

The 2025 European Survey



International Network of Interim Manager Associations

Please note that all INIMA Surveys MUST NOT be located on any other websites, this is due in part to minor updates that we make, and should only be referenced and linked to the appropriate URL on the INIMA website.

Executive Summary

In 2024, European interim managers faced a more complex market landscape, with utilization rates adjusting to 65%/-4% and a modest recalibration of daily rates to an average of €994/-5€. The proportion of interim managers starting the year on assignment also shifted to 62%/-7%, reflecting an evolving market rather than a sustained downturn.

These market adjustments align with last year's forecast of a challenging 2024. Looking ahead to 2025, interim managers anticipate continued shifts in business conditions. However, rather than viewing this as a purely negative trend, many see it as a period of transformation—one that rewards those who adapt, innovate, and position themselves effectively.

As businesses continue to seek agile leadership solutions, interim managers who proactively strengthen their market presence, highlight their strategic value, and deepen client relationships will be well-positioned for success. Challenges remain, but so do opportunities—making this a time for strategic focus and confident action.

Summary of Key Challenges Reported by European Interim Managers

1. Client Acquisition & Market Positioning

- Need to improve visibility, self-marketing, and differentiation from "fake" interim managers (Germany, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Poland, UK).
- Difficulty in securing new assignments and clients (Portugal, France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Austria, Poland, UK).
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2. Pricing Pressure & Economic Uncertainty

- Economic, political, and geopolitical instability affecting business opportunities (Portugal, Czech Republic, Austria, UK).
- Increasing pressure on daily rates (France, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland, UK).

3. AI & Skills Development

- Need to upskill, particularly in AI and digital tools (France, Switzerland, Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, UK).

4. Work-Life Balance & Availability

- Concerns over workload, availability, and personal well-being (Switzerland, Czech Republic, Austria, UK).

5. Regulatory & Structural Barriers

- Lack of decision-making ability from clients slowing down processes (Switzerland, Poland, UK).
- Challenges like IR35, Brexit, and restrictive policies (UK).

The recurring themes suggest that **winning new mandates, pricing pressure, economic uncertainty, AI adoption, and work-life balance** are top priorities for interim managers across Europe.

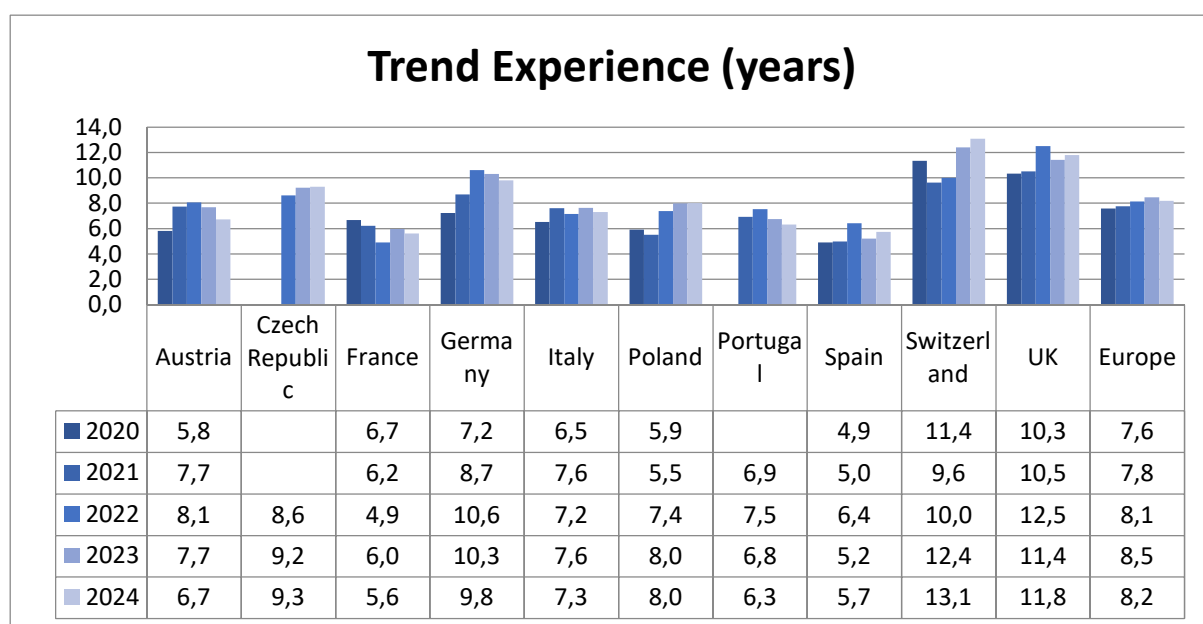
The Interim Manager

Demographics

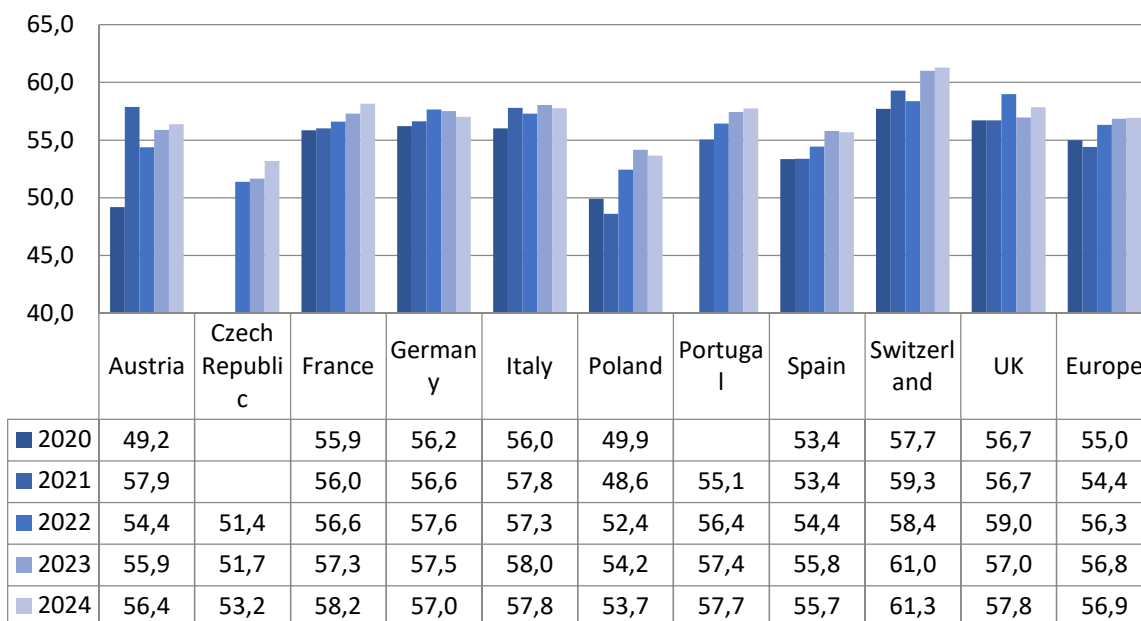
A typical European Interim Manager, as revealed by the survey, was predominantly male and around 56.9 years old, boasting over 8.2 years of experience in the interim management field. Over the past five years, there was a noticeable uptick in the average age (+1.8 years), reflecting a trend towards more seasoned professionals in the sphere. On average, 16% of European interim managers were women. Poland (36%) and France (29%) had a higher-than-average female presence in the profession.

Analysis indicated that the average interim manager made the transition from permanent employment at the age of 48.7 years, indicating a significant shift in career trajectory towards interim management at a relatively mature stage.

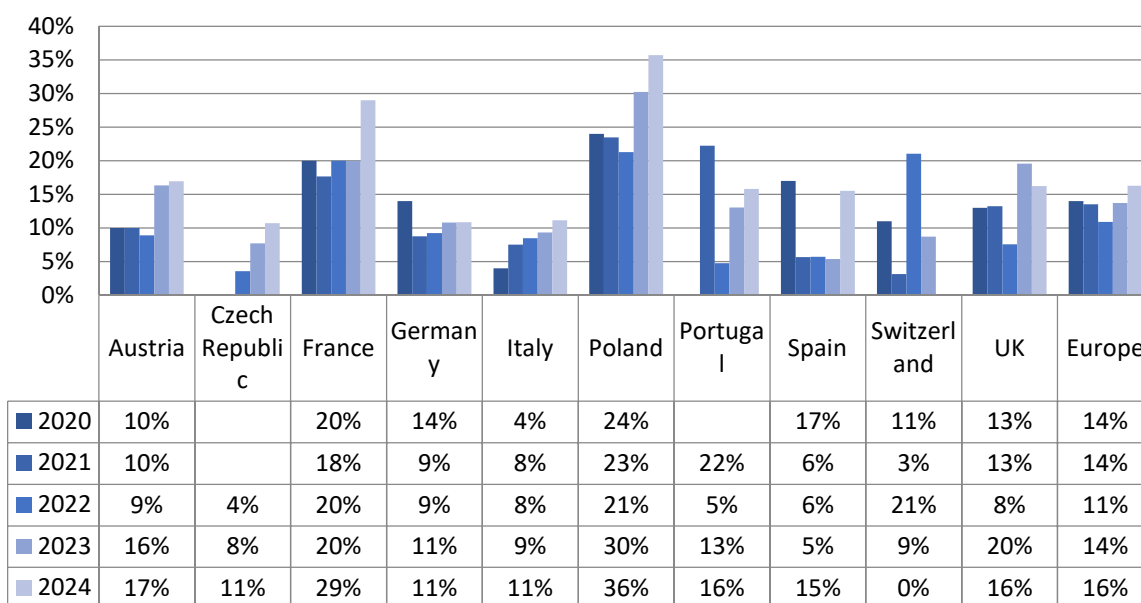
Moreover, the survey underscored the high seniority of European interim managers, with 64% of them occupying C-level roles or higher across various management levels.



