



FREELANCING IN BELGIUM

Trends & Insights 2025



Table of Contents

About 3

Community supporters 4

- Respondent profile overview 5
- Location 6
- Professional fields 7
- Gender, age, and experience 8-9
- Pre-starters 10

Pre-starters

- Motivation to freelance 11
- Hesitations to start 12

The realities of the active freelancer

- Freelancing form (time, legal structure) 15-16
- Clients (size, type, by profession) 18-21
- Assignment duration 23

Pricing

- Hourly & daily rates 25-27
- Rates by seniority and profession 28-29
- Gender comparison 30
- Pricing models 31-32

Challenges

- Overall 34
- By profession, experience, gender 35 -37
- Open responses 38
- Passive income for freelancers 39
- Continuation 41

Ambitions

- Next-year goals 43
- Pre-starters' ambitions 44
- By profession 45

Freelance business support

- Support needs overall 47
- Pre-starters' needs 48

Conclusion & next steps

- Key findings 50
- Actions for the community 51
- Survey improvements 52
- Disclaimer and future plans 53

About

This is the first edition of *Freelancing in Belgium: Trends & Insights*, a survey created to better understand the landscape of independent work across the country. We set out to **explore who freelancers are, how they work, what they charge, what they need, and what they aspire to**. The results aim to inform not only freelancers themselves but also clients, policymakers, and platforms that support the self-employed.

With over **300 responses from a diverse range of professionals**, this survey provides valuable insights into freelance realities in Belgium today, from rates and pricing models to challenges, ambitions, and business support needs.

This survey is made by Freelancers in Belgium

Freelancers in Belgium is a community of **16 000+ members** connecting freelancers to **share best practices, tips** and **resources** for starting and running a freelance business better.

Freelancers:

- Join our free Facebook group.
- Subscribe to our free newsletter.
- Join one of our events.

Find out more via www.freelancersinbelgium.be

Community supporters

The following organisations collaborate with Freelancers in Belgium as community supporters, offering services and expertise that benefit freelancers in different stages of their journey.

Accountable

A mobile and web app that helps freelancers manage their entire accounting process, tracking expenses, creating PEPPOL compliant invoices, monitoring payments, and filing VAT returns. Connected to your bank account, it provides real-time insight into net income and tax obligations, with personalised tax tips and proactive support.

Catalyst

An accounting firm offering tailored financial and fiscal advice to optimise your setup and reduce your tax burden. They provide proactive guidance on pensions, investments, salary packages, and more, with a high-quality, digital-first service.

ING Belgium

Offers banking solutions for freelancers, from starter packages with free accounts and cards to business loans, mortgages and savings options. Supports both new and experienced freelancers in managing their finances flexibly and efficiently.

Securex

Guides freelancers from setup to ongoing compliance, handling registrations, contracts, GDPR policies, and more. Provides tools, checklists, and personalised advice to help independents start strong and stay compliant.

Tentoo

A payrolling service that lets you freelance without being self-employed, handling salary, insurance, social security, and taxes. Specialises in the cultural and audiovisual sectors, also supporting students and artists.

LV Agency

Provides personalised insurance and pension solutions for freelancers, ensuring coverage stays optimal over time. Led by a former freelancer who understands the unique risks and needs of self-employed professionals.

Note: The organisations listed here are community supporters of *Freelancers in Belgium*. Their inclusion highlights ongoing collaborations that provide value to freelancers. They have not sponsored or influenced the results of this survey.

Work with us to support freelancers

Have a freelancer-focused offer? Get in touch via info@freelancersinbelgium.be.

Who are they?

Respondent Profile Overview

This overview highlights the backgrounds of the **316 freelancers** who shared their perspectives, covering their location, professional activities, experience levels, age groups, and gender. **290** were active freelancers, **26** pre-starters, people aspiring to become freelancers.

This cross-sectional online survey employed a non-probability sampling method (convenience sampling) via Freelancers in Belgium community social media channels, reaching respondents across the country. Tally was used as a data collection tool.

The respondents filled in the survey during the month of April 2025.

Statistical Notes:

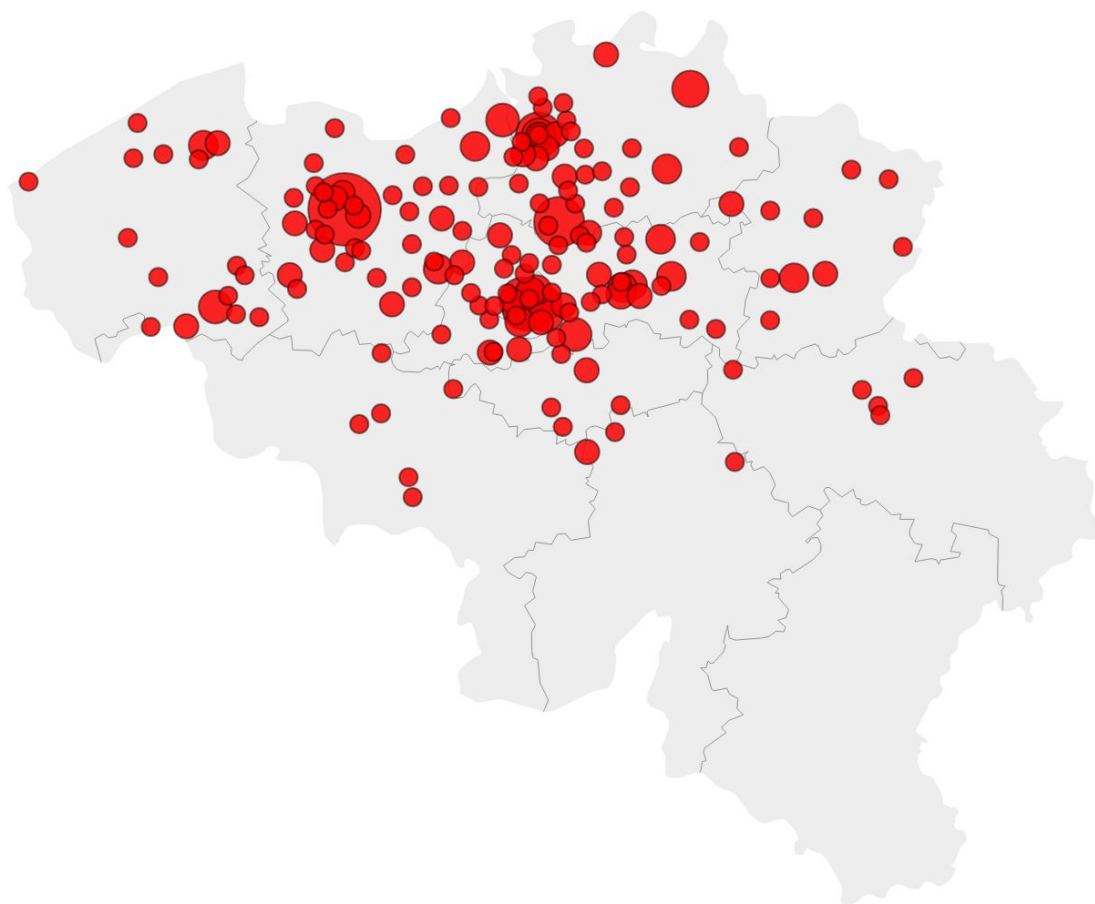
Confidence intervals calculated at 95% level. Percentages rounded to 2 decimal places. Small subgroup analyses (n<30) flagged as indicative only. Multiple selection questions noted where applicable.

Note on pre-starter results

For most analyses in this report, we flag results based on fewer than 30 responses as indicative only because such small samples risk being less representative. The exception is the pre-starter group (n=26). While small, this segment is presented without the “indicative only” label because it forms a clearly defined and intentionally analysed subgroup: individuals who are not yet officially freelancing but plan to start soon. Their answers provide valuable context on motivations, expectations, and perceived support needs at the very start of the freelance journey. Rather than being treated as noise, these insights highlight trends worth considering, even if they should not be interpreted as statistically representative of all potential freelancers.

Location

Most respondents based in Flanders and major cities



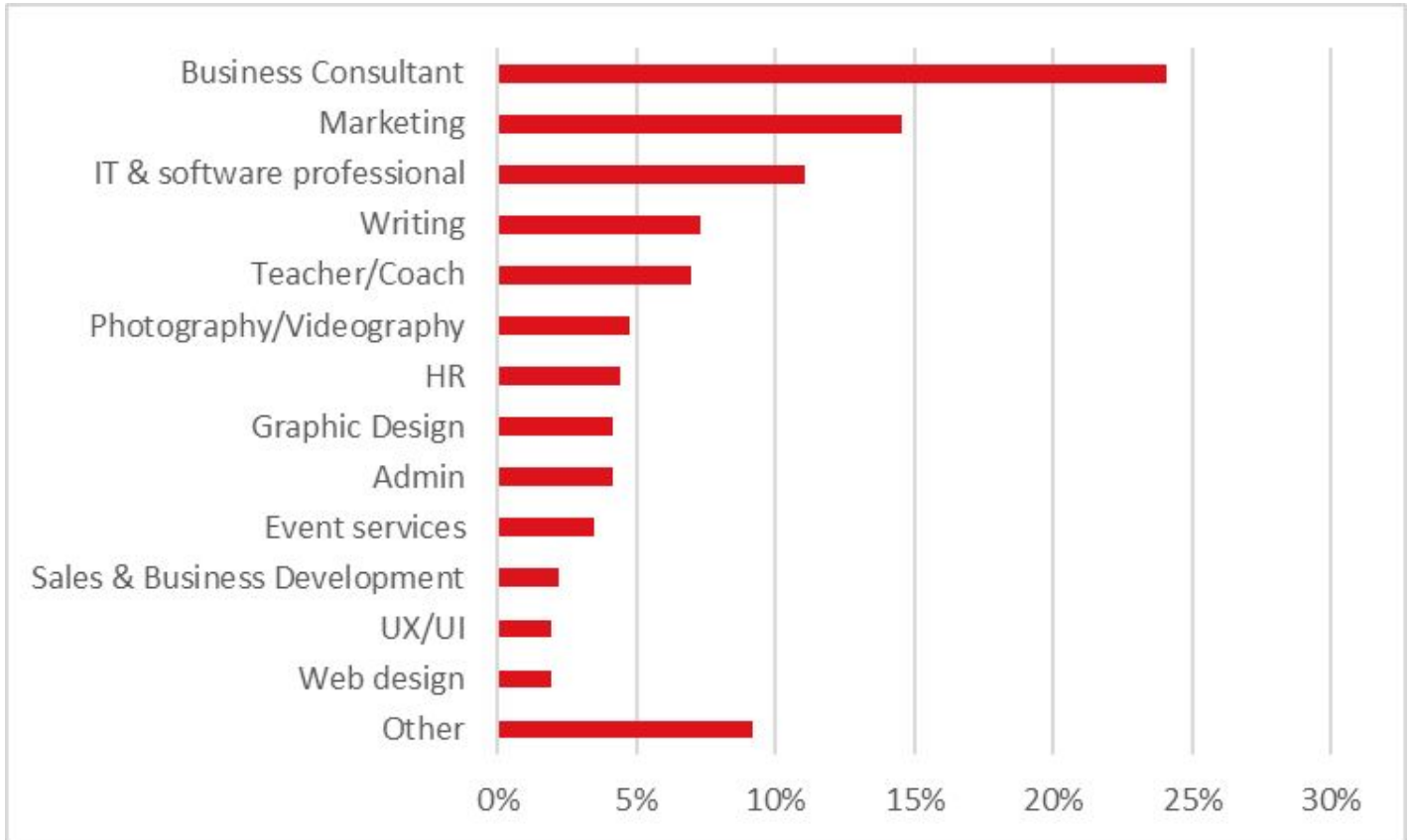
Base (n) = 316

- **Region:** Flanders (**76%**), Brussels (**17%**), Wallonia (**7%**)
- **Top provinces:** East-Flanders (**24%**), Antwerp (**22%**), Flemish Brabant: (**18%**), Brussels: (**17%**), West-Flanders (**8%**)
- **Top cities:** Gent (**7%**), Antwerp (**5.4%**), Brussels (Brussels City + Ixelles) (**5%**)

This distribution is likely due to the survey's distribution via the English-speaking "Freelancers in Belgium" Facebook group, attracting many foreign residents who typically live in Brussels and other international hubs. It also helps explain the lower representation from Wallonia, where English is less commonly spoken.

Overview of Professional Fields

Diverse freelance landscape led by business consultants, marketers and IT professionals.



Base (n) = 316

The largest group of survey respondents are

- **Business Consultants** (24%), including strategy, finance, project management, and interim roles.
- **Marketing** and **IT & software professionals** (15% and 11% respectively) also make up significant shares, along with **writers** and **creatives** like designers and photographers. Results by roles with less respondents might be indicative rather than conclusive.
- The “**Other**” category – nearly 10% – includes a wide range of **niche roles** such as engineers, interpreters, trainers, musicians, and executive support, reflecting the diversity of Belgium’s freelance landscape.

Gender distribution

Nearly 50/50 gender ratio



50%



49%

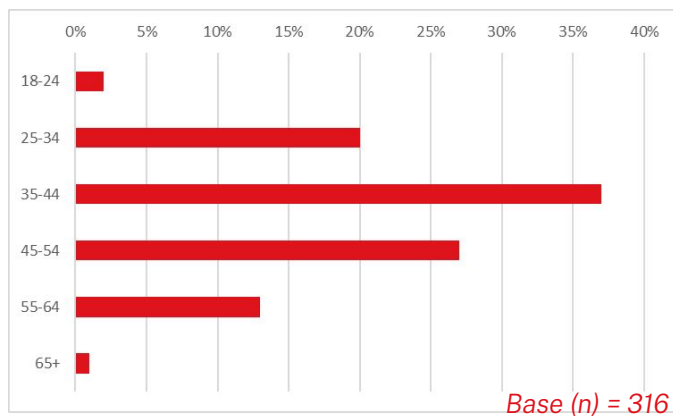
1% of respondents prefer not to say

Base (n) = 316

The gender balance in this survey is nearly perfect, with 50% (158) female and 49% (155) male respondents, and 3 people who preferred not to say.

