

American Guild of Organists 2014 Survey

Past, Present and Future Members

Report

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Introduction

The October 2014 Survey of Past, Present and Future Members of the AGO was completed by 5,692 respondents. It included more than 50 questions. Given the possibility of cross-tabbing and comparing responses to each of these questions, a complete analysis of the survey data could include more than 2,500 separate analyses.

This impressive response rate may be attributed to the motivation of organists who are members of the AGO to have a voice in their organization. It is also clearly related to the coordinated outreach efforts and easy response options.

Of the 5,692 respondents, 85% (4,788) were current members, 12% (656) were lapsed members, and 3% (174) were never members. This analysis will focus primarily on current members. Current members comprise the vast majority of the sample and are the group for whom programs will be planned, based on their responses to this survey. Additionally, we report on the reasons former members allowed their membership to lapse. In virtually all categories other than membership, responses from current and lapsed members closely mirrored each other. The small sample size of respondents who have never been members makes it difficult and ill-advised to generalize to a larger population, but we summarize a few trends that appear to emerge from that small sample. Of course all of the data will be available for further analysis in the future.

The Marketing Committee welcomes your thinking on ways the Guild can address various challenges identified in this survey. Please communicate with us at Marketing@agohq.org.

Rationale

This survey of AGO members was implemented by the AGO Marketing Committee in order to document the socio-demographic profile of its members, as well as to better understand their participation in the AGO, those aspects they find most valuable, and the challenges they face as they pursue their profession. There are many positive findings—long tenure in current position, satisfaction with current work situation, and an appreciation of opportunities to connect with the larger community of organists through the AGO, among others. In addition, the survey highlights challenges and opportunities for adapting the structure and activities of the AGO to meet the current and future needs of its members. The ultimate goal of the survey is to look beyond the statistics and graphs to develop innovative programs for the future which best serve the needs of the AGO membership of all ages, levels of training, and employment situations in the most cost-effective way possible. The statistics and graphs are only that until they are put to programmatic use.

Methodology

The AGO 2014 survey was developed by the AGO Marketing Committee in consultation with Dr. Sarah Harbison and Guild leadership, and was approved by the National Council in September 2014.

The AGO 2014 survey was sent via *Survey Monkey* to approximately 30,000 individuals, including approximately 15,000 current members, as well as lapsed members, non-members, donors, advertisers, subscribers, chapter friends, and others. Additionally, links to the survey were disseminated through the AGO's Facebook page and through reminders from regional councilors and chapter leaders. Respondents were able to take the survey electronically using their smart phones, their tablets, their laptops or desktop computers. No print surveys were utilized.

The survey has been conducted under the *pro bono* supervision of Dr. Sarah F. Harbison. Dr. Harbison recently retired as Senior Advisor for Research and Evaluation in the Office of Population and Reproductive Health, Global Health Bureau, USAID, where she provided leadership and technical assistance to the design of programmatic research and project evaluation. Dr. Harbison has worked internationally for over 30 years in various research and evaluation-related capacities. She studied human biology at Oxford, holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology from Pennsylvania State University, and pursued post-doctoral studies in economic demography at the University of Michigan. She has extensive experience in the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data for clarifying program objectives, designing program interventions, and measuring program improvement.

Reliability of the Data – A note from Dr. Sarah Harbison

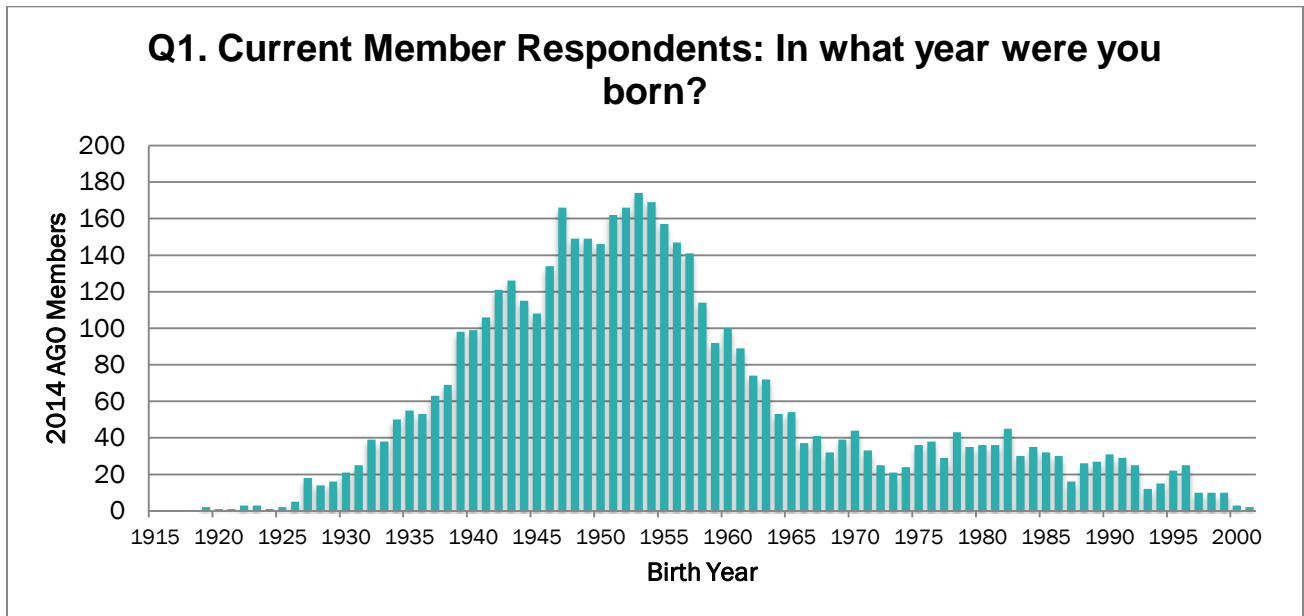
While the number of current members who responded, 4788, is large and represents about a third of the membership, it is a self-selected sample. An issue of some concern is whether there is any reason to suspect that the respondents are different in important ways from the population of the AGO as a whole. I see no reason to assume that bias. It is possible that the fact that a member took the time to respond to the survey indicates somewhat greater motivation to be involved in the AGO than non-respondents. Additionally, it is likely that leadership of the organization, although small in number relative to the whole, might have a more positive perspective than the average member and a greater inclination to respond. To a degree these factors could elevate positive responses.

The importance of non-response for data analysis and interpretation has been addressed extensively in the statistics literature of social science survey research. Historically, the issue of non-response has been viewed as a threat to rigorous analysis, and a range of methods, including re-contacting non-respondents and estimating values for missing data have been suggested. However, recent research on low response rates in the field of higher education surveys (Fosnacht, *et al.*, among others) takes a different perspective. They conclude that a large number of survey respondents can mitigate the impact of non-responses. They define *large* as 1,000 or greater. Clearly, in this survey, we have a very large set of responses from a diverse group of respondents.

It is important to note that chapter-wise participation was very good: 291 out of 303 chapters were represented by survey respondents. On the basis of sample size *per se* as well a review of individual characteristics of the respondents (demographic, geographic, professional), I am confident that this analysis of current members of the AGO provides a reliable profile of the membership and a strong base for guidance for future programming. I agree with the authors of the educational research previously cited: “once survey administrators consider these results, we hope they will spend less time worrying about low response rates, and more time evaluating and using the data they collect.”

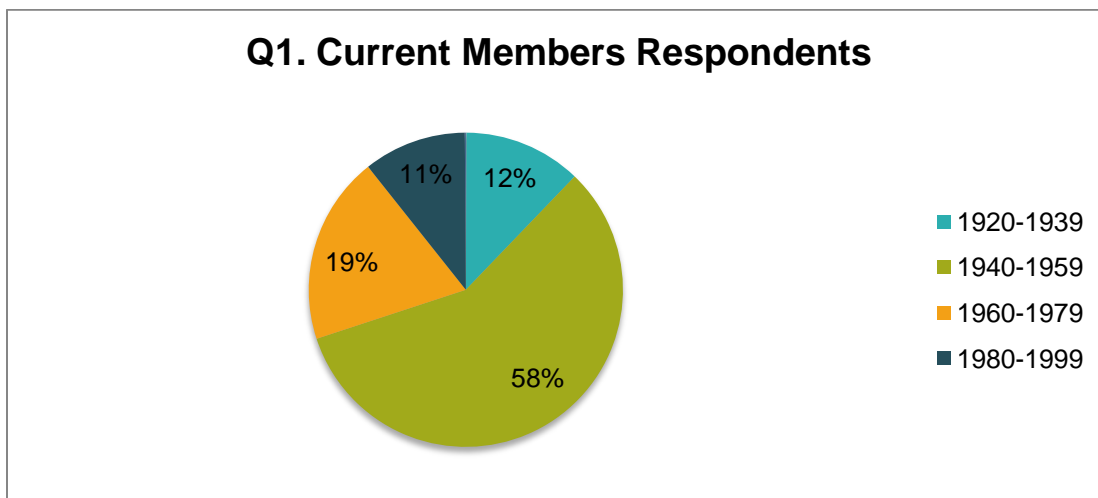
Membership Demographics

Current AGO Age Distribution



Q1-A Member Survey Respondents by Year of Birth

Q1-A presents data on the number of member respondents, by year of birth. The large number of respondents who were born between 1940 and 1960 is striking. (Q1-B)



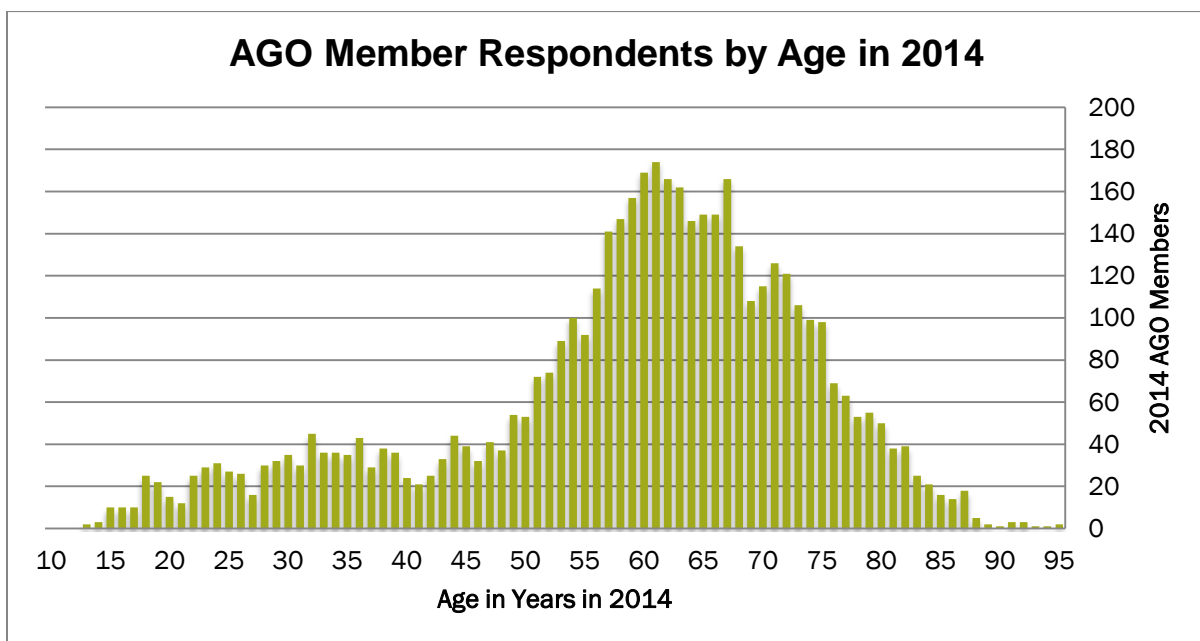
Q1-B Member Survey Respondents by 20-Year Birth Groups

They comprise approximately 58% of the respondents, and are currently ages fifty-four to seventy-four. It is not surprising that numbers in the earliest birth groups, that is, the oldest members of the AGO, are relatively few. Many will have “aged out” of active membership, either through retirement, for a range of other reasons, or through mortality. What is particularly remarkable, however, are the small numbers of members in the recent birth cohort years. In fact, a steep decline in number of respondents born in the five-year birth year groups starts in members born about 1955 and continues through those born in about 1970, at which point the

numbers level out at a comparatively low level. Considering these trends, it becomes clear that AGO overall membership losses are not of recent origin. The precipitous decline in membership among organists born in the 1960s points to a trend some 50 years in the making.

Members of the Post-War Baby Boom cohort are strongly over-represented in AGO membership. The effects of the population bubble known as the Post War Baby Boom have been called the Pig in the Python of American society. Almost every sphere of American life is affected by the rise and decline of this outsized cohort. Their retirement and exodus from the American Guild of Organists will challenge the AGO to redefine itself as a much smaller organization

In the next two decades, current Boomer members will “age out” of the AGO, with strikingly few younger members able to “take their place.” It is clear from Chart Q1-C that the number of members in these more recent birth cohorts is extremely small.



Q1-C Member Survey Respondents by Age

This trend falls outside the sphere of influence of the leadership of the American Guild of Organists and there is little that leadership can do to avoid the losses of members projected in the next two decades. Rather, current leadership faces the choice of envisioning and planning for a smaller organization or simply kicking the can down the road.

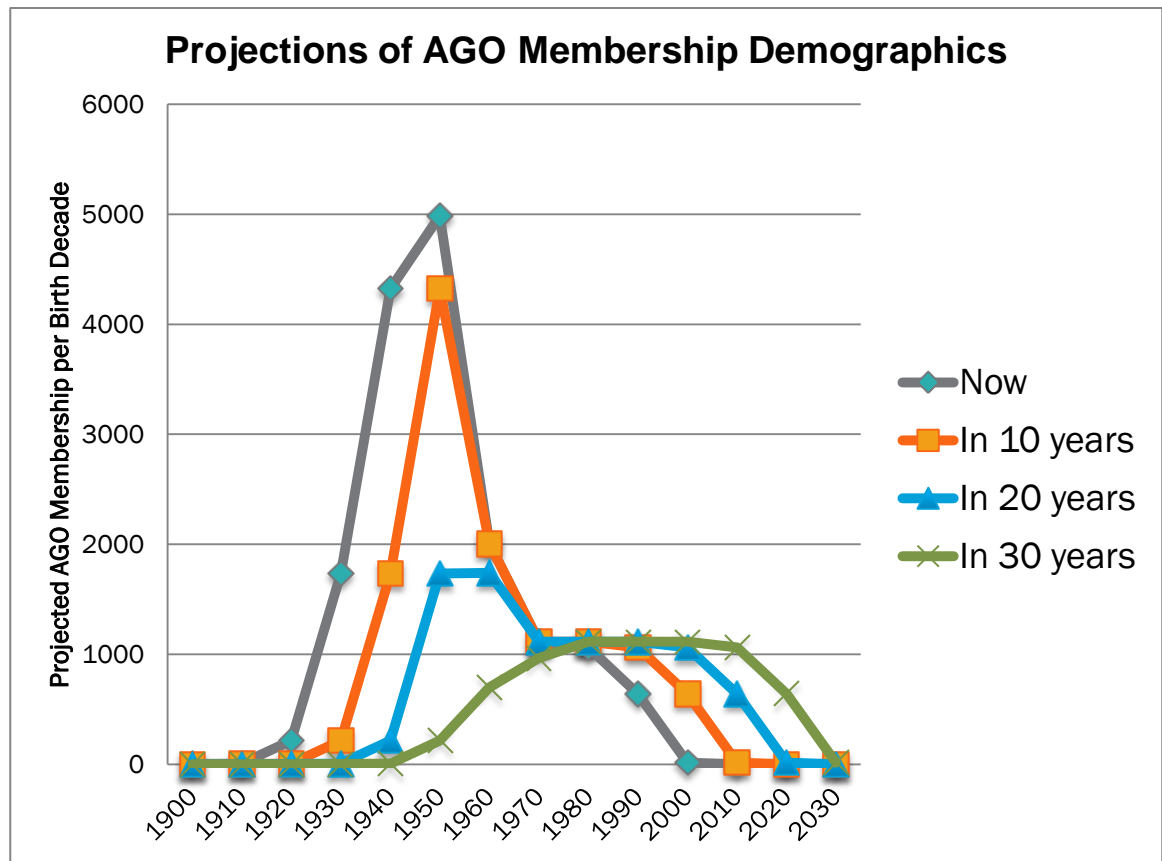
On a positive note, this demographic pattern will affect virtually all American institutions. Denominational music organizations, for example, will also feel the effects of this shift. The Royal College of Organists and the Royal Canadian College of Organists will likely experience a similar demographic shift. The case for collaboration and partnerships has never been stronger.

This demographic snapshot highlights the importance of enhancing the AGO’s value proposition to millennials and current organ students.

Finally, the demographic data suggests that today is an excellent time to be a young organist embarking on a career. As the Baby Boomers retire over the next two decades, they will vacate many choice positions for which there will be a limited pool of qualified applicants.

Future Membership Projections

The implications of this demographic picture for current and future AGO structure are dramatic.



Q1-D AGO Membership Age Demographic Projections 2014-2044

Several demographic projections contained in the preliminary data (Q1 D-Q1-H) help us visualize the AGO's likely demographic picture in 20 years, when its many middle-aged and older members have moved out of the organization. In viewing these charts, membership should be understood as the total area encompassed under each differently colored line. So today's membership is modeled in the area under the gray line; membership in 10 years is modeled in the area under the orange line, etc.

Of course these projections are based on assumptions about likely numbers who will join and drop out of the organization. The projections assume:

- A. The number of members joining in the past decade will continue in future decades. We assume that the number of new members joining in the future is unlikely to exceed current rates, but will remain constant.
- B. Older birth cohorts will be reduced by similar factors as previous birth cohorts, exiting the organization at the same rate as previous cohorts.

These are very simple assumptions based on a common sense approach and could be changed based on a different perspective of what is likely to happen in the profession. It is conceivable, for example, that in coming years young and middle-aged organists could begin joining the Guild at a much higher rate than is currently the case. Employing this more bullish assumption could change the projection of the number of members born *after* 1960, but would not blunt the impact of the retirement of Baby Boomer members. It is worth noting, in addition, that using the present statistical model we were able to retroject 2004 membership numbers to a very high level of accuracy—within 1% of the historical data. In short, we do not think that the current projections overstate the AGO’s future demographic challenge.

Based on these assumptions, we project that in ten years the AGO membership is likely to be about 76% as large as it is now (loss of 24%); in twenty years it is projected to be about 54% as large as it is now (loss of 45%), and in 30 years, about 43% as large as it is now (loss of 57%). In absolute numbers, assuming current membership of approximately 16,000, we are projecting

- 12,000 members in 2025
- 8,700 members in 2035
- 6,900 members in 2045

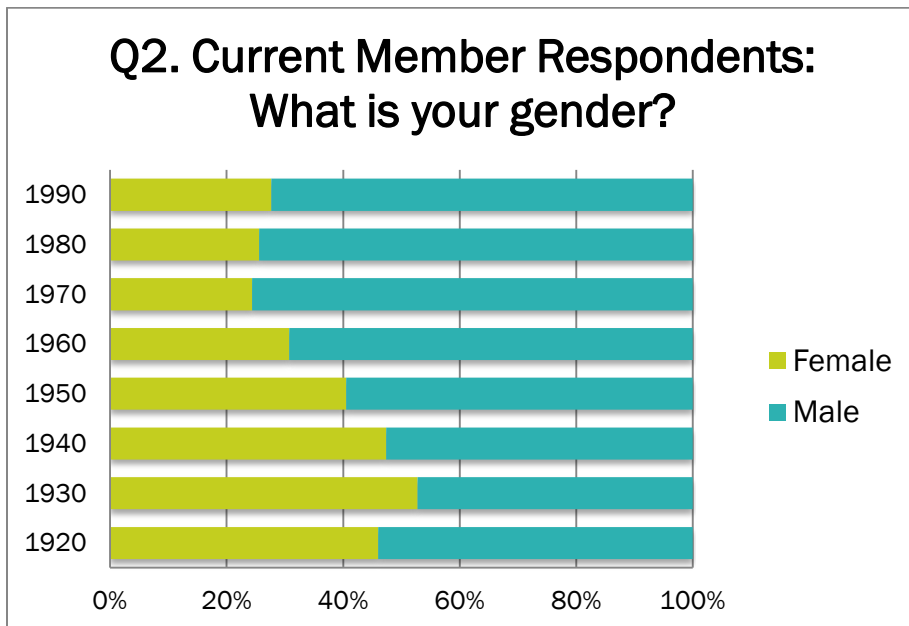
These numbers also have implications for the regional structure of the organization. As numbers drop, it is likely that the smaller chapters will disappear, necessitating further travel to attend nighttime chapter meetings. This is a particular disincentive to older members, who will constitute the overwhelming majority of members in the next decade. Currently 66% of members report living 0-19 miles from a place where organ is taught. 66% of members report living 0-19 miles from a place where they can hear concert organists in recital. Using these metrics as proxies for urban living, it appears that the majority of members currently live in or near cities. It seems very likely that in future years the AGO will become an increasingly urban organization. Alternatively, Independent Membership or even Virtual Membership may become more attractive options.

If it is difficult for older members to attend meetings, and they don’t attend conventions, then the remaining benefit is primarily the AGO magazine. This discussion highlights the importance of developing new electronic approaches to communication, meetings, and Guild participation in general which can mitigate the challenges of older members, better match the preferences of younger members (see discussion of time spent on the internet and use of smart phones) and provide cost efficiencies for the organization.

Q2 A-B Gender

Overall Guild membership is currently 60% male and 40% female. This varies significantly from the US population as a whole, which is 51% female and 49% male. It is interesting to note that this gender imbalance is most pronounced among younger members. Looking collectively at members born in the 1960s through 1990s, the male/female ratio is 73%/27%. This counter-intuitive finding suggests that in the coming decades, the AGO will become an even more male-dominated organization absent energetic efforts to engage young women to become organists and AGO members.

Q2-A Member Respondents by Gender



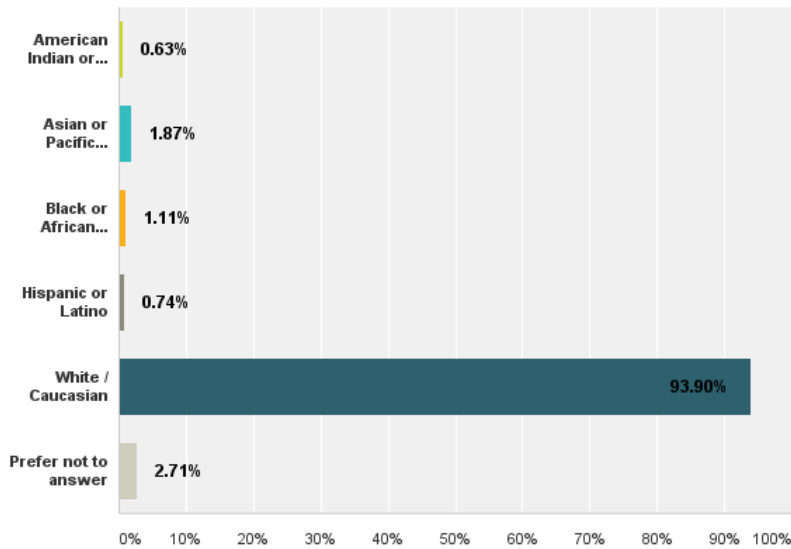
Q2-B Member Respondents Gender by Decade

Q3 Ethnicity

94% of member respondents self-identified as white/Caucasian; 3% preferred not to answer; 2% identified as Asian/Pacific Islands; 1% identified as black/African-American. Non-white respondents are heavily concentrated among the youngest members of the Guild, with 10% of members born in the 1970s through 1990s self-identifying as non-white. Nevertheless, because of the disproportionately large number of members born in the 1950s, the largest number of non-white members in each ethnic category were born in that decade.

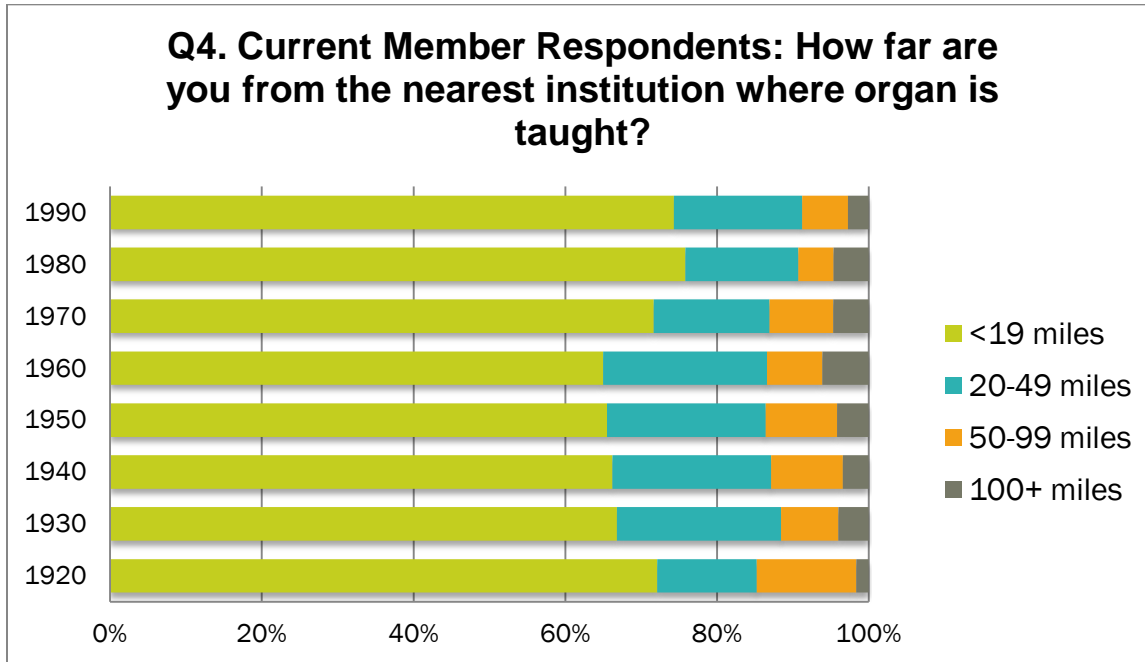
Q3 What is your ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)

Answered: 4,756 Skipped: 32



Q3 Member Ethnicity

Q4 Proximity to Educational Resources

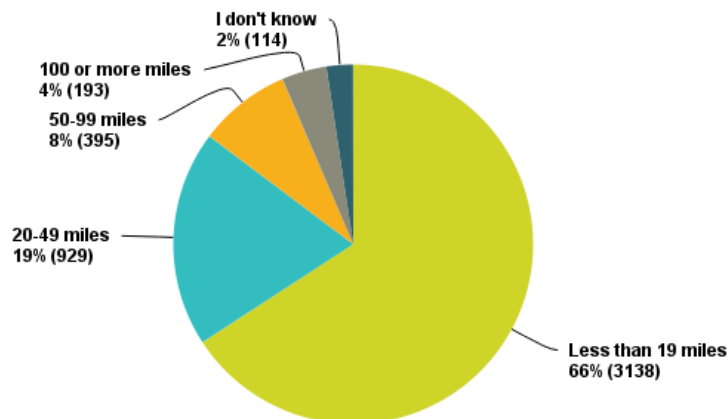


Q4 Member Respondents Distance to Educational Institutions

Question 4 assessed proximity to educational resources. 66% of members reported living 0-19 miles from an institution of higher education where organ is taught; 19% reported living within 20-49 miles of such an institution. 8% of members live 50-99 miles or more from such an institution. 4% live 100 or more miles away.

Q4 Thinking about your current residence, approximately how far are you from the nearest college, university or conservatory where organ is taught?

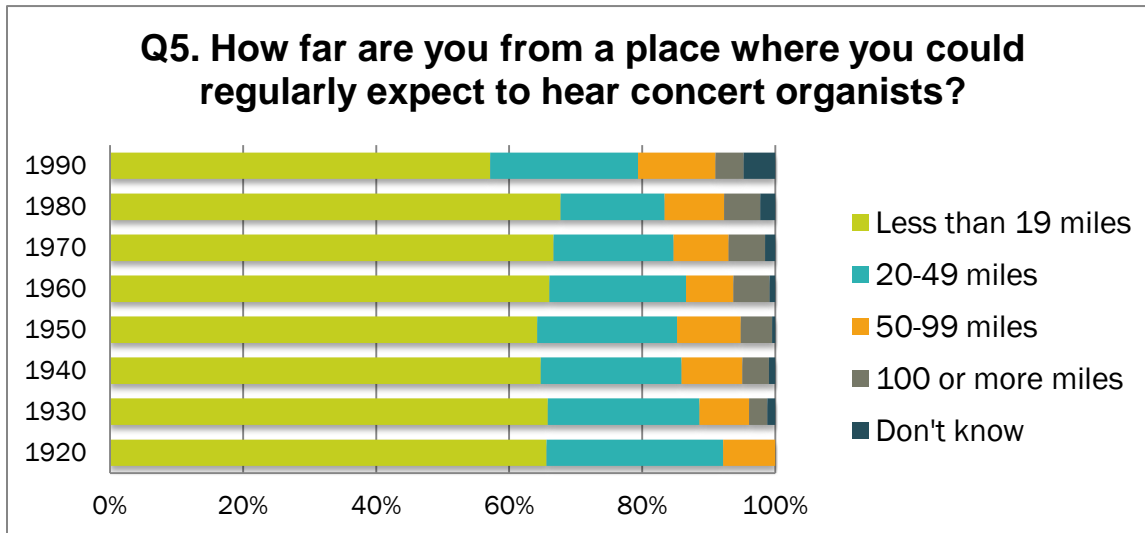
Answered: 4,769 Skipped: 19



Q5 Proximity to Organ Recitals

Question 5 assessed proximity to cultural resources, asking proximity to a location where they could regularly expect to hear concert organists. 66% of members reported living 0-19 miles from such a location; 19% reported living within 20-49 miles of such a location. 8% reported living 50-99 miles away from such a location. 4 report living 100 or more miles away.

The above findings were consistent in all age groups.



Q5-B Member Survey Respondents' Proximity to Organ Recitals

Q6 Language Spoken at Home

98% of members reported speaking English as their primary language at home. The second and third most heavily represented languages were German and French, with 0.4% and 0.2% respectively.

Q6 – What language do you mainly speak at home?

