

# **EACA's EUROPEAN AGENCIES SENTIMENT SURVEY**

**January 2025**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The EACA Agency Sentiment Survey was carried in November 2024 and we received **3,957 responses from participants in 25 countries**. Considering this is the first EACA Sentiment Survey, we are delighted with the number of responses. Through the insights shared by participants, we are able to delve into how members of our industry are feeling and use this information to meet the needs of our people.

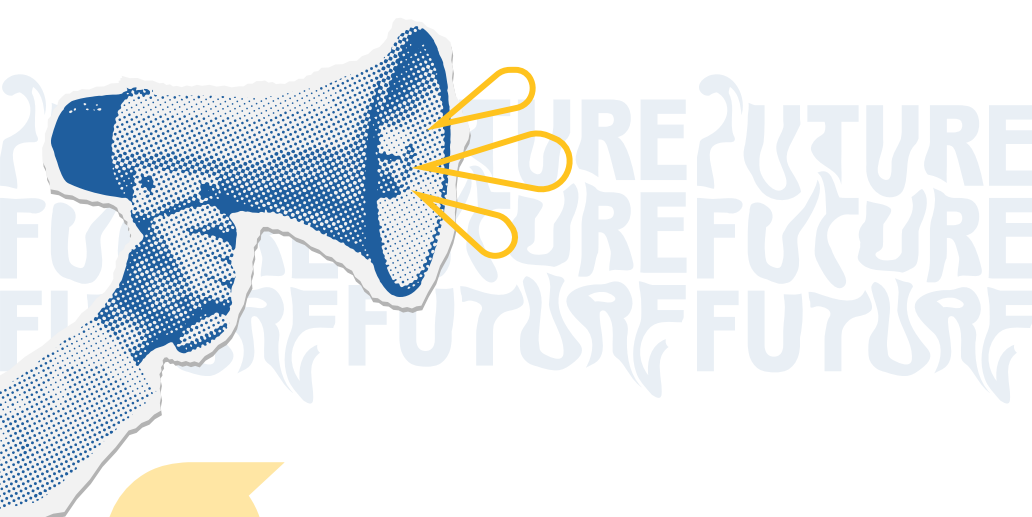
Responses were overwhelmingly positive and showed our industry in a good light, while also identifying areas where we should focus our efforts in the upcoming year. Pride in the industry was high, with **70% of respondents proud or very proud to be working in the communications industry** in their respective countries. Pride was highest among those who had recently Started in the industry and those at Management level (85% proud and 84% proud, respectively). Over half (56%) would recommend the communication industry as a great place to work, with those in content marketing agencies most likely to recommend the industry (72% would recommend).

Respondents were also overwhelmingly optimistic, with 67% optimistic about the future of their own agency and 54% optimistic about the future of the industry. Each country had different issues that respondents believed should be tackled in the upcoming year, however the most common across nations are agency profitability, mental health and wellbeing, and staff training and development.



Staying power in the industry is high, with **almost two-thirds (63%) expecting to remain in the industry for 5+ years** and only 2% expecting to leave the industry in less than 1 year. During their time in the industry, most respondents expect to move around, only 17% expecting to stay in the same agency for the remainder of their career.

In contrast, 62% expect to remain in their current agency for at least 2 more years.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Another positive sign for the industry is that job security is high, as 73% of respondents feel secure or very secure about their job. That being said, the most common reason why employees would consider leaving the industry is to **reduce their workload** and **have a better work/life balance**. This is something agencies need to keep in mind when looking to retain their talent.

Respondents are positive about agency performance in the upcoming year and 47% believe their agency will do better or much better this year compared to last.



Undeniably, the most important thing to employees in the industry is **valuing their colleagues**, with 90% of respondents considering this to be important. This shows the high levels of collaboration and mutual respect between employees that have been fostered by agencies within our industry. Also positive is that 84% believe they can be their true self at work. There is a clear need to offer employees **more training and development opportunities**, as only 52% feel that their needs in this area are being met. Similarly, 25% of respondents do not feel that their career needs are being met.

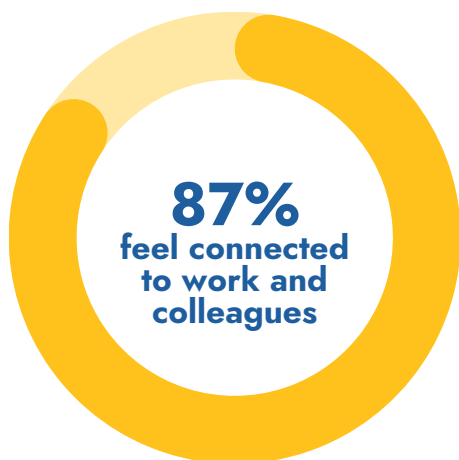
Despite this, **most respondents feel positively about their workplace**. 69% feel valued by their agency and colleagues, 61% report being satisfied with the enjoyment and motivation they experience in their work and 59% believe the communication and support they receive from managers and leaders is effective. Employees are reporting **high levels of stress and overwhelm**, which needs to be addressed by the industry as a whole. 29% of respondents feel stressed or very stressed and 48% do not feel as though they can manage all of their tasks without feeling overwhelmed.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

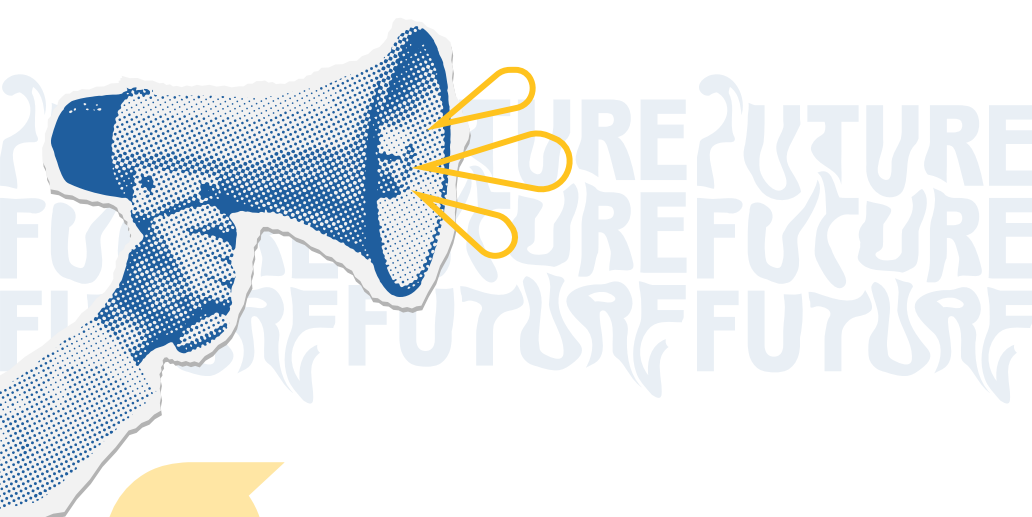
Positively, respondents feel **supported by their managers** within the workplace. 83% feel that their line manager is responsive to their needs outside of work and the 73% believe they can talk openly with their manager about mental health and stress levels.

Employees are also **connected to their workplaces**, with 87% feeling connected to work and their colleagues and 86% feeling included at work. Agencies in our industry are clearly fostering strong communities within their workplaces which is highly valued by employees.

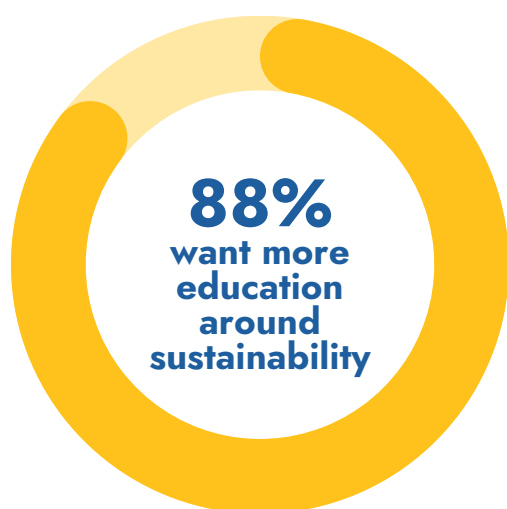


**Psychological safety** is strong, as 78% of respondents feel they can openly share and learn from their mistakes in their company and 71% agree that their team encourages them to disagree or think differently. Agencies also appear to be implementing **feedback cultures**. 77% of respondents agree that their managers can receive feedback and 57% feel that they receive regular feedback on their performance that they find helpful. These are positive figures, however it is important not to forget about those who do not feel that they are receiving helpful and regular feedback.

Respondents to the Sentiment Survey believe that the communications industry has a role and responsibility when it comes to large societal issues such as sustainability and DEI. There is an appetite for **sustainability**, with 84% of respondents happier to work with clients that are committed to sustainability and 88% believing they need to become better educated on what agencies and clients can do to impact sustainability. Agencies and national associations can address this by nominating sustainability champions, committing to carbon reduction targets, and hosting educational events.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Respondents are more inclined to place the responsibility for action on the industry as a whole as supposed to their individual agencies. For example, 90% agree that the industry has an important role in changing consumer behaviours when it comes to sustainability, however only 59% think it is important for their agency to demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability. **Fair pay and flexible working** are also important to employees, with 87% considering it important that their agency support flexible and remote working arrangements and 83% thinking it important that their agency ensure fair and transparent payment practices.

Respondents feel that we are making progress when it comes to **DEI**, but there is a belief that the industry can do more. 82% of respondents agree that their agency and national association have a role to play in helping the industry become more diverse and inclusive. For 81% of respondents, working in a diverse and inclusive industry is an important factor in choosing where they work, and the same number believe that everyone in the industry should undertake unconscious bias training. This demonstrates the importance industry members place on diversity and inclusion.

Only 34% feel their **disposable income** has reduced in the last 12 months, however 62% have cut down their discretionary spend and 56% do not feel they have enough disposable income to do most of the things they like. This shows a continuance of cost-of-living difficulties and demonstrates some of the challenges experienced by employees in the industry. This is an industry-wide challenge, as only 41% feel they are paid properly and 69% feel they could earn a lot more in an equally fascinating job in another sector. Another area requiring agencies' focus is **inappropriate behaviour**, with 25% reportedly experiencing inappropriate behaviour in their company in the last 12 months.



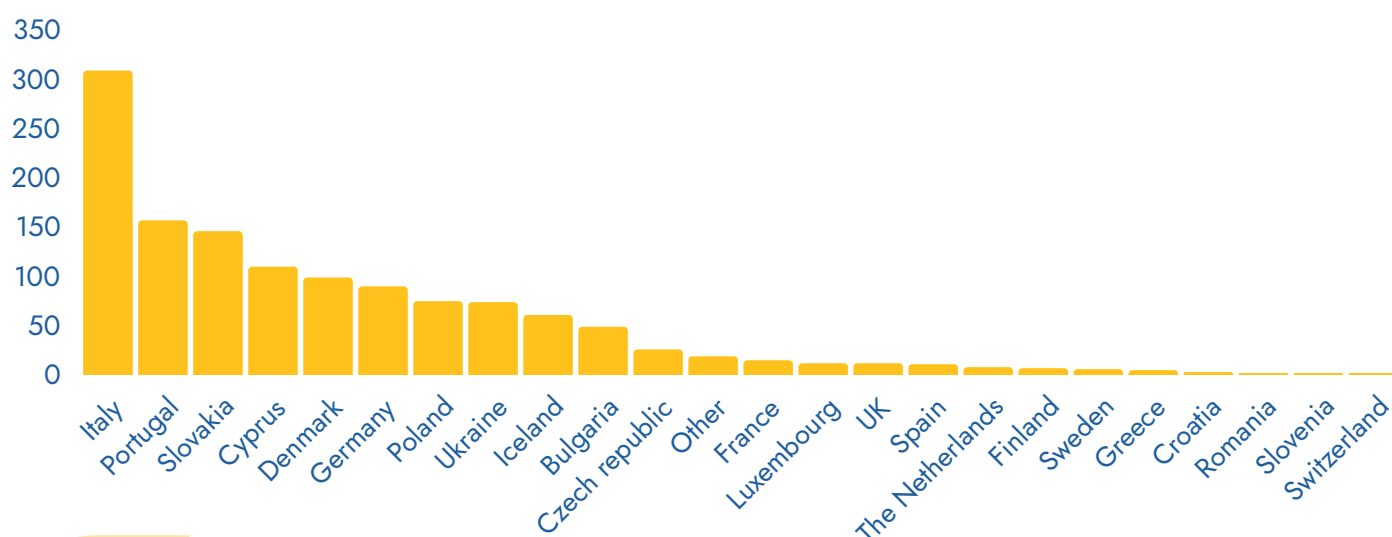




# **SURVEY PARTICIPATION**

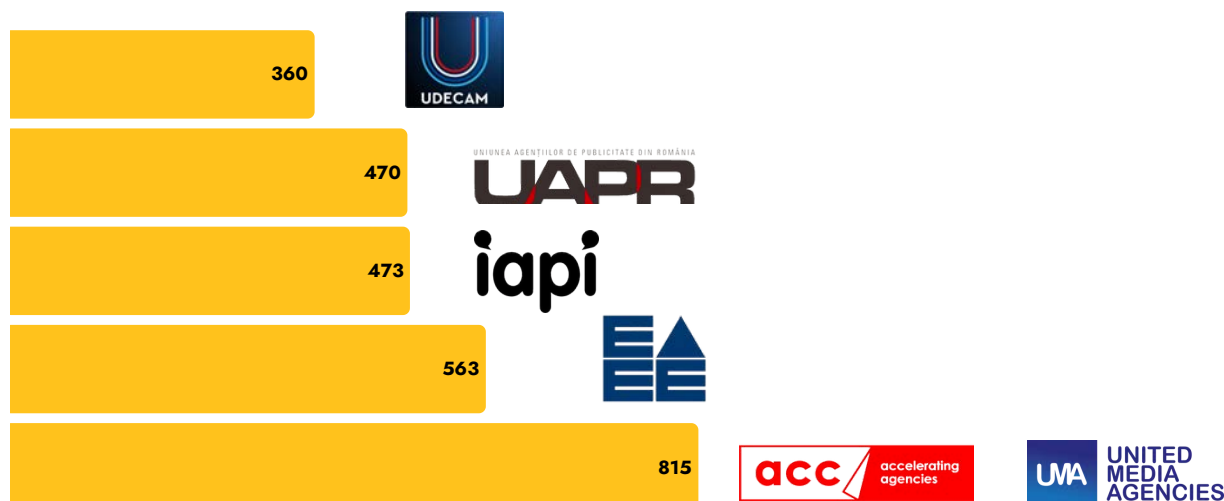
## NATIONALITY

**1,276 respondents** answered the EACA 2024 Sentiment Survey. Respondents from Italy, Portugal, Slovakia and Cyprus made up over half (56%) of all participants. Countries with less than 10 respondents included The Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Greece, Croatia, Romania, Slovenia and Switzerland. Taking into account five country-specific surveys carried out by EACA's National Associations Council, the number of total respondents reached **3,957**.



