VIBERATE

2021 STATE OF MUSIC

What was 2021 like in the music industry, and what can we expect in 2022?

In the first edition of Viberate's State of Music address, we put the world's largest verified dataset on music artists, festivals, songs, labels and playlists to work.

We crunched the annual numbers behind every relevant music and social media channel, from Spotify to Beatport and TikTok, and drew conclusions regarding music industry trends and markets in 2022.

We looked into:

50K
top artists on each channel

100K
Spotify playlists

~50M
tracks and music videos

500
top music festivals

Period: December 9, 2020–December 9, 2021

Delivering key insights into:

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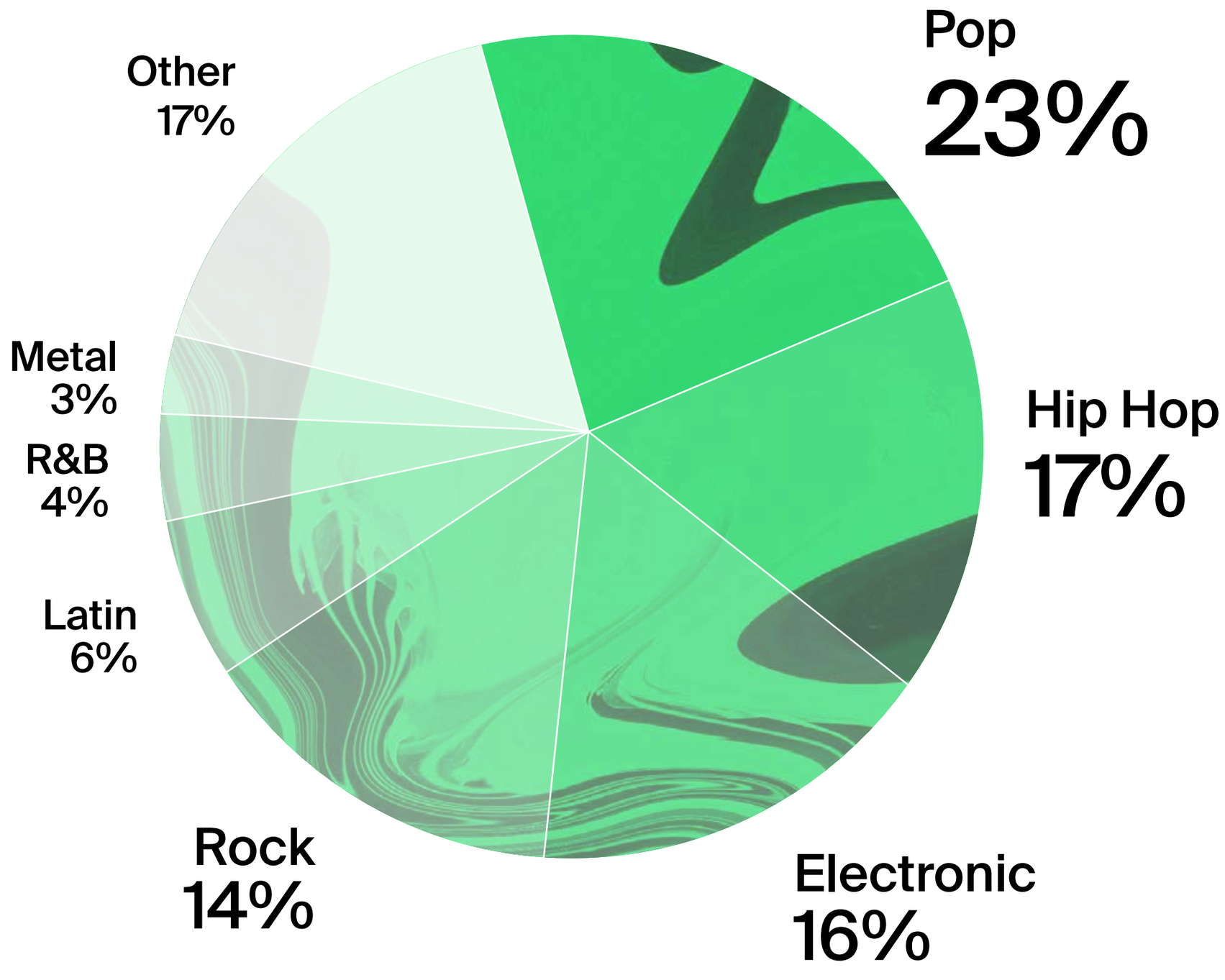
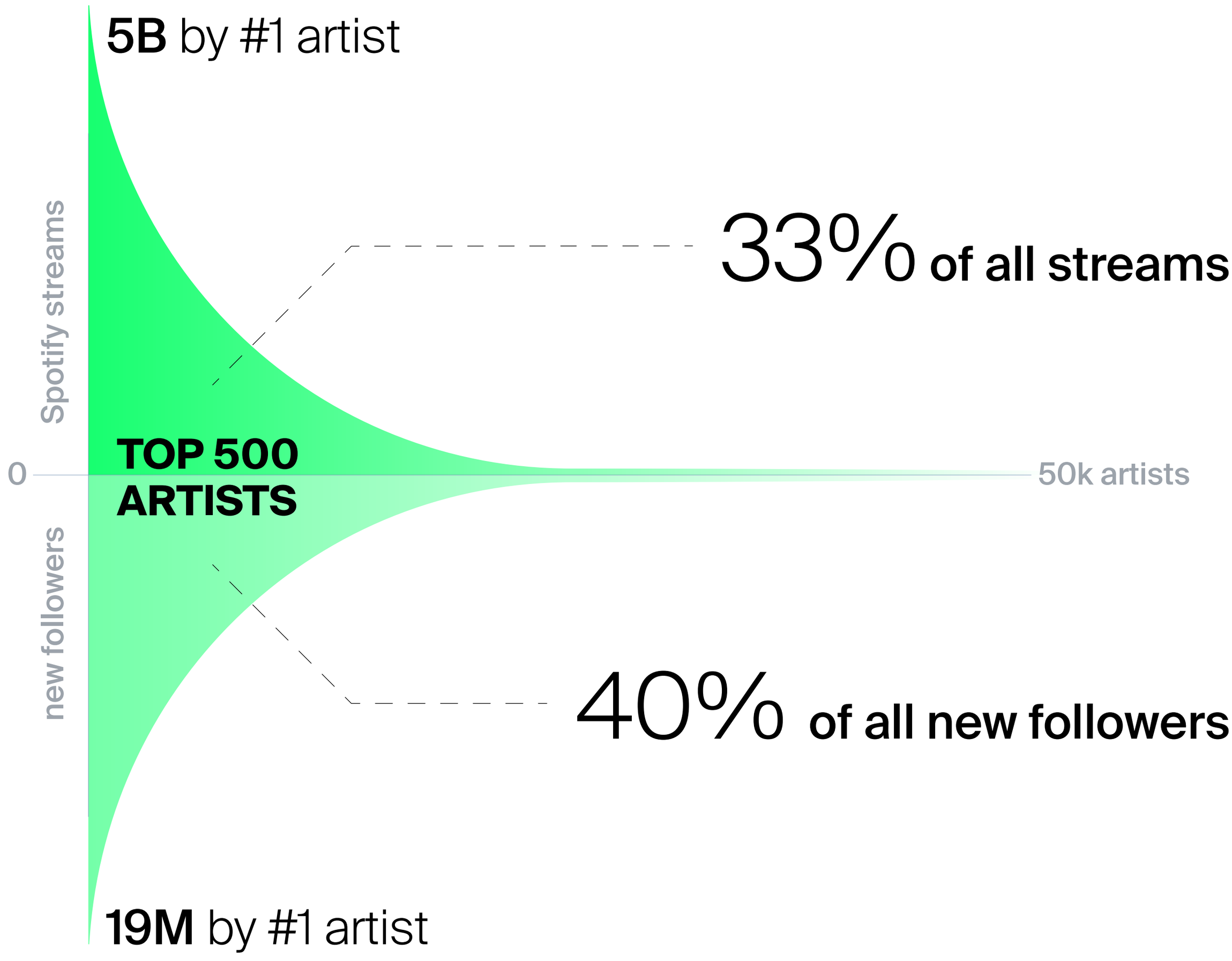
SOCIAL MEDIA & MUSIC CHANNELS

What's up on Spotify

Genre distribution of the top 50K artists



The top 500 artists generated 33% of all streams and gained 40% of all new followers



Top 5 artists

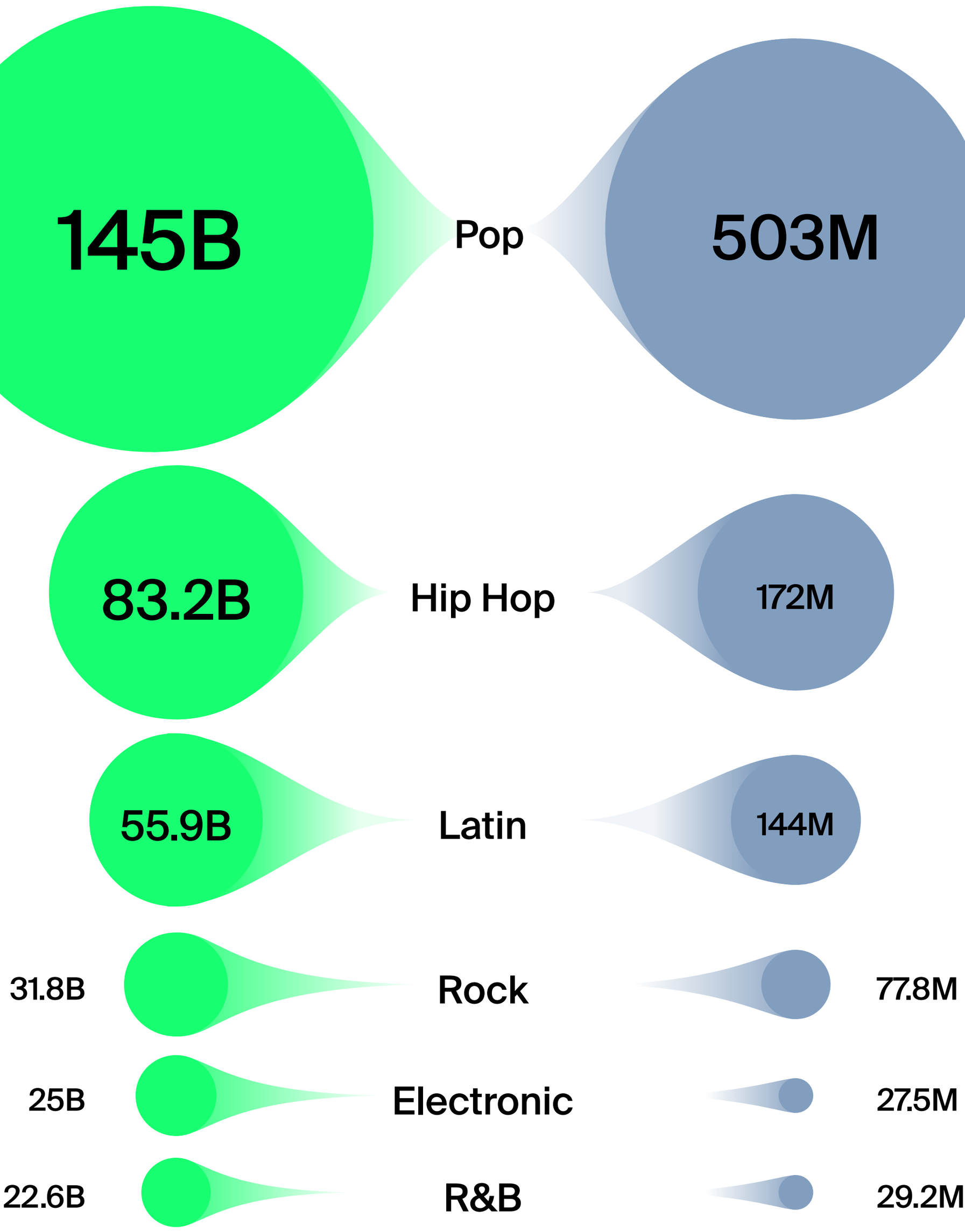
Popstars dominate. Considering his fanbase size, growth and streams, Justin Bieber won Spotify in 2021. However, it was the year of Olivia Rodrigo, whose debut album rocked the streaming game (her follower count increased by more than 50 times).

		Artist	Spotify followers	New followers	Spotify streams	Genre
1		Justin Bieber	53.7M	13.5M	4.6B	Pop
2		Olivia Rodrigo	11M	10.8M	5.1B	Pop
3		Ariana Grande	72.6M	18.5M	2.9B	Pop
4		BTS	42.3M	16.3M	3B	Pop
5		Billie Eilish	53.2M	17.2M	2.9B	Pop

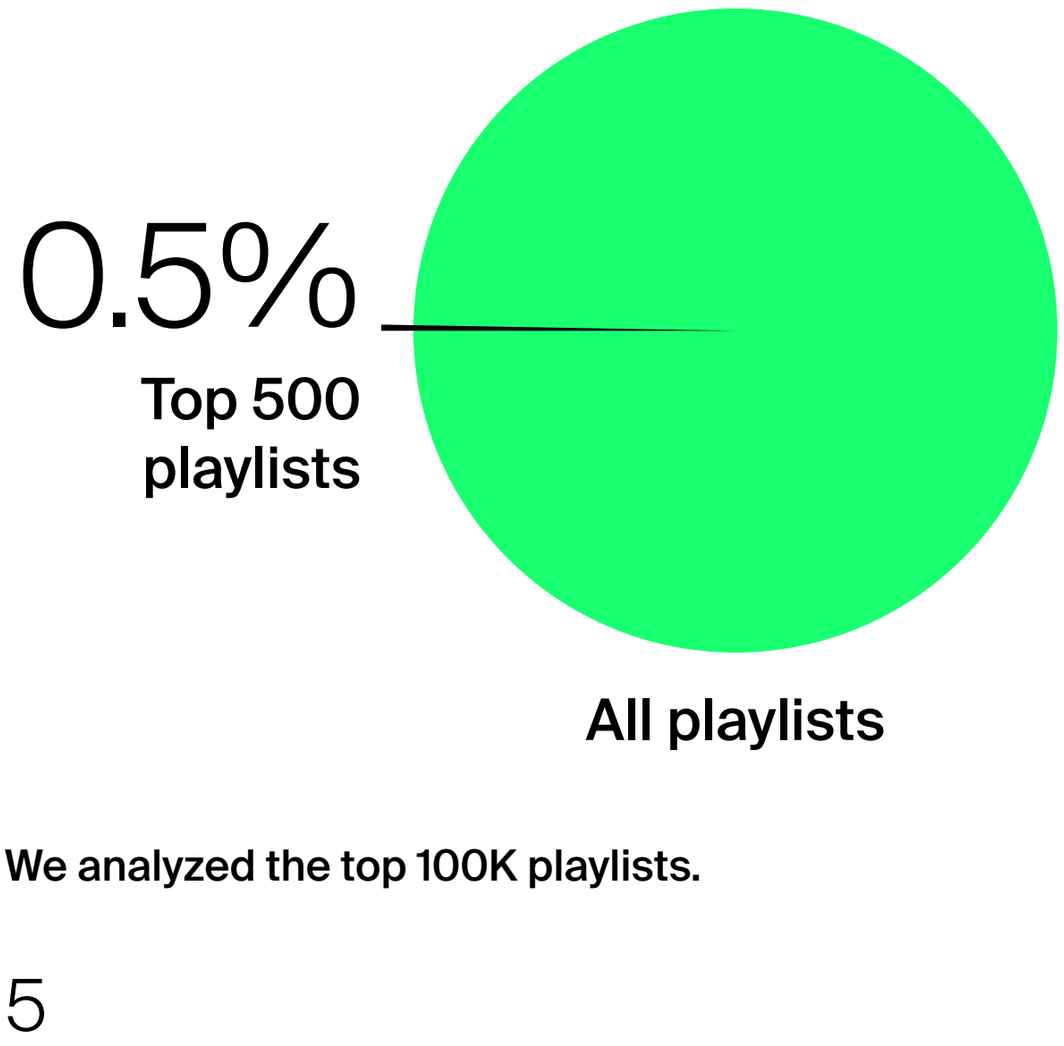
The artists with the best Spotify performance in a one-year period.