Age Demographics

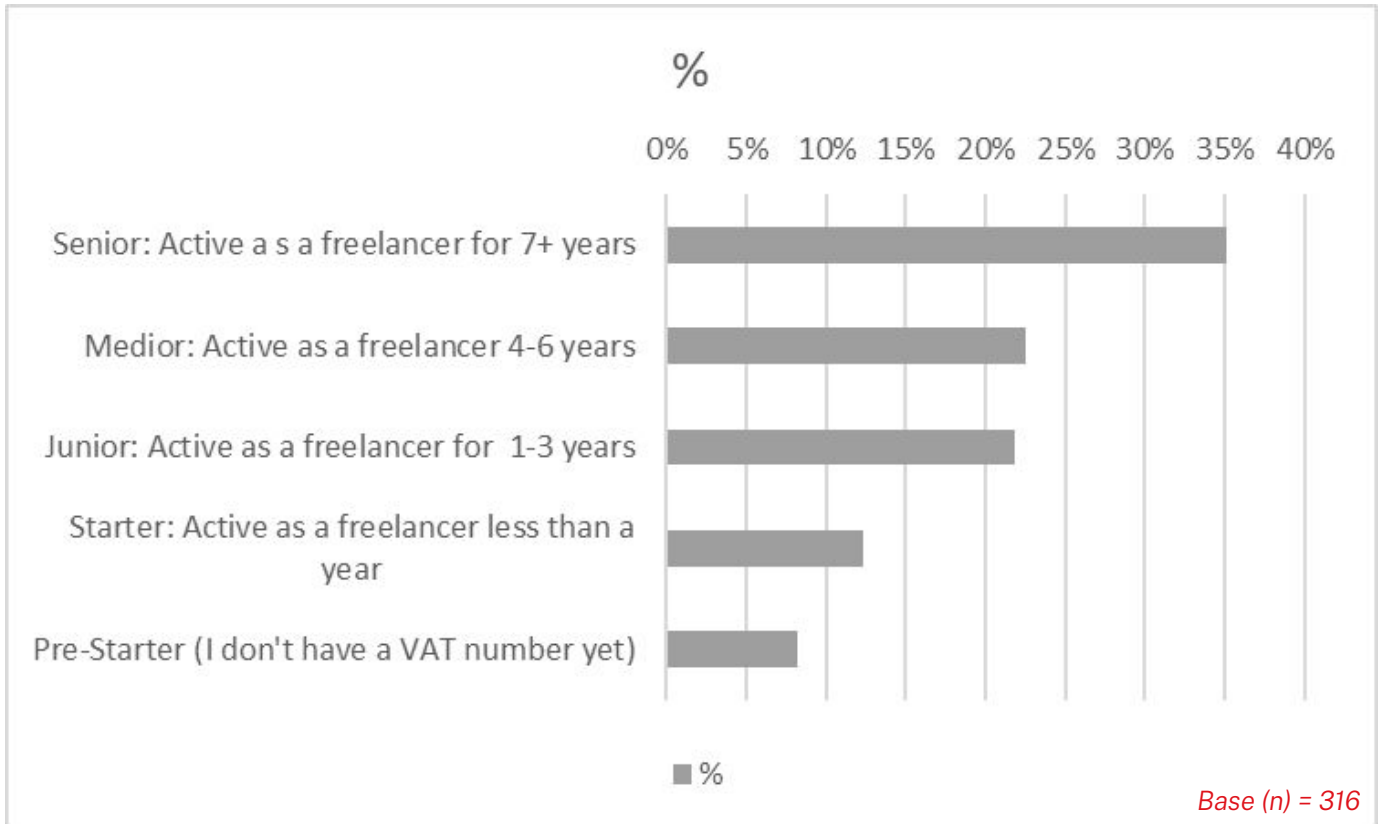
Freelancing dominated by mid-career professionals



The majority of respondents are aged **35–44 (37%)**, showing that freelancing is a common mid-career choice. This is supported by the **45–54** group (**27%**), while younger freelancers aged **25–34 (20%)** and **18–24** represent a growing new wave.

Experience Levels

Seasoned freelancers shape the results



The survey reveals a seasoned freelance population: 34% are senior (7+ years), followed by 22% mid-level (4–6 years) and 22% junior (1–3 years), with only 12% just starting out. This mirrors the age distribution, where **most respondents are mid-career professionals**.

Pre-Starters

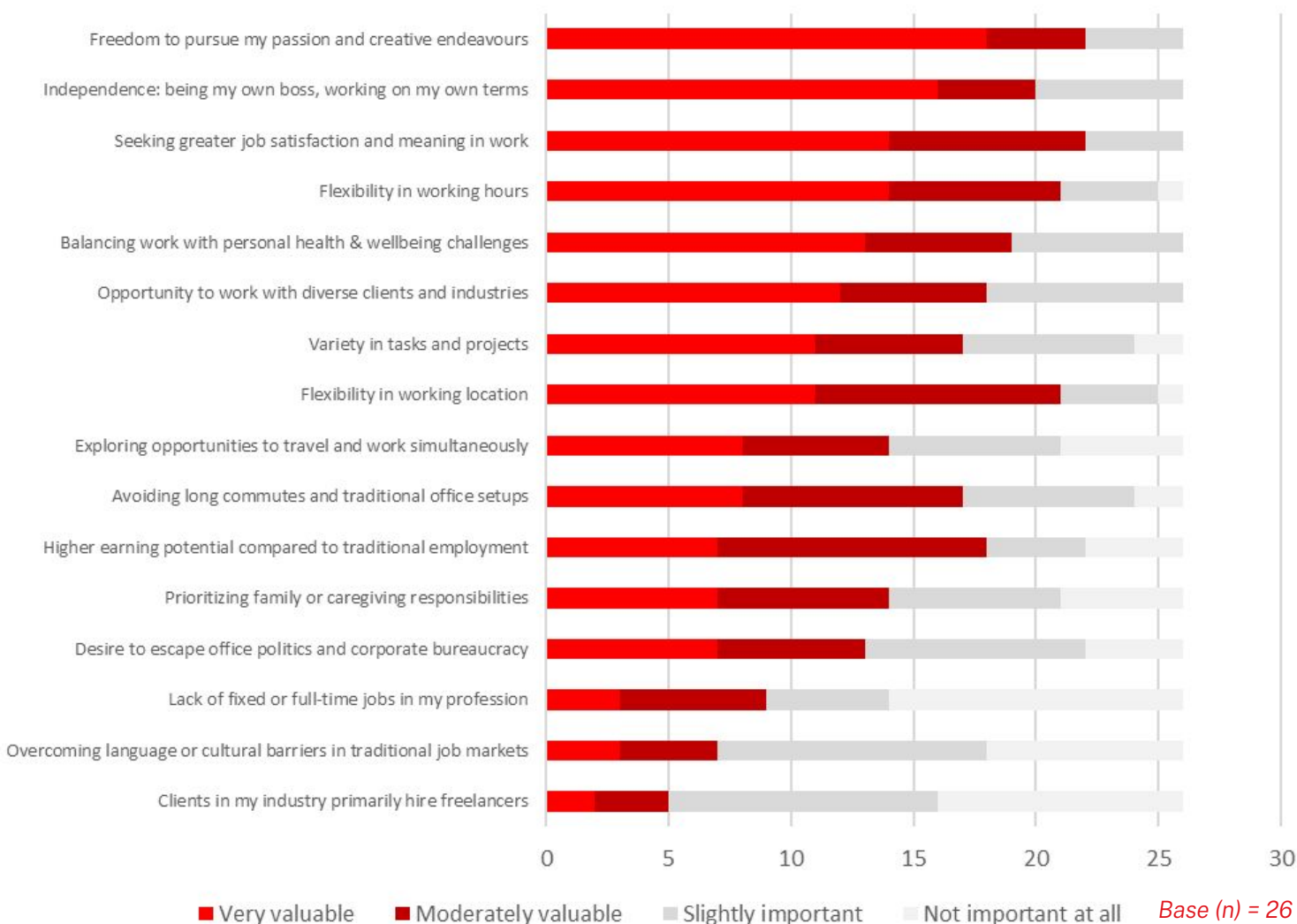
Notably, **8%** (26) are “pre-starters” without a VAT number, who answered tailored questions that provide valuable insights into the motivations and concerns of aspiring freelancers. The results of their answers are later in the report.

Pre-starters

Exploring the aspirations and hesitations of future freelancers

Motivation - why do you want to become a freelancer?

Why pre-starters choose the freelance path: Passion, purpose, and flexibility



For pre-starters, the top motivations are personal and aspirational:

- **Freedom and fulfilment** -Pursuing passions and finding greater job satisfaction rank highest.
- **Flexibility and independence** -Control over working hours, location, and terms is a major draw.
- **Balance and variety** -A better work-life balance and more diverse work experiences also matter.

Push factors like job scarcity or industry norms play a minor role. This indicates that most are drawn to freelancing by choice, not necessity.

What makes you hesitate to become a freelancer?

Financial insecurity, client pressure, and lack of support make starting feel risky



This chart shows the answers of "moderate reason to very important reason"

Base (n) = 26

Top concerns reflect **financial risk**, **emotional stress**, and **structural barriers**:

- **Financial insecurity** -Unstable income, no safety net, and stress about uncertainty
- **Client-related pressure** -Needing to constantly find work and fear of rejection
- **Administrative hurdles** -Taxes, accounting, and professional card requirements
- **Emotional doubts** -Fear of failure, pricing uncertainty, and imposter feelings
- **Limited support** -Lack of network and backup when things go wrong

These insights point to a need for **better financial guidance**, **emotional support**, and **clearer structures** for getting started. Practical **sales training** and **increased access to job opportunities** can also ease the pressure of landing clients.

The realities of the active freelancer

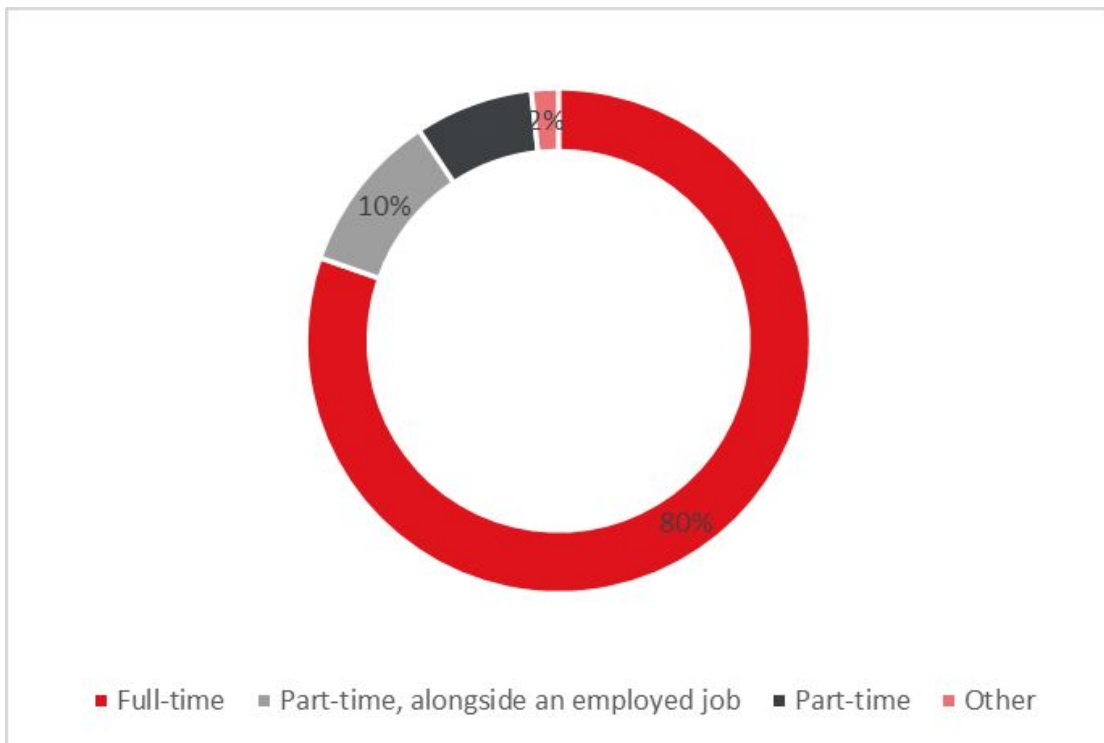
How they are set up, which kind of clients they serve, what they charge and how long their assignments are.

Freelancing form

Freelancing form - Time commitment

Most respondents freelance full-time

The majority of survey respondents are full-time freelancers, making up the largest segment by far. A smaller share works part-time alongside a salaried job, while others freelance part-time only. A small minority falls into the “other” category, which may include students, transitioning professionals, or those in less conventional setups. **This distribution highlights that for most respondents, freelancing is not just a side hustle — it’s their primary occupation.**



Base (n) = 290

Freelancing form - Legal structure

BV/SRL and sole proprietorships represent the vast majority among freelance business structures

The majority of freelancers surveyed operate through a **limited liability entity** (BV/SRL), followed closely by those using a **sole proprietorship** (eenmanszaak/entreprise individuelle).

The **split** between bv and eenmanszaak often comes down to income level, experience, industry, and risk tolerance.

This is likely due to higher earners and growth-minded freelancers lean toward a bv for tax and liability reasons, while starters and those in creative fields prefer the simplicity of an “*eenmanszaak*”.

Other legal structures — such as commanditaire vennootschap, general partnership (VOF/SNC), and payroll companies — **are used far less frequently.**

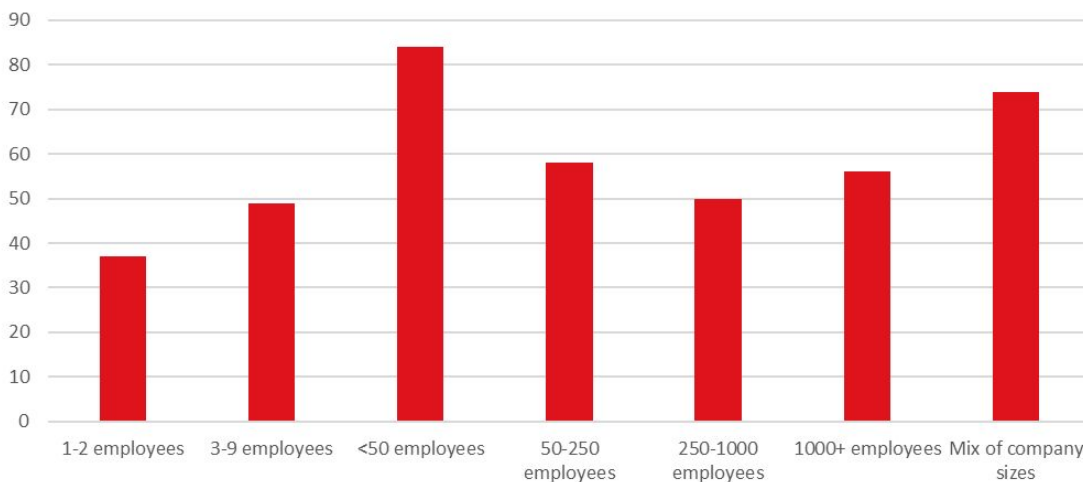


Base (n) = 290

Clients

Clients - Client size

Small businesses lead, but freelancers support all company sizes



**Respondents could select more than one option or indicate that they work with a mix of client sizes.*

Base (n) = 290

42% of freelancers work with small companies (1 to 50 employees), making this the most commonly served individual segment.

