

The 2021 survey of Polish Interim  
Managers performed by  
[Stowarzyszenie Interim Managers]



In collaboration with the  
International Network of Interim  
Manager Associations



INIMA

## List of content

List of content.....	2
List of Figures.....	3
The Interim Manager .....	5
Demographics.....	5
Functional Specialities.....	8
Market 2020 and Interim Manager Utilization.....	9
Current Status of Interim Managers .....	10
International Mobility .....	11
The Clients.....	12
Sectors of Activity .....	12
Size of company.....	14
The Assignments.....	16
Management level.....	16
Key Business Issues .....	16
Duration.....	18
Countries/region of the last assignment.....	18
Sales channel.....	19
Day Rates.....	20
Pressure on Pricing.....	20
Trends .....	22
Market Development.....	22
Future View and key issues facing Interim Executives .....	22
Background of the Survey .....	24

Respondents .....	24
Respondents' recruitment channels and means.....	24

## List of Figures

Figure 1. <i>IM Experience Profile</i> .....	5
Figure 2. <i>IM Age Profile</i> .....	7
<b>Figure 3. <i>IM Gender Profile</i></b> .....	7
<b>Figure 4. <i>IM's Primary Expertise</i></b> .....	8
<b>Figure 5. <i>IM's Secondary Expertise</i></b> .....	8
<b>Figure 6. <i>IM Market Development Last Year in Poland</i></b> .....	9
<b>Figure 7. <i>IM's Utilisation in the Last Year</i></b> .....	10
<b>Figure 8. <i>Currently on Assignment</i></b> .....	10
<b>Figure 9. <i>Global Mobility for a New Assignment</i></b> .....	11
<b>Figure 10. <i>Where Do IMs Live</i></b> .....	12
Figure 11. <i>Sector of Last Assignment</i> .....	12
<b>Figure 12. <i>Business Sector of Last Assignment</i></b> .....	13
<b>Figure 13. <i>Company Size Contracted with (no. of employees)</i></b> .....	14
<b>Figure 14. <i>Company Size Contracted with (revenue p.a. in €)</i></b> .....	15
Figure 15. <i>Management Level of Last Assignment</i> .....	16
<b>Figure 16. <i>Business Issues' in Last Assignment</i></b> .....	17
<b>Figure 17. <i>Duration of Last Assignment</i></b> .....	18
<b>Figure 18. <i>Country / Region of Last Assignment</i></b> .....	18
<b>Figure 19. <i>Sales Channel of Last Assignment</i></b> .....	19
<b>Figure 20. <i>Day Rate of Last Assignment</i></b> .....	20

---

Figure 21. <i>Pressure on Day Rate in Last 6 months</i> .....	21
Figure 22. <i>Pressure on Day Rate in Next 6 months</i> .....	21
Figure 23. <i>IM Market Development Next Year</i> .....	22
Figure 24. <i>Biggest Challenges in Next Business Year</i> .....	22
Figure 25. <i>INIMA survey respondents in Poland</i> .....	24
Figure 26. <i>INIMA survey respondents' recruitment program and daily results in Poland</i> .....	<b>Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.</b>
Figure 27. <i>INIMA survey respondents by their origin</i> .....	<b>Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.</b>
Figure 28. <i>IM experience profile by SIM survey and INIMA survey 2020</i> .....	<b>Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.</b>
Figure 29. <i>IM age profile by SIM survey and INIMA survey 2020</i> ....	<b>Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.</b>
Figure 30. <i>IM gender profile by SIM survey and INIMA survey 2020</i> .....	<b>Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.</b>
Figure 31. <i>Day reate by SIM survey and INIMA survey 2020</i>	<b>Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.</b>
Figure 32. <i>Duration of the assignments by SIM survey and INIMA survey 2020</i>	<b>Errore. Il segnalibro non è definito.</b>

## The Interim Manager

### Demographics

The typical Polish Interim manager in our survey was male, in over 70% of the age between 41-55 (Figure 2) and living in Poland (Figure 14).

Majority (altogether 58%) of Interim managers represents segment of rather mature professionals, they have experience with more than four (4) years as an Interim professional (see Figure 1). Nevertheless, there is significant segment represented by the Interim managers who have from less-than-one year to 3-4 years of experience (42%, Figure 1). This demonstrates the still early maturity of the Polish IM market. It is also 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 permanent job<sup>1</sup>. It might be noticed that last year brought visible 13% new entries to the profession of Interim management. It is impossible in this survey to judge in which extent it was conscious decision, or forced by the loss of job due to the pandemic. But in the next year survey (providing 2021 year will be economically better than 2020/ more “typical” year) it will be interesting to see whether this picture is a feature of Polish market, or one- off result of the year of Covid-19.

### Figure 1. *IM Experience Profile*

---

<sup>1</sup> SIM knows from the own surveys of Polish market that over 50% of respondents would return to the permanent job should such opportunity come.

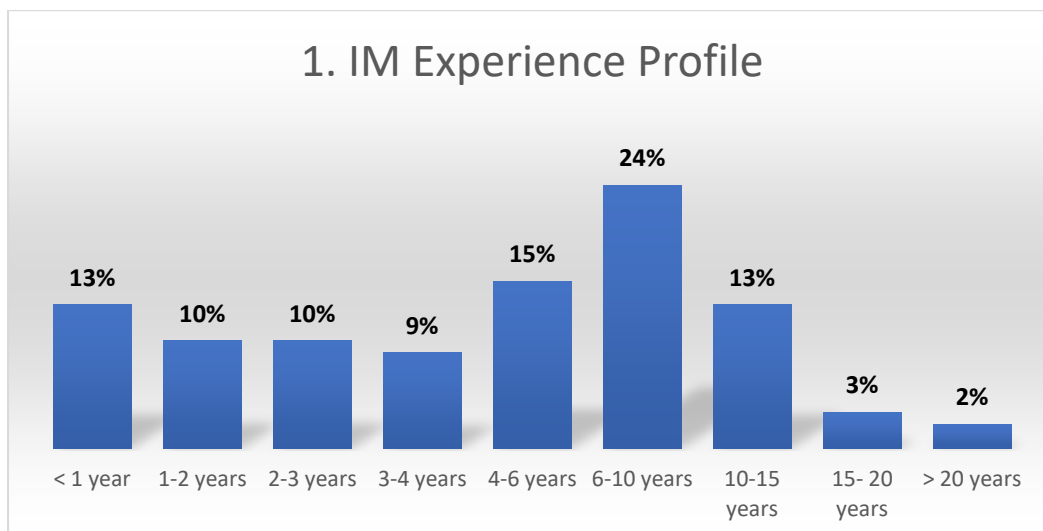
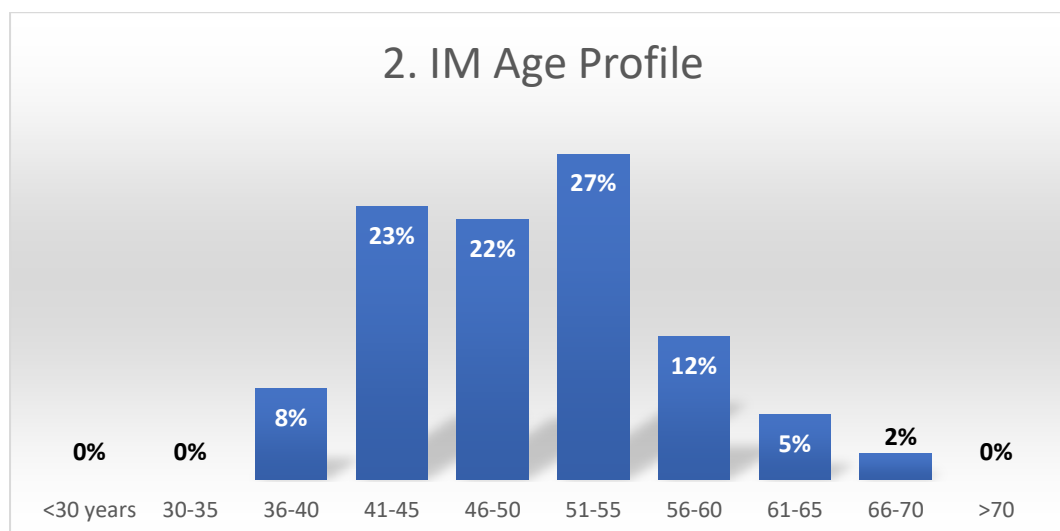
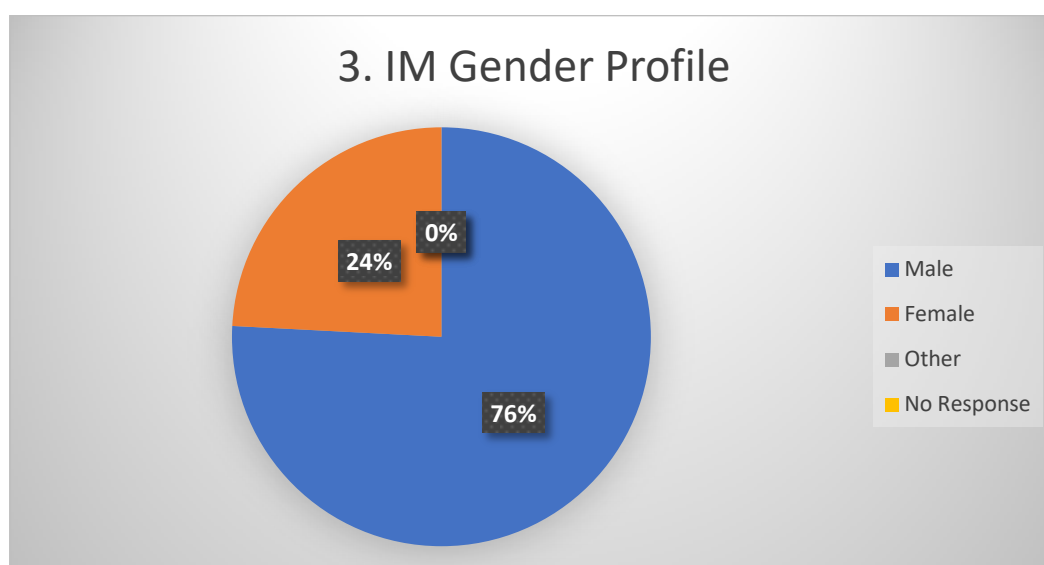


