ASSESSING AND ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY
Assessing and advancing gender equality
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Since the United Nations addressed gender equality as the fifth of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), business in general and the PR and communication industry in particular, have promoted discussion on the issue. Special reports (i.e. CIPR, 2017; GWPR, 2019) along with particular networks to enhance women’s leadership have been established and gained traction. Industry reports and the most recent scientific meta-studies (Place & Vardeman-Winter, 2018; Topić et al., 2020) corroborate that gender inequalities and discriminations still persist in the communications field. Annually the European Communication Monitor monitors female practitioners and gender issues in the profession. This year it evaluates how gender equality achievements are perceived. The study also explores the awareness of the glass ceiling and its causes and responsibilities at the individual, organisational and profession level.

Gender issues remain a particular concern in an industry where three out of four departments and agencies in Europe employ more women than men, but still only one out of two leaders are women. Over half of practitioners (55.4 per cent) observe an improvement in gender equality in their country, but disagreement arises when it comes to evaluating how much has actually been done to support female practitioners: every second man (50.1 per cent) believes enough has been done, while most women (45.2 per cent) strongly dispute that. The glass ceiling refers to unacknowledged barriers that keep female practitioners from rising in the hierarchy (Dowling, 2017). There are still 32 per cent of European communication practitioners that deny the glass ceiling exists at any level. 42.6 per cent acknowledge the problem at the professional level in their country, but only 22.4 per cent concede its an issue in their own organisation or department.

According to previous research, denial occurs in the field (Yeomans, 2019) and is most commonly seen in male practitioners (Zerfass et al., 2014). This study shows that only three out of ten male respondents (29.6 per cent) acknowledge the problem in the profession and only 11.2 per cent accept its observable in their organisation or department. In contrast every third female practitioner (29.4 per cent) believes they have been personally affected.

When considering factors that perpetuate the glass ceiling, the results corroborate previous research (Catalyst, 2004; GWPR, 2019; Meng & Neill, 2020; Moreno et al., 2020). The majority identify issues at the organisational level: lack of flexibility to take care of family obligations (61.6 per cent) and intransparent promotion policies (57.9 per cent). Barriers at the macro level of the profession are also identified – a lack of networks and programmes for women (39.2 per cent) and too few inspiring female role models (33.9 per cent). Yet, at the individual level a lack of motivation and competences of female practitioners is identified by a small number of respondents (15.4 per cent), less than two out of ten respondents. Because psychological and cognitive differences are not empirically conclusive, gender differences tend to be explained today in educational, social and cultural factors (Mazei et al., 2015; Tench et al., 2017). Responsibilities for overcoming the glass ceiling are also placed at the organisational level for 65.3 per cent of respondents. Nevertheless, CCOs and agency CEOs tend to attribute shared responsibilities to the professional communities and female employees.

Results of this study reinforce that gender prejudices still exist in the profession in Europe. The main factors for the glass ceiling relate to work-life balance conflicts and interventions are needed firstly from organisations and secondly from professional communities.
Gender issues at work: In 75 percent of communications departments and agencies, women are in the majority, but only every second top communicator is female.
Female communicators are predominant in all types of organisations – female leadership is stronger in non-profits and falling short in private companies.

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n ≥ 2,151 communication professionals. Q32: How is the situation regarding women in leading communication positions in your organisation? The top leader of my communication department/the CEO of my agency is a woman / Overall, there are more women than men in my communication department/agency. Scale: Yes / No / N/A. (Highly) significant differences between various types of organisations (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01 / p ≤ 0.05).
Nine out of ten communication departments and agencies in Finland and Sweden are dominated by female professionals, compared to only 59 per cent in Greece.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage More Women than Men</th>
<th>Percentage More Men than Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>85.2%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>78.7%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 1,897 communication professionals from 22 countries. Q32: How is the situation regarding women in leading communication positions in your organisation? The top leader of my communication department/the CEO of my agency is a woman / Overall, there are more women than men in my communication department/agency. Scale: Yes / No / N/A. Highly significant differences between countries (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01).
Female leadership in communications is strong in Finland, Sweden, Croatia, and Slovenia, while Germany, Portugal and Greece are lagging behind.

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 1,925 communication professionals from 22 countries. Q32: How is the situation regarding women in leading communication positions in your organisation? The top leader of my communication department/the CEO of my agency is a woman / is a man.

