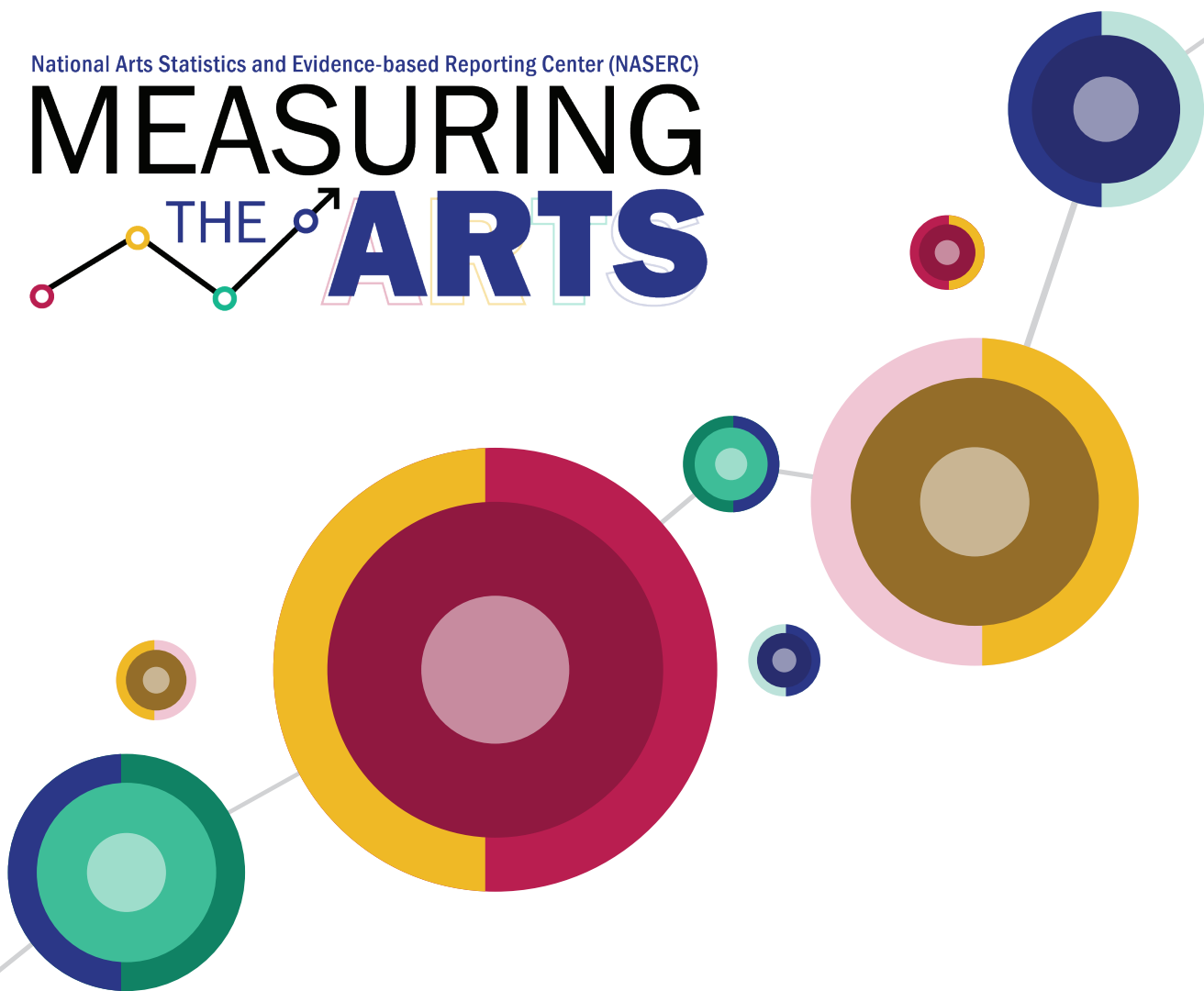


National Arts Statistics and Evidence-based Reporting Center (NASERC)

# MEASURING THE ARTS



Domain B

## **Arts Participation**



## Indicator B.1: **Who Attends Arts Events in Person?**

## Introduction

Arts and cultural participation takes many forms. Examples include creating or performing, learning, reading, viewing, or listening through electronic media, and attending or visiting events or venues in person. Using data from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), Indicator B.1 explores attending or visiting events or venues in person. This includes activities such as attending live performing arts events (e.g., music, dance, and theater); visiting art museums, galleries, or places with historical or design value; attending craft fairs; and going to the movies. This indicator captures information about adults aged 18 and over who report they have attended arts events or venues in person over the past year.