English	4711
German	20
French	14
Chinese	9
Spanish	9
Other	40

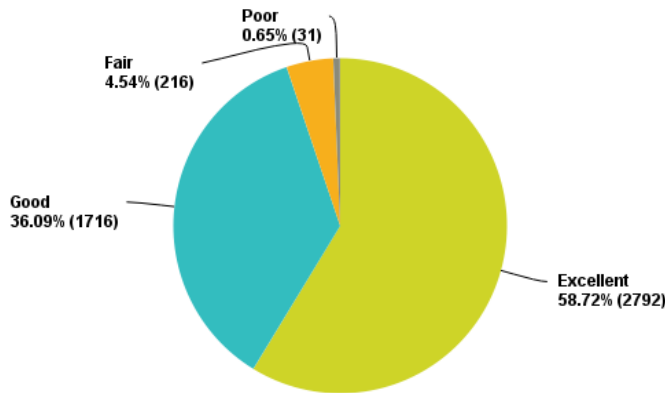
Q7 Health

59% of members described their health as excellent; 36 described their health as good; 5% described their health as fair. Less than 1% described their health as poor. It is very encouraging that despite a relatively old population, about 95% of the respondents reported their health in the past year to be either excellent or good.

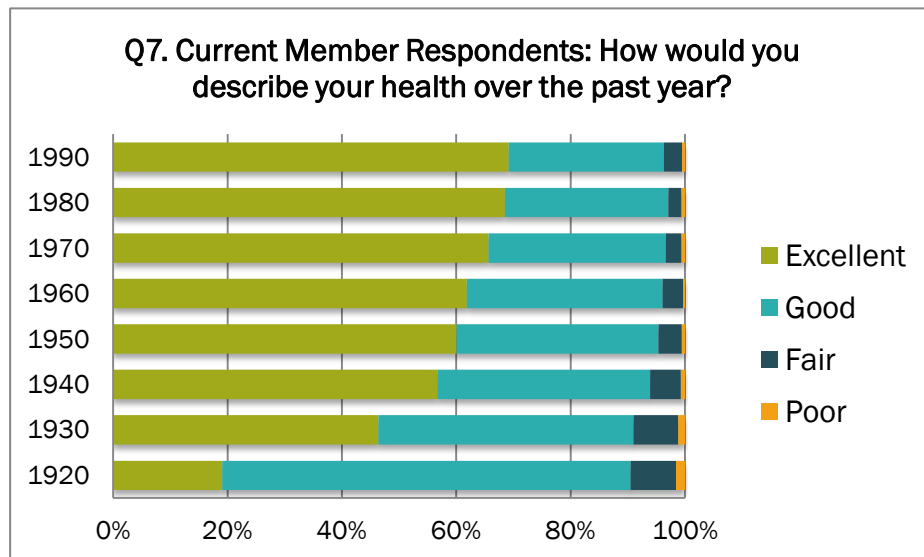
Since this well-educated population is generally pursuing a non-hazardous profession and has access to good medical care, this is not a surprising finding. Combined with the reported high levels of job satisfaction, longevity in current job, late age of retirement, and proximity to educational and cultural resources, the overall picture of the quality of life of AGO members is a very positive one.

Q7 How would you describe your health over the past year?

Answered: 4,755 Skipped: 33



Q 7A Member Respondents Health



Q7B Member Respondents Health by Birth Decade

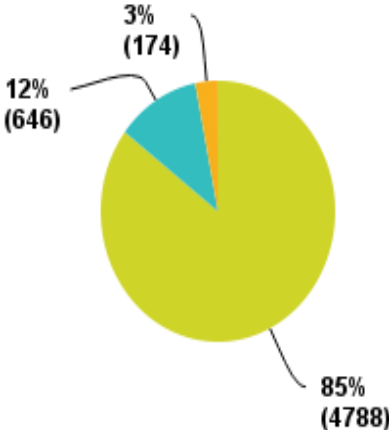
AGO Engagement

Q8 Membership Status

4788 current members of the AGO participated in the survey. Additionally, 646 people who identified themselves as former members of the AGO participated in the survey and 174 individuals who have never been members.

Q8 What is your AGO member status?

Answered: 5,608 Skipped: 84



- I am a current member of the American Guild of Organists.
- I was a member of the American Guild of Organists at one time.
- I have never been a member of the American Guild of Organists.

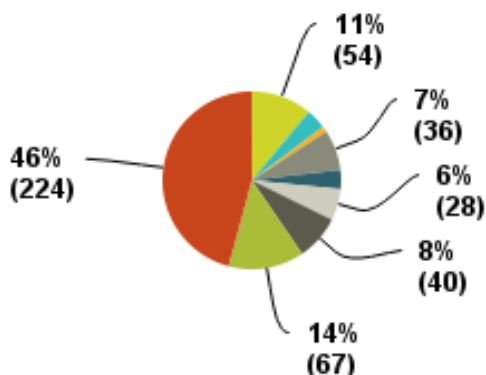
Q8 All Respondents Membership Status

Q9 Reasons for Allowing Membership to Lapse

The 646 former members who replied to the survey were asked their principal reason for allowing their membership to lapse. 489 responded to Question 9. By far their leading response was “the cost of membership outweighed its benefits” with 46% of former members choosing that answer. 14% responded that they had retired. 11% said “the organ became less important in my life.” Although inhospitable Guild meetings have frequently been identified as a significant problem for retaining members, only 6% of members said that “I never felt welcome at Guild meetings” was their primary reason for leaving the organization. A larger percentage, 7%, said “Guild meetings were unsatisfying.”

Q9 What is the main reason that you let your membership lapse?

Answered: 489 Skipped: 5,203



- The organ became less important in my life.
- Personality conflicts with Guild members.
- Conventions were too expensive.
- Chapter meetings were unsatisfying.
- I never read The American Organist.
- I never felt welcome at Guild events.
- It was irrelevant to my job as an organist.
- I retired.
- The cost of membership outweighed its benefits.

Q9 Former Members Reasons for Lapsing

The overwhelming response that “the cost of membership outweighed its benefits” suggests that this topic would be ripe for further exploration.

The current survey data does not permit us to say how 646 former members did or did not engage in AGO activities at some time in the past. But we may be able to gain some insights into what former members meant when they said “the cost outweighed the benefits” by considering the responses of **current** members to questions about their engagement in Guild activities. Consider the following:

Q20 Value of Membership: When we asked current members what they valued most in their AGO membership, (Q20) 39% responded “to meet and network with professional colleagues.” 22% chose “to stay informed about the organ world.” 12% responded “to support the work of organists.” All other answer options garnered fewer than 10% of respondents.

Q13 Chapter Meetings: Despite the fact that 39% of members believe the principal value in Guild membership is meeting and networking with professional colleagues, a high percentage of members—35%—did not attend a single Guild meeting last year. An additional 28% said they had attended 1-2 meetings last year. Taken together, 63% members—almost two-thirds—are participating in chapter events peripherally or not at all.

Q15: Certification: 81% of members report that they have never taken a certification exam. 92% of lapsed members have never taken a certification exam.

Q12: Conventions: 33% of current members report that they have never attended a regional or national convention. 42% of current members report having attended between 1 and 5 conventions in their lifetime. Almost half of the lapsed members (49%) have never attended a single convention.

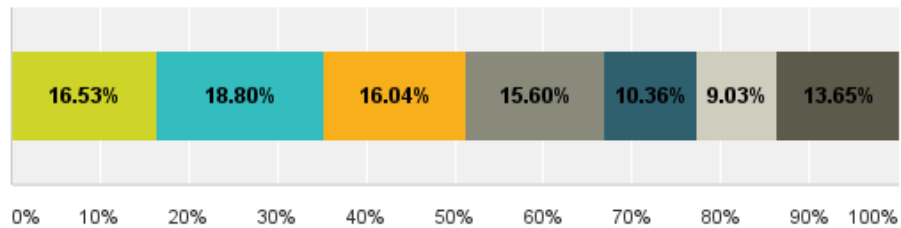
Clearly, large percentages of members are not deriving benefit from several of the key planks of the AGO’s value proposition. Based on the above data, we posit that if members **do not** attend chapter meetings, **do not** participate in certification programs and **do not** attend conventions—then they will conclude that the cost of annual dues exceeds the value of 12 copies of *The American Organists*. And we suspect that this is what lapsed members are telling us when they say that the “cost of membership outweighed the benefits.”

Q11 AGO Regional Representation

All seven AGO regions were well represented in the survey: Northeast 17%; Middle Atlantic 19%; Southeast 16%; Great Lakes 16%; North Central 10%; Southeast 9% and West 14%.

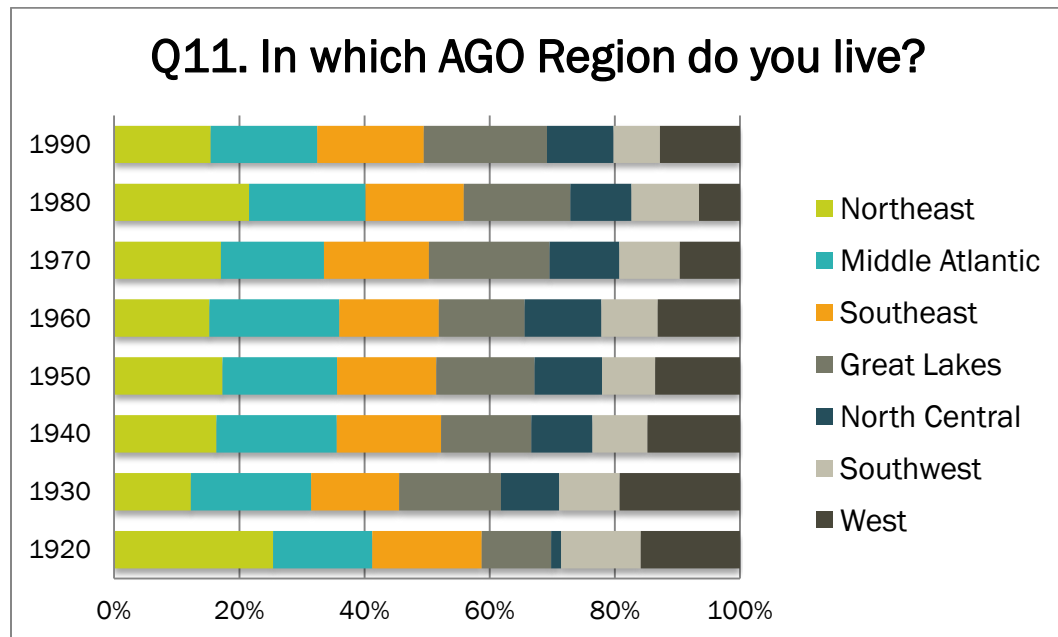
Q11 In which AGO Region do you live?

Answered: 4,719 Skipped: 69



- 1. Northeast (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Ne...
- 2. Middle Atlantic (New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia...
- 3. Southeast (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tenn...
- 4. Great Lakes (Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan)
- 5. North Central (Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, ...
- 6. Southwest (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas)
- 7. West (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, Oreg...

Q11 Member Respondents AGO Region



Q11 Member Respondents AGO Region by Birth Decade

Q10 Chapter Survey Participation

Members from 291 out of 303 chapters participated in the survey, in addition to 151 independent members. Ninety-one chapters had participation levels of 40% or above. Among chapters with fewer than 20 members, Chippewa Valley Chapter took the lead with 7 out of 9 members (80%) participating; among chapters with 20-99 members, the Youngstown Chapter took the lead with 31 out of 47 (66%) participating; among chapters with more than 100 members, the Northern Virginia Chapter took the lead with 62 out of 130 members (47%) participating.

The following 91 chapters had 40% or greater participation in the survey:

Amarillo Chapter	Greater Lansing Chapter	Santa Barbara Chapter
Annapolis Chapter	Greenville Chapter	Sequoia Chapter
Austin Chapter	Harrisburg Chapter	Seton Hill University Chapter
Baltimore Chapter	Huntington Chapter	Southeast Minnesota Chapter
Big Country Chapter	Inland Empire Chapter	Southeast Ohio Chapter
Blackhawk Chapter	Las Cruces Chapter	Southern Arizona Chapter
Bloomington Chapter	Les Bois Chapter	Southern Indiana Chapter
Blue Ridge Chapter	Long Beach Chapter	Southern Maryland Chapter
Boston Chapter	Lorain County Chapter	Southern Oregon Chapter
Brooklyn Chapter	Louisville Chapter	Southwest Florida Chapter
Buena Vista Chapter	Lynchburg Chapter	Southwest Michigan Chapter
Cedar Valley Chapter	Madison Chapter	Southwest Suburban Chicago
Central Coast Chapter	Merrimack Valley Chapter	St. Louis Chapter
Central Hudson Valley Ch.	Missoula Chapter	Stanislaus Chapter
Central Iowa Chapter	Monongahela Chapter	State College Chapter
Central New Jersey Chapter	NE Wisconsin Chapter	Suffolk Chapter
Chippewa Valley Chapter	North Central Ohio Chapter	Susquehanna Valley Chapter
Cimarron Chapter	North Louisiana Chapter	Tampa Chapter
Columbus Chapter	Northern Valley Chapter	Utah Valley Chapter
Cumberland Valley Chapter	Northern Virginia Chapter	Valparaiso University Chapter
Delaware Chapter	Omaha Chapter	Waterbury Chapter
Dothan-Wiregrass Chapter	Oneonta Chapter	West Texas Chapter
Dubuque Chapter	Oxford-University of Mississippi	Wichita Chapter
Durham-Chapel Hill Chapter	Queens Chapter	Winchester Chapter
East Carolina Chapter	Red River Valley Chapter	Wisconsin River Chapter
East Texas Chapter	Rhode Island Chapter	Worcester Chapter
Eugene Chapter	Rochester Chapter	Wyoming Chapter
Gainesville Chapter	Rockford Chapter	Yellowstone Chapter
Grand Strand Chapter	Sacramento Chapter	Youngstown Chapter
Greater Columbia SC Chapter	Salt Lake City Chapter	
Greater Huntsville Chapter	Sandusky Chapter	

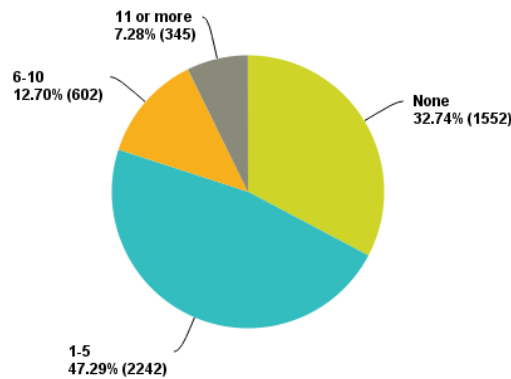
Q 12A-E AGO Convention Attendance

33% of total member respondents have never attended an AGO Convention. 47% have attended 1-5 conventions. 13% report having attended 6-10 conventions. 7% report having attended 11 or more conventions.

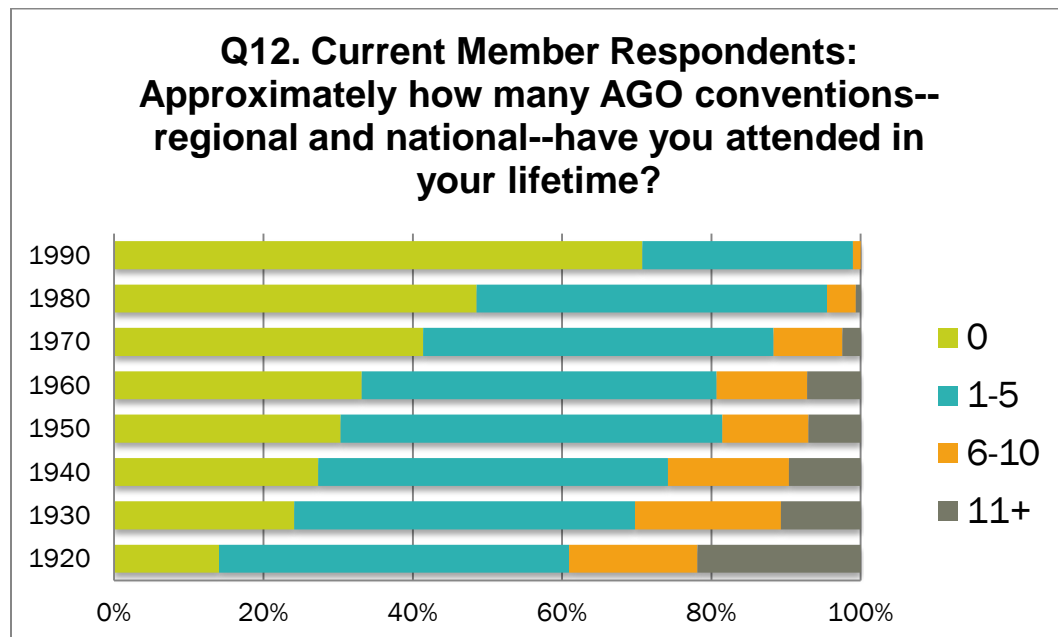
If the Regional and National Conventions of the AGO are to become a meaningful part of the Guild’s value proposition to its members, AGO leadership will need to fast-track multiple strategies for the dissemination of the convention resources to a higher percentage of Guild members. The current allocation of energy and resources delivers little value to 1/3 of the members of the organization.

Q12 Approximately how many AGO conventions--regional and national--have you attended in your lifetime?

Answered: 4,741 Skipped: 47



Q12-A Member Survey Respondents Lifetime Convention Attendance

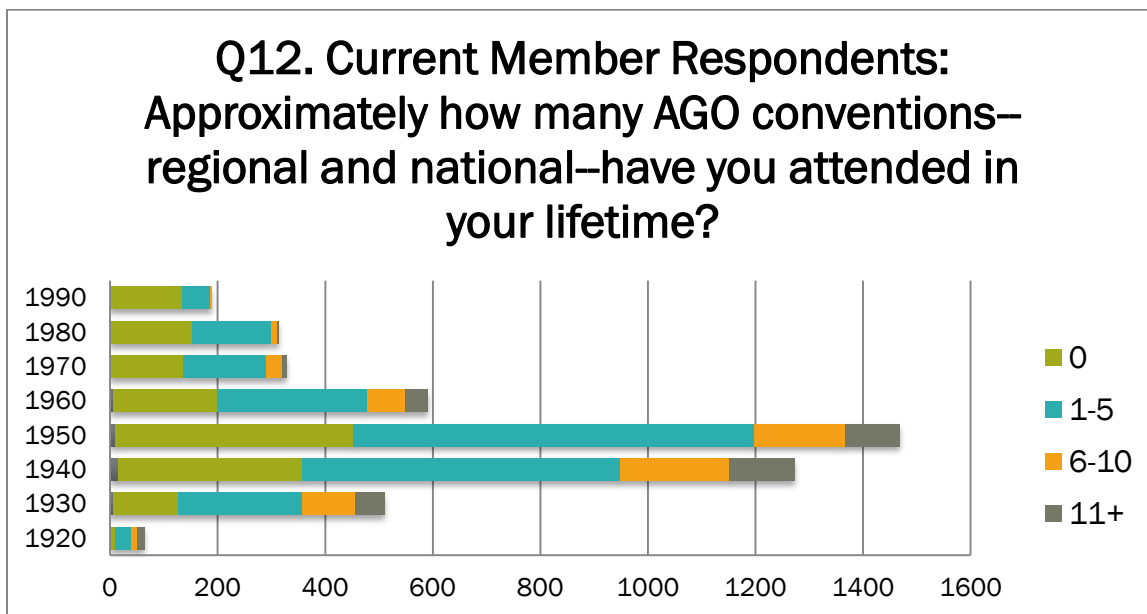


Q12-B Member Survey Respondents Lifetime Convention Attendance by Decade of Birth

Not surprisingly, the number of conventions attended increases with age. (Chart Q12-B)
 Looking at convention attendance compared to decade of birth, we find:

- 49% of members born in the 1980s (aged 25-34) have never attended a convention.
- 41% of members born in the 1970s (aged 35-44) have never attended a convention.
- 33% of members born in the 1960s (aged 45-54) have never attended a convention
- 30% of members born in the 1950s (aged 55-64) have never attended a convention

The high percentage of members born in the 1970s and 1980s who have never attended a single convention is cause for concern. Q12-C shows that Baby Boomers dominate conventions from a numerical standpoint. AGO leaders will have to figure out what conventions will look like when this huge cohort becomes less active.



Q12-C Member Convention Attendance by Birth Decade - Absolute Numbers

By cross-tabbing convention attendance with chapter meeting attendance, (Q12-C) we see a strong correlation between convention attendance and chapter participation. Chapter meeting participation is a strong predictor of convention participation. We can learn that 46% of members who have never attended a convention also did not attend any chapter meetings last year. 78% of members who have never attended a convention attended two or fewer chapter meetings last year. Persons attending 1-5 chapter meetings in the last year are most likely to have attended conventions. Parenthetically, 48% of persons who are former members of the AGO have never attended a convention.

	No Conv.	1-5 Conv.	6-10 Conv.	11 or more Conv.	Total
Q13: No mtg.	46% 742	44% 714	7% 115	3% 50	1,621
Q13: 1-2 mtgs.	32% 429	49% 644	13% 174	6% 75	1,322
Q13: 3-5 mtgs.	24% 264	48% 530	16% 181	11% 126	1,101
Q13: 6 or more mtgs.	17% 113	50% 340	19% 127	14% 94	674
Total Respondents	1548	2228	597	345	4718

Q12-C Convention Attendance Compared to Chapter Meeting Attendance

By cross-tabbing convention attendance with level of training as an organist (Q12-E), we learn that level of training as an organist is another strong predictor of convention attendance.

	No Conv.	1-5 Conv.	6-10 Conv.	11 or more Conv.	Total
Q26: I have never studied organ.	38% 44	49% 57	9% 10	4% 5	116
Q26: Largely self-taught	57% 111	36% 70	6% 11	2% 3	195
Q26: A few private lessons	54% 254	39% 183	4% 21	3% 13	471
Q26: Many private lessons	43% 618	45% 653	9% 125	4% 53	1,449
Q26: Bachelor's degree in organ performance or sacred music	32% 288	49% 437	14% 126	5% 43	894
Q26: Master's degree in organ performance or sacred music	15% 176	53% 616	18% 212	13% 149	1,153
Q26: Doctorate in organ performance or sacred music	8% 34	50% 203	23% 92	19% 76	405
Total Respondents	1525	2219	597	342	4683

Q12-E Convention Attendance Compared to Training as Organists

Q13 Chapter Meeting Attendance

34% of members report having attended no chapter meetings last year. (This statistic includes Independent members.) 28% of members report having attended 1-2 meetings last year. 23% attended 3-5 meetings last year. 14% attended 6 or more meetings last year.

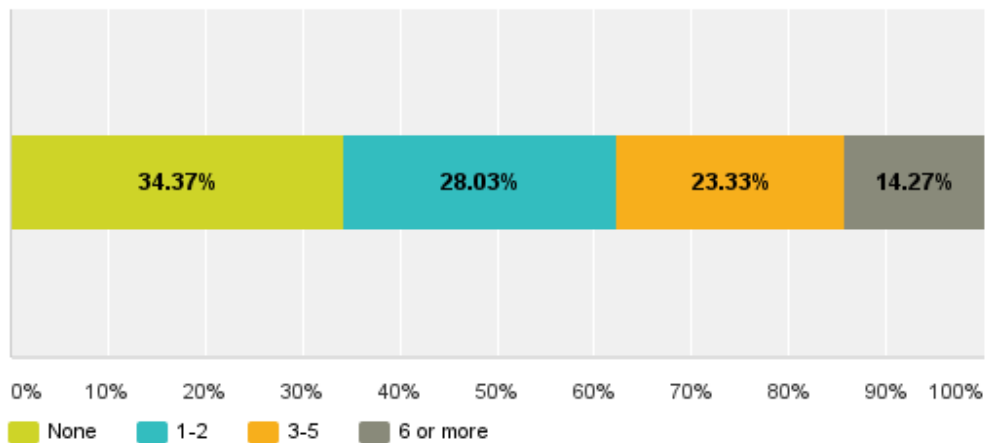
These percentages remain fairly consistent across all member age groups.

Chart 13-C depicts the age distribution of members at chapter meetings in terms of absolute numbers. It is interesting to note that 73% of members who attended a Guild meeting last year were born before 1960 (56 and older.) A college-aged new member of the AGO walking into a Guild meeting for the first time will be surrounded by people the age of his or her parents or grandparents.

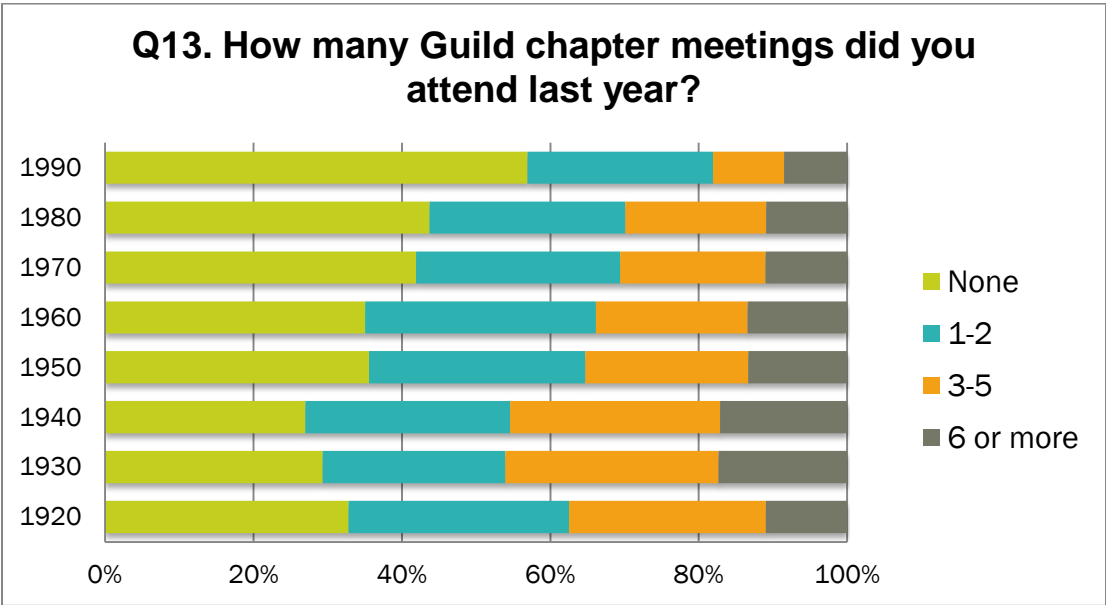
It may be difficult to reconcile the needs and interests of the Guild's youngest members with the needs and interests of the huge AARP-eligible segment. Chapter leaders may wish to consider developing non-traditional alternative chapter meetings to appeal to younger members.

Q13 Approximately how many Guild chapter meetings did you attend last year?

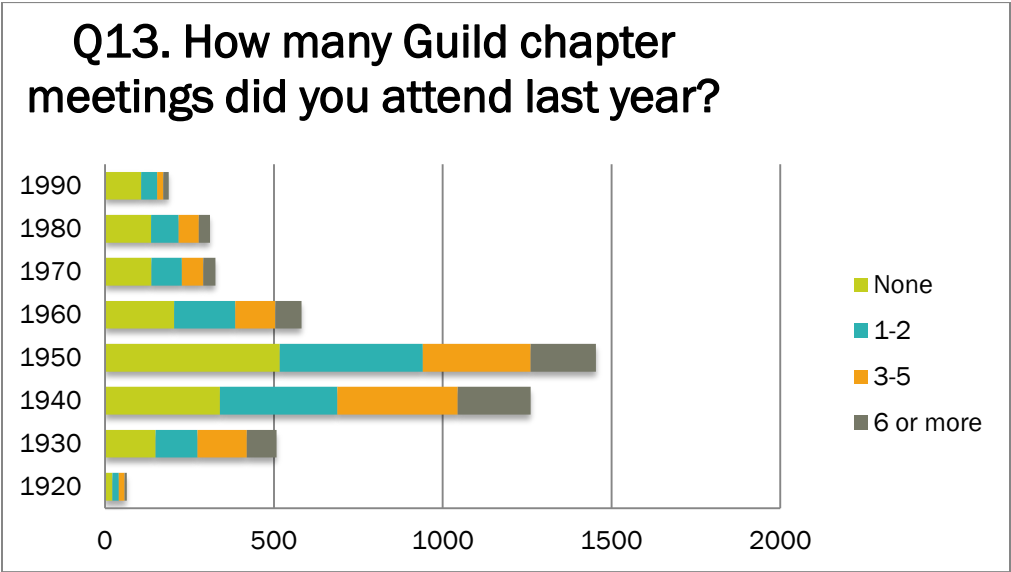
Answered: 4,737 Skipped: 51



Q13-A Member Survey Respondents Chapter Meeting Attendance



Q13-B Member Survey Respondents Chapter Meeting Attendance by Birth Decade



Q13-C Chapter Meeting Attendance by Birth Decade Absolute Numbers

Q 13	None	1-2	3-5	6 or more
1920	21	19	17	7
1930	149	125	146	88
1940	340	348	356	216
1950	517	424	319	194
1960	204	181	119	78
1970	137	90	64	36
1980	136	82	59	34
1990	107	47	18	16

Figure 1 Q13-D Chapter Meeting Attendance by Birth Decade Absolute Numbers

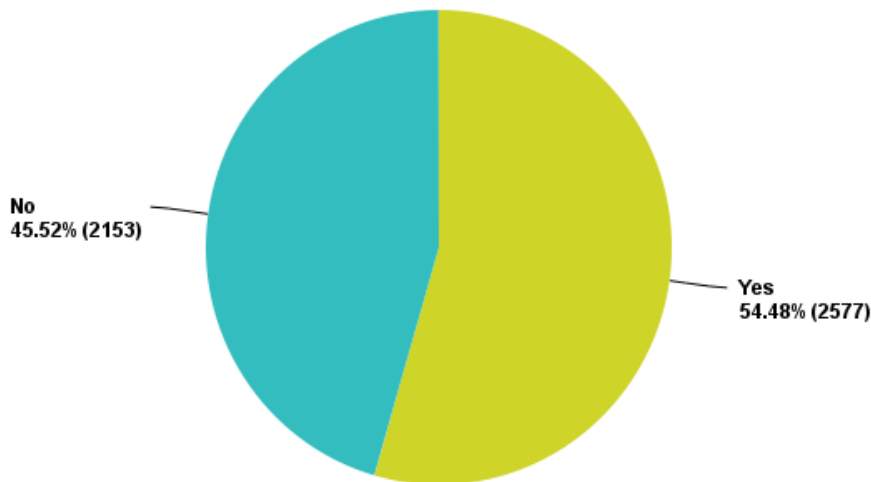
Q14 Service as a Guild Officer

55% of respondents have served the Guild as an officer at some level. Past and present officers are doubtless over-represented in the survey sample.

