

**IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE SOCIOECONOMIC
CHARACTERISTICS OF FREELANCERS**

**IMPACTO DA PANDEMIA COVID-19 NAS CARACTERÍSTICAS
SOCIOECONÔMICAS DOS FREELANCERS**

**IMPACTO DE LA PANDEMIA DEL COVID-19 EN LAS CARACTERÍSTICAS
SOCIOECONÓMICAS DE LOS TRABAJADORES AUTÓNOMOS**

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Scientific Editor: José Edson Lara
Organization Scientific Committee
Double Blind Review by SEER/OJS
Received on 12/04/2022
Approved on 05/10/2022

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Abstract

The study analyzes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work activities of freelancers and the self-employed. The study is based on a conducted survey. A total of 1,157 respondents participated in the survey. The sample subjected to statistical analysis is N=469 people. The employed research methods include correlation and one-factor analysis of variance, as well as text analysis. The textual analysis method is used in determining the reasons behind an unwillingness to register as self-employed. Correlation analysis is used in assessing the impact of the pandemic on income and customer demand. Analysis of variance is deployed to compare subsamples of current freelancers and former freelancers. Analogies are drawn between the current findings and those of other researchers. The results of the study indicate that the main advantage of freelance work is the free schedule (83% of the respondents). Another appeal of freelancing is the lack of the need to go to the office (70%), the freedom to choose orders and customers (68%). Among the negative characteristics of freelancing is the instability of income (67%). In view of the freelancers themselves, the COVID-19 pandemic has had no major influence on their work. Specifically, 40% report that COVID-19 has not affected their work in any way.

Keywords: freelance, freelancer, self-employment, self-employed, labor market, entrepreneurship.

Resumo

O estudo analisa o impacto da pandemia de COVID-19 nas atividades laborais de freelancers e autônomos. O estudo é baseado em uma pesquisa realizada. Um total de 1.157 entrevistados participaram da pesquisa. A amostra submetida à análise estatística é N=469 pessoas. Os métodos de pesquisa empregados incluem correlação e análise de variância de um fator, bem como análise de texto. O método de análise textual é usado para determinar as razões por trás da relutância em se registrar como autônomo. A análise de correlação é usada para avaliar o impacto da pandemia na receita e na demanda dos clientes. A análise de variância é implantada para comparar subamostras de freelancers atuais e ex-freelancers. São feitas analogias entre as descobertas atuais e as de outros pesquisadores. Os resultados do estudo indicam que a principal vantagem do trabalho freelance é o horário livre (83% dos entrevistados). Outro apelo do freelancer é a falta de necessidade de ir ao escritório (70%), a liberdade de escolher pedidos e clientes (68%). Entre as características negativas do freelancer está a instabilidade de renda (67%). Para os próprios freelancers, a pandemia do COVID-19 não teve grande influência em seu trabalho. Especificamente, 40% relatam que o COVID-19 não afetou seu trabalho de forma alguma.

Palavras-chave: freelance, freelancer, autônomo, autônomo, mercado de trabalho, empreendedorismo.

Resumen

El estudio analiza el impacto de la pandemia de COVID-19 en las actividades laborales de los trabajadores autónomos y autónomos. El estudio se basa en una encuesta realizada. Un total de 1.157 encuestados participaron en la encuesta. La muestra sometida a análisis estadístico es de N=469 personas. Los métodos de investigación empleados incluyen correlación y análisis



de varianza de un factor, así como análisis de texto. El método de análisis textual se utiliza para determinar las razones detrás de la falta de voluntad para registrarse como autónomo. El análisis de correlación se utiliza para evaluar el impacto de la pandemia en los ingresos y la demanda de los clientes. El análisis de varianza se implementa para comparar submuestras de autónomos actuales y antiguos autónomos. Se establecen analogías entre los hallazgos actuales y los de otros investigadores. Los resultados del estudio indican que la principal ventaja del trabajo freelance es la libertad de horario (83% de los encuestados). Otro atractivo del freelance es la ausencia de la necesidad de ir a la oficina (70%), la libertad de elegir pedidos y clientes (68%). Entre las características negativas del freelance está la inestabilidad de los ingresos (67%). A juicio de los propios freelancers, la pandemia del COVID-19 no ha tenido mayor influencia en su trabajo. Específicamente, el 40% informa que COVID-19 no ha afectado su trabajo de ninguna manera.

Palabras clave: autónomo, freelancer, trabajo por cuenta propia, autónomos, mercado de trabajo, emprendimiento.

1. INTRODUCTION

A non-standard form of employment has emerged, where there is no direct employer, but instead a chain of contracts is formed, through which the development of the competencies of the self-employed or a freelancer progresses. Freelancing offers freedom to choose a contractor, as well as independence and a workspace. The emergence of non-standard employment owes to the development of the creative economy (Kong, 2011) and the crisis in the labor market (Danson et al., 2021).

Individual self-employment has minimal impact on the likelihood of becoming an employer (Cowling & Wooden, 2021). This is logical because the emphasis placed on individual self-employment means the absence of employees. In other words, not every self-employed person will become an employer, but neither can we deny that such a transformation is impossible. The chance to meet other professionals or aspiring entrepreneurs and get emotional support is also a reason to pursue freelancing (Reuschke et al., 2021).

One of the main disadvantages of freelance work is low socio-economic security. This is evidenced by a study by Swedish researchers (Norbäck & Styhre 2019) showing that freelance journalists find themselves in a precarious position. Their hired colleagues have higher salaries and numerous benefits (possibility of maternity leave, pension, etc.) and feel more secure. With an equal level of education and the same competencies, freelancers face risks that fall entirely on their shoulders, while wage earners work under decent conditions,

including social security. In many countries, the self-employed do not have access to old-age social security and do not participate in pension systems to the same extent as salaried workers (Li et al., 2016). Meanwhile, the propensity to become self-employed increases with retirement age in advanced economies (Millán et al., 2019). Workers in employment become self-employed due to unemployment (Lo et al., 2020) and poor working conditions that force workers to seek alternative income opportunities (Huang et al., 2020). The likelihood of becoming self-employed is also related to low wages in employment (Stenard, 2019). Self-employment thus comes up as a solution to economic problems. In contrast to these ideas, there is a study arguing that financial hardship has a negative impact on the well-being of the self-employed (Wolfe, Patel, 2021). This, however, is logical and may apply not only to self-employment but other forms of labor as well. That is, according to the theory proposed by Wolfe and Patel (2021), there is a possibility to become self-employed, but the presence of financial difficulties will have a negative impact on well-being, and the fact of self-employment itself cannot compensate for the lack of well-being. Nor can access to finance through credit always have a positive impact on self-employment. Microfinance provided to low-income people exacerbates the risks faced by those transitioning to self-employment (Danson et al., 2021). Microfinance could be the key factor in this failure. The bottom line is that microfinance is usually of interest to vulnerable populations. However, compared to men, women with higher financial literacy rates are more likely to be in non-employment, preferring self-employment instead. In this case, financial literacy could correlate with self-actualization. Another study suggests that women are less likely to be self-employed than men (Lo et al., 2020).

Self-employed individuals perceive their jobs as more mentally demanding because they work more and have more responsibility (Andersson, 2008). Nonetheless, to those with more advanced skills, self-employment brings not only higher incomes, but also the flexibility of work schedules (Chen & Liu, 2019).

In this article, we use the word "freelancer", which is equivalent to self-employed in terms of the content of work. "Freelancer" is a word used to make the wording of the questions clearer to the respondents and avoid cluttering the survey with institutional terms.

Self-employed persons are those who are registered with the Tax Inspectorate and are payers of the Tax on professional income. This is a special tax regime with a preferential rate of 4% on income from individuals and 6% on income from legal entities and individual entrepreneurs (a type of organizational-legal form). The tax on professional income is paid by those who work by themselves or sell goods of their own production. The self-employed, according to Russian legislation, do not have hired workers (Gosuslugi.ru, 2022). The peculiarity of self-employment is that a person combines the functions of an employer and an employee in one person. Thus, they find paid work for themselves and receive remuneration for the result of their labor – the services rendered.

The methodology of the International Labor Organization recognizes four main groups of self-employment (Pokida & Zybunovskaya, 2020):

1. own-account workers;
2. "entrepreneurs of unincorporated businesses using hired labor (employers)";
3. members of producers' cooperatives;
4. unpaid workers in family businesses (contributing family workers).

Thus, the methodological approach of the International Labor Organization to self-employment differs from the Russian approach.

2. METHODS

The materials of the study are the completed questionnaires (survey results) of the respondents. The value of the results of this survey is that the online users responded voluntarily and were able to exit the survey at any time.

Most of the responses come from users of the etxt.ru website, a marketplace for freelancers and the self-employed. The respondents were recruited through a banner on the website with a link to the SurveyMonkey questionnaire. The respondents were informed that they could exit the survey at any time without giving any reasons. The participants in the survey were also notified that their responses would only be used for the purposes of the ongoing study, and no personal information would be disclosed to third parties. To access survey data, see (Plotnikov, 2022).

The total number of respondents in the study is 1,157. The sample subjected to statistical analysis is 469 people (of which 441 are freelancers at the time of the survey and 28 are not freelancers at the moment but used to be). The ratio of the total number of respondents to the sample is due to the respondents voluntarily interrupting their participation in the study. The main socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Appendix Fig. A1-A8, as well as Table A1.

The purpose of the paper is to explore the views of freelancers and the self-employed on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on their lives and work.

Research objectives are as follows:

1. to identify the most popular areas of freelance work;
2. to study the structure of freelancers' job activities (availability of occupations other than freelancing) and motives for freelance work;
3. to identify the key advantages and disadvantages of working as a freelancer, as well as the level of orientation of current freelancers on freelancing in the future;
4. to determine freelancers' overall assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on freelancers' work and the number of self-employed individuals;
5. to determine freelancers' assessment of public attitudes toward the self-employed, as well as the extent to which COVID-19 affects people's attitudes toward the self-employed;
6. to determine freelancers' assessment of the extent of impact of COVID-19 on income, the amount of time given to orders, and demand for services;
7. to identify freelancers' level of awareness of the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income";
8. to establish the share of freelancers officially registered as self-employed, as well as the reasons for freelancers' reluctance to register.

At the beginning of the study, descriptive statistics on the survey data are calculated. The reasons for not wanting to register as self-employed are determined via the textual analysis method. In this question, the respondents were not offered answer options and were instead asked to give an unstructured answer – to independently determine the reason for not registering as a self-employed person.

Correlation analysis is used to estimate the impact of the pandemic on income and customer demand. Analysis of variance is deployed in comparing subsamples of current freelancers and former freelancers. Analogies are drawn between the results of the present study and those of other research, the methods of generalization are used.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Popular areas of freelance work

Currently employed freelancers make up 94% of the sample and 6% of the respondents had suspended their activities at the time of the survey for various reasons (Fig. 1). The value of this sample is that the majority of the respondents who completed the questionnaire are active freelancers rather than respondents who have only heard of freelancing. Thus, the proportion of respondents is consistent with the survey's target audience. Sociodemographic parameters and their values, as well as a table with descriptive statistics, are presented in the Appendix.

