



# STATE OF THE PROFESSION 2015 RESEARCH REPORT

# Introduction



Sarah Pinch FCIPR, CIPR President 2015

## STATE OF THE PROFESSION 2015

### Research Report

Over the last six years, the Chartered Institute of Public Relations has asked members and non-members to share their views and opinions on the state of the PR profession. This year's results point to a promising future for our practice, but also deliver some findings that make tough reading.

As an industry we have to become better equipped, more confident and clearer about the additional opportunities that are coming our way.

The opportunities for employers could not be clearer. This year we're being told there has been significant growth in client facing public relations, where individuals make a strong contribution to communications and business strategy for UK businesses.

There are also terrific opportunities for the future, with the convergence of departments, the mainstream establishment of technology, and the increase in brands, companies and organisations taking external and internal engagement ever more seriously.

But, we must be clear what a professional public relations practitioner is and we must tackle the growing gender pay gap, which is an embarrassment to an industry dominated by women.

In the next twelve months I promise to lead a Chartered Institute that delivers action on these two key areas.

Professionalism is about standards, quality, ethical working and assurance of our work to employers, employees, colleagues and clients. It is not about being paid well or popular, described in the report as 'satisfying clients and/or employers'.

The CIPR has to sharpen its message about professionalism, if we are to represent an industry alongside our legal, HR and financial colleagues in the board room. This means delivering professionals who are not only qualified and skilled to do the job, but also held to account under our Royal Charter and our code of conduct.

In addition, we will redouble our efforts on working to close the gender pay gap. I am deeply saddened to see gender as the third biggest influencer of pay. It is unfair, immoral and wrong. We will seek to work with employers and employees to develop the skills, information, support and training they need to be able to report fairer pay.

Fulfilling our own professional ambitions will be no easy task, so we must consider these findings as a call to action.

I have confidence that we will use this insight to deliver a better, stronger, fairer and more confident profession.



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## Methodology

Survation interviewed 2,028 public relations professionals online between 14 October and 12 December 2014. Invitations to complete the survey were sent by email to members of the CIPR Member and Non-Member database of public relations professionals. Additional emails were sent out to those professionals who contacted the CIPR directly requesting to take part.

## Data

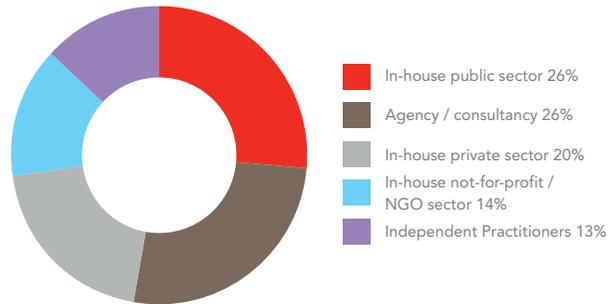
The full dataset from the CIPR State of the Profession survey is available to download from [www.cipr.co.uk/stateofpr](http://www.cipr.co.uk/stateofpr)

# Sample profile

## Organisation type

Respondents comprised a broad range of in-house public sector, in-house private sector, consultancy and independent professionals.

Organisation type (all respondents)



## Sector – in-house

Exactly 40% of all in-house respondents worked in the public sector, tending to work in local and central government roles. For those in-house in the private sector, the most common sectors were Financial services/corporate (20%), Utilities (16%) and Property & construction (14%).

Top five most common in-house sectors (all in-house respondents)

Public sector – local / central government	26%
Public sector - armed services/emergency services/NHS	16%
Charity / voluntary sector	15%
Education	14%
Property and construction	10%

Top five least common in-house sectors (all in-house respondents)

Fashion / beauty	1%
FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods)	2%
Sport	3%
Automotive	3%
Arts / culture	3%

## Sector – consultancy

When asked about their clients' common areas of operation, the charity/voluntary sector (30%), the property and construction sector (27%), and the financial services/corporate sector (26%) were ranked as the most likely to be represented by consultancies and Independent Practitioners. The least likely client sectors were identified as the aerospace (6%) and automotive sectors (9%).

Top five most common client sectors (all agency/ consultancy and Independent Practitioner respondents)

Charity / voluntary sector	30%
Property and construction	27%
Financial services/corporate	26%
Travel and tourism	23%
Public sector - local / central government	23%

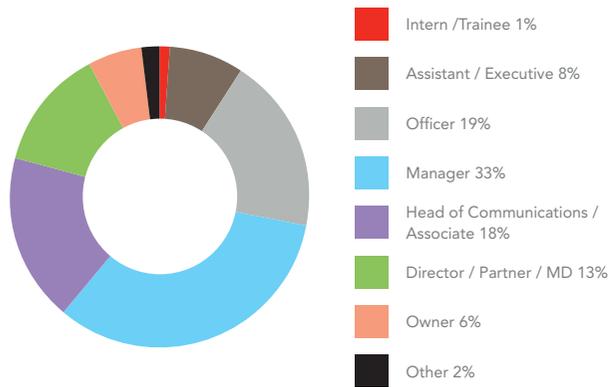
Top five least common client sectors (all agency/ consultancy and Independent Practitioner respondents)

Aerospace / defence	6%
Automotive	9%
Fashion / beauty	10%
Sport	10%
Insurance / legal	13%

## Seniority

The majority of all respondents were in senior management (37%), with just over a third indicating they were middle managers (33%). Non-managers made up 27% of respondents.

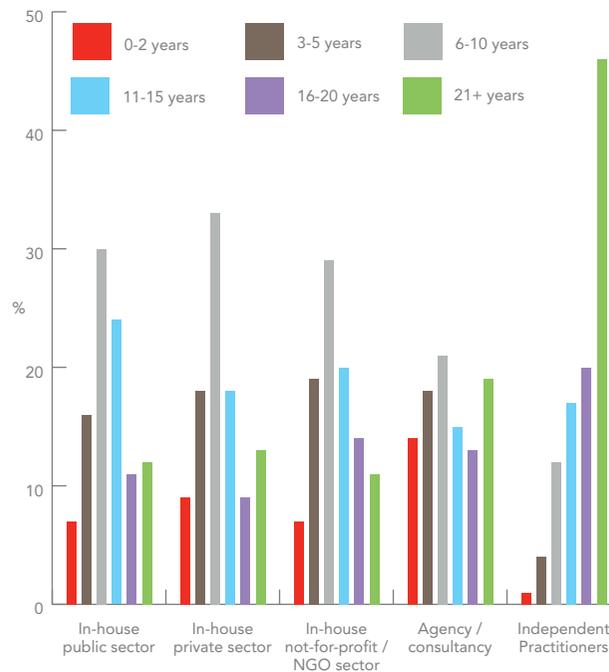
Seniority (all respondents)



## Years in public relations

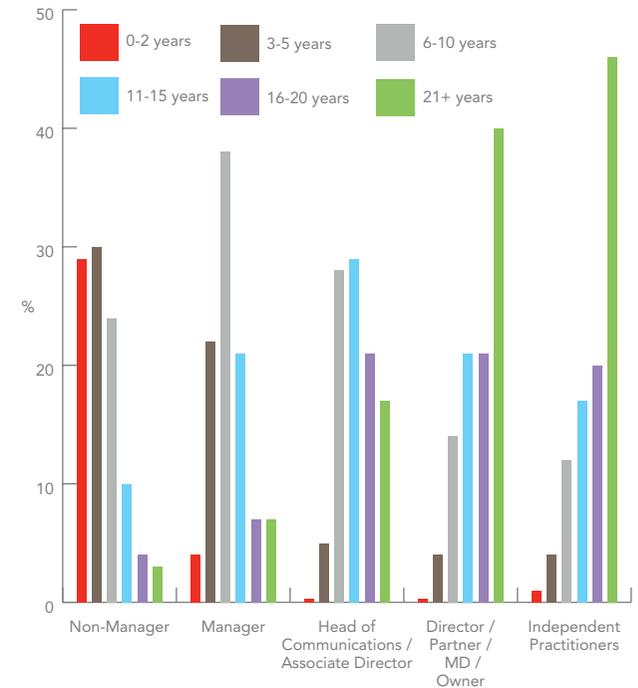
Exactly half of all respondents indicated that they had worked in public relations for more than 10 years. 26% of respondents said they had worked in public relations for more than 5 years but less than 10 years, 16% had worked in PR for between 3-5 years, and 9% for less than 3 years.

Years in public relations – by organisation type (all respondents)



The majority of all respondents who are employees (28%) had been working in public relations for 6-10 years across all sectors; however those who worked as Independent Practitioners were most likely to have been working in public relations for more than 20 years (46%).

Years in public relations – by seniority (all respondents)

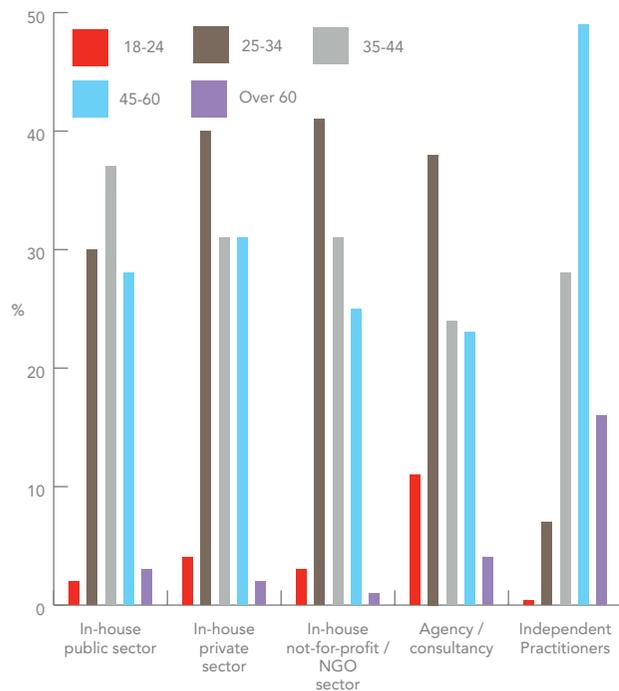


## Age

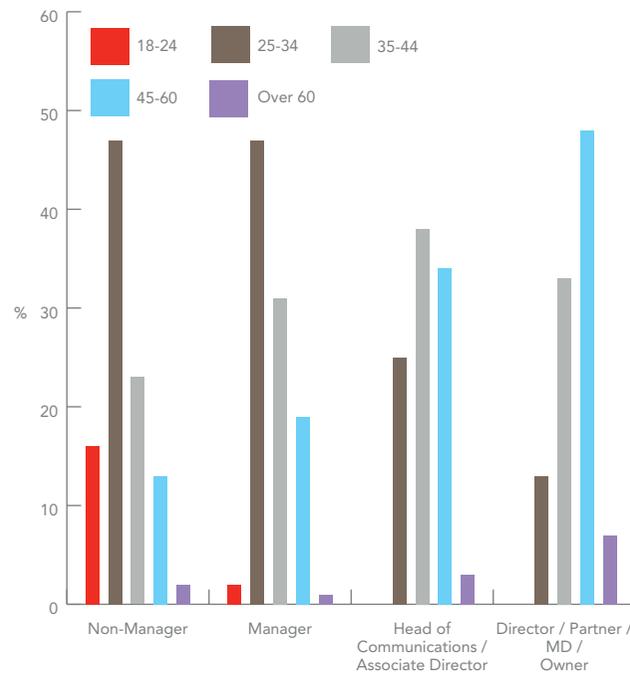
Just under a third (32%) of public relations professionals participating in the survey were aged between 25 and 34. 35-44 year olds accounted for 30% of respondents, whilst 28% indicated they were aged between 45 and 60. Nine out of ten (90%) of respondents were older than 24 and younger than 61 - only 5% were aged under 25 and these tended to be consultancy employees.

