

EUROPEAN COMMUNICATION MONITOR 2007

Trends in Communication Management and
Public Relations – Results and Findings



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Research project and team

European Communication Monitor

The first transnational survey on future trends in communication management and public relations in Europe

An international research project serving solely academic purposes, supported by Euprera (European Public Relations Education and Research Association), a network of leading scholars from more than 30 countries

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Sponsor

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About the survey

About the survey

Aim of the research

- _ monitoring trends in communication management regarding strategic issues, fields of practice, instruments and resources
- _ to analyse the changing framework for public relations driven by the European integration
- _ to evaluate specific topics like addressing young people, innovation, trust and evaluation

Online survey

- _ April/May 2007

Target group

- _ PR professionals in organisations and consultancies

Participants

- _ 1,087 PR professionals from 22 European countries
-

About the survey

Sampling

- _ personal invitation to > 20,000 professionals throughout Europe via e-mail; additional invitations to participate via national branch associations, executive education programs, press release (partly self-recruiting)

Assumptions

- _ use of professional terminology and PR practice has been considered rather standardized throughout Europe, therefore national specific aspects were not taken into account
- _ respondents have been considered proficient users of English language; therefore it was assumed that no ambiguity was related to language issues

Analysis

- _ methods of empirical social research – descriptive and analytical
- _ statistically affirmed significant mean differences will be marked by



= significant higher parameter value



= significant lower parameter value

Socio-demographic analysis

Socio-demographic analysis 1/2

Full sample

- _ 1,087 fully completed replies

European States

- _ participants from 22 European states
(e.g. Germany, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, Netherlands, Norway, Belgium, UK, Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia ...)

Age

- _ on average 41.3 years

Type of organisation

- _ communication department / press office – 55,7%
- _ communication consultancy / public relations agency / freelancer – 33,3%
- _ other – 11%

Socio-demographic analysis 2/2

Experience in communication management and public relations

- _ up to 3 years – 12,4%
- _ 4 to 5 years – 11,8%
- _ 6 to 10 years – 27%
- _ more than 10 years – 48,9%

Relevant markets

- _ business to consumer markets (B2C) – 31,2%
- _ business to business markets (B2B) – 43,1%
- _ no specification / not relevant – 25,8%

Interpretation

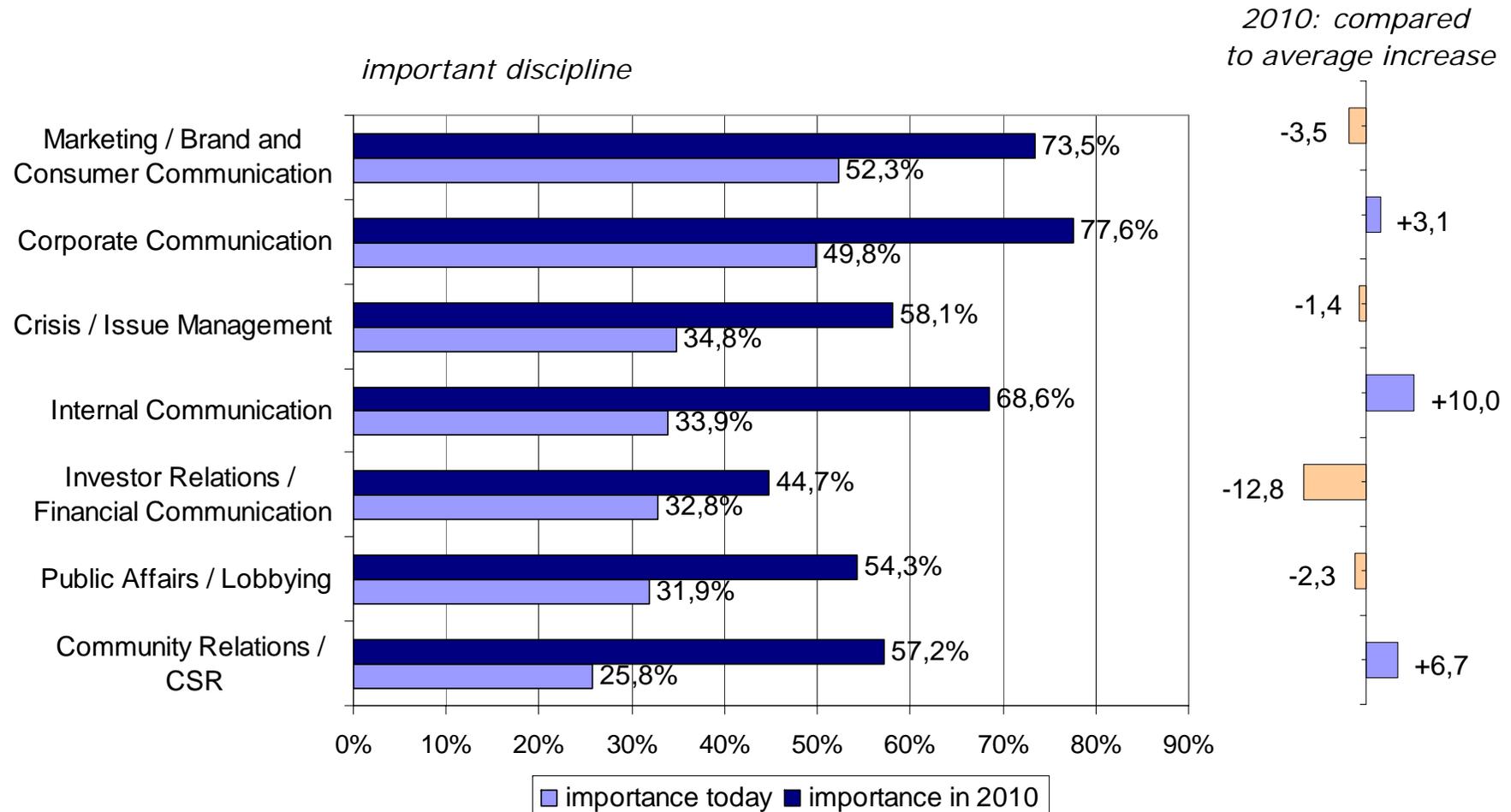
Valuable insights into the evolution of Public Relations in Europe

- _ Based on a sample of nearly 1,100 professionals from 22 countries with a thorough level of experience (average age 41.3 years, every second with more than 10 years of experience in the field), this research lays a solid ground for identifying major developments in communication management and public relations
- _ However, as there is no knowledge about the population of communication departments and agencies in Europe, the findings presented here can not claim representativeness
- _ Statistical analysis is able to reveal significant differences between various groups of respondents (communication departments vs. agencies, B2B vs. B2C, age groups, ...) and stimulates discussion about different segments of the market



Disciplines and communication channels in 2010

Development of disciplines and fields of practise



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 PR Professionals from 22 countries
 Q 3: How important are the following fields of practise in your organisation? Will they gain more or less importance within the next three years. (1 = not important; 5 = very important; important discipline = scale point 4 & 5)
 All disciplines are considered more important in 2010; comparison shows difference to the average increase (24,7%).

Most important disciplines in communication management in Europe

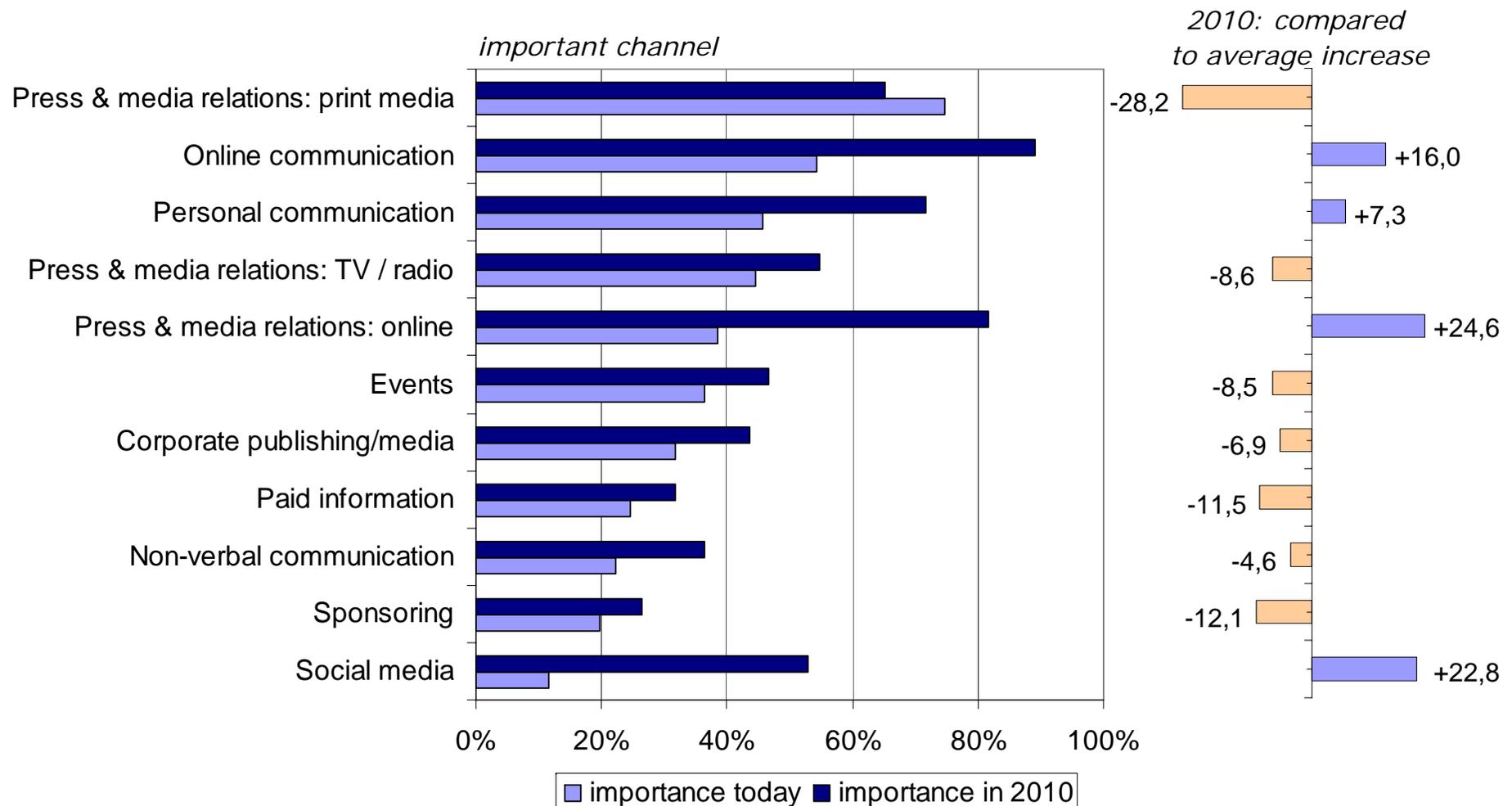
Today		In 2010		
1	Marketing/Brand and Consumer Communication	1	Corporate Communication	↗
2	Corporate Communication	2	Marketing/Brand and Consumer Communication	↘
3	Crisis / Issue Management	3	Internal Communication and Change Management	↑
4	Internal Communication and Change Management	4	Crisis / Issue Management	↘
5	Public Affairs / Lobbying	5	Community Relations, CSR	↑

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 PR Professionals from 22 countries.

