WE3 MEDCOMMS

2025, Healthcare Communications
Salary & Market Insights Survey

INDEX

INTRO-DUCTION

At **WE3 MedComms**, we're proud to present the 2025 edition of our **Healthcare Communications Salary & Market Insights Survey** — our most comprehensive report to date, built from the responses of **826 professionals** across the industry.

This isn't just a data exercise. It's part of our commitment to delivering honest, useful insights that reflect what's really happening across the sector, from pay and progression to workplace trends and shifting priorities.

As a **boutique, independently owned recruitment agency**, WE3 MedComms is known for keeping things simple, effective and human. We bring over **40 years of combined experience** in Medical & Healthcare Communications recruitment and have built a reputation for delivering high-quality results with a personal touch.

We don't spread ourselves thin. Our focus is sharp: helping people and businesses in **Medical & Healthcare Communications** connect in smarter, more strategic ways. Whether it's **medical writing, market access, digital strategy, public relations or regulatory affairs**, we know this space inside out and the professionals who shape it.

This annual survey was created to give something back to the community we serve. Whether you're benchmarking your salary, planning your next move or building a team, this report provides practical, real-world data to support informed decisions.

Our mission is simple: **to make recruitment straightforward, successful and genuinely valuable** for both clients and candidates. We hope this survey helps you do the same in your world.

KEY STATS

2025 at a Glance…

- **826 respondents in 2025 (Up from 712 in 2024)**
- **73% female, 23% male, 4% non-binary/prefer not to say**
- **Top 3 reasons to move:**
  - **Better pay (23%)**
  - **Career progression (20%)**
  - **Less stress/burnout (13%)**
- **Only 27% felt their salary had kept up with cost of living**
- **42% said training and development support had improved**
- **39% rated their current employer 4 or 5 out of 5 for professional development**
- **Remote working remains strong, but 32% report increased pressure to return to the office**
- **AI confidence gap:**
  - **70% use AI tools occasionally**
  - **Only 16% feel their company has a clear AI strategy**

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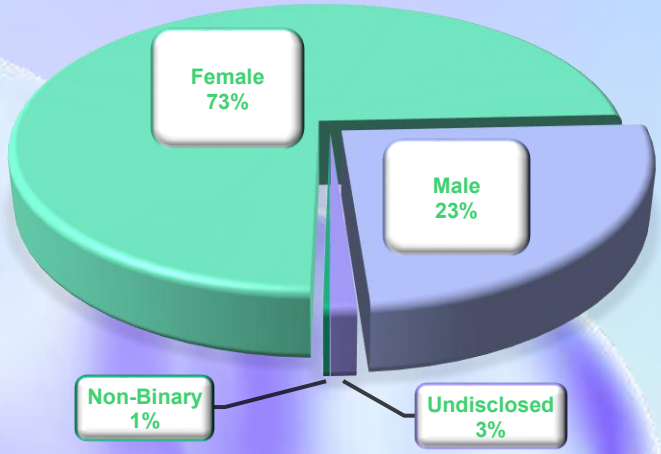
PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER



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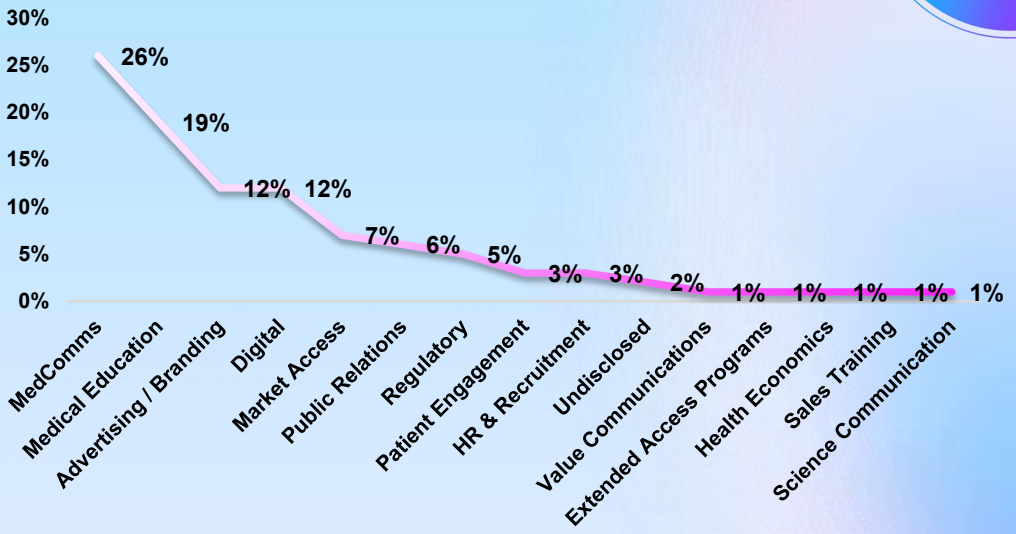
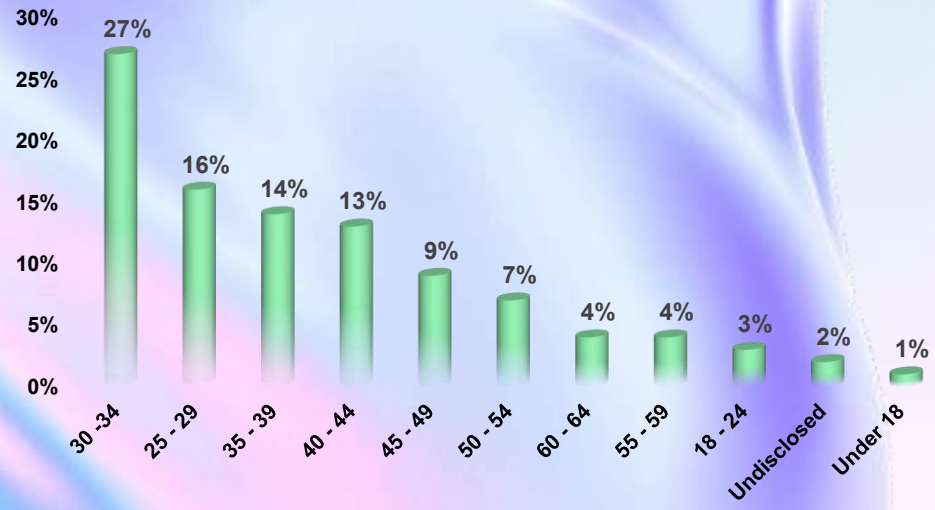


AGE



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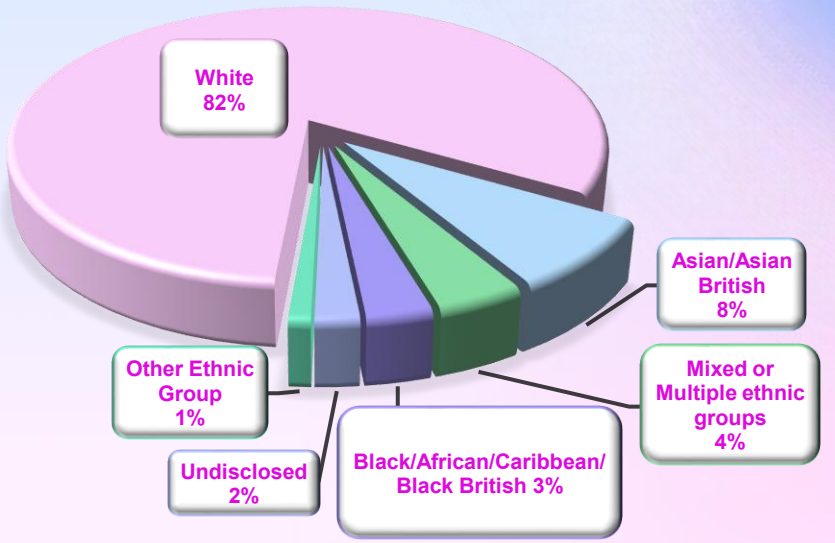
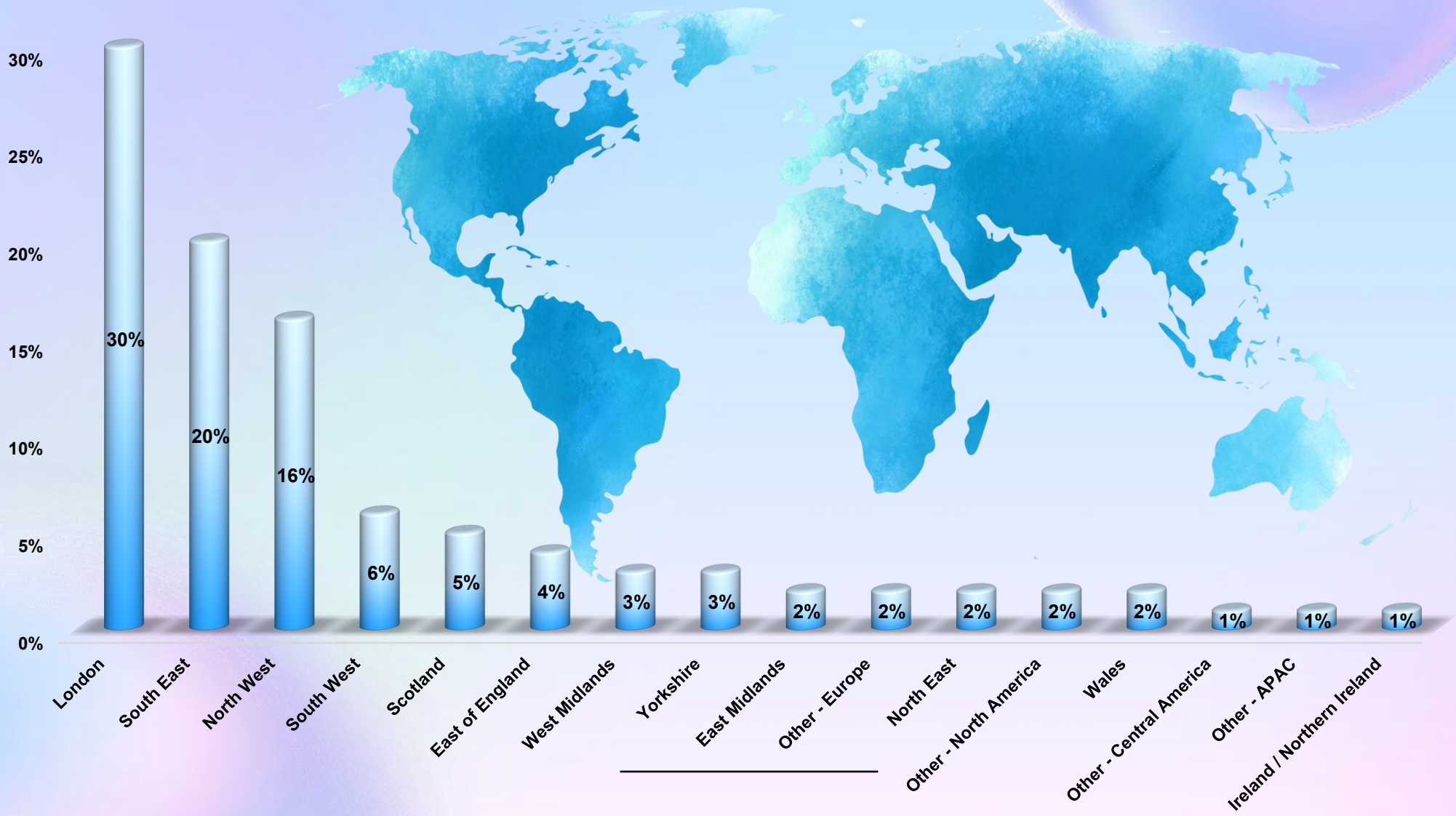
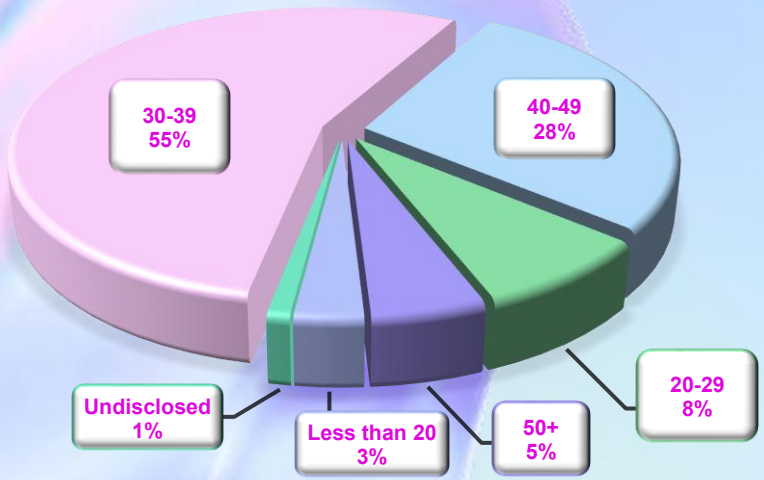


