



FRANCE
EDITION

**CHIEF
COMMUNICATIONS /
CORPORATE AFFAIRS
OFFICER
TURNOVER STUDY
2026**



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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ABOUT CASA

CASA (the Corporate Affairs Search Alliance) is the group of like-minded Corporate Affairs search firms which comes together in support of clients and candidates. Each CASA member is the number one or number two Corporate Affairs and Communications specialist search firm in their home market. We have very similar values, ethics and

high professional standards, and we are friends who enjoy working together.

CASA members have businesses which are structured in different ways and are independent. What brings us together is our commitment to excellence in Corporate Affairs search, and the great outcomes we provide for those we work with.

All CASA member firms are dedicated to the promise of **'Making Corporate Affairs Better'** and as the name suggests, our vision is for CASA to be **'the home of Corporate Affairs'** for leaders of the profession, wherever in the world they are.

CASA MEMBERS

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Addison (Ireland)
addison.ie



Exeter Search (France)
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Herman Rutgers Executive & Interim Search (Netherlands)
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ITHACA

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Ithaca Partners (UK)
ithacapartners.co.uk



Patino Associates (US)
patinoassociates.com



PRCC (DACH region Germany, Austria & Switzerland)
prcc-personal.de

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the French edition of the 2026 CASA annual survey of turnover amongst top Communications and Corporate Affairs leadership.

In this report we examine the data for 2025, a year in which the working environment for Communications and Corporate Affairs functions became if anything more challenging. Developments in technology, and communication practices among audiences and stakeholder groups, showed no signs of slowing. Stakeholder activism continued to rise, with economic, political and consumer factors all competing to shape corporate priorities. The march of technology put traditional media under further pressure for audience share against online platforms. AI brought both traditional working methods and the authority of many sources into question. Even decades-long geopolitical assumptions fell under doubt. And everywhere, news cycles shortened.

With ever-increasing expectations falling on the top communications professional, whether Chief Communications Officer (CCO) or Corporate Affairs Director (titles vary), our research aims to reflect aspects of stability and change in the recruitment markets for these roles in the USA, UK and continental Europe.

The Corporate Affairs Search Alliance (CASA) is a multi-national group of like-minded Corporate Affairs search firms in Europe and the USA. Each CASA member is the number one or number two Corporate Affairs specialist search firm in its home market. Our members are closer than anyone to trends in the market for Corporate Affairs / CCO talent. The 'market-mapping' we undertake for our corporate clients provides insights into how changes in their needs affect their recruitment decisions. Our dialogues with director-level practitioners inform us about the factors which attract the rising stars and the established talent.

Last year we published our inaugural survey of the European market, drawing comparisons with a longer-established study of annual changes conducted by our USA-based partner in the market for Chief Communications Officers in that country. This year, in response to encouragement from clients and candidates alike, we have expanded the research base further to enable valid samples to be drawn on a national basis in France, alongside all six national markets we serve.

This year's report for France² covers the combined CAC 40 and SBF 120 companies.

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1. For the US and multinational editions, CASA uses "Corporate Communications Officer / CCO" as the primary descriptor of the role, reflecting widespread US practice.

2. Comparative data in this report are drawn from the 666 highest-revenue companies in the USA; the FTSE-100 in the UK; the combined CAC 40 and SBF 120 in France; the DAX 40, MDAX 50 and Austrian/Swiss traded indices in Germany; the ISEQ 20 companies in Ireland; and the 56 AEX and AMX companies in The Netherlands. Full CASA reports at Global, US, UK, France, Germany, Netherlands and Ireland levels are available on request.

SNAPSHOT OF 2025

CCO turnover in France held steady at 12.5% within the CAC 40, despite reductions in turnover across Europe as a whole

There were large variations in turnover rates between national markets, but two features stand out in the overall picture. Across Europe, overall churn in 2025 was much lower than in 2024, with every country except Germany showing a considerable fall. For France, though, there was no reduction in the CAC 40 turnover which provided our direct comparison with 2024 figures. However, our widening of the 2025 research to include the SBF 120 showed a much lower level of activity among smaller companies, bringing the wider

set down to 10.5%, much closer to the European norm.

