

2023

# Australian Media Landscape Report

Public Relations Edition

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We acknowledge the Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which this report was written. We recognise their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities and pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.

## About the survey

Welcome to the findings report for Medianet's 2022 Australian Media Landscape survey. The report summarises the findings from two separate surveys conducted between October and November 2022, one of PR professionals and one of journalists. Medianet's Journalist Survey is an annual study on the views of Australian journalists, but this was the first time Medianet had conducted a PR survey.

Respondents were invited to participate via professional email addresses stored in Medianet's contacts database. A total of 1,023 journalists and 291 PR professionals participated in the anonymous surveys, providing a comprehensive result which helps us understand more about the work, experiences and challenges faced by Australian media professionals in 2022.

This survey was conducted before the intense interest in AI tools such as ChatGPT. We appreciate that some challenges might arise for journalists and PR professionals in the coming months and this will be covered in the next 2023 surveys to be conducted towards the end of the year.

Survey participants were invited to enter a draw to win a monetary gift card. Responses were analysed confidentially with all identifying information about respondents removed to maintain anonymity.

For respondents of the journalist survey, 64% of respondents worked in digital journalism, 44% worked in print, 21% worked in radio, 13% worked in TV and 10% worked in podcasting.

For respondents of the PR survey, 40% worked in agencies, 49% in-house and 12% in other PR related positions.

The information presented in this report includes quantitative results, insights and quotes from respondents.

### Media enquiries:

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asidhu@medianet.com.au or  
team@medianet.com.au

**Please note:** these surveys were intended to provide a snapshot of the experiences of journalists and PR professionals, not a comprehensive study into the state of the media industry. Responses received may not fully reflect an accurate sample of both demographics.

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number. Where these do not add up to 100, this is due to respondents being able to select more than one answer to the question.

## PR professional respondents

291



40%

Agencies



49%

In-house



12%

Other PR positions

## Journalist respondents

1,023



64%

Digital journalism



44%

Print



21%

Radio



13%

TV



10%

Podcasting

## Snapshot of the media industry

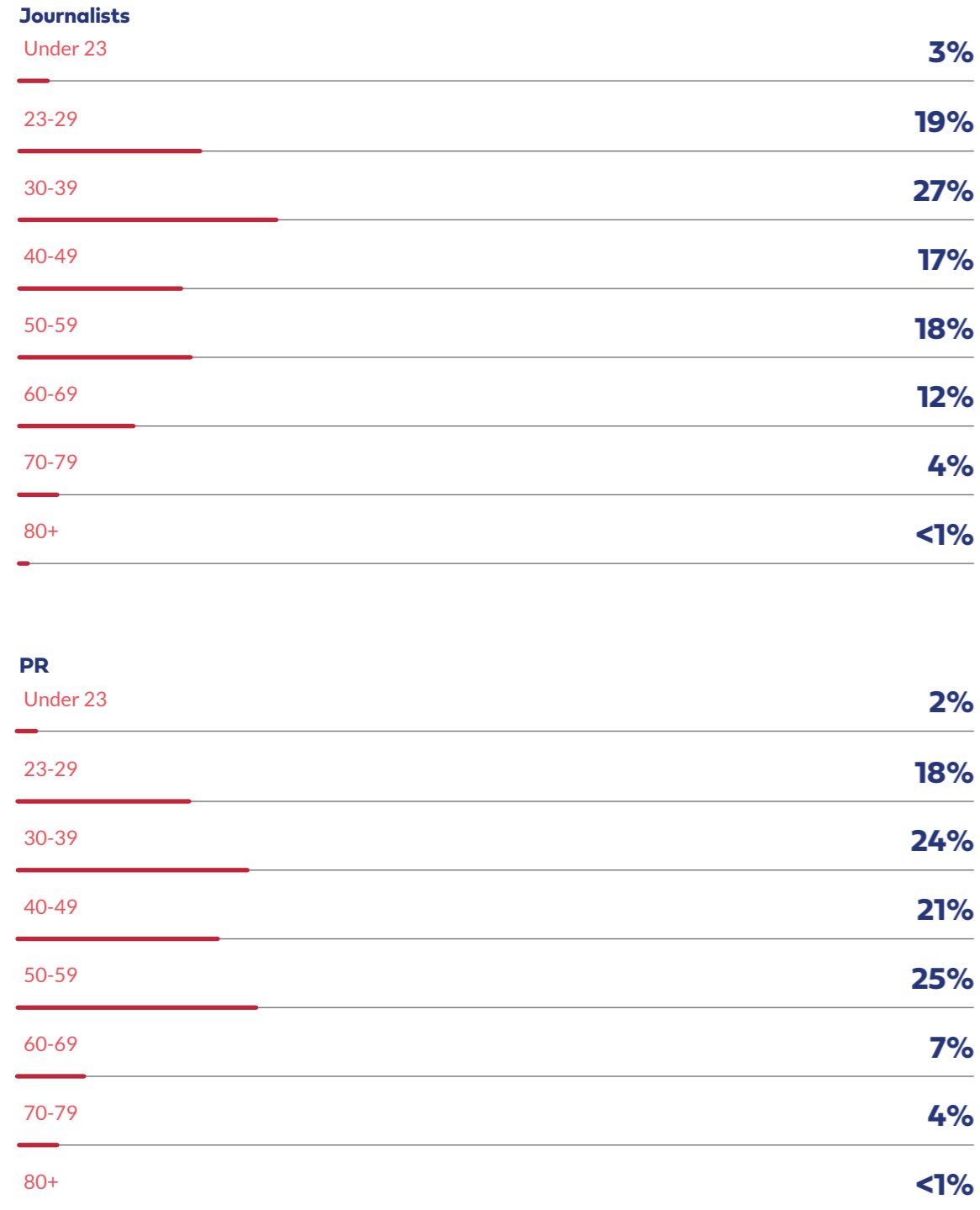


FIGURE 1: Age of respondents (years)

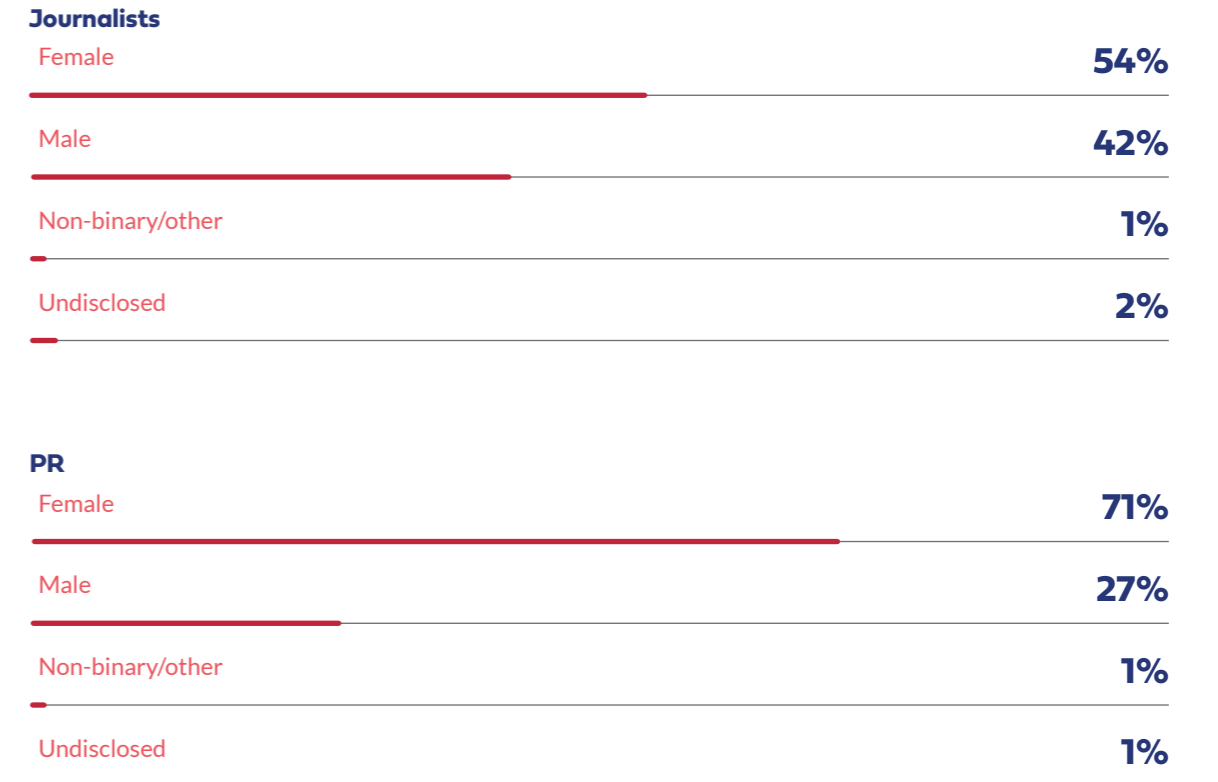


FIGURE 2: Gender of respondents



**Respondents were invited to participate via professional email addresses stored in Medianet's database.**



A total of 1,023 journalists and 291 PR professionals participated in the anonymous surveys, providing a comprehensive result which helps us understand more about the work, experiences and challenges faced by Australian media professionals in 2022.

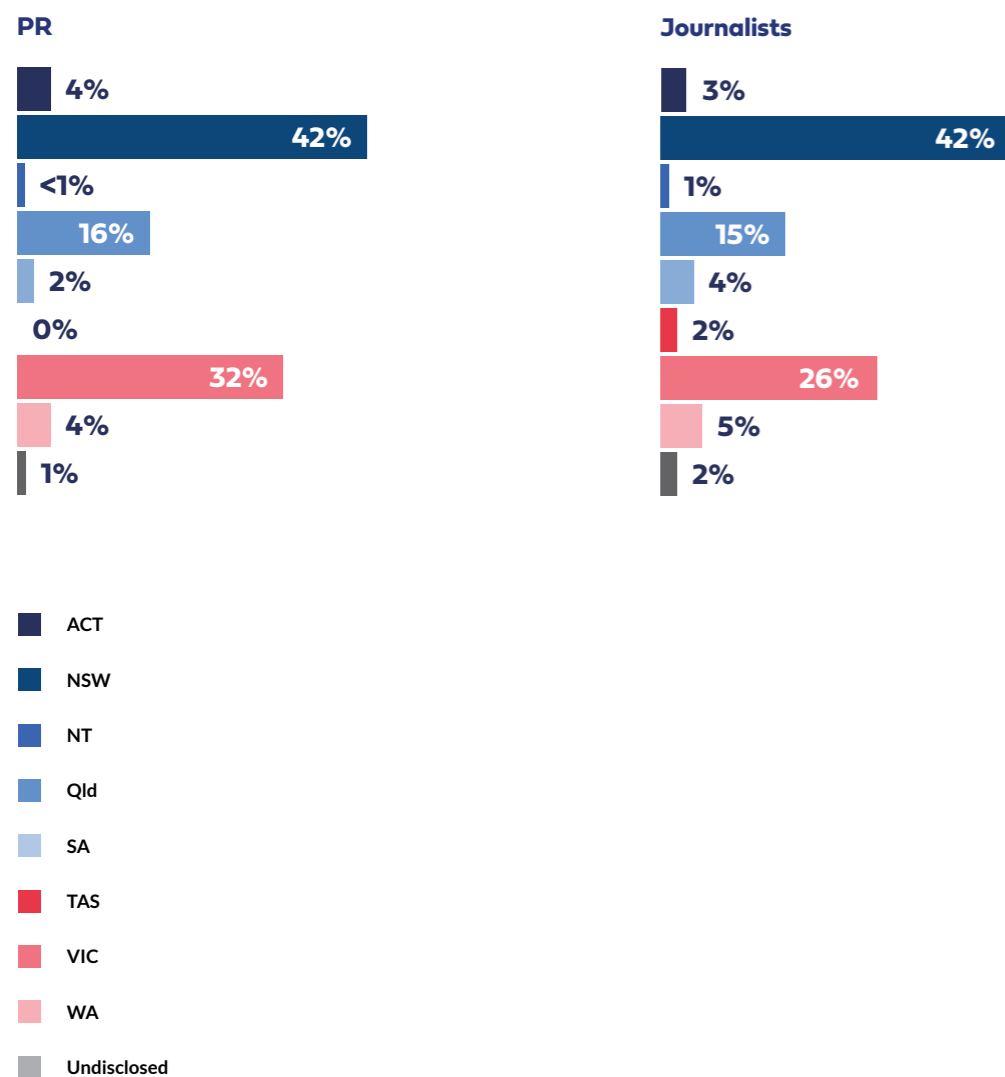
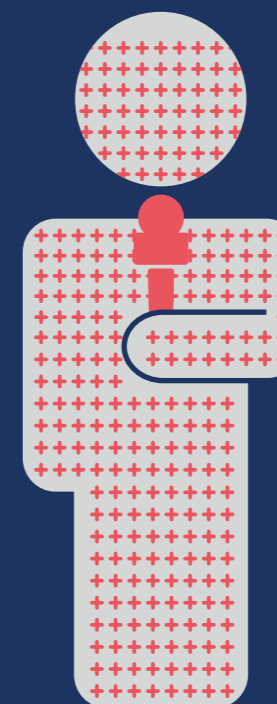


FIGURE 3: Location of respondents

## Snapshot of key findings

97%

Almost all surveyed journalists (97%) use social media in their media work, with 76% using it specifically to source stories. Journalists use more Facebook while PRs use LinkedIn the most.



46%

Almost half of PR professionals (46%) said their press releases or pitches get picked up and covered by the media most of the time.



Industry and professional contacts remain the top story source for journalists (used by 90% of respondents), followed by press releases (used by 86% of respondents).



The most commonly preferred way for PR to contact journalists with story ideas or pitches was by email, used by 87% of PR professionals.



Most surveyed PR professionals said they include assets such as images or videos in a press release or pitch the the media, either everytime (38%) or frequently (31%).

## CAMPAIGNS AND PITCHING



# 71%

Most PR professionals said their normal interactions with journalists are generally positive (60%) or always positive (11%).

More than half of PR professionals said finding/contacting the right journalists or coming up with a news story or angle were one of their biggest obstacles to getting PR (53% and 51% of respondents respectively).



When receiving a press release, only 11% of journalists said they read the whole thing before deciding if the story is worth pursuing. The majority of respondents (70%) read less than a paragraph.

## CAMPAIGNS AND PITCHING

# 87%

The most used social media site for PR professionally was LinkedIn, used by 87% of PR survey respondents.



# 48%

Almost half of journalist respondents (48%) said they generally like to receive embargoed releases a few days in advance. Twenty-two percent of PR professionals said they prefer not to send embargoed releases.



Journalists' professional use of LinkedIn has been increasing for the past three years, and Instagram and Facebook also saw a slight increase in usage this year.

# 41%

of journalists also responded that they believed, in relation to their work, that defamation laws in Australia are too strict.



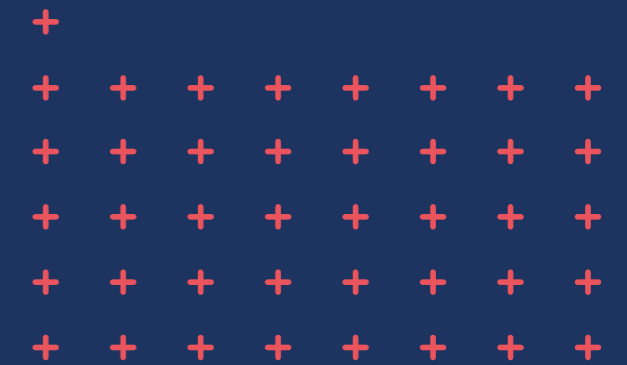
# 32%

Half of journalists (52%) who reported on federal politics in 2022 said there has been no change in reporting under the new government. Thirty-two percent said the new government was more transparent.



# 49%

Half of journalists (49%) said they had withheld from publishing information that they knew to be true because of fear of defamation.



Just over a quarter of all respondents (28%) said they had been asked to take a certain editorial stance based on the affiliations or beliefs of the media organisation where they currently work or freelance for.

# 98%

of survey respondents felt that public interest journalism had been threatened in 2022. The top threats to public interest journalism identified by respondents were an increase in disinformation/'fake news', lack of resources and staff and the closure of media companies/newsrooms.

## THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE AND JOURNALIST CONTENT





# 47%

On average, PR respondents were found to earn more than journalist survey respondents, with almost half of PR professionals (47%) earning over \$100,000 per year compared to a quarter of journalists (25%).

A higher proportion of male journalist respondents held chief-of-staff, photojournalist or cameraperson, publisher and presenter or announcer positions compared to female journalists, and were also slightly more represented in editor and producer positions.



The percentage of journalists working in print media has been decreasing over the past three years, dropping by 8% between 2020 and 2022.



The most common pay bracket for PR professionals was between \$80,000 and \$99,999 per year.



# 35%

More than a third of all surveyed PR professionals (35%) said they had at some stage worked as a journalist, changing to PR work most commonly due to seeking better hours/lifestyle and better pay.

Changes in workload and mental health were the most common greatest personal challenges for PR professionals overall in 2022, while money was the most common greatest challenge for journalists.



# 46%



of journalists said they had experienced abuse or harassment because of their profession and work in the media.

# 84%



of both PR professionals and journalists were found to do at least an hour or two of unpaid work each week.



Two thirds of PR professionals (66%) and 72% of journalists said they had experienced burnout in their media work.

# 22%



Twenty-two percent of journalists who reported being of an ethnic background other than Australian non-Indigenous, New Zealander, English, Scottish or Irish said they had experienced racial discrimination, prejudice or abuse as part of their media work (12% of respondents overall).

## WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

## CHALLENGES



# 01.

## PR campaigns and media pitching

### Journalists' sources

Industry and professional contacts remain the top story source for journalists (used by 90% of respondents).

Press releases are the second most used story source, used by 86% of journalists. Compared to previous years, there has been a 4% increase in respondents who use press releases as a story source. There has also been significant increases in the percentage of journalists using the general public, PR agencies and publicists, other news media, social media, journals or peer reviewed articles and official documents to source stories.

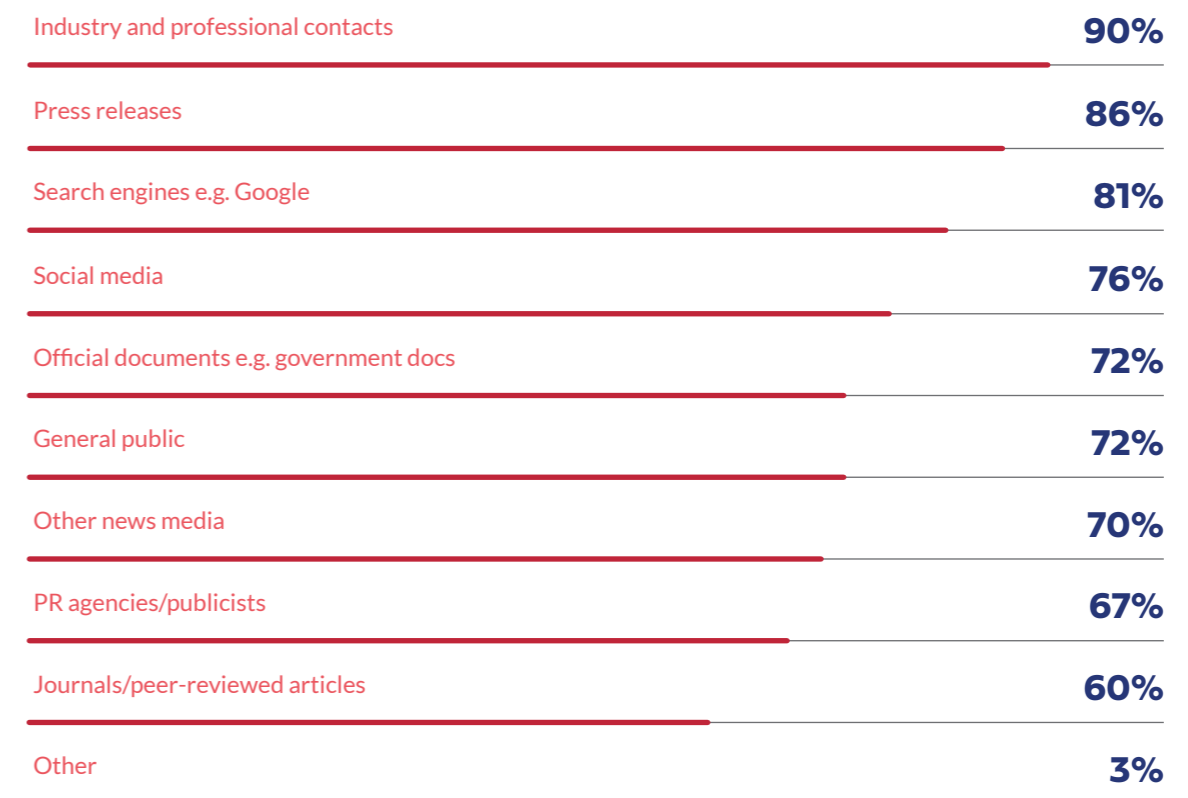


FIGURE 4: Story sources used by journalists



**General public**



**Industry and professional contacts**



**Other news media**



**PR agencies/publicists**



**Press releases**



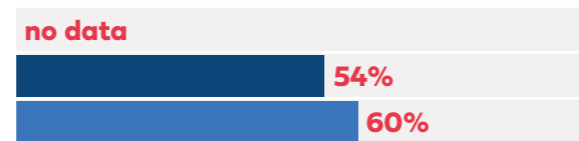
**Social media**



**Official documents e.g. government docs**



**Journals/peer-reviewed articles**



**Search engines e.g. Google**



2020  
2021  
2022

FIGURE 5: Story sources used by journalists (year)

**PR pitching methods**

When pitching a story to the media, most PR professionals said they used press releases (85% of respondents) or their journalist contacts (80%).

