

The 2021 survey of Italian Interim  
Managers performed by



Associazione Italiana dei Temporary Manager

In collaboration with the  
International Network of Interim  
Manager Associations

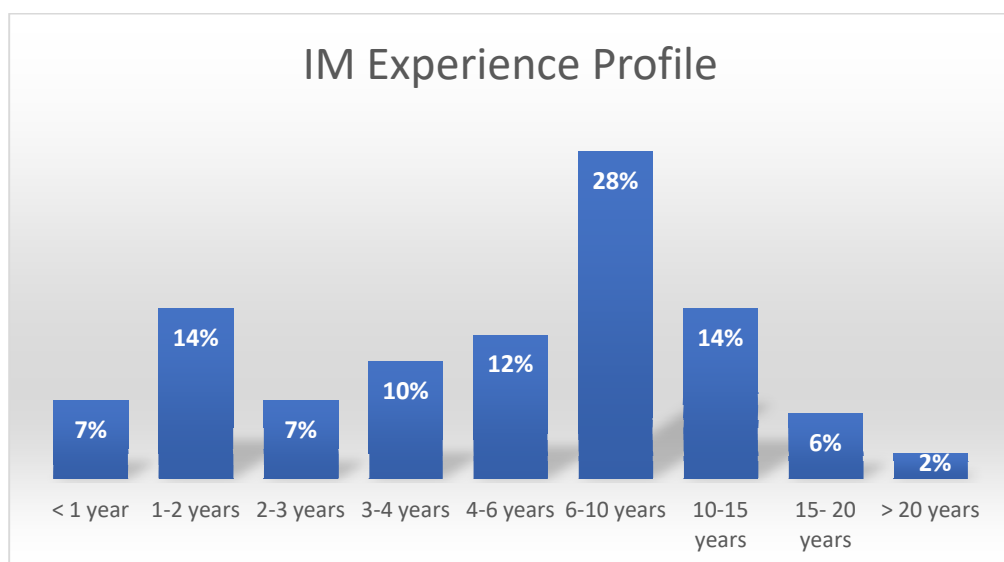
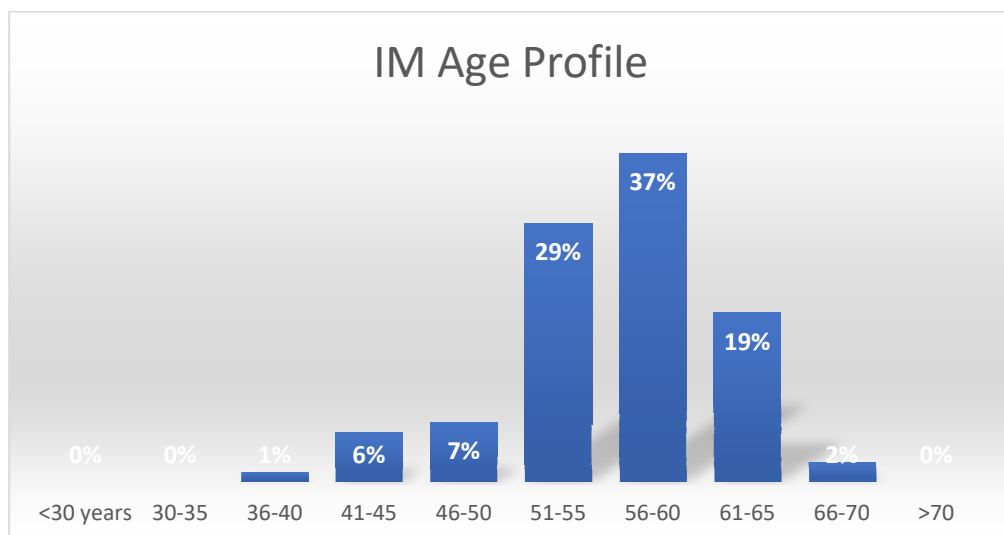


INIMA

## The Interim Manager

### Demographics

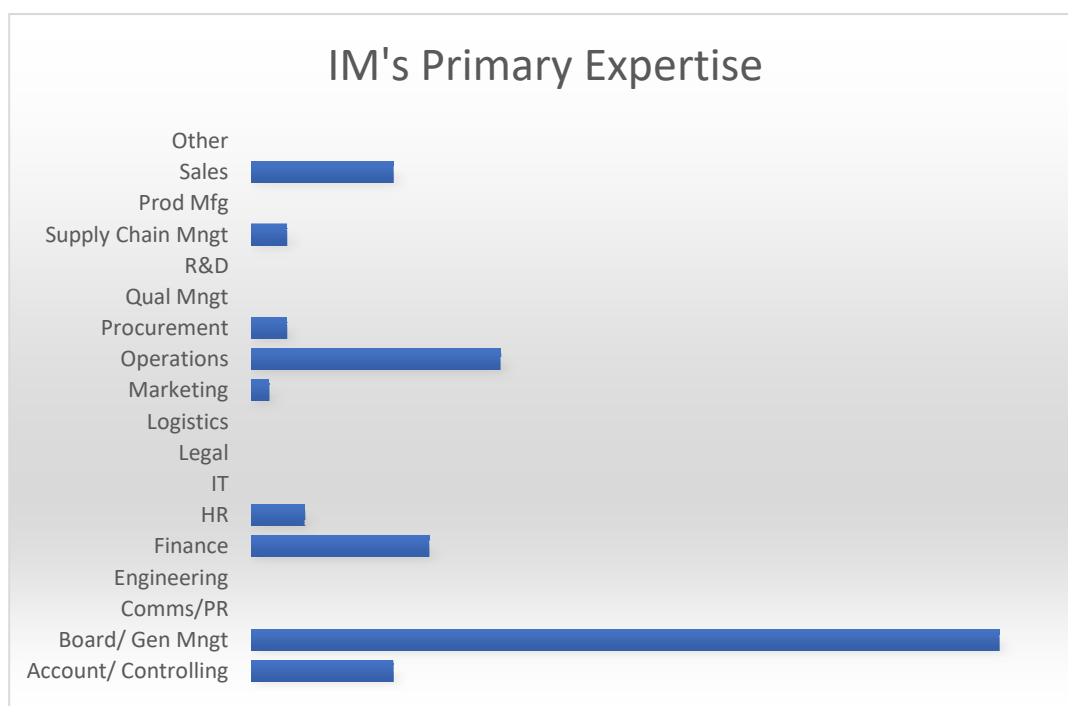
The typical Italian Interim manager in our survey was male, over-50 and with more than six(6) years of experience as an Interim professional.



