



NETHERLANDS
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

addison

Addison (Ireland)
addison.ie



Exeter Search (France)
exetersearch.com



Herman Rutgers Executive & Interim Search (Netherlands)
hermanrutgers.nl

ITHACA

PARTNERS

Ithaca Partners (UK)
ithacapartners.co.uk



Patino Associates (US)
patinoassociates.com



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

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Netherlands 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 vary¹), our research aims to reflect aspects of stability and change in the recruitment markets for these roles in the Europe, the UK and the USA.

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 The Netherlands² covers the 56 AEX and AMX companies.

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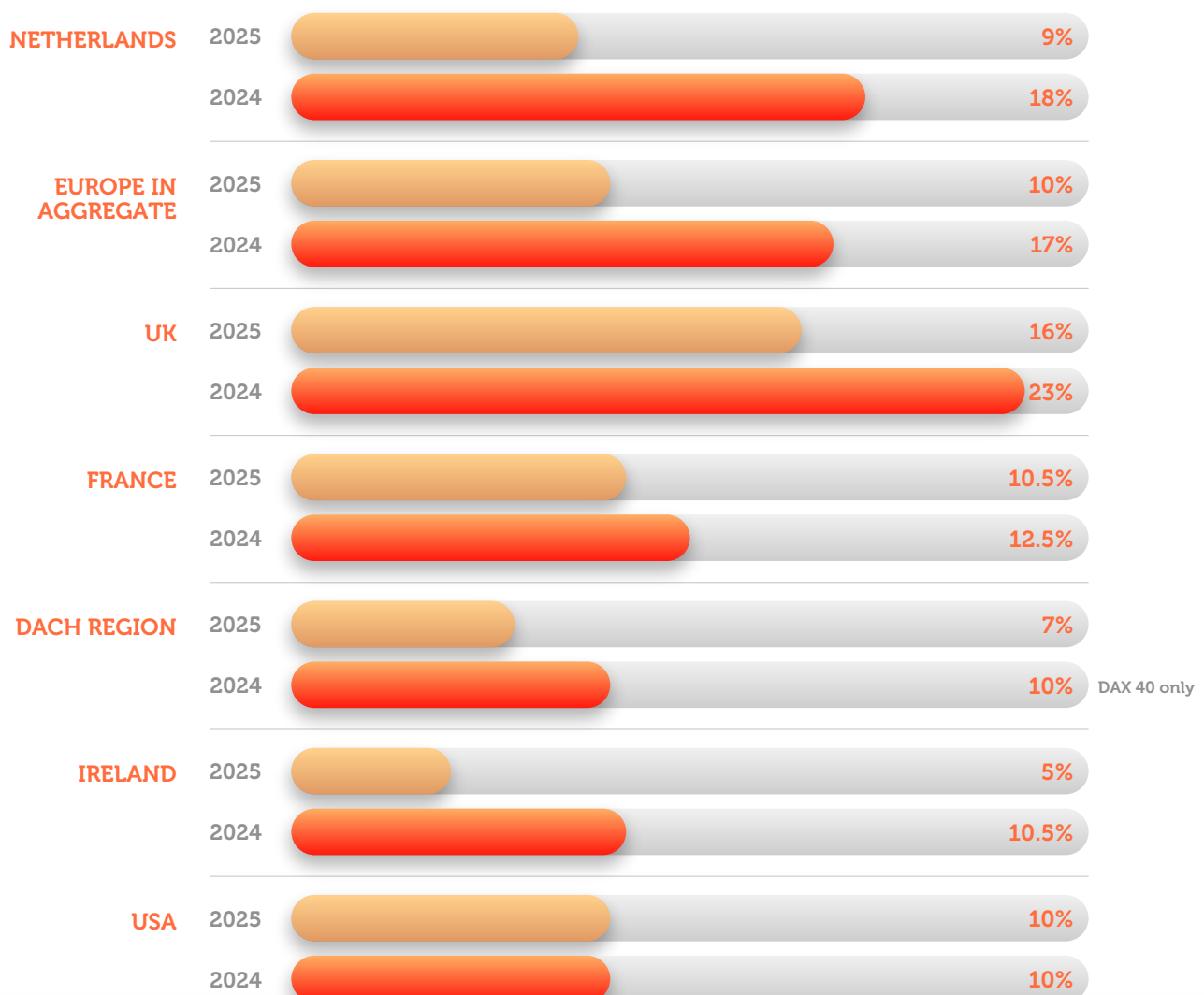
1. For the US and multinational editions, CASA uses "Corporate Communications Officer / CCO" as the primary descriptor of the role, reflecting widespread US practice.