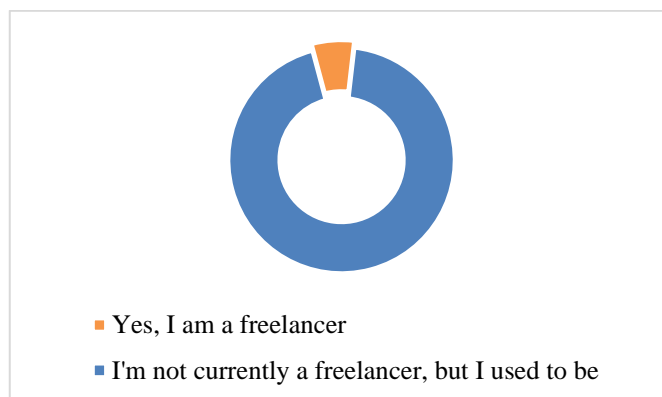


Figure 1. "Are you currently a freelancer (self-employed professional offering your knowledge and competencies remotely (via the Internet))?"

The leading area by the number of freelancers is work on the creation of text – copywriting, rewriting, poetry, articles, and others (79%). However, this characteristic is due to the peculiarity of the platform on which the survey invitation was published.

The top five areas of freelancing are also (by a significant margin from the leading spheres) advertising, marketing, data collection and analysis (14%), education, science, tutoring (14%),

SEO, contextual advertising (11%), and language translations (10%). Other spheres are less popular, with less than 8% of respondents employed in them.

The structure of freelancers' work activities and motives for freelance work

Up to 45% of active freelancers have no other type of employment, the rest combine freelancing with one or more activities – work, study, or housekeeping (Fig. 2). The main reason for freelance work is to earn extra income (Fig. 3).

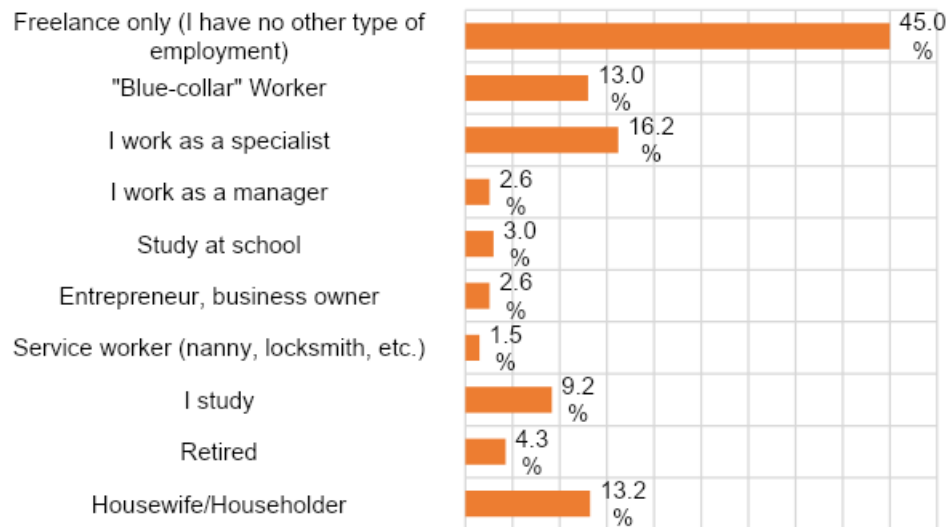


Figure 2. "What is your occupation besides freelancing?"

There is a study according to which job insecurity and fear of losing one's job force workers to accept non-standard employment conditions compared to locally hired workers (Agudelo-Suárez et al., 2020). Thus, workers become "hybrid self-employed" or "hybrid entrepreneurs". The stress levels of "hybrid entrepreneurs" differ from other groups, while their life satisfaction levels are statistically similar. In terms of job satisfaction, hybrid workers are similar to full-time wage earners, who are less satisfied with their paid work compared to full-time self-employed workers. (Ardianti et al., 2022)

Next, let us consider the motives for working as a freelancer (Fig. 3).

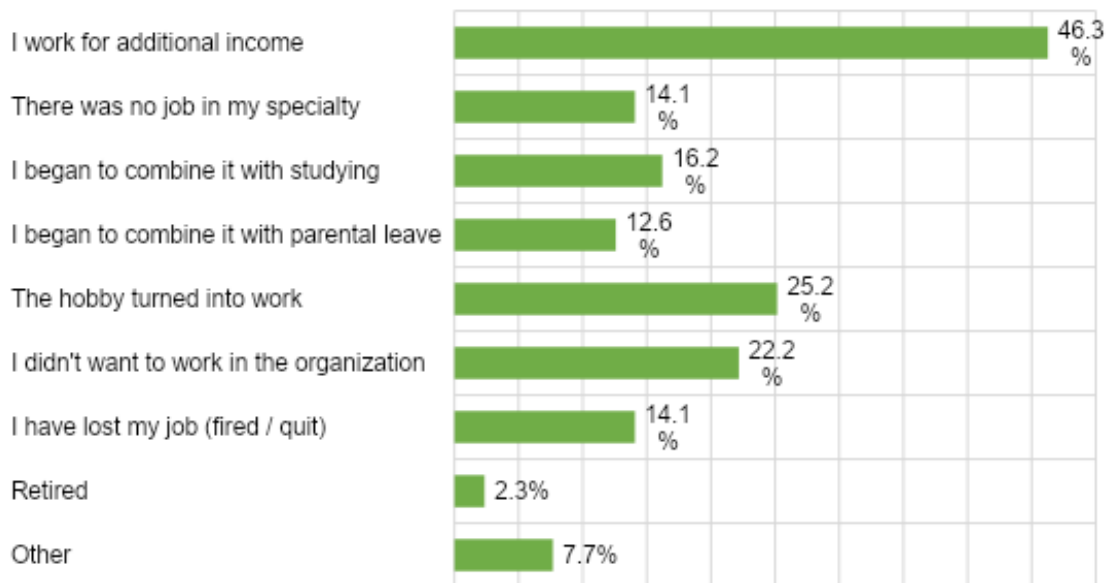


Figure 3. "Why did you become a freelancer?"

Our results on motives for becoming a freelancer are consistent with studies in which an increase in income is found to be the main motive (Jafari-Sadeghi, 2020) and relate to the search for extra opportunities and not a necessity. Increased income as a result of professional activity falls in line with the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Welters et al., 2014; Hsu, 2013; Deci & Ryan, 2000).

There is also a study (Stenard, 2019) that shows a negative relationship between self-employment and income, and suggests the view that intangible benefits can act as a compensator for low wages. The opposite view is held by Koch et al. (2021), whose study suggests that consistency in self-employment leads to higher incomes.

Key advantages and disadvantages of working as a freelancer, the degree of orientation of current freelancers on freelancing in the future

Sufficient levels of respondents' satisfaction with their own labor activity is evidenced by the high level of orientation of current freelancers to continue this work in the future. The vast majority of respondents (94%) plan to continue working as a freelancer (50% exclusively as self-employed, and 44% – combining it with the work in an organization) (Fig. 4).

Moreover, only 6% of active freelancers call freelancing a temporary job. This indicates a high level of sustainability of freelancing as a form of employment.

Results obtained with respect to the levels of satisfaction among the self-employed agree with the findings of Koch et al. (2021), which assert that a career based on continuous self-employment brings more satisfaction from work and greater life satisfaction. Self-employment is associated with increased individual job satisfaction (Stenard, 2019). The self-employed experience less activity-related stress than hired workers, and the self-employed without hired jobs also experience less stress than the self-employed with hired jobs (Hessels et al., 2017). Thus, the presence of responsibility directly affects stress levels.

The level of preference for self-employment depends on the attitudes of the population toward entrepreneurship. Attitudes imply the presence of the following factors in society: egalitarianism, high individualism, high embeddedness, an orientation towards a high productivity, high tolerance for uncertainty, and a low tolerance for unequal distribution of power (Laffranchini et al., 2018). Regardless of their stable optimistic personality traits, self-employed people tend to be overly optimistic about how satisfied they will be with their lives in the future (Odermatt et al., 2021).

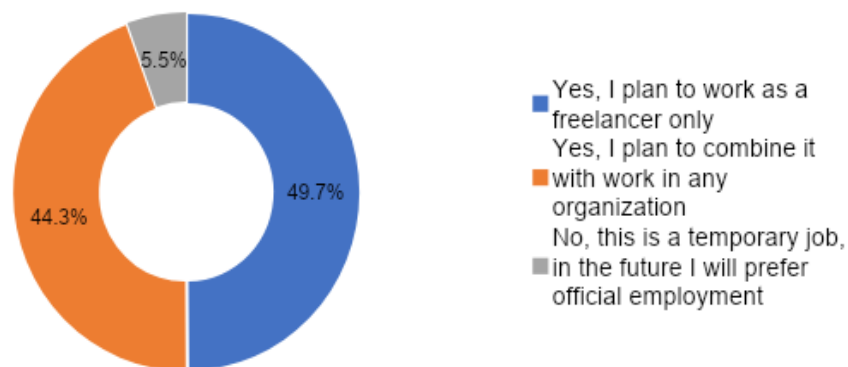


Figure 4. "Do you plan to continue working as a freelancer in the future?"

Free work schedule is noted by the respondents as the main advantage of freelance work (83%). Another appeal of freelancing is the lack of need to go to the office (70%), the freedom to choose orders and customers (68%), the possibility to combine it with other activities (68%), and lack of attachment to a specific location (63%) (Fig. 5).

Exploring the question of the advantages of freelancing, we can understand the advantages as motives to work as a freelancer. Based on the responses, we can assume that the respondents choose the principle of autonomy, which protects against professional burnout (Hsu, 2013). The main motives discovered coincide with the results of other researchers (Huang et al., 2020; Koch et al., 2021).

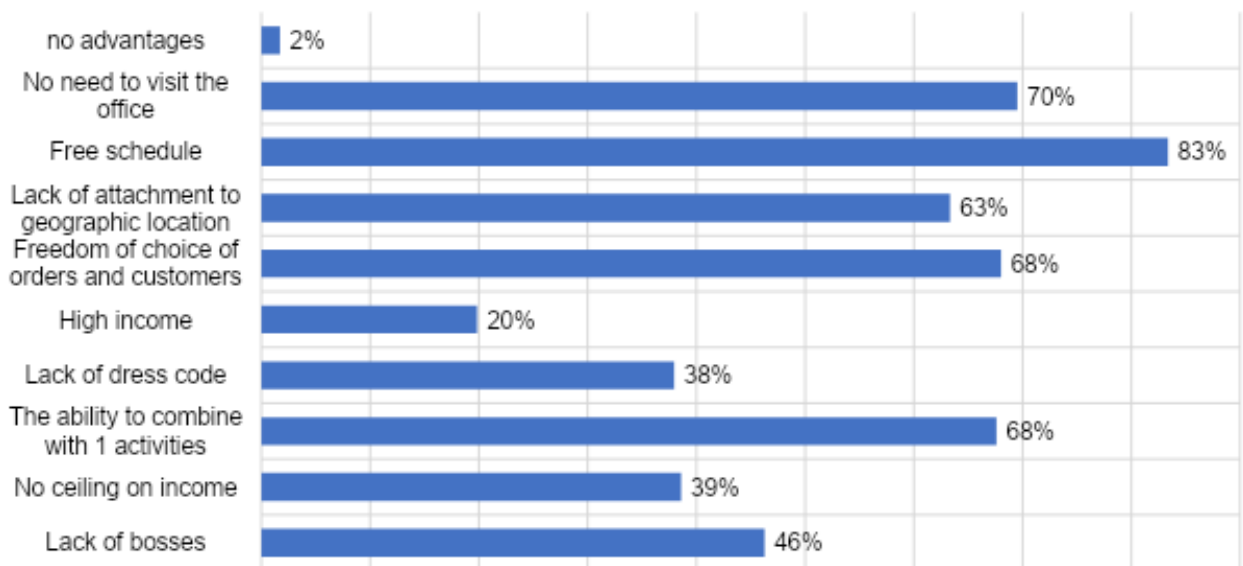


Figure 5. "What advantages do you see for yourself in working as a freelancer?"

