

The 2022 survey of Italian Interim  
Managers performed by



Associazione Italiana dei Temporary Manager

In collaboration with the  
International Network of Interim  
Manager Associations



INIMA

## 2021 was a good year for Italian Interim Managers

Our survey showed that business improved for Italian Interim Managers in 2021 with respect to the previous year, this was demonstrated by:

- increased billed days (+8%)
- increased average day rate €683 (+1%)
- decreased number of interim managers out of contract (-7%)

Interim managers had not predicted improvements in these KPIs when they were asked in January 2021, but it was good to see that they were wrong! The reality was better than the prediction, utilization and day rates increased, Interim managers networked effectively to find assignments and companies committed to full-time in preference to more flexible part-time assignments. The percentage of full-time assignments increased (+8%) whilst part-time assignments stabilized at the previous years' percentage.

The typical Italian Interim manager was male, over 55, C-level and experienced primarily as CEO, COO and CFO, the average also increased by two years in 2021

The top 5 issues encountered were change management, business development, process optimization, coaching and general management. It was noted that coaching had replaced cost reduction in the top 5 issues.

The types of interim management projects were improvement of process, function or projects(59%), turnaround of a company(23%), and gap assignment to temporary replace a permanent. (18%)

The top 3 industrial sectors remained metal-mechanical engineering, industrial and automotive but IT and food arrived in the top 5 (they replaced logistics and paper)

Personal networking generated even more assignments in 2021 (+17%), and was confirmed as the preferred sales channel for Italian Interim managers.

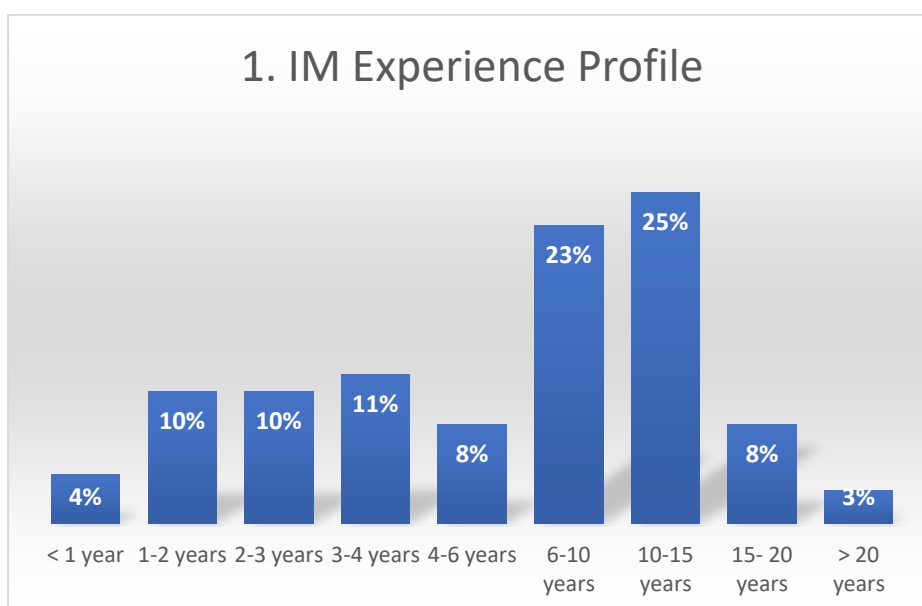
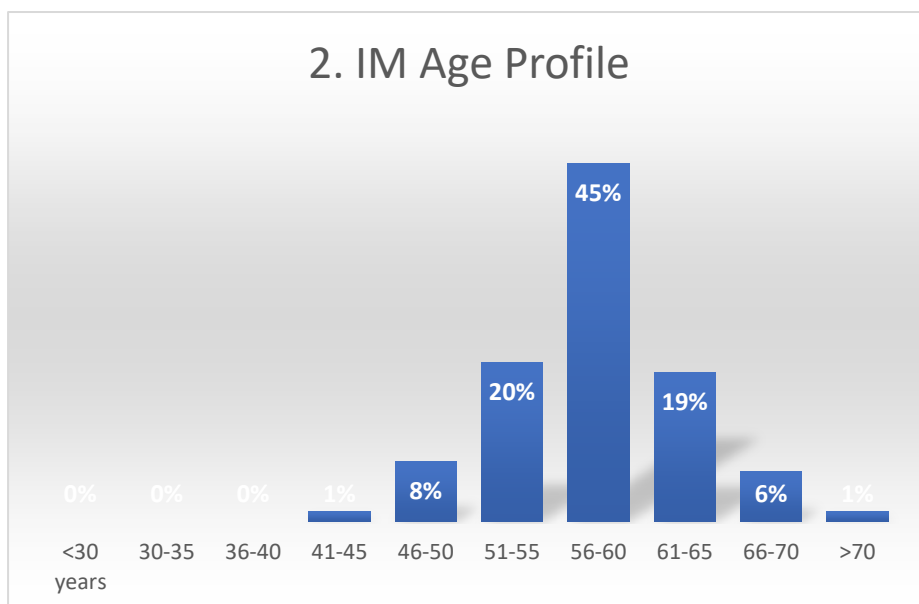
The members of Leading Network had a positive view on market development in the next 6 months (79%), but with continued pressure on day rate.

