

HIRE RIGHT[™]

Global Benchmark Report

2024



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Foreword

Welcome to HireRight's 2024 Global Benchmark Report!

First, I would like to extend my thanks to everybody who completed our 2024 Global Benchmark Survey. HireRight has been conducting this annual survey for the past 17 years, but this year is special because we partnered with [International Sanctuary](#),¹ a global charity that serves girls and young women who are recovering from human trafficking, to fundraise through the survey. For every completed survey we received this year, we pledged a donation—and I am thrilled to share that we exceeded our fundraising target thanks to your participation.

This year's report focuses on three key areas—background screening, talent acquisition, and workforce management—comparing the findings of our survey respondents from North America (the U.S. and Canada), Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), and Asia-Pacific (APAC) with each other, as well as against our previous years' survey data to see if and how things are shifting in these areas.

Following a summary of our key global takeaways, the report begins by exploring background screening programs; from the key risks that employers need to mitigate to how screening programs are managed, and the checks most widely used in each region.

Next, the report reviews talent acquisition, reflecting on recent recruitment challenges, tactics used to attract new talent, and the expected talent acquisition challenges identified for 2024 and beyond.

Finally, we look at workforce management and how businesses are planning to retain their staff in 2024. We also take a deep dive into remote working, looking at the pros and cons to see how its adoption is changing and discuss if the future of work is still hybrid.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and that it will help you to better understand the everchanging global and regional employment landscapes affecting businesses worldwide.

Stephen Spears

Chief Revenue Officer at HireRight



Key Global Takeaways

1 Accuracy matters most when choosing a screening provider.



Accuracy of results has climbed to the top of the priorities list for employers globally when choosing a background screening provider.

Speed and cost were less important to respondents in each region this year than in 2023—with candidate experience climbing the ranks to take the number two spot for EMEA and APAC employers.

4 Stability or growth of workforce size in 2024 is expected by nearly nine in 10 respondents globally.



While stories of mass layoffs continue to be shared in the media, most respondents said they expect their company's workforce size to stay the same or increase by the end of 2024, with fewer than 5% saying they anticipate a reduction in their company's workforce size this year.

Over half of respondents globally said that recruitment carried on roughly as expected last year, and almost a third said they hired more workers to meet increased demands on the business.

2 Employment and education verifications are the most likely to find candidate discrepancies.



Employment and education verifications are the checks that APAC and EMEA respondents said most often returned candidate discrepancies.

The checks also ranked second and third among North America respondents, with undisclosed convictions uncovered during criminal record checks taking the top spot.

5 The top retention tactics for 2024 are consistent across the regions.



Additional training and professional development opportunities, new wellbeing initiatives, and enhanced healthcare insurance offerings were the activities most likely to be introduced to support retention in 2024.

However, almost half of North America respondents, over a third of EMEA respondents, and a fifth of APAC respondents said they had no plans to introduce these, or other new activities, to support retention this year.

3 Most businesses are comfortable with the use of AI/automation in the background screening process.



Across all regions, most respondents said they would be comfortable with AI or automation being used for researching or compiling a screening report if it led to speeding up the screening process or reducing the risk of human error.

Improving the candidate experience and cost savings were other top benefits of utilizing AI or automation that respondents said would warrant their use.



