



UK
EDITION

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

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the UK edition of the 2026 CASA annual survey of turnover among top Corporate Affairs and Chief Communications Officer (CCO) leaders.

In this report we examine the data for 2025, a year in which the working environment for Corporate Affairs and Communications functions continued to be 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 Corporate Affairs Director (CAD) or Chief Communications Officer (CCO) (titles vary¹), our research aims to reflect aspects of stability and change in the recruitment markets for these roles in the USA, UK and 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 star 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 the UK, as one of the six national markets we serve.

As last year, this year's report for the UK² covers the FTSE-100 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 are drawn from the 666 members of the combined S&P 500 and Fortune 500 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 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.

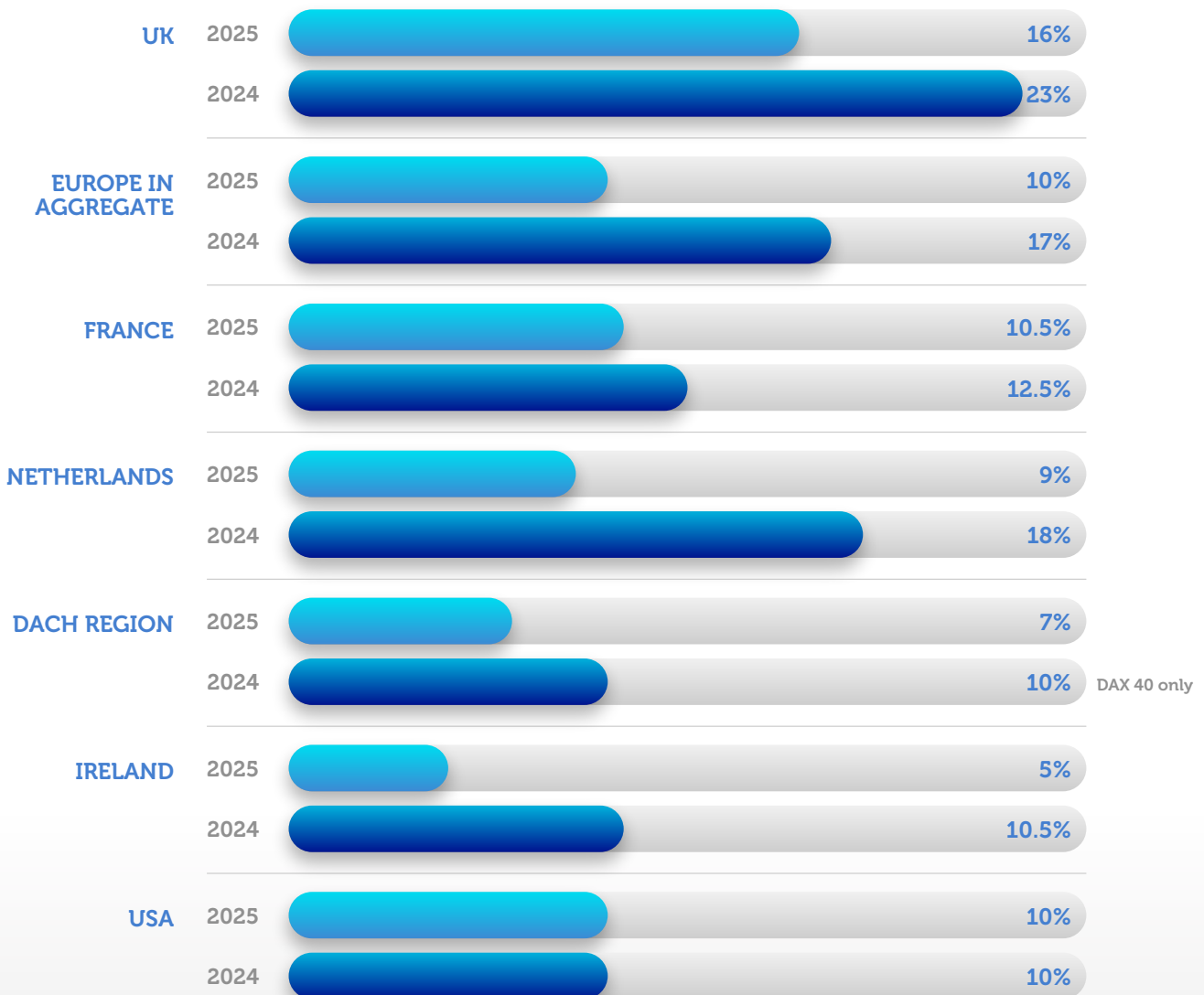
SNAPSHOT OF 2025

UK Corporate Affairs Director / CCO turnover eased in 2025, but remains the highest of any country we measure

16 of the FTSE-100 companies had a change in Corporate Affairs leadership in 2025, down from 23 changes in 2024. Turnover was especially intense at the very top

of the FTSE, with five of the top 10 FTSE companies repeating the pattern of greater volatility in the most highly valued companies that we first noted last year.

