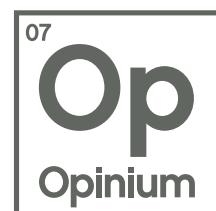




Global Women in PR

Annual Index 2020

#GWPRAnnualIndex



ABOUT GWPR

Global Women in PR exists to champion, connect and support women in senior PR and Communications roles. We inspire women to become leaders and promote public relations as an important global industry.



Who We Are

A global membership organisation for women in senior PR and communications roles. GWPR comprises national networking groups, whose members come from agencies, in-house and independents; plus individual members.

There are GWPR national groups and affiliates across Europe, Russia, India, Africa, the Middle East and Central America. We are expanding fast with groups developing in New York, Asia Pacific and South America.

We are a not for profit organisation driven by our desire to change the landscape to benefit both men and women working in our industry.

We are an inclusive organisation that celebrates diversity and works to engage with the leaders in our industry and other business leaders.

A key focus for GWPR is the issue surrounding leadership and gender equality - from flexible working practices to pay incentives and the working environment. The PR boardroom continues to be dominated by men (64%), despite the global industry being 2/3 female.

We highlight the value the PR industry brings to the global economy and its role in contributing to business success.



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INTRODUCTION

The GWPR ANNUAL INDEX provides a unique analysis of the global landscape for women working in PR. This second edition of the INDEX is aimed at tracking and measuring the position of women in PR and is part of a five-year plan to definitively understand the issues affecting women in the industry and measuring their progress around the world towards gender equality.

In partnership with strategic insight agency Opinium, GWPR aims to shine a light on the imbalance in the global PR industry, which is two-thirds female, but when it comes to the boardroom tells a different story, with men occupying the majority of seats at the table.

Our annual research allows us to examine the issues, identify solutions and encourage change, so we can inspire more PR women to reach positions of leadership.

Diversity in the boardroom

Addressing diversity in the boardroom is not just about achieving equality. According to management consultancy McKinsey & Co* there is a direct link between boardroom diversity and a company's financial performance. Company profits and share performance can be close to 50 percent higher when women are well represented at the top.

Senior-level women also have a vast and meaningful impact on a company's culture. They are more likely than senior-level men to embrace employee-friendly policies and programmes and to champion racial and gender diversity. They are also more likely to mentor and sponsor other women.

The COVID effect

There have been some huge challenges this year, but has the pandemic changed things for the better for women working in the PR industry? The biggest change has undoubtedly been the huge increase in remote working.

However, lack of childcare and home schooling has meant that 40% of these women are now working even longer hours and many are experiencing 'burn out' as home and work boundaries have blurred. Despite this situation, they prefer the opportunity afforded by remote working, as it gives them a better work/life balance and allows them to juggle their work and childcare responsibilities more efficiently – the biggest barrier to women getting into the boardroom.

Our 2020 survey

Speaking to PR professionals from around the world, we have looked at the work environment, the pressures of working in PR, the barriers to women getting in to the boardroom and how we can break those down. We've highlighted why businesses would benefit from change, the impact of caring responsibilities and the gender pay gap.

Our results create a unique reference report on gender issues affecting the PR industry as a whole. It will be fascinating to see what impact Covid will have on the workplace of the future. Hopefully we will see a more equal workplace which will be better for business and the next generation of PR women.

TOP LINE FINDINGS

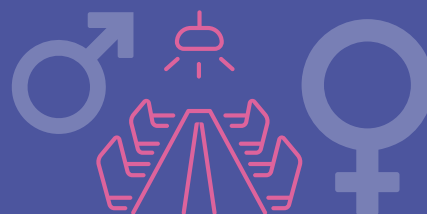


Remote working is on the increase and was increasing prior to the pandemic – **60%** were offered the opportunity to work remotely this year

Over two-thirds say they would be more likely to choose a job that offered flexible working over one that did not.

69%

The PR boardroom continues to be dominated by men (**64%**), in spite of the industry being 2/3 female.

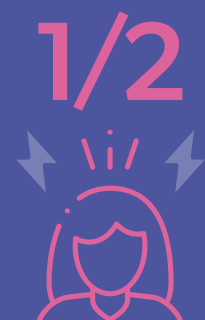


89%

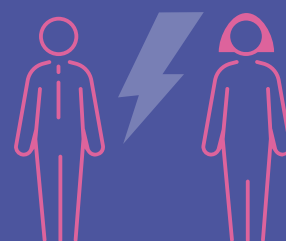
The vast majority believe that more needs to be done to ensure women in the PR industry have greater boardroom presence.

Two-thirds (**66%**) of respondents believe having more senior women as role models is the most important initiative to help women progress their career.

Almost half (**47%**) of women reported that having caring responsibilities had negatively impacted their career.



1/2 of PR professionals say they feel stressed on a typical working day and more than a quarter (**27%**) have taken time off work for stress.



Over a quarter (**27%**) say there is a gender pay gap in favour of men at senior management level in their organisation

WORK ENVIRONMENT

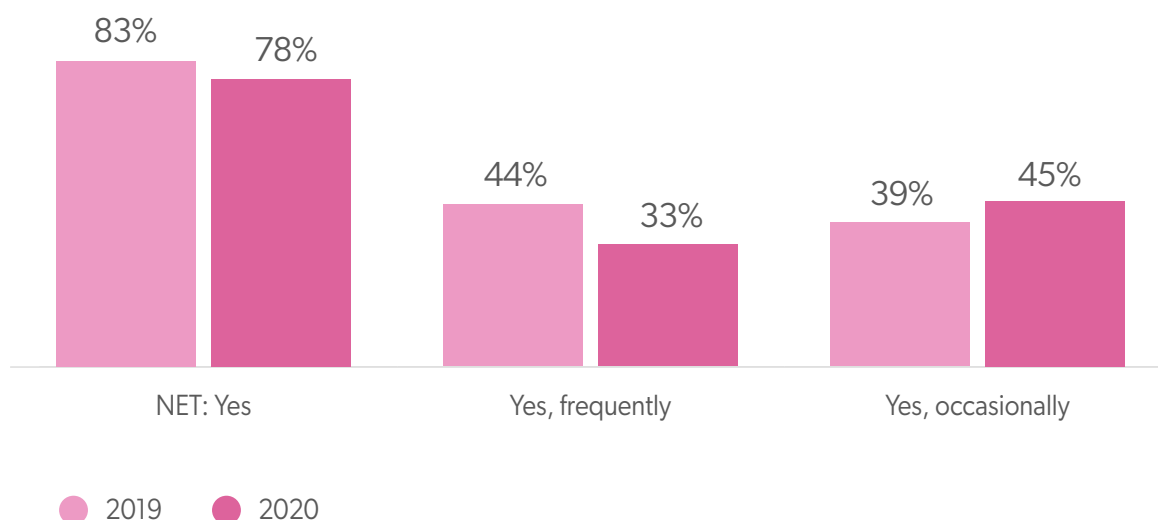
We are seeing a transition into more agile working practices partly as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic. The move to more remote working is a positive one and is being offered widely in the PR and communications industry. We know from our research last year that this is highly desirable, with many acknowledging the benefits to mental wellbeing, as well as helping to retain female talent in the industry. However, there is still work to be done to ensure the increase in flexible working does not impede career progression for women.

