



# Publicis Groupe

Subsidiaries: Publicis Health, Publicis Media, Publicis Sapient, Publicis Communications, Leo Burnett Worldwide, Digitas, Re:Sources, Saatchi & Saatchi

Locations: France (HQ)

Industries: Commercial and Professional Services, Media and Entertainment

## RISK LEVEL:



**High Risk**

### DESCRIPTION:

Publicis Groupe is High Risk. The company yields to political activism in shaping corporate governance, potentially alienating consumers, dividing employees, and harming shareholders. The company implements race and identity-based policies that replace merit, excellence, and integrity with preferential treatment and outcomes. The company embraces corporate initiatives that redirect its central focus from business goals to partisan policies and divisive issues. This approach fails to safeguard free exercise, free speech, and free enterprise.

### Corporate Weaponization

**Has canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors due to their political views or religious beliefs OR corporately boycotts, divests, or sanctions regions, people groups, or industries. Medium Risk**

*Publicis Media's received a score of 95 on the 2025 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group. The company recruits employees based on sexual identity issues. The company discriminates against vendors that do not promote divisive sex and gender policies, indicating it prioritizes sexual issues over merit (1)(2). The company was a member of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media, which aimed to demonetize and suppress content that it deemed to spread "hate speech" or "misinformation", discuss "debated social issues in a negative or partisan context", or "vilify" individuals based on sexual orientation and gender identity. These arbitrary guidelines were used to censor mainstream perspectives online (3)(4)(5). The company integrates ESG into its business practices. From its Net Zero Climate Policy: "[Suppliers refusing] to engage with an environmental action plan will constitute a non-selection criterion. Publicis Groupe is encouraging all suppliers to take action to fight climate change: limiting global warming rises to 1.5° (or at least 2°)" (6). The company promotes divisive sex and gender policies. Its Diversity & Inclusion Key Principles require international vendors to include sexual orientation in their nondiscrimination policy (7)(8). However, the company has not canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors based on political views or religious beliefs (9).*

**Charitable giving (including employee matching programs) policies or practices discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or religious beliefs. High Risk**

*Publicis Media's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2). The company does not appear to discriminate against religious organizations based on views or beliefs. The company's charitable giving focus areas are education, arts, and health (3).*

**Employment policies fail to protect against viewpoint or other discrimination and/or are ideological in nature. High Risk**

*Publicis Media's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company forces employees to attend multiple, controversial trainings on gender*

identity, sexual orientation, transgender issues, and divisive racial ideology. The company provides gender transition guidelines for its employees and a specific benefits guide with a comprehensive explanation of transgender services funded by the company (1)(2). The company offers DEI training to its employees (3). The company appears to prioritize diversity over merit in its recruitment. From its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: The company focuses on "[sourcing and recruiting] diverse talents with distinct backgrounds, to be aligned with the local economic and social context, and to reflect the consumer audience of our clients." The company appears to prioritize diversity over merit in its promotions: "Foster 'Equality of Chance' as a key-principle, to have more diverse candidates applying for a new position, role or promotion, and recognize intersectionality challenges" (4). The company appears to prioritize diversity over merit in its business structure through the establishment of gender targets for its recruitment, promotions, and leadership composition. The company is seeking "to have 45% women in leadership roles by 2025" (5). The company does not provide viewpoint protections for its employees (6).

## Corporate Governance and Public Policy

**Uses corporate reputation to support causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression.**

**High Risk**

A member of the management board, Anne-Gabrielle Heilbronner, made a post about "'World Safe Abortion Day'" and advocated that Publicis Groupe is "committed to covering travel expenses for abortions for our US employees" (1). The company's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy. By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (2)(3). The company's CEO signed the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion pledge, which includes a commitment to promote DEI through bias education training in the workplace, strategize on DEI programs/initiatives with other signatories, and engage boards of directors when developing and evaluating DEI strategies (4)(5). The company's CEO Arthur Sadoun is a signatory to CEOs For Gun Safety (6). The company was a contributing member of GARM's Action Guide to Reduce Media Greenhouse Gas Emissions and The Global Media Sustainability Framework which provides an action plan for media companies to transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions (7)(8). The company is committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2040 (9). The company supports DEI within its business practices. From its Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: "DEI is one of the three priorities of the current Groupe's multi-year CSR/ESG strategy" (10). The company supports ESG within its business practices. From its Corporate Social Responsibility & ESG: "The Groupe strategy embraces all aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR/ESG)" (11). The company scored a 95 out of 100 on the 2023-2024 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group (12)(13). The company ran a pro-gun control campaign in Russia, and company executive Arthur Sadoun signed an open letter urging the US Senate to pass stricter gun control legislation (14)(15). The company has emphasized its DEI commitments, running an "Embrace Change" campaign that includes employee diversity training and an increased focus on race in hiring (16). The company has allied with Tetu Connect, an LGBTQ policy-focused Think Tank in France (17). The company has published US Transition and Employment Support Guidelines and hosted a "'Shine On' Trans Awareness Week" (18). The company offers unconscious bias workshops (19).

**Uses corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression.**

**High Risk**

Publicis Groupe and Digitas provides a benefits package for employees that covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children (1)(2)(3)(4). The company's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company covers transgender related costs for its employees and their children, including paid short-term leave, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, chest surgeries, genital surgeries, medical visits and lab monitoring, travel and lodging. Additionally, the company has pledged philanthropic support of at least one organization or event that promotes sex and gender ideology. By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (5)(6). Publicis Media was a member of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media (7)(8)(9). Publicis Health is a corporate partner of the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (10). Otherwise, there are no publicly known cases of the company using corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies (11).

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**Uses corporate political actions and/or financial contributions for ideological, non-business purposes.**

**High Risk**

*Publicis Groupe HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company publicly advocated for controversial sex and gender ideology through local, state or federal legislation or initiatives. By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (1)(2). The company does not operate a PAC or report on its lobbying at this time (3)(4)(5).*

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