Social media was used by 25%. Several of those who cited other methods said they used an online newsroom.

The most commonly preferred way to contact journalists with story ideas or pitches was by email, used by 87% of PR professionals. Half of PR survey respondents (51%) said they like to use phone calls, while social media was a preferred contact method for only 8% of respondents.

Text message was a commonly cited preferred contact method for the 5% of respondents who selected 'other' methods.

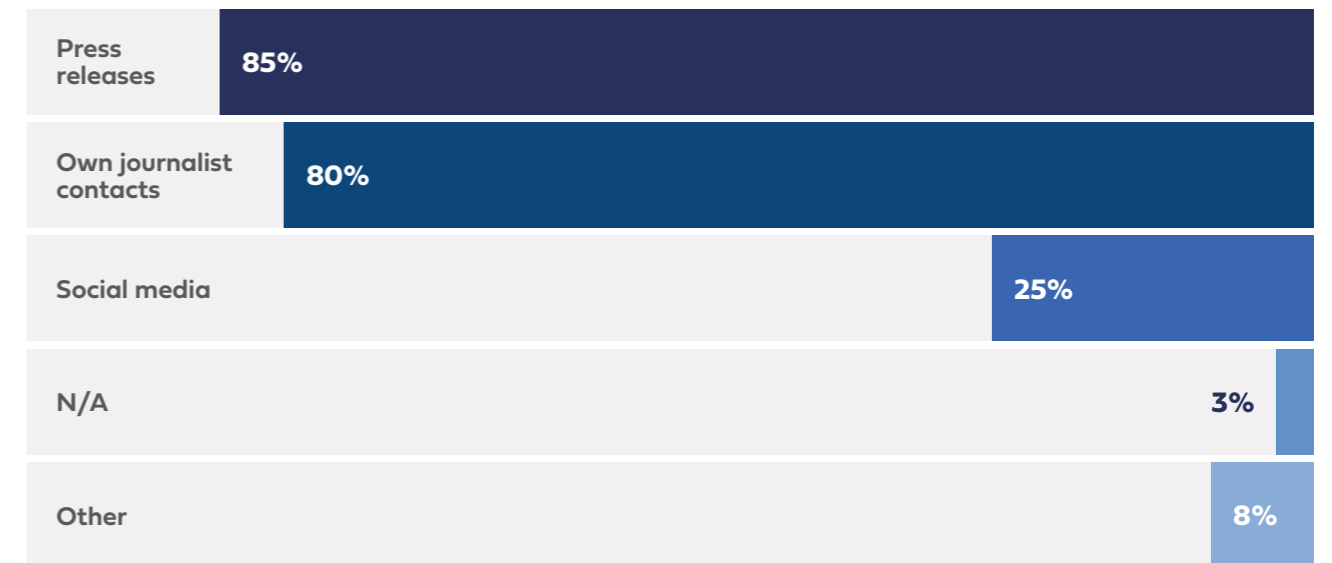


FIGURE 6: PR pitching methods

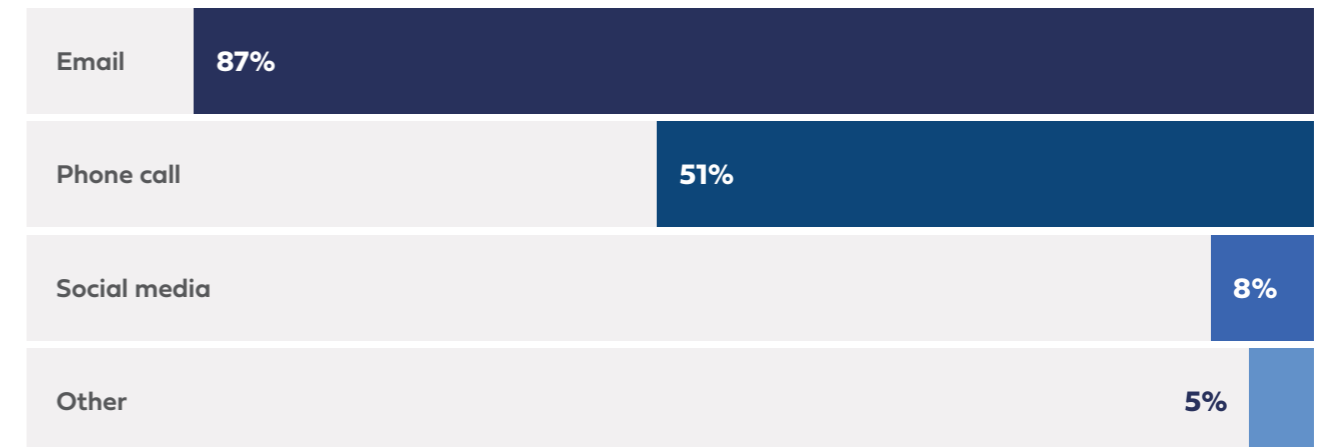


FIGURE 7: PR's preferred method of contacting journalists with story pitches

## Press releases

# 87%

of journalist respondents, of the 868 survey respondents who use press releases to source their stories, said their PR contacts email them directly with press releases.



Of the 868 journalist survey respondents (86%) who use press releases to source stories, the majority (87%) said their PR contacts email them directly with press releases.

Two thirds (67%) said they receive emails or pitches from a press release distribution service, while 32% receive press releases from their editor or chief-of-staff and 30% find them online on a press release platform.

**Media now is dependent on press releases as there is not enough time or resources to hunt independently for stories.**

- 2020
- 2021
- 2022



FIGURE 8: Journalists' use of press releases to source stories (year)

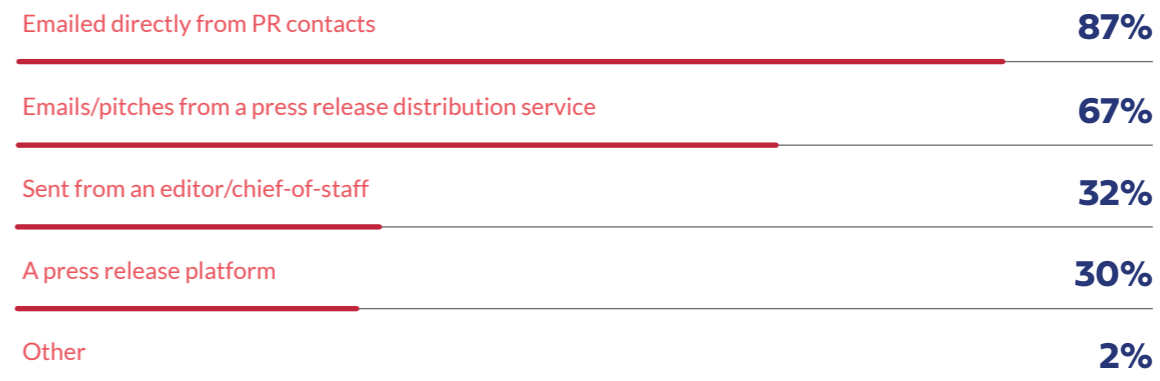


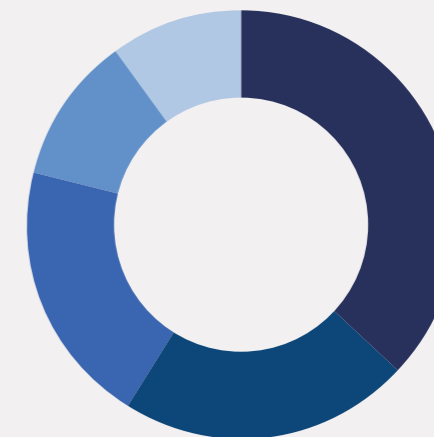
FIGURE 9: Where journalists find press releases

**Press releases: time spent reading**  
When receiving a press release, only 11% of journalists said they read the whole thing before deciding if the story is worth pursuing.

The majority of respondents (70%) read less than a paragraph, with 37% opening the email and glancing at it, 23% reading the first paragraph and 10% reading just the email subject line. Twenty percent read more than one paragraph but not the whole release.

FIGURE 10: How much journalists read of a press release

- Open the email and glance at it 37%
- Read the first paragraph 22%
- Read more than one paragraph 20%
- Read the whole thing 11%
- Read just the email subject line 10%



**Press release: digital assets**

Most surveyed PR professionals said they include assets such as images or videos in a press release or pitch to the media, either everytime (38%) or frequently (31%). Only 15% of respondents said they rarely or never include extra assets.

In [Medianet's 2022 Media Landscape Report](#), 18% of journalist

survey respondents said that not having usable assets attached (e.g. photos) was one of their biggest pet peeves when being contacted by PR.

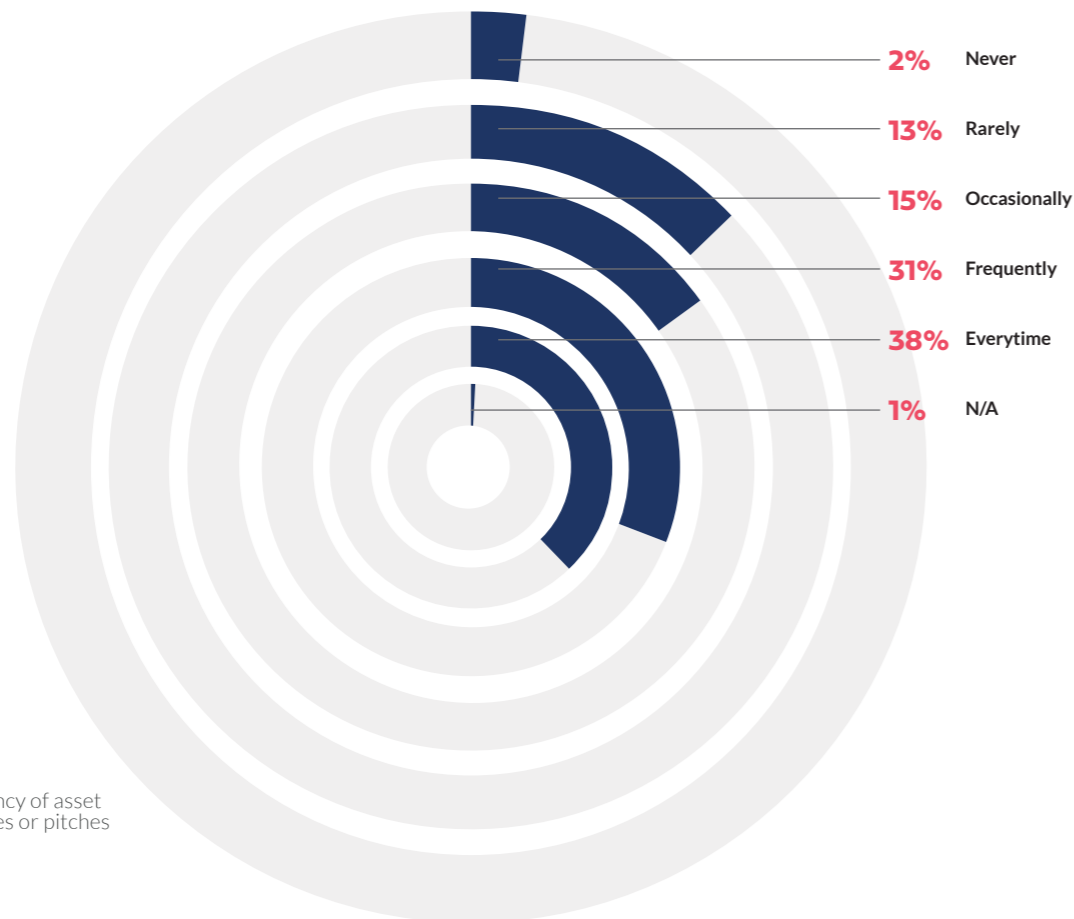


FIGURE 11: Frequency of asset use in press releases or pitches (according to PR)

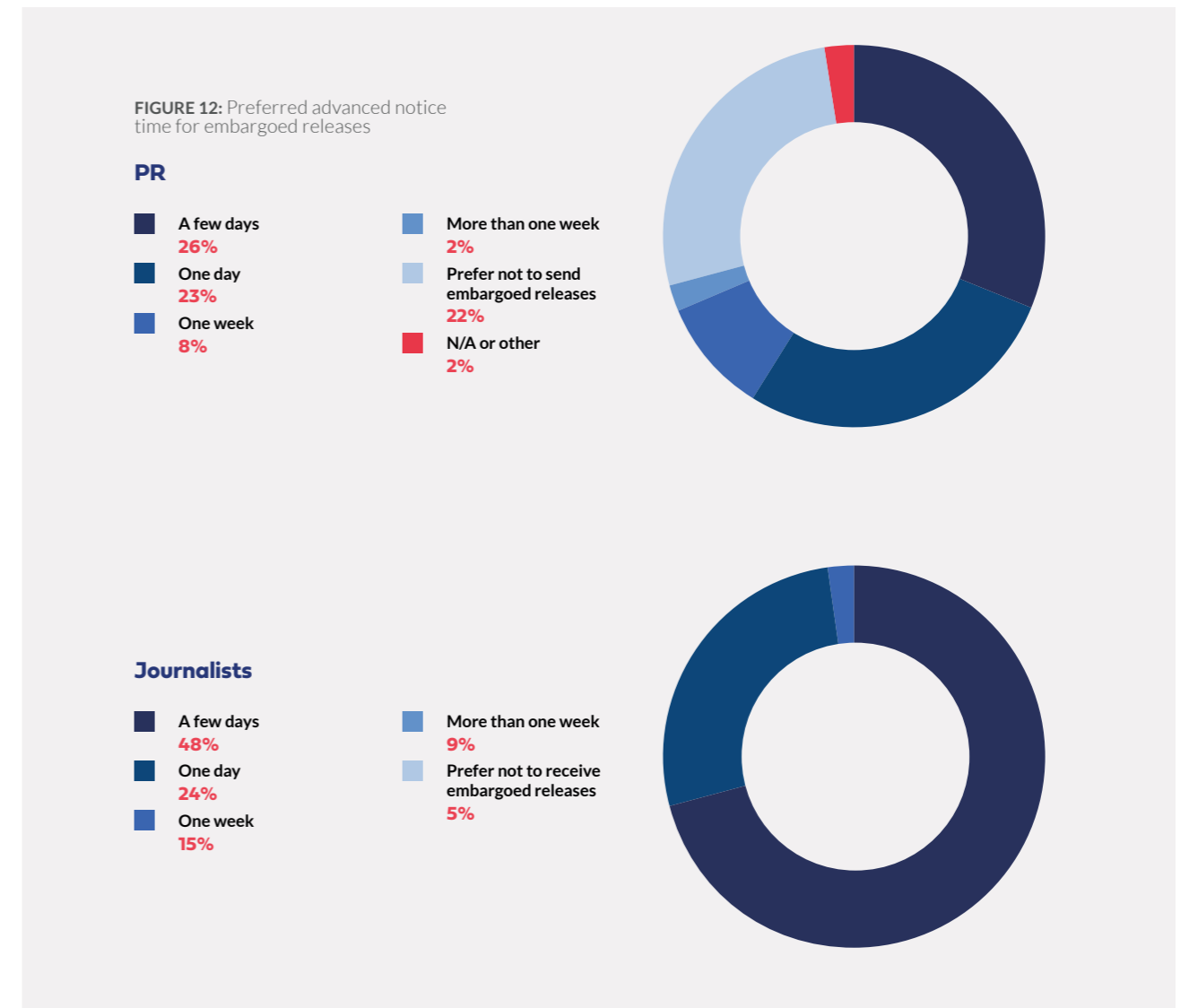
## Embargoes

Almost half of journalist respondents (48%) said they generally like to receive embargoed releases a few days in advance. One day is the preferred notice period for 24% of journalists, one week for 15% and more than one week for 9%.

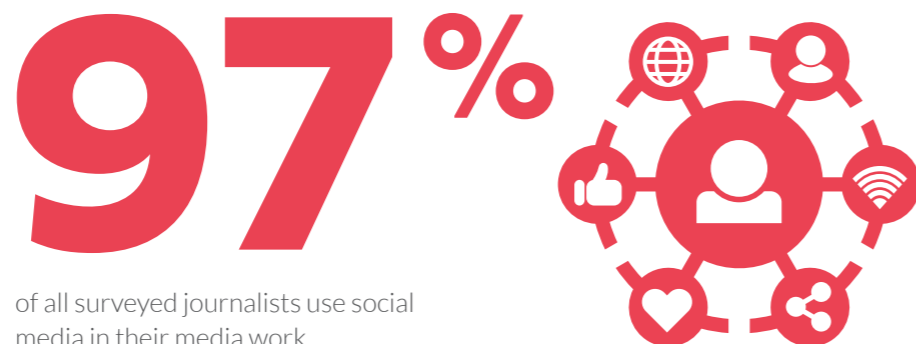
A few days was the preferred notice period for PR professionals setting an embargo on a release.

Twenty-two percent of PR professionals said they prefer not to send embargoed releases, while only 5% of journalists responded that they prefer not to receive embargoed releases.

These preferences did not differ significantly depending on the journalists' platform (print compared to radio etc.).



## Social media



of all surveyed journalists use social media in their media work.

### Social media: Journalists

Almost all surveyed journalists (97%) use social media in their media work, with 76% using it specifically to source stories. Facebook remains the most used social media/communication platform for journalists professionally, followed by Twitter, Instagram then LinkedIn.

Journalists' professional use of LinkedIn has been increasing for the past three years, and Instagram and Facebook also both saw a slight increase in usage since the 2021 survey. Professional use of Reddit and TikTok saw the most significant increase compared to 2021.



**Journalists' professional use of LinkedIn has been increasing for the past three years, and Instagram and Facebook also both saw a slight increase in usage since the 2021 survey. Professional use of Reddit and TikTok saw the most significant increase compared to 2021.**

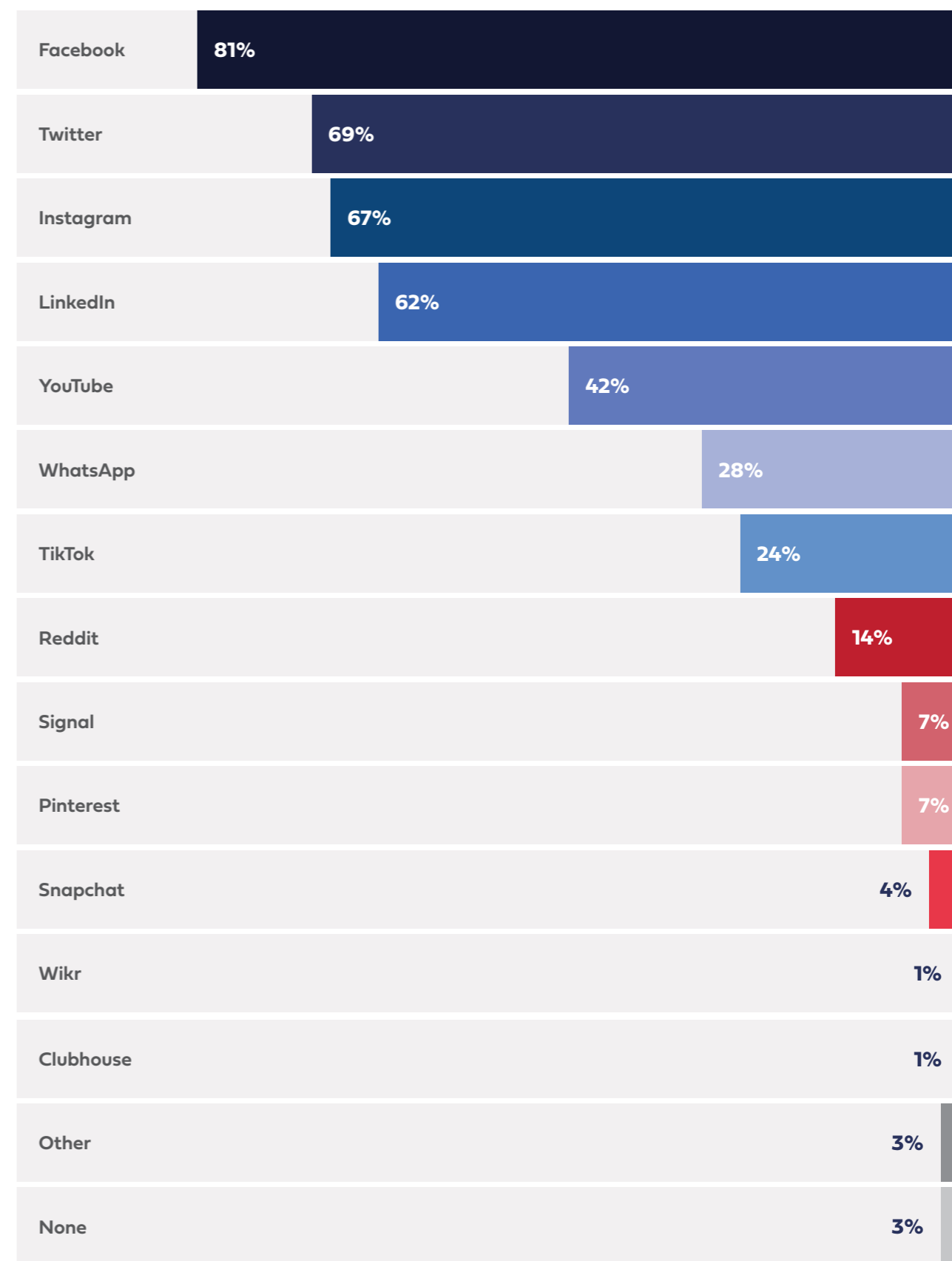


FIGURE 13: Professional social media usage by journalists in 2022

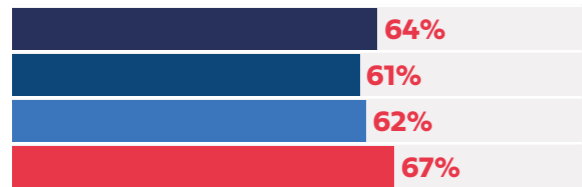
**Facebook**



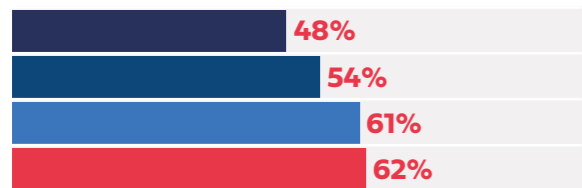
**Twitter**



**Instagram**

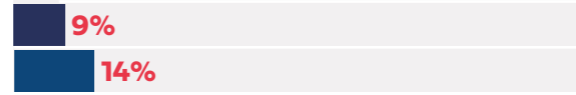


**LinkedIn**



- 2019
- 2020
- 2021
- 2022

FIGURE 14: Professional social media usage by journalists (year)



- 2021
- 2022

FIGURE 15: Journalists' professional use of Reddit



- 2021
- 2022

FIGURE 16: Journalists' professional use of TikTok

**Social media: PR**

The most used social media site for PR professionally was LinkedIn, used by 87% of PR survey respondents. This was followed by Facebook (79%), Instagram (72%) and Twitter (62%).