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

Turnover was modestly down in 2025, broadly in line with lower turnover across Europe as a whole

CCO Turnover Rate



Rounded to nearest 0.5%

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 Europe is directionally unmistakable.

We believe several factors contributed to a quiet year for investment in corporate communications. At home, an unexpected early general election in the second half of the year brought a period of political uncertainty. For companies with a global reach, geopolitical changes, including the resurgence of tariffs, also shifted the ground. Finally, M&A and IPO activity were low during 2025, both being factors which are often catalysts for change in communications functions.

A further barrier to flexibility in the employment market may have been the unintended consequences

of well-intentioned regulations which have put a stop to the use of interim executives to fill short-term gaps, special projects and cover for maternity leave. For the three years before 2025 the interim CCO market was vibrant, indicating a genuine need, and helped companies to explore options.

TENURE OF NETHERLANDS CCOS WAS GENERALLY STABLE

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

CCO tenure in The Netherlands remains in the middle of the European pack, having fallen slightly from 4.5 to 4.3 years, though such a small change cannot yet be regarded as indicating a trend. A handful of very long-tenured leaders, who started in role as far back as 2003, 2008, 2011 and 2012, push up the averages and create a “long-tenure tail,” especially in industrial and financial services.

Average CCO Tenure 2024-2025



France stayed high in the rankings for long tenure, equalling the USA, with Germany at the top though, by a lower margin than last year.

The UK and Ireland are the countries where CCOs have the shortest average tenure, the UK number rising from an extremely low level in last year’s survey to a level we believe will be more consistent in future years.

WHO IS BEING HIRED?

