Report sponsored and analyzed by:

Measuring U

uxpa international

2026 UX Salary Survey

Research Methodology

STUDY DESIGN

Online survey (14 minutes)

SAMPLE SIZE

383 UX Professionals

Initial respondents were recruited through postings on professional networks and websites, such as UXPA and LinkedIn. Additional respondents were recruited using snowball sampling.

DATES OF STUDY

June 2026 - September 2026



Respondent Demographics

Respondents (Global)

We received responses from people in 24 countries. The majority of respondents were from the United States (82%), Canada (5%),the United Kingdom (4%), and Germany (2%).

The respondent sample differed slightly from 2024, where fewer respondents were from the United States (67% -- fluctuating between 64% and 82% over the past ten years).

	Percentage (2026)	Percentage (2024)	Percentage (2022)	Percentage (2018)	Percentage (2016)
United States (USA)	82%	67%	72%	64%	75%
Canada	5%	4%	5%	5%	3%
United Kingdom (UK)	4%	4%	9%	5%	4%
Germany	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
India	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Australia	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Portugal	1%				

N = 383 in 2026



Global Responses (Full List, 2026)

United States	82.2%	Poland	0.3%
Canada	4.7%	Pakistan	0.3%
United Kingdom	3.7%	Nigeria	0.3%
Germany	1.6%	Netherlands	0.3%
India	1.3%	Mexico	0.3%
Portugal	1.0%	Italy	0.3%
Australia	0.8%	Hungary	0.3%
Argentina	0.5%	Greece	0.3%
Turkey	0.3%	France	0.3%
Switzerland	0.3%	Czech Republic	0.3%
Sweden	0.3%	Brazil	0.3%
Spain	0.3%	Austria	0.3%

N = 383

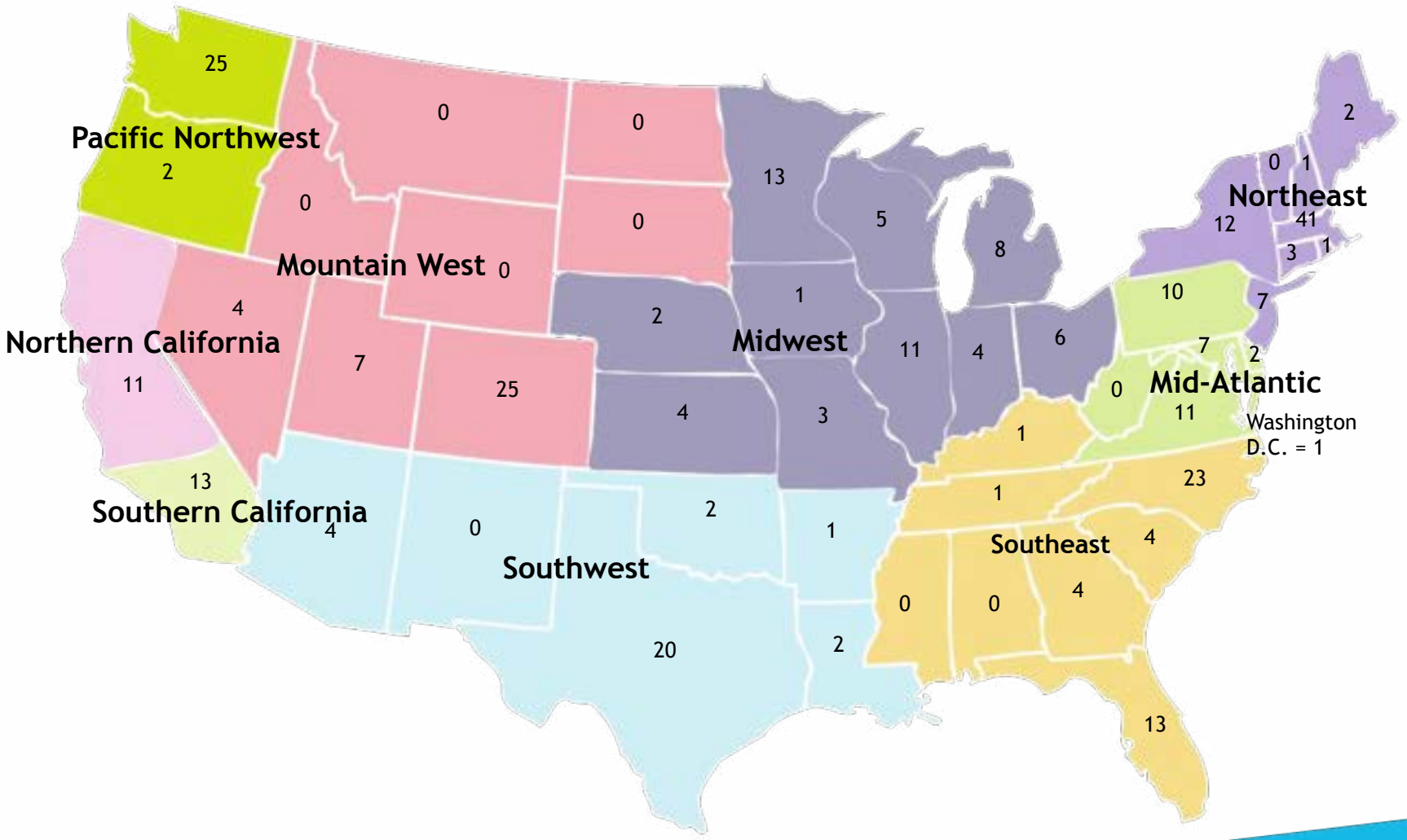


Respondents (US Regions)

The respondents from the US were mostly from the Northeast (22%), Midwest (18%), and Southeast (15%). The largest changes from 2024 to 2026 were an increase of 4 percentage points for the Mountain West and a decrease of 4 percentage points for Northern California.

US Region	Percentage (2026)	Percentage (2024)	Percentage (2022)	Percentage (2018)	Percentage (2016)
Northeast	22%	20%	21%	22%	17%
Midwest	18%	18%	19%	16%	18%
Southeast	15%	15%	10%	15%	5%
Mountain West	11%	7%	5%	4%	3%
Mid-Atlantic	9%	10%	13%	10%	23%
Southwest	9%	10%	9%	9%	5%
Pacific Northwest	9%	8%	11%	11%	9%
Northern California	4%	8%	4%	9%	15%
Southern California	3%	3%	8%	4%	6%
Total N =	**312**	**297**	**452**	**848**	**924**

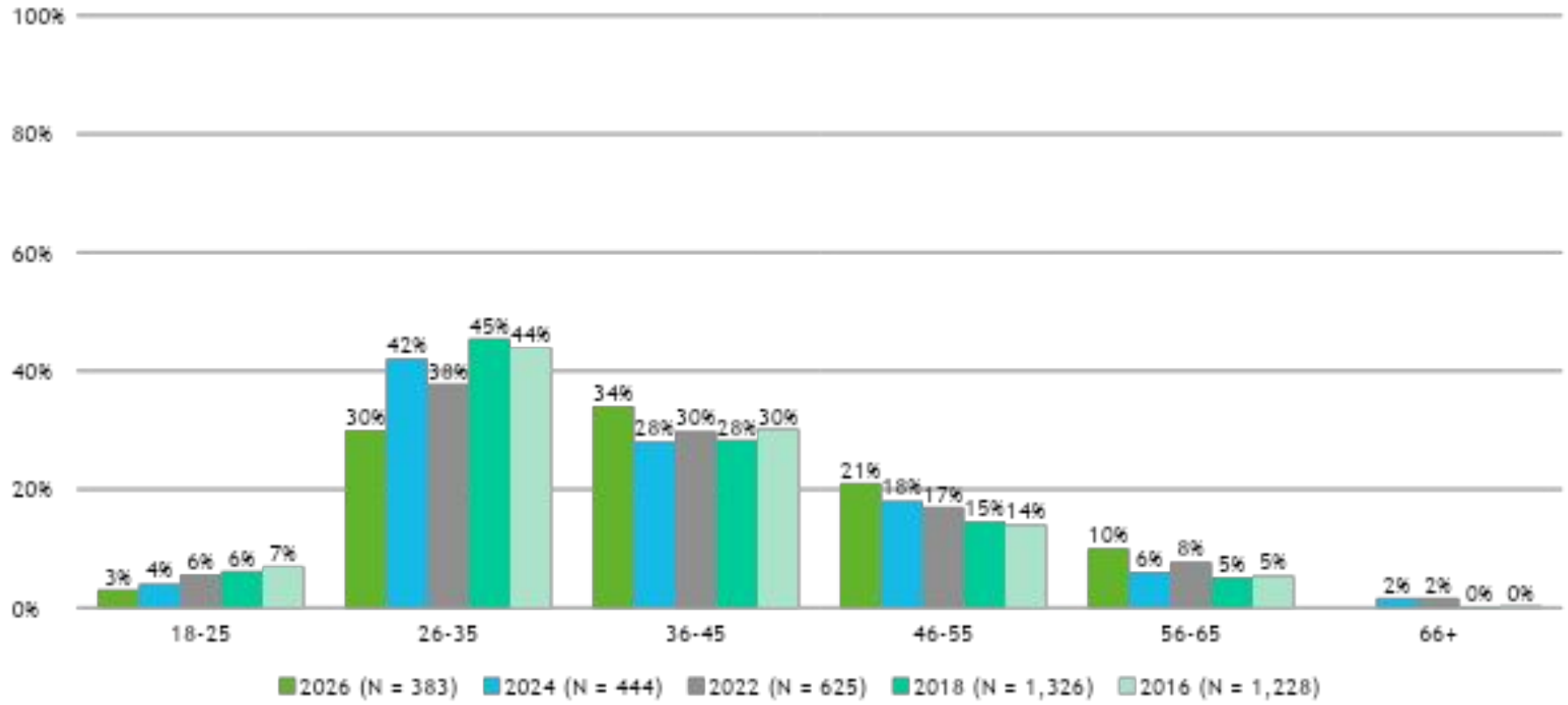
Respondents (US Regions)



= Number of Responses by State *N = 315*

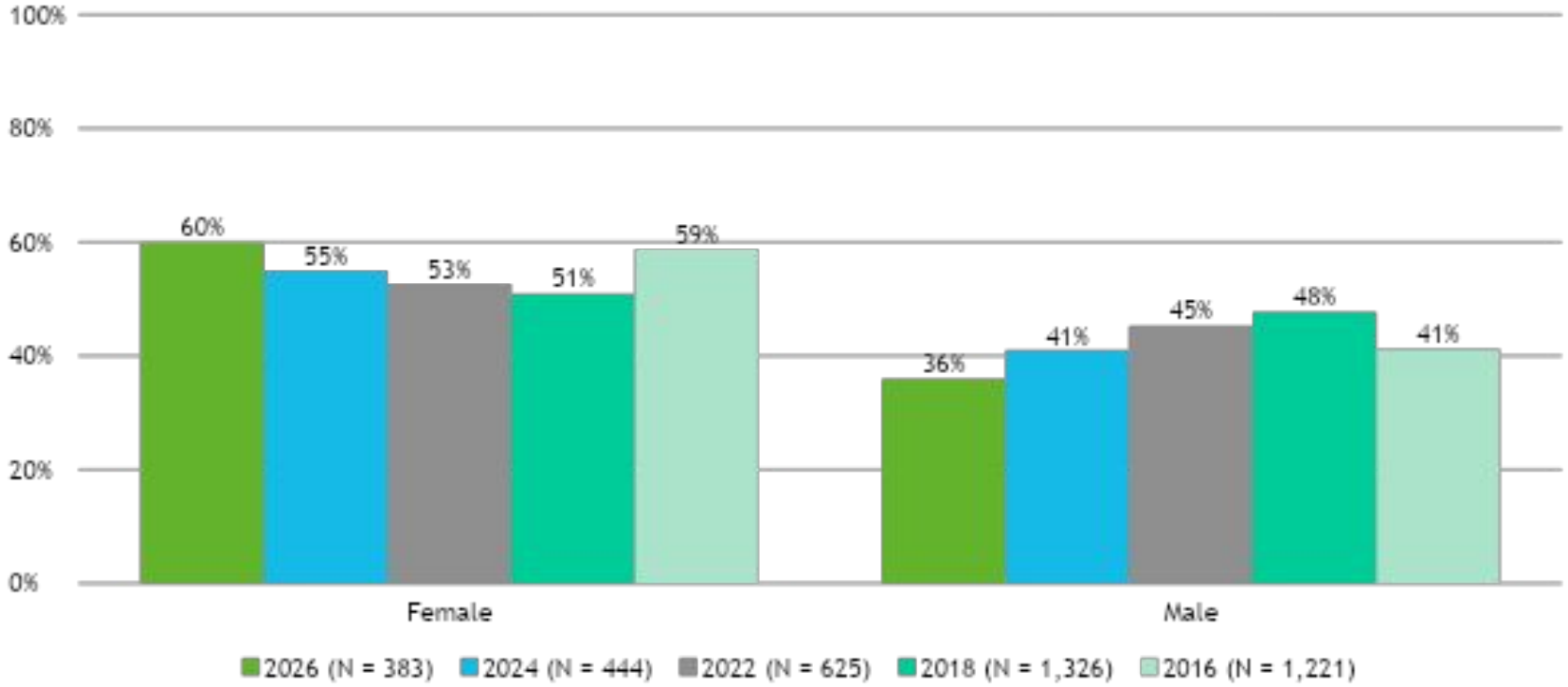
Respondents' Age

64% of the respondents were between the ages of 26 and 45 at the time of this survey, similar to results seen in our previous surveys.