The aggregate turnover rate for Europe in 2025 therefore fell sharply to 10% (44 changes from 436 companies), making the 2025 churn rate effectively the same as that of USA, compared to 17% for Europe in 2024 (when there were 37 changes from 219 companies)

The largest market, the USA, showed remarkable stability with one in ten positions changing hands.

CCO Turnover Rate

FRANCE - SBF 120



FRANCE - CAC 40 ONLY



EUROPE IN AGGREGATE



USA



Rounded to nearest 0.5%

Within Europe, though, we once again saw wide variations between countries. The UK continued to produce the highest turnover rate, with changes at nearly one in six CCO positions, twice the rate of some other national markets, though much lower than in 2024. While The Netherlands was superficially the second most volatile country in 2024 with an 18% turnover rate, a small sample size made that figure less statistically reliable than the 9% recorded on the expanded sample for 2025. However, the overall downward direction in turnover across all European countries is directionally unmistakable.

FRENCH CCOS CONTINUE TO ENJOY LONG TENURE

CCO tenure in France extended slightly from 4.8 to 4.9 years. While such a small change cannot yet be regarded as indicating a trend, it does cement France high in the rankings, with only

Germany ahead, and by a much lower margin than last year.

Across other markets, tenure extended slightly across the field, with reduced variation between the highest and lowest figures. The other country markets showing longer tenure year-on-year were the USA and the UK, the latter rising from an extremely low level in last year's survey. In last year's survey the average DAX 40 CCO in Germany had been in post for more than two years longer than a counterpart in the UK's FTSE 100, but while the same two countries have this year's highest and lowest tenure this year, the gap between average UK and German tenure has shrunk by a whole year.

Broadly, as one would expect, the greater the typical turnover in a country, the shorter its length of tenure for a CCO tends to be.

Average CCO Tenure 2024-2025



WHO IS BEING HIRED?

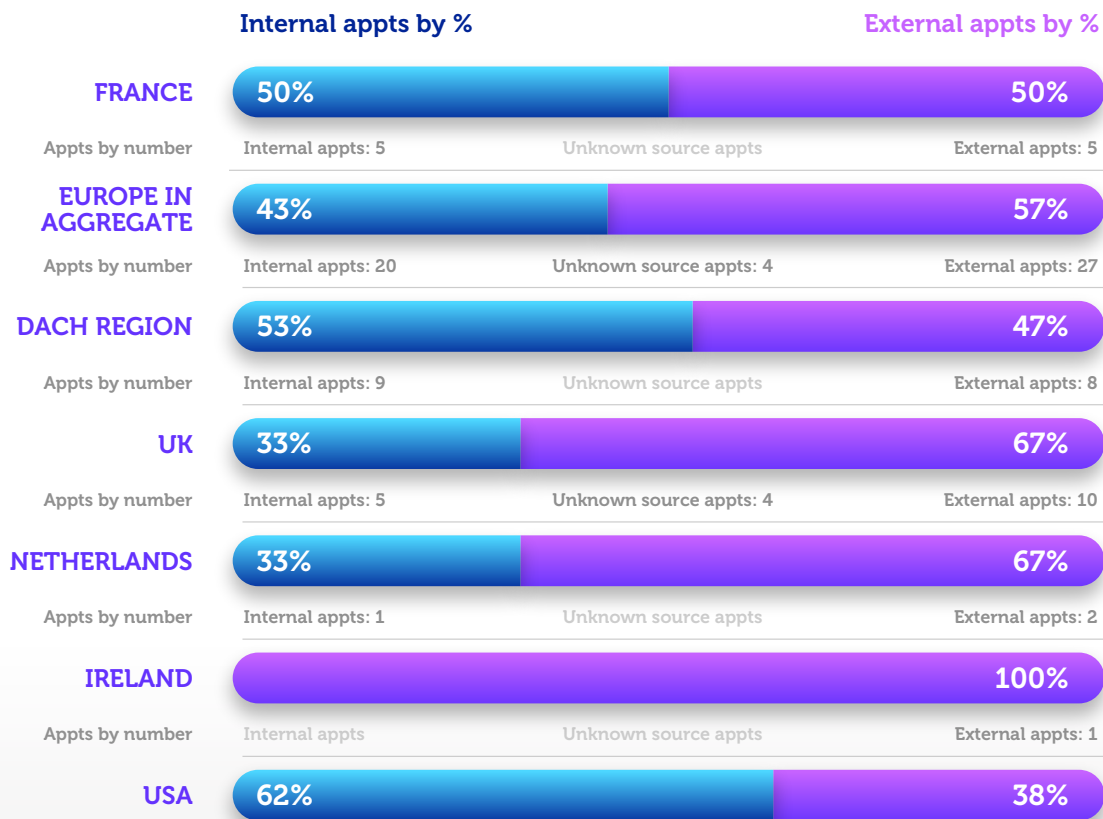
2025 was a very different year from 2024 in terms of candidate selection, both in France and elsewhere. Appointments within the CAC 40 showed an even balance between internal and external candidates, whereas in 2024 only one of the open CAC 40 CCO roles had gone to an external hire.

