

ARTS ATTENDANCE, ART-MAKING, AND SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS: SPRING/SUMMER 2024

The U.S. Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey (HPS) gathers timely data on emergent social and economic issues impacting individuals and households across the country. Beginning with the spring of 2024, five questions about arts access and arts participation were added to the survey. Unlike the National Endowment for the Arts’ (NEA) periodic Survey on Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), which examines patterns of arts engagement within a 12-month period, the HPS collects data on self-reported rates of arts attendance and arts creation during the previous month. These data can be particularly useful to cultural practitioners and policymakers seeking to measure the pace of recovery for the arts sector in the years immediately after the COVID-19 pandemic.

This research brief presents findings from four data-collection cycles within Phase 4.1 of the Household Pulse Survey, administered from April 2 to July 22, 2024. It offers insights into how U.S. adults were engaging with the arts in the spring and summer of 2024. Because other question-items on the survey address issues of loneliness and social connectedness, the brief also explores the relationship between arts participation and those perceptual and behavioral factors.

Arts Attendance

Throughout the spring and summer of 2024, a quarter (25.2 percent) of U.S. adults attended at least one live, in-person performance and/or art exhibit within the last month. This includes the 21.6 percent of adults who attended at least one live performance of theater, music, or dance, and the 10.5 percent of adults went to an art exhibit or gallery.

As for going to the movies, 17.0 percent of adults did this activity in the last month. Taken together, roughly one third of U.S. adults (or 33.4 percent, representing an average of 85.2 million people across the four cycles of the survey) engaged in some form of arts attendance, such as attending a live performance of theater, music, or dance, going to an art exhibit or gallery, or going to the movies.

Looking across HPS cycles—the intervals when the survey was administered—attendance rates for performing arts events and art exhibits did not change drastically. There was, however, an uptick in movie-going during the final survey cycle captured in this brief (between June 25 and July 22, 2024).

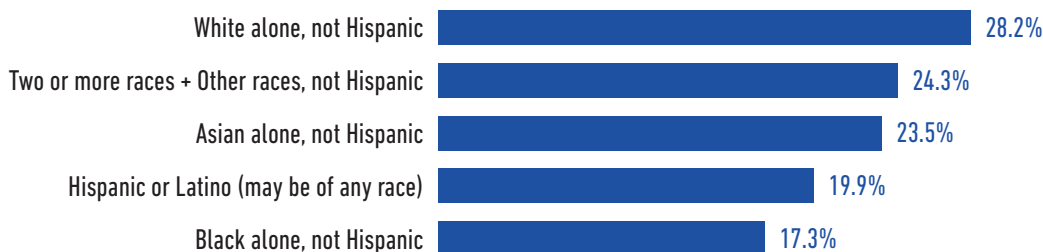
For the brief’s remaining sections, the data presented are combined across all four cycles of data collection.

Demographics

The HPS includes a series of demographic questions to better comprehend how emergent social and economic issues are affecting sub-groups of U.S. adults. This brief explores the differences in arts participation by age, gender¹, race/ethnicity, education, and annual income.

Americans 55 years of age and older were less likely than younger adults to attend in-person arts experiences—specifically, art exhibits and/or performing arts events. By gender, there were no rate differences (roughly 26 percent of men and women alike attended at least one of these types of arts events in the past month). In terms of race and ethnicity, Hispanic and non-Hispanic Black adults were far less likely to attend in-person arts events (19.9 percent and 17.3 percent of each group, respectively) than were non-Hispanic White adults (28.2 percent), non-Hispanic Asian adults (23.5 percent), and non-Hispanic adults of other racial backgrounds or adults of two or more races (24.3 percent for this combined category).

Percent of U.S. adults who attended an in-person art exhibit and/or live performance in the previous month, by race/ethnicity



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey. Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024.