CCO Turnover Rate



Rounded to nearest 0.5%

While 16% turnover is still the highest level for the companies we cover in Europe, and far greater than in the USA, for the UK market it represents a diminished volume. The scale of the reduction was similar to that of Europe as a whole, where every other country saw a significant reduction in job moves. The USA, however, was remarkably stable, holding a steady 10% turnover rate among its top companies.

The fact that CAD job moves were lower in 2025 is an indicator of the senior employee market being slower than for several years. Bearing in mind the usual lag of a few months between a company identifying a requirement and an appointment being made, the slow period seemed to correlate with period between the early April US tariff

announcements provoking “trade war” concerns, a summer of conflicting international messaging, and the rebuilding of greater confidence by October. The uncertainties posed by the potential impacts of AI may also have motivated pauses in plans over the summer as the ‘buzz’ grew to a crescendo.

UK CORPORATE AFFAIRS DIRECTOR TENURE HAS INCREASED FROM A LOW BASE

Broadly, as one would expect, the greater the typical turnover in a country, the shorter its length of tenure for a CAD tends to be, and that was certainly borne out by patterns in the UK market during 2024 and 2025.

Average CCO Tenure 2024-2025



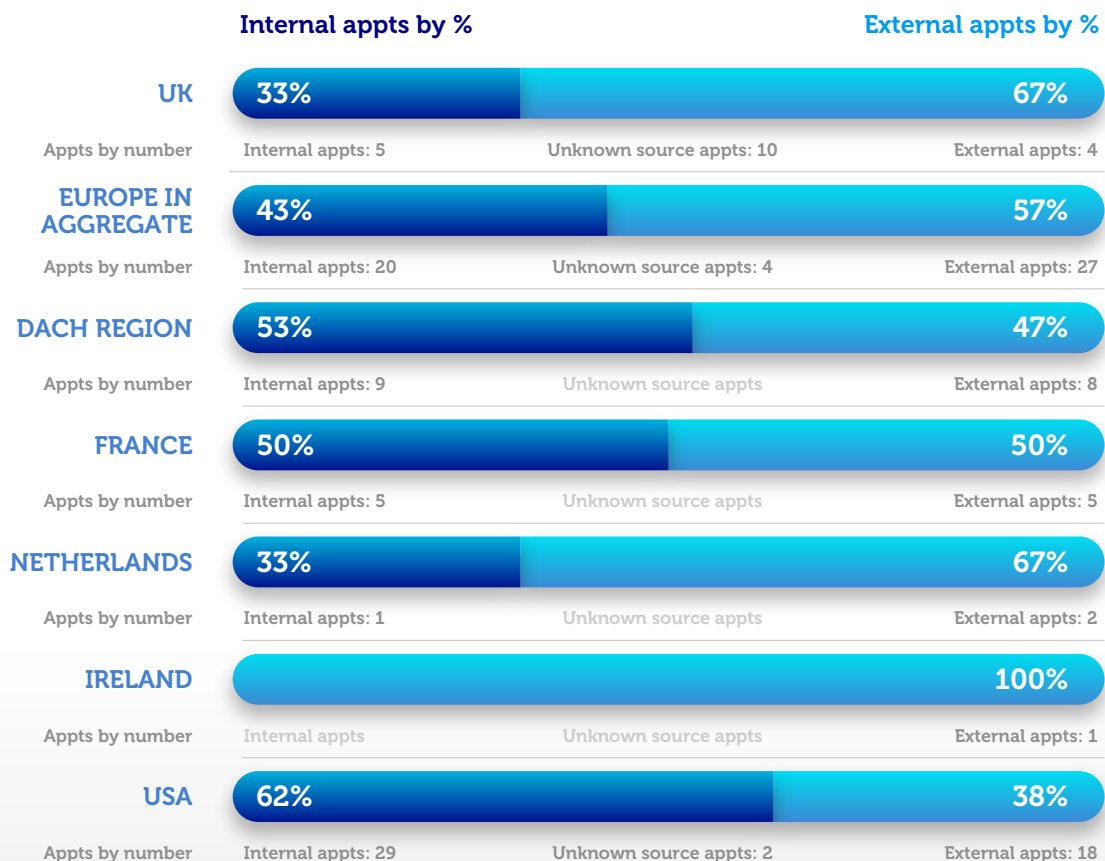
Breaking down CAD tenure by company sector, business services, technology and healthcare stand out as pools of stability with long tenure, while