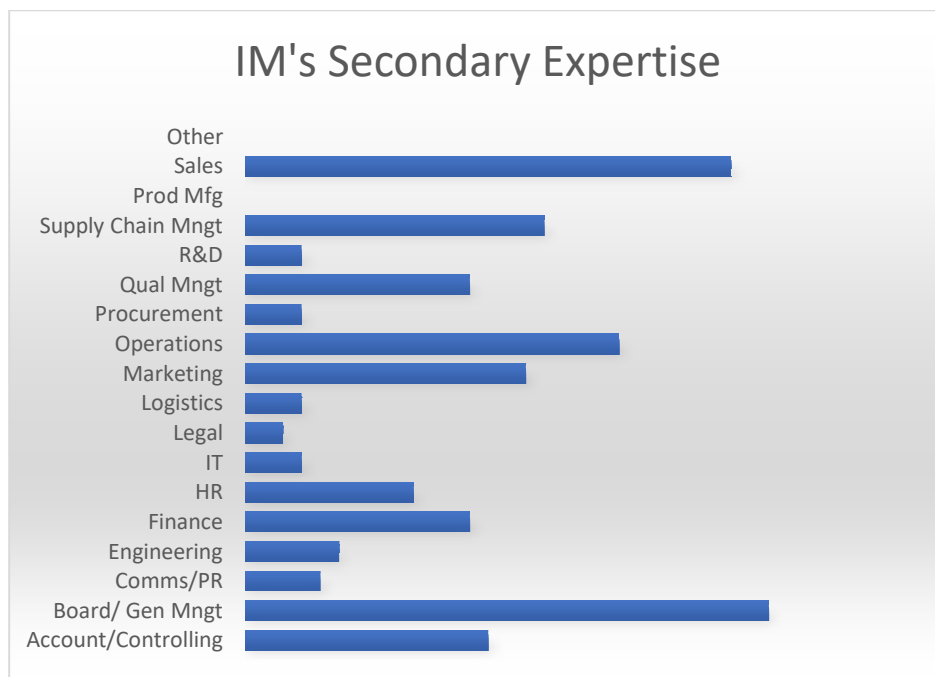
The high seniority was also shown by the management levels, with 72% of the interims covering C-level roles or above. On a negative note, only 4,5% of the respondents were women which reflected that Interim Management is still a male-dominated profession in Italy.

### Functional Specialities

The top three primary functional specialities of the interim managers in our survey were general management (47%), operations (16%) and finance (11%), so typical roles were CEO, COO and CFO.



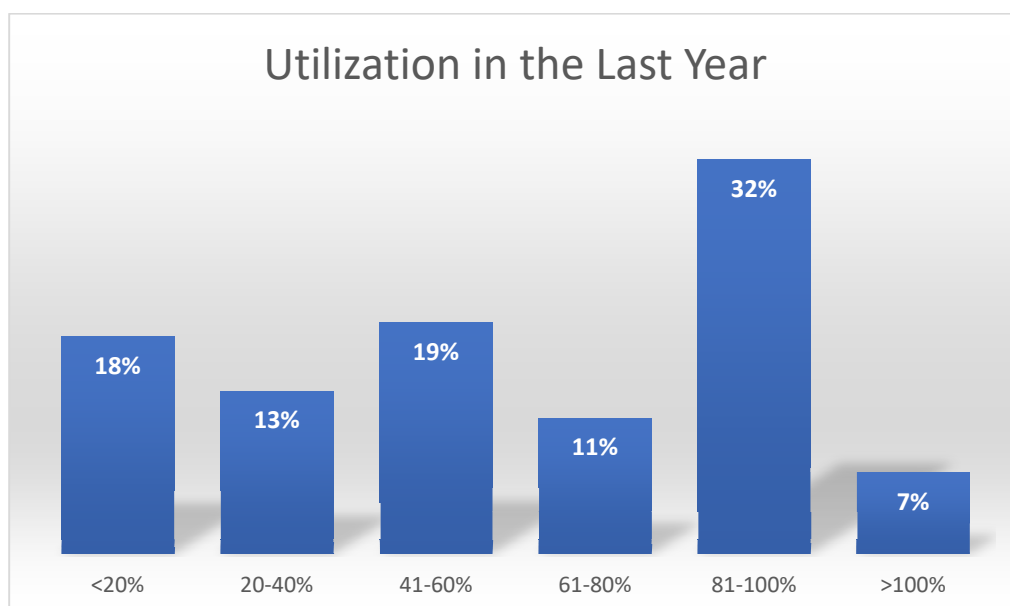
Interim Managers complemented their primary specialities with one or more secondary competences. So for example an interim General Manager also provided sales-marketing guidance, or conversely, an over-qualified COO brought CEO experience to the management team. Italian Interim Managers complimented their primary speciality with an average of 2.2 secondary competencies.