Age was unsurprisingly directly correlated to seniority, with 63% of non-managers and 49% of managers stating that they were under 35, compared to only 13% of Directors and Owners. Similarly, 55% of Directors/Owners were over 45, compared to just 14% of non-managers.

Age of respondents – by organisation type (all respondents)



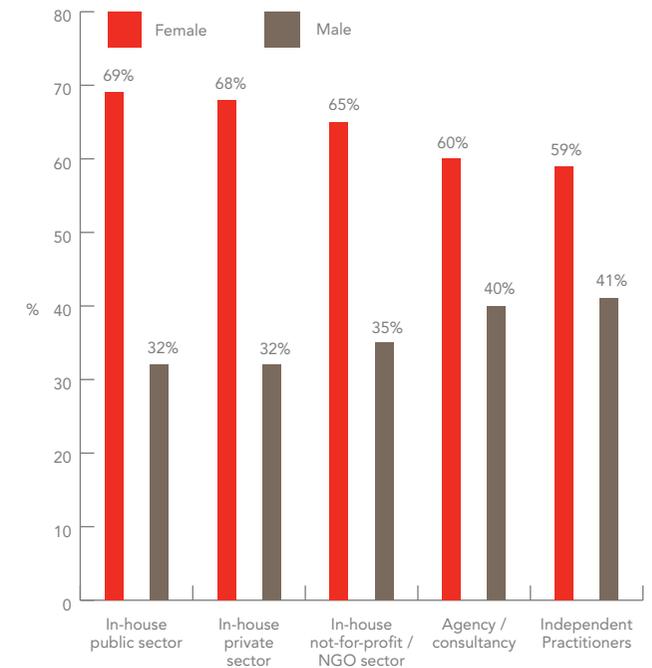
Age of respondents – by seniority (all respondents)



## Gender

Just under two-thirds of respondents were women. 64% of respondents were female and 36% were male.

Gender of respondents – by organisation type (all respondents)



## Locality

Grouping together respondents who selected 'South East' and 'South West', 50% of respondents were based in London and the South. Practitioners from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland made up 13% of all respondents, whilst 27% were based elsewhere in England.

Locality (all respondents)



East of England	5%	South East	13%
East Midlands	3%	South West	8%
London	29%	Wales	3%
North East	3%	West Midlands	5%
Northern Ireland	2%	Yorkshire & Humber	4%
North West	7%	Outside the UK	10%
Scotland	8%		

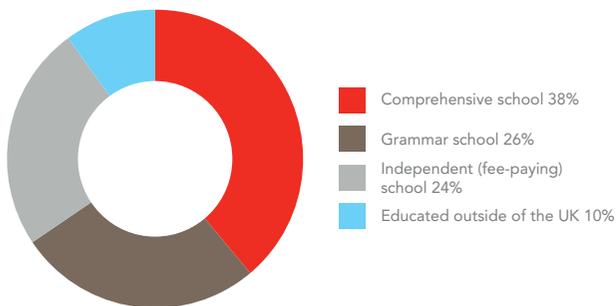
# Educational background

## Secondary education

The vast majority (69%) of all respondents indicated they spent the bulk of their secondary education at a comprehensive (53%) or grammar school (16%), whilst one sixth said they undertook the majority of their secondary education at an independent fee paying school (16%), representing a marked increase on the national average of 7%<sup>1</sup>.

Looking at the top level of senior management in public relations, just under a quarter (24%) of Directors, Partners, MDs and Owners said they attended an independent fee-paying school in the UK.

Type of secondary education attended by Director/ Partner/MD/Owners



## Further education

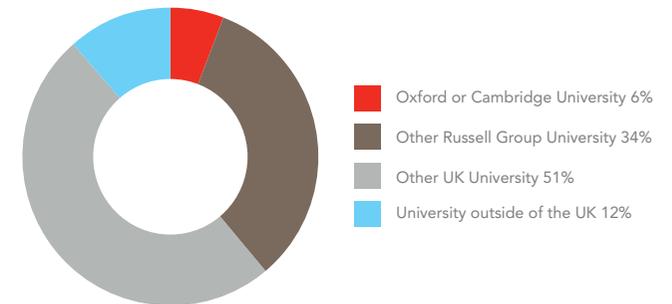
When it came to higher education, only 15% of participants said they hadn't graduated from university – more than half of these respondents had spent over 21 years in the industry. The overwhelming majority (90%) of practitioners who'd spent less than five years in the profession were graduates, evidencing that university degrees appear to be a prerequisite for aspiring practitioners.

## The influence of the Russell Group?

According to the survey data, 4% of public relations practitioners who were university graduates attended either Cambridge or Oxford University to study an undergraduate or master's degree. 28% of all graduate respondents attended a Russell Group university (excluding Cambridge/Oxford University), an increase on the national average of 24%<sup>2</sup>, whilst 57% studied at another university in the UK and 14% studied at university abroad.

Looking at the top level of senior management in public relations, two-fifths of Directors, Partners, MDs and Owners said they attended a Russell Group university (including Oxford or Cambridge).

Type of university attended by graduates who are Director/Partner/MD/Owners



<sup>1</sup> According to the Department for Education, in January 2014 there were 227,390 11-15 year olds in independent schools. This represents 7.6% of the 2,989,015 pupils aged 11-15.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) 2,340,275 students attended university during 2012/2013. The Russell Group confirmed 568,390 students attended their universities for 2012/2013.

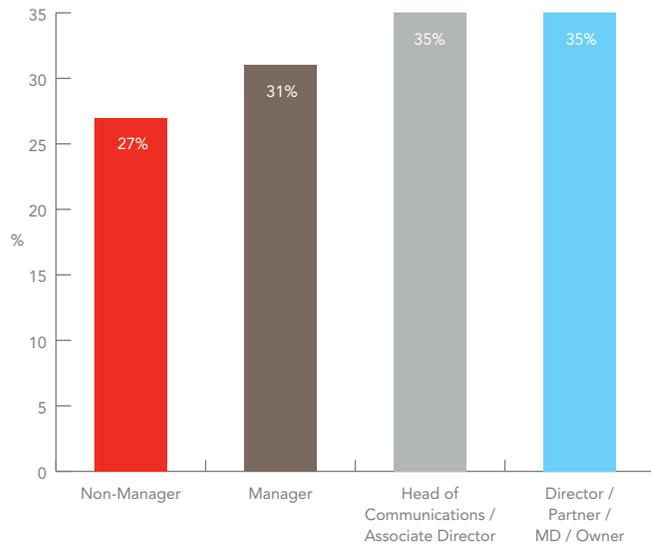
## Types of Qualification

Eight out of ten (80%) professionals said they had an undergraduate degree. 15% of respondents held an undergraduate degree in public relations or communications whilst the remaining two thirds graduated with a degree in an unrelated subject (66%).

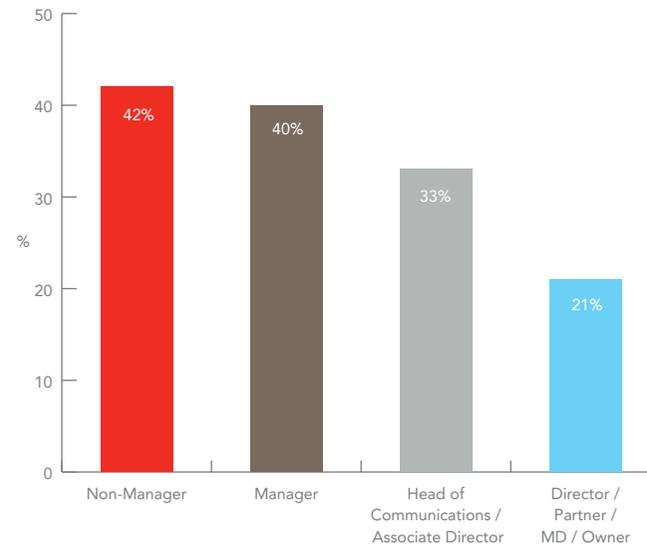
A third of practitioners (33%) said they also graduated with a Master's degree, with an average of 35% of those in senior management holding a Master's.

Over half of respondents (52%) said they didn't hold a professional qualification of any sort. When looking at professional qualifications that are public relations specific, exactly a third (33%) of all Associate Directors or Head of Communications hold a CIPR, PRCA, CIM or another relevant industry body qualification, this compares to 40% of all managers and 42% of non-managers.. Interestingly, those in the highest echelons of management are least likely to hold a professional qualification in public relations (21%).

Master's degrees by seniority (all respondents)



CIPR, PRCA, CIM or another relevant industry qualification held by seniority (all respondents)



# Hallmarks of professionalism

## Is professionalism important?

“Being considered a professional” is important to 96% of respondents, with 78% strongly agreeing with this statement and 18% tending to agree.

Strongly agreeing over the desire to be a professional is the most prevalent for those working in-house in the private sector (83%) and least likely for those working in consultancies or agencies (74%).

