



# Being or appearing socially responsible? How do public relations agencies demonstrate their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects, whether they are supporting external initiatives or pursuing their own

¿Ser o parecer socialmente responsables? Cómo visibilizan las agencias de relaciones públicas su implicación en proyectos de RSC ajenos y propios

## Elisenda Estanyol

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). Spain.

[eestanyol@uoc.edu](mailto:eestanyol@uoc.edu)



## Marc Compte-Pujol

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). Spain.

[mcomptepuj@uoc.edu](mailto:mcomptepuj@uoc.edu)



## Ferran Lalueza

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). Spain.

[flalueza@uoc.edu](mailto:flalueza@uoc.edu)



### How to cite this article / Standardized reference:

Estanyol, E., Compte-Pujol, M., & Lalueza, F. (2024). Being or appearing socially responsible? How do public relations agencies demonstrate their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects, whether they are supporting external initiatives or pursuing their own [¿Ser o parecer socialmente responsables? Cómo visibilizan las agencias de relaciones públicas su implicación en proyectos de RSC ajenos y propios]. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 82, 01-28. <https://www.doi.org/10.4185/rlcs-2024-2181>

**Date of Receipt:** 08/07/2023

**Date of Acceptance:** 30/09/2023

**Date of Publication:** 18/12/2023

## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Since the introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sustainable development and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are one of the main strategic trends in public relations (PR). Our research objectives are to identify whether the PR consultancies make their offer of specialized CSR services visible, and to verify their own implication in the issue. **Methodology:** We have analyzed the websites of 50 communication consultancies that operate in Spain, based on the reference ranking of the magazine *El Publicista* (2022 edition) and 66 CSR campaigns identified through these websites (43 campaigns developed for their clients and 23 promoted by the agencies themselves). Quantitative and qualitative content analysis has been applied, with the variables analyzed being: type of consultant, CSR services offered, CSR case studies shown, own CSR actions implemented, and professionals specialized in CSR. **Results:** Results show that there is still a large number of agencies that do not offer CSR specific services (58%) nor do they have specialized professionals in its communication (only 12%). In turn, the 43 CSR case studies developed for their clients prove their growing ability to convince promoters (current and potential clients) about the positive impact of CSR communication on organizational reputation. **Discussion:** However, the PR sector itself does not demonstrate the same level of implication, given that the implementation of own CSR actions in the industry is still a minority phenomenon (34%, and 23 CSR campaigns), although it is true that it can serve as an incentive for other agencies to follow this path. **Conclusions:** CSR communication represents an area of PR specialization which, in the case of agencies operating in Spain, means that almost half claim to offer communication services in this field. Although, according to their websites, there are still few professional specialists in this matter within the agencies, and few also the agencies that promote their own CSR actions through this channel (as companies that they themselves are), an offer of specialized communication services mostly linked to the SDGs in the field of health, well-being and environmental protection has been detected.

**Keywords:** Communication agencies and consultancies; Corporate social responsibility-CSR; Organizational reputation; Public relations strategy; Sustainable development goals-SDG; PR; Campaigns.

## RESUMEN

**Introducción:** Desde la introducción de los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible (ODS), el desarrollo sostenible y la responsabilidad social corporativa (RSC) son una de las principales tendencias estratégicas en relaciones públicas (RRPP). La presente investigación tiene como objetivo identificar si las agencias visibilizan su oferta de servicios especializados en RSC, y comprobar su propia implicación en la materia. **Metodología:** Se han analizado las webs de 50 agencias de comunicación y RRPP que operan en España, a partir del ranking de referencia de *El Publicista* (edición 2022) y un total de 66 campañas de comunicación de RSC identificadas a través de estas webs (43 campañas desarrolladas para sus clientes y 23 de impulsadas por las propias agencias). Se ha aplicado el análisis de contenido cuantitativo y cualitativo, siendo las variables analizadas: tipo de consultora, servicios de RSC ofertados, casos de éxito de comunicación de la RSC mostrados, acciones de RSC propias implementadas, y profesionales especializados en comunicación de la RSC. **Resultados:** Todavía existe una gran cantidad de agencias que no ofrecen servicios específicos en el ámbito de la RSC (58%) ni cuentan con profesionales especializados en su comunicación (sólo un 12%). Sin embargo, los 43 casos de éxito en RSC desarrollados para sus clientes evidencian su creciente capacidad para convencer a los sujetos promotores (clientes actuales y potenciales) sobre el impacto positivo de la comunicación de la RSC en la reputación organizacional. **Discusión:** El propio sector de las RRPP no demuestra el mismo nivel de implicación, dado que la implementación en la industria de acciones propias de RSC es un fenómeno aún minoritario (34% y 23 campañas propias de RSC identificadas), si bien es cierto que puede servir de acicate para que otras agencias sigan esta vía. **Conclusiones:** La comunicación de la RSC representa un área de especialización de las RRPP que en el caso de las agencias que operan en España supone que casi la mitad afirman ofrecer servicios de comunicación en este ámbito. Si bien se visibilizan en sus webs pocos profesionales especialistas en esta materia dentro de las agencias, y son pocas también las agencias que manifiestan a través de este canal impulsar acciones de RSC propias (como empresas que ellas mismas también son), se ha detectado una oferta de servicios de comunicación de la RSC mayoritariamente vinculada con los ODS del ámbito de la salud, el bienestar y la protección del medio ambiente.

**Palabras clave:** Agencias y consultoras de comunicación; Estrategia de relaciones públicas; Objetivos de desarrollo sostenible-ODS; Responsabilidad social corporativa-RSC; Reputación organizacional; RRPP; Campañas.

## 1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has an impact on corporate reputation (Ferrari and Durán, 2019; Kim, 2023; Morsing et al., 2008; Virakul et al., 2009). Consequently, more and more organizations are replacing philanthropic initiatives with strategic CSR linked to their core corporate activities (Barrio-Fraile and Enrique-Jiménez, 2021). In fact, Spanish organizations carried out 17% more CSR projects in 2021 compared to the previous year (Deloitte and SERES Foundation, 2023a). This shift requires effective communication from companies and institutions, especially in a context where public expectations regarding corporate social and environmental commitment are on the rise (Edelman, 2022; Viererbl and Koch, 2022).

Since the introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations as part of the 2030 Agenda (UN, 2015), CSR communication has become one of the key strategic trends in public relations (PR). These goals address a wide range of issues, from poverty reduction and education promotion to gender equality and climate change mitigation. However, while CSR has received increasing academic attention in recent years, specialized studies on CSR communication are still scarce, as noted by various authors (Capriotti and Moreno, 2007; Chaudhri, 2016; Crane and Glozer, 2016; Ji et al., 2020; Kim, 2023; Podnar, 2008; Tench et al., 2014; Verk et al., 2021).

In the professional field, the importance of CSR communication has grown in recent years due to various regulations, such as the Spanish Companies Act (Government of Spain, 2014), which requires companies to be transparent about their activities, including communication transparency (Álvarez, 2020), and the Law 11/2018 on Non-Financial Information and Diversity (Government of Spain, 2018), which introduced the obligation for companies with more than 250 employees to report on their environmental and social impact. This legislation is complemented by guidelines from the European Commission, such as the recent guidelines on Due Diligence of Companies on Sustainability (Council of the European Union, 2022: s.p.), which set out rules on "the obligations of large companies concerning the actual and potential adverse effects on human rights and the environment of their own operations, the operations of their subsidiaries, and the operations of their business partners." Faced with this new regulatory framework, companies are increasing the production of sustainability reports and their dissemination. However, it's worth noting that only 72% of companies in Spain with an obligation to report non-financial information actually did so (CSR Observatory, 2022).

This reinforces the need, which has become an obligation for some organizations, to communicate CSR actions effectively. In fact, 34.5% of European communication and PR professionals consider CSR the most important strategic issue (EUPRERA, 2022). Similarly, Dircom (2022) reveals an increase from 27.7% (2017) to 42% (2021) in the importance of CSR and sustainable development according to Spanish communication directors.

Therefore, this research aims to fill a gap in the public relations and CSR communication literature in Spain. Its main objectives are to identify whether PR agencies operating in the country promote their specialized CSR communication services and to analyze their own involvement in CSR.

## 2. Objectives and research questions

The objectives of this research are: [O1] to identify whether PR agencies promote their specialized services in CSR communication, and [O2] to analyze their own involvement in this field.

To achieve these objectives, the following research questions have been formulated:

- P1. Do PR agencies offer CSR communication services? If so, what specific services do they offer?
- P2. What types of CSR communication campaigns do they design and execute?
- P3. Do they have professionals specialized in CSR communication?
- P4. Are the agencies themselves committed to CSR? If so, what types of CSR initiatives do they undertake?

### 3. Theoretical framework

#### 3.1. CSR from the Public Relations Theory

In 1980, Bernays, one of the founding figures of the PR discipline, argued that "PR is the practice of social responsibility" (cited by Clark, 2000, p. 367). Twenty years later, Clark (2000) posited that PR and CSR were very similar specialties in terms of their origins, theories, and processes, and added that both shared objectives as they aimed to improve the quality of an organization's relationships with its stakeholders from a business perspective. This view has been confirmed by authors such as Coombs (2019), Durán-González and Mosquera-López (2016), Fernández-Fernández and Melé (2015), and Pérez y Rodríguez del Bosque (2015). Ferrari and Durán justify this by stating:

Sustainable management is associated with how organizations relate to society, the environment, and, primarily, with their strategic stakeholders. Therefore, it requires that companies' communication processes be transparent and integrative between them and the strategic stakeholders that orbit around them" (2019, p. 193).

Strategic stakeholders, or stakeholders, have been defined from the Stakeholder Theory as "any group or individual that can affect or is affected by the organization's activities" (Freeman, 1984, p. 46). Among them are usually shareholders, employees, consumers, non-governmental organizations, local communities, the media, and legislators. During the implementation of their CSR actions, organizations must know how to engage with these stakeholders, so it is necessary for them to use PR techniques (Tworzydło et al., 2021). From this perspective, CSR is defined as "a communicative practice that corporations undertake to integrate social, environmental, ethical, and human rights commitments into their core business operations and strategy, in close collaboration with their stakeholders" (Ellerup and Thomsen, 2018: 493).