volatility is clearly evident in industrial concerns, financial services and the property sector.

CCO Tenure by sector



CCO External & Internal Appointments



Rounded to nearest 1%

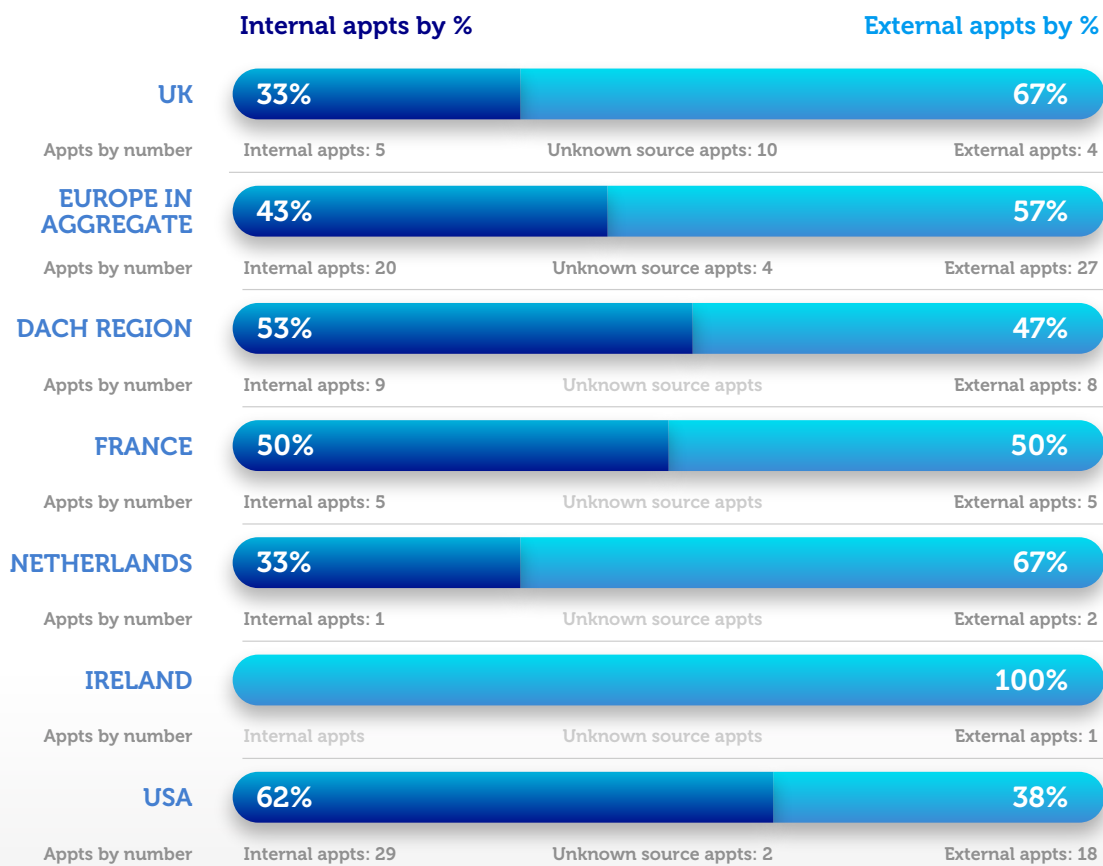
UK COMPANIES REMAIN KEEN ON HIRING FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES, INCLUDING OTHER BUSINESS SECTORS.

Among the 15 appointments made in 2025 (one remained unfilled) 10 were external hires and five were internal promotions. This picture further develops a pattern we found last year in 2024 data, when 11 external appointments were made, against nine internal.