Overall, there are more women than men in my communication department/agency. Scale: Yes / No / N/A. Highly significant differences between countries (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01).
Most communicators in Europe state that gender equality has improved recently, but they disagree whether enough is being done to support women in the field.

“Gender equality in communications has improved within the last five years in my country.”

- 15.6% disagreement
- 55.4% agreement

“Enough is done to support women in communications in my country.”

- 37.5% disagreement
- 37.3% agreement

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 2,324 communication professionals. Q8: Gender issues are heavily discussed at the moment across all professions – especially the equality of women and men. How would you assess the current situation of women in strategic communication and public relations? Scale 1 (Fully disagree) – 5 (Fully agree).
Gender equality has improved significantly in Spain, Greece, Belgium, and the Czech Republic; more support is especially asked for in Austria, Italy, and Germany

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 2,048 communication professionals from 22 countries. Q8: Gender issues are heavily discussed at the moment across all professions – especially the equality of women and men. How would you assess the current situation of women in strategic communication and public relations? Scale 1 (Fully disagree) – 5 (Fully agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5. ** Highly significant differences (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01).
Male respondents assess the current situation of women in the profession more positively than female colleagues; every second believes that there is enough support.

“Gender equality in communications has improved within the last five years in my country.” **

“Enough is done to support women in communications in my country.” **

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 2,320 communication professionals. Q8: Gender issues are heavily discussed at the moment across all professions – especially the equality of women and men. How would you assess the current situation of women in strategic communication and public relations? Scale 1 (Fully disagree) – 5 (Fully agree). ** Highly significant differences (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01).
Four out of ten communication practitioners in Europe believe a glass ceiling problem exists in the profession, but only every fifth reports about it in their own environment.

The glass ceiling problem affects
the communication profession
(macro level) — 42.6%

The glass ceiling problem affects
my communication department/agency
(meso level) — 22.3%

The glass ceiling problem affects
female communication practitioners in my organisation
working in positions like mine
(micro level) — 22.4%

32.0% do not recognise the glass ceiling as a problem at all.

Glass ceiling
= an invisible barrier that keeps female practitioners from rising beyond a certain level in the hierarchy.

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 2,204 communication professionals. Q.9a: In many professions, women are less often found in leading positions. This phenomenon is referred to as the “glass ceiling” – an invisible barrier that keeps female practitioners from rising beyond a certain level in the hierarchy. How do you perceive the situation in the communication profession in your country and in your organisation? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5. Not recognizing the problem at all = respondents who disagreed with all three items (scale points 1-2).
Significant differences across various types of organisations: The glass ceiling problem is perceived as most relevant in companies

- The glass ceiling problem affects the communication profession (macro level) **
- The glass ceiling problem affects my communication department/agency (meso level) *
- The glass ceiling problem affects female communication practitioners in my organisation working in positions like mine (micro level)

Companies: 45.4%, 45.8%, 41.7%
Governmental organisations: 36.9%, 22.8%, 21.6%
Non-profit organisations: 24.6%, 21.6%, 19.3%
Consultancies & Agencies: 24.6%, 19.5%, 21.4%

** Highly significant differences (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01). * Significant differences (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.05).

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n ≥ 2,204 communication professionals. Q9a: In many professions, women are less often found in leading positions. This phenomenon is referred to as the “glass ceiling” – an invisible barrier that keeps female practitioners from rising beyond a certain level in the hierarchy. How do you perceive the situation in the communication profession in your country and in your organisation? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5. ** Highly significant differences (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01). * Significant differences (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.05).
Women working in the communications profession are much more aware of unacknowledged barriers for promotion on the macro, meso, and micro level.

The glass ceiling problem affects the communication profession (macro level) **

- 51.0% (Female professionals)
- 29.6% (Male professionals)

The glass ceiling problem affects my communication department/agency (meso level) **

- 29.5% (Female professionals)
- 11.2% (Male professionals)

The glass ceiling problem affects female communication practitioners in my organisation working in positions like mine (micro level) **

- 29.4% (Female professionals)
- 11.7% (Male professionals)
Every third female communication practitioner in Europe states that she is personally affected by an invisible barrier keeping her from rising to another career level.

