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# BIG GAMES INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT SURVEY 2025

SALARIES, COMPENSATION TRENDS AND STATE OF THE GAMES SECTOR IN EUROPE



www.ingamejob.com | www.valuesvalue.com | www.scorewarrior.com

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# Highlights of 2025

- **26%** experienced layoffs in the past year, with game designers, artists, and QA specialists hit the hardest.
- **13%** left the games industry entirely in the past year.
- Marketing professionals lead the trend, with **24%** switching to other industries – the highest rate across all roles.
- At the junior level, **39%** exited the industry in 2024–2025.
- **15%** have been job hunting for over a year – or are still searching.
- Among programmers, **18%** say it takes a year or more to land a new role.
- When changing jobs last year, **28%** accepted worse terms – either a lower salary or a lower position.
- Only **1%** of respondents are interested in developing hyper-casual games.
- Salary remains the top priority when choosing an employer for **87%** of professionals.
- Half of all respondents report experiencing professional burnout.
- **41%** have a personal project on the side, most often programmers, game designers, and artists.
- QA specialists are the most skeptical about AI: **24%** neither use it for work nor plan to – the highest rate of any role.



# Introduction & Research Methodology

## Who conducted the study?

This study was conducted for the ninth time and the third at the international level. It provides an in-depth look into the European video games industry. A collaboration between Values Value and InGame Job, the research explores key trends in salaries, job satisfaction, job security, and career development across different roles and regions.

- [Values Value](#) is a recruitment expert in hiring top game development talent.
- [InGame Job](#) is an online platform for finding career opportunities in the gaming industry.

Last year's results were presented exclusively at devcom Developer Conference 2024. You can watch the full talk by Tanja Loktionova, founder of Values Value and co-founder of InGame Job, [on YouTube here](#).

## What is this study about?

We're looking into how secure industry professionals feel, focusing on their views on the likelihood of layoffs, their thoughts on switching jobs in 2025, and how many have left the industry due to job cuts. We're also identifying the groups most vulnerable to these changes. Alongside income and job satisfaction, our research explores the economic effects of mass layoffs. Respondents also shared which companies they'd like to work for and their preferred genres and platforms. As always, a large section of the report is dedicated to eNPS, broken down by various criteria. This helps us understand how factors like company type, size, project genre, and even the presence of a pet project impact employee engagement and loyalty.

# Introduction & Research Methodology

## How was the study conducted?

The research was conducted anonymously from March to June 2025.

A total of 1,650 respondents from 85 countries worldwide participated in the study.

The data was cleansed of invalid and anomalous salary responses. We analyze only the European region in order to represent valid data for this report.

We divide **Europe** into two regions (**European Union and Non-European Union**) because there are significant differences in the cost of living, income, expenses, and taxes. This way, we present more accurate figures in the salary charts.

For the sake of clarity, the following countries were grouped together as the region "**Europe (EU+UK+Switzerland)**": Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The size of the sample – 709 people.

The following countries were grouped together as the region "**Europe (Non-EU)**": Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine. The size of the sample – 543 respondents.



# Introduction & Research Methodology

## Who participated in the study?

- 56% male, 25% female, 19% other
- 8% Junior, 24% Middle, 35% Senior, 29% Lead/Top
- 21% have over 10 years of experience in games
- 82% have a bachelor's or master's degree, 8% did not finish university, 6% have only a high school education, and 3% have a PhD.

## Thank you!

This year, we would like to thank the partners and sponsors of this research who supported our initiative: the gaming companies [TAPCLAP](#), [Hypercell](#), [HyperVR](#), [Joyteractive](#), and the recruitment agency [Tribe](#).

A special thank you goes to our main sponsor, the gaming company [Scorewarrior](#).



joyteractive



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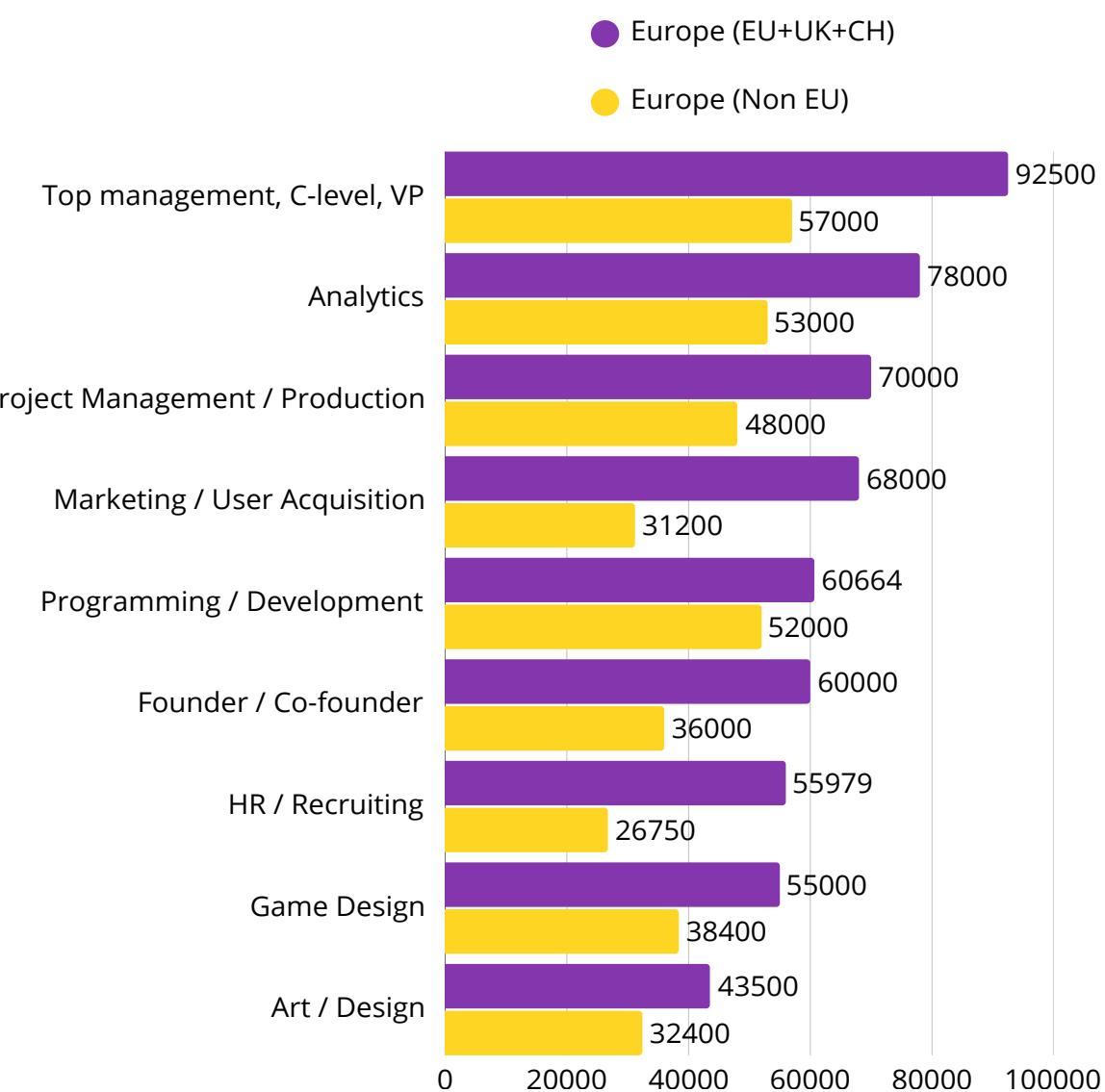
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# Salary Data 2025

Median salary is the median value of salaries in euro. The median value divides the sample into two equal parts: one-half of respondents receive salaries less than the median, and the other half more than the median. All salaries are gross, annual, and in euro.

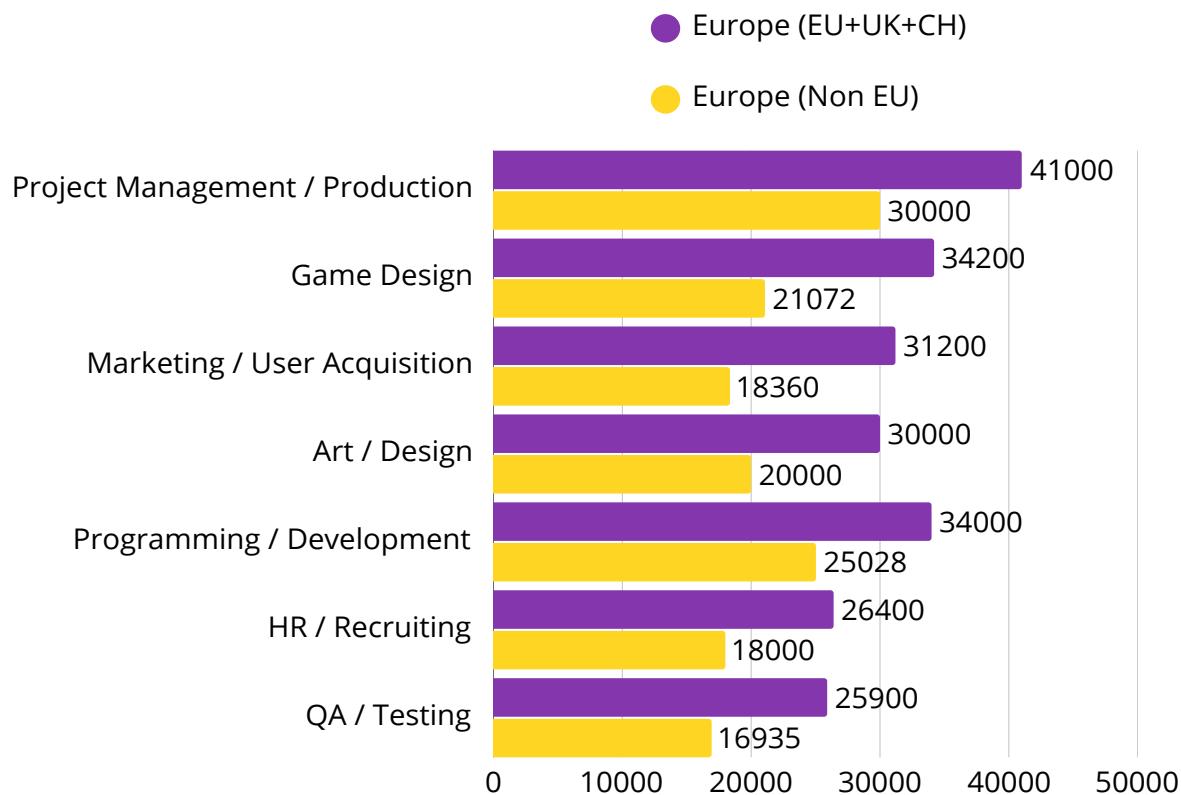
## Median Annual Salary By Roles And Regions Based On The Level Of Seniority

SENIOR LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR

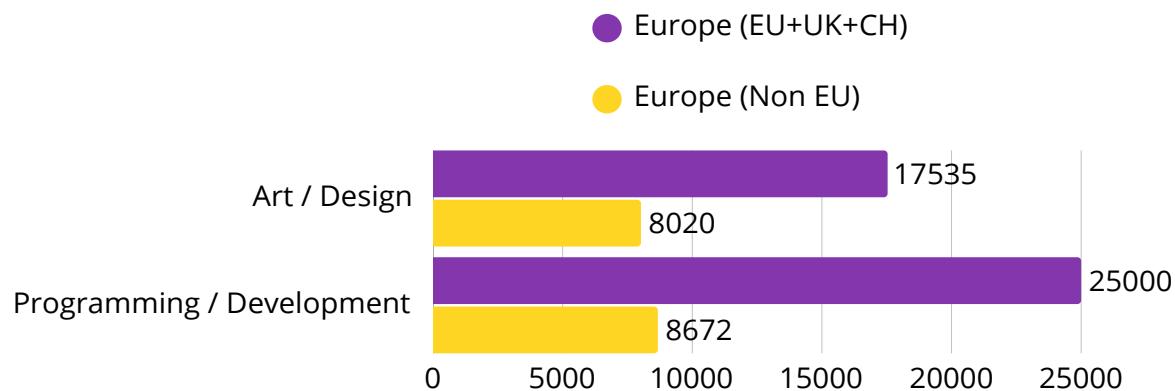


# Salary Data 2025

MIDDLE LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR



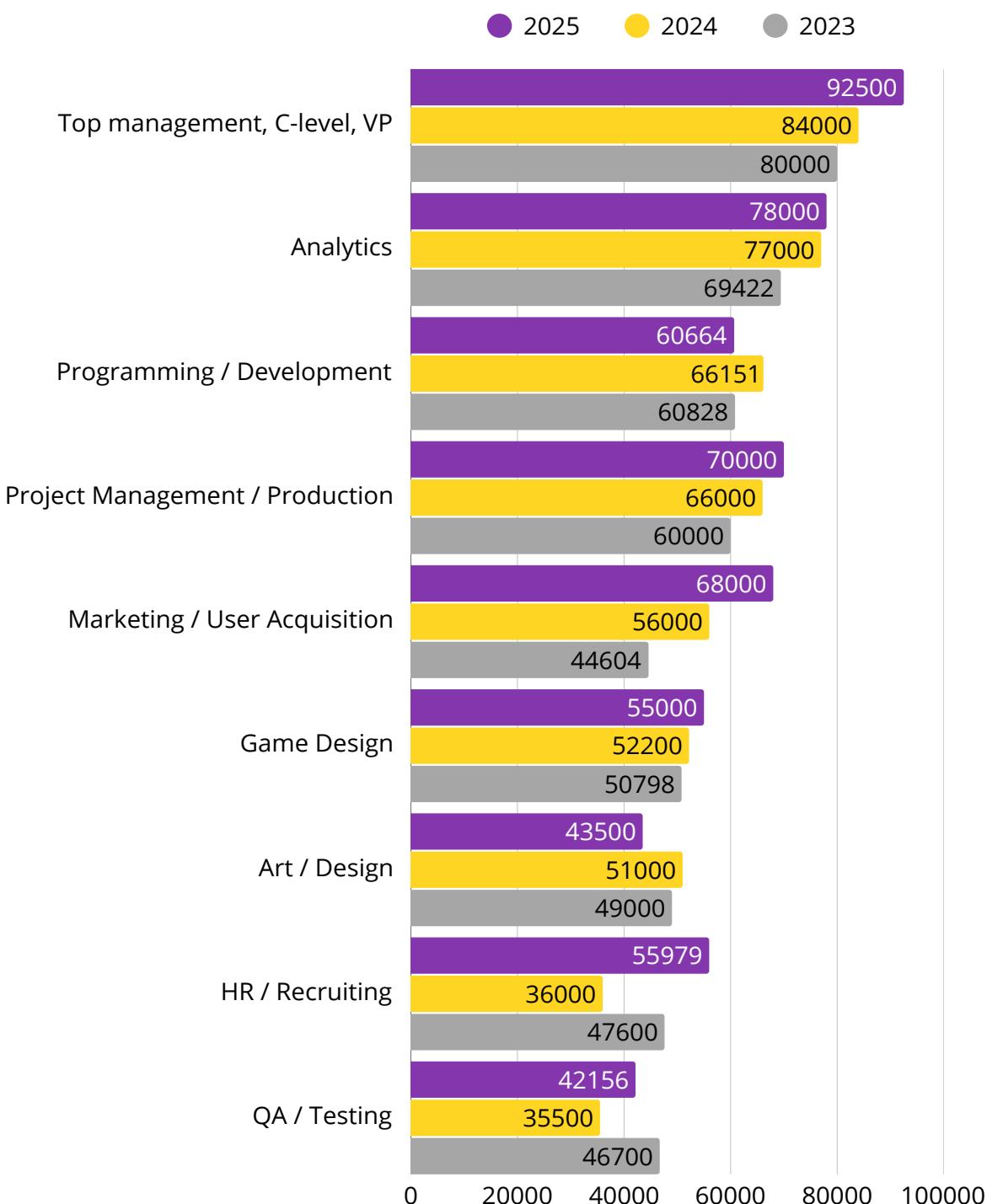
JUNIOR LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR



# Salary Data 2025

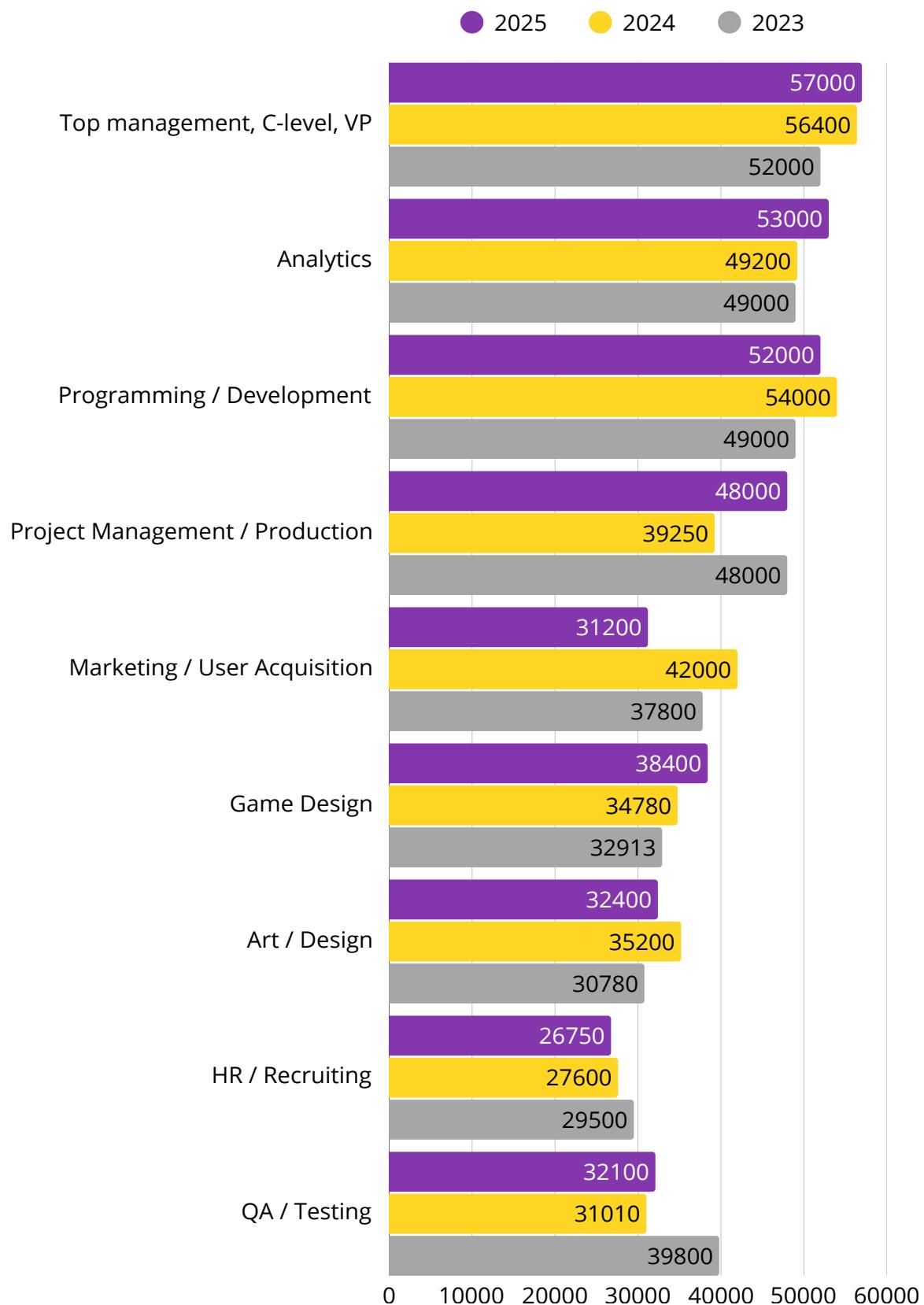
## Salaries Compared to 2024 and 2023: What Has Changed?

SENIOR LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, EU+UK+CH (2023–2025)



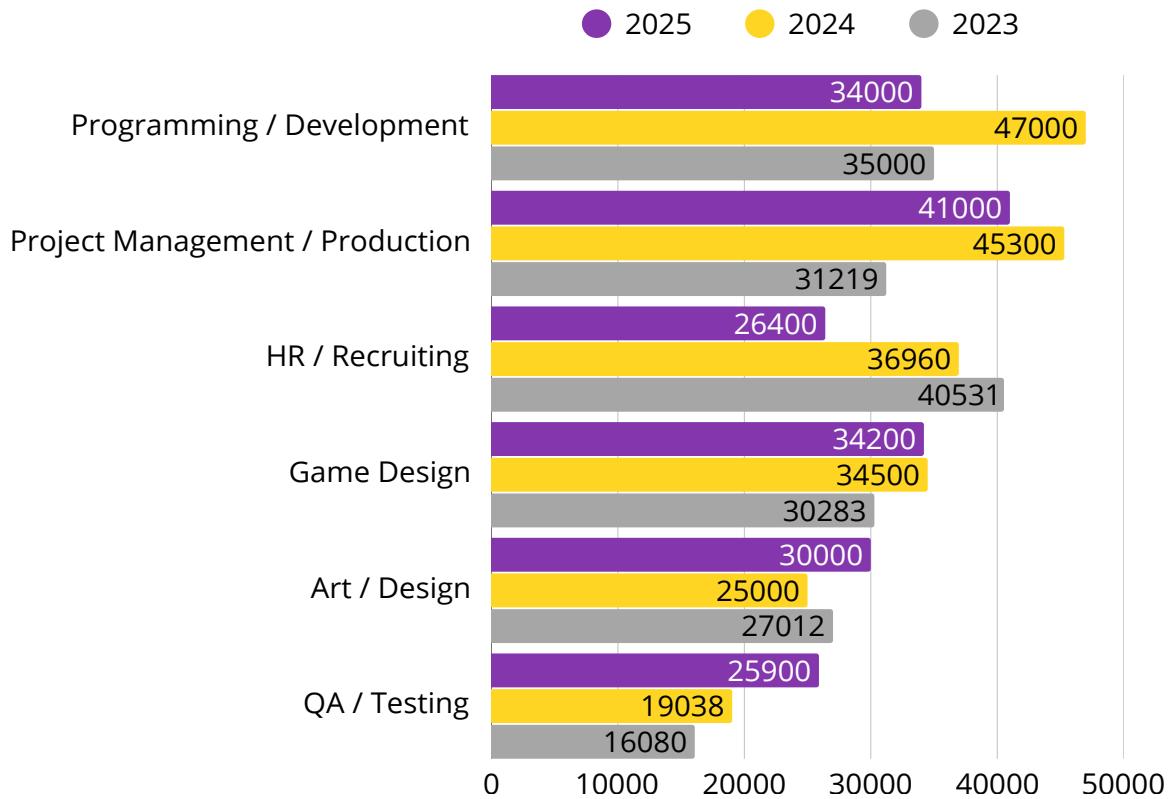
# Salary Data 2025

SENIOR LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, **NON-EU** (2023–2025)

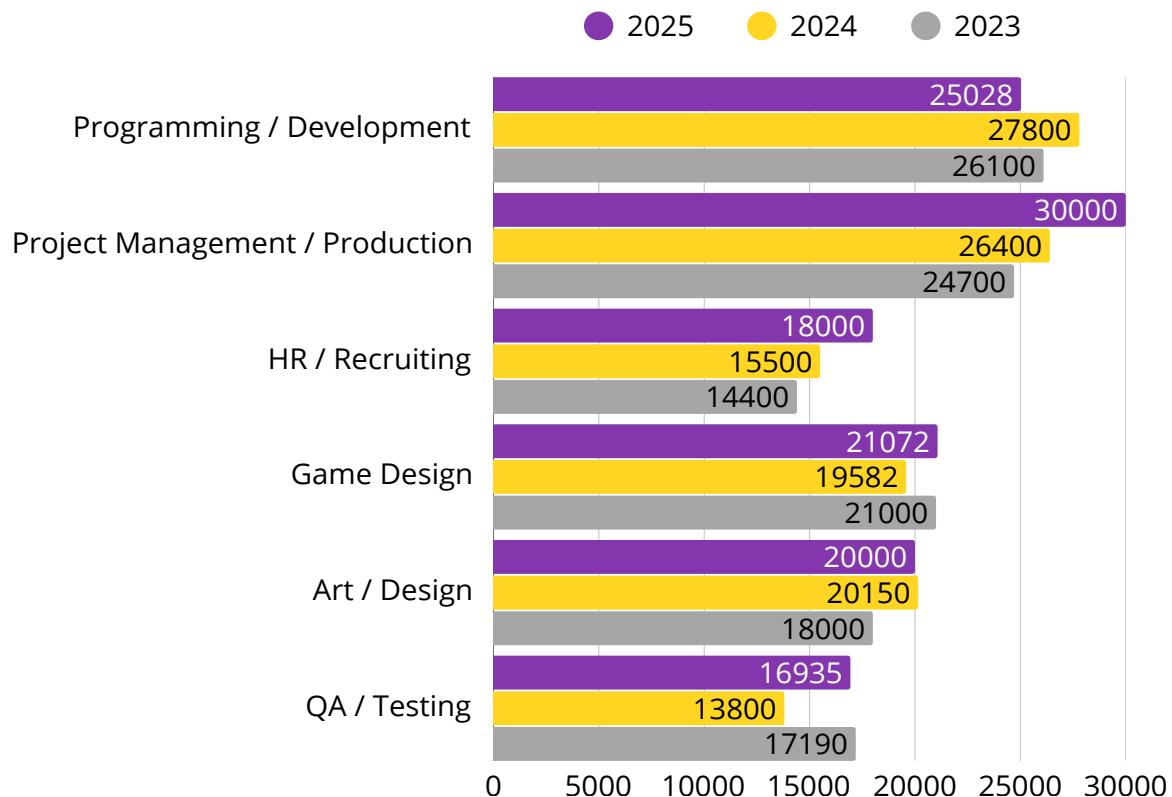


# Salary Data 2025

MIDDLE LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, EU+UK+CH (2023–2025)



