

The 2023 survey of Italian Interim  
Managers performed by



Associazione Italiana dei Temporary Manager

In collaboration with the  
International Network of Interim  
Manager Associations



INIMA

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## Executive Summary

The first INIMA survey of European interim managers coincided with the beginning of the COVID pandemic and the market in crisis. The following year 2021 showed positive signs of market recovery and the majority of interim managers predicted that the recovery would continue in 2022.

This year's survey measured the response of Italian Interims on the state of the profession in 2022, it included the demographics of the **managers**, the profile of IM **clients** and lastly the nature of the **assignments**.

Overall, the macro-indicators showed stability rather than continued recovery of the Italian market, there was no change in interim managers utilization (67%) or assignment duration but a slight decrease of day rates (-11€). However, only a small percentage (3%) of interim managers were dissatisfied with the market development in 2022.

The demographic of a typical Italian interim **manager** remained male (91%), over 55, C-level with over 5 years of experience. The demographic has not changed significantly since the start of the INIMA surveys.

The top three (3) sectors of IM **clients** were equipment manufacturing-mechanical engineering (24%), automotive (13%) and industrial (10%).

In 2022 there was a return to part-time interim management from full-time, indeed 72% of current **assignments** are part-time. There was also a shift in the overall objectives of assignments from company turnarounds (-14%), to process optimizations(+10%) or gap assignments(+4%). This was mirrored by a reduction(-19%) in C-level assignments.

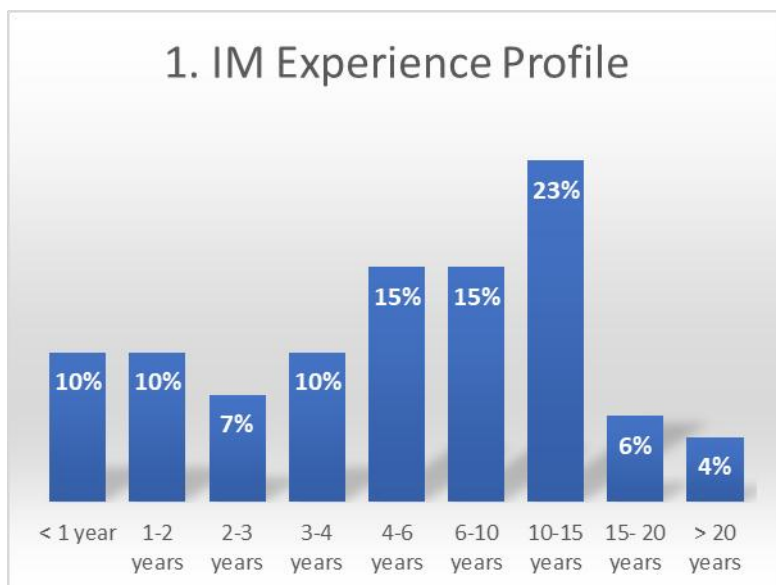
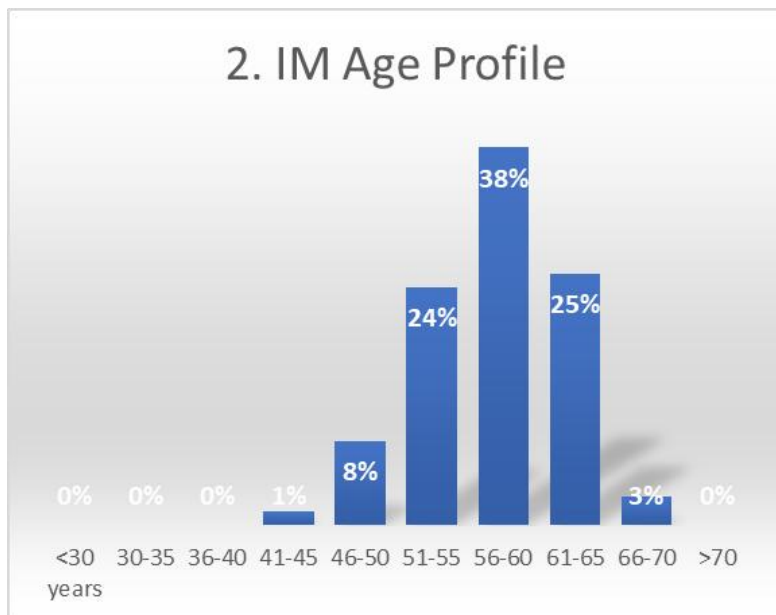
Personal networking was confirmed as the preferred sales channel for gaining assignments and interim service providers served a modest percentage (18%) of the Italian IM market.

