



GLOBAL EDITION

**CHIEF
COMMUNICATIONS
OFFICER
TURNOVER STUDY**

2025



WWW.CASA-PARTNERS.COM

ABOUT CASA

CASA (the Corporate Affairs Search Alliance) is the group of like-minded Corporate Affairs search firms which comes together in support of clients and candidates. Each CASA member is the number one or number two Corporate Affairs and Communications specialist search firm in their home market. We have very similar values, ethics and high professional standards, and we are friends who enjoy working together.

CASA members have businesses which are structured in different ways and are independent. What brings us together is our commitment to excellence in Corporate Affairs search, and the great outcomes we provide for those we work with.

All CASA member firms are dedicated to the promise of **'Making Corporate Affairs Better'** and as the name suggests, our vision is for CASA to be **'the home of Corporate Affairs'** for leaders of the profession, wherever in the world they are.

CASA MEMBERS



Addison (Ireland)
addison.ie



PARTNERS

Ithaca Partners (UK)
ithacapartners.co.uk



Exeter Search (France)
exetersearch.com



Patino Associates (US)
patinoassociates.com



Herman Rutgers Executive &
Interim Search (Netherlands)
hermanrutgers.nl



PRCC (Germany & the
Dach region)
prcc-personal.de

INTRODUCTION

The Corporate Affairs Search Alliance (CASA) has been tracking the changes amongst the world's top Chief Communications Officers, in its CCO Turnover Study. Reviewing 2024, businesses around the world have endured increasing degrees of volatility instigated by:

- political upheaval, including dramatic election results, and the resulting regulatory shifts of new leadership philosophies in government
- technological transformation driven largely by the rapid adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- stakeholder unrest, including the resurgence of activist investors and the rise of Gen Z employee activism

Companies recognize the value of effective communication in building and maintaining

a strong reputation in order to achieve business objectives. The CCO is responsible for communicating with a wide range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, investors, and the media. They also play a key role in managing crises and protecting the company's reputation. As a result, the position of Chief Communications Officer (or Chief Corporate Affairs Officer) has maintained its importance in counseling, guiding and educating senior leaders as they navigate these choppy waters together.

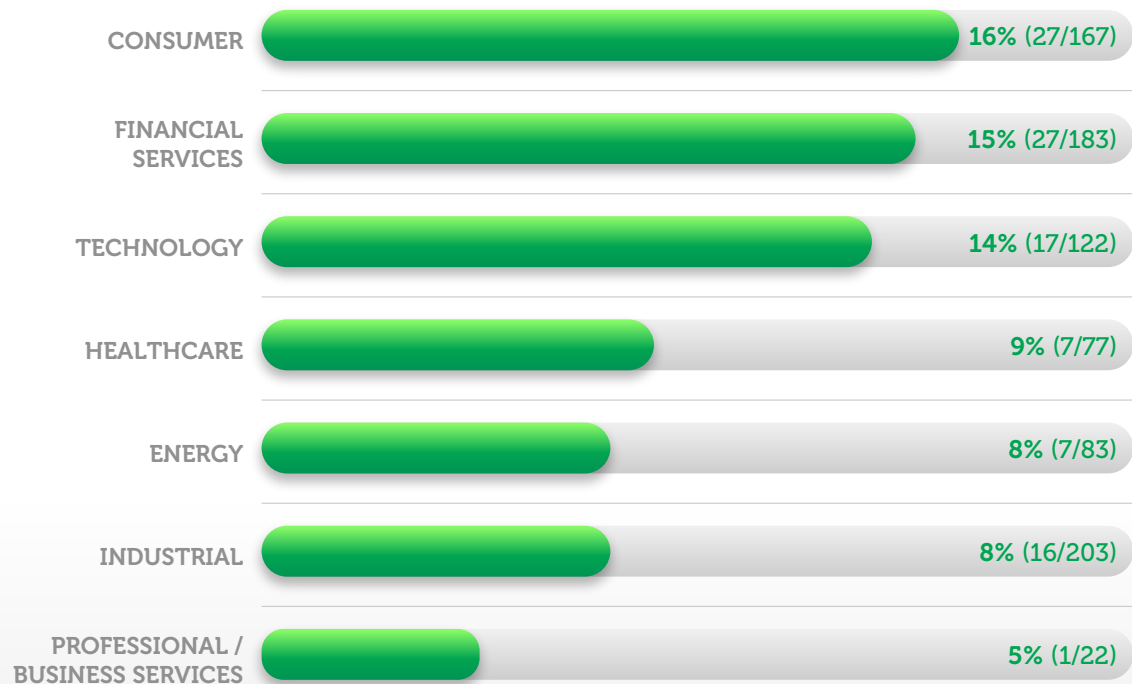
The 2025 Global CCO Turnover Study examines the latest trends in CCO turnover, including the types of companies that are most likely to experience CCO turnover, and the characteristics held by candidates that are most attractive to CEOs hiring for the role.