For more information about the data used in Indicator B.1, see the Data on arts participation textbox. Activities involving the personal creation and performance of art are captured by **Indicator B.3: Who Is Personally Creating or Performing Art?**, which also uses data from the SPPA. These indicators are complemented by **Indicator B.4: How Much Time Do Americans Spend on Arts Activities?**, which uses data from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) to capture information about the amount of time that respondents engaged in arts activities on a given day.

### Data on arts participation

Indicator B.1 uses data from the 2017 and 2022 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), the nation's largest and most representative survey of adult patterns of arts participation in the United States. The SPPA is produced in partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Census Bureau as a supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). It captures the participation of adults in a selection of key arts and cultural activities. The survey is conducted every five years. By utilizing data from both the 2017 and 2022 SPPA, this indicator highlights participation in the arts both before and after the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

See <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NADAC/studies/38936/summary> for more information on the data and <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2022-SPPA-final.pdf> for the most recent report on the 2022 SPPA.

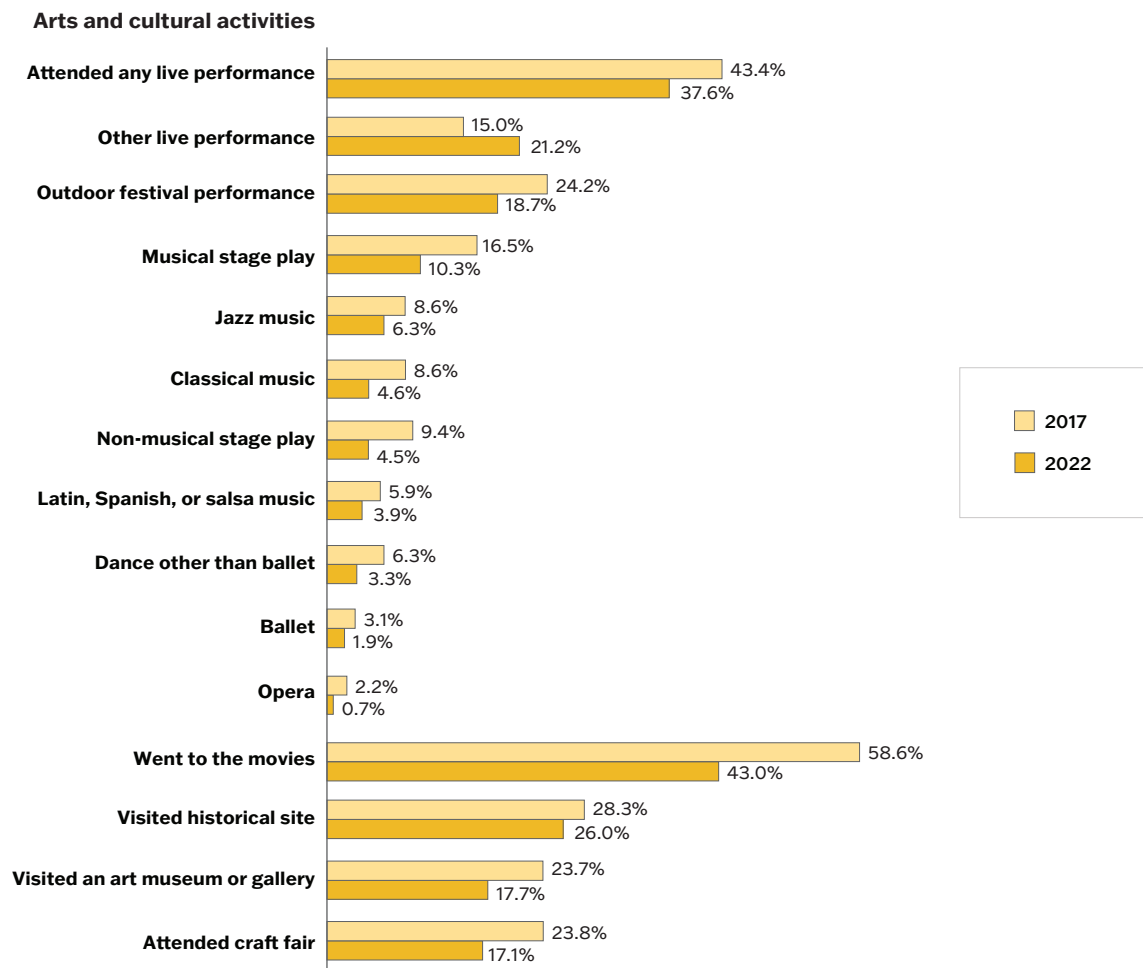
## Arts Participation by Activity Type and Trends in Participation