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



Demographics

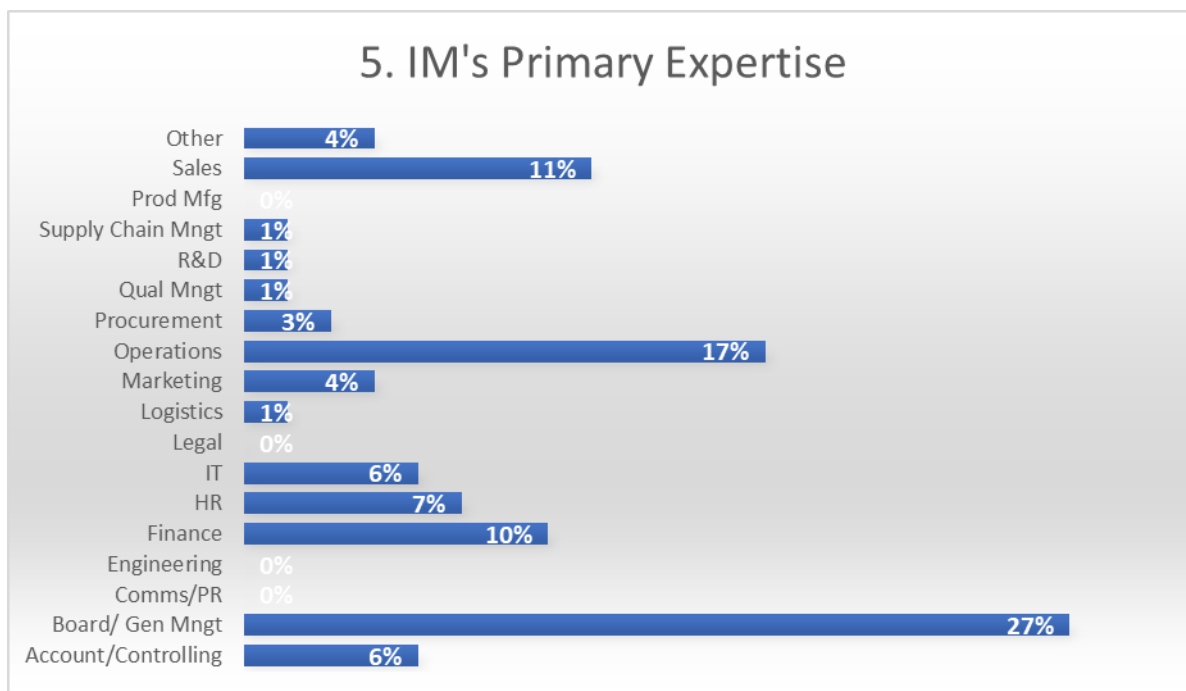
The typical Italian Interim manager in our survey was male, over-55 and with more than five (5) years of experience as an interim professional.



The high seniority was also shown by the management levels, with 56% of the interims covering C-level roles or above. On a negative note, only 8.5% of the respondents were women which reflected that Interim Management is still a male-dominated profession in Italy. The latest Eurostat survey reported that that 12% of Italian senior executives were women, this showed 3,5% gap in respect to the interim profession.

### Functional Specialities

The top five primary functional specialities of the interim managers in our survey were general management (36%), sales (27%) operations (21%), marketing (21%) and accounting (11%).

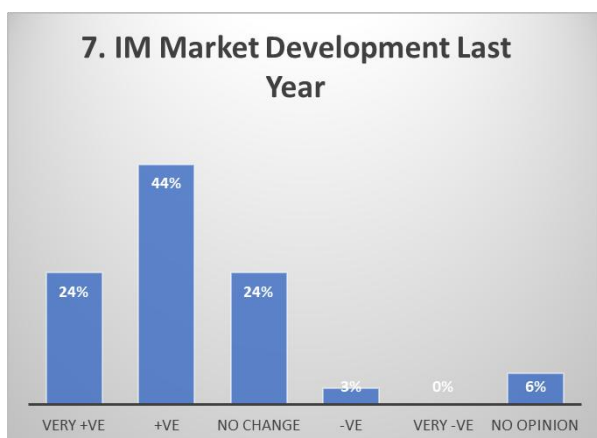
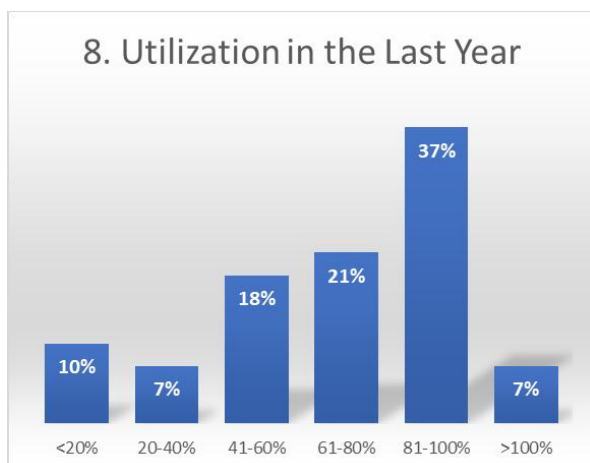


Interim Managers complemented their primary specialities with one or more secondary competences. So for example an interim General Manager also provided sales-marketing guidance, or conversely, an over-qualified COO brought CEO experience to the management team. Italian Interim Managers complimented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