An extraordinarily high level of engagement in leadership roles is found among members of all ages. In the preceding question, Q13, we learned that 34% of members attended no chapter meetings last year. In Q14 we learn that 55% of members have served as an officer at some time. These findings suggest that there is very little middle ground in terms of AGO member involvement. While a significant percentage of members do not actively participate in Guild activities, those who do participate demonstrate a very high level of commitment and engagement.

Q14 Have you ever served the Guild as an officer at any level?

Answered: 4,730 Skipped: 58



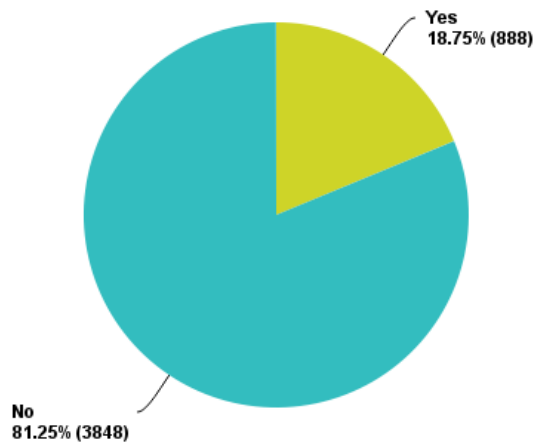
Q14 Member Respondents Service as Guild Officers

Q15 Certification Examinations

Asking if respondents have “ever” taken an exam, the question was designed to assess lifetime involvement in the AGO certification program. 19% of respondents indicated that they have taken at least one certification examination. 81% of respondents indicated that they have never taken a certification examination.

Q15 Have you ever taken an AGO certification examination?

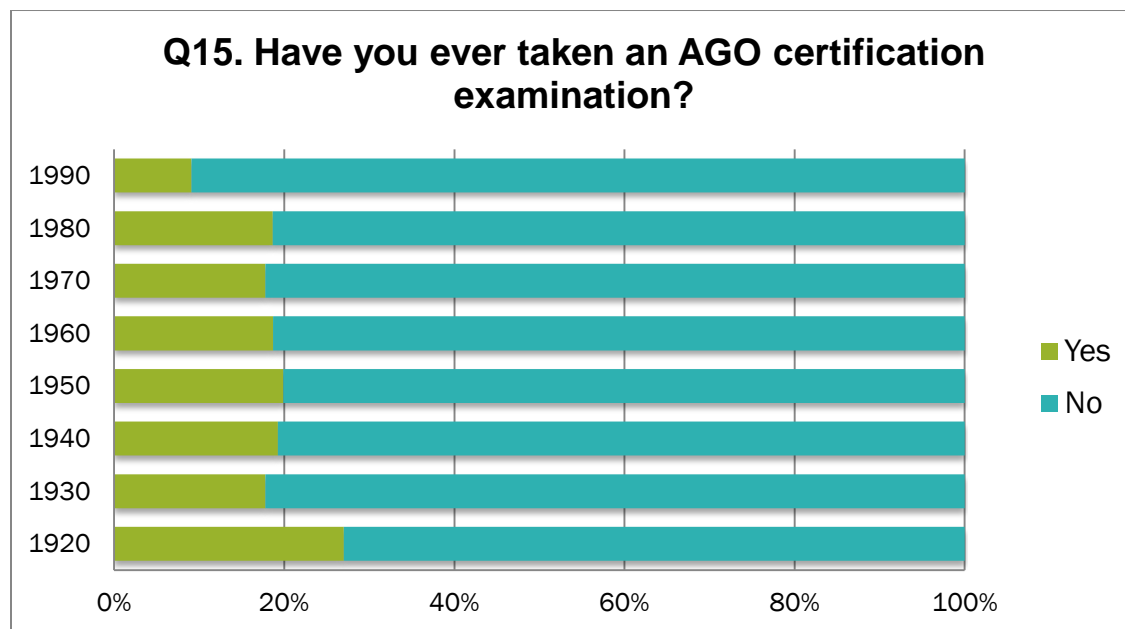
Answered: 4,736 Skipped: 52



Q15-A Member Survey Respondents Participation in Certification Programs

With a lifetime participation rate of 19%, the AGO’s certification program is currently reaching far fewer members than would be necessary if it were to be a significant part of the Guild’s value proposition to prospective members. As currently structured, the certification program offers no value to 80% of the organization’s members. This statistic, combined with the high level of members whose training consists primarily of a series of private lessons, points to the urgent need of a thorough re-examination of the certification process. In particular, Guild leaders with doctorates and master’s degrees may need to strive harder to identify with the half of AGO members who come to the certification table without undergraduate courses in music theory, etc., potentially developing certification programs that are accessible to every member of the organization.

It is noteworthy that these percentages (Q15-B) vary very little by cohort. Members born in the 1940s and members born in the 1980s are almost equally likely or unlikely to have taken a certification examination.



Q15-B Member Survey Respondents Participation in Certification Programs by Decade of Birth

While the percentage of members taking Guild examinations in each birth-decade group remains fairly constant, it is important to note that due to the over-representation of Baby Boomers in overall Guild membership, these members, born roughly between 1946 and 1964, dominate the certification process from a numerical standpoint. (Q17-C)

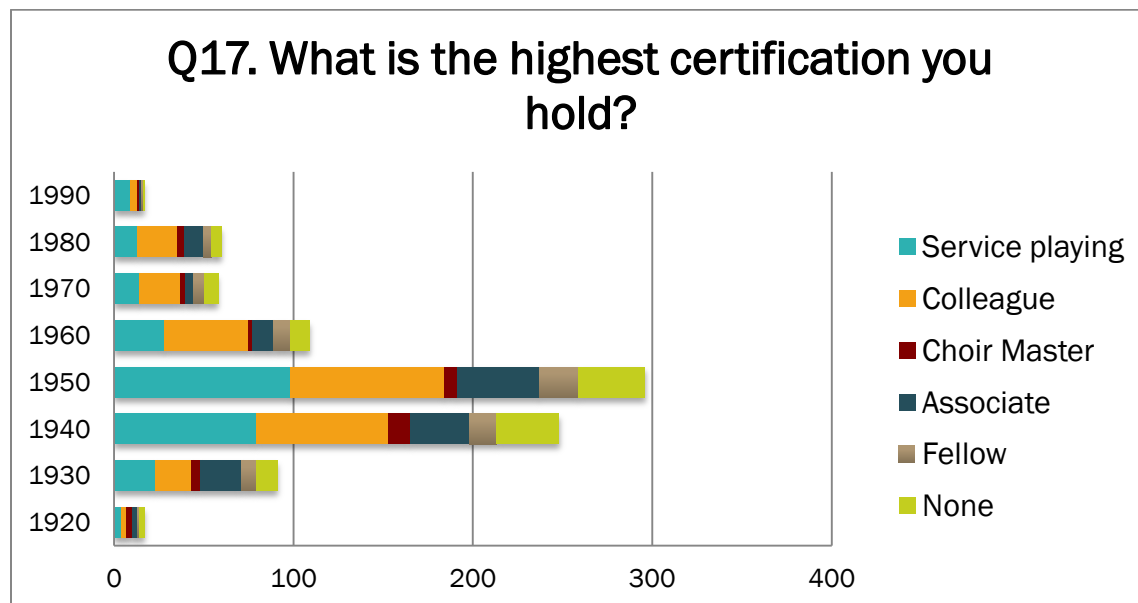
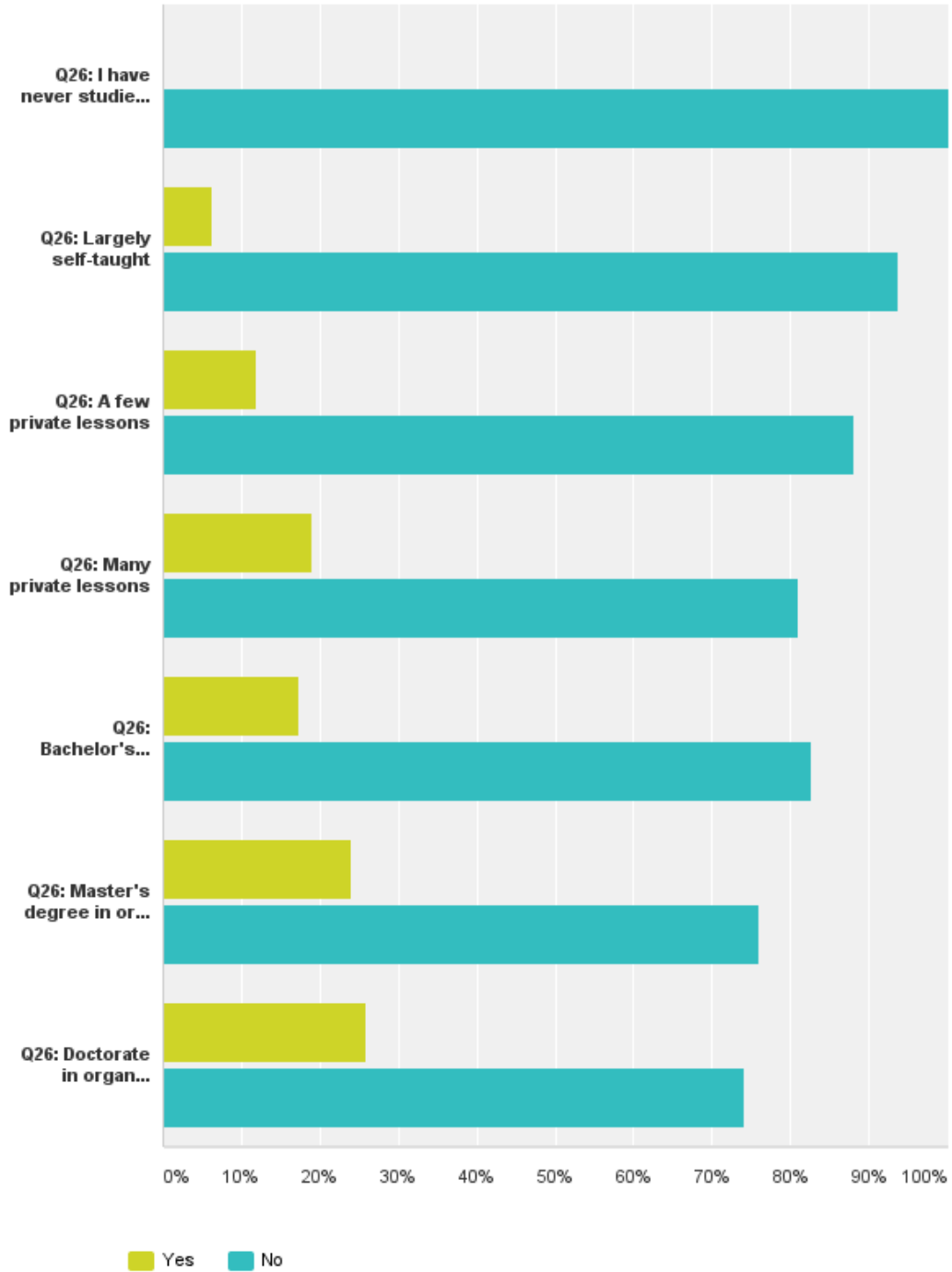


Table 1 Q17-C Certifications Held by Birth Decade in Absolute Numbers

Q15 Have you ever taken an AGO certification examination?

Answered: 4,682 Skipped: 22



Q15-C Member Survey Respondents Participation in Certification Programs Compared to Levels of Training as Organists

Q16 Primary Reason for Not Taking an AGO Certification Exam

When asked why they had never taken a Guild exam, 38% of members reported that “I feel my academic degree qualifications are adequate.” This leading response is followed by “I haven’t had time to prepare adequately” with 18% of respondents. The large number of people indicating that they feel their academic degree obviates the need for Guild certification point to the need for internal marketing of the certification program to members, highlighting the ways in which certification differs from academic training. The Certification Committee may wish to develop a series of monthly “advertisements” in the AGO that feature member testimonials on the value of certification and/or other marketing strategies.

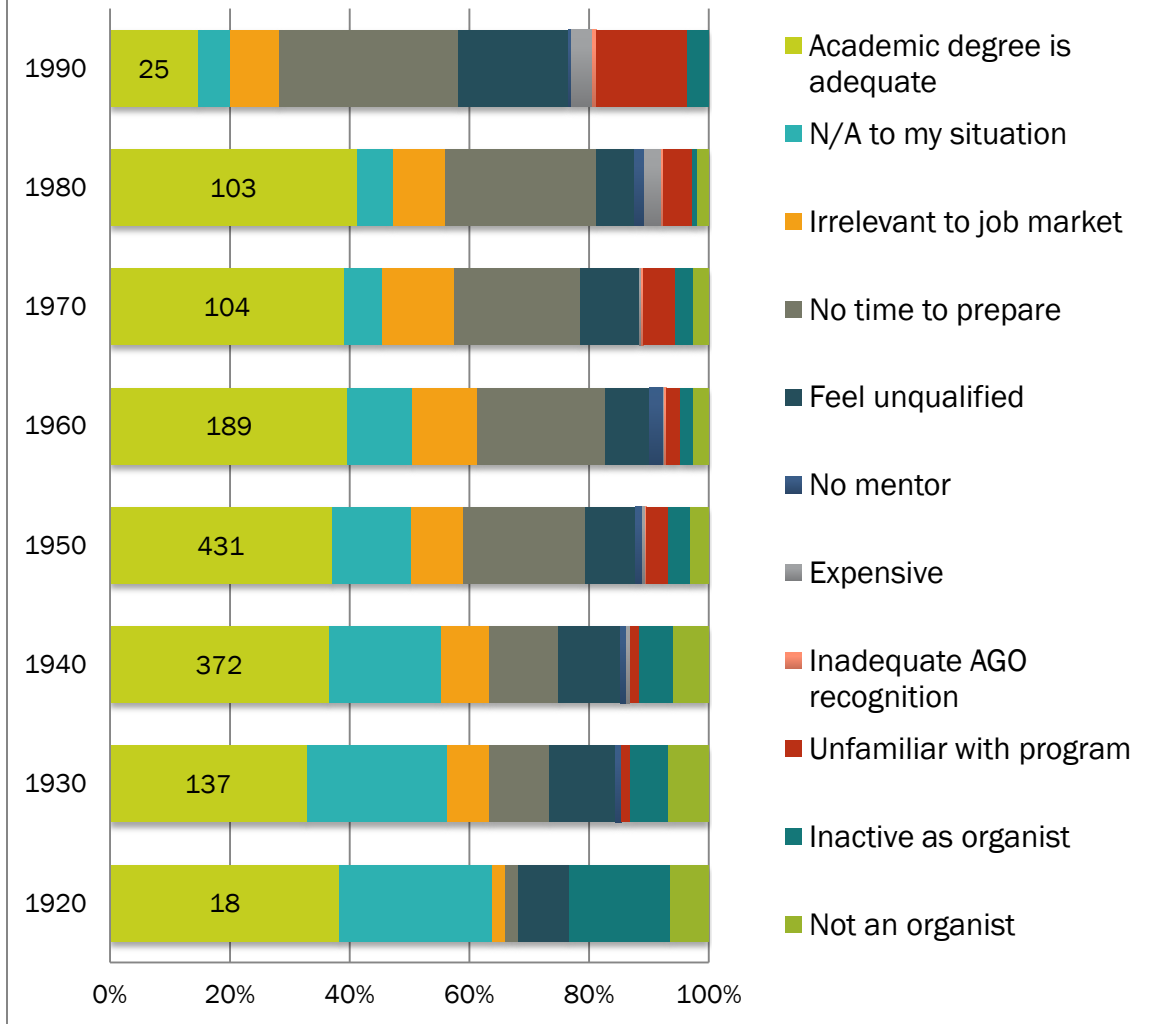
Among all members with university degrees “I feel my academic degree qualifications are adequate” is the top reason: Bachelor’s 41%, Master’s 68% and Doctoral 85%.

Among members who describe themselves as having had “many private lessons,” a group comprising essentially a third (31%) of Guild membership, 25% cite “lack of time to prepare” and 22% say “certification doesn’t apply to my situation.”

Future discussion may help us better understand these attitudes to develop certification packages aimed at this large under-served segment of the AGO membership. Overall there appears to be a need for better internal marketing of the certification programs.

The present survey does not shed much light on how certification affects an organist’s career prospects. The correlation between hours of employment and levels of certification appears to be a weak one. In addition, numerous other personality variables such as level of ambition make it difficult to draw simplistic conclusions. Do organists become better musicians through certification and thus get better jobs or are better musicians simply more attracted to the challenge of certification? We are unable to answer these questions with the data obtained from this survey.

Q16. Current Member Respondents: What is your primary reason for not taking an AGO certification examination?



Q16 Member Respondents Reasons for Not Taking Certification Exam

Q17 Highest Certification

This question was asked of persons who said they have taken at least one AGO certification examination. 903 members answered the question; 3,885 members skipped the question, reflecting the very limited reach of the AGO certification program.

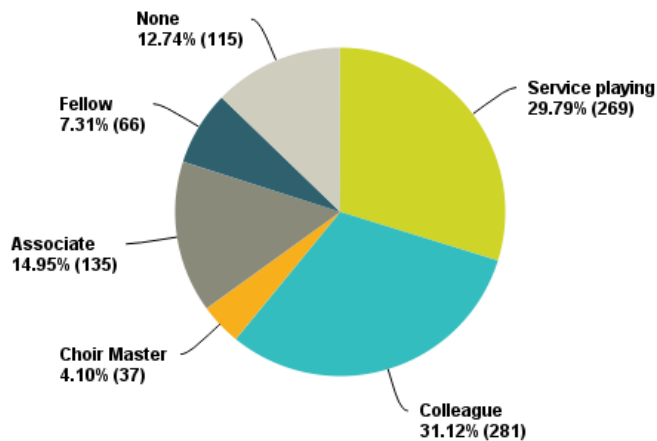
Highest Certification Levels

None	13%
Service Playing	30%
Colleague	31%
Choir Master	4%
Associate	15%
Fellow	13%

By comparing the highest certification attained with members' description of their levels of training as an organist, certain patterns emerge. Among certificated members whose training is "many private lessons," the highest percentage (44%) hold the Service Playing certification. Among certificated members with a Bachelor's degree, the highest percentage (35%) hold the Colleague certification. Among certificated members with a Master's degree, the highest percentage (35%) hold the Colleague certification. Among certificated members with Doctoral degrees, the highest percentage (30%) hold the Associate certification.

Q17 What is the highest certification you hold?

Answered: 903 Skipped: 3,885



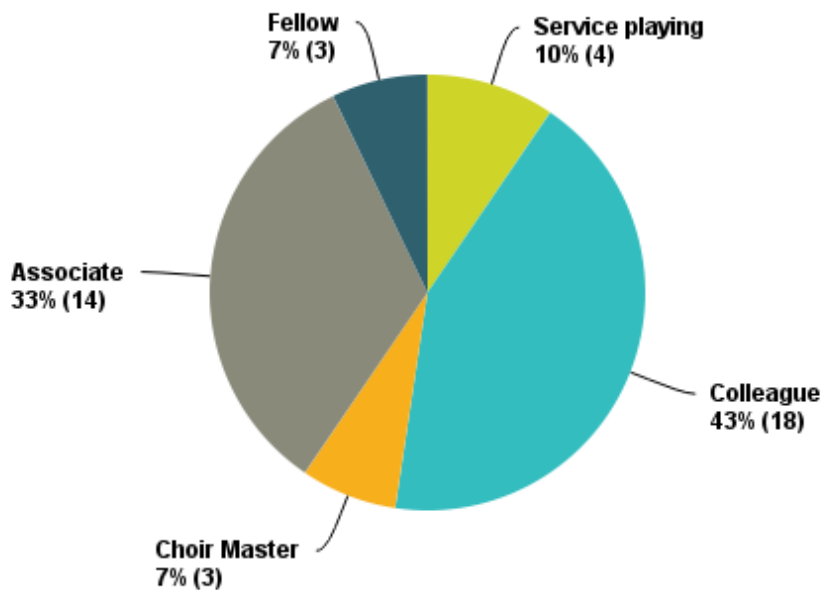
Q17 Member Respondents Highest Certification Level

Q18 and Q19 Certifications Partially Completed

Five percent of members who have taken a certification exam report that they are still working toward completion of an exam, having passed part I or II. This statistic represents a response from only 42 members. While the responses form an interesting snapshot, the low number of respondents makes it difficult to generalize to the larger population.

Q19 For which certification have you passed Section I or Section II while not yet completing the certification?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 4,746



Q20 Value of AGO Membership

Across all age groups, the most valuable aspect of AGO membership was “to meet and network with professional colleagues.” 39% of members selected that response. 22% selected “to stay informed about news in the organ world” as the most valuable aspect, reflecting the importance of *The American Organist* in the Guild’s value proposition to its members.

Since members were allowed to choose only one reason, it does not mean that the other reasons are unimportant, only that they are not the *most* important. Conferences were the most important value to 3% of members. Educational programming was most important to 8%. Learning about job openings was most important to 6%. Nurturing the next generation of organists was most important to 4% of members. Supporting the work of organists was most important to 12% of members.

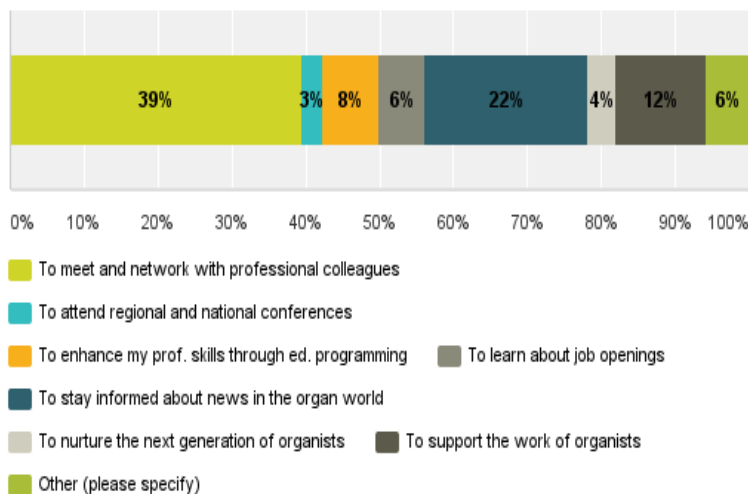
Of the 6% of respondents who wrote in a response under “Other,” 54 indicated they could not choose a single value because all of the Guild dimensions were important. 40 respondents specifically cited *The American Organist*.

Since about 1/3 of members did not attend a chapter meeting last year, and are unlikely to have attended a convention, *The American Organist* is likely the principal plank in the Guild’s value proposition for those members. We believe they are the members most likely to allow their membership to lapse, asserting that the “cost outweighs the benefits.”

Based on these findings, we believe that every leader in the AGO must be engaged in developing new value drivers for membership. As you will see in the next section, young members will expect to have those products delivered electronically via digital devices.

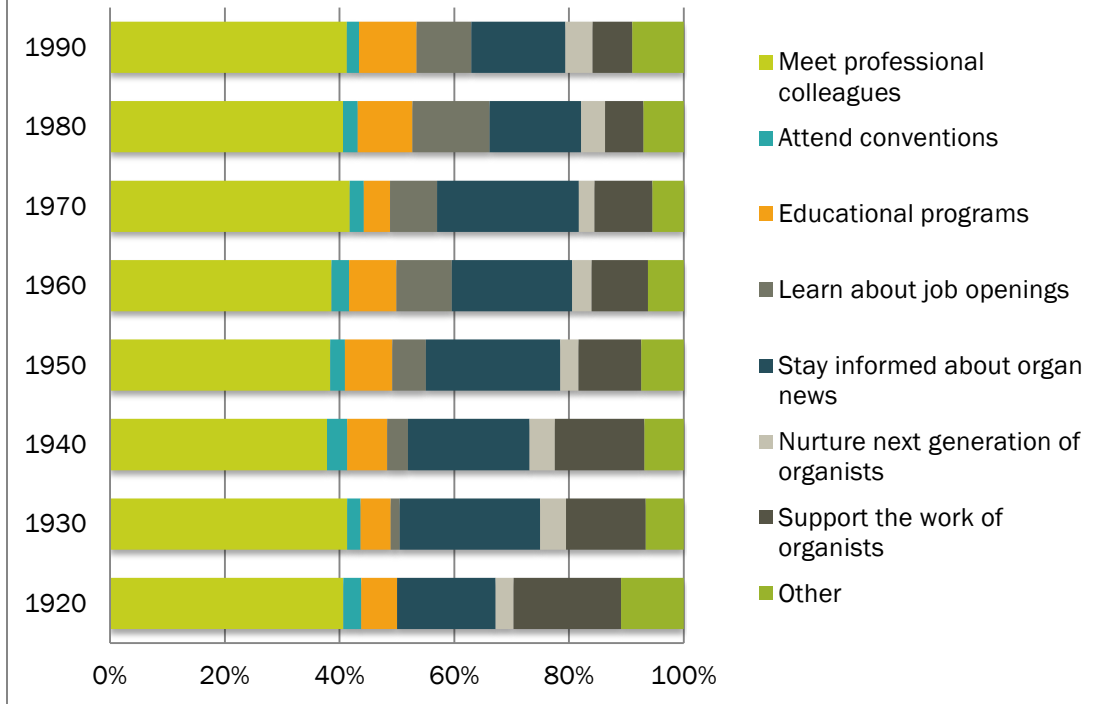
Q20 Why is membership in the AGO valuable to you personally? Please select the most important reason.

Answered: 4,721 Skipped: 67



Q18 Member Survey Respondents Value of AGO Membership

Q20. Current Member Respondents: Why is membership in the AGO valuable to you ?



Q20 Member Respondents Value of Membership

Communications

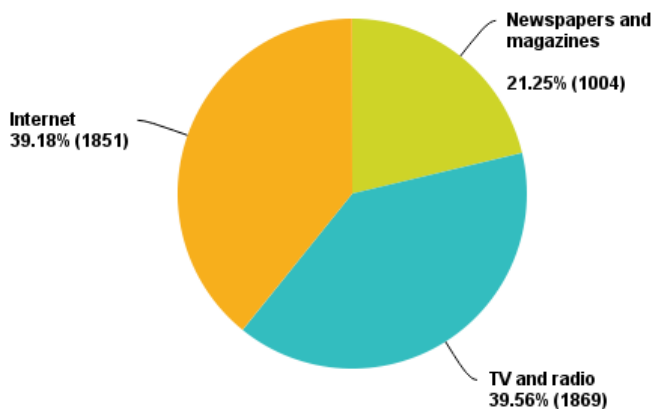
Q 21 News Media Usage

40% of respondents indicate that they receive most of their news from TV and radio. (Q21-A) 39% of respondents indicate that they receive most of their news from the internet. A significantly smaller percentage, 21%, receive most of their news from print media. Not surprisingly, younger members (born in the 1980s and 1990s) receive about 80% of their news from the internet. (Q21-B) Only about 4% of younger members receive most of their news from print media. Chart Q21-B strikingly demonstrates the extinguishing of newspapers and magazines as a source of news for younger members, and the corresponding advance of the internet.

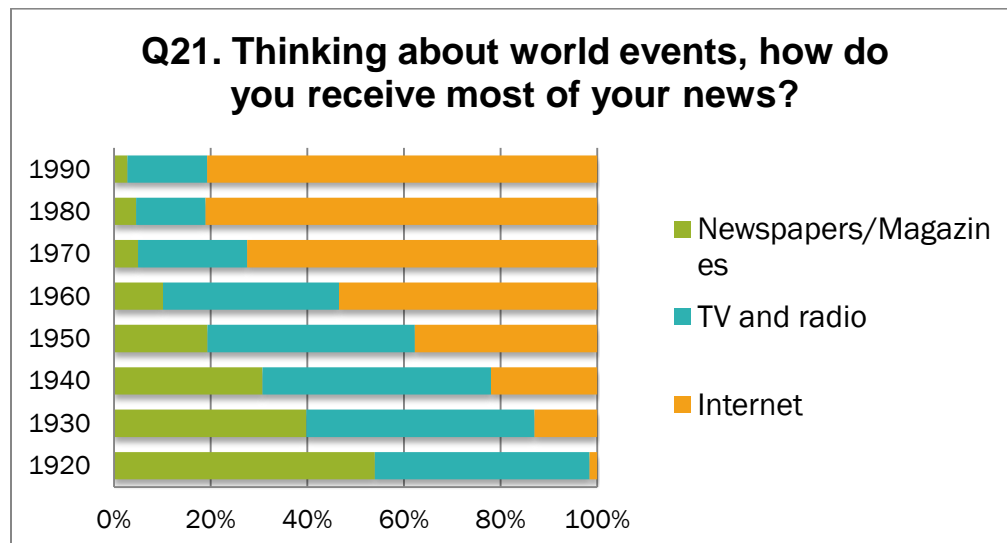
These patterns of media usage among young members pose a challenge to the AGO which has relied almost exclusively on print media to communicate with its members.

Q21 Thinking about world events, how do you receive most of your news?