Adults aged 18 and over were more likely to report going to the movies than attending any other arts event or venue in person in 2022. Overall, 43 percent of adults reported going to the movies over the past year, while 38 percent reported going to any type of live arts performance (**Figure B1-1**).<sup>1</sup> More than twice as many adults attended any live performance (38 percent) than visited an art museum or gallery (18 percent) or attended a craft fair (17 percent) in 2022. Fewer adults also attended outdoor festival performances (19 percent) or musical stage plays (10 percent). For live performances, the participation rate ranged from fewer than 1 percent of adults attending opera to nearly 21 percent attending “other” live performances not listed on the survey (these may have included rock, folk, country, rap, or hip-hop performances; comedy/improv; magic shows; or circus acts). The least attended performance types besides opera were ballet (2 percent); dance other than ballet (3 percent); Latin, Spanish, or salsa music (4 percent); non-musical stage plays (5 percent); classical music (5 percent); and jazz music (6 percent).

Between 2017 and 2022, the percentage of adults attending arts events or venues in person decreased. This is likely reflecting the lingering effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person arts participation. For example, the share of adults who reported going to the movies declined from 59 percent in 2017 to 43 percent in 2022. The share of adults attending a craft fair also declined during this period, from 24 percent in 2017 to 17 percent in 2022. The only activity captured in the survey that did not decline during this period was attendance at “other” live performances, which increased from 15 percent in 2017 to 21 percent in 2022. Based on annual data collected through the ATUS and tabulated in **Indicator B.4: How Much Time Do Americans Spend on Arts Activities**, there is evidence that the decline in attendance for most types of live events or venues may be associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>1</sup> Differences between estimates (including trends over time) are stated only when they are statistically significant based on a 95 percent level of confidence. For more information see *The Arts in the United States: Developing Key National Indicators of Arts Activity* report.

**Figure B1-1. Percentage of adults, aged 18 and over, participating in selected arts and cultural activities during the past 12 months, by activity type: 2022**



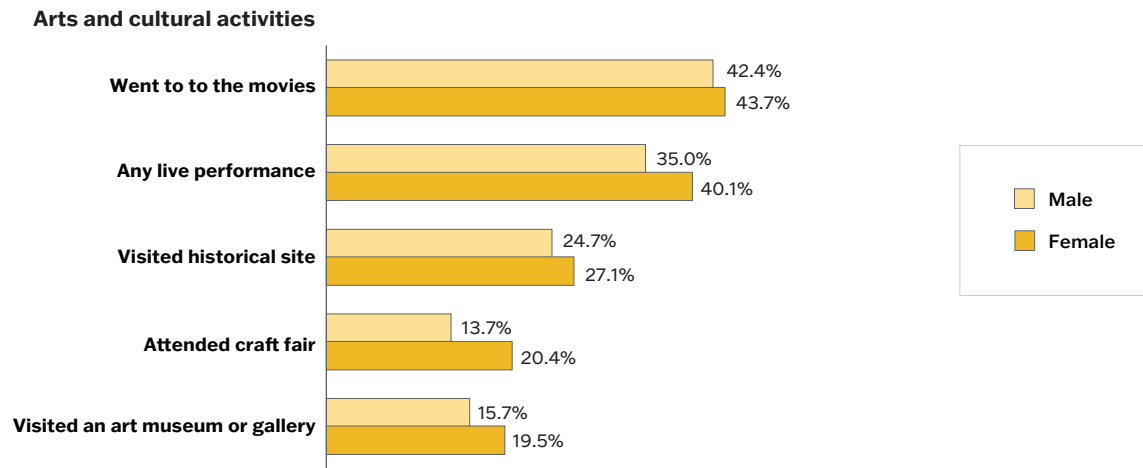
NOTE: "Other" live performance captures those performances not specifically on the 2022 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts instrument and may have included rock, folk, country, rap, or hip-hop performances; comedy/improv; magic shows; or circus acts.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), July 2017 and July 2022.

