

PEG rates survey 2025 RESULTS

Issued by the PEG National Executive Committee

PEG last conducted a rates survey in 2022 to determine average rates charged for various editing services. The Executive Committee therefore decided that another survey was due.

We sent the link to an online survey to our members via the official mailing list (egroup) and invited them to respond (their participation was entirely voluntary). The survey link remained open from 13 March to 3 April 2025 (three weeks).

We had a good response rate to the survey – 170 responses, which works out to a 25% response rate.

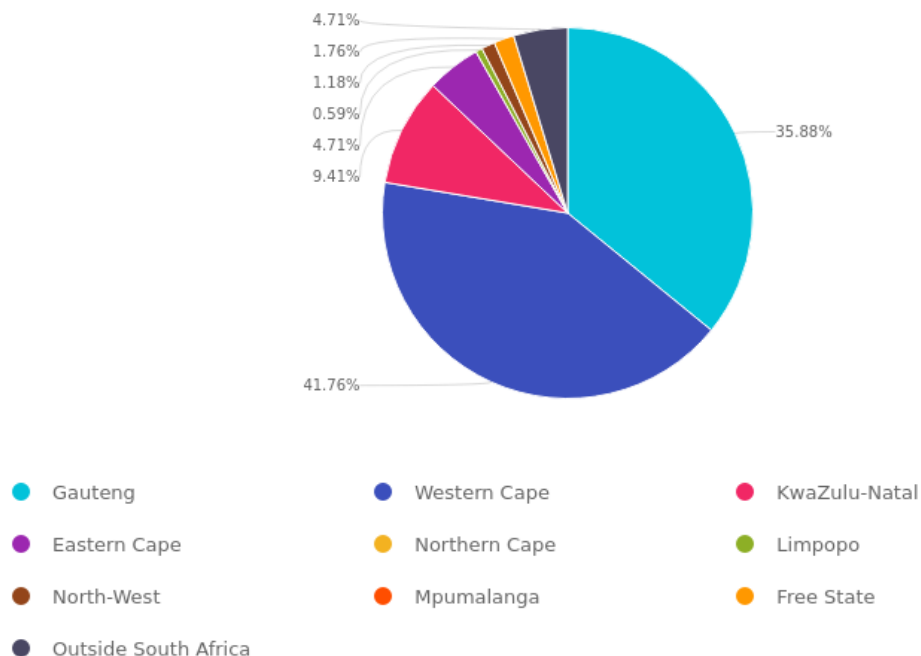
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Respondents' demographic information

Place of residence

Number of responses: 170

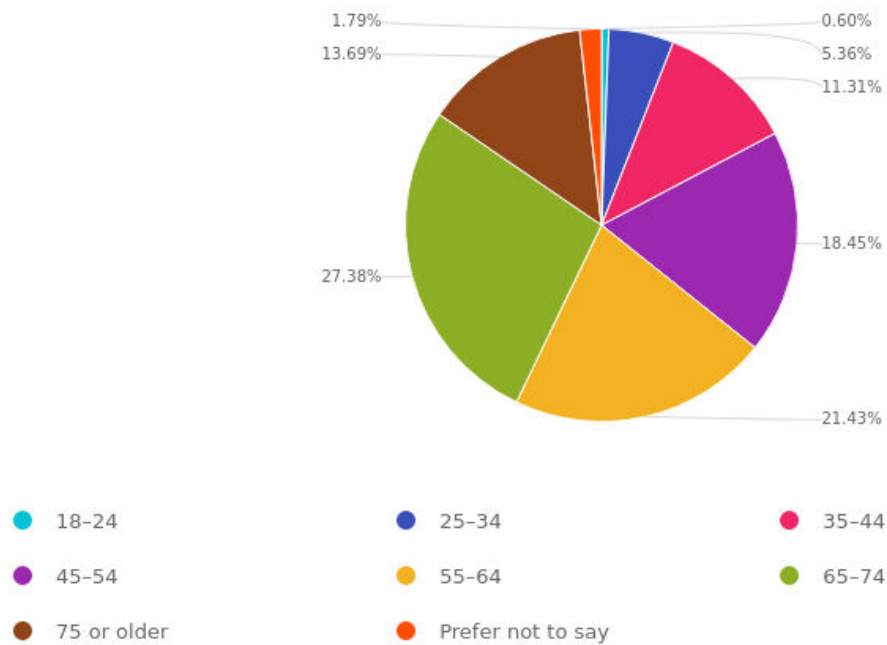
Over three-quarters of the respondents reside in Gauteng or Western Cape, with the latter just nosing ahead this time around. The other two areas with their own branch, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape, are the next biggest groups.