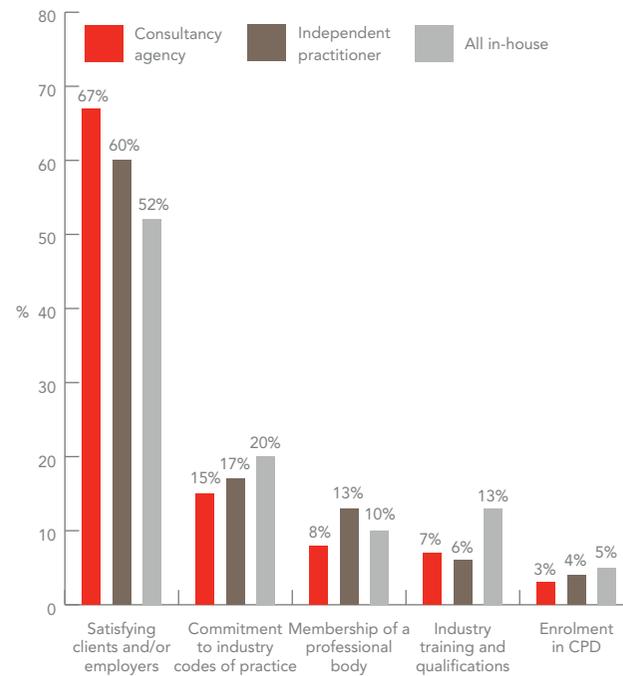
## Demonstrations of professionalism

Considering that 96% believed professionalism to be important to them, respondents were prompted to reveal what they believed were the best demonstrations of that professionalism.

More than half of all respondents indicated that ‘satisfying clients and/or employers’ (55%) was the clearest demonstration of professionalism in public relations, followed by ‘commitment to industry codes of practice’ (19%). ‘Enrolment in continuing professional development (CPD)’ was only believed to be the best demonstration of professionalism by 5% of all respondents.

When broken down by organisation type, unsurprisingly consultants and independent practitioners appear to believe ‘satisfying clients and/or employers’ is overwhelmingly the best demonstration of professionalism. Collectively, consultants and independent practitioners also appear to place considerably less value in industry training and qualifications as a demonstration of professionalism, than all of those who work in-house.

What best demonstrates professionalism in public relations? - by organisation type (all respondents)

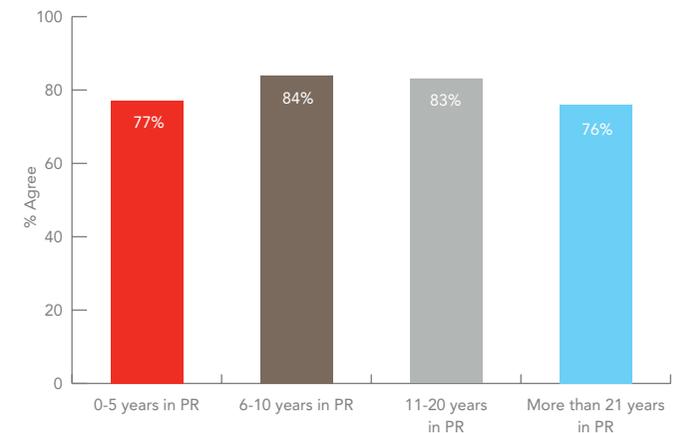


## Assets that make up a PR professional

When asked to rank a list of most valuable assets for a public relations professional, ‘experience in a public relations role’ was by far the most desired quality with 79% ranking it the highest. This was followed by ‘a professional qualification, in public relations’ (9%) and ‘an academic qualification, in public relations’ (4%). The least valuable asset was considered to be ‘a professional qualification, but not in public relations’ (1%).

There was little variation in these answers across gender, regions, organisation type, and levels of seniority, yet those with the least experience, and those with the most experience in PR, were least likely to consider experience as an important asset.

‘Experience in a public relations role’ as the most important asset for a PR professional - by years in PR (all respondents)



# Happiness & wellbeing

## Workplace stress

Respondents were asked to rate their level of workplace stress on a 1-5 scale.

6% of all respondents claim they are “extremely stressed”, with 34% giving a stress rating equating to “very stressed”, this indicates that 40% of PR professionals experience a high level of workplace stress. Only 19% indicated a lower level of workplace stress.

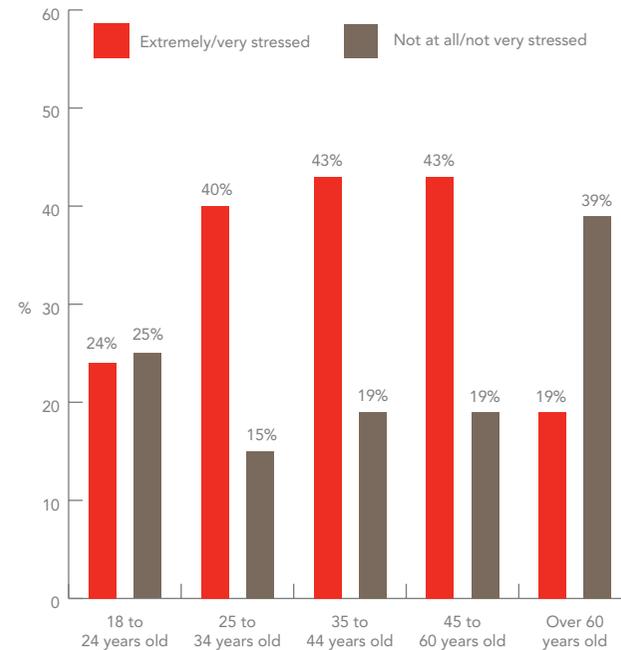
Examined further, it appears that women experience a higher level of workplace stress than men, with 42% indicating a high level of workplace stress compared to 37% of men.

Unsurprisingly, a higher percentage of Heads of Communication/Associate Directors and Directors/Owners experienced a high level of stress when compared to more junior roles and managers, with 55% of Heads of Communication and Associate Directors experiencing a high level of workplace stress compared to just 33% of non-managers.

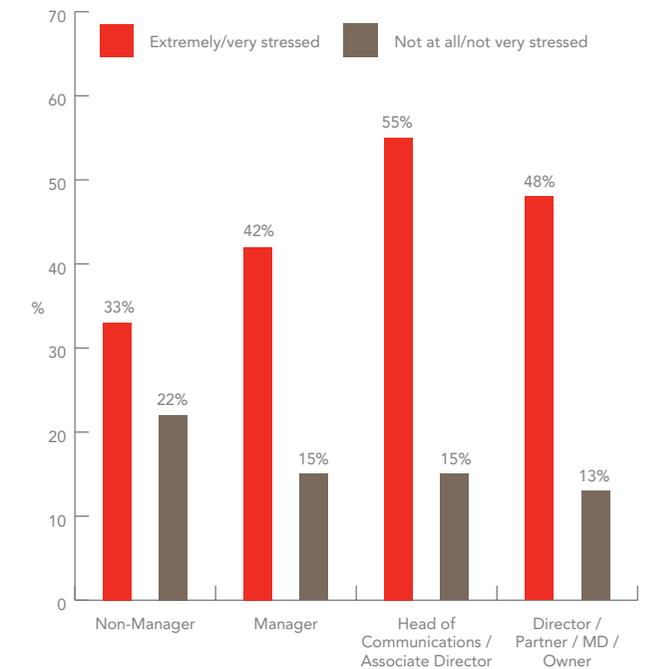
Full-time employees also understandably experienced higher levels of workplace stress than those who worked part-time, with 43% of those working full-time compared to 18% of those working part-time stating they experience high levels of workplace stress.

Interestingly, there was little geographical difference between those experiencing high levels of workplace stress, indicating that working in London does not necessarily contribute to a stressful working environment.

Extremely or very stressed / Not at all or not very stressed – by age (all respondents)



Extremely or very stressed / Not at all or not very stressed – by seniority (all respondents)



## Job satisfaction

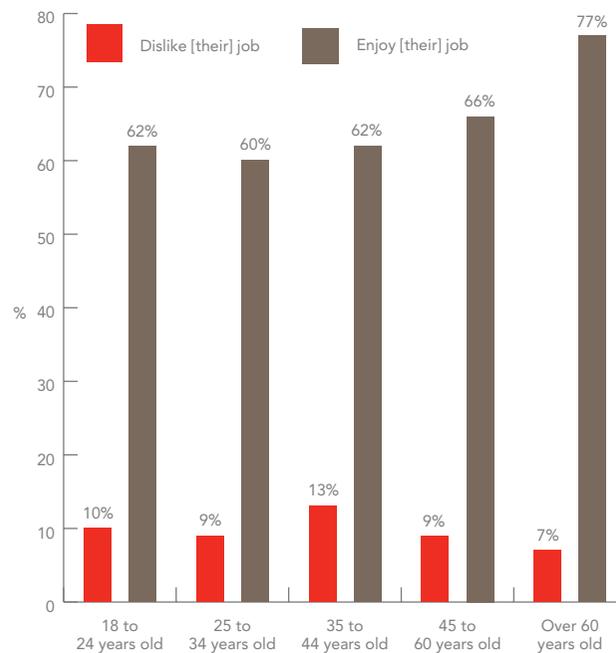
Respondents were asked a similar question as a gauge of job satisfaction using a 1-5 scale.

Responses show that 63% of PR professionals enjoy their job with 22% stating that they 'greatly enjoy [their] job'. 27% appear to be undecided on their level of job satisfaction and only 10% of all respondents appear to dislike their job.

There is very little gender difference in terms of job enjoyment, but there is a substantial regional difference; 57% of those based in London enjoy their job compared to 66% of those outside of London, with 72% of those who work outside of the UK saying that they enjoy their job.

Respondents also tended to enjoy their job more the older they got, with 77% of over 60's responding that they enjoyed their job and none said that they 'greatly dislike [their] job'. This is in comparison to 62% of 18-24s and 60% of 25-34s who said that they enjoy their job.

Dislike [their] current job / Enjoy [their] current job - by age (all respondents)

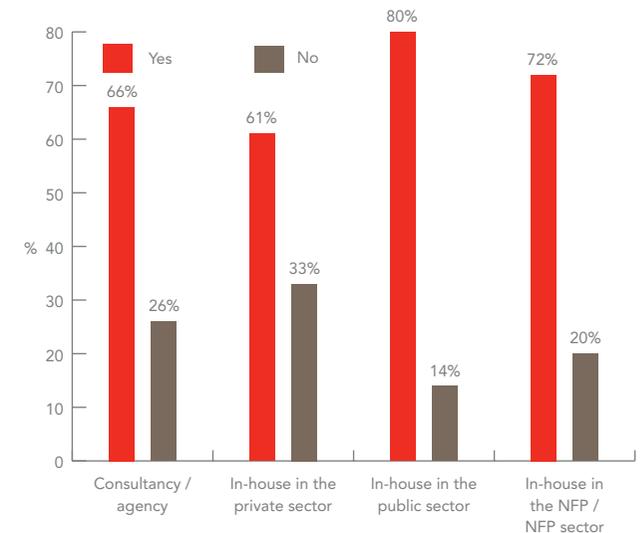


## Flexible working culture

70% of respondents stated that their organisations promoted a flexible working culture.