Trend Age (years)



Trend Female Gender

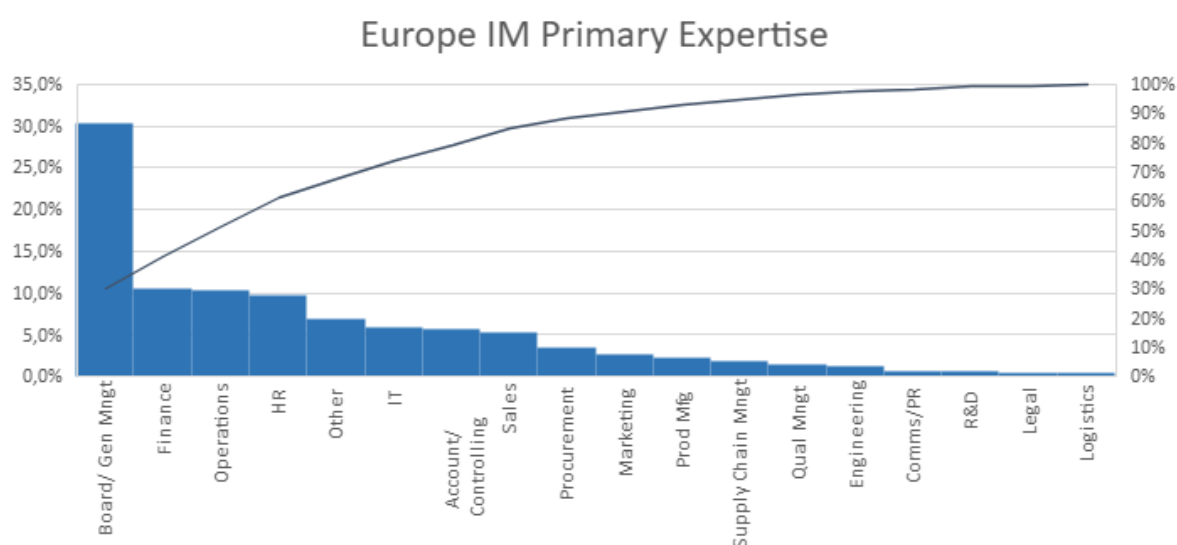


France and Poland had the largest percentage of female interim managers this could be attributed to several factors. Firstly, specific laws were enacted to promote gender inclusion in the workforce, creating a conducive environment for women to take up leadership roles. Additionally, there was a growing demand for expertise in sectors traditionally associated with a higher female representation, such as finance and human resources, further driving the increase in female interim managers.

On the other hand, Poland's situation was influenced by a unique social factor. Over the last century, Poland maintained a larger female workforce compared to many other countries, leading to a more balanced representation of women in managerial positions, including interim roles. This historical context played a significant role in shaping the then-current landscape of female leadership in Poland.

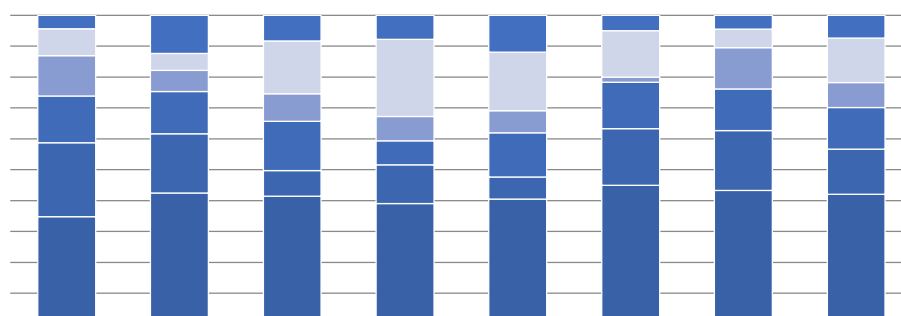
Functional Specialities

The top five primary functional specializations of European interim managers were general management at 30.4%, finance at 10.5%, operations at 10.4%, human resources at 9.7%, and IT at 5.8%. Over the past five years, demand for operations managers has increased, by 2 percentage points while the demand for the other functions has fluctuated.. The distribution of functional expertise varies across interim management associations, with each nation exhibiting a distinct profile



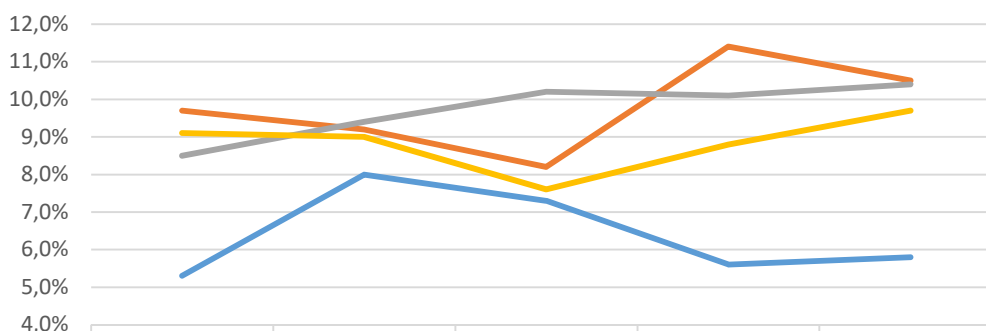
Some graphs in this report) did not include the Czech Republic, Liechtenstein, Portugal, and Switzerland because the limited number of respondents did not assure reliable data segmentation.

Primary Expertise



	Austria	France	Germany	Italy	Poland	Spain	UK	Europe
■ Sales	3,4%	9,0%	5,7%	6,2%	8,9%	4,2%	2,7%	5,3%
■ Operations	6,8%	4,0%	11,9%	19,8%	14,3%	12,7%	3,6%	10,4%
■ IT	10,2%	5,0%	6,1%	6,2%	5,4%	1,4%	8,1%	5,8%
■ HR	11,9%	10,0%	11,1%	6,2%	10,7%	12,7%	8,1%	9,7%
■ Finance	18,6%	14,0%	5,7%	9,9%	5,4%	15,5%	11,7%	10,5%
■ Board/ Gen Mngt	27,1%	31,0%	28,7%	30,9%	30,4%	38,0%	26,1%	30,4%

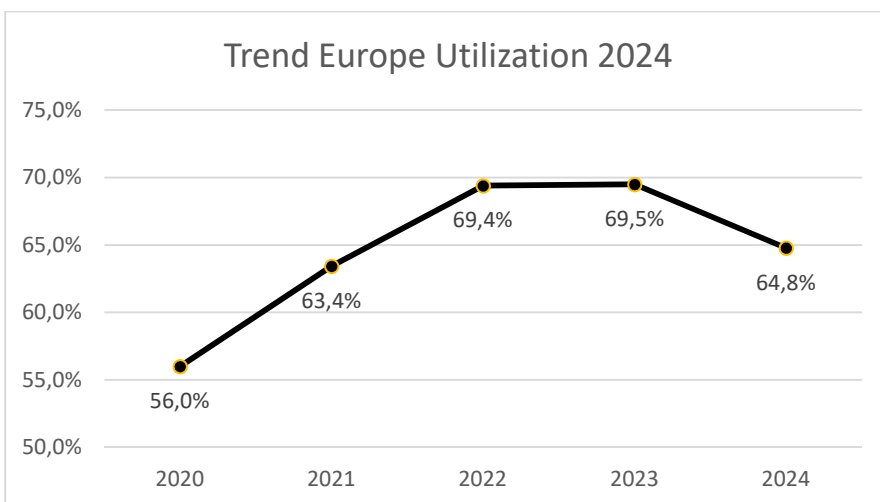
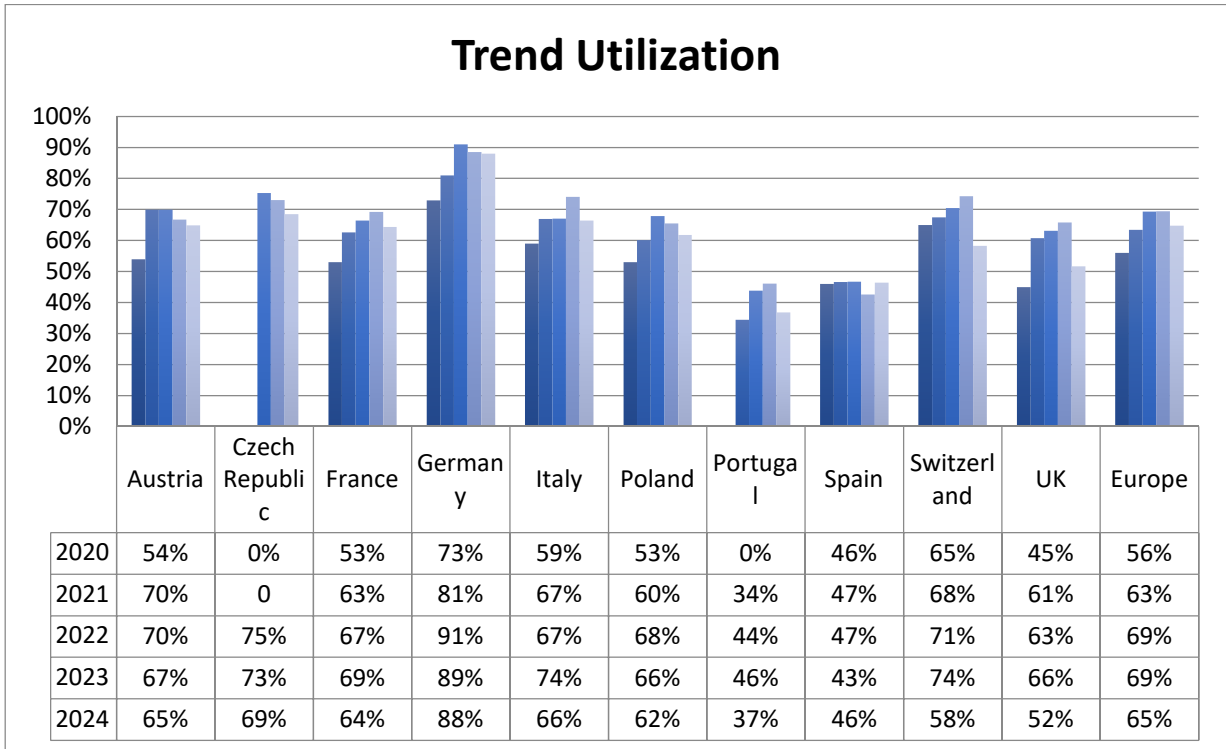
Trend Europe Primary Functions (excludes Gen Mngt)