PARTICIPANT LOCATIONS

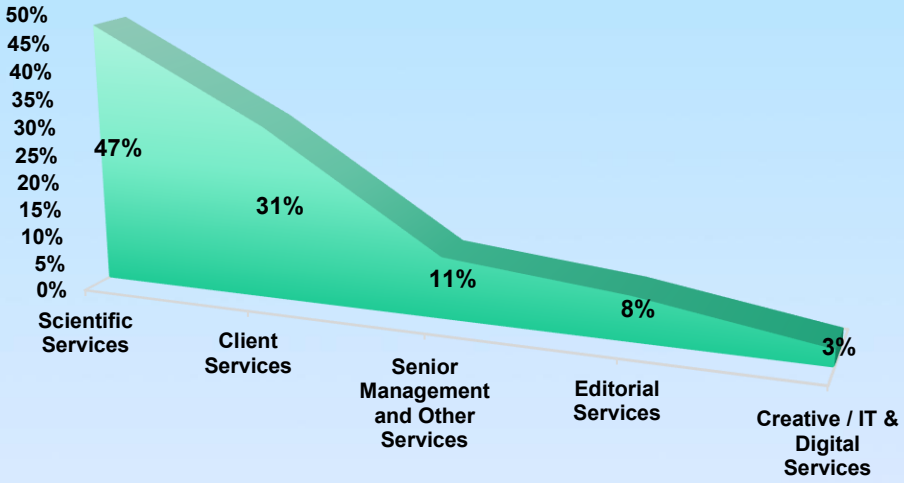


PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

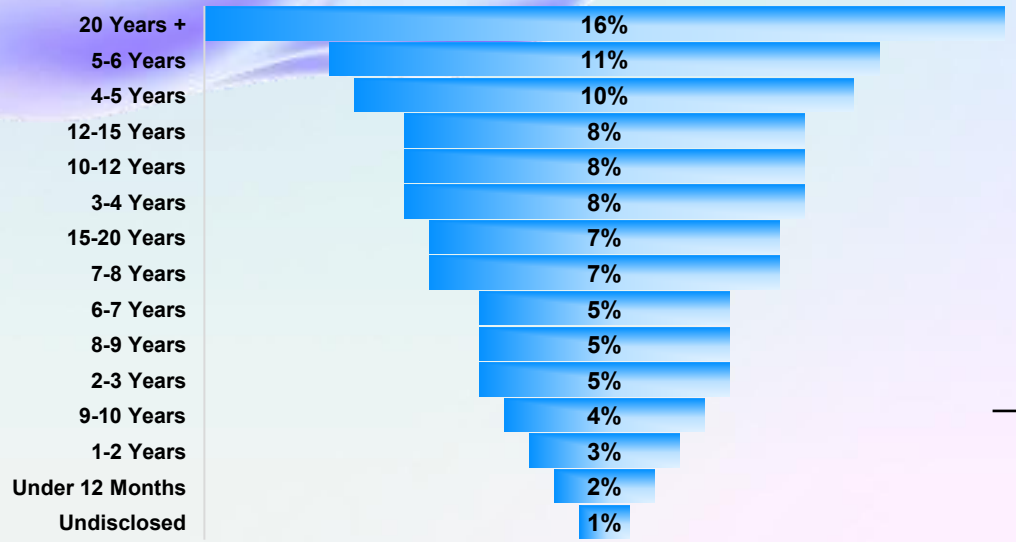
AVERAGE WEEKLY WORKING HOURS



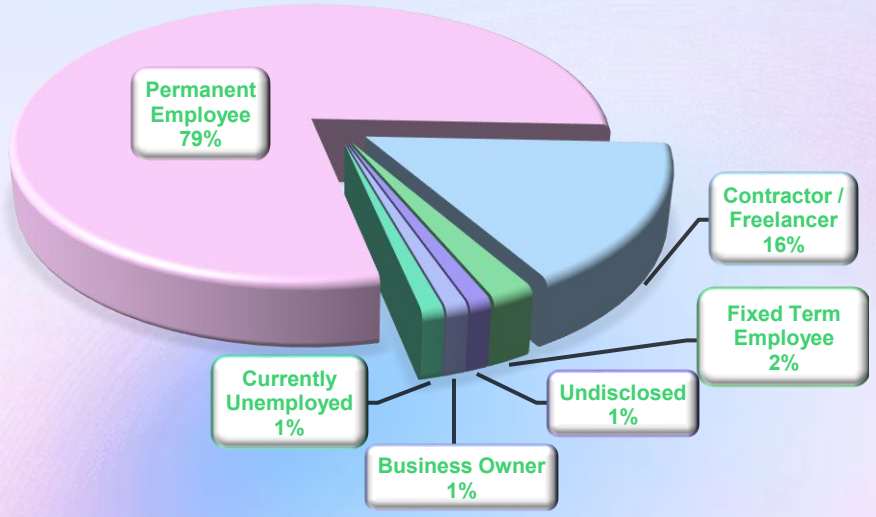
DIVISION



YEAR'S OF INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

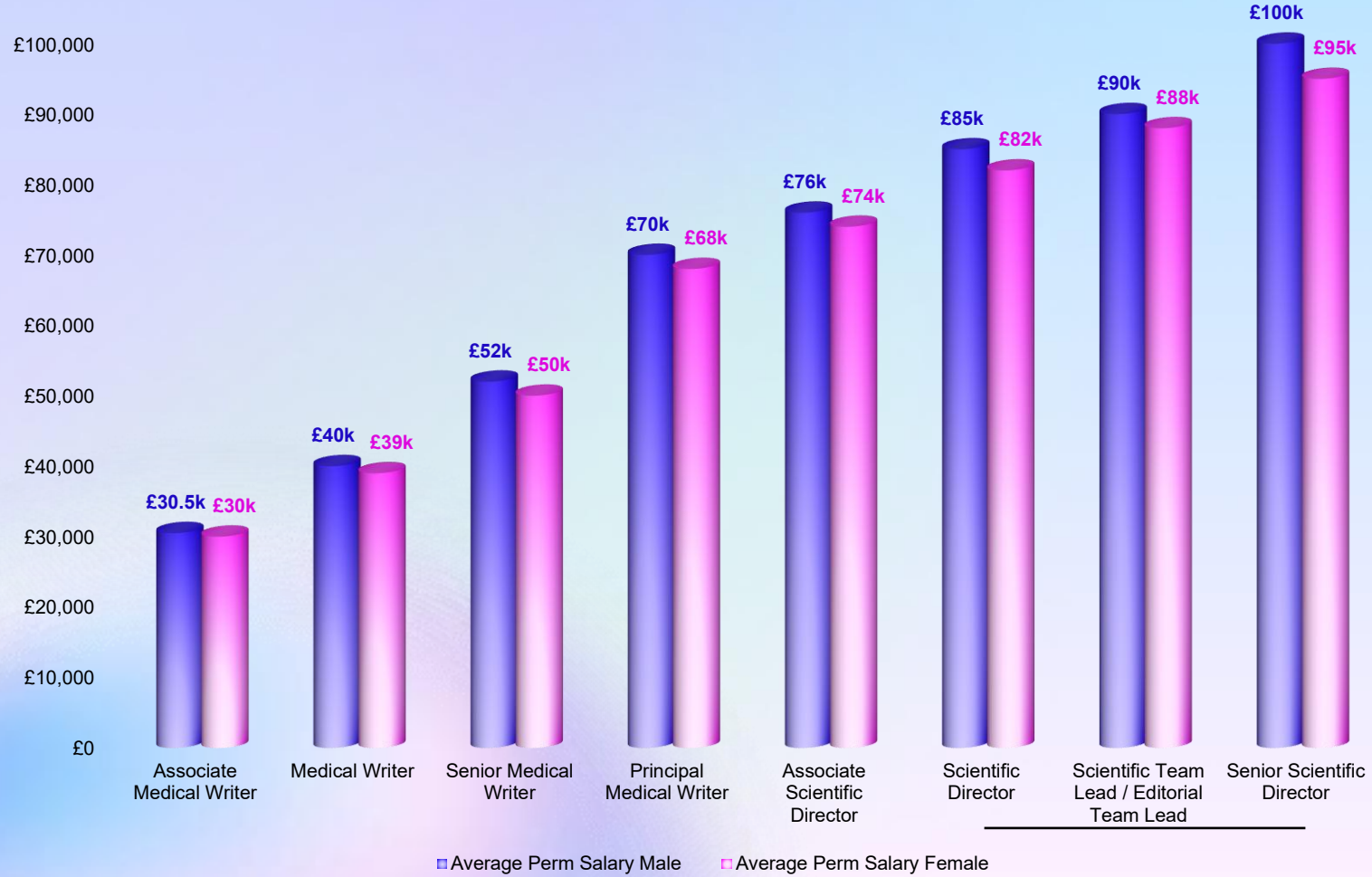


CURRENT WORKING STATUS

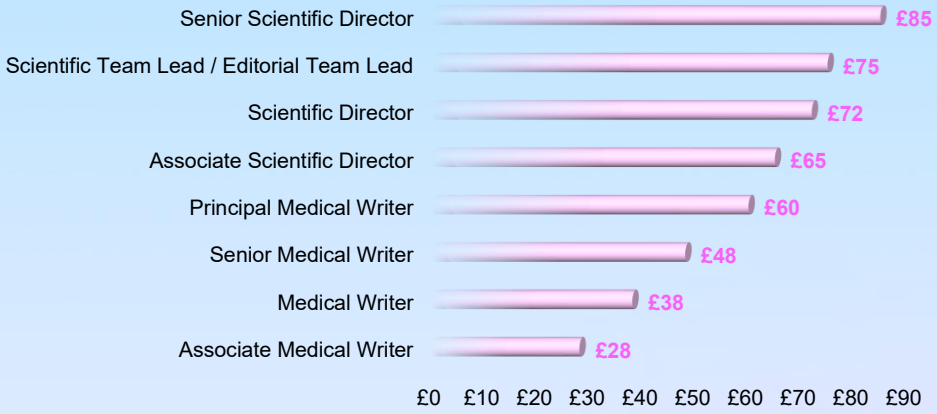


SALARIES IN SCIENTIFIC SERVICES

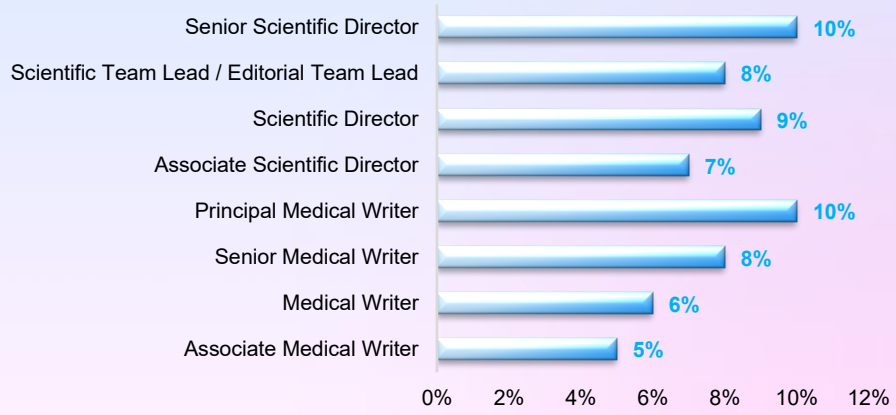
AVERAGE PERMANENT SALARIES



AVERAGE FREELANCE HOURLY RATE

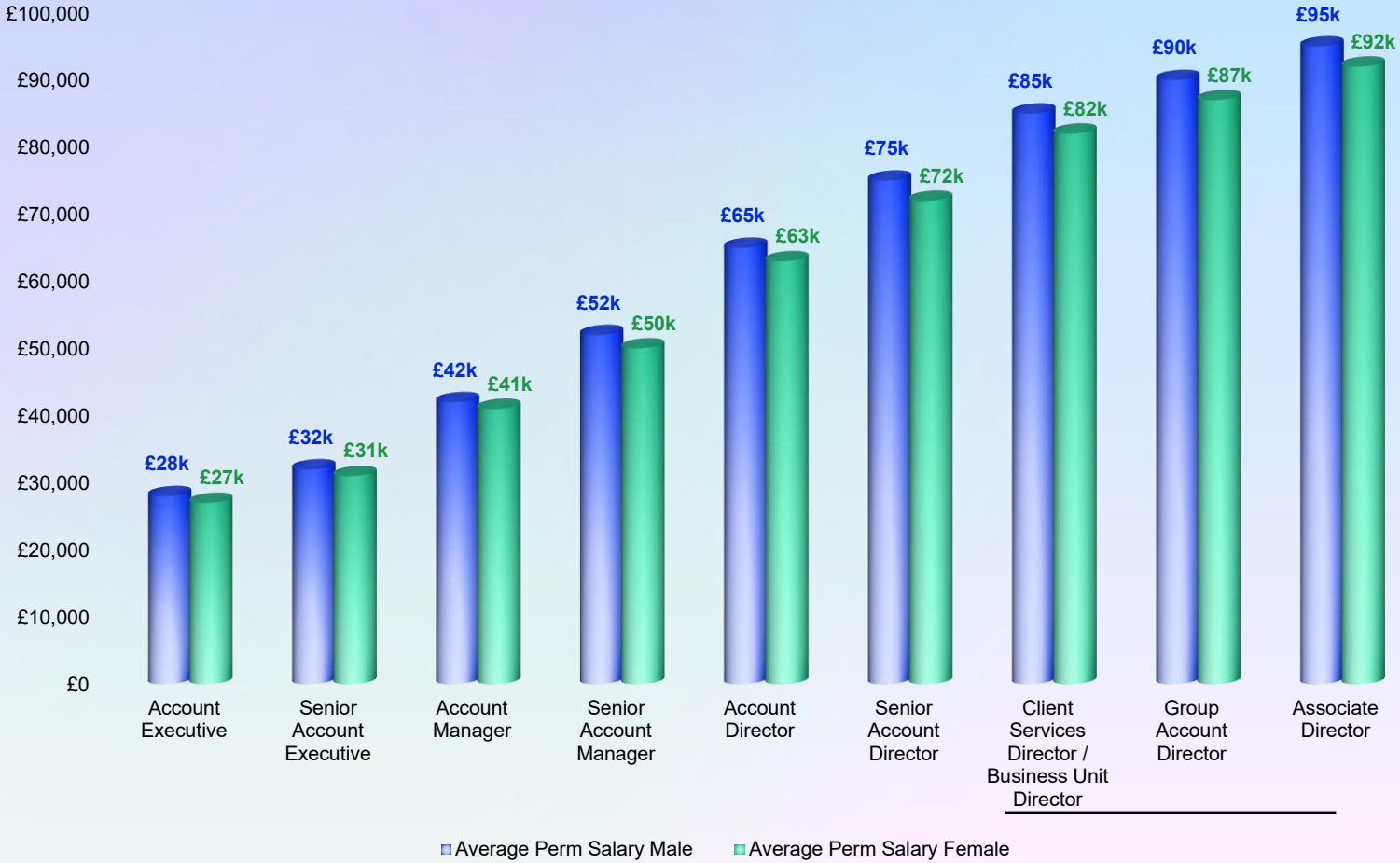


London vs Rest of UK

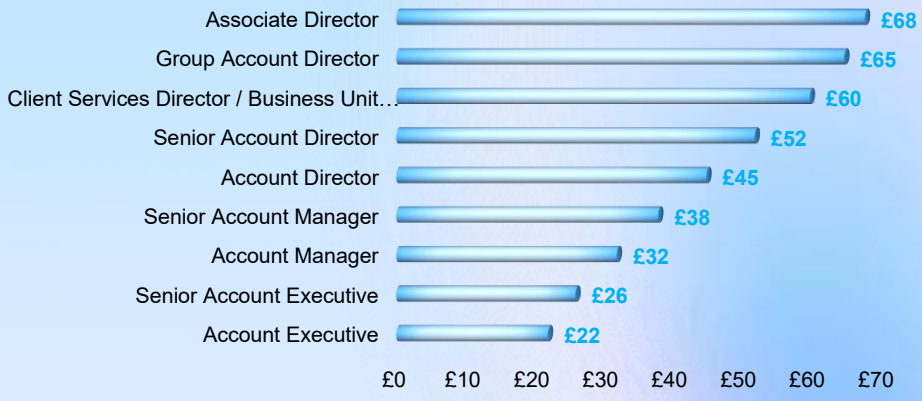


SALARIES IN CLIENT SERVICES

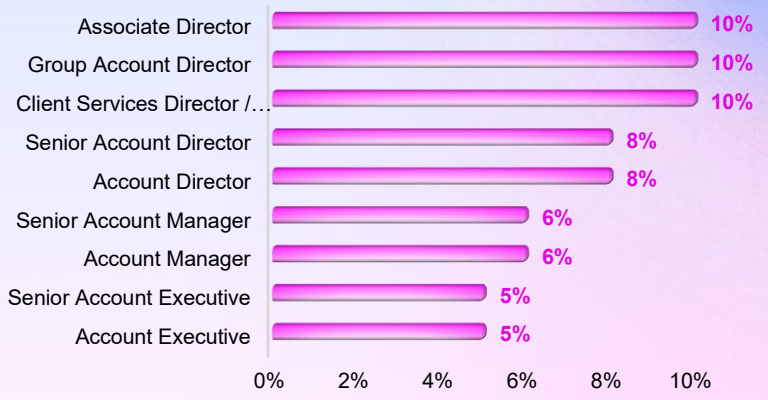
AVERAGE PERMANENT SALARIES



