

Press release (2010-07-07)

European Communication Monitor 2010 results published: 72% say communication has become more important in their organisation during economic crisis

The European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) and the European Association of Communication Directors (EACD) have released the results of their annual European Communication Monitor study. With 1,955 participating professionals from 46 countries, it is probably the most comprehensive study ever conducted in the field of public relations and communication management worldwide. The study has been conducted by a group of professors from universities in 11 countries, led by Prof. Dr. Ansgar Zerfass, Germany. Results are available in a free report (chart version, 122 pp., PDF) online at www.communicationmonitor.eu.

Some of the key findings are:

- Impact of the recession: 72 percent of the respondents report that communication has become more important within their organisations during the economic downturn. However, only 22 percent were able to strengthen their resources compared to other functions, whereas 37 percent lost more than the average. The survey proves that a clear focus on linking communication activities to facilitating business processes – instead of mainly building image and reputation – correlates positively with the development of budgets.
- Job satisfaction: Communication professionals in Europe are generally satisfied with their job situation (69 percent), although there is a huge difference between different regions. Eastern Europeans are the most content (75 percent) and Southern Europeans the least (57 percent). While working in public relations is considered interesting because it comprises manifold tasks and is valued by superiors, job security, salaries and career opportunities are limited.
- Leadership styles: Communication professionals enacting an inclusive leadership style are more satisfied and more influential within their organisations than practitioners using transactional or transformational leadership. Inclusive leadership means superiors appeal to ideals and visions or name challenges and stimulate shared decision making within their teams.
- Indicators of excellence: Good relationships with key stakeholders, the capability to mobilise people, and formal involvement in the management process are the top three features defining an excellent communication department, as perceived by the respondents.
- Development of disciplines and channels: Corporate communication is still considered the most important field of practice, followed by marketing/brand communication. Online communications, media relations on the web and social media have gained in importance massively since 2009 and are expected to grow further.
- Social media: Almost every second European professional (45 percent) thinks online communities are an important channel for public relations today, whereas only 26 percent believe in Twitter and 17 percent in Wikis. Predictions for the future are very positive for any type of social media platform, with online videos leading the path. In spite of this outlook, only a minority of organisations has already started to establish important prerequisites for this field, such as social media guidelines.
- Reliability of predictions for the future: For the first time, it was possible to compute time series analyses and compare this year's results with predictions for the future from previous editions of the same survey. Obviously, communication professionals tend to overestimate the development of

disciplines and communication channels. For example, media relations with print journalists was expected to decline in importance by 9.5 per cent between 2007 and 2010; in fact it increased by 5.2 percent. Importance of social media was thought to rise by 41.4 per cent, but it only rose by 15.2 percent. Nevertheless, the overall shift towards a more responsive and interactive communication environment is highly visible.

The international research, now in its fourth year, has been conducted in partnership with the magazine Communication Director, and sponsored by the media monitoring company Infopaq and Grayling, the world's second largest independent public relations consultancy.

The study monitors trends in communication management and analyses impacts of the global downturn and media crisis on communication departments and agencies. Moreover, it identifies major strategic issues, fields of practice and instruments. Specific topics, such as indicators of excellence and power, effects of social media, leadership styles, job satisfaction or salaries, are discussed in detail. The huge amount of data that had been collected this spring were analysed by means of empirical social research methods and statistical computation.

About the organisers

The European Public Relations Education and Research Association (Euprera) is an autonomous organisation, with members from more than 30 countries, that aims at stimulating and promoting the knowledge and practice of communication management in Europe. Academic scholars and experienced practitioners work together to advance fundamental and applied research. More information is available at: www.euprera.org

The European Association of Communication Directors (EACD) is the leading network for in-house communication professionals from all fields across Europe with nearly 1,500 members. The non-partisan association lobbies for the profession, establishes common quality standards and promotes the advancement of professional qualification by organising events and providing services and material. More information is available at: www.eacd-online.eu