The survey included the demographics of the **managers**, the IM **clients** and the nature of the **assignments**, the same format was deployed by partners in France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. All the national reports and the European IM Survey were posted on the INIMA website.

# The Interim Manager

## Demographics

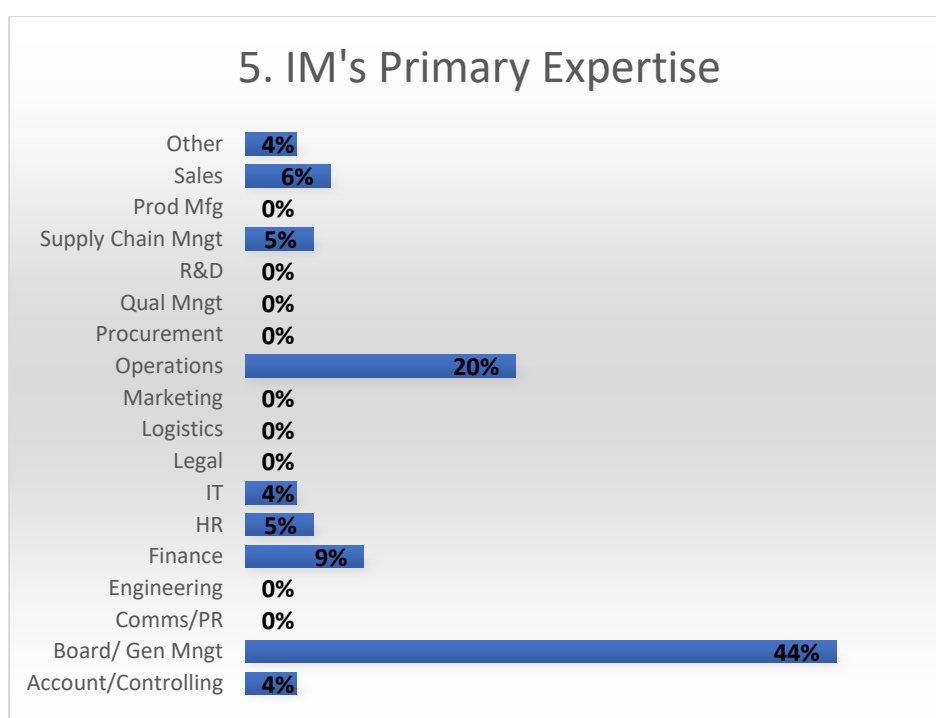
The typical Italian Interim manager in our survey was male, over-55 and with more than seven (7) years of experience as an Interim professional, the average age increased by 2 years in 2021.



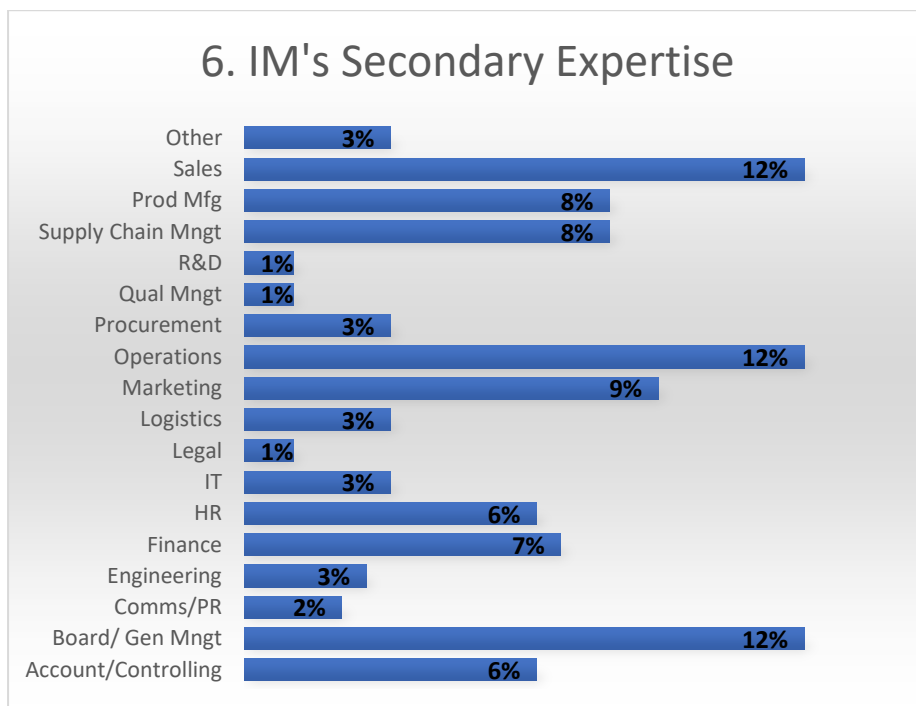
The high seniority was also shown by the management levels, with 75% of the interims covering C-level roles or above. On a negative note, only 8% of the respondents were women which reflected that Interim Management is still a male-dominated profession in Italy.

### Functional Specialities

The top three primary functional specialities of the interim managers in our survey were general management (44%), operations (20%) and finance (9%), so typical roles were CEO, COO and CFO.