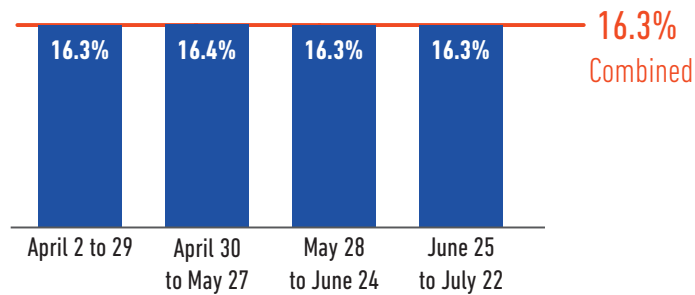
As educational attainment and income levels increased, so did the likelihood of in-person arts attendance. For example, 8.5 percent of those who had only some high school education or less reported attending arts events, compared with 37.6 percent of adults with bachelor's degrees and 44.4 percent with graduate degrees. Adults earning less than \$25,000 per year reported attending at least one art event within the last month at a rate of 16.2 percent, compared with 55.2 percent of adults earning \$200,000 or more.

Arts Creation

Survey respondents were also asked whether they had created, practiced, or performed art within the last month. In all, 16.3 percent of adults (representing an average of 41.9 million adults across the four cycles) reported doing so. The rate of arts creation remained consistent through the spring and summer of 2024.

¹ The Household Pulse Survey contains two gender-related questions: one is about the respondent's biological sex at birth and the other is about the respondent's current gender identity. This brief uses the HPS variable that asks respondents for current gender identity: male, female, or transgender. Due to complications with question-wording, comparisons are provided only for male and female genders. For more information, please see: <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity.html>.

Percent of U.S. adults who created, practiced, or performed art in the previous month



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey. Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024.

Demographics

Adults aged 18-24 were more likely to create art (25.9 percent) than were older adults. Among adults aged 24-64 years old, the rate of arts creation diminished with age; among 55-64-year-olds, the rate was 12.7 percent. Adults 65 and older, however, had a slightly greater likelihood to create art (14.1 percent) than did those aged 55-64. Women were more likely to create art (17.7 percent) than were men (14.8 percent).

Adults of two or more races, combined with non-Hispanic adults from a racial/ethnic group “other” than one listed on the survey, were the most likely to create art (20.4 percent), compared with all other racial/ethnic groups. Non-Hispanic White adults reported the second highest rate of arts creation (18.6 percent), with non-Hispanic Black adults reporting the lowest (10.1 percent). Nearly 15 percent (14.9 percent) of non-Hispanic Asian adults and 12.0 percent of Hispanic adults created art. The survey also found that as educational attainment and income levels increased, so did the likelihood of arts creation.

Access to Arts and Cultural Amenities

Household Pulse Survey participants were also asked about the degree to which they had physical access to arts and cultural opportunities. The question, which also had been featured on the NEA’s 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA),² asked respondents whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the following statement: “There are plenty of opportunities for me to take part in arts and cultural activities in my neighborhood or community.”

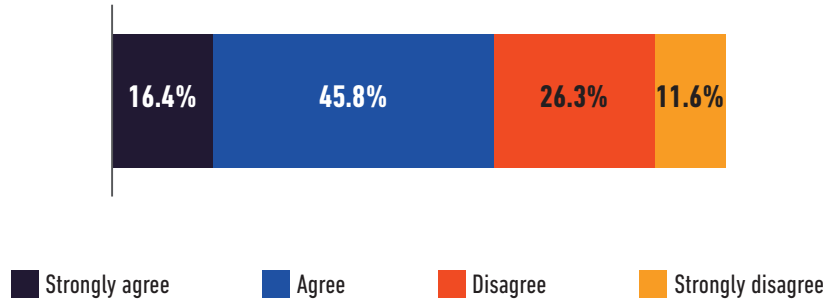
Across all four cycles of the Phase 4.1 data collection, 16.4 percent of adults strongly agreed, 45.8 percent agreed, 26.3 percent disagreed, and 11.6 percent strongly disagreed with the statement about their access.³ In total, 62.2 percent of adults agreed or strongly agreed, while 37.8 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed.

² For more details, please see *U.S. Patterns of Arts Participation: A Full Report from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*: <https://www.arts.gov/impact/research/publications/us-patterns-arts-participation-full-report-2017-survey-public-participation-arts>.