### Interim Manager Utilization

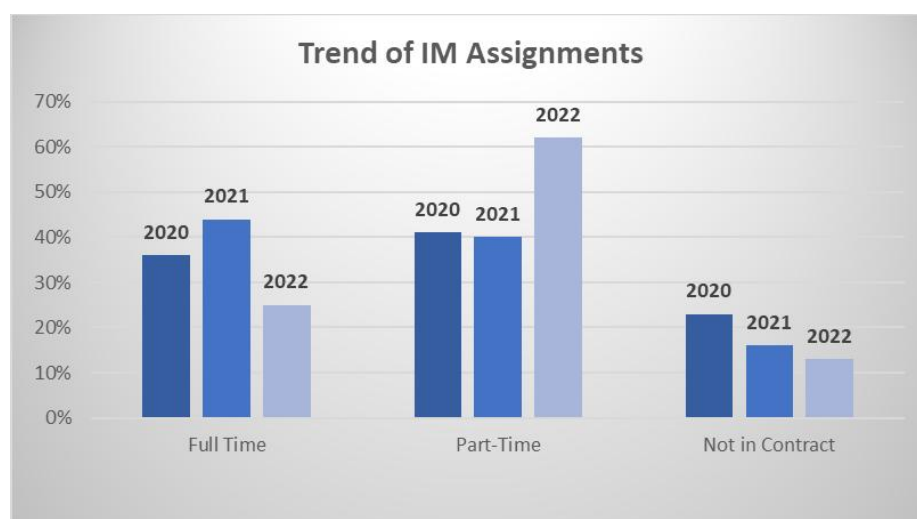
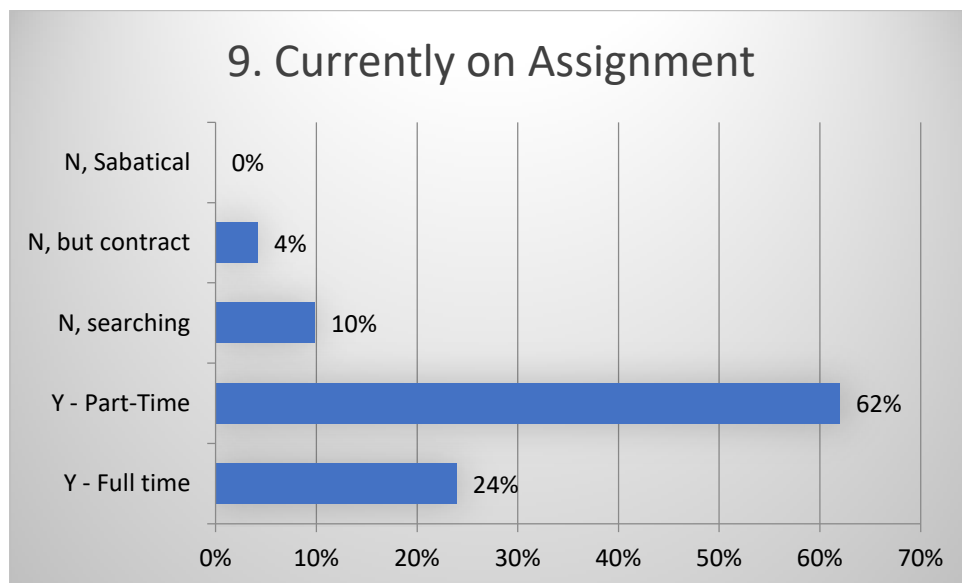
The Interim Managers were asked to report the proportion of billed days to total number of working days in 2022, this was the “utilization”.

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



### Current Status of Interim Managers

The survey reported (as of January 2023) that 86% of interim were on assignment and 14% were searching, waiting to start a contract or on a sabbatical.



### International Mobility

The 95% of Italian Interim Managers stated their availability for international assignments with a preference for relocation to other INIMA partner countries.