### Interim Manager Utilization

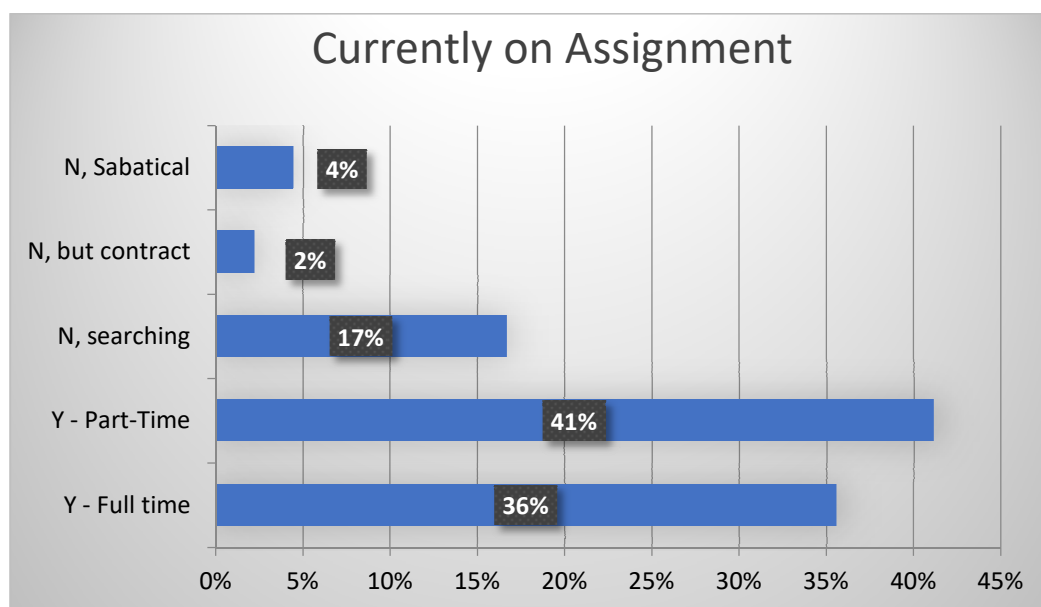
The Interim Managers were asked to report the proportion of billed days to total number of working days in 2020, the “utilization”.

On average it was estimated that respondents were utilized for 59% of the billable days.



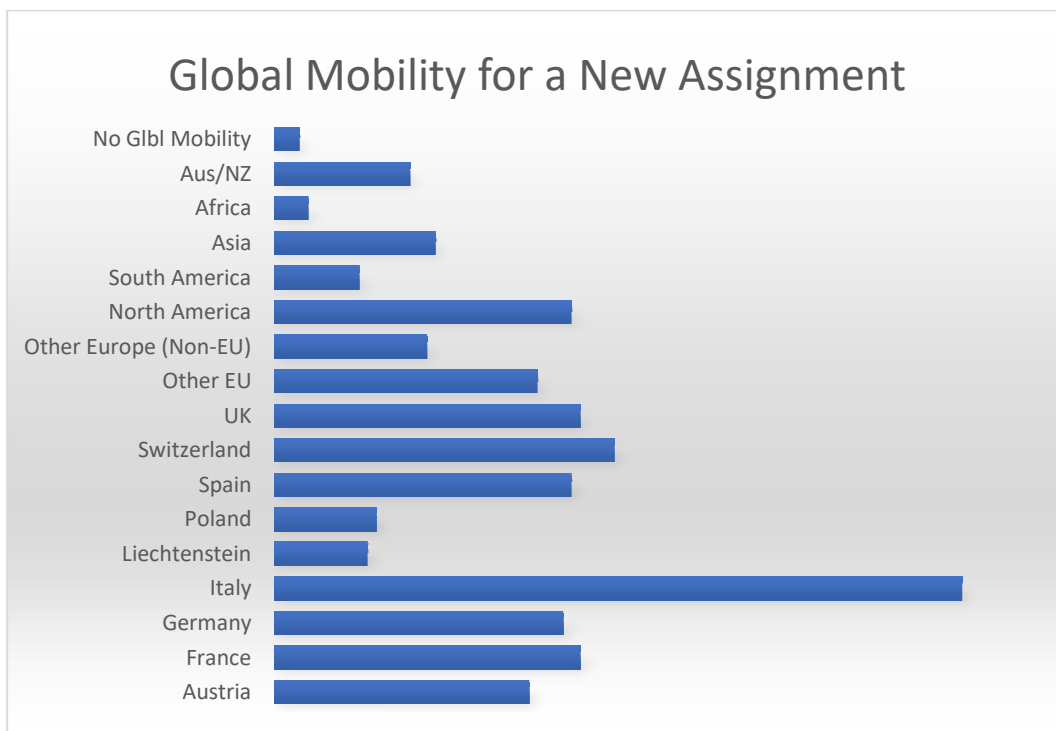
### Current Status of Interim Managers

The survey reported that 41% of current interim assignments were part-time, which was a preferred form of collaboration for SMEs. Managers looking for a new assignment or on a sabbatical counted for 23% of our sample.



### International Mobility

The vast majority of Italian Interim Managers stated their availability for international assignments and 70% had a preference for relocation to other INIMA partner countries. A notable 9.6% of managers stated availability for assignments in North America.

