



news aktuell
TREND REPORT
2019

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INTRODUCTION



The communications industry has long been debating traditional media's loss of importance. And yet: the most important influencers for PR professionals are still journalists. That may be surprising in the age of social media and the widespread hype surrounding the topic of influencers. But Instagrammers and YouTubers are still not particularly relevant for press offices and PR-agencies. This is a key finding of news aktuell's Trend Report 2019.

Under the title „Journalists, PR Professionals and Influencers – Friends or Foes?“ we interviewed journalists, PR professionals and influencers simultaneously for the first time, thus building on our many years of survey expertise. This time, the focus is on aspects such as influence, credibility, media use, job obstacles and future prospects: How do journalists assess their influence on public opinion formation? How do PR professionals and influencers assess their own importance? What obstacles do journalists face in their daily work? Do PR professionals and influencers face the same obstacles in their jobs? How do media makers, communicators and influencers assess their professional future?

The current study compares the self-image of the three communication groups and examines their similarities and differences. One thing can already be revealed: they are less likely to compete against each other, and more likely to work in harmony. Sometimes the major chords are to the fore, and sometimes the minor chords predominate.

F WOMEN INFLUENCERS

JOURNALISTS: MOST IMPORTANT INFLUENCER GROUP FOR PR PROFESSIONALS

Journalists are by far the most important influencer group for the work of PR professionals. Despite much talk of their loss of importance, journalists writing for the classic media still rank first for a large majority of respondents (86 percent). But do journalists also see themselves as influencers? Not particularly or not at all, say two thirds of the journalists surveyed (65 percent). The more senior their position, however, the more their assessment of their own influence increases. While only 24 percent of the journalists see themselves as influencers, 34 percent of the department heads already see themselves as influencers. Among the editors-in-chief, as many as 41 percent consider themselves to be opinion leaders.

49% of companies rely on corporate influencers. The figure for PR agencies is only 23%.

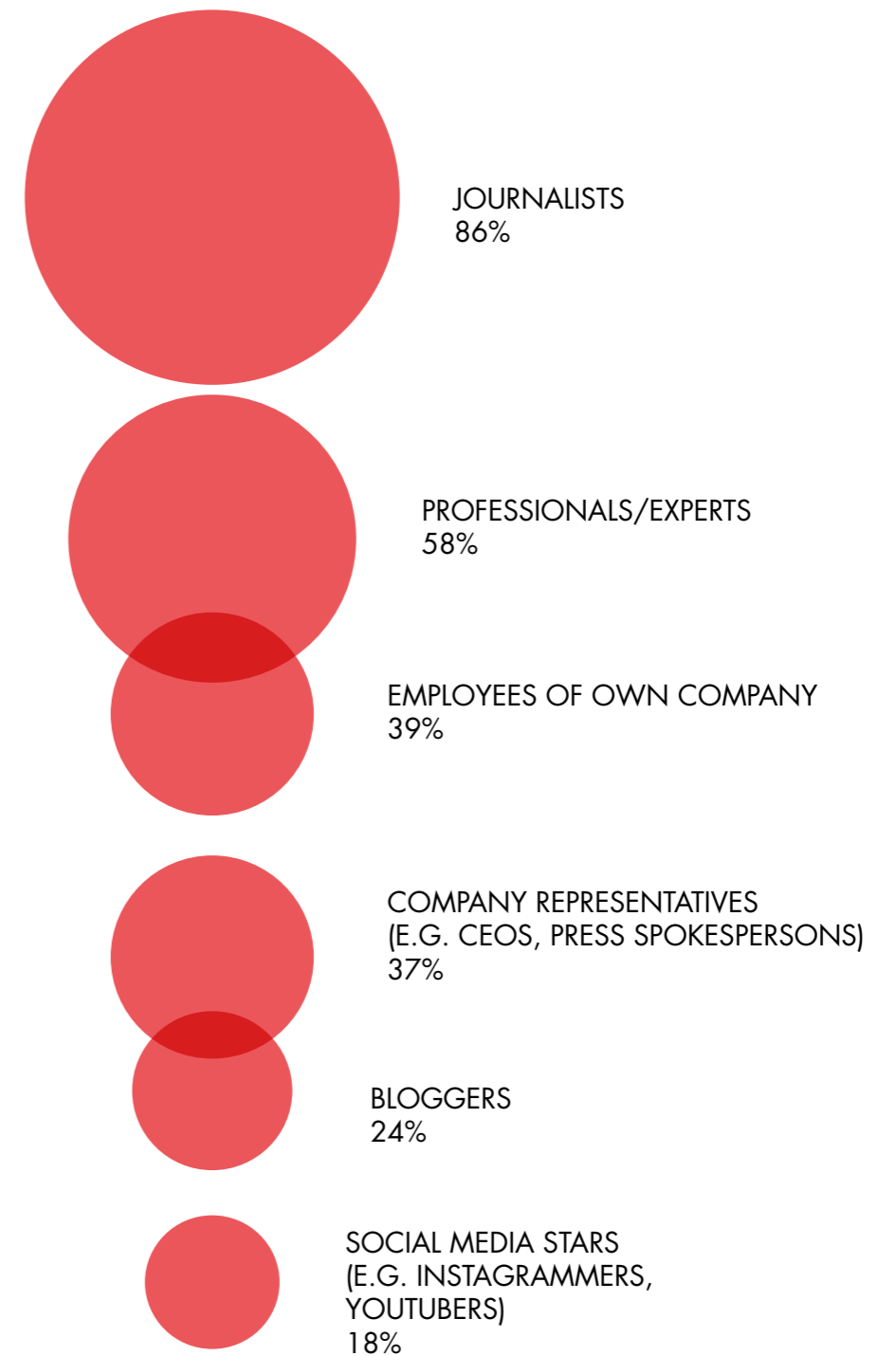
While journalists are most relevant for PR professionals, they attribute a comparatively small

role to social media influencers. However, PR agencies already rely significantly more on Instagrammers and YouTubers (30 percent) than press offices (11 percent). For companies, on the other hand, their own employees play an important role: almost every second respondent from corporate communications now relies on corporate influencers (49 percent).

