



Exploring the UK Freelance Workforce in 2015

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Freelance workers are an important, but hidden, part of the small business population. United Kingdom's (UK) official statistics do not classify workers explicitly as freelancers, but their numbers can be estimated using Labour Force Survey (LFS) categories. This report presents quantitative data on freelancer numbers and their personal and work characteristics as at Q2, 2015.

No official, or widely accepted, definition of freelance status exists in the UK. The term 'freelance' is not a legal concept but, rather, a customary one used to describe particular kinds of worker or work relationship in particular occupational or industry settings. We define freelancers as genuine business owners without employees working in a range of creative, managerial, professional, scientific and technical occupations.

UK Freelance Workforce Size

LFS data suggest there are an estimated 1.91 million freelance workers in the UK. This figure comprises 1.65m working freelance in main jobs and a further 255,000 working freelance in second jobs; 13 per cent of all freelancers work freelance in a second job. Freelance workers constitute 6 per cent of all UK workers in employment.

Since 2008, freelancer numbers have increased from 1.40m to 1.91m, a rise of 36 per cent. This was a period of prolonged economic uncertainty precipitated by the global financial crisis of 2008-9. During the period, unemployment increased by almost 50 per cent before then falling by a third. Similarly, employment decreased sharply before turning upward. Freelance working has continued to rise throughout the period, suggesting that macroeconomic circumstances exert an influence on the demand for, and supply of, freelance workers. The benefits to end-users of hiring freelancers continue to be evident with the economic upturn.

Flows into, and out of, freelance working are an enduring feature of labour market activity in the UK. Individuals enter, and exit, freelancing as work opportunities enable or constrain job choices, and/or as individuals' preferences change. Freelance working is a 'high-churn' activity, with high levels of entry and exit. LFS data suggest that 72 per cent of those working freelance in main jobs in April-June 2015 were also freelancing a year previously, while 28 per cent were newcomers. Turning to those working freelance in 2014, 73 per cent remained freelancing in main jobs a year later. Overall, therefore, the freelance workforce is one of considerable churn with sizeable flows into, and out of, this way of working.

Occupational Profile

Freelancers have a widespread, though uneven, presence across major occupational groups. This is partly for historical reasons – where occupations have traditionally been organised on a freelance basis – and partly because, more recently, employers have externalised jobs to achieve greater flexibility and cost savings, and to manage risk better in fast-changing market environments. Associate professional and technical occupations include 784,000 freelance workers, (41 per cent of the freelance workforce). This diverse group includes writers, artists and musicians, science and engineering technicians, sports and fitness occupations, and protective service occupations. There are 686,000 freelance workers (36 per cent) in professional occupations and a further 437,000 (23 per cent) work in managerial occupations.

Freelance workers are present in all 43 minor occupation groups covered by the LFS. The largest freelance groups are artistic, literary and media occupations with 328,000 freelancers (17 per cent), managers and proprietors in other services with 222,000 freelancers (12 per cent), and teaching and education professionals with 139,000 freelancers (7 per cent). These three occupational groups continue to be the most important numerically; they now constitute more than a third of all freelance workers.

Occupations vary in the proportion of workers working freelance. Among LFS minor occupational groups with more than 30,000 freelancers, artistic, literary and media occupations are, by far, the most likely to be undertaken freelance; two thirds of workers in this group do so. Four in ten of all people working in sports and fitness occupations also work freelance. At the other end of the scale, fewer than one in ten teaching and educational professionals, public services and other associate professionals, and sales, marketing and related associate professionals work on a freelance basis.

Trends in the occupational profile of freelance workers are highly variable. Some occupational groups have expanded substantially while others have decreased, although changes in classification mean that assessments of occupational change should be conducted carefully. Freelancer numbers more than doubled in artistic, literary and media occupations and in sports and fitness occupations over the 2008-15 period, while therapy professionals declined by almost half.

A portrait of a man with dark hair and a light beard, wearing a light blue denim button-down shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a plain, light grey color.

Industry Profile

Freelance workers are present in all major industry groups covered by the LFS. Freelance workers are strongly represented in the professional, scientific and technical activities industry (20 per cent), with 384,000 people. High numbers are also found in the education, and health and social work (21 per cent), arts, entertainment and recreation (12 per cent) and in information and communication (10 per cent) industries. Almost two thirds of all freelancers work in these four industry groups.

Industries with high proportions of freelancers tend to rely heavily on occupations that are commonly organised on a freelance basis, for example, artistic, literary and media occupations. Particular industries and sectors have historically drawn upon freelance labour more than others.

Freelance Working and Gender

Six in ten freelancers are male, a higher proportion than among employees in comparable occupations (in SOC major groups 1 to 3). It would be interesting to explore whether this is because men have better access to the resources required to enter, and sustain, both freelance and senior employment positions and/or stronger preferences for freelance working.

Freelancers' occupational profiles vary by gender. Women are more highly represented in associate professional and technical occupations, where 44 per cent are women; in managerial and professional occupations, the figures are 36 and 38 per cent respectively. This is consistent with research concerning the sex-typing of specific occupations and the barriers women experience in accessing jobs in management and the higher professions.

The number of mothers working as freelancers is 287,000, 15 per cent of all freelancers. This number has increased 70 per cent since 2008, approximately double the rate of increase in the freelance workforce as a whole. This continues the trend towards increased self-employment among women evident for the past two decades.

Older and Younger Freelancers

Freelancers aged 60 and older comprise 21 per cent of the stock of freelance workers, a marginally higher proportion than in 2008. Men and women of retirement age who undertake paid work are more likely to do so as self-employed rather than as employees, in comparison with younger workers. Older individuals often choose self-employment for both economic and non-economic reasons and to avoid ageism in employment. In the context of rising life expectancy, the abolition of the Default Retirement Age, inadequate pension provision and planned increases in State Pensionable Age, the number of freelancers aged over 60 might be expected to increase in the coming years.

Younger freelancers aged 16-29 comprise just over one in ten of the freelance workforce. Younger freelancers are more likely to be over-represented among freelancers working in second jobs, among women and among those working in associate professional and technical occupations (SOC 3). Young freelancers are particularly concentrated in sports and fitness occupations where they constitute 33 per cent of this occupational group.

Descriptions of Self-Employed Status

Freelance workers are much more likely to define themselves as 'working for themselves' than 'doing freelance work'.

More than two thirds self-report as 'working for themselves' in main jobs, while fewer than a quarter report 'doing freelance work'. This is likely to reflect two influences: first, the high proportion of individuals working as sole proprietors without employees, or as sole directors of limited companies. More than three quarters of the UK business stock comprise businesses with no employees.

A second influence is the occupational/industrial norms influencing how the self-employed without employees are described in particular work settings. It is interesting to note that of those in main jobs, 53 per cent of media professionals, 43 per cent of those in design occupations and 41 per cent of those in artistic, literary and media occupations described themselves as 'doing freelance work'. These are occupations where the term freelance is customarily used to refer to self-employed workers without employees.

Self-Employment Duration

Despite being a population believed to be subject to high levels of churn, 16 per cent of freelance workers report first becoming self-employed more than 20 years ago and 35 per cent report becoming self-employed more than 10 years ago. This high level of stability among a large subset of the self-employed population suggests both a strong preference for self-employment and might indicate that churn is a feature of particular subsets of the self-employed rather than characteristic of the entire population.

Education and Training

Freelance workers and comparable employees (in SOC major groups 1 to 3) are educated to an equivalent level. More than two thirds of both groups are qualified to NQF Level 4 (post-compulsory schooling qualifications).

Continuing training and development is important for freelancers in order to keep abreast of technological, economic, legal and other issues in their respective occupational fields. There were large differences in the number of freelance workers and comparable employees reporting job-related training or education (during the previous four week period and the previous three month period). Only about half the proportion of freelancers undertook such training: 18 per cent of freelancers compared to 33 per cent of employees reported training in the previous three months. The pattern of learning and training activity raises questions about whether freelancers engage in sufficient learning and training activity to support their skill development needs.

Freelance Workers' Contribution to Business Turnover

It is possible to provide a speculative estimate of the economic contribution freelance workers make to the UK economy. Businesses without employees (excluding financial intermediation) contributed an estimated £237 billion in sales in 2015, or approximately 6 per cent of private sector turnover.

Approximately 46 per cent of businesses without employees are freelancer-owned: 1.84m freelancers, of a wider group of 4.08m (excluding financial intermediation). If freelance workers contribute to turnover proportionate to their presence in the wider group of businesses without employees, their collective sales would be approximately £109bn.

Freelancer-owned businesses might be expected to generate greater revenues than other own-account businesses, owing to the more valuable knowledge and skills exercised, suggesting a slightly higher turnover figure, perhaps £120-125bn, approximately 3-4 per cent of business turnover.

Conclusion

Freelance workers continue to be an important component of the UK labour force, enabling organisational clients in a wide variety of industries and occupational settings to adapt labour practices flexibly to meet operational requirements. The continued expansion of the freelance workforce indicates that access to a pool of suitably-skilled and motivated workers remains highly valued by organisational end-users. Growth in freelancer numbers has continued unabated during both the global financial crisis of 2008-9 and the subsequent economic upturn.

UK Freelance Workforce at a Glance

1.91
million
freelancers
in the UK



1.65 million work freelance in main jobs

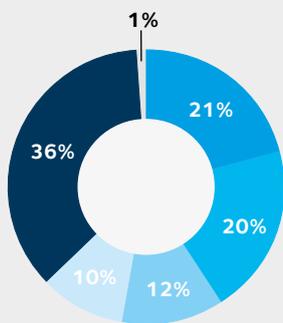


A further 255,000 work freelance in second jobs

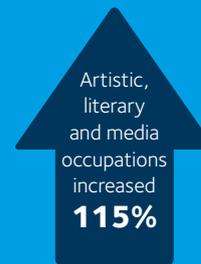
Between 2008 and 2015 the number of freelancers in the UK **increased by 36%**



Freelance workers are present in all major industry groups



Fastest growing occupational groups since 2008



Freelancers have a widespread presence across all occupations

The largest freelancer occupational groups:



328,000

Artistic, literary & media occupations



222,000

Managers & proprietors in other services



139,000

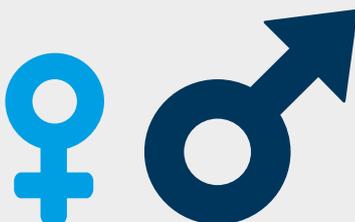
Teaching & education professionals



117,000

IT & telecommunications professionals

Gender split



40%
Female

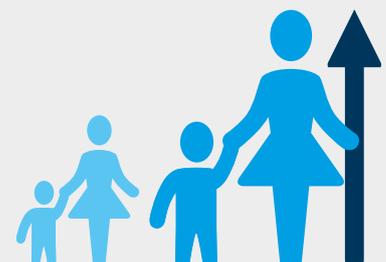
60%
Male

Mothers working as freelancers

1 in 7 of all freelancers are working mums (**287,000**)

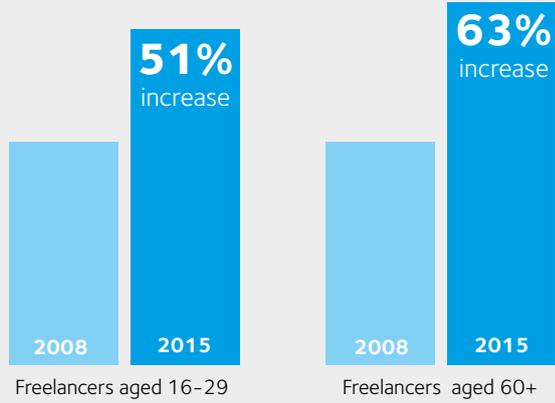
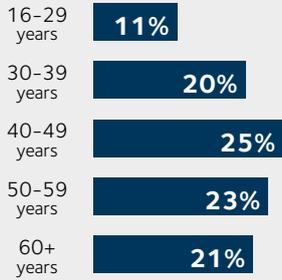


Between 2008 and 2015 the number of mothers working as freelancers **increased by 70%**

