# Scrum Master Salary Report 2022

Stefan Wolpers & Alexander Bergmann

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# Introduction: Scrum Master Salary Report 2022

Now and then, the position of Scrum Master is revealed as one of the top-paying jobs in the United States. However, few have ventured to investigate the state of this profession on a global scale.

In 2017 we endeavored to unravel the career paths leading to and the financial rewards of this lucrative profession globally by polling Scrum Masters and agile coaches around the world. Our questions addressed the practitioners' educational background, working experience, and the industries and organizational details of the respondents' companies.

Our objective was to identify common career patterns among successful Scrum Masters and link those patterns with their financial remuneration, thus providing aspiring Scrum Masters with an idea of how to plan for a career in the profession.

In 2021, four years after our first Scrum Master Salary Report, we went out again to survey over 1,100 Scrum Masters and agile coaches from Australia to the United States. And as you can imagine, the agile world is changing regarding working environments and financial remuneration. In this conclusive report, you'll find facts and statistics not readily available anywhere else, including clarity on several issues likely to be of concern to new entrants to the profession.

All figures are listed in US-$.

The previous reports are still available for download:

- **Download the 2019 edition here**: Scrum Master Trends Report 2019
- **Download the 2017 edition here**: Scrum Master Salary Report 2017.

*Please note that high-resolution graphics are included with the download.*

**How to cite this report:**

Wolpers, S., & Bergmann, A. (2022). Scrum Master Salary Report 2022 (Version 1.0). Berlin Product People GmbH: Berlin. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.5894847.

# Data Collection and Analysis

We collected the data for the 2022 edition from September 2021 to December 2021. Overall, 1,113 Scrum Masters and agile coaches participated in the survey. To gather the contributors' answers, we employed an online questionnaire administered via Google Forms.

The main acquisition channel was the *Food for Agile Thought* newsletter. Additionally, we distributed the survey link via blog posts and various social media postings.

We started the survey with a standardized instruction where we provided further information on data usage and anonymity. Then, if the participants proceeded with the survey, they agreed to include their data in the analysis.

There were no incentives for participating in our survey. After a standard data cleaning procedure, we computed descriptive statistics for all 34 survey questions. In addition, we investigated the relationship between several variables and the study participants' salaries.

# Sample Description

## Socio-Demographics: Age, Gender and Salary

The participants are 64.3 % male and 34.5 % female. Most of the participants are between 30 and 39 years old (40.9 %) or between 40 and 49 years old (30.7 %.) Another 16.9 % belong to the age group between 50 and 59 years.

The average salary of our participants is $83,687, with a standard deviation of roughly $48,700 – that is a lot of variances to explain in further analyses, see Figure 1.
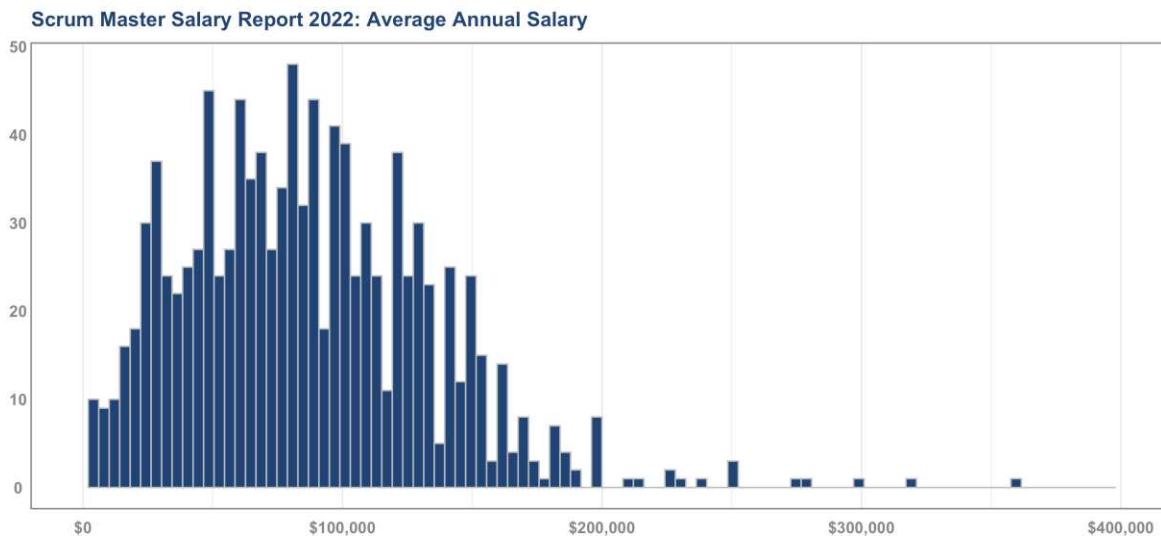


**Figure 1**: Average Annual Salary [US-$]

## Participants' Education and Agile Experience

Comparing our recent results with the 2017 report, the participant's educational level and background haven't changed much. Most of them either have a bachelor's degree (42.8 %) or a master's degree (34.5 %). In addition, they usually start their agile careers with technical/engineering backgrounds (47.2 %) or a business degree (22.7 %).

Our sample is comparatively small in the proportion of other educational backgrounds, such as social sciences, natural sciences, arts, or medicine. As an agile coach or Scrum Master, it is most likely you have prior work experience as a project manager (34.3 %), software engineer (21.5 %), or business analyst (10.0 %)

Most of the participants of the Scrum Master Salary Report 2022 either have practical experience of more than four years (50.5%) or at least two to four years (31.2%). In addition, they indicated significant transition experience (67.2%), and at least 52.0% of them experienced or initiated a transition kickoff.

