# Digitalisation, labour market and training. Opportunities and vulnerabilities for Communication graduates

**María del Carmen Garcia Galera**
*Professor*
*Universidad Rey Juan Carlos*
carmen.garcia@urjc.es
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6211-2700

**Beatriz Catalina-García**
*Associate Professor*
*Universidad Rey Juan Carlos*
beatriz.catalina@urjc.es
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0464-3225

**Manuel Martínez Nicolás**
*Associate Professor*
*Universidad Rey Juan Carlos*
manuel.martinez.nicolas@urjc.es
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3949-2351

**Abstract**

*Digitalisation has caused changes in the job search strategies of young people, who are increasingly dependent on specialised internet portals. For Communication graduates, having digital skills is also a requirement to find a job in this professional sector. The present study examines the impact of digitalisation on Communication graduates in both facets of access to the labour market. With this dual purpose, a survey was conducted among recent graduates (N=198) to learn about their job search strategies, and interviews were carried out with professionals in the communication sector (N=11) to identify the competencies and skills that companies require from young graduates. The results indicate that personal contacts continue to be the main way to find a job, and that companies in the sector demand technical/technological skills from new graduates that university training does not seem to be sufficiently providing.*

**Keywords**
*Communication, employability, training, digitalisation, graduates.*

**Resum**

*La digitalització ha provocat canvis en les estratègies de recerca de feina per part dels joves, cada cop més dependents dels portals especialitzats a internet. Per als graduats en Comunicació, disposar de competències digitals és, a més, un requisit per aconseguir una feina en aquest sector professional. En aquest treball s'estudia l'impacte de la digitalització en els graduats en Comunicació en els dos vessants de l'accés al mercat laboral. Amb aquest doble propòsit, es va fer una enquesta a titulats recents (N=198) per conèixer les seves estratègies en la recerca de feina, i entrevistes a professionals del sector de la comunicació (N=11) per identificar les competències i habilitats que les empreses exigeixen als joves graduats. Els resultats indiquen que els contactes personals encara són la via principal per obtenir un lloc de treball, i que les empreses del sector demanen als nous graduats competències tècniques/tecnològiques que sembla que la formació universitària no està atenent prou.*

**Paraules clau**
*Comunicació, ocupabilitat, formació, digitalització, graduats.*

## 1. Introduction

Digitalisation is one of the characteristics of the 21st century and features young people as its leading figures. For both social natives and digital natives (Eddy, 2022), most, if not all, of their existence has taken place in a world in which terms such as social networks, web platforms or mobile devices are as common as newspapers or television were for previous generations. In this context, young people have sought to make the most of this digitalisation, not only for leisure or entertainment, but also for everything related to work, from looking for employment to developing technological skills on the job.

These last two aspects are what we address in this paper. In the professional world, job search web platforms have become the standard procedure for creating virtual and personal networks (Peterson and Dover, 2014). Gasparènienè et al. (2021) consider, in fact, that job search web platforms have completely replaced traditional forms of job searching, and that social networks such as LinkedIn have opened the door to interactive CVs compared to which traditional letters of recommendation will no longer make sense.

Once they enter the labour market, these young people in particular are required to have a series of digital skills and competencies that, although still quite recent, cannot be compared to the demands made in previous times. Writing specifically about the field of journalism, Soo Heong (2022) considers that the profile of the professional who wants to access the journalism market needs to combine narrative skills with technological and visual capabilities. That would be the ticket to employability in the communication sector around the world.

Over the last few years we have heard repeatedly that crises are moments for creativity and opportunities. If we focus on the labour context, one of the main challenges facing Spanish society is the employability of its graduates, especially in the digital and technological field, taking into account that we find ourselves in a market in which the number of young people pursuing a university degree is growing and that the labour market is becoming more and more competitive.

According to data from the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (2023), more than three million people are looking for work in our country at the time of this study, of which around one million are young people, defined as being between 24 and 35 years old. But let's add a little more information. In 2021, 48.7% of young people in that same age group held a higher education degree, which is 8.4 points higher than in 2011 and almost 15 points higher than in 2000 (34%). This is a figure which is also above the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development average (46.9%) (OECD, 2022). Nevertheless, there are countries with higher rates of university graduates than Spain, as is stated in this same report. Among the countries with the highest percentage of young people with tertiary education are Japan, Ireland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Norway, all above 55%.

Given this look at the employability situation, with high unemployment rates and a significant group of young people that is properly trained and prepared to enter the labour market, it is essential to increase the possibilities or ways through which these young people can obtain employment. Therefore, digitalisation holds a place among these new ways to have a paid job. Digitalisation has brought with it the possibility for these young people to publicly present their academic training and work history through different platforms. LinkedIn, Infojobs and Infoempleo allow journalism graduates to create professional profiles, upload their CVs and search for jobs based on their skills and interests. In Spain, these platforms are the most commonly used and recommended resource for this purpose (Merino, 2021). At the same time, they have become a work showcase in which it is practically a requirement to have a presence on them to find a job (Komljenovic, 2019).

