2021 Netherlands Report

State of the Software Developer Nation

OFFER ZEN | Supported by techleap.nl

Attracting top talent in the Dutch Ecosystem

Techleap.nl empowers Dutch leaders in tech. We aim to help start- and scaleups by providing them with the tools and knowledge to recruit, retain, and develop the best talent. Thanks to our friends at OfferZen, this report provides valuable insights into the career wishes and development of Dutch software developers. We hope it may serve both those responsible for hiring the developers, as well as the developers themselves in their potential search for a new startup job.

Important insights for the Dutch startup ecosystem include:

- **Developers are highly ambitious**
  Junior developers are keen to learn new skills every couple of months, and more than half of developers code as a hobby.

- **However, they're worried about their career growth**
  1 in 3 developers aren't confident in their career growth at their company.

- **In fact, 1 in 4 developers want to move jobs this year**
  Startups and scaleups need to focus on employee growth and the candidate hiring experience if they want to compete for the best talent.

We are strengthened by the idea that creative and impactful work offered by startups is highly attractive for software developers. Startups are known for offering flexibility, independence, and responsibility in their roles. Based on the insights in this report, we encourage startups to pay attention to their employee growth opportunities and hiring experiences. For an overview of Dutch startup jobs, please check out startupjobs.techleap.nl.

Any questions? Get in touch!

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Introduction

In the tech industry, we often say that 'software is eating the world' and if anything, this past year has demonstrated exactly this. The acceleration of existing trends like remote work, eCommerce and digitisation have catapulted tech into the spotlight in almost every industry.

But to say that 'software is eating the world' overlooks a very integral part of the tech ecosystem: The people behind the curtain who spend their days building the future.

At OfferZen, we know that people are the foundation of thriving tech teams. That's why we've spent the last six years investing in the tech community.

Whether that's helping developers find impactful jobs on our platform, connect at local maker events, mentor a junior developer, or write about their projects on our blog – we want to help build an inclusive, transparent, and thriving tech ecosystem.

That's also why we put together resources like this report and its open dataset: With the help of survey responses from over 500 developers in the Netherlands, we hope to increase transparency in the industry so that developers can make informed career decisions and companies can build more impactful tech teams.

I hope you find the report as insightful as I did!
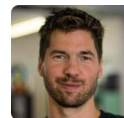
Malan Joubert
CEO and Co-founder of OfferZen

Skills and Tech Trends

Python is the language of choice in 2021 and developers are most excited about the AI and Cloud engineering industry.

Skills and Tech Trends

The next big thing in tech? AI and cloud computing

2021's Most exciting industry for developers? AI and cloud computing

Top 8 most exciting industries according to developers

60.1% AI & Cloud Technology

29.7% Cybersecurity

24.4% FinTech

22.8% Robotics

21.6% Sustainability

19.6% Consumer Health

18.2% Gaming

17.2% eCommerce/D2C

We asked developers which industry they thought was up and coming in 2021. The AI and cloud technology industry came out on top, followed by cybersecurity and FinTech.

This focus in the top three is unsurprising given that so many aspects of life and work went remote in 2020, which makes these industries more attractive than ever. Developers are also keen to use their skills to address global challenges: 1 in 5 are looking to work on problems related to environmental sustainability.

In 2021, developers want to work with Python

Top 8 languages developers want to work with in 2021

33.3%	Python
24.4%	TypeScript
23%	Go
20.4%	JavaScript
17.4%	Rust
17.2%	C#
13.6%	Java
12.6%	Kotlin
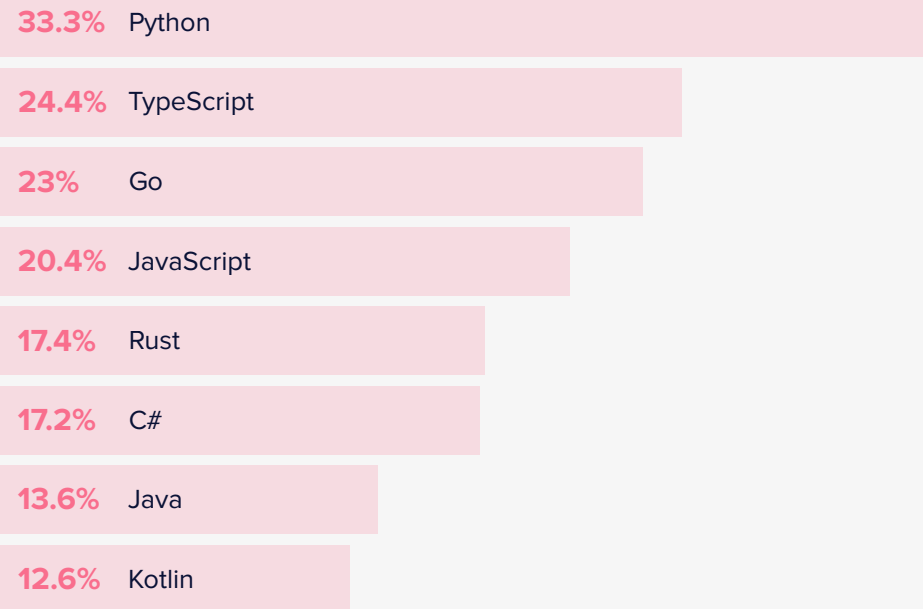
Given its prominence within AI and cloud computing, this might come as little surprise: The majority of developers chose Python as the language they want to work with next.

Interestingly, all the languages that round out the top 5 have applications in AI or cloud computing: TypeScript comes in second, followed by Go, JavaScript, and Rust.