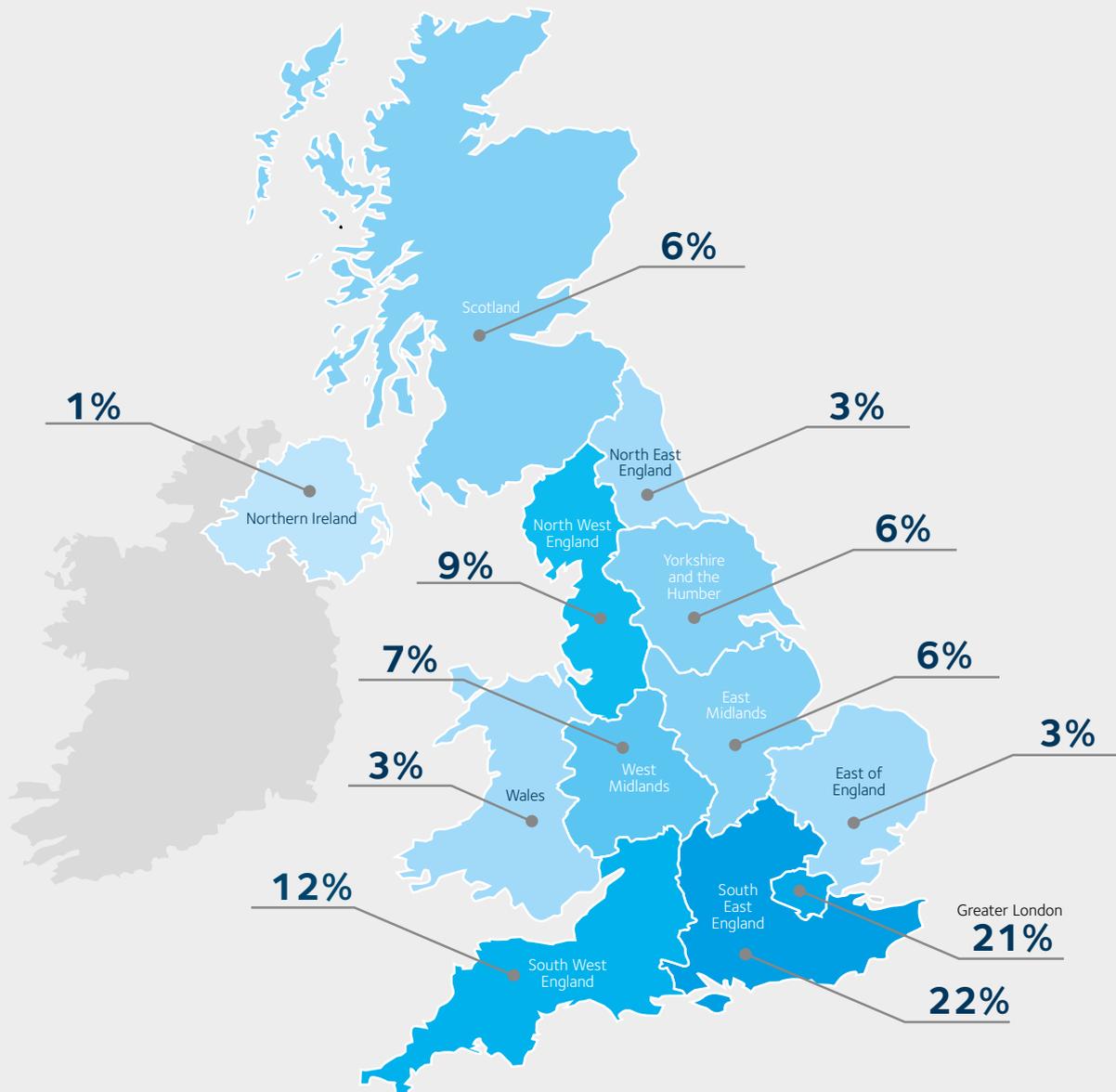


Age distribution of freelancers

The largest proportion of freelancers are **40-49 years of age (25%)**



Location of freelancers



Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding

Introduction

The self-employed are important contributors to the United Kingdom's (UK) economy. Their important role is reflected in the recent reviews undertaken by Julie Deane (Deane 2016) and Baroness Mone (2016), as well as in a number of other publications (Dellot 2014; D'Arcy and Gardiner 2014).

At the start of 2015, there were 5.4m businesses operating in the formal UK economy (BIS 2015). The vast majority of businesses are small; three quarters of firms (4.1m) involve no-one but their owners, working alone or with partners. This group includes freelance workers – an important, but hidden, part of the small business population.

The purpose of this report is to provide a quantitative 'snapshot' of the UK freelance workforce and important constituent sub-groups in early 2015. Building on previous publications (Kitching and Smallbone 2008, 2012), this report presents data drawn from official UK government sources to develop a contemporary picture of the UK

freelance workforce. The principal data source used is the Labour Force Survey (LFS), but data from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) Business Population Estimates for the UK and the Regions 2015 are also used. All LFS data refers to quarter two (Q2) in the relevant years, unless otherwise stated.

The report is structured as follows. First, two definitions of freelance status – a narrow and a broad one – are outlined. Second, using the narrow definition, an estimate of the size of the UK freelance workforce is presented. Third, this report provides data on freelancers' personal and work characteristics. Where applicable, trend data, looking at changes over the 2008-15 period, and comparative data, contrasting freelance workers with employees, are presented¹. In two appendices, the methodological approach is set out and data tables upon which the analysis is based are presented.

Defining Freelance Status

Freelance status is not a legal concept defined either by UK statute or by common law but rather a customary term used by workers, end-users of labour services² and others to refer to particular types of worker or work relationships. Typically, freelance workers are independent professionals, who are

neither employers nor employees, supplying labour services to clients on a temporary basis under a contract for services as distinct from a contract of service typical of employment relationships. Freelance status might be defined in terms of six criteria (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Freelance Status: Two Provisional Definitions

CRITERION	DESCRIPTION
Work status	Self-employed proprietors and partners in unincorporated businesses, and directors of limited companies, without employees, genuinely in business on their own account, plus some PAYE umbrella company employees
Primary/secondary work role	Those working freelance in main or secondary jobs, on either a full-time or part-time basis
Nature of client base	Those serving organisational <i>and</i> personal clients
Contract duration	Contracts of any duration included
Number of clients	Workers with only a single client also included
Skill/occupation	(i) Broad – all occupations (ii) Narrow – skilled, non-manual occupations only (managerial, professional and technical occupations)

Source: Adapted from Kitching and Smallbone (2008; 2012)

Narrow and broad definitions of freelance status might be distinguished. Both share a similar position with regard to the first five criteria in Figure 1, but differ with regard to the sixth which is skill/occupation. The broad definition incorporates all occupational groups, the narrow one includes only a subset of occupations. The LFS distinguishes respondents by occupational group, enabling operationalisation of the narrow definition (see Appendix 1). The LFS uses the UK Standard

Occupational Classification (SOC) 2010 to categorise jobs, distinguishing nine major occupational groups according to skill level and specialisation (Figure 2) (ONS 2010a). The narrow definition of freelance status includes SOC major groups 1 to 3: managers, directors and senior officials; professional occupations; and associate professional and technical occupations.

1. Comparisons take account of revisions to 2008 and 2011 datasets made by the Office of National Statistics. Data therefore vary from those presented in previous reports for 2008 (Kitching and Smallbone 2008) and 2011 (Kitching and Smallbone 2012).

2. End-users of labour services include employers, who hire workers under contracts of service, and clients, who engage workers under contracts for services.

Figure 2
Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 2010, Major Groups

SOC MAJOR GROUP	EXAMPLES OF OCCUPATIONS
1. Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	Managers and proprietors in agriculture related services, transport and logistics, and health and care services.
2. Professional Occupations	Professionals in science, research, engineering and technology; health; teaching and education; business, media and public service.
3. Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	Health and social care associate professionals; protective service occupations; culture, media and sports occupations.
4. Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	Bookkeepers, credit controllers and legal secretaries.
5. Skilled Trades Occupations	Skilled agricultural trades; metal, electrical and electronic trades; construction and building trades.
6. Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	Dental nurses, hairdressers and barbers and travel agents.
7. Sales and Customer Service Occupations	Sales and retail assistants; debt, rent and other cash collectors; call and contact centre occupations.
8. Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	Taxi drivers, sewing machinists and scaffolders.
9. Elementary Occupations	Farm workers, window cleaners and security guards.

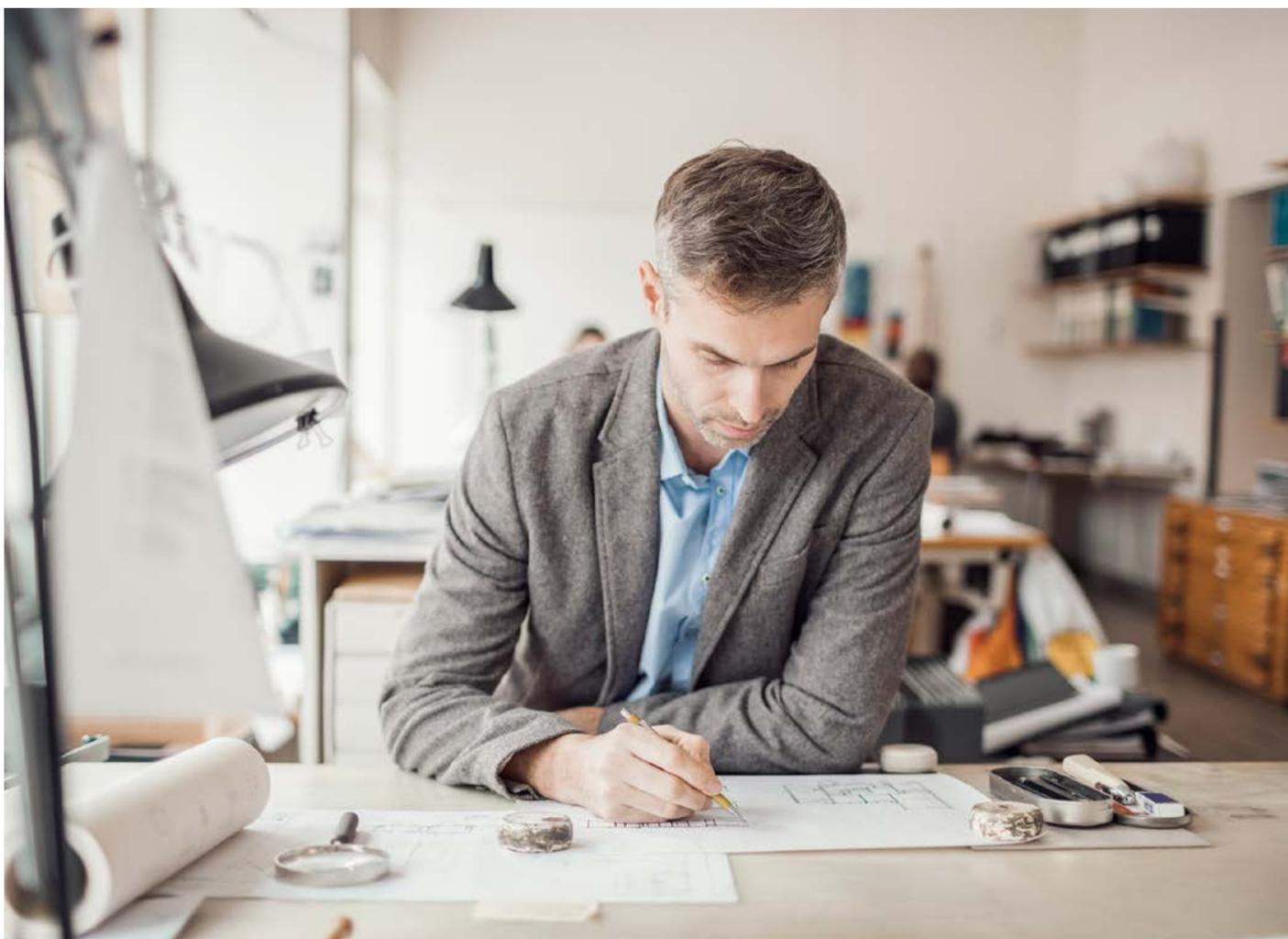
Note: Shaded area refers to the narrow definition of freelance status used in the report
 Source: ONS (2010a)

SOC major groups 1 to 3 include many occupations conventionally described as freelance, for example, in creative and media sectors (e.g. Baines 1999). However, they also incorporate occupations where those working on a self-employed basis without employees are not conventionally described as freelance; – instead, as contractors, consultants, interims and independent professionals. Those working through labour market intermediaries might also be referred to as agency workers or as umbrella workers. Such workers, however, might also be considered freelance on the basis of the managerial, professional, scientific and technical knowledge and skills they contribute to client requirements.

Definitions matter because they necessarily influence estimates of the size of the freelance workforce and constituent sub-groups. Alternative definitions of freelance status, based on different assumptions, are possible. These might adopt different positions in relation to the six criteria listed in Figure 1 or, alternatively, introduce additional criteria. Mould et al. (2014), for example, include some occupations within SOC major groups 5 to 7 as potentially including freelancers too. Other sources use an industrial rather than an occupational criterion to identify independent professionals (e.g. Rapelli 2012). Narrow definitions necessarily produce lower size estimates than broader ones.

In the remainder of the report, data are presented using the narrow definition of freelance status. We begin by estimating the overall size of the UK freelance workforce.

“SOC major groups 1 to 3 include many occupations conventionally described as freelance, for example, in creative and media sectors ... they also incorporate occupations where those working on a self-employed basis without employees are not conventionally described as freelance – instead, as contractors, consultants, interims and independent professionals.”



The Size of the UK Freelance Workforce

LFS data suggests there were 1.91m freelancers in the UK in April-June 2015 (ONS 2015a) (Table 1). This figure includes 1.65m people working freelance in main jobs plus a further 255,000 people estimated to work freelance in second jobs; 13 per cent of all freelancers work freelance in a second job. Freelance workers constitute 6 per cent of all workers in employment³. Using the broad definition of freelance status, incorporating all occupations, there were 4.11m, an increase of 16 per cent since 2011.

Freelancer numbers have risen from 1.40m in 2008 to 1.57m in 2011, and then to 1.91m in 2015 (a 22 per cent increase during 2011-15 and a 36 per cent rise during 2008-15). The rate of increase during 2011-15 is very similar for those working freelance in both main and second jobs. This recent increase is an extension of a longer-run trend towards increased freelancer numbers. One study found that the number of freelance workers has risen from 1.04m workers in Q2, 1992 (Kitching 2015).