## OTHER SENTIMENT SURVEYS

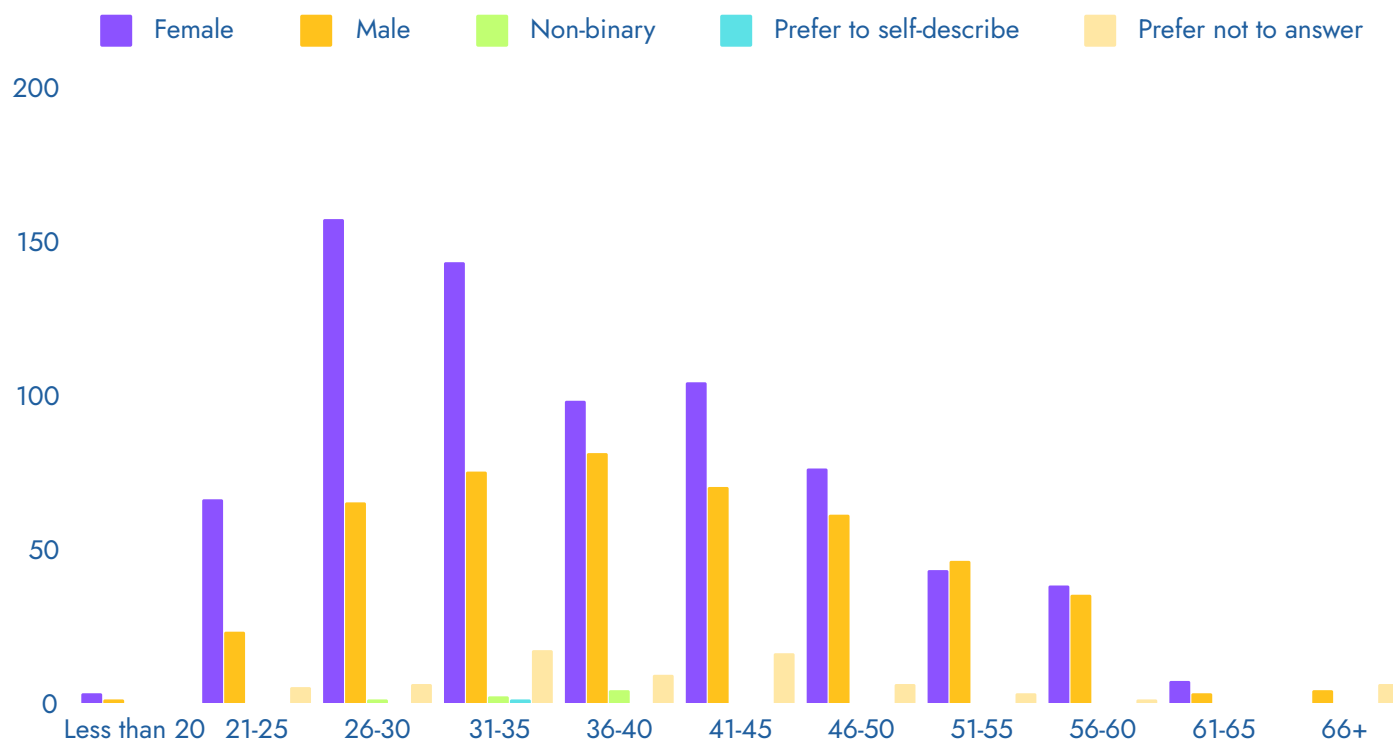
Several EACA National Associations' Councils completed their own national Sentiment Surveys earlier in 2024. These include ACC & UMA (Belgium), UDECAM (France), EΔEE (Greece), IAPI (Ireland), and UAPR (Romania). The findings of these National Sentiment Surveys are referenced throughout this report and the full survey reports for each country can be found on the respective council's website.

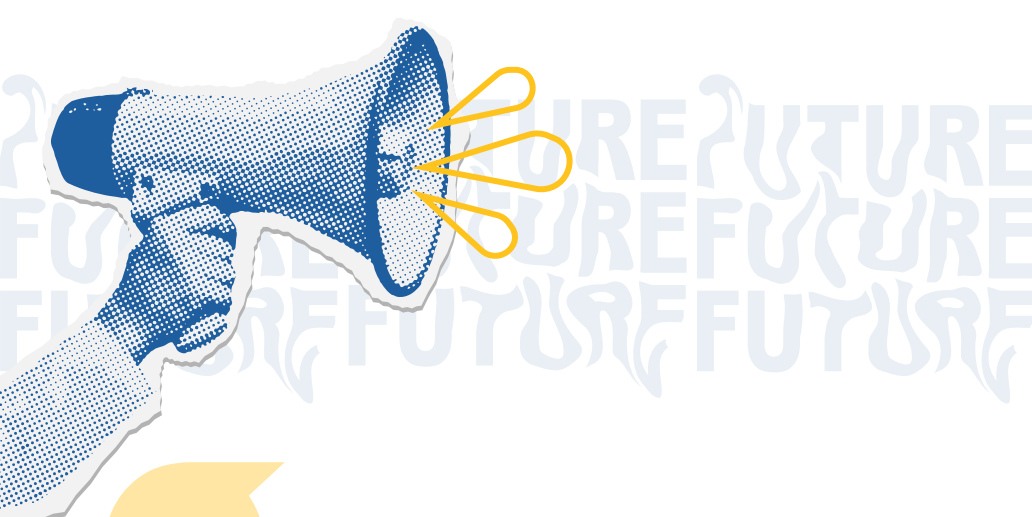




## AGE & GENDER

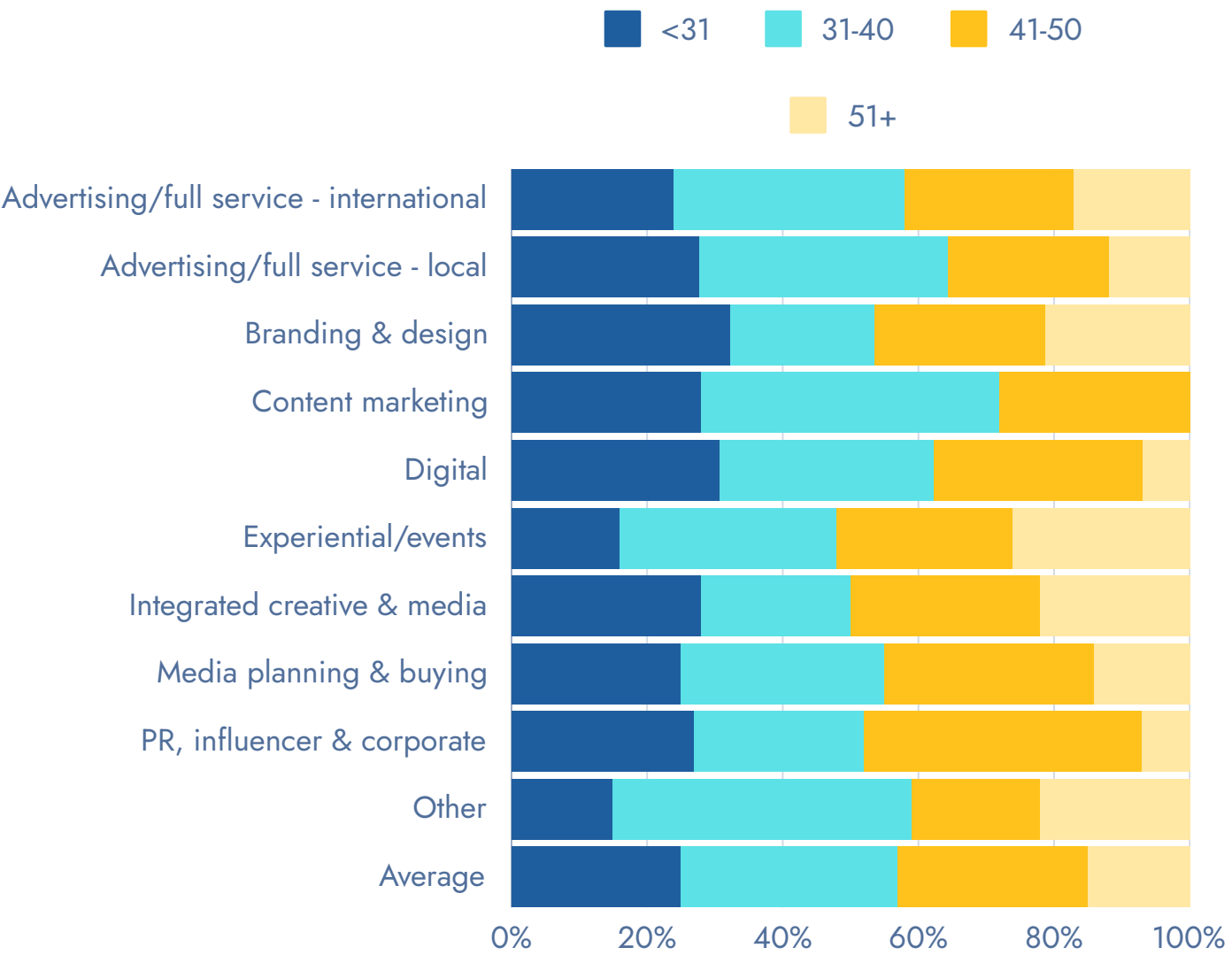
Over half of respondents (58%) were female and 36% were male. Seven respondents identified as non-binary and one preferred to self-describe. Female respondents also significantly outnumbered males in all the individual national Sentiment Surveys. Half of all female respondents (50%) were aged 35 or younger, compared to 35% of males. All non-binary respondents were between the ages of 26 and 40. Almost one-third of male respondents (32%) were over the age of 45, whereas only 22% of female respondents were in this age bracket. The majority of respondents (78%) were aged 26-50 years. There were 20 respondents over the age of 60 and four aged 20 or younger.

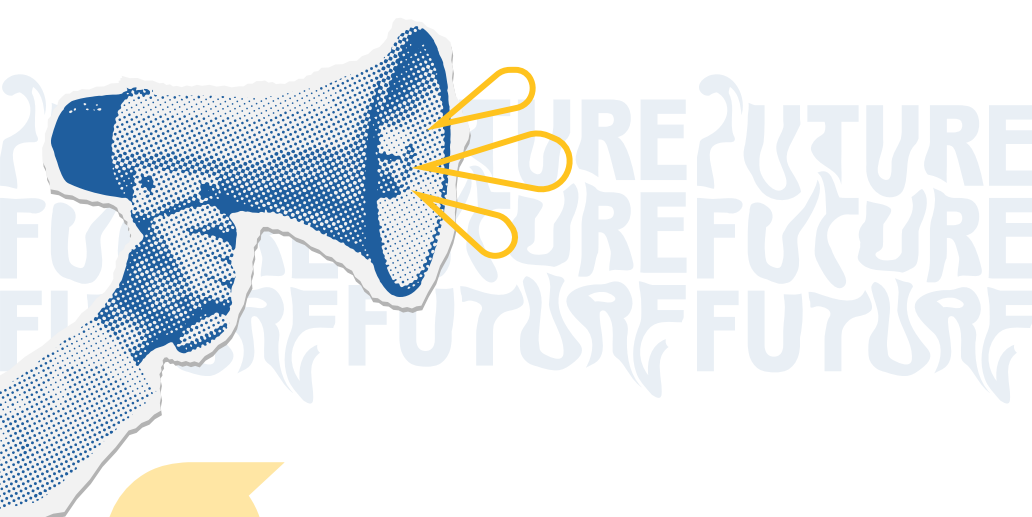




## AGE & GENDER

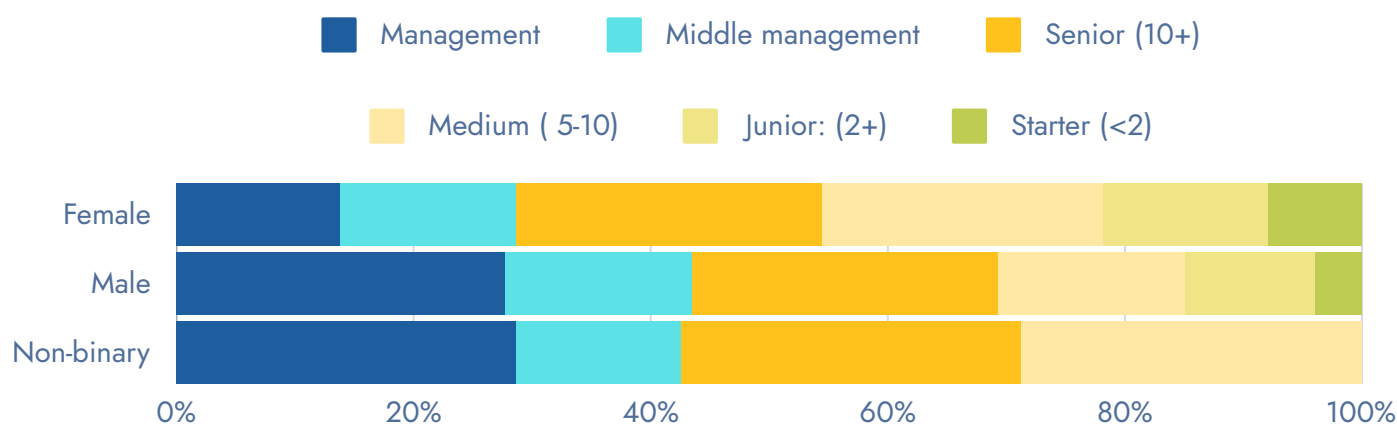
Branding & design (32%) and digital agencies (31%) had the most respondents aged 30 and under. No respondents working in content and marketing agencies were aged 51 and over, whereas experiential and events agencies had the highest proportion of those in this age bracket (26%).