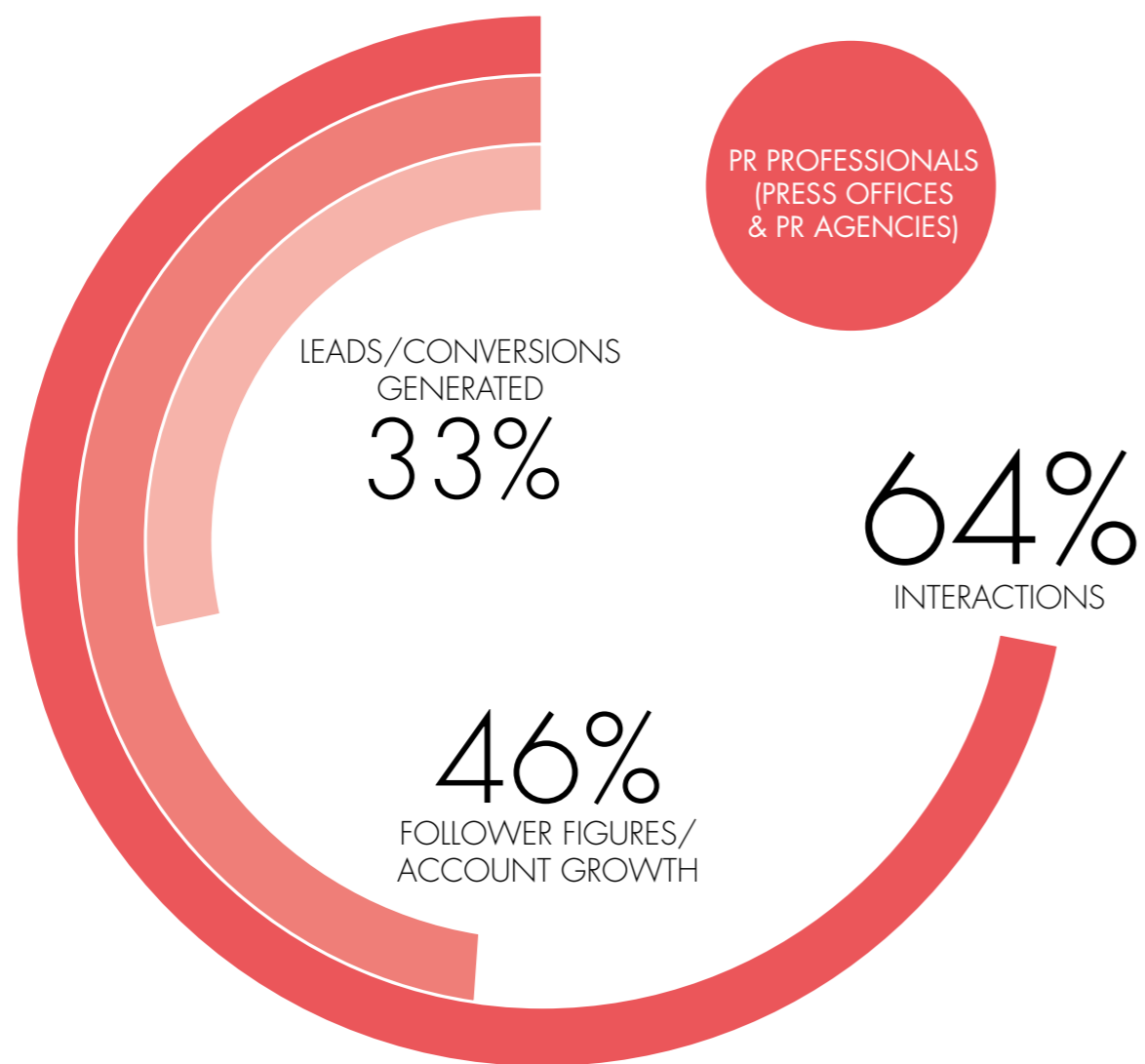
PR professionals who already run campaigns with social media influencers do so primarily to increase awareness. Every second respondent (51 percent) says this, but increasing sales is only a primary goal for every sixth respondent (16 percent). Less surprisingly: Above all large agencies rely on influencer campaigns. Only 5 percent of agencies with 51 or more employees say they do not run influencer campaigns. That is a very strong contrast to the smaller agencies (less than five members of staff), where one in two companies don't use them which (52 per cent).

WHICH INFLUENCER GROUPS ARE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR YOUR WORK?

Basis: Press offices and PR agencies (multiple answers), N=510



HOW DO PR PROFESSIONALS MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF INFLUENCER CAMPAIGNS? DO THEY GET THE METRICS THEY EXPECT?

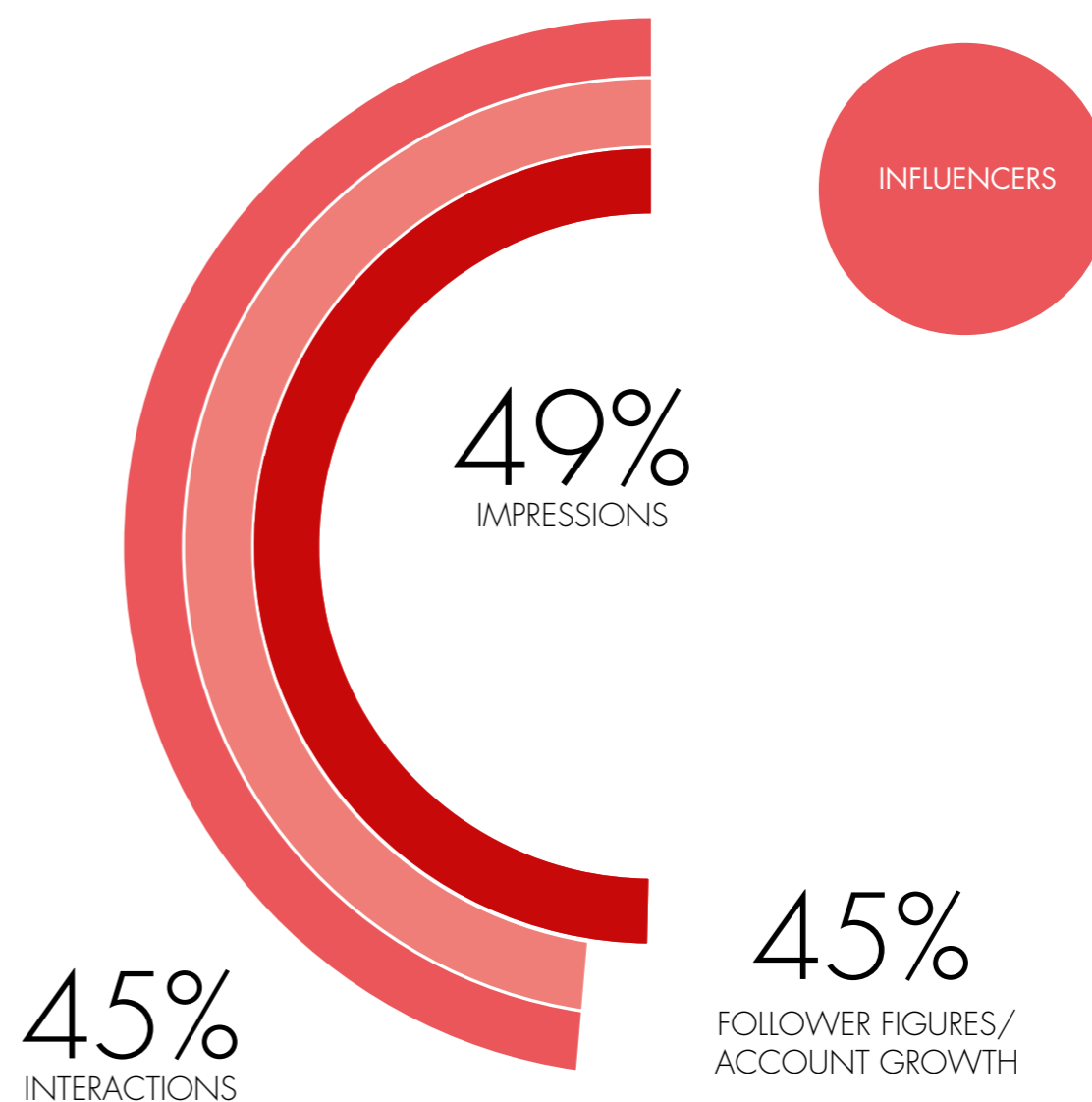


TOP 3: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR PR PROFESSIONALS

Basis: Press offices and PR agencies carrying out influencer campaigns (multiple answers), N=301

The comparison shows that influencers have a good feeling for the needs of their clients. PR experts who conduct influencer campaigns particularly rate interactions (64 percent), account growth (46 percent) and generated leads (33 percent) as important success indicators. This expectation is fulfilled by influencers.

They most frequently provide key figures on impressions (49 percent), account growth (45 percent) and interactions (45 percent). Influencers with high numbers of followers (> 50,000) are particularly professional. They deliver the above-mentioned indicators to their customers about twice as often as influencers with comparatively low numbers of followers (<10,000).



