

# HOW ARE WE DOING?



## IDI 2014 CAREER & SALARY SURVEY

revealing a wide mix of views  
on the designer's life in Ireland  
today – and tomorrow!

**INSTITUTE  
DESIGNERS  
IRELAND**

**LEADING  
DESIGN**

# THE **OVERALL** CONSENSUS

## ● **THERE IS SOME OPTIMISM ON EMPLOYMENT AND SALARIES**

● **DESIGNERS ARE MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT MOST THINGS** – more people working in the industry feel as though salaries are beginning to trend upwards.

● But, there's still a **HUGE COHORT OF EMPLOYEES EARNING A VERY LOW WAGE.**

● 70% of respondents give the thumbs-up to **IN-CAREER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.**

● **ALMOST 25% OF DESIGNERS HAVE COMPLETED A MASTERS** – and 75% of respondents are working in their field of study.

● **THE IN-HOUSE DESIGN SECTOR IS GROWING** – almost 20% of respondents working as designers in a non-design business.

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"I think designers need to remember they provide a magic that is hard to quantify.... Designers are natural entrepreneurs they just don't equate their creativity with potential profits.... Nevertheless we need to train designers to think more efficiently and plan, process and record their work in a business fashion. Salary value will follow the intrinsic worth invested in a company by its most senior players."

ANONYMOUS SURVEY RESPONDENT

"There needs to be a change in public perception about the value of good design. Not just with tangible consumer products or crafts, but the design of more abstract things like interiors/ spacial planning, or the design of systems etc. There seems to be a perception that ideas aren't particularly valuable, and a lot of clients don't want to pay for the 'idea' part of the process. They tend to see the output and assume a certain value for that element when in fact, it's the ideas and the design process brought us to that point."

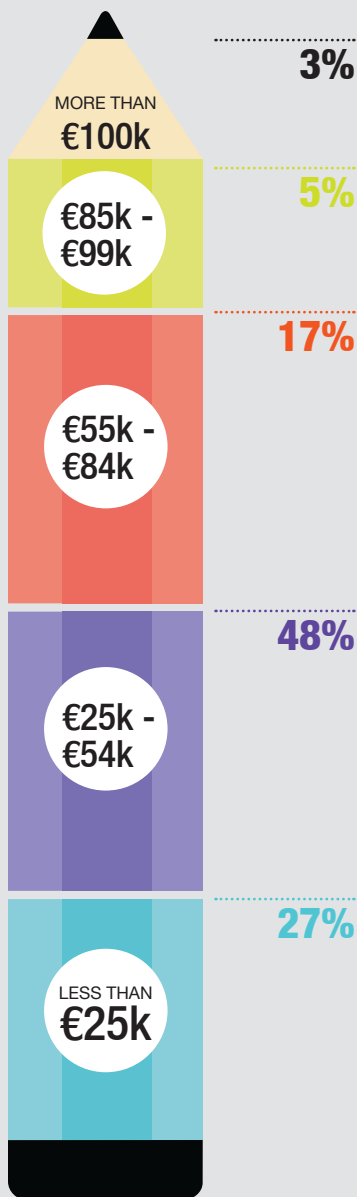
ANONYMOUS SURVEY RESPONDENT

# DESIGNER'S CURRENT GROSS BASE ANNUAL SALARY

• A large number of replies, **27%**, **REPORTED EARNINGS OF LESS THAN €25K PER ANNUM.** Notably, less than 5% are unpaid internships.

• **48% OF ALL RESPONDENTS EARN IN THE RANGE OF €25K TO €54K PER ANNUM.**

• **LESS THAN 10% OF RESPONDENTS EARN MORE THAN €85K PER ANNUM.**



THE **FIGURES**

# THE FACTS BEHIND THE FIGURES

- Of those who replied, **35% WERE IDI MEMBERS.**

• **OUR RESPONDENTS REPRESENTED A WIDE SECTORAL SPREAD** again this year – **with VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS, DIGITAL MEDIA DESIGN** and **INTERIOR DESIGN** all well represented.

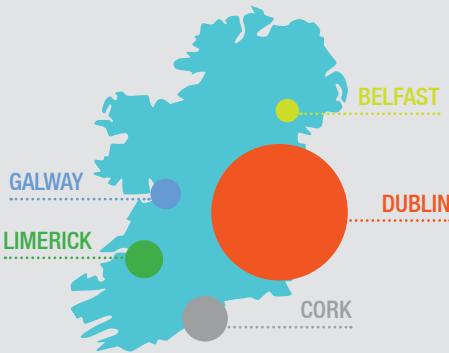
The majority of replies came from the greater Dublin area, but significantly all areas were represented.

- There is **NO CHANGE IN THE MALE TO FEMALE RATIO** since last year which is still approx 6:4.



- **A THIRD OF RESPONDENTS HAVE WORKED IN DESIGN FOR LESS THAN 3 YEARS**, so plenty of new blood entering the sector. Interestingly, at the other end of the scale, over 15% have been working within Design for 20 years or more.

