The 2023 survey of Polish Interim Managers performed by the

Association of Interim Managers SIM

[Stowarzyszenie Interim Managers] SIM

In collaboration with the

International Network of Interim Manager Associations

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The Interim Manager

Demographics

The typical Polish Interim manager in our survey was male, aged over 40, living in Poland, having over 4 projects already implemented, and holding positions at C-level and above while delivering the missions.

In the 2023 survey male IMs represented 79% (Figure 3) and the proportion between genders practically didn’t change as compared to 2022 results (Figure 3.1) .

Over 60% of IM’s were aged 41-55 (Figure 2), but certain changes can be observed in the second year of the pandemic, namely a new group of younger IM’s - 30-35 years old - entered the market (Figure 2.1).

Most surveyed IM’s are living in Poland (Figure 10).

The majority (altogether 58%) of Interim Managers represent the segment of rather mature professionals with an experience of more than six years as Interim Managers (see Figure 1). Nevertheless, there is a significant segment represented by Interim Managers who have 1 to 6 years of experience (36%, Figure 1). This demonstrates the still early stage of maturity of the Polish IM market. It also reflects the first period in life after deciding to become an IM, full of trials and disappointments, when some of Interim managers might take the decision to return to a permanent job[1].

A high degree of seniority was shown by the management levels, with 67% of the interims covering C-level roles or above (Figure 15), like CEO/MD and CFO, CMO, COO, CDO, as well as Board level missions .

[1] SIM knows from earlier surveys of the Polish market that over 26% of respondents would return to a permanent job should such the opportunity arise.

The survey involved mainly managers with extensive experience over 6 years, unlike last year, when the participation was more evenly spread across different groups of experience.

Figure 1. *IM Experience Profile*

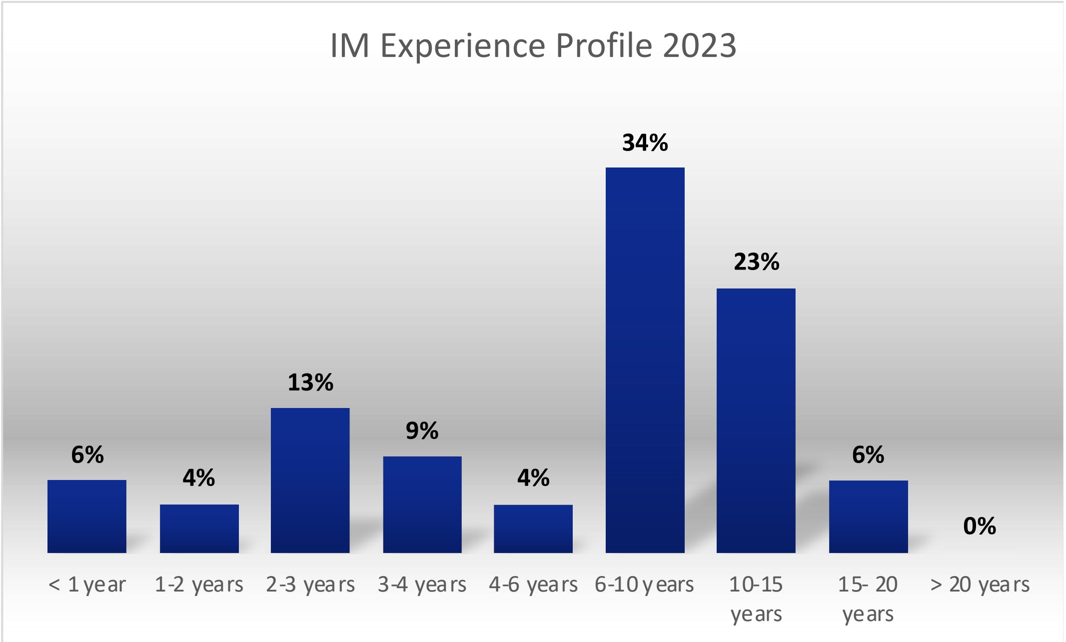
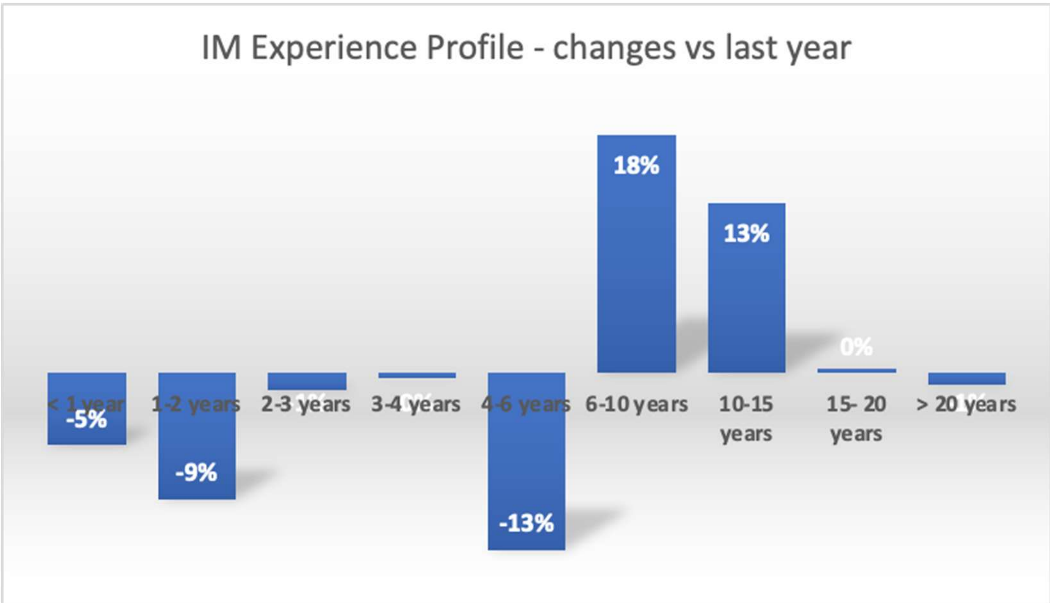


Figure 1.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 -How IM Experience Profile changed in 2023 survey*



The age profile has not changed. Polish managers start working in this formula after the age of forty, but most of them are just before or after fifty.

Figure 2. *IM Age Profile*

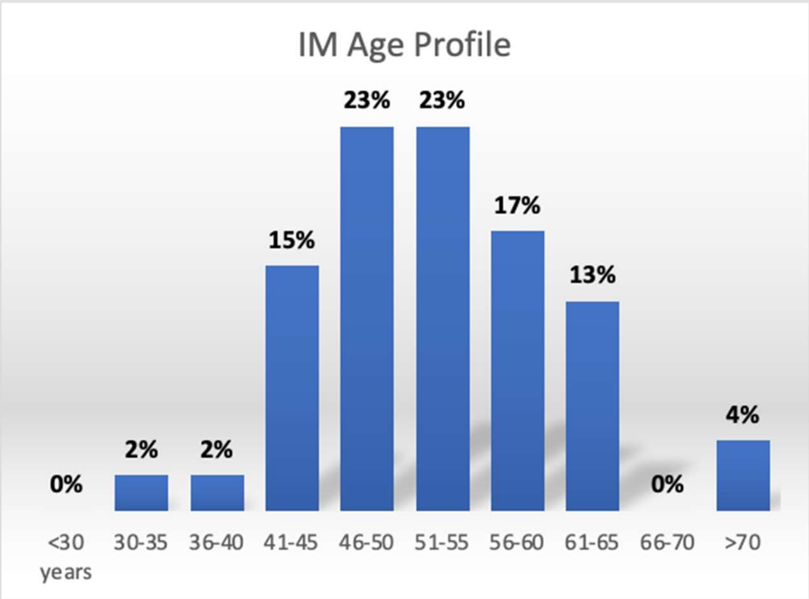
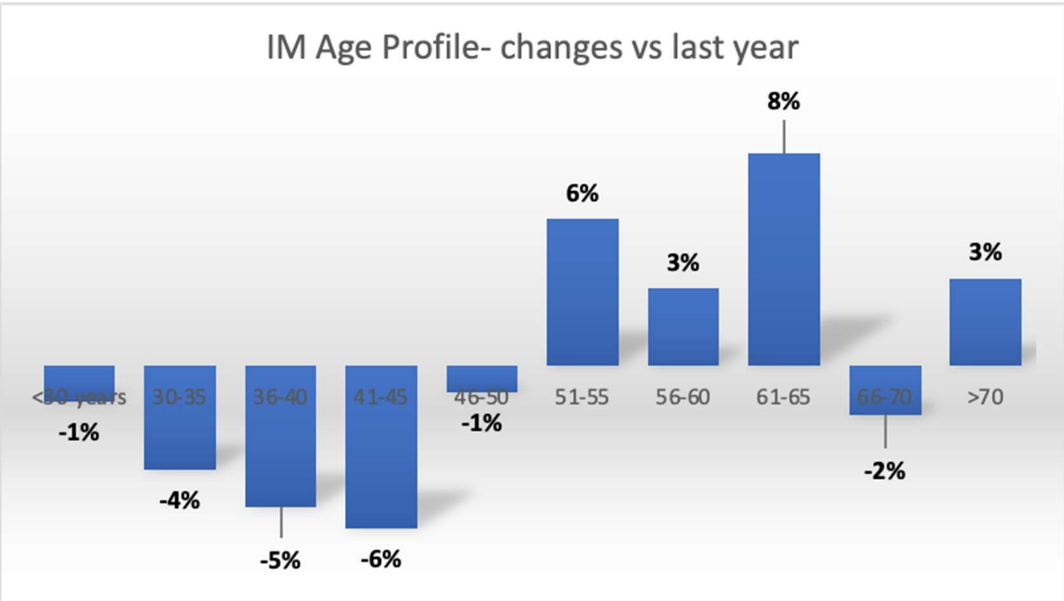


Figure 2.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 - How IM Age Profile changed in 2023 survey*



In the 2023 survey male IMs represented 79% (Figure 3) and the proportion between genders practically didn't change (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3. *IM Gender Profile in 2023*

