

A Descriptive Inquiry of the PR Professionals in the Czech Republic

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Abstract: The paper addresses the scarcity of demographic data in the Czech PR market, aiming to inform both academic research and industry management. Drawing from established European surveys, the cross-sectional quantitative study from late 2022 responded by PR practitioners with diverse organization background investigates the composition of the Czech PR workforce, their gender distribution, levels of experience, ongoing education pursuits, and job roles. While estimating the total number of PR professionals remains challenging, 463 online survey respondents suggest a substantial presence. The average age aligns with global trends, with most professionals transitioning from the media industry and finding the quarter of the professionals, those youngest, starting directly in PR. Despite a high percentage of university graduates, a significant proportion abstains from further education, possibly due to time constraints or differing perceptions of continuing education. Notably, media relations remained the primary focus, followed closely by communication strategy development and copywriting.

Keywords: Public relations, strategic communication, communication, Czech Republic, PR professionalization

INTRODUCTION

The public relations market in Czechia boasts an annual volume of approximately EUR 39 million (APRA, 2020). However, despite this significant market size, there remains an eminent dearth of knowledge regarding the individuals comprising this industry. Managers, in particular, pose numerous inquiries for which answers remain elusive. There is not only a lack of understanding regarding the total workforce within the field, but there also exists ambiguity concerning their educational backgrounds and job titles. The two primary professional organizations involved in the sector—APRA, representing predominantly PR agencies, and the PR Klub—only scratch the surface with their data collection efforts. The former offers insights into average salaries and rates (in agencies), while the

latter minimally extends its analysis beyond basic information such as names, positions, and employers. Previous research by Beurer-Zeullig et al. (2009) provides some insight into the Czech labor market by surveying communication managers. However, only 9.9% of the respondents hailed from Eastern Europe, a category inclusive of the Czech Republic for the purposes of the study. Similarly, the European Communication Monitor, supported by EUPRERA, struggled to attract substantial participation from Eastern European nations. Out of 1,771 PR professionals across 43 countries, that responded in 2022, only 245 originated from Eastern Europe (Zerfass et al., 2022).

Hence, this paper endeavors to address crucial questions: Who constitutes the Czech PR professional? What is the scale of this profession within the Czech Republic? What levels of experience do they possess, and do they actively pursue ongoing education? What defines their job roles? Are they predominantly female, as observed elsewhere in Europe? This research aims not only to establish a foundational database for future inquiries but also to provide valuable insights for the industry itself, aiding in understanding PR's competitive landscape, gauging the influx of younger professionals, and more.

Existing studies have primarily delved into the dynamics between PR and journalists in the Czech Republic, focusing on ethical considerations, additionally, the historical evolution of the field in the Czech Republic has received attention (Kopová, 2017; Ortová, 2017; Pařík, 2009). However, calls have been made for the inclusion of a demographic profile of the profession (Hejlová, 2023; Ortová, 2017; Pařík, 2009). Previous studies have examined the role and development of the PR profession in the Czech Republic (Hejlová, 2014; Hejlová, 2023; Hejlová & Klimeš, 2019; Kasl Kollmannová, 2013), as well as the public affairs profession (Kasl Kollmannová & Matušková, 2014). Thus, this work seeks to complement existing literature by providing a much-needed demographic perspective, akin to the comprehensive datasets available in countries like the United States (via the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Public Relations Society of America), the United Kingdom (through associations like the State of the Profession by CIPR and the PR and Communications Census by PRCA), the Netherlands (as exemplified by Van Ruler, 2003), Germany (as evidenced by Bentele & Wehmeier, 2003), and the European context (as observed through the European Communication Monitor by Zerfass et al., 2021).

PR PROFESSION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic, situated in Central Europe with a population of 10.5 million (Eurostat, 2024), is a member of both the European Union and NATO. It operates under a parliamentary democracy and boasts a robust market economy characterized by a longstanding low unemployment rate (CZSO, 2024). According to data from the World Bank (2024), the Czech Republic ranks as the 37th richest country globally.