Skills and Tech Trends

Most used languages & frameworks: JavaScript reigns supreme

JavaScript is currently the most used programming language

Top 8 languages developers currently work with most

58.9% JavaScript

37.9% SQL

30.9% TypeScript

29.3% Python

24.6% C#

24.6% Java

19.6% PHP

17.6% Bash
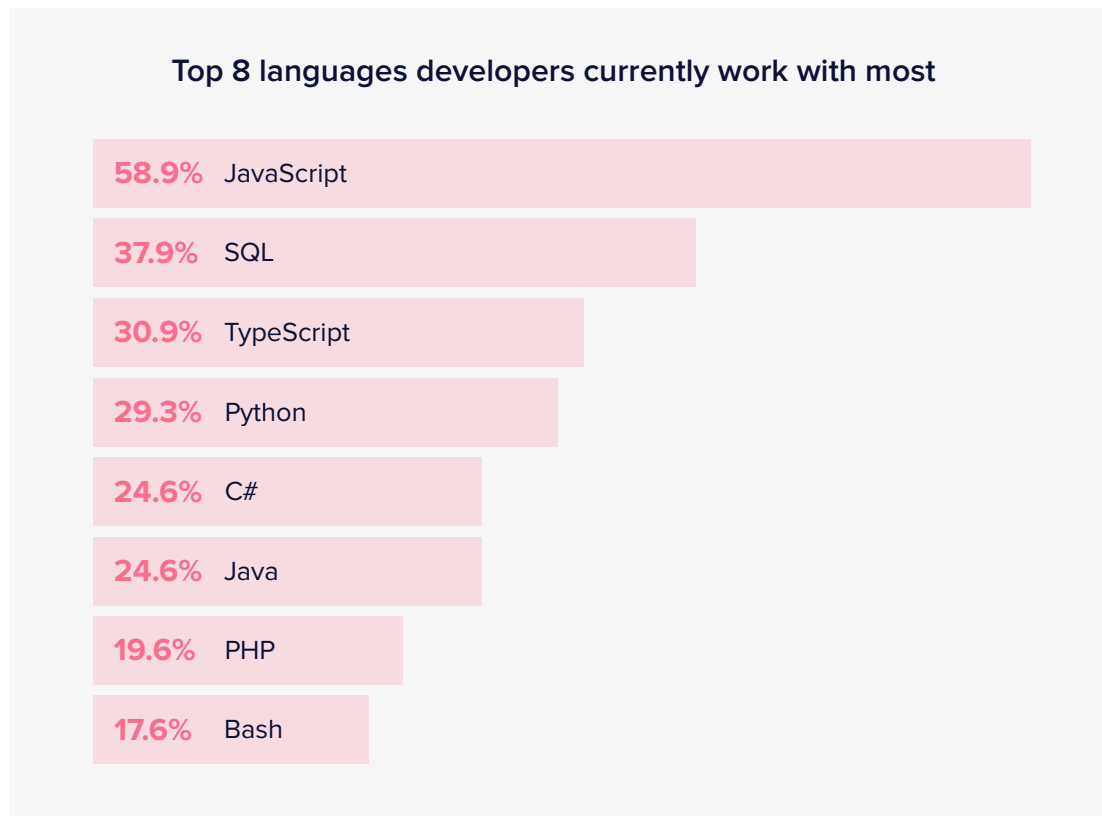
The majority of developers are currently working with JavaScript.

Interestingly, SQL comes in second place. This suggests that database work is an important aspect of many developer roles.

Most developers work with Node.js – and most want to work with React next

Developers' top 5 most used vs most desired frameworks

● Most used   ● Most desired

Node.js
27.9%
17.6%

React
25.3%
26.7%

.NET Core
21.6%
17.2%

Angular
20.6%
13.4%

ASP.NET
18.2%
7.2%
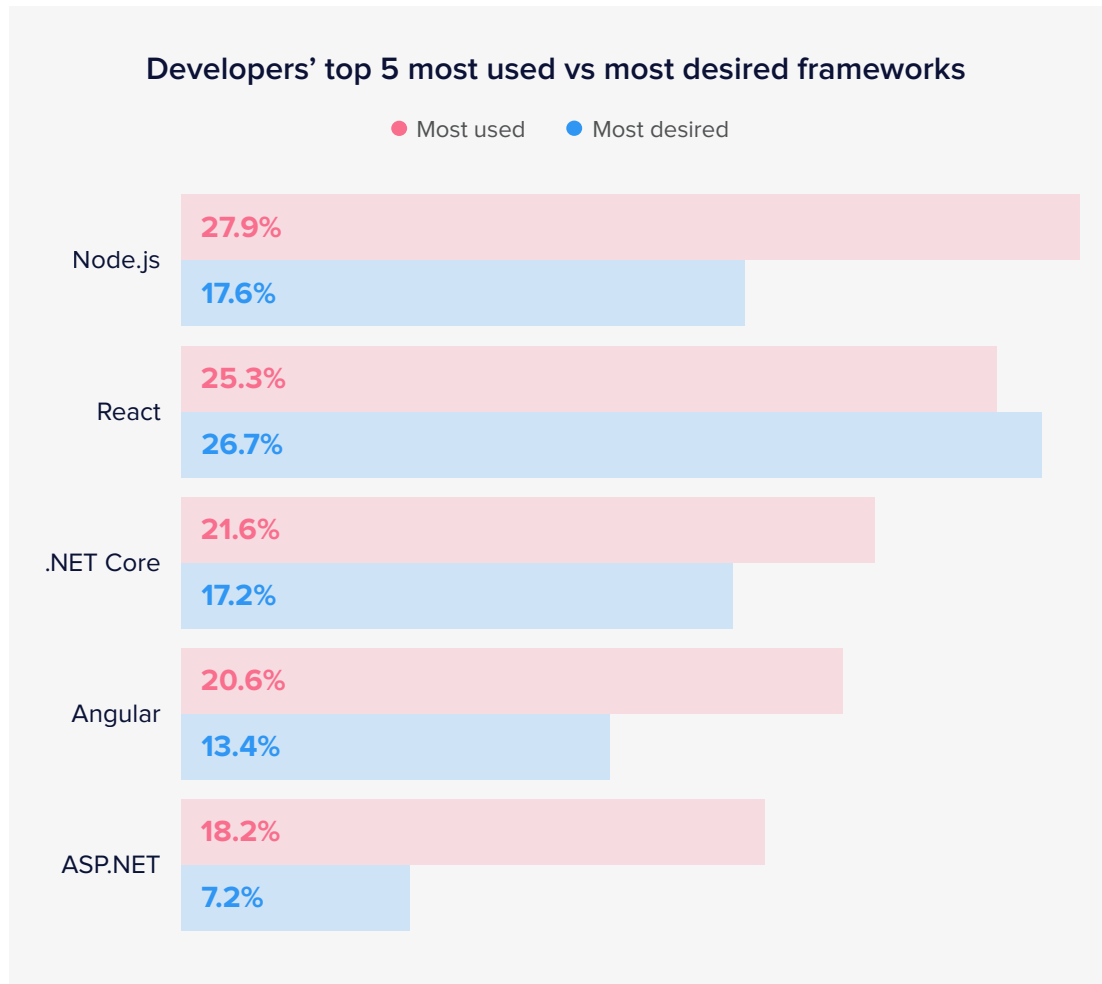
Node.js and React are the top two most used frameworks – which is unsurprising, given that they are frameworks of the most used programming language, JavaScript.

Here's the plot-twist: Although Node.js is currently the most used framework among developers, most indicated that they are keen to work with React next!

