

2024 ICF SNAPSHOT SURVEY

*Coaching and
Mental Well-Being*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Table of Contents

- 3 Introduction**
- 7 Section 1: Insights into the Coach Practitioner Key Points Summary**
This section presents a profile of coach practitioners under the following headings: demographics, coaching services, the client, and memberships and credentials.
- 9 Section 2: A Spotlight on Coaching and Mental Well-Being Key Points Summary**
This section looks at the strategies coach practitioners are using to help clients with their well-being, the effectiveness of each technique, and whether adequate resources and support are made available to practitioners to help them to address their clients' mental well-being.



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SNAPSHOT
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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents the findings from the *2024 ICF Snapshot Survey: Coaching and Mental Well-Being*. The study was commissioned by the International Coaching Federation (ICF) and conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). It was designed to engage with as many coach practitioners as possible to provide an up-to-date picture of the coaching profession.

Founded in 1995, ICF is dedicated to advancing the coaching profession by setting high ethical standards, providing independent certification, and building a worldwide network of credentialed coaches. ICF is a global organization, with a membership comprising of more than 60,000 trained personal and business coaches located in over 140 countries.

ICF defines coaching as partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

Methodology

Findings for this survey were collected via an online survey. Survey fieldwork commenced on March 1, 2024. The survey ran for six weeks and closed on April 24, 2024.

A number of approaches were deployed to encourage worldwide engagement.

ICF's extensive contacts lists were used to circulate personalized invitations and survey links. In addition to current ICF members, invitations to participate in the survey were sent to non-members holding ICF credentials, expired ICF members, and other databases existing within ICF, such as inquiries regarding membership, credentialing/certification, and location of ICF chapters.

ICF members were asked to share a generic link to the online survey registration site with their wider networks of coaches; the intention of which was to initiate a "snowball" effect that would attract more non-ICF coaches.

Weekly reminders were sent to those on contact lists to encourage their response and remind them of the survey deadline.

In addition, the survey was implemented to ensure it was readily accessible to all potential respondents.

Thus, the survey was made available online in the following nine languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Mandarin, and Spanish.

The survey was designed so that it could be completed using desktop and mobile devices.