Despite enduring setbacks during the communist regime from 1948 to 1989, PR as a field has solidified its presence in the Czech Republic (Kasl Kollmannová, 2013). Its initial development faced challenges, yet academic study began to emerge in the 1960s under the guise of economic propaganda at the University of Economics in Prague. By the 1970s, a dedicated specialization was established at the Faculty of Journalism of Charles University in Prague (Hejlová, 2014). The foundational text on PR, composed by Alfons Kachlík in 1969, initially catered exclusively to students at the University of Economics (Kachlík, 1969). However, until 1989, the development of the PR profession in the former Czechoslovakia was limited due to the totalitarian state and its propaganda (Hejlová, 2014; Hejlová & Klimeš, 2019). The professional fields of PR and public affairs began to grow after the transition to democracy in the 1990s. Gradually, the demand for professionalization and high-quality education in the field also increased (Hejlová, 2015).

Presently, PR education is available through four bachelor's and one master's program. These programs are offered at various institutions including two private (Schools of International Relations in Prague and the University of New York in Prague) and two public schools: Tomas Bata University in Zlín, and the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University in Prague, which offers the most comprehensive specialized education in the field. Their bachelor's degree program was inaugurated in the academic year 2004/2005, with a subsequent master's program titled Strategic Communication introduced in the academic year 2020/2021 (FSV UK, 2023). Consequently, individuals seeking university education in PR, with few exceptions from abroad, are typically born after 1985. Meanwhile, professionals entering communication departments and agencies often come from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, primarily business administration schools and journalism.

The first professional organization for PR practitioners emerged in 1983 at the Brno Trade Fairs and Exhibition Centre under the moniker *Klub práce s veřejností* (Public Relations Club) (Kačena, 2012). Notably, the most prominent PR association, the Association of Public Relations Agencies (APRA, now called Association of Public Relations), traces its roots back to 1995, followed by the establishment of the PR Klub in 1998, which primarily caters to individuals (and

as of 2022, agencies and communication departments), and the PR Chamber in 2004, catering to small agencies. In 2003, APRA adopted the Stockholm Charter as its ethical code, followed by the adoption of the Helsinki Declaration in 2017.

CZECH PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS

The membership of APRA comprises approximately two dozen agencies, collectively representing around 400 employees, while the PR Klub accounts for an additional three hundred members. However, data from the Czech Statistical Office indicates approximately 2,600 employees within the communications industry. Given the subjective interpretation of job roles across businesses, what one organization perceives as marketing might be construed as communication elsewhere and a position labeled as a PR representative in one context might be categorized as a business role elsewhere (Cutlip et al., 1985, p. 59). Therefore, it's essential to recognize that PR professionals may operate under assorted job titles and can be found among other specialized fields, such as marketing, which boasts nearly 9,000 employees. Consequently, the employee count reported by the CSO may not provide a comprehensive overview of PR practitioners.

Despite this, the Czech Republic has roughly 150 registered PR agencies, with an undisclosed number of professionals working independently. Utilizing Falconi's (2006) estimate, which suggests that one in every 700 workers in developed democratic nations engages in PR, the Czech Republic would theoretically harbor around 15,000 PR professionals.

But it is not only agencies and employees who make up the market of PR professionals. Public relations practitioners can be found across various sectors, including institutions, companies, and independent consultants, often referred to as freelancers. It is imperative to acknowledge both employees and freelancers as integral components of the workforce in this field.

In 2018, approximately 16% of economically active individuals aged 15 to 74 pursued freelance work, a figure only marginally higher than the European Union average (Eurostat, 2019). By comparison, the United Kingdom reports that 11-13% of surveyed professionals engage in freelance work (CIPR, 2022).

