# 4. France[1]

## 4.1 The focus of the survey

A number of different channels were used to distribute the questionnaire in France, including the Fedae (Federation of Self-Entrepreneurs), the AFD (Association of Designers), the Coopaname, the CIP (Temporary and Intermittent Workers Coordination), Ouishare, Sharers and Workers.

Still, the number of responses collected was small, at 153, with a high presence of professionals in the areas of web communication and training, as well as artists, while liberal professionals and those employed the sectors of finance and health are almost absent.

It was decided to limit the survey to those professional sectors for which the number of responses available (148) was relatively significant, based on the overall target population, doing without 5 responses distributed among the areas of finance, health, legal studies and accounting.

As regards the type of contractual arrangement, there are two modes of work specific to France: employees of wage portage firms and salaried entrepreneurs. This last category, created only recently, proves to be quite numerous. Overall, independent workers who are also classified as salaried, which includes workers in the entertainment sector, account for 72% of the sample group. The remaining responses consist of a mix of independent professionals classified as self-employed, plus others with mini-jobs.

The sample group is too small and unbalanced to be considered representative of French reality, though it still provide some qualitative insights, especially with regard to independent workers classified as salaried employees.

In order to obtain an overview of the entire target population, use was made of the results of the Enquête Emploi of the INSEE for the two-year period 2014-16, making possible a more accurate analysis than with the Eurostat figures.

The first will illustrate the results of these formulations, thanks to which it was possible to estimate:

1) The sum total of Independent Professionals (IP) in France, with a particular on the IPs of only the sectors covered by the responses;
2) The number of salaried entrepreneurs, whose presence is quite recent, but growing rapidly, and who are particularly important, seeing that many of the respondents fall into this category

An analysis of the survey results will follow.

[1] This chapter was written by Anna Soru.


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## 4.2 THE REFERENCE UNIVERSE

### 4.2.1 THE INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONALS

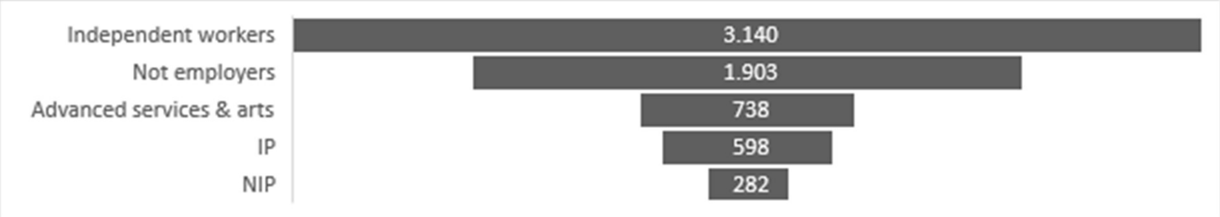
The IPs were identified in a series of phases. The variables made available by the questionnaire utilised for the INSEE research made possible a more refined selection process than that employed in the general chapter (cf. Section 1), thanks to the information on sectors provided by the second digit of the NACE, through which the sectors could be categorised in more accurate fashion.

Starting with all employed workers, who totalled 26,583,839 in 2016, the following subgroups were established in the phases that followed:

- Independent workers, who number 3,140,418, or 11% of all employed workers. This group also includes salaried entrepreneurs;
- Of which, the non-employers, meaning independent workers without employees, number 1,902,965, amounting to 60% of all independent workers;
- Of which, those active in the sectors of advanced services to businesses and artistic activities (sectors NACE 58-75 and 82-90) total 737,775 people, or 39% of the independent workers without employees;
- Of which, the Independent Professionals (IP) are those who perform jobs that are classified, based on socio-professional categories, as professional or technical activities[2] (CSTOT2 = 23, 31, 33-35, 37, 38, 42-47) (all categories regarding subordinate employees, agricultural workers, merchants and artisans have been excluded).
- Of which, the IPs that work in the sectors covered by the survey, which excluded the sectors of finance, healthcare, legal affair and accounting, as well as research and development, are referred to as the NIP (New Independent Professionals) because, taken as a whole, they represent the newer activities.

The procedure followed, as shown by the graph below, leads to an estimate of almost 600 thousand IPs in France in 2016[3], and to an estimate of almost 300 thousand NIPs, all of whom more or less constitute the reference universe.

**FIGURE 1 - INDEPENDENT WORKERS AND INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONALS IN FRANCE (000) IN 2016**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

[2] The variable that classifies professions (CSTOT) is different from the ISCO variable used by Eurostat.

[3] Based on the Eurostat data (Section 1), that result in a less selective identification of the sectors, there are 661 thousand IPs rather (2015 figure) rather than 598 thousand (2016 figure).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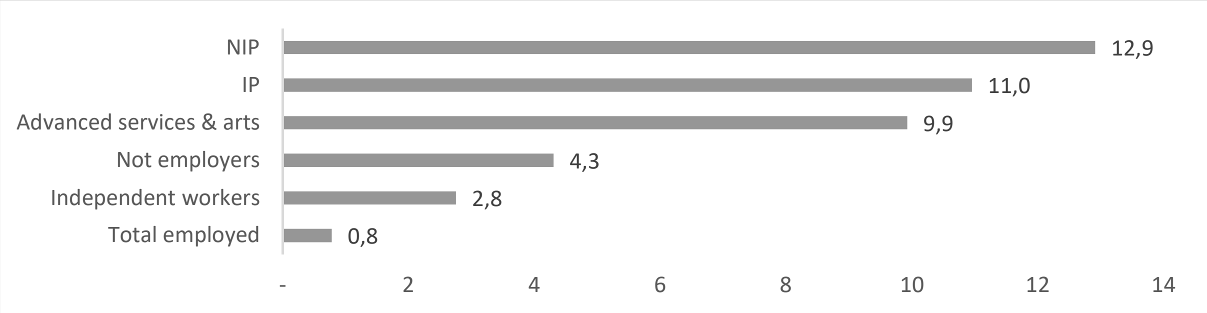
Of interest is how the growth shown by the different aggregates considered becomes more intense as the selection proceeds towards the reference target. Overall employment shows little growth (+0.78% between 2014 and 2016), and the same holds independent workers as a whole (+2.76%). Growth rises with the subgroup of independent workers without employees, and even more so with those in the advanced services (almost +10%). Even higher growth (almost 11%) was shown by IPs who work in advanced services and by the NIPs covered by the survey, who reached a rate of nearly 13% in just 2 years, confirming that the focus of the survey is on the more dynamic sectors.

**FIGURE 2 – TRENDS FOR ALL EMPLOYED AND IP IN FRANCE. % VARIATIONS 2014-16**

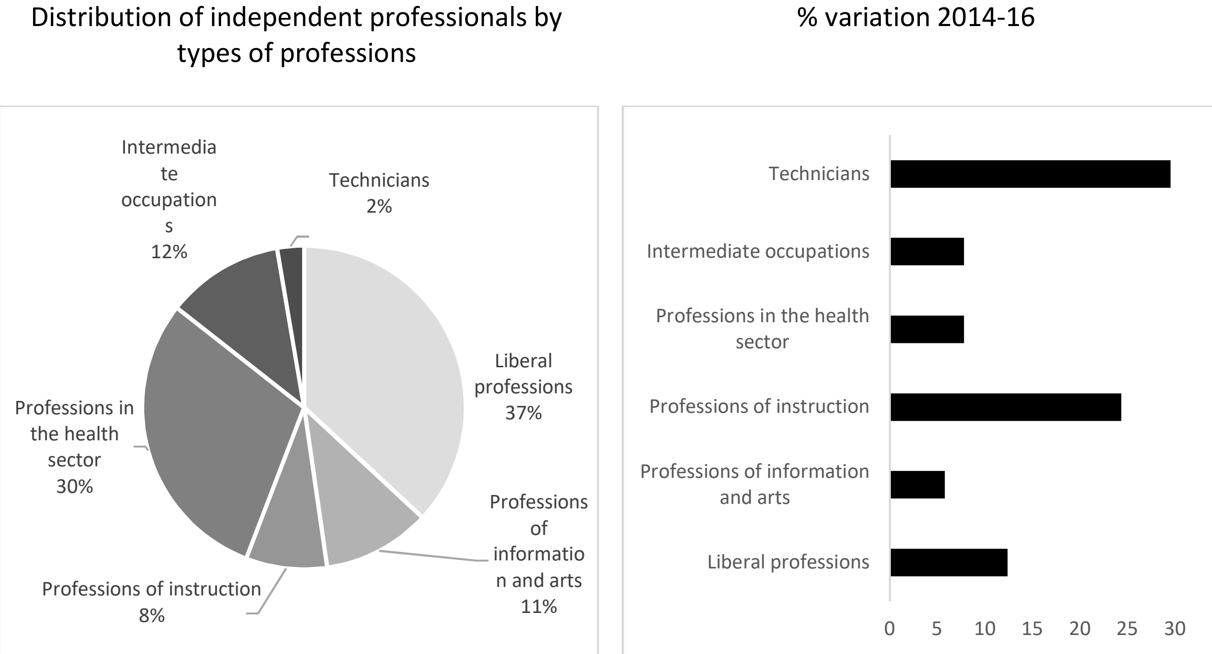



*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

### 4.2.2 Professions and sectors

At 37%, the liberal professions are the most numerous category of IP, followed by professions in the health sector, at 30%. The activities showing the most growth over the last two years were technicians and professions involving instruction.

**FIGURE 3 - IP BY TYPES OF ACTIVITY**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations of INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*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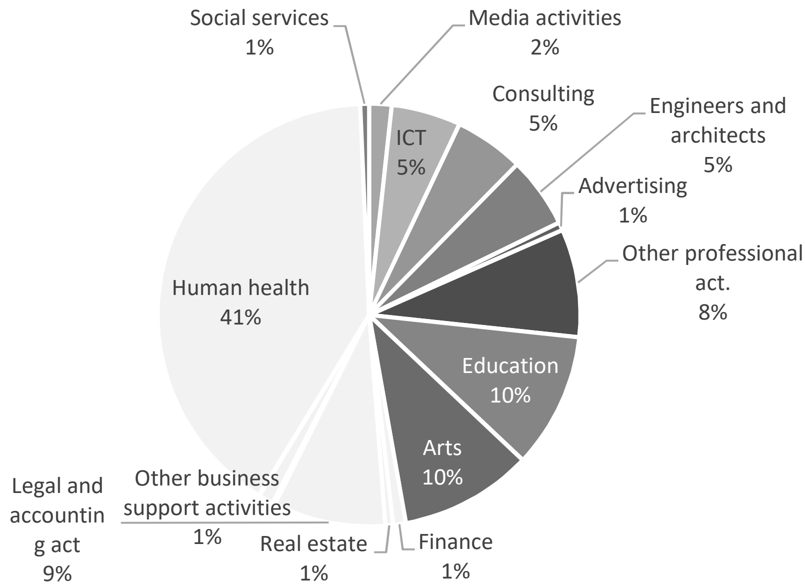
The following graph shows the IP break-down by sector. The lighter shaded sectors were excluded from the I-Wire survey, with the most important being human health (41% of the IPs), and the legal and accounting sectors (9%), while the incidence of finance and real estate was negligible.

**FIGURE 4 - IP BY SECTOR**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

The table below details the sectors covered by the I-WIRE survey, accounting for 282 thousand people, slightly less than half of all IPs.