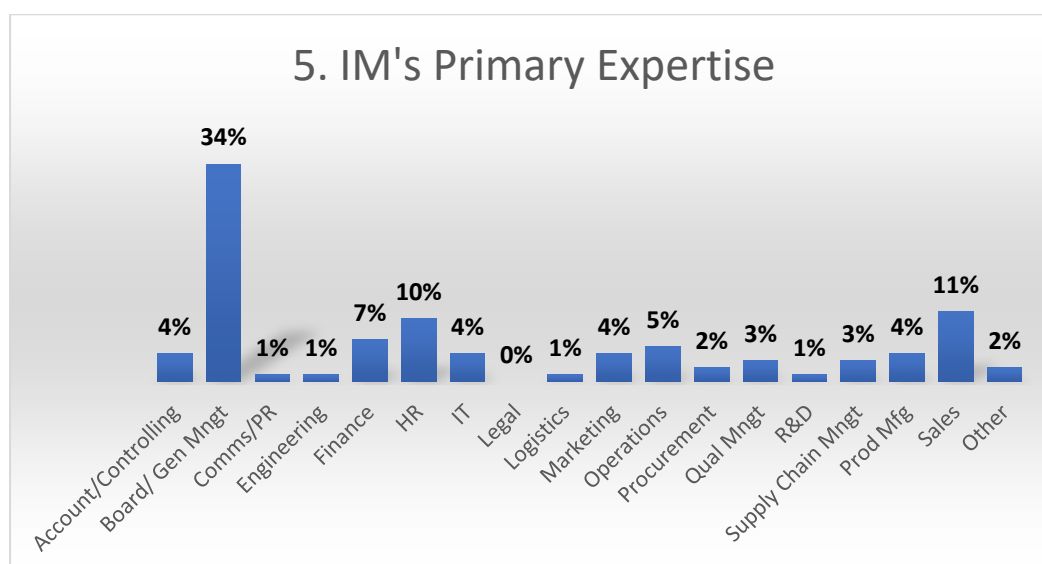
Figure 2. *IM Age Profile*Figure 3. *IM Gender Profile*

The high seniority was also shown by the management levels, with altogether 67% of the interims covering C-level roles or above (Figure 18, CEO/MD and CFO, CMO, COO, CDO). On a negative note, only 24% of the respondents were women which reflected that Interim Management is still a male-dominated profession in Poland.

### Functional Specialities

The leading top primary functional speciality of the interim managers in our survey is represented by the function of Board/General management (34%). It is followed by the next three primary functional specialities, which are mentioned by the respondents with similar frequency: Sales (11%), HR (10%), and Finance (7%).

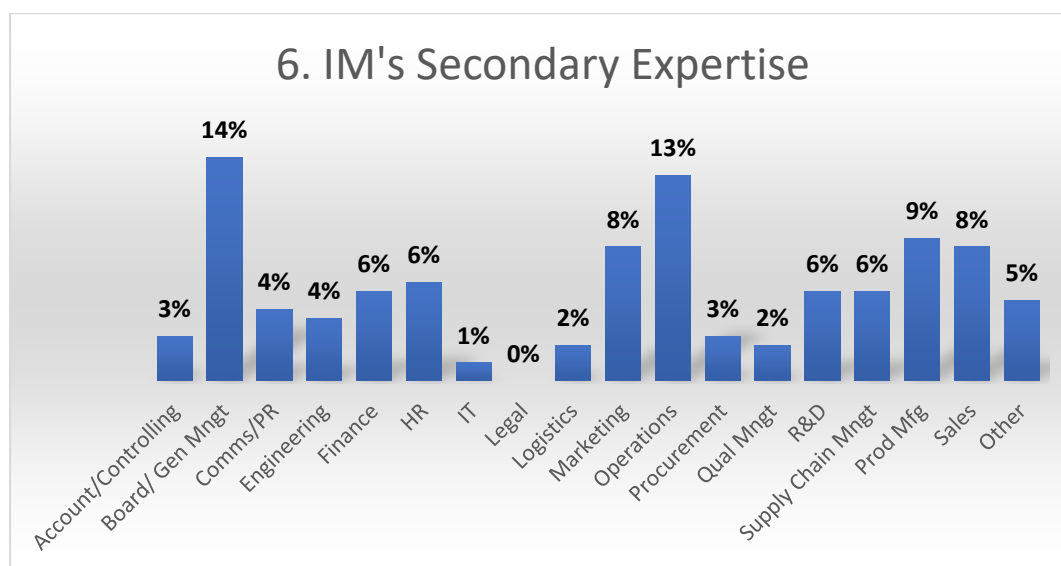
Figure 4. *IM's Primary Expertise*



Interim managers complemented their primary specialities with one or more secondary competences. So in the same project they could be a valuable experts for their customers in the fields of: Operations (13%), Production (9%), Sales (8%) or Marketing (8%). Polish Interim Managers complimented their primary speciality with an average of two secondary competencies and the graph below shows all of them (17).