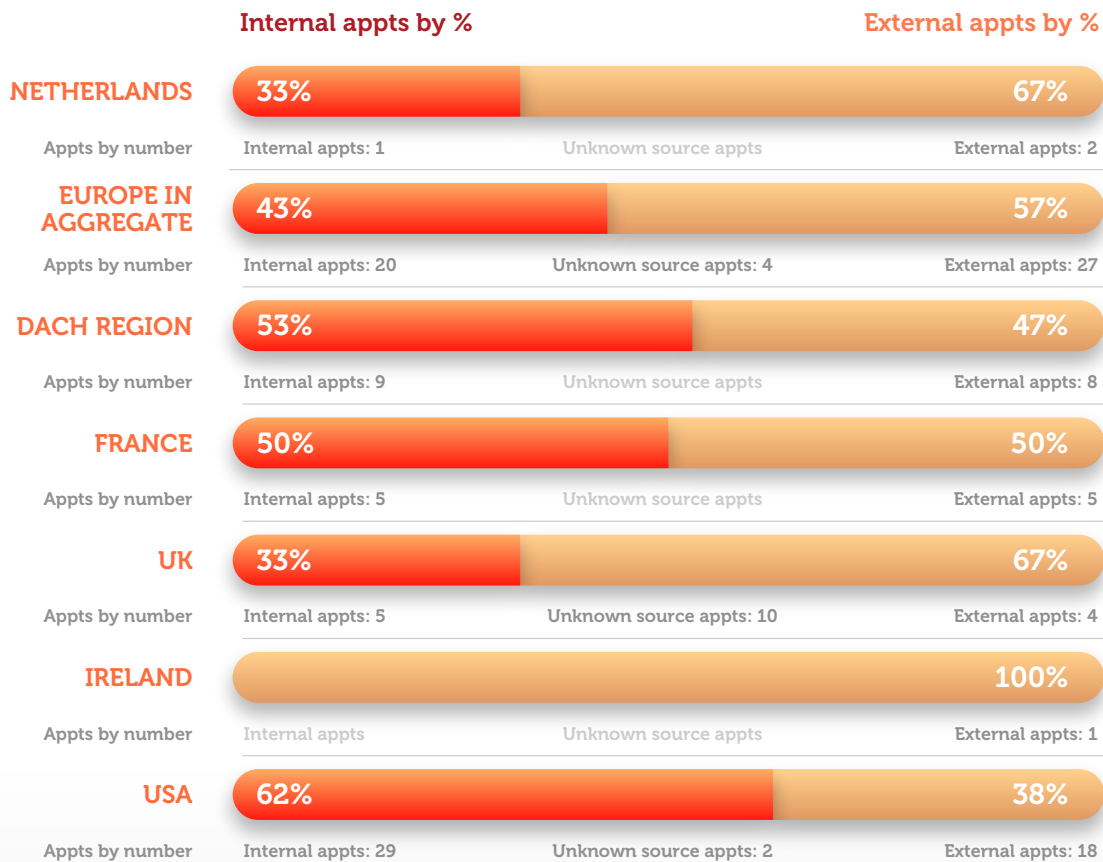
With an unusually small number of appointments during the year in The Netherlands, it is hard to draw a firm conclusion from 2025’s hiring activity between internal and external candidates, but a two to one advantage for external candidates does fit the pattern seen elsewhere in Europe.

