

Payoneer®

## The Global Gig-Economy Index

Cross-border freelancing trends  
that defined Q2 2019

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## Introduction

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In today's digital world, freelancers representing all different age groups and professions can offer their services to anyone, wherever they are located. Because they are using Payoneer to manage their cross-border payments, we must constantly keep our fingers on the pulse of this community, making us uniquely qualified to analyze the state of the global gig economy.

The Global Gig-Economy Index is powered by data from a sample of more than 300,000 freelancers, service providers and outsourcing professionals in the Payoneer network. In it, we share our insights into geographic and demographic trends, providing you with a bird's-eye view of the state of the freelancing economy in Q2 2019.

We hope that you'll be able to use this report as a reference point in your own analysis of the world of freelancing and to establish how you're best able to situate yourself in this continuously shifting industry.



Eyal Moldovan  
General Manager, Payoneer

## Q2 Highlights

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### The Earning Power of Gen X

Service providers in the 35-44 age demographic earned significantly more than all other age groups.

### The US Gig Economy Continues to Grow

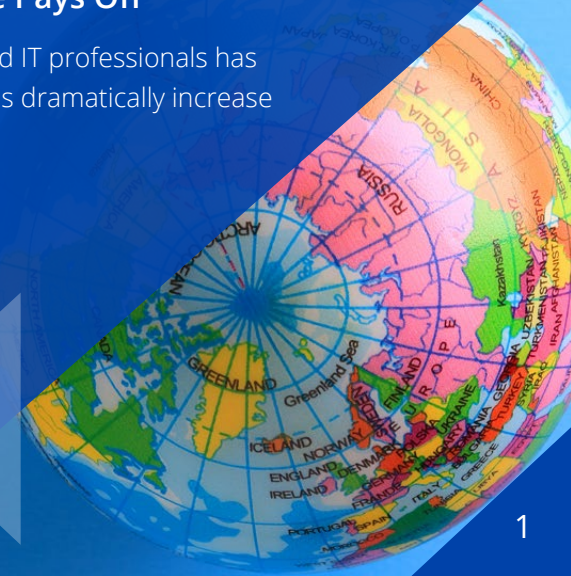
The freelancing lifestyle continues to draw US professionals to the gig economy, resulting in an expanded marketplace.

### Freelancing in Asia is Rapidly Expanding

Freelancers in Asia more than doubled their earnings from this time last year.

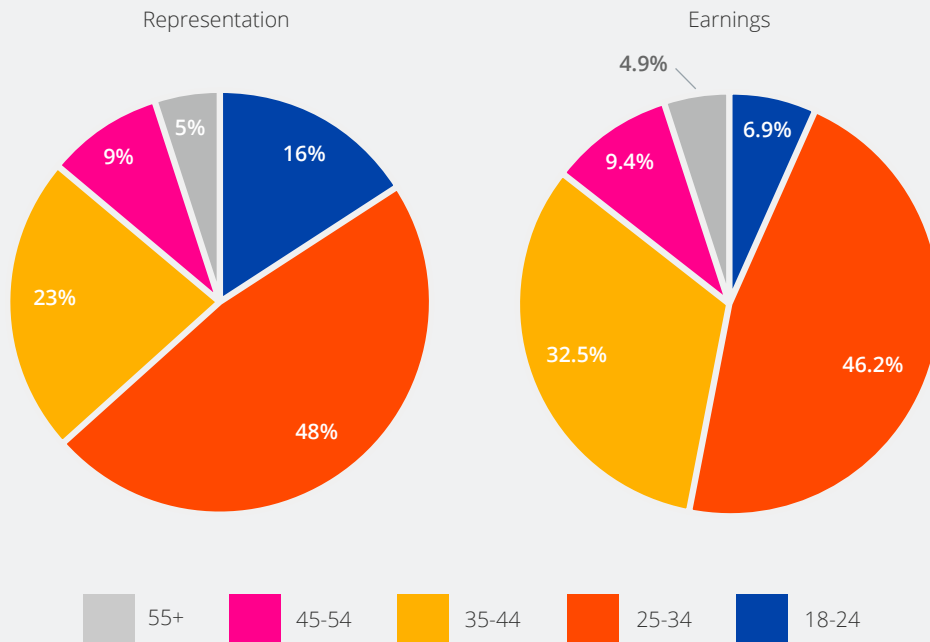
### Technical Training in Ukraine Pays Off

A large number of university educated IT professionals has helped Ukrainian outsourcing services dramatically increase their profitability.



