



The remuneration of company lawyers in Belgium

2026 survey results



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Disclaimer: This report is purely indicative and based on survey responses. IBJ-IJE, Vlerick Business School and Vialegis make no guarantees and may not be held liable for any errors or for consequences arising from using this report.



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Introduction



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Introduction

Regularly taking the pulse of the profession is essential, particularly when it comes to remuneration and satisfaction at work. This is all the more important as the role of company lawyers and the environment in which they operate continue to evolve rapidly.

Building on the 2023 edition, the Institute of Company Lawyers (IBJ-IJE), Vlerick Business School and Vialegis have once again joined forces to examine how company lawyers in Belgium are rewarded today.

The survey looks beyond fixed and variable pay. It also covers benefits, mobility and flexible rewards, as well as how company lawyers experience and understand their total rewards package. New areas of focus in this edition include financial and reward literacy and the use and impact of AI in the profession. For the first time, the survey also provides insights into legal professionals working in-house on a self-employed basis.

The online survey ran from 29 May to 30 June 2026. No fewer than 663 valid responses were included in the analysis, around 20% more than in 2023. We sincerely thank everyone who took the time to participate.

In addition to this report, an interactive online benchmark tool is available on the IBJ-IJE website, allowing company lawyers to explore the results in greater detail.

This new edition is the result of a rewarding collaboration between IBJ-IJE, Vlerick Business School and Vialegis. We hope that the report and the online tool will provide valuable insights and help company lawyers better understand their remuneration and professional situation.



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Institute of Company
Lawyers (IBJ-IJE)



Valérie Hofman
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Executive summary



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Key takeaways

Pay and benefits

- **Remuneration varies significantly across roles and organisations.** Seniority, job level and organisational context (rather than factors such as sector) are important factors in salary and variable pay differences
- **Traditional benefits are the baseline, not the differentiator.** Over 90% receive hospitalisation insurance, meal vouchers and a pension plan
- **Flexibility is a key part of total rewards.** 98% can work remotely, the median is 32 days of leave and 48% have flexible pay
- **No gender pay gap.** No statistically significant gender pay gap was identified among company lawyers based on the regression analysis.

Satisfaction and financial literacy:

- Satisfaction with rewards is good, but confidence in future pay is lower
- The package is better known than understood: communication is the weakest link
- Younger employees and solo legal counsels are particularly vulnerable to lower reward satisfaction
- Financial security is far from universal; long-term illness is the largest knowledge gap
- Lawyers want financial protection and clarity, not personal financial coaching

AI in the legal profession

- Company lawyers see AI as an opportunity
- AI is part of everyday work and its productivity benefits are accepted
- Organisations have accepted AI
- Adoption is broad, but legal-specific tools are not yet widespread



Total rewards summary

Function	Experience <i>Median value</i>	Fixed monthly gross salary <i>Median value</i>	End of year premium (13 th month) <i>Median value</i>	Bonus <i>Median value</i>	Flat-rate reimbursement <i>Median value</i>	Company car/Mobility budget	Supple- mentary pension	Hospitalisation insurance	Outpatient medical insurance	Guaranteed income insurance	Flexible rewards
Legal manager, executive committee member (N = 71)	23	€ 10.400	97% € 10.400	90% € 25.000	73% € 240	94%	94%	97%	46%	52%	45%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member (N = 163)	19	€ 8.600	94% € 8.386	87% € 14.225	69% € 200	88%	89%	96%	44%	57%	47%
Solo legal counsel (N = 70)	13	€ 6.806	93% € 6.715	54% € 8.500	60% € 170	81%	87%	91%	38%	34%	30%
Legal advisor (N = 289)	12	€ 6.767	94% € 6.500	77% € 7.250	55% € 150	71%	87%	95%	40%	45%	54%

Converted to full-time equivalent
(FTE) & excluding 13th month and
double holiday pay

Launch event in Brussels



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Results event – 8 October 2026

Sharing knowledge and experience within our profession is an important part of IBJ-IJE's mission. During an inspiring event at Sparks in Brussels, Xavier Baeten, Professor of Reward and Sustainability at Vlerick Business School, and Sanne De Cooman, Senior Researcher at Vlerick Reward Centre, guided our members through the key findings of the survey.

Throughout the presentation, Nicolas Istas, President of IBJ-IJE and company lawyer at Novartis, and Valérie Hofman, CEO of Vialegis, joined Julie Dutordoir, General Manager of IBJ-IJE, in exploring what the findings mean for company lawyers, employers and the further development of the profession. Simon Vander Putten, Secretary-General of IBJ-IJE, then introduced the new interactive online tool.

The evening concluded with a networking cocktail, offering members the opportunity to continue the conversation and exchange views in an informal setting.



Methodology



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Methodology

Survey and languages

Online, 29 May – 30 June 2026, in French, Dutch and English

Scope and distribution

Belgian company lawyers and self-employed legal professionals. Shared by IBJ-IJE among its members (company lawyers and associated members) and by Vialegis within its network. 95% of the 610 employee respondents are IBJ-IJE (associated) members

Confidentiality and analysis

Responses were collected anonymously and processed confidentially. Only Vlerick Business School received and processed the individual answers

Sample

794 responses received; incomplete surveys removed and response patterns checked

663 responses retained: **610** employees and **53** self-employed

Salary equivalent

All values are on a full-time equivalent basis (FTE). Monthly gross salaries are shown as reported, excluding the end-of-year premium (13th month) and double holiday pay. For 90% of employee respondents, annual base salary = monthly gross salary × 13,92

Outliers

Clearly illogical values (e.g. an annual salary entered instead of a monthly one) were excluded to avoid a distorted picture

Spread of data points

P25: 25% earn less than the amount shown (75% earn more)

Median (P50): 50% earn less, 50% earn more

P75: 75% earn less than the amount shown (25% earn more)

Salary data shown in this report

<5 respondents: no salary data

5–9 respondents: median (P50) only

>9 respondents: P25–P50–P75

Respondents – employees



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Respondents

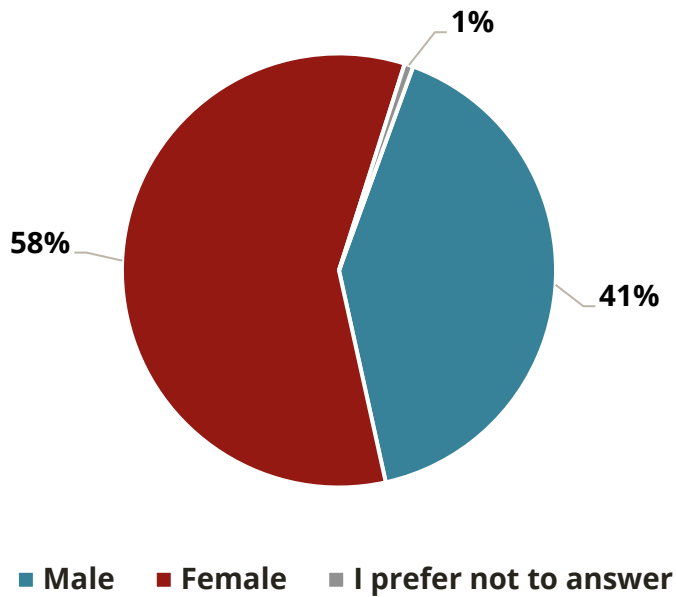
- In this section, we provide a description of the respondents who participated in the survey and an overview of their main characteristics (for example functions, sectors, legal domains and company size and total legal experience).
- Understanding the sample and categories is crucial for interpreting the results and drawing meaningful conclusions from the survey data. This will help readers contextualise the findings and understand the relevance of the results to their own interests or objectives.





Gender

Survey Question: How do you see yourself?

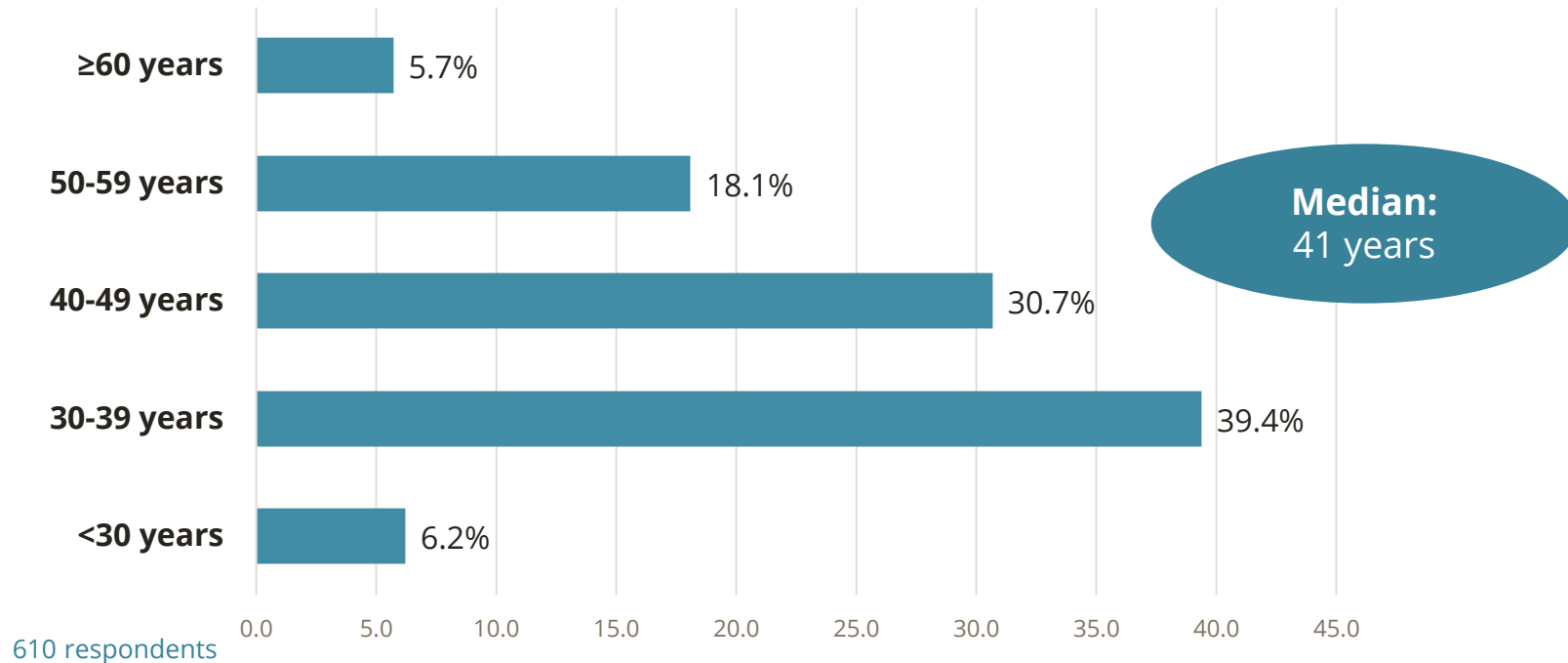


610 respondents



Age

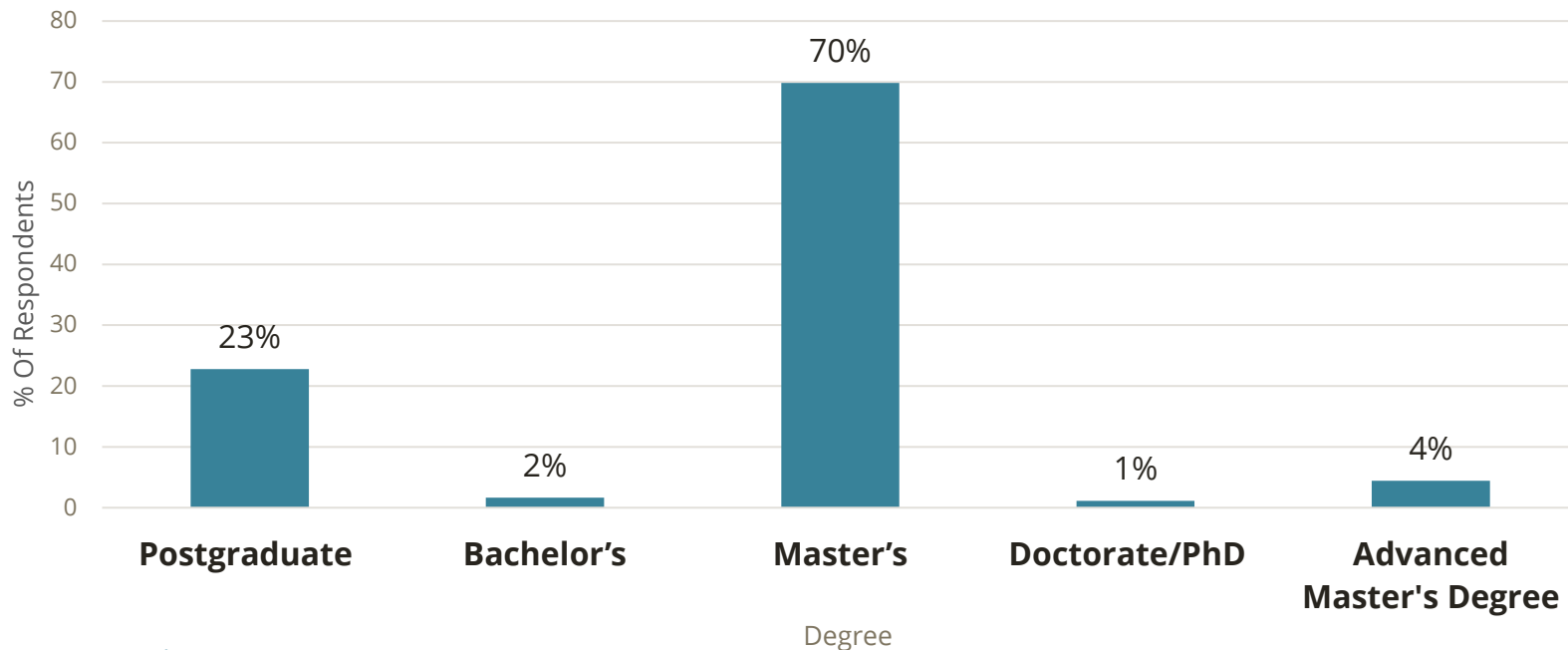
Survey Question: *What is your year of birth? – converted to age in years*





Highest level of education

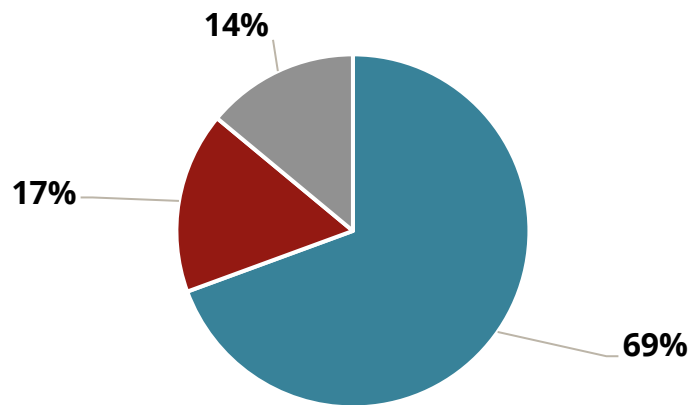
Survey Question: *What is the highest level of education you have completed or the highest degree you have obtained?*





Member of executive committee

Survey Question: *Are you a member of your organisation's executive committee or equivalent leadership body?*

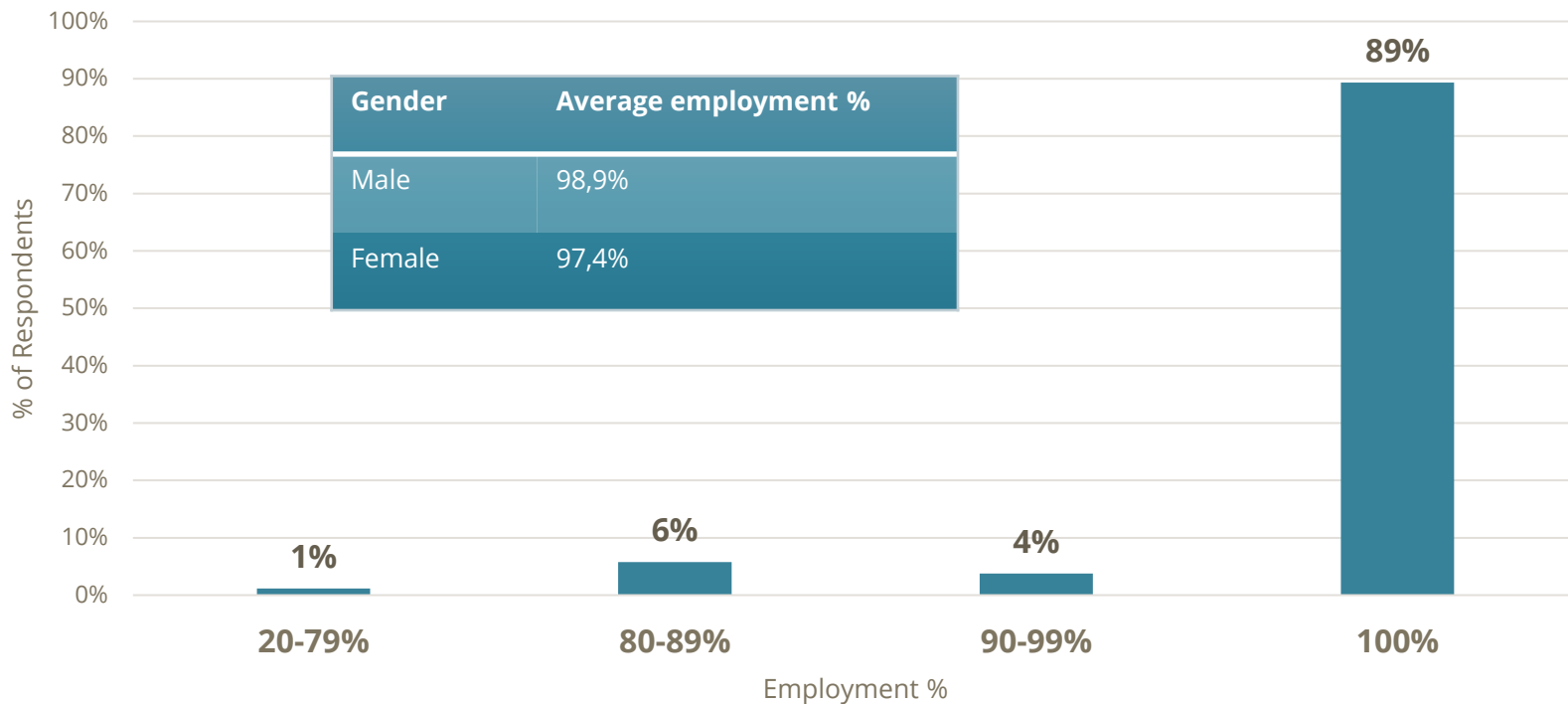


- No, and I do not attend the meetings either.
- No, but I do attend the meetings.
- Yes

608 respondents



Employment percentage

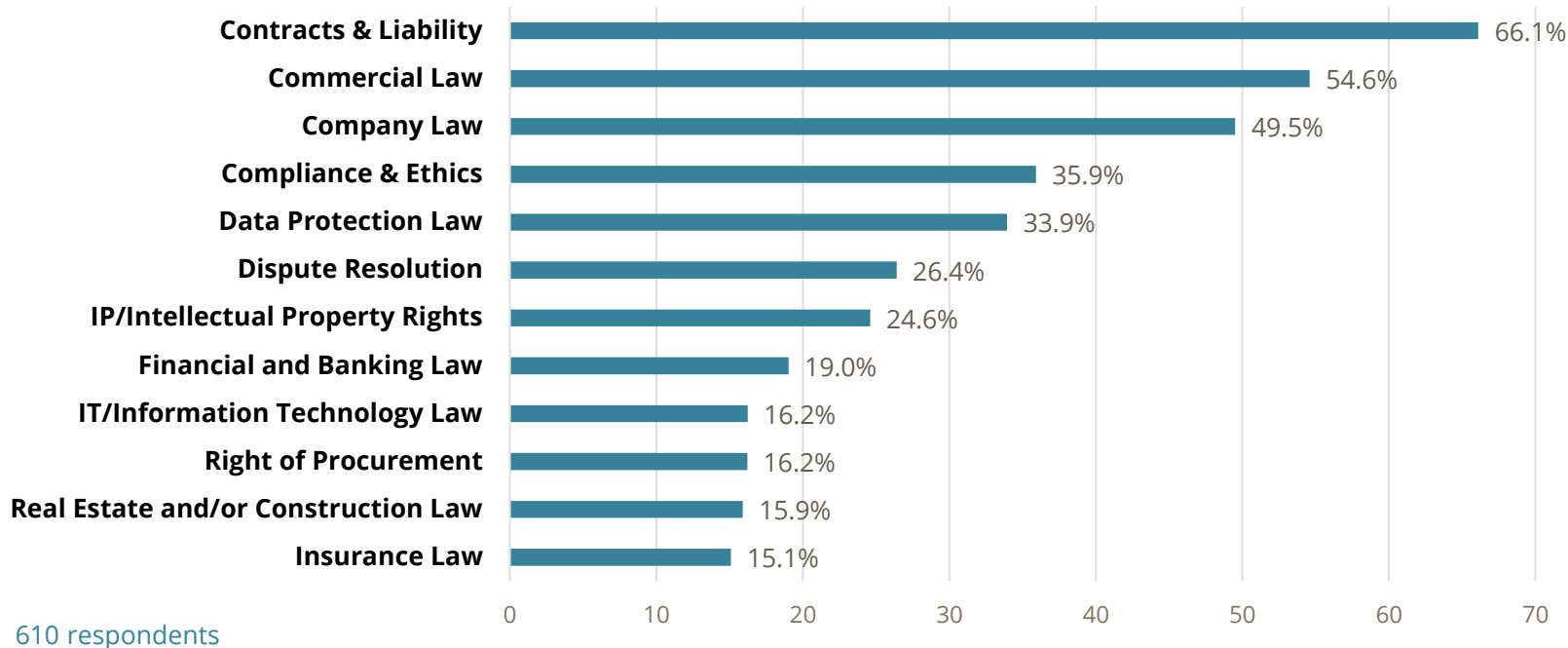




Multiple domains per
respondent possible

Legal domain (1/2)