MIDDLE LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, NON-EU (2023–2025)



# Salary Data 2025



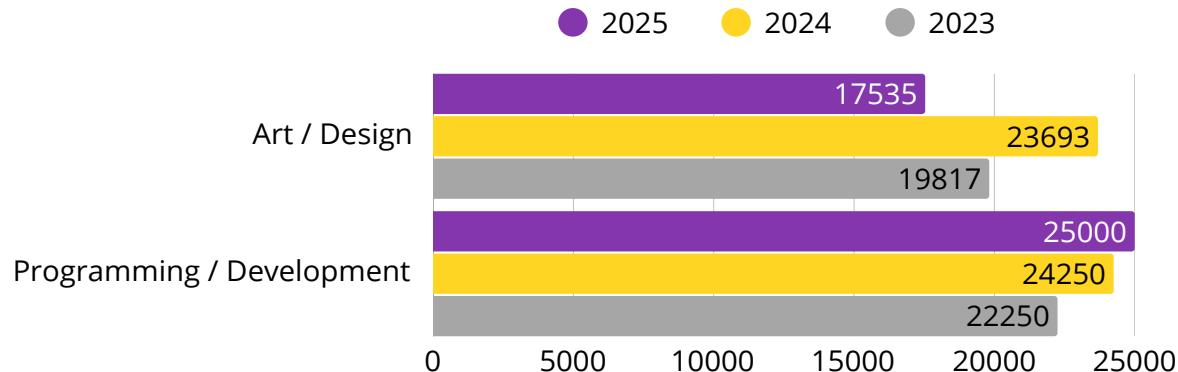
“

**Tanja Laktionova**  
Founder at Values Value,  
Co-Founder at InGame Job

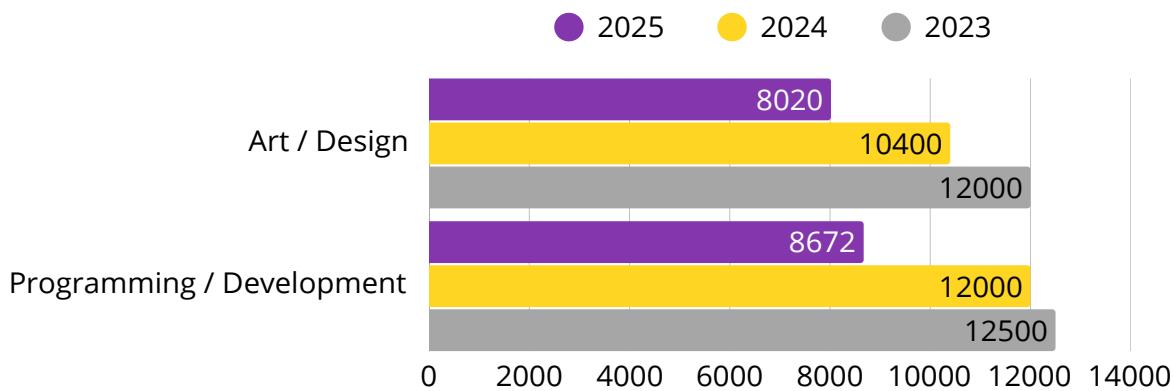
*“Salaries for programmers, especially Unity developers, have been going down. There just aren't enough open roles for them, and the market's become highly competitive. In some cases, dev specialists even lower their salary expectations by half just to land a job. Another big factor is AI — copilots, cursors, and similar tools. Development really is speeding up thanks to them, and that changes the whole landscape.*

*This isn't just happening in the games industry. It's a broader trend across mobile development as a whole. The only developers whose rates are going up right now are AI specialists. In fact, many job descriptions now explicitly expect candidates to be able to work faster with AI tools.”*

## JUNIOR LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, EU+UK+CH (2023–2025)



## JUNIOR LEVEL, MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, NON-EU (2023–2025)

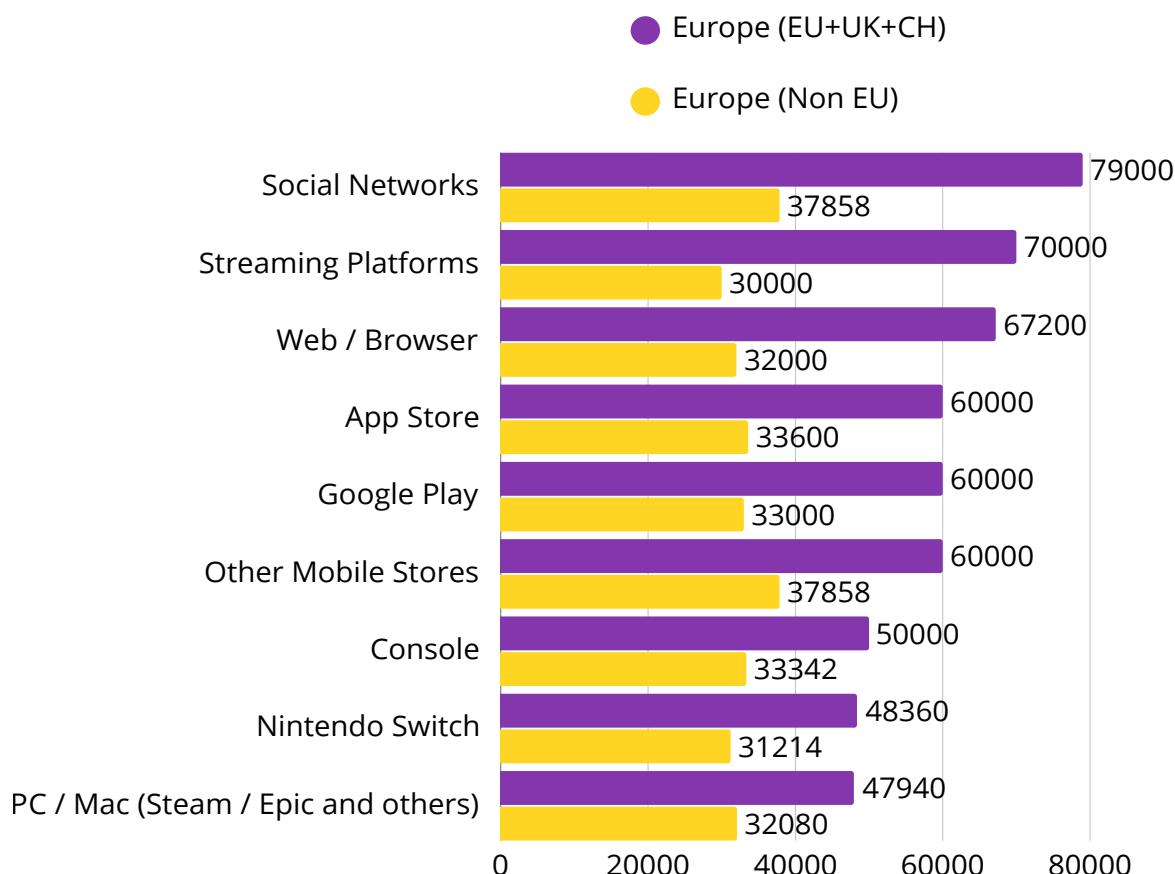


# Salary Data 2025

## Median Annual Salary By Platforms, Genres, Monetization Types, Company Types

This year, we continue to investigate whether there's a correlation between income level and the genre of the project a game industry professional is working on. We were also curious to see if there's a difference in salaries between those releasing their games on mobile devices and those developing games for PC. Additionally, we wanted to find out if the type of game monetization affects income levels. Take a look at the charts below to see the results we obtained.

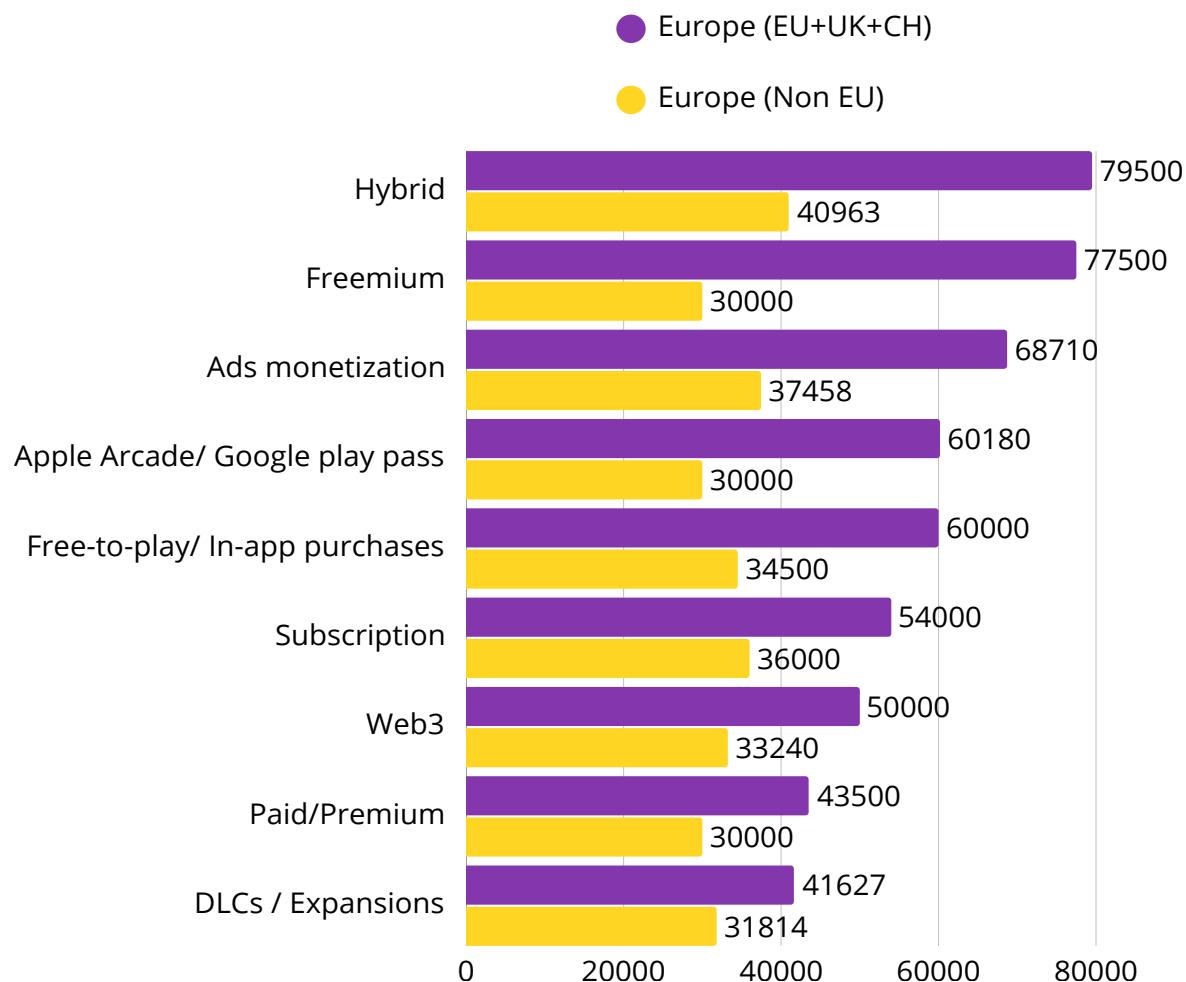
### 2025 MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, BY PLATFORMS



- Among platforms, Social Networks offer the highest salaries.
- The largest EU vs. non-EU salary gap is in Web / Browser platforms – a staggering 110%.

# Salary Data 2025

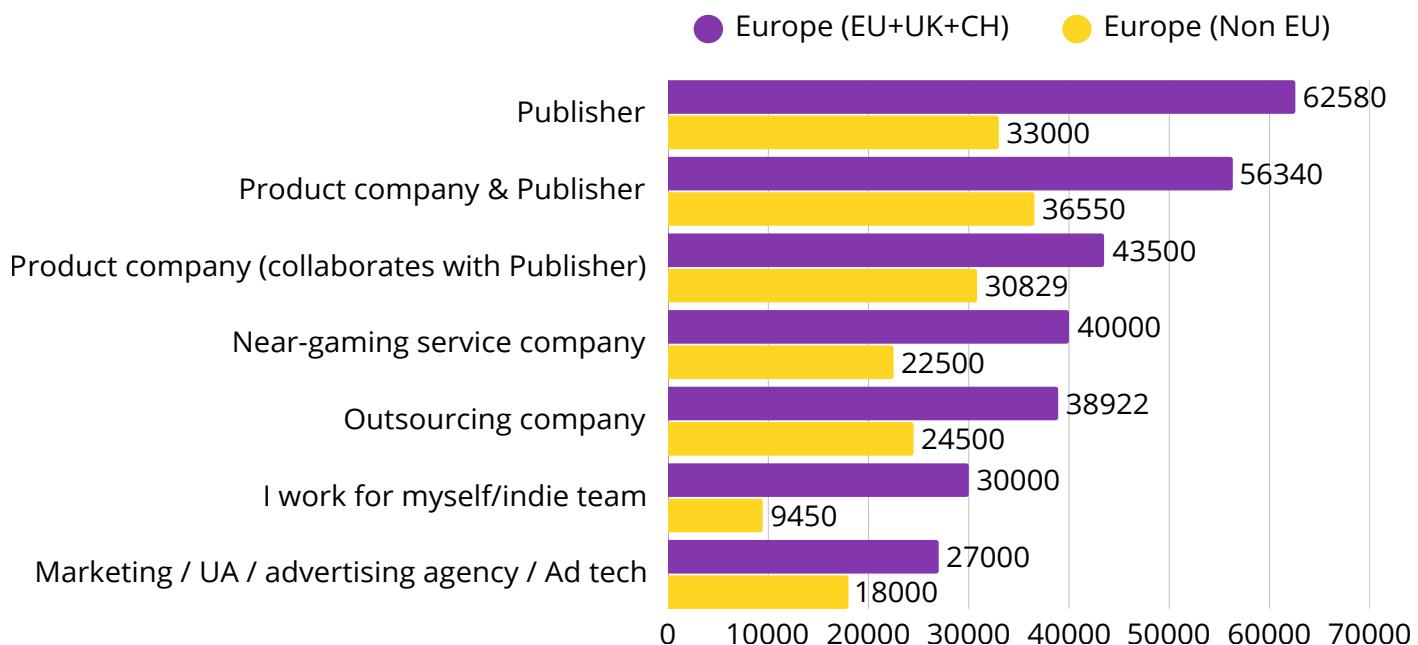
2025 MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, BY MONETIZATION TYPE



- By monetization type, the biggest salary difference between EU and non-EU professionals is in Freemium – a remarkable 158% gap.

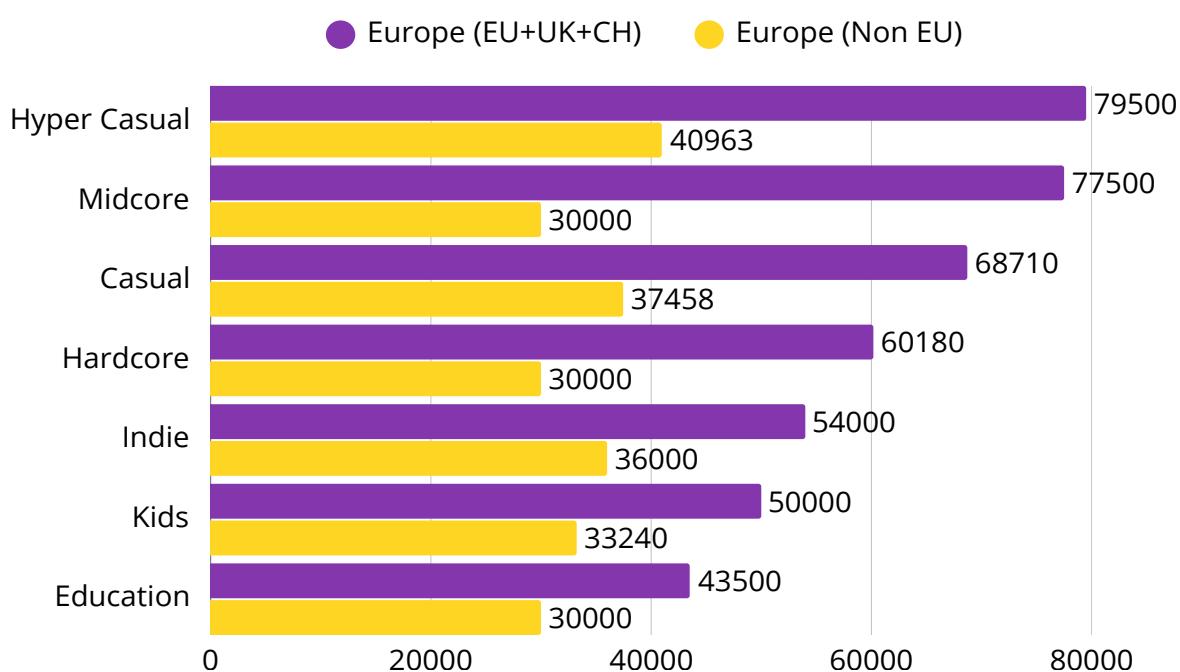
# Salary Data 2025

2025 MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, BY TYPE OF SPECIALIZATION



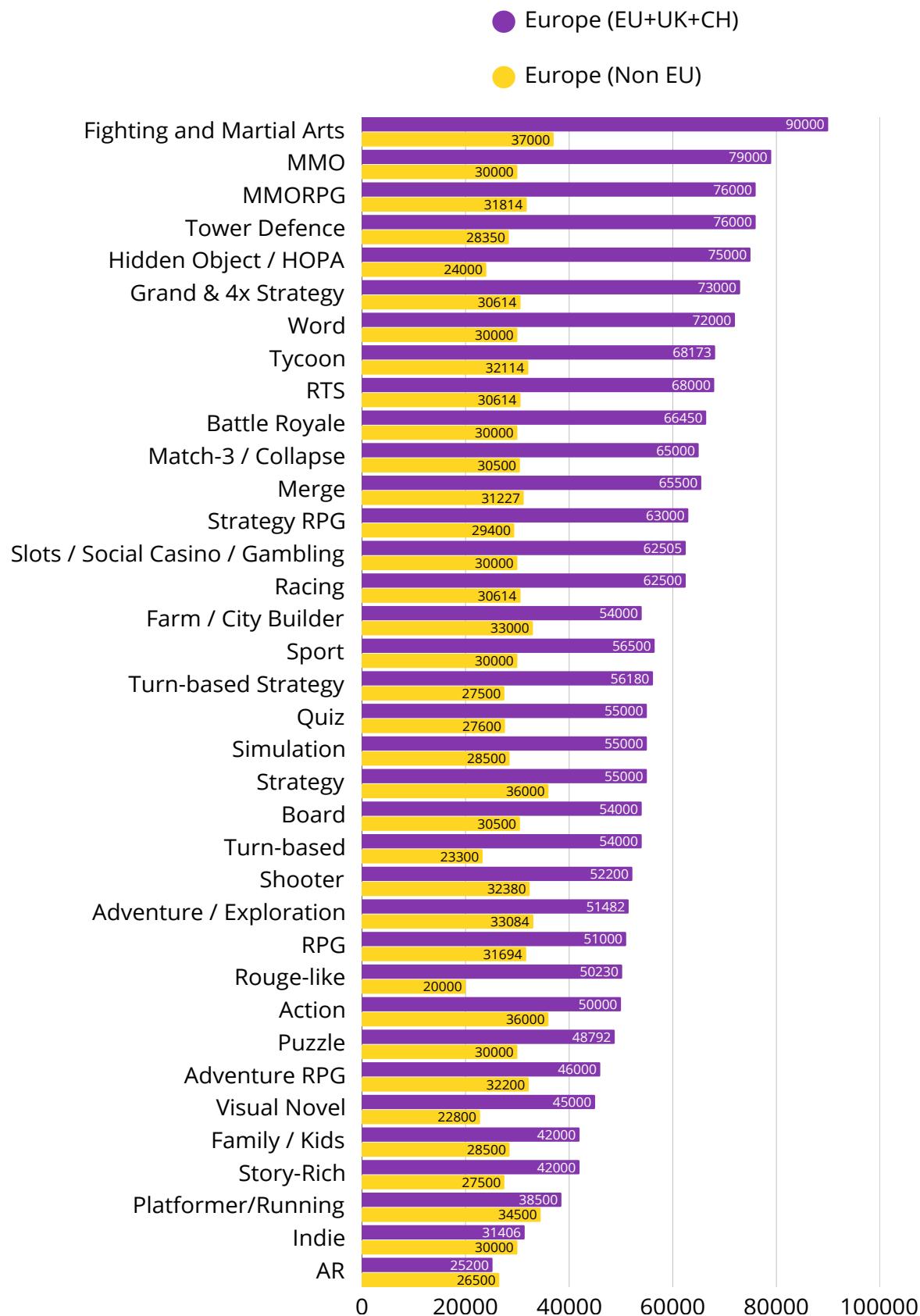
- European Publishers pay 89% more than non-EU Publishers.
- An even greater gap is seen among those who selected "I work for myself / indie team" – a 217% difference.

2025 MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, BY GENRE OF CURRENT PROJECTS



# Salary Data 2025

2025 MEDIAN, GROSS, EUR/YEAR, BY GENRE



# Satisfaction With Current Salary

How satisfied are game industry professionals with their income? We asked respondents to rate their income satisfaction on a five-point scale.

This year's results show a decline in salary satisfaction across most seniority levels compared to 2024:

- Juniors: 2 out of 5 (down from 2.1 in 2024)
- Mid-level: 2.8 out of 5 (vs. 3.0 in 2024)
- Seniors: 3.3 out of 5 (vs. 3.5 in 2024)
- Top managers: 3.6 out of 5 (almost unchanged from 3.7 in 2024).

The decline is most visible among entry-level and mid-level specialists, many of whom faced salary freezes, reduced bonuses, or slower career progression in the past year. At the same time, top managers remain relatively satisfied, highlighting an ongoing imbalance in compensation dynamics.

## Who's the most dissatisfied?

- Juniors: artists across all Europe
- Mid-level: QA specialists in the EU and artists in both EU and non-EU regions
- Seniors: QA specialists in the EU and marketing specialists outside the EU

## Who's the happiest?

- Juniors: programmers in both regions
- Mid-level: programmers and marketing specialists in the EU
- Seniors: analysts, C-level executives, and HR in the EU

# Satisfaction With Current Salary

## Why is satisfaction dropping?



“

**Jelena Kotelova**  
HR Manager,  
[Hypercell Games](#)  
& [HyperVR Games](#)

*“Over the past year, the games industry has undergone a number of changes – both at the market level and in terms of broader global dynamics: currency fluctuations, inflation, and the rise of AI. These factors are impacting not just individual professionals, but companies themselves.*

*Many of today’s mid-level specialists entered the industry during the boom years of 2020–2021 – a time of rapid growth and abundant job opportunities. Back then, expectations were high: fast career progression, frequent raises, and plenty of offers to choose from, often with attractive financial terms.*

*By 2025, the market has shifted. Fast growth has given way to a focus on optimization.*

*Add to that the effects of the external economic climate – inflation, currency instability, and other global pressures – and it becomes clear that declining satisfaction with salaries reflects more than just trends in game development. It mirrors a broader feeling across the job market: people are working just as hard, if not harder, but often feel like the return on their effort isn’t what it used to be.*

*I truly hope this is just a temporary phase – and that in the near future, the market will once again offer more opportunities and open new doors for emerging talent.”*



# Satisfaction With Current Salary



## Respondents' quotes

*"Unpaid for the last six months — the company ran out of money."*

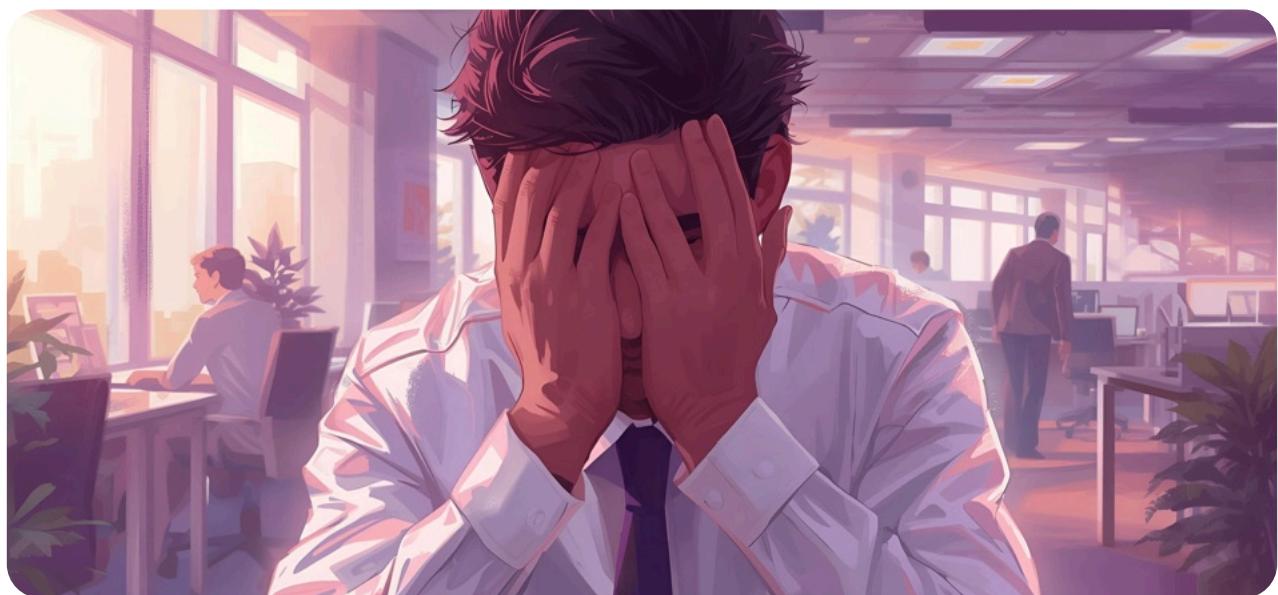
*"My US manager refused to give me a raise, saying: "I think it's enough for Europe."*