³ For the purposes of comparison between the HPS 2024 and SPPA 2017, all missing responses were excluded from this analysis. The rest of the analysis contained in this brief includes missing responses. When missing responses are included, 13.0 percent of HPS 2024 respondents strongly agreed, 36.3 percent agreed, 20.8 percent disagreed, and 9.2 percent strongly disagreed.

Percent of U.S. adults who agreed or disagreed with the statement:

“There are plenty of opportunities for me to take part in arts and cultural activities in my neighborhood or community.”

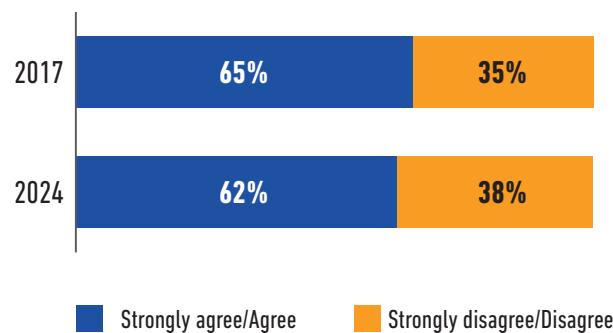


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey. Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024.

Relative to the last time this question had been administered as part of a nationally representative survey—the 2017 SPPA—public agreement with the statement decreased slightly in 2024. In 2017, 65 percent of adults had agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Percent of U.S. adults who agreed or disagreed with the statement:

“There are plenty of opportunities for me to take part in arts and cultural activities in my neighborhood or community.”



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey. Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024; U.S. Census Bureau, Survey on Public Participation in the Arts, 2017; NEA Report: *U.S. Patterns of Arts Participation: A Full Report from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, 2019.

Note: percentages are approximate.

Demographics

As age increased, so did the level of agreement with the statement that there were plenty of opportunities to participate in neighborhood or community arts activities. A little over half (54.4 percent) of adults aged 18-24 agreed or strongly agreed, versus 70.4 percent of those 65 or older. Men had a higher likelihood of agreeing with the statement (64.9 percent) than did women (60.4 percent). Non-Hispanic White adults had a higher likelihood of agreeing with the statement (66.3 percent) than did Hispanics and non-Hispanic Black adults (53.4 and 53.2 percent, respectively). Among non-Hispanic Asian adults, 64.6 percent agreed with the statement. These racial/ethnic group differences are consistent with those in the 2017 SPPA report.⁴

The level of agreement with this statement increased with education. For example, 48.0 percent of adults who did not go to high school agreed there are plenty of opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activities in their neighborhood or community, compared with 77.2 percent of adults who had a graduate degree. The rate differences, by education level, are similar to those in the 2017 SPPA report. Agreement with the statement also rose by household income level.

The Arts and Social Connection

Of the variety of social and economic issues examined by the Household Pulse Survey, there are also question-items related to other social activities and to the respondent's perceptions of loneliness. Especially in view of a 2023 Surgeon General advisory about the ill health effects of loneliness and social isolation,⁵ the questions pose an opportunity for researchers to explore the potential relationships between arts participation and social connectedness.

The results below share statistically significant differences between different groups of adults for arts attendance and creation. Although the following analyses do not account for subgroup differences, future reporting will attempt to control for variables such as race/ethnicity and education level.

Attending meetings of clubs or organizations

Respondents were asked the following question, "Altogether, how often do you attend meetings of clubs or organizations you belong to, such as church groups, unions, fraternal or athletic groups, or school groups?" Adults who attended arts programming and/or created art were more likely to participate in these types of social groups, and do so at higher frequencies, compared with adults who did not attend and did not create art.

For example, adults who attended one or more live performances or art exhibits in the last month were more likely to participate in organizations or clubs than those who did not attend arts events. Meanwhile, 49.4 percent of all adults reported not belonging to a group, while among arts attendees the rate was significantly lower: 42.0 percent.