Figure 5. *IM's Secondary Expertise*

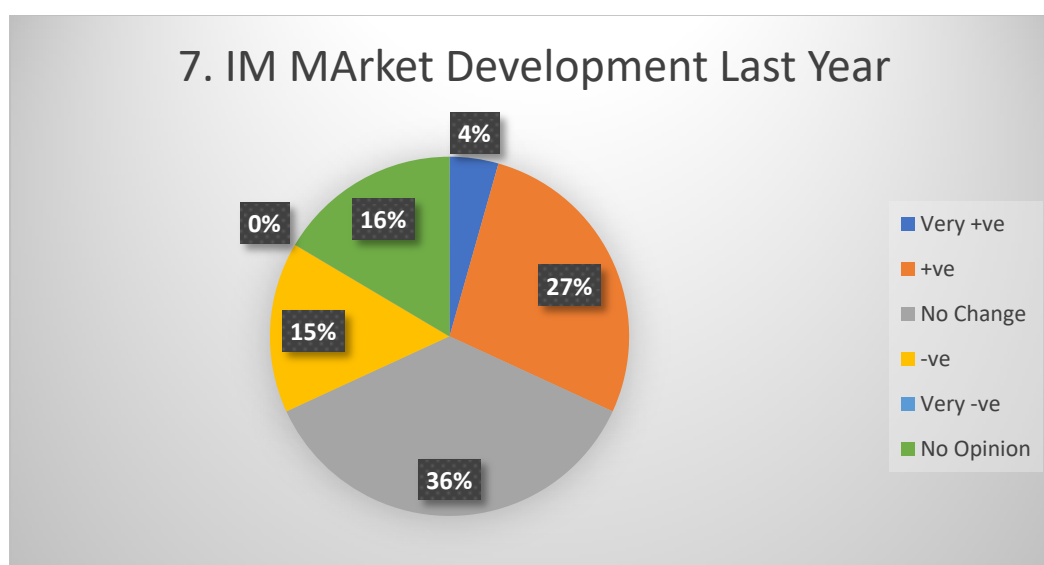




### Market 2020 and Interim Manager Utilization

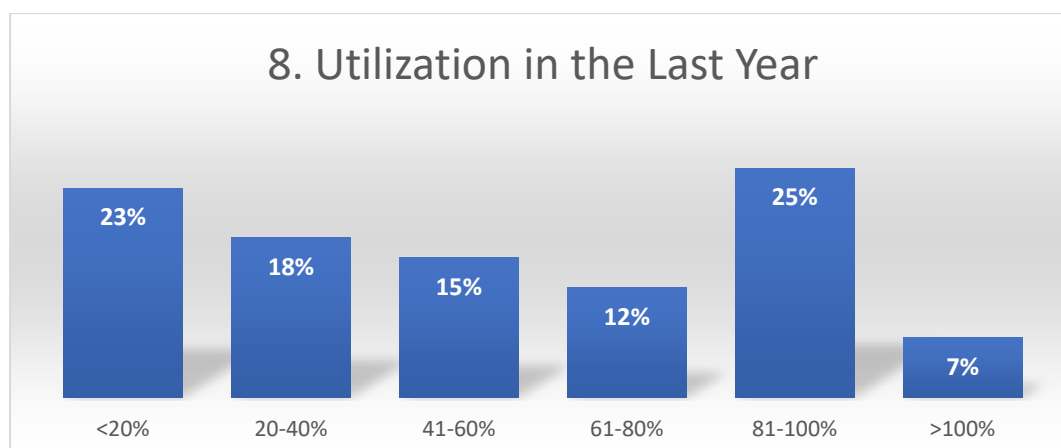
In the present survey market was evaluated quite positive. Altogether 67% of answers indicated very positive/positive/no change market development, and more than half of the positive answers shown no change (36%), which – in the light of pandemic-related concerns shows that demand from Polish clients demanded the service was quite high.

Figure 6. IM Market Development Last Year in Poland



In the present survey, not much more than one third (32%) of Managers were saturated for more than 80-100% of their time. Majority of projects brought only up to 40% utilisation, with one fifth (23%) of Interim managers occupied with less than 20% of their time.

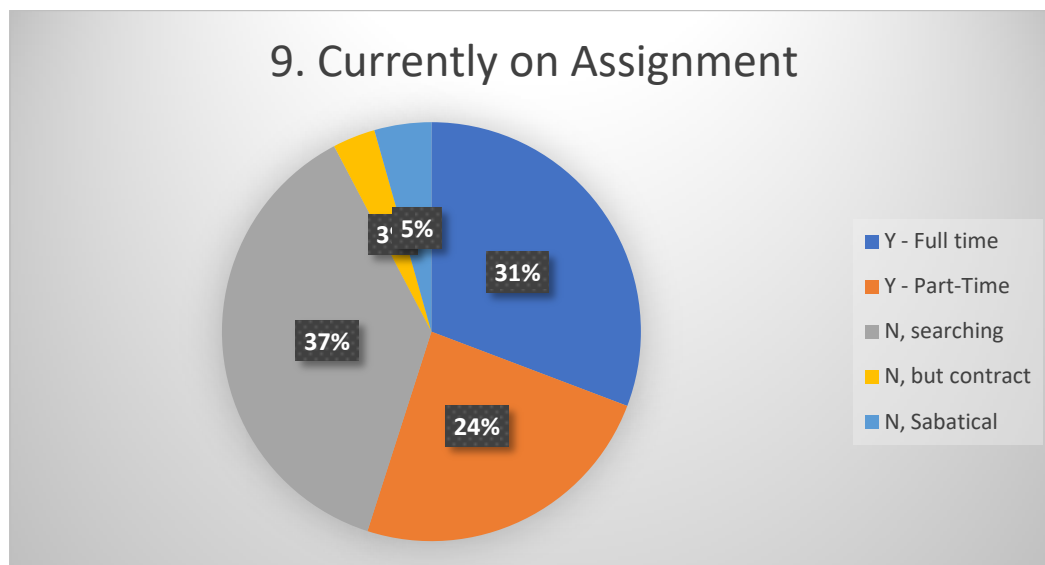
**Figure 7. IM's Utilisation in the Last Year**



### Current Status of Interim Managers

The survey reported that altogether 45% of Interim managers were not occupied for the three following reasons: 5% were on their sabbaticals, while three were just waiting to start their contract, but a big share of 37% were not employed at all. Only 55% altogether of the Interims were on their current interim assignments, and majority of this group was full-time occupied (31%), while 24% were on part-time projects.

**Figure 8. Currently on Assignment**



### International Mobility

The vast majority (88%) 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, Switzerland, or other EU or not EU country in Europe. A notable 9.6% of managers stated availability for assignments in North America.

