European Illustrators Forum

EIF Diversity Survey – Supporting inclusive opportunities for Illustrators across Europe

EIF SURVEY REPORT

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Illustration by Tania Yakunova

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Executive Summary

The EIF Diversity Survey, conducted to assess the experiences and challenges of illustrators across Europe, focused on promoting inclusivity within the industry. Drawing responses from a diverse group based on gender, education, and experience, the survey revealed critical insights. Notably, a substantial 70% of the respondents are female (Graphic 2), indicating a gender imbalance in the field. Furthermore, the vast majority do not identify as part of an ethnic minority (Table 3, and a smaller proportion, around 10%, have disabilities (Graphic 4).

A key finding is the range of obstacles faced by illustrators in their work. As indicated in Table 24, the primary challenges include low fees and wages, underappreciation of the value of illustration, and unfavorable contract terms. Over 60% of respondents highlighted financial concerns, while about 55% pointed out the lack of understanding of illustration's value. Additionally, self-taught illustrators, as opposed to those with formal education, perceive constraints such as limited opportunities for skill development and marketing challenges more acutely (Table 25).

The COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the illustration sector is significant. As shown in Graphic 12, a large majority, approximately 70%, reported a decrease or no change in their income due to the pandemic. This underlines the economic vulnerability of freelance illustrators during external disruptions.

The survey also sheds light on gender-based disparities within the industry. Female illustrators face more substantial obstacles in nearly all areas, except accessing formal education (Tables 24 and 25). This distinction calls for focused efforts to address the unique challenges encountered by female illustrators.

Regarding training needs, the survey reveals varied requirements across countries. Common themes include marketing, business acumen, technical skills, and professional development. Each country exhibits specific training priorities, reflecting their unique illustration landscapes. For instance, in Germany and Italy, over 50% of illustrators emphasize the need for business and marketing skills, while in Norway and Sweden, about 40% highlight the importance of digital skill enhancement.

The survey's findings are invaluable for policymakers, commissioners, and educators. It advocates for providing financial aid, enhancing legal awareness, and establishing fair industry pricing and contract terms. Prioritizing diversity, inclusive practices, and adaptive training programs is essential to meet the changing demands of the illustration industry.

While providing substantial insights, it's important to note that these findings represent a specific segment of illustrators and may not fully reflect the broader community. Ongoing research and

engagement with various stakeholders are crucial to comprehensively understand and support the diverse needs of illustrators across Europe

<div align="right">AOI
European Illustrators Forum (EIF)
President</div>

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to understand the opportunities and challenges within the illustration sector in different countries across Europe, and to explore how the experiences and perceptions of illustrators are influenced by factors such as gender, education, and experience. **Method:** This study utilized a descriptive survey research design, and recruited 1,107 participants from nine countries across Europe (United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Turkiye   , Spain, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland) through social media and professional networks. The survey included questions on the participants' background, experiences, and perceptions of the illustration sector, and was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as t-tests and ANOVA. **Results:** The findings of this study suggest that various factors influence the experiences and perceptions of freelance illustrators, including their gender, level of education, and years of experience. The majority of illustrators surveyed were female, with over 70% identifying as such, and a relatively small percentage considered themselves to have a disability. The most significant barriers reported by respondents included low fees and wages, lack of knowledge on the value of illustration by commissioners, and unfavorable contract terms offered by commissioners. The study also revealed that self-taught illustrators and educated illustrators had different perceptions of some obstacles, with self-taught illustrators considering limited opportunities for continuous skills/creative development and no time for marketing/self-promotion to be more significant barriers than educated illustrators. The pandemic was found to have a significant impact on the income of illustrators, with the majority reporting a decrease or no change in income. Additionally, female illustrators tend to experience more significant barriers than male illustrators. **Recommendations:** Based on the main results of this study, it is recommended that policymakers, commissioners, and educators work towards creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for freelance illustrators, recognizing the diverse backgrounds and experiences of illustrators. This may include providing more support and resources for artists, improving intellectual property laws, and creating more opportunities for collaboration and networking within the industry. Additionally, there is a need for greater awareness and education around the value of illustration, particularly among commissioners. Finally, the findings of this study suggest that efforts should be made to address gender-based disparities in the experiences and opportunities of illustrators.

INTRODUCTION

Illustration, a field demanding immense creativity and imagination, finds its use in various mediums including advertising, publishing, fashion, and the film industry.. However, the increasing competition and the lack of understanding of the value of illustration in some branches can pose a significant challenge for illustrators. Therefore, it is crucial to identify the challenges faced by illustrators and the opportunities that can help them thrive in different branches across Europe.

Challenges for Illustrators

Illustrators face several challenges in their work, such as low income, unfavorable contract terms, and lack of social security. In a study conducted by Kuhn and colleagues (2021), they found that low fees and wages are a significant barrier for illustrators in Germany. Moreover, they reported

that unfavorable contract terms and the lack of knowledge of the value of illustration by commissioners are among the top five obstacles for illustrators in Germany. A similar study by Kartal and Lappalainen (2020) found that illustrators in Finland face challenges such as lack of access to formal education, low fees and wages, and difficulty finding work.

Opportunities for Illustrators

To overcome the challenges faced by illustrators, several opportunities can be explored. One of the opportunities is the use of digital tools and platforms to showcase their work and connect with potential clients. In a study conducted by Malinowska (2021), they found that the use of social media platforms such as Instagram and Behance can help illustrators reach a wider audience and attract clients. Moreover, the study found that illustrators can benefit from collaborating with other professionals such as writers, designers, and editors to increase their visibility and enhance their skills.

Another opportunity for illustrators is to participate in international competitions and exhibitions. In a study conducted by Sanchez and colleagues (2021), they found that participating in international competitions and exhibitions can help illustrators expand their network and gain exposure to new markets. Furthermore, the study reported that attending conferences and workshops can help illustrators learn new skills and stay up to date with industry trends.

In summary, the challenges faced by illustrators in different branches across Europe can be overcome by identifying the opportunities available to them. The use of digital platforms, collaboration with other professionals, and participation in international competitions and exhibitions are some of the opportunities that can help illustrators thrive in their work. However, more research is needed to identify the specific challenges and opportunities for illustrators in different branches across Europe.

The discipline of illustration is one that is rapidly expanding and evolving. It is an important part of the creative industries all over Europe. Illustrators, publishers, art directors, teachers, and policymakers need to know about the opportunities and problems in this sector. This research can give important information about the key factors that lead to success in this field and the problems that illustrators and other professions face. By looking at the current state of the illustration industry in different European countries, this research can give important information about the key factors that lead to success in this field. This research can also give a comparison of the illustration industry in different European countries, demonstrating how opportunities, challenges, and cultural factors affect the industry in the same and different ways. This can help people who want to get into the field or make their work better.

The majority of the research that has been conducted on the illustration industry has been done on particular nations or locations. There are not many studies that compare the illustration industry in different countries in Europe. This is despite the fact that there is a significant amount of research on the industry. This lack of research presents an opportunity to investigate the state of the illustration industry in Europe, taking into account the various ways in which cultural, economic, and social factors affect the industry in different places.

The rise of digital tools and platforms has changed how illustrations are made, shared, and used. More research is required to look at how these changes have affected the illustration industry and the people who work in it. Another gap in the literature is that there isn't much research on the problems that illustrators and other industry professionals face as they try to figure out how to work in a digital world that changes quickly. This is a problem because these professionals are trying to figure out how to work in a constantly changing world.

This study has the potential to help us learn more about the opportunities and challenges present in the illustration industry across Europe by filling in the research gaps that currently exist. Because of this, we will have a greater understanding of this significant and rapidly developing field.

METHOD

Research Design

The research design for this study is a descriptive survey, which aims to better understand the opportunities and challenges within the illustration sector in different countries across Europe today. The descriptive survey research design is used to better understand a particular phenomenon by describing it in detail. In this case, the research aims to describe the opportunities and challenges within the illustration sector in different countries across Europe today. Descriptive surveys are commonly used in social science research to collect data from a large and diverse group of participants. The research design allows for the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, which provides a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The descriptive survey research design is suitable for this study because it enables data collection from a large sample size across different European countries. According to Creswell (2014), descriptive surveys are used to "describe the characteristics of a population, group, or phenomenon" (p. 173). This research design allows for the collection of data from a large and diverse group of participants, which enables researchers to draw conclusions about the phenomenon being studied.

The descriptive survey research design is appropriate for this study as it will allow us to gather information about the illustration sector in different countries across Europe. This research design will provide us with an understanding of the current trends, demands, challenges, and opportunities faced by illustration professionals.

Research Sample

The research sample for this study was obtained using convenient and voluntary sampling techniques. These sampling techniques are commonly used in social science research, particularly when the population is difficult to access or when the research requires a large number of participants. Convenient sampling involves selecting participants who are readily available and accessible to the researcher. This sampling technique is commonly used in studies where the research participants are easily accessible, such as online surveys or when the researcher has access to a large group of participants, as is the case in this study. Voluntary sampling is often used in studies where the research participants are interested in the topic being studied or have a vested interest in the outcome. According to Babbie (2016), convenient sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that involves selecting participants based on their availability and accessibility to the researcher. Babbie also suggests that voluntary sampling is a non-probability sampling technique involving participants who willingly participate in the study.

While convenient and voluntary sampling techniques have limitations, they are appropriate for this study as the research participants were professionals working in the illustration sector across different countries in Europe. The sample size was large, and the use of online surveys enabled the researchers to access a large and diverse group of participants. The research sample consisted of 1104 professionals working in the illustration sector across different European countries. The participants were selected from different countries to ensure a diverse representation of the illustration sector in Europe. The participants included:

Data Gathering Instruments and procedure

The data gathering instruments used for this study were questionnaires that included both open-ended and closed questions, as well as Likert-type questions. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on various aspects of the illustration sector's opportunities and challenges, such as the current trends, demands, challenges, and opportunities.

Procedure

The data were collected via Google Forms, which were distributed among the participants through social media platforms, email, and other professional networks. The questionnaire was available in multiple languages to cater to the participants' diverse backgrounds and nationalities. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. They were also given the option to withdraw from the study at any point.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Quantitative Data: The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as t-tests and ANOVA. These analyses were performed using the SPSS program. The data were analyzed to identify the common trends, opportunities, and challenges in the illustration sector across different countries in Europe. The analysis was also used to compare the differences and

similarities between different countries in terms of the opportunities and challenges faced by professionals in the illustration sector. The findings were presented using tables, graphs, and charts to facilitate easy interpretation and understanding.

Analysis of Qualitative Data: The descriptive qualitative analysis technique was used to analyse qualitative data. This technique is used to help summarize and analyze data. In this analysis, direct quotes from participants' opinions were used to support the qualitative findings.

FINDINGS

This section presents the findings obtained from the EIF Diversity Survey, shedding light on the experiences, perspectives, and challenges faced by illustrators in Europe. ***By organizing the findings in alignment with the survey questions***, this chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research outcomes and their implications for supporting inclusive opportunities within the illustration field.

1. Please select your country of residence

Table 1. Demographic information about the country of residence

Country	Number of Responses
England	197
Turkiye	132
Denmark	43
Italy	271
Germany	115
Finland	59
Spain	128
Norway	53
Sweden	115
Grand Total	**1107**

Table 1 displays the distribution of participant responses across different countries, highlighting the geographical spread of the survey's participants.The data indicates the distribution of participant responses across different countries, with Italy having the highest number of responses (271), followed by England (197) and Turkiye   (132). Denmark, Germany, Finland, Spain, Norway, and Sweden also had a notable number of responses ranging from 43 to 128.

