SURVEY	RESPONSES COLLECTED	COUNTRIES
238 improv organisations	15 October to 15 November 2026	34, from Iceland to Turkey

BEHIND THE SCENES of EUROPEAN IMPROV

How improv schools, theatres, groups and festivals across Europe organise the work that happens off stage.

Read the full report →



THANK YOU

to all 241 of you

You filled in the survey, answered my messages, passed the link to another group, or wrote back to say you don't play any more. Every reply helped.

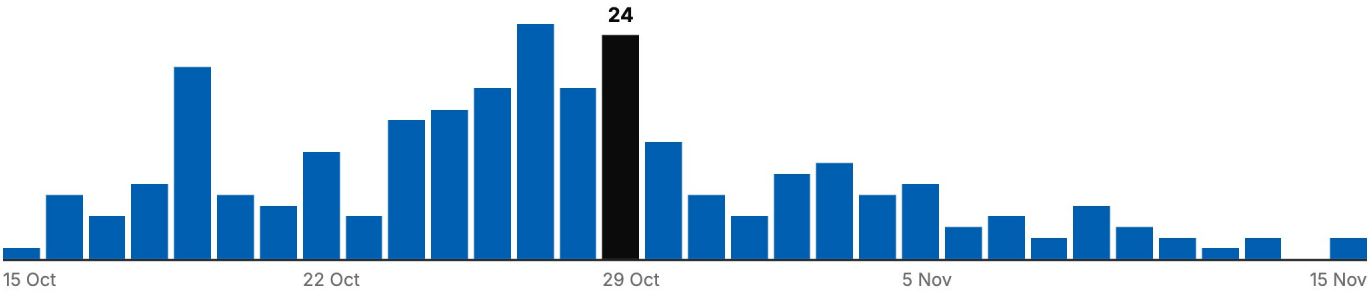
Almost nothing is known about small improv stages, although they make up most of the scene in Europe. This is a first look at how we work off stage, and a chance to compare notes with 237 other stages.

Iwo Wieczorek

author of the survey and of *Run the Show*

FOUND	WRITTEN TO	REPLIED	COUNTRIES
1,498	**4,003**	**241**	**34**
improv stages on my list, in 38 countries	messages, sent one by one by email and on Instagram	responses; 238 organisations are in the analysis	from Iceland to Turkey, plus a few from the Americas

Responses day by day



A TYPICAL STAGE in the survey

43%

have been running for **more than 10 years**

2 OR 3

people organise, the most common answer (37%)

20-40

people in a typical audience (42%)

€10-15

for **a ticket**, the most common price (34%)

DID YOU know?

7%

of groups that exist **only on Instagram** replied, compared with 27% of groups with a website or email but no Instagram.

44

of you named **more than two tasks** that take most of your time, although I asked for two. I counted them all.

WHAT IF THE LEADER DISAPPEARED for a month?

The answers depend most on one thing: how many people share the organising.

31 OF 74

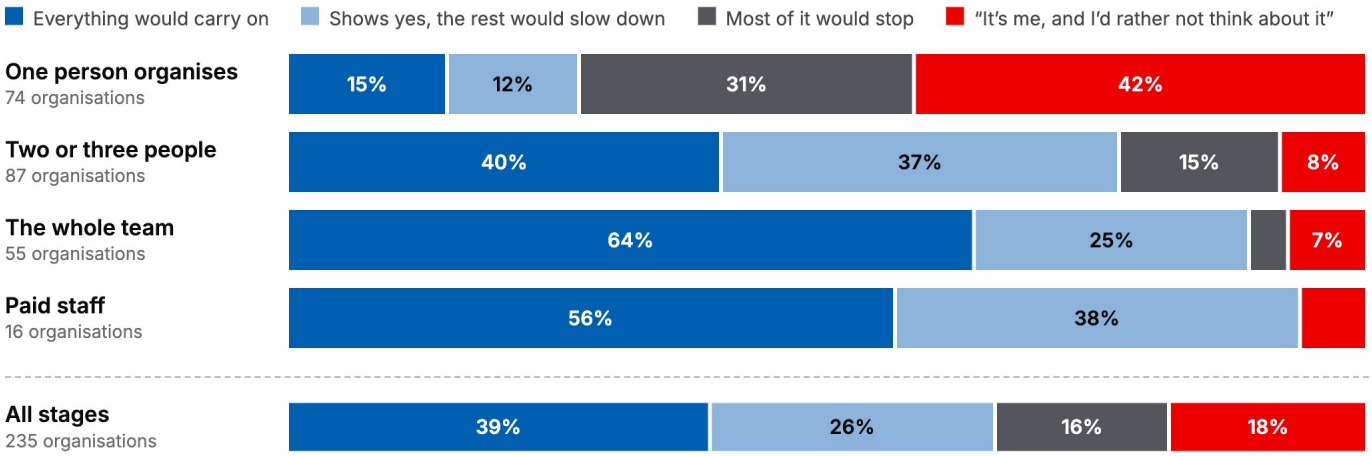
leaders who organise **mostly alone** answer "I am that person and I'd rather not think about it".

7 OF 87

say the same where **two or three people** share the organising.

ABOUT 8×

higher odds of that answer with one organiser. For years running, pay and planning tools I found no clear link.