Survey Context

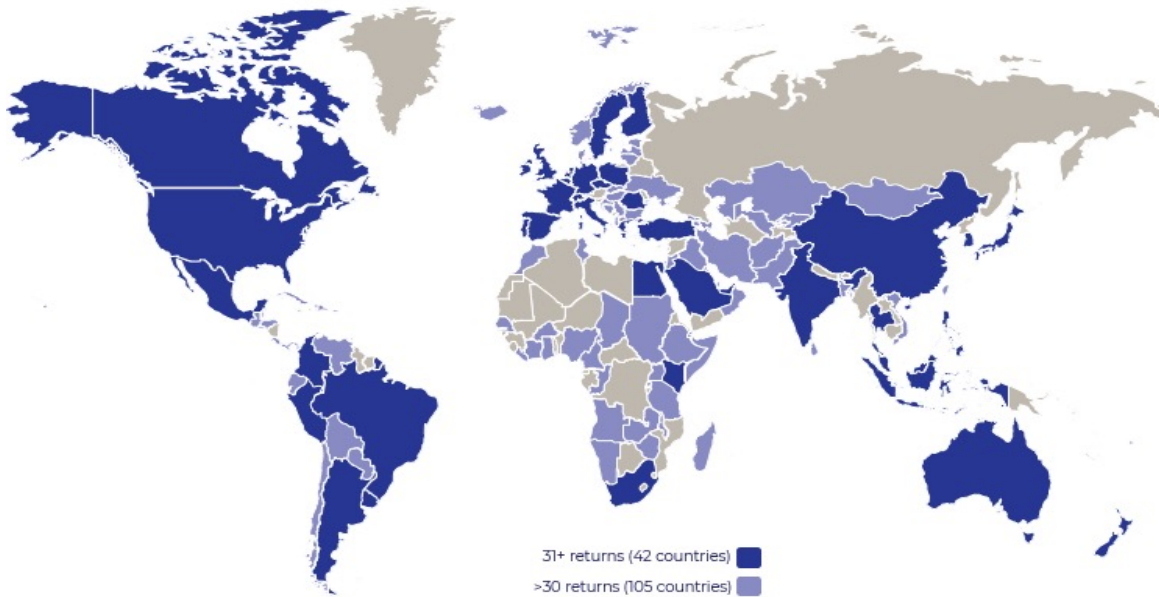
Objectives

The objectives of the *2024 ICF Snapshot Survey: Mental Well-Being* were as follows:

- Determine the frequency and reasons coaching clients are asking for help with their mental well-being.
- Effectiveness of current strategies and challenges faced by coach practitioners who support their clients mental well-being.
- The future of mental well-being in coaching and whether additional support, training or literature would be beneficial.

Survey Outcomes

In this year's study, we received responses from 10,039 participants from across 147 countries and all major world regions.



Of the 9,044 participants who self-identified as coach practitioners, 93% said that they were actively coaching clients, with the remaining 7% stating that they are still working as a coach but not currently working with clients. The breakout of surveys completed across each main region is shown in Table 1, which also shows the proportion of coaches in each region who said that they have an active client base.

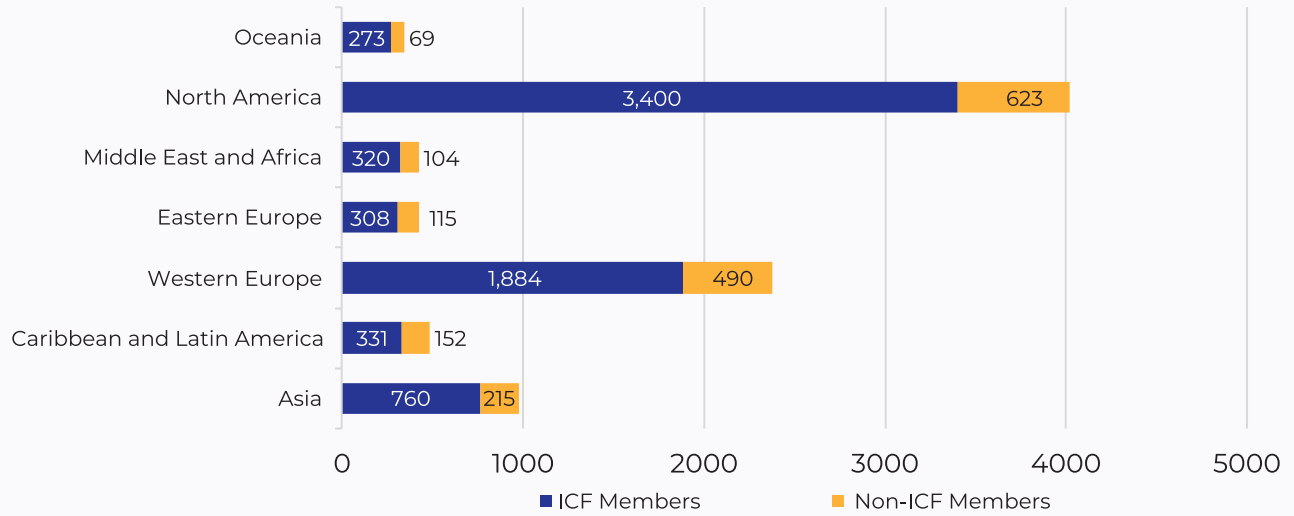
Table 1

Region	Coach Practitioners	Active Clients
	Number of completed surveys	%
Asia	975	88%
Eastern Europe	423	91%
Latin America and the Caribbean	483	93%
Middle East and Africa	424	89%
North America	4,023	94%
Oceania	342	93%
Western Europe	2,374	93%
Global	9,044	93%

Of the 9,044 coach practitioner responses, 7,276 were provided by ICF members (80% of the total responses). The largest number of ICF member responses came from North America (3,400), followed by Western Europe (1,884), reflecting where ICF's main membership base resides.