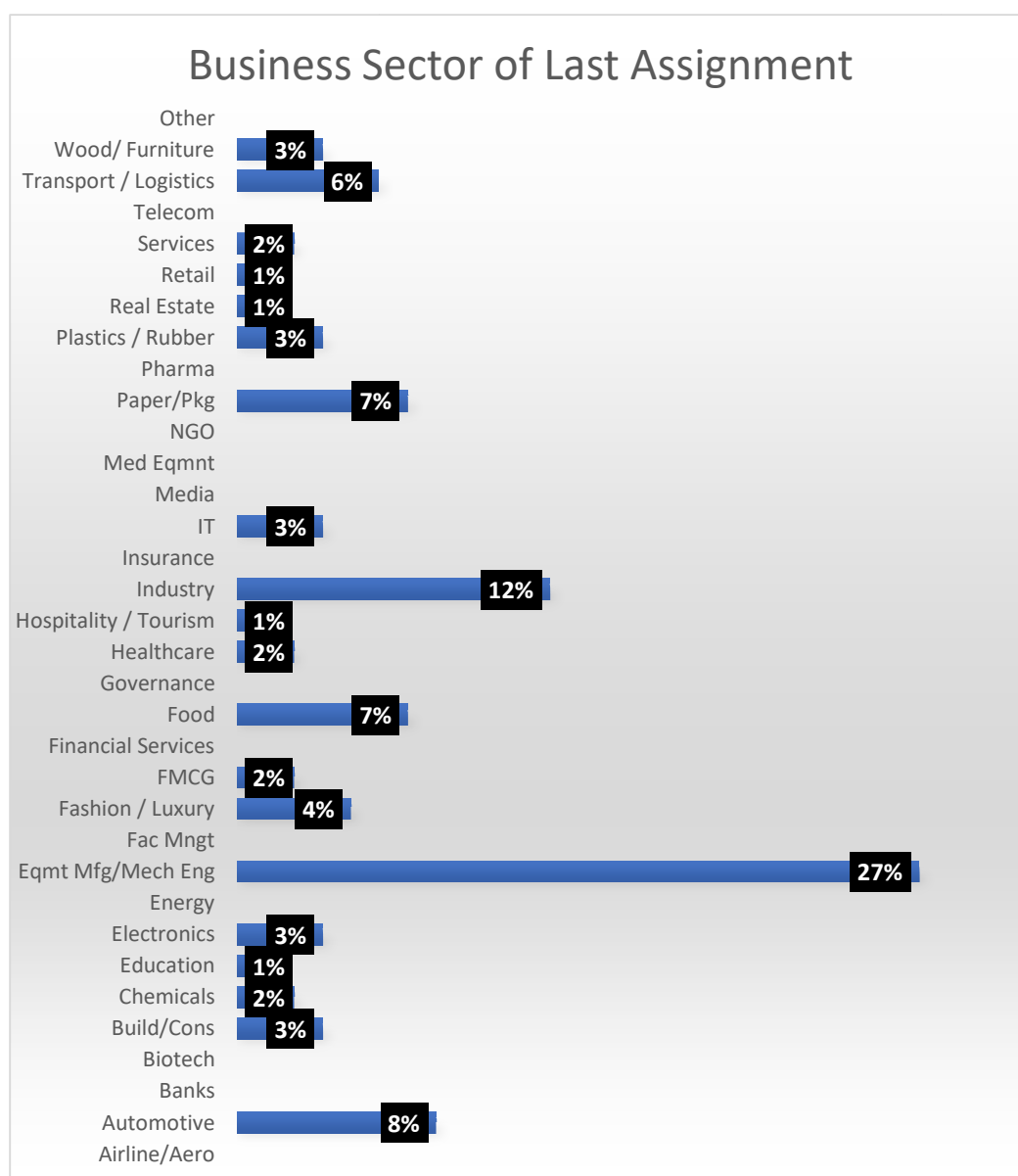


## The Clients

To give an insight into the 2020 IM market the Italian Interim Managers were asked to report details of their last assignment

### Sectors of Activity

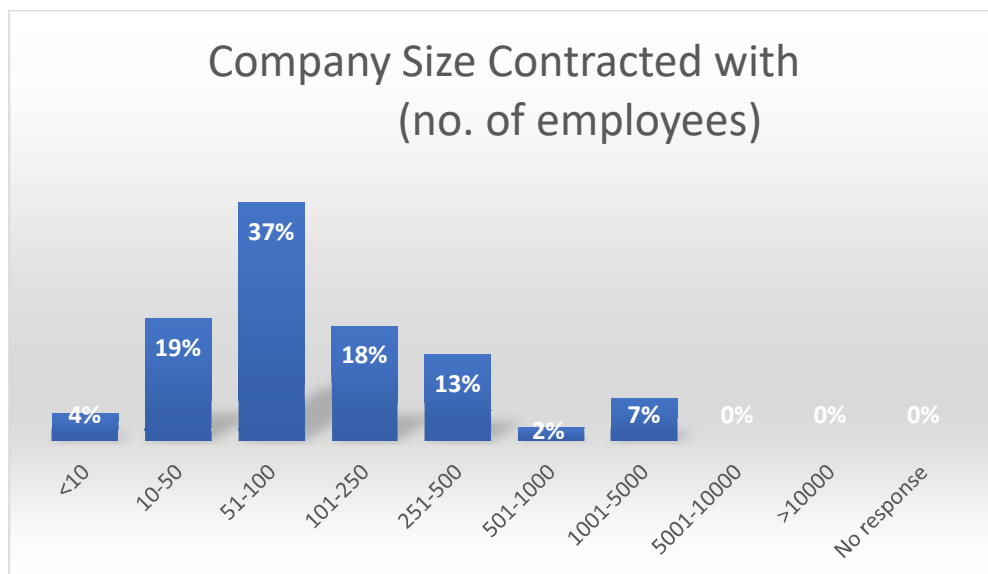
The coverage of Italian Interim managers was wide-ranging, clients came from 20 different sectors of activity.