## When it Comes to Turning a Profit, Gen X Freelancers Hit the Sweet Spot

Global Freelancer Breakdown by Age



In Q2 2019, Gen X (those 35-44 years old) was by far the most profitable age group, contributing 32% of earnings despite representing only 23% of freelancers.

Compare this with freelancers in the 18-34 age group, which were the clear majority (64%) in number but only earned 53% of total profits, and we see evidence of several recurring trends in the gig economy:



### Portfolios matter

Companies are willing to pay a premium for experienced freelancers that can show examples of past work in a variety of job types.



### It pays to build up reviews

A large number of reviews from former employers is more likely to get your profile noticed in freelancer marketplaces.



### It's important to think globally

Experienced freelancers have learned how to market themselves to a global audience, expanding their pool of potential employers.

*One of the most important parts of my job is staying proactive and going beyond the scope of every project I work on. Not only does this help me get repeat work from the same employer, but also leads to positive reviews and recommendations, which help me branch out to new markets.*



**Ayman Sarosh**

Content Writer and Virtual Assistant, Islamabad Pakistan

## Top-10 Countries

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**1 USA**  
78%

**2 UK**  
59%

**3 Brazil**  
48%

**4 Pakistan**  
47%

**5 Ukraine**  
36%

**6 Philippines**  
35%

**7 India**  
29%

**8 Bangladesh**  
27%

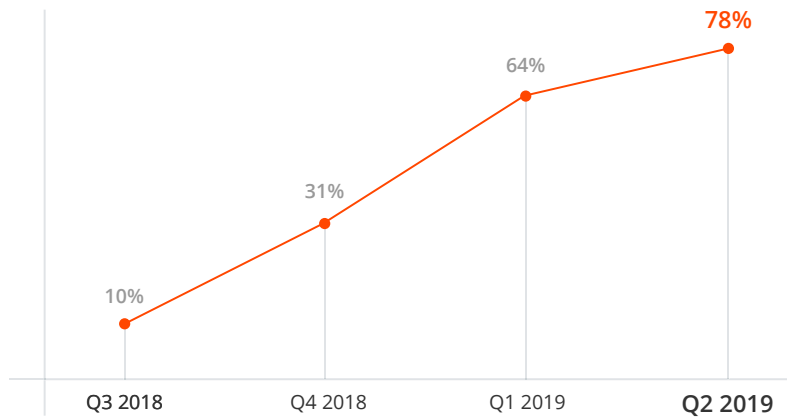
**9 Russia**  
20%

**10 Serbia**  
19%

Year over year revenue growth



## As Earnings Spike, US Gig Economy Draws in a Diverse Group

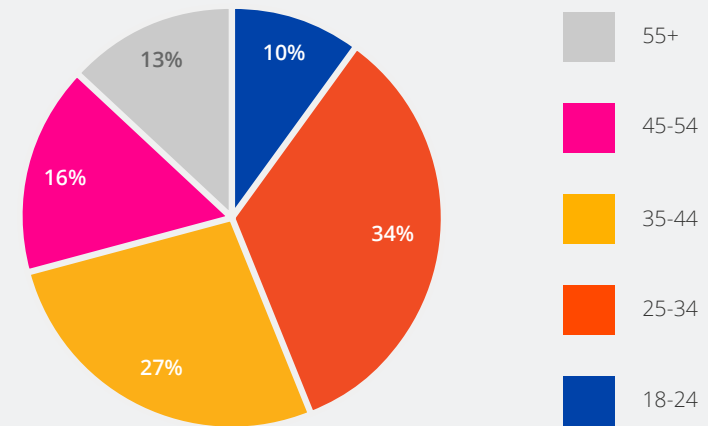


Increase in US Freelancer Earnings Since Q2 2018

### For US freelancers, Q2 2019 was notable for two reasons:

- 1 There was a 78% spike in earnings from Q2 2018, by far the highest in the world.
- 2 Unlike other countries, where the freelancer population tends to skew younger, professionals of all ages in the US are drawn to the gig economy.