The most frequent answer overall is actually “mix of company sizes”:

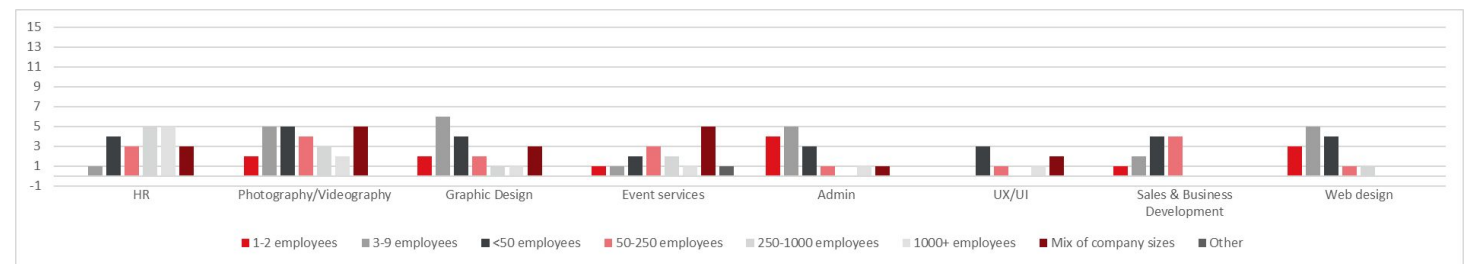
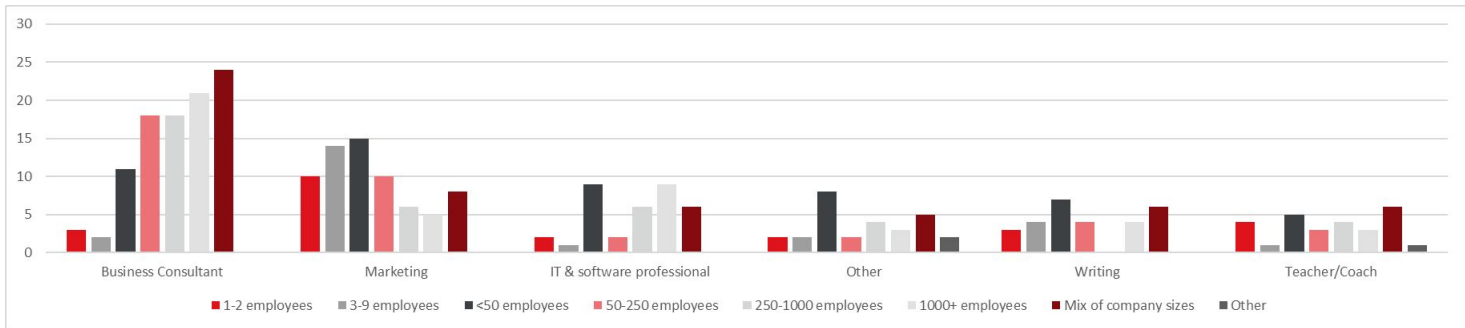
- **74 respondents** explicitly selected this option, indicating they work across different client sizes.
- Another ~70 freelancers selected multiple size categories, typically in clustered ranges (e.g. all smaller sizes or all mid-sized companies).

Thus, in total, **about half of freelancers serve a mix of company sizes**, even if that doesn't mean they cover the entire range from micro to enterprise in each case.

Whether it's a team of two or a company of two thousand, freelancers are embedded at every level, proving their adaptability and value across the board.

Clients - Client size by profession

Profession impacts client size



Data in the second graph is indicative (fewer than 15 respondents per profession).

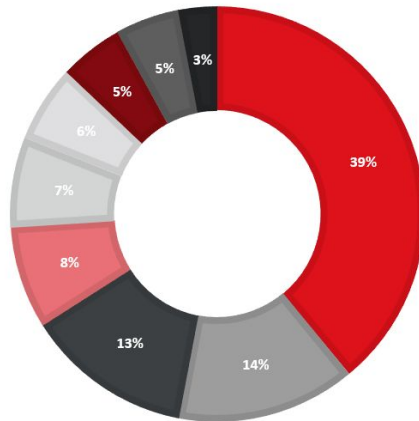
Base (n) = 290

- **Freelancers work with clients of all sizes, across all professions.**
- **Business consultants work more with larger companies** probably because larger companies tend to have more budget to spend than smaller ones. Another potential reason: Smaller ones may rely on founders or are not aware about freelancers being available for (temporary) support. This shows there is potential to raise awareness among smaller businesses about how freelancers, especially consultants, can help them grow.
- **Marketing work is more evenly distributed across company sizes**, likely because businesses of all sizes outsource marketing tasks to fill skills gaps or boost capacity.
- **IT professionals show a bump** in mid-sized clients (10–50 and 250–1000 employees), possibly because in-house talent is harder to find as many IT experts work as freelancers.
- **For HR and all professions below**, the client size distribution should be considered **indicative** only, as each had 14 respondents or fewer.

Clients - Client type

Freelancers in Belgium mainly work with businesses, not individuals

■ B2B ■ Intermediaries ■ B2C ■ NGOs ■ Governmental org ■ Int'l or ■ Educational ■ Startups ■ Individuals



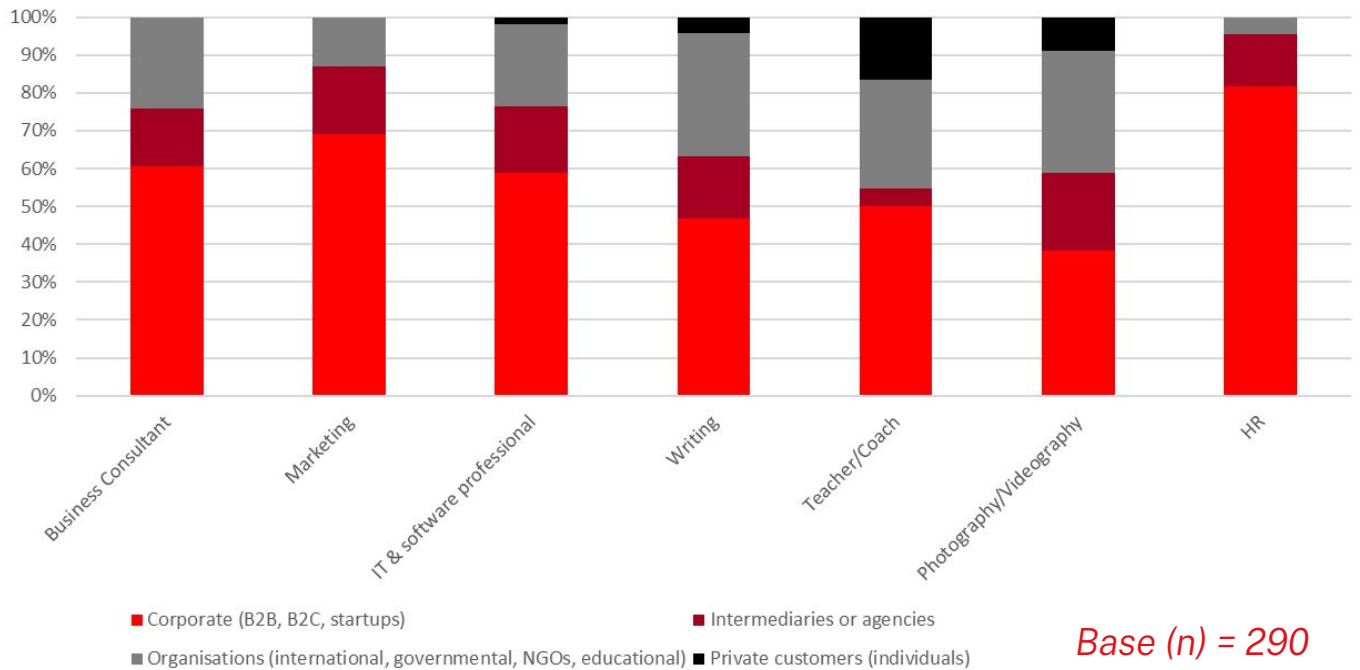
**Respondents could select more than one option or indicate that they work with a mix of client sizes.*

Base (n) = 290

- **B2B clients dominate** the Belgian freelance market — **39%** of respondents name them as their main client type.
- **Intermediaries (14%)** (third parties, like agencies, platforms, or brokers connecting freelancers with clients) and **B2C companies (13%)** also play a notable role in providing freelance opportunities.
- **Startups are surprisingly underrepresented** — only **5%** work mainly with them, possibly due to **limited budgets** or **structural incentives** to hire employees instead.
- **Public and institutional clients** — governments, NGOs, international and educational organisations — **remain limited in freelance use (3–8%)**. Likely reasons include **complex procedures, rigid budget structures**, and **low awareness** of when freelancers are a smart solution.
- Only **3%** of freelancers primarily serve individuals. This confirms that most freelance work targets organisations, whether directly, through intermediaries, or via public institutions, with a focus on **business-oriented expertise** such as consulting, IT, or marketing.

Clients - Client type by profession

Creative freelancers work with a broader variety of clients – combining corporate, consumer and startup engagements alongside NGOs, governments and individuals.



The chart shows **corporate clients** make up for at least **35%** of work for every freelancer type, with **agencies** providing a steady **5–15%**.

Public/nonprofit bodies are significant (~25–30%) only for creatives and educators, while **private individuals remain under 10%** across the board.

Two strategic openings emerge from this mix:

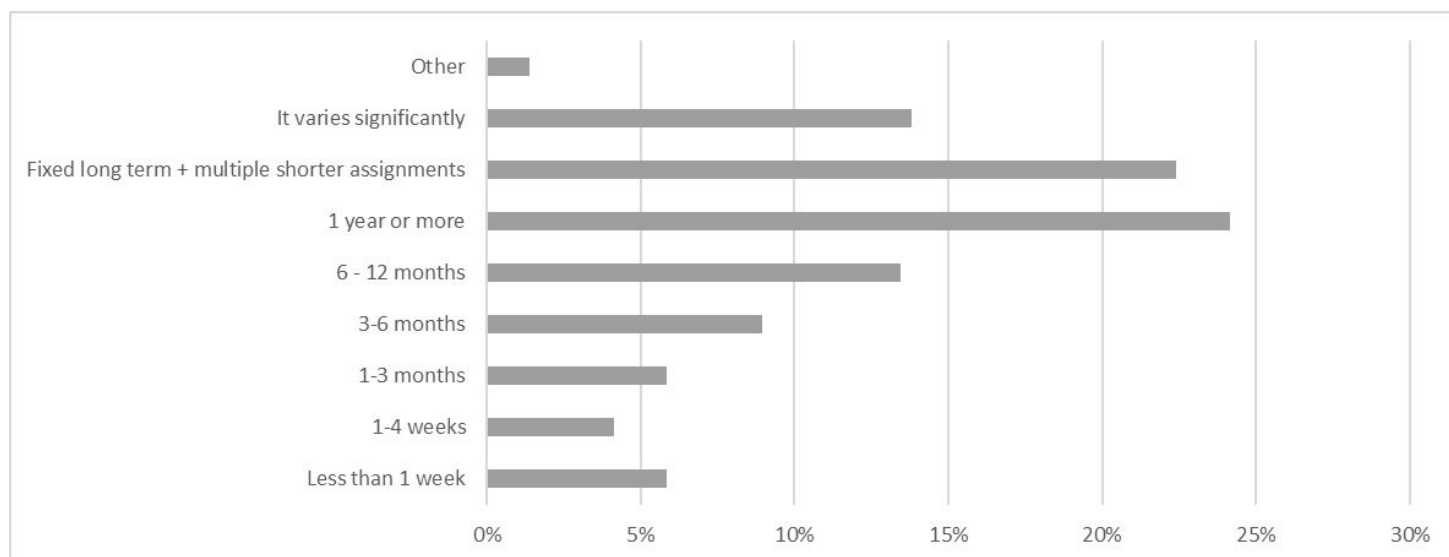
- **Leverage agencies as your pipeline:** Since intermediaries reliably deliver a portion of projects even in pure B2B fields, partnering with a few specialist agencies can secure larger, steadier contracts – public tenders or retainer work – and smooth out feast-or-famine cycles.
- **Own a niche:** Rather than competing in a crowded generalist market, develop razor-sharp positioning (e.g. “IT for biotech startups,” “Sales strategy for ed-tech”) to tap underserved budgets and stand out in quieter corners of the market.

NOTE: We've focused the chart on the most-surveyed professions and **consolidated related client types into broader categories for greater clarity.**

Assignment duration

Assignment duration

More than gigs: Freelancers build enduring client ties



Base (n) = 290

Despite freelancing’s reputation for flexibility, the data points to a trend toward **stable, ongoing client relationships**.

Nearly 1 in 4 respondents (25%) report assignments lasting **a year or more**, with an additional 21% juggling both long-and short-term projects. While medium-length gigs (1–6 months) are still common, very short-term projects (under 4 weeks) are relatively uncommon.

This trend likely reflects the respondent group, which includes a high share of senior freelancers and business consultants — roles often tied to strategic, longer-term work.