A total of 1,768 responses were received from non-ICF members, including 623 from North America and 490 from Western Europe.

Survey responses by region and ICF membership



Base: All those internal, external, both internal and external coach practitioners (9,044).



We received responses from **10,039 participants** from across **147 countries** and all major world regions.

Section 1: Insights into the Coach Practitioner Key Points Summary

Demographics

- A majority (56%) of coach professionals are Gen X (born between 1965-1981). There is a stronger presence of Millennials in the emerging regions, most notably in Eastern Europe, where there are more Millennials (23% of coach practitioners) than Baby Boomers (12%).
- Based on how the survey respondent chose to self-identify, 71% said they are female and 27% are male. The proportion of male practitioners is significantly higher in Asia (42%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (35%) and lowest in Eastern Europe (21%) and North America (23%).
- Six percent of coach practitioners identified as having a disability.
- The coaching profession is attracting a more diverse mix of race and ethnic identities. The proportion of white practitioners declines with each generation.
- Most coach practitioners hold an advanced degree, such as a master's or doctoral degree. There is a correlation between generation of respondent and their level of education, with the proportion of those with advanced degrees declining with age, again demonstrating diversification of the profession and an embracing of different levels of education and training.
- Ninety five percent of coach practitioners received their coaching education through an accredited program; a vast majority (86%) received coaching education through a program accredited or approved by a professional coaching organization.

Coaching Experience and Services

- Coaching experience is positively linked to the age of the coach practitioner.
- Internal coaches are likely to be from younger generations and to have been coaching for fewer than 10 years.
- The proportion of coach practitioners with five or more years of experience is highest in established regions. This correlates to where coaching has been established as a profession for longer.
- On average, most coach practitioners (65%) coach up to 14 hours per week.
- Those who work as both an external coach practitioner and an internal coach practitioner (14% of survey participants) divide their time fairly evenly across their two roles but tend to work slightly more of their time employed within an organization (57% of their work week).
- Leadership coaching is more commonly selected as a coach practitioners' primary area of focus than any other specialty, selected by 36% of practitioners, a percentage that has been increasing steadily since this study was first carried out in 2016.
- Almost all coach practitioners (93%) said they offered additional services as part of their professional practice, with consulting the most common.
- Eighty-two percent of coach practitioners engage in ongoing education to refine their coaching skills, with coaches in North America and Oceania most likely to do this. Supervised coaching and feedback are significantly more likely to be used to refine and develop coaches in Europe, where 62% (Western Europe) and 53% (Eastern Europe) of coaches participate, compared to a global average of 42%.

Memberships and Credentials

- Eighty percent of coach practitioners agree that people and organizations receiving coaching expect coaches to be certified or credentialed.
- Almost nine in 10 coach practitioners (88%) are members of one or more coaching organizations.
- An increasing proportion of coach practitioners hold a certification/credential from a coaching organization with 88% reported being certified.

The Client

- On average, practitioners coach 6-7 clients per week. There is only a slight difference by region with coaches in Asia averaging 5 clients. There is no difference in the number of client's based on whether someone is an internal or external coach.
- There is a correlation between the generation of coach practitioners and the level of coachee seniority. The older generations are the most likely to have senior-level clients.
- A majority of coach practitioners strongly agree that the use of their services within an organization has led to a multitude of client benefits, in particular, enhanced personal and professional growth.