**TABLE 1 – SECTORS SURVEYED: 2014 AND 2016**

| | 2014 | 2016 | var. 2014-16 | 2016% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Media activities | 6,641 | 10,249 | 54.3 | 3.6 |
| ICT | 20,343 | 31,891 | 56.8 | 11.3 |
| Consulting | 31,590 | 31,765 | 0.6 | 11.2 |
| Engineers and architects | 30,983 | 32,507 | 4.9 | 11.5 |
| Advertising | 7,537 | 3,720 | -50.6 | 1.3 |
| Other professional act. | 42,256 | 49,453 | 17.0 | 17.5 |
| Education | 50,724 | 61,929 | 22.1 | 21.9 |
| Arts | 60,011 | 60,850 | 1.4 | 21.6 |
| NIP | 250,085 | 282,364 | 12.9 | 100.0 |
| IP | 538,935 | 597,975 | 11.0 | |

*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

The largest sectors are education and the arts, while the fastest- growing are media activities and ICT, with only advertising dropping, in a full-fledged collapse.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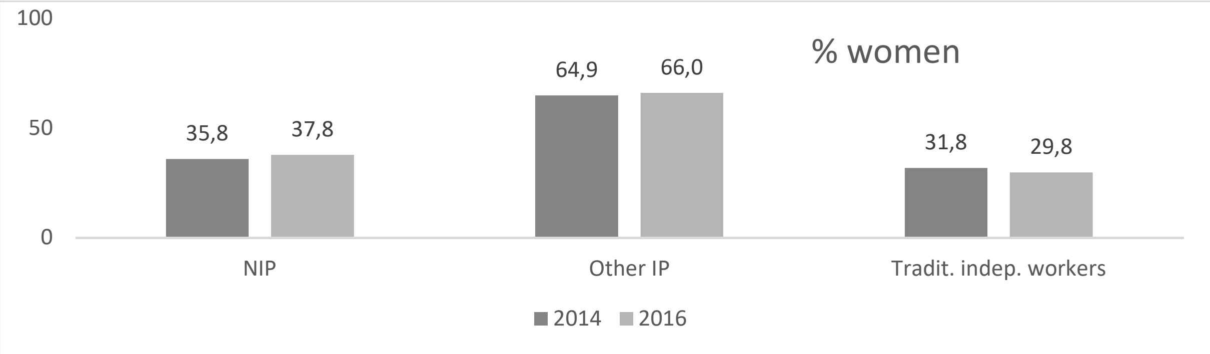
### 4.2.3 Characteristics of IP

To evaluate the characteristics of IPs, consideration was given to the two subsets of NIPs and other IPs, with independent workers without employees in traditional sectors used as the benchmark[4].

More than half of the IPs are women, with their growth making them far more numerous than among traditional independent workers without employees (less than 30% in 2016).

The situation among NIPS is much different, however, than that of other IPs: less than 40% of the former are female, while women account for 66% of other IPs.

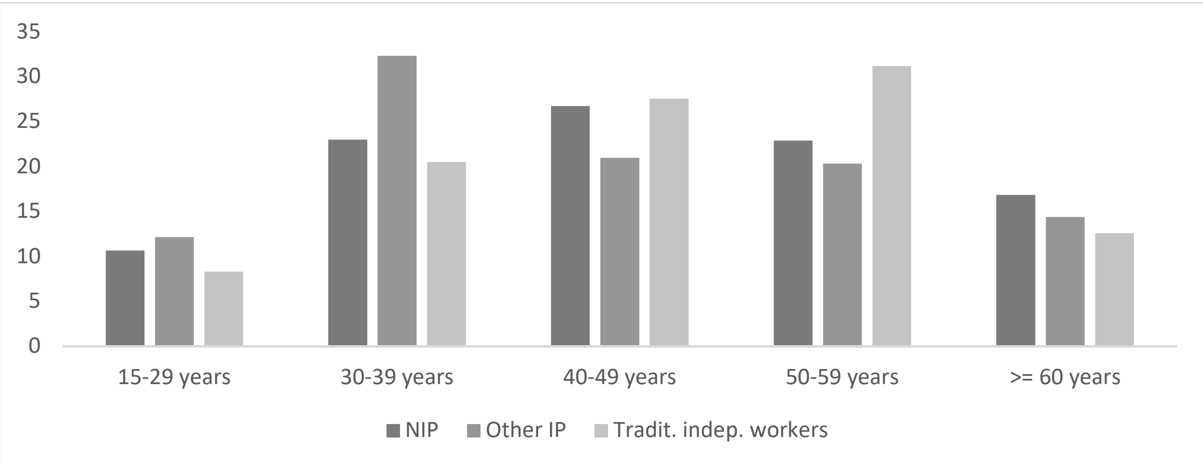
**FIGURE 5 - GENDER – 2014 AND 2016**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

The break-down by age is fairly balanced, being younger for other IPs, with 30 year-olds representing the largest, fastest-growing age group, with NIPs proving more mature, as 40 year-olds were most numerous and all age groups over 40 grew. Among traditional independent workers, 50 year-olds dominate, while the fastest growth was recorded among over-60's.

**FIGURE 6 - AGE**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

[4] Meaning the sum total of independent workers without employees, excluding IPs, as well as craftsmen, merchants etc..



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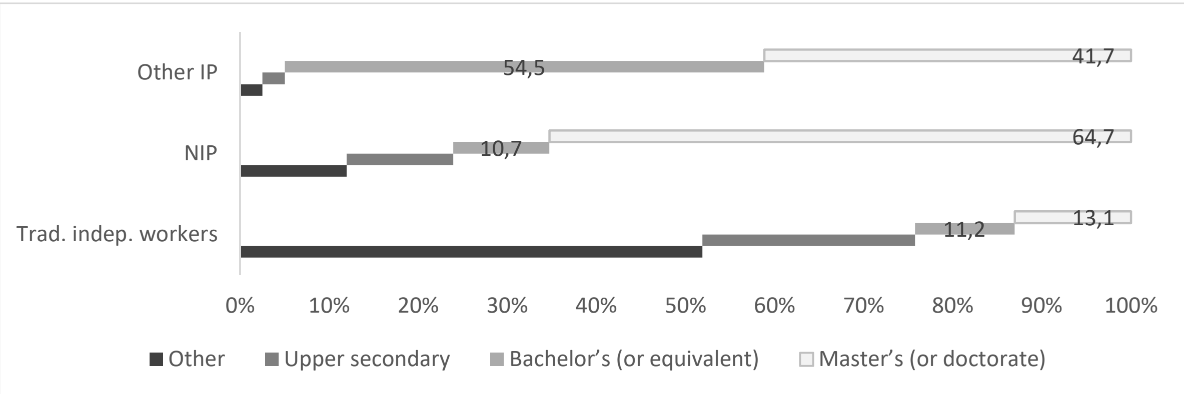
**FIGURE 7 - AGE TRENDS (2014-16)**


*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

The data on levels of education confirms that all independent professionals have more schooling, and especially the NIPs, 2/3 of whom have university degrees, though they also include a sizeable percentage (23%) of people with no formal higher education.

**FIGURE 8 – EDUCATION LEVELS (2016)**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

### 4.2.4 The salaried entrepreneurs

Within independent workers, the subgroup of salaried entrepreneurs (variable STC) can be identified[5]. It is a small but growing component, thanks to the incentive of the Hamon Act (2014) on cooperative enterprises[6].

[5] Non-salaried independent workers are subject to the same social-security protection as non-subordinate workers, whereas salaried entrepreneurs are employees of their own enterprises.

[6] I-WIRE project, France country study, Marie-Christine Bureau Antonella Corsani Bernard Gazier, 2018.


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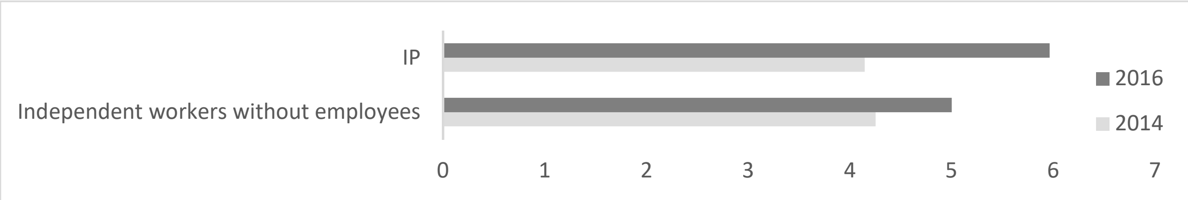
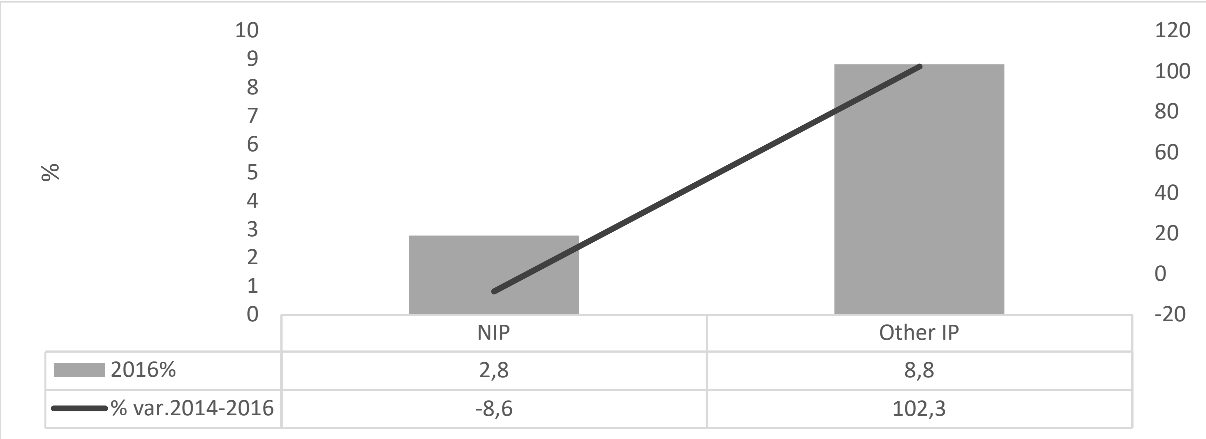
**FIGURE 9 - SALARIED ENTREPRENEURS AS % OF INDEPENDENT WORKERS WITHOUT EMPLOYEES AND OF IP**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

There are few of them, however, among the NIPs, and their number is falling, where as they are a significant, and fast-growing, presence among the Other IP.

**FIGURE 10 - % SALARIED ENTREPRENEURS: COMPARISON BETWEEN NIP AND OTHER IP**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

Salaried entrepreneurs are especially numerous in the liberal professions, in particular the law and accounting, which is where 58% of the salaried entrepreneur IPs are concentrated.