While the concept of CSR has become widespread internationally from the corporate communication perspective in the late 20th century, the presence of the concept in the PR discipline, based on its social function, is much earlier, dating back to the 1960s, in the same way its use can be identified in the 1970s in management (Compte-Pujol et al., 2019).

From the PR discipline, the communication of CSR has traditionally been approached from two paradigms: the functionalist approach, which focuses on how organizations can influence their stakeholders through CSR communication, and the constructivist approach, which emphasizes the need to establish a dialogue with stakeholders beyond informing them, advocating for more bidirectional channels to co-create CSR practices through a process of mutual understanding (Golob et al., 2013). Thus, from a functionalist point of view, transparency is the fundamental element for communication with stakeholders, while from a constructivist perspective, the focus is on co-creation, dialogue, and engagement. However, from another theoretical perspective, such as Critical PR Theory, the instrumental view of CSR is criticized, and it is suggested that it runs the risk of becoming "an attempt to put a human face on capitalism to continue its harmful practices" (Ihlen et al., 2011, p. 9).

"This reinforces the need, which has become an obligation for some organizations, to communicate CSR actions effectively"

In all these paradigms, the notion emerges that PR is not limited to disseminating an organization's social responsibility actions, but often plays a decisive role in planning and implementing such actions since "CSR is seen as a central aspect of organizations' reputation, for which public relations are responsible" (L'Etang, 2013). It is worth noting that Stakeholder Theory is considered "an integral part of CSR" (Chen et al., 2020).

### 3.2. Structure of PR Agencies in Spain

Communication and PR agencies have been defined as "independent and outsourced companies that offer communication services to third parties (mostly companies and institutions, but also governments and individuals)" (Estanyol and Lalueza, 2014, p. 139). They are a type of executing subjects in the PR process, as these can also be internal (in-house communication departments). Communication and PR agencies offer diverse and evolving services to adapt to the needs of the sponsoring subjects (client companies, whose role is to promote and finance them) and to sector trends and the interests of the receiving subjects (the audiences targeted by the campaigns) (Cuenca-Fontbona et al., 2020; Miquel et al., 2018).

Internationally, there is a global PR industry centered in the United States and the United Kingdom, which is expanding worldwide as local socioeconomic conditions permit (Lee et al., 2023). The Public Relations Global Market Report (Business Research Company, 2023) estimates the economic activity of the sector to be over \$107 billion by the year 2023.

In Spain, the leading communication and PR agencies are well-established companies with a history of more than 20 years, some of them international and others national, of medium size (between 51 and 100 employees), with a majority of women in their staff and primarily providing full services<sup>1</sup> (63%) (Costa-Sánchez et al., 2019).

According to the latest edition of the reference study conducted by Scopen (2021), Spanish PR agencies are not positioning themselves as long-term strategic partners with their clients. They only retain their clients for an average of 4.1 years, and although this relationship tends to be longer in the case of larger consulting firms and shorter in the case of smaller ones, the trend in recent years has been clearly declining. Paradoxically, client satisfaction with the services provided by their agency tends to improve, exceeding 95%, and is equally higher for larger consulting firms than for smaller ones. Given that the most determining factor for considering hiring a consulting firm (in 83% of cases according to Scopen) is the ethics and transparency it demonstrates, any deficiencies in this area could explain the diminishing loyalty even in an environment of growing satisfaction. Costa-Sánchez et al. (2019, p. 6), who also refer to ethics and transparency along with continuous expertise, point out in this regard that the added value provided by consulting firms "does not end with a single campaign or service but must function cumulatively over a diachronic perspective to gain the trust of clients and audiences".

As positioning strategies for their clients, consulting firms rely on creativity, innovation, digital transformation, and sustainability as differentiating elements (Scopen, 2021), but they do not always apply these strategies to their own positioning. However, in this edition of the study, aspects related to sustainability and social consciousness emerge for the first time as one of the main future concerns for the sector (second only to the need to achieve greater visibility and relevance).

### 3.3. Communication of CSR

The communication of CSR has been defined by many authors (see Golob et al., 2013; Ihlen et al., 2011; Kim, 2023; Viererbl and Koch, 2022), although, as noted by Heath and Waymer (2016), one of the most accepted definitions is that of Podnar:

---

<sup>1</sup>. The concept of full services implies that they "offer any kind of communication solution" with a focus on concept development and strategic planning of communication campaigns (Schultz and Ervolder, 1998: 40).

a process of anticipating stakeholder expectations, articulating CSR policies, and managing various communication tools of the organization designed to provide accurate and transparent information about a company or brand's integration of its business operations, social and environmental concerns, and interactions with stakeholders (2008, p. 75).

CSR communication is a growing specialty at both the professional and academic levels (Verk et al., 2021; Walter, 2014). However, some years ago, there was still a debate about whether CSR practices should be communicated or not. Authors like Du et al. (2010), Lindgreen and Swaen (2010), Mark-Herbert and Schantz (2007), Skard and Thorbjornsen (2014), among others, reflected on this issue influenced by precepts that gave greater merit to undisclosed good deeds. However, as Walter (2014: 62) points out, CSR communication is inevitable because "one cannot not communicate... the communication process begins, whether intentionally or not, as soon as a corporation starts implementing CSR.

As a result, Morsing and Schultz (2006) define CSR communication as "a double-edged sword." This situation has been dubbed by Coombs and Holladay (2011, p. 110) as the "dilemma of promotional CSR communication," and it becomes more pronounced in a scenario where public criticism of socially irresponsible corporate practices is on the rise, along with skepticism towards corporate actions that are communicated as responsible when they are, in reality, not very or not at all responsible, such as greenwashing<sup>2</sup> or pinkwashing<sup>3</sup> (Dessart and Standaert, 2023; Gatti et al., 2019; Vollero, 2022). This skepticism among stakeholders towards CSR inhibits the success of CSR programs (Dalal, 2020) and harms corporate reputation (Morsing et al., 2008).

The focus, therefore, is on how to effectively communicate CSR practices (Cunningham, 2022; Lindgreen and Swaen, 2010), and specifically, whether it is more suitable to promote proactivity in disseminating them or to opt for a more subtle communication (Bachmann and Ingenhoff, 2017; Kim and Ferguson, 2018).

In this regard, real commitment and intrinsic motivation have been identified as key factors in gaining credibility and trust and convincing stakeholders (Du et al., 2010; Viererbl and Koch, 2022). In other words, clearly demonstrating a connection between the organization's purpose (its mission, vision, and values) and CSR practices, involving all members of the organization (Casado and Cuadrado, 2014), and showing consistency in CSR commitments (Coombs and Holladay, 2011; Kim and Ferguson, 2018). Another pillar of CSR communication is transparency (Coombs and Holladay, 2011; Kim and Ferguson, 2018; Kim and Lee, 2018), which requires carefully planned communication to avoid reputational risks (Morsing et al., 2008).

Previous studies have identified that one of the strategies to provide greater legitimacy to CSR practices is to link them to one of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (ElAlfy et al., 2020; Estanyol, 2020; López-Concepción et al., 2021; Rosati and Faria, 2018; Scheyvens et al., 2016), as these provide a universally accepted understanding of sustainability (ESADE et al., 2022; Ike et al., 2019) and can serve as guidelines for companies to invest in sustainable development while pursuing their own business objectives (Grover et al., 2019).

Organizations worldwide have started to integrate the SDGs into their sustainability reports (Rosati and Faria, 2018). However, after analyzing 1,370 sustainability reports published by organizations explicitly committed to the SDGs from various countries, Heras-Saizarbitoria et al. (2022) conclude that the involvement of these organizations with the 2030 Agenda is often low. They tend to avoid referring to strategies, objectives, stakeholders, indicators, actions, and results related to the integration of the SDGs into their CSR practices. The authors add that the communicative use that companies make of the UN's goals is for social legitimization,

---

<sup>2</sup>. Greenpeace (2022) defines greenwashing as a public relations tactic used to make a company or product appear environmentally friendly when it is not significantly reducing its environmental impact.

<sup>3</sup>. Pinkwashing is the practice of using the color pink and pink ribbons to indicate that a company has joined the search for a cure for breast cancer and to invoke solidarity with this disease, even when the company may be using cancer-related chemicals.

linking them to practices aimed at improving the organization's projected image as socially responsible, and even using strategies associated with *bluewashing*<sup>4</sup> or the *SDG-washing*<sup>5</sup>.

Regarding the Spanish context, organizations consider the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a valid framework to respond to the sustainability demands of stakeholders (ESADE et al., 2022). However, there are still few organizations that clearly choose to align and communicate their CSR practices with the SDGs. Specifically, only 34% of Spanish companies, according to the 2022 SDG Barometer (ESADE et al., 2022).

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1. Sample and justification

The websites of 50 PR agencies operating in Spain were analyzed (n1=50), based on the reference ranking from the specialized magazine *El Publicista* (2022 edition, see Table 1).

Of all the existing rankings, this one was chosen because it has had the greatest continuity over the past decade (regularly published since 2016). Additionally, it provides the most recent data, covers a larger number of agencies, employs a methodology that gathers evaluations from various relevant actors, and presents results that are consistent with other existing rankings both at the national level (*El Economista* or *Merca2.0*) and internationally (*PRovoke* or *PRWeek*).

The study of the 50 websites of PR agencies has allowed the identification of 43 CSR campaigns that these agencies have developed for their clients, in addition to 23 more campaigns developed as their own actions. This total of 66 campaigns (n2=66) has also been analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

**Table 1.** List of the PR agencies analyzed.

Num.	Agency	Num.	Agency
1	LLYC	26	Archetype Spain
2	Omnicom PR Spain	27	Equipo Singular
3	Apple Tree	28	Trescom
4	Atrevia	29	AMT Comunicación
5	Roman	30	Esencial
6	Tinkle	31	Bloody
7	Evercom	32	Axicom Spain
8	Kreab Spain	33	MGC&CO
9	Estudio de Comunicación	34	Nota Bene
10	Marco	35	Accenture Song Spain
11	Newslink Spain	36	The Apartment

<sup>4</sup>. McClimon (2022) explains that the term *bluewashing* comes from the blue color of the United Nations flag, as it was first used to refer to companies who signed the United Nations Global Compact and its principles but did not make any actual policy reforms.

<sup>5</sup>. The concept has a very similar meaning to *bluewashing* but specifically involves the use of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a vehicle for PR or marketing. Companies that boast about championing certain commitments from the 2030 Agenda to improve the public perception of their values, social programs, and governance practices without introducing real changes or reforms in their day-to-day management would be engaging in *SDG-washing*. Munro (2021) warns that if this harmful practice continues, there is a risk that the credibility of the UN's goals will significantly diminish over time.