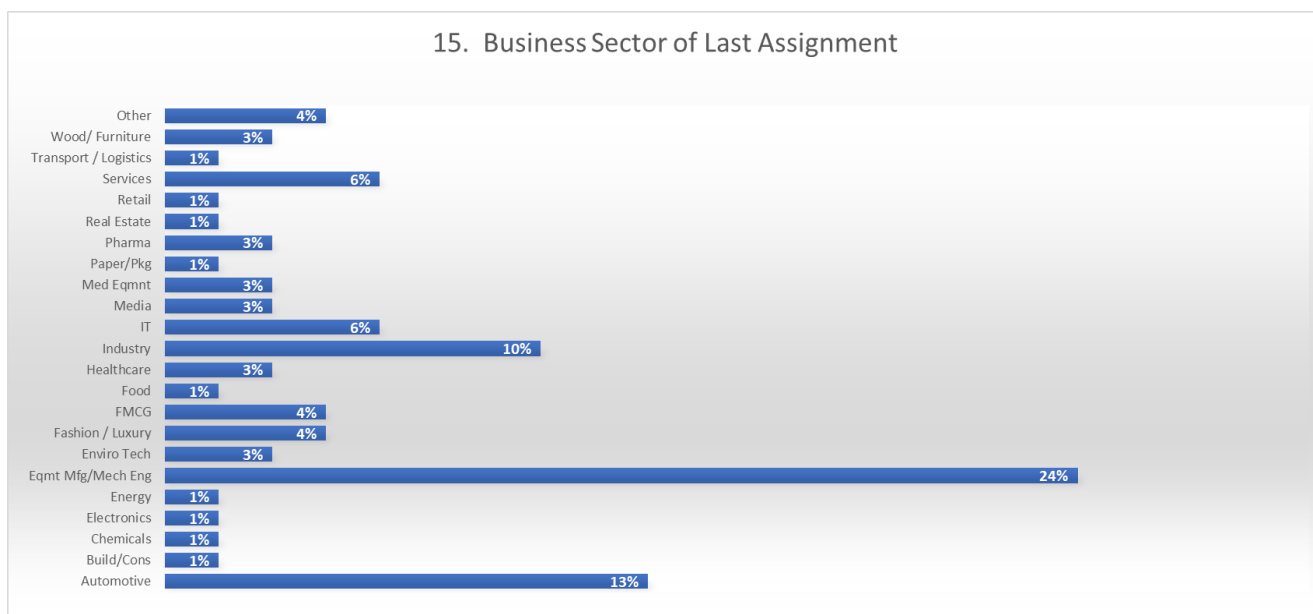
## The Clients

To give an insight into the 2022 IM market the Italian Interim Managers were asked to report details of their last assignment.

### Sectors of Activity

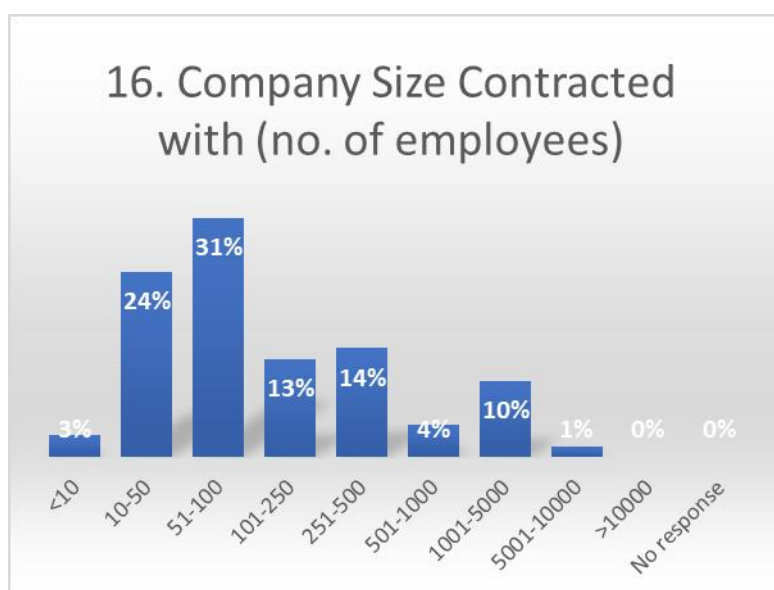


The coverage of Italian Interim managers was wide-ranging, clients came from 20 different sectors of activity. The top three (3) sectors were equipment manufacturing-mechanical engineering (24%), automotive (13%) and industrial (10%).

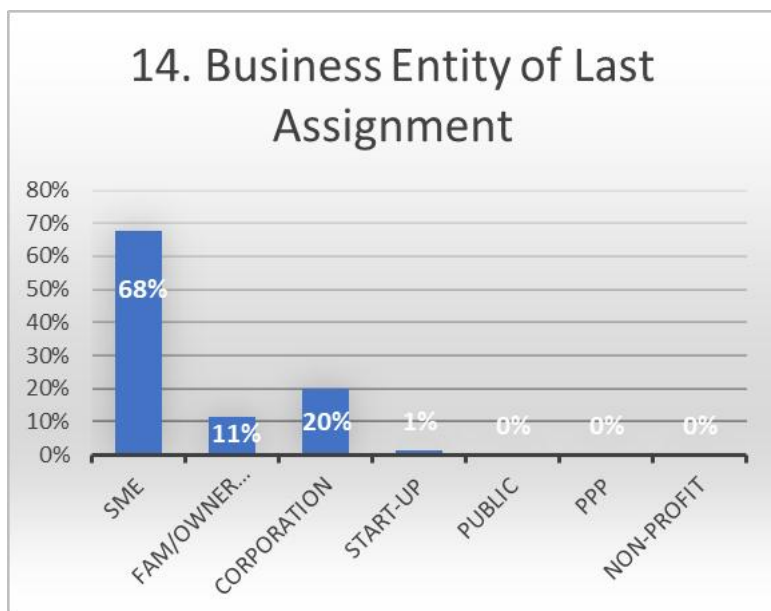
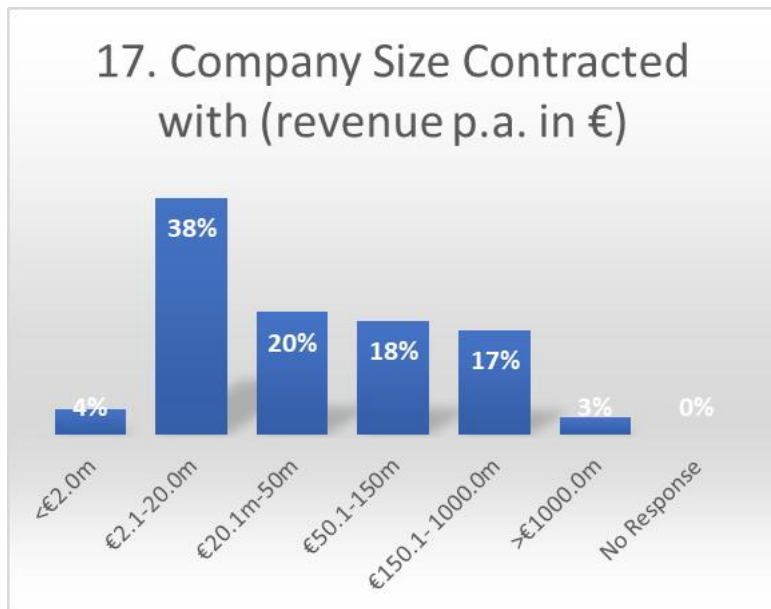