**FIGURE 11 - % OF SALARIED ENTREPRENEURS OUT OF IP**


*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

Salaried entrepreneurs breakdown into two categories:

1) "Company head" salaried entrepreneurs: lone entrepreneurs or salaried entrepreneurs belonging to cooperatives;
2) Other salaried entrepreneurs not company heads, including salaried entrepreneurs who work in cooperatives but are not yet members.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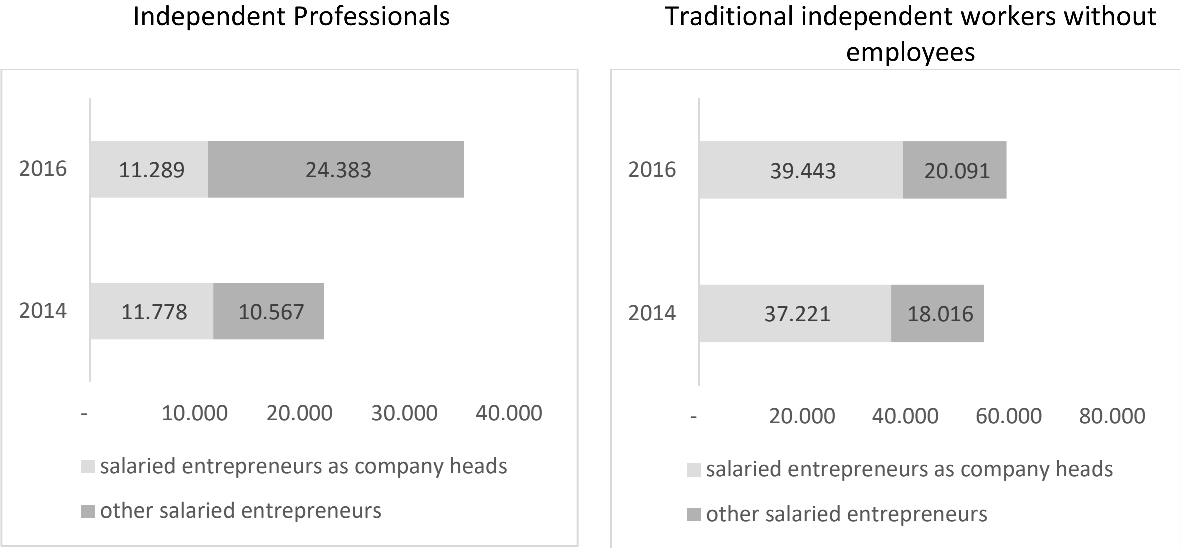
The above are more frequent among IPs (6%) than among traditional independent workers without employees (4.6%).

**FIGURE 12 - SALARIED ENTREPRENEURS AS SUBGROUP OF INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL AND TRADITIONAL INDEPENDENT WORKERS**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi"*

Among IPs, salaried entrepreneurs have registered extremely high growth in the last two years, all concentrated among those who are not company heads. Among other independent workers without employees, growth was more modest and more evenly distributed among the two categories of salaried entrepreneurs.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## 4.3 THE RESPONDENTS TO THE SURVEY

### 4.3.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Compared to the reference universe estimated on the basis of the INSEE data, there are more women and young people among the respondents, and their level of schooling is even higher. Within the I-WIRE sample group, in fact, the percentage of those who have not obtained a bachelor's degree is significantly lower, in keeping with the lower presence of over-50's.

**TABLE 2 – SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

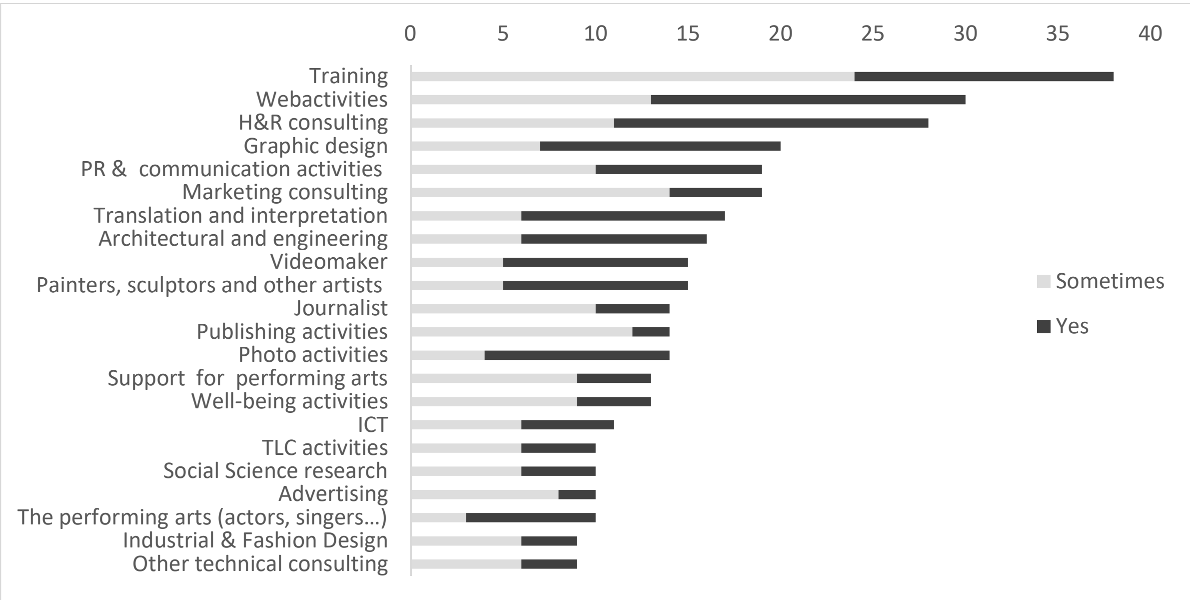
| | | NIP Universe | I-WIRE Sample |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | women | 37.8 | 56.1 |
| Age | 15-29 | 10.6 | 12.8 |
| | 30-39 | 23.0 | 25.4 |
| | 40-49 | 26.7 | 35.8 |
| | 50-59 | 22.9 | 18.9 |
| | >= 60 | 16.8 | 6.1 |
| level of education | Master/ doctorate | 64.7 | 66.9 |
| | Bachelor | 10.7 | 25.7 |
| | Upper secondary | 11.9 | 6.8 |
| | Other | 11.9 | 0.7 |

*Source: ACTA, elaborations on INSEE data "Enquête Emploi" and on French I-WIRE Survey*

### 4.3.2 A PROFESSIONAL PATCHWORK

The most frequent professions among the respondents are those shown on the graph below, led by professions tied to training, web technology and communications, and consulting.

**FIGURE 13 – MAIN ACTIVITIES**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*



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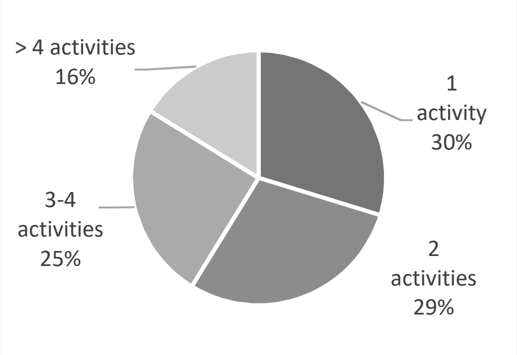
As a rule, the respondents in France also have more than one job: only 30% say they practice just one profession, while 41% state that they engage in 3 or more professional activities.

**FIGURE 14 – - MULTIPLE JOBS**

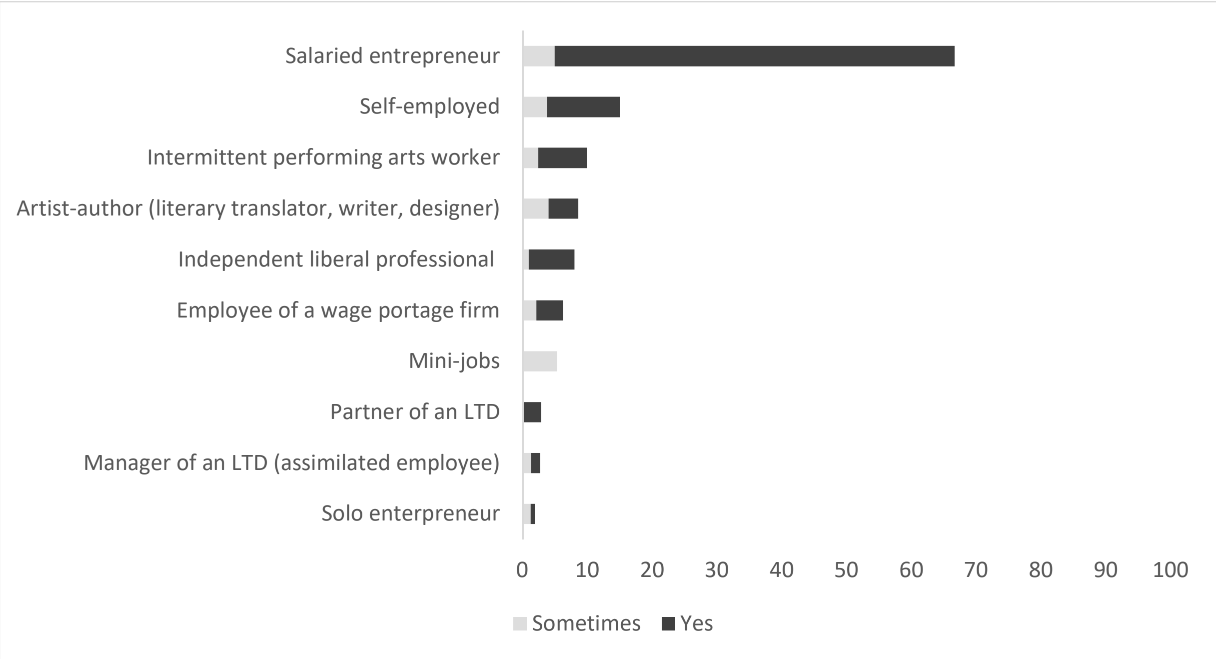



*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

### 4.3.3 Contracts

As noted, the great majority (72%) of the respondents works as salaried employees. Salaried entrepreneurs are the most widespread category, but salaried workers also include employees of portage forms, intermittent entertainment workers and employees of other LMIs. The remainder are a highly varied group, ranging from self-employed professionals and lone entrepreneurs to holders of mini-jobs and partners of LTD, though in numbers too small to draw any useful indications on all these categories.

**FIGURE 15 – CONTRACTS**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*



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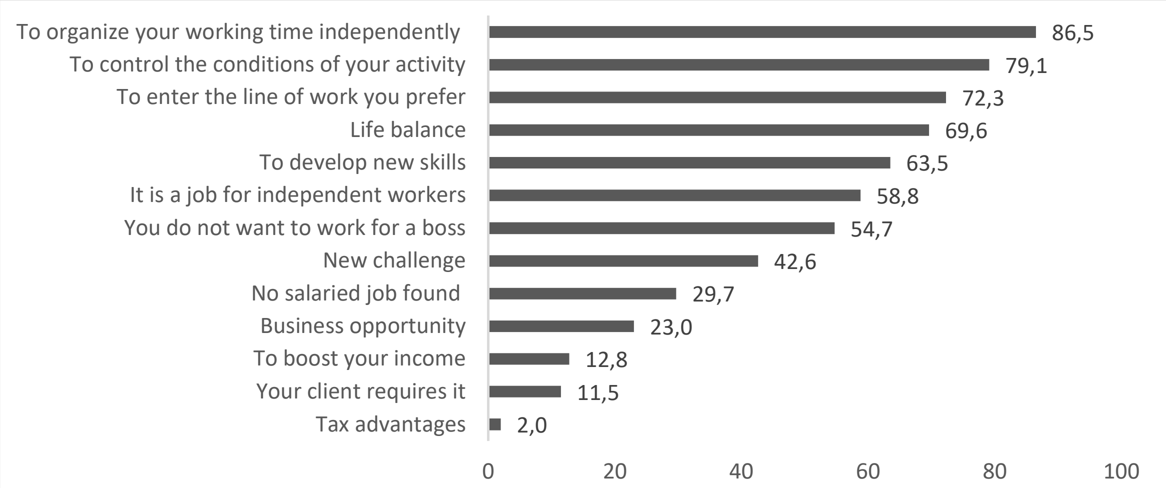
## 4.4 WHY ARE YOU INDEPENDENT?

The primary motives behind independent employment are tied to being able to choose what work to do and to control the conditions and timing of that work.

Cases where clients demand independent employment are relatively few (11.5%), though it is an obligatory choice for the many who have not found salaried employment (almost 30%) and/or because the job in question is typically performed independently.

