



Public
Relations
Institute
of Ireland



PRII
Census
2025

Message from the President, **Paul Hand**



I am delighted to launch the results of the 2025 PRII Census. This Census is more than a set of data points. It tells us who we are and where we're going as a profession – and what our past looked like.

Carried out every three years and now in its third iteration you can really see the value of the longitudinal data store. I applaud my predecessors on National Council who had the foresight and commitment to agree to this investment, a not insignificant one, on behalf of the members and the sector.

I want to thank Amárach for their work on the data collection and analyses and our own Executive team, led by CEO Martina Byrne, for the considerable work behind this report which is available now and forever as a resource for members and non-members, researchers, academics, students, and business commentators.

And, of course, thanks to all the respondents, members and non-members alike – without you taking the time to respond, this couldn't happen.

As you will see and read, our profession is in good shape and its practitioners are ready for the challenges the next three years will bring!

**Regards,
Paul**

Message from the CEO, Martina Byrne

The PRII Census 2025, conducted in collaboration with Amárach Research, offers a comprehensive profile of Ireland's public relations (PR) and communication sector at a time of significant transformation.

It reveals a profession that has grown its contribution to the economy to almost €2bn, in the numbers employed, team sizes, and in available budgets, while also grappling with issues around diversity, work-life balance, making time for professional development and the integration of new technologies like artificial intelligence (AI).

Recognition for the public relations profession, and its contribution to organisational success as well as the economic, social, cultural and political life of the country, grew in the aftermath of the pandemic.

As communicators navigate new and evolving challenges, the PRII 2025 Census underscores a grounded, positive outlook which, in the context of the world we are living in, is a good place for any profession to find itself.

**Best of luck – ádh mór,
Martina**



Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Page 4

Introduction

Page 5

Methodology

Page 6

Part 1: People in Public Relations

Page 7

Part 2: The State of Public Relations

Page 15

Part 3: Future Challenges

Page 32

Part 4: The Economic Impact of PR

Page 40

Executive Summary

The number of public relations professionals in Ireland is conservatively estimated at around 4,000, up from approximately 3,344 in 2022.

This growth is especially visible in the public sector, where in-house roles now represent 42% of the PR workforce — up from 31% in 2022 and 25% in 2019.

The profession remains female-dominated (62%) although in a positive move towards gender balance, the share of male professionals has risen by 8% to 38%. Ethnic and cultural diversity remains limited with 98% identifying as white Irish or other white background and 2% as black or black Irish.

Work practices have shifted substantially. Remote and hybrid work are now standard, with 80% of PR professionals working from home at least once a week.

A majority work from home two or more days a week and most expect that to continue though there is an awareness of some downsides including impacts on collaboration and teamwork.

Despite significant overtime being reported and work-related contacts outside normal office hours, 70% report having a good work-life balance (up on 66% in 2019) and 75% (same as 2019) say they have a good career ahead of them in public relations given industry growth and their skill sets.

Continuous professional development is recognised as important by employees and employers alike, but the hours spent on CPD in 2025 are down significantly, even on 2019 figures, with time pressure being cited by 75%, up on 59% in 2022 and 61% in 2019.

Salary levels have also risen, with the average PR salary reaching €78,000 in 2025 – an 18% increase since 2019.

The profession continues to diversify its activities. Strategic communication advice, media relations, and programme delivery remain core tasks, but digital and event-related activities have declined while writing content has grown significantly.

Evaluation and measurement methods have improved, with a marked shift away from outdated metrics like Advertising Value Equivalence (AVE) toward outcomes and impacts-based assessment.

Artificial Intelligence has emerged as both an opportunity and a concern. While 66% welcome its integration, two-thirds cite “use of AI tools” as their biggest skills gap. Only a minority have received formal AI training, and knowledge levels remain modest. Of particular concern is the limited frequency of AI discussions within teams and with clients, and that almost half of respondents worked in organisations with no AI policy usage in place. Finally, the economic impact of the PR profession is estimated at €1.9 billion in 2025 which is nearly a 60% increase since 2019. This reflects not only the sector’s scale but its strategic importance to organisations across public, private, and agency settings.

Introduction

This is the third census of the public relations and communication sector by the Public Relations Institute of Ireland in partnership with Amárach Research.

The PRII Census 2025 captures the views and expectations of PR professionals in the face of extraordinary change and the prospect of more to come – just as we saw in the Census of 2019 and again in 2022.

Happily, the outlook for the PR industry is extremely positive based on these findings and PR professionals can look forward with some confidence to a future of rewarding and fulfilling work.

This report is divided in four parts:

Part 1 paints a portrait of the workforce composition, setting out trends since 2019.

Part 2 examines the state of PR practice in Ireland, employment trends and training, as well as the future of working from home.

Part 3 looks to the future, first at job satisfaction and career prospects for public relations professionals and then focusing on artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact in the sector.

Part 4 updates our 2019 analysis of the economic contribution of the sector using data from the Central Statistics Office 2022 Census, and information in the PRII's own survey, to estimate the economic value of PR in 2025.

Methodology

We followed a similar methodology to the previous two PRII census surveys and reports. We sent an email link to all PRII members to complete the survey in April 2025, and it was promoted – to PRII members and non-members – through PRII channels including social media.



We received 166 completed responses: approximately 1 in 10 PRII members participated in the study. The number of responses in 2025 was lower than in previous surveys but is sufficient for analysis and comparison purposes.

It should also be noted that while we refer to the survey results for 2019 and 2022 in comparison with 2025 throughout this report, the 2022 survey took place in the aftermath of the 2020–2021 pandemic. Therefore, we have tended to compare 2019 to 2025 results in the commentary simply because of the anomalous nature of the 2022 period, but we have included the 2022 results for consistency.

Finally, a note on reporting: percentages may not always add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Part One

People in Public Relations



People in Public Relations

In this section we look at the demographic profile of people working in the PR sector. One important thing to note is that the overall number of people working in PR and related professional roles has increased significantly since 2019.

We estimate there are approximately 4,000 people working as PR professionals in 2025 (see details of the calculation in Part 4). Therefore, a decline in, say, the percentage of PR professionals in one group/category or another between 2019 and 2025 does not necessarily mean a decline in the numbers in that group or category. It just means that the numbers in other related groups or categories have increased faster over the past six years.

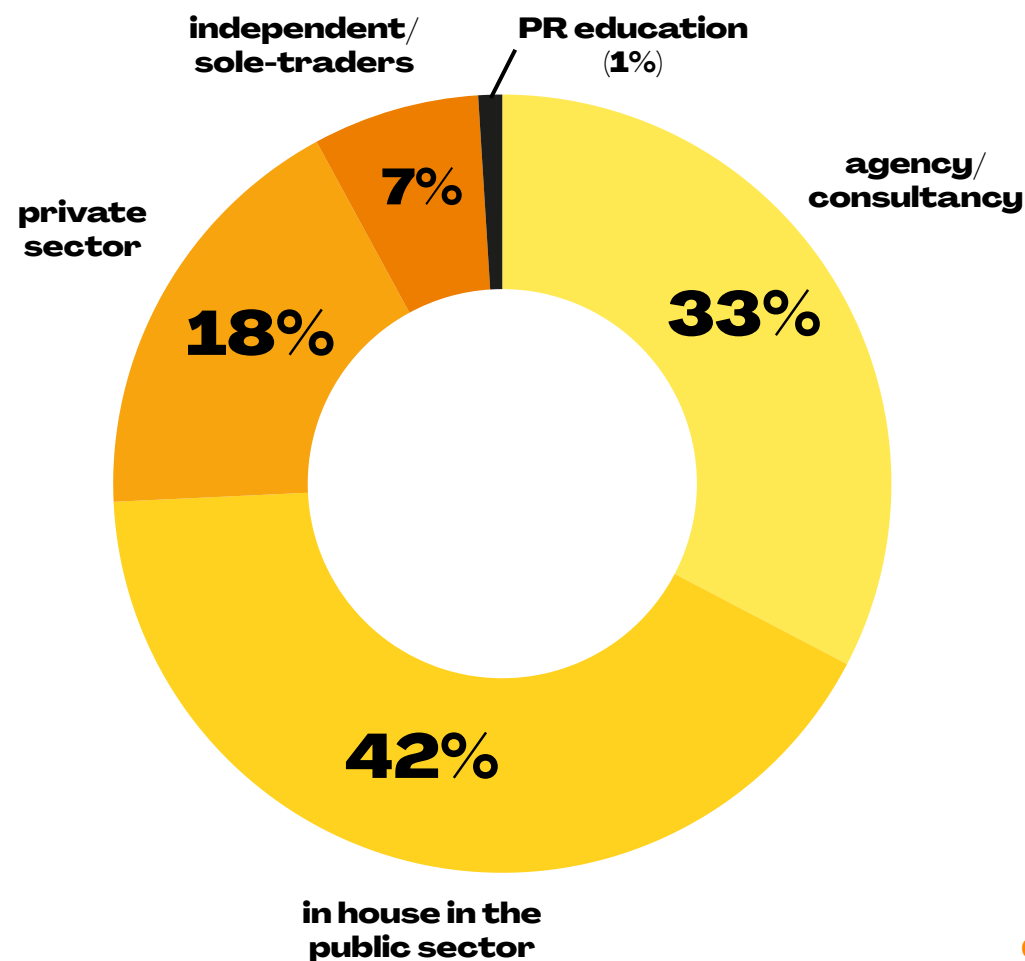


4,000
people
working as PR
professionals
in 2025

In-House and Agency

To begin with we look at the changing composition of the workforce in terms of in-house or agency employment.