Respondents' Gender

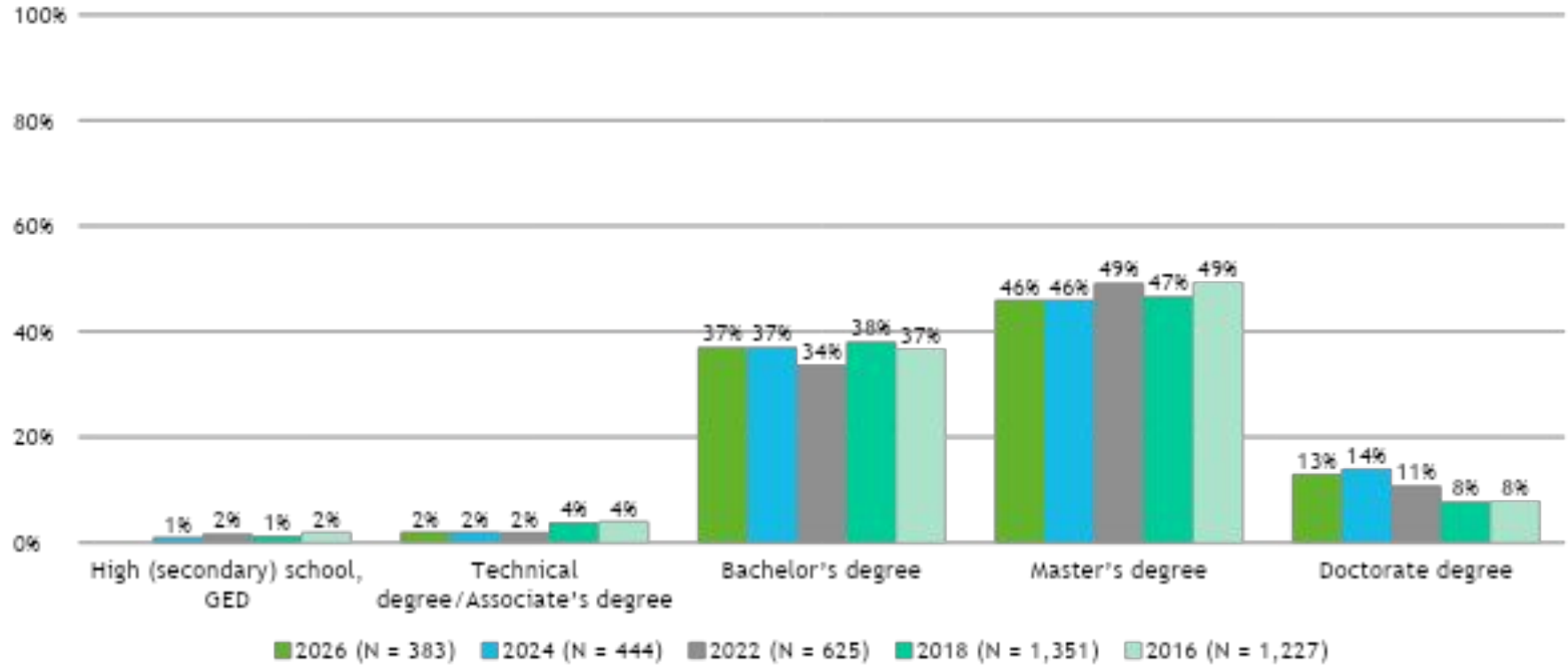
A majority (60%) of respondents in this year's survey were female, consistent with our previous surveys.



4% selected Genderqueer/nonbinary
0.5% selected Prefer not to answer

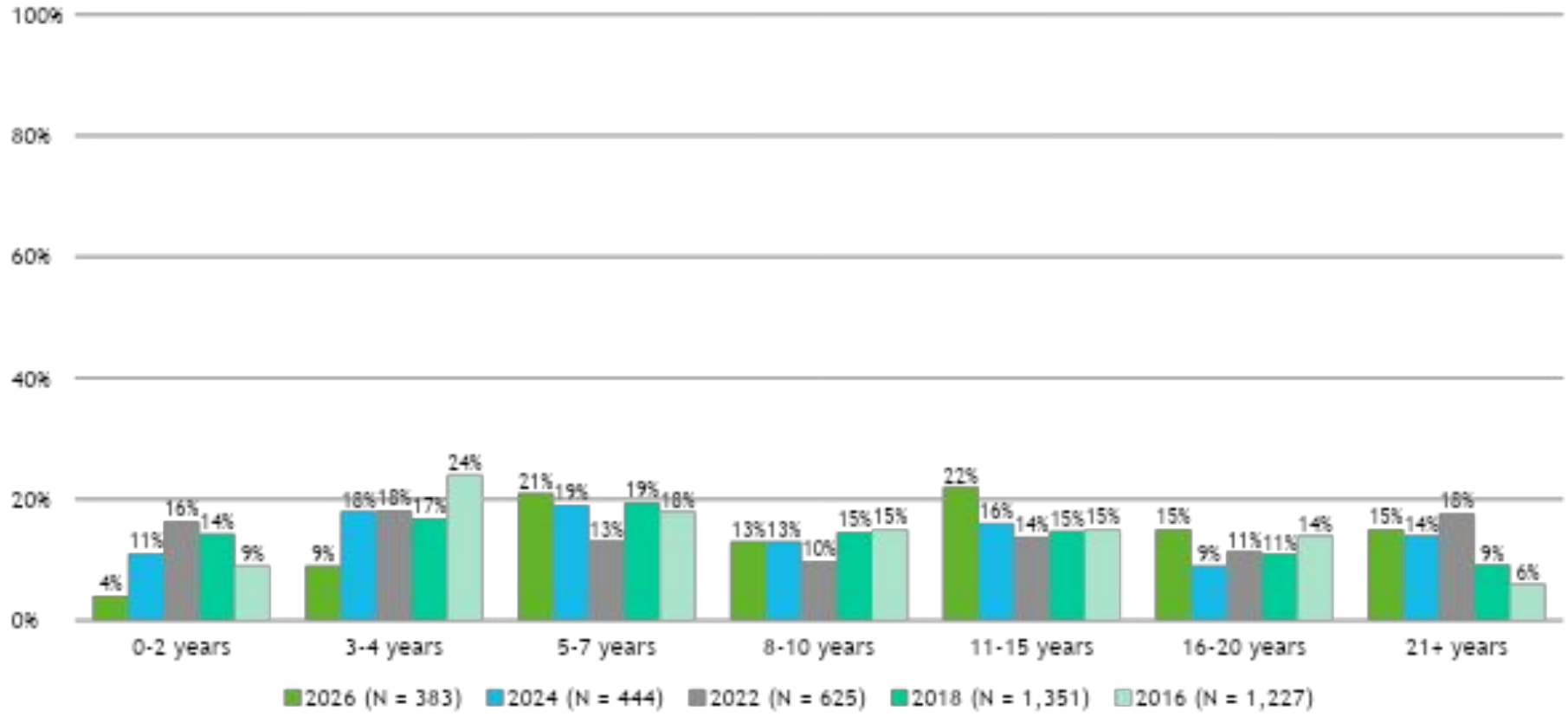
Respondents' Highest Degree Held

Almost half of the respondents hold a Master's degree (46%) and 96% of respondents report having a Bachelor's degree or higher, mirroring results seen in earlier years. The percentage of respondents that hold a Doctorate degree (13%) has increased slightly since 2016.



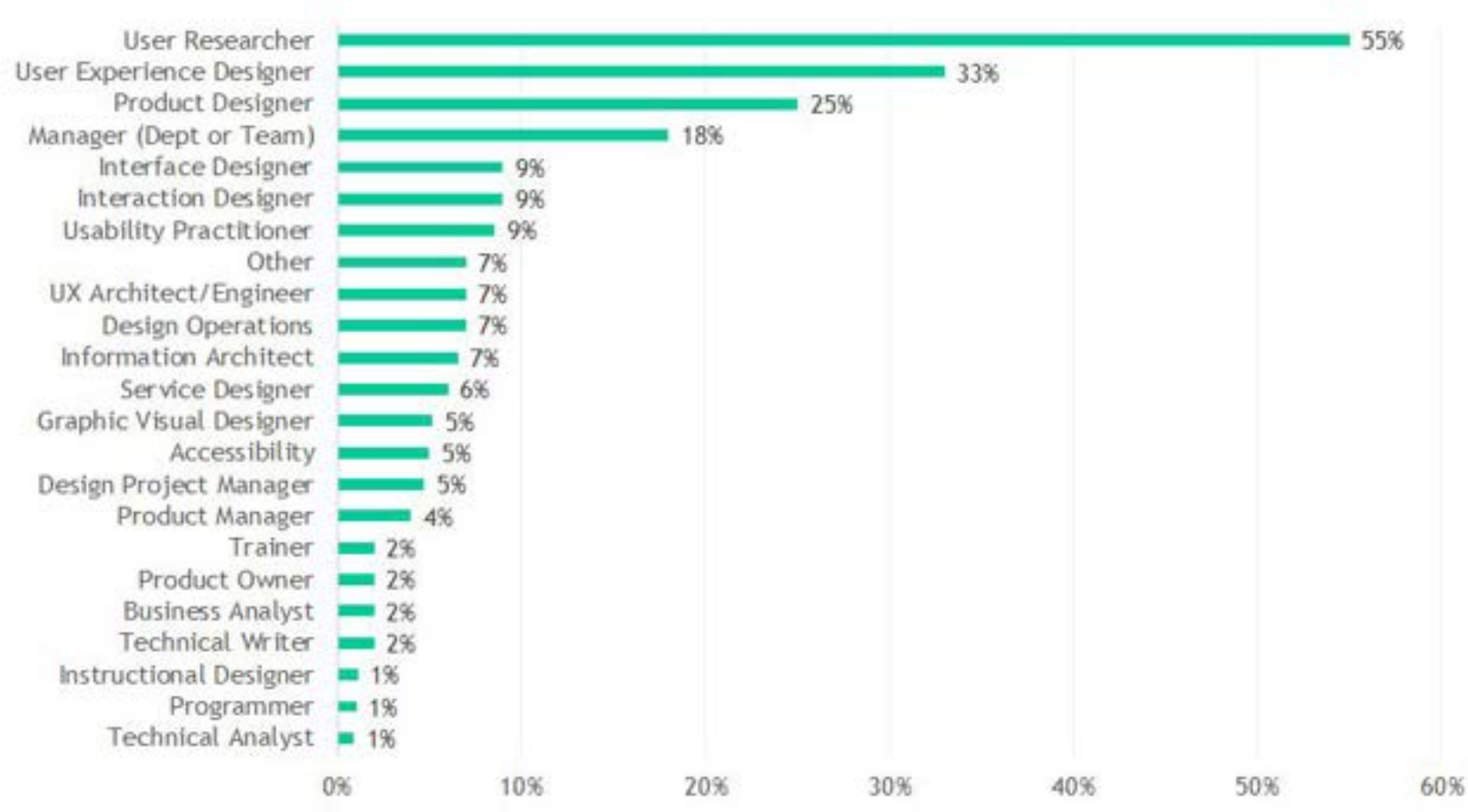
Respondents' In-Field Experience

In 2026, about a third of respondents (34%) reported between 0 and 7 years of in-field experience. 35% reported 8 to 15 years in the field, and 30% reported have 16 or more years of experience. From 2024 to 2026 there was a drop in the percentage of those with 0-4 years of experience from almost half of respondents to about a third.



Respondents' Job Title

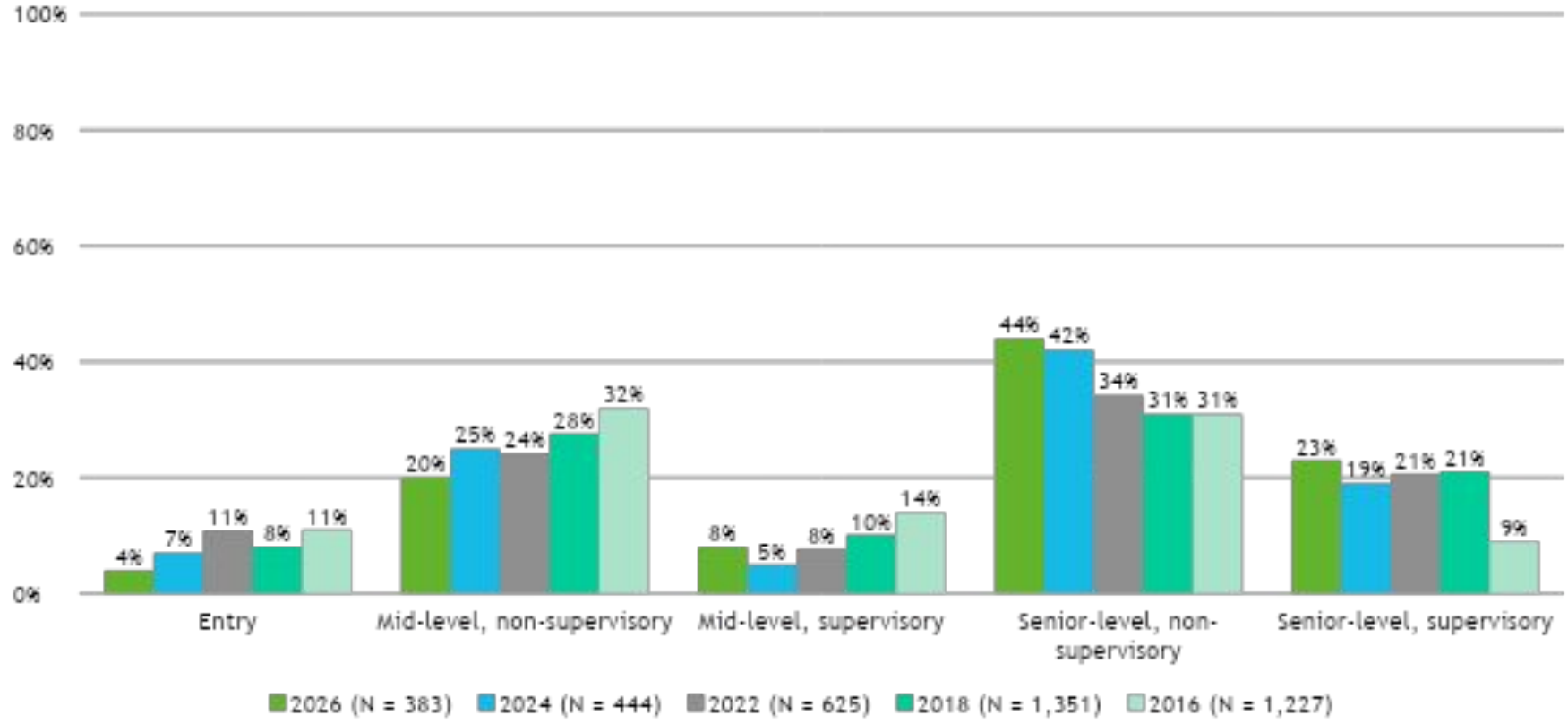
A variety of different professions were represented in the data set and respondents were able to select multiple titles. "User Researcher" was the most popular job title, being selected by more than half of respondents (55%).