*"The company keeps piling more and more work onto employees without increasing salaries. Top management keeps making poor decisions."*

*"Please, just give me a job. Money isn't the issue — as long as it's enough to cover my living expenses and a pack of cigarettes a day."*

*"After 12 years in this industry, I've never felt more disappointed in how my profession is treated. More than ever, employers make it seem like it's our fault — just to justify lowering salaries and expecting one person to do the work of three. While I do believe that to excel you should broaden your skills, the demands placed on a single role — say, a 2D Artist — have become absurd. Employers often use the high level of competition to their advantage. I'm truly disappointed."*

*"The trust in companies is gone. The trust in the future of games is gone. We're overworked, underpaid, poorly trained, and often expected to take on responsibilities far beyond our roles without compensation. I've been tasked with marketing, UI, texturing, engine implementation, and more — all on top of an already overloaded job — with the unspoken expectation that I do it just to keep my position. The excuse was always, "It's part of the industry." There was no credit for the extra work either. And while the pay was decent, I can't help but wonder if it's all really worth it."*

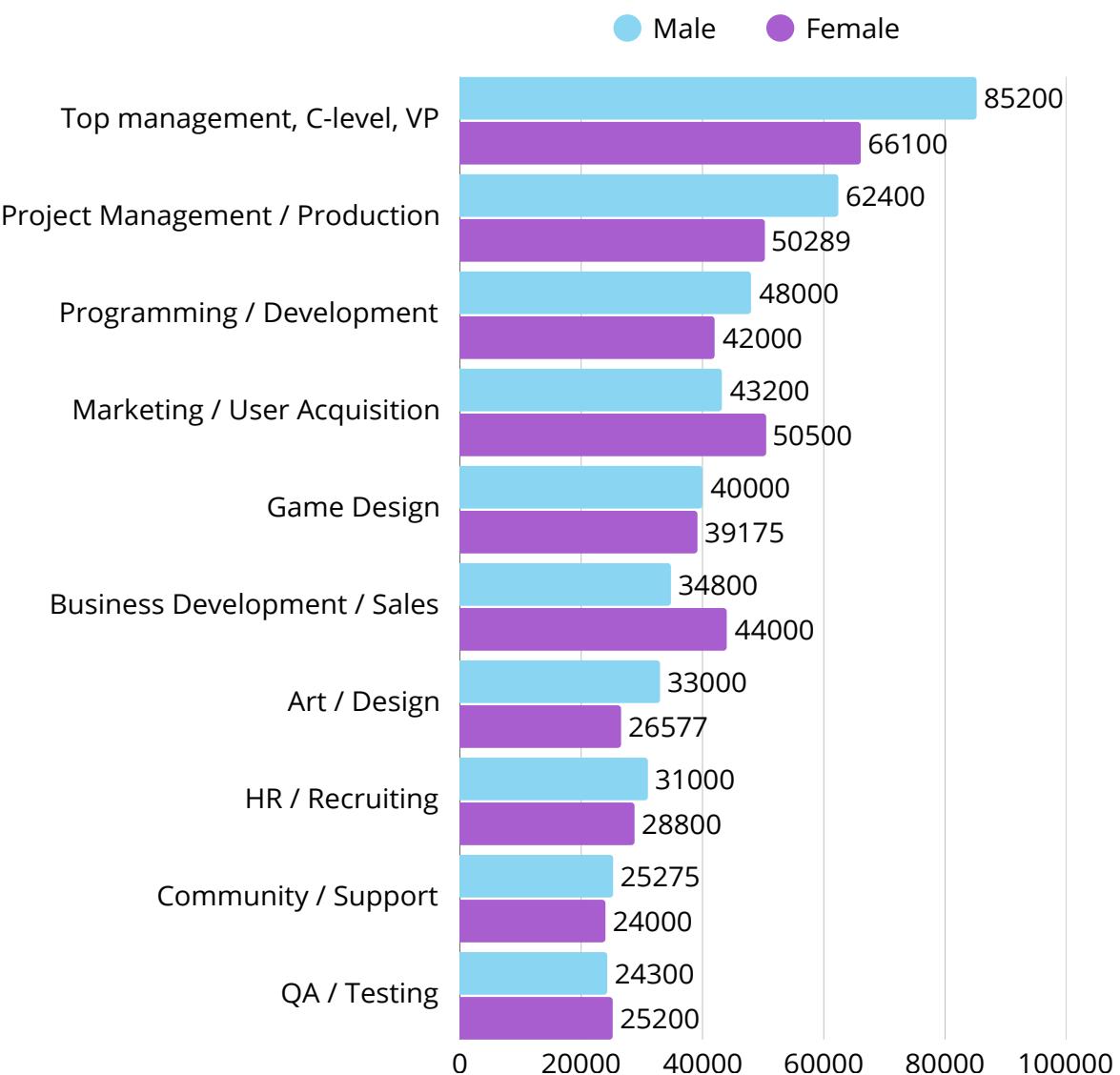


# Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap in game development persists despite growing attention to inclusivity. Women remain underrepresented – especially in leadership and high-paying technical roles – and continue to face barriers to career growth. These structural imbalances, along with lingering stereotypes, contribute to lower average salaries for women across the industry.

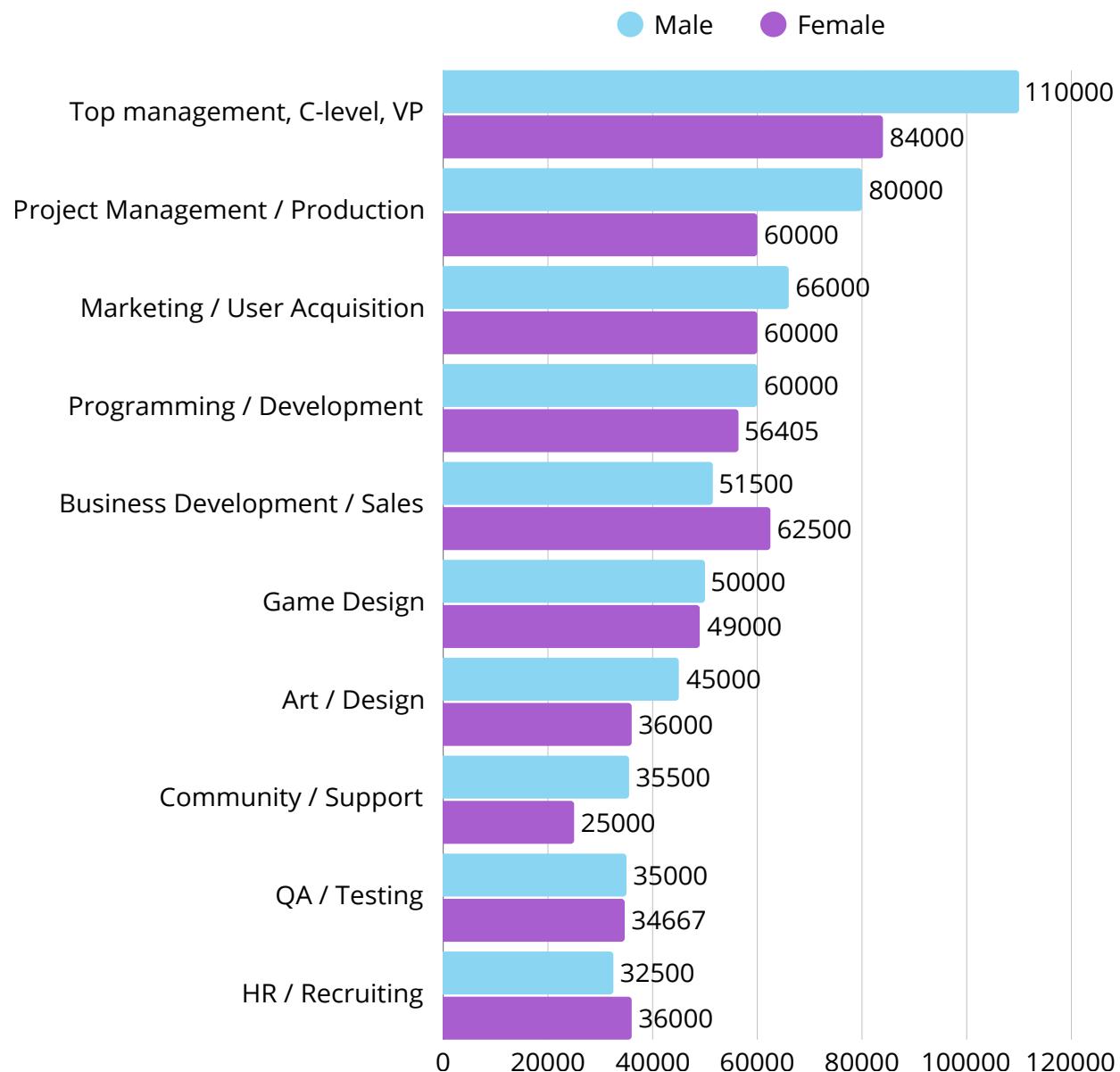
Gender breakdown of the European audience: 55.4% male, 25% female, 19.5% others.

2025 EUROPE, ACTUAL MEDIAN SALARY, BY GENDER, EUR/YEAR



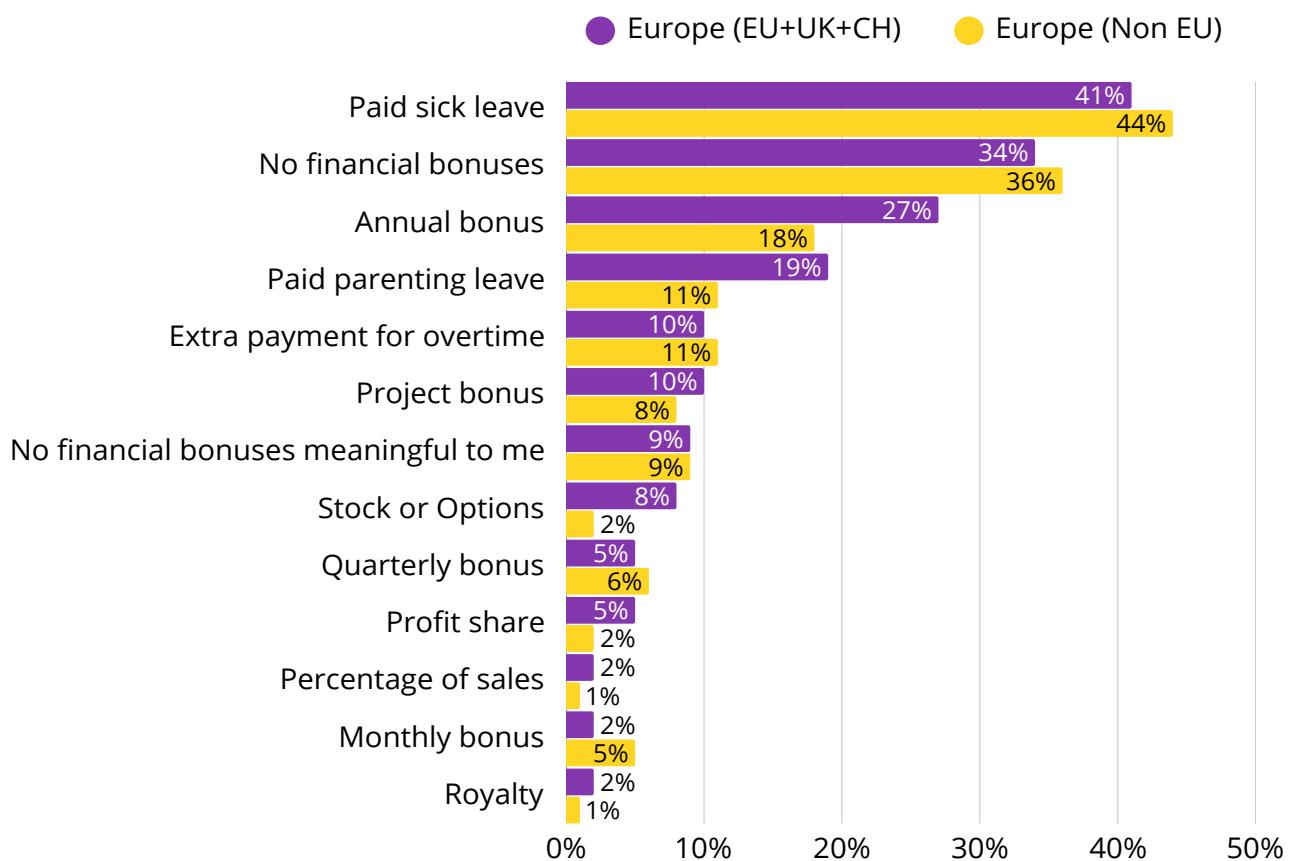
# Gender Pay Gap

2025 EUROPE, DESIRABLE MEDIAN SALARY, BY GENDER, EUR/YEAR



# Compensations and Benefits

2025 FINANCIAL BONUSES, %



Financial compensations and benefits remain a key factor in retention – but the picture is far from perfect.

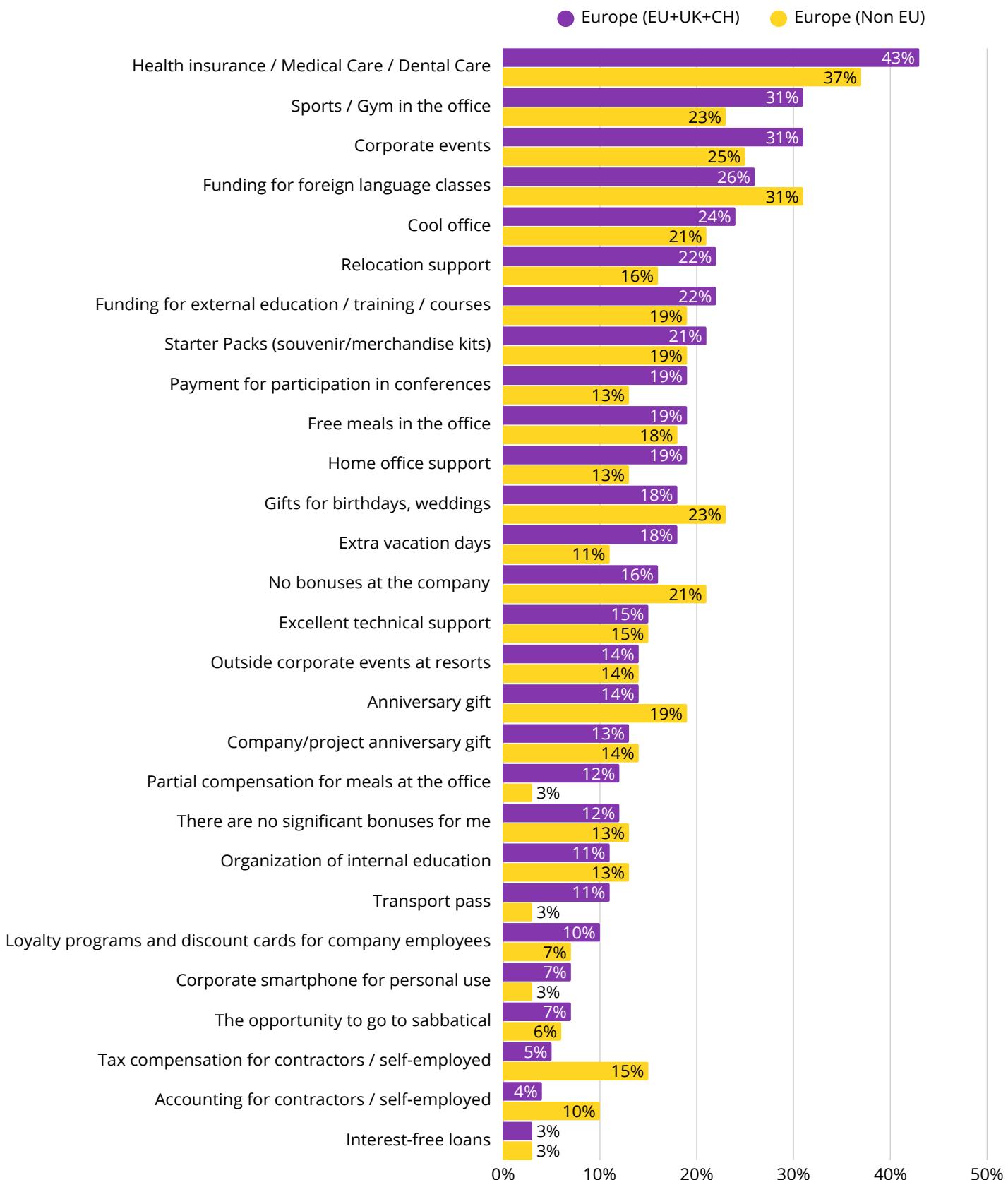
The most common perks this year are still paid sick leave, annual bonuses, and paid parenting leave. However, their availability has declined compared to 2024:

- Paid sick leave: now 41% in the EU and 44% outside the EU, down from 46% in both regions last year.
- Annual bonuses: dropped sharply to 27% in the EU and 18% in non-EU countries (previously 46% and 29%).
- Paid parenting leave: 19% EU, 11% non-EU (vs. 21% and 9% in 2024).

What stands out is the growing number of companies offering no financial bonuses at all – 34% in the EU and 36% in non-EU, compared to 27% and 32% last year.

# Compensations and Benefits

2025 NO FINANCIAL BONUSES, %



# Compensations and Benefits

Non-financial perks continue to shape employee satisfaction — but the hierarchy of benefits is shifting.

The most common options in 2025 are:

- Health insurance (medical/dental care): 43% in the EU, 37% in non-EU, slightly down from last year's 48% and 43%.
- Sports or gym access in the office: 31% EU, 23% non-EU (vs. 29% and 23% in 2024).
- Corporate events: 31% EU, 25% non-EU, up slightly from 33% and 24% previously.
- Funding for language classes: 26% EU, 31% non-EU, similar to last year's 30% and 34%.
- Cool office perks: 24% EU, 21% non-EU, down from 26% and 20%.

## Respondents' quotes

*"I love my job, but because my company operates internationally, I'm technically classified as a contractor, even though internally I'm treated as a full-time salaried employee. As a result, I miss out on benefits — and I wish I could at least receive some form of tax compensation."*

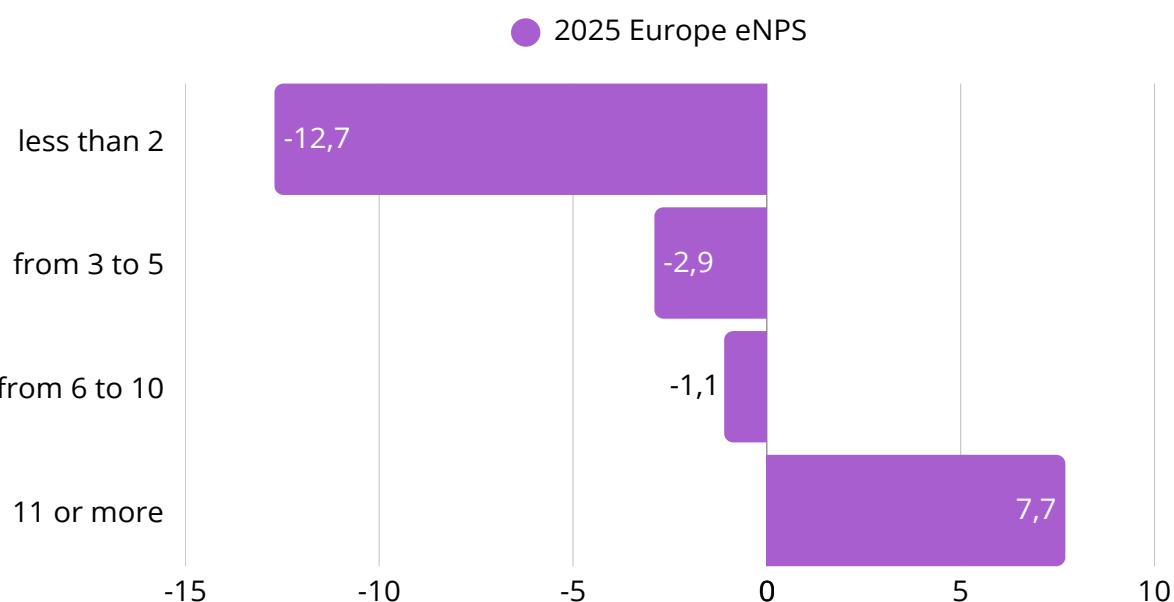


# eNPS: What Makes Employees Loyal & Engaged

**eNPS** - Employee Net Promoter Score. NPS stands for Net Promoter Score, a metric used in customer experience programmes. NPS measures the loyalty of customers to a company. NPS scores are measured with a single question survey and reported with a number from -100 to +100. A higher score is desirable.

Below, we'll show the correlations between eNPS and various other factors.

## 2025 ENPS AND YEARS IN THE GAMES INDUSTRY, EUROPE



We're seeing a decline in overall eNPS in 2025. The chart showing the correlation between eNPS and years in the industry confirms a trend we've observed every year: the most loyal employees are those who've been in the industry the longest. Juniors, on the other hand, show the lowest – even negative – engagement. The reasons are clear: there are very few open positions for them, it's hard to get onto a strong, well-established project, and they're the first to be laid off.

# eNPS: What Makes Employees Loyal & Engaged



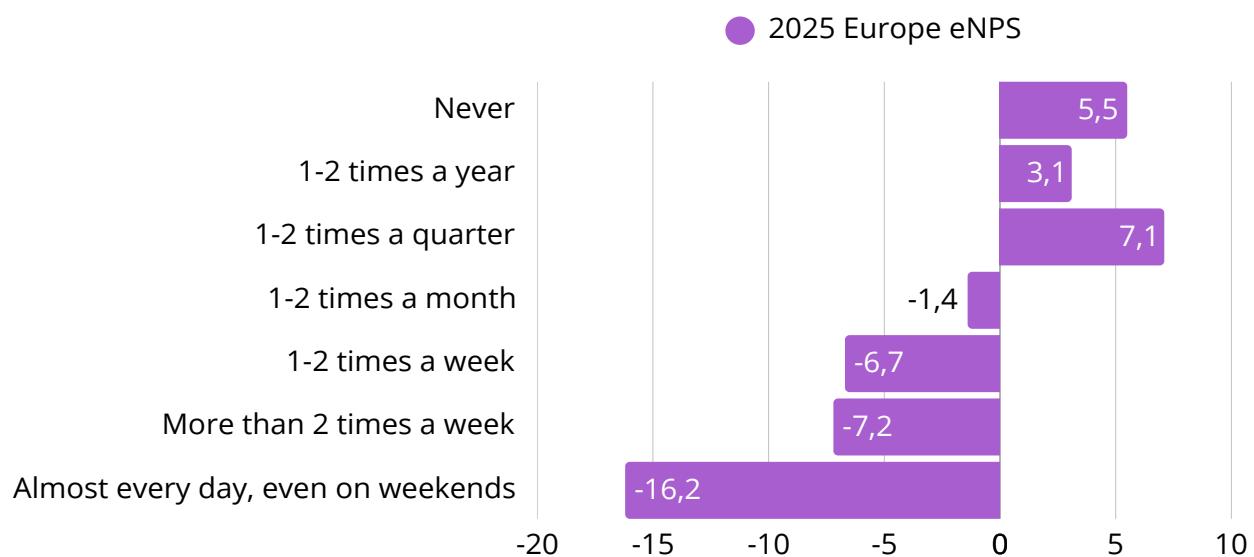
## Respondents' quotes

*"I haven't had a chance to break into the gaming industry yet. With AI and layoffs, it's getting harder and harder — and honestly, I'm not sure I ever will. On top of that, the number of entry-level jobs is... terrible. Practically nothing. Nothing at all."*

*"I've been trying to get a job as a 3D artist for two years. I built a portfolio, took countless courses — even ChatGPT told me I have a solid background for a junior role. But it's all been in vain: not even the smallest studios respond to my applications. It's as if I'm invisible."*

*"I worked for two years at a studio, starting as a junior 3D artist and later becoming a mid-level. I was fired after questioning the lack of funding and salaries (including my own) and pointing out company missteps that led to financial trouble. The official reason given for my dismissal was "political views." I lost my team connections and, in a way, my professional identity as a 3D artist."*

## 2025 ENPS ACROSS OVERTIME FREQUENCY, EUROPE



The correlation between overtime and eNPS is always straightforward: when overtime is excessive, employee loyalty to the employer drops. Occasional, reasonable overtime, however, doesn't affect engagement. If it's rare, not the norm, and often initiated by employees themselves, those employees tend to be the most engaged.

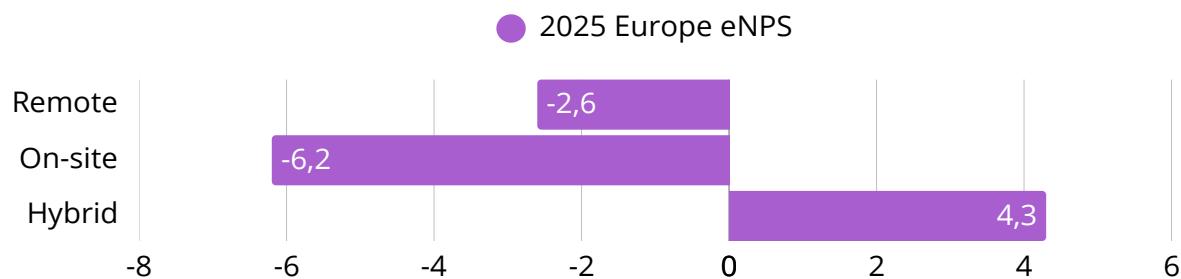
# eNPS: What Makes Employees Loyal & Engaged



## Respondents' quotes

*“Our company has always struggled with proper pipelines. As product releases get closer, we constantly work overtime (which is paid), but work-life balance is non-existent. We’ve had urgent team meetings at 3 AM and critical weekend tasks. For one of our biggest releases, the team was running on fumes. Management promised that once we delivered, everyone would get a two-week mandatory break where we could all rest at the same time and no one would bother us. They kept that promise – but the time off was taken from our regular annual leave, not in addition to it. So, essentially, they made us use our vacation days at a random, unplanned time. And then they threw us a pizza party.”*

### 2025 ENPS BY COOPERATION FORMAT, EUROPE



This year's chart on the correlation between eNPS and work format shows the same trend as before: hybrid teams remain the most engaged, with an eNPS of +4.3, though this is a steep drop from +15.9 in 2024. Remote employees now report a negative eNPS of -2.6, down from +7.7 last year. On-site employees remain the least engaged, with eNPS plunging from +8.1 in 2024 to -6.2 in 2025. Overall, eNPS scores have dropped sharply across all formats – a sign that the broader sense of well-being in the industry is fading.