## Arts Participation by Sex and Race and Ethnicity

Rates of attending or visiting some arts events or venues in person varied by sex and race/ethnicity. In fact, there were no arts and cultural activities for which males had higher participation rates than females in 2022 (Figure B1-2). Females reported attending craft fairs (20 percent), visiting art museums or

galleries (20 percent), and attending live performances (40 percent) at higher rates than men (14 percent, 16 percent, and 35 percent, respectively). Within the category of live performances, women were also more likely than men to have attended classical music performances (5 percent versus 4 percent), ballet (3 percent versus 1 percent), or musical stage plays (11 percent versus 9 percent; see Table B1-1). For all remaining arts and cultural activities, there was no measurable difference in participation rates between males and females.

**Figure B1-2. Percentage of adults, aged 18 and over, participating in selected arts and cultural activities during the past 12 months, by sex: 2022**



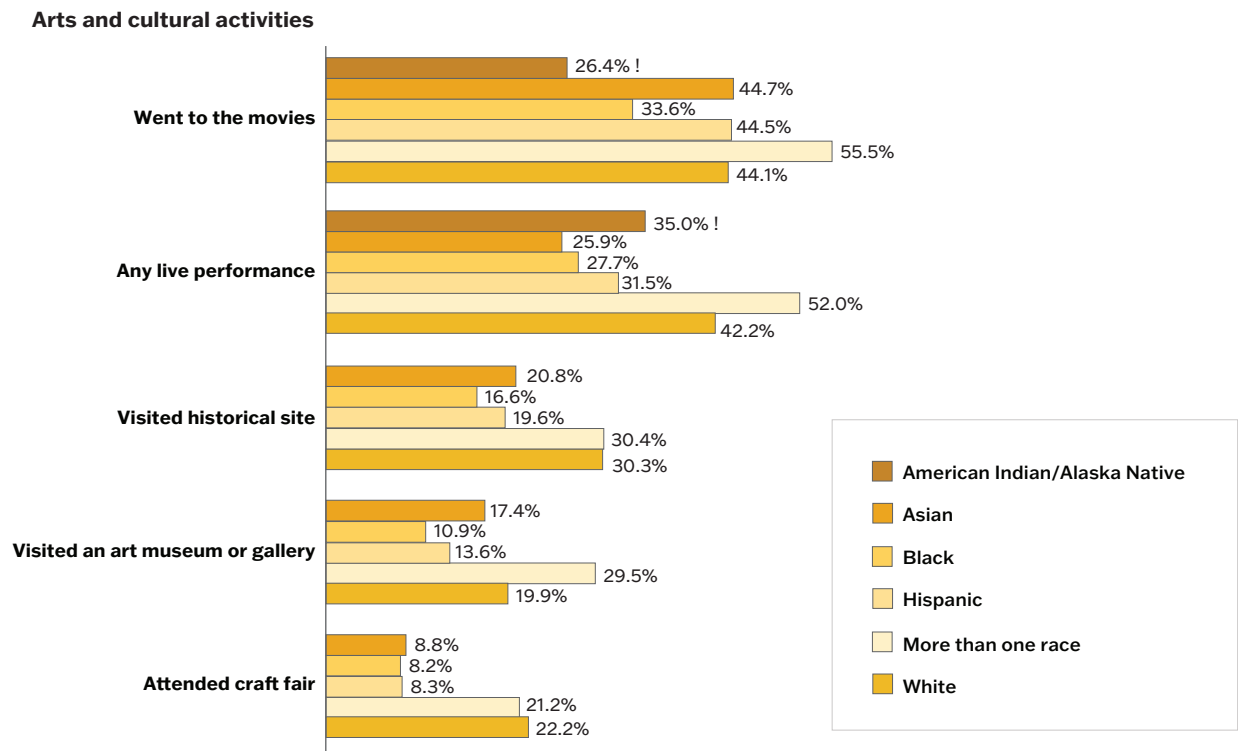
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), July 2022.