Q 3: How important are the following fields of practise in your organisation? Will they gain more or less importance within the next three years. (1 = not important; 5 = very important; important discipline = scale point 4 & 5).

Arrow symbols indicate changes within the ranking of most important disciplines; in general, all disciplines are ascending.

Development of communication channels/instruments



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 PR Professionals from 22 countries

Q 4: How important are the following methods in addressing stakeholders, gatekeepers and audiences? Will this change within the next three years? (1 = not important; 5 = very important; important channel = scale point 4 & 5)

All instruments are considered more important in 2010; comparison shows difference to the average increase (18,7%).

Important channels and instruments for public relations

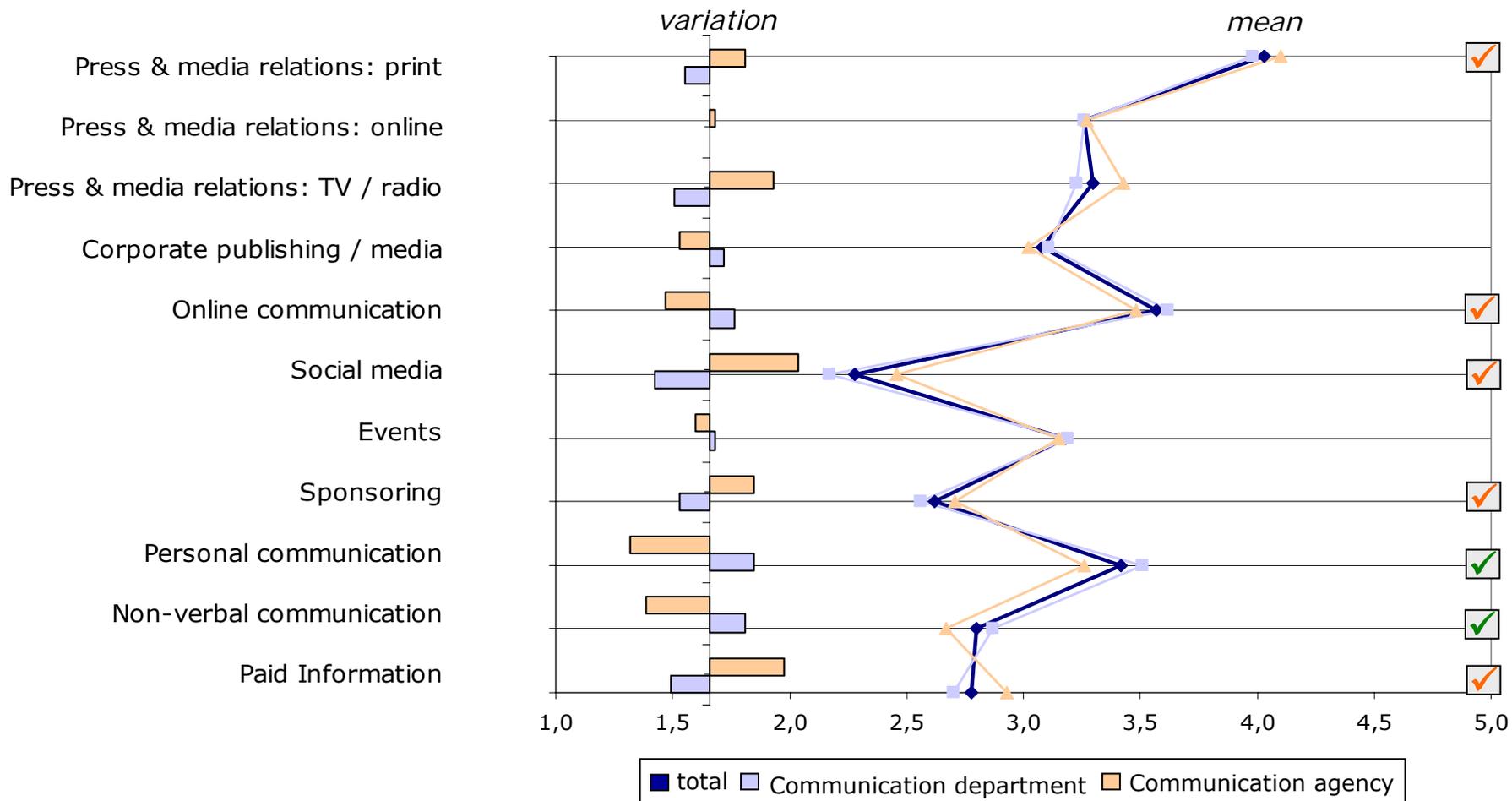
Today		In 2010		
1	Press and media relations: print media	1	Online communication	↗
2	Online communication	2	Press and media relations: online media	↑
3	Personal communication	3	Personal communication	→
4	Press and media relations: TV / radio	4	Press and media relations: print media	↓
5	Press and media relations: online media	5	Press and media relations: TV / radio	↘
6	Events	6	Social media	↑

www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 PR Professionals from 22 countries

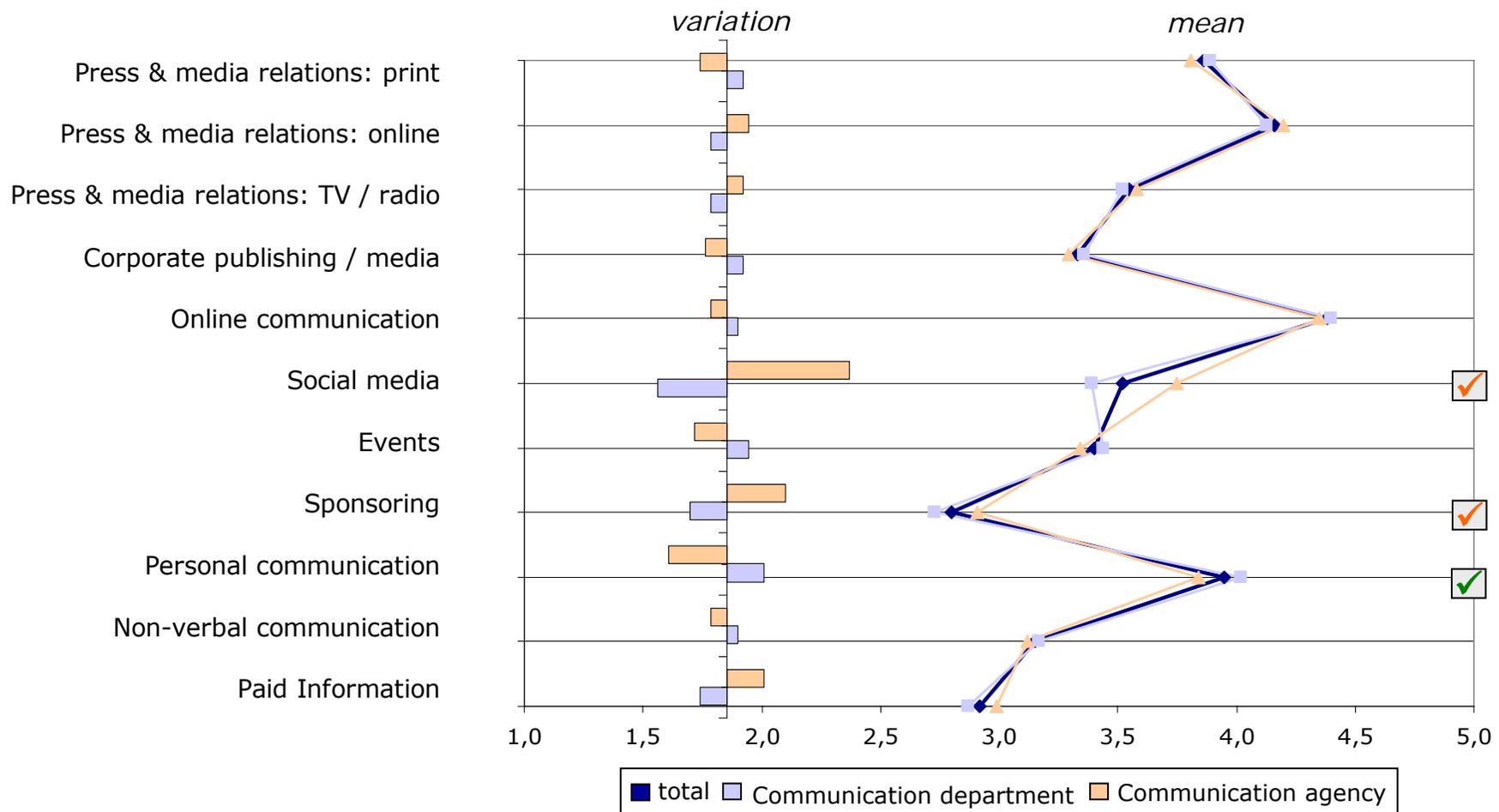
Q 4: How important are the following methods in addressing stakeholders, gatekeepers and audiences? Will this change within the next three years? (1 = not important; 5 = very important; important channel = scale point 4 & 5)

Arrow symbols indicate changes within the ranking of most important instruments.