In terms of the type of organisation that respondents worked for, 33% of those who worked in-house in the private sector felt that their organisation did not promote a flexible working culture compared to just 14% of those who worked in-house in the public sector. 80% in the public sector did also state that their organisations promoted a flexible working culture.

Does your organisation promote a flexible working culture? - by organisation type (all respondents)



There was a further large discrepancy between whether Directors and Owners believed that their organisation promoted a flexible working culture (84% believed that they did) compared to 67% of non-Directors/Owners. Gender also showed a significant differentiation with only 68% of women compared to 75% of men thinking that their organisation promoted a flexible working culture.

## The happiest UK public relations professional is most likely to be...

- ▶ A man...
- ▶ Over the age of 60...
- ▶ Working as an Independent Practitioner...
- ▶ Based in the Midlands or the East of England.

## The unhappiest UK public relations professional is most likely to be...

- ▶ A woman...
- ▶ Aged between 35 to 44...
- ▶ Working as a Head of Communications...
- ▶ In-house in the public sector...
- ▶ Based in London.

# Skills & competencies

## Working patterns

The majority of professionals (76%) indicated that they still spend some or most of their time working on media relations. Consultancy employees were the most likely to fall within this demographic with 45% indicating that they spend most of their time working with the media. In-house private sector (22%) and public sector (23%) were most likely to say they spend the majority of their time on internal communications.

Just shy of two thirds (65%) said they spend some or most of their time on social or digital media management. Non-managers (21%) as well as those with less than five years industry experience (25%) were by far the most likely to say they spent most of their time on digital and social media management. In-house private sector professionals were the least likely to say they devoted the majority of their time to digital. In fact, of all respondents who said they never worked on digital or social media, in-house private sector practitioners accounted for the majority.

### Top three areas of PR practice occupying most or some of PR professionals time (all respondents)

Media relations	76%
Research, planning and measurement	65%
Social or digital media management	65%

### Top three areas of PR practice occupying only an occasional or no amount of PR professionals time (all respondents)

Public affairs / lobbying	75%
Corporate social responsibility	72%
Crisis management	60%

## Skillset confidence

Technical computing and digital skills proved to be the weakest competencies for survey respondents. Most respondents (79%) said HTML and coding was among their greatest weaknesses. 84% of all in-house private sector employees fell within this demographic.

### Top five weakest skills (all respondents)

HTML and coding	79%
Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)	56%
Photo / video editing	45%
Quantitative data analysis	24%
Behavioural psychology	19%

Participants indicated that they were far more confident in their traditional business competencies.

### Top five strongest skills (all respondents)

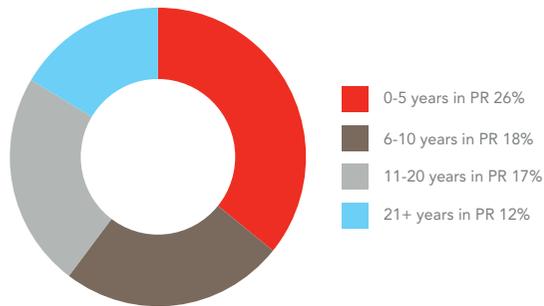
Written Communication - traditional	47%
Interpersonal skills	38%
Leadership and management skills	30%
Creativity	28%
Strategic management	28%

Independent practitioners were the most confident in their written communication capabilities with 53% placing the skill in their top three competencies. Agency/consultancy practitioners were the least likely to rank traditional communications skills amongst their strongest professional capabilities.

Practitioners based in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales were far more confident in their social and digital communications skills than their London-based counterparts. 27% based in the home nations felt their digital skills were amongst their top three competencies compared to just 13% of Londoners.

Confidence in social and digital media correlated negatively with number of years spent in the industry. Over a quarter (26%) of practitioners still in the first five years of their PR career indicated that social and digital media management was amongst their strongest competencies. However only 12% of practitioners with over 21 years of industry experience felt confident in their social and digital media management skills.

Practitioners ranking digital and social media skills in top three competencies – by Years in PR (all respondents)



Confidence in both traditional and digital communications skills is balanced equally between men and women. However compared with men, women were significantly more confident in project management (18% v 11%), organisational skills (25% v 14%) and attention to detail skills (23% v 17%). Men were comparatively more confident in their strategic management (32% v 25%) and were more confident in their knowledge of current affairs and industry trends than women (22% v 15%).

## The skills to get you hired

In-house and consultancy professionals responsible for hiring new employees were asked to identify which skills and competencies they looked out for in new recruits. They were asked to select from a list of competencies and indicate which skills were most relevant for junior roles and which were needed most for senior roles. The results show that traditional written communication skills and interpersonal skills are considered the key competencies for both junior and senior practitioners, whilst recruiters' appetite for other skills depended largely on whether a senior or junior candidate was being sought.

Top five most desired competencies sought when hiring **junior** candidates (all respondents)

Written communication skills - traditional	76%
Interpersonal skills	71%
Social/digital skills	68%
Oral communication skills	67%
Attention to detail	67%

Top five least desired competencies sought when hiring **junior** candidates (all respondents)

Budgeting and financial planning	3%
HTML and coding	3%
Strategic management	4%
Behavioural psychology	5%
Quantitative data analysis	5%

Top five most desired competencies sought when hiring **senior** candidates (all respondents)

Leadership and management skills	73%
Strategic management	70%
Interpersonal skills	66%
Organisational skills	65%
Written communication skills - traditional	64%

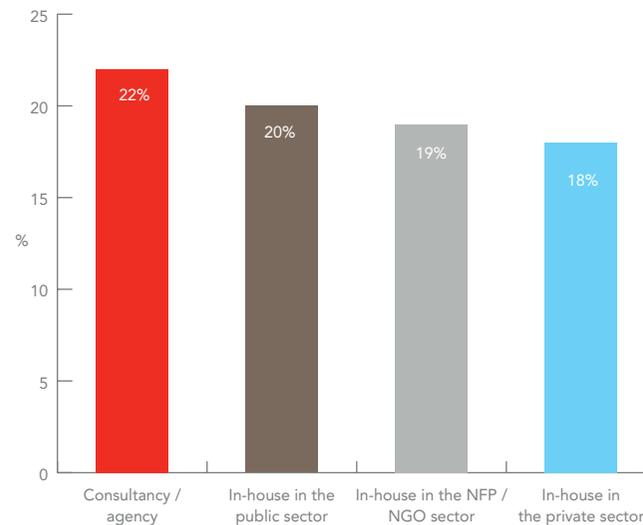
**Top five least desired competencies sought when hiring senior candidates (all respondents)**

HTML and coding	1%
Photo/video editing	4%
Search engine optimisation (SEO)	6%
Behavioural psychology	14%
Quantitative data analysis	17%

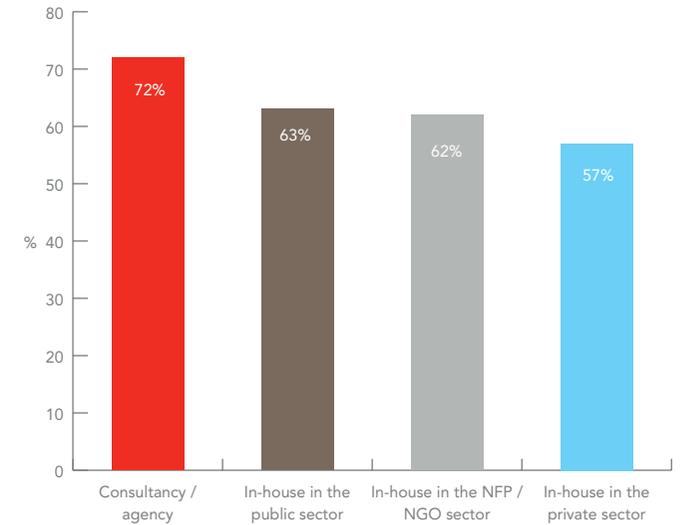
It is interesting to note that digital and social skills fail to feature in the top five list for competencies sought by professionals hiring senior candidates. Yet the same skillset was the third most (68%) in-demand competency for junior roles. This is of particular interest considering the majority (22%) of respondents also said that changing social and digital landscape would provide the biggest challenge to the industry in the next five years (see page 31).

The survey data also appears to suggest that both traditional and digital communications skills are more valued in agency roles than in-house positions. For senior roles, 61% of agency professionals sought candidates with digital communication skills and 71% looked for candidates with traditional written communications skills. The trend was repeated for junior roles with 74% of agency professionals seeking candidates with digital communications skills and 84% looking for individuals with traditional written communications skills. When it came to hiring for junior and senior roles, these percentages were consistently higher for agency employees compared to in-house practitioners.

**Value placed in digital/technical skills and competencies when hiring both junior and senior candidates - by organisation type (all respondents)**



**Value placed in traditional PR skills and competencies when hiring both junior and senior candidates - by organisation type (all respondents)**

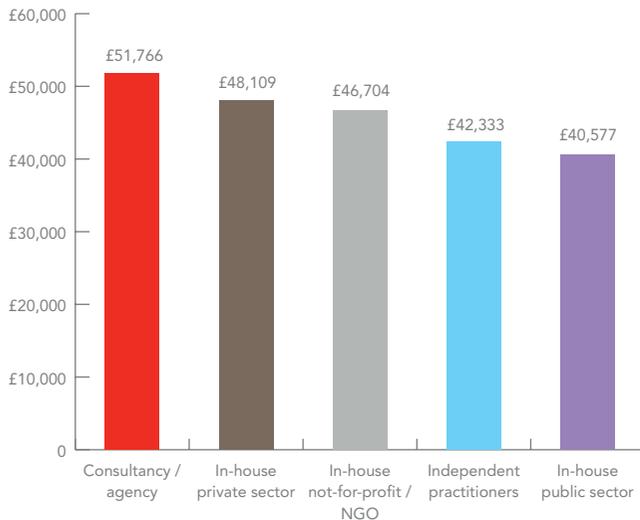


# Salaries

## Salary – by organisation type

Agency / consultancy professionals command the industry's highest wages with salaries averaging £52,000 per year, earning £11,000 more than the lowest organisation type. The average mean salary of an in-house private sector professional is £48,000, followed closely by the in-house not-for-profit / NGO sector averaging at £47,000. Independent practitioners take home an average income of £42,000, whilst in-house public sector employees pocket the lowest average salary of £41,000 per year.