TOP 3: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS SUPPLIED BY INFLUENCERS

Basis: Influencers (multiple choice), N=95

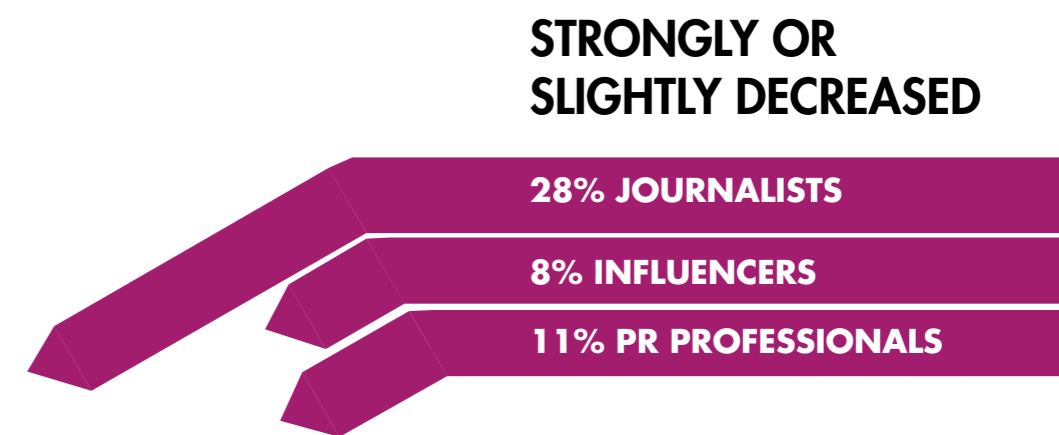
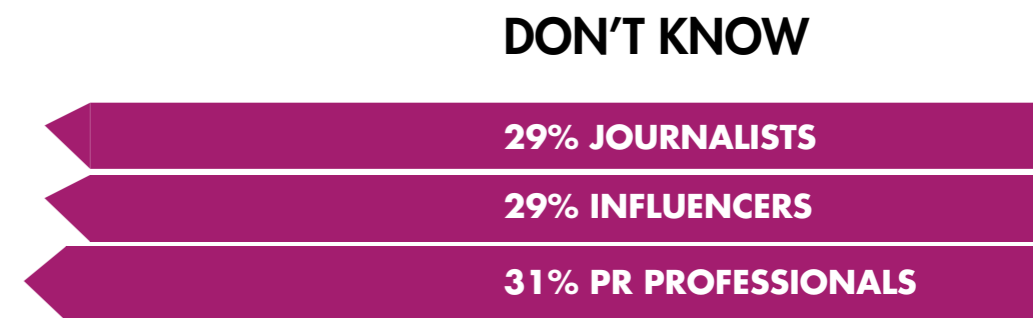
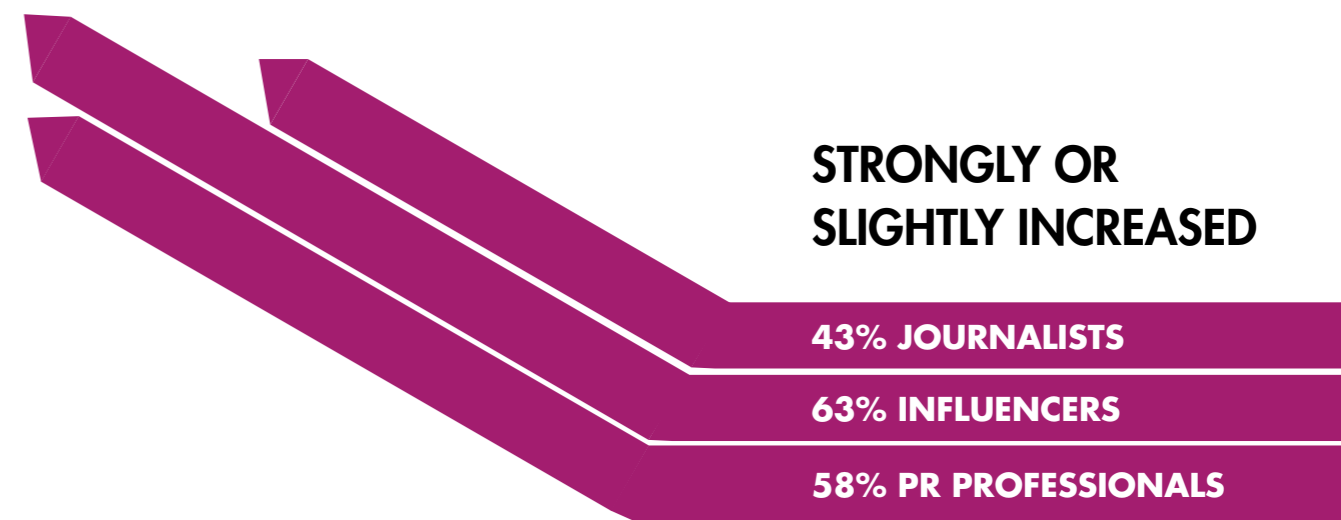
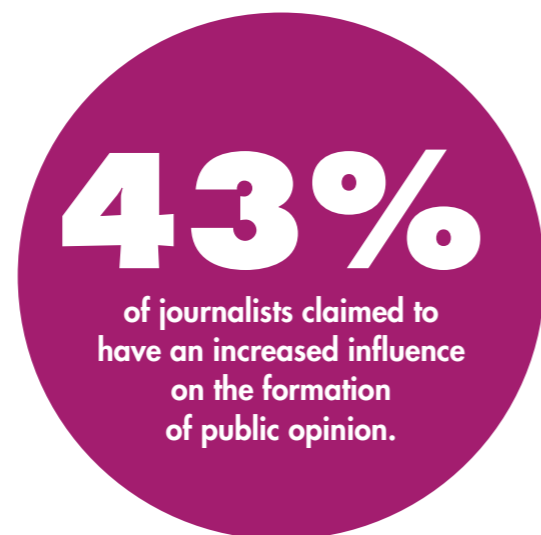
INFLUENCE

JOURNALISTS: SELF-CONFIDENT DESPITE CRISIS

Falling print runs and the rise of new media formats: Society's changing behavior when it comes to media usage also has a significant impact on the press. Nevertheless, the majority of journalists attest to an increased influence on the formation of public opinion. This was stated by 43 percent of the interviewed journalists, the most important reason being the increase in their reach (60 percent).

A good quarter, however, is skeptical about the trend of the last two years (28 percent) and cites changes in the target group as the main reasons for this: falling attention (48 percent) and an increase in information density (43 percent). PR professionals are somewhat more self-confident in their assessment of their impact on formation of opinion among the „res publica.“ According to the survey, the communicators see a significant increase in their influence on the formation of opinion within society over the past two years (58 percent). It is striking that the vast majority of respondents also attribute this primarily to the increase in their reach (62 percent). One third also cites the improvement in the quality of the content (35 percent) and increased credibility (34 percent) as reasons for more influence.

Not surprisingly, influencers are bursting with self-confidence. A good two-thirds of those surveyed consider their influence on the formation of opinion to have increased significantly in a two-year comparison (63 percent). It is noticeable that influencers with a very high reach (> 50,000 followers) in particular attribute this increase to increased credibility (73 percent). Irrespective of the number of followers, the increased reach (77 percent) is also clearly one of the most important factors for influencers. Second place is taken by an improvement in the quality of the content (50 percent).



HOW HAS YOUR INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC OPINION FORMATION DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS?