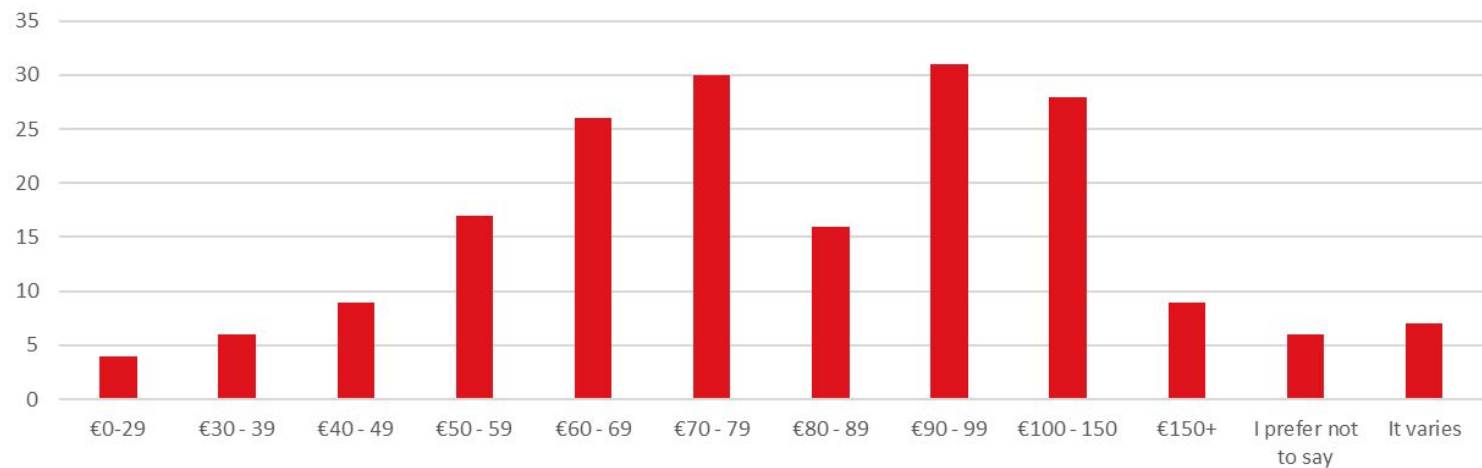
NOTE: While a deeper breakdown by profession and experience level could offer more nuance, we chose not to include it here to keep the analysis focused and concise.

Pricing

Pricing - Hour and day rate

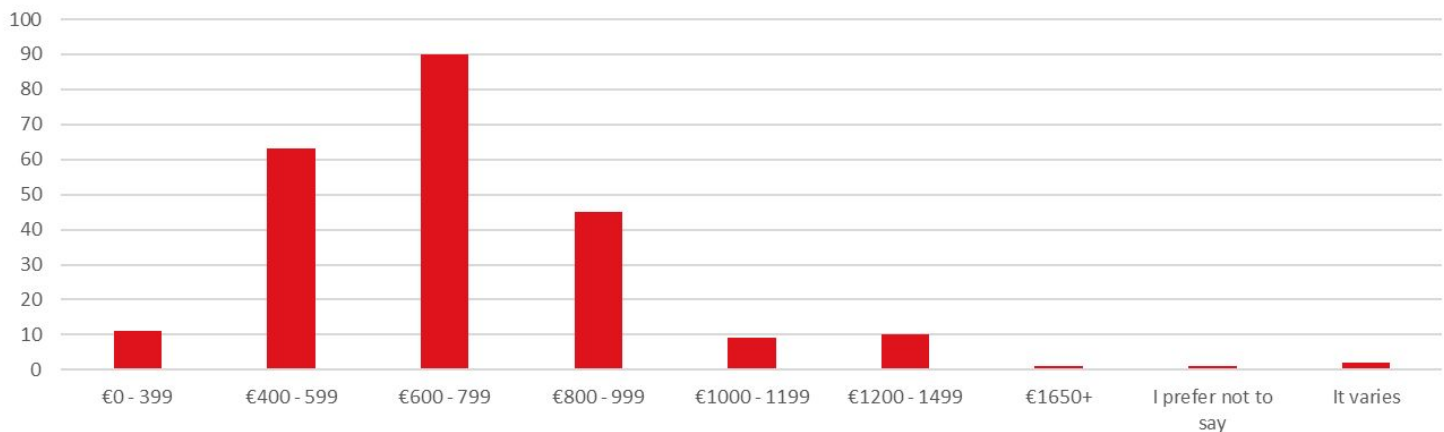
Average freelance rates cluster in the mid-to-high range

Hourly rate



Base (n) = 290

Day rate



Base (n) = 290

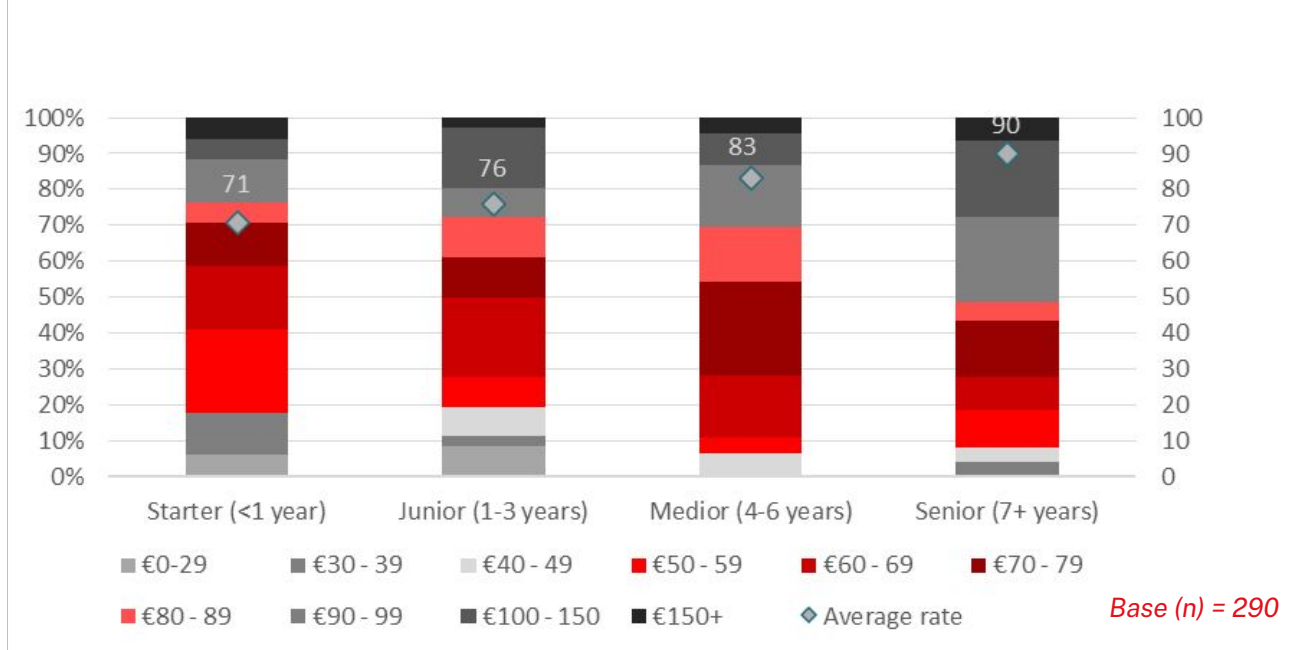
On average, freelancers in our sample charge around **€708** per day and **€84** per hour. The median range is €70-79 per hour and €600-799 per day.

The average hourly rate of €84 translates to €672 for an 8-hour day, closely aligning with the €708 daily average.

Later on, we'll see that not everyone uses an hourly or daily model. Many combine both or even offer flat-fee and value-based packages.

Pricing - Hourly rate by seniority

Freelance rates rise with experience, but other factors count too



The chart reveals a clear link between experience and hourly rates, but also highlights that seniority isn't the only driver of what freelancers charge. **Key takeaways:**

- **Starters** (1-2 yrs): Nearly all fall between €30-79/hr, yet with quite a few charging beyond €80.
- **Juniors** (3-5 yrs): Roughly 40% now price at €80+/hr, one in five even commands €100-150.
- **Mediors** (6-10 yrs): Surprisingly, only about 13% exceed the €100 mark, a smaller share than juniors.
- **Seniors** (7+ yrs): The average rate climbs steadily, but there are still a handful below €80 and a healthy 20-30% charging €100-150+.

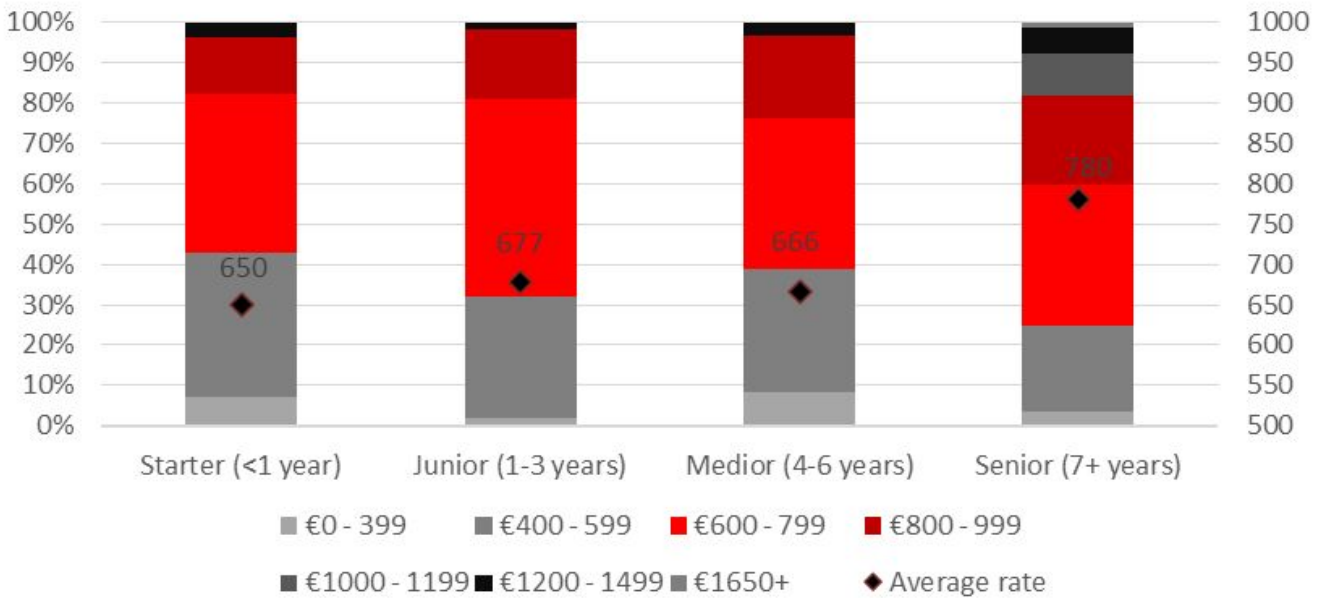
Across all levels: Some freelancers in every cohort charge €100+/hr showing that **market demands, niche expertise, project complexity** and **client type** can trump pure seniority when it comes to setting rates.

Pricing - Day rate by seniority

Seniors earn considerably more than Mediors

Interestingly, **Juniors earn slightly more on average than Mediors**. This may reflect niche focus or client types, rather than experience alone. **Seniors**, however, show a clear **rate jump**, likely due to deeper expertise and positioning.

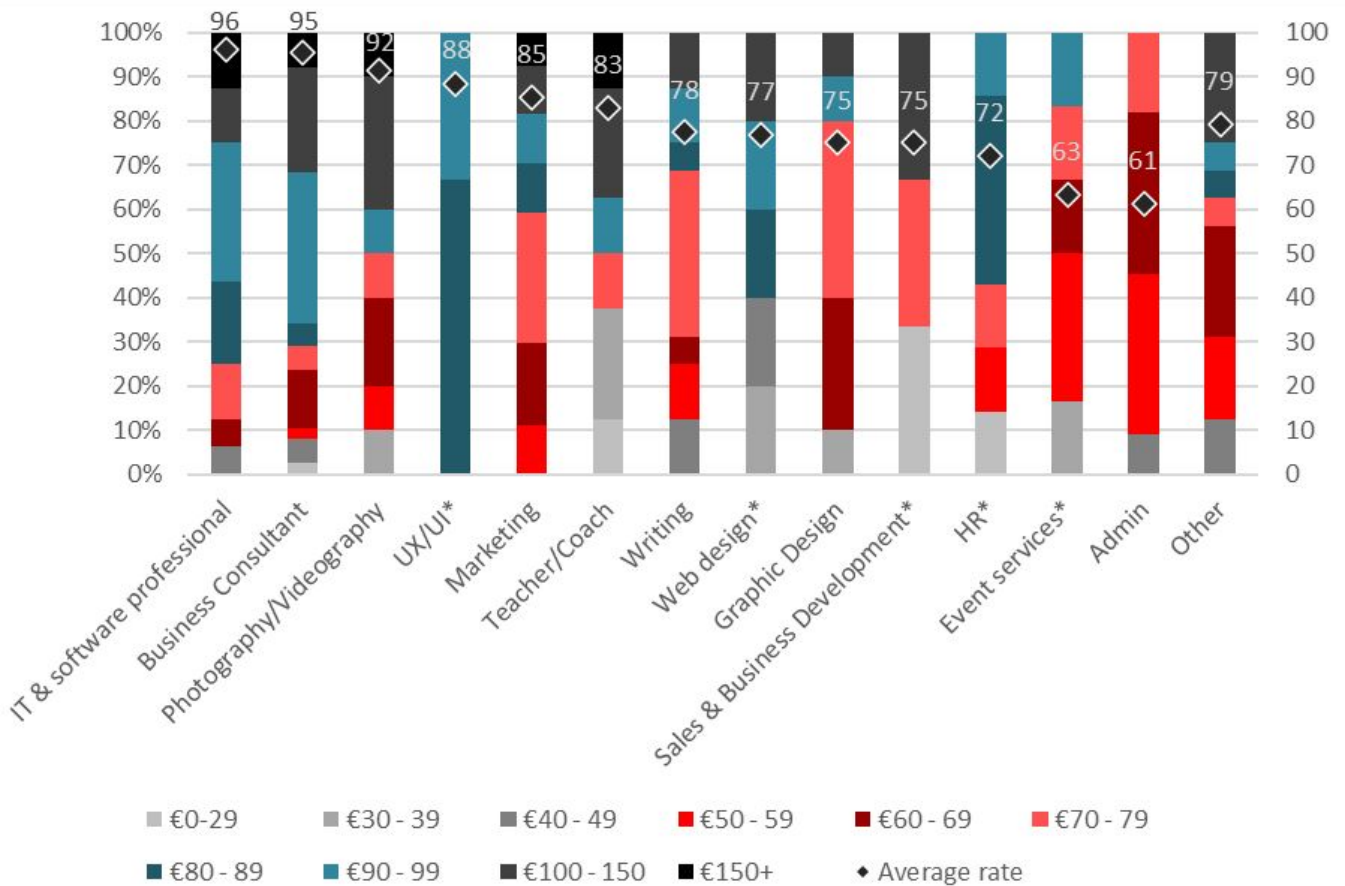
There are **Starters, Juniors and Mediors** earning more than **€1000 a day**. This suggests that while **experience is a key driver of pricing**, other factors like specialization, demand, and project complexity seem to influence day rates.