Background Screening

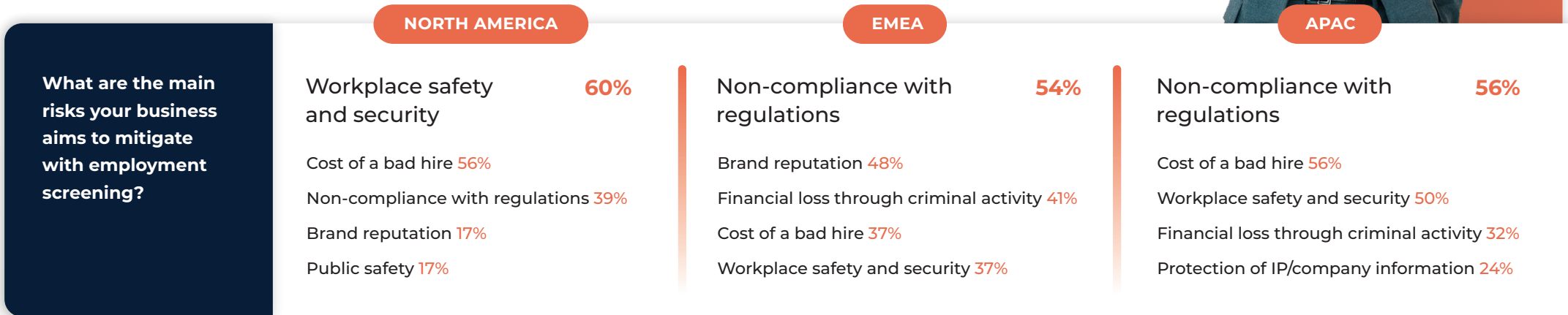


Risk Mitigation

Employers in different regions have different risk mitigation priorities when it comes to background screening, according to our survey respondents.

Over half of EMEA and APAC respondents are concerned about non-compliance with regulations, compared with around two-fifths of North America respondents. Perhaps this is due to the myriad of local laws and regulations employers must be mindful of and adhere to when screening in the many countries and territories within the EMEA and APAC regions.

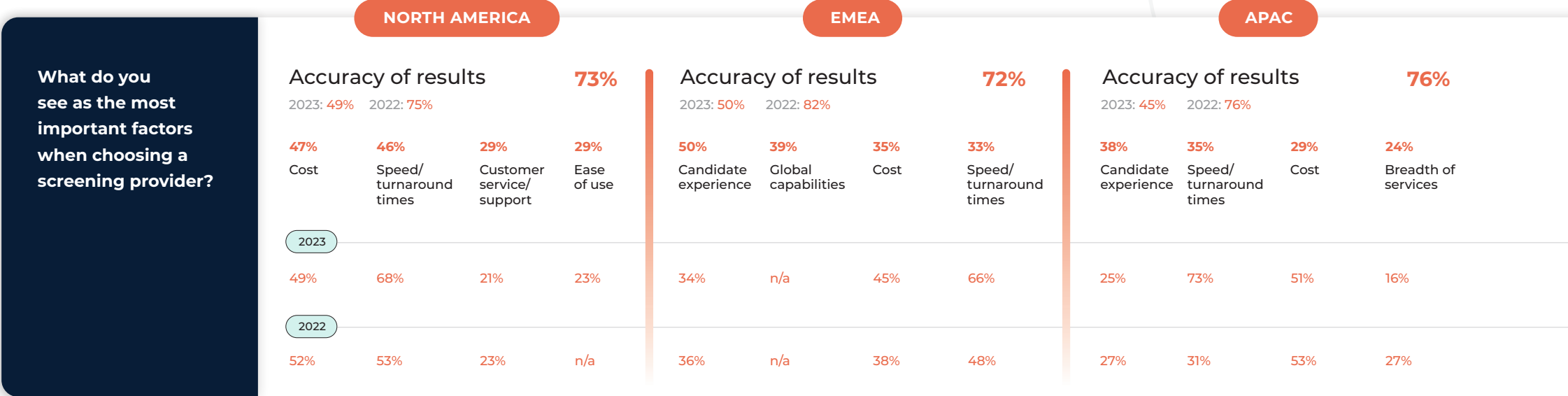
Workplace safety and security is the most common risk sought to be mitigated through background screening for our North America respondents—however, this ranked third in APAC and just fifth in EMEA, behind the cost of a bad hire in both regions.



Another risk that many businesses—predominantly in EMEA—look to minimize through employment screening is damage to their brand reputation (e.g. from bad press related to the actions of an unsuitable hire being exposed in the media). In one such recent case in the U.S., it was reported that the former Chief Financial Technology Officer for the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) was believed to have several alleged lies on his resume, including details of his employment history and education details.²

Choosing a Screening Provider

Following a notable drop in last year’s survey, accuracy of results has returned to its position as the most common important factor considered when choosing a screening provider in all regions.



Our 2023 survey found that speed/turnaround times was the most common consideration for respondents from each region when choosing a screening provider. However, this year, speed/turnaround times dropped down to third in North America and APAC, and fifth in EMEA.