Adults who were of more than one race (52 percent) or White (42 percent) were more likely than adults who were Hispanic (31 percent), Black (28 percent), or Asian (26 percent) to have attended any live performance in 2022 (Figure B1-3). There were also racial and ethnic differences in the types of live performances that adults attended. For example, Black and White adults were more likely to have attended a jazz music performance (9 percent and 7 percent, respectively) than those who were Hispanic (4 percent; see Table B1-1). White adults were three times more likely than Hispanic adults to have attended a classical music performance (6 percent versus 2 percent), but Hispanic adults, in turn, were more than five times more likely to have attended a Latin, Spanish, or salsa music performance than White adults (12 percent versus 2 percent). White adults were also more likely to have attended a musical stage play in 2022 (13 percent) than those who were Asian, Black, or Hispanic (8 percent, 7 percent, and 5 percent respectively). Additionally, White adults were more likely to have attended non-musical stage plays than were Hispanic adults (5 percent versus 3 percent). White adults and adults of more than one race were

more likely to have attended “other” live performances (25 percent and 35 percent, respectively) and outdoor festival performances (21 percent and 36 percent) in 2022 than were Black, Hispanic, and Asian adults (16 percent, 14 percent, and 10 percent and 16 percent, 13 percent, and 12 percent, respectively).

White adults and adults of more than one race were more likely to participate in other arts and cultural activities as well. For example, White adults and adults of more than one race were more likely to visit an art museum or gallery (20 percent and 30 percent) than Black or Hispanic adults (11 percent and 14 percent) and more likely to attend a craft fair (22 percent and 21 percent) than Asian, Black, or Hispanic adults (9 percent, 8 percent, and 8 percent respectively). White adults were also more likely to visit historical sites (30 percent) than Asian (21 percent), Black (17 percent), and Hispanic (20 percent) adults. Finally, Black adults were less likely to have gone to the movies during the past year (34 percent), compared to Hispanic (44 percent) and White (44 percent) adults or adults of more than one race (55 percent).

**Figure B1-3. Percentage of adults, aged 18 and over, participating in selected arts and cultural activities during the past 12 months, by race/ethnicity: 2022**



! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.  
 NOTE: Race groups are mutually exclusive; persons of Hispanic ethnicity can be of any race. Data for some categories are not available due to small sample size.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), July 2022.

## Arts Participation by Disability Status and Education Level

There were also differences in rates of attending or visiting some arts events or venues by disability status<sup>2</sup> and educational attainment in 2022. Differences based on these dimensions may indicate barriers to participation, such as accessibility. Adults without a disability were more likely than those with a disability to attend any live performance (39 percent versus 24 percent), visit an art museum or gallery (19 percent versus 8 percent), attend a craft fair (18 percent versus 12 percent), visit a historical site (27 percent versus 18 percent), or go to the movies (46 percent versus 25 percent). Within live performances, adults without a disability were more likely than those with a disability

to participate in all activities except attending a ballet, for which there was no measurable difference in 2022.