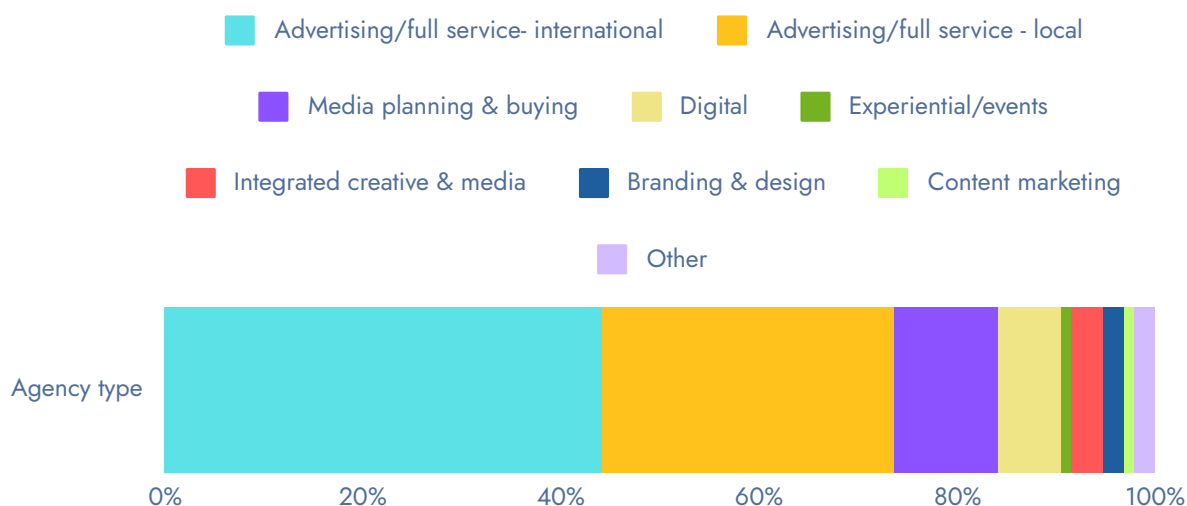
## PARTICIPANTS & THEIR AGENCIES

Respondents were cross-level, with 26% describing themselves as senior level workers, with 10+ years' experience, and 21% as medium level, with 5-10 years' experience. Only 6% of respondents had less than 2 years' experience. 28% of males and 14% of females were in management positions. All non-binary respondents had minimum 5 years' experience. On average, less female respondents had senior roles compared to males, with 69% of males at a Senior level or above versus 54% of females.

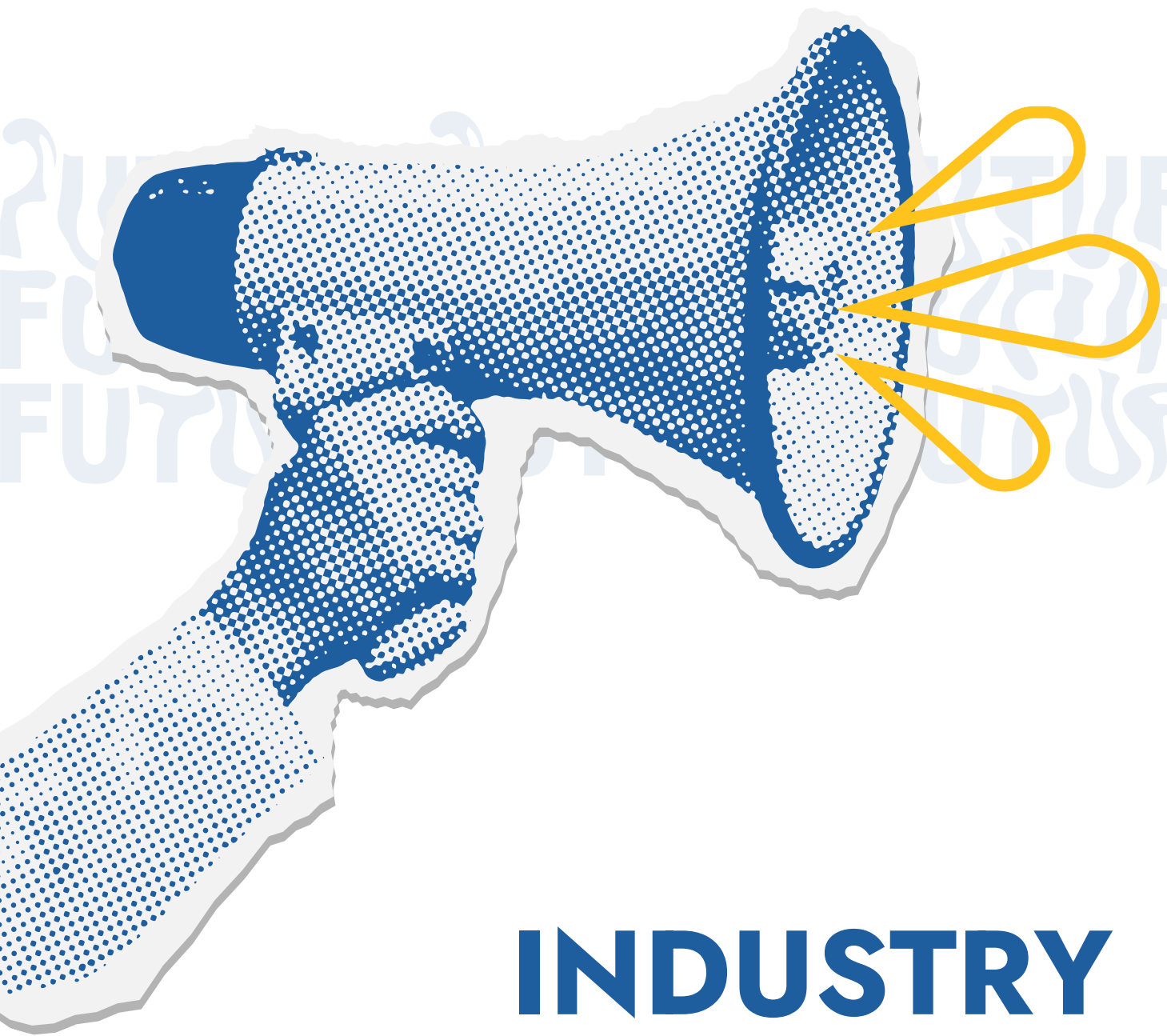


### Agency Type

70% of all respondents worked in either local or international advertising/full-service agencies. Media planning and buying agencies were the next largest agency group represented in this survey (10%). Content marketing and experiential/events agencies each made up 1% of the sample.



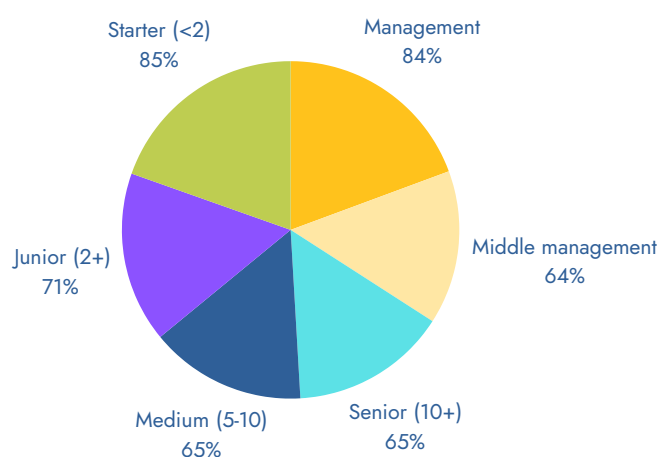
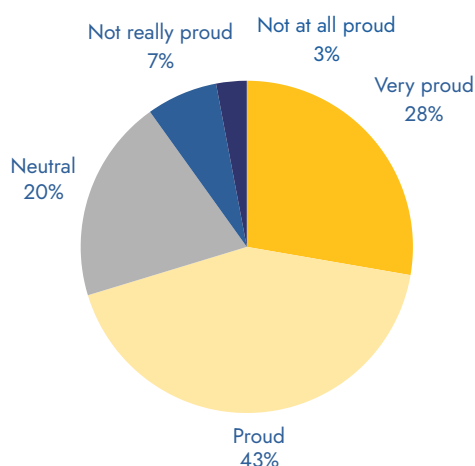




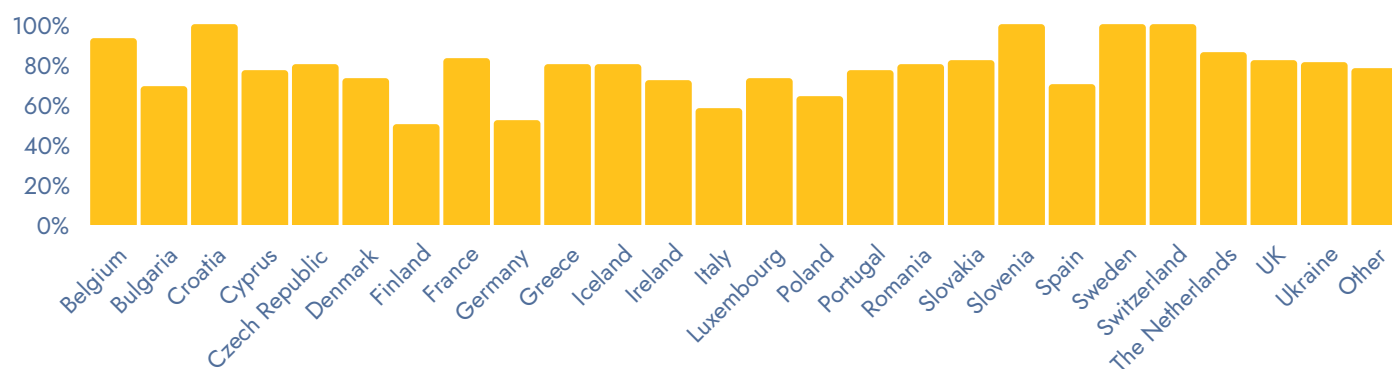
# **INDUSTRY SENTIMENT & OPTIMISM**

## PRIDE IN THE INDUSTRY

On average, **over 70% of respondents claimed to be proud**, or very proud to work in the industry. Pride varied by nationality, with respondents from Slovakia, the UK, and Ukraine expressing the highest levels of pride (out of countries with 10+ respondents). Starters had the highest level of pride in the industry (85%), followed by those at Management level (84%).

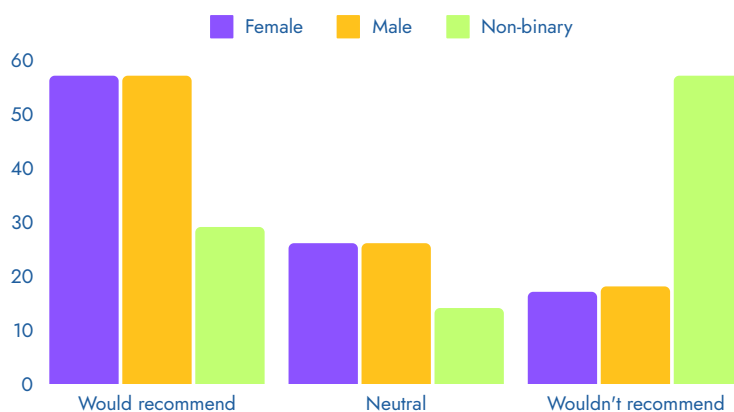
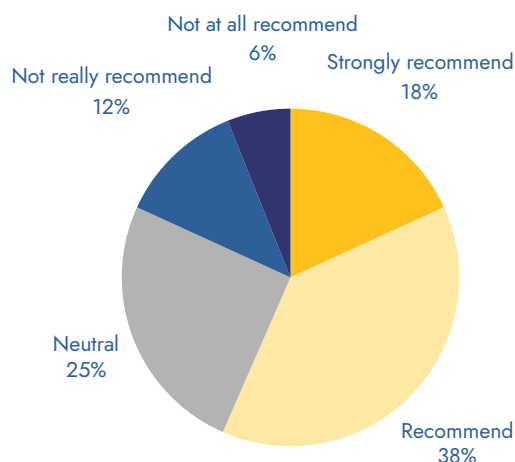


When including the results from Sentiment Surveys carried out by other countries, respondents from Belgium, France, Slovakia and the UK were most likely to be proud to work in the industry. Over half of the respondents in each country were proud to be working in the industry.