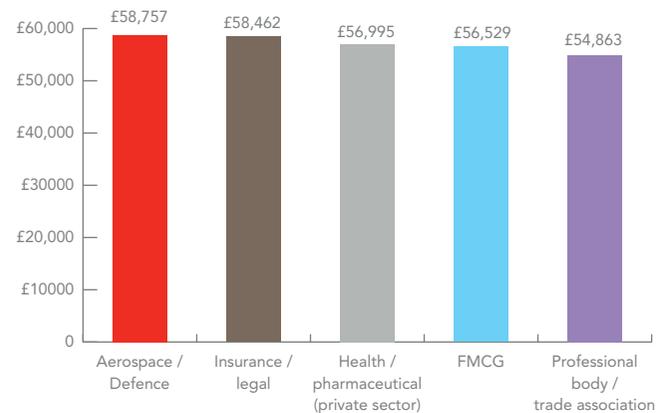
Average salaries or incomes – by organisation type (all respondents)



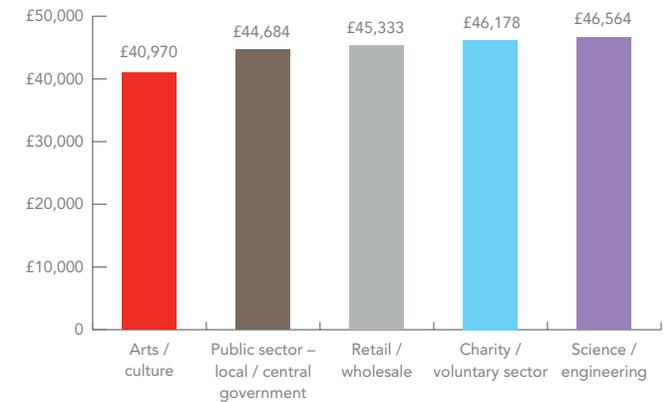
## Salary – by sector

Professionals working across the Aerospace / Defence and Insurance / Legal sectors earn the highest average wages in the industry (£58,000). Professionals working within the Health / Pharmaceutical (private sector), along with the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, indicated they were amongst the industry's highest earners. Those earning the smallest average salaries tended to work within the Arts / Culture sector. Public relations professionals working in the public sector – local / central government earned an average of £44,000, whilst those working in the charity/voluntary sector earned an average of just over £46,000.

Top five highest average salaries or incomes – by sector (all respondents)



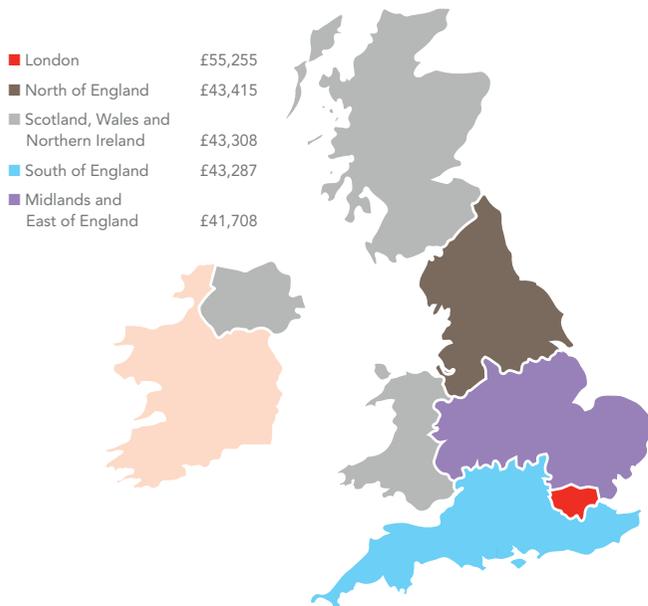
Top five lowest average salaries or incomes – by sector (all respondents)



## Salary – by locality

It's little surprise that London-based professionals earn the highest salaries (£55,000 per year). Practitioners located in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, North of England and South of England all earn average annual salaries of £43,000. The data suggests individuals based in the Midlands and East of England earn the lowest average wages (£42,000).

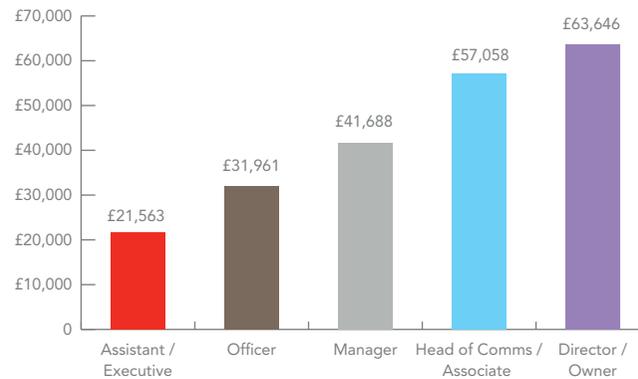
Average salaries or incomes – by UK region (all respondents)



## Salary – by seniority

The average salary for an Assistant or Executive is £21,500, whilst Directors and Owners command average annual salaries of over £63,000. Average salary earnings rise steadily with seniority however a notable pay gap of approximately £15,000 exists between Manager and Head of Comms / Associate level roles.

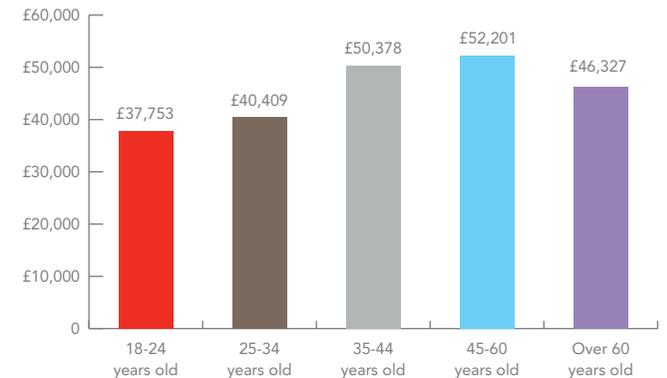
Average salaries or incomes – by seniority (all respondents)



## Salary – by age

The survey data revealed that participants aged between 35 and 60 earned the highest wages in the industry. The results infer that public relations professionals are likely to earn more money as they grow older; however those aged over 60 are likely to experience a sharp decline in their average salaries. Professionals aged between 45 and 60 can expect to earn around £52,000 but practitioners aged over 60 earn an average of £46,000.

Salaries or incomes – by age (all respondents)

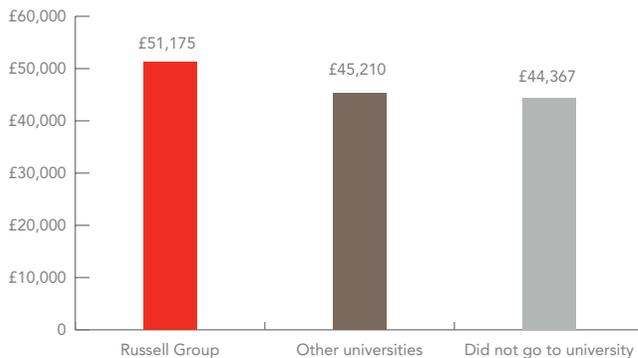


## Salary – by educational background

The survey data revealed a notable correlation between the earnings of Russell Group and non-Russell Group graduates - the latter earned an average wage of £45,000 per year, almost the same amount as those who didn't graduate from university. Yet the data revealed those who attended a Russell Group university earned an average wage of £51,000.

Over a quarter (27%) of all Russell Group graduates said they earn more than £60,000 a year, compared with 19% of non-Russell Group graduates and 21% of non-graduates. Interestingly, those who were educated at fee-paying independent schools earn an average of £54,000 per year, £10,000 more than those who were educated at comprehensive schools, and over £3,000 more than those who attended grammar schools.

Average salaries or incomes – by university type (all respondents)



## Bonuses

Amongst all professionals, 37% said that they had received a bonus in the last 12 months. However there was a ranging disparity amongst the cross-breaks with regards to receiving a bonus.

Those based in London (44%) were much more likely to receive a bonus than those in the rest of the UK (31%) – with the lowest percentage of bonuses being handed out in Scotland; Wales & Northern Ireland combined (29%).

Those who worked in-house in the private sector were considerably more likely (63%) than those who worked in-house in the public sector (16%) to receive a bonus. Bonuses were also handed out to 44% of consultancy/agency employees, compared to just under a quarter of those working in-house for a NFP / NGO (24%).

Employees working in the aerospace and defence sectors were most likely to be awarded a bonus (60%), followed by those working in FMCG and in the private health/ pharmaceutical sector (both 56%).

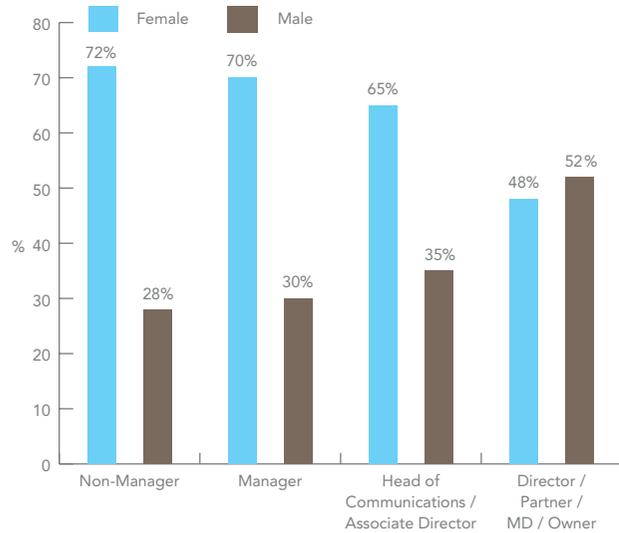
At the most senior level of management, bonuses were awarded to nearly half of all respondents (48%), this compared to non-managers where only just over a quarter (27%) said that they had received a bonus in the last 12 months.