Across Europe, 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



Rounded to nearest 1%

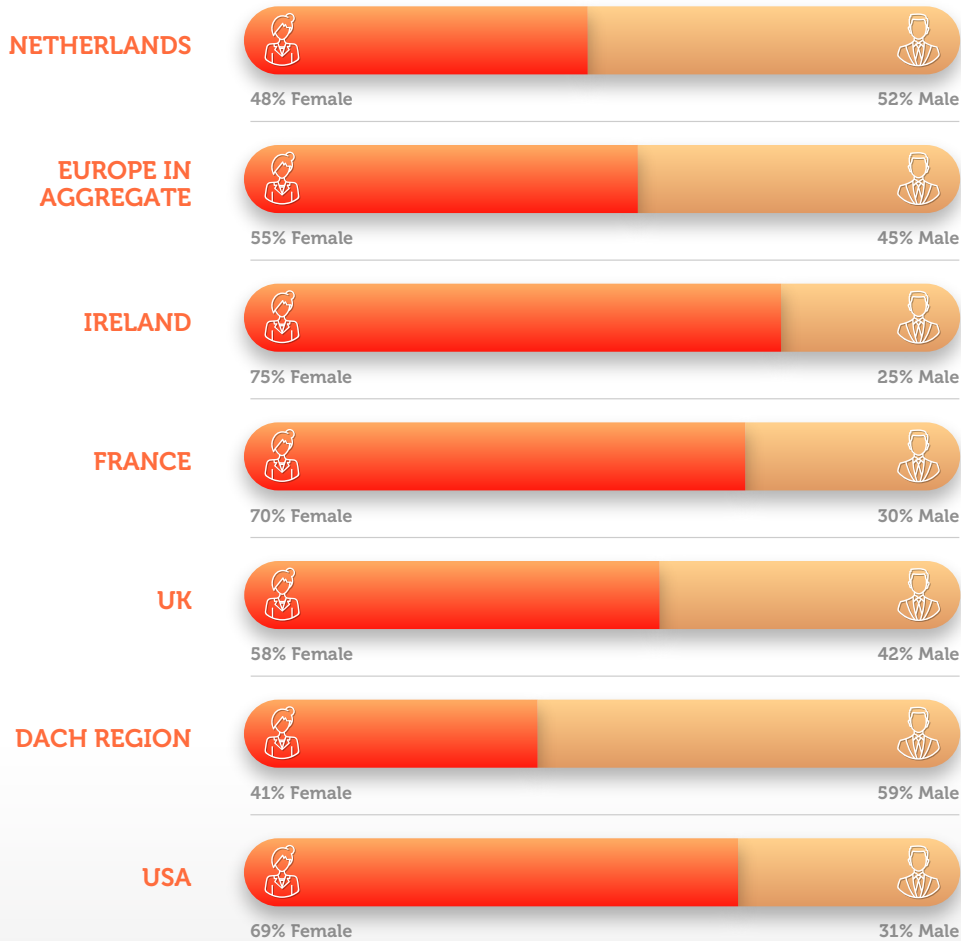
GENDER PARITY PERSISTS

The Netherlands has the most neutral gender balance of any country we survey, unchanged from 2024 despite the larger sample size for 2025.

Europe as a whole is slightly female-led, though

there are marked disparities between individual countries. Ireland and France rival the USA for female leadership of the communications profession, whereas the UK and DACH region are closer to the centre ground.