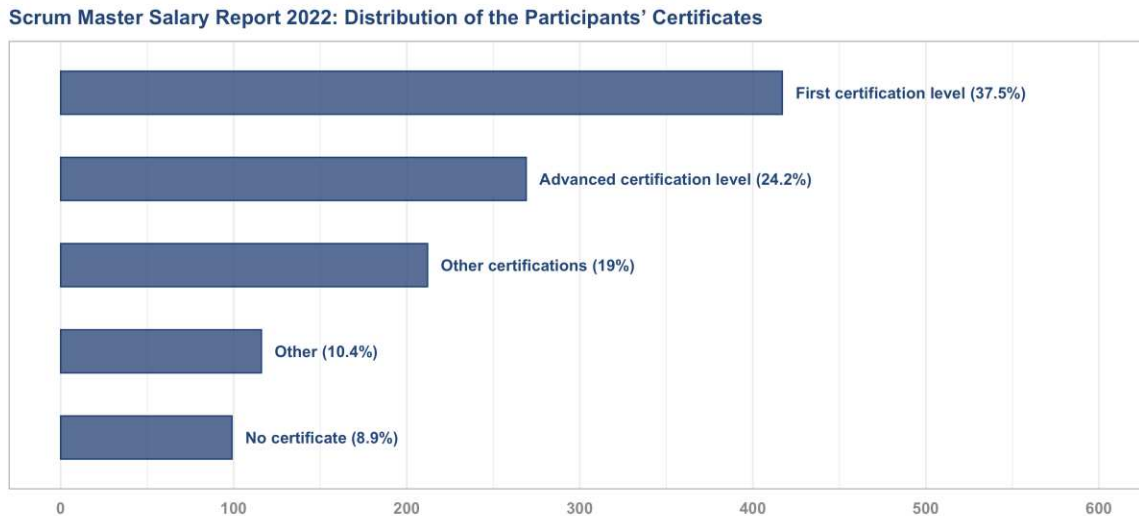Their experience usually goes along with at least one agile certificate, see Figure 2.

**Scrum Master Salary Report 2022: Distribution of the Participants' Certificates**

First certification level (37.5%)

Advanced certification level (24.2%)

Other certifications (19%)

Other (10.4%)

No certificate (8.9%)

**Figure 2**: Distribution of the Participants' Certificates

## Organizational Perspective: Country, Sector, Size, Agility Level

The participants' organizations were located in various countries, see Figure 3, and from a broad set of corporate sectors, see Figure 4. A comparatively large proportion of the organizations is located either in the USA (28.0 %), in Germany (12.7 %), or multiple countries (15.8 %). The largest sectors were software and internet companies (19.8 %), companies from the finance and insurance sector (19.3 %) as well as companies with a focus on engineering and technology (13.4 %).

**Figure 3**: Countries of Participants' Organizations



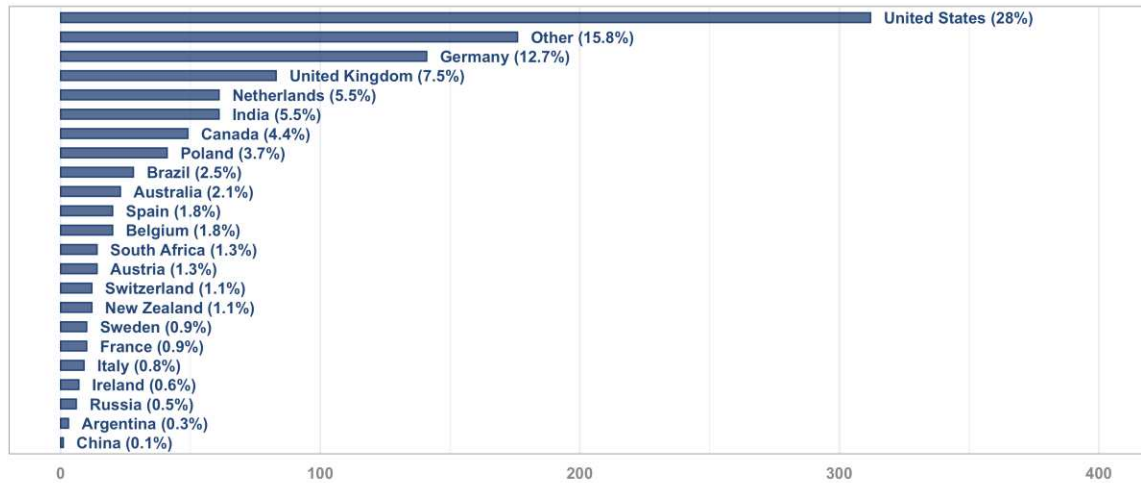**Figure 4**: Sectors of Participants' Organizations
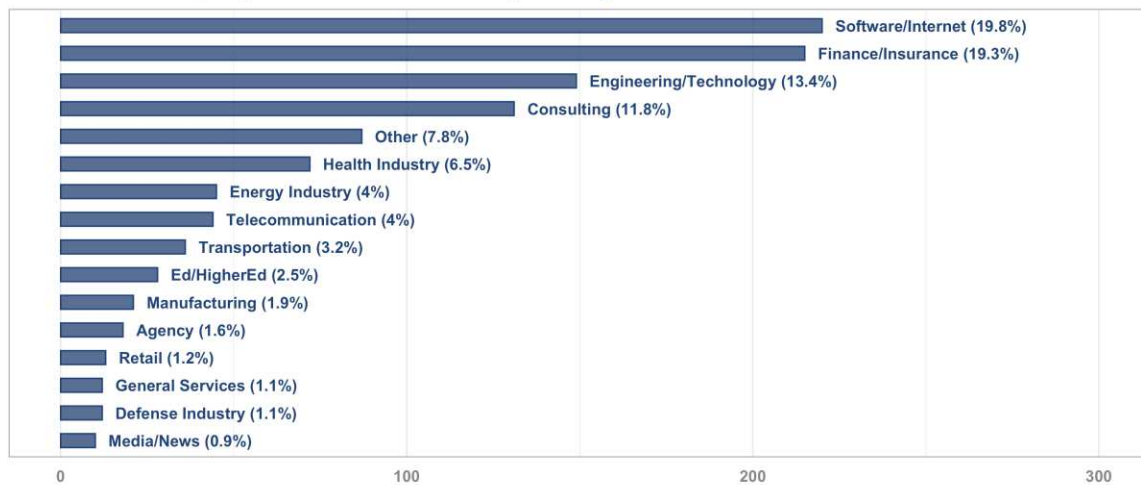
Nearly a third of the companies had more than 10,000 employees (29.5 %). On the other hand, 8.3 % of the companies had 5,000 to 9,999 employees. Smaller companies with 1,000 to 4,999 employees, 250 to 999 employees, and 50 to 249 employees were evenly distributed with 17.8 %, 19.8 %, and 18.1 %, respectively. The minor proportion were organizations with 1 to 50 employees (6.6 %).