# Gender balance & equal pay

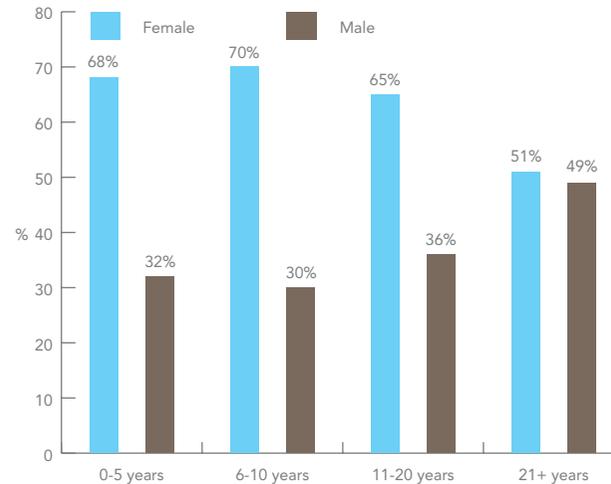
## Gender balance

The sample profile suggests women comprise just under two thirds (64%) of the public relations profession. The following charts, graphs and tables below put the gender pay gap in context of common factors which often influence gender balance and equal pay.

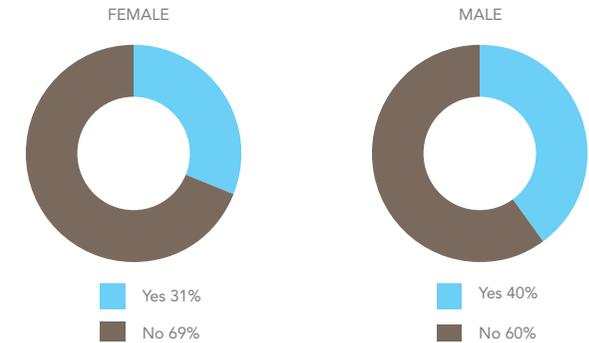
Gender of respondents – by seniority (all respondents)



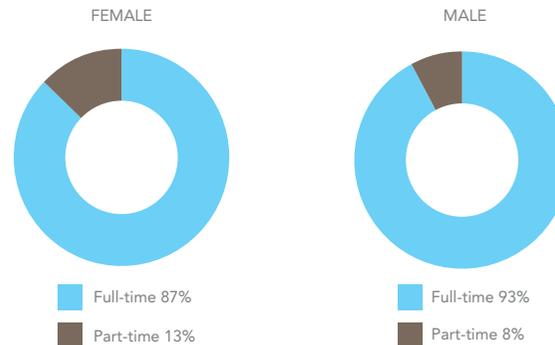
Gender of respondents – by Years in PR (all respondents)



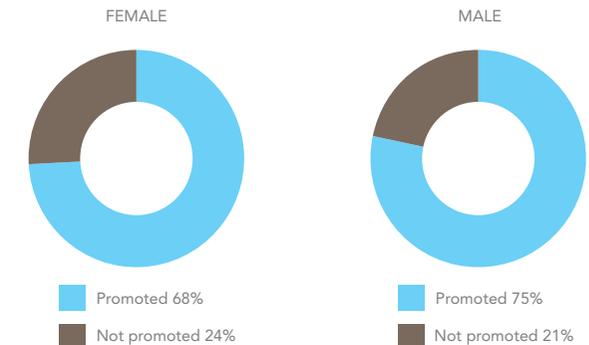
Parent of a child under the age of 18 – by Gender (all respondents)



Full-time/part-time status – by Gender (all respondents)



Perceptions of a flexible working culture being promoted – by Gender (all employee respondents)



## The pay gap

The basic figures reveal that there continues to exist a noticeable gender pay-gap between males (£51,486 for employees and £55,566 for independent practitioners) and females (£43,962 for employees and £42,910 for independent practitioners) in public relations. However, to test this with academic rigour, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted on a range of independent variables to determine the true gender pay-gap.

From the survey data collected, salaries of employees and annual personal incomes from independent practitioners were both included. Respondents who did not work in the UK were excluded. Additionally, edge cases of salary (below £5,000 and above £500,000) were excluded. After these adjustments, the difference between male and female salaries was £13,887<sup>3</sup>. This is an increase of 12% on last year's figure of £12,390.

Multiple linear regression was employed to help determine to what extent gender could predict salary, and how strong this prediction is compared to other above variables. Predictive variables that were included were gender, full-time status, secondary education type, university graduate, parent of child under 18, seniority, public/private/agency, sector, and number of years working within PR industry<sup>4</sup>.

Looking at the differences in salary that could only be accounted for by gender, men earned £8,483 more per annum than women in the same situations. Simply, findings reveal that where the mean difference between male and female salaries was £13,887, £5,404 could be explained by other factors such as length of service, seniority, and higher prevalence of part-time work among women. This left £8,483 that cannot be explained by any other factors and is therefore the pure effect of gender on pay.

The ability to control across a wide range of potentially compounding variables enables the conclusion that there exists a clear pay inequality present in public relations that cannot be explained by factors often used to explain such effects, such as the differences in full and part time work rates between men and women, their years of experience in the sector, seniority, or whether they work in the public or private sector. Additionally, by looking at other measures such as parenthood, it has been shown that pay inequality in public relations cannot be explained by having children - something that appears to have no impact on pay at all.

As a result of the above analysis, it can also be concluded that in public relations, gender has the third largest overall impact on salary, after level of seniority and years in industry.

### Top seven overall impacts on salary (all respondents)

1.	Level of seniority
2.	Number of years in public relations
3.	Gender
4.	Type of secondary education
5.	Sector of practice
6.	University graduate vs. non-graduate
7.	Part-time/full-time status

**£8,483** pure pay inequality gap

<sup>3</sup> Salary was positively skewed by occasional high salaries, but was similar for both male and female data. This suggests this variable violates the assumption of normality. Regression analyses that followed used both this data and square root transformed data, and this changed very little in regards to overall amount of variance explained or the individual regression coefficients, so non-transformed salary is reported only. An independent t-test was conducted between gender (male n = 550, female n = 1044) on the dependent variable of salary (t (1592) = 8.5, p < .001).

<sup>4</sup> All variables used correlated significantly with salary, either positively (such as seniority, r = .509), or negatively (such as the binary gender variable, r = -.209). These correlations with salary allow multiple linear regression to be reliably undertaken. A direct method was used for the multiple linear regression analyses. The eight variables produced an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of .338 (F (8, 1444) = 92, p < .001) for the prediction of salary. Individual variable results that were significant predictors were; gender (Beta = -.128, p < .001), type of school (Beta = .067, p = .002), university graduate (Beta = -.059, p = .007), work full/part-time (Beta = -.053, p = .019), sector (Beta = -.067, p = .003), level of seniority (Beta = .362, p < .001), and number years in public relations (Beta = .243, p < .001). However, being a parent (Beta = -.033, p = .198) was **not** a significant predictor of salary.

## The effect of seniority on the gender pay gap

Identifying the gender pay gap was followed up with looking at the pay gap across multiple levels of seniority, to see to what extent the gap exists at each level of seniority, and evidences whether or not this gap remained steady, grew, or shrunk.

Seniority has a significant impact on the gender pay gap. The more senior the position, the greater the gap that exists between men and women. At the initial entry-level position, men and women have equal salaries. Then, the gap begins to appear at the Officer level. At the manager level, this problem appears to be temporarily eliminated, but once again appears at the Head of Communications / Associate Director level<sup>5</sup>.

Average (mean) salary of men and women – by seniority

	Men	Women	Difference
Assistant/Executive	£21,324.15	£21,634.41	£310.26
Officer	£38,105.40	£29,516.40	-£8,589.00
Manager	£39,705.61	£38,382.97	-£1,322.64
Head of Communications / Associate Director	£62,970.13	£53,968.12	-£9,002.01
Director / Partner / MD	£91,841.58	£77,997.02	-£13,844.56
Owner	£78,424.24	£57,713.46	-£20,710.78

<sup>5</sup> This data that doesn't take consideration of all the factors included within the multiple linear regression.

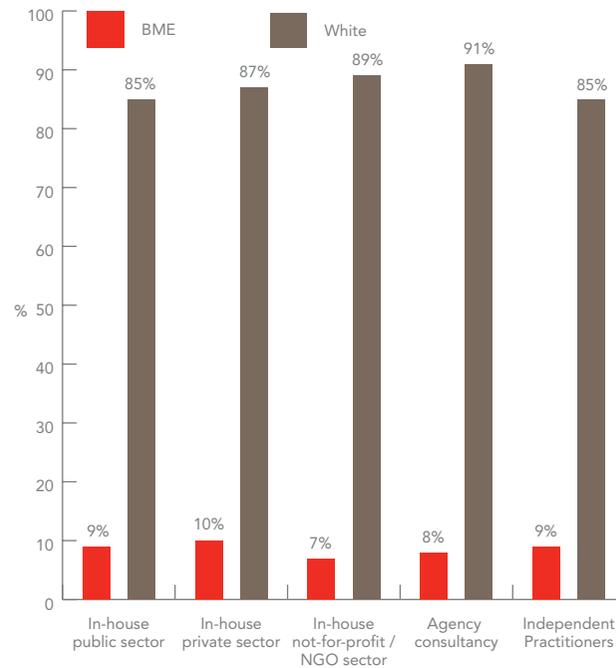
# Diversity

## Ethnicity demographics

Black, African, Caribbean and Black British professionals accounted for just 4% of survey respondents - whilst only 2% said they considered themselves to be Asian or Asian British. The overall percentage of practitioners who consider themselves to be from any ethnic minority background was 9%.

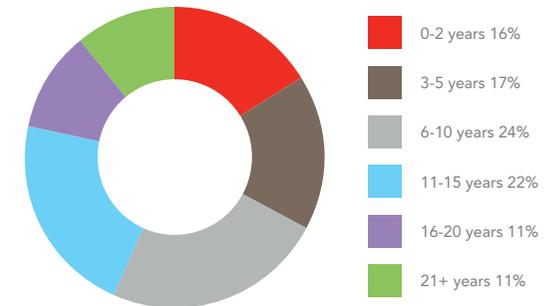
BME professionals were least likely to work in-house within the not-for-profit / NGO sector (only 7.2%), but the most common place for a white person to work was in a consultancy/agency (91%). Black and ethnic minority professionals were most likely to work in-house in the private sector (10%) or for in-house public sector organisations (9.0%).

Organisation type – by ethnicity (all respondents)



The years in PR data evidences that the majority of BME professionals have worked in public relations for 10 years or less (57%). This contrasts with a majority of white respondents, over 50% of whom said they had worked in public relations for more than 10 years.