Survey Question: *Indicate which legal domains you are mainly active in*

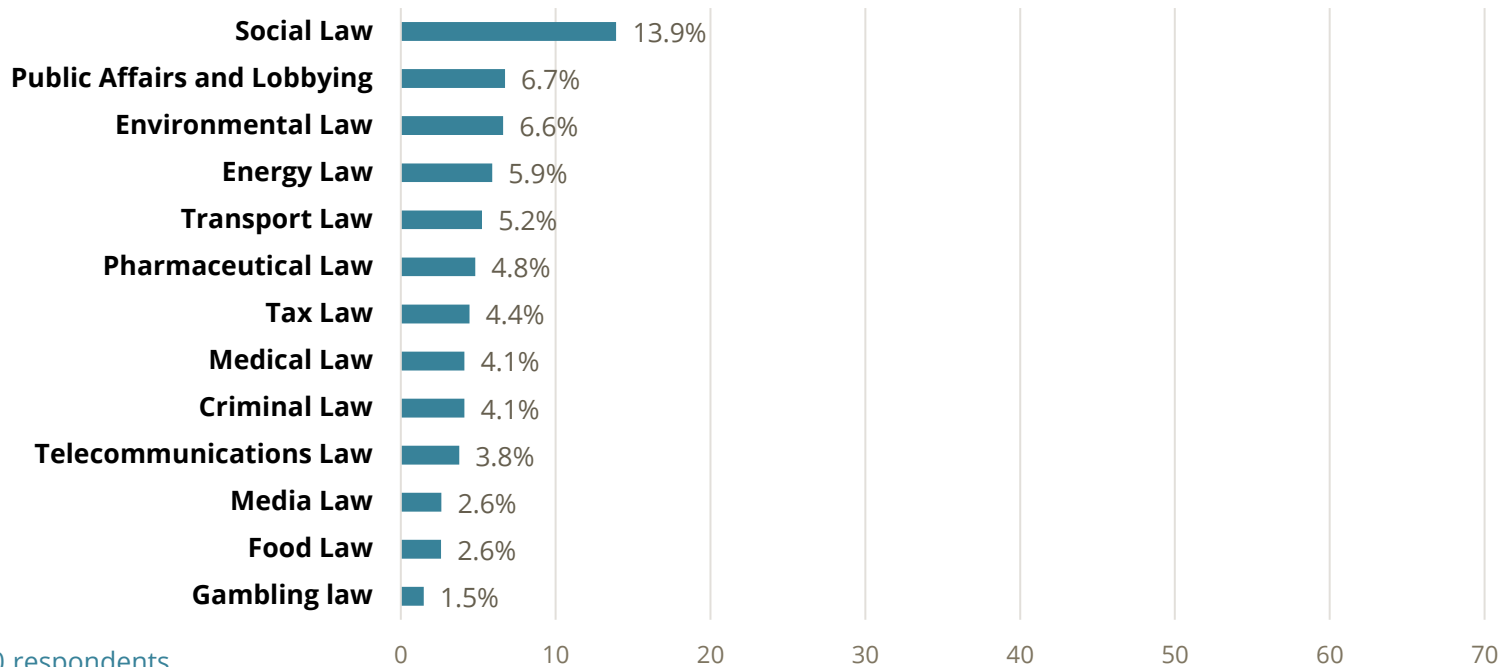




Multiple domains per respondent possible

Legal domain (2/2)

Survey Question: *Indicate which legal domains you are mainly active in*

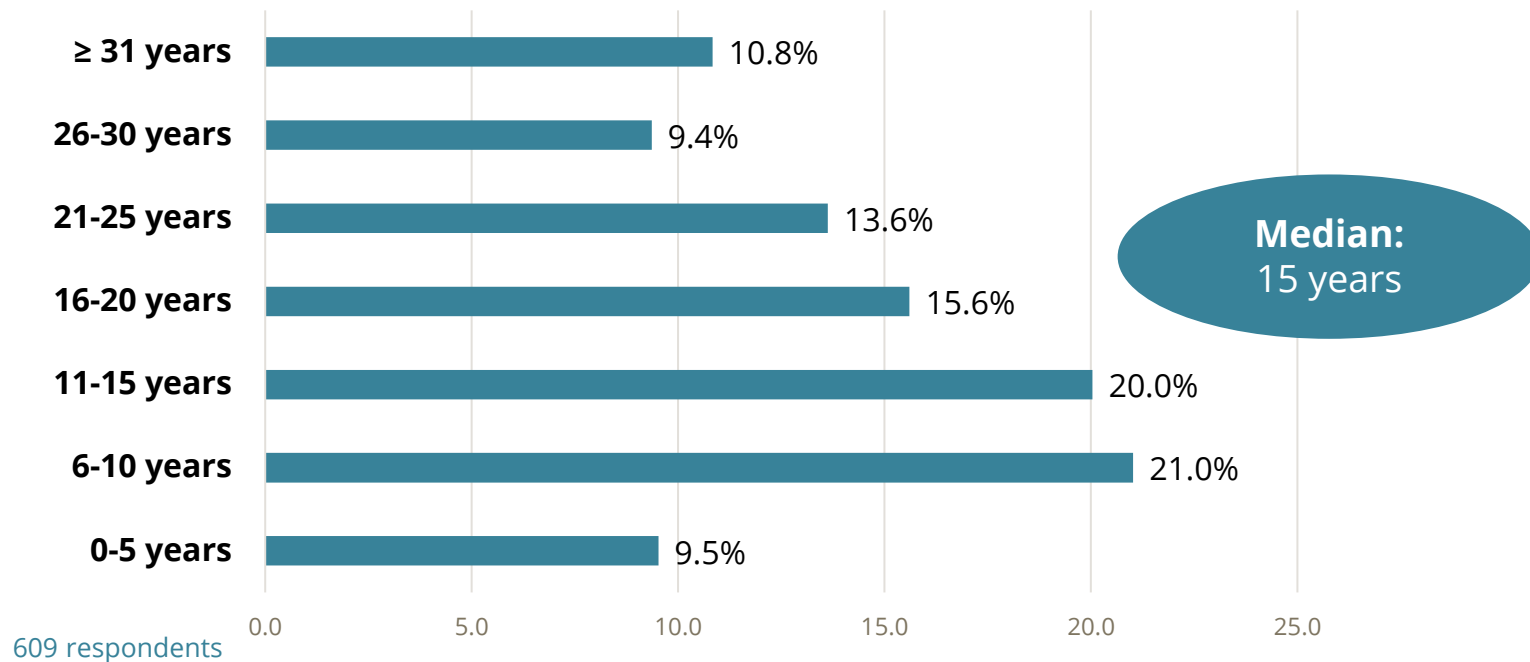


610 respondents



Years of legal experience

Survey Question: *What is your total number of years (across all employers) of legal professional experience?*

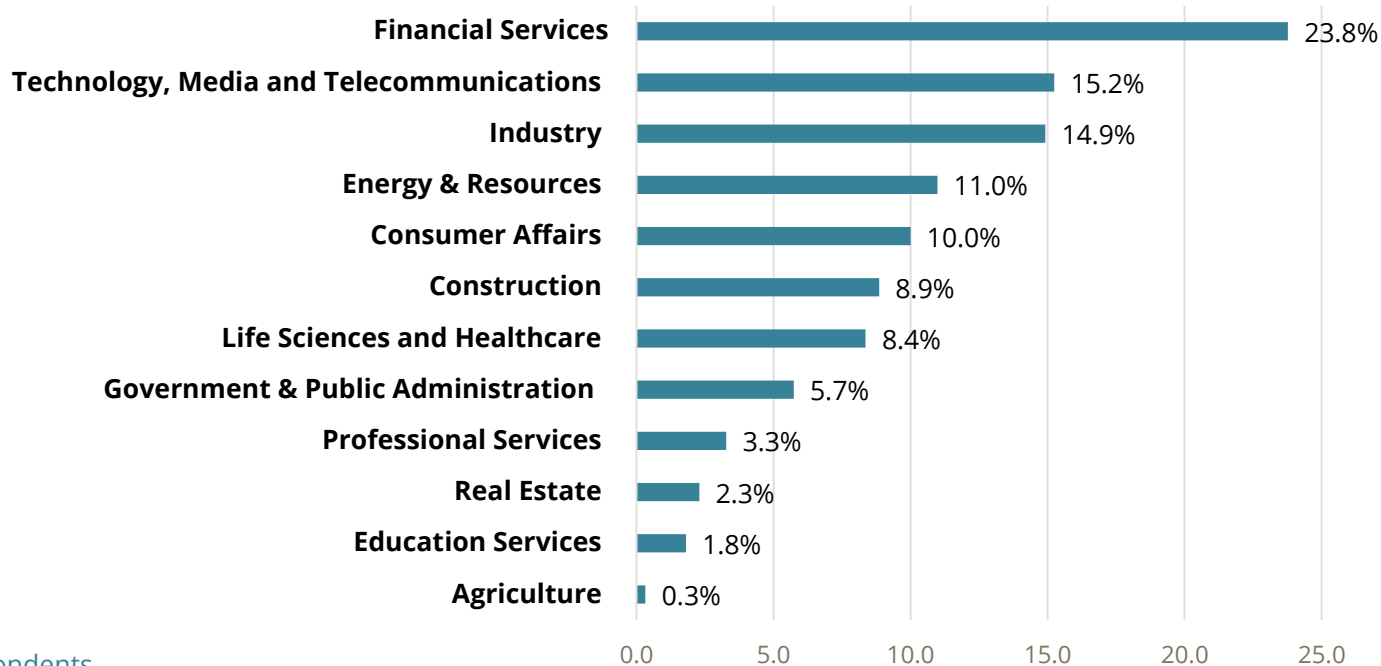




Sector

Multiple domains per
respondent possible

Survey Question: Indicate the sector in which your organisation operates



610 respondents



Sector definitions

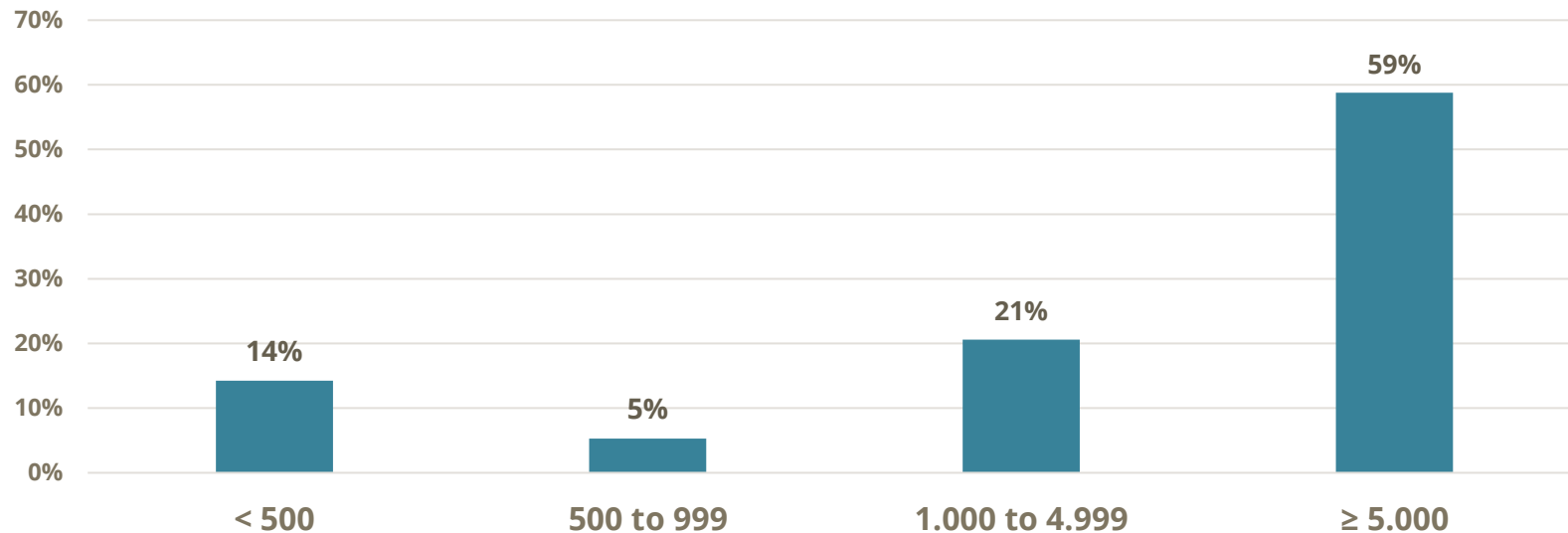
Sector	Includes
Consumer Affairs	Consumer products, retail & distribution, wholesale, travel, hospitality & leisure
Energy & Resources	Oil & gas, energy & utilities, shipping & ports, water, alternative energy, mining
Financial Services	Banking, insurance, investment management
Life Sciences and Healthcare	Social assistance, healthcare providers, pharmaceutical products, biotechnology, medical devices, biomedical technologies
Industry	Aerospace & defence, automotive, chemistry, forestry, paper & packaging
Technology, Media and Telecommunications	Media, technology, telecommunications, IT, data processing, software
Professional Services	Consultancy, legal services, advertising
Education Services	Education, adult education
Real Estate	Rental, leasing, real estate
Construction	Building, construction
Agriculture	Forestry, fisheries, hunting
Government & Public Administration	–

Respondents could also select “Other”.



Number of employees (FTE)

Survey Question: *How many employees does the organisation where you are employed have in total (counting those in Belgium and internationally)?*

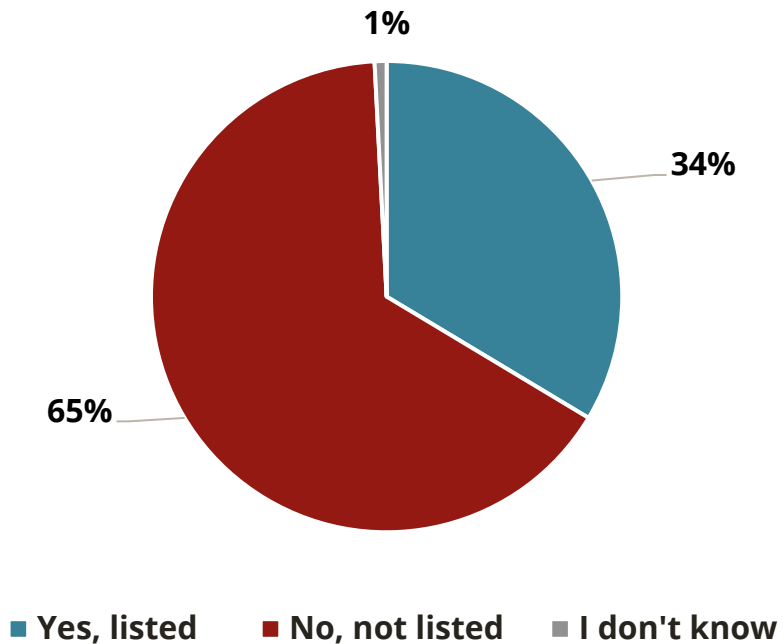


456 respondents



Listed on stock exchange

Survey Question: *Is your organisation listed on the stock exchange?*

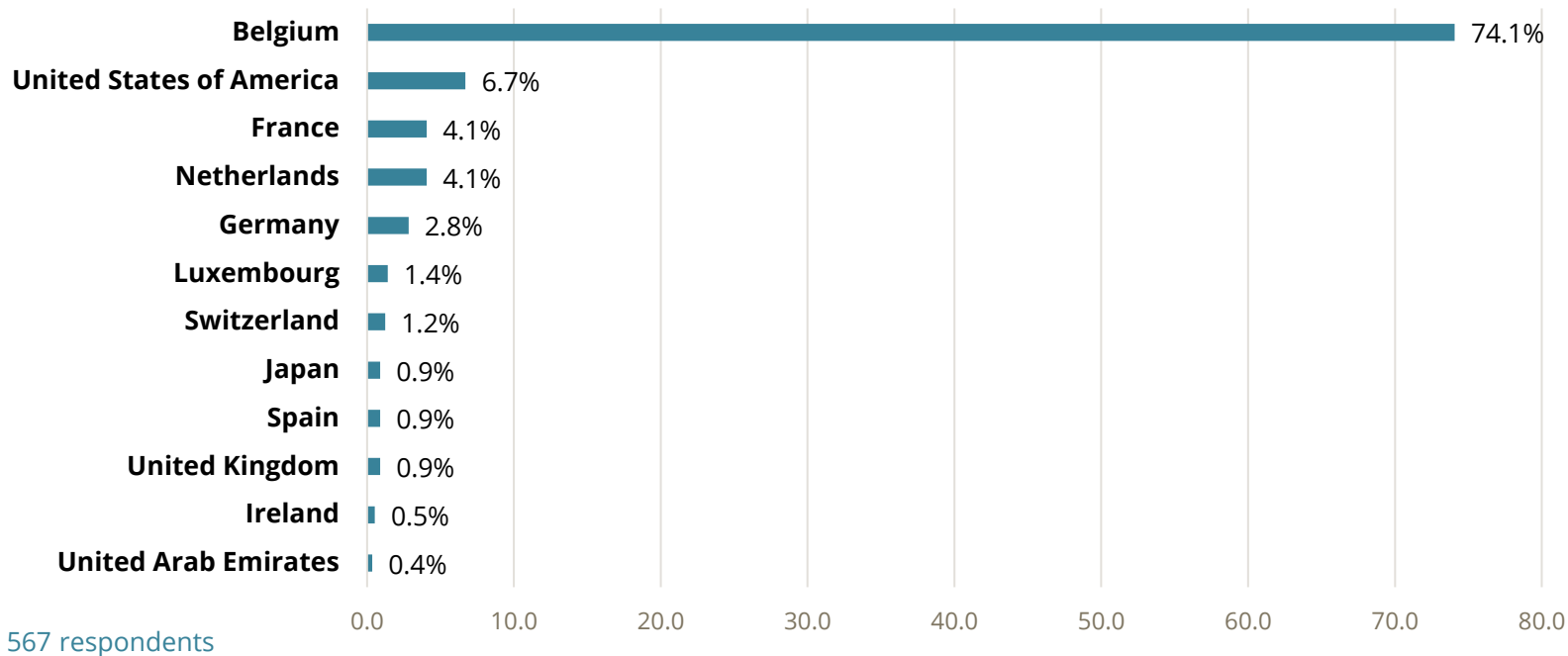


610 respondents



Registered office

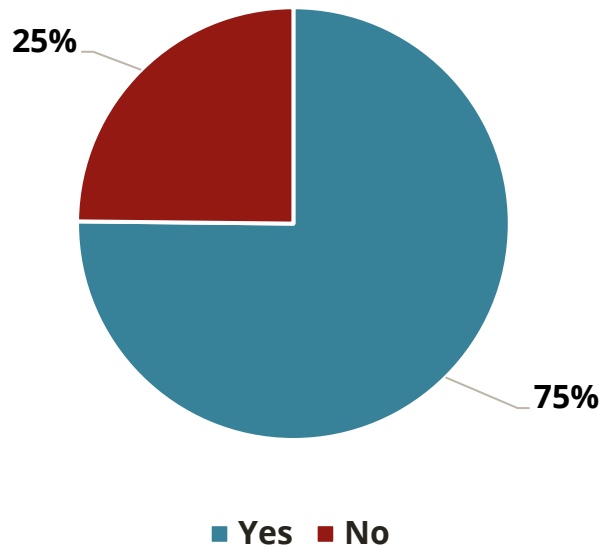
Survey Question: *In which country is the registered office of your organisation located?*





Activities outside of Belgium

Survey Question: *Does your organisation have activities outside of Belgium?*

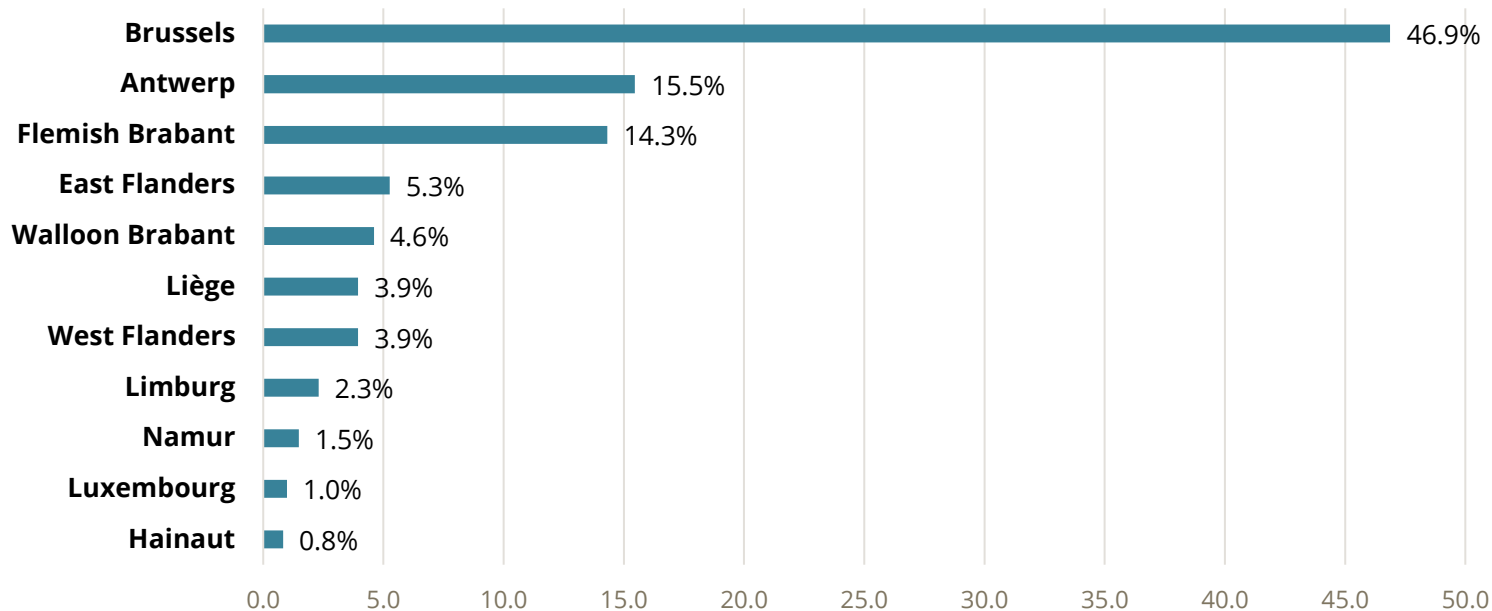


608 respondents



Belgian province

Survey Question: *In which Belgian province (including Brussels) are you employed?*



608 respondents



Function – definitions

- **Legal manager:** Legal expert who manages a legal department or the entire legal team
 - Executive committee member
 - Not executive committee member
- **Legal advisor:** Legal expert without managerial responsibility
- **Solo legal counsel:** Legal expert who is the only one performing this role in the organisation

Note: Compliance officer (1,5% of sample) and paralegal (1,3% of sample) are not included in the overview of pay and benefits when specifying functions, due to insufficient responses.

