



Public Affairs Forum of India

# Public Affairs in India

## An Evolving Landscape

---

**MAY 2024**

© Public Affairs Forum of India

**Edited by Deep Pal, PhD,  
Director, PAFI**

**Knowledge Partner**



**INDIAN  
SCHOOL  
OF PUBLIC  
POLICY**

# CONTENTS

Foreword	01
Executive Summary	02
Takeaways from the Study	04
Background and Evolution of Public Affairs	06
Recent Developments in Public Affairs in India	08
Survey Findings	10
Public Affairs Division: Years of Existence	10
Public Affairs Division: Team Size – 2024	11
Recruitment of Public Affairs Professionals:	13
Time Taken and Sources	
Annual Salary Range for Public Affairs Professionals	15
Training for Public Affairs Professionals	16
Retention of Public Affairs Employees and	18
its Challenges	
Issues Faced by Public Affairs Professionals	20
Desired Skillsets in Public Affairs Professionals	21
Public Affairs and Other Functions	23
Measuring the Impact of Public Affairs	25
Trends and Changes	26
Study Design	32
Respondent Profile	34
About Public Affairs Forum of India	37
About Indian School of Public Policy	38



# Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to present to you the second edition of a comprehensive report on the state of Public Affairs in India. This report, developed in collaboration with the Indian School of Public Policy, starts where our November 2022 report, Public Affairs Career in India: A Turning Point, left off.

Within the vibrant tapestry of India's democratic fabric, the realm of Public Affairs (PA) holds a pivotal position, shaping the contours of governance, advocacy, and stakeholder engagement. This report serves as a beacon, illuminating the evolving landscape of PA in our country, from its historical underpinnings to the contemporary challenges and future trajectories.

As we delve into the PA landscape, it becomes evident that it encompasses more than mere communication; it embodies participatory democracy, fostering transparency and inclusivity. The introduction of the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP) in India exemplifies the commitment to enhancing public engagement in governance processes. Through meticulous research methodologies, this analysis unveils the heartbeat of PA, echoing the perspectives of stakeholders and industry experts, outlining



**Vinita Sethi**

**President, PAFI**

**SVP & Chief Public Affairs  
Apollo Hospitals Group**

challenges such as talent retention and navigating regulatory complexities.

In the era of globalisation and amidst transformative events like the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthening government-industry partnerships, and understanding of global regulations has become paramount. As we chart the course of governance, this report aims to serve as a compass, guiding policymakers, organisations, and stakeholders toward informed decision-making and collaborative efforts for a more inclusive and Viksit Bharat.

# Executive Summary



## **Public Affairs Division: Years of Existence**

- 64 percent of respondents have had a Public Affairs division for over ten years.
- 83 percent of those in India for over 50 years anticipate a 20-plus strong PA team in 2024.

## **Public Affairs Division: Team Size – 2024**

- Most companies surveyed prefer small teams, with 59 per cent saying they will have less than five members in their PA team in 2024.
- 64 per cent of companies generating more than Rs 10,000 crores in annual revenues say that they would require fewer than five PA professionals in 2024.
- However, 75 per cent of the public affairs consultancies surveyed reported seeking more than 10 PA professionals in their team in 2024.

## **Recruitment of Public Affairs Professionals: Time Taken and Sources**

- 49 per cent of respondents reported taking up to six months to fill a PA position.
- 25 per cent of respondents take less than two months to fill a position. Almost half of these respondents are public affairs consultancies.

- PA consultancies also use various recruitment sources, including campus recruitment and LinkedIn/similar websites.

### **Annual Salary Range for Public Affairs Professionals**

- Public Affairs can be a well-paying career, valuing seniority and experience. However, the wide range in each experience band depicts a lack of standardised practice in team structure and seniority of members.

### **Training for Public Affairs Professionals**

- 68 per cent of companies train PA professionals at least once a year.
- 11 per cent conduct training at least once every quarter or more frequently.
- Responses indicate that companies headquartered outside India train their employees more frequently than those headquartered in India.

### **Retention of Public Affairs Employees and its Challenges**

- 77 per cent of respondents consider the retention of Public Affairs employees a challenging task, up from 64 per cent in the survey conducted in November 2022.
- Major challenges include better job opportunities (36 per cent), dissatisfaction with compensation (24 per cent), and lack of appreciation and recognition (12 per cent).

### **Issues Faced by Public Affairs Professionals**

- 47 per cent of the respondents perceive a lack of metrics to demonstrate business value, followed by unclear career progression (24 per cent) as the most concerning issues.

### **Desired Skillsets in Public Affairs Professionals**

- Relevant experience and education are the most important attributes for 65 per cent of respondents.

- Relevant experience, at 38 per cent, is the most important attribute, down from 64 percent in 2022.

### **Public Affairs and Other Functions**

- CSR as an active function along with Public Affairs for 47 per cent of respondents.
- 54 per cent of those working on CSR and Public Affairs handle the function in-house.

### **Measuring the Impact of Public Affairs**

- 44 per cent of respondents chose Policy impact as the top metric for measuring success.
- 21 per cent of respondents use qualitative metrics to measure success, whereas only 4 per cent prefer quantitative metrics.



# Takeaways from the Study



Quantitative and qualitative analysis from this study offers valuable insights into the evolving landscape of Public Affairs in India. The report highlights the aspects uplifting the profession and the areas of concern. Further, it attempts to identify the areas that need further work to provide structure and consistency to the field as it evolves to keep pace with India's rapidly advancing economy.

The study finds PA to have undergone transformational changes in response to a maturing policy environment characterised by developments such as the PLCP and aligning CSR and ESG functions with Public Affairs. Participants have indicated the way PA needs to develop in response. Public Affairs will need to champion knowledge-based engagement, transparency and inclusive practices and be proactive in keeping with the environment of consultative policymaking representing the interests of businesses, the government, and society at large.

Respondents have further highlighted Public Affairs as having expanded beyond government relations in keeping with the larger economic environment. With few exceptions, governments in the centre and states now seek active industry collaboration, considering them vital partners in India's growth story.

As the scope of Public Affairs expands, this report also provides an overview of the availability of talent and career prospects for those entering the profession. It highlights that the PA is well-entrenched



in a large number of organisations, many of them operating a division for over 15 years. However, many companies also seem to prefer small teams, choosing to outsource work in non-core issues to specialised consultancy work.

Recruitment for roles typically takes two to six months, with word-of-mouth referrals being the primary channel for hiring. Respondents mentioned challenges related to both finding the right talent and retaining them. Relevant experience and education top the list of desired skills for PA professionals, followed by communication skills and trainability.

Most professionals chose policy impact as the most significant marker of success for them. Qualitative markers of impact are more popular, with **21** percent favouring them, while

only **4** percent indicated using quantitative metrics like media analytics and website data. Respondents emphasised the need to develop robust frameworks for measuring impact that can be deployed across the sector.

The report is based on survey responses and in-depth interviews conducted across sectors and with respondents at different stages of their careers. While the responses draw the picture of a rapidly evolving field, they also point to some challenges. The work of a PA professional is often ill-defined, varying in scope as the sector changes. Respondents sometimes felt that their relevance and role were unclear to other functions within their companies. The standardisation of roles and hiring practices will make the profession more attractive.



# Background and Evolution of Public Affairs



Public Affairs (PA) in India encompasses the strategic management of communication and relationships between an organisation and its stakeholders, including the government, media, community groups, and the public. In India, PA plays a crucial role in influencing policy decisions through consultations with policymakers, shaping public perception, and fostering mutual understanding between organisations and the society in which they operate.

## **Key Responsibilities:**

In India, Public Affairs as a profession has evolved to include the following responsibilities:

- **Advocacy:** Representing the organisation's interests to policymakers and regulatory bodies.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders, including government officials, community leaders, and the media.
- **Risk Mitigation:** Identify potential crises early and develop strategies to ensure trust in the organisation's image, reputation and credibility.

- **Issue Monitoring and Management:** Proactively monitoring and managing issues to identify potential challenges before they escalate through effective communication and stakeholder engagement.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Aligning the organisation's activities with societal needs and expectations to enhance its reputation and social impact.

**Public Relations (PR):** Managing the organisation's reputation and public image through strategic communication campaigns and media relations.

**Attributes of Public Affairs:** Public Affairs in India is characterised by its dynamic nature, evolving scope, and multidisciplinary approach. The relative recentness and constant evolution in the role have required PA professionals in India to be agile and adaptable in navigating India's policy landscape. The profession draws upon insights from various disciplines, including media and communication, law, politics, business, and industry associations, to effectively engage with diverse stakeholders and address emerging issues. Its origin can be traced through four broad phases:

- **Pre-independence era (Before 1947):** Public Affairs began to take shape during the pre-independence era, with the government and private organisations laying the foundation for modern communication practices in the form of the Public Relations industry.
- **Post-independence era (1947–1980):** Following independence, Public and Government Relations gained recognition as a distinct function within public

and private organisations. The number of professionals increased, and the profession underwent professionalisation.

- **Pre-liberalisation era (1981–1990):** The 1980s marked a shift in the economic and media environment, leading to the growth of the private sector and increased competition. Public Relations began to evolve beyond its traditional role, moving towards modern Public Affairs, encompassing many of the strategic characteristics it exhibits at present.
- **Liberalisation era (after 1991):** The liberalisation of the Indian economy in 1991 brought about significant changes in the socio-economic landscape, resulting in the expansion of the private sector and the growth of media. In the last three decades, the Public Affairs profession has evolved further to cater to the needs of the companies, involving stakeholder management, advocacy, and a collaborative approach to policymaking through evidence-backed and data-based interventions.



# Recent Developments in Public Affairs in India



India has witnessed a significant evolution in its approach to governance and Public Affairs post-2010s, particularly marked by a shift towards greater transparency, inclusivity, and responsiveness. The introduction of the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP) in 2014 by the Ministry of Law and Justice represents a pivotal moment in this evolution. This policy has increased public participation in the legislative process and underscored India's commitment to fostering a more deliberative democracy.

Since its inception, the PLCP has led to a significant increase in consultations between professionals representing the interests of businesses and the government. It indicates a growing trend of public engagement in shaping legislation, emphasising transparency and inclusive practices. The process has helped identify the various stakeholders involved, including government ministries, civil society organisations, advocacy groups, industry associations, legal experts, and, most importantly, the general public. The PLCP has formalised the recognition of the need to engage diverse stakeholders in the law-making process to ensure that the proposed legislation is comprehensive, well-informed, and reflective of the needs and concerns of the populace.