Skills and Tech Trends

Not all frameworks and languages are created equal

PHP is currently the most disliked language among developers

Top 5 languages developers dislike working in

● Disliked by everyone   ● Disliked by devs who use it

Language	Disliked by everyone	Disliked by devs who use it
PHP	27.3%	16.3%
JavaScript	20.4%	13.9%
Java	19.8%	8.9%
C++	10.6%	2.3%
C#	10.2%	2.4%
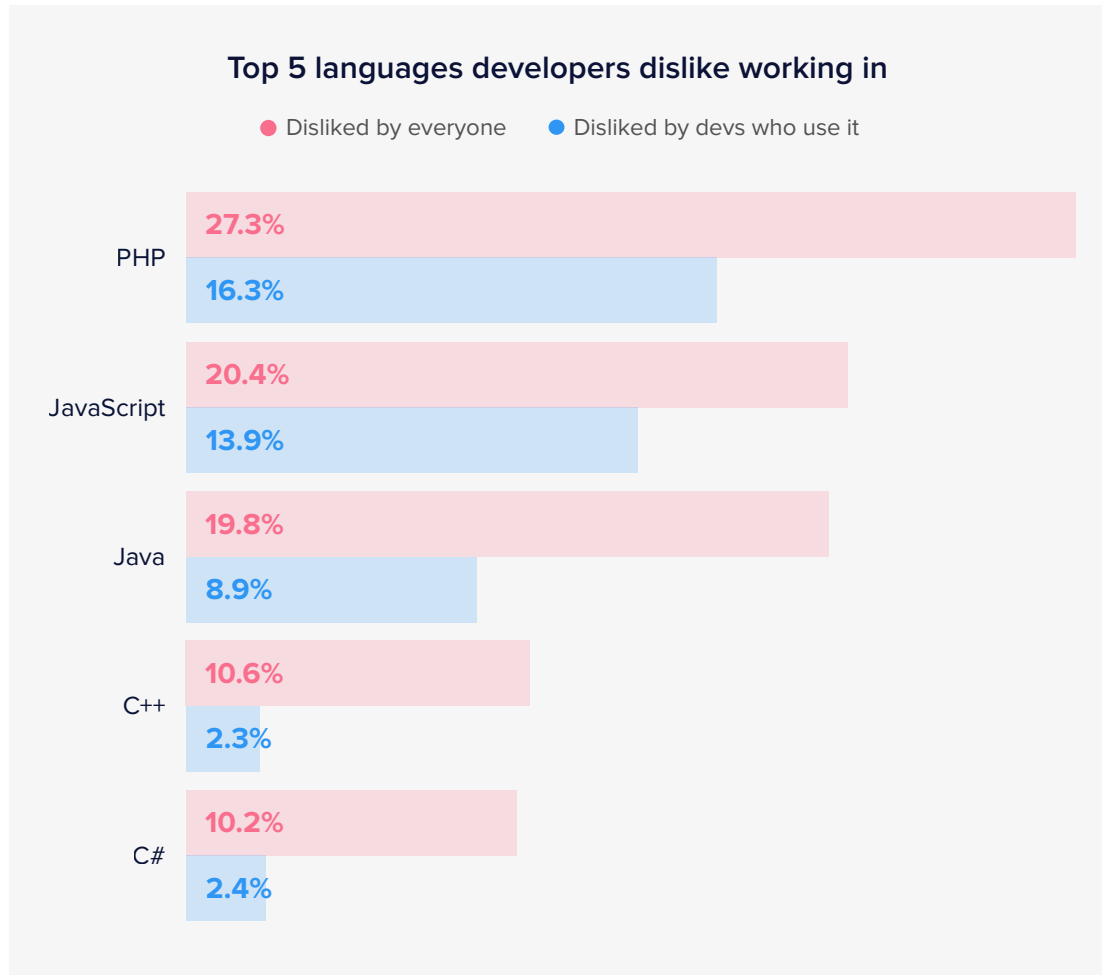
Not all languages are created equal, and website development language PHP is the most unequal of them all: It's the most disliked language among developers.

Fun fact: 16% of PHP developers indicated a dislike for their own language, followed by 14% of JavaScript developers.

Actually like PHP? ❤️

Take the survey to let us know which languages you like or dislike!

AngularJS is the most disliked framework

Top 10 frameworks developers dislike working with

20.6%	AngularJS
13.2%	Angular
12.2%	ASP.NET
9.2%	.NET Core
8.2%	Spring Framework
6.6%	Laravel
6.6%	React
5.8%	Node.js
4.6%	JSF
4.6%	Ruby on Rails
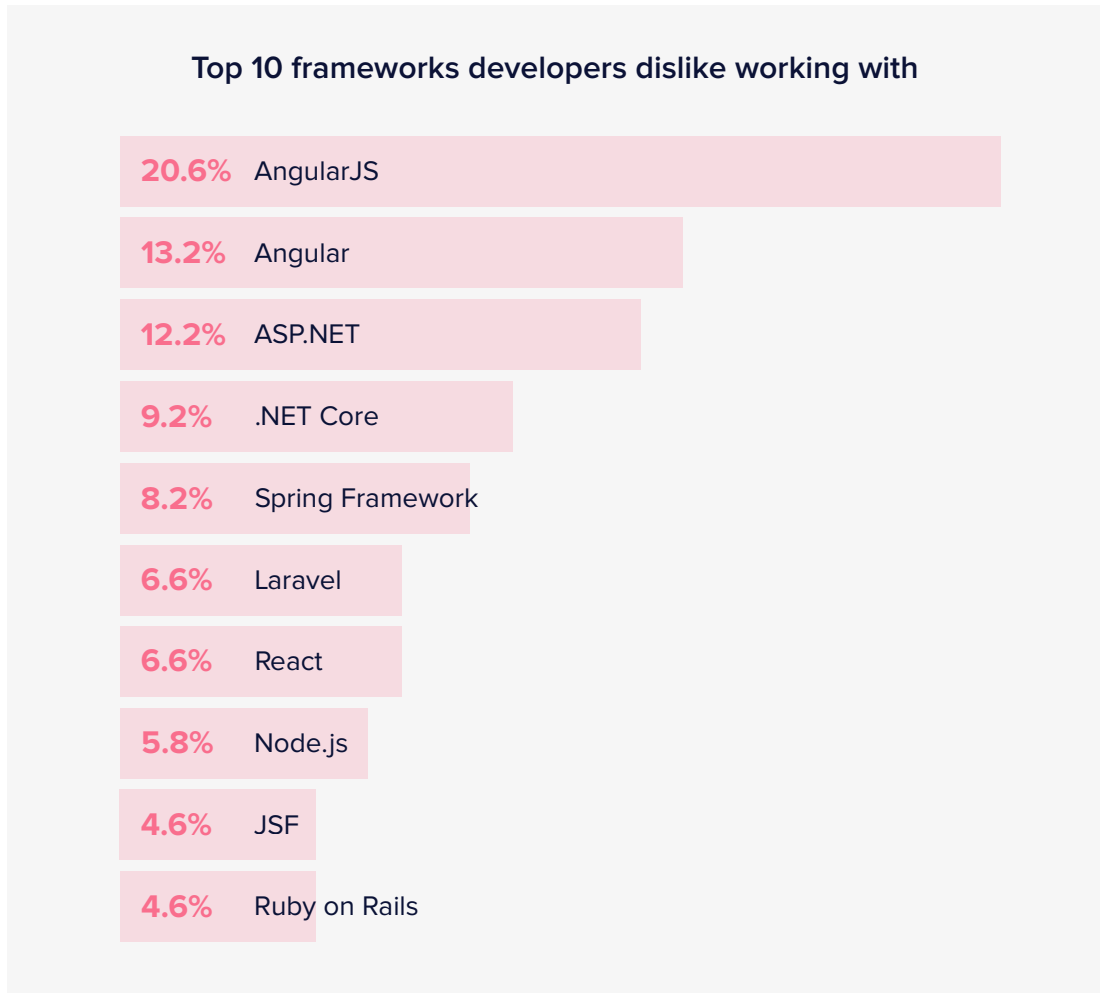
When it comes to frameworks, developers have a clear disdain: 1 in 5 voted AngularJS as the most disliked framework.

Even though surveyed developers indicated that React is their most desired framework, it still ranks in the top 10 of disliked frameworks.

Education and Learning

More than half of developers love to code outside of their nine-to-five – Junior developers are especially keen to keep their skills sharp.

Education and Learning

Developers hit the keyboard at a pretty early age

Education and Learning | Developers hit the keyboard at a pretty early age

57% of developers learned to code as kids

Many developers get excited about coding from an early age:
Over half of surveyed developers learned to code before
they turned 18.