Individuals' decisions to become and remain freelance are influenced by broader economic, political and social forces shaping demand for their labour services (Kitching and

Smallbone 2012). Privatisation, market, technological and regulatory change, and organisational restructuring have all influenced opportunities for freelancing in recent decades. Private and public sector organisations have sought to match labour inputs more closely to commercial requirements to achieve numerical flexibility and cost savings, and to manage risk (e.g. Stanworth and Stanworth 1997; Purcell and Purcell 1998); using freelancers is one means of achieving this flexibility. There is some evidence of a growing use of temporary jobs for high discretion freelancers (Stanworth and Druker 2006), for instance, in the audio-visual sector where regulatory and technological change since the 1980s has produced shifts in industrial structure, working practices and contractual arrangements (Antcliff 2005). During the past three decades, public, private and privatised organisations have externalised many business functions, and the associated workers, in order to reduce the costs and risks of employing people. In some cases, externalisation of work perpetuates a well-established practice; in others, employers have externalised jobs previously performed by employees, occasionally by switching employees to self-employed status.

3. This calculation includes employees, freelancers, other own-account workers (those working self-employed without employees in SOC major group 4-9 occupations), employers, workers on government schemes and unpaid family workers in both main and second jobs in the denominator. Individuals may, therefore, be in more than one category.

Labour Market Analysis

The marked increase in freelance working since 2011 has occurred at a time of improving labour market conditions. As employment opportunities have increased, jobseekers have turned to freelance working. This suggests either that more people are making a positive choice for freelancing, even though employment opportunities are available, or that organisational end-users of freelancer services are choosing to supply more jobs on a freelance basis, rather than increasing employment. During 2011–15, employment levels increased

5.4 per cent, from 29.5m to 31.0m, while unemployment decreased 27 per cent from 2.5m to 1.9m (ONS 2015b: AO1 Table 1). The number of economically active people rose from 32.0m to 32.9m. Freelance working expanded faster than employment and labour market activity in general over the four year period. Trends in freelance working, employment, unemployment and labour market activity are shown in Figure 3.

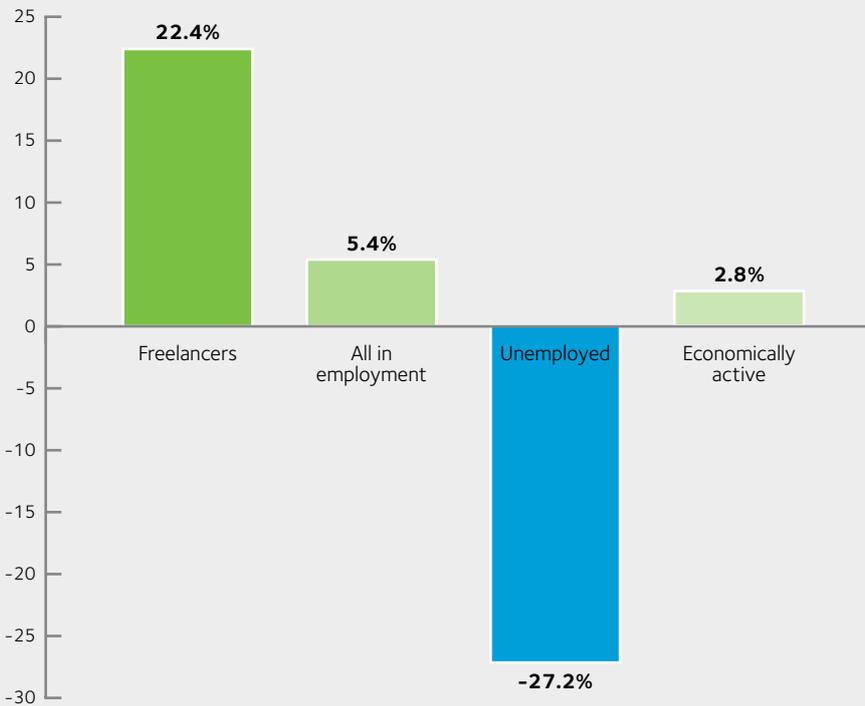
Table 1
Freelance Workforce, 2015: Major Occupational Group

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
SOC MAJOR GROUP	Self-employed without employees in Main Jobs	Self-employed without employees in Second Jobs and Employees in Main Jobs	Self-employed without employees in Second Jobs and self-employed employers in Main Jobs	Self-employed without employees in SOC 1–3 occupations in Second Jobs and self-employed without employees in SOC 4–9 occupations in Main Jobs	ALL
SOC 1 Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	391,722	30,446	7,383	8,382	437,933
SOC 2 Professional Occupations	598,735	79,739	3,980	4,344	686,798
SOC 3 Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	663,770	107,694	2,811	10,072	784,347
All SOC 1–3 Occupations	1,654,227	217,879	14,174	22,798	1,909,078
SOC 4 Administrative and Secretarial occupations	130,888	18,624	1,739	n/a	151,251
SOC 5 Skilled Trades Occupations	1,021,266	31,252	2,405	n/a	1,054,923
SOC 6 Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	279,547	30,763	0	n/a	310,310
SOC 7 Sales and Customer Service Occupations	82,998	6,806	0	n/a	89,804
SOC 8 Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	341,656	11,817	0	n/a	353,473
SOC 9 Elementary Occupations	243,080	16,224	752	n/a	260,056
No data	613	261	0	n/a	874
All Occupations	3,754,275	333,626	19,070	(22,798)	4,129,769

Notes: Includes the self-employed without employees, either working alone or with a partner, in main and second jobs. Data weighted according to age, sex and region of residence in order to be nationally representative. Column d cases are only applicable to the narrow definition of freelance status. SOC4–9 occupation data are excluded to avoid double-counting.

Source: ONS (2015a)

Figure 3
Changes in Freelance Workforce, Employment, Unemployment and Economic Activity, 2011-2015



Source: ONS (2015b)

Freelance Entry and Exit

Flows into, and out of, freelance working are an enduring feature of labour market activity in the UK. Individuals enter, and exit, freelancing as work opportunities enable or constrain job choices, and/or as individuals' preferences change. Freelancing offers opportunities for greater financial and non-financial rewards than employment but, in some cases, might reflect limited employment possibilities.

Using LFS data it is possible, first, to estimate how many entered freelancing during the period Q2, 2014 to Q2, 2015 and, second, to estimate what proportion of freelancers in 2014 left to take up other labour market statuses (employment, unemployment, inactivity), or stayed in freelancing, in 2015. LFS data suggest that of the 1.65m people working freelance in main jobs in April-June 2015, 72 per cent were freelancing a year previously. The remaining 28 per cent report other labour market statuses a year ago – most were previously employees, but a small number were

also employers, other own-account workers, unpaid workers, unemployed or economically inactive (e.g. full-time students, undertaking care responsibilities, sick or disabled, retired). Such a change partly reflects the expansion of the freelance workforce, drawing in large numbers of people previously undertaking other types of work or outside the labour market.

Turning to exits from freelancing, the majority of those working freelance in main jobs in 2014 continued as freelancers in main jobs in 2015. Approximately 73 per cent of freelancers in main jobs in 2014 retained their freelance status a year later. Of those leaving freelancing during 2014-15, most became employees or employers. Overall, therefore, the freelance workforce is one of considerable churn with sizeable flows into, and out of, this way of working.

Occupational Profile

Freelance workers have a widespread, though highly uneven, presence across all UK occupations. Freelancer presence varies partly for historical reasons and partly because, more recently, employers have adapted recruitment practices to meet their operational requirements in fast-changing market environments, choosing to externalise work to achieve greater flexibility and cost savings, and to manage risk better (van Wanrooy et al. 2013; Perraudin et al. 2013).

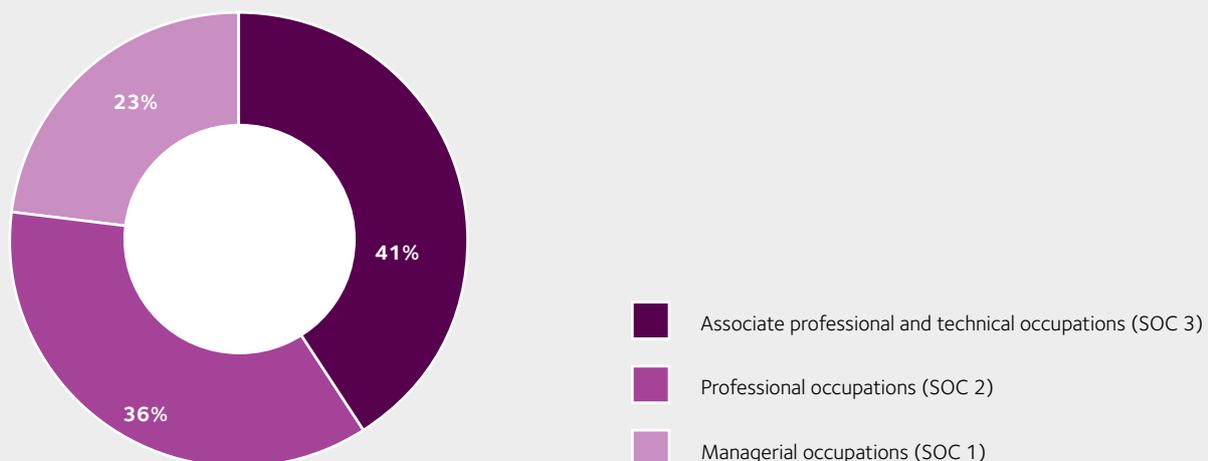
Historically, occupations differ in the degree to which they are organised on a freelance, or employment, basis. Where jobs can be organised in terms of specific activities, or projects, with definite start and end points, employers are able to design jobs in this way and offer them on a temporary freelance basis. Over time, job-seekers learn about employer practices and agree to supply their labour on a freelance basis.

The demand and supply side of the freelance labour market often reinforce one another. Employers offer freelance

job opportunities believing there to be a ready supply of individuals willing to work freelance; this encourages individuals to seek freelance opportunities which, in turn, further encourages employers to continue to draw upon this labour pool to meet their operational requirements. Several occupations have traditionally had a large freelance component - including creatives (artists, writers, musicians, actors), media workers (in television, radio, film, publishing/journalism), and construction and technical professionals offering consultancy services such as in engineering (e.g. Baines 1999; Dex et al. 2000; Storey et al. 2005; Davenport 2006).

The largest freelance occupational group is associate professional and technical occupations, with 784,000 people (41 per cent of all freelance workers) (Figure 4). This group includes writers, artists and musicians, science and engineering technicians, sports and fitness occupations, and protective service occupations.

Figure 4
Freelance Workforce by Major Occupation Group



Source: ONS (2015a)

FS data provide a more fine-grained view of occupational numbers (Table 2). The SOC2010 distinguishes 43 minor group occupations within the three major groups, SOC 1 to 3; freelancers were present in all of them. The largest groups are artistic, literary and media occupations (328,000 freelancers), managers and proprietors in other services (222,000 freelancers), and teaching and education professionals (139,000 freelancers). These three groups constitute more than a third of all freelance workers in the UK.

In 2015, there were more than 30,000 freelancers in 20 of the 43 minor occupational groups for which LFS collect data – this is two more groups than in 2011. Newly added categories include legal professionals (with almost 38,000 freelancers) and media professionals with almost 32,000. At the opposite end of the scale, there are fewer than a thousand working freelance as either senior officers in protective services or as conservation and environmental associate professionals.

Table 2
Freelance Workforce, Selected Occupations, 2015

(Qualification: 30,000 or more freelance workers)

SOC MINOR GROUP	FREELANCERS, 2015 (AS % OF ALL IN EMPLOYMENT)	ALL IN EMPLOYMENT, 2015
Artistic, literary and media occupations (SOC 341)	328,642 (68.0)	483,304
Managers and proprietors in other services (SOC 125)	222,754 (35.3)	631,724
Teaching and educational professionals (SOC 231)	139,295 (8.4)	1,656,439
Information technology and telecommunications professionals (SOC 213)	117,388 (12.5)	938,537
Health professionals (SOC 221)	94,851 (17.1)	554,209
Business, research and administrative professionals (SOC 242)	91,367 (14.8)	617,491
Sports and fitness occupations (SOC 344)	90,685 (40.4)	224,597
Sales, marketing and related associate professionals (SOC 354)	83,132 (8.6)	971,198
Functional managers and directors (SOC 113)	78,658 (9.0)	877,203
Business, finance and related associate professionals (SOC 353)	78,591 (11.8)	666,366
Design occupations (SOC 342)	58,803 (32.0)	183,562
Production managers and directors (SOC 112)	50,989 (9.9)	516,838
Engineering professionals (SOC 212)	49,568 (10.5)	469,867
Health associate professionals (SOC 321)	46,850 (30.4)	154,064
Managers and proprietors in hospitality and leisure services (SOC 122)	43,291 (13.9)	311,992
Public services and other associate professionals (SOC 356)	42,869 (8.4)	510,358
Architects, town planners and surveyors (SOC 243)	40,401 (17.4)	231,741
Legal professionals (SOC 241)	37,995 (21.3)	177,999
Therapy professionals (SOC 222)	32,025 (21.4)	149,586
Media professionals (SOC 247)	31,845 (19.9)	160,236

Notes: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1. 'All in employment' column includes freelance workers, employees, employers and the self-employed without employees in SOC major groups 4 to 9 in main and second jobs. Excludes workers on government schemes and unpaid family workers.

Sources: ONS (2015a)



Freelancers as a Proportion of all in Employment

There is considerable variation in the proportion of the occupational group that works freelance (Table 2). Among occupational groups with a minimum of 30,000 freelance workers, artistic, literary and media occupations are, by far, the most likely to be undertaken freelance; two thirds of workers in this group do so. This occupational group includes: artists; authors, writers and translators; actors, entertainers and presenters; dancers and choreographers; musicians; arts officers, producers and directors; and photographers, audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operators. A third of those working in sports and fitness occupations, and as managers and proprietors in other services, also work freelance.