Base (n) = 290

Pricing - Hourly rate by profession

Freelance rates vary widely across professions



*Data with professions marked with an * is indicative (fewer than 15 respondents per profession). Base (n) = 290

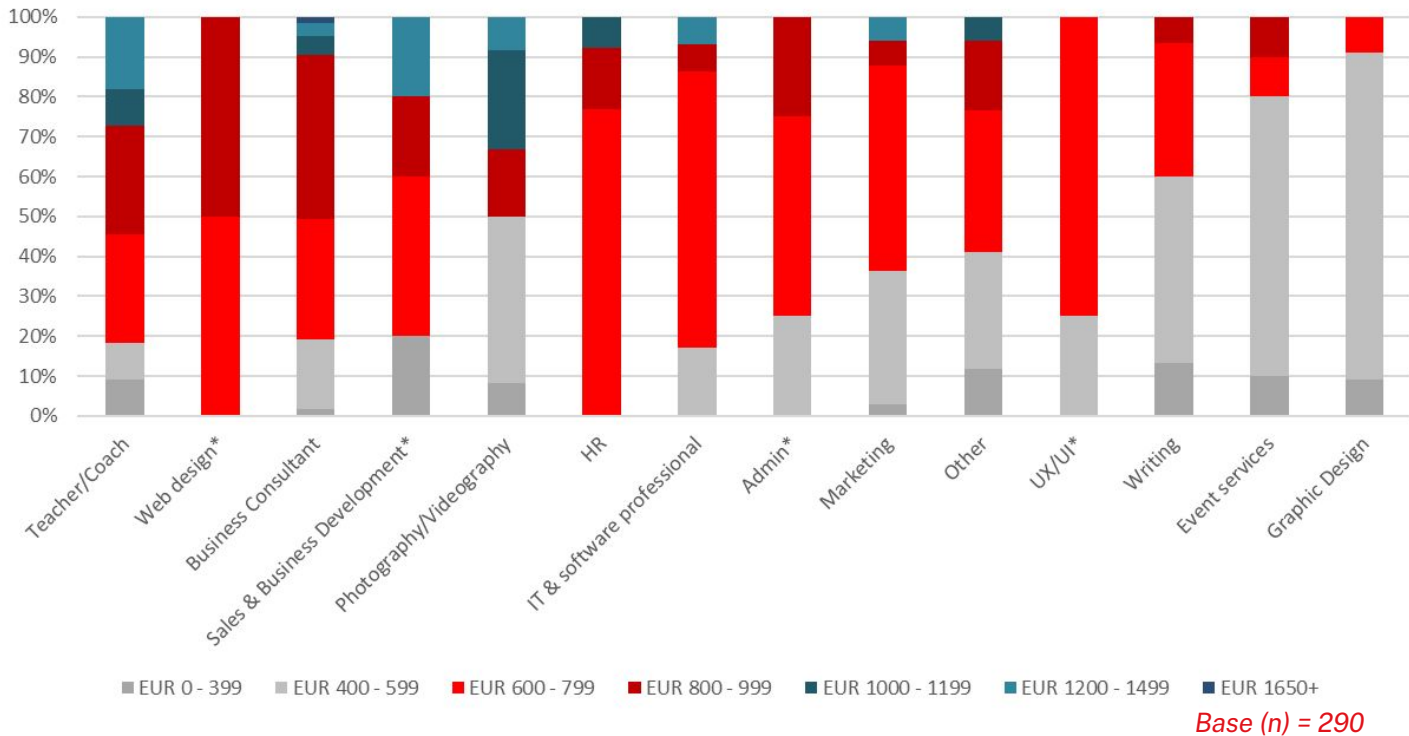
Business consultants, IT professionals, photographers and teachers often charge **€100+ per hour**, while **marketing, writing, and UX/UI** roles typically fall between **€60–99**. **Creative fields** like **graphic design** cluster around **€40–79**, with **admin** and **event services** in the lower range. **HR** and **coaching** show more mixed patterns.

These **differences** reflect not just **pricing freedom**, but also **market demand, skill level, and barriers to entry**. Fields requiring specialised expertise tend to command higher rates, while entry-level or more saturated professions see lower pricing.

For more insights about pricing and rates, check our **Market rates guide** [here](#).

Pricing - Daily rate by profession

Freelance day rates reflect how closely services tie to business value



The chart shows clear differences in day rate distributions across freelance professions. **Business consultants, IT and software specialists, and sales professionals** are most likely to **earn over €1000 per day**, with some **exceeding €1650**. These roles often deliver measurable business value and are closely tied to revenue, making it easier to justify higher fees.

Creative and support-focused fields, like **graphic design, events, admin,** and **photography** tend to fall **under €800 per day**. These professions operate in more competitive markets and may find it harder to demonstrate direct business impact, which can limit rates.

Marketing, UX/UI, HR, and coaching show a **broader spread**, reflecting differences in experience, niche, and service type.

The data highlights how perceived value and market demand shape freelance earning potential.

Pricing - Gender comparison

Clear gender gap in average freelance rates



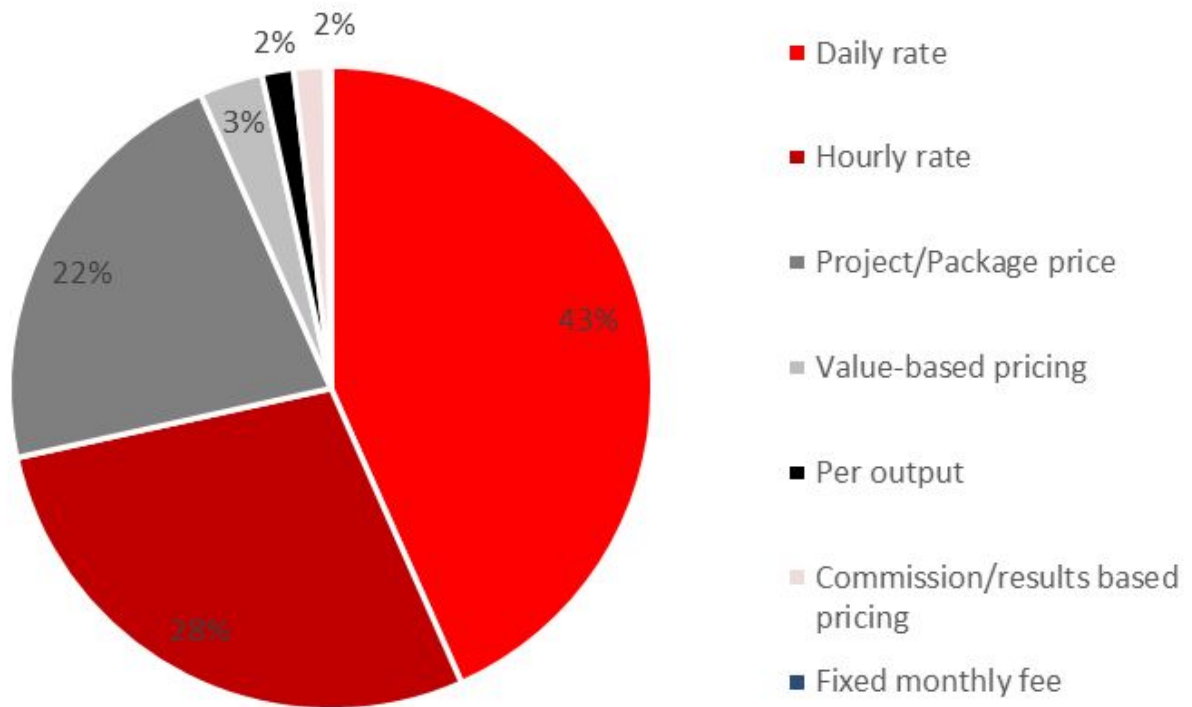
Men earn on average €14 more per hour.

While both men and women are represented across a wide range of hourly and day rates, the data suggests **a clear gender gap** in average earnings. On average, men report higher hourly (**€89** vs. **€75**) and day rates (**€746** vs. **€647**) than women. However, the **median day rate is identical for both genders (€700)**, indicating a similar typical price point, even if outliers skew the average.

This may reflect differences in negotiation, niche, or client base, and could warrant further exploration in future surveys.

Pricing - Model

Freelancers lean on time-based rates, yet explore alternatives



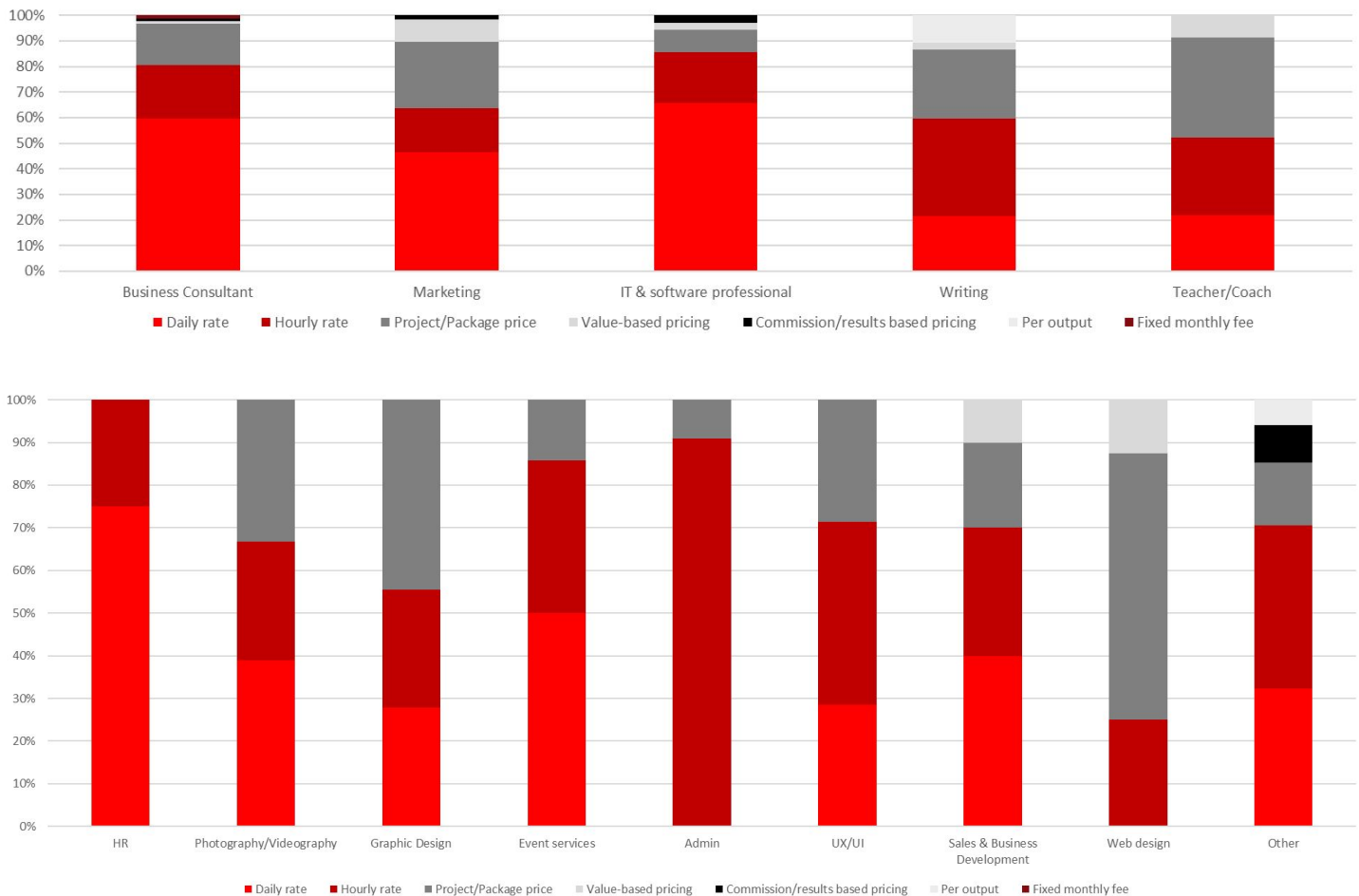
*Note that respondents could select multiple options.

The majority of freelancers in the survey rely on time-based pricing, with **43%** charging a **daily rate** and **28%** using **hourly rates**. However, **22%** have adopted **project or package pricing**, often preferred for creative or well-scoped work.

More flexible or value-driven models like value-based pricing, per-output fees, commissions, or fixed monthly retainers remain less common.

That said, the data, along with insights from the *Ambitions* and *Challenges* sections suggests **a growing desire among freelancers to move away from strict time-based billing**. Many are seeking more flexibility, stability, or alignment between pricing and the value they deliver, rather than just the hours worked.

Pricing - Pricing model by profession



Base (n) = 290

This breakdown by profession shows clear differences in pricing models across freelance fields. **Time-based billing**, especially daily rates, is **dominant** in **consulting, IT, admin, HR, and event services**. However, in creative and content-driven fields like **Writing, Web Design, UX/UI, and Photography/Videography, project or package pricing** plays a much bigger role.