Flexible working offered widely and remote working on the increase even prior to the Coronavirus pandemic

We asked respondents about their flexible working practices prior to the Coronavirus lock down. **Over three-quarters (78%) said they worked flexibly, with 33% doing so frequently and 45% occasionally.** This is similar to last year when 83% said they worked flexibly. Obviously, the situation has changed dramatically this year and it will be fascinating to track the changes in the next few years, particularly in relation to remote working, which will undoubtedly remain an important part of future working practices.

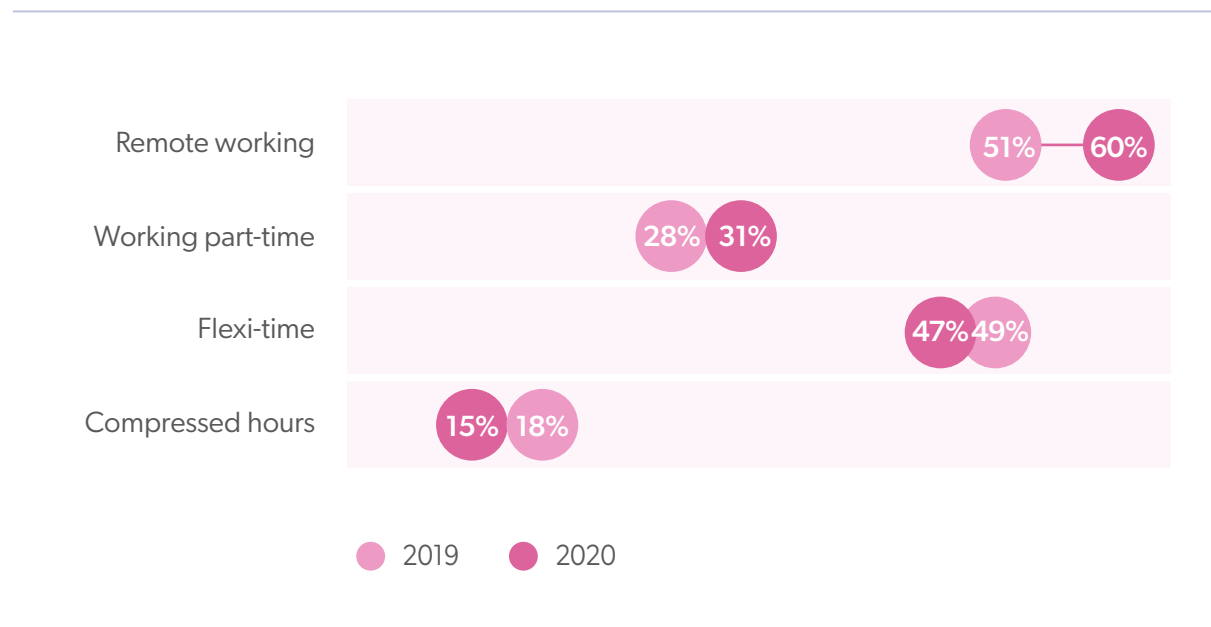
Those working in-house are more likely to work flexibly compared to those working in an agency (83% vs 72%).

Flexible working in 2019 and 2020 (Pre-Coronavirus)



Despite PR professionals appearing to be working less flexibly pre-coronavirus, there has been an increase in some flexible working opportunities being offered, with 60% offered remote working opportunities (vs 51% in 2019) and 31% being offered the opportunity to work part-time (versus 28% in 2019). However, some other flexible working opportunities have seen a slight decline with 47% saying they are offered flexitime compared to 49% in 2019, and 15% being offered compressed hours compared to 18% in 2019.

Flexible working in 2019 and 2020 (Pre-Coronavirus)



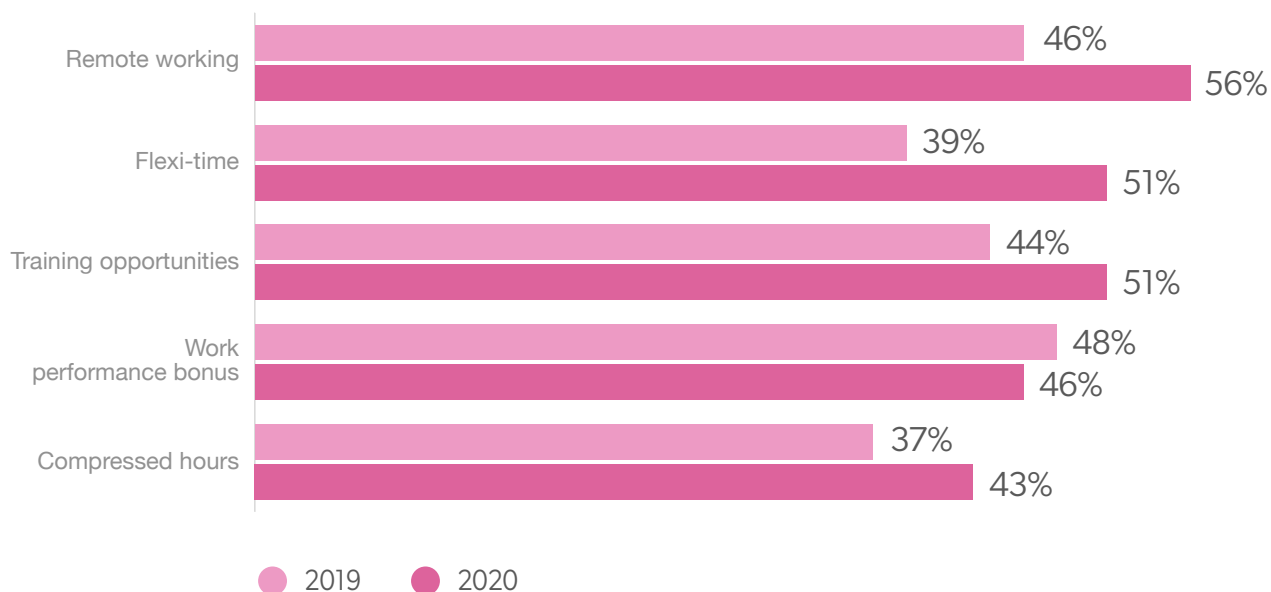
Flexible working is becoming increasingly important and the opportunity to work remotely is the benefit most requested by PR professionals

Flexible working is becoming increasingly important and more so year on year. **Remote working is the top workplace benefit professionals want to be offered (56%), followed by working flexi-time (51%).** This is an increase from last year when 46% wanted remote working, and 39% wanted flexi-time opportunities. Compressed hours have also seen an increase in desirability with 43% wanting this compared to 37% last year. This comes as three-quarters (74%) feel that flexible working should be more widely offered, an increase from 67% last year.