Overall, the participants reported a wide range of organizational agility levels. 3.6 % indicated that their organization mainly employs traditional techniques, e. g., command & control, and waterfall. 30.9 % reported that their organization is starting to adopt agile practices. 30.2 % stated that their company is making significant progress in adopting agile practices and another 12.6 % indicated that agile practices are already well established in their organization. Also, there were 6.5 % of the participants whose organizations somehow had problems implementing agile practices; therefore, the agile transition stalled, see Figure 5.
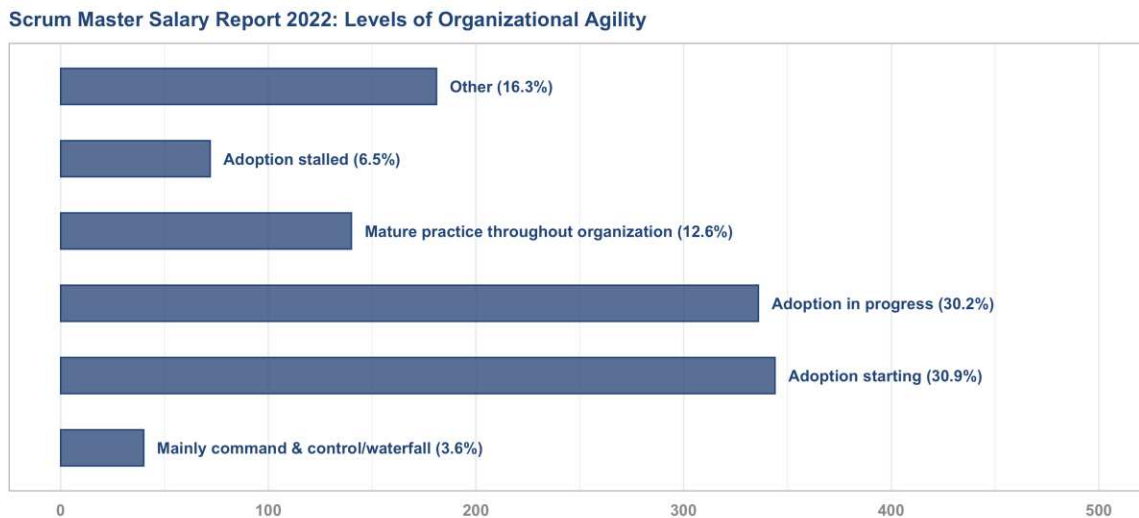
**Scrum Master Salary Report 2022: Levels of Organizational Agility**

Other (16.3%)

Adoption stalled (6.5%)

Mature practice throughout organization (12.6%)

Adoption in progress (30.2%)

Adoption starting (30.9%)

Mainly command & control/waterfall (3.6%)

**Figure 5**: Levels of Organizational Agility

## Agile Work Environments

Among our participants were 70% Scrum Masters and 30% Agile Coaches, 92.2% of them employed directly at the respective organization. The participants` tenure level was more or less evenly distributed among the four categories "less than one year" (32.5%), "one to two years" (19.9%), "two to four years" (22.4%), and "more than four years" (25.2%.)

Our participants usually work in two to ten teams (50.0 %). Another third of them (34.4 %) has to divide their attention to more than ten teams.

It is pretty common to work in 10 or more projects, where most of our participants' projects were medium or large scales, see Figure 6.