See graph on the next page >

57% of developers learned to code as kids

Age when developers first learned to code
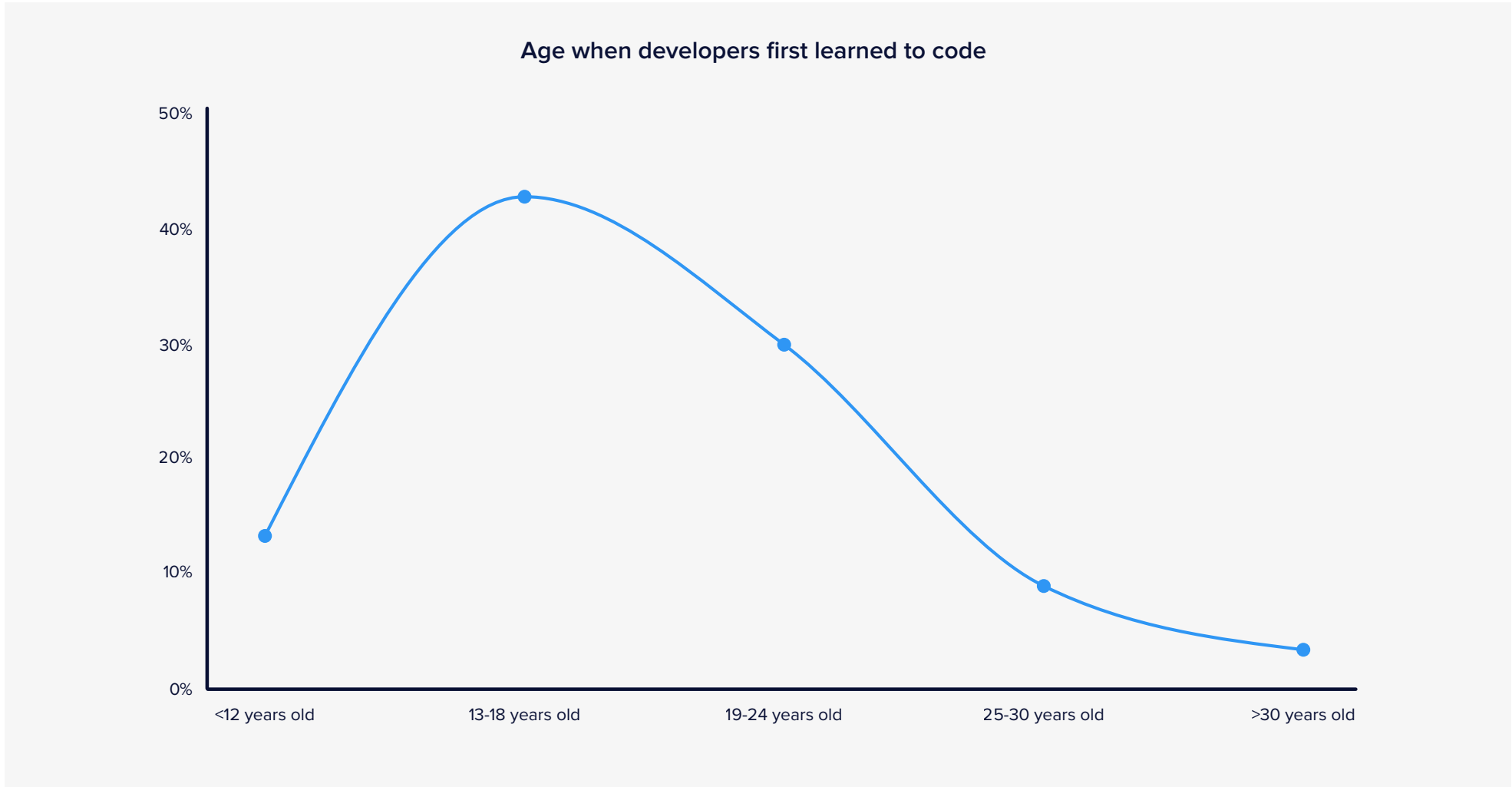
44% of developers are self-taught

How developers learned to code
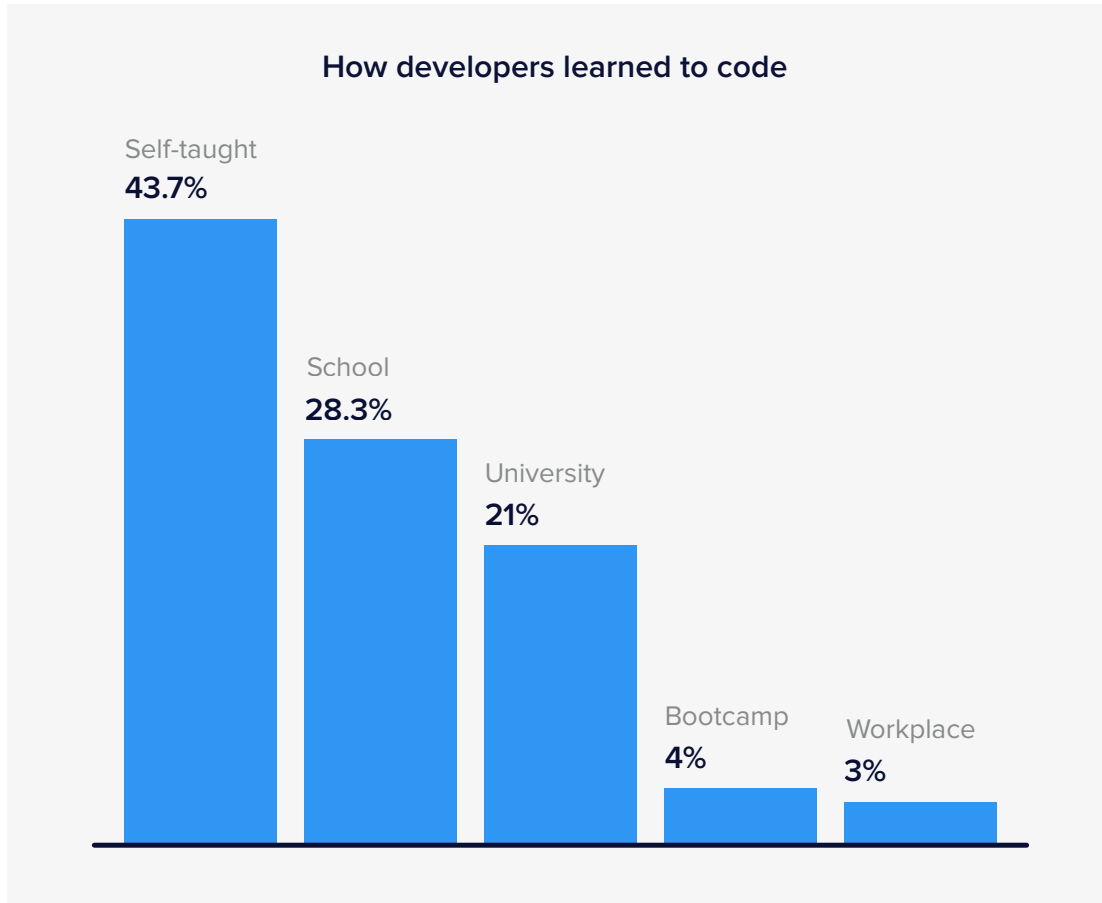
When it comes to being a developer, not all learning takes place in the four walls of a classroom. In fact, 44% of surveyed developers indicated that they taught themselves to code.