Age group

Number of responses: 168

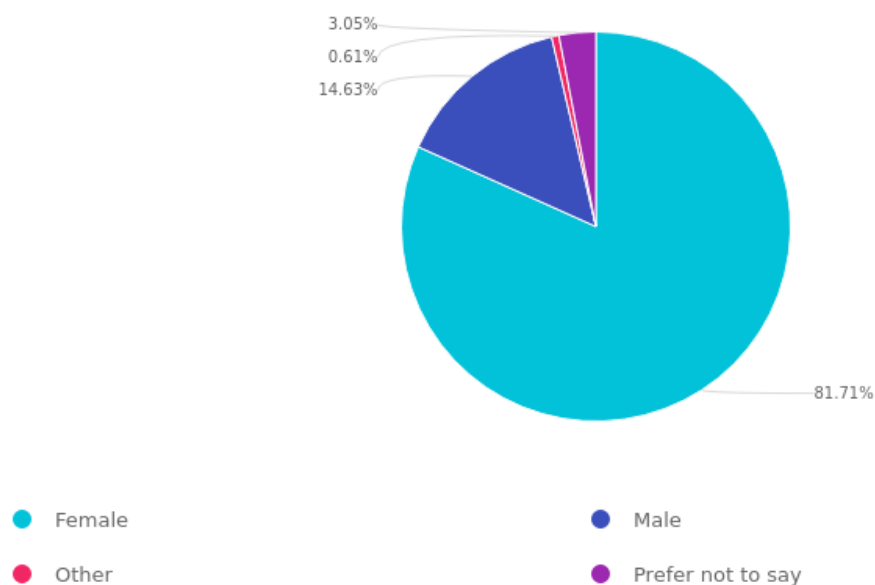
Nearly two-thirds of the members who responded are over the age of 55 and over three-quarters are over the age of 45.



Gender

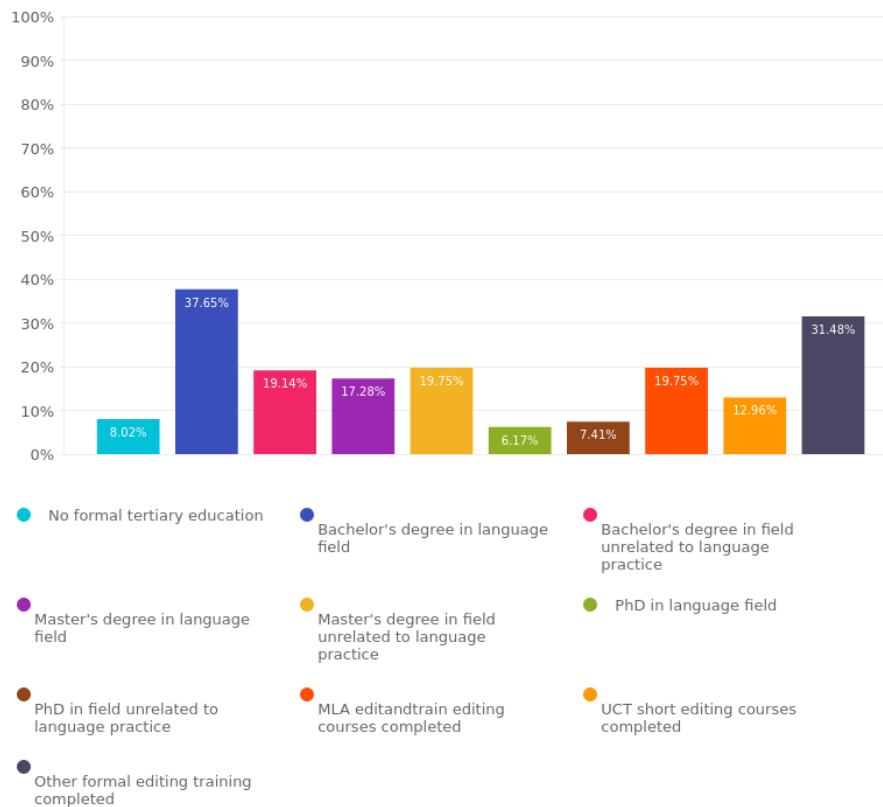
Number of responses: 164

Asked for the sake of completeness, this suggests, as has been the case in all past surveys, that PEG is predominantly female.