Since 2019 there has been a very significant increase in the percentage of professionals working in an in-house public relations role in the public sector (a trend noted by PRII in terms of new members in the past six years). This reflects the recognition of the importance of professional communications and advisory services within government departments and other state agencies. As noted above, this expansion has shifted the relative shares of other job/role categories, but does not imply a reduction in the numbers in the other roles (quite the reverse in fact):



Pathways to PR Career

The pathways to a career in public relations have also changed over time. About two thirds of PR professionals have worked in a non-public relations/communications role before their current role, unchanged since 2019.

However, among those who moved from a non-PR role into their current role, there has been a significant increase in the share of those who previously worked in journalism or the media in general in just the past three years (we don't have equivalent data for 2019).

That this reflects the well-documented challenges the media sector has been facing is a matter for future studies.

Previous Role	2022	2025
Journalism/Media	20	29
Administration	15	24
Research and Consultancy	7	10
Management	10	10
Marketing	16	9

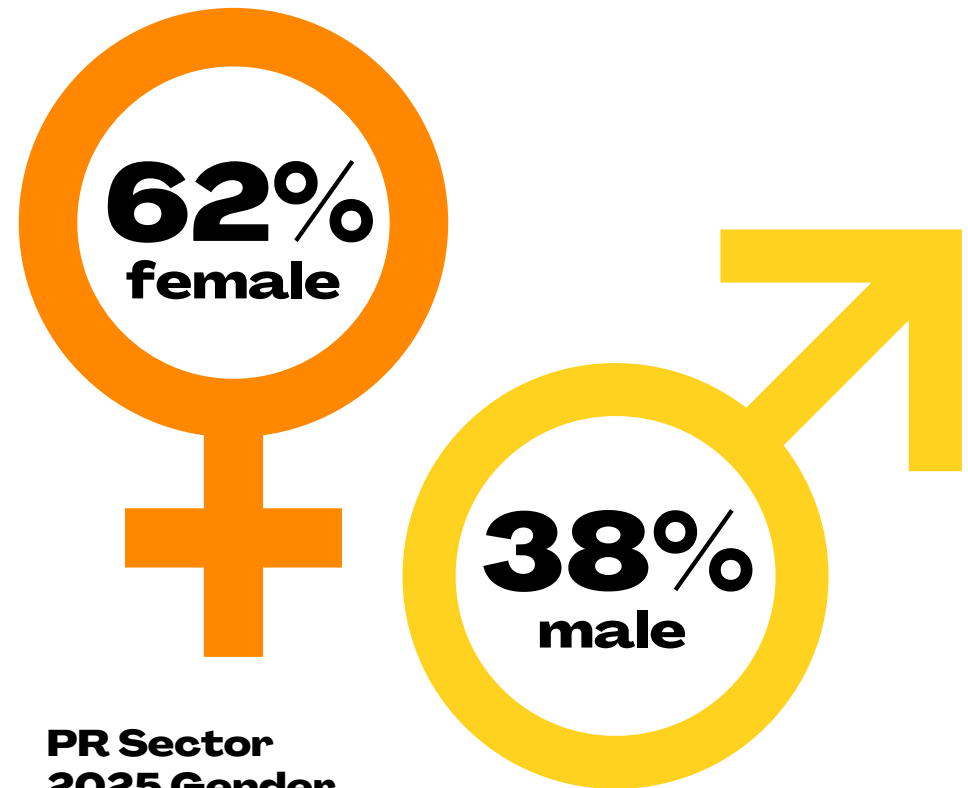
Source: PRII Census

Demographic Profile

One feature of the sector noted in previous PRII census reports is the high proportion of women in the profession. For example, in 2019 and 2022, over two thirds of PR professionals were women.

Although there is a long way to go to attain gender balance, the share of men in the profession has since grown, from 29% to 38%, or two in every five PR professionals.

Since 2022 we have asked respondents to describe their sexual orientation, though there has been little change in the past three years, with **84% of PR professionals describing themselves as straight or heterosexual** and **9% as gay, lesbian or bisexual** (others preferred not to say).



**PR Sector
2025 Gender
Profile**

Ethnicity

Turning to ethnicity, we find that the sector remains relatively homogenous in terms of indicators such as nationality or cultural background. In 2019, 91% of professionals were Irish, and 2% British; in 2025, 92% are Irish and 4% are British.

In terms of the ethnic profile of the sector, 9 in 10 are white Irish, most of the rest are from another white background (using the CSO's categories for ethnicity and cultural background).

No doubt the ethnic composition of the PR profession will change over time as that of the country changes. But at present, the ethnic (and gender) profile is unrepresentative of the population of Ireland as a whole.

Ethnic Profile	2022	2025
White		
White Irish	90%	89%
Irish Traveller	-	-
Any other White background	6%	9%
Black or Black Irish		
African	-	1%
Any other Black background	1%	1%
Asian or Asian Irish		
Chinese	-	-
Any other Asian background	-	-
Other	1%	1%