Female vs Male CCO Role Holders 2025

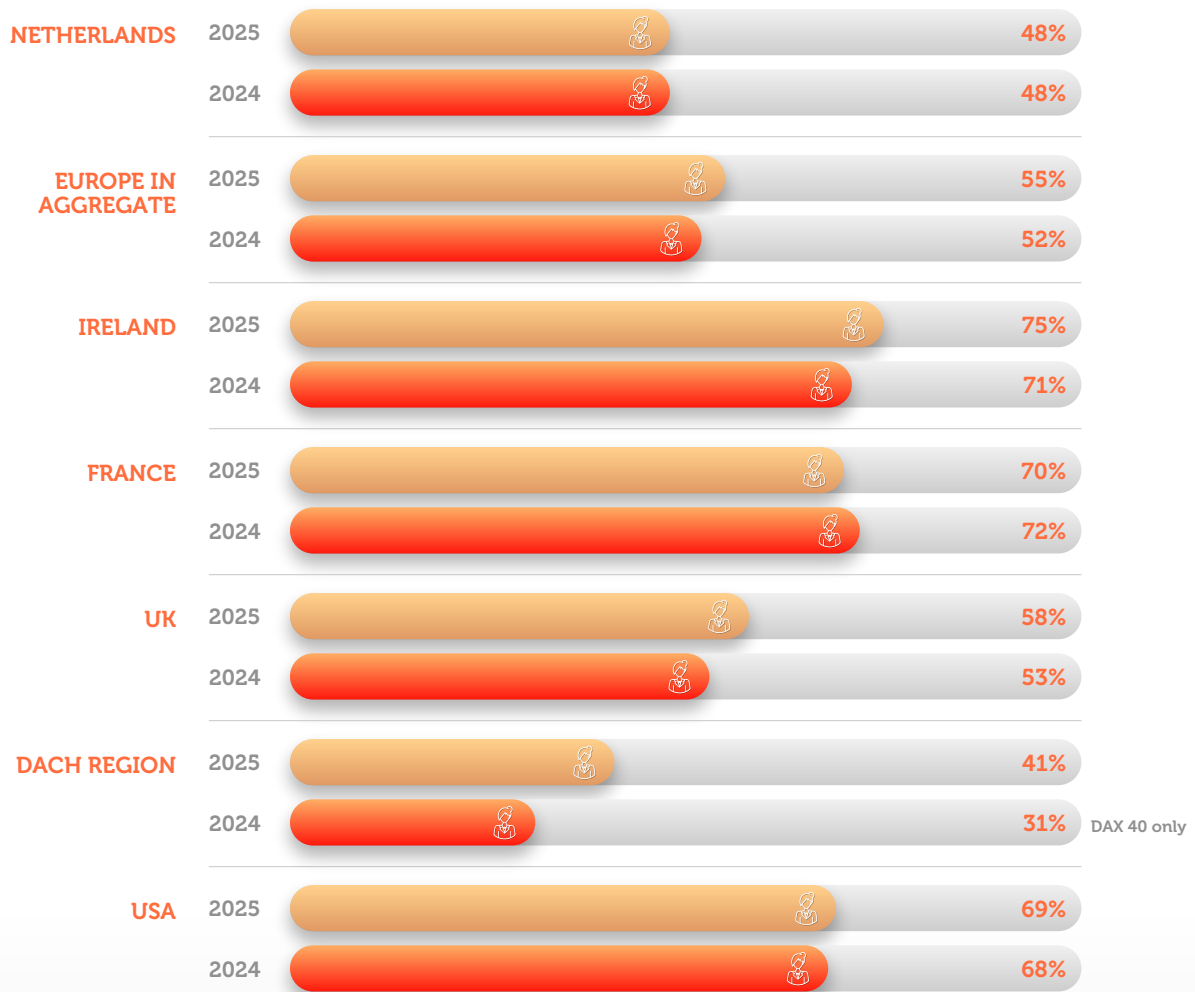


Rounded to nearest 1%

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 largely attributable to expansion of the research in

Germany, where widening our coverage from DAX 40 to MDAX data revealed greater female CCO representation, bringing the country closer to a neutral balance.

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

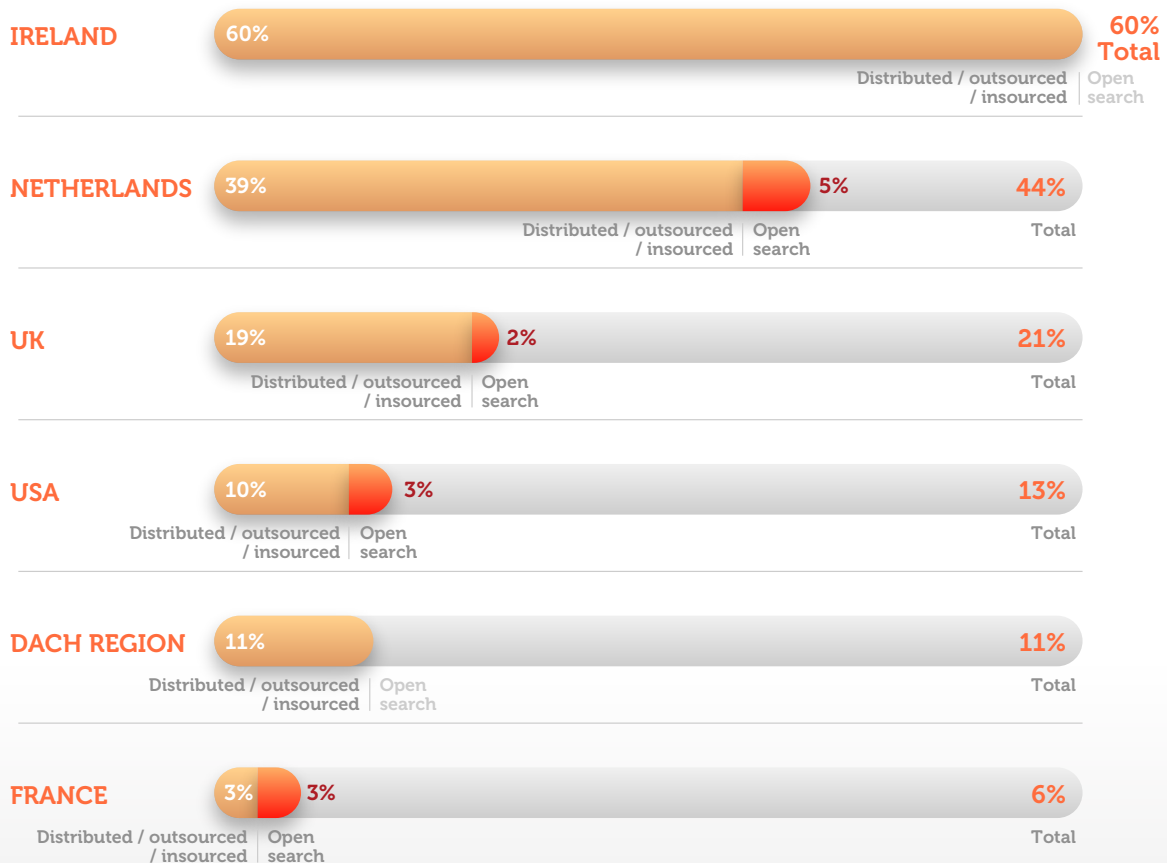
in healthcare and energy, and men leading in consumer companies and property firms.