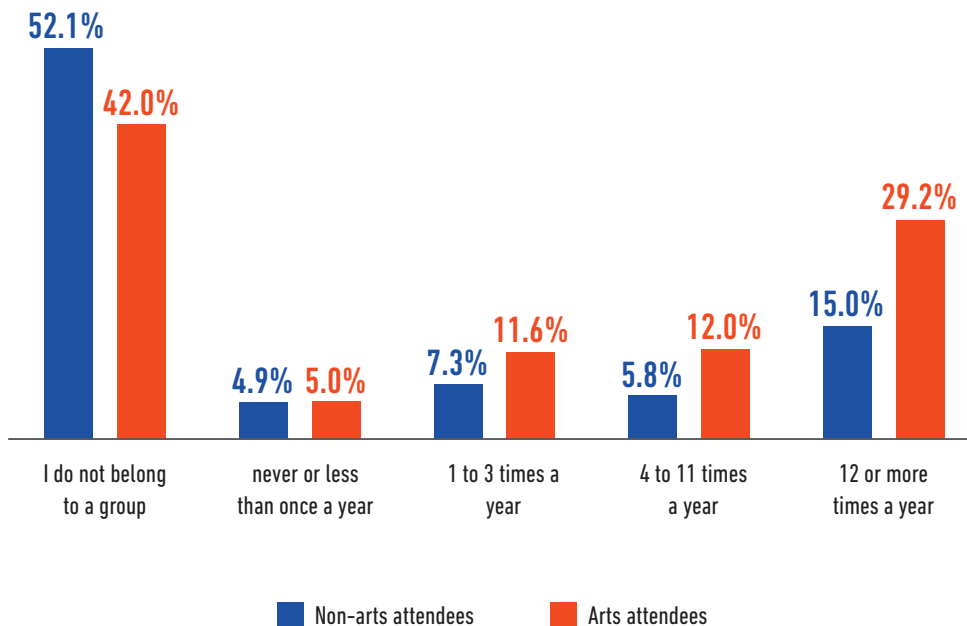
Comparisons also favor arts attendees when it comes to frequency of attending organization or club meetings. Among all adults, the share who attended such meetings one to three times a year was 8.4

⁴ National Endowment for the Arts, *U.S. Patterns of Arts Participation: A Full Report from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts* (2019). <https://www.arts.gov/impact/research/publications/us-patterns-arts-participation-full-report-2017-survey-public-participation-arts>.

⁵ Office of the Surgeon General, *Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community* (2023). <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>.

percent; four to 11 times a year, 7.3 percent; and 12 or more times a year, 18.5 percent. Among arts attendees, the corresponding rates for organization/club meeting attendance were 11.6 percent, 12.0 percent, and 29.2 percent. Arts attendees were twice as likely to attend four or more meetings a year than were non-arts attendees.

Percent who attended organization or club meetings in the past year, by frequency and whether they attended an in-person arts event in the previous month



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey. Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024.

Adults who created art also were more likely to attend organization or group meetings than were other adults: While 46.4 percent of art-making adults reported not belonging to a social group, the rate was 49.4 percent for adults as a whole and 57.7 percent for those who did not create, practice, or perform art.

Similarly, people who created art reported higher frequencies of attending group meetings. For people who attended meetings four to 11 times a year, the rate was 10.3 percent for arts creators versus 7.3 percent of all adults and 7.8 percent of non-creators; for those attending 12 times or more a year, it was 28.2 percent of arts creators, versus 18.5 percent of all adults and 19.3 of non-creators.⁶

As for the previously mentioned statement, “There are plenty of opportunities for me to take part in arts and cultural opportunities in my neighborhood or community,” adults who agreed with it were more likely to attend organization or club meetings than were those who disagreed with the statement.

⁶ 4.9 percent of arts creators and 5.6 of non-creators never attended meetings or did so less than once a year. A full 10 percent of creators and 9.2 of non-creators attended meetings 1 to 3 times a year.