A similar directional shift was evident across Europe, where in 2025 the overall balance moved in favour of external hires, from the broad internal / external equilibrium we noted in the 2024 data. The UK market in particular showed a strong preference for external candidates, with 10 external hires versus five internal, up from a mild preference in 2024 (11

external vs 9 internal). Of those 10 external hires, seven came from different industries. In Germany, however, the 2025 figures showed a balanced picture in contrast to the 2024 ‘clean sweep’ for external candidates.

In the USA, by sharp contrast to Europe, internal hires took the lion’s share (62%) of vacant posts in 2025. This was a significant reversal from 2024 in which 66% of hires during the year were external. The break in the trend may reflect a corporate desire for development and retention of talent pipelines, as more than half of US internal promotions were to newly-created CCO positions.

CCO External & Internal Appointments



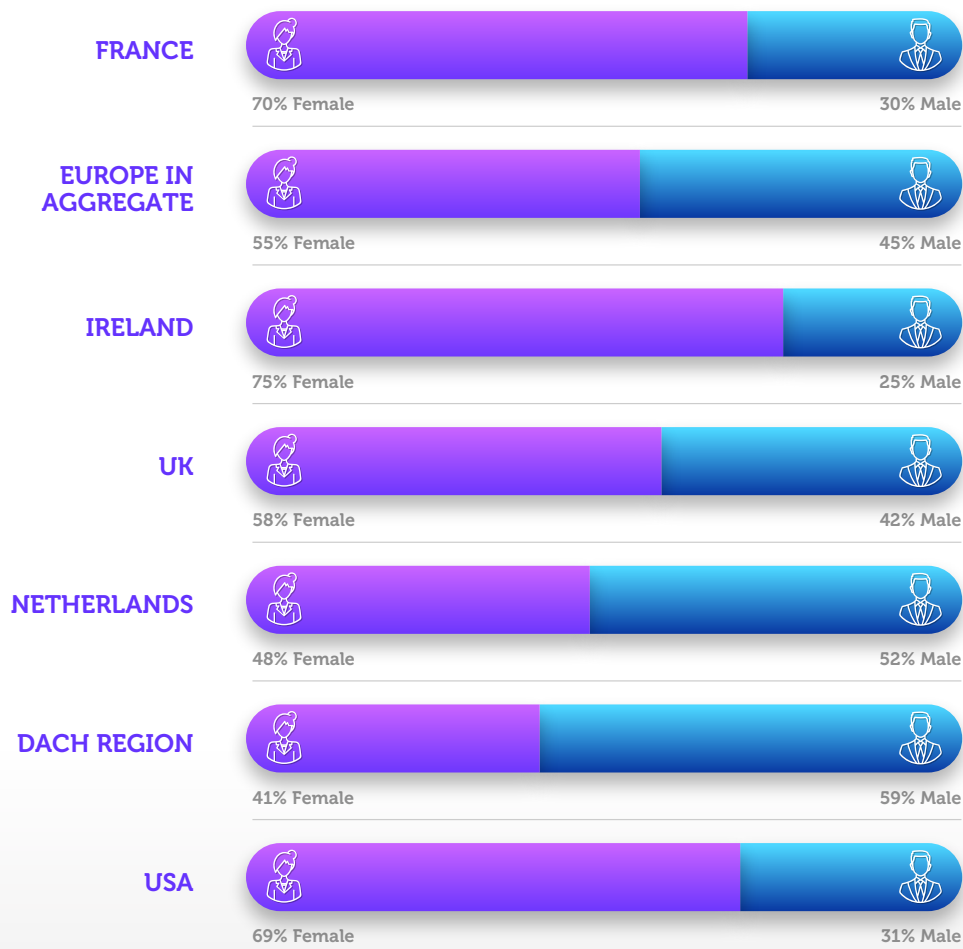
External / Internal splits are shown as percentages of “where known”, not of the job move total

