

Female artists representation within the electronic music industry – a preliminary study by *L'Appel du 8 Mars*

Introduction

Musical diversity exists and is particularly strong in the electronic* genre but like our society, it conveys bias against equal gender opportunity. General observations made by clubbers, artists, media and active participants in the industry - who believe female DJs/producers are misrepresented in the scene - is the starting point of this analysis. From there we started to extract data so as to see if those assumptions are founded.

This presentation is not intended to be exhaustive but aims to better understand how female DJs and producers are represented and assess more accurately the gender distribution.

L'Appel du 8 Mars is pleased to share these first results focusing on European trends. We hope that in the near future, decision-makers shaping this industry would go above any gender difference or cliché, and with respect to each artist's singularity, could enhance diversification in their line-up, in the name of music.

**Electronic: broad definition including techno, house, minimal, deep house, electronic genres and their derivatives.*

Scope and data collection

This study highlights the gender ratio in three electronic Parisian clubs: Concrete, Djoon and Rex club – from 2017 to mid 2019. It also includes Berghain and Fabric for the first semester of 2019, to make a first comparison at a European level.

The results should not allow to generalize in any aspect but give a first insight on how female artists are represented by clubs.

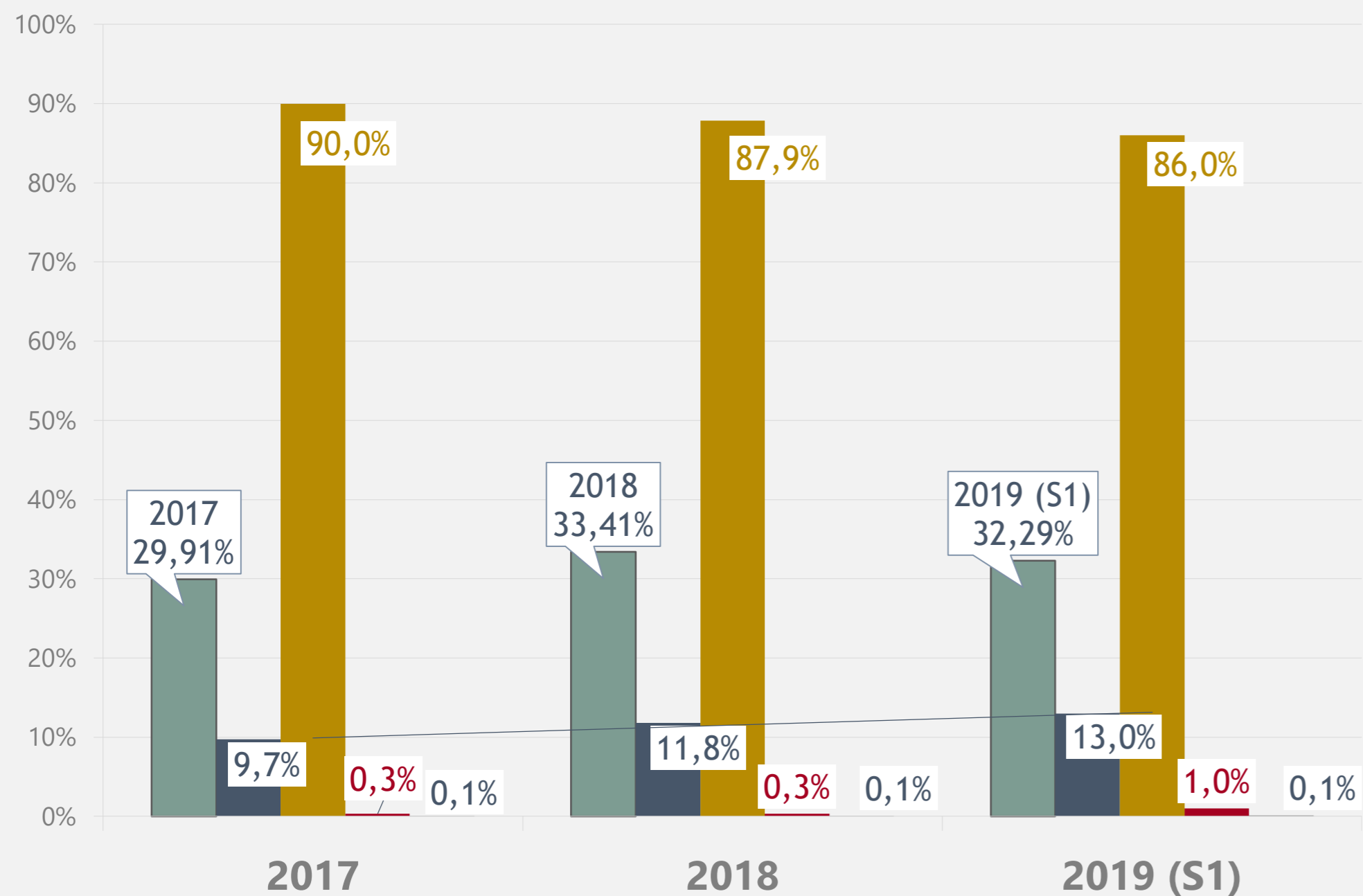
Data collected through line-up announced by these venues on their social media (e.g. Resident Advisor and Facebook) include the following:

- Name of the event
- Date
- Number of women performing per event (or group exclusively composed by women)
- Number of men performing per event (or group exclusively composed by men)
- Number of mixed groups (composed by both women and men)
- Number of non-binary declared artists performing per event

The gender estimation was made through stereotype norms developed by our society. The judgement foundation lays in the artists' public information collected on their social media and/or publicly available (biographies, articles, pictures). When unknown and/or in case of doubt, we either contacted them directly or made an assumption. The presented results may thus be subject to minimal inaccuracies.

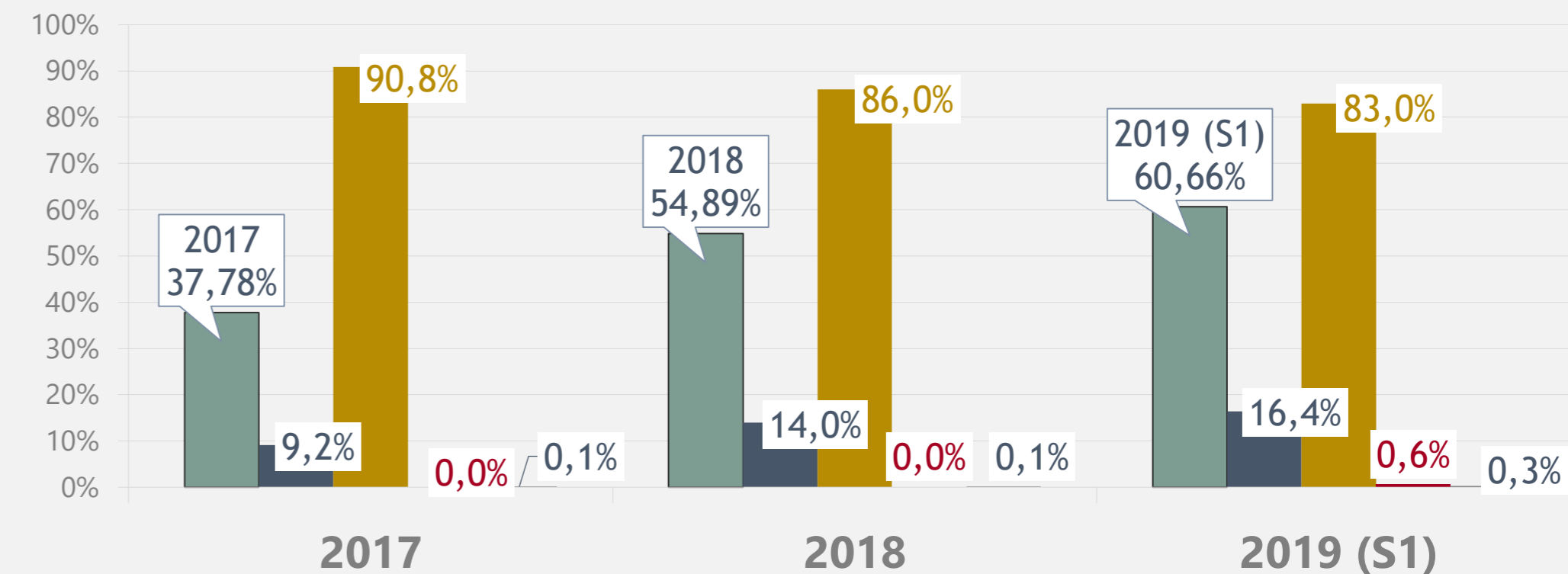
Gender ratio in three Parisian electronic clubs from 2017 to mid-2019