US Freelancer Representation by Age

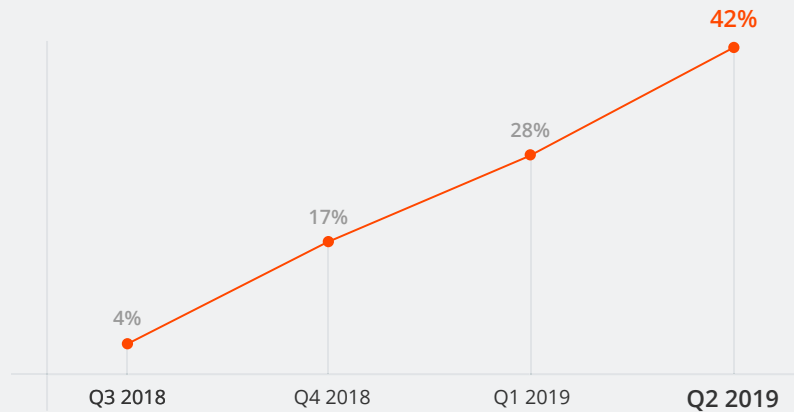


This data points to some interesting trends regarding the future of freelancing. Specifically, that it doesn't have to only be a side gig—the increase in earnings signals that it's possible to make a career out of freelancing. Additionally, with so many people of varying ages joining the gig economy, it's clear that it isn't only for young professionals anymore.

*We're seeing more and more professionals leaving their jobs to join the gig economy. Whether it's the flexible hours, the absence of a manager looking over your shoulder or the desire to build up your own business, workers don't feel the need to be tied to their offices anymore. Furthermore, this flexibility is appealing to all generations – young and old alike – who are often looking for additional income, or just a change of pace.*

Iain McNicoll  
VP Regional Head for the Americas, Payoneer

# Pakistani Youth Fuel Gig-Economy Explosion

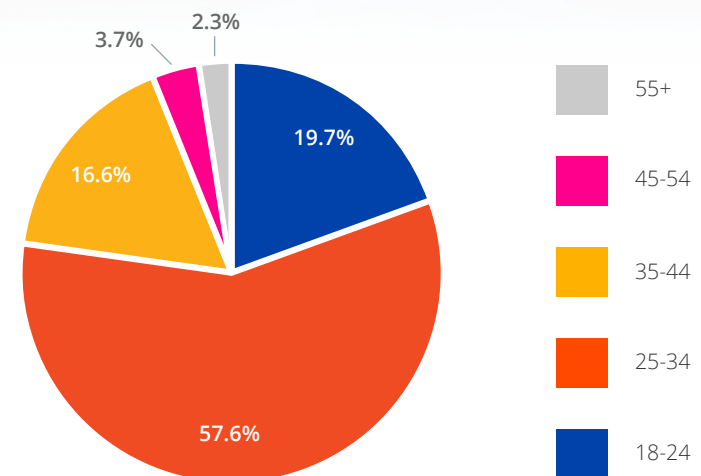


Increase in Pakistani Freelancers Since Q2 2018

The 42% increase in Pakistani freelancers since Q2 2018 was fueled by several factors, most notably a very young population, 70% of which are under the age of 30. A more technically-oriented education has helped Pakistan's youth participate in the gig economy.

This investment in the younger generation appears to be paying off – freelancers younger than 35 generated 77% of revenues in Q2.

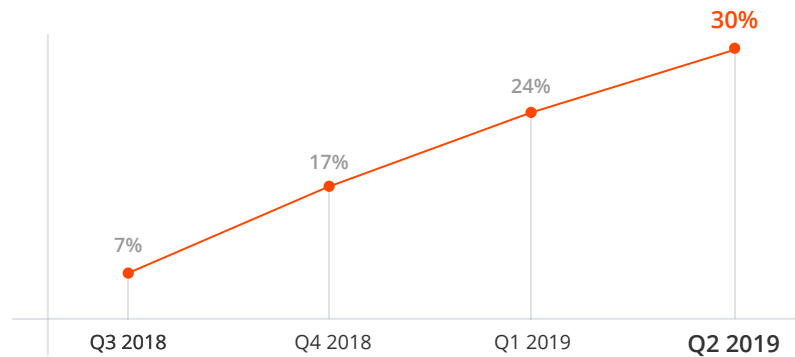
Pakistani Freelancer Earnings by Age



*Government investment in enhancing digital skills has helped create a skilled freelancer workforce, while blanket 4G coverage across Pakistan has given freelancers unprecedented access to international jobs.*

Mohsin Muzaffer  
Head of Pakistani Business Development, Payoneer

## Advanced Technical Training Brings Ukraine to the Forefront



Increase in Ukrainian Outsourcing Professionals Since Q2 2018

There was a 30% increase in the number of Ukrainian outsourcing professionals from this time last year, a trend which is largely attributed to the tens of thousands of new IT experts graduating university every year.