Self-taught
43.7%

School
28.3%

University
21%

Bootcamp
4%

Workplace
3%

Education and Learning

Developers prioritise continuous learning and refining their craft

—— —

Junior developers are keen to learn new skills every few months

Frequency at which developers learn a new language

30.3%	Every few months
31.9%	Once a year
32.7%	Once every few years
2.8%	Once a decade
2.2%	Not interested in new languages

See split by seniority on the next page >

Developers are committed to refining their craft and keeping their technical skills sharp. 1 in 3 developers want to learn a new language every few years.

That said, the frequency of learning varies according to seniority level: While juniors tend to be more keen on learning a new language every few months, senior developers and tech managers are more likely to learn new skills every few years.

Junior developers are keen to learn new skills every few months

Frequency at which developers learn a new language by seniority
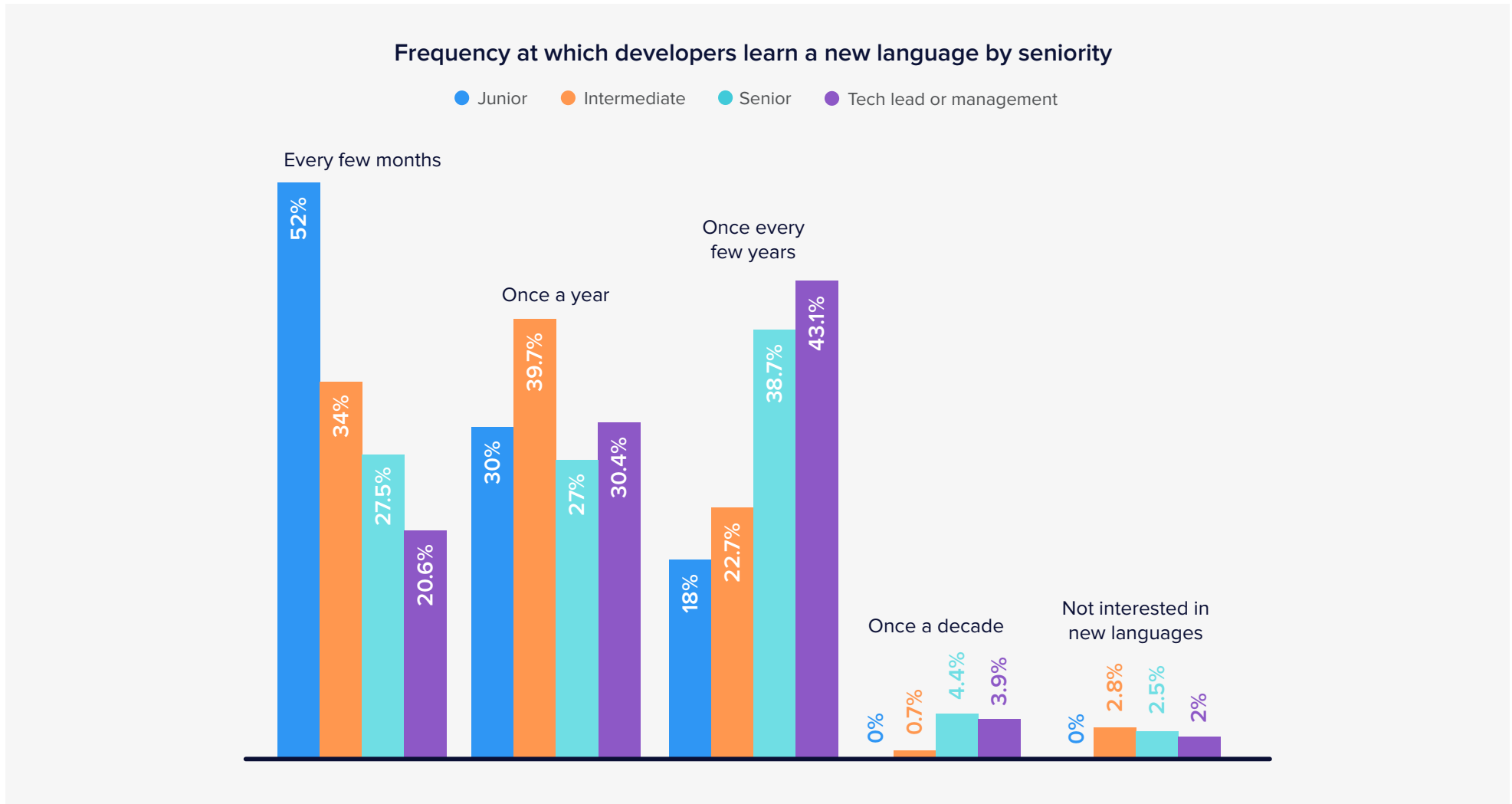
● Junior   ● Intermediate   ● Senior   ● Tech lead or management

More than half of developers code as a hobby

"I spend significant amounts of time coding as a hobby or on side-projects"

26.9% Strongly agree

29.9% Agree

21.4% Neutral

16% Disagree

5.8% Strongly disagree

See split by seniority on the next page >

Developers' commitment to honing their craft extends beyond the grind of a nine-to-five: 57% of developers spend time coding as a hobby.

Interestingly, whereas junior developers are especially keen to frequently learn new skills, it appears that senior developers and tech leads are more likely to code as a hobby.

Looking for your next side project? 👀
Join a virtual Make event to build cool tech with other developers and get your free tech kit delivered to your door.

Join a Make event

More than half of developers code as a hobby

"I spend significant amounts of time coding as a hobby or on side-projects" by seniority

● Junior ● Intermediate ● Senior ● Tech lead or management

Strongly agree
- Junior: 10%
- Intermediate: 17.7%
- Senior: 33.3%
- Tech lead or management: 35.3%

Agree
- Junior: 28%
- Intermediate: 32.6%
- Senior: 29.4%
- Tech lead or management: 28.4%

Neutral
- Junior: 40%
- Intermediate: 24.1%
- Senior: 19.1%
- Tech lead or management: 12.7%

Disagree
- Junior: 16%
- Intermediate: 19.9%
- Senior: 14.7%
- Tech lead or management: 12.7%

Strongly disagree
- Junior: 6%
- Intermediate: 5.7%
- Senior: 3.4%
- Tech lead or management: 10.8%

Careers and Job Satisfaction

Senior positions may mean more bucks, but developers are prioritising work-life balance above all else.

Careers and Job Satisfaction

Benchmarking: Where are you at?

What makes a senior developer? At least 6 years of experience

While 6-10 years of experience seems to be the minimum requirement for this career stage, the majority of senior developers and tech leads have at least 10 years of experience.

The majority of junior developers typically have less than 2 years of experience and intermediate developers have, on average, 2-6 years of experience.