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
— Finance	9,7%	9,2%	8,2%	11,4%	10,5%
— Operations	8,5%	9,4%	10,2%	10,1%	10,4%
— HR	9,1%	9,0%	7,6%	8,8%	9,7%
— IT	5,3%	8,0%	7,3%	5,6%	5,8%

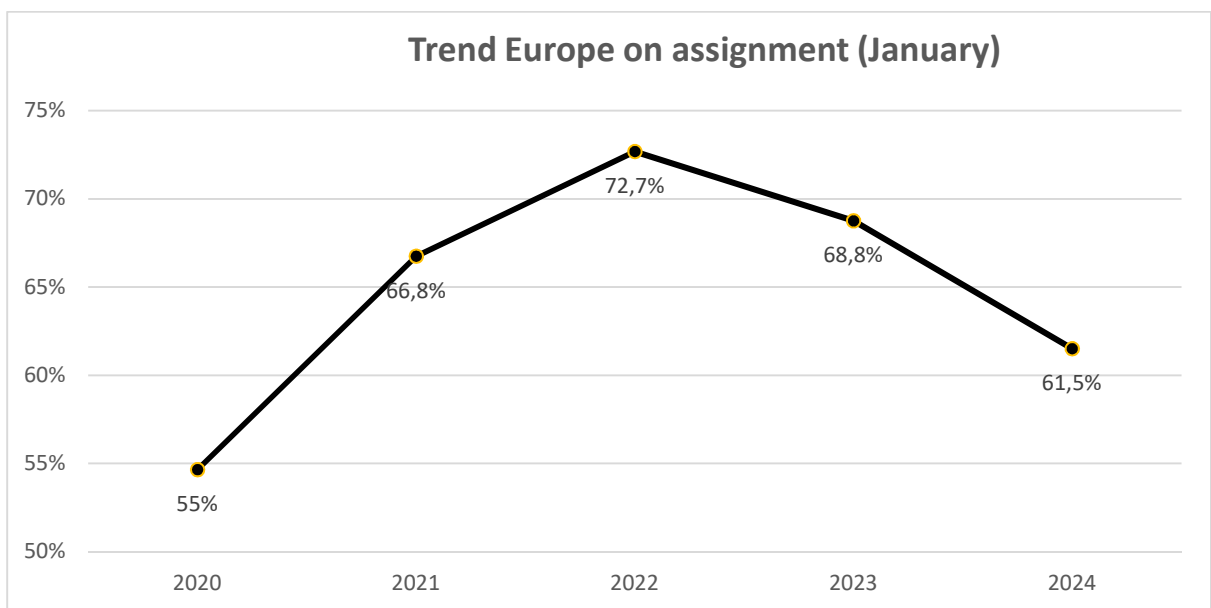
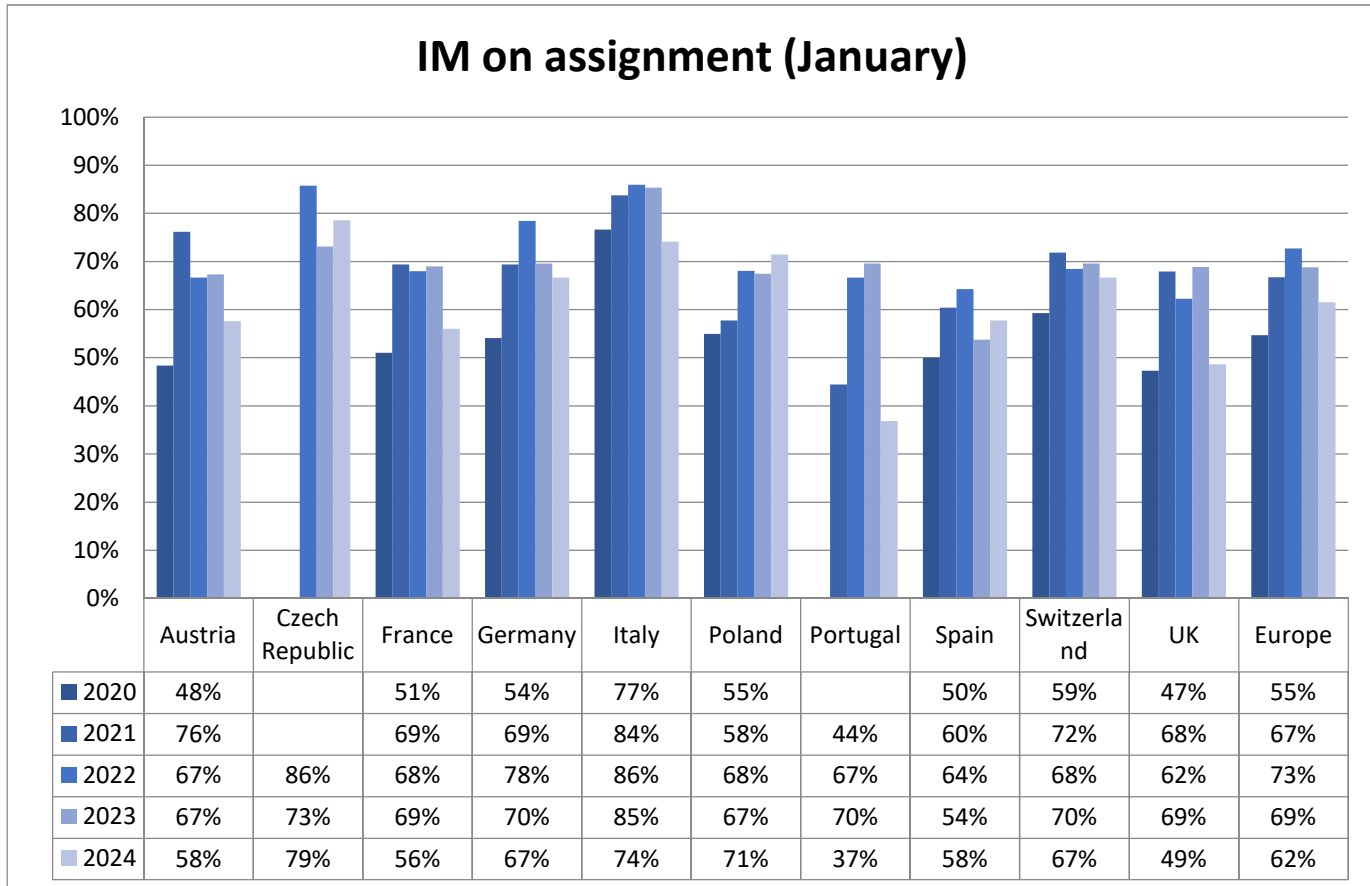
Interim Manager Utilization

Members of the European Interim Manager Associations were asked to report the proportion of billed days to the total number of working days in 2024. The average utilization of European Interim managers remained high, but lower than the previous year (-4%/65%). It was also noted that the utilization decreased across all European countries in 2024.



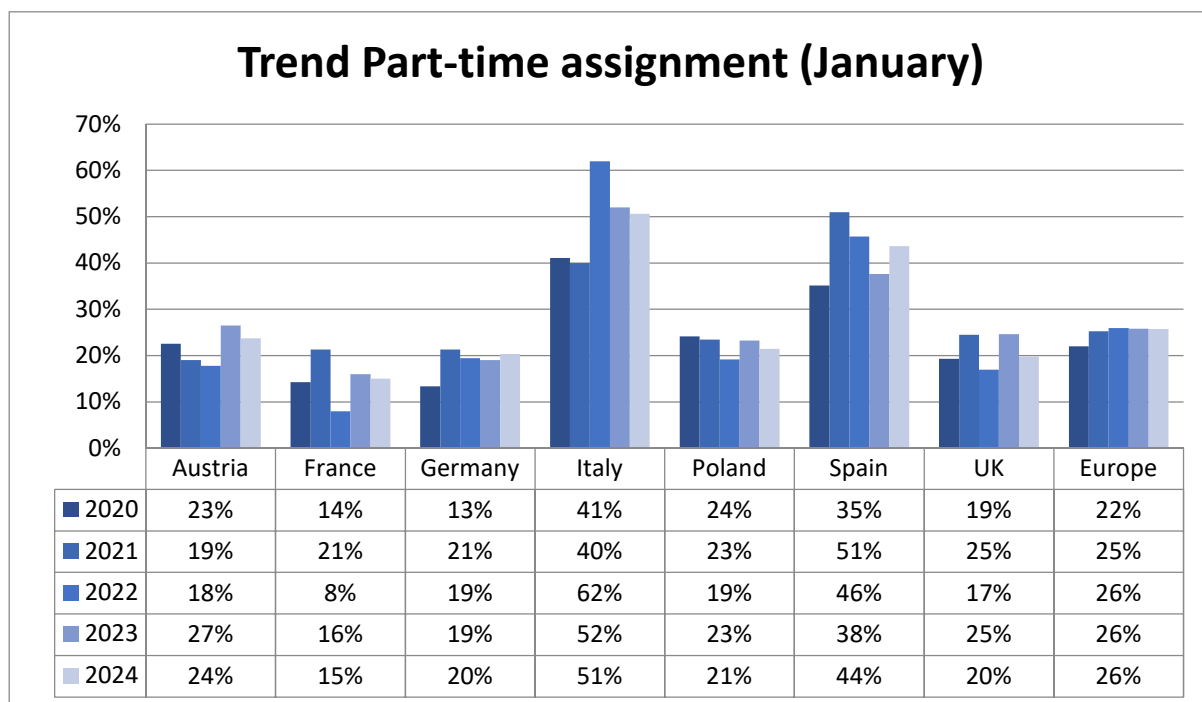
Current Status of Interim Managers

Interim managers were asked about their assignment status as of January 2025. There was a reduction (-5%/62%) of the European interim managers “on assignments” from the same period of the previous year.