A far higher percentage of PR professionals are using LinkedIn in their work than journalists (62% of journalist respondents), while more journalists are using Twitter compared to PR.

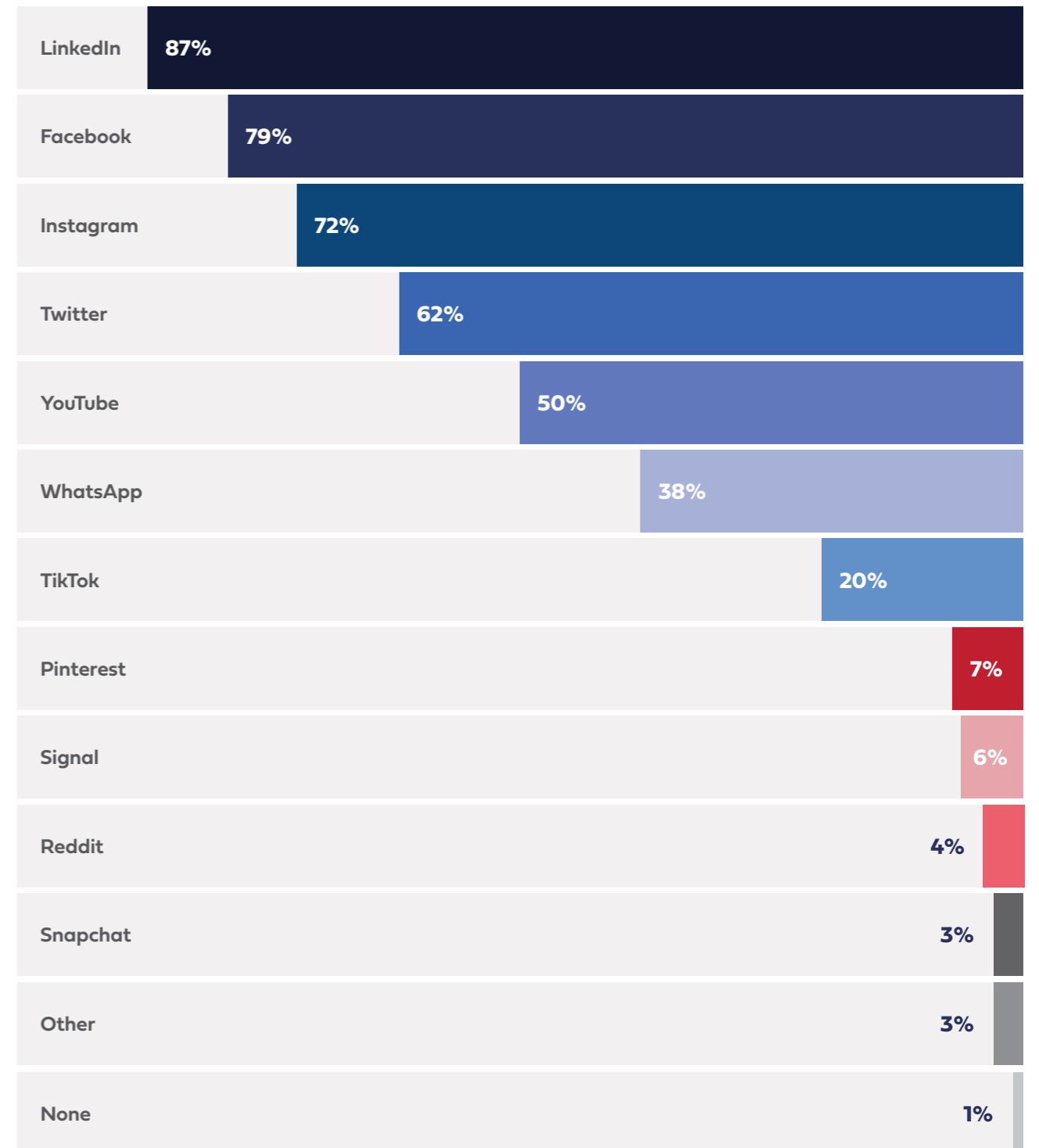


FIGURE 17: Professional social media usage by PR in 2022

## PR obstacles

PR survey respondents were asked to identify up to three of their biggest obstacles to getting PR for their business or their clients. More than half said finding/contacting the right journalists or coming up with a news story or angle were one of their biggest obstacles (53% and 51% of respondents respectively). Other common obstacles were reaching enough journalists/newsrooms (28%), fulfilling the requests of journalists (21%) and being or training a good spokesperson (15%).

Of those who reported that 'other' factors were their biggest obstacle, many noted journalists' time constraints as a challenge.

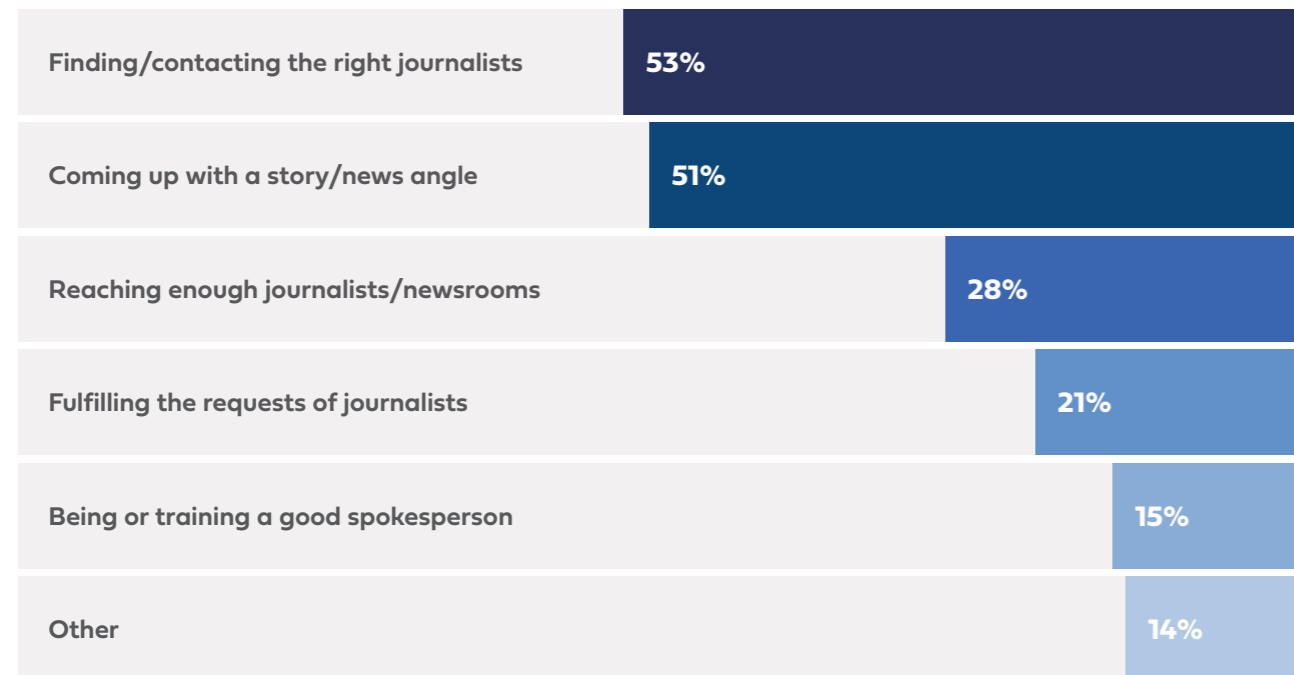


FIGURE 18: Biggest obstacles to getting PR

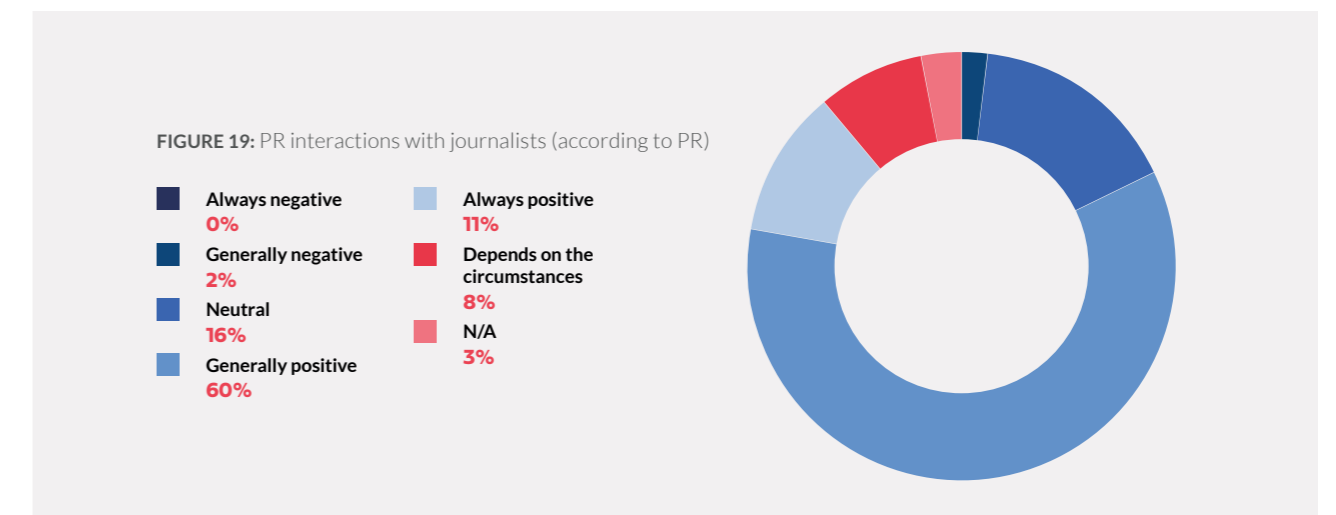
## PR and journalist interactions and relationships

More than half of PR professionals said their normal interactions with journalists are generally positive (60%). This was followed by 16% of respondents who said their normal interactions were neutral and 11% who said they were always positive. Only 2% of respondents said their normal interactions with journalists were generally negative.

Many respondents emphasised the value of establishing good relationships with journalists over time, especially by building a reputation of expertise and professionalism. Many also noted one of their biggest challenges when interacting with journalists is not receiving responses to pitches.

Most PR professionals (73%) said they maintain their own journalist contact lists and 60% said they subscribe to a media contacts database.

There are so few journalists covering so many beats across so many outlets you're thrilled when you even get a decline.



**Getting no response at all is frustrating. A simple 'can't do this one' would really help, as energy could then be redirected to sharing the potential story with others.**

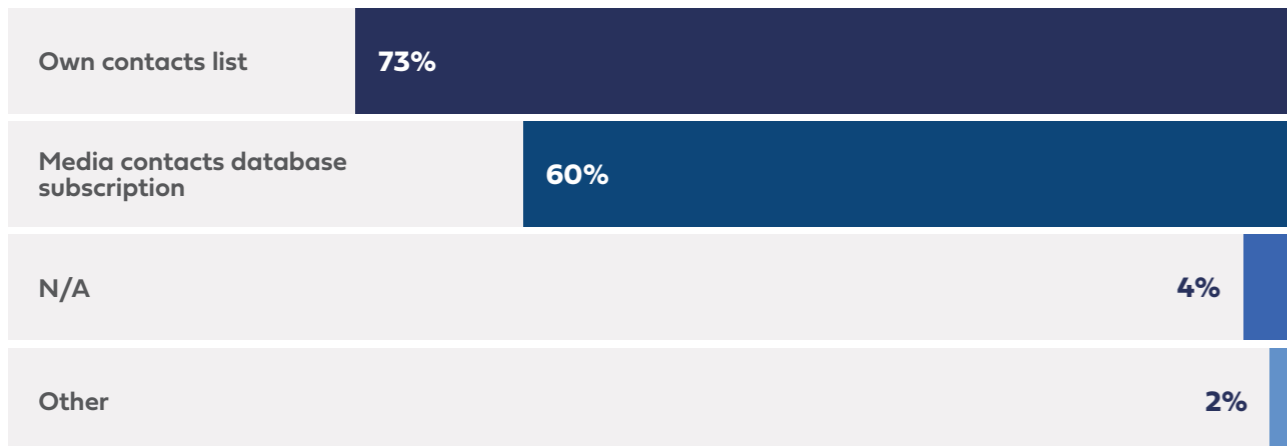


FIGURE 20: How PR professionals maintain journalist contacts

**I** I've known many of my media contacts for more than two decades, so they're also my friends and colleagues now

**J** Journalists get swamped with stories so they can become pretty grumpy sometimes when we do follow ups.



**Building relationships with journalists is incredibly important. Before pitching a story to a specific journalist I make sure to read their latest stories so I know they have an interest in what I am sending to them. Sending journalists irrelevant pitches will only sour a relationship and make you lose out in the long run.**

## Measuring PR success

### Campaign success rates

Almost half of PR professionals (46%) said their press releases or pitches get picked up and covered by the media most of the time. This was followed by 22% of PR respondents who said their pitches get picked up less than half of the time and 21% who said their pitches get picked up half of the time.

### Measuring success

Most PR survey respondents (74%) said they think PR success should be measured by a combination of both the amount of coverage a story receives and the sentiment of the coverage. Sentiment of coverage was valued slightly higher than coverage amount as a measurement of PR success for remaining respondents.

FIGURE 21: PR pitches/press release media pick-up rate (according to PR professionals)

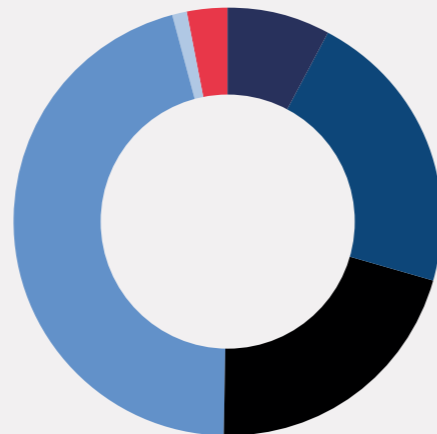
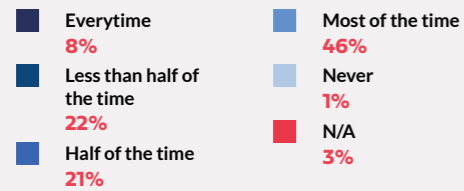
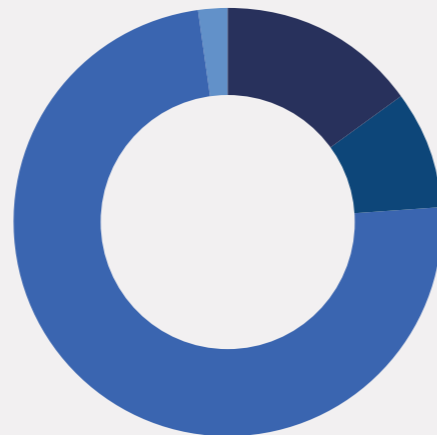
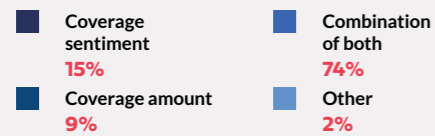


FIGURE 22: How PR professionals think success should be measured



### Tools and services

The most commonly used tool or services for measuring PR success was mention tracking or a media monitoring platform, used by 68% of PR survey respondents.

This was followed by analytics from social media platforms (used by 42% of respondents), metrics from a press release distribution service (29%), metrics from email marketing platforms e.g. Mailchimp (29%) and a media analysis service (23%).

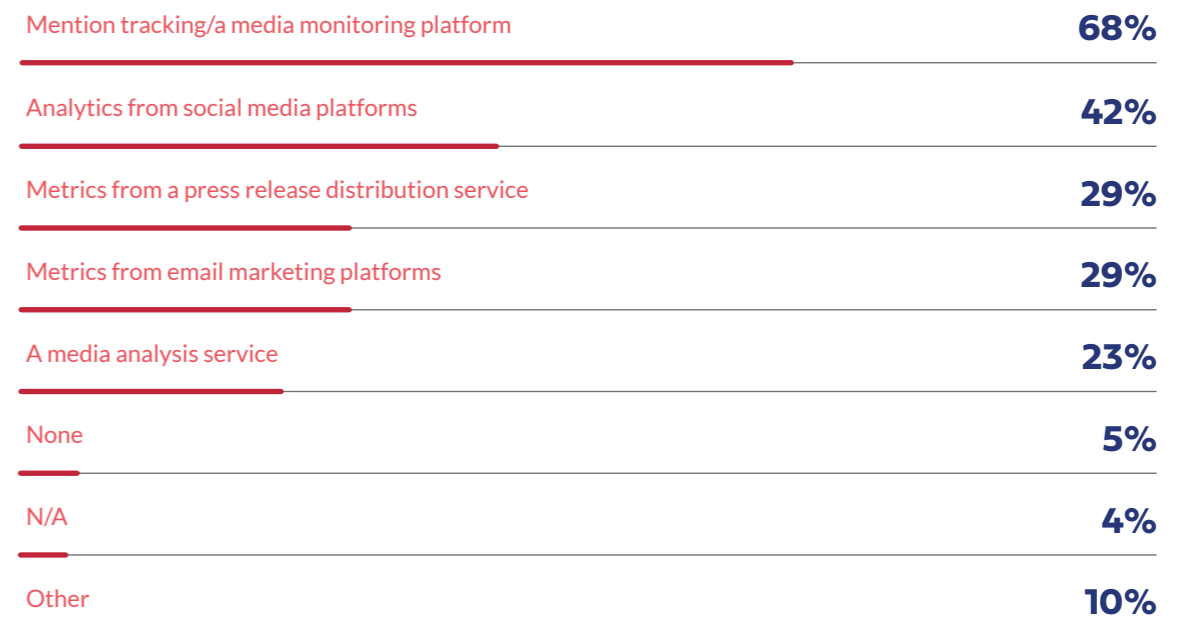


FIGURE 23: Tools and services used for PR success measurement



# 02.

## The media landscape and journalist content



m.

### PR and journalist topic areas

**38%**

For journalist survey respondents, the most common topic areas were entertainment (38%), politics (37%), lifestyle (36%), business (35%), health (35%) and music or arts (34%).

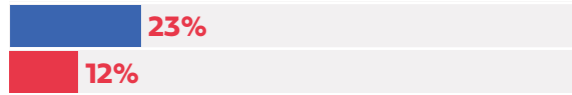
For PR survey respondents, the most common topic area relevant to respondents' line of work was health (45% of respondents), followed by business (41%), national news (34%), politics (32%) and tech (32%). Of the 16% of respondents who selected 'other' topics, 22% highlighted environment or wildlife related areas.

For journalist survey respondents, the most common topic areas were entertainment (38%), politics (37%), lifestyle (36%), business (35%), health (35%) and music or arts (34%).