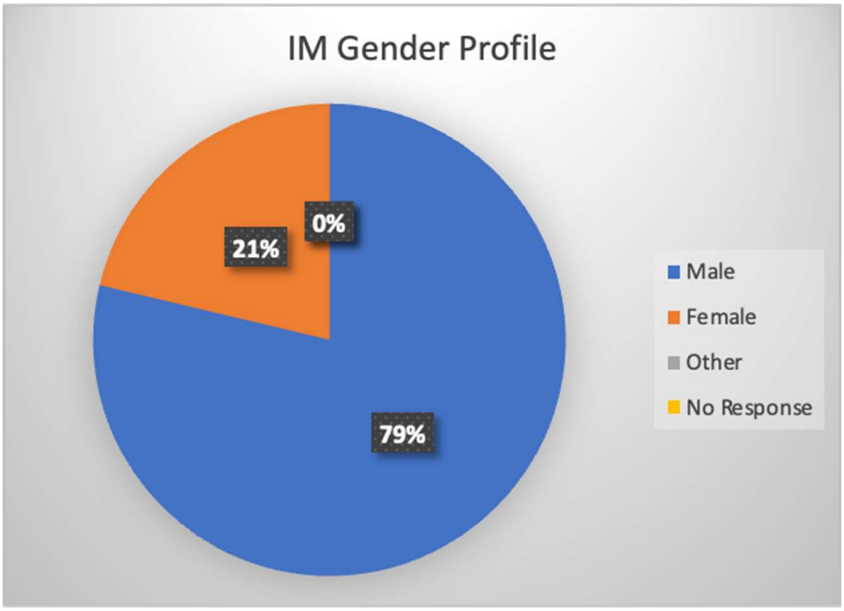
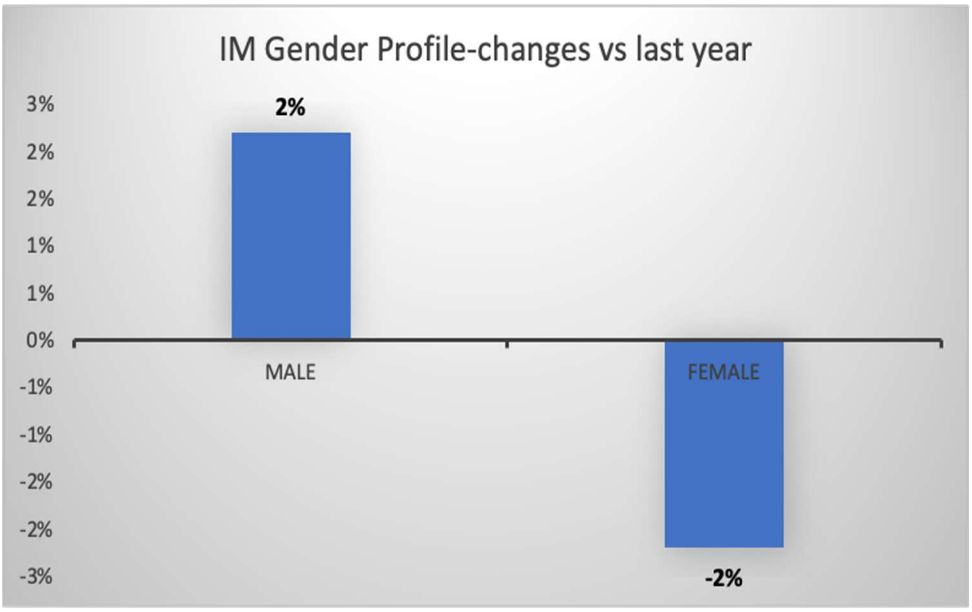


Figure 4.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 -How IM Gender Profile changed in 2023 survey*



Functional Specialities

The top primary functional speciality of the interim managers in our survey is Board/General management (28%). It is followed by the next three primary functional specialities, which are mentioned by the respondents with similar frequency: Logistics (17%), Supply chain (11%), and Finance (11%).

The areas of primary and secondary expertise are very similar.
Figure 4 shows that Interim managers complemented their primary specialities with one or more secondary competences. So in the same project they could be valuable experts for their customers in the fields of: Board/General management (28%) or Operations (17%), Sales (11%), HR (11%), Finance (9%).

The difference that catches the eye is the increase in the share of 'Operations'.

Figure 5. *IM's Primary Expertise*

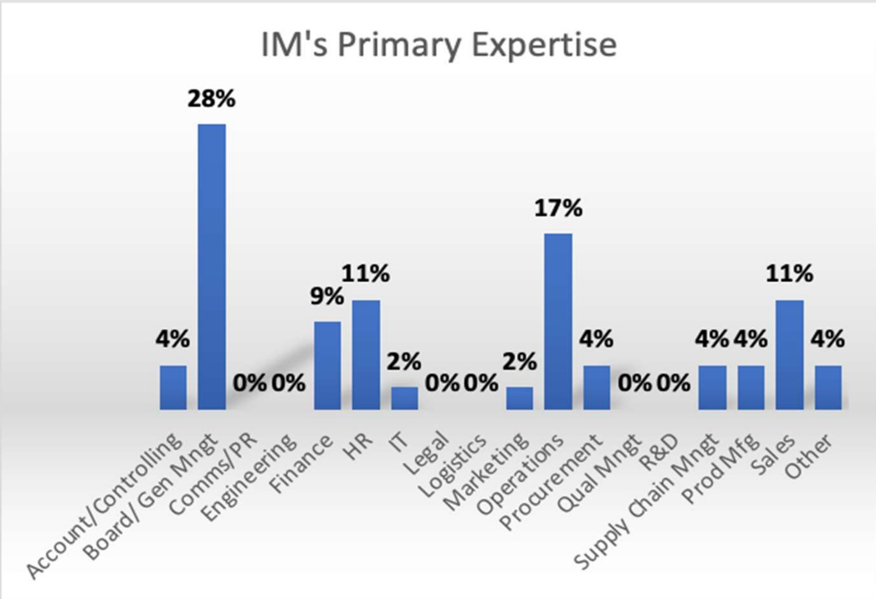
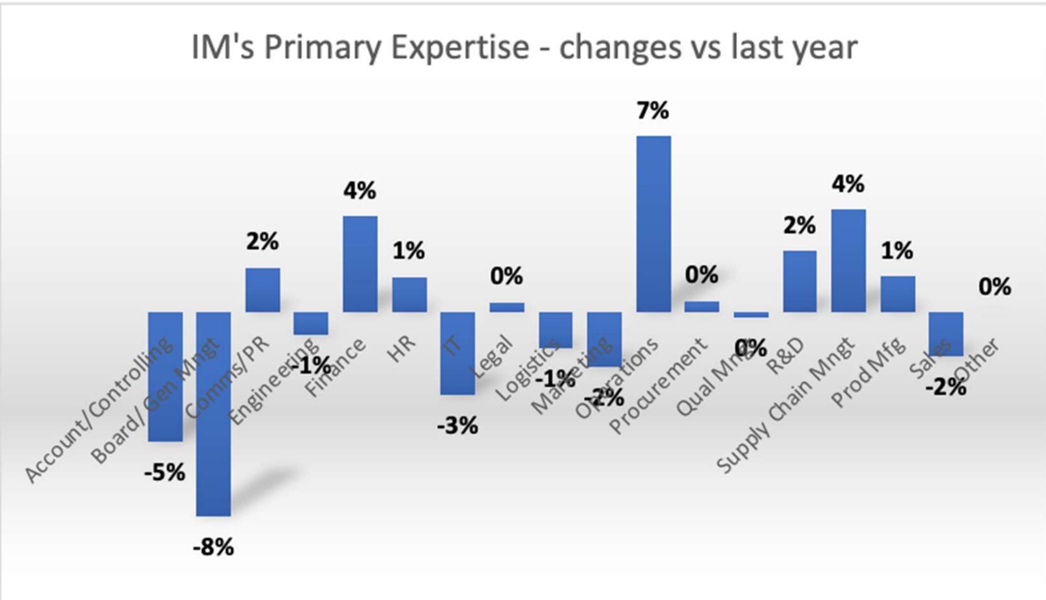


Figure 4.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 - How the IM's Primary Expertise changed in 2023 survey*



As shown on Figure 5 a significant group of Polish Interim Managers complemented their primary speciality with an average of two secondary competencies and the graph below shows all of them – Operations (18%), Sales (13%) and Board/General Management (10%),

Figure 6. *IM's Secondary Expertise*

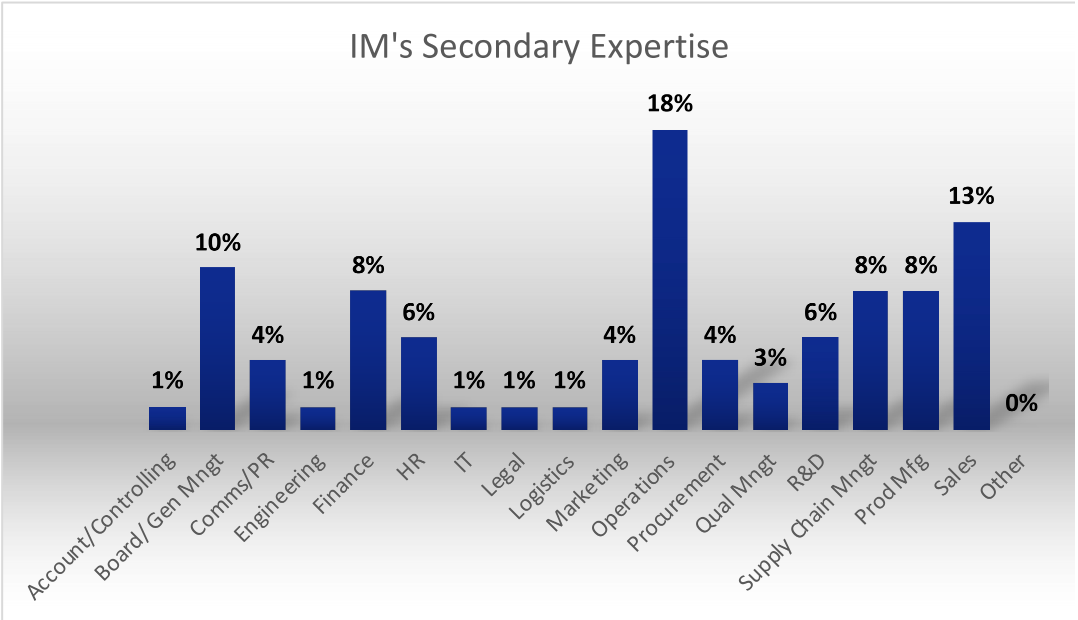
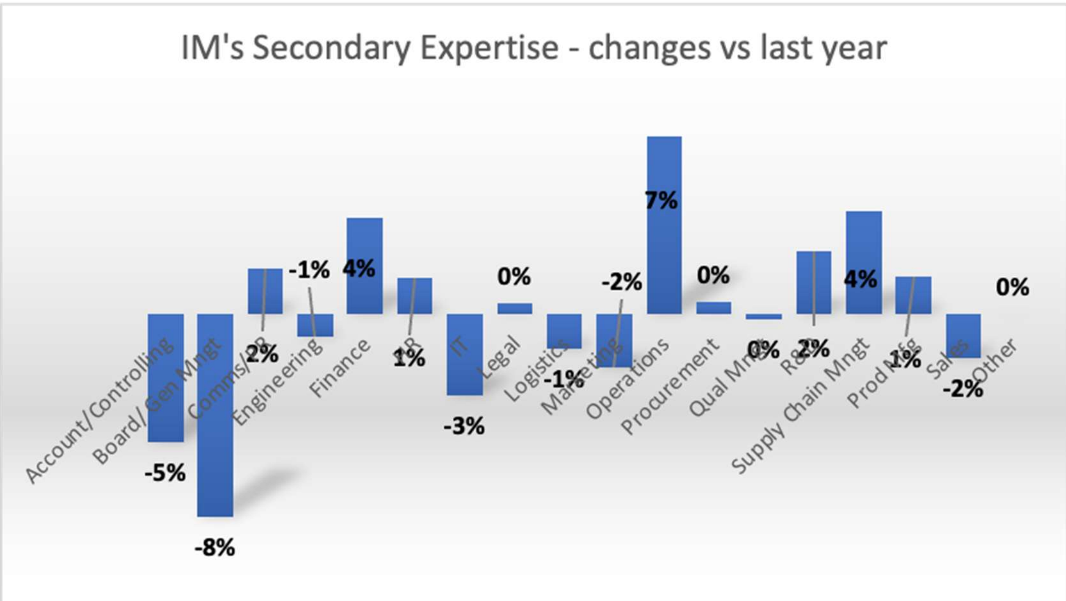


Figure 5.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How IM's Secondary Expertise changed in 2023 survey*



Market development 2022 and Interim Manager Utilization

In the present survey the market was evaluated quite positively. Altogether 83% (Figure 6) of answers indicated very positive/positive/no change market development, and less than half of the positive answers showed no change (17%), which shows that demand from Polish clients was quite high.