In addition, over two-thirds (69%) say they would be more likely to choose a job that offered flexible working over one that did not. The country where job selection was massively influenced by the offer of flexible working was Germany (94%).

With regards to other things their workplace could offer, training opportunities have also seen an increase in desirability from last year with 51% wanting this from a workplace compared to 44% last year.

What do PR professionals want from their workplace?



However, flexible working is associated with slower career progression

Despite the increase in flexible working opportunities and their appeal, there is still work to be done to ensure flexible working doesn't have a negative impact on career progression. When asked how flexible working impacts PR professionals career progression, a quarter (25%) believe they progress more slowly, compared to 14% who felt this way last year. Those working agency side are more likely to believe flexible working impedes career progression than those working in-house (29% vs 20%). This was also felt more strongly by PR professionals working in the UK (46%).

Encouragingly, over half (54%) of respondents feel that flexible working is perceived positively in their company, an increase from last year (48%).



Benefits of flexible working

Many recognise the benefits of working flexibly, particularly for wellbeing, with over three-quarters (78%) feeling it helps employees maintain a healthy work-life balance and 69% believe it helps employees maintain their mental wellbeing.

Flexible working is also felt to be particularly beneficial to women. Two-thirds (67%) believe flexible working allows women to have a family / perform caring responsibilities and still progress in their careers. A similar proportion (63%) agree that it helps to retain female talent. Over a quarter (28%) feel it helps women to progress into boardroom positions.

Opinion

Covid has changed almost everything in the immediate term. And it will change very many things in the longer term. One area where I hope and believe positive change will be effected is in the gender balance of our industry.

Put simply, employers' business models have shifted fundamentally. The new work paradigm will no longer be based around presenteeism. It will recognise that remote, flexible working is perfectly manageable - indeed, for many, it is infinitely preferable. And in my view, that is excellent news for our industry.

This shift will be of enormous help in tackling one of the key drivers of imbalance in our industry - the fact that many women who have children either do not return to their employers; or see their careers thrown off trajectory, often irrevocably. A fact which means that an industry which is female dominated at entry level is male dominated at leadership level, with all of the negative consequences which flow from that.

So Covid can provide us with a reset moment. It can replace the painfully slow progress of the past decade with true transformation. And when we get through this period of crisis, it will be one of the positive changes that will last.

Francis Ingham MPRCA
Director General, PRCA
Chief Executive, ICCO
Executive Director, LGComms



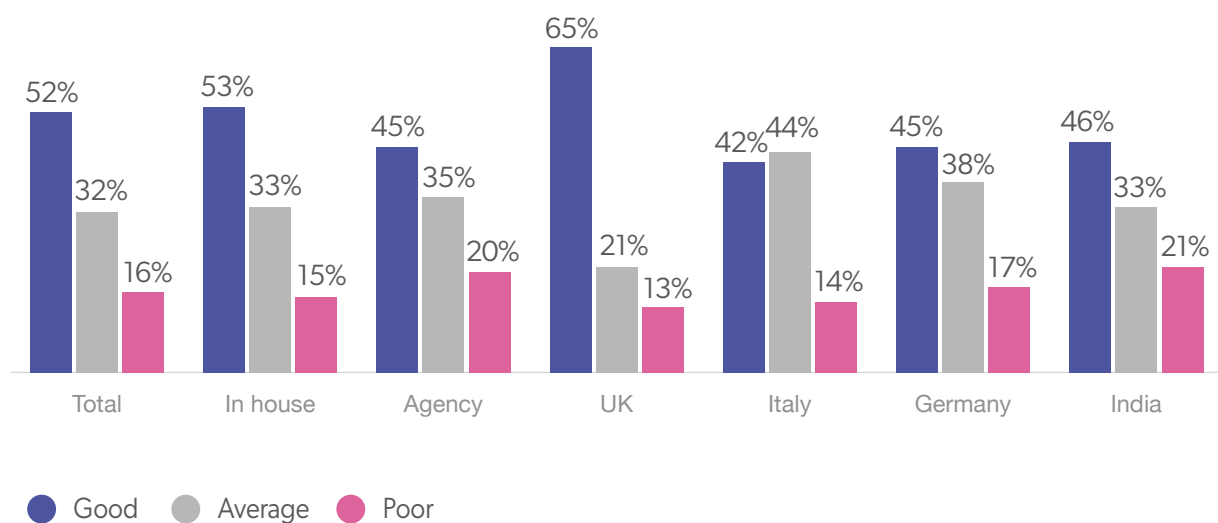
WORKPLACE WELLBEING

The year 2020 has been a rollercoaster; many people have been struggling with their mental wellbeing and for some the new working practices are making it hard to maintain a good work/life balance. A significant minority in the PR and Communications industry appear to be struggling with striking that balance and are experiencing negative emotions on a daily basis at work. It is important that workplaces recognise the mental health of their staff and ensure they are supporting employees as much as possible by introducing initiatives to help improve wellbeing in the workplace.

One in six PR professionals feel they have a poor work/life balance

Despite over half (52%) of PR professionals saying they felt they had a good work/life balance, one in six (16%) believe their work/life balance is poor. Those working in-house are more likely to feel they have a good work/life balance, compared to those working agency side (53% vs 45%). In addition, those who have worked in the PR industry for over 15 years consider themselves to have a better work/life balance, compared to those who have worked in PR for less than 15 years (62% vs 44%). Those working in the UK are most likely to consider themselves as having a good work/life balance (65%). Worryingly, a fifth (21%) of PR's in India say they have a poor work/life balance.

How would you describe your work/life balance?



Younger PR professionals are more likely to experience negative emotions at work

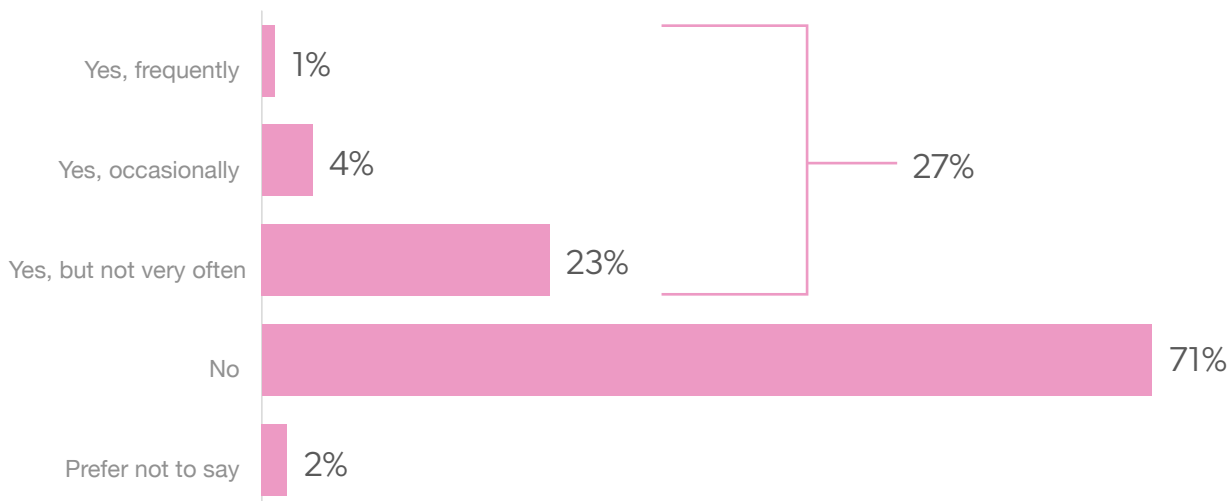
Thinking about how they feel at work on a typical day, positively over half of PR professionals (53%) feel satisfied and two-fifths (40%) say they feel happy. However, half (50%) feel stressed on a typical day, and a fifth feel overwhelmed and frustrated (both 21% respectively).

