

INSPIRATIONS AND TRENDS



ANDERSON
WILLINGER

IN THE ALCHEMY OF SELECTING CEOs AND TOP MANAGEMENT

COURAGE RESILIENCE

AUTHENTICITY

DISCIPLINE

Compassion



20
25

THANK YOU to our team
for their resilience.

THANK YOU everyone,
who had the courage to create
with us.

AS WELL AS TO YOU,
who finds the time and desire
to read.

ANDERSON WILLINGER TEAM ❤️

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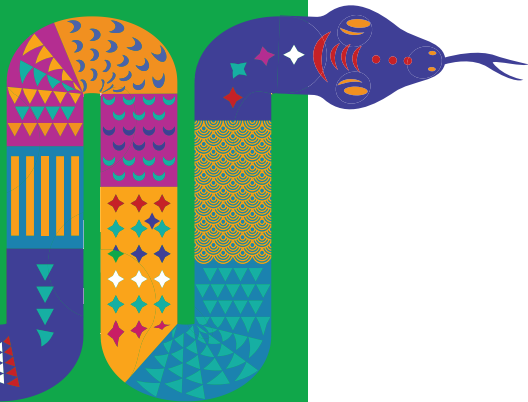
**WHICH INDUSTRIES HAVE
EXPERIENCED THE MOST
CHANGES OVER THE YEARS?**



There are many directors with great presentation skills, but what matters to me is whether they can actually do the work and be consistent. Because behind every true victory, there is hard work and responsibility.

VLASTIMIL LAGAN
CEO, STORCK CZ/SK

(Love Brand for fans of Merci a Toffifee)



When the team and I started preparing for our annual report on what's happening in the world of leaders, I reassured them that this time it would be easy.

After all, we have a well-functioning Business Intelligence system with more than five years of data – so the format and output should be quick and easy.

By the end of January, we were ready. The report looked perfect. And yet, we suddenly stopped and looked around. We were holding a document about people that was full of numbers – but without real people. It lacked those who embody what today's world truly needs.

Today, more than ever, we need **four key super-skills:**

COURAGE, RESILIENCE, AUTHENTICITY AND DISCIPLINE.

As well as the one that we still too often associate with weakness in business – **COMPASSION.**

Astrologers claim that **we are now entering a star configuration similar to the one that prevailed during the Renaissance of the 14th century.** And even though we view this era today as a period of great development, it is clear that the shift back then was also accompanied by challenges and pain.

If we truly stand on the brink of a new Renaissance, it will likely be driven by **technology.** However, just as a horse cannot be led by a single rein, we must also hold the other – **the human, humanitarian rein.**

That is precisely why **understanding emotional intelligence, mindset, and a values framework is one of the most crucial indicators of both present and future leaders.**

At Anderson Willinger, we may not change the world, but we can shape who steps into key roles – and in turn, who leads others. Not only with their expertise, but with their humility as well. It is these individuals who not only deliver the expected results but also set a powerful example for those around them. **Through their courage, resilience, authenticity, and discipline, they demonstrate how to stay grounded, even in the strongest of winds – not only at work, but, more importantly, at home.**

That's exactly why we've chosen individuals for this year's report who may not be the „fashion icons“ of business, but whose **super-skills** are truly worth noting.

LUCIE TEISLER

MANAGING PARTNER,
ANDERSON WILLINGER



A LOOK INTO THE PAST: THE LAST 5 YEARS IN TOP MANAGEMENT TRANSITIONS

● 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic period had a significant impact on the growth of demand in the E-Commerce and Logistics sectors, while company size remained a key factor in attracting top talent. Leaders have also moved to smaller companies, startups, or other segments. International experience was highly valued, with nearly half of newly hired CEOs at the time having prior career experience abroad.

● 2021

The importance of the E/Q-Commerce sector increased due to accelerated digitalization and changes in consumer behavior. The strongest period of 2021 was its second half. Companies began to focus much more on personal qualities when selecting their leaders, such as maturity and stability, which were particularly important during this emotionally charged time. Companies or industries that had been attractive for years are losing their allure, and directors prefer to see themselves in more flexible and modern environments.

● 2022

Careers began to grow much more horizontally from this year onward. Significantly more Czech men and women started to appear in important executive and managerial roles in corporate firms abroad. Roles focused on Sustainability and ESG began to be integrated into senior management for the first time during that period.

● 2023

Corporations started to slow their hiring processes and prioritize internal promotions. Building a career in local companies or starting one's own business during one's career, as well as getting involved in managing a private fund or investment group, became more accepted. New opportunities began to arise, especially within privately owned companies that started to boldly enter Western markets, necessitating the right management. The CEE region began to establish a stronger identity, resulting in an increase in expatriates holding top positions here from countries within the region.

● 2024

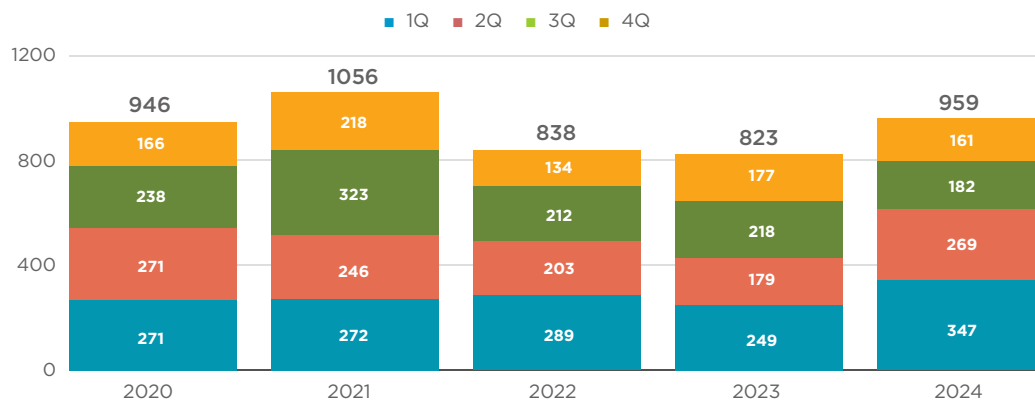
This year can be characterized as the year of Finance, IT, and Operations. Compared to previous years, we are witnessing a significant change in their seniority, importance, and responsibilities. Roles influenced by technological advancement or EU regulations (AI & Data Management, ESG, Cyber Security, Innovation, and Transformation roles) are increasingly gaining prominence. The number of standalone AI directors is significantly rising. We are observing a notable shift in the quality of Czech CFOs, who are gaining greater respect not only in the local market but also on an international scale.

“ Let go of the past so your present can find a place where the future can fully bloom. ” – Anonymous

THE YEAR 2025 IS MARKED BY INNOVATION, REGULATION, AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADAPTATION ACROSS ALL KEY SECTORS.

- Ongoing dominance of technology and digitalization:** Most companies are transforming into technology firms that offer some form of service or product. This shift in mindset will continue to increase pressure on IT directors, expanding their responsibilities and enhancing their influence within the organization. IT and system integration will remain key areas, especially with an emphasis on AI, Cyber Security, and Automation.
- Implementation of AI and its integration with business:** A key skill for AI leaders in 2025 will be the ability to connect AI with business strategy and support the profitability and competitiveness of their organizations.
- The impact of European regulations on business and their communication to the market:** The year 2025 will be pivotal in terms of European regulations (e.g., Digital Services Act, AI Act, ESG Directive), meaning that companies will need, among other things, strong public affairs and PR experts to help them shape the legislative framework and ensure compliance.
- Intensive growth of experts in the field of Cyber Security:** As a result of EU legislation, Cyber Security expertise is gradually being separated from the responsibilities of CIOs, and an increasing number of companies, especially those in critical sectors according to the EU, will continue to create standalone roles for leaders in Cyber Security.
- Increasing demand in the field of Finance and Risk Management:** The role of the CFO is rapidly transforming, with more than 70% of CFOs now bearing responsibilities that extend beyond traditional finance. This confirms that, with the growing emphasis on strategic thinking and the ability to respond to dynamic market conditions, CFOs are becoming essential for the long-term growth and stability of organizations.

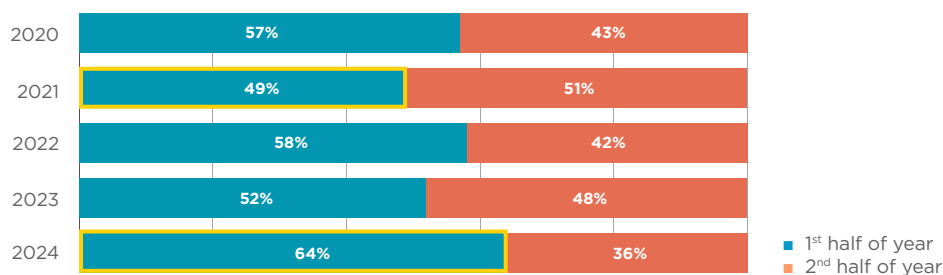
► Comparison of the Total Number of Top and Managerial Transitions



In the last 5 years, there have been a total of **4,625 top executive and senior management changes in the Czech Republic**. The average number of managerial changes per year is 925.

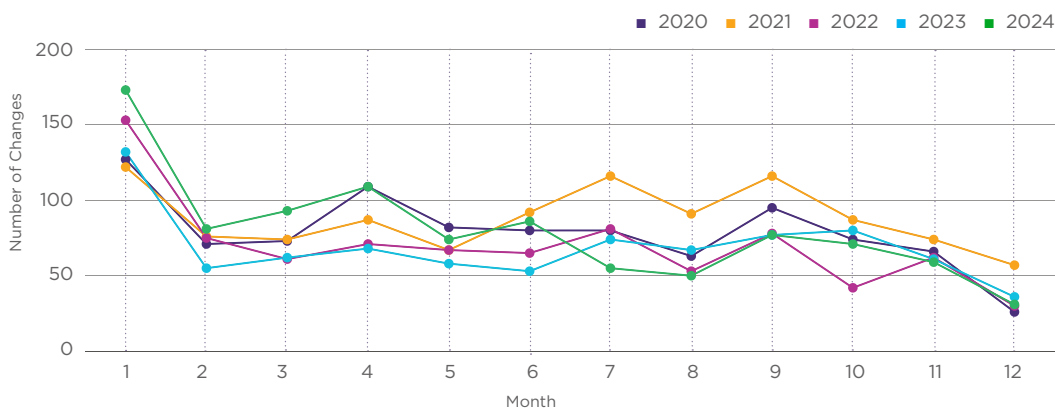
Most of these changes regularly occur in the first two quarters. This trend was particularly pronounced last year when the number of changes in the first half of the year exceeded 60% for the first time in the entire observed period.

An exception to this trend was the year 2021, when the second half of the year slightly prevailed (51%). This was most likely influenced by the uncertainty and hiring freeze due to the pandemic in the second half of 2020 and the beginning of 2021. **We see this as a similar factor for the year 2025, especially in light of various political and economic uncertainties.**

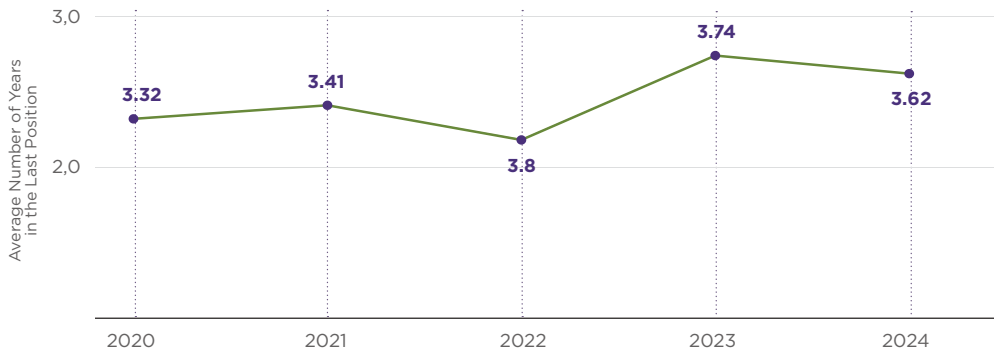


Directors most commonly take on new roles in January and September.

► Market in the Last 5 Years - Comparison of Senior Manager Changes by Month



● **Directors change their positions or are promoted on average after 3.45 years.** Overall, the tenure across all roles has been increasing over the past 5 years.



● **In the last 5 years, there has been a decline in recruitment activities by corporations.**

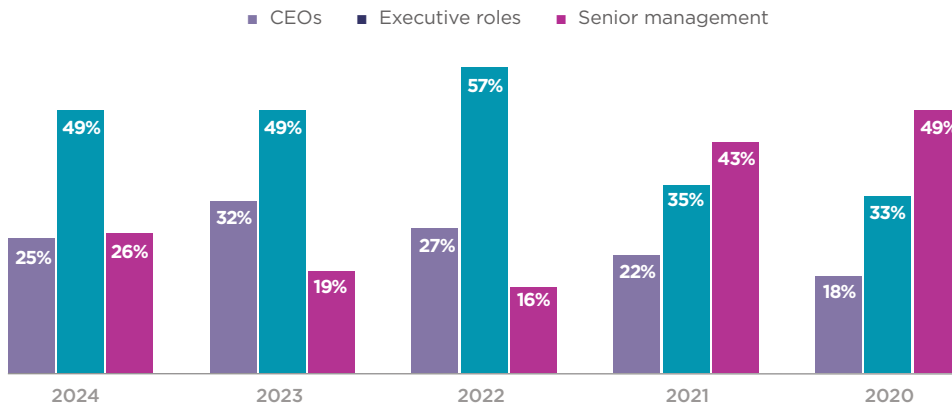
→ In 2020, 67% of all transitions occurred in these sectors. By 2024, this figure has dropped to just under half, at 48%.

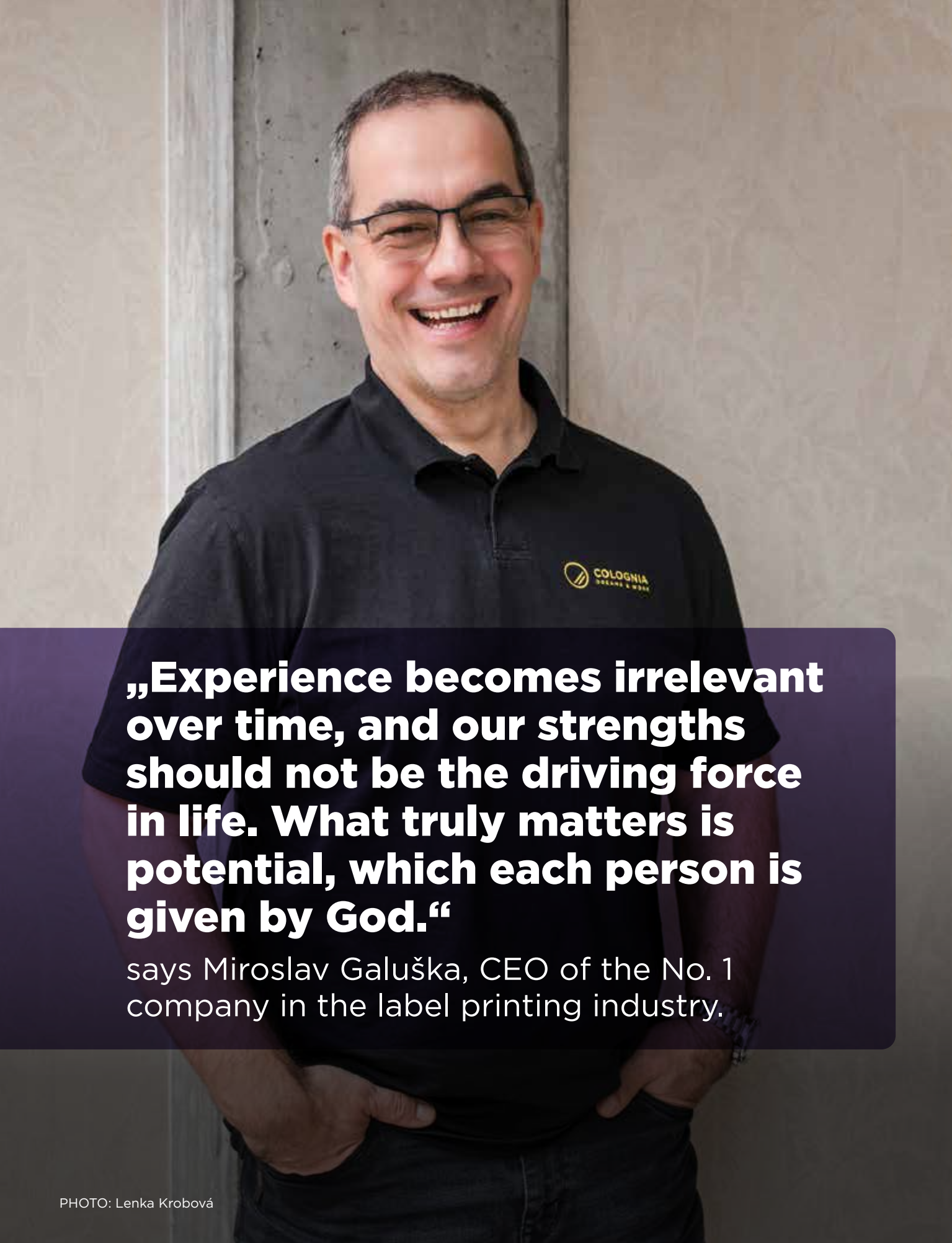
● **In recent years, private companies and firms owned by private equity funds have come to the forefront.**

→ In 2020, it was a total of 27%. By 2024, this share had increased to 44%.

● **How has the distribution evolved in terms of seniority?**

- In 2024, the share of CEO positions in total recruitment/changes was significantly lower than in previous years (25%), but still relatively high compared to 2020 (18%).
- Executive roles remain relatively stable, with a share of around 49-57% over the years.
- The share of senior management in recruitment and changes is gradually decreasing.





„Experience becomes irrelevant over time, and our strengths should not be the driving force in life. What truly matters is potential, which each person is given by God.“

says Miroslav Galuška, CEO of the No. 1 company in the label printing industry.

C

Charming Kolín, with the warm smiles of its people, and a company that might still be unknown to many. Still, it's one of the top centers of managerial alchemy. Colonia Press, a business in the printing industry, where, according to Mirek Galuška, the traditional way of working is fading. „We have to respond to this. We are building a Human-Centric

hybrid printing company with a job turnaround time of one to two days,” he says.

In Kolín, they are targeting 800 million in revenue with a team of 140 people, expanding internationally, and in March, they will begin moving to a new facility with an impressive area of 8,000 square meters.

All of this has been achieved in less than three years, with the help of a carefully selected board of directors, which, alongside Mirek Galuška, includes three other individuals. What role does Galuška play in the team? He is the captain who sets the direction, and the system integrator all in one.

„Inside the company, we no longer want role titles. No more CFO, CEO, or Accountants. We simply connect the potential we see in people with the activities we need.“

„We've mapped 1,297 activities across the entire organization. Going forward, we want 40 percent of these to be automated. For the remaining activities, we need hundreds of hard skills and 10 soft skills. This means we look at each activity in the company and match it with the relevant ‚skills‘,” describes the captain.