To sustain and enhance the current participatory approach, continued efforts are needed to ensure uniform success in fostering a culture of participation and transparency throughout the legislative landscape. This entails evaluating compliance levels within departments and ministries, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing measures to address shortcomings. Public Affairs departments have responded to these changes by evolving in the following ways to ensure better participation by professionals in the policymaking process.

- **Integration:** Integration between various aspects of public policy and public affairs has increased, with companies adopting varied approaches such as differentiation or integration of functions like ESG, CSR, and government affairs.
- **Broadbasing of Interests:** Businesses and professionals have responded to the policymakers' approach of taking integrated views of sectors by focusing on broader consensus-based approaches beyond narrower, company-based interests.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Companies are actively involved in policy advocacy, representing their interests and opinions in alignment with changing policy environments.
- **Strategic Approach:** Companies with successful PA functions strategise based on current developments and engage before the policy is finalised.
- **Emerging Frameworks:** The growing Indian economy, along with the emergence of newer domains, have necessitated new frameworks of collaboration that run on expertise and deep sectoral understanding, leading to the practice of advocacy through traditional networks taking a backseat.
- **Fundamental Shift in Focus Areas:** The traditional role of liaison personnel has expanded and evolved into that of policy professionals, with companies hiring talent to shape public opinion rather than control it. Crisis management has become integral to PA.

- **Reputation Management:** In a globalised environment, evolved corporate practices have prioritised reputation management and sustainable business practices, making stakeholder management crucial.

Despite these advancements, challenges continue to hinder the profession's growth in India. The issues that impede the achievement of the full potential of the public policy domain include the following:

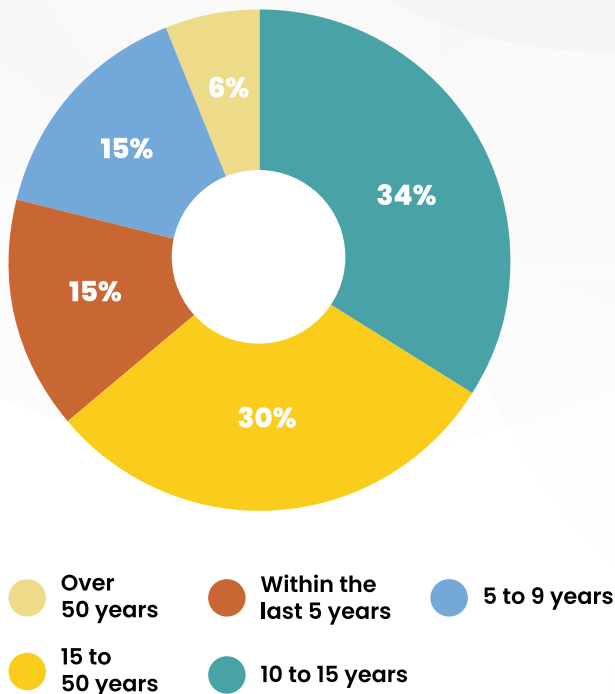
- **Demand and Supply Gap:** The profession has a significant demand-supply gap. The industry needs more skilled talent, and finding, developing, and retaining highly talented professionals is an important issue. This is even more acute for smaller organisations. Public policy institutes and business schools have attempted to address this issue in recent years through tailored courses.
- **Lack of Training Opportunities:** Despite such courses, the Indian PA landscape lacks adequate PA education and training infrastructure. While shorter programmes covering mid-level executives have found purchase with organisations, full-time programmes teaching Public Affairs are still being mainstreamed.
- **Measurement Challenges:** Measuring the outcome of PA activities has been given a low priority, affecting the profession's development. Better standards to measure the efficacy of PA activities and professionals are necessary. Although policy impact, quantitative and qualitative metrics are used, there is no standardised method across the PA industry.

# Survey Findings

## Public Affairs Division: Years of Existence

*How long has the Public Affairs/Government Affairs/Public Policy function existed in your organisation in India?*

### Existence of PA in Organisations



64 per cent respondents have had a Public Affairs division for over ten years.

Thirty-four per cent of respondents reported their PA function being established 10–15 years ago, while 30 per cent have had the function for 15 to 50 years. Fifteen per cent of respondents reported their PA function being established 5–9 years ago, while another 15 per cent reported establishing the department within the last five years. Only 6 per cent of respondents have had a PA function in their organisation for over 50 years.

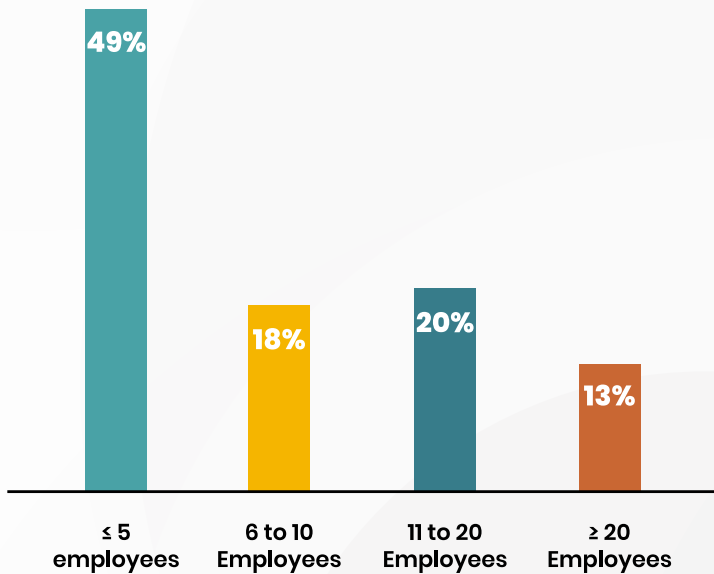
The data suggests a trend where 64 per cent of organisations have established public affairs functions within the last 15 years. This coincides with the introduction of PLCP in 2014 and CSR in 2013, indicating the possibility that the policies have influenced the growth of Public Affairs in India.

A significant portion of companies (83 per cent) conducting business in India for over 50 years anticipate a 20-plus strong PA team in 2024. Most of these companies operate in the FMCG and Manufacturing sectors and have gross annual revenue surpassing Rs 10,000 crores. This suggests that as companies in specific sectors spend more time in India and grow, they recognise the increasing benefits of consultative policymaking.

## Public Affairs Division: Team Size - 2024

*What is the projected size of the overall Public Affairs team within your organisation in India in 2024? (Include only full-time/permanent employees)*

Projected size of PA team in 2024

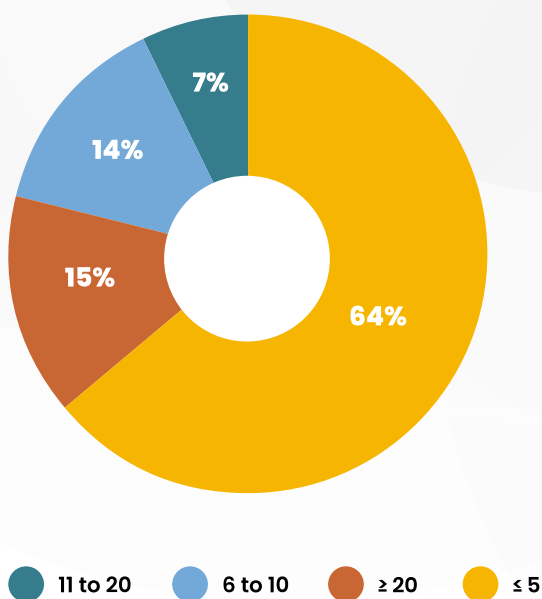


49 per cent respondents to have less than 5 member PA team in 2024.

Forty-nine per cent of the respondents expressed a need for a PA team with less than five employees in 2024. This is slightly lower than the 2022 PAFI report in which 57 per cent of respondents preferred a similar-sized team.

Eighteen per cent indicated a need for 6-10 employees. Among the remaining respondents, 20 per cent preferred 11-20 employees, while 13 per cent said they would have a PA team with more than 20 members.

At least 49 per cent of the teams reported the need for, at most, a five-person team for PA functions. This may suggest a trend in companies towards outsourcing PA activities to specialised firms, particularly outside the core focus areas. The study also found that 75 per cent of the public affairs consultancies surveyed reported seeking more than 10 PA professionals in their team in 2024. The key informants interviewed also reported a strategic decision in companies to keep sensitive work with internal teams while increasingly outsourcing non-core policy issues.



Sixty-four per cent of companies generating annual revenues exceeding Rs 10,000 crores across sectors indicated that they would require fewer than five PA professionals in 2024. Even among smaller companies, 50 per cent have less than five full-time PA professionals.

Companies with revenue exceeding Rs 10,000 crores

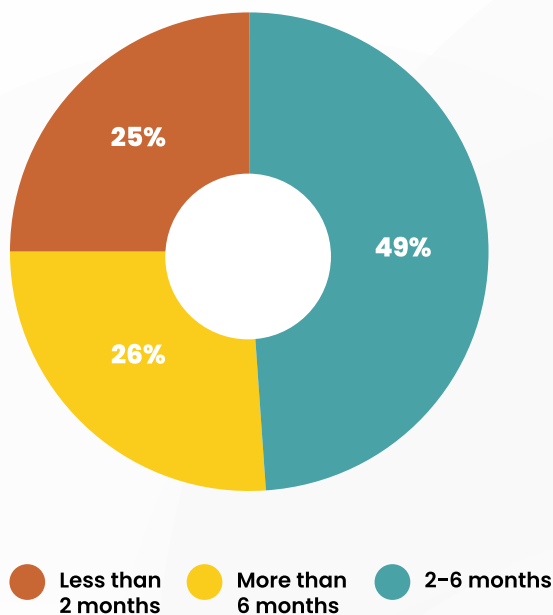




## Recruitment of Public Affairs Professionals: Time Taken and Sources

*On average, how long does it take to fulfil a Public Affairs/Government Affairs/Public Policy position in your organisation?*

Time Taken to Fulfil PA Position



49 per cent  
respondents  
reported taking up  
to six months to fill  
a PA position.