## Respondents' quotes

*“When I took this job, we agreed on a hybrid model – three days on-site, two days remote. But due to some corporate nonsense over hardware standards, I ended up with a full desktop tower instead of a laptop. When I raised this with my manager, I was jokingly told I could take the PC home on my remote days, and that maybe they'd sort it out eventually. Well, it's been a year and a half, and I still have the same desktop.”*

# eNPS: What Makes Employees Loyal & Engaged

2025 ENPS BY FINANCIAL BONUSES, EUROPE

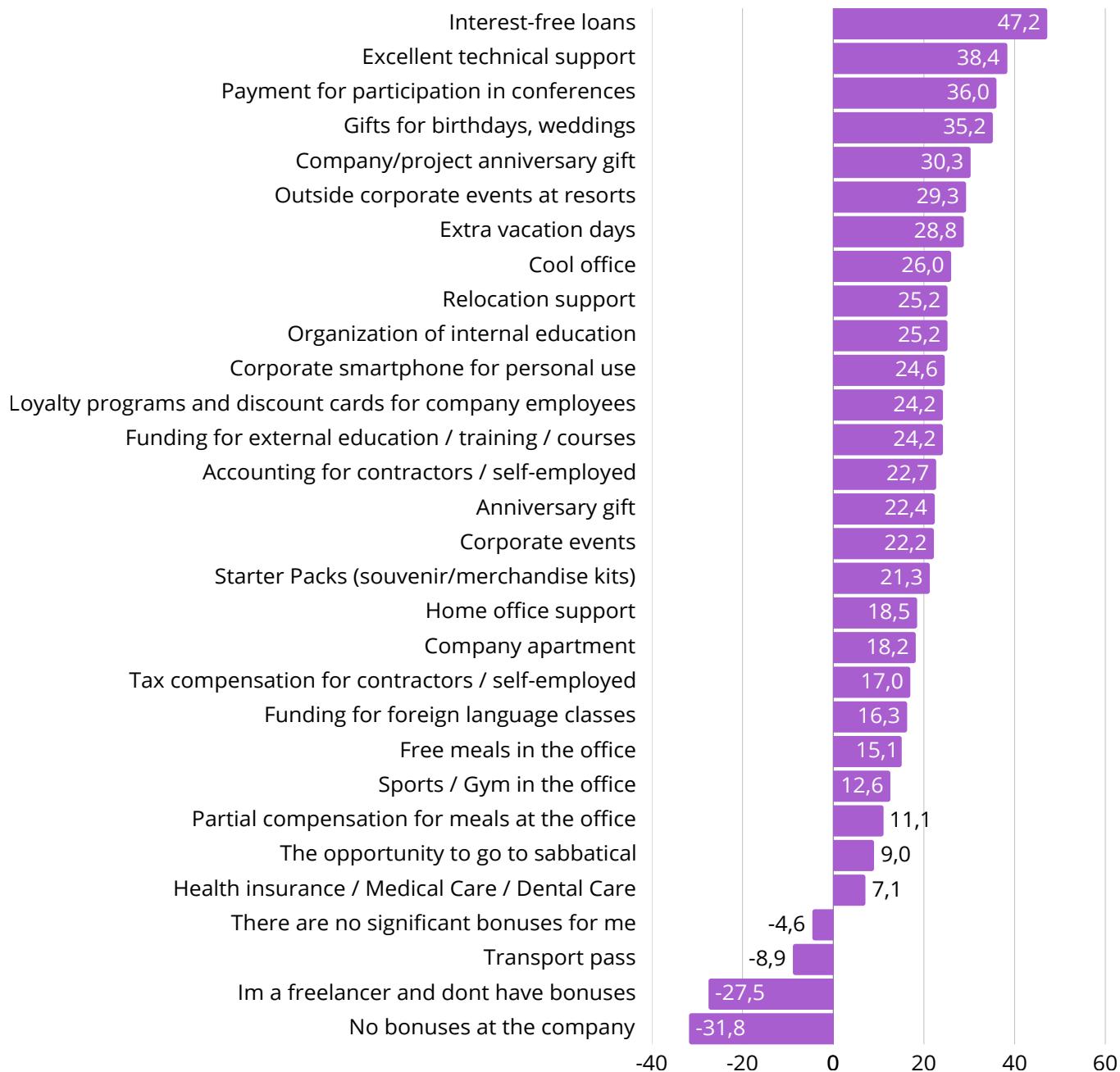


While bonus programs still drive engagement, their emotional impact is weakening year over year. The gap between employees who receive profit-sharing (+43.2) and those with no financial recognition (-28.3) now exceeds 70 points — wider than ever. Companies that don't adapt their incentive structures risk not just dissatisfaction, but a serious decline in team loyalty and retention.

# eNPS: What Makes Employees Loyal & Engaged

2025 ENPS BY NON-FINANCIAL BONUSES, EUROPE

● 2025 Europe eNPS

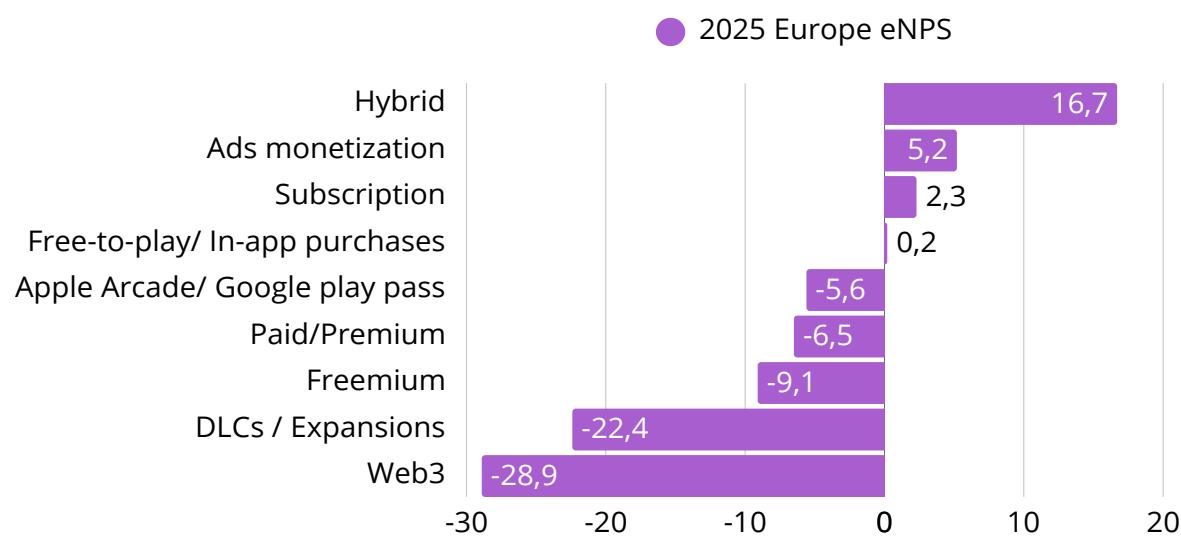


Non-financial perks continue to influence employee engagement in 2025, but their overall impact has declined across nearly all categories – in some cases quite substantially.

# eNPS: What Makes Employees Loyal & Engaged

- The most appreciated perks remain the same, though their eNPS effect has shifted. Interest-free loans top the list with an impressive +47.2, up from +37.8 in 2024, suggesting growing relevance amid rising financial stress. However, most other top perks have lost ground. For example, technical support dropped from +43.5 to +38.4, and conference funding declined from +39.5 to +36.0.
- Traditional benefits like gifts for birthdays and weddings (+35.2) and company anniversary presents (+30.3) continue to generate positive engagement, but almost all have seen modest decreases. Perks such as extra vacation days (+28.8 vs. +32.7), corporate events (+22.2 vs. +32.3), and cool offices (+26 vs. +33.5) reflect this downward trend.
- Even highly personalized support has weakened in influence: internal education programs dropped from +33.3 to +25.2, and foreign language funding fell from +24.3 to +16.3. Perks that once had premium emotional value – like sabbatical opportunities (+9 vs. +37.7) and free meals at the office (+15.1 vs. +25.9) – have lost more than half their impact.

## 2025 ENPS BY MONETIZATION TYPE, EUROPE



Monetization models with higher average salaries (e.g. hybrid, freemium) tend to show higher eNPS, while lower-paid segments (e.g. Web3, DLCs) see lower engagement – hinting at a link between financial success and team satisfaction.

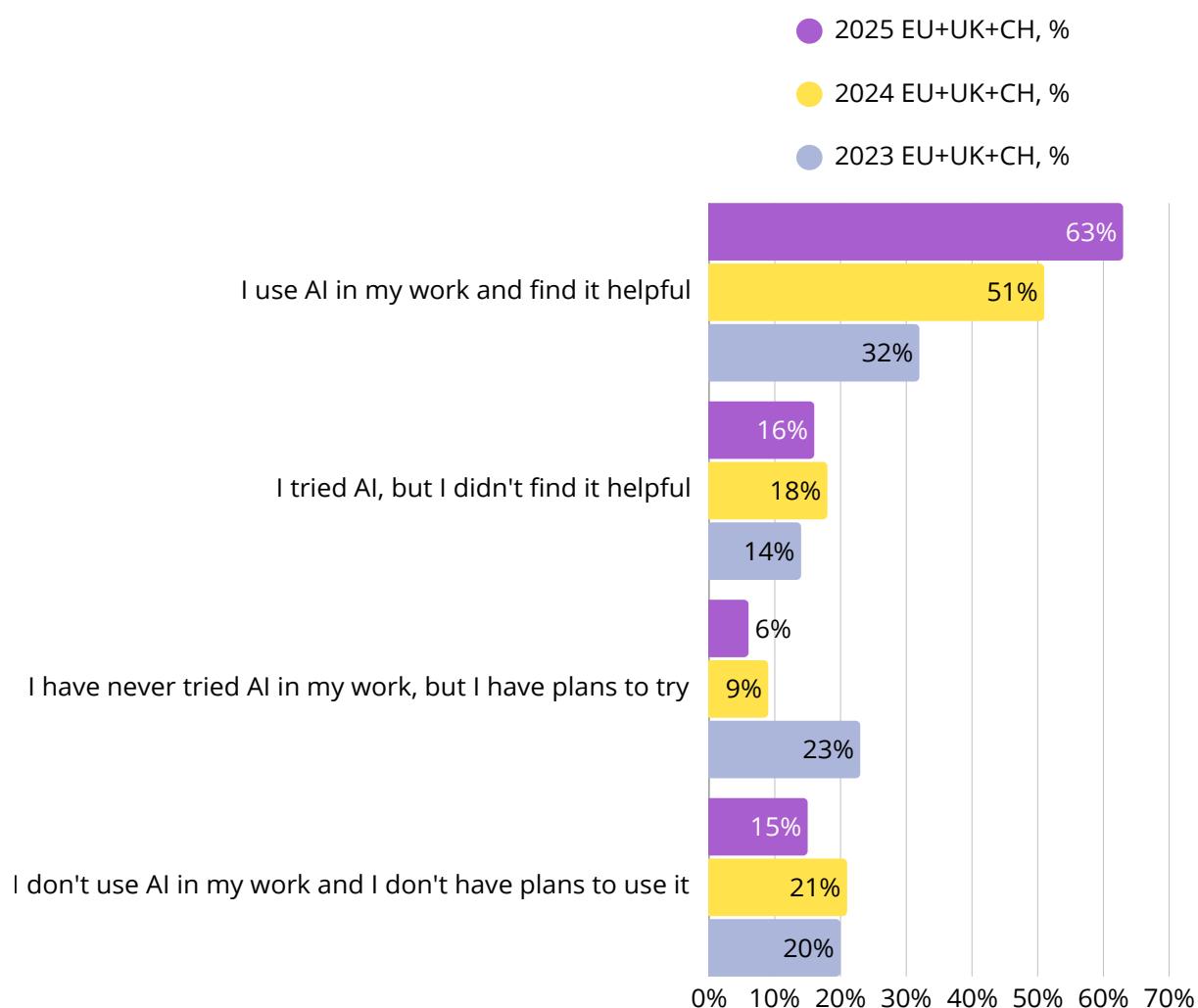
# AI Adoption

The share of professionals who use AI regularly and find it helpful has nearly doubled in the past two years, reaching 63% in the EU and 69% in non-EU regions.

At the same time, the number of those who have never used AI and don't plan to has dropped by more than a third since 2023.

Skepticism toward AI continues to decline, and the technology is increasingly viewed as a practical tool rather than a threat.

AI USAGE, EU+UK+CH 2023–2025 (%)



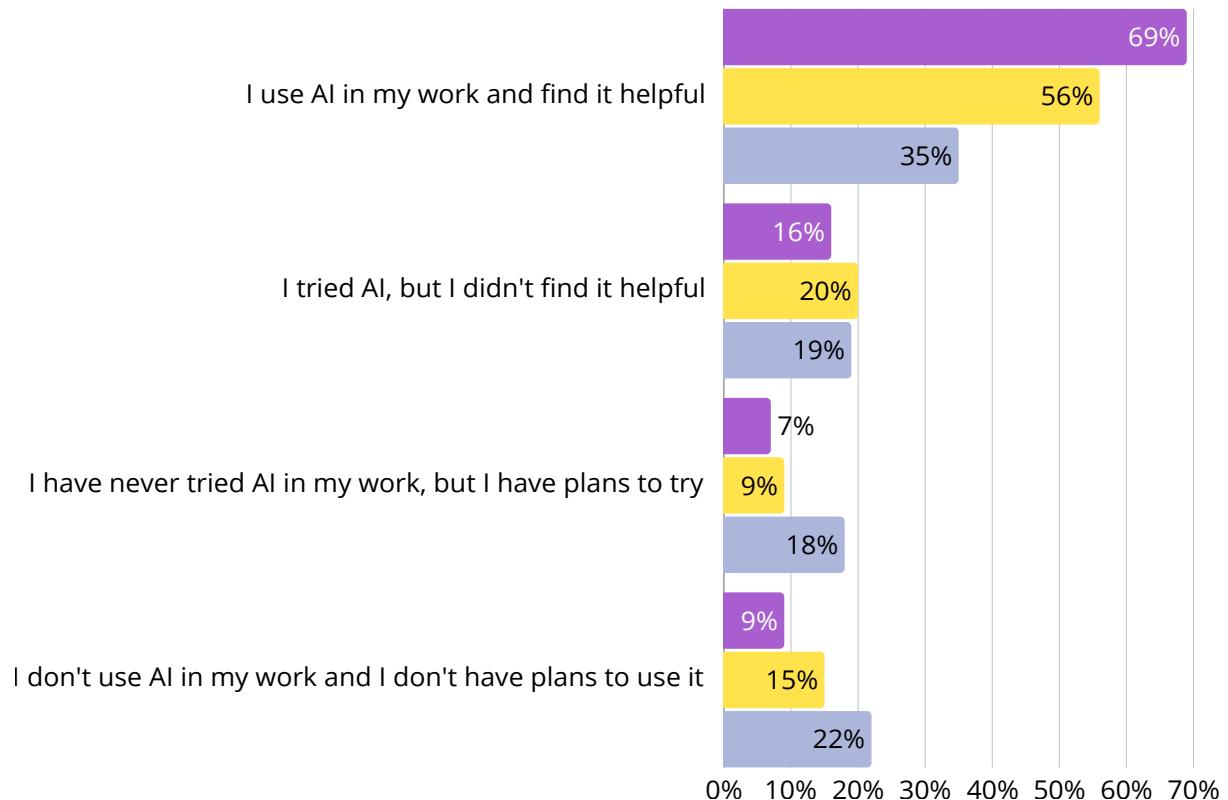
# AI Adoption

AI USAGE, NON-EU 2023–2025 (%)

● 2025 Non-EU, %

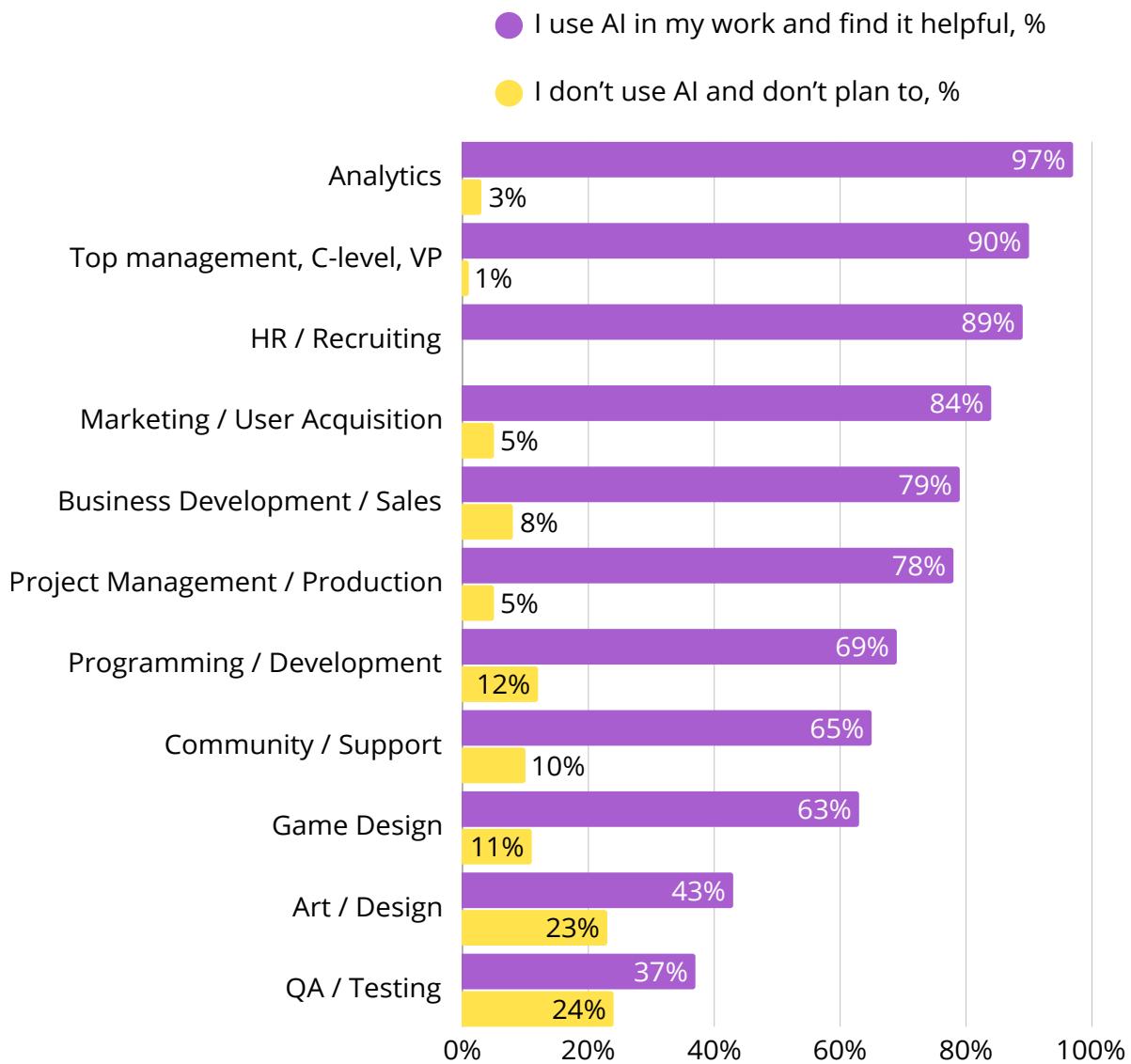
● 2024 Non-EU, %

● 2023 Non-EU, %



# AI Adoption

## 2025 AI ADOPTION BY PROFESSION, EUROPE, %



AI adoption is highest among analytics (97%), C-level executives (90%), and HR (89%), where automation and strategic planning play a major role.

Mid-level adoption is seen in business development (79%), production (78%), and developers (69%) — reflecting growing integration of AI into management and technical workflows.

Lowest engagement comes from art (43%) and QA (37%), where up to 24% don't plan to use AI at all. These roles may face barriers related to trust, tool maturity, or creative integrity.

# AI Adoption



“

**Artur Davydenko**  
Senior Product Marketing Manager at Meta

*“Before sharing my point of view, I want to add important context:*

- Europe faced significant challenges in 2023-2024: layoffs in major gaming companies, and the closure of about 4% of small game studios in 2022-2023. Europeans had a lot on their shoulders to dive deep into this new technology.
- Zooming in on layoffs, about 75% of job cuts were developers, artists/designers, and QA. I empathize with those laid off due to “resource optimizations” who might not feel comfortable leveraging AI.
- Zooming out to AI models (LLM, Generative AI), their capabilities have improved in memory (task size) and accuracy (fewer mistakes or “hallucinations”):
  - Memory grew dramatically: 8K token window in 2023, 32K in 2024, and 100K+ now. This means AI can now solve complex tasks that take days vs short (minutes-long) tasks in 2023.
  - Hallucination rates dropped from about 30% in 2023 to around 15% now.

*With that in mind, here are my observations from the numbers:*

1. **65%** of gamedev professionals in Europe have tried AI multiple times over the last 2.5 years and now fully leverage it in their core jobs. The **80%** leap in AI adoption in 2024 brought many new users in Management, Analytics, HR/Recruiting, and Marketing. This makes sense as they mostly use LLM and basic GenAI capabilities, which have grown dramatically since 2023. QA/Testing specialists stand out with the highest share (**24%**) not using or planning to use AI. Manual testers were heavily impacted by layoffs, adding a psychological barrier.

2. Among Designers and Artists, **23%** are not using AI. This likely reflects junior and mid-level specialists affected by “resource optimizations.” While GenAI models have improved in basic programming (Llama 3, AI Copilot, Claude 3), 2D art (Midjourney, DALL-E, Stable Diffusion), and UI design (DALL-E, Firefly), there remains a big gap in generating high-quality in-game UX and 2D/3D models with animations (hence only **43%** of artists found AI helpful after using it).”

# AI Adoption



**Artur Davydenko**  
Senior Product Marketing Manager at Meta

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*“3. If we look at the business side, many VC-backed startups aggressively marketed their AI solutions (I manually checked many), but production-quality AI models have improved slower compared to management, marketing, analytics, and support. This is changing, but it remains to be seen if AI can generate great 3D characters with rigs and animations by 2026 or 2030. However, based on my experience at Meta and conversations with gaming founders, I believe project management, development and programming will dramatically change by AI in 2026-2027.*

*4. Lastly, Marketing has been AI-powered in its campaign management, targeting, ad ranking, conversion optimization, measurement, and static ad creatives. The next steps are automation of video, playable ad creative production, and omnichannel measurement.*

*In summary, AI adoption will continue to grow among those who want to stay employed in gaming, as in other content-heavy industries. It's business, nothing personal. ©*

*Before sending my comment, I had AI check the grammar and double-check the numbers.”*

## Respondents' quotes



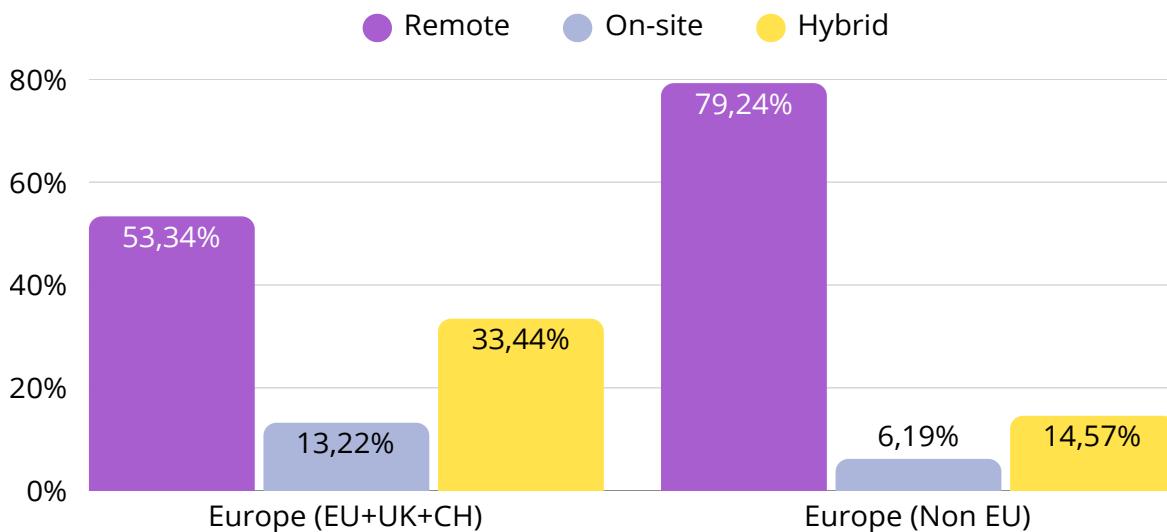
*“I switched careers for many reasons – almost no stability, no fair wages. Now AI is sucking the soul out of art, and I want no part of it. It feels like a corpse being puppeteered by people with no creativity and no desire to develop any. They want quick fixes, and corporations sold them AI as the answer.”*

*“As the only non-Hungarian on the team, a lot of people use AI just to talk to me :D Sometimes I can tell when they've had ChatGPT write their reply (it loves em dashes way more than most people –) instead of just answering themselves.”*

*“The paradox today is that, thanks to AI, many people who lack real talent now appear better – but their actual skill hasn't improved. It just makes it harder to tell the difference.”*

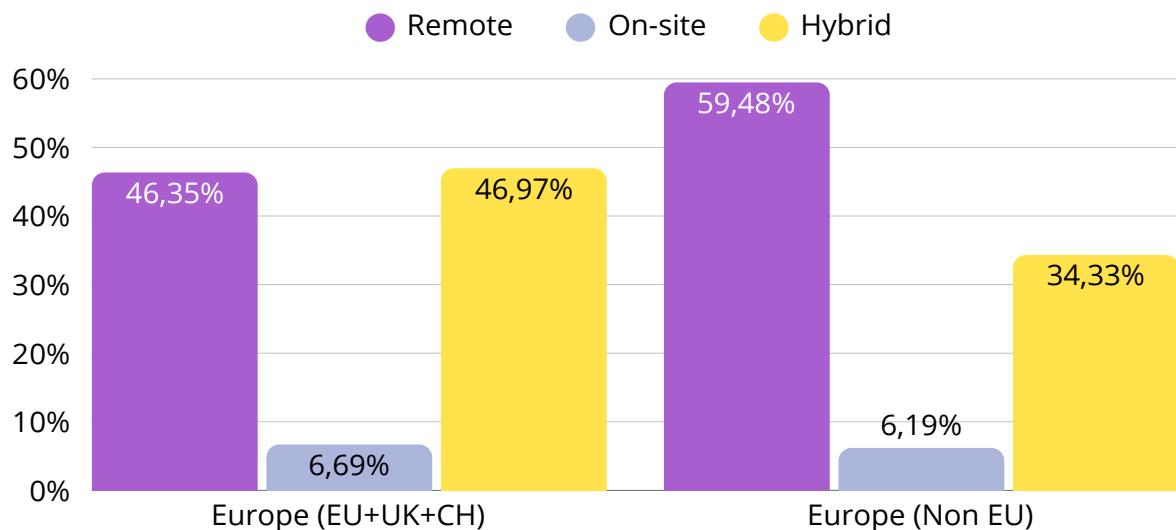
# Work Arrangement Trends and Employment Types

2025 EU+UK+CH VS NON-EU, BY ACTUAL JOB FORMAT, %



Remote work remains the dominant format across Europe – especially outside the EU, where infrastructure, outsourcing models, and cost-efficiency may make remote-first strategies more viable. Meanwhile, EU-based teams are more likely to maintain hybrid setups, blending flexibility with in-person coordination.