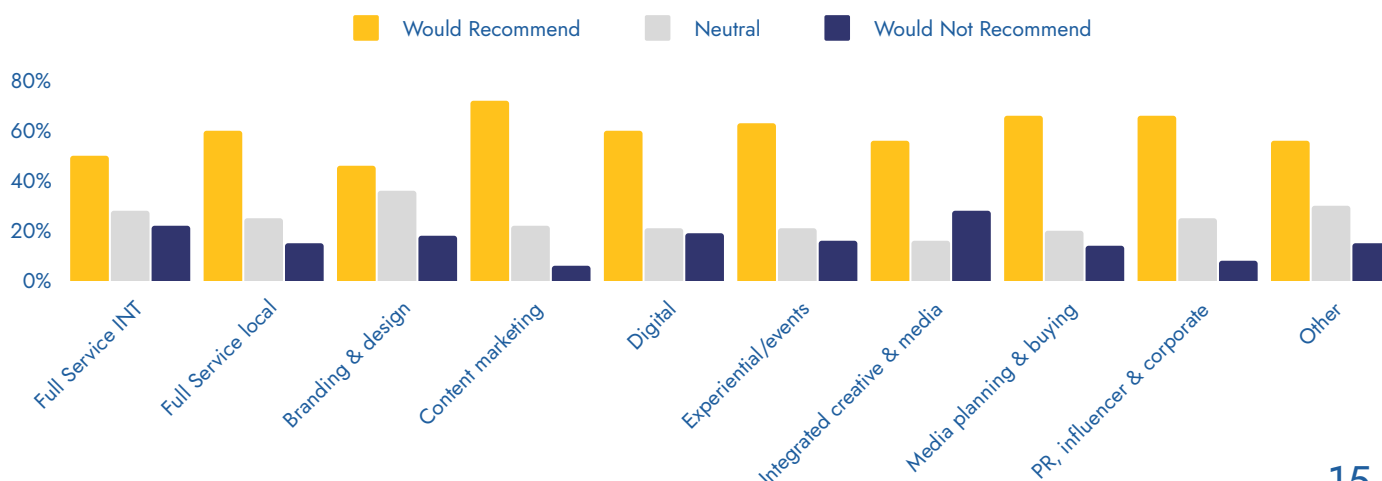


## RECOMMENDING THE INDUSTRY

Over half (56%) of all respondents would **recommend or highly recommend the communications industry as a great place to work**. There were no differences between male and female respondents' likelihood of recommending the industry as a great place to work (57%), although non-binary respondents were more likely to not recommend it (57%).



Respondents working in content marketing agencies were most likely to recommend the industry (72% would recommend) and those in Integrated creative & media agencies were most inclined to not recommend the industry (28% would not recommend).

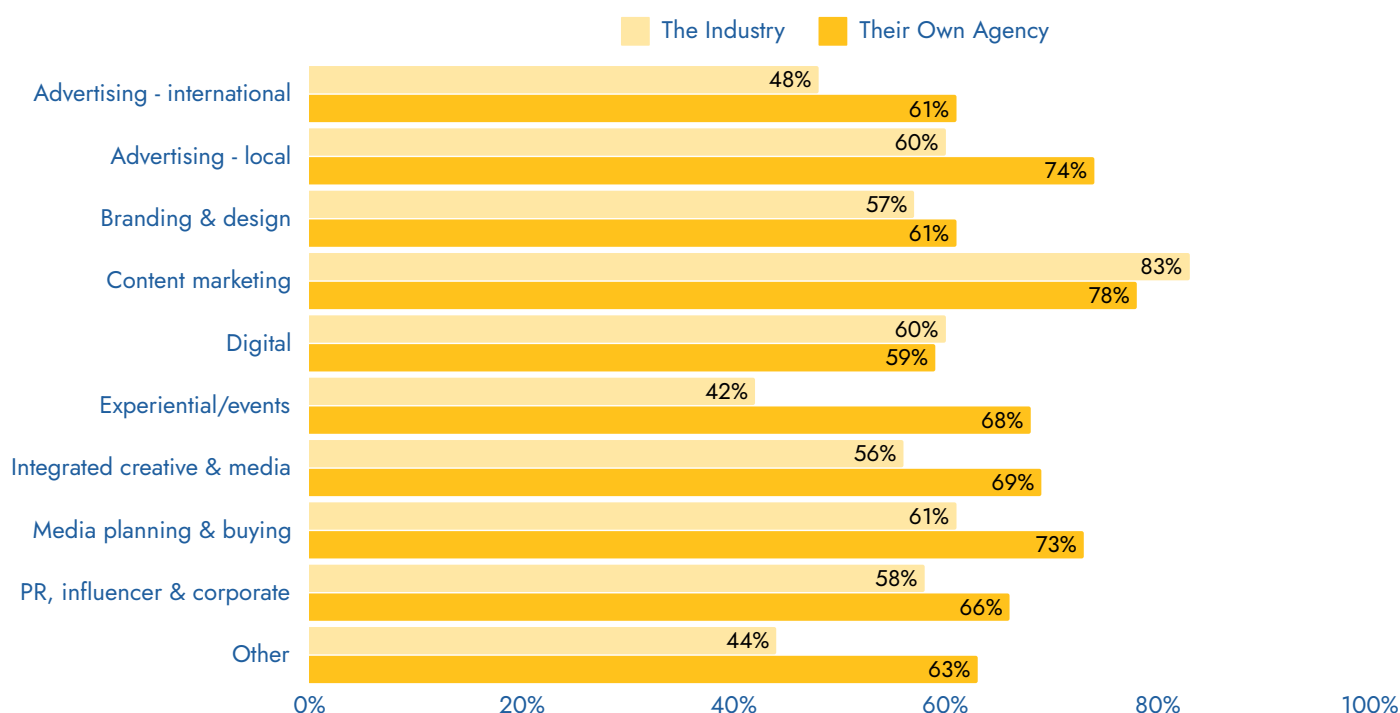


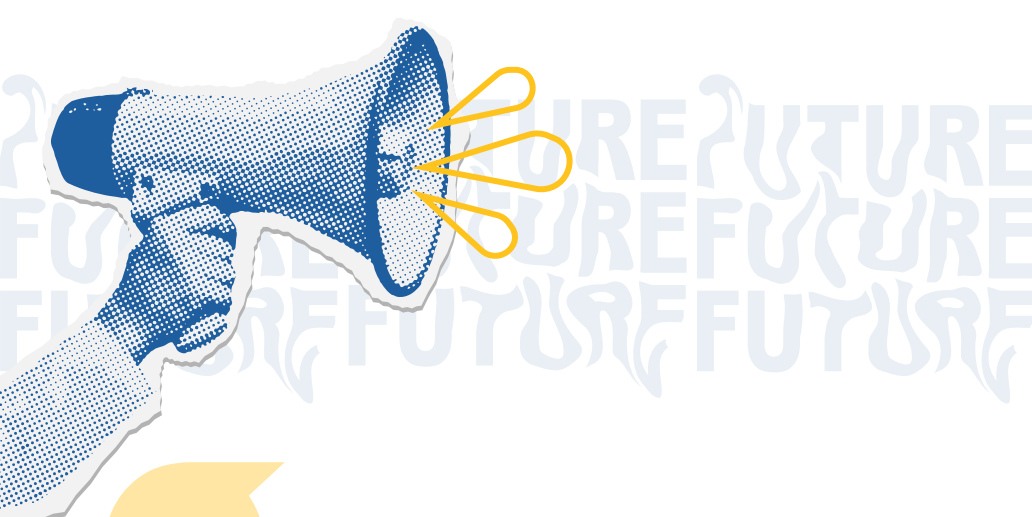


## OPTIMISM ABOUT THE FUTURE

Over **two-thirds of respondents (67%)** were optimistic about the future of their own agency and over **half (54%)** were optimistic about the future of the communications industry. Only 18% were not optimistic about the future of the industry and 15% about the future of their agency.

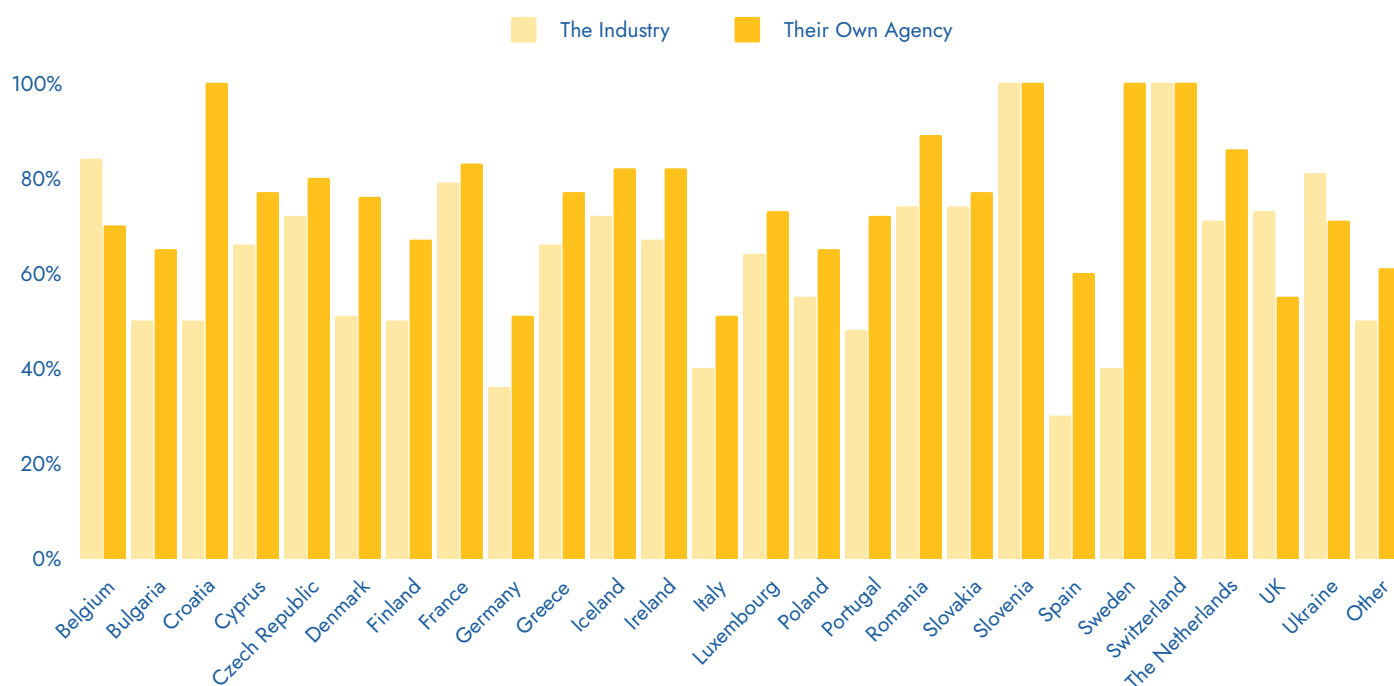
The most junior level employees were the most optimistic about the future of the industry (78%), and those at the most senior Management level were most optimistic about the future of their agency (85%). Content marketing agencies were most optimistic about the future, both for the industry (83%) and their own agency (78%).





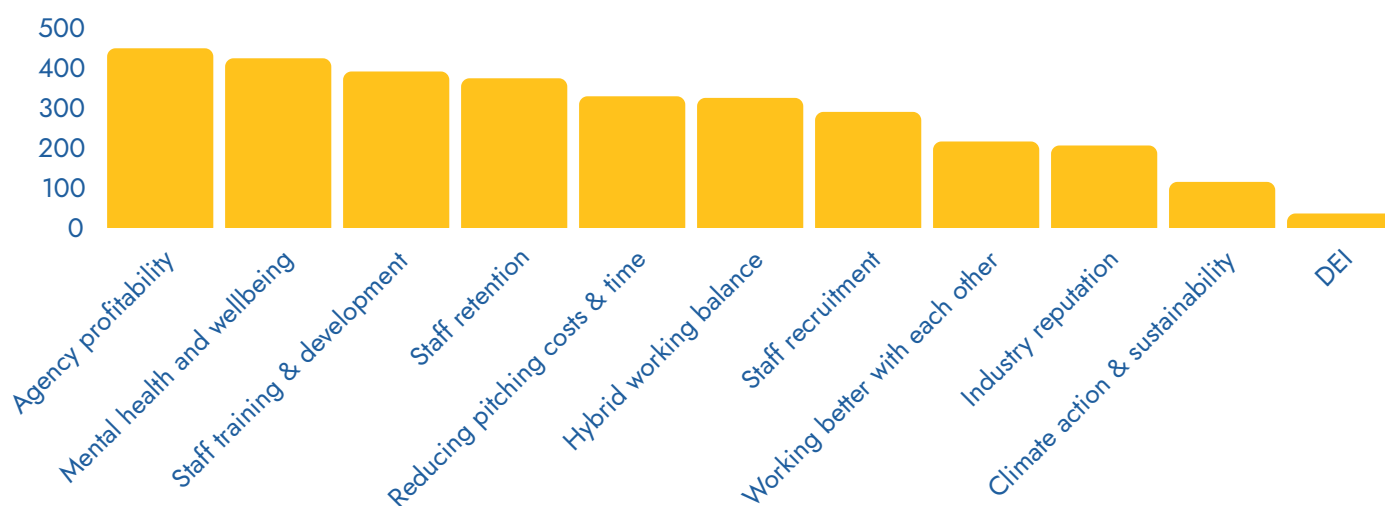
## OPTIMISM ABOUT THE FUTURE

When also including the other Sentiment Survey results, respondents from Romania (89%) and the Netherlands (86%) were most optimistic about their own agencies' future and those from Belgium (84%) and Ukraine (81%) were most optimistic about the industry's future.



## MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR 2025

The top three issues respondents believed their countries need to tackle in the upcoming year were **agency profitability**, **mental health and well-being**, and **staff training and development**.



 **BG:** Profitability

 **HR:** Profitability

 **CY:** Mental health & wellbeing


 **CZ:** Profitability

 **DK:** Profitability

 **FI:** Profitability

 **FR:** Staff retention & Profitability

 **DE:** Profitability

 **GR:** Profitability & hybrid work

 **IS:** Profitability

 **IT:** Mental health & wellbeing

 **LU:** Reducing pitch process costs & time

 **PL:** Profitability

 **PT:** Profitability

 **RO:** Profitability

 **SK:** Mental health & wellbeing

 **SI:** Profitability

 **ES:** Reducing pitch process costs & time

 **SE:** Staff recruitment

 **CH:** Profitability

 **NL:** Reducing pitch process costs & time & Profitability

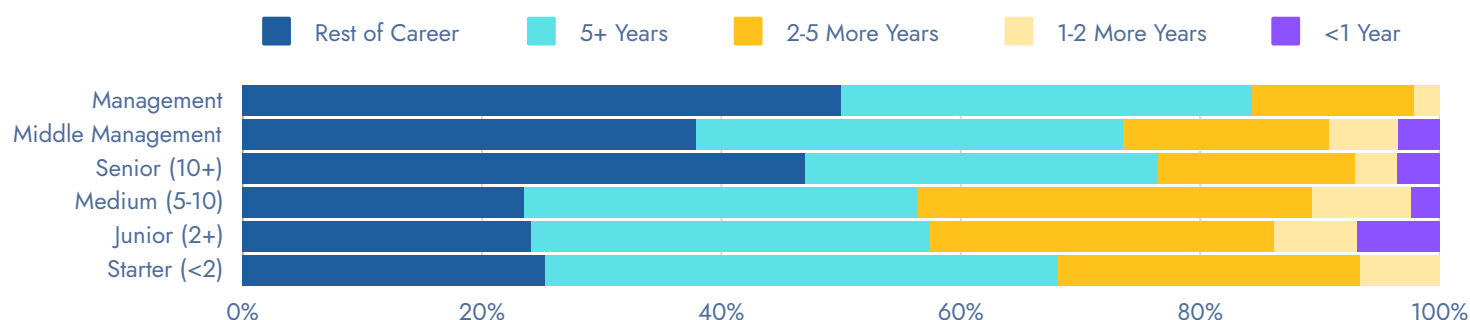
 **UK:** Profitability

 **UA:** Mental health & wellbeing

## STAYING POWER

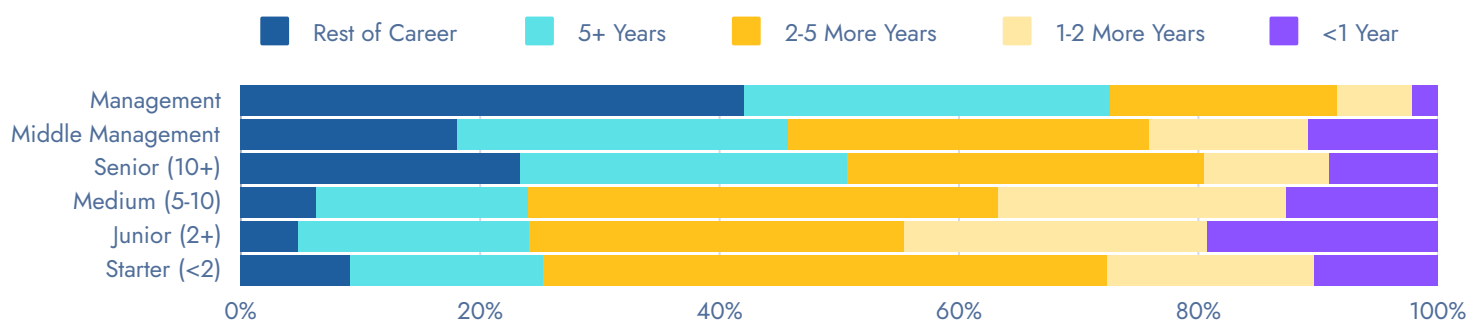
### Industry

A positive indication for the industry is that staying power is high, with **33% of individuals expecting to stay in the industry for the rest of their career** and 30% see themselves in industry for another 5+ years. Only 2% expect to remain in the industry for less than 1 year and 5% for 1-2 more years. Those at Management and Senior levels are the most likely to stay in the industry for the rest of their careers (48% and 40% respectively). Those at Junior and Medium levels are most likely to stay for another 2 years or less (12% and 9% respectively).



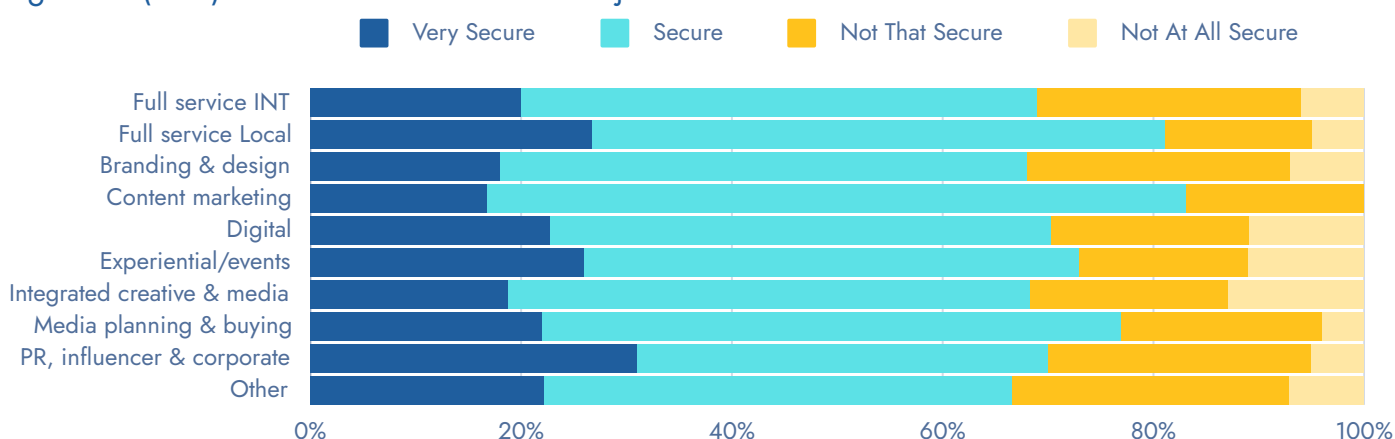
### Agencies

Many respondents **expect to move around agencies**, with 17% planning to stay in the same agency for the remainder of their career. Only 20%, however, expect to leave their current agency in 2 years or less. Over one-third of Junior employees (38%) do not expect to remain in their current agencies for longer than another 2 years. For those at the Starter level, the majority (41%) think they will work in their current agency for another 2-5 years, showing a strong commitment to their new workplaces.



## JOB SECURITY & LEAVING

Almost **three-quarters of respondents (73%)** feel **secure or very secure about their job** at the moment. This is more or less consistent across departments, levels, and genders. Job security varies by agency type, with almost one-third of those in international advertising/full-service (32%), branding & design (32%), integrated creative & media (31%), and PR, influencer & corporate agencies (31%) not feeling secure in their job. Those in Content marketing (83%) and local advertising/full-service agencies (82%) feel the most secure in their jobs.



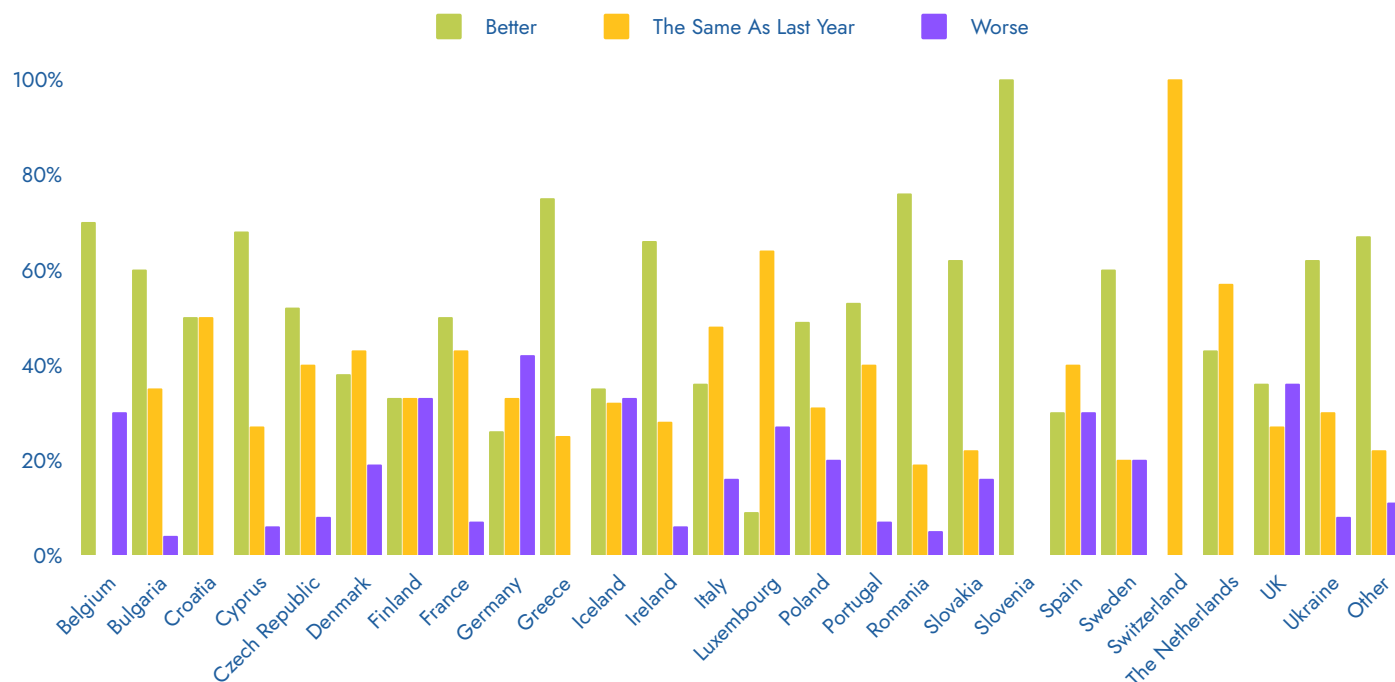
The most common reason why respondents would consider leaving the industry is to **reduce their workload** and have a **better work/life balance**, followed by to **earn more money for a comparable workload**. Having a livelier work environment or increasing responsibility are not currently driving employees to leave the industry, showing that internationally, agencies are doing very well in these areas.



## AGENCY PERFORMANCE IN 2025

Almost **half of respondents (47%)** believe their agency will do better or much better this year compared to last. Only 16% believe their agency will do worse than the previous year. Starters are the most optimistic about their agency's performance in the upcoming year, with 60% believing their agency will perform better. Medium level employees are the least positive, as only 40% believe their agency will do better and 19% believe it will perform worse.

Including the other Sentiment Surveys and excluding countries with a sample size less than 10, respondents from Belgium (70%), Cyprus (68%) and Ireland (66%) were most likely to believe their agencies will perform better or much better than last year.