KEY FINDINGS

The Global Turnover Rate for Chief Communications Officers in 2024 was 11.7%.

This is inline with the CEO turnover in comparable markets at 11.0%. (credit - Russell Reynolds Global CEO Turnover Index). The rates were dramatically different in the U.S. (10.5%) versus Europe (17.0%) Global CCO Turnover was highest in Consumer (16%), Financial Services (15%) and Technology (14%) industries.

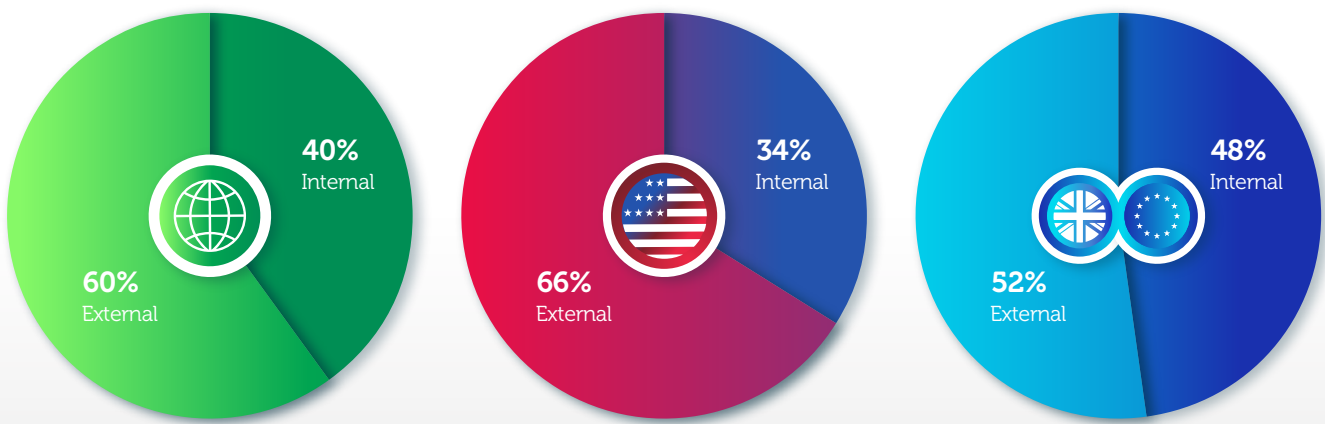
Global CCO Turnover



60% of CCO positions filled in 2024 were done so with candidates from outside of the company. External hires were far more common in the US in 2024 (66%). There was greater balance between external and internal hires in Europe (52% / 48%).

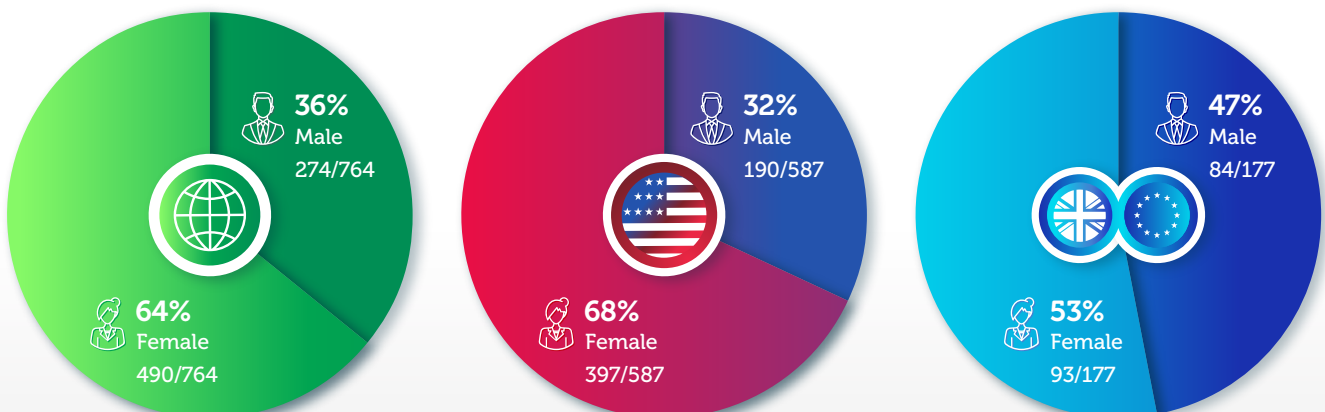
However, both of these numbers are far in excess of the 10-year averages for CEOs (22.4% of positions filled externally) and CFOs (38.1% of positions filled externally).