At the other end of the scale, fewer than one in ten teaching and educational professionals, public services and other associate professionals, and sales, marketing and related associate professionals work on a freelance basis.

This suggests there is no simple link between absolute numbers working freelance and the proportion of the workforce that is freelance. Teaching and educational professionals, for instance, are the third largest group of freelancers in absolute terms, but only 8 per cent of all such professionals work freelance.

“...artistic, literary and media occupations are, by far, the most likely to be undertaken freelance; two thirds of workers in this group do so.”

Trends

Trends in the occupational profile of freelance workers during the 2008-15 period are highly variable (Table 3). Some occupational groups have expanded substantially while others have decreased, although changes in classification mean that assessments should be conducted carefully due to discontinuities in the data series⁴. Diverse changes are to be expected as the demand for, and supply of, particular freelance skills evolves over time, varying with wider processes of economic development, or as organisations choose to externalise work or bring it in-house in order to address changing operational requirements.

Where organisations adapt to changing economic conditions by externalising labour and reducing the employee headcount, this is likely to lead to increased opportunities for freelance workers. Conversely, where end-users reduce external service provider inputs, this will limit job openings for freelancers. Trends in the pattern of demand for freelancer services reflect these diverse forces. Freelancer numbers more than doubled in artistic, literary and media occupations and in sports and fitness occupations over the 2008-15 period while therapy professionals declined by almost half (Table 3).

Table 3

Freelance Workforce, Selected Occupations, 2008, 2011 and 2015

(Qualification: SOC Minor Group Occupations with 50,000 freelancers or more in 2008, 2011 or 2015)

SOC MINOR GROUP	2008	2011	2015	% CHANGE, 2008-15
Artistic, literary and media occupations (SOC 341)	153,138	265,089	328,642	114.6
Managers and proprietors in other services (SOC 125)	n/a	162,920	222,754	36.7*
Teaching and educational professionals (SOC 231)	97,587	111,379	139,295	42.7
Information technology and telecommunications professionals (SOC 213)	66,913	93,943	117,388	75.4
Health professionals (SOC 221)	56,557	75,357	94,851	67.7
Business and statistical professionals/Business, research and administrative professionals (SOC 242)	59,052	84,940	91,367	54.7
Sports and fitness occupations (SOC 344)	43,984	61,193	90,685	106.2
Sales, marketing and related associate professionals (SOC 354)	44,438	71,213	83,132	87.1
Business, finance and related associate professionals (SOC 353)	75,349	60,409	78,591	4.3
Functional managers and directors (SOC 113)	64,041	70,064	78,658	22.8
Design occupations/Design associate professionals (SOC 342)	64,168	42,705	58,803	-8.4
Engineering professionals (SOC 212)	56,766	45,550	49,568	-12.7
Public services and other associate professionals (SOC 356)	51,903	36,282	42,869	-17.4
Therapists/Therapy professionals (SOC 322/222)	55,925	31,922	32,025	-42.7

Notes: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1. Revisions to the Standard Occupation Classification (2010) include the creation, renaming and removal of minor occupation categories, producing discontinuities in the data series. Some cases have been reallocated to different groups. N/a means percentage change data are not available due to new or obsolete categories. Minor group titles refer to the SOC2010 categories where these still exist; previous titles are used where the category was removed from SOC2010. Starred (*) figures in % change column refer to change during the 2011-15 period.

Sources: ONS (2008, 2011, 2015a)

4. The SOC is revised periodically to reflect changes in types of jobs. SOC2010 created, renamed and removed a number of minor occupational categories and reallocated a large number of cases between groups, particularly managerial and nursing occupations (Elias and Birch 2010).

Industry Profile

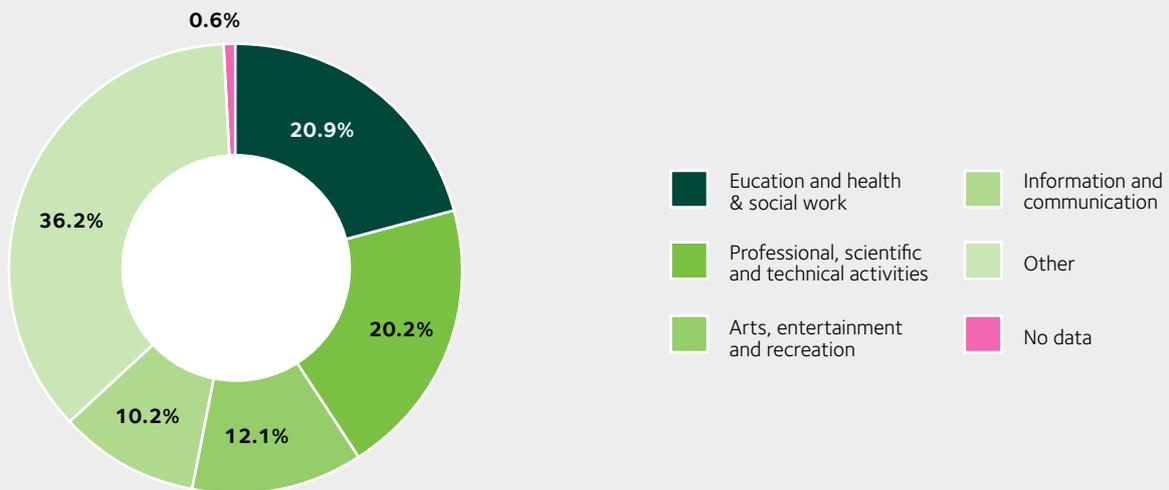
Freelance workers are present in all 21 industry groups defined by the UK Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2007 (ONS 2009). Freelance workers are strongly represented in the professional, scientific and technical activities industry, with 384,000 people (Figure 5; Table 4⁵). High numbers are also found in the education and health social work; arts, entertainment and recreation; and in information and communication industries. Almost two thirds of the UK freelance workforce work in these four industry groups.

Industries with high proportions of freelancers tend to rely heavily on occupations that are commonly organised on a freelance basis. Particular industries and sectors have historically drawn upon freelance labour more than others. Conversely, there are fewer than 5,000 freelance workers in each of the following industries: electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; water supply, sewerage, waste management; and remediation services and extraterritorial organisations.

“Almost two thirds of the UK freelance workforce work in these four industry groups.”

- Professional, scientific & technical activities
- Education and health & social work
- Arts, entertainment & recreation
- Information & communication industries

Figure 5
UK Freelance Workforce, Industry Profile, 2015



Source: ONS (2015a)

5. Changes in the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) have produced discontinuities in the data series making examination of trends over time difficult. As with the Standard Occupational Classification, changes are made periodically to reflect changes in industry structure. SIC2007 implemented a major revision of the industrial structure classification, adopting a framework incorporating 21 sections (ONS 2009).

Table 4
Freelance Workforce, 2011-15: Industry

INDUSTRY SECTION	FREELANCERS, 2011 (AS % OF ALL FREELANCERS)	FREELANCERS, 2015 (AS % OF ALL FREELANCERS)	EMPLOYEES, 2015 (AS % OF ALL IN EMPLOYMENT)
A-F Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Mining and quarrying; Manufacturing; Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities; Construction	133,354 (8.5)	186,991 (9.8)	1,758,319 (15.2)
G-I Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles; Transport and storage; Accommodation and food service activities	201,174 (12.8)	205,032 (10.7)	1,265,219 (10.9)
J Information and communication	166,400 (10.6)	194,535 (10.2)	804,945 (7.0)
K-L Financial and insurance activities; Real estate activities	102,558 (6.5)	145,944 (7.6)	860,727 (7.4)
M Professional, scientific and technical activities	321,215 (20.5)	384,735 (20.2)	1,093,483 (9.4)
N-O; S-U Administration and support services; Public administration and defence; Other service activities; Households as employers; Extraterritorial organisations	126,258 (8.1)	152,272 (8.0)	1,737,746 (15.0)
P-Q Education; Health and Social Work	333,733 (21.3)	398,240 (20.9)	3,730,742 (32.2)
R Arts, entertainment and recreation	170,889 (10.9)	230,704 (12.1)	289,241 (2.5)
No data	10,961 (0.7)	10,625 (0.6)	34,392 (0.3)
All	1,566,542	1,909,078	11,574,814

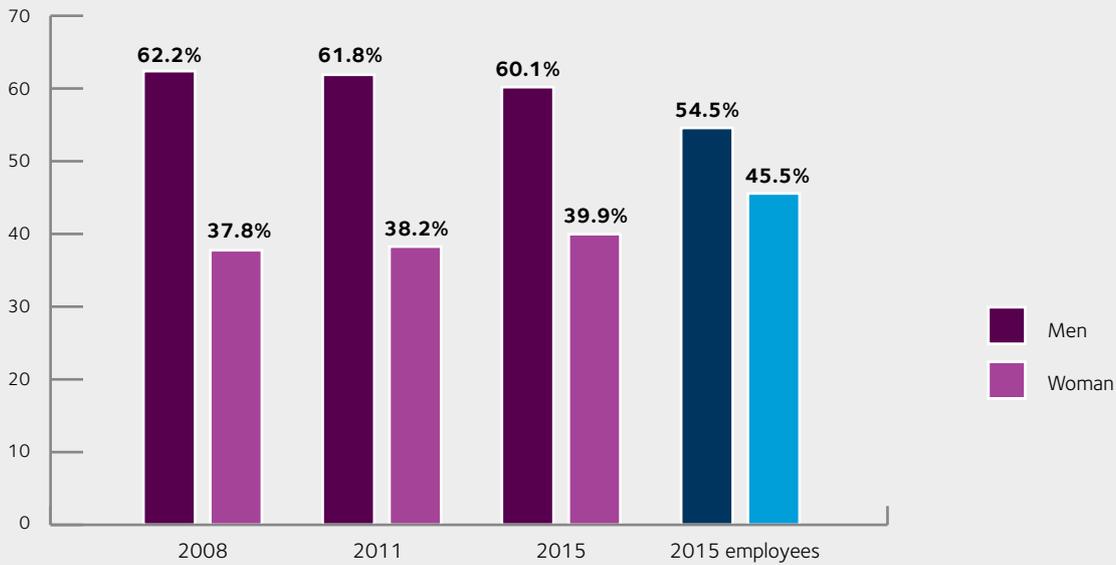
Note: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1. Column percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.
Source: ONS (2011, 2015a)

Freelancing and Gender

The gender mix of the freelance workforce in large part reflects the occupational profile. Sex-typing processes, whereby occupations become associated with men or women and are more likely to be filled by them, are deep-rooted and tend to change slowly over time. Men are dominant, numerically, in engineering, information and communication, and among architects, town planners and surveyors. Women are more highly represented among therapy professionals, health associate professionals and welfare and housing associate professionals. The sexes are more evenly distributed across teaching, design occupations and sales, marketing and related associate professionals. As demand for particular freelance labour services waxes and wanes, this expands, or limits, opportunities for male or female freelancers depending on the roles that are experiencing shifts in demand.

Six in ten freelancers are male, although there appears to have been a slight downward trend since 2008. Men remain more highly represented among the freelance workforce than amongst employees in comparable SOC 1 to 3 occupations: 60 per cent of freelance workers are male compared to 55 per cent of employees in similar occupational groups (Figure 6). It would be interesting to explore whether males have access to greater resources required to enter, and sustain, freelancing and senior employment positions and/or stronger preferences for freelance working. Women often experience various forms of labour market disadvantage arising from pervasive cultural assumptions regarding appropriate paid and unpaid work behaviour. This often influences women to interrupt labour market careers, with consequences for access to the financial, human and social capital required to secure freelance and senior employment jobs.

Figure 6
Gender Profile of the UK Freelance Workforce, 2008-2015

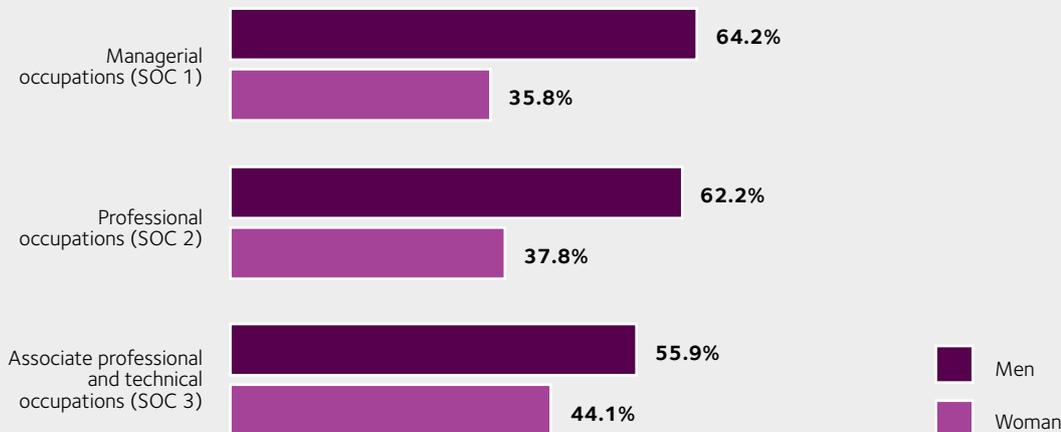


Sources: ONS (2008, 2011, 2015a)

LFS data display differences in freelancers' occupational profiles by gender (Figure 7). Women are more highly represented in associate professional and technical occupations, where 44 per cent are women; this compares with 36 and 38 per cent in managerial and professional

occupations respectively. These figures are slightly higher than those obtained in 2011 for managerial and professional occupations (33 and 35 per cent respectively) and about the same for associate professional and technical occupations (45 per cent).