Of the 10 external hires, seven came from different industries, again a pattern much more prominent in the UK than in other countries.

UK practitioners have the advantage of working in a central time zone, in a universal business language, and relationships with media and other cultural forces which outpunch their weight. For the UK, our experience is that a competitive Corporate Affairs director candidate with experience in one sector of the economy is likely to be competitive in others, with highly transferrable skills and networks.

CAD / CCO External & Internal Appointments



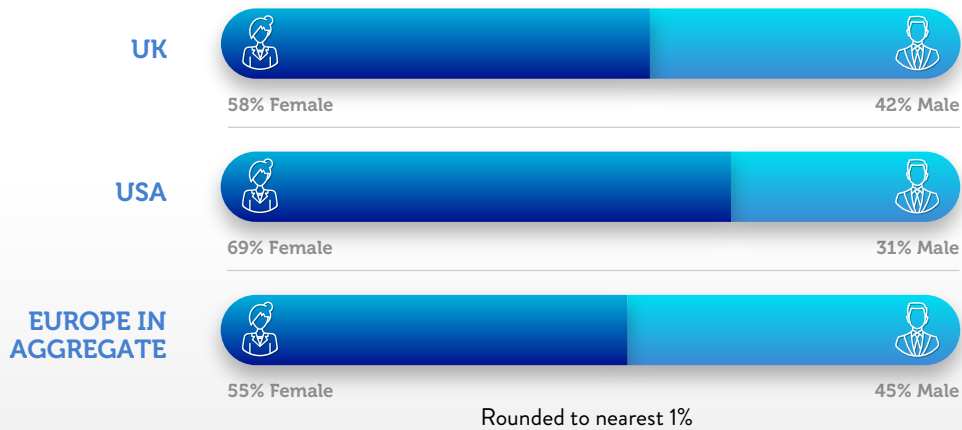
External / Internal splits are shown as percentages of “where known”, not of the job move total

WOMEN CONTINUE TO DOMINATE CORPORATE AFFAIRS LEADERSHIP

Female CADs / CCOs were already in the majority in our 2024 US and European reports.

During 2025 they extended their lead in the UK, across Europe as a whole, and in the USA.

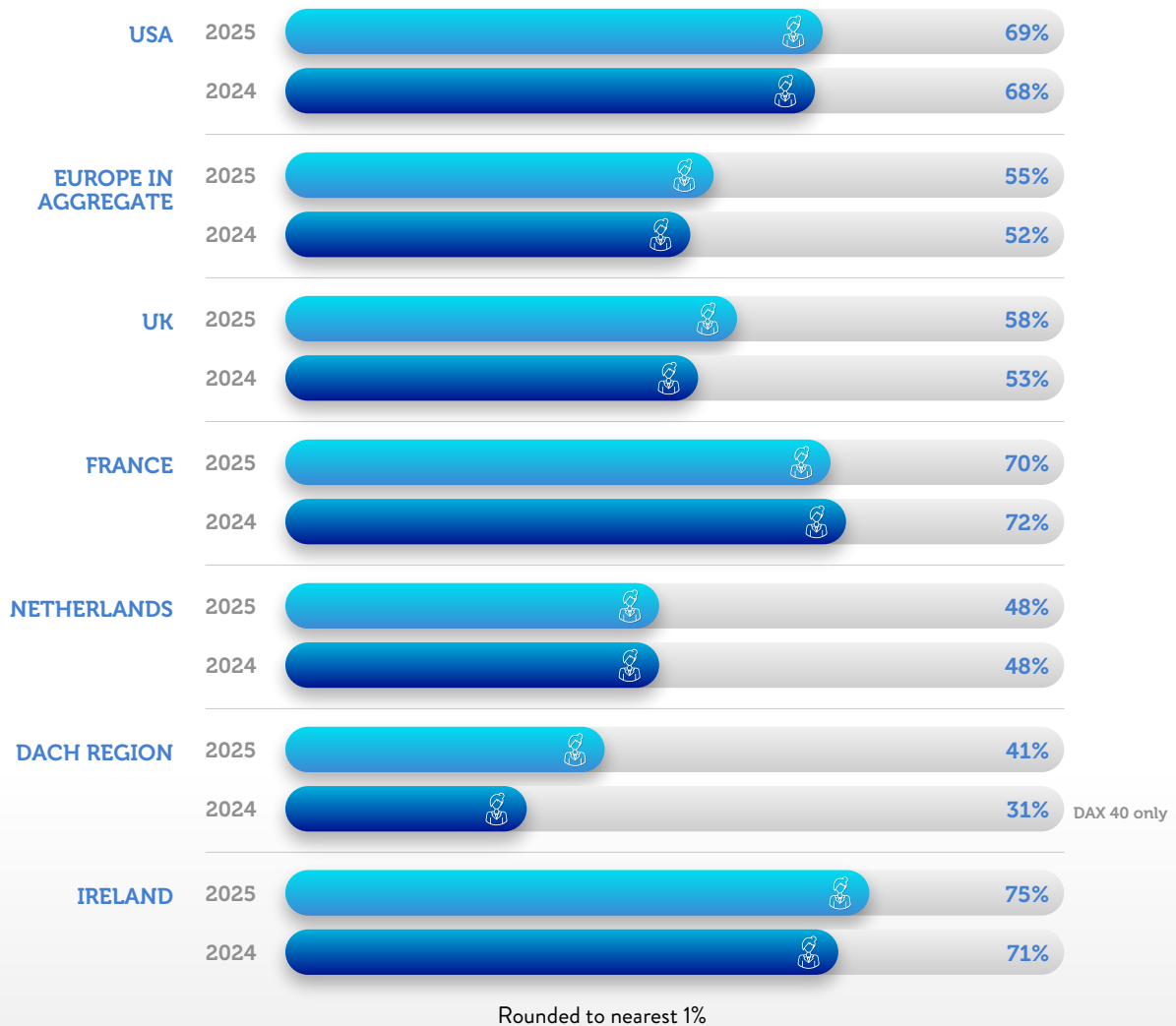
Female vs Male CAD / CCO Role Holders 2025