Younger PR professionals are more likely to feel stressed on a typical day (58% 18-34 vs 48% 35-54), as well as those working agency side (59% vs 41% working in-house). In addition to this, those working outside of Europe are more likely to feel stressed compared to their European counterparts (54% vs 47%).

Over a quarter have taken time off work due to work-related stress or anxiety

Looking at time taken off due to work-related stress and anxiety, over a quarter (27%) stated they have done this. However, this is not very frequent, with 23% of these respondents saying it was not very often.

Have you ever been absent from work because of work-related stress, or anxiety?



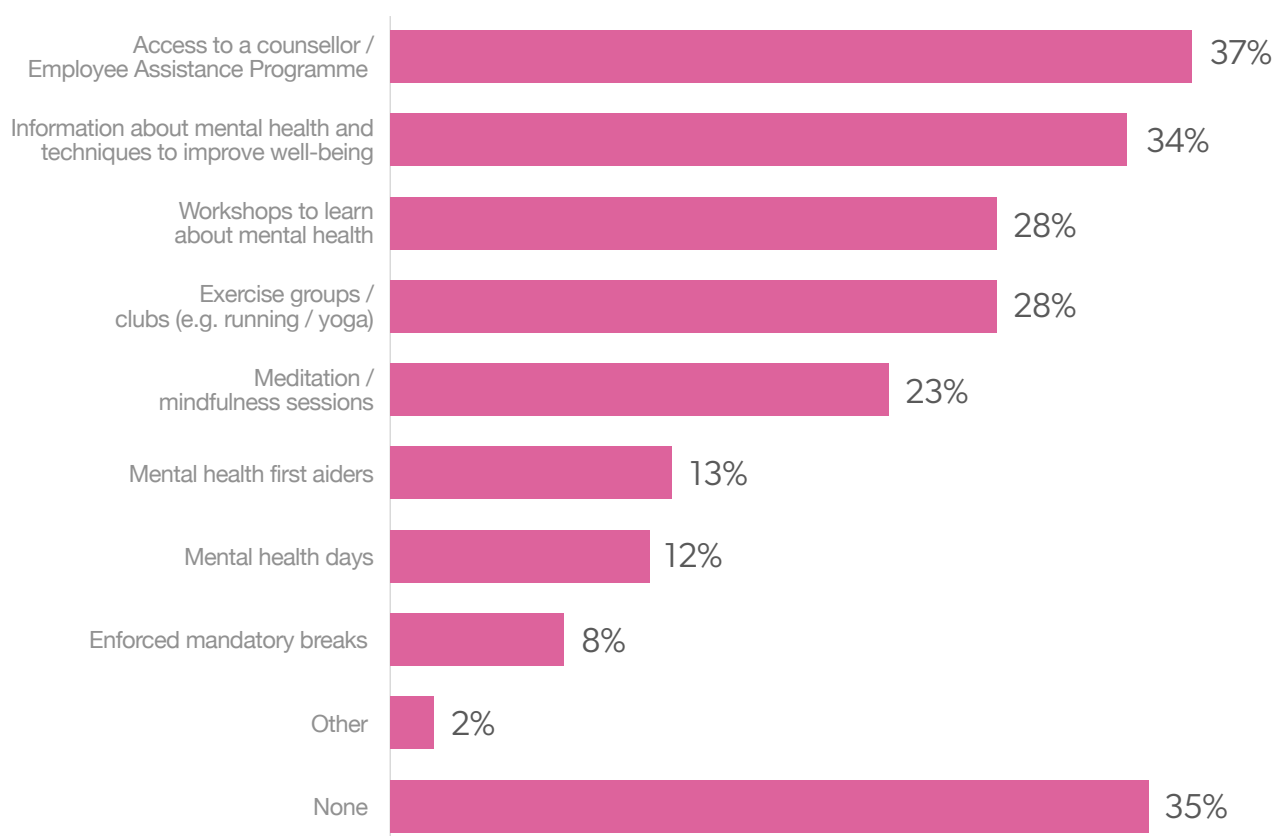
Despite PR's working in-house not feeling as stressed as those working in agencies, they are more likely to have taken time off because of stress, compared to their agency counterparts (33% versus 24%). Perhaps it is a case that agency workers are working under more pressure and feel they cannot take time off because of stress.

Over a third are not offered any mental health initiatives at work

Workplaces have a vital role to play in helping to improve the mental wellbeing of their staff by having initiatives in place. When asked about their own companies, worryingly over a third (35%) say they are not offered any mental health support initiatives at work. There are some marked regional differences around the world. For example, over three-quarters (78%) of those working in Italy say they are not offered any mental health initiatives, whereby in the UK this reduces to 21%.

For those who do have mental health initiatives in place, the most common support is access to a counsellor / employee assistance programme (37%), followed by the provision of information about mental health/techniques that improve well-being (34%). Over a quarter (28%) are provided with workshops to learn about mental health and the same proportion (28%) have the opportunity to join exercise groups or clubs.

Does your company offer or have in place any of the following mental health initiatives?



