

Demographic Information

The latest West End Theatre Audience report was published in September 2004. The report is the result of a major qualitative research project by MORI into the exact profile of current theatre audiences and was based on data from 6,615 theatregoers who completed a survey in 2003. As well as giving invaluable demographic data, the report examines such topics as media consumption, transport, associated spending and booking preferences in theatre audiences, and will be of interest to producers, theatre managers, marketing personnel and the academic sector. Please [click here](#) for details about purchasing the whole report.

The key demographic findings of the report are summarised below.

Origin Of Audience Member

Table 1

Origin of audience member	Percentage of total survey
London	37%
Elsewhere in UK	36%
North America	17%
Europe	7%
Elsewhere	4%

In 2003, nearly three-quarters of theatregoers in London (73%) were domestic visitors, with just over half of that number coming from London. The number of domestic visitors has fallen since MORI's previous audience survey in 1997, when 83% of visitors were domestic.

In 2003, 28% of visitors to the West End came from abroad. This marks an increase from 1997, when 18% of visits were from abroad. The most significant increase was in the number of visitors from the USA rose from 9% to 17% between 1997 and 2003.

Table 2

Country of origin	Percentage of total overseas visitors
USA	45%
Canada	4%
Australia	3%
Germany	3%
Sweden	2%
Norway	2%
Holland	2%
Switzerland	2%
Spain	1%
France	1%
New Zealand	1%

Italy	1%
Ireland	1%

As table 2 shows, nearly half of overseas visitors to West End theatres were from America, with other English speaking nations such as Canada and Australia also contributing significant numbers. It is interesting that France, the UK's nearest neighbour and little more than 2 hours away from the West End by train, provides only 1% of theatre visitors, as opposed to 3% from Germany.

Gender Trends

Table 3

Audience Gender	Female attendances	Male attendances
2003	65%	35%
1997	61%	39%

The findings of the Mori report reveal a significant disparity between the numbers of men and women going to the theatre. According to the survey, 65% (or three fifths) are female while 35% are male. This disparity has grown since the 1997 report when 61% of respondents were female and 39% were male. The gender disparity is even more apparent among younger age groups: 73% of respondents aged 15-24 were female.

These findings underline a long-standing disparity between the numbers of male and female theatre-goers, and suggests that a perception persists among young men between 15-24 that theatre is not for them.

Age Trends

Table 4

Age of audience	2003	1997
15-24	17%	14%
25-34	20%	21%
35-44	18%	20%
45-54	18%	23%
55-64	19%	15%

With the exception of the over-65s group, which accounts for only 10% of the theatre-going audience, the 2003 break down of age groups was fairly even, as table 3 shows. It is interesting to note that in 2003 the biggest single group was the 25-34 age group. The 3% rise in attendance for the 15-24 age group suggests that initiatives such as Get Into

London Theatre may have helped attract younger people to the theatre with reduced-price tickets.

Employment Status

Table 5

Employment Status	Percentage
Working full time	55%
Working part time	12%
Student	11%
Retired	15%
Looking after House/Children	4%
Unemployed	2%
Other	2%

Given the traditional profile of a theatre audience, it is to be expected that a significant proportion of theatregoers will be retired. A significant number of students continue to visit the West End, with their share of the audience increasing from 9% in 1997 to 11% in 2003.

Ethnic Background

Table 6

Ethnic Origin	Percentage
White	92%
Asian or Asian British	2%
Chinese	1%
Mixed	1%
Black or Black British	1%
Middle/Near Eastern	>0.5%
Other	2%

Just over nine in ten theatregoers who responded to this area of the survey described themselves as white. It appears that the ethnic profile of UK theatregoers broadly reflects that of the UK population as a whole (according to the 2001 Census, 92.1% of the population described themselves as White).

Annual Income:

Table 7

Annual Income	Percentage
£50,001+	20%
£40,001 - £50,000	7%
£30,001-£40,000	14%
£20,001-£30,000	22%
£10,001-£20,000	21%
Up to £10,000	17%

West End theatregoers answering this question on the survey earned, on average £31,300. London residents are the highest earning group overall, earning an average of £44,200 per annum. Perhaps unsurprisingly, audiences at opera or dance productions are the highest earners, with an average of £35,000 per annum.

Leisure Habits

Table 8

Leisure Activity undertaken in last year	Percentage (of surveyed theatregoers)
Museum or art gallery	68%
Cinema	67%
Visitor Attraction (Madame Tussaud's etc)	41%
Theatre	37%
Live Music (pop etc)	29%
Live Music (classical)	28%
Club	27%
Live sporting event	22%
Theme Park	16%
Stand up comedy	14%
None of the above	6%

The percentages of theatregoers visiting museums and art galleries (68%) and the cinema (67%) are both considerably higher than those of the British population in general, where the figures were 37% (museums and galleries) and 59% (cinema) in the latest MORI survey. The numbers of theatregoers attending pop music events is also higher than that of the public at large, which may be explained by the presence of pop-influenced musicals such as *We Will Rock You* and *Mamma Mia!* in the West End.