WOMEN CONTINUE TO DOMINATE COMMUNICATIONS LEADERSHIP

With the exception of Ireland, which is made volatile by a small data set, France leads Europe and rivals the USA for female leadership of the communications profession. The expansion of the data set from CAC 40 to SBF 120 made

little difference in this regard. Over recent years many French companies have sought to add more female representation to their executive committees and the CCO role has frequently contributed in that regard.

Female vs Male CCO Role Holders 2025

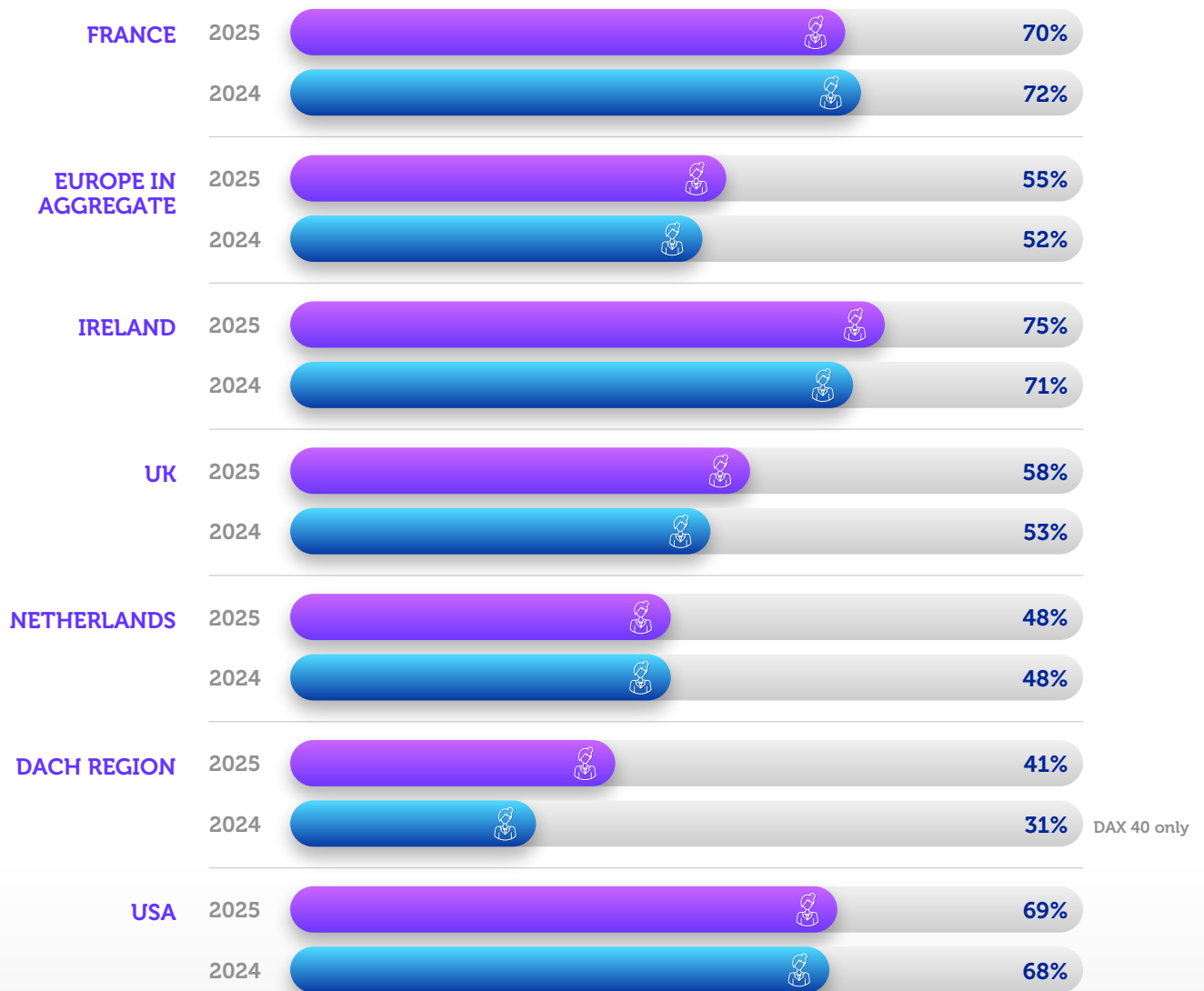


Rounded to nearest 1%