Overall results

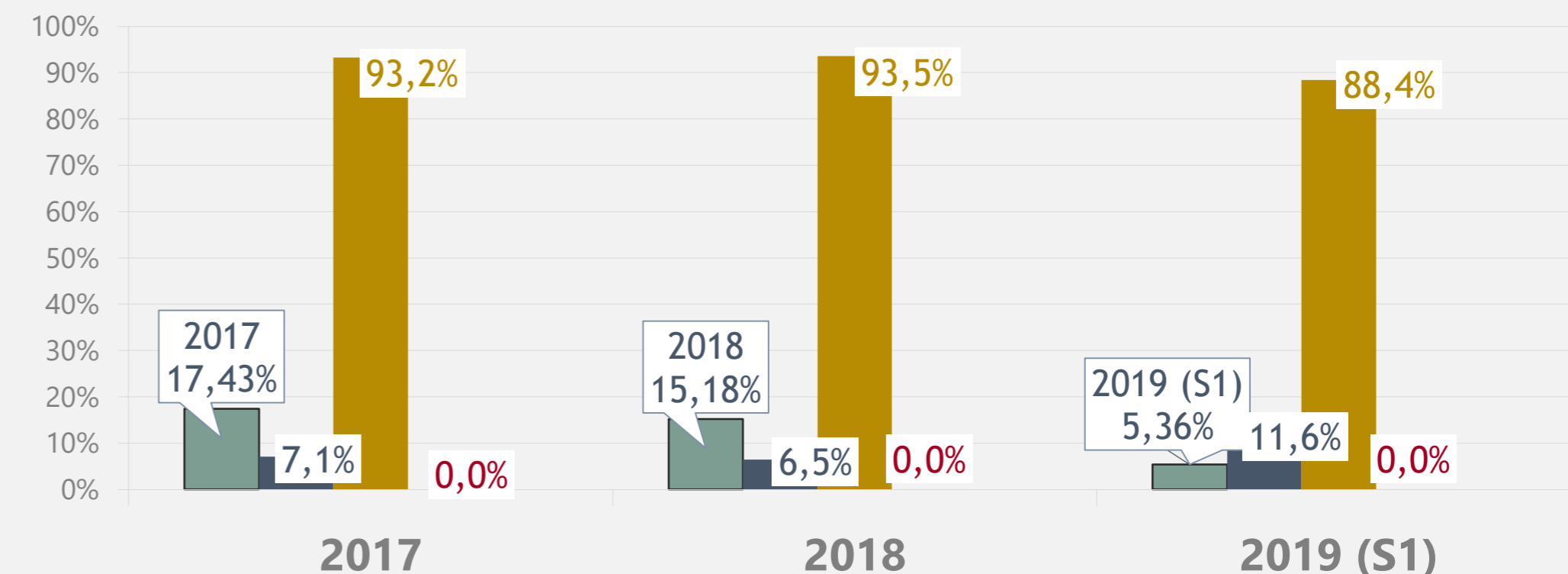


Breakdown per club

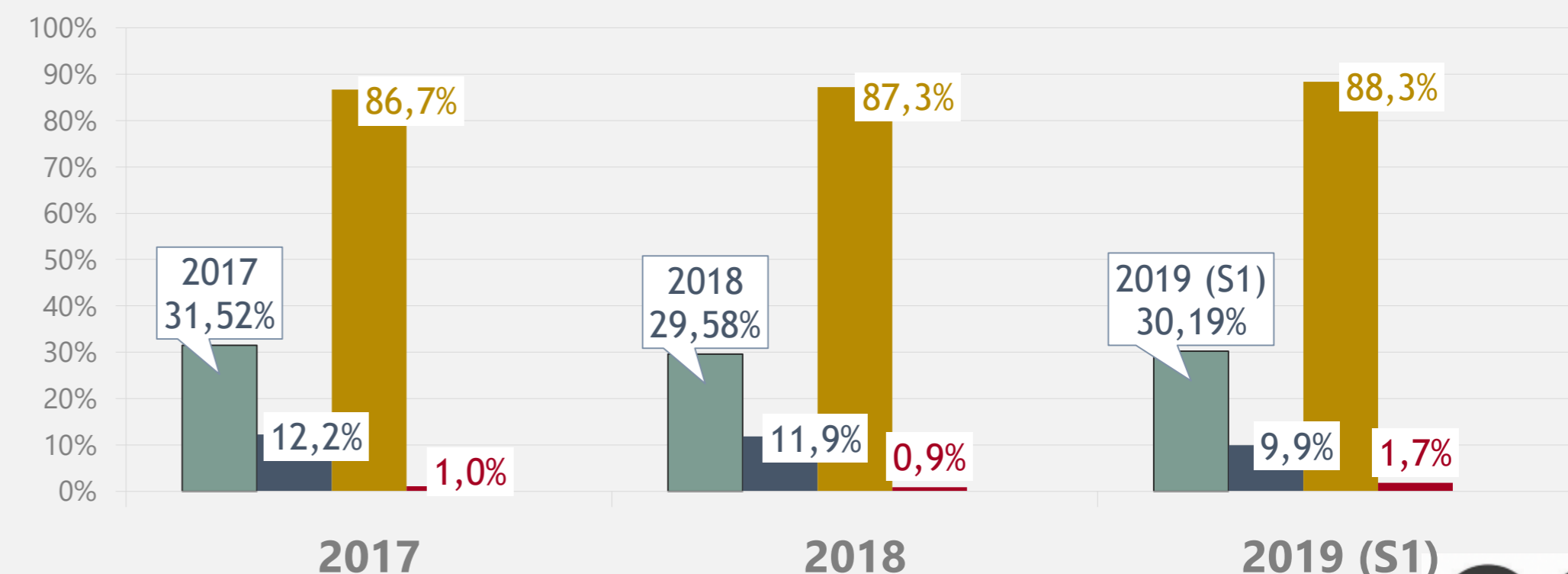