Figure 9. Global Mobility for a New Assignment

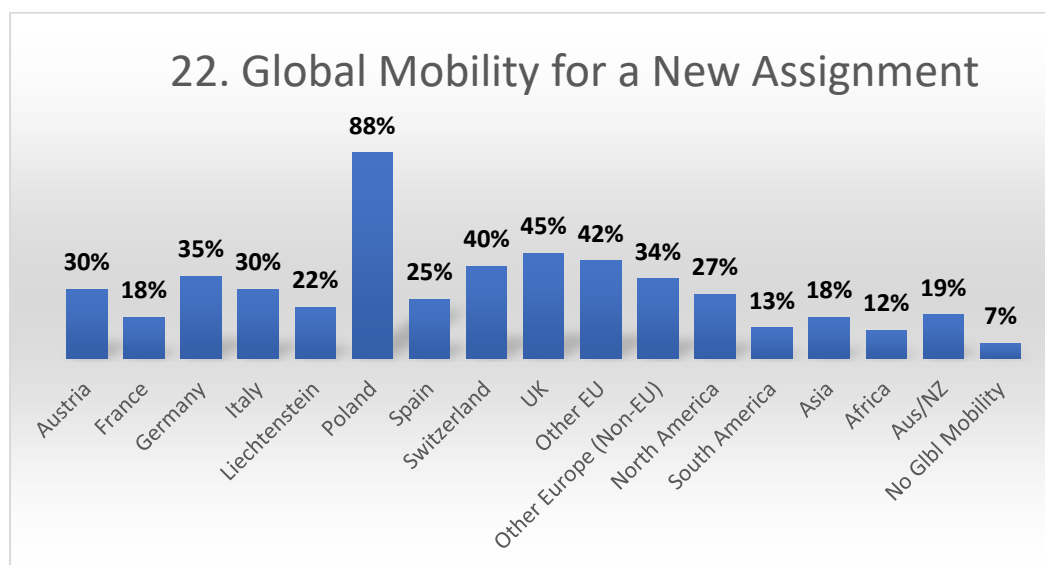
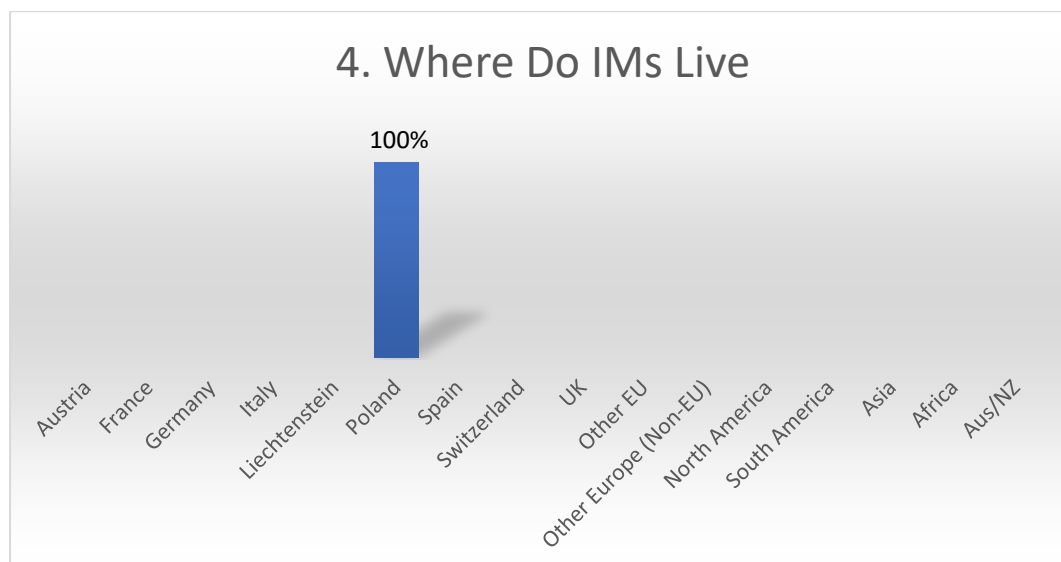


Figure 10. *Where Do IMs Live*



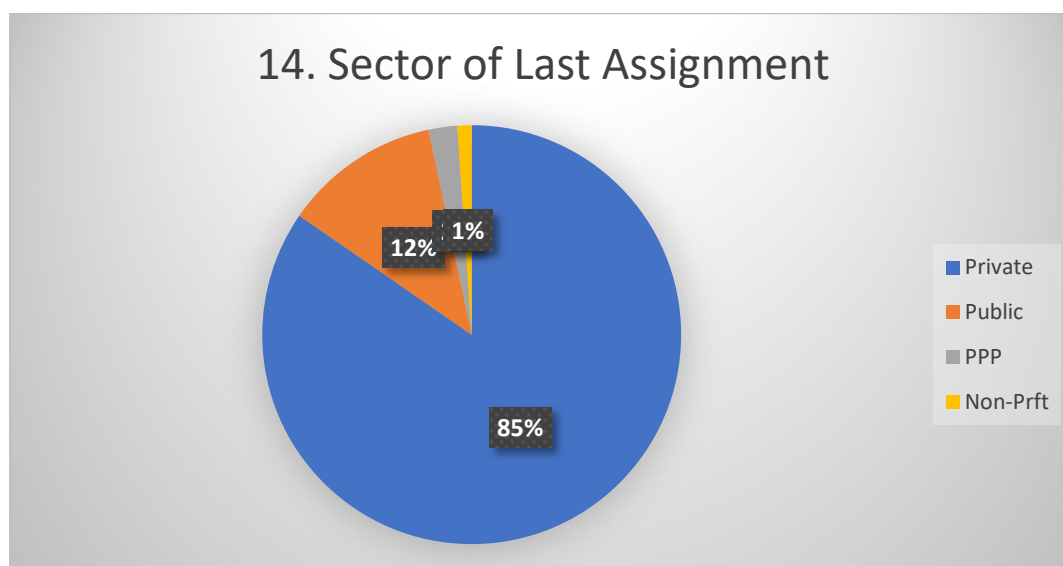
## The Clients

To give an insight into the 2020 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, majority of clients (85%) represented private sector

Figure 11. *Sector of Last Assignment*



### Business Sector of last assignment

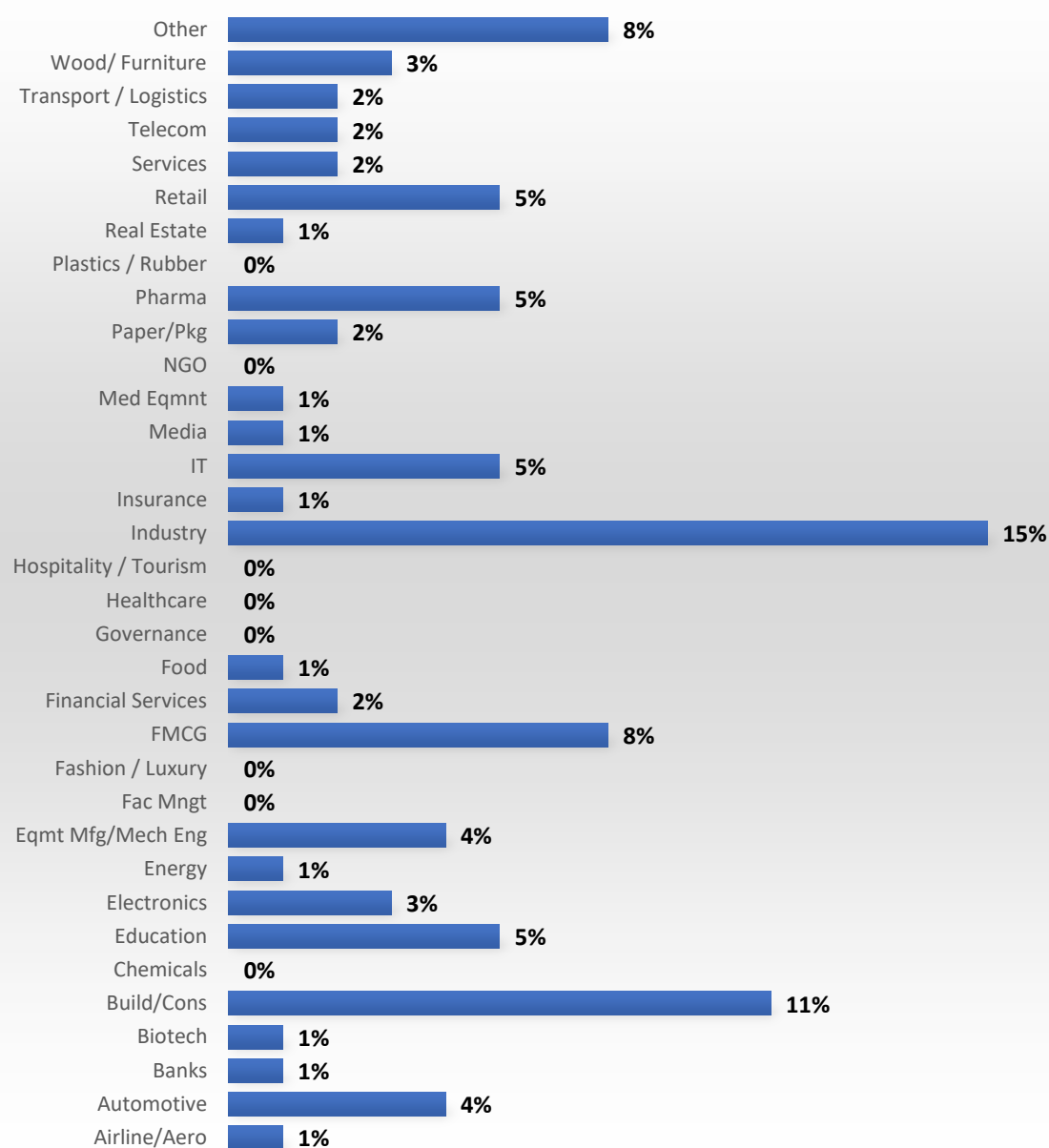
The coverage of Polish Interim managers was wide-ranging, clients came from 26 different sectors of activity and majority of sectors covered two groups of altogether 54%.