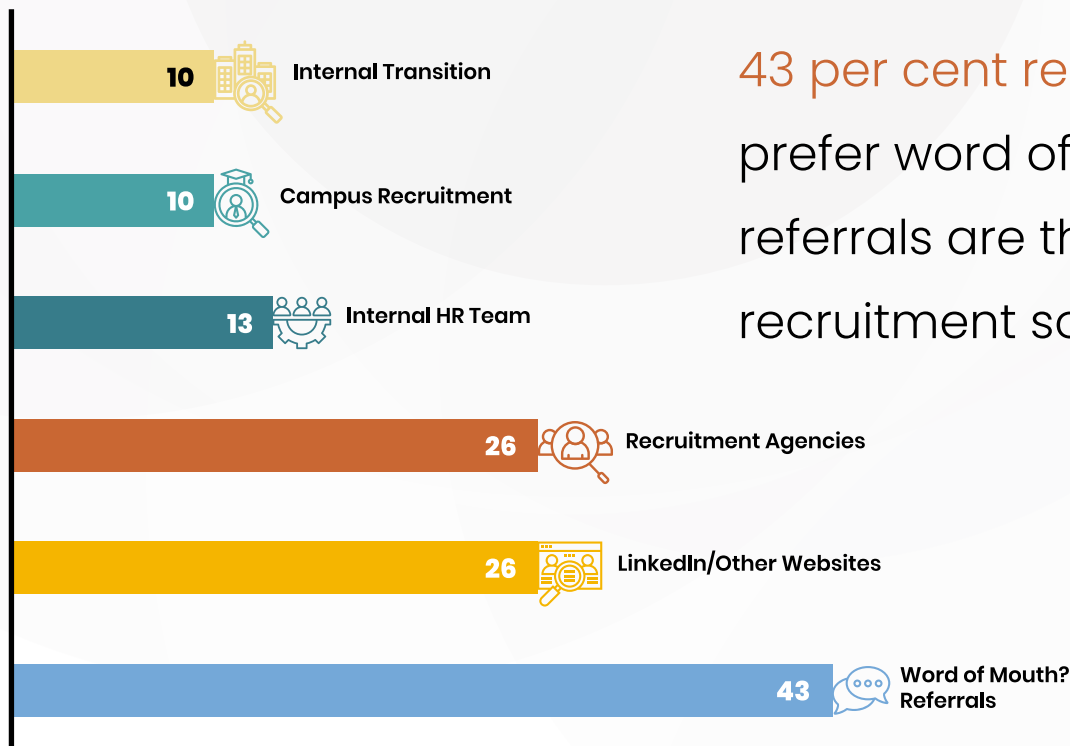
Respondents also reported difficulty finding appropriate talent at all times, leading to long and drawn-out hiring periods. Forty-nine per cent of the surveyed reported taking up to six months to fill a vacancy within their organisation. Twenty-six per cent reported this to take over six months.

While 25 per cent of companies did report taking less than two months to fill a position, 47 per cent of these respondents were from public affairs consultancies, often with broader sectoral practices and requirements, which could make finding the ideal candidate somewhat easier.

As the later sections of the report demonstrate, PA consultancies also use a wide variety of recruitment sources, campus recruitments, LinkedIn/ similar websites to word of mouth, which allows them to access a bigger talent pool, albeit one that may consist of generalists over sector specialists.

## What are the primary channels for recruitment of Public Affairs/Government Affairs/Public Policy professionals?

Preferred Channels for Recruitment (in percentages)



43 per cent respondents prefer word of mouth/referrals are the primary recruitment source

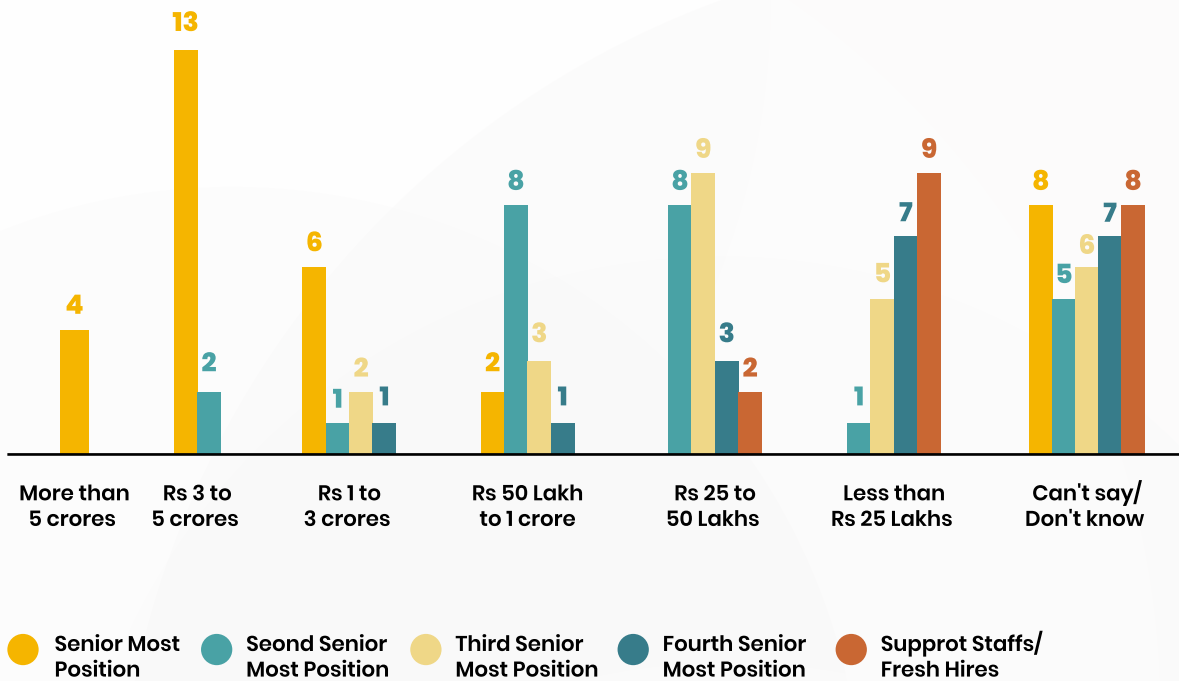
Companies across all sectors expressed a preference for this channel as the first option for hiring. According to 43 per cent of the respondents, word of mouth/referrals are the primary recruitment source for PA teams. This is followed by recruitment agencies and LinkedIn/ other websites (26 per cent each). The previous PAFI report captured a trend of using online professional platforms for recruitment during COVID-19 by 55 per cent of respondents. This practice continues in a post-COVID-19 scenario.

Thirteen per cent of respondents reported direct recruitment by HR departments in their organisations, while 10 per cent each reported a preference for internal transitions and campus recruitment.

More than half of the companies that prefer recruiting from campuses are public affairs consultancies.

# Annual Salary Range for Public Affairs Professionals

Training of PA Professionals – Comparing Companies Headquartered in India and Outside India



The chart above illustrates the range of annual cost to company (CTC – in Rupees) for various positions in the PA department. Regardless of their positions, participants provided the salary scale for different positions in their organisation if they were reasonably sure about it.

Of 33 responses for the seniormost position, 13 respondents said that the annual CTC ranges from Rs 3 to 5 crores, while six reported it in the Rs 1 – 3 crore range.

Of 25 responses for the second seniormost position, eight companies reported their annual CTC ranging between Rs 50 lakhs to 1 crore. In contrast, another eight reported it as being in the Rs 25–50 lakh range. Two respondents reported it in the Rs 3–5 crores bracket.

Nine of 25 respondents for the third seniormost position reported the annual CTC in the Rs 25 and 50 lakhs range. Another three said it ranges between Rs 50 lakh and one crore.

Of 19 responses for the fourth seniormost position, seven respondents reported an annual CTC of less than Rs 25 lakhs, while three reported a range from Rs 50 lakh to 1 crore.

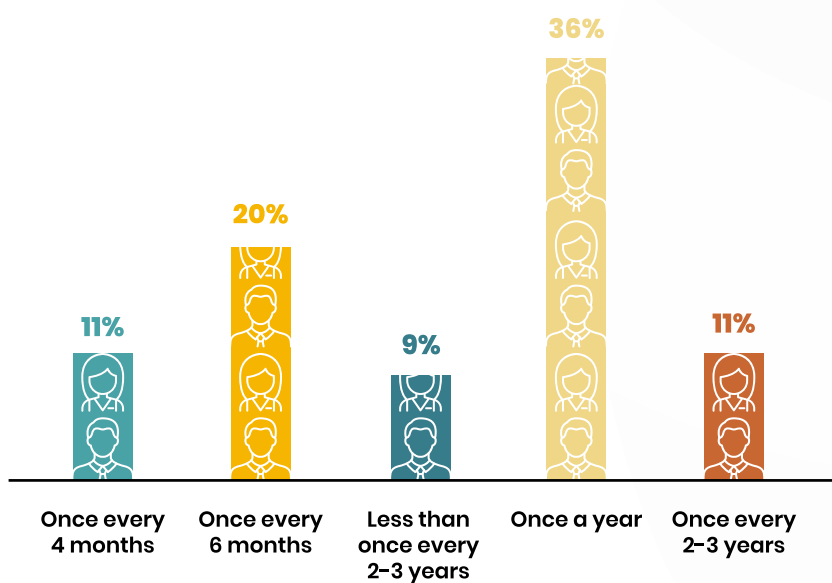


Of 19 responses for supporting staff and fresh hires, nine indicated an annual CTC of less than Rs 25 lakhs, while another three reported a Rs 25 to 50 lakhs.