AVERAGE FREELANCE HOURLY RATE

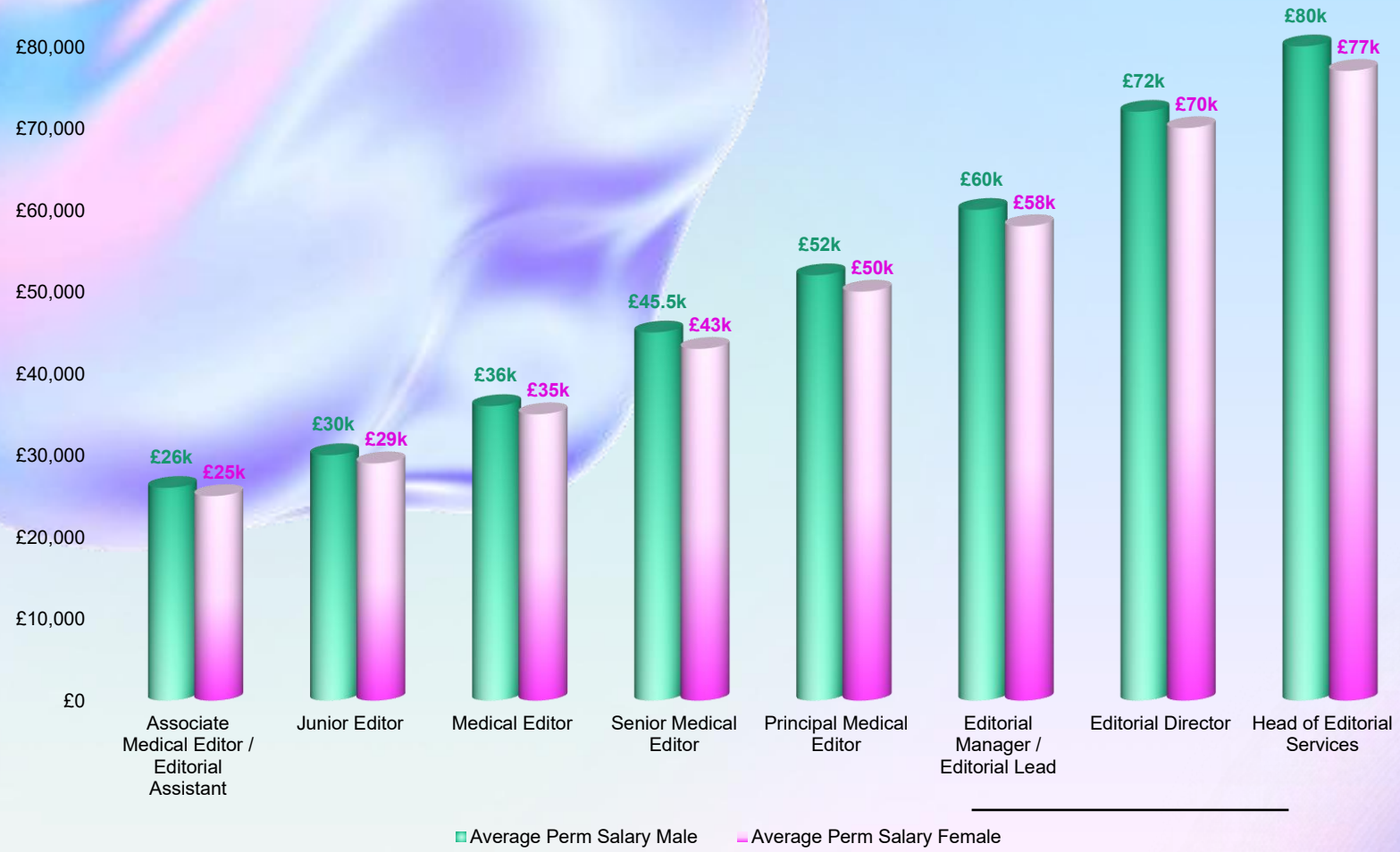


London vs Rest of UK

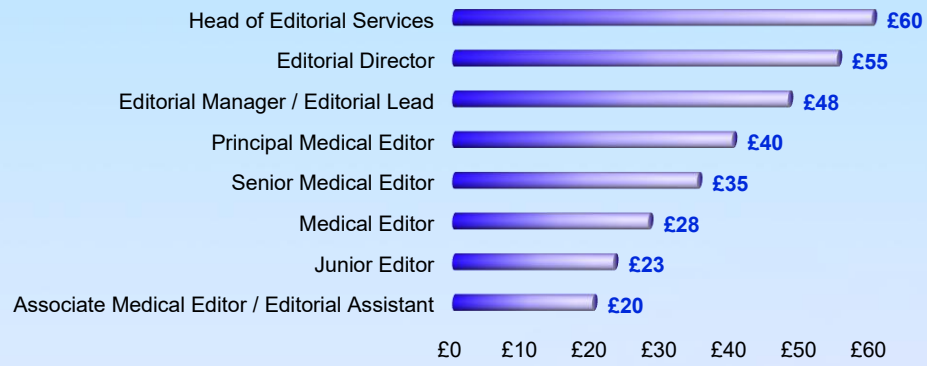


SALARIES IN EDITORIAL SERVICES

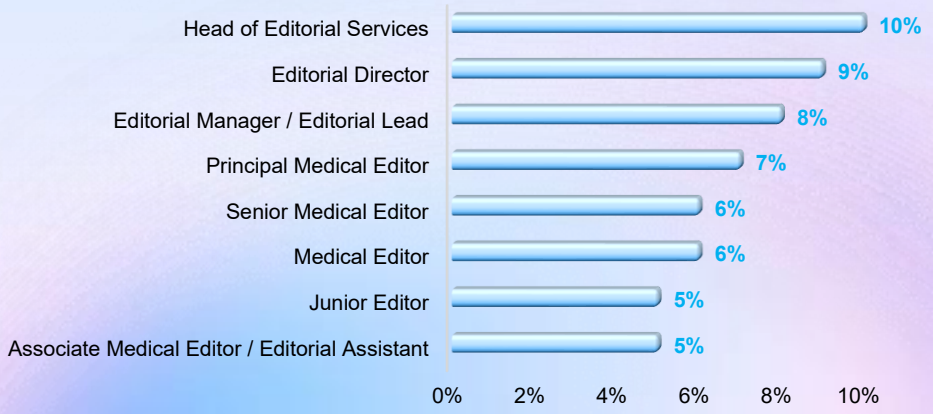
AVERAGE PERMANENT SALARIES



AVERAGE FREELANCE HOURLY RATE

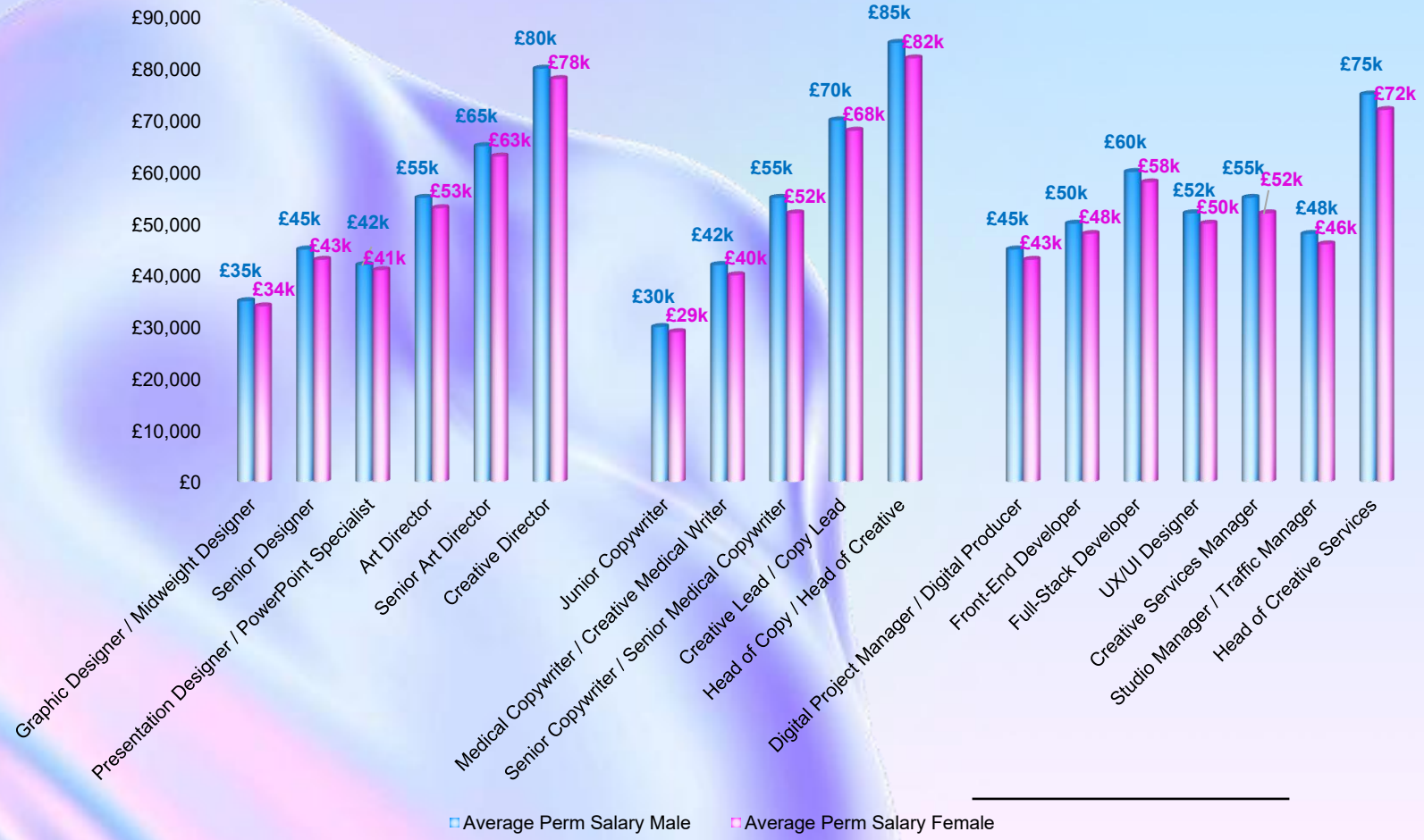


London vs Rest of UK

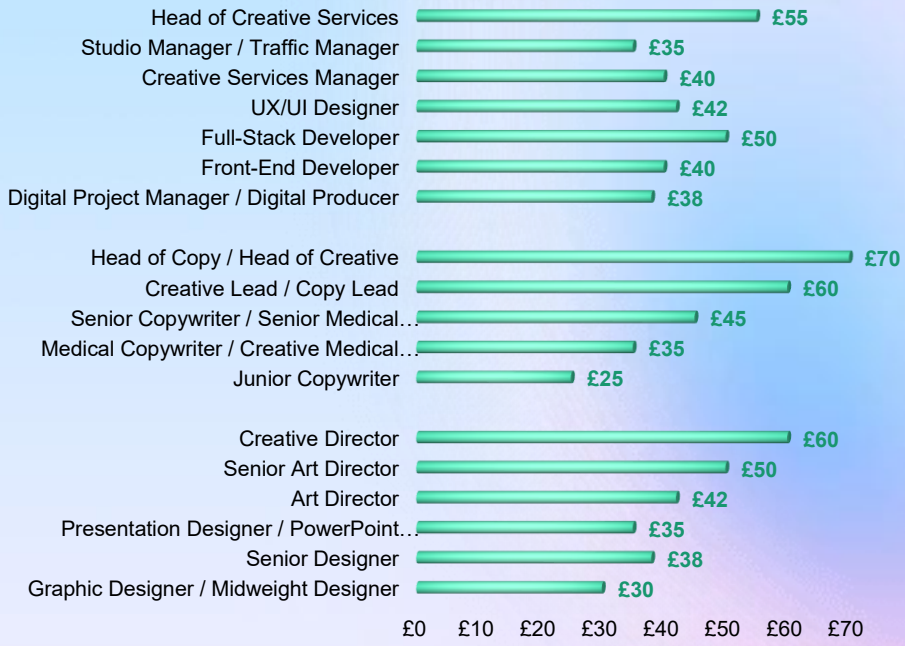


SALARIES IN IT, CREATIVE & DIGITAL

AVERAGE PERMANENT SALARIES

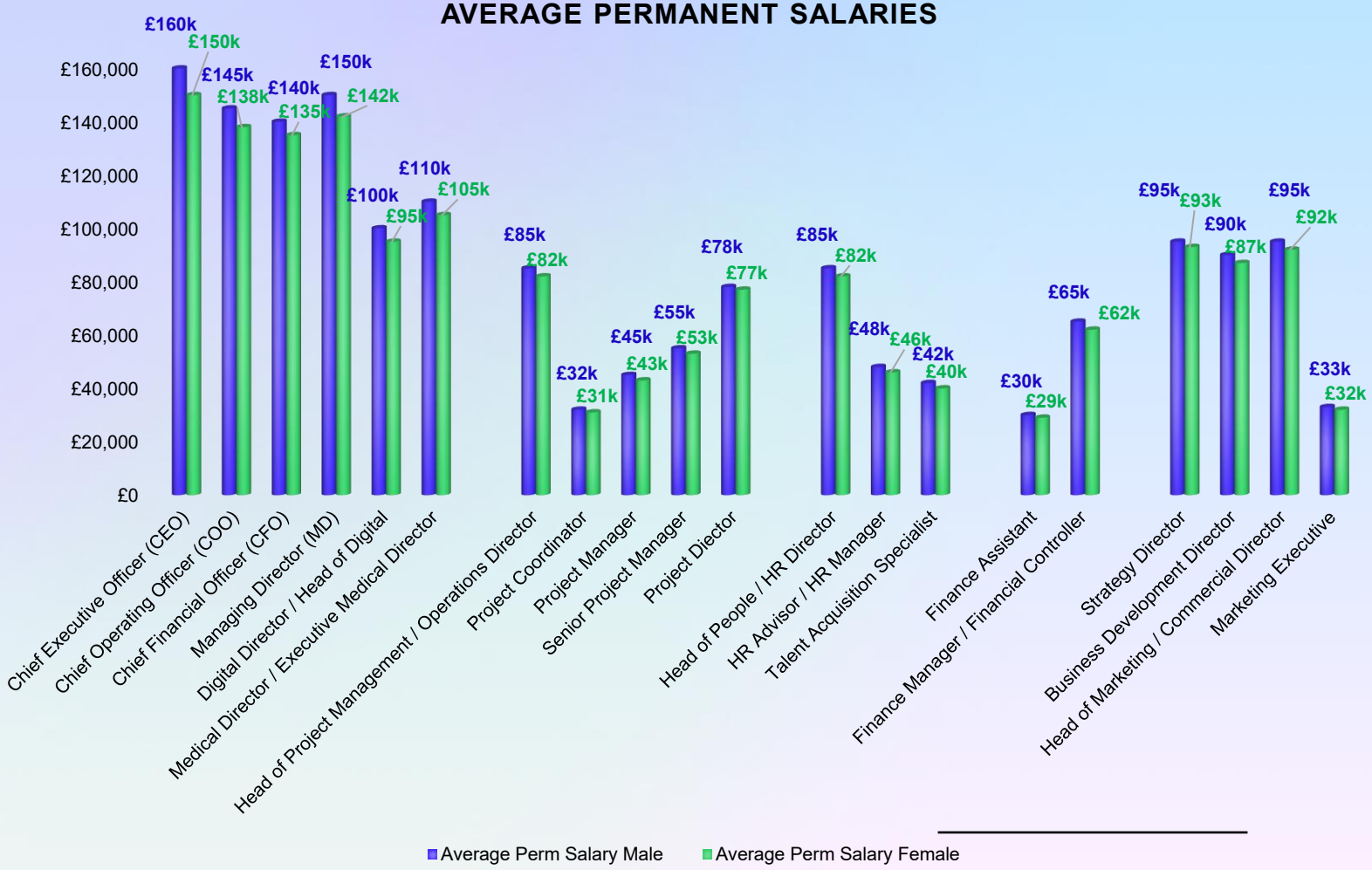


AVERAGE FREELANCE HOURLY RATE

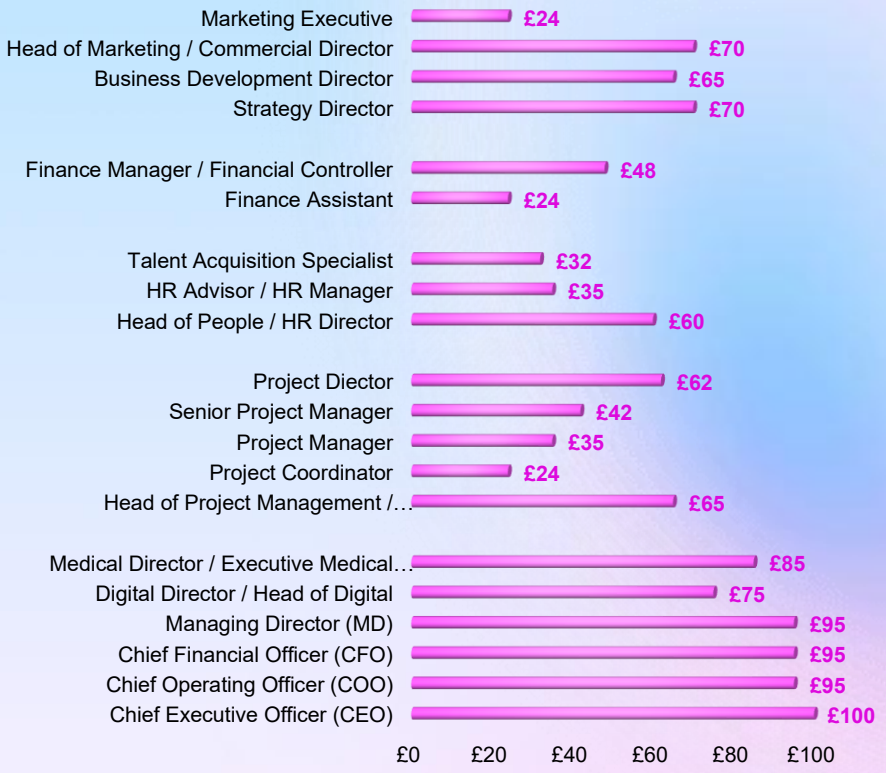


SALARIES IN MANAGEMENT & OTHER

AVERAGE PERMANENT SALARIES

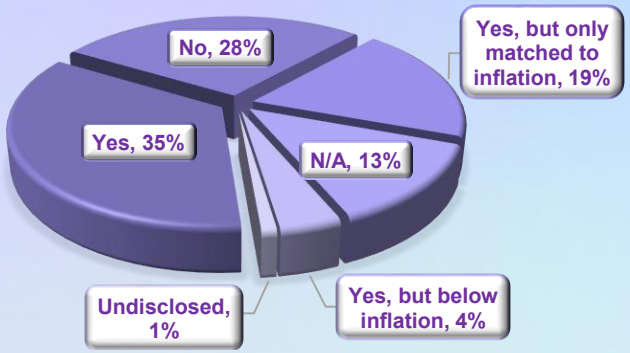


AVERAGE FREELANCE HOURLY RATE



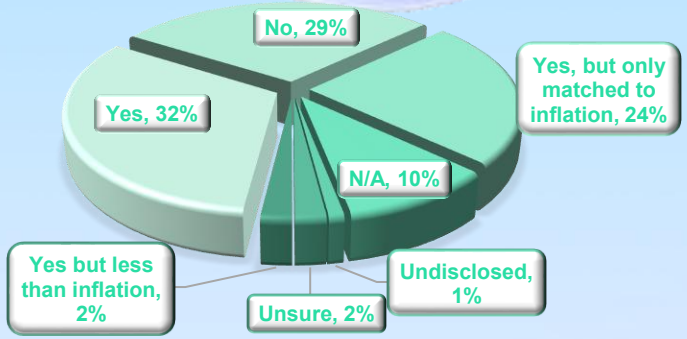
ANNUAL PAY RISE TRENDS