- **Compliance officer:** *An officer who is appointed to oversee compliance with laws and regulations within the organisation (often at a financial institution)*
- **Paralegal:** *Bachelor's degree in legal practice or those who perform similar work through experience*



Function

Survey Question: *What best describes your responsibility/function (within the legal department)?*

Function	% of sample	Experience Median	N
Legal manager, executive committee member	11,6%	23 years	71
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	26,7%	19 years	163
Solo legal counsel	11,5%	13 years	70
Legal advisor	47,4%	12 years	289

610 respondents

Results – employees



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Total rewards – an overview

PAY

- Fixed salary
- End-of-Year Premium / 13th month
- Variable pay (bonus)
- Flat-rate expense reimbursement

BENEFITS

- Teleworking
- Holidays
- Company Car/ Mobility Budget
- Flexible remuneration
- Fringe benefits

Pay



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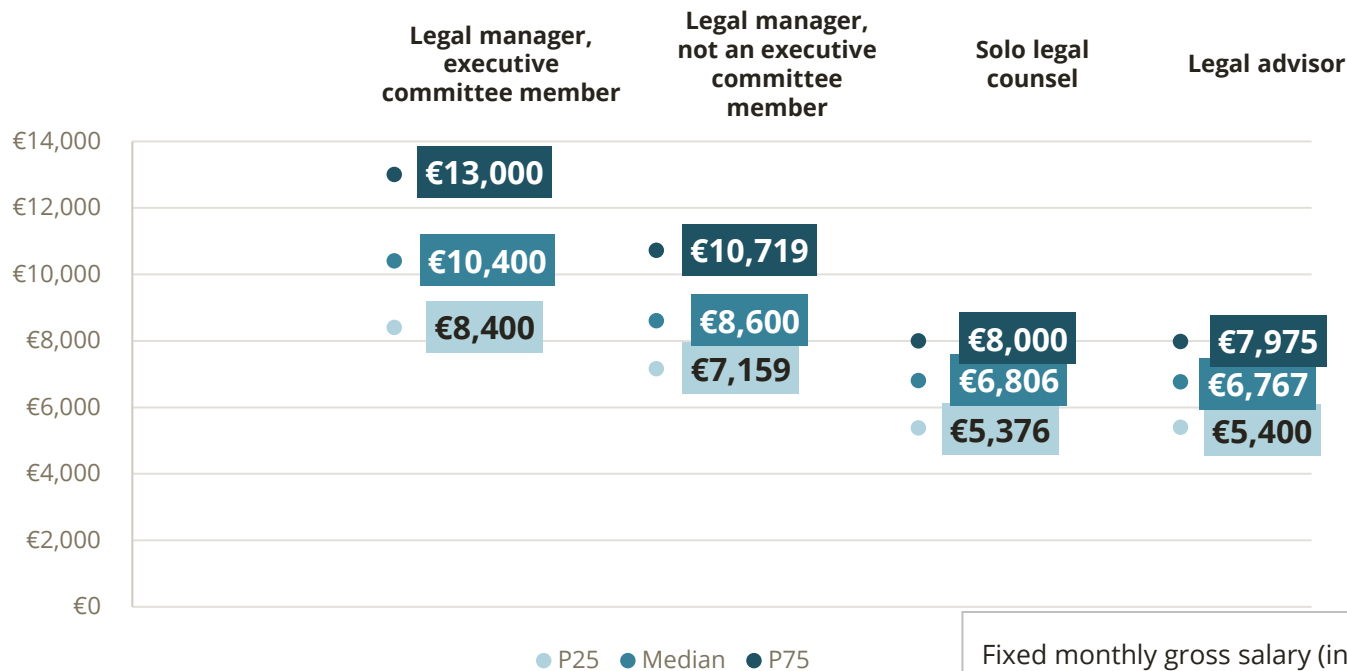
Monthly gross salary in terms of function

Monthly gross salary (in FTE)	P25	Median	P75	Legal experience (median)
Legal manager, executive committee member	€ 8.400	€ 10.400	€ 13.000	23 years
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 7.159	€ 8.600	€ 10.719	19 years
Solo legal counsel	€ 5.376	€ 6.806	€ 8.000	13 years
Legal advisor	€ 5.400	€ 6.767	€ 7.950	12 years

Fixed monthly gross salary (in FTE excluding
13th month & double holiday pay)



Monthly gross salary in terms of function



Fixed monthly gross salary (in FTE excluding 13th month & double holiday pay)



What has an impact on pay components?

- A regression analysis was performed to identify the factors associated with **gross monthly salary and bonus amounts**. The results indicate that **legal experience is a significant positive predictor of both outcomes**: higher levels of experience are associated with higher gross monthly salaries and higher bonus amounts.
- **Job level is also significantly associated with both compensation components**. Legal managers, both with and without executive committee membership, have significantly higher gross monthly salaries and bonus amounts compared with the reference group: legal advisors. No statistically significant differences are observed for solo legal counsels.
- **Organisation size shows a significant association mainly for very large organisations**. Professionals working in organisations with 5.000 employees or more have significantly higher gross monthly salaries and bonus amounts. No statistically significant differences are found for organisations with 1.000 to 4.999 employees compared to companies with less than 1.000 employees.
- **Sector has a more limited role**. Differences in gross monthly salary are observed for some sectors only (Energy & Professional Services), whereas no statistically significant sector differences are found for bonus amounts.
- **Overall, experience, job level and employment in a very large organisation (≥5.000 employees) emerge as the most consistent factors associated with higher gross monthly salaries and bonus amounts**, while sector shows a less consistent relationship with compensation.



Monthly gross salary in terms of function & legal experience

Monthly gross salary (in FTE)	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16+ years
Legal manager, executive committee member	€ 4.648	€ 5.780	€ 7.211	€ 7.800
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	Not enough responses	€ 6.651	€ 7.375	€ 9.600
Solo legal counsel	Not enough responses	Not enough responses	€ 8.300	€ 11.236
Legal advisor	€ 3.858	€ 6.100	€ 6.900	€ 8.000

Median values

Fixed monthly gross salary (in FTE excluding 13th month & double holiday pay)



Monthly gross salary in terms of function & company size

Monthly gross salary (in FTE)	< 500 FTE	500-999 FTE	1.000-4.999 FTE	≥5.000 FTE
Legal manager, executive committee member	€ 10.400	Not enough responses	€ 11.000	€ 9.877
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 8.687	€ 8.800	€ 7.972	€ 9.700
Solo legal counsel	€ 5.782	Not enough responses	€ 7.075	€ 7.875
Legal advisor	€ 7.350	€ 6.310	€ 6.362	€ 7.300

Median values

Fixed monthly gross salary (in FTE excluding
13th month & double holiday pay)



Monthly gross salary in terms of function & region

Monthly gross salary (in FTE)	Flanders	Wallonia	Brussels-Capital Region
Legal manager, executive committee member	€ 8.790 (Median experience: 21 years)	€ 11.000 (Median experience: 25 years)	€ 12.000 (Median experience: 25 years)
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 8.450 (Median experience: 18,5 years)	€ 7.518 (Median experience: 16 years)	€ 9.225 (Median experience: 20,5 years)
Solo legal counsel	€ 7.368 (Median experience: 16 years)	€ 5.737 (Median experience: 8 years)	€ 6.150 (Median experience: 10 years)
Legal advisor	€ 6.669 (Median experience: 10 years)	€ 5.759 (Median experience: 12,5 years)	€ 6.999 (Median experience: 13 years)

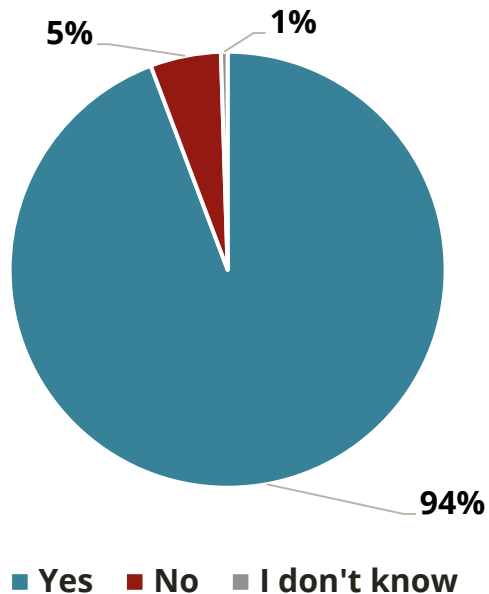
Median values

Fixed monthly gross salary (in FTE excluding
13th month & double holiday pay)



Year-end bonus

Survey Question: *Do you receive a year-end bonus (also known as a thirteenth month, so an extra salary at the end of the year)?*



610 respondents



Year-end bonus in terms of function

Survey Question: *Do you receive a year-end bonus (also known as a thirteenth month, so an extra salary at the end of the year)?*

Legal manager, executive committee member	97%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	94%
Solo legal counsel	93%
Legal advisor	94%



Calculation of annual base salary

Survey Question: *How is your salary calculated on an annual basis?*

	Frequency	Percentage
Gross monthly salary x 12	22	4%
Gross monthly salary x 13	16	3%
Gross monthly salary x 13,92	548	90%
Other:	24	4%

610 respondents



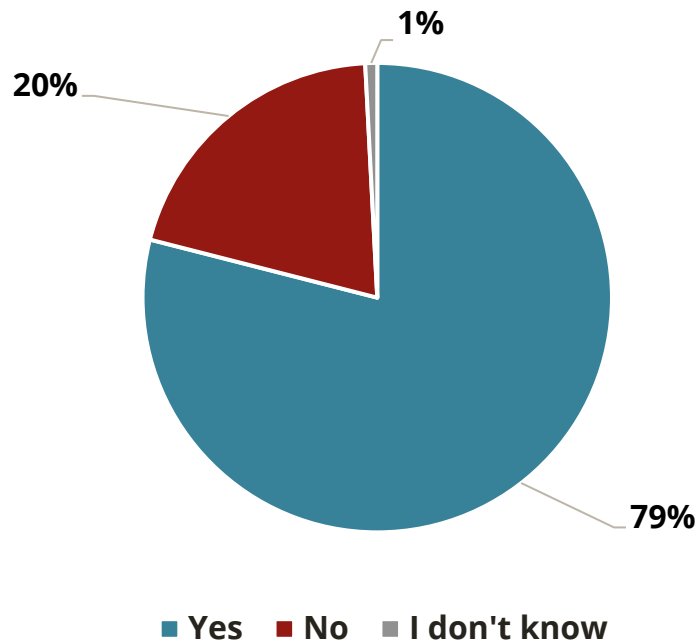
Annual base salary in terms of function

Annual base salary (in FTE)	P25	Median	P75
Legal manager, executive committee member	€ 112.752	€ 144.768	€ 180.960
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 99.528	€ 119.175	€ 148.944
Solo legal counsel	€ 72.871	€ 94.744	€ 111.360
Legal advisor	€ 74.085	€ 93.486	€ 109.816



Entitled to a bonus

Survey Question: *Are you entitled to a bonus (also called variable remuneration)?*



609 respondents



Variable pay – bonus in terms of function

Survey Question: *Are you entitled to a bonus (also called variable remuneration)?*

Legal manager, executive committee member	90%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	87%
Solo legal counsel	54%
Legal advisor	77%



Variable pay in terms of function

Bonus value of 2025 (in FTE)	P25	Median	P75	Legal experience (median)
Legal manager, executive committee member	€ 12.500	€ 25.000	€ 45.000	23 years
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 8.000	€ 14.225	€ 30.000	19 years
Solo legal counsel	€ 4.500	€ 8.500	€ 15.000	13 years
Legal advisor	€ 4.000	€ 7.250	€ 11.500	12 years



Variable pay in terms of function & legal experience

Bonus Value of 2025 (in FTE)	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16+ years
Legal manager, executive committee member	No responses	Not enough responses	€ 25.000	€ 26.242
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	Not enough responses	€ 12.349	€ 12.881	€ 17.630
Solo legal counsel	Not enough responses	€ 8.250	Not enough responses	€ 15.000
Legal advisor	€ 4.600	€ 7.500	€ 6.000	€ 7.800

Median values



Variable pay in terms of function & company size

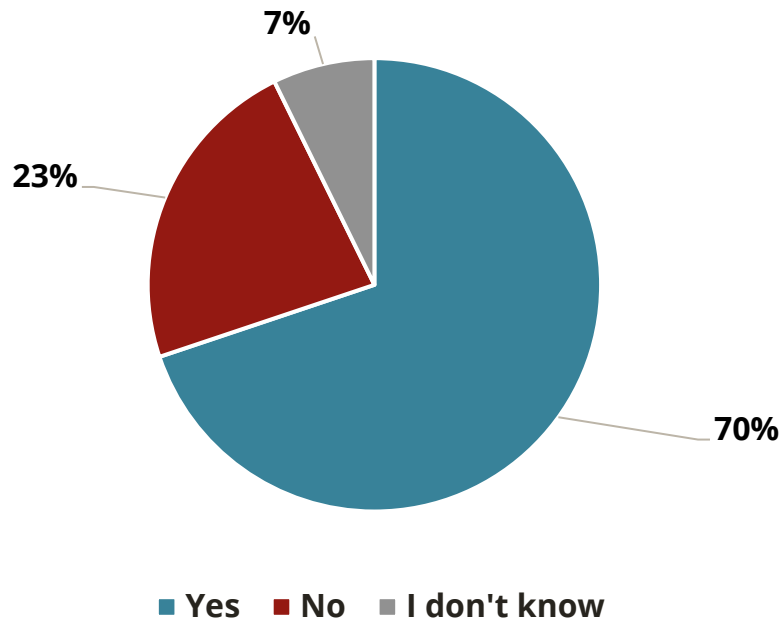
Bonus Value of 2025 (in FTE)	< 500 FTE	500-999 FTE	1.000-4.999 FTE	≥5.000 FTE
Legal manager, executive committee member	Not enough responses	Not enough responses	€ 30.000	€ 28.000
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 7.250	Not enough responses	€ 8.000	€ 23.819
Solo legal counsel	€ 3.249	Not enough responses	€ 7.911	€ 15.000
Legal advisor	€ 5.500	€ 4.627	€ 6.000	€ 9.422
Only respondents that are entitled to a bonus included				

Median values



Variable pay – (para)fiscal optimisation

Survey Question: *Is (para)fiscal optimisation used for the payment of the bonus?*

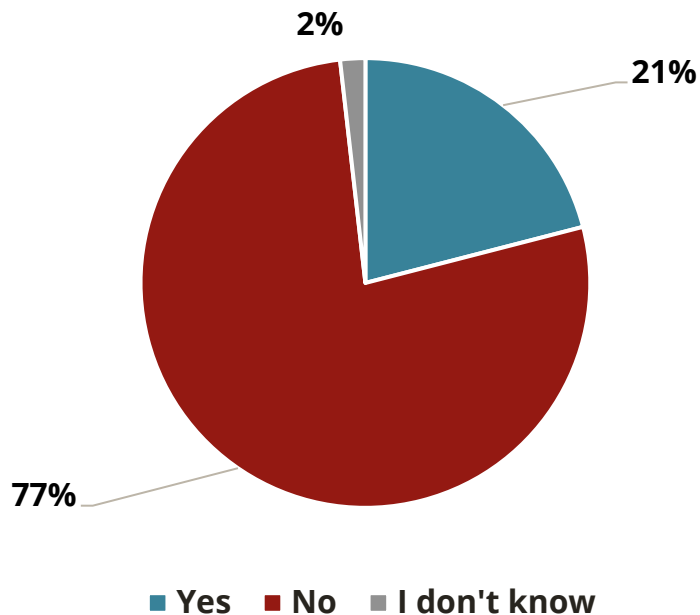


481 respondents



Variable pay – share-based remuneration

Survey Question: *Do you receive share-based remuneration (such as share options, share appreciation rights, shares ...)?*

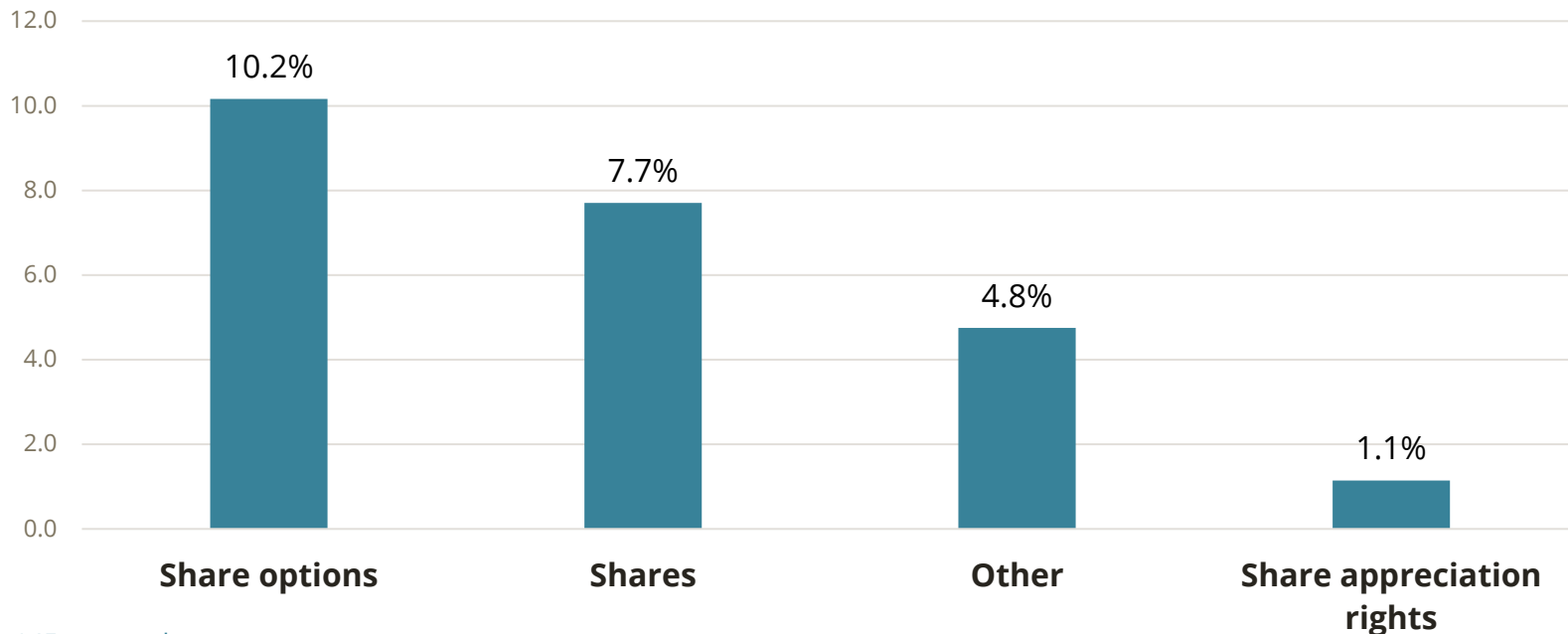


610 respondents



Variable pay – type of share-based remuneration

Survey Question: *What type of share-based remuneration do you receive?*



145 respondents



Monthly flat-rate expense reimbursement in terms of function

Legal manager, executive committee member	73%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	69%
Solo legal counsel	60%
Legal advisor	55%



