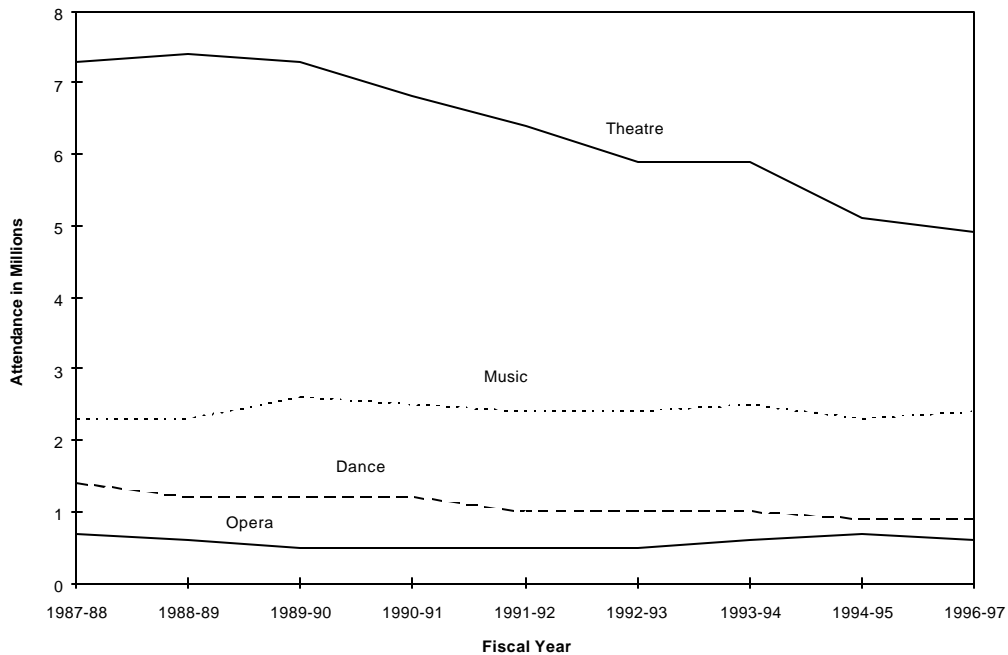
Attendance by Category

Attendance by Discipline: Significant Decreases Except for Music

The chart below shows a dramatic drop in attendance at performances given by Canada Council funded theatre companies, where attendance fell from 7.3 million to 4.9 million over 10 years, a decrease of 33%. This is despite the fact that there were many more Council-funded theatre companies included in the figures.

There was an even larger decrease in dance attendance (37%), which does not appear as dramatic as theatre on this chart since the relative size of the audience is smaller. Opera attendance fell by 18%, while music attendance actually increased by 5% over the ten years.

Canada Council Funded Performing Arts Companies,
Attendance at Performances by Discipline, 1987-88 to 1996-97



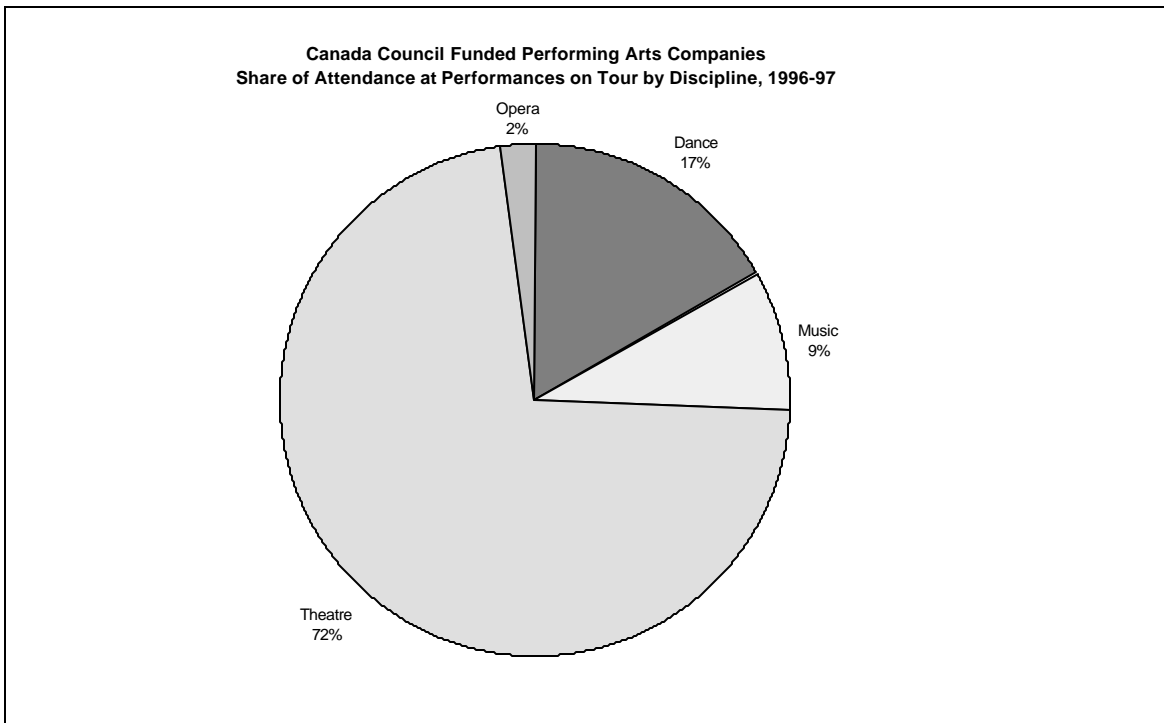
Attendance at Performances on Tour: A Shrinking Share of Attendance