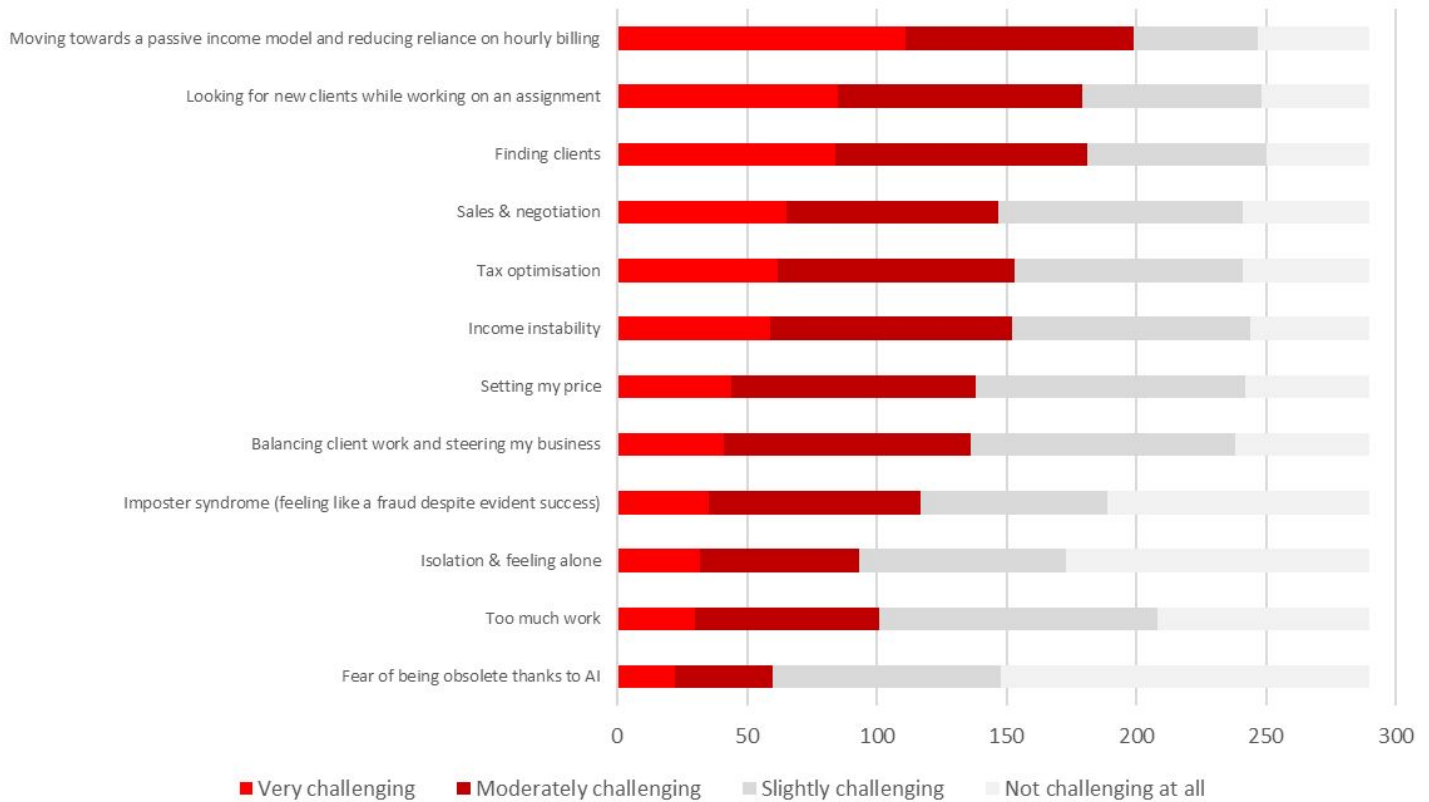
Value-based pricing models, while still niche, appear more often in roles like **Sales & Business Development** or **Coaching**. Interestingly, fields with more standardized deliverables or clear outcomes are more likely to use alternative pricing structures. This supports the idea, which is also reflected in freelancers' stated ambitions and challenges, that many seek to move away from rigid time-based models in favor of more flexible, value-aligned approaches tailored to their work.

Challenges

What hinders active freelancers? And do they want to stay as freelancers?

Challenges

Freelancing in Belgium: A complex mix of strategic, financial, and emotional challenges



Passive-income pivot reigns supreme: freelancers rank **moving to passive income over hourly billing** as their #1 goal, likely eager to have more free time and/or seeking stability.

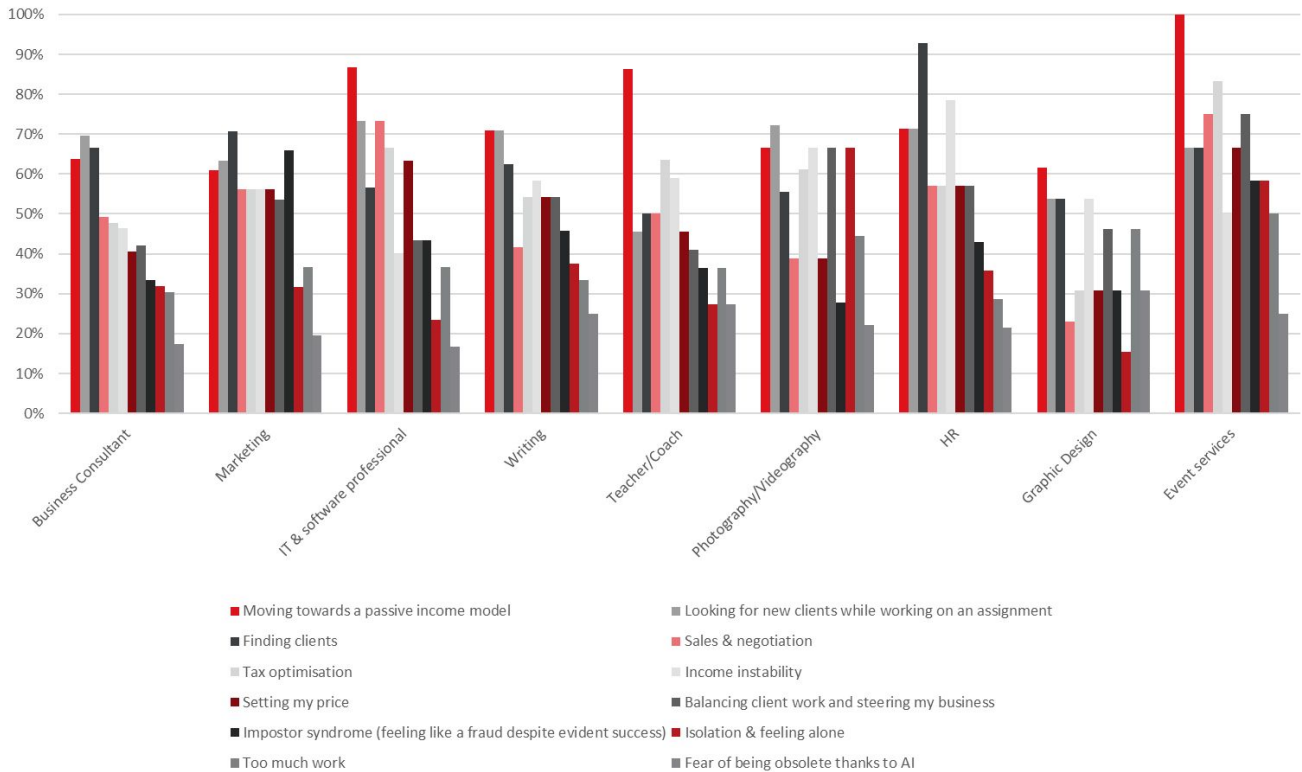
Client acquisition remains daunting: “**finding clients**” and “**prospecting while on assignment**” occupy spots #2 and #3, each with over 50% calling them moderately to very challenging. And, with “sales & negotiation” added, 3 of the top 5 hurdles boil down to closing contracts.

Emotional toll is real: a third of freelancers find mental wellbeing challenges moderate to highly challenging, whereas fear of AI-driven obsolescence sits near the bottom, underscoring mental well-being as a key concern.

Freelancing is multifaceted: today’s independent work blends commercial, financial and emotional challenges.

Challenges - by profession

Challenges vary widely by profession



This chart shows the answers of "moderately to very challenging"

Freelancers seemingly split into two camps with their challenges:

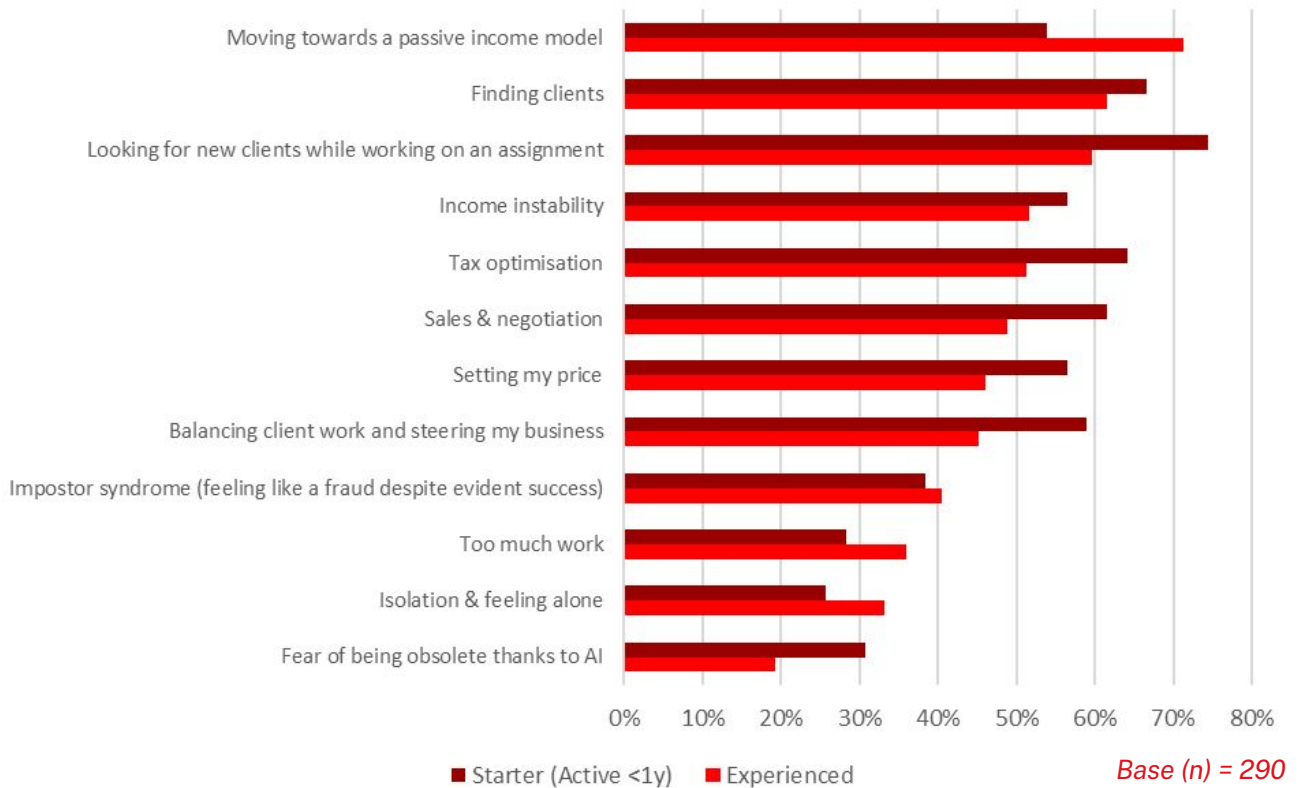
- **Passive-income first: IT & software, writing, graphic design, event services, and HR** prioritise escaping hourly billing for **steadier, scalable revenue**.
- **Contract-closers: Consultants, marketers, and photographers/videographers** struggle more with **finding and pitching clients**. Three of their top five pain points involve **landing and negotiating work**.

Those chasing passive income may benefit most from **training on scalable offers, productised services, and recurring revenue models**, while those focused on client acquisition need **sales skills, lead-generation strategies, and negotiation support**.

Tax optimisation is clearly a struggle for many freelancers.

Challenges - by experience

Freelance challenges shift with experience level



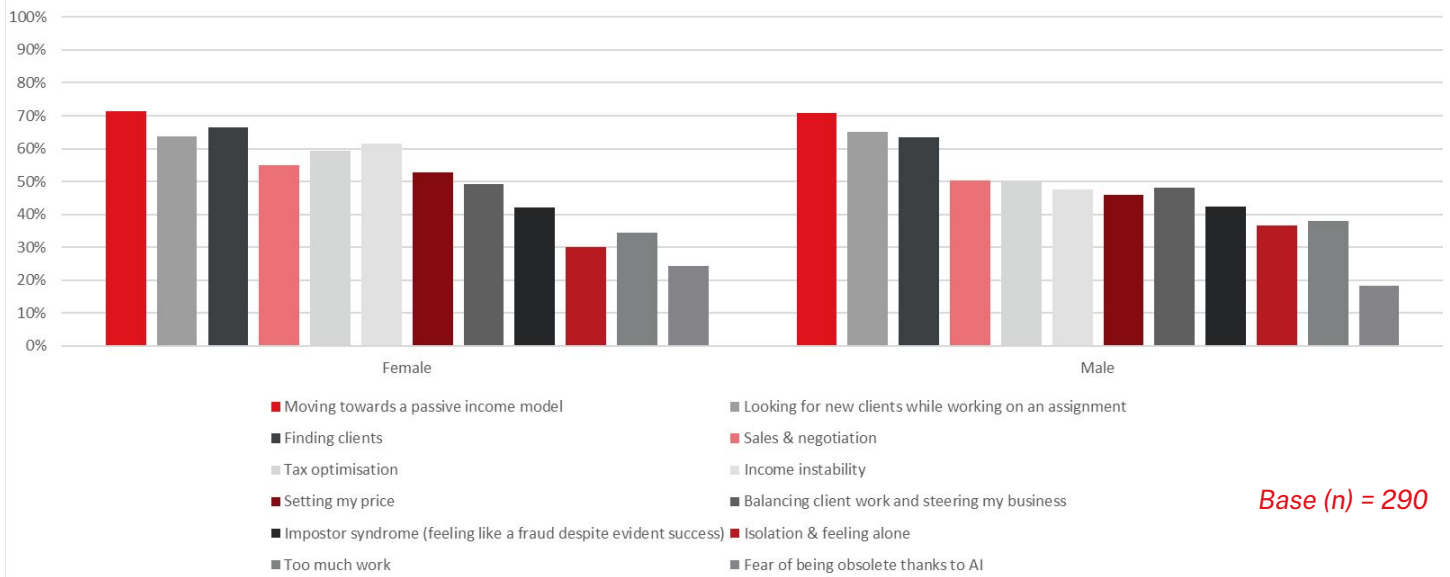
This chart shows the answers of "moderately to very challenging"

You can see that starters struggle more across the board with their biggest pain points all tied to **customer acquisition** and **delivery**; prospecting new clients mid-assignment, simply finding leads, negotiating deals and juggling project work with business development, plus the admin burden of tax optimisation. Experienced freelancers still find client work challenging, but to a lesser degree. For many, **creating scalable, passive-income streams has become a more prominent challenge**, reflecting an interest in diversifying revenue beyond client projects.

Interestingly, income instability registers nearly the same for both groups, underlining how the **feast-or-famine** cycle is baked into the freelance model. Perhaps one reason the passive-income path holds such strong appeal.

Challenges - by gender

Freelancers face similar issues – some hit harder for women



Men and women freelancers share remarkably similar top concerns; **moving toward a passive-income model, finding clients** and **prospecting alongside existing projects** all register within just a few points of each other for both groups.