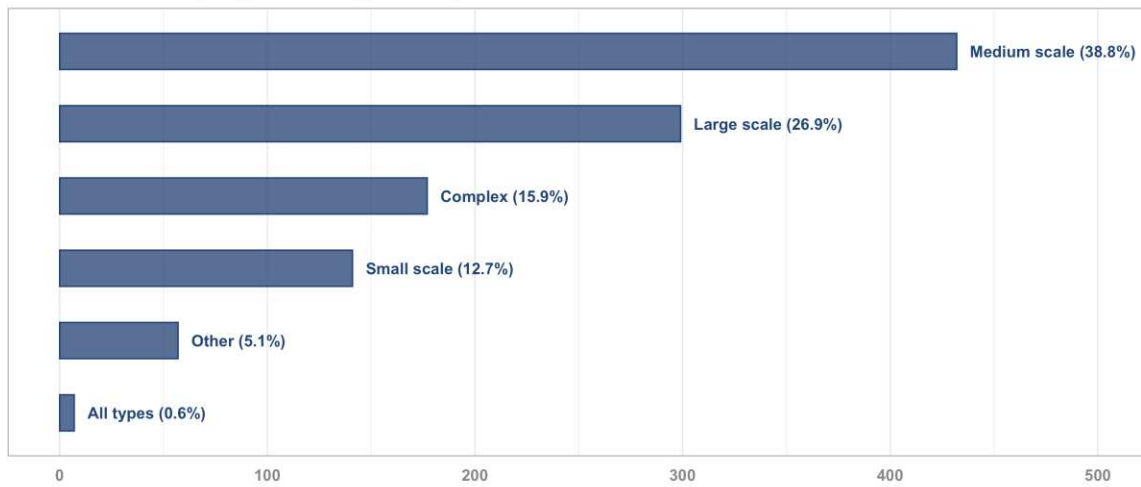**Scrum Master Salary Report 2022: Type of Projects**

- Medium scale (38.8%)
- Large scale (26.9%)
- Complex (15.9%)
- Small scale (12.7%)
- Other (5.1%)
- All types (0.6%)

**Figure 6**: Type of Projects

# Your Educational Level Barely Matter

The standard "get a master's degree" mantra implies that the more you invest in your education, the higher your income. There are countless exceptions to this rule, and for the role of Scrum Master, the exception could not be more accurate; see Figure 7.

Of course, there are some exceptional cases where the additional degree raises the maximum salary to $320,000 or even $360,000. But looking at both the salary distributions median and mean values, there is no remuneration-induced need to invest more time and accomplish a master's degree. As you will see in the two subsequent sections, it is much more beneficial to invest in agile certificates and gain significant work experience.

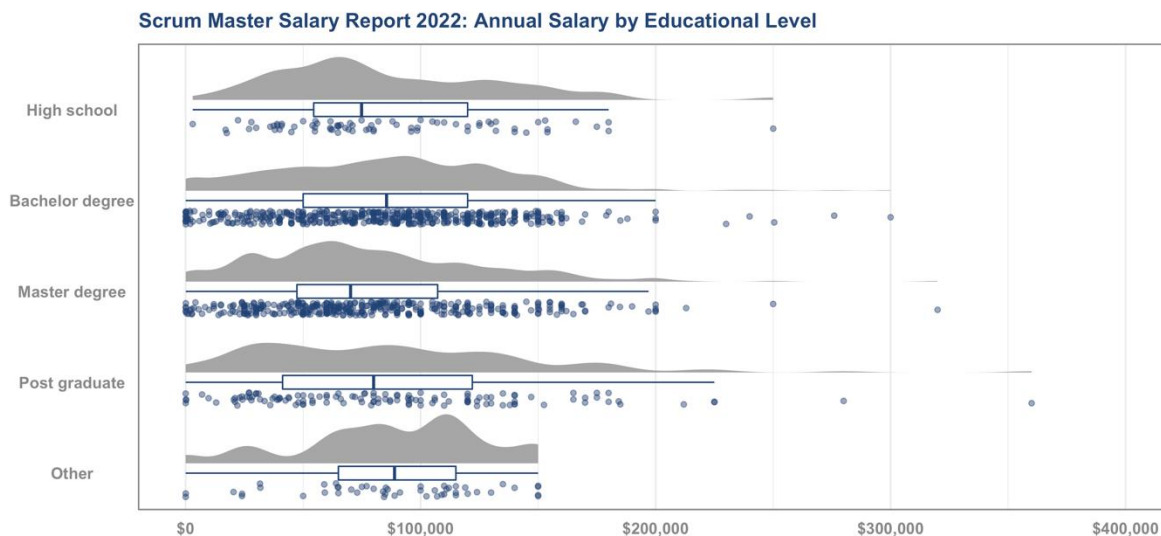| Educational Level | Maximum | Median | Mean | SD | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| High school | 250,000 | 74,874 | 85,987 | 47,377 | 75 |
| Bachelor degree | 300,000 | 85,500 | 85,544 | 47,483 | 474 |
| Master degree | 320,000 | 70,190 | 78,846 | 47,417 | 384 |
| Postgraduate | 360,000 | 80,000 | 88,316 | 59,765 | 127 |
| Other | 150,000 | 88,900 | 88,154 | 38,735 | 49 |



**Figure 7**: Annual Salary by Educational Level

# At Least Get a First-Level Certificate

Your salary increases with the number and sophistication of the certificates you obtain. The median difference between having no certification and having at least an entry-level certification, for example, the PSM I, is as much as $15,000 annually. Advanced certificates, for example, the PSM II, and additional qualifications such as SCM, ICP-ACC, PMI-ACP add up to another $19,000 annually to your paycheck.

The more specific your profile, the higher your income may become. Therefore, we subsumed the participants who described particular combinations of certificates and additional qualifications in the "Specific Profile" group. As you can see, this group's median score is comparatively high, but this is also the group with the highest overall salaries.