A total of 2.1 million tickets were sold to performances on tour in 1996-97 down 45% from 3.8 million in 1987-88. Attendance at performances on tour accounts for one-quarter of overall attendance in 1996-97 down from one-third in 1987-88.

Canada Council Funded Performing Arts Companies, Share of Attendance by Venue of Performance	1987-88	1996-97
Home	63%	73%
Tour	34%	24%
Other	4%	3%

The significant drop in attendance at performances on tour may be related to several factors including decreasing public funding available for touring activity and possibly the increased cost of touring.

Theatre accounts for almost three-quarters of attendance at performances on tour. A total of 1.5 million tickets sold were for theatre performances on tour in 1996-97.



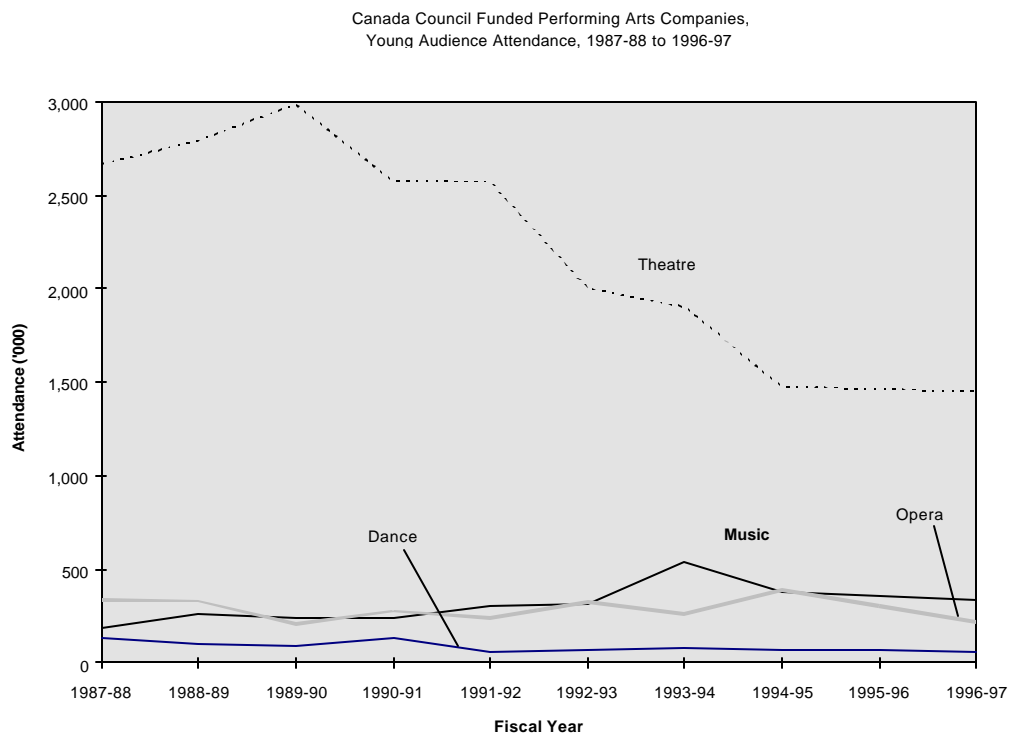
The number of performances on tour fell from 10,600 to just over 6,100 over the ten-year time period, a drop of 42%.