12	Weber Shandwick Spain	37	LeanFactor
13	Havas PR	38	Best
14	Ulled	39	Canela
15	Torres y Carrera	40	Grayling Spain
16	BCW Spain	41	Comma
17	Hotwire Spain	42	Aletreo
18	PR Garage	43	SEC Newsgate Spain
19	H+K Strategies Spain	44	Interprofit
20	Asesores de Comunicación	45	Com2Be
21	Team Lewis Spain	46	Pridecom
22	Coonic	47	Alabra
23	Ogilvy Spain	48	PROA
24	Edelman Spain	49	Taller WK
25	Butragueño & Bottländer	50	Bemypartner

Source: *El Publicista* (2022).

## 4.2. Method

The applied method was a quantitative and qualitative content analysis (Krippendorff, 1980) of corporate websites, a methodology previously used in CSR communication research (see Capriotti and Moreno, 2007; Vollero et al., 2022). As Vollero et al. (2022) point out, corporate websites represent a comprehensive and privileged tool for companies to disseminate their approach and CSR projects, making them suitable for identifying how companies communicate their CSR experience and commitment.

The analyzed variables included the type of consultancy, offered CSR services, showcased CSR success cases, implemented own CSR actions, and specialized professionals in CSR (see the coding sheet in Table 2). The analysis period spanned from December 1, 2022, to January 30, 2023.

To ensure the reliability of the data, the analysis was conducted by three independent coders, with a percentage of agreement of 0.91, according to the Holsti method (1969). This indicates a very acceptable reliability coefficient (Neuendorf, 2002). To validate the degree of agreement in the more qualitative variables, the Cohen's Kappa coefficient (k) (Cohen, 1960) was applied, resulting in a value of 0.712, which, falling between 0.6 and 0.8, represents a good degree of agreement.

**Table 2.** Data coding sheet.

N.	Categories	Sub Categories
1	Agency Name	-
2	Type of Agency	From 1 to 50
3	Type of agency	Full services (based on Schultz and Ervolder's definition, 1998). Specialized in CSR. Other (please specify).
4	Services related to CSR	Yes (qualitative analysis of the type) No
5	Mention of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals)	Yes No

Being or appearing socially responsible? How do public relations agencies demonstrate their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects, whether they are supporting external initiatives or pursuing their own

6	Mention of the 2030 Agenda	Yes No
7	Dissemination of CSR campaigns developed for clients	Yes No
8	CSR campaigns featured on the agency's website	Yes/No (In case of Yes:) Name of the action Client Client sector Client sector linked to CSR (Yes/No) CSR scope (S=Social or E=Environmental) Linked ODS Campaign description Year PR Action Results
9	Specialists in CSR	Yes No
10	In-house CSR initiatives	Yes/No (In case of Yes:) Campaign name CSR scope (S=Social or E=Environmental) Linked ODS Relationship with agency's tasks (Yes/No) Year Description

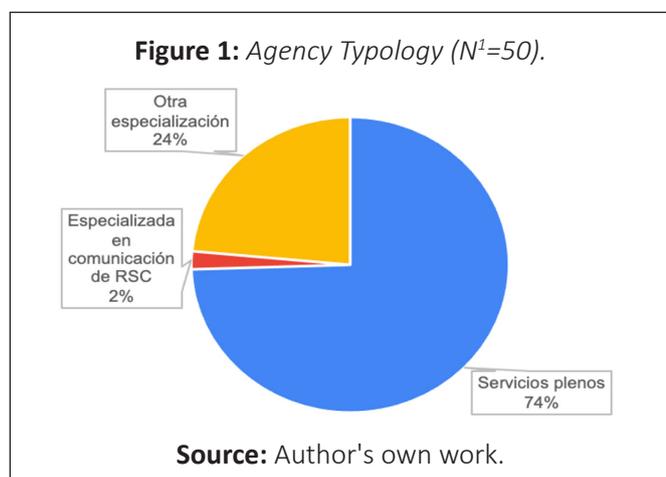
Source: Author's own work.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Specialized CSR services offered by PR agencies

The vast majority of communication and PR consulting firms (74.5%) present themselves as full-service agencies. When it comes to self-designation, they prefer to use the term communication agency.

Only 1 out of the 50 agencies specializes in CSR communication. 23.5% specialize in other areas, with the most common specializations being digital content creation, lifestyle-focused communication, and internal communication (see Figure 1).



Based on the information they disclose on their corporate websites, 42% of these consulting firms offer CSR services, focusing on sustainability communication, equality, reputation, and ESG criteria (Environmental, Social, and Governance). This means that more than half of the consulting firms (specifically 58%) still do not include CSR communication in their service portfolios.

From the qualitative analysis, it is evident that agencies offering expertise in CSR highlight this on their websites with messages such as "We are experts in aligning business strategy with ESG criteria" (LLYC, 2023), "We help our clients define

their unique position and voice and communicate their social purpose" (Weber Shandwick, 2023), "Words only matter if they have ESG commitment" (Torres y Carrera, 2023), or "A company cannot succeed in a failing society" (Kreab, 2023). These positions appear to go beyond communication to offer CSR advisory services.

Conducting ESG audits based on reference standards, preparing sustainability reports and memoranda, identifying the interests of each stakeholder in relation to the SDGs, creating a corporate narrative linked to purpose, risk management, supporting the transition to sustainability, and integrating ESG parameters into the strategy and operational performance of organizations are some of the specific CSR-related services that agencies explicitly mention on their websites. While most of these are CSR communication services, some fall into a more strategic realm of PR and even corporate management.

## 5.2. CSR campaigns developed for client companies

The majority of the PR agencies analyzed (specifically 60%) showcase on their websites successful CSR communication campaigns designed and executed for some of their clients. In particular, 43 campaigns have been identified, some of which were developed by the same agency (see Table A1 in the Annex). These campaigns were mostly executed between 2020 and 2022. The analysis shows that the client companies for which these campaigns were developed belong to sectors ranging from banking to transportation, food and beverages, or energy. According to the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE, 2009) (National Institute of Statistics-INE, 2023), the top sectors are associative activities (19%), followed by companies in the chemical industry (specifically hygiene and cosmetics) (9%), the manufacture of electrical machinery and equipment (7%), and financial services (7%) (see Table 3).

It is worth noting that 27.3% of the promoting organizations of these campaigns are NGOs, foundations, or third-sector entities. Furthermore, 56.8% of all the campaigns are linked to the organization's own activities, even if it is in the private sector, as their actions contribute to sustainability (sustainable energy companies, recyclable packaging companies, or hospital centers).

**Table 3.** *Client Company Sectors.*

Sector	Num. Companies
Other types of associative activities	8
Chemical industry (hygiene and cosmetics)	4
Manufacture of electrical machinery and equipment	3
Financial services, except insurance and pension funds	3
Healthcare activities	2
Manufacture of beverages	2
Other manufacturing industries	2
Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	2
Manufacture of pharmaceutical products	1
Collection, treatment, and disposal of waste	1
Sale and repair of motor vehicles	1
Retail trade, except for motor vehicles	1
Maritime and inland waterway transport	1
Air transport	1
Accommodation services	1
Programming, consultancy, and related computer activities	1

Being or appearing socially responsible? How do public relations agencies demonstrate their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects, whether they are supporting external initiatives or pursuing their own

Manufacture of computer, electronic, and optical products	1
Insurance, reinsurance, and pension funding, except compulsory social security	1
Travel agency, tour operator, and other reservation services	1
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	1
Tobacco industry	1
Nature reserves	1
Sports, recreational, and entertainment activities	1
Forestry and logging	1
Food industry	1

Source: Author's own work.

\*Classification of sectors according to the codes of the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE, 2009) (National Institute of Statistics-INE, 2023).

Classifying the campaigns by their nature (more social or environmental), an evenly balanced distribution is observed, with 21 social campaigns, 19 environmental campaigns, and 3 campaigns covering both areas. Through a more detailed study to identify their connection with the SDGs, it is noted that most campaigns are linked to SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), specifically with actions to promote physical health (reduction of infectious diseases, awareness about skin or breast cancer) but also with a significant focus on mental health, such as reducing mobile device use among teenagers, eradicating bullying, or preventing stress. They are followed by the SDGs related to environmental protection (SDGs 7, 12, 13, 14, and 15), with campaigns promoting recycling, eco-friendly and biodegradable products, renewable energy, and sustainable tourism. Additionally, there are campaigns advocating for coral protection, against deforestation, and for reducing CO2 emissions. Campaigns promoting SDG 5 (Gender Equality) come next (see Figure 2).

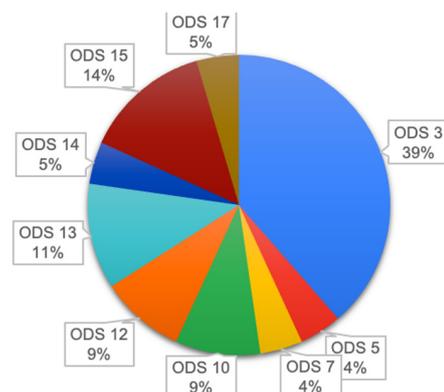
The agencies describe the success of these CSR communication campaigns by detailing the impacts achieved in media, whether they are traditional or non-traditional, mostly through quantitative data (number of views, impressions on social media, website visits, etc.).

### 5.3. Professionals specialized in CSR communication

Only 12% of the agencies indicate on their website that they have professionals specialized in CSR or its communication, which contrasts with the fact mentioned earlier that 42% of these consulting firms offer CSR communication services and/or CSR advisory. Those that do mention having these experts highlight their specialization in reporting standards, ESG advisory, socio-economic impact measurement, or sustainability strategic planning.

Thus, while it is common for the vast majority of agency websites to highlight their professional team under the 'About Us' or 'Team' section and specify who is responsible for each specialty, very

Figure 2: SDGs linked in RSC communication campaigns developed for clients (N=43).



Source: Author's own work.