**FIGURE 16 – MOTIVATIONS TO BE AN INDEPENDENT WORKER**

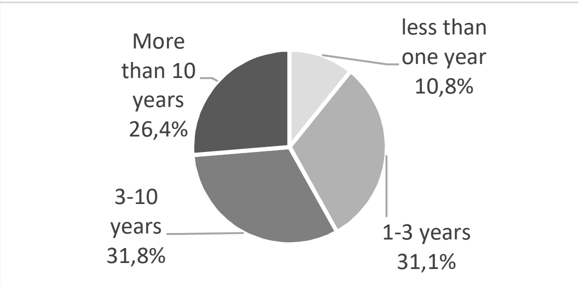



*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

### 4.4.1 HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AN INDEPENDENT WORKER?

The majority of the respondents (58.2%) has been freelance for more than 3 years, but a significant percentage (10.8%) began working freelance only in the last year, and 31% in the last 1-3 years.

**FIGURE 17 – HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AN INDEPENDENT WORKER?**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

### 4.4.2 BEFORE BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT WORKER

The percentage who worked previously as salaried employees is 43%, while 23% began working independently after intermittent jobs and 23% from a condition of unemployment.


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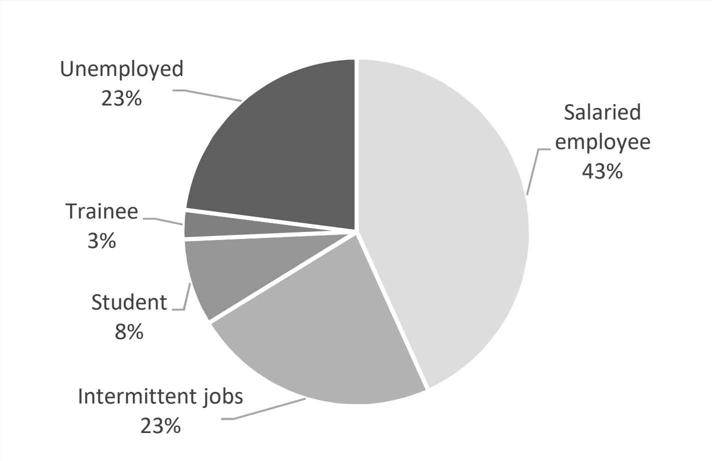
**TABLE 3 - FORMER OCCUPATION (RIGHT BEFORE BECOMING INDEPENDENT)**



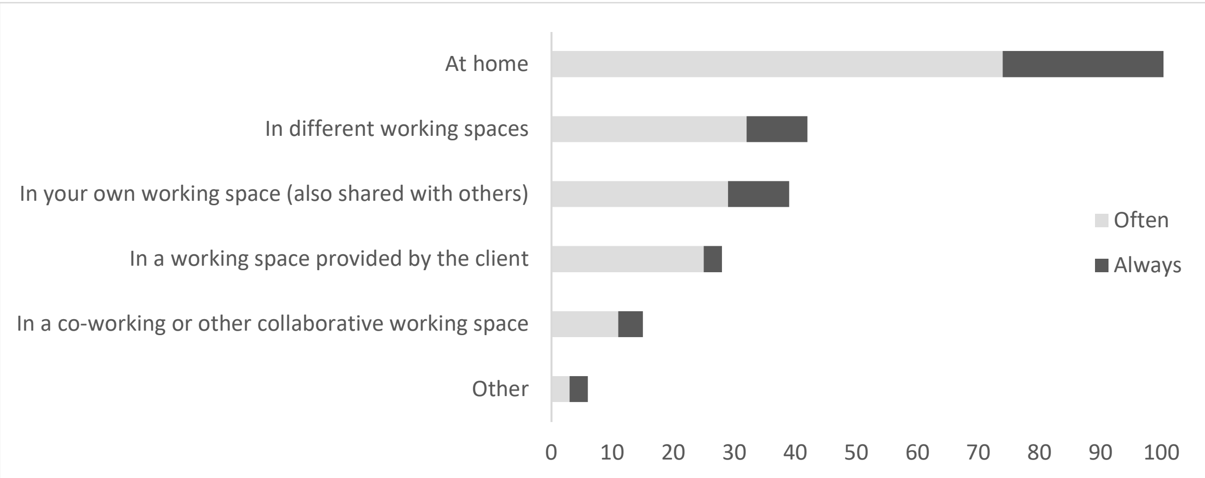

*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

## 4.5 Organization of work and clients

### 4.5.1 Where do you work?

The bulk of the respondents works at home, though, as a rule, not exclusively. The various other alternatives include a large percentage that have their own working space outside of the home, or that use spaces made available by clients. Co-working is not widely used.

**FIGURE 18 - WHERE DO YOU WORK?**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

### 4.5.2 Duration of contracts

The duration of contracts varies frequently, with 33% working under short-term contracts of no more than a few weeks.



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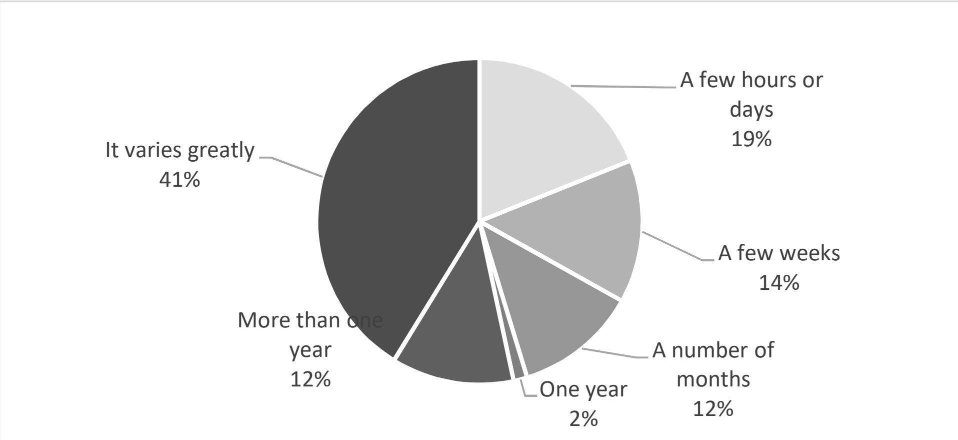
**FIGURE 19 - YOUR CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIPS TYPICALLY LAST…**



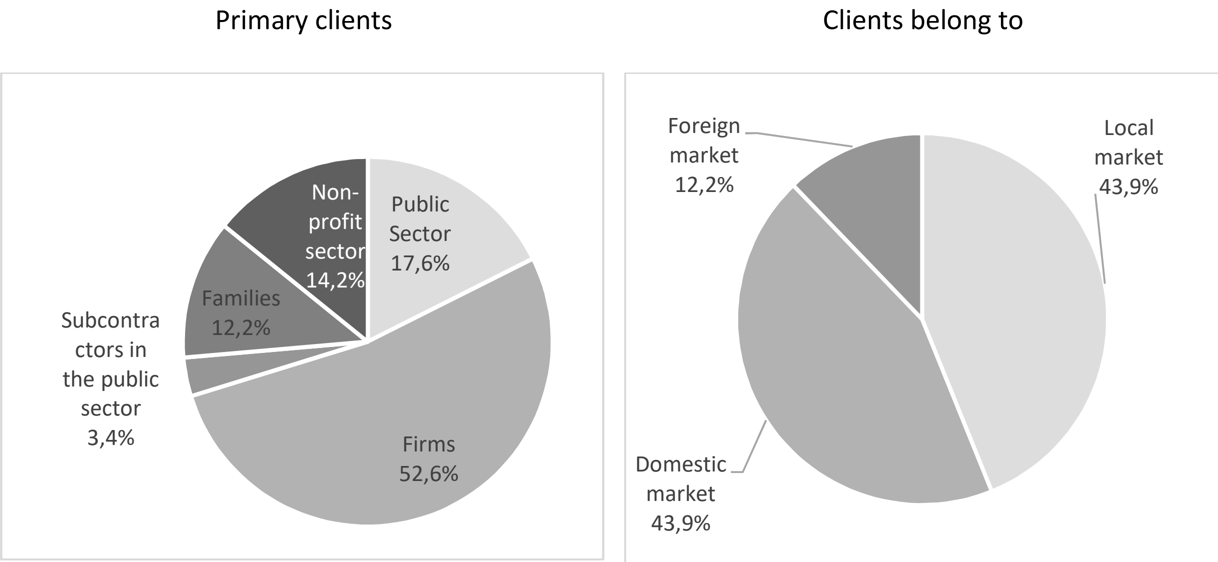

*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

Working on major projects is the norm only for 12.8% of the respondents, while another 57.4% are involved in them occasionally. Participation in large-scale projects usually leads to the assignment being shared with a network of colleagues, for the most part the networks are stable.

### 4.5.3 Clients

The majority of clients are companies that operate on national or local markets, while only 12% of freelancers work with clients on international markets.

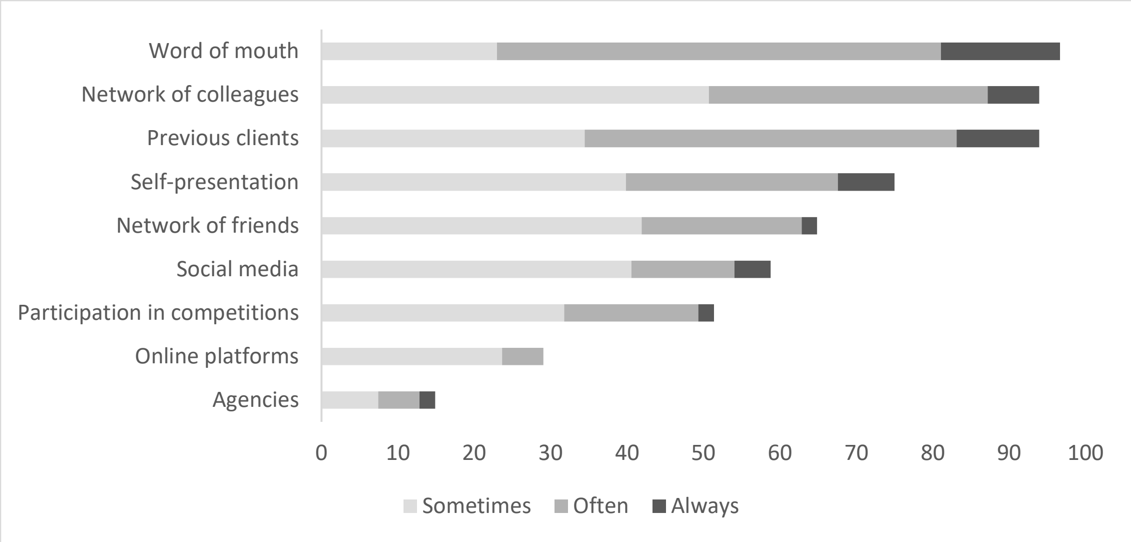
**FIGURE 20 - CLIENTS**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

The three channels most frequently used to obtain new assignments, all of them based on reputation, are: word of mouth, networks of colleagues and existing clients. Direct marketing (self-promotion and social media) is used intermittently, while work is rarely found through intermediaries, be they agencies or on-line platforms, though the latter are definitely on the rise.