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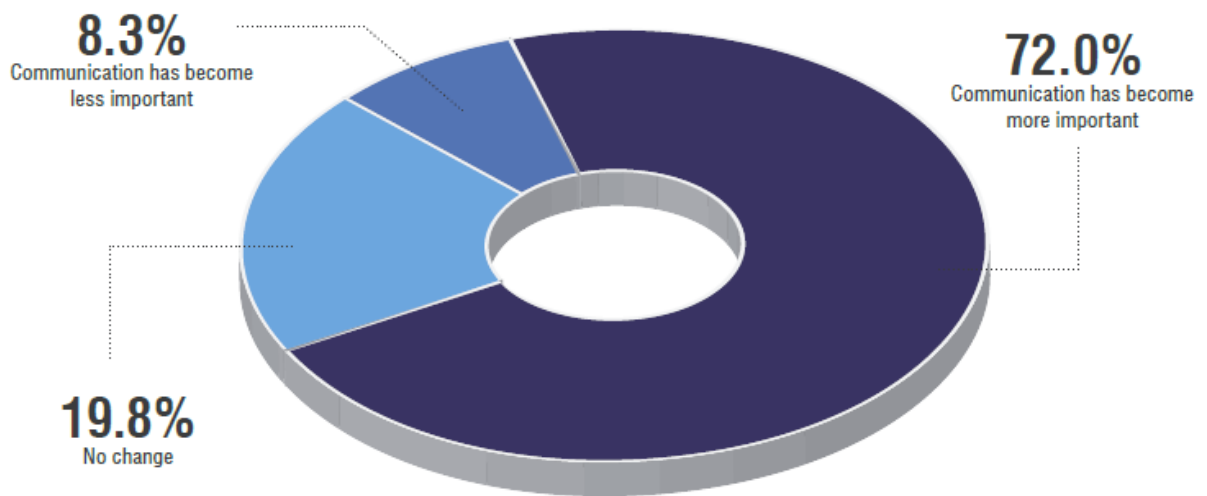
Sample charts from the European Communication Monitor 2010 survey

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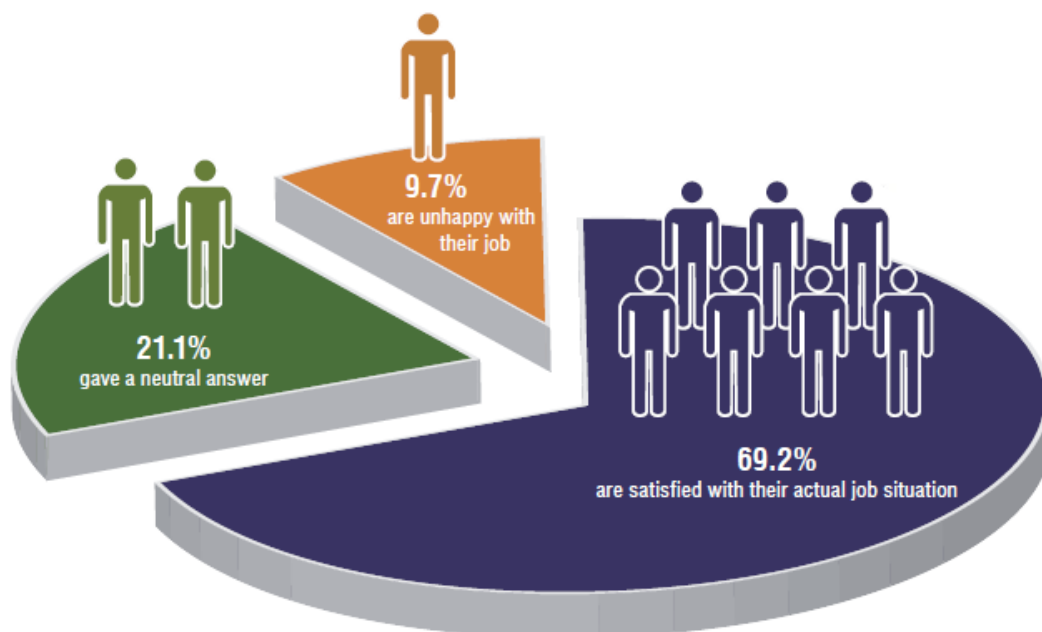
High-res versions of the figures are available for download at www.eacd-online.eu in the Press Room section.