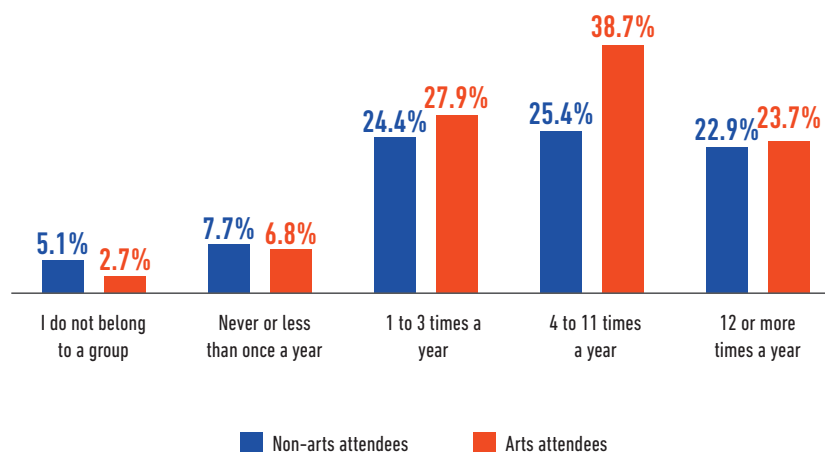
Just under half (49.5 percent) of adults who agreed or strongly agreed with the arts access statement did not belong to a group, versus 65.0 percent of those who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Moreover, 10.2 percent of those who agreed with the statement reported attending one to three meetings a year, versus 8.2 percent of those who disagreed; 9.6 percent attended four to 11 meetings, versus 6.2 percent; and 25.2 attended 12 or more meetings, versus 14.7 percent.⁷

Perceptions of Loneliness

Another survey question asked respondents to rate their level of loneliness, ranging from “never” to “always lonely.” Adults who attended one or more performances and/or art exhibits in the last month were more likely than others to say they “rarely” experience loneliness (38.7 percent, compared with 25.4 percent of non-arts attendees and 28.6 percent of all adults). Conversely, arts attendees were less likely than others to report being “always” lonely (2.7 percent of arts attendees versus 5.1 percent of non-attendees and 4.5 percent of all adults).

The rate of arts attendees “usually” experiencing loneliness was similarly lower than for non-attendees and all adults (6.8 percent, compared with 7.7 percent and 7.5 percent, respectively). The rates of “never” experiencing loneliness, however, were barely statistically significant between arts attendees and non-arts attendees (23.7 percent for attendees, 22.9 percent for non-attendees, 23.1 for all adults).

Percent of U.S. adults who reported feeling lonely, by frequency and whether they attended an in-person arts event in the previous month



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024.

⁷ Further, 5.3 percent of adults who agreed with the statement, and 5.7 percent of adults who did not agree, never attended meetings or did so less than once a year. There is no statistical difference between those who agreed or disagreed—in terms of their rates of attending group meetings.

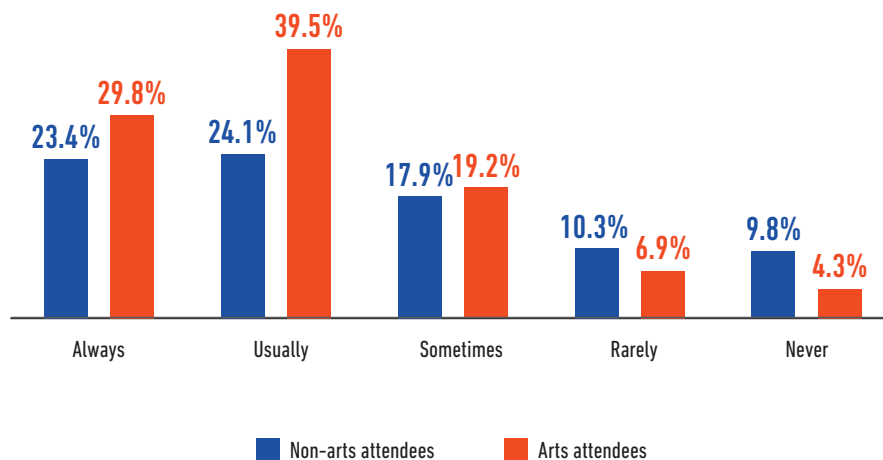
Adults who created art were more likely to report experiencing loneliness “sometimes” or “rarely” (31.9 and 34.7 percent, respectively) than were those who had not created art (27.2 and 32.2 percent, respectively). However, at least some level of loneliness proved more familiar to creators of art than to non-creators. That is, 18.4 percent of those who created art in the last month reported “never” experiencing loneliness, versus 27.3 percent of those who did not create art.⁸