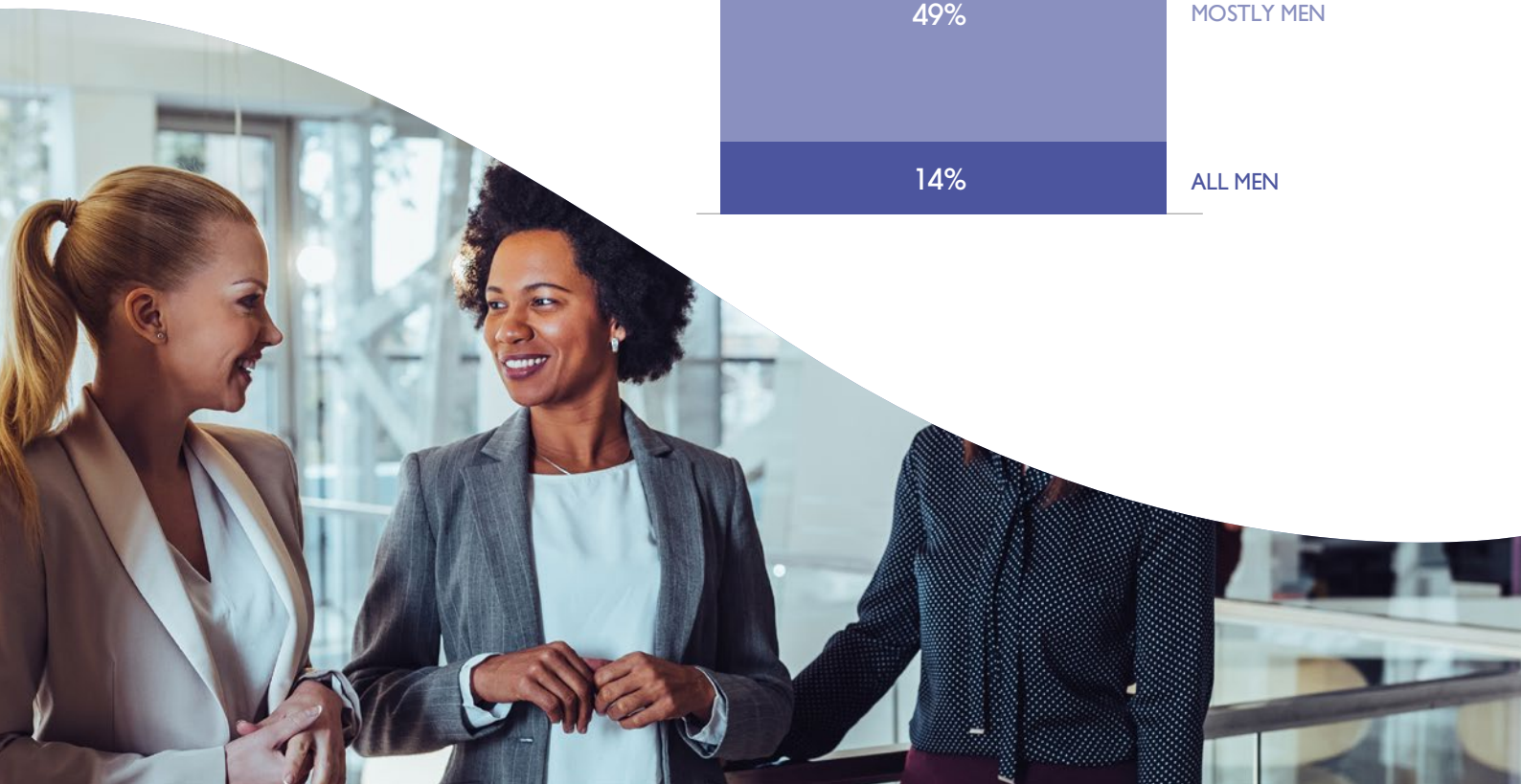
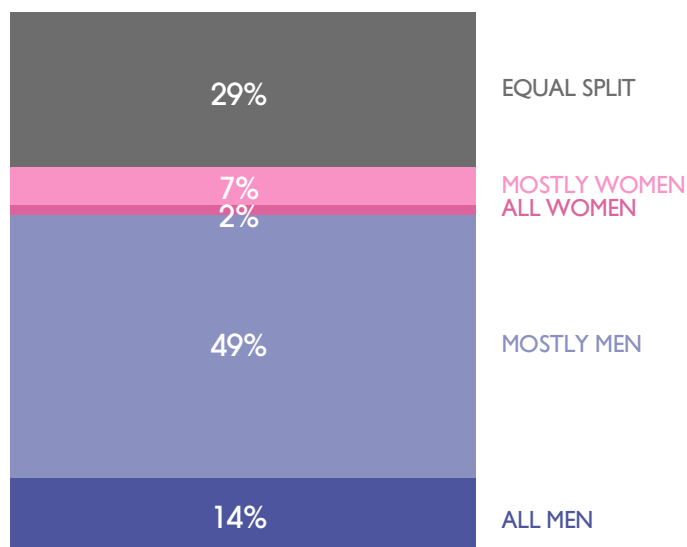
BOARDROOMS & BARRIERS

The makeup of the PR industry's boardrooms remains similar to last year. Men are still far more likely to hold boardroom positions, and women are still thought to be promoted at a much slower rate than their male counterparts. However, it is encouraging to see that the importance and benefits to business of having women in the boardroom continues to be highlighted. **We need this sustained focus to break down the barriers to women entering the boardroom so we can make change.**

Three in five continue to work in companies where the board is male dominated

Looking into the gender split of boards, **almost two-thirds (64%) work in companies where the board is male dominated, similar to last year (61%).** Almost half (49%) say their board of directors is mostly made up of men and one in seven (14%) state their board is made up entirely of men. Disappointingly, the number of PR professionals who say that their board is made up of mostly, or all women, has dropped from **14% last year to 9%** in 2020.

Which of the following best describes how your board of directors is made up?



Almost half (46%) of those surveyed that have a board of directors¹ feel the gender split on their board is unfair, and a similar proportion (47%) feel that the board is not representative of different genders; whereas a quarter (26%) feel their board equally represents different genders.

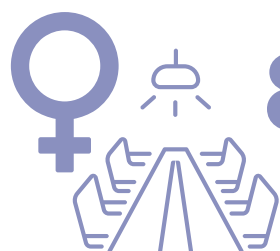
Two in five feel women are promoted more slowly

Two in five (39%) PR professionals feel that women are promoted more slowly at their company than men, similar to last year. When it comes to looking at mothers compared to fathers, **just 2% of PR professionals believe men are promoted more slowly as a result of becoming fathers**, whereas **43% believe mothers are promoted more slowly**, starkly highlighting the inequality between mothers and fathers in the workplace and no change from last year.

Importance of women in the boardroom

We are able to highlight, once again, **the importance of having women in the boardroom and the significant business benefits to having greater gender equality**.

Almost all (80%) of PR professionals surveyed believe that having women in the boardroom helps improve working practices within the PR industry. In addition, **76% believe having women in the boardroom helps improve the productivity of a company** and almost three quarters (72%) feel that having women in the boardroom improves the overall employee satisfaction. These figures remain on par with last year's findings, where 70% also felt that a better-balanced boardroom helps to improve the creativity of the company, increasing to 79% in 2020.