## Training for Public Affairs Professionals

*How often do Public Affairs professionals in your organisation undertake training and development programmes designed specifically for them?*

Training of PA Professionals

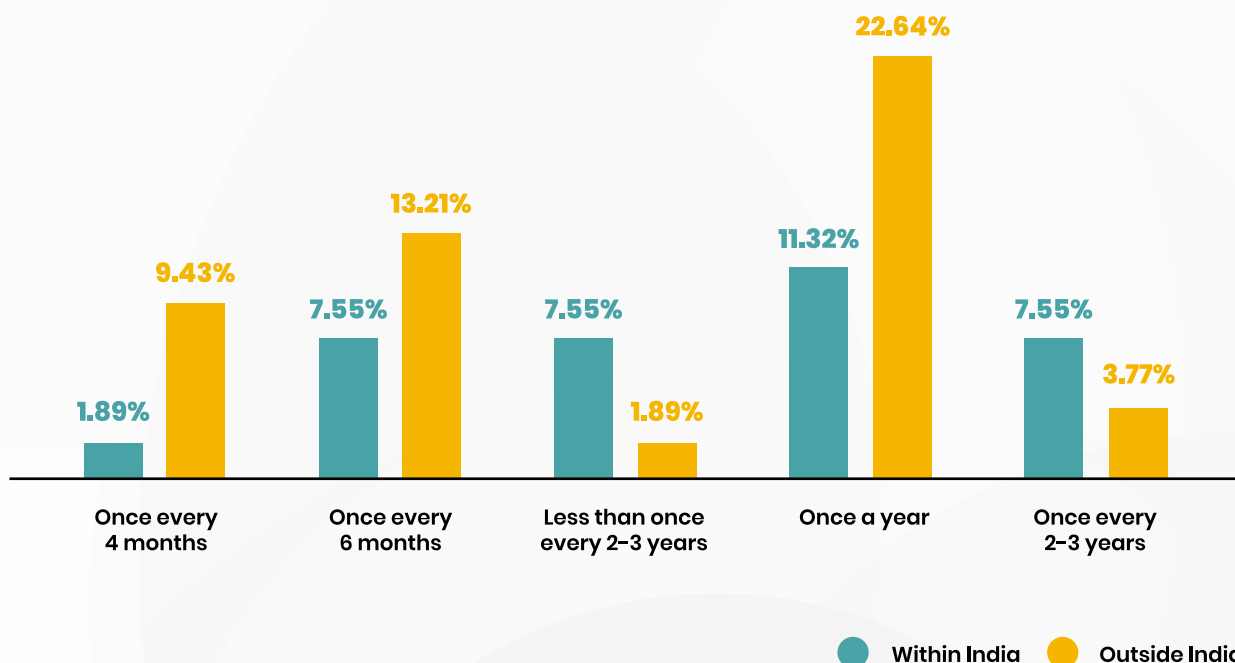


68 per cent companies conduct training for PA professionals at least once a year.

Thirty-six per cent of the companies provide training once a year. Another significant portion (21 per cent) offer training at least once every six months. A smaller percentage (11 per cent) conduct training at least once every quarter or more frequently, whereas 11 per cent do so once every 2-3 years and 9 per cent do so less than once every 2-3 years. Thus, 68 per cent of the companies said that PA professionals undergo specific training at least once a year.

The data indicates that companies headquartered outside India train their employees more frequently than those headquartered in India, as shown in the chart below.

### Training of PA Professionals – Comparing Companies Headquartered in India and Outside India



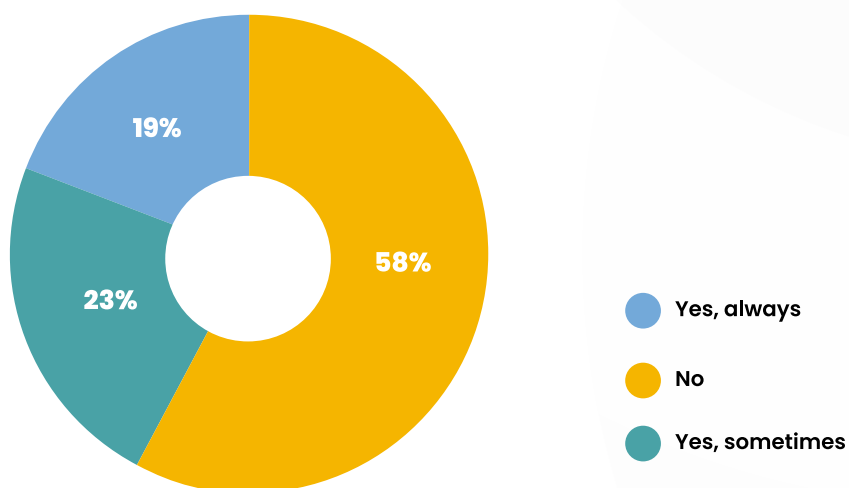
Companies headquartered outside India favour annual training sessions (23 per cent) more than those within India (11 per cent). Companies headquartered outside India also show a higher preference for training once every six months (13.21 per cent) than those within India (7.55 per cent).

# Retention of Public Affairs Employees and its Challenges



*Do you think retention of Public Affairs professionals is challenging for organisations?*

Retention as a Challenge



## In your experience, why do Public Affairs employees leave?

### Reasons for Leaving the Organisation



## 77 per cent respondents perceive retention as a challenge

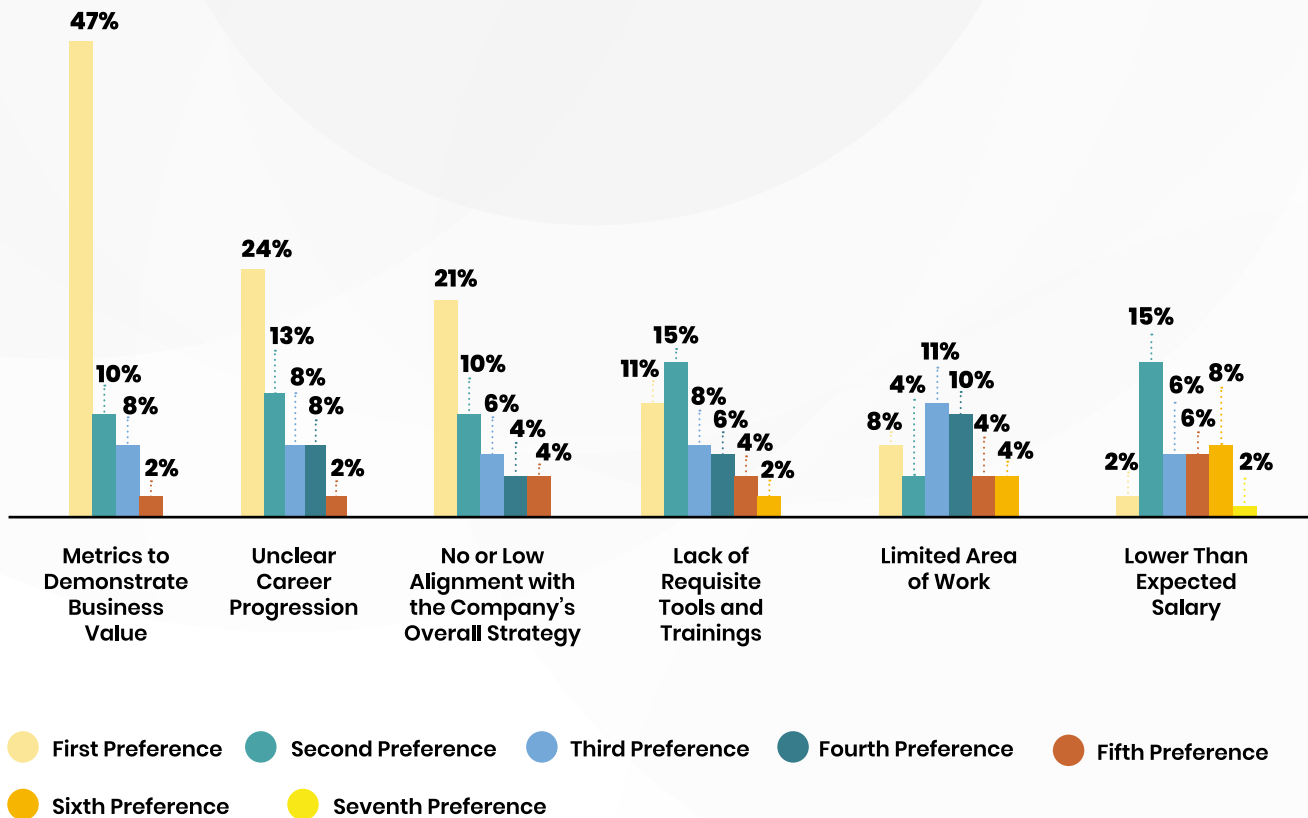
At 77 per cent, the percentage of respondents that find retention of PA professionals a concern has increased from 64 per cent in the 2022 PAFI report. Thirty-six per cent of respondents reported the emergence of better opportunities as the primary reason for this trend, followed by dissatisfaction with compensation (24 per cent) and lack of opportunity and lack of appreciation/recognition (12 per cent).



# Issues Faced by Public Affairs Professionals

*In your understanding, what are the biggest issues faced by Public Affairs professionals at the moment?*

Biggest Challenges that PA in India Faces



Lack of metrics to demonstrate business value concern almost half the respondents.



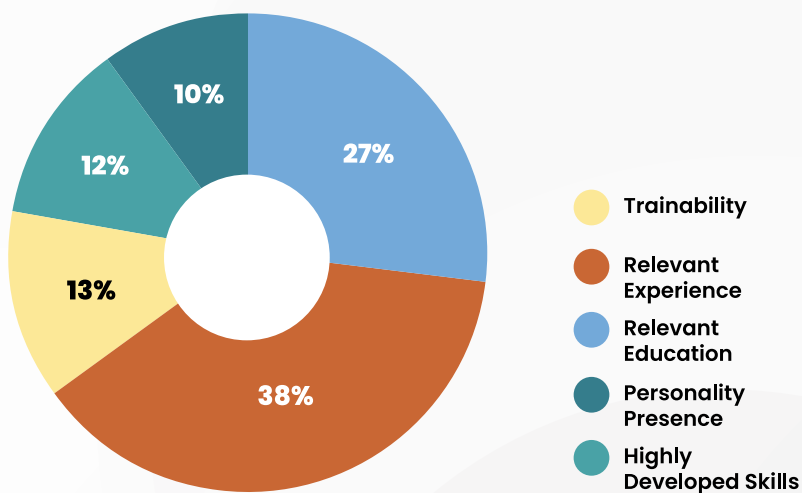


Public Affairs professionals highlight concerns beyond issues related to retention, availability of talent, and training. According to 47 per cent of the respondents, a lack of metrics to demonstrate business value is at the top of the list of issues affecting the field. This is followed by the challenge of unclear career progression, chosen by 24 per cent as their first preference. Twenty-one per cent of respondents found a lack of alignment of the PA function with the company's overall strategy to be the most concerning issue.