Figure 7
UK Freelance Workforce by Gender and SOC Major Group, 2015



Source: ONS (2015a)



Freelance Occupations and Gender

There is considerable variety in freelancer job distribution by gender distribution at minor occupational level (Table 5). Male-dominated occupations include engineering (97 per cent of freelance jobs occupied by males), production managers and directors, and architects, town planners and surveyors. Female-dominated occupations are fewer in number – as only 40 per cent of freelancers in total are women – including therapy professionals (90 per cent are female), health associate professionals and, to a lesser degree, managers and proprietors in hospitality and leisure services.

There appears to be no particular relationship between absolute numbers in particular occupations and evidence of any skew towards men or women. The most populous occupational categories – artistic, literary and media occupations; and managers and proprietors in other services – mirror almost exactly the 60/40 gender split in the freelance

workforce as a whole. The third largest occupational category by absolute size is female-dominated: teaching and education professionals (54 per cent female). The fourth largest group, IT professionals, is heavily male-dominated with 87 per cent of freelancers being male.

Nor does there appear to be any straightforward relationship between growth in freelancer numbers in particular occupations and their gender composition. The fastest growing occupations since 2008 (artistic, literary and media occupations; sports and fitness occupations; sales, marketing and related associate professionals) are skewed towards women, while the group experiencing the largest decline (therapy professionals) is also female dominated. With regards to male-dominated groups, IT professionals have undergone a significant increase in numbers since 2008, while engineering professionals have witnessed a fall.

Table 5
Freelance Workforce, Selected Occupations by Gender, 2015
 (Qualification: 30,000 or more freelance workers)

SOC MINOR GROUP	MALE FREELANCERS, 2015 (AS % OF ALL FREELANCERS)	FEMALE FREELANCERS, 2015 (AS % OF ALL FREELANCERS)
Artistic, literary and media occupations (SOC 341)	193,035 (58.7)	135,607 (41.3)
Managers and proprietors in other services (SOC 125)	135,485 (60.8)	87,269 (39.2)
Teaching and educational professionals (SOC 231)	63,467 (45.6)	75,828 (54.4)
Information technology and telecommunications professionals (SOC 213)	101,790 (86.7)	15,598 (13.3)
Health professionals (SOC 221)	51,392 (54.2)	43,459 (45.8)
Business, research and administrative professionals (SOC 242)	54,587 (59.7)	36,780 (40.3)
Sports and fitness occupations (SOC 344)	48,887 (53.9)	41,798 (46.1)
Sales, marketing and related associate professionals (SOC 354)	42,497 (51.1)	40,635 (48.9)
Functional managers and directors (SOC 113)	54,487 (69.3)	24,171 (30.7)
Business, finance and related associate professionals (SOC 353)	63,244 (80.5)	15,347 (19.5)
Design occupations (SOC 342)	29,907 (50.9)	28,896 (49.1)
Production managers and directors (SOC 112)	46,088 (90.4)	4,901 (9.6)
Engineering professionals (SOC 212)	47,891 (96.6)	1,677 (3.4)
Health associate professionals (SOC 321)	7,716 (16.5)	39,134 (83.5)
Managers and proprietors in hospitality and leisure services (SOC 122)	17,843 (41.2)	25,448 (58.8)
Public services and other associate professionals (SOC 356)	26,852 (62.6)	16,017 (37.4)
Architects, town planners and surveyors (SOC 243)	35,773 (88.5)	4,628 (11.5)
Legal professionals (SOC 241)	26,209 (69.0)	11,786 (31.0)
Therapy professionals (SOC 222)	3,194 (10.0)	28,831 (90.0)
Media professionals (SOC 247)	13,321 (41.8)	18,524 (58.2)

Notes: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1.
 Sources: ONS (2015a)

Freelance Mothers

Recent years have witnessed a growing research interest in the ‘mumpreneur’ phenomenon; women with school-age children forming and managing businesses (e.g. Nel et al. 2010; Ekinsmyth 2011). LFS data demonstrate that freelance working mothers, defined as those with dependent children aged 16 or under, are a substantial group. In 2008, there were an estimated 168,000 freelance working mothers in the UK. By 2011, this figure had increased to 211,000 and

by 2015 the figure had risen again to 287,000, 15 per cent of all freelancers (Table 6). This constitutes a massive increase of 70 per cent over the 7-year period. This far outweighs the rise in female employment during this time. This continues the trend towards increased self-employment among women evident for the past two decades.

Table 6
Freelance Working Mothers, Q2, 2015

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
SOC MAJOR GROUP	Self-employed without employees in SOC 1-3 occupations in Main Jobs	Self-employed without employees in SOC 1-3 occupations in Second Jobs and Employees in Main Jobs	Self-employed without employees in SOC 1-3 occupations in Second Jobs and self-employed employers in Main Jobs	Self-employed without employees in SOC 1-3 occupations in Second Jobs and self-employed without employees in SOC 4-9 occupations in Main Jobs	ALL
SOC 1 Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	49,622	6,892	826	1,586	58,926
SOC 2 Professional Occupations	76,947	16,600	1,272	0	94,819
SOC 3 Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	113,017	18,422	587	1,522	133,548
All SOC 1-3 Occupations	239,586	41,914	2,685	3,108	287,293

Notes: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1. Includes women with dependent children aged 16 or under. Cases with missing data excluded.
Source: ONS (2015a)



Older and Younger Freelancers

The age distribution of the freelance workforce is skewed slightly towards the middle of the range with the 40-49 age group the largest (25 per cent of all freelancers are in this age group). Those aged under 30 are least likely to be freelance (11 per cent of all). Freelancers aged 60 and older comprise 21 per cent of the stock of freelance workers (Figure 8).

Men and women of retirement age who undertake paid work are more likely to do so as self-employed rather than as employees, in comparison with younger workers. Older individuals often choose self-employment for what can be categorised as economic or non-economic reasons.

i) Economic reasons – to increase pensionable income, either out of necessity because pension incomes are low, or to top up pension incomes to enhance an already comfortable lifestyle; and

ii) Non-economic reasons – to achieve a more satisfactory work/retirement balance, combining paid work with care responsibilities and leisure time (e.g. Weber and Shaper 2004; Kibler et al. 2012). Older individuals often consider self-employment a means of overcoming perceived ageism in employment (Porcellato et al. 2010).

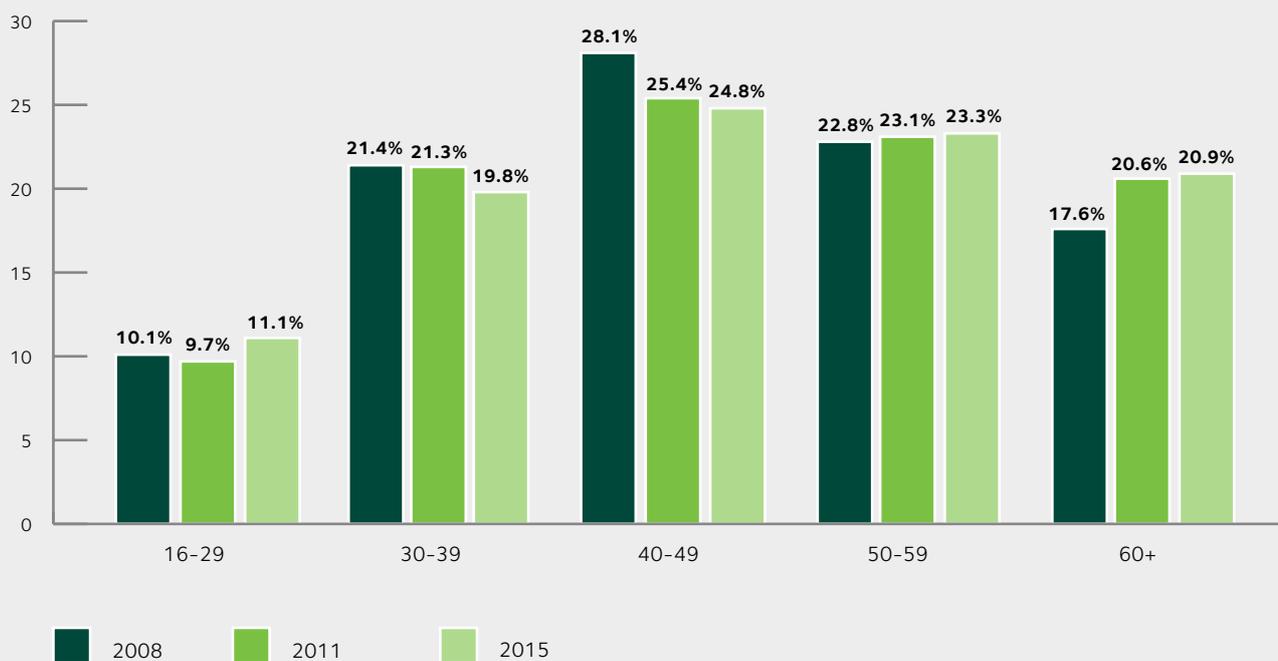
In the context of rising life expectancy, the abolition of the Default Retirement Age, inadequate pension provision and planned increases in State Pensionable Age, the number of freelancers aged over 60 might be expected to increase in the coming years.

Interestingly, young freelancers aged 16-29 years constitute a higher proportion of freelancers in second jobs than in main jobs: 10 per cent of freelancers in main jobs are young, while for those working freelance in second jobs the figure is 17 per cent. Multiple job-holding is thought to be more common among those with family or financial responsibilities, so we might expect freelancing in second jobs to be more common among people in their 30s or older. It is possible that young freelance workers hold multiple part-time jobs, including self-employed ones.

Women are slightly more highly represented among young freelance workers aged 16-29 than in the freelance working population as a whole (42 per cent of young workers compared with 40 per cent of all freelancers). Too much ought not to be read into this. Women are over-represented among all age groups except the oldest group (60 and older) where they comprise only 33 per cent of older freelancers.

Younger freelancers are disproportionately located in SOC major group 3 occupations and less well-represented in SOC major groups 1 and 2. This is consistent with the well-known argument that older workers are more likely to occupy senior managerial and professional positions in employment. For instance, young freelancers aged 16-29 comprise only 7 per cent of freelancers in main jobs in managerial occupations (SOC 1) and 7 per cent of freelancers in main jobs in professionals occupations (SOC 2), but they constitute 15 per cent of all freelancers in main jobs in associate professional and technical occupations (SOC 3).

Figure 8
UK Freelance Workforce by Age, 2008-15



Sources: ONS (2008, 2011, 2015a)

Contrasting with their overall presence of 10 per cent of the freelance workforce in main jobs, young freelancers are especially concentrated in particular jobs. These include: sports and fitness occupations (SOC 344), where 33 per cent of all freelancers in main jobs are in the 16–29 age group. High proportions of young freelancers are also found among information technology technicians (SOC 313) (28 per cent of all freelancers in main jobs), welfare and housing associate professionals (SOC 323) (22 per cent) and managers and directors in transport and logistics (SOC116) (21 per cent). In contrast, young freelancers have no presence at all in 15 of the 43 minor occupation groups suggesting there are powerful barriers to entry for younger workers in these jobs.

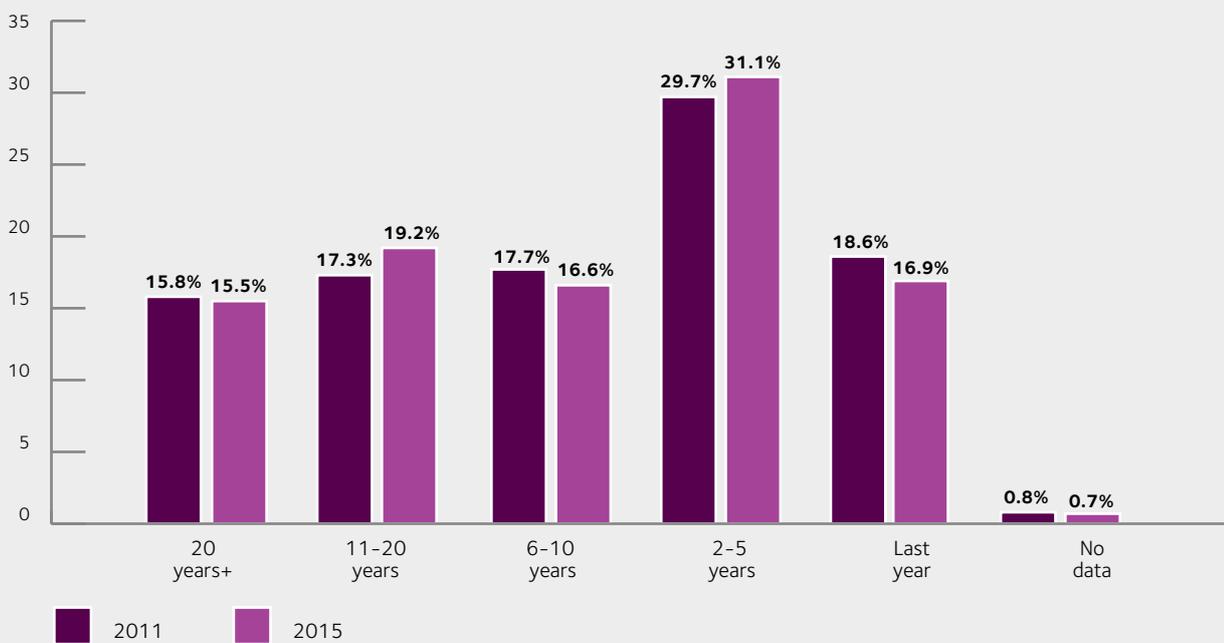
“The age distribution of the freelance workforce is skewed slightly towards the middle of the range with the 40–49 age group the largest”

Self-Employment Duration

The self-employed who work alone are known to be a ‘high-churn’ population. Entry and exit rates are high with approximately 10 per cent of businesses entering, and a slightly lower proportion exiting, the population each year. As most businesses are very small (BIS 2015a), it is such firms that comprise the majority of new entrants and exits. Some suggest that approximately half of all firms cease trading within four years of start-up, with closure rates peaking after 12–18 months (Storey 2011). Any business surviving longer than two years might, therefore, be considered well-established.