Attendance by Young Audiences: Theatre for Young Audiences Worst Hit

A total of 1.9 million tickets were sold to performances for young audiences in 1996-97. This makes up more than one-fifth (22%) of total attendance at Canada Council funded performing arts companies (down from 26% a decade earlier).

Young audience theatre accounts for most of the young audience attendance and a very large share of this involves young audience theatre performances on tour.

Theatre for young audiences has suffered a greater decline in attendance than any other category of performance, falling by 46% over ten years. The number of young audience theatre performances fell by close to the same percentage (43%).



There are about 25 theatre companies across Canada funded by the Council whose mandate is theatre for young audiences. Some of these companies are known internationally. This accounts for the relative importance of young audiences in theatre.

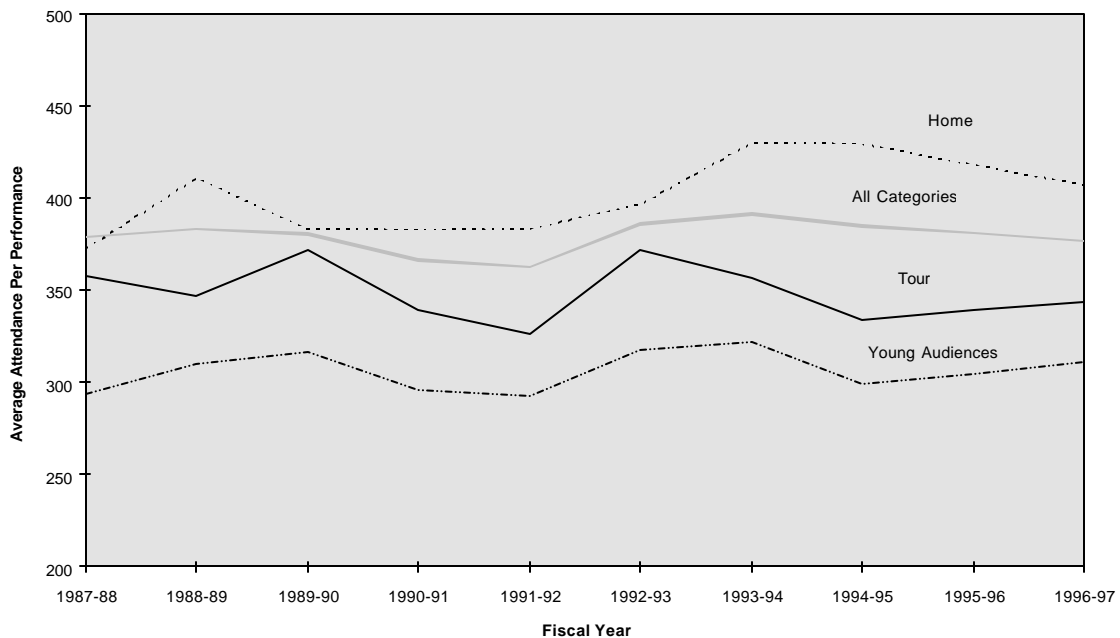
Although the Council does not fund any similar organizations in dance, music and opera, companies in these disciplines put on performances aimed at young audiences. Proportionately, the discipline with the smallest young audience attendance is dance (7.5% of total attendance). In music, the young audience percentage is over 14% and in opera 16%.

Canada Council Funded Performing Arts Companies, Young Audiences as Share of Total by Discipline, 1996-97	Young Audience	Total	Young Audience as % of Total
Dance	64	858	7.5%
Music	342	2,378	14.4%
Theatre	1,450	4,876	29.7%
Opera	91	550	16.5%

Average Attendance Per Performance: Stable Audiences

Although both attendance and performances have decreased for Canada Council funded performing arts companies, the average attendance per performance has remained relatively stable totalling 377 in 1996-97 (i.e., an average of 377 tickets sold per performance) compared with 379 in 1987-88. The number has fluctuated somewhat in the intervening years but not dramatically. For individual categories such as home, tour and youth attendance, there has been more fluctuation. However, in each case the average in 1996-97 is close to the average in 1987-88.