\*SDGs: SDG1 (No Poverty); SDG2 (Zero Hunger); SDG3 (Good Health and Well-being); SDG4 (Quality Education); SDG5 (Gender Equality); SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation); SDG7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); SDG9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure); SDG10 (Reduced Inequality); SDG11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); SDG12 (Responsible Consumption and Production); SDG13 (Climate Action); SDG14 (Life Below Water); SDG15 (Life on Land); SDG16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions); SDG17 (Partnerships for the Goals)

few agencies still make it visible whether they have a specialist in CSR communication among their staff. They emphasize teams specialized in other areas, with the most common ones being crisis communication, digital communication and content editing, internal communication, public affairs, and event organization. However, only one in ten agencies highlights having an expert in CSR or its communication.

Furthermore, during the content analysis, it was observed that there are agencies that do not mention having these specialized professionals but do publish articles on their blogs about greenwashing or activism, where some of their professionals are identified as experts in CSR and its communication.

It's also important to note that the absence of the disclosure of having such specialized professional profiles on the websites of agencies does not necessarily mean that these professionals do not exist within their teams. What is demonstrated is that very few agencies showcase this on their websites, and as a result, they may use it as an attractive feature for clients seeking specialized services in this area.

#### 5.4. Own CSR actions

Finally, only 34% of the PR agencies implement their own CSR actions. 23 campaigns have been identified, some carried out by the same agency. From the qualitative analysis, it is evident that they do so under the umbrella of their own foundation, by collaborating with NGOs to develop pro bono communication plans, or by implementing their own ethical codes and conduct, which include aspects such as transparency and respect for human and environmental rights. Additionally, some agencies highlight on their websites that they have received B Corp<sup>6</sup> certification or have been awarded in awards in the field (for example, in the MEES Awards, 2023).

The types of CSR actions publicly displayed on the websites are relatively recent, with most of them starting from 2019, of various kinds, and targeting diverse audiences (see Annex Table A2). They include training actions on public speaking for economically disadvantaged children, initiatives aimed at employee happiness, activities to empower women, actions focused on alleviating the socio-health crisis resulting from COVID-19, and others aimed at the population of specific regions affected by an environmental crisis, such as the volcanic eruption in La Palma in 2021.

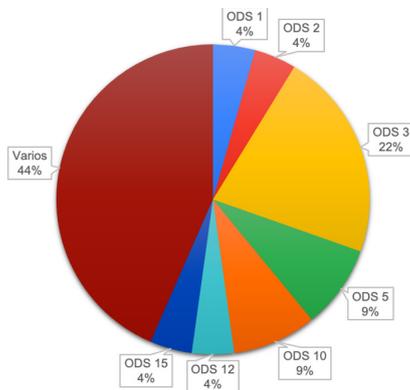
Among the agencies with their own CSR programs, 47.8% use pro bono collaboration strategies with socially responsible non-profit entities, such as non-governmental organizations, foundations, and associations, focusing all their CSR efforts on long-term cooperation with one or a few entities (some collaborations have lasted more than twenty years), or choosing to support specific actions. The type of collaborations varies, providing support in communication and PR tasks ranging from event organization to press office actions.

In terms of CSR scope, the majority of these actions are of a social nature (60.9%), with only 8.6% being of an environmental nature, and 30.4% encompassing both areas. Although most agencies do not specifically communicate their connection to the SDGs in their CSR actions, analyzing the objectives of the campaigns reveals that they are varied, with 44% of the campaigns linking to more than two SDGs. The most linked SDGs are Gender Equality (SDG 5), Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3), No Poverty (SDG 1), Zero Hunger (SDG 2), and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10) (see Figure 3).

---

<sup>6</sup>. The B Corp certificate is awarded to companies "leaders in the transformation towards a new, more inclusive and sustainable business paradigm" (BCorp, 2023). With a total of 6 distinctions, Spain is the third country in the world with the most public relations and communication agencies accredited by B Corp, only surpassed by the United Kingdom -with 18- and the United States -with 14- (Dircomfidencial, 2023).

**Figure 3: SDGs linked in their own CSR communication campaigns (N=23).**



**Source:** Author's own work.

\*SDGs: SDG1 (No Poverty); SDG2 (Zero Hunger); SDG3 (Good Health and Well-being); SDG4 (Quality Education); SDG5 (Gender Equality); SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation); SDG7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); SDG9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure); SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities); SDG11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); SDG12 (Responsible Consumption and Production); SDG13 (Climate Action); SDG14 (Life Below Water); SDG15 (Life on Land); SDG16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions); SDG17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

## 6. Discussion and Conclusions

This research aimed to delve into the study of CSR communication, identifying whether PR agencies showcase their specialized services in the field [O1] and examining their own involvement in the matter [O2]. The study provides pioneering results on how one of the key actors in the public relations process, the executing entity responsible for designing and implementing PR campaigns in an external capacity, develops CSR actions. This has placed communication at the center of CSR research, as advocated by the literature (Ji et al., 2020; Kim, 2023; Verk et al., 2021). It has done so by providing empirical evidence of its application in Spain, in a context where CSR is being promoted by the promoting entities—client companies and institutions (Deloitte and SERES Foundation, 2023a)—but also amid increasing expectations from stakeholders (Lock and Schulz-Knappe, 2019; Viererbl and Koch, 2022).

In response to question [P1] (Do PR agencies offer CSR communication services? And, if so, which ones specifically?), the results reveal that only 2% of the top PR agencies analyzed in Spain specialize

in CSR communication. This highlights that CSR communication is still relatively underdeveloped in the country when compared to other areas of specialization, such as digital communication, internal communication, or lifestyle communication, which do have specialized consultancies among the top 50 (23.5%). However, it's worth noting that nearly half of the agencies do offer CSR communication and/or advisory services, specifically 42%. This figure could even be higher if we consider the possibility that some agencies offering services in this area do not explicitly advertise them on their websites. It is hypothesized that in the coming years, this area of specialization will increase (Dalla-Pria and Rodríguez-de-Dios, 2022) in response to growing demand from clients, as indicated in recent reports (Deloitte and SERES Foundation, 2023a; Dircom, 2022), and to comply with new regulations at the national and European levels that increasingly require companies to report on their non-financial actions (Council of the European Union, 2022; Government of Spain, 2014 and 2018).

Regarding [P2] (What type of CSR communication campaigns do they design and execute for their clients?), 60% of PR agencies showcase success stories of CSR communication on their respective websites. These actions go beyond a sustainability report, applying PR techniques such as event organization, media relations, and social media communication. Specifically, 43 campaigns promoted by client companies of various types have been identified. Among the disclosed cases, we find actions driven by third-sector entities and similar organizations (27.3%), which inherently have a high level of social legitimacy. Furthermore, over half of these campaigns (56.8%) are linked to the core corporate activities of the organizations, a strategy recommended by scholars in the field and considered a best practice (Casado and Cuadrado, 2014; Coombs and Holladay, 2011; Kim and Ferguson, 2018, Rim and Tao, 2022).

The objectives of the identified CSR campaigns are mostly related to SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and the SDGs most associated with environmental protection (SDGs 12, 13, 14, and 15), although they cover a wide range of goals.

For the most part, agencies describe the success of the campaigns they have promoted using notoriety data based on the PESO<sup>7</sup> model, defined by Dietrich (2015), indicating the number of impacts in earned, owned, or shared media. However, it is observed that they focus on the achievement of cognitive impact objectives (message exposure), but very little on affective impact objectives (focused on influencing attitudes) or cognitive impact objectives (focused on reinforcements or behavior changes). In other words, they are limited to the first hierarchical level of objectives formulated by Ray (1973), so it is identified as a practice that needs improvement.

This research aimed to delve into the study of CSR communication, identifying whether PR agencies showcase their specialized services in the field [O1] and examining their own involvement in this matter [O2]. The study provides pioneering results on how one of the key subjects in the public relations process - the executing subject responsible for designing and executing PR campaigns, in this case, in an external mode - carries out CSR actions. This places communication at the center of CSR research, as advocated by the literature (Ji et al., 2020; Kim, 2023; Verk et al., 2021), providing empirical evidence of its application in Spain, in a context where CSR is being promoted by promoting subjects - client companies and institutions (Deloitte and SERES Foundation, 2023a) - but also with increasing expectations from their stakeholders (Lock and Schulz-Knappe, 2019; Viererbl and Koch, 2022).

Addressing question [P1] (Do PR agencies offer CSR communication services? And if so, what specific services?), the results reveal that only 2% of the analyzed PR agencies that occupy the top positions in Spain specialize in CSR communication. This highlights that CSR communication is still an area with limited implementation in the country, especially when compared to other areas of specialization such as digital communication, internal communication, or lifestyle sectors, which have specialized consulting firms among the top 50 (23.5%). However, it's worth noting that nearly half of the agencies do offer CSR communication services and/or CSR consulting, specifically 42%. This figure could be even higher if we consider the possibility that some agencies offering such services may not explicitly advertise them on their websites. It is postulated as a hypothesis that in the coming years, this area of specialization will increase (Dalla-Pria and Rodríguez-de-Dios, 2022) in response to growing demand from clients, as indicated by recent reports (Deloitte and SERES Foundation, 2023a; Dircom, 2022), and to comply with new state and European regulations that increasingly require companies to report on their non-financial actions (Council of the European Union, 2022; Government of Spain, 2014 and 2018).

Regarding [P2] (What type of CSR communication campaigns do they design and execute for their clients?), 60% of PR agencies display CSR communication success stories on their respective websites. These actions go beyond sustainability reporting, applying PR techniques such as event organization, media relations, and social media communication. Specifically, 43 campaigns have been identified, promoted by client companies of various types. Among the disclosed cases, there are actions promoted by third-sector entities and similar organizations (27.3%), whose purposes generally have a special social legitimacy. Moreover, more than half of these campaigns (56.8%) are linked to the core corporate activities of the organizations, a strategy recommended by scholars in the field and considered a good professional practice (Casado and Cuadrado, 2014; Coombs and Holladay, 2011; Kim and Ferguson, 2018; Rim and Tao, 2022).

The objectives of the identified CSR campaigns are mostly related to SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDGs related to environmental protection (SDGs 12, 13, 14, and 15), although they cover a wide range of objectives.

In most cases, PR agencies describe the success of the campaigns they have promoted using notoriety data based on the PESO model.

---

<sup>7</sup>. Acronym Paid, Earned, Shared and Owned.