2. How would you describe your gender?

Gender Distribution of Illustrators
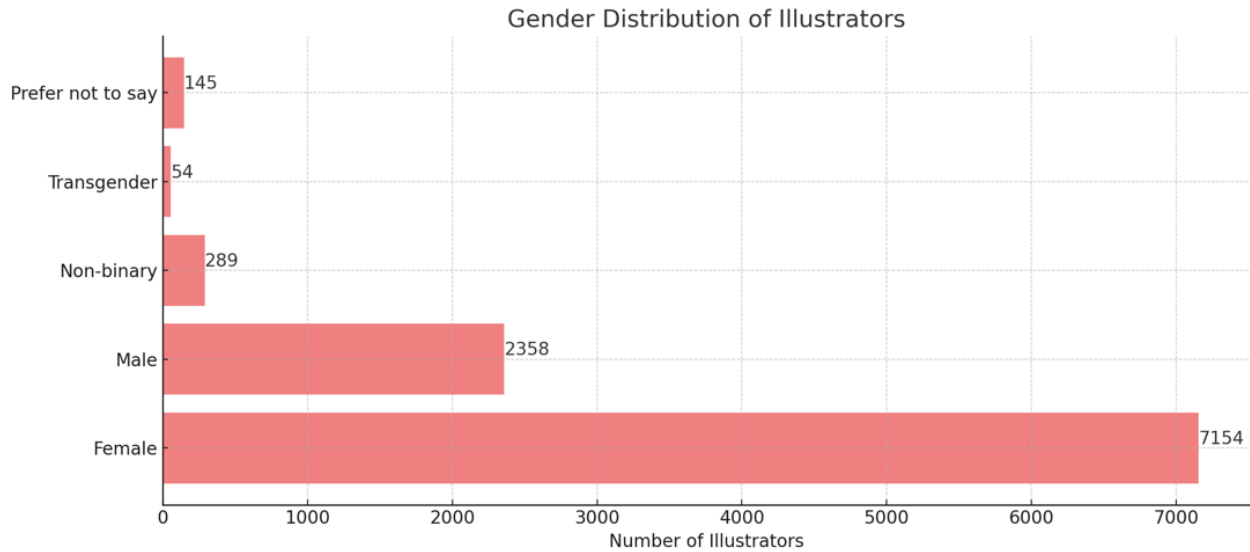
The **D-bar chart for gender distribution shows a significant predominance of female illustrators, with 7,154 identifying as female. Male illustrators number 2,358, illustrating a substantial gender disparity in the field. Non-binary (289), transgender (54), and those preferring not to state their gender (145) represent much smaller proportions, highlighting the dominance of traditional gender categories in the illustrator community.**

3. Do you consider yourself part of an ethnical minority where you live /work?

Graphic 3. Answers to Considering Themselves as Being Part of an Ethnich Minority
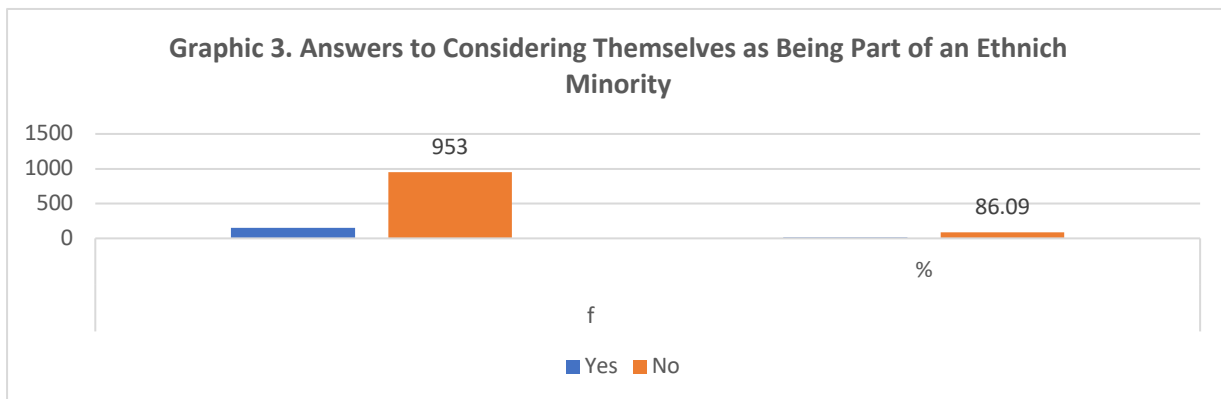
Graphic 3 presents the number of illustrators who identify as members of an ethnic minority group in their place of residence and those who do not. Based on their responses, 154 illustrators (13.91%) consider themselves part of an ethnic minority group where they live, while 953 (86.09%) do not.

4. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?
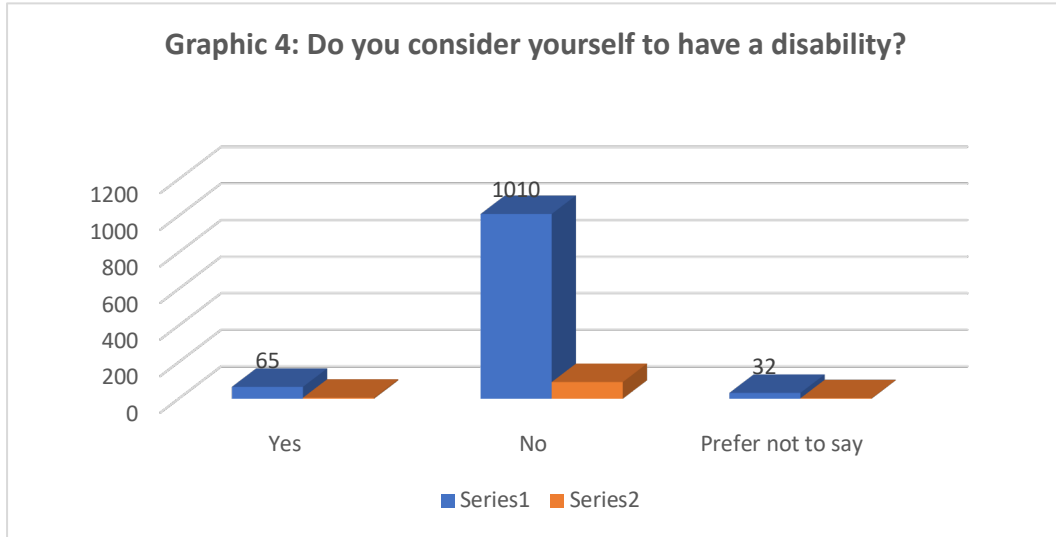
Graphic 4 presents data on the number of illustrators with a disability. The table indicates that 65 of the participants (5.87%) consider themselves to have a disability, while 1010 of them (91.24%) do not identify as having a disability. The remaining 32 illustrators (2.89%) chose not to provide an answer to this question.

5. Please select your age range.
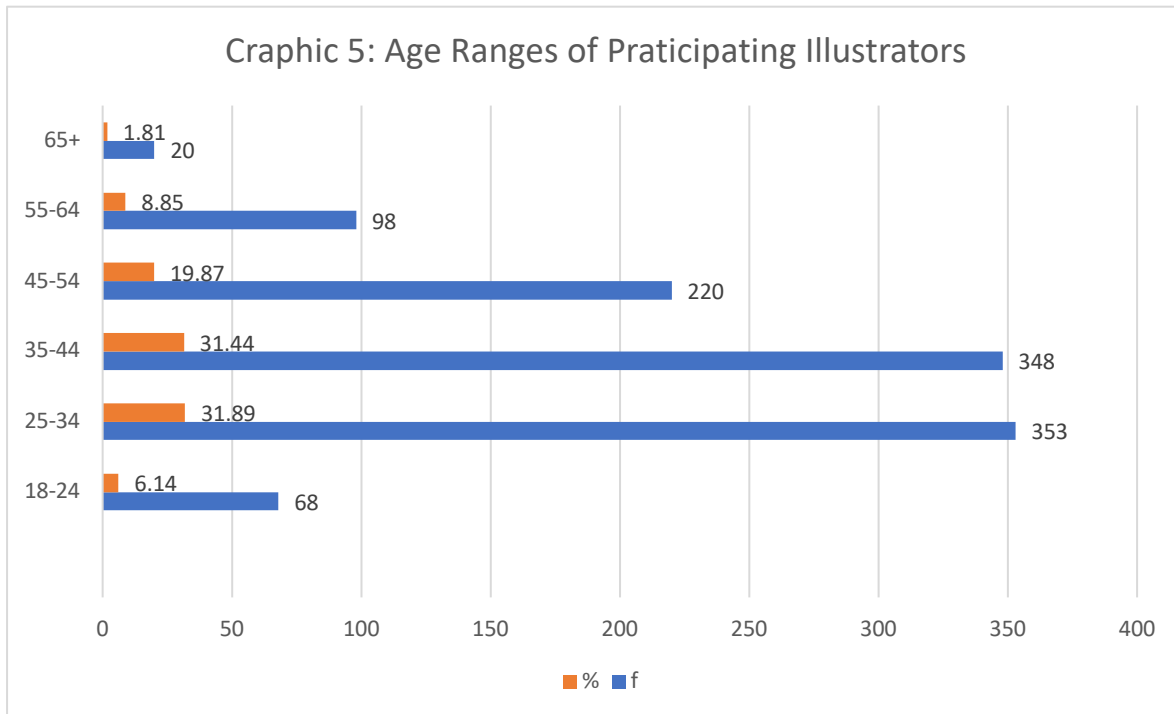
Graphic 5 presents the age distribution of illustrators, indicating that the majority fall into the age categories of 25-34 (31.89%) and 35-44 (31.44%). The table shows that 220 illustrators (19.87%) are between the ages of 45-54, 98 of them (8.85%) are between the ages of 55-64, and 68 of them (6.14%) are between the ages of 18-24. Only 20 illustrators (1.81%) are aged 65 or above, the least common age category.

6. How long have you worked as an illustrator?
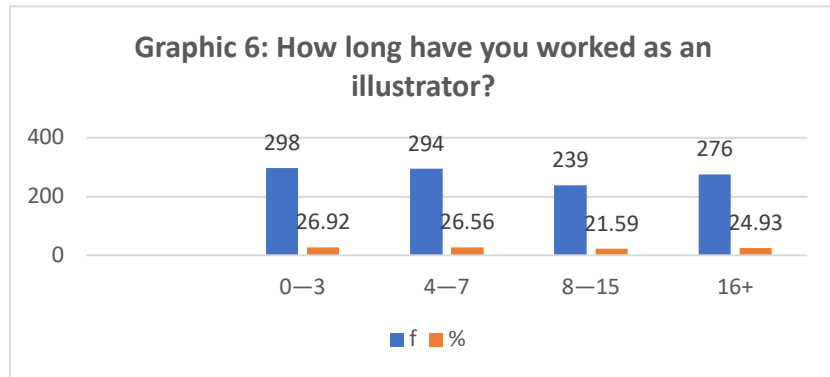
Graphic 6 presents the duration of experience of the participants as illustrators. The table shows that 298 of them (26.92%) have worked for 0-3 years, 294 of them (26.56%) have worked for 4-7 years, 239 of them (21.59%) have worked for 8-15 years, and 276 of them (24.93%) have worked for more than 16 years as illustrators.