**FIGURE 21 - CHANNELS USED FOR ACQUIRING CONTRACTS**



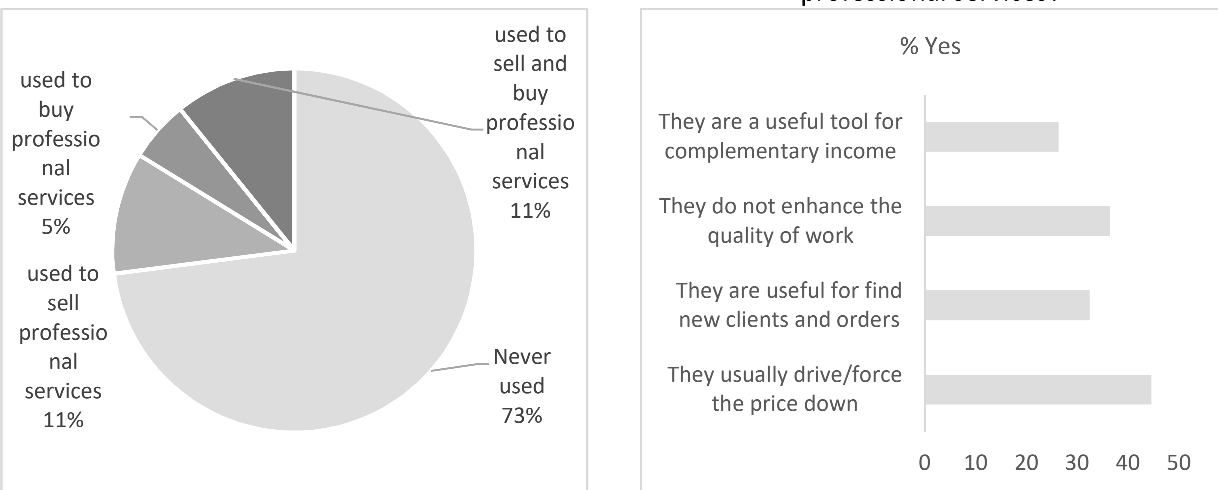

*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

More in-depth analysis of on-line platforms shows that 27% of freelancers use them, mainly to sell their services. They are viewed with much unease, being seen as contributing to increased competition and lower prices, and without favouring quality work. At the same time, they are thought to be helpful in finding new clients and generating additional income.

**FIGURE 22 - PLATFORMS FOR THE EXCHANGE OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Have you ever used online platforms to buy and sell professional services?

Do you agree with the following statements about online platforms for the exchange of professional services?




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

In terms of relations with customers/clients, these are generally handled independently: 69.6% rule out any direct control by the client, though 35.1% say there is some supervision. Most frequently, the relationship is one between equals, but with specific results to achieve.


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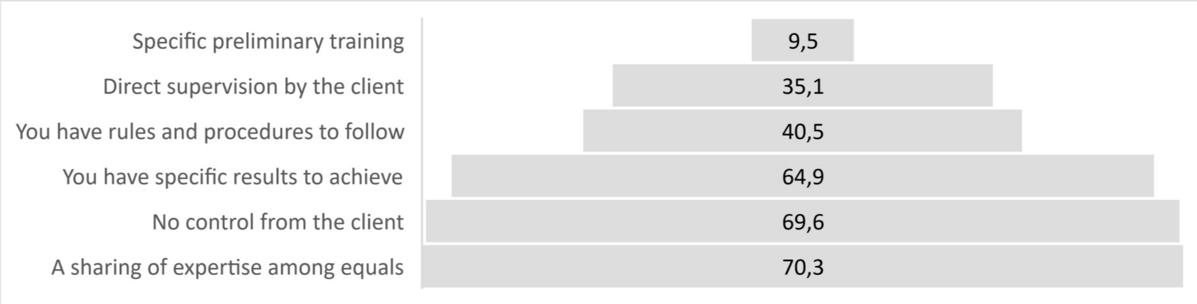
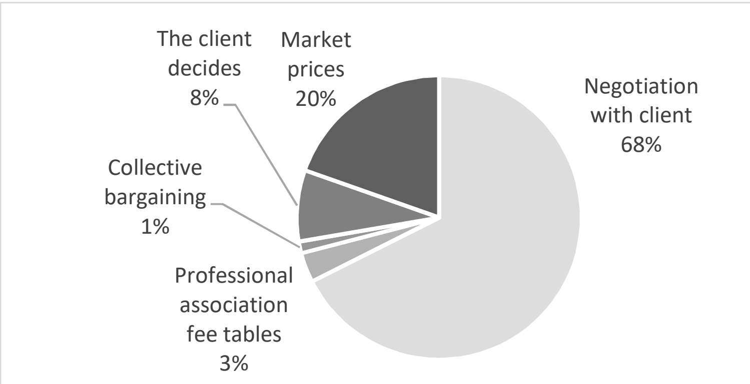
**FIGURE 23 - RELATIONSHIP WITH CLIENTS**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

As a rule, compensation is determined through direct negotiation, though in 8% of the cases, the matter is completely in the hands of the client. Only in a few cases are there tools guaranteeing minimum pay, such as fee schedules or collective bargaining contracts.

**FIGURE 24 - HOW IS YOUR COMPENSATION DETERMINED?**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

## 4.6 How independent?

To determine actual levels of independence, there were a number of questions that objectively gauged the independence of freelancers, together with a subjective evaluation completed by the respondents themselves.

Finally, they were asked to state whether, if free to choose, they would prefer to be independent or salaried employees.

### 4.6.1 Objective criteria of independence

The questions designed to determine whether workers were objectively independent were based on the legal parameters traditionally used to evaluate conditions of subordinate employment:

- the use of the tools and the premises of the client;
- work for only one client;

- freedom to manage one's time and work schedule;
- freedom in choosing how to carry out the work.

In general, these indicators all show elevated levels of independence. Specifically, the great majority had more than one client, did not use the client's tools and organised their work on their own.

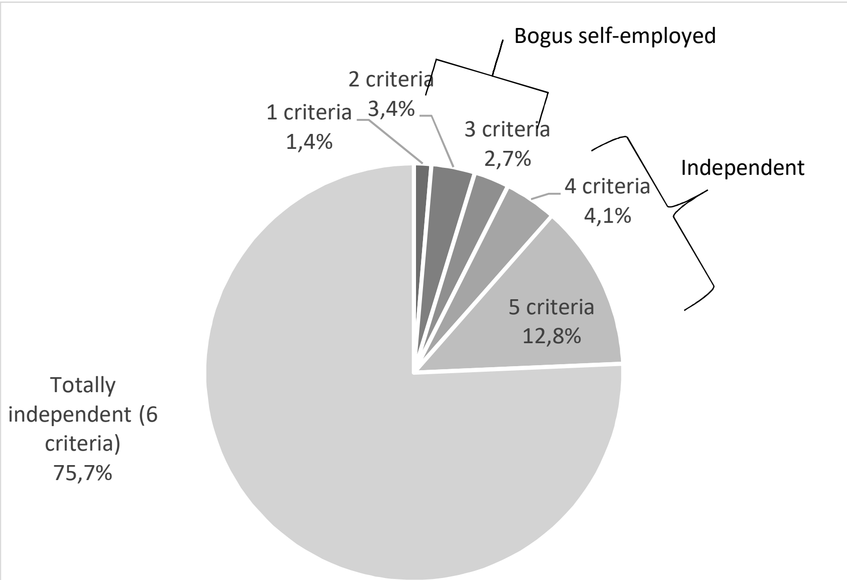
**TABLE 4 - 6 CRITERIA OF INDEPENDENCE**

| | | Total % |
|---|---|---|
| It is up to you to decide: | - Where to work | 85.8 |
| | - When to work | 87.2 |
| | - How to organize your work | 94.6 |
| | - Holidays | 90.5 |
| You don't use client's tools | | 98.0 |
| More than 1 client | | 94.6 |

*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

Employment can be considered subordinate when, at any given time, a number of the parameters of independence are not met. For each respondent we determined how many of the 6 parameters of independence were present, with situations of high risk of subordination, or cases of bogus self-employment, being those that satisfied fewer than 4 parameters of independence.

**FIGURE 25 - CRITERIA OF INDEPENDENCE- BOGUS SELF-EMPLOYED**




Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data

Of respondents, ¾ satisfied all 6 conditions of independence (the "totally independent"), while another 17% met 4-5 criteria of independence ("independent"). There were only 7.5% who met less than 4 criteria of independence and whom we can largely consider to be bogus self-employed.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What are the bogus self-employed like? They are frequently younger and male, workers who have no choice but to be self-employed, due to a lack of alternatives for salaried employment and/or the client preferring they be self-employed. They most often have fragmentary, non-continuous employment, with businesses in the private sector as their clients.

**TABLE 5 – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOGUS SELF-EMPLOYED**

| | | totally independent | independent | bogus self-employed | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Women | 72.3 | 20.5 | 7.2 | 100 |
| | Men | **80.6** | 11.3 | 8.1 | 100 |
| age | < 30 years | 68.4 | 21.1 | **10.5** | 100 |
| | 30-40 years | **79.5** | 10.3 | **10.3** | 100 |
| | 40-50 years | **81.1** | 17 | 1.9 | 100 |
| | 50-60 years | 64.3 | 21.4 | **14.3** | 100 |
| | >=60 years | 77.8 | 22.2 | 0 | 100 |
| salaried work not found | No | 76.9 | 19.2 | 3.8 | 100 |
| | Yes | 72.7 | 11.4 | **15.9** | 100 |
| forced to be self-employed | No | **80.2** | 16 | 3.8 | 100 |
| | Yes | 41.2 | 23.5 | **35.3** | 100 |
| how compensation is determined | Negotiated with client | **78** | 17 | 5 | 100 |
| | Professional association fee tables | 80 | **20** | 0 | 100 |
| | Collective bargaining | 0 | 0 | **100** | 100 |
| | The client decides | 58.3 | 8.3 | **33.3** | 100 |
| | Market prices | **79.3** | 20.7 | 0 | 100 |
| Type of clients | Public Sector | 73.1 | 23.1 | 3.8 | 100 |
| | Businesses | 75.6 | 12.8 | **11.5** | 100 |
| | Private subcontractor in public sector | **80** | 20 | 0 | 100 |
| | Families and individuals | **88.9** | 5.6 | 5.6 | 100 |
| | Non-profit sector | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0 | 100 |
| You have worked | Continuously, without interruption | 75.3 | 19.8 | 4.9 | 100 |
| | More than 9 months of the year | **88** | 8 | 4 | 100 |
| | 6-9 months of the year | 76.2 | **19** | 4.8 | 100 |
| | Less than 6 months of the year | 61.9 | 14.3 | **23.8** | 100 |
| Duration of contracts | A few hours or a few days | 64.3 | 25 | **10.7** | 100 |
| | A few weeks | 71.4 | 14.3 | **14.3** | 100 |
| | Some months | **88.9** | 11.1 | 0 | 100 |
| | One year | 50 | 0 | 50 | 100 |
| | More than one year | **88.9** | 5.6 | 5.6 | 100 |
| Freelance income | < 10,000 euros | **82.8** | 9.4 | 7.8 | 100 |
| | < 10-30,000 euros | 67.2 | 25 | 7.8 | 100 |
| | < 30- 60,000 euros | 76.5 | 17.6 | 5.9 | 100 |
| | > 60,000 euros | **100** | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| Total income | Not sufficient | 75.5 | 17 | 7.5 | 100 |
| | Enough to live on | 70.4 | **20.4** | **9.3** | 100 |
| | Sufficient for a good life | **82.9** | 12.2 | 4.9 | 100 |
| | TOTAL | 75.7 | 16.9 | 7.4 | 100 |

*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

## 4.6.2 SUBJECTIVE PERCEPTION OF INDEPENDENCE

The respondents largely saw themselves as independent.

One question asked them to rank how independent they perceived themselves to be, on a scale of 0 to 10.