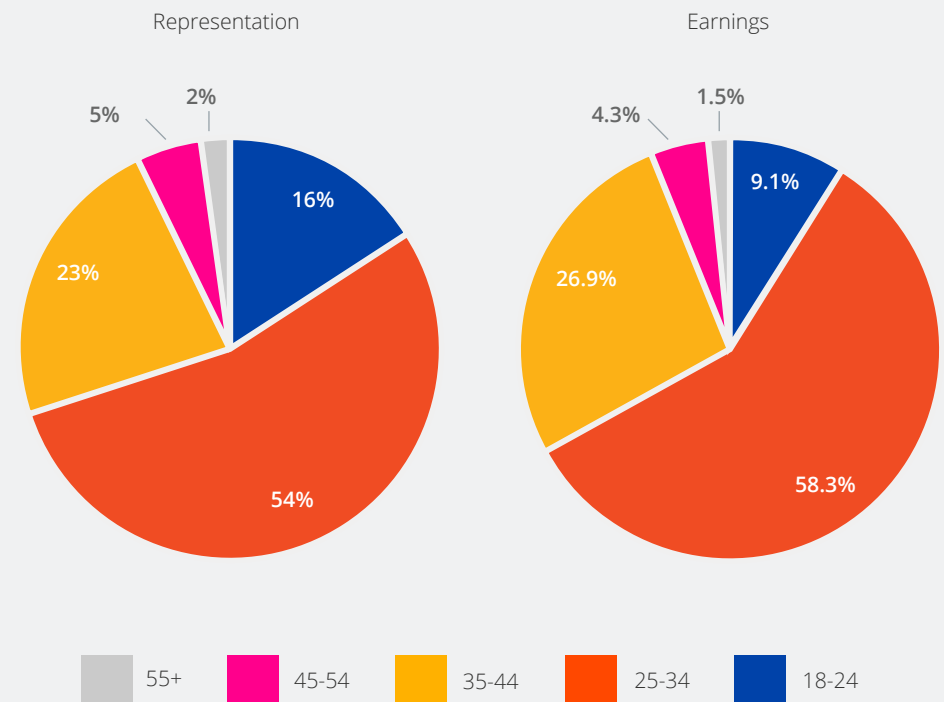
*On average IT specialists earn between 10 and 20 times more than the average Ukrainian salary, an extremely appealing prospect for the younger generation. Ukrainians also have a lot of experience working with Western marketplaces, making it easy for us to effectively communicate with companies in the EU and US. Finally, Ukrainian working hours mirror the rest of Europe, making it very convenient to work with outsourcers here.*



Pavel Obod  
Founder and CEO, Sloboda Studios

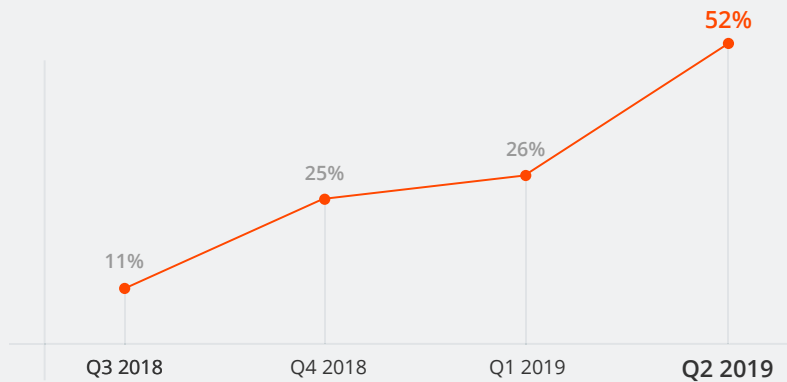
Our data, which shows that millennials earned 58% of revenues in Q2 despite representing only 54% of the population, confirms that for young IT specialists, it pays to outsource their services.