N = 383

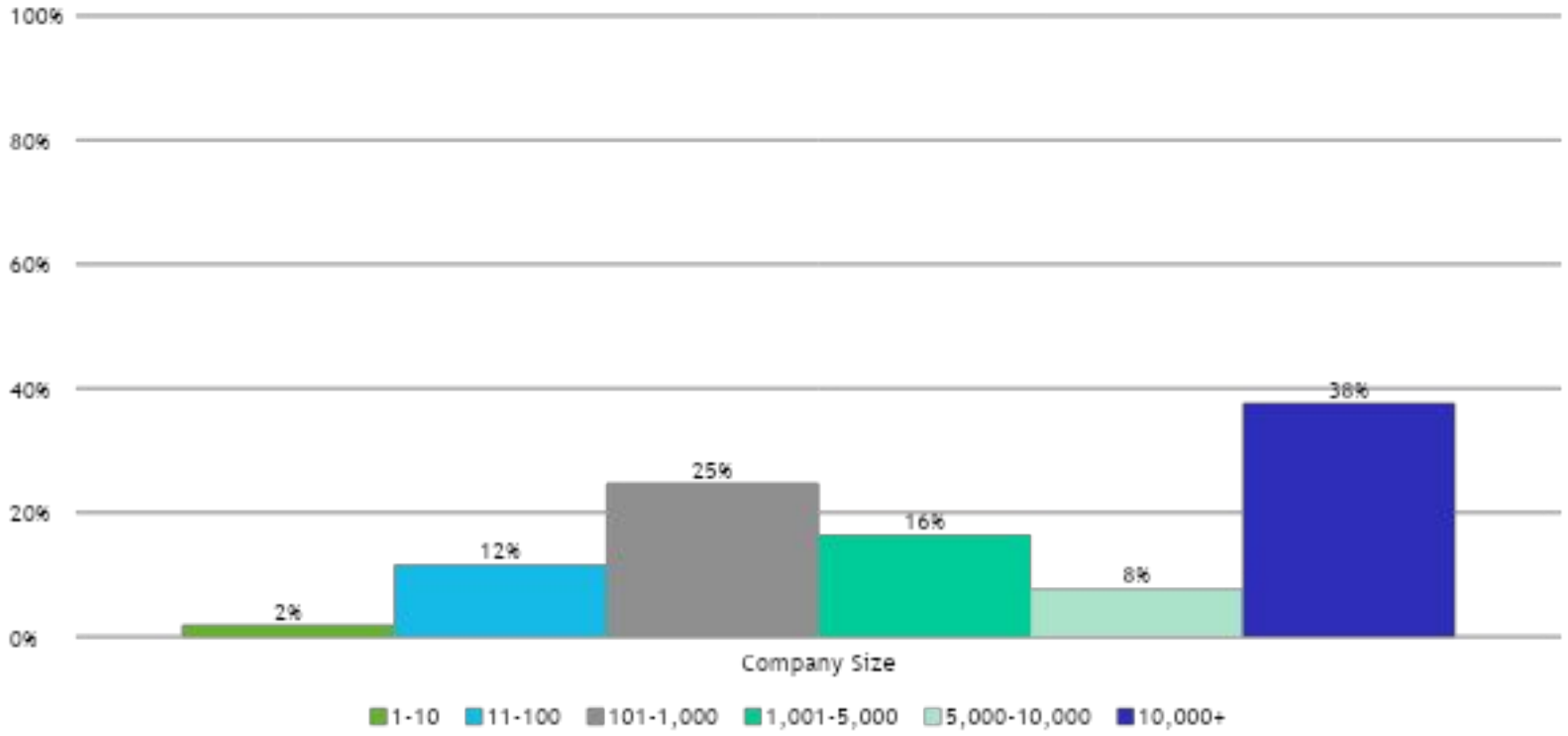
Respondents' Employment Level

28% of the respondents reported being in a mid-level position and two-thirds being at least at the senior level (67%). 31% of respondents are in a supervisory position. The percentage of mid-level supervisory respondents has fallen since 2016 while the percentage of senior-level non-supervisory has increased.



Respondents' Company Size

38% of the respondents reported working for a company with more than 10,000 employees. Only 14% worked for companies with 100 or fewer employees.



n = 311

UX Salary

Sample Changes Affected the Median Salary

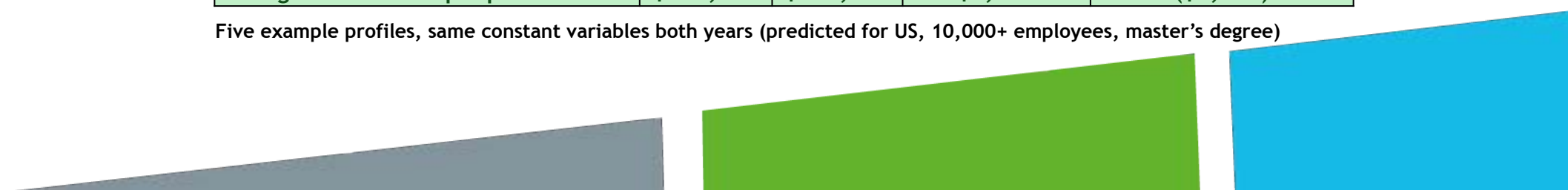
As shown on the next slide, the overall median salary for 2026 of $143K is 19% higher than the overall median salary for 2024 of $120K. **This does not mean that UX salaries were uniformly higher in 2026 than in 2024.** Not only must the inflation from 2024 to 2026 of 6.3% be accounted for, but there were **three important shifts in the composition** of the 2026 sample relative to 2024 which inflated the overall median salary. The table below illustrates how years of UX experience affect job level adapted estimated US salaries from 2024 to 2026, holding other variables constant (using the 2026 MeasuringU salary calculator). For the five profiles in the table, the average for 2026 was $4764 more than 2024, but after accounting for inflation, the 2026 average was $6,273 less.

Key Shifts in Sample Composition from 2024 to 2026 that Affect Overall Median Salary

- **% US Responses:** Increased 15 points from 67% in 2024 to 82% in 2026 (US salaries are higher than non-US).
- **% Respondents with < 5 Years Experience:** Decreased 16 points from 29% in 2024 to 13% in 2026.
- **% Entry/Mid-Level Non-Supervisory Job Titles:** Decreased 8 points from 32% in 2014 to 24% in 2026.

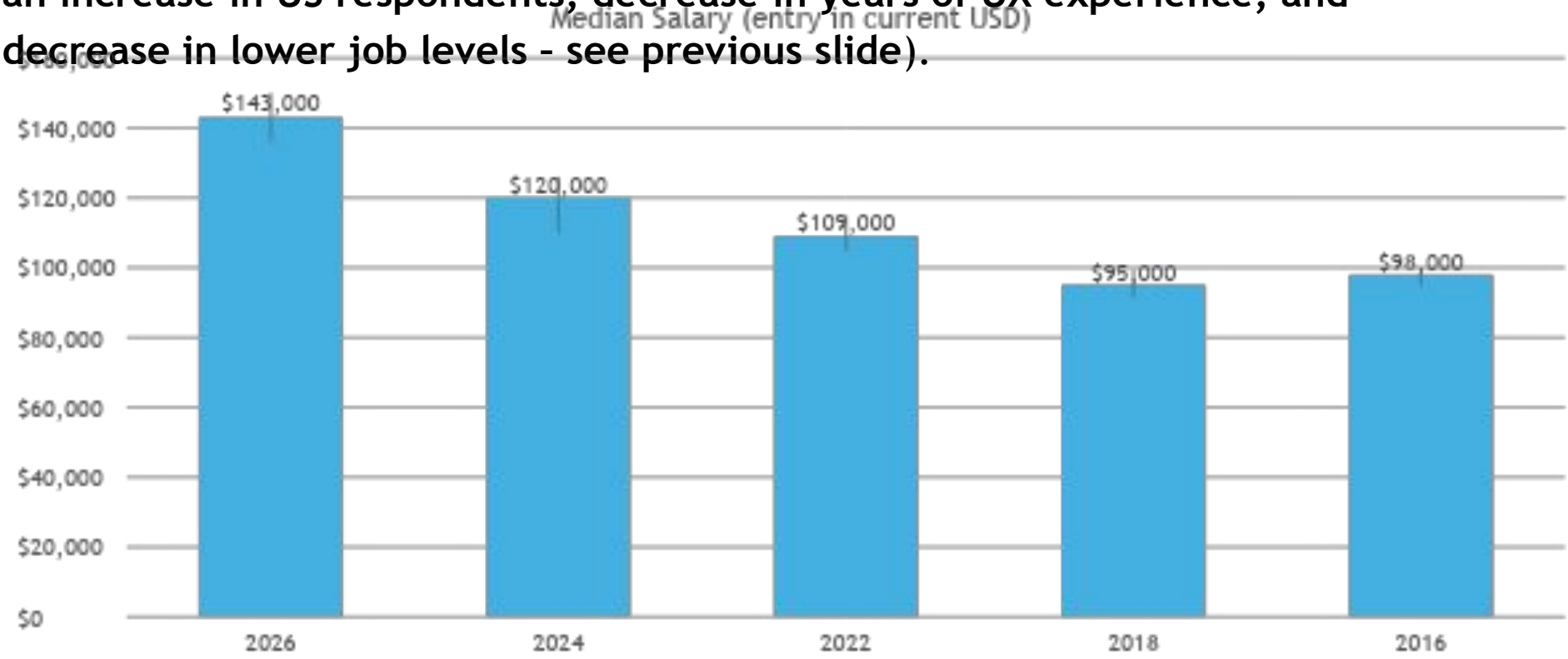
Example Profiles	Salary 2026	Salary 2024	2026-2024 Difference	Inflation-Adjusted Difference
Entry, 0-2 years	$97,503	$103,559	($6,056)	($12,580)
Mid-level supervisory, 8-10 years	$160,480	$152,793	$7,687	($1,939)
Senior non-supervisory, 11-15 years	$183,091	$163,146	$19,945	$9,667
Senior supervisory, 16-20 years	$218,562	$215,298	$3,264	($10,300)
Senior supervisory, 25 years	$240,152	$241,171	($1,019)	($16,213)
Average across example profiles	**$179,958**	**$175,193**	**$4,764**	**($6,273)**

Five example profiles, same constant variables both years (predicted for US, 10,000+ employees, master's degree)



Median Salary by Year

Median salaries increased by 19% ($23k) from 2024 to 2026. This large increase in median salary is **due to a shift in the composition of the sample (relative to 2024, an increase in US respondents, decrease in years of UX experience, and decrease in lower job levels - see previous slide).**

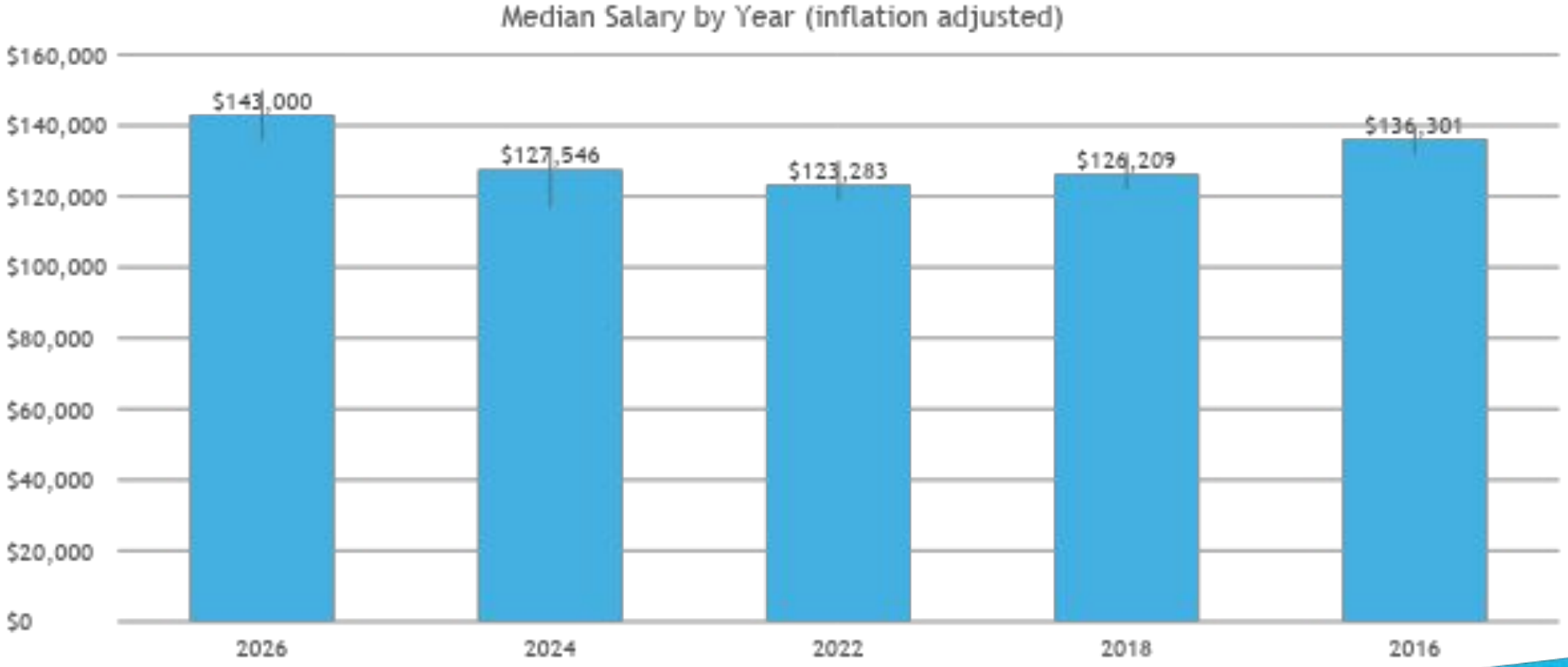


USD not inflation adjusted – All currencies converted to US dollars

Median Salary by Year Constant 2026 Dollars

(Inflation Adjusted)