## Size of company and industrial sector

As expected the majority of the companies were family-owned SMEs operating in the private sector. The survey showed that 58% of assignments were in companies with less than 100 employees.



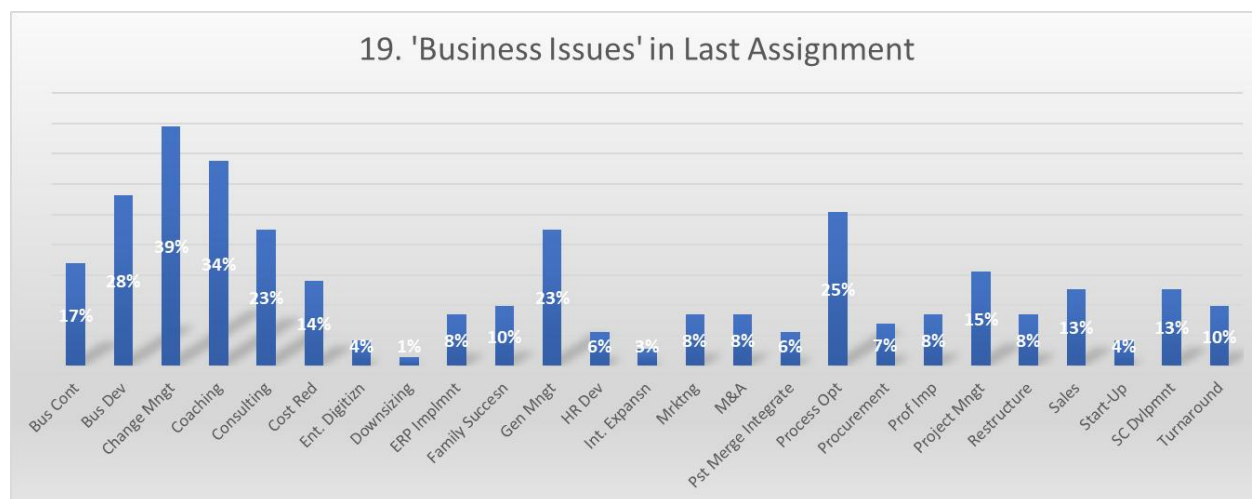
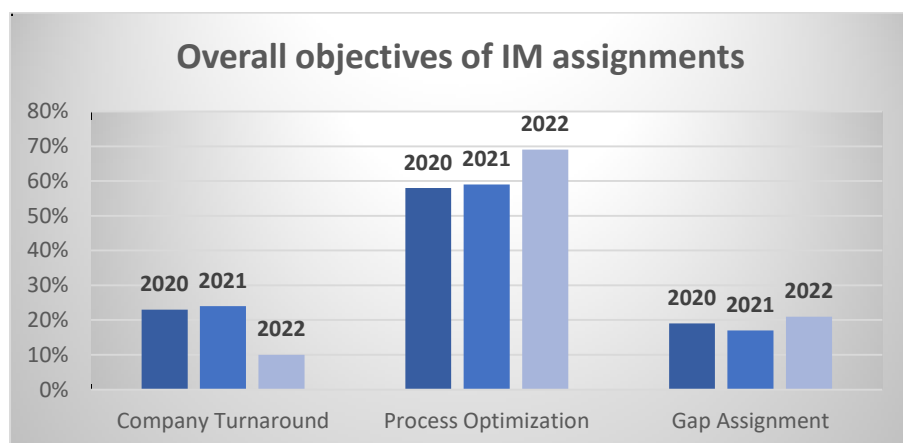
Alternatively from a sales perspective, 62% of the assignments were in companies with revenues less than € 50 million.