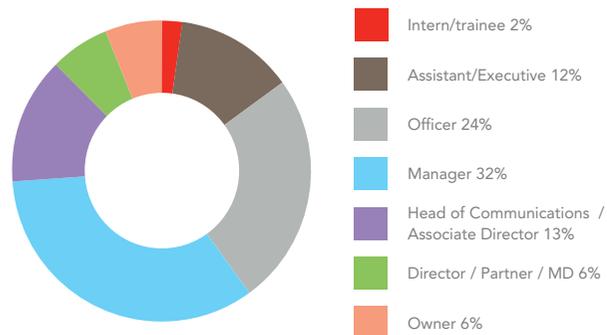
Years in PR of all BME professionals (all respondents)



## Ethnicity – seniority and salary

The survey data reveals a concerning disparity between the average earnings of BME and white professionals. BME professionals working in public relations earn an average of £5,798 less than individuals who identified themselves as white. This may be attributed to distribution of BME professionals in senior management roles (25%), contrasting with 38% of white respondents being distributed amongst senior management roles.

Seniority of all BME professionals (all respondents)

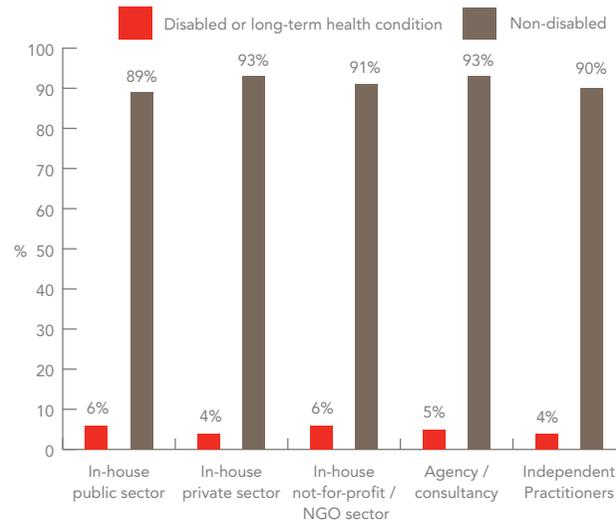


## Disability demographics

Public relations professionals who identified as having a disability or a long-term health condition accounted for just 6% of survey respondents, in real terms this equated to 109 respondents. This compares to the national average of 16%<sup>6</sup> of the working population that identify as living with a disability.

Those with a disability or a long-term health condition were most likely to work in-house in the public sector, or for a not-for-profit or NGO, and were least likely to be working in-house in the private sector.

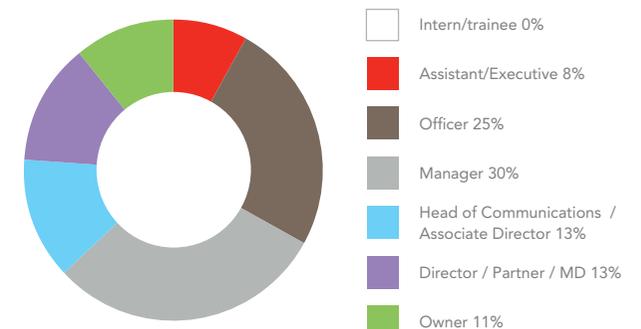
Organisation type – by disability (all respondents)



## Disability – seniority and salary

As a result of the limited sample size for this demographic, drawing conclusions based on these responses is inconclusive. From the data available, the mean salary for those identifying as not disabled was £7,513 lower than those with a disability or a long term health condition. In addition, this data shows that those with a disability and those without a disability are proportionally just as likely to be Directors, Partners and MDs. It is also of note that distribution of those identifying as Owners is far higher amongst disabled people, than those without a disability.

Seniority of all identifying with having a disability or long term health condition (all respondents)



<sup>6</sup> According to UK Government statistics, around 6% of children are disabled, compared to 16% of working age adults and 45% of adults over State Pension Age

## Attitudes to diversity balanced teams

Exactly half (50%) of all respondents agreed that public relations campaigns are more effective when practiced by ethnically diverse teams, while 26% disagreed. Consultancy professionals were by far the most likely (34%) to disagree with the premise, whilst those working in-house within the not-for-profit or NGO sector were most likely to agree (56%). Interestingly, 74% of BME respondents agreed that campaigns are more effective when practiced by ethnically diverse teams compared to 47% of white respondents.

Respondents tended to disagree with notion that PR campaigns are more effective when practiced by teams consisting of a proportionate number of disabled and non-disabled professionals, with only 30% agreeing. 45% of those who consider themselves to have a disability or long-term health condition did believe this statement to be true, compared to 29% of those who consider themselves not to be disabled.

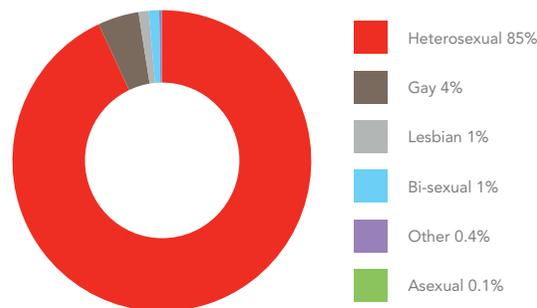
The need for gender balanced and aged balanced teams in producing successful campaigns were the two statements most commonly agreed with. 51% agreed for the need for teams equal of men and women, and exactly two thirds (66%) believed campaigns would perform better if representative of all ages. The two age groups most under-represented in the industry (18-24 and 60+) are the most likely to agree that PR campaigns are more effective when practiced by teams of all ages (73% and 80% respectively).

Despite somewhat conflicting opinions across different strands of diversity, almost two thirds (65%) of respondents said they believed PR campaigns are more effective when practiced by teams who are representative of the audiences they seek to engage. Those working in a consultancy/agency were most likely to disagree with this statement (28%), with independent practitioners the most likely to agree (68%).

## Sexual orientation

Over 85% of survey respondents indicated they were heterosexual, whilst 6% said they were gay, lesbian or bi-sexual. This percentage is consistent with UK Government figures, backed by Stonewall, that suggest 5-7%<sup>7</sup> of the UK population is gay, lesbian or bi-sexual.

Sexuality of PR professionals (all respondents)



<sup>7</sup> According to Stonewall, there is no hard data on the number of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals in the UK as no national census has ever asked people to define their sexuality. However Stonewall suggest the Government's figure of 5-7% is "reliable"

# Budgets

## Budgets – in-house

Results show signs of stagnation within all in-house public relations budgets, with respondents' budgets more likely to have stayed the same (37%) or decreased (31%), than increased (21%) – when compared to 12 months ago.

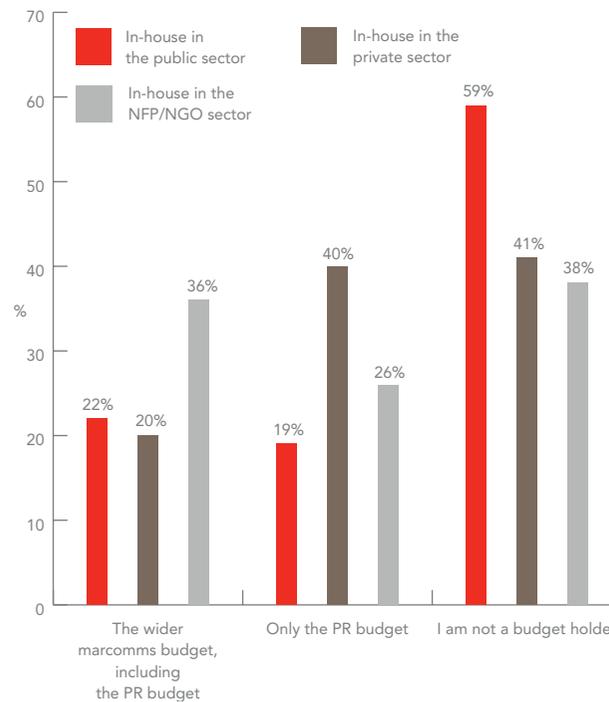
On a regional and national level across the UK, for all respondents in-house, it is notable that 22% of public relations budgets in London, South of England, Midlands and the East have increased over the past 12 months, compared to just 13% of those based in the North of England, and Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Notably 42% of those in the North of England also said that their budgets have decreased over the same period.

## In-house budget holders

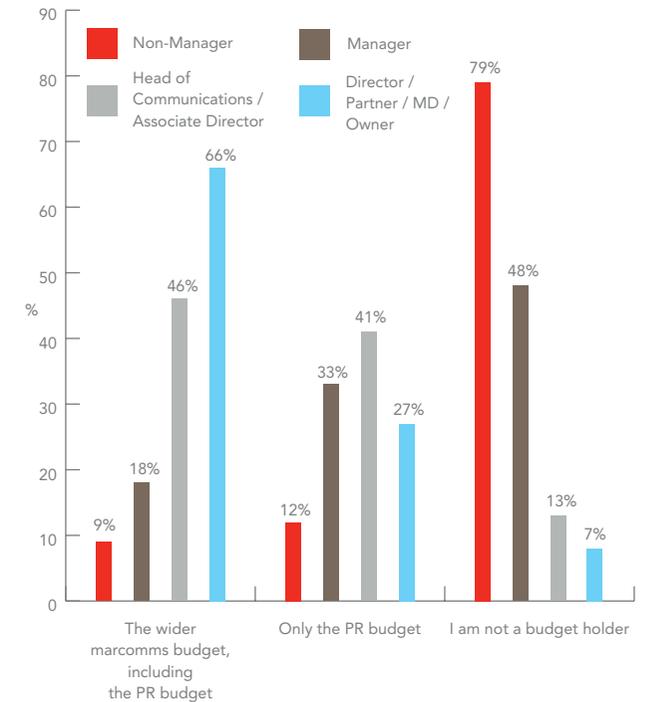
A quarter (24%) of in-house respondents indicated they were responsible for the wider marketing communications budget encompassing public relations. Not-for-profit / NGO practitioners were by far the most likely to be responsible for this budget (36%). Budget holders responsible for the wider marketing communications budget tended to be aged between 45-60. Over a third (35%) of in-house practitioners within the age group said they were responsible for the wider budget.

28% of in-house professionals said they were solely responsible for the public relations budget, these tended to be in-house practitioners working in the private sector (40%). Just under half (48%) said they weren't budget holders and these respondents mostly comprised of public sector practitioners.