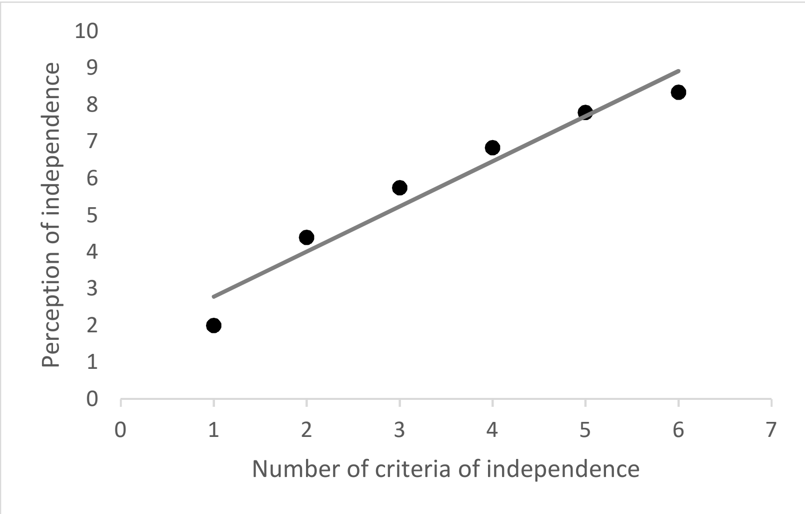
For 11.4%, the score was less than or equal to 5, while for 42.9% it was very high, at more than 8.

The average score was 7.9, without noticeable differences in terms of gender or level of education, though scores did rise slightly with advancing age.

Self-perception of independence was lower among those who had not chosen to be self-employed, with the level rising as the number of clients, the period of self-employment and income rose.

The (subjective) perception of independence was in line with the objective evaluation based on 6 criteria of independence, as confirmed by the significant positive correlation (Pearson's Index 0.577, level of significance 0.01) between perceptions of independence and the number of criteria of independence met. This shows both that the respondents are well aware of their situations and that the parameters used to determine situations of subordinate employment are effective.

**FIGURE 26 - AVERAGE VALUES OF PERCEPTION OF INDEPENDENCE BY NUMBER OF INDEPENDENCE CRITERIA**

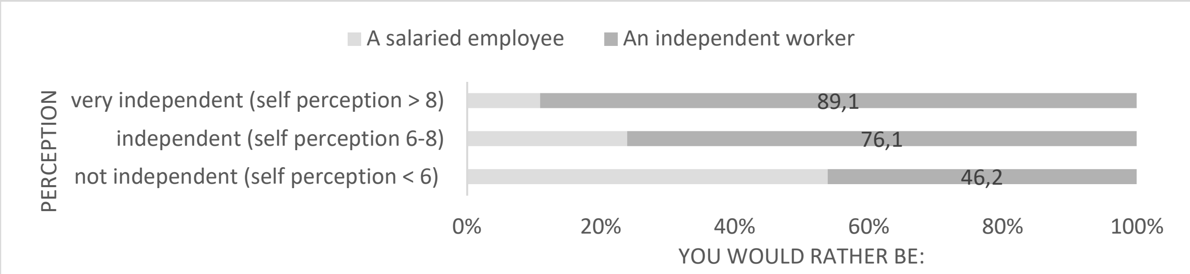



*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

### 4.6.3 Would you rather be independent or a salaried employee?

Given the choice, almost 80% of the respondents would prefer to be independent.
The percentage is even higher (89.1%) among those who now see themselves as being completely independent (self-perception of 9-10 on a scale of 0 to 10), while the majority (53.8%) of those who view themselves as not being very independent (self-perception of < 6 on a scale of 0 to 10) would rather be salaried employees.

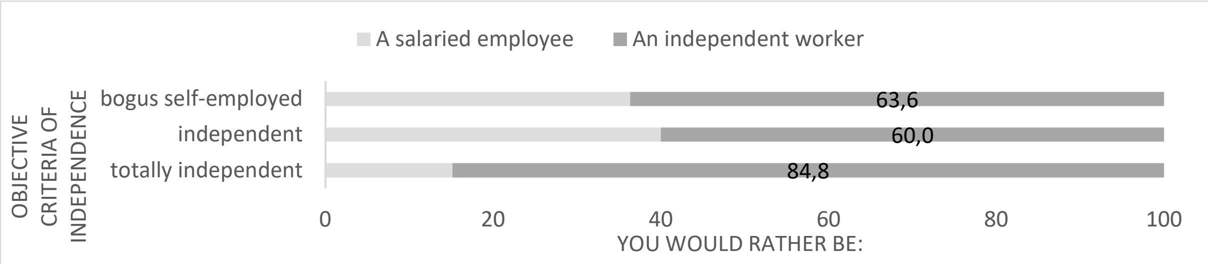
**FIGURE 27 DESIRE TO BE INDEPENDENT IN TERMS OF PERCEPTION OF INDEPENDENCE**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

Likewise, the wish to be independent is higher among those who are objectively independent, as compared to those who present number parameters of subordinate employment.

**FIGURE 28 DESIRE TO BE INDEPENDENT IN TERMS OF BOGUS SELF-EMPLOYMENT/INDEPENDENCE**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

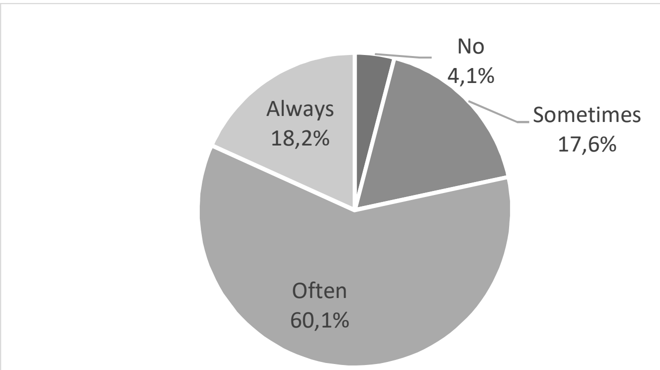
## 4.7 Evaluations

The questionnaire included sets of questions meant to gather further information on both levels of satisfaction and problems of note. In both cases, factorial analyses were utilised to highlight the underlying factors.

### 4.7.1 Satisfaction

All things considered, the respondents are satisfied with their work situations: 18.2% are always satisfied, while another 60.1% are often satisfied and only 4.1% never are.

**FIGURE 29 - ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR JOB?**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*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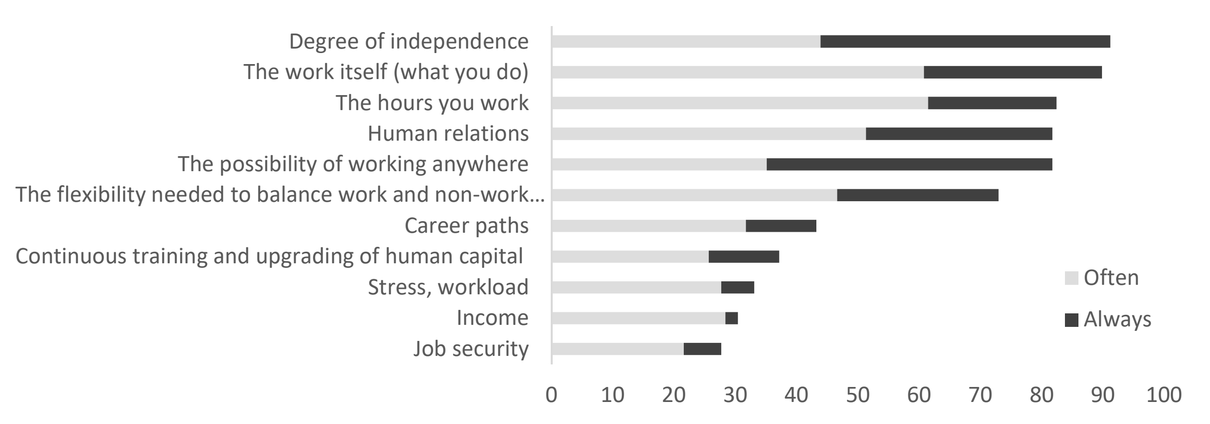
The main motives of satisfaction are tied to independence and the possibility of flexible working hours, as well as to the content of the work. In other words, satisfaction depends on the ability to fully maintain one's decision-making independence and creative capacity, so that work is experienced as freedom and self-fulfilment.

**FIGURE 30 - HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR JOB, IN TERMS OF:**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

On the other hand, satisfaction is low with regard to income, security/continuity of employment, workloads and possibilities for growth in terms of training and career advancement.

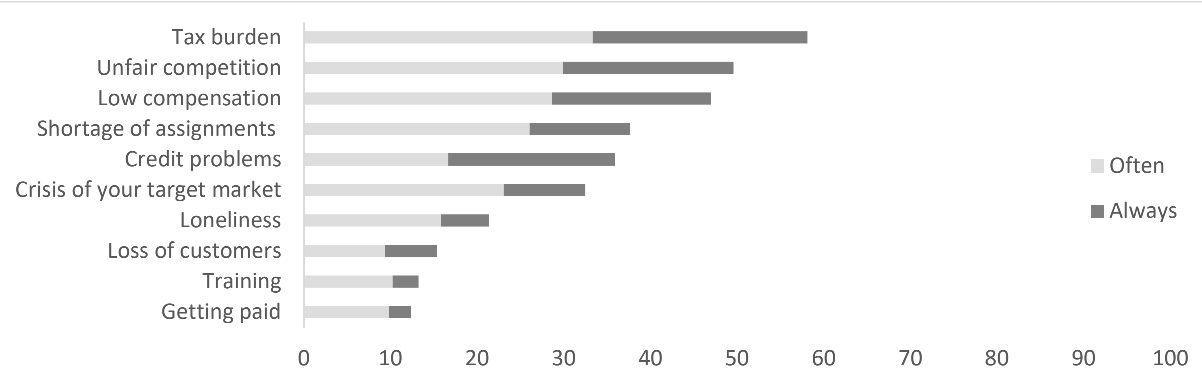
### 4.7.2 Problems

The problem cited most frequently is the burden of taxes and benefit contributions. Even those (20%) who benefit from favourable conditions complain of high taxes and social security charges.

Next come problems tied to the marketplace, such as increasingly intense, and often unfair, competition, low compensation and the fact that it is not easy to replace lost clients with new ones.

Problems in obtaining credit were also noted, while approximately 20% were unhappy with the loneliness of freelance work.

**FIGURE 31 - CURRENTLY, HOW PROBLEMATIC ARE THE FOLLOWING ISSUES TO YOU?**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*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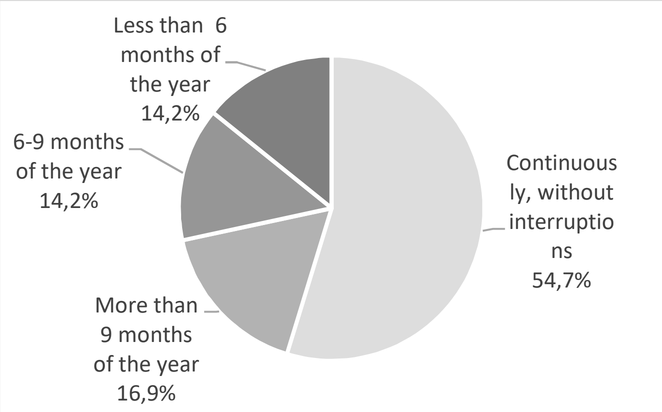
## 4.8 STABILITY VERSUS PRECARIOUSNESS

In order to evaluate the overall state of precariousness of respondents, three factors were considered in parallel: the continuity of work, the income it provides and social security.

### 4.8.1 CONTINUITY OF WORK

Only 55% of respondents work steadily, while 14.2% work less than 6 months of the year and 14.2% between 6 and 9 months.