## The Assignments

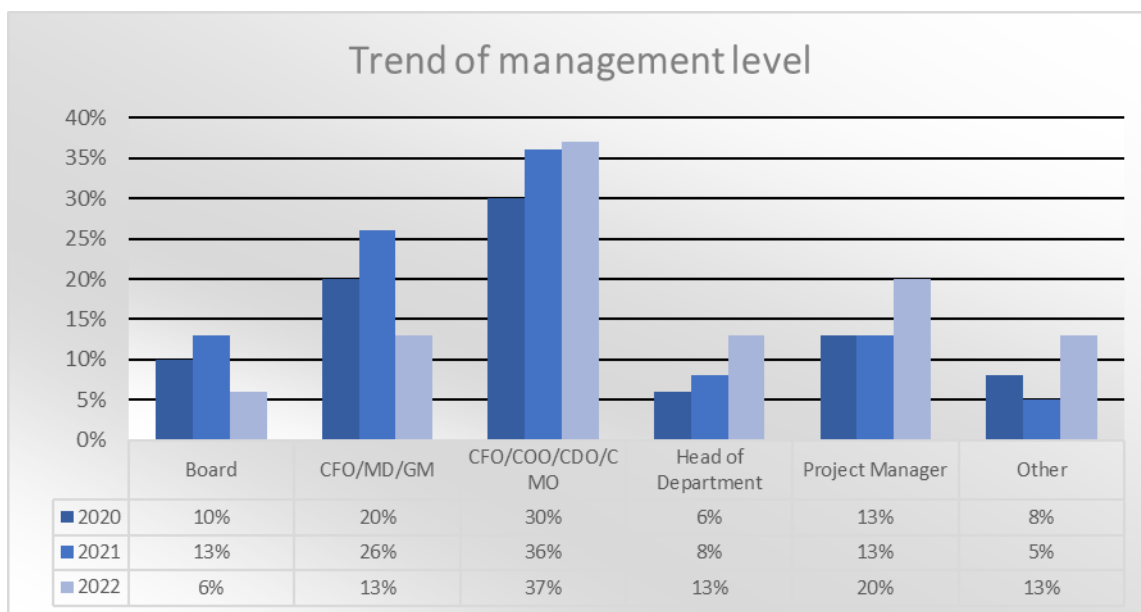
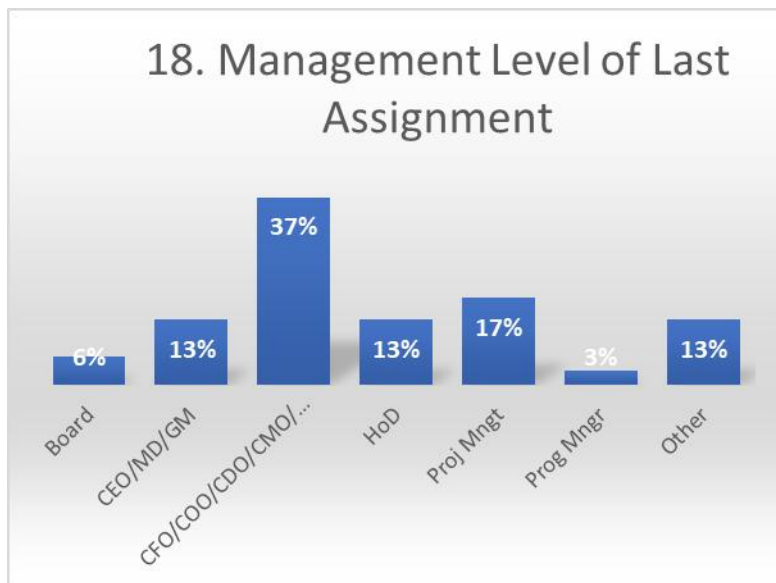
### Types of Projects and Key Issues

Interim Managers’ assignments had three (3) overall objectives; process-function improvements (69%), gap assignments (21%) and company turnarounds (10%). There was a decrease(-14%) of company turnaround assignments in 2022.



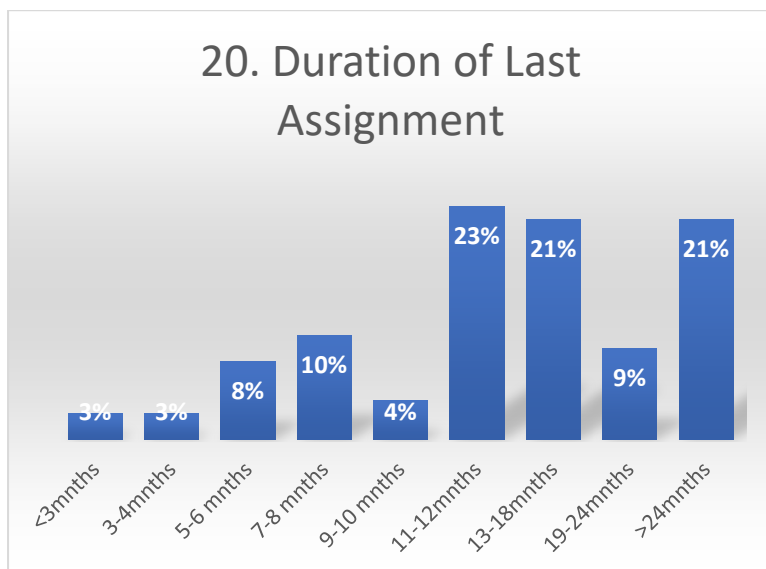
### Management Level

During their last assignments, the majority of managers (56%) covered roles at C-level or above. However, there was a decrease(-19%) of C-level assignments in 2022.