The positive perception of market development has significantly improved. It has grown to 60% from the previous 45%.

Figure 7. *IM Market Development last year in Poland*

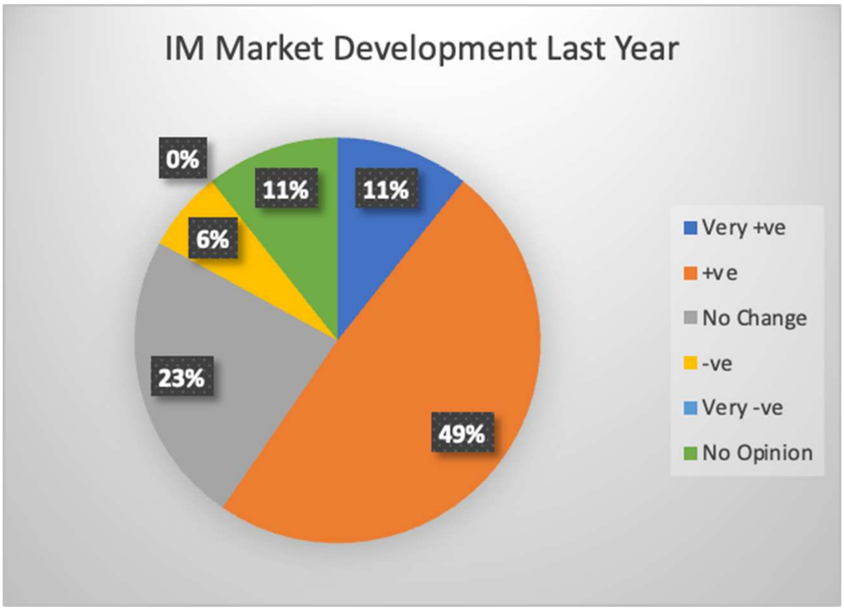
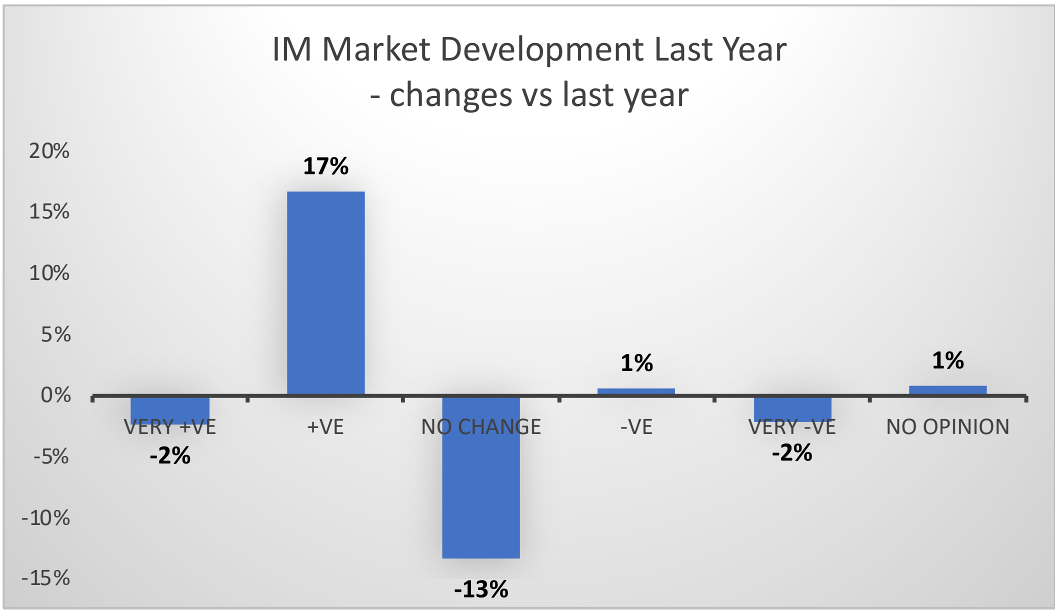


Figure 6.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How IM Market Development changed in 2023 survey*



In the present survey 66% of Managers were utilized for 60 up to 100% of their time. 11% of Interim managers were occupied less than 20% of their time.

A positive change can be noticed (Figure 7.1) in the group of managers occupied 81-100% of their time, it increased by 3%, and at the same time the utilization rate of the least occupied (below 40%, Figure 7.1) dropped by 6%.

The number of interim managers during the project has increased, albeit slightly.

Figure 8.*IM's Utilization in the last year*

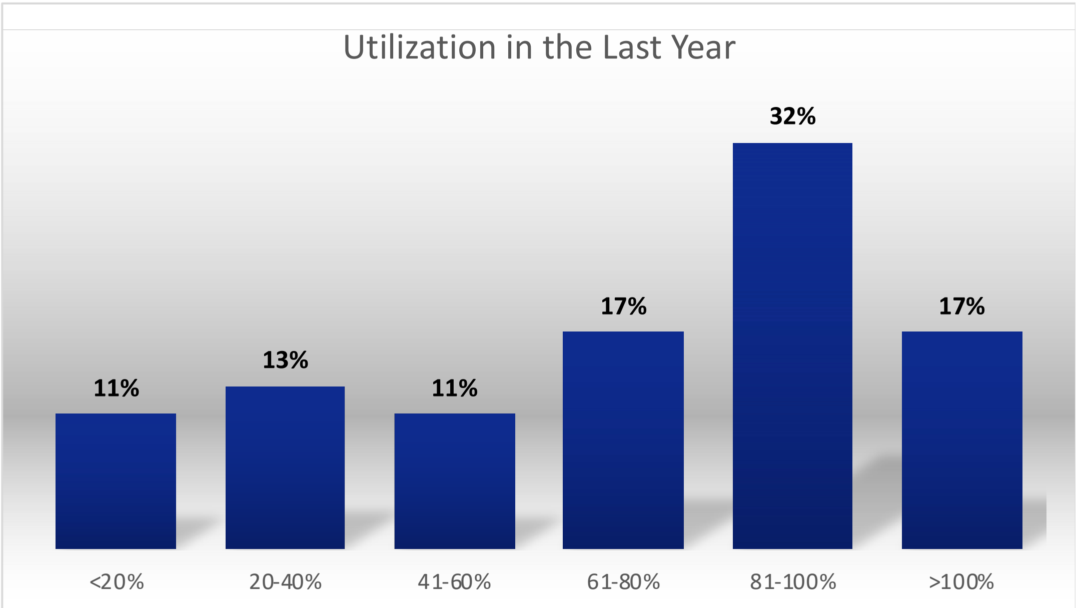
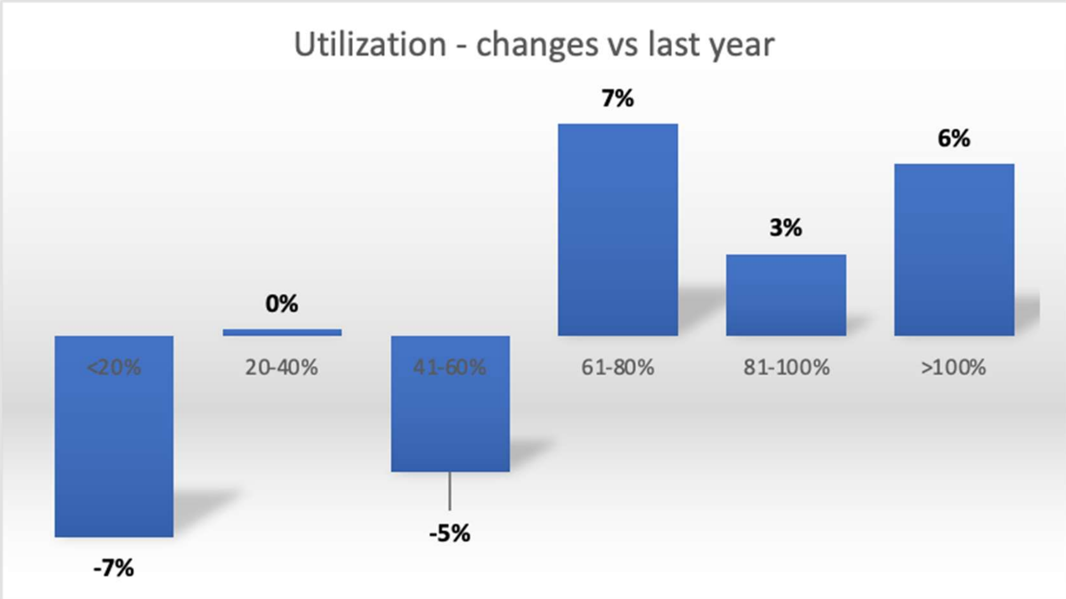


Figure 7.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How IM's Utilization changed in 2023 survey*



Current Status of Interim Managers

In Figure 9 the survey reported that altogether 32% of Interim managers were not occupied for the three following reasons: 9% were on their sabbaticals, 4% were just waiting to start their contract, but a significant 19% were not employed at all. 68% of the Interims were on their current interim assignments, and the majority of this group were full-time occupied (49%), while 19% were on part-time projects.

This picture changes significantly in the group of those working full-time (15% growth on the Figure 9.1). The group of not-employed IMs shrank by 13% (Figure 9.1)

The share of 'full time' increased significantly from 34% to 49%.