The overall gender balance of CCO post holders in the USA and Europe changed only slightly from 2024 to 2025. The most significant change was in Europe, being largely attributable to expansion

of the research in Germany, where widening our coverage from DAX 40 to MDAX data revealed greater female CCO representation.

Female CCO Role Holders 2024-2025



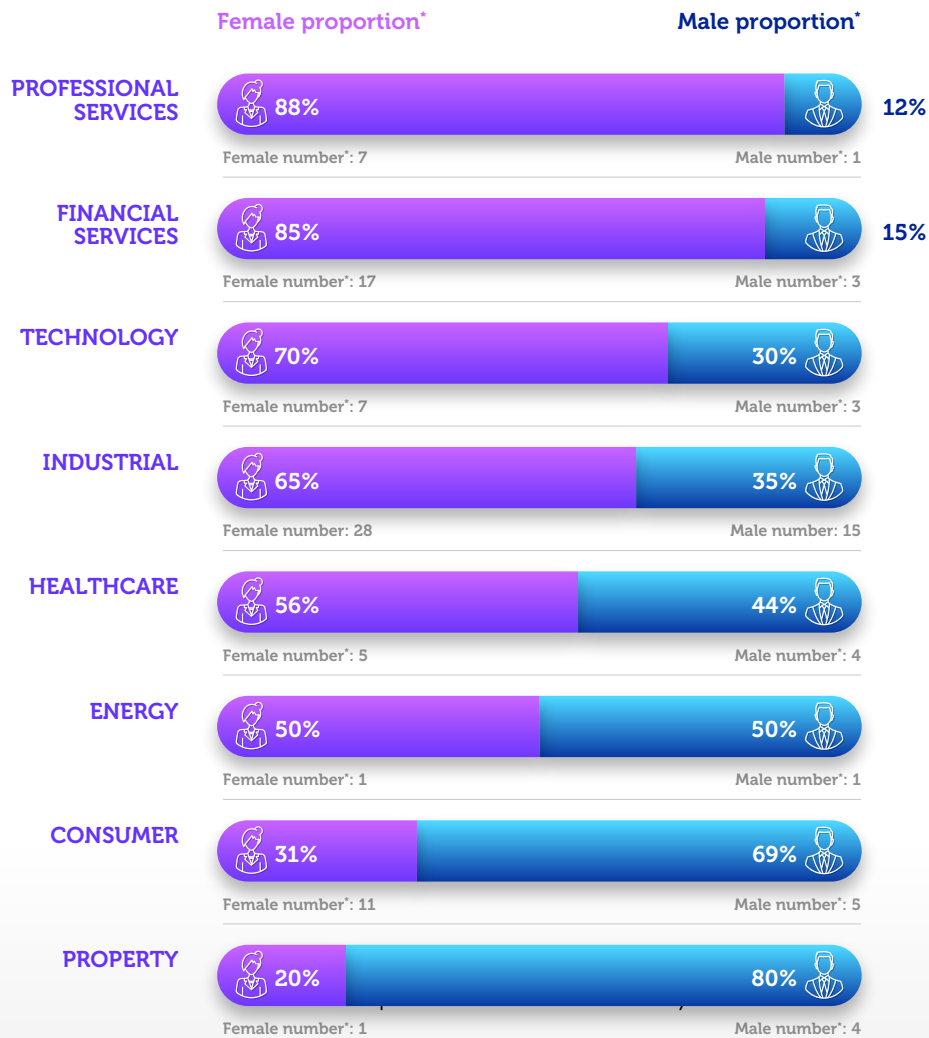
Rounded to nearest 1%

GENDER MAKEUP BY INDUSTRY

The services sectors, technology and industrial companies are strongholds for female communications leadership, with broad parity

in healthcare and energy, and men leading in consumer companies and property firms.