Basis: All respondents (single entry), N = 1,534

CRED

IBILITY

INFLUENCERS PERFORMING VERY WELL, BUT PR PROFESSIONALS AND JOURNALISTS ALSO ATTEST TO INCREASED CREDIBILITY

Scandals such as the case of journalist Claas Relotius who fabricated some of his articles have hit the media industry hard. However, when it comes to the credibility of their own content, journalists still have a very positive self-image. A clear majority believe that their credibility among the target group has even increased in the last two years (59 percent). The improvement in the quality of their own content is mentioned together with an improved image of their media organization or, in some cases, even of their own self is given as the main reason (in each case 42 percent).

Nevertheless, media criticism remains an important issue. After all, one in six journalists sees a decline in their own credibility (16 percent). For PR professionals, the matter is clear: in recent years, it has been above all their own content and the image of their own company that has improved (49 percent each). PR practitioners cited this as the most important

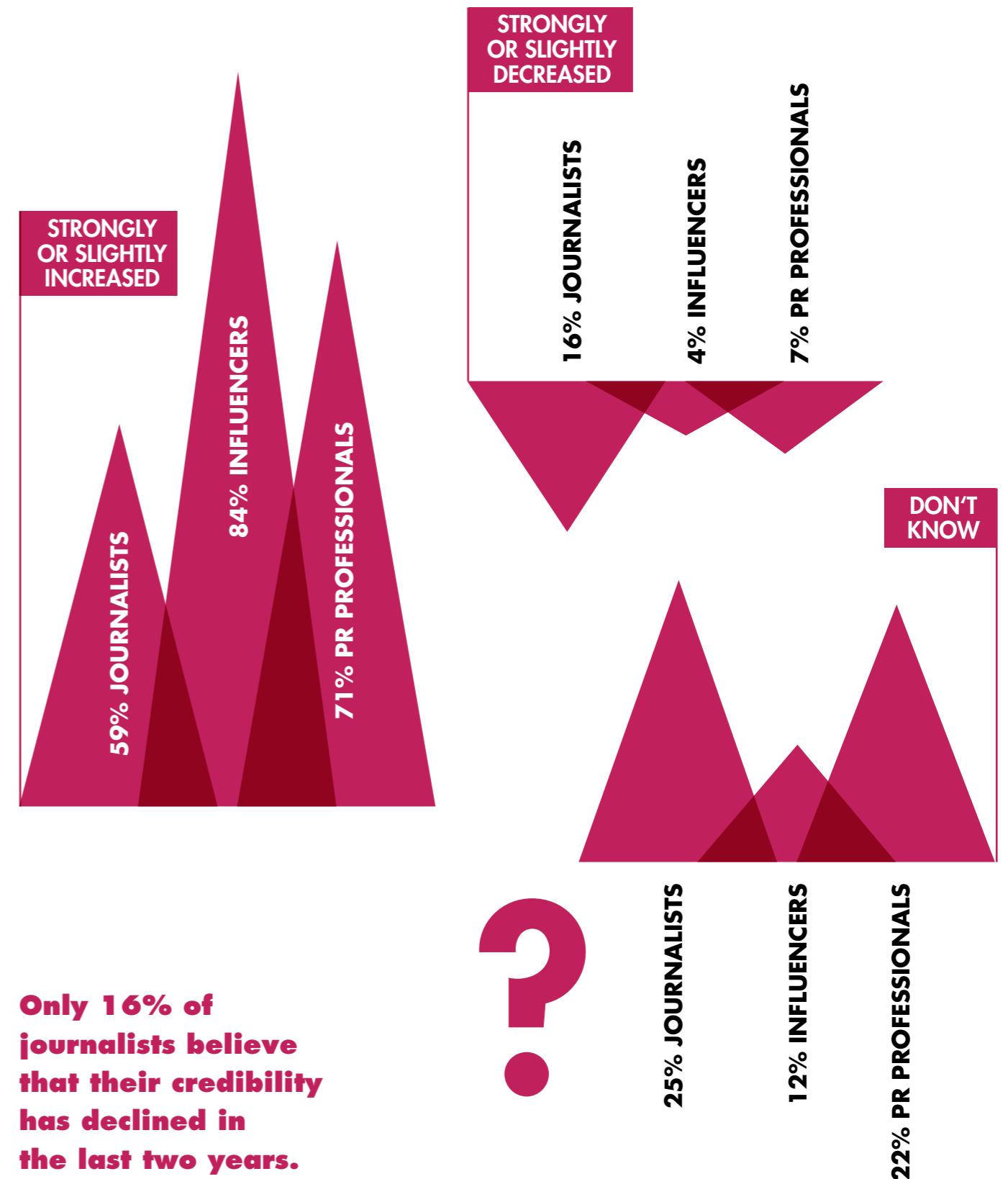
justification for seeing an increase in their own credibility (71 percent). PR agencies and press offices generally agree on this assessment.

The increased proximity to their target group is also among the top three reasons for the increase in credibility among PR agencies and press offices, but there is a percentage difference here. In agencies this is stated by 41 percent of respondents, in the press offices it is 31 percent. Meanwhile, for PR professionals a more transparent attitude to content (16 percent) or a more open culture for dealing with mistakes (6 percent) don't play much of a role.

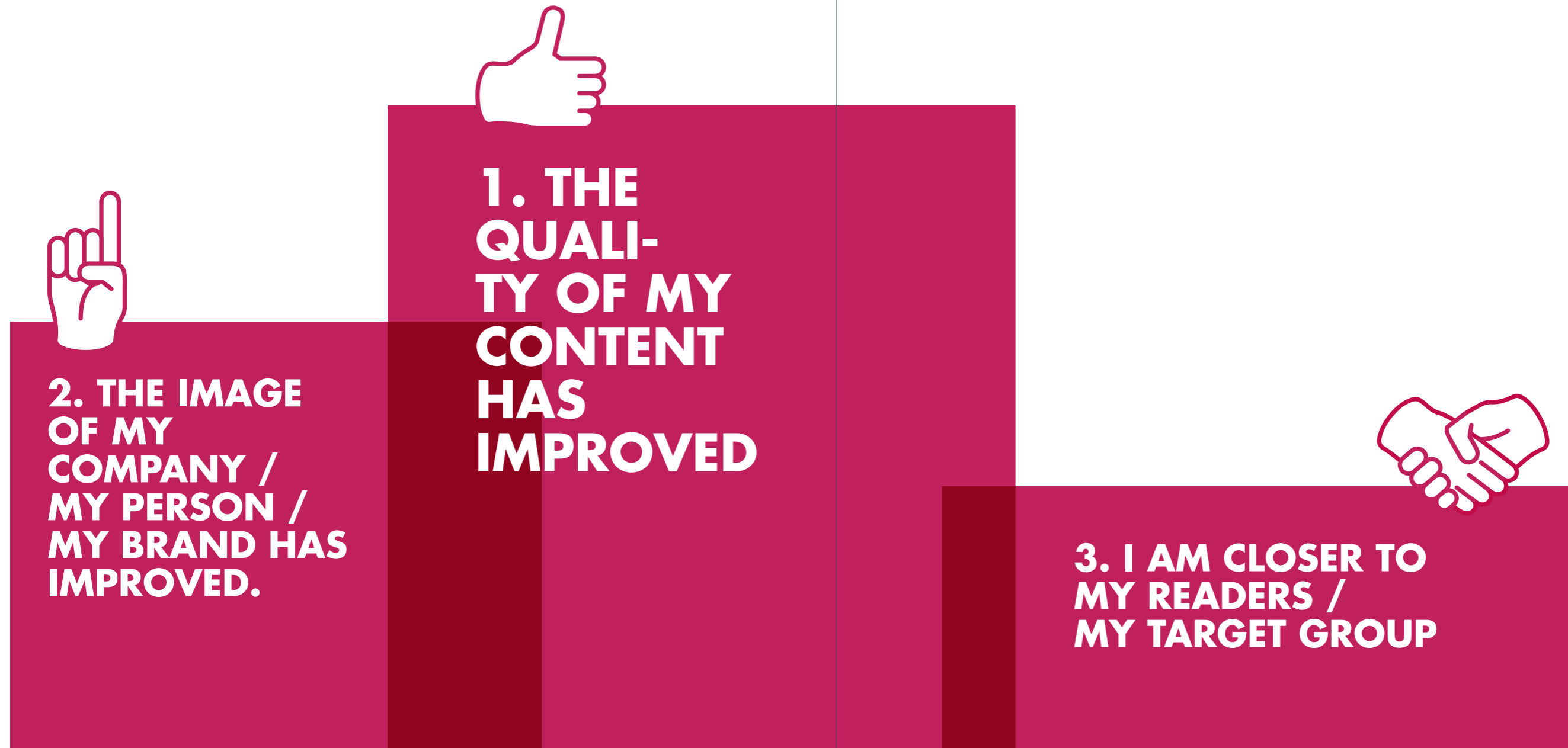
Auch die gestiegene Nähe zu ihrer Zielgruppe ist sowohl bei PR-Agenturen als auch bei Pressestellen unter den Top drei Gründen für die Glaubwürdigkeitssteigerung, hier gibt es aber einen prozentualen Unterschied. In Agenturen geben dies 41 Prozent der Befragten an, in den Pressestellen sind es 31 Prozent. Kaum eine Rolle spielt für die PR-Profis derweil eine besser sichtbare Haltung hinter Inhalten (16 Prozent) oder eine offenere Fehlerkultur (6 Prozent).