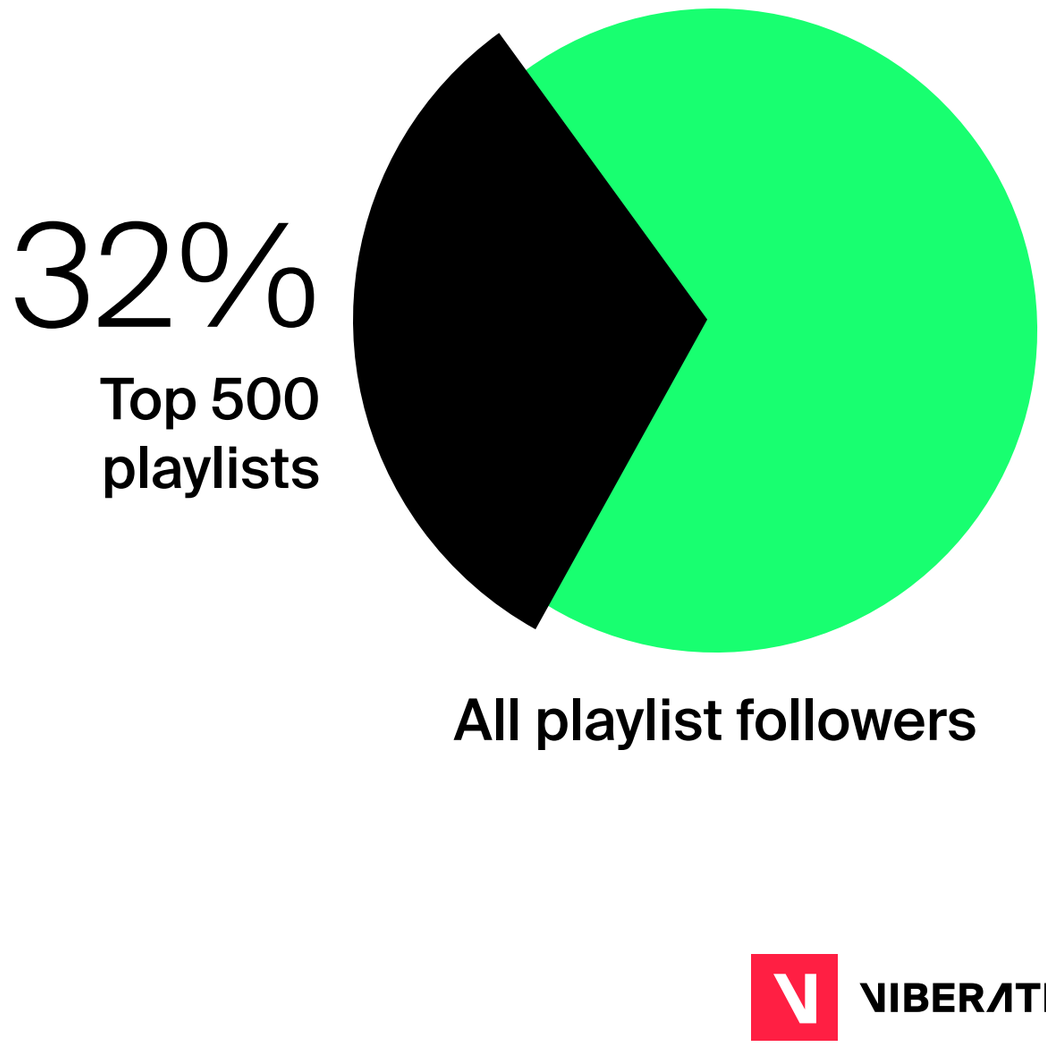
The winning genres

Pop rules the streams, Hip Hop and Latin follow (Reggaeton artists claimed 72% of the total Latin streams).



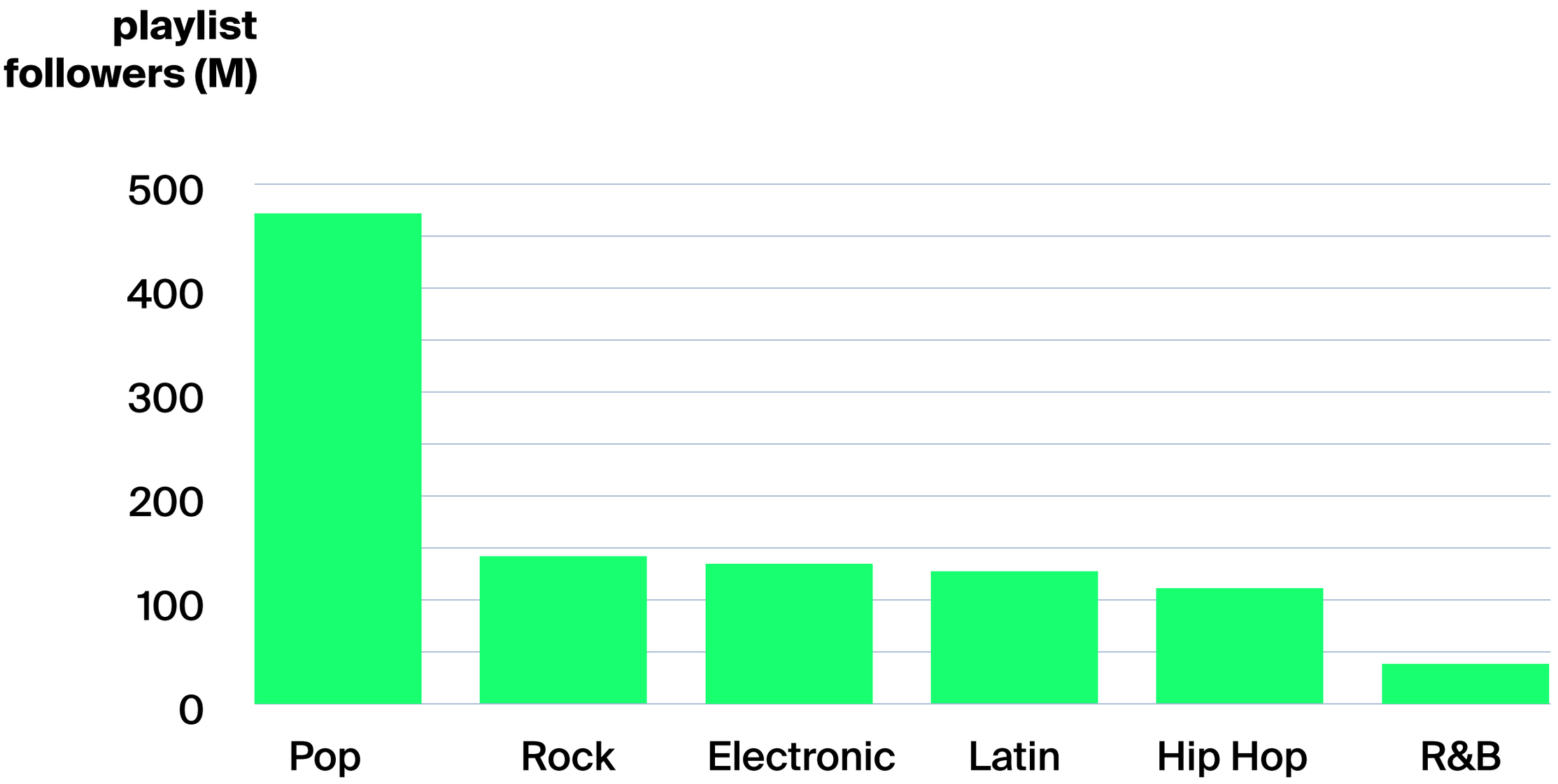
The top 500 playlists have 32% of all Spotify playlist followers





We analyzed the top 100K playlists.

Pop playlists have the most followers



Based on the top 500 Spotify playlists.

10 of the 50 fastest-growing playlists are independent

- **Strange Fruits Music** 🍉 to workout, game, party - summer 2021, deep house, dance, lounge chillout **(#1)**
- **Lofi Fruits Music** 🍉 lofi hip hop music to chill, relax, study, sleep **(#2)**
- **Deep House 2021 (#7)**
- **lofi hip hop music** - beats to relax/study to **(#10)**

...

These are the playlists that gained the most followers in a one-year period.

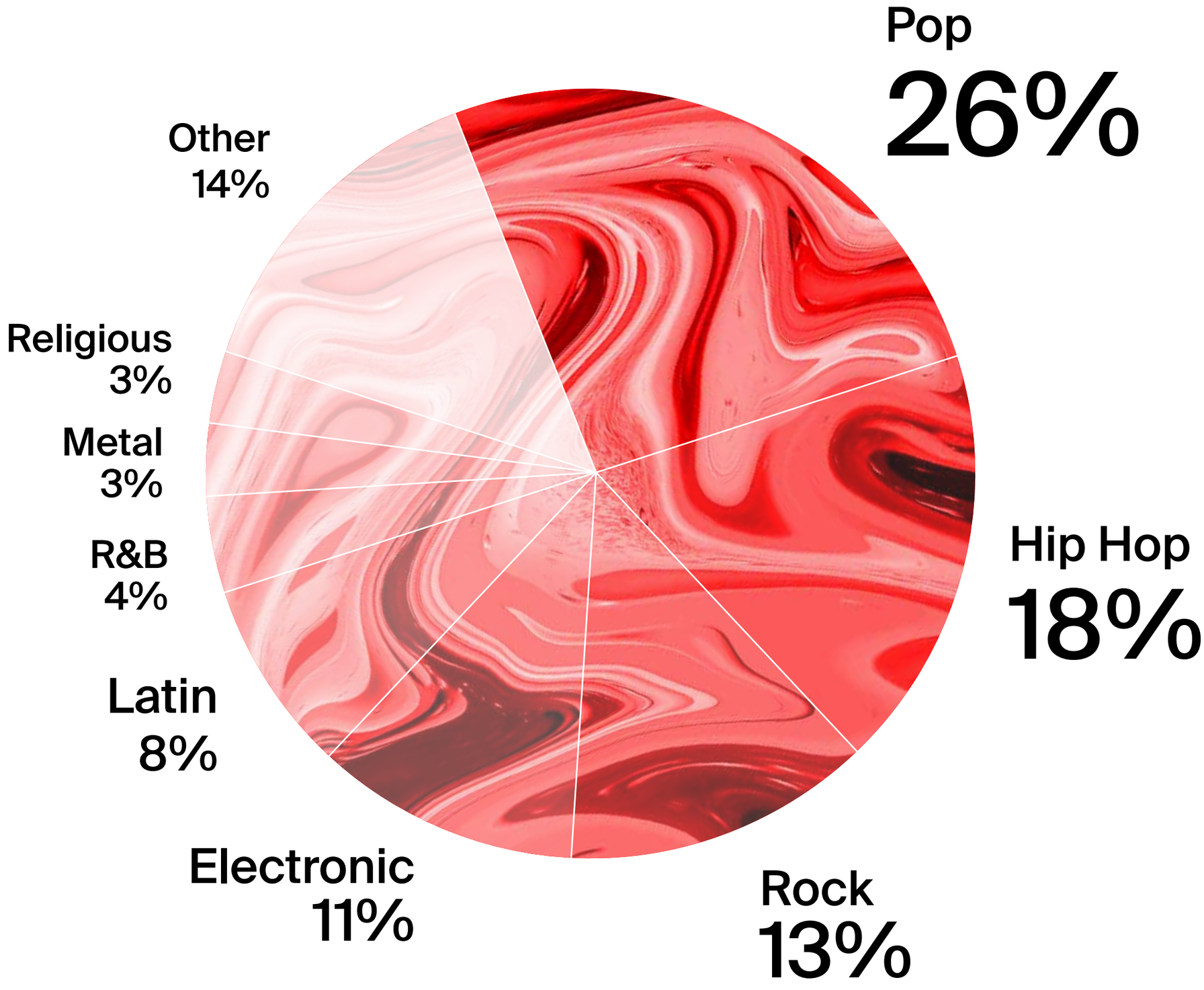
Top 5 tracks on Spotify

	Artist	Track	Streams	Genre
1	Olivia Rodrigo	drivers license	1.2B	Pop
2	The Kid LAROI.	Stay (with Justin Bieber)	1.2B	Pop
3	Lil Nas X	MONTERO (Call Me By Your Name)	1.2B	Hip Hop
4	Olivia Rodrigo	good 4 u	1.1B	Pop
5	Justin Bieber	Peaches	937M	Pop

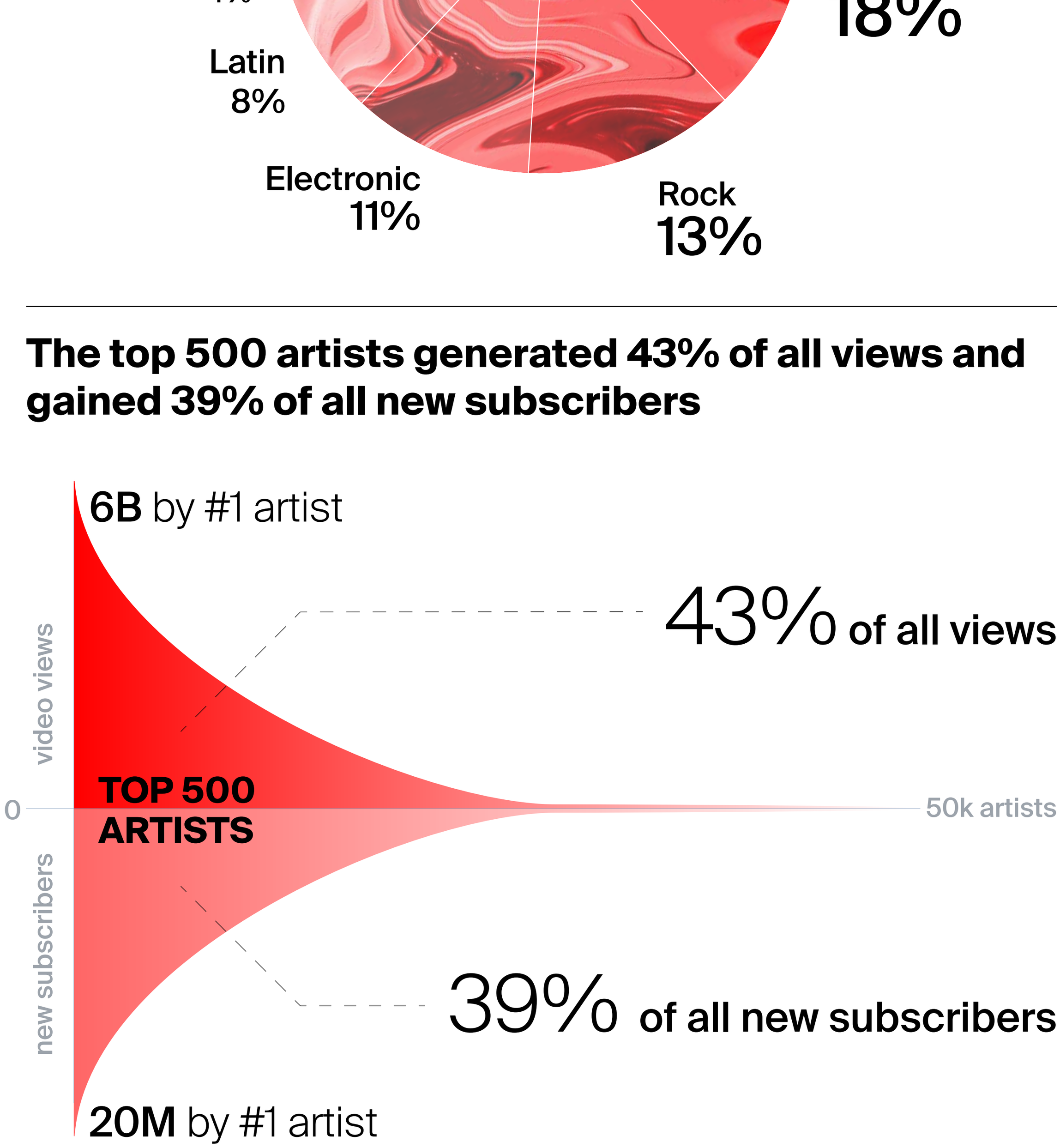
Includes only Spotify tracks released in 2021.