Canada Council Funded Performing Arts Companies,
Average Attendance Per Performance by Category, 1987-88 to 1996-97



Appendix 1: Statistics Canada Survey of Performing Arts Companies

Statistics Canada undertakes an annual (currently biennial) census survey of not-for-profit performing arts companies. In 1996-97, 602 companies responded to this survey.

Each year the survey is undertaken, the Council obtains a profile from the survey of its clients which respond to the survey. In 1996-97, there were 270 companies responding to the survey which had received Council funding.

Although the 270 Council-funded companies in the survey account for 45% of the number of companies, they make up 66% of total attendance and 81% of the total revenues of all companies in the survey and therefore account for a good proportion of the not-for-profit performing arts activity in Canada.

In 1996-97, the Council funded a total of 680 organizations through dance, music and theatre sections. A number of the organizations funded through these programs would not, however, be within the scope of the Statistics Canada Performing Arts Survey (e.g. grant recipients in the Sound Recording Program, some grant recipients in the small ensembles program, artist management companies, festivals and presenters). Taking the above into account, the Statistics Canada data profile on Canada Council funded performing arts companies is quite representative of the Council's clients who would be within the scope of the survey.

Performing Arts Companies Funded by the Canada Council for the Arts,
Ten-Year Trend in Attendance, 1986-87 to 1996-97

	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
ALL DISCIPLINES										
Number of Companies	232	236	228	241	236	243	232	230	..	270
Attendance ('000)	11,643	11,483	11,617	11,023	10,258	9,897	10,054	8,961	..	8,661
Home	7,387	7,599	7,738	7,701	7,116	7,041	6,734	6,319	..	6,283
Tour	3,800	3,678	3,574	3,162	3,035	2,732	2,815	2,390	..	2,103
Other	456	206	305	160	107	124	505	252	..	275
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>3,114</i>	<i>3,305</i>	<i>3,415</i>	<i>3,040</i>	<i>3,040</i>	<i>2,517</i>	<i>2,625</i>	<i>2,072</i>	..	<i>1,947</i>
Performances	30,744	29,946	30,536	30,091	28,287	25,655	25,708	23,280	..	22,982
Home	19,829	18,498	20,191	20,126	18,567	17,749	15,661	14,720	..	15,442
Tour	10,611	10,600	9,609	9,306	9,306	7,341	7,899	7,158	..	6,126
Other	304	848	736	659	414	565	2,148	1,402	..	1,414
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>10,605</i>	<i>10,664</i>	<i>10,773</i>	<i>10,265</i>	<i>10,393</i>	<i>7,937</i>	<i>8,156</i>	<i>6,933</i>	..	<i>6,258</i>
Attendance per Performance	379	383	380	366	363	386	391	385	..	377
Home	373	411	383	383	383	397	430	429	..	407
Tour	358	347	372	340	326	372	356	334	..	343
Other	1,500	243	414	243	258	219	235	180	..	194
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>294</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>317</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>293</i>	<i>317</i>	<i>322</i>	<i>299</i>	..	<i>311</i>
Attendance per Company	50,185	48,657	50,952	45,739	43,466	40,728	43,336	38,961	..	32,078
Home	31,841	32,199	33,939	31,954	30,153	28,975	29,026	27,474	..	23,270
Tour	16,379	15,585	15,675	13,120	12,860	11,243	12,134	10,391	..	7,789
Other	1,966	873	1,338	664	453	510	2,177	1,096	..	1,019
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>13,422</i>	<i>14,004</i>	<i>14,978</i>	<i>12,614</i>	<i>12,881</i>	<i>10,358</i>	<i>11,315</i>	<i>9,009</i>	..	<i>7,211</i>
Performances per Company	133	127	134	125	120	106	111	101	..	85
Home	85	78	89	84	79	73	68	64	..	57
Tour	46	45	42	39	39	30	34	31	..	23
Other	1	4	3	3	2	2	9	6	..	5
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>30</i>	..	<i>23</i>