However, if we talk about digitalisation, one of the sectors most affected by the technological sea change is communication. An infographic about how the COVID-19 virus spreads in a room, a television presenter who, without leaving the set, appears to be reporting the news from the United States Congress, or a radio programme that allows the audience to listen in at any time or place. These are just some of the examples of how digital transformation has brought with it new tasks and, therefore, new professional profiles to companies in the communication sector. People who seek to develop such profiles are invariably asked to have digital skills that can be acquired—or not—in the course of one's university education. Communicators face a new reality that requires skills, competencies and knowledge that previously they did not have or were not necessary (Tuñez López, Martínez Solana, and Abejón Mendoza, 2010; Guo and Volz, 2019).

Therefore, digitalisation has brought about changes at different levels in this context. On the one hand, the possibility of accessing the labour market; and, on the other hand, the need to adapt to the technological contexts that prevail in the communicative context. Both aspects will be addressed in this paper. It is about observing how young people who have studied Communication value the possibilities that digitalisation offers them for finding a job, and, in turn, learn about: (1) technical/technological abilities; (2) the abilities of the profession; and (3) the personal skills that the profession demands.

## 2. Digitalisation in job searches

As mentioned above, in this process of digital transformation, the presence of tools and platforms that make it easier to find a position in the labour market is now an unavoidable reality. Compared to the traditional sending of CVs by post or delivery in person, technologies have opened up the possibilities of knowing what is happening in the labour market and making oneself a candidate for a job without leaving home.

Among the different functionalities of the internet, beyond leisure and information, job searching clearly figures as one of them (Durán and Feas, 2013). The expansion of social media and digital platforms has inevitably affected the practice and dynamics of job searches (Pais and Gandini, 2015), since it has facilitated or complemented the traditional routes for accessing the labour market. Searching for jobs online has certain advantages over traditional searches, thanks to the ease of access and its relative ease of use. Among these advantages, it seems easy to deduce, for example, the geographical factor —that is, job seekers can access offers, locally, elsewhere in their country, and internationally. Furthermore, Pais and Gandini (2015) highlight that online job searching is relatively

economical and also saves time compared to traditional methods, since it involves a reduction in costs compared to conventional searches (less spending on paper, correspondence, travel by car, among others) (Kuhn and Skuterud, 2004). Likewise, another advantage is the immediacy when sending CVs, since, once the offer has been selected, the job seeker can send their CV in digital format, as well as contact the company or intermediary that is publishing the job offer.

Therefore, if traditionally personal and professional relationships were essential to finding a job, with the digital transformation it is also essential to be present on digital job search platforms. Along these same lines, as Oncina and Pérez (2020) state in their paper, not using the internet today to look for work or not knowing how to do so properly are two of the main barriers to accessing the labour market, and they can become a reason for being effectively locked out of the labour market.

However, currently there is still no clear evidence about the specific weight of each of these elements in obtaining a job, as reflected in the research carried out by Dillahunt et al. (2021) among 768 people actively seeking work. They detected that there was a certain correlation with demographic factors and differences in the use of online platforms between variables such as income, gender, years of education, or even race. The results suggest that those with higher incomes searching for jobs on online platforms were more likely to use different strategies and more likely to receive callbacks than job seekers with lower incomes.

According to the *Talento Conectado 2019* report, prepared by Infoempleo (2019), the first option that candidates turn to when they are actively searching for work are online employment portals, consulted by 98% of those surveyed. This is followed by corporate websites (95%), recruitment companies (93%) and personal contacts (93%). Likewise, the results of the present paper reflect that social networks have allowed 23% of users who have received a job proposal through this medium to obtain a job.

For their part, employment web portals continue to be the most used tool by 95% of companies when they want to recruit new employees. This is followed by personal contacts (94%) and spontaneous applications (76%). This same report shows that increasing the number of CVs received (47%), improving their quality (45%) and diversifying recruitment channels (45%) are the objectives that the different companies that use social networks for recruitment hope to achieve.

Thus, if we focus on the communication sector, the data reflect that in recent decades this profession has experienced a significant decline (Walker, 2021). The first decade of the 21st century was especially difficult for media workers. As seen in the case of the United States, the number of workers employed by newspaper publishers decreased by more than half from the 2000s to the 2010s. Many of these job losses have been the result of the closure of companies in the sector, including 2,500 newspapers that have disappeared since 2005. This situation,

also driven by digital transformation, has led to a progressive adaptation of both the media and the communicators themselves, who have had to develop their digital skills to adapt to the new media ecosystem (Carnevale and Wezinger, 2022). Recent studies, such as Carnevale and Wezinger (2022), show that work in media newsrooms, including the traditional roles of news anchor, reporter, radio news host, editor and television news reporter, will decline by approximately 3% between 2022 and 2031. By 2031, these authors' projections show that the number of journalism jobs will have fallen almost 35% since 2002, a loss of more than 20,000 jobs. However, despite these data that tend towards pessimism, there are those who take a glass-half-full view to the journalistic profession, as long as the perception of journalism is expanded and the new profiles or skills that new media are demanding are taken into account (Molla, 2019). In fact, the communication professionals interviewed maintain, as we will later see, that new graduates are required to have communicative and technological skills that go beyond the degree in communication they have completed.