Concrete



Djoon



Rex club



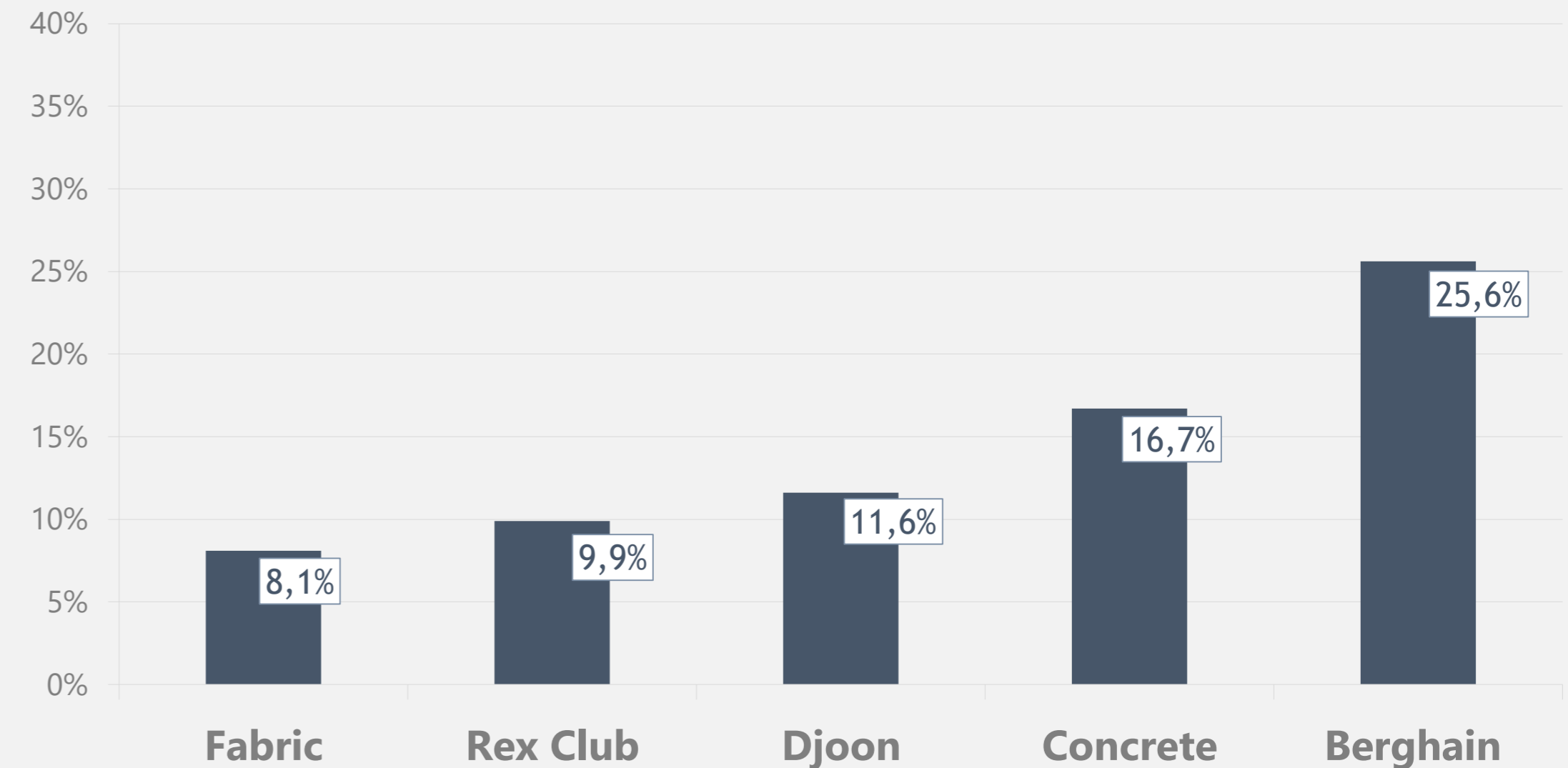
Gender ratio at European level in S1 2019