Eighty percent of coach practitioners agree that people and organizations receiving coaching **expect coaches to be certified or credentialed.**

Section 2: A Spotlight on Coaching and Mental Well-Being Key Points Summary

Prevalence of Coaching in Mental Well-Being

- A vast majority (85%) of coach practitioners have clients who request help with their mental well-being. While these clients are currently in a minority – only 26% of coaches said that it is something that more than 50% of their clients are asking for help with – it remains a significant area of practice.
- Differences in the proportion of clients asking for support with their mental well-being are based on the age and gender of the coach. Female and younger practitioners are more likely to hear such requests.
- Coach practitioners in Asia are significantly less likely to be asked to support their clients on this topic than in other regions.
- Business or career issues are most commonly stated in contributing to poor mental well-being and requests for coach support.

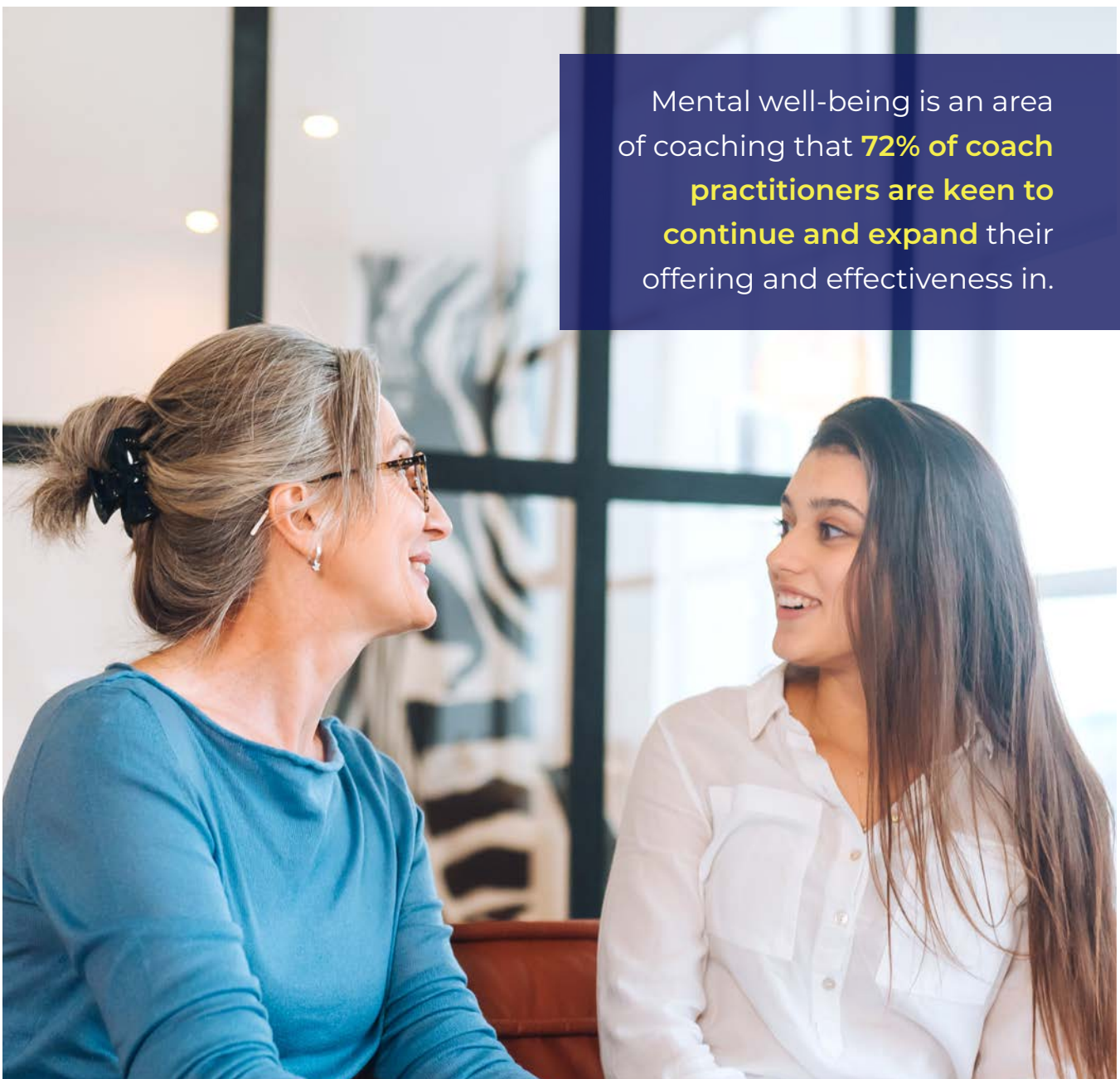
Strategies Used and Challenges Faced by Coach Practitioners Supporting the Mental Well-Being of Clients