Graphic 7: In what area of illustration do you specialize?
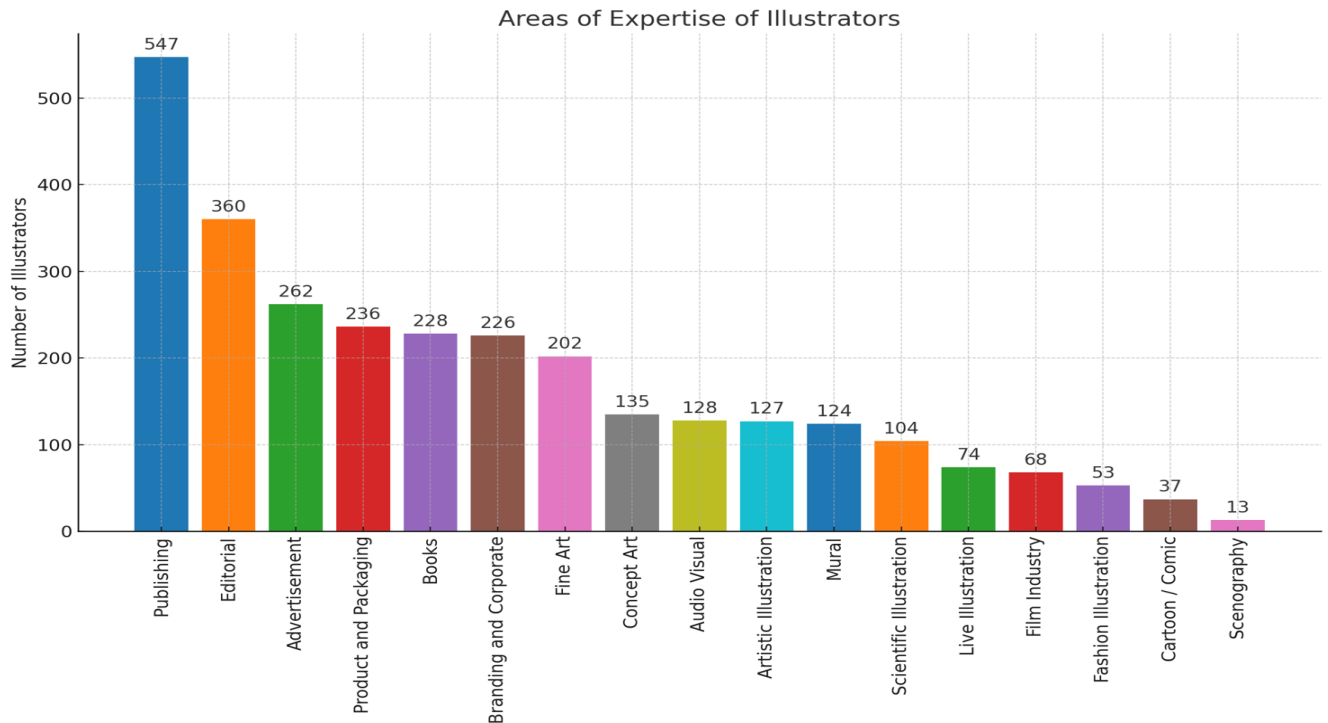
The Graphic 7 provides a comprehensive view of the areas of expertise among illustrators. The most prevalent field is 'Publishing,' with 547 illustrators, indicating a strong inclination towards book and publication-related illustration work. 'Editorial' is the next most common area, with 360 illustrators, showcasing the importance of illustration in magazines, newspapers, and online media. The fields of 'Advertisement' (262) and 'Product and Packaging' (236) follow, reflecting the role of illustrators in marketing and product design. 'Books' (228), 'Branding and Corporate' (226), and 'Fine Art' (202) also see substantial participation, suggesting a diverse range of applications for illustration skills. Other areas such as 'Concept Art' (135), 'Audio Visual' (128), and 'Artistic Illustration' (127) have a moderate number of illustrators. Fields like 'Mural' (124), 'Scientific Illustration' (104), 'Live Illustration' (74), 'Film Industry' (68), 'Fashion Illustration' (53), 'Cartoon/Comic' (37), and 'Scenography' (13) have fewer practitioners, indicating more niche or specialized sectors within the illustration industry. Overall, the chart highlights the diverse and multifaceted nature of the illustration profession, encompassing a wide range of applications from traditional publishing to more specialized artistic endeavors

Graphic 8. Distribution of illustrators according to whether they have a qualification in illustration or related subject
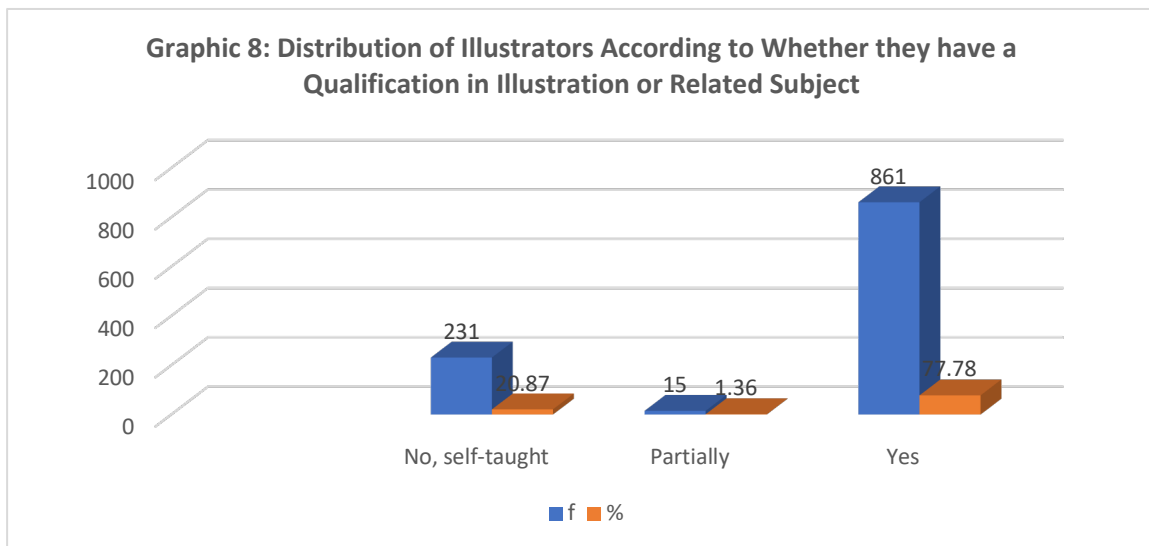

Graphic 8: Distribution of Illustrators According to Whether they have a Qualification in Illustration or Related Subject

The Graphic 8 shows the distribution of illustrators based on whether they have a qualification in illustration or a related field. Participants were grouped into three categories: "yes", "partially", and "no, self-taught". According to the table, it is evident that the majority of participants (77.78% or 861 individuals) have a qualification in illustration or a related field. 231 participants (20.87%) have stated that they are self-taught. Finally, only 15 participants (1.36%) have partially reported having a qualification in illustration or a related field.

9. Is illustration work your main source of income?

Table 9. Distribution of Illustrators According to Whether Illustration Work Is Their Main Source of Income

Graphic 9: Distribution of Illustrators According to Whether Illustration Work Is Their Main Source of Income
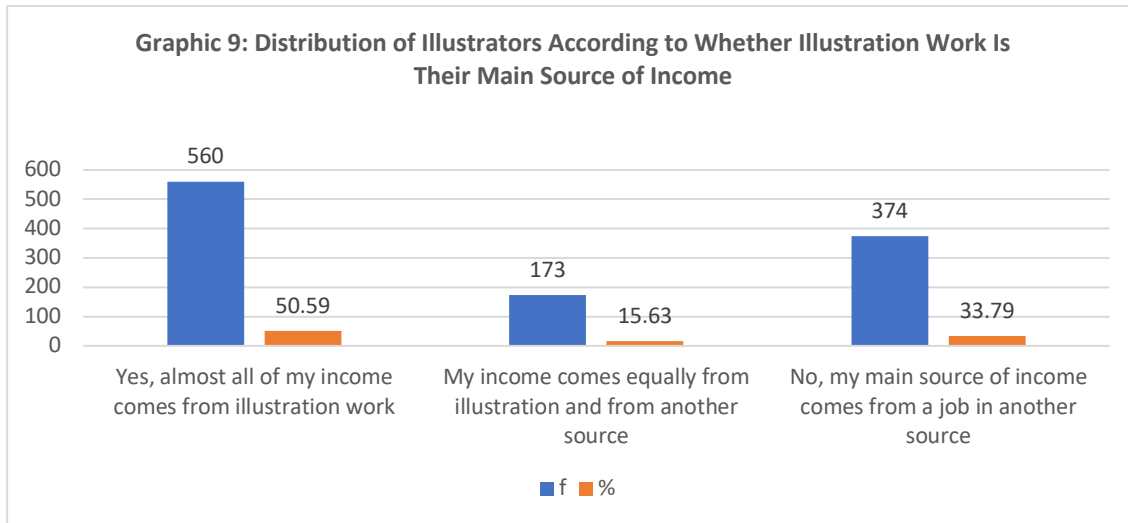
The Graphic 9 presents the distribution of participants based on whether they consider illustration work as their primary source of income or not. The table shows that approximately half of the illustrators (f=560; %=50.59) rely solely on illustration work as their primary source of income, while 374 of them (33.79%) have another job as their primary source of income. Additionally, the income of 173 illustrators (15.63%) comes equally from both illustration work and another source.

Graphic 10. Is your illustration work consistent throughout the year?

Graphic 10: Is your illustration Work Consistent Throughout the Year?
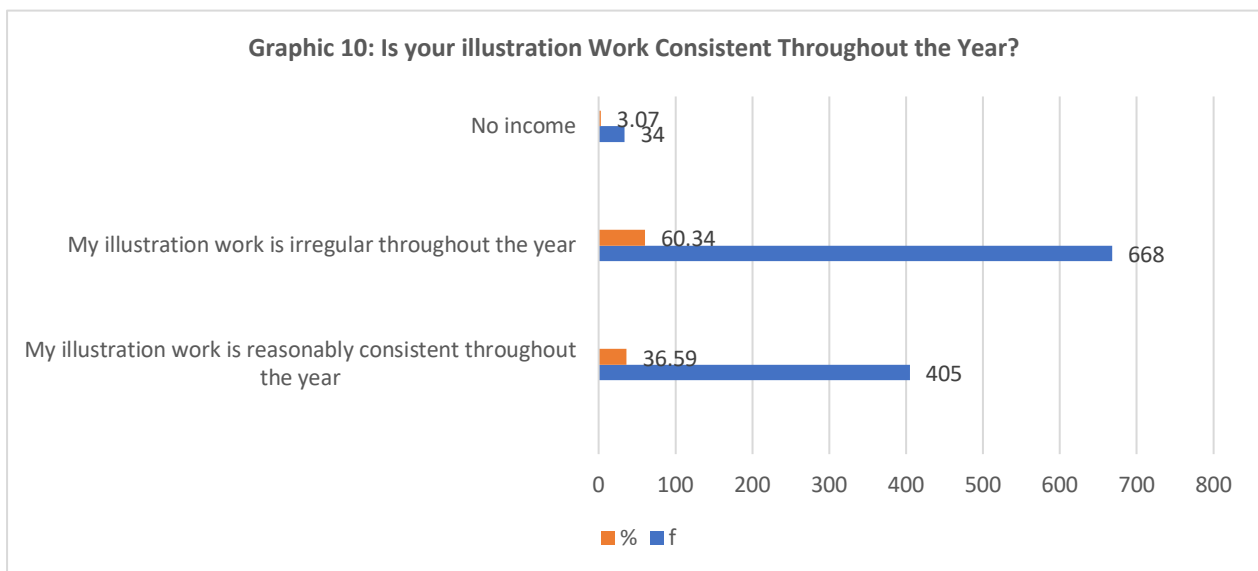
The Graphic 10 presents the distribution of illustrators based on the consistency of their illustration work throughout the year. A small proportion of participants (f=34; %=3.07) reported having no income. Among the illustrators who reported having an income, over half of them (f=668; %=60.34) stated that their illustration work is inconsistent throughout the year. On the other hand, the number of illustrators who reported having reasonably consistent illustration work throughout the year is 405, which constitutes 36.59% of all participants.

Graphic 11: What was your total earned income from illustration last year?
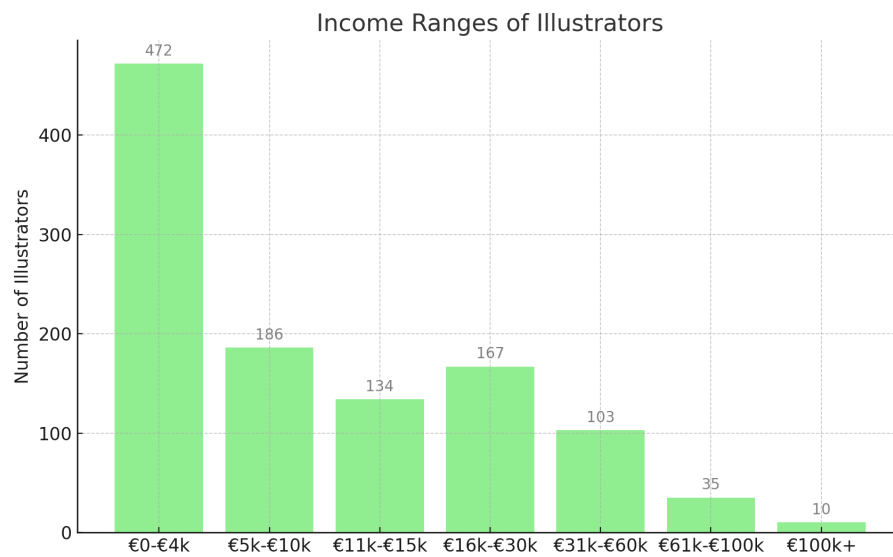
The Graphic 11 depicting the income ranges of illustrators reveals a significant concentration of professionals in the lower income brackets. The majority of illustrators fall into the lowest income range of €0 to €4,000, highlighting a prevalence of very low earnings in the field. As the income brackets increase, the number of illustrators within each range decreases. A moderate number of illustrators earn between €5,000 to €10,000, while fewer still earn in the €11,000 to €15,000 range. The mid-income ranges of €16,000 to €30,000 and €31,000 to €60,000 are occupied by a reasonable number of illustrators, possibly those with more experience or specialization. However, the higher income ranges of €61,000 to €100,000 and over €100,000 are represented by a significantly smaller number of illustrators, suggesting that only a select few in the field achieve these higher earnings. This pattern indicates a typical income disparity where a large portion of professionals earn lower incomes, with a progressively smaller number achieving higher earnings.

