The Well-being of Musicians in the U.S.

2018 MIRA Musician Survey

Dr. Ying Zhen
Associate Professor of Business & Economics, Economics Program Director
Department of Business and Economics
Professional Studies Division
Wesleyan College

Founder of MIRA (Music Industry Research Association): Alan Krueger

*"**Alan B. Krueger** is an American economist, who is the Bendheim Professor of Economics and Public Affairs at Princeton University and Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research. He is among the 50 highest ranked economists in the world according to IDEAS/RePEc.*

Professor Krueger served as Chairman of President Barack Obama's Council of Economic Advisers and a Member of the Cabinet from 2011 to 2013. He also served as Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy and Chief Economist of the U.S. Department of the Treasury in 2009-10 and as Chief Economist at the U.S. Department of Labor in 1994-1995."

2018 MIRA Musician Survey

- Survey of 1,227 musicians and composers conducted April 12-June 2nd.

- Target: Individuals who earned a living as a musician or composer, or who were endeavoring to earn a living through making music.

- **Nonrandom Sample**: MusiCares' Clients (62%) and American List Council (30%) + Referrals (8%)

- Many questions taken from national surveys, so can compare to general public; questionnaire available online

Race & Ethnicity Look Similar in MIRA Survey and in ACS Musicians

2012-2016 ACS WEIGHTED 5-YEAR ESTIMATES - PUBLIC USE MICRODATA SAMPLE				
OCCUPATION= 27-2040				
AGE 18 AND OLDER	**ACS Musicians**		**MIRA Musicians**	
	U.S.		SAMPLE (Unweighted)	
RACE	263,438	Percent	1,227*	Percent
White alone	207121	79%	941	78%
Black or African American alone	32865	12%	159	13%
Native American	1072	0.4%	11	1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	10250	4%	10	1%
Two or more races	6733	3%	70	6%
Some other race alone	5397	2%	15	1%
HISPANIC	263,438			
Not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino	241,134	92%	1158	95%
Hispanic	22,304	8%	58	5%

Gender & Marital Status are Similar in MIRA Survey and ACS Musicians

		ACS		MIRA
SEX	263,438			
Male	172,032	65%	791	65%
Female	91,406	35%	434	35%
MARITAL STATUS	263,438			
Married	127,579	48%	596	49%
Widowed	10,219	4%	16	1%
Divorced	28,675	11%	202	17%
Separated	5,170	2%	23	2%
Never married or under 15 years old	91,795	35%	375	31%

MIRA Sample is Somewhat Older and More Highly Educated than ACS Musicians

AGE		ACS		MIRA
18-24	29,665	11%	8	1%
25-29	26,697	10%	62	5%
30-34	26,517	10%	110	9%
35-39	20,101	8%	121	10%
40-44	20,041	8%	121	10%
45-49	19,837	8%	119	10%
50-54	21,552	8%	119	10%
55-59	25,495	10%	166	14%
60-64	26,462	10%	194	16%
65-78	47,071	18%	184	15%

HS grad	41,493	16%	76	6%
Some college	65,843	25%	273	22%
Associate's degree	13,085	5%	86	7%
Bachelor's degree	74,361	28%	375	31%
Master's degree	43,398	16%	275	23%
Professional degree beyond a bachelor's degree	4,119	2%	10	1%
Doctorate degree	6,588	3%	93	8%

And MIRA Sample Has Higher Income Median $35k versus $25k

Personal Income Past 12 Months	ACS		MIRA	
Less than 5000	39,930	15%	68	6%
Between 5000 and 7499	13602	5%	46	4%
Between 7500 and 9999	10,963	4%	35	3%
Between 10000 and 12499	17,989	7%	61	5%
Between 12500 and 14999	9,892	4%	67	6%
Between 15000 and 19999	21,442	8%	71	6%
Between 20000 and 24999	21,486	8%	97	8%
Between 25000 and 29999	16,394	6%	85	7%
Between 30000 and 34999	15,458	6%	74	6%
Between 35000 and 39999	11,511	4%	68	6%
Between 40000 and 49999	20,828	8%	113	9%
Between 50000 and 59999	14,048	5%	107	9%
Between 60000 and 74999	15,264	6%	115	10%
Between 75000 and 99999	11,258	4%	108	9%
Between 100000 and 149999	8,205	3%	58	5%
150000 or more	15,168	6%	18	2%