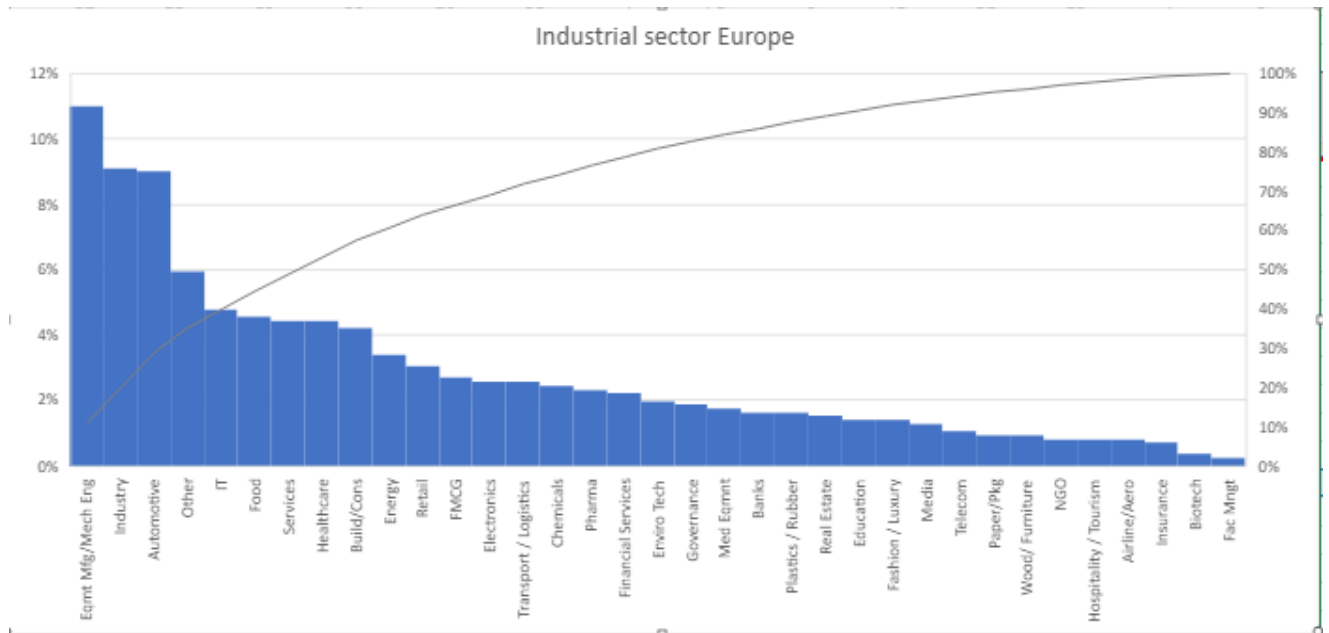
Managers not on assignment included those searching for contracts (30%), taking a sabbatical (5%), or waiting for an assignment to start (3%).

Full-time assignments dedicated 100% to one company was the typical way of working in Northern Europe whilst part-time was more frequent in Spain and Italy, which reduced the financial burden on the smaller company clients.



In Italy and Spain there was a considerable variance of part-time interim assignments in the last five (5) years.

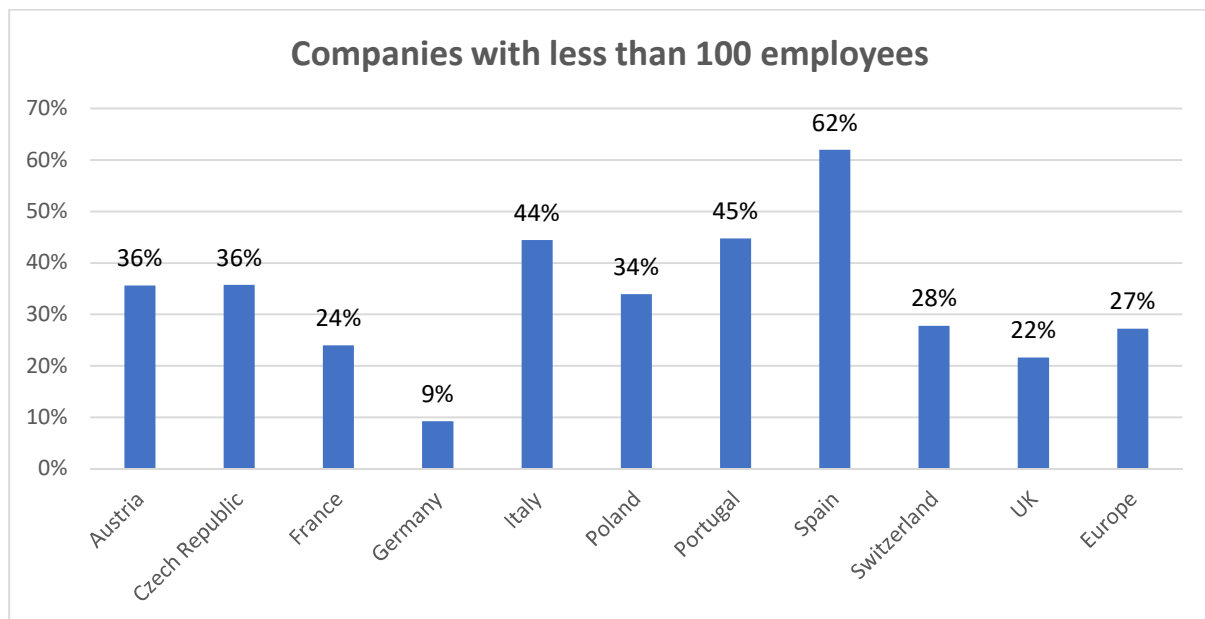
The sector of the Last Assignment



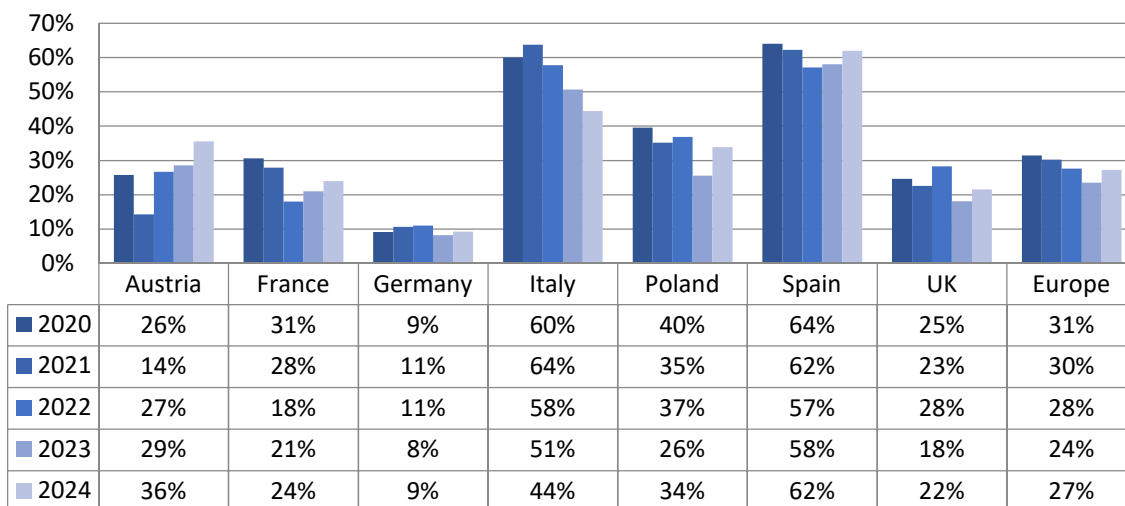
The top 5 sectors for European interim managers were equipment/mechanical manufacturing, industry, automotive, IT and food.