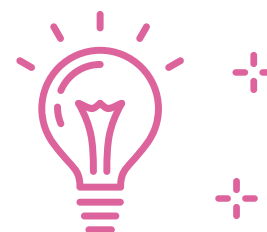


80%

believe that having women in the boardroom helps to improve working practices in the PR industry

79%

feel having women in the boardroom improves the creativity of the company



72%

feel having women in the boardroom helps to improve company productivity

¹ Defined as those who are answerable to shareholders and responsible for the strategic direction of the company

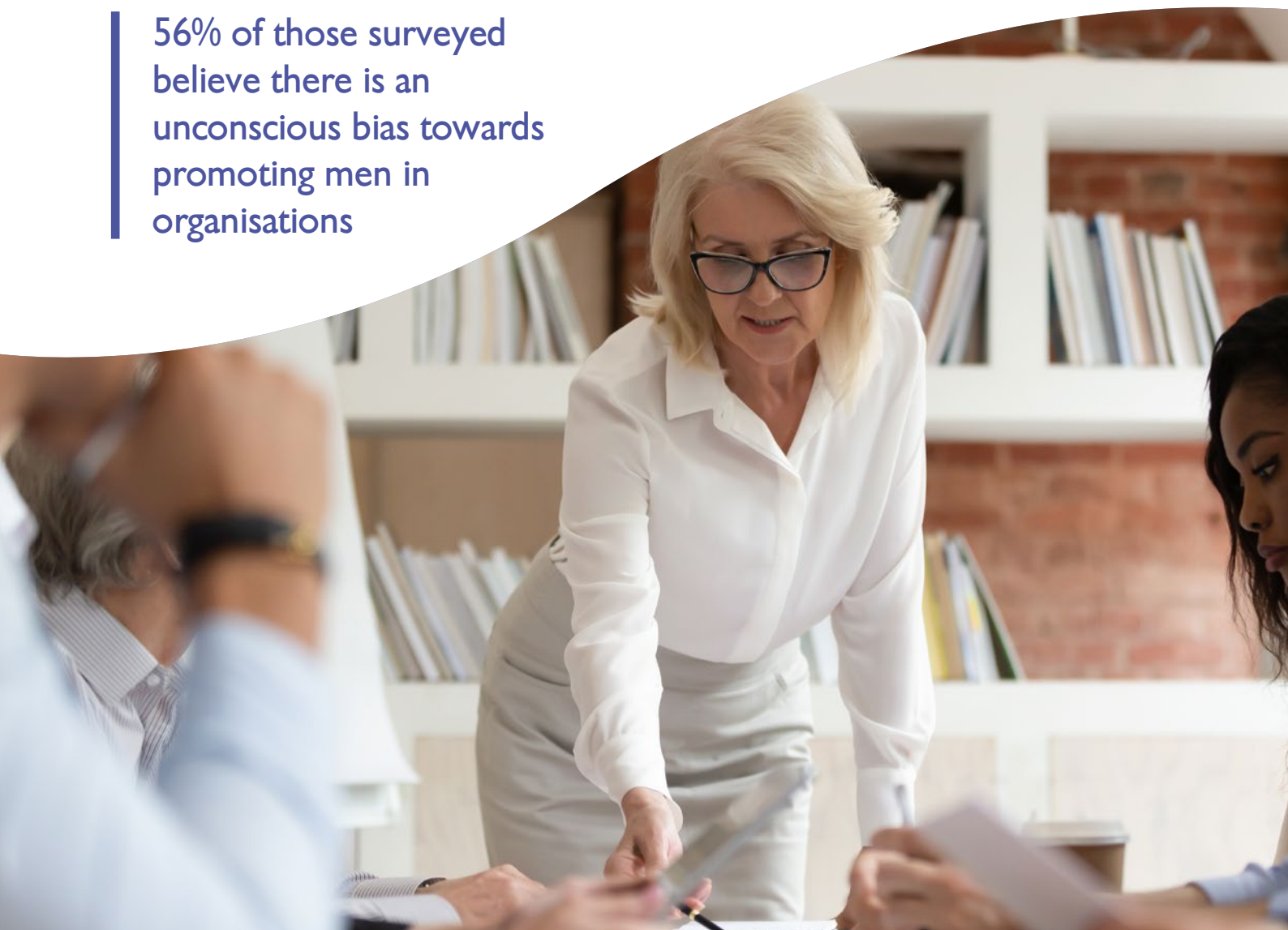
Furthermore, a significant 89% believe that more needs to be done to ensure women in the PR industry have greater boardroom presence, rising from 81% last year and, as we take a look at the barriers to women progressing, we see a similar picture to last year.

The barriers to women entering the boardroom remain the same

Looking again at the potential barriers women face when it comes to progressing into senior positions, the biggest barrier remains that women are most likely to take on childcare or caring responsibilities (78%). Related to this, 70% feel that the lack of work/life balance in a senior role prevents women getting into the boardroom. A similar number (67%) believe that a lack of flexible working and family-friendly policies prevent women from progressing into senior positions.

In addition to caring responsibilities, there is also a feeling of inequality when it comes to promotion and recruitment. Two in three (65%) believe there is a lack of transparency, which creates a barrier for women attaining more senior roles and 60% feel that women tend to be less proactive than men when it comes to asking for a promotion. In addition, over half (56%) of those surveyed believe there is an unconscious bias towards promoting men in organisations, which hinders female progression. A new entry into the top 5 barriers preventing women progressing to the boardroom is that almost two thirds (63%) believe men tend to be responsible for promotion opportunities and often promote people like themselves.

56% of those surveyed believe there is an unconscious bias towards promoting men in organisations



The top 5 barriers preventing women from progressing into senior positions are:



78%

Women predominantly taking on childcare or caring responsibilities



70%

Lack of work / life balance in a senior role



67%

Lack of flexible working or family-friendly working policies



65%

Lack of transparency around recruitment and promotion



60%

Men tend to be responsible for promotion opportunities and often promote people like themselves

More needs to be done to break down boardroom barriers

The initiative considered most likely to help women progress their career is having more senior female role models (66%). This has overtaken flexible working practices (63%), which was selected as the top initiative to get more women into the boardroom last year.

Other initiatives that were felt could have an impact were more senior recognition of the issues around gender inequality (58%) and mentoring schemes for women (55%).

Top 5 initiatives
to get more
women into the
boardroom:

+ 66%

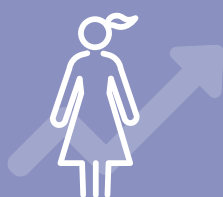
More senior female role models



63% Flexible working practices

58%

Senior recognition of the issues
around gender inequality



55% Mentoring schemes



50% Shared parental leave



Despite PR being a predominantly female dominated industry, the gender breakdown in the boardroom does not reflect this and there is no short-term fix. Senior recognition of the issues around gender inequality is really important and initiatives, such as showcasing successful women in the industry and mentoring schemes for women, need to be implemented. The PR industry should not be discouraged by the slow pace of change, but look to place a greater focus on initiatives like these to continue the journey towards getting more women into the boardroom.