See graph on the next page >

What makes a senior developer? At least 6 years of experience

Self-reported seniority level by years coding professionally

● Junior   ● Intermediate   ● Senior   ● Tech lead or management
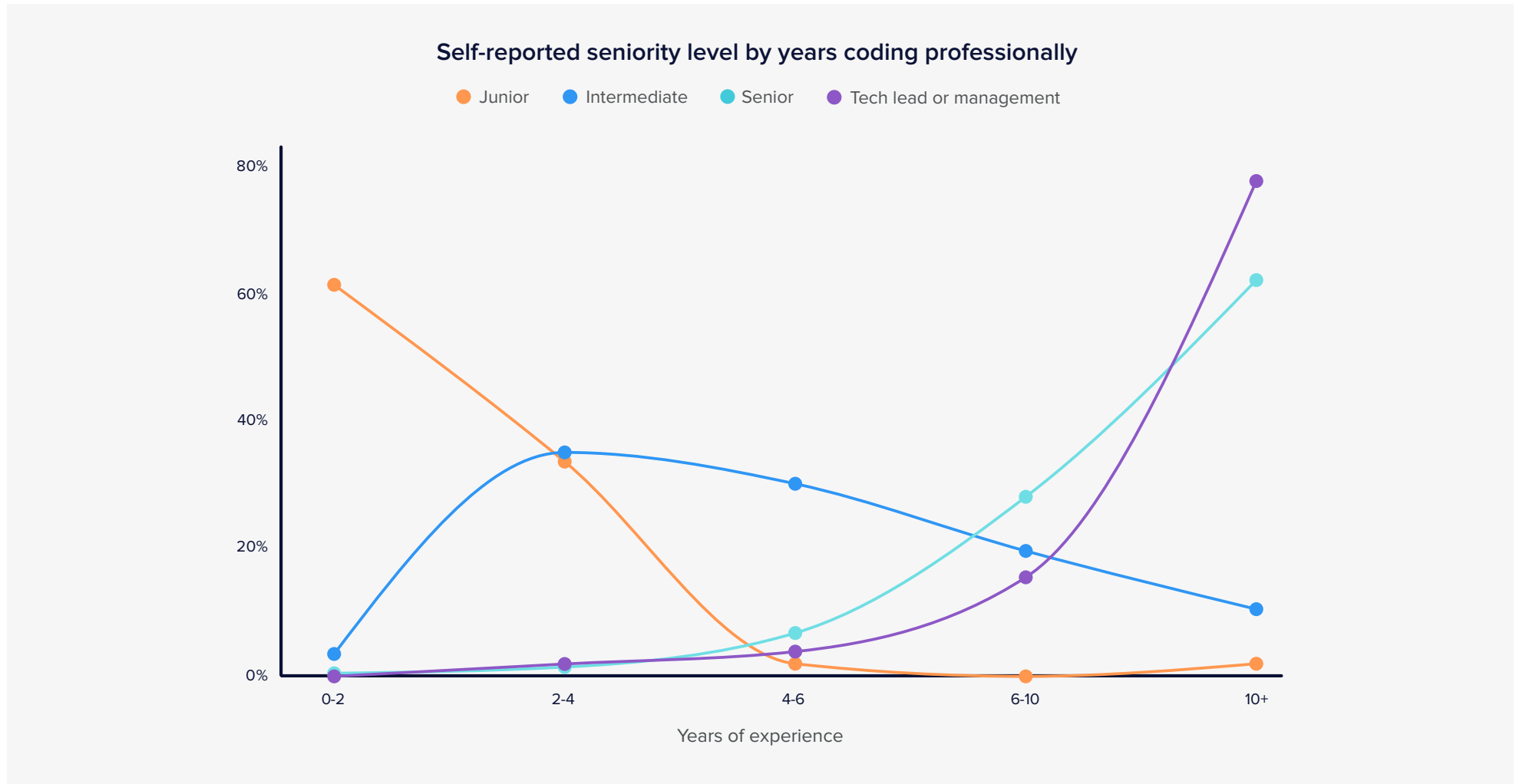
Tech leads earn an average salary of €6 075 per month

When it comes to developer salaries, seniority matters. It is unsurprising to find junior developers earning the lowest average salary and tech leads earning the highest.

We've included the upper and lower quartiles to give better context on the distribution of the data. The quartiles, shown by the shaded area, indicate what the top 25% and bottom 25% of developers earn.

See graph on the next page >

Tech leads earn an average salary of €6 075 per month

Average salary by seniority

View the upper and lower quartiles [here](#).

Want to get more comprehensive salary data? 💰 Take the survey to help create transparency in the industry.

Developers want to work in holistic, human-centred work environments

Developers stay in their jobs for work-life balance, great teams, and growth

Top 8 reasons developers stay in their current role

62.3% Good work-life balance

55.5% People I work with

44.1% Growth and/or learning opportunities

42.7% Company culture

29.1% Current salary

23.4% Future salary potential

21.6% Cutting edge tech-stack

16.6% Great benefits

So what do developers want in their careers?

When it comes to assessing their current position, developers care about a balanced setup: Their top 4 reasons for staying in a job are good work-life balance, great teams, opportunities for career growth and a great company culture.

These factors even trump current and future salary potential when deciding to stick in a job.

1 in 3 developers aren't confident about career growth at their current company

While growth and learning opportunities are developers' third most important reason for staying in a job, one third of them don't seem to feel confident that their current company can offer this to them.

See graph on the next page >

1 in 3 developers aren't confident about career growth at their current company

"I feel I can develop my career at my current company"

Strongly agree	21.8%
Agree	40.1%
Neutral	17.6%
Disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	4.8%

For developers, career growth means challenging projects and opportunities to upskill

Top 5 factors developers want for career growth

67.3% Challenging projects

43.1% New languages or frameworks

33.3% Mentors / coaching

31.7% Company growth projections

29.5% Training availability

See split by seniority on the next page >

Developers at all levels of seniority consider challenging projects their number one way to grow.

While junior developers care a lot about mentorship and training programmes, the number two most important growth opportunity for seniors and tech leads seems to be the opportunity to work on new languages and frameworks.

Looking for your next exciting career challenge? 💻
Sign up to OfferZen to get a dev job where your skills shine.

Find your next dev job

For developers, career growth means challenging projects and opportunities to upskill