### Ukrainian Freelancer Representation and Earnings by Age





## Freelancers in India Diversifying Job Types



Increase in Indian Freelancers Since Q2 2018

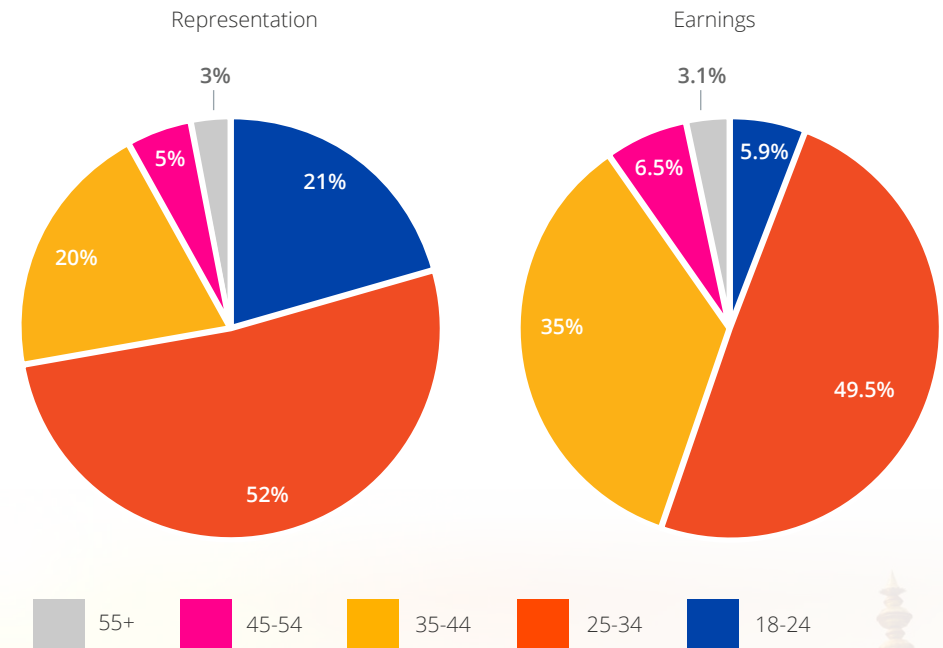
The 52% increase in the number of freelancers in India since Q2 2018 comes amid an aggressive government push with various programs, including Startup India, Skill India and Digital India to foster local businesses.

For freelancers, these initiatives have provided the ideal platform to hone their skills and develop their businesses in a variety of industries. This was particularly true for freelancers in the 35-44 age demographic, who were responsible for 35% of revenues despite comprising only 20% of freelancers in Q2.

*Young Indians are increasingly taking the path of entrepreneurship and building organizations in fields outside of traditional software companies, including in AI, data science and machine learning.*

Rohit Kulkarni  
Country Manager for India, Payoneer

### Indian Freelancer Breakdown by Age



As we noted in our [Q1 Global Seller Index](#), India has also played an increased role in the world of eCommerce, further reinforcing their growing place in the global digital economy.

## Conclusion

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### Asia, Eastern Europe Cement Freelancer Hub Status amid Western Market Growth

In Q2 2019, Asia cemented its status as a freelancer hub. Pakistan, the Philippines, India and Bangladesh all made it onto our top-10 list, collectively recording a 138% increase in earnings from Q2 2018. The common thread among each of these countries was increased investment in technical education.

*Local governments know that education is the key to thriving in the 21st century global marketplace. In the Philippines, for example, the Department of Information and Communications Technology provides technical training in rural areas throughout the country.*