External vs. Internal Hires



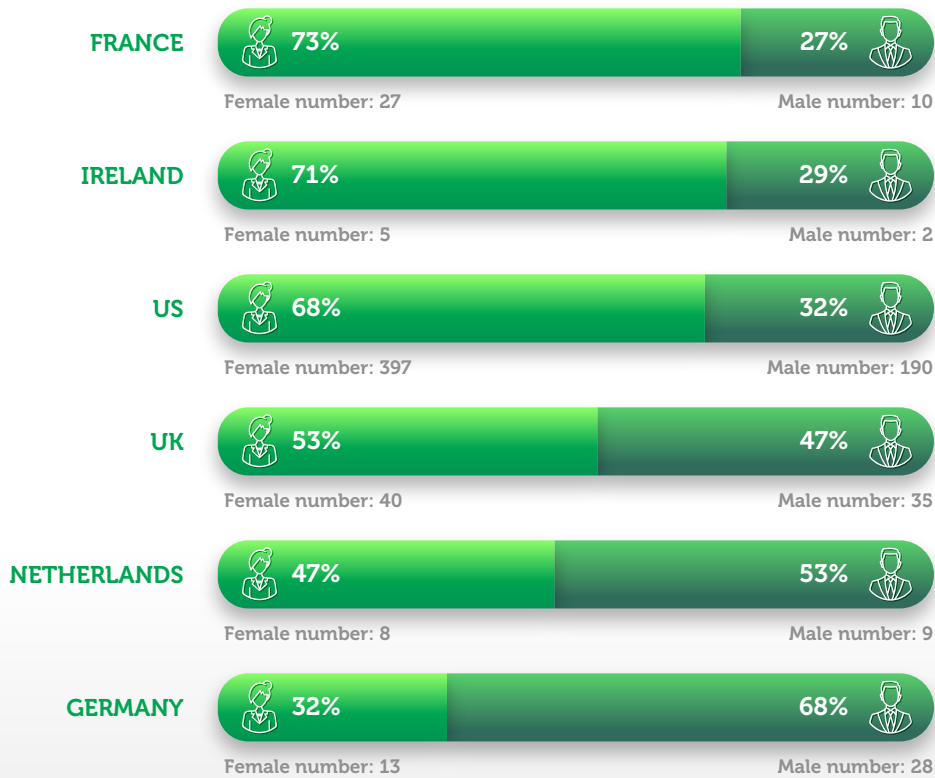
Women currently hold 64% of CCO roles globally, but the data shows a significant discrepancy between the U.S. and European markets.

CCO roles held by gender



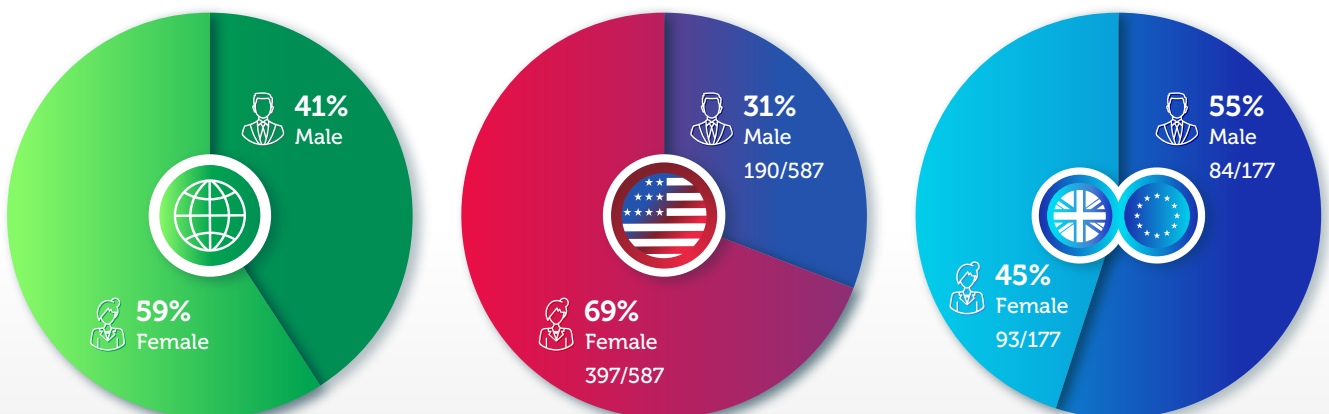
Women represent a majority of CCOs in top companies in 5 out of 7 global markets with strong numbers and clear majorities in France and the US. However, Germany has the least representation among women CCOs, with men making up two-thirds of top company CCOs.