IN 2024, DID YOU RECEIVE A PAY RISE OR AN INCREASE TO YOUR RATE (SALARY, HOURLY, OR DAILY) WHILE CONTINUING TO WORK FOR THE SAME COMPANY OR CLIENT?

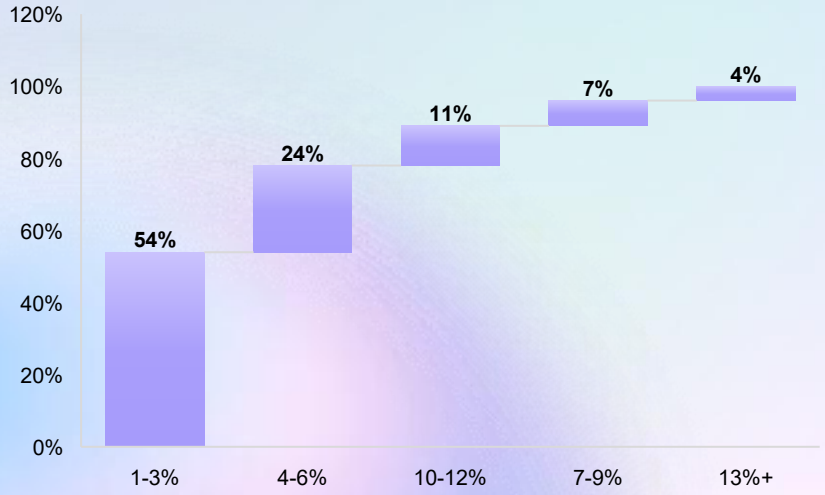


2024

IN 2025, HAVE YOU RECEIVED — OR DO YOU EXPECT TO RECEIVE — A PAY RISE OR RATE INCREASE WHILE CONTINUING TO WORK FOR THE SAME COMPANY OR CLIENT?

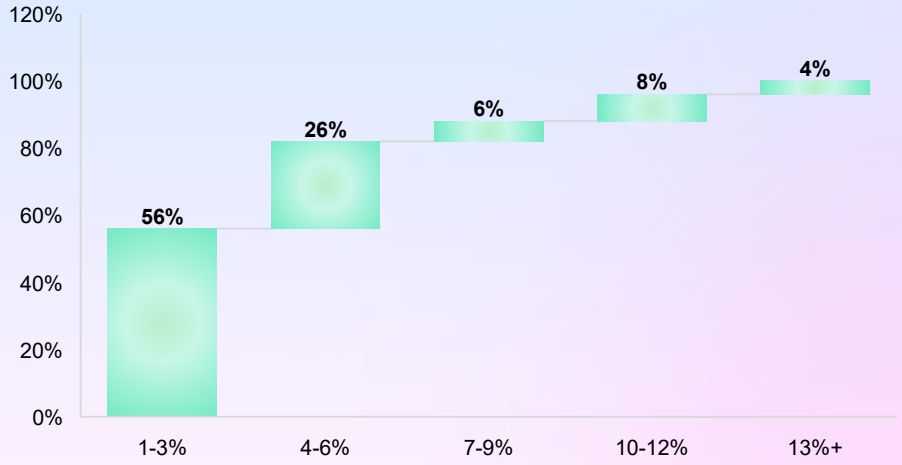


If yes, what percentage increase did you receive in 2024?



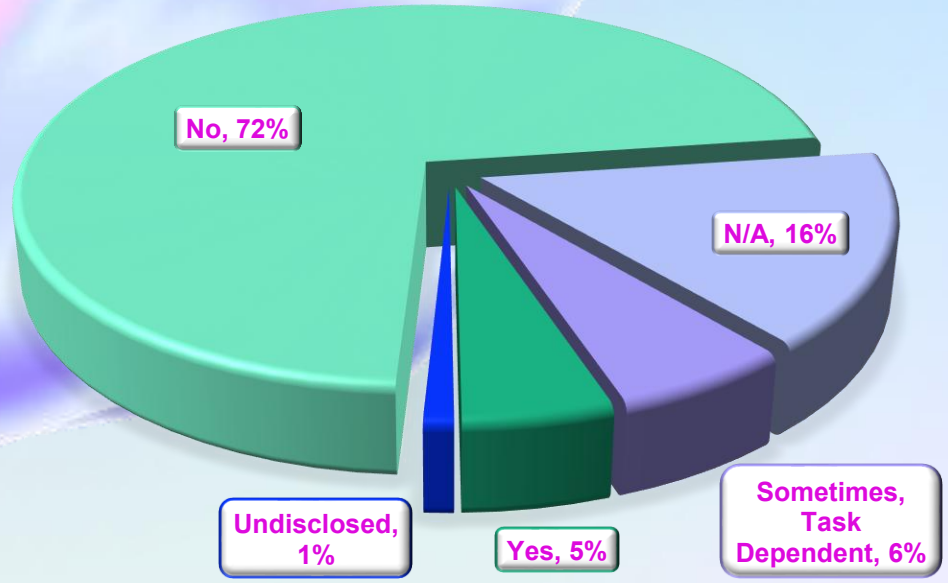
2025

If yes, what percentage increase did you receive or expect to receive in 2025?

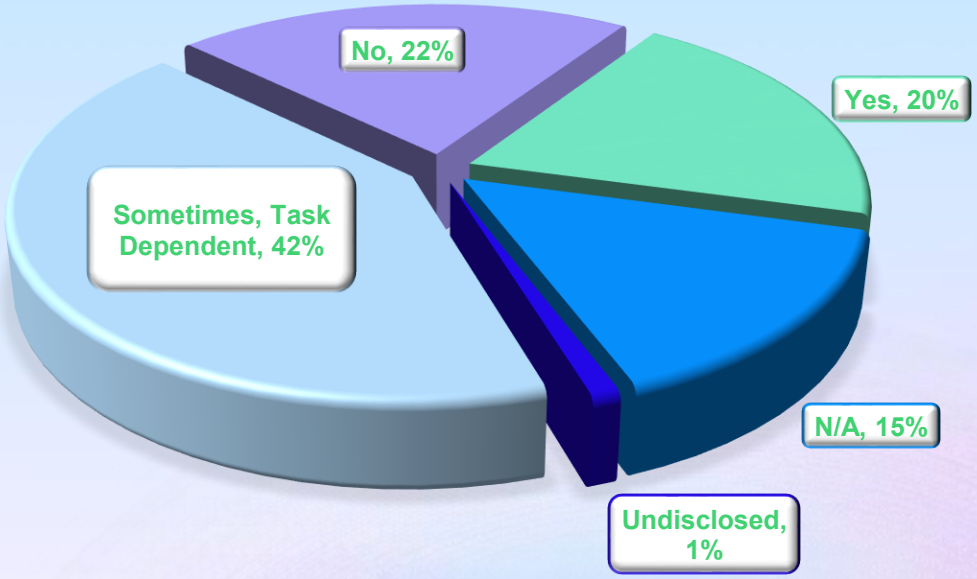


OVERTIME & TIME IN LIEU

ARE YOU FINANCIALLY COMPENSATED FOR OVERTIME?

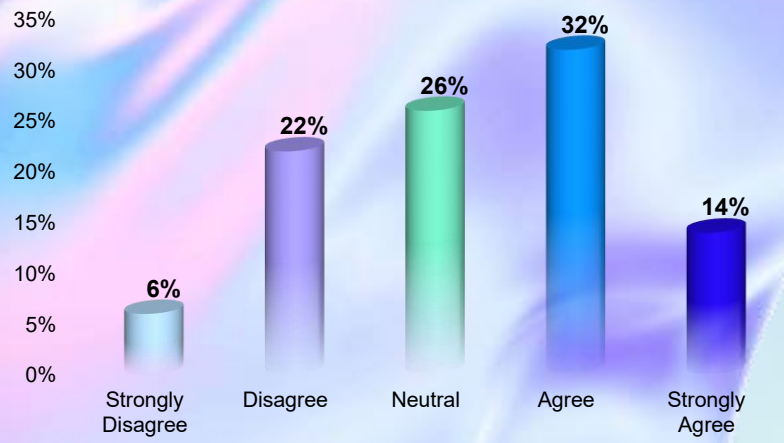


DO YOU RECEIVE TIME OFF IN LIEU FOR ANY OVERTIME WORKED?