What's up on YouTube

Genre distribution of the top 50K artists



The top 500 artists generated 43% of all views and gained 39% of all new subscribers



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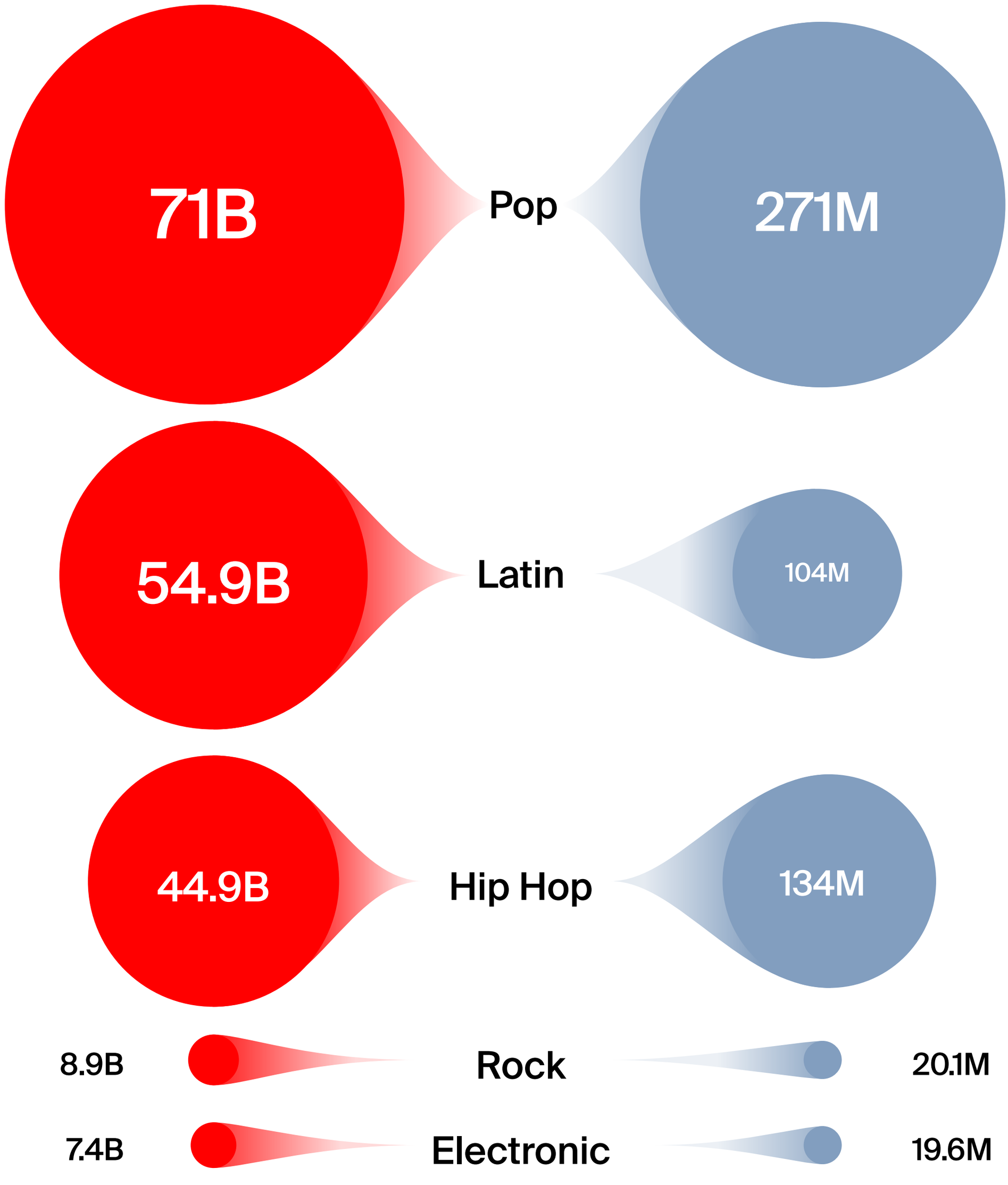
The winning genres

Pop, Latin and Hip Hop lead when it comes to engagement and fanbase increase.



Top 5 artists

K-Pop & Latin artists are outperforming the competition.

		Artist	YouTube subscribers	New subscribers	YouTube views	Genre
1		BLACKPINK	70.3M	15.9M	6.2B	Pop
2		BTS	61.6M	19.6M	4.6B	Pop
3		Bad Bunny	36.5M	6.2M	5B	Latin
4		Rauw Alejandro	10.2M	3.7M	3.1B	Latin
5		Bruno Mars	33.6M	4.8M	2.2B	Pop

The artists with the best YouTube performance in a one-year period.

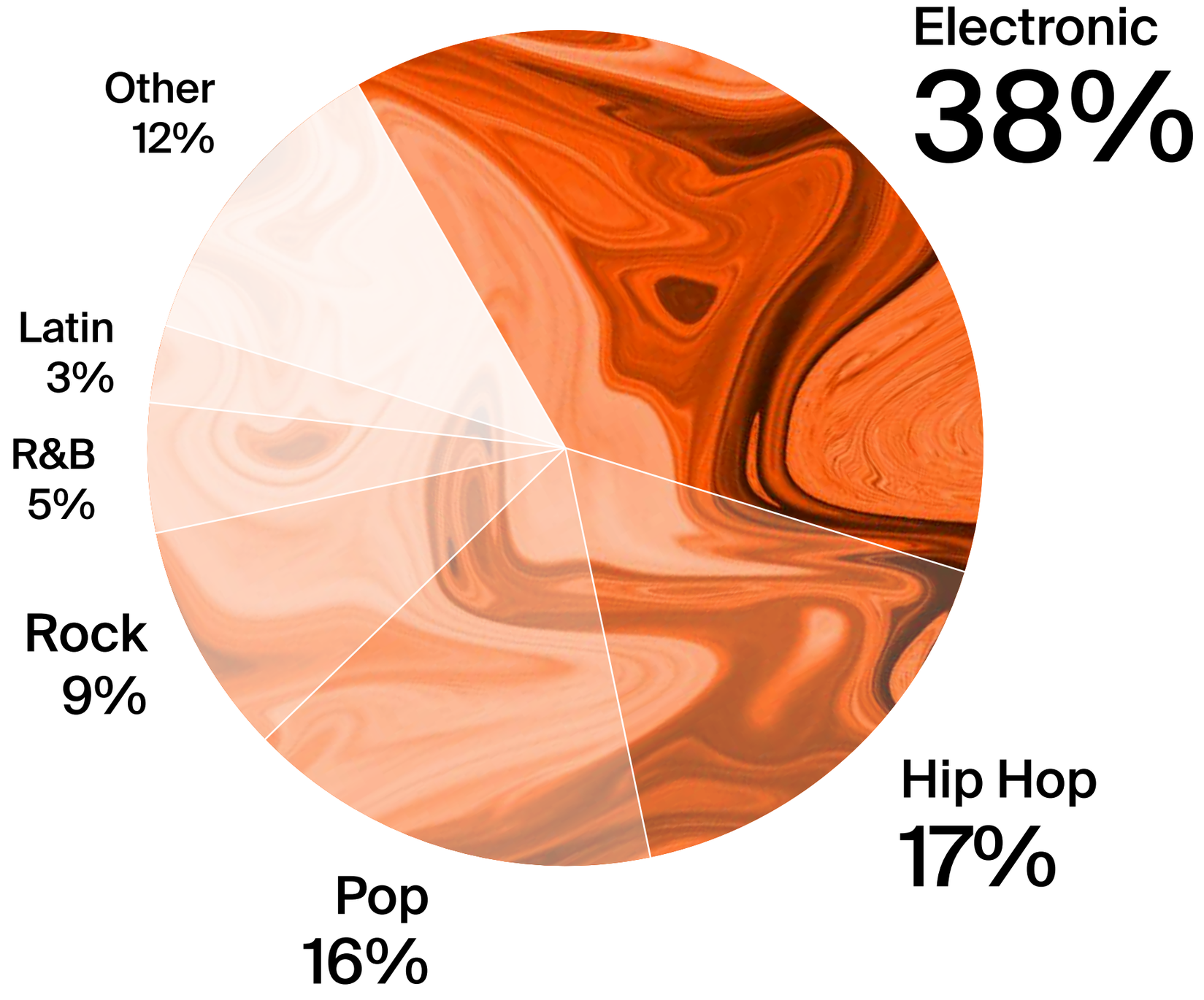
Top 5 YouTube videos

	Artist	Track	Total Views	Genre
1	Bad Bunny	Yonaguni *[Video Oficial]*	465M	Latin
2	Bruno Mars, Anderson .Paak, Silk Sonic	Leave the Door Open *[Official Video]*	448M	Pop
3	Bad Bunny x Rosalía	LA NOCHE DE ANOCHE *[Video Oficial]*	435M	Latin
4	Rauw Alejandro	Todo de Ti *[Video Oficial]*	430M	Latin
5	Natti Natasha x Becky G	Ram Pam Pam *[Official Video]*	420M	Latin

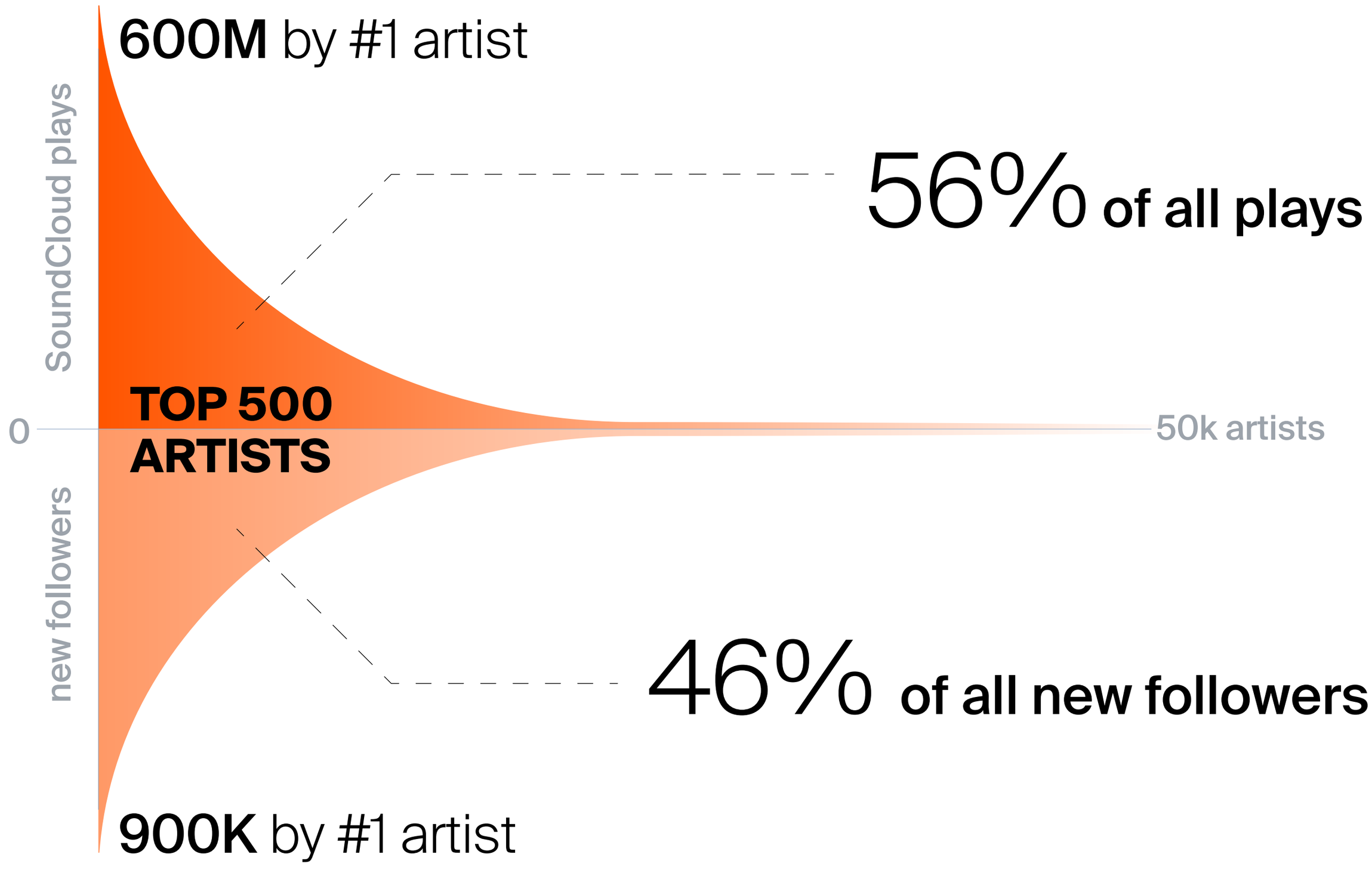
Includes only YouTube videos published in 2021.

What's up on SoundCloud

Genre distribution of the top 50K artists

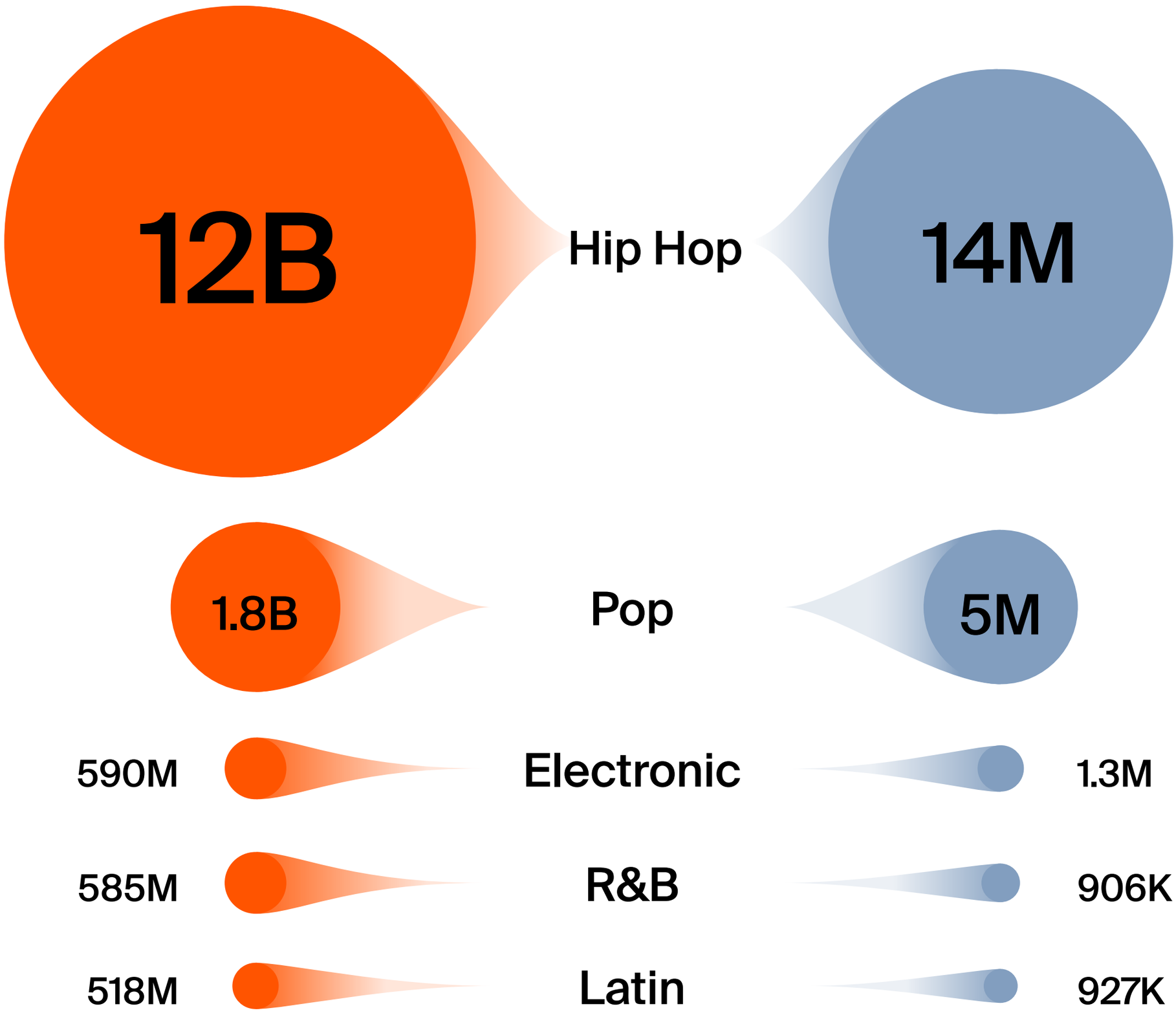


Top 500 artists generated 56% of all plays and gained 46% of all followers



The winning genres

There’s one winner and it’s Hip Hop, especially Trap.



VIBERATE

Top 5 artists

The average top performer on SoundCloud is American, male and makes Trap music. At #2, K-Pop sensation BTS are the exception that proves the rule.

		Artist	Followers	New followers	Plays	Genre
1		Polo G	856K	430K	400M	Hip Hop
2		BTS	4M	883K	388M	Pop
3		NBA YoungBoy	1.7M	390K	567M	Hip Hop
4		Lil Baby	1.1M	330K	323M	Hip Hop
5		Lil Durk	583K	273K	335M	Hip Hop

The artists with the best SoundCloud performance in a one-year period.