## Duration

The 51% of assignments had a duration greater than 12 months, almost no change from the previous years.



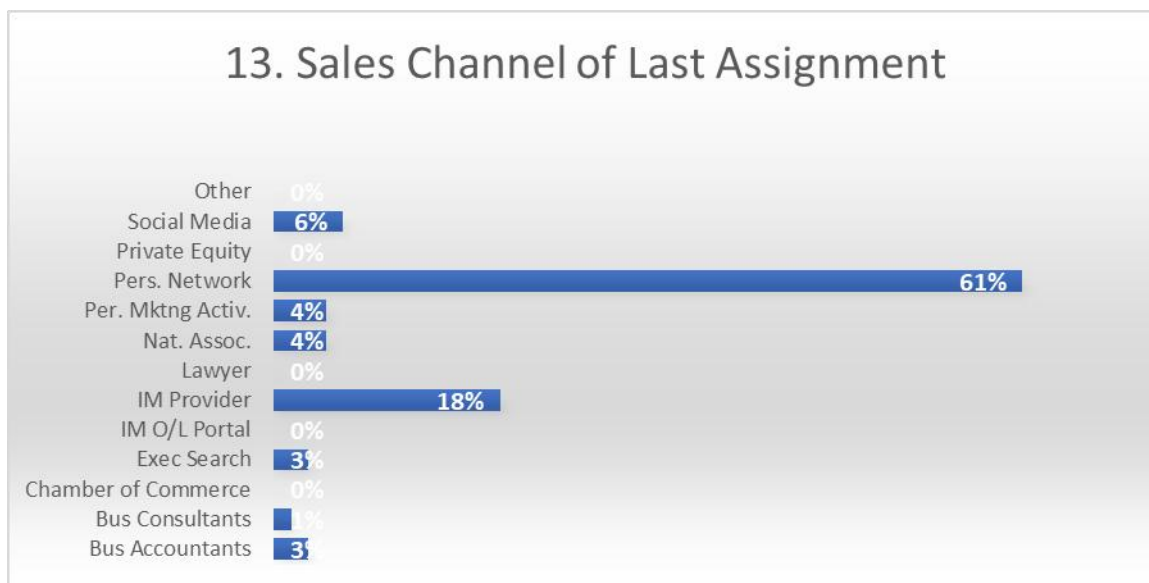
### Countries

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:

- Four managers (4) were active in North America
- Two (2) managers were active in each of these countries: France, Germany, Spain and the UK
- One (1) manager was active in each of these countries: Austria, Australia , Switzerland, Portugal, Poland and other EU countries

### Sales channel

The largest sales channel was the personal network of the Interim Manager and personal marketing (65%), Interim Service Providers came second with 18% of assignments.



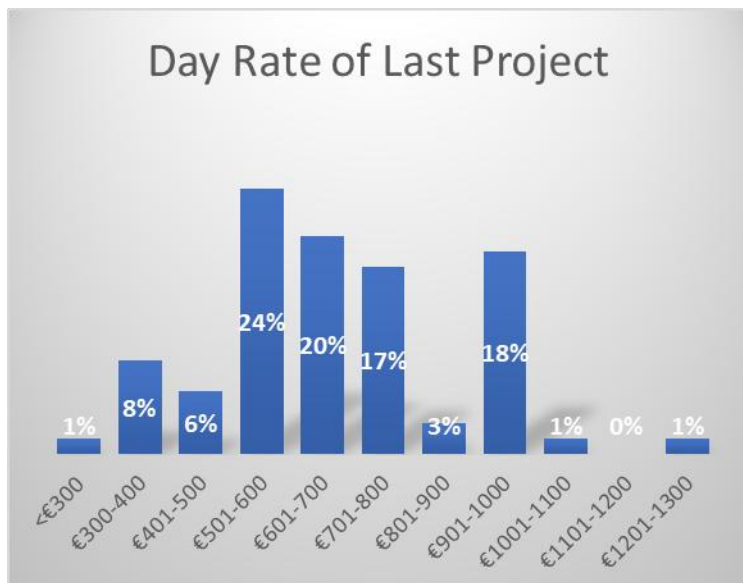
It was encouraging that 4% of assignment came from the Leading Network job-board or personal referrals from fellow members.