*The glass ceiling problem affects me personally*

![Survey Results Chart]

The personal impact of the glass ceiling problem is assessed quite differently across Europe

*The glass ceiling problem affects me personally*

![Radar chart showing percentage of respondents in different countries who feel the glass ceiling affects them personally.](chart)

- **Western Europe**
  - Germany (39.3%)
  - Austria (41.4%)
  - Switzerland (56.9%)
  - France (38.1%)
  - Belgium (31.0%)
  - Netherlands (27.0%)
  - United Kingdom (41.3%)
  - Denmark (28.6%)
  - Sweden (20.4%)
  - Norway (34.6%)
  - Finland (20.6%)

- **Northern Europe**
  - Russia (34.4%)
  - Romania (25.9%)
  - Czech Republic (12.5%)
  - Poland (44.7%)
  - Serbia (28.8%)
  - Croatia (42.9%)
  - Slovenia (34.0%)

- **Southern Europe**
  - Greece (38.1%)
  - Italy (39.4%)
  - Portugal (31.0%)
  - Spain (42.2%)

- **Eastern Europe**

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www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 1,222 female communication professionals from 22 countries. Q 9b: And what about you personally? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5.
Factors hindering women from reaching top positions in communications: Organisational barriers are most important

Reasons for the glass ceiling in the communications profession

- Organisations don’t offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations: 61.6%
- Organisations promote employees based on intransparent and informal policies: 57.9%
- The profession lacks specific networks and development programmes for women: 39.2%
- The profession lacks inspiring female role models: 33.9%
- Women who don’t get promoted lack the ambition required to reach senior levels: 17.9%
- Women who don’t get promoted lack specific competences necessary for senior levels: 15.4%

Meso level barriers (80.0% identified at least one of them)
Macro level barriers (54.2%)
Micro level barriers (25.4%)

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 1,086 communication professionals. Q10: What are the factors that hinder women from reaching top positions in strategic communication and public relations in your country? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5.
Assessment of reasons for the glass ceiling problem in Western/Northern Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Women who don’t get promoted lack specific competences necessary for senior levels</th>
<th>Women who don’t get promoted lack the ambition required to reach senior levels</th>
<th>Organisations promote employees based on intransparent and informal policies</th>
<th>Organisations don’t offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations</th>
<th>The profession lacks specific networks and development programmes for women</th>
<th>The profession lacks inspiring female role models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>68.4%</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 962 communication professionals from 22 countries. Q10: What are the factors that hinder women from reaching top positions in strategic communication and public relations in your country? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5.
## Assessment of reasons for the glass ceiling problem in Southern/Eastern Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Women who don’t get promoted lack specific competences necessary for senior levels</th>
<th>Women who don’t get promoted lack the ambition required to reach senior levels</th>
<th>Organisations promote employees based on intransparent and informal policies</th>
<th>Organisations don’t offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations</th>
<th>The profession lacks specific networks and development programmes for women</th>
<th>The profession lacks inspiring female role models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>59.6%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
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<td>63.3%</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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<td>35.7%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 962 communication professionals from 22 countries. Q 10: What are the factors that hinder women from reaching top positions in strategic communication and public relations in your country? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5.
Governmental organisations offer more flexibility than companies and agencies, but they are equally intransparent and informal in their promotion policies.

Organisational factors which hinder women from reaching top positions in communications

- Organisations don’t offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations **
- Organisations promote employees based on intransparent and informal policies

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 1,086 communication professionals. Q.10: What are the factors that hinder women from reaching top positions in strategic communication and public relations in your country? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Mean values. ** Highly significant differences (ANOVA, p ≤ 0.01).
Female practitioners report stronger barriers on the organisational and professional level, while men blame individual characteristics of women more often.

Factors assumed to hinder women from reaching top positions in communications

- Organisations don’t offer enough flexibility to take care of family obligations
- Organisations promote employees based on intransparent and informal policies **
- The profession lacks specific networks and development programmes for women **
- The profession lacks inspiring female role models **
- Women who don’t get promoted lack the ambition required to reach senior levels
- Women who don’t get promoted lack specific competences necessary for senior levels

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 1,083 communication professionals. Q 10: What are the factors that hinder women from reaching top positions in strategic communication and public relations in your country? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Mean values. ** Highly significant differences (ANOVA, p ≤ 0.01). * Significant differences (ANOVA, p ≤ 0.05).
Overcoming the glass ceiling in communications: A clear majority of European practitioners believe that organisations have the greatest influence on the issue.

Agents assumed to be most capable to change the current situation of women in communications

- **Organisations** (meso level): 65.3%
- **Professional communities** (macro level): 17.7%
- **Female practitioners themselves** (micro level): 17.1%

The most relevant barriers hindering women from reaching top positions were also identified on the organisational level (p. 64).