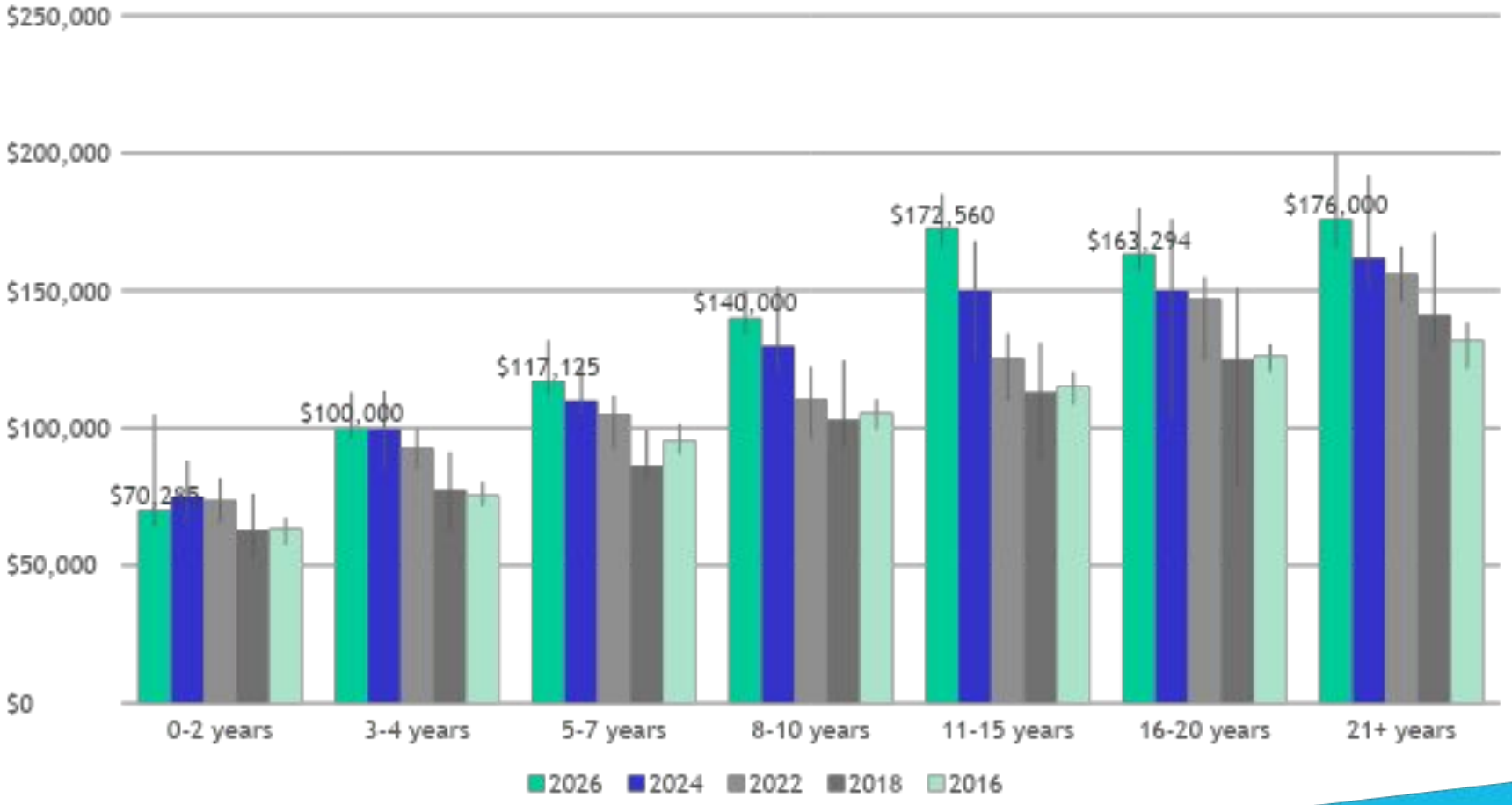
Median salaries increased by $15,454 (+12%) from 2024 to 2026 after factoring in inflation (6.3% from 2024 to 2026). This large increase is likely due to a shift in the composition of our 2026 sample (e.g., more senior level, less entry level employees).
All currencies have been converted to August 2026 US Dollars.



Inflation adjustment calculator

Median Salary By Years of Experience

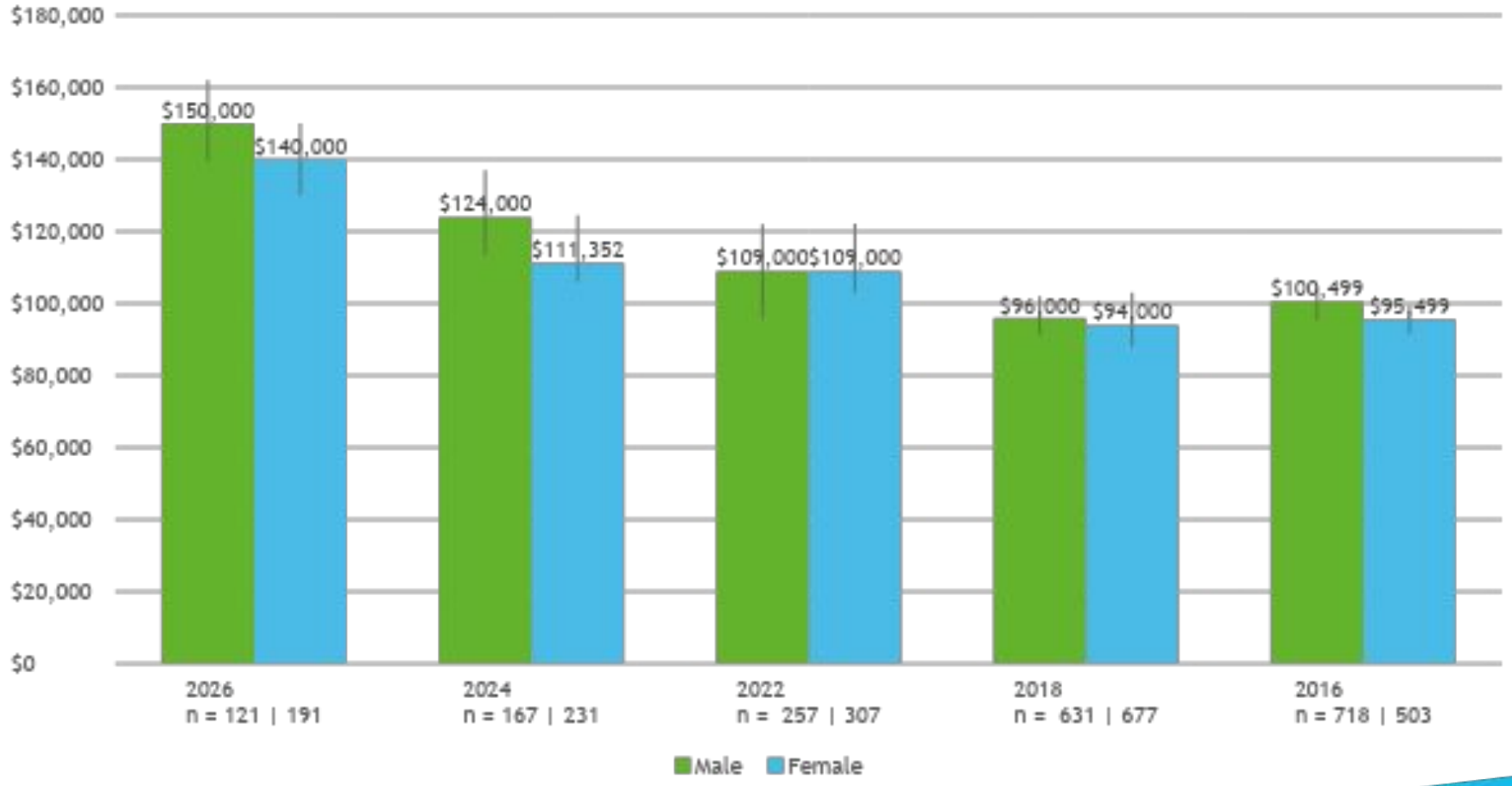
As shown in previous years, salary is strongly affected by the number of years in the field. Respondents with more than 10 years of experience report making, on average, 43% (~$50k) more annually than those with 3-10 years of experience.



USD not inflation adjusted

Median Salary by Gender

As is typical historically, the median salary for male respondents in 2026 was higher than that for female respondents, with differences within the margins of error.



USD not inflation adjusted [n = M | F]

Salary Ranges by Gender

Men's salaries in 2026 were higher than women's salaries with the largest difference ($10,000) at the 2nd quartile.

Gender	1st Quartile	2nd Quartile	3rd Quartile
Male	$101,693	$150,000	$183,000
Female	$100,000	$140,000	$175,200

Q1: *The 25th percentile, or the mid-point between the lower number and the median of the entire data set.*

Q2: *The median (50th percentile) of the entire data set.*

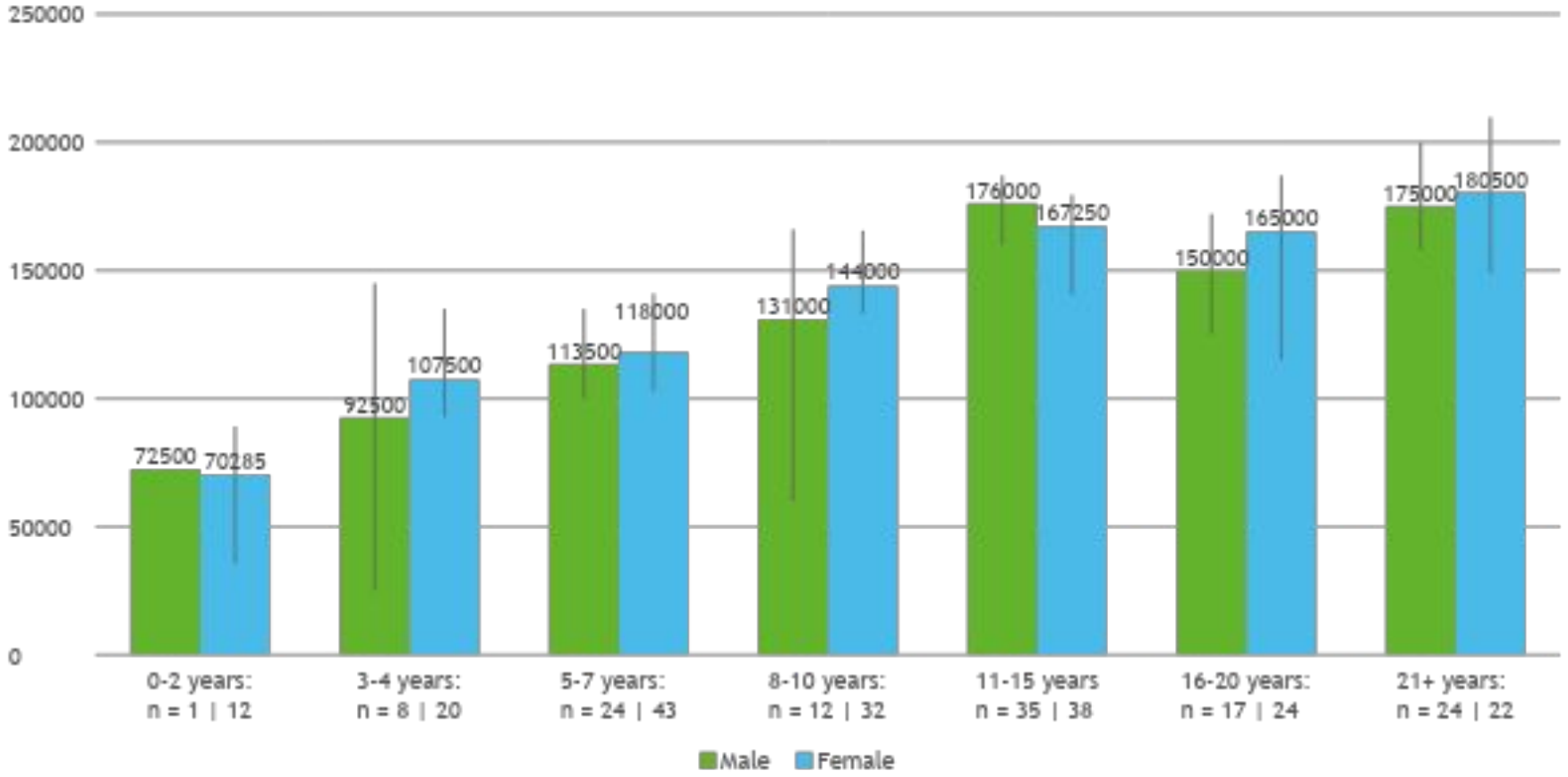
Q3: *The 75th percentile, or the median between the highest number and the median of the entire data set.*