Quick Tour of Findings in Report

- Likes and Dislikes of Being a Musician

- Career Activities

- Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

- Mental Health

- Drug and Alcohol Use

Top 10 Genres Performed Last Year

- Classical 37%
- Jazz 35%
- Pop 35%
- Folk 31%
- Blues 31%
- Country 28%
- Christian 27%
- Adult Contemporary 24 %
- Independent 23%
- Mainstream Rock 23%

Top Primary Instruments

- Guitar 25%
- Piano/Keyboard 17%
- Voice 15%
- Drums 10%
- Bass or Bass Guitar 10%
- Organ 5%

< 5 Percent

- Violin
- Tuba
- Trumpet
- Saxophone
- Trombone
- Clarinet

Table 3: Favorite and Least Favorite Aspects About Being a Musician

	Musicians
	(1)
Panel A: Likes	
Artistic Expression	81.0%
Performing	70.3%
Audience Appreciation	48.7%
Collaborating	63.7%
Financial Rewards	22.6%
Panel B: Dislikes	
Unknown Career Trajectory	38.6%
Time Management	16.2%
Financial Insecurity	70.0%
Opportunity Costs	35.3%
Dealing with Logistics	24.2%
Working/Collaborating with Others	1.6%
Time/Effort into Getting Paid	25.3%
Time/Effort into Marketing Oneself	40.6%
Unstable Fan Base	13.3%

Table 1: Sources and Shares of Music-Related Income

	Earned Income From	Share of Music-Related Income	Median Amount Earned
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Live Performances (Non-Religious)	80.8%	41.6%	$5,427.50
Audio/Video Recordings	35.6%	3.6%	$850.00
Songwriting/Composing	28.8%	4.2%	$850.00
Salary from Band/Symphony/Ensemble	18.1%	4.9%	$4,000.00
Merchandise Sales	27.4%	2.7%	$500.00
Producing	14.7%	2.3%	$2,000.00
Session/Sideman Fees	34.6%	4.0%	$1,000.00
Fan Funding/Patronage	7.3%	1.3%	$2,800.00
Sponsorship	5.0%	0.4%	$2,000.00
YouTube Monetization	7.2%	0.1%	$53.00
Streaming Royalties	28.1%	1.5%	$100.00
Sheet Music Sales	6.0%	0.2%	$112.50
Ringtones Revenue	3.7%	0.0%	$300.00
Church, Choir, Other Religious	38.2%	15.9%	$8,000.00
Record Label Advance	4.5%	0.3%	$4,000.00
Give Music Lessons	41.8%	12.0%	$4,000.00
Other Music Related	14.6%	5.1%	$7,000.00

Note: Column 2 is the average share of music-related income from each source, taken over musicians. $\bar{s} = \sum_i^n s_i/n$ where s_i is musician i's share of income from the source.

Evidence on
Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

	Male		Female	
	Musicians	National	Musicians	National
Panel A: Discrimination	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Discriminated Because of Race?	24.4%	16.9%	26.0%	11.1%
Discriminated Because of Sex?	12.6%	10.7%	71.8%	27.8%
Panel B: Sexual Harassment				
Victim of Sexual Harassment?	16.8%	11.0%	67.1%	42.0%

Notes: The musicians sample in column 1 contains all respondents living in the US, aged 18+, have non-missing age, and non-missing gender or race. The national sample in panel A comes from the Princeton Self-Employment Survey and contains respondents who are self-employed and aged 18+. The national sample in panel B comes from a 2017 Gallup survey on sexual harassment and includes respondents aged 18+. Samples include up to 929 observations in the musicians samples, up to 986 observations in the Princeton Self-Employment Survey, and up to 558 observations in the Gallup survey.