## 3. Digitalisation and work in the communication sector

Therefore, if we compare the expectations from two decades ago (Pavlik, 2001) with the most current forecasts (Newman, 2021), we can see the scale of the impact of digitalisation on companies. The communication sector has been immersed, almost since the beginning of the 21st century, in a radical transformation of its productive structures and business models as a consequence of the digitalisation of all the processes involved in the communication circuit (production, distribution and consumption of the products generated by these cultural industries: journalistic information, advertisements, cinema, series, etc.), forcing them to open themselves towards a remaking of traditional job profiles in all the professional fields involved: journalism, advertising, public relations and audiovisual creation (Vivar, 2011; Perlado, 2013: PwC Foundation and Atresmedia Foundation, 2016; Cerezo, 2018).

The work carried out by Goodman and Stein (2017) includes ten case studies, each focusing on a different country, in which it is evident that the disconnect between the university training of future journalists and work in newsrooms is not exclusive to some countries, but that it is a worldwide characteristic, and that the rapid changes the profession is undergoing is at the core of this dissonance.

Likewise, these differences are not new nor have they emerged as a consequence of the digital advent. Since the first school of journalism was established in Missouri, United States in 1908, and a little later, in 1912, when the Columbia Journalism School (New York, USA) opened (Mensing, 2011), or later, after World War II, when the first journalism faculties were established in Europe, the argument between academia and industry has been a constant. As Nygren (2016) states, university training in communication emphasises critical thinking, independence

and flexibility, although the industry raises certain objections in considering that the university does not offer enough practical training.

The changes introduced by technologies in the world of communication have led some authors to speak of a convergence of functions that result in the 'super-communicator' (Spyridou and Veglis, 2016; Lugmayr and Dal Zotto, 2016; Domingo et al., 2007). This convergence involves the publication of news and information on multiple platforms, with integrated news production, a role as a multimedia narrator and with the necessary knowledge of social media and as a platform for the dissemination and positioning of content.

## 4. Objectives and methodology

In this context, the objective of this work is to ascertain how young people operate in the digital ecosystem, both when searching for employment and when carrying out the tasks inherent to the job -- in this case, in the communicative context. That is to say, it seeks to observe, on the one hand, how young graduates in Communication (specifically Journalism, Audiovisual Communication, Advertising and Public Relations) are using digital tools to search for employment, what results they have obtained and what ease or difficulty they have experienced when searching for work through these web platforms (such as Infojobs or Infoempleo) or social networks such as LinkedIn. The aim is also to observe how journalism professionals value the digital or technological skills of the new generations in their day-to-day work.

To address the first objective, the research instrument used was the survey, and for this an online questionnaire was developed that was adapted to the conditions of social networks. The online survey has some intrinsic characteristics, such as the speed in collecting information, the low cost and the improvement in responses, characteristics that were perfectly adapted to the study carried out here (Díaz de Rada, 2012). For this reason, the quantitative technique of the online survey among young graduates of the degrees in Communication between 23 and 30 years old, specifically from the Community of Madrid, through the online tool SurveyMonkey has been chosen . The sample size includes 198 young graduates, defined as having completed their studies within the last three years. A random probabilistic selection was carried out based on the type of studies.

Through this online survey we have tried to verify the hypothesis that despite the growing importance and prominence of employment web platforms, and the entire digitalisation process, the primary agents that have traditionally played an important role in finding a job, such as friends and family, continue to play a leading role in job placement for graduates.

For the second objective of this paper, the qualitative technique of a structured interview was used. In social research, the interview is a means to access knowledge of social phenomena.

For this reason, in the interviews that we discuss in this work, the interviewee acts almost as a proxy. It can be said that the interviewee is an intermediary that needs to be passed through in order to capture a collective reality (Penalva et al., 2015). This research technique was used in similar studies, such as that of Baranova (2017), who over a period of seven years interviewed 40 media managers in Russia, in order to know what skills and competencies journalists should have in the present day. Previously, in the British context, Saltzis and Dickinson (2008) also carried out research using the structured interview technique with journalists from the BBC, Sky News, the Guardian and the Financial Times.

The interviews were individual and conducted through Microsoft Teams, which allowed for both audio and video recording of all interviews. The industry professionals who were selected for the study had to meet the following requirements: (1) to have been in the same communication company for more than ten years; (2) to be recipients of CVs and responsible or jointly responsible for hiring; (3) to know first-hand the employment needs of their organisations; (4) to have positions of responsibility within the company. Regarding the selected companies, they are owners of media with different intended reaches (national or local) and of different types (agency, press, radio, television), which were the two variables that were taken into consideration for the final selection.  Additionally, it was undertaken to avoid redundancy -- that is, to avoid the situation of a saturated sample and new cases not providing new information.. The selected companies were: News agency: Colpisa; Newspapers: El Confidencial, Diario As and La Voz de Cádiz; Radio stations: RNE, Radio Euskadi; Television: Canal Sur, Spanish Television (RTVE), Telemadrid, Television Galicia and La Sexta. Although in some cases (namely agencies and newspapers) the companies are linked to journalistic information, these firms call for not only graduates in Journalism, but also in Audiovisual Communication and in Advertising and Public Relations. And this is not only due to their status as companies, but, as seen in the interviews carried out, due to the changes that the practice of journalism is experiencing in the digital environment, which gives increasing weight to audiovisual narratives and to knowledge of promotion strategies for information products, such as SEO positioning.