CCO Gender Distribution by Country



Of the CCO roles filled globally in 2024, 59% were filled by a female candidate. However, women were more than twice as likely to be filling US CCO roles (69%), while men were slightly more likely to fill the CCO role in 2024 (55% male / 45% female) across Europe.

CCO roles filled by gender



WHY ARE CCO ROLES MORE LIKELY TO BE FILLED EXTERNALLY?

While the expectations for the CCO position and the Communications/Corporate Affairs function have risen dramatically over the past several years, the development of rising stars within the function has not kept pace. In part this reflects the smaller size of communications relative to other corporate functions, which results in a smaller talent pool. At best, development is inconsistent and underinvested in some companies and, at worst, completely ignored.

At the moment of turnover, many companies choose to look outside for executive talent because this lack of talent underinvestment has created a real (or perceived) gap in skills, leadership and credibility. While companies sometimes involve internal candidates in the search process, most internal candidates report that they did not feel that their candidacy was taken seriously. As seen in the data, a percentage of these disenfranchised candidates end up leaving their company, in many cases taking a CCO-level role in another organization.

The use of an external search firm provides the opportunity for an unbiased assessor to determine what, if any, gaps may exist between an internal candidate and external candidates. In CASA-member firms, we treat the internal candidates equally to the external candidates. We are able to provide transparent feedback to the internal candidate about not only where their gaps may lie, but how to address them.

A GENDER GAP?

Women make up nearly two-thirds of CCOs at top global companies. However, the differential in data at a market level was distinctive, with women holding 69% of the CCO positions in the U.S., but a more balanced equity in Europe with 53% of CCOs being female. We believe the level of maturation of social change from market to market is a significant driver of the differences between the U.S. and Europe. Specifically, some countries in Europe have instituted quotas in executive hiring to encourage gender parity. The United States, while still grappling with diversity and equity in its own right, has largely moved beyond using quotas as a remedy for gender inequality.

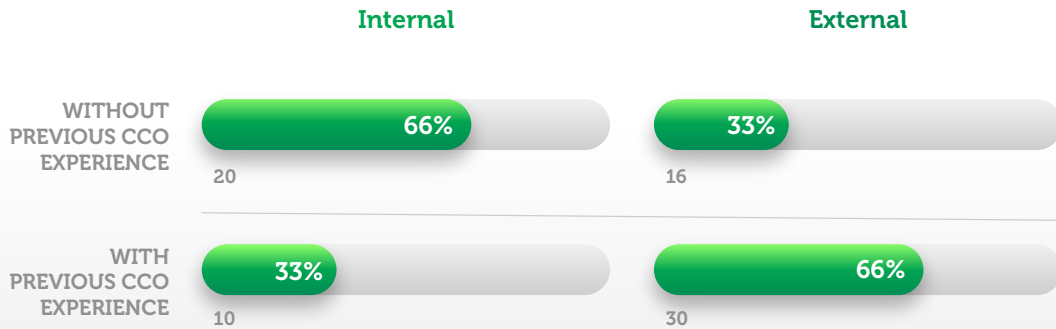
HOW ARE CCO ROLES BEING FILLED?

In volatile times, CEOs often seek a “steady hand” at the helm of their communications function. While prior CCO experience might seem like a prerequisite, our 2025 data reveals a more nuanced picture. Only 52% of candidates hired had prior experience as a CCO in another organization.

Globally, 60% of CCO roles were filled by external candidates, reflecting the perceived skills gap and ongoing challenges in developing internal talent. Interestingly, while external hires were twice as likely to have previous CCO experience, the inverse was true amongst internal candidates. This suggests that CEOs are more likely to take the risk of putting an “untested” executive into the CCO role if they have already proven themselves as a leader and counselor within the company.

