

Getting Your Foot in the Door

SECTION EDITOR



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Editorial

Starting a new medical writing career and don't know where to start? Or are you just curious and would like to learn about the potential employers

in Europe? In this article, Sarah and her colleagues offer a helpful overview of medical writing companies across Europe.

Ivana

Medical writing in Europe: A survey

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Abstract

Medical writing is a global discipline, and its visibility is currently limited. While medical writing is a well-established career in central and southern Europe, it is an emerging profession in the Nordics and eastern Europe. The information on medical writing employers across Europe is limited online. Therefore, we conducted a survey in late 2023 to address this knowledge gap and provide a resource for experienced and aspiring medical writers alike. This article provides an overview of the types of organisations in which medical writers work across Europe.

Introduction

We are a group of five aspiring medical writers from diverse backgrounds (medicine, biomedical research, project management, and clinical trial management). There is limited information available via online platforms like LinkedIn for beginners in the field of medical writing. Our survey covers employers in medical writing in continental Europe and Ireland (excluding UK). Countries with limited opportunities for medical writers outside of remote or freelance positions were excluded. This article is not intended to be an exhaustive list of employers, but rather a snapshot of the current employers of medical writing on LinkedIn as of the end of 2023.

Methods

Study design

This survey was conducted by a group of five aspiring medical writers led by Sarah Nelson. Online surveys were developed in English using SurveyMonkey, which enabled secure and anonymous data collection. The results from the survey were analysed using Microsoft Excel. The potential participants were approached online via LinkedIn and by email with a link to the survey, through the authors' professional networks. The surveys were also publicised on social media platforms.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were designed to be completed in under 5 minutes using SurveyMonkey. There were 7 questions to answer including country of work, type of organisation (pharmaceutical company, business consulting and medical writing company, medical writing company, medical device company, contract research organisation, digital comms and technical consultancy, etc) and contact information.

Data analysis

Participant responses were collected automatically and exported into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The information was cross-checked using search engines like Google search. A total of 44 responses were collected. Results summarise the information collected in the survey.

Results of the survey

Central and Southern Europe

Medical writing is well established in Central and Southern Europe.

- France is home to many employers of medical writers, especially in regulatory writing. Many of the consultancies, agencies and CROs are based in Paris, while pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies are located in other regions.
- Belgium is a growing hub for biopharmaceutical expansion, with global companies already established throughout the country.
- Multiple well-established healthcare and life sciences organisations can be found throughout Germany. In addition to pharmaceutical giants, major players include a growing number of agencies, consultancies, and CROs.
- Ireland offers many exciting opportunities in medical writing in medical communications agencies, pharma, healthcare, and CROs. Company offices and headquarters are mainly located in Dublin. Medical writers in Northern Ireland can also work for UK companies remotely.
- In Netherlands, medical writers are employed across the country, with headquarters in Amsterdam. Opportunities are centred around the pharmaceutical industry with a handful of medcomms agencies and CROs.



- Pharma organisations with a presence in Poland employ both in-house writers and work with agencies or consultancies for technical writing. Warsaw is emerging as a growth centre for medical communications. Opportunities in these neighbouring countries include a range of medical, scientific and technical writing roles.
- Employers in Austria include a growing number of consulting companies and CROs. Switzerland, as a vibrant hub for pharma, biotech, and NGOs, attracts medical writers of every kind.

- Spain and Italy have several agencies and consultancies employing medical writers. Medical writers are mainly employed within satellite offices of prominent global organisations, mainly pharma companies and CROs (Table 1).

Nordics

Medical writing is emerging as a recognised profession in the Nordic countries of Finland, Sweden, and Denmark, although opportunities remain fairly limited in this region (Table 2). Several organisations like Inizio, MedEngine, Medtronic and LINK Medical are situated in multiple locations in the Nordics.

Eastern Europe

Medical writing opportunities in Eastern European countries appear mostly in CROs. Budapest in Hungary appears to be a growing hub for pharma and supporting services (Table 3). There are several Pharma, Device, Biotech and CROs with offices throughout the Eastern European region, for example, ADAX International, Bayer, BiTrial, Comac Medical, Medtronic and Worldwide Clinical Trials.