12. Has the pandemic affected your income from illustration work?

Graphic 12: Income Change Distribution
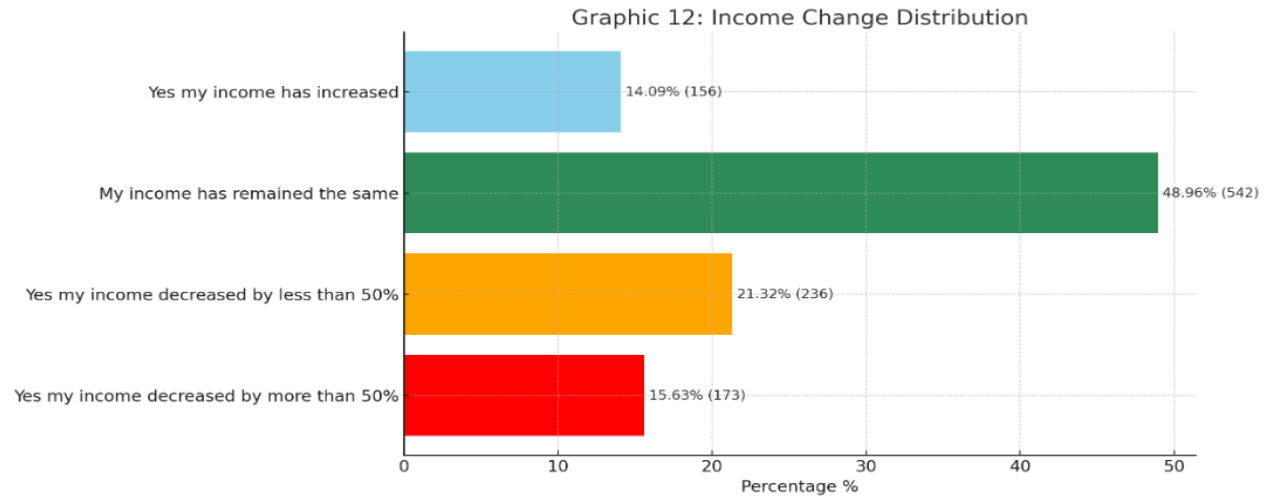
Graphic 12 presents the percentages and actual numbers of respondents' income changes. A small segment of 14.09% (156 individuals) experienced an increase in their income, while nearly half of the respondents, 48.96% (542 individuals), reported no change. Income reductions were reported by two groups: 21.32% (236 individuals) saw a decrease of less than 50%, and a slightly smaller proportion, 15.63% (173 individuals), encountered a more drastic decrease of more than 50%. The most common scenario among the respondents was a stable income, with decreases being less common overall.

Graphic 13. Do you currently receive any financial aid from your government?

Graphic 13: Types of Financial Aid Received by Illustrators
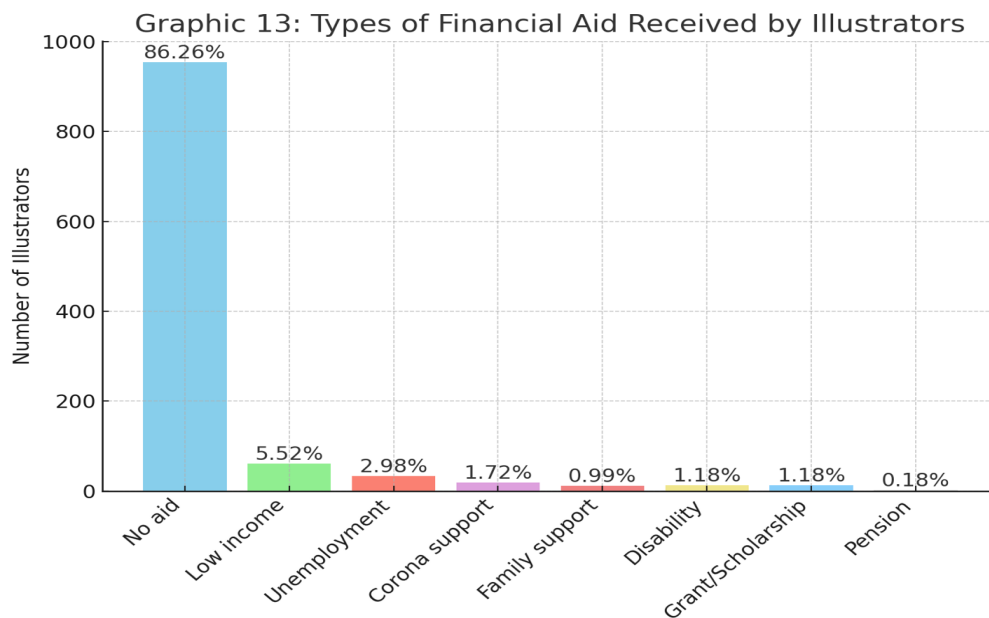
The Graphic 13 provides an overview of the types of financial aid received by illustrators from their government. The majority, 86.26% (954 illustrators), report not receiving any financial aid. Among those who do receive aid, the most common reason is due to low income, accounting for 5.52% (61 illustrators) of the total. Other types of aid include unemployment benefits (2.98%, 33 illustrators), Corona support (1.72%, 19 illustrators), and family-related support (0.99%, 11 illustrators). A smaller number receive aid due to disability or through grants/scholarships (each 1.18%, 13 illustrators), and a very small percentage (0.18%, 2 illustrators) receive a retirement pension. This distribution highlights the relatively low reliance on government financial aid among illustrators, with the majority not receiving any form of aid.

Graphic 14. If you receive government financial aid, do you feel it is enough?

Graph 14: Financial Aid Sufficiency for Illustrators
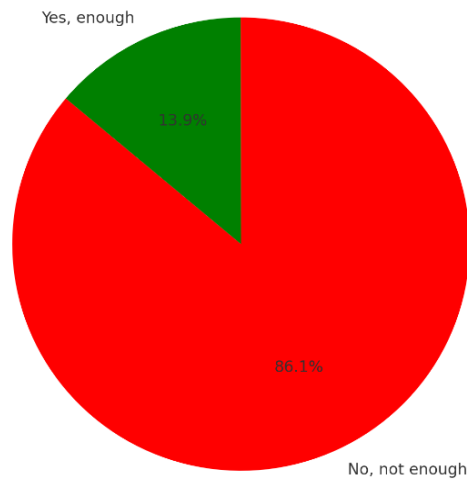
The above chart illustrates the distribution of illustrators who have received financial aid from the government and their perception of its adequacy. A significant majority, 86.14% (261 illustrators), feel that the financial aid they receive is not enough to cover their living expenses. In contrast, only 13.86% (42 illustrators) believe that the aid they receive is sufficient. This stark disparity highlights a prevalent issue among illustrators who rely on financial aid — the majority find it inadequate for meeting basic living costs, pointing to potential financial struggles within this professional group.

15. Which area of campaigning do you feel the EIF should prioritise in the next 12-18 months?

Graphic 15.1: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Overall]
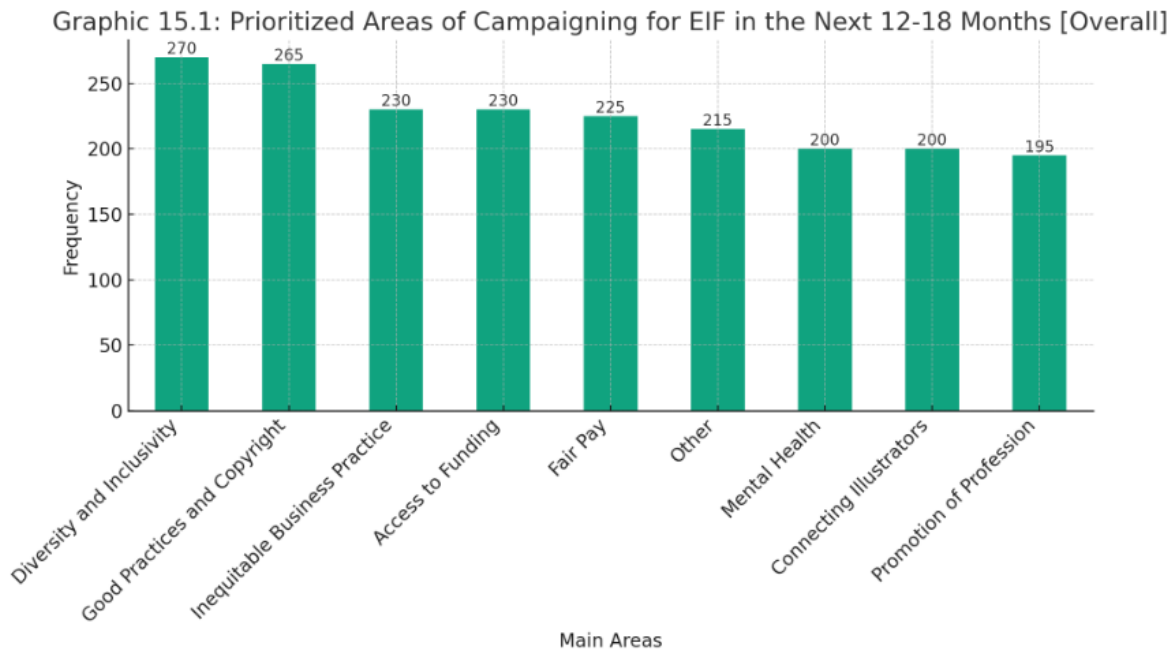
This chart illustrates the combined priorities across all participating countries, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

In "Graphic 15.1: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Overall]", the bar chart distinctly highlights the collective preferences across nine countries. The area that received the most emphasis is "Diversity and Inclusivity", accumulating a total of 270 votes, underlining its paramount importance to the participants. Following closely, "Good Practices and Copyright" secured 265 votes, signifying its substantial relevance. In contrast, "Promotion of Profession" gathered the least interest with 195 votes, indicating a relatively lower but still significant concern across the countries. Other notable areas include "Inequitable Business Practice" and "Access to Funding", each receiving 230 votes, and "Fair Pay" with 225 votes. The chart effectively captures the varied priorities of the participants, ranging from highly prioritized areas like "Diversity and Inclusivity" to less prioritized yet crucial aspects such as "Promotion of Profession". This visualization provides EIF with an insightful overview of where the collective interests and perceived needs are concentrated among the participating regions.

Graphic 15.2: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [United Kingdom]
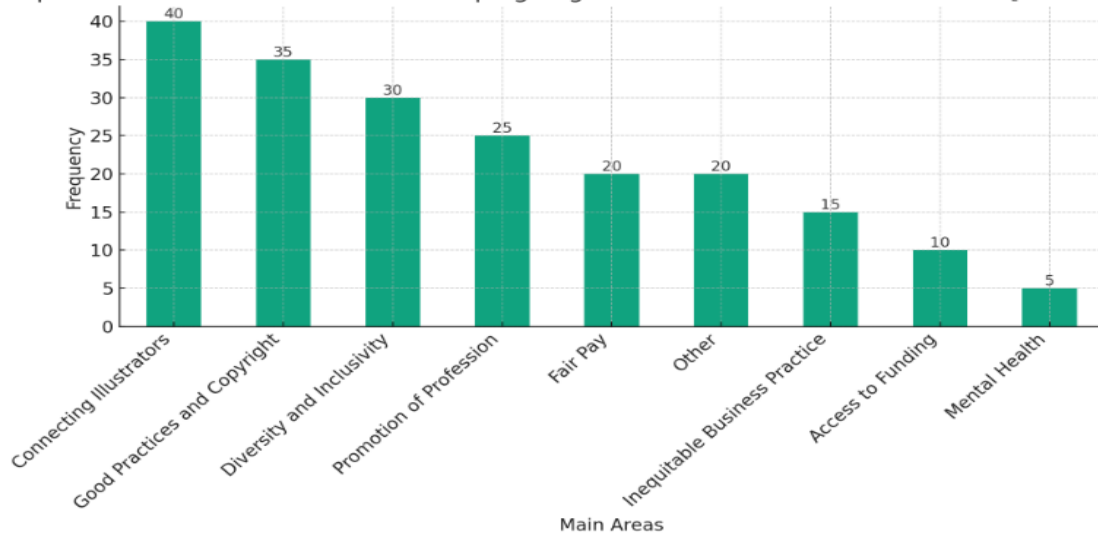
This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from United Kingdom, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

In the United Kingdom, "Connecting Illustrators" emerged as the top priority with 40 votes, reflecting a strong focus on networking within the illustration industry. "Good Practices and Copyright" and "Diversity and Inclusivity" also received significant attention, with 35 and 30 votes respectively, highlighting concerns around intellectual property and inclusivity. The least prioritized area was "Mental Health", receiving 5 votes, indicating it may not be a primary focus in the current context.16. Obstacles experienced by illustrators

Graphic 15.3: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Sweden]

This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from Sweden, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

Sweden's top priority is "Promotion of Profession" with 50 votes, indicating a strong emphasis on elevating the status of illustration as a profession. "Mental Health" and "Fair Pay" also ranked high, with 40 and 30 votes, underscoring concerns about wellbeing and financial fairness. The area of least concern appears to be "Connecting Illustrators", receiving just 5 votes.