Comments

Berghain, Berlin (including Berghain and its affiliate, Säule and Panorama Bar), is leading the way, booking 25.6% of female artists since the beginning of the year. Concrete in Paris is next with 16.5%, followed by Djoon and Rex club that give their decks to respectively 11.6% and 9.9% of female artists.

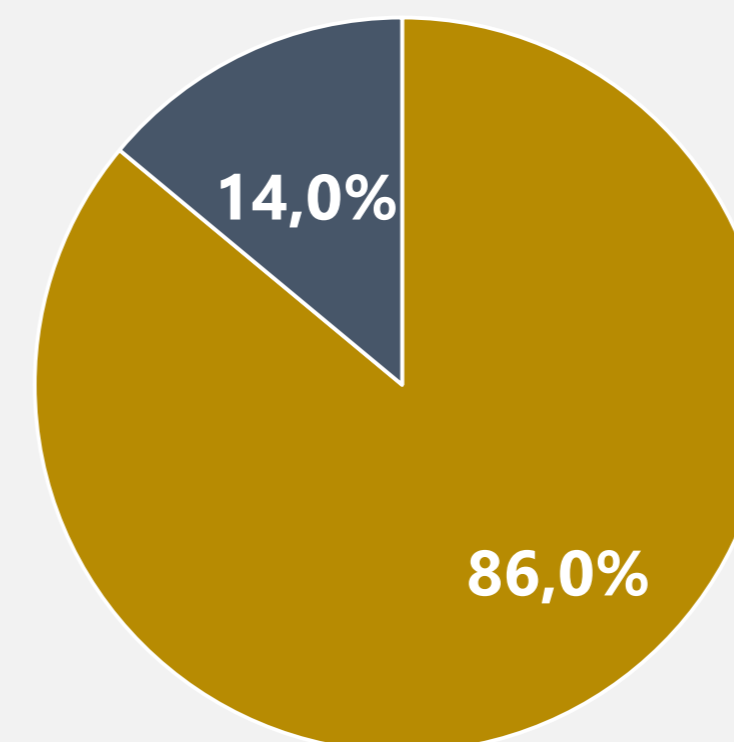
Data from Fabric reveal that there is only 8.1% of female artists booked at this venue in S1 2019. However, this club should not be seen as the ugly duckling misrepresenting female artists as it supports our initial thoughts: electronic music is opening up to gender difference. Indeed when doing a focus on electronic (broad definition including techno, house, minimal, deep house, electronic genres and their derivatives) parties only organized at Fabric, the percentage jumps from 8.1% to 13.97% which makes think that the electronic scene is more accessible to female talents than other genres such as jungle, DnB, dub step, hip hop, etc.