The top three sectors (34% altogether) were: Industry (15%), Building/Construction (11%), and FMCG (8%).

The following four sectors represented 20% altogether: Education, Retail, Pharma, and IT, – each of 5%.

**Figure 12.** *Business Sector of Last Assignment*

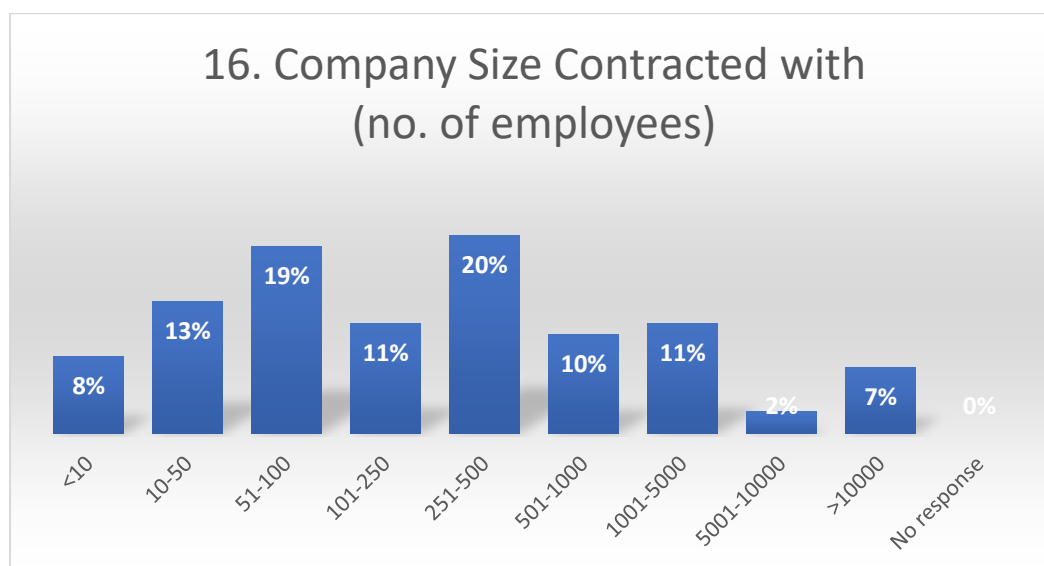
## 15. Business Sector of Last Assignment



## Size of company

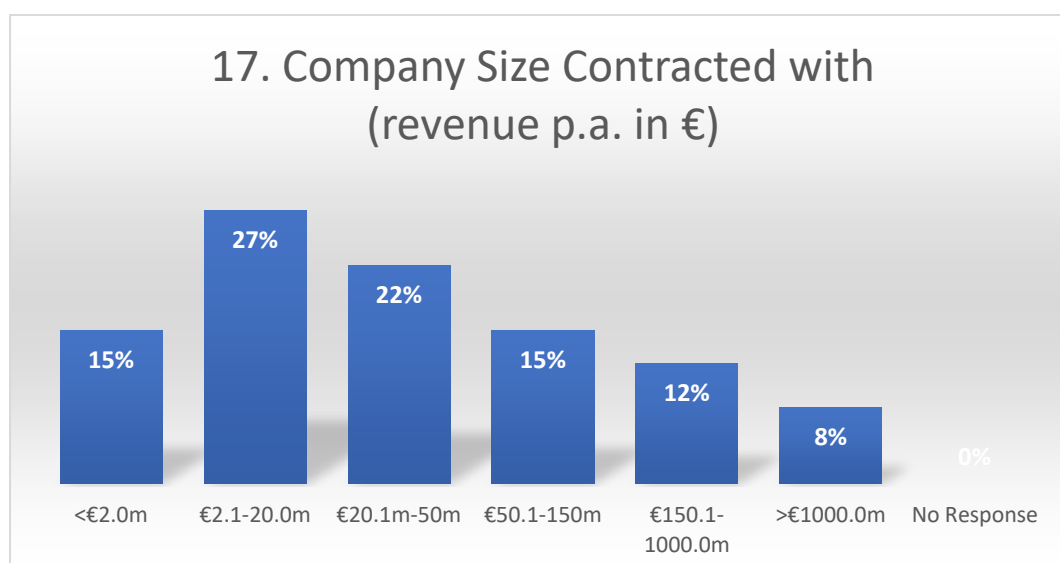
The survey showed that 70% of assignments altogether were in companies with less than 500 employees. And larger part of 40% of the assignments were in small companies up to 100 employees.

**Figure 13.** *Company Size Contracted with (no. of employees)*



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

Figure 14. *Company Size Contracted with (revenue p.a. in €)*

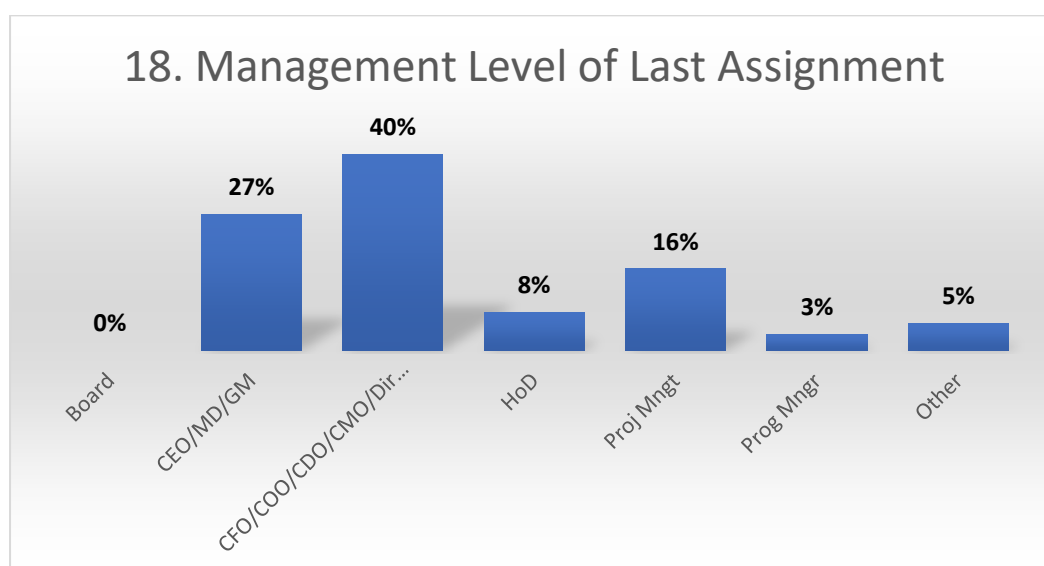


## The Assignments

### Management level

During their last assignments, the majority of managers (67%) covered roles at C-level or above

