

## WHITEPAPER SALARISENQUETE

With 696 participants, the edition is truly a success. We noted that there are 75% more participants compared to 2008.

This edition is a decidedly new edition. For the first time, USG Legal Professionals and the Belgian Institute of Company Lawyers (IJE) have worked together intensively. Salaries were surveyed, as was satisfaction with the work environment of company lawyers and other trends reflecting the day-to-day existence of company lawyers.

A majority of company lawyers is still professionally active in Brussels and primarily working for a company that is focused on Belgium.

One noteworthy observation is the feminisation of the profession. The majority of young company lawyers in Belgium are women. Men still account for the majority in the age bracket of company lawyers over the age of 45. Among company lawyers who are managers, men still have a numerical advantage. We can expect more women to fill these categories in future. It is clear that non-technical competencies (soft skills) will become increasingly important. Some 80% of all of the respondents believe that personal skills and aptitudes will be more important in future. The ability to “think in terms of solutions” was cited as particularly important. In addition, universities will be expected to take the right initiatives to generate problem-solvers.

Company lawyers are increasingly important to the companies in which they work. The legal manager or the sole legal advisor (who does not have any company lawyer colleagues in-house) reports directly to the CEO in nearly 50% of companies. A significant percentage (36%) of company lawyers who are managers are also part of the management committee.

As a result, the impact of company lawyers has increased significantly over the last few years. No less than 73% of all legal managers have the feeling that their impact on the decision-making process has risen at their company over the past 5 years. However, this feeling is less present among the members of their team, only 54% of whom have the feeling that they now have a greater impact. Team managers must make this increased impact more visible to their team and must make their team more aware of this impact.

The labour market is still relatively volatile for company lawyers in Belgium: 43% of all company lawyers have changed jobs over the past 4 years. Among young company lawyers, this percentage is significantly higher. However, mobility to other departments within the company continues to be an exception to the rule.

If an employer wishes to motivate his/her company lawyers more effectively, it should focus more on providing a better financial package, opportunities for promotion and on reducing stress and the workload.

The wage package of company lawyers was also examined in great detail.

The wage gap between men and women still exists, but only among company lawyers who are managers. In the case of legal advisors (without managerial responsibilities), the wage package between men and women is practically identical.

The base salary of a company lawyer is EUR 37,500. At the end of his/her career, the average company lawyer makes EUR 77,000. A 40-year-old legal manager makes EUR 100,000. Being a member of an executive committee is profitable: on average, the members of the executive committee earn 25% more than those of their company lawyer colleagues who are managers but are not members of the executive committee. The number of direct reports also has a significant impact on remuneration. The larger the team being managed, the higher the remuneration. Legal advisors who are the only lawyers in their particular company make a particularly good living.

Regional wage differences appear to be diminishing, although differences between industries are still striking. The industries that pay the best are the energy and pharmaceutical industries.

2 out of 3 company lawyers have a company car. This benefit constitutes the most appreciated fringe benefit. 2 out of 3 company lawyers are also entitled to a bonus plan.

According to the 2014 edition, the profession of company lawyer is evolving significantly, as regards content, in terms of both remuneration and the degree of impact on the company. This trend reflects the growing importance of legal management and the appreciation of the importance of legal managers to the success of companies.