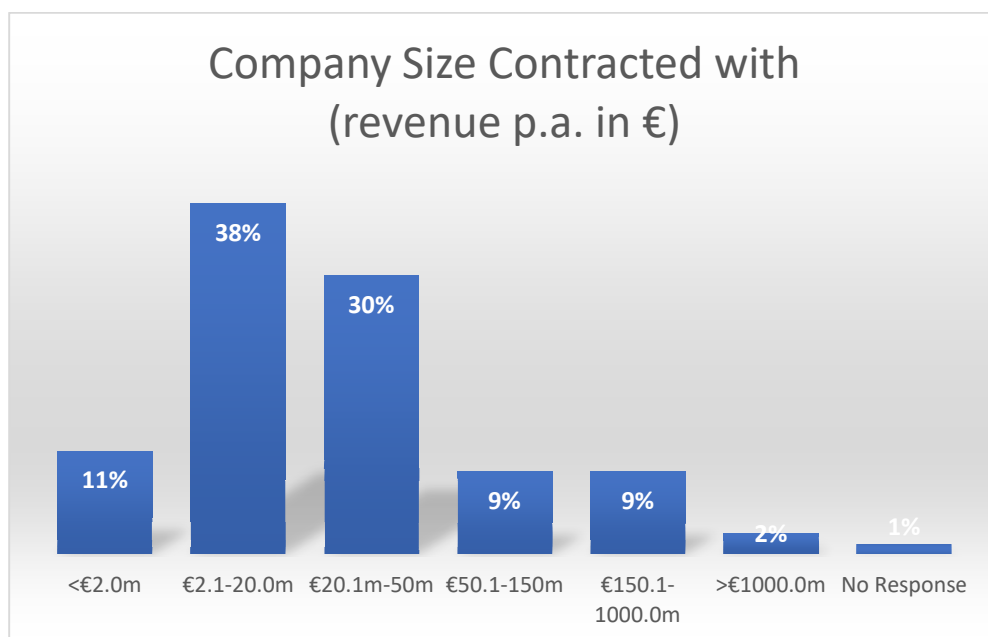
Size of company

As expected the majority of the companies were family-owned SMEs operating in the private sector.

The survey showed that 60% of assignments were in companies with less than 100 employees.



Alternatively from a sales perspective, 78% of the assignments were in companies with revenues less than € 50 million.