A clear majority of PR professionals in Europe believe that their function has become more important since the recession



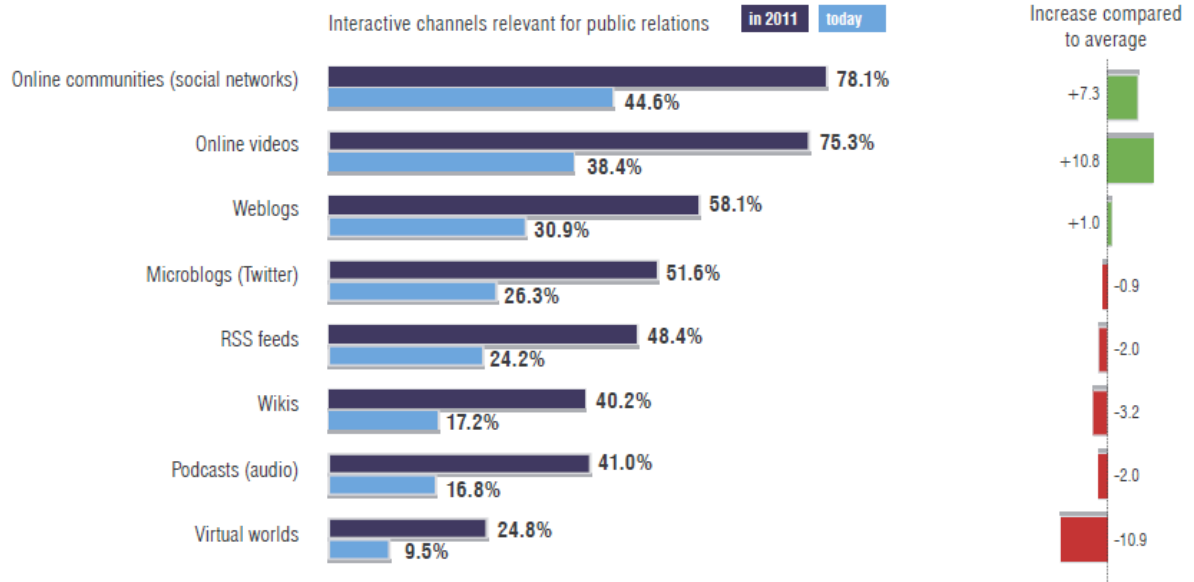
www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zeffass et al. 2010 / n = 1,533 PR professionals in communication departments; Q 1: How has the economic downturn affected the role of communication management within your organisation? (1 = Communication has become less important; 5 = Communication has become more important; less important = 1-2, no change = 3, more important = 4-5).

Job satisfaction: Most PR practitioners in Europe are content



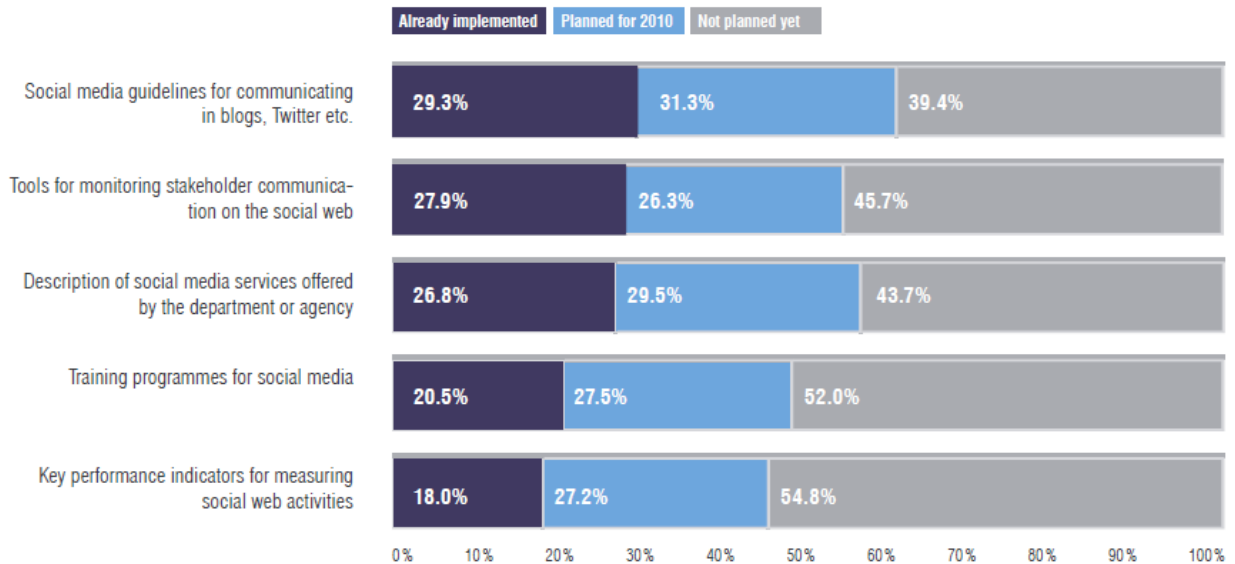
www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zeffass et al. 2010 / n = 1,955 PR professionals from 46 European countries; Q 16: How do you feel about your actual job situation? (scale 1-5; scale points 1-2 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 4-5 = unsatisfied).