Education

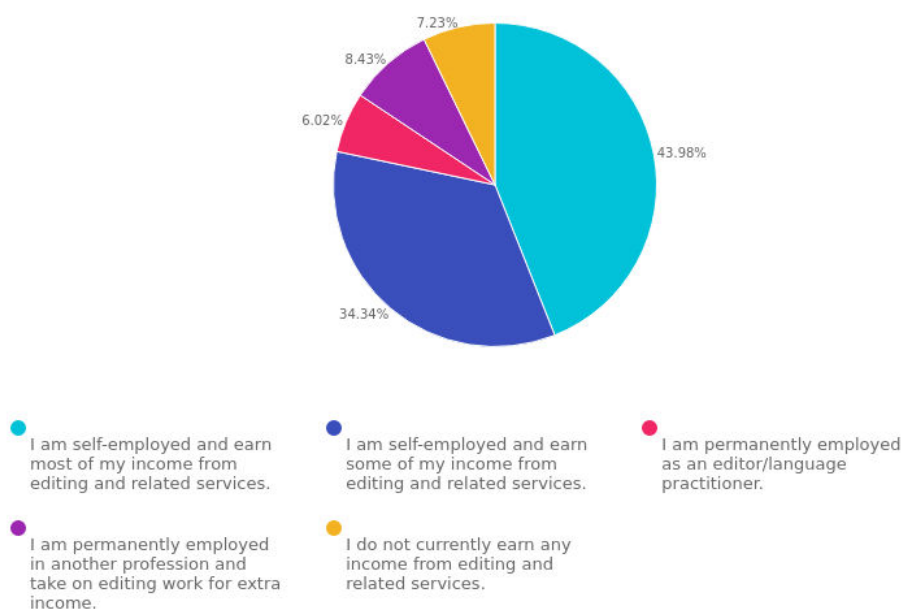
Number of responses: 162



Current employment status

Number of responses: 166

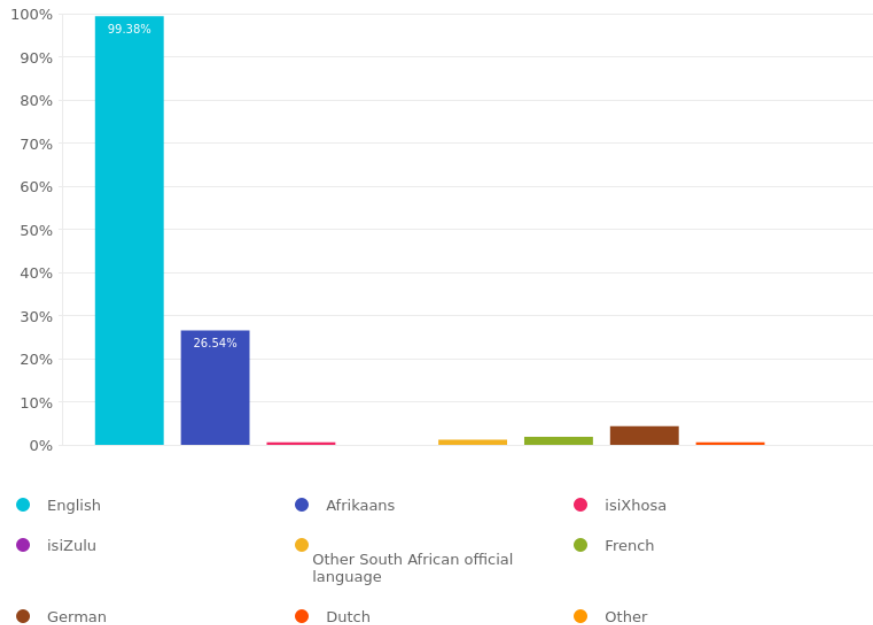
Self-employed is overwhelmingly the employment status of most of our members though, interestingly, under half report earning the majority of their income from editing work.



Languages

Number of responses: 162

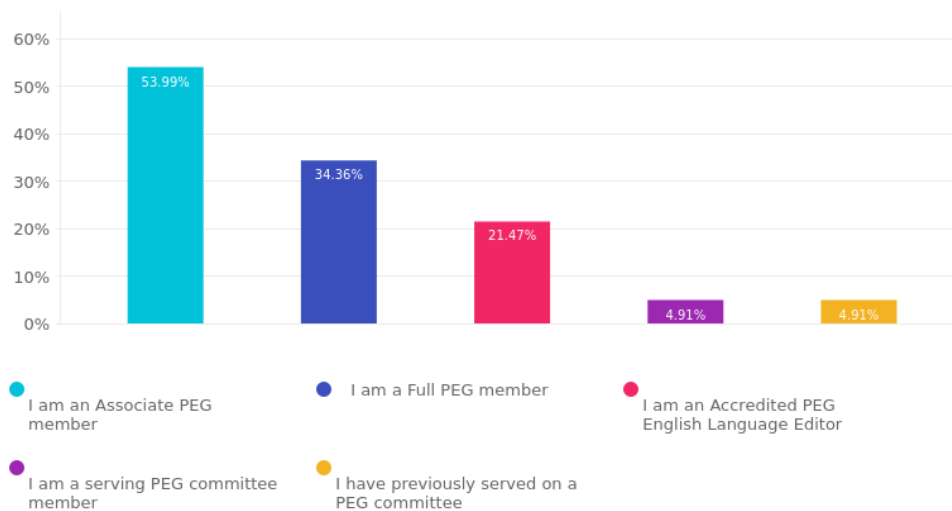
Most of our members work in English, with around a quarter also working in Afrikaans. Other languages are not very prevalent at all.