Graphic 15.4: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Denmark]
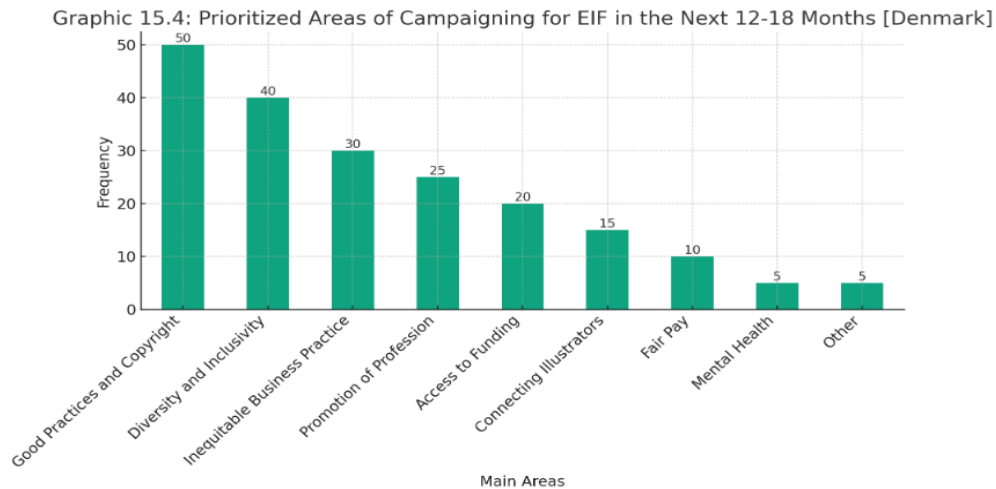
This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from Denmark, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

For Denmark, "Good Practices and Copyright" is the most prioritized area with 50 votes, showing a keen interest in protecting creators' rights. This is closely followed by "Diversity and Inclusivity" with 40 votes, emphasizing the importance of inclusiveness in the industry. The least concern is shared between "Mental Health" and "Other", each receiving 5 votes.

Graphic 15.5: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Finland]

This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from Finland, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

Finland's participants prioritized "Other" as their top area with 50 votes, suggesting unique concerns not covered in the standard options. "Good Practices and Copyright" and "Diversity and Inclusivity" are also highly valued, with 40 and 35 votes respectively. The least focus is on "Promotion of Profession", receiving 5 votes.

Graphic 15.6: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Germany]

This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from Germany, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

In Germany, "Connecting Illustrators" is the top priority with 50 votes, indicating a strong desire for networking and community building. "Access to Funding" and "Fair Pay" follow closely with 40 and 35 votes, highlighting financial aspects. "Inequitable Business Practice" is the least prioritized with 5 votes.
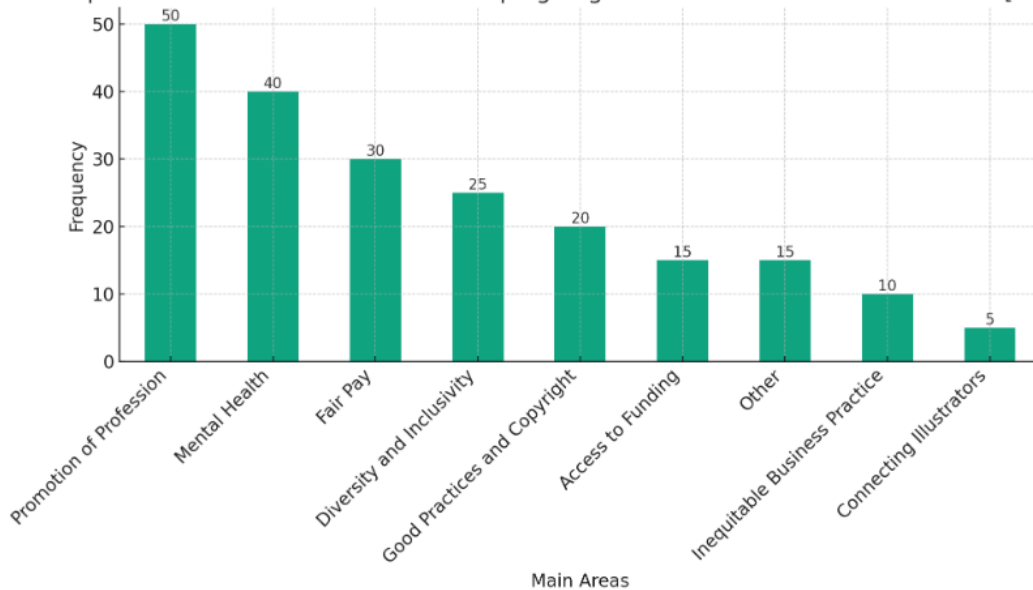
Graphic 15.7: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Norway]
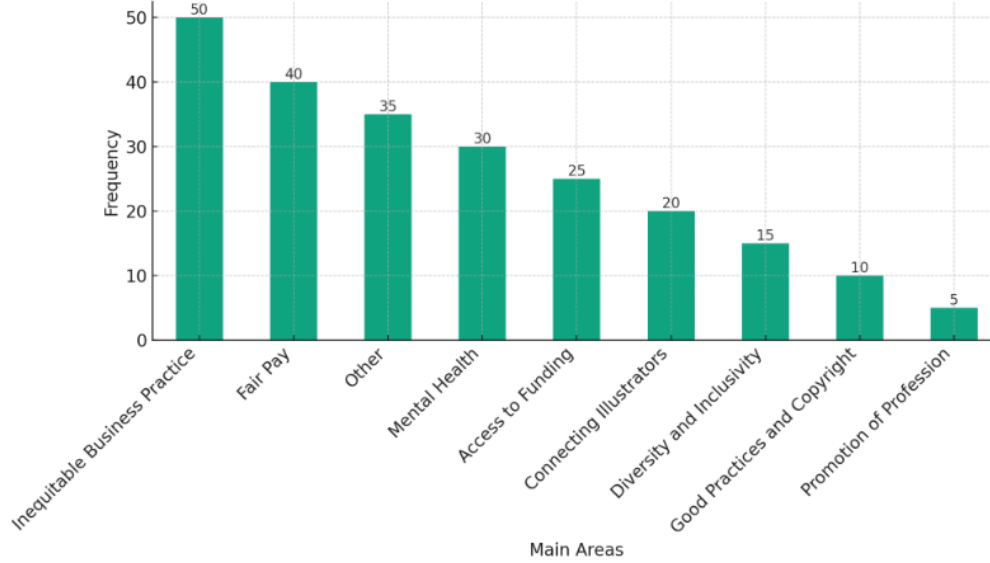
This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from Norway, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

Norway sees "Inequitable Business Practice" as the most critical area with 50 votes, suggesting a major concern with fairness in business dealings. "Fair Pay" and "Other" are also important, receiving 40 and 35 votes. The least attention is given to "Promotion of Profession" with 5 votes.

Graphic 15.8: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Turkey]
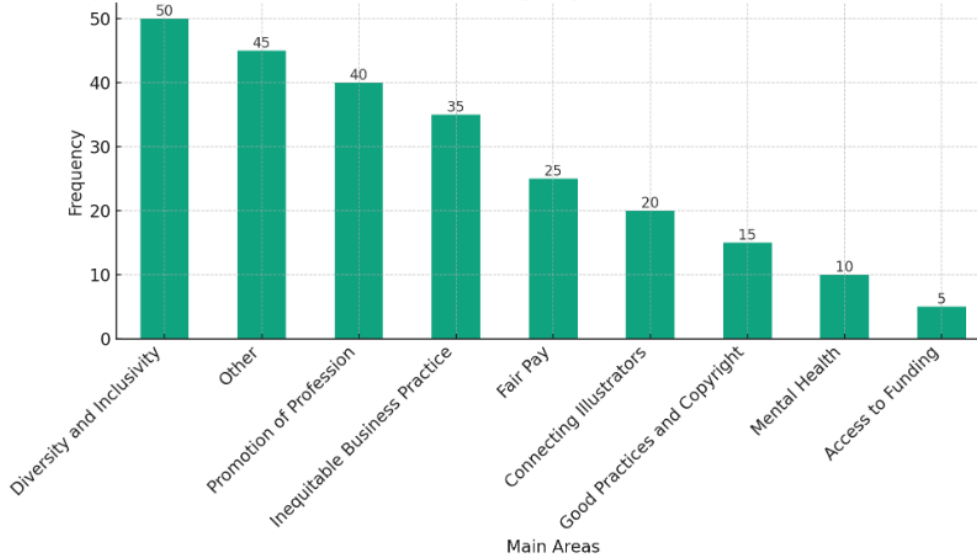
This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from Turkey, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

Turkey's highest priority is "Diversity and Inclusivity" with 50 votes, showing a significant emphasis on inclusiveness. This is closely followed by "Other" with 45 votes and "Promotion of Profession" with 40 votes. "Access to Funding" receives the least focus, with 5 vote

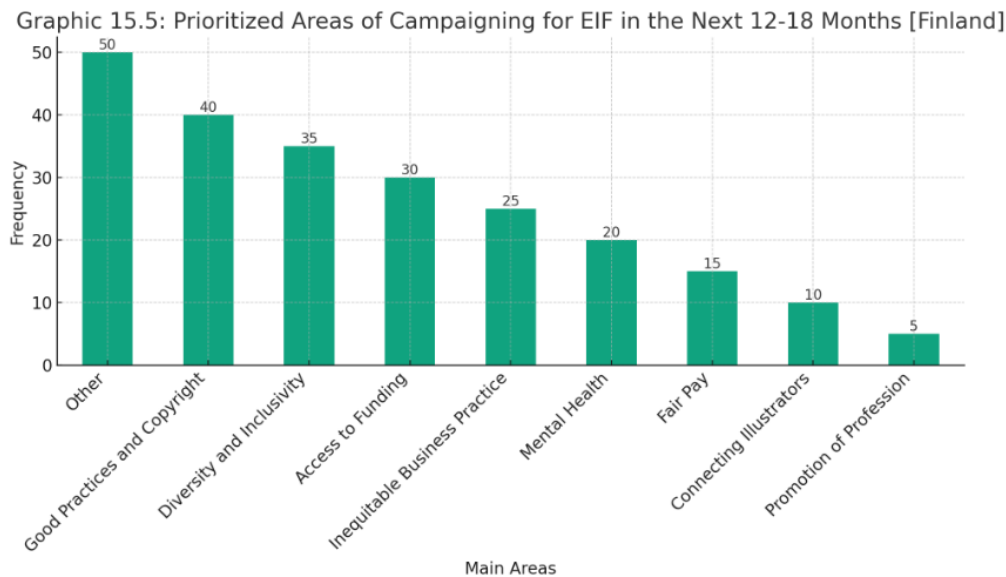Graphic 15.9: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Spain]

This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from Spain, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

In Spain, "Access to Funding" leads with 50 votes, indicating a high concern for financial support. "Diversity and Inclusivity" and "Inequitable Business Practice" also rank high with 45 and 40 votes. The area of "Fair Pay" is least prioritized with 5 votes.