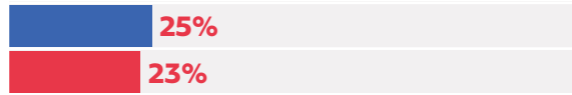


**For PR survey respondents, the most common topic area relevant to respondents' line of work was health (45% of respondents), followed by business (41%), national news (34%), politics (32%) and tech (32%).**

**Agriculture**



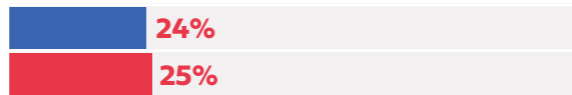
**Finance**



**Automotive**



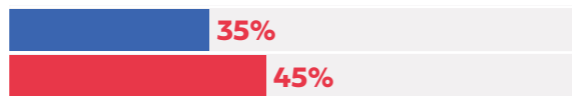
**Food**



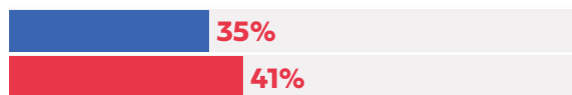
**Beauty/fashion**



**Health**



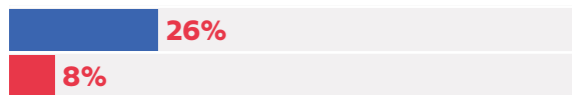
**Business**



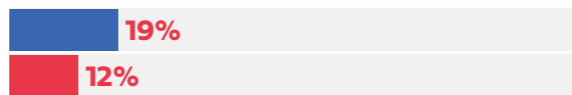
**Indigenous affairs**



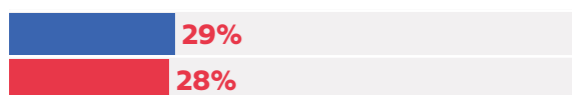
**Courts/crime**



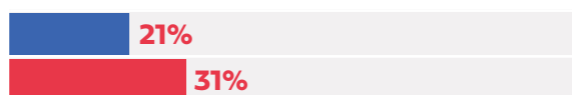
**International news/foreign affairs**



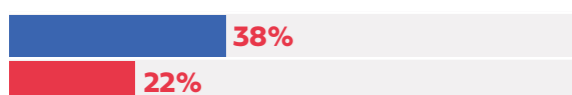
**Education**



**Industry news**



**Entertainment**



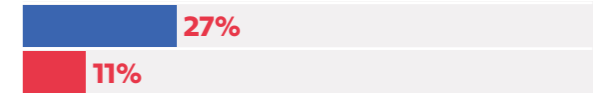
**Lifestyle**



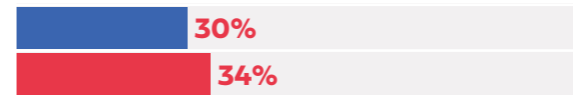
**Music or arts**



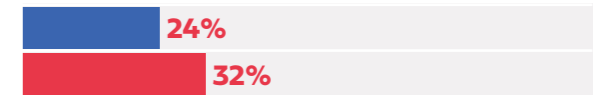
**Sports**



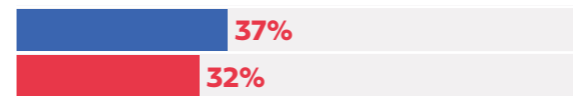
**National news**



**Tech**



**Politics**



**Travel**



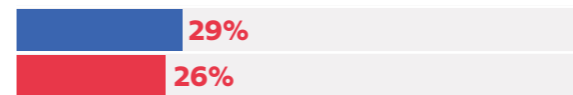
**Property**



**Other**



**Regional news**



**Religion**



**Science**



Journalists  
PR

FIGURE 24: Topic areas of media professionals

FIGURE 24 continued

## Audience engagement: Good news or bad news

Survey respondents were asked whether they thought good news or bad news generated more audience engagement.

Almost half of respondents said it depends, including 41% of journalists and 47% of PR.

For journalists, 36% said bad news generates more engagement and 18% said good news, while only 10% of PR professionals responded good news with 39% responding that bad news generates more engagement.

Of those who responded 'other', many said they thought balanced, quality and informed journalism generates the most audience engagement, regardless of whether this was about good or bad news. On the other hand, many journalists and PR professionals said more trivial, fun or entertaining, or misleading, 'clickbait' or sensationalised news generates the most engagement.

For us, engagement means community involvement and participation in local democratic processes.

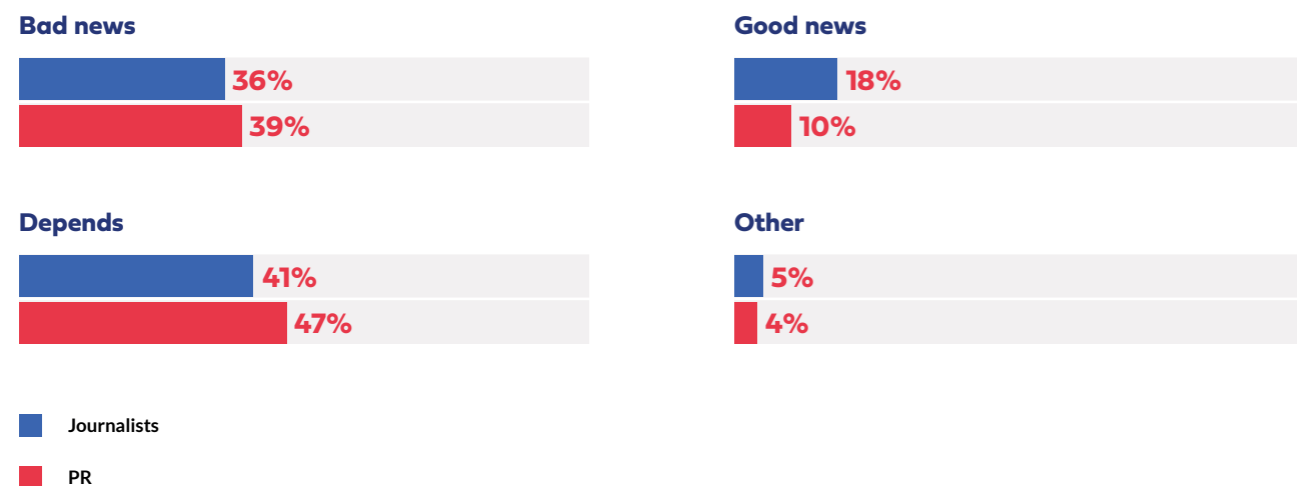


FIGURE 25: Views on content generating most audience engagement

All 'news' relies on conflict of some type, either opposing opinions, or winners/losers. This is fundamental to news and PR.

If it bleeds it leads. I think there's a lot of research that shows negative information to be more interesting.

People tend to engage with whatever provokes an extreme reaction.

Meaningful, smart, insightful journalism.

Short, dumbed down, provocative.

## Media control over the news agenda: proactive or reactive

Survey respondents were asked whether, in general, they believe the media shape the news agenda or respond to it.

Of the journalists, 58% responded 'both', while 28% said the media shape the news agenda and 14% said the media just respond to what's happening.

For PR respondents, 52% said 'both', 35% said the media shape the news agenda and 13% said the media just respond to what's happening.

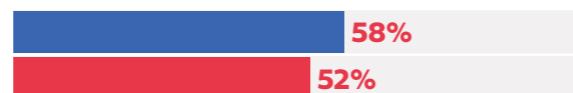
Many respondents pointed out that the audience also controls the news agenda due to the media's need to prioritise viewership numbers, subscribers and 'clicks'.

In general, journalists also suggested that the media should aim for some sort of combination of reactive and proactive coverage.

### The media shape the news agenda



### Both



### The media respond to what's happening



Journalists

PR

FIGURE 26: Views on media control over news agenda

# The audience shapes the news agenda.

I believe it is all controlled by wealthy, powerful people.

The media is both reactive and proactive; reactive when things are happening in the community we serve and pro-active in bringing issues to light.

The media is a reflection. We write more crime because it's what people click. If people read the good news/important news more often, we'd be pushed to do more of that, and less of the other.

## Threats to public interest journalism

Survey respondents were asked to identify factors that they think threatened public interest journalism in 2022.

The top factors identified by both journalists and PR were an increase in disinformation/'fake news', lack of resources and staff and the closure of media companies/newsrooms. Only 2% of journalists and 3% of PR professionals responded that they did not feel there had been any threats to public interest journalism in 2022.

Of the 10% of journalists who cited 'other' threats in 2022, many noted the effect of Australian defamation law on public interest journalism, including criminal action against whistleblowers. Some also mentioned bias or "propaganda" by other media outlets.

Given the opportunity to elaborate, many journalists spoke about the impact of decreasing budgets and resources due to various reasons.

Respondents noted the impacts of online and social media on public interest journalism, for example the impacts of algorithms on media publications, the pressure to create 'clickbait' journalism and the monetary impact of changing advertising models on the resources and funding of media, and the dissemination of 'fake news'.

There were comments about both the issue of disinformation, as well as the impact of having the public or other media outlets accuse 'factual' or accurate reporting as 'fake news'.

**The competition created by social media and click bait means the pressure to be first can come at the expense of accuracy.**

Disproportionate space and platforms given to extremists, 'both sides' reporting, and a complete editorial failure to actually research and investigate stories.

People not trusting journalism outlets, not understanding how much you have to do with increasingly fewer resources and ever-increasing demands, the scrutiny you're under from within and outside the industry but fewer staff to vet your work before it goes to air

**We simply don't have the resources to conduct the necessary local investigations. By resources, I specifically mean people.**

### Closure of media companies/newsrooms



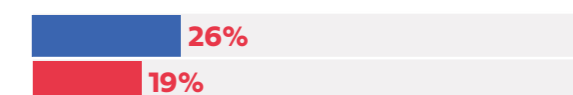
### Lack of resources and staff



### Concentration of media ownership



### Right to access information



### Increase in disinformation



### Public interest journalism has not been threatened



### Intrusion of privacy



### Other



Journalists  
PR

FIGURE 27: Biggest threat to public interest journalism

## Defamation laws and the media

Half of journalists (49%) said they had withheld from publishing information that they knew to be true because of fear of defamation. This represented 57% of all journalists who said publishing stories was relevant to their work.

Journalists reporting on religion, politics, courts/crimes and Indigenous affairs reported the highest rates of having withheld truthful information at some point in their career due to concerns about defamation laws.

Forty-one percent of journalists also responded that they believed, in relation to their work, that defamation laws in Australia are too strict, with 33% saying they have no opinion, 22% responding that the law is 'just right' and 4% saying that defamation laws are too lenient.

Respondents pointed out how defamation laws can make it difficult to hold powerful people and institutions accountable, a fundamental role of journalism, and also investigate issues of sexual abuse. Many said editors, publishers or lawyers at their media organisations were highly conservative/risk averse when it came to publishing potentially defamatory information due to the financial risks it would put the company in if taken to court.

Some pointed out the challenge of being legally responsible as a media organisation for social media comments left on articles or other news content.



**Half of journalists (49%) said they had withheld from publishing information that they knew to be true because of fear of defamation.**

Others raised how defamation laws play an important role in holding journalists accountable to the public for the information they share and protecting private citizens.

### Too strict

41%

### No Opinion

33%

### The law is just right

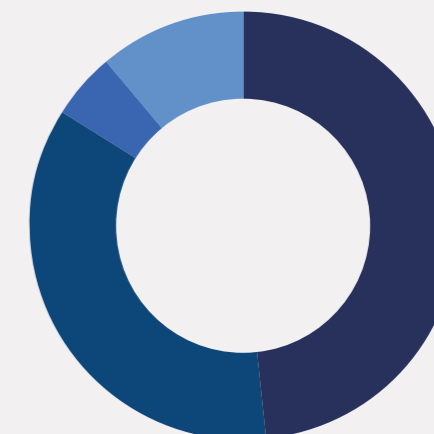
22%

### The law is too lenient

4%

FIGURE 28: Withholding information because of fear of defamation

- Yes 49%
- No 36%
- Prefer not to say 5%
- N/A (don't publish information) 11%



**Working for a small organisation my biggest fear is a wealthy person suing us for defamation and litigating us out of business with court costs.**

You can get money out of a news company, not the trolls who are making the [social media] comments. Our newspaper has got to the point where we just do not allow comments at all.

Especially when it comes to reporting on issues of racism, the experiences I've had in regards to defamation law are truly horrifying. I've been told that organisations cannot be called racist even if they are structurally – you can only report on instances of racism.

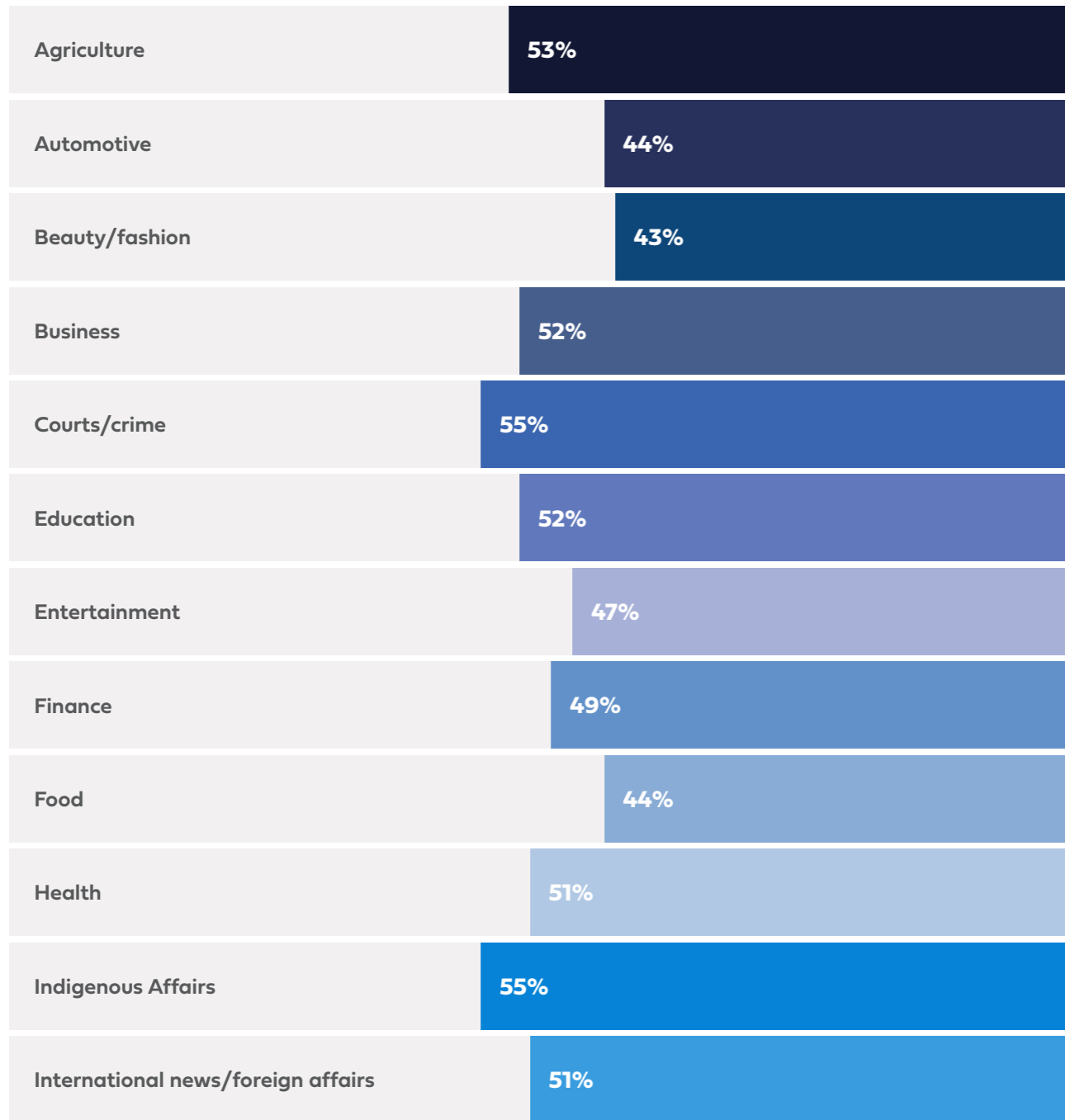


FIGURE 29: Withholding information because of fear of defamation, by journalists topic area

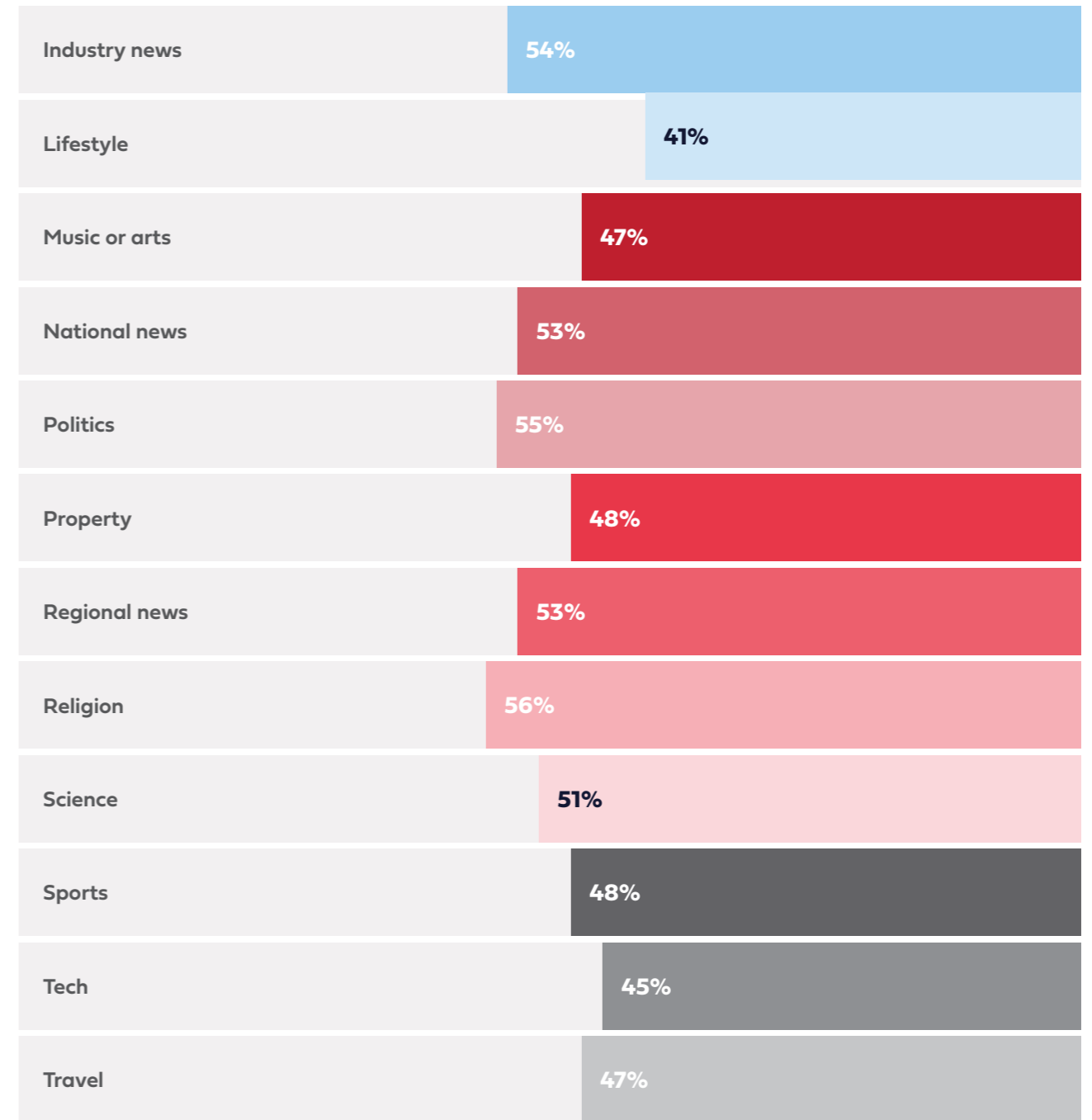
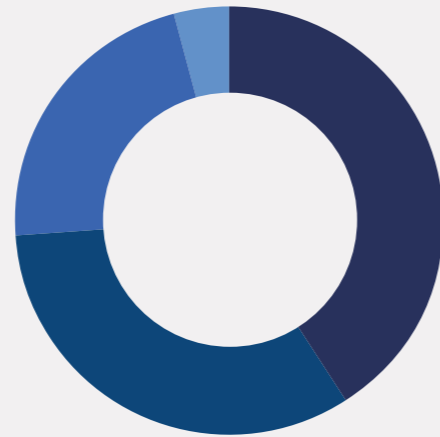


FIGURE 29 continued

FIGURE 30: Views about defamation laws in Australia

- Too strict 41%
- No opinion 33%
- Just right 22%
- Too lenient 4%



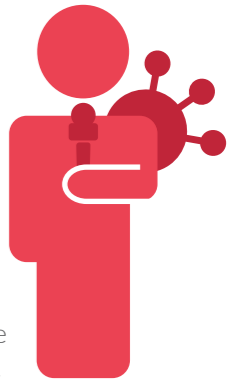
**I certainly would not like to see us travel too far down the American example which is so open to hate speech and racism masquerading as freedom of speech.**

As an editor I must be on constant guard to avoid affecting the lives of others by publishing untrue or exaggerated content. It is to avoid defamation action and to be fair to all.

Defamation laws... have had a chilling effect on reporting, particularly on political corruption and sexual misconduct, as cautious media publishers understand how costly a potential defamation action can be.

## Editorial control or direction

**28%**



of all journalist respondents said they had been asked to take a certain editorial stance based on the affiliations or beliefs of the media organisation where they currently work or freelance for.

Just over a quarter of all journalist respondents (28%) said they had been asked to take a certain editorial stance based on the affiliations or beliefs of the media organisation where they currently work or freelance for. Journalists working for commercial media organisations reported higher rates of having experienced this, as did TV and digital journalists.

A higher proportion of women reported having been asked to take an editorial position based on the affiliations or beliefs of their media organisation, compared to men and non-binary respondents.

Many respondents noted the influence advertisers or appealing to potential advertisers can have editorially on a media organisation.

Some also raised that they had had stories “pulled” (cancelled) or been advised not to pitch certain stories due to the editorial stance of their organisation.

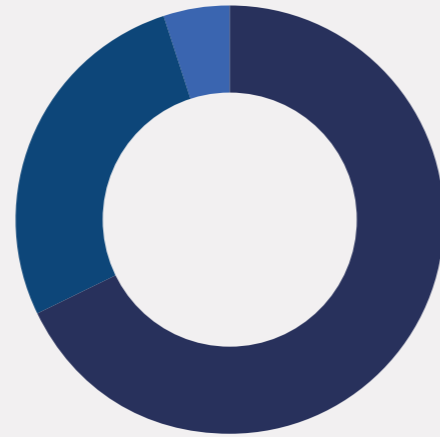
Others raised that they or their organisation follow strong editorial guidelines and ethical principles that either prevent this from occurring, or ensure that certain editorial stances are upheld.