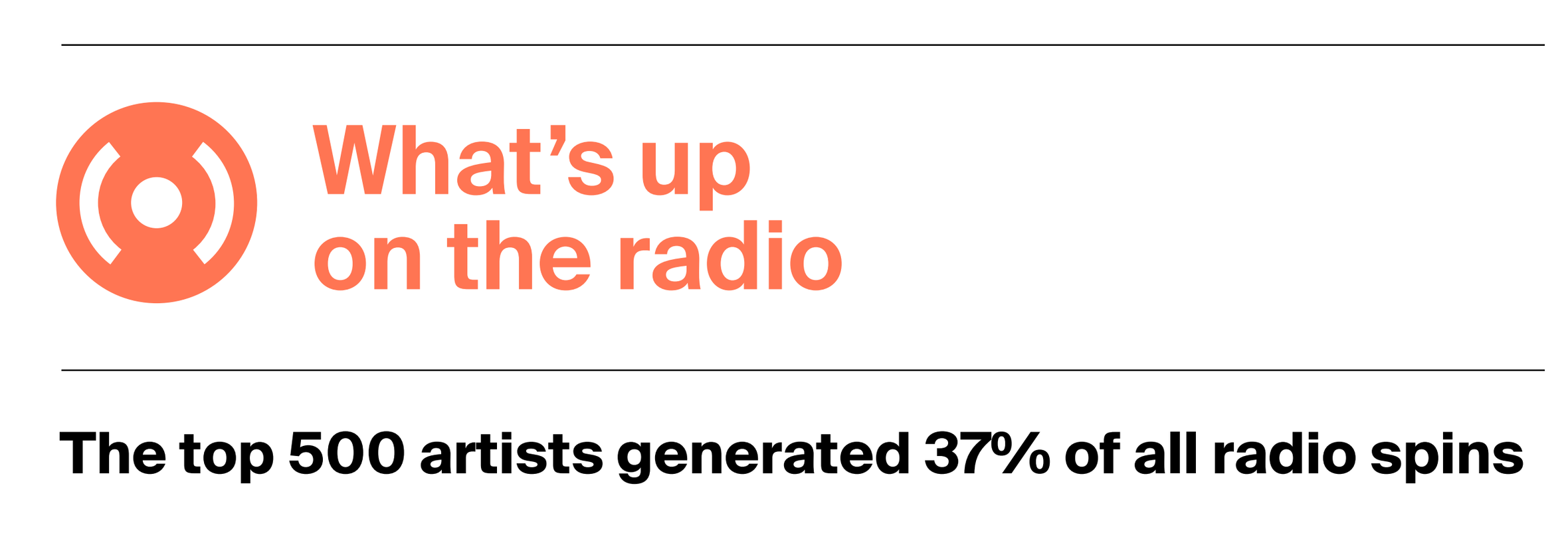
Top 5 tracks on SoundCloud

	Artist	Track	Total plays	Genre
1	Birdman (feat. Lil Wayne)	STUNNAMAN	86M	Hip Hop
2	Polo G	RAPSTAR	56M	Hip Hop
3	Rich Gang (feat. Young Thug)	Blue Emerald	49M	Hip Hop
4	Lil Tjay	Calling My Phone	45M	Hip Hop
5	Sleepy Hallow	2055	33M	Hip Hop

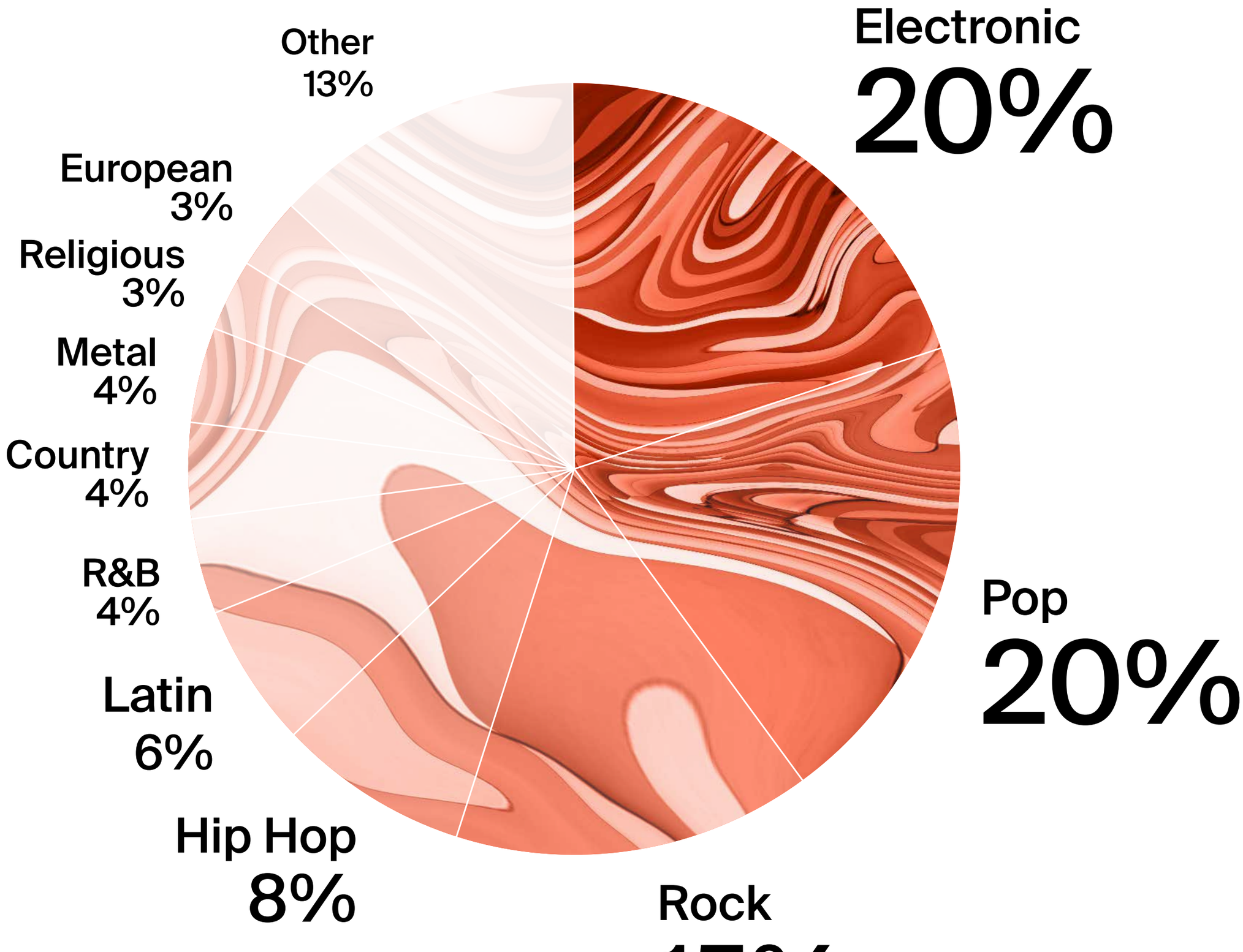
Includes only SoundCloud tracks published in 2021.

What's up on the radio

The top 500 artists generated 37% of all radio spins



Genre distribution of the top 50K artists

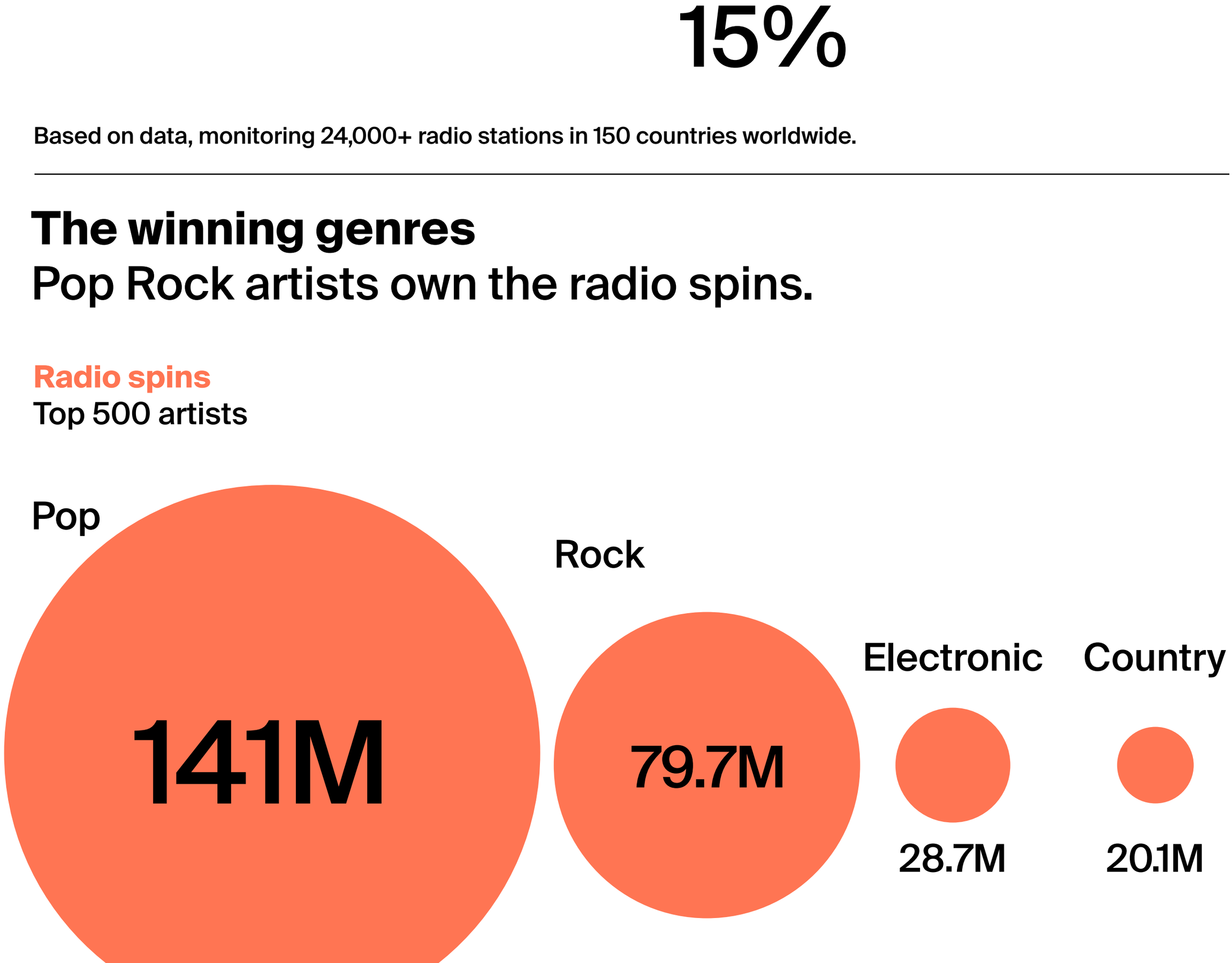


Based on data, monitoring 24,000+ radio stations in 150 countries worldwide.

The winning genres

Pop Rock artists own the radio spins.

Radio spins
Top 500 artists



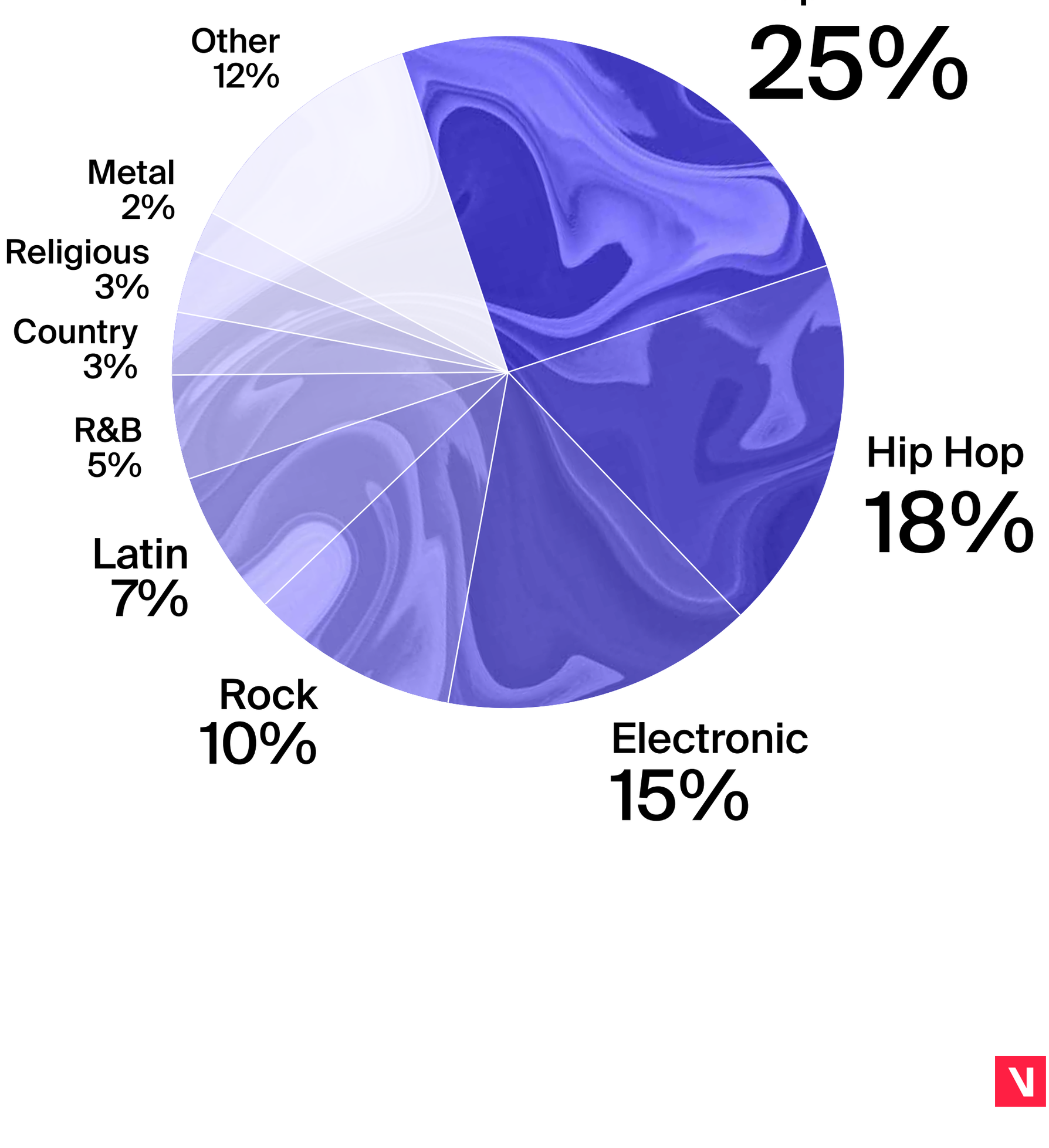
Top 5 artists

		Artist	Radio spins	Genre
1		Ed Sheeran	4.3M	Pop
2		Dua Lipa	4.2M	Pop
3		The Weeknd	3M	Pop
4		Queen	2.9M	Rock
5		Maroon 5	2.8M	Pop

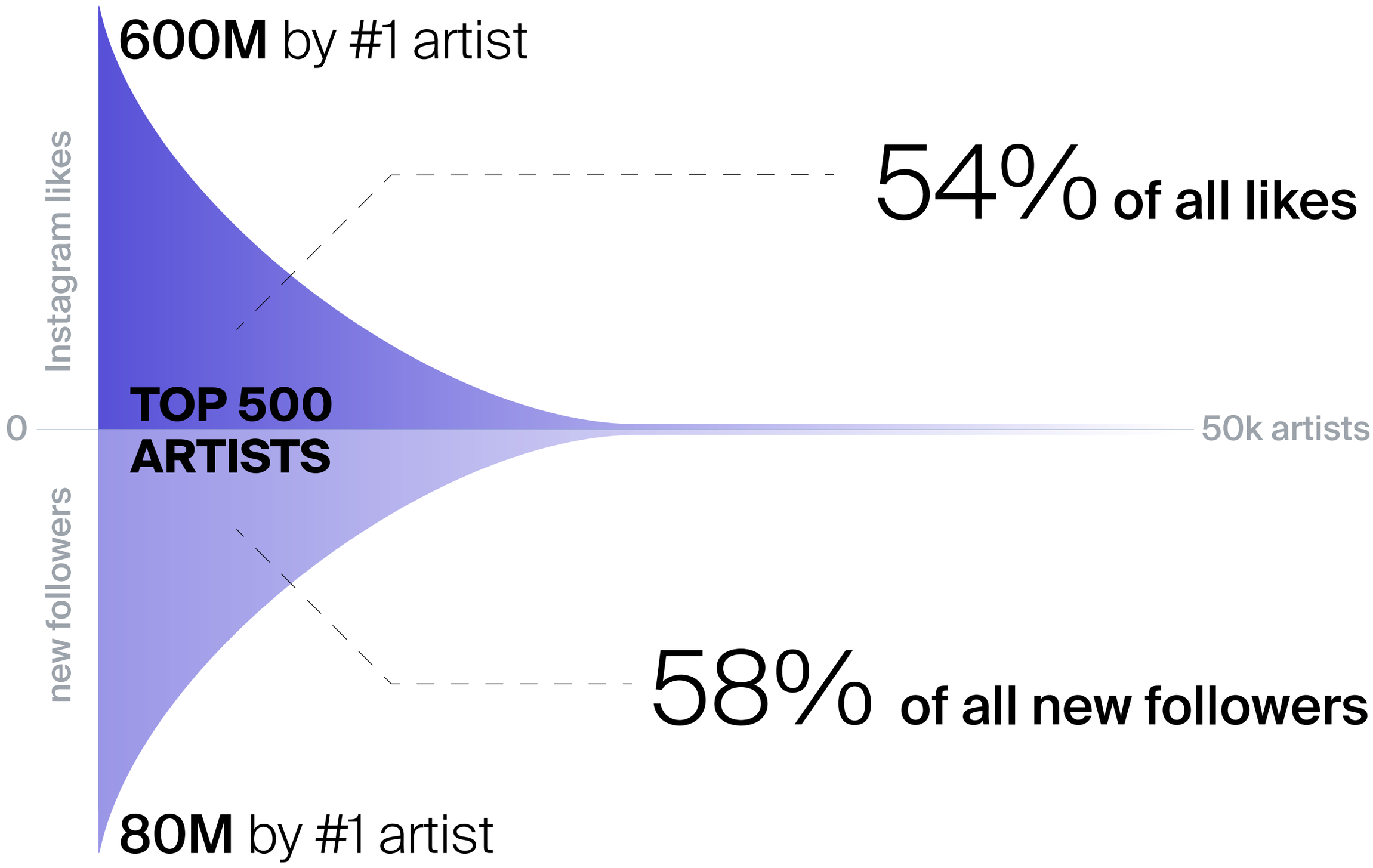
The artists with the best radio airplay performance in a one-year period.