## Desired Skillsets in Public Affairs Professionals

*What attributes do you look for when hiring a public affairs professional? Multiple responses allowed.*

Desired Attributes While Hiring

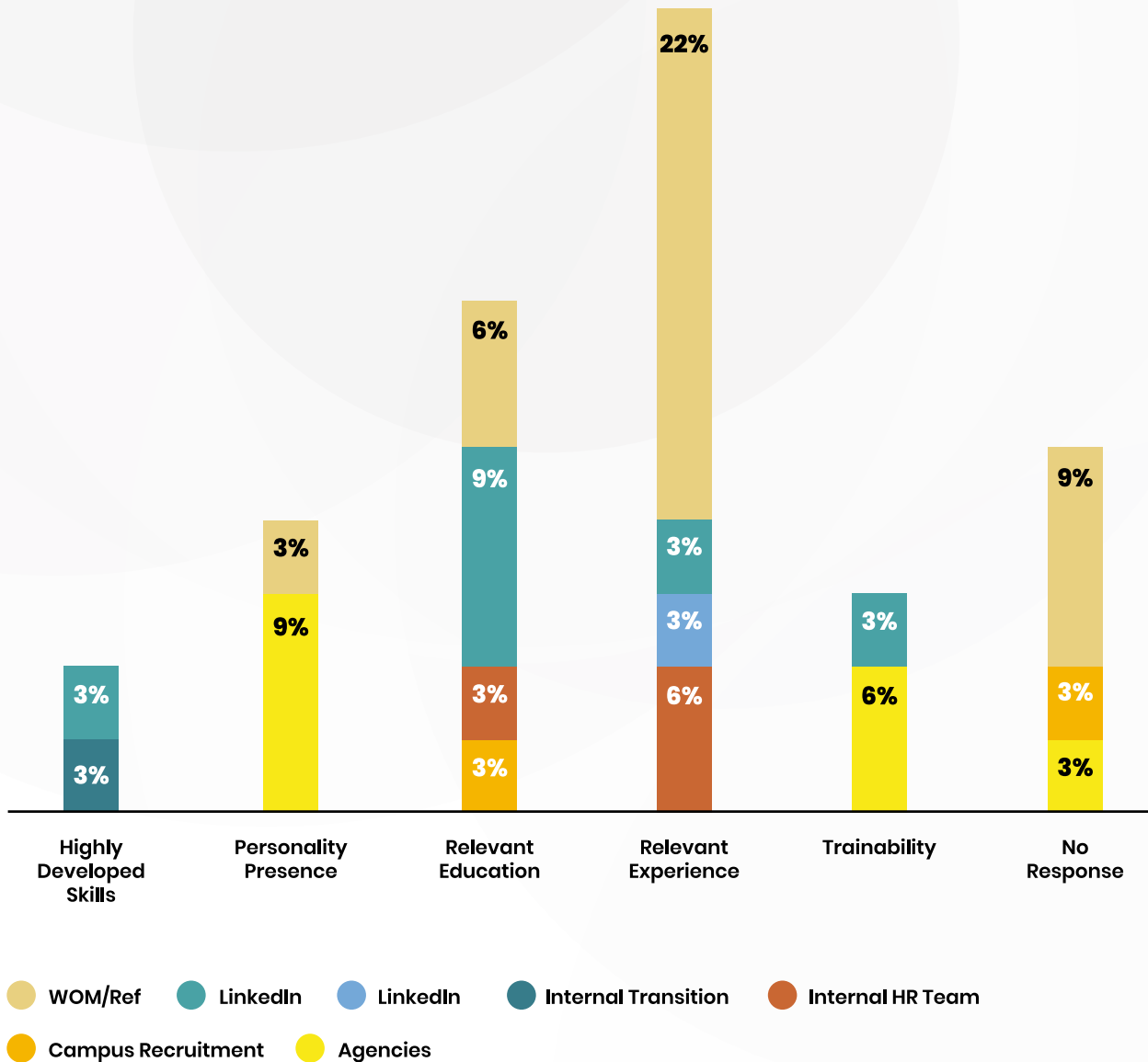


65 per cent pegged relevant experience and education as the most important attributes.

The survey further captures the opinions of respondents on the desired skill set for PA professionals. Relevant experience, at 38 per cent, is the most important attribute, down from 64 per cent in the 2022 PAFI report. This is followed by relevant education at 27 per cent. Together at 65 per cent, these two attributes comprise the most desirable characteristics in professionals.

Other preferences include 13 per cent to the trainability of candidates and 12 per cent to highly developed skills. About 10 per cent of the respondents reported that they look for traits such as personality and presence in making a hiring decision.

## Patterns in Hiring



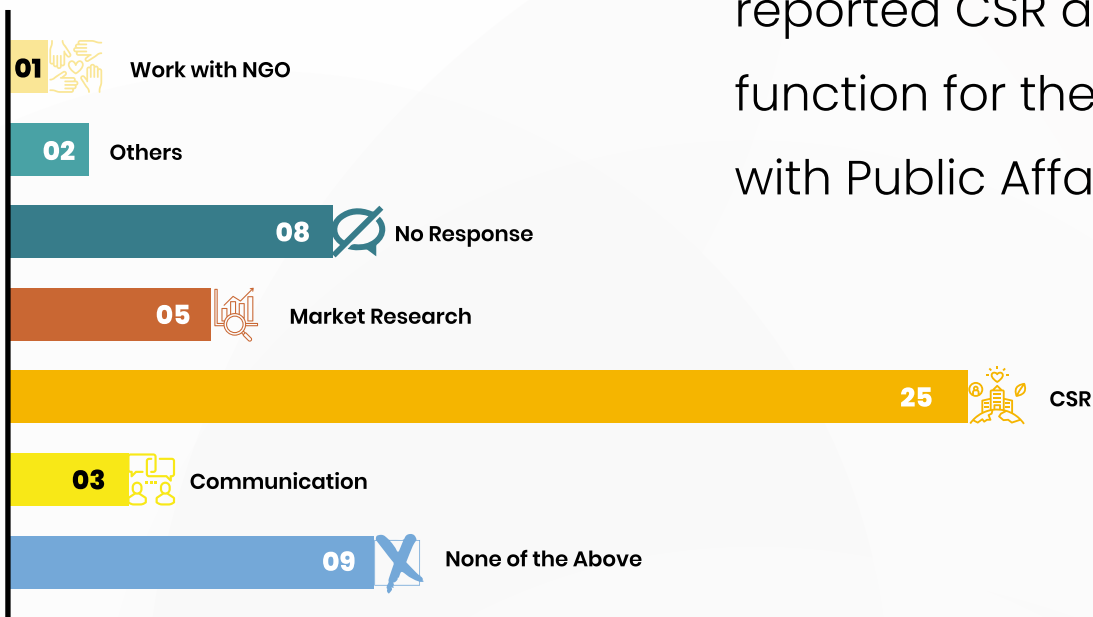
Examining data from respondents on recruitment channels and desired attributes together throws up interesting trends.

For instance, while seeking candidates through word of mouth, relevant experience becomes the most sought-after attribute. Similarly, companies prefer to look at LinkedIn when prioritising relevant education. During campus recruitment, personality and presence become more critical to companies. Key informants helped put this trend in context by pointing out that the hiring practices within the same organisation may vary depending on factors, including the immediacy of hire, the level of hired professionals, and the specific role of the position. In some instances, domain expertise is valued over other attributes, whereas, in other cases, companies may prefer to train the candidate in the specifics of a particular sector.

# Public Affairs and Other Functions

Beyond public affairs, are you responsible for any of the following work areas?  
Multiple responses allowed.

## Other Functions



47 per cent respondents reported CSR as an active function for them along with Public Affairs.

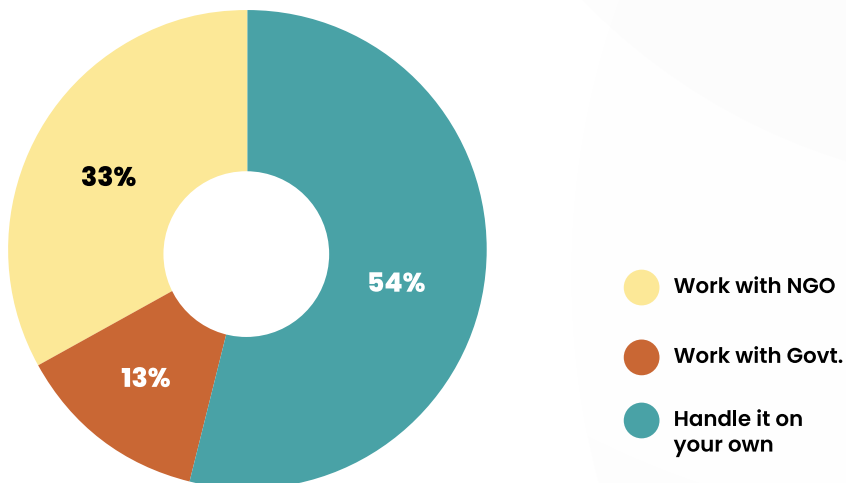
Forty-seven per cent of the respondents informed that CSR was also an active function apart from Public Affairs. Other functions, such as communications, market research and regulatory affairs, were in fewer numbers.





*What agencies do you use to execute CSR initiatives in your company?  
Multiple responses allowed.*

CSR Function (N = 52)

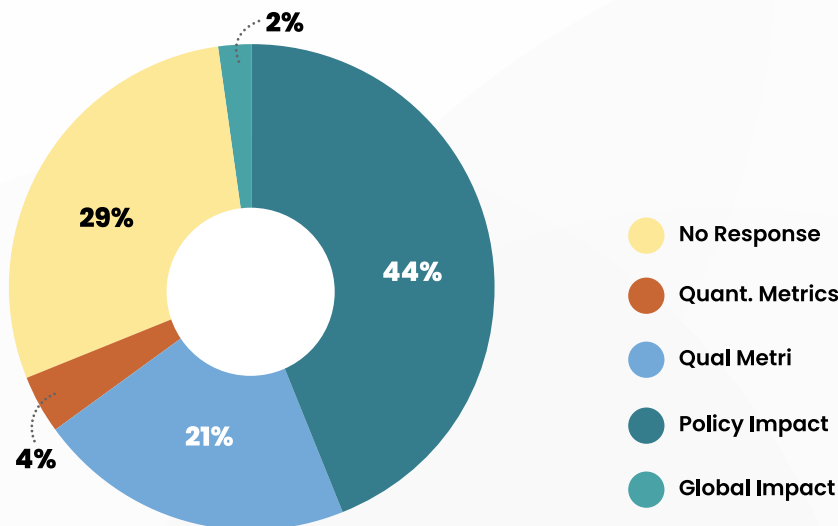


Fifty-four per cent of those working on CSR and Public Affairs reported handling the function in-house, while a third collaborated with NGOs. Thirteen per cent reported working with the government on CSR.

# Measuring the Impact of Public Affairs

*How does your organisation measure the success or impact of its Public Affairs initiatives? Multiple responses allowed.*

Measuring the Success of PA Initiatives (N=52)



Policy impact emerged as the top metric for measuring success in PA professionals' work, with 44 per cent of respondents choosing it.