The swing from men to women during 2025 was more prominent in the UK than elsewhere, with women jumping from 52% of role holders to 58% in a year. The overall gender balance of CAD / CCO post holders in the USA and Europe

showed less dramatic changes, some of which were attributable to larger data sets in France and The Netherlands, and enlarging from the German DAX 40 to the wider DACH region.

Female CAD / CCO Role Holders 2024-2025



PRESENTATION AND POSITIONING OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLE

In recent years the UK has become known as the crucible of the evolution of traditional corporate communications into a broader and more integrated Corporate Affairs approach to stakeholder alignment. While the role of the top professional in this area has also broadened in well-run companies in other countries, it is not always evident in job titles.

In the UK they have largely reflected that shift, with “Corporate” (65%) and “Affairs” (57%) being prevalent while only 42% of communications leadership titles now include the word “communication” or a derivative. By contrast, our colleagues in France report “communication” as part of the job title of more than 90% of post holders.

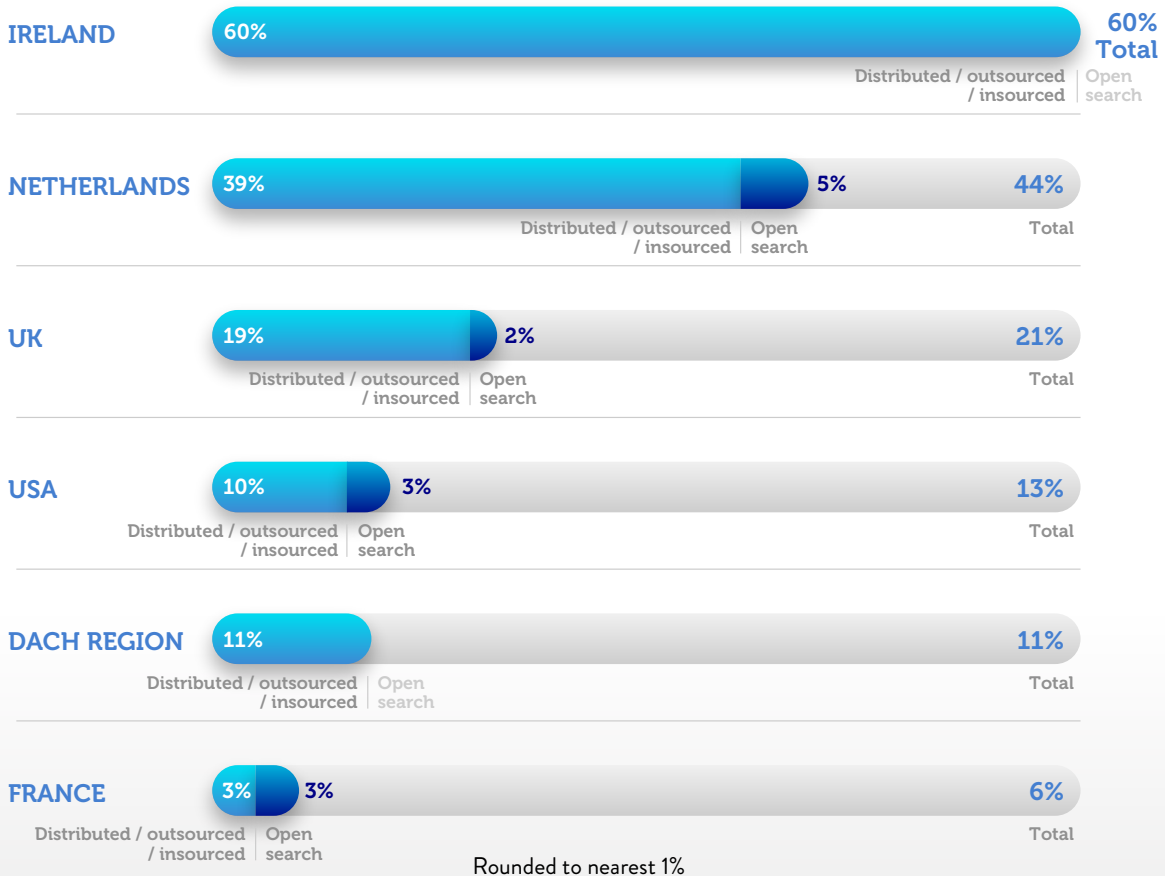
This is not a cosmetic exercise. During 2025 we noticed a significant increase in the importance

of public affairs and policy considerations within the span of UK Corporate Affairs teams. In the second half of the year we found that clients were increasingly asking for more experience in the Government Relations area or indexing more strongly on it than they had previously.

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

Although Corporate Affairs under strong integrated leadership is well institutionalised in the mainstream of the FTSE-100, it is not universal. Nearly one in five FTSE companies do not have senior in-house communication support, with most of those who do not outsourcing the role to external consultants.

Communications Outsourcing 2025



Large UK companies with no in-house senior communications leader include large investment trusts and asset management companies, sometimes with junior and mid-

tier communications staff reporting into other functions, such as reporting to a Company Secretary, while strategic counsel to the Board is outsourced.



PERSONAL INSIGHT