Defined by Dietrich (2015), indicating the number of impacts in earned, owned, or shared media. However, it is observed that they focus on the achievement of cognitive impact objectives (message exposure) but very little on affective impact objectives (focused on influencing attitudes) or conative impact objectives (focused on reinforcements or behavior changes). In other words, they are limited to the first hierarchical level of objectives formulated by Ray (1973), so it is identified as a practice that needs improvement.

Addressing [P3] (Do they have professionals specialized in CSR communication?), the fact that only 12% of PR agencies communicate on their websites that they have professionals specialized in this field represents very limited diffusion of this profile. This is especially notable when the sector itself considers CSR communication an increasingly strategic and demanded area by the clients of PR agencies (Dircom, 2022; Deloitte and SERES Foundation, 2023a; EUPRERA, 2022). Furthermore, considering that this percentage is significantly lower than the percentage of agencies claiming to offer CSR communication services (42%), it is evident that either these services are offered by non-specialized professionals, or agencies do not consider it necessary to highlight such specialization in their communication channels. This suggests a need for revision, as it could help attract new business.

Regarding [P4] (Do PR agencies themselves engage in CSR? And if so, what type of CSR actions do they undertake?), the data reveal that only a minority of agencies undertake their own CSR actions (34%). While many of the studied agencies are small and medium-sized enterprises, this should not be an excuse for not adopting socially responsible policies, as advocated by Cunningham (2022). Specifically, 23 campaigns have been identified. Many of these actions started after 2020, following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have some correlation, as indicated by recent reports (Deloitte and SERES Foundation, 2022b).

It has also been observed that one of the most common objectives of these CSR campaigns is the promotion of gender equality (SDG 5) and women's empowerment, which could be linked to the fact that the sector is highly feminized (72% women) but still lacks female representation in top management positions (50%) (ADC report, 2020). Moreover, it is observed that less than half of the campaigns apply techniques related to the agency's own activities (47.8%), such as offering pro bono communication services to non-profit entities or social causes. This is considered a low percentage, especially when previous studies have concluded that demonstrating consistency between CSR actions and the organization's core activities helps build credibility and reduce public skepticism (Du et al., 2010; Rim and Tao, 2022; Viererbl and Koch, 2022).

Given that transparency is a fundamental pillar of CSR communication (Coombs and Holladay, 2011; Kim and Ferguson, 2018; Kim and Lee, 2018), and corporate websites are an important platform for disseminating implemented CSR practices (Georgiadou and Nickerson, 2020), it is encouraged that in the future, PR agency websites more accurately reflect their CSR activities. Furthermore, the sector should increase its level of involvement in this area. Likewise, since Scopen (2021) reports that the most commonly used selection criterion for clients when choosing a PR agency is the agency's previous work, which is showcased through cases, credentials, etc. (69%), it seems like a good strategy to promote more CSR communication campaigns in the future if agencies want to demonstrate their strength in this area and attract new business. However, the results achieved with these campaigns and the way they are presented on websites should not be limited- as they are now- to media impacts (quantitative data related to publications, views received, etc.). It is recommended that agencies provide data on the influence achieved on target audiences in terms of attitude and behavior changes (achievement of affective and conative objectives), especially when the goal is a social and/or environmental impact.

Another conclusion of the study is that the PR industry itself does not lead by example in demonstrating the same level of commitment to CSR. The data show that the implementation of CSR actions within the industry is still a minority phenomenon (34%), although it can serve as an incentive for other agencies to follow suit. Some agencies provide pro bono communication services to NGOs, which is considered a good practice to be implemented in the future, as it links the communication activities offered by PR agencies with CSR.

"This research aims to fill a gap in the public relations and CSR communication literature in Spain."

This research has limitations. First, it is limited to one country, Spain, although some of the analyzed campaigns were developed by international PR agencies, and others are global campaigns executed in multiple countries. In any case, the same study could be replicated in other countries to detect similarities and differences. Second, although the research focuses on the analysis of information about CSR services and involvement published by PR agencies on their websites, this does not imply that these agencies are not undertaking other CSR actions even if they are not communicated through this channel. Furthermore, the study identifies what agencies showcase and offer on their websites, but it does not delve into whether this corresponds to what they actually do. This is a methodological limitation inherent to the research technique used. Therefore, as future lines of research, in order to obtain richer information, it is proposed to conduct in-depth interviews with agency leaders to gain a better understanding of how they are addressing CSR, both in terms of communication and consulting services for clients and internally within the agencies themselves. Finally, analyzing CSR communication by agencies on other channels, such as their social media profiles, is suggested for a better understanding of how they communicate CSR.

This study contributes to academic knowledge about CSR communication practices, an area that is still not widely studied in the specialized literature, which tends to focus on specific economic sectors. The results provide evidence of how CSR campaigns are developed for a wide range of companies across various sectors, as well as how PR agencies (the executing entities of the campaigns) themselves promote their own CSR actions. As a result, the findings have implications for the PR profession, as they identify strategies and best communication practices that the sector can adopt, such as the dissemination of CSR campaigns through their own channels, the employment of specialized professionals, and the promotion of CSR campaigns linked to the corporate mission.

#### DATABASE (*dataset*)

The database (*dataset*) generated in the research, as part of the supplementary material accompanying the text, is published on the Catalan Open Research Area (CORA), the research data repository for Catalan universities. You can access it through the following link: <https://doi.org/10.34810/data755>

## 7. References

- ADC [Asociación de Consultoras de Comunicación]. (2020). *II Edición del estudio La mujer en comunicación y RRPP en España*. <https://www.asociacionadc.org/publicaciones-adc/>
- Álvarez, M. B. (2020). La reforma de la Ley de Sociedades de Capital sobre las operaciones con partes vinculadas. La incorporación de la directiva 2017/828. *Revista de derecho de sociedades*, 60.
- B Corp. (2023). *Quiero ser Empresa B Corp*. <https://www.bcorpSpain.es/ser-bcorp>
- Bachmann, P. y Ingenhoff, D. (2017). How do media companies gain legitimacy? An experimental study on the (Ir)Relevance of CSR communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 11(1), 79-94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2016.1249282>
- Barrio-Fraile, E. y Enrique-Jiménez, A. M. (2021). The strategic value of corporate social responsibility CSR: the present and future of its management. *Profesional de la Información*, 30(3). <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2021.may.12>
- Brès, L., Mosonyi, S., Gond, J. P., Muzio, D., Mitra, R., Werr, A. y Wickert, C. (2019). Rethinking professionalization: A generative dialogue on CSR practitioners. *Journal of Professions and Organization*, 6(2), 246-264. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jpo/joz009>
- Business Research Company. (2023). *Public Relations Global Market Report 2023*.

- Capriotti, P. y Moreno, A. (2007). Communicating corporate responsibility through corporate web sites in Spain. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 12(3), 221-237.
- Casado, A. y Cuadrado, F. J. (2014). La reputación corporativa: Un nuevo enfoque de las competencias transversales en el EEES. *REDU: Revista de docencia universitaria*, 12(1), 353-371.
- Chaudhri, V. (2016). Corporate social responsibility and the communication imperative: Perspectives from CSR managers. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 53(4), 419-442. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488414525469>
- Chen, Y. R. R., Hung-Baesecke, C. J. F. y Chen, X. (2020). Moving forward the dialogic theory of public relations: Concepts, methods and applications of organization-public dialogue. *Public Relations Review*, 46(1), 101878. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2019.101878>
- Clark, C. (2000). Differences Between Public Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility: An Analysis. *Public Relations Review*, 26(3), 363-380.
- Cohen, J. (1960). A coefficient of agreement for nominal scales. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 20, 37-46.
- Compte-Pujol, M., Matilla, K. y Marca-Francés, G. (2019). La formación universitaria en comunicación de la RSC: Análisis de las titulaciones especializadas en RSC en España (2017-18). *Revista de docencia universitaria*, 17(2), 177-196. <https://doi.org/10.4995/redu.2019.10470>
- Coombs, W.T. (2019). Transmedia storytelling: a potentially vital resource for CSR communication. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 24(2), 351-367. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-11-2017-0114>
- Coombs, W. T. y Holladay, S. J. (2011). *Managing Corporate Social Responsibility: A Communication Approach*, Wiley-Blackwell.
- Consejo de la Unión Europea. (2022, 1 de diciembre). *El Consejo adopta una posición sobre las normas de diligencia debida para las grandes empresas*. [bit.ly/3EsJ9zv](https://bit.ly/3EsJ9zv)
- Costa-Sánchez, C., Túñez-López, M. y Míguez-González, M. I. (2019). Agencias de comunicación en España en la encrucijada digital. Prácticas, perspectivas y visión de futuro. *Profesional de la Información*, 28(6), e280606. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2019.nov.06>
- Crane, A. y Glozer, S. (2016). Researching corporate social responsibility communication: Themes, opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Management Studies*, 53(7), 1223-1252. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12196>
- Cuenca-Fontbona, J., Matilla, K. y Compte-Pujol, M. (2020). Transformación digital de las agencias de Relaciones Públicas y Comunicación españolas. *Profesional de la Información*, 29(3), e290310. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2020.may.10>
- Cunningham, P. (2022). Corporate social responsibility in small- and medium-sized fast-growth private firms: How it is conceived, enacted, and communicated. En A. O'Connor (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility Communication* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Dalal, B. (2020). The antecedents and consequences of CSR skepticism: An integrated framework. *Journal of Sustainable Marketing*, 1(1), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.51300/josm-2020-18>