Table 5: Mental Health and Depression

	All Respondents	
	Musicians	National
Panel A: Have Little Interest in Doing Things	(1)	(2)
Not at All	55.7%	76.4%
Several Days	30.7%	15.8%
More than Half the Days	9.5%	4.3%
Nearly Every Day	4.2%	3.6%
Panel B: Feeling Down, Depressed or Hopeless		
Not at All	49.0%	76.7%
Several Days	37.6%	17.0%
More than Half the Days	8.5%	3.6%
Nearly Every Day	4.8%	2.6%
Panel C: Trouble Sleeping or Sleeping Too Much		
Not at All	38.8%	60.5%
Several Days	39.4%	24.3%
More than Half the Days	13.5%	7.3%
Nearly Every Day	8.3%	8.0%
Panel D: Feeling Tired or Having Little Energy		
Not at All	26.0%	45.8%
Several Days	48.3%	38.2%
More than Half the Days	15.0%	8.4%
Nearly Every Day	10.6%	7.7%

	All Respondents	
	Musicians	National
	(1)	(2)
Panel E: Feeling Bad About Yourself		
Not at All	52.7%	83.9%
Several Days	30.4%	11.2%
More than Half the Days	9.8%	2.5%
Nearly Every Day	7.2%	2.4%
Panel F: Trouble Concentrating on Things		
Not at All	62.8%	84.1%
Several Days	25.1%	10.5%
More than Half the Days	7.3%	2.8%
Nearly Every Day	4.8%	2.6%
Panel G: Thoughts you Would be Better Off Dead		
Not at All	88.2%	96.6%
Several Days	8.4%	2.3%
More than Half the Days	1.9%	0.7%
Nearly Every Day	1.4%	0.4%

Notes: The musicians sample contains all respondents from the MIRA survey who are living in the US, aged 18+, and have non-missing age. All responses refer to a respondent's reported feelings in the last 14 days. Nationally representative data come from the 2015-2016 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), include respondents aged 18+ and use appropriate sampling weights. Samples include up to 1,202 observations in the musicians sample and up to 5,161 observations in NHANES.

Table 7: Drug Use

	All Respondents	
	Musicians	National
Panel A: Marijuana Use (age 18-59)	(1)	(2)
Ever Used	71.4%	57.2%
At Least Once Per Month for Past 12 Months	28.7%	28.2%
Panel B: Other Drug Use in Past Month (age 18+)		
Any of Below	5.4%	1.8%
Cocaine or Crack Cocaine	3.7%	0.7%
Ecstasy	1.4%	0.2%
LSD or Acid	1.8%	0.1%
Speed	1.3%	0.7%
Heroin or Opium	0.5%	0.2%
Meth	0.9%	0.3%

Notes: The musicians sample contains respondents from the MIRA survey who are living in the US and have non-missing age. The question "At Least Once Per Month..." is unconditional on ever using. The sample for "Any of Below" is further restricted to include only respondents who answered all remaining panel B questions. The type of pain medication question is conditional on taking pain medication the previous day. All national statistics use appropriate sampling weights. The national data in panel A come from the 2015-2016 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). The national data in panel B come from the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). Samples include up to 1,195 observations in the musicians survey, up to 3,428 observations in NHANES, and up to 42,625 observations in NSDUH.

Prescription Drugs Use

- 13% used prescription medication for **depression** *on a regular basis*

- 12% used prescription medication for **anxiety**

- 10% used prescription **sleep medication**

- 8% used prescription **pain medication**

- 8% used **beta-blockers**

- 3% used prescription medication for **attention deficit disorder**

Table 8: Musicians' Injuries

	Ongoing Issue	Past Issue	Never an Issue
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Hearing Issues	22.2%	15.4%	62.4%
Repetitive Strain	23.0%	24.4%	52.6%
Back or Neck Injury	24.8%	25.0%	50.2%
Hand or Finger Injury	15.4%	27.1%	57.4%
Vocal Injury	6.2%	17.7%	76.2%
Any of the Above	50.0%	59.5%	19.1%

Notes: This table reports the share of musicians who have suffered one of the listed injuries. The sample includes musicians from the MIRA survey who live in the US, are aged 18+, and have non-missing age. The last row is restricted to observations who answered all injury questions. In the last row, columns 1 and 2 represent the fraction of musicians who have an ongoing or past issue, and column 3 represents the fraction of musicians who never had an issue. Samples include up to 1,199 observations.

Health Insurance Coverage Rate:

2013 FMC   57%
2018 MIRA 86%

Next Steps

- Make data available to M♪RA Members

- Draw attention to disturbing findings to *improve* conditions for musicians

- Asked respondents permission to follow up so will *create longitudinal data*.

- Survey another (hopefully more representative) sample next year – ongoing MIRA annual survey