USD not inflation adjusted



Median Salary By Gender and Experience

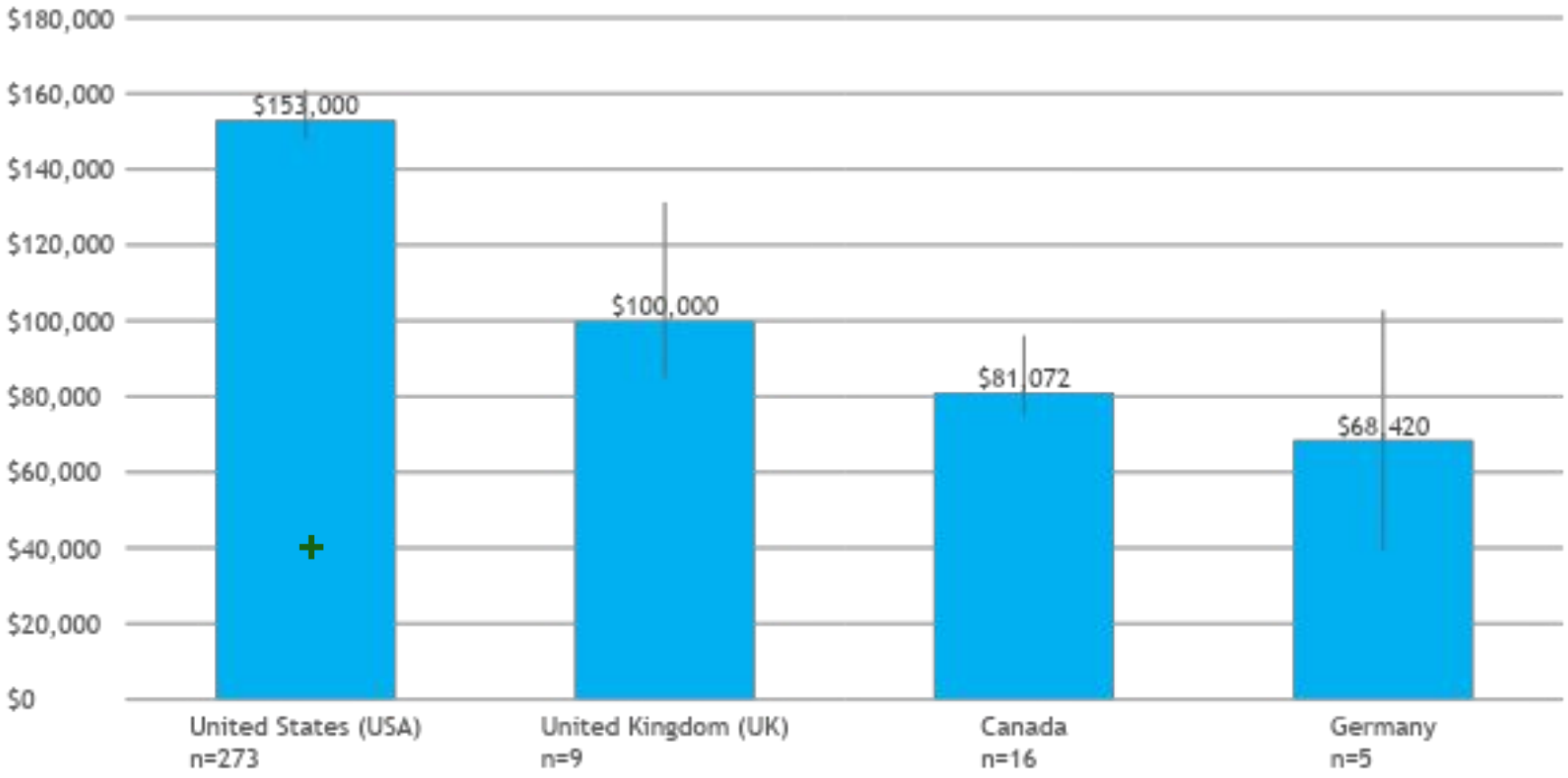
For 2026, even though the overall median salary for males is greater than for women (Slide 19), women make nominally more than men in 5 of 7 experience brackets.



[n = M | F -- when n = 1 confidence intervals can't be estimated]

Median Salary by Country

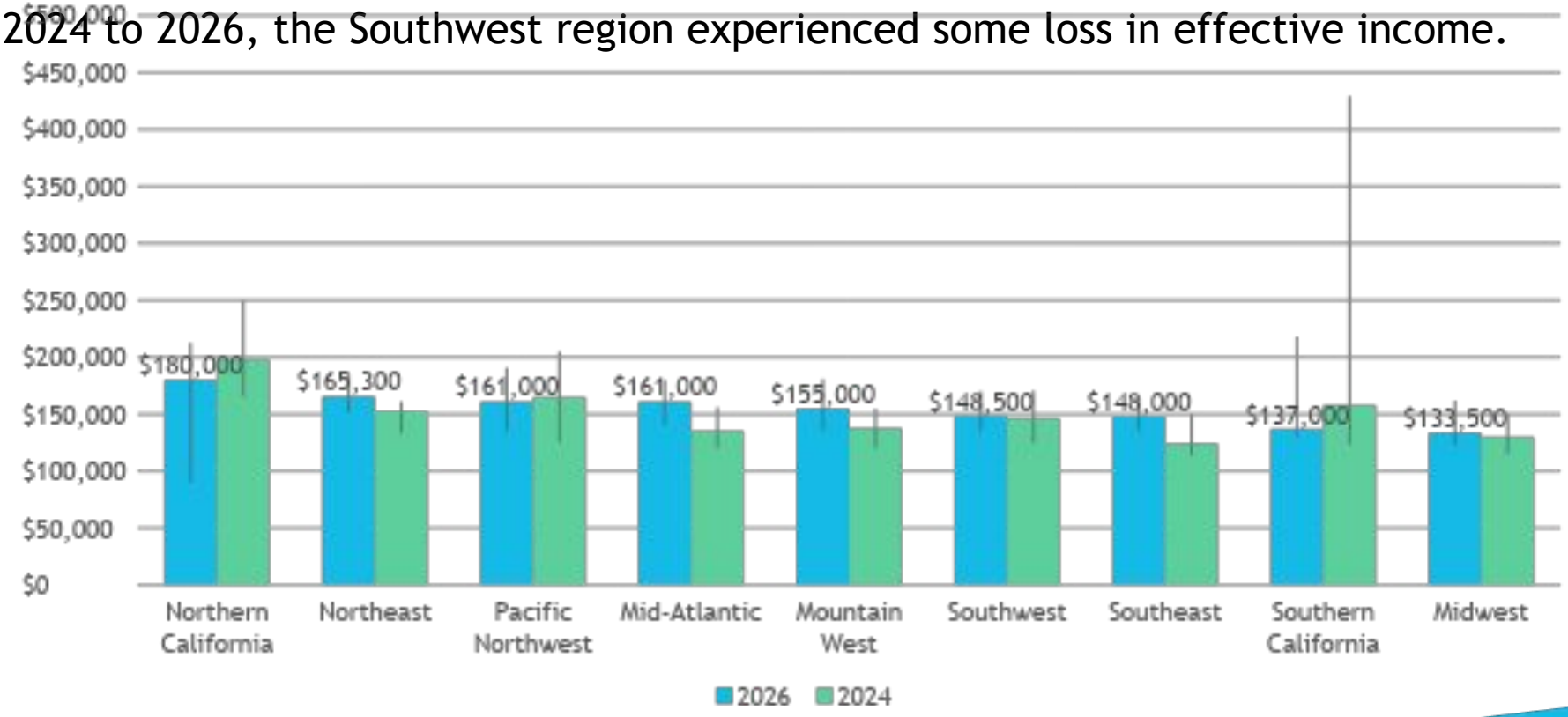
The median salary in the United States is statistically higher compared to the United Kingdom, Canada and Germany.



\+ *Statistically highest*

Median Salary by US Region

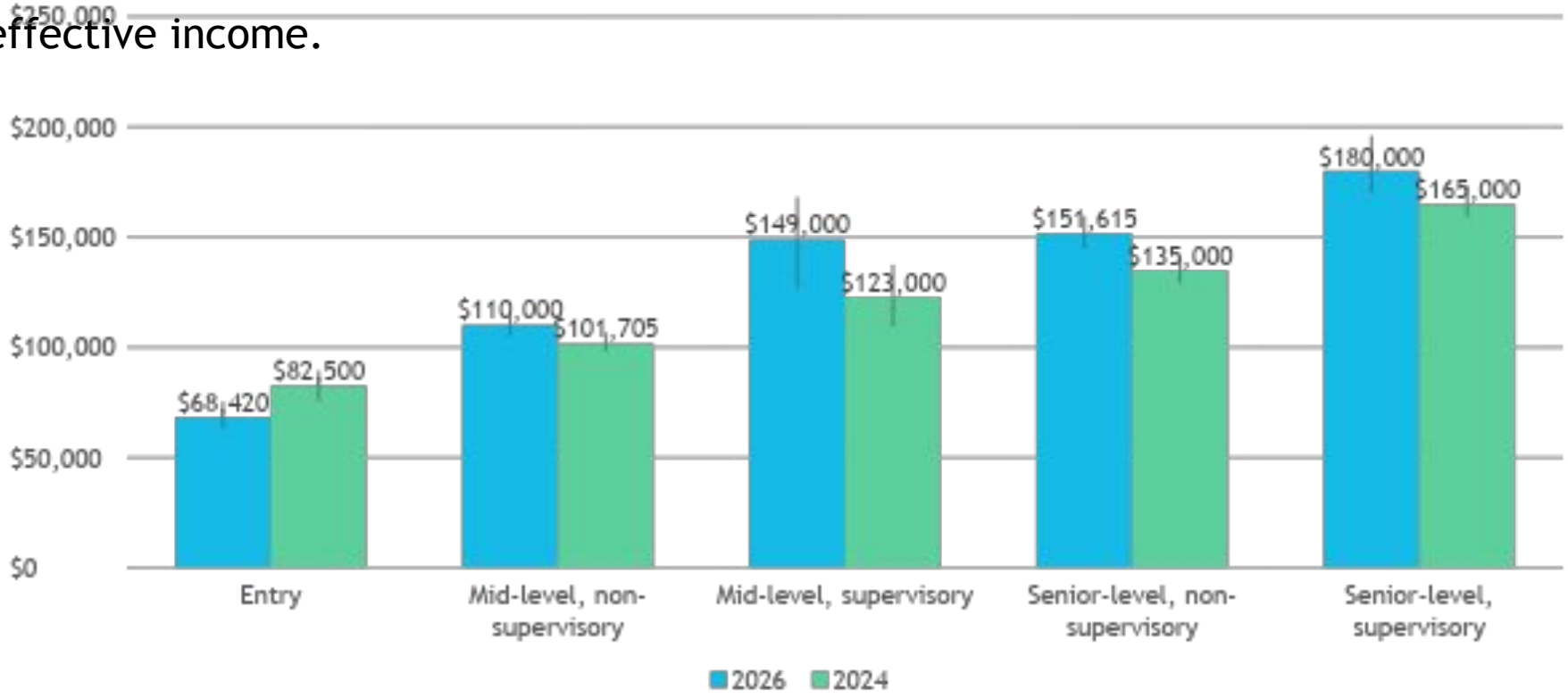
Northern California has a reported median salary that is at least 9% ($15k) higher than all other regions in 2026. Six US regions had a higher median salary in 2026 compared to 2024. However, after considering the 6.3% inflation from 2024 to 2026, the Southwest region experienced some loss in effective income.



USD not inflation adjusted (inflation from 2024-2026: 6.3%)

Median Salary by Job Level

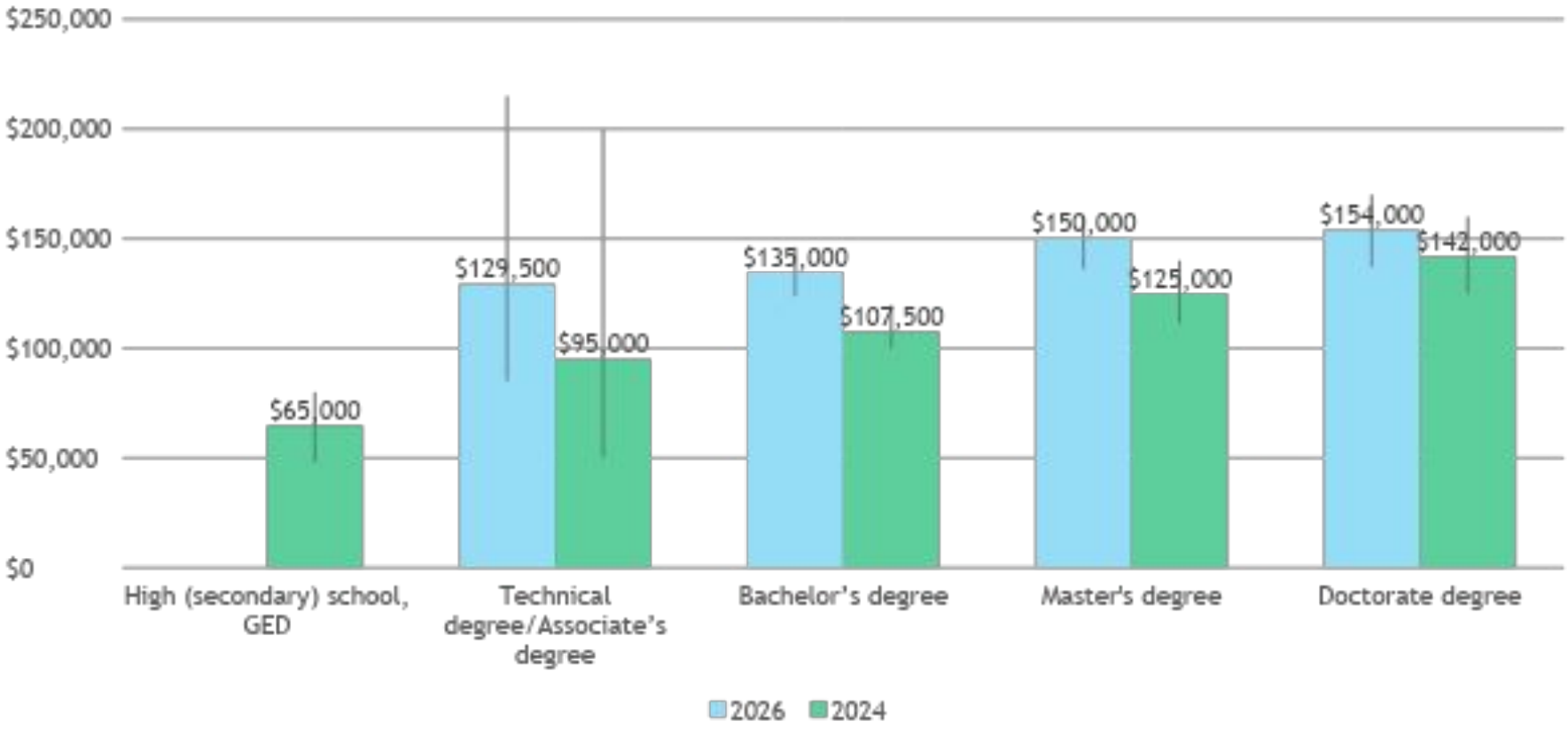
As in 2024, those in a senior-level supervisory position earned the highest amount in 2026. Salaries increased from 2024 to 2026 for all levels except entry (a statistically significant decline). Even after considering the 6.3% inflation from 2024 to 2026, the increase for non-entry positions improved their effective income.