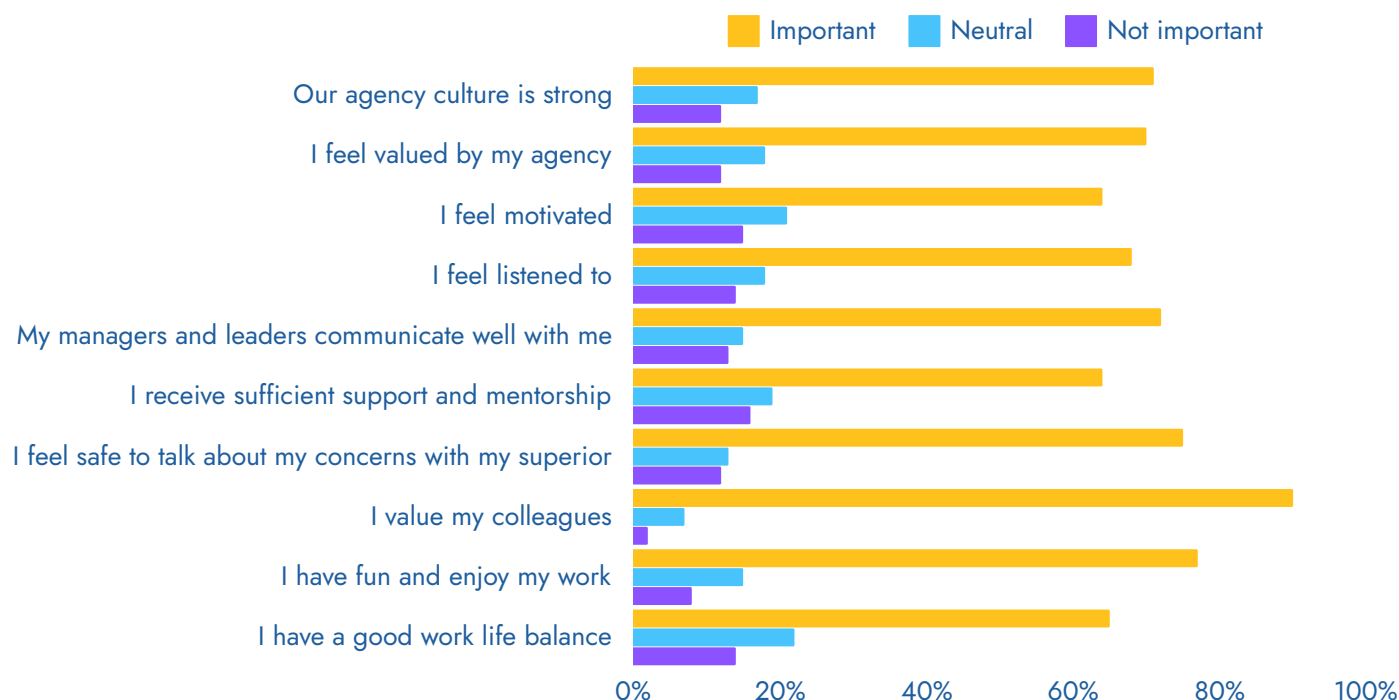




## VIEWS ON YOUR OWN AGENCY

Respondents were asked how important they considered a number of statements on a scale of 1-10. What emerged was that undeniably, the most important thing to employees is **valuing their colleagues**, with 90% of respondents giving this a score of 7 or higher. Across agency types, departments and employee level, this remained the most important priority. This reflects extremely positively on the industry and shows great work from our agencies in fostering collaboration and respect between employees.

Respondents also highly valued **having fun and enjoying their work** (77%), **feeling safe to talk about their concerns** with a superior (75%) and **having their managers and leaders communicate well** with them (72%). Although still important, receiving support and mentorship was not as much of a priority with 64% saying it is important and 16% saying it is not.



84% believe they can be their true self at work. Although this is relatively consistent across countries, the UK is the exception where a lower number of 64% feel they can be their true selves at work.





# **EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT & STATE OF MIND**

## TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

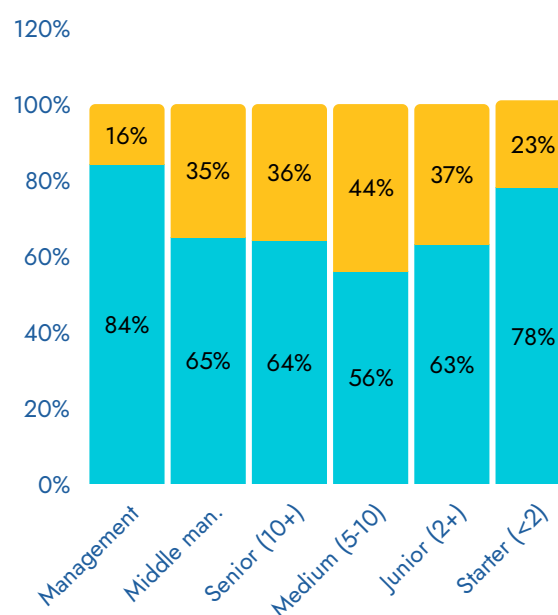
Just over half of all respondents (52%) feel that their training and development needs are being met. This varies between levels, with 64% of Starters and 62% of Managers feeling that their training and development needs are being met, compared to 46% of Medium-level employees and 47% of Middle Managers. This shows agencies need to consider **investing in more training and development opportunities** for individuals at median levels of seniority.

## OPPORTUNITIES

67% of respondents consider that they have the same opportunities as anyone else with their skills. This varied, however depending on agency type and respondents' level of seniority, department and gender. Managers were most likely to think they have the same opportunities (84%) and Medium-level employees were the least (56%).

By gender, 75% of males believe they have the same opportunities as anyone else with their skills, compared to 63% of females and 43% of non-binary individuals.

Respondents in strategic departments were most likely to think they have the same opportunities as others (69%), whereas those in technology/production were the least likely (55%).



## JOB PERCEPTIONS

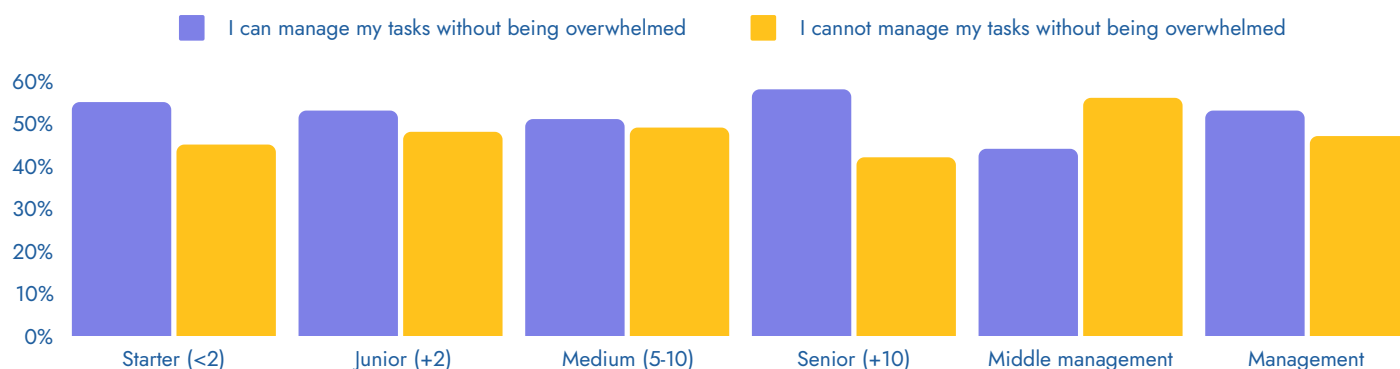
Participants were asked to score their current job on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high) in response to a number of different statements.

- **69% of respondents felt highly valued** or valued by their agency and colleagues (score of 7+). This is a great indication of the strength of the industry, as we mentioned previously that for 90% of respondents, valuing their colleagues was most important to them.
- 61% of participants were **satisfied or very satisfied (score of 7+)** with the enjoyment and motivation they experience in their work, with only 16% dissatisfied (score of 4 or less). 59% believe the **communication and support they receive from managers and leaders is effective** or very effective (score of 7+).
- Just over **half (51%) of respondents think that their training and development needs are being met** (score of 7+). This mirrors the outcomes from a previous question exploring the same theme and emphasises the need for agencies to invest in employee training and development.
- While the same number (51%) felt that their career opportunities are being met (score of 7+), a quarter of respondents (25%) did not feel they are being met (score of 4 or less). The industry as a whole needs to **ensure there are adequate opportunities for all individuals to progress** their careers. This is essential to maintain talent within the communications industry and prevent individuals from moving elsewhere.

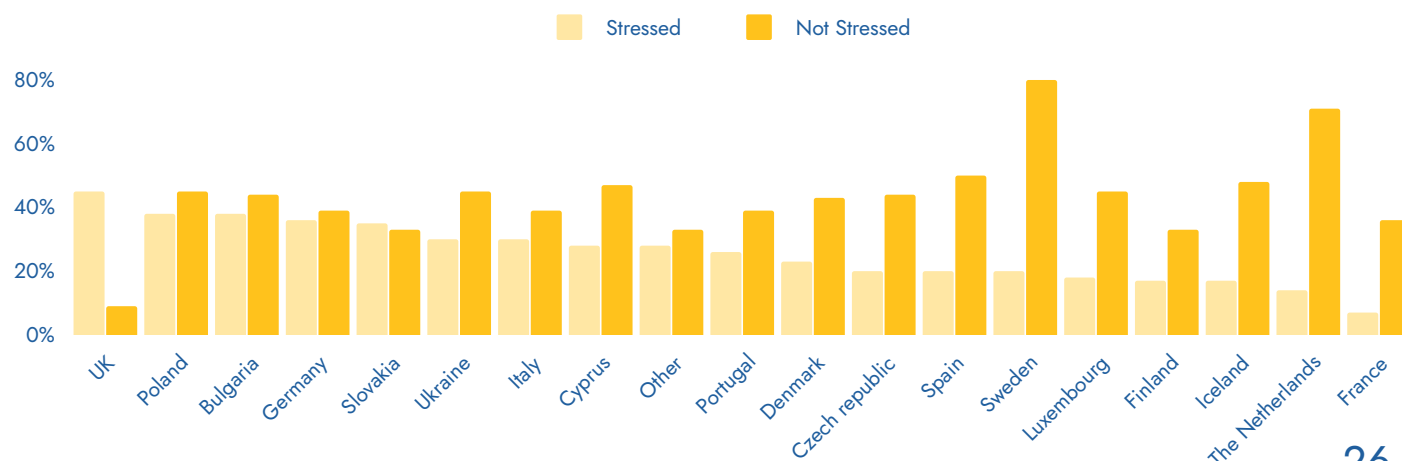


## OVERWHELM & STRESS

Half of all respondents (48%) **did not feel as though they can manage all their tasks** without feeling overwhelmed. This varied somewhat by level, with middle managers feeling the highest levels of overwhelm (56% cannot manage) and Senior level the least (42% cannot manage). This number of employees feeling overwhelmed is concerning, as it can lead to **burnout and mental health issues** for the individual and **high turnover and retention issues** for agencies.



When asked to rate how stressed they feel in their daily work, 41% of respondents do not feel stressed, compared to 29% who reported feeling stressed or very stressed. Excluding countries with less than 5 respondents, employees in Sweden and the Netherlands experience the lowest levels of stress and those in the UK the highest.





## **STATE OF MIND**

87% of respondents agreed that they feel connected to work and their colleagues. 86% feel included at work, showing a **strong sense of community and mutual respect in communications agencies**. 83% agreed that their line manager is responsive to their needs outside of work, and 73% feel they can talk openly with their manager about mental health and stress levels at work.

Psychological safety, the shared belief that individuals can make mistakes, share openly, take risks and constructively challenge one another without negative consequences, is high in the industry, with **78% feeling they can openly share and learn from their mistakes** in their company and 71% agreeing that their team encourages them to disagree or think differently.

77% of respondents agreed that their managers can receive feedback. A lower percentage of 57% feel that they receive regular feedback on their performance that they find helpful, showing a **need by agencies to develop a greater feedback culture**.



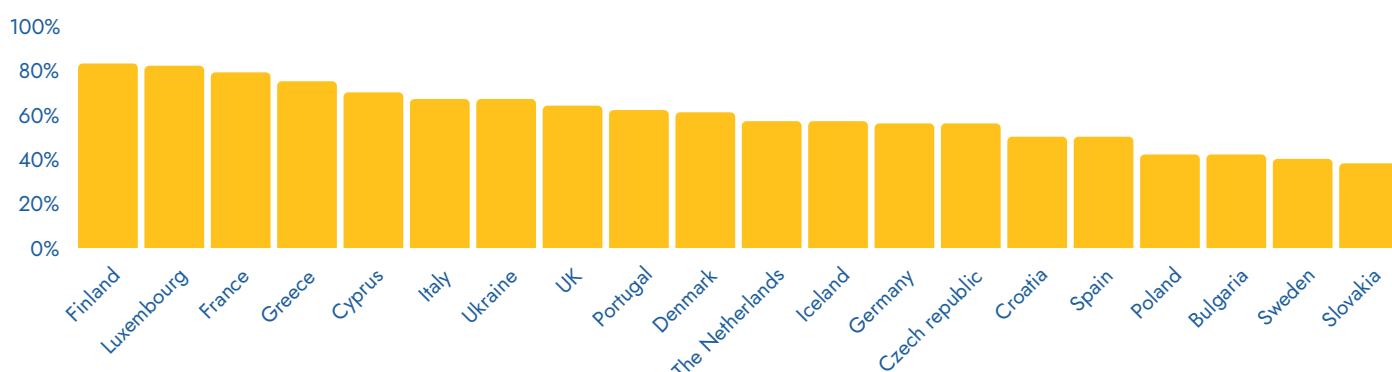
# **THE WIDER CONTEXT & THE ROLE OF THE INDUSTRY**



## THE ROLE OF THE INDUSTRY

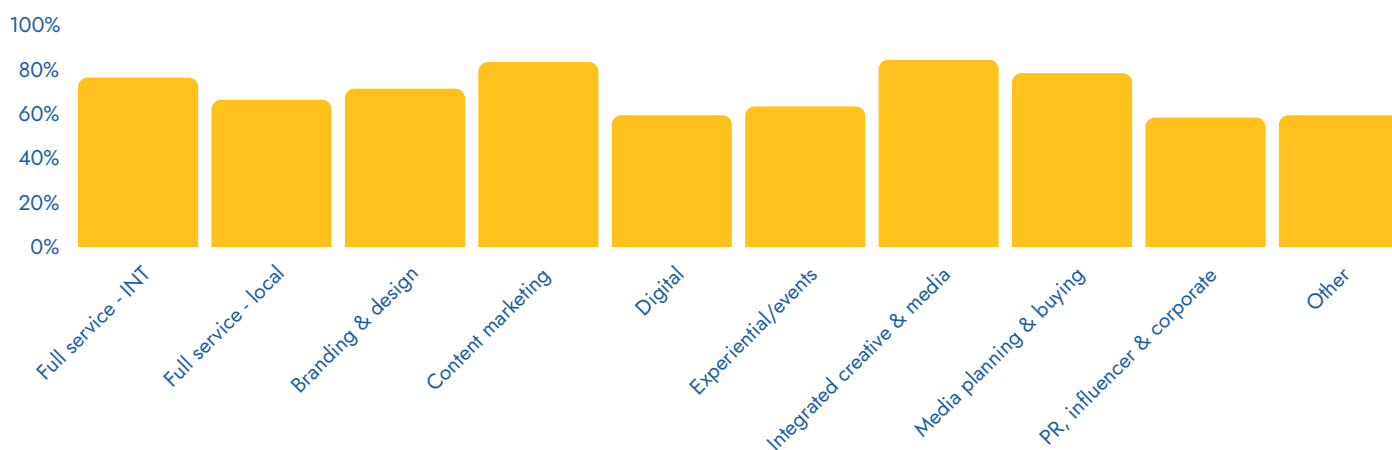
### Sustainability

Over half (59%) of respondents think it is important for their agency to **demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability**. This varies in importance by country, with 83% of respondents from Finland considering it important for their agency to demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability, compared to 38% of respondents from Slovakia.