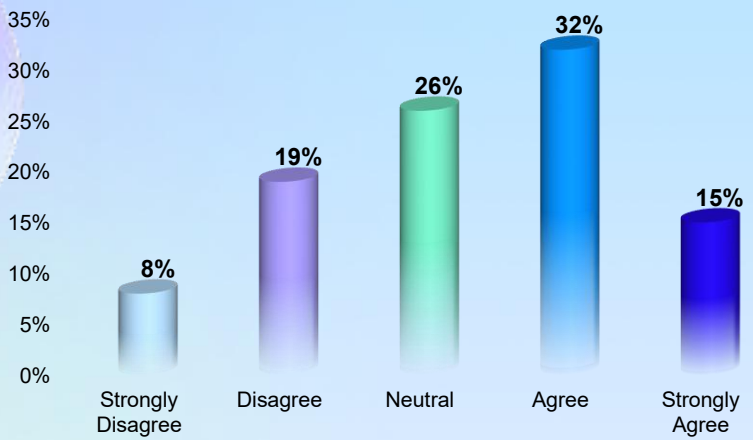


COMPENSATION SATISFACTION

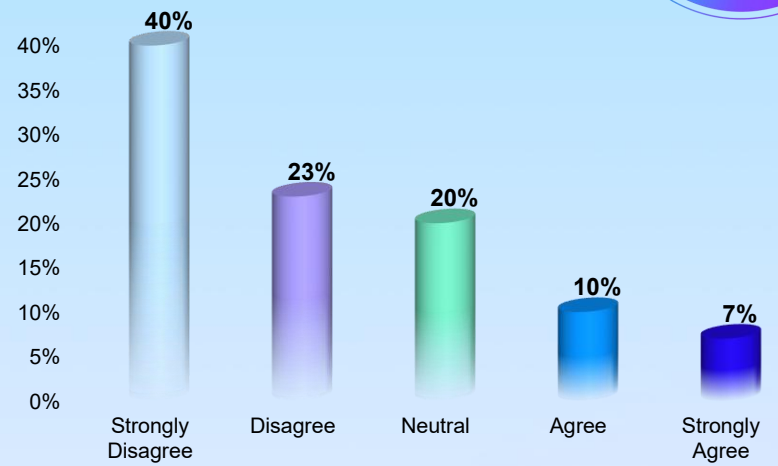
IS YOUR CURRENT PAY FAIR FOR YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES?



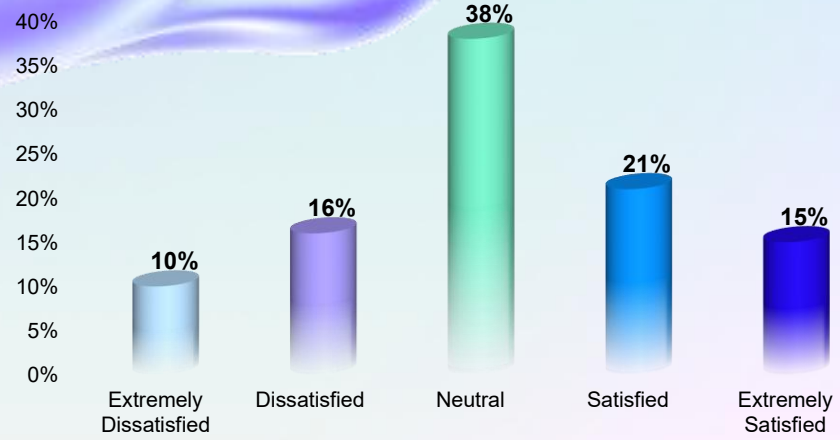
IS YOUR PAY COMPETITIVE WITHIN THE INDUSTRY?



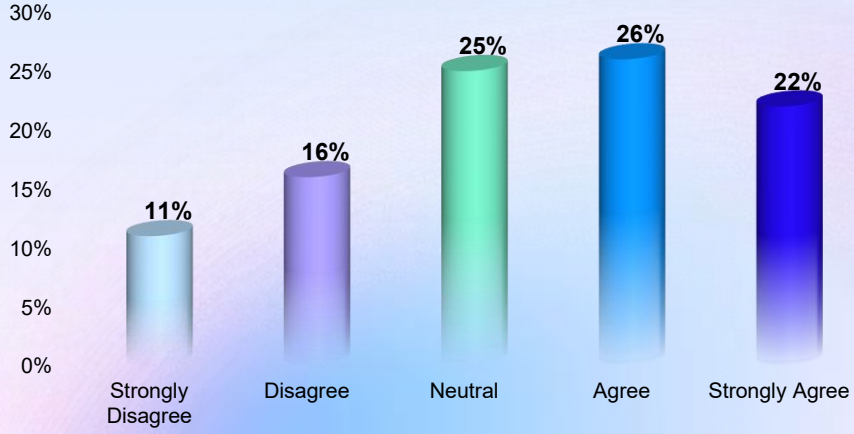
IS PAY TRANSPARENCY PRESENT IN YOUR ORGANISATION?



DOES YOUR EMPLOYER TACKLE GENDER AND PAY INEQUALITY?



DO YOU FEEL VALUED BY YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?



RENUMERATION COMMENTS

Finally, on the remuneration section, we asked participants to share any additional thoughts. Here's what they had to say:

Bonus & Variable Pay:
Feedback around bonuses was mixed. While a few noted receiving a decent bonus *("Yes, received a relatively good bonus of 12%" / "We also get a yearly bonus"),* many others highlighted a lack of clarity or disappointment *("No bonus paid for 2024" / "No bonus this year as company profits were down 0.02%" / "I'd be keen to understand if other places are offering them")*.

Pay Rises & Promotions:
A recurring theme was frustration over stagnant salaries and limited progression:
"Our pay rises and promotions have been on freeze this year. My salary has not kept up with the cost of living."
Others felt loyalty wasn't being rewarded, with approval for promotions and pay increases described as *"extremely challenging for the last 2 years."*

Cost of Living Concerns:
Some felt increases weren't keeping pace with inflation:
"2% is presented as 'good' by the company, but the cost-of-living increases mean significant erosion of buying power over the last 4 years."
One participant stressed that inflation-linked increases should be standard.

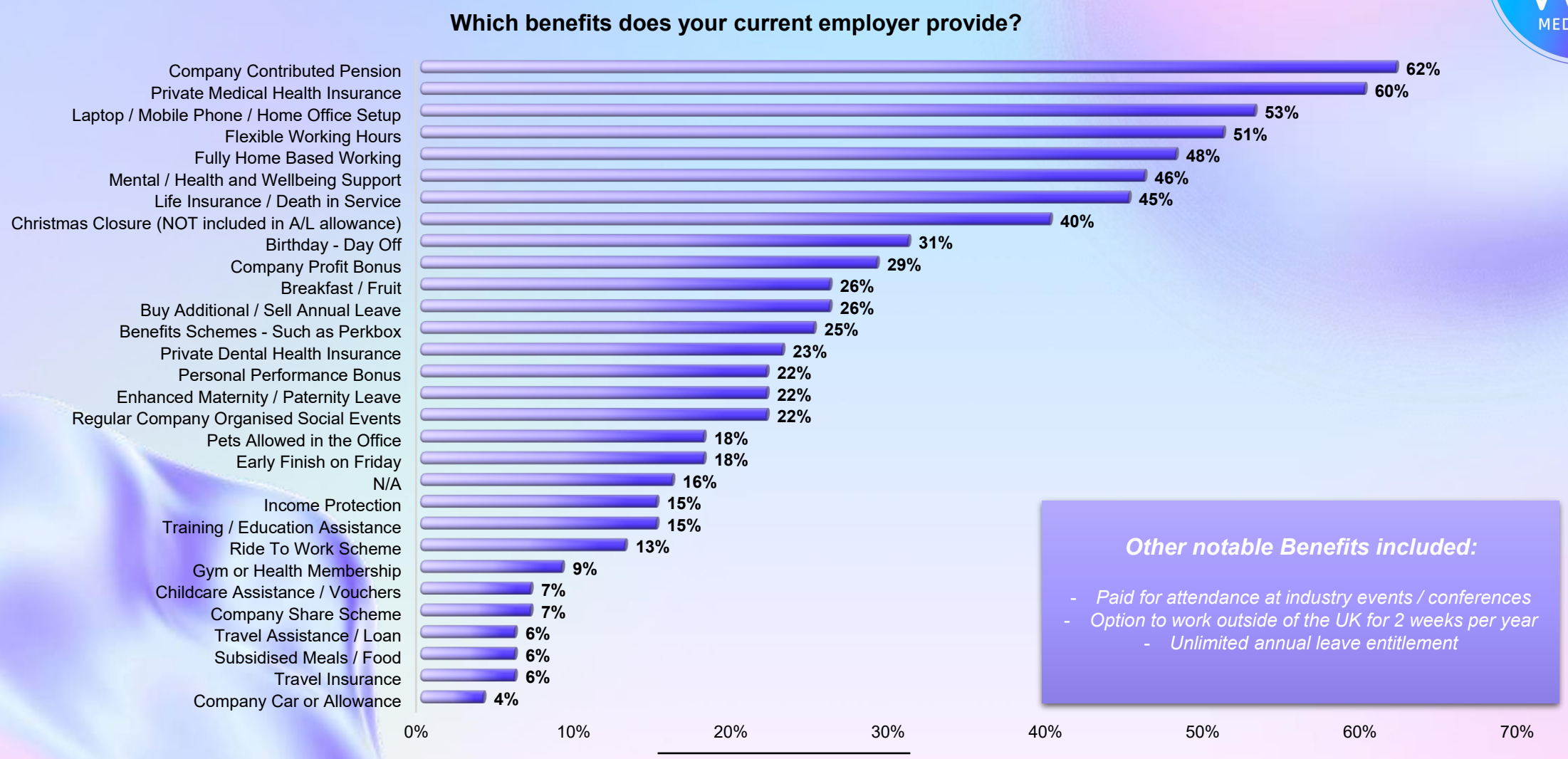
Pay Disparities & Transparency:
Concerns were raised around inconsistent pay scales and the lack of visibility on benchmarks:
"Disparity between job titles makes it hard to discern what you are earning vs the rest of the industry."
Another called for *"transparent information about salary bands per role,"* especially highlighting how internal promotions often result in lower salaries than new external hires.

Working Patterns & Flexibility:
A few noted how flexibility or part-time working arrangements helped offset weaker packages:
"Flexibility compensates for the less competitive benefits package" and *"I work part time with some compensation from bonus."*

Positive Outliers:
While most comments reflected dissatisfaction or concerns, a small number expressed satisfaction:
"I have no idea what the others in the team are paid, but I'm very happy with my package here."
Others mentioned perks like commission or multiple bonus pays.

Additional Points:
One respondent flagged gender bias in pay and promotions. Another mentioned regional salary expectations not aligning:
"I moved from an agency in Manchester to one in London. I expected a pay rise, but the salary is the same."

BENEFITS PACKAGE

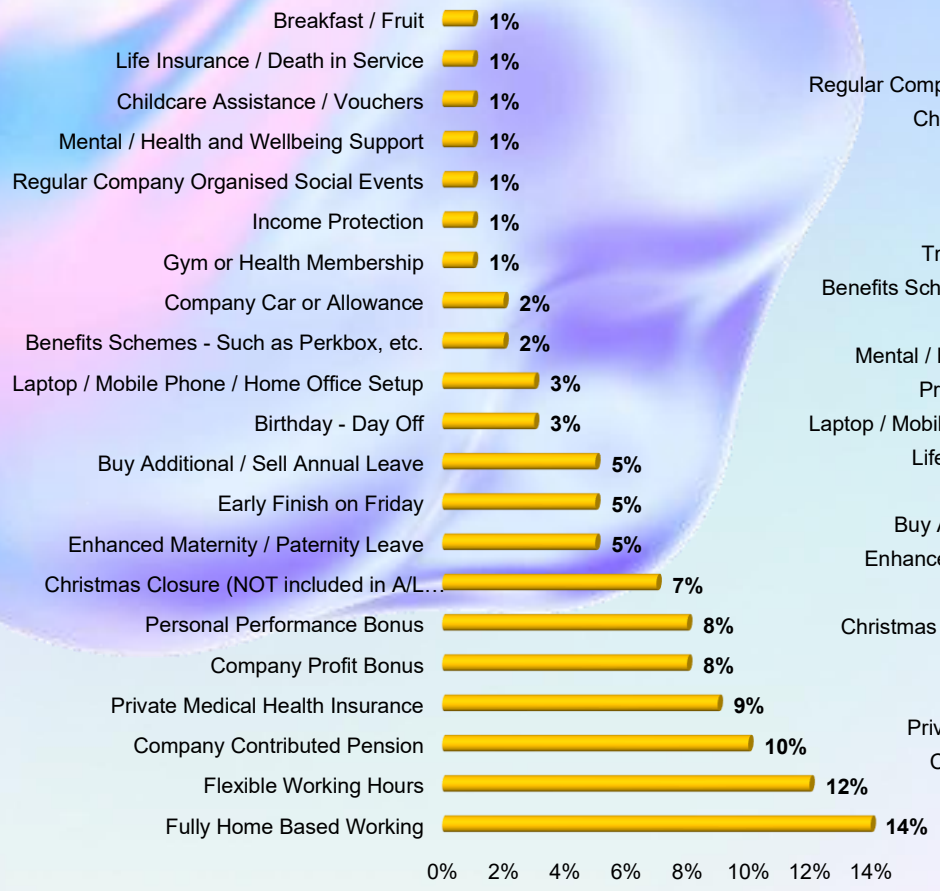


Other notable Benefits included:

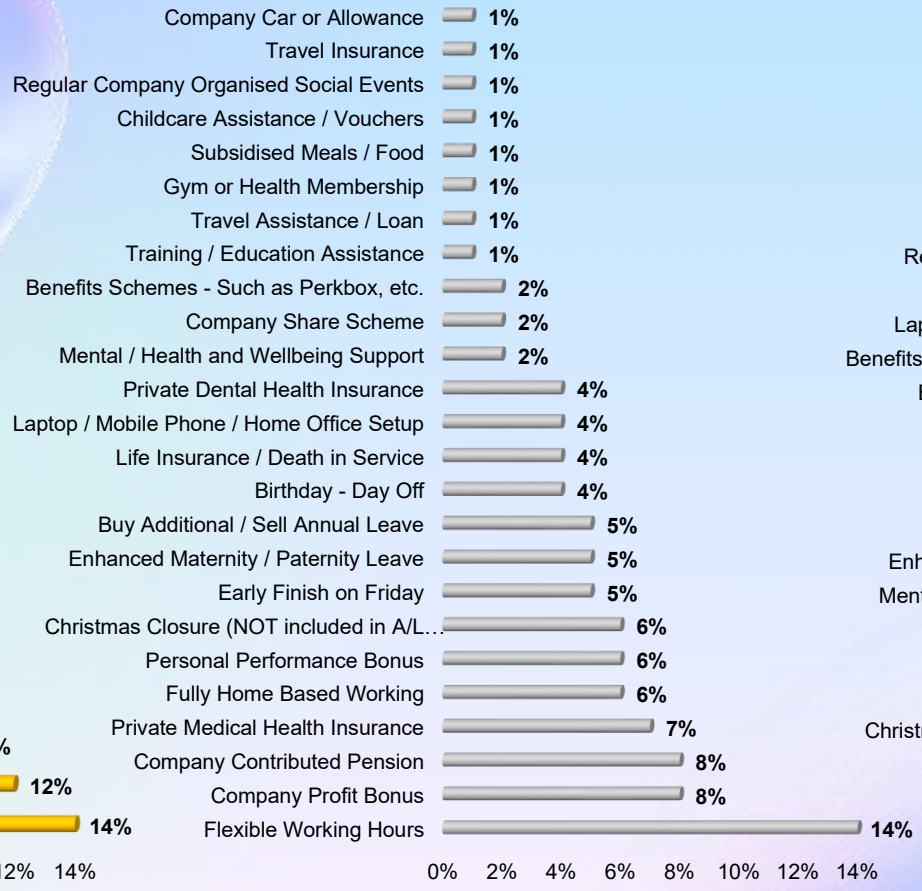
- *Paid for attendance at industry events / conferences*
- *Option to work outside of the UK for 2 weeks per year*
- *Unlimited annual leave entitlement*

PARTICIPANT PREFERRED BENEFITS

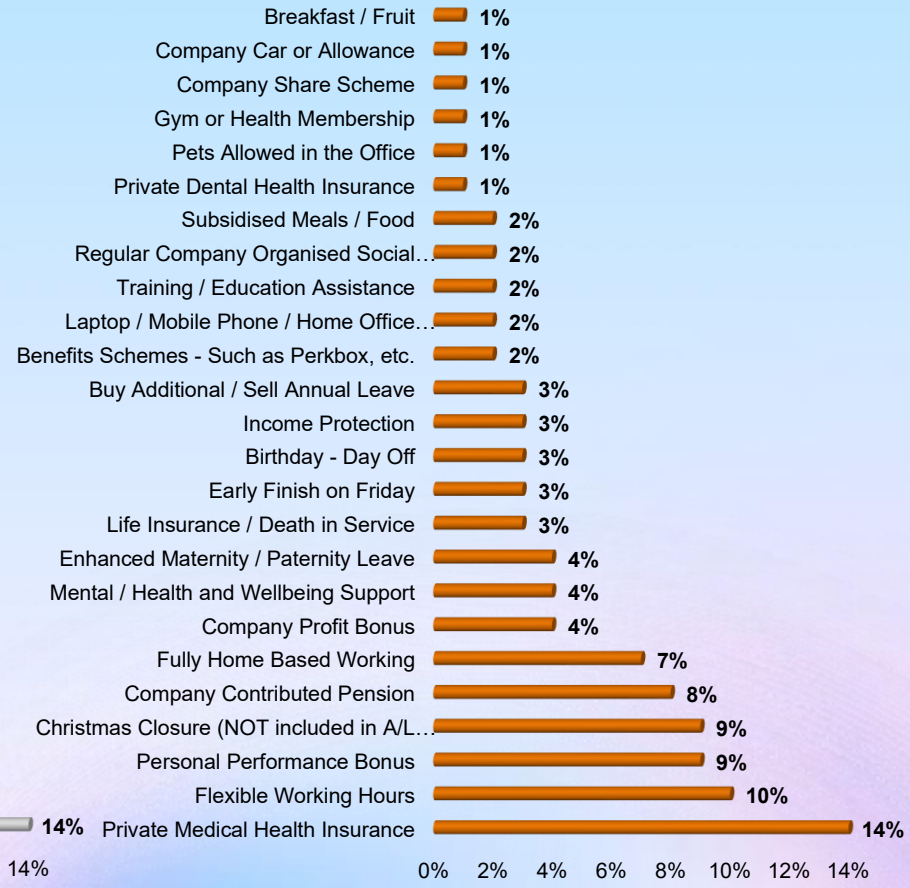
1ST CHOICE BENEFIT & MOST PREFERRED



2ND CHOICE BENEFIT

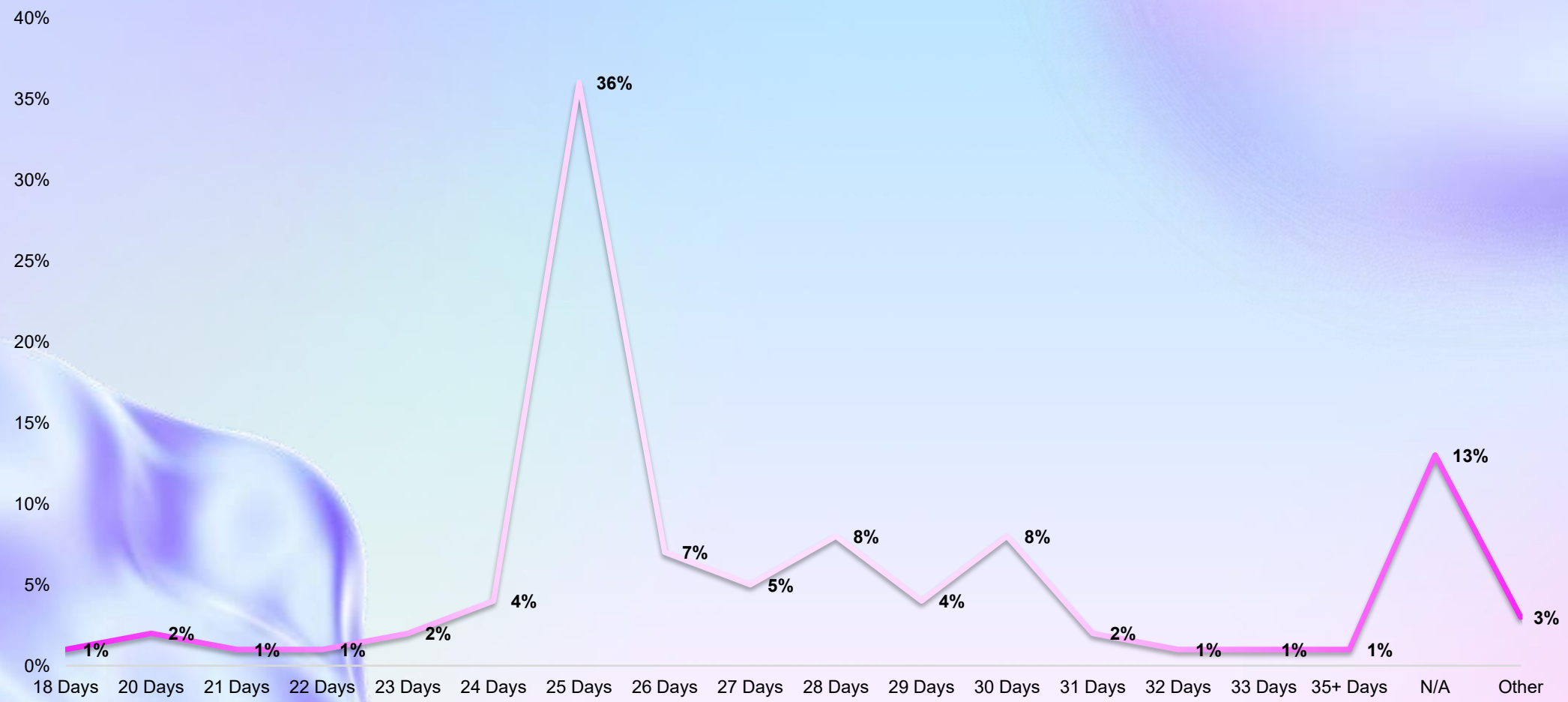


3RD CHOICE BENEFIT



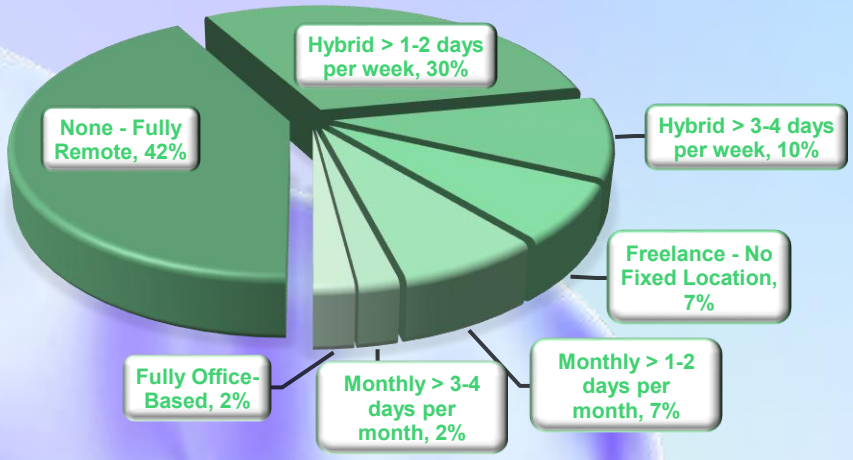
ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

How many days of annual leave do you receive (excluding bank holidays and before any pro-rata adjustments)?

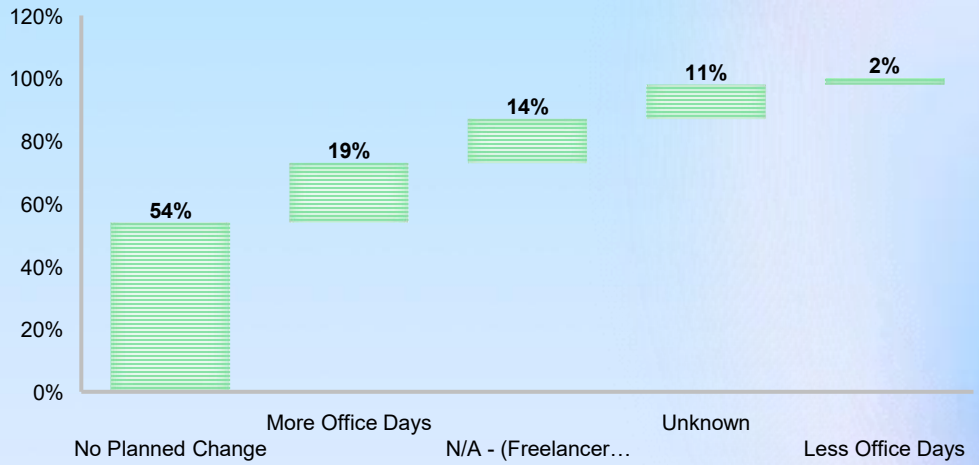


FLEXIBILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

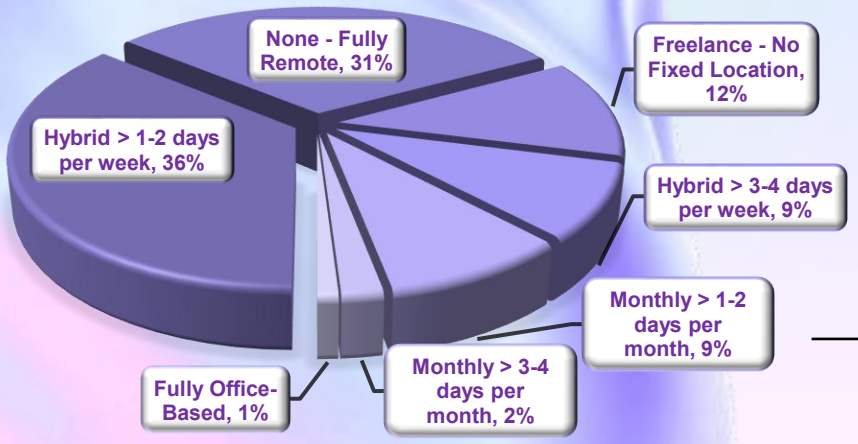
ON AVERAGE, HOW MANY DAYS PER WEEK DO YOU WORK IN THE OFFICE DURING A TYPICAL WEEK?



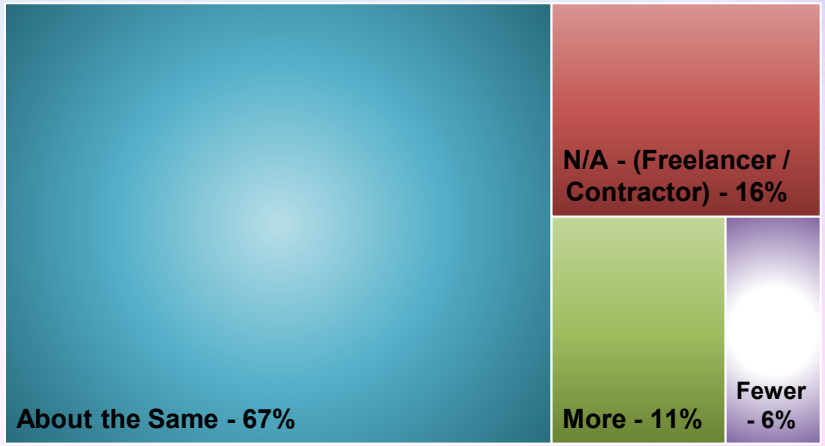
DO YOU THINK YOUR COMPANY IS LIKELY TO CHANGE ITS CURRENT HOME OR HYBRID WORKING POLICY IN THE FUTURE?



IF IT WERE UP TO YOU, HOW MANY DAYS PER WEEK WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO WORK FROM THE OFFICE?