IF YOU COULD FIX one thing tomorrow

63 answers ask for **people**: someone to help, or a better split of work in the team

47 name **audience and marketing**

31 name **a venue**

WHAT OTHERS should steal from you

58 name **community and atmosphere** in the team

44 name their **artistic identity** and way of teaching

42 name **structure and clear roles**

WHERE the time goes

59% promotion and ticket sales

52% scheduling shows and rehearsals

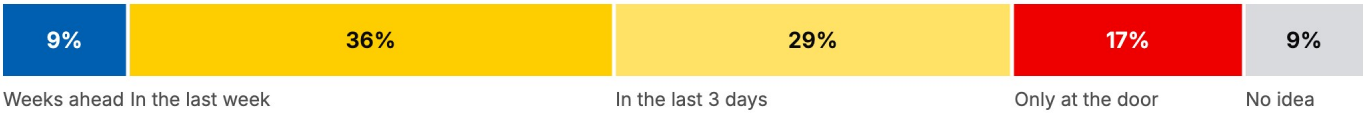
27% money and budgets

Worth testing: hand one area, with the right to decide in it, to one more person.

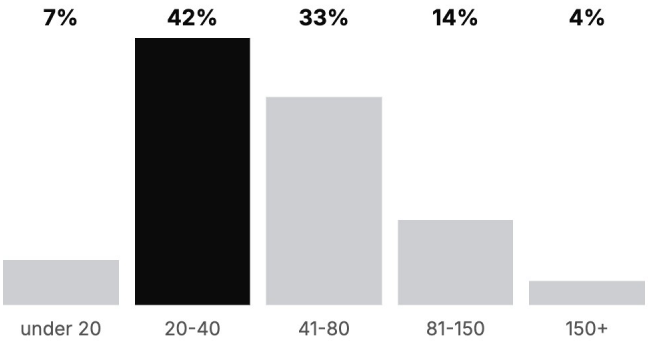
More in the full report →

65% OF STAGES SELL MOST TICKETS in the last week

153 of 236 organisations. Only one stage in ten sells weeks ahead.



Most of us play to small rooms



Typical audience per show, in people

A newsletter goes with fuller rooms

72%

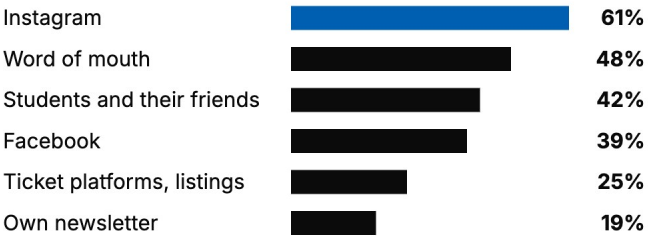
of stages that name **their own newsletter** as a main audience source play to more than 40 people (31 of 43)

45%

of all the other stages do (85 of 187)

A correlation: it cannot show that starting a newsletter grows your audience.

Where audiences come from



Paid ads: no clear difference

48%

of stages that **never advertise** play to more than 40 people

53%

of those that **advertise most shows** do

The survey did not measure budgets or targeting, so it cannot tell whether ads work.

Audiences in the full report →

DID YOU know?

12 OF 12

organisations in **Czechia** named Facebook as a main audience source.

20 OF 31

organisations in **Germany** never pay for ads.

26%

of stages with **a ticket over €15** sell weeks ahead, against 6% of the rest.

3 OF 97

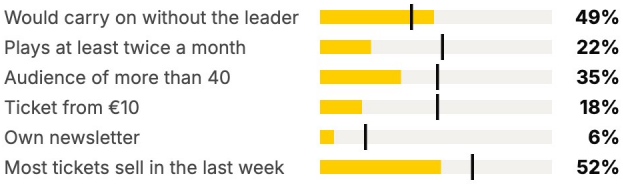
stages that name **students and their friends** as a main audience source sell weeks ahead.

FOUR KINDS OF STAGE. Which one is yours?

THE COLLECTIVE

84 organisations, 35% of the sample

People who play because they love it and carry the organising together.



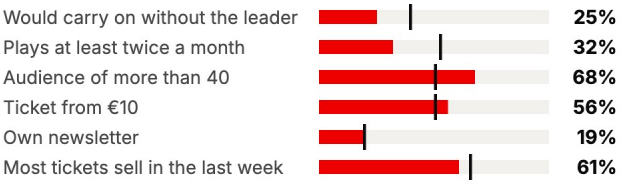
Strength. Continuity: nearly half say everything would carry on without the leader.

Trap. Audiences come mainly through friends and recommendation.

THE FOUNDER'S STAGE

57 organisations, 24% of the sample

A school or stage built by one person who still holds everything in their hands.



Strength. Classes build the audience: 51% name students and their friends as a main source.

Trap. Everything depends on one person: 21 of 57 leaders answer "it's me".

THE RISING STAGE

63 organisations, 26% of the sample

A team that plays regularly, has started earning and shares the work.



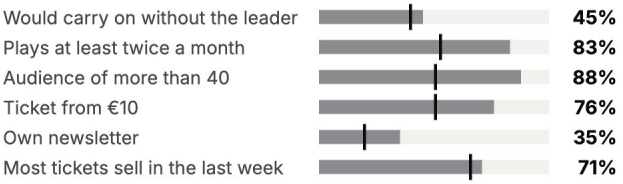
Strength. Rhythm and organisation: 92% play at least twice a month.

Trap. Small rooms despite frequent shows: 83% sell most tickets in the last week.

THE HOUSE

34 organisations, 14% of the sample

Usually a theatre, festival or combined organisation that pays most of its people.



Strength. Audience and sales: 88% play to more than 40 people.

Trap. Money and a small core team. About one leader in six still says "it's me".

average for all stages

Full character cards →

LET'S KEEP talking

Tell me what you tried after reading this, and what worked. Share it with your team or with a stage that should see it. And if you want to be in the next edition, let me know.

Read the full report →

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Scan for the full report

The sample is not random: the results describe the 238 organisations that replied, not the whole European scene. Links between answers are correlations, not proof of cause and effect. The four types are my own typology. Data are anonymised: no group, city or person who took part is named.