USD not inflation adjusted (inflation from 2024-2026: 6.3%)

Median Salary by Education Level

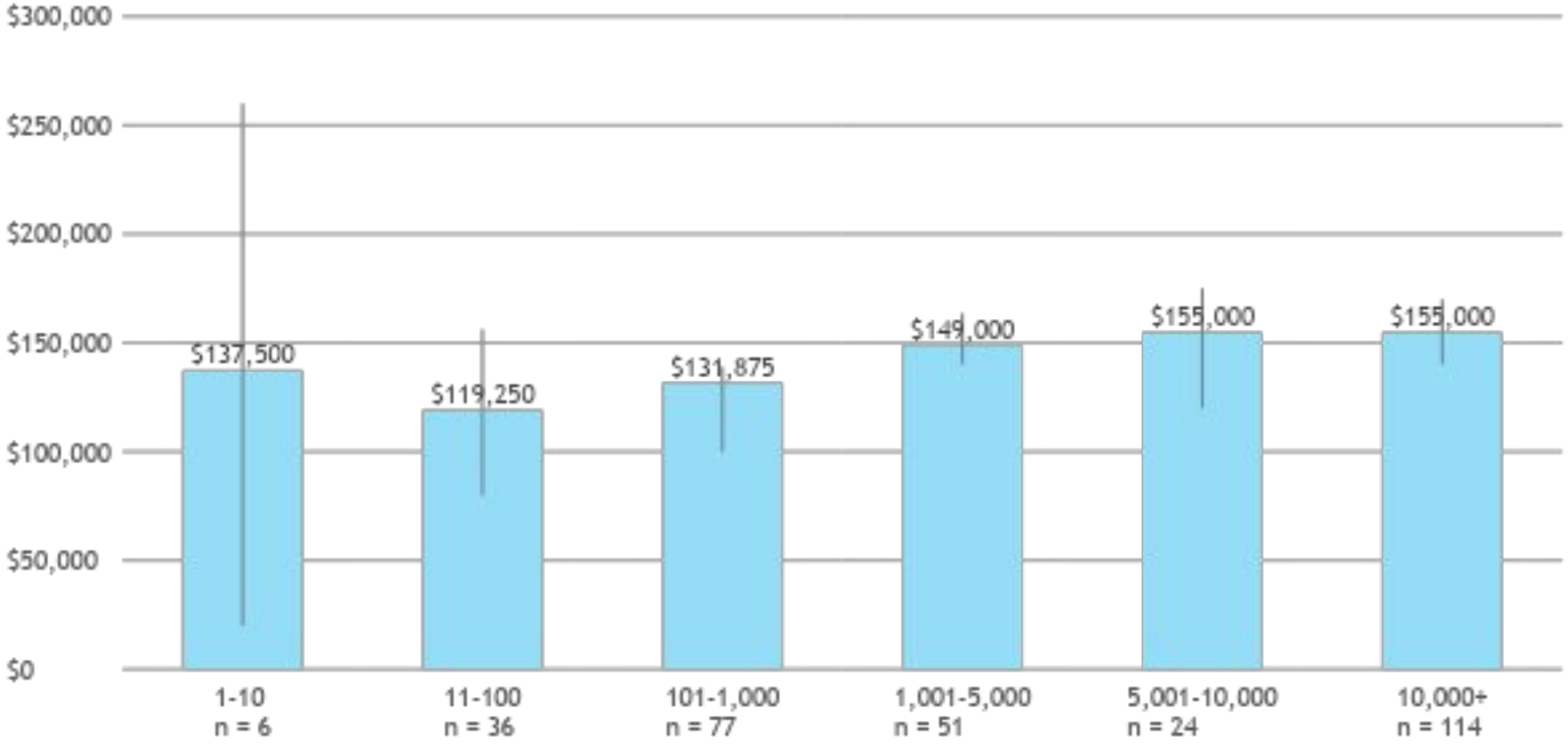
In 2026 those with a doctorate degree reported the highest annual median salary at $154,000. Even after accounting for the 6.3% inflation from 2024 to 2026, all of the year-to-year increases improved effective salaries. (This sample did not have any respondents for high school/GED.)



USD not inflation adjusted (inflation from 2024-2026: 6.3%)

Median Salary by Company Size

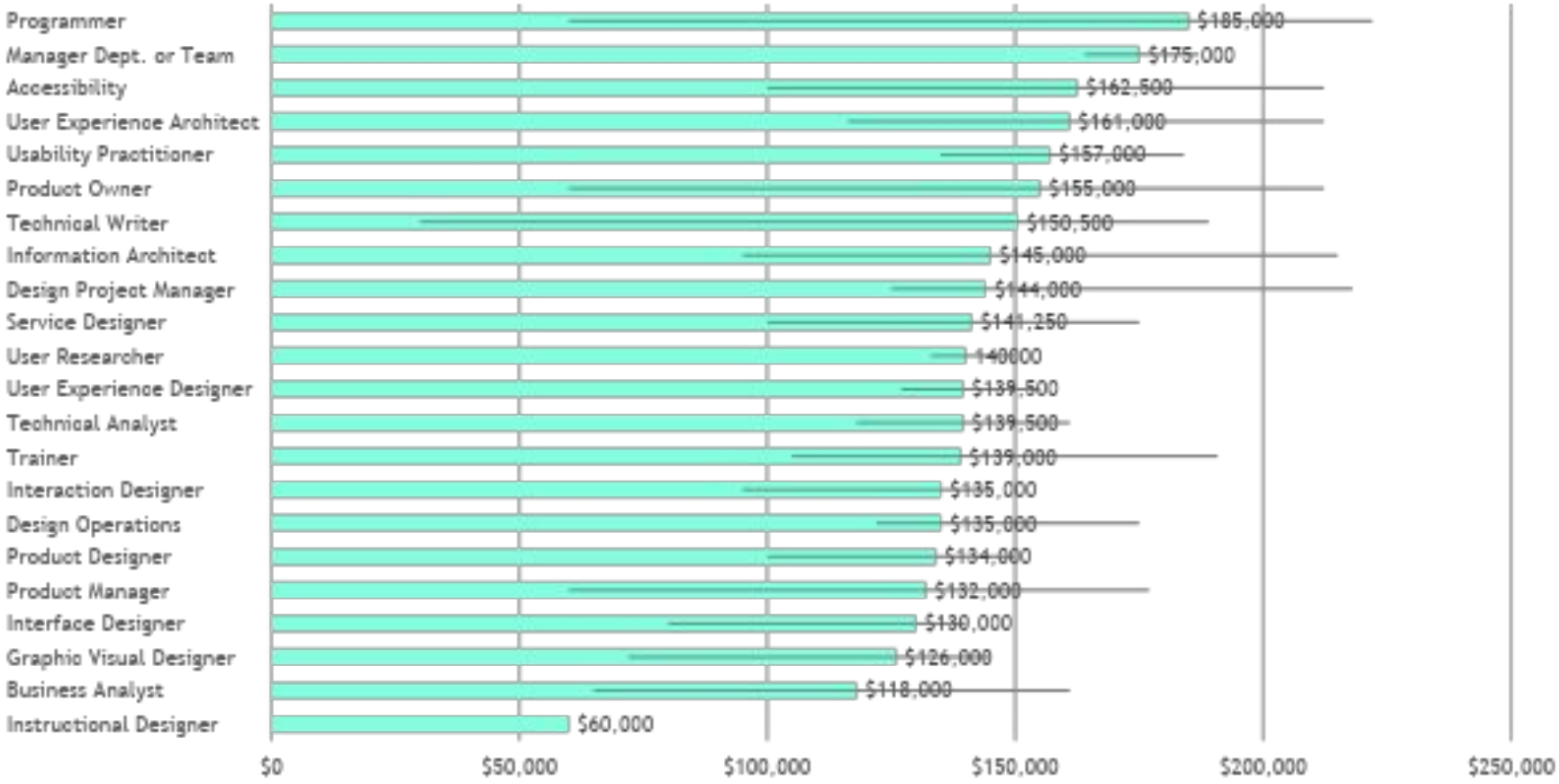
Salaries tend to be higher for larger companies. The estimated median salary for companies with 1,001 to 10,000+ employees ($153,000) was about 20% higher than that for companies with 1 to 1,000 employees ($128,000).



n = 308

Median Salary by Job Title

The highest median salaries were for programmers and managers of departments/teams. (This sample only had one respondent for instructional designer, so that confidence interval can't be estimated.)



Salary Ranges by Job Title

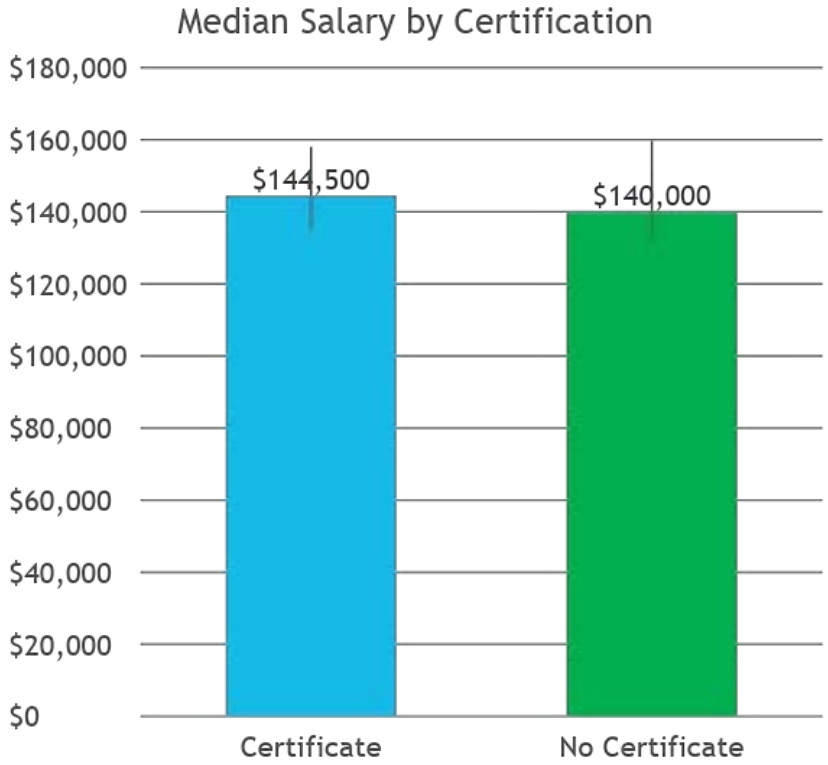
Job Title	1st Quartile 25th %ile	Median 50th %ile	3rd Quartile 75th %ile	n
Programmer	$90,000	$185,000	$214,000	4
Manager Dept. or Team	$144,000	$175,000	$211,125	61
Accessibility	$118,750	$162,500	$206,813	14
User Experience Architect	$99,525	$161,000	$213,625	21
Usability Practitioner	$122,950	$157,000	$190,200	30
Product Owner	$103,500	$155,000	$185,813	6
Technical Writer	$105,000	$150,500	$178,500	6
Information Architect	$90,000	$145,000	$216,500	17
Design Project Manager	$126,500	$144,000	$187,250	14
Service Designer	$100,625	$141,250	$175,000	16
User Researcher	$105,000	$140,000	$179,125	180
Technical Analyst	$118,000	$139,500	*	2
User Experience Designer	$94,000	$139,500	$170,000	101
Trainer	$117,500	$139,000	$170,400	5
Design Operations	$117,750	$135,000	$183,750	22
Interaction Designer	$75,000	$135,000	$157,000	25
Product Designer	$82,857	$134,000	$161,900	71
Product Manager	$82,500	$132,000	$147,000	10
Interface Designer	$72,000	$130,000	$143,000	27
Graphic Visual Designer	$73,000	$126,000	$143,750	16
Business Analyst	$95,000	$118,000	$144,000	7
Instructional Designer	*	$60,000	*	1