### Diversity and Inclusion

71% think it is important for their agency to **actively promote inclusion and diversity in the workplace**. The importance placed on promoting DEI varies by agency type, with 84% of integrated creative and media agencies and 83% of content marketing agencies considering this important or very important.

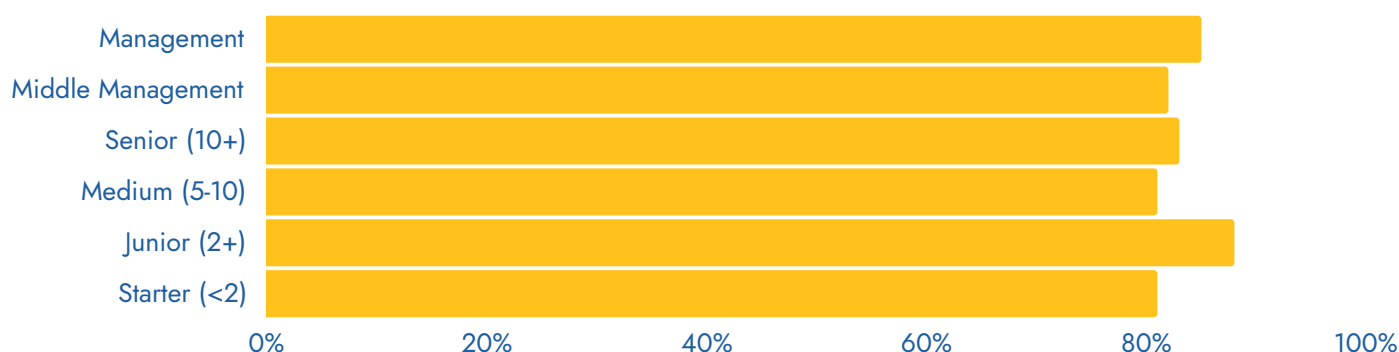




# THE ROLE OF THE INDUSTRY

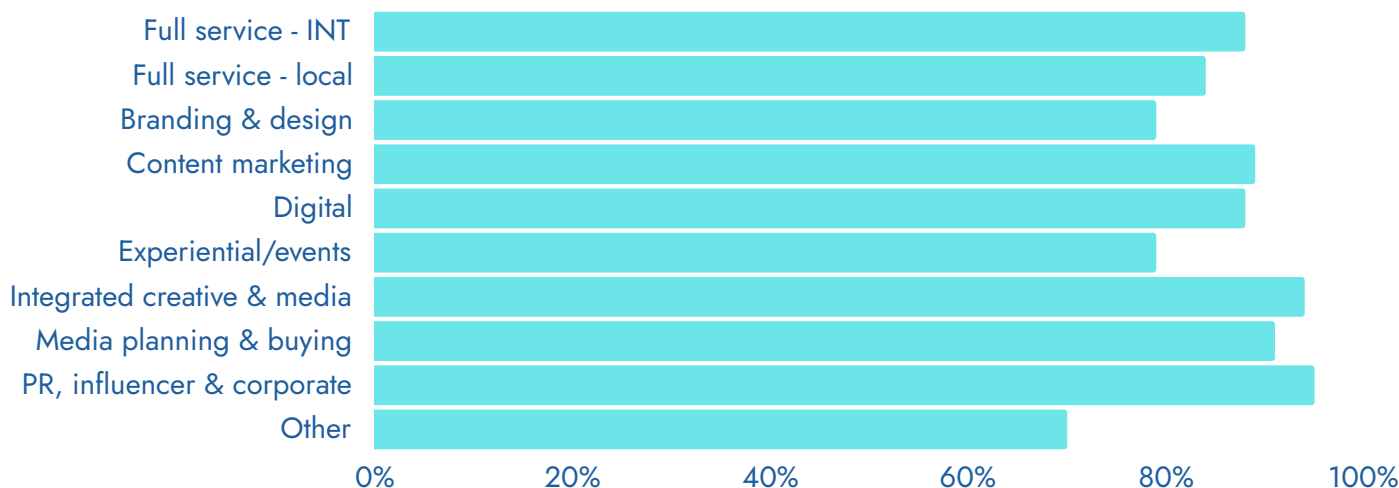
## Payment Practices

83% of respondents think it is important or very important that their agency **ensure fair and transparent payment practices**. It is extremely positive to see that this is considered important at all levels. Of note is the value placed on fair and transparent payment practices by those involved in decision making, with 85% of Managers and 82% of Middle Managers considering it important.



## Flexible Working

A large majority of 87% of respondents think it is important or very important that their agency support **flexible and remote working arrangements**. This is most important to those in PR, influencer & corporate agencies and Integrated creative & media agencies, where 95% and 94% respectively consider it important.

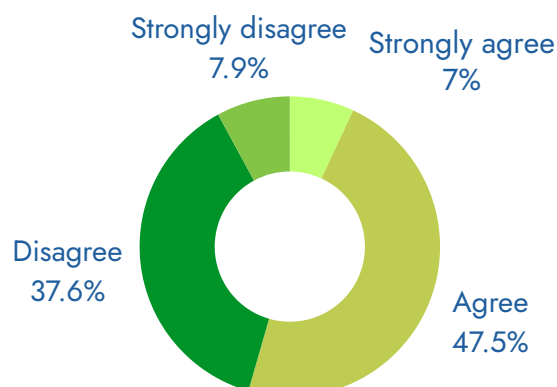


# SUSTAINABILITY

## The Role of the Industry

There is evidently appetite among respondents for sustainability action and responsibility, with 90% agreeing that our industry has an important role in changing consumer behaviours. 54% agree that their agency and national association have an important role to play in committing the industry to reduce carbon emissions through initiatives such as Ad Net Zero.

*“Agency and national body have a role to commit the industry to reduce emissions”*



## Clients' Sustainability

Just over half (53%) believe that their clients are committing to sustainable behaviours. 84% of respondents agree or strongly agree that they are **happier to work with clients that are committed to sustainability**, demonstrating the need for clients to increase their sustainability commitments and behaviours.

## Agency Actions

Two-thirds (66%) of respondents agree that their agency is committing to sustainable behaviours, showing there is room for improvement among agencies. 71% believe that **every agency should have a sustainability champion**, giving agencies a clear action to take to progress their sustainability journeys.

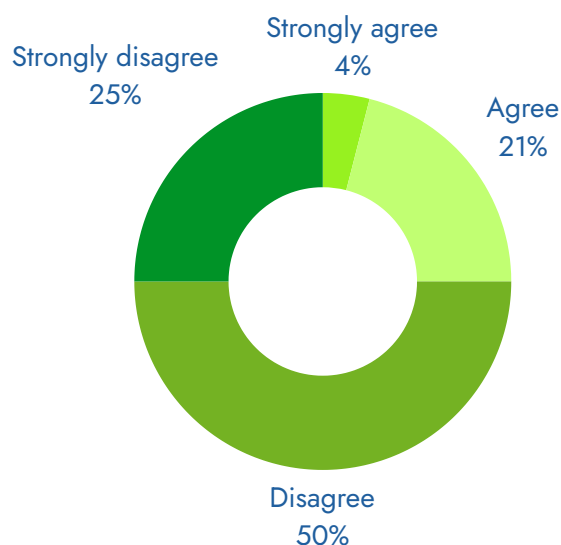


## SUSTAINABILITY

### Individual Attitudes

75% disagree with the statement “I don’t want to think about sustainability at all”, showing a desire from individuals to get involved in sustainability. 88% believe that they **need to become better educated on what agencies and clients can do to impact sustainability**. National associations can support this by providing information, hosting educational events and other informative activities.

*“I don’t want to think about sustainability at all -  
I just want to get on with my job”*



# DIVERSITY, EQUALITY & INCLUSION

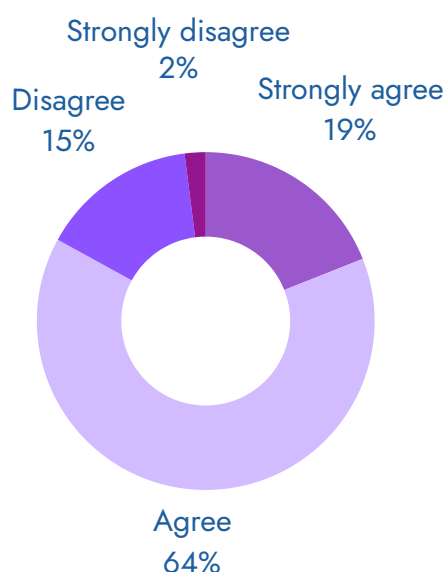
72% of respondents agree that we are moving in the right direction when it comes to DEI in our workforce and representation, and 76% feel that we are doing better on gender balance in creative roles. 91% agree that **the industry has an important role in changing consumers' behaviour**. Regarding DEI, 82% agree that their agency and national association have a role to play in helping the industry become more diverse and inclusive.

## Agency Actions

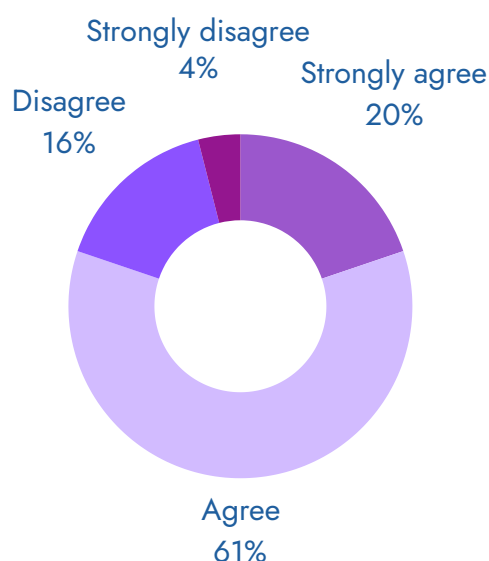
81% of respondents feel that **everyone in the industry should undertake unconscious bias training**, providing agencies and national associations with a positive action they can take. It is positive to see that 78% of respondents agree that people of diverse characteristics and backgrounds are visible and speak up in their companies.