Regarding the negative aspects of working as a freelancer (income instability (67%), lack of social guarantees (40%), and difficulty organizing oneself (38%)) (Fig. 6), according to a study by M. Norbäck and A. Styhre (2019), financial uncertainty is related to the instability of employment contracts. If the respondents mention income instability as a disadvantage, it means a deviation of income to the lesser side of the average income. Consequently, working long hours as a freelancer will help increase the sustainability of their activities and income based on regular clients. This is evidenced by a study by M. Koch et al. (2021). The answer about "social guarantees" for some freelancers can come as a positive factor because a freelancer can choose for themselves which needs to spend their earnings on. Thus, nobody forbids a freelancer to spend their income on social guarantees. Perhaps, in this context, there is an intrapersonal conflict in the case of choosing to spend the funds. The challenges of self-organization can be solved by organizing the workspace based on the

artifacts of the co-working space (Bouncken & Aslam, 2021; Luo, Chan, 2021; Bouncken et al., 2021).

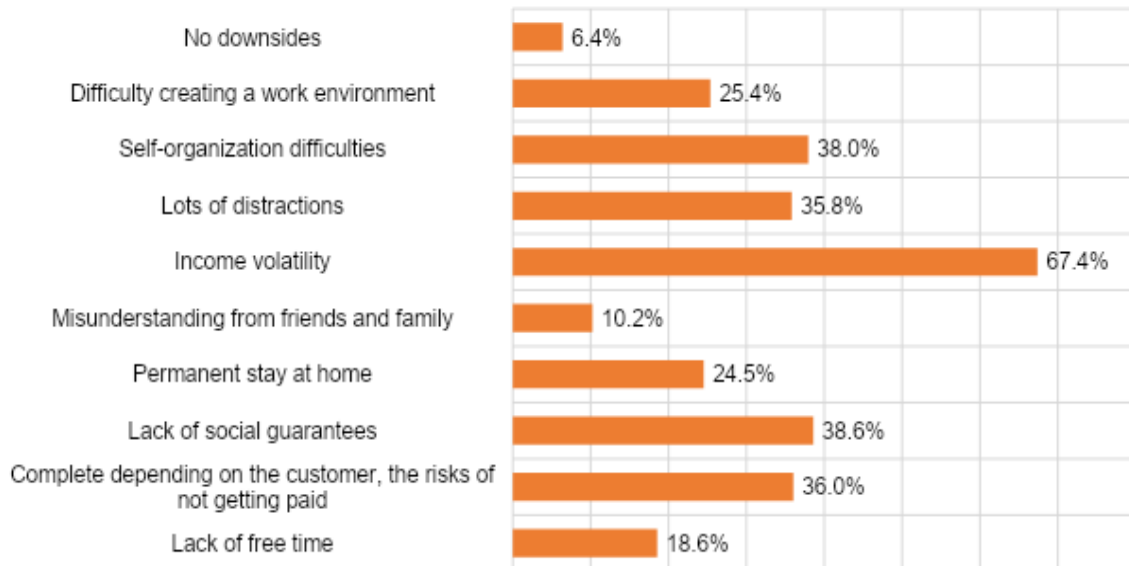


Figure 6. "What disadvantages do you see for yourself personally in working as a freelancer?"

Freelancers' assessment of public attitudes toward the self-employed and the extent to which COVID-19 affects people's attitudes toward the self-employed

In freelancers' estimations, those around them have a mostly neutral attitude with a tendency toward a positive attitude. Thus, 45% say that those around them have a neutral attitude toward freelancers, 23% say they have a rather positive attitude, and 13% say they have a completely positive attitude (Fig. 7).

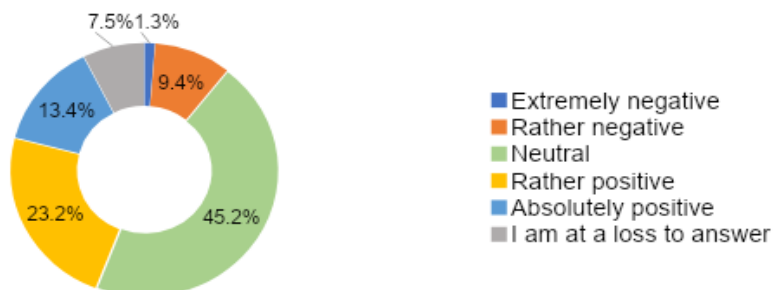


Figure 7. "Generally speaking, how do people around you feel about freelancers?"

Most respondents believe that the COVID-19 pandemic has had no effect on people's attitudes toward freelancers (52%) or has had a positive effect (23% – rather positive, 7% – absolutely positive) (Fig. 8).

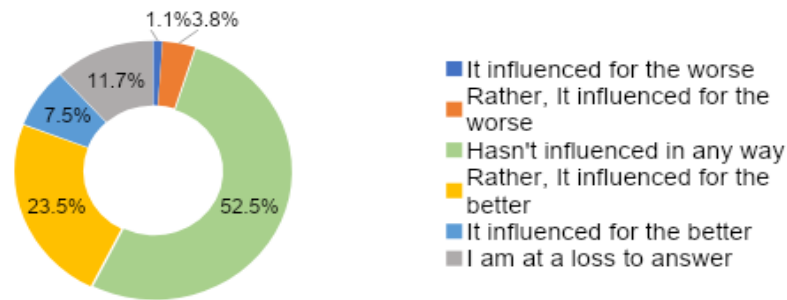


Figure 8. "Has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced the attitude of people around you towards freelancers in any way?"

Freelancers' overall assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the number of self-employed persons and freelance jobs

Up to 60% of the freelancers note that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been more self-employed individuals – slightly more (39%) or significantly more (20%) (Fig. 9). At the same time, every fourth respondent finds it difficult to answer the question about the influence of the situation with COVID-19 on the number of self-employed.

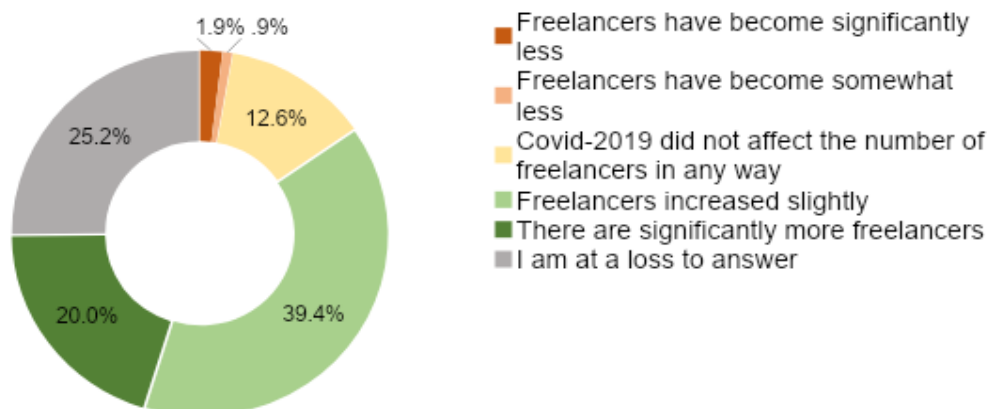


Figure 9. "Has the number of people freelancing in your community changed in any way due to COVID-19?"

According to freelancers themselves, the COVID-19 pandemic has had little impact on their work. Thus, 40% note that COVID-19 had no effect on their work, 19% – that rather affected for the better, 11% – that rather affected for the worse. At the same time, there is a balance in the proportion of respondents assessing the COVID-19 pandemic as a negative and positive factor in this regard (25% and 27%, respectively) (Fig. 10). One study (Mindes, & Lewin, 2021) indicates that the self-employed are more likely to shut down operations during a pandemic. Another study asserts that the survival of small businesses in the COVID-19 pandemic depends on the characteristics of the owner (Grashuis, 2021). The economic uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic hit the self-employed harder than the employed. (Patel & Rietveld, 2020) Thus, it can be assumed that our sample of freelancers has entrepreneurial stability.

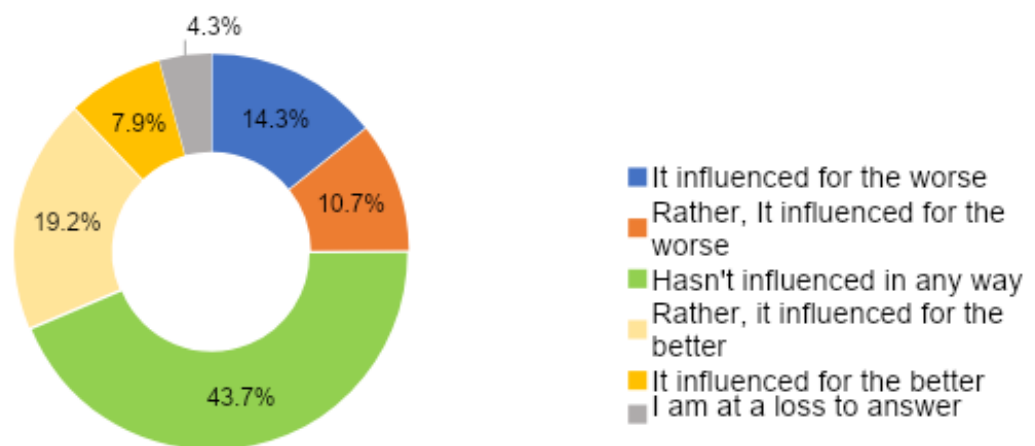


Figure 10. "In your opinion, has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced your work as a freelancer in any way?"

Freelancers' assessment of the extent of the impact of COVID-19 on income, the amount of time given to orders, and the demand for services

The COVID-19 pandemic has had little impact on such job characteristics as income, amount of time given to orders, and demand for services. According to 33% to 40% of the respondents, COVID-19 had no effect on these parameters, while one in four freelancers report a change for the better (Fig. 11).

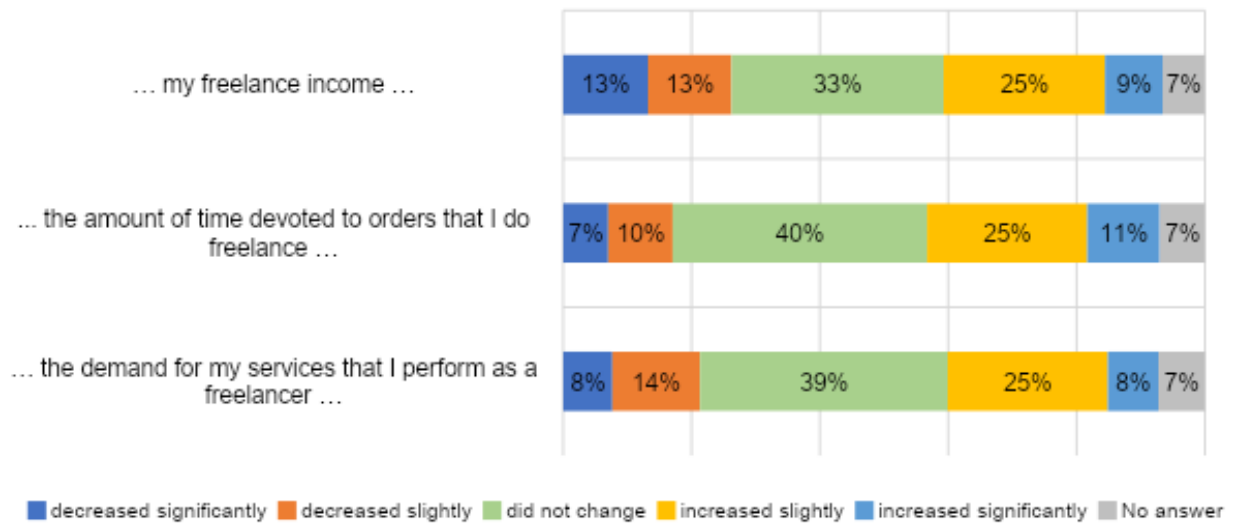


Figure 11. "Between March and December 2020..."