COMPARISON WITH BORDERING COUNTRIES

Research on PR professionals' demographics in neighboring countries – Austria, Germany, Poland, and Slovakia – is conducted sporadically. Germany has seen repeated studies by Bentele (Bentele & Seidenglanz, 2013; Bentele & Wehmeier, 2003) examining trends like professionalization, specialization, and feminization,

highlighting that Germany has over 20,000 PR professionals (Bentele & Wehmeier, 2003). While most PR professionals hold higher education degrees, only 15% studied PR specifically. German PR agencies are represented by GPRA (36 agencies, 2,800 employees) and the DPRG association, while communicators are unified under BdKom (Bundesverband der Kommunikatoren).

In Poland, Tworzydło et al. (2019) assessed the profession's status through three surveys (2017–2018). The country has 934 PR agencies, though nearly a quarter operate as single-person consultancies. Agencies are represented by ZFPR, which establishes ethical standards. PR can be studied at multiple institutions, offering PR, marketing, and media programs. Three organizations serve Polish PR professionals: ZFPR, SAPR (agency associations), and PSPR (communication professionals).

Austria, with approximately 10,000 PR professionals, sees a third working in agencies or as consultants and the remainder in institutions or corporations (Haas, 1987; Zowack, 2000). PRVA, founded in 1975, is the primary association. Since the 1980s, the average age of Austrian PR practitioners has been 39 years, with 89% holding university degrees, primarily in journalism, media, or economics (Nessman, 2004).

In Slovakia, PR professionals often transition from journalism or related fields. PR studies are offered at five institutions in combination with media or marketing. The APRSR (18 members) represents agencies and publishes an ethical code. However, no estimates exist for the total number of Slovak PR professionals (Žáry cited in van Ruler, B. & Verčič, D. ed. (2004)).

These findings reflect both commonalities and national distinctions in PR professionalization across Central Europe.

ACTIVITIES

European communications professionals dedicate most of their time to media relations, followed by providing consultancy to top management and strategic communication planning (Beurer-Zuellig, 2009). Tasks such as coordinating with colleagues and journalists, drafting press releases and other written materials, monitoring activity outcomes, and organizing events consume an average of 36.2% of a PR's time. Younger professionals (under 29 years) and women allocate more time to these operational duties, with 45.1% and 38.1% respectively, while men focus more on coordination, occupying an average of one-fifth of their working time (18.8%). Additionally, management responsibilities account for approximately 27.8% of their time, while coaching and consulting members of their organization or clients, including media preparation, comprise the remaining fifth (17.2%) (Zerfass et al., 2016).

In contrast, research conducted in Britain places greater emphasis on copy-writing (82%), campaigning (69%), and strategic planning (68%), with media relations ranking fourth (64%). Over half of the respondents also mention engagement in community relations (54%), internal communications (54%), crisis communications (54%), and social media management (51%) (CIPR, 2022).

Interestingly, both lower-level team members and senior PR executives spend a significant portion of their time communicating with the media, with the former dedicating 46.6% and the latter 29.6% (Zerfass, 2016). This active involvement in day-to-day media relations, even at the senior level, is characteristic of the PR field. Senior managers often engage directly in media communication, particularly when addressing sensitive topics such as financial results (Moss & Desanto, 2005).

While a systematic description of tasks within the Czech Republic's communications sector is yet to be undertaken, insights can be gleaned from a survey among PR agencies conducted by APRA (STEM/MARK, 2021). Media relations emerge as the primary focus, accounting for 30% of agencies' workload, followed by product PR (14%), digital and social media management (12%), crisis communications (10%), internal communications (8%), corporate identity (8%), content marketing (4%), public affairs/government relations (5%), influencer marketing (3%), and social responsibility and philanthropy (4%).