Different perceptions: How communication departments and agencies value public relations instruments today



A view of the future: How communication departments and agencies value public relations instruments in 2010



Interpretation

New weight of disciplines within communication management

- _ Corporate Communication will succeed today's forerunner Consumer Communication as the most important field of practice until 2010
- _ Internal/Change Communication and Community Relations/CSR are the fastest-growing disciplines within communication management in Europe

Public Relations goes online – press and media relations loose ground

- _ Addressing journalists keeps being a significant part of public relations. But within 3 years the most important addressees are working for the online media, not print or broadcast.
- _ The use of online communication and social media as a tool to reach stakeholders without engaging the mass media is growing rapidly

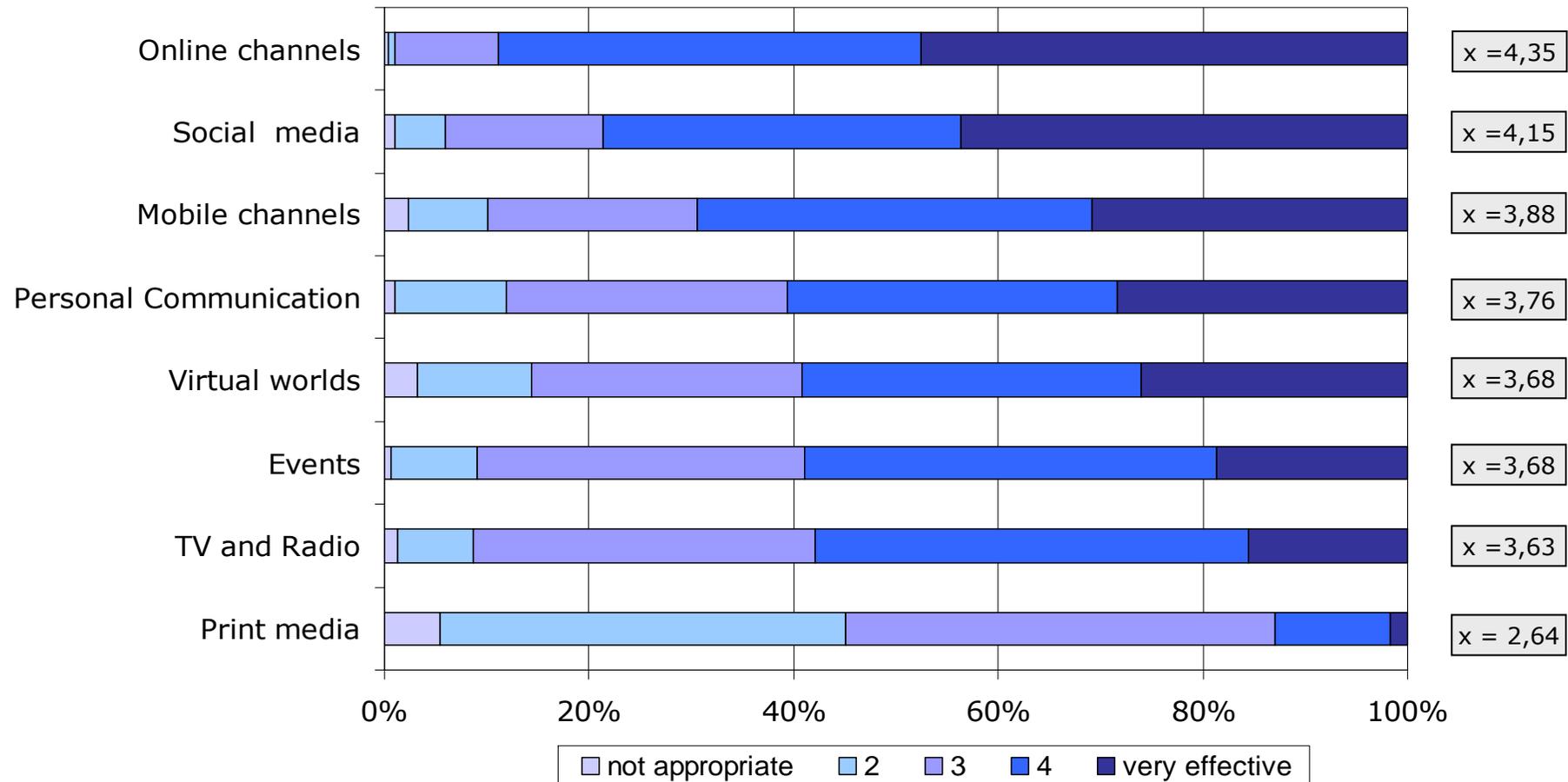
Communication agencies underestimate personal and nonverbal communication

- _ There are significant gaps between today's and future perceptions of relevant communication channels by companies and agencies
 - _ Agencies tend to think in terms of media production and neglect the chances of direct interactions. Companies are less convinced by social media and sponsoring.
-



Addressing tomorrow's customers, co-workers and opinion leaders

Effective channels for addressing the young generation



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 PR Professionals from 22 countries
 Q 5: Thinking of current teenagers, who are trendsetters for future media usage in society: which channels are effective to deliver messages and catch their attention?

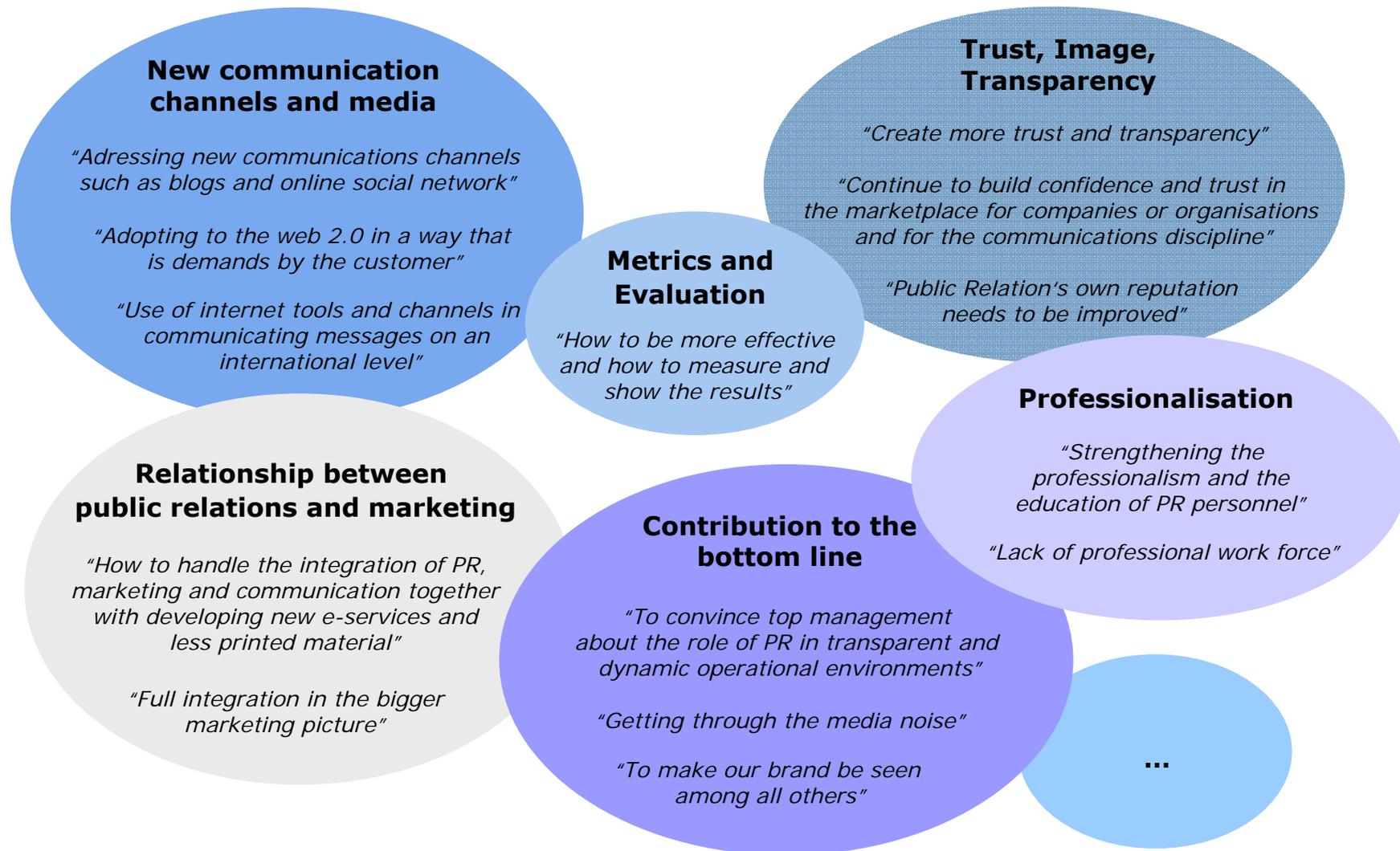
Interpretation

Interactive and personal settings are first choice when addressing tomorrow`s customers, co-workers and opinion leaders

- _ Public Relations needs a complete new set of instruments and competencies to reach young people
- _ Online communication, social media and mobile channels are most effective
- _ High-end technological platforms have to be complemented by real-life interactions, which may be enabled by personal communication and events. This offers great opportunities for crossmedia concepts and word-of-mouth campaigns.
- _ Today's routines in Communication Management which are focused on using print media and TV/Radio as multipliers may look outdated very soon

Strategic issues and challenges

Challenges for public relations – sample quotations



Most important issues for communication management



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 PR Professionals from 22 countries
 Q 6: Here are some issues that might become relevant for public relations and communication management within the next three years. Please mark those 3 items which are most important in your point of view.