**In my role, I am encouraged to be balanced and fair in all of my reporting.**



FIGURE 31: Journalists asked to take an editorial stance

- No 68%
- Yes 27%
- Prefer not to say 5%



🗨️ **We would be advised against pitching stories that were too left-leaning or ‘Indigenous’ because they wouldn’t be published.**

🗨️ In nearly 30 years management has never once even suggested a certain line of thinking.

🗨️ We don’t run bad stories on any current or potential clients.

🗨️ **I’ve never been told what to write. But certain pitches won’t get up in the first place if they don’t think it suits the paper.**

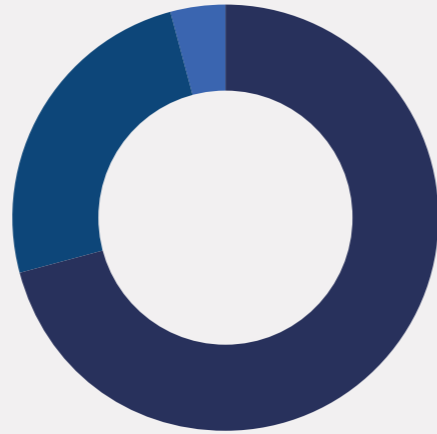
🗨️ We have non-negotiable moral stances where I work. For example we don’t publish anything that is anti-gay, anti-abortion or anti-women’s rights.

🗨️ At a regional daily I was given a list of preferred local businesses / industry spokespeople for quotes. I believe the majority of these were advertisers.

FIGURE 32: Journalists asked to take an editorial stance, by media organisation type

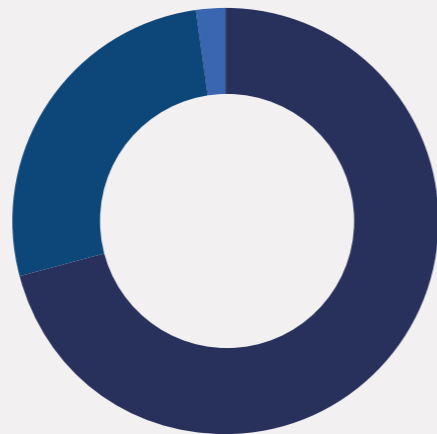
**Independent**

- No 71%
- Yes 25%
- Prefer not to say 4%



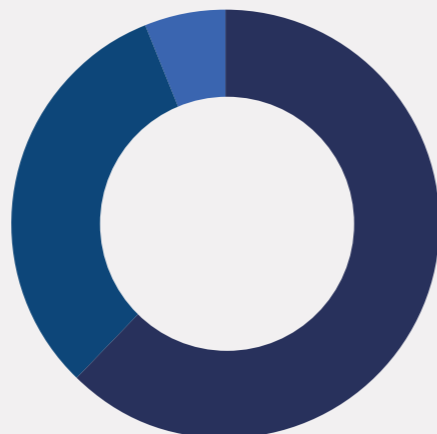
**Government/publicly funded**

- No 71%
- Yes 27%
- Prefer not to say 2%

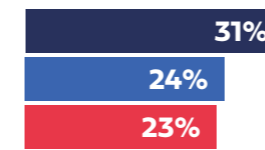


**Commercial**

- No 63%
- Yes 32%
- Prefer not to say 6%



**Yes**



**No**



- Female
- Male
- Non-binary

FIGURE 33: Journalists who have been asked to take an editorial stance, by gender

**I am the owner of the publication so no-one asks me to take a certain editorial stance but I am reasonably confident the publication has lost or not gained some advertising because of the editorial stance I take, which is to put the public interest first.**

## Reporting on federal politics

Given 2022 was a federal election year, journalist survey respondents were asked whether reporting on federal politics was any different under the new government. Of the 472 journalists who said they report on federal politics (46% of all respondents), 32% reported that the new government was more transparent, and 5% said it was less transparent. Half (52%) said that the experience of reporting had not changed under the new government.

Of the 4% of journalists who responded 'other' to this question, many said it was too early to tell the difference.

Throughout the survey, journalists were given several opportunities to elaborate on their responses. One theme that emerged across many of these responses was a strong political divide between journalists, often making bold accusations about the biases and harm caused by other media organisations which are known to be politically aligned on one side or the other. Many respondents accused journalists on both ends of the political spectrum of spreading misinformation or perpetuating a harmful agenda.

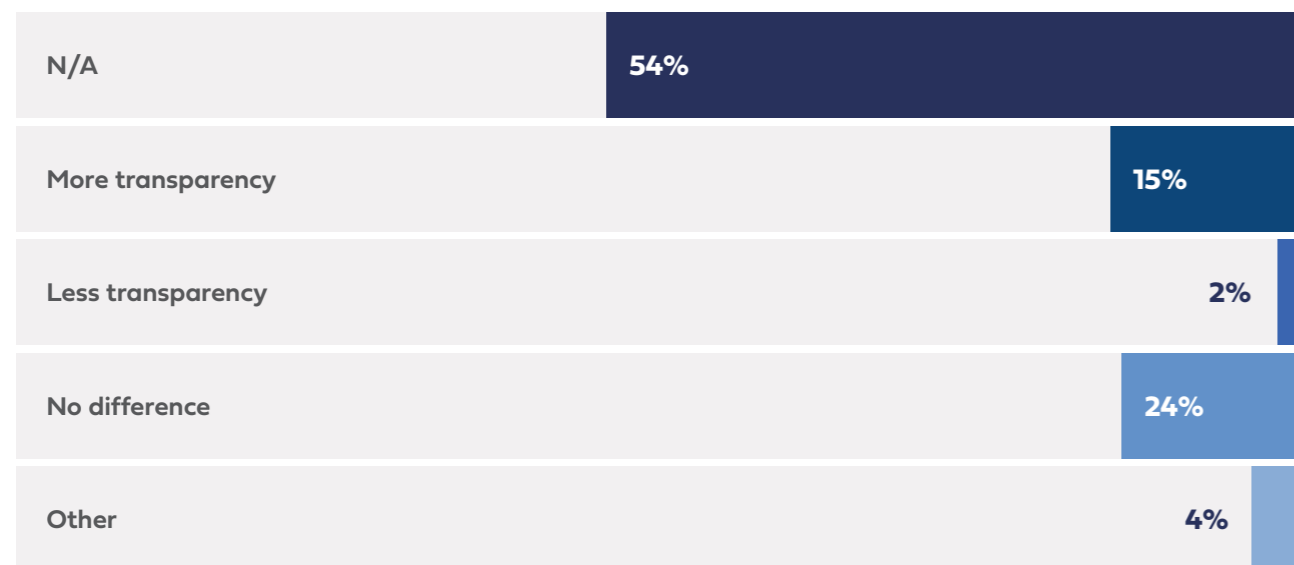


FIGURE 34: Difference in reporting on federal politics under new government

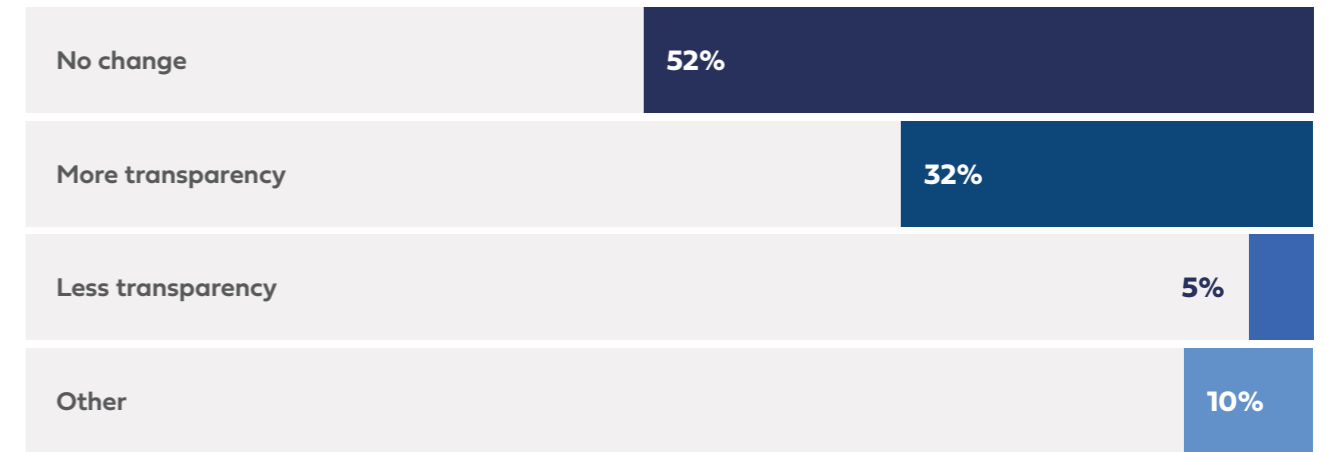


FIGURE 35: Difference in reporting on federal politics under new government (those who report on federal politics)

**It's easy for new governments to seem open and transparent. We need to see how they deal with their own failures to judge if they will actually deliver in this area.**

Government [is] more transparent but media coverage [is] also more sympathetic.

The political bias in some media organisations is shocking. It might serve their masters/owners but it is a disservice to the nation.

The media is politically biased. It supports the extreme woke left, and public figures fear the media on this.

We have better access to ministers and information now, it's such a breath of fresh air.

# 03.

## Work and employment



m.

### PR employment

Half of all PR survey respondents (49%) worked in in-house roles and 40% worked for agencies. Of the 12% who said they worked in 'other' positions, many do consultant or freelance work.

The majority of respondents (72%) were employed full-time, with 12% working part-time, 10% contracted, 9% freelancing and 2% casuals.

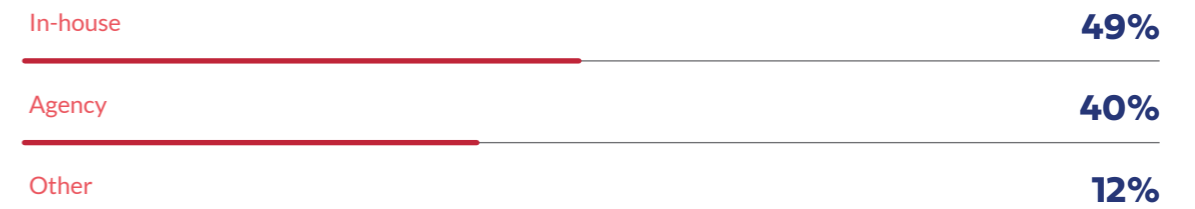


FIGURE 36: PR professionals' job type



FIGURE 37: PR professionals' employment status

## Journalists' work and employment

Of all journalist survey respondents, 64% work in digital media, 44% in print, 21% in radio, 13% in TV and 10% in podcasting. As with last year's study, a large proportion of journalists work across more than one platform of media (39%).

The percentage of respondents working in print media has been decreasing over the past three years, dropping by 8% between 2020 and 2022 (see Figure 39).

More than half of survey respondents (56%) worked in traditional journalist or reporter roles. Male journalists were far more highly represented in chief-of-staff, photojournalist or cameraperson, publisher and presenter or announcer positions, and were also slightly more represented in editor and producer positions (see Figure 41).

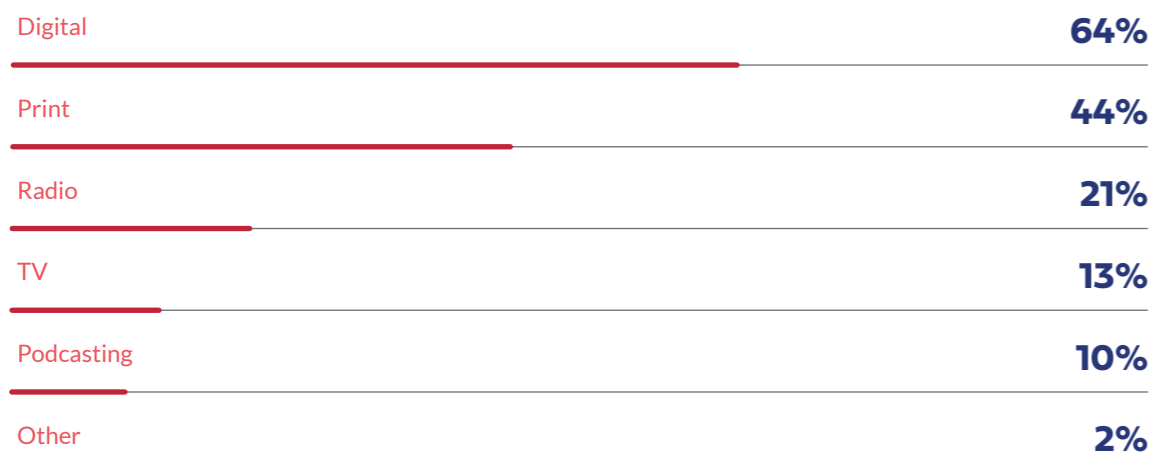


FIGURE 38: Sector of the media industry

The majority of respondents (69%) were employed full-time in 2022. The next most common employment types were freelance (19%) and part-time (11%).

Almost half (46%) worked at independent media organisations, with 40% at commercial and 13% at public/government funded media. Of the 4% who responded 'other', half noted they worked in community media.

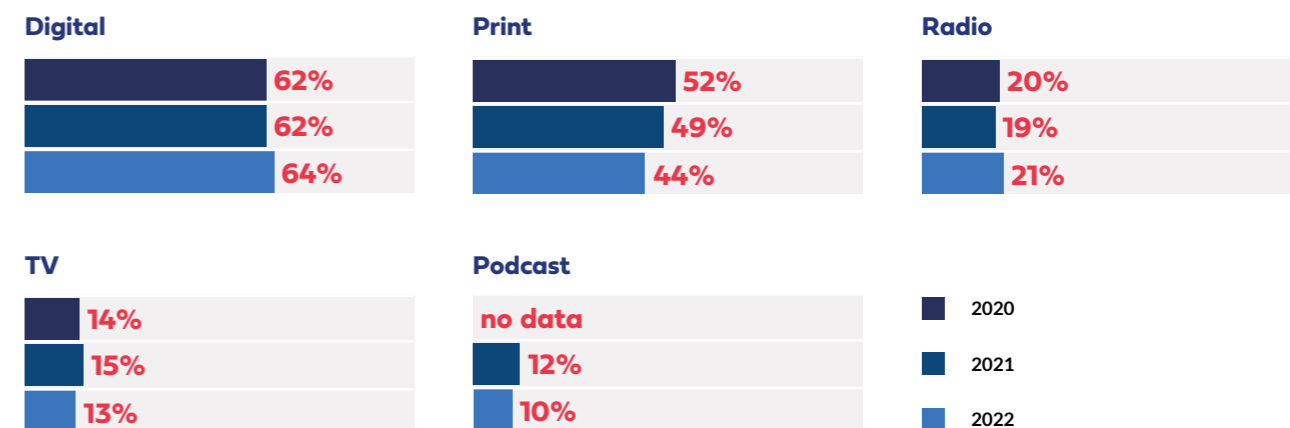


FIGURE 39: Sector of the media industry over time

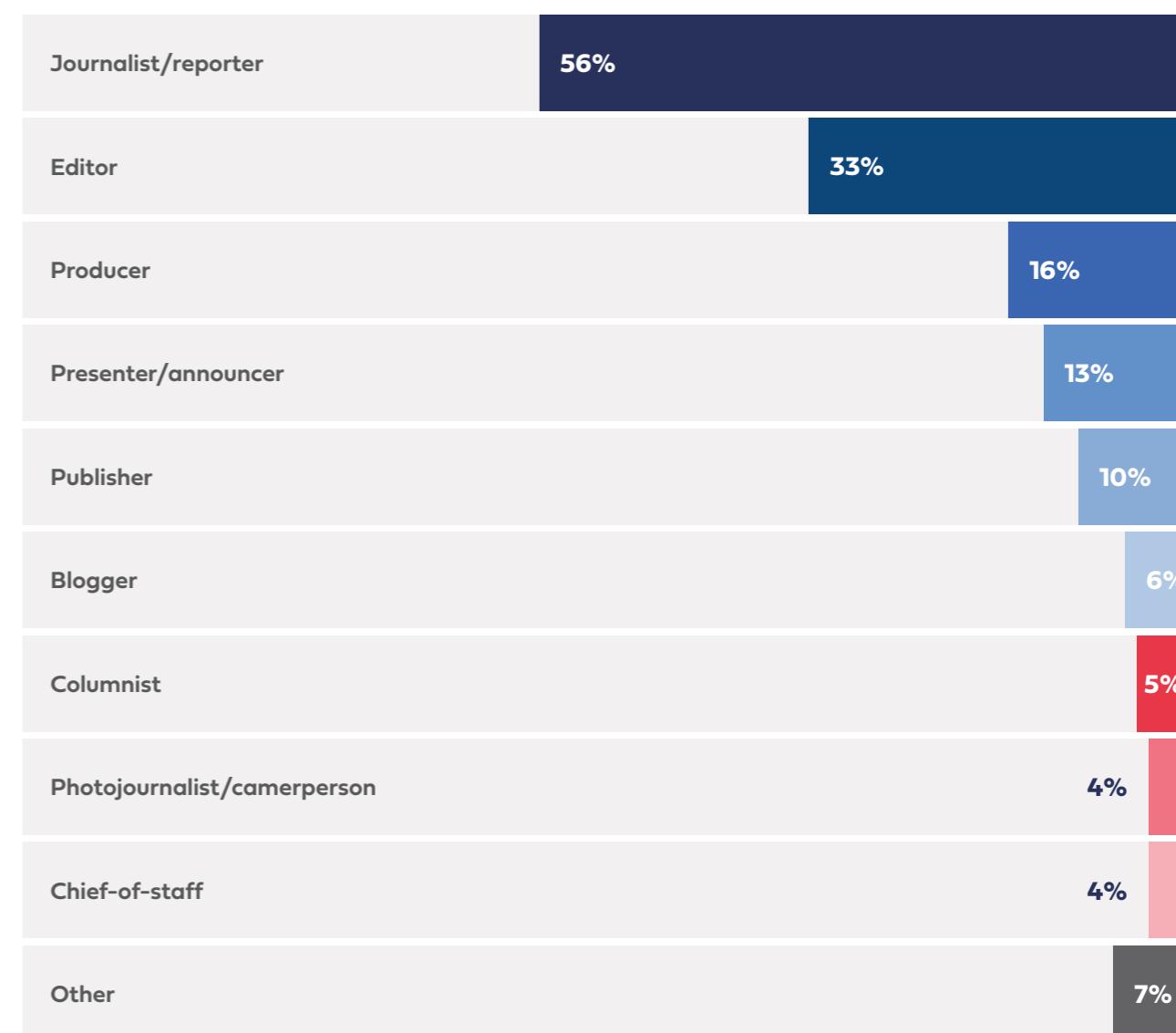
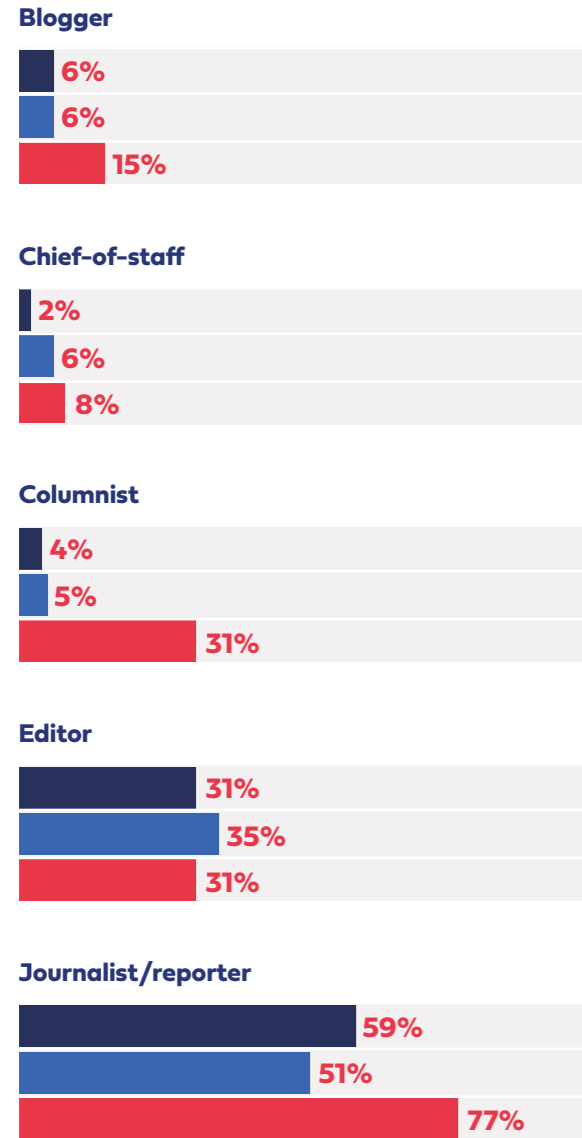


FIGURE 7: Role in the media



■ Female  
■ Male  
■ Non-binary

**FIGURE 41: Role in the media (gender)**  
 Please note: Data from respondents who identified their gender as non-binary may not accurately reflect this demographic due to a small sample size.