% female artists booked in five European electronic clubs in S1 2019

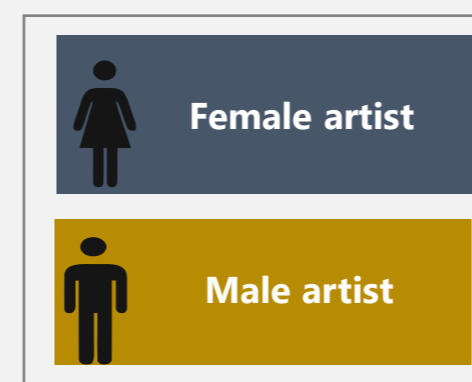
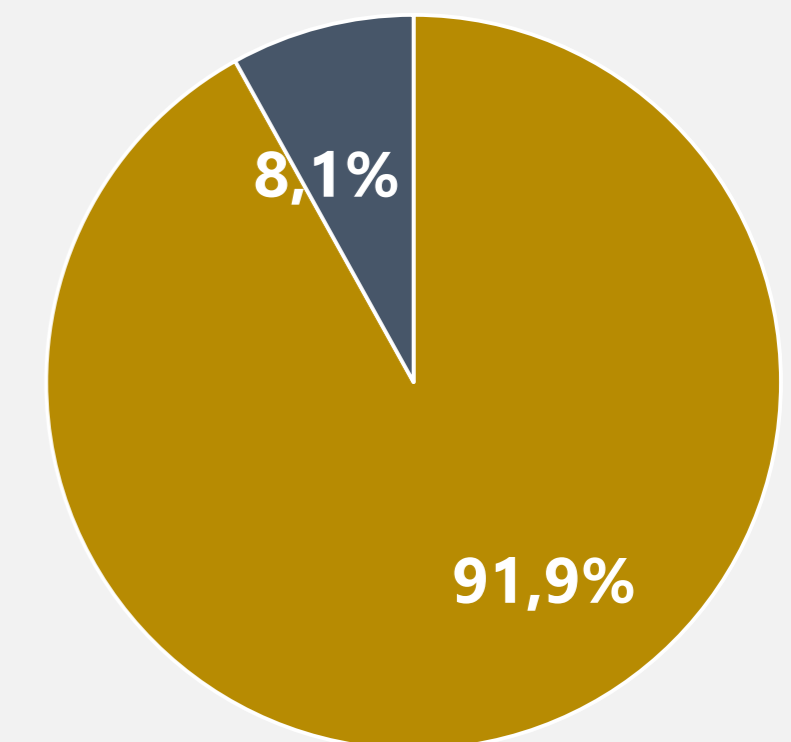


Focus on Fabric

Gender ratio in electronic** parties only (S1 2019)



Gender ratio in all style parties (S1 2019)



Female artists representation in Digital Music Stores

Comments

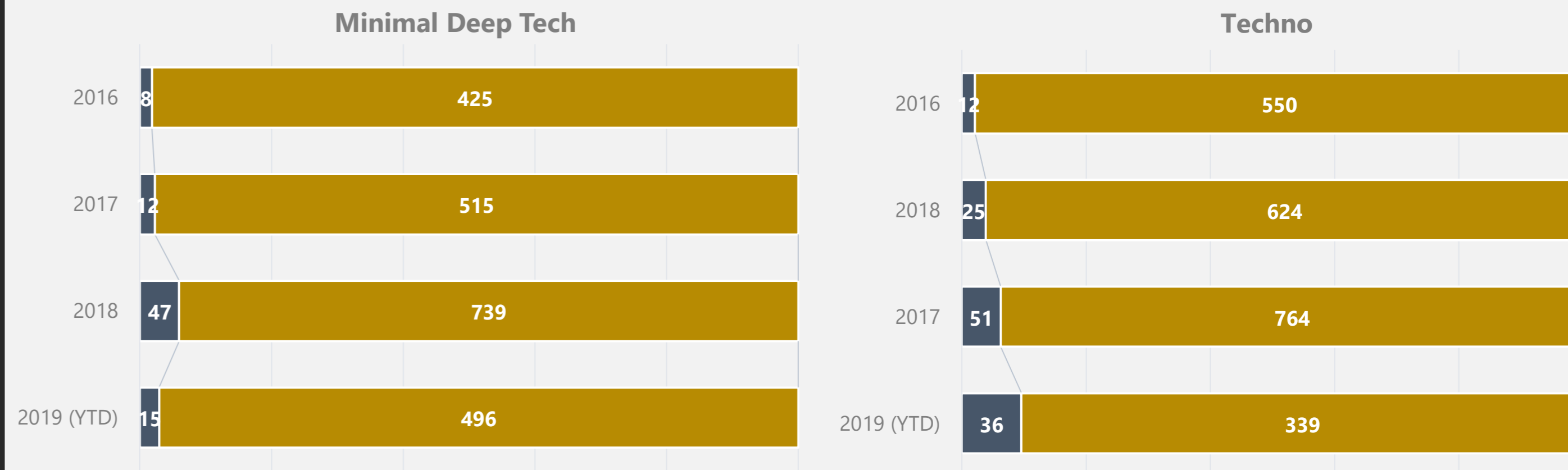
The electronic music scene is not only shaped by events, it is also a matter of promotion through online musical platforms. Therefore, we had a closer look at two leading digital music stores: Beatport and Juno Download. The idea was to observe how female talents are represented among professionals and how platforms are contributing to highlight their music.