Challenges for communication management in Europe

Most important issues within the next three years		
1	Coping with the digital evolution and the social web	48,9%
2	Linking business strategy and communication	45,6%
3	Building and maintaining trust by authentic communication	43,4%
4	Dealing with the demand of new transparency and active audiences	36,3%
5	Establishing new methods to evaluate and demonstrate the value of communication	31,4%

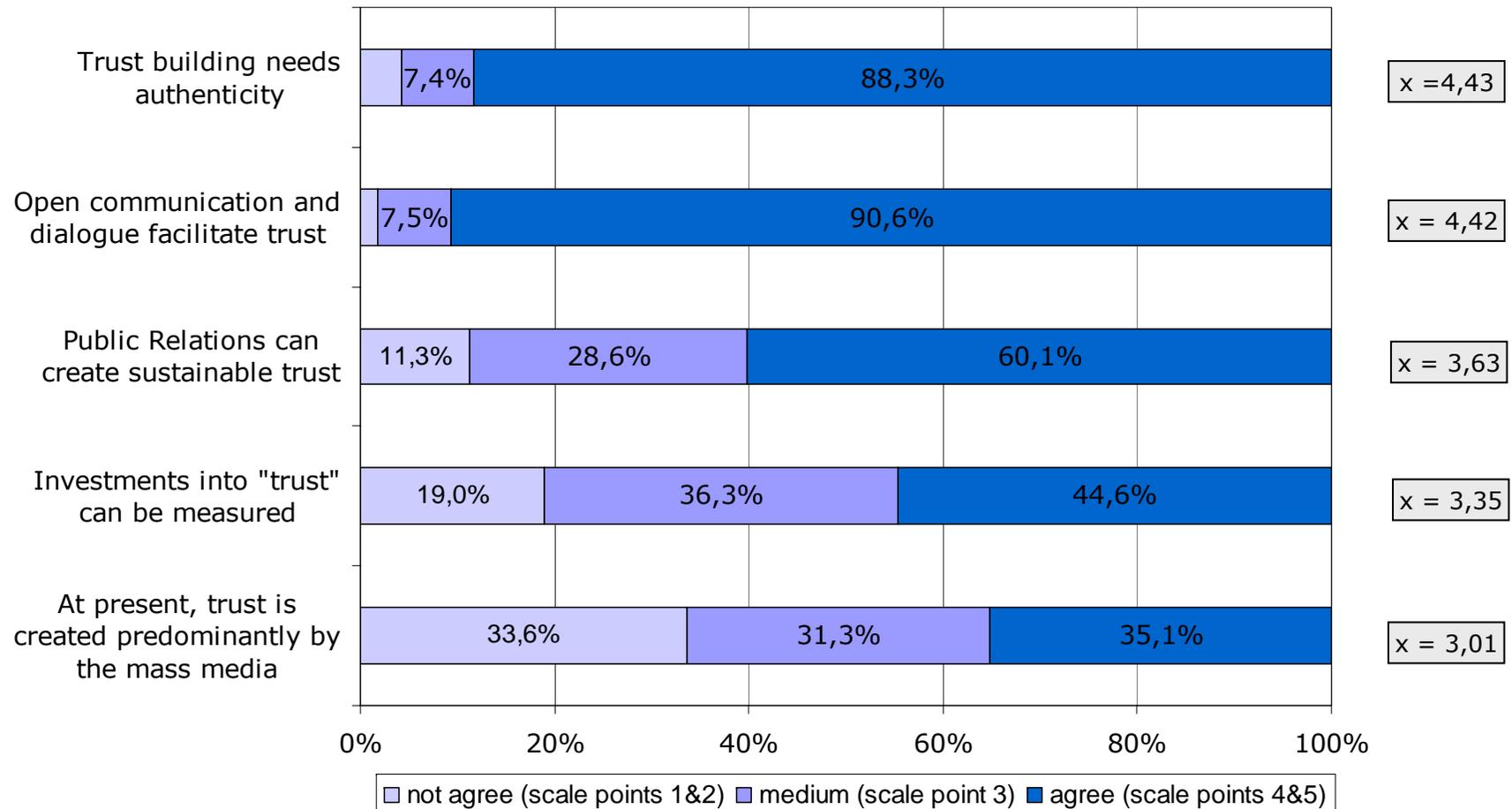
Interpretation

A new agenda for communication management and public relations in Europe

- _ PR Professionals face three major challenges: coping with the digital evolution, linking their function to business strategies, and maintaining trust. Nearly every second questioned gives top priority to those issues within the next three years.
- _ On a broader scale, the most important issue to be dealt with is the intertwining complex of social change, that brings about active audiences and the quest for more transparency, and the rise of truly interactive communication on the web, which brings about new configurations of symmetry and power
- _ Communication controlling is a major challenge for the profession, combining two strongly linked aspects: advancing communication strategies by establishing value links to corporate strategy, and implementing trusted methods and performance indicators for communication measures

Trust and public relations

Trust and Public Relations



Interpretation

Building trust is a major challenge for public relations – it needs open communication, dialogue and authenticity

- _ Nine out of ten PR professionals in Europe identify authentic, dialogical and open communication as the main lever for building and obtaining trust
- _ Nowadays' communication strategies are called into question: only 60 per cent of those working in the field think that public relations can create sustainable trust, and even less are convinced that this can be measured
- _ Press and media relations are not able to reconstitute trust in corporations and institutions on their own. Additional strategies like positioning personalities and corporate brands are necessary to establish authenticity, utilizing a maximum number of contact points with relevant stakeholders.



Communication and innovation management

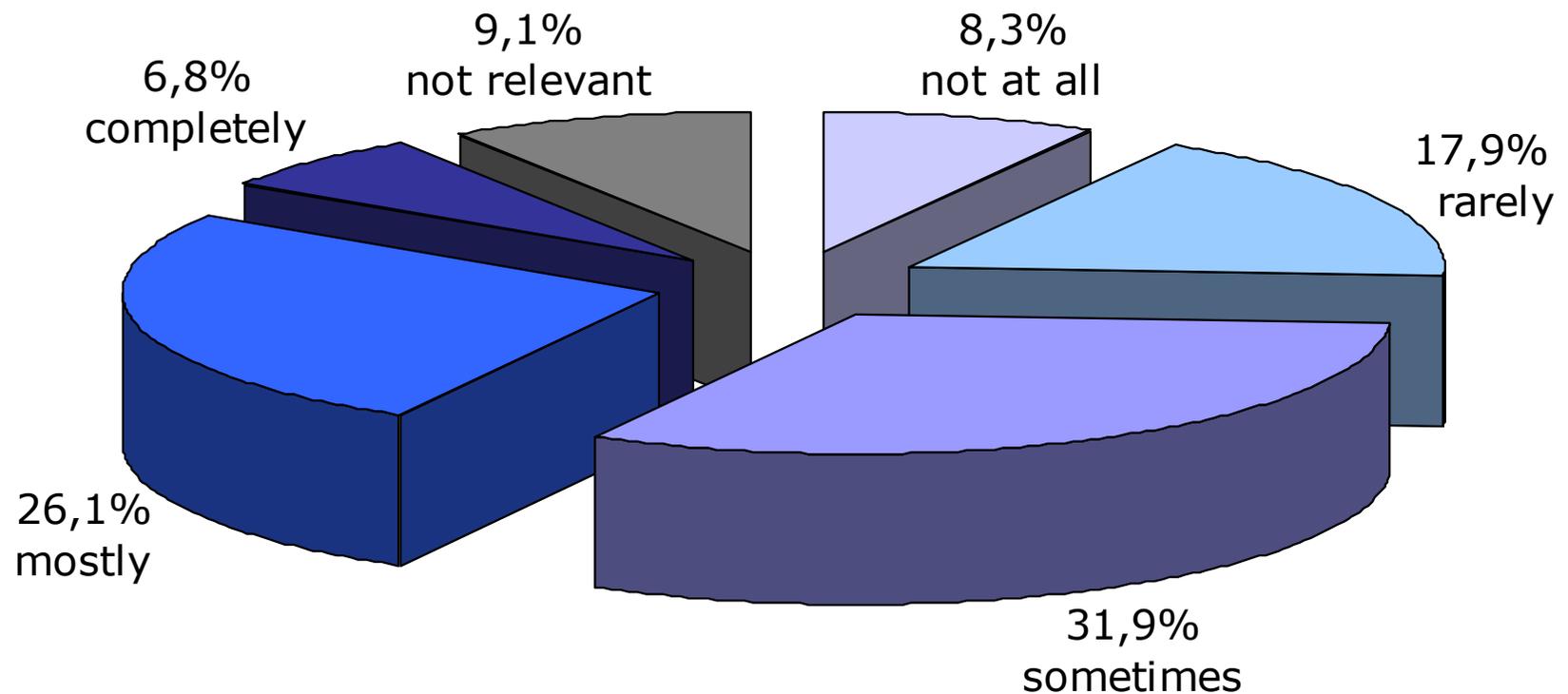
Most PR Professionals in Europe have not realized the importance of Innovation for their function

What are the most important strategic issues
for communication management within the next three years?

„Stimulating and promoting innovations“

18%

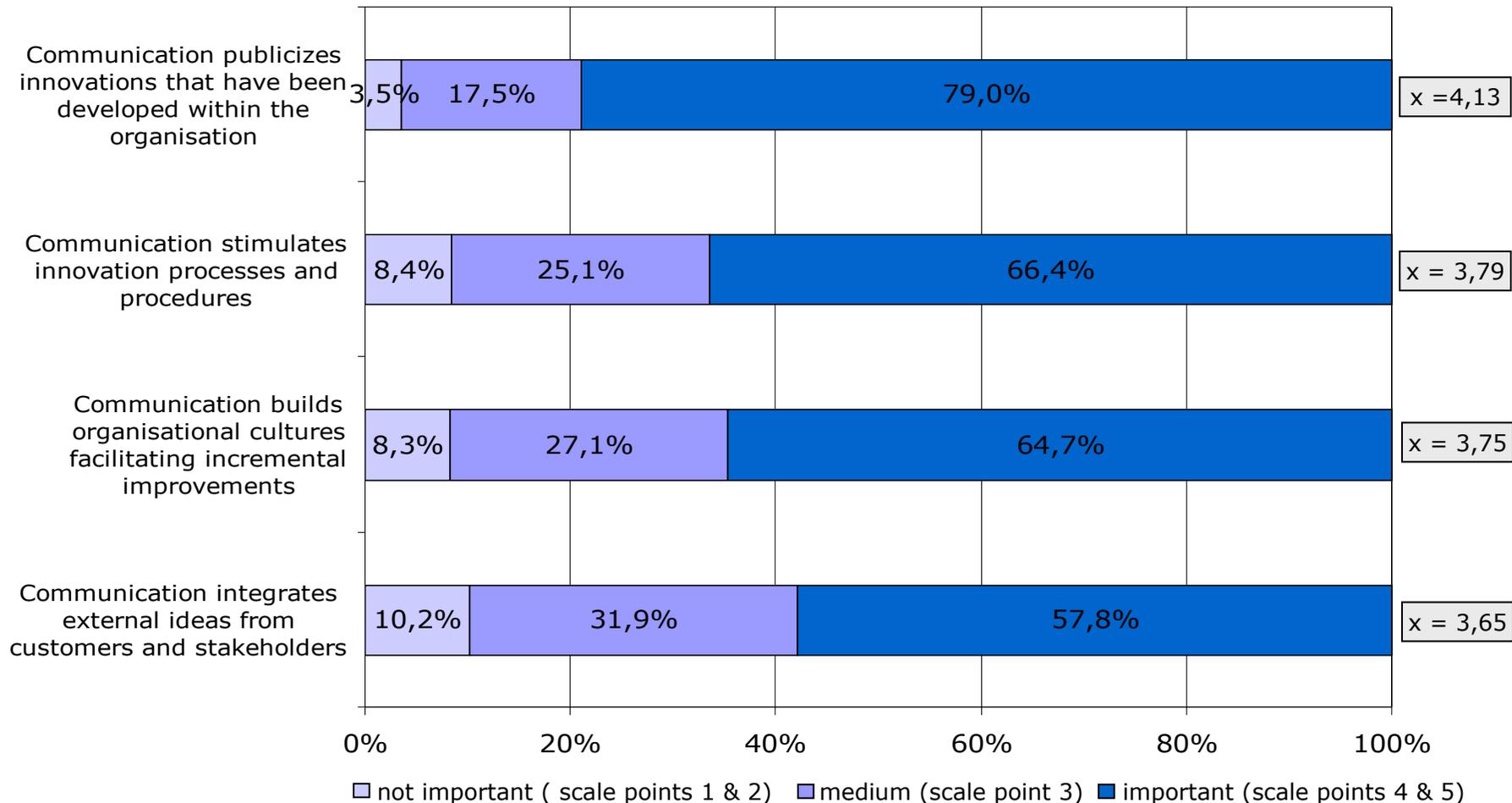
Only every third Communication Manager is involved into the innovation process