HOW HAS THE CREDIBILITY OF YOUR CONTENT VIS-À-VIS YOUR TARGET GROUP DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS?

Basis: All respondents (single entry), N=1,534



**TOP 3 REASONS FOR INCREASED CREDIBILITY
(ALL RESPONDENTS)**



The current trend is also continuing in the area of credibility: Influencers are optimistic about their own work and their social position. A large majority, 84 percent, believe that their credibility with the target group has increased. As with journalists and PR professionals, the top three reasons for the increased credibility among influencers are a qualitative improvement in content (63 percent), an improved image (50 percent) and proximity to the reader/target group (46 percent). It is also interesting to note, however, that a comparatively large number of influencers also give as a reason that they invest more time in research (31 percent) and communicate more transparently than before (24 percent).

JOB OBSTACLES

LACK OF RESOURCES GREATEST OBSTACLE

Too little time and a lack of budget are the two biggest obstacles at work for journalists, PR professionals and influencers. While journalists (48 percent), communicators from companies (51 percent) and influencers (56 percent) suffer the most from the often too tight deadlines, communicators from agencies find their work more difficult due to the too low budget (62 percent). The argument „too little time,“ however, follows directly in second place for PR agencies (48 percent).

No recruiting problems in PR: Only 5% of press offices find their work hindered by a lack of young talent.

Despite the much-described shortage of skilled workers: in PR and journalism there are obviously few problems with recruiting. Only 5 percent of the interviewed press offices complain of a lack of new recruits, while one in 10 (12 percent) of PR agencies do so. The profession of journalist also seems to remain popular, even though the media industry has been in crisis for many years: Only 9 percent of the journalists surveyed see themselves hindered by a lack of young talent. And that despite the fact that one in six journalists complains about the lack of earning opportunities in their profession (17 percent). In the case of PR professionals, on the other hand, the problem is not salary: only a tiny 3 percent of company spokespersons complain

about their salary being too low. As expected, the figure for PR agencies is higher (9 percent).

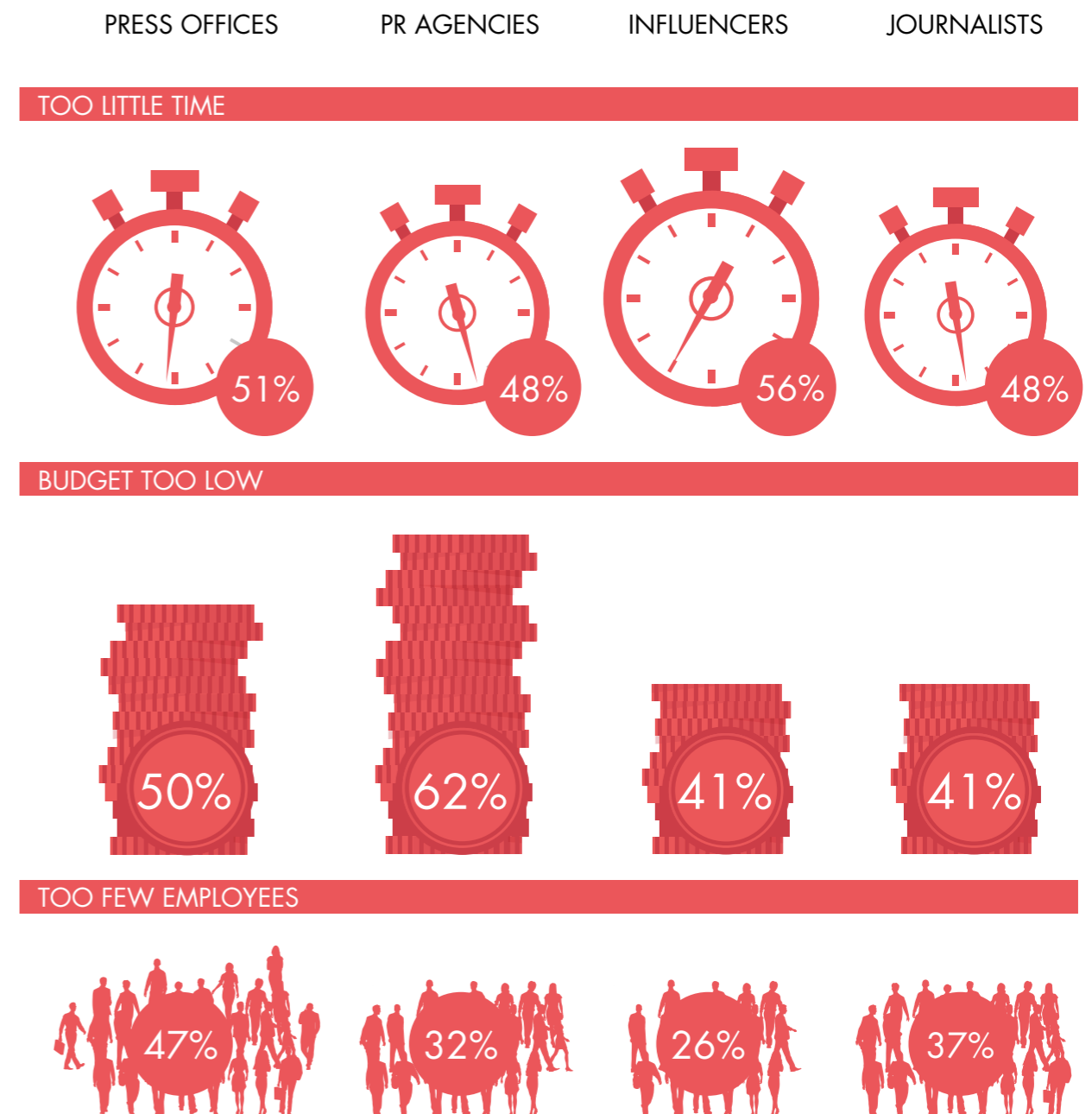
While legal framework conditions play a rather subordinate role for PR professionals and journalists as a job obstacle, they make the work of influencers considerably more difficult. One in three respondents from the YouTubers, Instagrammers and bloggers said that legal regulations and bans hindered their work (32 percent).