METHODOLOGY

Based on previous research, two main research questions (RQ) were identified with hypotheses (H) below:

- RQ1: What is a demographic profile of Czech PR practitioners?
- H1a: Czech PR professionals are, like 80% of PR professionals in Europe (Beurer-Zuellig et al., 2009), university educated.
- H1b: Czech PR professionals are most often educated in the social sciences, communication and journalism (according to Beurer-Zuellig et al., 2009 in Eastern Europe: 26.2% in communication, 29.4% in social sciences, 11.1% in journalism).
- H1c: For most Czech PR professionals, PR is not their first profession.
- H1d: As in other countries (66% in the USA (Grunig et al. (2001, p. 50) and in the UK (CIPR, 2022), 53% in Germany (Fröhlich et al. 2005, p. 80), women also predominate among Czech PR practitioners.
- RQ2: What is the job description of Czech PR practitioners?
- H2a: Most Czech PR professionals (36.2%) are frequently involved in media relations (according to Zerfass et al. (2016)).

The cross-sectional quantitative study collected data through an online questionnaire comprising 26 mandatory questions in the Czech language, divided into four sections. Twenty respondents were pretested over three weeks in August and September 2022, following which the final revised version was distributed for six weeks in October and November 2022.

Respondents were selected via purposive sampling, utilizing email and the professional networking platform LinkedIn. The questionnaire was disseminated through various channels, including the Faculty Alumni and student network, professional organizations such as APRA and PR Klub, the PR Academy for NGOs, the #Holkyzmarketingu group on Facebook, and P.R.ciny on LinkedIn.

The outreach efforts extended beyond professional organizations to ensure a diverse sample. A total of 710 PR professionals were directly contacted via email and LinkedIn. Additionally, questionnaires were distributed to senior staff of APRA member agencies and members of the PR Klub with publicly traceable addresses. To maintain objectivity and minimize bias, recipients were encouraged to share the questionnaire with their colleagues.

Respondents were assured that the data collected would remain completely anonymous in both the accompanying letter and the introduction to the online questionnaire.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

The survey's respondents comprised 463 Czech PR professionals, with 40.39% identifying as men, 59.18% as women (one respondent indicated a different gender, and one chose not to specify), with an average age of 39.6 years. The capital city, Prague, boasted the highest representation among regions, with 76.89% of participants primarily working there, followed by the South Moravian (6.91%) and Moravian-Silesian regions (3.89%). Some respondents had accrued 30 years of experience in the industry, with an average tenure of 11.08 years (median 10 years).

In terms of employment sectors, the largest proportion of respondents hailed from government and contributory organizations (28.3%), followed by those from commercial firms (26.57%), agencies (23.97%), and self-employed individuals (12.53%). Additionally, 7.99% of respondents worked in the non-profit sector.

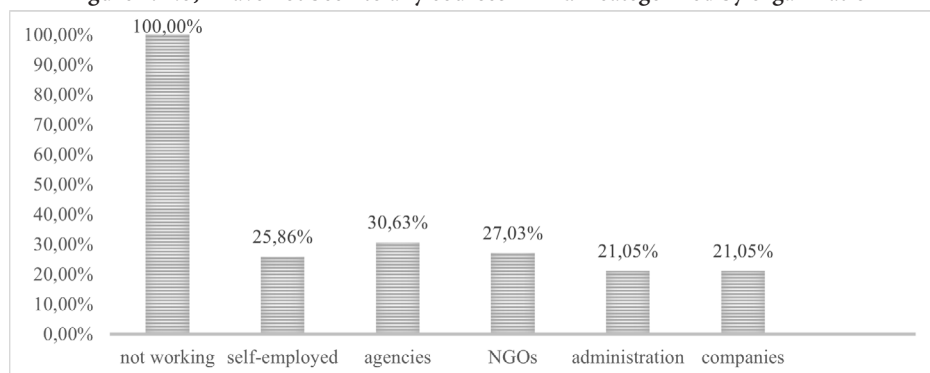
RESULTS

COMPETENCIES

Of the respondents, 87% reported holding a university degree, with 6 out of 10 PR professionals possessing an MA, and 6.7% having a PhD. More than half of the university-educated respondents pursued a social science discipline such as media studies, sociology, or economics. Business studies were pursued by 13.39% of the surveyed PR professionals, while arts and humanities, which include linguistics or history, were studied by 10.8%. Other disciplines were represented by less than 5%.

