



# GIGMETAR SERBIA

## NEWSLETTER #2

AUTUMN 2024

### Latest news: Serbian gig workers' preferences for long-term employment and changes in 2024

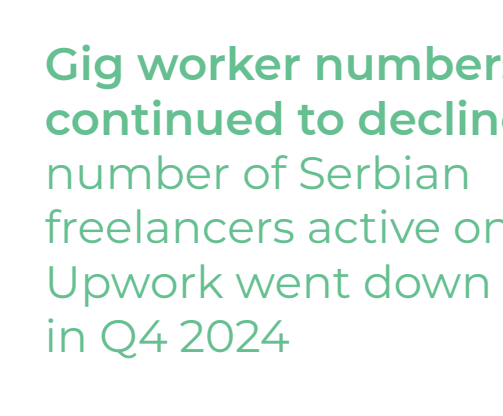
Gigmetar is the first instrument created to track digital work trends in Serbia and South-Eastern Europe by geographical distribution, gender structure, earnings and occupations on Upwork, one of the world's most popular online work marketplaces.

A **complex methodology**, relying on big data processing of publicly available information using in-house software, was developed to explore the features of digital workers.

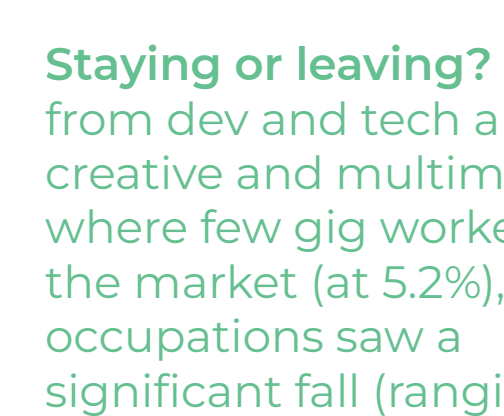
## 1

### Restructuring of the digital work market remains ongoing

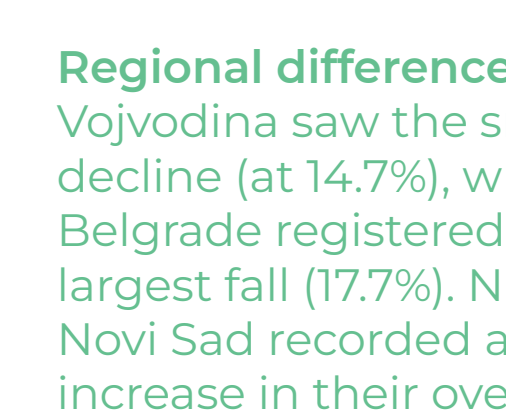
Latest findings



**Gig worker numbers have continued to decline.** The number of Serbian freelancers active on Upwork went down by 16.2% in Q4 2024



**Staying or leaving?** Apart from dev and tech and creative and multimedia, where few gig workers left the market (at 5.2%), most occupations saw a significant fall (ranging from 25% to 36%)



**Regional differences.** Vojvodina saw the smallest decline (at 14.7%), whilst Belgrade registered the largest fall (17.7%). Niš and Novi Sad recorded an increase in their overall share, Kragujevac held steady, and Belgrade's share declined



**Who was more likely to leave the market?** Women were more likely to leave the digital market over the past six months, with their share in the overall gig population falling to 33.1%



**Size and rewards shaped trends.** Occupations that were larger on average and had higher average wages recorded smaller contractions



**Experience commands a premium.** Freelancers with documented and diverse experience of platform work were far more likely to remain in the market