Self-employment has the capacity for labor market resilience, so, for example, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the self-employed compared to hiring was less severe in hard-hit industries (Mindes & Lewin, 2021). However, there are studies that confirm the opposite effects. Self-employed individuals are rapidly losing income in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic (Wolfe & Patel, 2021). In addition, financial losses in the self-employed lead to mental disorders (Patel & Rietveld, 2020; Wolfe & Patel, 2021).

The level of freelancers' awareness of the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income"

The level of the freelancers' awareness of the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income" is average. About a third (31%) of freelancers have heard about the preferential tax regime for the first time, 22% have heard something, and less than half (47%) know about it well (Fig. 12).

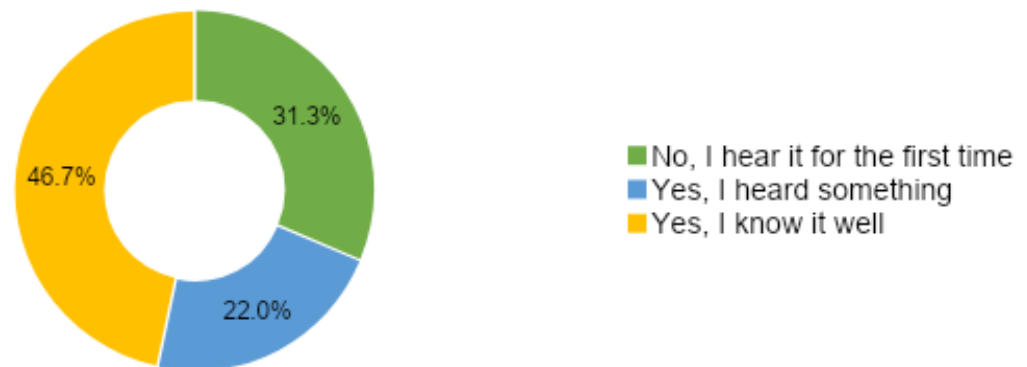


Figure 12. "Do you know about the preferential tax regime 'Tax on professional income'?"

The tax on professional income is a preferential tax regime for self-employed citizens. It was introduced in 2019 and is valid only for the self-employed. The preferential tax regime is an experiment that is staying in force until 2028. Individuals and individual entrepreneurs who switch to the new preferential tax regime (referred to as "self-employed" in everyday life) pay the tax at a reduced rate of 4% or 6% of their income (Npd, Nalog & Ru, 2022).

The proportion of freelancers registered officially as self-employed and the reasons for not registering

The relative majority of freelancers are not officially registered as self-employed (58%) (Fig. 13). The key arguments against this registration are lack of desire, motivation, unwillingness to pay taxes, lack of residency status in Russia, residence in another country, and lack of necessity.



Figure 13. "Are you officially registered as self-employed?"

The responses of the majority of respondents go in line with the study by D. S. Pritadrajati et al. (2021), which shows that developing countries have an informal labor market. Next, we examine the reasons for not registering as self-employed (Fig. 14).

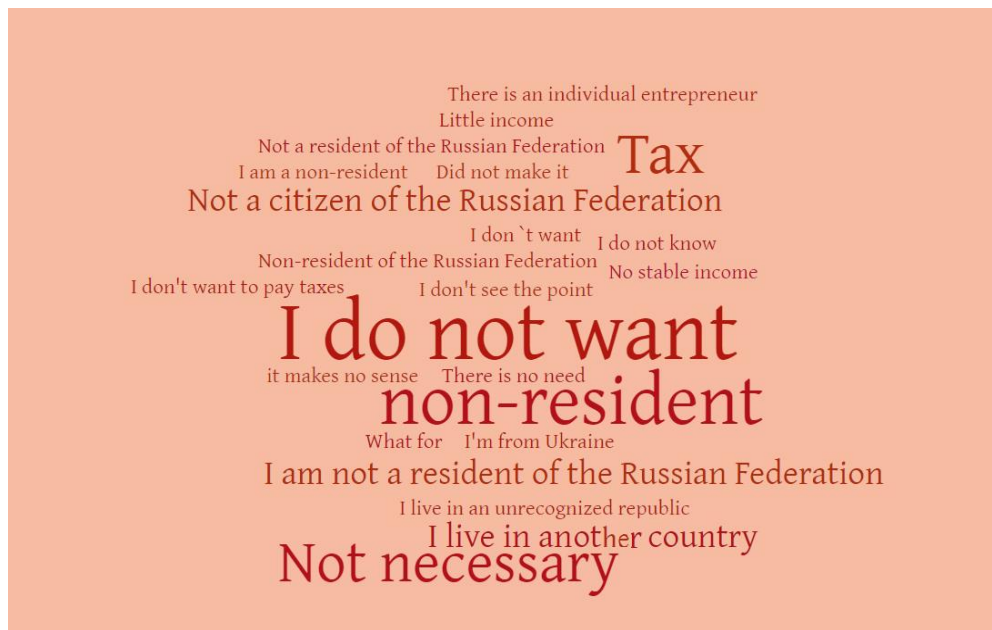


Figure 14. "For what reasons are you not registering as a self-employed citizen?"

In this question, the respondents were not given answer options but were asked to give an unstructured answer – independently determine the reason for not registering as a self-employed person. Note that in Russia, a self-employed person is a person with a preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income" registered in the Tax Inspectorate.

Based on the responses of the survey participants, the reasons for not registering as self-employed can be divided into two groups: the first group: "not a resident or citizen of the Russian Federation"; the second group: "do not want or do not need to register as self-employed". Among these two groups, a third reason can be found: not wanting to pay taxes, and a fourth: unstable or small income.

Correlation analysis of the freelancers' responses

The correlation analysis (Table 1) of freelancers' responses to the survey allows us to draw the following conclusion: freelancers who are positive about the impact of the pandemic on the number of orders, also tend to be positive about the other measurable indicators of their work, such as income and demand for services, and vice versa: freelancers who negatively assess the impact of the pandemic on the number of orders tend to negatively view the other indicators of their work as well.

Thus, the more positively a freelancer estimates their income level, the number of orders, and demand for their services, the more positively they estimate the overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their work as a freelancer, and vice versa.

Table 1
Correlation analysis

| | | Between March and December 2020, my freelance income ... | Between March and December 2020, the amount of time devoted to orders that I do freelance ... | From March to December 2020, the demand for my services that I perform as a freelancer ... | Do you know about the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income"? : |
|--|-------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| In your opinion, has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced your work as a freelancer in any way? | Correlation coefficient | .592** | .381** | .530** | .043 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .362 |
| | N | 422 | 420 | 419 | 449 |
| Has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced the attitude of people around you towards freelancers in any way? | Correlation coefficient | .172** | .094 | .121* | .075 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | .063 | .017 | .128 |
| | N | 393 | 392 | 390 | 414 |
| Has the number of people freelancing in your community changed in any way due to COVID-19? | Correlation coefficient | .071 | .107 | .111* | -.043 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .197 | .052 | .045 | .419 |
| | N | 333 | 332 | 330 | 351 |
| Between March and December 2020, my freelance income ... | Correlation coefficient | 1.000 | .555** | .667** | .002 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .000 | .973 |
| | N | 438 | 436 | 435 | 438 |
| Between March and December 2020, the amount of time | Correlation coefficient | .555** | 1.000 | .533** | -.034 |
| | Sig. | .000 | | .000 | .484 |

| | | Between March and December 2020, my freelance income ... | Between March and December 2020, the amount of time devoted to orders that I do freelance ... | From March to December 2020, the demand for my services that I perform as a freelancer ... | Do you know about the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income"? : |
|--|-------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| devoted to orders that I do freelance ... | (2-tailed) | | | | |
| | N | 436 | 436 | 434 | 436 |
| From March to December 2020, the demand for my services that I perform as a freelancer ... | Correlation coefficient | .667** | .533** | 1.000 | .010 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | | .838 |
| | N | 435 | 434 | 435 | 435 |
| Are you officially registered as self-employed? | Correlation coefficient | .038 | -.064 | .033 | .556** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .428 | .183 | .492 | .000 |
| | N | 438 | 436 | 435 | 469 |

Source: research data

Comparison of the subsamples of active and "former" freelancers

The subsamples of respondents who are currently freelancers and respondents who were freelancers in the past are divided based on the respondents' answers to the question "Are you currently a freelancer (self-employed professional offering your knowledge and competencies remotely (via the Internet)?" The first subsample is composed of the individuals who chose "Yes, I am a freelancer", which is the majority of the sample, N=441. The second subsample is made up of those who chose "I'm not currently a freelancer, but I used to be", N=28.

The results of the sample comparison are shown in Table 2 and Fig. 15-18.

Significant differences (the difference of the studied subgroups by the value of the trait is statistically significant if $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) between the groups are found in the following indicators:

1. Do you plan to continue working as a freelancer in the future? (Fig. 15). Given the average values for the subgroups on the scale and the direction of the scale, we conclude that "former" freelancers are significantly less likely to plan to continue freelancing than active freelancers. In particular, the average value for the subsample of "former" freelancers on this

scale is 1.9 points, while the average value for the subsample of active freelancers is 1.5 points (the closer to one, the more pronounced is the desire to remain a freelancer).

2.

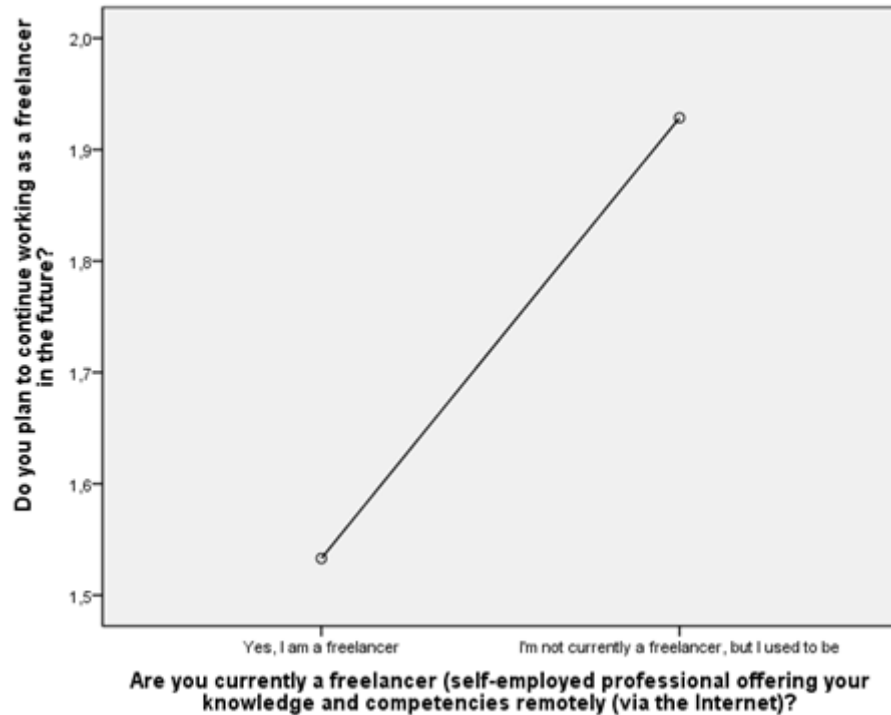


Figure 15. "Do you plan to continue working as a freelancer in the future?", mean values on a scale from 1 to 3, where 1 – Yes, I plan to work as a freelancer only, 2 – Yes, I plan to combine it with work in any organization, 3 – No, this is a temporary job, in the future, I will prefer official employment (The value "No answer " (code = 99 in the database) is excluded for all variables during the analysis of variance in order to bring the nominal scale to a nominal ordinal (or ranked) scale for subsequent calculation of the mean value on the scale).