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 1,120 communication professionals. Q 11: And who do you think is most capable of changing the current situation of women in communications? Female practitioners themselves (e.g. by enhancing their competencies and motivation) / Organisations (e.g. by changing structures and cultures) / Professional communities (e.g. by uniting and supporting female practitioners).
Communication leaders stress the self-responsibility of female practitioners and the stewardship of professional associations more often.

*Agents assumed to be most capable to change the current situation of women in communications*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Female practitioners themselves</th>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>Professional communities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of communication / Agency CEO</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit leader / Team leader</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team member / Consultant</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 1,049 communication professionals. Q 11: And who do you think is most capable of changing the current situation of women in communications? Female practitioners themselves (e.g. by enhancing their competencies and motivation) / Organisations (e.g. by changing structures and cultures) / Professional communities (e.g. by uniting and supporting female practitioners). Highly significant differences between hierarchical levels (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01).
Perceived capability of different agents to break the glass ceiling in Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Professional communities (macro level)</th>
<th>Organisations (meso level)</th>
<th>Female practitioners themselves (micro level)</th>
<th>Professional communities (macro level)</th>
<th>Organisations (meso level)</th>
<th>Female practitioners themselves (micro level)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>72.9%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
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</table>

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 990 communication professionals from 22 countries. Q 11: And who do you think is most capable of changing the current situation of women in communications? Female practitioners themselves (e.g. by enhancing their competencies and motivation) / Organisations (e.g. by changing structures and cultures) / Professional communities (e.g. by uniting and supporting female practitioners).
Communication practitioners working in excellent departments report less problems with gender inequalities

The glass ceiling problem affects the communication profession (macro level) **

The glass ceiling problem affects my communication department/agency (meso level) **

The glass ceiling problem affects female communication practitioners in my organisation working in positions like mine (micro level) **

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n ≥ 1,486 communication professionals in communication departments across Europe.

Q.9a: In many professions, women are less often found in leading positions. This phenomenon is referred to as the “glass ceiling” – an invisible barrier that keeps female practitioners from rising beyond a certain level in the hierarchy. How do you perceive the situation in the communication profession in your country and in your organisation? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5. ** Highly significant differences (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01).
Female professionals working in excellent communication departments are less affected by a glass ceiling problem hindering their career plans.

The glass ceiling affects me personally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
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<td>Female professionals in excellent communication departments</td>
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Female professionals in other communication departments

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2020 / n = 981 female communication professionals in communication departments across Europe. Q.9b: And what about you personally? Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree). Frequency based on scale points 4-5. Highly significant differences excellent and other communication departments (chi-square test, p ≤ 0.01).
References


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The mission of EUPRERA is to enhance and promote innovation in the knowledge, research, education and practice of strategic communication. Through its membership of universities and other research associations and bodies, EUPRERA has developed a range of high profile transnational research projects and a worldwide network. More than 200,000 scholars and practitioners can potentially be reached through its extended communication channels and partnership arrangements.

www.euprera.org

European Association of Communication Directors (EACD)

The EACD aims to attract, inspire and engage current and future communication leaders to drive excellence in the profession. It offers a platform to connect, deepen their expertise, share best practice, establish and promote relevant standards. The EACD is a networked community that convenes its members in national chapters and working groups. It engages its members – and others – through a rich online programme and regional debates across Europe.

www.eacd-online.eu

Communication Director (Media partner)

Communication Director is the EACD’s international magazine for corporate communications and public relations. It provides insights on strategic questions in communication, highlights transnational developments and discusses them from an international perspective.

www.communication-director.eu
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www.finkfuchs.com
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#NORA THE NORDIC ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNICATION & MANAGEMENT

The Nordic Alliance for Communication & Management is a cross-disciplinary research group focusing on communication as a strategic driver of sustainable organizational performance and success in a changing world. NORA is hosted by BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo.

Regional research partner for the Nordic countries – www.bi.edu/nora

The Center for Strategic Communication (Centro per la Comunicazione Strategica – CECOMS) at Università IULM in Milan, is committed to basic and applied research on how strategic communication and PR create value within and for complex organisations.

National research partner for Italy – www.cecoms.it
# National contacts

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Please contact the universities listed here for presentations, insights or additional analyses in key countries.

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<tr>
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Additional resources: Online benchmarks, Excellence book, previous ECM reports

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