Figure 9. *Currently on Assignment in the last year and the change vs. last year*

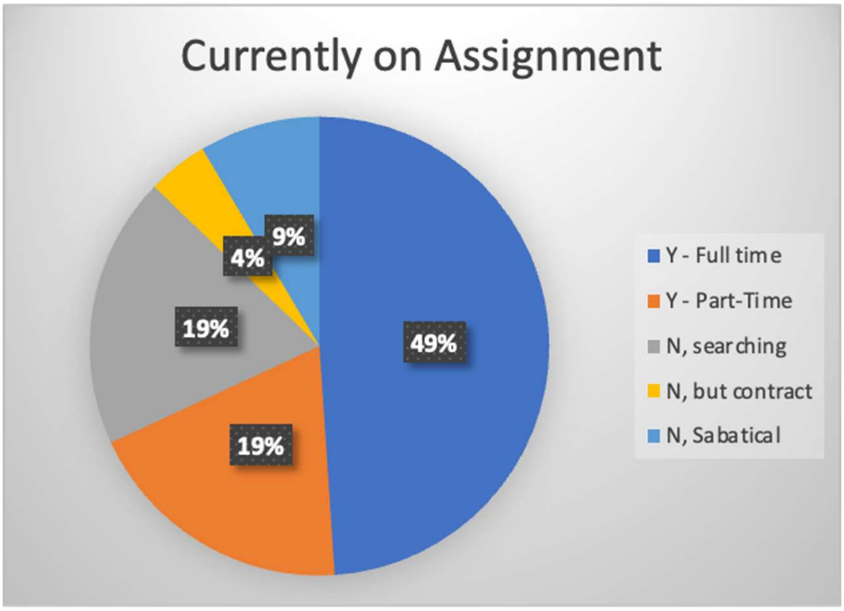
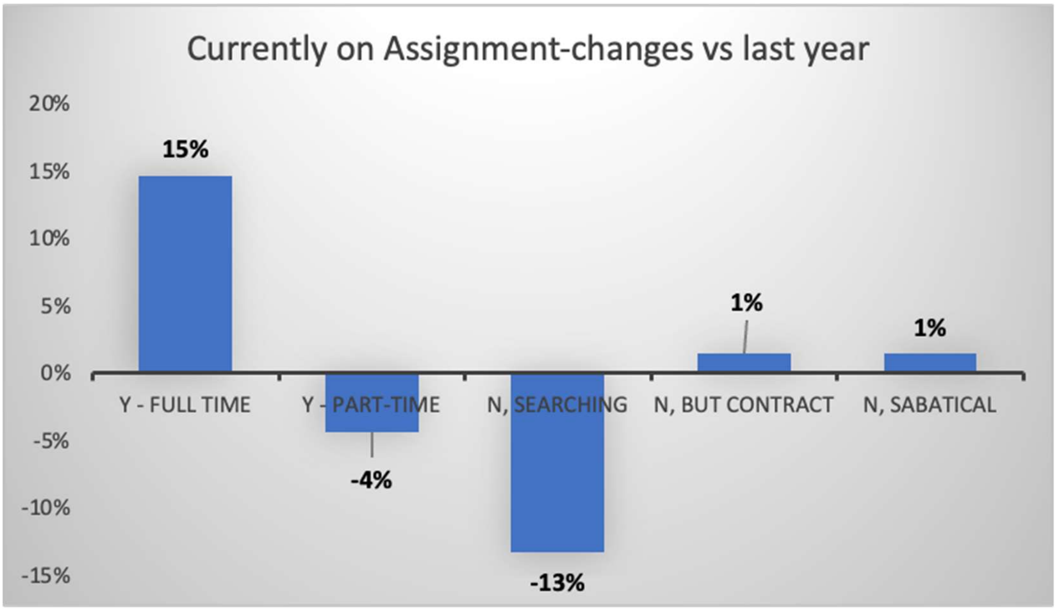


Figure 8.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How Currently on Assignment changed in 2023 survey*



International Mobility and the country of residence

The vast majority (Figure 9) - 79% - of Polish Interim Managers stated they were not available for international assignments. For those who declared their readiness for moving abroad, their most preferred destinations were: UK (28%), Germany (23%), Austria (21%), Portugal (21%), Spain (21%), or other EU (26%) or European non- EU country (17%). 6 % of managers stated availability for assignments in North America, and 15% in both Americas altogether.

As far as the most significant changes are concerned , the most notable one is the reference to the UK as destination for projects, which dropped by 11%, and this change most probably is linked in part to Brexit, but maybe also in part to the restrictions the UK government introduced for travellers to this country.

Figure 10.. *Global Mobility for a New Assignment*

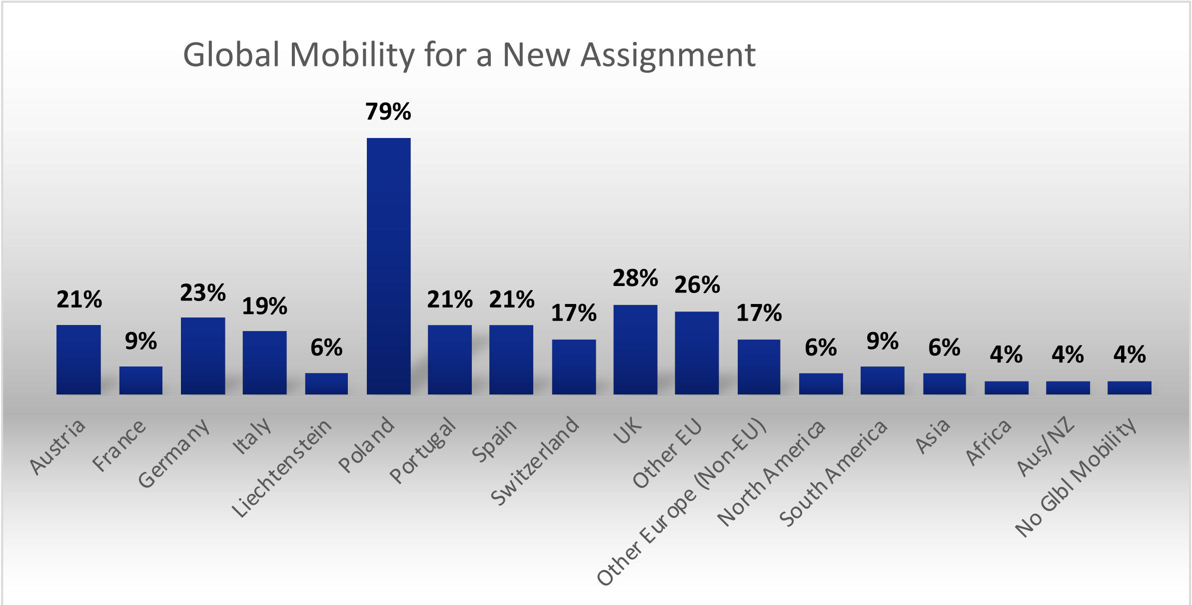
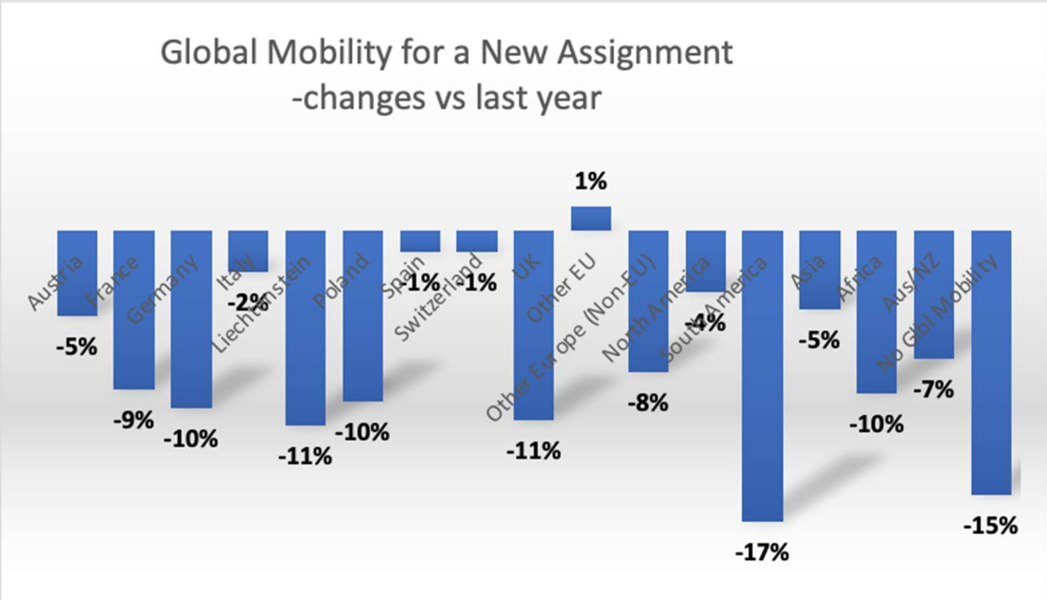


Figure 9.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 - How global Mobility for a New Assignment changed in 2023 survey*



Country of residence

The surveyed IM's were living in Poland (Figure 10). In 2023 no significant changes happened.

Polish interims work mainly in Poland, but they are ready to provide services in European countries and around the world. The readiness level is about 20-30%.

Figure 11.*Where Do IMs Live*

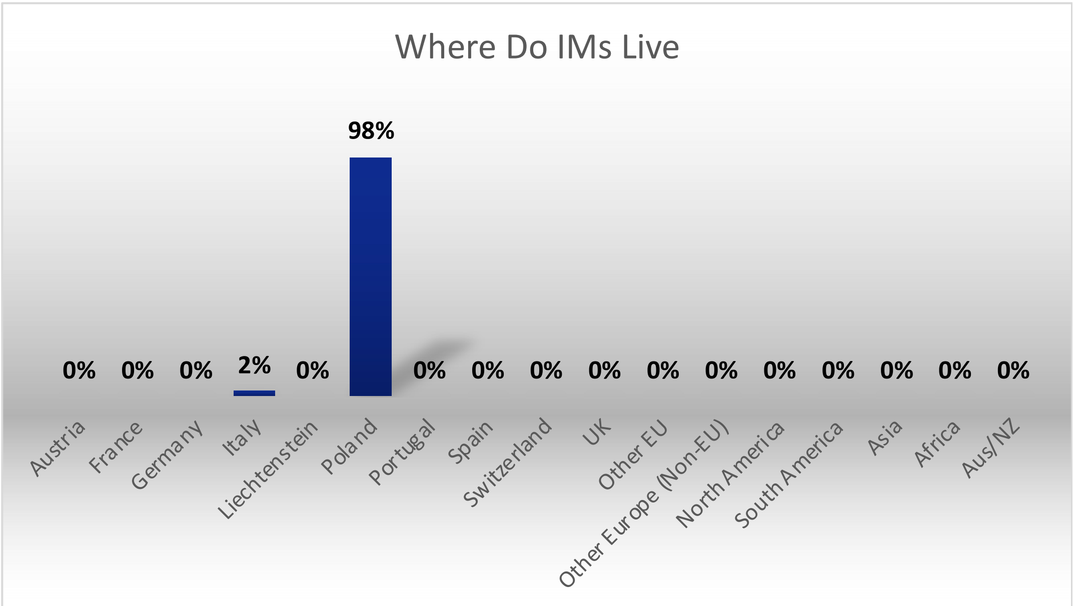
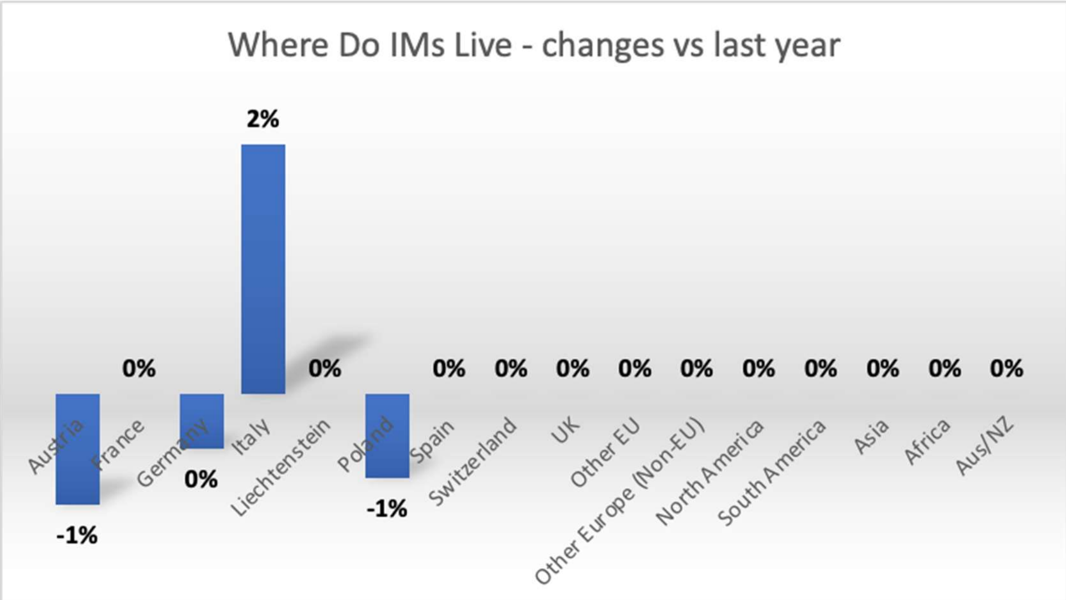