While speed is an essential component of any background screening program—and protracted recruitment and onboarding processes could result in candidates taking positions elsewhere—perhaps more employers are now realizing that it is not worth cutting corners while conducting background checks just to get faster results.

Outside of North America, cost ranked fourth in EMEA and APAC, dropping from its position as a top three consideration for employers in each region in our 2022 and 2023 surveys. While for some businesses recruitment and onboarding budgets are being squeezed, it is reassuring to see that many organizations seem to believe that the benefits of having an accurate background screening outweigh the associated monetary costs. To effectively mitigate employment risk, you need to invest in the right combination of screening services and choose the right partner.

“At HireRight, we continue to develop, expand, and innovate our product offerings to help our customers mitigate their employment risk more thoroughly. Accuracy is at the heart of what we do, and while it is of course important to find efficiencies in the background screening process that can help reduce turnaround times, these should never compromise the quality of the checks. Missed hits matter, and we know our customers sleep more soundly knowing they have robust checks in place to manage and minimize their hiring risk.”



Jim Daxner

Chief Product Officer at HireRight

How Screening is Conducted

Approaches to conducting background screening varies across the regions, with respondents from North America and EMEA the most likely to work with a single screening provider.

Which of the following describe how background screening is currently conducted by your business?

NORTH AMERICA

- 44% We work with a **single provider** but only screen in one country
- 32% We work with a **single provider** for all our global screening services
- 13% We work with **different providers** for different screening services

EMEA

- 54% We work with a **single provider** for all our global screening services
- 24% We work with **different providers** in different regions/countries
- 15% We conduct some of our background screening services **in-house** / We work with **different providers** for different screening services

APAC

- 41% We work with **different providers** in different regions/countries
- 35% We work with a **single provider** for all our global screening services
- 24% We conduct all our background screening services **in-house**

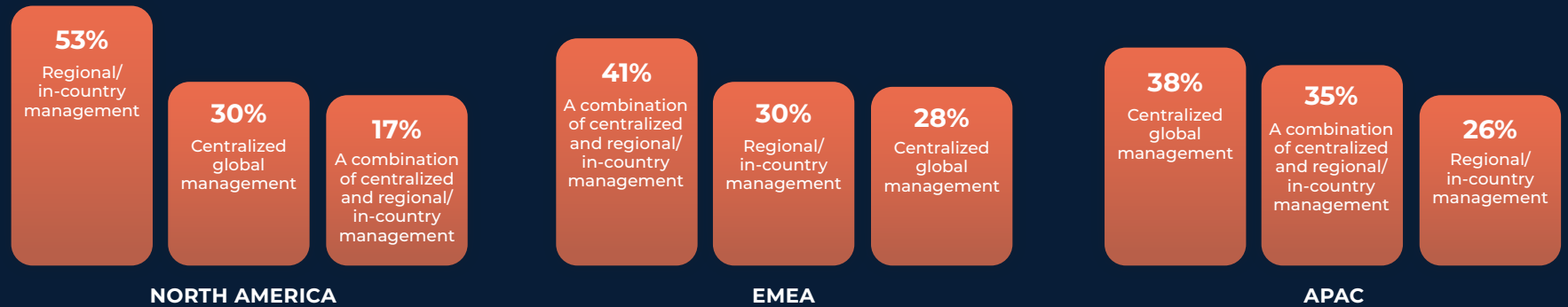
Over three-quarters (76%) of North America respondents and around three-fifths (58%) of EMEA respondents work with a single background screening provider—either for only screening in one country or across their entire global footprint. Just one in 10 (11%) North America respondents said they work with different providers in different regions/countries, compared with 24% of EMEA respondents and 41% of APAC respondents who said this was the case.

APAC is also the region where respondents are the most likely to conduct all their screening in-house; almost a quarter (24%) said they do, compared with just 7% of EMEA respondents and 6% of North America respondents. Perhaps the developing screening landscape in many countries in the APAC region is part of the reason why companies are adopting a do-it-yourself approach to screening. However, as already mentioned, there are lots of local screening regulations to consider in the region, so employers screening their candidates in-house should ensure they have the knowledge to do so.

How Screening Programs are Managed

There is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to management of screening programs, with companies in each region taking a variety of approaches.