- Mindfulness, visualization, and meditation techniques are the most used techniques to help support clients with their well-being.
- The most effective strategies are those that are employed least frequently – self-reflection, self-growth, and self-care (currently employed by 6% of coaches globally), and strategies that are designed and tailored to the individual (employed by 5%).
- The most frequent challenge reported by coach practitioners when engaging clients in discussions about their mental well-being is navigating the fine line between supporting them without crossing into areas that require mental health expertise. The clients lacking awareness about their mental health issues is the second most stated reason globally, but the main reason given by coach practitioners in Eastern Europe (45%), the Middle East and Africa (41%), and Asia (40%).
- Over the course of the last 12 months, 44% of coach practitioners said that they had referred one or more of their clients to a medical professional or therapist. Referrals are significantly lower in Asia where only 25% of coach practitioners have referred a client in the last year. This will, in part, be due to the lower incidence of patients in Asia citing a need for support with their mental well-being in the first instance.
- Globally, there is an upward shift in referrals needed as only 4% stated that the need for referrals had decreased compared to 19% stating that it had increased.

The Future of Well-Being Coaching and Whether More Support and Training is Needed

- Businesses are making improvements to support their employee's well-being and there is reasonable level of agreement that companies are seeing an improved return of investment in providing more health and well-being support (53% agreement vs 8% disagreement).
- More can be done. With 72% of internal coaches acknowledging that more training is needed to support practitioners and their clients/colleagues with their mental well-being.

- Mental well-being is an area of coaching that 72% of coach practitioners are keen to continue and expand their offering and effectiveness in. Millennials and Gen X practitioners were more likely to agree (80% and 76% agreement) which bodes well for it becoming a growing area of focus in years to come.
- There is an acknowledgment that coaches are not always well equipped to deal with their client's mental well-being and coach practitioners will likely benefit from more training on when they should refer clients to mental health specialists.
- While most coach practitioners (77%) feel they have adequate resources and support to effectively address their client's mental well-being, this report indicates that there would be benefits from increased shared learning around what has and hasn't worked when coaching clients on their well-being. Lesser used strategies are considered the most effective so raising awareness of this and the techniques used may lead to improved outcomes.



Mental well-being is an area of coaching that **72% of coach practitioners are keen to continue and expand** their offering and effectiveness in.

Connect to Additional Resources

Free Access to Full Report and So Much More

This Executive Summary highlights key findings from the *2024 ICF Coaching Snapshot Survey: Coaching and Mental Well-Being*. The study was commissioned by the International Coaching Federation (ICF).

The 44-paged full report, which is the basis for this Executive Summary, is primarily focused on coach practitioners and the growing demand in client requests for mental well-being support.

When you become a [member of ICF](#), you can gain free access to this research report and a multitude of other benefits, including:

- Free and discounted access to additional cutting-edge industry research designed to help you make savvy business decisions and communicate the power of professional coaching to prospective clients.
- Free access to ICF Communities of Practice, which offer rewarding learning and networking opportunities, plus enough CCE credits needed for ICF credential renewal.
- Opportunities to connect with the world's largest coaching community, from local ICF chapters to our online community platform to global events.

[Join ICF](#)

The full report is also available to non-members for a cost of \$149 USD. To access the report, visit coachingfederation.org/research/global-coaching-snapshots.



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