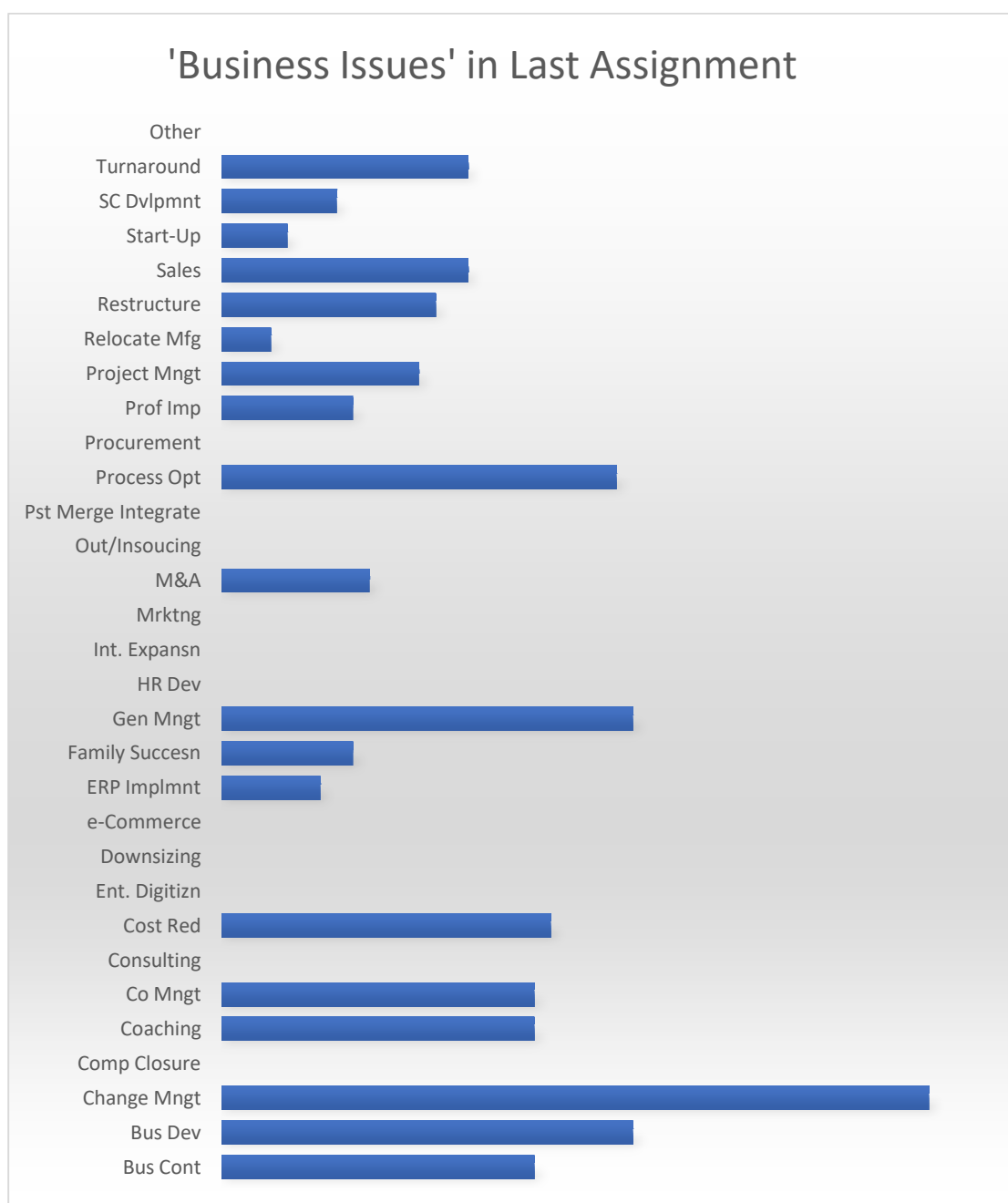




## The Assignments

### Key Issues

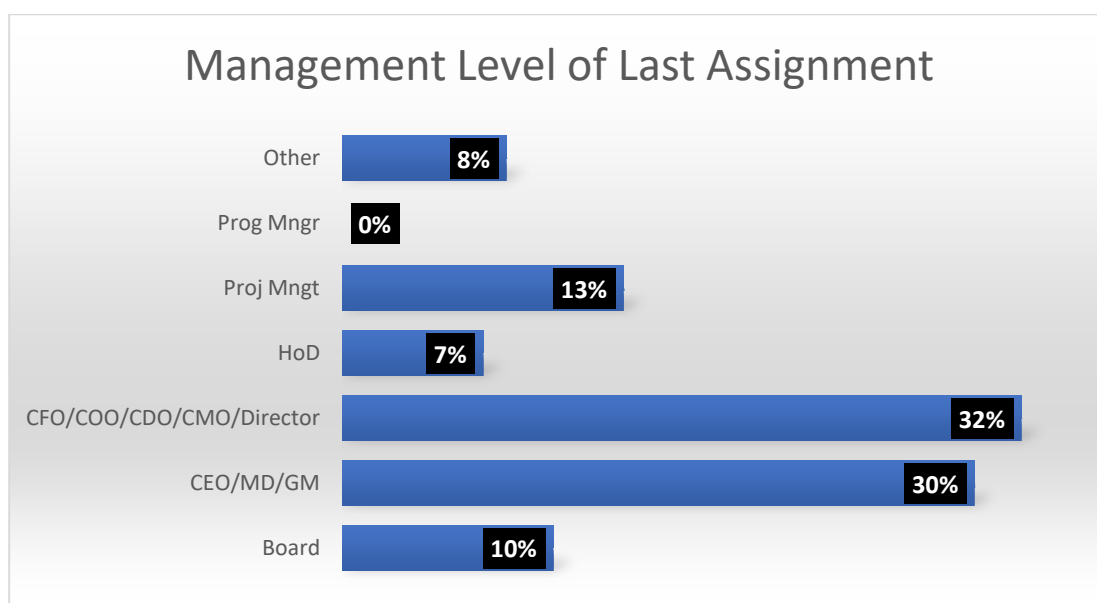
Interim Managers are change-agents by nature so it was no surprise that 51% of respondents reported change management as their biggest issue. The issues addressed by managers in their last assignments are shown in the following graph.



It was interesting to note that Interim Managers used their secondary competence of “sales” (31%) to improve a recurrent issue of their clients, “business development” (39%). Another issue of “business continuity” was addressed by interim managers as part of their main-role or as gap-assignments (21%). Also, Interim managers were active in company-wide change, such as turnarounds (18%), merger-acquisitions (11%) and family-successions (9%).

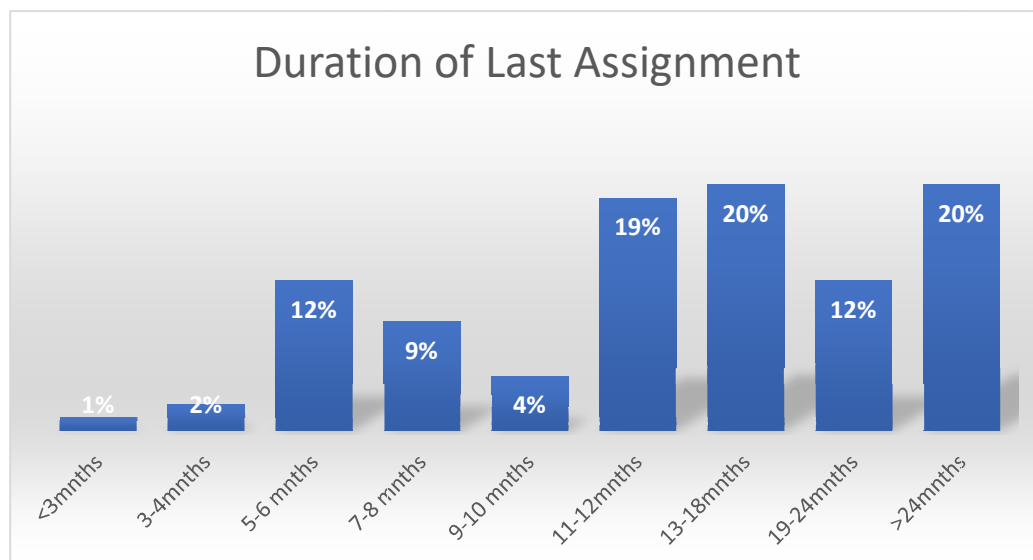
### Management Level

During their last assignments, the majority of managers (72%) covered roles at C-level or above.



## Duration

The assignments had an average duration of 14 months.