For the qualitative analysis of the data, Atlas.ti was used, falling under the umbrella of so-called CAQDAS ('*Computer-Assisted/ Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software*') (Lee & Fielding, 1996) that emerged in the mid-1980s. The Atlas.ti program is a tool designed to help the analyst in the interpretation of textual data. It allows the construction of models through semantic networks. Qualitative research has conceptualisation as its main objective. It is a work of abstraction to discover in an intuitive and inductive way hidden structures of phenomena following the exploration of textual data. The Atlas/ti includes a set of tools that allows the management, extraction, exploration and restructuring of significant elements of the data (Penalva et al, 2015, 127).

## 5. Quantitative results

### Use of platforms and social networks for job searching

The total proportion of respondents based on the type of studies is distributed as follows: graduates in Advertising and Public Relations account for 38% of the total. They are followed by Journalism, with 28%; Audiovisual Communication, with 21%; and the remaining 13% corresponds to students who took other types of degrees in Communication.

On a Likert scale from 1 to 5, the vast majority of respondents (61.76%) agree (somewhat, mostly or completely) that job portals are essential to finding a job today. In fact, 63% of those surveyed consider that employment web platforms or social networks such as LinkedIn are 'a good place to publish your CV and make yourself known at work'. Along these lines, 89% of young people claim to have a LinkedIn profile, followed by 62% who claim to have their professional and academic profile on Infojobs. These data reflect that a significant majority of young people have their CV published on more than one platform/social network.

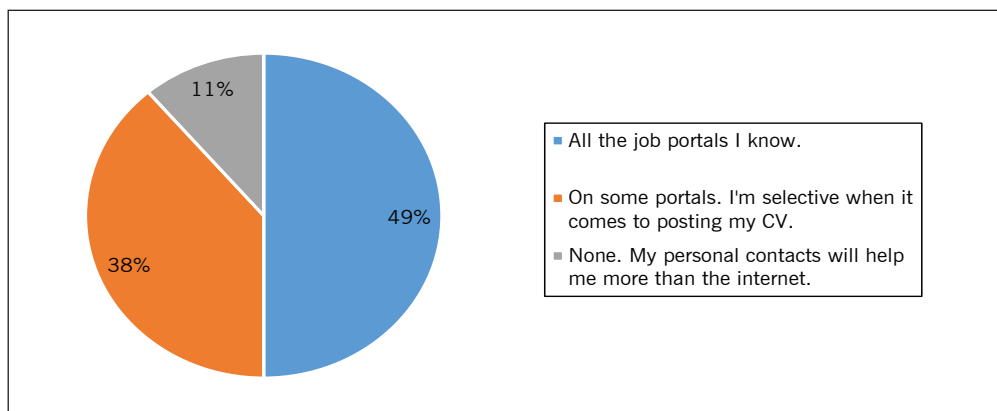In fact, 48% claim to have published their CV on 'all the job portals they know'. However, another representative part of the sample (38%) are somewhat more selective and only have their CV published on certain portals. On the opposite side, 11% of young people do not consider it necessary to have their CV published on any employment web platform or social network, since their personal contacts help/will help them more in finding a job than the internet.

### Social relationships in job searching

Faced with the possibilities that digitalisation has brought with it for job searching, the experience of young people seems to reflect that family and social relationships continue to play an important role when entering the labour market or moving through it. Thus, 49% claim to have found their first job through family, friends and/or acquaintances, and 70.5% respond that they somewhat or totally agree with the statement that 'Web employment platforms are important and you have to be on them; however, the truly interesting offers usually come through more traditional methods such as friends, acquaintances or family'.

However, 45% of young people surveyed declare that they respond quite frequently to job offers from these portals. As can be seen in Figure 2, 19% obtained a job through an employment

**Figure 1. Percentage of publication of CVs by Communication graduates on job search portals/social networks**



- All the job portals I know.
- On some portals. I'm selective when it comes to posting my CV.
- None. My personal contacts will help me more than the internet.

Source: Own elaboration.

**Figure 2. Percentage of Communication graduates in relation to the way in which they have found employment**



- Through family, friends...
- Through the University
- Through a job portal
- Others
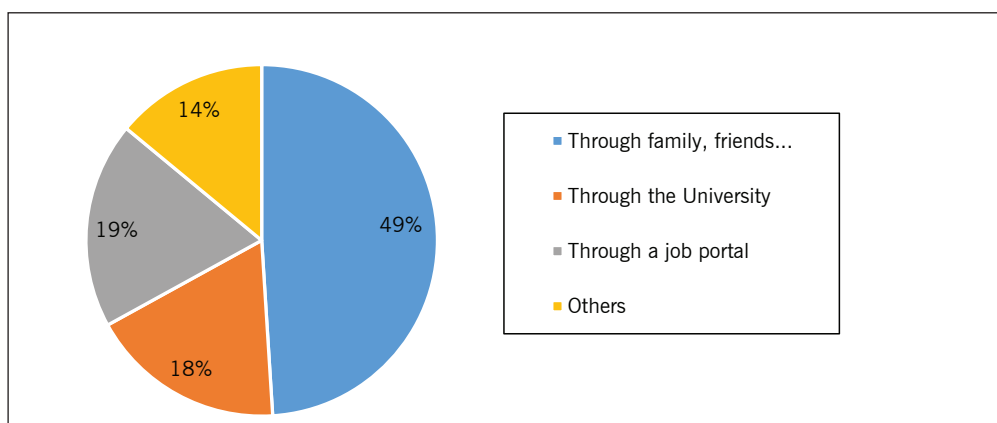
Source: Own elaboration.

**Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who declare that the training being demanded in the labour market today is what is obtained at university**
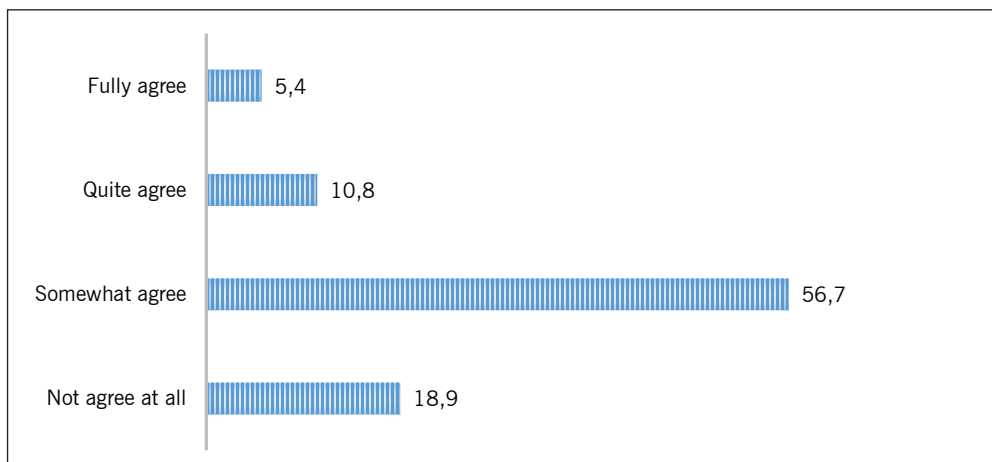


Source: Own elaboration.

web portal, which would mean that 1 in 5 young people access the labour market through internet offers. Furthermore, out of these young people, 48% affirm that they got the job after responding to an offer published on the portal and 34% declare that 'I introduced myself with my CV and they contacted me'.

For their part, 64% of young people surveyed claim to respond quite frequently to job offers advertised on these portals/social networks. However, these young people, 46% of the total, consider these portals/social networks to be overrated for job searches, and one in four agree with the statement 'although there are a lot of them, they are not really useful for finding work'.

Finally, it was also of interest for the study to know first-hand whether the university training that young graduates in Communication have received is responsive to the demands of the labour market. Survey respondents were therefore asked if, in their experience, the training that is demanded in the labour market today is what is obtained at university. As can be seen in the Figure 3, there are few who believe firmly that this is the case. About 60% say they somewhat agree and 19% do not agree at all. This totals to almost 80% of university graduates in the different fields of communication who have verified that the training they received at university is related to the demand of communication companies.

## 6. Qualitative analysis results

The script on which the interviews are based contained eight questions, out of which we will analyse in this paper the one related to the digital transformation of the communication sector and the one that refers to the knowledge, competencies, skills and abilities that the communication medium requires or demands from workers, especially new hires, a consequence that, specifically, is a result of digital transformation. To analyse

these competencies, we have divided the account into three fundamental parts: (1) technical/technological abilities; (2) abilities specific to the profession; and (3) personal skills.

Regarding the process of change that the communication sector is experiencing, it is recognised that 'it is in the midst of a digital transformation process, I think like most of the media in this country. We are truly undergoing a process of digital transformation within the company, which requires an absolute modernisation and updating of everything to do with the company's professional profiles' (*Canal Sur*); 'Now we need employees who truly master and know how to get around on social media' (*Telemadrid*). It is clear, therefore, that the backdrop has changed. A person who ably uses social media, who is familiar with various technologies, new communication skills and competencies is valued, without forgetting the traditional abilities in the field of communication.

The hiring managers interviewed agree when talking about the technical/technological skills required of new graduates entering newsrooms. In fact, there seems to be unanimity on the part of those interviewed when it comes to affirming that digitalisation is already part of the DNA of young graduates, although it is necessary for them to know how to channel it to the world of work. In television, for example, 'knowing how to handle audio and video formats, such as monitoring, transmedia, SEO, SEM, digital strategy, channel management, artificial intelligence or product development' (RTVE); 'Specific profiles: Multimedia Operator, person with Audiovisual Production and Communication skills, specialising in the management and execution of Multiscreen streaming; Multimedia Designer, as a person with abilities, with skills, in specialised Graphics, Mobile Web and Front-end Design, and Smart TVs' (*Canal Sur*).

The topic of SEO appears quite often in all those interviewed. We are no longer looking for just an employee, but rather an employee 'with SEO knowledge' (*Diario As*). Or on social media: 'We need an employee who truly masters and knows how to

get around on social media' (*Telemadrid*); 'SEO Editor, as the person in charge of executing the optimisation of the content published on the site by the Web Editorial Team, evaluating recommended SEO and social media criteria' (*Canal Sur*).