Except for the 23.76% of respondents who have not undertaken any additional PR courses, respondents displayed an inclination toward staying abreast of the latest developments in the field. Notable activities mentioned more frequently included media training (cited by 199 participants; 43% of respondents), in-house training (188 PR professionals; 41%), and professional lectures and workshops (referenced by 177 respondents; 38%). The highest number of non-participants in training activities was observed among self-employed individuals. Interestingly, 30.63% of agency staff and 27.03% of NGO staff reported not participating in any PR courses (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. No, I have not been to any courses in PR. – categorized by organization



Source: Own elaboration, N=109, $p < 0.001$

NOT THEIR FIRST PROFESSION

The survey encompassed both newcomers to the field and seasoned professionals with up to 30 years of experience. The average industry tenure was 11.08 years. However, participants had an average overall work experience of 17.06 years. This indicates that the majority, nearly 74%, transitioned into PR from another field.

The most prevalent route into PR, identified by 36.29% of respondents, was from the media. Marketing served as the entry point for 15.77% of respondents, followed by administration (7.78%) and teaching (5%). Additionally, 24.41% of participants commenced their careers directly in PR. As illustrated in Table 1, the average age of individuals entering PR directly is notably lower (35.42 years) compared to other categories. Conversely, workers with a teaching background had the highest average age (43 years).

Table 1. The initial profession and the average year of these respondents (N=463)

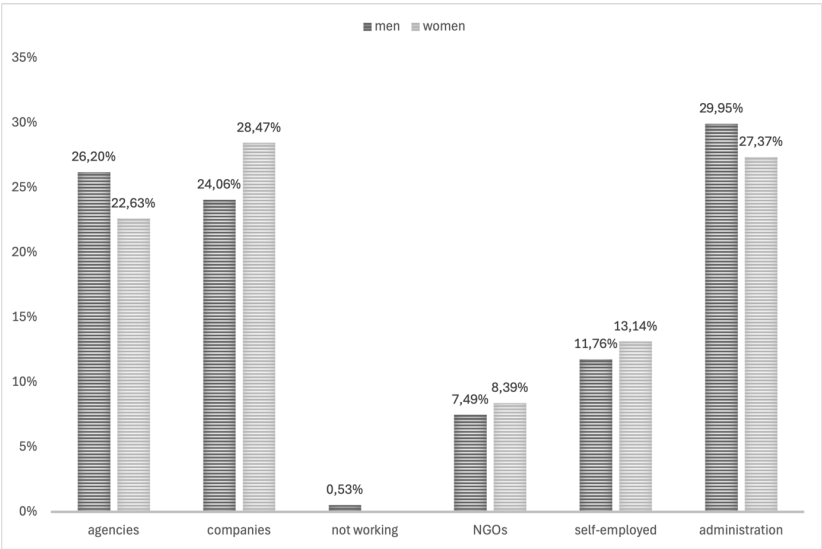
Previous profession	%	Average age in years
media	36.29	41.9
first profession	24.41	35.4
marketing	15.77	38.5
business administration	7.78	40.6
different	7.13	41.0
education	5.62	43.0
management	1.51	39.9
HR	1.08	41.6
event management	0.43	41.5

Source: Own elaboration

WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION

The questionnaire yielded a response rate of 40.39% from men and 59.18% from women (with one respondent indicating a different gender and one opting not to disclose). Notably, the distribution of the gender of respondents across organizational types did not exhibit significant variance (see Figure 2). Slightly more women were engaged in the non-profit sector and freelance work and demonstrated a higher frequency of client-oriented roles. Conversely, men were more prevalent in civil service positions and significantly more represented in agencies.