Figure 12.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How "Where Do IMs Live" changed in 2023 survey*



The Clients

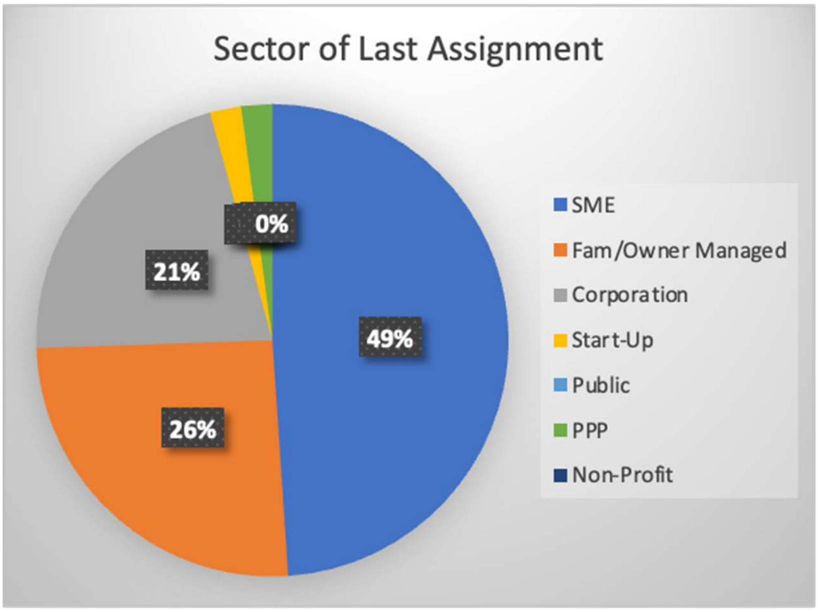
To give an insight into the 2022 IM market the Polish Interim Managers were asked to report details of their last assignment

Sectors of Activity

As far as type of the company is concerned, the majority of clients (49%) represented the Small and Medium Enterprises sector, the second largest was the sector of Family or Owner-Managed companies (26%).

The share of SME, family businesses and corporations increased compared to last year. Currently, they occupy a total of 96%.

Figure 13. *Sector of Last Assignment*



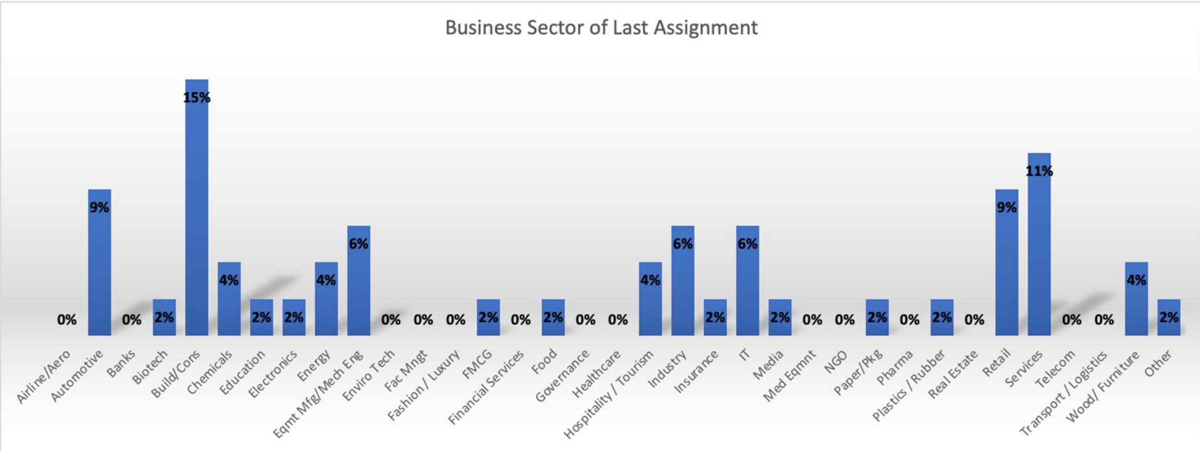
Business Sector of last assignment

The coverage of Polish Interim managers was wide-ranging, clients came from 21different sectors of activity and the majority of sectors covered *four groups* of sectors representing altogether 66% of the market (Figure 12).

The top four sectors (44%) were: Building and Construction (15%), Services (11%), Automotive (9%), Retail (9%).

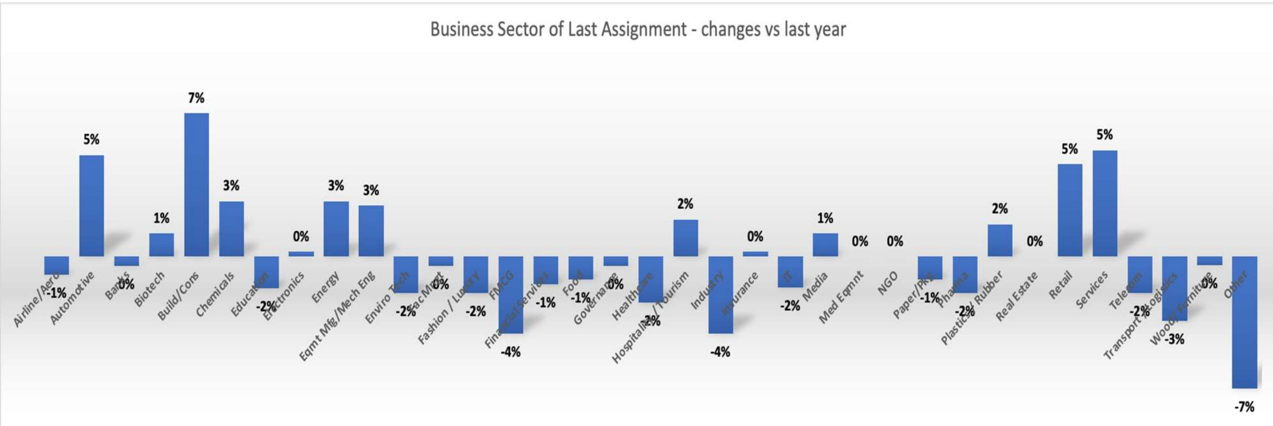
They significantly increased their share compared to the previous year.

Figure 14. *Business Sector of Last Assignment*



Out of the 21 different sectors only 11 indicated any growth (Figure 12.1), and it wasn't significant, representing only 34% of all responses - the largest increases were observed in Building and Construction (7%), Services (5%), Automotive (5%) and Retail (5%) while two recorded a significant decrease – FMCG and Industry (4%)

Figure 12.1. *Business Sector of Last Assignment – change in survey 2023 survey*



Size of company

The survey showed (Figure 13) that 76% of assignments altogether were in companies with less than 500 employees, out of which the largest part of 34% of the assignments were in small companies up to 100 employees.

The size of the companies in terms of turnover and number of employees were at a level similar to the previous year.

Figure 15. *Size of Companies Contracted with (no. of employees)*

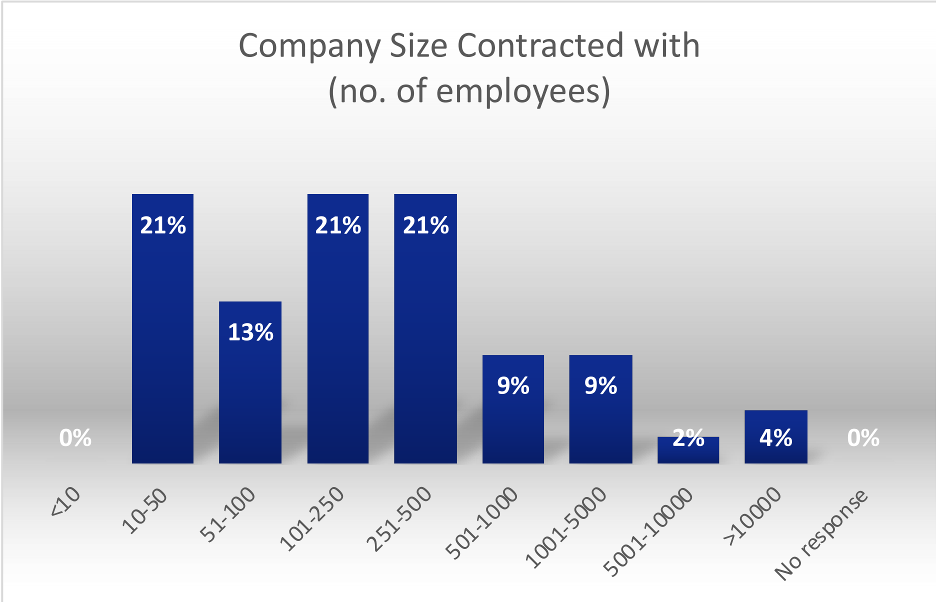
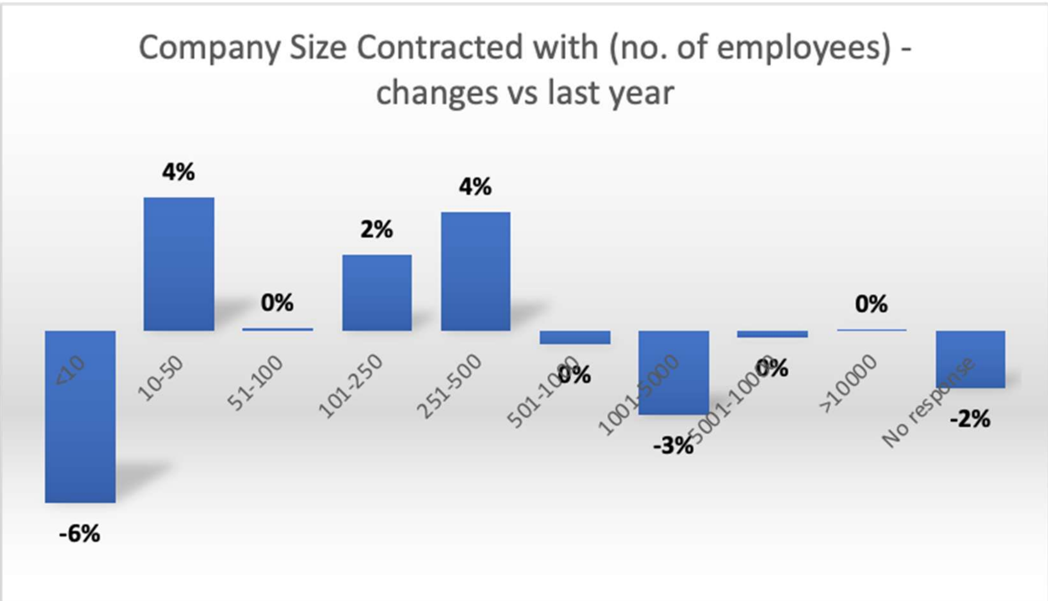


Figure 13.1 *Comparison 2023-2022 – How Size of Companies Contracted with (no. of employees), changed in 2023 survey*



Alternatively from a sales perspective, 59% of the assignments were in companies with revenues less than € 50 million (Figure 14). This group of companies shrank by 7% in 2022, indicating that the clients representing bigger size firms may become a growing segment in the future.