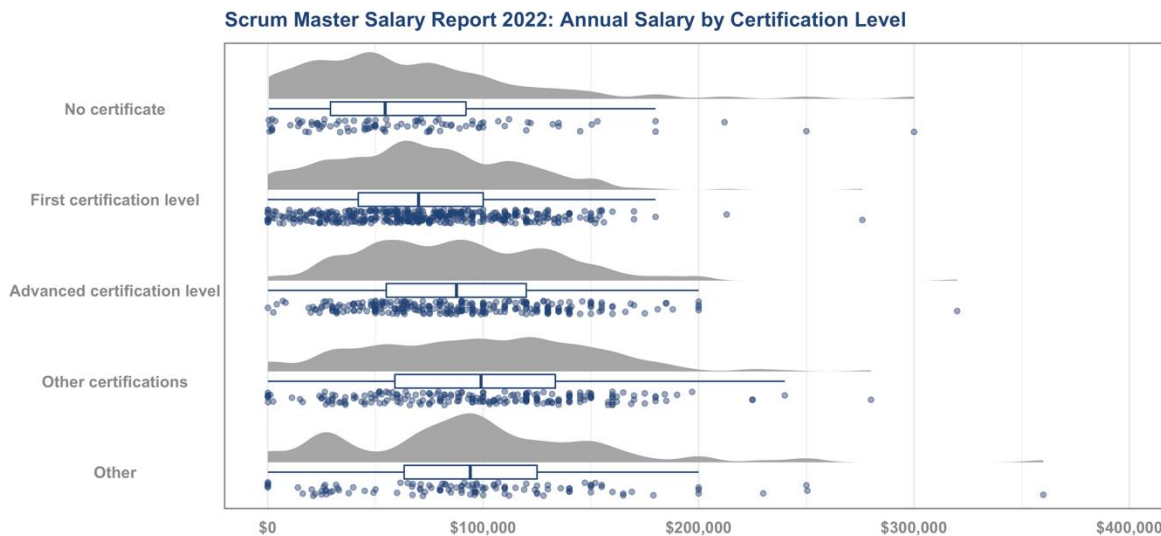| Certificate | Maximum | Median | Mean | SD | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No certificate | 300,000 | 54,500 | 67,501 | 53,730 | 97 |
| First level | 276,000 | 70,000 | 73,015 | 41,678 | 417 |
| Advanced level | 320,000 | 87,600 | 89,762 | 45,027 | 269 |
| Other certificates | 280,000 | 99,000 | 97,897 | 51,260 | 211 |
| Specific profile | 360,000 | 94,000 | 95,762 | 58,740 | 115 |



**Figure 8**: Annual Salary by Certification Level

# Experience Is Key

Unsurprisingly, the salary also increases as Scrum Masters and agile coaches gain experience and reach intermediate and senior levels. From our point of view, what is surprising is the median difference between junior-level income and senior-level income. A difference of roughly $40,000 is a valid argument to cope with the troubles that may stress you in your day-to-day business.

We also want to highlight that the more senior you become, the higher the salary distribution spreads.

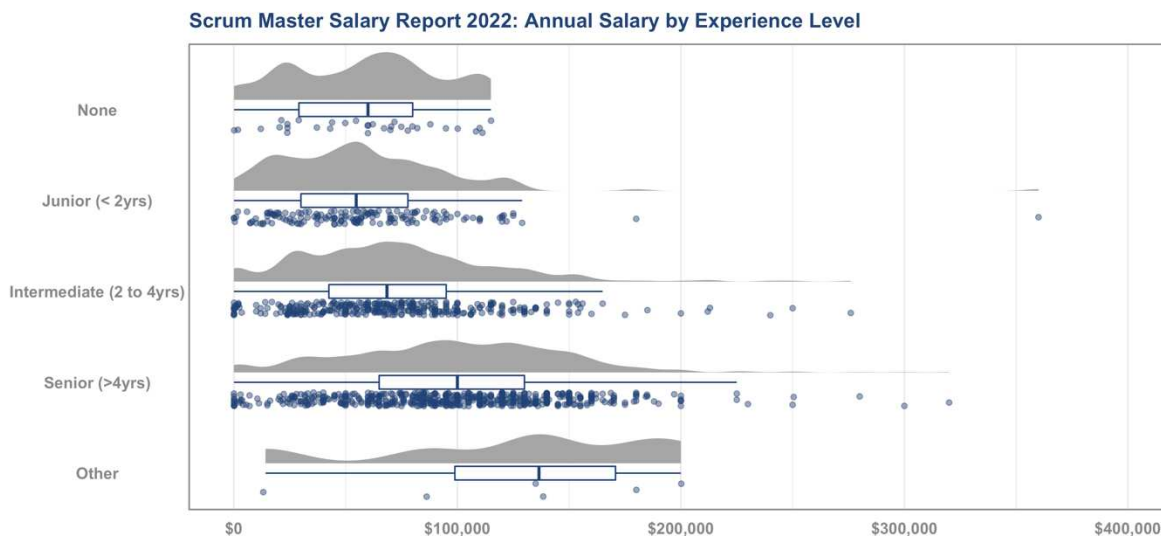| Experience Level | Maximum | Median | Mean | SD | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| None | 115,000 | 60,000 | 59,071 | 32,732 | 33 |
| Junior (< 2yrs) | 360,000 | 54,743 | 57,688 | 40,853 | 162 |
| Intermediate (2-4yrs) | 276,000 | 68,500 | 72,473 | 43,680 | 347 |
| Senior (>4yrs) | 320,000 | 100,000 | 99,128 | 48,678 | 561 |



**Figure 9**: Annual Salary by Experience Level

# Your Previous Occupation Matters

There are significant differences in the annual salary, see Figure 10, depending on the previous job of our participants, with a difference of as much as $59,000 in median income between former UX/UI designers ($58,000) and product managers ($117,000).