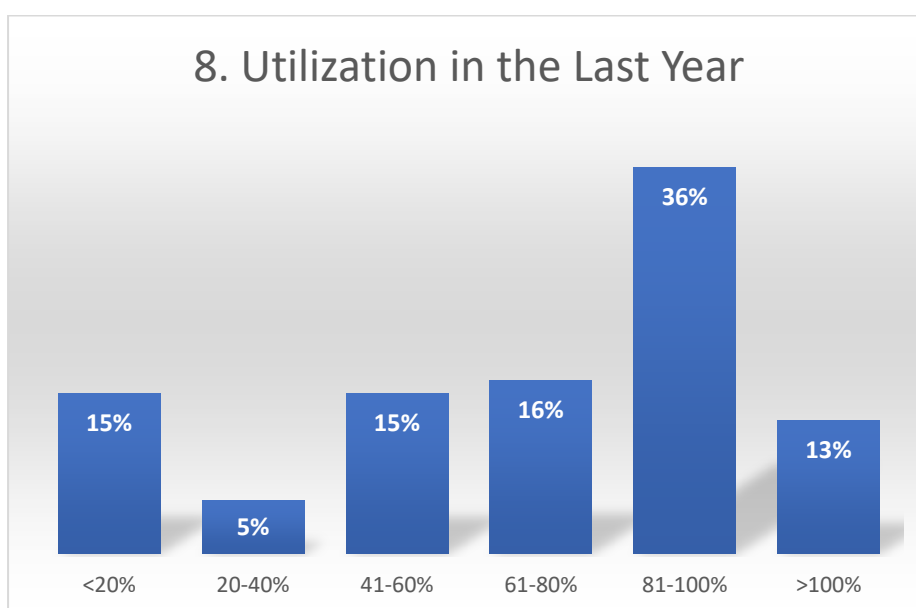
Interim Managers complemented their primary specialities with one or more secondary competences. For example an interim General Manager also provided sales-marketing guidance, or conversely, an over-qualified COO brought CEO experience to the management team. Italian Interim Managers complimented their primary speciality with an average of 2.3 secondary competencies.



### Interim Manager Utilization

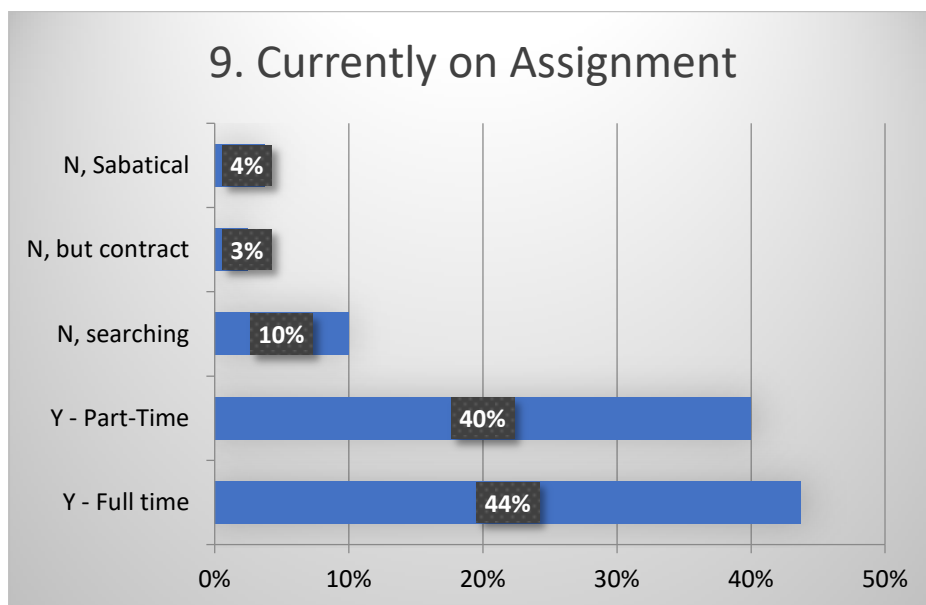
The Interim Managers were asked to report the proportion of billed days to total number of working days in 2021, the “utilization”.

On average it was estimated that respondents were utilized for 67% of the billable days.