PR professionals expect a heavy growth in importance for social media until 2011, with online videos leading the field



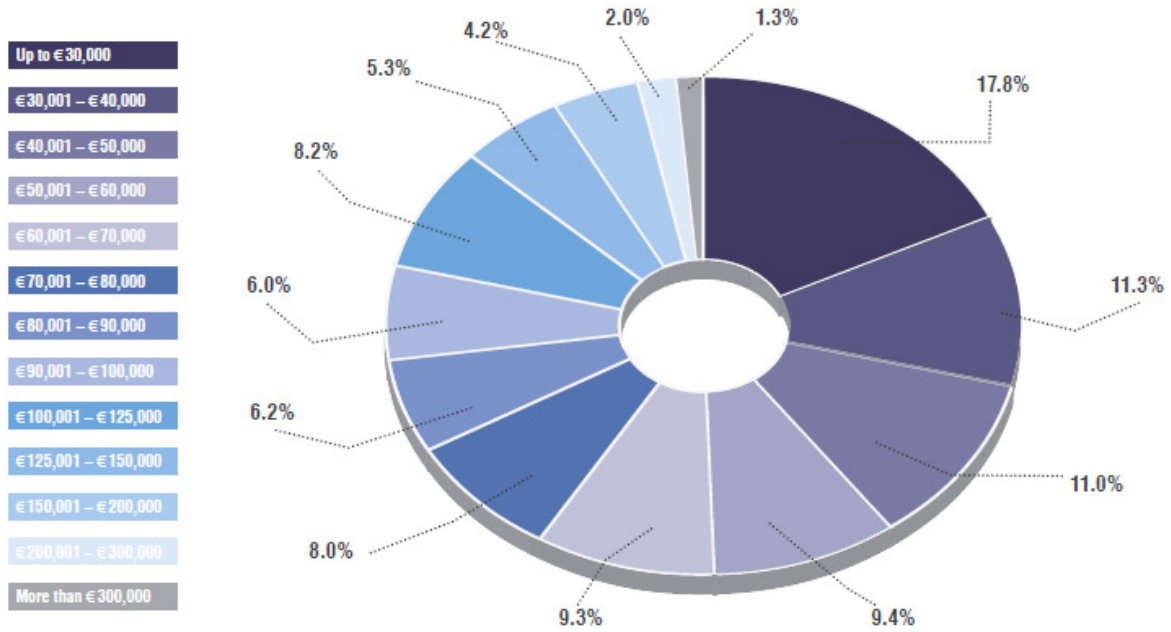
www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2010 / n = 1,955 PR professionals from 46 European countries; Q 13 (scale 1-5; important = scale points 4-5). All are considered more important in 2011; comparison shows difference to average increase (26.18%).

However, most PR departments and agencies have still not implemented the basic prerequisites for social media usage



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2010 / n = 1,955 PR professionals from 46 European countries; Q 14: Has your organisation or agency already implemented one of the following? (1 = Already implemented; 2 = Planned for 2010; 3 = Not planned yet).

Basic annual salary of European PR practitioners (in Euros)



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2010 / n = 1,688 PR professionals from 46 European countries; Q 19: In which of the following bands does your basic annual salary fall?