Figure 16. *Size of Companies Contracted with (revenue p.a. in €)*

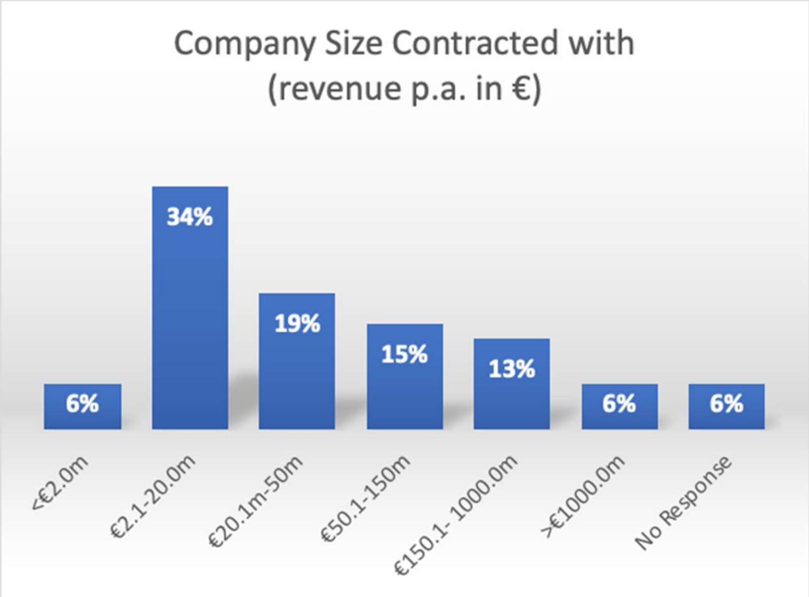
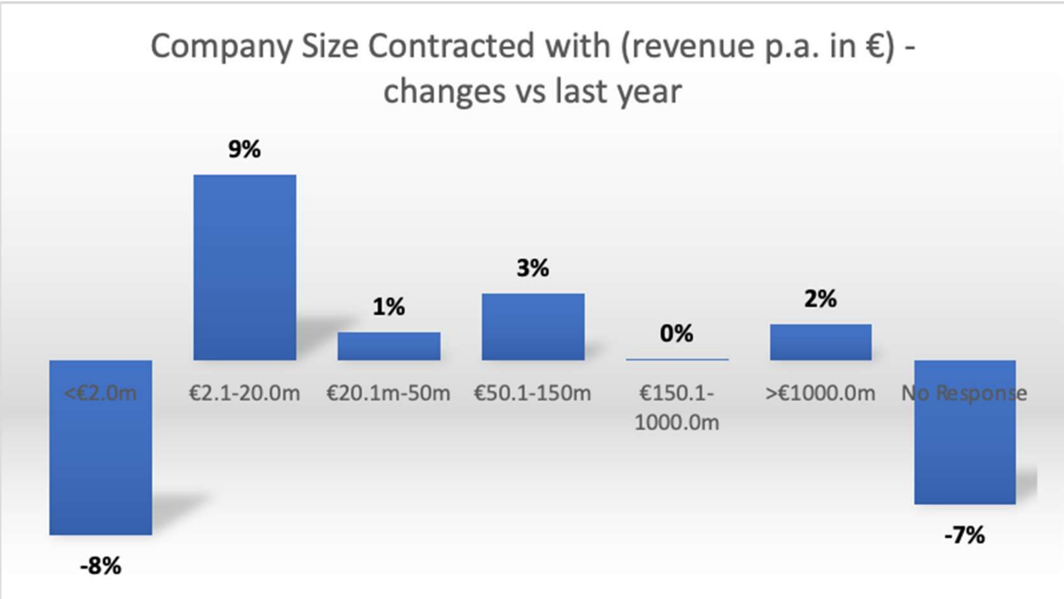


Figure 14.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How Size of Companies Contracted with (revenue p.a. in €) changed in 2023 survey*



The Assignments

Management level

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

Figure 17. *Management Level of Last Assignment*

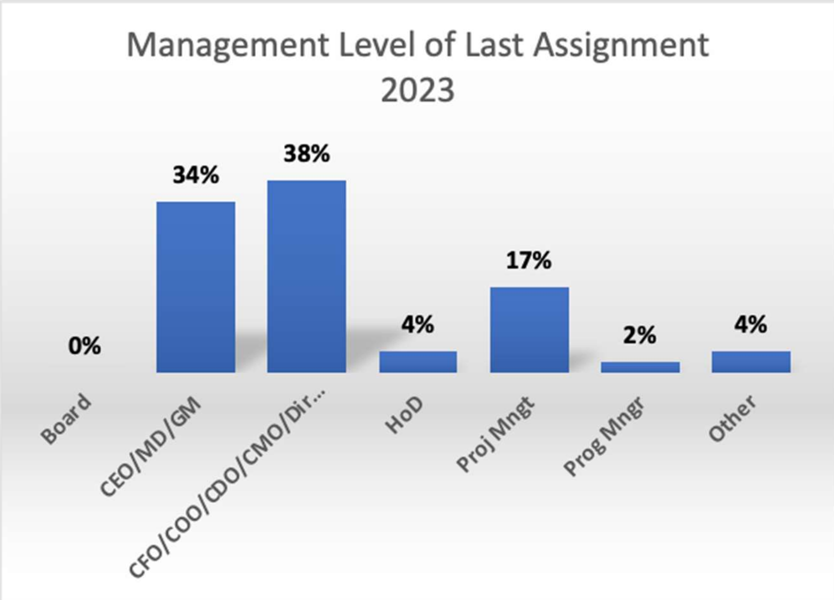
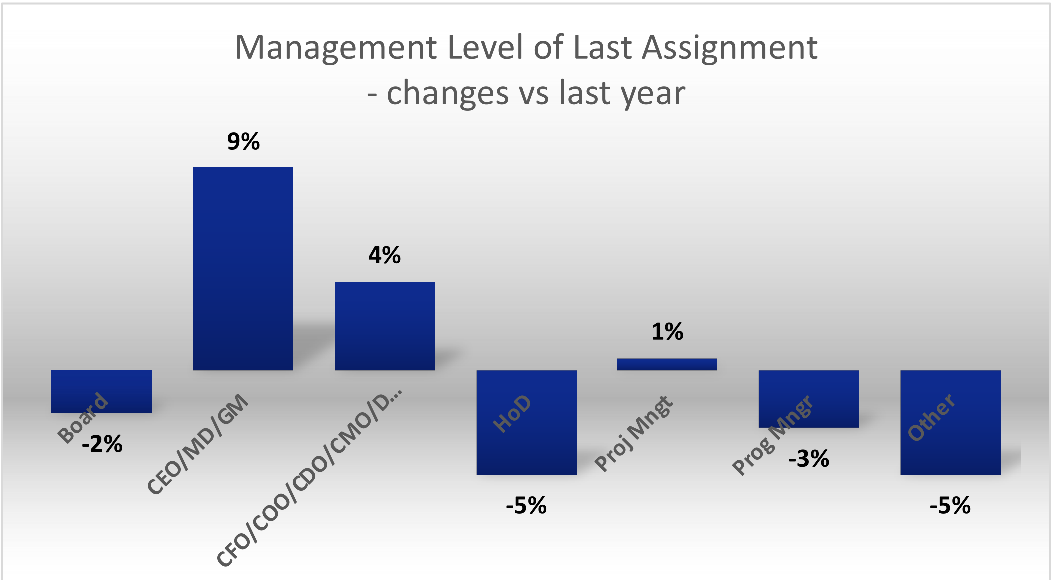


Figure 15.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How Management Level of Last Assignment changed in 2023 survey*



Key Business Issues

As IMs are change agents by nature it was no surprise that among the first three most often reported business issues respondents indicated the following areas of their assignments (in decreasing order of importance): Change management, Business development and Process optimisation.

The nature of the assignments covers aspects of management per se, and this was reflected in the group of the three second largest business issues: Company management, Business continuity and Project management.

The structure of reasons for employment is comparable to last year.
A significant decrease was recorded by the Development and Consulting businesses.

Figure 18. *Business Issues in Last Assignment*

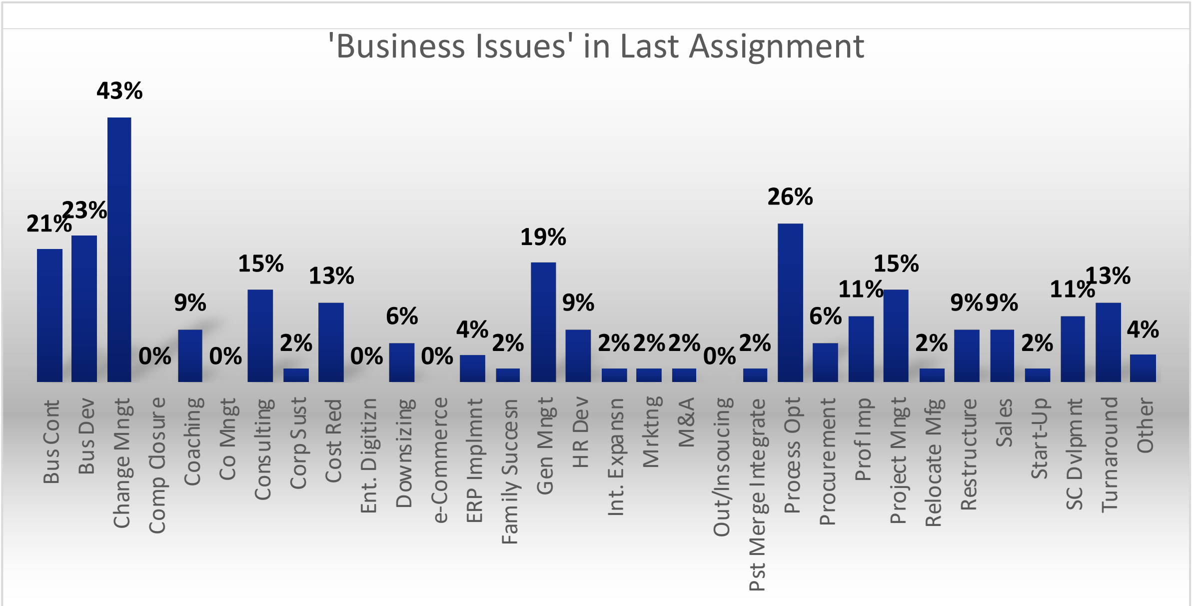
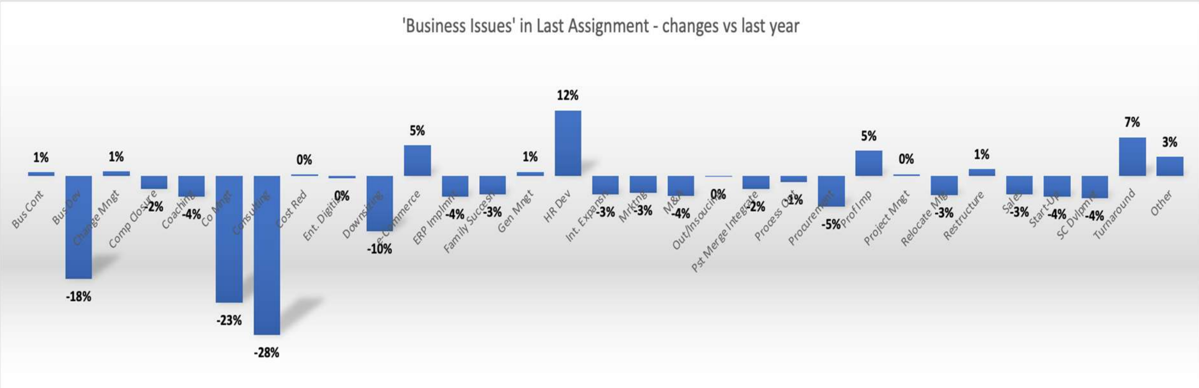