Not surprising, after the Relotius case: one in three journalists believe that black sheep make their work more difficult (33 percent). In addition, the journalists are also the most distrustful of all the groups surveyed. After all, one in five journalists see themselves hindered in their job (21 percent) by people's loss of confidence in the media.

32%
of influencers are hindered by the legal framework.

WHICH ARE THE BIGGEST OBSTACLES THAT MAKE YOUR WORK MORE DIFFICULT?

Basis: All respondents (maximum three responses), N = 1,534



MEDIA FOR MAINS

ONLINE FIRST IN PR – PRINT (STILL) FIRST IN JOURNALISM

Text is still the most popular format among PR professionals and journalists – despite (or precisely because of) the ever-increasing competition from images and videos. For more than half of the interviewed journalists, text attracts the most attention from their readers (57 percent), while just under one in two PR professionals (41 percent) believes it does. Among the interviewed influencers, however, the format of images comes first (49 percent), followed by text (27 percent) and video (21 percent). Despite the current podcast hype audio plays only a marginal role for all those surveyed (4 percent).

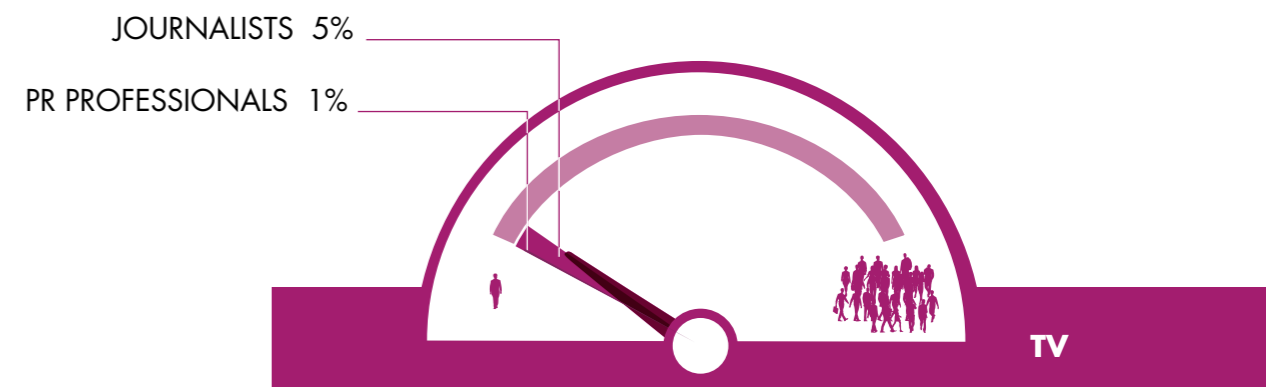
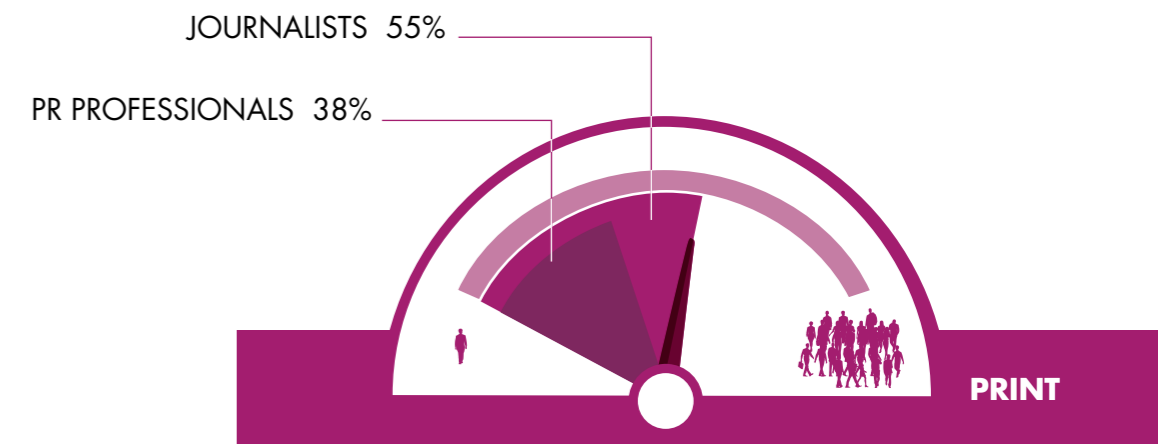
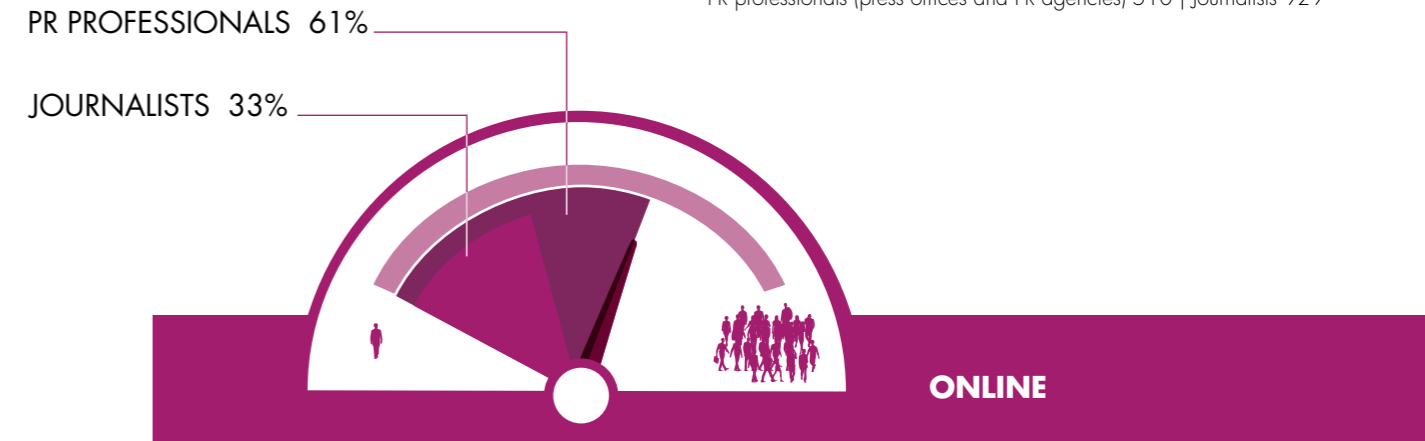
For older journalists, the following still applies: Print first. 61% of those over 55 see printed media as the best way to reach their target group.

Print or online: How do PR professionals and journalists best reach their target groups? This is where opinions differ: via online channels, say the PR experts (61 percent). For journalists, it is still print. This is what more than half of those surveyed (55 percent) say.