Top 5 factors developers want for career growth by seniority

● Junior ● Intermediate ● Senior ● Tech lead or management

Challenging projects
- 62%
- 67.4%
- 68.1%
- 68.6%

New languages or frameworks
- 44%
- 44.7%
- 43.6%
- 39.2%

Mentors / coaching
- 50%
- 32.6%
- 31.4%
- 29.4%

Company growth projections
- 36%
- 30.5%
- 29.4%
- 36.3%

Training availability
- 44%
- 34.8%
- 25.5%
- 21.6%
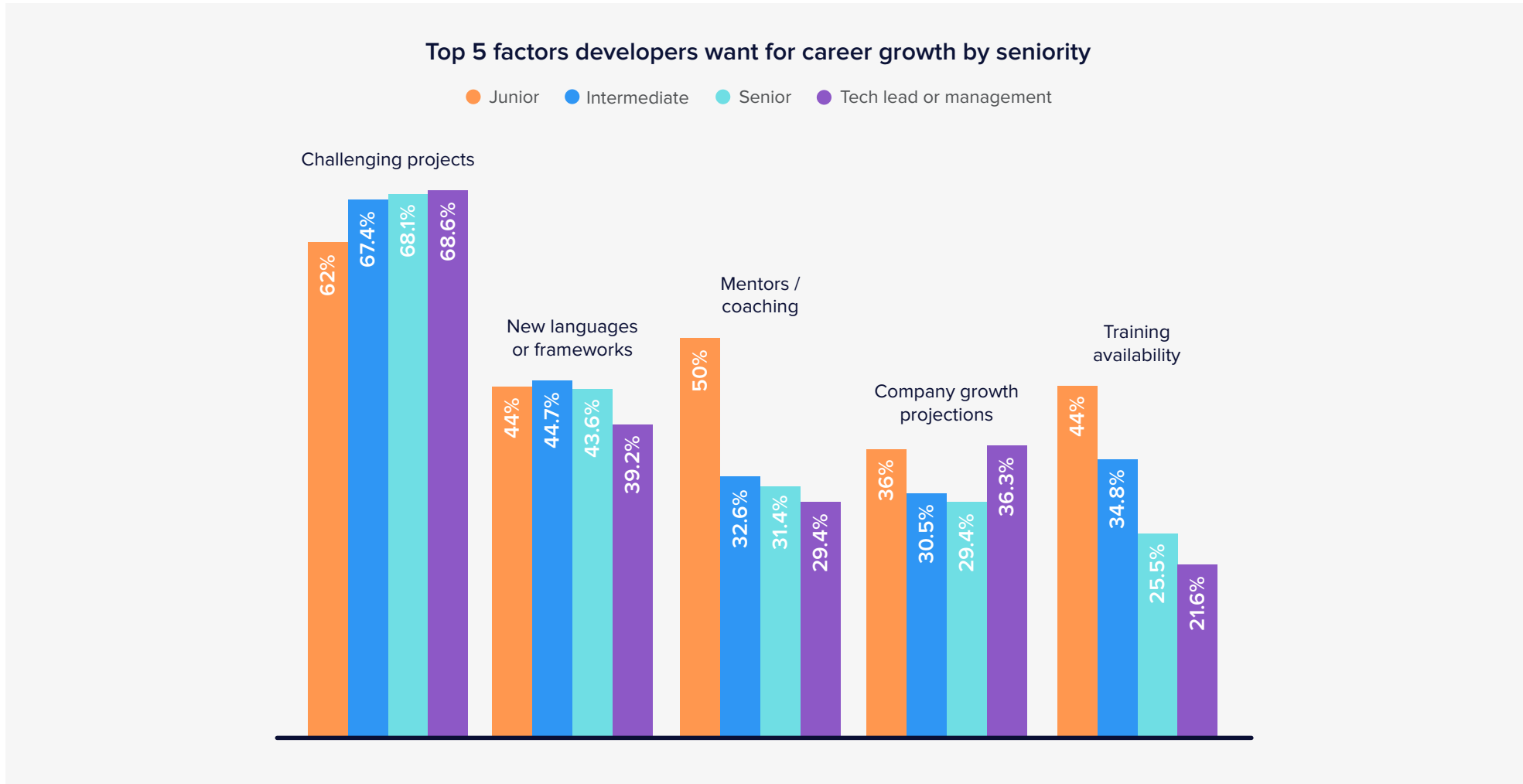
Job Search

One in four developers want to leave their jobs in the next 12 months – here's what's making them go.

Job Search

Developers change jobs frequently

More than half of developers have been in their current jobs for less than 2 years

The majority of surveyed developers have been in their current jobs for less than 2 years. This remains true for developers who have been working for more than 4 years.

With tech being a fast-paced and dynamic industry, developers want the opportunity to learn new skills and work with exciting tech – and taking on new job opportunities is one way to achieve this growth.

See graph on the next page >

More than half of developers have been in their current jobs for less than 2 years

Developers' years in current job

● Overall ● Devs with 4+ years of experience

Years in current job

1 in 4 developers want to move jobs in the next 3-12 months

Developers' job search timelines

7% Currently looking for work

23.2% Looking to move in the next 3-12 months

13% Same company this time next year

25.5% Same company in 2 years' time

23.6% Same company in 5 years' time

While half of the surveyed developers indicated a desire to remain at their current company for another two years, there's an interesting trend emerging:

One fourth are looking to move jobs within the next three to twelve months and 7% are already looking for work.

Why are developers leaving? Poor management

Developers' top 8 reasons for leaving a role

48.1% Poor management

41.7% Better salary

40.7% Poor work-life balance

39.5% Lack of growth opportunities

26.1% Lack of career opportunities

21.8% My colleagues

20.8% A more exciting role

17.4% A more exciting mission

While the majority of developers want to stay in their current jobs for now, companies need to consider their team members' wellbeing to retain top talent:

The number one reason for developers to leave their jobs is poor management, followed by better salary offers elsewhere and a poor work-life balance at their current workplace.

This makes sense given that developers are most likely to stay in a job for good work-life balance — and leave if it's missing.

Job Search

Candidate experience can make or break a successful hire

More than half of developers have discontinued an interview process after a negative experience

"Have you discontinued an interview process due to a negative experience?"

Yes		63.3%
No		19.4%
Has never had a negative experience		17.4%

Companies who don't raise the bar on their recruitment processes could miss out on more than half of developers. In fact, 63% of developers have discontinued an interview process after a negative experience.

A developer's number one interview pet peeve? Not receiving feedback

Developers' top 8 biggest interview process pain points

41.5% Not receiving feedback

38.1% Approached for a mismatched role

35.5% Getting spammed by recruiters

29.7% Badly written job descriptions

27.5% Irrelevant online assessments

25.3% Long delays in interview process

24.8% Being lowballed on salary

22.2% Too many steps in process

Not receiving feedback after an interview or technical assessment is the number one pet peeve of developers in a hiring process.

Their second biggest pain point? Being approached for a job that doesn't match their skillset or interests.
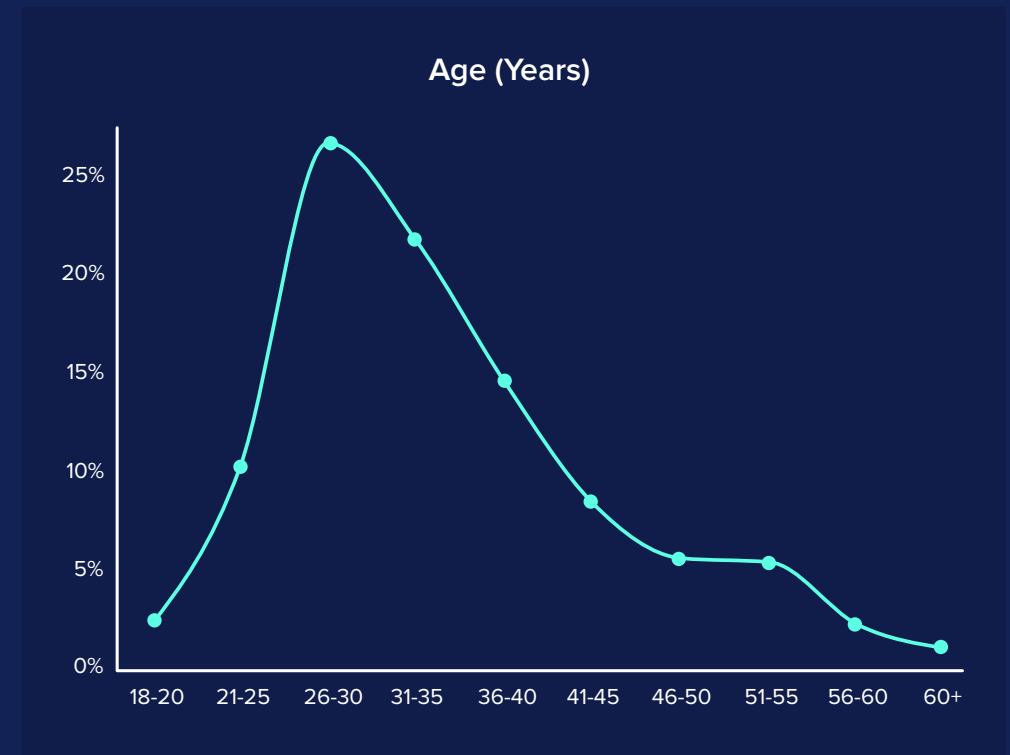
The good news for companies is that both of these pain points in the candidate experience can easily be fixed by adding one or two steps to a hiring process.