Size of Company Clients

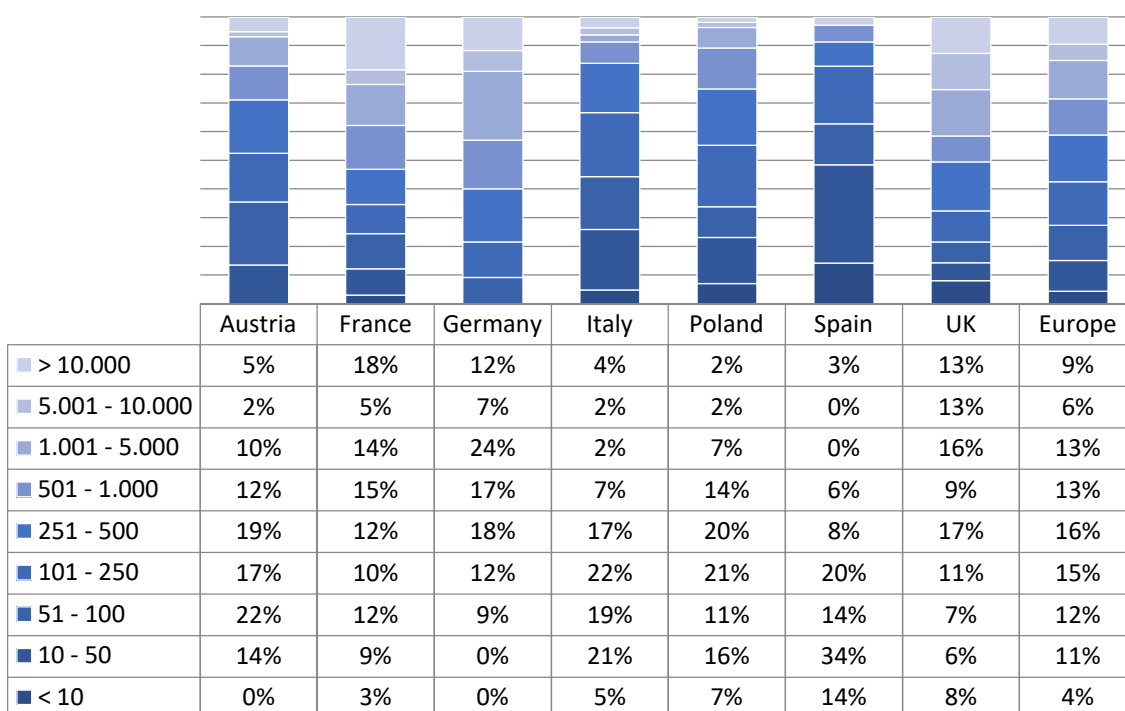
European Interim Managers had assignments in the full range of enterprises, from the start-up with a few employees, to large corporations. In Southern Europe, approximately half of the assignments took place in companies with fewer than 100 employees.



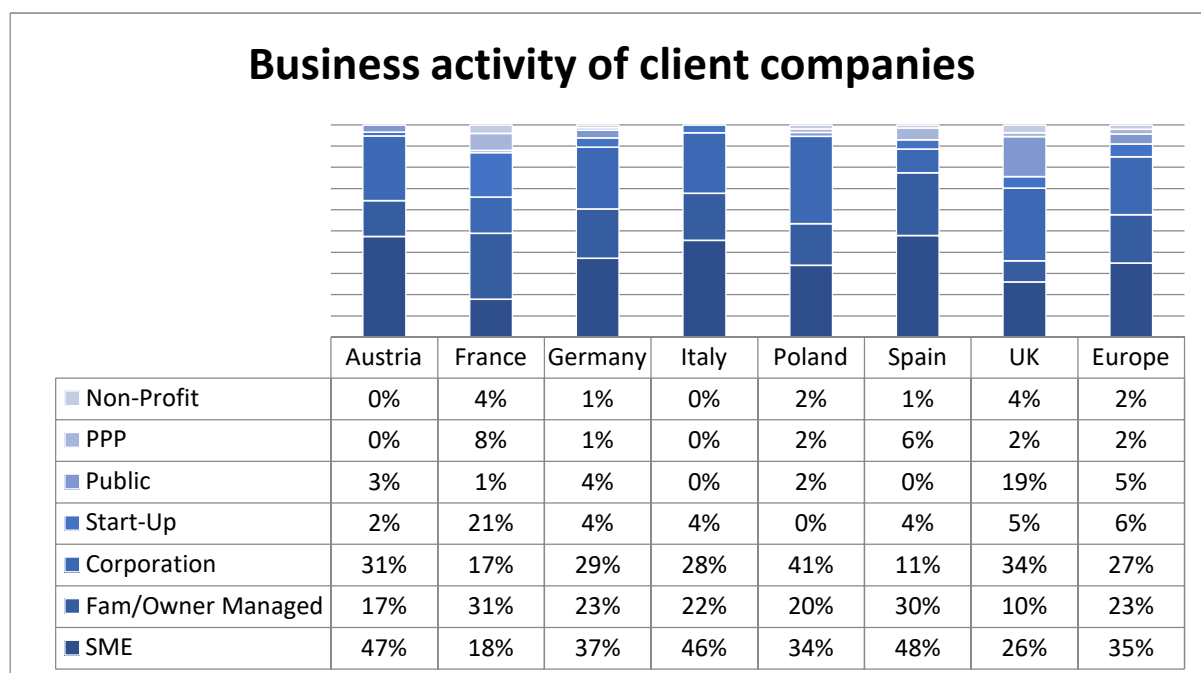
Trend Companies with less than 100 employees



Client company number of employees



Business Organization of Company Clients



In 2024, European interim managers undertook assignments in a wide range of business organizations, spanning from start-ups to large corporations. These organizations exhibited significant variation across different countries, as outlined above.

Non-profit Organizations: In the United Kingdom, non-profit organizations accounted for 4% of the assignments. Interim managers in this sector contributed their expertise to entities dedicated to advancing social causes and making a positive impact in society.

Public-Private Partnerships: France saw an 8% share of assignments in the realm of public-private partnerships. These unique collaborations between governmental entities and private companies necessitate effective management and coordination, areas where interim managers played a vital role.

Public Sector: The United Kingdom witnessed a notable 19% of assignments in the public sector. Interim managers in this domain were instrumental in ensuring the smooth functioning of government institutions and the efficient delivery of public services.

Start-ups: France had a considerable 21% share of assignments in the start-up sector. Interim managers contributed their expertise to support emerging ventures, assisting them in navigating the challenges inherent in the early stages of business development.

Corporations: The European average of 27% demonstrated a substantial presence of interim managers in the corporations. These professionals played a pivotal role in optimizing operations, driving growth, and enhancing efficiency within large-scale businesses.

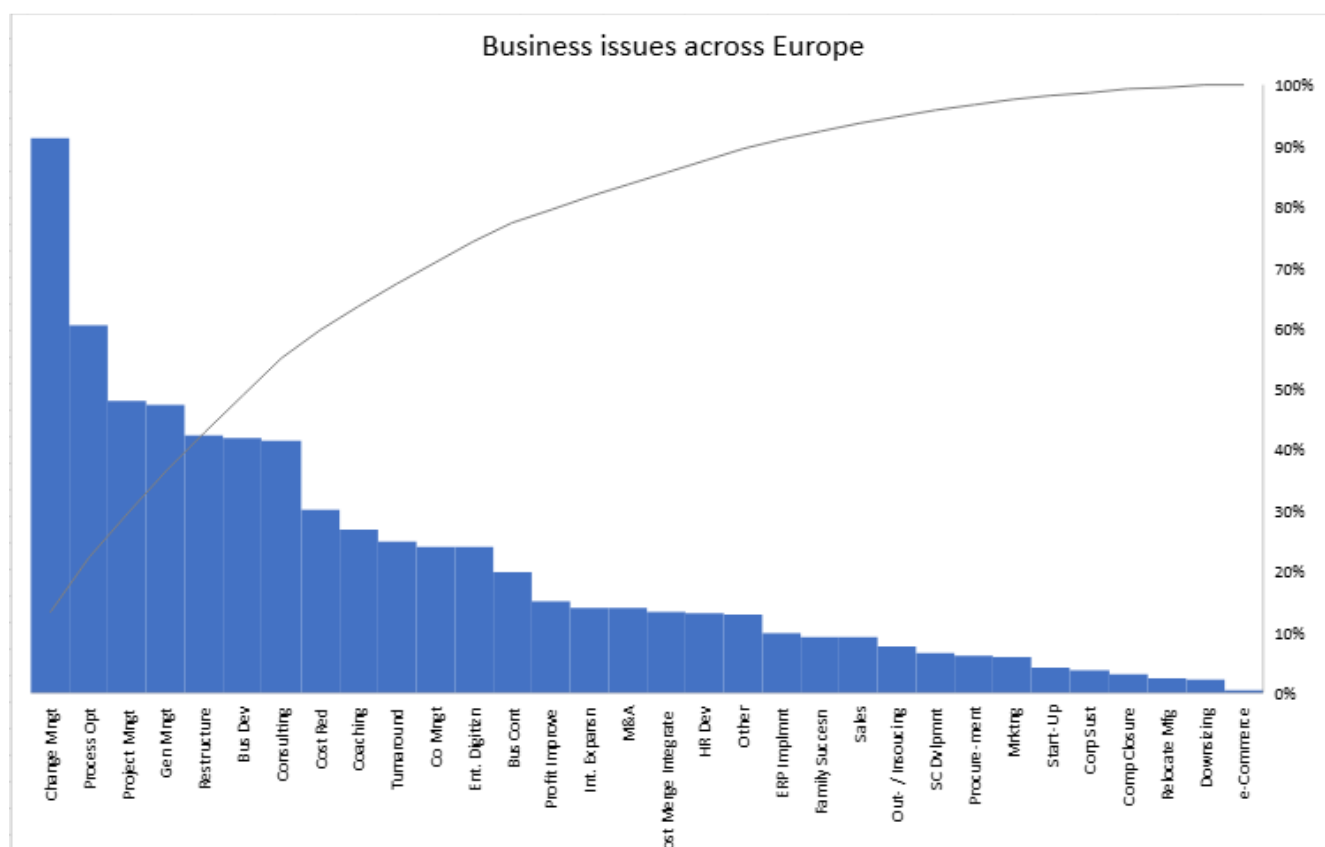
Family-Owned: Family-owned businesses accounted for 23% of assignments. Interim managers lent their expertise to these enterprises, addressing the unique dynamics of family involvement while implementing effective management strategies.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): A significant 35% of assignments were in +in the SME sector. Interim managers supported the growth and development of these vital contributors to the economy, offering guidance, streamlining operations, and driving innovation.

The diverse landscape of business organizations and their distribution across European countries in 2024 showcased the versatility and adaptability of interim managers. Their contributions across sectors played a vital role in fostering organizational success, addressing unique challenges, and driving positive change.