Generally speaking, how do people around you feel about freelancers? (Fig. 16). Comparison of the average values for the subgroups on the scale, given the direction of the scale, leads us to the conclusion that "former" freelancers are more likely to be convinced that those around them have a negative attitude toward freelancers. The average value for the subsample of "former" freelancers on this scale is 2.9 points, whereas the average value for the subsample of active freelancers is 3.5 points (the closer to 5, the more positive the score).

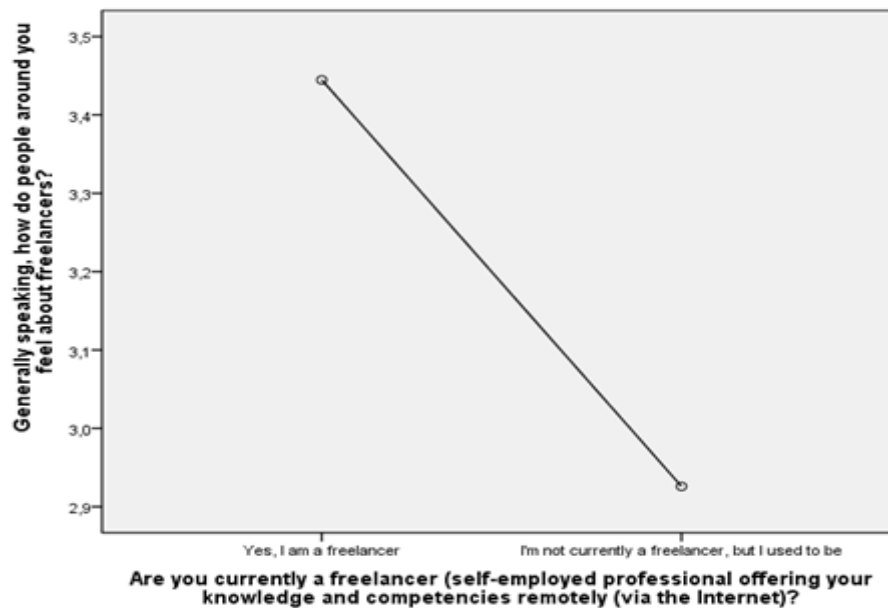


Figure 16. "Generally speaking, how do people around you feel about freelancers?," mean values on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 – Extremely negative, 5 – Absolutely positive

From March to December 2020, the demand for my services that I perform as a freelancer ... (Fig. 17). Comparing the average values for the subgroups on the scale, and taking into account the direction of the scale, we conclude that "former" freelancers were more likely to fail due to the demand for their services. Specifically, the average value for the subsample of "former" freelancers on this scale is 2.6 points, while the average value for the subsample of active freelancers is 3.2 points (the closer the value is to 5, the more positive the score is).

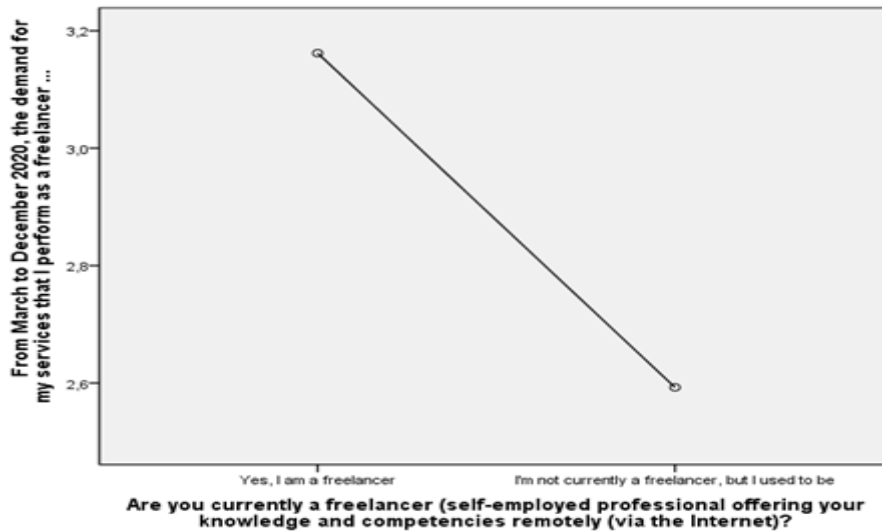


Figure 17. "From March to December 2020, the demand for my services that I perform as a freelancer ...", mean values on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 – decreased significantly, 2- decreased slightly, 3 – did not change, 4 – increased slightly, 5 – increased significantly
Do you know about the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income"? (Fig.

18). Comparing the mean values of the subgroups on the scale and considering the direction of the scale, we conclude that "former" freelancers are less likely to be informed about the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income". The mean value for the sample of "former" freelancers on the scale is 1.8 points, whereas, for current freelancers, it is 2.2 points (the closer the value is to 3, the higher the level of awareness).

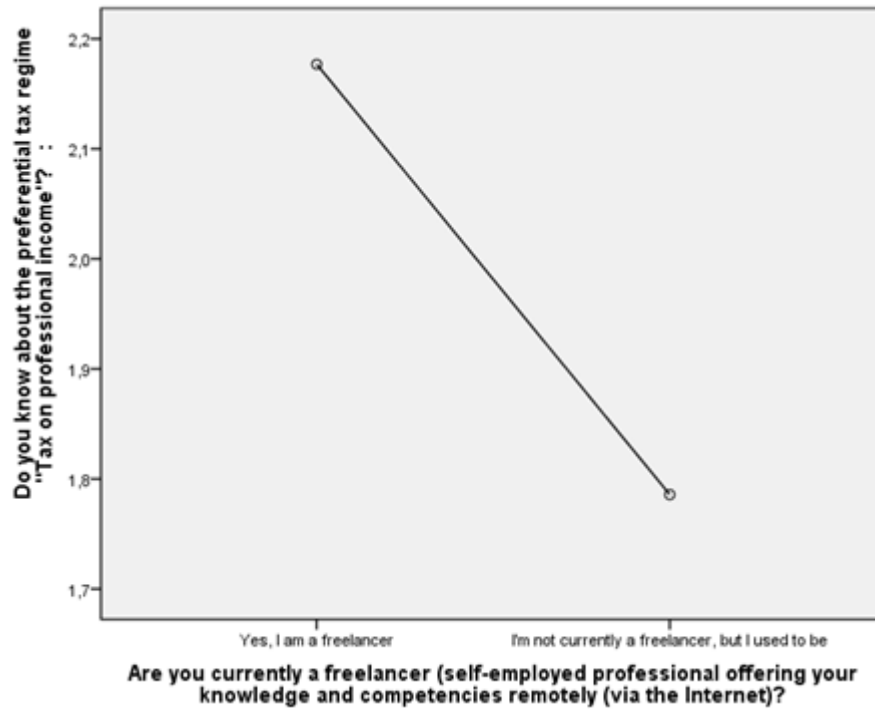


Figure 18. Do you know about the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income"? Mean values on a scale from 1 to 3, where 1 – No, I hear it for the first time, 2 – Yes, I heard something, 3 – Yes, I know it well.

The Appendix (Fig. A9-A14) presents graphs comparing the average values between current freelancers and former freelancers on the following parameters:

'In your opinion, has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced your work as a freelancer in any way?', 'Has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced the attitude of people around you towards freelancers in any way?', 'Has the number of people freelancing in your community changed in any way due to COVID-19?', 'Between March and December 2020, my freelance income ...', 'Between March and December 2020, the amount of time devoted to orders that I do freelance ...', 'Are you officially registered as self-employed?'

Table 2

One-factor ANOVA for subsamples of active and so-called "former" freelancers

| | | Sum of squares | DF | Mean square | F | Value |
|--|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------|
| Do you plan to continue working as a freelancer in the future? | Between groups | | 1 | 4.118 | 11.739 | .001 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|---------|-----|-------|-------|------|
| | Within groups | 163.128 | 465 | .351 | | |
| | Total | 167.246 | 466 | | | |
| In your opinion, has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced your work as a freelancer in any way? | Between groups | .536 | 1 | .536 | .432 | .511 |
| | Within groups | 554.573 | 447 | 1.241 | | |
| | Total | 555.109 | 448 | | | |
| Video calls | Between groups | .830 | 1 | .830 | 2.092 | .151 |
| | Within groups | 48.420 | 122 | .397 | | |
| | Total | 49.250 | 123 | | | |
| Generally speaking, how do people around you feel about freelancers? | Between groups | 6.815 | 1 | 6.815 | 8.451 | .004 |
| | Within groups | 348.358 | 432 | .806 | | |
| | Total | 355.173 | 433 | | | |
| Has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced the attitude of people around you towards freelancers in any way? | Between groups | .743 | 1 | .743 | 1.323 | .251 |
| | Within groups | 231.450 | 412 | .562 | | |
| | Total | 232.193 | 413 | | | |
| Has the number of people freelancing in your community changed in any way due to COVID-19? | Between groups | .642 | 1 | .642 | .899 | .344 |
| | Within groups | 249.358 | 349 | .714 | | |
| | Total | 250.000 | 350 | | | |
| Between March and December 2020, my freelance income ... | Between groups | 3.882 | 1 | 3.882 | 2.866 | .091 |
| | Within groups | 590.458 | 436 | 1.354 | | |
| | Total | 594.340 | 437 | | | |
| Between March and December 2020, the amount of time devoted to orders that I do freelance ... | Between groups | 4.615 | 1 | 4.615 | 4.211 | .041 |
| | Within groups | 475.632 | 434 | 1.096 | | |
| | Total | 480.248 | 435 | | | |
| From March to December 2020, the demand for my services that I perform as a freelancer ... | Between groups | 8.204 | 1 | 8.204 | 7.759 | .006 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|---------|-----|-------|-------|------|
| | Within groups | 457.842 | 433 | 1.057 | | |
| | Total | 466.046 | 434 | | | |
| Do you know about the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income"? | Between groups | 4.028 | 1 | 4.028 | 5.361 | .021 |
| | Within groups | 350.918 | 467 | .751 | | |
| | Total | 354.947 | 468 | | | |
| Are you officially registered as self-employed? | Between groups | .840 | 1 | .840 | 3.462 | .063 |
| | Within groups | 113.250 | 467 | .243 | | |
| | Total | 114.090 | 468 | | | |
| Your gender | Between groups | .090 | 1 | .090 | .458 | .499 |
| | Within groups | 91.595 | 467 | .196 | | |
| | Total | 91.684 | 468 | | | |
| How old are you? | Between groups | .283 | 1 | .283 | .184 | .669 |
| | Within groups | 720.923 | 467 | 1.544 | | |
| | Total | 721.207 | 468 | | | |
| What is your marital status? | Between groups | 2.559 | 1 | 2.559 | 1.454 | .229 |
| | Within groups | 822.093 | 467 | 1.760 | | |
| | Total | 824.652 | 468 | | | |
| How many children under the age of 16 live with you? | Between groups | .083 | 1 | .083 | .109 | .742 |
| | Within groups | 355.495 | 467 | .761 | | |
| | Total | 355.578 | 468 | | | |
| Your education level: | Between groups | 3.412 | 1 | 3.412 | 3.020 | .083 |
| | Within groups | 527.595 | 467 | 1.130 | | |
| | Total | 531.006 | 468 | | | |
| Indicate the average monthly income per person in your family: | Between groups | 1.334 | 1 | 1.334 | 1.512 | .220 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|---------|-----|------|-------|------|
| | Within groups | 356.321 | 404 | .882 | | |
| | Total | 357.655 | 405 | | | |
| How do you assess the current financial situation of your family? | Between groups | .465 | 1 | .465 | .646 | .422 |
| | Within groups | 334.490 | 465 | .719 | | |
| | Total | 334.955 | 466 | | | |
| The type of settlement in which you live: | Between groups | .304 | 1 | .304 | 2.579 | .109 |
| | Within groups | 54.944 | 466 | .118 | | |
| | Total | 55.248 | 467 | | | |

Source: research data

3. CONCLUSION

Textual analysis of unstructured answers of participants in the study to the question about the reasons for not wanting to register as self-employed with the Tax Inspectorate reveals similar opinions of the respondents. Similar opinions appear in similar semantics, despite the difference in the use of words in the answers. Lack of desire to register as self-employed due to unwillingness to pay taxes appears to be similar to greed.