Table 1. Central and Southern Europe

Country	Agencies and consultancies	Pharmaceutical, device, and biotech organisations	Contract research organisations (CROs)
Belgium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emtex Life Science Modis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AstraZeneca Bayer AG C.H.Boehringer Sohn AG and Ko.KG Roche Pharmaceuticals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4Clinics Archer Research Crophia ICON Keyrus Life Science
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Azur Health Science Evidera McCann Health (IPG Health) Publicis Health France Strategik & Numerik TBWA/Adelphi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biocorp (Novo Nordisk) Genethon Genomic Vision Sanofi Servier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4Clinics Aixial Group Apices Biotrial Excelya Keyrus Life Science NAMSA Veristat (formerly Scinopsis) Venn Life Science (hVIVO)

Continued overleaf

Table 1 continued

Country	Agencies and consultancies	Pharmaceutical, device, and biotech organisations	Contract research organisations (CROs)
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co.medical Cast Pharma Cerner Enviza Fleishman Hillard Kyouds M:werk McCann Health (IPG Health) Medperion Trilogy Writing & Consulting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bayer BioNTech Boehringer Ingelheim Grünenthal Merck KGaA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ClinStat ICRC-Weyer OCT Clinical Scope International
Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affinity Edelman Inizio InkLab Med Media NIIT Synergy Vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gilead Sciences Grifols LetsGetChecked Novartis Regeneron 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cromos Pharma Syneos Health
Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Novius Excerpta Medica (Adelphi group) Medical Digitals Synterex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AM-Pharma Euro Trol Thermo Fisher Scientific (Evidera) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venn Life Science (hVIVO)
Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bioconvey Health Communications CB Health Spark (IPG Health) HealthWay Medical Communications Sp.z.o.o. Proper Medical Writing Publicis Groupe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JSS Medical Research ICON Pharmaxi
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DREHM Pharma Gouya Insights Medperion NeuroScios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boehringer Ingelheim Med-El 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CW-Research & Mgmt Joanneum Research SGS ZAK Clinical Research Services
Switzerland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emtex Life Science Infinity Communications MedComms Experts Medperion nspm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idorsia Johnson & Johnson Novartis Roche 	None found
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDM Barcelona (Omnicom) Kalispera Medical Writing PharmaLex mPhaR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AstraZeneca (Alexion) Bayer Hispania 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apices MEDSIR Syneos Health
Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alecra Healthcare CDM Milan (Omnicom) Connexia EDRA S.p.A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Osmosia S.r.l Chiesi GSK Medtronic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syneos Health

Figure 1. Countries in Europe where multinational companies employ medical writers



Table 2. Nordics

Country	Organisations
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bayer • Biocodex PhaMe
Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sobi • Immuneed • Scandinavian CRO • TFS HealthScience
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coloplast • Novo Nordisk • Publicis Denmark

Table 3. Eastern Europe

Country	Organisations
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syntesia Medical Communications • Cortex Pharma Services • Pharma-Regist • Roche Services & Solutions
Ukraine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AstraZeneca • Bayer Hispania
Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulgarian Organized Research Activities • Rotrial Contract Research

Multinational Companies

Numerous multinational organisations have office locations scattered throughout Europe. Many of these organisations are large, with a presence in multiple countries (Figure 1). In addition, some global giants operate subsidiary agencies with names that differ from that of the parent company, e.g., PPD is part of Thermo Fisher Scientific. Some examples of organisations with multiple locations across Europe include: Abbvie, AstraZeneca, Edelman, Inizio, IPG Health, IQVIA, Omnicom Health Group, Parexel, SanaClis, Syneos Health, Thermo Fisher Scientific, and CRO Directory.

Conclusions

In general, writers can apply for a job in organisations with a physical presence in the country in which they reside. Jobseekers can try searching the organisations listed in Tables 1, 2, and 3 to find local roles and find out more about medical writing.

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Disclaimers

The authors do not have affiliation with any of the organisations listed. Appearance on the list does not imply that organisations are actively hiring or recruiting entry level writers. The information was accurate at the time of survey response collection and research.

Disclosures and conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data availability statement

For inquiries about data and other supplemental information, please contact the corresponding author.