On the other hand, those who had access to arts activities in their communities reported lower rates of loneliness than those who lacked such access. Adults who agreed or strongly agreed with the arts access statement were more likely to say they rarely experienced loneliness (36.8 percent) or never experienced loneliness (28.2 percent), compared with adults who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (26.2 and 20.9, respectively).

Social and Emotional Support

The HPS directly asked respondents, “How often do you get the social and emotional support you need?” Adults who attended at least one in-person arts event within the last month were more likely to report “always” or “usually” receiving needed support (29.8 and 39.5 percent of arts attendees, respectively) than were non-arts attendees (23.4 and 24.1 percent, respectively).

Percent of U.S. adults who reported benefiting from social/emotional support, by frequency and whether they attended an in-person arts event in the previous month



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey. Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024.

⁸ In all, 4.7 percent of creators and 5.0 percent of non-creators said they “always” experienced loneliness (not statistically significant), while 10.0 percent of creators and 8.0 percent of non-creators said they “usually” experienced loneliness.

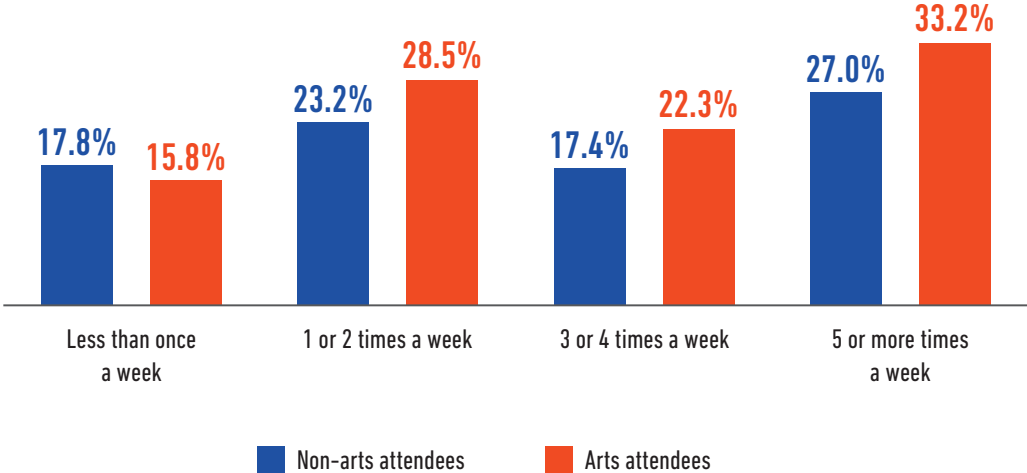
Adults who created art were more likely to say they usually received social support than those who did not create art (38.8 percent compared to 30.2 percent for non-creators “usually” receiving support). Arts creators were also less likely to say they never received support (4.1 percent versus 10.1 percent of non-creators). However, non-creators were more likely to say they “always” receive social and emotional support than were arts creators (28.8 percent of creators versus 24.6 percent of non-creators).⁹

Adults who agreed or strongly agreed with the arts access statement were also more likely to say that their social and emotional needs are met (32.7 percent, “always,” and 35.8 percent, “usually,” compared with 20.1 percent and 25.8 percent, respectively, of those who disagreed with the statement).¹⁰

Phone Conversations with Friends, Family, Neighbors

In another survey item related to social support, respondents answered the question: “In a typical week, how often do you talk on the telephone with family, friends, or neighbors?” Adults who attended an in-person arts events within the last month were more likely to talk with friends, family, and neighbors on the phone (for every level of frequency). Additionally, those who had attended an arts event were less likely than those who did not to talk on the phone less than once a week. Specifically, 15.8 percent of attendees, compared to 17.8 percent of non-arts attendees, did this activity.