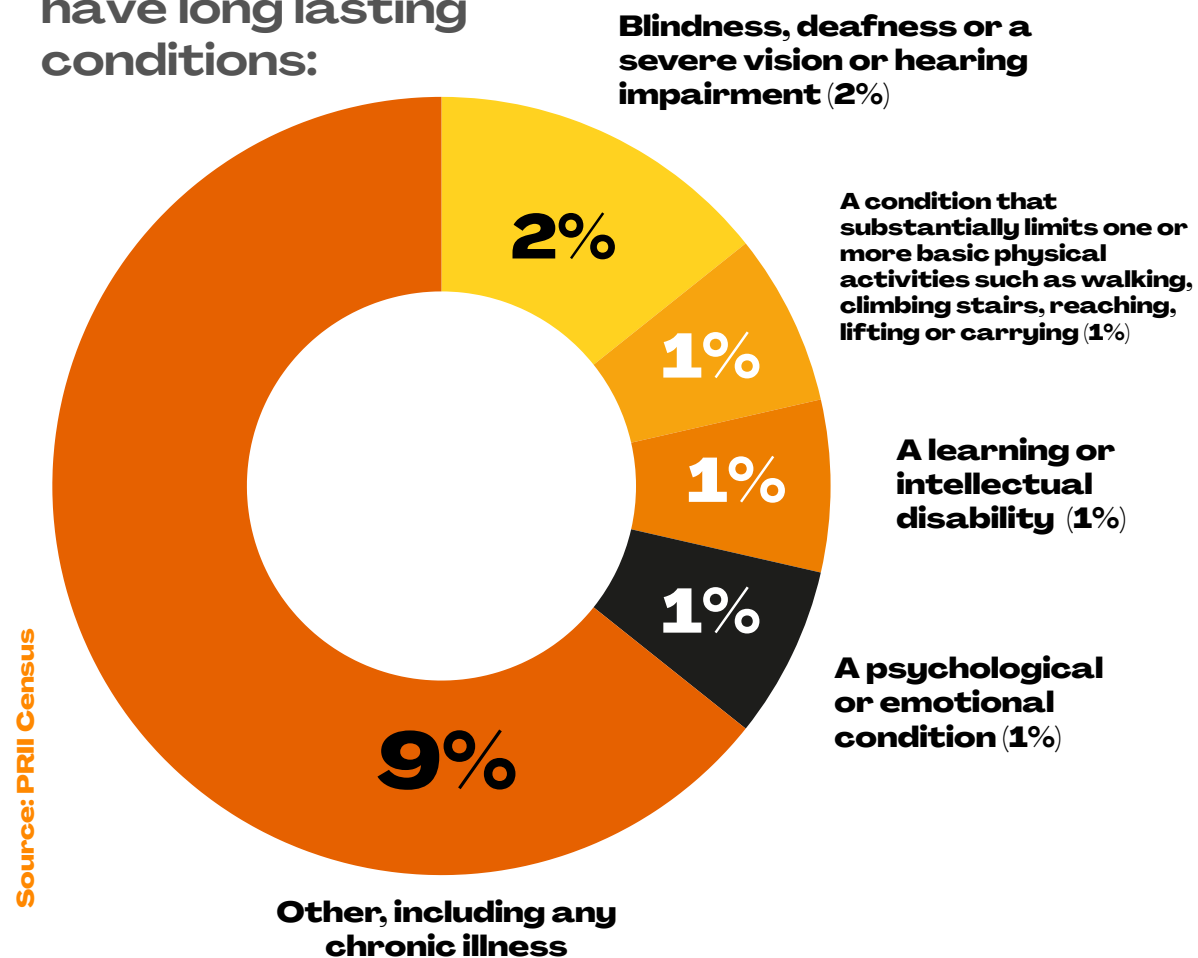
Source: PRII Census

Disability

There is a widespread consensus in the PR sector that the profession needs to better reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. For this reason, the PRII census has included questions about people's experience of disability in the working environment since 2022.

In 2025 we found nearly 1 in 7 PR professionals has a disability or long-lasting condition.

Of those who have long lasting conditions:



Has Disability Created Barriers to Work?

Among those with any disability, there has been a reassuring reduction in the barriers to work created by the disability.

This is an encouraging trend and may well reflect efforts by the PRII Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Initiative in recent years, and by PR professionals and the organisations they work for, to introduce working arrangements that enable people with disability to contribute as effectively as they can to their roles.

Indeed, when we ask those with disability whether they felt their employer had accommodated their needs, the percentage answering 'yes' has risen from 50% of PR professionals with disability in 2022 to 88% in 2025.

Has Disability Created Barriers to Work?	2022	2025
Yes	46%	36%
No	46%	64%
Prefer not to say	8%	-

Source: PRII Census

We turn now to Part 2 which explores the working lives of PR professionals...

Part Two

**The State
of Public
Relations**



The State of Public Relations

In this section of the Census Report 2025, we look at trends in PR practices; the scale of PR operations; and the employment rewards to PR professionals. We then look at PR working lives, including work-life balance and training/professional development.



The Functions of PR

Since 2019 we have asked respondents to rank the main functions or tasks that they do as part of their job, and we have listed the top 10 for each wave of the PRII Census overleaf.

There has been some change inevitably: but there is also a lot of consistency with 'communications strategy development' remaining the top task and 'media relations' following in second place.

The 2022 Census came in the wake of the pandemic, so in some respects the 2019 vs 2025 trends are the more significant ones. Take, for example, 'writing content' as a core task for PR professionals. An even greater proportion say it is a top ten task than in previous waves of the census, while others like 'event planning' have fallen back significantly – even below what they were in 2019. Interestingly, digital/social media tasks have dropped 6% since 2019.

The Top 10 Tasks for PR Professionals	2019	2022	2025
Communications strategy development	79%	80%	78%
General media relations	75%	69%	68%
Public relations tactics planning/ delivery	63%	58%	66%
Writing content	54%	41%	64%
Reputation management	63%	58%	57%
Event planning/organisation	63%	52%	55%
Corporate public relations	58%	50%	54%
Crisis management	55%	48%	51%
Digital public relations /social media	55%	48%	49%
Issues management	55%	54%	49%

Source: PRII Census

Looking at activities and tasks by age and gender, there is a high level of consistency across different demographic cohorts, but there are some differences:

- **Men are more likely than women to write content (70% vs 60%), as are under 35s (78%).**
- **Men are more likely than women to have reputation management as a key task (67% vs 50%), also higher among 55-64s (75%); similarly for crisis management.**
- **Women are more likely than men to have event planning and organisation as a top ten task (60% vs 48%), though there are no significant age differences.**
- **Women are more likely than men to have digital PR and social media in their top ten tasks (53% vs 41%), rising to 80% of under 25s in our survey.**

Teamwork

Delivering all these tasks (and many others not shown outside the top 10), requires a dedicated and capable team.

Six years ago, the average number of PR professionals in an organisation was 8.9% (across all sizes, sectors and agencies vs client side). As the chart below shows, this rose to 12.5% in 2022 and has remained at 12% in the latest census.

This is one indication of the degree to which the PR profession has expanded in little over half a decade, growing by more than a third according to our calculations.

We will return to this calculation in our estimate of the economic impact of PR later in Part 3 of this report.

2019	8.9
2022	12.5
2025	12

Source: PRII Census

As one might expect, PR agencies have the largest pool of PR professionals (Full Time Equivalents (FTE)) on average at 15.7. In-house PR teams in the public sector average 14.5 in our 2025 census, though in-house PR teams in the private sector tend to be smaller at 4.2 FTE.

Bigger PR teams imply bigger PR budgets, but only up to a point. Focusing on in-house PR teams, we see a significant variation in budgets (defined as spend on 3rd part costs such as events, PR agencies, but not salaries).

One in three in-house PR teams have a budget of over €200,000, but one in four have a budget of less than €100,000.

Overall PR Budget (for 3 rd Party Costs) per In-House PR Team	2025
Under €20,000	7%
Between €20,000 and €50,000	8%
Between €50,000 and €100,000	10%
Between €100,000 and €200,000	19%
Over €200,000	36%
Don't know	19%

Source: PRII Census

Using these findings and those from the previous surveys, we estimate that the average in-house PR budget has risen from nearly €135,000 in 2019 to over €148,000 in 2025: almost a ten percent increase.

Budgets for in-house teams in the public sector are higher (€159,000) than in the private sector (€128,000).

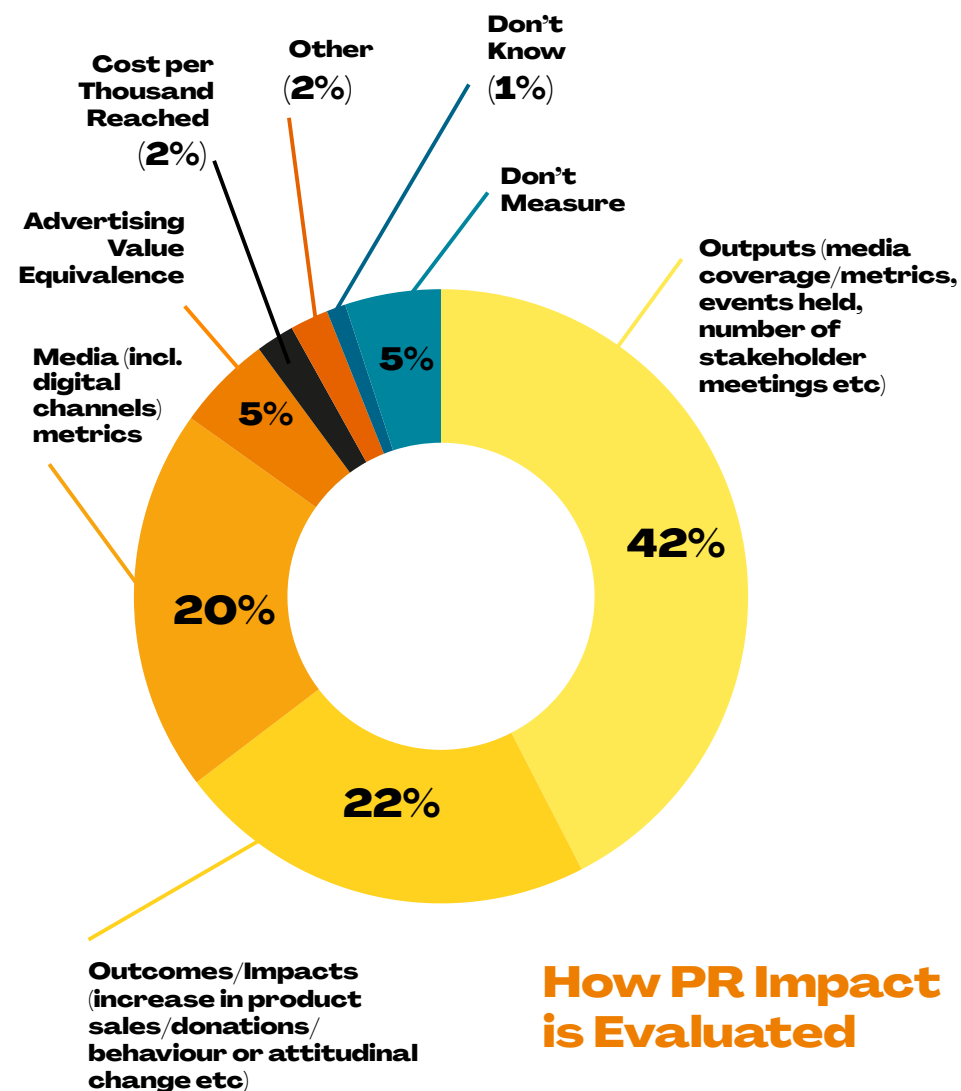
How do organisations measure and evaluate the impact of PR and related activities for their employing organisations or clients? Here, there has been a lot of change.