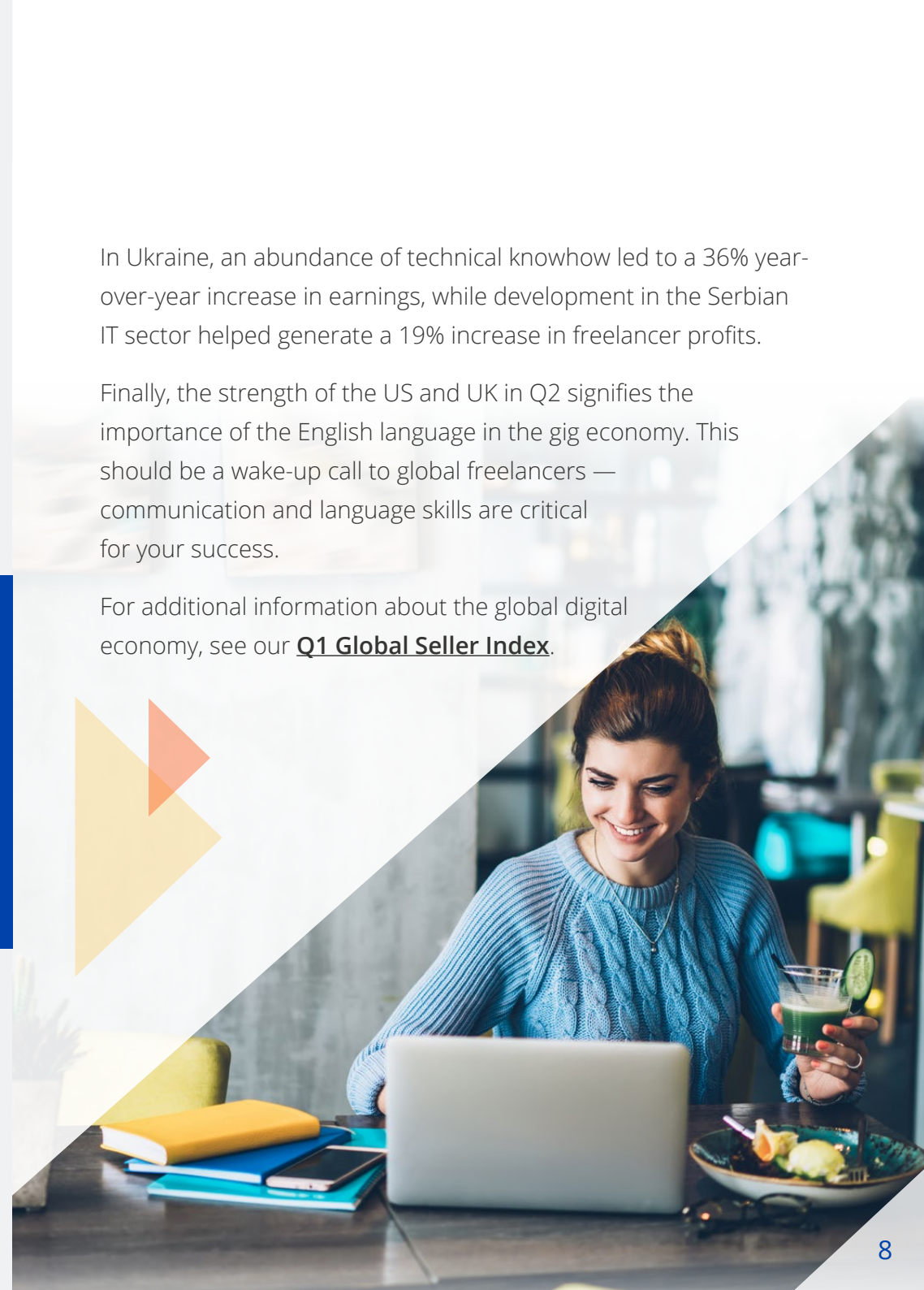
Miguel Warren  
Regional Manager for South East Asia, Payoneer

Elsewhere, Brazil saw a 48% increase in earnings from Q2 2018, which Christine Hutchinson, Payoneer's Head of Sales and Business Development for Latin America attributes to "increased awareness of the gig economy and the opportunities it provides. Until recently, freelancing was never thought of as a serious career choice – now, it's a permanent fixture of the job market."

In Ukraine, an abundance of technical knowhow led to a 36% year-over-year increase in earnings, while development in the Serbian IT sector helped generate a 19% increase in freelancer profits.

Finally, the strength of the US and UK in Q2 signifies the importance of the English language in the gig economy. This should be a wake-up call to global freelancers — communication and language skills are critical for your success.

For additional information about the global digital economy, see our [Q1 Global Seller Index](#).



# The Payment Landscape

## Go with the leader

Payoneer is the world's leading cross-border payment platform, designed to empower global freelancers by connecting them to businesses, professionals, countries and currencies.

## What sets Payoneer apart?

- Accept and make payments in multiple currencies via a simple and cost-effective solution.
- Get paid by the world's leading freelance marketplaces
- Send payment requests to your clients worldwide and get paid online
- Quickly access your earnings in your local currency at low rates
- Pay your sub-contractors for free

I'm a freelancer

START NOW

I'm a marketplace

LEARN MORE