Percent of U.S. adults who spoke on the phone with family, friends, or neighbors in the course of a week, by whether they attended an in-person arts event in the previous month



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey. Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024.

9 Nearly 23 percent (22.9 percent) of creators and 19.7 percent of non-creators “sometimes” received social support, 9.4 percent of creators and 10.8 percent of non-creators “rarely” received support, and 4.1 percent of creators and 10.1 percent of non-creators never received support. All differences are statistically significant.

10 Just under 18 percent (17.8 percent) of adults who agreed and 24.6 percent of adults who disagreed with the statement “sometimes” received social support, 7.3 percent of those who agreed and 15.8 percent of those who disagreed “rarely” received support, and 6.1 percent of those who agreed and 13.3 percent of those who disagreed never received support. All differences are statistically significant.

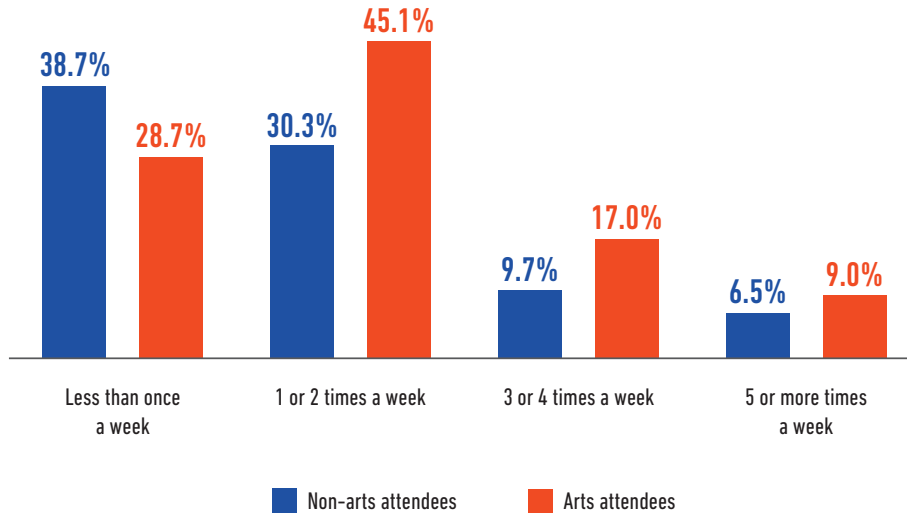
Results were more mixed for adults creating art. Adults who made art had a slightly higher rate of talking on the phone less than once a week than did non-creators (21.0 percent versus 19.4 percent). Arts creators were more likely to talk one to two times a week, but less likely to talk five or more times a week, compared to non-creators.¹¹

For adults agreeing or strongly agreeing with the arts access statement, they were more likely to talk with friends, family, or neighbors across all reported frequencies than were those who disagreed or strongly disagreed—with the exception of talking less than once a twice a week. A full third (33.0 percent) of adults who agreed with the statement talked on the phone five or more times a week, versus 29.4 percent of adults who did not agree with the arts access statement.¹²

Time Spent with Friends and Family

According to the survey results, adults who attended in-person arts events within the last month were more likely to get together with friends or family than were those who did not attend arts events: 45.1 percent of art-goers met with friends and family once or twice a week; 17.0 percent, three to four times a week; and 9.0 percent, five or more times a week. Among non-arts attendees, the corresponding rates are 30.2 percent, 9.7 percent, and 6.5 percent. Adults who attended arts events were less likely than non-arts attendees to get together with friends or family less than once a week (28.7 percent versus 38.7 percent).

Percent of U.S. adults who got together with friends or family in the course of a week, by whether they attended an in-person arts event



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey. Phase 4.1, Cycles 04-07. April 2 – July 22, 2024.