Figure 16.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How Business Issues in Last Assignment changed in 2023 survey*



The first two largest groups of business issues shown on the Figure 16 also represent the issues that grew the most in the 2022 survey, as indicated on the Figure 16.1.

Duration

In the present survey longer assignments dominated in IM projects. (Figure 17).

The first group of projects - over 13 months - represents 38% of the total.

The second group of the longest projects consists of assignments that last six months (13%) to one year (13% too).

The structure of project duration is comparable to the previous year.

Figure 19. *Duration of Last Assignment*

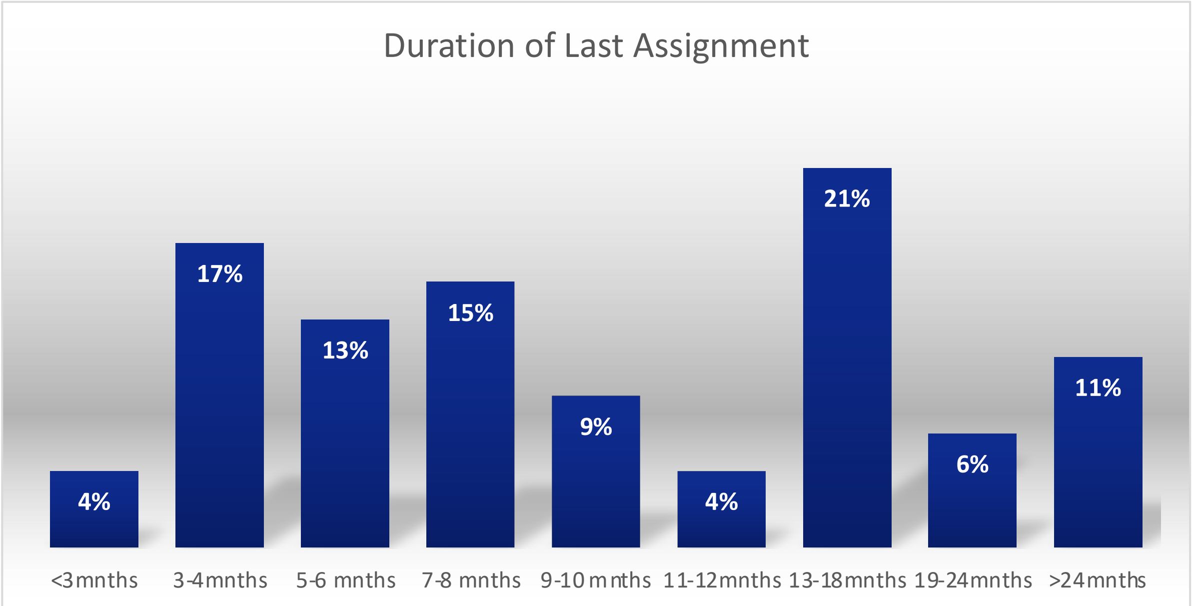
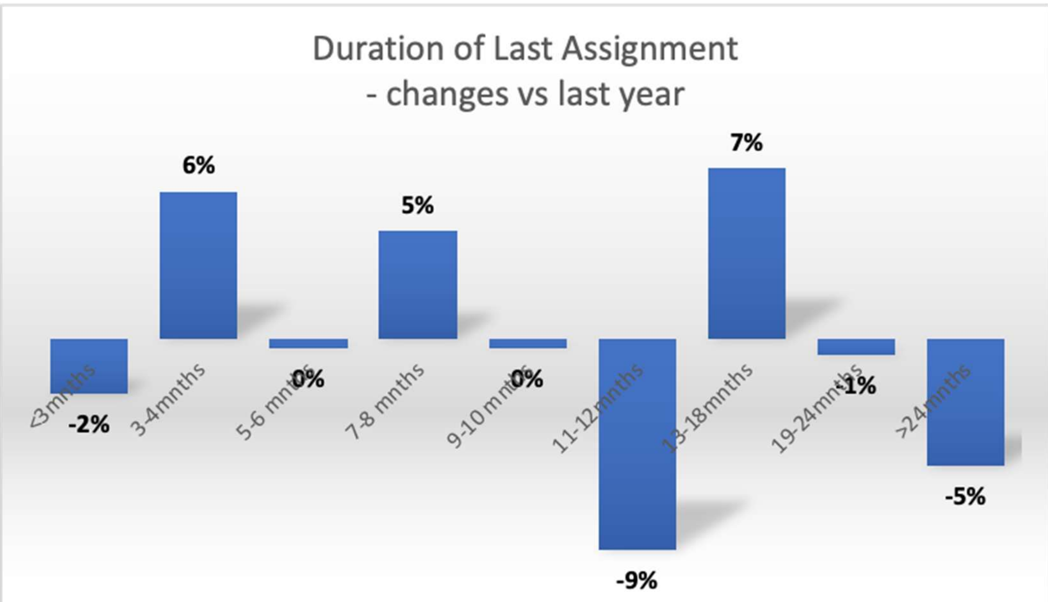


Figure17.1. *Comparison 2023-2022 - How Duration of Last Assignment changed in 2023 survey*



The number of assignments lasting 11-12 months decreased the most in the 2022 survey (Figure 17.1)

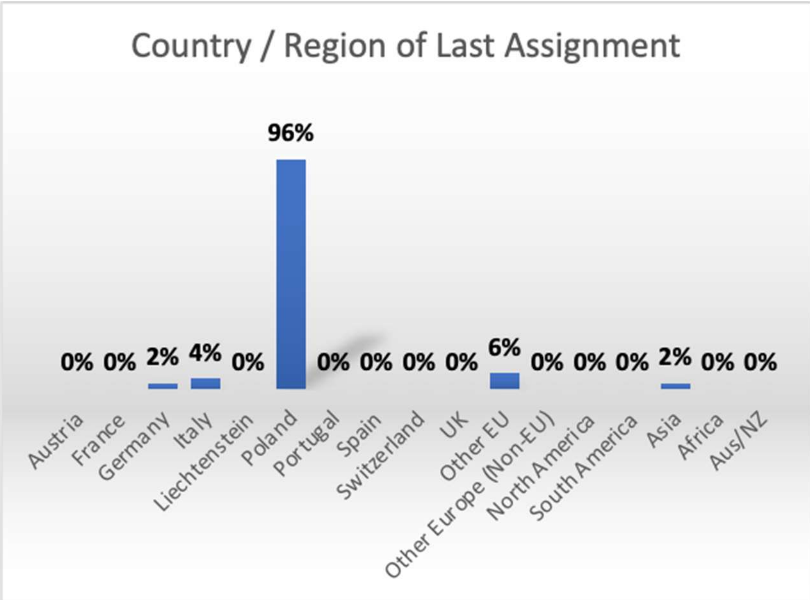
The number of assignments in the 13-18 months group grew by 7%.

Countries/region of the last assignment

As expected, 96% of the Polish Interim Managers in our survey worked in Poland. Their assignments in other countries were seen as exceptions, and if they happened, they were conducted in other European countries. Only one manager had an assignment in Asia.

Country/region of the last assignment

Figure 20. *Country / Region of Last Assignment*



Sales channel of the last assignment

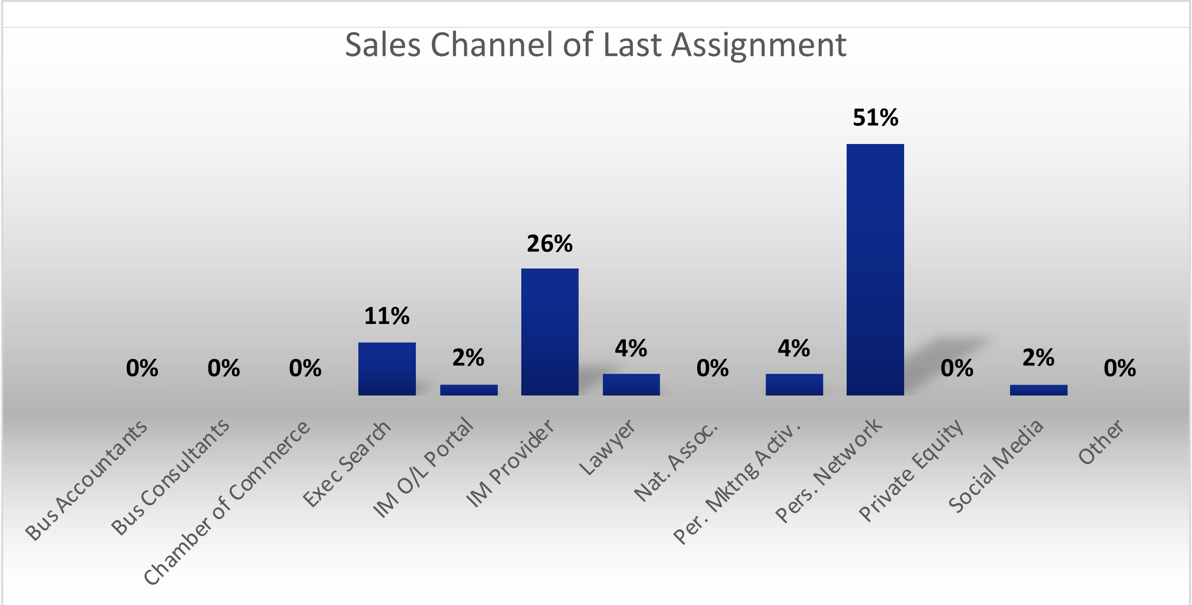
Interim Managers in Poland were acquiring clients in almost 80% via two groups of channels. 61% of IMs were able to get assignments in result of two kinds of the personal activities: personal networking (51%) and Personal marketing activities (4%),

The next two channels were IM Provider and Executive search, with a 37% share.