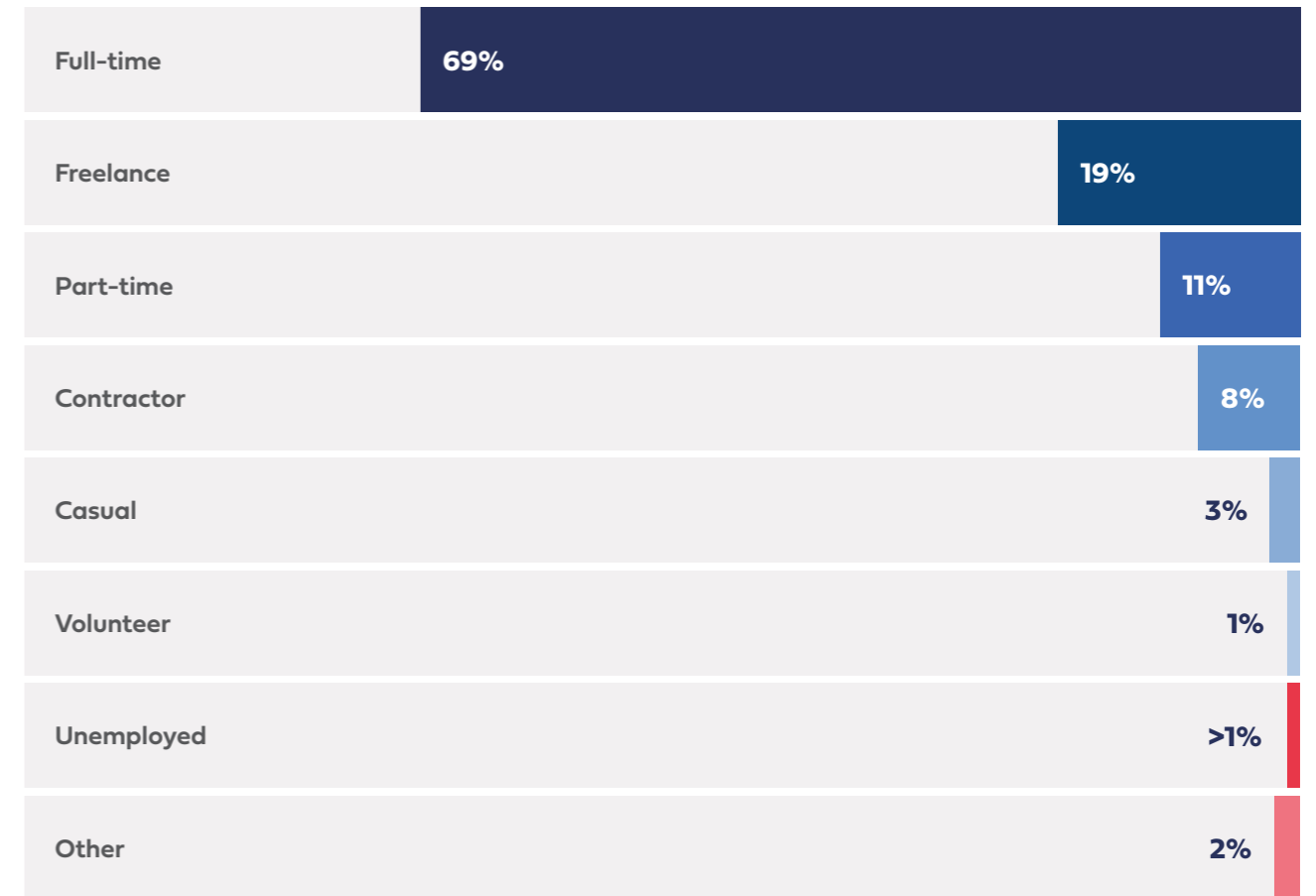
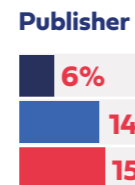
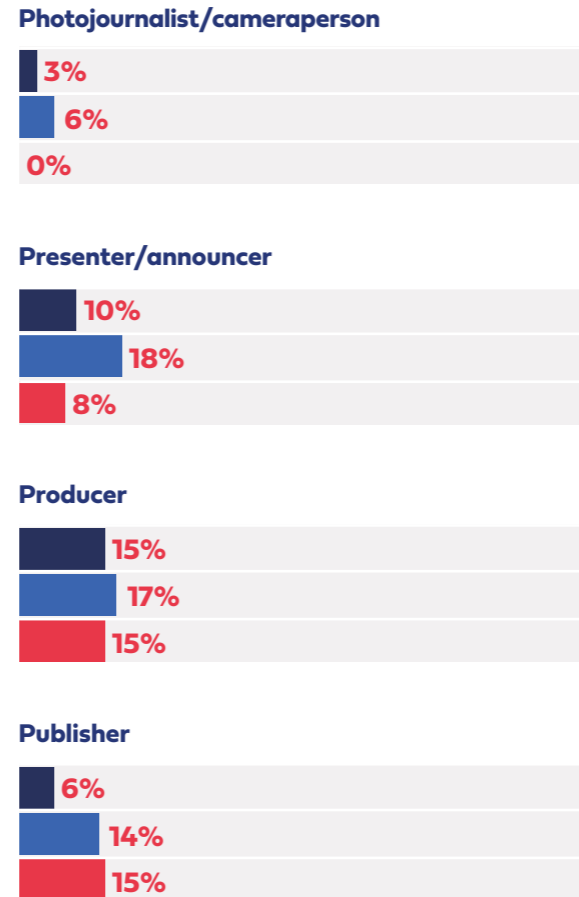


FIGURE 42: Journalists' employment status

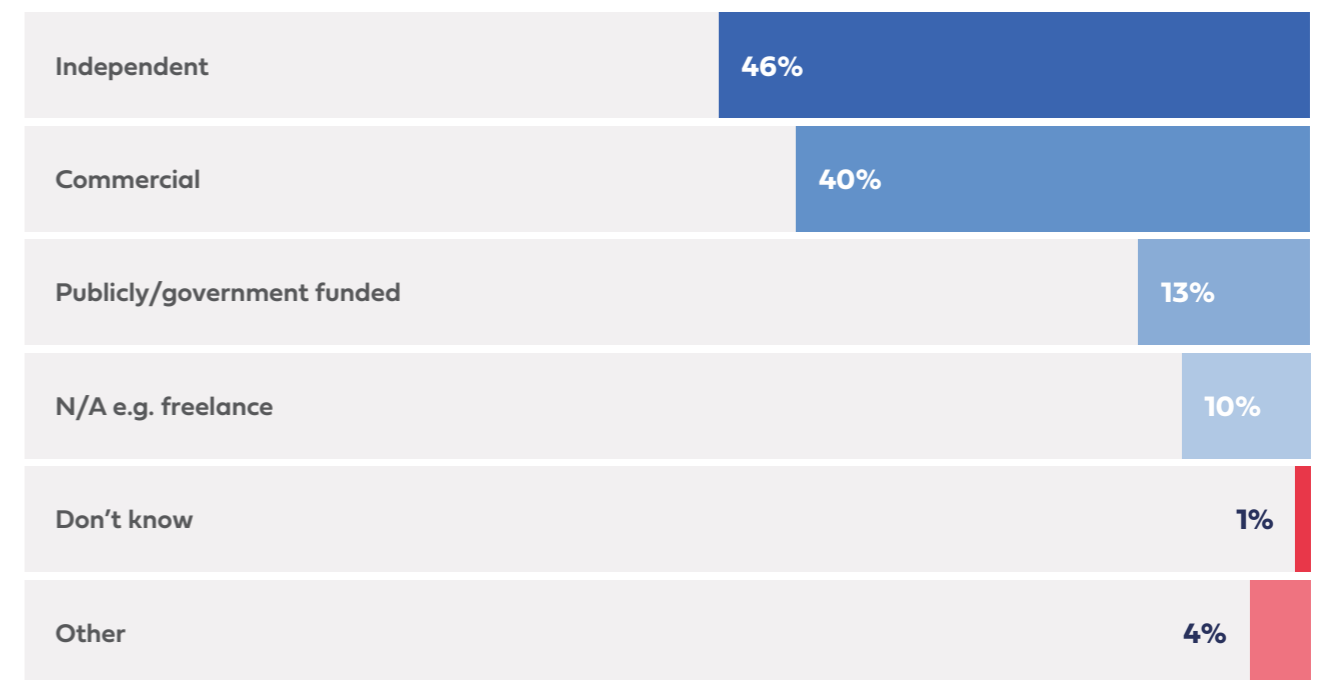


FIGURE 43: Journalists' media organisation type

## PR work location

Three quarters of surveyed PR professionals (75%) were working at least part of the time at home in 2022, with 47% having adopted working from home since the pandemic began.

Thirty-one percent of PR survey respondents worked entirely from home, and 44% were doing a mix of both working at home and the office (having always done this or started this practice since the pandemic).

FIGURE 44: Work locations of PR professionals

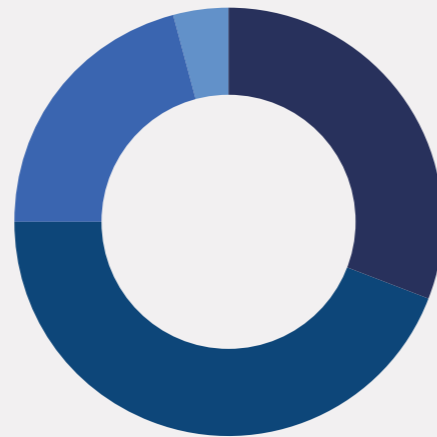
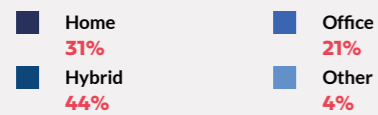
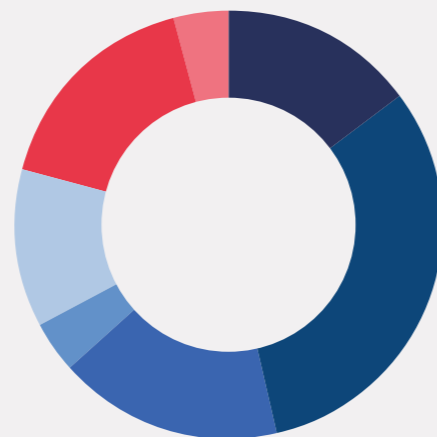
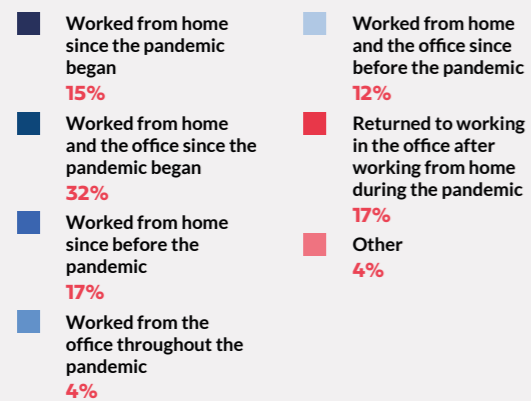


FIGURE 45: Work locations of PR professionals 2



## PR Industry movement

Of all PR survey respondents, 40% said their job or role has changed in some way this year, including changing jobs in the industry, changing roles at the same organisation, or starting a 'side hustle'/looking for additional work in the industry. Four percent said they had started looking for a job outside of PR and 8% said they started looking for a new PR job.



**Of all PR survey respondents, 40% said their job or role has changed in some way this year**

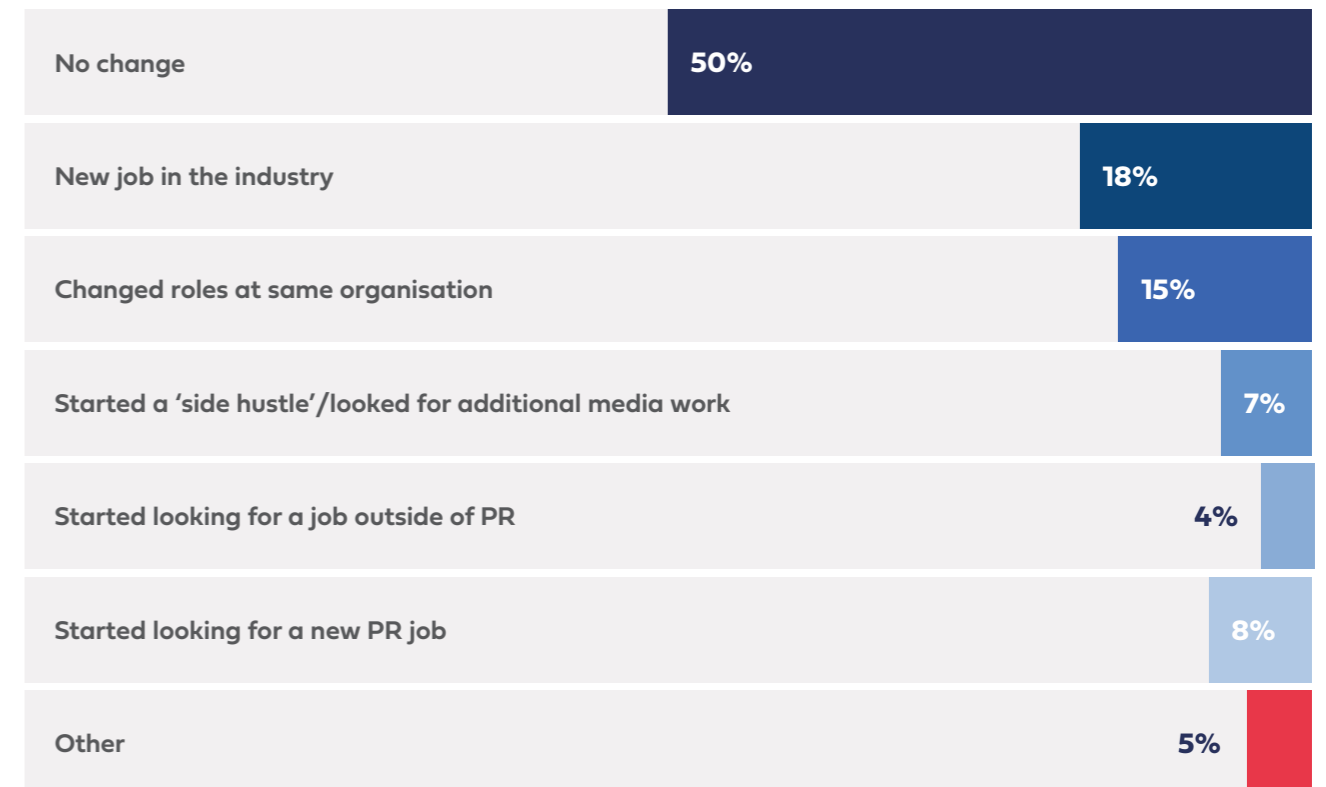


FIGURE 46: Job changes in 2022

## Journalists moving to PR work

More than a third of all surveyed PR professionals (35%) said they had at some stage worked as a journalist.

Of those who responded that they had worked as a journalist, 39% said they had changed roles to PR work due to seeking better hours/lifestyle and 36% said it was because of better pay. The next most commonly cited

reasons were looking for a change or work (24%) and more job security (20%).

Respondents offered a variety of other reasons for changing to PR, including being made redundant in journalism jobs and causes associated with a changing industry.



FIGURE 48: Reasons former journalists changed to PR roles

## Pay

The most common pay bracket for PR professionals was between \$80,000 and \$99,999 per year. This was followed by the \$60,000 to \$79,999 per year bracket and then the \$100,000 to \$119,999 per year pay bracket.

On average, PR respondents were found to earn more than journalist survey respondents, with almost half of PR professionals (47%) earning over \$100,000 per year compared to a quarter of journalists (25%).

Male PR professionals were far more highly represented in the less than \$60,000 per year or more than \$100,000 per year pay brackets, with female respondents much more highly represented in the \$60,000 to \$99,999 pay bracket. This gender pay gap in the higher pay brackets was also reflected in the journalist survey, however, unlike PR, male journalists were not more represented in the lowest pay brackets than females (see Figure 52).

Similarly, PR professionals working in-house were more highly represented in the lowest **and** highest pay brackets compared to respondents working for agencies, who were more highly represented in the \$60,000 to \$99,999 pay brackets.



**Male PR professionals were far more highly represented in the less than \$60,000 per year or more than \$100,000 per year pay brackets, with female respondents much more highly represented in the \$60,000 to \$99,999 pay bracket.**



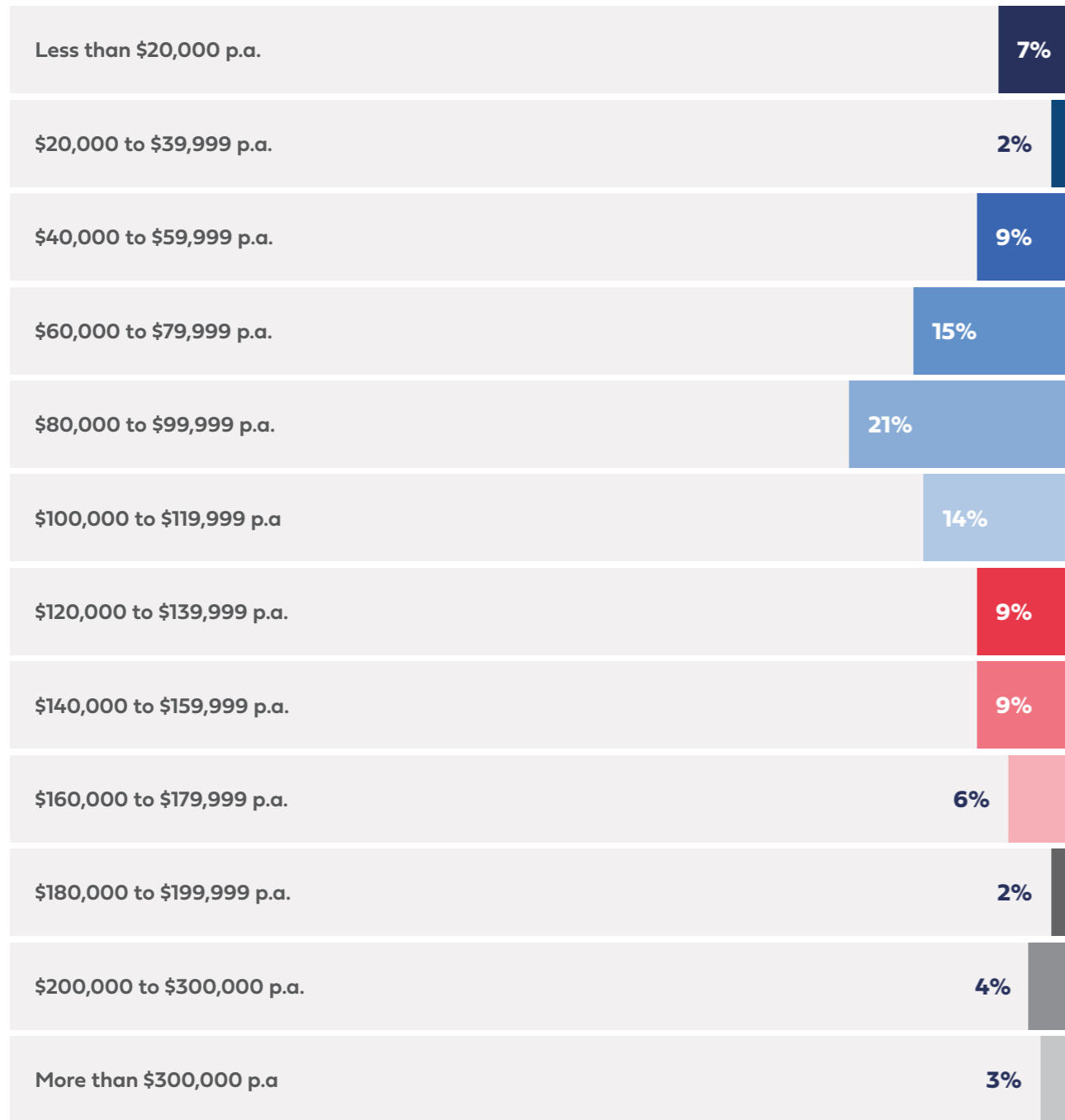
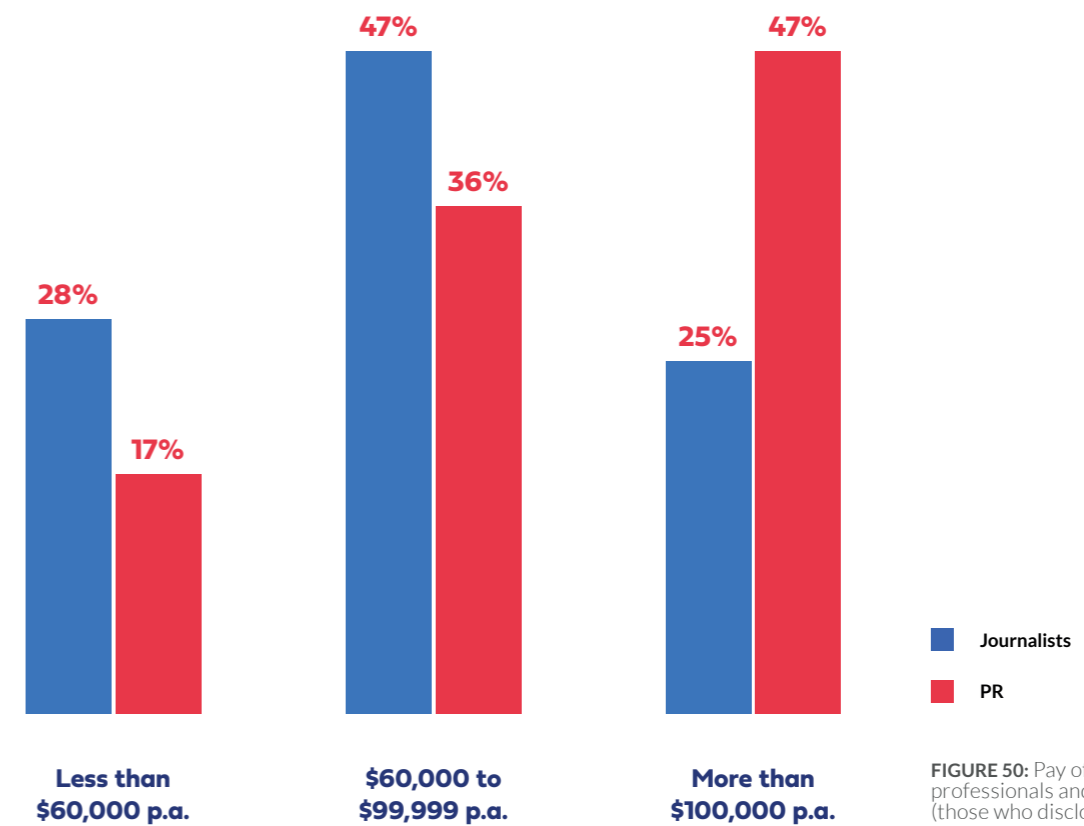