## 2

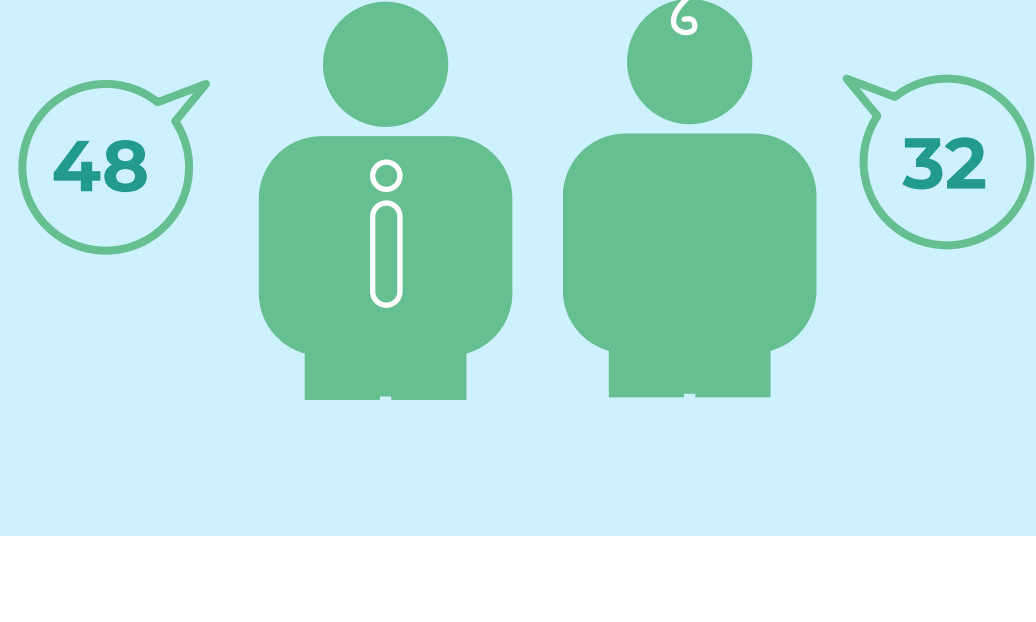
### Seeking trade-offs between flexibility and certainty

Are Serbian gig workers tired of freelancing?

A total of 13% of Serbian platform workers are open to long-term employment. Who are these prospective employees?

#### More experienced workers seek more permanent arrangements

These had, on average, completed **48 jobs**, as opposed to others' **32**



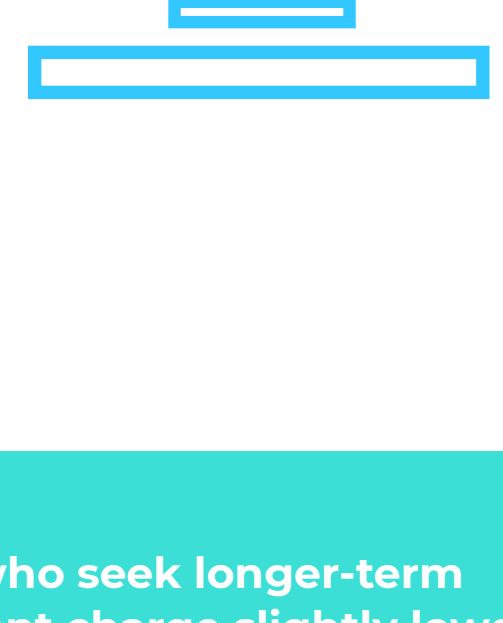
#### Workers interested in long-term employment are distributed equally across all regions

These are more likely to lack Top Rated status, at 14.6% vs 13.7%



#### Those who work more tend to seek more permanent arrangements

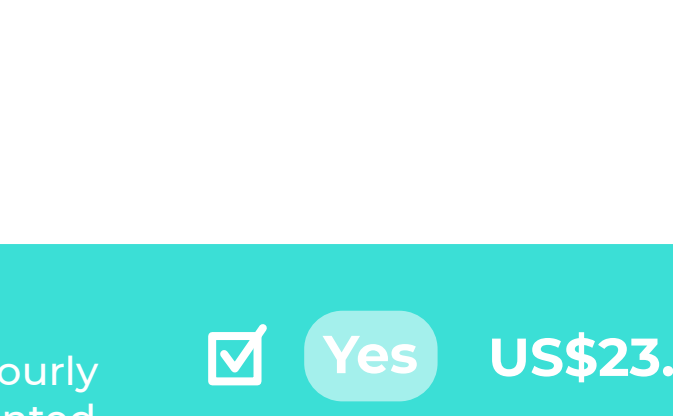
As many as 3/4 of those active at the time of the measurement expressed readiness to enter into long-term employment