DANCE

Number of Companies	27	29	29	29	27	29	29	34	..	36
Attendance ('000)	1,365	1,249	1,204	1,213	965	1,045	1,044	884	..	858
Home	759	576	588	632	567	535	534	489	..	484
Tour	601	628	600	569	397	507	458	361	..	348
Other	5	45	16	12	1	3	52	34	..	26
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>68</i>	..	<i>64</i>
Performances	1,824	1,776	1,410	1,376	1,039	1,149	1,371	1,311	..	1,258
Home	934	568	582	551	464	529	598	613	..	628
Tour	849	943	775	796	554	599	621	547	..	547
Other	41	265	53	29	21	21	152	151	..	83
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>374</i>	<i>258</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>246</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>127</i>	..	<i>155</i>
Attendance per Performance	748	703	854	882	929	909	761	674	..	682
Home	813	1,014	1,010	1,147	1,222	1,011	893	798	..	771
Tour	708	666	774	715	717	846	738	660	..	636
Other	122	170	302	414	48	143	342	225	..	313
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>350</i>	<i>384</i>	<i>544</i>	<i>524</i>	<i>686</i>	<i>670</i>	<i>539</i>	<i>535</i>	..	<i>413</i>
Attendance per Company	50,556	43,069	41,517	41,828	35,741	36,034	36,000	26,000	..	23,833
Home	28,111	19,862	20,276	21,793	21,000	18,448	18,414	14,382	..	13,444
Tour	22,259	21,655	20,690	19,621	14,704	17,483	15,793	10,618	..	9,667
Other	185	1,552	552	414	37	103	1,793	1,000	..	722
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>4,852</i>	<i>3,414</i>	<i>3,000</i>	<i>4,448</i>	<i>2,185</i>	<i>2,586</i>	<i>2,828</i>	<i>2,000</i>	..	<i>1,778</i>
Performances per Company	68	61	49	47	38	40	47	39	..	35
Home	35	20	20	19	17	18	21	18	..	17
Tour	31	33	27	27	21	21	21	16	..	15
Other	2	9	2	1	1	1	5	4	..	2
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	..	<i>4</i>

MUSIC

Number of Companies	40	42	45	45	47	44	47	44	..	59
Attendance ('000)	2,273	2,292	2,611	2,535	2,410	2,408	2,528	2,331	..	2,378
Home	1,710	1,939	2,143	2,242	2,162	2,116	2,134	2,012	..	2,055
Tour	127	263	194	264	181	260	359	277	..	192
Other	436	90	274	29	67	32	35	42	..	131
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>188</i>	<i>259</i>	<i>245</i>	<i>238</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>318</i>	<i>539</i>	<i>382</i>	..	<i>342</i>
Performances	2,076	1,901	2,238	2,278	2,360	2,198	3,058	2,839	..	2,549
Home	1,857	1,593	1,798	1,847	1,962	1,782	1,929	1,845	..	2,080
Tour	171	194	264	283	286	324	1,069	903	..	330
Other	48	114	176	148	112	92	60	91	..	139
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>262</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>326</i>	<i>319</i>	<i>402</i>	<i>379</i>	<i>1,056</i>	<i>843</i>	..	<i>347</i>
Attendance per Performance	1,095	1,206	1,167	1,113	1,021	1,096	827	821	..	933
Home	921	1,217	1,192	1,214	1,102	1,187	1,106	1,091	..	988
Tour	743	1,356	735	933	633	802	336	307	..	582
Other	9,083	789	1,557	196	598	348	583	462	..	942
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>718</i>	<i>863</i>	<i>752</i>	<i>746</i>	<i>771</i>	<i>839</i>	<i>510</i>	<i>453</i>	..	<i>986</i>
Attendance per Company	56,825	54,571	58,022	56,333	51,277	54,727	53,787	52,977	..	40,305
Home	42,750	46,167	47,622	49,822	46,000	48,091	45,404	45,727	..	34,831
Tour	3,175	6,262	4,311	5,867	3,851	5,909	7,638	6,295	..	3,254
Other	10,900	2,143	6,089	644	1,426	727	745	955	..	2,220
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>4,700</i>	<i>6,167</i>	<i>5,444</i>	<i>5,289</i>	<i>6,596</i>	<i>7,227</i>	<i>11,468</i>	<i>8,682</i>	..	<i>5,797</i>
Performances per Company	52	45	50	51	50	50	65	65	..	43
Home	46	38	40	41	42	41	41	42	..	35
Tour	4	5	6	6	6	7	23	21	..	6
Other	1	3	4	3	2	2	1	2	..	2
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>19</i>	..	<i>6</i>