FIGURE 49: PR professionals' pay (those who disclosed)

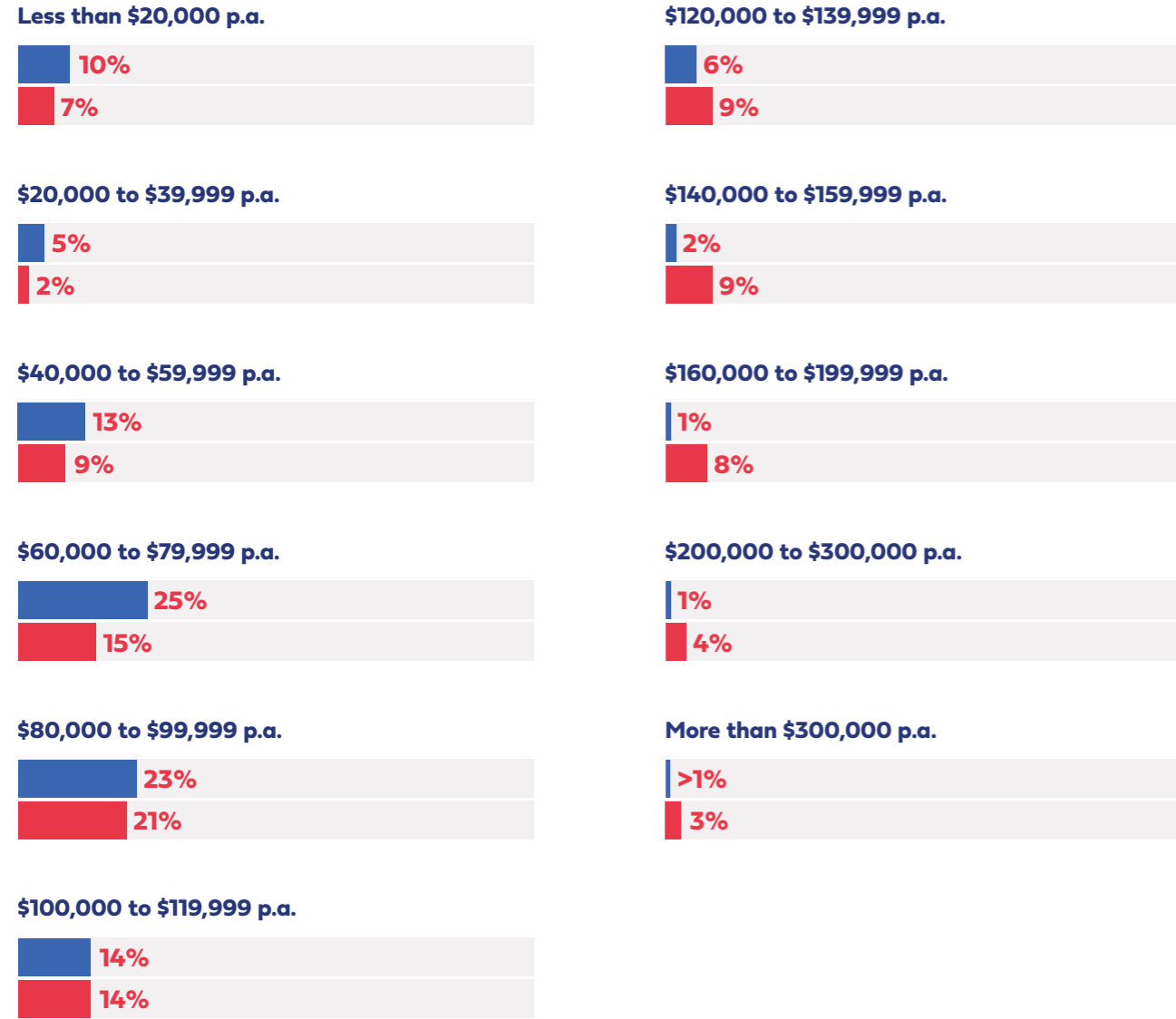


**On average, PR respondents were found to earn more than journalist survey respondents, with almost half of PR professionals (47%) earning over \$100,000 per year compared to a quarter of journalists (25%).**



Journalists  
PR

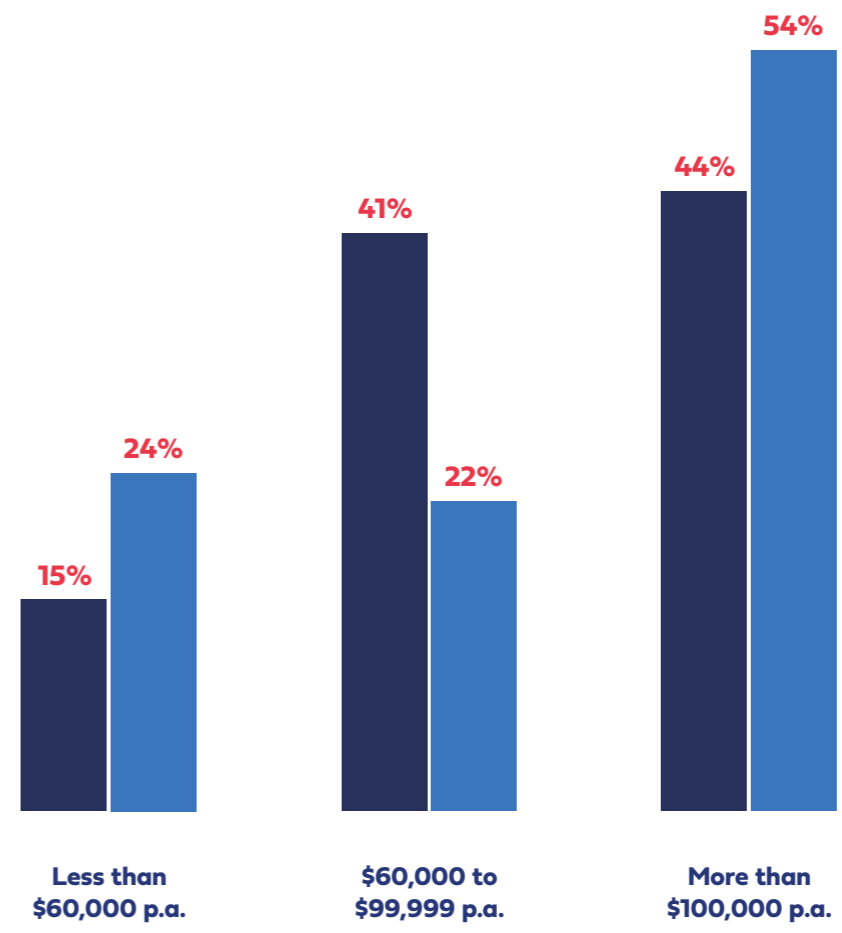
FIGURE 50: Pay of PR professionals and journalists (those who disclosed)



Journalists  
PR

FIGURE 51: Pay 2 (those who disclosed)

PR professionals working in-house were more highly represented in the lowest and highest pay brackets compared to respondents working for agencies



Female  
Male

FIGURE 52: PR pay based on gender (those who disclosed)

Please note: this survey did not receive enough responses from PR professionals who identify their gender as non-binary or other to analyse this data.

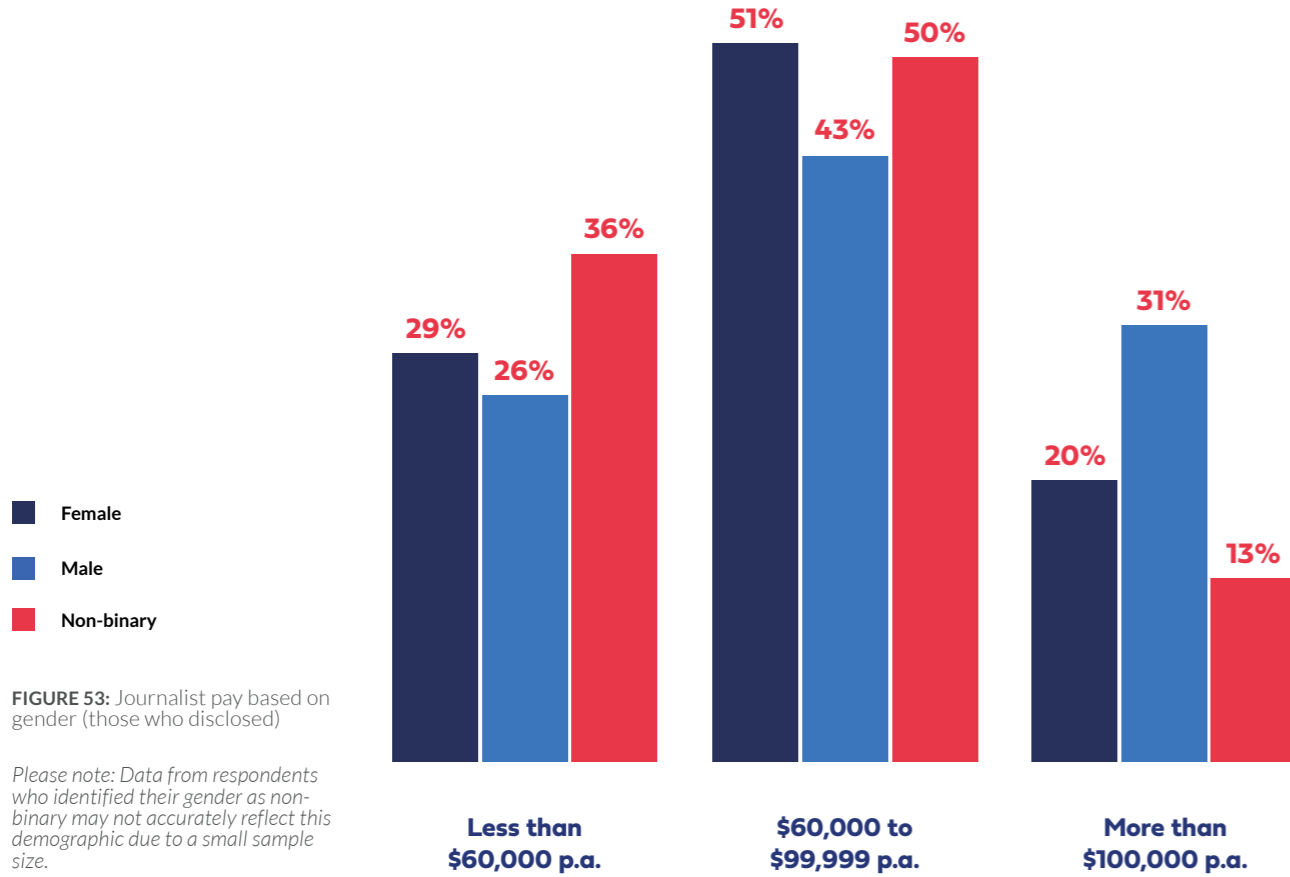


FIGURE 53: Journalist pay based on gender (those who disclosed)

Please note: Data from respondents who identified their gender as non-binary may not accurately reflect this demographic due to a small sample size.

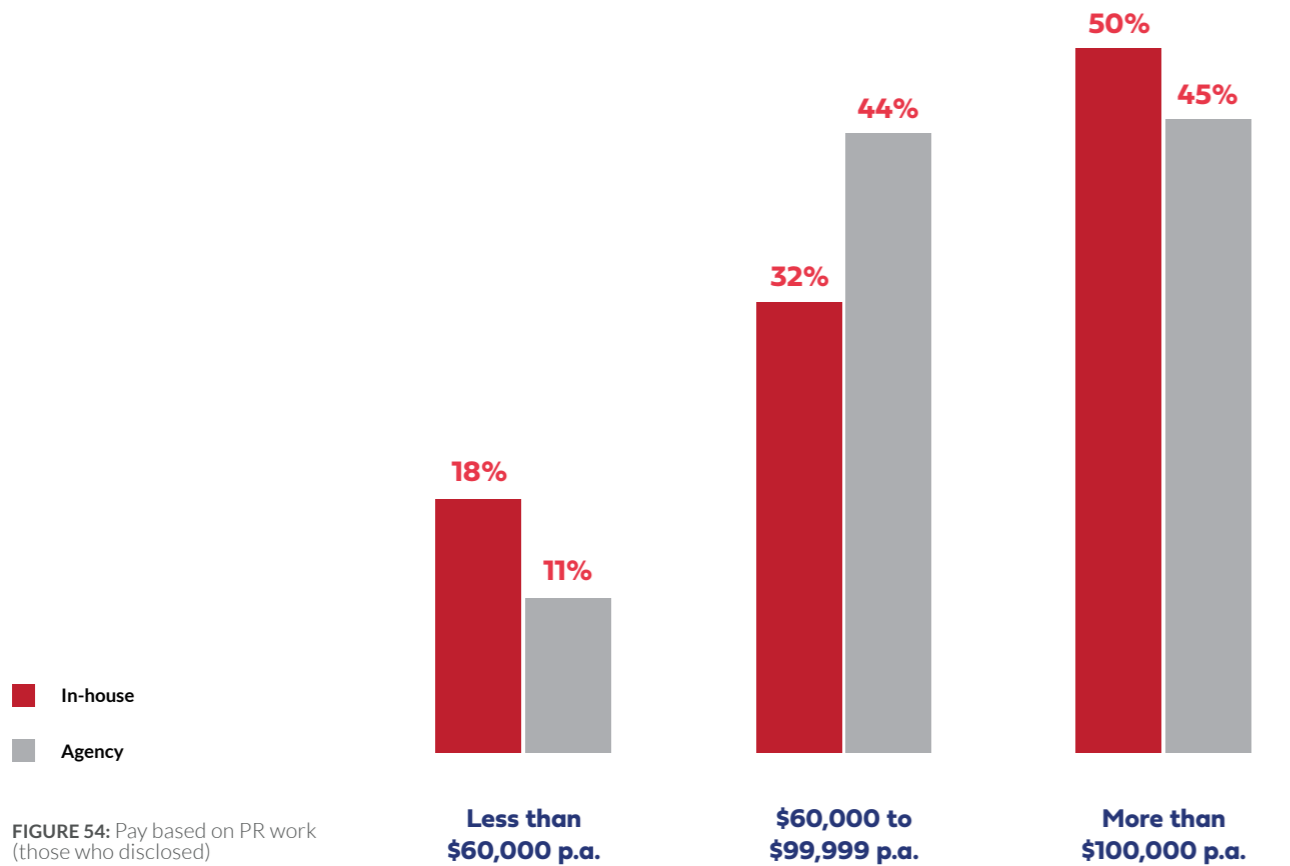


FIGURE 54: Pay based on PR work (those who disclosed)

## Unpaid work

# 84%



of both PR professionals and journalists were found to do at least an hour or two of unpaid work each week.

Eighty-four percent of both PR professionals and journalists were found to do at least an hour or two of unpaid work each week.

For PR professionals, this included 28% who reported doing an hour or two of unpaid work weekly, 33% who did an hour or two unpaid per day and 23% who did more than 10 hours a week unpaid.

Several PR survey respondents noted unpaid work was often not overtime but doing volunteer or pro bono PR.

Many said they are expected to be on-call or contactable by both journalists and clients outside of their work hours, and others noted spending unpaid time on admin, research and other non-billable tasks.

Respondents working for agencies reported higher rates of unpaid work and higher hours compared to those working in-house (see Figure 57). Female respondents also reported slightly higher rates of unpaid work compared to men.

The workload and expectations increase but not the paid hours.

Internal admin and client admin work always add an extra few hours.

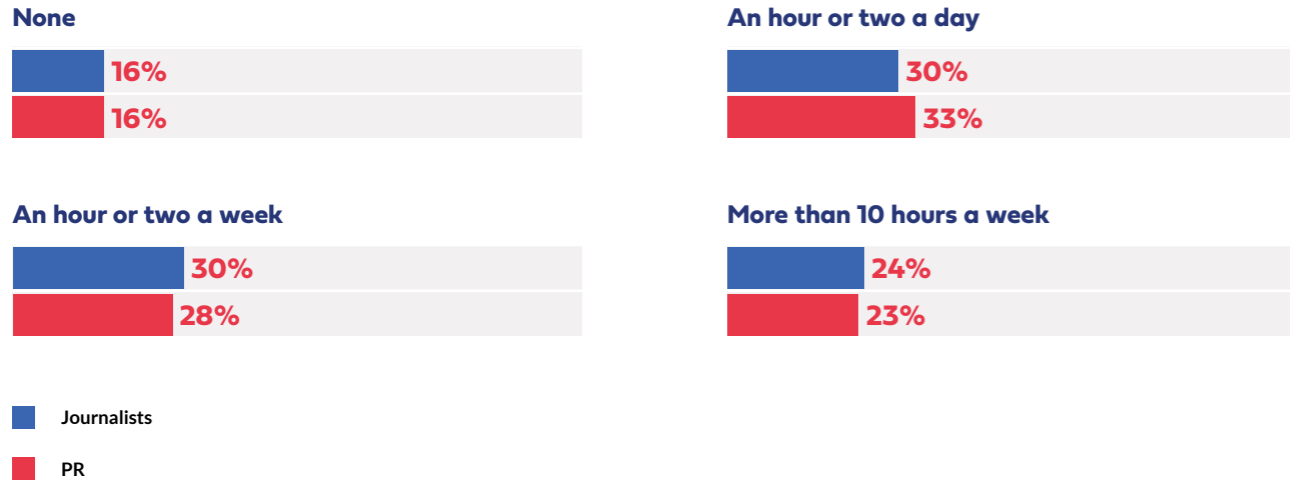


FIGURE 55: Unpaid work

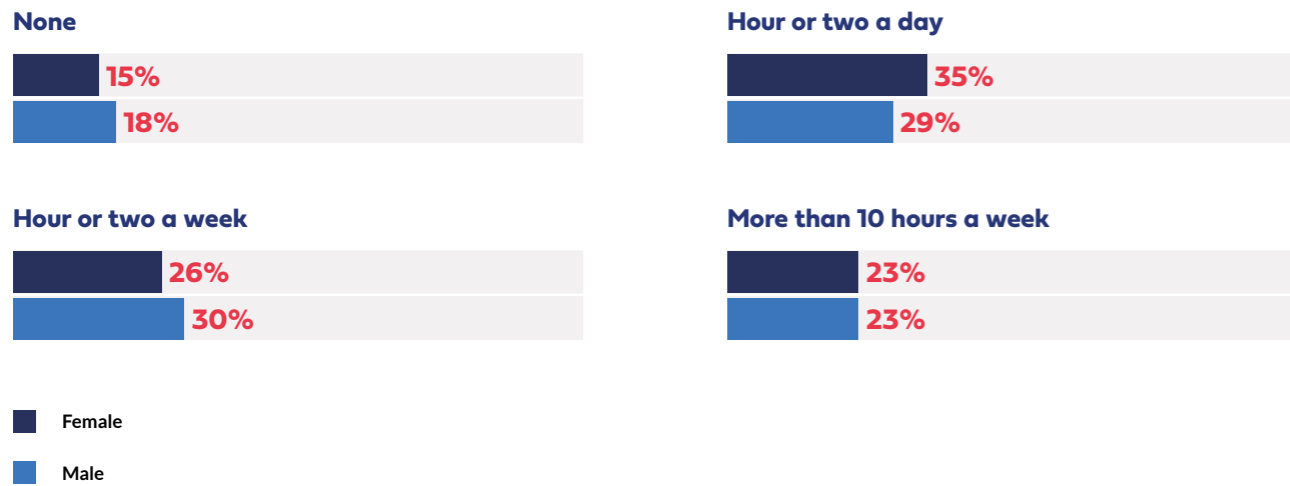


FIGURE 56: Unpaid work for PR (gender)

Please note: this survey did not receive enough responses from PR professionals who identify their gender as non-binary or other to analyse this data.