Answered: 4,724 Skipped: 64



Q21A Member Respondents News Sources



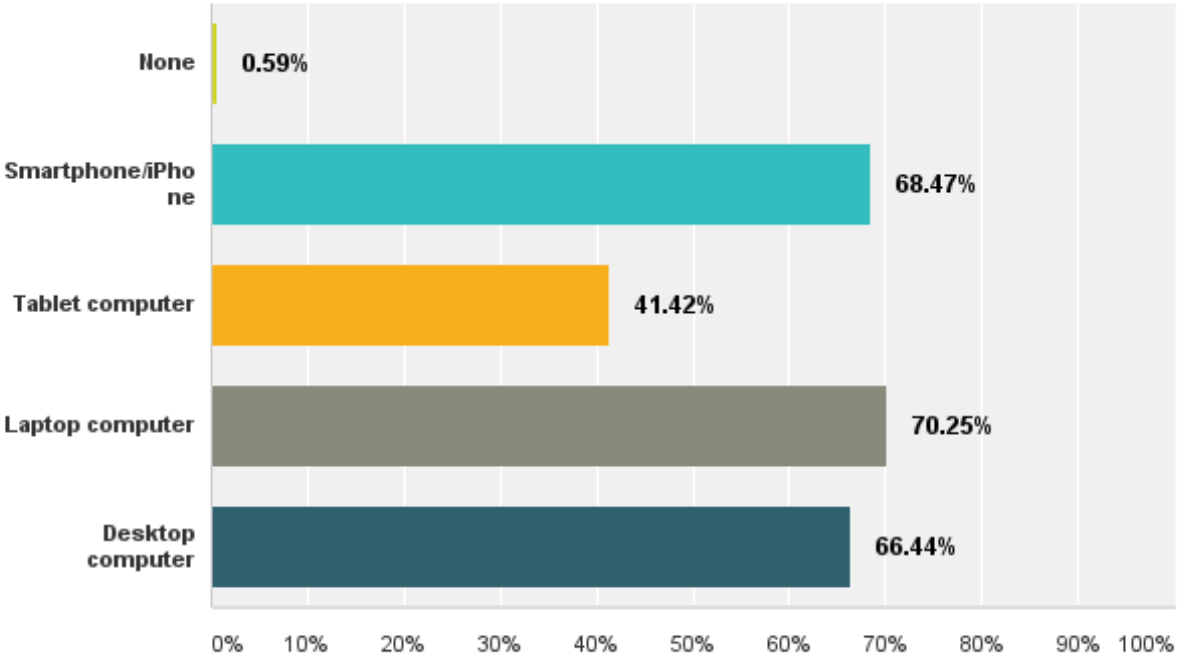
Q21-B Member Survey Respondents News Sources by Birth Decade

Q22 Electronic Device Ownership

Fewer than one percent of respondents own no electronic communication device (smart phone, tablet laptop, or desktop). This is hardly surprising given that the survey was administered electronically! 68% of members report owning a smartphone. 70% own a laptop computer.

Q22 Which electronic devices do you own?

Answered: 4,732 Skipped: 56



Q22 Electronic Devices Owned

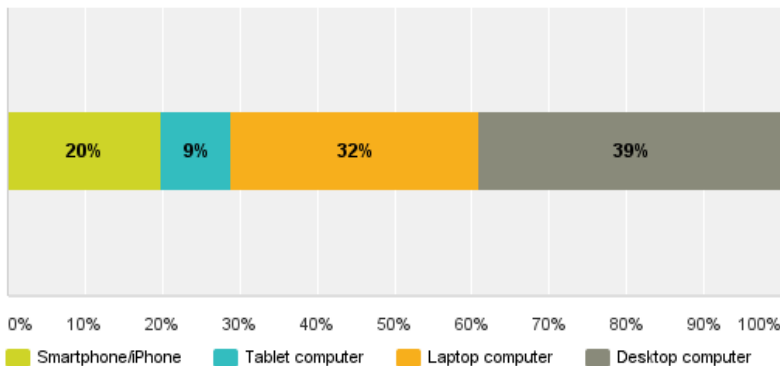
Q23 Electronic Device Used to Connect Online

The most common way respondents reported connecting on line was using a desktop computer (almost 40%). But, looking at how members connect online, we see clear age-related patterns. Respondents in the older age cohorts overwhelmingly reported using the desktop to connect on line. The proportion of desktop users steadily increases with age. Conversely, use of smart phones to connect online grows steadily with each succeeding cohort, jumping from about 6% of members born in the 1940s to over 50% of members born in the 1980s.

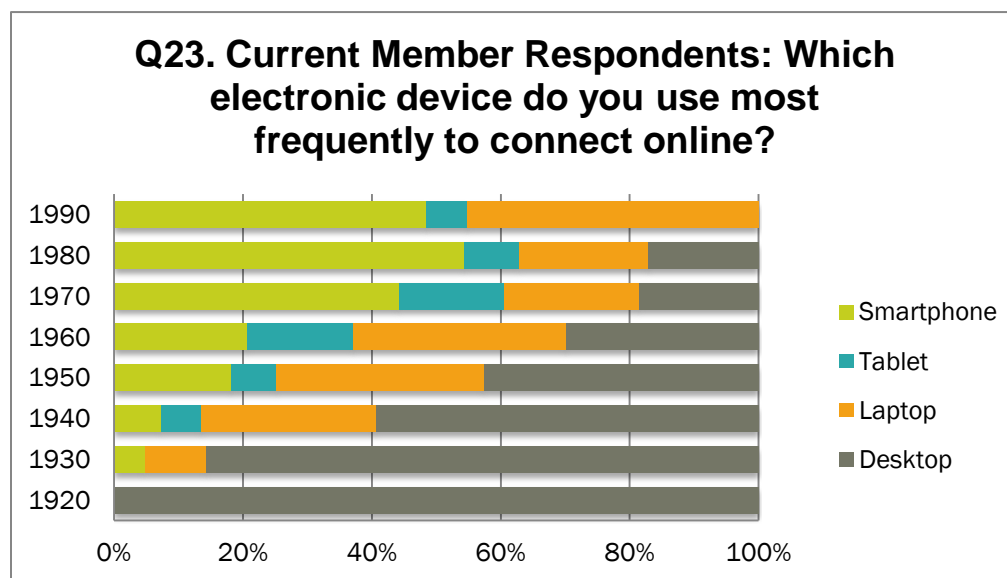
These findings will become increasingly relevant as the Guild distributes more and more educational materials to members electronically. Younger members accessing the internet on hand-held electronic devices will be more likely to view short video pieces, as opposed to long form video that consumes a lot of cellular data.

Q23 Which electronic device do you use most frequently to connect online?

Answered: 4,655 Skipped: 133



Q 23-A Electronic Device Used to Connect Online



Q23-B Member Survey Respondents Preferred Online Devices by Birth Decade

Q24 Time Spent Online Each Day

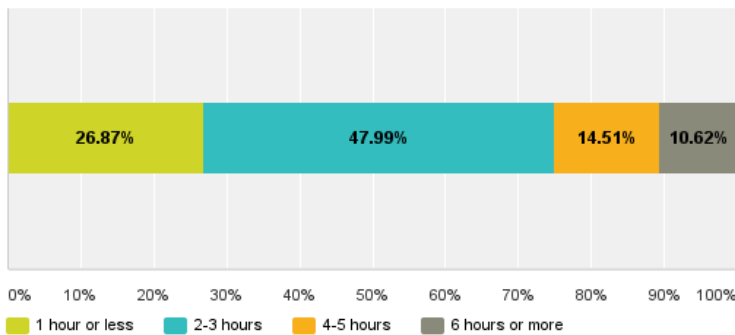
48% of respondents indicated that they spend between 2-3 hours online each day. 26% spend four or more hours online each day—about the same percentage as respondents who spend an hour or less online.

Once again, looking at responses to this question by birth decade reveals a dramatic trend (Q24-B). The moderate users (2-3 hours a day) seem to be a fairly constant percentage in each age group. But the percentage of members in each birth decade spending more than 4 hours a day online increases about 5% each decade. Thus older and younger members are becoming more divergent in their patterns of internet use, with 43% of members born in the 1980s spending four or more hours a day online.

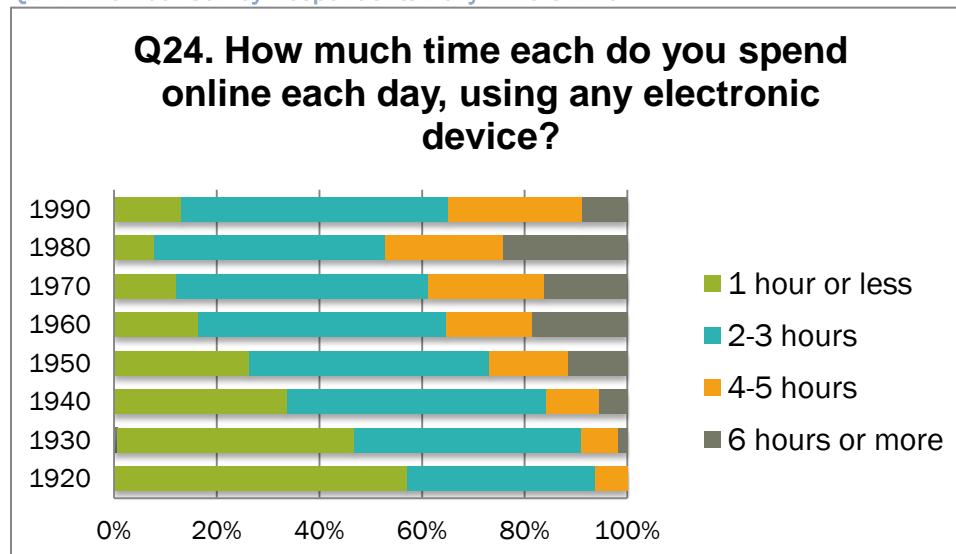
Respondents of all ages report ready access to electronic technology, and substantial daily time on line. This picture intensifies in the more recent cohorts. Electronic communication appears to be an efficient and cost effective means of communication to members of all ages.

Q24 On average, how much time each do you spend online each day, using any electronic device?

Answered: 4,682 Skipped: 106



Q24-A Member Survey Respondents Daily Time Online



Q24-B Member Survey Respondents Daily Time Online by Birth Dec

Q25 Frequency of Use of Social Media

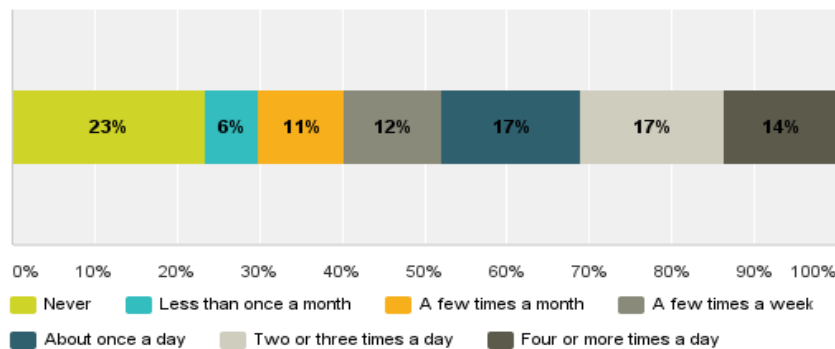
Looking at AGO respondents as a whole, 23% report never using social media. On the other hand, 48% of respondents indicate logging onto social media sites once a day or more. 29% log on occasionally, but less than daily.

When we look at these usage patterns by birth decade, we again see very divergent patterns of use. More than 60% of members born in the 1980s log into social media at least two or three times a day. Almost 40% of that age group log in four or more times a day.

The importance of social media to young members may be difficult for middle-aged Guild leadership to fully grasp because their own use of social media varies so much from that of younger members. We see no reason to believe that the trends reflected in Q25-B will not continue into the future.

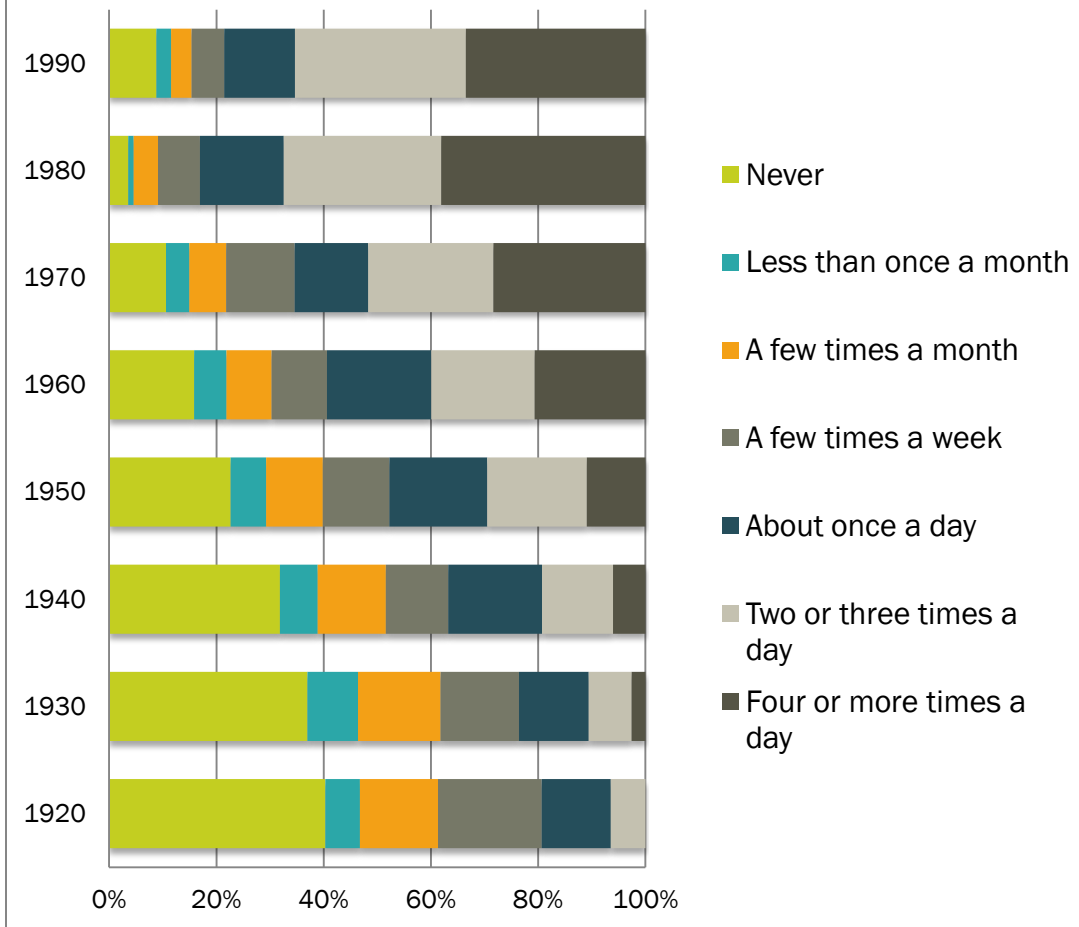
Q25 How often do you log into social media networks (e.g. Facebook, Google+, etc.)?

Answered: 4,674 Skipped: 114



Q25-A Social Media

Q25.Current Member Respondents: How often do you log into social media?



25B Members Use of Social Media by Birth Decade

Training & Practice

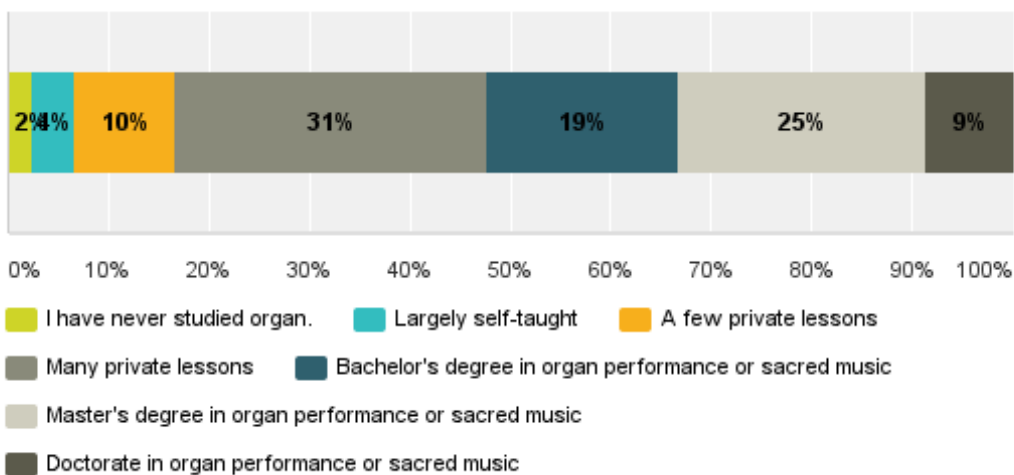
Q26-A Training and Practice as an Organist

Question 26 asked respondents to choose the response that came closest to describing their training as an organist: no training; largely self-taught; a few private lessons; many private lessons; a bachelor's degree in organ; a master's degree in organ; a doctorate in organ.

One of the most surprising findings to come out of the survey was the 31% of members who describe their training as "many private lessons." They constitute the largest category in terms of level of training. The second most frequent category was Master's degree, with 25% of respondents selecting that description. Thus the distribution of respondents is heavily weighted on both ends of the level-of-training continuum.

Q26 Please select the category that comes closest to describing your training as an organist.

Answered: 4,704 Skipped: 84

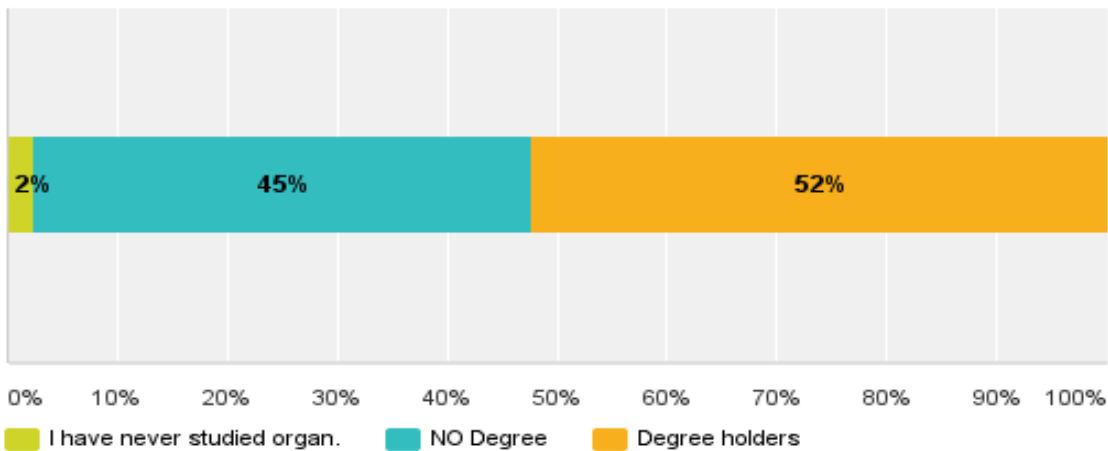


Q26-A Member Survey Respondents Training as Organists

Q26-B When we aggregate all members with less than a bachelor's degree in organ and those with a bachelor's degree or more in organ (degree vs. no degree), we see that members who do not hold a degree in organ comprise 47% of the membership while those with at least a bachelor's degree comprise 52% of the membership. It is interesting that these two groups are approximately equal in size. Neither group could be said to be a minority. This dichotomous population will obviously have very different needs and interests. One-size-fits-all approaches to Guild programs and services run the risk of not matching the needs of half of the membership.

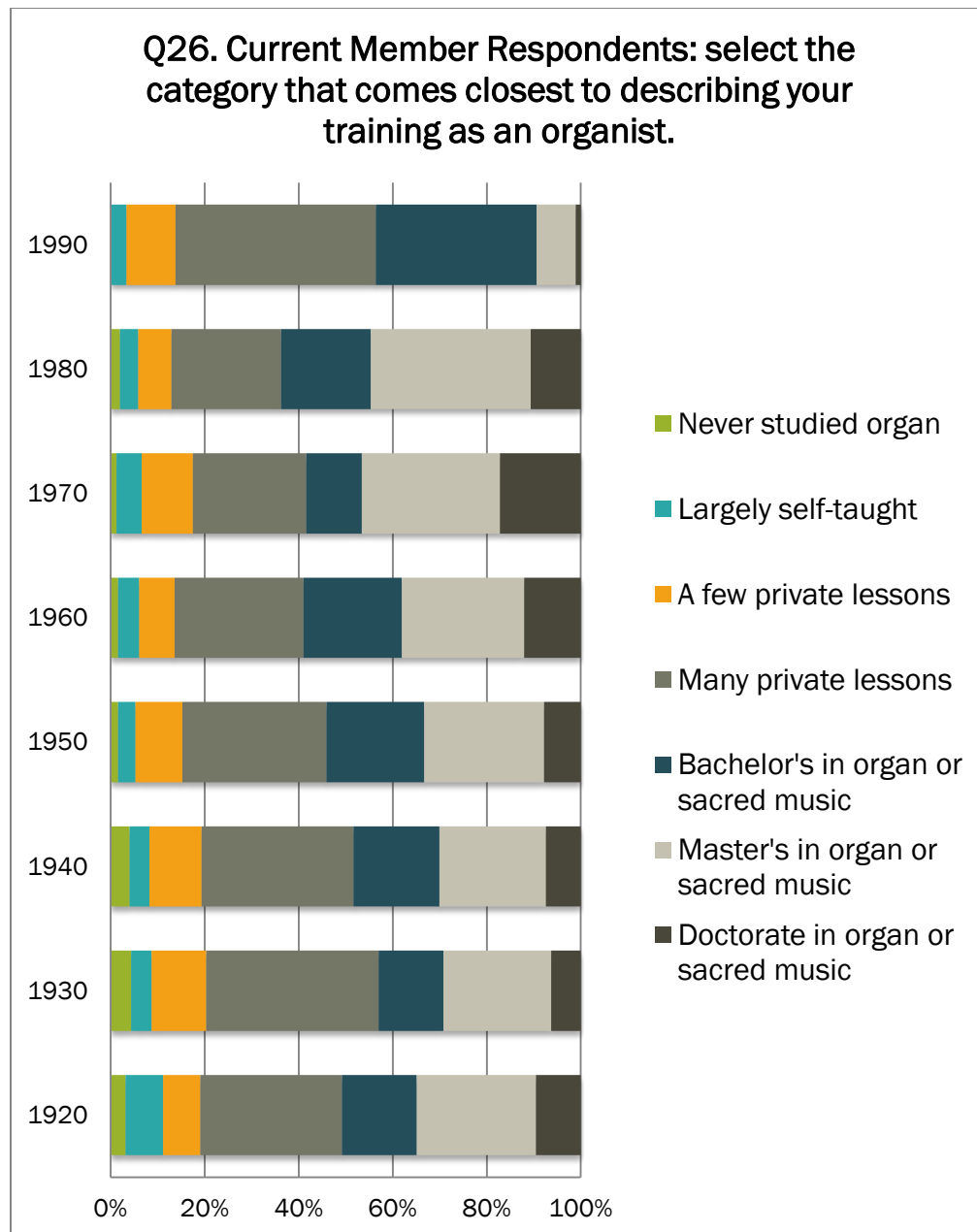
Q26 Please select the category that comes closest to describing your training as an organist.

Answered: 4,704 Skipped: 84



Q26-B Aggregated +/- Academic Degree in Organ

Q26-C It is also interesting to note that these percentages pertaining to training remain quite stable across time, so that members born in the 1920s and members born in the 1970s reflect very similar levels of training.



Q26-C Member Respondents With and Without Academic Degrees in Organ

Reflecting on the very different levels of training of the members of the AGO, Councillors may wish to consider fashioning two-track approaches reflecting these differences. In particular, the relevance and feasibility of the AGO's mainstay certification programs as currently structured should be examined in the light of these findings. How could the program be tailored to meet the needs of members who do not hold degrees in organ, remembering that they comprise half of Guild membership? Could courses taken at the collegiate level count towards AGO certification?

Q27 Interest in Skill-Building

This question asked members to indicate their level of interest in working with an excellent private tutor in various skill areas. The similarity of response rates across the various skill areas suggests that this question was simply a proxy for eagerness to learn. About 40% of members were *very interested* in six out of eight skill areas. About 32% of members were *somewhat interested* in those same skill areas, and about 25% are either *not very interested* or *not at all interested*. Respondents were clearly less interested in studying *anthem accompaniment* and *Jazz, gospel or contemporary music*. Improvisation stands out as the area in which the most respondents said they were *very interested*.

The extended series of charts contained in Q27B compares responses to this question by level of training. It is instructive to note that people who describe their training as *many private lessons* are, in general, the most eager to learn in all the areas mentioned. The members who have had *many private lessons* describe themselves as *very interested* in:

- Keyboard technique – 48%
- Hymn playing - 44 %
- Pedal technique – 49%
- Standard Repertoire – 49%
- Organ registration – 52%
- Improvisation – 46%
- Anthem accompaniment – 31%

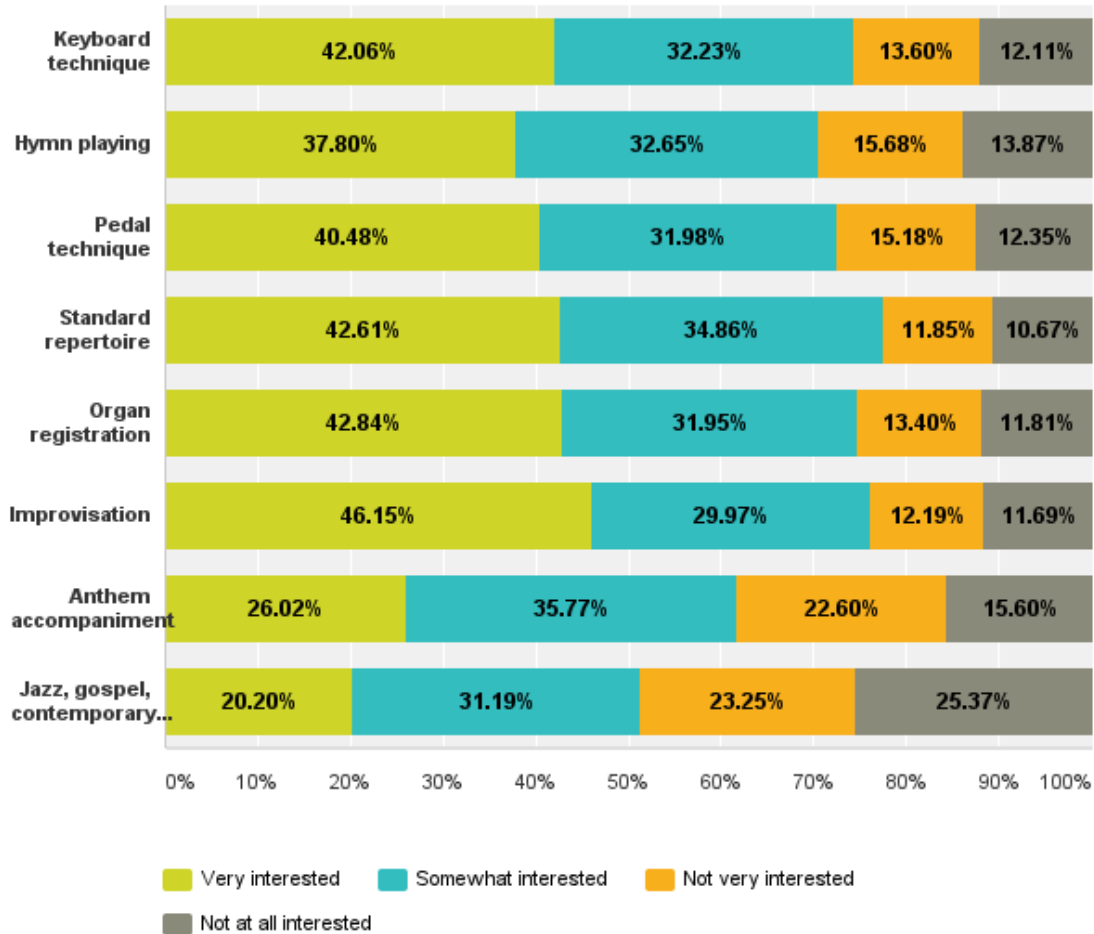
These findings suggest that the Guild may do well to focus significant educational resources on these “many private lessons” organists, who constitute approximately one-third of the membership.

It is noteworthy that *improvisation* is the only area of high interest to the majority of members with Master’s or Doctoral degrees.

We believe that the data in Q27B bears close examination by the Councillor for Education. Rather than fashioning “one size fits all” educational materials, the Guild may wish to tailor its educational materials to those sectors of membership with the greatest expressed interest.

Q27 If you had access to one of the country's great organ teachers as your private tutor, how interested would you be in working with the tutor to develop your skills in the following areas?