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2007 / n = 605 (communication departments)

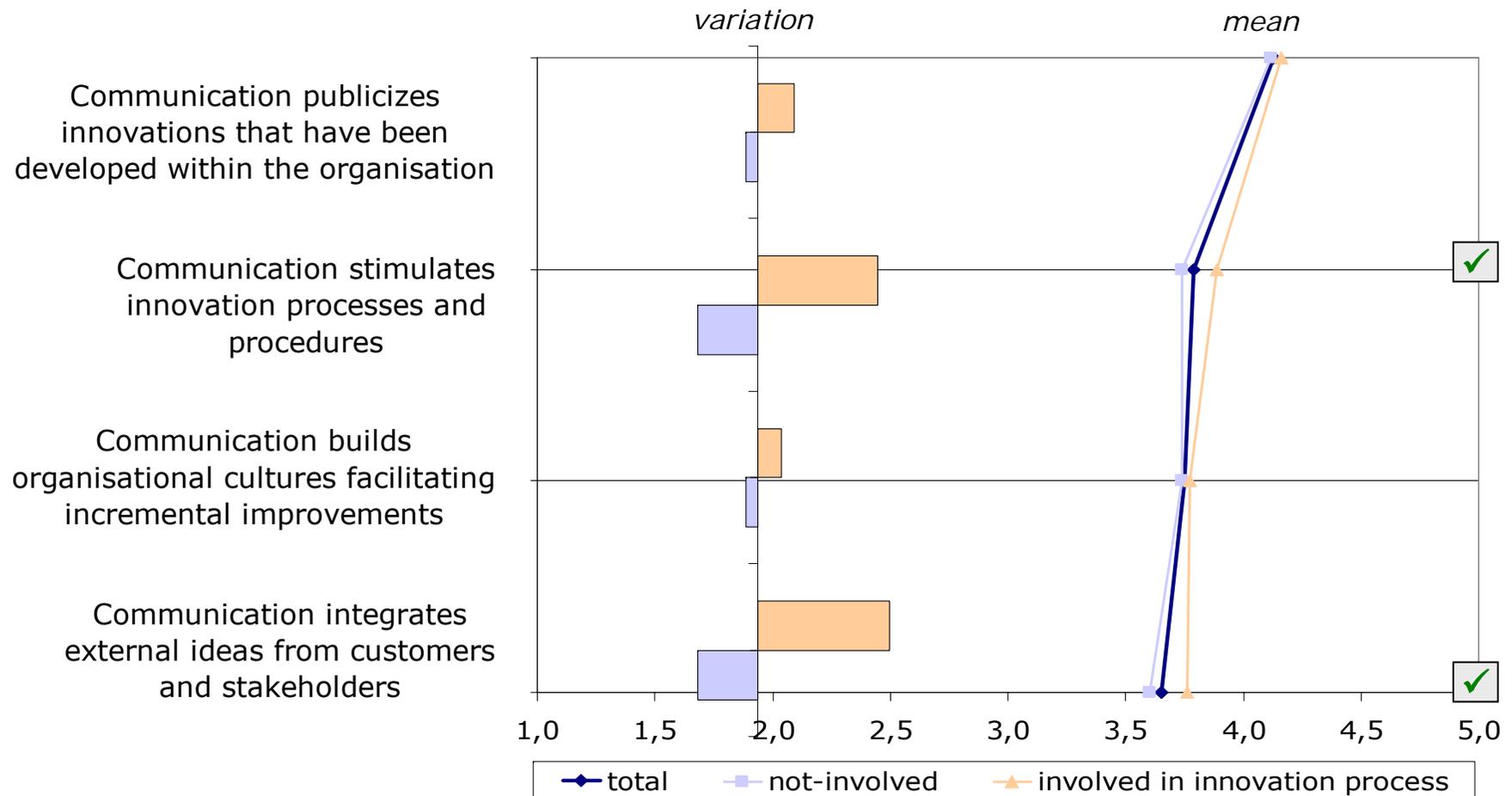
Q 9: Many organisations have established specific processes and internal teams to foster innovations. Are you involved?

Innovation Communication is perceived the traditional way as publizing new products and concepts

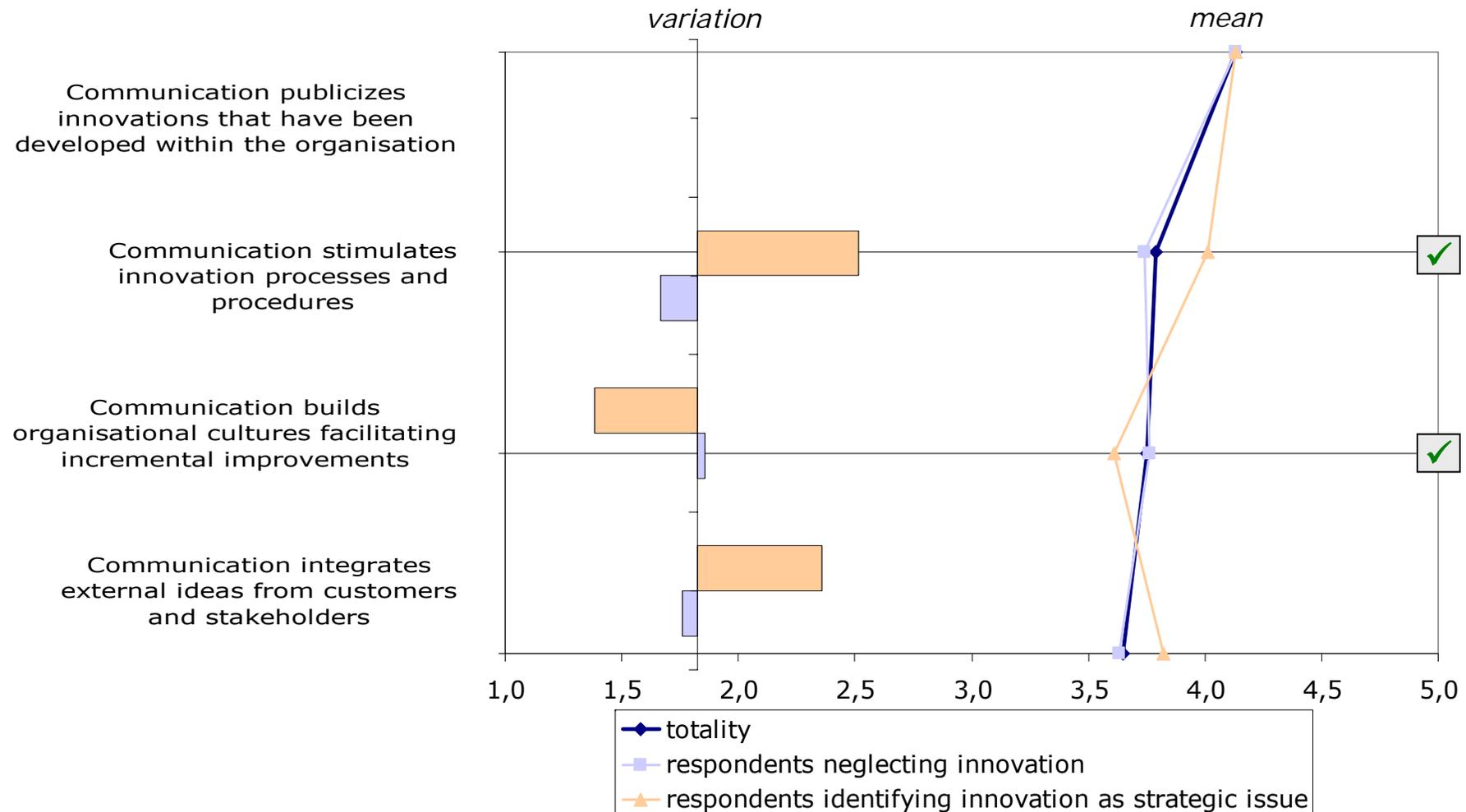


www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfass et al. 2007 / n = 605 (communication departments)
 Q 8: Innovations are essential for organisational success. Here are some statements regarding the relevance of communication for innovation management. Please assess the importance from your point of view.