He considers hard skills to be abilities acquired through training, while soft skills are those that develop through therapy. But, as he says, the key to everything is potential: „Just because someo-

ne worked as a technologist for 15 years doesn't mean they are a good technologist. Saying that I was a squirrel for 15 years trying to swim in the water alongside pikes is as stressful as can be.“

A person might achieve excellent results, but that doesn't mean they've developed their full potential. They may have wasted a large part of it because they didn't follow their path of personal discovery. According to Galuška, that's the core of the Socratic saying, „know thyself.“

„By truly understanding my core, I can expand both my strengths and my abilities.“

The search for potential is often left to HR, with the expectation that they will have an overview of all competencies within the company. „But that's an illusion,” adds Mirek Galuška. Modern technologies bring tremendous transparency and the ability to dig deeper, but this challenges established traditions. What used to belong to the realm of experience gathered over the years can suddenly

be systematically broken down into several correlated parameters and even programmed for the future. However, as Galuška says, this gives companies a way to have fish in the water and squirrels in the trees, while also figuring out where and which animals they need to „purchase“

to cover all competencies in what he refers to as our „domestic zoo.“

Similarly outdated views exist on the question of who is the CEO. It's commonly believed that a company is governed by clearly defined responsibilities set by the organizational structure, with sales, finance, HR, and purchasing under the CEO. The CEO is expected to solve all the problems that cross these areas, but for the overwhelming majority of CEOs, this is unrealistic.

„We live under the illusion of the powerful, multi-skilled leader who can handle everything and fix all problems.“

„WE LIVE IN THE MYTH OF THE POWERFUL LEADER WHO CAN HANDLE EVERYTHING AND SAVE THE DAY.“

In my opinion, that's nonsense. The demands are growing, and now we want things that are beyond all the little animals, fish, squirrels, and so on, so the turnover in the chair is getting faster and faster," he admits.

He considers it a historical mistake to try to find a one-to-one replacement. One leader for another leader. According to him, this is an example of not fully utilizing potential.

„That's why we work in a way that everyone wears a captain's hat. I don't want to know the opinion of the sales or production department. I ask the salesperson or the production worker how they would decide if they were the captain, if they were the CEO. I'm interested in their opinion, not their title," explains Galuška, noting that traditional organizational structures are slowly dissolving.

His goal is to guide his colleagues toward holistic thinking, which he sees as a missing competency in Czech leaders. According to him, the reason for this is that most of today's leaders started working in the 1990s at corporations that brought systems to the Czech Republic and taught most people only to run within those systems. In the Czech private business sector, greater or lesser chaos prevailed. „When I look at the organization as a patient and see some symptoms, pains, or ailments, a holistic perspective doesn't mean I treat the sore spot, but I ask what it's eating and how it's sleeping. So, I study things that seemingly have nothing to do with the problem.“

That's why Galuška wants to teach his people to see things from a broader perspective and, just as importantly, to ask themselves why a particular problem actually arose. „Because taking a painkiller, putting on a nice white bandage may help, but the ulcer is still there. And cutting out the ulcer is definitely a better treatment," he emphasizes. However, changing people's mindset can take time.

„When I take the story from Jim Collins' book Good to Great, it's like a big flywheel. The first turn feels like a dead stop, the second and third ones too, the fiftieth feels like it's going to kill you, and it's still wrong, but at the 1499th turn, it starts to gain momentum, and the inertia, which had been drawing a

flat line, suddenly shoots up," he explains. Unfortunately, skipping the previous 1498 turns is not possible; it's necessary to do the work. And with his characteristic smile, he adds that the curiosity is that, from the inside, people don't see any change when the exponential curve starts to form because it seems like business as usual to them.

This is exactly why Galuška devotes his full attention to it. Behind this effort lies both courage and fear—two of the ten key soft skills that define the company.

„YOU KNOW THE PROBLEM, THE CAUSE, THE SOLUTION, BUT STILL DON'T DARE TO ACT. I CALL IT SCARS OF THE SOUL.“

„Over 50 percent of the tasks in our organization demand **COURAGE**.“

And I'm confident that this is true for most companies.“ ■

ING. MIROSLAV GALUŠKA, MBA

CEO, COLOGNIA

He graduated in materials engineering from Brno University of Technology (VUT) and has held top leadership and CEO positions in multinational companies. He also specializes in coaching and organizational development. He speaks five languages and has a collection of five bicycles, selecting one based on his mood.



Leadership

is like „svíčková“ –
everyone has their own.

Jakub Majer | CEO VAFO Praha a VAFO Production

His approach to leadership is based on entrepreneurial spirit, authentic communication, and trust in people. Together with the five-member top management team under the leadership of owner Pavel Bouška, VAFO transformed from a small family business into a European leader in pet food. How? They were never afraid to combine proven recipes with bold experiments.

This is not a story about a corporation with endless spreadsheets and strict rules. It's a story about how to maintain the soul of a family business while conquering Europe.

Entrepreneurial spirit as DNA

"I want VAFO to be known as a bunch of trailblazers," Jakub admits. A trailblazer, to him, is someone who isn't afraid of challenges, is determined to pursue their goals, and sees things through to the end. This spirit is felt in every step. When the sales team proposed expansion into Asian markets, the response was clear: „Go there and show them what we've got."

This entrepreneurial freedom goes hand in hand with responsibility. „You either believe in it, or it's pointless. When someone goes, I trust them to give their best," Jakub explains. And this trust in people is one of the keys to VAFO's success.

Stop putting out fires and start building highways.

One of the biggest challenges was to move „from heroism to professionalism." What does this mean? Stop putting out fires and start

building processes that will move the company forward. That's why VAFO's leadership developed a strategy for 2030, focusing on professionalization, digitization, and growth in foreign markets.

„Every five years, it feels like working in a completely different company," admits Jakub. As the company grows, there is an increasing emphasis on standardized processes and performance management. The manufacturing parts of the company are strictly centralized, while the commercial organization has the freedom to adapt to local conditions. „The strength comes from unity in production and agility in sales," summarizes Jakub.

To lead is to trust

Jakub's leadership approach can be summed up in one word: trust. "I prefer when people make their own decisions and take responsibility. If things don't work out, we learn from it and move forward," he says. This style fosters an environment where people aren't afraid to take risks.

According to Jakub, the key is to give people a sense of purpose in what they do. "You have to give them space and trust them. When they make decisions for themselves, they'll be more committed," he adds. And this applies not only to Czech teams but also to international branches.

Passion for animals and joy of success

"This is what we love," Jakub responds without hesitation when asked what brings them the most joy in the company. They love making food for dogs and cats, they love building a company, and they love winning.



JAKUB MAJER

CEO, VAFO PRAHA A VAFO PRODUCTION

Jakub is the current CEO of VAFO Praha and a member of the board of VAFO Group, a leading manufacturer of pet food. Prior to his appointment to this position, he worked at VAFO Praha as the Sales Director. Since 2020, he has succeeded Pavel Bouška, the owner and chairman of the board of VAFO Group, as CEO of VAFO Praha.

VAFO's corporate culture isn't just about numbers and targets—it's about a genuine passion for what they do. "With joy and love, we create pet food" is written in their company motto, and it's not just a marketing phrase.

"One of the most important things is to do everything with joy. If you don't enjoy it, it doesn't make sense," says Jakub. This joy is also reflected in the way VAFO treats its employees. Every new team member goes through thorough onboarding, and initiatives like VAFO Forum, which is evolving into VAFO Academy, help cultivate leadership and team spirit.

With respect for local differences

VAFO now operates in nine countries and exports to over ninety more. The first foreign acquisition—Germany's Allco (now VAFO.de)—was just the beginning. Today, the group has production facilities both in the Czech Republic and abroad.

"It's naive to think we'll understand the British market better than the Brits," says Jakub. That's why foreign teams are given the freedom to operate in their own way, while production remains strictly centralized.

"Our strength lies in having a unified production system while allowing commercial organizations to breathe," Jakub explains. This pragmatic approach enables VAFO to grow without losing flexibility or the ability to adapt to change.

Trailblazers with a Vision

Jakub doesn't hide his further ambitions. "I want VAFO to be known as a company that made it to the top of the world," he reveals. Although the company is already a leader in Europe, Jakub knows that this is not the end of the road.

"We still need to repeat what we've achieved in several countries, across all of Europe," he admits. And when you ask him if that's realistic, he smiles and says: "Why not? We're trailblazers."

The story of VAFO is proof that it's possible to build a global company without losing its soul. Leadership is like the perfect „svíčková“, with the right balance of tradition, innovation, and above all, **AUTENTICITY**, that tastes great not only in the Czech Republic but all around the world. **And if you ever find yourself deciding whether to embark on something new, remember Jakub's words: "It's better to act first and ask questions afterward."** ■

COURAGE is not the absence of fear. It is the ability to do the right thing regardless of the consequences.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT?


The level of courage is directly proportional to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

The higher the needs are satisfied, the more courage is available.

„Let us explore a person's values, as they define the limits and extent of the courage they are willing to demonstrate.“

- ANDERSON WILLINGER

COURAGE

A portrait of Martin Frko, a man with short, spiky grey hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a light-colored button-down shirt over a white t-shirt. He is smiling and looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a dark, solid color.

**„I believe that people
are meant to do good
in the world.“**

MARTIN FRKO | GROUP CEO, DIRECT AUTO

▶ In our world, success is associated with growth. It seems that the way to save this planet lies in consuming less. But growth can also occur at the expense of something that is now less beneficial. „And that is why we are building Direct Auto,“ says Martin Frko, co-founder of Direct Auto and partner at Direct Family.

„Moreover, life with a car is actually really great,“ he adds. A car simplifies our lives, provides us with experiences, and fulfills our needs. For many people, a car is a matter of emotions or self-expression. „Just look at the guys at self-service car washes, how they almost caress their cars,“ he smiles.

Many families choose to go into debt when buying a new car, but 80 percent of new cars are company cars. When it comes to used cars, however, it's a completely different world—a world full of immense stress and fear. Rolled-back mileage, two cars welded into one, the uncertainty of whether the car will hold up. Every year, 700,000 to 800,000 people and households go through this kind of anxiety, and, honestly, most of them experience an unpleasant surprise.

„If you compare this world to banking or insurance, where the top three players can hold up to 70 percent of the market, you'll see that in the used car industry, the top three companies barely reach ten percent. That's when you realize that entering this market makes sense because it's full

of emotions and opportunities. Growth in such an environment feels very healthy,“ he adds. Direct Auto is bringing something that is transparent, appealing, and capable of generating solid profits. At the same time, it helps clients eliminate stress and provides them with an exceptional customer experience.

„I simply want Direct Auto to be the place where I can handle everything I need, so I never have to go anywhere else to buy or sell a new or used car again. I just won't have to think about it anymore—just like when I use Booking or Rohlík.“

approaching a turnover of five billion, was largely built through acquisitions of businesses from former owners who had been building them for 30 years. The people in these acquired companies didn't join because they believed in a shared vision. „We bought them and then told them: This is our vision, and we want you to like it too. And that's very demanding work. In fact, it's much harder than starting something from scratch and bringing in people who voluntarily choose to be part of it,“ he explains.

As Martin Frko adds, the key smart decision that helped

„ YOU SUCCEED WHEN YOU STOP CHASING COMPETITION AND START WINNING THE CUSTOMER'S HEART— THAT'S THE ONLY FIGHT THAT MATTERS. ”

„In short, I no longer need to test other options. I'm satisfied to the point where I don't even mind if one out of six eggs I buy happens to be broken—because that just happens sometimes. I can check it off my list,“ describes Martin Frko.

„And this is something you can build when, as a company, you stop focusing on competition and start focusing on the heart of the customer. That is the only thing worth fighting for.“

A challenge for Martin Frko and his team is that Direct Auto, now

them gain acceptance was first observing the „original world“ and learning how the business operated. That allowed them to understand its inner workings. They realized that these were people who simply wanted to work in decent conditions and be fairly compensated. They also understood that their vision could not only be acceptable but even fulfilling—provided that what Martin calls the „right ferryman“ is in place. That is, someone who acts as a bridge between the owners and the people on the ground.

And so, for the role of „Ferryman,“ Direct Auto seeks people who are open to trying new things and can explain them clearly, thanks to their naturally positive outlook on life.

For those who have been doing things the same way for 15 years, it's essential to let them truly experience the new approach. Creating a kind of test lab allows them to see that things can work differently—and that, in the end, the customer feels much better about it. When that happens, the team member also feels a sense of joy and becomes willing to embrace change.

My default mindset is this: People are here to do good. None of us are born with bad intentions—maybe just a very small percentage.

I believe that trust inspires people to give their best.

Martin has even more trust in people when they openly admit they don't know something, haven't considered it yet, or are dealing with a problem. The important thing is that they speak about it openly.

When building the core team at Direct Auto, they had to acknowledge a crucial fact—they didn't necessarily need to hire automotive experts. This doesn't mean that industry experience isn't valuable; it certainly is. But every closed bubble has its pros and cons. What mattered more was creating a strong mix of people with a positive outlook, their own vision, and intrinsic motivation—those with an “internal engine” who are

healthy growth, but also about people, their courage to try new things, and mutual trust. Only then can the team's RESILIENCE grow.

„Direct Auto is not just about cars. It's about creating space for people to grow. It's about allowing them to work without the fear of making mistakes, experiencing joy in what they do, and together, making the world a better place,“ emphasizes Martin Frko. ■



“MY DEFAULT BELIEF IS THAT PEOPLE ARE HERE TO DO GOOD. NONE OF US ARE BORN WITH ILL INTENTIONS—PERHAPS ONLY A SMALL FEW.”

„Today, I know that when people feel safe—when they know in advance that failure will be forgiven—they can achieve amazing things. And when someone who is 55 years old, has spent 35 years in a traditional business, and improves efficiency by 40% in just six months, it shows others that change is possible. I gave him my trust, and he knew that if it didn't work out, I wouldn't fire him,“ says Frko.

resilient. Only such a team is truly sustainable.

„Today, the world moves faster than ever, and the winds are stronger at sea. More capital is flowing, more startups are emerging, and new ideas are being discovered. What works today might not work in a month,“ reflects Martin, adding that he also **believes sustainability is not just about**

MARTIN FRKO

GROUP CEO, DIRECT AUTO

Martin Frko is the co-founder of Direct Auto and co-founder of Direct Family. Direct Auto focuses on building an ecosystem that includes the sale of new and used cars, service, and operational leasing. The goal is to create a place where customers can address all their mobility needs in one location.

INTERESTING FACTS AND TRENDS FROM OUR CEO COMMUNITY

● **IN 2024, WE SAW 26 FEWER NEW CEOs COMPARED TO 2023.**

● In corporations, the trend of promoting CEOs from internal sources continues to dominate. On average, over the last three years, only **41% of new CEOs have come from the external market.**

● **In contrast, the situation in locally owned companies is developing in the opposite direction.** This trend is also evident in companies owned by Private Equity, where the share of externally hired CEOs has been steadily increasing since 2021. By 2024, it even reached an impressive 70%.

● On average, **30-40%** of them bring previous CEO experience into their new roles across the years.

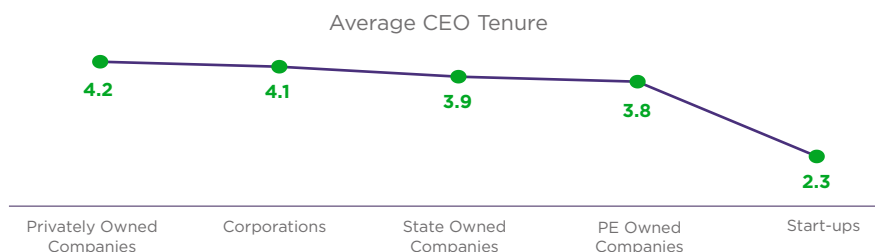
● **The roles from which CEOs are most often promoted remain stable over the years.** Just like in the past, in 2024, Sales and Operations Directors were the most common to transition into the CEO roles. However, in 2024, we observed a slight increase in the number of promoted Financial Directors, rising from 3% to 6%. This trend suggests that Finance is playing an increasingly important role in the strategic management of companies.

Coming from another CEO role	37 %
Sales, BDVP & Commercial.....	20 %
Operations	10 %
Finance Management	6 %
Marketing	4 %

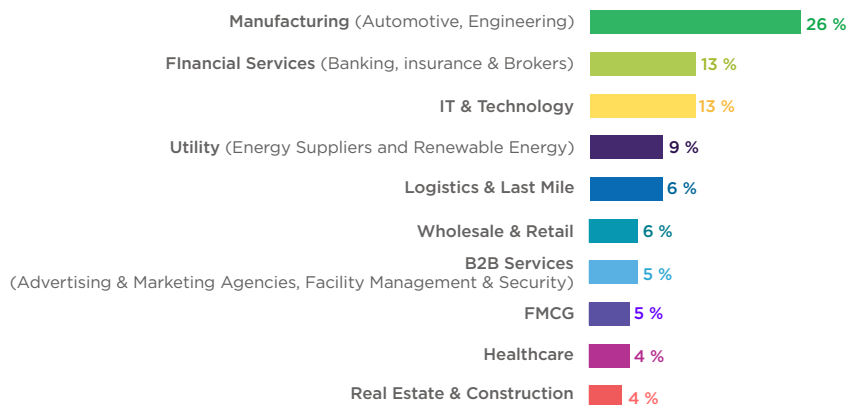
● **In 2024, the highest share of foreigners in CEO positions was found in international family-owned companies with branches in the Czech Republic, where it reached 35%.** In the startup sector, it was 21%. **Conversely, in corporate companies, there continues to be a declining trend in the interest in foreigners in these positions.** In 2024, their representation stands at 14%, a decrease from 18% in 2023 and 22% in 2022.

● **The tenure of CEOs has not changed since 2023 and remains a stable four years,** which is approximately six months longer than the market average of 3.5 years over the past five years.

● **CEOs tend to stay in their roles the longest in corporations or privately owned firms, while their tenure is the shortest in start-ups.**



● In which sectors did CEO turnover occur most frequently in 2024?



MOST NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE CEO COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Petr Šťastný
Country General Manager
Central Europe
BAŤA



Daniel Horák
Chief Executive Officer
BEZVAVLASY.CZ



Marek Doležal
General Manager
BILLA ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA



Miroslav Štěpán
General Manager
ČESKÁ POŠTA



Zuzana Švecová
General Manager
CISCO ČR



Dimo Dimov
General Manager
COCA-COLA HBC CZ&SK



Romana Jourdren
Country Manager
COTY CZ&SK



Veronika Sedláčková
Chief Executive Officer
DEICHMANN CZ&SK



Pavel Franko
Managing Director
G4S



Andrzej Martynek
Chief Executive Officer
GasNet CZ



Tomáš Furinda
Chief Executive Officer
GLOBAL PAYMENTS



František Štrupl
Country Director
GOOGLE CZ



Jiří Mlích
Chief Executive Officer
HOPI EU LOGISTICS



Lukáš Poór
Chief Executive Officer
HOUSE OF LOBKOWICZ



Eva Bučová
General Manager
ING ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA



Thierry Thibault
General Manager
KOMERČNÍ POJIŠTOVNA



Miroslav Lukeš
President
LASVIT



Tomasz Kuźma
Chief Executive Officer
LIDL ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA



Michal Hanák
Chairman of the Board
MAFRA



Silvia Nováková
General Manager
MAGNA CARTECH



Robert Christof
General Manager
mBANK CZ



Michal Stachník
Country Manager
MICROSOFT CZ&SK



Michal Čarný
Chief Executive Officer
NICEBOY



Mariusz Wnuk
Chief Executive Officer
ORLEN UNIPETROL



Aleš Korotvička
Vice President and
General Manager
UK/Nordics
OTIS



Erich Čomor
Chief Executive Officer
PACKETA GROUP



František Wagner
Chief Executive Officer
PETCENTER CZ



Fabio Costa
Managing Director
PHILIP MORRIS ČR



Peter Klekner
Interim
Chief Executive Officer
PILULKA



Petra Jakopanec
General Manager
PODRAVKA – LAGRIS



Zdeněk Řiháček
Regional Senior Managing
Director Central Europe
South
PROCTER & GAMBLE



Denisa Materová
Chief Executive Officer
PROMET GROUP



Michael Graham
General Manager CZ/SK
(Health and Hygiene)
RECKITT BENCKISER



Branislav Kotlárík
Head of EEU
SANTEN PHARMACEUTICAL



Tomáš Braverman
Group Chief
Executive Officer
SLEVOMAT



Martin Kele
Chief Executive Officer
STV GROUP



Melinda Szabó
Chief Executive Officer
T-MOBILE CZ
& SLOVAK TELEKOM



Tomáš Příbyl
Chief Executive Officer
TENAUR (ČEZ GROUP)



Martin Binder
Country Manager CZ & SK
THE COCA-COLA COMPANY



Olivier Maurice
Chief Executive Officer
TONAK



Marcin Gołębiewski
Head of the UPS Central
Europe Country Cluster
UPS



Tobias Sondorfer
General Manager &
Chairman of The Board
(od 1. 1. 2025)
VIG RE



Martin Komora
Chief Executive Officer
VIVANTIS



Violeta Luca
Chief Executive Officer
VODAFONE CZ



Šárka Heyna Fuchsová
Managing Director
VOLVO CAR CZ



Karina Příbylová
Chief Executive Officer
WOLTAIR



Michal Karcol
Chief Executive Officer
XXXLUTZ CZ&SK

RESILIENCE IS LIKE A MUSCLE.