Product Owners and business analysts share a place in the top group with product managers.

As there are high incomes in all categories, be optimistic regarding your career perspective!

| Previous Job | Maximum | Median | Mean | SD | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UX/UI designer | 130,000 | 58,000 | 70,946 | 32,575 | 11 |
| (QA) engineer | 360,000 | 64,832 | 75,596 | 52,927 | 65 |
| Developer | 320,000 | 70,000 | 74,721 | 44,682 | 237 |
| Other | 250,473 | 80,500 | 82,867 | 47,930 | 254 |
| Project manager | 280,000 | 81,900 | 85,953 | 49,595 | 382 |
| Product Owner | 200,000 | 92,590 | 101,078 | 49,162 | 10 |
| Business analyst | 166,000 | 95,000 | 87,775 | 41,442 | 110 |
| Product manager | 300,000 | 117,500 | 121,458 | 62,621 | 40 |
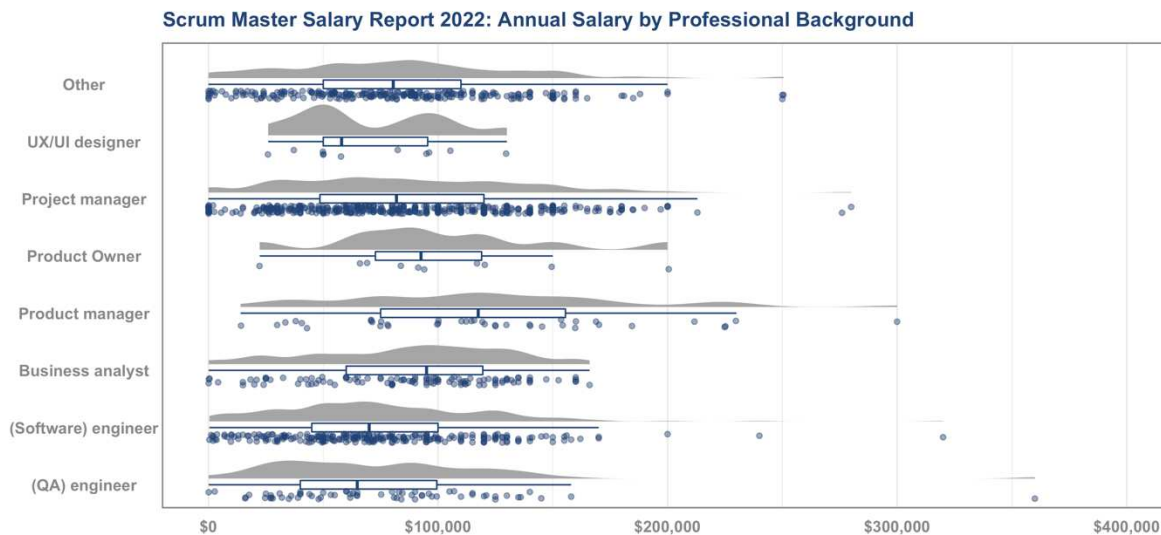


**Figure 10**: Annual Salary by Professional Background

# Relocate to the United States, Australia, or Germany

Our 2017 report reported median salaries between $20,000 (India) and $110,000 (Australia). In general, we see higher median salaries in this year's report and a larger spread in the salary distributions, especially in India; see Figure 11.

Despite the increase in median income, the relative position amongst the countries nearly stayed the same. The United States, Australia, and Germany form the top income group. At the bottom are India, Brazil, and Poland.

The conclusion of our last report still holds: If Scrum certifications worldwide are considered equal, a position as Scrum Master or agile coach in the United States is financially preferred, even when considering the higher cost of living.