The survey showed a small percentage of assignment came from Business Accountants (3%), Executive Search (3%) and Business Consultants (1%)

### Day Rates

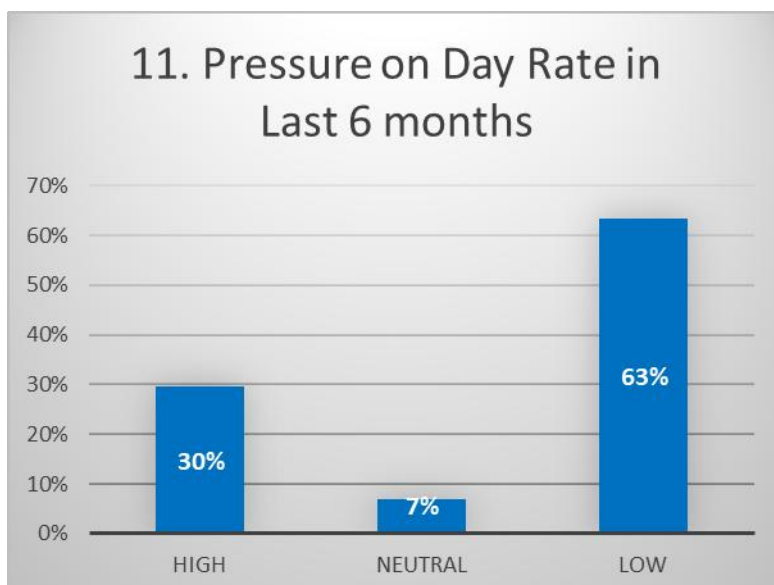
Managers were asked to provide the day rate that they billed on their last assignment (the net price, excluding expenses and VAT). This response was preferred as it was more objective than a yearly average or other formats.

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 €672, but this number had limited meaning because there was no “average interim”.



### Pressure on Pricing

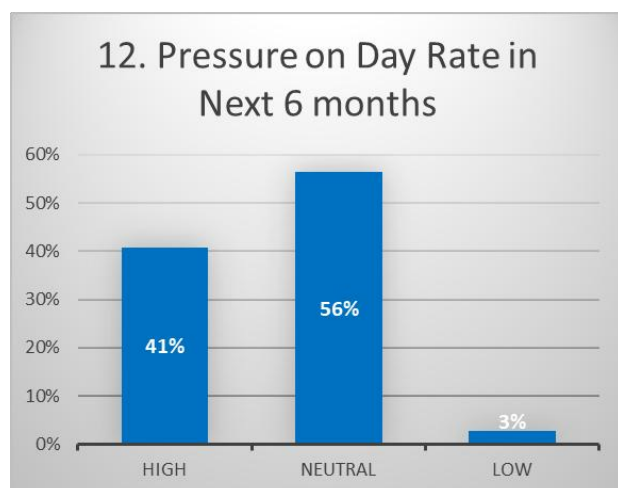
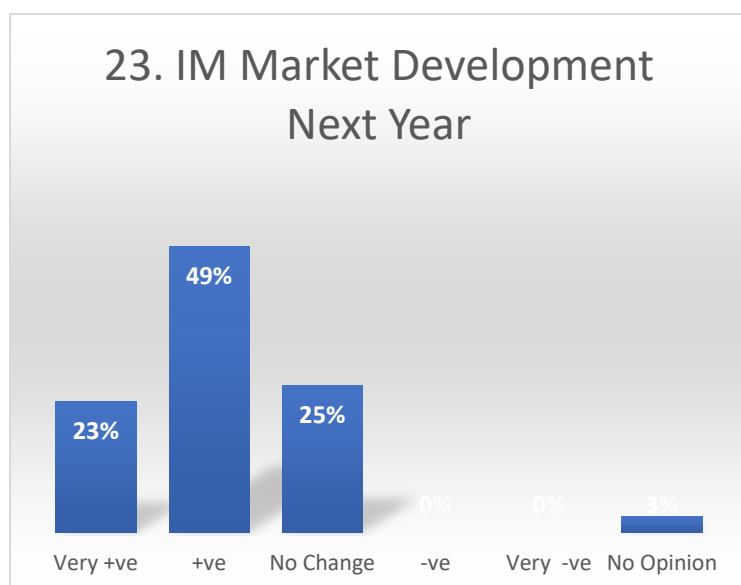
In the last six (6) months 62% of managers reported that there was low pressure on pricing during negotiation with the client.



## Future Trends

### Market Development

In our survey, 62% of managers judged positively the development of the market in 2023 but there will be “neutral to high” pressure on the day rate price.





### Future View and key issues facing Interim Managers

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:

1. Communicate the benefits of interim management to the market, in particular to SMEs
2. Keep updated in new technology, soft skills, circular economy and best practices (training and continuous improvement)
3. Develop business and maintain a satisfactory level of working days
4. Improve personal branding to gain visibility on the IM market
5. Find assignment with other interim managers to work in team on a company project, also part-time
6. Collaborate with the IM client to prepare clear and measurable assignment objectives

## Background of the Survey

The survey was performed in January 2023 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.



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 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 and is a founding member of INIMA.

## The Authors

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

**Jonathan Selby** is the founder and chairman of INIMA, and a board member of Leading Network.

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