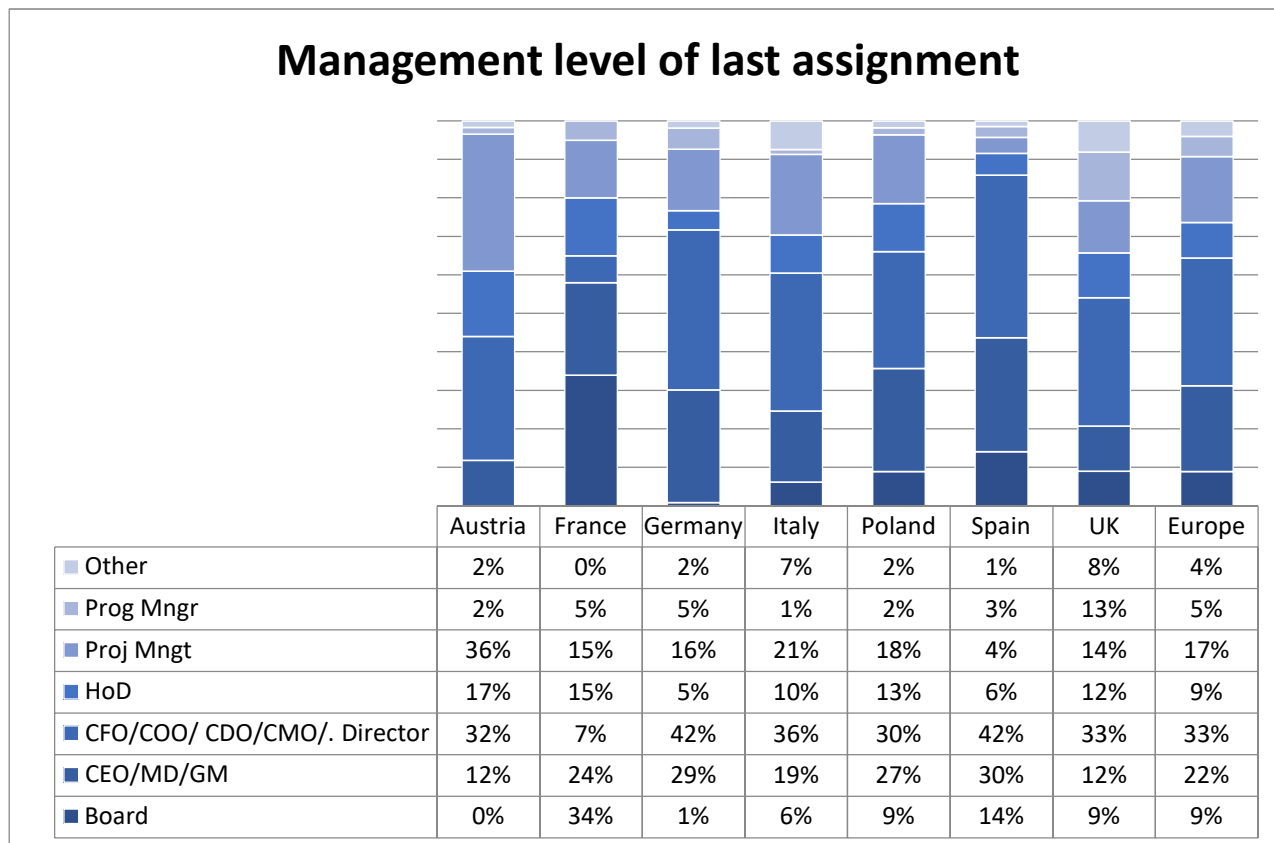
The Assignments

Respondents across Europe reported that change management and process optimizations were common issues in the last assignment. Other important issues addressed by interim managers were “business development” “project management” and “general management.”



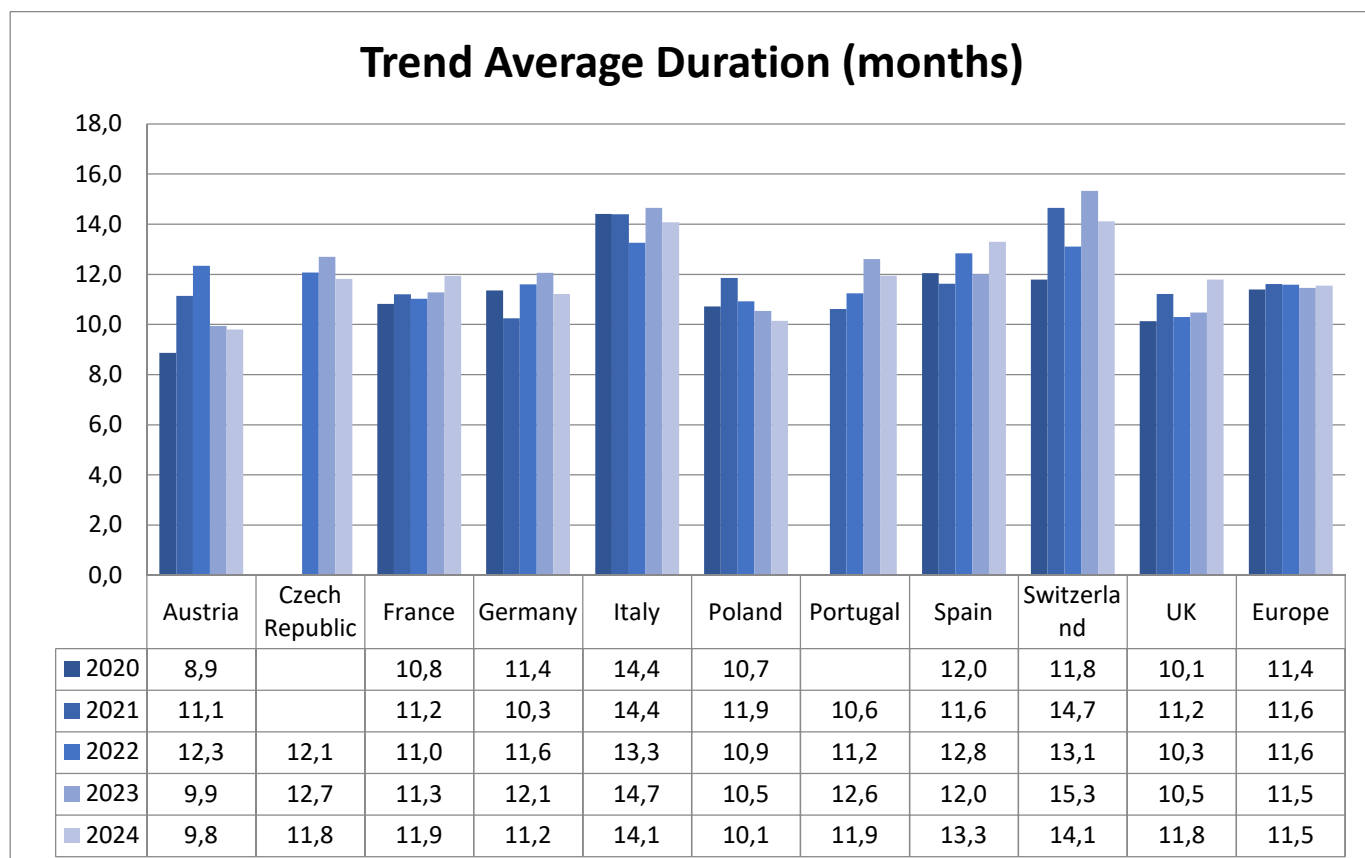
Management Level

Over 60% of European Interim managers had completed assignments in positions at C-level or above, a slight increase (+2%) from the previous year.



Duration

The average duration of an interim assignment in Europe was 11,5 months, almost unchanged from last year.



Sales channel

Throughout Europe, the main sales channels remained the personal network and personal marketing (50%) and the Interim Providers (32%). National associations channelled 3% of assignments, an additional benefit of membership of national interim manager associations.

The digital marketplace has not taken off, social media and digital platforms were still minor players in the game. Indeed, European IM clients preferred the professional service of providers or the personal relationships of interim managers. Providers increased market share in 2024 by two (2) percentage points.

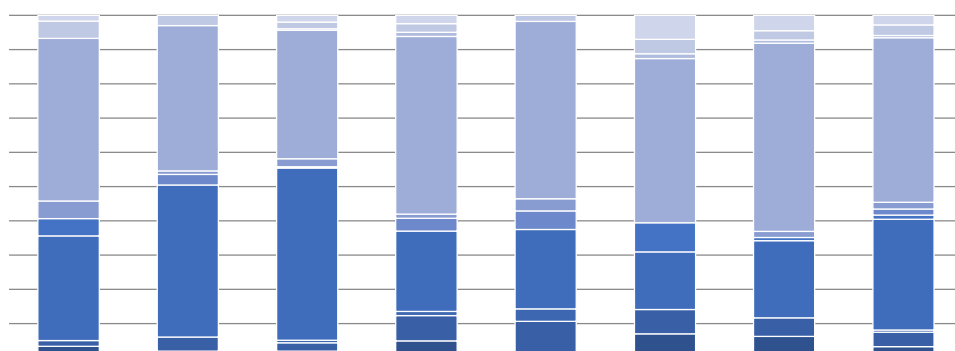
Interim management providers handle less than 25% of assignments in Italy and Spain, where personal networks dominate. In Northern Europe, providers secure most assignments. This contrast stems from cultural, economic, and structural factors.

In Italy and Spain, business culture prioritizes personal trust over formal processes. Decision-makers prefer hiring through direct connections, viewing providers as unnecessary intermediaries. Cost is another factor, as hiring through networks avoids provider fees.

The market in Southern Europe is more fragmented, with fewer large providers and a prevalence of SMEs and family-owned businesses that favor informal hiring. Many companies are unaware of providers or see little added value. Experienced interim managers rely on their networks, securing work through referrals rather than agencies.