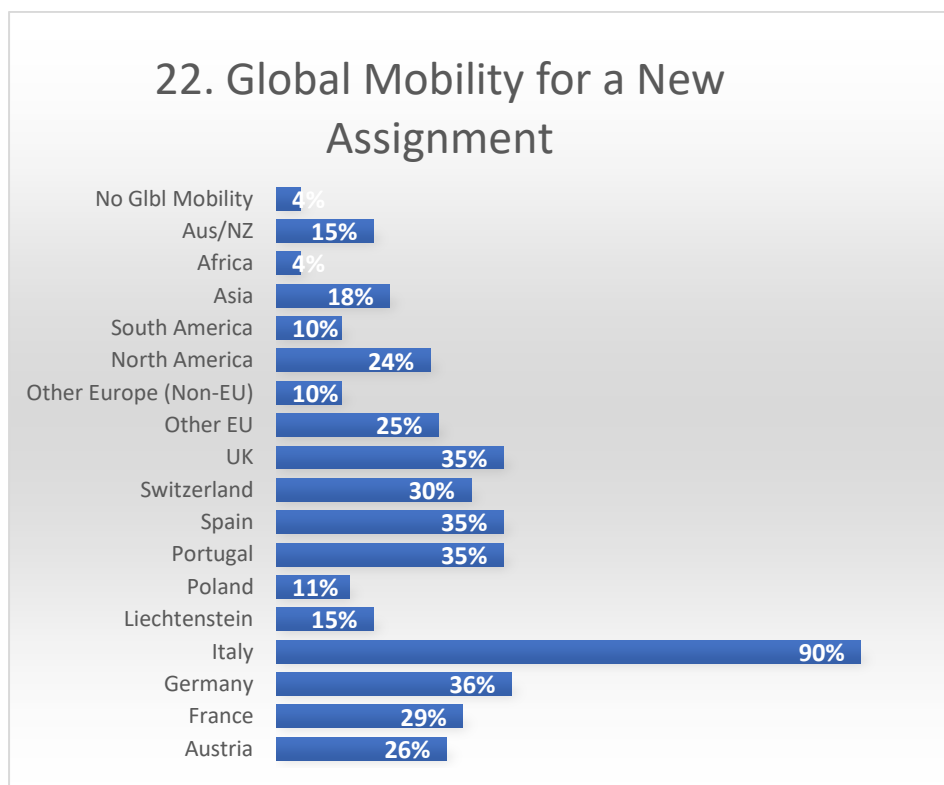
### Current Status of Interim Managers

The survey reported that 84% of interim were on assignment and 16% were searching, waiting to start a contract or on a sabbatical.



### International Mobility

The vast majority of Italian Interim Managers stated their availability for international assignments and 96% had a preference for relocation to other INIMA partner countries.



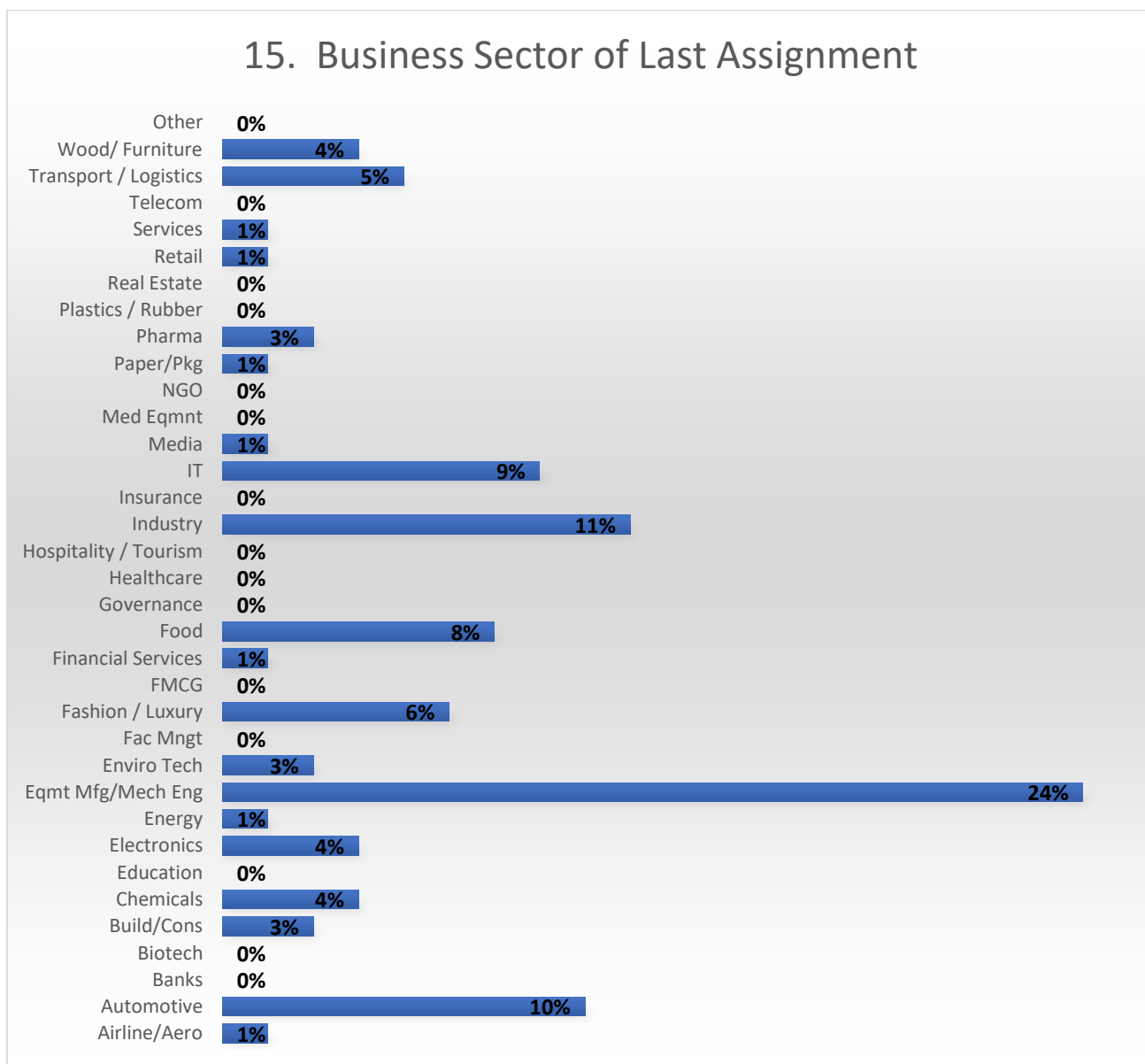


## The Clients

To give an insight into the 2021 IM market the Italian Interim Managers were asked to report details of their last assignment