Answered: 4,596 Skipped: 192

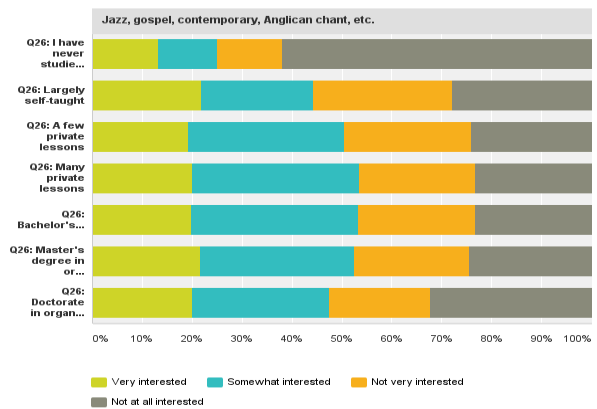
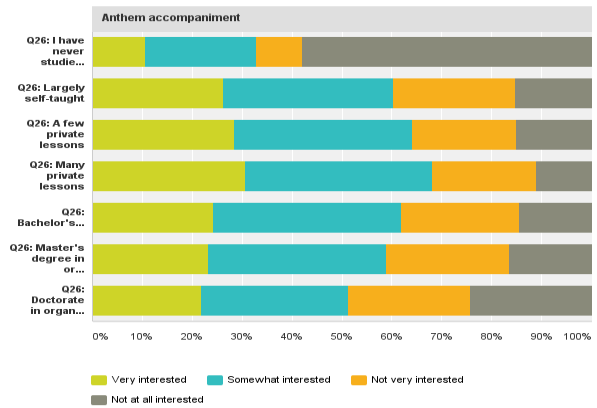
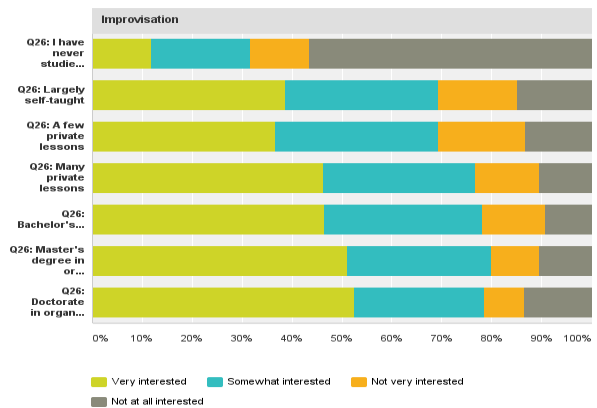
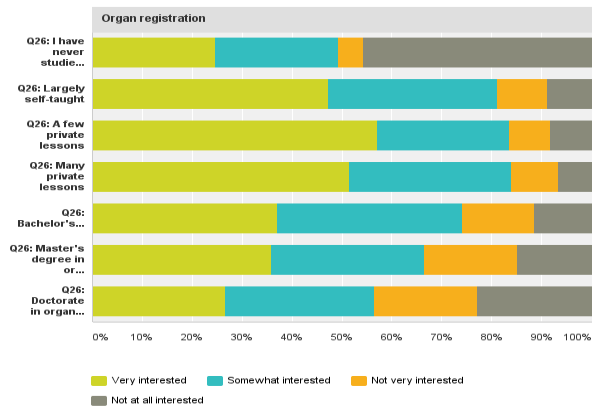
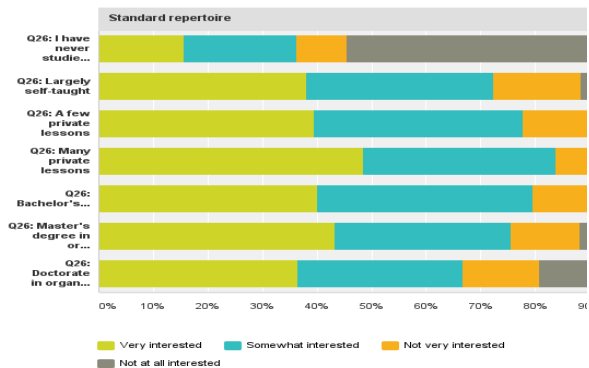
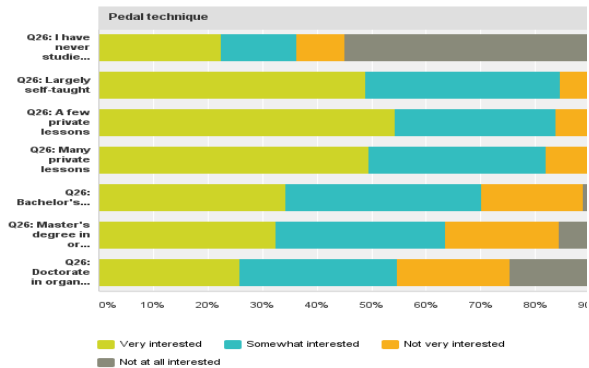
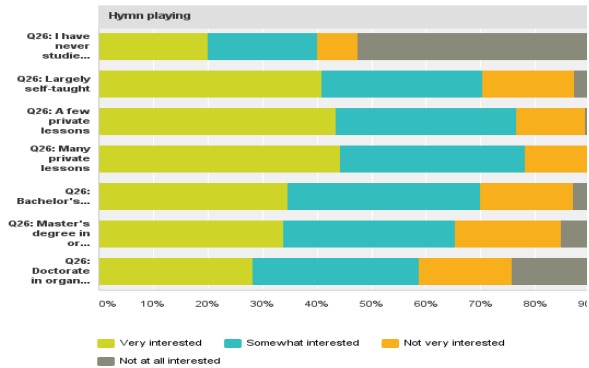
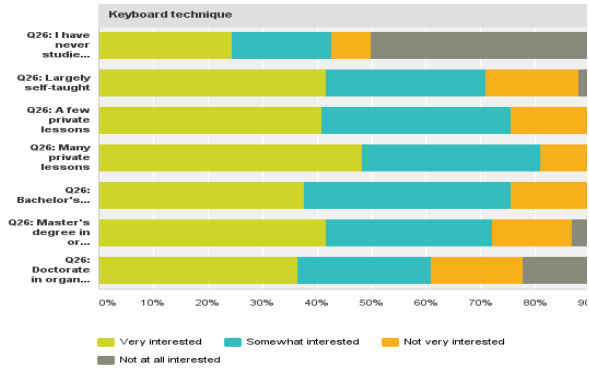


Q27 Member Survey Respondents Interest in Skill Development by Birth Decade

Q27B Interest in Skill Building Compared to Training as an Organist

Q27 If you had access to one of the country's great organ teachers as your private tutor, how interested would you be in working with the tutor to develop your skills in the following areas?

Answered: 4,589 Skipped: 124

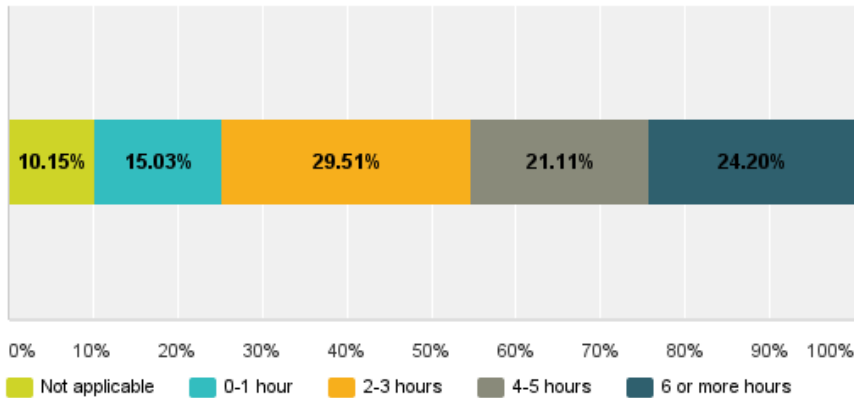


Q28 Weekly Hours of Organ Practice

Guild organists are not resting on their laurels. About 45% report practicing four or more hours a week. 24% practice six or more hours a week. Almost 30% of members report practicing 2-3 hours a week. Only 15% report an hour or less of practice time.

Q28 On average, how many hours do you practice the organ each week?

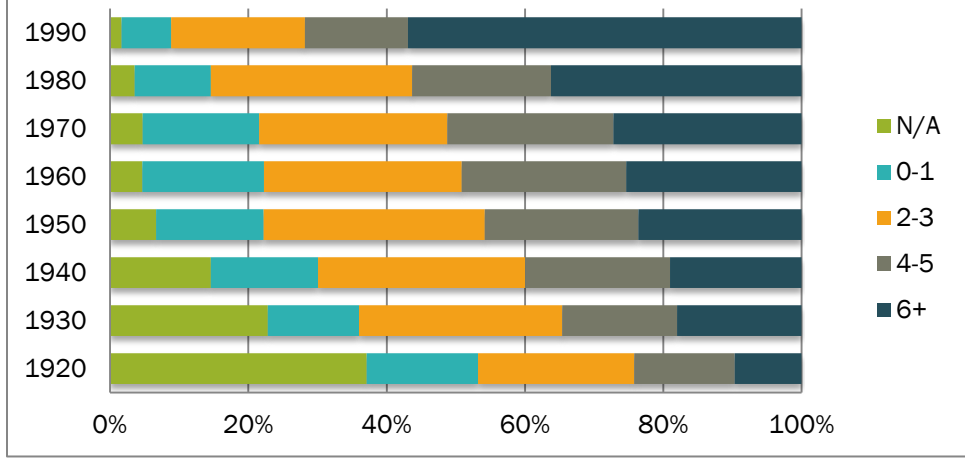
Answered: 4,690 Skipped: 98



Q28-A Member Survey Respondents Average Practice per Week

Not surprisingly, young organists practice more. More than half of the organists born in the 1990s report practicing more than six hours a week. Looking at chart Q28-B we notice that the percentage of members practicing between one and five hours a week remains fairly consistent. (The blue, yellow and gray bars are about the same size for all age groups).

Q28. Current Member Respondents: How many hours do you practice the organ each week?



Q28-B Member Survey Respondents Average Practice per Week by Birth Decade

Employment

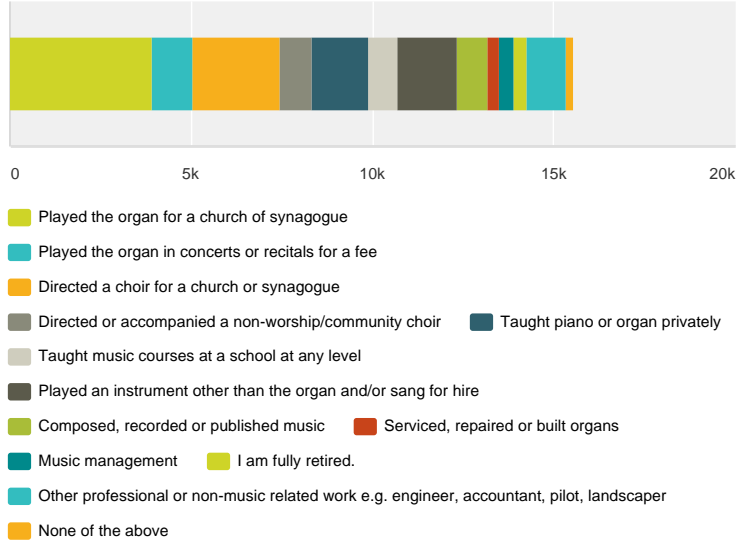
Q29 How Guild Members Earn Their Income

84% of respondents received financial compensation for playing the organ in a church or synagogue last year, *i.e.*, the overwhelming majority of Guild members are professional church or synagogue organists. 51% reported that they were paid to direct a choir. A third taught piano or organ privately; another third played an instrument other than the organ for hire. 23% reported doing other professional or non-music-related work.

By cross-tabbing Q29 with Q26 (level of training as an organist) we learn that 57% of members with doctoral degrees teach piano or organ privately; 45% with a Master's; and 33% with a Bachelor's. The large number of members teaching privately suggests that Organ Pedagogy could be considered as an area for Guild Certification, a credential that might be valuable to members trying to build a private studio.

Q29 Please select all of the following activities for which you have received financial compensation in the last 12 months.

Answered: 4,706 Skipped: 82



Answer Choices	Responses
Played the organ for a church of synagogue	83.62% 3,935
Played the organ in concerts or recitals for a fee	23.69% 1,115
Directed a choir for a church or synagogue	51.36% 2,417
Directed or accompanied a non-worship/community choir	18.27% 860
Taught piano or organ privately	33.36% 1,570
Taught music courses at a school at any level	16.79% 790
Played an instrument other than the organ and/or sang for hire	35.21% 1,657
Composed, recorded or published music	17.70% 833
Serviced, repaired or built organs	7.29% 343
Music management	8.18% 385
I am fully retired.	7.71% 363
Other professional or non-music related work e.g. engineer, accountant, pilot, landscaper	23.27% 1,095
None of the above	3.61% 170
Total Respondents: 4,706	

Figure 2Q 29 Compensated Activities

Q30 Principal Income-Generating Activity

The AGO is just about equally divided between people who make most of their income playing the organ and people who do not. On the one hand, 41% of respondents report that they generate the highest percentage of their income by playing the organ for a church or synagogue. On the other hand, another 41% report that they earn most of their income through *other* activities. Looked at another way, a majority (59%) of members derive their principal source of income from activities other than playing the organ in a church or synagogue.

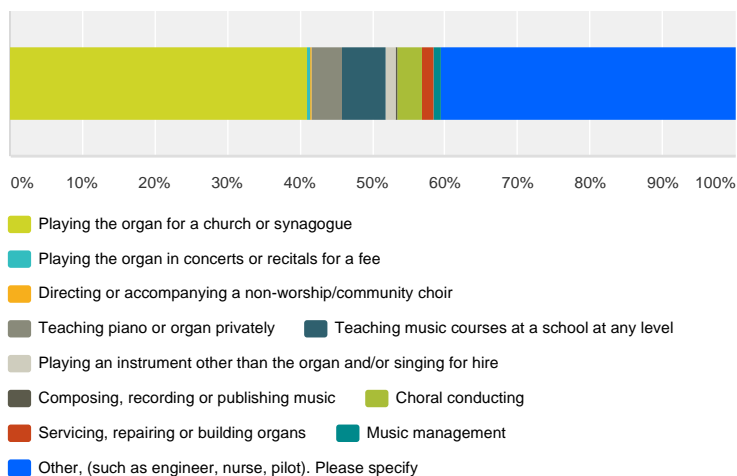
Responses to Q 29 and Q 30 point out some interesting characteristics of AGO members. They are overwhelmingly *professional organists*, in that 84% are paid for their services. But *only* 41% of members derive their principal income through playing the organ at a religious institution.

It is worth noting in chart Q30-B that members are considerably more likely to be church organists than lapsed members or non-members.

Chart Q30C demonstrates a linear relationship between level of training and the ability to make a living in music-related fields.

Q30 Which activity generates the largest percentage of your income?

Answered: 4,452 Skipped: 336

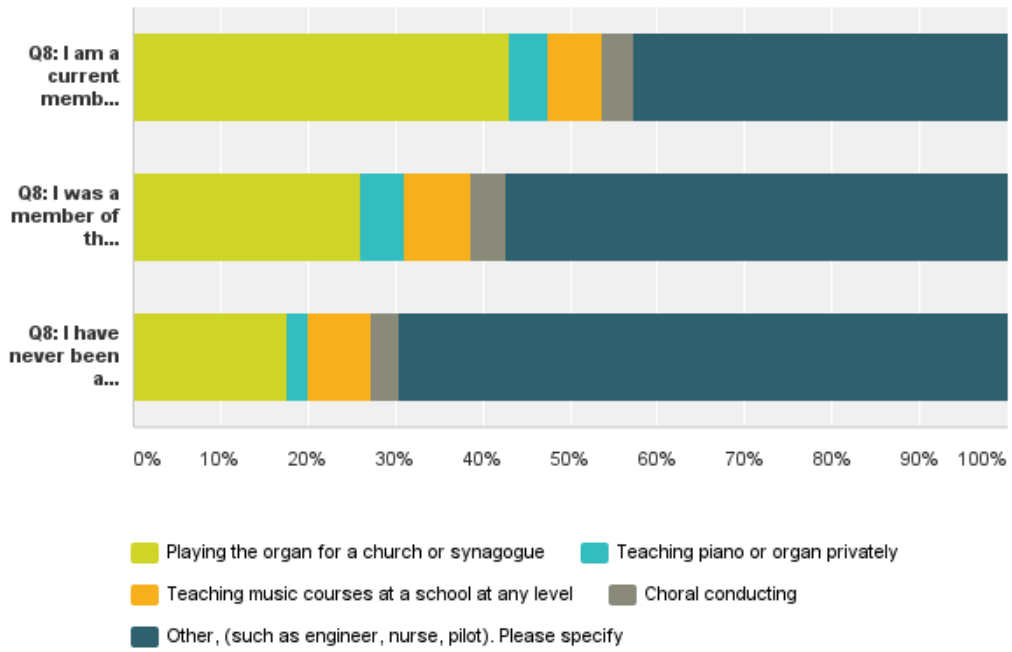


Answer Choices	Responses
Playing the organ for a church or synagogue	41% 1,826
Playing the organ in concerts or recitals for a fee	0% 18
Directing or accompanying a non-worship/community choir	0% 16
Teaching piano or organ privately	4% 181
Teaching music courses at a school at any level	6% 269
Playing an instrument other than the organ and/or singing for hire	1% 62
Composing, recording or publishing music	0% 9
Choral conducting	3% 154
Servicing, repairing or building organs	2% 69
Music management	1% 45
Other, (such as engineer, nurse, pilot). Please specify	40% 1,803
Total	4,452

Q30-A Member Respondents Principal Income-Generating Activity

Q30 Which activity generates the largest percentage of your income?

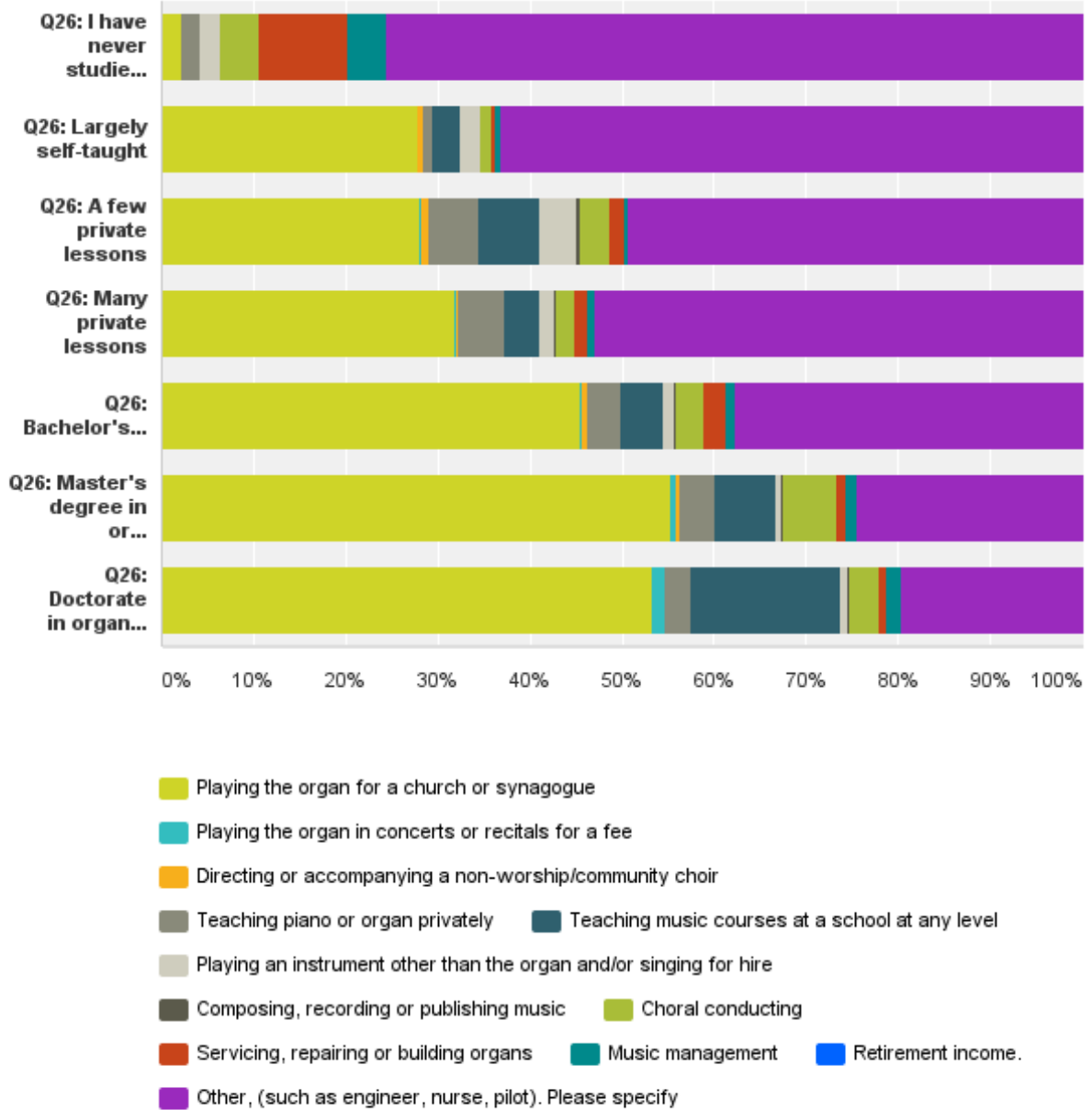
Answered: 5,173 Skipped: 435



Q30-B Compare Member Status with Principal Income-Generating Activity

Q30 Which activity generates the largest percentage of your income?

Answered: 4,438 Skipped: 266



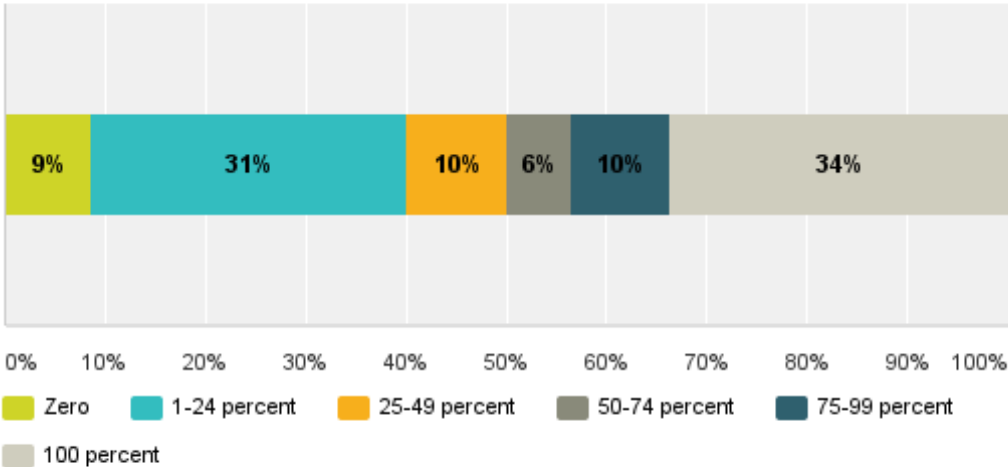
Q30C Member Respondents Principal Source of Income by Training as an Organist

Q31 Income from All Music-Related Activity

About one third of respondents earn all of their income in music related fields. About one third earn less than a quarter of their income in music related fields. About one quarter earn more than a quarter but less than all of their income in music related fields. About 9 percent earn none of their income in music-related fields.

Q31 Please estimate the percentage of your total income that you earn from music-related activity.

Answered: 4,498 Skipped: 290



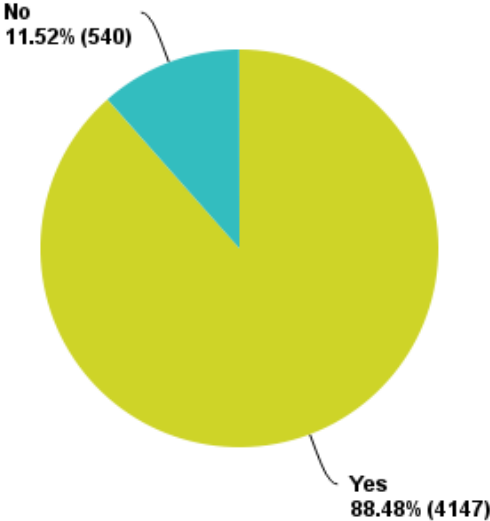
Q31 Income from All Music-Related Activity

Q32 Professional Activity

88% of members report having taught organ lessons, played the organ for at least one service or played a recital in the last year. This lines up with the finding of Q29, in which 84% of respondents indicated they have been paid to play in a church or synagogue in the last year.

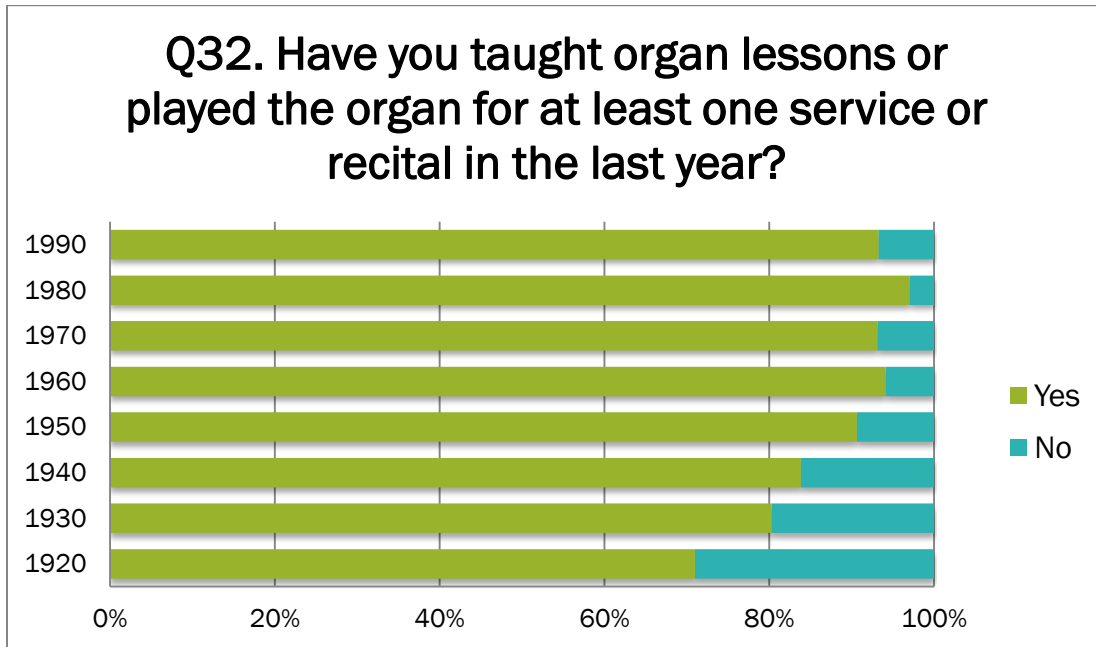
Q32 Have you taught organ lessons or played the organ for at least one service or recital in the last year?

Answered: 4,687 Skipped: 101



Q32-A Member Respondents Who Have Played in the Last Year

AGO members appear to remain active as organists throughout their lives. About 80% of members born in the 1930s (age 76-85) report having taught organ lessons, played at least one service, or played a recital in the last year. This finding suggests (Q32-B) that members retire from organ playing very, very late in life, if at all.



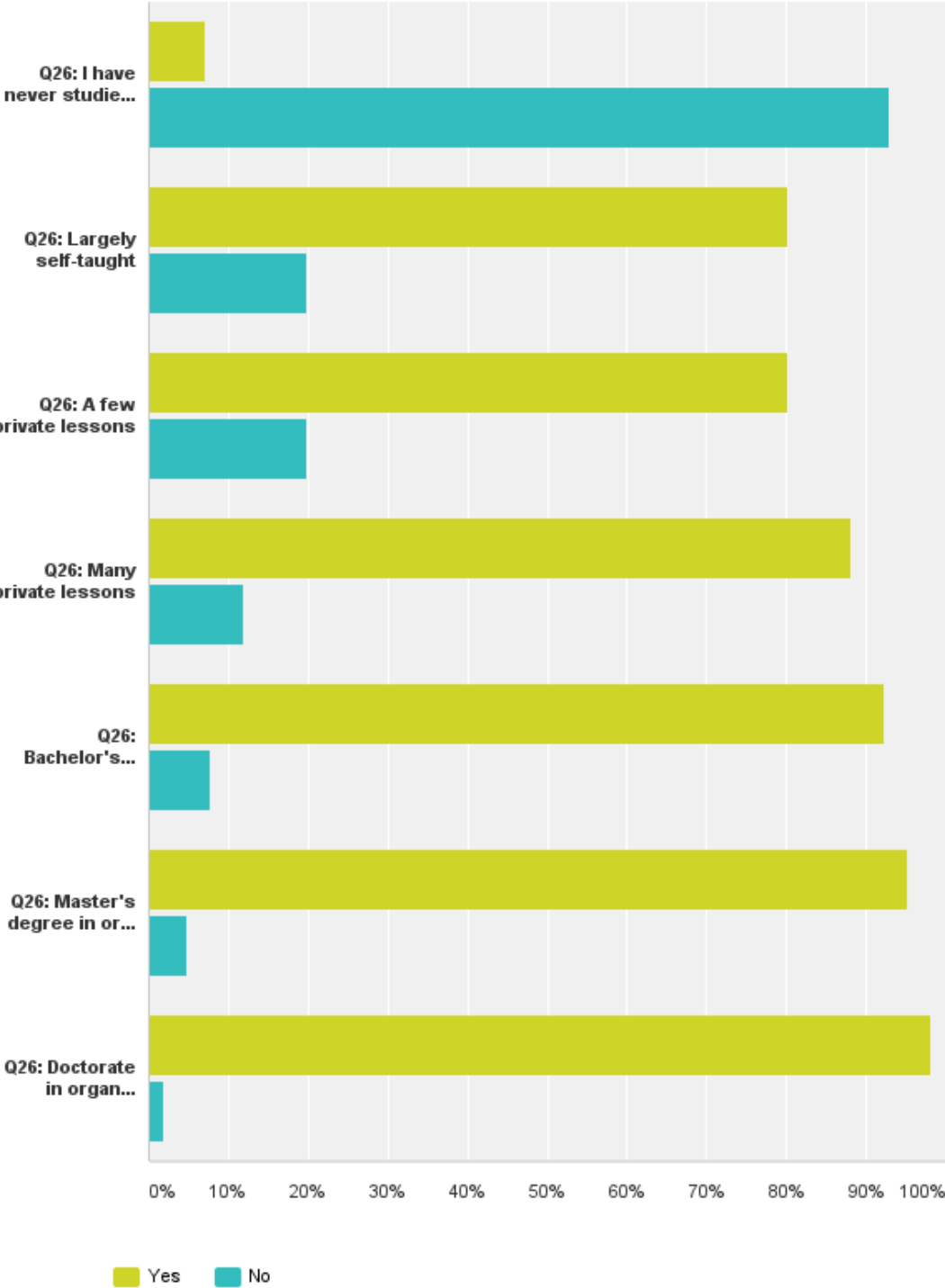
Q32-B Member Respondents Who Have Played in the Last Year by Birth Decade

Q32-C The probability of having played publicly or taught in the last year is directly correlated to members' training as organists, though the differences are not very dramatic. Having a doctorate in organ increases the probability that a member will have played publicly or taught in the last year to 98%—up from a probability of 80% for members who describe themselves as *largely self-taught*.

Current members (88%) are more likely to have played or taught in the last year than lapsed members (72%) or respondents who have never been members (50%).

Q32 Have you taught organ lessons or played the organ for at least one service or recital in the last year?