We strengthen it with mental and physical exercises that enhance concentration and help detach from emotions linked to the ego.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT?

- In the ability to not be afraid of making mistakes and learning from them.
- In the art of not taking things personally.
- In the level of tolerance for uncertainty.
- In the skill of distinguishing inner peace from restlessness.

- ANDERSON WILLINGER

RESILIENCE

LADY FROM COTY

ROMANA JOURDREN



A CEO MUST BE ADAPTABLE, NOT JUST A VISIONARY.



ROMANA JOURDREN
CEO, COTY CZ&SK

Romana has over 25 years of experience in the pharmaceutical and FMCG industries. She served as Vice President and Regional General Manager at GSK Consumer Healthcare, leading teams across Europe. She specializes in transformations, integrations, and strategic business growth. She earned an MBA in Digital Business from UCL and completed a prestigious program at IMD.

Her multicultural approach and fluency in Czech, English, and French enable her to successfully manage international teams and projects.

How has the role of the CEO changed?

Today's leader must be extremely flexible. The world is changing faster than ever before—digitalization, global crises, new technologies. It's not enough to have a vision; it must be continuously adapted to reality. A CEO must be able to make decisions in uncertainty while maintaining strong values. For me, corporate culture is key—without it, no strategy works in the long run.

What's new in your business?

The beauty business is no longer just about products; it's about storytelling and lifestyle.

The digital world has taken over—online shopping dominates, and customers expect not only speed and convenience but, most importantly, brand authenticity. Influencers play a key role in shaping the decisions of the younger generation. Product quality alone is no longer enough; what matters is the connection to lifestyle and values such as sustainability or natural ingredients.

How do you choose the right leader?

There is no universal recipe, but I have a proven process. First, I meet with each individual to see if we connect both personally and professionally.

Next comes the reference phase and interviews with the team - they must feel that they will accept the new leader as one of their own.

The final test? An informal meeting, like a lunch. It reveals a lot about how the collaboration will work in practice.

What do you never compromise on?

In mindset. I would rather choose a less experienced person with energy and enthusiasm than an expert who excels but doesn't fit into the team. I made this mistake once, and I don't want to repeat it. The right mindset makes the difference between average and success.

I will never compromise when selecting people for my team. This lesson stays with me forever. ■

WOMEN AND MEN IN LEADERSHIP

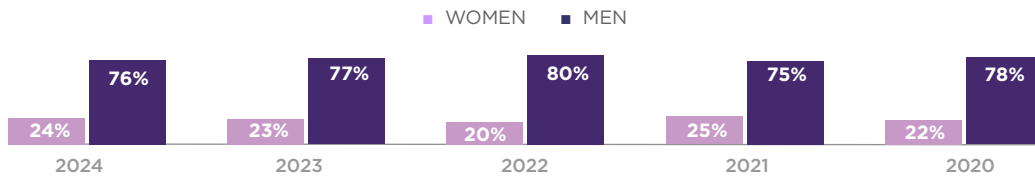
In our approach, we do not see differences between women and men as a defining factor.

Each person has unique qualities and is suited for different environments. The key is ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity for self-expression while companies should strive to reflect a balanced diversity of perspectives.

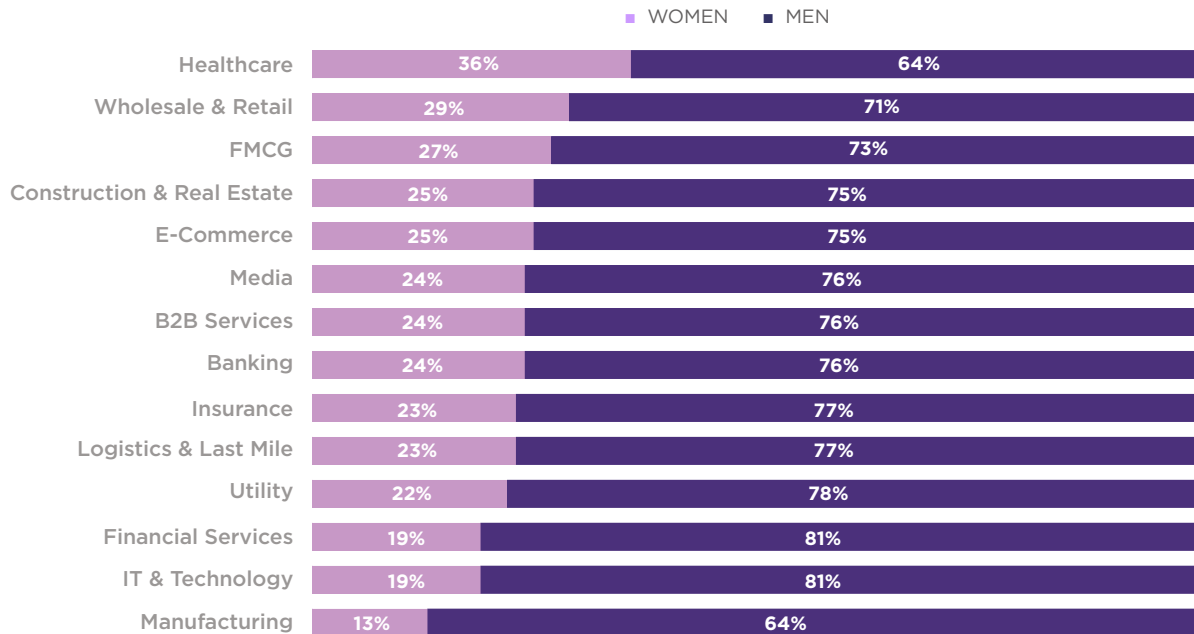
The fact that the number of women in top and senior management is increasing is a reality.

Our data invites reflection on whether traditional perceptions of roles based on gender may pose a barrier and whether consciously reassessing these patterns could be beneficial for the development of organizations.

The ratio of women to men in all senior and top management changes has remained largely unchanged over the years with men representing an average of 77% and women making up 23%.

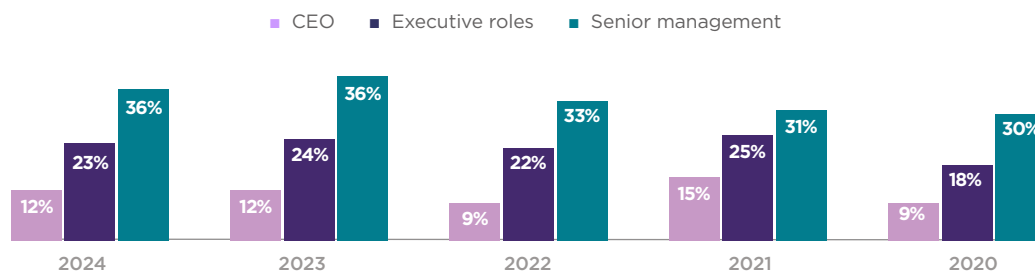


In which sectors is the representation of women greater than the market average of 23% over the last 5 years?



● **12%** is the proportion of women who transitioned into CEO roles in the last two years.

▶ The ratio of women within specific seniority levels over the years.



● **WOMEN in CEO roles** most commonly transition into companies in the following sectors over the last 5 years:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Advertising and Communication Agencies	FMCG	Pharmaceutical Companies	Banking	Utility (Energy & Telecommunication)

● **MEN in CEO roles** most commonly move to:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
IT & Technology	FMCG	Automotive	Manufacturing - Engineering	Utility (Energy & Telecommunication)

● **In executive roles directly subordinate to the CEO, women most commonly hold positions in HR, while men dominate in Sales.** Interestingly, in both cases, Finance is the second most commonly filled role. For men, the third most common role is Operations, while for women, it is Marketing. For men, all three most frequently filled roles correspond to positions from which they most often get promoted to CEO.

▶ **In executive roles, directly subordinate to the CEO, WOMEN** most commonly fill positions in:

1.	2.	3.	4.
HR	Finance	Marketing	Sales & BDVP

▶ **MEN**, on the other hand, most commonly transition into roles in this seniority level in:

1.	2.	3.	4.
Sales & BDVP	Finance	Operations	IT

- In the case of senior management, the roles between women and men do not differ significantly. The composition remains the same; only the order in which the roles are filled most frequently varies.

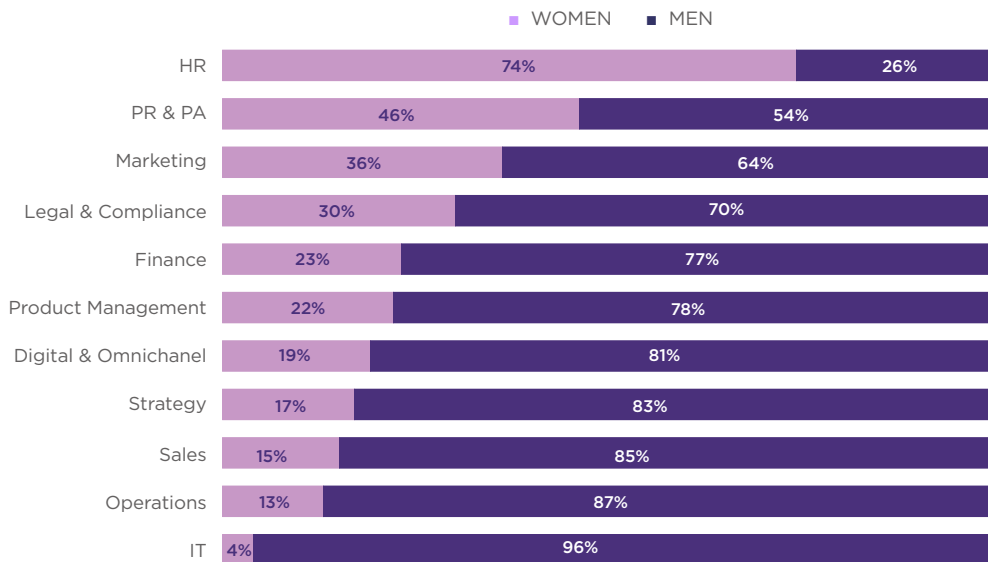
▶ In senior management roles, **WOMEN** most commonly fill positions in:

1.	2.	3.	4.
HR	Marketing	Sales & BDVP	Finance

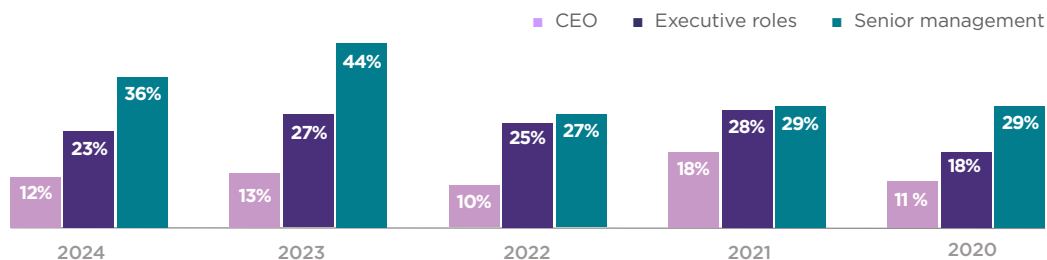
▶ In **MEN** on the other hand, these are positions in:

1.	2.	3.	4.
Sales & BDVP	Marketing	HR	Finance

▶ Which expert roles can we designate as women or men (in the context of the last 5 years)?



- The average number of women in 2024 has declined due to the overall decrease in recruitment in corporations across all senior and top management roles.



- Corporations, however, continue to show the highest likelihood of a woman becoming a CEO. On average, 17 women per year take on these top management positions in these firms. In privately owned companies, the average is 5 women per year. In companies owned by Private Equity, it is 3 women per year.

- Women have the greatest chance of securing a CEO role in corporations operating in the FMCG, Pharmaceutical, Advertising and Communications, and IT & Technology sectors.

- Over the last 5 years, the representation of women in privately owned companies accounted for an average of 21% of all changes. However, in 2024, this percentage dropped to 19%.

- The representation of women in management in private equity-owned companies in 2024 is higher than in privately owned firms. Women make up a quarter (25%) of all changes in 2024. Over the past 5 years, this ratio is the highest in this context.

RESILIENCE, ADAPTATION AND RESPECT: KATEŘINA VONDRKOVÁ ABOUT PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

Kateřina Vondrková knows that people are the key factor in private equity. As Group Chief People Officer at Kaprain, she operates in an environment where results must come quickly, and strong leadership is essential.

Private equity emphasizes performance, discipline, and efficiency. „We look for people who can make quick decisions and lead teams under pressure,“ says Vondrková. Being a good manager is not enough—resilience, adaptability, and natural authority are crucial. In this field, leadership means taking responsibility and creating an environment where high performance is a given.

Selecting the right leaders is critical. „It’s not just about strategic thinking and drive but also about the ability to fit into a dynamic, high-performance culture.“

HR in private equity is not just about administration; it’s about creating value. „Investing in the right leadership and effective teams determines whether a company succeeds.“ Vondrková navigates this world with absolute confidence. ■



KATEŘINA VONDRKOVÁ

**GROUP CHIEF PEOPLE
OFFICER, KAPRAIN GROUP**

Kateřina has been serving as Group Chief HR Officer at Kaprain since 2024. Her career began at PPF Group, where she gained valuable experience in human resources management. She then became a key figure in the engineering holding Wikov, where she held the role of HR Director for eight years, overseeing the HR strategy across the entire group.

Her professional journey also includes roles at renowned companies such as Skanska, Mladá fronta, and Rohlík, where she contributed to strategic HR development, business partnering, and the implementation of learning and development (L&D) projects. In all these organizations, she was not only a driving force in talent management but also a key player in introducing innovations from parent companies.

AUTHENTICITY is truthfulness that, perhaps surprisingly, emerges the moment we realize we have been lying to ourselves.

The more we are able to acknowledge and observe our self-deceptions, the closer we come to true authenticity.

Authenticity cannot be fully recognized during a one-hour interview.

It can, to some extent, be predicted through emotional intelligence, our values, and the ability to show kindness and acceptance – both towards ourselves and others.

Its true depth, however, reveals itself only through long-term observation of a person.

- In the alignment between what we say and what we actually do.
- In the courage to be honest, even when it's uncomfortable.
- In the stability of their attitudes, regardless of circumstances.
- And in the willingness to admit a mistake or humbly say, „I don't know.“

- ANDERSON WILLINGER

AUTHENTICITY

CURRENT CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT ROLES

● **The year 2024 can be labeled as the year of Finance, IT, and Operations.** Although their share in overall recruitment may not seem groundbreaking at first glance, **we are witnessing a significant change in their seniority, importance, and responsibilities compared to previous years.**

● In 2024 and 2025, roles influenced by technological advancements or EU regulations are becoming increasingly prominent. Key roles include:

- **AI & Data Management**
- **ESG**
- **Cyber Security**
- **Innovation and Transformation roles**

● Responsibility for Artificial Intelligence is most often associated with Data Management, but there is a significant **increase in the number of standalone AI directors**, confirming the strategic importance of this area.

- Most companies are still primarily using AI to optimize costs and streamline processes. **However, a key skill for AI leaders in 2025 will be the ability to connect AI with business strategy to enhance profitability and competitiveness within their organizations.**



Kateřina Lesch
Head of Data & AI Solutions
EmbedIT



Jan Pivovarnik
Director, AI & Data
EY



Adrian Matei
Head of Data & AI
International | CBO | Head
of Data Science Hub
(Data & AI CoE)
NN



Martin Tomis
Data & AI Director
TRASK

Alphabetical Order by Company Name

● **The role of ESG directors has evolved in recent years from being part of other functions into a standalone strategic position.**

- The reason for this shift is the growing pressure from EU regulations (e.g., CSRD) and heightened expectations from investors and stakeholders regarding sustainability. Companies now need experts who not only oversee reporting and compliance but also actively integrate ESG with business strategy, innovations, and long-term competitiveness. This trend is expected to continue strengthening in 2025.



Drahomíra Mandíková
Group Chief Sustainability
Officer (Japan)
ASAHI GROUP HOLDINGS



Marek Loula
Board Member, Credit
Management and
Sustainability
CSOB



Gabriel Marosi
Sustainability and ESG
Director
DELOITTE



Zuzana Filipová
ESG Group Manager
KKCG GROUP



Martin Breyl
Executive Director of
Board of Directors (ESG)
RESPECT

Abecední řazení podle jména společnosti

► Which roles saw the most changes in 2024?

1.	Sales, BDVD & Commercial	15 %
2.	Finance	12 %
3.	Marketing, PR&PA	12 %
4.	HR	11 %
5.	Operations	8 %
6.	IT	6 %
7.	Strategy	6 %
8.	Legal & Compliance	2 %
9.	Product Management	2 %

COMMERCIAL & SALES MANAGEMENT, BDVP

- Commercial and Sales roles consistently top the list of executive transfers, and 2024 was no exception.

148 new **SALES, COMMERCIAL AND BDVP LEADERS** have found new opportunities in 2024, which is 31 more than in 2023. **On average, women make up 18% of this group.**

„If we were to categorize current sales role trends, they generally have three main directions – transformation of the business model, broader management of all sales channels, so-called omnichannel, or international expansion. All three require not only different experiences but also fundamentally different personalities.“

Lucie Teisler, Managing Partner, Anderson Willinger

- 48%** Almost half of all senior changes occurred in **corporations in 2024.**

- Next are **privately owned companies**, which accounted for an additional **26%.**

→ This market sector is experiencing exponential growth.

→ There is a demand for business experience with international exposure or export management.

- The sectors that most frequently change their commercial directors are **FMCG, followed by Manufacturing and B2B services.** In previous years, changes were dominated by the IT and Technology sectors (2023, 2020, 2021) and Advertising and Marketing agencies (2022).

- Compared to the previous year, the average tenure in one role and company has shortened to **3.5 years.** The shortest tenure for commercial directors occurred in 2020, when most of them left after three years.