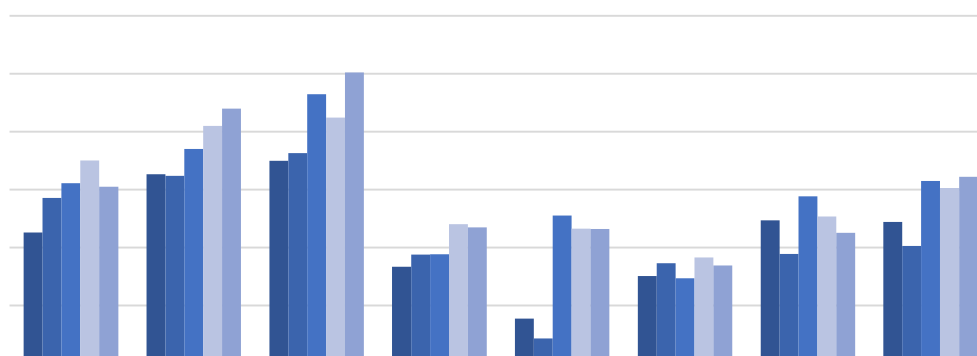
Providers find a niche in specialized roles requiring unique expertise, compliance, or long-term commitments, but their growth is constrained by the lower number of large corporations. To compete, they must offer faster matching, broader talent access, and superior compliance handling to differentiate from personal networks.

Sales channels



	Austria	France	Germany	Italy	Poland	Spain	UK	Europe
Other	2%	0%	2%	2%	0%	7%	5%	3%
Social Media	5%	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%	3%	3%
Private Equity	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Pers. Network	47%	42%	37%	52%	52%	48%	55%	48%
Per. Mktng Activ.	5%	1%	2%	1%	4%	0%	2%	2%
Nat. Assoc.	0%	3%	0%	4%	5%	0%	0%	2%
Lawyer	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	1%	1%
IM Provider	31%	44%	50%	23%	23%	17%	23%	32%
IM O/L Portal	0%	0%	1%	1%	4%	0%	0%	1%
Exec Search	2%	4%	2%	7%	9%	7%	5%	4%
Bus Consultants	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	6%	6%	3%
Bus Accountants	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%

Trend IM providers

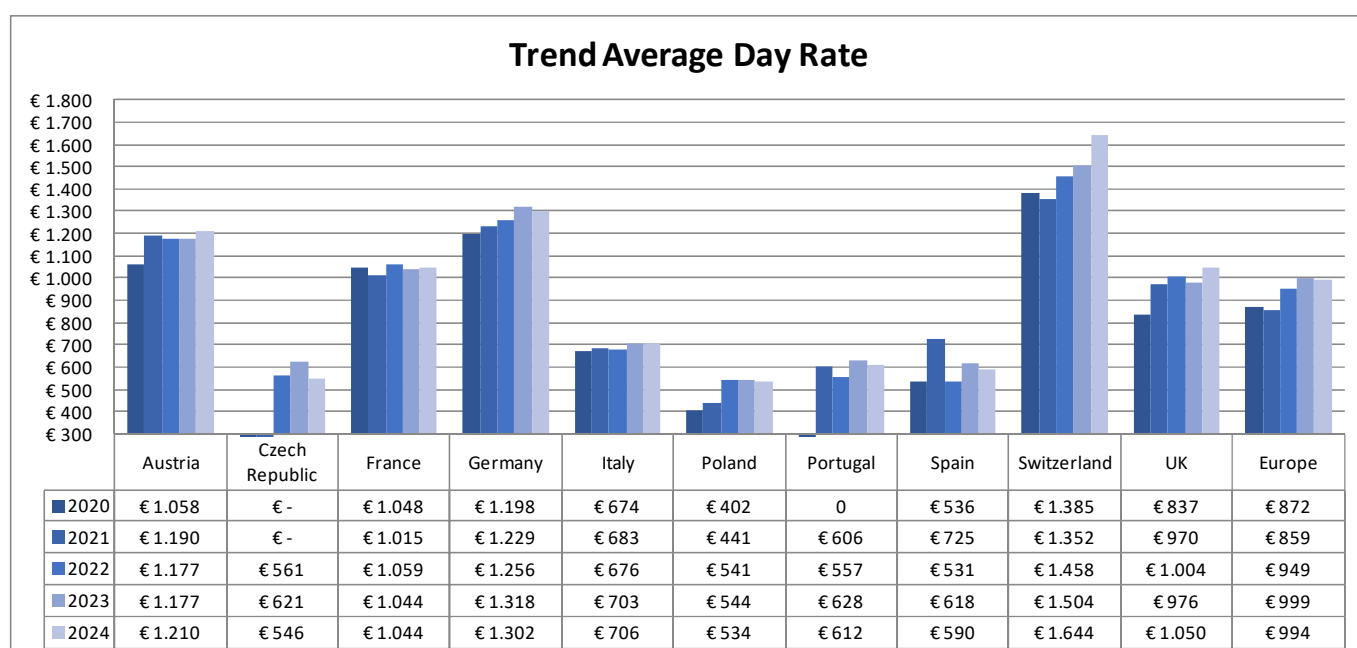


	Austria	France	Germany	Italy	Poland	Spain	UK	Europe
2020	23%	33%	35%	17%	8%	15%	25%	24%
2021	29%	32%	36%	19%	4%	17%	19%	20%
2022	31%	37%	46%	19%	26%	15%	29%	32%
2023	35%	41%	42%	24%	23%	18%	25%	30%
2024	31%	44%	50%	23%	23%	17%	23%	32%

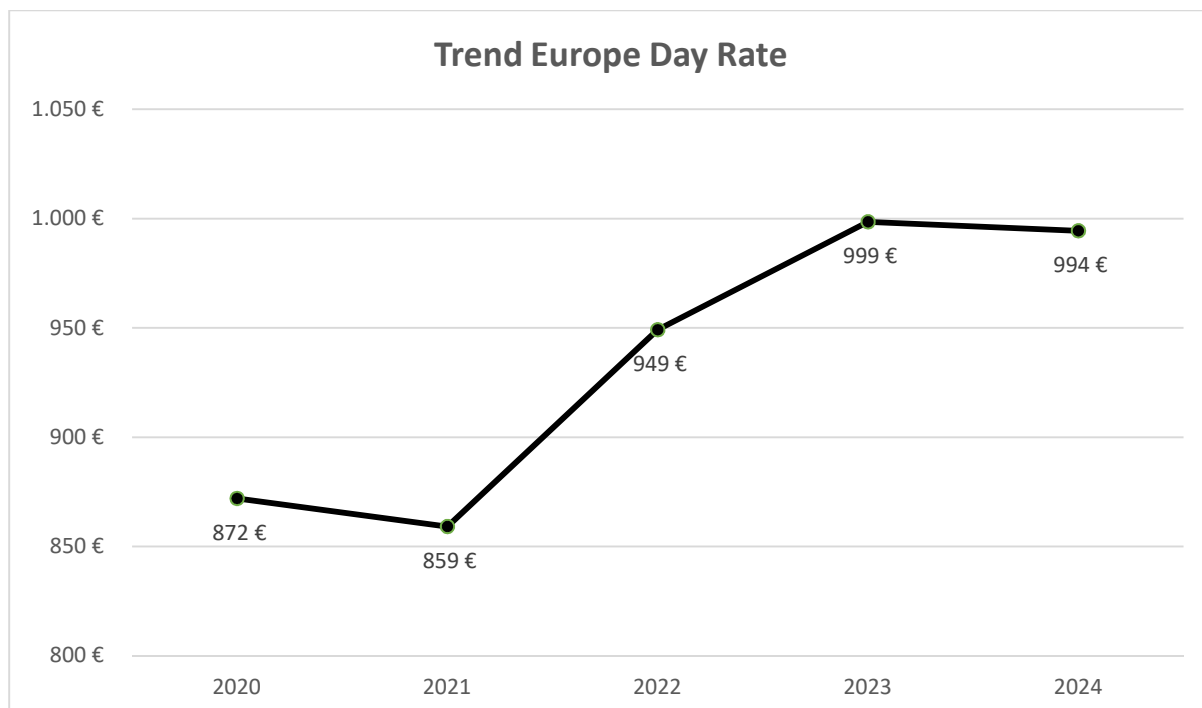
Day Rates

Managers were asked to provide the day rate that they billed on their last assignment (the net price, excluding expenses and VAT). The average European day rate decreased slightly in 2024. (-5€/994€).

The large range of the day rates showed the diversity of national economies, national IM markets size of clients and sectors. As previously illustrated, the services and expertise provided by the Interim Managers were reasonably aligned between countries.



The estimated average daily rate had limited practical meaning because there was no “average interim,” but it was useful to indicate the differences between countries.