COMMUNICATIONS OUTSOURCING, OPEN VACANCIES, AND THE "NO CCO" OPTION

Expanding our research base from the 22 AEX companies to the broader 56 in the combined AEX/AMS reveals potential opportunities for growth in the profession. The Netherlands stands out as a country where a large share of companies

have no identified in-house communications leader, or had an open position at the end of 2025. The smaller AMX companies have a lower proportion of integrated communications leadership than their larger counterparts.

Communications Outsourcing 2025



Rounded to nearest 1%

The blending of functionality in medium-sized companies is often a good thing providing the multiple functions are skilfully co-ordinated towards mutually-reinforcing corporate goals. Communications professionals from smaller companies with a track record of successfully leading commercial operations alongside their communications role may become particularly sought-after in the future as they advance towards CCO positions in larger companies.

PRESENTATION AND POSITIONING OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLE

Job titles in The Netherlands tend to be some of the more senior-sounding in the context of Europe, and frequently blend Communications with Public Affairs, Brand, Sustainability, and Financial Communications. However, many words which are used with specific meaning in some markets are more interchangeable in The Netherlands and less indicative of level in a corporate hierarchy.



PERSONAL INSIGHT

“For many companies in The Netherlands, 2025 was a year of caution, with both political instability at home, and uncertain trade conditions affecting internationally-focused companies. Within the smaller AMX companies there are many opportunities to promote commercial objectives by improving the position of communications. Throughout the corporate sector we are aware of increasing ambitions to upgrade CCO roles and restructure the function. The CCOs who moved in 2025 are in many cases finding their roles more intense, broader and more challenging, with higher expectations. For those ready for a career move in 2026, we expect 2026 to bring advantageous opportunities for career moves.”

Petra Herman
Herman Rutgers



PERSONAL INSIGHT

“Not all companies listed on the AMX are taking full advantage of everything corporate communication has to offer.

There are still many opportunities to realise the strategic added value of this field.”

Francine Rutgers
Herman Rutgers

CONCLUSION

Extending our research to a larger universe of companies confirms most of the findings of last year's survey, with broad stability in The Netherlands despite a complex and challenging year for the leading companies.

With uncertainties in political, economic and technological trends, companies have understandably wanted to assess before they act, reflected in lower volumes of CCO changes during the year.

Change cannot be deferred forever, and there are some early indications of progress in 2026. For the CCOs who moved into new positions in 2025 their new roles are more intense, broader and more challenging, with rising expectations of what the function can achieve.

Looking ahead, there is still much to be gained for the profession from a more integrated approach to Corporate Affairs in AMX companies, of which many currently lack a formal CCO role. This suggests opportunities for smaller companies to win greater share of voice and influence by investing in more powerful and integrated Corporate Affairs functions, advantages which we believe will become more evident over time.



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.