Providers - Interim Service Providers came with 26% of assignments, and IM online portals just 2%.

Among the channels of reaching customers, networking still ranks first. The second positions are IM provider and executive search, whose share has increased compared to the previous year.

Figure 21. *Sales Channel of Last Assignment*



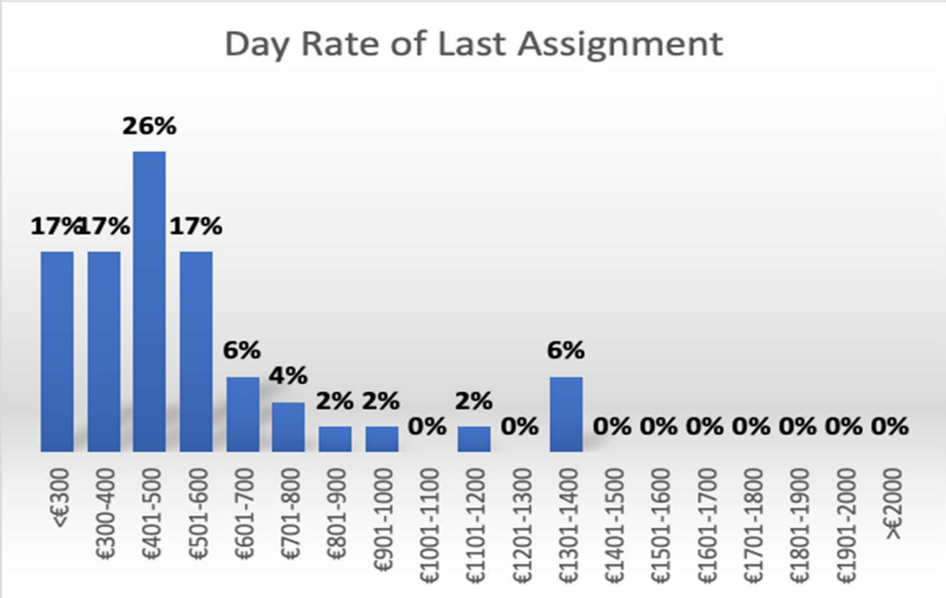
Day Rates

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 rather narrow, and covered the span of the lowest value of Figure 20: 60% of the projects were paid not more than 500 Euro. But inside this group the largest segment of 17% was represented by projects with a rate below 300 Euro.

The percentage of managers working for the lowest wages dropped significantly. However, only 16% of Polish IM's are paid above EUR 700.

Figure 22. *Day Rate of Last Assignment*



Pressure on Pricing

In the last six months only 21% of managers reported that there was high pressure on pricing during negotiations with the client; the number of managers forecasting such pressure for the next six months was slightly lower at 13%.

The current and expected pressure to lower rates in the near future remains at a comparable level.

Figure 23. *Pressure on Day Rate in Last 6 months*

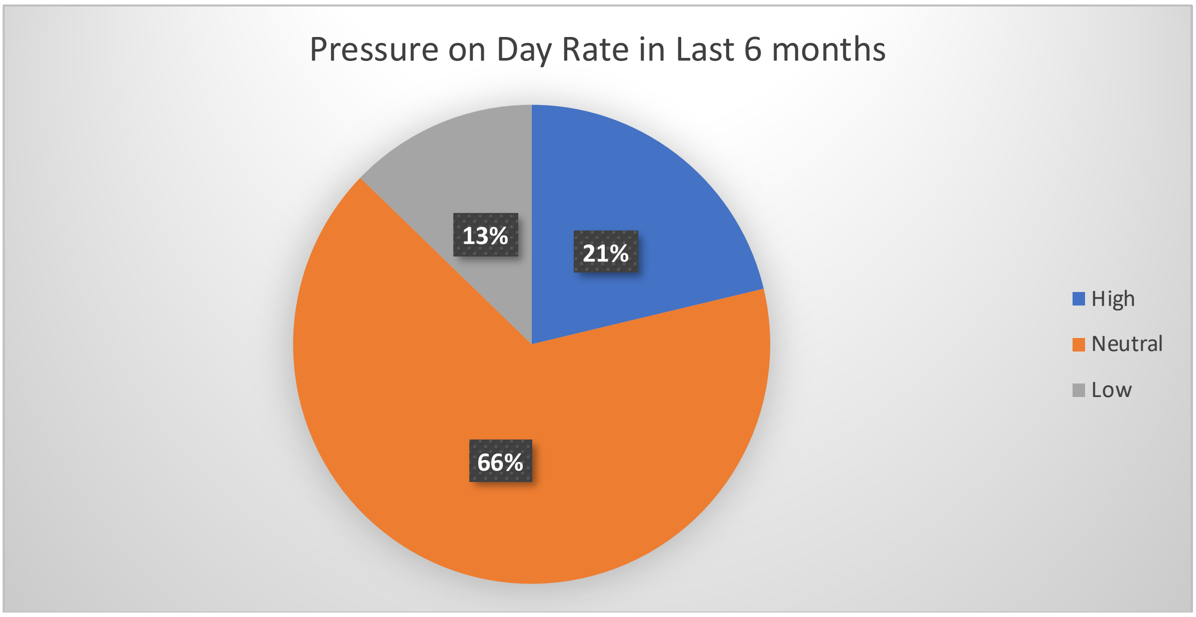
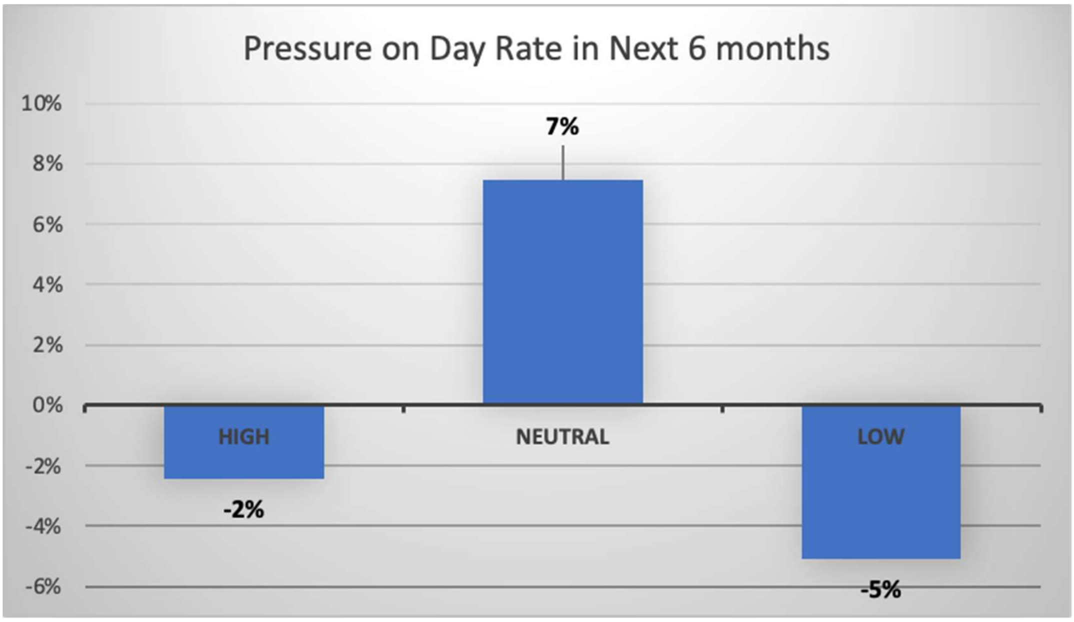


Figure 24. *Comparison 2023-2022 – How Pressure on Day Rate in Next 6 months changed in the 2023 survey*



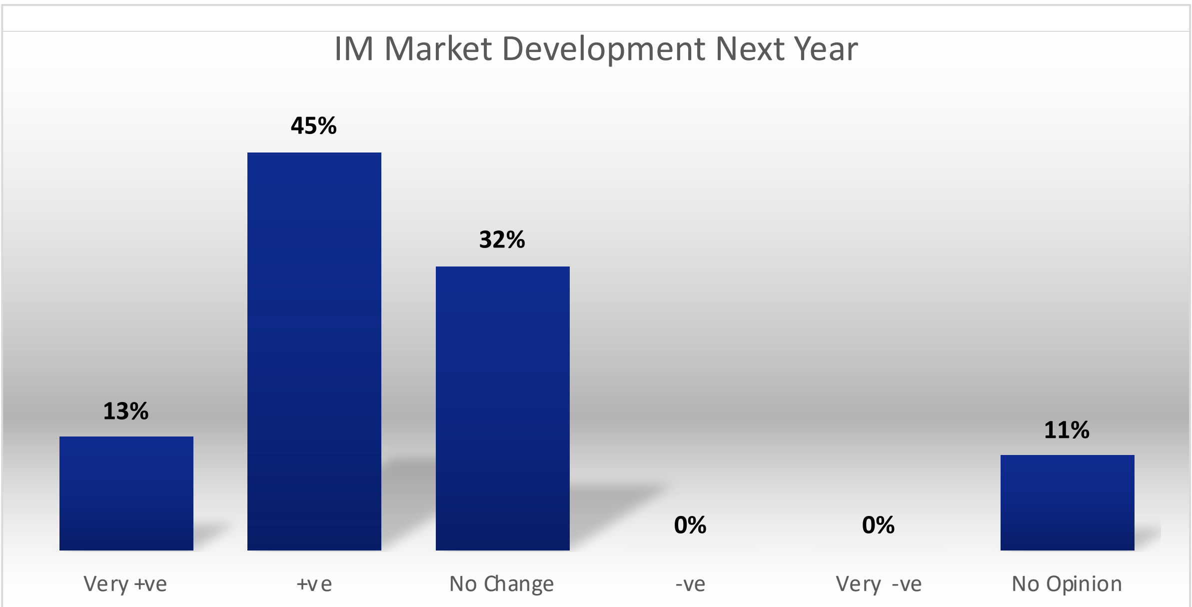
Trends

Market Development

In our survey, 90% of managers altogether judged positively/no change the development of the market in 2023.

Compared to the previous year, the assessment of future market development is predominantly optimistic.

Figure 25. *IM Market Development Next Year*



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?”. The summary of the responses is shown in Figure 24.

Figure 26. *Biggest Challenges in Next Business Year*

1. Acquisition of new projects
2. Inflation
3. Low popularity/awareness of the IM model among potential clients.

Background of the Survey

Respondents

The survey was performed between January 10 and January 29 2023. It was restricted to practising IM’s who were members of the national association SIM.

Respondents’ recruitment channels and means

To recruit the respondents, SIM set up the “INIMA Survey Support Group” on Whatsapp, only accessible to SIM members.

Moreover, the following recruitment steps were undertaken:

- direct mailing to SIM members
- direct text messages (SMS) to SIM members