**I do a lot of pro bono community work.**

**PR is undervalued and as such, we overservice clients - offering free work to get the job done. This is expected. We also don't get paid for taking part in tenders.**

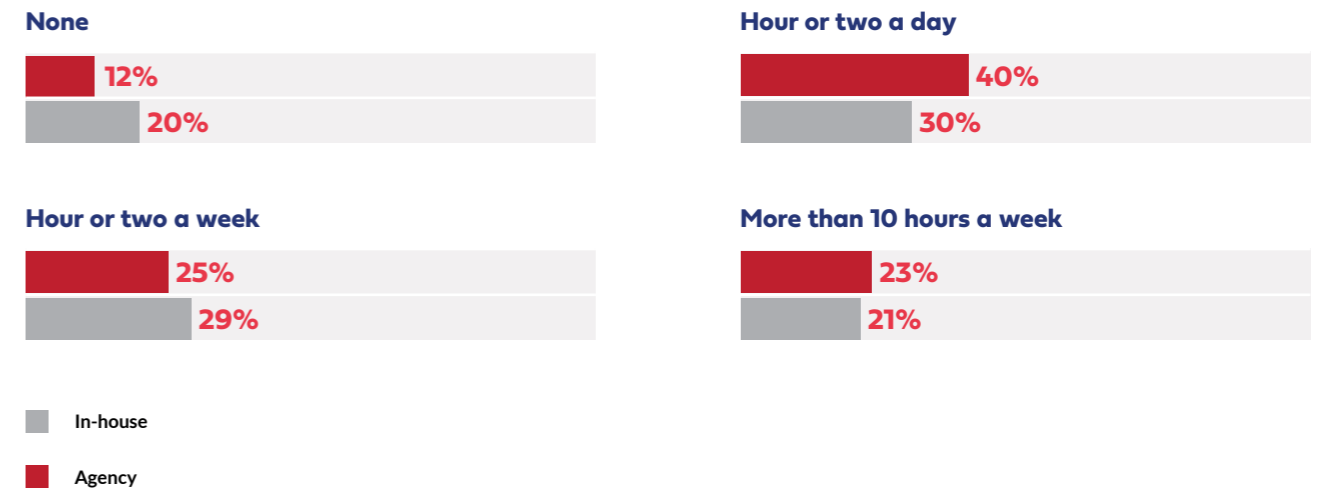


FIGURE 57: Unpaid work for PR (job type)

**Some clients and colleagues do not respect professional boundaries and expect you to respond to work queries well after hours.**

# 04.

## PR and Journalist challenges



### Personal challenges

Journalist and PR survey respondents were asked to select up to three factors which had been their biggest challenge in 2022.

For journalists, money, changes in workload, uncertainty about the future and mental health proved the most common greatest personal challenges in 2022 overall. A smaller percentage of PR professionals responded that money was their greatest challenge, with changes in workload and mental health proving more challenging for PR overall in 2022.

A lot of PR professionals emphasised the challenge of being constantly on-call for journalists and having to manage high or unrealistic expectations from clients. Several also mentioned personal challenges related to the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, such as economic uncertainty.

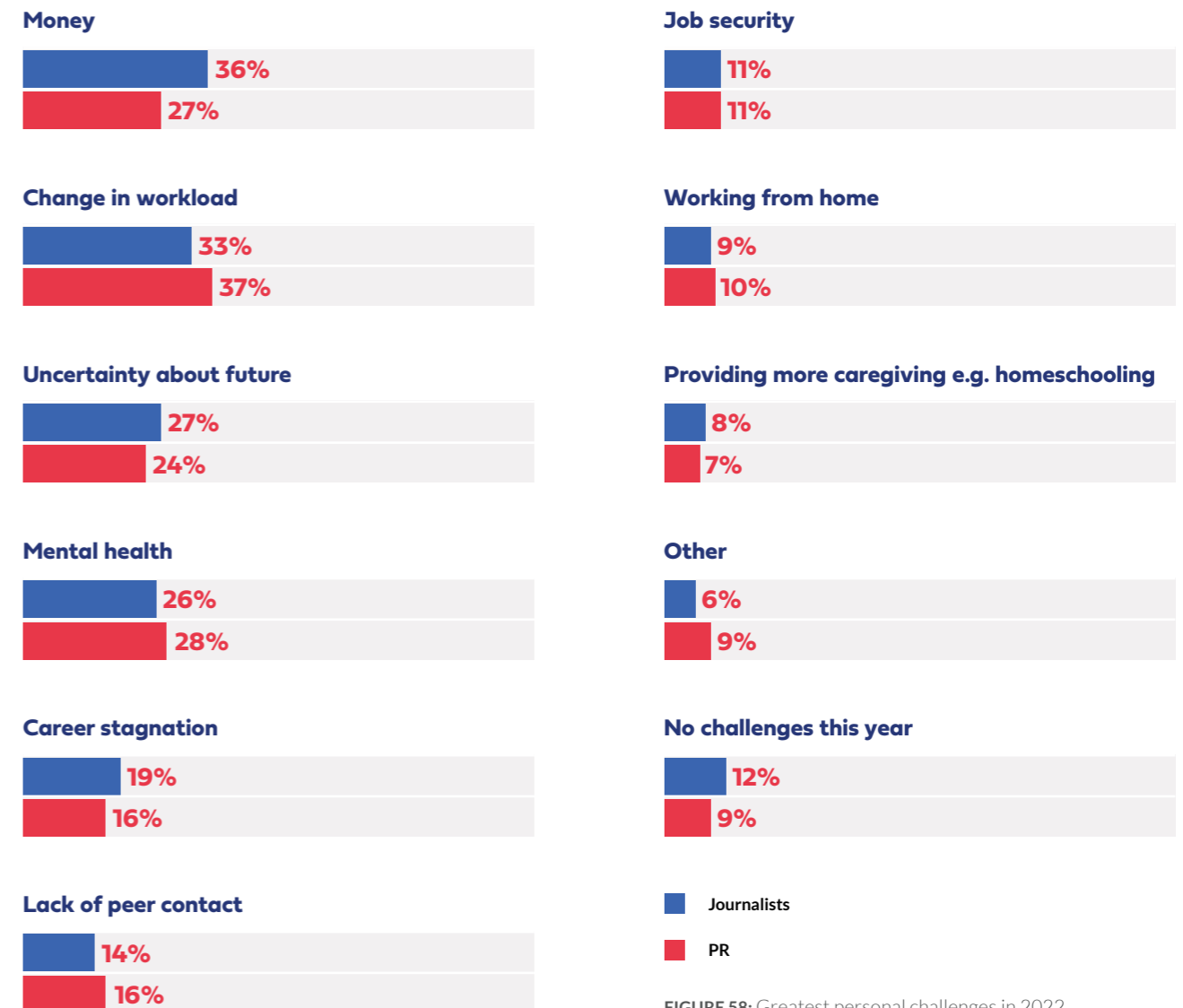


FIGURE 58: Greatest personal challenges in 2022

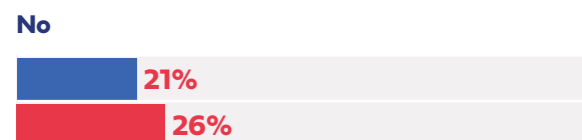
## Burnout

Two thirds of PR professionals said they had experienced burnout in their PR work.

Once again, many PR survey respondents emphasised the challenge of being constantly on-call for journalists and having to manage high or unrealistic expectations from clients. Many credited a high workload as the cause of their burnout.

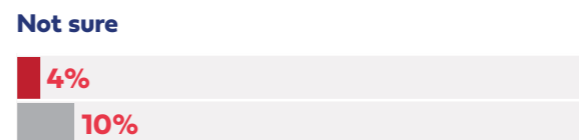
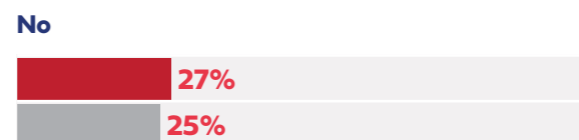
A slightly higher percentage of surveyed journalists (72%) had experienced burnout compared to PR professionals.

PR professionals who worked for agencies reported slightly higher burnout rates than those working in-house (69% compared to 65%).



Journalists  
PR

FIGURE 59: Burnout in media work



In-house  
Agency

FIGURE 60: Burnout in media work (PR job type)

**PR is a 24/7 job... The pressure and hours are literally insane.**

**[I] have had to take mental health leave several times.**

There is always more that you can do. So many different media platforms. Always trying to keep up with the latest advances.

Lack of strategic direction means over producing content for wrong audiences.

Our agency let go of much of our team throughout Covid-19, so when the industry rebounded we were short-staffed.

I have been expected to work from 6am to 10pm at night and be on call on weekends. That was just the norm. I was often responding to journalist inquiries on Christmas Day, and every public holiday.

## Abuse and harassment of journalists

Forty six percent of journalists said they had experienced abuse or harassment because of their profession and work in the media.

Of these respondents, 69% said they had experienced online written abuse or trolling and 53% had experienced in-person verbal abuse or harassment. Forty four percent reported having received online threats, 23% had received in-person threats, and 5% had experienced physical abuse. Of the 7% of respondents who noted 'other' forms of abuse, half said they had received abusive phone calls, or "textline" abuse on talkback radio. Many respondents noted there was an increase in abuse rates and/or severity during COVID when reporting from related protests.

Generally respondents noted that the abuse and harassment was directed by members of the public, a smaller minority mentioned receiving abuse or bullying from colleagues.

Women and non-binary journalists experienced higher rates of abuse or harassment because of their media work, with 62% of non-binary journalists having experienced abuse or harassment, 47% of female journalists and 40% of male journalists.

## Being a female in sport, I cop a bit of sexual harassment.

I've had death threats and threatening emails after stories people didn't like. Online trolling is commonplace.

I received an email with death and rape threats while I was working at community radio station.

Being touched / interrupted during a live cross.

Police are also often very problematic in the field - I have been pushed, shoved, grabbed, thrown, and yelled at by police officers while doing my job, and doing that job within legal boundaries.

Very nasty comments about personal appearance, or about a story.

FIGURE 61: Abuse and harassment for media work

Yes 44%  
No 53%  
Prefer not to say 3%

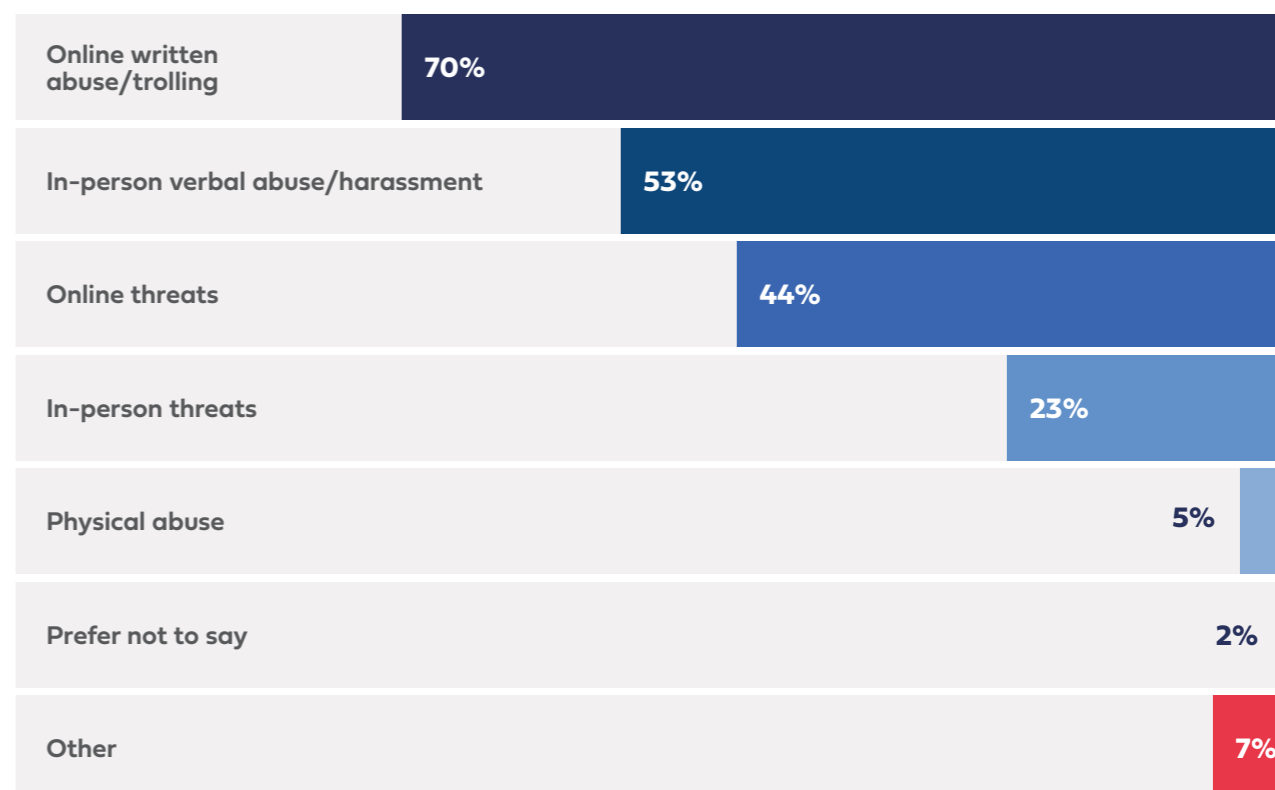
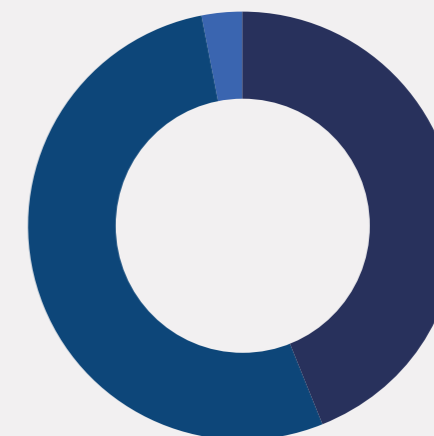


FIGURE 62: Type of abuse

## Racial discrimination, prejudice and abuse of journalists

Of the 243 journalist survey respondents who reported being of an ethnic background other than Australian non-Indigenous, New Zealander, English, Scottish or Irish, 22% said they had experienced racial discrimination, prejudice or abuse as part of their media work (12% of overall respondents had experienced this).

Lebanese respondents reported the highest rates of abuse (43%), followed by Indian (31%), Chinese (29%), Australian (Indigenous) (25%) and Italian (21%).

FIGURE 63: Racial discrimination, prejudice or abuse of journalists

- Yes 12%
- No 86%
- Prefer not to say 2%

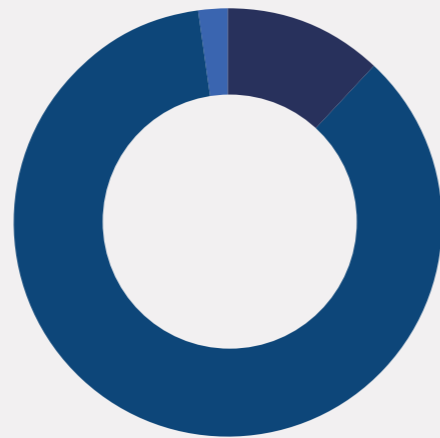
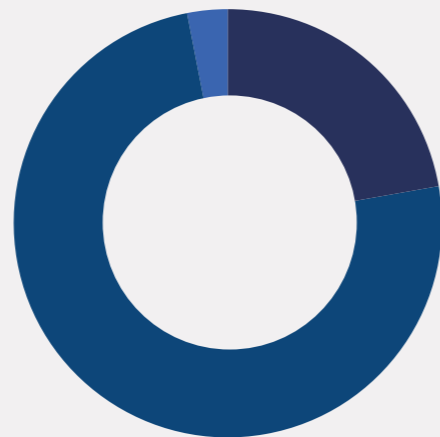


FIGURE 64: Racial discrimination, prejudice or abuse of journalists other than Australian non-Indigenous, New Zealander, English, Scottish or Irish

- Yes 22%
- No 74%
- Prefer not to say 3%



**Twenty-two percent of journalist survey respondents who reported being of an ethnic background other than Australian non-Indigenous, New Zealander, English, Scottish or Irish said they had experienced racial discrimination, prejudice or abuse as part of their media work.**

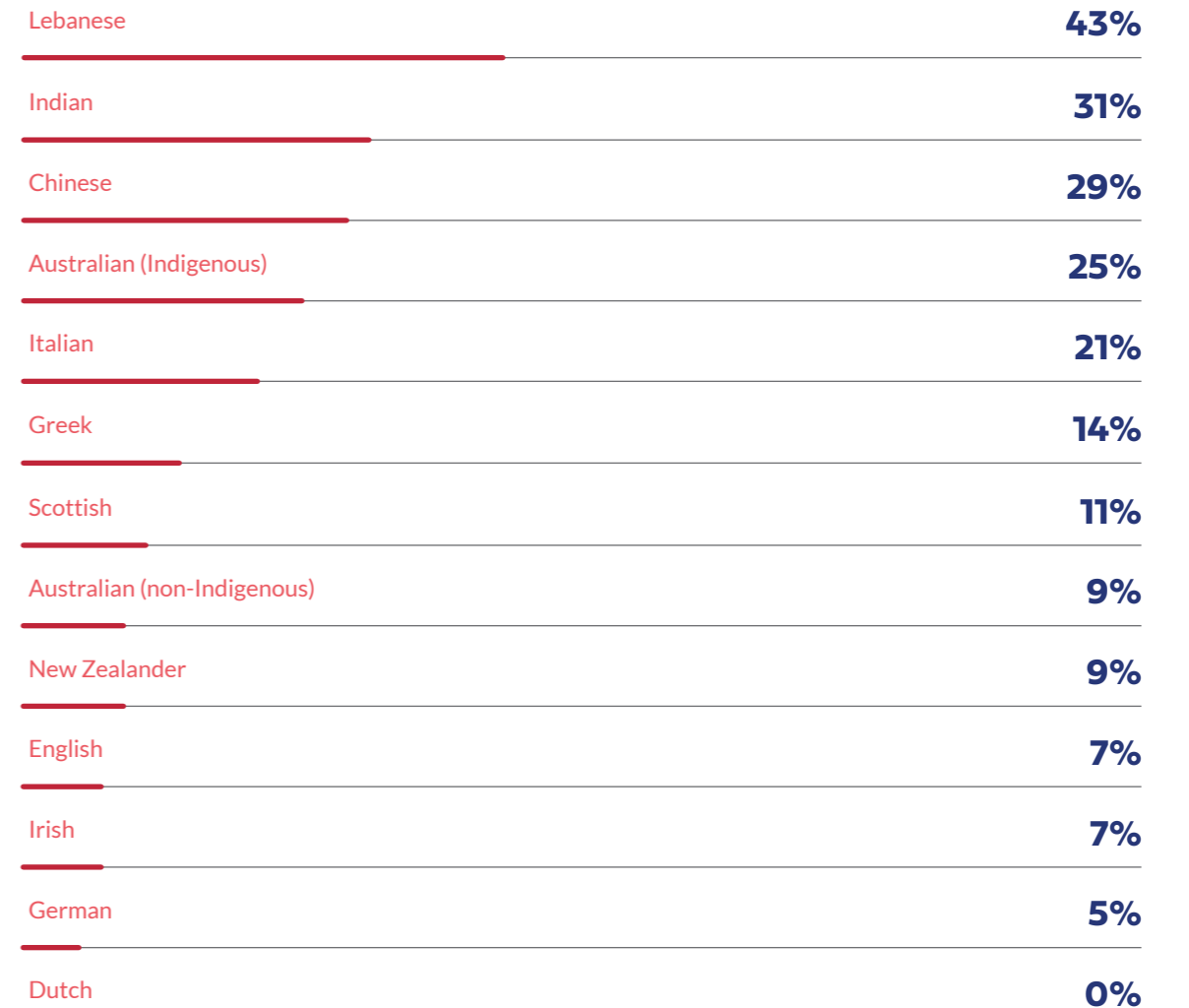


FIGURE 65: Racial discrimination, prejudice or abuse (journalists' ethnic background)



## Addressing representation and support for CALD journalists

Surveyed journalists were asked to identify how they think the media industry or their workplace could improve representation and support for people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD). The overwhelming majority of responses suggested more diverse hiring is needed, particularly in management or board positions.

Some also suggested addressing systemic barriers, providing more support within organisations and implementing quotas for diversity, although others raised how efforts need to extend beyond “tokenism”.

Many also raised how hiring should be diversified to include more people with disabilities and women in higher level roles.

**There’s good talk of allyship, but when it matters, people in my newsroom don’t speak up. I think increased training could help, but it needs to be run by diverse people.**

Accepting and embracing bilingualism would be great. Most organisations/ companies find it hard to have employees who have English as a second language.

By giving us opportunities to have our voices platformed and treating us with equity.

**[We need to] hire/ promote more people from diverse backgrounds to senior management positions.**

The entertainment media industry should work to champion more artists of diverse cultural backgrounds and support their releases, rather than only report on them when they’re negatively affected by something ie. harassed online / involved in a crime / speak out about their oppression.

Entry level jobs in media start at 40-50k which is really only feasible for people who have family support, generational wealth or benefit from nepotism. And these people are usually white. If you come from a disadvantaged background and need to support a family, you literally can’t intern for free or work for 40k a year. Media salaries do not do a great job at attracting a broad range of talent.

Nearly every photojournalist in my city is a white male. This is not a coincidence or an accident. White men hire other white men above all other people. Additionally, editors most often choose images of white people over images that represent the actual diversity of Australia.



## Journalist Pulse Report

Discover what journalists have to say about you.

Find out journalists' perception of your brand, product or organisation and receive valuable insights tailored to your communications strategy.

[Learn more](#)

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## About Medianet

Medianet has a unique position in the heart of the media. For more than 40 years, we've been a trusted connection between newsrooms and those who have a story to tell.

When it comes to achieving earned media, Medianet is your trusted partner. Owned by Australia's two major media players, Nine and News Corp, we link you directly with newsrooms, publishers and broadcasters across Australia, New Zealand and globally.

Our platform offers all the tools and data to maximise your return on your PR efforts.

- Build a release in minutes with our easy-to-use press release builder.
- Save time with hundreds of media lists curated for you.
- Research the bios, contact information and profiles of 36,000+ media contacts and outlets.
- Reach inboxes and not spam folders with an average 98% email delivery rate and open rates above industry standards.
- Break through inboxes and promote your story even further with ad-driven distribution to news sites and social media.
- Rely on our local research team to be an extension of yours, saving you countless hours in contact updates.



**36,000+**  
media contacts  
and outlets

**200+**  
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