How is your company's screening program currently managed?



While over half (53%) of respondents from North America said they manage their screening programs regionally or in-country, only three in 10 respondents from EMEA said this is their approach, and just a quarter (26%) of APAC respondents said the same.

Centralized global management is the most common way company screening programs are managed among our APAC respondents, whereas in EMEA two-fifths (41%) said they use a mix of centralized and regional/in-country management.

“Some of the key benefits a business may experience from managing their screening program centrally—and working with a single screening provider for all their screening needs—include a universal candidate experience and consistent global reporting. Additionally, by only having one system to train your teams to work on—rather than a different system for each vendor or location—the administrative side of managing screening activity all around the world becomes much simpler to manage.

“A centralized approach to program management also supports a simplified top-down enforcement of screening standards and policies, making it easier to make changes across all your global screening packages if needed—for example, adding a new screening service.”

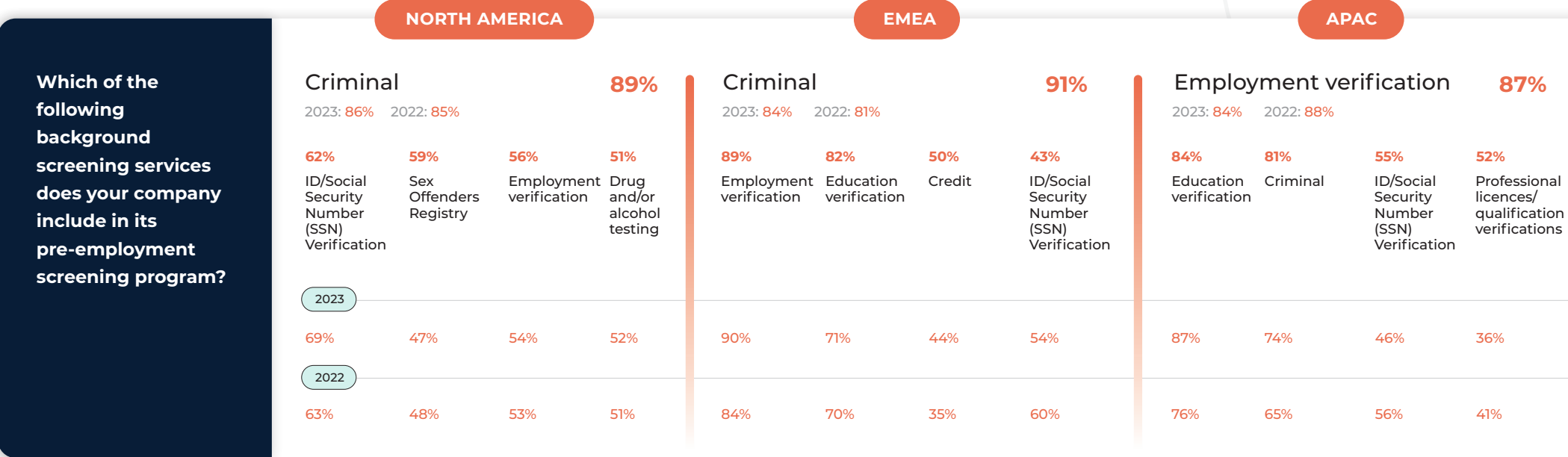
Mary O’Loughlin

EVP, Global Head of Customer Success and GTM Strategy at HireRight



Background Screening Around the World

Criminal record checks remain the top screening service used by employers in North America in 2024—and are now the most common check in EMEA too.



For the past few years, employment and education verification checks have been the most popular checks in EMEA and APAC. While these checks remain the most common in APAC, there has been an uptick in criminal record checks in EMEA, driving these to take the top spot in the region. Over nine in 10 (91%) EMEA respondents said their company conducts criminal checks as part of their pre-employment screening program, up from 84% in 2023 and 81% in 2022.

There has also been an increase in the use of education verification checks in EMEA, up from 71% in 2023 to 82% this year. Employment verification checks remain popular in EMEA, with little change from last year's survey findings.

In North America, Sex Offender Registry checks have seen a surge in popularity this year, up by 12 percentage points on last year's figure. The other top five checks in the region have seen similar adoption rates as the past two years.