PR Professionals with innovation experience try to involve stakeholders and integrate processes



Proponents of innovation are oriented towards internal processes and managing external interactions



Interpretation

Prospects of Innovation Communication are neglected

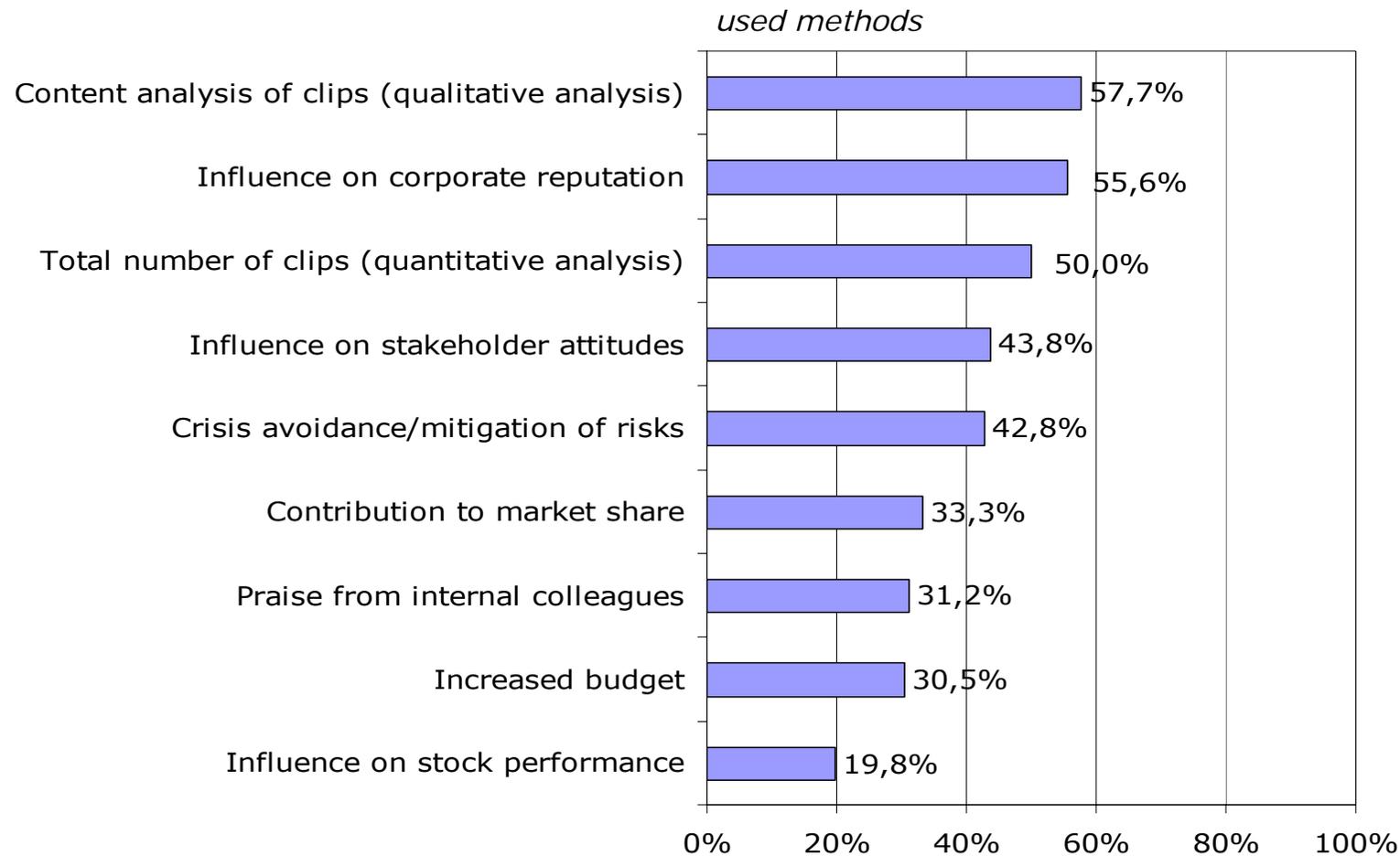
- _ Only every fifth Communication Manager in Europe has adopted the topic „Innovation“ – which is from utmost importance for CEOs and top management – as a strategic issue for himself
- _ Two third of the PR Professionals are not regularly involved into the innovation process within their company
- _ The prevailing concept of Innovation Communication is rather traditional, focussing on the „end of the pipe“ and making external announcements

Progressive PR Professionals support a new understanding of Open Innovation

- _ Significant differences are evident with regard to respondents that are already strongly involved in the innovation process and/or who have recognized the strategic relevance of innovation management
 - _ Communication Management is requested to support the innovation process from start to finish and to organize an open flow of ideas; this combines with recent theories of innovation management (Open Innovation)
-

Evaluation and controlling

Prevalent methods for measuring PR in Europe



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfaß et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 PR Professionals from 22 countries

Q 12: Thinking of your daily work, to what extent do you (really) use these measures to evaluate the effectiveness of public relations and management? (1 = do not use; 5 = use significantly; used methods = scale points 4 & 5)

Public relations measurement in the USA and Europe

To what extent do you (really) use various measures to evaluate the effectiveness of public relations / communication management?
(relevance: 1 = do not use at all ↔ 7 use significantly)

	USA	Europe
Influence on corporate reputation	5,00	4,86
Content analysis of clips	4,49	5,03
Influence on stakeholder / employee attitudes	4,36	4,26
Crisis avoidance/mitigation	3,92	4,42
Total number of clips	3,87	4,75
Praise from internal colleagues	3,71	4,16
Increased PR budget	2,97	4,05
Influence on stock performance	2,62	3,14
Contribution to market share	2,39	3,95

Europe: www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfaß et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 PR Professionals; Q 12, adapted scale.
USA: GAP III Study 2005 – Public Relations General Accepted Practices, USC Annenberg Strategic Public Relations Center / Council of Public Relations Firms. Average results; selected items only. n = 347 Companies.

Interpretation

Public relations evaluation is most important, but still deficient in Europe

- _ Linking business strategy and communication is identified as most important issue for public relations by every second PR professional in Europe. But only 20% measure the influence of communication on stock performance; 33% are interested in their contribution to market share.
- _ Evaluation is still focused on measuring the output in the mass media, using content analysis and counting the total number of clips.
- _ PR professionals are also hooked on evaluating corporate reputation, though this overall indicator can hardly be used to set goals and optimize communication management

In contrast to the US, European PR practitioners still believe in counting press clippings and celebrating increased budgets

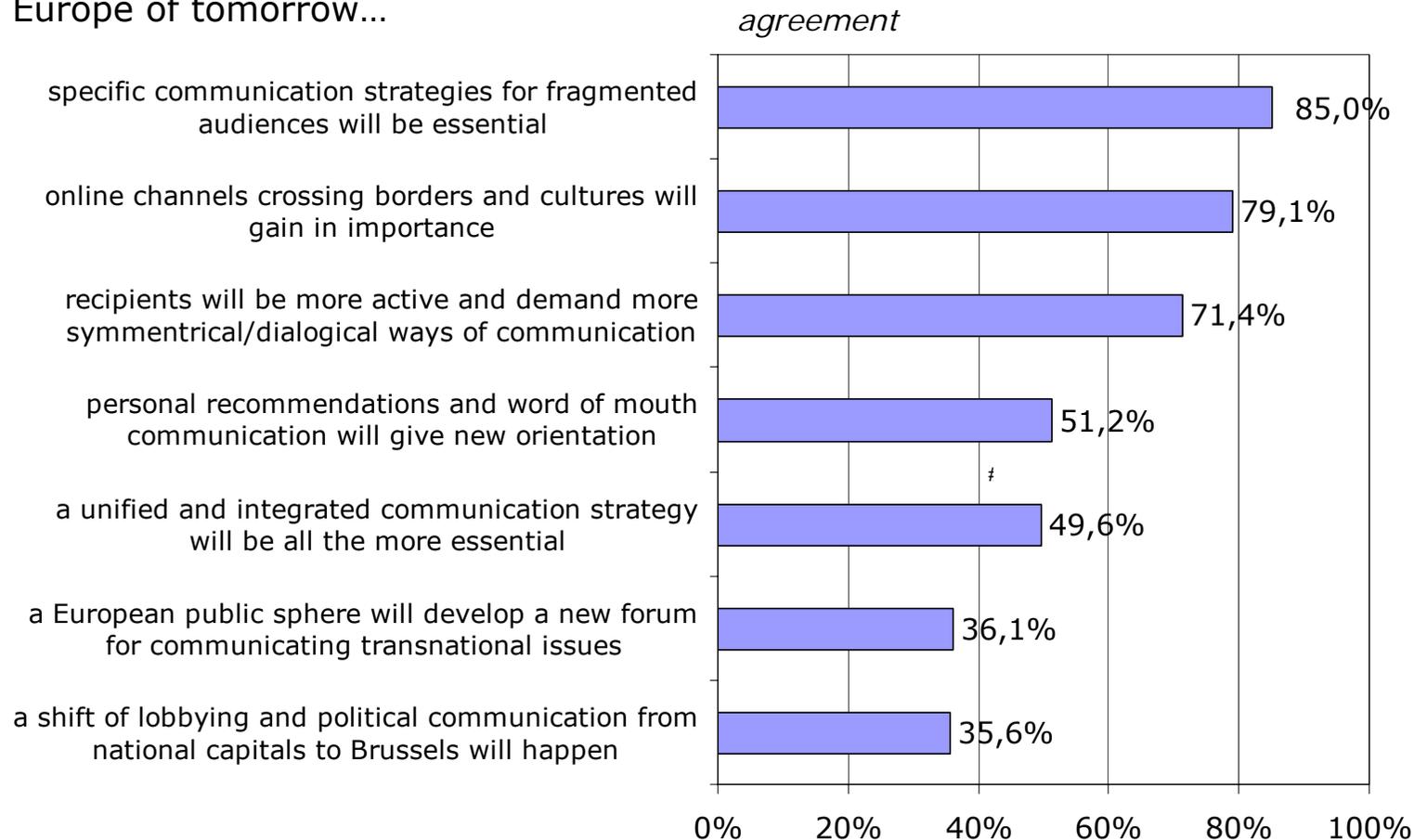
- _ Compared to similar research from the United States this survey reveals that Europe shows different approaches towards communication controlling