PEG membership

Membership type

Number of responses: 163



Length of membership

Number of responses: 155

Range: 2006–2025 (i.e. 0–19 years as a member)

Average number of years in PEG: 7



Rates

For each document type, editing rates are given (per word) for light, medium and heavy edits. This was the most common rate type charged for other services too. Hourly rates are also shown as this was a common quoting mechanism for jobs of unknown scope. We have included the range and number of responses per rate to help you judge the reliability of the quoted rates.

Hourly rate

Number of responses: 178

Range: R112.50–R850

Average: R470 per hour

Editing – per word

Theses

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.27	60	R0.14	R1.20
Medium	R0.31	57	R0.11	R1.20
Heavy	R0.36	58	R0.12	R1.50

Academic documents

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.39	31	R0.13	R2.50
Medium	R0.39	26	R0.15	R1.20
Heavy	R0.47	34	R0.12	R1.50

Academic journal articles

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.35	50	R0.14	R2.50
Medium	R0.35	46	R0.13	R1.20
Heavy	R0.42	49	R0.12	R1.50

Textbooks

A number of respondents mentioned that the rates for textbook editing are usually dictated by the publisher rather than the editor.

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.49	10	R0.13	R2.50
Medium	R0.40	15	R0.11	R1.00
Heavy	R0.45	14	R0.12	R1.50

Corporate communications

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.39	24	R0.15	R1.00
Medium	R0.50	21	R0.18	R1.00
Heavy	R0.75	22	R0.12	R3.00



Government documents

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.36	15	R0.15	R1.00
Medium	R0.56	13	R0.17	R2.00
Heavy	R0.61	18	R0.12	R3.00

Professional reports

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.42	24	R0.15	R1.00
Medium	R0.55	20	R0.20	R2.00
Heavy	R0.69	26	R0.12	R3.00

Magazine/newspaper articles

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.34	11	R0.15	R0.75
Medium	R0.63	17	R0.17	R2.50
Heavy	R0.62	13	R0.12	R2.25

Web content

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.34	10	R0.15	R0.75
Medium	R0.55	10	R0.25	R1.50
Heavy	R0.73	10	R0.25	R2.25

Narrative non-fiction

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.32	15	R0.13	R0.75
Medium	R0.43	20	R0.17	R1.50
Heavy	R0.57	21	R0.12	R2.25

Fiction

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.33	11	R0.10	R0.50
Medium	R0.44	13	R0.20	R0.80
Heavy	R0.52	14	R0.04	R1.00

Poetry

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.27	5	R0.10	R0.50
Medium	R0.51	4	R0.25	R0.75
Heavy	R0.62	6	R0.12	R1.20

Indexes

Level of edit	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Light	R0.20	5	R0.07	R0.28
Medium	R0.45	2	R0.40	R0.50
Heavy	R0.47	4	R0.07	R0.90



Reference checking

Unit	Average rate	Number of responses	Range	
Per word	R0.29	17	R0.14	R0.52
Per reference	R15.15	42	R15	R100

Other services

Service	Average rate (per word)	Number of responses	Range	
Proofreading	R0.24	64	R0.04	R0.65
Copywriting	R2.43	15	R0.17	R7.00
Index generation	R0.19	8	R0.07	R0.43
Transcription	R0.16	7	R0.10	R0.25
Document formatting*	R0.36	18	R0.05	R1.04

* Document formatting was usually mentioned as being included in the editing quote and not charged for separately.

Other information

Sample or free edit

Most respondents are loath to provide a free or even a sample edit. However, there are certain circumstances in which such a request is honoured.

Samples (of two to three pages) are provided if requested to new clients, on unclear jobs and for editing 'tests' or assessments. The sample can also serve to allow the editor to assess the level of edit required and hence inform the quoted rate.

Free edits are sometimes granted for friends and family, small extras for regular clients, NGOs/NPOs ('passion projects') or student clients who are genuinely unable to pay.

Discounted rate

Loyalty to long-term clients and recognition of financial difficulty may inspire a discounted rate. Another consideration is the final document – if a per word rate results in a particularly high fee then a discount may be considered. Premium rates, on the other hand, are more common, especially in cases of tight deadlines and complicated work.

Multiple rounds

The usual practice seems to be that a second round of revision is included in the original rate and any substantial additional work is charged at an hourly rate.