Back in 2019, nearly 1 in 4 PR professionals used 'advertising value equivalence' (AVEs) as their main measurement: now just 1 in 20 use it.

Today, the focus is on measuring and evaluating outputs tied to specific campaigns or organisational objectives, along with outcomes and impacts².

Moreover, in 2019 over 4 in 10 PR professionals simply didn't evaluate and measure their work. That figure has fallen to just 5% in 2025, which is good news, and reflects the wide range of strategic interventions and education undertaken by the PRII to promote outcomes and impact as the true measure of public relations.

² This is in line with global best practice set by the Barcelona Principles.











Social Media

Social media has become a vital communications tool for almost all PR professionals in 2025. Currently, LinkedIn, Instagram and X (Twitter) feature prominently among the top three most important social media channels for work-related output and information.

We also asked what were the most important social media channels one year ago to see what shifts have taken place recently (note, about 16% say their preferences haven't changed in the past year).

However there has been a significant decline in the use of X since last year, though over a third of PR professionals continue to see it as a top 3 social media channels for work-related purposes. The move away from X is expected by many PR professionals to continue into next year.

While 38% say they don't expect to change their usage of social media channels going forward, just 9% expect X to be in their top 3 channels in future.

Most Important Social Media Channels		In 2024*	In 2025
	LinkedIn	86%	92%
	Instagram	58%	63%
	X (Twitter)	67%	35%
	Facebook	33%	32%
	TikTok	16%	20%
	YouTube	14%	20%
	BlueSky	1%	7%
	Other	-	1%

Source: PRII Census * excluding those who haven't changed

The Rewards of Working in PR

Ireland's strong economy has driven up wages and salaries across the board, especially since the end of the pandemic. We have tracked these changes in the PR sector since 2019.

It is evident from our survey results that PR provides a good income for most professionals, with 45% of respondents to our survey earning €80,000 or more in 2025, and 16% earning under €45,000:

Annual Basic Salary Distribution for a PR Professional	2025
Under €30,000	1%
Between €30,001 and €45,000	15%
Between €45,001 and €60,000	14%
Between €60,001 and €80,000	23%
Between €80,001 and €100,000	21%
Over €100,000	24%

Source: PRII Census

Using the mid-points from the salary ranges in our survey, we estimate an average PR salary in 2025 of just over €78,000 – up from less than €66,000 in 2019: an 18% increase over six years.

There are variations depending on where the PR professional is employed.

In-house PR professionals earn on average €84,000: the same in the private or the public sectors. Those employed in agencies have a typical salary of just over €74,000 in 2025.

As in previous census reports, there is a significant gender difference in salaries with men on average earning €84,000 and women on average earning €75,000. However, it should be noted that though proportionally a small group (approx. one third) in the sector, men are more likely to be in senior roles which are compensated with higher salaries.

Remuneration is not limited to basic salary.

A minority of PR professionals receive bonus payments (1 in 3 in 2025, down from previous years). However, the average value of a bonus payment for those who received them has steadily increased, from 7% of basic salary in 2019 to nearly 14% in 2025.

Beyond bonus payments, there are other benefits available to PR professionals.

- **Contributory Pension:** this is now the norm for most PR professionals, rising from 39% in 2019 to 64% of all respondents in 2025.
- **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)** funded by employer: this has also risen steadily: from 30% to 45% this year.
- **Transport Related:** in 2025, 26% of PR professionals have access to the 'bike-to-work' scheme, but only 11% avail of the tax saver for public transport/leap card scheme, and just 10% have a company car or contribution to running costs.

Maternity and paternity leave

For those who become parents, access to paid maternity and paternity leave is a very attractive offer in 2025. It is also more common, as the chart shows – with two thirds of PR Professionals working in organisations offering paid maternity leave.

Maternity/Paternity Leave	2019	2022	2025
Paid maternity leave i.e. top-up of social welfare by a % of salary	59%	65%	66%
Paid paternity leave i.e. top-up of social welfare by a % of salary	35%	45%	46%
Don't know/not sure	39%	32%	31%

Source: PRII Census

In-house PR professionals are more likely to work in organisations offering this, highest at 77% for in-house professionals in the private sector, falling to 59% of those working in independently owned PR agencies.

Working Hours & Practices

The average contracted working week for PR professionals has changed little since 2019, from 37 hours six years ago to 36.5 hours in 2025.

However, most work many more hours than they are contracted to work: 83% of PR professionals work more than their contracted hours by an average of nearly 10 hours a week.

There is little significant difference between in-house and agency professionals in this regard.

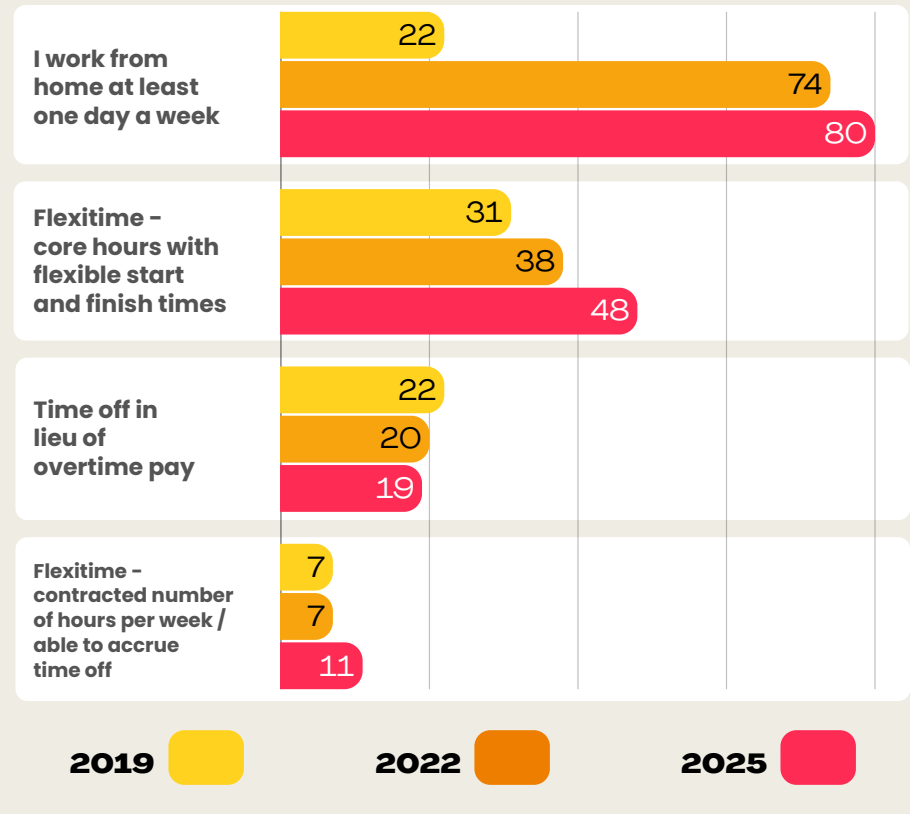
But if the number of contracted hours hasn't changed, where and how the work is done has changed enormously.

Working from home (WFH) at least once a week is now the 'norm' for 8 in 10 professionals. The incidence is higher for women (84%) than for men (71%).