| Country | Maximum | Median | Mean | SD | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Australia | 155,000 | 120,000 | 114,763 | 23,150 | 23 |
| Brazil | 95,000 | 23,500 | 27,360 | 25,655 | 26 |
| Canada | 200,000 | 80,000 | 87,144 | 38,625 | 48 |
| Germany | 320,000 | 82,700 | 89,490 | 42,911 | 141 |
| India | 360,000 | 30,000 | 39,252 | 47,887 | 60 |
| Netherlands | 200,000 | 80,000 | 83,045 | 33,005 | 61 |
| Poland | 85,680 | 40,000 | 39,294 | 19,271 | 41 |
| UK | 168,705 | 75,237 | 78,207 | 32,339 | 83 |
| United States | 300,000 | 122,000 | 124,001 | 38,037 | 312 |
| Other | 250,000 | 38,500 | 47,011 | 37,268 | 176 |
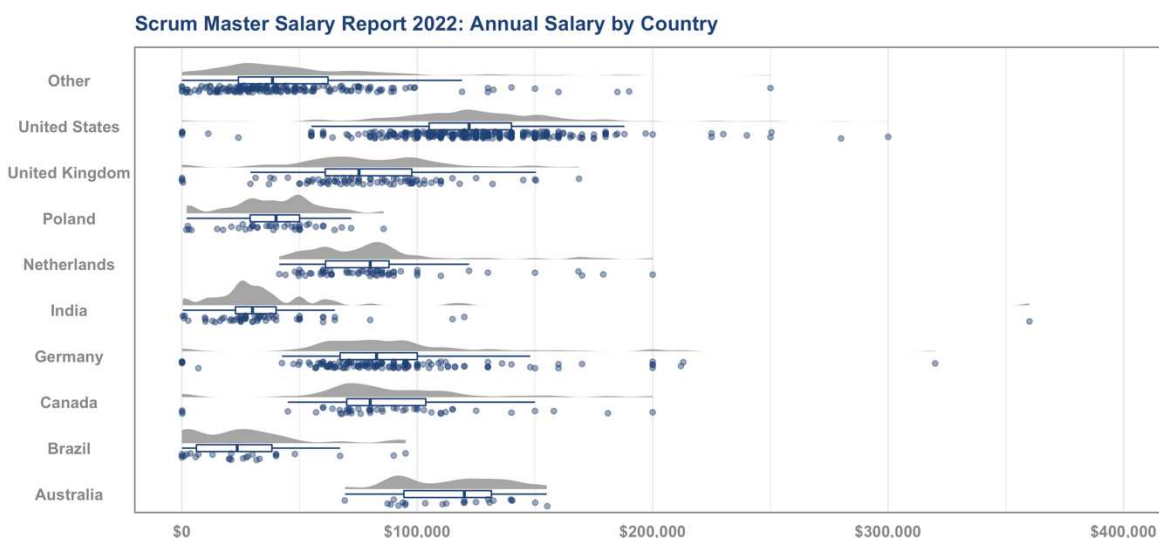


**Figure 11**: Annual Salary by Country

# Consider Freelancing

Freelancers earn more, but only very few of them started as freelancers right away; see Figure. Usually, the freelancers in our sample have backgrounds in finance/business and consulting. In addition, most of them were either software engineers or project managers. And nearly all of them have significant agile experience of four or more years.

However, given the considerable spread in the annual income for freelancers, you may want to consider whether to start freelancing carefully.

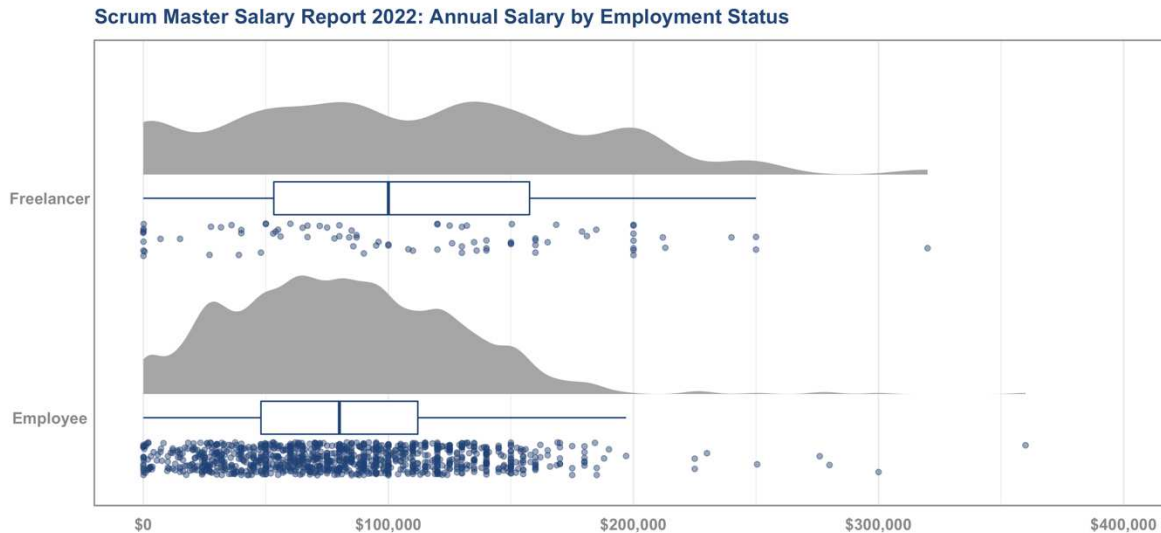| Employment Status | Maximum | Median | Mean | SD | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employee | 360,000 | 80,000 | 81,701 | 45,833 | 1023 |
| Freelancer | 320,000 | 100,000 | 107,324 | 71,251 | 86 |



**Figure 12**: Annual Salary by Employment Status

# The Gender Pay Gap

In 2017 we reported only marginal income differences for male and female Scrum Masters, and we were able to replicate these results in this year's report.

However, why shouldn't there be a gender pay gap in the agile world when you find it in nearly every other industry sector? Therefore, we went a little bit further with our analyses. We found several interesting patterns by comparing gender-specific income based on variables such as business sector and previous job.

Finally, we decided to use regression analysis to investigate the influence of the participants' gender on their salary, controlling for a broad set of other variables, such as business sector, location, previous position, etc. Thus, we found a statistically significant difference between male and female participants' income of roundabout $7,800 – which equals roughly 10% of the median income.

We recommend closely looking at your colleague's salary, especially if you are a female Scrum Master or agile coach.

| Gender | Maximum | Median | Mean | SD | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female | 360,000 | 81,000 | 82,507 | 47,879 | 384 |
| Male | 320,000 | 80,000 | 84,461 | 49,294 | 714 |
| Prefer not to say | 150,000 | 62,600 | 74,718 | 42,546 | 11 |

Yes, we applied a statistical model:

| Coefficient | Est. | SE | t | P(>|t|) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | 83,969 | 12,551 | 7.44 | <.001 |
| Gender (Female) | -7,807 | 2,427 | -3.22 | <.01 |
| … | … | … | … | … |

$Note: R_{adj.}^2 = .57$, F(84, 878) = 16.22, p < .001.