What's up on Instagram

Genre distribution of the top 50K artists

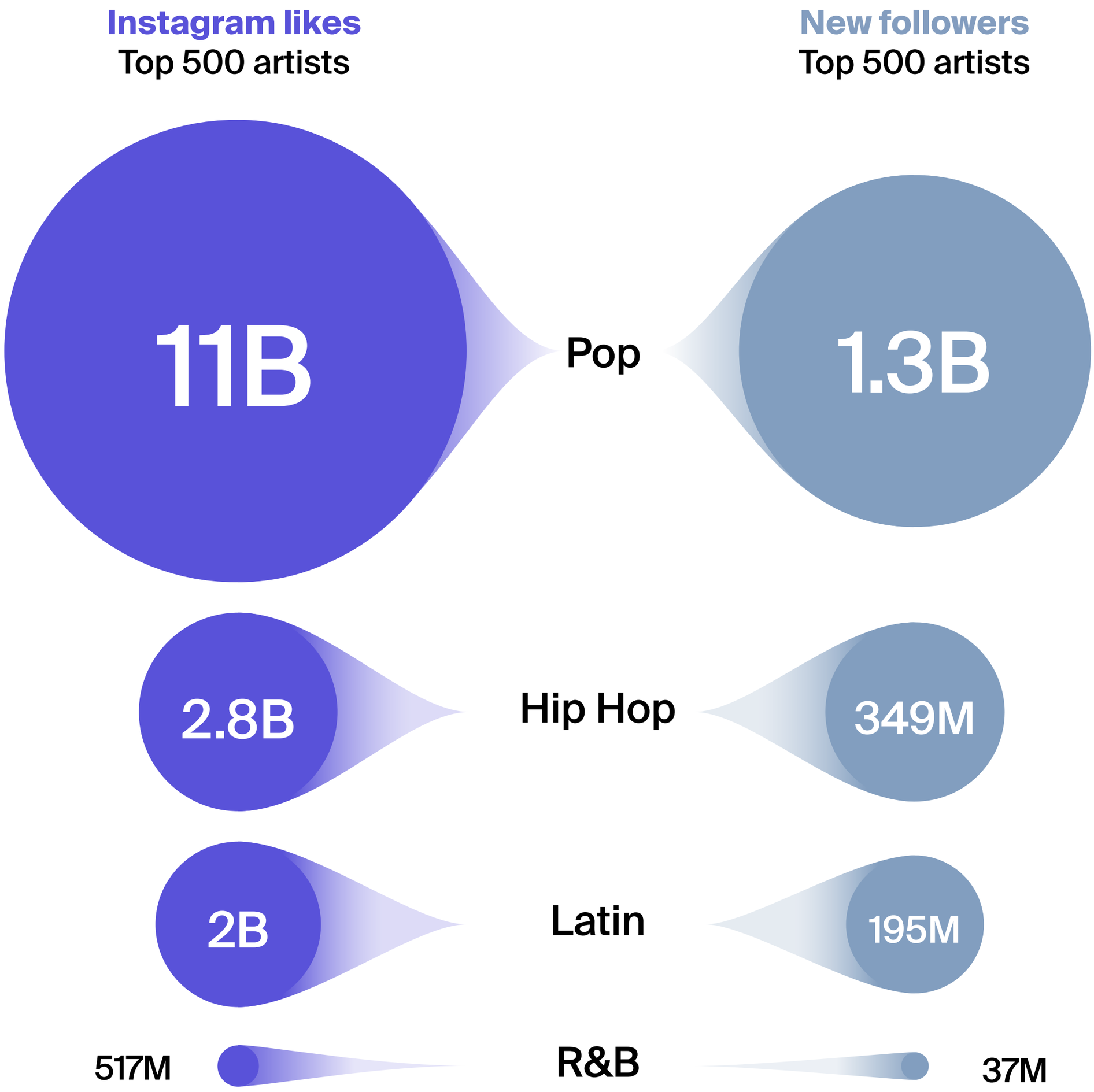


The top 500 artists generated 54% of all likes and gained 58% of all followers



The winning genres

Pop artists prosper on Instagram.



Top 5 artists

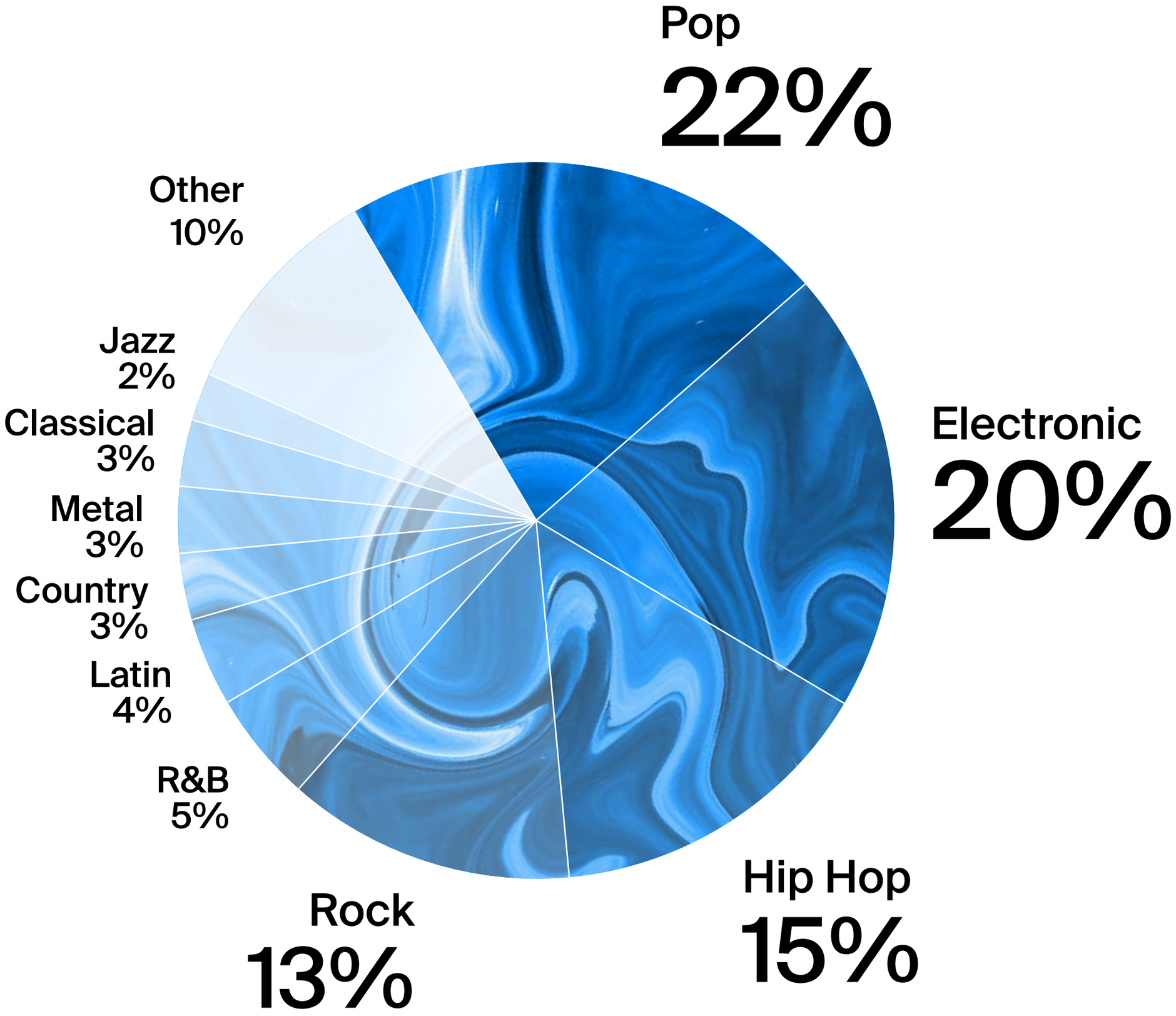
Watch your throne, Justin Bieber – the average top artist on Instagram is female, American and makes Mainstream Pop.

	Artist	Instagram followers	New followers	Instagram likes	Genre
1	Justin Bieber	207.7M	55M	506.6M	Pop
2	Ariana Grande	279.7M	71.2M	293.5M	Pop
3	Selena Gomez	278.2M	82.1M	135M	Pop
4	Billie Eilish	97.2M	25.4M	606.8M	Pop
5	Beyonce	222.5M	65.5M	96.6M	Pop

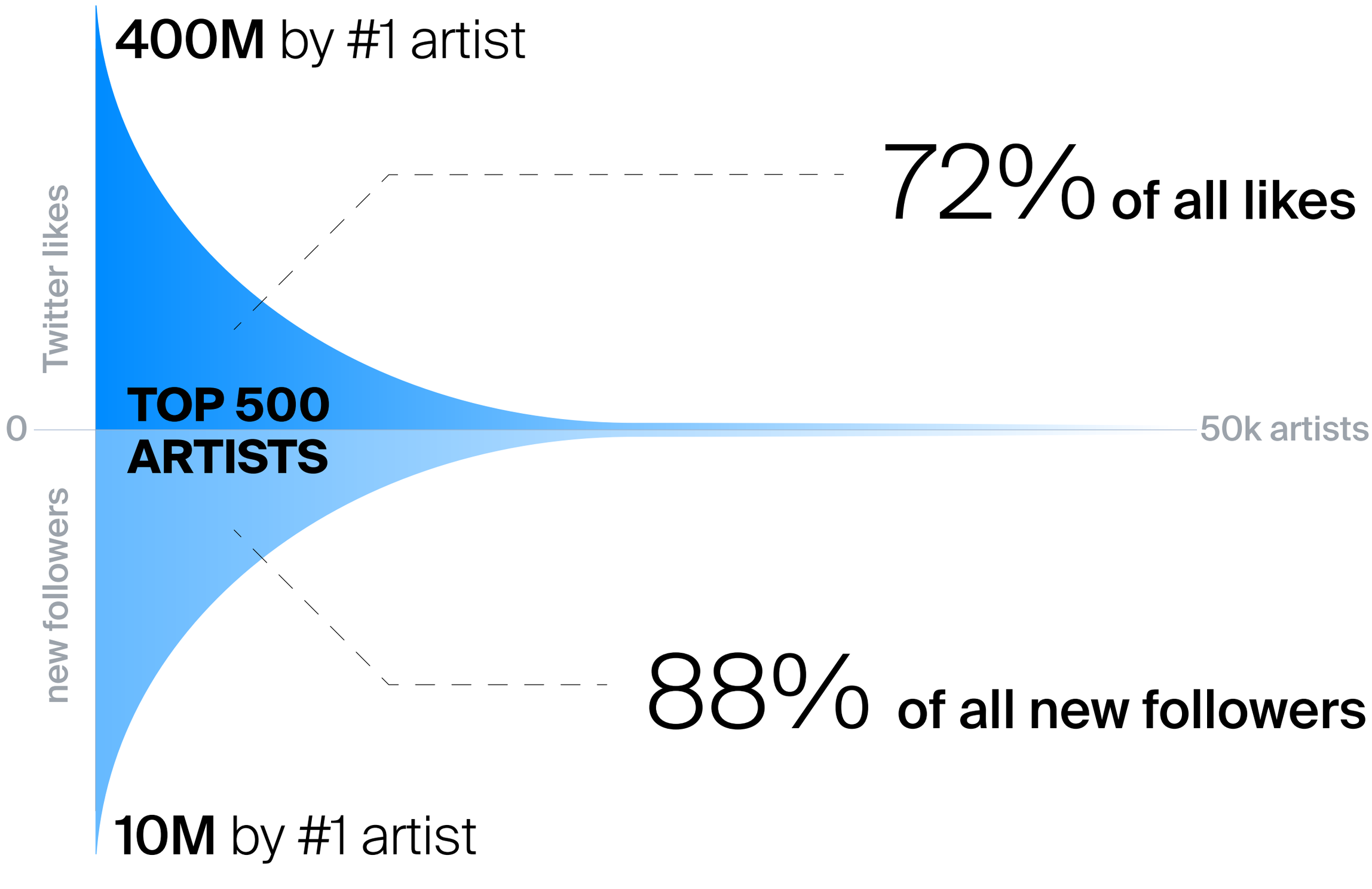
The artists with the best Instagram performance in a one-year period.

What's up on Twitter

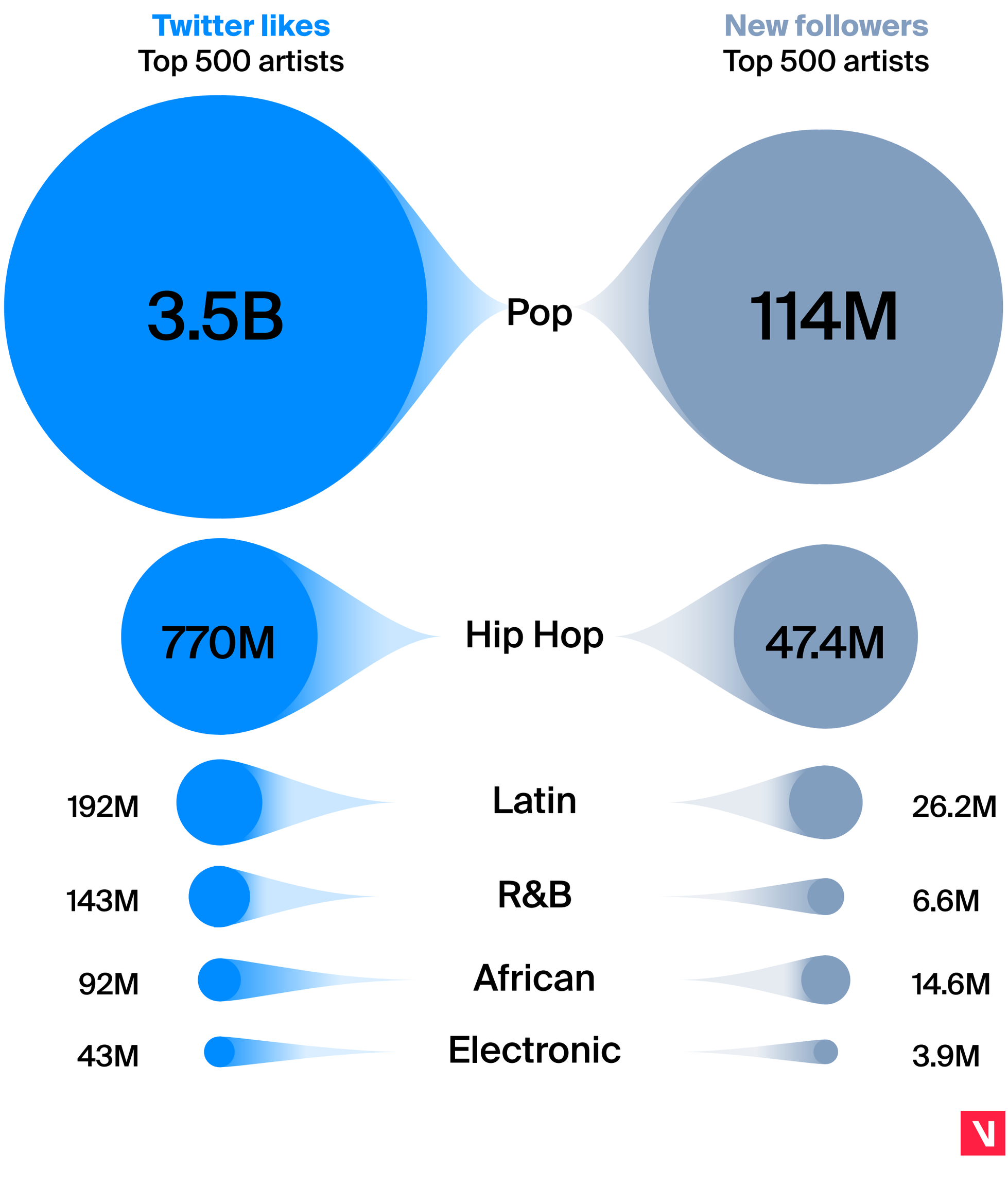
Genre distribution of the top 50K artists



The top 500 artists generated 72% of all likes and gained 88% of all followers



The winning genres



Top 5 artists

It’s all about K-Pop. Their extremely engaged fanbase makes South Korean popstars the best-performing artists on Twitter. Crashing the party are Ariana Grande at #7 and Lil Nas X at #8.