Among those working from home, there has been a slight fall back from an average of 2.9 days per week in 2022 to 2.5 days a week in 2025. In-house professionals in the private sector have the highest average days working from home (2.6), compared to 2.4 in the public sector and 2.4 in independent agencies.

Flexitime is also normal for nearly half of respondents in 2025, though time off in lieu has fallen back a little these past six years. Meanwhile other forms of flexibility are less common and/or less popular (e.g.: additional, unpaid holidays), even if available.

Use of Flexible Working Options (%)



Source: PRII Census

Source: PRII Census

Working from Home: Average Days per Week	2019	2022	2025
1 Day	73%	11%	16%
2 Days	8%	30%	37%
3 Days	9%	33%	36%
4 Days	5%	12%	7%
5 Days	4%	14%	5%
Average	1.6%	2.9%	2.5%

As it has been several years since the surge in working-from-home, there is a clear consensus about the benefits and costs of doing so in the minds of PR professionals.

Obviously work-life balance is a key benefit, while flexibility around family responsibilities is joint second with saving money on commuting costs and even wardrobe. Over 6 in 10 say they are more productive as well: with very few differences in these findings by agency vs in-house, or private vs public sector.

Working from Home: Main Positives	
Better work-life balance	81%
More time for personal or family responsibilities	69%
Cost savings (e.g., transportation, meals, wardrobe)	68%
Increased productivity with fewer office distractions	64%
More flexibility in work hours	63%
Increased autonomy and independence	43%
Opportunity to work from anywhere	42%
Improved job satisfaction	42%
Reduced office politics and workplace conflicts	25%

Source: PRII Census

But there are downsides identified as well. The lack of in-person collaboration and teamwork is the most common downside (felt particularly by those working in agencies).

Decreased visibility is considered a bigger negative for those in in-house roles. Only 7% said there were no negatives in working from home in 2025:

Working from Home: Main Negatives	
Lack of in-person collaboration and teamwork	60%
Reduced networking opportunities	57%
Blurring of work-life boundaries, making it harder to "switch off"	47%
Over-reliance on virtual meetings and emails	46%
Communication challenges with colleagues and managers	37%
Potential for decreased visibility and career growth opportunities	34%
More difficulty in managing or mentoring teams remotely	34%
More distractions from household responsibilities or family	22%
Limited access to office resources and technology support	21%
Difficulty staying motivated and focused	20%
Security risks and data privacy concerns when working remotely	9%

Source: PRII Census

With widespread support for remote work, current WFH patterns are likely to persist.

We asked respondents in this year's survey whether they think in three years' time that they will work from home more or less frequently than they do currently.

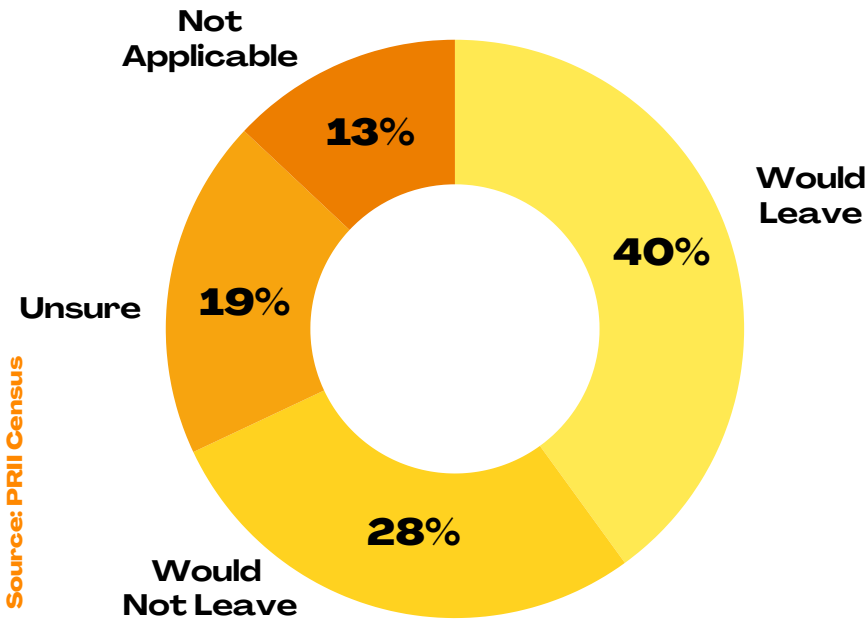
Over 3 in 4 (77%) said they would work the same or similar amount, just 7% expected to work less from home and 12% thought they might work more from home. Those expecting to work less often from home anticipate a mandate from management to return to the office, though just as many expect it will be a personal choice in future. There was very little difference between professionals in this regard.

However, though most anticipate a continuation of the same arrangement, the reality is that many businesses, including professional service firms, are mandating more time in the office.

We asked respondents whether they would change their jobs if they had to return to the office more than 3 days a week: a very large minority – 40% – said they would change job in that scenario.

The majority of those working as in-house PR professionals in the private sector said they would change, and almost half of those working in independently owned PR agencies said they would leave rather than go back.

No Going Back: Expected Response to Mandate to Return to Office 3 Days a Week



We noted earlier the extra hours most PR professionals work above their contracted hours.

That said, the incidence of making/sending work-related calls, texts, and emails outside of normal office hours has declined significantly from a daily incidence of 46% in 2019 to 33% in 2025. Fewer than 1 in 20 PR professionals never send work-related messages outside of working hours: the same since 2019.

We also asked about the frequency of receiving work-related messages in 2025 rather than just sending them. The chart shows that over a third receive such messages (calls/texts/emails) every day outside of normal working hours (higher for in-house professionals in the public sector and those working in agencies):

Source: PRII Census

Frequency of Work-Related Communications per Week	Receive	Send
Every Day	36%	33%
Every 2 to 3 Days	24%	27%
Once A Week	16%	18%
Less Often Than Once A Week	20%	19%
Never	4%	4%

Nearly half (47%) of PR professionals work in organisations that monitor and manage staff workloads to avoid excessive demands and negative consequences for physical and mental wellbeing – down a little since 2022 but up slightly since 2019. Though a third answered ‘no’ in 2025. Independent agencies are more likely to monitor workloads than those with international parents, while in-house professionals in the public sector are less likely to feel their workloads are monitored.

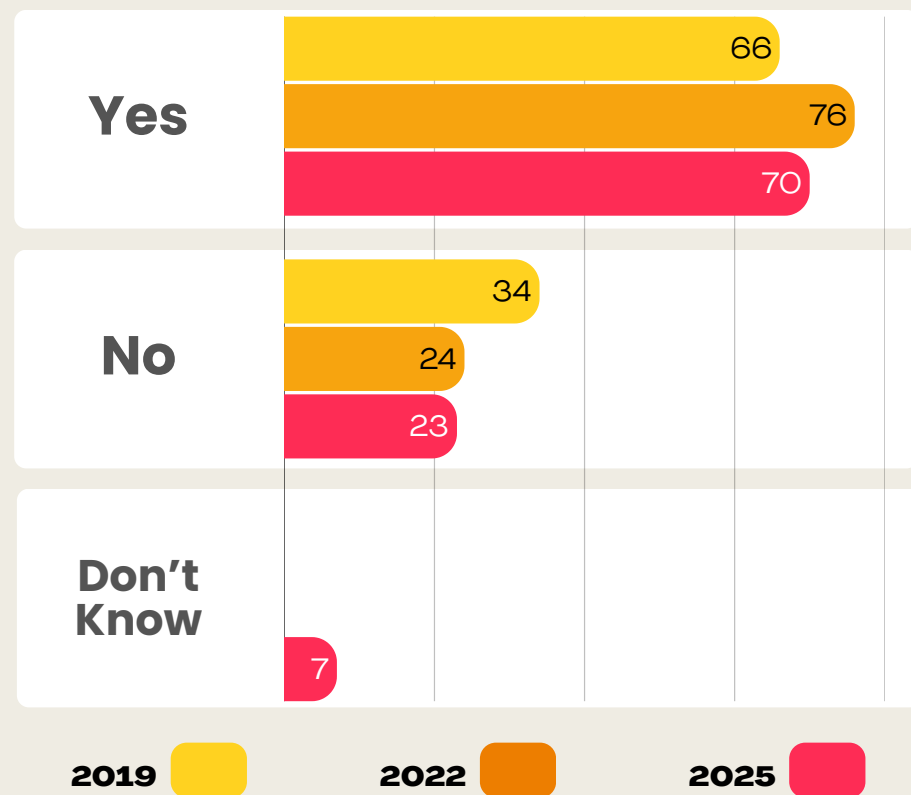
Work-life balance

That said, 7 in 10 PR professionals say they have a healthy 'work-life balance' most of the time, up from 2019, but down from 2022.