However, **women** report noticeably higher anxiety around **income instability, tax optimisation** and **setting their prices**, whereas **men** feel **isolation** slightly more acutely, and **imposter syndrome** scores are virtually identical.

Women often lack access to peer networks for **fee-setting** and **tax tips**, so pricing and filings feel riskier. Coupled with well-documented confidence and negotiation gaps; only about 12.5% of women negotiate job offers versus 50% of men [Harvard Business Review](#) and higher loss aversion [University of Bath](#), they may undercharge or hesitate to push back on fees. Add greater caregiving demands and less time for financial planning, and it's clear why **income stability, pricing** and **taxes** hit women particularly hard.

Challenges - Additional challenges from open responses

Structural, emotional, and practical hurdles

Freelancers shared **valuable qualitative insights** beyond the predefined options:

- **Structural challenges:** high taxes, unclear legal rules, limited benefits
- **Market pressure:** rates undercut by less experienced peers or price-driven clients
- **Client behaviour:** unpaid scope creep, poor onboarding, preference for hires
- **Personal growth:** shifting fields, redefining services, burnout
- **Community needs:** more peer exchange, especially in niche sectors

Summary:

The biggest challenges are business- and client-driven rather than technology-driven: **finding clients, balancing work with business development, moving beyond time-based billing, income instability, and setting prices.**

Freelancers **juggle multiple roles** and **face emotional, strategic, and financial pressures** alone.

Solutions:

Pricing-and sales support, peer networks to reduce isolation, practical coaching, and improved policy frameworks.

Passive income for freelancers

What it means:

Passive income is often defined as **income streams that continue to flow even when you are not actively delivering work**. We include this overview because “passive income” frequently appeared in survey responses as a freelancer ambition. Many are searching for ways to earn beyond hourly work, but there is often confusion about what is realistically possible. In practice, few models are fully passive. Most require upfront effort, marketing, or maintenance. What is achievable is to build **scalable income streams**, where each new client or sale adds value without requiring the same increase in hours.

Evolving beyond hourly work:

The first step is moving away from hourly invoicing. Many shift to **project or deliverable pricing**, then to strategic packaged trajectories, where clients pay for expertise and outcomes. From there, some expand into **training or coaching**, sold per session or as a bundled programme, increasingly online.

Building an audience:

Another route is visibility. By positioning yourself as a **thought leader** or **influencer**, you can generate sponsorships, affiliate income, memberships, or speaking fees. Others create **digital products** (ebooks, templates, courses) or launch a **webshop**. These options are scalable but competitive, and require ongoing promotion.

Investing and assets:

Beyond business models, freelancers can also explore **investment-based income**; ETFs, stocks, real estate, or renting out what they already own. While these require capital and carry risk, they complement business earnings with more stable returns.

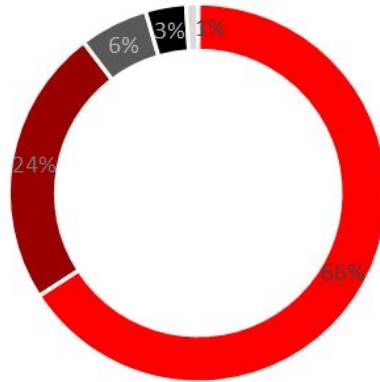
Pros, cons, and combinations:

Every model has trade-offs. Digital products scale but face heavy competition. Online courses need long lead times. Audience-based income requires constant engagement. Investments can fluctuate. For most freelancers, the solution is not one “passive stream” but a **mix of models** that together reduce dependence on billable hours and create resilience.

Continuation

Continuation

Despite challenges - most freelancers are here to stay



- Yes, I love freelancing and plan to continue long-term
 - Yes, for now, but I'm open to other opportunities
 - Not sure yet, I'm still figuring things out
 - Other
 - No, I'm considering a return to employment
- Base (n) = 290*

Despite the many challenges freelancers face, the vast majority express a strong commitment to their path: **most (90%!) respondents say they want to continue as freelancers.** A smaller share (24%) say they are open to other opportunities or still figuring things out, while only a very small minority are considering a return to employment.

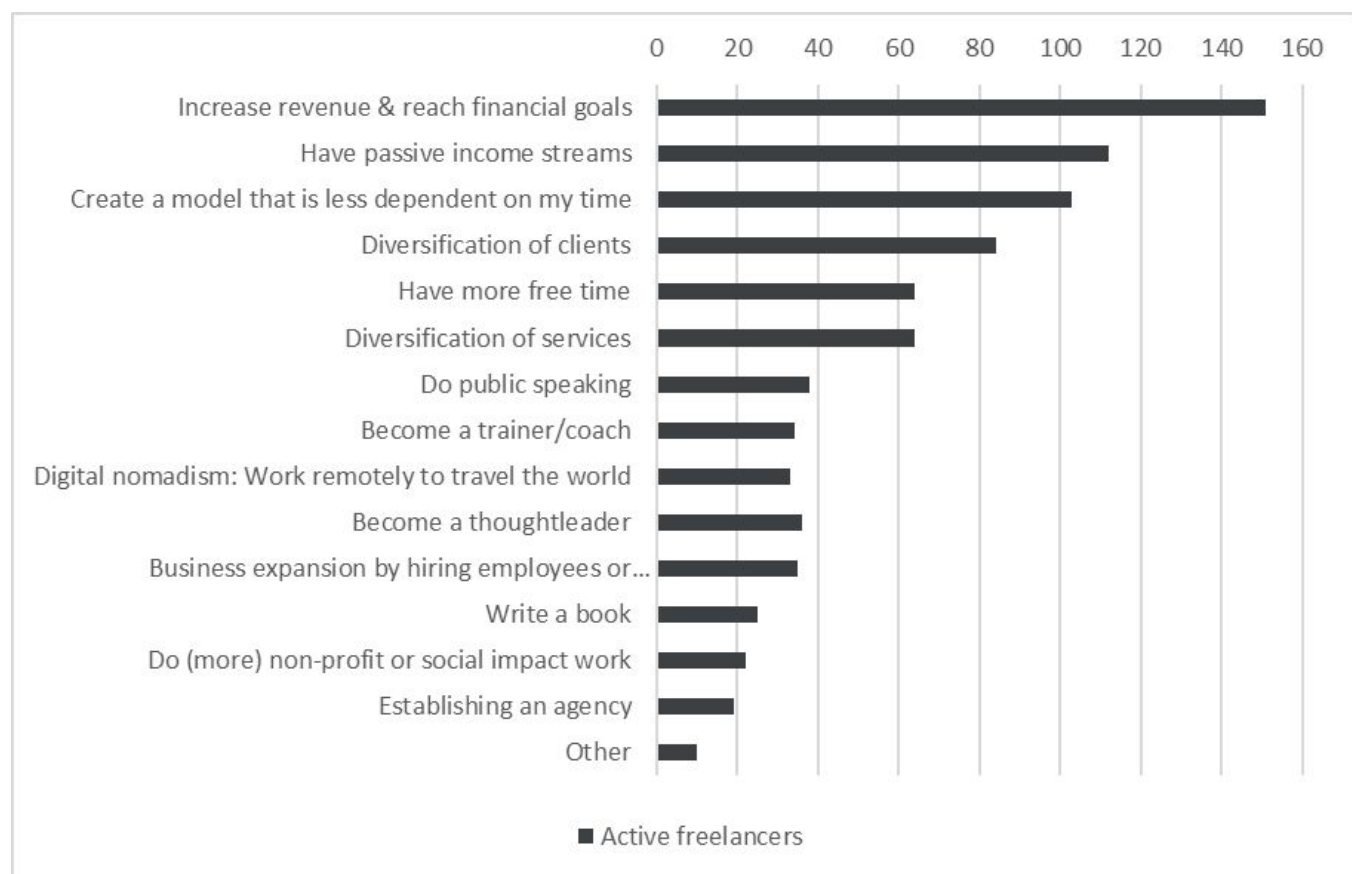
This reflects a high level of satisfaction and resilience within the freelance community, even in the face of financial, operational, and emotional pressures.

Ambitions

Freelancers' visions for the year ahead

What are your ambitions as a freelancer within the next year?

Financial growth takes priority in freelancers' 2025 goals



Note: Respondents could select more than one option.

Freelancers' **top goal** for the year ahead is clear: **earning more**. Among experienced freelancers, **54% want to increase revenue**, **40% aim for passive income**, and **37% want to work less for the same money**.

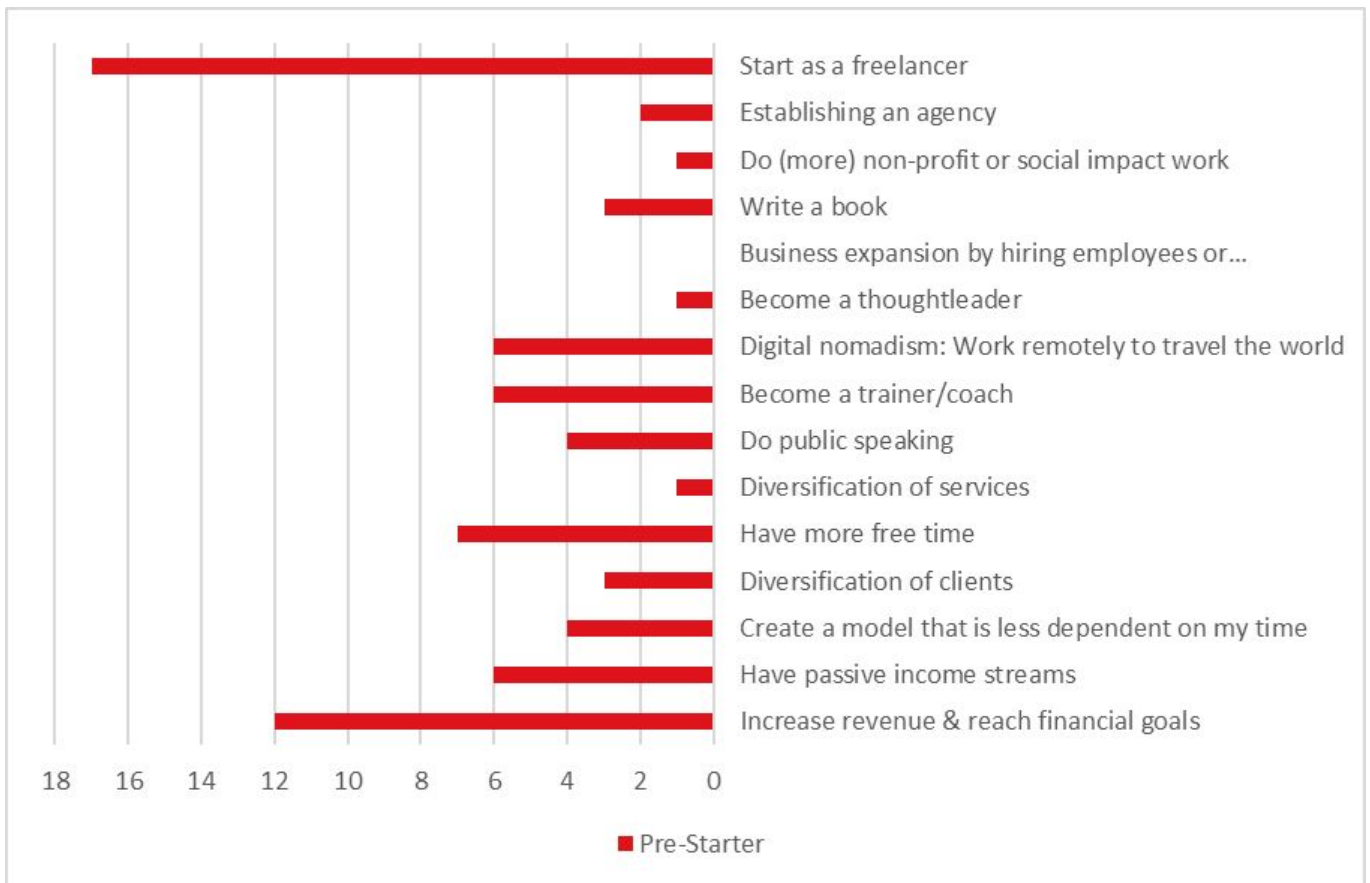
All three are about improving **income** and **stability**.

One in three also want to **diversify their clients**, likely to **reduce risk**.

In uncertain times, it's no surprise that **stability** is top of mind.

Pre-starters dream of freedom, flexibility, and starting strong

Two-thirds aim to officially start freelancing in the coming year

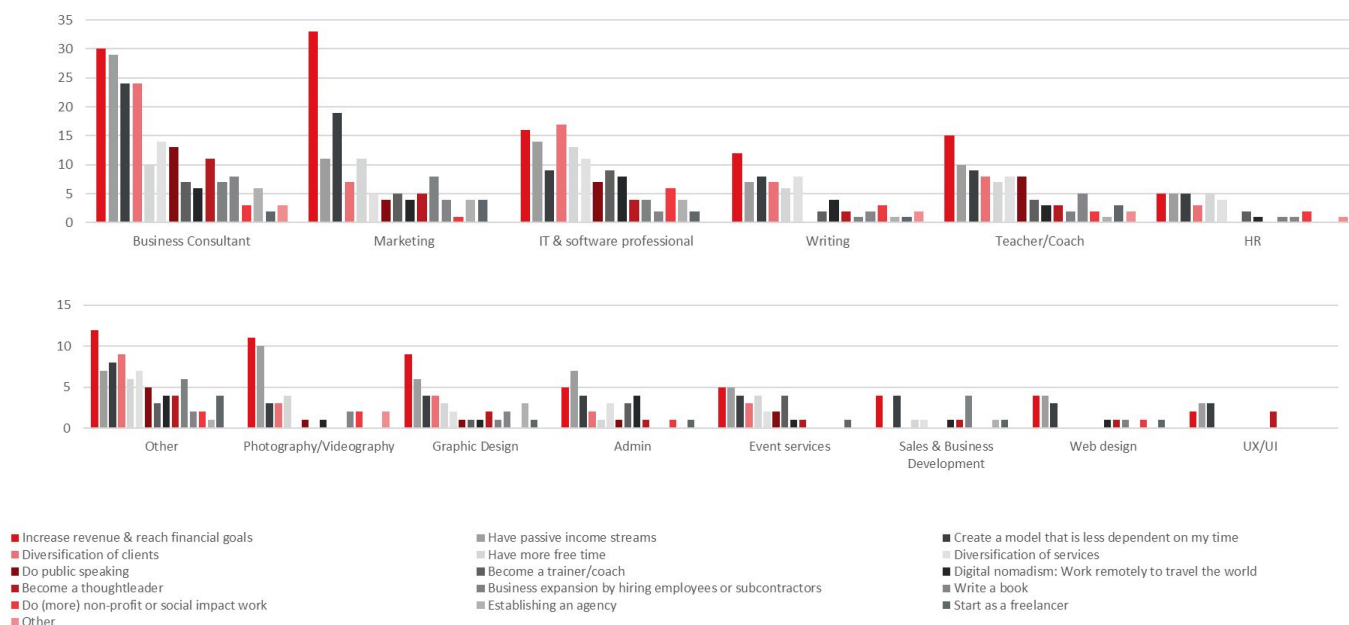


Pre-starters have similar goals but also care more about **time** and **location freedom**. Alongside earning more and gaining **free time**, many dream of building **passive income** or working as a **digital nomad**. It's not just about money, it's about creating a life with more freedom and meaning. The **coaching ambition** may reflect a desire to feel more impact or turn past experience into something valuable for others.