## Individual Attitudes

*"I am happier to work with a client that has a truly DEI culture"*

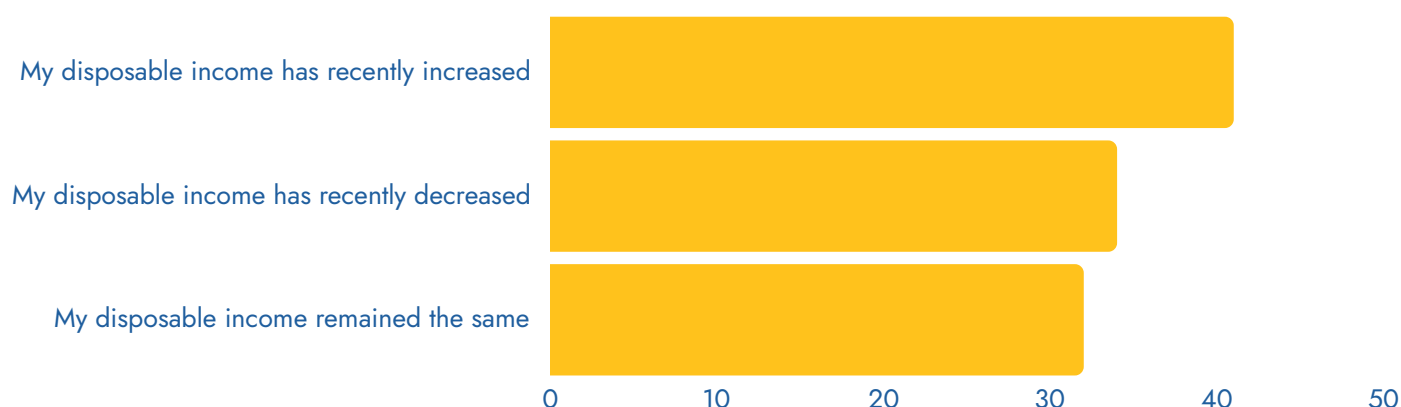


*"Working in a diverse and inclusive industry is an important factor in choosing where I work"*



## COST OF LIVING

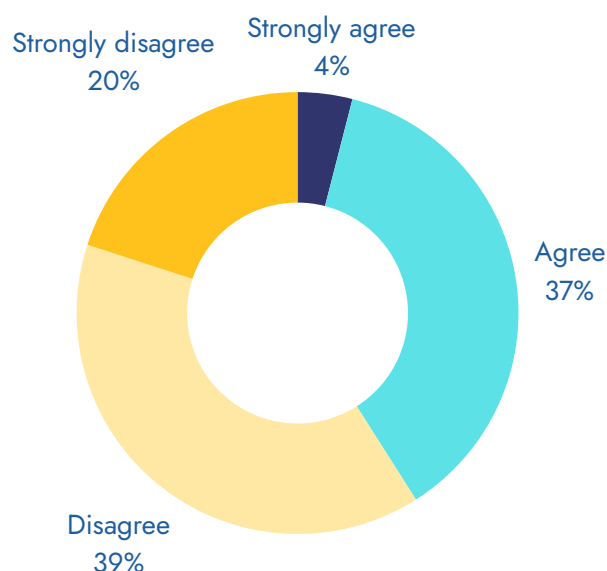
There is not much disparity between those who agree that their disposable income has recently increased (41%), decreased (34%), or remained the same (32%). There is some difference between levels, though, with Senior level employees the least likely to agree that their disposable income has increased (26%) and the most likely to agree that it has decreased (40%). Starters are the most likely to feel their disposable income has increased (43%), as they see the benefits of full-time employment in agencies.



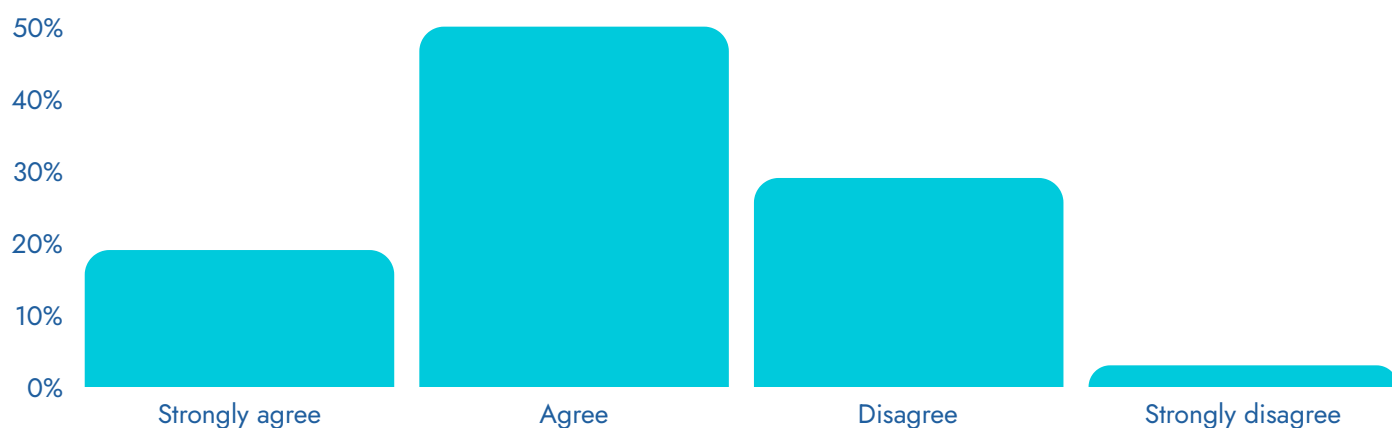
Almost two-thirds (62%) have cut down their discretionary spend and only 44% of respondents feel they have enough disposable income to do most of the things they like. Even though the majority have not seen a decline in their disposable income, difficult economic conditions mean individuals are not able to live comfortably on current salaries. In line with this, 39% of respondents agree that they are struggling to make ends meet.

## EARNINGS

**Only 41% of respondents feel that they are paid properly** for their workload and responsibilities. This varies by agency type, as 78% of respondents in content marketing agencies feel they are paid fairly, compared to 32% of branding and design agencies.

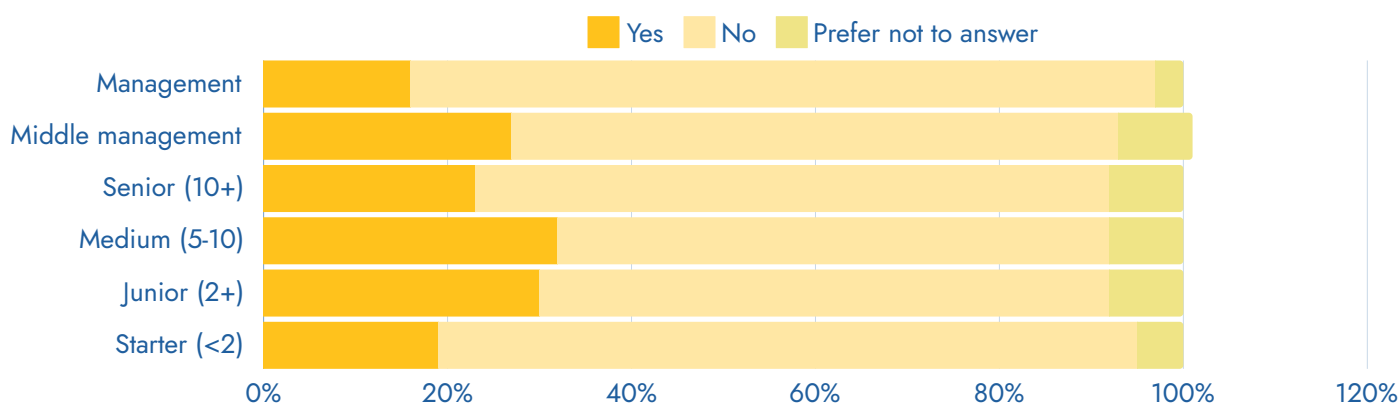


As we can see below, 69% of people agree that **they could earn more for doing an equally fascinating job in another sector**. A lesser number, 52%, agree that they could earn more and still have an equally fascinating job in another agency.

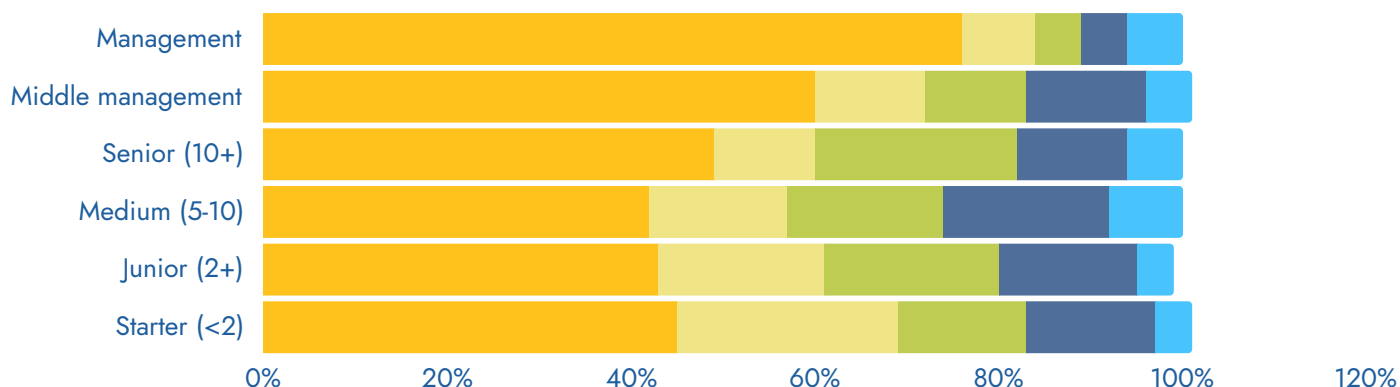


## INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In the last 12 months, **a quarter of respondents (25%) reported experiencing inappropriate behaviour** or behaviour that made them feel uncomfortable in their company. Medium and junior level employees were the most likely to experience inappropriate behaviour, with 32% and 30% respectively agreeing that they experienced inappropriate behaviour or behaviour that made them feel uncomfortable in their company in the past 12 months.



The majority (53%) would feel comfortable reporting inappropriate behaviour and know how and to who to report it, which is positive for the industry. Generally, respondents with the most experience were most likely to feel comfortable reporting this type of behaviour, however Senior employees were the least likely to feel comfortable.









# KEY TAKEAWAYS

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **70% feel proud to be working in the communications industry**, especially junior employees and those at management level (85% proud and 84% proud, respectively). Mid-level and senior employees (64% and 65% proud, respectively) lag behind, although the majority still feel proud to be in the field. Indeed, **most respondents feel positively about their workplace** – 69% feel valued by their agency and coworkers, and 61% experience enjoyment and motivation at their workplace.
- Middle managers have been struggling to keep employees motivated in the aftermath of Covid-19 and the partial return to office; this has been contributing to higher stress levels, **with more than half of middle managers (56%) expressing they cannot manage their tasks without feeling overwhelmed**. Further, middle managers feel less connected to work compared to their more junior coworkers, with only 46% stating that they receive regular and helpful feedback on their performance (as opposed to 53% of senior and 61% of junior employees). This indicates an acute need for **more and better training and development opportunities for this group**. The issue of insufficient training and talent development appears to be industry-wide; respondents from Portugal, Slovakia, Cyprus, and Denmark are among those most satisfied with the training and development opportunities they receive (61%, 54%, 56%, and 58%, respectively).
- Mental health and wellbeing, along with people development, was among the key issues that respondents believed should be tackled in 2025. It is encouraging to see that 73% of employees, on average, feel that **they can talk openly about mental health with their superiors**; this sentiment was highest among senior management and lowest among junior employees (84% and 66%, respectively).
- Psychological safety in the industry is strong, with **78% of employees feeling they can openly share and learn from their mistakes**. Agencies as a whole also appear to be implementing feedback cultures; 57% report that they receive regular feedback on their performance. Yet, these findings underscore that **providing feedback should remain an ongoing priority** in the industry, particularly regarding mid-level employees.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Respondents believe that the communications industry has a role and responsibility when it comes to large societal issues such as **sustainability and DEI**. 84% of respondents are **happier to work with clients who are committed to sustainability**, and 88% feel they need to become better educated on what agencies and clients can do to impact sustainability. Additionally, for 81% of employees, working in a diverse and inclusive industry is an important factor in choosing where they work; the same number believe that everyone in **the industry should undertake unconscious bias training**.
- Fair pay and flexible working are also important to employees, with **87% valuing flexible and remote working arrangements**, and 83% considering it essential that their agency **ensure fair and transparent payment practices**.
- Only 34% of respondents feel their disposable income has reduced in the last 12 months, however 62% have cut down their discretionary spend. This shows a **continuance of cost-of-living difficulties** and testifies to an industry-wide challenge, as only 41% feel they are paid properly and **69% feel they could earn a lot more in an equally fascinating job in another sector**. Junior and medium-level employees, as well as middle managers, agree to the highest degree, with 76%, 79%, and 71% responding with 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'. This appears to be an industry-wide issue and not pertaining to a specific agency, as 52% of all respondents believe they could earn more if they worked for a competitor; while still a majority, this is a lower number than the 69% seen in the previous question.
- Importantly, 25%, or one in every four respondents, report experiencing **inappropriate behaviour in their company in the last 12 months**. The numbers are highest amongst medium- and junior-level employees (32% and 30%, respectively), and lowest among senior management and starters (16% and 19%). Senior and medium-level employees are also the least likely to report such behaviour (only 60% of seniors and 57% of medium-level employees would report), although on average, most of those who have faced inappropriate behaviour would be comfortable reporting these instances and also know who to address it to.



## **TAKE ACTION!**

- 1. Prioritise Mid-Level Employees:** Focus on the needs of mid-level employees by offering career development opportunities and fostering leadership potential
- 2. Manage Workloads Effectively:** Implement systems and tools to address workload issues, ensuring a sustainable balance and reducing burnout
- 3. Enhance Employee Wellbeing:** Create initiatives that reduce stress, support mental health, and promote professional growth to boost engagement and satisfaction
- 4. Foster Transparency and Feedback:** Build a culture of open communication by offering constructive feedback and ensuring transparency across all agency processes
- 5. Champion Sustainability and DEI:** Commit to sustainability and DEI by setting measurable goals, promoting inclusive practices, and integrating them into everyday decision-making
- 6. Address Financial Concerns:** Take actionable steps to address financial challenges raised by employees, ensuring fair and equitable compensation practices
- 7. Offer Tailored Training Programmes:** Design and implement training opportunities that meet the specific needs of your employees, keeping them engaged and future-ready
- 8. Build a Positive Work Culture:** Reinforce values like respect, trust, and collaboration through agency-wide initiatives and leadership-led actions
- 9. Support Flexible Work Models:** Expand hybrid and flexible work policies to accommodate diverse employee needs and improve retention
- 10. Celebrate Achievements:** Recognise and reward the contributions of your team to maintain morale and foster a sense of belonging







EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS AGENCIES