#### Software dev and tech freelancers prioritised permanent contracts

Software developers accounted for 33% of all workers expressing these preferences

Women gig workers were especially likely to share this view



Workers who seek longer-term employment charge slightly lower rates than those who do not



Average hourly rate amounted to...

Yes US\$23.4

No US\$23.8

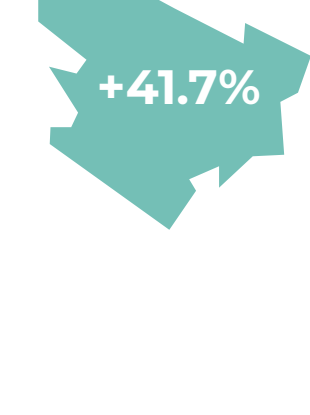
## 3

### Gigmetar over time, 2021 - 2024

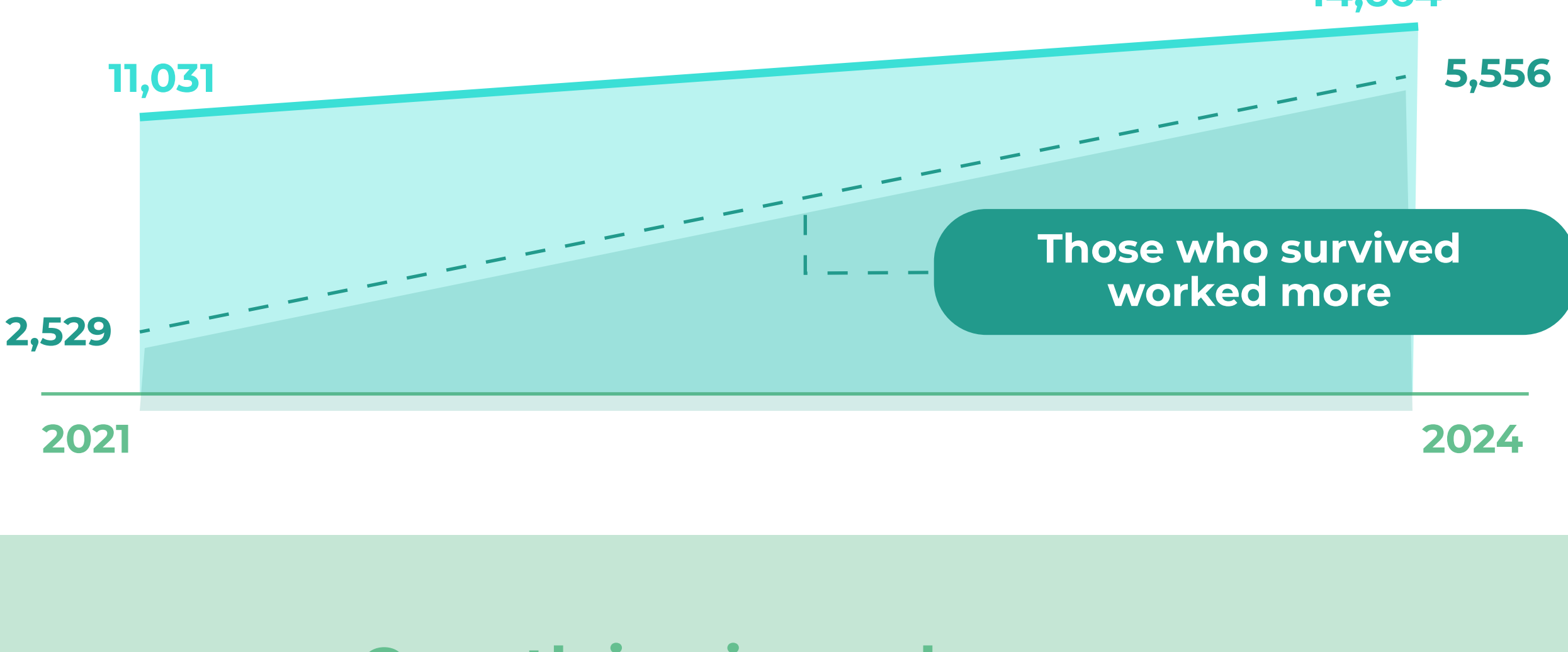
Digital work market: from unprecedented growth to consolidation