In APAC, criminal record checks have seen an increase over the past two years, from 65% of respondents including them in 2022 to 81% this year. Additionally, the usage of professional licences/qualification verifications has risen from just over a third (36%) in 2023 to over half (52%) this year.

“The survey results from APAC support what we are seeing from our customers in the region, with a trend of organizations placing more emphasis on achieving a workforce comprised of top-quality hires. The increase of criminal record checks in APAC over the past two years suggests that APAC businesses are setting more robust screening requirements and are focussed on conducting comprehensive assessments of their candidates to protect their business, their employees, their customers, and their brand from potential risk. Additionally, where government-sourced criminal checks are not permitted due to local legislation, we are seeing a demand for other checks that can be conducted to mitigate similar risks, such as conduct checks, adverse media, and social media screening.”



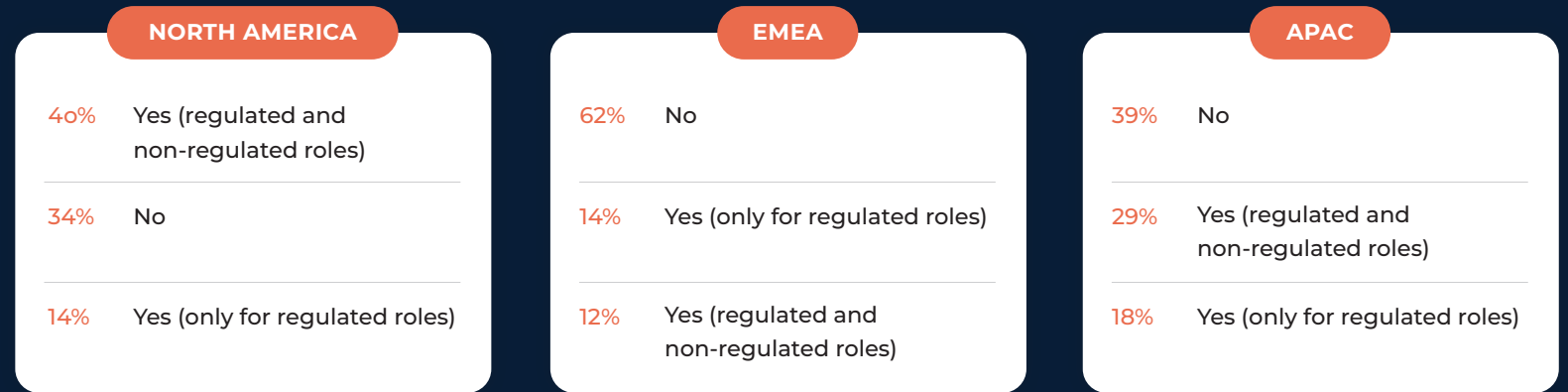
Ko Hui Yen

SVP and Managing Director
of APAC and India at HireRight

Drug Screening

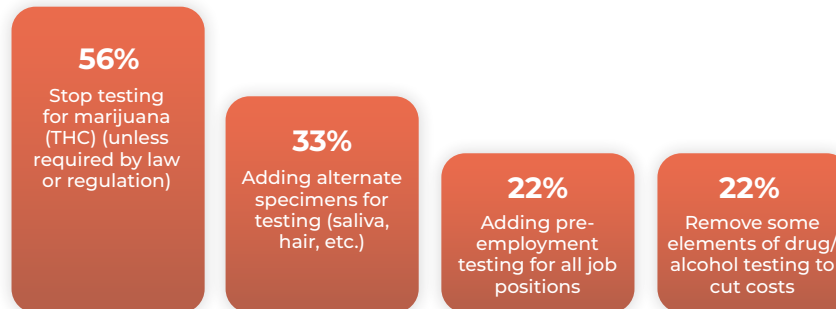
Unsurprisingly, drug screening remains the most common in North America, with two-fifths of employers saying they use drug/alcohol testing for both regulated and non-regulated roles. An additional 14% only use drug screening for regulated roles.

Do you currently have a drug/alcohol testing program at your company?



Just one in 10 North America respondents said they are considering or planning changes to their drug screening program in 2024. Stopping testing for marijuana (THC) unless required by law or regulation, adding alternate specimens for testing (such as saliva or hair), and adding pre-employment screening for all job positions were the top responses.