Graphic 15.10: Prioritized Areas of Campaigning for EIF in the Next 12-18 Months [Italy]
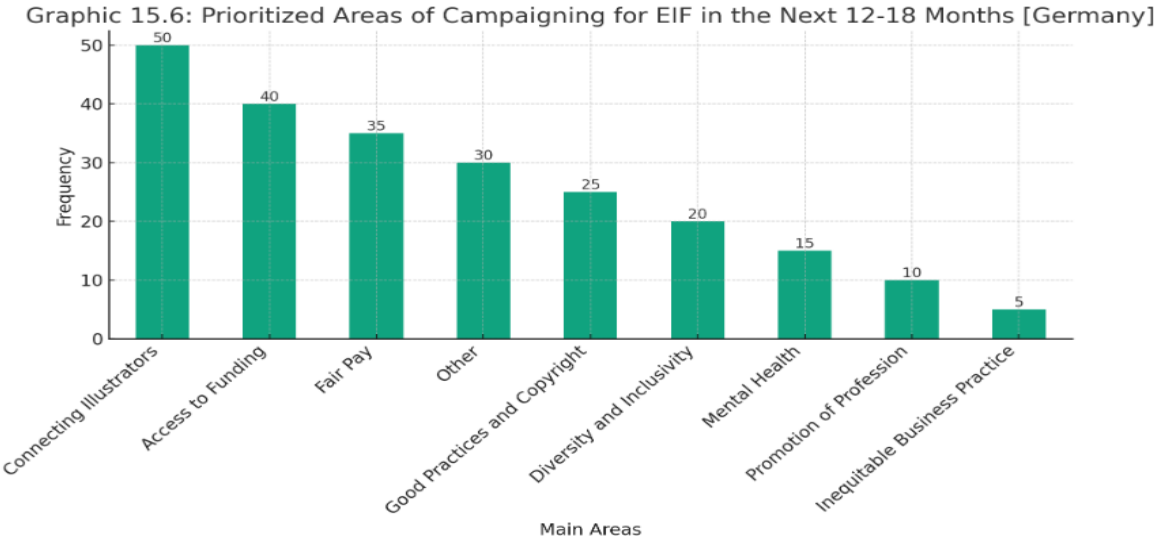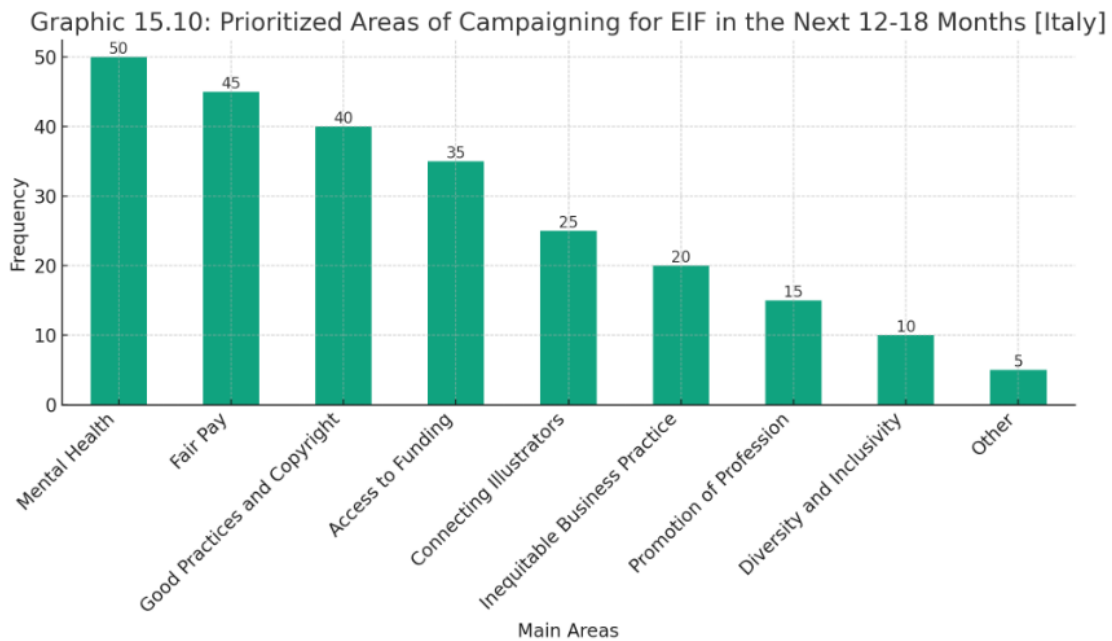
This chart depicts the priorities selected by participants from Italy, sorted from the most to the least prioritized areas.

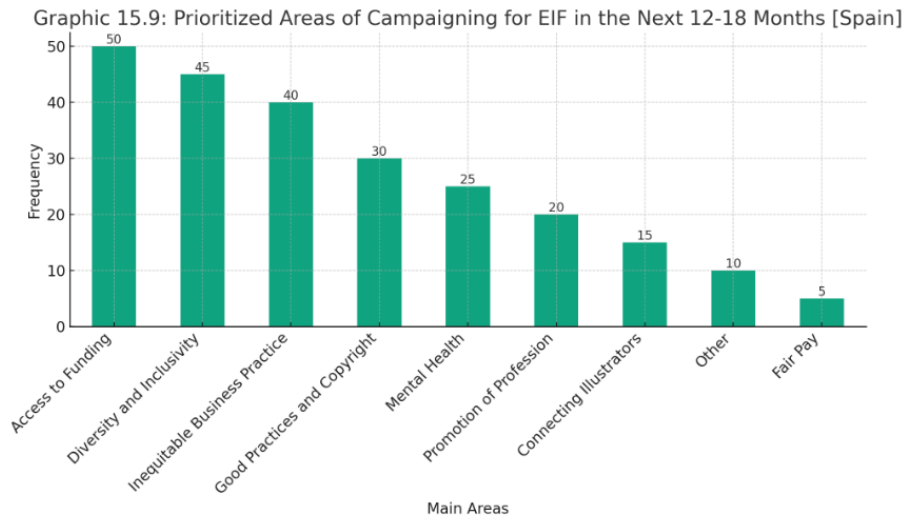Italy's participants place the highest priority on "Mental Health" with 50 votes, reflecting significant concern for wellbeing. "Fair Pay" and "Good Practices and Copyright" follow with 45 and 40 votes. The least attention is given to "Other", receiving 5 votes.

Table 24. Descriptive Analysis of Obstacles They Experience

Obstacles	1 Not a Barrier	2 Slight Barrier	3 Moderate Barrier	4 Extreme Barrier	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Male Mean	Female Mean
16.1. Low fees and wages	19	118	358	611	**3.41**	3.24	3.46
16.2. No common pricing standards	39	210	461	396	**3.10**	2.85	3.18
16. 3. Unfavourable contract terms offered by commissioners	40	199	448	419	**3.13**	2.92	3.20
16.4. Lack of knowledge in licensing/copyright by commissioners	41	209	467	389	**3.09**	2.92	3.15
16. 5. Commissioners don't know how to give a brief	177	463	313	153	2.40	2.25	2.43
16.6. Lack of knowledge on the value of illustration by commissioners	32	199	426	449	**3.17**	2.95	3.23
16. 7. A full-time job in and/No, self-taught profession	288	288	267	263	2.46	2.37	2.48
16.8. No time for marketing/self-promotion	147	375	378	206	2.58	2.41	2.64
16. 9. Limited opportunities for continuous skills/creative development	225	406	331	144	2.36	2.17	2.41
16.10. Limited opportunities to network with No, self-taught illustrators	331	443	242	90	2.08	1.93	2.12
16. 11. Lack of opportunities due to discrimination	480	320	187	119	1.95	1.73	1.99
16.12. Lack of social security as self-employed	86	197	330	493	**3.11**	2.87	3.17
16. 13. No access to formal education in illustration	448	364	168	126	1.97	1.90	1.98

Table 24 presents the results of a survey in which illustrators were asked to rate potential obstacles from 1 to 4, where 1 indicates "not a barrier" and 4 indicates "extreme barrier". The mean scores for each item were calculated, indicating that higher scores reflect greater obstacles. The table shows that the highest mean scores were given to "low fees and wages" ($\bar{x}$=3.41), "lack of knowledge on the value of illustration by commissioners" ($\bar{x}$=3.17), "unfavorable contract terms offered by commissioners" ($\bar{x}$=3.13), "lack of social security as self-employed" ($\bar{x}$=3.11), "no

common pricing standards" ($\bar{x}$=3.10), and "lack of knowledge in licensing/copyright by commissioners" ($\bar{x}$=3.09). The lowest mean scores were given to "lack of opportunities due to discrimination" ($\bar{x}$=1.95) and "no access to formal education in illustration" ($\bar{x}$=1.97). The mean scores for the other obstacles ranged from 2.08 (item 16.10) to 2.58 (item 16.8).

In addition to the frequency distribution and mean scores for all illustrators, Table 14 also displays the mean scores for men and women separately. Further detailed descriptive analysis and t-tests were performed on these categories, and the findings are presented in Table 15.

Table 25. Descriptive analysis and t-test results for male and female illustrators' opinions on barriers and obstacles which they experience

	Group	f	$\bar{x}$	sd	df	t	p
16.1	Female	792	3.46	0.73	1104	4.26	0.0000
	Male	260	3.24	0.78			
16.2	Female	792	3.18	0.80	1104	5.58	0.0000
	Male	260	2.85	0.88			
16.3	Female	792	3.20	0.80	1104	4.67	0.0000
	Male	260	2.92	0.89			
16.4	Female	792	3.15	0.82	1104	3.97	0.0000
	Male	260	2.92	0.83			
16.5	Female	792	2.43	0.93	1104	2.66	0.0040
	Male	260	2.25	0.87			
16.6	Female	792	3.23	0.81	1104	4.72	0.0000
	Male	260	2.95	0.85			
16.7	Female	792	2.48	1.12	1104	1.45	0.0738
	Male	260	2.37	1.10			
16.8	Female	792	2.64	0.94	1104	3.43	0.0003
	Male	260	2.41	0.94			
16.9	Female	792	2.41	0.95	1104	3.64	0.0001
	Male	260	2.17	0.90			
16.10	Female	792	3.46	0.73	1104	4.26	0.0000

	Group	f	x̄	ss	sd	t	p
	Male	260	3.24	0.78			
16.11	Female	792	1.99	1.03	1104	3.62	0.0002
	Male	260	1.73	0.92			
16.12	Female	792	3.17	0.95	1104	4.48	0.0000
	Male	260	2.87	0.96			
16.13	Female	792	1.98	1.01	1104	1.07	0.1414
	Male	260	1.90	0.98			

We compared the barriers faced by male and female illustrators for all potential obstacles, and the results are displayed in Table 16. The analysis includes 792 females and 260 males; respondents who identify as non-binary or transgender are excluded. It should be noted that the t-stat values for all potential obstacles are positive, indicating that female illustrators generally experience more significant barriers than males. With a level of significance a<0.005, there is strong evidence that the average barrier for females is higher than that of males for all items except 16.7 and 16.13. For obstacle 16.7, there is still statistical evidence that female illustrators experience more significant barriers than males *(t=1.45, p=.0738),* although the level of significance is not as significant as other barriers. The only obstacle where there is no significant difference between genders is 16.13 (No access to formal education in illustration). It is worth noting that males (1.90) and females (1.98) do not consider this an obstacle. No statistical evidence suggests a difference between male and female illustrators' experiences regarding obstacle 16.13 *(t = 1.07, p=0.1414).* In conclusion, it is statistically proven that female illustrators face stricter barriers than male illustrators for all obstacles except for accessing formal education.

In summary, the analysis provides statistical evidence that female illustrators face more stringent barriers compared to male illustrators across all obstacles, except for accessing formal education in illustration. This information highlights the gender disparities within the illustration industry and emphasizes the need for targeted interventions and support to address the specific challenges faced by female illustrators.

Additionally, we examined the opinions of self-taught and educated illustrators regarding the potential obstacles presented in Table 24, and the findings are presented in Table 25.