Demographics

The data in this report does not claim to be representative of the entire developer population in the Netherlands. Whenever the word 'developer' is used, it refers to the group of developers who took our #NLDevNationSurvey in 2020 and 2021.

In cases where no data slicing occurs, all 501 valid responses were included. In order to shed light on survey participant characteristics, we've included the demographic breakdown of all 501 valid responses below.
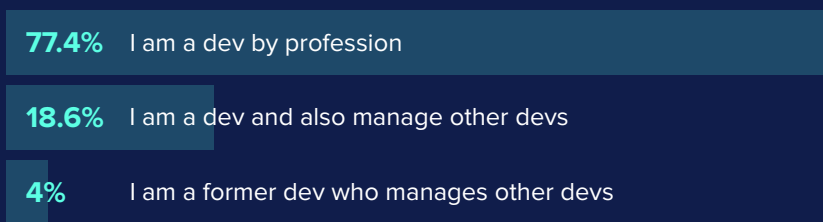
In some cases, we decided to exclude insights on gender and ethnicity because we felt that we could not do these important topics justice in the short-form format of this report. We are, however, planning to deep-dive into these demographics in the coming months.
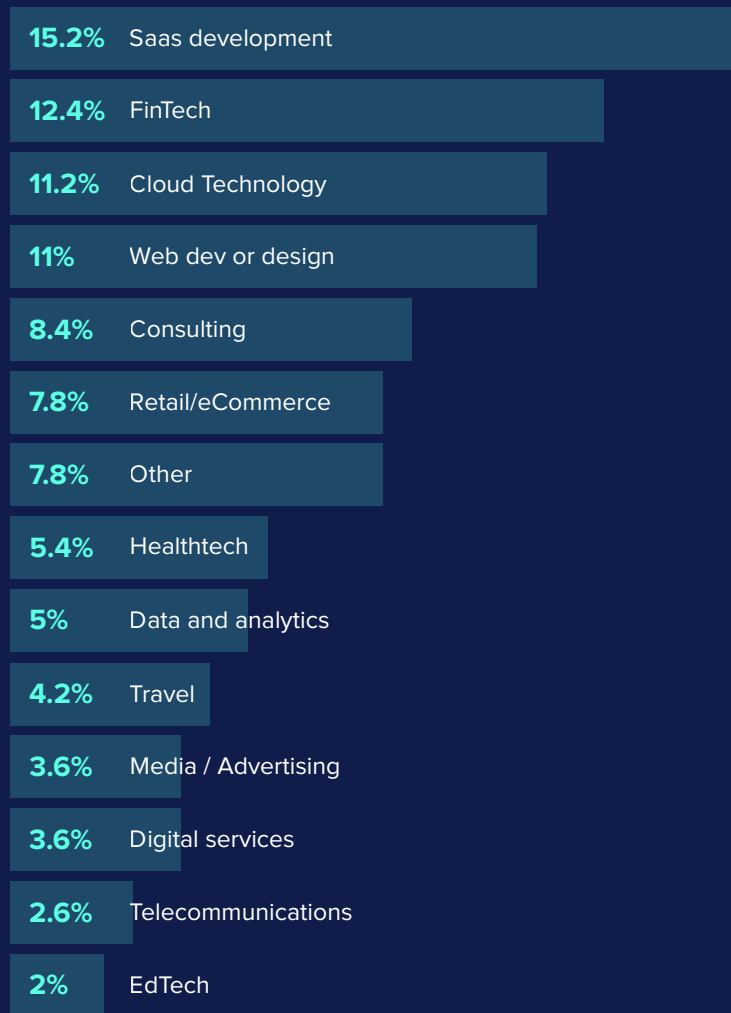
Age (Years)

Organisation size

5%	Contractor / freelancer / self-employed
9.8%	2-10 employees
24.4%	11-50 employees
20.8%	51-200 employees
9%	201-500 employees
5.6%	501-1000 employees
7.6%	1001-5000 employees
4.2%	5001-10 000 employees
13.8%	10 000+ employees

Industries developers currently work in

15.2%	Saas development
12.4%	FinTech
11.2%	Cloud Technology
11%	Web dev or design
8.4%	Consulting
7.8%	Retail/eCommerce
7.8%	Other
5.4%	Healthtech
5%	Data and analytics
4.2%	Travel
3.6%	Media / Advertising
3.6%	Digital services
2.6%	Telecommunications
2%	EdTech

Role

77.4%	I am a dev by profession
18.6%	I am a dev and also manage other devs
4%	I am a former dev who manages other devs

Origin

74.6%	White or of European descent
6.9%	South Asian
4.2%	Hispanic or Latino
3.6%	Middle Eastern
2.9%	Other
2.5%	Black
2.1%	Multiracial
1.7%	South East Asian
1%	Biracial
0.4%	East Asian

Gender

85.6%	Male
12.6%	Female
1%	Non-binary, genderqueer, or gender non-conforming
0.8%	Other

Coding experience

3.2%	0-1 years
4.6%	1-2 years
14.8%	2-4 years
12.4%	4-6 years
20.4%	6-10 years
18.4%	10-15 years
26.3%	15+ years

Get involved in the OfferZen community

Take this 2021 Netherlands Developer survey

Share your thoughts and your response will be added in the next report update.

Take the survey

Join a virtual Make event

Get a free tech kit delivered to your door and build cool tech while connecting with other developers.

Join a Make event

Subscribe to our newsletter

Get upcoming data content and tech career insights like this sent straight to your inbox.

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Methodology

OfferZen conducted a survey to find out more about developers' skills, work experience and job search behaviour. A total of 888 people took the online survey between 30 October 2020 and 15 February 2021. Of these responses, 501 responses were counted as valid because they were from developers who are currently employed or have work experience in the Netherlands.

We hosted the survey itself on Typeform and recruited respondents via emails sent to software makers in the OfferZen community and social media posts to the public. Data was anonymised in accordance with GDPR guidelines and is housed separate to any and all of OfferZen's platform data. Percentages may not always add to 100% due to rounding.

Salary in this report refers to gross salary before tax and excludes benefits. Statistical analysis was conducted to verify insights regarding salaries and we have only included claims where we have at least 95% confidence. The midpoint of a salary range has been taken for all insights where salary information is included.

Download the open data of this report
Want to answer your own questions? Download the anonymised data of this report to get going!

CSV

Download

About OfferZen

OfferZen is an online job marketplace founded by developers for developers: We believe that people are the foundation of thriving tech teams and, through this, the foundation of great software. That's why our core business is focused on helping developers find impactful, meaningful work.

Since our start in 2016, over 100 000 software professionals and more than 1000 companies have signed up to our platform. Each interaction helps improve our matching algorithm so that hiring teams can quickly find the right team member and developers get better opportunities. We turn the traditional recruitment model on its head: Companies reach out to candidates with upfront salary, role and tech stack information.

Sign up to OfferZen to   Find a dev job   or   Hire developers

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