Flat-rate expense reimbursement in terms of function

Survey Question: *What is the amount of this flat-rate expense reimbursement (amount per month)? (in x euros)*

Flat-rate expense reimbursement (in FTE)	P25	Median	P75
Legal manager, executive committee member	€ 150	€ 240	€ 260
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 150	€ 200	€ 250
Solo legal counsel	€ 125	€ 170	€ 240
Legal advisor	€ 110	€ 150	€ 190



Monthly flat-rate expense reimbursement in terms of function & company size

Respondents entitled to a flat-rate expense reimbursement	< 500 FTE	500-999 FTE	1.000-4.999 FTE	≥5.000 FTE
Legal manager, executive committee member	Not enough responses	Not enough responses	11%	42%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	8%	Not enough responses	14%	32%
Solo legal counsel	13%	Not enough responses	8%	13%
Legal advisor	4%	Not enough responses	8%	28%



Monthly flat-rate expense reimbursement in terms of function & company size

Monthly flat-rate expense reimbursement (in FTE)	< 500 FTE	500-999 FTE	1.000-4.999 FTE	≥5.000 FTE
Legal manager, executive committee member	Not enough responses	Not enough responses	€ 225	€ 250
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 147	Not enough responses	€ 170	€ 238
Solo legal counsel	€ 195	Not enough responses	€ 167	€ 165
Legal advisor	€ 180	Not enough responses	€ 125	€ 150

Median values

Benefits



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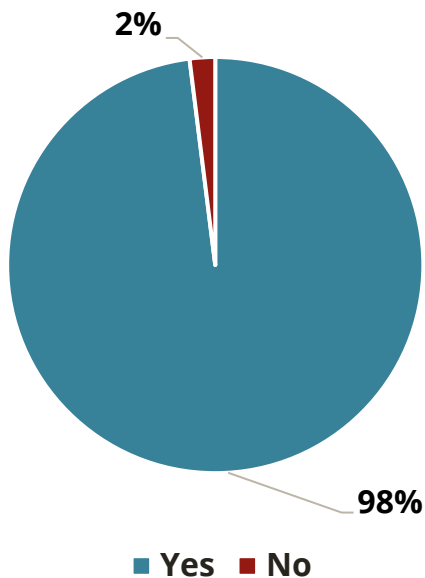
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Teleworking opportunity

Survey Question: *Does your organisation offer the possibility to work from home or work remotely?*



607 respondents



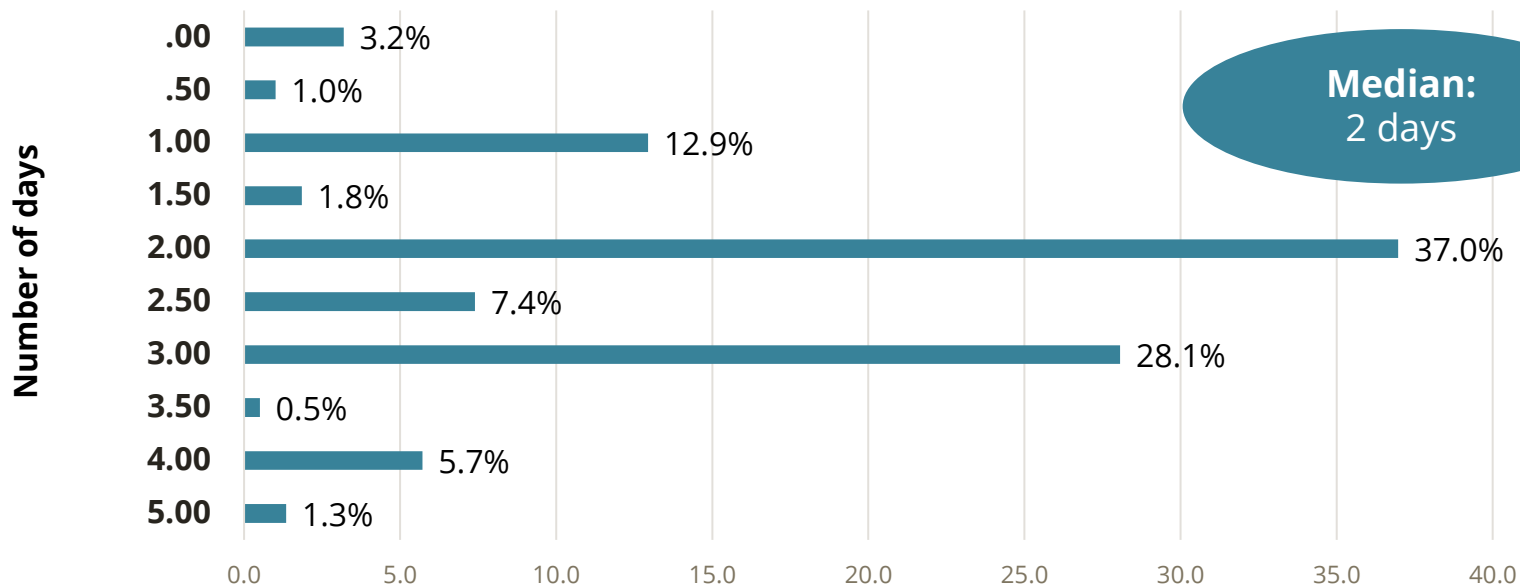
Teleworking opportunity per function

Legal manager, executive committee member	96%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	98%
Solo legal counsel	96%
Legal advisor	97%



Days working from home

Survey Question: *On average, in a typical week, how many days do you actually work from home or work remotely?*



595 respondents

Median:
2 days



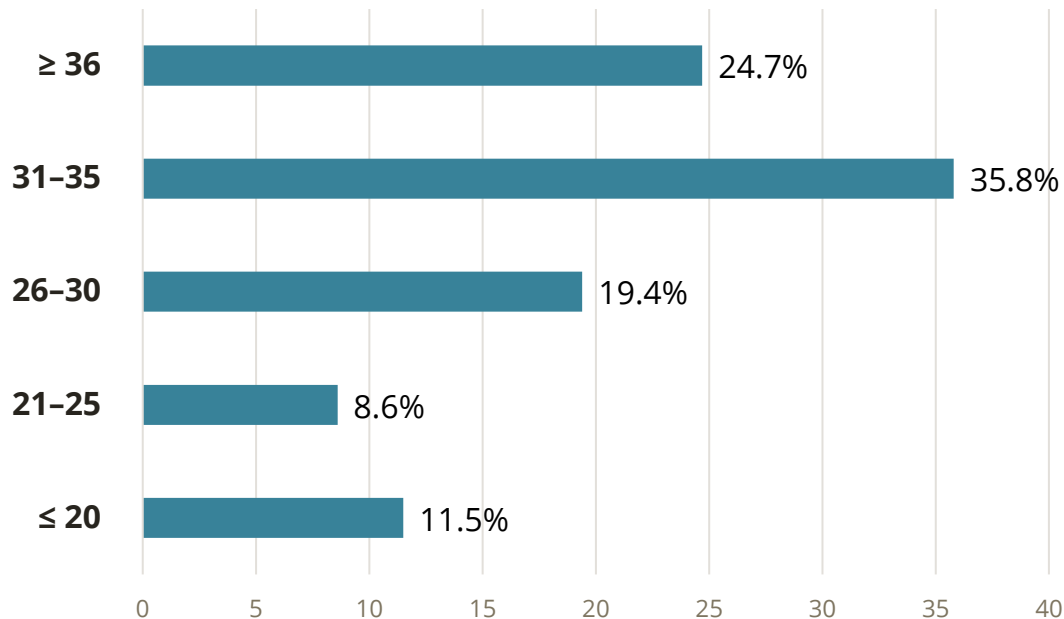
Monthly homeworking allowance in terms of function

Home Working Allowance	P25	Median	P75
Legal manager, executive committee member	€ 50	€ 100	€ 150
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	€ 20	€ 72	€ 130
Solo legal counsel	€ 66	€ 110	€ 150
Legal advisor	€ 30	€ 70	€ 110



Holidays

Survey Question: *How many holiday days do you have?*



608 respondents



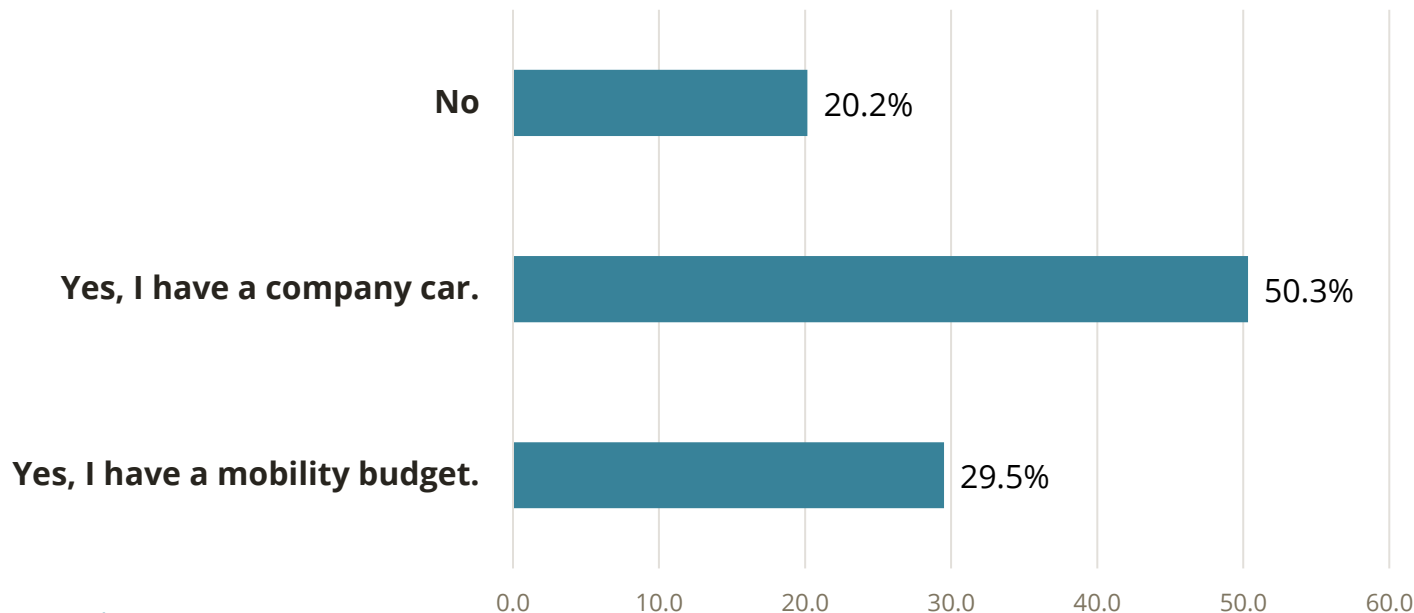
Holidays in terms of function/number of days

Holidays (in number of days)	P25	Median	P75
Legal manager, executive committee member	25	32	35
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	28	32	36
Solo legal counsel	24	30	33
Legal advisor	28	32	36



Company car or mobility budget

Survey Question: *Do you have a company car or a mobility budget?*



610 respondents



Company car or mobility budget in terms of function

	Mobility Budget	Company Car	No
Legal manager, executive committee member	21%	73%	6%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	33%	55%	12%
Solo legal counsel	16%	66%	18%
Legal advisor	30%	40%	30%



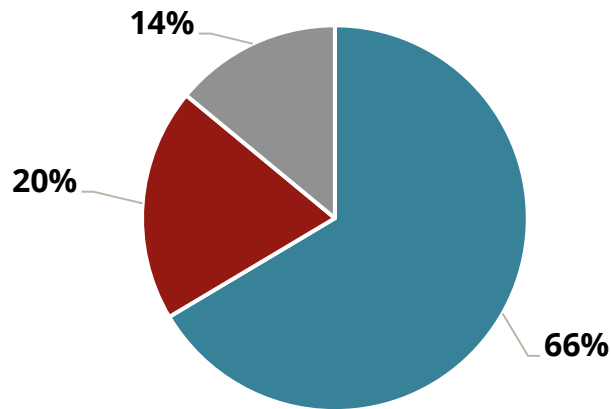
Company car or mobility budget in terms of function & region

	Flanders		Wallonia		Brussels-Capital Region	
	Mobility Budget	Company Car	Mobility Budget	Company Car	Mobility Budget	Company Car
Legal manager, executive committee member	23%	71%	11%	89%	23%	71%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	24%	69%	21%	50%	47%	40%
Solo legal counsel	10%	77%	30%	60%	17%	55%
Legal advisor	27%	48%	13%	50%	38%	31%



Company car – type of fuel

Survey Question: *What type of drive/fuel does your company car have?*



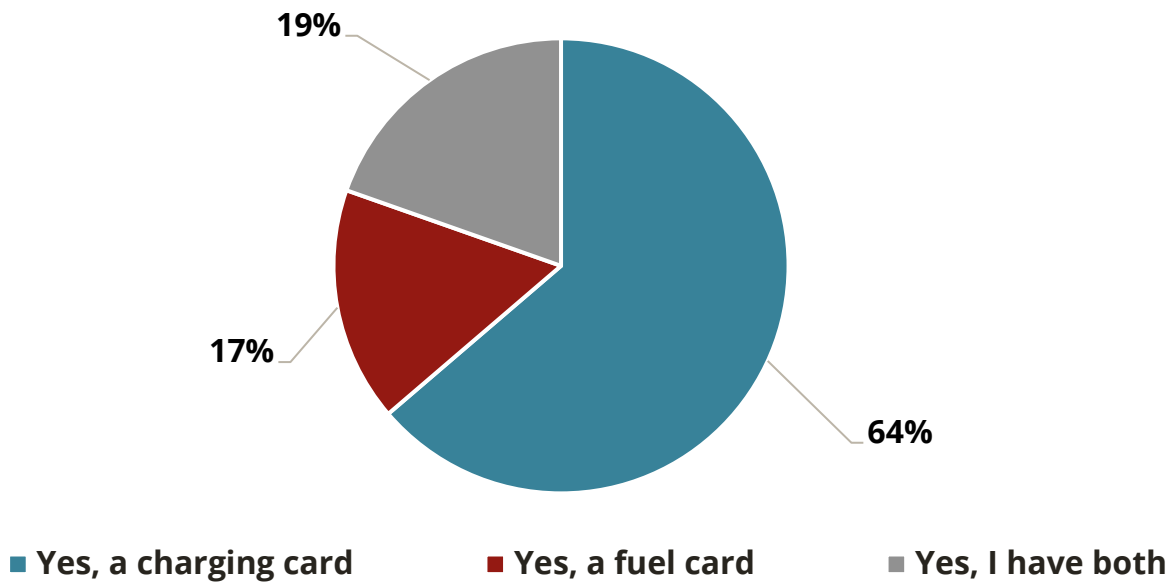
- BEV (Battery Electric Vehicle)
- PHEV (Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle)
- ICE / fuel (internal combustion engine – petrol or diesel)

307 respondents



Company car – fuel/charging card

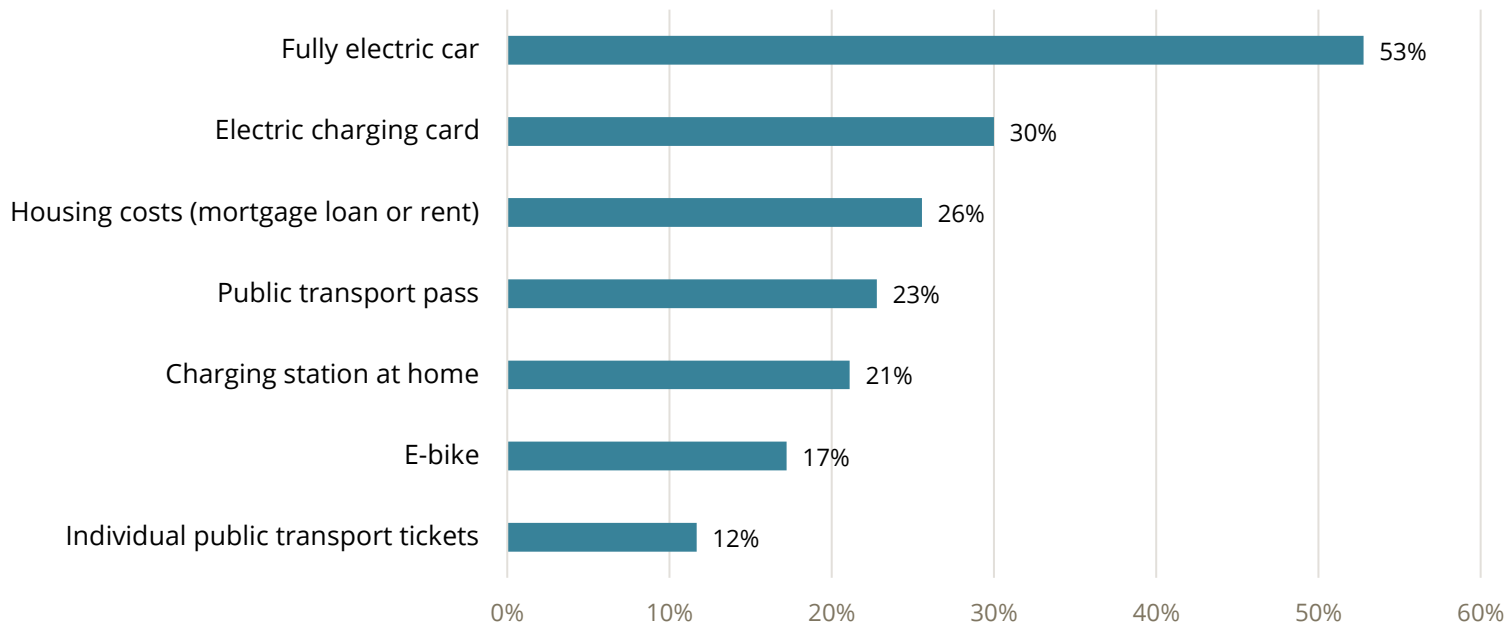
Survey Question: Does your employer provide a fuel card or charging card?



307 respondents



Mobility budget – mobility options

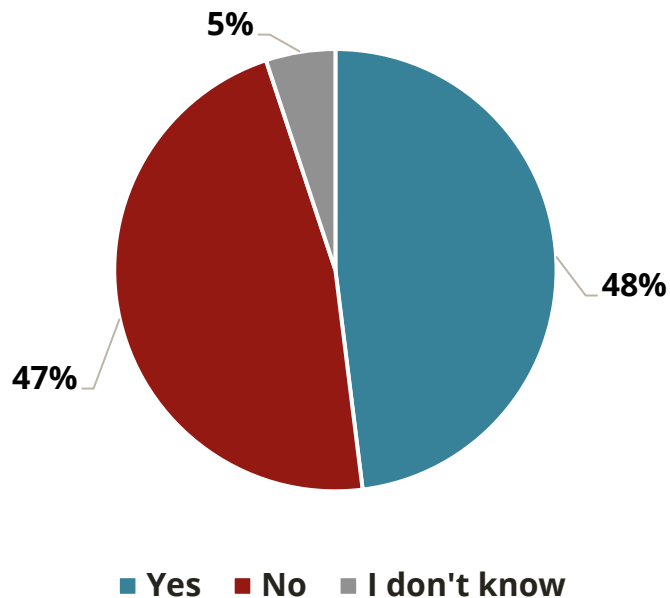


180 respondents



Benefits – flexible reward system

Survey Question: *Does your organisation have a flexible reward system?*



610 respondents



Benefits – flexible reward system

Survey Question: *Does your organisation have a flexible reward system?*

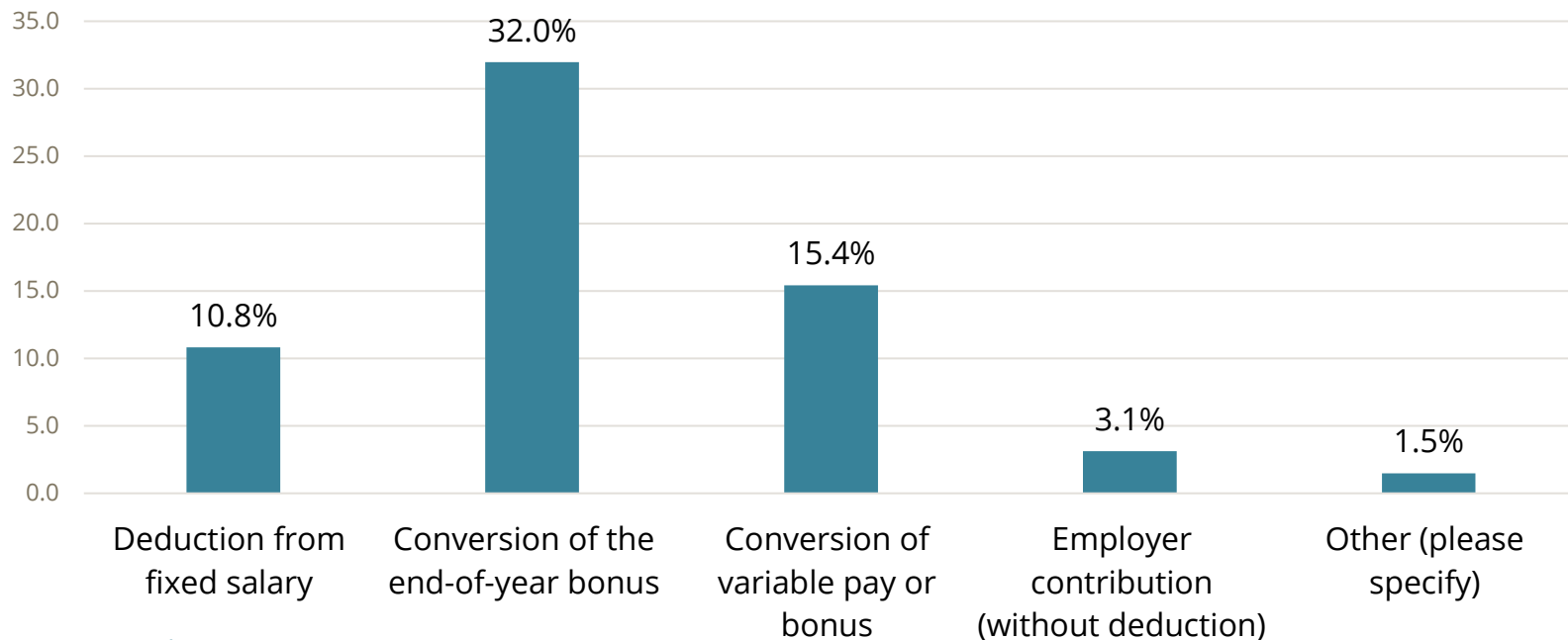
	Yes	No	I don't know
Legal manager, executive committee member	45%	51%	4%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	47%	50%	3%
Solo legal counsel	30%	69%	1%
Legal advisor	54%	39%	7%