Table 26. Descriptive analysis and t-test results self-taught and educated illustrators' opinions on barriers obstacles which they experience

	Group	f	x̄	ss	sd	t	p
16.1	Yes	860	3.43	0.74	1089	-1.22	0.1117
	No, self-taught	231	3.36	0.78			

16.2	Yes	860	3.11	0.81	1089	-0.97	0.1655
	No, self-taught	231	3.05	0.89			
16.3	Yes	860	3.15	0.82	1089	-1.77	0.0384
	No, self-taught	231	3.04	0.86			
16.4	Yes	860	3.09	0.82	1089	-0.54	0.2937
	No, self-taught	231	3.06	0.85			
16.5	Yes	860	2.39	0.91	1089	0.45	0.3272
	No, self-taught	231	2.42	0.95			
16.6	Yes	860	3.16	0.82	1089	0.60	0.2738
	No, self-taught	231	3.19	0.82			
16.7	Yes	860	2.43	1.11	1089	1.30	0.0970
	No, self-taught	231	2.54	1.13			
16.8	Yes	860	2.55	0.93	1089	1.96	0.0253
	No, self-taught	231	2.69	0.98			
16.9	Yes	860	2.34	0.93	1089	1.32	0.0938
	No, self-taught	231	2.43	1.02			
16.10	Yes	860	3.43	0.74	1089	-1.22	0.1117
	No, self-taught	231	3.36	0.78			
16.11	Yes	860	1.95	1.01	1089	-0.24	0.4033
	No, self-taught	231	1.94	1.04			
16.12	Yes	860	3.11	0.97	1089	-0.10	0.4587
	No, self-taught	231	3.10	0.95			
16.13	Yes	860	1.91	0.97	1089	3.44	0.0003
	No, self-taught	231	2.17	1.10			

A two-sample t-test with equal variances was conducted to compare the experiences of self-taught and educated illustrators for all potential obstacles, and the results are presented in Table 25. Notably, there is a statistically significant difference between the experiences of self-taught and educated illustrators for obstacle 16.3 (Unfavorable contract terms offered by commissioners) *(t=-1.77, p=0.0384)*. Educated illustrators perceive unfavorable contract terms as a more significant

barrier than self-taught illustrators. On the other hand, Self-taught illustrators consider obstacle 16.7 (A full-time job in another profession) a stricter barrier than educated illustrators, albeit the significance level is close to the threshold *(t=1.30, p=0.097)*. This might be due to the fact that educated illustrators prefer full-time jobs in illustration, whereas self-taught illustrators need another source of income. Additionally, self-taught illustrators face a more severe obstacle for item 16.8 (No time for marketing/self-promotion), with a statistically significant difference compared to educated illustrators *(t=1.96, p=0.0253)*. The same applies to item 16.9 (Limited opportunities for continuous skills/creative development), where self-taught illustrators encounter a stricter barrier than educated illustrators, although the level of significance is near the threshold (t=1.32, p=0.0938). This might be due to educated illustrators' access to formal and continuing education. Furthermore, item 16.13 (No access to formal education in illustration) reveals the same conclusion. Educated illustrators have access to formal education and do not consider it as a significant obstacle (average 1.91). In contrast, self-taught illustrators face more difficulties (average 2.17), and there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups *(t=3.44, p=0.0003)*.

17. "What kind of support do you need as an illustrator to build a successful, sustainable career?

Below is a summary table of the types of support needed by illustrators as mentioned in the survey, listed along with their frequencies:

Table 17.1. Summary table of the types of support needed by illustrators [Overall]

Type of Support Needed	Frequency
Financial Support	7
Marketing	7
Self-Taught Illustrators	6
Higher Fees	5
Contracts	5
Networking	5
Mentoring	4
Economic Support	4
Grant/Scholarship	4

This table provides an overview of the key areas where illustrators feel they need support, based on the frequency of mentions in the survey responses. "Financial Support" and "Marketing" are the most frequently mentioned, each with 7 mentions, followed by needs related to self-taught illustrators, higher fees, and contracts.

Table 17.2. Types of support needed by Illustrators

	Type of Support Needed by Illustrators	Frequency
English	▪ Self-Taught Illustrators	2
	▪ Network with No	2
	▪ Financial Support	2
	▪ Business Support	2
	▪ Help with Networking and Marketing	1
Swedish	▪ Marketing	3
	▪ Find Customers	2
	▪ Good Fees	1
	▪ Fair Sick Pay and Unemployment Benefits	1
	▪ Increase the Reputation and Fees of Illustrators	1
Turkish	▪ Network	2
	▪ Increased Job Opportunities	2
Spanish	▪ Grant/Scholarship	4
	▪ Financial Support	2
	▪ Image Rights and Uses	1
Italian	▪ Economical	3
	▪ Self-Taught Artists	2
	▪ Financial Support from the State	2
Danish	▪ Concern for young people in the industry	1
	▪ Recognition as a profession, trade union, collective bargaining	1
	▪ No need for support expressed	1
	▪ Understanding the scope of work, willingness to pay for it	1

	▪ Common price guide for all illustrators	1
Finnish	▪ Need for an agent or manager for marketing and contracts	1
	▪ Support in finding and meeting new clients	1
	▪ Mentoring to help develop professional skills	1
	▪ Finding personal strengths, openness in publishing	1
	▪ Open and honest discussions in the industry	1
German	▪ Knowledge of the market, understanding potential fees	1
	▪ Access to social benefits during low work periods	1
	▪ Advocacy for open price politics	1
	▪ Issue of illustrators being too modest and impacting the market	1
	▪ Understanding the market and fee structures	1
Norwegian	▪ Recognition of illustration as a professional profession	1
	▪ Personal preferences not dominating client feedback	1
	▪ Fair wages and salaries, especially in publishing	1

The survey data highlights diverse support needs among illustrators across various regions, with financial and business-related challenges being a common theme. In England, there's a focus on support for self-taught illustrators and effective networking, alongside a need for financial and business assistance. Swedish illustrators emphasize the importance of marketing skills, client acquisition, and fair compensation, reflecting concerns about promoting their work and financial stability. In Turkey, the emphasis is on expanding networks and increasing job opportunities, indicating a desire for career growth and more work. Spanish illustrators show a strong need for financial aid, as seen in the high demand for grants and scholarships, coupled with concerns about image rights and usage. Italian responses highlight economic challenges, with a focus on support for self-taught artists and state-backed financial assistance, underscoring the need for both educational resources and financial stability. Overall, these responses paint a picture of illustrators seeking varied forms of support to navigate the challenges of building sustainable careers in a competitive and evolving industry.

18. What future training needs/skills are needed for you to progress within your current job as an illustrator?

Country	Technical Skills	Business & Marketing	Prof. Development	Portfolio & Client Skills	Industry Challenges	Entrepreneurship	Client Acquisition	Illustration Education	Mental Health	Legal Knowledge	Accounting Skills	Accessibility & Support	Digital Literacy	Education & Opportunities

England	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
Sweden	✓	✓	✓		✓								
Denmark	✓	✓	✓										
Finland	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					
Germany	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓		
Norway	✓	✓	✓		✓							✓	✓
Turkiye	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓
Spain	✓												

The table provides an overview of the future training needs for illustrators in Italy based on the identified themes. Enhancing marketing, promotion, and sales skills will enable illustrators to expand their networks, participate in relevant events, and effectively promote their work. Acquiring business and financial skills, including knowledge of legal aspects and copyright, will support illustrators in managing their businesses and navigating bureaucratic and tax-related matters. Developing technical and artistic skills, such as animation techniques, digital tools proficiency, and storytelling abilities, will enhance the quality and creativity of their illustrations. Providing opportunities for professional development and time management training will empower illustrators to dedicate time for personal research and experimentation, ensuring continuous growth. Accessible education options, increased recognition of illustration as a profession, and exposure to international opportunities will contribute to the advancement of illustrators' careers in Italy. Italy can nurture a thriving and competitive illustration industry by addressing these training needs.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the survey findings, it can be seen that various factors affect the experiences and perceptions of illustrators, including their gender, level of education, and years of experience. The data indicates that the majority of illustrators are female, with over 70% of respondents identifying as such (Graphic 2). Regarding ethnicity, the vast majority of respondents do not consider themselves part of an ethnic minority where they live (Table 3), and a relatively small percentage consider themselves to have a disability (Graphic 4).

One of the most significant findings from the data is related to the potential obstacles faced by illustrators in their work. As shown in Table 24, the most significant barriers reported by

respondents include *low fees and wages*, *lack of knowledge on the value of illustration by commissioners*, and *unfavorable contract terms offered by commissioners*. Interestingly, self-taught illustrators appear to have different perceptions of some obstacles compared to educated illustrators, as shown in Table 25. For example, self-taught illustrators consider limited opportunities for continuous skills/creative development and no time for marketing/self-promotion to be more significant barriers than educated illustrators.

Another important finding from the data is related to the impact of the pandemic on the income of illustrators. As shown in Graphic 12, the majority of respondents reported that their income had either decreased or remained the same due to the pandemic, with only a small percentage reporting an increase in income. This underscores the significant impact that external factors can have on the income and livelihoods of freelance illustrators.

The data also highlights some differences between male and female illustrators. As shown in Table 24 and 25, female illustrators tend to experience more significant barriers than male illustrators, with statistically significant differences observed for all obstacles except for accessing formal education in illustration. This suggests that underlying gender-based factors may contribute to disparities in the experiences and opportunities of illustrators.

Overall, the findings from this study shed light on the challenges and opportunities faced by freelance illustrators, and provide valuable insights for policymakers, commissioners, and educators seeking to support and promote the work of illustrators. It is important to recognize illustrators' diverse backgrounds and experiences, and to work towards creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for their work.

The analysis of the responses to question "*What future training needs/skills are needed for you to progress within your current job as an illustrator?*" provides valuable insights into the future training needs and skills required for illustrators in different countries. The identified themes, including marketing and promotion, business and financial skills, technical and artistic abilities, professional development and education, access to opportunities, and health and well-being, highlight the common areas of focus among illustrators across these countries. However, specific nuances and priorities are unique to each country's illustration community.

The need for skills development and training emerged as a key theme in Denmark. Illustrators expressed a desire for masterclasses, workshops, and courses to explore new techniques, enhance technical skills, and stay up to date with digital tools and software. This reflects the importance of continuous learning and the pursuit of artistic excellence.

Similarly, in England, the training needs encompassed technical skills and software proficiency, business and marketing skills, professional development and knowledge enhancement, portfolio and client-related skills, and addressing industry challenges. The emphasis on technical skills and

software proficiency reflects the industry's demand for illustrators well-versed in digital tools and 3D software.

In Finland, the training needs to be revolved around accessibility and support, marketing and networking, business and financial skills, digital literacy and technical skills, professional development and education, and health and well-being. Notably, illustrators emphasized the importance of accessibility and support for illustrators working in peripheral areas, highlighting the need for equal opportunities and resources (Finland reference 1).

In Germany, illustrators emphasized business and marketing skills, technical skills and software proficiency, legal and copyright knowledge, professional development and education, and accounting and administrative skills. The focus on business and marketing skills reflects the importance of entrepreneurial abilities for illustrators in Germany.

The identified training needs in Italy encompassed marketing, promotion, and sales; business and financial skills; technical and artistic skills; professional development and time management; and education and access to opportunities. Illustrators in Italy highlighted the importance of marketing strategies, self-promotion, and knowledge of financial management and legal aspects of illustration.

In Norway, illustrators expressed training needs in accessibility and support, marketing and networking, business and financial skills, digital animation and technological skills, professional development and education, and specialized areas and interdisciplinary skills. The focus on accessibility and support reflects the desire for equal access to resources and opportunities for illustrators across the country.

In Spain, the training needs revolved around marketing, promotion, and sales; business and financial skills; professional development and time management; digital animation and technological skills; and access to opportunities and resources. Illustrators emphasized the importance of marketing, networking, and effective self-promotion to expand their reach and access better-paid markets.

Lastly, the training needs in Sweden included technical skills and software proficiency, business and marketing skills, professional development and industry knowledge, time and creative freedom, and industry challenges and support. The emphasis on technical skills and software proficiency reflects the industry's demand for illustrators who can adapt to new technologies and tools.

It is important to note that the training needs identified in each country are based on the responses to question 18 and may not represent the entire illustration community in these countries. Further research and consultation with stakeholders, such as illustrators' associations, educational

institutions, and industry professionals, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the training needs and support required for illustrators in each country.

The analysis of the responses to question 17 sheds light on the challenges and opportunities illustrators face in different countries. By examining the specific contexts of Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Turkiye   , we can gain a deeper understanding of the factors shaping the illustration industry in these regions. The identified themes, including market demand, industry trends, client expectations, cultural influences, technological advancements, and professional networks, provide valuable insights into each country's unique illustration landscape.

In Denmark, illustrators highlighted the challenge of meeting market demand while maintaining artistic integrity. The need to balance personal artistic vision with commercial viability reflects the dynamic nature of the Danish illustration market.

In England, illustrators emphasized the importance of staying up to date with industry trends and technological advancements. This highlights the fast-paced and ever-evolving nature of the illustration industry in England, where illustrators must continuously adapt to new tools and techniques.