Answered: 4,670 Skipped: 34



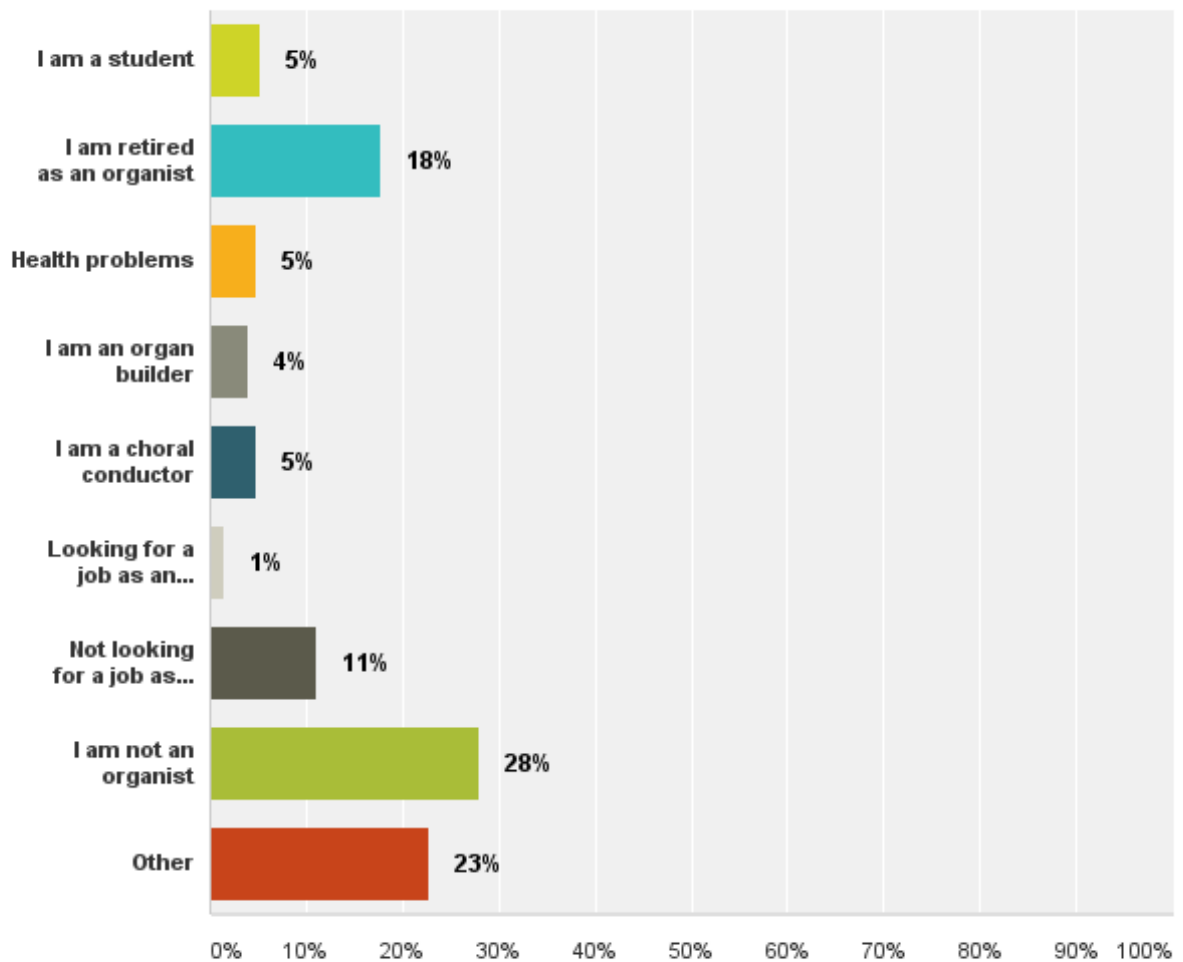
Q32-C Member Respondents Who Have Played in Last Year Compared to Training

Q33 Reasons Member Respondents Haven't Taught or Played in the Last Year

The leading reason (28%) given for a member's not having played or taught in the last year was *I am not an organist*. (A good reason.) 18% of members indicated that they are *retired as organists*. 23% selected *other*.

Q33 Which category best describes why you haven't taught organ or played a service or a recital in the last year?

Answered: 797 Skipped: 4,895



Q33 Reasons Member Respondents Have Not Played in the Last Year

Q34 Member Respondents Years in Retirement

Only 92 people answered this question. 46% have been *retired as an organist* for 5 years or less. 54% have been retired as an organist for 6 or more years.

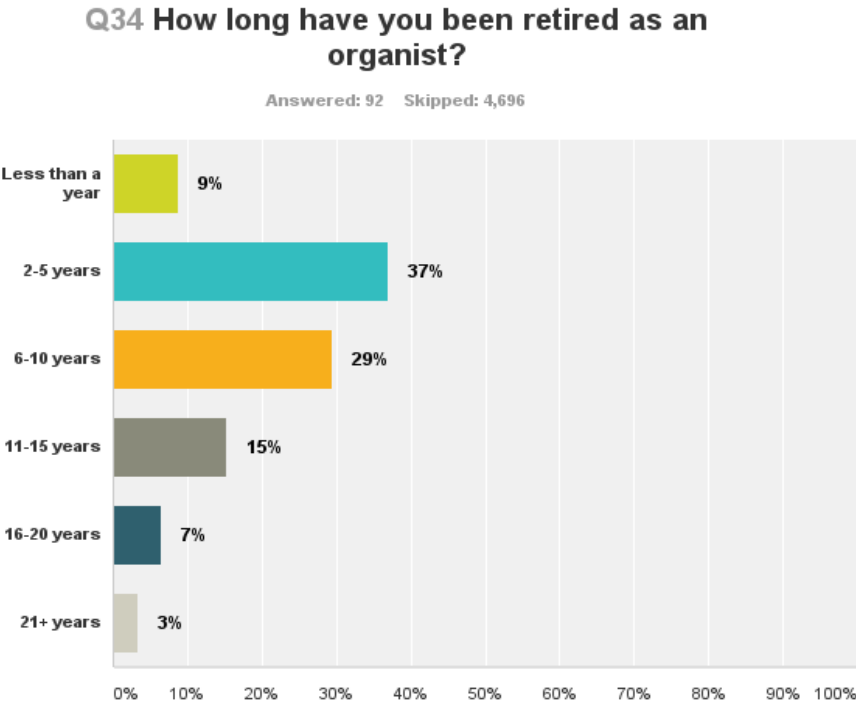


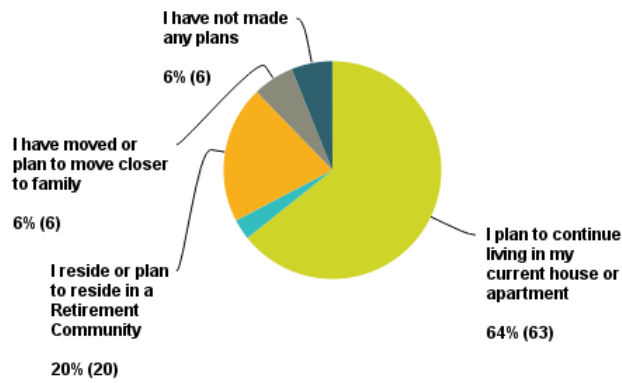
Figure 3 Q34 Member Respondents Years in Retirement

Q 35 Plans for Retirement Living

Only 98 members responded to this question. 64% plan to continue living in their current home. 20% reside or plan to reside in a retirement community.

Q35 What are your plans for retirement living?

Answered: 98 Skipped: 4,690



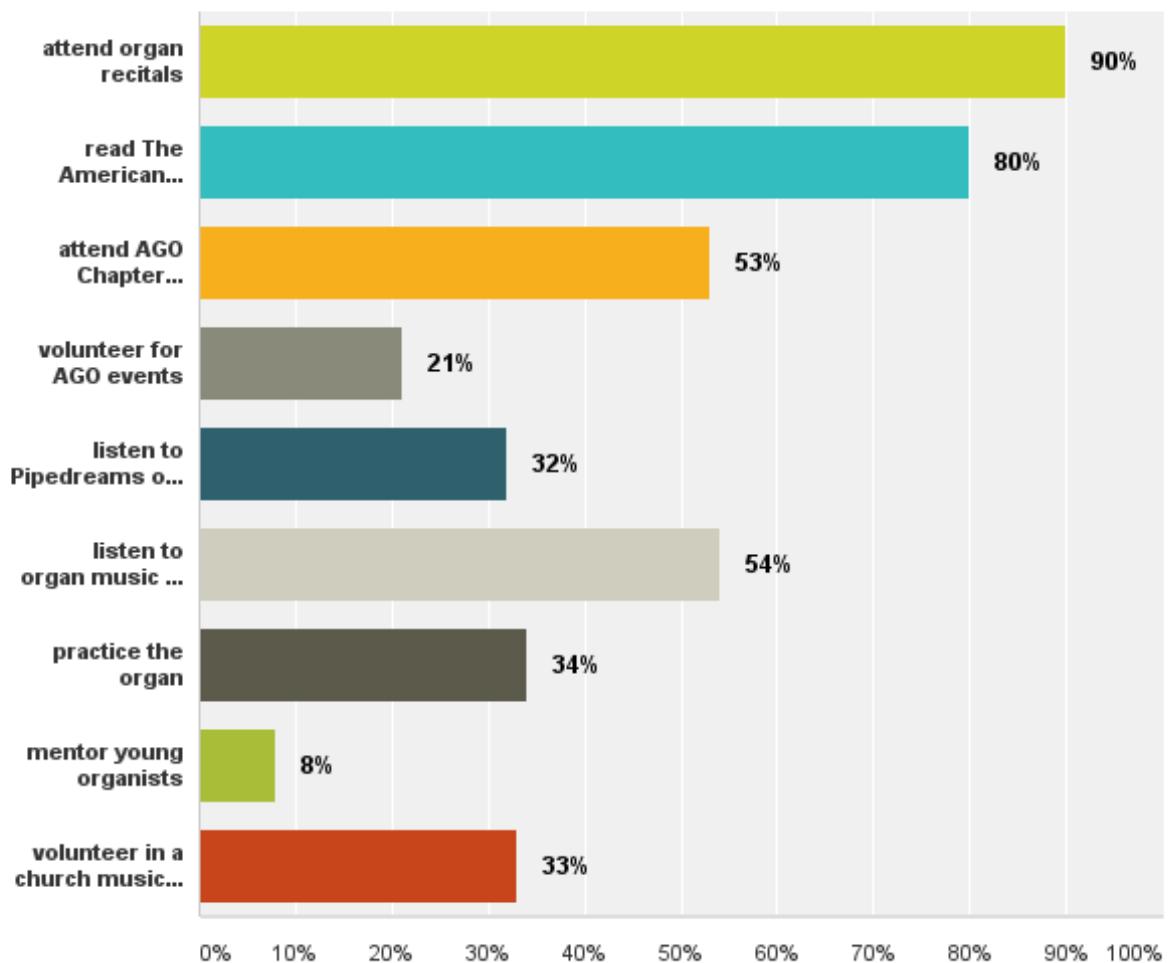
Q35 Members Respondents Plans for Retirement Living

Q36 Retired Member Respondents Organ Activities

Only 100 members responded to this question. 90% of retired member respondents indicated that they continue to attend organ recitals; 80% read The American Organist; 54% listen to recorded organ music; 53% attend AGO chapter meetings.

Q36 Please indicate all of the following activities you pursue in retirement to remain engaged in the organ world:

Answered: 100 Skipped: 4,688



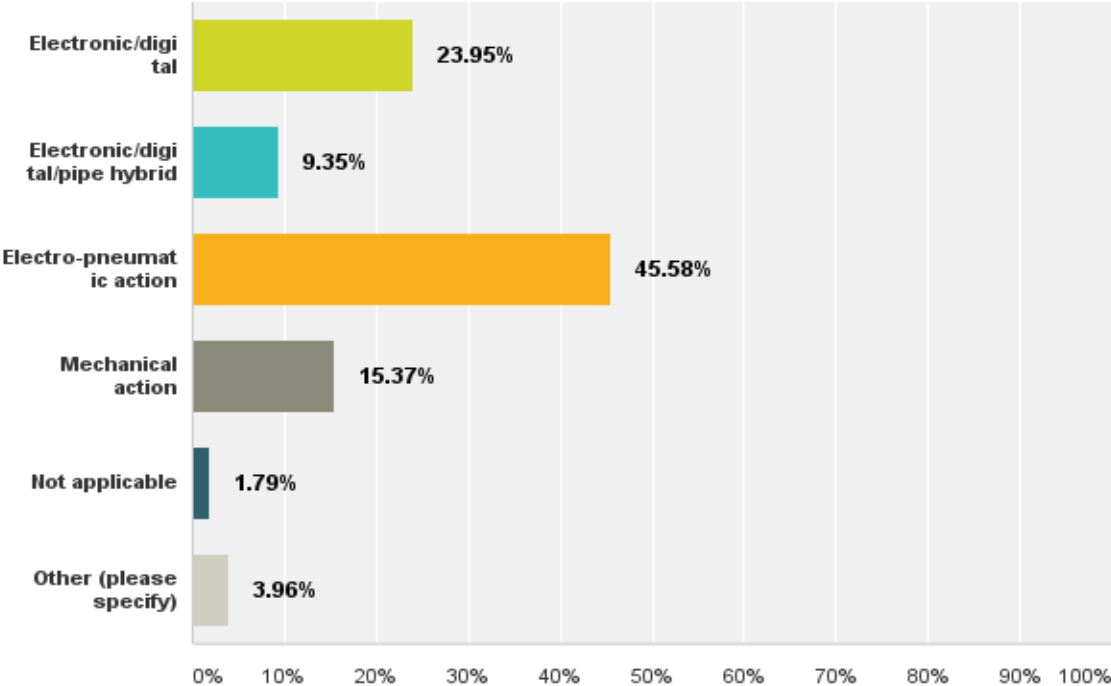
Q36 Retired Member Respondents Organ Activities Pursued

Q37 Type of Instrument Played Professionally

46% of members report playing an electro-pneumatic instrument; 24% play an electronic/digital instrument; 15% play a mechanical action instrument, and 9% play an electronic/digital-pipe hybrid.

Q37 Excluding any home instrument, what type of organ do you spend the most time playing professionally?

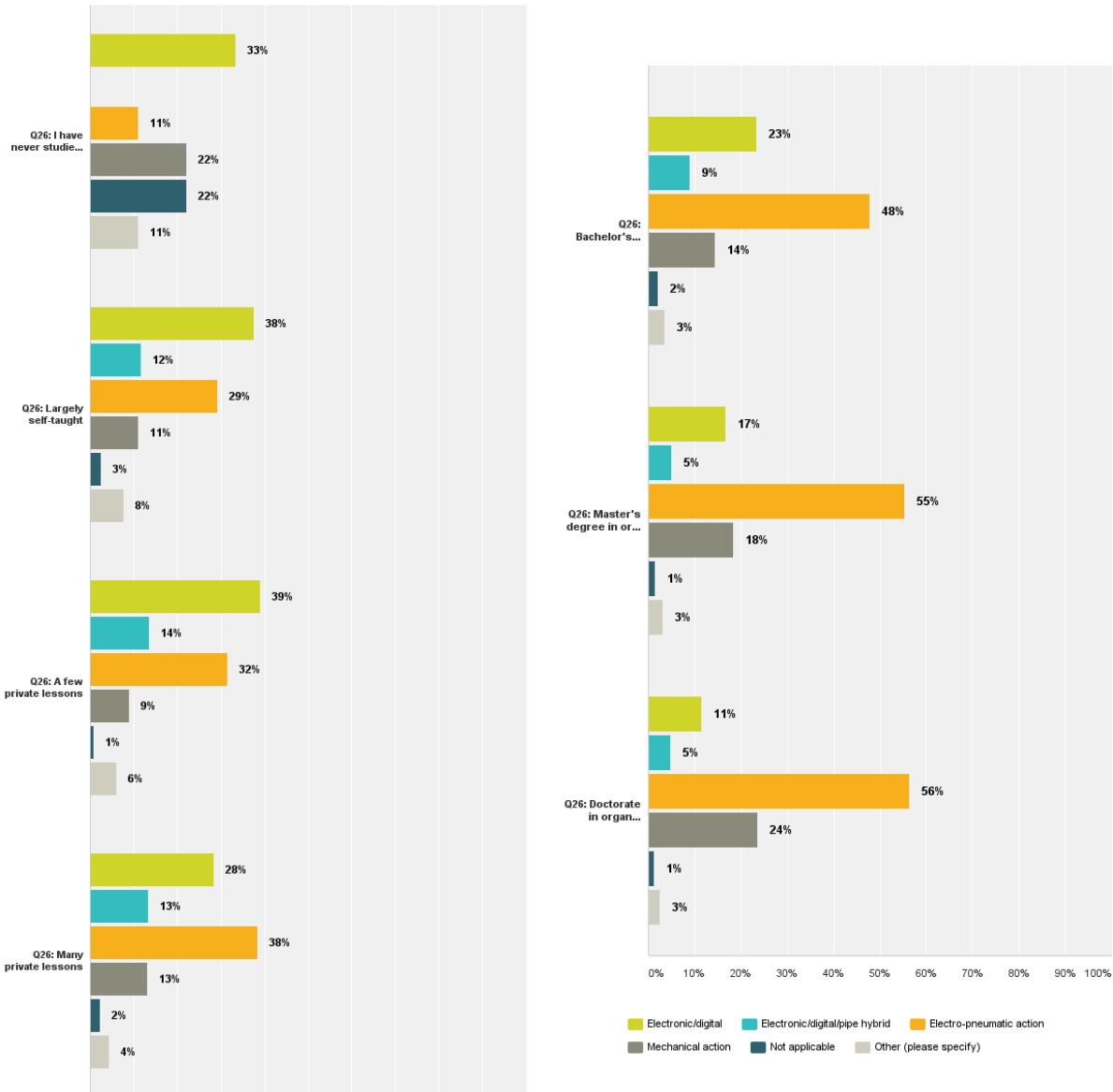
Answered: 4,138 Skipped: 650



Q37A Member Respondents Type of Instrument

Q37 Excluding any home instrument, what type of organ do you spend the most time playing professionally?

Answered: 4,125 Skipped: 579



Q37B Member Respondents Type of Instrument Compared with Training as an Organist

Q38 Condition of Instrument

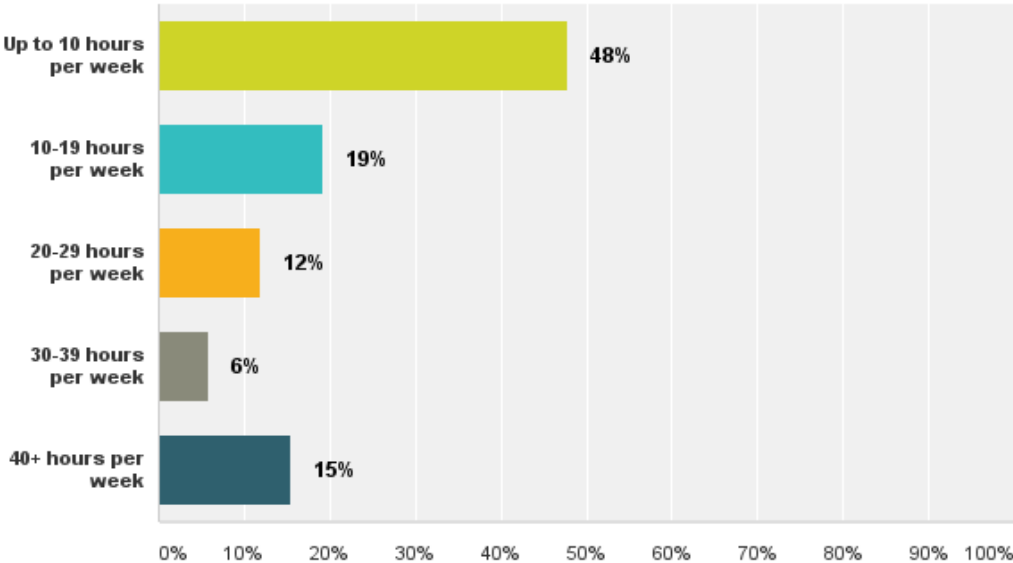
85% of respondents rated the condition of their instruments excellent or good.

Q39 Hours Member Survey Respondents Weekly Employment as an Organist

Only 15% of members report being employed 40 or more hours a week as an organist. More than three times as many members (48%) are employed as an organist 10 hours or less each week. 19% work 10-19 hours. 12% work 20-29 hours; 6% work 30-39 hours a week.

Q39 Over the last year, approximately how many hours a week have you been employed as an organist?

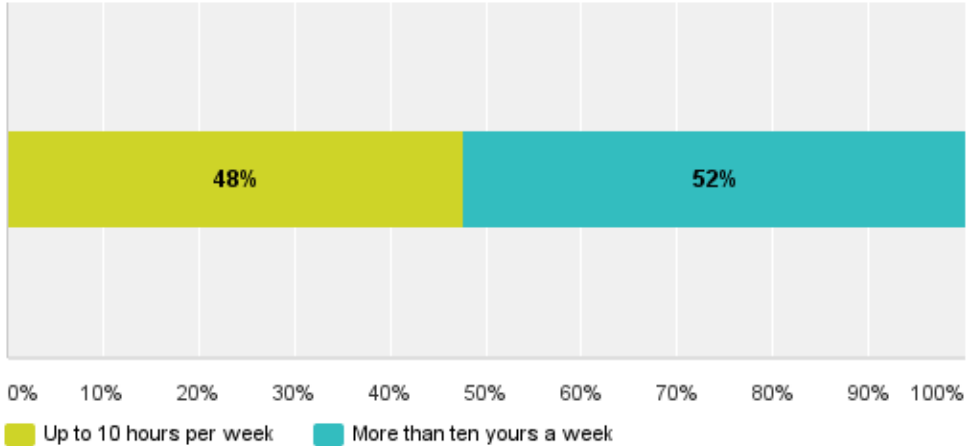
Answered: 4,113 Skipped: 675



Q39A Hours Employed as an Organist

Q39 Over the last year, approximately how many hours a week have you been employed as an organist?

Answered: 4,113 Skipped: 675



Q39-B Member Employment Up to 10 Hours per Week Compared to Aggregated >10 Hours a Week

In assembling chart 39-B we aggregated all responses above 10 hours a week. The chart helps us see that close to half of all AGO members are employed *up to 10 hours a week*.

By cross-tabbing hours of employment with gender, we see that male members are more than twice as likely to be employed full-time as female members. (Q39-C)

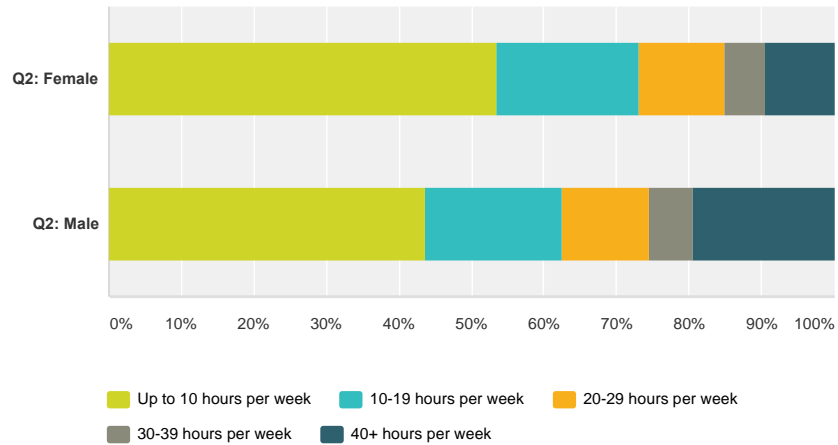
Chart 39-D cross-tabulates age and hours a week of employment. By far the largest number and percentage of members now holding full time positions were born in the 1950s. This cohort ranges in age from 56-65. As these organists retire over the next 15-20 years, organists born in later cohorts may see a large number of full-time positions coming available.

Chart 39-E cross-tabulates hours of employment with training as an organist. Members with a doctoral degree in organ are almost three times as likely to be employed full-time as members with a bachelor's degree in organ.

It should be noted that many organists work well beyond the hours for which they receive compensation, and some are not compensated for their responsibilities at all.

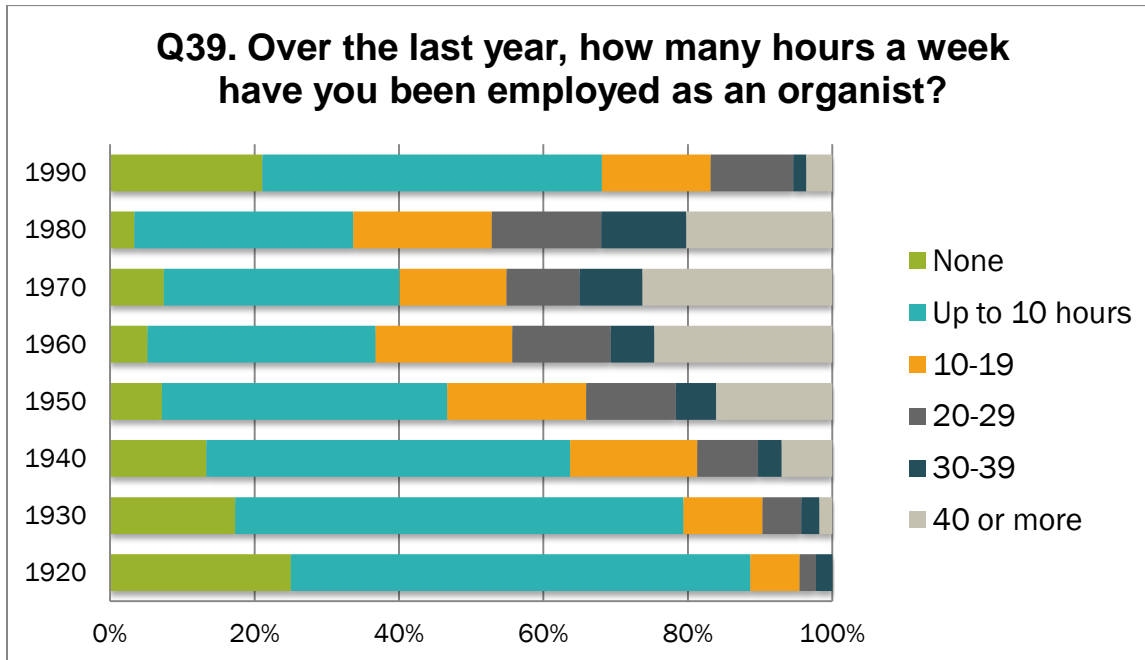
Q39 Over the last year, approximately how many hours a week have you been employed as an organist?

Answered: 4,088 Skipped: 666



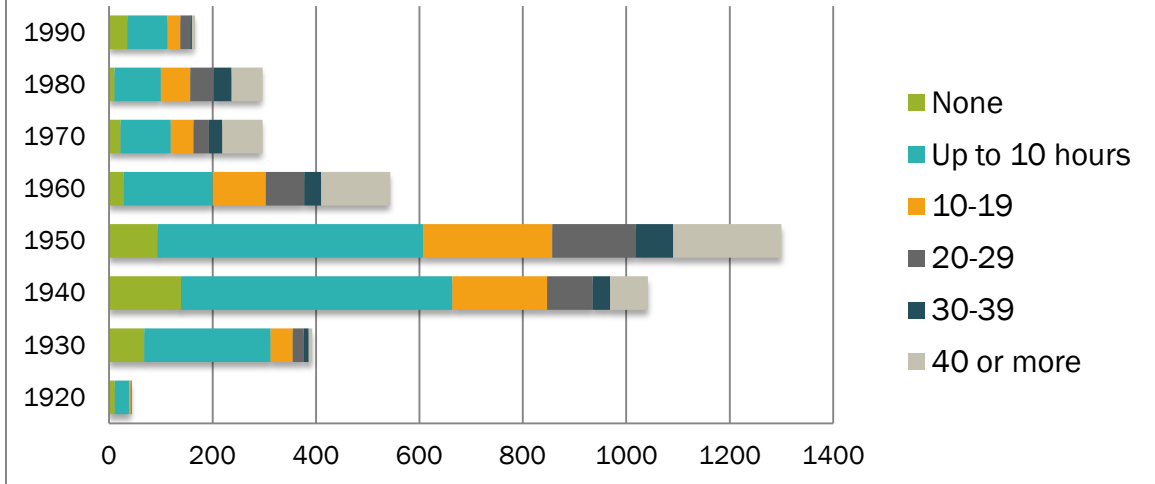
	Up to 10 hours per week	10-19 hours per week	20-29 hours per week	30-39 hours per week	40+ hours per week	Total
Q2: Female	54% 797	20% 290	12% 177	6% 83	9% 140	1,487
Q2: Male	44% 958	19% 413	12% 263	6% 132	19% 426	2,192
Total Respondents	1755	703	440	215	566	3679

Q39-C Member Employment by Gender



Q39-D Member Survey Respondents Weekly Organist Employment by Birth Decade

Q39. Over the last year, how many hours a week have you been employed as an organist?



Q39-E Member Respondents Hours Employed as Organist by Birth Decade

Q39 Over the last year, approximately how many hours a week have you been employed as an organist?

Answered: 4,092 Skipped: 496

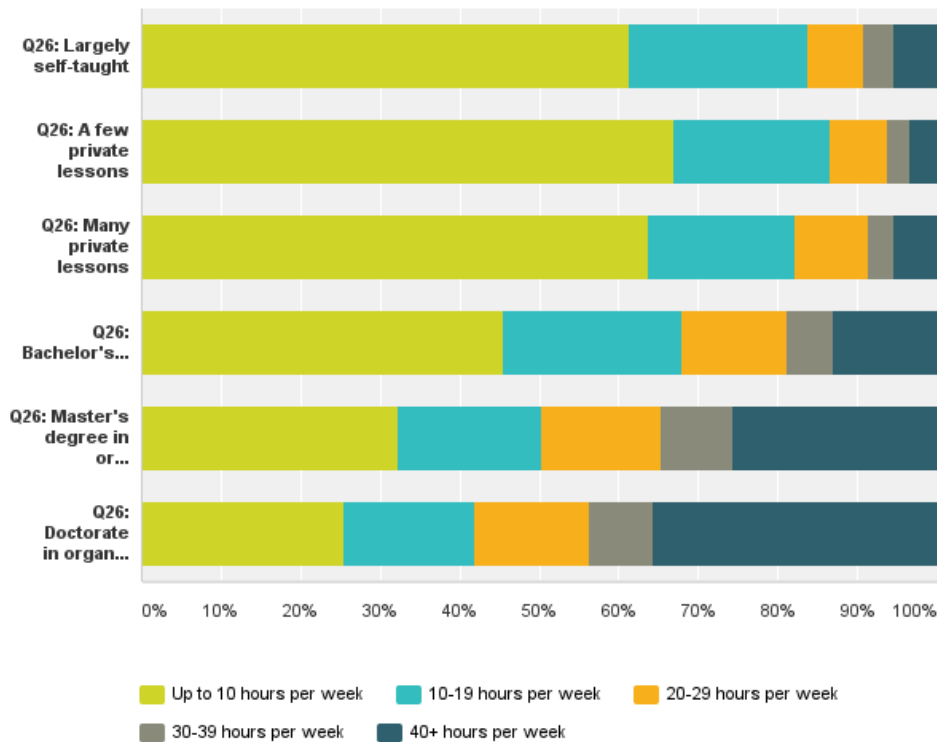


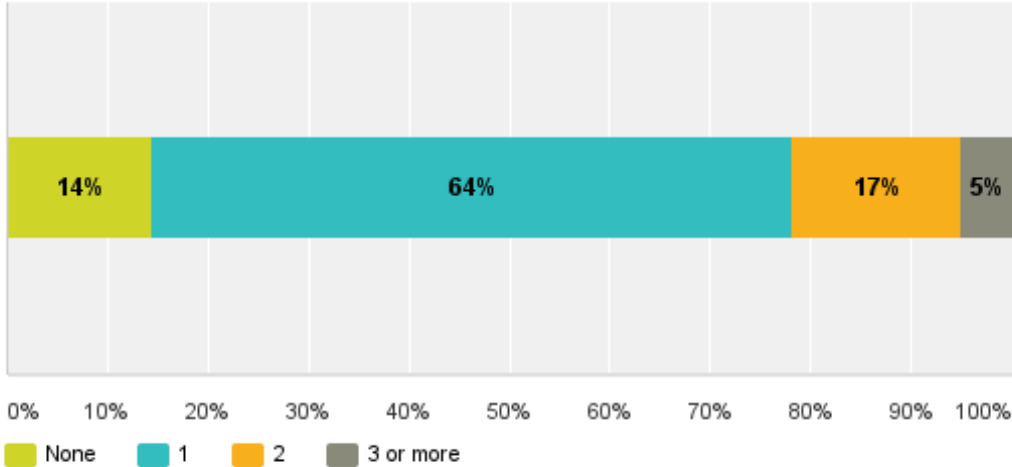
Figure 4Q39-F Hours of Weekly Employment Compared to Training as an Organist

Q-40 Number of Institutions Served

This question was designed to find out if members are putting together a livelihood as an organist by playing a variety of different jobs. Responses indicate that 14% of members do not play anywhere. 64% report playing at one institution; 17% play at two institutions; 5% play at three or more.