MOST NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE COMMERCIAL COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Jakub Jonáš
Business Development
Director CEE
AEQOOM GROUP



Josef Danda
Sales Director CEE and
Member of the Board
AESKULAB



Giuseppe Panarese
VP, International IP
ALLEGRO



David Šindelář
Member of the Board of
Directors
ASSECO CENTRAL EUROPE



Katarína Vániková
Chief Commercial
Officer
CETIN



Jiří Bádř
Head of Sales
CETIN



Kateřina Peštuková
Group Head of Marketplace
DR. MAX PHARMACY CHAIN



Kateřina Klosová
Commercial Director
DUN & BRADSTREET EUROPE



Zuzana Remrová
VP, Commercial Head
Emerging Markets,
General Medicines
GSK



Naděžda Ptáčková
Project Development
Director
JRD GROUP



Robert Brejc
International Director
KOŠÍK.CZ



Marco Veroni
Sales and Operations
Director, Board Member
MAKRO CASH & CARRY



Jozef Nemček
Commercial Director
CZ&SK
MASPEX CZECH



Rudolf Kodýtek
Chief Commercial
Officer
MEOPTA



Michal Nebeský
Sales Director, Member
Board of Directors
NÁRODNÍ ROZVOJOVÁ BANKA



Vladimír Čillík
Global Sales Director
NOTINO



Lubomír Galatík
Technology Sales Director
CZ
ORACLE



Agnieszka Bobrukiewicz
Commercial Marketing
Director, Board Member -
CZ/SK/HU
ORLEN UNIPETROL



Jan Havliš
Group Chief
Commercial Officer
PENTA HOSPITALS



Lukáš Hora
Senior Director GTM
Transformation China
PROCTER & GAMBLE



Pavla Procházková
VP, Real Estate and
Customer Experience
Europe
PROLOGIS



Nikola Hoffmann
Member of the Board,
Commercial Activities
SAINT-GOBAIN CONSTRUCTION
PRODUCTS CZ



Magda Blouin
Industry Sales Leader
SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC



Tomáš Pánek
Chief Commercial Officer
SECURITAS ČR



Vladimír Štěpán
Vice President Region
Europe & Afrika Industrial
Steam Turbines and
Generators
SIEMENS ENERGY



Pavel Netopil
Sales Director Consumables
/ KERR / CEE, Adriatics,
Romania, Bulgaria, Greece,
Israel
SPOFADENTAL



Martin Daneš
Chief Sales Officer
SURI.CZ



Kateřina Ježková
Head of Top Corporate
Sales
T-MOBILE



Pavel Biskup
Director of Program
Management
TATRA TRUCKS
(Sales Director from 1.2.2025)



Michal Brzobohatý
Sales Director
THE HEINEKEN COMPANY



Stanislav Krátký
Head of Commercial
Excellence Team (ON/OFF)
THE HEINEKEN COMPANY



Lenka Kostlánová
Sales Director CZ&SK
VAFO PRAHA

▶ CRM & OMNICHANNEL

- **Between 2020 and 2022, insurance companies primarily changed their CRM leaders** as they faced digital transformation and the needed to modernize customer care. This led to more frequent changes in CRM leaders, making these companies dominant in recruitment during that period.
- **In 2023 and 2024, companies in the E/Q-Commerce sector, along with those in Payment Services and Entertainment, are coming to the forefront.** These industries reflect the growing emphasis on personalization, automation, and more effective customer relationship management. The rapid growth of these sectors requires new approaches to CRM, as well as in the entertainment sector, which focuses on enhancing digital experiences and building customer loyalty.

▶ Key Trends in 2025:

- Personalization based on advanced analytics
- Automation and artificial intelligence
- Omnichannel and seamless channel integration
- Focus on value, sustainability, and long-term viability
- Enhancing customer experience (CX) through data-driven approaches
- Better alignment of CRM with overall business objectives
- Emphasis on improving customer loyalty
- Increased focus on mobile CRM and mobile customer experience
- Proactive management of customer relationships

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Lucie Slavičková
Head of Customer Value
Management
E.ON



Lukas Antos
Chief Customer Officer
OPAP



Jozef Baláž
Head of Customer Experience
and Engagement
ŠKODA AUTO

FINANCE MANAGEMENT, CONTROLLING & ACCOUNTING AND TAX

The most attractive roles of 2024 were characterized not only by an increase in numbers but also by their interest and seniority.

The role of CFO is rapidly transforming, with over 70% of CFOs now bearing responsibilities that extend beyond traditional finance.

We are witnessing a significant shift in the quality of Czech CFOs, who are gaining increasing respect not only in the local market but also on an international scale.

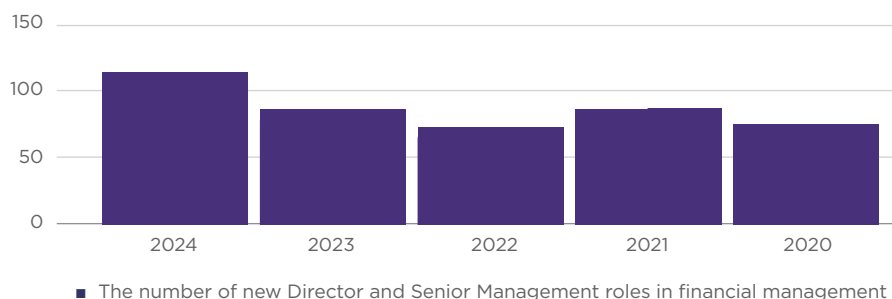
Dominant requirements for CFOs in 2024:

- On one hand, **acquiring financial resources on an international scale**, IPOs, working with investors, and increasing financial and operational efficiency with a focus on utilizing new technologies and digitalization.
- On the other hand, **leadership with a strong business focus**.

After years where the primary responsibility was to monitor and evaluate financial results and manage risks, the skills of CFOs are shifting towards much greater creativity, flexibility, and courage.

This fact also contributes to the increased number of CFOs who were promoted to CEO positions last year.

In 2024, a total of 116 new directors and managers in Financial Management took on new roles, which is an increase of 28 compared to 2023.



The complexity of CFO roles, their increasing number, and the lengthening tenure of CFOs—approaching four years in 2024—confirm that, with the growing emphasis on strategic thinking and the ability to respond to dynamic market conditions, **CFOs are becoming essential for the long-term growth and stability of organizations**.

● Although the quality of Czech CFOs is rising significantly, this role remains one of the few where the involvement of expatriates is above average compared to other managerial positions.

→ In 2024, expatriates accounted for 13% of all new CFO/FD roles, indicating that global companies continue to select foreign leaders, often due to their international experience or specialized expertise that can add value to the local business.

● Compared to 2023, when more than half (57%) of new CFOs were appointed in privately owned companies and PE-backed firms, 2024 saw a more balanced distribution between these companies and corporations. The share of new CFOs in privately owned and PE-backed firms dropped to 44%, while the number of CFO appointments in corporations increased to the same 44%. The remaining portion was replaced in state-owned enterprises or startups.

● CFOs continue to be primarily recruited from the external market rather than promoted internally. Additionally, there is a growing tendency to acquire financial leadership talent from outside the industry. However, this trend does not apply to Banking, Utilities, and FMCG sectors, where CFO transitions predominantly occur between competing companies.



● Over the past five years, women have accounted for an average of 24% of all changes in executive and senior financial positions.

MOST NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE FINANCIAL COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Marko Lehtonen
Chief Financial Officer
AURES HOLDING



Michal Pašák
Financial Director, Deputy
Chairman of the Board
ČEZ PRODEJ



Zdeněk Jurák
Group Chief
Financial Officer
CZECHOSLOVAK GROUP



Martin Oravec
Group Chief
Financial Officer
DIRECT FAMILY



Leoš Brabec
Chief Financial Officer
FOOTSHOP



Tomas Redler
Chief Financial Officer
FORTUNA CZ & SK



John Dieter
CFO & COO
FORTUNA ENTERTAINMENT
GROUP
(Promoted to CEO role
in January 2025)



Jaroslava Hirschová
Group Chief
Financial Officer
FUTURELIFE



András Gróf
Chief Finance Officer,
Board Member
INNOGY



Nicolas Mucherl
Chief Financial
Officer & Board Member
KOOPERATIVA



Daniel Eichholz
Chief Financial Officer
LIDL ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA



Michal Horák
Chief Financial Officer
Austria and Slovakia
MATTONI 1873



Dušan Ševc
Chief Financial Officer
MEOPTA



Markéta Benková
Finance and Risk Director,
Member of the Board
MODRÁ PYRAMIDA



Pavel Marek
Chief Financial Officer &
Member of the Board
NÁRODNÍ ROZVOJOVÁ
BANKA



Jan Bechyně
CFO and Vice-Chairman
of the Board
O2 CZECH REPUBLIC



Zdeněk Jíra
Chief Financial Officer
& Member of the Board
ORLEN UNIPETROL



Petr Tomášek
Group Chief
Financial Officer
PACKETA GROUP



Ľubica Poláková
Head of Finance
Operations CEE and WE
PEPCO



Jindřich Lhota
Chief Financial
Officer
PFNONWOVENS



Eugenia Panato
Finance Director
PHILIP MORRIS CZ/SK/HU



Peter Suchý
Chief Financial Officer,
Board Member
PORR



Kristína Pažmová
Chief Financial Officer
PORSCHE INTER AUTO CZ



Christian Diel
Chief Financial Officer
SIEMENS



Jaroslav Zoch
Chief Financial Officer
ŠKODA GROUP



Andrea Hábová
Finance and
Administration Director
STORCK CZ&SK



Šárka Švecová
Chief Financial Officer
TV NOVA



Georgia Salagean
Chief Financial Officer,
Member of the Board
UNICREDIT BANK



Milan Kníže
Chief Financial Officer
VODAFONE GREECE



Zuzana Sovová
Transaction Director
WOOD & COMPANY



Thomas Spitzenpfel
Group Chief Financial
Officer
ZENTIVA

NICOLAS MUCHERL STORY

From risk
to CFO
of major
markets.



Since 2024, Chief Financial Officer and member of the Board of Directors at Kooperativa a.s., a member of VIG.





NICOLAS MUCHERL

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, KOOPERATIVA

Nicolas's journey in the world of finance began nearly 19 years ago in the insurance industry. He gradually held several positions within the VIG Group before moving to Kooperativa in 2014 as Head of Risk Management. There, he was responsible for preparations for the new Solvency II regime and quickly progressed further.

In 2015, he became CFO at VIG Baltics – a major challenge. Together with the local team, he built the greenfield company into one of the top three players in the Baltic market. He then led strategic planning and controlling at VIG from 2021 to 2024, before returning to Prague in July 2024, where he now holds his current position.

How has the role of CFO changed in recent years?

The role of the CFO has dramatically shifted. In the past, the CFO focused primarily on the financial health of the company, but today, their role is much broader. It's no longer just about numbers – the **CFO is increasingly involved in strategic management, helping to build the business and shape the organization.** In other words, it's no longer just about defense, but also about offensive strategies.

What are the biggest challenges for CFOs in insurance?

Currently, the main challenges are the **implementation of the new accounting regime IFRS 17/9** and other regulatory changes, such as **DORA**. These reforms have a significant impact on financial process management and require careful adaptation of corporate governance.

What do shareholders, management, and CEOs expect from CFOs today?

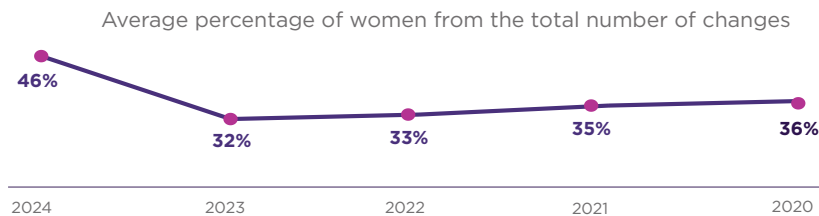
Expectations are clear – **not to be just a steward of finances, but a true business partner.** The CFO should challenge the status quo, think ahead, and, together with their team, **contribute to sustainable growth and the long-term success of the company.** ■

MARKETING, PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

- **SINCE 2020, THE NUMBER OF NEW MARKETING DIRECTORS HAS REMAINED RELATIVELY STABLE, RANGING BETWEEN 70 AND 80 PER YEAR.**

- **Marketing positions are among those with the highest fluctuation. On average, marketers stay in one role for just under three years.** However, 2024 marked the first year this duration increased to 3.3 years.

- **Women dominate the marketing field** Accounting for nearly half of all transitions—46%. This represents an increase of more than 10% compared to previous years. **The highest representation of women is in the FMCG sector.**



- **Marketing roles are among the least likely to be promoted internally, with only 30% of positions filled this way.** There is a clear tendency to recruit marketers from the external market. Additionally, they are the **most flexible in terms of transitioning between industries.**

- **Compared to previous years, the number of marketers in B2B services and Manufacturing has significantly increased.**

- **This is also the first year that a significant number of Marketing Directors have succeeded in international competition and secured interesting senior roles abroad.**

- **50%** **Marketing leaders have been promoted to roles reporting directly to the CEO, yet their seniority aligns with that of Senior Management. We believe this is due to:**

- **Focus on execution over strategy:** In some companies, local marketing is primarily focused on operational and executional activities, such as implementing campaigns or communicating with local agencies. Strategic management remains centralized in foreign headquarters.
- **Smaller size of local teams:** The Czech market is smaller compared to larger markets, which also affects the structure of the marketing department. Teams tend to be compact, and positions are not as complex.
- **Cost efficiency:** Companies often prioritize less experienced managers who can handle basic tasks at lower costs as part of their cost optimization strategies, while more complex issues are addressed by regional or global teams.
- **Centralization of functions at the regional or global level:** In corporations, key decisions regarding marketing strategy, branding, or budgets are increasingly being shifted to regional or global centers.

MOST NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE MARKETING COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Eduard Piños
Chief Marketing Officer
ACCOLADE GROUP



Zuzana Dudová
Marketing Director
ASAHI BEER USA



Nathalie Pfaff Seigle
Chief Growth Officer
ASAHI EUROPE & INTERNATIONAL



Ivana Stará
Head of Strategic
Marketing
BILLA CZ



Enikő Raskó
Marketing Director
GROUPE SEB



David Zappe
Marketing Lead
LIDL ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA



Dagmar Rychterová
Marketing Director
MOSER GLASSWORKS



Jan Dietl
Marketing Director
CZ/SK/HU
ORKLA FOODS CZ & SK



Jakub Mikeš
Marketing, Digital &
eCommerce Director,
Dermocosmetics and
Personal Care, Greece
PIERRE FABRE GROUP



Lenka Králová
Brand Director
PLZEŇSKÝ PRAZDROJ



Miloš Novotný
Marketing Director
SERVISBAL OBALY



Michal Šlechta
Director of Brand &
Marketing Communication
T-MOBILE CZ



Agnieszka Gorecki
Brand and Business
Development Director APAC
The HEINEKEN Company



Jakub Drobec
Brand, Marketing &
Communication Director
UNIQA CZ & SK



Jake Barrow
Chief Creative Officer
VML CZ



She doesn't like empty phrases or corporate jargon. Her experience and energy are reflected in her actions. She is known for her ability to connect business strategy with the potential of managers as true leaders. Soňa Schwarzová, Chief People & Sustainability Officer at the media group CME.

Imagine a world where HR is your **FIRM'S HIDDEN GEM**

There's no such thing as a purely "HR issue." People should be talked about in business terms.

- **Not measuring engagement?**
We're holding people back from doing their best work.
- **Unfair compensation?**
It leads to low performance.
- **High turnover?**
We'll pay more for hiring, onboarding, and training.
- **Tolerating underperformance?**
It will become the norm.

So the question isn't:
„Does a People-Driven company really exist?“

Question is:
„How long can we afford to ignore it?“

HOW TO BUILD A „PEOPLE-DRIVEN“ ORGANIZATION IN A COMPANY PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON PERFORMANCE? AND IS IT EVEN NECESSARY?

Personally, I've yet to meet a company that sets „being People Driven“ as its primary goal. Companies focus on clients, growth, profit, or efficiency, and people management is often seen as something that will take care of itself. But without active effort, it really doesn't work that way.

Fortunately, smart leaders know that the key to achieving goals lies in people who not only can but also want to perform. And those are two different things. Motivated and engaged people are not a given—they need to be nurtured. And that's not about the label „People Driven,“ but about common sense.

Taking care of people may sound simple, but anyone who has ever led a team knows it's a daily and strategic discipline. It requires constant thinking about what people need, what motivates them, and how to develop them. Sometimes, I even dream about it. However, I often see that people management tends to be more of a duty for leaders, one they avoid, preferring to bury themselves in spreadsheets. It's not their strong suit, but rather something they're happy to delegate to HR. This is understandable—they got to where they are due to their technical skills, not their ability to lead people. But, sooner or later, working with people becomes the key to success.

That's why I like to talk about people in the language of business—numbers, impacts, results. Turnover, costs, productivity, business cases, engagement levels—these aren't just HR topics, they're business metrics. If we don't create an environment where people feel good and have space to grow, it will affect the company's results. If we don't set the right conditions for working parents during parental leave, we lose the performance of experienced employees and hire newcomers instead, which always carries a risk. If we don't work with satisfaction survey results or, heaven forbid, don't measure them

at all, we won't know what's preventing people from focusing on their work or why they're not performing at their best. If we tolerate under-performance, it becomes the norm, negatively affecting the performance of others. And all these „soft“ factors have a hard impact on the company's results.

My role is to be a partner to leaders. To listen, understand, and adjust the pace and ambitions based on what they and their teams need. Every leader has different strengths, and each has their own style—and it's in that diversity where the greatest challenge, and also the joy, lies.

WHAT ARE THE „SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET“ THAT APPEAR ALONG THE WAY AND DESERVE ATTENTION?

Skeletons are everywhere, and I'm sure some have been left behind by me too. I stopped worrying a long time ago about things not working perfectly—the important thing is to understand why they're not working and what we can do about it. People generally do the best they can, but sometimes they need to see that things can be done differently.

One skeleton that never lets me rest is unfairness. I don't just mean in compensation. Unfairness shows up in small decisions—who gets an invite to a leadership conference and who doesn't. These small, seemingly insignificant injustices often have a much bigger impact on trust and employee satisfaction than we realize. And yet, they're actually easy to eliminate—just by being aware of them. And that's a key trait of leaders—to be aware of their impact in every situation. What I say or don't say. What I do or don't do. And how I do it. Everything has an effect and impact. And as a good leader, I work consciously with that.

The second topic is status. In organizations where titles, positions, and office sizes matter, unnecessary barriers are created. Every time I hear someone needs „Director“ on their business card to get people to deliver what they need, I realize how important leadership is. Respect isn't earned by a sign on the door, but by how you behave and inspire others. When

a leader masters this, they give people purpose, vision, and enthusiasm, drawing out their best—even when they don't realize it's there. Then they'll follow you anywhere and work from a garage, without needing bananas every Monday! It doesn't matter where I am in the hierarchy or what's on my card. By the way, I don't have one. Each of us is the leader of our own life! I spent several years in an open space with colleagues, even though that's rare in HR. For me, it was about showing that it's not about form, but substance.

HOW DOES THE ROLE OF THE CEO DIFFER FROM YESTERDAY TO TODAY AND TOMORROW?

When I think about what we expect from leaders today compared to the past, the first thing that comes to mind is the digital mindset. And I feel like we still somewhat underestimate it. When hiring for leadership positions, we rarely ask about their relationship to digitalization – yet it can be one of the factors that determines how a company will operate in a few years.

Digital tools and technologies are no longer „nice to have.“ They are part of everyday reality. I see how crucial it is to be open to learning new things, to listen to people who are more advanced in certain areas, and not be afraid to bring in people from different industries who offer new perspectives. To me, this defines leadership today – having a digital vision and the ability to create an environment where various skills can meet and complement each other.

Another key area is generational diversity. Leading different generations is challenging – mid-lifers have experience, perspective, and know how to handle stress, while younger generations may have more energy but don't necessarily want to channel it all into work. Most CEOs are themselves in mid-life, with everything that comes with it. They are at a crossroads, dealing with themselves, while also having to lead a company that's welco-

ming snowflakes and digital freaks, each with their own expectations. That's a huge challenge!

Being able to maximize the differences in people by adapting to various needs requires a great deal of courage and a sense of fairness. A CEO should be aware of this context and consciously change how the company operates – becoming much more flexible. They must be the first to be willing to change themselves in order to continue being a benefit to their company. But who am I to lecture CEOs? I have never been in such a role myself. And why am I writing about CEOs in the male gender?