The rest of the responses indicate some interesting trends that merit further study. Twenty-one per cent of respondents preferred qualitative metrics like stakeholder feedback, reputation surveys, and case studies as their measure of success. In contrast, only four per cent indicated using quantitative metrics like media analytics and website data.

This may indicate businesses taking a more hands-on and proactive approach by depending not just on the analysis of data but on impact through knowledge-based interactions as a measure of success.

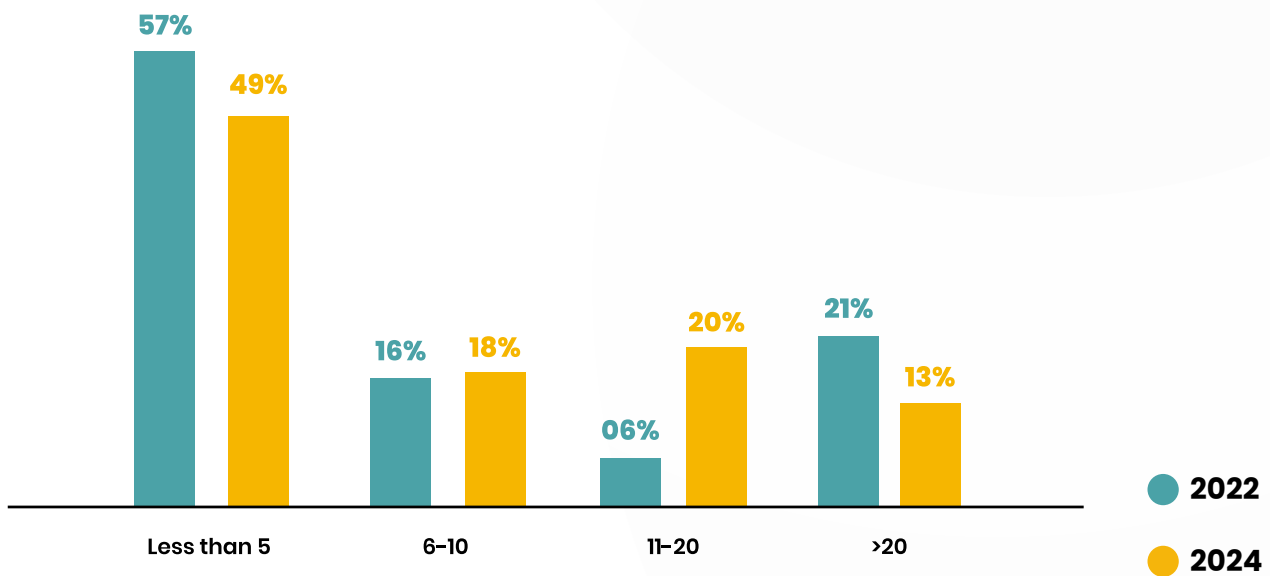
21 per cent respondents use qualitative metrics to measure success; 4 per cent prefer quantitative metrics.

However, 29 per cent of respondents did not answer the question about measuring success. In addressing this aspect, key informant interviews emphasised the need to develop clearly defined frameworks that can be deployed across the sector to measure impact.

# Trends and Changes\*

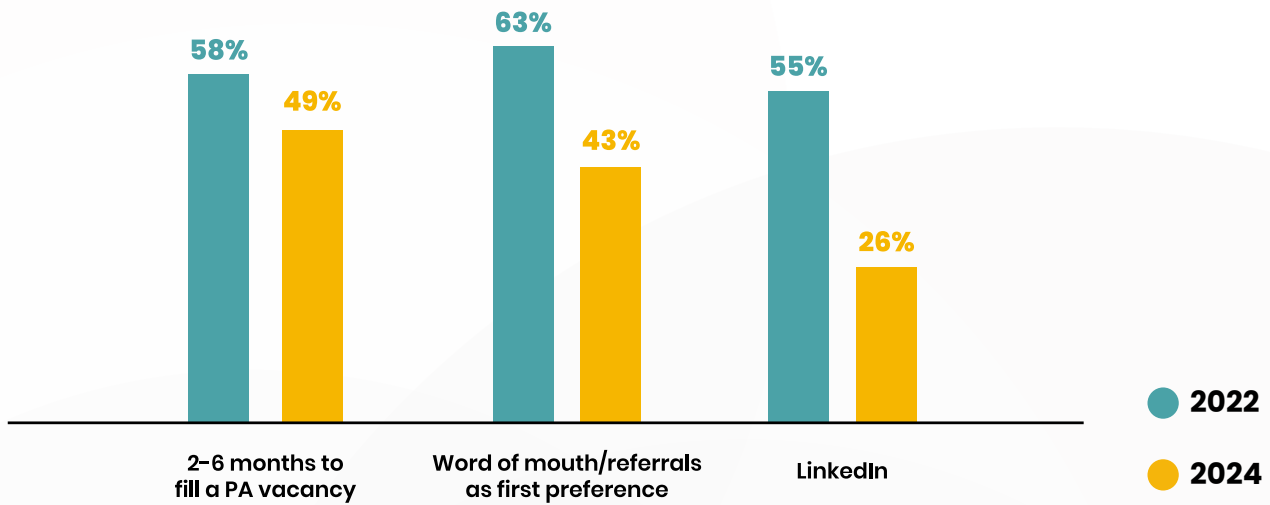


## Employee size



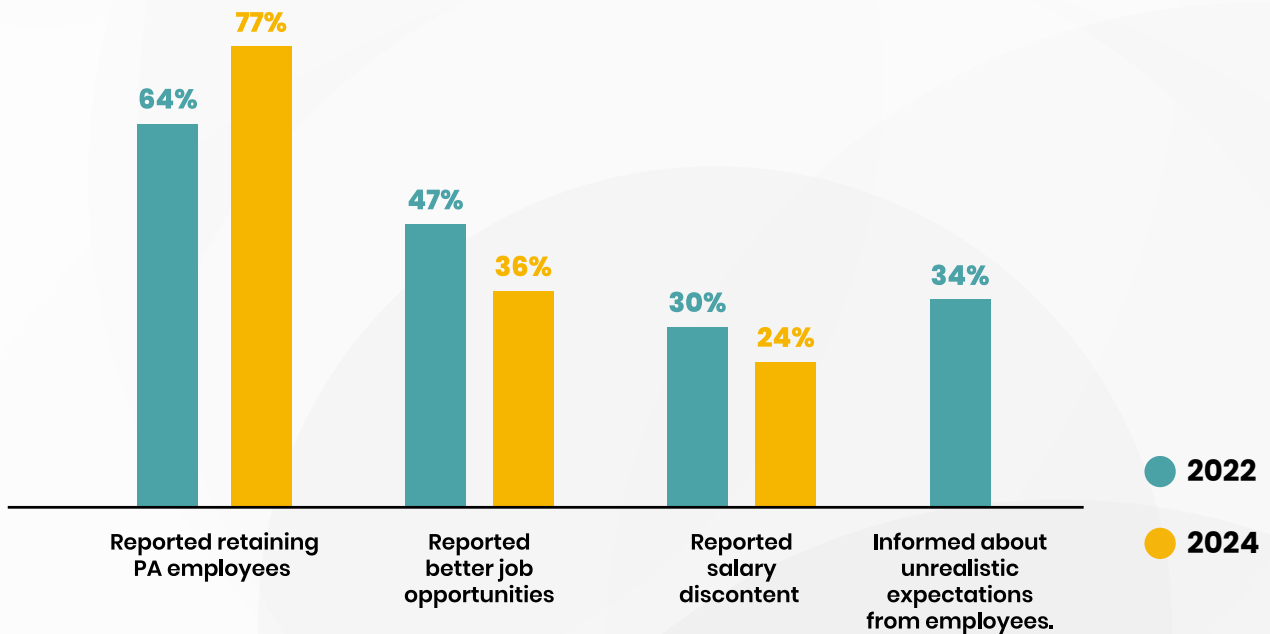
The high prevalence (**49%**) of companies seeking fewer than 5 Public Affairs (**PA**) professionals suggests a potential trend towards outsourcing PA activities, especially outside their core focus areas, validated by **75%** of public affairs consultancies planning to have more than **11** PA professionals in their team by 2024.

## Recruitment



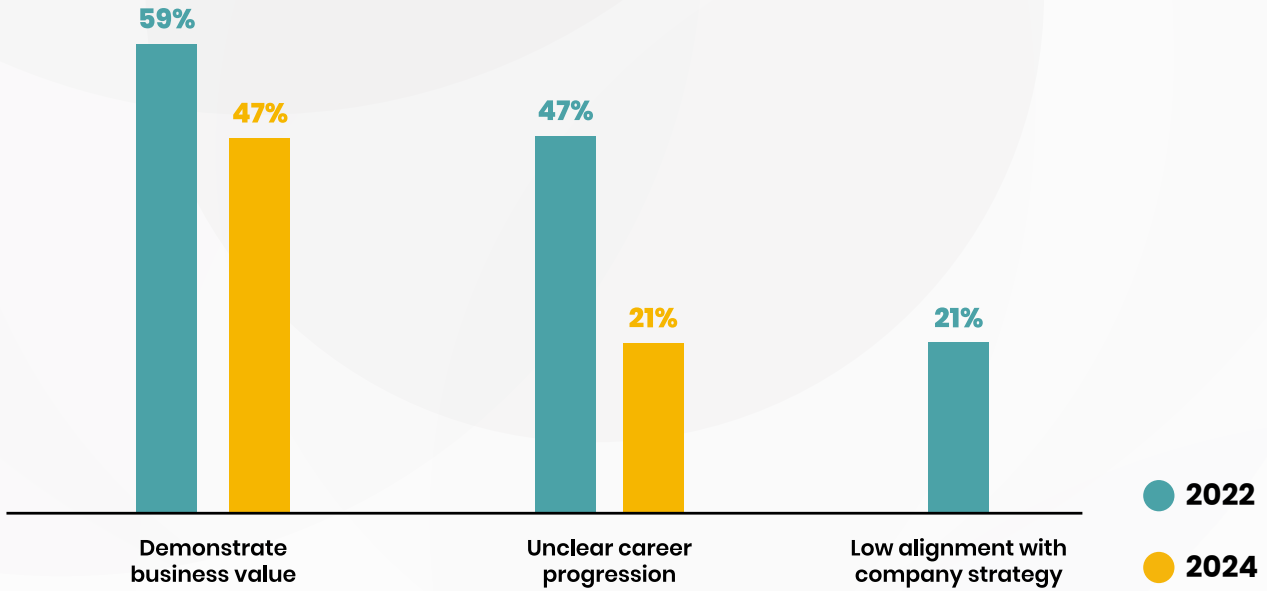
Online platforms like LinkedIn are still in use, but the high percentage seen earlier may be due to pandemic lockdowns. Restricted gatherings may have induced companies to try out other measures.