Q40 At how many different educational, civic or religious institutions do you typically play or teach the organ each week?

Answered: 4,128 Skipped: 660



Q40 Member Respondents Number of Institutions Served

Service Playing

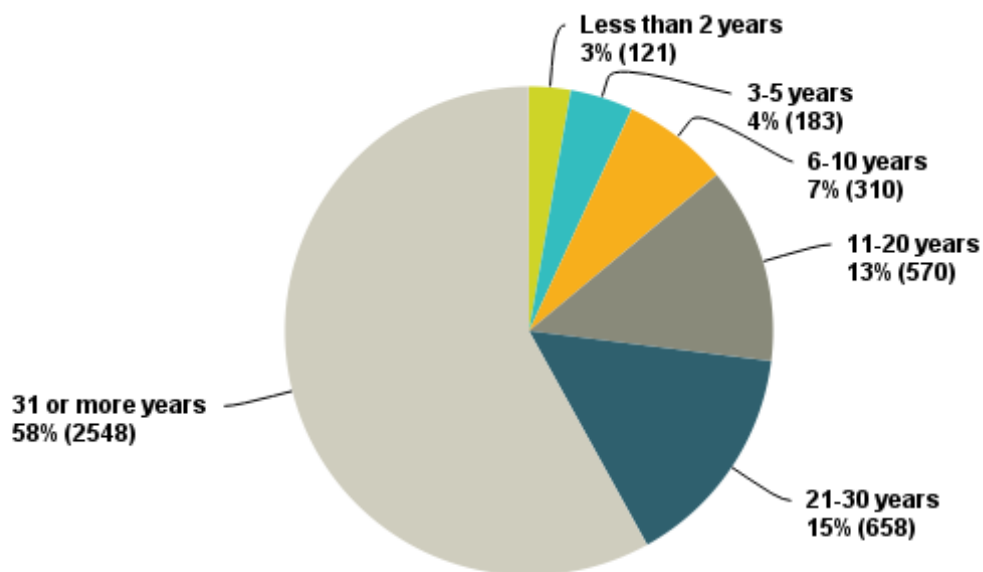
Q41 Years Served as Organist at a Religious Institution

Remarkably, 58% of members report having served 31 or more years as an organist at a religious organization. Only 14% of members have served as an organist for less than 10 years, i.e. 86% have served as organists at religious institutions for more than 10 years.

These statistics may be helpful to AGO leaders charged with delivering educational materials to members. Whatever their skill levels, AGO members have been discharging their duties as church organists for a long, long time. They are veteran organists. Only 7% of members have served as church organists for less than 6 years.

Q41 Please estimate the total number of years that you have served as an organist at any religious organization in the course of your lifetime.

Answered: 4,676 Skipped: 112



Q41 Member Respondents Years Served at Religious Institutions

Q42 Member Respondents Currently Playing at a Religious Institution

A stunning 82% of members currently play the organ at a religious institution. The percentages remain remarkably high even in the oldest cohorts. (Q42B) This statistic should remove any doubt as to the importance of and relevance of sacred music to Guild members, who are overwhelmingly church organists. It is worth noting that more than 90% of members born in the 1980s currently play the organ in a religious institution.

Q42 Do you currently play the organ in a religious institution?

Answered: 4,392 Skipped: 396

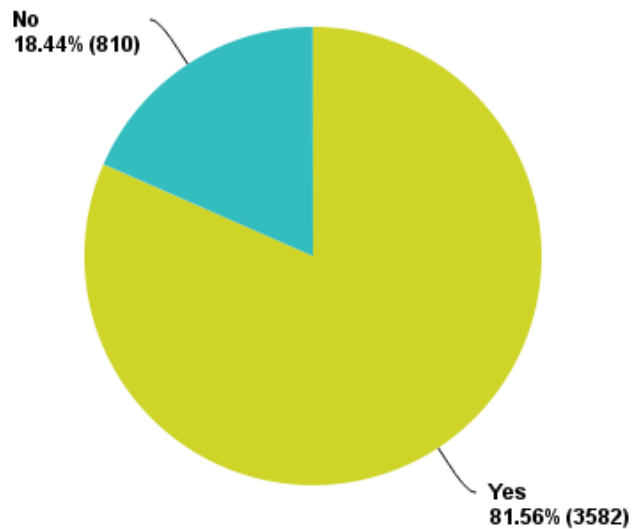
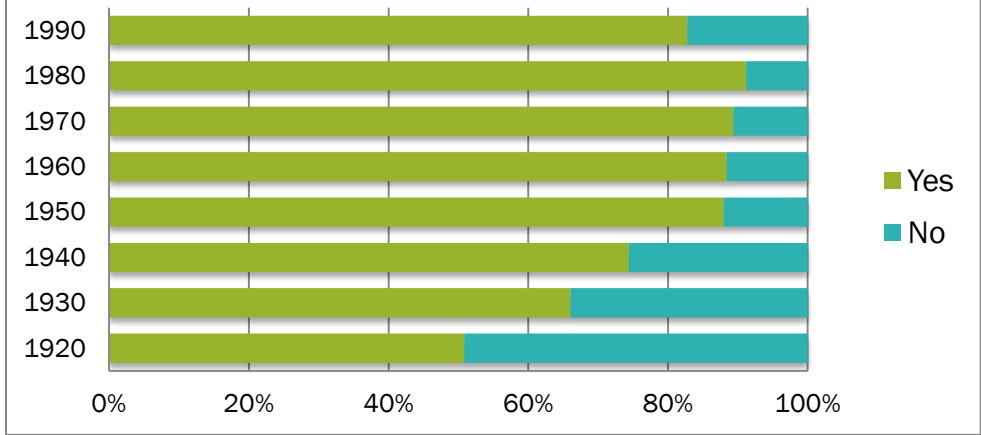


Figure 5 Q42A Member Respondents Currently Playing at a Religious Institution

Q42. Do you currently play the organ in a religious institution?



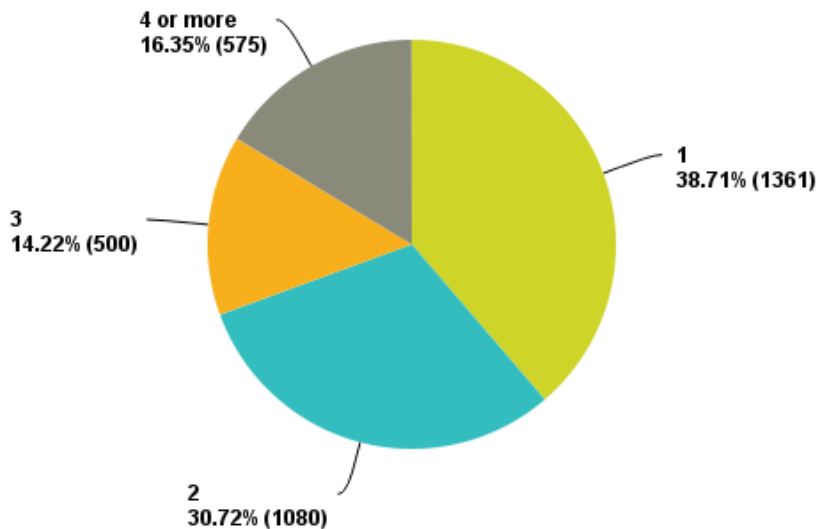
Q42-B Member Respondents Currently Playing at Religious Institutions by Birth Decade

Q43 Number of Services Played Per Week

Roughly one third of members play one service per week. About another third play two services per week. Another third play three or more services a week.

Q43 On average, what is the total number of services/events that you play per week including all the institutions you serve?

Answered: 3,583 Skipped: 1,205

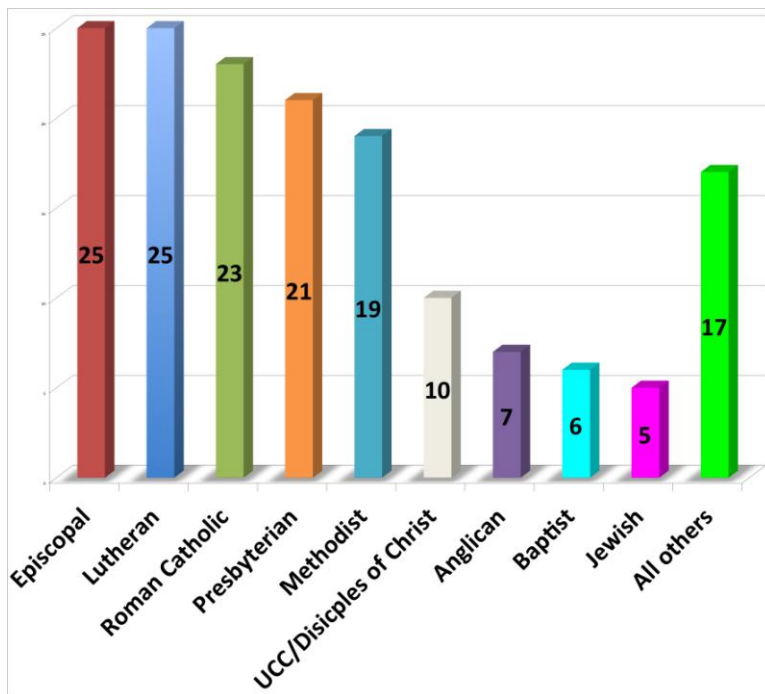


Q43 Member Respondents Number of Institutions Served

Q44 Denominations Served by Members

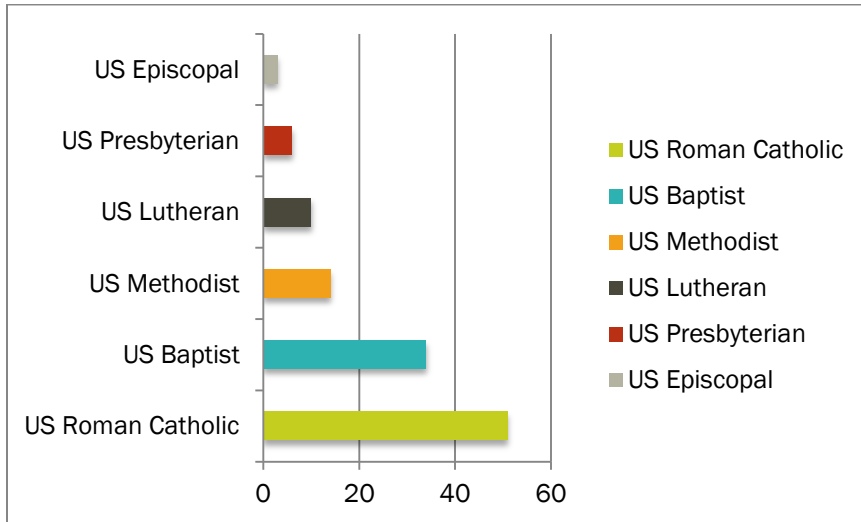
25% of members reported that they serve in an Episcopal church. Another 25% serve in a Lutheran church. 23% serve in a Roman Catholic Church, 21% serve in a Presbyterian Church, and 19% serve in a Methodist Church. 10% serve the United Church of Christ. 7% serve the Anglican Church. 6% serve the Baptist Church. 5% serve Jewish temples. All other denominations individually represent less than 5% of membership and collectively total 17% of the membership.

Thus we can see that the AGO is primarily made up of members serving four Protestant denominations and Roman Catholicism.



Q44A Denominations Served by Percentage of Members

AGO denominational representation does not mirror the size of the denominations in the US. It is interesting to note that although similar numbers of AGO members serve Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodist churches, this representation varies significantly from the size of those denominations nationally. According to the 2012 *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* published by the National Council of Churches, there were almost four times as many United Methodists (7.8 million) as Episcopalians (2 million) in the United States in 2012, but fewer AGO members serve the Methodist Church than the Episcopal Church. To make another comparison, Baptists are the largest single Protestant denomination in the United States, but they make up only 6% of Guild members. Roman Catholics outnumber Episcopalians in the United States by about 34:1, but about equal numbers of Guild members serve Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches. Thus the AGO is made up of a disproportionately high number of members serving Episcopal, Lutheran, and Presbyterian congregations relative to the size of those denominations nationally.



Q44-C US Denominational Members (Millions of Members)

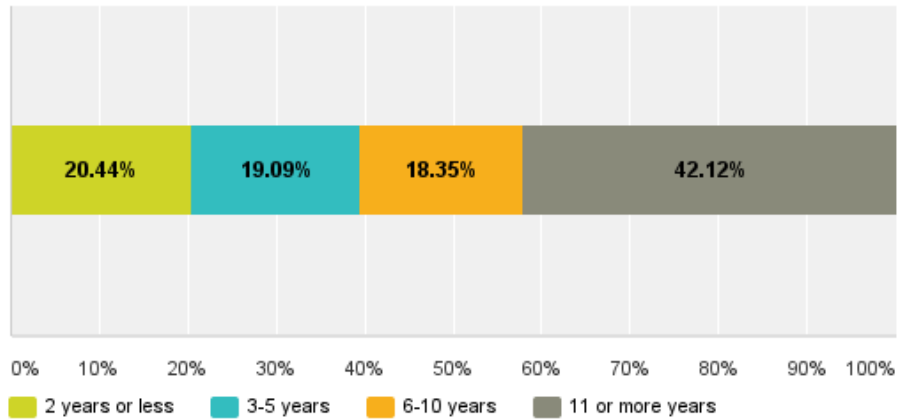
It is important to note that several of the major denominations mentioned above have significant church music organizations of their own: National Association of Pastoral Musicians (Roman Catholic - NPM), Association of Anglican Musicians (AAM), Association of Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM), Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM), and the Fellowship (Methodist). The AGO's new Taskforce on Denominational Music Organizations seeks to build bridges and open communication with these associations.

Q45 Member Respondents Years at Current Religious Institution

42% of members have been at their current job for 11 or more years. Members who have been in their current position for 10 years or less are about equally distributed between those who have been in place 2 years or less, 3-5 years, and 6-10 years. These percentages remain fairly constant in all AGO regions and in all levels of training as an organist.

Q45 Thinking about your current primary position as an organist at a religious institution, how long have you been in this particular job?

Answered: 3,584 Skipped: 1,204



Q45 Member Respondents Years at Current Religious Institution

Q46 Member Respondents Satisfaction in the Quality of Their Service Playing

Overall, members expressed a high level of satisfaction in their own *hymn playing*. More than 97% percent of respondents were either satisfied (54%) or extremely satisfied (43%).

This high level of satisfaction held true for members who had only had a few private lessons all the way through members with a doctorate in organ performance. However, members with doctorates were more likely to be *extremely satisfied* and the largely self-taught members were more likely to be *satisfied*. Fewer than 3% of members are *less than satisfied* or *dissatisfied*.

Similar patterns obtain for *service music playing* and *presenting music appropriate to the liturgical calendar*.

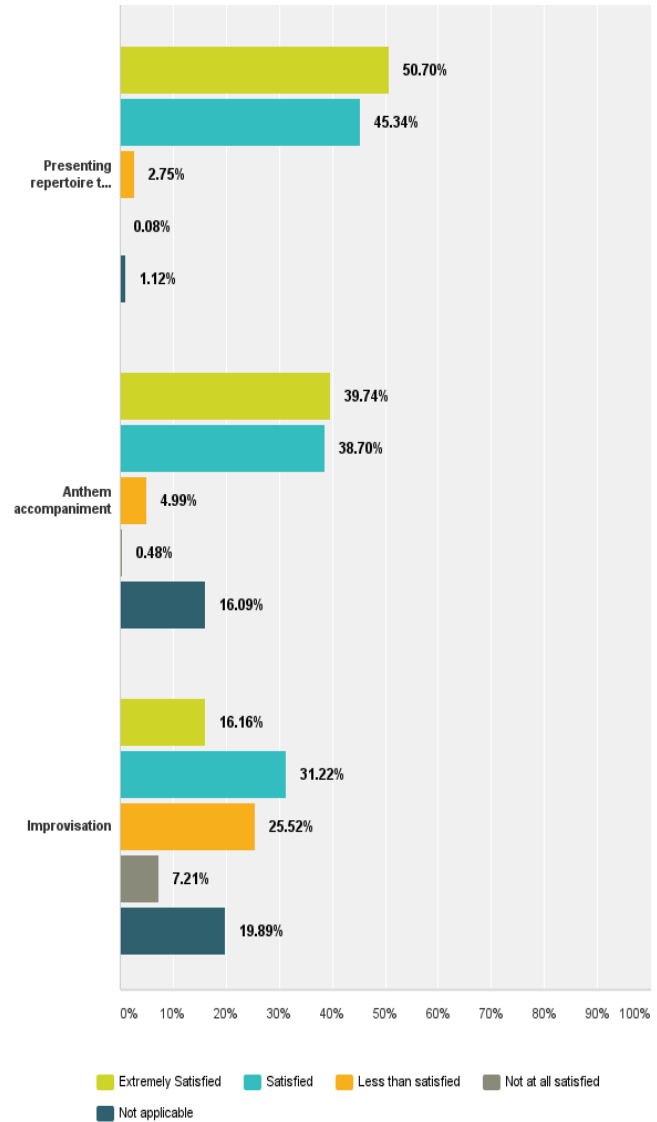
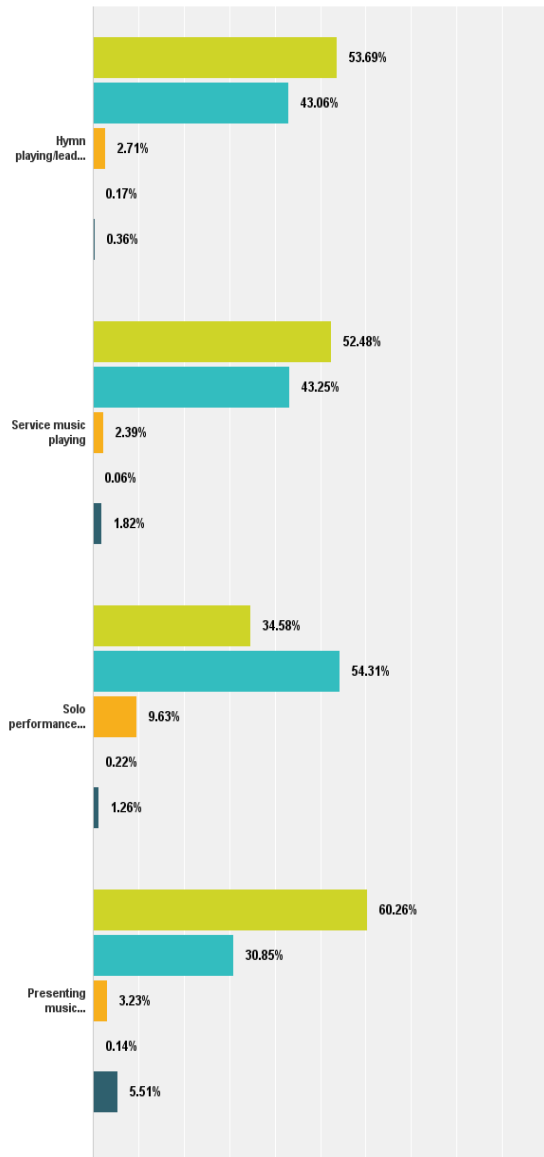
Solo performance is a different matter. Only 35% said they were extremely satisfied; 54% were *satisfied*; and 10% were *less than satisfied*.

Members expressed the greatest dissatisfaction in their improvisation. Only 16% were *extremely satisfied*. 31% were *satisfied*, 26% were *less than satisfied*, and 7% were *dissatisfied*. The 7% response of members who said they were *dissatisfied* with their improvisations was the only category surveyed in which dissatisfaction exceeded 0.5%.

This rather surprisingly high level of satisfaction deserves further inquiry in the upcoming focus groups. The responses pose a challenge to the convention and education committees. How do you interest people in professional development who are already either *satisfied* or *extremely satisfied* with their performance?

Q46 Thinking back to the last service you played, how do you feel about your performance in the following areas:

Answered: 3,581 Skipped: 1,207



Q46 Member Respondents Satisfaction in Quality of Their Service Playing

Q47 Member Respondents Challenges in Service Playing

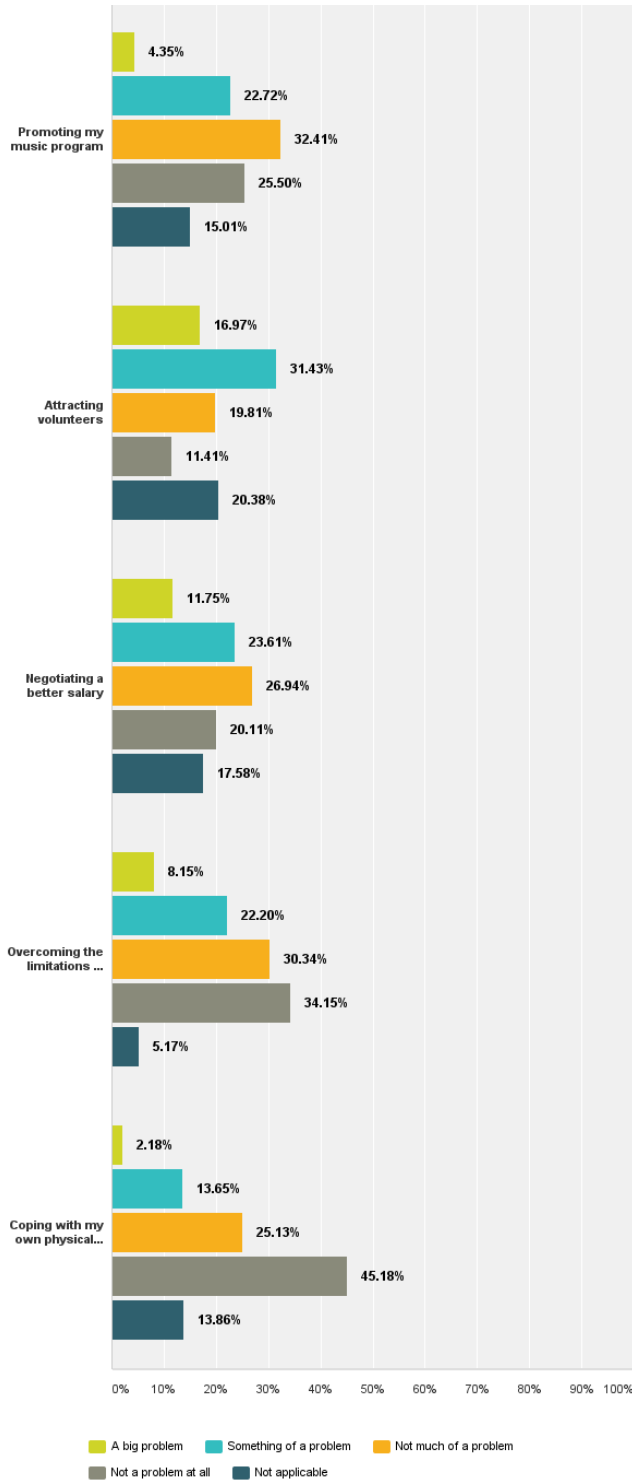
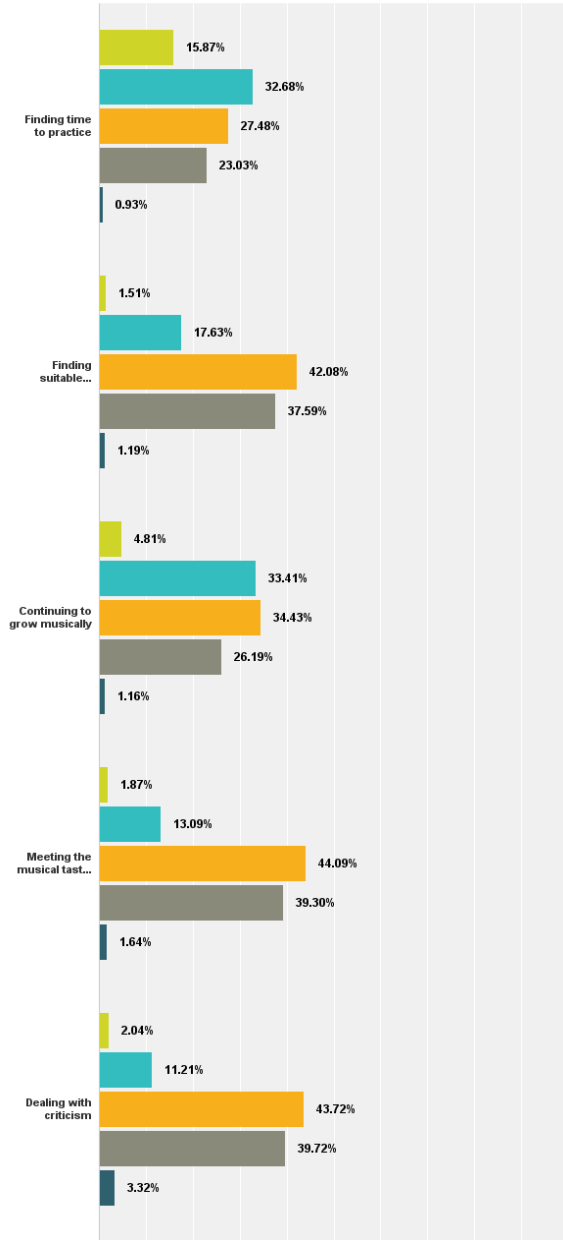
Finding time to practice and *attracting volunteers* appear to be two of the biggest challenges facing members in their work at religious institutions. A significant percentage of members also report it is a problem to continue to grow musically. By combining two response categories, a *big problem* and a *problem*, we can look at areas where member may be struggling:

Finding time to practice	48%
Finding suitable repertoire	20%
Continuing to grow musically	38%
Meeting the musical tastes of my congregation	15%
Dealing with criticism	13%
Promoting their music program	27%
Attracting volunteers	48%
Overcoming limitations of their instrument	30%
Coping with personal physical limitations	16%

These findings could have implications for programming at all levels of Guild activity.

Q47 How problematic are the following issues for you in your role at a religious institution? We want to try to understand the greatest challenges you are facing.

Answered: 3,565 Skipped: 1,223



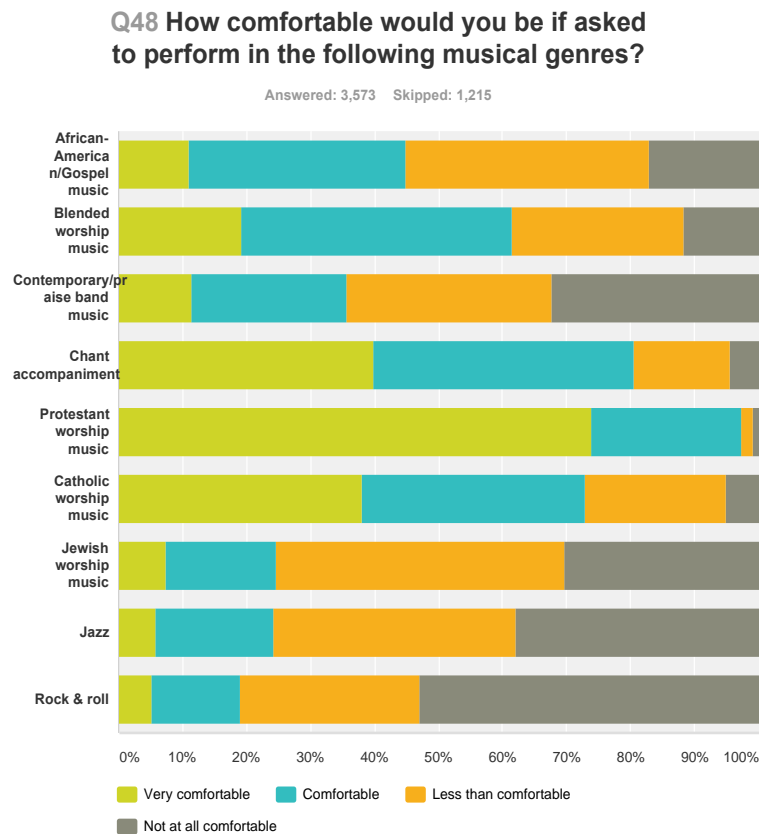
Q47 Member Respondents Challenges in Service Playing

Q48 Comfort in Various Musical Genres

Not surprisingly, members are most comfortable in Protestant worship music: 74% are very comfortable. Fewer than 1% are not at all comfortable.

A majority of members are comfortable or very comfortable in blended worship music (61%), chant accompaniment (81%), and Catholic worship music (73%).

A majority of members are less than comfortable or not at all comfortable in African-American/Gospel music (55%); contemporary/praise band (64%); Jewish worship music (75%); jazz (76%); and rock & roll (81%).



Q48 Comfort in Various Musical Genres

Q49 Member Respondents Seeking Other Employment at a Religious Institution

Only 15% of members report that they are actively looking for a better or more satisfying job. 66% of members report they are satisfied in their current position and are not looking for a better job. 13% of members report that they are not looking for a better job because other factors prevent their leaving their current job.