WHERE DO WE FIND THE ENERGY TO NOT GIVE UP AND KEEP GOING? AND WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM IT ALL?

For me, it's mainly about doing things I believe in and that make sense. When the work has a purpose and a clear vision, the energy comes naturally. The second key source is the people around me – a team that pulls together. When I see that people are pursuing the same goal, are independent, confident, determined, and eager to move things forward, it truly fulfills me. Last week, a colleague in Slovenia said to me, „Soňa, you are moving the rocks. So will I!“ That's what it's all about.

When a person is passionate about their work and it gives them meaning, they stop counting the hours. And when I add the feeling that what I do has a real impact, that I am leaving something visible and valuable behind, it's the driving force that keeps me moving forward, even when things aren't easy. From difficult moments, you always take away the most valuable thing – experience and the confirmation that what you're doing matters. And every day, I am reminded that the right team will always have my back, just like they have so many times before! ■

"In the past, the leader was expected to be the best. Today, that's no longer true. The younger generation excels in digital skills beyond what the previous one could. A leader must embrace the fact that they aren't the best at everything anymore and focus on fostering an environment where their team can shine."

SOŇA SCHWARZOVÁ**CHIEF PEOPLE & SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER, CME GROUP**

Soňa Schwarzová has over 20 years of experience in banking and large corporations, having worked in various roles and environments – from Four Seasons, Komerční banka, and Société Générale to NN and Air Bank. Today, at CME, she aligns HR strategy with business goals while driving key ESG initiatives forward. She is behind the creation of the CME Cares strategy, which aims to produce socially responsible television content, support communities, and promote sustainable practices across all activities.

Not only in her work but also as a mentor, she believes that everyone has the right to their own pace and path. She helps break down barriers in career growth and supports diversity not just as a word on paper but as an everyday reality. She believes that we achieve the most when we allow ourselves to be ourselves – and when we have people around us who make that possible.

HR MANAGEMENT

● **77** IS THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF NEW HR DIRECTOR ROLES PER YEAR OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

● **60%** of all HR transitions in 2024 took place in the first two quarters. Towards the end of the year, the number declined, aligning with the overall trend of 2024, where most transitions occurred in the first half of the year.

● In 2024, the number of men in HR roles remains at the same level as in 2023, with a total of 21 recorded.

● **3 YEARS** The average tenure of an HR director in a single role and company has been gradually increasing since 2020. However, compared to other roles, it remains among the shortest.

● Companies tend to refresh their HR teams with new talent from different industries.

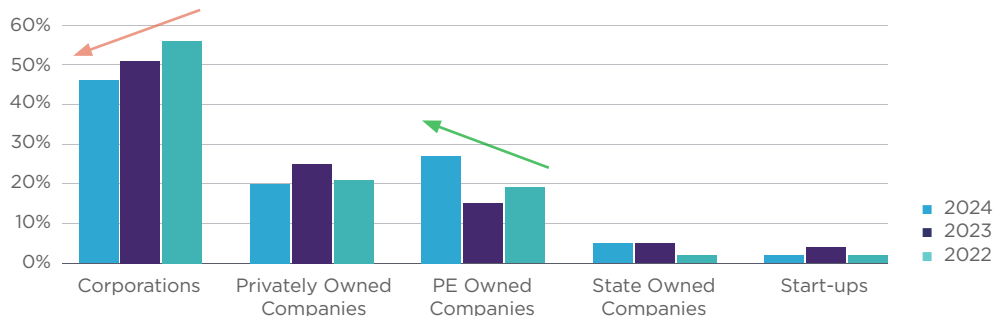
→ Compared to 2023, the tendency to hire HR professionals externally has significantly increased. In 2024, only 23% of new HR leaders were promoted internally, highlighting the dominance of external recruitment in this field. Additionally, 77% of HR directors are transitioning to a new company from a different industry.

→ In top HR roles, selecting the right industry is crucial. Companies want to acquire experience from a similar business model and a comparable cultural transformation experience, which primarily concerns:

- ▶ The transformation of the organization, corporate culture, knowledge, approach, and employee engagement.
- ▶ The redefinition of HR itself involves connecting a deep understanding of business, data, and numbers with psychology.

● In 2024, new HR leaders were most in demand in Manufacturing, FMCG, and Healthcare. In contrast, in 2023, the highest demand was in Financial Services and IT & Technology.

● Companies owned by PE funds are coming to the forefront, with more than half of new HR leaders (55%) stepping into executive or group roles.



- **63 %** of HR leaders have changed in companies with a turnover of up to 5 billion CZK.

▶ WHAT'S NEW IN THE WORLD OF HR AND ORGANIZATIONS?

- Just as the pandemic changed the PLACE where we work artificial intelligence is now changing the WAY we work. The boundaries we once took for granted are gradually dissolving, and traditional employment models are becoming more flexible and lacking clearly defined borders. HR is ceasing to function as a standalone and isolated function.

- Today's business challenges are becoming increasingly complex and require collaboration across multiple disciplines to address them. In this environment, HR is no longer just a support function for business strategy in the role of a „business partner.“ Instead, HR actively participates in co-creating business strategy and key business outcomes. Companies that can combine technological innovations with a human approach and strategic thinking will gain a significant competitive advantage.

- The key 5 areas for 2025 will be:

1. **Skills in data literacy and its connection to business: In general—and especially in the field of human resources—data literacy has become more important than ever.** In the global business environment, data literacy is expected to be the most sought-after skill by 2030.
2. **AI Implementation:** While artificial intelligence has been just a „buzzword“ in the HR field for several years, 2024/2025 marks a significant shift toward its real use and practical implementation. Advanced AI applications are now starting to be utilized for people analytics and workforce intelligence, analyzing skill gaps, and optimizing recruitment and talent development processes.
3. **Investing in the definition and development of so-called „Human Capabilities“:** As organizations increasingly use artificial intelligence and automation for routine tasks, „Human Capabilities“ become key factors that differentiate them in areas requiring judgment, interpersonal interaction, and adaptive thinking. Investing in these capabilities enables organizations to build resilient teams ready to support innovation, new technologies, and manage change.

“An organization is a network of skills, not just employees.”



David Blackburn
Senior Advisor for Skills
and HR Evolution,
Bank of England

4. Building „skills-based“ organizations:

- One of the main challenges facing HR leaders today is the question: **“How can I place the right skills in the right positions to align our efforts with business goals and truly contribute to achieving business outcomes?”**
- Organizations that focus on skills are particularly effective in managing the challenges of digital transformation, integrating artificial intelligence, and hybrid work models, where adaptability and continuous learning are key. By shifting from clearly defined roles to individual skills, these organizations should be better prepared to respond to the rapidly changing market environment.

5. Shift towards „Boundaryless HR“: Instead of supporting the business as an external partner, HR is becoming an integral part of achieving organizational goals. It is evolving into a key driving force that connects people strategies with overall business priorities, such as innovation, customer satisfaction, and operational agility.

NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE HR COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Ctirad Nedbálek
Global Head of People and
Organizational Development
and Group HR Functions
AHOLD DELHAIZE



Martina Ježková
Human Resources
Director
ČESKÉ
RADIOKOMUNIKACE



Pavel Mičánek
Head of Human
Resources
DEUTSCHE BÖRSE



Vlasta Sloupová
Group HR Director CZ
E.ON



Radka Bečvářová
Chief People Officer
EMBEDIT



Denisa Šmejck Ptáčková
Global Chief
People Officer
FUTURELIFE



Katarína Andrašová
Head of HR & Organization
GENERALI
ČESKÁ POJIŠŤOVNA



Jana Krajcarová
Group Human
Resources Director
HEUREKA GROUP



Kateřina Vondrková
Group Chief
People Officer
KAPRAIN GROUP



Daniel Soukup
Regional HR Director
KINSELLAR



Andrea Bělková
HR Lead
MICROSOFT CZ&SK



Daniela Razimová
Chief HR Officer
PACKETA GROUP



Michaela Lagerová
Country HR Manager
PARTNER IN PET FOOD
CZ&SK



Lucie Benešová
Senior People and Culture
Manager CZ/SK/HU
PHILIP MORRIS



Blanka Řihová
People Director CE
TESCO



Bridget Olde Olthof
Head of People & Organization
ZENTIVA CZ

The word **DISCIPLINE** comes from the Latin *disciplina*, which means teaching.

It is the ability to manage your thoughts, actions, and time, even when it is not always comfortable or easy.

WHAT DEFINES IT?

- The ability to set goals and commitments and stick to them, even when we don't see immediate results.
- Effective time management and the art of setting the right priorities.
- The level of resilience against obstacles and the effort to find solutions.
- Self-control, even when it would be tempting to fall into laziness.

„Discipline is not about rigidity, but about the ability to stay on course even in a chaotic and challenging environment.“

- ANDERSON WILLINGER

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How to spot a great leader?

Partnership as the key to success

Finding the right person to lead a company is, first and foremost, a crucial decision and a great responsibility. A CV full of achievements is not enough—the key lies in how the person thinks, makes decisions, and, most importantly, fits into the team. I have found several things that work well:

- **A strong recruiting team** – Every person involved in the interviews knows exactly what to focus on. Efficiency and good coordination help prevent poor decisions.
- **Multiple personal interviews** – Not just formal interviews, but also longer and more informal conversations. I want to see how the candidate behaves in different situations.
- **Cultural fit** – The cornerstone of success. If a person doesn't align with the company culture, it won't work in the long run

And finally—there are always two sides in the selection process, and I want to inspire the candidate about our business. After all, I'm looking for another partner for the team.

HR? No. We are People team!



PHOTO: Lenka Krobová

I like that at Tesco, we no longer call it HR but the **People Team**. We are not a “human resources” department. People are not resources—they are individuals. And we want everyone to feel like an important part of the company.

The world of HR is changing rapidly, and I believe we now stand on two main pillars:



We treat people the way they wish to be treated.

Retail is a tough job in a dynamic environment. However, **our colleagues know that at Tesco, they will always be treated fairly.**

Women make up a significant part of our team, and we actively support their career growth. People want the freedom to choose, and we provide it. We help our colleagues find a balance between work and personal life. Flexibility, diversity, and well-being are no longer just slogans—they are an integral part of our DNA.

And do you know why these are not just empty words?

9 out of 10 employees say they can be themselves at Tesco and would recommend it as a great place to work. That's something we're proud of. Because when people feel good, they perform at their best. ■

BLANKA ŘÍHOVÁ

PEOPLE DIRECTOR, TESCO CE

Blanka has held the position of People Officer for Central Europe at Tesco since 2024. Previously, she worked as Vice President of Global HR Partnerships at Iron Mountain. As a certified therapist and coach, she possesses deep expertise in psychology and coaching, enabling her to effectively understand and support people's needs and motivations.

With over 20 years of experience at global levels, she has successfully led complex transformation and change projects, including the implementation of innovative technologies such as CI, robotics, and AI.

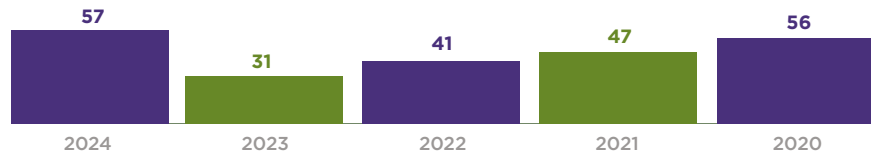
1. **HR as a strategic partner, not just support** – We are no longer just “the ones who hire people.” We are **sparring partners for management**, capable of providing honest feedback, challenging leadership, and helping to shape the company's direction.

2. **AI and digitalization are changing the game** – Communication, learning, and collaboration are all different from just a few years ago. Technology provides us with tools, but it's up to us how we use them.

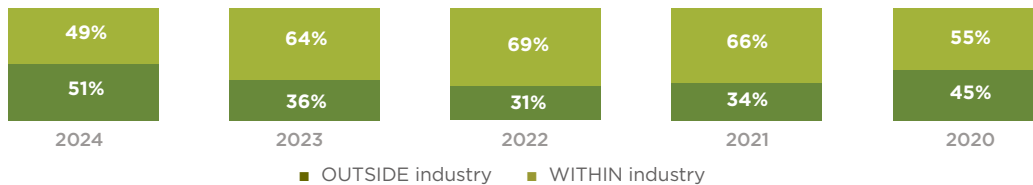
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

- THE NUMBER OF NEW CHIEF OPERATING OFFICERS (COOs) INCREASED AGAIN IN 2024, WITH 15 MORE THAN THE AVERAGE OF PREVIOUS YEARS.

NUMBER OF COO CHANGES BY YEAR



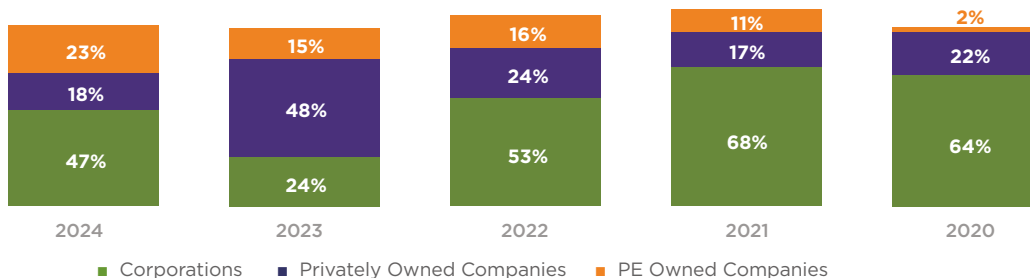
- The second major shift is in the recruitment of Chief Operating Officers. While in previous years they were predominantly selected from the same industry, in 2024, 51% of these hires are happening across different sectors. This trend reflects the growing demand for a broader range of knowledge and skills than was traditionally required.



- In 2024 recruitment the dominant sectors are Energy & Utilities, Logistics & Transport, and IT & Technology.

“ Unlike in the past, when COO roles were purely focused on Operations, these positions now increasingly encompass a broader range of responsibilities beyond business, innovation, product, and marketing. Today, COOs often oversee not only operational management but also Finance, IT, Compliance, ESG implementation, and Cyber Security. ”

- Corporations saw the highest turnover of operational leaders until 2022. Since 2023, their activity has been declining. In contrast, over the past two years, privately owned companies and those owned by PE funds have come to the forefront.



● From which roles have COOs most frequently transitioned in the past five years?

1.	Operations	40 %
2.	General Management	11 %
3.	Sales	8 %
4.	Finance	6 %
5.	IT	4 %
6.	Lean & Process Improvement	4 %

● What knowledge is now expected from a COO?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Data Management, AI & Process Automation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Effectiveness of Hybrid Management, Agility |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cyber Security and Compliance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESG and Sustainable Operations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital Transformation and System Integration | |

NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE COO COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Martin Hrudnik
Chief Operating Officer
AURES HOLDINGS



Marcel Rusinko
Chief Operations Officer
DIRECT AUTO



Jaromir Staroba
Chief Operations Officer
EMCO CZ



Jan Procházka
Eastern Europe
Chief Operations Officer
EUROP ASSISTANCE



Filip Popovič
Chief Operations Officer
GROUPON



Petr Indra
Group Operations Officer
HEUREKA



Petr Krula
Chief Operating Officer
LIDL ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA



Pavel Todt
Chief Operations Officer
PACKETA GROUP



Marcel Homolka
Vice Chairman of the Board
TSK PRAHA

IT, TECHNOLOGY & CYBER SECURITY

- **THE NUMBER OF NEW CIOs/IT DIRECTORS AND CYBER SECURITY LEADERS/CISOs TRIPLED IN 2024 COMPARED TO 2023.**

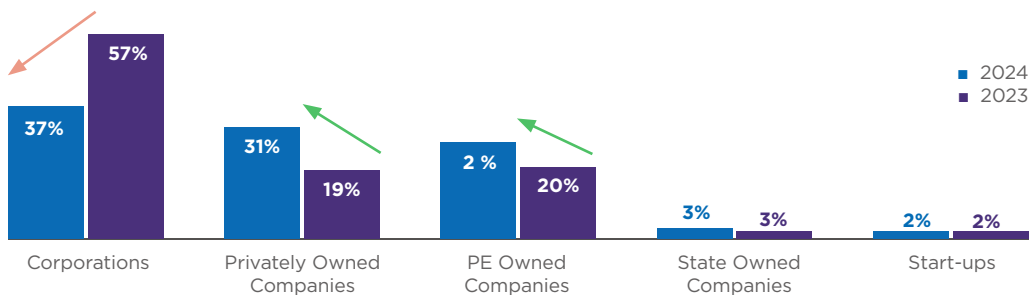
- As in previous years, recruitment is **dominated by Financial Services—primarily banks and insurance companies.**

- **29%** of new CIOs and CISOs changed in companies with a turnover exceeding 10 billion CZK.

- As a result of EU legislation (primarily the Cyber Solidarity Act), Cyber Security expertise is gradually being separated from the responsibilities of CIOs, and an increasing number of companies, especially those in critical sectors according to the EU, are creating standalone roles for Cyber Security leaders.

- In 2025, most smaller local companies will intensively continue this trend, either by building Cyber Security centers or by outsourcing selected parts.

- **Privately owned companies and those owned by PE funds are dominating the recruitment of CIOs this year, with 58% of new IT Directors transitioning in these organizations.**



- **External recruitment is prevailing over internal promotions.** Over the long term, only an average of 33% of new IT leaders are promoted to their roles.

▶ WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE WORLD OF CIOs?

- **The main change is that most companies are transforming into technology firms** that offer some form of service or product. This shift in mindset significantly increases pressure on IT Directors, expands their responsibilities, and strengthens their influence within the organization.

- **CIOs are shifting from a supportive role focused on business support to strategic positions** with direct responsibility for corporate strategy, competitiveness, and profitability.

- **This places a significantly greater emphasis on broader business understanding than was previously sufficient in these roles.** It also indicates that in the future, we will increasingly see individuals with diverse backgrounds entering these positions, not just those strictly from the IT field.

NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE CIO/CTO/CYBER SECURITY COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Přemysl Semerád
Chief Technology Officer
AIR BANK



Jan Rulišek
Chief Information
Security Officer
ARICOMA GROUP



Martin Götz
Director of ICT and
eGovernment
ČESKÁ POŠTA



Jan Štěpánovský
Chief Information Officer
CETIN CZ



Václav Ryč
Regional CISO
for Continental
Europe
COMMERZBANK AG



Luboš Chládek
Group Chief
Information Officer
CZECHOSLOVAK GROUP



Luca Demarchi
Group Chief Information
and Technology Officer
DR. MAX PHARMACY CHAIN



Ivo Gajdica
Head of Cyber Security
EMBEDIT



Sigurdur Stefnisson
Chief Technology Officer,
Cyber Safety
GEN



Jan Las
Chief Information Officer
HOPI HOLDING



Petr Hejda
Chief Information
Security Officer
KOOPERATIVA



Petr Kopřiva
Head of NN Digital Hub
NN



Martin Fiala
Chief Information Officer
PACKETA GROUP



Tomáš Galko
Chief Information Officer
PFNONWOVENS



Kamil Mrva
Chief Information
Security Officer
PPF GROUP



Markéta Eggerthová
Chief Information Officer
PRAŽSKÁ PLYNÁRENSKÁ



David Pavlík
Chief Technology Officer
ROHLIK GROUP



Ondřej Klamt
Senior Vice President
Development
SHIPMONK



Jarmila Plachá
Head of IT Process and
System Integration
ŠKODA AUTO



Milan Urbášek
Group Information
Technology Director
ŠKODA GROUP

STRATEGY, TRANSFORMATION & INNOVATION

- **In 2024, there was a significant increase in demand for strategic, transformational, and innovation directors**, doubling in number compared to the previous year.
- **The highest concentration of these roles is in companies with a turnover of 1 billion CZK or more**, with 30% of strategic positions found in firms exceeding 10 billion CZK in turnover.
- **The primary focus of strategic directors is organic and acquisitive growth**, building strategic partnerships, and investing in startups or innovative projects.
- **The second type consists of transformation roles** focused on digitalization and AI.
- **The third type consists of innovation directors**. What unites innovation directors is the expected contribution of more significant and impactful innovations across various industries. They are also typically responsible for multiple markets or a broader range of products and services.
- **An interesting trend is that companies are increasingly filling these roles with experienced leaders who have previously served as CEOs**. This approach ensures a broader perspective and experience, the ability to navigate complex situations, a strong connection to the business, and the skill to persuade both the organization and the market about important changes.

NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE STRATEGY COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Jakub Vaniš
Transformation Lead
ASAHI BREWERIES EUROPE
& INTERNATIONAL



Petr Litvan
Director of Strategy
and Development
ASTRON GROUP



Eldar Vagabov
Chief Innovation Officer
AURES HOLDINGS



Vladimír Mužík
Director of Digital
Transformation and
Informative Programs
CME GROUP



Jaroslav Strnad
CSG Ammunition
Chief Strategy Officer
CZECHOSLOVAK
GROUP



Jan Vyhňálek
Head of CEE Innovation
DPD CZ



László Szabó
Chief Transformation
Officer CZ/HU/SK
L'OREAL



Miloš Bronček
Director of Strategic
Projects
TATRA TRUCKS



Vít Javůrek
Chief Strategy Officer
WOLTAIR

PR&PA, CSR AND COMMUNICATIONS

- After the boom in 2020 and 2021 and the subsequent decline, **the demand for positions in PR and PA has been gradually increasing since 2022.**
- **Unlike the previous period, when state-owned companies dominated, in 2024, the highest demand for these professionals came from privately owned firms and companies owned by PE funds.**

► What's new in the world of PR & PA?

The year 2025 will be a turning point for European regulations (e.g., the Digital Services Act, AI Act, and ESG directives), meaning that companies will need strong PA and PR experts to help shape the legislative framework and ensure compliance. With the rise of generative AI, disinformation will spread faster than ever before. Companies will require immediate responses, strong crisis scenarios, and the ability to quickly repair reputational damage. Traditional media are gradually losing their dominant influence, being replaced by specialized platforms, newsletters, and influencer marketing. PR professionals must master new communication channels.

NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE PR&PA COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Alžběta Honsová
Head of External and
Internal Communications,
Spokesperson
AIR BANK



Jakub Holas
Director of the
Communications Division
and CNB Spokesperson
ČESKÁ NÁRODNÍ BANKA



Jiří Jón
Executive Director
of Group Communication
ČSOB



Jan Hamáček
Director, External Relations
CZECHOSLOVAK GROUP



Kateřina Petko
Head of Corporate
Communications and
Marketing
CZECHOSLOVAK GROUP



Jitka Pajurková
Communication Leader
DIRECT FAMILY



Tomáš Leixner
Head of Corporate
Communication
E.ON CZ



Michal Kříž
Head of External
Communication
NADACE THE KELLNER FAMILY
FOUNDATION



Martin Žabka
Head of Communications
NN POJIŠTOVNA A PENZIJNÍ
SPOLEČNOST



Andrea Gontkovičová
VP, External Affairs SSEA,
CIS and MEA
PHILIP MORRIS



Zuzana Krajíčková
Chief Communication
Officer
STAVEBNINY DEK



Vladimír Rosol
Editor in Chief - News
TV NOVA



Vlastimil Nigrin
Director of Fundraising
and Marketing
ZDRAVOTNÍ KLAUN

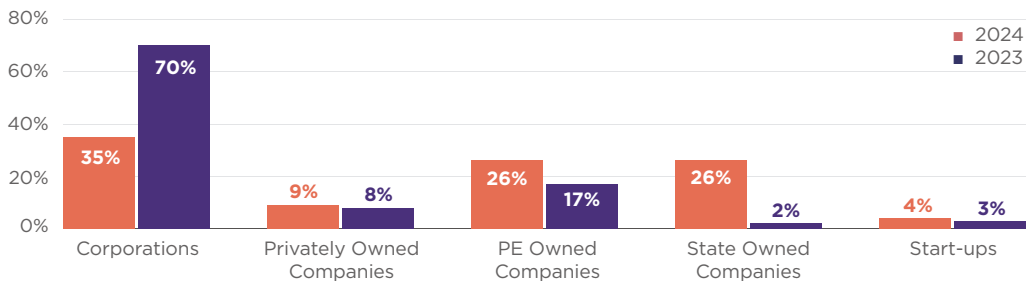
LEGAL, COMPLIANCE & REGULATORY

- **THE NUMBER OF SENIOR AND TOP MANAGEMENT CHANGES HAS DOUBLED COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR.**

→ This trend reflects the growing emphasis on acquiring top-tier in-house legal experts, whose roles and responsibilities within organizations are continuously expanding. In large companies, they often combine the legislative agenda with procurement, ensuring comprehensive legal support.

- **Recruitment continues to be dominated by Financial Services, just as in previous years. In 2024, 52% of all changes occurred in this sector.**

- Compared to previous years, **there was a significant increase in demand for these roles in state-owned companies and companies owned by PE funds in 2024, particularly in firms with a turnover exceeding 10 billion CZK.**



- The average tenure in this role is the longest compared to others, at 4.5 years.
- **There is an increasing trend of top experts transitioning from elite law firms to in-house legal teams.** At the same time, in-house legal teams are undergoing dynamic transformation – lawyers are no longer just „rule keepers“ but key players in the growth and protection of companies.
- **In-house corporate lawyers are increasingly overseeing multiple countries and have international responsibilities.**

▶ WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE LEGAL WORLD?

- **Law is becoming a key component of business:**
 - Corporate lawyers are no longer just a support function—they are strategic partners to company management.
 - They are increasingly involved in key business decisions, and their roles are expanding.
 - The workload of in-house legal departments is increasing, particularly in the areas of regulations, transactional advisory, and compliance.

- **The scope of responsibilities is changing:**

- Strategic legal issues are intertwined with business decisions, and lawyers are involved in acquisitions, expansions, and transformations of companies.
- Key topics for 2024/2025 include regulations in the areas of Cyber Security (NIS 2), Artificial Intelligence (AI Act), and Infrastructure (Gigabit Infrastructure Act).
- They are given more decision-making power by companies, which increases their responsibility and influence within the organization.

NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE LEGAL COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Jiří Hrabovský
Head of Legal
Department
ČESKÁ TELEVIZE



Lubomír Bubelíny
Chief Legal and
Regulatory Officer
CETIN



Matěj Daněk
Group Head of Employment
and Corporate Legal
CTP



Brendan Donahue
Chief Legal &
Regulatory Officer
e& PPF TELECOM GROUP



Dušan Malota
Chief Administrative
Officer
EMBEDIT



Martin Šeda
Chief Legal and
Compliance Officer
HOME CREDIT GROUP



Pavel Rozehnal
Chief Legal and Regulatory
Officer PPF Telco group
PPF GROUP



Tomáš Krčil
Group Legal Director
ROHLIK GROUP



Jan Klouda
CE Legal & Corporate
Security Director
TESCO



Aneta Disman
Chief Legal Officer
WIKOV GEAR

SUPPLY CHAIN, LOGISTICS & PROCUREMENT

- The need for new directors in Supply Chain and Procurement has remained stable since 2022.

- ▶ **Which industries are most frequently replacing these leaders?**

- 2024 → FMCG, Wholesale & Retail, Q-Commerce
- 2023 → Logistics and Transportation, Manufacturing and Aerospace, FMCG
- 2022 → Q-Commerce, Wholesale & Retail, FMCG
- 2021 → Automotive, Manufacturing, Logistics and Transportation
- 2020 → Pharmaceutical industry, Logistics and Transportation, Automotive

- The demand for new directors in 2023 was evenly distributed between corporate companies and privately owned firms. **In 2024, corporations prevailed, accounting for 62% of these transitions. Most of them also went to companies with 500 FTEs or more.**

- **69%** of these new roles were filled internally, both in 2023 and 2024.

► **Key Trends in Supply Chain in 2025**

- **Digitalization & AI** – Artificial Intelligence will significantly transform planning, purchasing processes, and supplier relationship management. New capabilities in predictive analytics, IoT, and automation will enable more efficient inventory management, optimization of logistics routes, and cost reduction. AI will also enhance demand forecasting and risk management.

- **Resilience & flexibility** – Companies will increasingly diversify suppliers, shift production closer to target markets (nearshoring), and plan for disruptions in supply chains.

- **Transformation of the industry and new skills** – Companies will increasingly seek experts in AI, data analysis, and automation. At the same time, hybrid work models will expand, and Global Competence Centers (GCC) and Centers of Excellence (CoE) will emerge for effective supply chain management.

- **ESG and Scope 3** – Companies must ensure that their supply chains meet environmental and social standards. Growing pressure for sustainability will lead to increased investments in a circular economy—recycling, reuse, and responsible production will be key competitive factors.

- **New delivery models** – Faster and more personalized deliveries (same-day delivery) are being increasingly implemented, utilizing micro-fulfillment centers and hybrid logistics models that combine various transportation channels for more efficient distribution.

- **Risk management in the supply chain** – Geopolitical instability, new regulations, changes in demand, and cyber threats require predictive technologies, data sharing with partners, and advanced visualization tools such as digital twins.

NOTABLE CHANGES IN THE LOGISTICS, SUPPLY CHAIN, AND PROCUREMENT COMMUNITY

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Milan Hladil
Vice President
Supply Chain
ALBERT-AHOLD



Konrad Senger
Head of Purchasing
Department, Board Member
LIDL ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA



Jan Turek
Supply Chain Director
CZ&SK
PIVOVARY STAROPRAMEN



Dragan Živanović
Supply Chain Director CZ
THE HEINEKEN COMPANY



SELECTION OF THE MOST NOTABLE LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN SLOVAKIA

MOST NOTABLE CHANGES IN CEO ROLES

Alphabetical Order by Company Name



Andrea Kočišová
General Manager
ANGELINI PHARMA



Marek Kramár
General Manager of
Competence Center
ARVAL BNP PARIBAS GROUP



Peter Kopačka
General Manager
BRITISH AMERICAN
TOBACCO (BAT SLOVAKIA)



Ján Šaulič
Country Manager
CZ&SK
CANS



Andrej Janičina
Chief Executive
Officer
ČSOB LEASING SK



Richard Daubner
Chief Executive
Officer
ČSOB POISTOVŇA



Peter Okenka
Managing Director
DHL Supply Chain



Tomáš Opačítý
Chief Executive
Officer
DIGI SLOVAKIA



Zdenko Böhmer
Country Director
HEWLETT PACKARD
ENTERPRISE SLOVAKIA



Ivan Udiljak
Chief Executive
Officer
LIDL SLOVAKIA



Roman Fink
General Manager
mBANK SK



Luboš Krpelan
Country Managing
Director
NTT SLOVAKIA



Martin Hromkovič
Chief Executive
Officer
PANTA RHEI



Martin Miller
Managing Director
UPC BROADBAND
SLOVAKIA



Peter Halmo
General Manager
CZ/SK/HU
XEROX

MOST NOTABLE CHANGES IN EXECUTIVE ROLES



Miroslav Gálus
Chief Risk Officer
365.BANK



Stanislav Kubala
Head of Audit,
Audit partner
BDO SLOVAKIA



Martin Zúbek
Audit & Assurance
Partner
BDO SLOVAKIA



Martina Kandra
Chief Mass Market
Segment Officer
SLOVAK TELECOM



Oliver Felszeghy
Chief Financial Officer
ZOZNAM.SK



VLASTA SLOUPOVÁ

VLASTA SLOUPOVÁ

CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER E.ON

Since 2024, Vlasta has been the Chief People Officer at E.ON, where she leads the HR department for nearly 4,000 employees. In addition to her role in HR leadership, she also works as a coach, career mentor, and trainer. Her professional career is associated with prominent companies such as GE Aviation, Adient, and VAMED.

What are your personal algorithms for selecting top executive directors?

For me, the key qualities are authenticity, the courage to make decisions and take responsibility, energy, drive, and the desire to push both themselves and the company forward. A leader must be a visionary who not only follows trends but also creates them. I need people who are not afraid to go against the grain, have a strong drive, and can inspire those around them.

How is the world of HR changing?

HR is no longer just a service department – any company can outsource such support. Today, HR must be on the front lines, understand the essence of the business, and be an indispensable strategic partner to management. HR must have the courage to change established practices, bring innovations, and be a true driver of corporate culture. Those who only stick to routine and administration won't remain relevant in the modern HR world for long.

What is happening in the energy sector from an HR perspective?

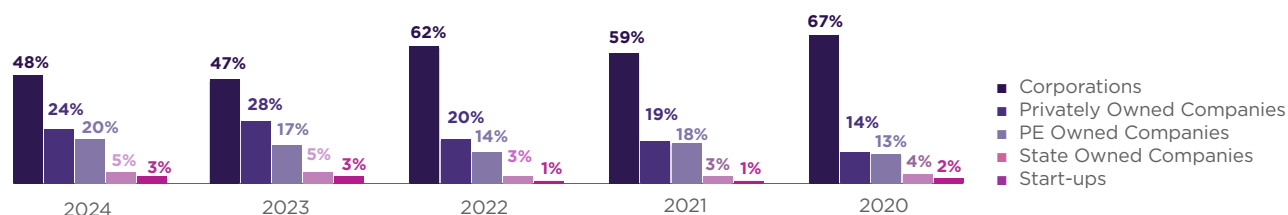
The energy sector is no longer a rigid, conservative industry. Today, it is an extremely dynamic environment that requires constant adaptation, openness to innovation, and the ability to make quick decisions. Employees must continually learn, work with the latest technologies, and be ready for change. We are witnessing a fundamental transformation of the entire industry, which creates huge challenges but also opportunities. Being part of this new era of energy is exciting and motivating – it's a world for those who are not afraid of big things! ■

WHAT TYPE OF COMPANIES ARE OUR LEADERS HEADING TO?

Corporate companies have been pausing changes in senior and top management positions for the second consecutive year. In contrast, hiring in privately owned companies continues to grow, particularly among those owned by local private equity funds, where activity has increased by 11% compared to 2020. Following them are companies owned by local stakeholders, with foreign family-owned companies coming in third place.

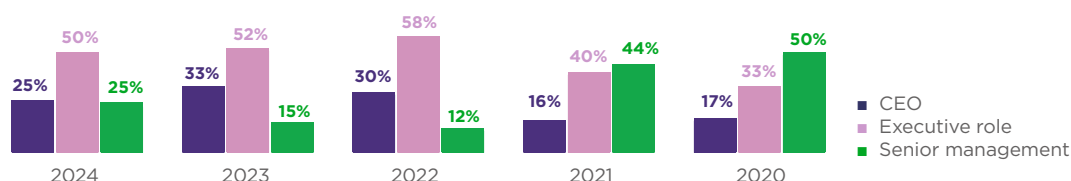
The main reason for the systematic decline in the number of attractive senior positions from global corporations for top executives in the CEE region is the shift of investments away from this region, which no longer offers such dynamic growth. These companies are increasingly centralizing their functions for multiple countries into a single hub, with Poland being the most common choice. In the Czech Republic, this, in turn, leads to existing managers in global firms often taking on more responsibilities within a single role.

On the contrary, local companies, whether owned by private owners or private equity funds, are actively investing in growth and in high-quality local leaders with international experience. The year 2025 will continue to be characterized by expansion into foreign markets, particularly in Europe, America, and Central Asia, as these firms reaffirm their ambition to become strong global players.



PRIVATELY OWNED COMPANIES

- In 2024, there is a significant turnover in senior management, which has increased by 10% compared to the previous two years, and external hiring has also grown significantly. Conversely, the number of newly appointed CEOs has decreased for the first time since 2022.

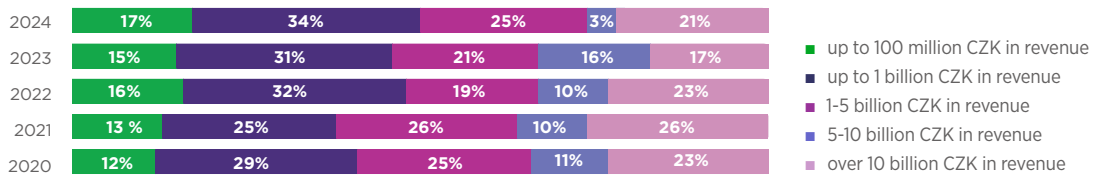


While the decrease in the number of new CEOs may be more of a short-term phenomenon reflecting the current specific needs of companies and their more conservative approach, the lower number of newly appointed CEOs **may also be related to a higher rate of long-term tenure in these positions.**

- The average tenure in the previous role for newly appointed CEOs reached **4.2 years**, and for those promoted internally, it's even a year longer. This marks an increase from 3.8 years in 2023 and 3.17 years in 2022.
- The length of tenure in other positions remained virtually unchanged in 2024, both for internal transfers and external hiring, with an average of 3.5 years. This figure is slightly below the overall market average, which is 3.6 years.

More than half of the managerial changes (51%) occur in companies with a turnover of up to 1 billion CZK.

- The most in-demand expert roles include positions in Sales and Marketing (Commercial roles), Finance, and IT-focused roles.



The share of expatriates in CEO and top management positions is among the lowest, at only **7%**.

The most active companies in recruitment in 2024 are in the following sectors:

- **Manufacturing** (primarily in the fields of engineering and electrical engineering)
- **IT** (consulting-software companies, data center and infrastructure providers, and integrators.)
- **Financial Services** (in the areas of insurance, payment solutions, or non-bank financial service providers)
- **Retail**
- **FMCG**

Smaller locally managed banks and locally owned real estate service companies have dropped to 6th and 12th place, respectively, in the industry ranking compared to previous years.

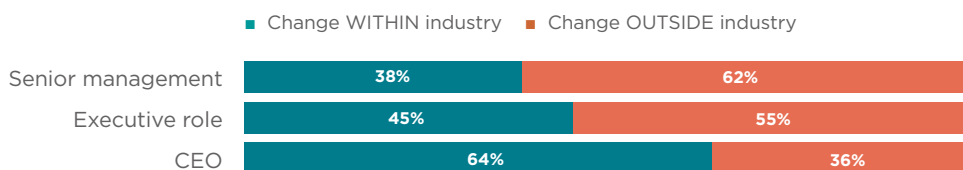
PRIVATE EQUITY OR INVESTMENT GROUP-OWNED COMPANIES

● The leaders of management changes in 2024 are:

- **Manufacturing** (engineering and the aerospace sector)
- **E-Commerce and Last Mile**
- **IT & Technology** (consulting and software companies, data center and infrastructure providers, and system integrators)
- **Financial Services** (Fintech innovators, Hybrid financial institutions, Consulting and Investment platforms)

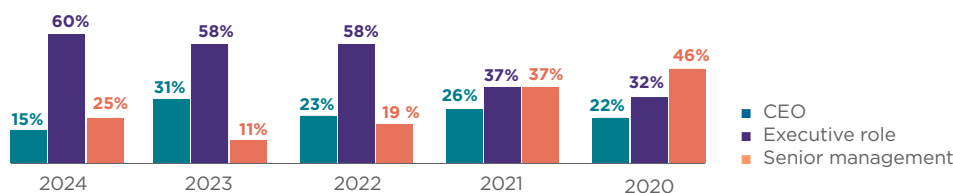
● A total of **67 %** of new managers in 2024 come from the external market, representing a **10% increase compared to 2023**. On average, more than half (55%) of these new leaders come from companies outside direct competition or industry. However, this percentage decreases with increasing seniority – for CEOs, it is only 36%.