2025 EU+UK+CH VS NON-EU, BY PREFERRED JOB FORMAT, %



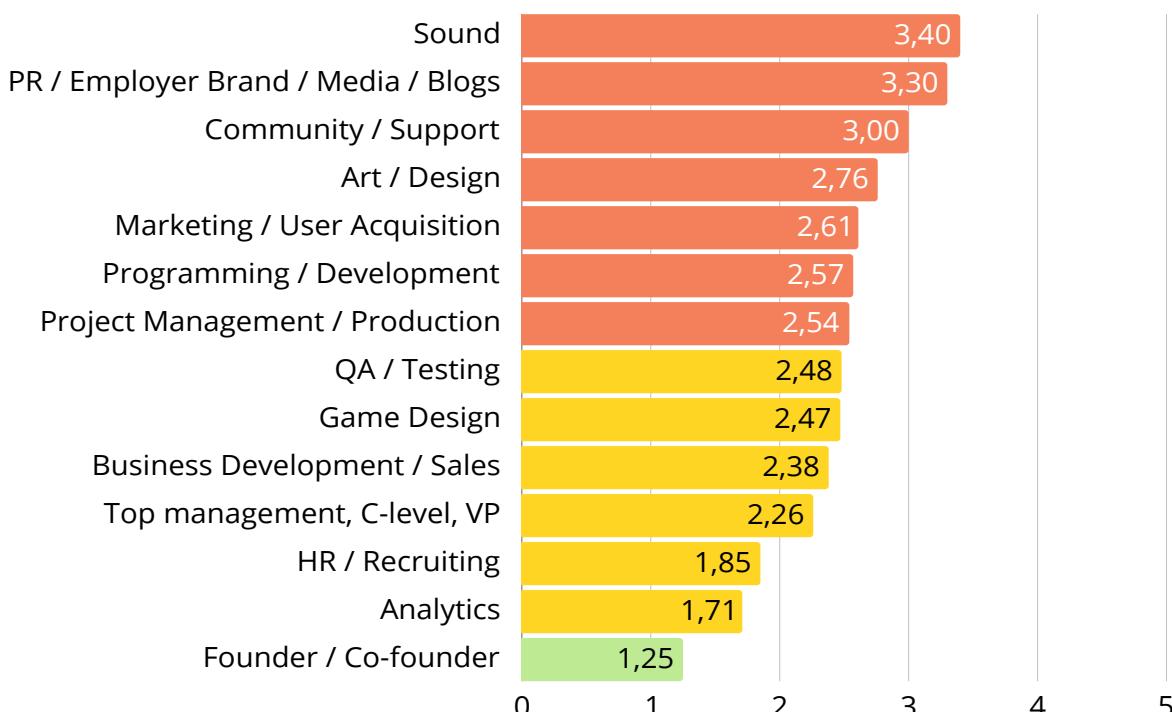
Preferred work formats across Europe show a growing demand for flexibility – but a noticeable mismatch remains between what professionals want and what they actually get.

# Work Arrangement Trends and Employment Types

## Who feels at risk of being laid off?

We asked respondents to rate the likelihood of being affected by layoffs over the next year on a five-point scale. Let's take a look at who feels more vulnerable during this period of market turbulence.

2025 EUROPE, LIKELIHOOD OF BEING LAID OFF IN THE COMING YEAR, SCALE 0–5

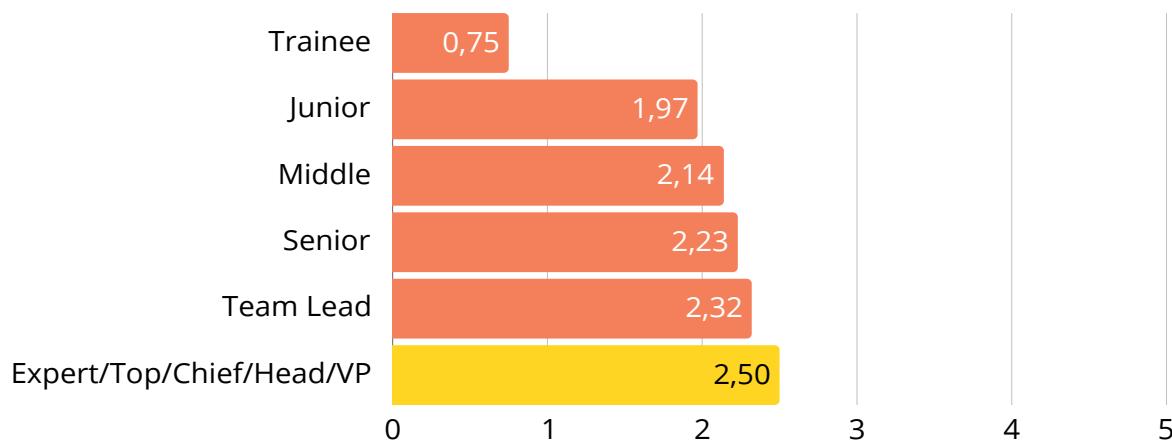


On average, industry professionals rate the likelihood of being laid off in the next year at 2.3 out of 5. This score is higher among sound specialists, PR/brand professionals, community and support staff, and artists.

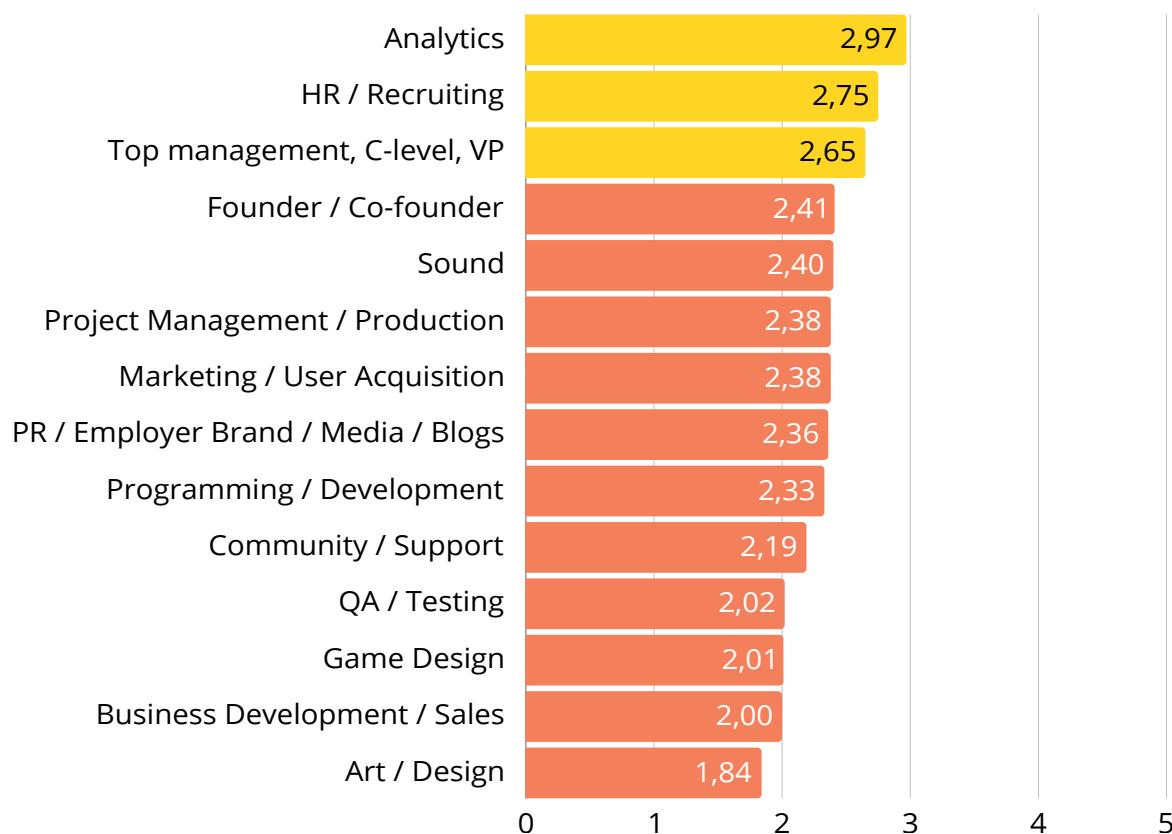
Also, we asked respondents to rate their sense of job security in the games industry right now on a 5-point scale, where 0 means "very insecure" and 5 means "very secure."

# Work Arrangement Trends and Employment Types

2025 EUROPE, HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY  
RIGHT NOW, BY LEVELS, AVERAGE, SCALE 0–5



2025 EUROPE, HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY  
RIGHT NOW, BY PROFESSION, AVERAGE, SCALE 0–5



# Work Arrangement Trends and Employment Types

In 2025, Analytics, HR/Recruiting, and Top Management report the highest sense of job security, indicating these roles are seen as more stable. Conversely, creative professions like Art/Design and Game Design feel less secure, with the lowest safety ratings.



## Respondents' quotes

*"F@#k layoffs! F@#k toxic workplaces! F@#k job instability in gaming and months of unemployment!"*

*"I've felt really insecure about the games industry for the past two to three years and have been thinking about switching to a different field."*

*"The past three years have been rough. I got an offer from a major studio and joined, but my visa was denied and I had to give up the job. Then I landed an offer from an established studio in Europe and relocated, only for the company's investors to pull out – and I lost that job too. It's been over a year now, and I'm still looking for work."*



# Job Change

2025 EUROPE, HAVE YOU CHANGED JOBS IN THE PAST YEAR?

Yes, I was laid off and I am currently unemployed.

10.4%

Yes, I was laid off and found a new one.

16.3%

No.  
55.8%

Yes, by my own choice.

17.5%

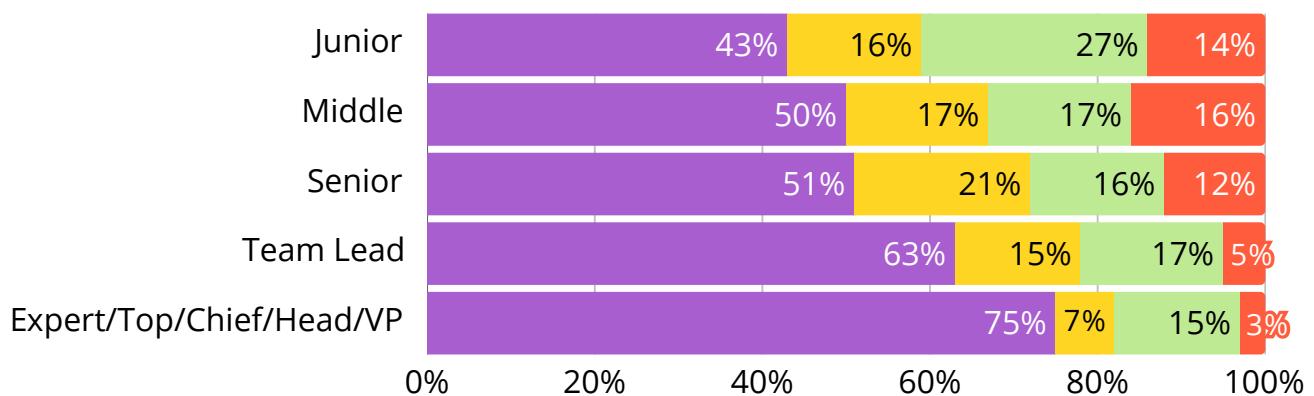
In 2025, the share of professionals who changed jobs voluntarily dropped noticeably (17.5% vs. 23.2% in 2024), suggesting reduced mobility and fewer attractive opportunities. At the same time, involuntary unemployment increased, with 10.4% of respondents laid off and still jobless – up from 6.2% the previous year.

2025 EUROPE, CHANGED JOB IN PAST YEAR, BY LEVEL, %

● No     ● Yes, I was laid off and found a new one.

● Yes, by my own choice.

● Yes, I was laid off and I am currently unemployed.



Junior employees experienced greater instability: only 43% remained in the same job (vs. 51% in 2024), 13% are currently unemployed after layoffs (up from 9% in 2024).

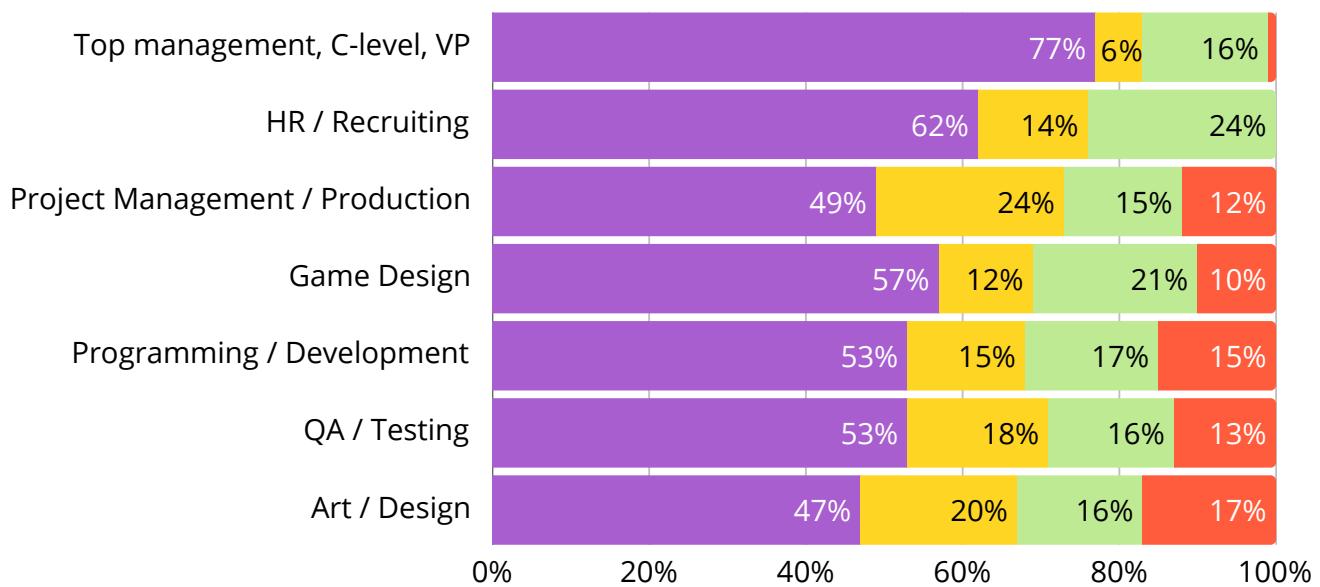
# Job Change

2025 EUROPE, CHANGED JOB IN PAST YEAR, BY LEVEL, %

● No      ● Yes, I was laid off and found a new one.

● Yes, by my own choice.

● Yes, I was laid off and I am currently unemployed.



In 2025, top management roles became significantly more stable: 77% did not change jobs (up from 66%), and only 1% remained unemployed after a layoff (down from 4%).

By contrast, creative professions, especially Art/Design and Game Design, faced growing instability:

- Art/Design had the lowest job retention (47%) and the highest unemployment rate post-layoff (17%, up from 10%),
- Game Designers saw a sharp rise in layoffs followed by reemployment (24% in 2025 vs. 13% in 2024), but also a higher share remaining unemployed (11% vs. 8%).

Meanwhile, HR professionals showed a recovery: unemployment dropped to 0% (from 2%), and voluntary mobility increased slightly, hinting at stabilization after previous years' cuts.

# Job Change



## Respondents' quotes

*"I think the saddest part is getting great feedback in every evaluation, knowing I'm having a positive impact on the company – and still being laid off. The leadership decided the best way to please investors was to cut 25% of the payroll, even though the company was still profitable. Just not profitable enough."*

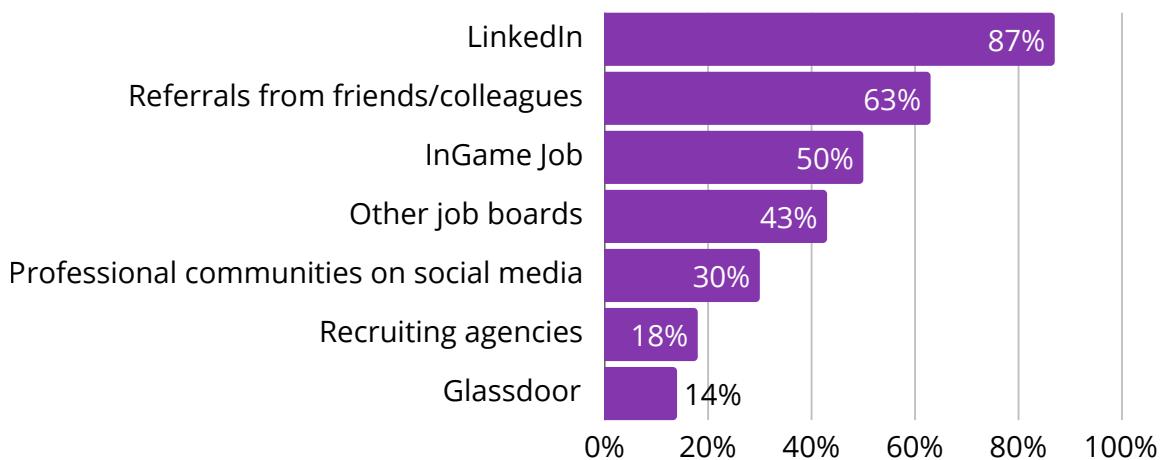
*"I was laid off about two weeks after successfully passing my trial period =) At first, they told me I was a great professional and they wanted to work with me... then two weeks later, they told me I was a great professional – but they couldn't keep me because of layoffs."*

*"The company I worked for laid off over 100 people in the past year. The way they handled it was completely wrong – and they did it in three waves. Each time, transparency dropped even further. Some people (not me) took them to court and won settlements. Personally, I was relieved to be laid off – they were building a toxic culture."*

*"I'm in my last month at the studio, and honestly, it doesn't look like the studio will last much longer. The whole thing is almost comical. After losing the client for our project, they laid off the most qualified specialists and had the remaining team work on a game without any market assessment. The result? The "efficient" managers now have an almost finished game that nobody wants. Meanwhile, an alternative project with real potential was scrapped. That's how it goes."*

*"I landed my dream job, working on my dream project – and then, out of nowhere, the company decided to downsize. Three months of living my dream, and I was back to square one."*

## 2025 EUROPE, WHERE PROFESSIONALS USUALLY SEARCH FOR A JOB IN THE GAMES INDUSTRY, %



# Job Change

## Key Factors When Choosing a New Employer

2025 EUROPE, MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN CHOOSING A NEW EMPLOYER, %



In 2025, salary level is the most important factor when choosing a new employer for European game industry professionals, cited by 87% of respondents. This underscores growing financial caution amid ongoing market instability.

Work format (remote/hybrid/office) and work-life balance follow closely (59% each), reflecting a continued demand for flexibility and personal well-being. Beyond basic conditions, candidates also value role clarity, professional development, and career growth, indicating a focus on long-term fit and progression.

Factors such as company culture, financial stability, and job security are important but slightly lower in priority, suggesting that while stability matters, immediate personal and career benefits drive most decisions. Traditional “soft” factors like company mission, location, or benefits packages rank lowest.

# Job Change



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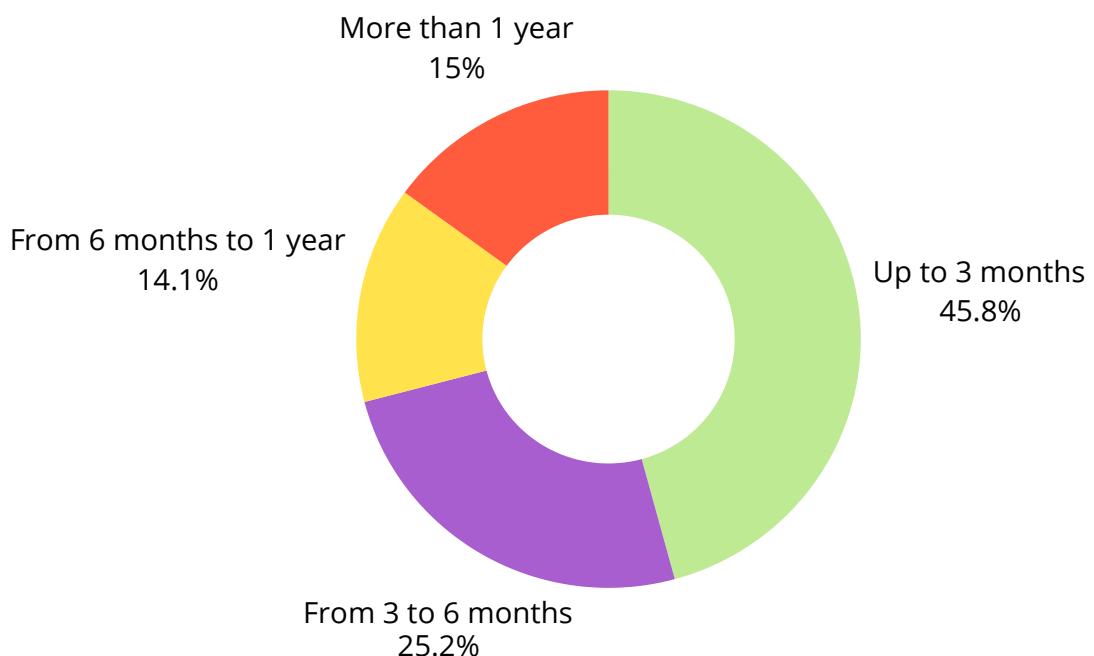
**Jelena Kotelova**

HR Manager,  
[Hypercell Games](#)  
 & [HyperVR Games](#)

*“Today, salary is seen as a symbol of stability and a guarantee of tomorrow within a company. With layoffs and studio closures still happening across the market, a steady paycheck has become a kind of safety net in times of uncertainty. It’s what gives people a sense of security: at the very least, you know what you’ll be doing tomorrow.”*

*Career growth and development have always been, and remain, important. But right now, with no guarantees that these opportunities will actually materialize, there’s a fear they might never come to life. As a result, the industry has shifted from a romanticized view of work toward a more rational one. Still, there should always be room for ambition and inspiration — after all, there are still companies willing and able to offer both: growth and stability.”*

## How quickly do specialists find new jobs?

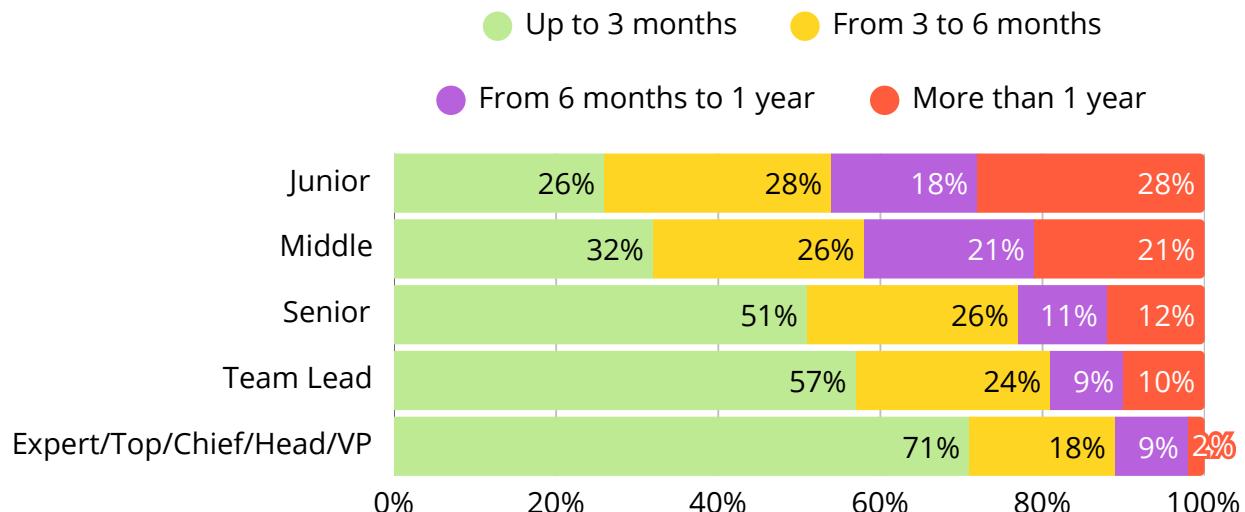


In 2025, professionals in the European gaming industry faced longer job searches compared to 2024:

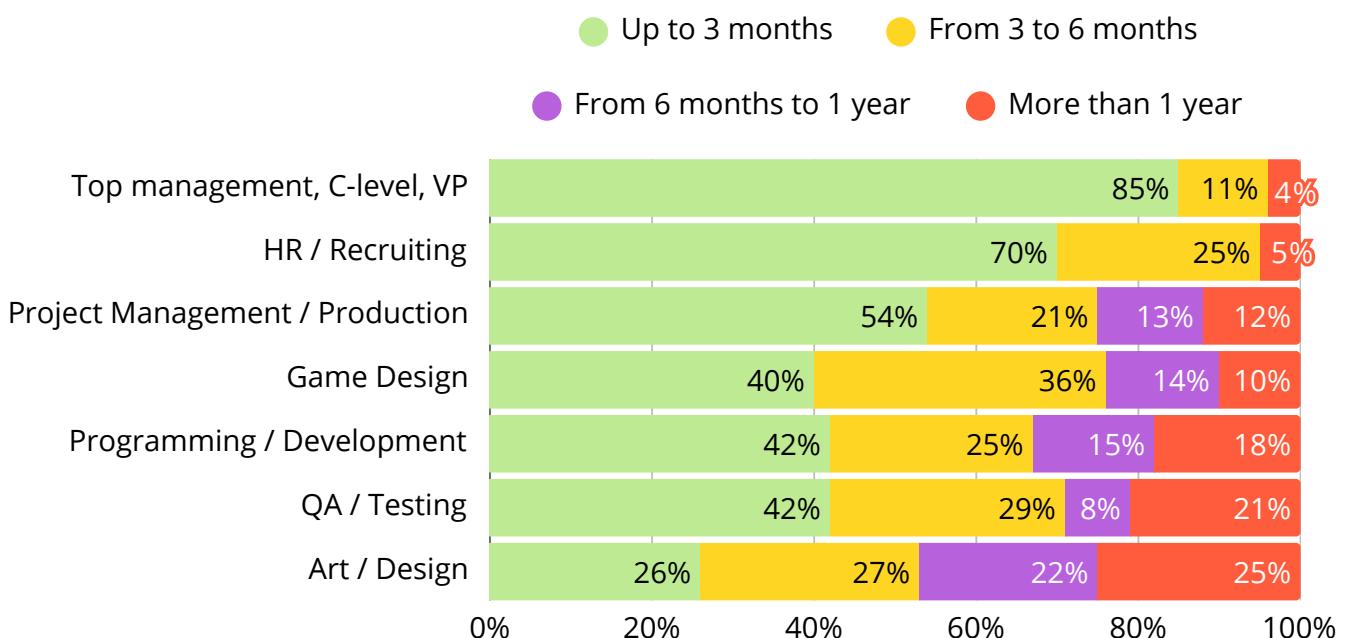
- Only 45.8% found a new job within 3 months (down from 55.2%),
- While 15% spent over a year searching — nearly double the share in 2024 (8.1%).