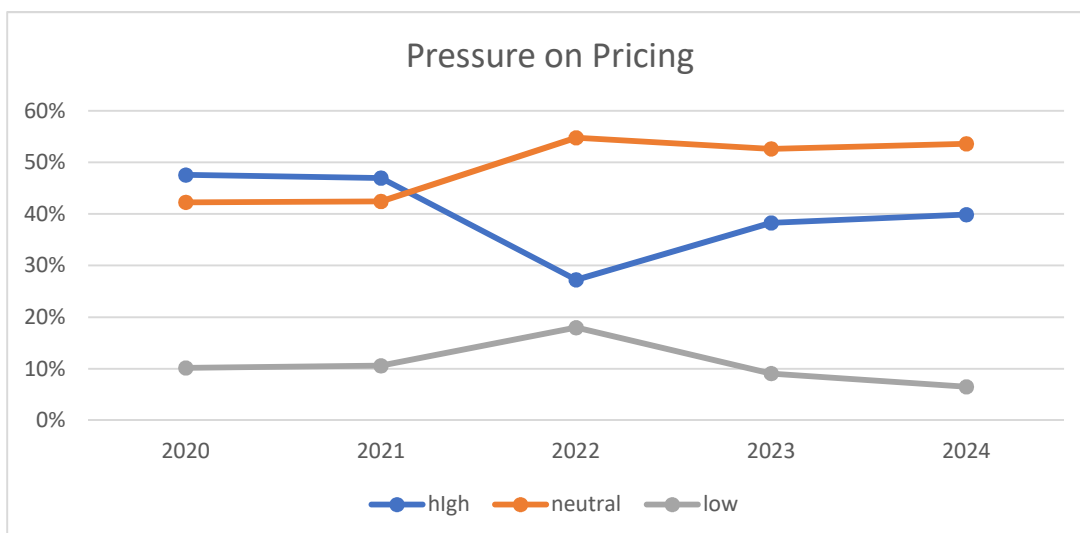
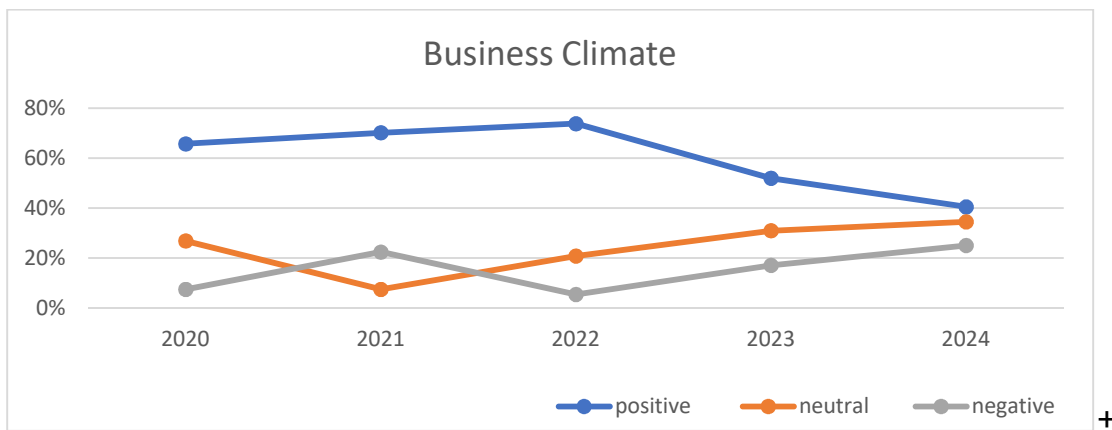
Only members of national interim manager associations responded to the INIMA survey. Typically, these managers were experienced and practicing interim managers who were also active networkers. It was not surprising that they had a higher proportion of direct assignments with company clients, bypassing the need for intermediation by interim providers or executive search agencies.

Trends

Market Development

The survey predicted a negative trend of business climate for 2025 (40% positive opinions, 32% neutral opinions 32%, 25% negative opinions).

The pricing pressure trend was again polarized (40% high opinions, 54% neutral opinion and 7% low opinions). It can be deduced that the interim managers predicted that day rates will remain stable in 2025, which was in contrast to the written comments of the survey.



Observations of the Board

During the International Interim Management Conference IIMC2025 the results of this survey were summarized by the INIMA board of directors.

Germany, Marei Strack (DDIM) A modest recovery in Germany's interim market is expected in 2025. DDIM forecasts rising demand and higher day rates. Key success factors include self-marketing, business development, AI, specialisation, networking, and digital transformation.

France, Jean-Philippe Menetret (Réseau alumni AE-CMT. To elevate the interim management profession in France, there is professional certification, continuous education with emerging trends like AI, ESG, and geopolitics – establishing itself as a national leader and active international partner within INIMA.

United Kingdom, Dr Stephen McCormac (IIM Institute of Interim Management). Unfortunately, Stephen was unable to attend the conference due to a fire at Heathrow Airport—continuing INIMA's curious tradition of losing at least one member at every event. Last year, it was Steffen Steckbauer who was stopped by a snowstorm on the Brenner Pass.

With the UK market remaining soft due to political uncertainty, reduced public sector spending, and economic headwinds in 2025, interims face fewer opportunities, increased competition, pressure on day rates, and longer gaps between often shorter assignments—making the IIM's role in supporting and advocating for its members more vital than ever.

Spain, Francisco Pérez (AIME Interim Management). Accurate market data and international collaboration are essential to strengthening Spain's interim management sector and aligning it with broader European standards.

Italy, Fabio Montefiori (Leading Network – Associazione Italiana Temporary Manager Network). Professionalisation, training, and strategic insight are essential for interim managers to remain relevant. Italy’s Leading Network is leading this charge through certification, education, and international collaboration.

Poland, Stanislaw Wojnicki, SW Mentoring (Stowarzyszenie Interim Managers SIM). SIM is driving interim management in Poland through certification, surveys, and standards, with strong demand across industry, services, and state-owned enterprises in a growing, diversified economy.

Czech Republic, Pavel Pačes (Česká asociace interim managementu – CAIM). While the Czech interim market faces challenges like industrial decline, bureaucracy, and a saturated talent pool, it also offers opportunities, especially in crisis management, defense, and optimisation, where certified, experienced interim managers can deliver real value.

Portugal, Maarten van Lelyveld (AIM | Associação Interim Management Portugal). Portugal’s interim management market is gaining momentum, with AIM focused on raising awareness, building trust in the profession, and fostering international partnerships. Key priorities include professional development, clear standards, and the integration of interim leadership into both private and public sector transformation efforts.

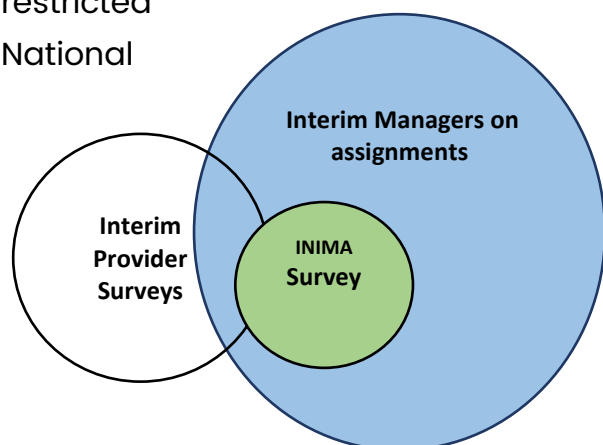
Background

Data was collected from 800 practising Interim Managers in eleven countries, practising professionals who could give an objective view of their last assignment and the state of the profession

The INIMA survey team developed a standardized questionnaire that measured the essential key issues for European Interim Managers. Harmonization of the various national surveys permitted an easy data comparison and was optimized to compare countries, whilst the national association remained the authoritative source for objective data in that nation. The survey was translated into the local languages, and deployed in January 2025. Each partner reviewed the data and prepared a national report, which was summarized in the present document.

This was the European Survey conducted by Interim Manager Associations for the benefit of Interim Managers. Other European surveys were performed by Interim Providers and have been appreciated by the community, However, this survey was more objective as it introduced a peer review of the findings, was not biased by commercial interests, and restricted

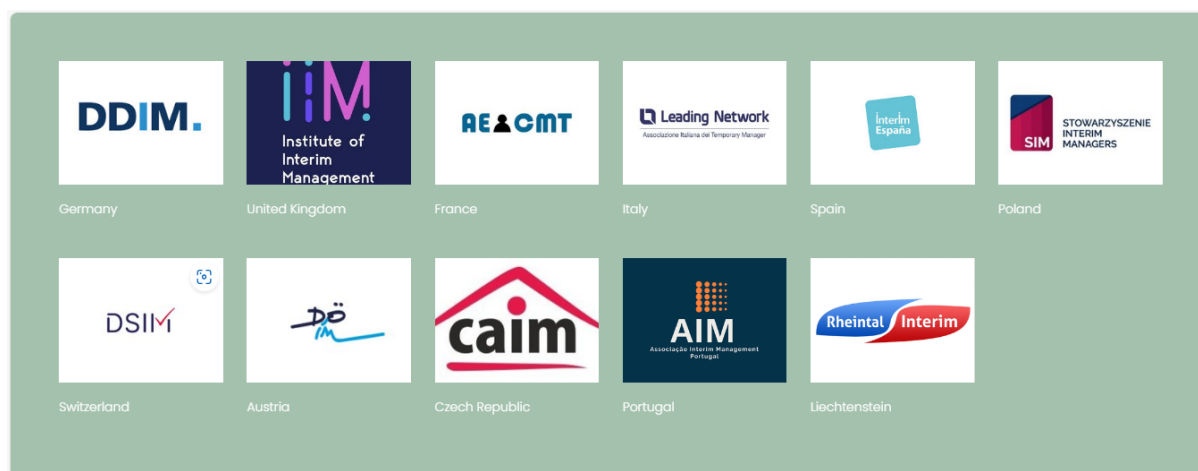
National



the respondents to members of IM Associations. This assured that data was only collected from practising Interim Managers who could give an objective view of their last assignment and the state of the profession. A survey open to respondents outside our associations would have increased the sample size but at the expense

of the sample reliability. The downside of restricting the field was that some national associations returned data from a modest number of respondents, which was considered in the data analysis. Countries that were new to interim management and the smaller nations needed a voice too.

Associations in this Survey



Further Reading

Further details of the INIMA European IM survey can be found on the website (www.inima.management). This report together with selected reports from the partner nations is available for download, Also INIMA partners' websites may have their national surveys in the local languages.

The Author of this Report

Jonathan Selby is a practising interim manager, chairman of INIMA and a board member of the Italian Interim Manager Association (Leading Network).

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