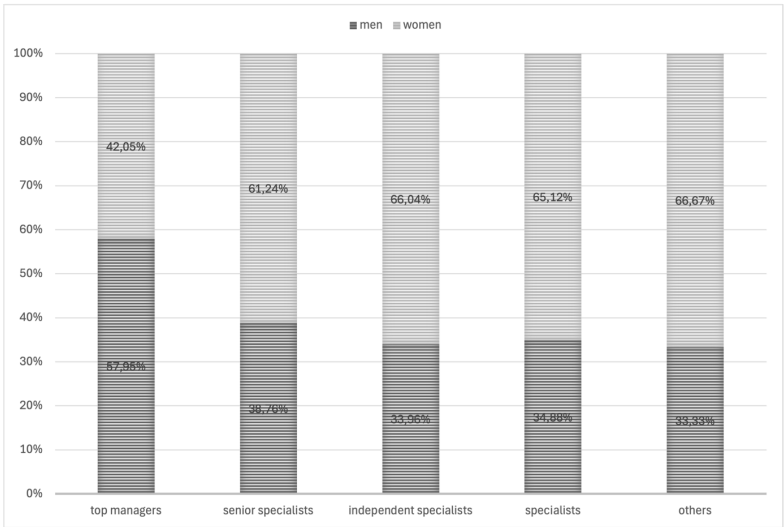
Figure 2. Gender distribution among Czech PR practitioners in organizations (N=461)



Source: Own elaboration

However, a highly significant difference ($p < 0.001$) was observed in their distribution across positions (Figure 3). Female representation across all positions in PR was evidently higher, except for top managers, where men and women have swapped positions.

Figure 3. Gender distribution among Czech PR practitioners in positions



Source: Own elaboration; % reflects the number of persons in this position among all men, resp. all women, N=461, $p < 0.001$

WHAT DO THEY ACTUALLY DO?

When considering the activities undertaken by Czech PR professionals, it becomes evident that media relations—encompassing press releases, press conferences, and publicity—remains the cornerstone of their daily responsibilities, irrespective of their gender, position or level of experience.

A closer examination of the most common activities based on seniority reveals distinct trends (as outlined in Table 2). Top managers primarily focus on communication strategies, media relations, and team management. Senior specialists predominantly cite media relations, followed by strategies and the role of spokesperson. Independent specialists are most frequently engaged in media relations, followed by working with text, with communication strategies ranking third most common. Moreover, top managers also oversee management functions, while both top managers and managers are actively involved in shaping communication strategies. Independent specialists and specialists are often tasked with working extensively with text, with the latter incorporating monitoring and reporting responsibilities.

Analysis of data related to experience levels in the field further reinforces the prominence of media relations across all career stages, except for the most experienced professionals (as seen in Table 3). Newcomers are typically tasked with text and social media management, while after five years, their focus shifts to communication strategies, and another five years later, representing the company in the media emerges as a key responsibility. For professionals with 15–19 years of experience, team management becomes increasingly important, and after another five years, the focus returns to text-related tasks. Respondents with over 25 years of PR experience notably engage in crisis communications as a key activity. The most seasoned professionals (with over 30 years of experience) predominantly engage in communication strategy development and internal communication.

An analysis of activity representation in the sample further highlights gender disparities (see Table 4). Men are more likely to be involved in media relations, crisis communication, and team management, with statistically significant differences noted in crisis communication and management. Conversely, female PR professionals are more likely to engage in event management, monitoring, and social media management, with significant differences observed in event management.

Examining less frequent tasks reveals divergent roles between male and female professionals. Women are three times more likely to work in CSR, while men are three times more likely to engage in lobbying. This observation aligns with the Grunig model, which suggests that men are more inclined toward managerial roles, while women tend to gravitate toward technical roles (Grunig et al., 2001).