- **Senior management shows high flexibility**, with 62% coming from different industries.
- **Roles directly reporting to the CEO** are filled by leaders from other sectors in half of the cases (55%).
- **CEOs come from outside the industry only 36% of the time. At the same time, 70% of them come from another company.**



● Compared to 2023, the number of new CEOs has decreased by half.

- **54%** of them are newly managing companies with a size of 100 to 250 employees.



● The time that CEOs remain in their roles has again extended by more than a year, returning to the levels seen in previous years.



PALEČKA
PALICKA
P
MAREK



**PRIVATE EQUITY:
FROM TRANSACTION
TO TRANSFORMATION**

Why is collaboration with company leadership crucial for private equity?

Previously, it was a transactional model - PE had a clear goal to sell the company within a few years. There are still funds, especially in the US and Western Europe, that flip companies quickly, holding them for three to four years and following a strict exit strategy. There is no room for a deeper relationship with management. In the Czech Republic and at Jet Investment, we have a longer investment horizon - typically six to eight years. This allows us to truly develop the company, but it's impossible without strong collaboration with leadership. Over the years, there will be challenging periods, and if the owners and management are not aligned, the company suffers.

What qualities must a leader of a fast-growing company have?

The key is for the leadership to be able to engage in discussions with us about where to take the company, what the main drivers are, and at the same time, know how to execute that strategy. Ideally, they should also have some experience with such growth. Managing a company with a billion-dollar turnover is very different from managing one that is two or three times larger. The automatic processes that worked well in a mid-sized company suddenly stop being effective. The company has to rely more and more on strong processes rather than the qualities of individuals, and that is also a major mental shift that not every manager can handle.

What types of companies do you look for when investing?

We prefer to invest in companies with strong management teams that simply need support to achieve further growth. We are not fond of unnecessary personnel changes. We find companies particularly interesting when we acquire them from founders and help them transition into professionally managed organizations. A good example is Tedom. In family businesses, management is accustomed to a close relationship with the owners, which often makes the transition easier.

Is intuition important in investment decision-making?

If the valuation numbers say 'great,' but you have a nagging feeling that something is off, most of the time, it turns out that something really wasn't quite right. And vice versa. I believe that most business decisions are more a reflection of internal feelings rather than purely numerical analysis. And that applies not just in the PE world. ■



MAREK PALIČKA

DIRECTOR - INVESTMENT PROJECTS,
JET INVESTMENTS

Marek is a director at Jet Investments. As part of his role, he also serves as the chairman of the board at 2JCP, a company within the portfolio. He has extensive experience in corporate restructuring and transformation, gained through his work at renowned consulting firms such as Roland Berger and Boston Consulting Group. Marek Palička studied the CEMS International Management program and pursued studies in Australia, Germany, and Austria.

The most sought-after roles were in the fields of sales and finance, which has remained unchanged for the second year in a row.

Unlike in previous years, there has been a significant increase in demand for new CIOs and CISOs. For the first time since 2020, these roles have become part of the most frequently changed positions in top management within this type of company.

→ Compared to last year, the demand for leaders in Operations has also increased.

- Sales 21%
- Finance 20%
- IT 13%
- Operations 11%
- HR 9%

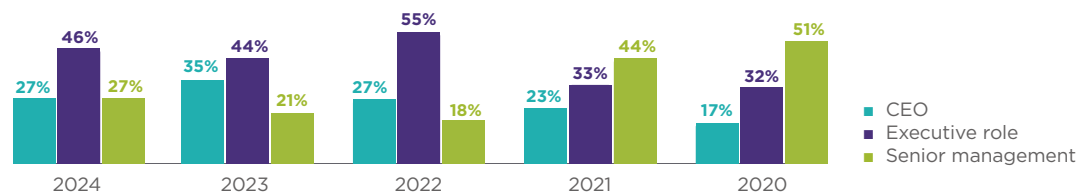
This may be due to:

- **The increasing emphasis on cybersecurity and digitalization:** With the rising threats in cyberspace and the rapid pace of digitalization, it is essential for companies to have strong leaders in IT who can ensure the security and modernization of their technological infrastructure.
- **Transformation of business processes:** PE funds are increasingly investing in optimizing operations and implementing efficient processes.
- **Adapting to regulations and sustainability:** With an emphasis on sustainability, regulatory compliance, and data protection, the demand for leaders who can integrate new technologies and processes to meet these requirements is increasing.
- **Focusing on growth and efficiency:** PE funds emphasize growth and profitability. CIOs and CISOs are crucial for technological integration and supporting innovations, while leaders in Operations ensure efficient operational processes that enable companies to grow and expand their capacities.

CORPORATIONS

The highest number of managerial changes in corporate companies occurred in the FMCG sector, which is characterized by the highest turnover of both senior and top management. There was also a significant increase in the number of newly filled CEO positions in pharmaceutical companies.

How are the seniority levels of managerial recruitments evolving?



● Over the last 5 years, an average of more than half (53%) of new senior and top management members have come from the external market.

→ By 2023, we observed a gradual increasing trend of corporations promoting their leaders internally. In 2024, this trend reversed, and external recruitment began to rise again, particularly in senior management roles (from 47% to 52%).

● CEOs remain the most frequently promoted position internally, accounting for 56 % of cases. However, we are increasingly seeing a growing openness to hiring new CEOs, with most of them coming from competitors—averaging 73% of cases.

→ In 2024, there is also an increase in the number of newly filled Plant Director roles in the automotive sector, rising by 48% compared to 2023.

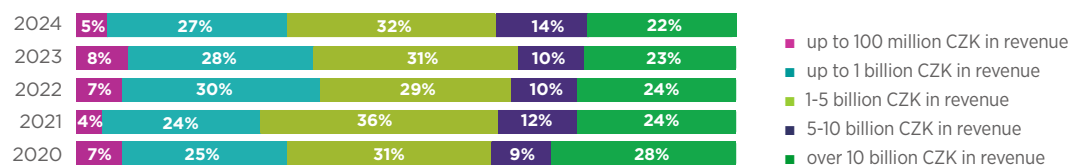
● Unlike privately owned companies, the tenure of CEOs in their roles does not change and remains relatively stable at around 4 years. The same applies to senior management, where the tenure has been holding steady for the past 2 years at 3.3 years.

● In corporations, the highest demand in the direct reporting line to the CEO is for Financial Managers (19%), Commercial roles (19%), and positions in Operations (11%).

→ In many cases, the leaders in these positions are at the senior management level. These roles, while directly reporting to the CEO, are becoming more junior than they were in the past.

● Compared to 2023 and 2022, there has been a significant decline in demand for new HR leaders, from 16% to 8%. In 2024, the main sectors for new HR managers are Automotive and FMCG, whereas in 2023, the sectors were Manufacturing, IT, Healthcare, and Financial Services.


● The distribution of recruitment in corporations, based on their revenue size, remains very balanced and stable across the years.



Daniela RAZIMOVÁ

She has worked for some of the best global brands and for prominent figures in Czech business, such as Jiří Šmejč and Tomáš Čupr. Now, she is revitalizing Packeta Group with Erich Čomor. How do the best operate, and what lessons can be learned from this for the alchemy of talent selection?

Here is the story of Daniela Razimová.



*Trust and relationships
are what matter.
Technical skills are
not everything.*

How did you end up doing what you're doing in life?

By a twist of fate. After school, I wanted to work in finance and thought I would become an accountant, which my father still believed for another 20 years. But my path led me elsewhere. Fate brought me to Philip Morris, where I started in the finance department, but when HR opened up in Prague, I switched over. At the time, not many people in HR knew how to work with Excel, which I used to my advantage, and I never left human resources after that.

In the beginning, I focused on compensation, which later took me to the PM headquarters in Switzerland, and then to the UK. After that, I got an offer from PPF Vietnam. Upon returning, I worked at GE Money Bank until Petr Janák from PPF approached me to return. I spent many years in the PPF group before the challenge came with Rohlík and later Packeta Group.

Home Credit was heavily built on people from GE. How did they handle the transition from corporations to an ambitious privately-owned company?

I think these were people who knew how to get the most out of the processes and concepts they had learned, but they also had the courage, independence, and ambition to take the best parts and apply them elsewhere. That was key for Home Credit. You had to be able to pack your bags and head to China, where nothing existed, and open a branch as CEO. And these people knew how to do that. It was the highest performing team I've ever worked with.

We built close relationships among ourselves—both professional and personal. We could speak honestly, sometimes even argue, but we always helped each other. That unity propelled us forward. They were colleagues with exceptional talents, which made the experience incredibly valuable. It was also a generation of people with a tremendous work ethic and commitment.

„At Home Credit, I grew tremendously in independence, the ability to make big decisions, and take responsibility for them. It's sometimes stressful, and you don't know how things will turn out, but you just jump. If you don't sink, you jump again, and eventually, it becomes part of your daily routine. It works, you find yourself in it, and it gives you wings.“

You mention „high-performing.“ What does that mean?

A team that recognizes its weaknesses and openly addresses them is more cohesive, with a culture of direct and effective communication. This allows for quick problem-solving and a focus on finding optimal, long-term solutions rather than just surface-level fixes. Nothing was ever truly „complete.“ The team had a strong instinct for identifying issues and tackling them head-on, instead of ignoring or brushing them aside. The ability to admit mistakes was also crucial in fostering trust and continuous improvement.

I believe Jiří Šmejč played a huge role in this. Jiří is a fascinating personality and an incredibly inspiring leader. He has an amazing ability to spot mistakes, but also understands that he's not infallible – and that makes him an exceptional boss. He's a leader who doesn't stand on a pedestal. He'll happily grab a beer with you and always finds time for his people. His philosophy – that people should work for a purpose, not just for money – was incredibly important.

I assume that at Rohlík you faced a similar challenge. Could the experience gained there be transferred?

Tomáš Čupr embodied the approach of „what's best for the customer,” regardless of who performs the task. This was very different from Home Credit, which had clearly defined processes and focused on numbers, analysis, and standardized reports. Rohlík was about the idea, the speed of its realization, and devotion to the customer. Tomáš had an incredible intuition—he could always sense what the customer wanted, even in unclear and ambiguous situations. And importantly, he was always right.

Additionally, Rohlík went through extremely dynamic development due to COVID and rapid growth—new countries, expansion, and financing. Everything happened at a breakneck pace, in a chaotic way, but it worked.

What do you think these people were missing?

Rohlík wasn't just a faster company. It was an environment where comfort zones didn't exist. On Monday, you believed you were heading in one direction, but by Thursday, the decision was different, and by Friday, it was already in motion. You had to accept that, quickly understand it, and

adapt. This pace was incredibly exhausting, both mentally and cognitively. There was no time for long-term planning; often, things had to be done out of necessity, immediately. Your mind was constantly racing, and on top of that, you were tired.

Then there was the issue of responsibility. In corporations, it's rare that the owner comes to you and says, „Hey, this really didn't go well, how could you have done this? You threw two million euros out the window.“ But in private companies, you experience that. It doesn't have to be in such big amounts, nor exactly those words, but it's still your responsibility. And you're standing there, exposed, without defense. You have to admit your mistake and move on. You get one night to process it, but the next day, you have to start again and do things better.

What is Packeta Group about now?

The story of a successful Czech entrepreneur who built a company from scratch carries strong emotion. However, when the company is bought by a UK-based fund, the emotional connection changes. This impacts the process of taking over the company while it remains the „child“ of its original founder. It's about many small steps, not one big breakthrough. Some may never see it the same way, but that doesn't mean it can't succeed—it just creates a different relationship with the company.

Last year was transformative, and focusing on the core business during the peak season from October to January was key. This season was the most successful in terms of customer service in the company's history. It was the first season with the new management, but we prepared thoroughly, dived into the details, and managed it smoothly. We set up intense control, with twice-daily stand-ups. Every day, we monitored progress and issues. Overall, it was a challenging year, but we achieved significant success.

***I* f I focus on all the big names and business icons you've had the opportunity to work with, how have they inspired you?**

My first big inspiration was my first boss, who brought me to Switzerland. She chose me as a young, ambitious girl and said, „Come, let's try it in the big world.“ And what do the people who influenced me have in common? Definitely one thing – I need someone who constantly motivates me to be better.

At the same time, it's important that these people are role models for me – whether through their expertise, creativity, or work ethic. They must have something I don't have or something I think I don't do as well, and that's what draws me to them. That's why I go to them. It's the combination of expertise, way of thinking, ambition to change things, integrity, and also human character.

***A* nd that brings us to CEOs. Do you feel there is something that connects CEOs from 15–20 years ago and those now?**

I believe so. It's still true that a good CEO has several key attributes that they should maintain and develop. First and foremost, they need to be able to make quick decisions. A good CEO must also have a vision for the company and the ability to foresee the future – not just think about what the company needs now, but also what will be needed in five years and how to remain relevant.

They also need to have the intuition to anticipate what could come, what the risks are, and what might surprise us. A strong personality is essential, someone who can engage people, a leader who knows what to say at the right moment to inspire confidence in the team and belief that we can handle it. Essentially, it's a psychological role because the CEO must be able to lead the team, whether they are at the top or struggling.

***W* hat was once crucial but may not be as significant today?**

I think the focus on qualifications and titles has faded over time. What's much more important today is the ability to adapt, quickly navigate new trends and technologies. What still unites us is the ability to build trust and emotional connections, which often matter more than technical expertise or work efficiency.

It can be impressive when someone graduates from the London School of Economics and is highly intelligent, but what often makes the real difference is emotional intelligence. That's what truly enables someone to succeed in life, business, and personal relationships. What matters is how we build and maintain relationships, how we take care of those around us, how we choose team members with similar values, and how we collaborate with them.

No matter how smart, creative, or hardworking you are, you always need a team to bring your plans to life. This applies to both work and personal life. If you master this, you stand a much better chance of achieving anything you set your mind to. ■

DANIELA RAZIMOVÁ

**CHIEF PEOPLE & CULTURE OFFICER,
PACKETA GROUP**

Daniela, as **Chief People & Culture Officer**, is completing a year-long transformational mission at **Packeta Group**, which includes the **Zásilkovna** service. Packeta Group is a significant player in the parcel delivery and pick-up point sector and has recently undergone a leadership and ownership structure change.

START-UPS

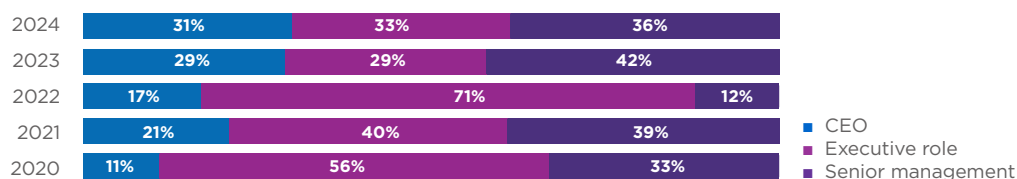
- **The most in-demand roles are at the CEO, Finance, and Marketing levels.**
- **The most active companies are in the Financial Services and Energy/Renewable Energy sectors.** Some of them change their management several times a year.
- As in previous years, **they enrich their management primarily from outside, with 72% coming externally and 66% from other industries.**
- **2.5 YEARS** is the average tenure in one role in 2024. The lifespan of managers here remains among the shortest.
- **Compared to 2023, the representation of women has doubled.** In 2024, they make up 22% of all transfers.
- In the CEE region, the number of start-ups focused on **digital transformation** continues to grow. Start-ups in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Blockchain, the Internet of Things (IoT), and Automation are increasingly offering innovative solutions for traditional industrial sectors.
- **Fintech start-ups** in the CEE region continue to grow, particularly in areas such as **digital payments, peer-to-peer lending, cryptocurrencies, and blockchain technologies.** With the increasing interest in decentralized finance (DeFi) and the rapid development of payment platforms, fintech innovations are becoming a key area for investment and start-up development.
- Start-ups in the **health, wellness, biohacking, and longevity sectors** are on the rise in the CEE region, driven by increasing interest in technologies that support personal health, disease prevention, and overall well-being.
- In 2024 and 2025, start-ups in the CEE region are increasingly focusing on **international expansion.** Many companies are beginning to expand not only into Western Europe but also into North American and Asian markets.

STATE OWNED COMPANIES

- The turnover of management in state- or city-owned companies has gradually increased since 2023. In 2024, it reached 5%, the highest in the last five years. Nevertheless, these organizations continue to be the most conservative, with management changes occurring less frequently.

50% Half of all transfers occurred in companies with a turnover of over 10 billion CZK. In these companies, the most changes were seen in the areas of Finance and CEO roles.

- In 2024, the distribution of recruitment by seniority is the most balanced it has been in the last five years. However, there has been a slight decrease in recruitment at the senior management level.



- The highest number of transfers occurred in the Energy and Financial Services sectors. In the Media sector, there were no significant changes this year.

- In 2024, as traditionally, the most active companies included the ČEZ Group, Czech Railways, the Czech National Bank, and Czech Post.

- Compared to 2024, the demand for managers in the Legal & Compliance field has increased. Conversely, the need for new leaders in Marketing has declined.

1. General Management	31%
2. Finance	17%
3. Operations	10%
4. HR	8%
5. Legal & Compliance	8%

- The duration of tenure in this role is traditionally the longest. In 2024, it is just over 4 years.

TRENDS IN EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION STRUCTURE



The Czech Republic offers attractive salaries and compensation structures. What changes over time is where and to whom these compensations apply.

Many companies provide enticing job titles but often lack equally attractive compensation, which reveals to individuals seeking new opportunities the specific methods and channels through which those directors are selected.

Unlike in previous years, the appeal of financial and non-financial compensation, including bonus systems from global corporations, is shifting away from our markets. The exception remains in roles managed from the Czech Republic with international responsibilities.

Local companies and private equity firms are starting to offer interesting compensation structures. The compensation amounts become more attractive as the company has a greater international reach.

Companies providing services in the B2C and B2B segments with a strong local presence offer similarly attractive compensation structures, regardless of ownership—whether they are international, publicly traded, or owned by local or foreign companies.

On the other hand, the financial compensation of manufacturing companies that lack added value, sales teams, or innovations, as well as strictly global companies, either maintain high salaries for their top executives or expatriates while subsequently lowering the salaries of reporting teams, or they reduce the seniority of top executives in direct proportion to their compensation.

► What factors determine the level of compensation paid?

The compensation structure is influenced by two key parameters - objective factors and a subjective mix of other aspects.

MAIN OBJECTIVE PARAMETERS:

- Company performance indicators
- Organizational structure and responsibility
- The level of so-called grades according to the compensation methodology
- Ownership structure
- Size of the organizations and teams
- Number of countries under responsibility
- Distribution of responsibilities among local, sub-regional, and central levels

MAIN SUBJECTIVE PARAMETERS:

- The mission of the CEO and the Board-transformation vs. stability or a predetermined period leading to a sale
- Scope of decision-making powers (Governance)
- Length of tenure in the position of GM or on the Board of Directors
- Professional background
- Contacts and network connections

Note:

- The number of companies managed by a CEO or board does not have a significant impact on the level of compensation.
- Between 2018 and 2024, wages increased primarily only once due to inflation.

► What does the current bonus structure look like at the CEO and Board level – the top management?

● SHORT TERM INCENTIVE – STI

Short-term incentives (STI) for most CEOs and top executives are set at 50% of the base salary. In 20% of cases, this bonus is paid out upon achieving set targets, meaning at the „On Target“ level. In the remaining 80% of cases, the maximum potential bonus does not exceed 50% of the base salary. Performance at the „On Target“ level is evaluated according to a success scale that uses a fixed multiplier, with an upper limit set at 150%. According to a survey by Korn Ferry, a bonus of 50% of the base salary is a standard market benefit for CEOs and members of the board or top executives in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The structure of short-term incentive (STI) compensation is most commonly divided in a ratio of 70:30. 70% of the bonus is tied to so-called hard criteria that assess the organization’s performance. The remaining 30% of the bonus depends on soft criteria, which currently most commonly include the representation of women in leadership, employee satisfaction, performance in corporate responsibility regarding environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors, reduction of carbon footprint, etc.