LFS data suggest strong preferences for self-employment and a certain degree of longevity among large numbers of the self-employed. Despite being a population subject to churn, 16 per cent of freelance workers report first becoming self-employed more than 20 years ago and 35 per cent report becoming self-employed more than 10 years ago (Figure 9; and Table A1, Appendix 2⁶). One might conclude, therefore, that a large part of the freelance workforce is a relatively stable population with large numbers being self-employed for long periods⁷. This high level of stability among a large subset of the self-employed population suggests both a strong preference for self-employment and might indicate that churn is a feature of particular subsets of the self-employed rather than characteristic of the entire population.

Figure 9
UK Freelance Workforce, 2015: Duration of Continuous Self-Employment



Source: ONS (2015a)

6. This proportion would rise to more than half, if the 13 per cent of cases with missing data were excluded from the calculation.

7. The LFS asks respondents when they first became continuously self-employed. The data may therefore conceal serial freelancing, where respondents operate separate businesses over time.

Educational Qualifications

Freelance workers and comparable employees (in SOC major groups 1 to 3) are educated to an equivalent level. More than two thirds of both groups are qualified to NQF Level 4 or higher (Table 7); these are post-compulsory schooling qualifications including academic degrees, professional diplomas and certificates of higher education. Very few freelance workers, or employees in comparable occupations, have no formal qualifications. This is to be expected given that freelance workers have been defined in terms of the highest skilled occupational groups. There has been a slight increase in the proportion of freelancers educated to NQF Level 4 and above since 2011.

“Freelance workers and comparable employees...are educated to an equivalent level. More than two thirds of both groups are qualified to NQF Level 4 or higher”

Table 7
Freelance Workforce and Employees 2011–15: Highest Educational Qualification

QUALIFICATION LEVEL	FREELANCERS, 2011(%)	FREELANCERS, 2015 (%)	EMPLOYEES, 2015 (SOC 1-3 OCCUPATIONS) (%)
NQF Level 4 and above	1,009,227 (64.4)	1,313,131 (68.8)	8,078,525 (69.8)
NQF Level 3	177,347 (11.3)	184,292 (9.7)	1,426,951 (12.3)
Trade apprenticeships	35,628 (2.3)	42,661 (2.2)	209,753 (1.8)
NQF Level 2	153,898 (9.8)	167,523 (8.8)	931,794 (8.1)
Below NQF Level 2	75,537 (4.8)	95,382 (5.0)	508,616 (4.4)
Other qualifications	60,019 (3.8)	63,203 (3.3)	271,645 (2.3)
No qualifications	50,874 (3.2)	40,213 (2.1)	126,663 (1.1)
No data	4,012 (0.3)	2,673 (0.1)	20,867 (0.2)
All	1,566,542	1,909,078	11,574,814

Notes: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a credit transfer system for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Framework distinguishes nine levels of qualifications for learning at secondary, further, vocational and higher education. NQF Level 4 qualifications include post-compulsory schooling qualifications including academic degrees, professional diplomas and certificates of higher education. Column percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.
Source: ONS (2011, 2015a)

Training

Skill formation and development is important for freelancers to keep abreast of technological, economic, legal and other issues in their respective occupational fields. The capacity to learn new practical skills and/or to acquire market and other information may be necessary to ensure 'employability'; failure to do so may limit access to valuable work opportunities.

Studies emphasise the importance of informal learning in small firms (Kitching 2007). LFS asks several questions regarding training activity and in relation to different time periods (Table 8). The data show important similarities and differences between freelance workers and employees in similar occupational categories.

Table 8
Training and Learning Activity (main jobs only)

TRAINING AND LEARNING ACTIVITY	FREELANCERS, 2015 (%)	EMPLOYEES, 2015 (SOC 1-3 OCCUPATIONS) (%)
Job-related training or education in past 4 weeks	148,179 (9.0)	1,848,151 (16.3)
Job-related training or education in past 3 months	290,198 (17.5)	3,686,204 (32.5)
Non-formal and/or informal learning undertaken within last 4 weeks	264,938 (16.0)	1,499,368 (13.2)
Non-formal and/or informal learning undertaken within last 3 months	399,460 (24.1)	2,534,925 (22.4)
Learning undertaken within the past 4 weeks	357,768 (21.6)	2,411,867 (21.3)
Learning undertaken within the past 3 months	482,523 (29.2)	3,318,042 (29.3)
All	1,654,227	11,329,206

Source: ONS (2015a)

There were large differences in the number of freelance workers and employees reporting job-related training or education during the previous four weeks and the previous three months. Only about half the proportion of freelancers undertook such training compared with employees: 18 per cent of freelancers while 33 per cent of employees reported such training in the previous three months. The proportions reporting participation in non-formal and informal learning were broadly similar among freelancers and employees, with a slightly higher incidence among the former. Informal learning typically includes practices such as: learning-by-doing, through performance of routine working practices; on-the-job guided learning through interaction with co-workers at the workplace; unplanned interaction with co-workers at the workplace; and planned and unplanned learning from material artefacts, such as equipment manuals or using a computer to search the Internet (Billett 1996; Eraut 2000).

This data suggests two possible implications. First, that freelance workers may have to rely more heavily on informal and non-formal learning to upgrade skills and knowledge because they are unable or unwilling to participate in more formal job-related training and education. Employers may be excluding freelancers from more formal training, reserving it for employees; alternatively, freelancers may be offered formal training but simply lack the time to take part due to work-related (or other) pressures. Second, the pattern of learning and training activity raises questions about whether freelancers engage in sufficient learning and training activity to support their skill development needs. It is possible that informal learning suffices to enable freelancers to keep skills and knowledge up to date because working in multiple workplaces with diverse co-workers fosters learning. It is also possible that employers exclude freelancers from training in order to keep costs down.



Descriptions of Self-Employed Status

Freelance workers operate under various legal forms – as sole proprietors or partners in unincorporated businesses, as directors of limited companies, or even as Pay As You Earn employees in umbrella companies. Many can also work through the additional intermediary of an agency. The LFS

provides insights into the legal form of freelancers' businesses. Respondents reporting as self-employed in their main job, or not paid directly by an employer, are prompted to describe themselves using up to four possible responses from a list of seven:



Working for yourself



Running a business or a professional practice



Doing freelance work



A partner in a business or a professional practice



A sole director of your own limited business



A sub-contractor

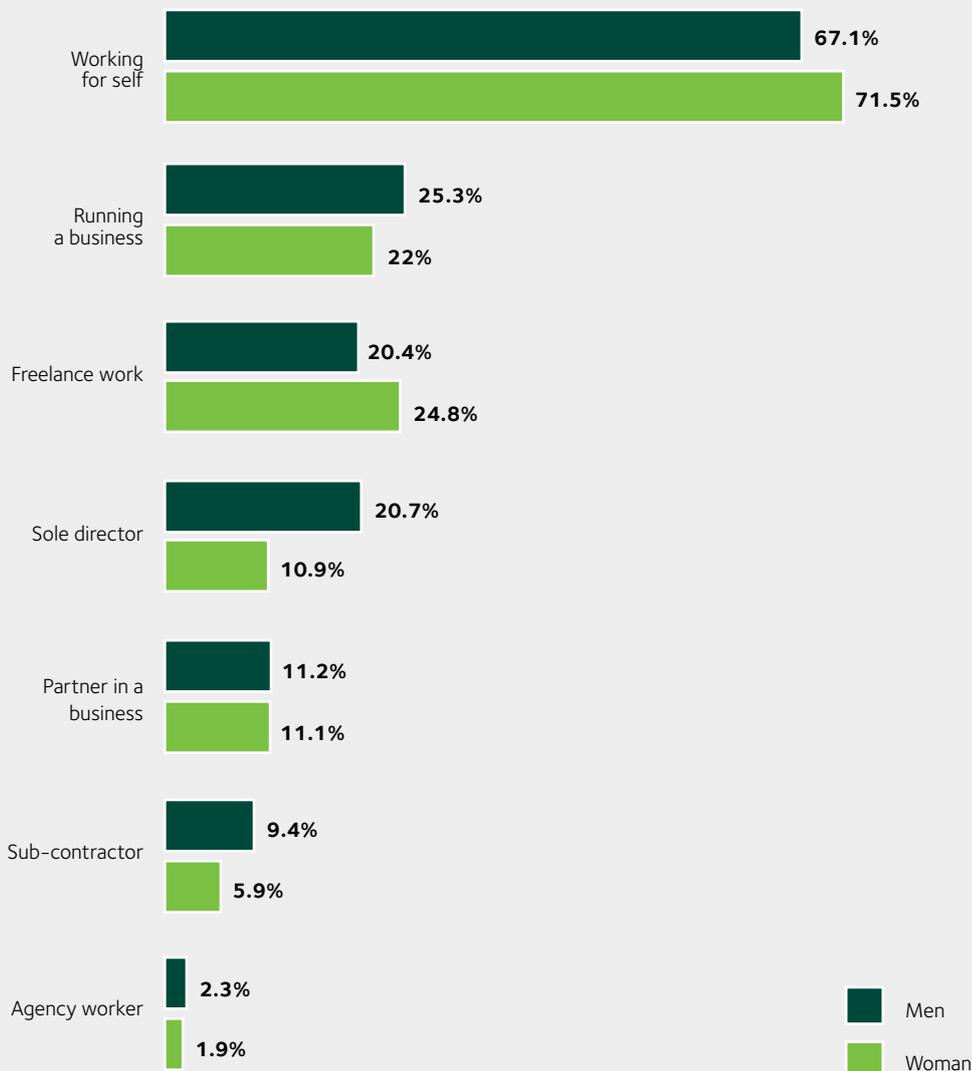


Paid a salary or wage by an agency

Freelance workers were much more likely to define themselves as 'working for themselves' than 'doing freelance work' (Figure 10; and Table A2, Appendix 2): more than two thirds self-report as 'working for themselves' while fewer than a quarter report 'doing freelance work'. This likely reflects two influences. First, the high proportion of individuals working as sole proprietors without employees (57 per cent of UK businesses), or as sole directors of limited companies (13 per cent of UK businesses) (BIS 2015a; see Table 10); and, second, occupational/sector norms influencing how the self-employed without employees are described in particular work settings. For instance, looking at the occupations listed in

Table 2, each of which has 30,000 or more freelance workers, of those in main jobs, 53 per cent of media professionals, 42 per cent of those in design occupations and 41 per cent of those in artistic, literary and media occupations described themselves as 'doing freelance work'. In contrast, only 2 per cent of managers and proprietors in hospitality and leisure services, 9 per cent of legal professionals, and 10 per cent of health professionals reported themselves to be doing freelance work. In these work settings, independent professionals are much more likely to self-report as working for themselves.

Figure 10
UK Freelance Workers, Reported Self-Employed Status, 2015



Notes: This question asked only of freelancers in main jobs. Multiple responses permitted; hence percentages do not sum to 100.
 Source: ONS (2015a)

There are some differences by gender. Women are slightly more likely to self-report as freelance workers than men (25 per cent, compared to 20 per cent of men) (Figure 10; see also Table A3, Appendix 2). Women are also more likely to report working for themselves (72 per cent, compared with 67 per cent of men). Men are more likely to report being the sole director of a limited company, perhaps indicating a greater propensity to incorporate their businesses whereas women are more likely to remain unincorporated as sole proprietors or as partnerships. This is consistent with data

suggesting men's businesses tend to be larger in terms of assets and might, therefore, be more willing to incorporate to take advantage of limited liability. It might also reflect the sectors men and women work in and the expectations of end-users of their labour services. For instance, operating through a limited company might be common practice in sectors such as IT, where men are numerically dominant, but less so in female-dominated areas such as health associate professionals and nursing and midwifery.

Region of Usual Residence

Freelancers live and work all over the UK. Table 9 provides data on the geographical distribution of freelancers and, for comparison, employees. Data are based on the government statistical regions. The most dominant region, numerically speaking, is the rest of the South East. Almost a quarter of all freelance workers (22 per cent), 423,000, reside in

this region. London (inner and outer) is home to 391,000 freelancers, while the South West has 219,000. At the other end of the spectrum, Tyne and Wear is home to fewer than 20,000 freelancers.