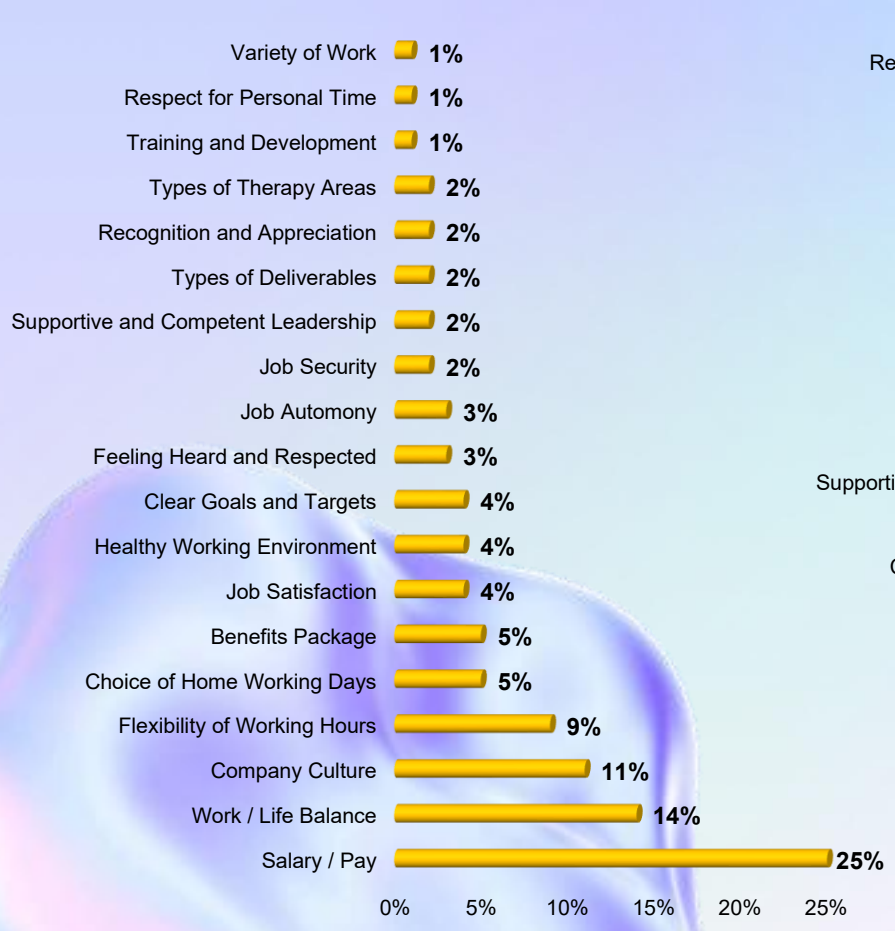


IS THIS MORE, FEWER, OR ABOUT THE SAME NUMBER OF DAYS AS YOU CURRENTLY WORK IN THE OFFICE?

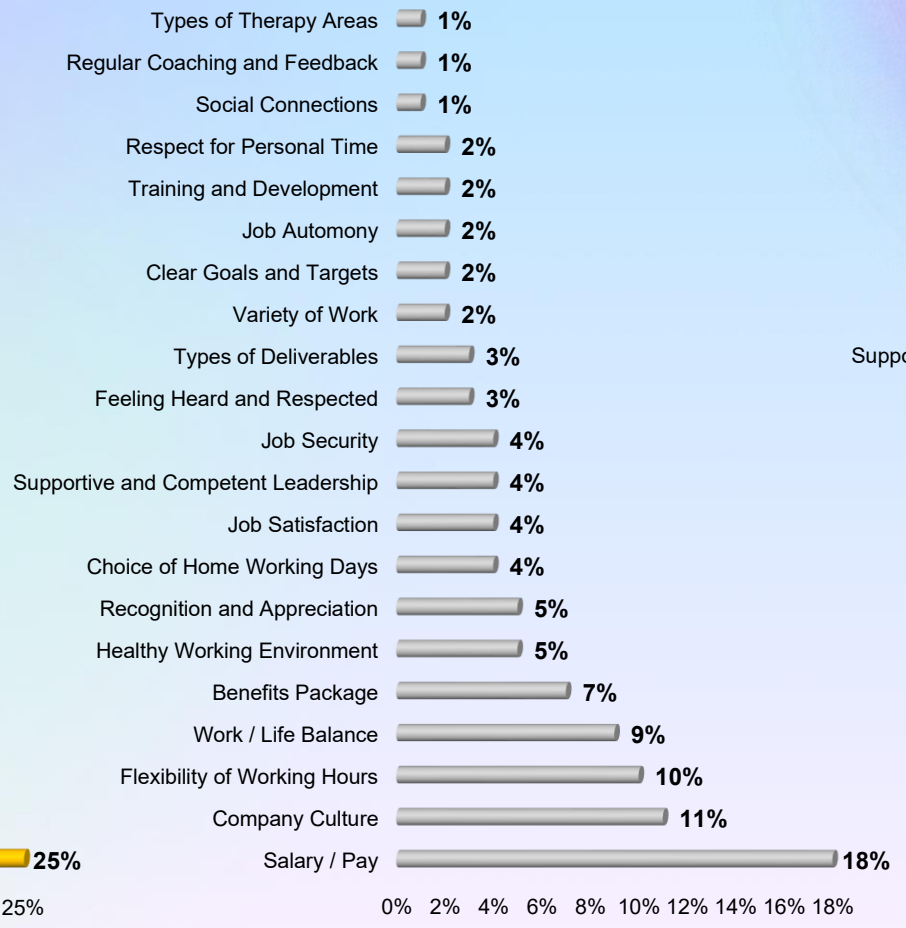


TOP THREE ATTRIBUTES IN AN EMPLOYER

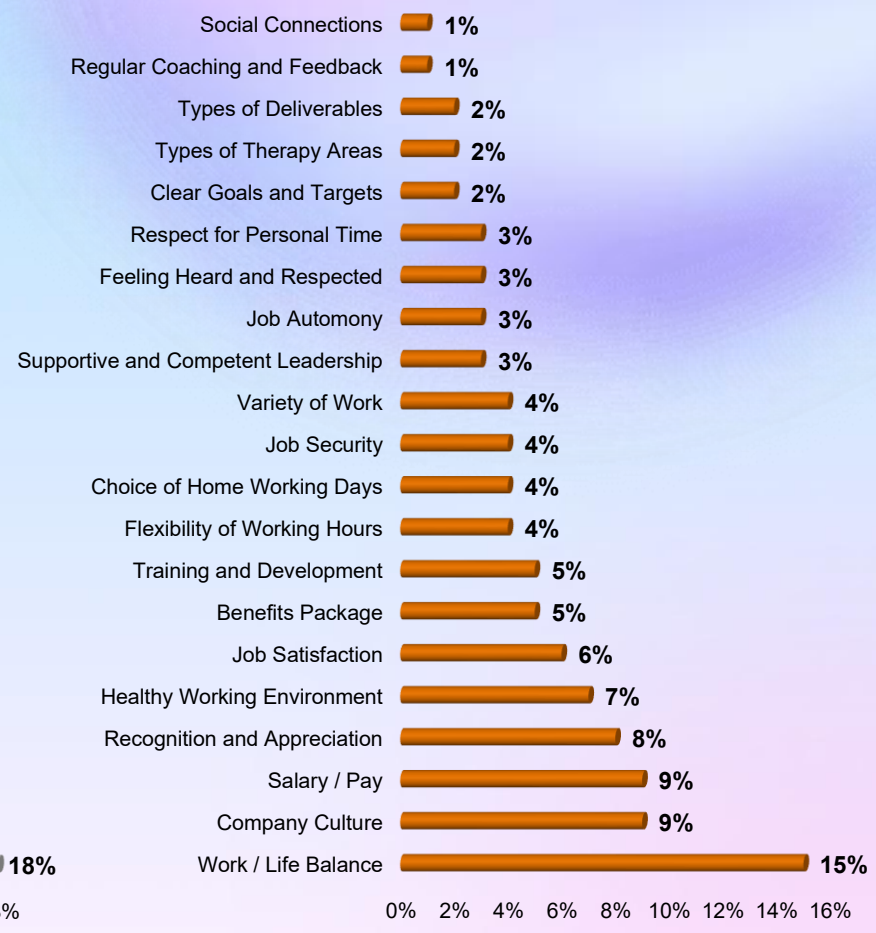
1ST CHOICE KEY ATTRIBUTE AND MOST PREFERRED



2ND CHOICE KEY ATTRIBUTE

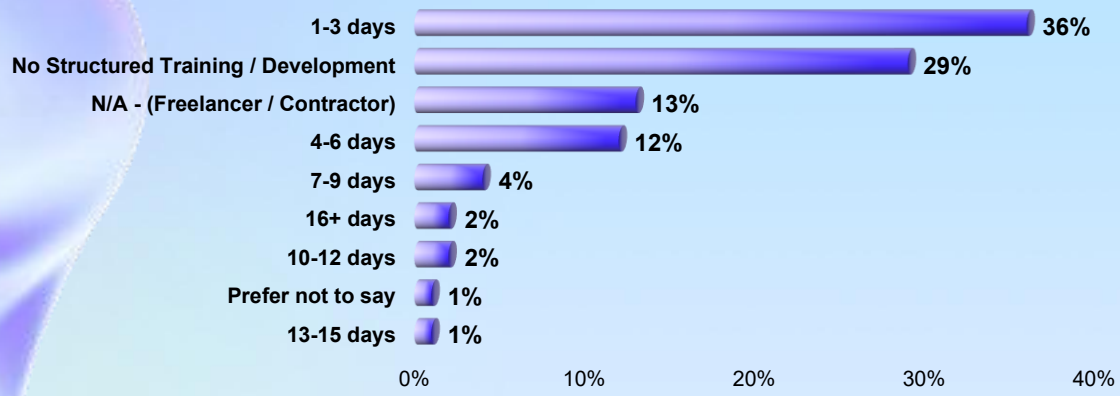


3RD CHOICE KEY ATTRIBUTE

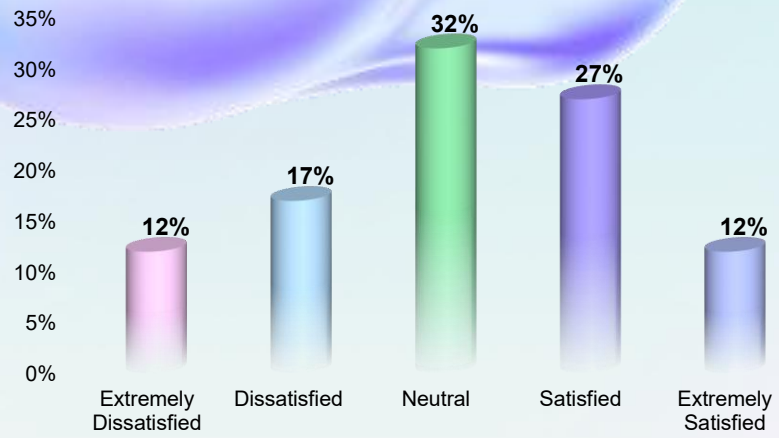


TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

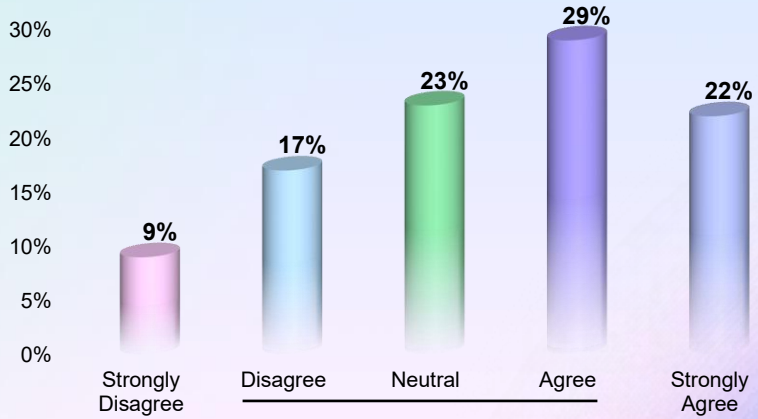
HOW MANY DAYS OF TRAINING HAVE YOU COMPLETED IN THE PAST YEAR?



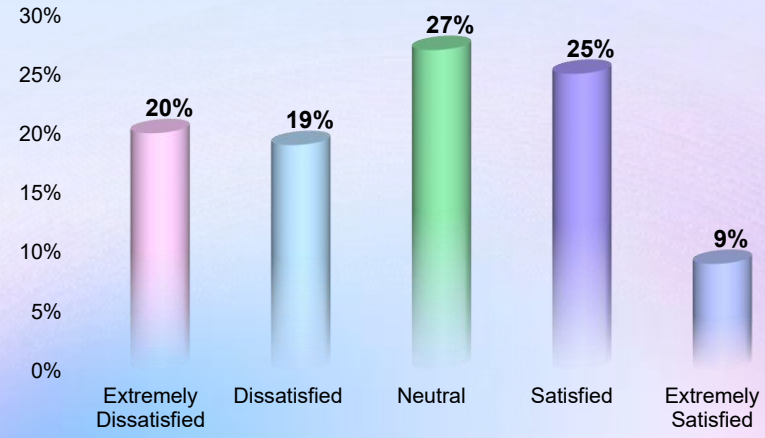
DOES YOUR EMPLOYER SUPPORT YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?



DO YOU RECEIVE REGULAR FEEDBACK AND PERFORMANCE REVIEWS FROM YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?

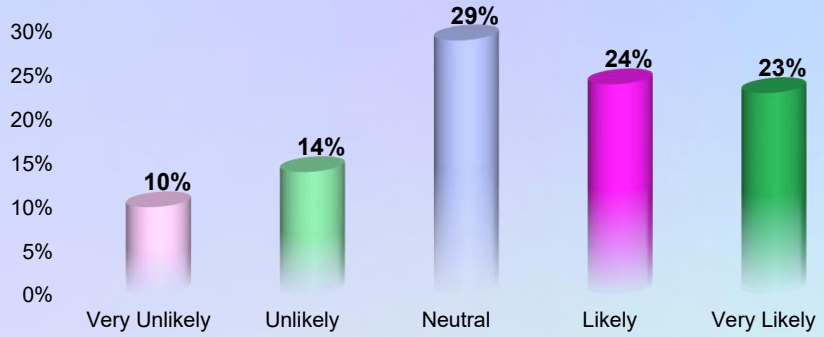


DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE FAIR OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION AND SALARY GROWTH?