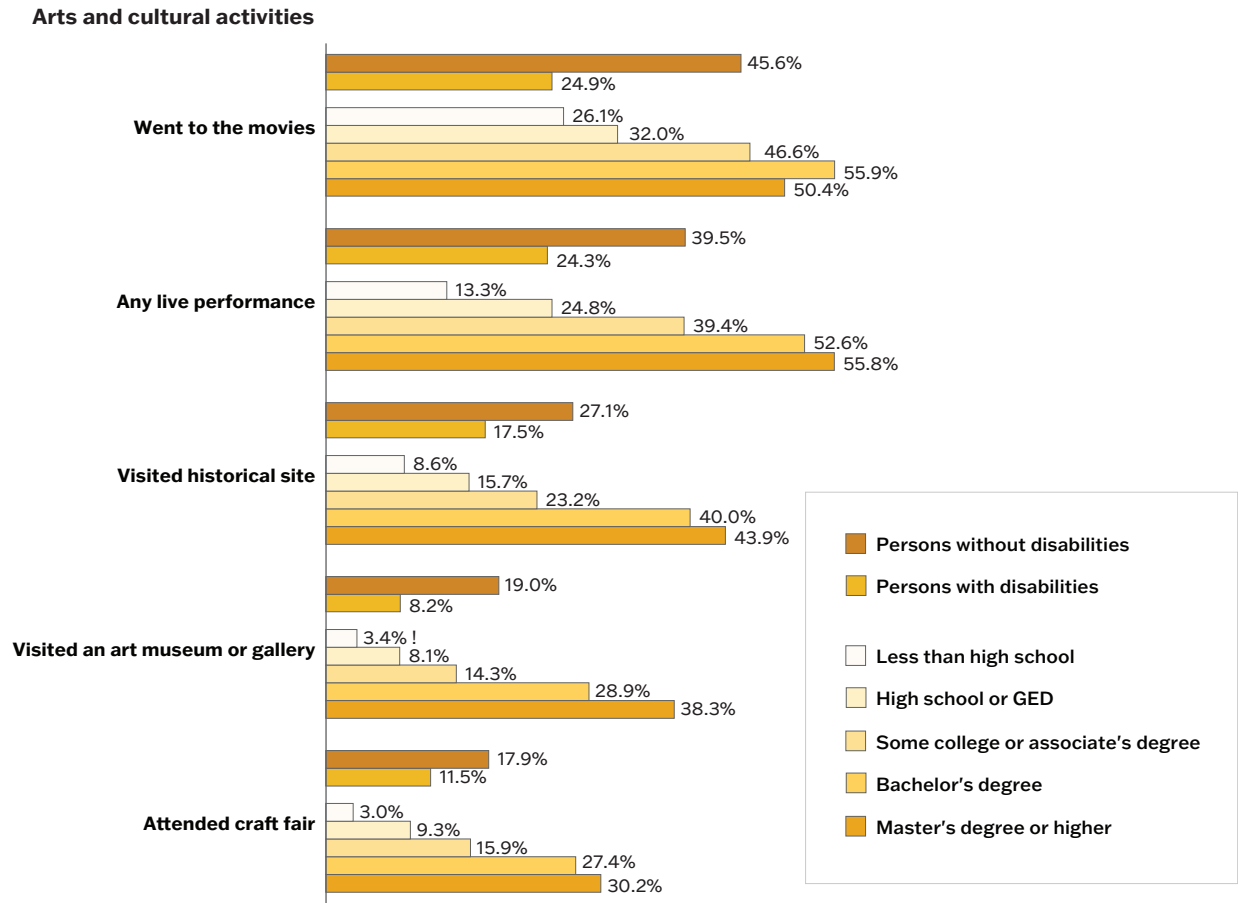
Rates of attending or visiting many arts events or venues increased with educational attainment. This may indicate that barriers to arts participation decrease as education increases, perhaps due to education-related factors such as income. For example, in 2022, adults with a bachelor’s degree (53 percent) or a master’s degree or higher (56 percent) were more than twice as likely to have attended any live performance in 2022 than those with a high school education (25 percent), and nearly four times as likely than those with less than a high school education (13 percent). Rates of attending a craft fair, visiting a historical site, or visiting an art museum or gallery in 2022 followed the same pattern. For example, adults with a master’s degree or higher were nearly five times more likely to have visited an art museum or gallery in 2022 (38 percent), compared

<sup>2</sup> The CPS uses a set of six questions to identify persons with disabilities. A response of “yes” to any one of the questions indicates that the person in question has a disability. For more information see [https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsdisability\\_faqs.htm#Everyone](https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsdisability_faqs.htm#Everyone).

to those with a high school education (8 percent). Adults with a bachelor's degree were more likely to have gone to the movies (56 percent) than adults of any other education group: movie-going rates for these

groups ranged from 26 percent for those who had not completed high school to 50 percent for those who had completed a master's degree or higher.

**Figure B1-4. Percentage of adults, aged 18 and over, participating in selected arts and cultural activities during the past 12 months, by disability status and educational attainment: 2022**



! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.

NOTE: The Current Population Survey uses a set of six questions to identify persons with disabilities. A response of "yes" to any one of the questions indicates that the person in question has a disability. For more information see [https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsdisability\\_faq.htm#Everyone](https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsdisability_faq.htm#Everyone). "Some college" includes individuals who attended college but did not receive a degree.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), July 2022.

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