'To begin with, and to identify, as well as the four or five key profiles, they could be, first, that they had programming knowledge, data analysis knowledge; there we already have two profiles. But there is another front, which is audience development, which is something more evolved coming from SEO, people who have SEO profiles, we are talking here about technical SEO. In newsrooms […], you need staff who offer you approaches and ideas that no one else is going to offer. In other words, you need people who understand very well what they are covering, who offer analysis, contextualisation, who decipher current events for everyone' (*El Confidencial*).

It is true that today's young people have digital experience that previous generations did not have: 'I think that this is an added value for young people who, if they know how to take advantage of it, have a lot to gain when it comes to joining the labour market' (*Colpisa*); 'People who come from university now tend to come with a higher digital profile than we employees who are already working normally have' (*Radio Euskadi*); 'The biggest difference is that those from the newspaper find the concept of immediacy and technology much more difficult than those who come from university, young kids, who find it much less difficult' (*Diario As*).

However, this digital skill does not seem to bear fruit in the same way in the labour market, since the demand for certain digital skills among employees makes it difficult, according to those interviewed, to find adequately prepared young graduates: 'We are demanding a series of profiles, from a technological perspective, and it is very difficult. They have been published on LinkedIn, and we are having a lot of difficulty completing it. Of the categories that have been presented, many are empty at the moment because we cannot find people' (*RTVE*).

Regarding skills in the communication professions, the digital transformation they are undergoing can be observed in the interviews. It is stated that it is necessary to keep in mind 'the omnichannel sense, we have to be focused on the story, regardless of the window in which we can broadcast it' (*RTVE*); 'Above all, we need people who know the world of communication from the new multiplatform possibilities' (*RTVE*). In a more critical way, some interviewees point out that today's reality gives way to what can be considered as 'one-man or woman band: because you produce programs, you produce your own content, you record it, you write a script, even though you are supervised by your coordinators, and then you edit it together with a director' (*La Sexta*).The professionals interviewed agree that there is a certain lack in the new generations of knowing how to express themselves easily or knowledge of the structure of the communication business. More traditional skills, such as languages, are taken for granted, especially English: 'If someone is not completely fluent in English, they are not useful for us' (*El Confidencial*); as well as the ability to communicate: 'They

should know how to communicate, they should know how to empathise with the story they are telling and they should help us get into that story' (*Telemadrid*); 'Writing and speaking well is not that simple' (*Radio Euskadi*);

The last point is related to cross-cutting skills or also called soft skills or competencies (creativity, communication, leadership, among others), which differ from 'hard' skills in that the former are not teachable and they cannot be learned (Giraldo, 2020). In this regard, those interviewed understand that recent graduates often arrive at the job with little previous professional experience, but that there are other (soft) skills that should be required of them: 'What is asked of them is desire, it is adequate training, they should know how to write, they should know how to do what they need to do in a normal way' (*Colpisa*). But that does not mean they are exempt from knowing 'how things work' when they arrive at a company. Passion for working is one of the elements mentioned: 'Each subject area manager looks for someone who is passionate, who is crazy about it. If you don't have that, it is impossible, because this is a sector where a lot of work is done, it is very intense, there is a lot of wear and tear. So you need someone who is passionate about it. They need to be crazy about this' (*El Confidencial*); 'The fundamental basis is that you like your job, that you want to do your job well, that you are willing to make the sacrifices it requires' (*La Voz de Cádiz*); 'They are required to be creative, creativity is very important' (*Telemadrid*).

In the opinion of those interviewed, those who have recently entered the labour market lack the courage to try to be a little more ambitious: 'In other words, you have to get to a place and not say [that] "I am the best", but say [that] "I can become the best"' (*Colpisa*). Therefore, taking the initiative is essential for all of them, and not waiting for others to decide: 'That is, not waiting to be told to do something, but having the initiative to want to do it' (*Diario As*); 'You have to show some curiosity about something, to have done something, like a podcast, for example, to have had some experience in something, to be active and not just settle for having a degree' (*El Confidencial*). It is in this aspect, again, where certain criticisms appear regarding the graduates who join the professional world: 'In a high percentage of them I do perceive that, well, they are there because they have to complete the hours that are required of them to complete their degree, but they do not take advantage of it as an opportunity to pour themselves into it and to see that I am valid and that I can be useful' (*Colpisa*).

## 7. Conclusions

The digital transformation in the field of Communication has affected all elements of the classic communication model; that is, the sender, the medium and the receiver or audience. This study has focused on the need for change that the sender has experienced, principally the journalist, who is required to have new skills and knowledge. For long-time workers in the industry,

this transformation has involved adaptation to new tools and ways of doing things, even of communicating. For young people, who were born digital, this adaptation has involved understanding that technologies are not only required for leisure or entertainment, but for something as important as searching for a job or being able to keep it.

The results of the primary research collected in this work show, first of all, that, despite the presence and importance of online employment platforms, one in two jobs among young graduates in some field of Communication is still gained through traditional methods such as personal contacts, family or friends, while one in five is gained through digital platforms. These results are not those expected, since the traditional strategy of joining the labour market through contacts in one's environment has been maintained. Companies are also interested in these digital search tools, but they are not finding what they need either. All this leads us to think of two arguments to justify the low effectiveness of these tools. Firstly, young people do not seem to know how to 'sell themselves' and do not convincingly show the benefits of their profile. In other words, they lack the ability to know how to communicate in an environment other than face to face, a necessary aptitude for the professional practice of the communication professions.