Table 2. The most common activity, categorized by positions (N=463)

Position	Activity 1	%	Activity 2	%	Activity 3	%
Top managers	Communication Strategies	59.09	Media relations	55.68	Team and project management	44.32
Senior specialists	Media relations	70.22	Communication strategies	35.96	Spokesperson	33.71
Independent specialists	Media relations	76.42	Copy-and Ghostwriting	44.34	Communication strategies	36.79
Specialists	Media relations	65.52	Copy- a ghostwriting	57.47	Monitoring, reporting	35.63
Others	Event management	50.00	Copy- and ghostwriting	50.00	Social media and community management	50.00

Source: Own elaboration

Table 3. The most common activity, categorized by experience in PR (N=463)

Years in PR	Activity 1	%	Activity 2	%	Activity 3	%
0–4 years	Media relations	69.79	Copy- and ghostwriting	44.79	Social media and community management	34.38
5–9 years	Media relations	72.50	Social media and community management	38.33	Communication strategies	37.50
10–14 years	Media relations	66.67	Communication strategies	35.35	Spokesperson	32.32
15–19 years	Media relations	62.67	Communication strategies	49.33	Team and project management	30.67
20–24 years	Media relations	63.83	Communication strategies	48.94	Copy- And ghostwriting	36.17
25–29 years	Media relations	65.22	Communication strategies	47.83	Crisis communication, issues management	34.78
More than 30 years	Communication strategies	66.67	Internal communication	66.67		

Source: Own elaboration

Table 4. The most common activities in the Czech PR – categorized by gender (N=461)

Men		Women	
Activity	%	Activity	%
Media relations	73.26	Media relations	63.87
Communication strategies	36.90	Communication strategies	38.32
Copy- and ghostwriting	35.83	Copy- and ghostwriting	32.12
Spokesperson	30.48	Social media and community management	29.93
Team and project management	29.41	Spokesperson	25.18

Source: Own elaboration

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The primary limitation of the study pertains to the questionnaire, the number of completed questionnaires, and the sample size, alongside the broad interpretation of PR and associated activities as articulated by respondents.

Given the absence of precise figures for the number of Czech PR professionals, the study relied on data from the Czech Statistical Office (which registers 2,600 employees under this classification) and information from APRA and PR Klub, representing several hundred professionals each, to establish a foundational population.

The sample's composition may have been influenced by the data collection method. Prior to the survey's commencement, collaboration was established with the two largest professional organizations, APRA and PR Klub, who disseminated the questionnaire via their respective channels, including newsletters and social media platforms. Additionally, invitations to participate were circulated on LinkedIn and Facebook by individuals and professional groups, such as Bohuslav Bohuněk's PR.ciny or PR Klub. Furthermore, directors of APRA member agencies, other agencies, individual members of the PR Club, and representatives from the public and commercial sectors, including spokespersons from various organizations, were reached out to. However, despite efforts to diversify outreach, certain organizations may have been inadvertently omitted, particularly those with non-public contacts or at lower administrative levels. Attempts were made to address this imbalance by encouraging respondents to share the questionnaire with their colleagues.

Some respondents expressed uncertainty regarding their eligibility as "PR professionals" or were taken aback by the term "professional", echoing findings from research among American PR practitioners (Hazleton & Sha, 2012). The perceived ambiguity surrounding the definition of PR, as also noted by Hejlová (2014), led to divergent perceptions among respondents regarding the scope of PR activities, which occasionally overlapped with those of public affairs professionals or human resources managers. For instance, discrepancies arose when evaluating activities such as agency management, team management, or administration, with varying interpretations among respondents.

It was challenging to eliminate deliberate errors in responses (e.g., one respondent provided an age of 999). Additionally, the mandatory nature of all questionnaire items may have prompted respondents to provide inaccurate answers intentionally. Moreover, the predominance of responses from senior specialists (38.4%) suggests a bias toward individuals with higher socioeconomic status, aligning with patterns identified in meta-analyses of similar surveys (Porter, 2004).

CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this paper was to address the dearth of demographic data within the Czech PR market, aiming to serve as a resource for further academic exploration and industry management. Drawing inspiration from two prominent European questionnaire surveys—the European Communication Monitor sponsored by the European Public Relations Education and Research Association and the State of the Profession by the British Chartered Institute of Public Relations—I adapted both instruments to the Czech context to address key inquiries: Who comprises the Czech PR workforce? How many PR professionals are active within the Czech Republic? Is there a predominant gender demographic, as observed in other European nations? What experience levels do they possess, and do they actively pursue ongoing education? What delineates their job roles?