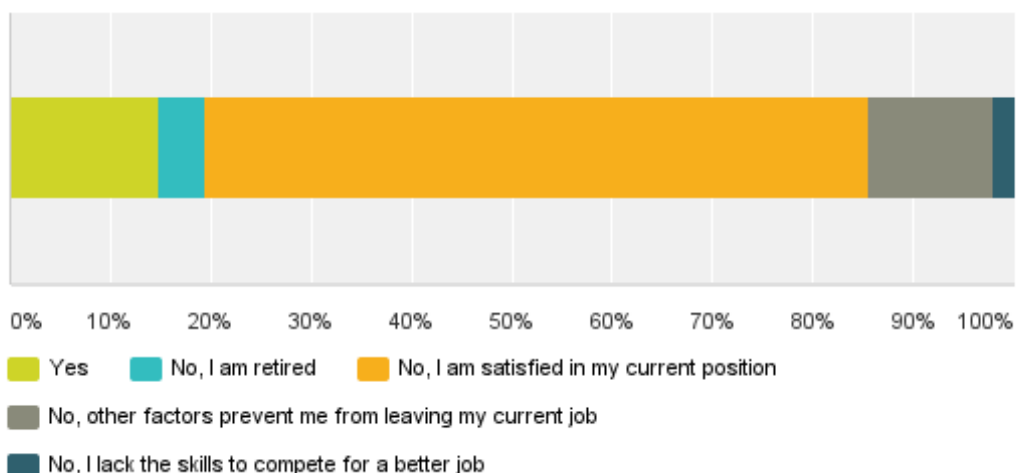
By cross-tabbing responses to Q49 with percentages depicted in Q45, we learn that members who have been in their current job for five years or less are somewhat more likely to be actively looking for a better job (21%).

By cross-tabbing responses to Q49 with members' training as an organist, we see, rather surprisingly, that the percentages depicted in Q48 remain fairly constant across all levels of training. Having more or less training does not increase the likelihood that a member will be actively looking for another job.

Chart Q49-B demonstrates that young members are considerably more likely to be actively looking for a better job than members born before 1980. This statistic suggests that the AGO's job referral services are a particularly valuable benefit to the coveted "young member."

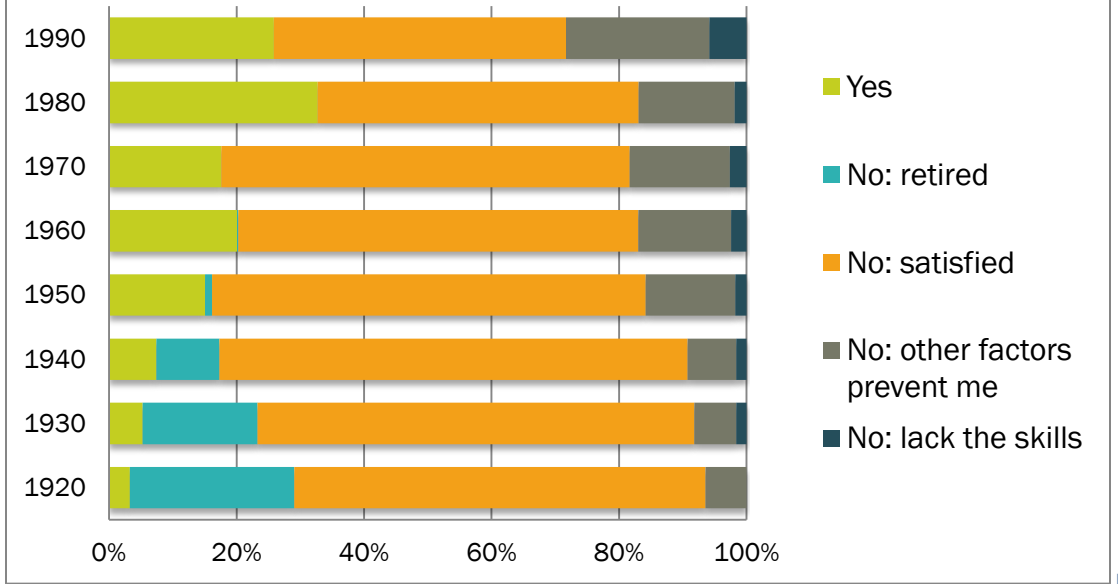
Q49 Are you actively looking for a better-paying or more satisfying job as an organist at a religious institution?

Answered: 3,566 Skipped: 1,222



Q49-A Member Respondents Seeking Other Employment at a Religious Institution

Q49. Are you actively looking for a better-paying or more satisfying job as an organist at a religious institution?



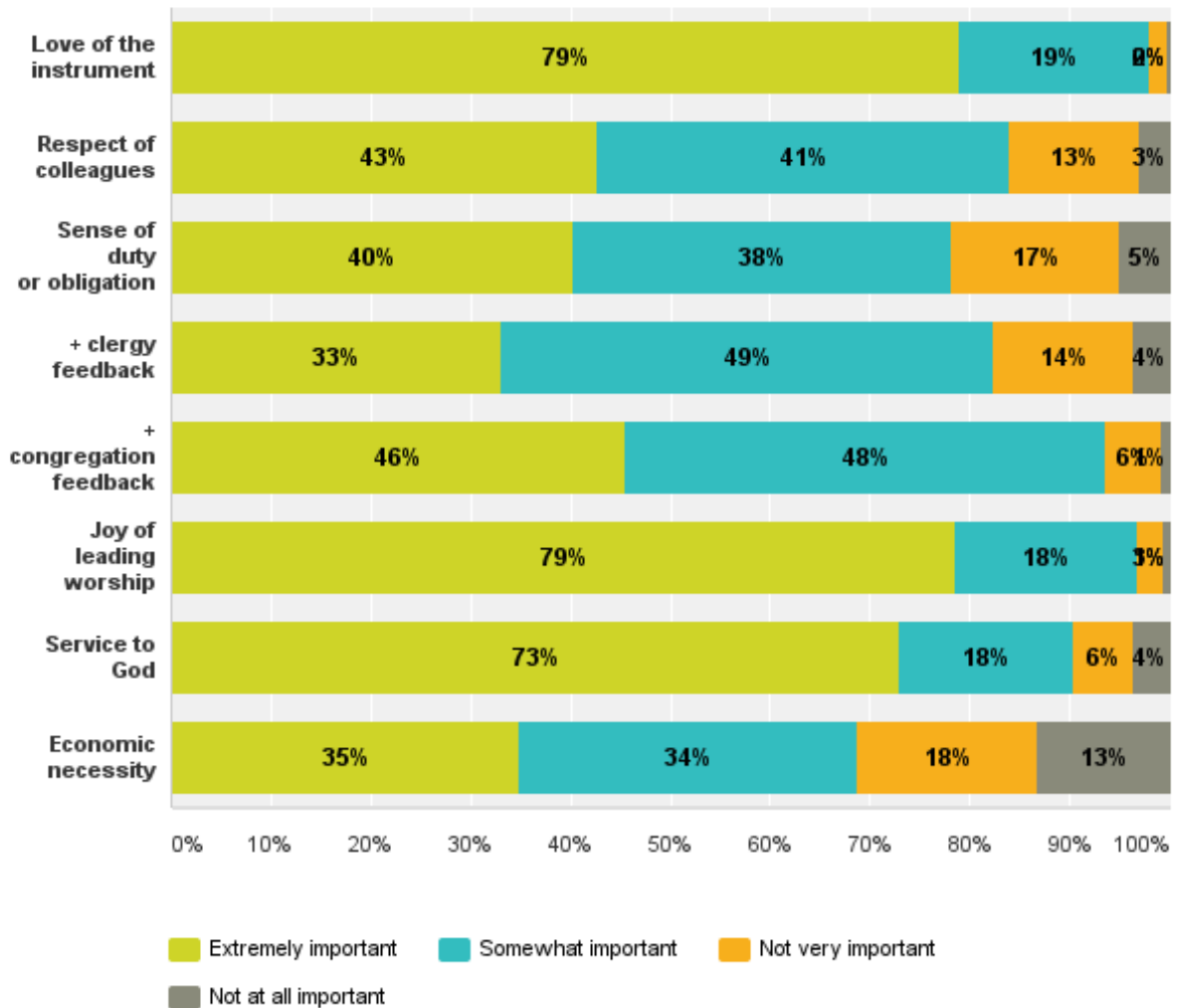
Q49-B Respondents Satisfaction in Current Position

Q50 Member Respondents Religious Employment Satisfaction Drivers

When asked, “What keeps you going in your work at a religious institution?”, two responses stand out. 79% said that *love of the instrument* was *extremely important*; 79% said that *joy of leading worship* was *extremely important*. Only 35% of members said that *economic necessity* was an *extremely important* factor. It appears that the rewards of being a church organist are not primarily monetary.

Q50 What keeps you going in your work at a religious institution? Please rate the following factors in terms of their importance to you.

Answered: 3,575 Skipped: 1,213



Q50 Member Respondents Religious Employment Satisfaction Drivers

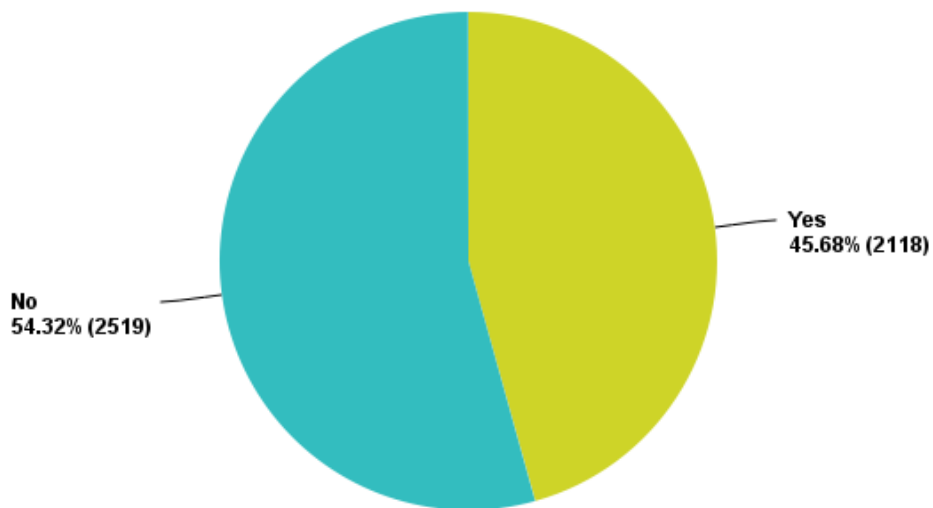
Ensembles

Q 51 Member Respondents Directing Musical Ensembles

46% of member respondents report that they direct a musical ensemble. By looking at Q51-B we see that music degree-holding members are significantly more likely to direct an ensemble: bachelor's 51%; master's 61%; doctorate 59%. This finding suggests that programming in the choral area will be of particular interest to members with the greatest academic training and much of it should be geared to the Master's level member.

Q51 Do you direct a musical ensemble?

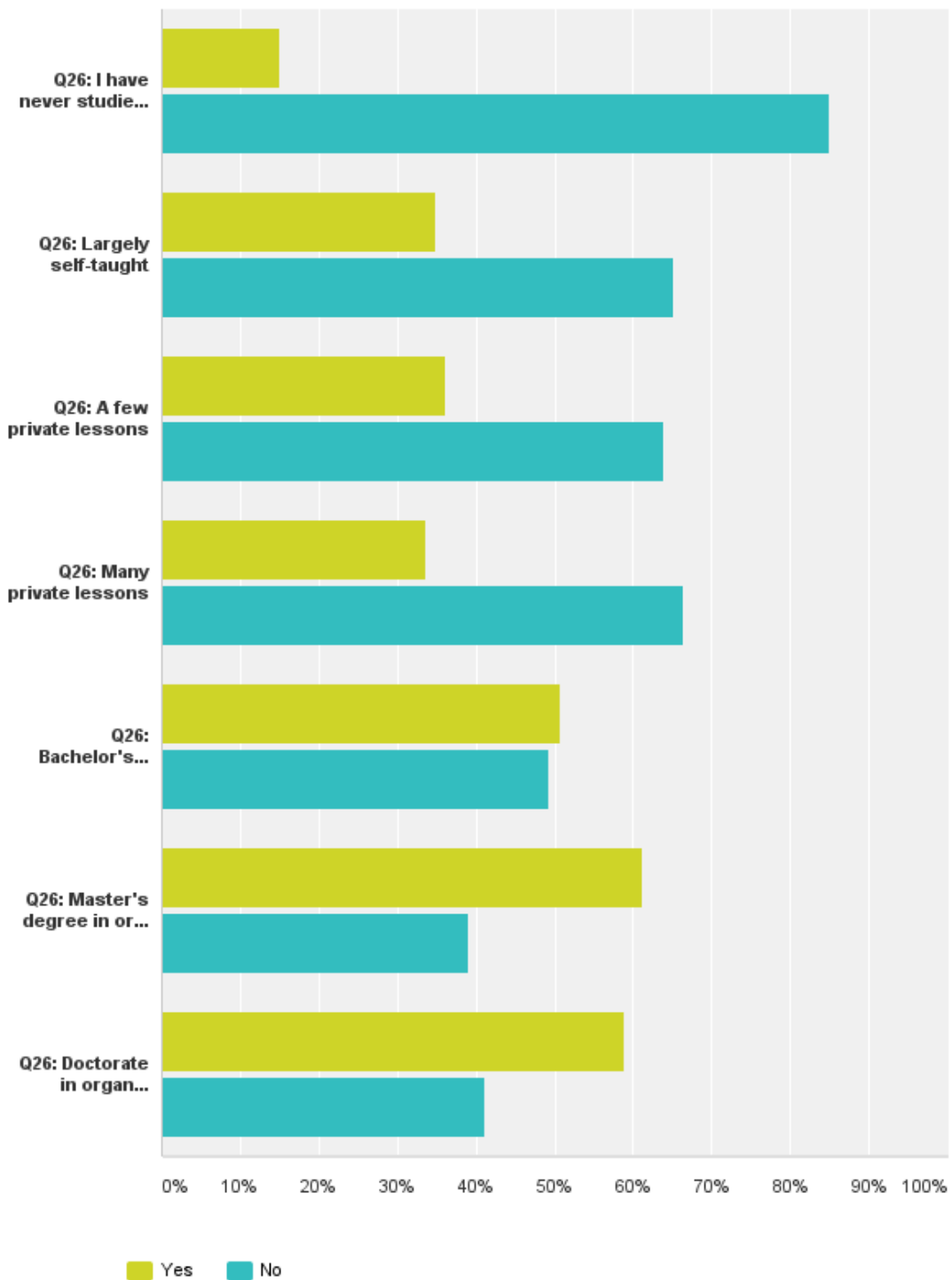
Answered: 4,637 Skipped: 151



Q51A Member Survey Respondents Directing Musical Ensembles

Q51 Do you direct a musical ensemble?

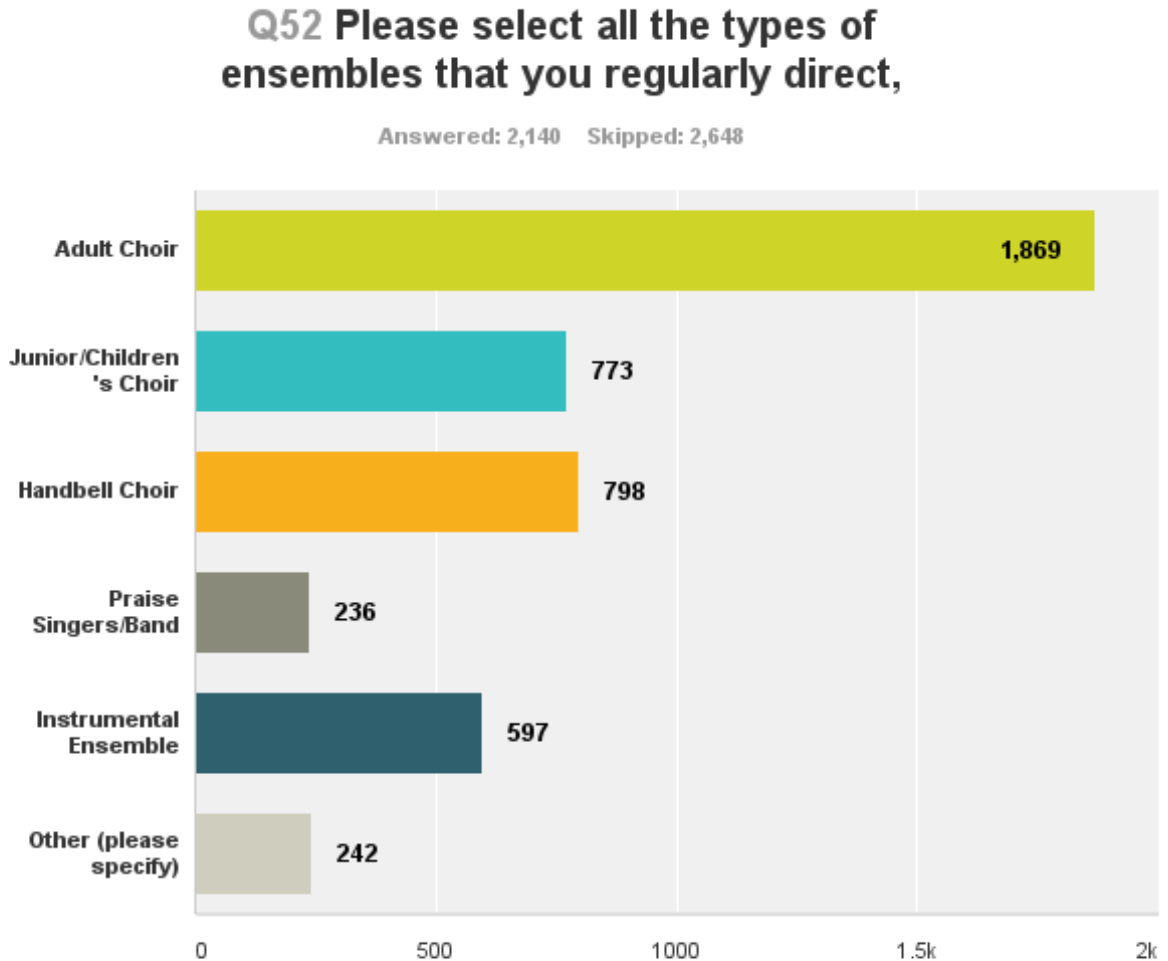
Answered: 4,621 Skipped: 83



Q51B Directing Ensembles Compared to Training as an Organist

Q52 Member Respondents: Type of Ensemble Directed

Chart Q52 depicts the number of members responding that they conduct each type of ensemble. 1,869 survey respondents out of a total of 4,788 reported directing an Adult Choir, comprising approximately 40% of the total AGO members responding to the survey. 18% direct a Junior Choir, 18% direct a Handbell Choir and 14% direct an Instrumental Ensemble.



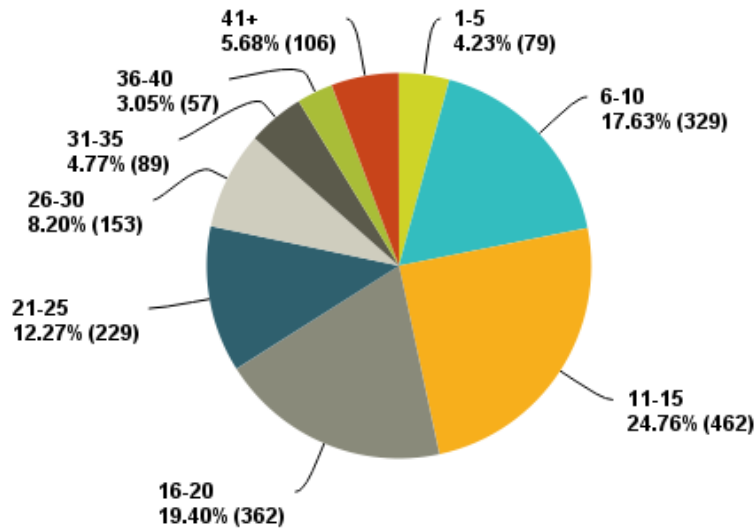
Q52 Member Respondents: Type of Ensembles Directed

Q53 Member Respondents Number of Singers in Adult Choir

There is considerable diversity in the size of adult choirs directed by AGO members. The most common size is 11-15 members (25%). About equal percentages of members direct choirs of 6-10 (18%) and choirs of 16-20 (19%) members.

Q53 Please estimate the number of singers in your adult choir at an average service.

Answered: 1,866 Skipped: 2,922



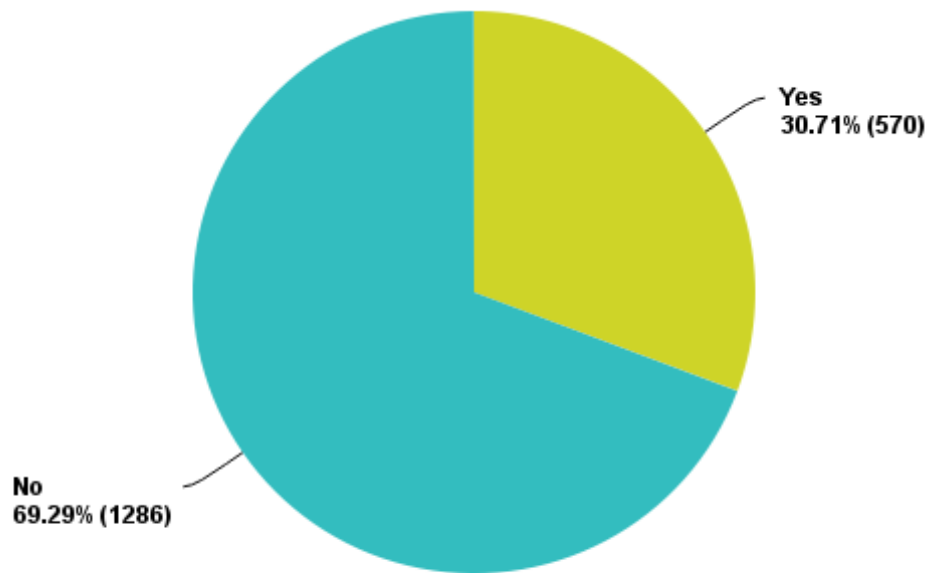
Q53 Member Respondents Number of Singers in Adult Choir

Q 54 Paid Singers in Adult Choir

31% of members who direct an Adult Choir report having paid singers in the choir.

Q54 Does your adult choir include any paid singers?

Answered: 1,856 Skipped: 2,932



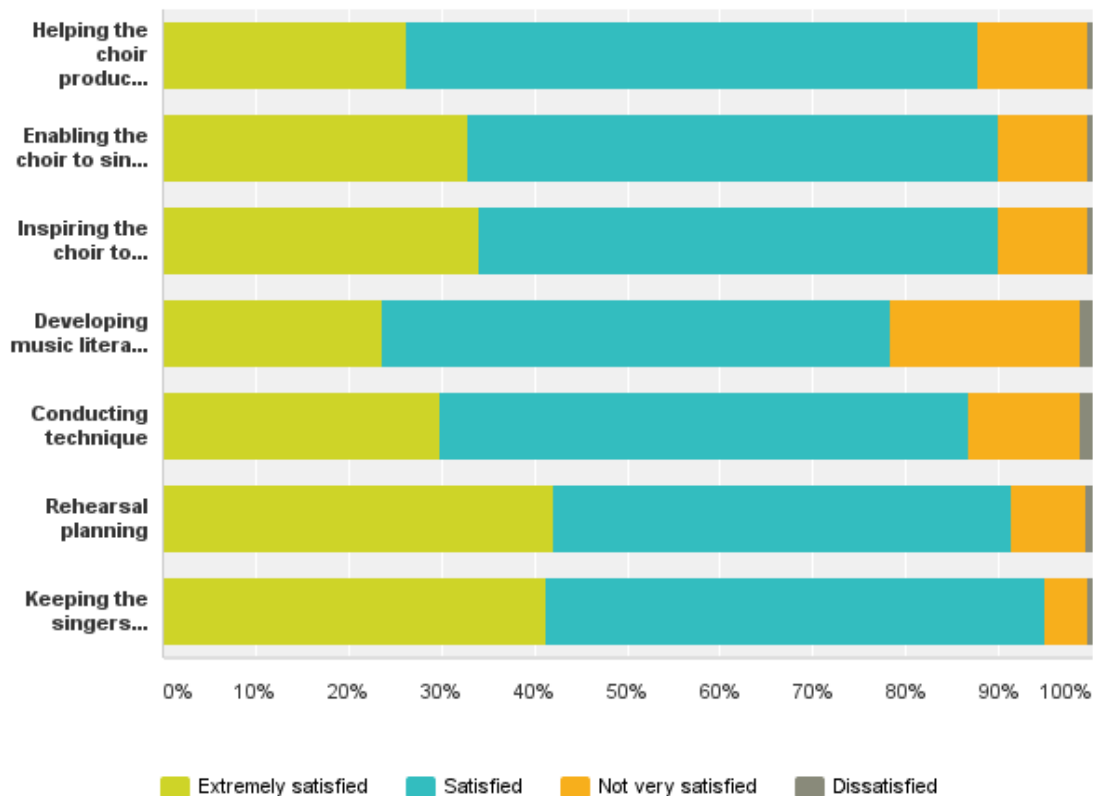
Q54 Paid Singers in Adult Choir

Q55 Effectiveness in Adult Choir Rehearsal

As in responses to Q46 about satisfaction with service playing, member respondents reported remarkably high levels of satisfaction with their work at their most recent choir rehearsal. More than about 90% of members were satisfied or extremely satisfied in all areas except developing music literacy in their choirs. These high levels of satisfaction were fairly consistent when cross-tabbed against training as a choral conductor, *i.e.*, more training does not make respondents more satisfied. Nor do years of experience change the picture. Cross-tabbing with years of experience as a church organist showed that experience does not increase levels of satisfaction. Novices appear just about as satisfied with their effectiveness as veterans.

Q55 Thinking back to your most recent adult choir rehearsal, how do you feel about your effectiveness in the following areas?

Answered: 1,861 Skipped: 2,927



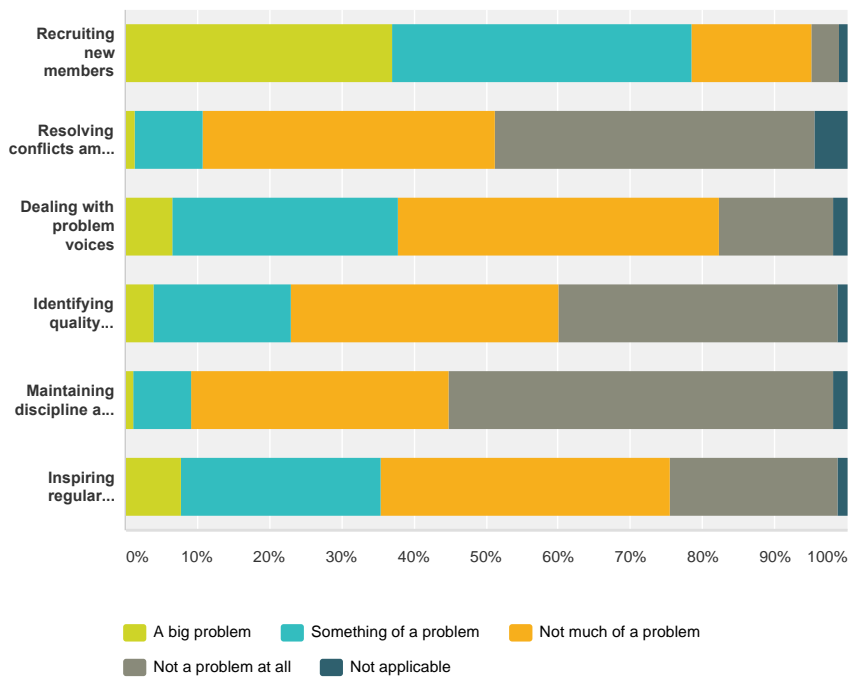
Q55 Effectiveness in Adult Choir Rehearsal

Q56 Member Respondents Problems Working with Adult Choir

Recruiting new members emerged as the biggest problem facing members who conduct an adult choir. It is a *big problem* for 37% and a *problem* for another 42%. Taken together, this becomes the most significant problem identified in this survey, identified by 79% of members who direct an adult choir. Dealing with problem voices was identified as an issue for 38% of members who direct an adult choir. Inspiring regular attendance is problematic for 36% of members who direct an adult choir.

Q56 How much of a problem are the following issues for you in working with your adult choir? Please select the option that comes closest to your experience.

Answered: 1,859 Skipped: 2,929



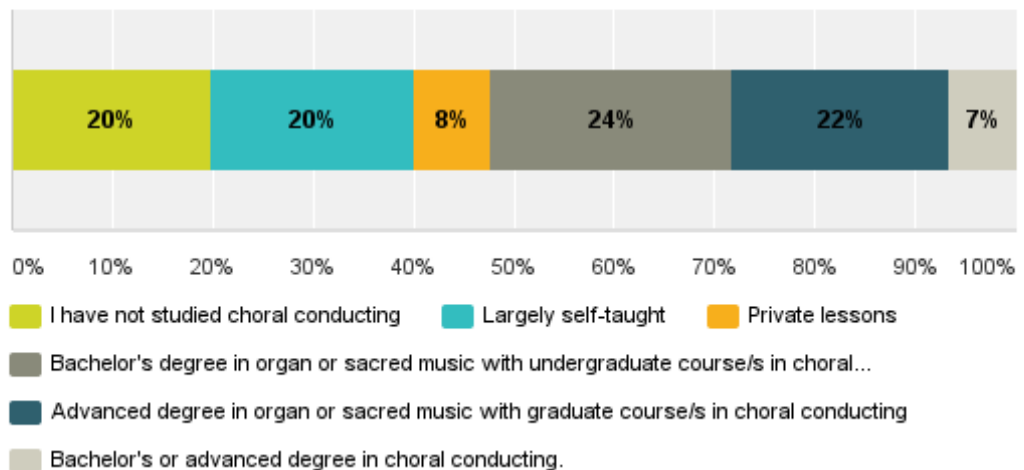
Q56 Member Respondents Problems Working with Adult Choir

Q57 Training as a Choral Conductor

AGO members represent considerable diversity in their training as a choral conductor, with roughly equal segments reporting they have never studied choral conducting, are largely self-taught, studied conducting as part of an undergraduate degree, or studied conducting as part of a graduate degree.

Q57 Please select the category that comes closest to describing your training as a choral conductor.

Answered: 4,623 Skipped: 165



Q57 Training as a Choral Conductor

An Invitation to All AGO Members

The Marketing Committee hopes that the 2014 survey will help Guild leadership understand the tremendous diversity that is represented in its membership and the challenges facing the organization. We are eager to harness the creative thinking of the entire Guild membership in addressing the challenges identified in the survey. We would be grateful if you would care to share your best ideas, strategies, and innovative approaches with us at the email address listed below. We would especially like to thank each of the 5,692 respondents who affirmed their faith in the future of the AGO by participating in this survey.

AGO Marketing Committee

March 2015

Marketing@AGOhq.org