- Dalla-Pria, L. y Rodríguez-de-Dios, I. (2022). CSR communication on social media: the impact of source and framing on message credibility, corporate reputation and WOM. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 27(3), 543-557. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-09-2021-0097>
- Deloitte y Fundación SERES. (2023a). *IX Impacto Social de las Empresas. Un análisis del impacto y la contribución real de las empresas a la sociedad*. <https://acortar.link/94CbO6>
- Deloitte y Fundación SERES (2023b, julio). *#SERESResponsables, impacto social Informe del impacto social de las empresas frente a la COVID-19*. <bit.ly/3Ev9BJ0>
- Dessart, L. y Standaert, W. (2023). Strategic storytelling in the age of sustainability. *Business Horizons*, 66(3), 371-385. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2023.01.005>
- Dietrich, G. (2015, 8 de junio). How PESO make sense in influencer marketing. *PR Week*. <https://www.prweek.com/article/1350303/peso-makes-sense-influencer-marketing>
- Dircom. (2022). *El estado de la Comunicación en España 21-22*. <bit.ly/3Pvxu9D>
- Dircomfidencial. (2023, agosto). *España es uno de los países con más agencias de comunicación acreditadas por B Corp*. Dircomfidencial.com. <bit.ly/45X69T1>
- Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B. y Sen, S. (2010). Maximizing Business Returns to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): The Role of CSR Communication. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(1), 8-19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2009.00276.x>
- Durán-González, A. M. y Mosquera-López, P. (2016). Correspondencia de los Modelos de Relaciones Públicas a distintos contextos evolutivos de responsabilidad social empresarial. *Revista Internacional de Relaciones Públicas*, 11(6), 91-112.
- Edelman. (2022). *Edelman Trust Barometer*. <https://www.edelman.com/trust/2022-trust-barometer>
- ElAlfy, A., Darwish, K. M. y Weber, O. (2020). Corporations and sustainable development goals communication on social media: Corporate social responsibility or just another buzzword?. *Sustainable Development*, 28(5), 1418-1430. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2095>
- Ellerup, A. y Thomsen, C. (2018). Reviewing corporate social responsibility communication: a legitimacy perspective. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 23(4), 492-511. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-04-2018-0042>
- El Economista. (2022). *Ranking de empresas del sector relaciones públicas y comunicación*. <https://ranking-empresas.eleconomista.es/sector-7021.html>
- El Publicista. (2022). *Ranking de las mejores agencias de comunicación y RRPP de España*. <bit.ly/487kAFS>
- ESADE, Seidor y United Vars. (2022, julio) *Barómetro ODS 2022. Alineamiento de las empresas españolas con los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible*. <https://acortar.link/DiJzce>
- Estanyol, E. (2020). Comunicación de la responsabilidad social corporativa (RSC): análisis de las campañas más premiadas en 2018. *Profesional de la información*, 29(3). <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2020.may.34>
- Estanyol, E. y Lalueza, F. (2014). ¿Tamaño o flexibilidad? Estructura organizativa de las consultoras de relaciones públicas en España. *SpheraPublica*, 6, 135-162.

- EUPRERA. (2022). *European Communication Monitor*. <https://www.communicationmonitor.eu/2022/07/07/ecm-european-communication-monitor-2022/>
- Fernández-Fernández, J. y Melé, D. (2015). Spain: From a Paternalistic Past to Sustainable Companies. En A. Habisch, J. Jonker, M. Wegner y R. Schmidpeter (Eds.). *Corporate Social Responsibility Across Europe* (pp. 289-302). Springer.
- Ferrari, M. A. y Durán, A. M. (2019). Estudio internacional sobre Relaciones Públicas y Sustentabilidad: el estado del arte en organizaciones brasileñas y ecuatorianas. *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación of Communication*, 10(1), 189-201. <https://www.doi.org/10.14198/MEDCOM2019.10.1.8>
- Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic management. A Stakeholder Approach*. Pitman.
- Gatti, L., Seele, P. y Rademacher, L. (2019). Grey zone in – Greenwash out. A review of greenwashing research and implications for the voluntary-mandatory transition of CSR. *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, 4(6), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-019-0044-9>
- Georgiadou, E. y Nickerson, C. (2020). Exploring strategic CSR communication on UAE banks' corporate websites", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 25(3), 413-428. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-02-2020-0044>
- Gobierno de España. (2014). *Ley 31/2014, de 3 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley de Sociedades de Capital para la mejora del gobierno corporativo*. [https://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2014-12589](https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2014-12589)
- Gobierno de España. (2018). *Ley 11/2018, de 28 de diciembre, por la que se modifica el Código de Comercio, el texto refundido de la Ley de Sociedades de Capital aprobado por el Real Decreto Legislativo 1/2010, de 2 de julio, y la Ley 22/2015, de 20 de julio, de Auditoría de Cuentas, en materia de información no financiera y diversidad*. <https://acortar.link/DVnISL>
- Golob, U., Podnar, K., Elving, W. J., Nielsen, A. E., Thomsen, C. y Schultz, F. (2013). CSR communication: quo vadis? *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 18(2), 176-192. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563281311319472>
- Greenpeace. (2022, 12 de abril). *Greenwash: what it is and how not to fall for it*. <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/what-is-greenwashing/>
- Grover, P., Kar, A. K. y Ilavarasan, P. V. (2019). Impact of corporate social responsibility on reputation. Insights from tweets on sustainable development goals by CEOs. *International Journal of Information Management*, 48, 39-52. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2019.01.009>
- Heath, R. y Waymer, D. (2016). Unlocking corporate social responsibility. Minimalism, maximization, and neo-institutionalist resource dependency keys. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 22(2), 192-208. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-12-2015-0084>
- Heras-Saizarbitoria, I., Urbieto, L. y Boiral, O. (2022). Organizations' engagement with sustainable development goals: From cherry-picking to SDG-washing? *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 29(2), 316-328. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2202>
- Holsti, O. R. (1969). *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*. Addison-Wesley.

- Ihlen, Ø., Bartlett, J. L. y May, S. (2011). Corporate social responsibility and communication. En , Ø. Ihlen, J. Bartlett y S. May (Eds.) *The handbook of communication and corporate social responsibility* (pp. 3-22). John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi-org/10.1002/9781118083246>
- Ike, M., Donovan, J. D., Topple, C. y Masli, E. K. (2019). The process of selecting and prioritising corporate sustainability issues: Insights for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 236(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.117661>
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística-INE (2023). *Clasificación Nacional de Actividades Económicas (CNAE-2009)*. [bit.ly/3RcqxLN](http://bit.ly/3RcqxLN)
- Ji, Y. G., Tao, W. y Rim, H. (2020). Mapping corporate social responsibility research in communication: A network and bibliometric analysis. *Public Relations Review*, 46(5), 101963. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2020.101962>
- Kim, S. (2023). CSR communication from a public relations perspective. In O'Connor, A. (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility Communication* (1st ed., pp. 11-20). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003184911-3>
- Kim, S. y Ferguson, M. A. T. (2018). Dimensions of effective CSR communication based on public expectations. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 24(6), 549-567. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2015.1118143>
- Kim, H. y Lee, T. H. (2018). Strategic CSR communication: A moderating role of transparency in trust building. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 12(2), 107-124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2018.1425692>
- Kreab (2023). *Kreab*. <https://kreab.com/espana/>
- Krippendorff, K. (1980). Validity in content analysis. En E. Mochmann (Ed.), *Computerstrategien für die kommunikationsanalyse* (pp. 69-112). Campus. [http://repository.upenn.edu/asc\\_papers/291](http://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers/291)
- Lee, S., Chung, S. y Lee, E. (2023). Globalization of the public relations agency industry: a country-level analysis of global public relations agencies and environmental factors. *Journal of Communication Management*, 27(1), 21-34. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-06-2022-0067>
- L'Etang, J. (2013). Public Relations: A Discipline in Transformation. *Sociology Compass*, 7(10), 799-817. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12072>
- Lindgreen, A. y Swaen, V. (2010). Corporate Social Responsibility. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2009.00277.x>
- LLYC. (202 ). *Llorente y Cuenca*. [llorenteycuenca.com](http://llorenteycuenca.com)
- Lock, I. y Schulz-Knappe, C. (2019). Credible corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication predicts legitimacy: Evidence from an experimental study. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 24(1), 2-20. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-07-2018-0071>
- López-Concepción, A., Gil-Lacruz, A. I. y Saz-Gil, I. (2022). Stakeholder engagement, Csr development and Sdgs compliance: A systematic review from 2015 to 2021. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 29(1), 19-31. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2170>

- Maloney, K. y McGrath, C. (2021). Rethinking public relations: Persuasion, democracy and society. *Public Relations Education*, 7(1), 220-226.
- Mark-Herbert, C. y Schantz, C. (2007). Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility – Brand management. *Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies*, 12(2), 4-11.
- McClimon, T. J. (2022, octubre). *Bluewashing joins greenwashing as the new corporate whitewashing*. Forbes.com. [bit.ly/3qTmYzy](https://www.forbes.com/3qTmYzy)
- Merca 2.0 (2023). *Ranking agencias de relaciones públicas 2023: RP en tiempos de IA*. <https://www.merca20.com/ranking-agencias-de-relaciones-publicas-2023-rp-en-tiempos-de-ia/>
- Miquel, S., López, L. y Gil, S. (2018). Radiografía de las consultoras de comunicación en España: perfil profesional, estructura y actividad. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 73, 478-503. <http://www.revistalatinacs.org/073paper/1266/25es.html>
- Morsing y Schultz (2006). Corporate Social Responsibility Communication: Stakeholder information, response and involvement strategies. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 15(4), 323-338. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8608.2006.00460.x>
- Morsing, M., Schultz, M. y Nielsen, K. U. (2008). The ‘Catch 22’ of communicating CSR: Findings from a Danish study. *Journal of marketing communications*, 14(2), 97-111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527260701856608>
- Munro, V. (2021, agosto). From CSR ‘greenwashing’ to general ‘SDG washing’: the potential threat to SDG implementation. *Emerald Publishing Opinion & Blog*. [bit.ly/3Z5oeMk](https://www.emerald.com/3Z5oeMk)
- Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Sage Publications.
- Observatorio de la RSC. (2022). *La responsabilidad social corporativa en las memorias anuales de las empresas del IBEX 35*. [bit.ly/3sGjJvI](https://www.observatoriodelarsc.com/3sGjJvI)
- ONU (Organización de las Naciones Unidas, 2015). *Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible*. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/objetivos-de-desarrollo-sostenible/>
- Pérez, A. y Rodríguez del Bosque, I. (2015). Corporate Social Responsibility Communication in the Spanish Hospitality Sector. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 36, 485-489.
- Podnar, K. (2008). Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 14(2), 75-81.
- Provoke. (2023). *Global top 250 PR agency ranking 2023*. [bit.ly/3PsyGUH](https://www.provoke.com/3PsyGUH)
- PRWeek. (2023). *Agency Business Report 2023: Rankings Table*. <https://www.prweek.com/article/1821395/agency-business-report-2023-rankings-table>
- Premios MEES [Premios Mi Empresa Es Saludable]. (2023). *Mi Empresa es saludable*. [www.miempresaessaludable.com](https://www.miempresaessaludable.com)
- Ray, M. L. (1973). A decision sequence analysis of developments in marketing communication. *Journal of Marketing*, 37(1), 29-38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224297303700105>