610 respondents



Benefits – flexible reward system funded

Survey Question: *How is your flexible reward budget funded?*

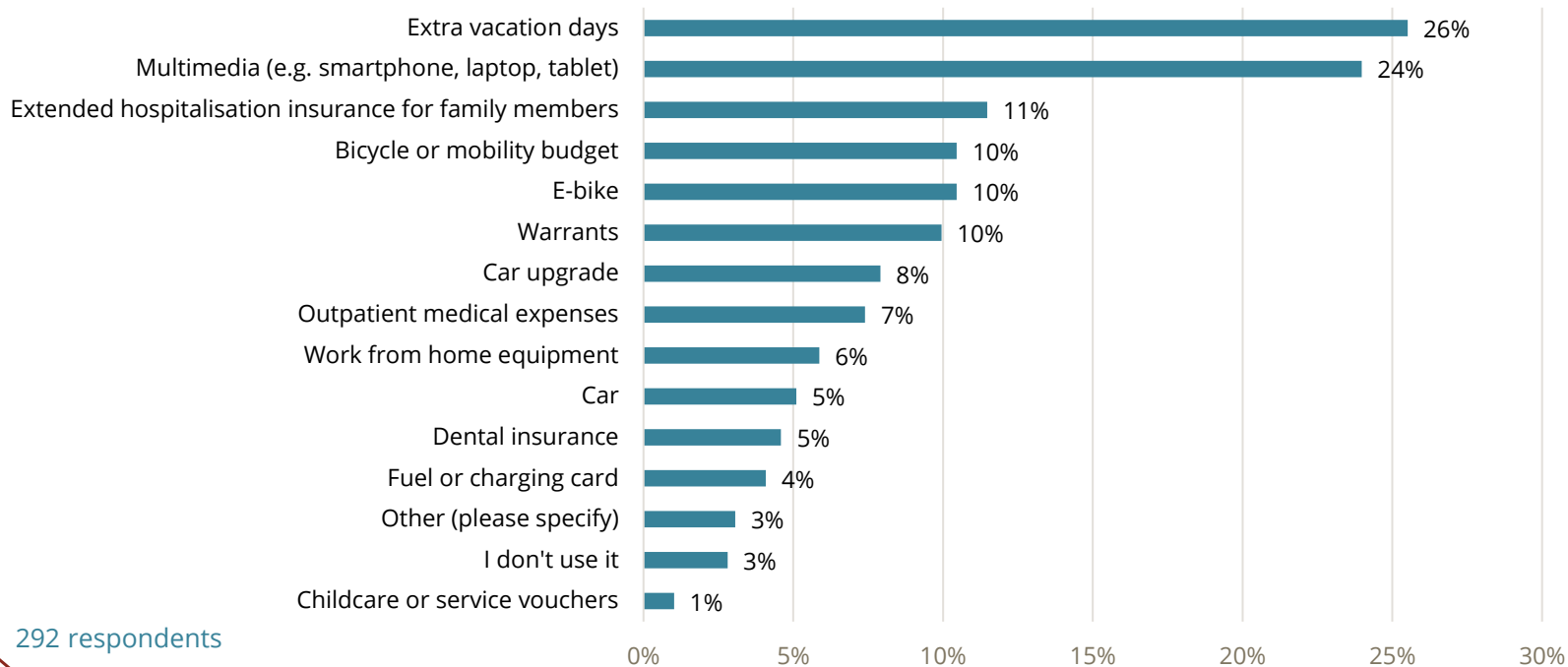


292 respondents



Benefits – use of flexible reward budget

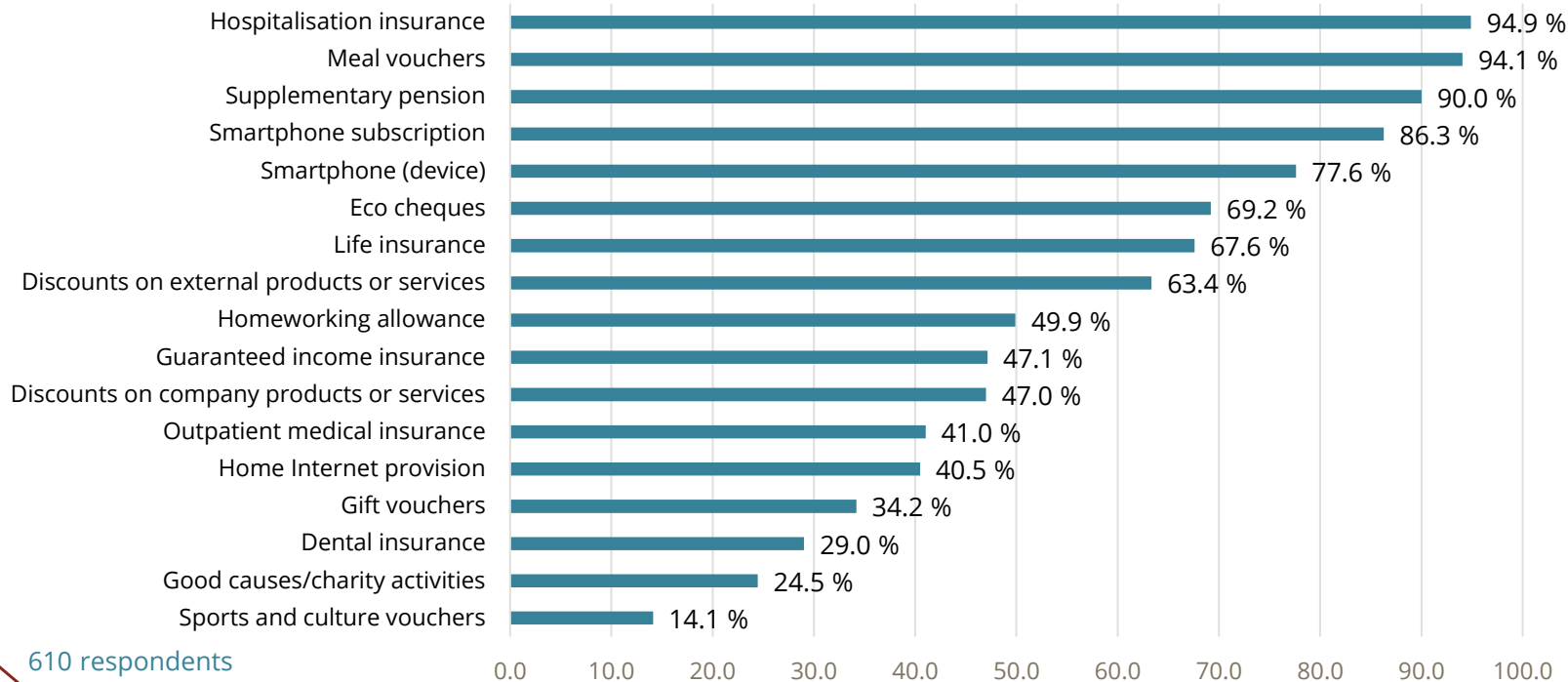
Survey Question: *What do you typically use your flexible reward budget for?*





Benefits – fringe benefits

Survey Question: *What fringe benefits do you receive from your employer?*





Benefits – insured employee benefits

Survey Question: *What fringe benefits do you receive from your employer?*

	Supplementary pension	Hospitalisation insurance	Life insurance	Guaranteed income insurance	Outpatient medical insurance	Dental insurance
Legal manager, executive committee member	94%	97%	72%	52%	46%	33%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	89%	96%	76%	57%	44%	32%
Solo legal counsel	87%	91%	57%	34%	38%	43%
Legal advisor	87%	95%	65%	45%	40%	24%

610 respondents



Benefits – vouchers & discounts

Survey Question: *What fringe benefits do you receive from your employer?*

	Meal vouchers	Eco vouchers	Gift vouchers	Sports & culture vouchers	Discounts on external products/ services	Discounts on company products/ services
Legal manager, executive committee member	96%	70%	41%	18%	51%	50%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	92%	69%	32%	16%	63%	51%
Solo legal counsel	94%	70%	33%	7%	52%	33%
Legal advisor	95%	70%	35%	14%	70%	48%

610 respondents



Benefits – other benefits

Survey Question: *What fringe benefits do you receive from your employer?*

	Smartphone	Smartphone subscription	Home internet provision	Homeworking allowance	Good causes / charity activities
Legal manager, executive committee member	94%	93%	45%	49%	30%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	83%	89%	40%	45%	28%
Solo legal counsel	75%	86%	31%	52%	20%
Legal advisor	71%	83%	42%	53%	22%

610 respondents

Total reward satisfaction & understanding



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Vialegis Elevating legal careers,
empowering business





Total reward satisfaction: introduction

Why measure reward satisfaction

- The report focuses on the quantum: fixed and variable pay, employee benefits, mobility and flexible rewards
- It is just as important to understand how company lawyers experience their rewards
- The report therefore also examines how satisfied they are with their total rewards and their building blocks

Basis in research

- Academic research has studied **pay satisfaction** in depth, with “pay” understood broadly to include benefits
- Researchers developed a pay satisfaction questionnaire (PSQ)
- To avoid both overgeneralisation and excessive detail, this survey covers the topics most relevant to this total rewards benchmark

Understanding of rewards

- The survey also asks how well company lawyers understand their rewards:
 - their satisfaction with the employer’s communication
 - how fixed and variable pay are calculated
 - which benefits are part of their total remuneration
- Understanding is linked to perceived pay fairness. Equity theory distinguishes three types of justice:
 - **Distributive**: “Is my salary fair compared to peers doing similar work?”
 - **Procedural**: “Are pay decisions made in a fair way?”
 - **Informational**: “Do I understand why I am paid this way?”
- These topics matter even more with the upcoming **pay transparency** legislation, which gives employees the right to know the mean salary of colleagues doing comparable work, split by gender.



Total reward satisfaction

Statement	Mean
The number of fringe benefits I receive in addition to my fixed and variable pay (e.g. meal vouchers, pension plan, insurance, ...)	4,06
My overall satisfaction with my total remuneration package	4,03
The value of the fringe benefits I receive	3,95
My fixed salary	3,83
The information my organisation provides me about my fringe benefits	3,68
The information my organisation provides me about my salary	3,61
My variable pay (this may include individual or collective bonuses, or a combination of both)	3,50
The information my organisation provides me about my variable pay	3,32
The clarity regarding possible future developments in my salary	2,73

Mean values

1 = Dissatisfied · 2 = Rather dissatisfied · 3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied · 4 = Rather satisfied · 5 = Satisfied



Total reward satisfaction

Statement	Legal manager, executive committee	Legal manager, not executive committee	Solo legal counsel	Legal advisor
The number of fringe benefits I receive in addition to my fixed and variable pay (e.g. meal vouchers, pension plan, insurance, ...)	4,2	4,1	3,9	4,0
My overall satisfaction with my total remuneration package	4,2	4,1	3,7	4,0
The value of the fringe benefits I receive	4,1	4,1	3,6	3,9
My fixed salary	4,2	3,9	3,6	3,8
The information my organisation provides me about my fringe benefits	3,9	3,8	3,4	3,6
The information my organisation provides me about my salary	4,0	3,7	3,4	3,5
My variable pay (this may include individual or collective bonuses, or a combination of both)	3,9	3,8	3,1	3,3
The information my organisation provides me about my variable pay	3,8	3,6	2,8	3,2
The clarity regarding possible future developments in my salary	3,1	2,8	2,6	2,6

Mean values

1 = Dissatisfied · 2 = Rather dissatisfied · 3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied · 4 = Rather satisfied · 5 = Satisfied



Understanding of reward package

Statement	Mean
I know which fringe benefits are part of my total remuneration.	4,16
I have a clear understanding of the various components of my total compensation package.	4,00
I understand the information on my payslip.	3,82
I understand how my fixed salary is determined.	3,72
I feel like I fully understand what my total rewards package is worth.	3,67
I understand how any variable compensation (bonus, incentive) is calculated.	3,58
My organisation communicates clearly about how my compensation is structured.	3,43

Mean values

1 = Disagree · 2 = Slightly disagree · 3 = Neither agree nor disagree · 4 = Slightly agree · 5 = Agree



Understanding of reward package

Statement	Legal manager, executive committee	Legal manager, not executive committee	Solo legal counsel	Legal advisor
I know which fringe benefits are part of my total remuneration.	4,5	4,2	4,0	4,1
I have a clear understanding of the various components of my rewards package.	4,3	4,1	3,8	3,9
I understand the information on my payslip.	4,1	3,8	3,8	3,7
I understand how my fixed salary is determined.	4,1	3,8	3,6	3,6
I feel like I fully understand what my total rewards package is worth.	4,1	3,8	3,5	3,5
I understand how any variable compensation (bonus, incentive) is calculated.	4,0	3,9	3,1	3,4
My organisation communicates clearly about how my compensation is structured.	3,8	3,5	3,2	3,3

Mean values

1 = Disagree · 2 = Slightly disagree · 3 = Neither agree nor disagree · 4 = Slightly agree · 5 = Agree



Main findings – total reward satisfaction & understanding

Total reward satisfaction

- **Overall satisfaction is relatively positive:** respondents are on average slightly satisfied, and rewards are not a major source of dissatisfaction.
- **Fringe benefits are the strongest element:** lawyers are most satisfied with both their number and their value, which adds to the package's attractiveness.
- **Fixed salary** is viewed clearly more favourably than variable pay.
- **Communication scores lower.** Career and salary progression clarity is the biggest weakness and main opportunity for improvement; other communication dimensions also need major improvement.
- **By profile:** legal managers on the executive committee are the most satisfied (and best rewarded). Solo legal counsels are the least satisfied, especially with benefits, fixed and variable pay, and communication.

Total reward understanding

- Company lawyers **generally understand which benefits and which components** make up their total remuneration.
- They understand less well the **information on their payslip** and **how fixed salary and variable pay are calculated**.
- They know which reward instruments they receive, but less well **what their total package is worth**, indicating potential for (better) total reward statements or communication about the total value of rewards.
- **Variable pay** remains the least transparent component: how bonuses and incentives are calculated is one of the weakest dimensions of understanding.
- **By profile:** solo legal counsels and legal advisors have the lowest understanding of their package and are also less satisfied with the quality of their organisation's communication.

Financial / reward literacy & well-being



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Financial well-being as a benefit

Survey Question: *For each item, please indicate to what extent you would appreciate it if your employer offered this. If your employer offers this, we would like to know how much you appreciate it.*

Statement	Mean
A comprehensive insurance package (in case of illness, death, accident, etc.)	3,76
Insight into the calculation of your salary	3,64
Guidance and tools for your retirement planning	3,30
Insight and guidance regarding your tax situation and taxes	3,28
Support in managing the financial impact of major life events	2,46
Investment advice	2,33
Support with managing your budget	2,20
Support with important financial decisions (e.g. buying a home)	2,14

1 = Not at all · 2 = To a limited extent · 3 = Neither to a great nor to a limited extent · 4 = To a rather great extent · 5 = To a great extent

602 respondents



Financial situation

Statement	Mean
My financial future feels secure.	3,47
I am well informed about the financial implications if I were to become ill for an extended period.	3,00
Financial worries affect my concentration at work.	1,69
I often put off facing my financial situation.	1,67
I have difficulty paying my monthly expenses.	1,58

602 respondents

1 = Disagree · 2 = Slightly disagree · 3 = Neither agree nor disagree · 4 = Slightly agree · 5 = Agree



Main findings – financial literacy & well-being

- **Company lawyers are financially comfortable and experience limited financial stress.** Few respondents report difficulties paying monthly expenses or being distracted at work by financial concerns.
- However, their **financial future** is not generally perceived as secure, and they feel less well informed about the **financial implications if they were to become ill for an extended period.**
- Protection, in the form of a comprehensive insurance package, is valued more than financial coaching like support in managing the financial impact of life events, investment advice, and support with managing the budget and on the occasion of important financial decisions.
- **There is moderate demand for guidance on retirement and taxation.** Support related to retirement financial planning receives substantially higher scores than support related to personal financial management.
- **Employers should prioritise financial literacy over financial assistance.** The opportunity lies less in solving financial problems and more in helping employees make informed decisions regarding income protection, pensions, taxation, and long-term wealth accumulation.

AI in the legal profession



In collaboration with:

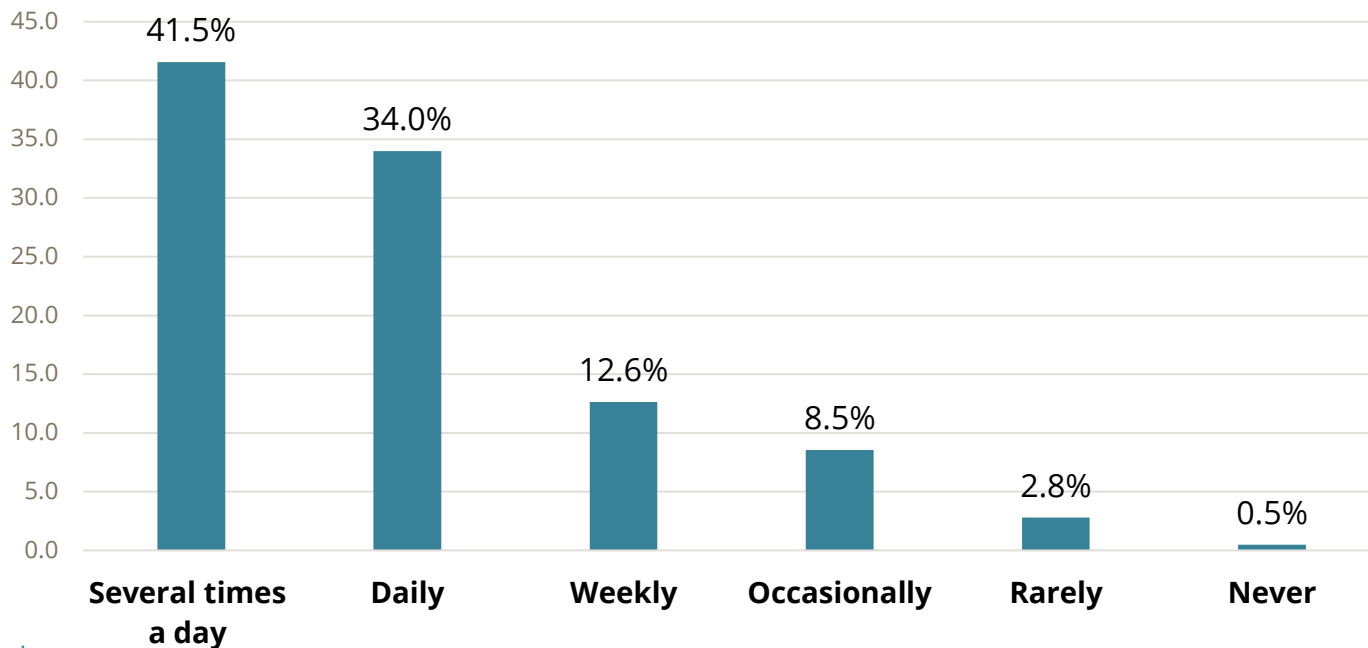
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AI – AI tools at work