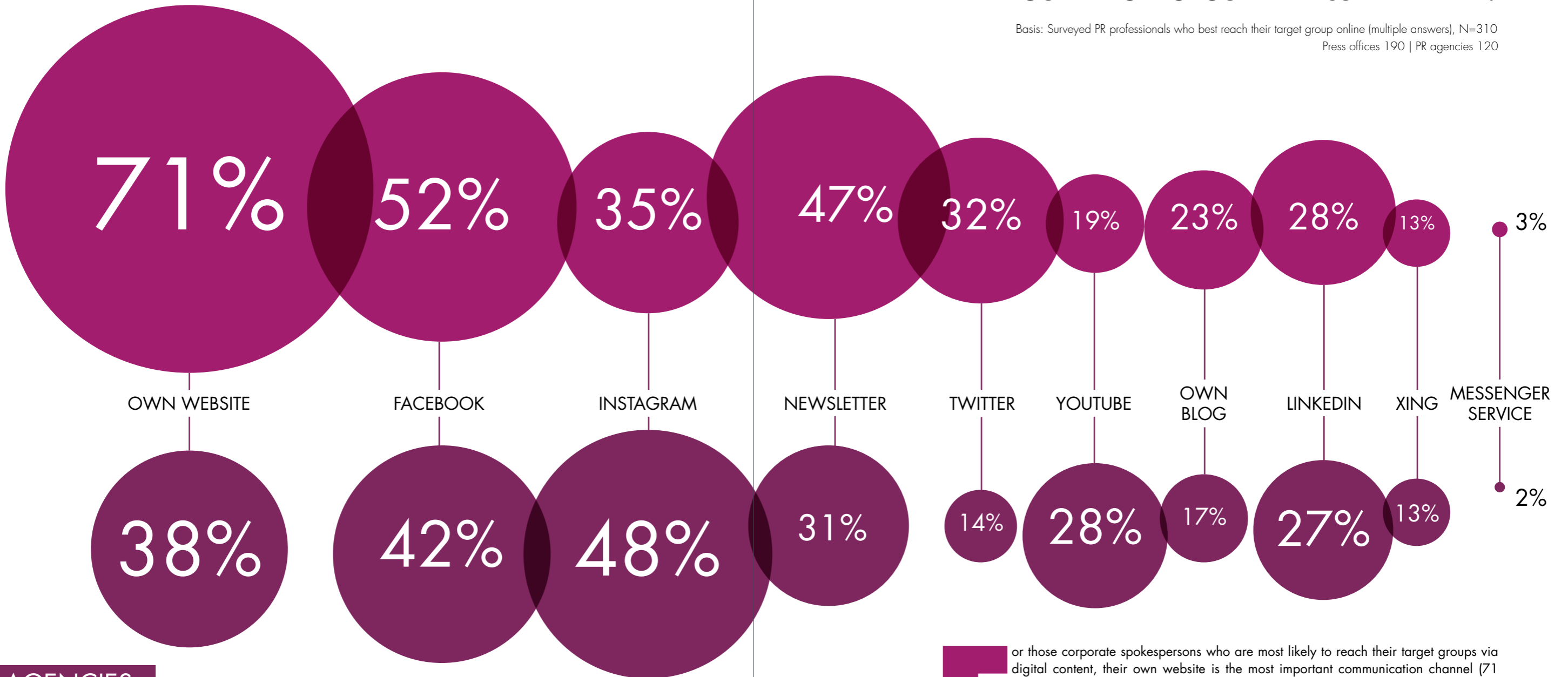
But: the younger the journalists, the more the relevance of print decreases. While 40 percent of the under-35s attribute the highest importance to print and 49 percent to online media, printed media still play the most important role among the older generation (55 years and older) (61 percent).

HOW ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO REACH YOUR TARGET GROUP?

Basis: All surveyed PR professionals and journalists (single entry), N = 1,439
PR professionals (press offices and PR agencies) 510 | Journalists 929



PRESS OFFICES



PR AGENCIES

ON WHICH ONLINE CHANNELS DO YOU REACH YOUR TARGET GROUP PARTICULARLY WELL?

Basis: Surveyed PR professionals who best reach their target group online (multiple answers), N=310
Press offices 190 | PR agencies 120

For those corporate spokespersons who are most likely to reach their target groups via digital content, their own website is the most important communication channel (71 percent), followed by Facebook (52 percent) as the second most important channel. The classic e-mail newsletter (47 percent) continues to be popular with corporate communicators and ranks third among the relevant digital channels – ahead of the social networks Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

For PR agencies, however, Facebook’s (not so) little sister is now in first place: almost half of the agencies that communicate digitally with their target groups now reach them primarily via Instagram (48 percent), rather than Zuckerberg’s original social network (42 percent).

The German professional network XING, on the other hand, is only (still) of minor importance for PR professionals. LinkedIn has become much more popular. Only one in 10 press offices and PR agencies rates XING as important (13 percent each). The US counterpart, on the other hand, is considered important by one in four PR professionals (PR agencies: 27 percent, press offices: 28 percent).

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

JOURNALISTS DIVIDED PR PROFESSIONALS AND INFLUENCERS OPTIMISTIC

Journalists have mixed expectations about the future of their jobs. 53 percent of the journalists surveyed assess the future prospects of their professional field as bad or very bad. On the other hand, the other half are optimistic about the future (47 percent).

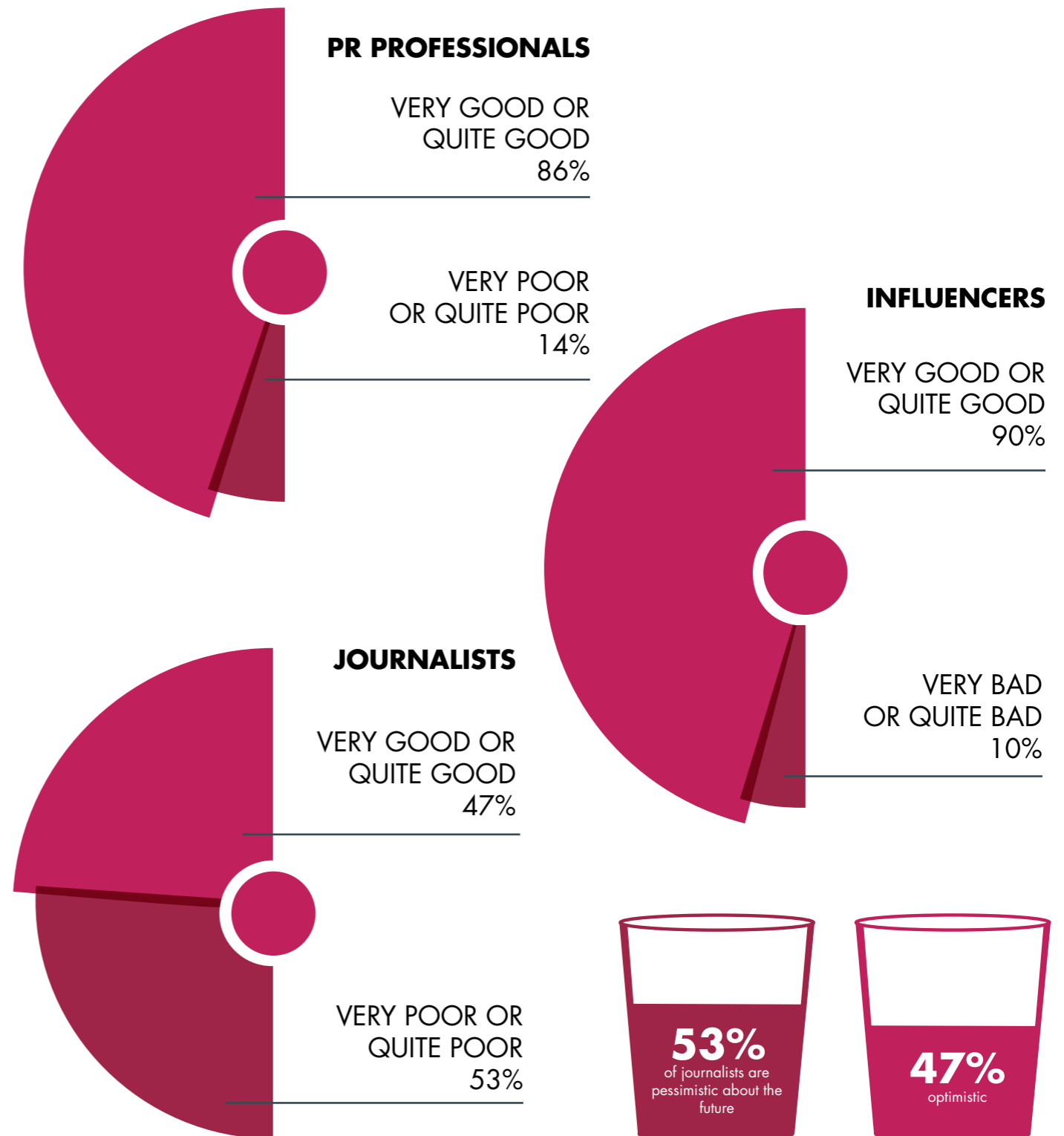
For the pessimists among the journalists surveyed, the economic problems of the media industry are the greatest challenge for the future of the profession (54 percent). They also cite the declining willingness to pay for journalistic content as a major reason (50 percent). What is