CCO Gender proportion by Sector



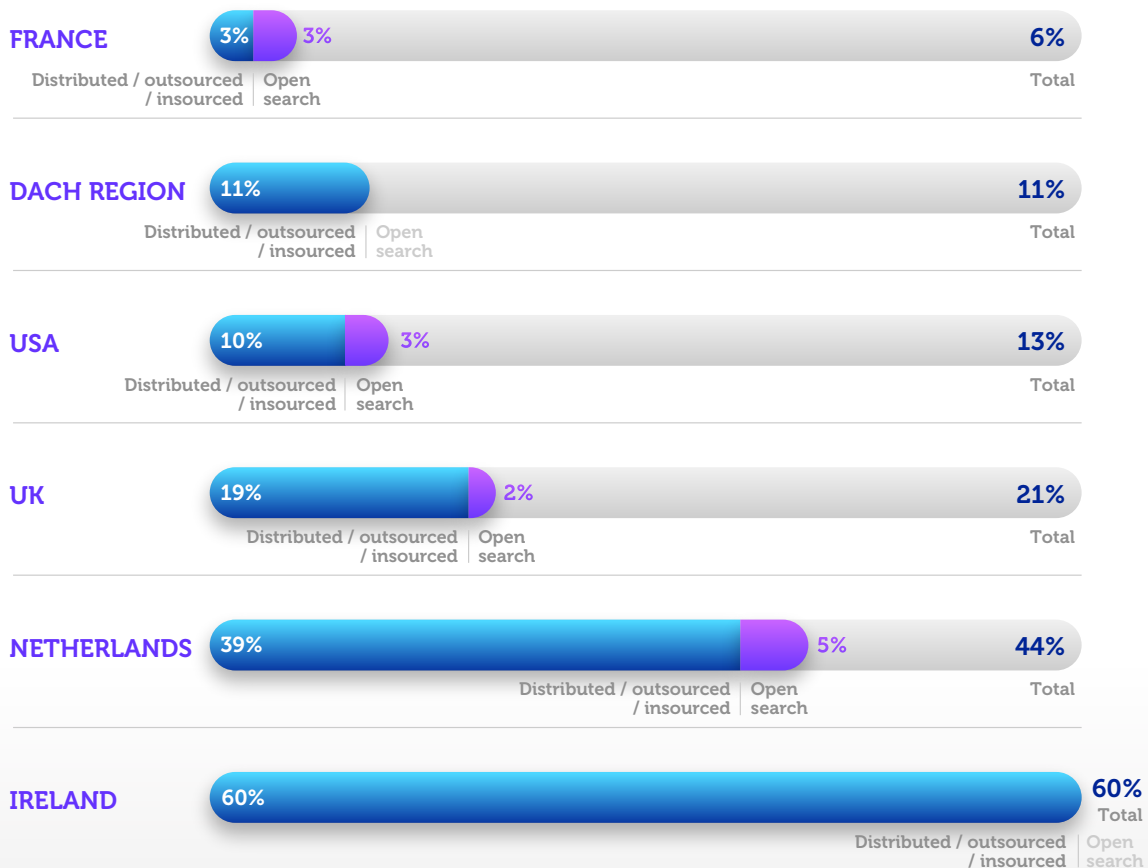
* excludes positions vacant at time of survey

COMMUNICATIONS OUTSOURCING, OPEN VACANCIES, AND THE “NO CCO” OPTION

France continues to demonstrate that communications leadership is highly institutionalised in the country, with very low

substitution from outsourcing or asking other teams, such as Investor Relations, to double-up to general communications activity.

Communications Outsourcing 2025



Rounded to nearest 1%

PRESENTATION AND POSITIONING OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLE

The degree of institutionalisation of communications in French companies brings stability and consistency, but that comes at a price. When we look at CCO job titles and span of control in France, there is a great contrast with the UK position in particular. Job titles in France are more than 90% focused on “Communications”, whereas the UK has very much evolved towards “Corporate Affairs”, both in title and scope of the work for which the CCO is responsible.