## Retention



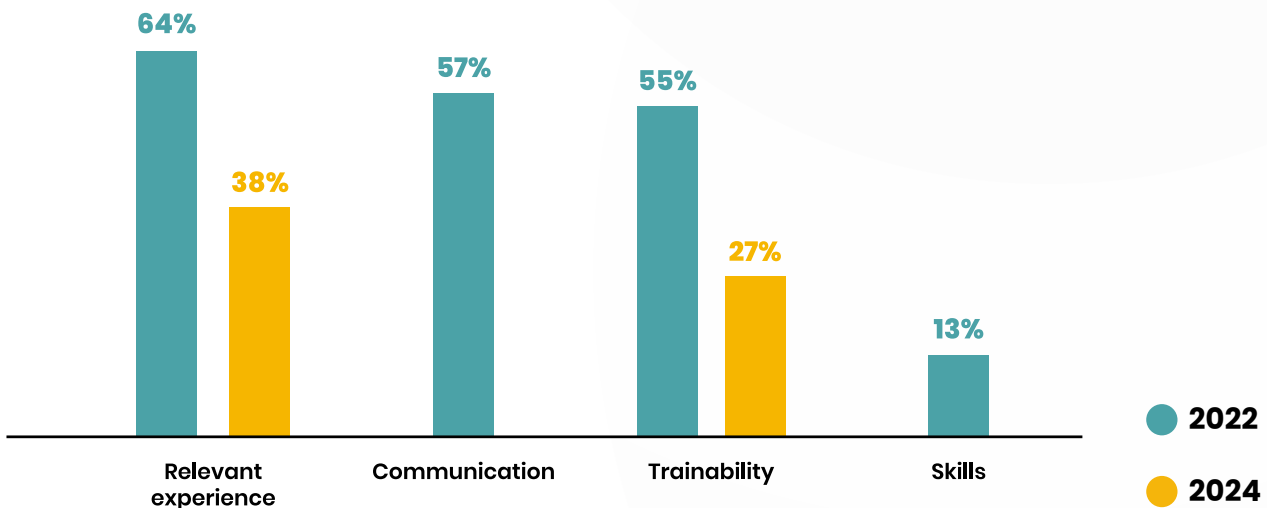
Better job opportunities highlight a dynamic industry.

## Professional Challenges



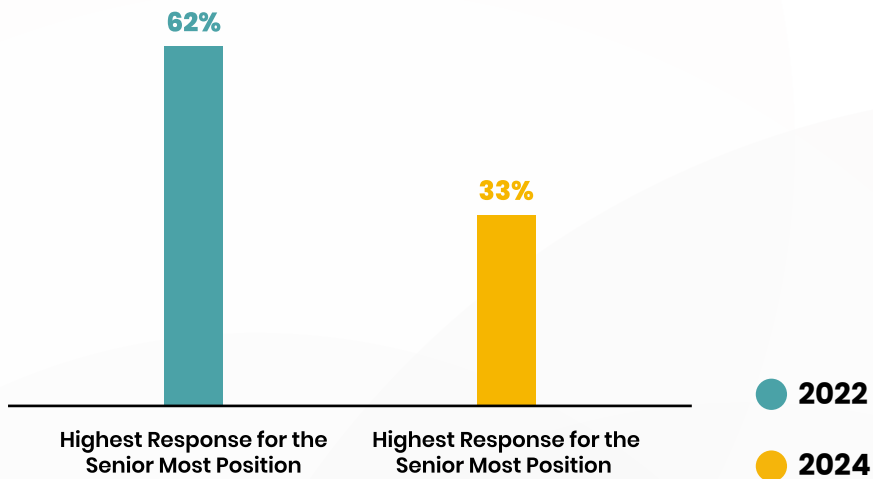
**32%** of companies identifying Lack of Tools/Metrics as the most significant challenge have been operating in India for **15-50** years or more, indicating a potential long-standing struggle in developing metrics, possibly due to a limited understanding of the profession's role.

## Desired Attributes



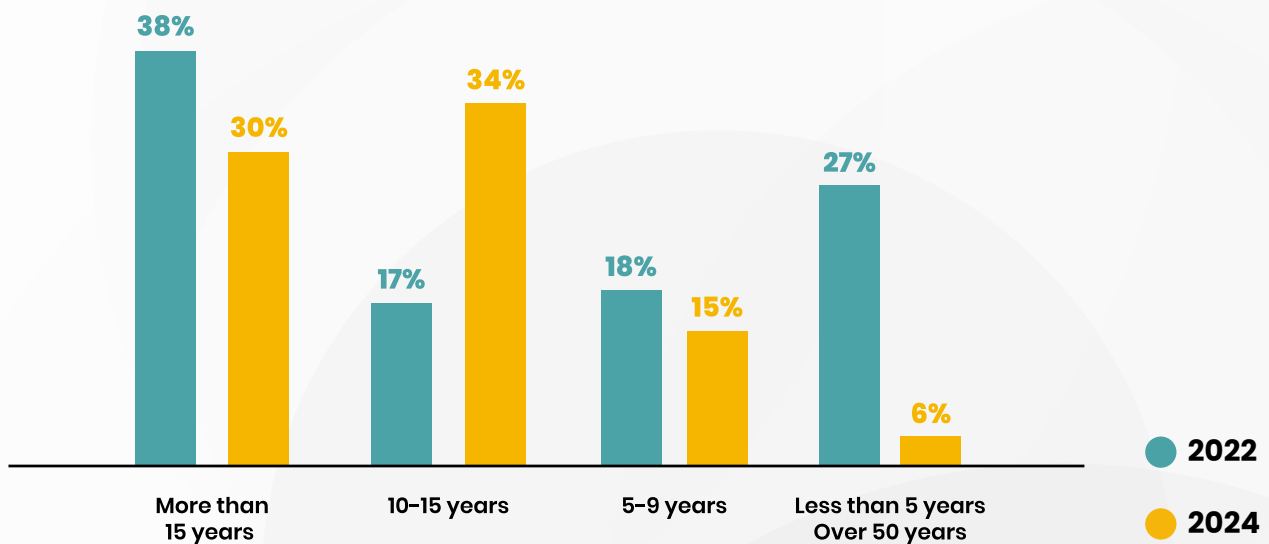


## Salary



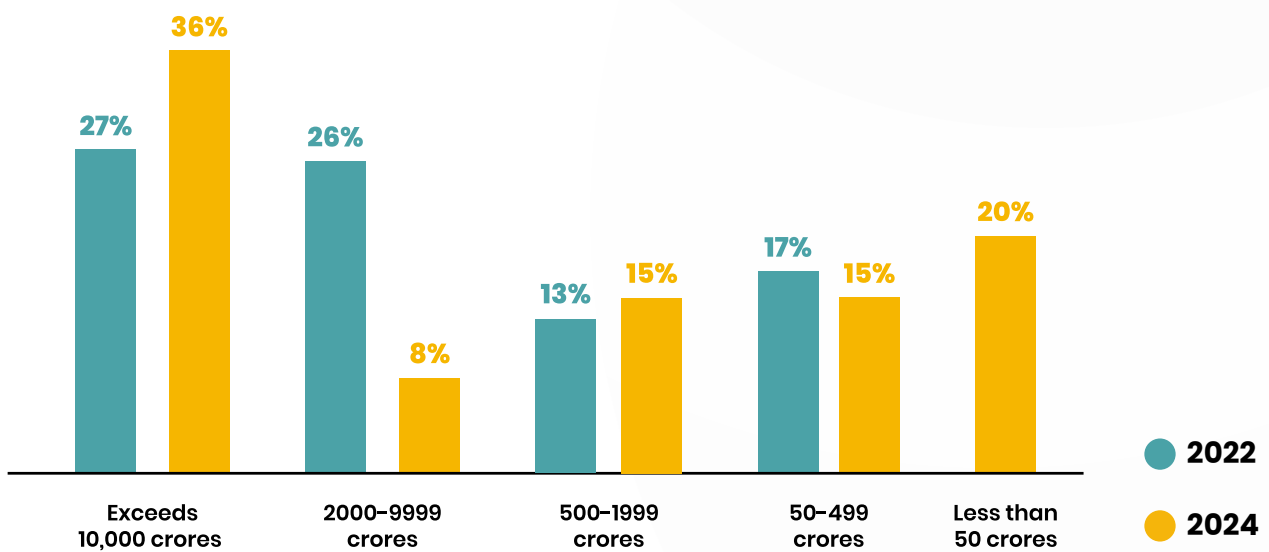
The wide range in each experience band depicts a need for more standardised practice in team structure and seniority of members. Some qualitative responses pointed out that Public Affairs head positions are filled in a company, and these heads may choose to have a team structured around their work. Even big MNCs tend to have small PA team sizes unless they are consultancies.