The annual bonus is paid out gradually and is typically spread over a 3 to 5-year cycle. The method of bonus payment varies. One approach specifies that 40% of the bonus is paid out in the first year, while the remaining 60% is evenly distributed over the following years. Alternatively, the bonus may be paid out as a fixed percentage each year. In many cases, advance payments are also provided.

● LONG TERM INCENTIVE (LTI) - 50% CASES

Long-term incentives (LTI) are structured either as additional bonuses or through equity-related programs, such as Phantom Stock Plans or stock option plans. The choice of LTI format depends on the employer’s policy and whether the company is publicly traded or owned by a private equity fund (PE fund).

LTIs are determined based on the Balanced Scorecard approach, with an annual maximum set at 50% of the base salary. The evaluation criteria maintain a 70:30 ratio, combining both hard and soft factors that are relevant across the organization, similar to the criteria used for Short-Term Incentives (STI). Private Equity (PE) offers a different structure, where LTIs are based on a defined date and the company’s sale price, which the current top management directly influences. Often, deferred bonuses are managed by an external party—such as a broker.

HIGH PERFORMANCE, HIDDEN RISK

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A LEADER, WHO IS ENDAGERING THE TEAM



Emma La Rivière & Lucie Teisler

Have you ever encountered a leader who achieves fantastic results, but behind their back, the team is boiling? Such a person may bring short-term success to the company, but in the long run, they can cause damage that is hard to repair – from demotivated teams to a toxic culture.

This brings us to a crucial question: Should individual performance always take precedence over team balance?

For HR and top management, this is not an easy dilemma. Keeping such a leader means risking

team disintegration, but parting with them could result in losing a high-performing driver. The usual solution? Coaching. **But what if we could identify the risks earlier—before the employment contract is even signed?**

**Don't extinguish what you can predict:
Risky behavior in the hiring process.**

Our consultant on leadership and emotional intelligence, Emmanuelle La Rivière, analyzed how to spot warning signs early, even before the candidate joins.

HERE ARE COMMON BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS OF LEADERS WHO MAY BE A TICKING TIME BOMB FOR THE TEAM:

LOW EMPATHY

A leader focused solely on results, regardless of the human impact. This leads to a cold, authoritative environment and alienation within the team.

LOW OPTIMISM

A focus on perceiving problems rather than seeking solutions. Such a leader stifles innovation and fosters pessimism.

WEAK SELF-CONTROL AND LOW RESILIENCE TO STRESS

Impulsive behavior under pressure leads to hasty decisions and creates a tense atmosphere.

EXTREME ASSERTIVENESS OR ITS ABSENCE	An authoritative approach prevents dialogue, while weak assertiveness undermines credibility. In both cases, interpersonal relationships suffer.
HIGH SELF-CONFIDENCE, LOW FLEXIBILITY	A leader who refuses to adapt their vision to the team creates conflicts and hinders collaboration.
HIGH EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS, BUT LOW INDEPENDENCE	Excessive need for validation leads to indecision and inner tension.
STRONG ANALYTICAL SKILLS, BUT WEAK INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS	A focus on results without the human aspect weakens team cohesion.
LOW EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONS AND EMPATHY	The leader comes across as cold, and the inability to express themselves and empathize creates a demoralizing environment.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT IN TIME? **A THREE-STEP RECIPE.**

It is possible to recognize a risky leader – if you know where to look. At Anderson Willinger, we rely on a combination of experience, data, and psychology.

WHAT WORKS?

- 1 In-depth career analysis:** Turnover, recurring patterns, indirect signals.
- 2 Targeted interviews:** Questions focused on emotional maturity and responses under pressure.
- 3 Simulations and scenarios:** How do they react to conflicts, pressure, change? It becomes most evident in real situations.

In our decision-making, we incorporate not only EQ and IQ assessments but also values, cultural „fit,“ and leadership mindset – to ensure we recommend **well-rounded and respected leaders.**

At Anderson Willinger, we believe that performance without respect loses its value. That's why we prioritize leaders who excel not only in results but also in their human approach. This enables companies to grow sustainably – avoiding unnecessary losses, turnover, and burnout.

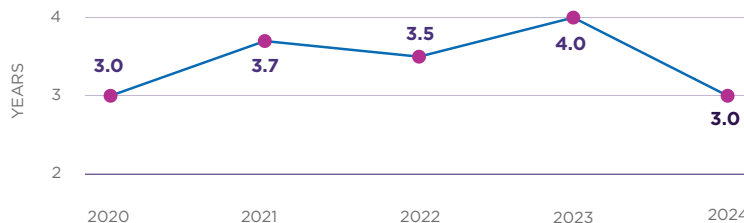
WHICH INDUSTRIES ARE EXPERIENCING THE MOST CHANGES OVER THE YEARS?

2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Manufacturing	Manufacturing	IT & System Integration	E/Q-Commerce	IT & System Integrations
IT & System Integration	IT & System Integration	Communication & Advertising	IT & System Integrations	Banking
FMCG	E/Q-Commerce	E/Q-Commerce	FMCG	FMCG
Utility Services & Energy	Banking	FMCG	Communication & Advertising	Pharma
Wholesale & Retail	Wholesale & Retail	Banking	Machinery & Equipment	Financial Services
Banking	FMCG	Wholesale & Retail	Banking	Wholesale & Retail
Logistics & Last Mile	Utility Services & Energy	Insurance	Financial Services	Automotive
Insurance	Financial Services	Financial Services	Automotive	Logistics & Transportation
E/Q-Commerce	Media & Entertainment	Automotive	Utility Services & Energy	Utility Services & Energy
Automotive	Logistics & Transportation	Utility Services & Energy	Insurance	E-Commerce

IT & TECHNOLOGY

IT & TECHNOLOGY 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 10% Average time in a role: 3 years	60%	CEO (29%) Executive (49%) Senior Management (22%)	Sales & Commercial HR Operations	Corporate (39%) Local (32%) PE/VC (22%) Owned by The State (2%) Start-up (5%)	EmbedIT Microsoft NTT Good Data	61% change within the industry Telecommunications Big4 & Consulting Financial Service

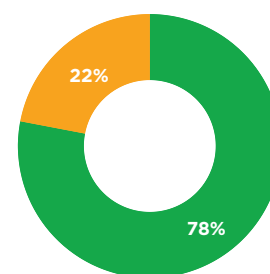
- In the IT sector, managers and directors are changing roles faster than in the past. **The time spent in positions has significantly shortened, dropping by nearly a whole year compared to 2023.** The demands on leaders are evolving, and the ability to keep pace with new trends is crucial.
- In 2024, privately owned or PE fund-owned IT and technology companies are taking center stage. They are primarily changing their CEOs and commercial roles.
- **The IT and Technology sector remains conservative,** with 62% of new transfers occurring within this industry.



FMCG

FMCG 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 8% Average time in a role: 3,0 years	43%	CEO (15%) Executive (53%) Senior Management (32%)	Marketing Sales & Commercial HR Finance	Corporate (66%) Local (22%) PE/VC (10%) Owned by The State (1%) Start-up (1%)	Philip Morris Asahi Group Heineken	79% changes within the industry Fast Food Chains

- In 2024, the FMCG sector saw the highest number of women promoted in the past five years. They account for 34% of all transitions, with most moving into Marketing and HR roles.
- In 2023, many FMCG companies replaced their CEOs. In 2024, however, they are focusing on hiring managers at the direct-report level to the CEO, confirming the trend of new leaders gradually reshaping their leadership teams.
- In the FMCG sector, corporations continue to dominate, although privately owned companies are gradually gaining prominence.
- The FMCG sector is one of the most conservative industries. The willingness to hire a leader from a different industry is low, at only 22%.



- Change OUTSIDE the industry
- Change WITHIN the industry

UTILITY SERVICES & ENERGY

UTILITY SERVICES & ENERGY 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 7% Average time in a role: 3.4 years	68%	CEO (32%) Executive (51%) Senior Management (17%)	Finance Operations Sales & Commercial	Corporate (46%) Local (8%) PE/VC (16%) Owned by The State (20%) Start-up (10%)	Skupina ČEZ Orlen Unipetrol Pražská plynárenská E.ON	52% changes within the industry IT & Technology Manufacturing Financial Services

- The total number of changes in the Utility sector has increased. In 2024, it moved up to third place in the ranking of all changes. 76% of transitions occurred in the energy sector.
- Corporations were dominant in 2024, with 10% more transitions occurring compared to the previous year.
- As in the previous year, Finance remained the most frequently changing expert role. This was followed by Operational roles, which saw a significant increase compared to previous years, reflecting the emphasis on optimizing operational processes and digitalization.
- More than half, 55%, of transitions took place in companies with a revenue of over 10 billion CZK.

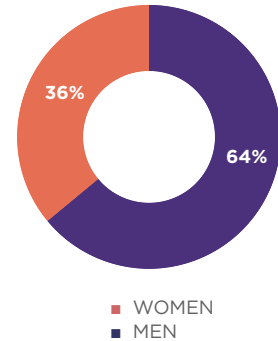
Most frequently changing roles in 2024:

1. Finance
2. Operations
3. Sales & Commercial
4. HR
5. Legal & Compliance

WHOLESALE & RETAIL

WHOLESALE & RETAIL 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 6% Average time in a role: 3 years	52%	CEO (25%) Executive (37%) Senior Management (38%)	Marketing Sales & Commercial Finance Operations	Corporate (44%) Local (42%) PE/VC (12%) Owned by The State (0%) Start-up (2%)	Lidl Billa	58% changes within the industry FMCG IT & Technology

- Just like in the FMCG sector, the number of women in managerial and leadership roles has significantly increased, reaching 36%. This is also the highest figure in the past five years. They most often move into marketing roles.
- Compared to the previous year, the number of expats in CEO positions decreased by half. In 2024, they accounted for only a quarter of newly filled CEO roles.
- Compared to the previous year, there was a significant decrease in demand for new HR professionals, who dominated recruitment in 2023. In contrast, in 2024, there was the highest demand for marketing roles, with three-quarters of the filled positions being occupied by women.
- Corporate activity has remained consistent for the second year in a row.



BANKING

BANKING 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 5% Average time in a role: 3.6 years	40%	CEO (13%) Executive (53%) Senior Management (34%)	Finance PR & PA IT Marketing Risk	Corporate (55%) Local (11%) PE/VC (6%) Owned by The State (28%) Start-up (0%)	ČNB ČSOB	68% changes within the industry Financial Services B2B Services

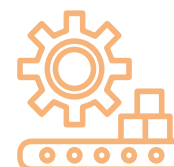


- From the perspective of total managerial changes, the banking sector remains stable.
- In 2024, there was a significant increase in the activity of state-owned institutions, particularly ČNB and NRB, while recruitment in privately owned banks, which dominated recruitment in 2023, declined.
- The turnover in HR roles has slowed, while in 2024, there was an increased demand for Financial roles, which accounted for a quarter of all changes. This reflects a greater need for cost control, investments, and regulatory compliance.
- Next are roles in PR/PA, reflecting the growing emphasis on reputational risks, regulations, and communication with government institutions. Banks and financial institutions require increasingly stronger external communication in response to economic and political changes.
- Banks continue to preferentially promote their leaders internally, which applies to both CEO roles and executive management.

MANUFACTURING & AUTOMOTIVE

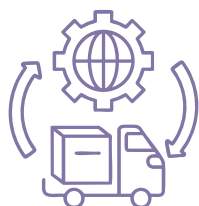
MANUFACTURING & AUTOMOTIVE 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 19% Average time in a role: 4.1 years	67%	CEO (34%) Executive (47%) Senior Management (19%)	Finance Sales & Commercial HR Operations	Corporate (52%) Local (24%) PE/VC (22%) Owned by The State (1%) Start-up (1%)	Czechoslovak Group Tatra Truck Škoda Group Schaeffler Group	Building Solutions Construction Materials Logistics

- From the perspective of overall managerial changes, the manufacturing sector, as a key pillar of the economy, remains stable. Just like last year, it holds a leading position in the rankings.
- The most sought-after roles are in the areas of Finance, Sales, and Operations.
- Compared to 2023, when privately owned or PE fund-owned companies were more active, corporations are regaining prominence in 2024. This trend is driven primarily by companies in the Automotive sector, which resumed their hiring activity in 2024 after a pause in 2023. The number of managerial changes in this sector has nearly doubled.



LOGISTICS & TRANSPORTATION

LOGISTICS & TRANSPORTATION 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 5% Average time in a role: 3.5 years	68%	CEO (34%) Executive (43%) Senior Management (23%)	Operations IT	Corporate (34%) Local (11%) PE/VC (32%) Owned by The State (18%) Start-up (5%)	Packeta Group Česká pošta DHL Supply Chain	61% changes within the industry IT E/Q-Commerce



- From the perspective of overall changes, the Logistics and Last Mile sector remains stable, accounting for 5%.
- Compared to the previous year, when Financial and Commercial roles dominated recruitment, in 2024, the most sought-after positions are in Operations and IT. This reflects the increased need for process optimization and efficiency, as well as strong pressure for digitalization, automation, and the use of data to improve logistics.
- This trend also confirms the ongoing tendency to source new talents primarily from IT and E/Q-Commerce, which continue to be the main sources of new talent.

INSURANCE

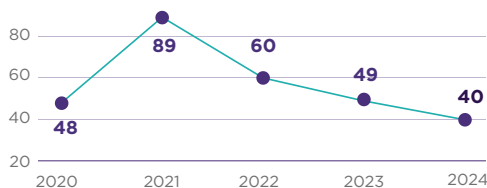
INSURANCE & INSURANCE BROKERS 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 4% Average time in a role: 3.6 years	43%	CEO (21%) Executive (49%) Senior Management (30%)	Sales & Commercial Operations Finance IT	Corporate (79%) Local (17%) PE/VC (2%) Owned by The State (0%) Start-up (2%)	RENOMIA NN UNIQA	64 % changes within the industry Banking IT Leasing & Consumer Finance

- After a decline in recruitment in 2023, the insurance industry ranks again among the TOP 10 most active sectors in terms of management changes in 2024.
- Insurance companies are among the more conservative sectors with a preference for internal promotions. Just under half, 43%, come from the external market. In the case of external recruitment, insurance companies seek managers from Banking, IT, or Financial services.
- The insurance sector is undergoing rapid digitalization and adapting to new challenges. Insurance companies are investing in artificial intelligence and automation, which speed up processes, improve predictive analytics, and personalize offerings. New insurance models are also emerging, such as usage-based insurance and on-demand microinsurance, which provide flexible and tailored products. With the growing cyber threats, there is an increasing demand for cyber insurance that protects against online attacks and data breaches.

E/Q COMMERCE

E/Q COMMERCE 2024	Percentage of external recruitment	Seniority level most commonly recruited in this industry	Most common types of expert roles	Type of ownership	Which companies changed their directors most frequently?	Which industries does it recruit from?
Of the total number of changes: 4% Average time on a role: 2.9 years	63%	CEO (8%) Executive (71%) Senior Management (21%)	Marketing IT	Corporate (5%) Local (38%) PE/VC (51%) Owned by The State (0%) Start-up (8%)	Rohlik Group Košík.cz Notino	56% changes within the industry Wholesale & Retail FMCG

- Similarly to the previous year, activity in the E/Q-commerce sector continues to decline. Compared to 2021, there has been a 50% decrease in turnover at senior and executive positions in 2024.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, E-commerce experienced tremendous growth, leading to rapid changes in leadership and team expansion. It seems that after significant growth and development, many E-commerce companies are now focusing more on optimization and stability rather than major changes in management.
- Most of the transfers in 2024 occurred at the executive level, with a significant decrease in the number of new CEOs compared to 2023.
- Private equity-owned companies or privately owned businesses play a key role.
- Compared to the previous year, the demand for roles in the IT sector has significantly increased.



▶ The curve of the total number of senior transfers.

■ Executive Search, that shapes the future.

Our mission is to connect the right individuals with the right opportunities—ensuring their arrival has a long-term positive impact. Not just on their careers, but also on the companies and teams they will lead.

For us, Executive Search is not just recruitment. **It is a strategic process that shapes the future of business.**

■ The business world is changing, and so is the definition of leadership.

What once mattered – a stable career, decades of experience, or technical expertise – is no longer enough. Today's leader must handle uncertainty, adapt quickly, innovate, and inspire others.

It's not just about what they've done. What matters is who they are today and who they can become.

We look for people who can grow. **Those who possess adaptability, resilience, authenticity, emotional intelligence, and strong values.** Because these qualities are what determine success today – for both the individual and the company.

■ We don't select resumes. We search for leaders.

When selecting managers, we don't stop at CVs. **We care about stories, attitudes, and potential.** We test the ability to respond, learn, collaborate, and lead in a changing world.

Our processes are evolving too. Instead of long interviews, **we prefer shorter, contextual meetings where we get to know candidates in various situations.** We observe decision-making, communication style, and value alignment – because **that's what determines whether the new leader will just manage or truly drive progress.**

■ We make decisions objectively, with the perspective that comes from a broader view.

Our role is not only to assess competencies. Thanks to an external perspective, we can look beneath the surface – identifying not only strengths but also potential risks.

At the same time, we help companies clarify **who and what they truly need.** Because what we think we're looking for isn't always what will take the company the farthest.

■ What is true Executive Search?

It's not about collecting resumes. Nor is it about quickly filling a vacant position. **It's about strategy, deep understanding, and selecting the person who will bring lasting value to the company.**

It's a process that transforms careers, companies, and entire teams.
And that's why we approach our work the way we do.



Zuzana Javořiková
Project & Data Science Lead

COMPASSION IS AN ART.

It is the ability to see the world with a kind gaze, to perceive others with compassion, while still maintaining oneself. The ability to remain open, even when it would be easier to close off, and to see the good where others might overlook it.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT?

In the willingness to listen and see the world through the eyes of others.

In acting with respect and in kind communication, especially in challenging situations.

In the ability to make ethical decisions.

In generosity without expecting personal gain.

„Compassion is not a sign of weakness or naivety. It is a strength that builds sustainable and human-centered business.“

- ANDERSON WILLINGER

COURAGE

RESILIENCE

AUTHENTICITY

DISCIPLINE

Compassion

#BETTERUS

We are Executive Search.

Business Intelligence is an integral part of our projects and practice. We regularly monitor and analyze trends within our leadership community.

We are developing a tool based on Artificial Intelligence designed to predict a leader's success in a specific role and business, in alignment with the company's culture and values.

As part of our projects, we conduct comprehensive psychological testing, which serves to evaluate and develop leaders while ensuring their successful integration. Anderson Willinger, in collaboration with colleagues from INSEAD, has identified the most important areas, including personality traits crucial for managing organizations in today's turbulent times, both in the case of external recruitment and promotions. Based on this knowledge, the AW team has defined the best global tools to understand where both the company and the leader stand and what their critical development areas are.

We not only assist our clients in setting strategies and selecting key executives, but we also partner with them in **educating and inspiring top management** on current global trends.

In addition to our exclusive study on the top management market, we are excited to invite you to our new series of seminars for 2025 - Artificial Intelligence: Future of HR.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FUTURE OF HR

EXCLUSIVE SEMINAR SERIES
WITH GLOBAL EXPERTS



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US!

TRENDS FROM OUR LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY

2024



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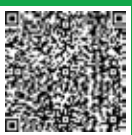
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