Numbers of total tracks including those produced by women and were featured in the monthly recommendations of those two platforms, under the category "Techno" and "Minimal" since 2016 were extracted.

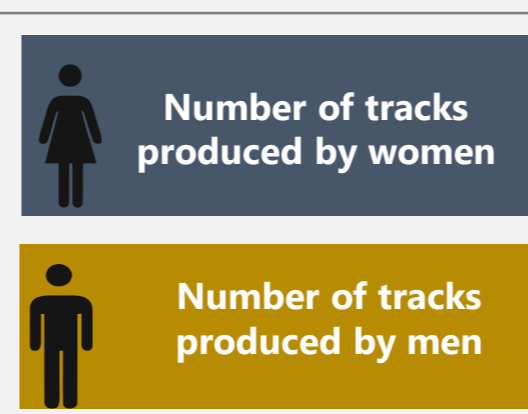
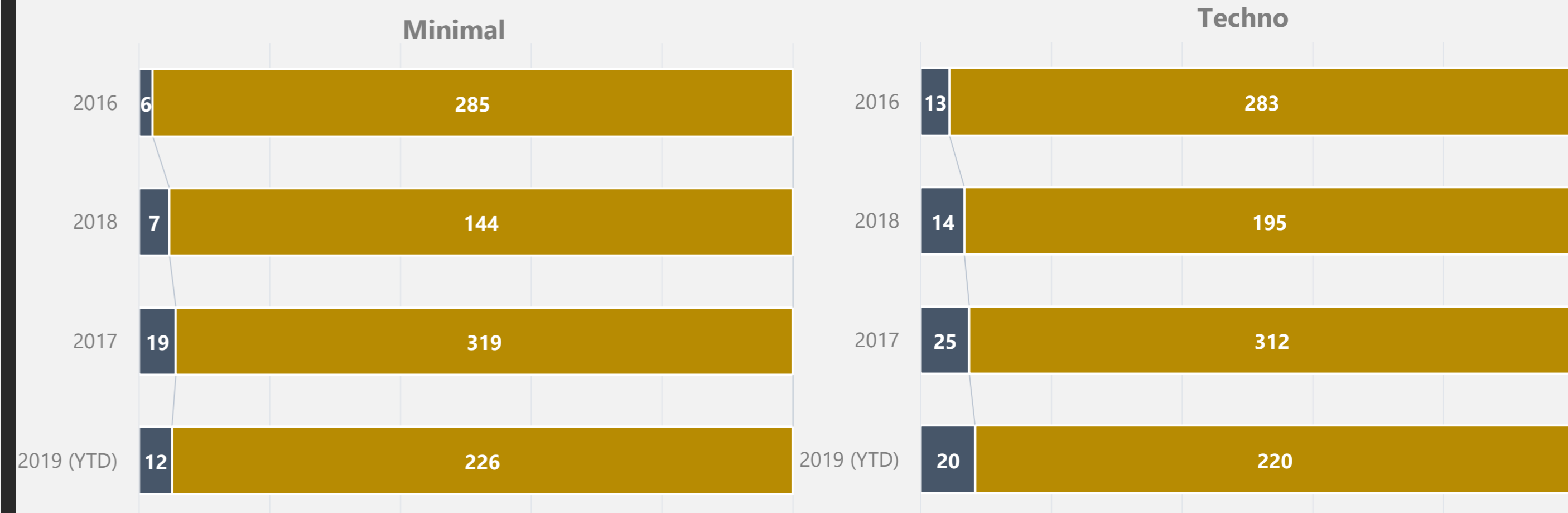
A leading trend shows that both platforms promote 40 to 60% more women in techno recommendations. Unfortunately, the numbers are still low because less than 10% of tracks featured in monthly recommendations (Techno and Minimal combined) are produced by female artists.

Beatport (*Best new track*), seems to offer some diversity, not only by representing more women but also by spotlighting unknown and emerging ones, which we believe is a great source of promotion when it comes to giving more visibility to female talents. The Juno Download's digital platform is very diverse with unknown female artists. *Recommendations* from the website show us yet, that there is still a misrepresentation for emerging female producers in the current market.