** = n too small to estimate*

Professional Certification

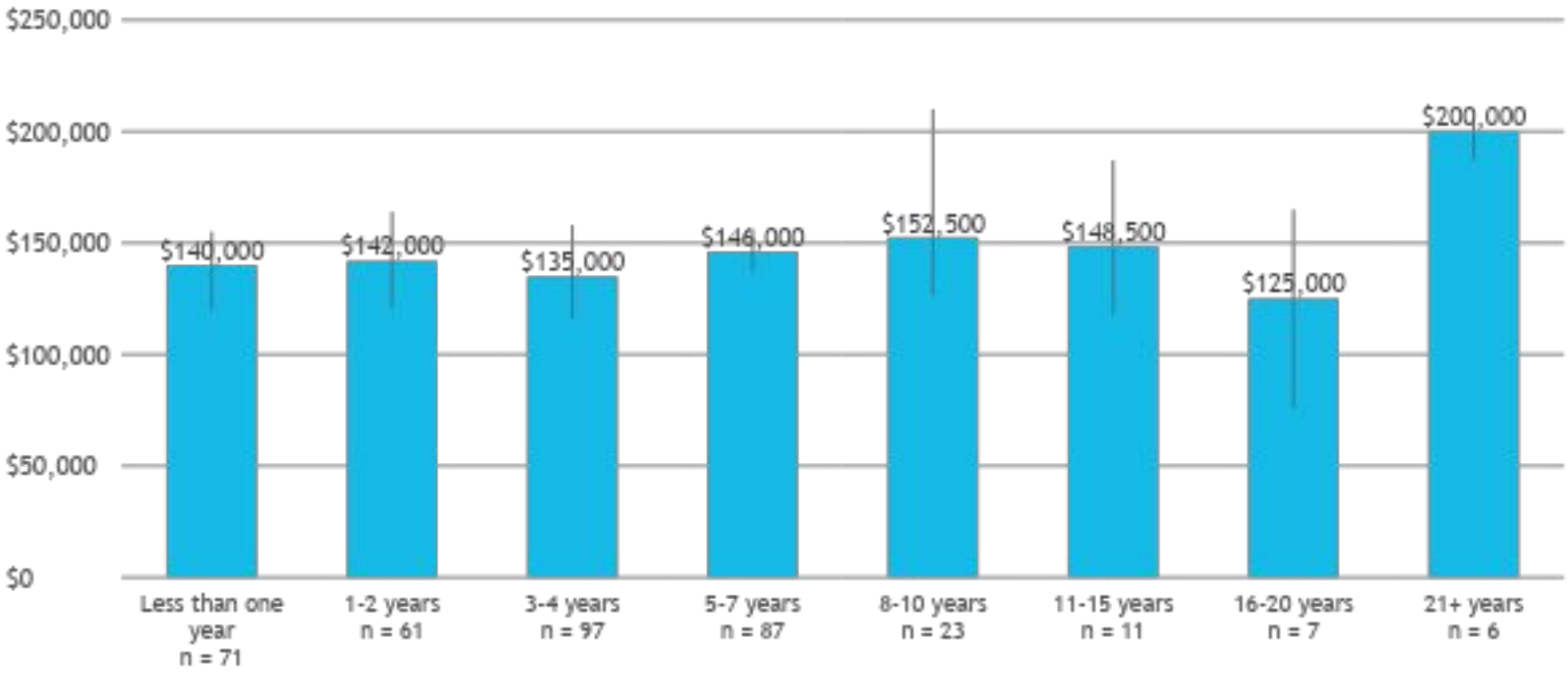
33% of respondents hold some type of professional certification. 11% have received a Nielsen Norman Group certificate and 7% received an academic certificate from a university course. Median salaries were slightly higher for those with a certificate, although not statistically.

Certification	n	%
None	255	67%
Other	42	11%
Nielsen Norman Group	42	11%
University/Academic	26	7%
CUA/CXA	7	2%
CHFP/AHFP	4	1%
CUXP/AUXP	4	1%
PMP	2	1%
IAPUX	1	0%



Median Salary by Tenure at Current Position

There are some swings in the medians of reported salaries by tenure at current position, but most confidence intervals show considerable overlap which indicates most differences are not statistically significant (e.g., all except 21+ years could plausibly be $150,000).



Additional Analyses

Impact of Certification on Jobs and Pay

About a third (37/128) of respondents with certification were looking for a job when they received their certification, with 16% reporting certification helped them break into the field and 16% saying it helped them get a new job. 53% indicated certification improved their job skills while 61% reported no impact of certification on their pay.

Impact of Certification on Job	%
Improved skills in my current job	53%
Had no impact on my career	30%
Helped me break into the field	16%
Helped me get a new job	16%
Helped me secure a promotion	6%

Impact on Pay	%
Had no impact on my pay	61%
Helped increase my pay	17%
I don't know	22%

n = 128



Full-Time Hours and Vacation Time

Most (93%) full-time employees work 5 days a week. A little over half (55%) of respondents had fewer than 26 vacation days.

Full-Time Hour (Days per Week)	%
4 days	2%
5 days	93%
More than 5 days	5%

Vacation Time (Days per Year)	%
No paid vacation	2%
6-10 days	2%
11-15 days	11%
16-20 days	20%
21-25 days	22%
26-30 days	10%
31-35 days	3%
36-40 days	1%
More than 40 days	4%
I have unlimited vacation time	25%

N = 328



Percent Pay Change and Compensation Feelings

Most of those who responded to this question had a pay increase and, with about the same percentages, expect on next year (71% this year, 68% next year). The average reported increase was 6.4±1% with 95% confidence. About half of respondents felt fairly compensated but a substantial minority (44%) felt underpaid.

Pay Change this Year	%
Increased	71%
Stayed the same	23%
Decreased	6%

Expected Pay Change Next Year	%
Increase	68%
Stay the same	29%
Decrease	3%

Feeling about Compensation	%
Fairly compensated	48%
Underpaid	44%
Unsure	7%
Overpaid	2%

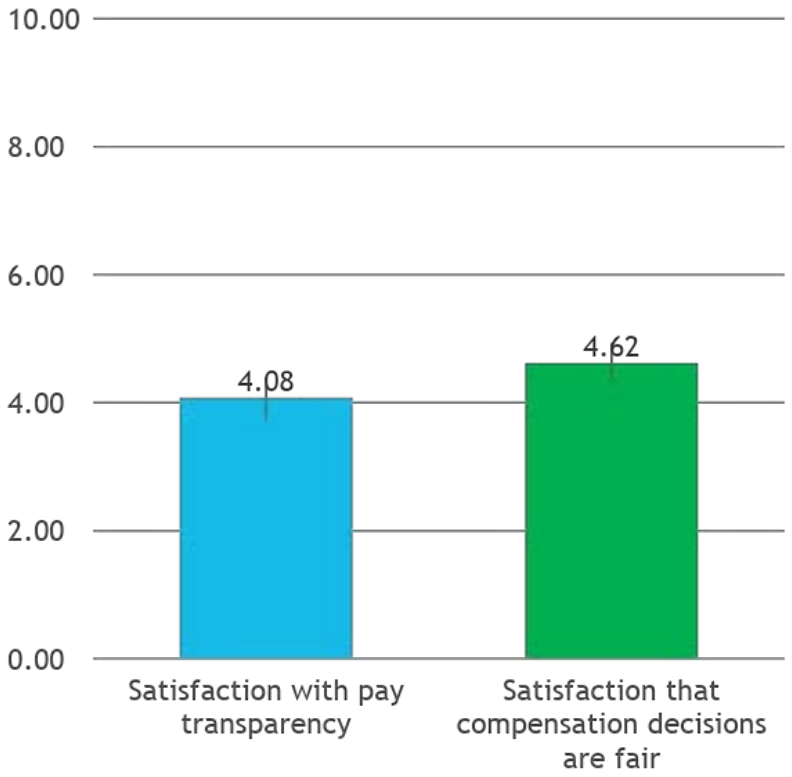
n = 320



Pay Transparency

Respondents indicated that pay transparency is still a rare company policy. Improvement in pay transparency policies might lead to higher levels of satisfaction with pay transparency and the perceived fairness of compensation decisions.

Pay Transparency Scope	%
Anyone in my company	7%
Anyone on my team	9%
Key executives	7%
New job postings	27%
None of these	39%



N = 444

Job Events in 2025/2026

About half of respondents reported getting a raise in 2025 or 2026. About a third of respondents indicated layoffs from their company; 8% reported having been laid off. For the 50 respondents who reported getting promoted, about two-thirds indicated it had taken 1-2 years.

Key Job Events 2025/2026	%
I got a raise	45%
My company had layoffs	34%
Some people on my team were laid off	26%
My title changed	18%
I changed jobs	14%
I got a promotion	13%
None of the above	9%
I was laid off	8%

N = 383

How Long Did It Take to Get Promoted?	%
1-2 Years	66%
3-5 Years	34%

N = 50



Planned Hiring in 2027

Of the 56 respondents who have plans to hire in 2027, 88% plan to make one or two UX hires. The top three skills they're planning to hire are user research/interviews/surveys, use AI tools, and usability testing.

Number of Planned UX Hires in 2027	%
1	45%
2	43%
3	4%
4	5%
5	2%
8	2%

Planned Skills to Hire in 2027	%
User research/interviews/surveys	73%
Use AI tools	59%
Usability testing	54%
Creating high fidelity prototypes	46%
Interface interaction design	43%
UX design workshops	43%
Creating low fidelity prototypes	38%
Information architecture	38%
Heuristic expert review	36%
Personas/user profiles	36%
Visual graphic design	36%

n = 56

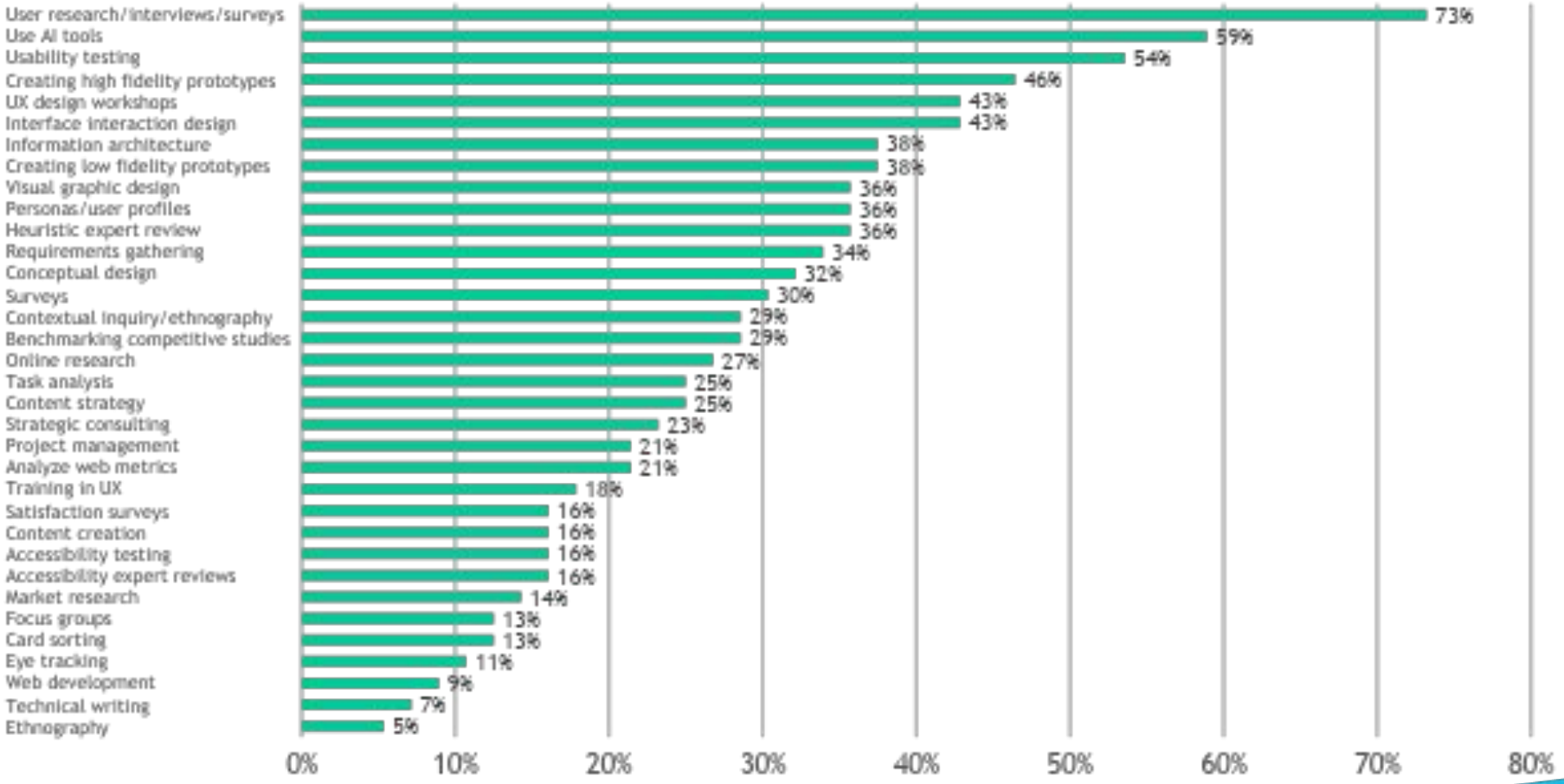


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What Hiring Managers Want in 2027

Consistent with previous surveys, the top skills managers want to hire are user research and usability testing, this time joined by use of AI tools.



N = 56

Business Climate

Respondents reported roughly equal percentages of adding and losing staff in the previous year in 2026 and 2024. There were shifts in projected business climate with higher percentages predicting a declining climate and lower percentages predicting an improving climate in 2026 relative to 2024.

Staff Changes	2026	2024
Added staff	32%	35%
Stayed the same	25%	24%
Lost staff	35%	35%
I don't know	7%	7%

Projected Business Climate	2026	2024
Strongly improving	2%	4%
Improving	19%	31%
Same level	40%	37%
Declining	27%	17%
Strongly declining	5%	2%
Not sure	7%	9%

n = 408



UX Maturity

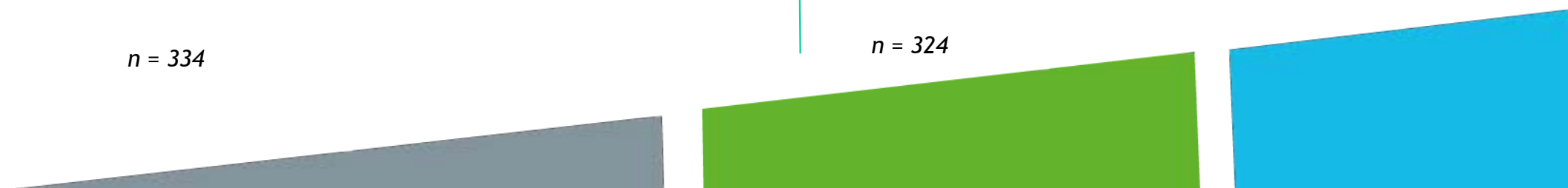
Just over a third of respondents reported that their company has had UX positions for more than 10 years and just under a third rated their companies as Institutionalized.