Opinion

As someone who has recruited in the industry for coming up to twenty years and seen the conversations around diversity in the workplace evolve, it's disappointing to see that the stats haven't changed, particularly with regards to the percentage of women in leadership roles. I concur with the findings around flexibility; that a lack of it, is one of the main reasons women leave the industry. Several organisations pre-COVID had started to offer greater flexibility as a way of attracting senior female talent, which is a positive. It is certainly something that women increasingly ask for and would rank as a primary consideration when accepting a role, to the extent that it is often required to be added to a contract of employment. With remote working now the new norm, one would have hoped that it would level the gender playing field. However, COVID has instead resulted in many women struggling with home/work balance; often taking on the lion share of family responsibilities, leaving them feeling overstretched and exhausted. I am hearing of senior women burnt out and either leaving the industry completely, or taking on a more flexible portfolio/freelance career.

At Hanson Search, 69% of the people we place at a senior level into agencies and in-house teams are women. These are positive stats and show that businesses are seeking to try to create change, so what's going wrong and why aren't we seeing the change at the top that we might expect?

The burning issue that is not being addressed is retention. If women are struggling with work/life balance and this is affecting their decision to stay in the industry, then more needs to be done to provide support to have greater equity at home and not just at work. This pipeline of talent is so fundamentally important, business needs to think of creative ways to help women. Women who successfully find that balance need to step forward as role models for other women and share how it can work.

Whilst change around shared parental leave has happened from a governmental level, working practices and individual attitudes to shared paternal leave and ongoing childcare needs to change. Men need to be able to feel confident to ask for flexibility around their work, so they can take on more childcare responsibilities, this then might culminate in creating an environment where we have a much better chance of re-addressing the imbalance at a senior level.



Alice Weightman
Founder & CEO Hanson Search



IMPACT OF PARENTHOOD/CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Caring responsibilities have naturally increased throughout 2020 as a result of the pandemic lockdown and in particular the closure of schools, but **women are still more likely than men to report that these caring responsibilities have had a negative impact on their career.**

Almost half of women reported their caring responsibilities had a negative impact on their career

Over half (58%) of all respondents have had to undertake caring responsibilities during their career whilst working. Of those who have caring responsibilities, the majority of this is equally shared with a partner (36%) or carried out alone (35%).

Almost half (47%) of women reported that caring responsibilities have had a negative impact on their career, compared to 38% reported last year. When probed further on the negative implications of child-caring responsibilities, 29% of women reported missing out on a promotion, 38% said they had to take a period of leave from work and 41% needed to work part-time in order to carry out their child-caring responsibilities.

Over half of women with children said they had negative experiences in the workplace when pregnant

Speaking to women who worked through pregnancy, over half (53%) had negative experiences in the workplace during this time. A third (32%) said that people felt their career was no longer their priority, a fifth (22%) said that people treated them differently and that they had missed out on a promotion. A further (18%) felt they weren't supported and 16% had tasks or responsibilities taken away from them which they felt wasn't necessary.

“Prospective client said they didn't want a pregnant woman running the account” **UK**

“I felt that my immediate boss was less considerate than before” **India**

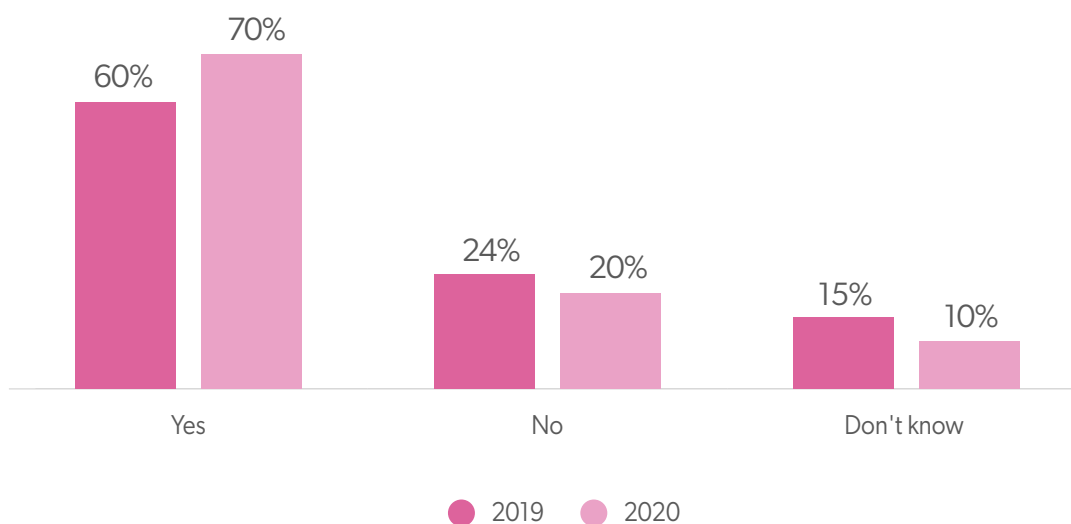
“I suffered a loss of earnings, as the company I worked for didn't have enhanced maternity pay” **UK**

Unfortunately, after returning from maternity leave these sentiments appear not to change. A fifth (20%) of women felt that colleagues did not think they were prioritising their career when they returned to work, the same proportion (20%) didn't feel supported and 14% said they had missed out on a promotion.

A fifth of parents said their company does not offer paid parental leave

A fifth (20%) of parents surveyed said their company does not offer paid parental leave following the birth of a child; this compares to 24% last year. However, paid parental leave appears to be rising as seven in ten (70%) say their company offers this, compared to 60% last year.

Paid parental leave offered by companies



20% of women felt that colleagues did not think they were prioritising their career when they returned to work after having a child



THE GENDER PAY GAP

Despite the majority of the PR and Communications industry being female, there is a perceived gender pay gap in favour of men at the more senior level; though many do not have access to the salary levels in their organisation.