GLOBAL

Among the 76 global CCO hires in 2024 with previous CCO experience + internal/external data listed



Only 21% of the CCO roles filled were by an external candidate with no previous CCO experience

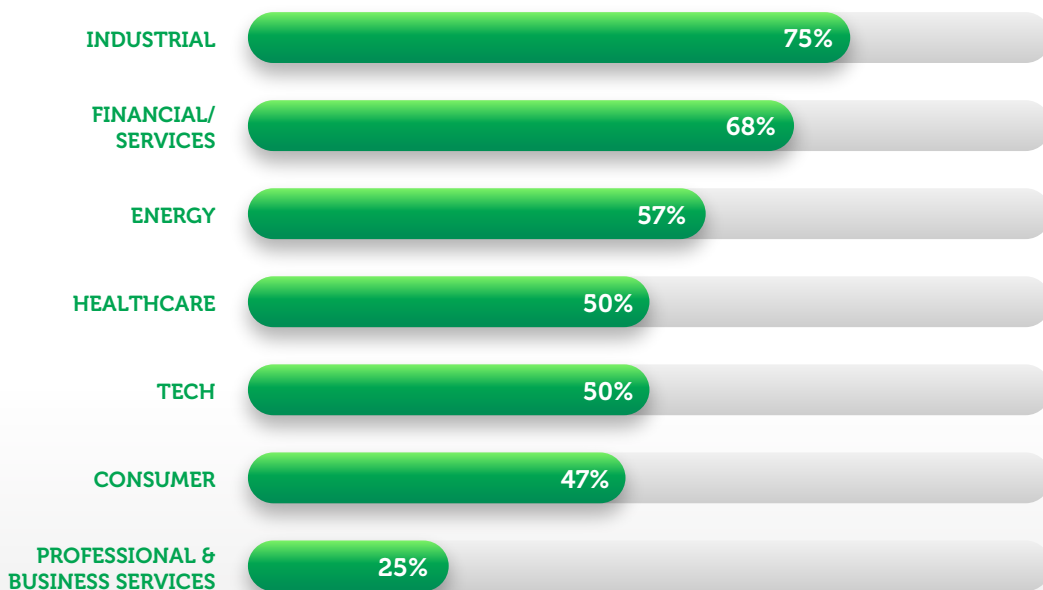
In future years of the study, we will seek to chart the results of these seemingly “higher risk” hires and their impact on success within the role.

Conventional wisdom suggests that in times of uncertainty, companies also prioritize industry experience to minimize the learning curve for new executives. However, our 2025 data challenges this assumption. Globally, 66% of external CCO hires did not have prior industry experience, indicating leadership’s willingness to prioritize other factors over industry knowledge. However, a closer look at the data

reveals that most of the geographic markets hover around 50%. The UK stands out as a stark exception with a surprising 90% of external candidates hired not having previous industry experience.

Because all internal candidates naturally have industry experience, when we view total number of CCOs hired by industry, we see that heavily regulated industries like Industrial (75%), Financial Services (68%) and Energy (57%) most value bringing in CCOs with previous industry experience.

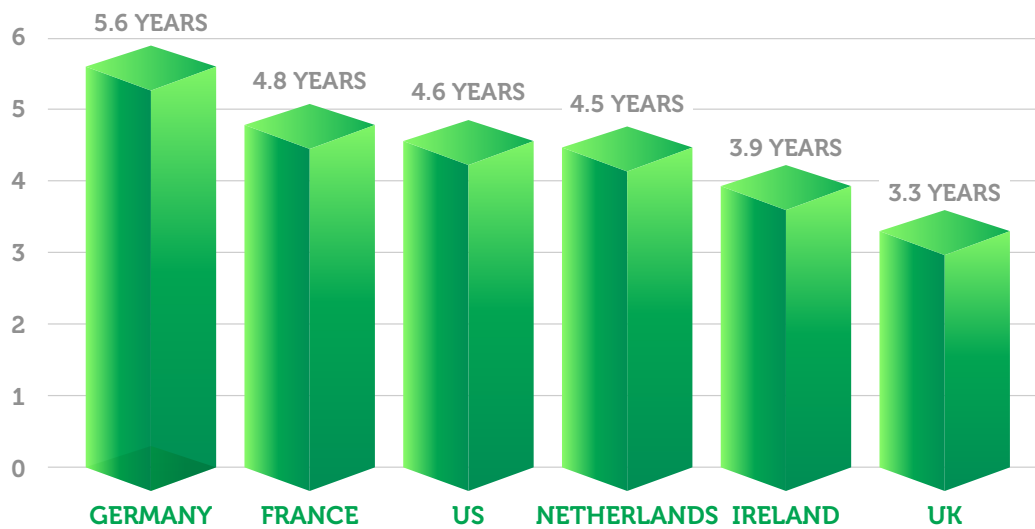
Percentage of Global CCOs hired with Previous Industry Experience (by Industry)



CCO TENURE

As a byproduct of a 0% turnover in 2024, Germany enjoys a vastly higher tenure rate than other countries, nearly a year more on the job, on average, than the next closest countries (France, the US, and The Netherlands). We believe that this is, in part, statistically influenced by a handful of very long-tenured male CCOs at German companies.