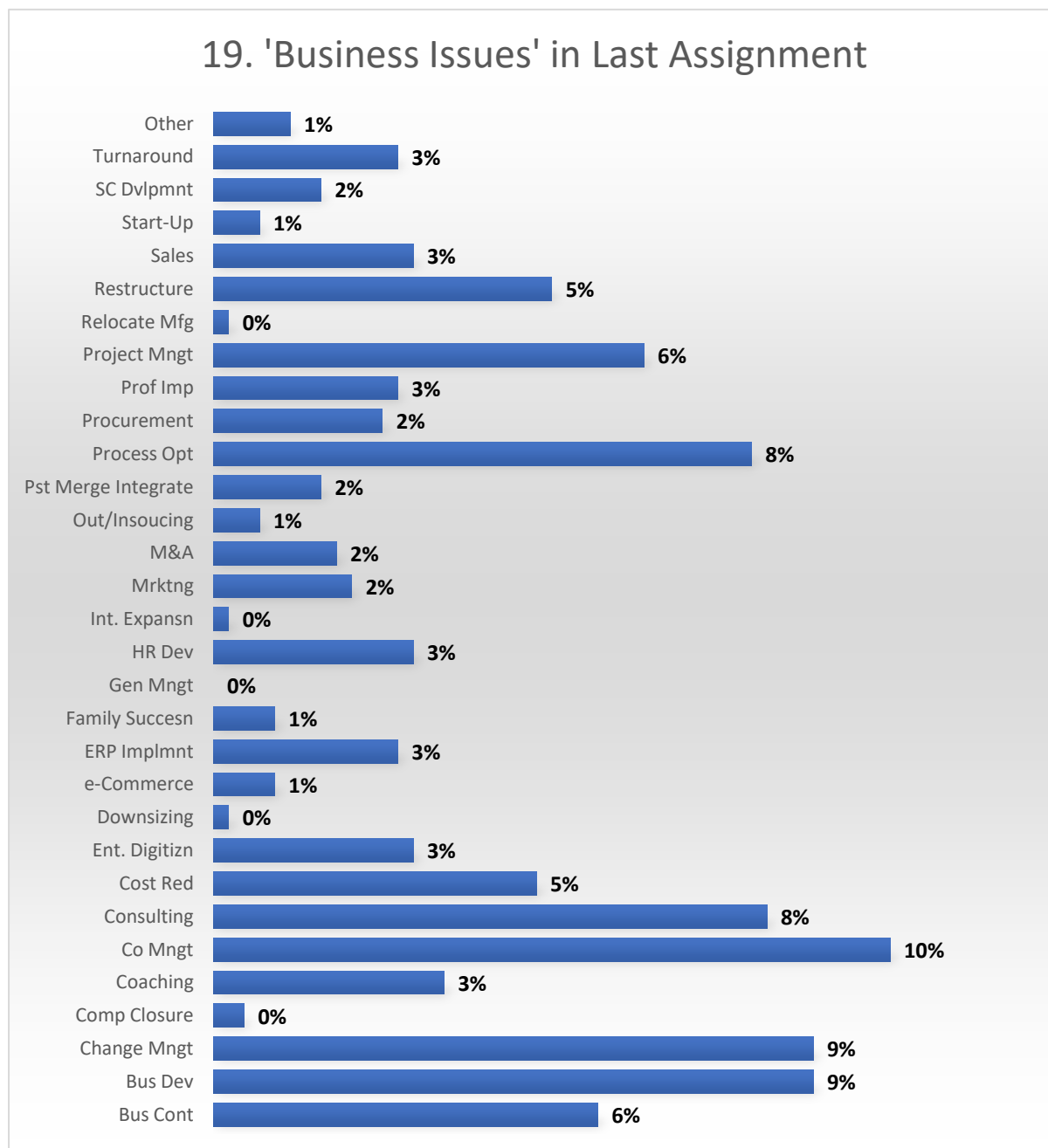
Figure 15. *Management Level of Last Assignment*



### Key Business Issues

Interim Managers are change-agents by nature so it was no surprise that respondents reported the following four areas as their biggest issues: Company management, Change management, Process optimisation, and Business development. Nevertheless, differences among top ten (10) issues addressed by managers in their last assignments as shown in the following Figure 16 are not large.

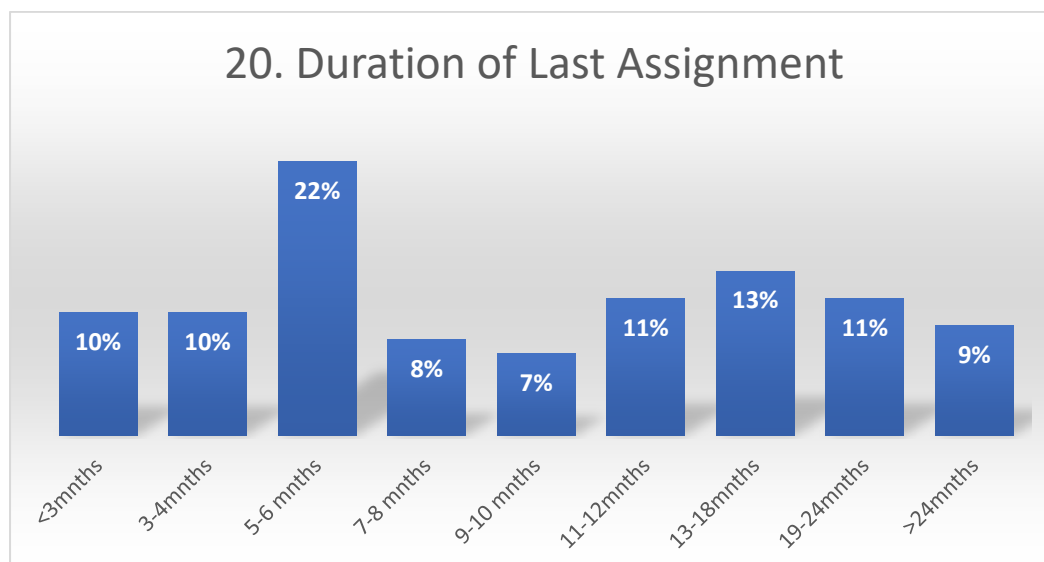


Figure 16. *Business Issues' in Last Assignment*

### Duration

The most often duration of assignments was 6 months, and the total frequency of the assignments of short period until one year was 57%.