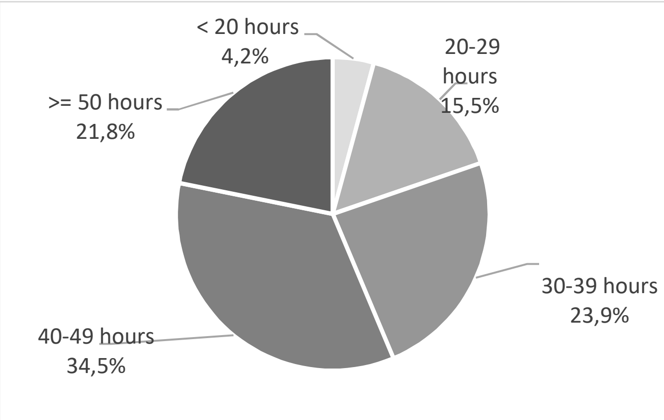
**FIGURE 32 - IN THE LAST 2 YEARS YOU HAVE WORKED**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

The average work-week of the sample as a whole is 38.4 hours, though the individual situations vary widely, with 19% not arriving at 30 hours a week, while 22% work more 50 hours weekly.

**FIGURE 33 - WORK HOURS**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

### 4.8.2 INCOME

Income results are the most cause for concern, as 43.5% have an income of no more than 10,000 euro a year, while another group of the same size has income of 10,000-30,000 euro. The generally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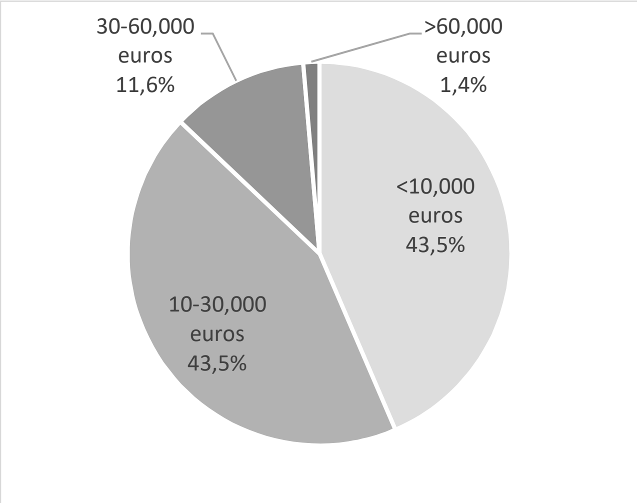
situation of difficulty does not differ significantly based on either age or gender, in keeping with the ISEE estimate for micro-entrepreneurs, which points to average monthly income of 460 euro, with little variation between the different sectors[7].
10,000 – 30,000 – 60,000 etc.

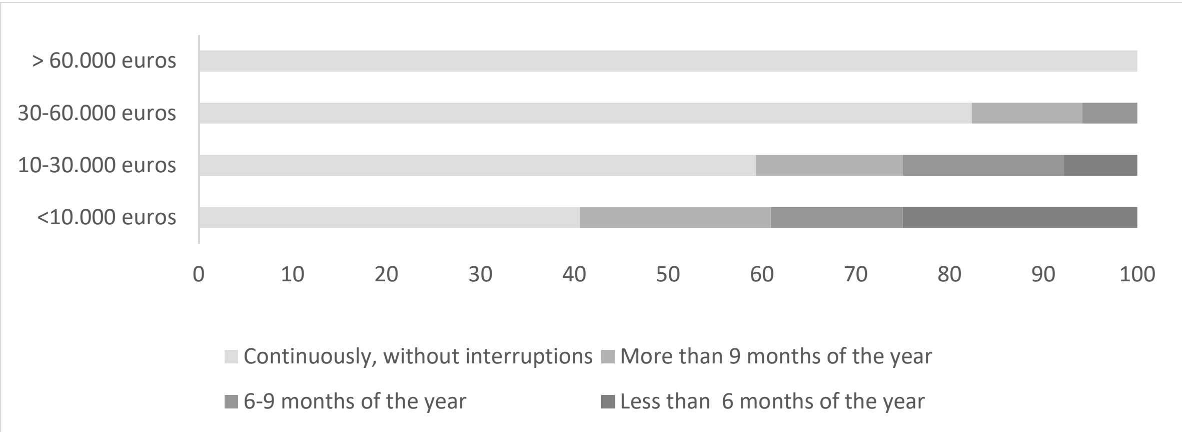
**FIGURE 34 - ANNUAL PRE-TAX INCOME AS A FREELANCER (EURO 2016)**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

The factor that appears to have the greatest influence on differences in income is continuity of work: the higher the discontinuity, the lower the overall income.

**FIGURE 35 - INCOME BY CONTINUITY OF WORK**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

### 4.8.3 Public and private social security and safeguards

Opinions of social safeguards are not overly negative, especially compared with those expressed in other countries, and in particular as regards illness and accidents, as well as unemployment.

[7] I-WIRE, French country study, Marie-Christine Bureau, Antonella Corsani and Bernard Gazier. 2018


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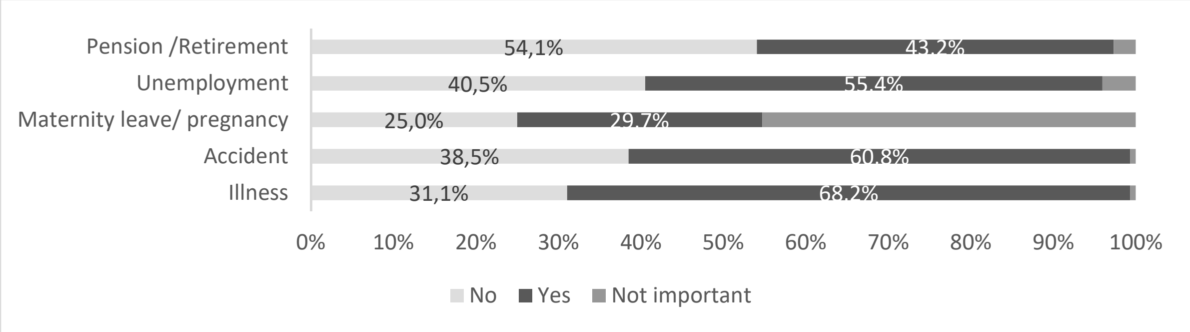
**FIGURE 36 - DO YOU FEEL PROTECTED IN THE CASE OF…?**

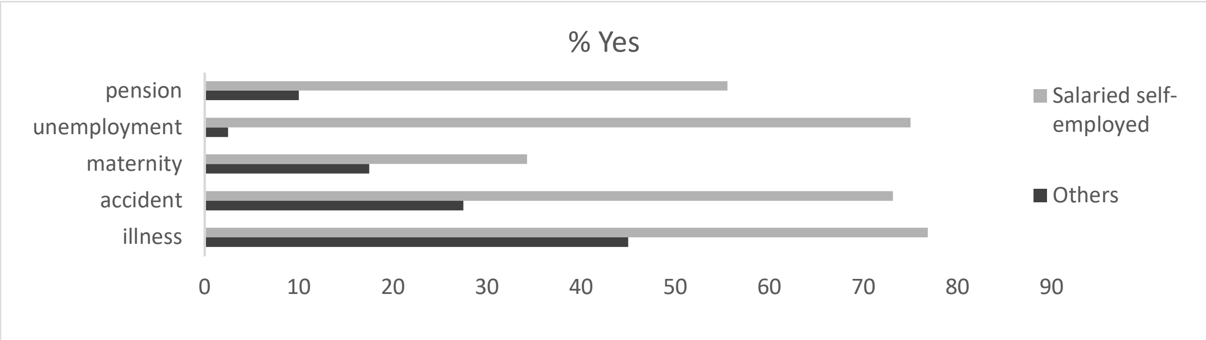



*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

This is likely the result of the high level of salaried self-employed workers (and especially salaried entrepreneurs) in the sample group.

The following graph points to those who do not feel protected, but by distinguishing the salaried self-employed from all others, it also demonstrates that protections are generally high only for the salaried self-employed, but not for other NIPs.

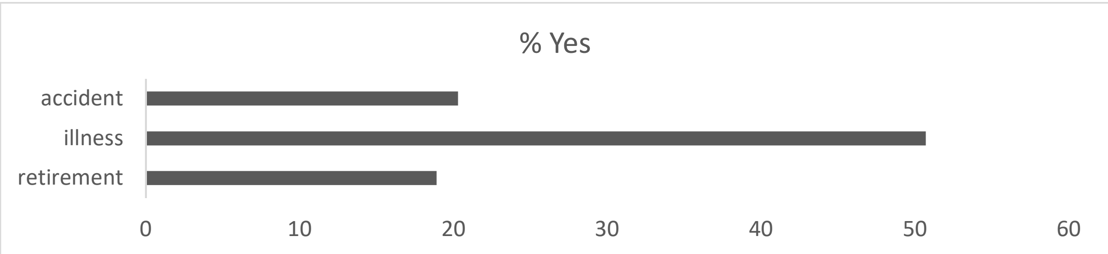
**FIGURE 37 – DO YOU FEEL PROTECTED IN THE CASE OF…? SALARIED SELF-EMPLOYED AND OTHERS**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

Private insurance taken out to cover illness is rather common, whereas voluntary pension payments are less frequent.

**FIGURE 38 DO YOU PAY ON YOUR OWN FOR BENEFIT COVERAGE OR A SUPPLEMENTARY PENSION PLAN?**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*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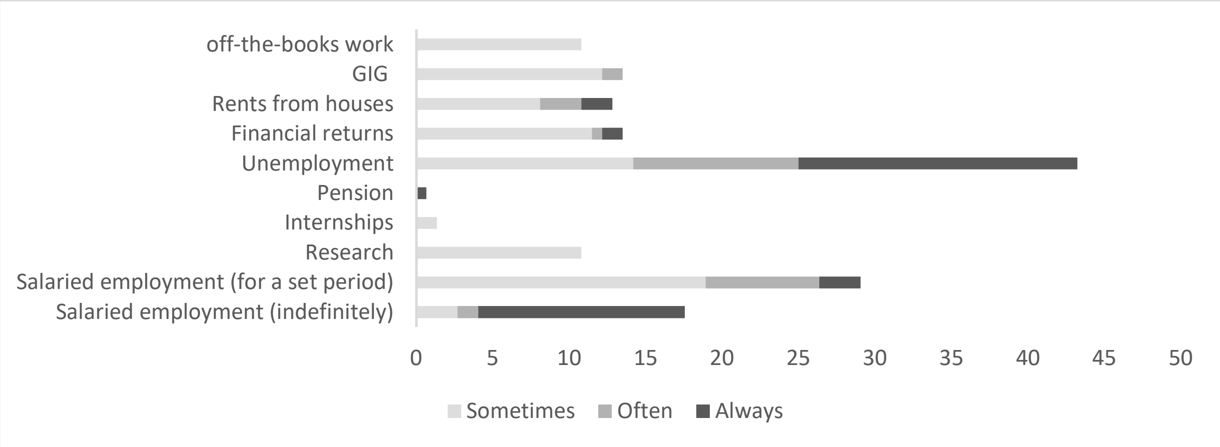
## 4.9 OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME

Freelance income is often supplemented with unemployment subsidies or pay from salaried employment. The incidence of gig-based work is low, as is traditional service work obtained through platforms (such as Uber, Foodora…).

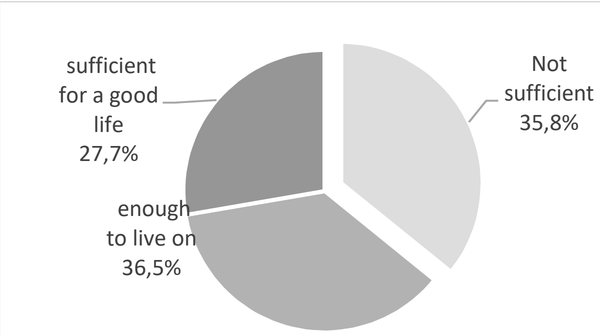
**FIGURE 39 - OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

Even taking into account supplementary income, overall income is often not sufficient to live on.