The majority of respondents tied their professional activity to freelancing because of the desire to be left unaffected by the rationing of working hours. Freelancing is also an attractive form of work in terms of the possibility of remote work and minimal dependence on the geographical location of the freelancer/organization. In addition, freelancers tend to choose their customers. Such a statement suggests that the freelancing market is not yet rich in workers. Along with the positive aspects of freelancing, there are also negative ones, such as unstable income, which is noted not only as a downside, but also as a reason for not wanting to register with the Tax Inspectorate. At the time of the survey, freelancers had not noticed any impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on freelancing practice. This indicates either that freelancers are in constant flux and are insensitive to some fluctuations in the market, or that the time of crisis has not yet come, old contractual relationships have not yet ceased to work, and new work appears due to the inertia of the market on the basis of past agreements.

The third possible cause of the lack of sensitivity is found in the fact that the surveyed freelancers are knowledge workers, meaning that they are immune to the shutdown of cafes, restaurants, hotels, etc. On the whole, we can conclude that freelancers who positively assess the impact of the pandemic on the number of orders also positively assess the other measurable indicators of their work, such as income and demand for services, and vice versa: freelancers who negatively assess the effect of the pandemic on the number of orders tend to negatively assess the other indicators of their work as well. This finding would seem possible and obvious, but nevertheless, it enriches a number of works on the sustainability of freelancing knowledge workers in times of crisis.

Limitations

One limitation of the study is that the survey involves mostly respondents who receive work orders via the Internet. The next limitation affects the scope of freelancers. The majority of freelancers are knowledge workers and relate to online marketing. The next limitation is the date range of the survey. These dates mean that real changes in business performance will come belatedly.

Acknowledgments

The study was supported by a grant from the Russian Science Foundation (project No. 20-78-00100).

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APPENDIX

Table A1. Descriptive statistics

| | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Are you currently a freelancer (self-employed professional offering your knowledge and competencies remotely (via the Internet)? | | |
| Yes, I am a freelancer | 441 | 94.0% |
| I'm not currently a freelancer, but I used to be | 28 | 6.0% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| What area does your work as a freelancer belong to? | | |
| Education, science, student assistance | 65 | 13.9% |
| Insurance, finance, accounting | 10 | 2.1% |
| Advertising, marketing, web-scraping and data processing | 65 | 13.9% |
| Jurisprudence | 14 | 3.0% |
| Real estate field | 7 | 1.5% |
| Outsourcing and Consulting | 5 | 1.1% |
| Architecture, design | 12 | 2.6% |
| Copywriting, rewriting, poetry, articles | 370 | 78.9% |
| Language translation | 46 | 9.8% |
| Computer programming | 16 | 3.4% |
| Advertising, design | 36 | 7.7% |
| Beauty field | 20 | 4.3% |
| Fitness, sports | 11 | 2.3% |
| SEO, contextual advertising (pay per click) | 50 | 10.7% |
| Engineering (drawings, estimates) | 4 | .9% |
| Management | 11 | 2.3% |
| Network administration | 4 | .9% |
| Event-management | 5 | 1.1% |
| Photography | 19 | 4.1% |
| Audio, Video | 16 | 3.4% |
| What is your occupation besides freelancing? | | |
| Freelance only (I have no other type of employment) | 211 | 45.0% |
| "Blue-collar" worker | 61 | 13.0% |
| I work as a specialist | 76 | 16.2% |
| I work as a manager | 12 | 2.6% |
| Study at school | 14 | 3.0% |
| Entrepreneur, business owner | 12 | 2.6% |
| Service worker (nanny, locksmith, etc.) | 7 | 1.5% |
| I study | 43 | 9.2% |
| Retired | 20 | 4.3% |
| Housewife/Householder | 62 | 13.2% |
| Why did you become a freelancer? | | |
| I work for additional income | 217 | 46.3% |
| There was no job in my specialty | 66 | 14.1% |
| I began to combine it with studying | 76 | 16.2% |
| I began to combine it with parental leave | 59 | 12.6% |

| | | |
|--|-----|--------|
| The hobby turned into work | 118 | 25.2% |
| I didn't want to work in the organization | 104 | 22.2% |
| I have lost my job (fired / quit) | 66 | 14.1% |
| Retired | 11 | 2.3% |
| Other | 36 | 7.7% |
| Do you plan to continue working as a freelancer in the future? | | |
| Yes, I plan to work as a freelancer only | 233 | 49.7% |
| Yes, I plan to combine it with work in any organization | 208 | 44.3% |
| No, this is a temporary job, in the future, I will prefer official employment | 26 | 5.5% |
| No answer | 2 | .4% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| In your opinion, has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced your work as a freelancer in any way? | | |
| It influenced for the worse | 67 | 14.3% |
| Rather, it influenced for the worse | 50 | 10.7% |
| Hasn't influenced in any way | 205 | 43.7% |
| Rather, it influenced for the better | 90 | 19.2% |
| It influenced for the better | 37 | 7.9% |
| I am at a loss to answer | 20 | 4.3% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| Video calls | | |
| Less often | 13 | 2.8% |
| As before | 67 | 14.3% |
| More often | 44 | 9.4% |
| I do not use it in work at all | 283 | 60.3% |
| Total | 407 | 100.0% |
| Audio Calls | | |
| Less often | 23 | 4.9% |
| As before | 121 | 25.8% |
| More often | 52 | 11.1% |
| I do not use it in work at all | 226 | 48.2% |
| Total | 422 | 100.0% |
| Text messages via email | | |
| Less often | 46 | 9.8% |
| As before | 234 | 49.9% |
| More often | 89 | 19.0% |
| I do not use it in work at all | 71 | 15.1% |
| Total | 440 | 100.0% |
| Text messages on social networks and messengers | | |
| Less often | 22 | 4.7% |
| As before | 231 | 49.3% |
| More often | 143 | 30.5% |
| I do not use it in work at all | 54 | 11.5% |
| Total | 450 | 100.0% |
| Audio messages on social networks and messengers | | |
| Less often | 24 | 5.1% |
| As before | 123 | 26.2% |

| | | |
|---|-----|--------|
| More often | 60 | 12.8% |
| I do not use it in work at all | 212 | 45.2% |
| Total | 419 | 100.0% |
| Personal meetings | | |
| Less often | 75 | 16.0% |
| As before | 45 | 9.6% |
| More often | 4 | .9% |
| I do not use it in work at all | 298 | 63.5% |
| Total | 422 | 100.0% |
| Generally speaking, how do people around you feel about freelancers? | | |
| Extremely negative | 6 | 1.3% |
| Rather negative | 44 | 9.4% |
| Neutral | 212 | 45.2% |
| Rather positive | 109 | 23.2% |
| Absolutely positive | 63 | 13.4% |
| I am at a loss to answer | 35 | 7.5% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| Has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced the attitude of people around you towards freelancers in any way? | | |
| It influenced for the worse | 5 | 1.1% |
| Rather, it influenced for the worse | 18 | 3.8% |
| Hasn't influenced in any way | 246 | 52.5% |
| Rather, it influenced for the better | 110 | 23.5% |
| It influenced for the better | 35 | 7.5% |
| I am at a loss to answer | 55 | 11.7% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| Has the number of people freelancing in your community changed in any way due to COVID-19? | | |
| Freelancers have become significantly less | 9 | 1.9% |
| Freelancers have become somewhat less | 4 | .9% |
| COVID-2019 did not affect the number of freelancers in any way | 59 | 12.6% |
| Freelancers increased slightly | 185 | 39.4% |
| There are significantly more freelancers | 94 | 20.0% |
| I am at a loss to answer | 118 | 25.2% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| Between March and December 2020, my freelance income ... | | |
| Decreased significantly | 62 | 13.2% |
| Decreased slightly | 61 | 13.0% |
| Did not change | 155 | 33.0% |
| Increased slightly | 118 | 25.2% |
| Increased significantly | 42 | 9.0% |
| No answer | 31 | 6.6% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| Between March and December 2020, the amount of time devoted to orders that I do freelance ... | | |
| Decreased significantly | 33 | 7.0% |
| Decreased slightly | 47 | 10.0% |

| | | |
|---|-----|--------|
| Did not change | 186 | 39.7% |
| Increased slightly | 117 | 24.9% |
| Increased significantly | 53 | 11.3% |
| No answer | 33 | 7.0% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| From March to December 2020, the demand for my services that I perform as a freelancer ... | | |
| Decreased significantly | 36 | 7.7% |
| Decreased slightly | 64 | 13.6% |
| Did not change | 181 | 38.6% |
| Increased slightly | 117 | 24.9% |
| Increased significantly | 37 | 7.9% |
| No answer | 34 | 7.2% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| What advantages do you see for yourself in working as a freelancer? | | |
| No advantages | 8 | 1.7% |
| No need to visit the office | 326 | 69.5% |
| Free schedule | 391 | 83.4% |
| Lack of attachment to geographic location | 297 | 63.3% |
| Freedom of choice of orders and customers | 319 | 68.0% |
| High income | 93 | 19.8% |
| Lack of dress code | 178 | 38.0% |
| The ability to combine with 1 activities | 317 | 67.6% |
| No ceiling on income | 181 | 38.6% |
| Lack of bosses | 217 | 46.3% |
| What disadvantages do you see for yourself in working as a freelancer? | | |
| No downsides | 30 | 6.4% |
| Difficulty creating a work environment | 119 | 25.4% |
| Self-organization difficulties | 178 | 38.0% |
| Lots of distractions | 168 | 35.8% |
| Income volatility | 316 | 67.4% |
| Misunderstanding from friends and family | 48 | 10.2% |
| Permanent stay at home | 115 | 24.5% |
| Lack of social guarantees | 181 | 38.6% |
| Complete depending on the customer, the risks of not getting paid | 169 | 36.0% |
| Lack of free time | 87 | 18.6% |
| Do you know about the preferential tax regime "Tax on professional income"? | | |
| No, I hear it for the first time | 147 | 31.3% |
| Yes, I heard something | 103 | 22.0% |
| Yes, I know it well | 219 | 46.7% |
| No answer | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| Are you officially registered as self-employed? | | |
| No | 273 | 58.2% |
| Yes | 196 | 41.8% |
| No answer | 0 | 0.0% |

| | | |
|-------|-----|--------|
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
|-------|-----|--------|

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

A set of socio-demographic variables is included to control for the identified patterns during the study.