In Finland, illustrators discussed the impact of cultural influences on their work. The emphasis on preserving and promoting Finnish cultural heritage through illustration reflects the unique position of illustrators in Finland as cultural ambassadors.

In Germany, illustrators emphasized meeting client expectations and adapting to changing market demands. The competitive nature of the German illustration industry requires illustrators to be versatile and responsive to client needs.

In Italy, illustrators discussed the influence of technology on the industry. The focus on digital tools and software reflects the increasing integration of technology in the Italian illustration scene and the need for illustrators to embrace digital platforms.

In Norway, illustrators highlighted the importance of building and nurturing professional networks. The emphasis on collaboration and networking reflects the close-knit nature of the Norwegian illustration community and the value of connections in securing opportunities.

In Spain, illustrators discussed the influence of cultural diversity on their work. Spain's rich and diverse cultural landscape contributes to the vibrancy and variety seen in Spanish illustration.

In Sweden, illustrators emphasized the importance of innovation and experimentation. The Swedish illustration scene thrives on pushing boundaries and exploring new artistic approaches, highlighting the country's reputation for innovation.

Lastly, in Turkiye, illustrators discussed the impact of societal and political factors on the industry. The intersection of cultural, social, and political dynamics shapes the unique challenges and opportunities faced by illustrators in Turkiye.

It is important to note that the themes identified in each country are based on the responses to question 17 and may not represent the entire illustration community in these countries. Further research and consultation with stakeholders, such as illustrators' associations, industry experts, and cultural organizations, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping the illustration industry in each country.

Conclusion

The survey results comprehensively depict illustrators' demographics, working conditions, and potential issues. The survey reveals that the majority of respondents are female, self-employed, and have an illustration or related qualification. The majority of illustrators are publishing and editing specialists, and illustration is their primary source of income. The survey also exposes potential obstacles illustrators face, such as low fees and wages, commissioners' lack of understanding of illustration's value, and unfavorable contract terms offered by commissioners. Female illustrators face more obstacles than male illustrators, and educated illustrators view unfavorable contract terms as a greater obstacle than self-taught illustrators. The findings of this survey are advantageous for both illustrators and commissioners as a whole. By identifying potential obstacles, illustrators are able to enhance their working conditions. On the other hand, commissioners can better understand illustrators' difficulties and strive to improve their working conditions and pay. The results of this survey are based on a specific sample of illustrators and may not be applicable to the entire population. Nonetheless, this survey provides valuable insights into illustrators' demographics, working conditions, and potential impediments, and can serve as a foundation for future research and industry-enhancing action.

Implication for Research and Practices

The findings from the survey present several implications for both illustration research and practice. These implications are based on the identified needs, challenges, and opportunities highlighted by illustrators across different countries. By addressing these implications, the illustration industry can work towards creating a more inclusive, supportive, and thriving environment for illustrators.

Support and Resources: The survey reveals a need for additional support and resources for illustrators, particularly in terms of financial aid and social security. Researchers and practitioners

can explore ways to advocate for government-funded programs and policies that provide financial support to artists and freelancers. Efforts can also be made to increase access to health insurance and other benefits, ensuring that illustrators have the necessary support to sustain their creative careers.

Education and Awareness: The survey emphasizes the importance of education and awareness regarding licensing, copyright laws, and industry pricing standards. Research can focus on developing initiatives and programs aimed at educating both illustrators and commissioners about these crucial aspects of the industry. By enhancing knowledge and understanding, practitioners can establish more transparent and equitable contract terms, fostering a fairer and more sustainable working relationship between illustrators and clients.

Diversity and Inclusion: The survey underscores the significance of diversity and representation in the illustration field and the need to address discrimination and unequal access to opportunities. By fostering a more inclusive environment, the industry can harness a broader range of perspectives and talent, enriching the creative landscape. Future research can explore strategies and interventions to promote diversity and inclusion in hiring and commissioning processes. Efforts can also be directed towards making education and training opportunities more accessible and affordable for underrepresented groups.

Technology and Industry Shifts: The survey highlights the impact of technology on the illustration industry. Future research can investigate the implications of these technological shifts, such as the rise of digital platforms and new tools, on illustrators and the broader creative sector. By understanding these changes, practitioners can adapt their practices, explore new opportunities, and navigate potential challenges effectively.

Longitudinal Studies: Researchers can consider conducting longitudinal studies to track the evolution of the illustration industry over time. Such studies can provide valuable insights into the industry's trends, developments, and emerging needs. By monitoring changes and patterns, practitioners can make informed decisions and adapt their strategies accordingly.

Regional and Branch-Specific Studies: In-depth studies focusing on specific regions and branches of the illustration industry can provide a deeper understanding of illustrators' unique obstacles and opportunities in different contexts. Researchers can explore the challenges specific to each region, considering cultural, social, and economic factors. These studies can inform targeted interventions and support initiatives tailored to the specific needs of illustrators in different areas.

Overall, the implications for research and practice highlighted by the survey findings call for a collaborative effort among researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and industry stakeholders. By addressing these implications, the illustration industry can foster a more supportive and inclusive

environment, provide better opportunities for illustrators, and ensure a sustainable and thriving future for the field.

SHORT VERSION

DISCUSSION and CONLUSION

The survey on illustrators offers a detailed look into their experiences, highlighting the influence of gender, education, and professional background. Key findings from the survey include:

- **Demographics**: Over 70% of the illustrators surveyed are female, indicating a female predominance in the industry. Most do not identify as part of an ethnic minority, and a smaller percentage have a disability.
- **Obstacles in the Profession**: Illustrators report several barriers, with low fees and wages, a lack of understanding of the value of illustration, and unfavorable contract terms being the most significant (Table 24). Interestingly, self-taught illustrators perceive challenges like limited opportunities for skills development and inadequate time for marketing as more significant than those with formal education.
- **Pandemic Impact**: A majority of illustrators experienced decreased or unchanged income during the pandemic, highlighting its significant economic impact.
- **Gender-Based Differences**: Female illustrators face more substantial obstacles than their male counterparts in nearly all aspects, except for accessing formal illustration education. This suggests gender-related disparities within the industry.

The survey also reveals diverse training needs across different countries:

- **Denmark**: Illustrators are interested in masterclasses, workshops, and courses to enhance new techniques and technical skills.
- **England**: The focus is on developing technical skills, software proficiency, and business and marketing skills, along with professional development and industry knowledge.
- **Finland:** Emphasis is placed on accessibility and support, marketing, business skills, digital literacy, and well-being.
- **Germany**: The need for business and marketing skills is highlighted, along with legal knowledge and administrative abilities.
- **Italy**: There is a focus on marketing strategies, financial management, and understanding the legal aspects of illustration.
- **Norway**: Support is needed in accessibility, digital skills, and interdisciplinary areas.
- **Spain**: Priorities include marketing, financial skills, professional development, and technological abilities.
- **Sweden**: There is a demand for technical skills, business acumen, and industry awareness.
- **Turkey**: Training needs center around marketing and promotion strategies, understanding the local market dynamics, and enhancing digital illustration skills.

These diverse training needs reflect the unique challenges and opportunities in the illustration industry across these countries, highlighting the importance of tailored educational and professional development programs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The survey underlines the challenges and opportunities faced by freelance illustrators, providing essential insights for stakeholders. Recognizing the diverse backgrounds and experiences of illustrators is crucial for creating a supportive environment. Tailored policies and programs are needed to address the unique barriers and training needs in different countries. There is a clear need for more inclusive practices, better financial support mechanisms, and educational resources tailored to the varying needs of the illustrators. Collaboration among industry stakeholders, policymakers, and educators is vital to enhance the working conditions and opportunities in the illustration sector.

Acknowledgement:

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EIF Diversity Survey – Supporting inclusive opportunities for Illustrators across Europe

This survey is part of research carried out by the European Illustrators Forum (EIF), financed by contributions from (member associations + countries), to better understand the opportunities and challenges within the illustration sector in different countries across Europe today.

Specifically, we want to know the diversity of the group of illustration professionals, review financial income differences between the different countries, and understand how we can best champion under-represented minority groups within the illustration industry.

Survey results will offer statistical data that can be used by the EIF to identify key priorities and provide important evidence for Government consultations. Results will also help the EIF to develop initiatives that support a wider range of illustrators in building a successful, sustainable career.

Therefore, we ask for your participation by filling out this questionnaire. All your responses will be anonymous and confidential. Thank you for your cooperation.

Proposed Questions

1. **Please select your country of residence**

(Drop down of 44 European countries)

2. **How would you describe your gender?**

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Trans-gender

☐ Non-binary

☐ Prefer not to answer

☐ Other_____

3. Do you consider yourself to be part of ethnical minority where you live /work?
   (Do feel Unrepresented?)

4. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

☐ Prefer not to say (3)

5. Please select your age range

☐ Under 18 (1)

☐ 18-24 (2)

☐ 25-34 (3)

☐ 35-44 (4)

☐ 45-54 (5)

☐ 55-64 (6)

☐ 65+ (7)

6. How long have you worked as an illustrator?

☐ 0-3 years (1)

☐ 3-7 years (2)

☐ 7-15 years (3)

□ 15+ years (4)

7. **In what area of illustration do you specialise?** *(respondents will be able to tick multiple areas)*

□ Publishing (1)

□ Editorial (2)

□ Products and packaging (3)

□ Branding and corporate (4)

□ Advertising (5)

□ Scientific Illustration (6)

□ Fashion Illustration (7)

□ Fine Art Illustration (8)

□ Audio Visual (animation, video games, FX)

□ Murals

□ Live Illustration (graphic recording and events)

□ Story Board film industry

□ Concept Art

□ Scenography

□ A combination of areas (9)

□ Other_____ (10)

8. **Do you have a qualification in Illustration or related subject?**

□ Yes (1)

□ No, I am a self-taught illustrator (2)

☐ Other_____ (3)

9. Is illustration work your main source of income?

☐ Yes, almost all of my income comes from illustration (1)

☐ No, my main source of income comes from a job in another sector (2)

☐ My income is divided more or less equally between the illustration and a job in another sector (3)

10. Is your   illustration work consistent throughout the year?

☐ My illustration work is reasonably consistent throughout the year (1)

☐ My illustration work is irregular throughout the year (2)

☐ Other_____ (3)

11. What was your total earned income from illustration last year? (equivalent in EURO)
☐ €0 - €4000 (1)

☐ €5000 - €10,000 (2)

☐ €11,000 - €15,000 (3)

☐ €16,000 - €30,000 (4)

☐ €31,000 - €60,000 (5)

☐ €61,000 - €100,000 (6)

☐ €100,000+ (7)

12. Has the pandemic affected your income from illustration work?

☐ Yes my income has decreased by more than 50% (1)

☐ Yes my income has decreased by less than 50% (2)

☐ Yes my income has increased (3)

☐ My income has stayed the same (4)

13. Do you currently receive any financial aid from your government?

☐ Yes, due to unemployment (1)

☐ Yes, due to low income (2)

☐ Yes, due disability (3)

☐ Yes, for another reason (please specify) (4)

☐ I do not receive financial aid from my government (5)

14. If you do receive financial aid from government, do you feel it is enough?

☐ Yes, it is enough to cover my living expenses

☐ No, it is not enough to cover my living expenses

15. Which area of campaigning do you feel the EIF should prioritise in the next 12-18 months?

☐ Diversity and inclusivity within the illustration industry (1)

☐ Fair pay from clients (2)

☐ Inequitable business practice (3)

☐ Access to funding and governmental support (4)

☐ Mental health and wellbeing (5)

☐ Connecting illustrators (6)

☐ Promoting the standing of illustration as a profession (7)

☐ Good practices and copyright

☐ Other_____ (8)

16. What do you feel is the biggest obstacle to a successful, sustainable career in illustration?
- Low fees and wages
- No common pricing standards
- Unfavourable contract terms offered by commissioners
- Lack of knowledge in licensing/copyright by commissioners
- Commissioners don't know how to give a brief
- Lack of knowledge on the value of illustration by commissioners
- A full-time job in another profession
- No time for marketing/self-promotion
- Limited opportunities for continuous skills/creative development
- Limited opportunities to network with other illustrators
- Lack of opportunities due to discrimination
- Lack of social security as self-employed
- No access to formal education in illustration
- Other____

17 What kind of support do you need as an illustrator to build a successful, sustainable career? Please specify *(open question)*

18 What future training needs/skills are needed for you to progress within your current job as an illustrator? Please specify *(open question)*