striking is that the younger the respondents, the greater the concern about readers' willingness to pay. While only 41 percent of those over 55 years of age are negative about the future for this reason, 76 percent of those under 35 years of age are. Equally sobering: almost half of the journalists who assess their professional future negatively believe that their content will be less in demand in the future (43 percent).

Communications professionals and influencers expect much rosier times. An overwhelming majority of PR professionals (86 percent) and YouTubers, Instagrammers and bloggers (90 percent) assess their professional future (very) positively.

HOW DO YOU ASSESS YOUR PROFESSIONAL FIELD'S FUTURE PROSPECTS?

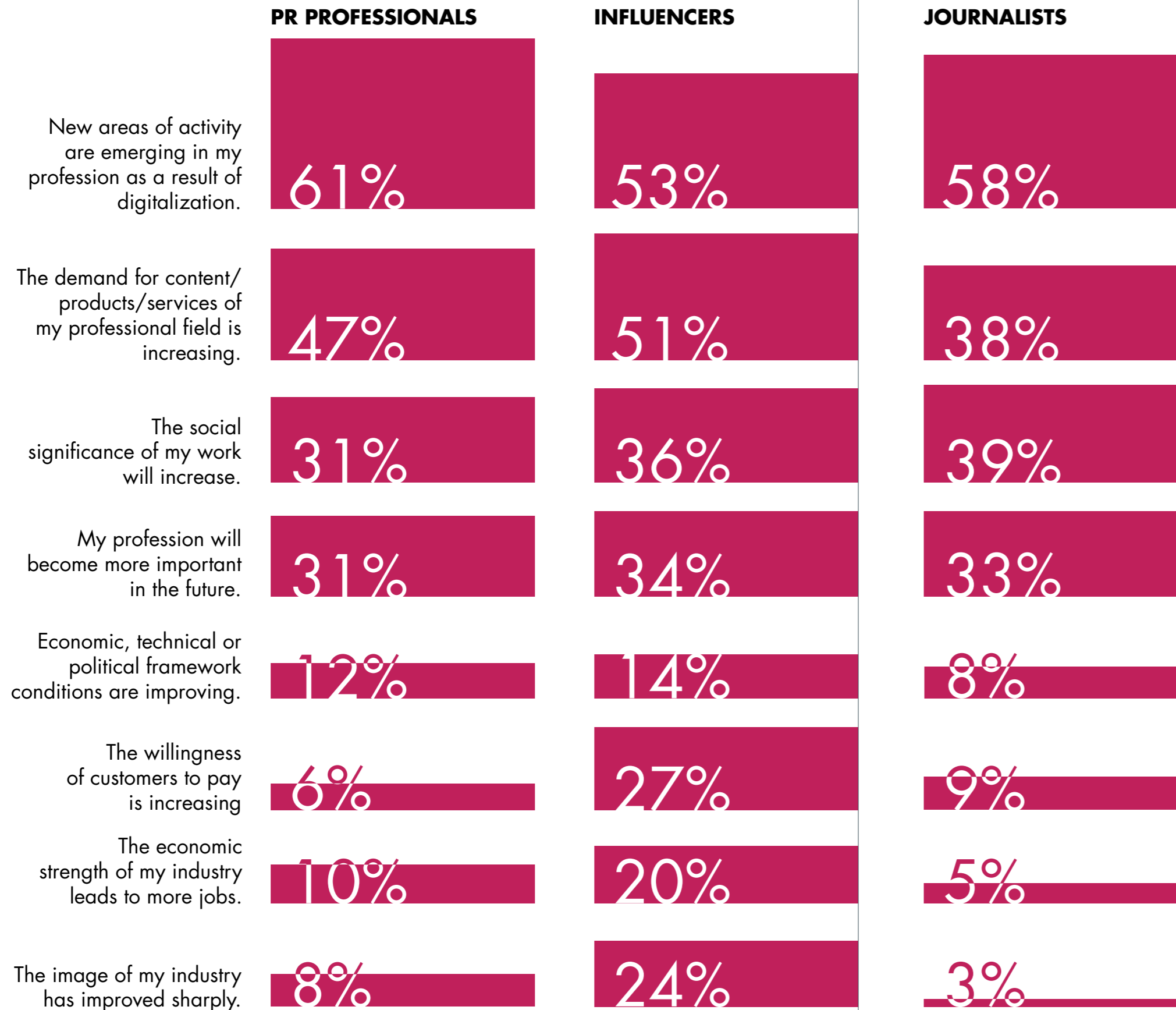
Basis: All respondents (single entry), N = 1,534



GLASS HALF EMPTY OR HALF FULL

WHY DO YOU HAVE A POSITIVE VIEW OF THE FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR FIELD OF WORK?

Basis: respondents who assess the future prospects of their occupational field positively (multiple answers), N=957
PR professionals (press offices and PR agencies): 440, influencers: 85, journalists: 432



For PR professionals, journalists and influencers alike, digitalization is the most important driver for future jobs.

The greatest source of hope is the ongoing digitalization. All groups surveyed – whether press offices, PR agencies or influencers – see it as the most important engine for new fields of activity. The optimists among the journalists surveyed also believe that digital disruption is the main driver for new jobs in the media industry and thus the most important factor for the survival of their profession. The pessimists among the journalists, however, do not see digitalization only as a savior. One in three believes that many fields of journalistic activity will disappear without replacement as a result of the major digital upheavals (31 percent).

The second most important driver for optimists among PR professionals and influencers is the rising demand for their products and services (press offices and agencies: 47 percent; influencers: 51 percent). For optimists among journalists, the social significance of their profession is another key driver for the future (39 percent).

STATISTICS

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As a wholly-owned subsidiary of dpa, news aktuell provides companies and organizations with effective access to media and consumers. Using the smart tools ots and zimpel, PR content reaches all media formats such as classic print titles, clickable online portals or social networks. In addition, news aktuell publishes all of its customers' PR content on www.presseportal.de, one of Germany's most popular PR portals. In this way, all relevant multipliers are reached world-wide, from editors and digital influencers to specialized bloggers and interested consumers. news aktuell was launched in 1989 and employs over 135 people. The company headquarters are in Hamburg. It has further locations in Berlin, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt and Munich.

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FAKTENKONTOR

1,534 journalists, PR professionals and influencers from Germany took part in the news aktuell trend report. The survey was conducted in March 2019 by news aktuell in cooperation with Faktenkontor. The initiators chose an online survey as their method.

1534	TOTAL
315	EMPLOYEES OF A PRESS OFFICE
195	EMPLOYEES OF A PR AGENCY
95	INFLUENCERS
929	JOURNALISTS