How Long Company Has Had UX Positions	%
We don't have any formal positions in UX	4%
Less than a year	2%
1-2 years	4%
3-5 years	17%
6-7 years	10%
8-10 years	13%
More than 10 years	37%
I don't know	13%

n = 334

UX Maturity of Your Company	%
Unrecognized - UX is not an issue, UI designed mostly by developers.	1%
Ad hoc - UX defined as an issue; methods are inconsistent; includes heuristic review but not user engagement.	10%
Considered - Dedicated staff hired; not applied to all projects; may include mock-ups or prototypes.	27%
Managed - UX process well defined; iterative evaluation; may include personas or field research.	10%
Integrated UX - UX processes consistently integrated into the product dev life cycle; includes metrics and quantitative research.	22%
Institutionalized - UX is corporate business strategy and all products follow UX design process.	31%

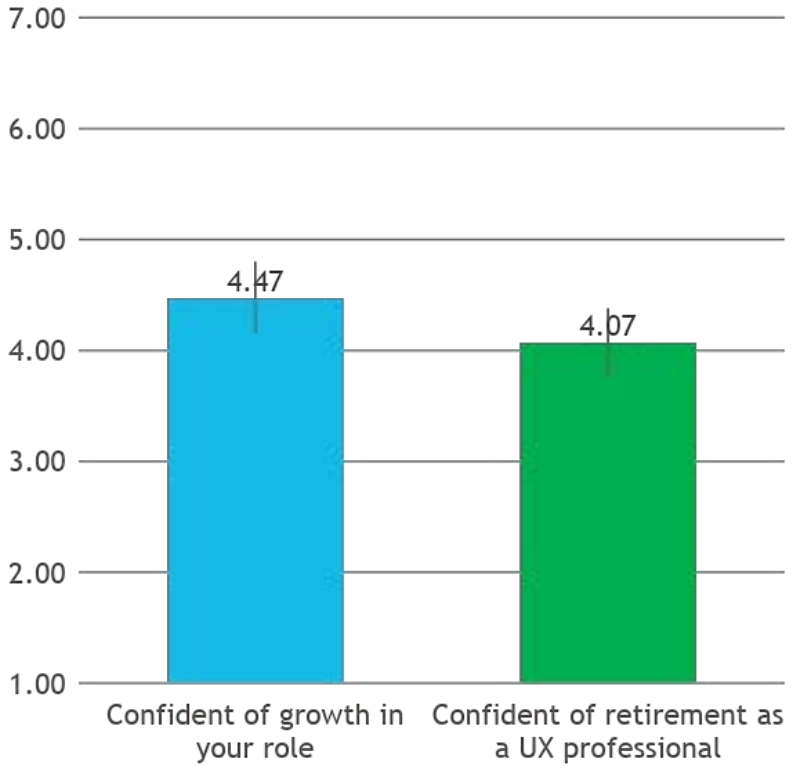
n = 324



Skills Acquisition and Growth/Retirement Confidence

The most frequent methods for acquiring new skills are to do hands-on-project work, take online courses, and read a book. The least frequent methods are taking college courses, attending bootcamps, or getting new degrees. Respondents do not have high confidence that they will grow in their current role or that they will retire as a UX professional.

How Do You Acquire New Job Skills	%
Do hands-on project work	56%
Take online courses	50%
Read a book	49%
Attend a conference	48%
Use AI tools	46%
Attend a webinar	43%
Get mentoring/coaching	38%
Watch social media videos	37%
Review recent literature	35%
Get employer training	22%
Get a certification	20%
Take a college course	9%
Attend a bootcamp	8%
Get a new degree	4%



N = 320

N = 383

Previous and Expected Future Use of AI in UX

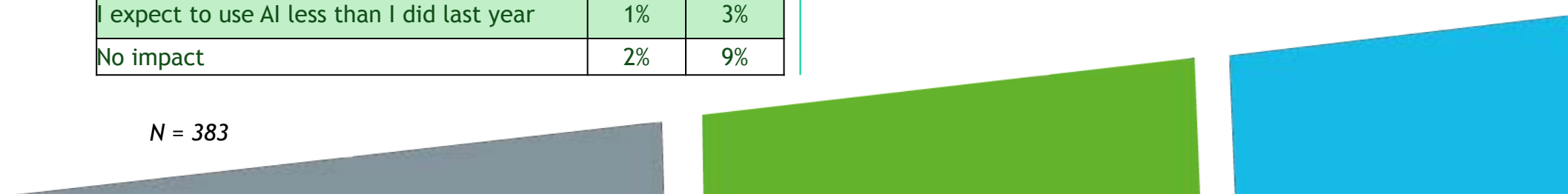
About half of respondents reported having tried AI in their roles and finding some value. From 2024 to 2026 companies increased their encouragement of AI use. From 2024 to 2026 the expectation that AI will cause UX job losses doubled (28% to 55%) and more respondents expect AI to degrade user experiences (from 37% to 54%).

Impact of AI on your role last year	2026	2024
Tried to apply some AI, found some value	45%	47%
Tried to apply some AI, not impressed	17%	20%
Company encouraged use of AI when it made sense	67%	37%
Company discouraged use of AI	2%	6%
No impact	2%	12%

Expected impact of AI on your role next year	2026	2024
I expect to use more AI than I did last year	60%	53%
I expect to use AI about the same as I did last year	17%	36%
I expect to use AI less than I did last year	1%	3%
No impact	2%	9%

Expected impact of AI on the UX profession in the next 5 years	2026	2024
Better understanding of appropriate use	57%	65%
Will cause UX job losses	55%	28%
Will degrade user experiences	54%	37%
Will improve user experiences	17%	30%

N = 383



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AI: UX Practitioners' Use of AI Tools

82% of respondents reported using AI tools to acquire UX skills regularly or occasionally. The top two skills developed using AI tools are explaining unfamiliar concepts, and getting feedback on writing (e.g., reports, deliverables).

Do You Use AI Tools to Acquire UX Skills?	%
Yes, regularly	38%
Yes, occasionally	44%
No	18%

N = 317

Skills Developed Using AI Tools	%
Explaining unfamiliar concepts	53%
Getting feedback on writing, reports, or deliverables	50%
Generating examples, templates, or exercises	46%
Summarizing articles, books, or research	45%
Finding resources or courses	30%
Practicing interview, research, or design tasks	28%
Creating a personalized learning plan	17%
Other	3%

N = 383



AI: Frequency of Use and Adoption Factors

Over half of respondents reported using daily and about three-quarters use it at least several times a week. The factors most influencing AI adoption were having employer-provided or approved tools and quality/trustworthiness of outputs.

Frequency of AI Use	%
Daily	56%
Several times a week	28%
Several times a month	8%
Rarely	5%
Never	2%

N = 312

Factors Influencing AI Adoption	%
Employer-provided or approved tools	65%
Quality of outputs	57%
Trustworthiness of outputs	51%
Integration with existing tools	44%
Ease of use	39%
Colleague or team recommendations	38%
Personal experimentation	37%
Privacy of security considerations	33%
Cost/free availability	32%

N = 383



AI Support of UX Work and Workload

About two-thirds of respondents use AI to support writing/editing and research synthesis/analysis, and about half report using it for brainstorming. Just under half of respondents reported some reduction in workload, about a quarter said there was no change, and about a fifth reported some increase in workload.

How AI Supports UX Work	%
Writing, editing, or documentation	66%
Research synthesis or analysis	64%
Brainstorming	51%
Competitive or secondary research	43%
Presentation or report creation	41%
Generating design ideas or concepts	38%
Coding or prototyping	30%
Creating or refining UI concepts	21%
Project coordination or scheduling	13%
Conducting moderated interviews	5%
Other	3%

N = 383

Net Effect of AI on UX Workload	%
Significantly reduces my workload	6%
Somewhat reduces my workload	45%
No net change	27%
Somewhat increases my workload	19%
Significantly increases my workload	3%

N = 305



AI Effects on UX Quality

About half of respondents felt that AI somewhat improved the quality of their deliverables while a third reported no noticeable impact. 58% noted an improvement in speed of execution but only 6% felt there was any improvement in accuracy or correctness (a potential indicator of mistrust in the AI outputs).

AI Effect on Quality of Your UX Deliverables	%
Significantly improved	8%
Somewhat improved	53%
No noticeable impact	33%
Somewhat reduced	4%
Significantly reduced	2%

N = 302

How AI Supports Your UX Work	%
Speed of execution	58%
Creative ideation	30%
Presentation quality	24%
Depth of research or analysis	21%
Collaboration or communication	16%
Consistency of outputs	13%
Accuracy or correctness	6%

N = 383



AI Evaluation and Ethical Concerns

Regarding practices for evaluating AI outputs, the top two strategies were to apply personal/professional judgment and to cross-reference with other sources. The top ethical concerns were trusting biased outputs and AI displacement of UX jobs. Only 2% of respondents indicated they did not verify AI outputs or have ethical concerns with AI.

Approaches to AI Evaluation in UX	%
Apply personal or professional judgment	70%
Cross-reference with other sources	53%
Peer or team review	30%
Test or validate with users	22%
Follow employer or vendor guidelines	11%
Other	3%
I don't typically verify AI outputs	2%

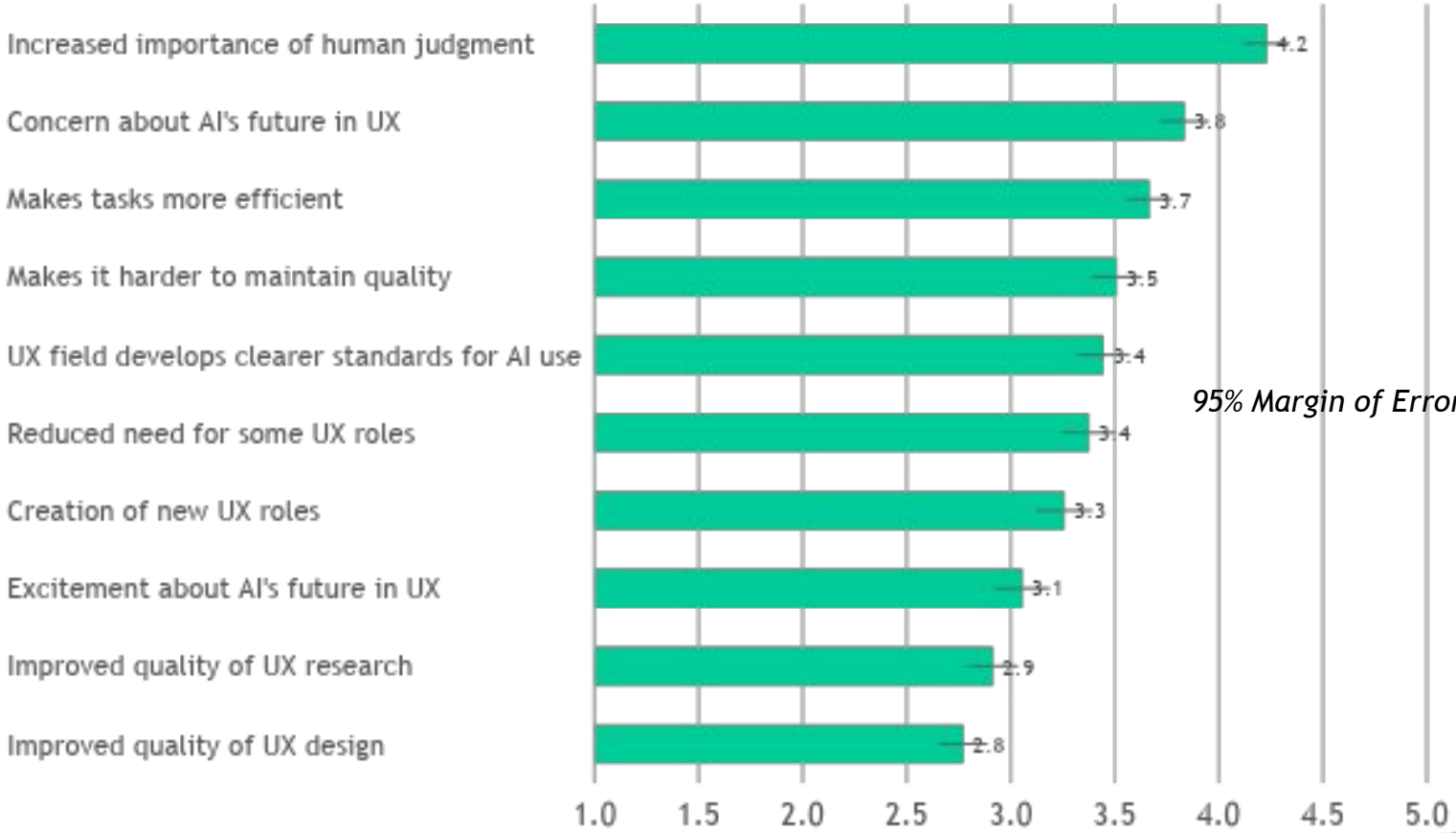
Ethical Concerns About AI Use in UX	%
Biased outputs affecting findings/decisions	67%
Job displacement in the UX field	54%
Data security	44%
Intellectual property or copyright	42%
Privacy of research participants	34%
Transparency with stakeholders about AI Use	34%
Accessibility gaps in AI tools	30%
Other	13%
I have no significant ethical concerns	2%

N = 383



Ratings of Expected AI Impact in Five Years

Respondents gave their highest ratings to an expectation that more experience with AI will lead to increased importance of human judgment in UX but there is also concern about AI's future in UX. The lowest expectation ratings were for improved quality in UX research and design, consistent with a need for human judgment.



95% Margin of Error = ±0.1

N = 303

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