Consequently, despite the prominence that these web platforms are acquiring in job searches, it seems necessary to delve deeper into this line of research to determine their real prominence, whether these digital tools replace or complement traditional agents when it comes to trying to find a job in the field of communication. Although digitalisation, therefore, does not yet appear as the main way to enter the labour market, it is true that, in communication companies, the technological skills that are implicit in the job of communicator today are more than necessary, an aspect that coincides with the results of Soo Heong (2022).

This study has also made it possible to link the current work reality in the communication sector with the effectiveness of the training provided in universities. Although the young people surveyed express their satisfaction with the training obtained at university, companies demand professional qualities that seem to go beyond the training pathway that is taken in university degrees, an issue that should also be a reason for reflection on a restructuring of higher education that is more closely adapted to the demands of the job market.

The competitiveness that has arisen with the forced adaptation of communication companies to the digital environment requires a communicator profile that -without losing its traditional qualities of perseverance, taste for the profession and an adequate ability to communicate- requires digital skills far beyond their knowledge acquired in daily life through the use of the internet and social media. The skills required now point to a much greater preparation than that shown by young job seekers. Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on a greater impact of university training on a much more advanced management of technologies and content hosted on the internet.

Secondly, companies are demanding skills that are practically impossible for a young person to have in their search for a first job and with little professional experience. The immediacy required in current journalistic routines may be the origin of these demands, but, in addition, it must be combined with the creativity exhibited by some of the industry professionals interviewed. However, this creativity must have a basis. Original ideas do not arise from nothing, but from experience and adequate university training.

Therefore, and from this context, several lines of reflection and research emerge: on the one hand, there is the need for a greater link between the university environment and current professional reality. On the other hand, we see the responsibility of the companies themselves to promote the entry into the labour market of young people who are required, to a large extent, to have knowledge and skills that cannot be generated in the educational environment, but rather through experience in a gradually developing work environment. Yes, it is true that competition is increasing and reaches unusual limits until the arrival of new technologies, but one might also wonder how many of the already established professionals actually started out with the preparation that young graduates currently have, although, we insist, this training still has many shortcomings and defects that must be corrected with a closer approach between the university and the professional environment.

## Financing of work

## References

Baranova, E.A. (2017). New Journalism Competences in the Conditions of Media Convergence: Myths and Reality. *RUDN Journal Of Studies In Literature And Journalism*, 22(1), 177-188.
doi: 10.22363/2312-9220-2017-22-1-177-188

Carnevale, A.P. & Wenzinger, E. (2022). *Stop the Presses: Journalism Employment and the Economic Value of 850 Journalism and Communication Programs*. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

Cerezo, P. (2018). *Los medios líquidos: la transformación de los modelos de negocio*. Editorial UOC. 1-216.

Díaz-de-Rada, V. (2012). Ventajas e inconvenientes de la encuesta por Internet. *Papers*, 97(1), 193-223. https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/papers/v97n1.71

Dillahunt, T., Israni, A., Lu, A.J., Cai, M. & Hsiao, J.C.Y. (2021). Examining the Use of Online Platforms for Employment: A Survey of U.S. Job Seekers. *CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 1-23. https://doi.org/10.1145/3411764.3445350

Domingo, D., Salaverría, R., Aguado, J. M., Cabrera, M.A., Edo, C., Masip, P., Meso, K., Palomo, M.B., Sádaba, C., Orihuela, J. L., Portilla, I., Díaz Noci, J., Larrañaga, J., Larrondo, A., López, X., Pereira, X., Gago, M., Otero, M., Fernández Rivera, ... & Giménez, E. (2007). F*our Dimensions of Journalistic Convergence: A preliminary approach to current media trends at Spain.* Comunicació presentada al International Symposium of Online Journalism, Texas, Estats Units d'Amèrica. http://online.journalism.utexas.edu/2007/papers/Domingo.pdf

Durán Díaz, J. & Feás Muñoz, J. (2013). Internet como recurso para la búsqueda de empleo. *Prodetur*, Diputación de Sevilla. https://www.prodetur.es/prodetur/AlfrescoFileTransferS ervlet?action=download&ref=eb718be1-9a30-425b-85ca-62d602b59063

Eddy, K. (2022). *Los hábitos y actitudes cambiantes de las audiencias jóvenes de noticias*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/es/digital-news-report/2022/los-habitos-y-actitudes-cambiantes-de-las-audiencias-jovenes-de-noticias

Fundación PwC & Fundación Atresmedia (2016). *Empleos del futuro en el sector audiovisual*. Fundación PricewaterhouseCooper.