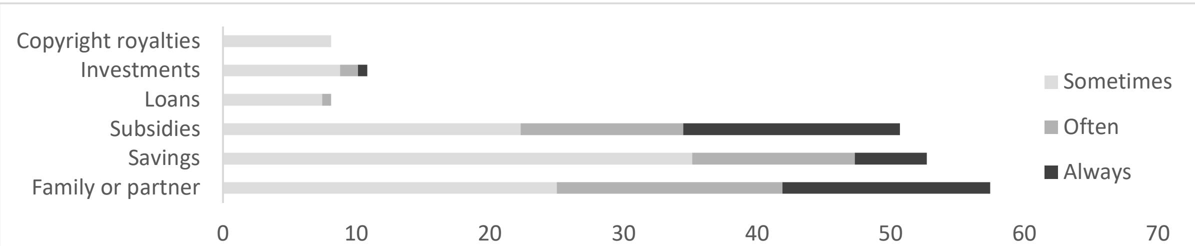
**FIGURE 40 - YOUR TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME IS:**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

Many freelancers resort to other forms of support, mainly from their families or partners, or by drawing on savings, or by public assistance.

**FIGURE 41 - OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT YOURSELF**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*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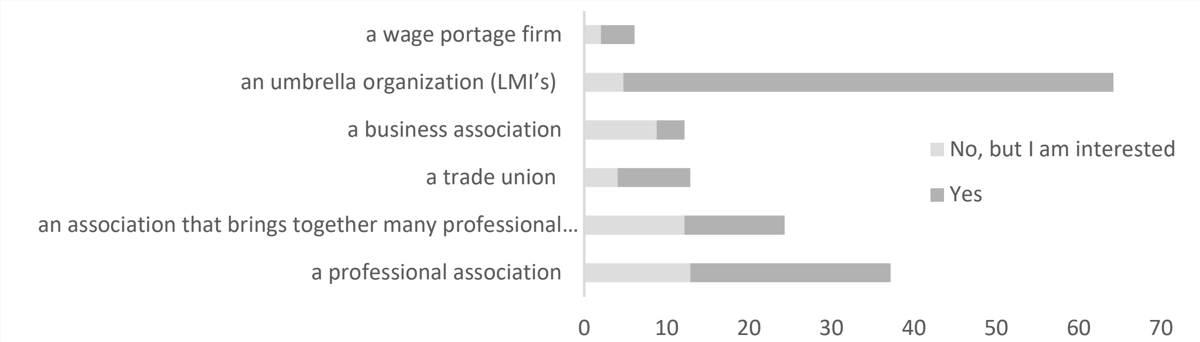
## 4.10 Representation

73% of respondents belong to umbrella companies or professional associations/union organisations. The type of association preferred by the respondents is the umbrella company, in keeping with the fact that the respondents were largely reached through umbrella organizations. Union membership is low, even though the workers are largely classified as subordinates.

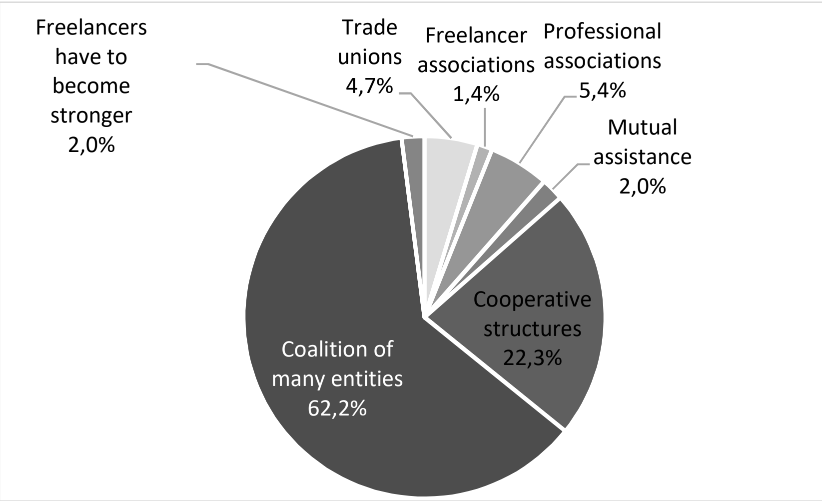
**FIGURE 42 - ARE YOU A MEMBER OF ANY UNION OR ASSOCIATION**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

More than 60% of the respondents hold that, in representing independent professionals, it is important to promote coalitions among different subjects.

**FIGURE 43 - IN ORDER TO REPRESENT INDEPENDENT WORKERS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO IMPROVE**




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

In selecting an organisation of representation, almost all the factors presented for evaluation proved relevant, and above all else the ability to make proposals and the services offered. Lobbying was given least importance.

**FIGURE 44 – MAIN FACTORS IN CHOOSING A COALITION OF INDEPENDENT WORKERS**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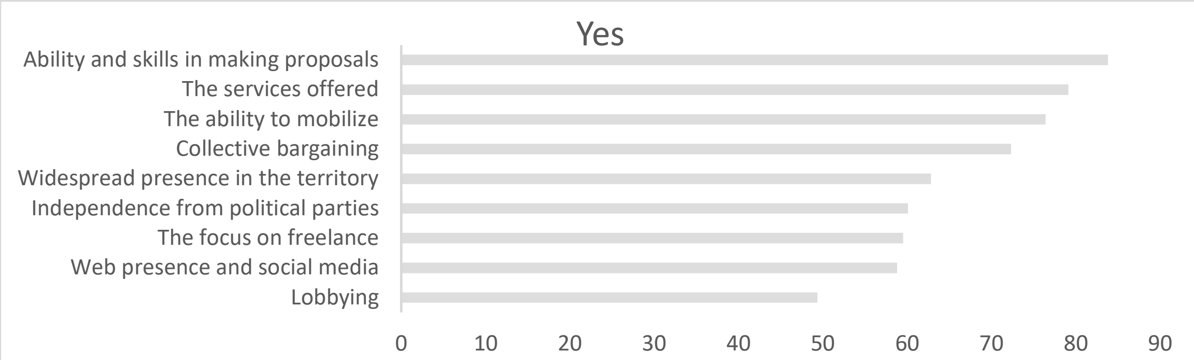



*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

Organisations of representation are expected to provide a variety of services, especially in terms of consulting, training, information and networking.

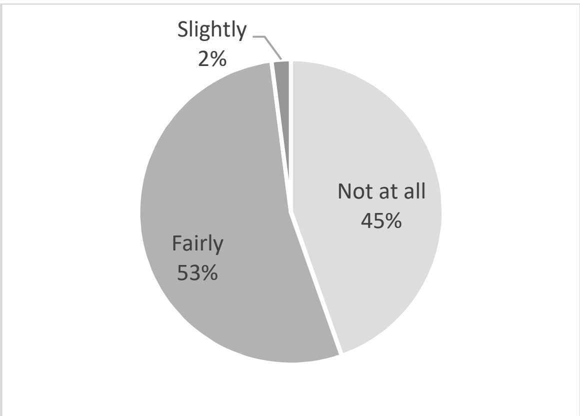
**FIGURE 45 - WHAT SERVICES SHOULD BE OFFERED BY AN INDEPENDENT WORKERS ORGANISATION**


*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

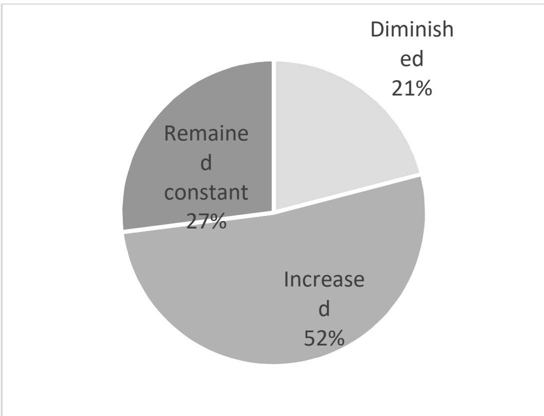
More than half hold that the political sphere pays attention to the requests of independent workers, and that this attention is on the rise.

**FIGURE 46 - POLITICIANS AND INDEPENDENT WORKERS**

The responsiveness of politicians to the demands of independent workers




This attention has recently




*Source: ACTA, I-WIRE survey, analysis of French data*

## 4.11 CONCLUSIONS

In France, independent professionals (IP) are relatively few in number, not only compared to countries like Italy and the United Kingdom, but in terms of the rest of the European Union as well. The Eurostat figures show that IPs account for 2.5% of total employment, as compared to the EU-28 average of 3.3%. Such workers are also found in the social sectors (especially healthcare), as opposed to services to businesses, at above average rates, though, as confirmed by the INSEE figures, in recent years there has been significant growth in the latter as well.

Within the IPs, we can distinguish salaried entrepreneurs, a category of independent worker classified as salaried and a specific characteristic of France. Though formed quite recently, it is growing quickly, even if these workers are still a minority (6% of the IPs).

Though the sample group is numerically small, and not representative of the NIPs as a whole, it still points to features highlighted in the literatures and in the country profile of France[8].

Compared to the general population, the respondents are more often women and younger, with levels of education above the average for IP. For the most part, they are truly independent (only 7% appear to satisfy parameters of subordination that could place them in the category of the bogus self-employed), though they are often classified as salaried.

In fact, the largest portion of the most of the respondents are either salaried entrepreneurs within employment cooperatives (BEC) or they work for wage portage forms or, finally, as artists, a category presumed to be salaried employees in France.

Classification as a salaried employee if one is member of a cooperative makes it possible to draw on unemployment benefits[9], with the combination of working income and benefits constituting a strategy for sustaining their aspiration for independence.
The above situation reflects a precise employment policy. The salaried entrepreneur has existed since 1995, but the Hamon Act of 2014 instituted the "entrepreneurs salariés" who are members of cooperatives as an incentive for unemployed and precariously employed people to become self-entrepreneurial subjects. Many of the respondents may have benefitted from this legislation: 42% have become independent workers in the last 3 years, and 45% were unemployed or worked intermittent jobs right before they became independent.

Unemployment insurance and other public subsidies play a key role in ensuring that a large part of these workers can maintain themselves, seeing that their income from work is insufficient, even though they are highly educated and often work more than one job.

Overall satisfaction is high, especially because the respondents are very satisfied with their independence, with the content of their work and the quality of the accompanying human relations.

[8] I-WIRE, French country study, Marie-Christine Bureau, Antonella Corsani and Bernard Gazier. 2018.

[9] Other assimilated salaried (for example, minority managers of SARL) who are covered by the general social regime don't benefit from the unemployment insurance.

Instances of low satisfaction were found with regard to income, job security, workloads and possibilities for career growth and further training.
The leading problems reported included levels of taxation and low pay. The opinion on taxes was common even among those who benefit from favourable terms, showing that, in reality, such terms probably fail to do much to alleviate the conditions of those with low earnings. The complaints of low pay, in turn, point to the difficulties of workers totally at the mercy of the market or individual bargaining. In fact, despite the high incidence of salaried workers, the safeguard of collective bargaining agreements does not function (only 1% of the sample group refer to it), nor are there fee parameters to use as guidelines.

In keeping with the high percentage of salaried entrepreneurs, membership in cooperatives is also high (60%), though only 22% think that cooperatives alone can effectively represent their interests; the vast majority would like to see a number of different entities work together.

Also worthy of note is the essentially positive opinion of the attention paid by the political sphere to the needs of independent professionals. In effect, the debate in France on independent employment, though still underway, has generated numerous proposals and initiatives.



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