Communication management in the integrated European market

Communication and media in the new Europe

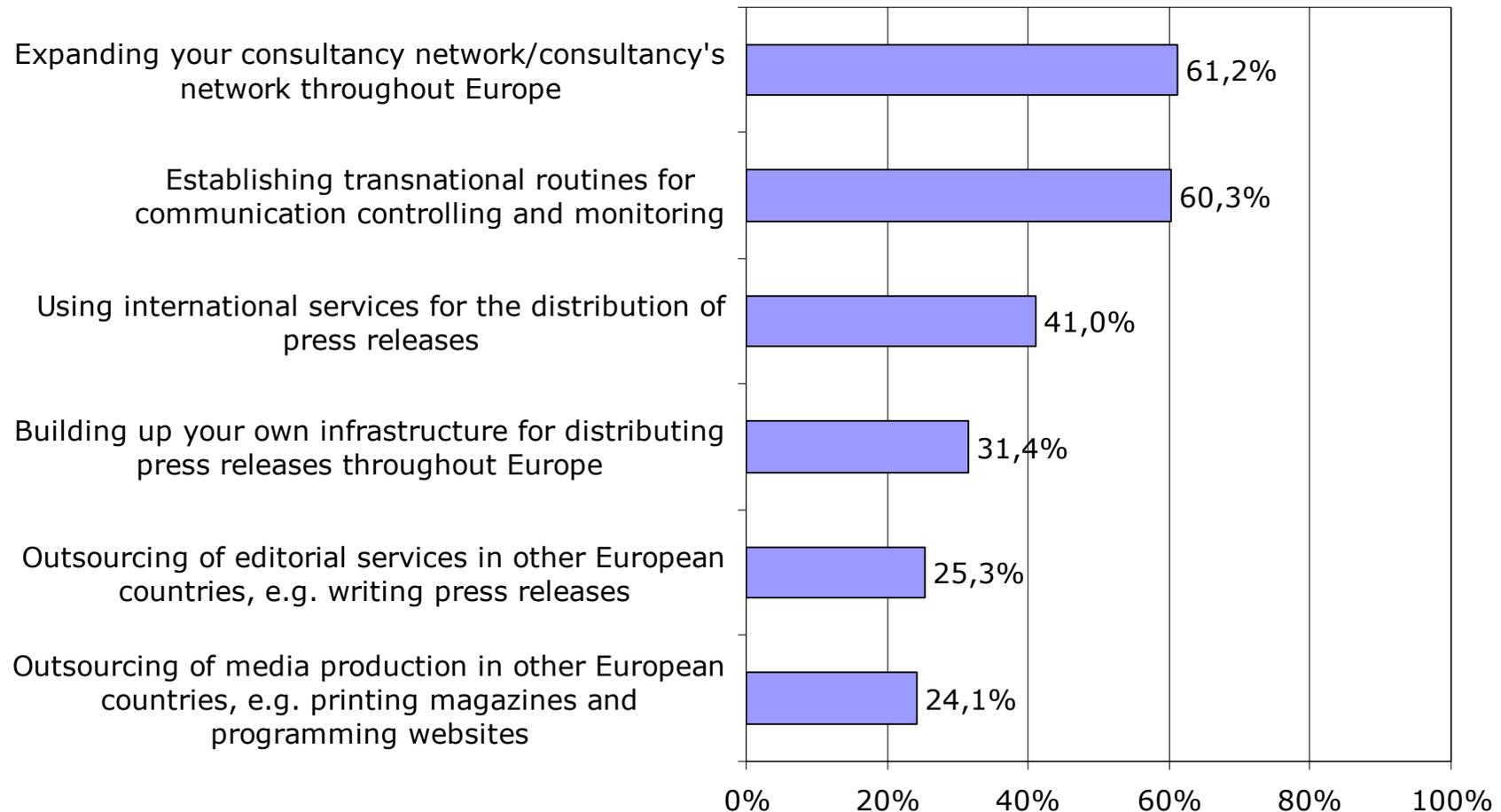
In the Europe of tomorrow...



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfaß et al. 2007; n = 1,087 PR Professionals from 22 countries

Q 11: Below you will find a number of statements concerning the change of the media landscapes in Europe. Do you agree with these statements? (1 = do not agree; 5 = fully agree; agreement = scale points 4 & 5)

Most important challenges to public relations



Interpretation

Fragmented audiences pose a major challenge to public relations in Europe

- _ Communication strategies which cope with aspects like specification and addressing stakeholders directly via online channels will be decisive in Europe's changing media landscape
- _ One-voice-strategies and unified messages are hard to realize, as no European sphere is emerging as a forum for public debate. Integrated communication has to be re-conceptualized as a strategic assignment, transcending the instrumental level.

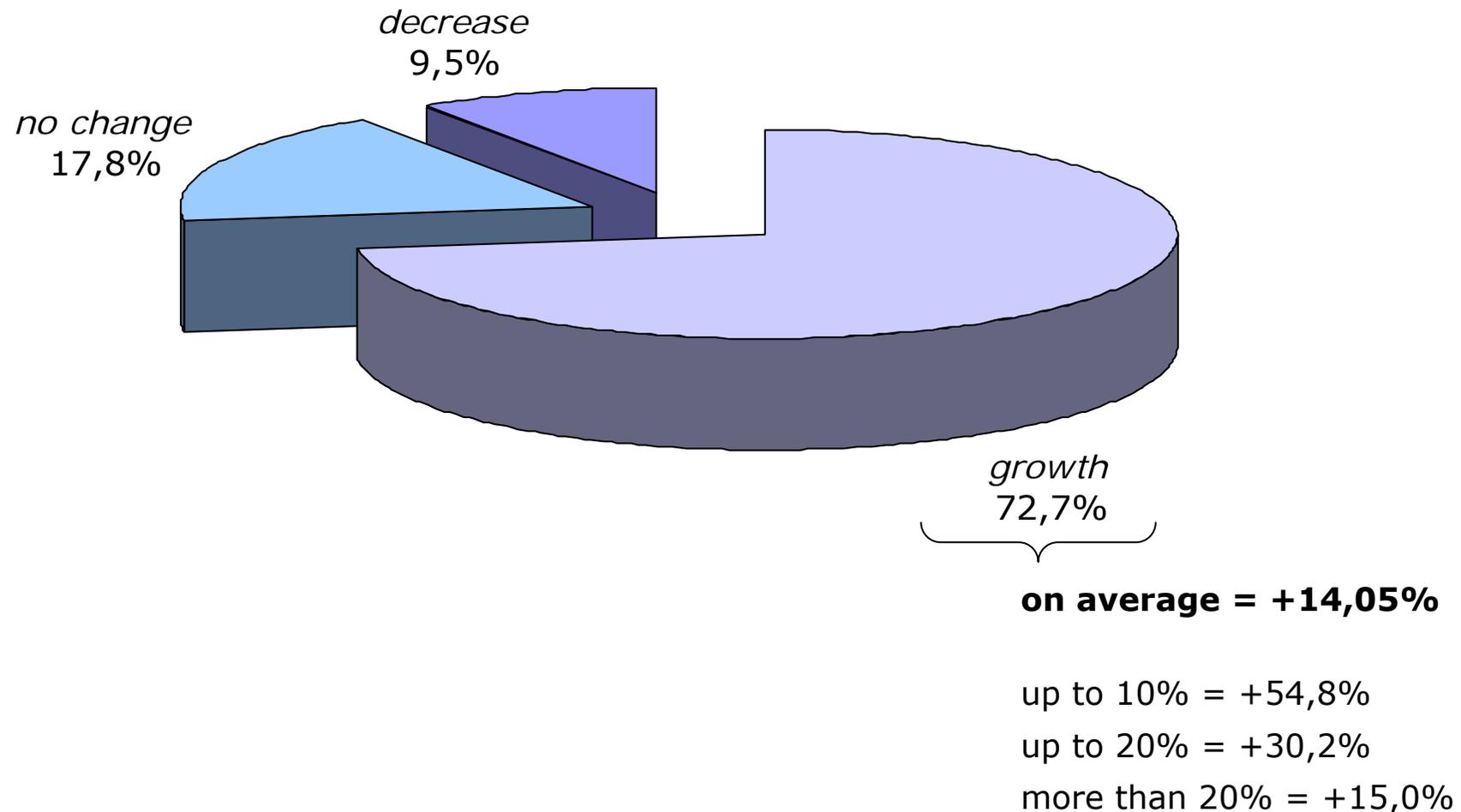
Upgrading infrastructure for consultancy and controlling

- _ Saving money by outsourcing hand-on tasks in public relations (writing, printing, programming) is less important than building up potentials for future success: More than 60% of the respondents are interested in expanding their institutional network and establishing routines for managing and evaluation across Europe



Next year`s perspective for Public Relations

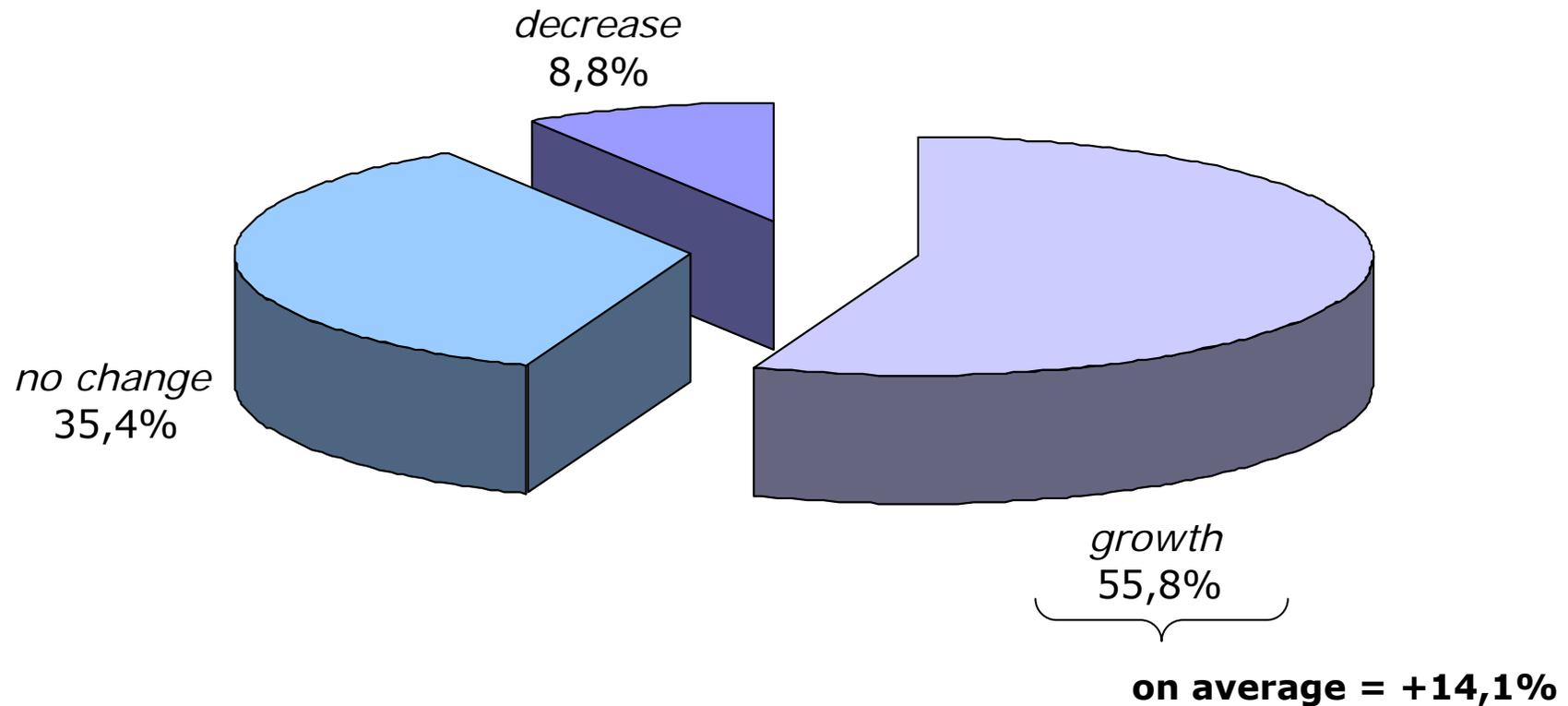
Budgets for Public Relations in 2008



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfaß et al. 2007 / n = 1,087 from 22 countries