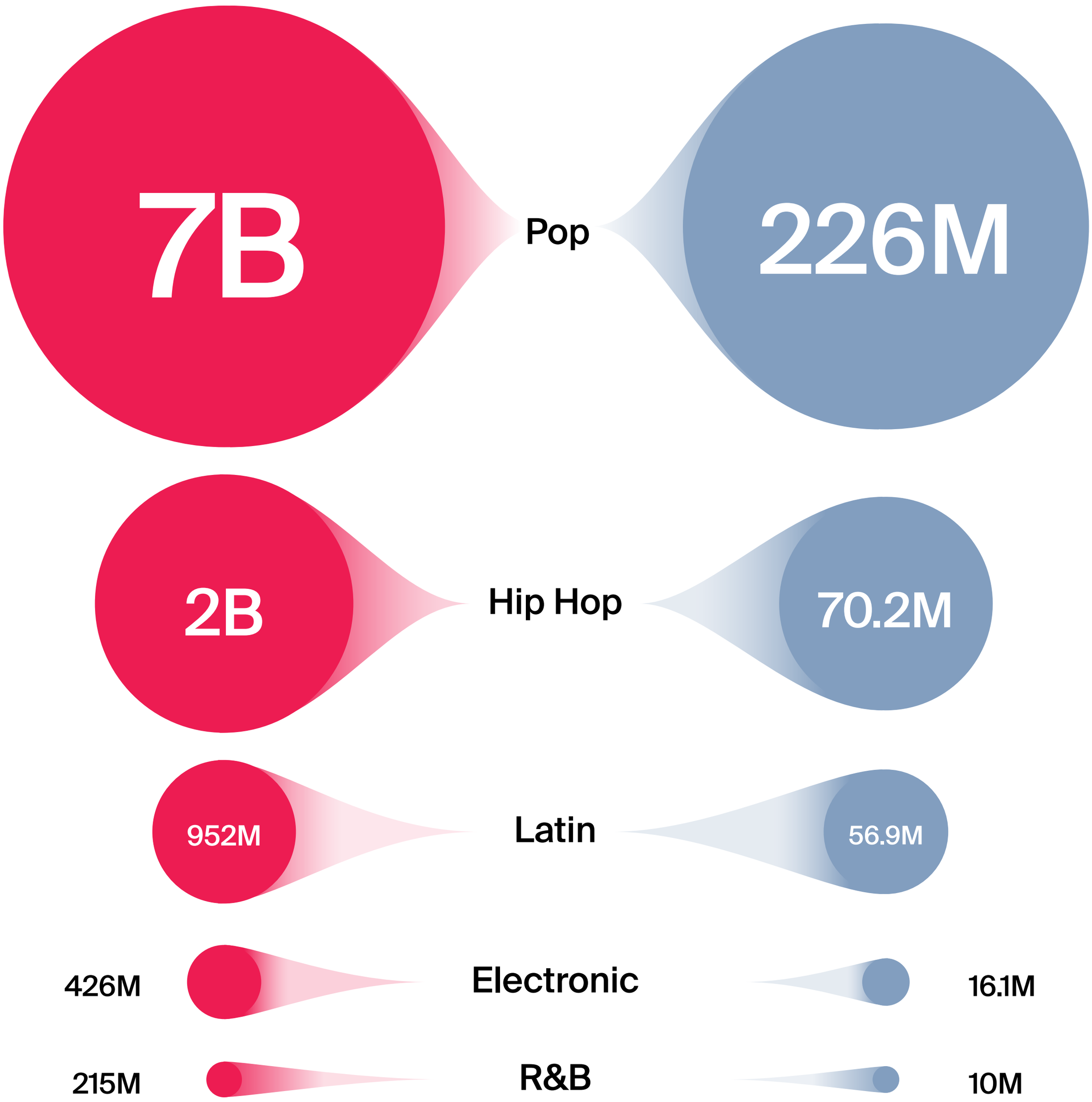
	Artist	Twitter followers	New followers	Twitter likes	Genre
1	BTS	36.8M	10M	383M	Pop
2	Treasure	2.7M	1.5M	192M	Pop
3	SEVENTEEN	8.2M	2M	175M	Pop
4	Ateez	3M	1.1M	140M	Pop
5	Stray Kids	6.8M	2.8M	115M	Pop

The artists with the best Twitter performance in a one-year period.

What’s up on TikTok

Genre distribution of the top 50K artists

The winning genres



TikTok engagement and fanbase growth were analyzed in the second half of 2021.

Top 5 artists

		Artist	TikTok followers	TikTok likes and views	Genre
1		Kim Loaiza	56.3M	846M	Pop/Latin
2		Lil Nas X	26.6M	396M	Hip Hop
3		Oliver Tree	11.9M	235M	Pop
4		BTS	44.4M	82.8M	Pop
5		Lizzo	19.9M	242M	Pop

The artists with the best TikTok performance in the second half of 2021.

2021 BEATPORT REVIEW

Let’s see which genres, labels, artists and tracks are the winners on Beatport, the online music platform whose customers are “DJs in some way, shape or form”.

Top 10 Beatport genres

Rank in 2021	Compared to 2020	Beatport genre
1	→ 0	Tech House
2	↑ 1	Melodic House & Techno
3	↓ 1	House
4	→ 0	Techno (Peak Time / Driving)
5	→ 0	Drum & Bass
6	→ 0	Funky / Groove / Jackin’ House
7	↑ 4	Dance / Electro Pop
8	↓ 1	Deep House
9	↓ 1	Progressive House
10	↑ 2	Nu Disco / Disco

The genre ranking is based on the number of times that tracks of a certain genre entered the overall Beatport Top 100 chart and the position of those tracks on the chart.

30 hottest labels

These are the labels that improved their Beatport performance the most in one year. **Anjunadeep**, which was #3 in 2020, took the lead in 2021. **Sink or Swim** is #2 (#30 in 2020) and **Ministry of Sound Recordings** is #3 (didn't make the top 30 list in 2020).

30 hottest labels by genre

Tech House
Melodic House & Techno
Drum & Bass
House
Funky / Groove / Jackin' House
Dance / Electro Pop
Techno (Peak Time / Driving)

10 hottest labels

	Label	Beatport genre
1	Anjunadeep	Melodic House & Techno
2	Sink or Swim	Tech House
3	Ministry of Sound Recordings	Dance / Electro Pop
4	Ultra	Tech House
5	Insomniac Records	Tech House
6	Critical Music	Drum & Bass
7	Black Book Records	Tech House
8	Glasgow Underground	Tech House
9	Repopulate Mars	Tech House
10	THRIVE MUSIC	Tech House

The score of the label is determined by its tracks on the genre charts up to 7 years ago.
Tracks are weighted – those that entered the charts in the recent months influence the final score the most.

Top 5 Tech House, House, Techno and Drum & Bass artists

These are the artists who've increased their Beatport score within their genres the most.

Tech House

- #1 ARTBAT
- #2 Chris Lake
- #3 Cloonee
- #4 FISHER
- #5 SIDEPIECE

House

- #1 John Summit
- #2 Block & Crown
- #3 Vintage Culture
- #4 CamelPhat
- #5 BISCITS

Techno

- #1 Space 92
- #2 Fabrication
- #3 Charlotte de Witte
- #4 UMEK
- #5 Boris Brejcha

Drum & Bass

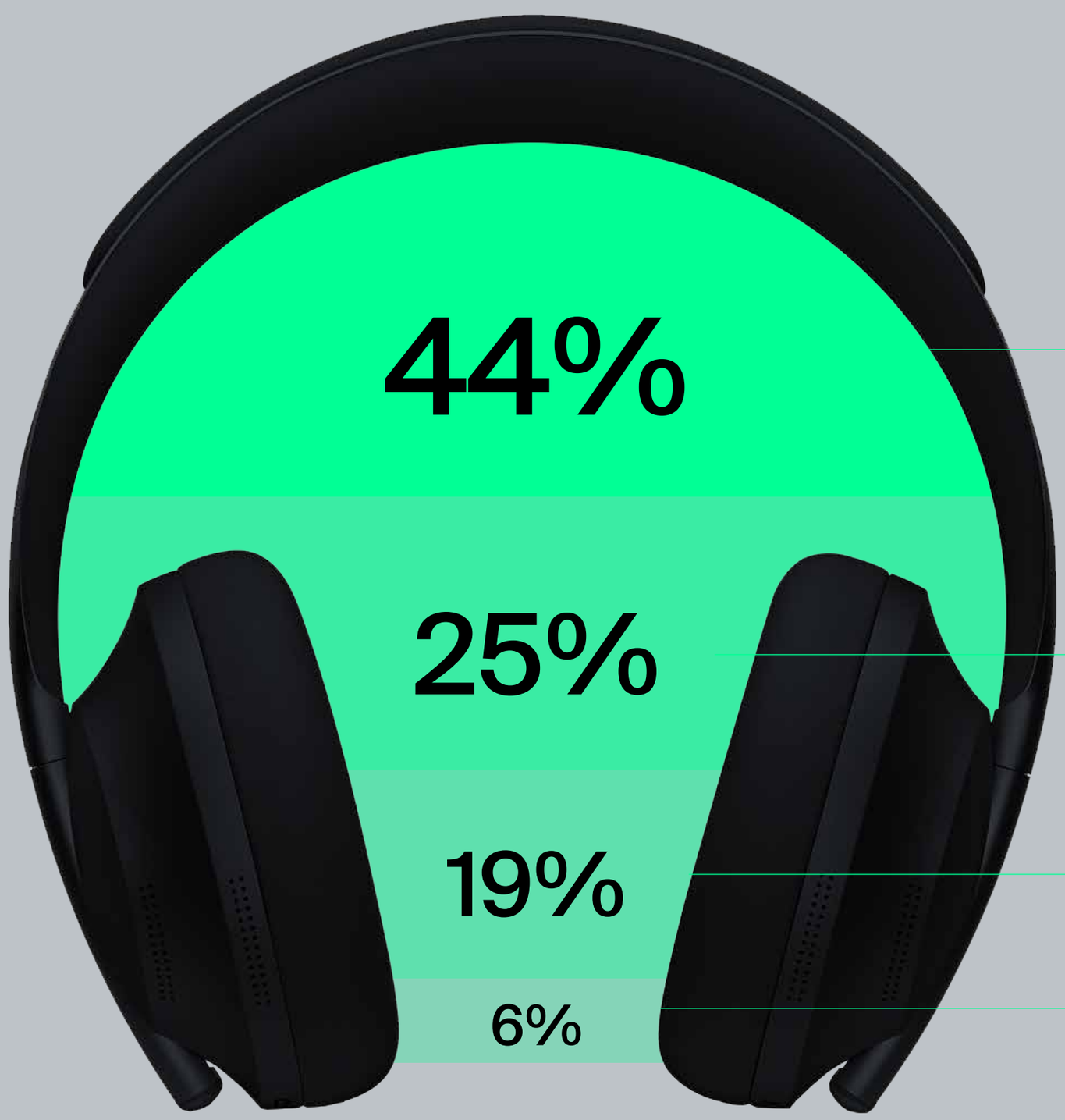
- #1 Break
- #2 Bou
- #3 Bladerunner
- #4 Sub Focus
- #5 Dimension

Beatport score

Artist photos sourced from their official social media channels

An artist's score is determined by their tracks on the genre charts up to 7 years ago. Tracks are weighted – those that entered the charts in the recent months influence the final score the most.

4 genres rule the top 100 tracks



Top 5 tracks on Beatport

	Track	Artists	Label	Genre
1	Set U Free (Extended Mix)	Guz	Sink or Swim	Tech House
2	Make Me Feel (Original Mix)	John Summit	Insomniac Records	Tech House
3	Sun Goes Down (Extended Mix)	Cloonee	Big Beat Records	Tech House
4	It Is What It Is feat. Elise LeGrow (Club Mix)	VintageCulture, Elise LeGrow	Defected	House
5	Pump the Brakes (Extended Mix)	Dom Dolla	Sweat It Out	Tech House

The top 100 tracks in 2021 are those that charted the highest on the Beatport genre chart for the longest period of time (even if released before January 2021). The genre coefficient levels out the irregularities that would occur as a consequence of different genre charts indicating a different number of downloads.

2021 BREAKTHROUGHS & ARTISTS TO WATCH

TikTok is the new SoundCloud & Spotify is the sieve separating viral luck from career potential.

Some artists went from uploading unpolished tracks to TikTok to getting a million Spotify streams, striking business deals in a matter of months. Here's who resonated with listeners the most in terms of streams, views and likes. Bonus: rising artists to watch out for in 2022.

Artists were selected according to the criteria of engagement across social media and music channels, the annual difference in Viberate rank, and "hotness" (recent notable upward trend on at least one music channel).

POP

Olivia Rodrigo

Mainstream Pop

Rank 7,965 → 29

5.1B streams

1.4B views

350M likes + plays

Glass Animals

Indie Pop / Indie Rock

Rank 1,617 → 173

1.2B streams

45M views

51.6M likes + plays

AURORA

Indie Pop

Rank 2,134 → 516

470M streams

37.5M views

249M likes + plays

Names to watch in 2022

PinkPantheress

Indie Pop

270M streams

BoyWithUke

Indie Pop

192M streams

Will Paquin

Indie Pop

18M streams

LATIN

L-Gante

Cumbia / Reggaeton

Rank 10,242 → 291

426M streams

931M views

18.1M likes

Avine Vinny

Forró

Rank 2,316 → 557

119M streams

105M views

1.7M likes

Junior H

Regional Mexican Music
Alternative Hip Hop

Rank 2,179 → 912

457M streams

43M views

1.5M likes

Names to watch in 2022

Tokischa

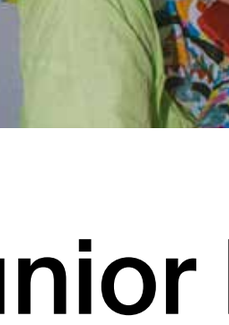
Reggaeton

83M likes + plays

DJ TAO

Reggaeton

125M likes + plays



Ingrid Contreras

Regional Mexican Music

10M likes + plays

L-Gante's photo by Elebph. Other artist photos sourced from their official social media channels.