# Job Change

2025 EUROPE, TIME TO FIND A NEW JOB LAST YEAR, BY LEVEL, %



2025 EUROPE, TIME TO FIND A NEW JOB LAST YEAR, BY LEVEL, %



In 2025, job search times increased significantly across most roles and seniority levels, with the sharpest deterioration among junior and creative professionals.

- Art/Design saw the most dramatic shift: only 26% found work within 3 months (down from 49% in 2024), while 25% searched for over a year (up from 10%). Similar trends are seen in QA and Game Design.
- Junior professionals are the most affected, with only 26% finding jobs in under 3 months (vs. 30% in 2024).

# Job Change



## Respondents' quotes

*“Within my circle of friends and contacts across the industry, I know three people who were made redundant and lost their housing. Two others haven’t been paid in months – and just the other day, one of their companies was declared bankrupt. Another contact has been told he won’t be paid this month, despite already being underpaid and relying on benefits. I was made redundant myself and was lucky enough to find freelance work. But many of my friends and colleagues are already talking about leaving the industry altogether.”*

*“I’m one of the many people caught up in the massive wave of layoffs in the games industry. I’ve been job hunting for six months now, and I’m starting to wonder if there’s something wrong with my CV – I keep getting rejection letters or being ghosted by employers. It’s been an incredibly tough time mentally, emotionally, and financially. Losing my job has taken a huge toll on my confidence and self-esteem, and every rejection just makes it harder.”*

*“Before I joined my last company, I had six offers on the table and ended up working there for two years. Now it’s been more than six months since I was laid off, and I’m actively looking for a new role. The situation is the complete opposite – getting an offer has become exponentially harder. I haven’t received a single one in all this time. I just hope things turn around.”*

*“Last year I changed jobs, but the search took me a year and a half. I honestly don’t remember such a global job market crisis since the 1990s.”*

*“I’ve spent 20 years in the video game industry and have now been unemployed for two and a half years, living on the street. There’s been zero humanity from games companies, despite my skills and experience. Every time, I hear: “Sorry, we decided to move forward with another candidate.” They could hire me simply to save a person – but instead, their “other candidates” can easily find work, while I can’t. I feel like trash thrown away, like I’ve been retired at 40 without a pension. My income is €0.”*

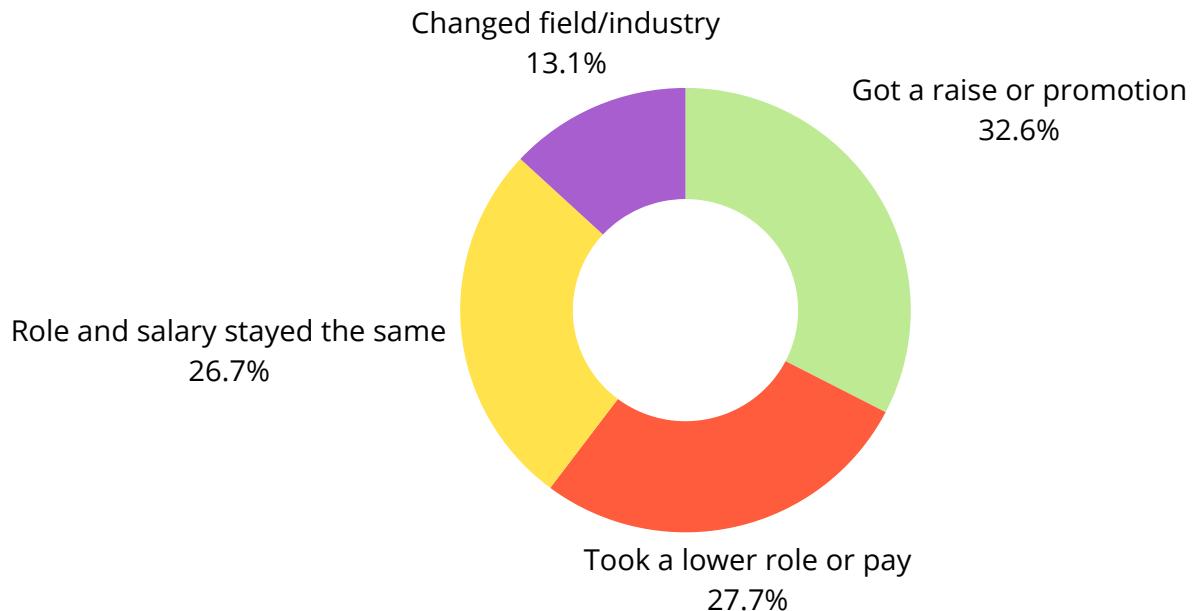
*“After two years of unpaid work building a demo and starting my own company, my former friends staged a hostile takeover of my shares and ran a smear campaign against me. Now I haven’t been able to find a job for over seven months, and I’m on the verge of losing my family and home.”*

*“I’ve been laid off five times in the past five years – most recently just a month ago. I’m losing trust in this industry.”*

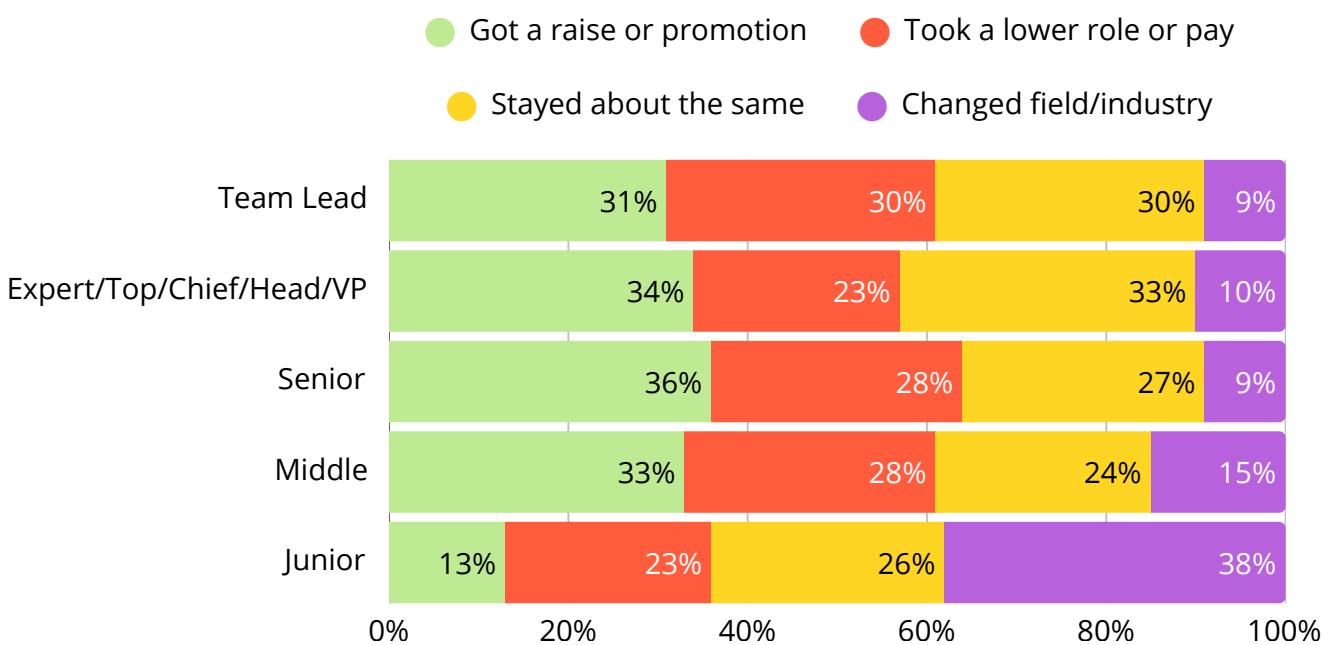
# Job Change

## Key Factors When Choosing a New Employer

2025 EUROPE, CHANGES IN SALARY AND POSITION, %

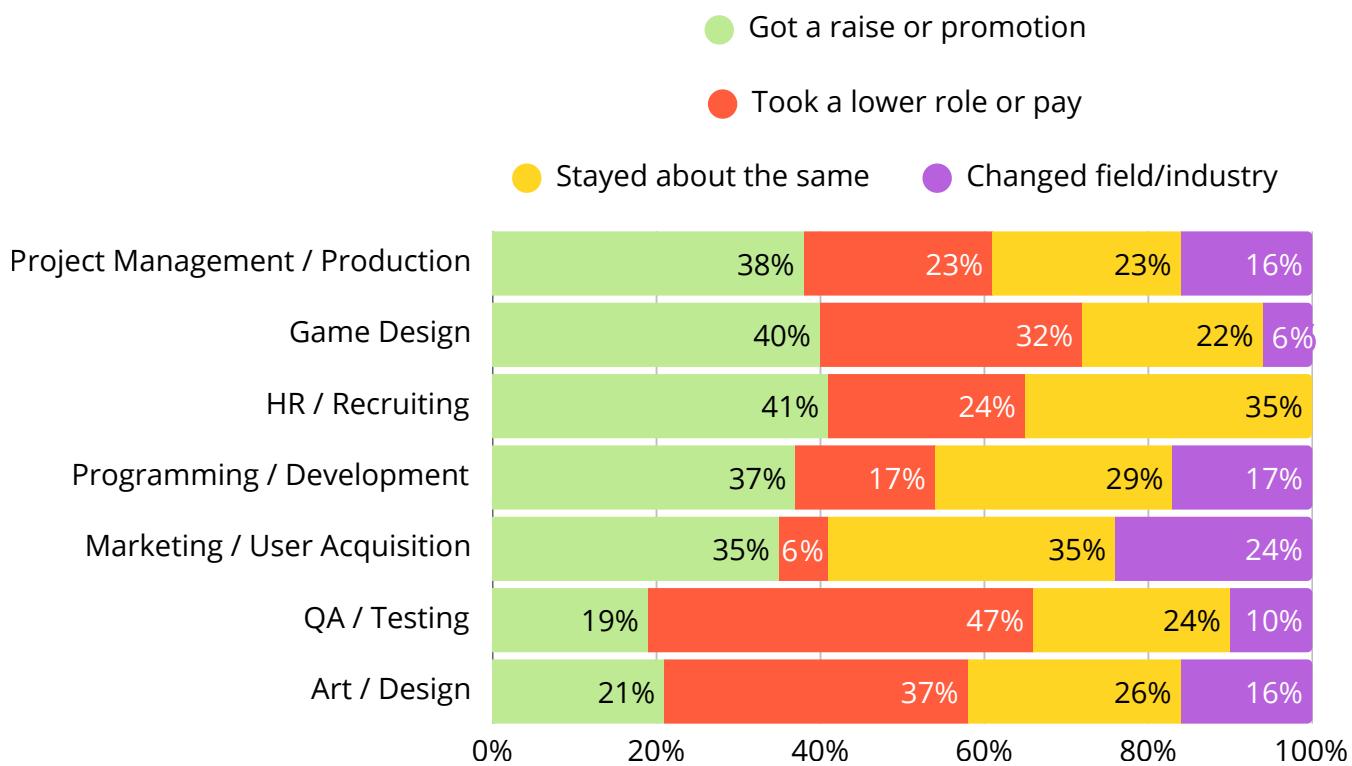


2025 EUROPE, CHANGES IN SALARY AND POSITION, BY LEVEL, %



# Job Change

2025 EUROPE, CHANGES IN SALARY AND POSITION,  
BY PROFESSION, %



- 13% ended up leaving the games industry altogether (vs. 10% a year ago).
- Junior specialists were once again the group most affected by industry exits — this year, a striking 38% of them switched fields after a layoff or job change (up from 31% in 2024).
- Roughly a quarter of all levels reported stagnant career conditions post-transition.
- For mid-level and senior specialists, around 28% had to accept worse offers.
- Only 13% of juniors experienced career growth — a sharp drop from 22% last year.
- In contrast, C-level executives and experts remain the most resilient group: over a third reported improved conditions, compared to more than half in 2024.
- Roles in QA and Art/Design were hit hardest — nearly half of QA specialists and over a third of artists faced pay cuts or demotions.
- Meanwhile, professionals in HR and Marketing were more likely than others to maintain or improve their positions.

# Job Change



## Respondents' quotes

*QA gets stepped on as a matter of course. We're seen as completely disposable and are always the first to be laid off. I tried several times to move out of QA, but at the time DEI was ramping up and the opportunities always went to women. All I've ever wanted is to work in games — and after 13 years, I still can't get another role, and I don't know why. I was made redundant when my company decided to move QA to India, so I suspect "financial reasons" are often the excuse for discarding QA. Serves me right for thinking hard work would mean career growth and stability, instead of being treated as expendable.*

*Right now, the industry feels almost hostile to beginners. Everyone wants to hire people with 5+ years of experience, but there are no entry-level roles to actually gain that experience. Even job platforms seem to assume you're already employed or recently were. If you were born at the wrong time, breaking into this field feels nearly impossible.*

*After 18 years in the games industry — six of them as a 3D Character Artist — I now find myself unemployed and unable to find work. I'm being forced to seriously consider leaving the industry and changing careers.*

## What Work-Related Issues Make Us Dissatisfied with Our Job?

We also asked respondents to rate how likely they are to voluntarily change jobs within the next six months, using a five-point scale: "On a scale from 0 to 5, how likely are you to change jobs by your own choice in the next 6 months? 0 – Definitely not, 5 – Already job hunting." Their answers revealed several important trends and correlations.

### What issues are most likely to push someone to quit?

Respondents who selected 4 or 5 on the scale — those most likely to leave — most frequently cited the following reasons:

- Professional burnout
- Unprofessional management
- Lack of appreciation

Last year, instead of "lack of appreciation," the top three reasons included "toxic team."

# Job Change

At the same time, the most critical factors driving job changes – the ones that scored the highest in impact – were:

- Insufficient support from management
- Unjust or unethical dismissal practices
- Harassment
- Any form of discrimination



# Relocation

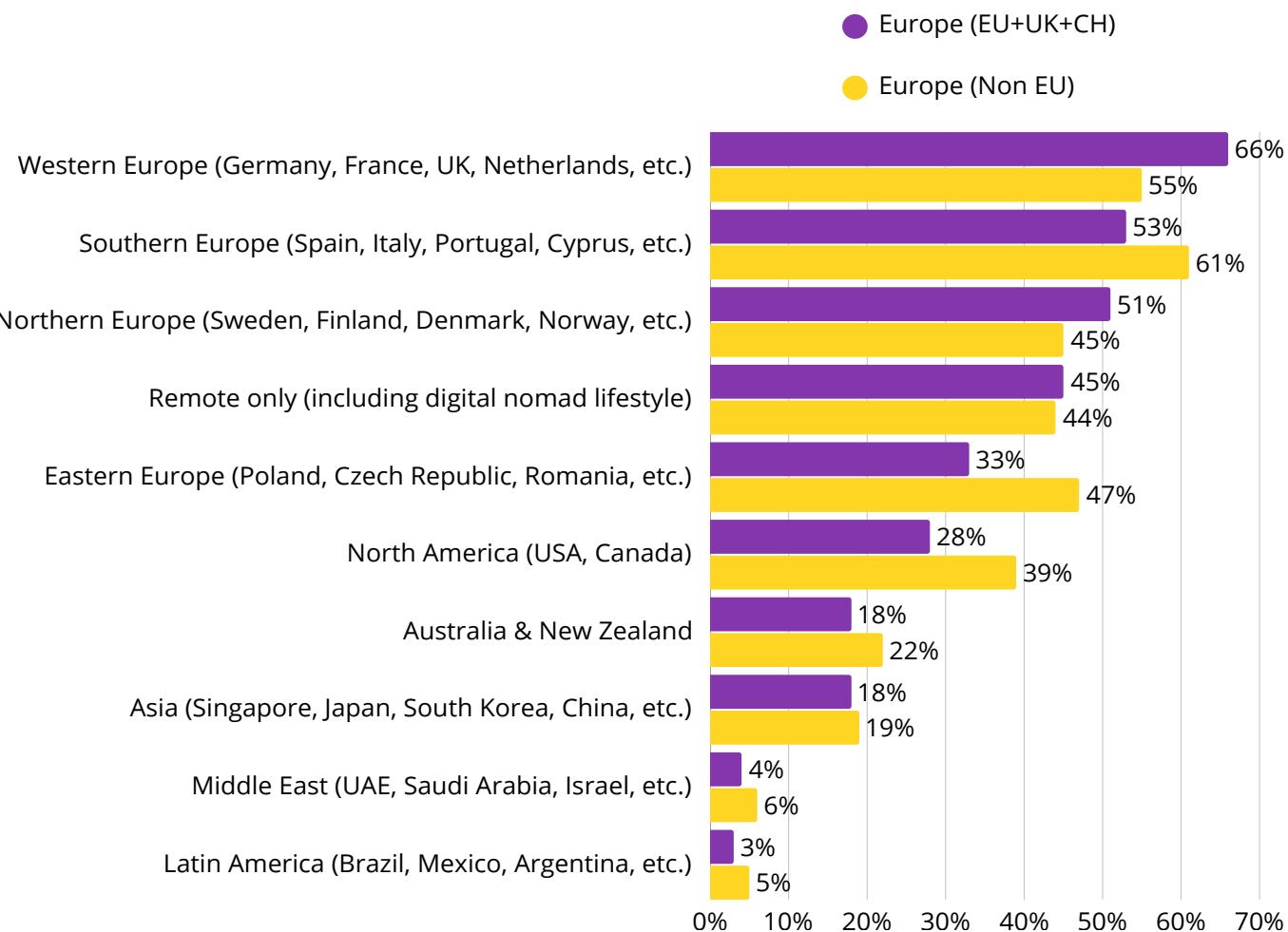
According to our data, openness or willingness to relocate doesn't vary much by seniority level — on average, the overall willingness score is 2.3 out of 5.

The breakdown by profession shows a similar picture, with the same average score. The only exception is among marketing and PR/brand specialists, whose average willingness to relocate is below 2.

Profession	Average Score
Top management, C-level, VP	2,53
Game Design	2,51
Project Management / Production	2,50
Community / Support	2,47
HR / Recruiting	2,44
QA / Testing	2,36
Business Development / Sales	2,35
Art / Design	2,23
Programming / Development	2,21
Sound	2,11
Analytics	2,00
Marketing / User Acquisition	1,89
PR / Employer Brand / Media / Blogs	1,43

# Relocation

## 2025 PREFERRED REGIONS FOR JOB CHANGE, %



In 2025, respondents from EU countries predominantly view Western Europe (66%) as the most suitable region for job-related relocation, followed by Southern (53%) and Northern Europe (51%). By contrast, professionals from non-EU European countries demonstrate a more diversified set of preferences: while Southern Europe (61%) is the top choice, Eastern Europe (47%) and North America (39%) are also attractive options.

The data suggest that EU-based respondents tend to prioritize proximity and intra-EU mobility, while non-EU professionals are more open to relocation beyond Europe, including North America and Australia/New Zealand. Interest in remote-only work is consistently high in both groups (45–44%), highlighting the continued importance of flexible working models.