THEATRE

Number of Companies	156	156	145	158	153	161	147	141	..	160
Attendance ('000)	7,334	7,382	7,344	6,769	6,364	5,922	5,892	5,068	..	4,876
Home	4,302	4,595	4,568	4,388	3,919	3,915	3,497	3,265	..	3,258
Tour	3,016	2,717	2,761	2,262	2,410	1,923	1,983	1,633	..	1,519
Other	16	70	15	119	35	84	412	170	..	99
<i>Youth(1)</i>	2,666	2,794	2,987	2,575	2,570	2,003	1,904	1,477	..	1,450
Performances	26,152	25,672	26,417	25,889	24,342	21,746	20,691	18,444	..	18,516
Home	16,542	15,937	17,439	17,395	15,739	15,028	12,611	11,725	..	12,242
Tour	9,395	9,266	8,471	8,012	8,331	6,297	6,181	5,614	..	5,136
Other	215	469	507	482	272	421	1,899	1,105	..	1,138
<i>Youth(1)</i>	9,631	9,775	10,079	9,424	9,661	7,119	6,687	5,573	..	5,534
Attendance per Performance	280	288	278	261	261	272	285	275	..	263
Home	260	288	262	252	249	261	277	278	..	266
Tour	321	293	326	282	289	305	321	291	..	296
Other	74	149	30	247	129	200	217	154	..	87
<i>Youth(1)</i>	277	286	296	273	266	281	285	265	..	262
Attendance per Company	47,013	47,321	50,648	42,842	41,595	36,783	40,082	35,943	..	30,475
Home	27,577	29,455	31,503	27,772	25,614	24,317	23,789	23,156	..	20,363
Tour	19,333	17,417	19,041	14,316	15,752	11,944	13,490	11,582	..	9,494
Other	103	449	103	753	229	522	2,803	1,206	..	619
<i>Youth(1)</i>	17,090	17,910	20,600	16,297	16,797	12,441	12,952	10,475	..	9,063
Performances per Company	168	165	182	164	159	135	141	131	..	116
Home	106	102	120	110	103	93	86	83	..	77
Tour	60	59	58	51	54	39	42	40	..	32
Other	1	3	3	3	2	3	13	8	..	7
<i>Youth(1)</i>	62	63	70	60	63	44	45	40	..	35

OPERA

Number of Companies	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	11	..	15
Attendance ('000)	671	559	458	506	519	520	590	677	..	550
Home	616	489	439	438	468	474	570	552	..	487
Tour	55	70	19	68	47	42	15	119	..	44
Other	0	0	0	0	4	4	5	6	..	19
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>145</i>	..	<i>91</i>
Performances	692	597	471	548	546	562	588	686	..	659
Home	496	400	372	333	402	410	523	537	..	492
Tour	196	197	99	215	135	121	28	94	..	113
Other	0	0	0	0	9	31	37	55	..	54
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>338</i>	<i>331</i>	<i>208</i>	<i>276</i>	<i>244</i>	<i>327</i>	<i>261</i>	<i>390</i>	..	<i>222</i>
Attendance per Performance	970	936	972	923	951	925	1,003	987	..	835
Home	1,242	1,223	1,180	1,315	1,164	1,156	1,090	1,028	..	990
Tour	281	355	192	316	348	347	536	1,266	..	389
Other	0	0	0	0	444	129	135	109	..	352
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>379</i>	<i>459</i>	<i>462</i>	<i>359</i>	<i>414</i>	<i>370</i>	<i>383</i>	<i>372</i>	..	<i>410</i>
Attendance per Company	74,556	62,111	50,889	56,222	57,667	57,778	65,556	61,545	..	36,667
Home	68,444	54,333	48,778	48,667	52,000	52,667	63,333	50,182	..	32,467
Tour	6,111	7,778	2,111	7,556	5,222	4,667	1,667	10,818	..	2,933
Other	0	0	0	0	444	444	556	545	..	1,267
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>14,222</i>	<i>16,889</i>	<i>10,667</i>	<i>11,000</i>	<i>11,222</i>	<i>13,444</i>	<i>11,111</i>	<i>13,182</i>	..	<i>6,067</i>
Performances per Company	77	66	52	61	61	62	65	62	..	44
Home	55	44	41	37	45	46	58	49	..	2
Tour	22	22	11	24	15	13	3	9	..	0
Other	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	5	..	0
<i>Youth(1)</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>35</i>	..	<i>1</i>

(1) Youth figures are already included in the total.