

First South African freelance media trends, income report

The Southern African Freelancers' Association (SAFREA) has released its first research report on the local media freelance economy.

The 2016 SA Freelance Media Industry and Rates Report shows the average age, gender, residence, education, working hours and income of media freelancers. The report also includes a comprehensive overview of rates paid for specific freelance media specialities.

"Freelancers are skilled professionals working at the same levels as their full-time counterparts. This report proves they deserve the same benefits in terms of pay and employment opportunities," says SAFREA chair, Laura Rawden.

Highlights

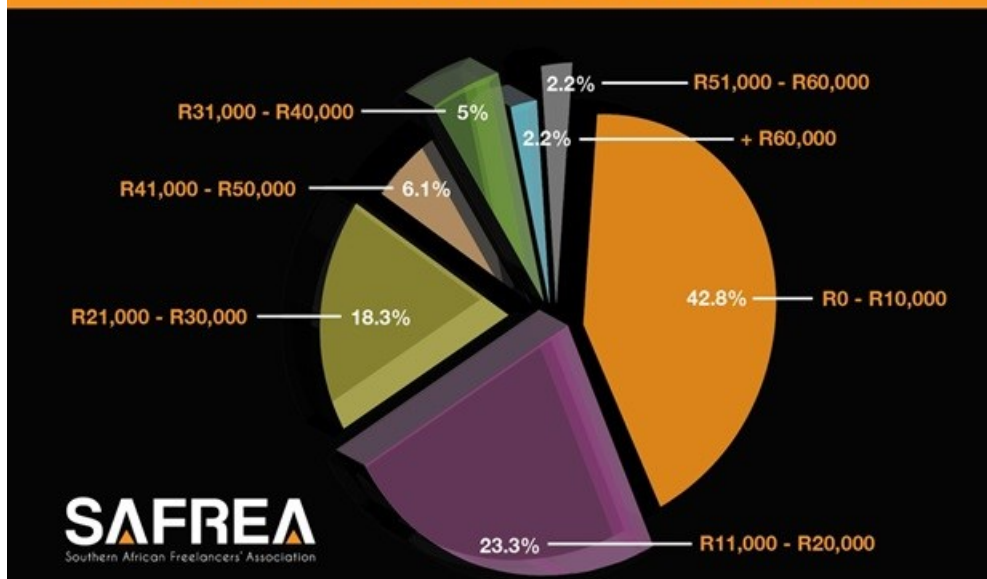
- Dominated by Baby Boomers and Generation X
- 78% female
- Concentrated in Gauteng (43%) and the Western Cape (35%)
- Writing, editing and translation services predominate
- Average income less than R10,000 per month

The report reveals the highest concentration of media freelancers resides in Gauteng (43%) and the Western Cape (35%). Amongst these workers, Baby Boomers and Generation X are the largest age groups, a finding that may reflect trends in the media industry such as downsizing and lay-offs.

Nearly 80% of freelance media professionals are women. This puts SA in line with international trends that indicate female freelancers dominate the industry.

Freelancers are highly skilled, according to the report, with over 60% of media freelancers holding postgraduate degrees. Most (39%) have 20 or more years' experience in their specialty field, and almost half (44%) have been freelancers for more than 10 years.

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME EARNED THROUGH FREELANCING



In a worrying income trend, the report found over 43% of media freelancers earned less than R10,000 per month in 2016. The average South African worker earned R18,045 in 2016, according to Stats SA.

With a weak job market and low youth employment, SAFREA expects an increase in freelance workers in 2017. To sustain that growth, it advocates for fair standards and practices in the industry.

SAFREA advocates for and supports freelance workers in the communications fields. It also provides resources, tools, training and networking to strengthen freelance careers.

To review the report, click [here](#).

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