CCO Tenure (by country)



Meanwhile, the high turnover in the UK's FTSE 100 in 2024 likely reduced its average CCO tenure rate to more than 2 years below that of Germany's DAX 40 companies. We will continue to monitor CCO

longevity, evaluating the effects of high turnover periods, in comparison to other C-Suite executives, and also the causation between CEO turnover and CCO turnover.

CONCLUSION

The impact of global political, societal and economic changes are having vast impact on the turnover of executive teams, and in particular, the Chief Communications Officer.

The stature of the CCO / Corporate Affairs role in the organization continues its prominence, reflecting its crucial role in navigating today's complex business landscape. This executive is most responsible for evaluating the landscape of stakeholders, understanding the impact of political, economic and social change on these stakeholders and their view of the organization and then effectively communicating the organization's vision amidst this complexity. The best Communications and Corporate Affairs executives have proven their ability to successfully adapt to volatile environments over the last five years. These outstanding executives are prepared to lead teams capable of continuous adaptation and the acquisition of new skills.

The members of the Corporate Affairs Search Alliance each have their fingers on the pulse of their respective markets and have come together to bring you this global perspective. We also touched on the dramatic differences between individual national markets. In the coming year, we expect more change, both in the world and in the executive suite as companies strive to navigate the new/current world order. We anticipate that companies will continue to expect more of the CCO and their teams.

We will continue to monitor the impacts of these changes in the coming years, both on turnover and on hiring practices. We look forward to sharing these insights with you in the coming year and in our future CCO Turnover Studies.

METHODOLOGY

The 2025 Global CCO Turnover Study measures the turnover of the senior-most Communications and Corporate Affairs executives while also evaluating the types of candidates coming to occupy these increasingly critical roles within a corporation's executive team.

The member firms of the Corporate Affairs Search Alliance (CASA) examined 883 companies in France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and the United States, noting personnel and organizational changes within the Communications/Corporate Affairs roles and structures.

Leveraging the proprietary databases of CASA members, as well as publicly available information, we sought to quantitatively ascertain the following:

- Whether a company had changed its CCO during the calendar year of 2024. In each case, a change meant that a new individual occupied the seniormost role. "Internal Hires" as discussed in the report are not the same person being promoted (e.g. VP, Communications to SVP, Communications)
- Whether the incoming CCO was an internal promotion or an external hire

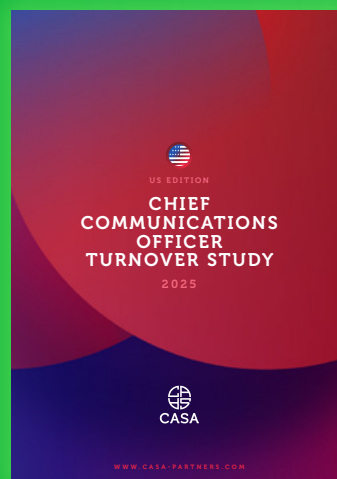
- If the current role was either newly created or substantially different structurally (with either greater or lesser responsibility) than that of the predecessor
- If the incoming CCO had previously served in a comparable CCO role as the head of corporate communications or corporate affairs for either a publicly traded or private company
- Whether the incoming CCO previously worked in the industry of his/ her current employer
- Rates of change amongst the above criteria by industry

This data was then discussed among CASA member company principals, clients, and various industry executives. These conversations informed our qualitative commentary and insight included throughout the study. The 2025 CCO Turnover Study contains data through December 31, 2024.



**CCO TURNOVER STUDY 2024
Europe Edition**

A European report that covers all of the non-U.S. data.



**CCO TURNOVER STUDY 2024
US Edition**

A US Report that builds on last year's research, with richer insights due to the increased number of companies.

To request a copy of either the Europe or Global edition of these reports, contact CASA at info@casapartners.com



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