Survey Question: *To what extent do you currently use AI tools in your work?*

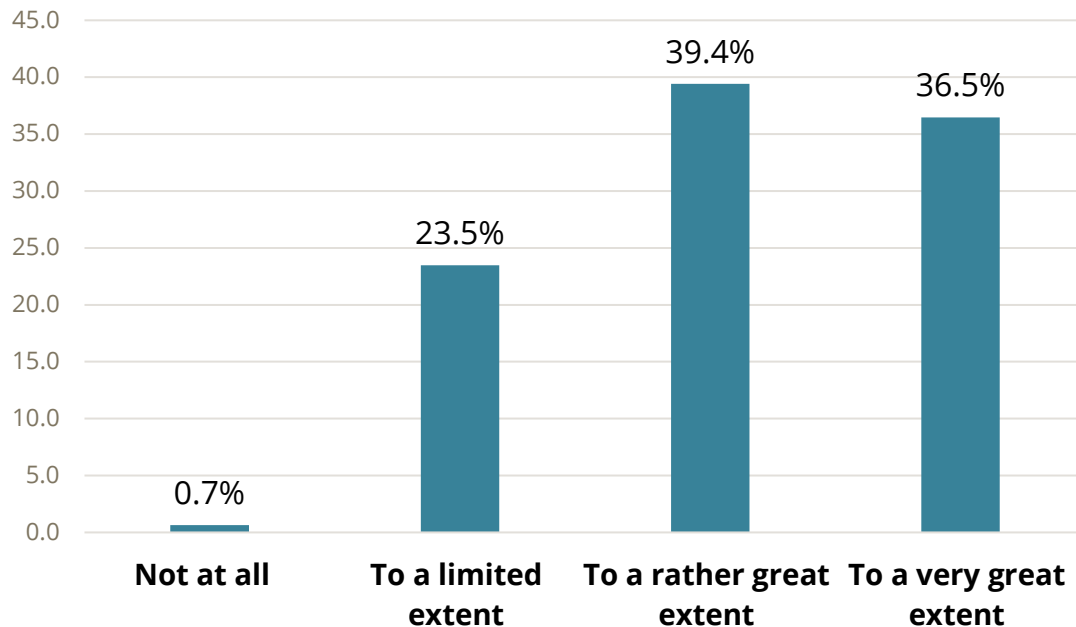


609 respondents



AI – encourage use of AI tools

Survey Question: *To what extent does your organisation allow or encourage the use of AI tools?*

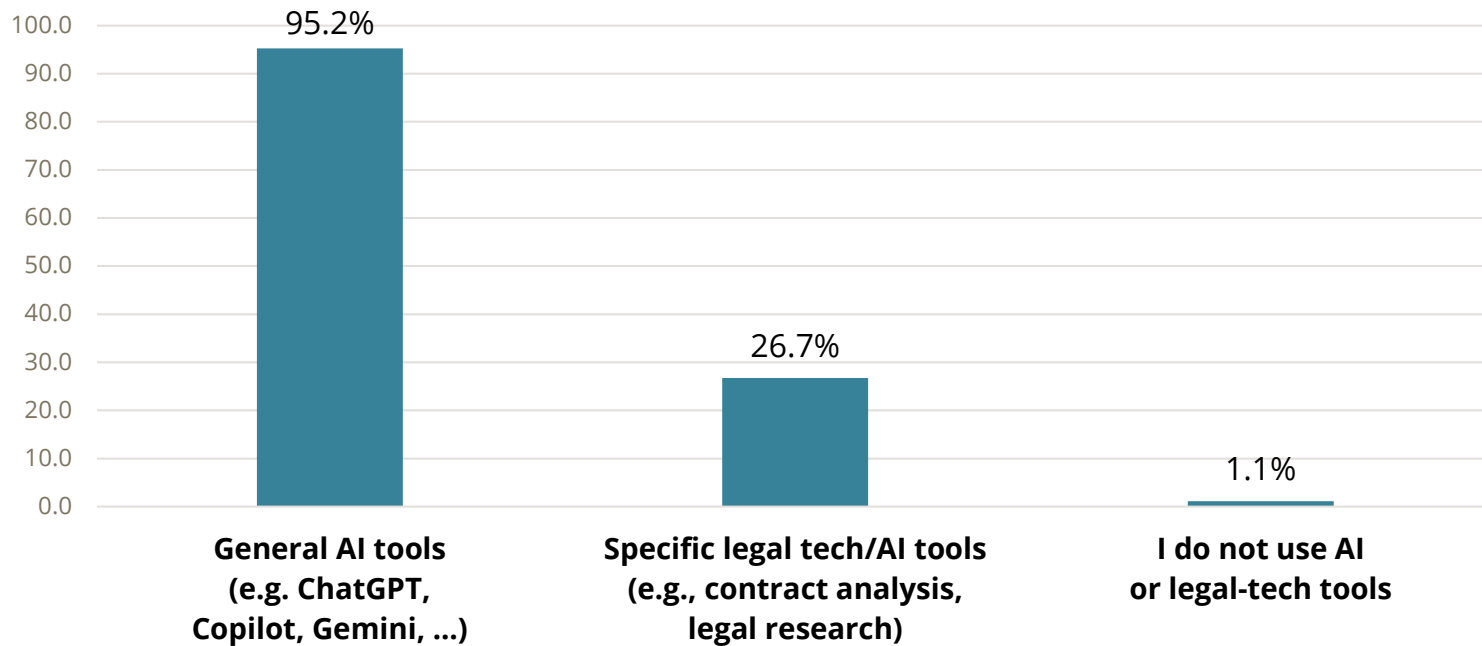


609 respondents



AI – types of AI tools

Survey Question: *What types of AI tools do you currently use for your work?*

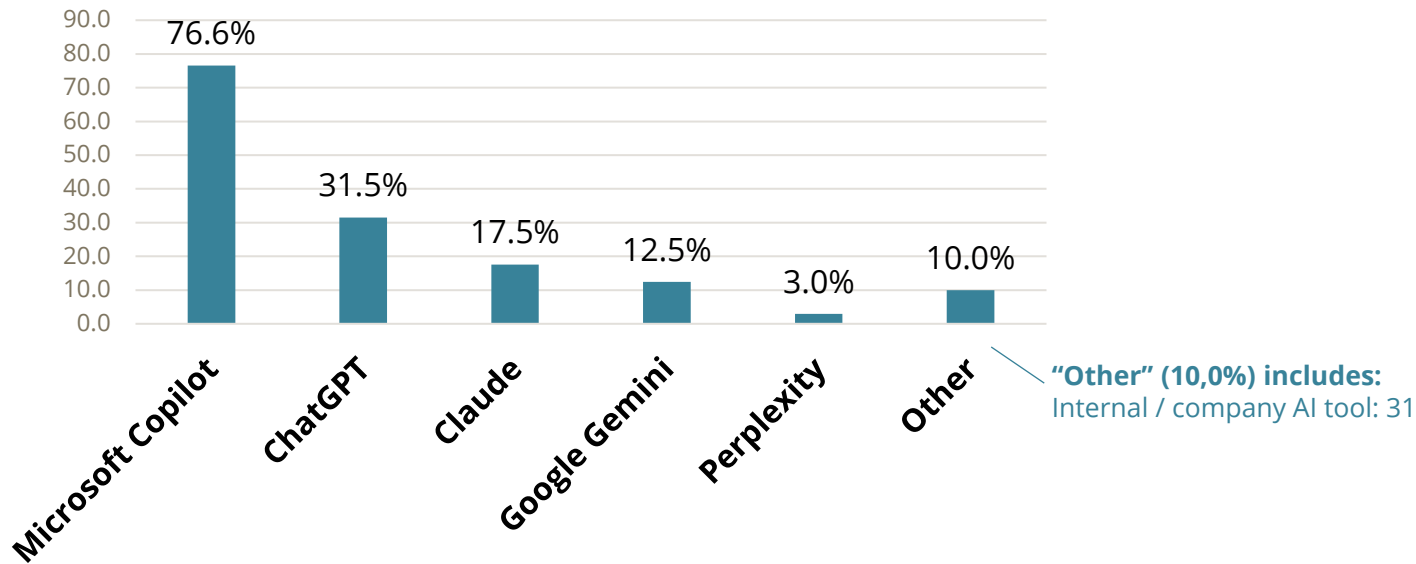


610 respondents



AI – types of general AI tools

Survey Question: What types of general AI tools do you currently use?

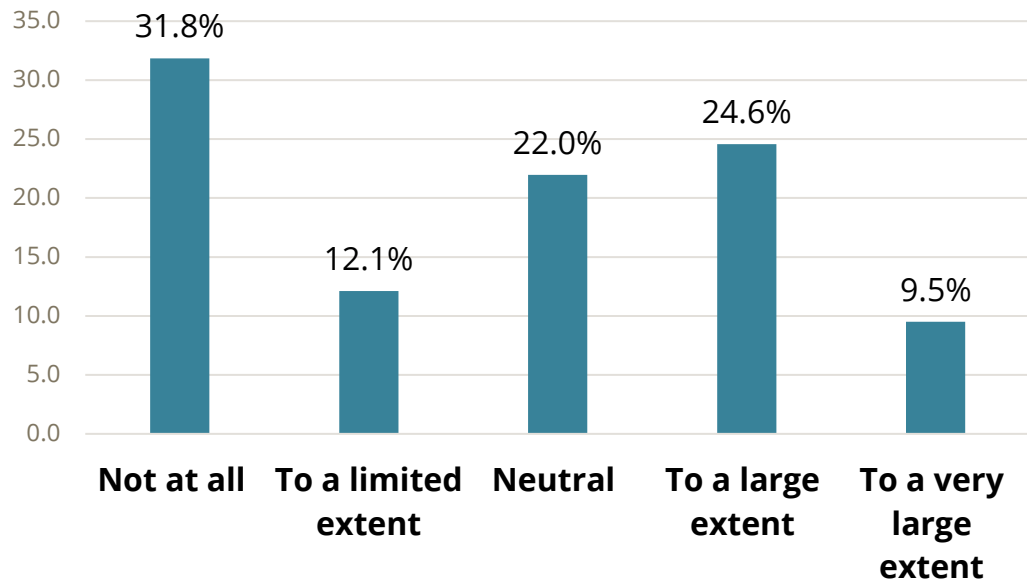


578 respondents



AI – AI tools as valuable part of reward package

Survey Question: *To what extent do you consider access to general AI tools for your job as a valuable component of your total rewards package?*

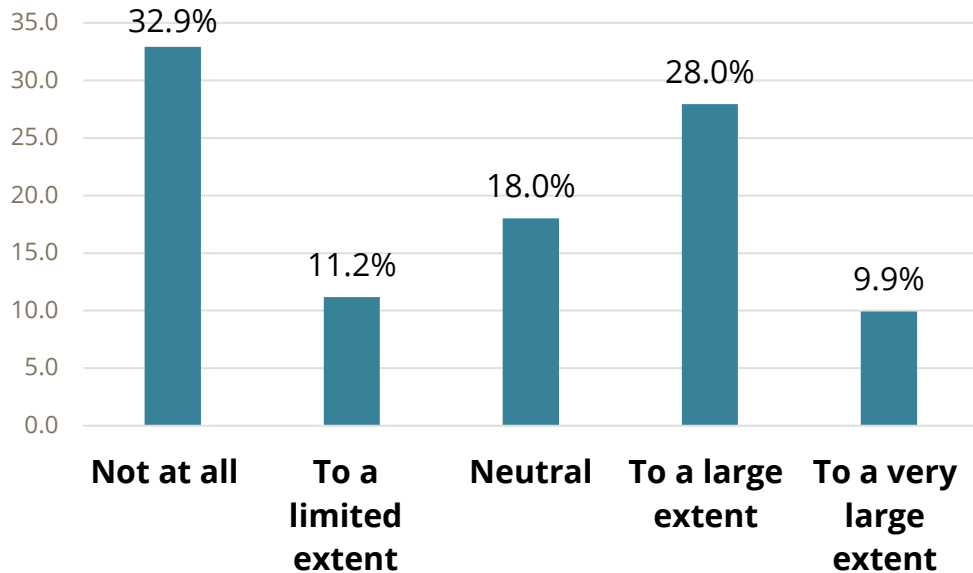


578 respondents



AI – legal AI tools as valuable part of package

Survey Question: *To what extent do you consider access to legal tech/AI tools for your job as a valuable part of your total rewards package?*



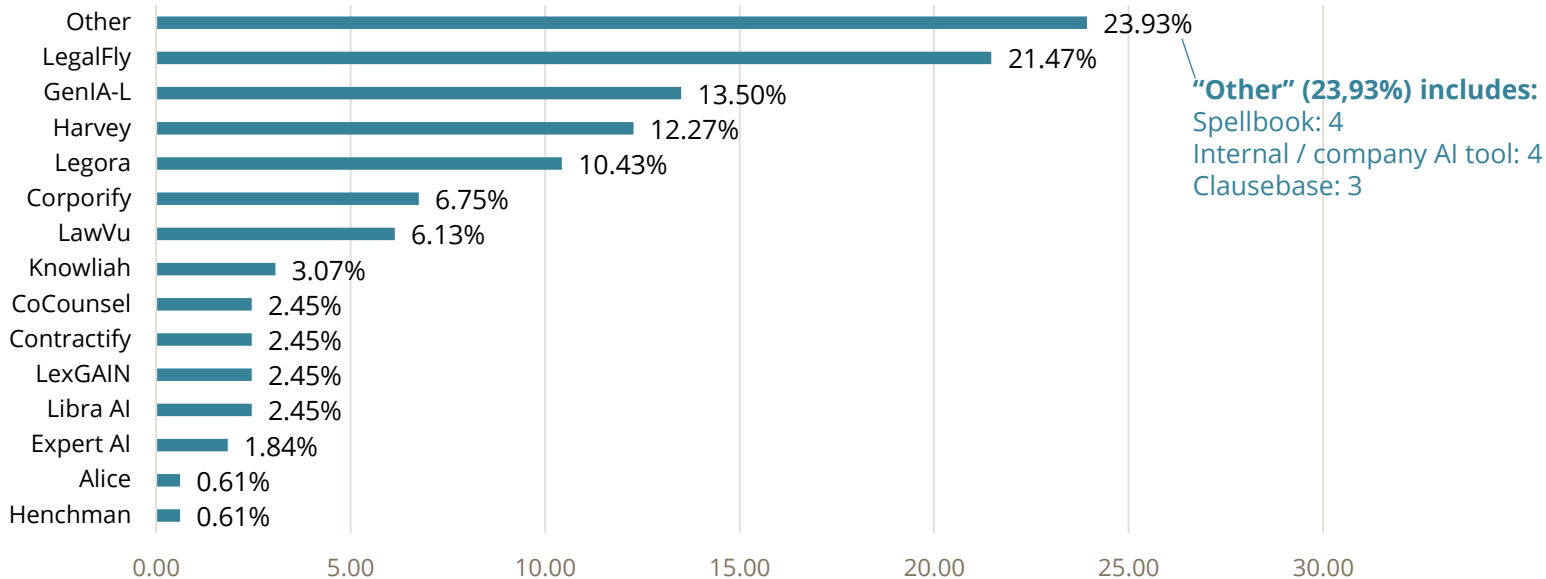
161 respondents

Only shown when legal tech/ AI tools were selected in the previous question.



AI – specific legal AI tools

Survey Question: Which specific legal tech/AI tools do you use?



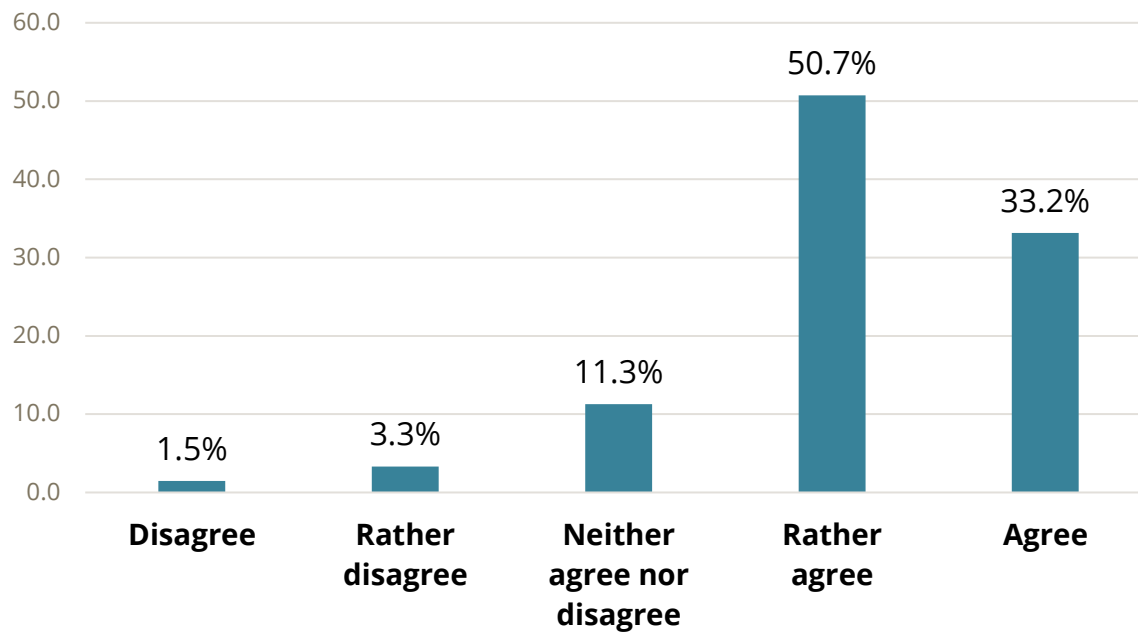
163 respondents

Only shown when legal tech/ AI tools were selected in the previous question.



AI – AI tools & work efficiency

Survey Question: *To what extent do you agree that AI tools help you work more efficiently?*

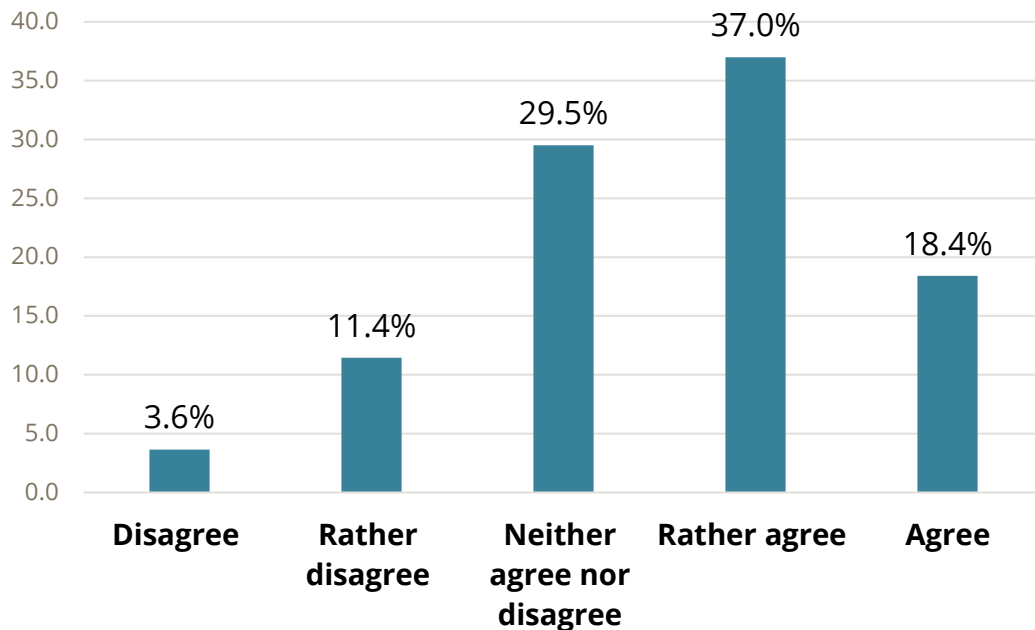


603 respondents



AI – AI tools & job satisfaction

Survey Question: *To what extent do you agree that AI tools increase your job satisfaction?*

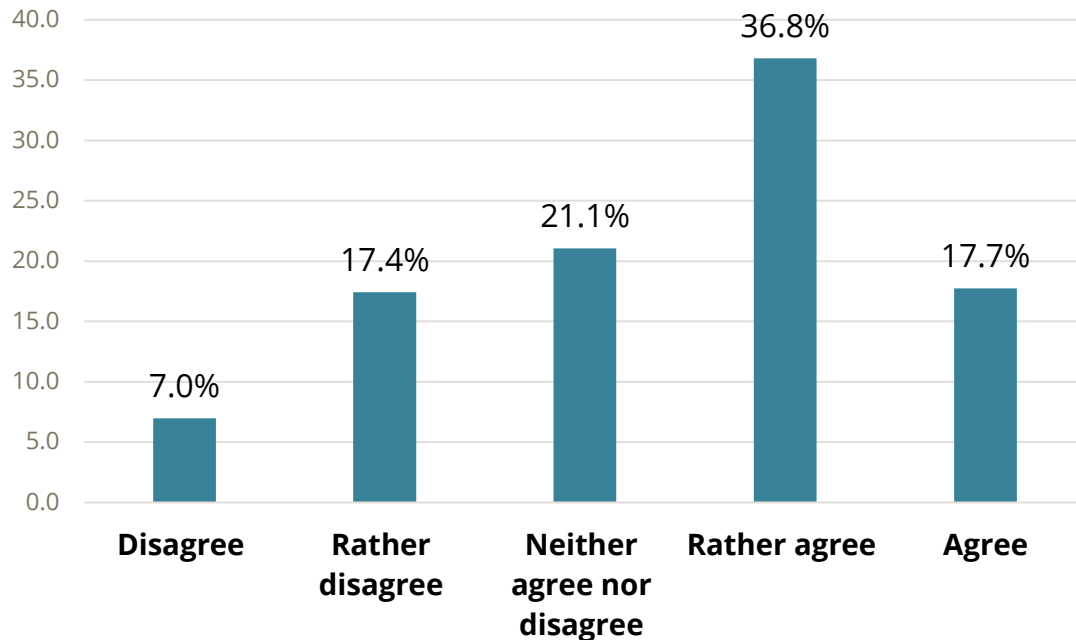


603 respondents



AI – investing in AI tools

Survey Question: *To what extent do you agree that your organisation invests sufficiently in AI tools and training relevant to your position?*