ROCK

Måneskin

Pop Rock
Alternative Rock

Rank 2,510 → 94

2B streams
213M views
30.2M likes

Mitski

Alternative Rock
Indie Rock

Rank 5,365 → 639

593M streams
8.4M views
14K likes

Tom Grennan

Indie Rock / Indie Pop

Rank 6,538 → 942

427M streams
102M views
824K likes

Names to watch in 2022

Crawlers

Alternative Rock

8M streams

Wet Leg

Indie Rock

5M streams

Sam Fender

Indie Rock

116M streams

HIP HOP

Masked Wolf

Contemporary Hip Hop

Rank 10,238 → 4901

957M streams
449M views
16.3M plays

CKay

Alternative Hip Hop
Afrobeat

Rank 11,301 → 63

569M streams
363M views
4M plays

Eladio Carrion

Trap / Reggaeton

Rank 1,106 → 351

343M streams
410M views
13.2M plays

Names to watch in 2022

Central Cee

Alternative Hip Hop

440M streams

Orelsan

Contemporary Hip Hop

130M streams

SODA LUV

Trap

73M streams

Soda Luv's photo by Kris Soldatova, Mitski's photo by Ebru Yildiz. Other artist photos sourced from their official social media channels.

R&B

Giveon

Neo Soul
Contemporary R&B

Rank 1,182 → 326

2B streams
158M views
10M likes

Pink Sweat$

Contemporary R&B

Rank 1,067→ 743

495M streams
294M views
2.2M likes

Chase Atlantic

Contemporary R&B

Rank 1,966 → 550

484M streams
66M views
2.4M likes

Names to watch in 2022

amaarae

Contemporary R&B
Afrobeat

97M streams

Steve Lacy

Contemporary R&B
Neo Soul

327M streams

Bruno Major

Contemporary R&B

171M streams

ELECTRONIC

Kungs

Dance

Rank 1,891 → 891

1.1B streams
43M views
4.4M plays

Sickick

Trap / Future Bass
Contemporary R&B

Rank 2,754 → 737

55M streams
215M views
5.4M plays

Imanbek

Dance

Rank 5,115 → 1,211

831M streams
8.4M views
3.1K plays

Names to watch in 2022

Mareux

Other Electronic Music

14M streams

Ape Drums

Dance / Dancehall

39M streams

Acraze

Dance / Trap / Future Bass

91M streams

Ape Drums' photo by Jay Tovar. Other artist photos sourced from their official social media channels.

STREAMING VS. RADIO AIRPLAY

80%

JUNIOR

80 of the 100 most streamed artists have careers shorter than 15 years

$688K

estimated average monthly royalty payout* for the 100 most-streamed Spotify artists

*At $0.0032 per stream.

64%

Senior

64 of the 100 most spinned artists have careers longer than 15 years

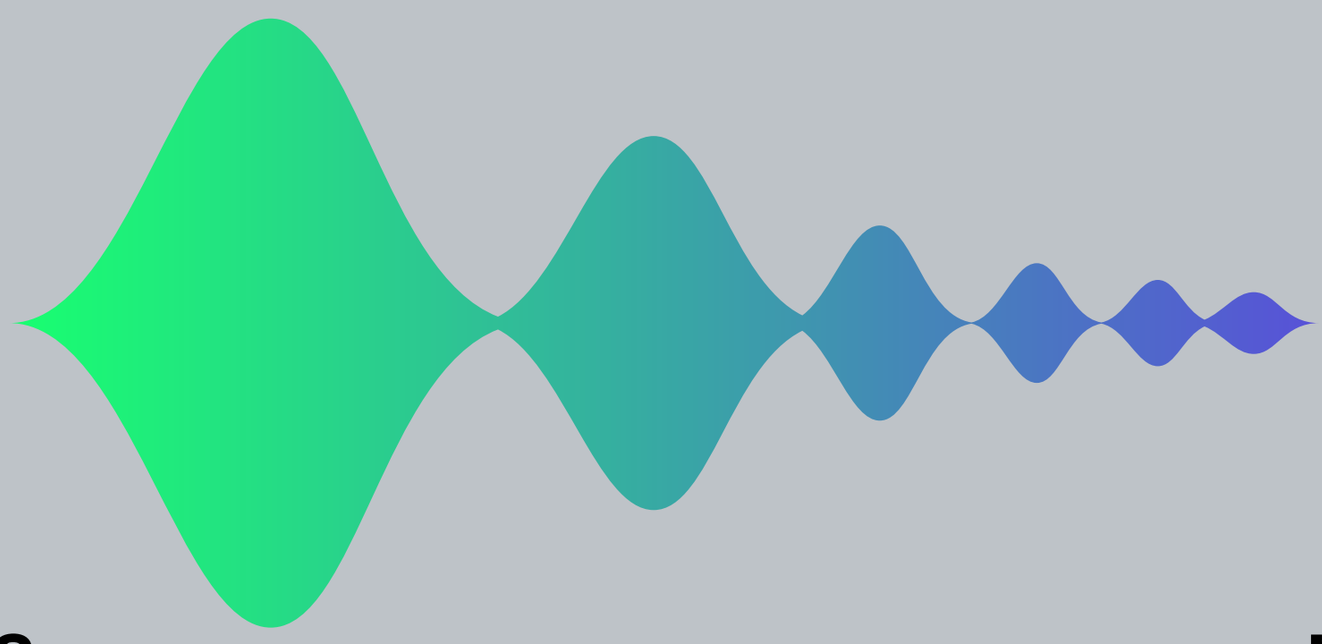
$186K

estimated average monthly royalty payout for the 100 most-spinned artists

*At $0.0012 per stream (U.S. commercial radio station tariff); royalties are split between songwriters and their publishers.

1126B

Spotify streams
by the top 50K artists



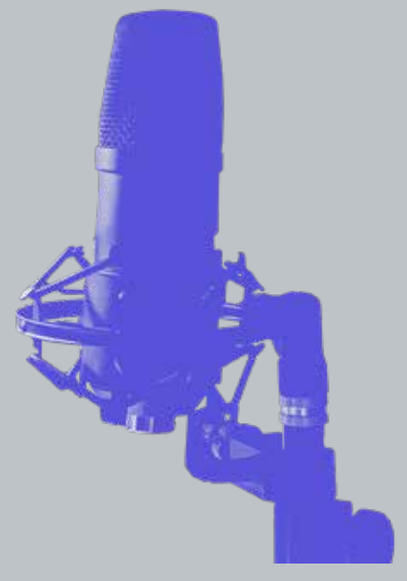
~1B

radio spins
by the top 50K artists

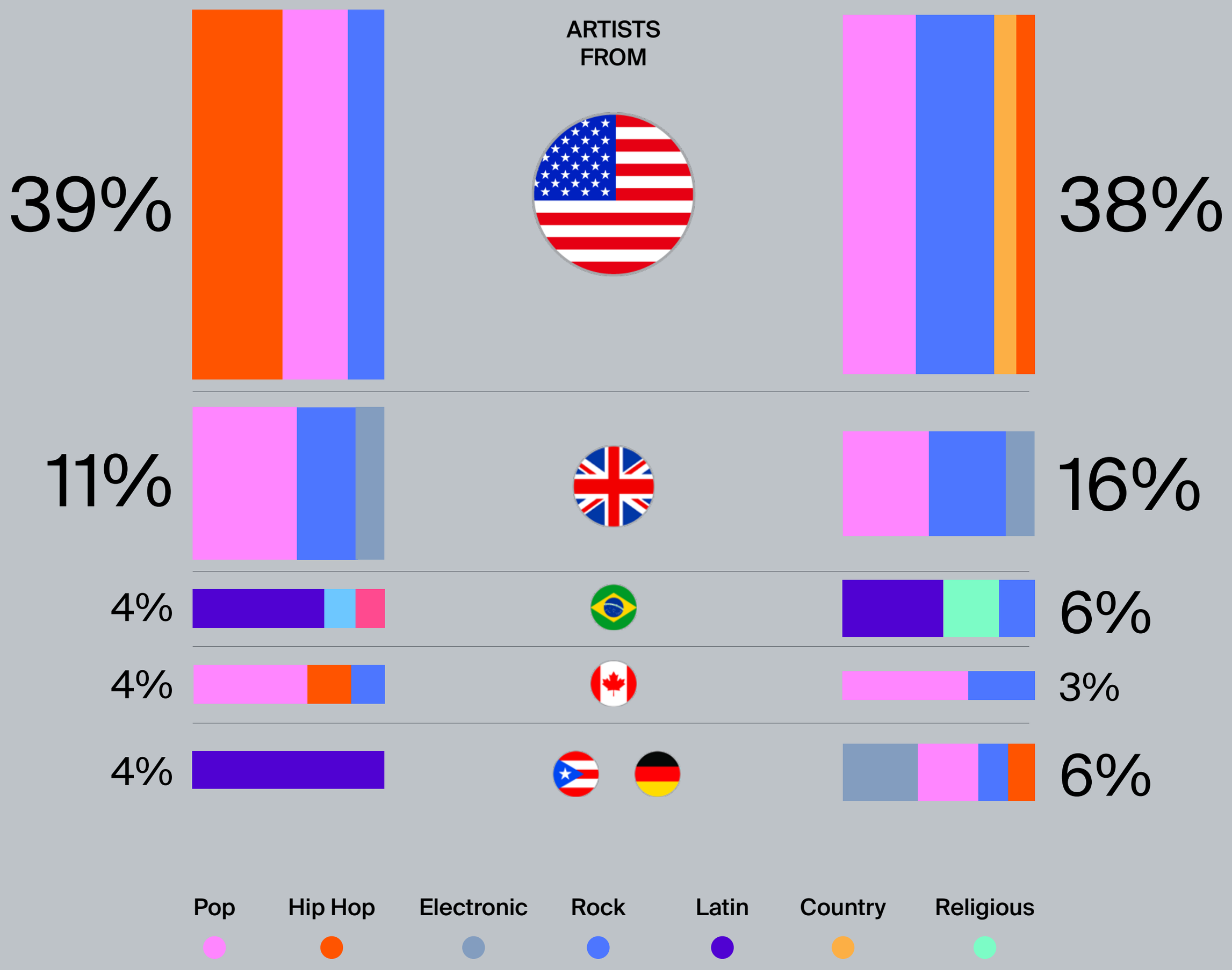
Top 5 markets

This is where the most streamed and spinned artists come from. Hip Hop acts are raking in the streams but are snubbed on the radio, while Pop and Rock artists have high numbers on both channels.

STREAMS



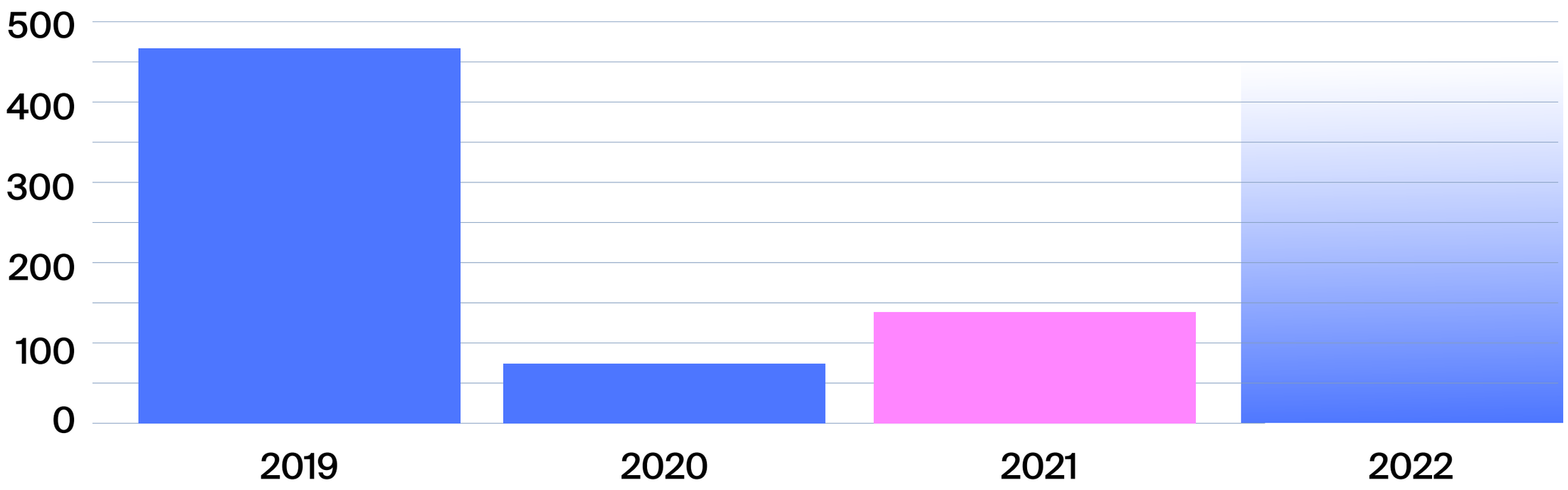
RADIO SPINS



FESTIVAL SEASON: WHAT TO EXPECT

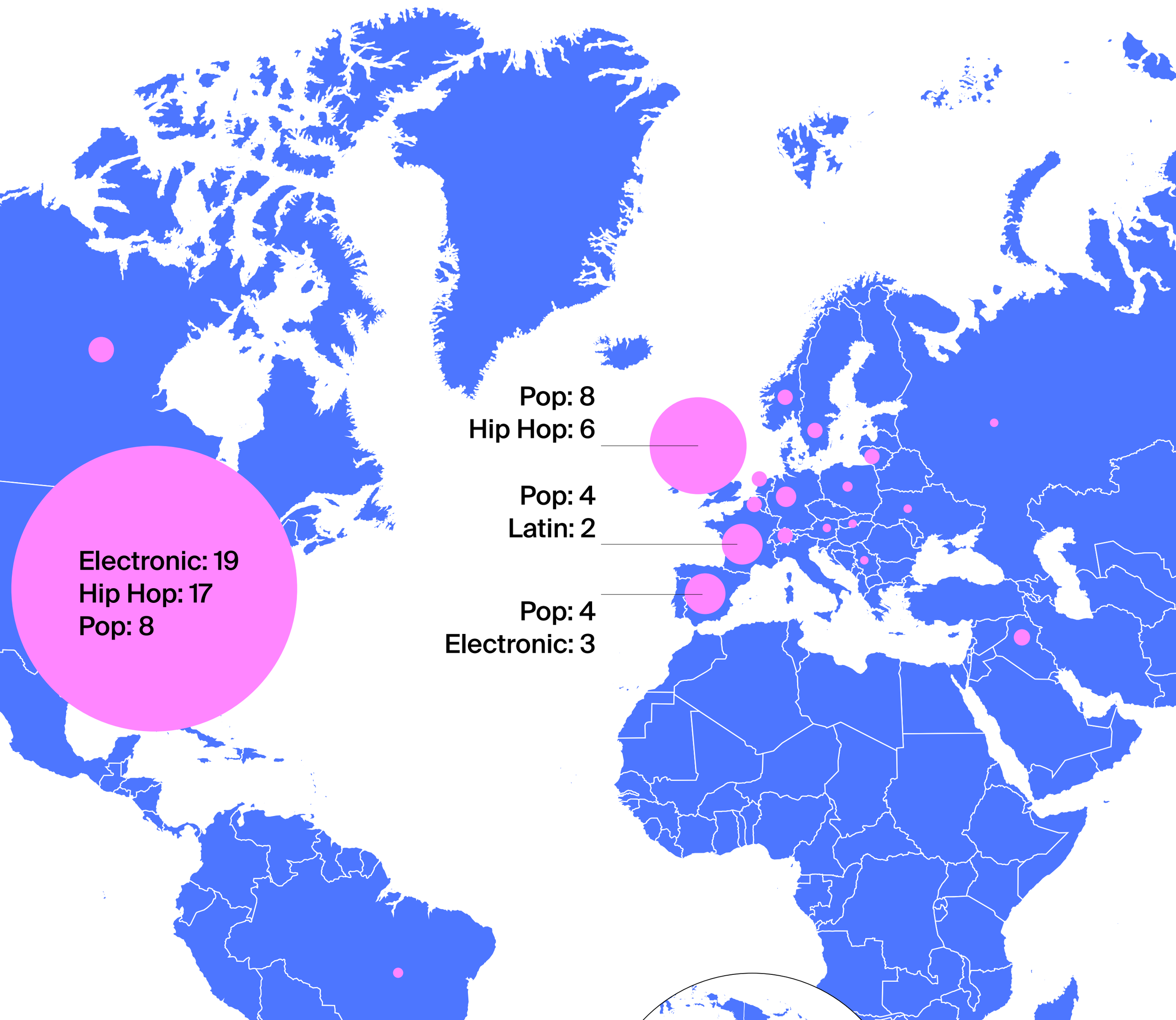
We looked into the top 500 festivals to see how many took place in 2021, where were the hotspots, and what was the genre landscape.

Active festivals by year



2021 festival hotspots

This is where the festivals took place in 2021.