**Figure 17.** *Duration of Last Assignment*

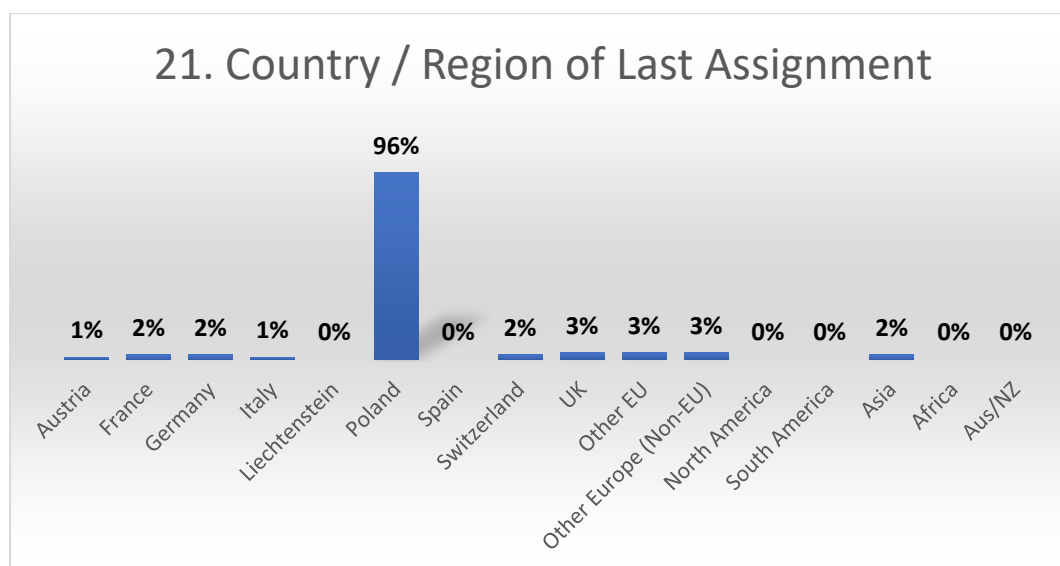


### Countries/region of the last assignment

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

### Country/region of the last assignment

**Figure 18.** *Country / Region of Last Assignment*



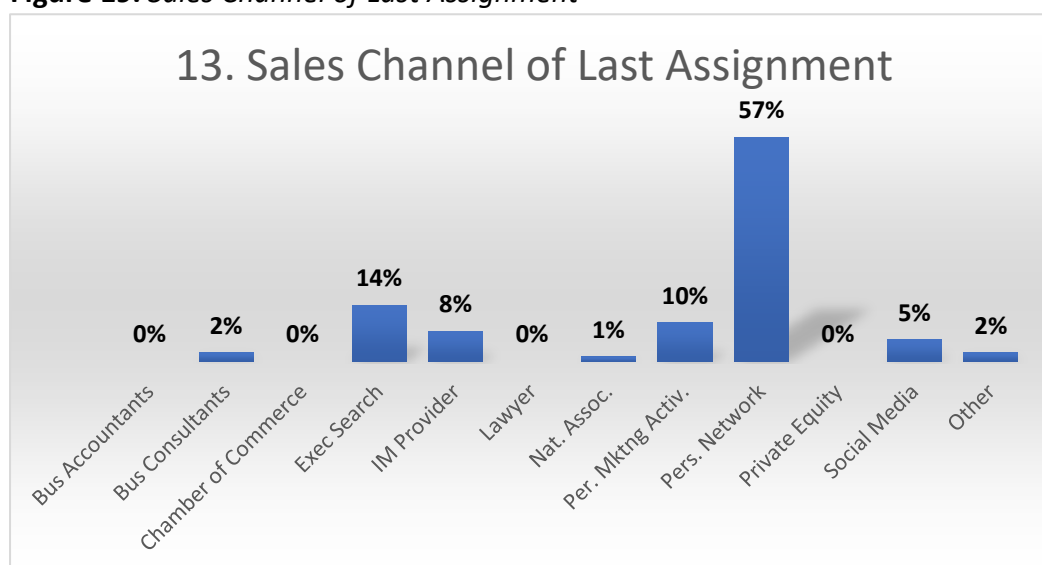
### Sales channel

Interims in Poland were acquiring clients in 87% altogether by the two directions: personal activities and through institutionalised organizations.

As to personal efforts they formed altogether 67% of sales: the personal network of the Interim Manager (57%), and Personal marketing (10%).

Recruiters formed altogether 22% of sales: Interim Service Providers came with 14% of assignments, and Executive search companies with 8%.

**Figure 19.** Sales Channel of Last Assignment



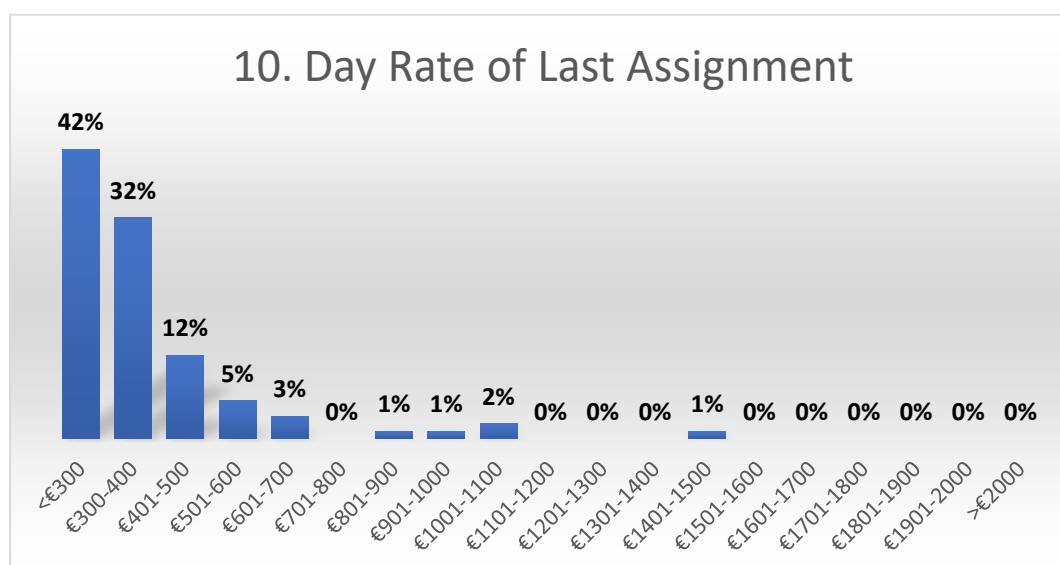
The remaining 23% was dispersed among four directions, as shown in the Figure 19.

### 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 the Figure 20: 86% of the projects were paid not more than 500 Euro. But inside this group the largest segment of 42% was represented by the projects with the rate below 300 Euro.