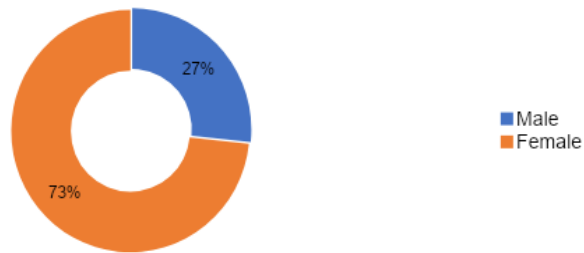


Figure A1. "Your gender"

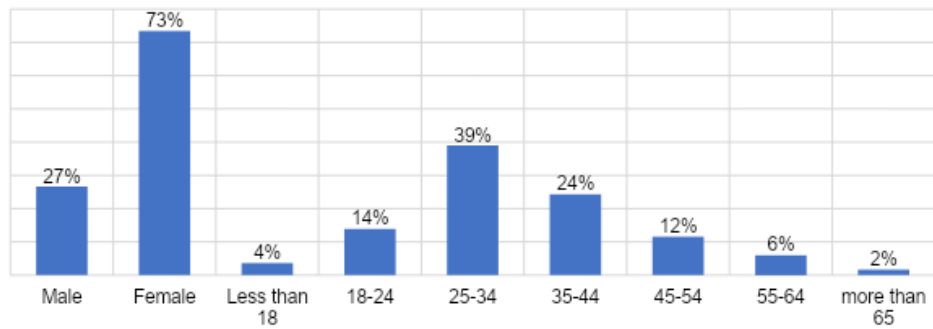


Figure A2. "How old are you?"

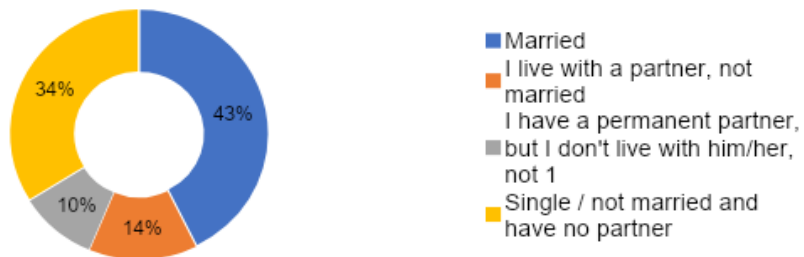


Figure A3. "What is your marital status?"

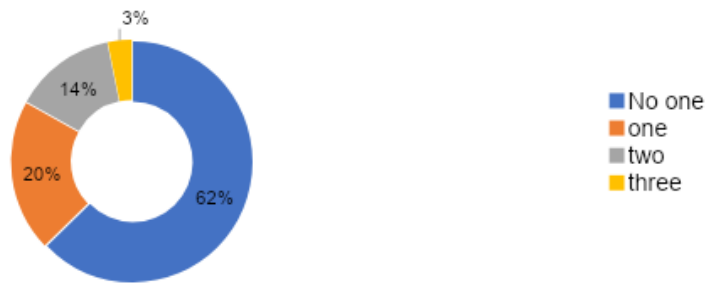


Figure A4. "How many children under the age of 16 live with you?"

The age of 16 is chosen as the threshold, since Russian law categorizes persons under the age of 16, inclusive, as "children".

Research demonstrates (Litsardopoulos et al., 2021) that women who spend more time on self-employment have a statistically significant positive impact on their life satisfaction. In men, however, the difference between self-employed and employees of hiring is insignificant.

It should be noted that self-employed individuals with a large number of family members in the house can continue to work, while the rest of the family are able to share the responsibilities of taking care of children. Considering two-spouse families where both spouses are self-employed, their flexible schedules are more easily adapted to this duty (Mindes & Lewin, 2021).

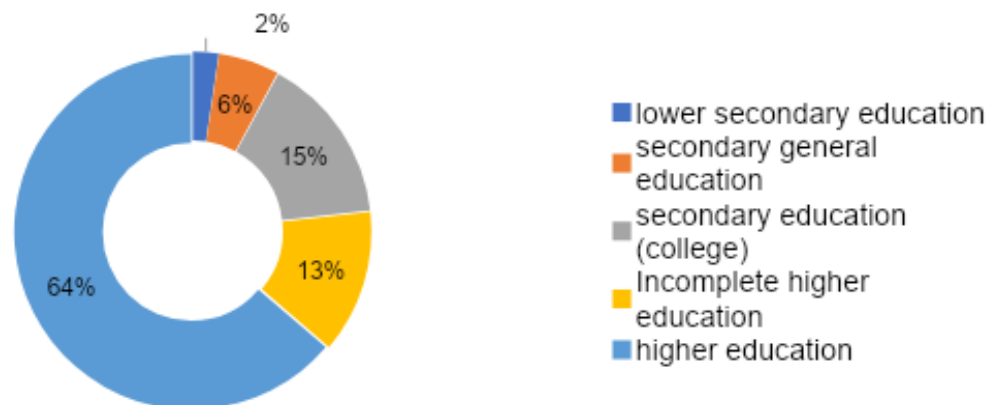


Figure A5. "Your education level"

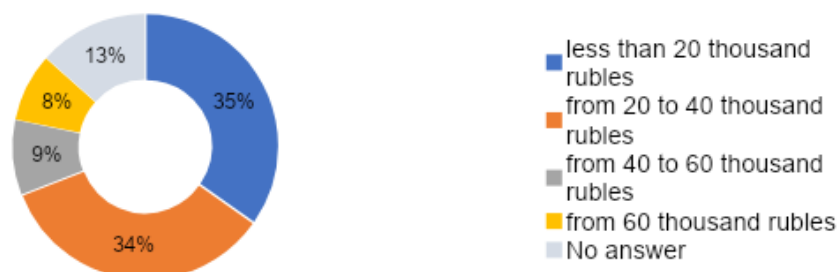


Figure A6. "Indicate the average monthly income per person in your family"

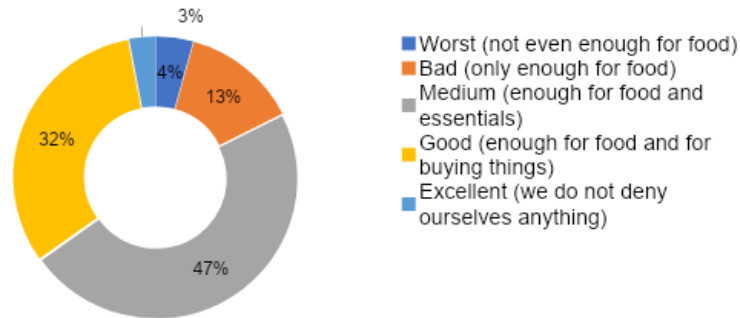


Figure A7. "How do you assess the current financial situation of your family?"



Figure A8. "The type of settlement in which you live"

Table A2. Profile of respondent

| | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Your gender | | |
| Male | 125 | 26.7% |
| Female | 344 | 73.3% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| How old are you? | | |
| Less than 18 | 17 | 3.6% |
| 18-24 | 65 | 13.9% |
| 25-34 | 183 | 39.0% |
| 35-44 | 114 | 24.3% |
| 45-54 | 54 | 11.5% |
| 55-64 | 28 | 6.0% |
| More than 65 | 8 | 1.7% |
| No answer | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| What is your marital status? | | |
| Married | 200 | 42.6% |
| I live with a partner, not married | 64 | 13.6% |
| I have a permanent partner, but I don't live with him/her, not 1 | 46 | 9.8% |
| Single / not married and have no partner | 159 | 33.9% |
| No answer | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| How many children under the age of 16 live with you? | | |
| No one | 293 | 62.5% |
| One | 95 | 20.3% |
| Two | 64 | 13.6% |

| | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Three | 15 | 3.2% |
| More than three | 2 | .4% |
| No answer | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| Your education level: | | |
| Lower secondary education | 11 | 2.3% |
| Secondary general education | 26 | 5.5% |
| Secondary education (college) | 72 | 15.4% |
| Incomplete higher education | 61 | 13.0% |
| Higher education | 299 | 63.8% |
| No answer | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| Indicate the average monthly income per person in your family: | | |
| Less than 20 thousand rubles | 163 | 34.8% |
| From 20 to 40 thousand rubles | 161 | 34.3% |
| From 40 to 60 thousand rubles | 43 | 9.2% |
| From 60 thousand rubles | 39 | 8.3% |
| No answer | 63 | 13.4% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| How do you assess the current financial situation of your family? | | |
| Worst (not even enough for food) | 20 | 4.3% |
| Bad (only enough for food) | 62 | 13.2% |
| Medium (enough for food and essentials) | 222 | 47.3% |
| Good (enough for food and for buying things) | 149 | 31.8% |
| Excellent (we do not deny ourselves anything) | 14 | 3.0% |
| No answer | 2 | .4% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |
| The type of settlement in which you live: | | |
| Urban settlement | 404 | 86.1% |
| Rural settlement | 64 | 13.6% |
| No answer | 1 | .2% |
| Total | 469 | 100.0% |

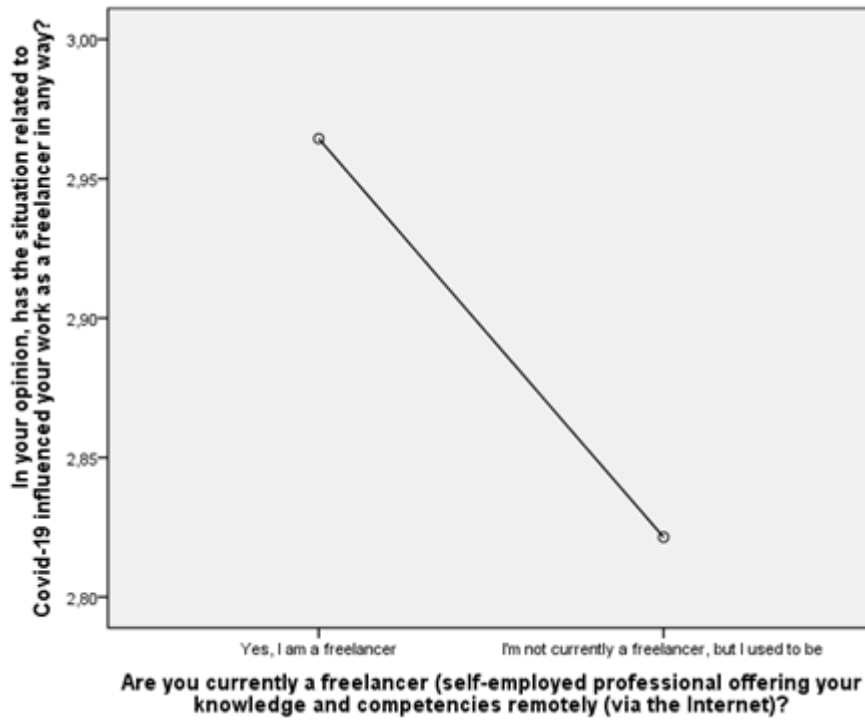


Figure A9. "In your opinion, has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced your work as a freelancer in any way?" Mean values on a scale from 1 to 5.