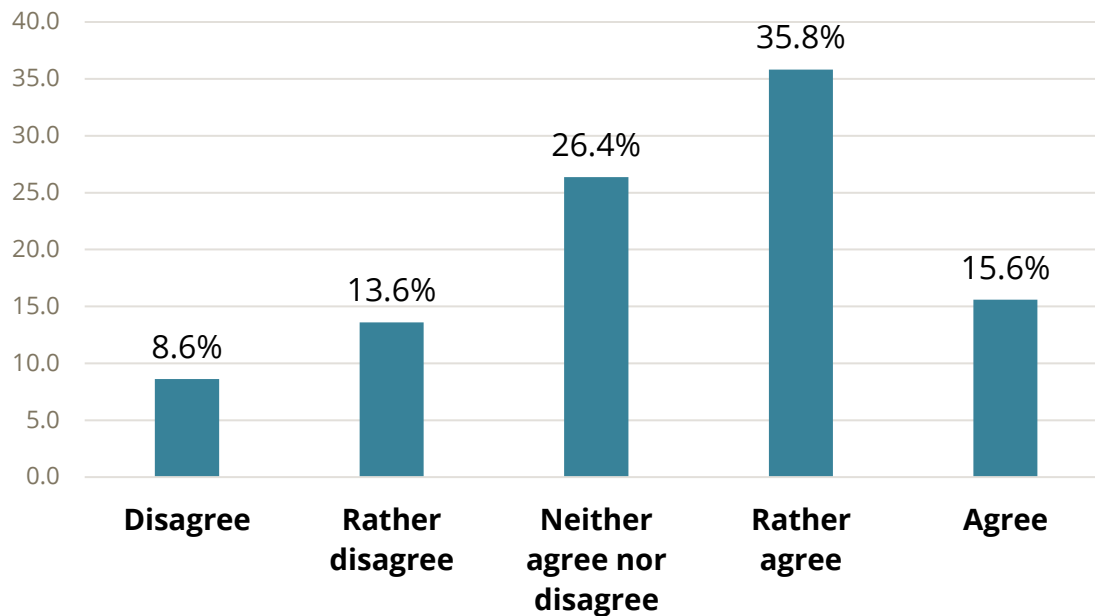


603 respondents



AI – AI tools when choosing a new job

Survey Question: *To what extent do you agree that the availability of professional AI tools would be an important factor when choosing a new job?*

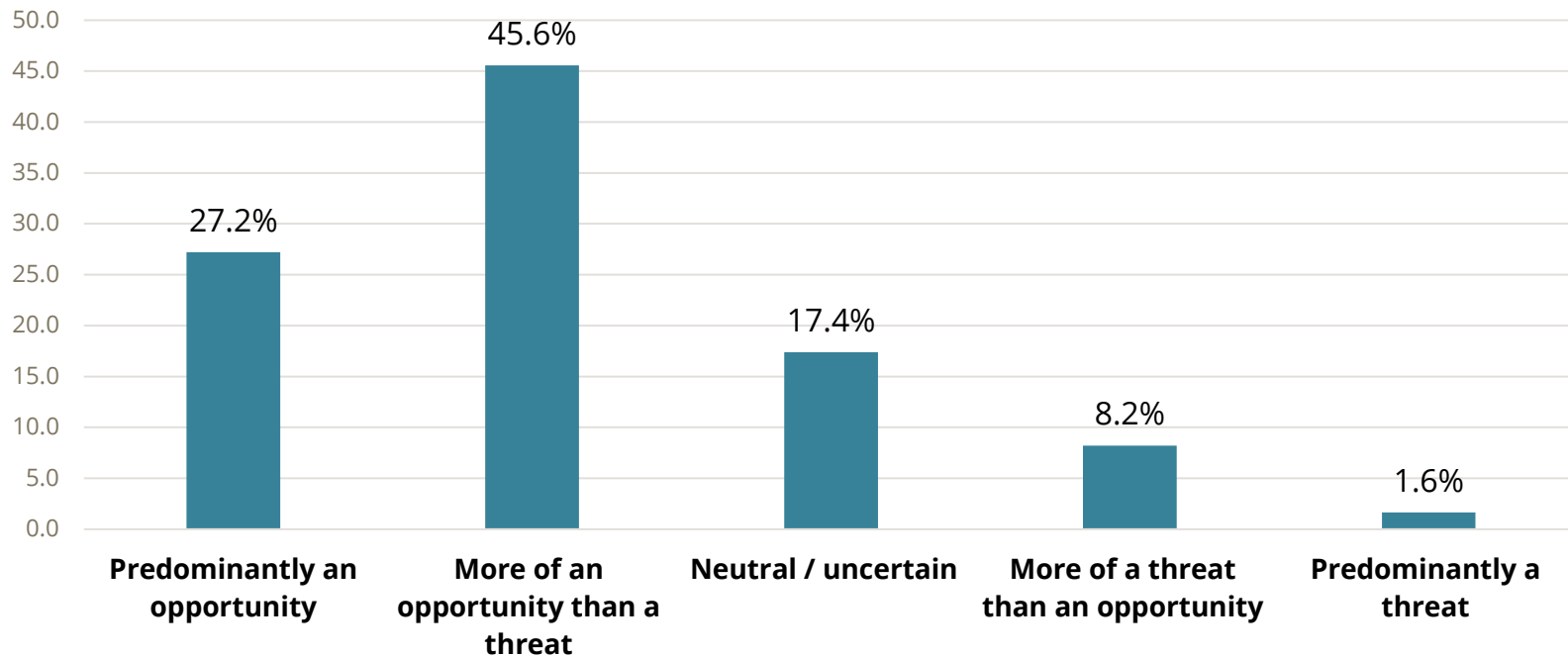


603 respondents



AI – impact of AI

Survey Question: *How do you view the impact of AI on your profession?*



610 respondents



AI – impact of AI

Survey Question: *How do you view the impact of AI on your profession?*

	Threat	Neutral	Opportunity
Legal manager, executive committee member	10%	20%	70%
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	10%	15%	75%
Solo legal counsel	12%	10%	78%
Legal advisor	8%	17%	75%

610 respondents



Main findings – AI use and tools in the legal profession

1. AI has become a mainstream part of daily work

AI adoption is already high:

- 41,5% use AI several times a day and
- 34,0% daily;
- another 12,6% use it weekly.
- Only 0,5% never use AI tools.

AI is no longer experimental but embedded in everyday work.

2. Organisations are generally supportive of AI use

- 76% say their organisation allows or encourages AI use to a rather great (39%) or very great extent (37%).
- Only 0,7% say it is not allowed or encouraged at all.

So organisational resistance is unlikely to be the main barrier to further adoption.

3. AI is used widely but not yet valued as an employee benefit

Access to AI is not widely seen as a valuable part of the total rewards package.

- Among general-AI users, 34% find it valuable to a (very) large extent,
- while 44% do so not at all or only to a limited extent; for legal-tech/AI users the split is 38% versus 44%.

AI is seen mainly as a tool needed to perform work, rather than as a benefit.

4. General-purpose AI tools dominate specialised ones

- 95% use general AI tools,
 - compared with 27% for specialised legal-tech/AI tools.
- Microsoft Copilot leads (77%), followed by ChatGPT (32%), Claude (18%) and Google Gemini (13%). Internal or company-specific AI solutions are also mentioned (31 mentions).



Main findings – impact of AI in the legal profession

5. The specialised legal AI market is fragmented

No specialised tool dominates the way Copilot does. LegalFly (21%), GenIA-L (14%), Harvey (12%) and Legora (10%) are named most; 24% chose “Other” (e.g. Spellbook, Clausebase, internal tools), pointing to a still-evolving ecosystem.

6. Efficiency is the clearest perceived benefit

- 84% rather agree (51%) or agree (33%) that AI tools help them work more efficiently;
- only 5% disagree to some degree.

7. Efficiency does not translate one-to-one into job satisfaction

- 55% rather agree or agree that AI increases their job satisfaction;
- 30% are neutral
- and 15% disagree to some extent.

AI is linked more consistently to working efficiently than to enjoying the job.

8. AI tools play a role in employer attractiveness

- When choosing a new job, 51% rather agree or agree that available professional AI tools would be an important factor,
- versus 22% who disagree to some degree
- and 26% who are neutral.

9. AI is seen as an opportunity rather than a threat

- 73% see AI predominantly as an opportunity (27%) or more as an opportunity than a threat (46%);
- only 10% see it more or predominantly as a threat,
- and 17% are neutral or uncertain.

This holds across roles: 70% of legal managers on the executive committee, 75% of other legal managers, 78% of solo legal counsel and 75% of legal advisors.

Self-employed



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Respondents

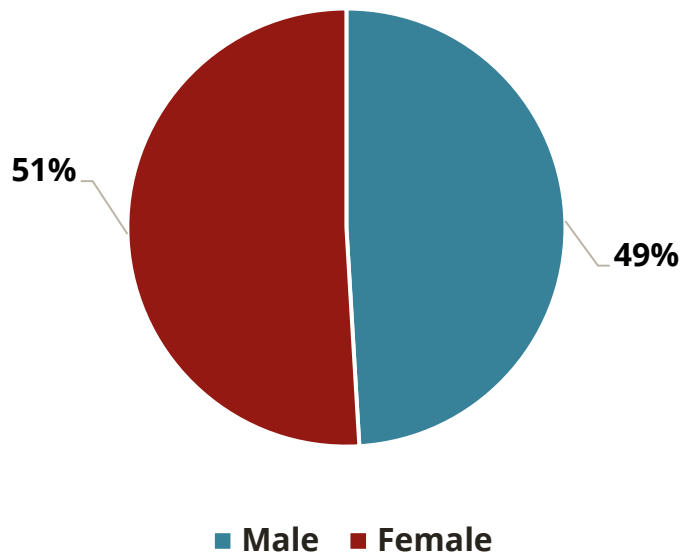
- In this section, we provide a description of the respondents who participated in the survey and an overview of their main characteristics (for example functions, sectors, legal domains and company size, total experience).
- Understanding the sample and categories is crucial for interpreting the results and drawing meaningful conclusions from the survey data. This will help readers contextualise the findings and understand the relevance of the results to their own interests or objectives.
- With 53 self-employed respondents, this sample is small and less representative than the employee sample. The results in this section should therefore be read with extra care.





Gender

Survey Question: *How do you see yourself?*

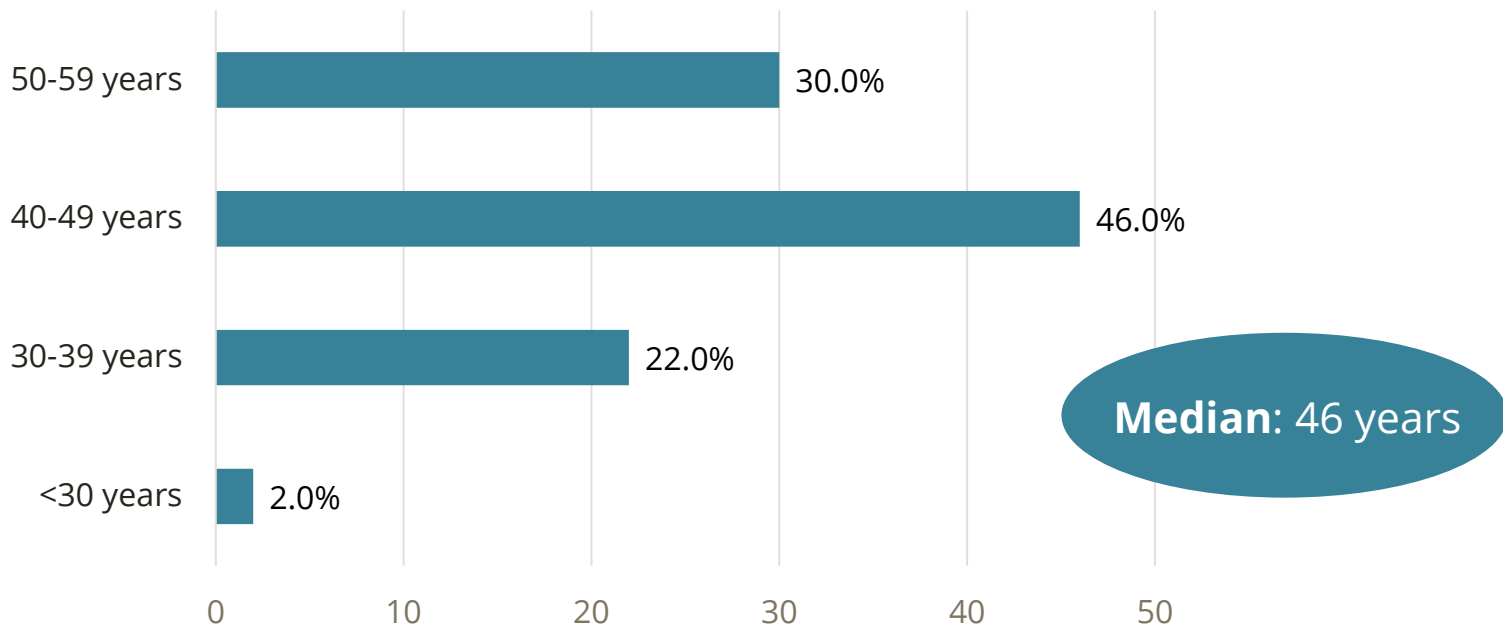


53 respondents



Age

Survey Question: *What is your year of birth? – converted to age in years*

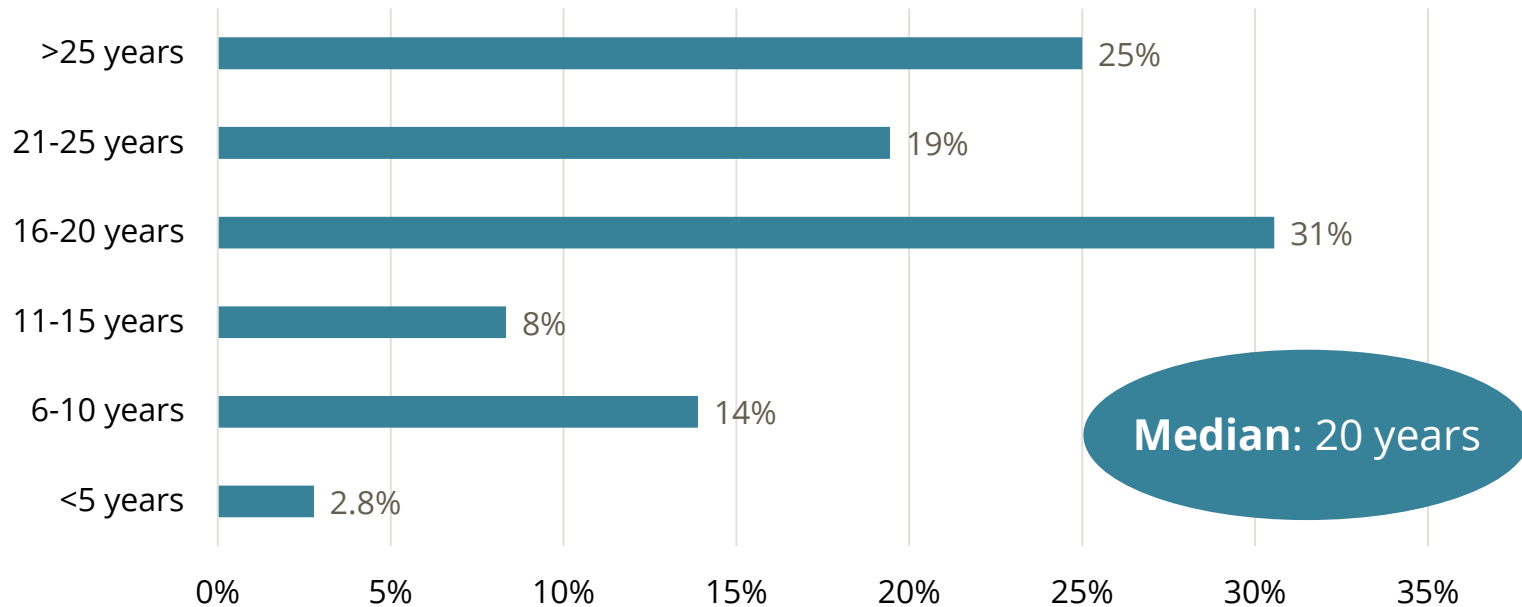


50 respondents



Legal professional experience

Survey Question: *What is your total number of years (across all employers) of legal professional experience?*

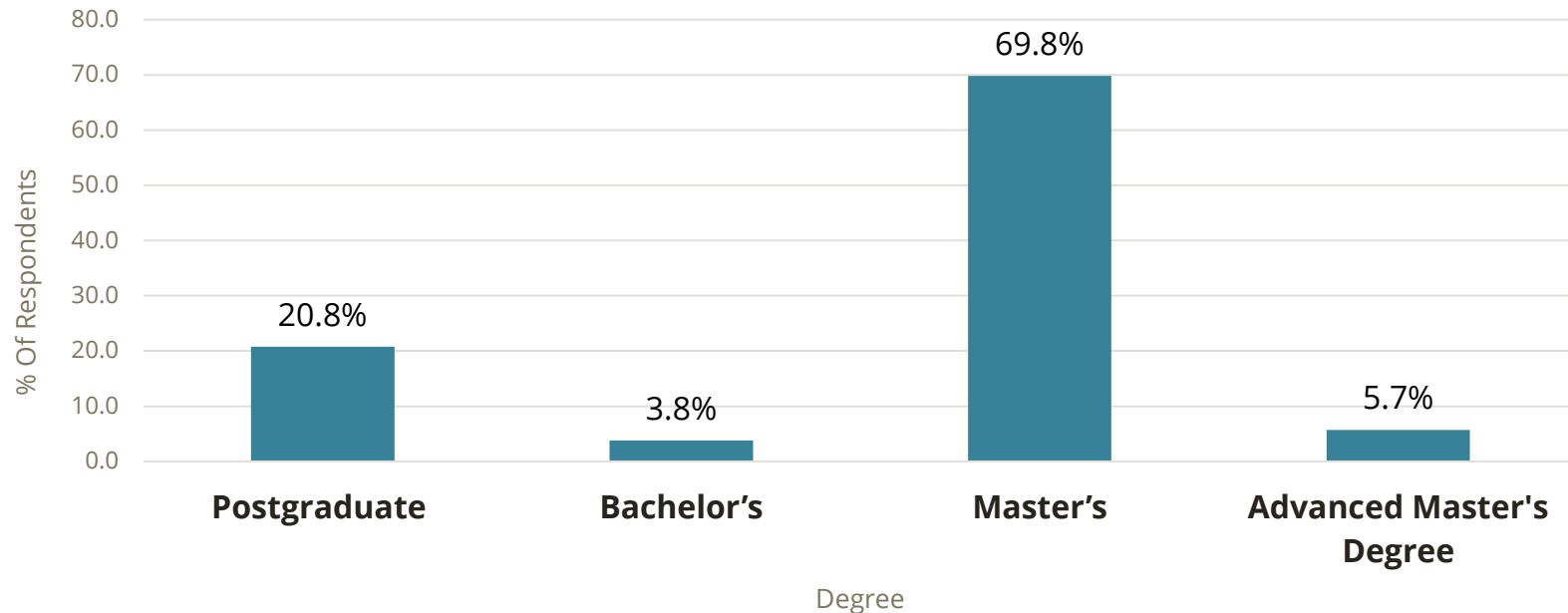


36 respondents



Highest level of education

Survey Question: *What is the highest level of education you have completed or the highest degree you have obtained?*



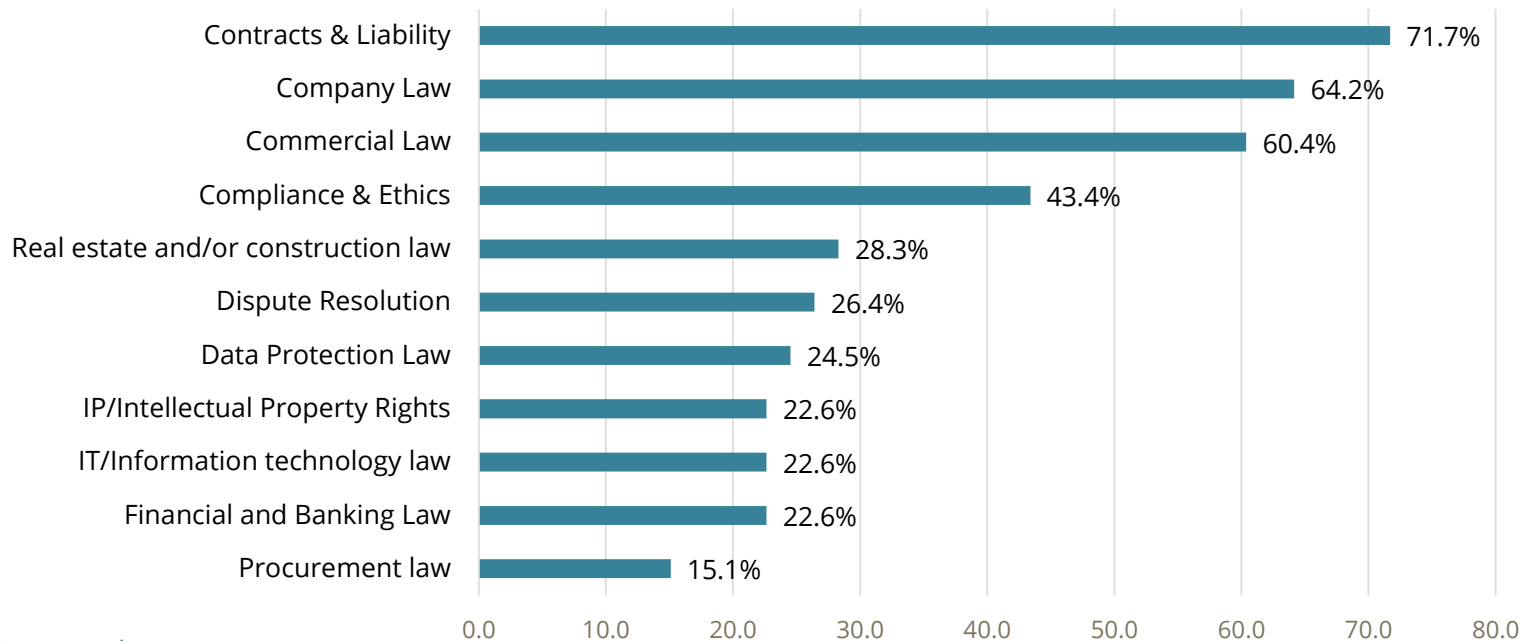
53 respondents



Multiple domains per
respondent possible

Legal domain (1/2)