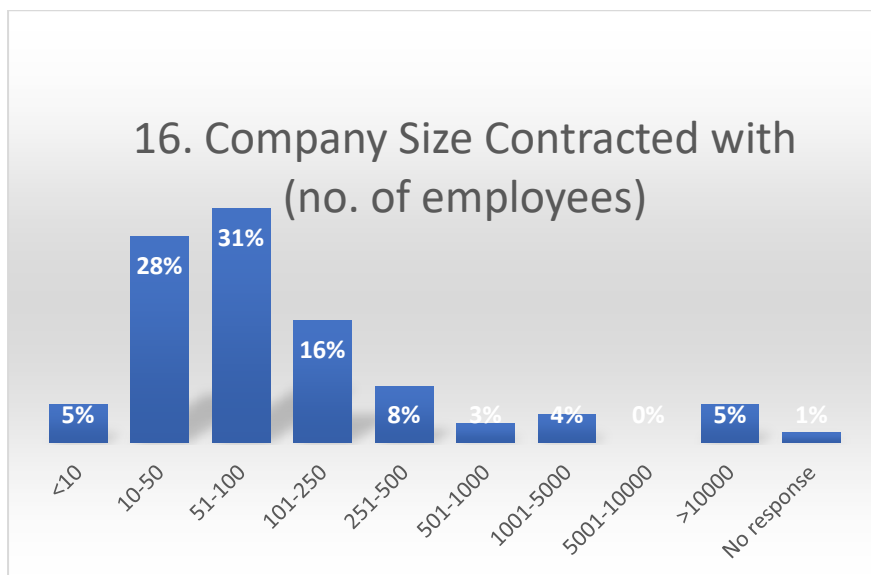
### Sectors of Activity

The coverage of Italian Interim managers was wide-ranging, clients came from 20 different sectors of activity. The top five (5) sectors were equipment manufacturing-mechanical engineering (24%), industry (11%) , automotive (10%), information technology (9%) and food (8%).

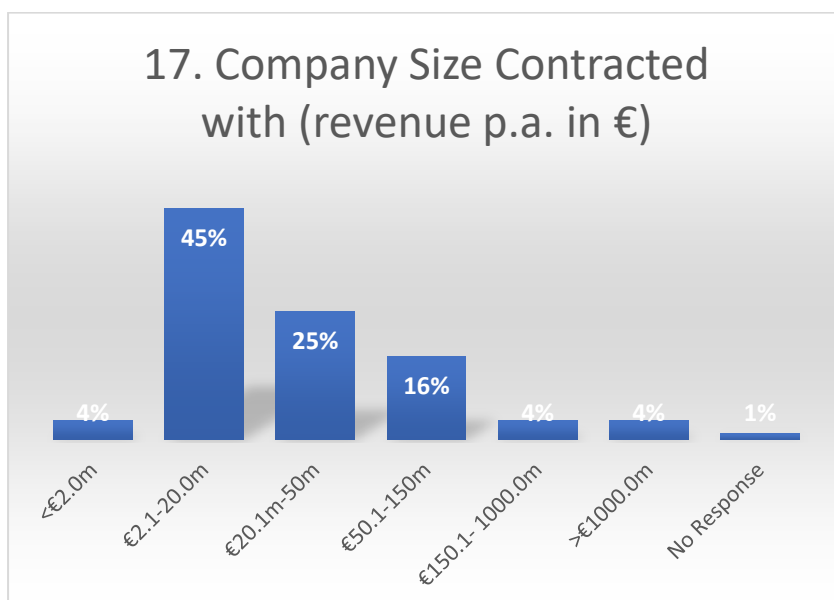


Size of company

As expected the majority of the companies were family-owned SMEs operating in the private sector. The survey showed that 64% of assignments were in companies with less than 100 employees.



Alternatively from a sales perspective, 74% of the assignments were in companies with revenues less than € 50 million.



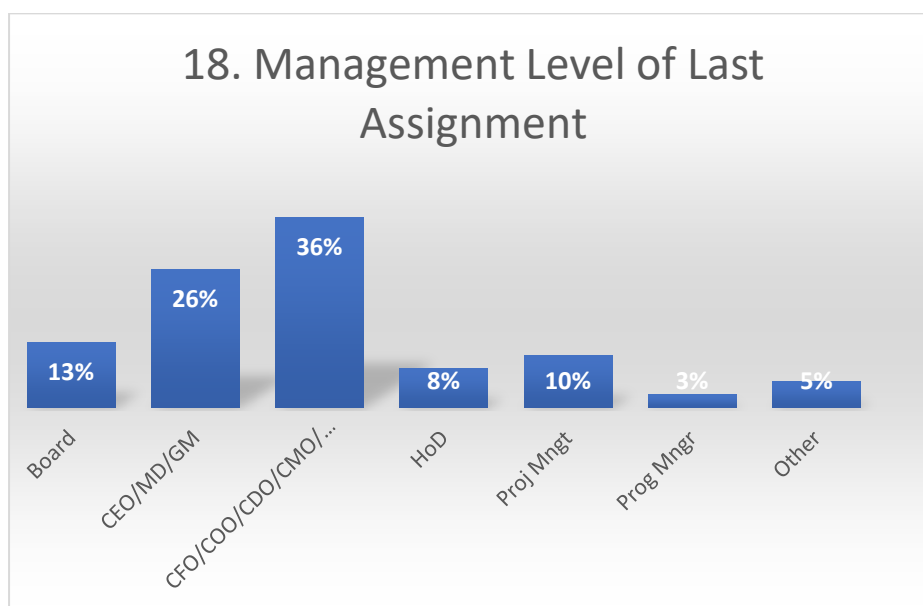
## The Assignments

### Key Issues

In 2021 change management was the most frequent issue for Interim Managers on assignment and coaching replaced cost reduction in the top five issues. The top five issues were change management (50%), business development (33%), process optimization (29%), general management (26%) and coaching (26%). This question permitted multiple answers from the managers.