11 Nearly 29 percent (28.9 percent) of creators and 27.3 percent of non-creators spoke with family, friends, or neighbors one to two times a week, and 20.2 percent of creators and 20.9 of non-creators spoke on the phone three to four times a week (the latter comparison is not statistically significant). Meanwhile, 29.7 percent of creators and 32.2 percent of non-creators spoke with family, friends, or neighbors five or more times a week.

12 Further, 17.3 percent of those who agreed and 23.6 percent of those who disagreed with the arts access statement talked on the phone less than once a week. But 28.1 percent of those who agreed and 27.0 percent of those who disagreed spoke once or twice a week, while 21.5 percent of those who agreed and 19.8 of those who disagreed spoke three to four times a week. Another 33.0 percent of those who agreed and 29.4 percent of those who disagreed spoke five or more times a week with family, friends, or neighbors.

As with arts attendees, adults who engaged in arts creation over the past month were also more likely to get together with friends or family than were non-creators. Moreover, arts creators were less likely than non-creators to get together, socially, fewer times than once a week (i.e., 35.6 percent of creators versus 42.1 percent of non-creators).

Adults who agreed with the arts access statement were more likely to see friends or family once a week or more: 41.4 percent, once or twice a week; 14.7 percent, three to four times; and 8.6 percent, five or more times—compared with respective rates of 33.3 percent, 9.8 percent, and 6.7 percent for those who disagreed with the statement.

More Research to Come

The Household Pulse Survey provides a unique set of social, health, and economic variables across a large respondent panel. Future research involving the survey results may consider arts participation, creation, and access in relation to one or more of the following topics: employment, household spending, physical and mental health, disability levels, social isolation, internet access, and living through natural disasters. Geography is another key consideration, as the large respondent panel allows for state-level analyses. Also, statistical models such as logistic regressions can be used better to understand the relationships between arts access and/or participation and social outcome variables, when controlling for demographic and other factors.

Arts question items will continue to be fielded in Phase 4.2. For more information on the survey and to access additional resources, including population tables for each arts variable, go to: <https://www.census.gov/data/experimental-data-products/household-pulse-survey.html>.

Methodology

Phase 4.1 collected data from April 2 to July 22, 2024. This phase was structured around four distinct collection cycles (Cycles 04-07), each followed by a scheduled data release:

- Cycle 4: Data collected from April 2 to April 29, 2024, with data released on May 16, 2024. For Phase 4.1 Cycle 04, the Census Bureau sent invitations to 1,056,836 households and received a total of 73,352 responses, for a weighted response rate of 6.8%.
- Cycle 5: Data collected from April 30 to May 27, 2024, with data released on June 13, 2024. For Phase 4.1 Cycle 05, the Census Bureau sent invitations to 1,057,491 households and received a total of 72,162 responses, for a weighted response rate of 6.7%.
- Cycle 6: Data collected from May 28 to June 24, 2024, with data released on July 11, 2024. For Phase 4.1 Cycle 06, the Census Bureau sent invitations to 1,058,173 households and received a total of 72,125 responses, for a weighted response rate of 6.7%.
- Cycle 7: Data collected from June 25 to July 22, 2024, with data released on August 8, 2024. For Phase 4.1 Cycle 07, the Census Bureau sent invitations to 1,058,879 households and received a total of 70,429 responses, for a weighted response rate of 6.5%.

Users can access the Phase 4.1 questionnaire on the main [Household Pulse Survey website](#), and all previous questionnaires from the survey are available on the [Technical Documentation webpage](#). Population tables for the nation and each state for each arts variable are [available online](#).

Arts Questions, introduced with Phase 4.1

ART1: During the last month, did you attend any live music, dance, or theater performances in person?

ART2: During the last month, did you go in person to an art exhibit, such as paintings, sculpture, textiles, graphic design, or photography?

ART3: During the last month, did you go to the movies?

ART4: During the last month, did you create, practice, or perform art of your own?

ART5: Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the next statement: "There are plenty of opportunities for me to take part in arts and cultural activities in my neighborhood or community."

For the purposes of the brief, data from the four cycles of Phase 4.1 were combined to get average rates. **All reported differences are statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level.**