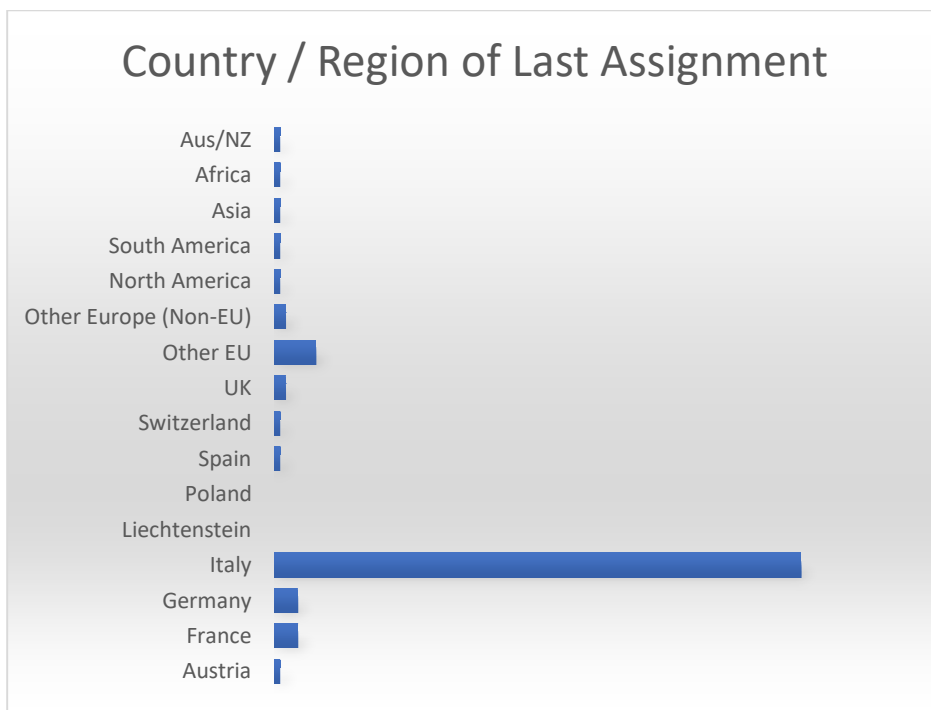


## Countries

As expected most of the Italian Interim Managers in our survey worked in Italy but their assignments also took them other to countries as a resident or on business trips:

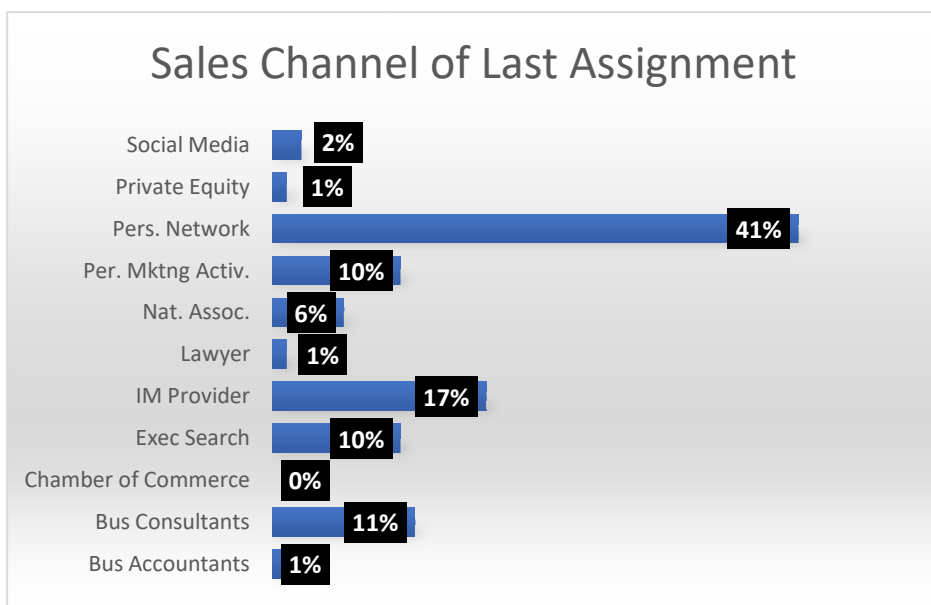
- France, four (4) managers;
- Germany, three (4) managers;
- Austria, the UK, Switzerland, Spain, one (1) manager;
- Other EU, four (5) managers;
- USA, South America, Africa, Asia, Australia/ New Zealand, Other non-EU, one (1) manager for each country.

The Italian Interim Managers were particularly active in INIMA partner countries.



## Sales channel

The largest sales channel was via the personal network of the Interim Manager(41%), Interim Service Providers came second with 17% of assignments.



A considerable proportion of assignments were landed through executive search(10%) and business consulting companies(11%), the sum of these two(2) channels provided more assignments than interim providers. It was noted that business consultancy and executive search were synergic, the first defined the need, the second provided the manager.

Personal marketing activities provided 7% of sales and included the virtual domain (websites, webinars) and real events such as seminars and public presentations

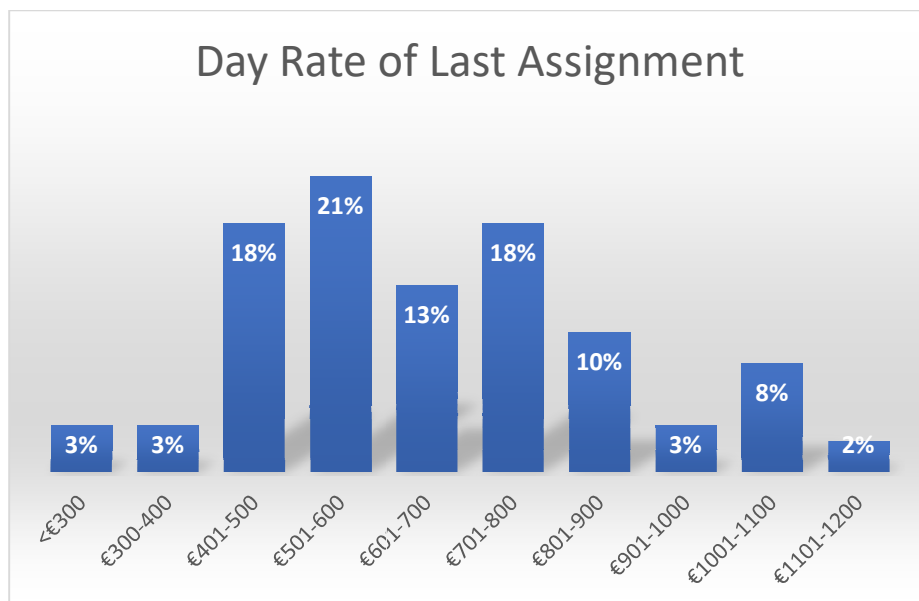
It was encouraging that the national association counted for 6% of assignments, from the Leading Network job-board or personal referrals from fellow members.