(We omitted all other rows to increase readability. If you want to learn more about the model, please reach out to Alexander.)

# The Top Ten Earners

Of course, it is much more realistic to compare oneself to the median scores in the respective category. However, who wouldn't have looked at the top income group to understand what the upper limit is at the moment. We identified the top ten earners in our dataset, and here are their characteristics. They:

- Represent the gender distribution of our general sample: three females and seven males
- Are between 40 and 60 years of age
- Are agile coaches (9 out of 10)
- Work in the United States
- Work in the business/finance or the technical/engineering sector
- Work at large and "agile" organizations
- Usually have a bachelor's degree (The top ten represent the full range of degrees, though.)
- Have particular combinations of agile certificates
- Have significant practical experience
- Are responsible for more than ten complex or large-scale projects.

# Toward a Scrum Master Salary Toolkit

Taking a step back and looking at our analyses, we wondered how we could improve the value for our readers. One size doesn't fit all, and what you can and cannot achieve—financially speaking—heavily depends on your current situation and your specific profile.

Therefore, we want to go beyond group comparisons. In preparation for future reports, we experimented with our dataset and investigated if it could point to a salary pathway or a Scrum Master salary toolkit.

The toolkit should allow you to calculate your salary considering your specific characteristics and identify relevant "next steps" to increase your salary significantly.

How could this work?

Imagine a Scrum Master with the following profile:

| Characteristic | Your profile |
|---|---|
| Age | Younger than 30 years |
| Gender | Male |
| Educational Degree | Bachelor's Degree |
| Educational Background | Technical/Engineering |
| Professional Background | Project Manager |
| Agile Certificate | First-level Certificate |
| Agile Experience | No prior experience |
| Work Experience | Entry Level Job |
| Coaching Experience | No coaching experience |
| Role | Scrum Master |
| Organization's Location | United States |
| Organization's Sector | Software/Internet |
| Organization's Size | Less than 50 employees |
| Type of Projects | Small-scaled |
| Number of Projects | 2 or less |

With this profile, your annual salary should be around $85,000, with an error margin of roughly $8,000. If you consider your current financial situation and your future aspirations, several questions become relevant, for example: Should you stay at your current organization? For how long? Should you invest in additional certificates?

We derived several decisions based on this profile that could positively or negatively affect your situation. Some of the characteristics you will be able to change proactively, others will be beyond your circle of influence:

- Just staying at the organization until you are 50 years of age or older should lead to a salary increase of $15,000.
- Changing your location should almost certainly decrease your income (e. g., by roughly $30,000 if you relocated to Germany)

- Obtaining certificates that match your organization's needs should increase your salary by approximately $10,000.
- Actively gaining hands-on experience in the following years should lead to an increase in your salary of roundabout $13,000.
- Taking on more individual risks and becoming a freelancer should increase your salary by nearly $18,000.
- Switching into the health industry or a finance/insurance company could increase your income by approximately $10,000.

At the moment, all other decisions should only have a minor influence on your financial situation.

**A word of caution:** Currently, there is still a lot of uncertainty in our model. We would not recommend adding up several income factors at the same time. (Sometimes, adding up will be impossible as the decisions are mutually exclusive.) But we will undoubtedly proceed with our work on the toolkit until our following report.

**Note**: All numbers reflect annual changes.

# Appendix: Abbreviations

**Maximum:**        Maximum value within the sample

**Median:**           Median value within the sample

**Mean:**             Mean value within the sample

**SD:**                Standard distribution

**n:**                 Sample size

**SE:**               Standard error

**t:**                  t-value

**P:**                 p-value

# About the Authors

## Stefan Wolpers



Stefan is a Professional Scrum Trainer with Scrum.org.



He specializes in coaching agile practices for change, such as agile software development with Scrum, LeSS, Kanban, and Lean Startup, as well as product management.

He also is an XSCALE Alliance trainer and coaches organizations in business agility. Additionally, he is a licensed facilitator of the Agile Fluency™ Team Diagnostic.

He has served in senior leadership positions several times throughout his career. His agile coaching expertise focuses on scaling product delivery organizations of fast-growing, venture-capital funded startups and transitioning existing product teams in established enterprise organizations.

Stefan is also curating the popular 'Food for Agile Thought' newsletter for the global Agile community with 34,000-plus subscribers. He blogs about his experiences on Age-of-Product.com and hosts large global Slack community of agile practitioners with 11,000-plus members. Also, he hosts the Hands-on Agile Meetup community with 4,000-plus members.

His ebooks on agile topics have been downloaded more than 75,000-plus times. Lastly, Stefan is the organizer of the Agile Camp Berlin, a Barcamp for 200-plus agile practitioners.

Read more about Stefan at Scrum.org, and connect with him via LinkedIn, or Twitter, or privately via email.

# Dr. Alexander Bergmann



Alex is science education researcher at the University of Leipzig (Germany) and co-founder of Empiriks, a consulting company with strong expertise in measurement, statistics & evaluation. As research coach he supports projects from a variety of research areas, such as health sciences, economics and communication sciences. His own research focusses on development of data literacy and motivational aspects of science learning and teaching. He has a strong interest in agile learning and teaching in higher education.

Read more about Alex at empiriks.de, and connect with him privately via email.

# Legal

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