## Existence of PA Department

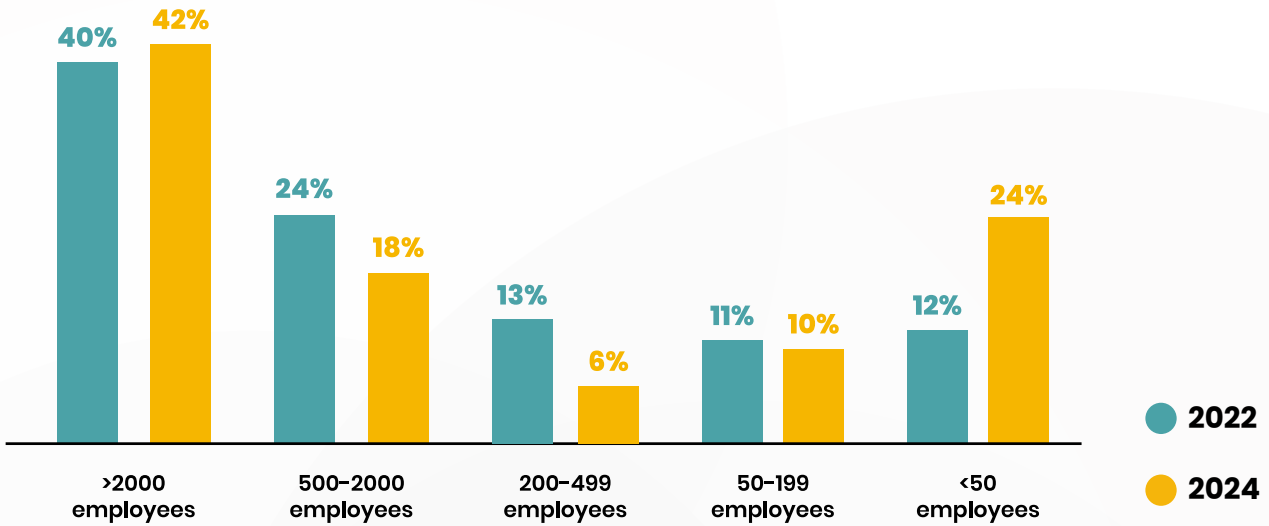




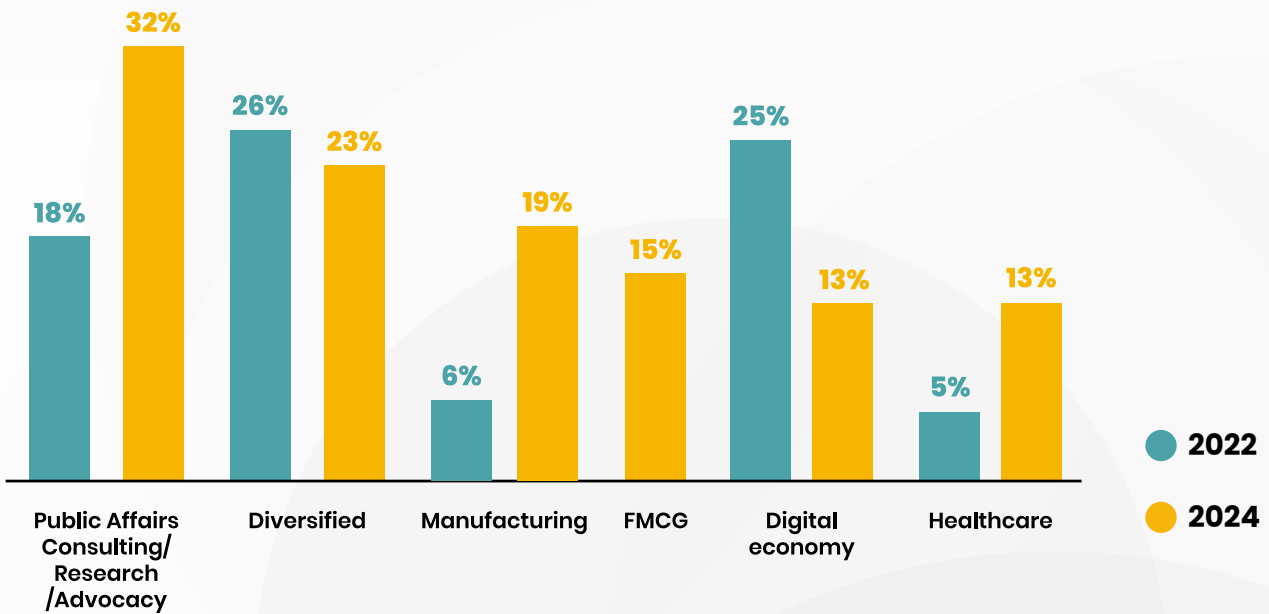
## Revenue Base



## Employee Base



## Sectoral Background



# Study Design



This study uses a mixed methods approach, incorporating quantitative and qualitative tools to arrive at the findings.



## Target Group

Members and non-members of PAFI (Public Affairs Forum of India)



## Methodology and Tools

- Quantitative survey using a structured questionnaire.
- Follow-up qualitative in-depth interviews.



## Data Collection

Face-to-face and Online modes for both quantitative and qualitative methods.



## Survey Method

- **Offline method** – Surveyors handed over the questionnaire to the respondents at two events organised by PAFI. Surveyors also interviewed the respondents in person for in-depth interviews.
- **Online method** – An online survey link was shared with respondents. The majority of in-depth interviews were conducted online by interviewers.

---

The quantitative survey using a structured questionnaire received 54 responses. Respondents were explained the purpose of the study and the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. The questionnaire consisted of 18 questions covering various aspects such as the sector, location of headquarters, and employee base size of the respondents' organisations. It also inquired about how long they had been present in India and the existence of PA functions in their organisations. Other areas of interest included the projected size of PA teams in the organisations, time taken to fill a position, primary recruitment channels, and the annual salary range for Public Affairs professionals. The survey explored challenges in retaining PA professionals, current issues and challenges in PA departments, the desired impact expected from companies' PA departments and how they are measured, and the ideal attributes businesses look for in Public Affairs professionals. The data was collected between 1 March 2024 and 1 April 2024, with an average response time of approximately 10 minutes.

Following the conclusion of the survey, the data was analysed and interpreted to draw findings, which are discussed in the sections above. The quantitative survey revealed important themes further explored in the follow-up qualitative interviews with senior public policy professionals as key informants. The key themes that emerged from the survey include the evolution of PA in India, team size and functions, challenges in measuring the impact of Public Affairs efforts, and talent availability in the space. The entire process was conducted with strict confidentiality, ensuring no identities of respondents or identifying information of their respective companies were used.

# Respondent Profile



## Sectoral Background

Public Affairs Consulting / Research / Advisory/Advocacy	<b>28%</b>
Diversified	<b>26%</b>
Manufacturing	<b>17%</b>
Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)	<b>13%</b>
Digital Economy (IT/Telecom/Media)	<b>20%</b>
Healthcare	<b>17%</b>
Agriculture and Food Processing	<b>7%</b>
Alcohol / Tobacco	<b>1%</b>
Others	<b>11%</b>

## Organisational Headquarters

Outside India	<b>57%</b>
Within India	<b>43%</b>

## Annual Revenue

Annual Gross Revenue	Percentage of the Respondents
Less than Rs. 50 crores	<b>15%</b>
Rs. 50 crores – 499 crores	<b>11%</b>
Rs. 500 crores - 1,999 crores	<b>11%</b>
Rs. 2000 crores - 9,999 crores	<b>6%</b>
Rs. 10,000 crores	<b>2%</b>
More than Rs. 10,000 crores	<b>2%</b>

## Employee Base

≤50 Employees	<b>25%</b>
50 to 199 Employees	<b>10%</b>
200 to 499 Employees	<b>2%</b>
500 to 2000 Employees	<b>17%</b>
>2000 Employees	<b>38%</b>



## Tenure of Business Operations in India

Less than 5 years	<b>3.5%</b>
5-9 years	<b>3.5%</b>
10-15 years	<b>13%</b>
15-50 years	<b>59%</b>
More than 50 years	<b>21%</b>



# About Public Affairs Forum of India

Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI) is at the forefront of driving ethical and respectful dialogue and interaction amongst stakeholders and serves as a professional resource for public affairs practitioners.

PAFI aims to provide knowledge and context to aid informed decision-making on policy and practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity, and truth. PAFI members pledge to not knowingly disseminate false or misleading information to the government and civil society.

## The objectives of PAFI and its members include the following.



**Aligning business, society, and government** on long-term priorities.



**Fostering trust** through ethical and respectful interaction across all the stakeholders.



**Collaboratively developing** smart and relevant policies, proposals and processes that foster innovation.



Rely on **evidence-based research** and promote capacity building to navigate change within the context and complexity of India.

The affairs of PAFI are run by the Managing Committee led by the President. The Steering Committee, comprising of Founding Members and past presidents, guide the Managing Committee. The PAFI Secretariat coordinates between the office-bearers, the Managing Committee and the Steering Committee and carries out the day-to-day work of the organisation as mandated.

Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI) is registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 and is the only organised forum in the country with representatives from large and medium-sized transnational Indian and foreign companies in the field of Public Affairs.

# About Indian School of Public Policy

The Indian School of Public Policy (ISPP) is a leading higher education institute dedicated to excellence in public policy education and practice for “creating next-gen policy leaders for rising India”. Located in Delhi, the heart of policymaking, ISPP was established in 2018 to meet the growing demand for skilled professionals in the emerging field of public policy. Education at ISPP is based on the S-P-E-L-L framework: Skills (S), Political Economy (P), Ethics (E), Leadership (L), and Lifelong Learning (L). The institute offers a one-year postgraduate programme in Policy, Design and Management and short-term executive courses. With a faculty of seasoned experts and practitioners, ISPP is committed to shaping the next generation of leaders and policymakers through its innovative curriculum, research initiatives, and strategic partnerships across samaaj, sarkaar, and bazaar to address India’s enduring policy and governance challenges. **In this pursuit, we are currently running the following programmes:**

## Thus far, we have:

- (i) A one-year programme on Public Policy, Design and Management, with 170 alumni over 4 batches and 48 Scholars in the current fifth batch.
- (ii) A four-month largely online programme in Indic languages, called LokNeeti, with 100+ alumni from over 5 batches with admissions ongoing for the sixth batch.
- (iii) An Executive Education programme, where we have trained 1500+ bureaucrats and CXOs from multiple ministries and organisations.
- (iv) An online course with L&T EduTech, where ISPP has delivered 21 hours of content for ‘Public Policy for Young Professionals’.
- (v) We recently curated courses on ‘Fundamentals of Public Policy’ and ‘Public Policy Writing’ for the iGOT Karmayogi platform, a comprehensive online platform that guides individual civil service officials in their capacity-building journey.
- (vi) ISPP also has research, training and knowledge partnerships with the NITI Aayog and Bihar Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (BIPARD).

ISPP takes pride in being India’s first policy school in India, to have a dedicated case centre for public policy cases. Developed on the lines of case centres in business and law schools, ISPP’s Case Study Centre (CSC) houses teaching cases based on Indian policy initiatives, written in an accessible and engaging manner for specialist and non-specialist audiences. This includes civil servants, corporate clients, and budding public policy professionals. Since October 2022, the CSC team has been working closely with the Capacity Building Commission of the Government of India to develop cutting-edge public policy cases to train civil servants. By converting the dilemmas and challenges faced by policymakers into teaching-learning materials, the Centre aims to provide learners with a rich repository of real-life policy problems they can analyse, solve and learn from.





Public Affairs Forum of India

Correspondence Address

---

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS FORUM OF INDIA**

Care IAMAI - 232-B, Ground Floor,

Okhla Industrial Estate - Phase III, New Delhi - 110020

**WWW.PAFI.IN**