Whilst growth increased substantially in 2021 and 2023, a contraction set in from mid-2023

Cumulative growth from 2021 to 2024 stood at **+27.6%**



**Šumadija and Western Serbia registered the greatest growth**



### Growth in gig workers was balanced across both genders



The population of men and women gig workers has grown over the past 3 years

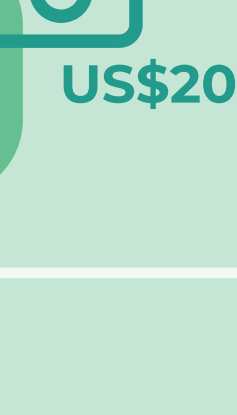
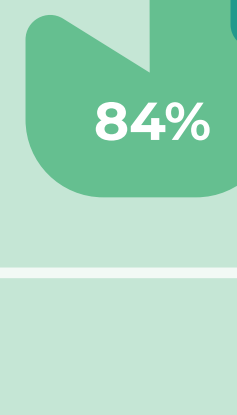
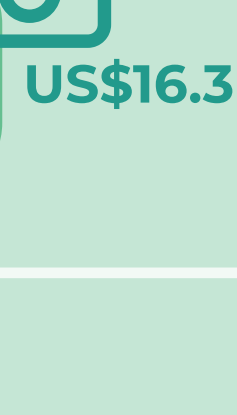
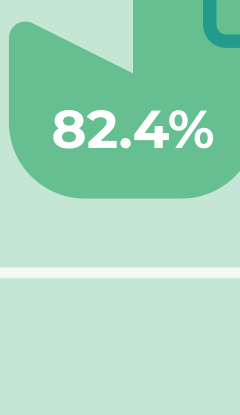
#### Minor changes to the gender gap

The share of female gig workers in the overall population is lower compared to the initial measurement.



34% 2021

35% 2024



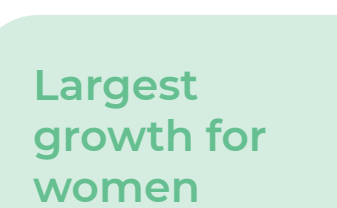
Throughout 2021, on average, female gig workers, compared to male gig workers, made less than they did in 2024.

### All occupations saw growth, but at unequal rates

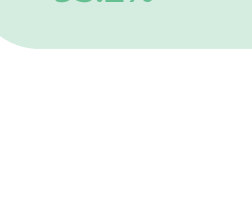
Increase in freelancer numbers across all occupations