Interestingly about **2/3rds** of the pre-starters are **looking to start as freelancers** in the next year. What are the remaining pre-starters waiting for?

Ambitions - by profession

What freelancers want depends on the work they do



Note: Respondents could select more than one option.

Base (n) = 305

Business consultants and **IT professionals** often work in stable, well-paid fields, which may explain their strong focus on **passive income** and **client diversification**. With a solid base, they're more likely to plan long term.

Marketing freelancers are also drawn to **visibility**, **thought leadership**, and **coaching**, natural goals in a field where impact and being seen matter.

Creatives often value free time and personal expression. Their interest in **writing books** or **exploring new formats** fits the desire to stay inspired.

HR and **admin** freelancers focus more on **financial stability** and **growing their services**. These roles tend to attract people who prefer low risk and clear structure.

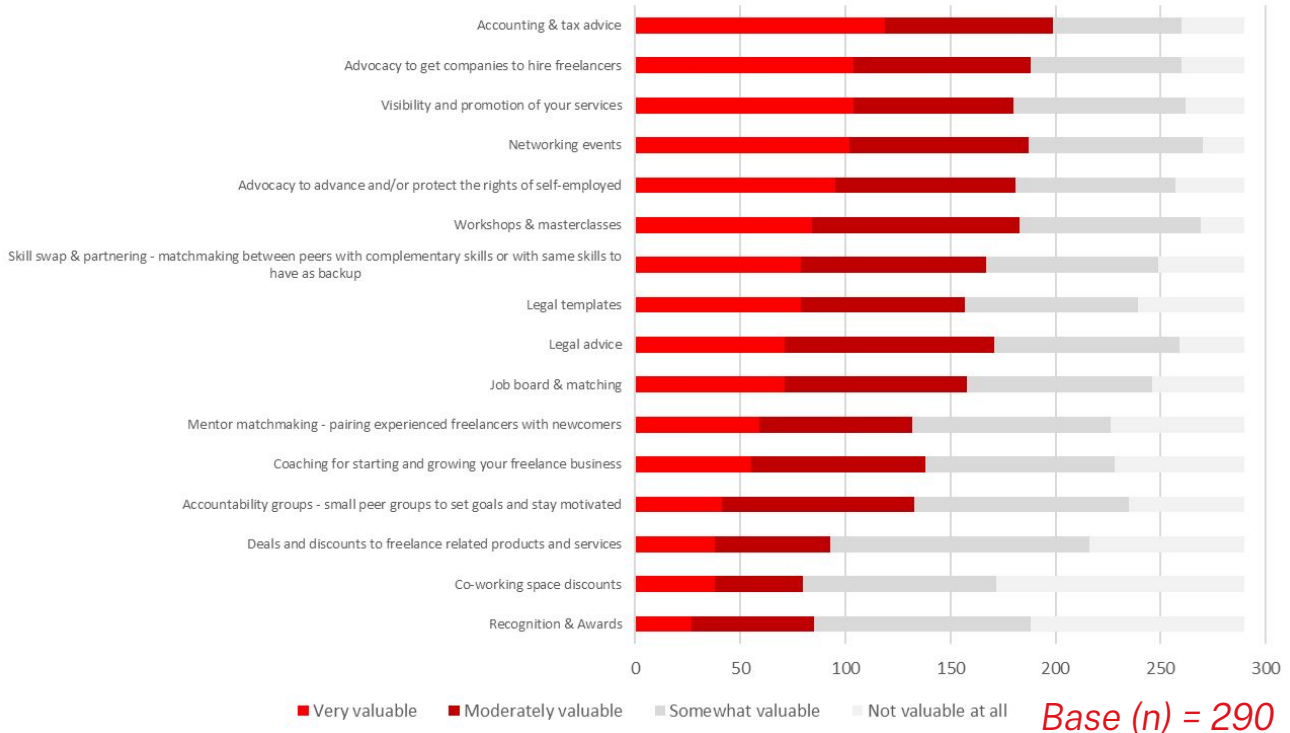
Freelance goals reflect more than ambition. They reveal what each profession values and how freelancers hope to shape their future.

Freelance business support

What do freelancers need to thrive?

Freelance business support

Accounting, advocacy, and visibility matter more than perks



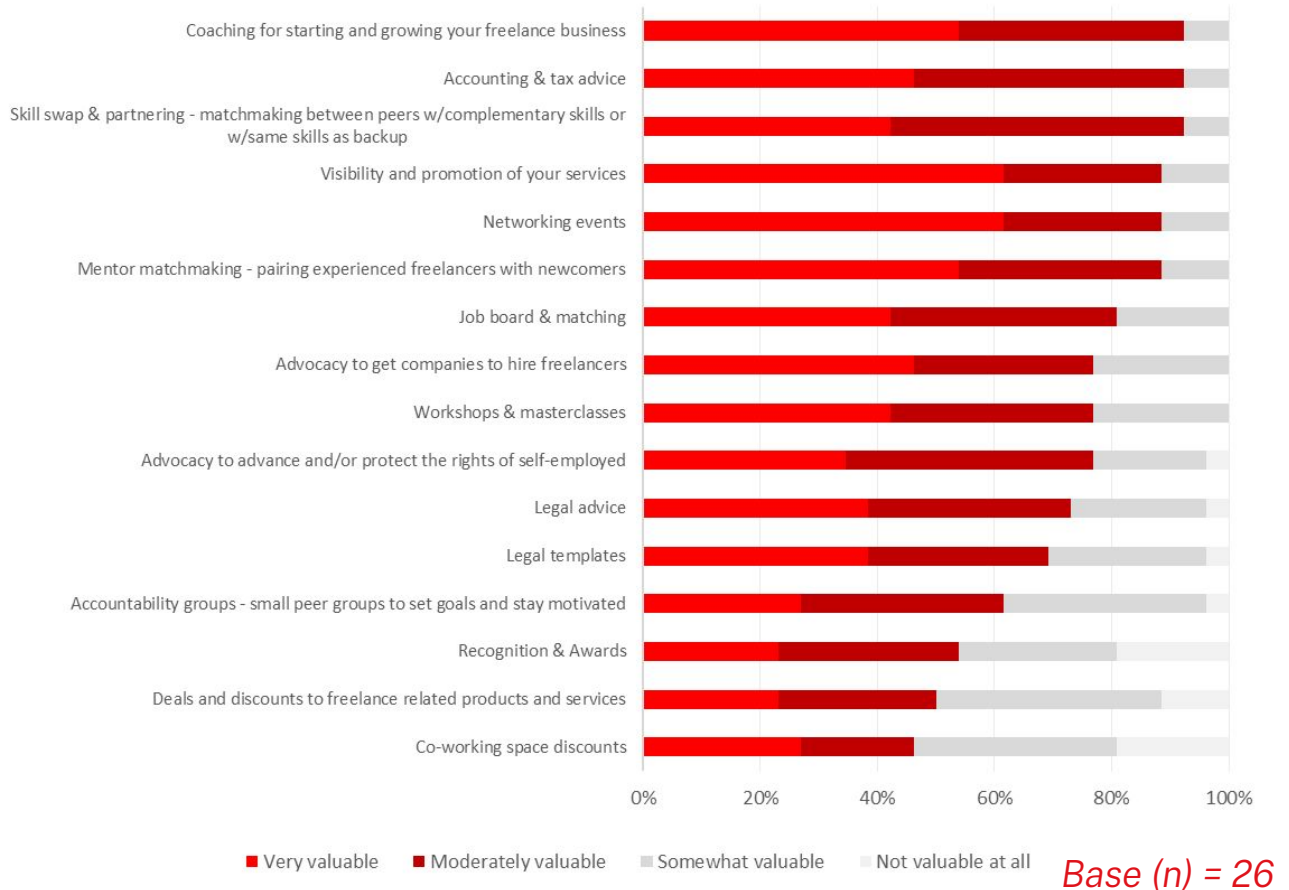
Freelancers clearly value practical support that helps them grow their business and secure more work. Accounting and tax advice tops the list, closely followed by advocacy to increase freelance hiring, visibility tools, networking, and legal help. These are **core needs** because freelancers must manage their finances efficiently to stay sustainable, and continually attract clients to maintain income flow.

Interestingly, the **top six support types** are **rated almost equally**, with 180 to 199 respondents finding them moderately to very valuable, showing no single silver bullet, but a steady demand for foundational support that underpins a viable freelance career.

Peer-based options like mentorship and skill swaps are appreciated but less essential, likely because they provide indirect rather than immediate business impact. Lifestyle perks such as coworking discounts and awards rank lowest, probably as they don't directly address income generation or operational stability.

Freelance business support - pre-starters

Aspiring freelancers show stronger appetite for guidance and peer connection



Accounting and **tax advice**, along with support to **find clients**, rank high for both pre-starters and experienced freelancers. The notable difference is that pre-starters place far more emphasis on **guidance, peer exchange**, and **confidence-building**, while experienced freelancers tend to rely on their own systems, established networks, and learned know-how.

Among pre-starters, 90% rated their top choices, such as **coaching, skill swaps**, and **mentoring** as moderately to very valuable, compared with **62–69%** of experienced freelancers. The same gap appears for “very valuable” ratings: **62%** vs. **41%**.

This likely reflects the fact that experienced freelancers already have the routines and connections that pre-starters are still working to build.

Conclusion

Conclusion of findings (1/2)

Conclusion of findings

Freelancing in Belgium is a diverse and maturing field, spanning most professions but with notable concentrations in business consulting, marketing, IT/software and creative services. The profile is relatively senior, with both women and men well-represented, and gender differences in challenges far smaller than expected.

Freelancers work with all types of clients; corporate, public, NGO and private and often on long-term assignments, even though flexibility in time is a top reason for starting.

Key takeaways

- **Pricing diversification:** Many freelancers aim to shift from hourly billing toward scalable or passive income models.
- **Client acquisition remains a core struggle:** Finding, pitching and negotiating contracts dominate the challenge list.
- **Tax optimisation and business foundations:** Across all levels, freelancers see financial literacy and tax strategy as critical growth levers.
- **Pre-starters' perspective:** Most want to freelance by choice, not necessity, but hesitate mainly due to financial insecurity, client-related pressures and administrative hurdles.
- **Support priorities:** Practical, business-growth-oriented help such as sales training, marketing skills, networking and clear tax/accounting guidance is valued above symbolic or lifestyle perks.

Conclusion of findings (2/2)

Actions for the Freelancers in Belgium community

Priority #1: Secure work and increase earnings

- Provide practical sales and marketing training to help especially beginners find clients.
- Offer guidance on value-based pricing and productised services for experienced freelancers.
- Share real-world examples and case studies from peers who have successfully made these shifts.
- Secure partnerships with job-matching agencies and platforms, and explore other channels that can connect freelancers to more clients.

Priority #2: Strengthen business foundations

- Help pre-starters with their admin and reduce financial uncertainty by raising awareness about payrolling solutions such as Tentoo, and providing clear information on social security and related obligations.
- Deliver accessible, relevant training on financial planning and tax optimisation.
- Facilitate networking and peer-learning opportunities to expand freelancers' support systems.
- Advocate for fairer policies and better recognition of freelancers' needs.

How we'll improve the next survey

- Add a question about how freelancers find clients
→ This directly addresses the top challenge reported and offers actionable insights.
- Include a question about current revenue
→ Essential for understanding financial context and setting benchmarks.
- Provide an option to indicate primary vs. secondary income source
→ Helps distinguish full-time vs. side freelancing, which affects rates and ambitions.
- Split "Business Consultant" into more specific professional categories
→ Will make future data on pricing, client types, and challenges more meaningful.
- Review all "Other" responses to identify missing categories or options
→ Ensures the survey reflects the diversity of freelance work.
- Add CommV as a selectable business form
→ This was frequently mentioned and is easy to implement.
- Include a question about tools or platforms freelancers rely on
→ Adds depth to understanding how freelancers work and where support is needed.
- Add a question about tax/accounting support or concerns
→ One of the top needs expressed – this deserves specific focus in future editions.
- Explore ways to identify potential partnerships
→ For example: tax advisors, platforms, coworking spaces, or service providers that align with freelancer needs.
- Aim for a larger and more diverse sample – including outreach in other languages if resources allow
→ Important for representation, though dependent on resources.
- Make the survey more visually appealing
→ Include improved graphs and visual elements to convey information more clearly
- Consider a separate survey for pre-starters
→ Their needs are distinct and deserve tailored attention – but can be handled separately if needed.

Disclaimer and future plans

This is our first survey and we intentionally kept the format focused for clarity and accessibility. We welcome your feedback. Please send suggestions to info@freelancersinbelgium.be.

Some points to keep in mind:

- This is a self-selected sample, mostly drawn from the Freelancers in Belgium community and social media.
- The results reflect the respondents, not the entire Belgian freelance population.
- We did not conduct weighted sampling or complex data modeling, still, with over 300 participants, the findings offer a strong and diverse snapshot.
- Respondents could by some questions select more than one option for many questions, so percentages do not total 100%.
- To encourage participation, several questions used pre-filled multiple-choice options. While open-ended questions often provide richer and more sincere insights, quicker formats tend to boost response rates.
- Respondents could always add their own input via an "Other" option where relevant.
- We plan to run this survey annually to track changes, compare trends, and improve our collective understanding.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who participated. Your input is helping build a more informed, connected, and empowered freelance community in Belgium.