# Relocation



**Olga Makhrova**  
HR Director at [Tribe](#)

## ***"The Era of Pragmatic Relocation***

*Impulsive relocation driven by dreams, new experiences, or a search for safety is giving way to carefully weighed relocation decisions backed by precise calculations. Today's candidates approach relocation not with an adventurous sparkle in their eyes, but with a calculator in hand - meticulously assessing risks and benefits against the backdrop of a volatile job market and global uncertainty.*

*The desire to change countries for career growth has not disappeared, but its nature has changed dramatically. A few years ago, a job offer abroad was seen as a unique professional opportunity that no one wanted to miss. Today, however, candidates have become far more cautious. This shift is influenced both by individual career goals and ambitions, as well as by labor market dynamics and the geopolitical environment. Of course, the possibility of working remotely without being tied to a specific location also has a significant impact in this regard. Some candidates prefer this more flexible format, as it allows them either to keep their permanent place of residence or, conversely, to travel actively around the world while working for the company that interests them most.*

*In the past, relocation almost always guaranteed an increase in income. However, with the development of remote work, salary differences have largely evened out, reducing the motivation to move abroad. As a result, when receiving and considering relocation offers today, candidates primarily focus on thoroughly assessing the cost of living in another country to ensure that the proposed compensation will support their usual standard of living. They pay close attention to housing rental prices, food costs, taxes, and everyday expenses."*

# Relocation



**Olga Makhrova**  
HR Director at [Tribe](#)

*“Cyprus, by the way, is a vivid example of this pragmatic approach. On the one hand, the island is appealing for its seaside lifestyle, while for candidates from non-EU countries, it also offers the promise of an EU passport in the foreseeable future. On the other hand, many candidates are discouraged by the high cost of living and the limited strength of the local residence permit, as Cyprus is not part of the Schengen Area. Those accustomed to the pace of a metropolitan city often fear the steady and predictable rhythm of island life. For some, the climate - with its hot summers and windy winters - is not a good fit. More recently, security concerns in the Middle East region have also been added to this list of considerations.*

*With regard to relocation packages, now it has become increasingly difficult to impress candidates with the benefits they include, as most of them are now perceived as a given. Comprehensive health insurance, full visa support, assistance with relocation for the entire family, and help with placing children in kindergarten or school are no longer viewed as attractive extras, but rather as a baseline requirement. For example, in Cyprus, the majority of large employers offer similar relocation packages and benefit sets. In this environment, we recommend that companies and teams we work with focus on developing a distinctive EVP (Employee Value Proposition) that goes beyond the standard offering and addresses the more selective expectations of today's candidates. As a result, candidates may hear from us about benefits such as exclusive discounts on goods and services through a corporate privilege program, financial support for renting or purchasing housing and cars, assistance with family social integration in Cyprus, a corporate cinema, and more.*

*However, despite a more pragmatic outlook, candidates remain generally open to discussing relocation opportunities. Moreover, their willingness to engage in dialogue does not depend on the seniority level or professional field. The more critical factor is whether the employer is ready - or not ready - to relocate certain categories of specialists.”*

# Relocation



**Olga Makhrova**  
HR Director at [Tribe](#)

“

*In practice, we observe that companies are most interested in relocating highly skilled IT professionals. Candidates at the Middle+ and Senior levels are generally open to relocation, but given their scarcity on the market, they often set their own terms. Employers, in turn, seek to retain them by any means possible, with salary increases usually proving to be the most effective tool. As a result, the expectations of some candidates rise so quickly that the financial advantages of staying in their current role outweigh any benefits of relocation. Junior specialists, by contrast, tend to be more flexible, but in places such as Cyprus, not all companies are prepared to bear the high costs of relocating them.*

*In summary, relocation is no longer romanticized or seen as a goal in itself. The market has been changing significantly. Candidates now weigh geography against economics, comfort against ambition, and security against long-term prospects. As a result, employers are compelled to offer more competitive conditions. In this context, our role as an HR agency goes beyond that of a traditional intermediary: we act as consultants who can strike the right balance between the expectations of both sides, recognizing that the cornerstone of a successful relocation proposal is not the promise of a “new and beautiful life,” but a clear financial and practical plan.”*



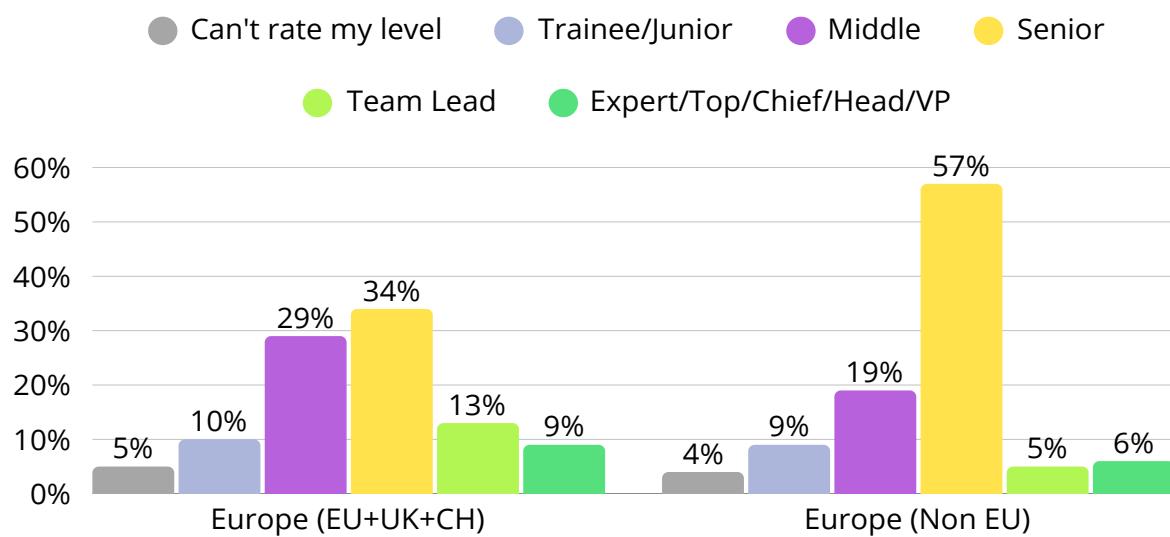
## Respondents' quotes

*“I was relocated to Poland on my own tourist Schengen visa, with the company assuring me it would be fine and that I'd easily get a residence permit, no problem. Of course, that never happened. I had to move to Serbia, a place I never planned or wanted to go. My idea was to get a valid visa in Serbia and then move back to Poland, but my project ended before I could even apply – I was still in the middle of preparing the documents. A few months later, I was laid off. Now I'm still in Serbia, still hoping to move to another country, but the chances are getting slimmer.”*

# Freelance and Pet Projects: Extra Income Beyond Full-Time Jobs

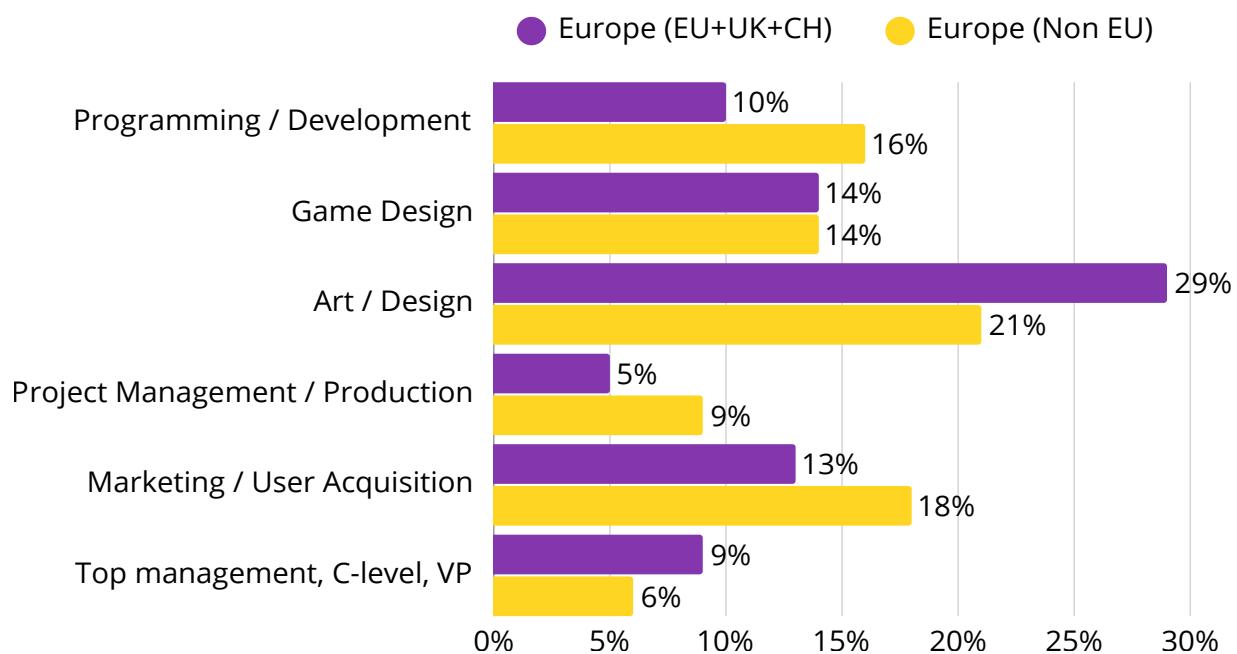
## Who works freelance?

2025 EUROPE (EU+UK+CH) VS NON-EU, FREELANCERS BY LEVEL, %



## What share of professionals in each field works as freelancers?

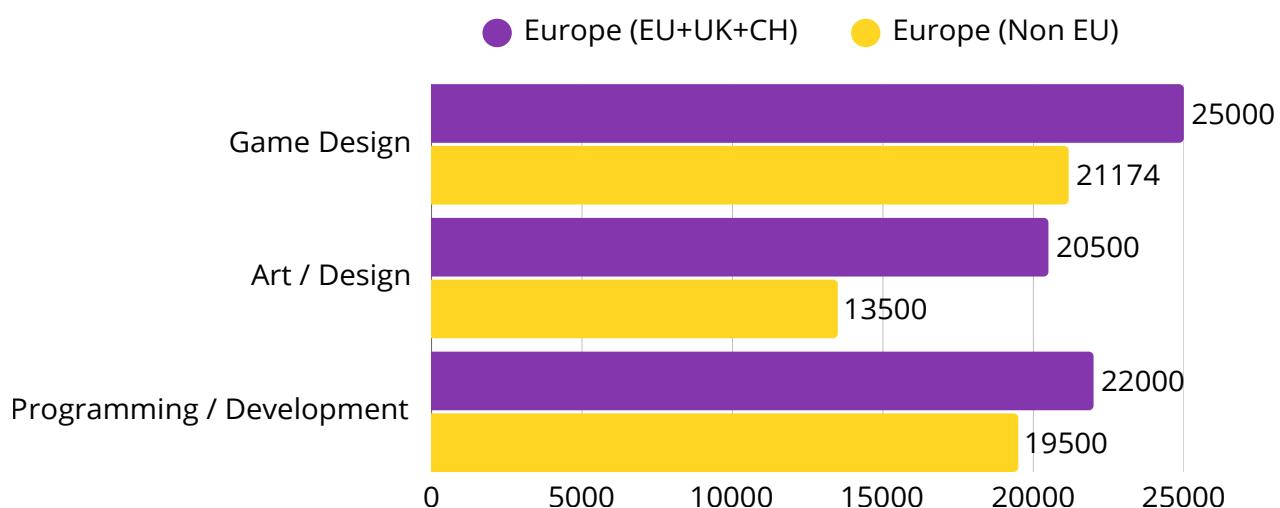
2025 FREELANCERS BY PROFESSION, % OF TOTAL



# Freelance and Pet Projects: Extra Income Beyond Full-Time Jobs

**How much do specialists earn additionally through freelance work?**

2025 FREELANCE MEDIAN SALARY, BY ROLE, EUR/YEAR



## Respondents' quotes

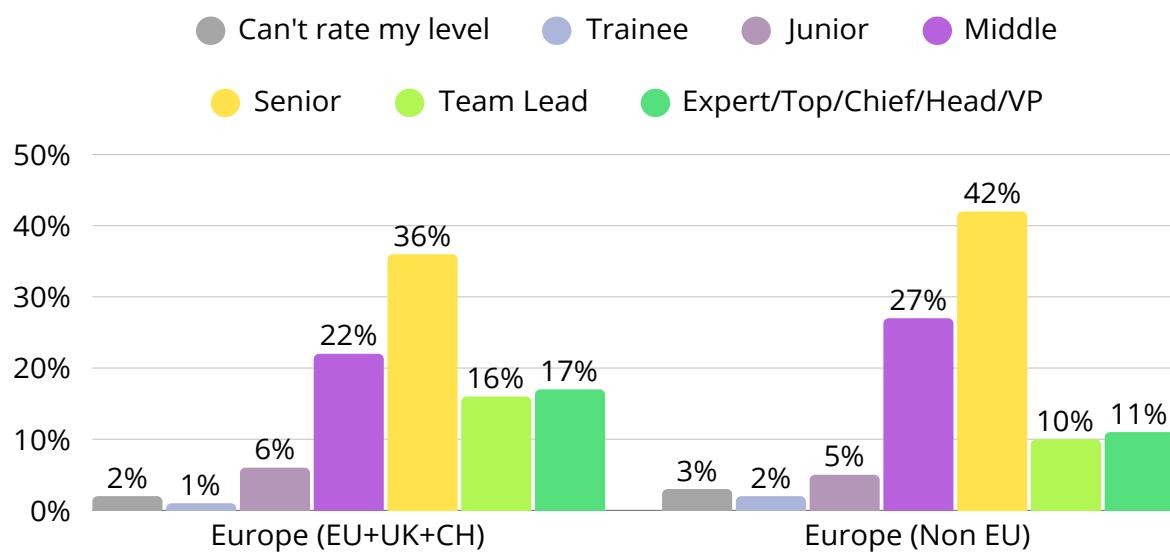
 "I don't think freelancers get talked about enough. I've heard so many stories about not getting paid for work done, facing unfair treatment, and dealing with crazy work or contract conditions. But when you're left with the choice of working freelance with the hope of getting paid, or not working at all, there's really no choice but to put up with it. They have the lawyers, we don't. And in many cases, we have no rights to stand on."



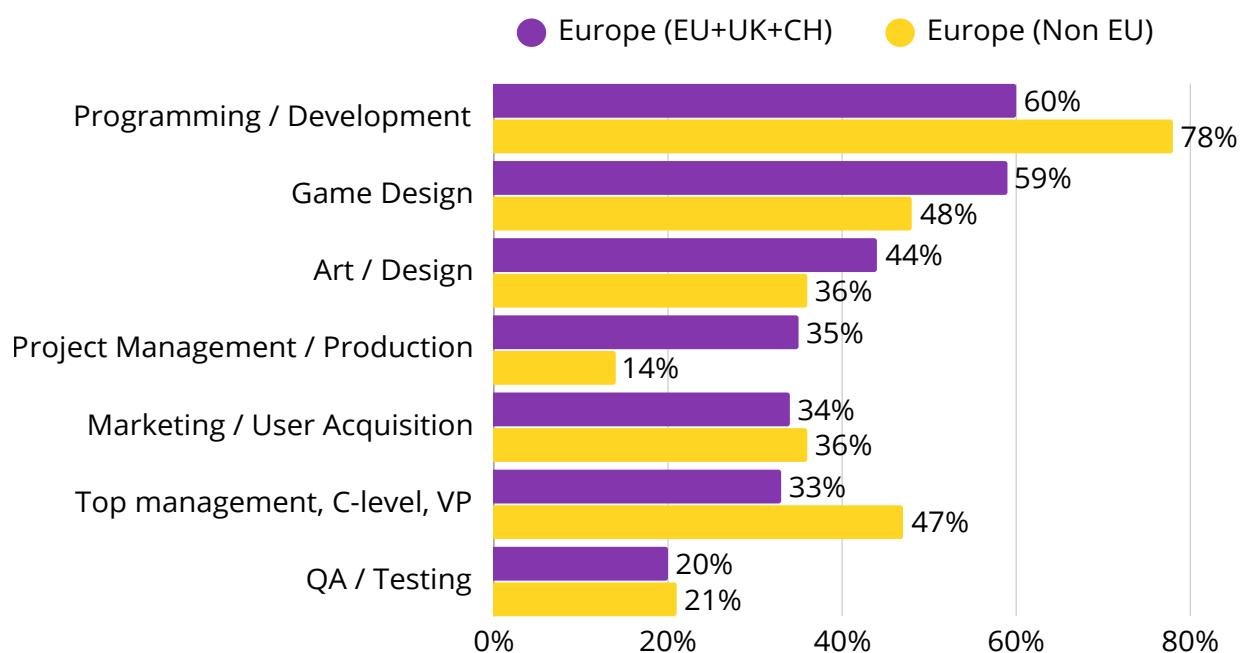
# Freelance and Pet Projects: Extra Income Beyond Full-Time Jobs

## Who has pet projects?

2025 EU+UK+CH VS NON-EU, LEVELS OF PROFESSIONALS WITH PET PROJECTS, %



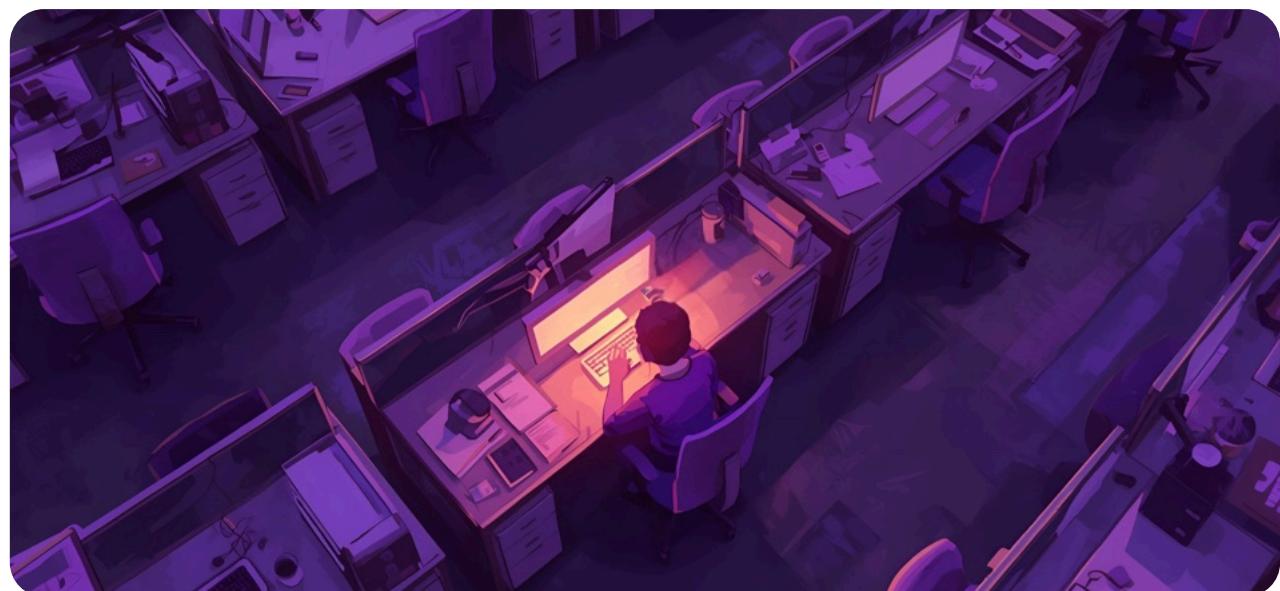
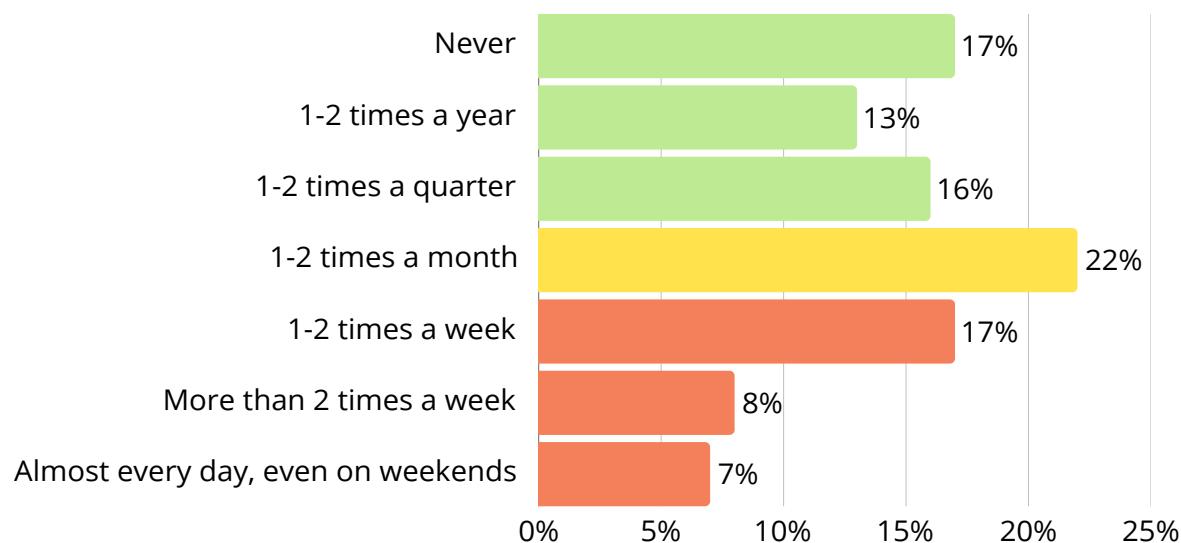
2025 PET PROJECTS ACROSS PROFESSIONS, %



# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

## How often do specialists work overtime?

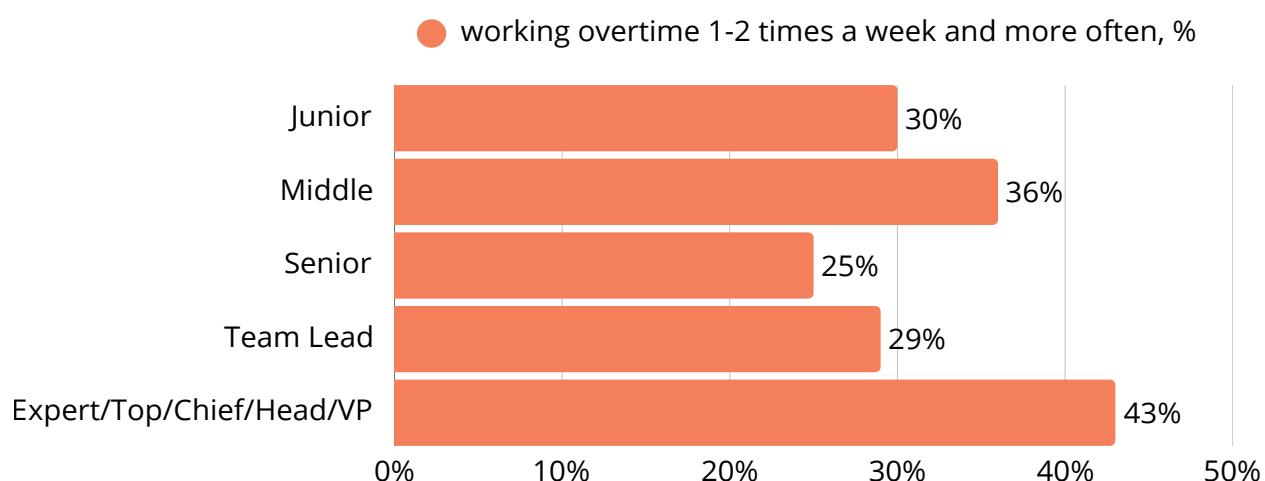
2025 EUROPE, HOW OFTEN PROFESSIONALS WORK OVERTIME, %



# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

## Who tends to work overtime the most in the industry?

2025 EUROPE, OVERTIME FREQUENCY BY LEVEL, %



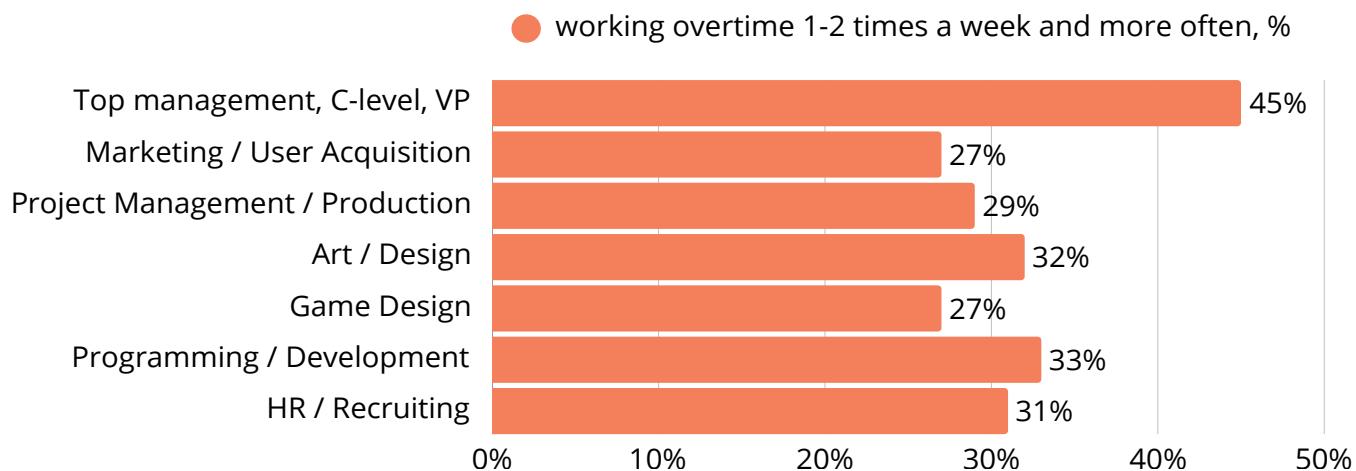
Our survey data shows that senior professionals in the games industry work overtime less often than other levels. This can be explained by several factors: seniors have more control over their workload and deadlines, they solve tasks more efficiently thanks to experience, and they are less driven by the need to prove themselves through extra hours. Routine and urgent tasks are usually handled by juniors and mid-levels, while seniors focus on architecture, strategy, and mentoring. Companies also tend to protect their senior talent from burnout, as they are harder to replace. In short, overtime often reflects lack of experience and resources rather than higher responsibility.



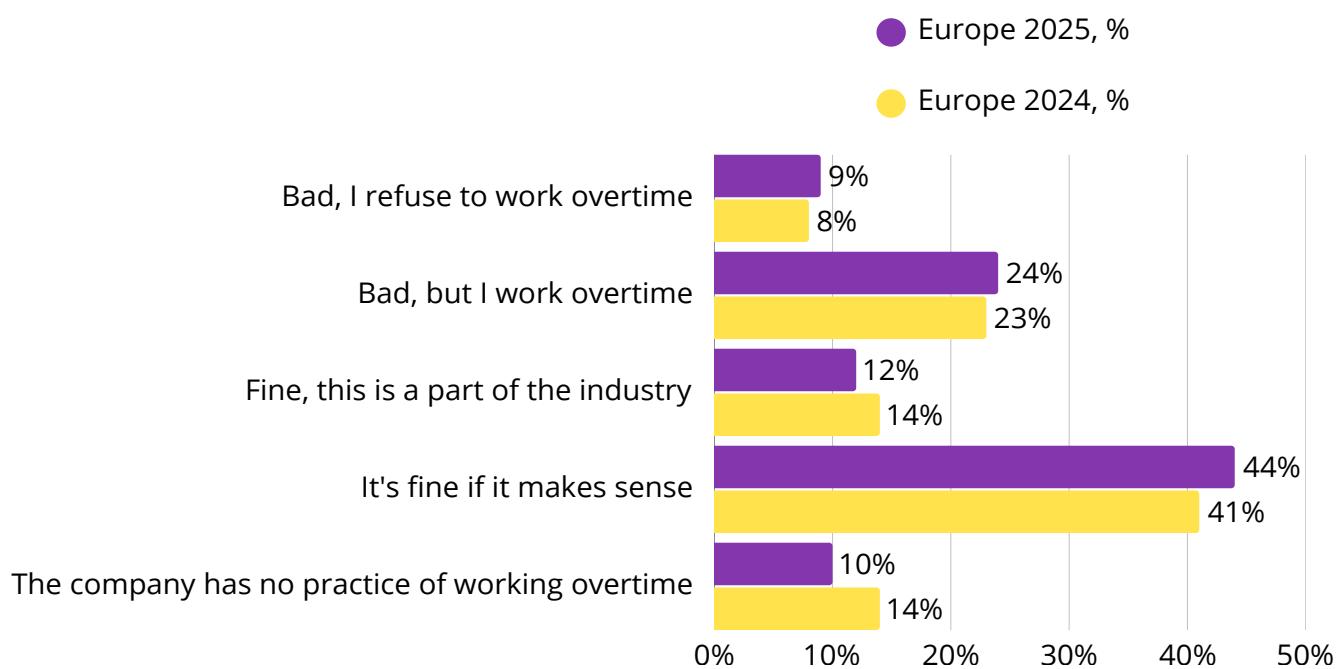
# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

## Who tends to work overtime the most in the industry?

2025 EUROPE, OVERTIME FREQUENCY BY PROFESSION, %



2025 VS 2024 EUROPE, HOW PROFESSIONALS FEEL ABOUT OVERTIME, %



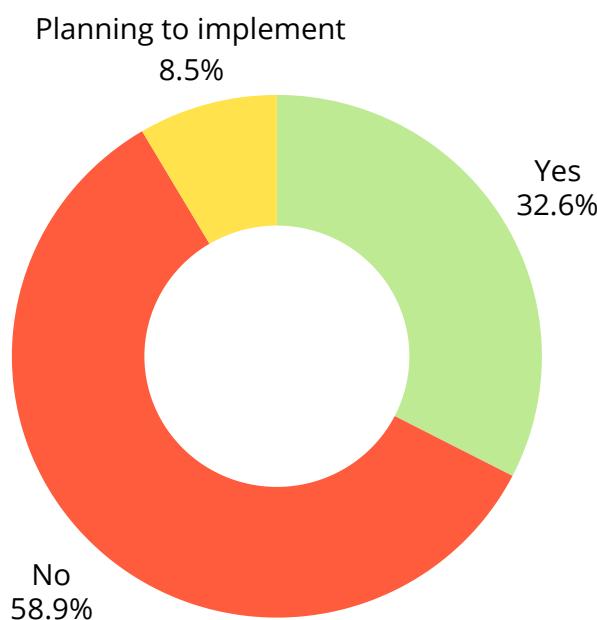
# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

## People Improvement Plan

A People Improvement Plan (PIP) is a structured approach designed to help employees improve their performance and address specific issues. It typically involves setting clear goals, providing support and resources, and monitoring progress over a defined period. The aim is to enhance employee skills, productivity, and overall contribution to the organization.