1 – It influenced for the worse, 2 – Rather, it influenced for the worse, 3 – Hasn't influenced in any way, 4 – Rather, it influenced for the better, 5 – It influenced for the better

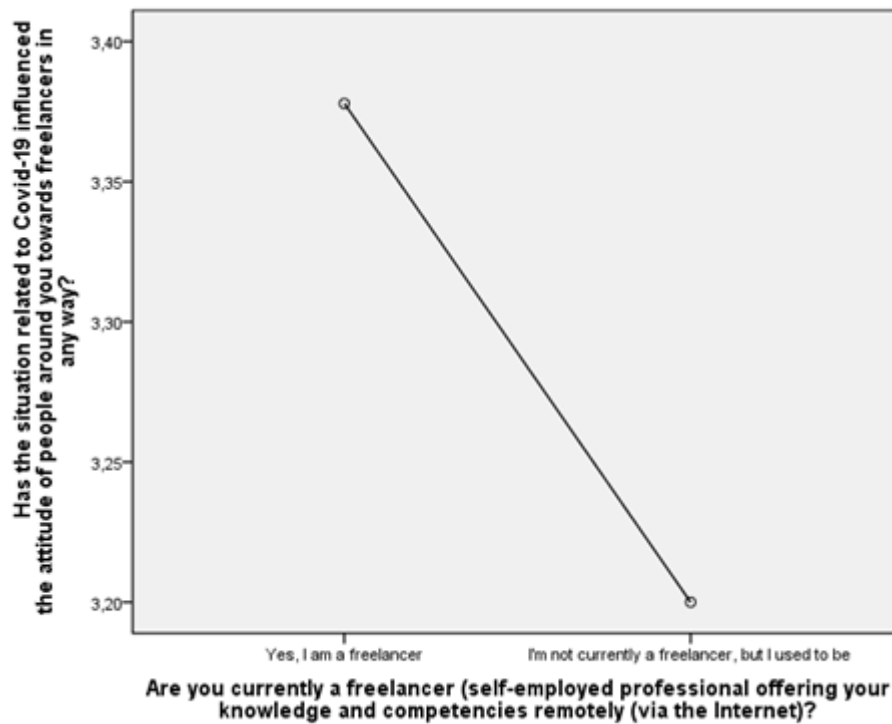


Figure A10. "Has the situation related to COVID-19 influenced the attitude of people around you towards freelancers in any way?"

Mean values on a scale from 1 to 5.

1 – It influenced for the worse, 2 – Rather, it influenced for the worse, 3 – Hasn't influenced in any way, 4 – Rather, it influenced for the better, 5 – It influenced for the better

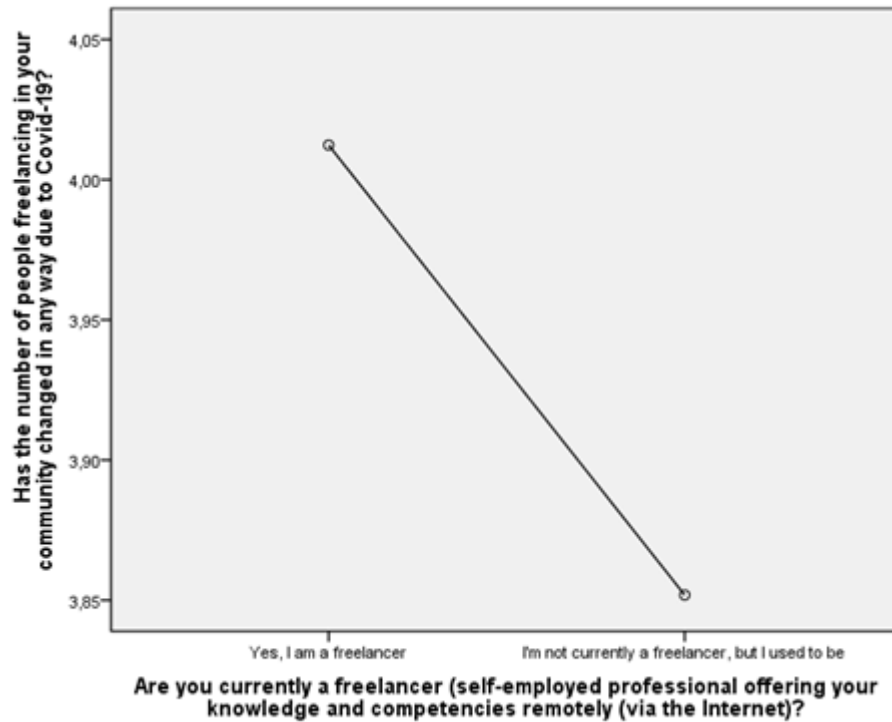


Figure A11. "Has the number of people freelancing in your community changed in any way due to COVID-19?"

Mean values on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 – Freelancers have become significantly less, 2 – Freelancers have become somewhat less, 3 – COVID-19 did not affect the number of freelancers in any way, 4 – Freelancers increased slightly, 5 – There are significantly more freelancers

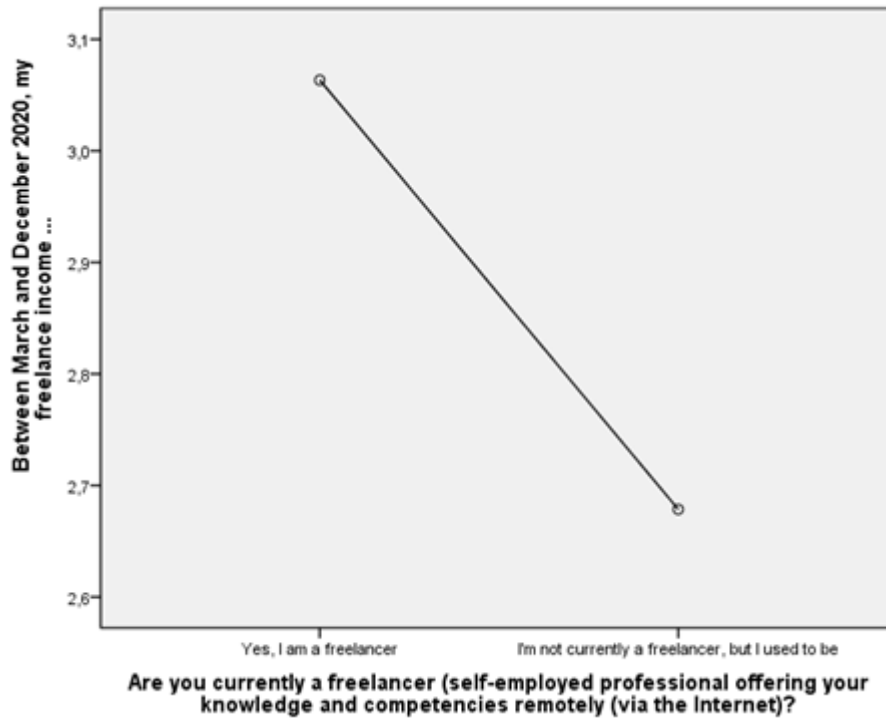


Figure A12. "Between March and December 2020, my freelance income ..."
Mean values on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 – decreased significantly, 2 – decreased slightly, 3 – did not change, 4 – increased slightly, 5 – increased significantly

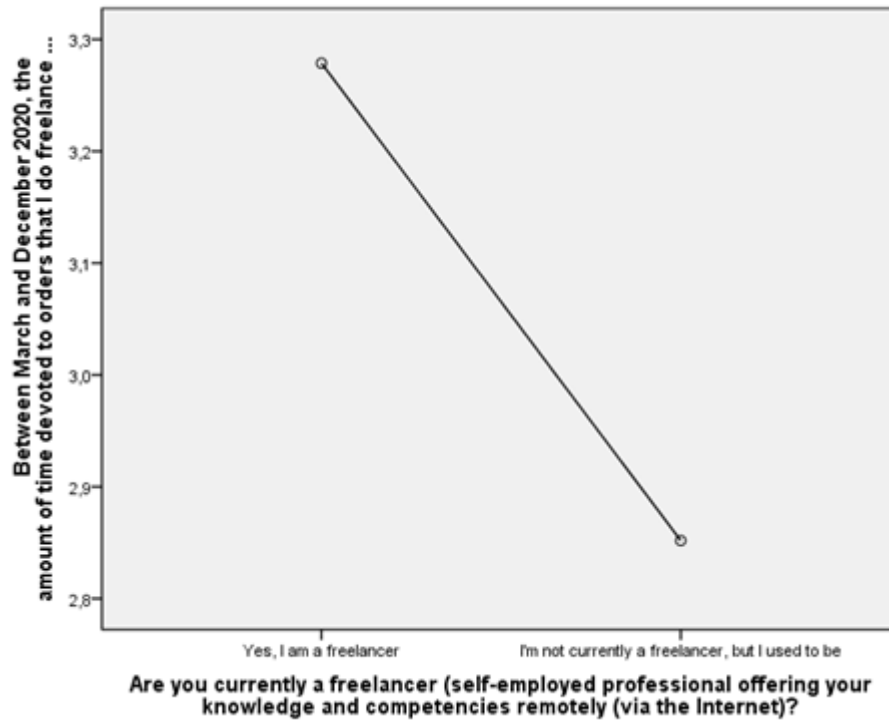


Figure A13. "Between March and December 2020, the amount of time devoted to orders that I do freelance ..."

Mean values on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 – decreased significantly, 2 – decreased slightly, 3 – did not change, 4 – increased slightly, 5 – increased significantly

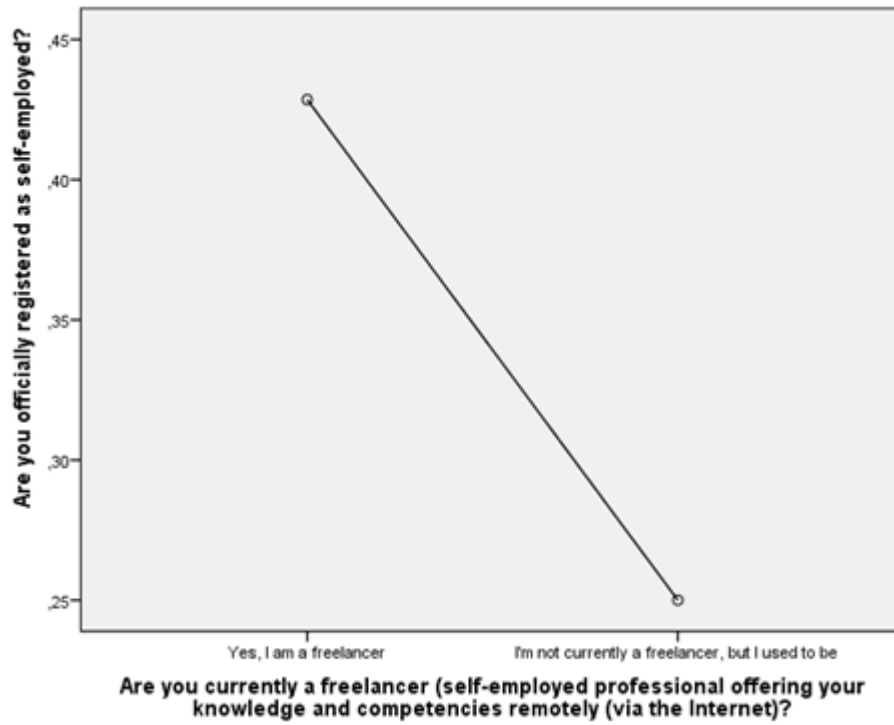


Figure A14. "Are you officially registered as self-employed?" Mean values on a scale from 1 to 3, where 1 – No, I hear it for the first time, 3 – Yes, I know it well