“UK corporates favour new blood. External hires outnumber internal promotions by two to one. It has long been the Ithaca view that if you are good in the UK, then you’ve proven yourself in one of the toughest, if not the toughest market, for Corporate Affairs. The stakeholders in the UK (particularly the British media) are more aggressive than almost anywhere else, so when you’re recognisably at the top of your game here, it means you’re transferable at a high level in most commercial sectors, and many different territories. The natural advantages we have here – in the middle time zone of the world, where we are native English speakers, and where media titles like the Financial Times and the BBC get to influential business audiences globally – all help to make the talent here very versatile. Sector knowledge is of course valuable, but the Corporate Affairs Directors who are most sought-after are those with outstanding commercial acumen as well as best of breed corporate affairs craft skills – and that makes them very transferable between sectors.”

Alex Gordon Shute
Ithaca Partners

CONCLUSION

We believe the mid-2025 'dip', while undeniably real in the UK, as in several European markets, is now over. When the market started to turn during the autumn it did not mean that every uncertainty affecting business confidence was behind us, but rather that companies felt the pressure for improvement and adaptation building up – and Corporate Affairs is one of the key functions for shaping a business to fit the future.

We remain highly encouraged by the appetite of UK companies to develop their Corporate Affairs capabilities as a competitive resource. Two-thirds of the roles filled through Ithaca Partners in 2025 were upgraded posts in terms of the seniority and calibre of candidate. In the choices of our clients, we see their contributions to making the UK a highly progressive market for candidates, actively seeking best talent rather than "sector average". That trend is continuing with assignments so far in 2026, and we look forward to a year of elevated activity.

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.

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CCO TURNOVER STUDY 2026

Reports that build on last year's research, with richer insight due to over 1,000 companies analysed 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.