Beatport Best Tracks: 2016-2019 (YTD)



Juno Download Recommends: 2016-2019 (YTD)



So what ?



What are the trends in Paris?

As a result of this study, the final percentage of three important clubs in Paris, have proved a slight progression of 3,24% in the female artist booking between 2017 and 2019-S1. The top progression goes to Concrete, with an increase of 7.26% followed by Djoon at 4.56%. Rex Club however is booking 2.33% less female artists between 2017 and S1 2019.

Throughout this study, we have noticed the following :

- Some Parisian promoters, established for a long time, tend to invite a few female techno pioneers who themselves pull up other emerging female artists. This general sorority clearly brings up the statistics.
- The intention of others is to promote a more eclectic choice of female artists to their audiences, thanks to alternative collectives offering a mix of local and international DJs/producers in their line-ups.
- Another strategy is noticed when a club gathers an "all night long" female line-up, which makes the numbers artificially inflated.
- We also tend to see that live performance with at least one female artist or duo are almost inexistent in Paris.

Therefore today if we keep going at this rate (+3,24% for 2 years and a half), it would take approximately twenty-two years for clubs to reach a 50% parity in their respective bookings. Maybe it is time to "Work a change" as stated in Steffi and Virginia's latest EP !

A conclusion ?

Although discussions about how to close the gender gap within the music industry have become a popular topic of debate (#metoo movement,...) , there is still room for improvement in 2019. Why and how come female electronic artists are so under-represented ?

Internet and digital networking has given the possibility for female artists to expose themselves. Thanks to platforms like Female:Pressure, Shesaid.so, for instance, there is some worldwide data base to discover other female talents, in order to join booking agencies, labels and dj-booths...

To go further...

Today it would be irrelevant to say that they are no female djs or producers.

A different approach would be to gather data from international labels, booking agencies or more emerging scenes or festivals in order to see if, somewhere else, female artists are more recognized for their talents.

"I hope and believe we are paving a better future for female artists to come."

Paula Cole



About us

L'Appel du 8 Mars (A8M) is a French crew dedicated to promote women in electronic music through an annual event organized on International Women's Day*.

Founded in 2017 by artists and music lovers Lou Berlinger, Deborah Rolls, it aims to provide a critical reflection on the visibility given to female talents on stage.

Their first event was launched at Paris in 2018 and gathered a line-up of 14 female artists and round tables with 8 industry leaders. The event started with panel discussions enabling actors of the electronic scenes to exchange their position, view and feelings on the representation of female artists.

A8M is expanding and will be organizing two events in France and Asia in 2020. By promoting female inclusion in the electronic music scene, L'Appel du 8 Mars aims to achieve greater gender equality in this industry.

Follow us on the social media:

<https://soundcloud.com/a8m>

<https://www.facebook.com/lappeldu8mars>

* *International Women's Day as stated by United Nations on the 8 March*

A word about the contributors

Deborah Rolls (L'Appel du 8 Mars)

A turntablist with a passion for minimalistic style, Deborah Rolls made her debut at the French Riviera in 2008 before heading to Singapore where she was DJ resident at the Octopus Garden parties between 2011 and 2016. Her favorite music labels include Poker Flat, Mobilee, Re:kids, Desolat or Perlon among many others. She also enjoys playing techno and drum'n'bass music at controversial events, and loves attending classical music concerts.

<https://soundcloud.com/deborah-rolls>

https://www.mixcloud.com/Deborah_Rolls/

Lou Berlinger (L'Appel du 8 Mars / Nevermind Records)

Lou is an activist dj since her second homeland, Buenos Aires where she launched a party with her peers Kat Kat Tat (Berlin) and May Mac Laren (Buenos Aires) for over 3 years in the well-known Cocoliche Club. She now dedicates her time to her new label Nevermind records that tends to promote producers whichever planet they come from and especially disabled people.

She has her new machine live project under the name Slow Dimension a.k.a NoireRomance and continues to play her dub techno plates between Paris and Nantes where she recently settled.

<http://nevermindrecords.fr/>

<https://soundcloud.com/slowdimension22>

Patrache a.k.a Anaïs (E ! klozin' / L'Appel du 8 mars)

Electronic music lover first, Patrache decided to pass behind the decks two years ago thanks to the support of her friends. She has recently joined A8M as dj resident.

Conscious of the discrimination's issues and concerned by fairness causes, she proudly offered her help on this publication.

Texts revised by Lauriane Garcia