Gasparènienè, L., Matulienè, S. & Žemaitis, E. (2021). Opportunities of job search through social media platforms and its development in Lithuania. Business: Theory and *Practice*, 22(2), 330-339. https://doi.org/10.3846/btp.2021.11055

Giraldo, V. (2020, 20 February). Conoce las Soft Skills y su importancia en el desarrollo profesional con 11 ejemplos. https://rockcontent.com/es/blog/soft-skills/

Goodman, R.S. & Stein, E. (2017). *Global Journalism Education in the 21st Century: Challenges & Innovations*. Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, University of Texas

Guo, L. & Volz, Y. (2019): (Re)defining Journalistic Expertise in the Digital Transformation: A Content Analysis of Job Announcements, *Journalism Practice*, 13(10), 1294-1315. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2019.1588147

Infoempleo (2019). *Talento conectado. Nuevas realidades en el mercado del trabajo.* https://cdn.infoempleo.com/infoempleo/documentacion/publicaciones/Informe_talento_conectado_2019.pdf

Komljenovic, J. (2019). Linkedin, platforming labour, and the new employability mandate for universities. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 17(1), 28-43. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2018.1500275

Kuhn, P., & Skuterud, M. (2004). Internet Job Search and Unemployment Durations. *American Economic Review*, 94(1), 218-232. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3592776

Lee, R. M. & Fielding, N. (1996). Qualitative data analysis: Representations of a Technology: A Comment on Coffey, Holbrook and Atkinson. *Sociological Research Online, 1*(4), 15-20. https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.1326

Lugmayr, A. & Dal Zotto, C. (2016). *Media Convergence Handbook - Vol. 1. Journalism, Broadcasting, and Social Media Aspects of Convergence*. Springer Verlag.

Merino, J. (2021, 28 October). Preparar plataformas digitales más robustas para los Cyber. LinkedIn https://es.linkedin.com/pulse/preparar-plataformas-digitales-m%C3%A1s-robustas-para-los-merino-cordova

Molla, R. (2019, 25 February). Chart: How the Definition of 'Journalist' Is Changing https://www.vox.com/2019/2/25/18224696/chart-transition-journalism-public-relations-content-social-media-jobs

Newman, N. (2021). *Journalism, media and technology trends and predictions 2021*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.

Nygren, G. (2016). Journalism Education and the Profession: Socialisation, Traditions and Change. In: N. Hovden, & H. Zilliacus-Tikkanen (ed.), *Becoming a journalist: Journalism education in the nordic countries* (73-91). Nordicom.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)(2022). *Education at a Glance. OECD Indicators*. https://sede.educacion.gob.es/publiventa/panorama-de-la-educacion-2022-indicadores-de-la-ocde-informe-espanol/espana-estrategias-y-politicas-educativas-organizacion-y-gestion-educativa/26339

Oncina, L. & Pérez, A. (2020). *Patrones de búsqueda de empleo en Internet. Diagnóstico y retos de las personas en desempleo*. Fundación Santa María la Real. https://areaempleofsmlr.es/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Informe-RRSS-B%C3%BAsqueda-de-Empleo.pdf

Pais, I. & Gandini, A. (2015). Looking for a Job Online: an International Survey on Social Recruiting. *Sociologia del Lavoro*, 137(1), 115-129. https://doi.org/10.3280/sl2015-137007

Pavlik, J. (2001). *Journalism and new media*. Columbia University Press

Penalva Verdú, C., Alaminos Chica, A., Francés García, F. J., & Santacreu Fernández, Ó.A. (2015). *La investigación cualitativa. Técnicas de investigación y análisis con Atlas.ti*. PYDLOS Ediciones.

Perlado Lamo de Espinosa, M. (2013). "Nuevas oportunidades en la comunicación digital: nuevos perfiles y competencias". In: M. I. de Salas & E. Mira (coords.): *Prospectivas y tendencias para la comunicación en el siglo XXI* (429-440). CEU Ediciones.

Peterson, R. M., & Dover, H. F. (2014). Building Student Networks with LinkedIn: The Potential for Connections, Internships, and Jobs. *Marketing Education Review, 24*(1), 15-20.https://doi.org/10.2753/MER1052-8008240102

Saltzis, K., & Dickinson, R. (2008). Inside the changing newsroom: journalists' responses to media convergence. *Aslib Proceedings, 60*(3) 216-228.

Soo Heong, D.Y. (2022). Employability of Journalism Graduates in an Ever-Changing Media Landscape. *Higher Education and Oriental Studies*, *2*(1), 1-5. https://doi.org/10.54435/heos.v2i1.40

Spanish National Institute of Statistics (Instituto Nacional de Estadística) (2023). Mercado laboral. https://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/categoria.htm?c=Estadistica_P&cid=1254735976594

Spyridou, L.P. & Veglis, A. (2016). Convergence and the Changing Labor of Journalism: Towards the 'Super Journalist' Paradigm. In: A. Lugmayr, & C. Dal Zotto (2016). *Media Convergence Handbook - Vol. 1. Journalism, Broadcasting, and Social Media Aspects of Convergence* (99-116). Springer Verlag. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-54484-2_6

Tuñez López, J. M., Martínez Solana, Y. & Abejón Mendoza, P. (2010). Nuevos entornos, nuevas demandas, nuevos periodistas. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, *16*, 79-94. https://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/ESMP/article/view/ESMP1010110079A

Vivar, H. (coord.) (2011). Cuaderno central: Nuevos perfiles profesionales para la comunicación digital, *Telos*, 87.

Walker, M. (2021, 13 July). *U.S. newsroom employment has fallen 26% since 2008*. Washington: Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/07/13/u-s-newsroom-employment-has-fallen-26-since-2008/