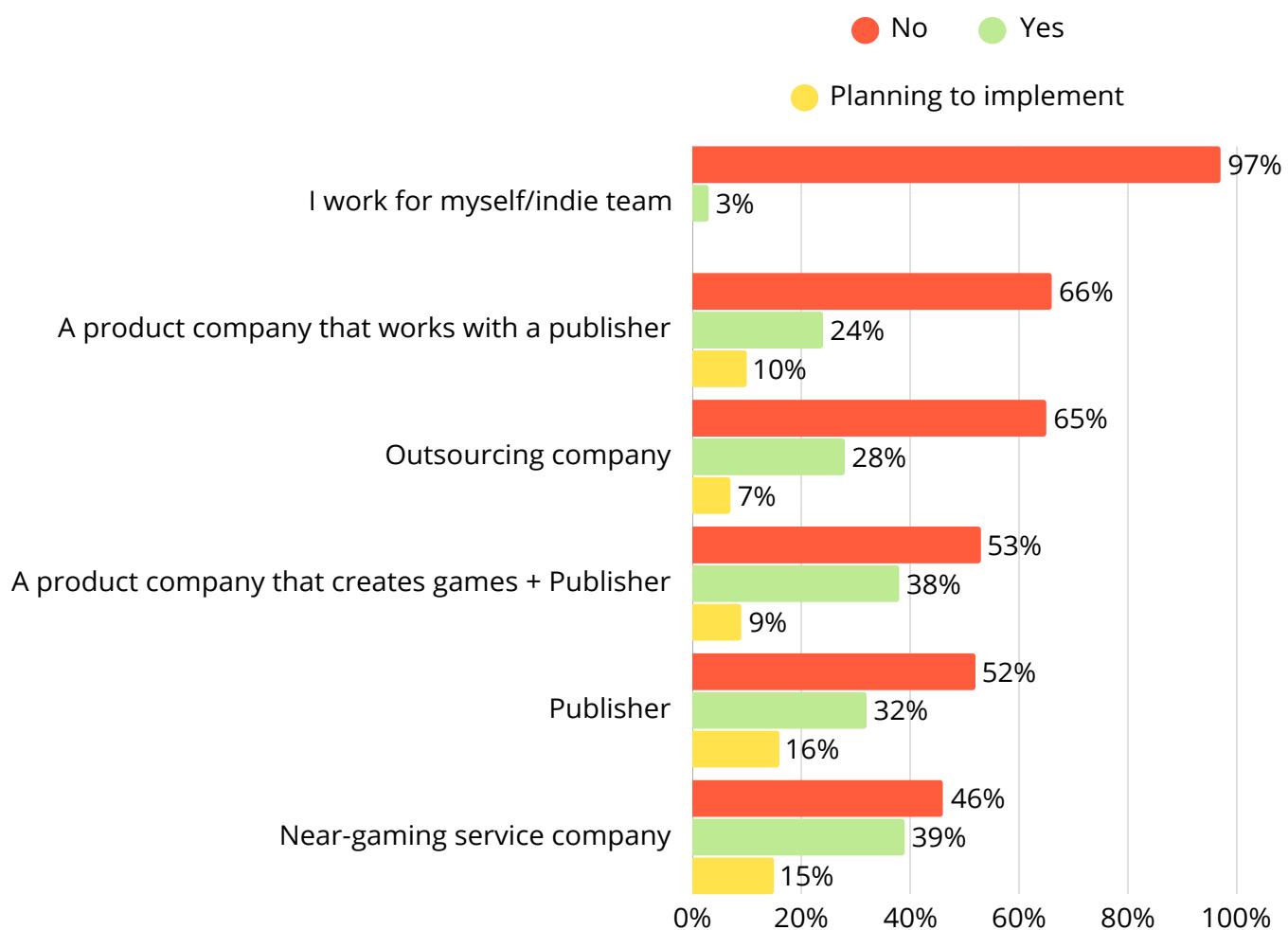
## How common is a PIP in the company?

2025 EUROPE, DO YOU HAVE PEOPLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN AT YOUR COMPANY?, %



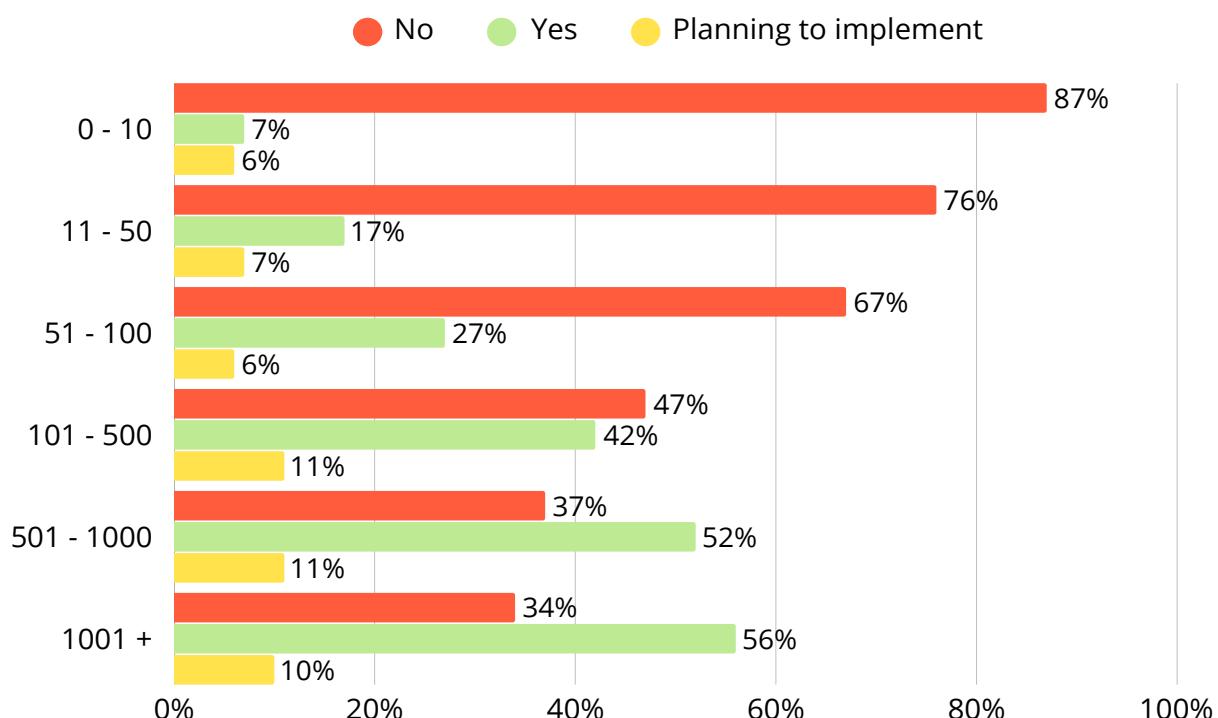
# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

2025 EUROPE, DO YOU HAVE PEOPLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN AT YOUR COMPANY? BY COMPANY SPECIALIZATION, %



# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

2024 EUROPE, DO YOU HAVE PEOPLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN AT YOUR COMPANY? BY COMPANY SIZE, %



We like to see on this chart that as the company grows, people improvement plans appear more frequently, since larger teams require more structured approaches to development and performance management.



## Respondents' quotes

*"A sad story: the Art Director, who is also a company founder, hires people without a proper interview process – he's always too busy and doesn't involve the direct team or team lead. These hires relocate, but during probation the Art Director never makes time for proper check-ins. Only after the probation ends – thanks to months of pushing from HR and myself – he finally realizes the new hire has serious issues with the team (and the team with them). He then decides to "fire" them. This has happened three times over three years, creating a toxic environment for everyone and ultimately costing the company heavily when one of the employees took them to court."*

# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

## How do specialists perceive their development?

According to our survey:

- 37% of respondents rate their development at their current job as average, noting that their progress could be better (42% in 2024).
- 30% are completely satisfied with their professional development at their current job (same as in 2024).
- 14% feel stagnant (11% in 2024).
- 18% report a slowdown in their professional development (17% in 2024).

## Respondents' quotes

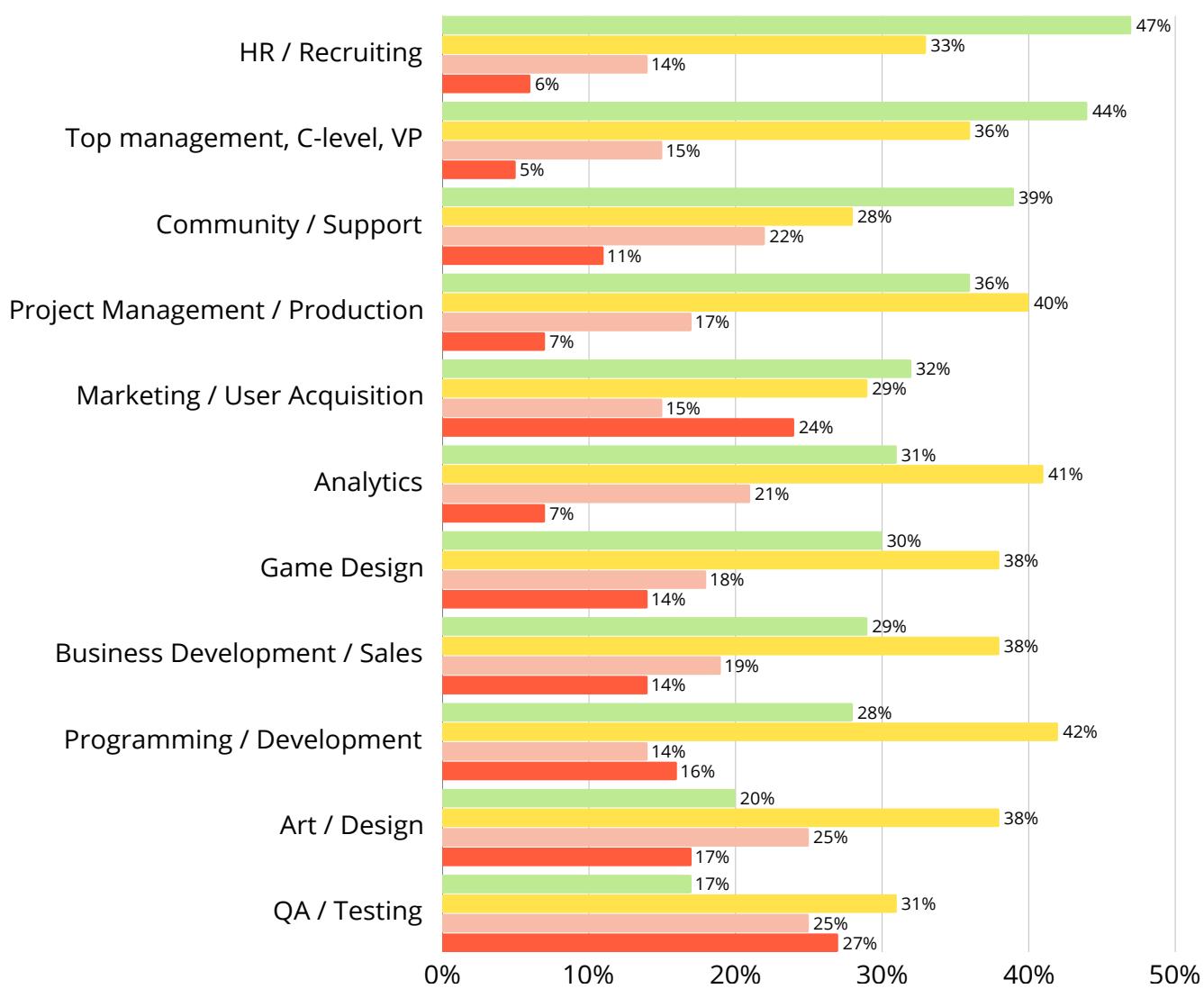
*"Most small studios can feel like career dead ends. They often lack financial stability, offer limited growth opportunities, and provide little room for networking. The skills you gain may not always be relevant for larger, more established companies, and the projects produced there may not significantly strengthen your portfolio."*



# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

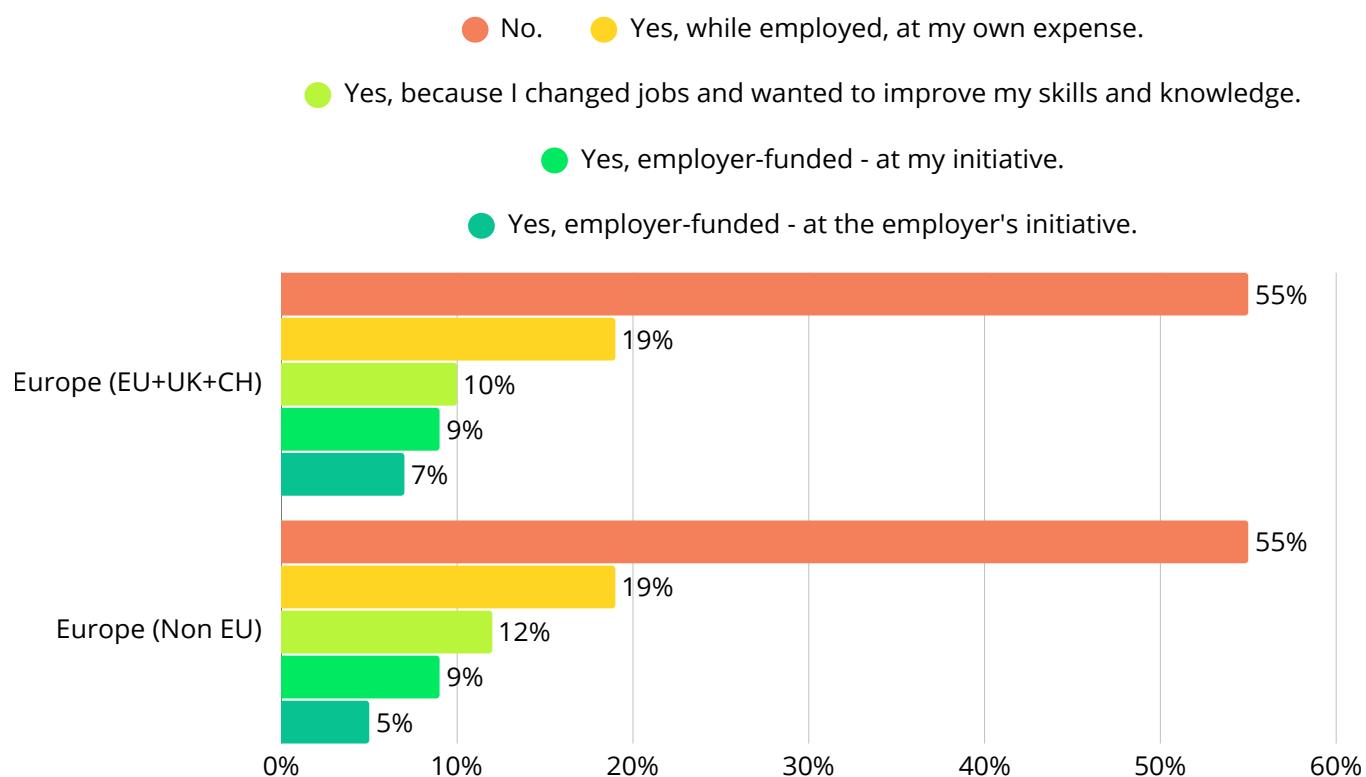
2025 EUROPE, ARE YOU DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALLY AT YOUR CURRENT JOB? BY PROFESSION, %

- Yes, absolutely.
- More or less yes, but it could have been better.
- More like no, I feel a slowdown in development.
- No, I feel stagnant.



# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

DID YOU TAKE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN THE PAST YEAR?, %



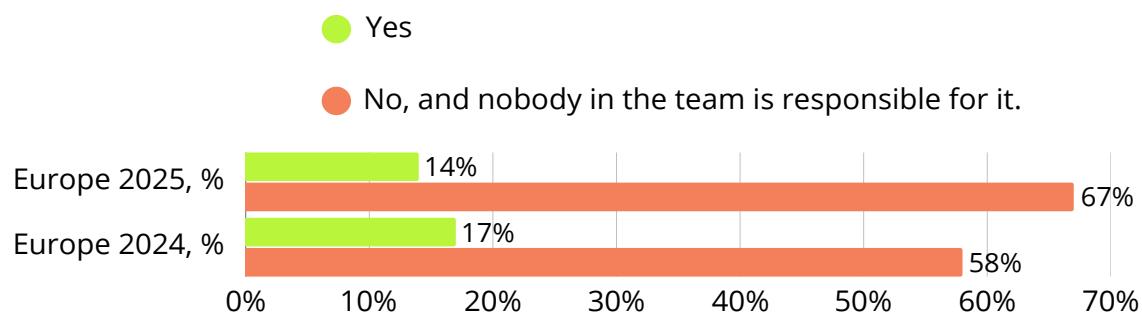
# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

## Diversity & Inclusion

Having employees responsible for Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) continues to play a crucial role in shaping a supportive and inclusive workplace. When people feel that their identities, backgrounds, and perspectives are valued, it reduces stress, increases job satisfaction, and fosters a sense of belonging. This inclusivity builds trust and psychological safety, making employees more comfortable expressing themselves and contributing fully. As a result, companies benefit from higher engagement, stronger motivation, and lower turnover, as employees feel respected and secure in their environment.

However, the situation in 2025 shows a negative trend. Last year, 58% of respondents reported that their companies did not have a dedicated D&I specialist, nor anyone partially fulfilling that role. This year, the number has grown to 67%, suggesting that structured efforts in this area are still not a priority for many employers in the games industry.

### 2025 VS 2024 EUROPE, DOES YOUR COMPANY HAVE EMPLOYEES SPECIALIZED IN DIVERSITY & INCLUSION?, %



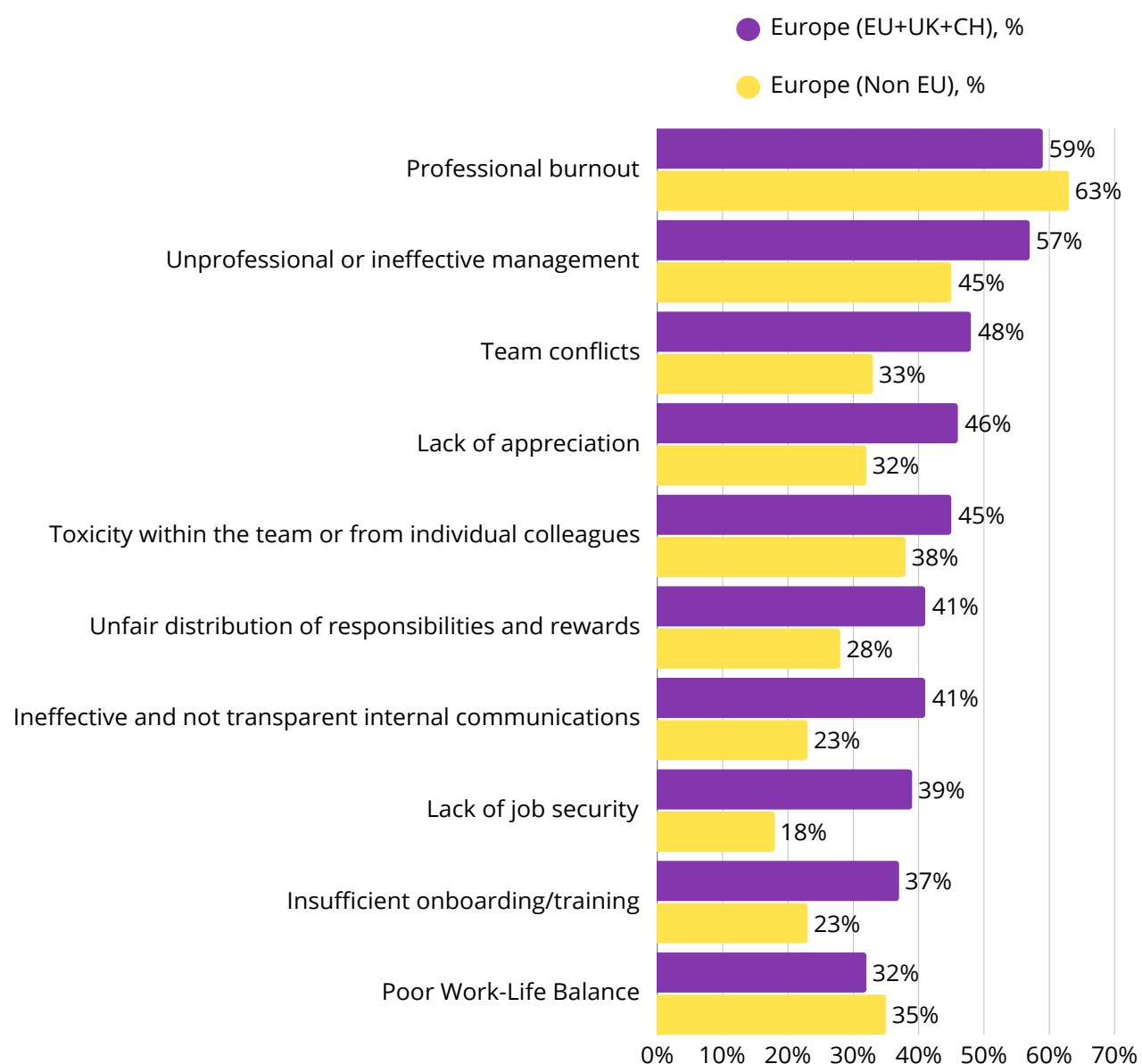
## Respondents' quotes

*"Support for neurodivergent employees in the games industry is still lacking, and it often hinders career progression. At one company, I was told I couldn't be promoted because I didn't "speak up enough" in online meetings – even when the topics being discussed weren't areas where I had any insights to contribute."*

# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

## What issues do specialists face in the workplace?

2025 TOP 10 CHALLENGES SPECIALISTS FACE AT WORK, %



# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face



## Respondents' quotes

*“When my manager was promoted to CEO, I only found out from a LinkedIn post – and no one in the company ever mentioned it afterwards.”*

*“I reported my director for emotional manipulation. HR confirmed it was unprofessional and unacceptable behavior, but a few months later I was the one who got fired.”*

*“I had been a team leader for about five years, but I changed jobs due to burnout and the toxic atmosphere at the top management/owner level. A little over a year later, the whole team was fired, so it turned out my timing was right.”*

*“At my previous workplace, everyone was too afraid to ask our only HR anything because she was so good at giving toxic answers. I even asked friends from other companies to get their HR departments to help me with paperwork questions. I experienced sexual harassment from a co-worker during a social event at the office – he repeatedly kissed me throughout the evening. Since then, I’ve felt extremely uncomfortable at work, especially on days when I have to interact with him.”*

*“I was fired after disclosing a disability.”*

*“I was excluded from writing for a game whose director claimed they wanted an ‘authentic voice’ based on race. After I refused to work under those standards and left the project, I later found out the director had simply hired a friend of theirs – who wasn’t even of the ‘appropriate race’ – to write the story.”*

*“I’ve been away from work for six months due to burnout, caused in part by a toxic atmosphere and constant undermining of my work. I’ve just returned, but I’m already considering moving to a new job or going freelance now that I’ve mostly recovered my energy.”*

# Well-Being: How Game Dev Professionals Feel and What Challenges They Face

## Which genres do specialists want to work with?

- **25%** of mid-core developers want to work on hardcore projects, but almost half of them (**40%**) are satisfied with their genre and do not wish to change it. **8%** of them would like to work on their own indie project.
- **45%** of hardcore genre developers prefer to continue working with hardcore genres, and only **18%** would like to switch to mid-core. **7%** of them would like to work on their own indie project.
- **34%** of Hyper Casual developers want to transition to mid-core, and **23%** to hardcore.
- **28%** of Casual game developers want to move to mid-core, **18%** to hardcore, and **26%** are satisfied with the Casual genre. **14%** of them would like to work on their own indie project.
- The percentage of those interested in working with Casual genres in each cohort, except for those already developing Casual games, is low — ranging from **2%** to **18%**.
- Very few want to start working on Hyper Casual projects, with up to **1%** in each cohort. Only **5%** of developers working on Hyper Casual projects would like to continue developing games in this genre



# Which global companies do our respondents want to work for? Top most mentioned companies

## Top 10 Global Game Companies



# Which global companies do our respondents want to work for? Top most mentioned companies

## Top 10 Regional Game Companies



# Useful Links

[Read](#) our reports from previous years.



Check out the presentation "[Career Challenges in the Games Industry in Numbers and Research](#)" at the devcom conference, 2024.



Need detailed salary analytics? Contact us at [oi@ingamejob.com](mailto:oi@ingamejob.com)



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