### Management Level

During their last assignments, the majority of managers (75%) covered roles at C-level or above.

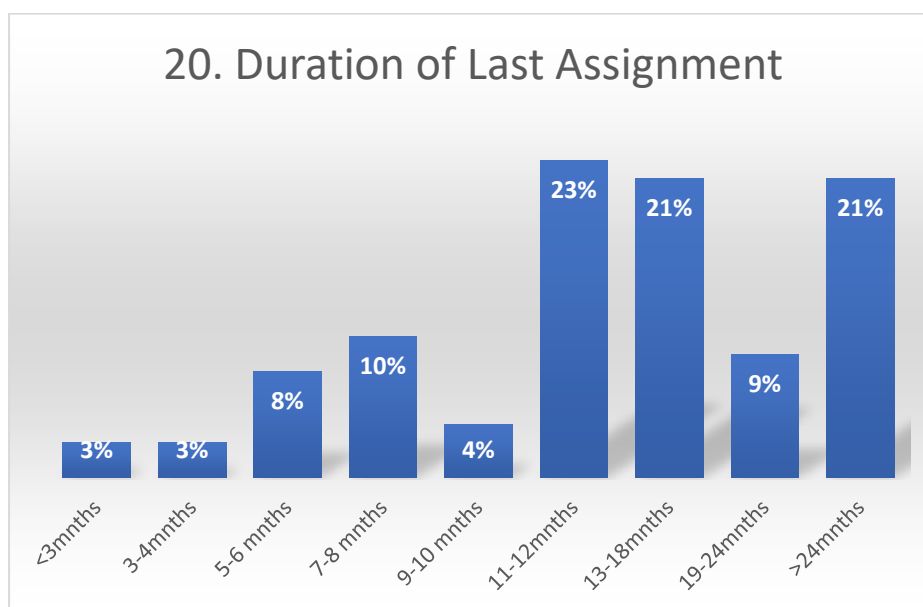


### Type of Assignment

The types of interim management projects were **improvement** of process, function or projects (59%), **turnaround** of a company (23%), and **gap** assignment to temporarily replace a permanent. (18%)

## Duration

The assignments had an average duration of 14 months. A high percentage (21%) of assignments lasted more the 24 months.



## Countries

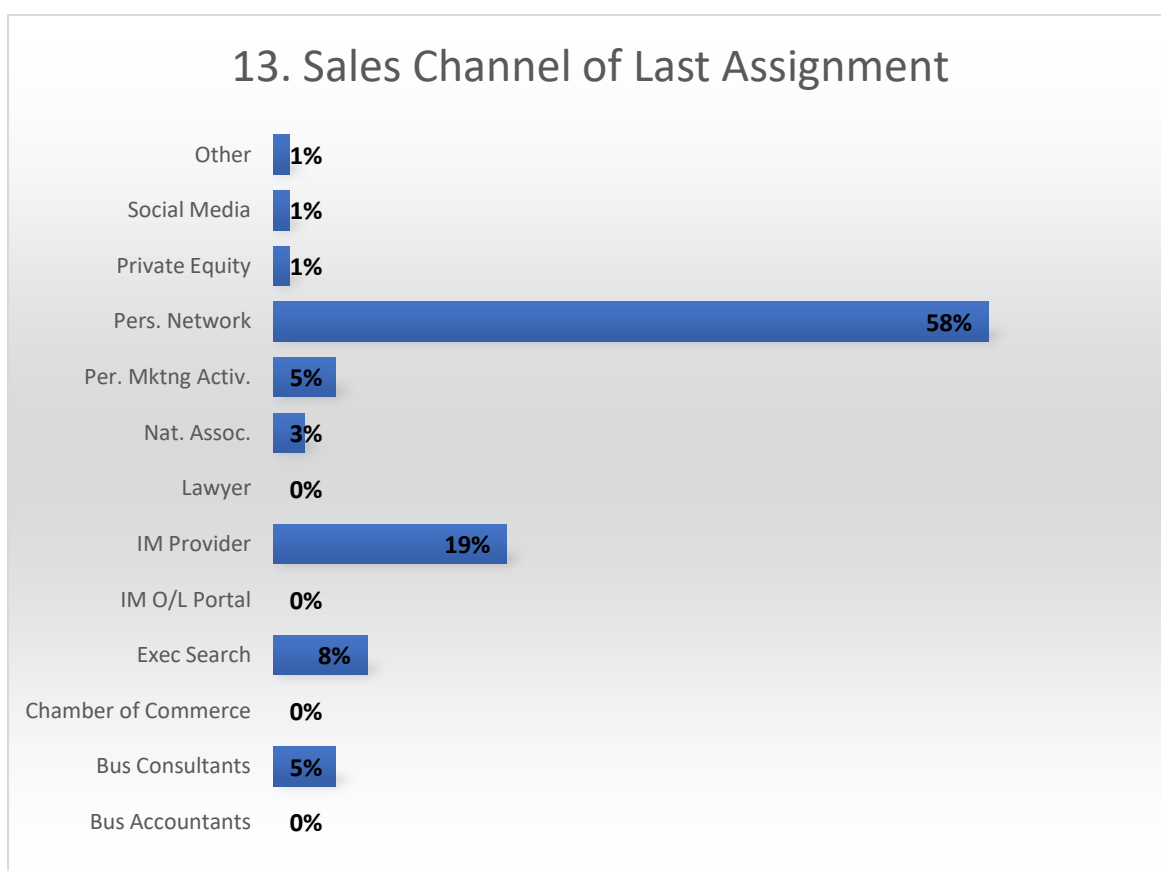
As expected most of the Italian Interim Managers in our survey worked in Italy but their assignments also took them other to countries as a resident or on business trips:

- France, two (2) managers;
- Germany, three (3) managers;
- Austria, the UK, Switzerland, Spain, one (1) manager;
- Other EU, four (4) managers;
- South America, Africa, Australia/ New Zealand, Other non-EU, one (1) manager for each country.
- North America, three (3) managers
- Asia, two (2) managers

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 (58%), Interim Service Providers came second with 19% of assignments.



Personal marketing activities provided 5% of sales and included the virtual domain (websites, webinars) and real events such as seminars and public presentations

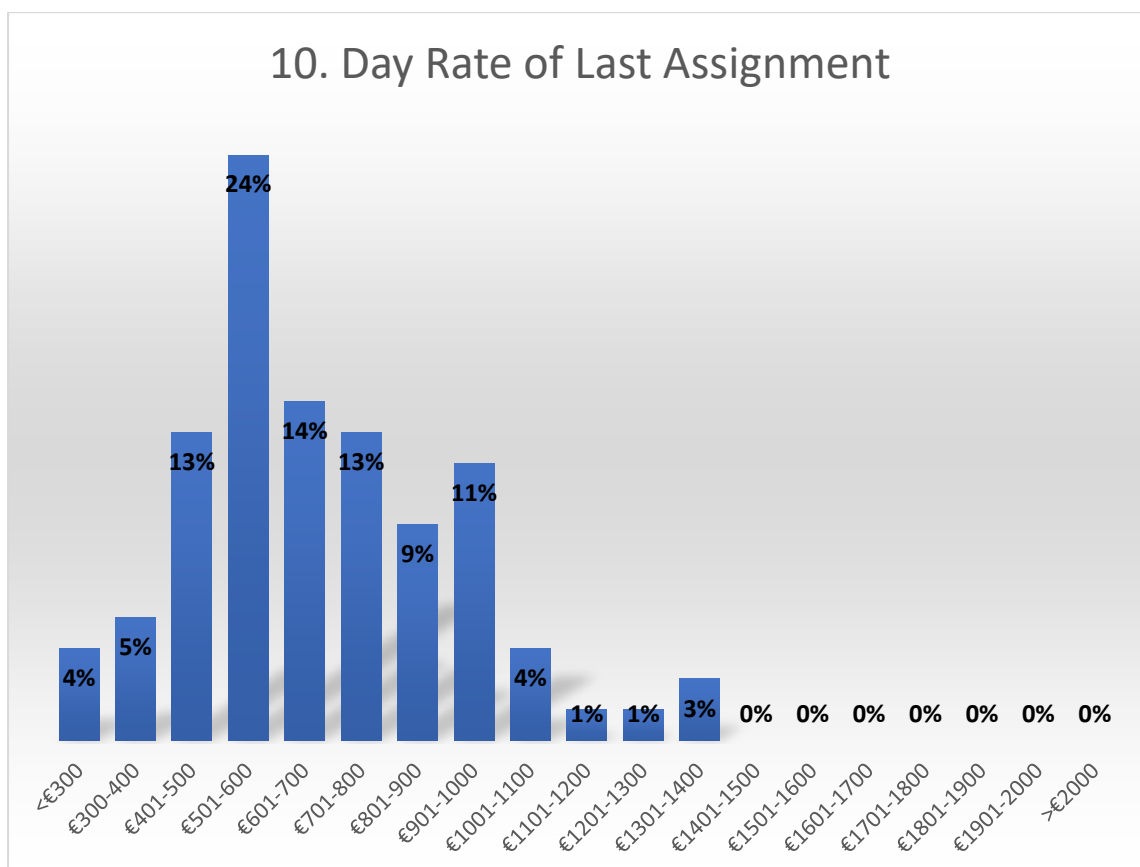
It was encouraging that the national association counted for 3% of assignments, from the Leading Network job-board or personal referrals from fellow members.

The survey showed assignments also came from executive search (8%), business consultants(5%) and private equities (1%).