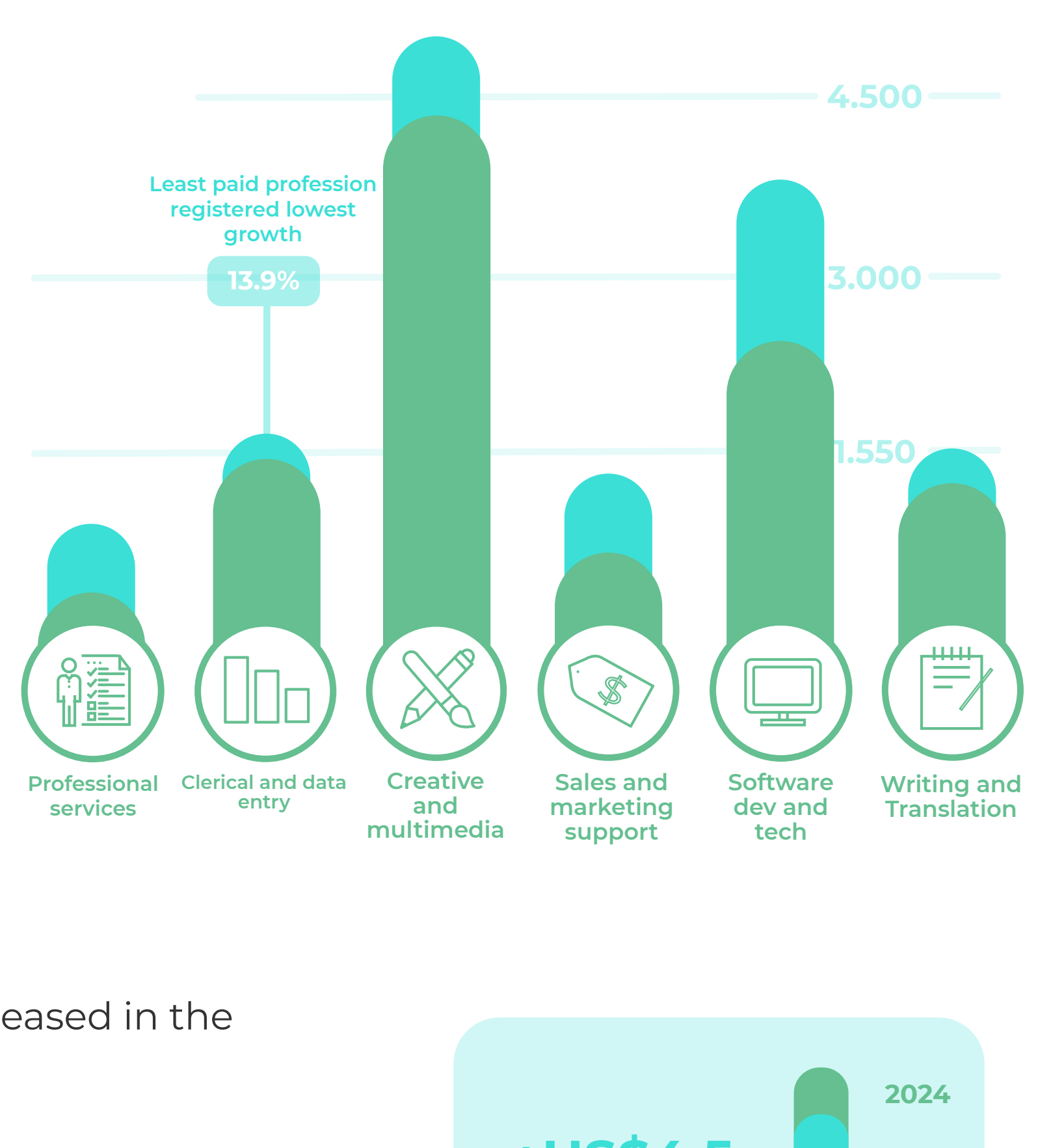
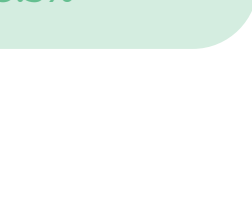
Highest-paid profession saw largest growth, least-paid saw smallest