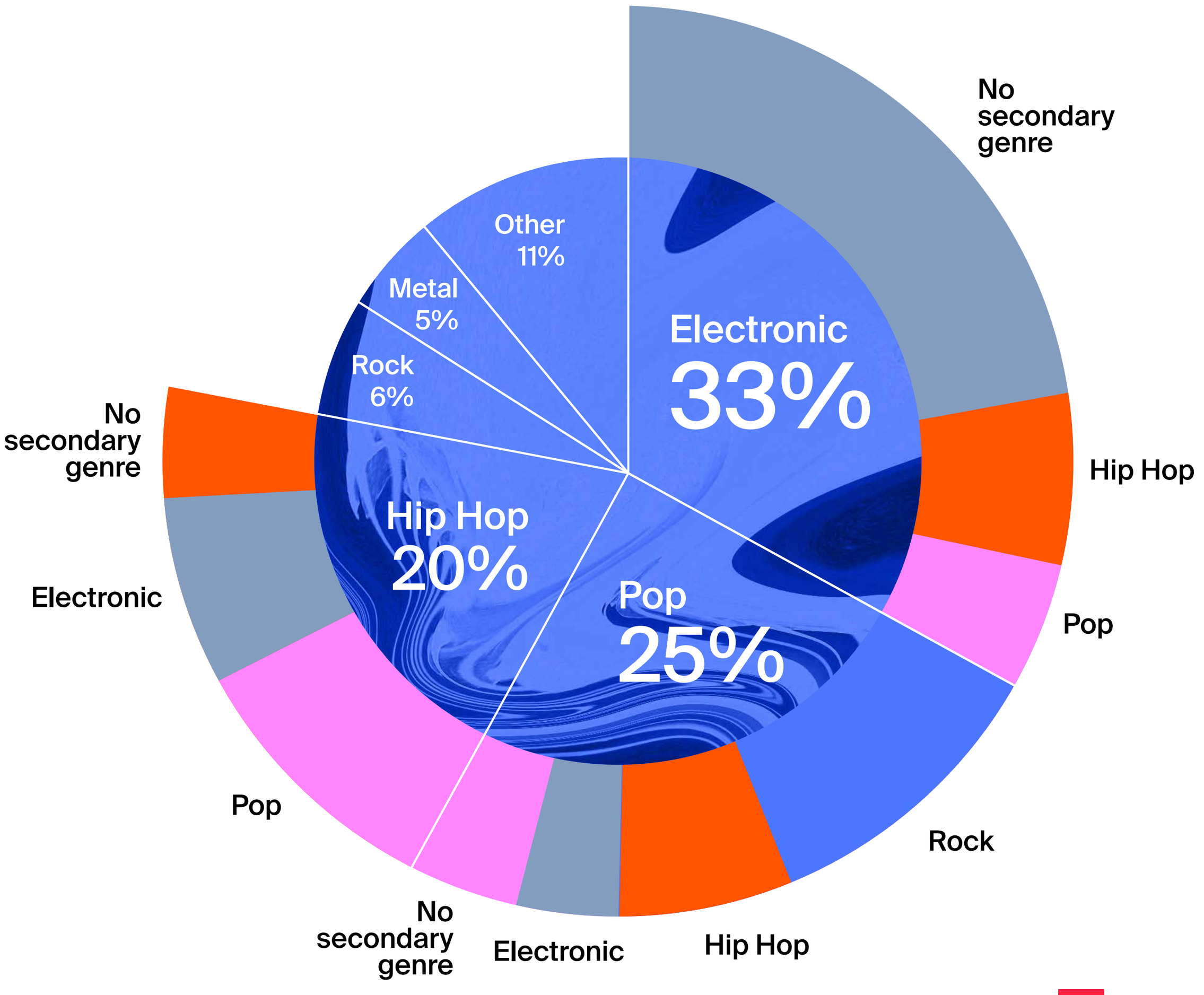
Most-mentioned festivals

These festivals got the most industry mentions on social media.

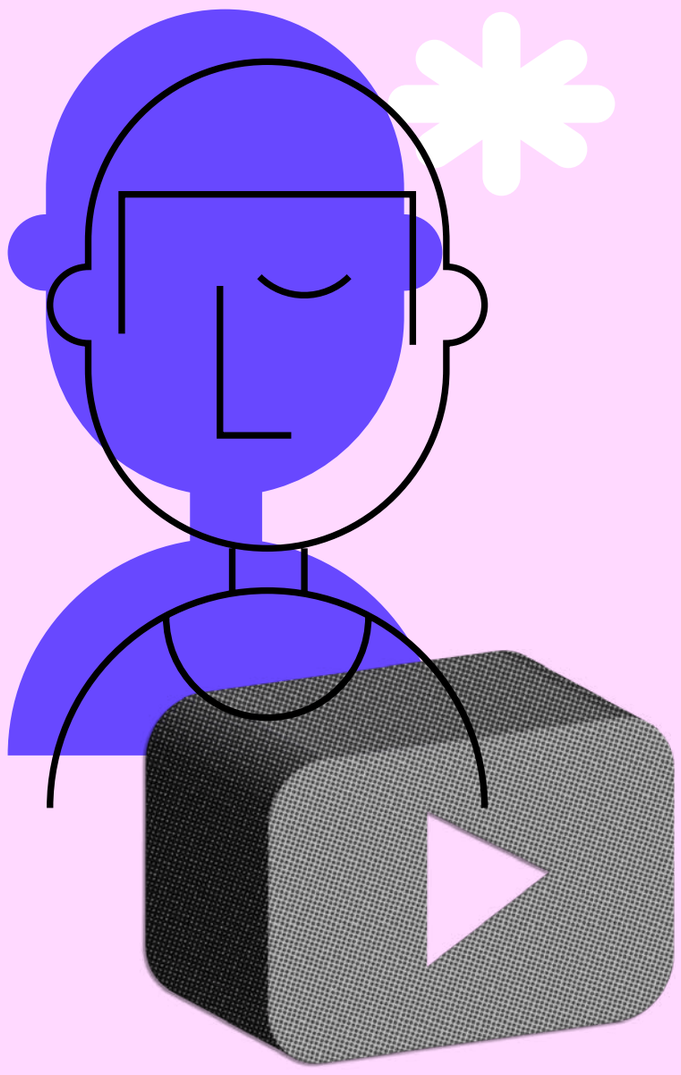
Festival	mention score
Lollapalooza	
Tomorrowland Belgium (postponed)	
Welcome To Rockville	
Electric Daisy Carnival - Las Vegas	
Austin City Limits Music Festival	
Creamfields	
Tecate Pa'l Norte	
Untold Festival	
Louder Than Life	
Glastonbury Festival (postponed)	

These artists were booked alongside

Primary & secondary genres of festivals in 2021.



TRENDS THAT WILL SHAPE THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IN 2022



Personalized everything

The artists who did best in 2021 took more care in cultivating their audience. **Creating special, fan-first approaches**, be it in the form of promotion, merch, special access or something else, will drive an artist's success. Just look at Twitter, where fandoms like the "BTS Army" and the "Arianators" boost new releases into millions of streams, providing traction and media coverage.

Non-English music goes mainstream

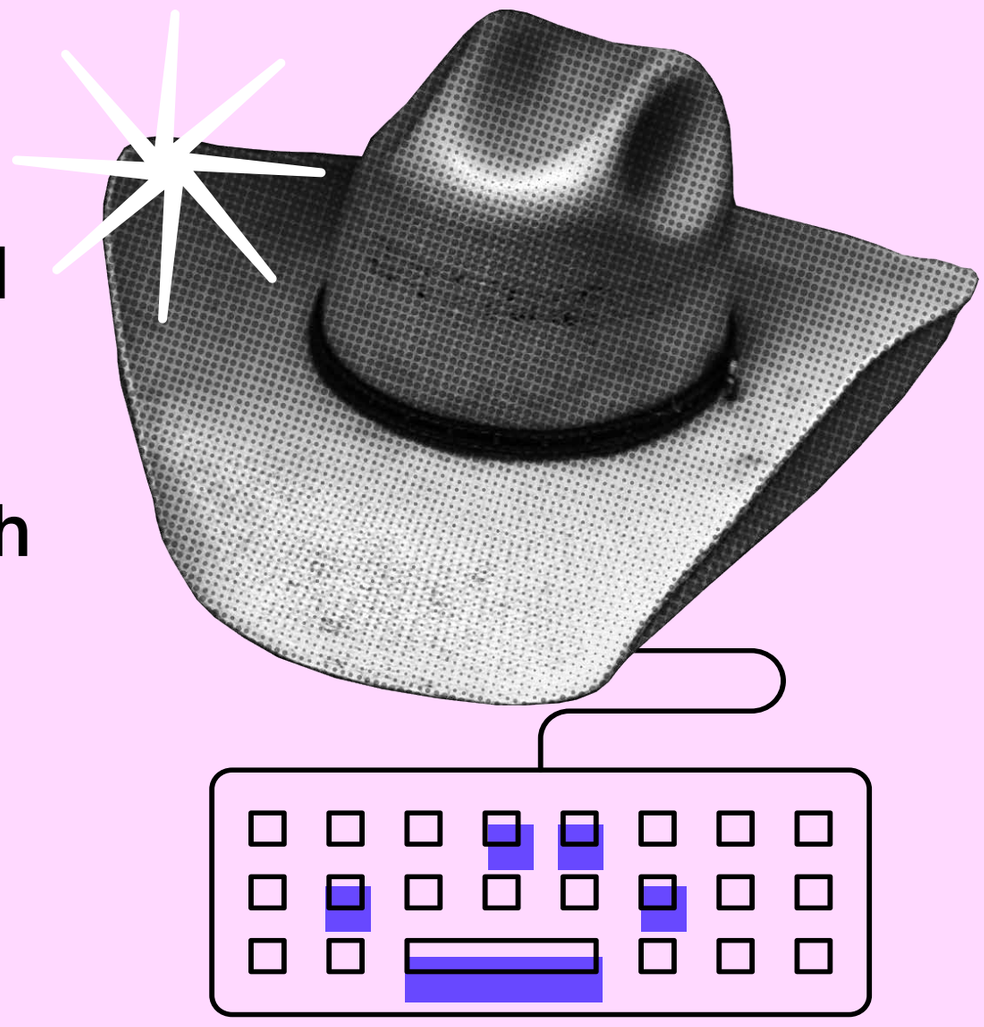
BTS made it to the top 5 list on almost every channel, while Asian Pop and Latin (especially Reggaeton) had an amazing year on YouTube. **Multilingual music is rising on gatekeeper-free channels**, slowly pushing non-English speaking artists into the mainstream.

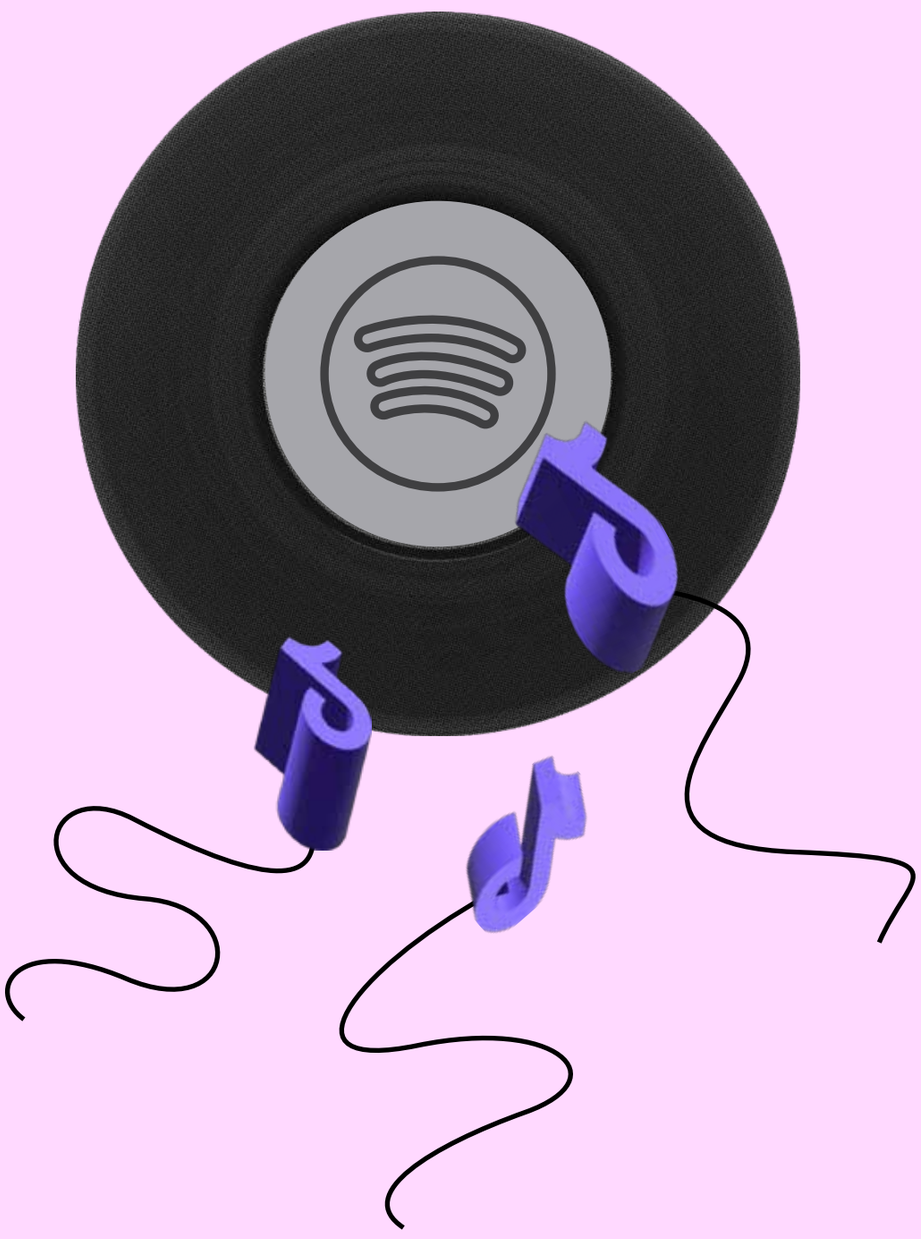
Rock resurrected

Thanks to **Punk Rock making waves on TikTok**, the sound is reaching new generations, even when represented by artists who typically wouldn’t be considered representative of the genre (think Olivia Rodrigo and Machine Gun Kelly).

Blurred genre lines

The breakthrough artists of 2021 proved genre-bending is more popular than ever. Artists and their audiences **prefer moods to traditional genre labels**, with the trend extending to popular playlists with tracks for specific occasions (driving, studying, relaxing, etc.).





Careers launch on TikTok, Spotify seals the deal

TikTok is where talent discovery happens, but Spotify is the one to **separate one-offs from bigger potential**. Up-and-coming artists are therefore embracing strategic cross-channel promotion, where TikTok acts as a “booster” for streaming numbers.

Short video formats rule

Short-form videos on TikTok (plus Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts) are easily digestible. Even when not polished to perfection, audiences celebrate the DIY approach. For artists, this will be the **most useful format to stand out** in the sea of content, promote their music and grow their fanbase.

The rise of digital monetization

The decline in live events and festivals since 2020 pushed the industry online in search of **alternative revenue streams**. We can expect 2022 to see more immersion into the digital, including larger adoption of monetized content: digital merch, subscriptions, personalized experiences, tipping, NFTs, etc.

Data will help up-and-coming artists break through

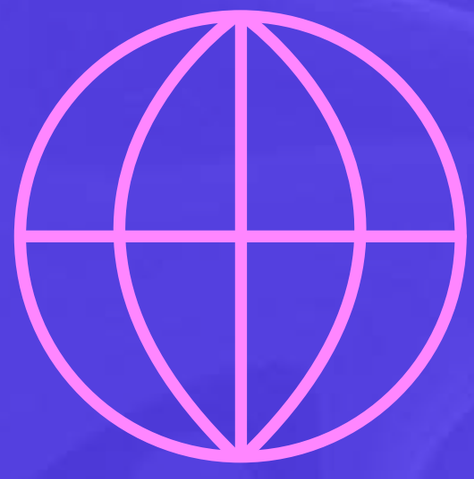
The majority of streams, social media engagement and fanbase growth belongs to the top 1% of analyzed artists. **Data analytics**, which is becoming widely accessible even to emerging artists, will be the easiest tool to help everyone stay competitive.

THIS IS THE BIGGER PICTURE.

Dive deeper with Viberate

Ready-to-use music analytics will save you loads of time. Viberate crunches data from all relevant music channels and translates it into insights you can work with.

Social media and music stats of every musician



Trends in 18 music genres and every country in the world

Unbiased charts for easy ranking and talent discovery

Detailed playlist and track performance

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