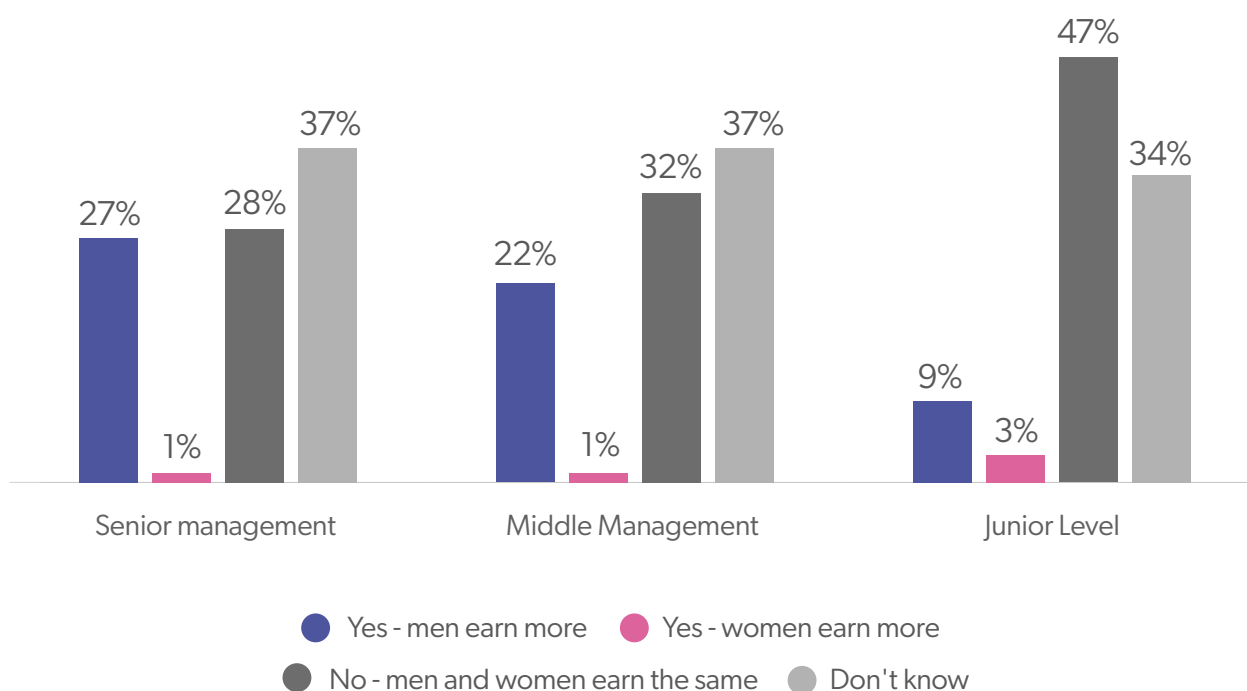
Over a quarter say there is a gender pay gap in favour of men in senior management in their company

Over a quarter (27%) say there is a gender pay gap in favour of men at senior management level in their organisation, and over a fifth (22%) say there is a gender pay gap at middle management level.

At a junior level, pay between the genders appears to be more balanced with just under half (47%) stating that men and women are paid the same at this level, although one in ten (9%) state that men earn more than women at a junior level.

There also appears to be limited knowledge about salary levels, with 37% saying they don't know whether there is a gender pay gap at senior and middle management levels, and a third (34%) say they are not aware of a gender pay gap at junior levels. In the UK, the gender pay gap appears to be much wider, with 42% stating that men earn more in senior management positions than women.

Does your organisation have a gender pay gap that you know of?



When asked if their company has disclosed their gender pay gap, just 14% of PR professionals said they had, with 7% having to do so by law and 7% doing so despite not needing to publish these figures. A quarter (25%) are unsure of whether or not their company has disclosed their gender pay gap. Those in the UK are most likely to have had this information disclosed (33%), meanwhile just 6% of those in India say they have been given this information.

On a positive note, over half (52%) of those we spoke to say their company has gender equality, diversity or inclusion policies in place, an increase from 47% in 2019. However, a further fifth (21%) say they don't know if their company has any of these policies.

On a positive note, over half of those we spoke to say their company has gender equality, diversity or inclusion policies in place

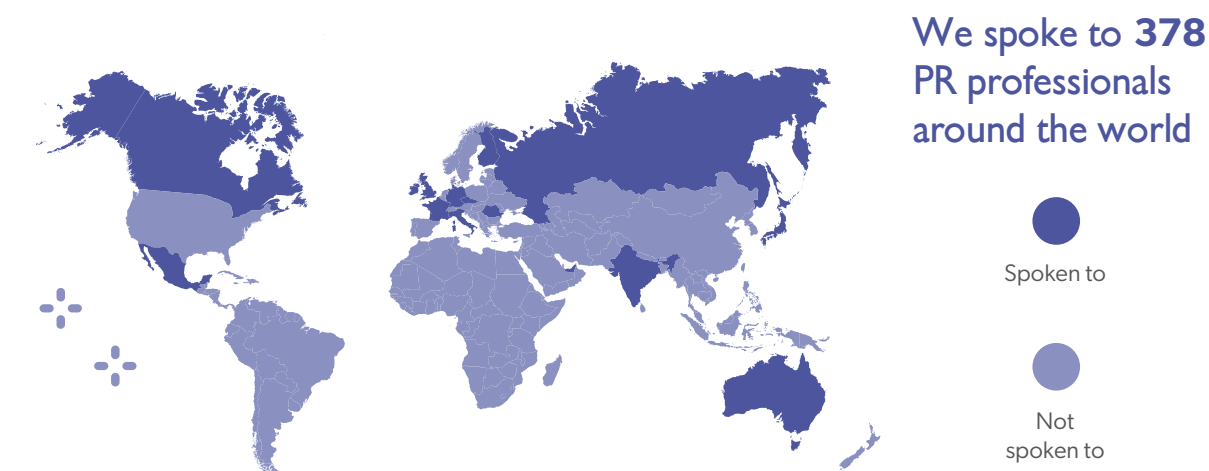


METHODOLOGY & SAMPLE

What did we do?

Responses were collected via an online survey designed by Opinium which was distributed by Global Women in PR through their global networks. Fieldwork took place between 18th August – 30th September 2020.

Who did we speak to?



49%
No
children



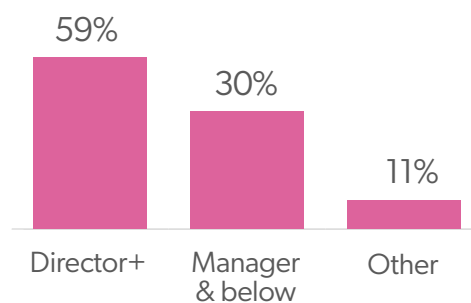
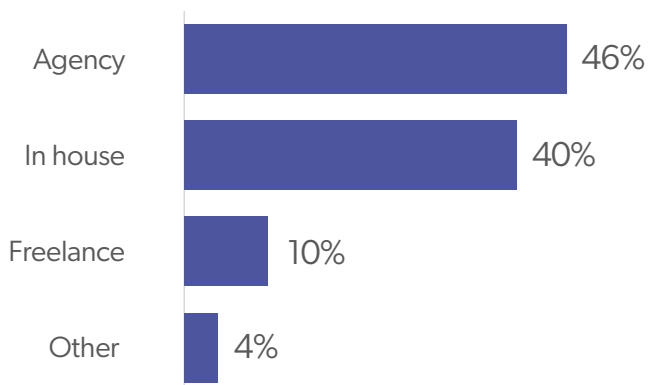
51%
Have
children



14%
Male



86%
Female



ABOUT OPINIUM



Opinium is an award-winning strategic insights agency built on the belief that in a world of uncertainty and complexity, success depends upon the ability to stay on the pulse of what people think feel and do. Creative and inquisitive, we are passionate about empowering our clients to make the decisions that matter.

We help our clients harness the power of insight to build, grow, promote and make strategic business decisions.

With over 10 years of experience conducting research for PR, we pride ourselves in getting to know our clients' needs and the issues their brand and industry faces. We have extensive experience researching wide ranging topics amongst consumers and B2B audiences around the world and converting their opinions into compelling thought leadership for agencies and end clients alike.

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