Business accountants and Lawyers had strong ties with family-owned SMEs so it was thought that a good proportion of assignments came through them. However, the survey showed that these sales channels were ineffective(2%), as too were private equities(1%).

### Day Rates

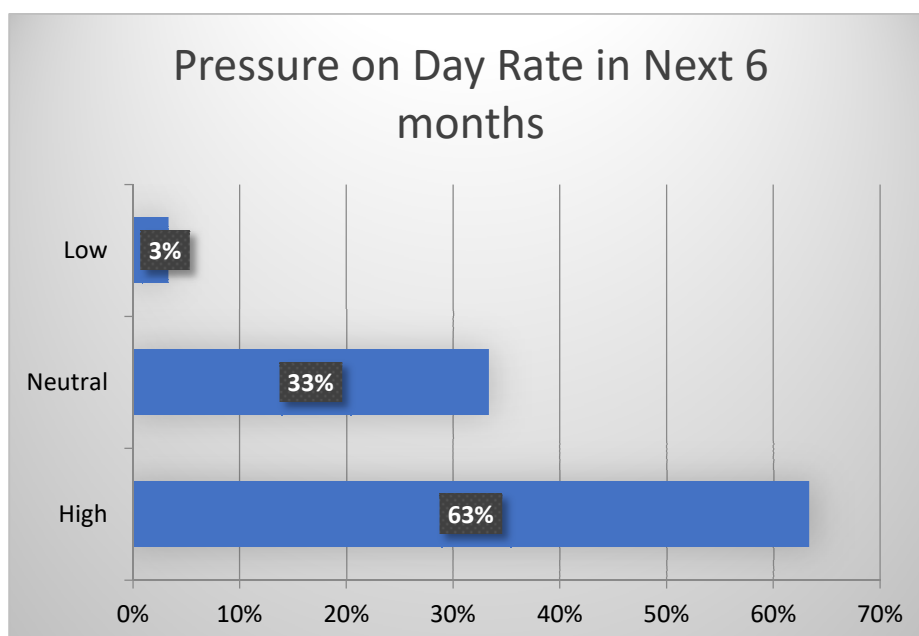
Managers were asked to provide the day rate that they billed on their last assignment (the net price, excluding expenses and VAT). This response was preferred as it was more objective than a yearly average or other formats.

The range of the day rates was extremely large, from €300 to €1400, which showed the diversity of services provided by the Interim Managers in our association. The estimated average daily rate of Interim Managers in Italy was €676, but this number had limited meaning because there was no “average interim”.



### Pressure on Pricing

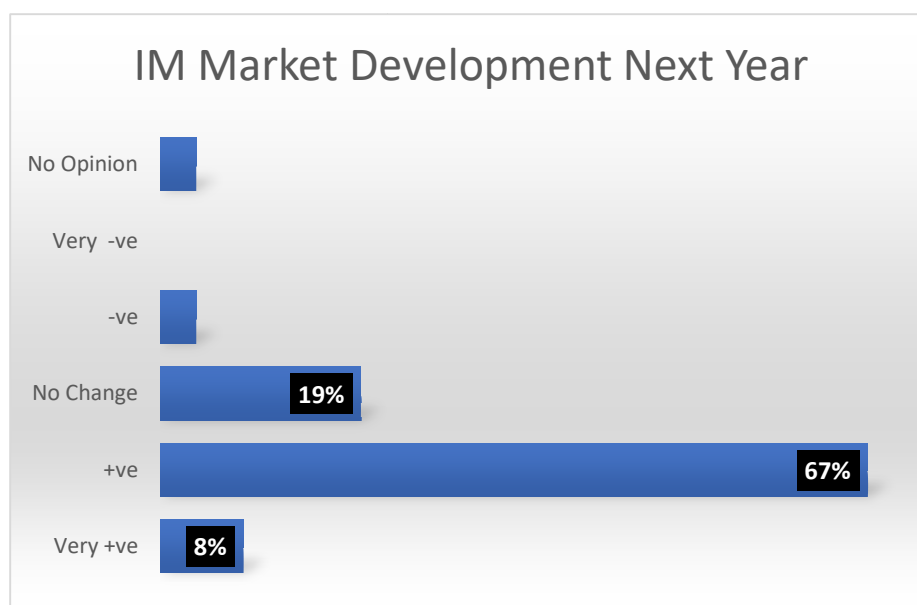
In the last six (6) months 59% of managers reported that there was high pressure on pricing during negotiation with the client, this pressure was forecasted to increase by a few points in the next six (6) months



## Trends

### Market Development

In our survey, 55% of managers judged positively the development of the market in 2020. The respondents were even more positive for the forthcoming year by ten (10) percentage points.



### Future View and key issues facing Interim Executives

In the survey, there was an open question, “What are the 3 biggest challenges for you as an Interim Manager in the next business year?”. This is a summary of the responses:

*“Covid will continue to change the “way of working” of the Interim Manager, during the **acquisition** of the assignment and its execution.*

*Permanent Managers released by companies are looking at interim management as a short-term solution. There is a concern of an **over-supply** of managers and pressure on **day-rates**. Practising interim managers express that the response to this challenge is to make **professionalism** the distinguishing factor and to extend personal **networks**.*

*The Interim Manager must become more oriented to short term **results** and be flexible to adjust to changing situations. There is an opportunity for the manager to acquire new technical **competences** and develop **soft skills**, that add value to the IM service.”*





## Background of the Survey

The survey was performed in January 2021 and restricted to practising interims who were members of the national association, 90 managers responded from a total membership of 182, which is a typical redemption for a survey of this type. A survey open to respondents outside of our association would have increased the sample size but at the expense of the sample reliability.

However, we estimated that our sample represented a significant number (6,3%) of the total practising Interim Managers operating in Italy (1434).