Largest growth for women

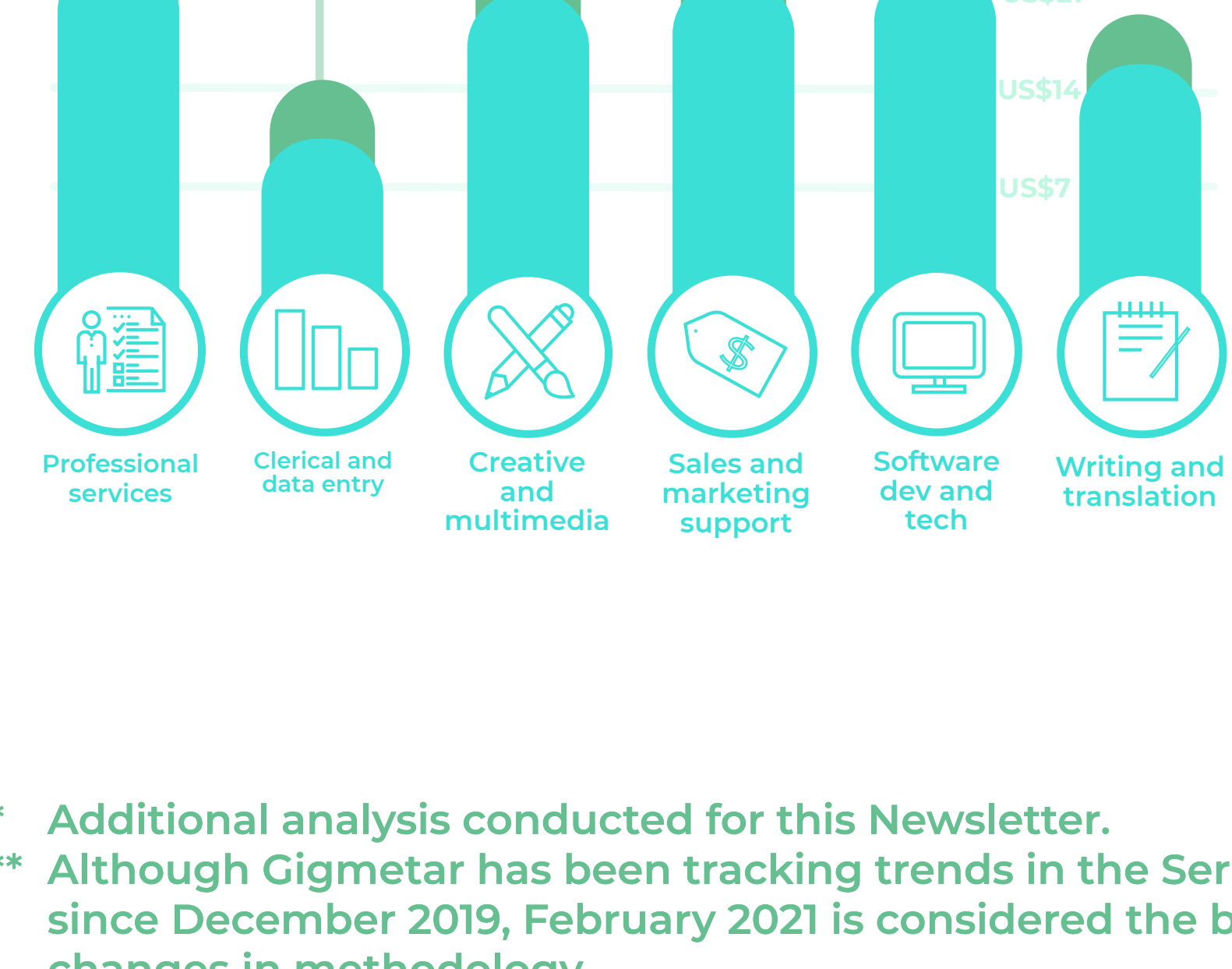


Largest growth for men



Quoted hourly rates increased in the period observed

**+US\$4.5**



\* Additional analysis conducted for this Newsletter.  
 \*\* Although Gigmetar has been tracking trends in the Serbian gig work market since December 2019, February 2021 is considered the baseline period due to changes in methodology.

**Authors** Anđelković, B., Jakobi, T., Ivanović, V., Kalinić, Z. & Radonjić, Lj. (2024) Gigmetar Srbija. Njuzleter jesen 2024, 2(2). <https://gigmetar.publicpolicy.rs/njuzleter/>

**Design** Sonja Lundin