Table 9
Region of Usual Residence, 2015

REGION	FREELANCERS (%)	EMPLOYEES (%)
Rest of South East	423,773 (22.2)	5,293,128 (19.6)
South West	219,421 (11.5)	2,282,352 (8.5)
Inner London	199,172 (10.4)	1,483,759 (5.5)
Outer London	192,180 (10.1)	2,099,547 (7.8)
East Midlands	109,860 (5.8)	1,987,913 (7.4)
Rest of West Midlands	84,491 (4.4)	1,236,909 (4.6)
Greater Manchester	82,444 (4.3)	1,128,173 (4.2)
Rest of Scotland	76,439 (4.0)	1,400,464 (5.2)
East Anglia	63,654 (3.3)	1,076,323 (4.0)
Wales	61,148 (3.2)	1,255,064 (4.7)
Rest of North West	58,807 (3.1)	1,038,069 (3.9)
West Midlands (met county)	57,394 (3.0)	1,023,473 (3.8)
West Yorkshire	52,335 (2.7)	922,531 (3.4)
Strathclyde	43,237 (2.3)	955,976 (3.5)
Rest of Yorks & Humberside	40,180 (2.1)	706,898 (2.6)
Rest of Northern region	39,163 (2.1)	782,356 (2.9)
Merseyside	31,959 (1.7)	556,475 (2.1)
South Yorkshire	30,124 (1.6)	561,198 (2.1)
Northern Ireland	25,659 (1.3)	712,078 (2.6)
Tyne & Wear	17,638 (0.9)	460,039 (1.7)
All	1,909,078	26,962,725

Source: ONS (2015a)

The comparison with the geographical distribution of employee jobs demonstrates that the regions with the highest absolute number of freelance workers are also home to proportionately more freelancers. Each of the top four regions by absolute number of freelancers – Rest of South East, South West, Inner and Outer London – also have much higher proportions of freelancers in relation to employees. Inner London comprises almost double the proportion of

freelancers in relation to employees. This is likely to reflect the industrial and occupational distribution of jobs, with many sectors prone to freelancing to be well-represented in the capital. In contrast, as might be expected, the regions with fewer freelance workers in absolute terms are also under-represented in proportionate terms relative to employees. Northern Ireland and Tyne and Wear have only half the level of freelancers relative to their presence among employees.

Working From Home and Travel to Work Time

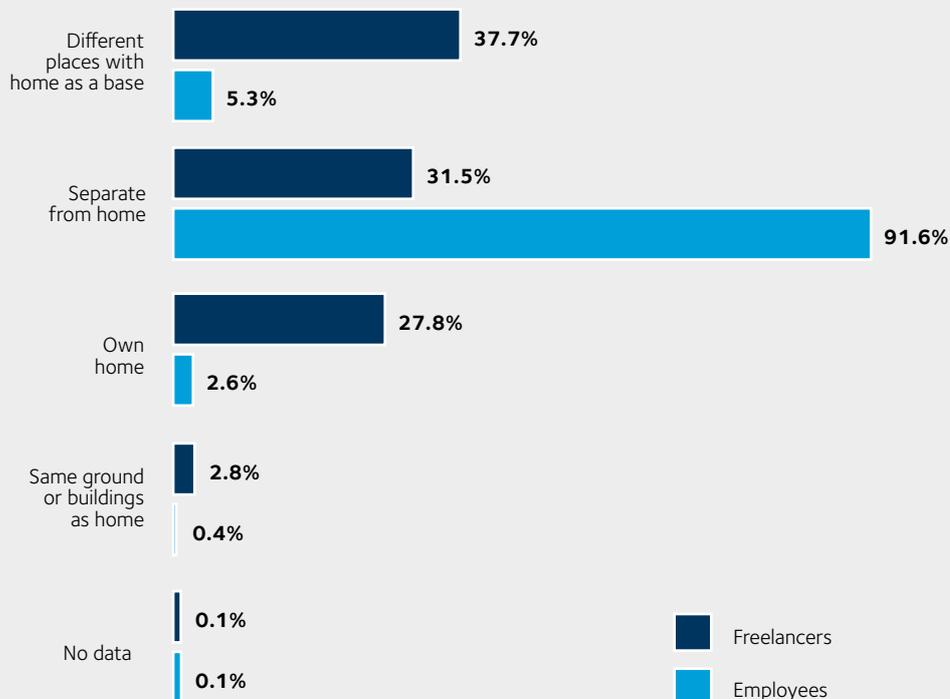
Control over the time and place of work is one of the reasons cited for choosing self-employment (Osnowitz 2005). Homeworking is a common practice among the self-employed (ONS 2014). Freelancers may choose to work at or from home, because it is more convenient to operate a business in this way, less expensive, or in order to combine paid work with caring, leisure or other activities. Although many employees also work at or from home for at least some of the time, the self-employed might be in a better position to make such a choice.

LFS data suggest that many freelance workers work at or from home (Figure 11; and Table A4, Appendix 2). Almost

four in ten freelancers (38 per cent) report working mainly in different places with home as a base, while a further 28 per cent report working mainly in their own home. In contrast, approximately a third (32 per cent) report working mainly somewhere quite separate from home. There has been little change in behaviour over the 2008-15 period.

The contrast between freelance workers and similar employees (in SOC 1-3 occupational categories) is stark. The overwhelming majority of employees (92 per cent) work mainly somewhere quite separate from home. Only a small proportion of employees work at or from home, or in the same grounds or buildings as home.

Figure 11
Freelancers and Employees: Place of Work, 2015



Source: ONS (2015a)

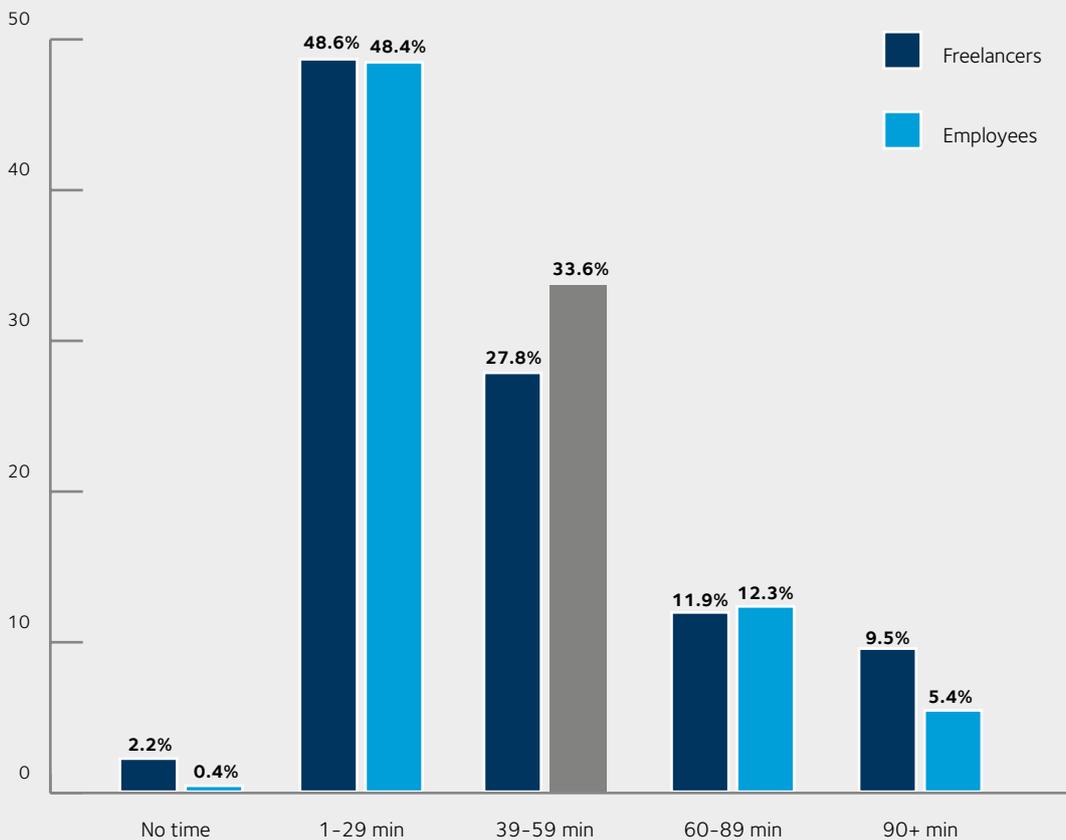
There are marked gender differences in main place of work. Women are more likely to work at home (33 per cent, compared to 24 per cent of men), while men are more likely to work in different places using home as a base (41 per cent, compared to 36 per cent of women). These differences are likely to reflect, in part, women's greater responsibility for unpaid household and care-work. Women wishing to combine paid work with looking after children and/or elderly relatives might find that working freelance at home provides them with the required flexibility.

Before coming to travel to work times, it is worth bearing in mind that the number of freelancers working at home has risen in both absolute and proportionate terms since 2008. Freelancer numbers working from home have increased from 358,000 to 531,000 between 2008-15 (Table A4),

a proportionate rise from 26 to 28 per cent of all freelancers. There are therefore fewer freelancers, in proportionate terms, who have to travel to work at all.

There is considerable variety in freelancers' travel to work times, from no time at all to over an hour and a half (Figure 12). Travel to work times in main jobs have increased during the 2010-14 period. Whereas, in 2010, 56 per cent of freelancers in main jobs could travel to work in under half an hour, by 2014 this figure had reduced slightly to 51 per cent (Table A5, Appendix 2). There was a corresponding increase in the proportion taking an hour or more to get to work, from 17 to 21 per cent of freelance workers. Average travel to work time has consequently risen approximately 10 per cent from 32 to 36 minutes.

Figure 12
Freelancers and Employees: Travel to Work Time(main jobs only), 2014



Notes: Data available only for workers in main jobs in Q4 each year; cases with missing data excluded. This question was asked only of those who work at a location separate from home.
Source: ONS (2014a)t

Freelance workers and employees in comparable SOC 1 to 3 occupations report a broadly similar pattern of responses with regard to travel to work time in 2014. Approximately, half of all freelancers and employees who work at a location separate from home report travel to work times of less than half an hour: 51 per cent of freelance workers and 49 per cent of

comparable employees (Figure 12; and Table A5, Appendix 2). But there is a slight difference in numbers travelling more than 90 minutes to get to work, with 10 per cent of freelancers and 5 per cent of employees reporting this. Overall, employees' travel to work times in main jobs is slightly shorter than that of freelance workers at 34 minutes.

Contribution to Business Turnover

Using data from the BIS Business Population Estimates 2015, it is possible to provide a *speculative* estimate of the economic contribution freelance workers make to the UK economy. A direct estimate cannot be provided on the basis of BIS data because firms are not distinguished according to skill/occupation. Businesses without employees (excluding financial intermediation) contributed an estimated £237bn in sales during 2015, or approximately 6 per cent of private sector turnover (excluding financial intermediation) (BIS 2015; see Table 10).

Approximately 46 per cent of businesses without employees (excluding financial intermediation) are freelancer-owned: 1.8m freelancers, in a wider group of 4.08m. If freelance workers contribute to turnover proportionate to their presence in the wider group of businesses without employees, their collective sales would be £109bn. Freelancer-owned businesses might be expected to generate greater revenues

than other own-account businesses, owing to the more valuable knowledge and skills exercised, suggesting a slightly higher turnover figure, perhaps £120-125bn, approximately 3-4 per cent of business turnover (excluding financial intermediation) – but caution is advised in interpreting this finding.

Such data, however, tell us little about the role freelancers may play enabling or facilitating organisational practices that enhance product and process innovations and, ultimately, sales and profit performance. Burke (2012) has shown how freelancers are used in a variety of ways by end-user organisations, producing innovations themselves but also supporting others to innovate. Unfortunately, LFS data provide little insight into these important but hidden processes. Incorporating such impact would surely lead to a revised upward estimate of the economic contribution of freelance workers.

Table 10
Businesses With No Employees, Start-2015: Business Stock, Proprietor Numbers and Turnover by Legal Status

LEGAL STATUS OF BUSINESS	ALL BUSINESSES	BUSINESSES WITH NO EMPLOYEES	BUSINESSES WITHOUT EMPLOYEES AS % OF ALL	PROPRIETOR NUMBERS IN BUSINESSES WITHOUT EMPLOYEES	TURNOVER (£M)
Sole proprietorships	3,325,205	3,050,930	91.8	3,051,000	105,784
Partnerships	435,995	304,030	69.7	678,000	26,729
Companies	1,628,250	722,625	44.4	722,000	104,678
All	5,389,450	4,077,585	75.7	4,451,000	237,191

Notes: 'Businesses with no employees' comprise sole proprietorships and partnerships with only the self-employed owner-manager(s), and companies with only an employee director. Companies can take a range of legal forms, including Public Limited Companies, Private Limited Companies, Limited Liability Partnerships, and others. Turnover column excludes financial intermediation (Section K) because data is not available on a comparable basis.

Source: Business Population Estimates for the UK and Regions, 2015, Table 3, UK Legal Status "https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/business-population-estimates-2015" https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/business-population-estimates-2015



Conclusion

This report has provided a portrait of the UK freelance workforce using official statistics. Defining freelance workers as self-employed workers, working alone or with partners, but without employees in SOC 1-3 occupations, it is estimated that there are 1.91m freelance workers in the UK. This figure includes 1.65m in main jobs and a further 255,000 in second jobs. Freelance workers constitute 6 per cent of all in employment.

Freelancer numbers have increased 22 per cent in the 2011-15 period, and 36 per cent over the 2008-15 period. Although the research covers only a relatively short period of seven years, the data are suggestive of a substantial shift in labour market processes. That the increase in freelancing in these seven years occurred during both periods of economic crisis and during a period of growth, albeit modest, suggest that a return to previous patterns of economic growth may not bring with it a return to prior employment patterns. Freelancing looks likely to remain very important.

Freelance workers remain important contributors to the UK economy. One tentative estimate might suggest that freelance workers contribute approximately 3-4 per cent

of private sector output, as well as facilitating wealth creation by the organisations that engage them. Freelancers enable organisational clients in a wide variety of industries and occupational settings to adapt labour practices flexibly to meet operational requirements in order to increase efficiency and manage risk better.