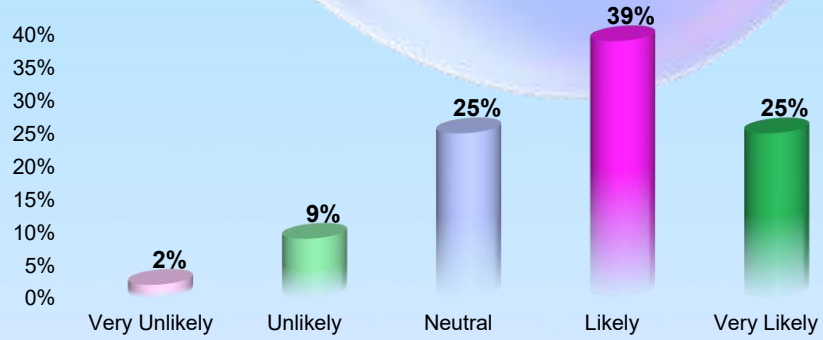


WORKING ENVIRONMENT

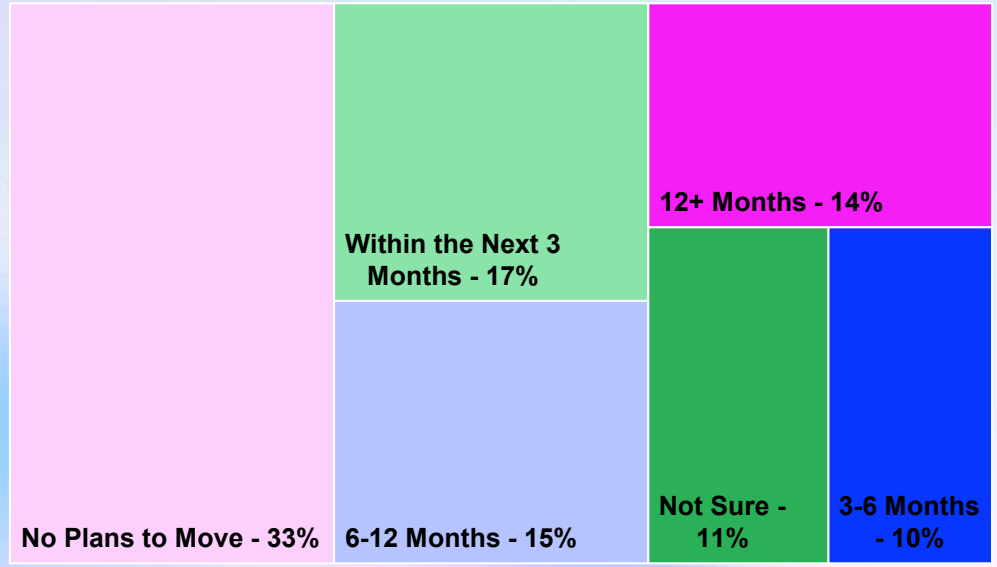
WOULD YOU RECOMMEND YOUR CURRENT COMPANY AS A GREAT PLACE TO WORK?



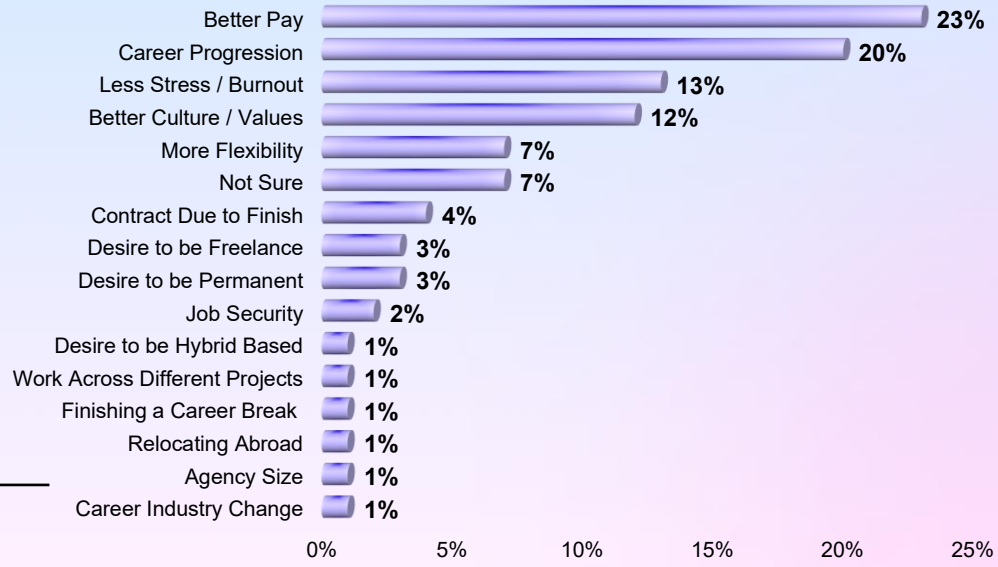
WOULD YOU RECOMMEND A CAREER IN MEDCOMMS TO OTHERS?



WHEN DO YOU EXPECT TO MOVE ROLES, OR FINISH YOUR CURRENT CONTRACT (IF FREELANCE)?



WHAT'S MOTIVATING YOUR NEXT CAREER MOVE? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



WORKING ENVIRONMENT COMMENTS

We also asked participants to share any additional comments about the working environment. Here's what they had to say:

Agency Burnout & Resourcing Issues
Many described agencies as overworked and under-resourced, particularly in the wake of layoffs:
- *"Redundancies left everyone overworked and they weren't allowed to hire again – now we're playing catch up and everyone is burnt out."*
- *"A lot of redundancies are now happening in MedComms... it's hugely demoralising not only to those being made redundant, but also to the remaining staff."*
- Some reported being stuck below their level due to lack of internal structure or support: *"Company is under-resourced so I'm working at a level below my role."*

Freelance vs Agency Life
A strong preference for freelancing came through repeatedly:
- *"I much prefer freelance life to working inside an agency."*
- *"It's easier to see bad practices and toxic environments from a distance as a freelancer… I earn more for less work."*

Some freelancers also flagged how quickly agencies gain reputations for how they treat freelance staff, good or bad.

Frustrations With Progression
Progression blocks and stagnation were recurring frustrations:
- *"Artificial glass ceiling introduced after Senior Medical Writer / Account Manager, so progression not possible without company growth."*
- *"My salary has been stagnant for years… only now do I feel I'm moving upwards again."*
- *"Promotions and pay rises don't match actual responsibilities."*

One participant reflected: *"I've never heard so many people saying they want to change jobs or even careers and discuss this relatively openly."*

Remote Working & Flexibility
Opinions were split. Some praised remote-first setups:
- *"Fully remote is a game changer. No need to be in an office."*
- *"Where I work, if you're overloaded it's okay to say… it's all without judgement. This creates a good working environment."*

Others preferred more in-person interaction:
- *"I would like more people in my team working in London/office rather than remote and overseas. It makes for a nicer working environment."*

A senior-level respondent noted the tension for women: *"I've had job offers this year that mandate office attendance and won't consider 4 days for senior roles – disappointing and limits women's participation."*

Cultural & Leadership Concerns
Several pointed to leadership and values misalignment:
- *"Shareholder interests trump employee salaries… lack of consistency within senior leadership."*
- *"I don't want to work for a MedComms agency again unless I'm sure about the culture. I do not miss the chaos and pressure."*

Other Comments
A few asked for better awareness of sponsorship/visa processes for international hires.
One flagged that during congress season; SAMs can end up working *"10ish hour days just to get the work done."*

GENDER & EDI INSIGHTS

Work Patterns, Flexibility & Career Progression

While gender pay gaps are shown in the salary breakdowns, this snapshot explores how gender intersects with working patterns, contract type, and seniority across MedComms.

Contract Type & Flexibility

81% of women in this survey are in permanent roles, compared to 80% of men.
However, **17.6% of women** work freelance or contract vs **12.8% of men**, suggesting a higher demand for flexibility among women.

Working Hours

58% of women work 30–39 hours per week, while just 27% work 40–49 hours.
Men are more evenly split, with **49% working 30–39 hours** and **36% working full-time hours**.
Women are also more likely to work part-time (under 30 hours per week).

Seniority & Career Progression

38% of women in the dataset hold senior-level roles, compared to **50% of men**.
This reflects a gap in senior representation relative to volume. This is despite more women working in the sector overall.

Career Tenure by Gender

28% of men reported 12+ years' experience, versus **19% of women**.
Women are more concentrated in mid-career bands (4–10 years), reinforcing the importance of long-term progression and retention strategies.

Representation of Gender-Diverse Respondents

A small number of participants identified as non-binary, other, or preferred not to say.
Despite low volume, these responses included permanent and senior-level roles.

These insights support the case for more inclusive hiring, greater flexibility at senior levels, and clear development pathways for underrepresented groups.

INDUSTRY TRENDS & AI IN MEDCOMMS

We asked for views on AI and other key trends expected to impact MedComms in the year ahead. Here's what participants had to say:

1. Budget Cuts & Financial Pressure
The most frequently raised concern:
- *"Pharma budget cuts"*
- *"Clients demanding more for less"*
- *"Budgets under more scrutiny — harder to get approved"*

Smaller RFPs, tighter margins, and increasing delivery pressure are fuelling burnout and instability.

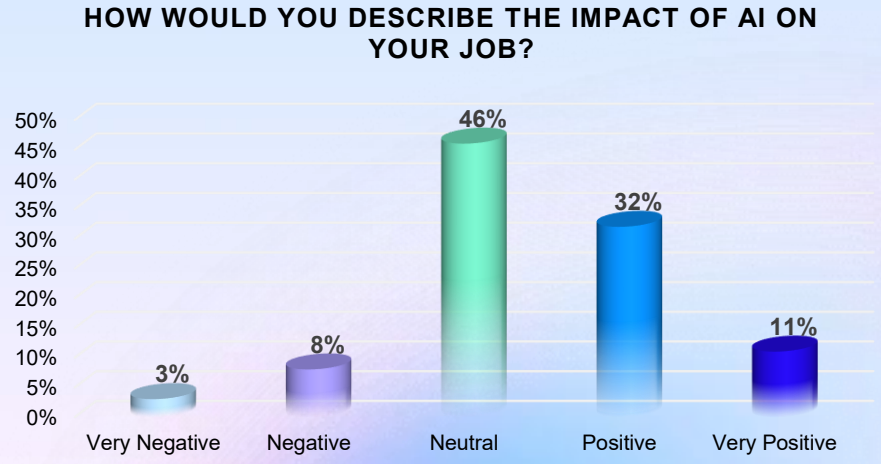
2. US Politics & Policy
The impact of the Trump administration and US elections is top of mind:
- *"Trump destroying the US healthcare system"*
- *"NIH cuts could devastate tools like PubMed"*
- *"Trade tariffs and political chaos affecting pharma budgets"*

3. Return-to-Office Mandates
Rigid in-office policies are seen as a talent risk:
- *"Mandated office return may drive staff freelance"*
- *"Pushback is growing — people want flexibility"*

4. Pharma Restructuring & Internalisation
Clients are shifting more work in-house or offshore:
- *"Pharma moving business to cheaper markets"*
- *"Less reliance on agencies"*
- *"Restructures and tighter pipelines"*

5. Patient-Centricity & Omnichannel
Still trending, though not without cynicism:
- *"Omnichannel hasn't delivered what it promised"*
- *"We need to stop paying lip service and focus on real HCP/patient needs"*

6. Industry Workforce & Working Culture
Hiring, retention, and burnout all featured heavily:
- *"Too many unsuitable hires just to retain staff"*
- *"More freelancers, harder to secure consistent work"*
- *"Younger staff demanding better balance"*



FINAL COMMENTS & FEEDBACK FOR WE3

To close the survey, we gave participants the opportunity to share any final thoughts. While some raised valid points about industry-wide issues like AI and freelancer flexibility, many offered encouragement, insights, and appreciation. Here's a selection:

- *"Please keep me on the books for future – I had a great experience with Craig and if I do ever want to move roles, he would be the first person I'd ask."*
- *"You guys got me my job, so thank you."*
- *"This was an interesting study, which sounded so good to me."*
- *"Thank you!"*
- *"Skilled human MedComms freelancers are critical for producing quality content."*

Several participants also shared insights on the future of the sector and the responsible use of AI:

- *"Agencies need to further embrace AI… allowing human intelligence to focus on higher-value work."*
- *"Too many companies are either burying their heads in the sand or rushing in blindly — very few are taking a balanced, pragmatic approach."*

We also received helpful feedback about the survey itself:

- *"You need to have more options for n/a freelancer for more of these questions."*
- *"Survey is quite hard to answer as a founder/owner."*

WE3 MedComms sincerely appreciates all the feedback shared through this year's Salary & Market Insights Survey.

Your input not only strengthens the value of this report but also helps us shape future editions.

As we continue to develop and expand the survey each year, our aim is to include even more meaningful data to help industry professionals understand the MedComms landscape more clearly and make better-informed decisions.

SUMMARY

The 2025 WE3 MedComms Salary & Market Insights Survey reflects an industry facing continued pressure around pay, resources, and retention. Client budgets are tighter, teams are leaner, and expectations are higher.

Despite the challenges, there is resilience. Flexible working remains highly valued. Development opportunities are improving. Many professionals continue to find purpose in the work and pride in the quality they deliver.

AI adoption is accelerating, but uncertainty persists. Most professionals view it as a tool, not a threat, and the industry is slowly learning how to integrate it without losing the human touch.

For agencies, the message is clear: transparency, strategic leadership, and looking after your people are no longer optional. For individuals, adaptability, clarity of value, and sustainable working patterns will be key.

WE3 will continue to support both sides of the table with insight-led recruitment that cuts through the noise and delivers real value.

THANK YOU

From all of us at WE3 MedComms, thank you to everyone who took part in our 2025 Medical & Healthcare Communications Salary & Market Insights Survey.

Your time, honesty, and insight make this report possible, and valuable. If you have any questions about this year's findings or would like further information, feel free to get in touch:

📩 medcomms@we3consulting.com

Who Are WE3 MedComms

At **WE3 MedComms**, we bring together over 40 years of professional recruitment experience and a genuine focus on quality over quantity. We're not here to flood inboxes — we're here to make strategic connections that work. By working closely with a select group of clients and candidates, we offer a sharper, more effective recruitment experience.

How Can WE3 Help?

For Clients
We help you manage the entire hiring process — from market insight and talent mapping to shortlisting and offer negotiation. As a trusted Talent Partner, we identify and attract high-calibre professionals who make a real difference to your business.

For Candidates
Whether you're actively exploring your next move or just curious about the market, we offer clear, confidential guidance. We work across all core areas of MedComms, from entry level through to senior leadership and executive search.

We're always happy to speak — whether it's about hiring, careers, or understanding the market landscape.

Above all, we pride ourselves on **professionalism, discretion, and delivering results without the nonsense**.

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