**Figure 20.** Day Rate of Last Assignment

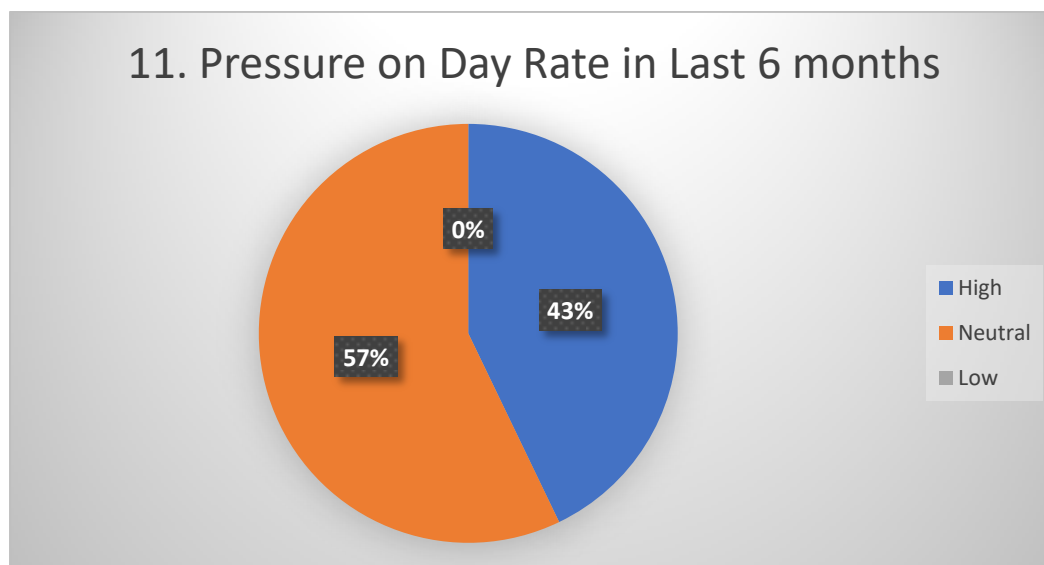


### Pressure on Pricing

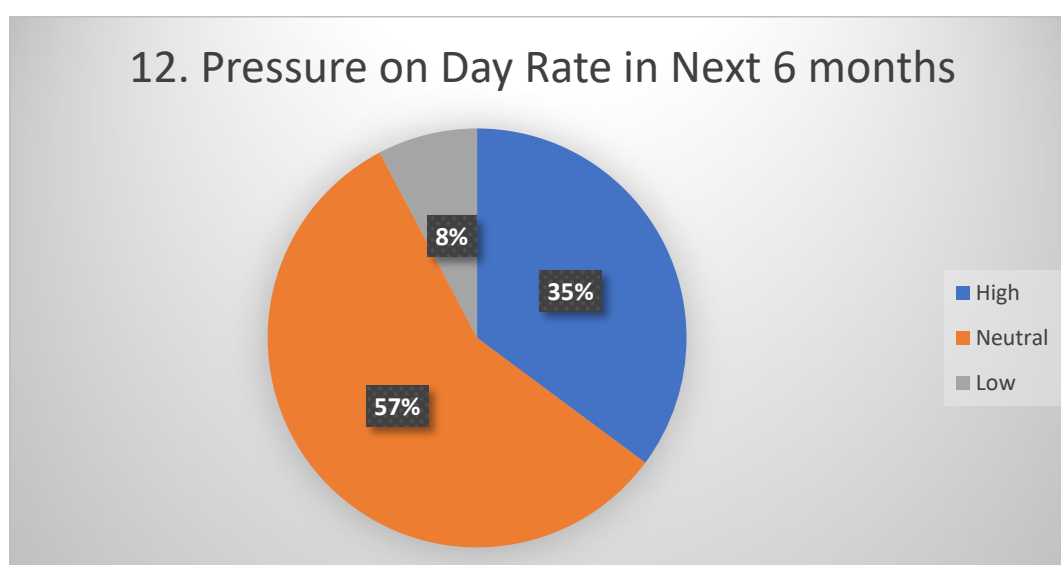
In the last six (6) months less than half (43%) of managers reported that there was high pressure on pricing during negotiation with the client, this

pressure was forecasted to decrease significantly to 35% in the next six (6) months.

**Figure 21.** *Pressure on Day Rate in Last 6 months*



**Figure 22.** *Pressure on Day Rate in Next 6 months*

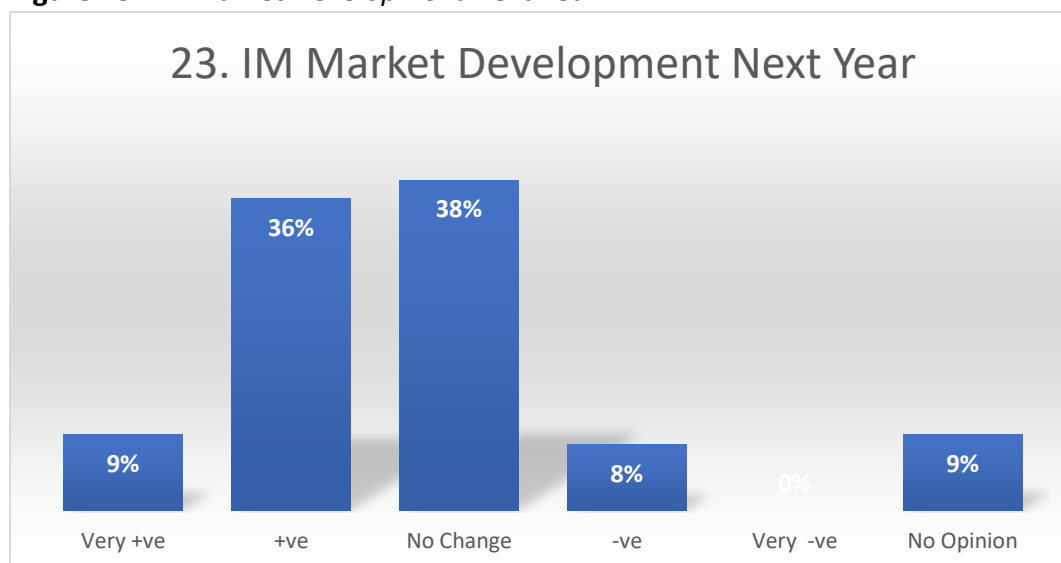


## Trends

### Market Development

In our survey, 83% of managers altogether judged positively/no change the development of the market in 2021.

**Figure 23.** *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?”. This is a summary of the responses as seen in the Figure 24.

**Figure 24.** *Biggest Challenges in Next Business Year*

24. Biggest Challenges in Next Business Year	
Finding new project, remote contacts makes networking effects weaken.	30
Concerns upon rates: less demand from clients puts pressure on rates.	8

---

Limited occasions of networking, decreased occasions due to moving to online/remote ways of working.	8
Various concerns upon negative changes in business/economic environment caused by pandemic: difficult in forecasting, prevailing short-term planning, costs cutting by clients (less demand), contracting economy, companies downsizing their activities, crisis, careful planning by firms, economical uncertainty, chaotic/frequent decisions of the government to contain pandemic,	12

## Background of the Survey

The survey was performed between 13<sup>th</sup> January (started/announced) and 30 January (closed) 2021. It was intended to be restricted to practising interims who were or who were not members of the national association SIM. There were 91 respondents and their characteristics are presented in the Figure 25

### Respondents

**Figure 25.** INIMA survey respondents in Poland

Total respondents	Respondens who disclosed their email addresses	Respondents identified thanks to disclosed email address	Identified as IM by SIM membership or by LinkedIn	Members of national organization SIM
91	63	52	52	35
100%	69%	57%	57%	38%

*Note:* SIM decided to qualify whole group of 91 respondents as valid.

### Respondents' recruitment channels and means

To recruit the respondents, SIM formed the "INIMA Survey Supporting Group" at Whatsup application. The Group consisting of 16 members of SIM, was acting daily. Group members were steered centrally by Communication manager of SIM to take actions to stimulate recruitment of the respondents.

The following recruitment program was set and executed, bringing daily results as shown in Figure 26.

Respondents were contacted and invited to take part in the survey by several communication channels:



- Sending direct mailing to SIM members centrally by SIM
- Sending direct text message to telephones (SMS) of SIM members by Sim centrally
- Posting on LinkedIn about INIMA survey in Poland and in Europe by SIM, commented daily by Members of “INIMA Survey Supporting Group”
- Inviting by SIM members via their network of contacts at LinkedIn

SIM decided to take the actions listed above in light of the two surveys happening in a very short time one after another. There was annual SIM survey finished at the beginning of January 2021, and INIMA survey in Poland started on 13 January. SIM survey collected 61 responses, and INIMA 91 ones. These surveys were competing for the same population of respondents. Therefore to avoid the low response rate of INIMA survey, SIM went beyond SIM members with the recruitment of the respondents.