However, this work-life balance drops significantly to just 44% of those working in internationally owned PR agencies, with a similar proportion answering 'no' to the question in 2025.

Women are more likely than men to answer affirmatively (75% vs 63%), while 35-54s tend to more positive about their work-life balance than other age groups.

Have a Work-Life Balance Most of the Time



Source: PRII Census

PR Training

Amidst constant and rapid media, technological and regulatory change in the wider world continuous professional development is a necessity for PR professionals. In fact, 37% of PR professionals in our 2025 survey spent zero hours on public relations-related training and continuous professional development in the previous year. This falls to 28% of professionals working in independently owned agencies but rises to 56% of those in internationally owned agencies.

Significantly, the average hours spent on training in the previous year has fallen sharply from 2022 (by more than 50%) and were below those reported in 2019. We know that in 2021/2022 many people took the opportunity to upskill, often online, as the pandemic reduced alternative or competing demands on time.

Interestingly, in 2025 average training hours are higher for women (18) than for men (12)):

Hours Spent on PR Training/CPD in Previous Year	
2025	Mean: 16
2022	Mean: 41
2019	Mean: 20

Part of the explanation is ‘busyness’ as noted earlier when we looked at work outside contracted hours.

The year 2022 was likely an aberration as there was also a post-Covid anxiety to navigate the new realities of working-from-home and the continuing surge in social media as a communications channel.

It isn’t that people are resistant to doing more training: nearly 7 in 10 PR professionals said they would like to do more in 2025.

Among those who said no, the primary reason is ‘time pressures’ (for 75%, up from 59% in 2022).

Cost is also a barrier for some (1 in 3 in 2025), and yet our survey reveals that among those who did training last year, the employer paid for the 85% of those who received training, higher than in 2019 or 2022.

Among those who would like to do more training in relation to public relations, the number one training ‘ask’ in 2025 is ‘digital media’, followed by ‘AI’ training.

Public affairs training comes in third for 24% of those open to training.

Training Preferences & Priorities in 2025

Digital media	39%
AI	31%
Public Affairs	24%
Strategy development	18%
Business management	17%
Metrics and Analytics	14%
Pitching/Influencing	10%
Internal communications	4%

Source: PRII Census

Digital media training is even more in demand among in-house PR professionals, while AI training is sought across the board.

Of course, training and CPD are often seen as means of ‘futureproofing’ jobs, roles and careers in times of rapid change. In each census we have asked ‘what are the main gaps in your skills when it comes to your future career’ and we have noted significant changes over time.

This year, we added ‘use of AI tools’ to potential options and two thirds of professionals picked it as their number one ‘gap’ when it comes to the future:

Skills Gaps for Future Careers

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools	67%
Business/Financial Management	42%
Analysis (measurement & evaluation, research)	40%
People Management	32%
Strategic Thinking	19%
Technical skills (e.g. writing, content creation)	11%

Source: PRII Census

Public sector in-house professionals were more likely than others to see AI as a skills gap (74%), while private sector in-house PR professionals were more likely than others to see business and financial management skills as a gap (47%) – similarly for agency professionals.

Perhaps related to using AI tools, public sector in-house respondents were much more likely to see analysis skills as a key gap (49%).

We explore the topic of AI in more detail in Part 3.

Embracing Diversity

As noted in Part 1, Ireland has become a much more ethnically diverse nation than before, as is evident not only in the population statistics but also in the lived experience of most people when it comes to the communities, organisations and social activities they belong to and participate in.

Obviously for the PR sector, to do the best job possible, it is vital that the sector reflects the wider population and marketplace that it serves. But it doesn't yet do so – at least not in the eyes of those already working in the sector in 2025.

A little over one in five participants in our survey thought that the public relations sector is diverse, i.e.: reflective of the population of Ireland. But the majority say it isn't:

Yes	22%
No	53%
Don't Know	25%

As to what is preventing diversity, there are many different perspectives, with the main one being that the sector is too 'white/female' dominated, followed closely by socio-economic barriers (either in terms of social class or ethnicity). Private sector in-house professionals are more likely than others to identify these as key barriers:

What is Preventing Diversity in PR?	
Current demographic makeup (white/female dominant)	24%
Socio-economic barriers	23%
Bias and discrimination	16%
Language and cultural barriers	14%
Educational requirements	13%
Hiring based on connections/ who you know	11%
Lack of diversity in leadership	10%
Geographic concentration in Dublin	7%
Lack of awareness/education about PR careers	7%

Embracing Diversity

Tackling the perceived lack of diversity will require attention to recruitment practices.

Excluding those unaware of current practices, most PR professionals (7 in 10) say that their approach to recruitment is inclusive and open to diverse candidates. Agency professionals are more likely to believe this than in-house professionals.

Nevertheless, there is a clear understanding that a key driver of the future of the PR sector and profession will need to be increased diversity.

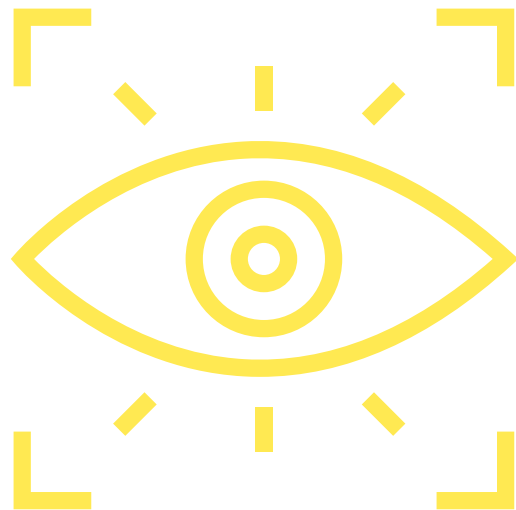
Part Three

**Future
Challenges**



Future Challenges

In this section of the Census Report 2025, we look at career prospects for PR professionals, and at how AI tools are growing as part of AI practice.



Looking to the Future

Since the first PRII census, we have tracked sentiment about career trajectories in the PR profession.

Consistently since 2019, the vast majority (75% in 2025) of PR professionals think they have a good career ahead of them in public relations, for as long as they wish.

Agency professionals tend to be more optimistic in this regard than in-house professionals, nevertheless the pattern of general positivity is pervasive.

Only 4% say they don't have good prospects, the rest simply don't know.

Expected Duration of Career in PR

People give different reasons for why they anticipate a good career (or not). Among the majority who are positive, key reasons include:

- Current growth trends in the PR sector and demand for services
- The reputation and skills of individual professionals
- Job satisfaction alongside job security at the present time

For the minority who are negative about their career prospects, key reasons include:

- A combination of low salaries with pressures at work
- Concerns about the impact of AI on future employability
- A mix of other reasons, including travel plans

To reinforce these positive findings about career prospects, the 2025 census reveals that most PR professionals intend staying in PR/communications for the rest of their career, up significantly (6%) from 2019:

Expected Duration of Career in PR	2019	2022	2025
1 Year	6%	8%	7%
5 Years	39%	31%	30%
The Rest of Your Career	42%	49%	48%
Don't Know	13%	13%	16%

Source: PRII Census

Here again, it is professionals in PR agencies who are most committed to working in PR for the rest of their career, slightly above in-house professionals (though even here the outlook is very positive).