- Rosati, F. y Faria, L. G. D. (2018). Business contribution to the sustainable development agenda: Organizational factors related to early adoption of SDG reporting. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 26(3), 588-597. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1705>
- Rim, H. y Tao, W. (2022). CSR Communication Message Effects. En A. O'Connor (Ed.) *The Routledge Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility Communication* (pp.115-127). Routledge.
- Scheyvens, R., Banks, G. y Hughes, E. (2016). The private sector and the SDGs: The need to move beyond "business as usual". *Sustainable Development*, 24(6), 371-382. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.1623>
- Schultz, M. y Ervolder, L. (1998). Culture, identity and image consultancy: Crossing boundaries between management, advertising, public relations and design. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 2, 29-50. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.crr.1540065>
- Scopen. (2021). *PR Scope España 2021/22. Tendencias en la industria de la comunicación y las relaciones públicas 7ª edición*. Scopen.
- Skard, S. y Thorbjornsen, H. (2014). Is Publicity Always Better than Advertising? The Role of Brand Reputation in Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 124, 149-160.
- Tench, R., Sun, W. y Jones, B. (2014). Introduction: CSR Communication as an Emerging Field of Study. En: R. Tench, W. Sun, y B. Jones (eds.). *Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility: Perspectives and Practice (Critical Studies on Corporate Responsibility, Governance and Sustainability* (pp. 3-21.), Volume 6. Emerald Group.
- Torres y Carrera. (2023). *Torres y Carrera*. <https://torresycarrera.com/>
- Tworzydło, D., Gawroński, S., y Szuba, P. (2021). Importance and role of CSR and stakeholder engagement strategy in polish companies in the context of activities of experts handling public relations. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 28(1), 64-70. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2032>
- Verk, N., Golob, U. y Podnar, K. (2021). A dynamic review of the emergence of corporate social responsibility communication. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 168, 491-515. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04232-6>
- Viererbl, B. y Koch, T. (2022). The paradoxical effects of communicating CSR activities: Why CSR communication has both positive and negative effects on the perception of a company's social responsibility. *Public relations review*, 48(1),102134. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2021.102134>
- Virakul, B., Koonmee, K. y McLean, G. N. (2009). CSR activities in award-winning Thai companies. *Social Responsibility Journal*, 5(2), 178-199. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17471110910964478>
- Vollero, A. (2022). *Greenwashing*, Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley. <https://acortar.link/vHA3RO>
- Vollero, A., Yin, J. y Siano, A. (2022). Convergence or divergence? A comparative analysis of CSR communication by leading firms in Asia, Europe, and North America. *Public Relations Review*, 48(1), 102142. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2021.102142>
- Walter, B. L. (2014). Corporate Social Responsibility Communication: Towards a Phase Model of Strategic Planning. En: R. Tench, W. Sun y B. Jones (eds.). *Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility: Perspectives and Practice (Critical Studies on Corporate Responsibility, Governance and Sustainability* (pp. 59-79). Emerald.
- Weber Shandwick (2023). <https://webershandwick.es/>

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF AUTHORS, FUNDING, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### Authors contributions:

**Conceptualization:** Estanyol, Elisenda; Compte-Pujol, Marc; Lalueza, Ferran. **Software:** Estanyol, Elisenda. **Validation:** Estanyol, Elisenda; Compte-Pujol, Marc; Lalueza, Ferran. **Formal Analysis:** Estanyol, Elisenda; Compte-Pujol, Marc; Lalueza, Ferran. **Data Curation:** Estanyol, Elisenda; Compte-Pujol, Marc. **Writing-Original Draft Preparation:** Estanyol, Elisenda; Compte-Pujol, Marc; Lalueza, Ferran. **Writing-Review and Editing:** Estanyol, Elisenda. **Visualization:** Estanyol, Elisenda; Compte-Pujol, Marc; Lalueza, Ferran. **Supervision:** Estanyol, Elisenda. **All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript:** Estanyol, Elisenda; Compte-Pujol, Marc; Lalueza, Ferran.

**Funding:** This research did not receive any external fundings.

### AUTHORS:

#### Elisenda Estanyol

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). Spain.

Elisenda Estanyol is the academic director of the Master's degree program in Corporate Communication, Protocol, and Events, as well as a professor at the School of Information and Communication Sciences at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). She holds a Ph.D. in Advertising and Public Relations from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and a Master's degree in Corporate Communication with a specialization in Digital Technologies from the Barcelona School of Management (BSM) at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF). Her research activities focus on the study of new trends in persuasive communication in the information and knowledge society. She is a member of the Research Group on Learning, Media, and Entertainment (GAME) at UOC and collaborates with the CAS (Communication Advertising and Society research group) at UPF.

[eestanyol@uoc.edu](mailto:eestanyol@uoc.edu)

**H-index:** 9

**Orcid ID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3986-0377>

**Scopus ID:** <https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=55221837000>

**Google Scholar:** [https://scholar.google.es/citations?hl=ca&user=\\_1kvaEYAAAAJ](https://scholar.google.es/citations?hl=ca&user=_1kvaEYAAAAJ)

**ResearchGate:** <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elisenda-Estanyol>

#### Marc Compte-Pujol

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). Spain.

Marc Compte Pujol is a professor at the School of Information and Communication Sciences at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). He holds a Ph.D. in Advanced Communication Studies from Universitat Ramon Llull (URL) and has earned Master's degrees in Advertising Strategy and Creativity, Film Direction, and Business Administration. His research, development, and innovation activities focus on studying the relationships between organizations and their audiences and applying strategic planning to communication. He is the scientific coordinator of the Association of Researchers in Public Relations (AIRP) and a member of research thematic networks within the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA).

[mcomptepuj@uoc.edu](mailto:mcomptepuj@uoc.edu)

**H-index:** 11

**Orcid ID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6694-2485>

**Scopus ID:** <https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=57189576902>

**Google Scholar:** <https://scholar.google.es/citations?user=ikmknx8AAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>

**ResearchGate:** <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Marc-Compte-Pujol>

**Academia.edu:** <https://uoc.academia.edu/MarcComptePujol>

## Ferran Lalueza

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). Spain.

Ferran Lalueza is a professor at the School of Information and Communication Sciences at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). He holds a Ph.D. in Journalism from Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF). His research focuses on organizational communication, particularly through the internet and social media. He views communication as a strategic tool that serves the persuasive capacity of companies, institutions, and various entities in a constantly changing context prone to generating crisis situations if risks are not managed properly. He actively collaborates with social media as part of knowledge transfer activities and also serves as the director of the informative journal of the School of Information and Communication Sciences at this university, COMeIN, since its foundation.

[flalueza@uoc.edu](mailto:flalueza@uoc.edu)

**H-index:** 7

**Orcid ID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7010-9795>

**Scopus ID:** <https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=56072408800>

**Google Scholar:** <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=9gw8Qd4AAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>

**ResearchGate:** <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ferran-Lalueza>

**Academia.edu:** <https://uoc.academia.edu/FerranLalueza>

## Annex

**Table A1.** RSC campaigns for clients carried out by communication and PR agencies.

Código	Campaña	Agencia de RRPP	Cliente	Vinculo Sector RSC	3r sector	Ámbito *	ODS	Descripción objetivo específico
C1	Invisible Soledad	LLYC	Fundación BBK	Sí	Sí	S	ODS10	Concienciar sobre la soledad no deseada de las personas mayores
C2	La cuna con pantallas	LLYC	Multiópticas	No	No	S	ODS3	Concienciar sobre el consumo diario de dispositivos con pantallas con el fin de moderar su uso
C3	#YoElijoCervezaSin (Conducción responsable, cerveza sin)	Omnicom PR Spain	Cerveceros de España	No	No	S	ODS3	Reducir el consumo de alcohol entre los conductores
C4	Patrocinio de la camiseta del FC Barcelona con UNICEF	Apple Tree	FC Barcelona	No	No	S	ODS3	Ayudar a la ONG focalizada en niños y niñas en situación de vulnerabilidad
C5	Memoria Sostenibilidad	Atrevia	Hijos de Rivera	No	No	S y M	ODS13	Acciones contra el cambio climático
C6	Evento ECOEMBES	Atrevia	ECOEMBES	Sí	Sí	M	ODS12	Evento Recycling Market Xmas Edition
C7	Ellas conducen	Evercom	Midas	No	No	S	ODS5	Desmentir los mitos que existen en torno a la conducción femenina
C8	Massive Good	Estudio de Comunicación	Fundación Millenium	Sí	Sí	S	ODS3	Erradicación enfermedades infecciosas
C9	#SuperCoralPlay	Newlink Spain	MSC	No	No	M	ODS14	Concienciar sobre los peligros de la decoloración de los corales

Being or appearing socially responsible? How do public relations agencies demonstrate their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects, whether they are supporting external initiatives or pursuing their own

C10	Our one home	Weber Shandwick Spain	Fauna & Flora Internacional	Sí	Sí	M	ODS15	Protección del mundo natural
C11	Checkouts of Thanks	Weber Shandwick Spain	FEVE	No	No	M	ODS14	Posicionar el vidrio como la opción amigable con el océano
C12	Contribución de Eaton a la transición energética	Hotwire Spain	Eaton	Sí	No	M	ODS7	Promover la transición energética
C13	Los manosucias	H+K Strategies Spain	Essity	No	No	S	ODS3	Concienciar sobre la importancia de una buena higiene de manos
C14	Campaña de comunicación sostenible de Sunweb	Team Lewis Spain	Sunweb Group	No	No	M	ODS13	Campaña de reducción de emisiones
C15	Soluciones sostenibles de climatización de Daikin	Team Lewis Spain	Daikin	No	No	M	ODS13	Campaña integral de comunicación sobre sostenibilidad dirigida a los millenials
C16	Alterna Energía	Team Lewis Spain	Alterna Energía	Sí	No	M	ODS7	Campaña de brand awareness de Alterna Energía
C17	WaterWipes	Team Lewis Spain	WaterWipes	No	No	M	ODS12	Lanzamiento de las toallitas Biodegradables
C18	Cuidado con el sol	Coonic	Grupo Hospitalario Viamed	Sí	No	S	ODS3	Prevención del cáncer de piel
C19	Early Check	Ogilvy Spain	Vueling	No	No	S	ODS3	Prevención del cáncer de mama
C20	Fem-ho bé, fem-ho possible	Ogilvy Spain	Generalitat de Catalunya	Sí	No	S y M	ODS17	Promoción de los ODS entre la población
C21	Querida Yo	Archetype Spain	Instagram y Verne	No	No	S	ODS3, ODS5	Activismo racial, igualdad de género, ansiedad y la salud mental
C22	Stripe Climate, eliminar CO2 de la atmósfera a golpe de click	Archetype Spain	Stripe Climate	Sí	No	M	ODS13	Reducción del CO2
C23	Familias hiperconectadas	Trescom	Qustodio	Sí	No	S	ODS3	Reducción uso de pantallas entre menores
C24	Evento #Imperdible_04	Trescom	Fundación Cotec	Sí	Sí	S y M	ODS17	Promoción de la innovación como motor de desarrollo económico y social para alcanzar los 17 ODS
C25	Programa Heealthy Cities	Trescom	Sanitas	Sí	No	S	ODS3	Promover estilos de vida y entornos saludables
C26	Vais a estar bien	AMT Comunicación	Fundación Animal Hub	Sí	Sí	M	ODS3	Promoción del bienestar animal
C27	Fundación Atenea	Esencial	Fundación Atenea	Sí	Sí	S	ODS10	Concienciar sobre la exclusión social y la drogadicción
C28	Reparto solidario de juguetes en hospital	Bloody	Hasbro	No	No	S	ODS3	Reparto solidario de juguetes entre niños hospitalizados en Hospital Gregorio Marañón
C29	Noise For The Nature	MGC&CO	Alladale (Escocia)	Sí	No	M	ODS15	Promoción del ecoturismo