Q 1: Thinking of your organisation or consultancy, do you expect a growth or decrease in budgets and personnel within the next 12 months? Please assess the percentage; no change should be marked as 0% growth.

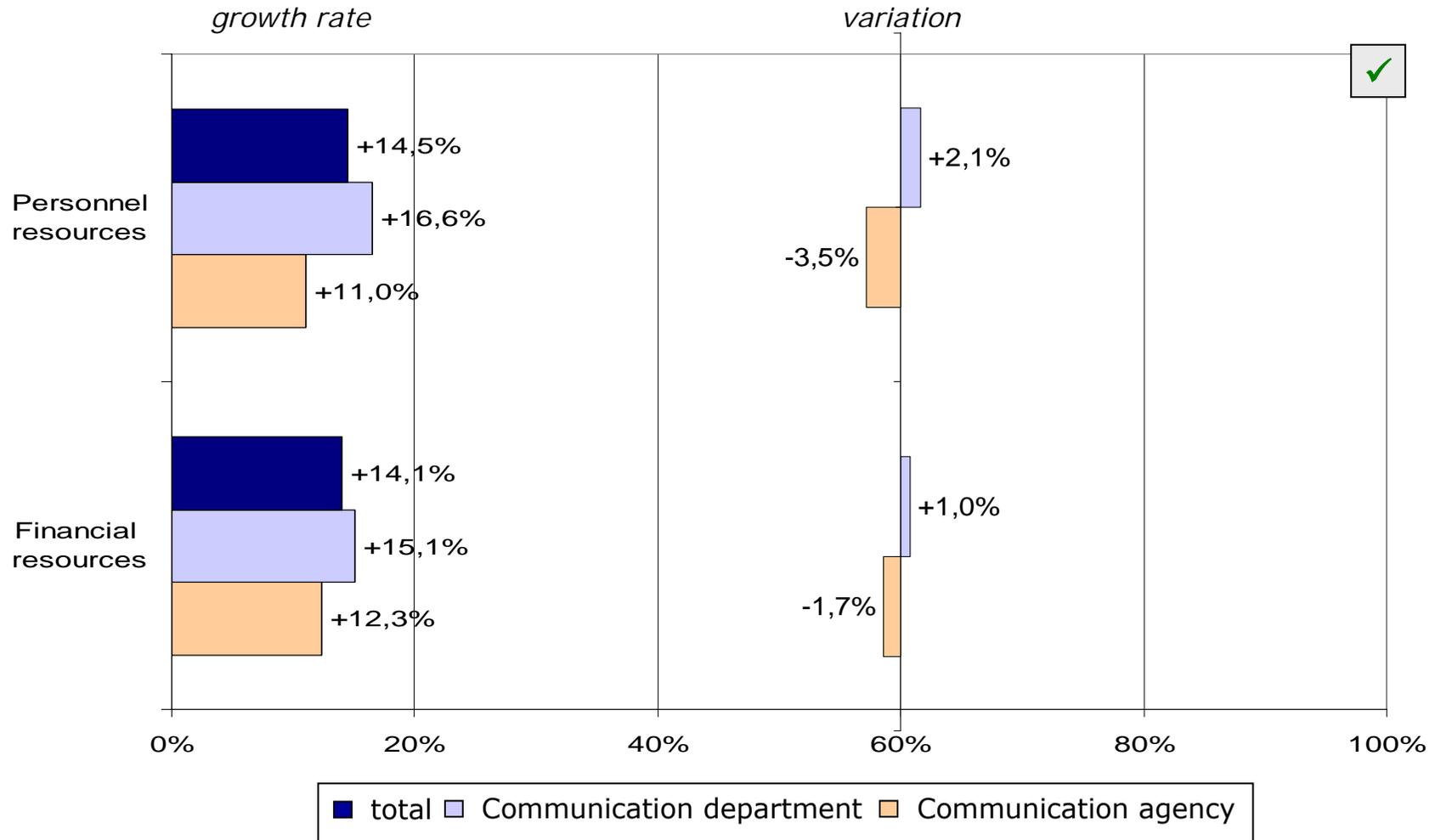
Personnel resources for Public Relations in 2008



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfaß et al. 2007 / n = 1,087

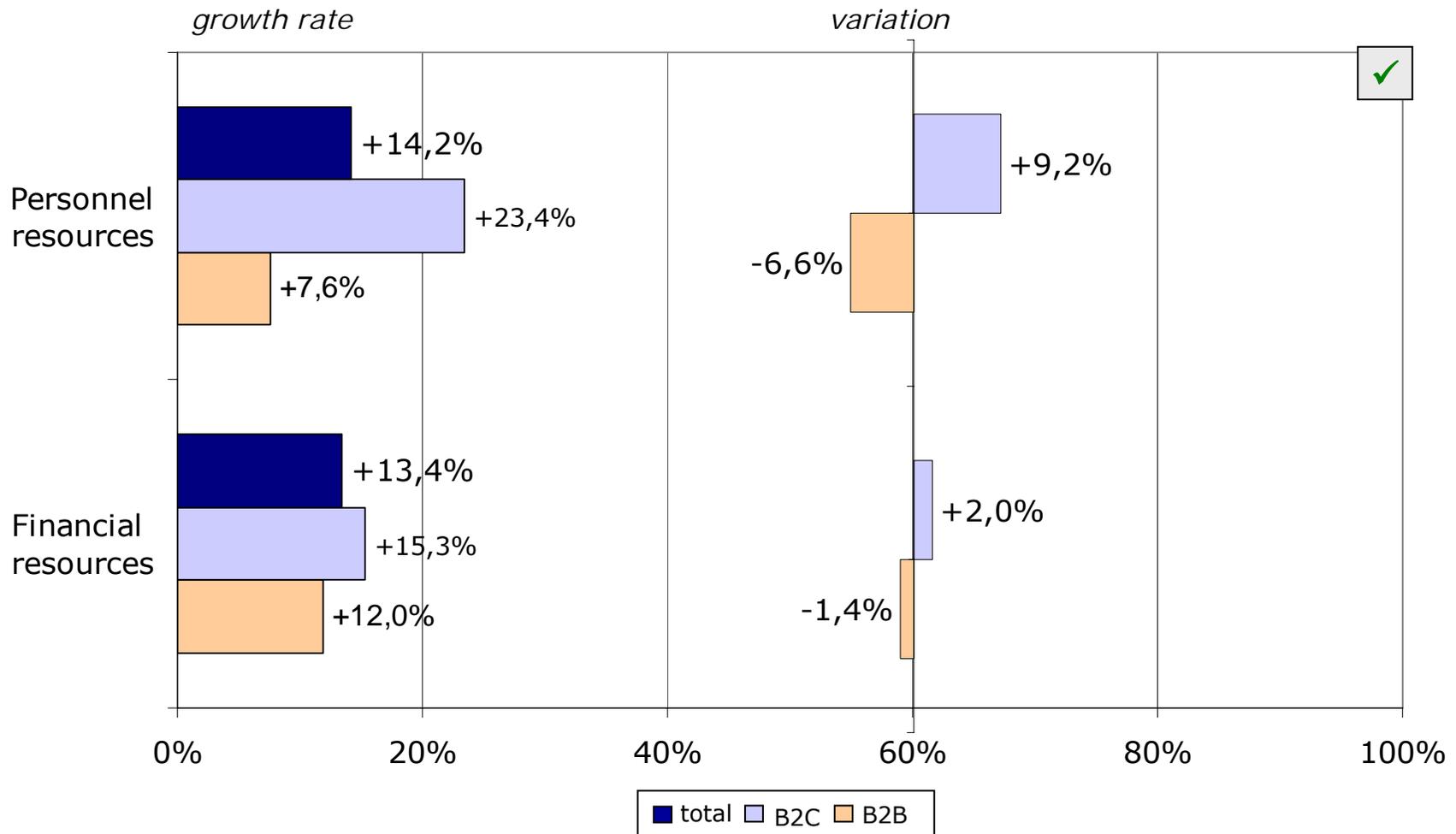
Q 1: Thinking of your organisation or consultancy, do you expect a growth or decrease in budgets and personnel within the next 12 months? Please assess the percentage; no change should be marked as 0% growth.

Two-speed growth in Public Relations: Companies create more jobs, agencies are less dynamic



www.communicationmonitor.eu / Zerfaß et al. 2007 / n = 967 (communication departments vs. agencies; without other participants); Q 1 and 13

Business-to-consumer communication drives the market



Interpretation

Significant upturn for public relations in Europe

- _ 7 out of 10 communication managers in Europe expect increasing budgets in 2008 with an average plus of 14%
- _ Public relations creates jobs: every second asked in the survey expects to have more personnel in 2008

Companies and business-to-consumer communication are going ahead

- _ PR professionals in communication departments expect a significant stronger growth in financial as well as in personnel resources, compared to consultancies
- _ Companies and agencies working in the Business-to-consumer environment are expecting a 15,3% growth in budgets and a 23,4% growth in personnel in 2008

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