The evidence base on the demand-side of the freelancer labour market is, however, limited and fragmented. We still have only a partial picture of the reasons end-users of freelance services, both organisational and personal, hire freelance labour, and of the nature and extent of use. Exploring the demand side of the freelance labour market in more depth would enlarge our understanding of the use and value of freelance working in the UK - its drivers, processes and consequences. This would contribute to an assessment of the value of freelance working to individuals, organisations and the wider UK economy. Such knowledge would be of value to freelance workers and their representative associations, organisational users of freelance workers, and policy-makers interested in facilitating freelance working in the UK.

Appendix 1

Methodological Approach

Introduction

This Appendix sets out our methodological approach. It describes the data sources used, methods of data search and extraction, and data analysis. We begin with a brief discussion of the principal data source, the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The Labour Force Survey as a Data Source on Freelance Workers

The UK government produces no data source specifically recording, or estimating, freelance worker numbers. Freelancers are present, but hidden, within UK official statistics on businesses and workers. One must, therefore, construct estimates from available data sources. Two government sources can be used to derive estimates of the size of the freelance workforce: the LFS, published quarterly by the Office for National Statistics; and the Business Population Estimates, published annually by Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS)⁹. The LFS, a quarterly survey of individuals' labour market activity, is the most useful source for identifying, and counting, freelance worker numbers.

The LFS provides estimates of UK self-employment and employment based on interviews with approximately 100,000 adults aged 16 and over in 50,000 households. LFS data can be used to distinguish freelancers from other labour market actors – employees, employers, other own-account

workers in SOC major groups 4 to 9, workers on government schemes, unpaid family workers, the unemployed, and the economically inactive – and to estimate their numbers. Data are weighted according to age, sex and region of residence, and grossed up, in order to present nationally representative figures (LFS 2010).

The LFS permits identification of businesses without employees in particular occupations. Four distinct sub-groups of freelance workers can be identified and counted (Figure A1). The first sub-group refers to those working freelance in main jobs in particular occupations; the rest refer to those freelancing in second jobs, with some other status in main jobs. To calculate the size of the UK freelance workforce, estimates must be made separately for each of the four sub-groups and then aggregated.

Figure A1
Operationalising the Narrow Definition of Freelance Status
Using LFS Categories

1.	FREELANCE IN MAIN JOBS	The self-employed without employees, working alone or with partners, in main jobs in an SOC major group 1-3 occupation
2.	FREELANCE IN SECOND JOBS	The self-employed without employees, working alone or with partners, in a second job in an SOC major group 1-3 occupation and who are employees in main jobs
3.	FREELANCE IN SECOND JOBS	The self-employed without employees, working alone or with partners, in a second job in an SOC major group 1-3 occupation and who are self-employed employers in main jobs
4.	FREELANCE IN SECOND JOBS	The self-employed without employees, working alone or with partners, in a second job in an SOC major group 1-3 occupation and who are self-employed without employees, working alone or with partners, in main jobs in an SOC major group 4-9 occupation ¹⁰

The LFS is subject to a number of potential sources of error that might affect freelancer estimates derived, for example, the reliance on self-report data and on proxy responses, and the exclusion of certain groups (Machin 2008).

Necessarily, this means estimates of the size of the freelance workforce, and constituent subgroups, derived from LFS data should be interpreted with caution.

9. BIS estimates use LFS data to estimate the number of enterprises that are not registered for Pay-As-You Earn and Value Added Tax, approximately half of the business stock.

10. This fourth sub-group is only relevant to the narrow definition of freelance status. Including this group in the broad definition would entail double counting of those in SOC major group 4 to 9 occupations in main jobs.

Estimating the Size of the Freelance Workforce

LFS respondents are routed differently through the survey questionnaire depending on responses to particular questions. So, for instance, self-employed respondents are asked particular questions but not others aimed specifically at employees or the unemployed. Identifying, and counting, freelance workers using LFS data entails various steps (Figure A2). First, the LFS asks respondents to define themselves as an employee, self-employed, on a government scheme, an unpaid family worker in their main job in a specific reference week - or if none apply (that is, economically inactive respondents). Self-employed respondents are then asked if they work alone, or with partners, or if they employ other people. The self-employed who work alone, or with partners, are then separated into those working in SOC major group 1 to 3 occupations and those working in SOC major group 4 to 9 occupations. This group comprises 1,654,227 people (Table 1, column a, 'All SOC 1-3 Occupations' row).

The procedure is undertaken for second jobs, although the process is slightly more complicated as it has to be repeated three times. Individuals working freelance in second jobs may report one of three non-freelance statuses in main jobs:

- employee;
- self-employed, with employees;
- self-employed, working alone or with partners, in an SOC major group 4 to 9 occupation.

So, the first step is to identify employees in main jobs who are also self-employed in second jobs, working alone or with partners in an SOC 1 to 3 occupation. This process is repeated for self-employed employers in main jobs and for the self-employed, working alone or with partners, in an SOC major group 4 to 9 occupation in main jobs. Individuals who are freelance in main jobs are not counted separately as freelance in second jobs, where they indicate operating a second, different, business.

**Figure A2,
Procedure for Identifying Freelance Workers in Main Jobs Using LFS Data**

Q1. (IN THE REFERENCE WEEK) WERE YOU WORKING AS AN EMPLOYEE OR WERE YOU SELF-EMPLOYED?	
Employee	26,240,767
Self-employed	4,508,489
Government scheme	17,612
Unpaid family worker	96,194
Does not apply	33,203,276
Total	64,066,338

Q2. IF SELF-EMPLOYED: WERE YOU WORKING ON YOUR OWN OR DID YOU HAVE EMPLOYEES?	
Work alone, or with partners	3,754,275
Employ others	753,271
No data	943
Total	4,508,489

Q3. WHAT WAS YOUR (MAIN) JOB (IN THE WEEK ENDING SUNDAY [DATE])?

SOC 1 Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	391,722
SOC 2 Professional Occupations	598,735
SOC 3 Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	663,770
SOC 4 Administrative and Secretarial	130,888
SOC 5 Skilled Trades Occupations	1,021,266
SOC 6 Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	279,547
SOC 7 Sales and Customer Service Occupations	82,998
SOC 8 Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	341,656
SOC 9 Elementary Occupations	243,080
No data	613
ALL OCCUPATIONS	3,754,275
All SOC 1-3 Occupations	1,654,227

Notes: Categories and data presented in bold indicate how the sample of freelance workers in main jobs has been derived from larger groups of the self-employed (Q1) and the self-employed working alone, or with partners (Q2).

So, in order to calculate the number of freelance workers, four figures must be calculated and summed (see Table 1):

- The number of self-employed without employees, working alone or with partners, in main jobs in an SOC 1-3 occupation
- The number of self-employed without employees, working alone or with partners, in second jobs in an SOC 1-3 occupation and who are
 - employees in main jobs
 - employers in main jobs
 - self-employed without employees, working alone or with partners, in main jobs in an SOC 4 to 9 occupation.

Data Analysis

Data are presented using univariate and bivariate analysis. Univariate analysis is presented in the form of frequency tables for various characteristics of the freelance workforce (e.g. occupation, industry, duration of continuous self-employment). Bivariate analysis is presented as cross-tabulations between freelance status and key variables (e.g. gender) and to compare freelance workers with employees on selected variables of interest. Trend data are provided for selected variables using the April-June 2008 and April-June 2011 datasets (overall size of freelance workforce, occupation, industry, gender).

Appendix 2

Data Tables

Table A1
Freelance Workforce, 2011: Year Started as Self-Employed (main jobs only)

	FREELANCERS, 2011 (%)	FREELANCERS, 2015 (%)
More than 20 years ago	214,823 (15.8)	257,027 (15.5)
11-20 years ago	235,375 (17.3)	317,532 (19.2)
6-10 years ago	239,813 (17.7)	274,362 (16.6)
2-5 years ago	403,931 (29.7)	514,203 (31.1)
Last year	253,270 (18.6)	279,752 (16.9)
No data	10,897 (0.8)	11,351 (0.7)
All	1,358,109	1,654,227

Note: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1. Respondents are asked when they first started as self-employed; this may be a different business to the current one. Column percentages do not sum to 100 per cent due to rounding.
 Source: ONS (2011, 2015)

Table A2
Freelance Workforce, 2008, 2011 and 2015: Descriptions of Self-Employed Status (main jobs only)

RESPONSE CATEGORY	FREELANCERS, 2008 (%)	FREELANCERS, 2011 (%)	FREELANCERS, 2015 (%)
Working for self	845,757 (69.6)	959,133 (70.6)	1,138,394 (68.8)
Running a business or professional practice	291,790 (24.0)	357,840 (26.3)	397,765 (24.0)
Freelance work	280,843 (23.1)	315,848 (23.3)	365,673 (22.1)
Sole director of own limited company	133,737 (11.0)	153,422 (11.3)	278,574 (16.8)
Partner in a business or professional practice	159,625 (13.1)	155,930 (11.5)	185,236 (11.2)
Subcontractor	83,197 (6.8)	107,095 (7.9)	132,708 (8.0)
Paid salary or wage by agency	47,921 (3.9)	27,930 (2.1)	35,305 (2.1)
No data	10,502 (0.9)	19,783 (1.5)	15,432 (0.9)
All	1,214,940	1,358,109	1,654,227

Table A3
Freelance Workforce, 2015: Self-Employed Status by Gender

RESPONSE CATEGORY	MALE (%)	FEMALE (%)	ALL
Working for self	674,325 (67.1)	464,069 (71.5)	1,138,394 (68.8)
Running a business or professional practice	254,844 (25.3)	142,921 (22.0)	397,765 (24.0)
Freelance work	204,903 (20.4)	160,770 (24.8)	365,673 (22.1)
Sole director of own limited company	207,852 (20.7)	70,722 (10.9)	278,574 (16.8)
Partner in a business or professional practice	113,106 (11.2)	72,130 (11.1)	185,236 (11.2)
Subcontractor	94,390 (9.4)	38,318 (5.9)	132,708 (8.0)
Paid salary or wage by agency	22,844 (2.3)	12,461 (1.9)	35,305 (2.1)
No data	6,585 (0.7)	8,847 (1.4)	15,432 (0.9)
All	1,005,424	648,803	1,654,227

Notes: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1, but only includes those in main jobs. Respondents could describe themselves using up to four separate prompted descriptions from seven listed. Column percentages for males/females sum to 100.

Source: ONS (2015a)

Table A4
Freelance Workforce, 2008-15: Place of Work

Q (IN YOUR MAIN/SECOND JOB) DO YOU WORK MAINLY IN...?	FREELANCERS, 2008 (%)	FREELANCERS, 2011 (%)	FREELANCERS, 2015 (%)	EMPLOYEES, 2015 (%)
Different places with home as a base	531,016 (38.0)	557,758 (35.6)	720,615 (37.7)	616,789 (5.3)
Somewhere quite separate from home	460,428 (32.9)	528,593 (33.7)	600,798 (31.5)	10,605,464 (91.6)
Own home	358,216 (25.6)	430,252 (27.5)	531,642 (27.8)	296,084 (2.6)
Same grounds or building as your home	47,436 (3.4)	49,330 (3.1)	53,394 (2.8)	40,548 (0.4)
No data/not applicable	2,138 (0.2)	609 (<0.1)	2,629 (0.1)	15,929 (0.1)
All	1,399,234	1,566,542	1,909,078	11,574,814

Note: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1. Columns do not sum to 100 per cent due to rounding.

Source: ONS (2008, 2011, 2015a)

Table A5
Freelance Workforce, Main Job Only, and Employees 2010-14: Travel to Work Time

	FREELANCERS, 2010 (%)	FREELANCERS, 2014 (%)	EMPLOYEES, 2014 (SOC1-3 OCCUPATIONS) (%)
No time	9,747 (2.4)	8,619 (2.2)	31,660 (0.4)
1-29 minutes	222,310 (54.0)	193,398 (48.6)	4,189,138 (48.4)
30-59 minutes	113,119 (27.5)	110,543 (27.8)	2,904,422 (33.6)
60-89 minutes	36,505 (8.9)	47,189 (11.9)	1,061,235 (12.3)
90 minutes or more	30,214 (7.3)	37,923 (9.5)	463,450 (5.4)
Average (mean) time	32.4	35.6	33.6
All	411,895	397,672	8,649,905

Notes: Freelancers defined as Table 1, note 1, but only includes those in main jobs. Data available for Q4, 2014. Question asked only in Q4 each year. This question was asked only of those who work at a location separate from home. Columns do not sum to 100 per cent due to rounding. Cases with missing data excluded.
Source: ONS (2010, 2014)

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About IPSE

IPSE is the largest association of independent professionals in the EU, representing over 67,000 freelancers, contractors and consultants from every sector of the economy. It's a not-for-profit organisation owned and run by its members.

We believe that flexibility in the labour market is crucial to Britain's economic success, and dedicate our work to improving the landscape for the freelance way of working through our active and influential voice in government and industry.

With highly professional staff working for you, IPSE has the unique ability to demonstrate the economic value of freelancing to those in power and ensure freelancing is both considered and supported in all areas of regulation and policy. As well as being a campaigning body, IPSE provides a wide range of support services to help its members succeed in business, including tax and legal helplines, IR35 support, and compensation for illness/injury.

Founded in 1999 by a community of freelance contractors, IPSE has become the leading authority on freelancing in the UK. The association is governed by its members and any member is eligible to stand for election to the Consultative Council, and from there, for election to the Board of Directors.

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