Being or appearing socially responsible? How do public relations agencies demonstrate their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects, whether they are supporting external initiatives or pursuing their own

C30	Nuestros espacios protegidos	MGC&CO	Fundación Global Nature, Europarc-España y la Asociación de Ecoturismo en España	Sí	Sí	M	ODS15	Promoción del ecoturismo
C31	Viaje de prensa Fundación Oso Pardo (Asturias)	MGC&CO	Fundación Oso Pardo	Sí	Sí	M	ODS15	Promoción del ecoturismo. Incrementar la visibilidad del trabajo de conservación del Oso Pardo Cantábrico
C32	Stop Bullying	Nota Bene	HS	No	No	S	ODS3	Erradicar el acoso escolar
C33	Evento Be NATURAL, Be Healthy, Be WELLBEING	Nota Bene	Weleda	Sí	No	M	ODS12	Promover el bienestar
C34	La lucha contra el calentamiento global se vuelve digital	Accenture Song Spain	Climeworks	Sí	No	M	ODS13	Lucha contra el calentamiento global
C35	Premio Triodos Bank	The Apartment	Triodos Bank	Sí	Sí	S	ODS10	Ayuda humanitaria e inclusión social
C36	#Teletrabajadores	Best	Rescue. Faes Farma	No	No	S	ODS3	Ayudar a gestionar el estrés a los teletrabajadores
C37	Unidos para proteger a la tortuga "Caretta" en Cabo Verde	Best	RIU Hotels & Resorts	No	No	M	ODS15	Proteger la biodiversidad
C38	Rompe con la trata	Canela	Sonrisas de Bombay	Sí	Sí	S	ODS10	Lucha contra el tráfico de personas
C39	Tree-Nation	Canela	Tree-Nation	Sí	No	M	ODS15	Lucha contra la deforestación
C40	La Erradicación de la Malaria Empieza Conmigo	Grayling Spain	RBM Partnership Partnership to End Malaria	Sí	No	S	ODS3	Erradicar la malaria
C41	Lanzamiento de envase ecológico	Grayling Spain	Tetra Pak e Imlek	Sí	No	M	ODS12	Promover el uso de envases sostenibles.
C42	Abarca Prize	Interprofit	HM Hospitales	Sí	No	S	ODS3	Reconocer a la investigación biosanitaria mundial
C43	Ikigai, programa de empresa saludable	Pridecom	JTI Iberia	No	No	S	ODS3	Promover el bienestar pleno y la autenticidad de las personas

\*RSC Scope: S = Social; M = Environmental

\*\*SDGs: SDG1 (No Poverty); SDG2 (Zero Hunger); SDG3 (Good Health and Well-being); SDG4 (Quality Education); SDG5 (Gender Equality); SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation); SDG7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); SDG9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure); SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities); SDG11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); SDG12 (Responsible Consumption and Production); SDG13 (Climate Action); SDG14 (Life Below Water); SDG15 (Life on Land); SDG16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions); SDG17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Source: Author's own work.

**Table A2.** *Own CSR campaigns carried out by communication and PR agencies.*

Código	Nombre campaña RSC	Agencia	Ámbito de RSC*	ODS vinculado**	Objetivo	Rel. tareas agencia	Año
CP1	Voces Futuras	LLYC	S	ODS10	Ayudar a menores sin recursos	No	2019
CP2	Fundación LLYC	LLYC	S	Varios	Contribuir a la sociedad basada en el expertise de la agencia	Sí	Desde 2016
CP3	Fundación ATREVIA	Atrevia	S y M	Varios	Igualdad de género, Felicidad del empleado, Transformación social	Sí	n.d.
CP4	Kreab Sustainability Outlook	Kreab	S y M	Varios	Comunicar análisis de tendencias de sostenibilidad	Sí	Periódica
CP5	RSC de Estudio de Comunicación	Estudio de Comunicación	S y M	Varios	Ofrecer servicios de comunicación pro-bono a varias fundaciones y organizaciones no gubernamentales	Sí	n.d.
CP6	El Libro Blanco de la Influencia	Newlink	S	Varios	Coautoría del Libro Blanco de la Influencia Responsable	Sí	2022
CP7	Online Mental Health First Aid	Weber Shandwick	S	ODS3	Promover el bienestar emocional de los empleados	No	2022
CP8	Programa Yolo	Weber Shandwick	S	ODS3	Promover el bienestar emocional de los empleados	No	2022
CP9	Headspace	Weber Shandwick	S	ODS3	Promover el bienestar de los empleados	No	2022
C10	Fundación Alba Torres Carrera	Torres y Carrera	S	ODS3	Ayudar a niños en riesgo de exclusión social	No	Desde 2004
C11	Responsabilidad Real	Torres y Carrera	S y M	Varios	Ayudar a pequeñas empresas en la elaboración de memorias de RSC	Sí	Desde 2013
CP12	Team Lewis Foundation	Team Lewis	S y M	Varios	Ayudar a entidades sociales o medioambientales en programas de comunicación	Sí	Desde 2020
CP13	Predestinados	Ogilvy	S	ODS3	Contra los abusos a la infancia	No	Desde 2018
CP14	Yo, jefa	Trescom	S	ODS5	Igualdad de género	No	2022
C15	Campaña de RSC con motivo del Covid-19	Esencial	S y M	Varios	Ayuda en la difusión a entidades del tercer sector	Sí	Desde 2020
C16	Becas para mentorizar a emprendedoras	MGC&CO	S	ODS5	Igualdad de género	Sí	Desde 2015
C17	The Plastic Museum	Accenture Song Spain	M	ODS12	Promoción del reciclaje	No	2022
C18	#CanelaCares	Canela	S y M	Varios	Colaborar con distintas ONG	No	n.d.
C19	El Bosque de Canela	Canela	M	ODS15	Compensar el CO2 de la actividad de la agencia	No	n.d.
C20	Grayling for Good	Grayling	S	Varios	Recaudar fondos para las necesidades de sus comunidades locales	No	n.d.

Being or appearing socially responsible? How do public relations agencies demonstrate their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects, whether they are supporting external initiatives or pursuing their own

CP21	Colaboración con la Transparencia Social Solidaria	Com2Be	S	ODS10	Promover la inclusión social y el talento de los jóvenes migrantes y/o en situación de vulnerabilidad	Sí	n.d.
CP22	Colaboración con la Fundación Esperanza y Alegría	Taller WK	S	ODS1	Reducir la pobreza	Sí	Desde 2021
CP23	Colaboración con la Fundación CASAM	Taller WK	S	ODS2	Reducir el hambre	No	Desde 2021

\*ÁCSR Scope: S = Social; M = Environmental

\*\*ODS: ODS1 (No Poverty); ODS2 (Zero Hunger); ODS3 (Good Health and Well-being); ODS4 (Quality Education); ODS5 (Gender Equality); ODS6 (Clean Water and Sanitation); ODS7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); ODS8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); ODS9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure); ODS10 (Reduced Inequality); ODS11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); ODS12 (Responsible Consumption and Production); ODS13 (Climate Action); ODS14 (Life Below Water); ODS15 (Life on Land); ODS16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions); ODS17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

**Source:** Author's own work.



## RELATED ARTICLES

- Barrio-Fraile, E., Barbeito-Veloso, M. L., Fajula-Payet, A., Perona-Páez, J. J., & Enrique-Jiménez, A. M. (2023). Uso del podcast corporativo como herramienta de comunicación de los ODS en el sector bancario español. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 81, 97-122. <https://doi.org/10.4185/rlds-2023-2011>
- Chavarría-Ortiz, C., Ganga-Contreras, F., & García-Parejo, A. (2020). Responsabilidad social corporativa (RSC) y su impacto en los resultados y el crecimiento en pequeñas y medianas empresas españolas. *Revista Venezolana de Gerencia*, 25(91), 1056-1075. <https://doi.org/10.37960/rvg.v25i91.33182>
- García Nieto, M. T., Rubio Pascual, P., Díaz-Oliver Fernández-Hijicos, A. M., Sierra García, P., & Vinagre Gaspar, R. (2023). Un ejemplo de responsabilidad social en el proceso prequirúrgico pediátrico: Lucas y el hilo mágico. *Revista de Comunicación y Salud*, 13, 38-56. <https://doi.org/10.35669/rcys.2023.13.e316>
- Humala Rojas, H. J., & Humala Rengel, J. B. (2020). La RSC responsabilidad social corporativa: factores específicos en la reputación de la empresa cuencana. *Revista de Comunicación de la SEECI*, 51, 109-128. <http://doi.org/10.15198/seeci.2020.51.109-128>
- Pellicer Jordá, M. T. (2023). Ética y valores en la publicidad. El Branded Content como formato estrella de la responsabilidad social corporativa. *Revista de Comunicación de la SEECI*, 56, 239-248. <https://doi.org/10.15198/seeci.2023.56.e833>