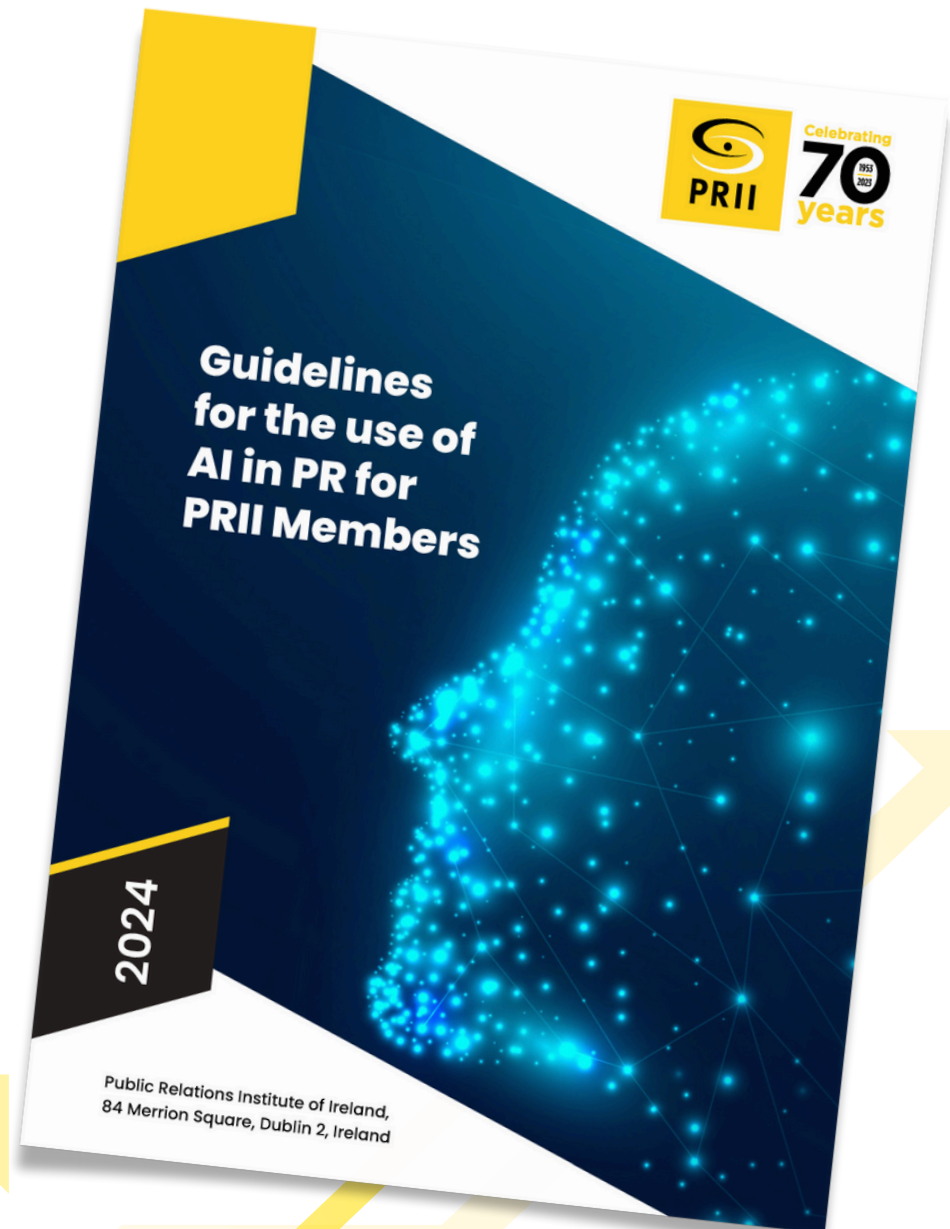
PR & AI

We have already noted the effect AI is having on perceived training needs and, for a minority, future job security.

We are still at the early stages of AI's impact on professional services in general and PR in particular, but already PR agencies and in-house professionals are embracing AI to work more effectively.

In 2024 the PRII published Guidelines on the use of AI in public relations and a third of PR professionals in the 2025 census have read them:

Private sector in-house professionals are more familiar with the Guidelines than others, as are those working in independently owned agencies. Among those who have read the guidelines, the vast majority (95%) say they were somewhat or extremely useful.



Knowledge of AI in PR

Clearly there is an ongoing need to inform and educate PR professionals about AI, and as we saw earlier, there is also a considerable appetite to learn more about AI as part of regular training and CPD activities.

Of course, not everyone is starting from the same place in terms of AI familiarity and usage.

One in five PR professionals claim to have a good knowledge of AI tools that can be used in their working role, while half say they have a fair level of knowledge.

Private sector in-house professionals are more likely to rate their knowledge as good, while the majority of those working in internationally owned PR agencies say their knowledge is good.

Source: PRII Census

Self-Rated Knowledge of AI Tools for Work	
Poor	28%
Fair	51%
Good	21%

A third of public sector in-house professionals rate their knowledge of AI as poor, especially those working in semi-state companies. It should be noted that many public sector bodies restrict access to or use of some AI tools.

Men are more likely than women to rate their knowledge as poor (33% vs 25%), while under 35s rate their knowledge of AI higher than any other age group (39% say it is good).

Nevertheless, most PR professionals are at the early stages of becoming familiar with and incorporating AI into their day-to-day work practices.

As with many such technologies and tools, few of us can embrace and integrate such tools without the collaboration of others. In the 2025 census we asked respondents to share their experiences of discussing AI with colleagues and peers.

Frequency of Discussing AI

We can see from the table that only a minority of professionals are discussing AI 'a great deal' with colleagues, staff and customers (external or internal):

Frequency of Discussing AI	Never/ Rarely	Occasionally	A Great Deal
My colleagues and I discuss AI usage	14%	55%	30%
Management discuss AI usage with staff	26%	51%	23%
Those we do work for discuss AI usage with us	46%	40%	14%

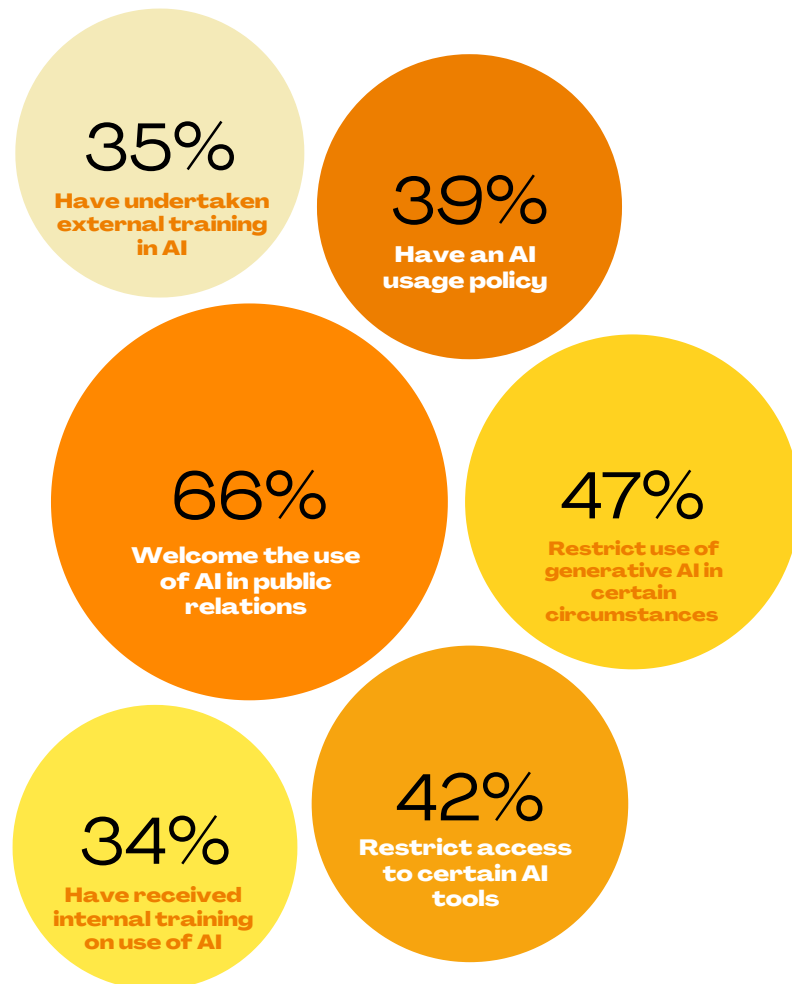
Source: PRII Census

Those working in-house in the public sector have fewer conversations about AI with colleagues (23% 'never') than others, while those in independently owned agencies are having more frequent conversations (43% 'a great deal') than others.

There are few significant demographic differences other than the propensity of under 35-year-old professionals to be more engaged in the AI conversation than older age groups.

Incidence of AI Policies

Our 2025 census examined in detail current AI practices by PR professionals. The results are summarised in the chart:



Source: PRII Census

- **Some 4 in 10 (39%) of PR professionals work in an organisation or team with an AI usage policy:** this is higher among in-house professionals in the private sector (57%) and in internationally owned agencies (56%).
- **A similar proportion (42%) work in organisations that restrict access to certain AI tools,** higher among in-house professionals than independent agencies (22%).
- **When it comes to using AI for certain outputs or in certain circumstances,** nearly half (47%) say this is the case, with only slight differences between in-house and agency practices.
- **Only 1 in 3 (34%) have received internal training about the use of AI,** higher among in-house private sector professionals (40%) and internationally owned agencies (56%); women are more likely than men to have received training (39% vs 27%).
- **A similar proportion (35%) have received external training,** this time higher among independently owned agencies (46%) than others, with no significant differences by gender or age.