### Day Rates

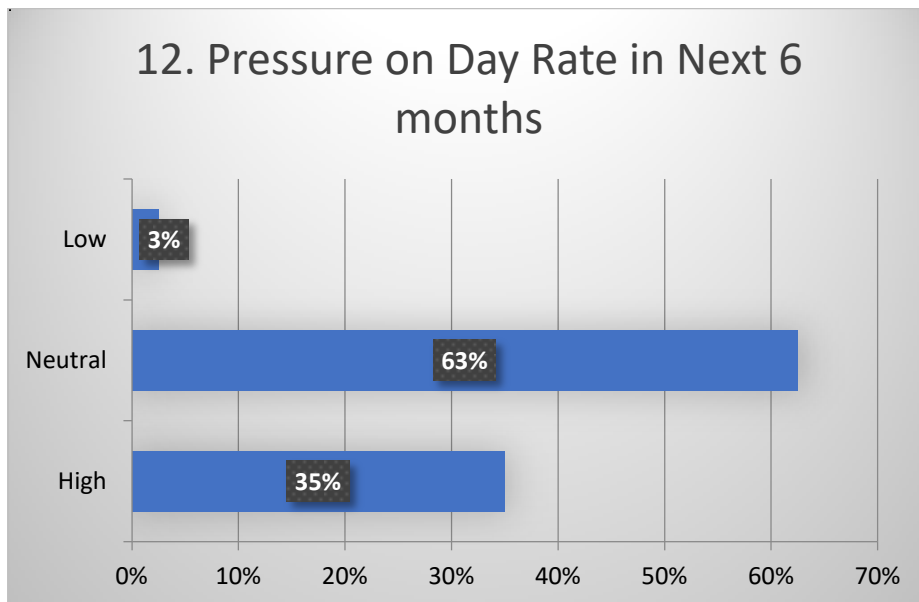
Managers were asked to provide the day rate that they billed on their last assignment (the net price, excluding expenses and VAT). This response was preferred as it was more objective than a yearly average or other formats.

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 €683, but this number had limited meaning because there was no “average interim”.



Pressure on Pricing

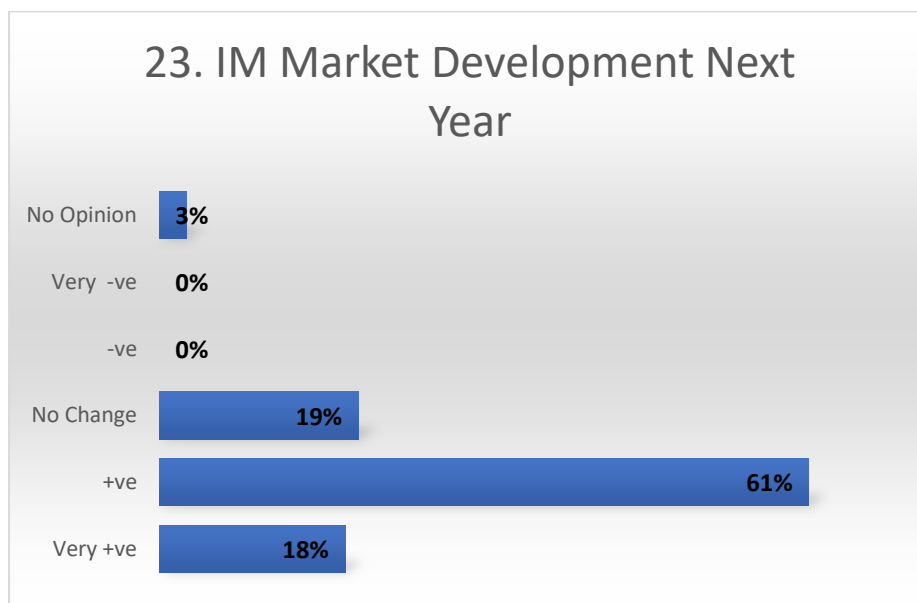
In the last six (6) months 62% of managers reported that there was high pressure on pricing during negotiation with the client, this pressure was forecasted to increase by a few points in the next six (6) months



## Trends

### Market Development

In our survey, 79% of managers judged positively the development of the market in 2022.



### 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?”.

In January 2021 this was the prediction for the year:

*“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.”*

The survey results January 2022, what really happened in 2021.

The reality was better than the prediction, utilization and day rates increased even with pricing pressure. Interim managers networked effectively to find assignments and companies committed to full-time instead of more flexible part-time contracts.

**What is the forecast for 2022?**

Interim Managers will focus on professionalism and competence to give a competitive edge compared to the other players in market. They indicate that 2022 will require a greater transversal skills, to manage organizations and relationships with entrepreneurs. They expect to invest in his training that will give opportunities for business continuity and development. Interim Managers expect to increase work on digitization and generational handover in the coming year.





## Background of the Survey

The survey was performed in January 2022 and restricted to practising interims who were members of the national association. A survey open to respondents outside of our association would have increased the sample size but at the expense of the sample reliability.



The Leading Network was founded in Verona in 2009 and is the largest association of Interim Managers in Italy. Vital to the success of the association is the Leading Business School, which develops standard procedures, tracks issues relevant to IM and shares the wisdom acquired during assignments. Leading Network has a national presence with offices in Verona, Milan, Rome, Imola and Vicenza, and a founding member of INIMA.



INIMA is the International Network of Interim Manager Associations, a “non-profit organization” that supports cross border collaboration to advance the Interim Management profession.

## The Authors

**Fabio Montefiori** represents Italy in the INIMA survey group and is a board member of Leading Network.

**Jonathan Selby** is president of INIMA and a board member of Leading Network.