Survey Question: *Indicate which legal domains you are mainly active in*



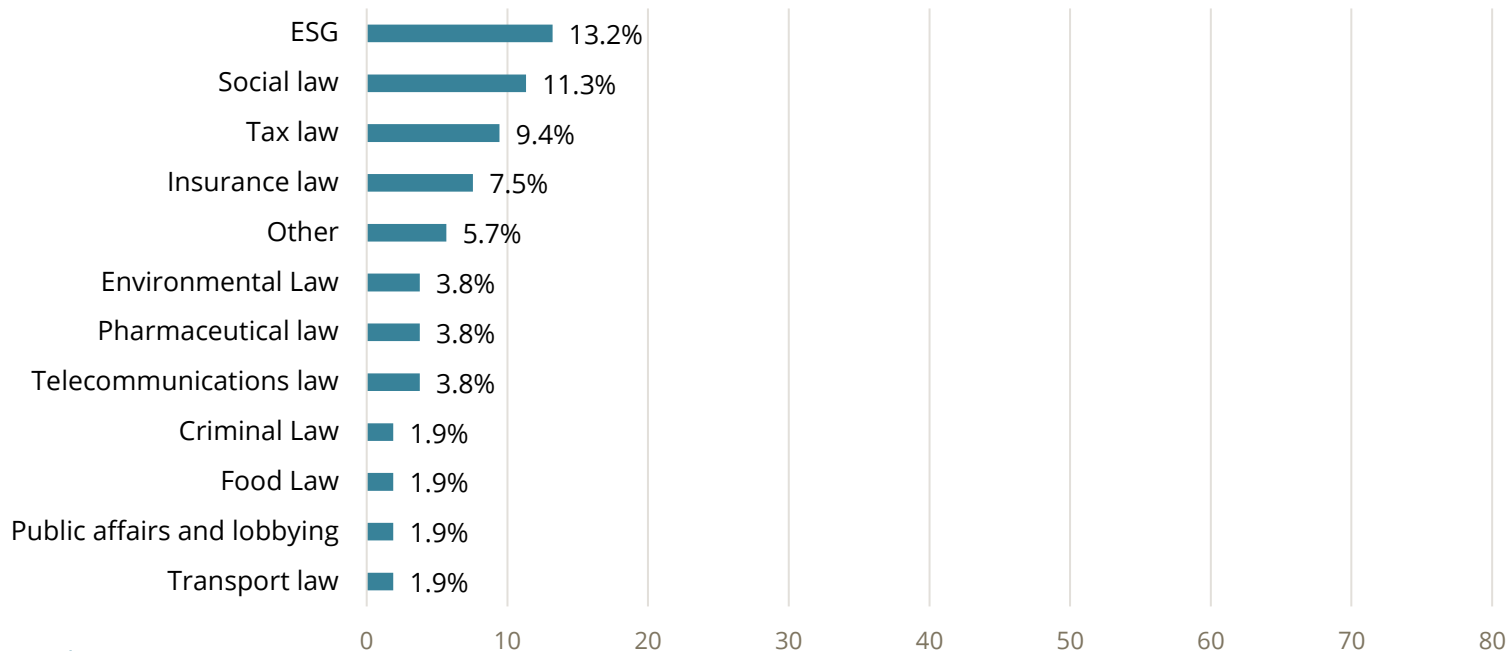
53 respondents



Multiple domains per
respondent possible

Legal domain (2/2)

Survey Question: Indicate which legal domains you are mainly active in



53 respondents



Function

Survey Question: *What best describes your responsibility/function (within the legal department)?*

Function	% of sample	Median legal experience	Average seniority
Legal manager, executive committee member	23%	21 years	24 years
Legal manager, not an executive committee member	13%	23 years	23 years
Solo legal counsel	13%	14 years	14 years
Legal advisor	45%	20 years	19 years

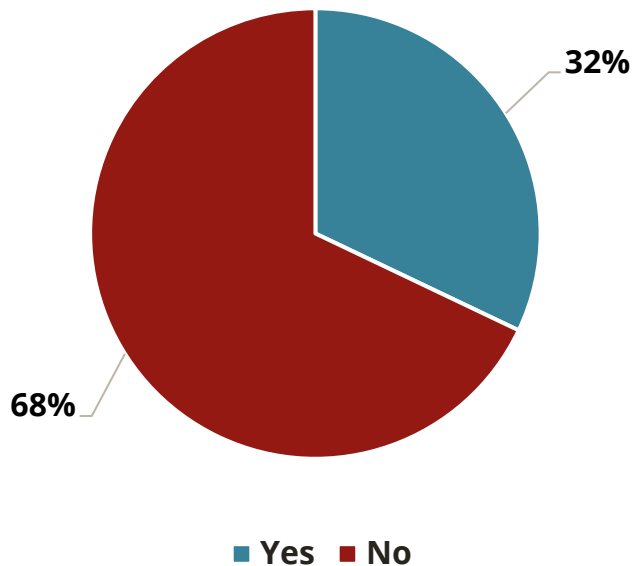
53 respondents

** Compliance officer (4% of sample) and paralegal (2% of sample) are not included in the overview of pay and benefits when specifying functions, due to insufficient responses.*



Member of the IBJ-IJE

Survey Question: *Are you a member (or associated member) of the Institute of Company Lawyers (IBJ-IJE)?*

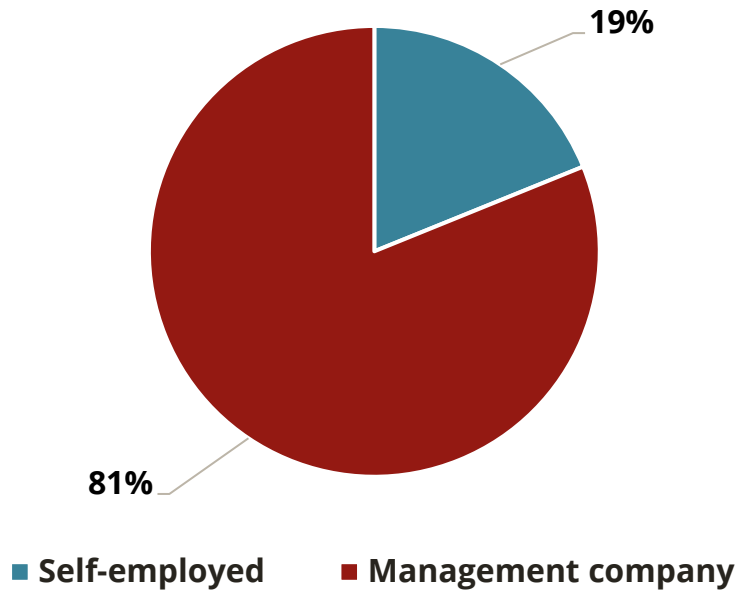


53 respondents



Self-employed or management company

Survey Question: *Do you work as a self-employed person or through a management company?*

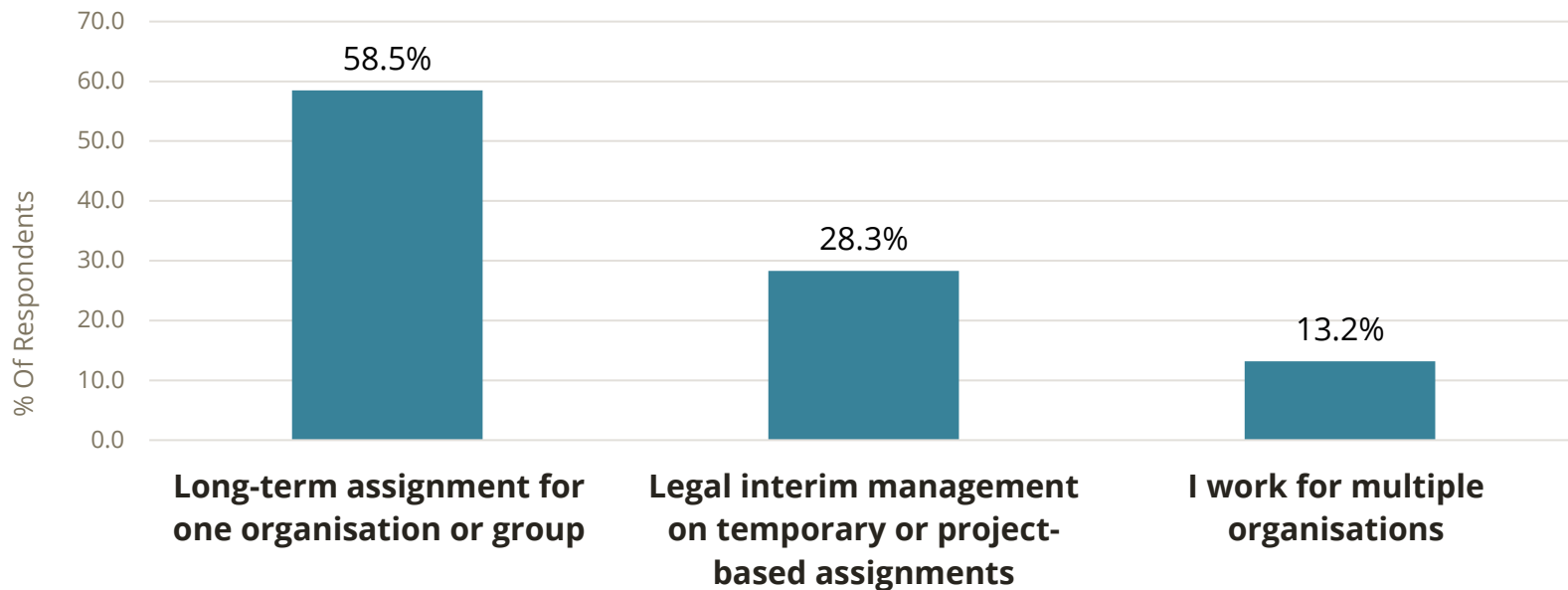


53 respondents



In-house legal work

Survey Question: Which statement best describes your in-house legal work?



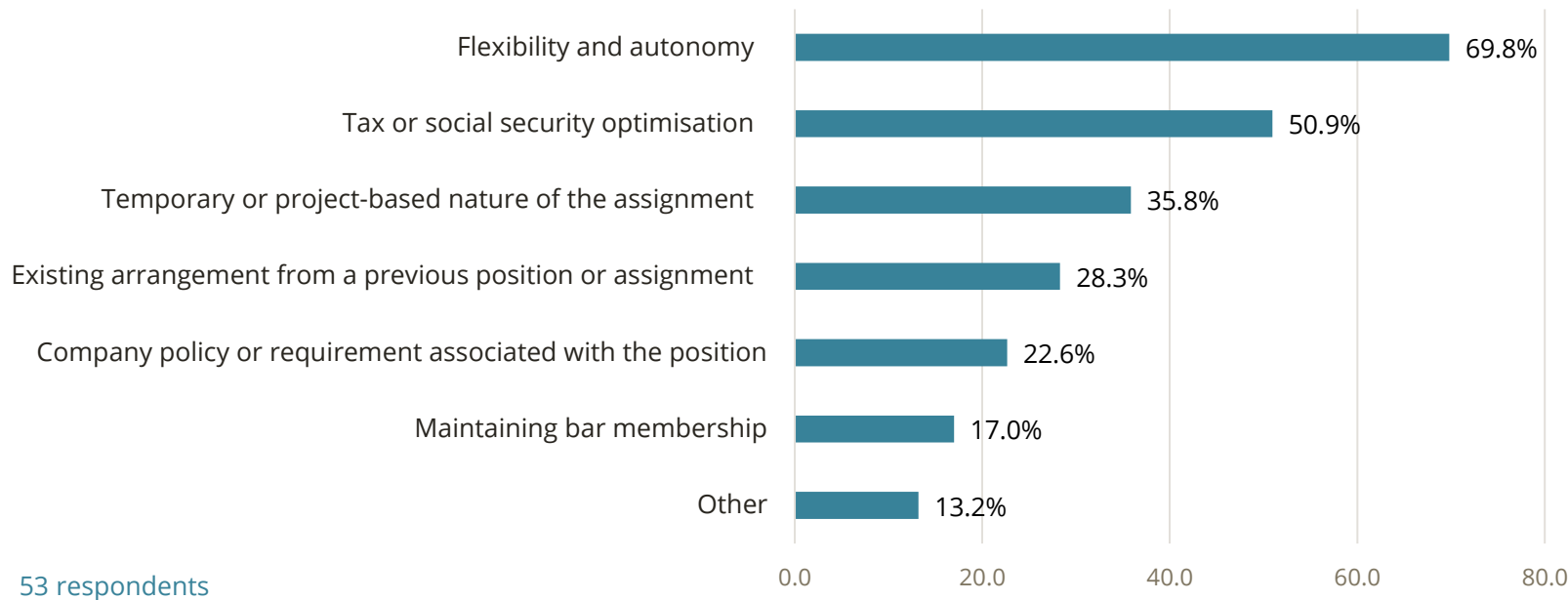
53 respondents

In-House Legal Work



Main reasons self-employed

Survey Question: *What are the main reasons for working as a self-employed professional or through a management company?*





Annual amount invoiced in 2025 in terms of function

Annual amount (in FTE)	P25	Median	P75
Legal manager, executive committee member (N = 12)	€ 211.385 (Median experience: 20 years)	€ 316.000 (Median experience: 21 years)	€ 392.500 (Median experience: 29 years)
Legal manager, not an executive committee member (N = 7)	Not enough responses	€ 190.000 (Median experience: 23 years)	Not enough responses
Solo legal counsel (N = 7)	Not enough responses	€ 149.600 (Median experience: 14 years)	Not enough responses
Legal advisor (N = 24)	€ 150.000 (Median experience: 12 years)	€ 162.400 (Median experience: 20 years)	€ 190.000 (Median experience: 24 years)



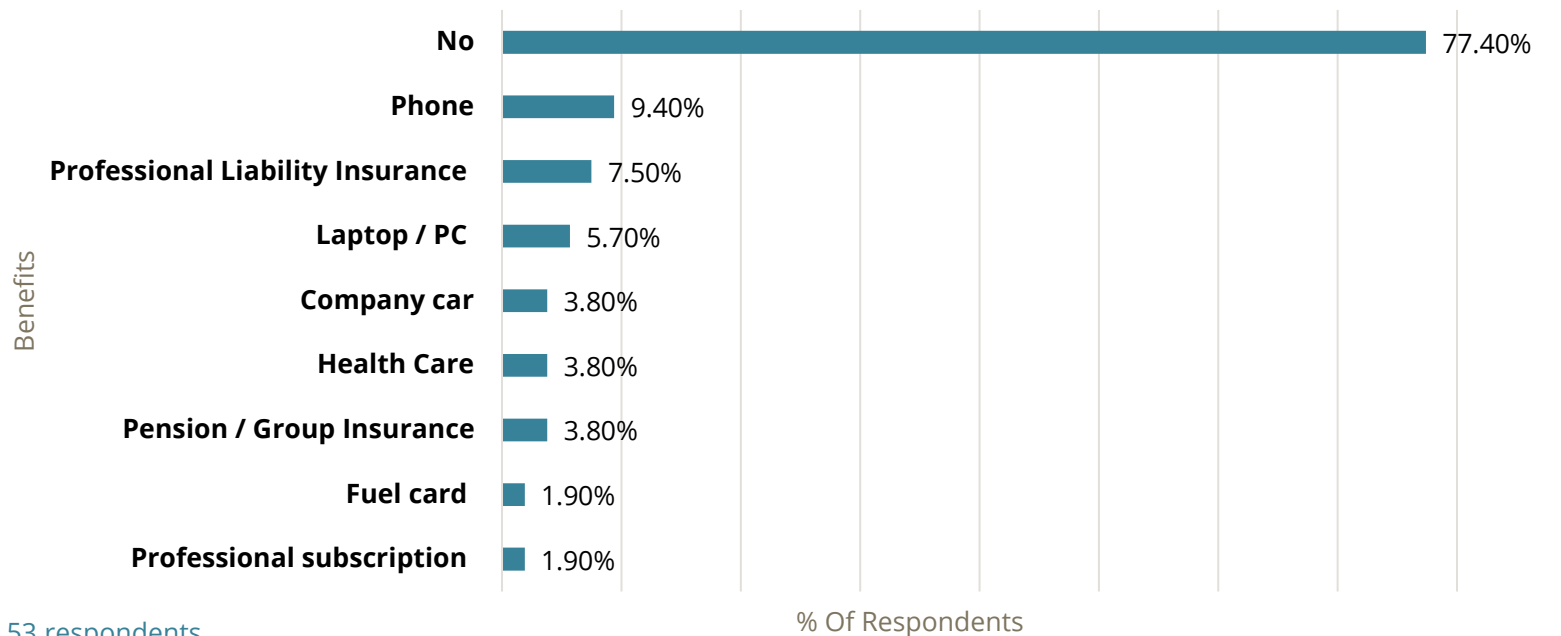
Average daily fee in terms of function

Average daily fee	P25	Median	P75
Legal manager, executive committee member (N = 12)	€ 788 (Median experience: 20 years)	€ 1.050 (Median experience: 21 years)	€ 1.904 (Median experience: 29 years)
Legal manager, not an executive committee member (N = 7)	Not enough responses	€ 850 (Median experience: 23 years)	Not enough responses
Solo legal counsel (N = 7)	Not enough responses	€ 675 (Median experience: 14 years)	Not enough responses
Legal advisor (N = 24)	€ 700 (Median experience: 12 years)	€ 750 (Median experience: 20 years)	€ 900 (Median experience: 24 years)



Additional benefits

Survey Question: *Do you receive any additional benefits from the organisation(s) for which you work?*



Comparison with 2023



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2023 vs. 2026: key figures by function

Function	Median fixed monthly gross salary			Bonus entitlement		Flat-rate reimbursement		Flexible reward system	
	2023*	2026	Change	2023	2026	2023	2026	2023	2026
Legal manager, exco member	€ 10.648	€ 10.400	-2,3%	89%	90%	79%	73%	38%	45%
Legal manager, not exco member	€ 8.109	€ 8.600	+6,1%	74%	87%	83%	69%	46%	47%
Solo legal counsel	€ 6.917	€ 6.806	-1,6%	73%	54%	70%	60%	30%	30%
Legal advisor	€ 6.203	€ 6.767	+9,1%	72%	77%	63%	55%	43%	54%

Context: shifts in experience explain part of the salary changes. Median legal experience of solo legal counsel fell from 16 years (2023) to 13 years (2026), while for legal advisors it rose from 11 to 12 years. For both legal manager functions, median experience was unchanged. Indexation is the other likely explanation.

** 2023: values indexed until March 2023 (561 respondents). 2026: 610 employee respondents. Medians in FTE, excluding 13th month and double holiday pay. Differences in sample composition and size limit direct comparability – figures are indicative.*



2023 vs. 2026: main findings

- **Salary growth has been selective rather than universal.** The strongest nominal increases since 2023 are among legal advisors and legal managers without executive committee membership. Median salaries for executive committee members and solo legal counsel remain broadly stable. Differences may reflect inflation and wage indexation, function-group composition, labour-market developments, and sample size. Greater overall experience does not explain them, as median legal experience is slightly lower in the 2026 employee sample.
- **Variable pay has become more widespread, but not across all functions.** Bonus eligibility has increased particularly among legal managers without executive committee membership, while falling considerably among solo legal counsel. Organisational context and sample composition may play a role, as large organisations generally have more developed bonus practices. The results do not establish the precise cause of the decline among solo legal counsel.
- **Mobility has undergone the clearest transformation.** The company car remains important, with the mobility budget increasingly complementing it and the fleet becoming substantially more electric. Changes in company-car prevalence therefore suggest a shift towards more flexible, sustainable mobility support rather than a decline in support.
- **Traditional benefits remain stable, while flexibility and communication are becoming more important.** Hospitalisation insurance, meal vouchers and supplementary pensions remain nearly universal and increasingly represent market standards. Differentiation lies more in flexible reward, broader financial protection and employees' ability to understand and choose within their total reward package.
- **Reward transparency remains the most persistent weakness.** Respondents are broadly satisfied with their remuneration and benefits, but have considerably less clarity about pay decisions and future salary growth. As in 2023, this suggests employers have improved reward packages more than procedural fairness, reward communication and future salary visibility.

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