Looking to the future

Despite concerns and limited knowledge, the majority of PR professionals in Ireland (66%) welcome the use of AI in public relations, only 11% don't; 3 in 4 agencies welcome AI, while women are more likely than men to welcome it (71% vs 59%); 45–54-year-olds are the most enthusiastic age group (78%).

However, as with any new technology that requires changes to work practices and processes, there are concerns about the negative consequences of AI in the PR industry.

About 1 in 5 don't think there are any negatives (higher among under 35s and women), but most have some concerns. We asked an open-ended question to elicit people's concerns, and these are summarised in the chart.

The main concerns are the 'loss of skills and creativity' (higher among independent agencies), followed by 'job displacement and devaluation' (higher among under 35s and men).

'Quality and accuracy' also ranks high, but it is mainly PR professionals working in PR agencies who flag this.

Concerns About Impact of AI on PR Industry	
Loss of skills and creativity	30%
Job displacement and devaluation	22%
Quality and accuracy concerns	19%
Ethics and transparency issues	17%
Misinformation and fake content	13%
Data security and privacy	9%
Loss of human connection	7%

In the final part of this report, we step back from the survey findings to take a wider look at the contribution of PR to Ireland's economic performance, updating calculations first shared in 2019.

Part Four

The Economic Impact of PR



The Economic Impact of PR

Finally, in this section of the Census Report 2025, we update the original 2019 estimate of the economic contribution of public relations and communication in Ireland, incorporating new data from the 2025 Census as well as CSO data trends on occupations.



As before, we have used the Falconi calculation³ to estimate the contribution of the public relations and communication profession to the Irish economy. This calculation requires the following information:

- The number of PR professionals involved.
- Their gross annual cost to the organisations they work for, or on whose behalf they supply advisory and professional services, to include overheads and support costs.
- An economic multiplier which accounts for the increased productivity delivered by those professionals.

In relation to the number of professionals involved, our first task is to update CSO Census 2022 data for the numbers working in PR and PR-related occupations.

³How Big Is Public Relations (and Why Does It Matter)? by Toni Muzi Falconi
Available https://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/Falconi_Nov06.pdf

How big is Public Relations?

In the CSO census of occupations there were 3,344 people working as either public relations professionals (2,407) or advertising and public relations directors (937). We cannot parse advertising from PR in the latter occupation group, so we have included them in the calculations. That said, there are people working in other occupations (e.g.: media-related or in the civil service) who consider themselves to be PR professionals but are not captured in the calculations.

To update the 2022 estimate to a current 2025 figure we used the CSO's quarterly labour force survey figures for Q1 2019 and Q1 2025 for the numbers employed in professional, scientific and technical activities (which covers all marketing, advertising and PR professions).

Over that period, the numbers in the professional category grew by 19%. Applied to our 2022 figure this then estimates the number of PR professionals in 2025 to be closer to 4,000 individuals – or 3,981 to be precise. This addresses the first data requirement for the updated Falconi calculation.

In terms of the second requirement, we have the distribution of salaries from PRII's 2025 census. Applying that distribution to our estimate of 3,981 PR professionals **we estimate the employment cost to be over €300 million this year**. We know from previous surveys that overheads etc are roughly equivalent to salary costs, so the **gross annual cost works out at more than €600 million in 2025**.

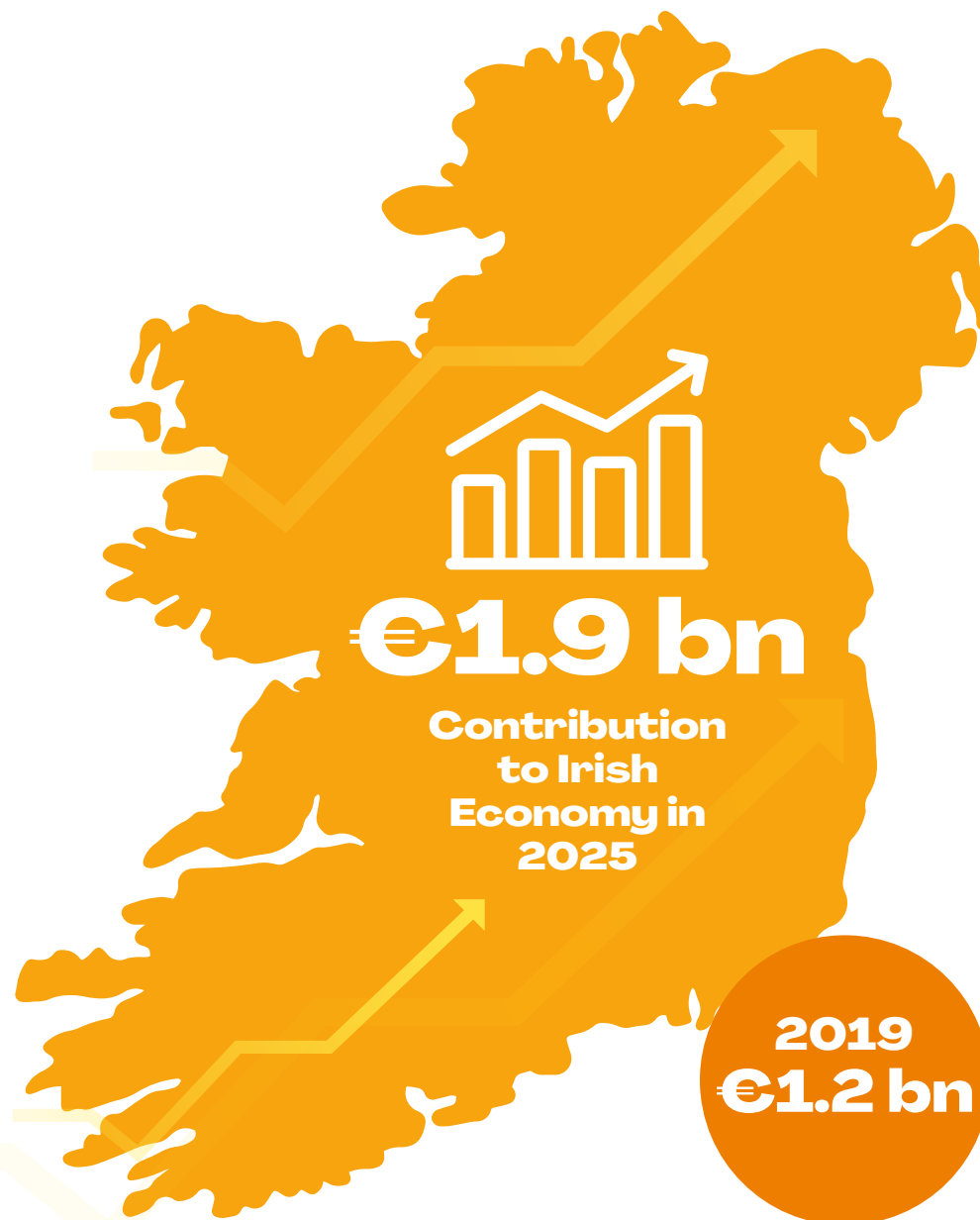


Finally...

We need to apply an economic multiplier to reflect the wider impact of that expenditure on the economy. Economists who study labour intensive professions (such as accounting/law/medicine) tend to agree that the multiplier should vary between 1.5 and 3 according to the value attributed by the organisation to the individual professional (which is already somewhat reflected in annual gross cost). Falconi suggests a multiplier value of x3 for the PR sector.

In keeping with the 2019 estimate, we have used the same multiplier value to calculate the impact of PR on the economy in 2025.

Applying the above Falconi calculation, Amárach estimate the overall contribution of the public relations profession to the Irish economy is just under €1.9 billion in 2025, up from less than €1.2 billion in 2019: **an increase of nearly 60% in value over the past six years.**





PRII **Census** **2025**



**Public
Relations
Institute
of Ireland**

Public Relations Institute of Ireland (PRII)

www.prii.ie

84 Merrion Square, Dublin, D02 T882

Tel: 01 661 8004

The Public Relations Institute of Ireland is the membership body dedicated to promoting the professional practice of public relations and communications in Ireland.

June 2025