In the UK, Public Affairs is usually part of the Corporate Affairs brief, with a career communicator having risen to the Corporate Affairs directorship. By contrast in France, relationships with political stakeholders typically sit under different management, or within the President’s function. We see from other countries that the

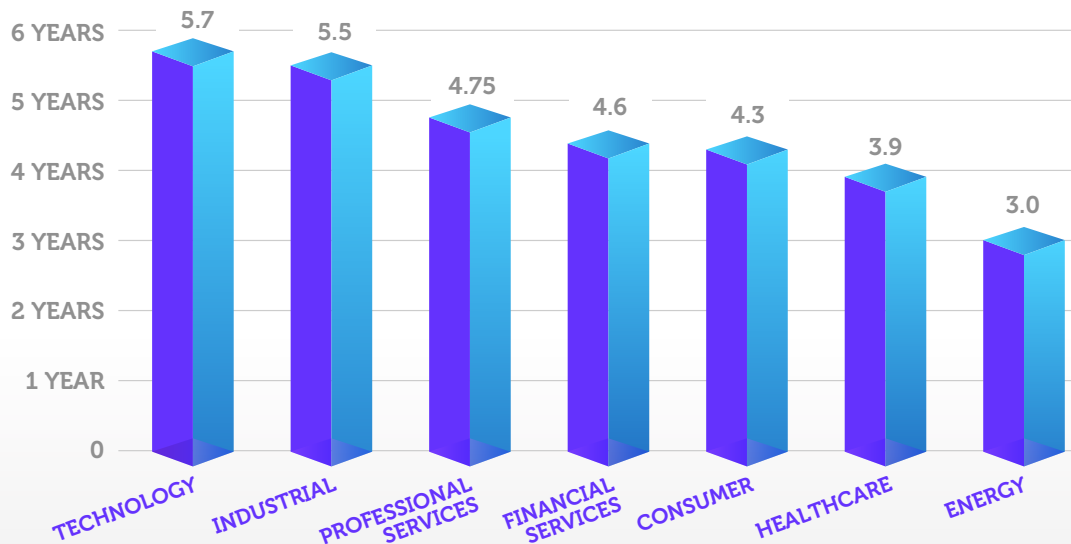
weight and impact of the work can be strengthened by developing an integrated Corporate Affairs function, so consider this an opportunity for French companies moving forward.

In expanding our research base to the SBF 120 this year, we found that the evident seniority level of the top communicator in the company drops when expanding beyond the CAC 40. Across the wider universe, only about 54% of titles clearly read as “senior”, with titles using words like Chief / Head / Officer / EVP or SVP). In the larger CAC 40 companies we find most job titles do present as operating at a senior level. This suggests that there may be headroom in France for an elevation of the status of communications within mid-cap companies, to an extent greater than in other countries.

TENURE BY INDUSTRY

Technology and Industrial have the longest serving CCOs while Energy and Healthcare are the most volatile sectors.

Average 2025 CCO Tenure by Sector



PERSONAL INSIGHT

While Corporate Affairs is typically a function with the instinct to innovate, business conditions in France favoured a degree of caution in 2025. The effect was most prominently seen in vacancies being filled through internal promotion, ensuring retention of knowledge and experience of the business. Women continued to hold a substantial majority of CCO roles, much more than the European and US averages. Political uncertainty and the potential impacts of AI limited the appetite in 2025 for investment in the function, but we see early signs of that activity coming through in 2026.

Kim Johnson
Exeter Search

CONCLUSION

In an uncertain 2025, including some domestic political instability alongside wider global trade policy concerns, French companies typically remained calm and cautious with their decision-making about corporate communications functions.

However, we believe that the advantages of evolving towards a more powerful and integrated Corporate Affairs function will become more evident over time. Comparatively modest investments in these areas can bring substantial advantages, and we expect to see a re-balance of priorities back into the reinforcement of CCO positions and their teams at a more integrated level during 2026.



CCO TURNOVER STUDY 2026

Reports that build on last year's research, with richer insight due to over 1,000 companies analyzed across France, Ireland, Netherlands, the UK and the US, and the DACH region of Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

To request a copy of any edition of these reports, contact CASA at info@casa-partners.com, and we'll be happy to share them with you.