Estimating the total number of PR professionals in the Czech Republic poses a challenge. While the Czech Statistical Office records 2,600 PR workers holding managerial positions and PR specialists across the state and commercial sectors, a notable percentage opt for freelance work, functioning as highly skilled independent contractors under a trade license—comprising 12.53% of respondents in the survey. Hence, it can be inferred that the field encompasses several thousand individuals. Therefore, the study conducted in late 2022, with a sample of 463 participants, can be deemed representative.

In Czech PR, women constitute a dominant presence, accounting for 59.18% of respondents, while men represent 40.39% of participants. This gender distribution surpasses that observed in the German PR market, where women comprise 53% of the workforce (Fröhlich et al., 2005, p. 80), yet falls below the figures reported in the USA and the UK, where women constitute 66% of the PR workforce (Grunig et al., 2001, p. 50; CIPR, 2022). Notably, women are more inclined to work in the non-profit and freelance sectors, with a pronounced presence in client-facing roles. Conversely, men are slightly more prevalent in government positions and exhibit a significant representation within agency environments.

The average age of Czech PR professionals aligns with global trends, with most individuals under 40 years old. While some seasoned professionals boast three decades of experience in the field, the average tenure is 11.08 years, with a median of 10 years. Remarkably, these professionals have an overall labor market experience averaging 17.06 years, suggesting that PR was not their initial career choice—a common occurrence given the nascent development of PR before 1989. Notably, PR professionals often transition from the media industry. At the same time, younger entrants frequently join the PR field directly, contrasting with the highest average age observed among individuals transitioning from

teaching—a phenomenon potentially influenced by limited university opportunities and low starting salaries for teachers in previous decades.

A significant proportion of Czech PR professionals hold university degrees, with only 13% lacking diplomas. Over half of them have graduated in social science fields such as media studies, sociology, economics, and business, arts, and humanities. Furthermore, three-quarters of respondents have pursued additional education, predominantly through media training, internal training, and professional lectures. Nonetheless, the notable proportion of PR professionals abstaining from educational pursuits (23.76%) raises questions.

Given the abundance of in-house lectures, conferences, and industry competitions replete with case studies—serving as sources of inspiration—it's perplexing that a noteworthy proportion of PR professionals opt out of educational endeavors in all types of organizations, even in PR agencies. One plausible explanation could be the time constraints imposed by the myriad clients and projects handled. This demanding workload may leave employees with limited bandwidth to engage in further education initiatives despite the enriching opportunities provided by their organizations. However, it's worth noting that this fast-paced work environment fosters innovation and the emergence of new trends. Additionally, there's a possibility that some PR professionals do not perceive in-house training or conferences as formal avenues for continuing education.

Despite the burgeoning influence of new media and online platforms, media relations remain the primary focus for Czech PR professionals, encompassing media communication, press release composition, and distribution. This trend persists across professionals of varying experience levels and organizational roles. Notably, creating communication strategies and copywriting emerges as the second most prevalent activity, a phenomenon potentially influenced by the considerable number of PR professionals transitioning from journalism—an industry closely aligned with these tasks.

One of the primary objectives of this study was to compile fundamental data for ongoing monitoring of the evolution of the PR profession. Regular repetition of the research would facilitate tracking changes in various aspects such as demographics, trends in gender representation, shifts in original professions, and attitudes towards continuing education. While collaboration with professional bodies was not pivotal in securing sufficient responses, it is noteworthy that such organizations hold a vested interest in shaping the industry's image and understanding the workforce profile. Understanding these dynamics is essential, as PR evolves as a profession and plays a broader societal role. Yang and Taylor (2013) examined the role of PR in society and concluded that it contributes by building relationships that foster social capital and support the development of democracy. Future research could similarly contribute by complementing this

micro-level perspective with insights from employers, including their expectations and future demands.

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