Budget responsibility – by organisation type (all respondents)



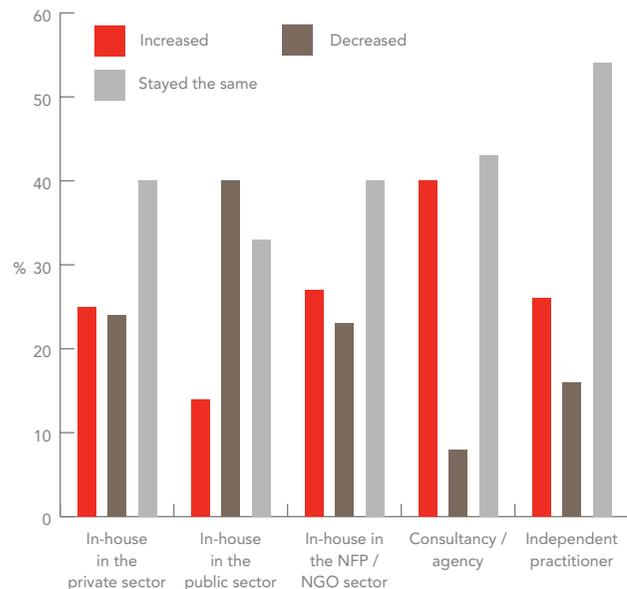
Budget responsibility – by seniority (all respondents)



## Budgets – consultancies and independent practitioners

In terms of growth compared to those working in-house, the opposite appears to be the case for consultants and independent practitioners who are over three times as likely to have seen client fees increase (35%) than decrease (10%) over the past 12 months. 47% of respondents indicated that client fees have stayed the same.

### Public relations budgets/client fees compared to 12 months ago (all respondents)



## Budget spend – in-house

For all in-house respondents, excluding staff costs, 19% of respondents stated that the largest amount of their public relations budget will be allocated towards media relations; this was followed by consumer or public campaigning (17%) and then event management (16%).

15% of respondents said that the least amount of their public relations budget is likely to go towards public affairs and lobbying, then corporate social responsibility (12%), and internal communications (11%).

Key strategic areas such as spend on social and digital media management, and on research, planning, measurement and evaluation, appear to be neither major items on in-house budget lines, nor minor ones.

# Public relations strategy & the board

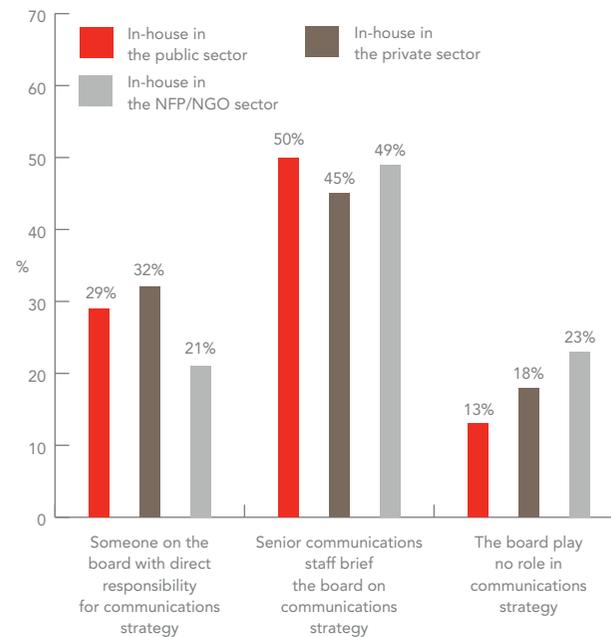
## In-house views

Under half of all in-house respondents (44%) say that they are directly responsible for the communications strategy of their organisations, with just over half (51%) saying that they contribute to communications strategy on an ad-hoc basis.

Communications strategy appears to largely be the remit of those in senior management as 82% identify it as their responsibility. However it is also of note that two-fifths (40%) of middle managers also say that they are directly responsible for the communications strategy of their organisations.

Only just over a quarter (28%) of respondents that there's someone on their management board who has a direct responsibility for communication strategy. This is most common for those in-house in the private sector (32%), and least likely in-house in the NFP/NGO sector (21%). Less than half (48%) of all in-house respondents said a senior member of the communications staff briefs the board of their organisation on communication strategy, whilst for 17% their board's play no part in communications strategy.

The role of the board in communications strategy – by organisation type (all in-house respondents)



Only 13% of in-house respondents said they have a direct role in developing their organisation's business strategy whilst the majority (43%) said they play no role whatsoever. In-house professionals working in the not-for-profit/NGO sector were far more likely (21%) to have a direct role in business strategy compared with their private sector (12%) and public sector (9%) counterparts.

## Consultancy & Independent Practitioners views

More than three quarters (76%) of respondents working for consultancies/agencies or as an independent practitioners said they work directly with clients to develop their communications strategy, with only 2% saying they played no role at all.

When it came to having a direct role in business strategy agency/consultancy and independent practitioners are less influential when compared to their role in communications strategy, when excluding non-managers. Just over a quarter (27%) said they played a direct role in developing business strategy. Although over three-quarters (77%) of all independent practitioners and consultancy employees said they contributed to their clients' overall business strategy at least on an ad-hoc basis.

The role of consultants and independent practitioners in the development of client's business strategies – by organisation type (all respondents, excluding non-managers)

A direct role in developing client's business strategy	27%
An ad-hoc contribution to the development of client's business strategy	50%
No role in client's business strategy	22%

# The changing nature of public relations

## Departmental convergence

For all in-house respondents the department that they believed was working more closely with public relations was “social/digital”, with 78% of respondents indicating that the Social team is working more closely with the PR department than two years ago.

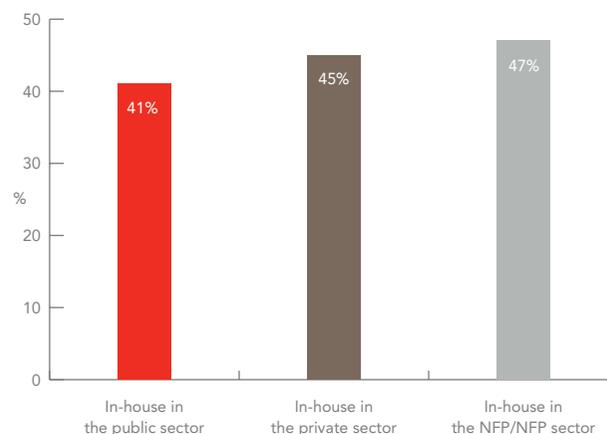
This department, along with “marketing” (53%) were the only two departments that more than half of respondents believe that the PR department is working closer with now than it was two years ago.

Just under half of all in-house respondents reported that they were now working more closely with “events” (47%) and “customer service” (46%), and over a third said the same for “human resources” (39%) and “IT” (39%).

Working closely with the “advertising” (29%) and “sales” (23%) departments was less prevalent, however a clear majority of respondents selected working “more closely” than “less closely” for all of the departments given.

On average it’s most likely for those working in-house in the not-for-profit / NGO sector (47%) to be working more closely with the majority of all departments listed, compared to those in-house in the private sector (45%) or those in-house in the public sector (41%).

Working more closely with different departments - by organisation type (all in-house respondents)



## Areas of converging PR practice

Respondents were also asked which areas of public relations practice have converged with those departments that now work more closely with PR. Once again, for all areas of PR practice given, more respondents selected that they had converged “more closely” with other departments than “less closely” again indicating an industry-wide trend of firms becoming more streamlined and undergoing inter-departmental convergence.

The areas of PR practice with the greatest number of respondents selecting “more closely” were “social or digital media management” (70%), “internal communications” (62%) and “media relations” (62%). The convergence of media relations with other teams and departments for all working in-house is of particular interest, as this has previously been seen as the sole remit of the PR professional.

None of the areas of PR practice given had less than 37% of respondents stating that they are now working “more closely” with other departments.

## New workloads and responsibilities

Respondents were finally asked what other responsibilities they had taken on from those not traditionally associated with in-house public relations practice; results are detailed in the accompanying table.

### Top ten areas of convergence from other disciplines (all in-house respondents)

1.	Branding (55%)
2.	Copywriting (50%)
3.	Website design and coding (47%)
4.	Sponsorship (45%)
5.	Print and design (43%)
6.	Content marketing (38%)
7.	Strategic partnerships (35%)
8.	Advertising (30%)
9.	Relationship marketing (30%)
10.	Market research (28%)

# Future challenges

The overwhelming majority of respondents indicate that the biggest challenge for the future is the changing nature of public relations – largely due to changes and advances in technology. This is because alongside their primary concern clearly being the ‘changing social and digital landscape’ (22%), amongst the top five future challenges are ‘the expanding skill set required of professionals’ (13%), ‘the impact of 24/7 newsrooms and “always on” culture’ (12%), and ‘convergence and competition from other industries’ (12%).

Often cited as an issue that holds public relations back, ‘the poor reputation of public relations in wider society’ is only ranked as the seventh biggest challenge for the future by a total of 10% of respondents.

## The biggest future challenge facing public relations (all respondents)

Changing social and digital landscape	22%
An expanding skill set required of professionals	13%
Under-representation of public relations practitioners at board level	12%
Impact of 24/7 newsrooms and ‘always on’ culture	12%
Convergence and competition from other industries	12%
Lack of understanding of measurement and evaluation	10%
The poor reputation of public relations in wider society	10%
Failure to prioritise training and education	2%
Ineffective leadership from professional/trade bodies	2%

## Top three future challenges – by organisation type

Similar to the general trend, four out of the five organisation type’s list ‘changing social and digital landscape’ as the biggest future challenge for PR – with Independent Practitioners clearly ranking this as far greater concern than others (26%).

Interestingly, those from consultancies/agencies appear to buck the general trend, citing ‘convergence and competition from other industries’ (23%) and ‘lack of understanding of measurement and evaluation’ (12%) amongst their first and third future challenges for public relations. They are the only organisation type to list either of these issues in their top three challenges.

Independent practitioners are the only group to list ‘the poor reputation of PR in wider society’ in their top three future challenges.

## Future challenges – by seniority

The ‘changing social and digital landscape’ appears to be more or less the primary concern for all levels of seniority. However, 26% of respondents who are Directors, Partners, MDs and Owners identify ‘convergence and competition from other industries’ as being their predominant concern. They are also the only level of seniority not to list the ‘expanding skill set required of professionals’ in their top three future challenges, and the only group to cite ‘the poor reputation of public relations in wider society’ as one of their big three issues for the future.

Middle-managers appear to be the group who worry the most about the changing nature of public relations, as alongside their primary concern being the ‘changing social and digital landscape’ (24%), they also foresee ‘an expanding skill set’ (17%) and ‘the impact of 24/7 newsrooms and “always on” culture’ (13%) in their top three future challenges.