- We are a highly qualified sector with almost a quarter of respondents having completed a Masters Degree and **LESS THAN 10% WORKING WITHOUT A THIRD LEVEL QUALIFICATION.** Over 75% of respondents said they are **WORKING IN THE DESIGN FIELD THEY STUDIED FOR** and a further 13% are working in a related field.



	DOCTORAL DEGREE	MASTER'S DEGREE	BACHELOR'S DEGREE	HIGHER DIPLOMA	DIPLOMA	CERTIFICATE
> 100k		40%	20%	20%	20%	
85k-100k		55.56%	44.44%			5.45%
75k-84k		20%	80%			3.03%
65k-74k	12.5%	25%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%	
55k-64k	6.25%	18.75%	68.75%		6.25%	
45k-54k		23.08%	46.15%	15.38%	7.69%	7.88%
35k-44k		33.33%	59.26%	7.41%		
30k-34k		22.22%	44.44%	16.67%	11.11%	5.56%
25k-29k		27.27%	63.64%	4.55%		
20k-24k			25%	75%		
< 20k			19.23%	76.92%	3.85%	

QUALIFICATION ACHIEVED V SALARY

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- Exactly 40% of respondents are self-employed designers, which is similar to last year. Almost 20% are employed in-house in a non-design business. **42.16% ARE EMPLOYED IN DESIGN PRACTICES**. There were less than 3% on Job-bridge and no-one replied as being Unemployed. Just 5% are Design Lecturers.

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- Interestingly, recruitment agencies provided less than 5% of current positions in 2014. The majority of respondents, **35%, SAID THAT THEY FOUND THEIR ROLE THROUGH THEIR OWN INITIATIVE**. A further 26% used their personal contacts/networks and 13% attributed online sources.

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- **38% RESPONDENTS SAID THE NUMBER OF DESIGN STAFF HAS INCREASED IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS** which is down considerably on last year (75%) however, less than 10% have noticed a decrease so this may be an indication that the sector is stabilising.

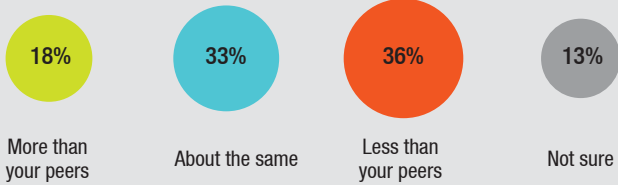
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• **MOST EMPLOYERS ARE NOT PAYING OVERTIME RATES**

with less than 10% of respondents claiming to receive overtime payments.

• 35% of designers believe that they are **PAID IN ACCORDANCE WITH OTHER SIMILARLY QUALIFIED AND EXPERIENCED PEERS**.

Just 17% believe that they are paid more than their peers.



Almost **50% OF DESIGNERS HAVE NOT BEEN AWARDED BONUSES OR PROFIT SHARE IN THE PAST YEAR**.

However almost a quarter of respondents say they have been granted some level of additional income top-up.

In 70% of replies we see **EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**. Less than 20% said no.

YEARS IN DESIGN	> 100k	85k-100k	75k-84k	65k-74k	55k-64k	45k-54k	35k-44k	30k-34k	25k-29k	20k-24k	> 20k	Unpaid intern
< 1							4%		12%	32%	40%	12%
1-3							6.67%	16.67%	23.33%	16.67%	26.67%	10%
4-9					10%	12.5%	22.5%	20%	20%		12.5%	2.5%
10-14	6.67%	10%	3.33%	10%	10%	10%	26.67%	10%	3.33%		10%	
15-19	13.04%	4.35%	8.70%	4.35%	21.74%	8.7%	17.39%	4.35%	4.35%	8.7%	4.35%	
20+	3.33%	16.67%	6.67%	13.33%	16.67%	10%	10%	6.67%	6.67%	10%		

YEARS IN PRACTICE V SALARY

# THE FUTURE IS BRIGHTER?

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## THERE IS SOME OPTIMISM ABOUT

Again this year there is some level optimism about with almost 40% of respondents expecting a salary increase in 2015. A significant number, almost 30% (up from 17.5%) said that they would change jobs, indicating a confidence in the market. However, job satisfaction is also high with almost 50% of respondents expecting to stay in the current role for the next 12 months.

## THANKS FOR READING...

“We are delighted to bring you these findings on our growing industry. This survey was circulated widely via email and social media from Dec ‘14 - Feb ‘15. We had an increased response on last year with a wide geographical, sectoral and age spread.

Thanks to all of you who responded. To those who didn't, we'd love to hear from you, so maybe next time?

I would like to thank Julie Richards and Denis O'Kelly who coordinated the survey and wrote up the findings and Kareem Ayoubi for the layout.

Keep a look out for our next survey.”

Yours in design,

**Andrew Bradley**

*IDI President (2013-2015)*

NOTE: The Salary Survey is an anonymous questionnaire. As such we cannot guarantee the accuracy of these figures; they may not be truly representative of salary trends in the industry. Results or data will not be sold or supplied to a third party for any reason. There were other questions on matters unrelated to salaries, this will be published at another time.