Which of the following changes to your company's drugs/alcohol testing program are you considering?



NORTH AMERICA

Evolving Drug Screening Legislation

With legislation around drug usage in the U.S. constantly evolving, employers that conduct drug screening as part of their screening programs need to stay up to date with all the latest developments and consider any changes they may need to make to stay compliant. One such area, which has gained a lot of attention in the media, is the legalization of marijuana in many locations across the U.S.

“As marijuana legalization sweeps across the United States, employers face a complex legal landscape regarding its use among employees. What was once a clear-cut issue of termination for positive drug tests has evolved into a complex assessment, with federal, state, and local laws offering conflicting guidance on how to navigate marijuana use in the workplace.

“Employers must update policies in this shifting legal environment to reflect evolving regulations. Maintaining zero-tolerance drug policies may prove impractical, necessitating a focus on cannabis use and impairment in the workplace. Employers must also differentiate between medical and recreational marijuana use, adjusting policies accordingly. Additionally, revisions to drug testing panels are essential to align with state requirements and accommodate lawful marijuana use.”



Alonzo Martinez

Associate General Counsel
at HireRight

“In some instances, the legislation around drug usage has led to employers using new methods of drug testing to stay compliant. For example, certain jurisdictions, such as California and Washington, restrict employers from testing for non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites. To specifically target the psychoactive cannabis metabolites, employers may consider oral fluid testing, which offers a cost-effective and simple to administer way to search for usage of a number of the most common drug types, including Amphetamines, Cocaine, Opiates, and THC (psychoactive metabolites).”



Katy Britto

Senior Product Director, Transportation
and Drug & Health Services at HireRight

Read more in Alonzo's article for Forbes: [2024 Marijuana Legalization Review: A Guide For Employers In A Complex Legal Landscape](#).³

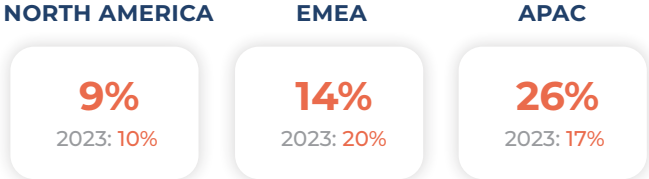
Find out more about oral fluid testing in our blog [Exploring the Advantages of Oral Fluid Testing](#).⁴

Learn more about drug screening in the U.S. in HireRight's [Drug Testing State of the Union 2024 Webinar](#).⁵

Social Media Screening

The adoption of social media screening still appears to be slower than expected, although there was an increase in its usage among our APAC respondents this year.

Which of the following background screening services does your company include in its pre-employment screening program?



Answer: Social media

A third (33%) of EMEA respondents—and over a quarter (28%) of North America respondents— admit that not knowing enough about social media screening is a main contributing factor to why their company doesn't yet utilize it.



Why does your company not currently conduct social media checks via your background screening provider?

NORTH AMERICA

EMEA

APAC

Not required by regulation **36%**

2023: 31%

28%
I don't know enough about it

24%
Social media activity is not a concern from a hiring perspective

2023

31%

22%

I don't know enough about it **33%**

2023: 28%

28%
Legal concerns

22%
Not required by regulation

20%

38%

Not required by regulation **45%**

2023: 30%

35%
Perceived as too invasive

30%
Social media activity is not a concern from a hiring perspective

24%

26%

Three in 10 APAC respondents and a quarter (24%) of North America respondents said that social media screening activity is not a concern from a hiring perspective. However, given the stories often seen in the press of potentially brand damaging behavior from employees on social media, should more employers consider utilizing social media screening services to help mitigate this risk?

“One industry that HireRight has seen adopting social media screening at a faster rate is healthcare/life sciences. In particular, social media screening has been used to help mitigate the threat of activism, where individuals may knowingly apply to work at companies that adopt practices they do not agree with (such as animal testing) and seek to sabotage their work.

“Social media screening can help to identify online behaviors, sentiment, and interactions that may make an individual the wrong fit for your organization, often with the ability to customize the search to help meet the specific needs of your organization.”



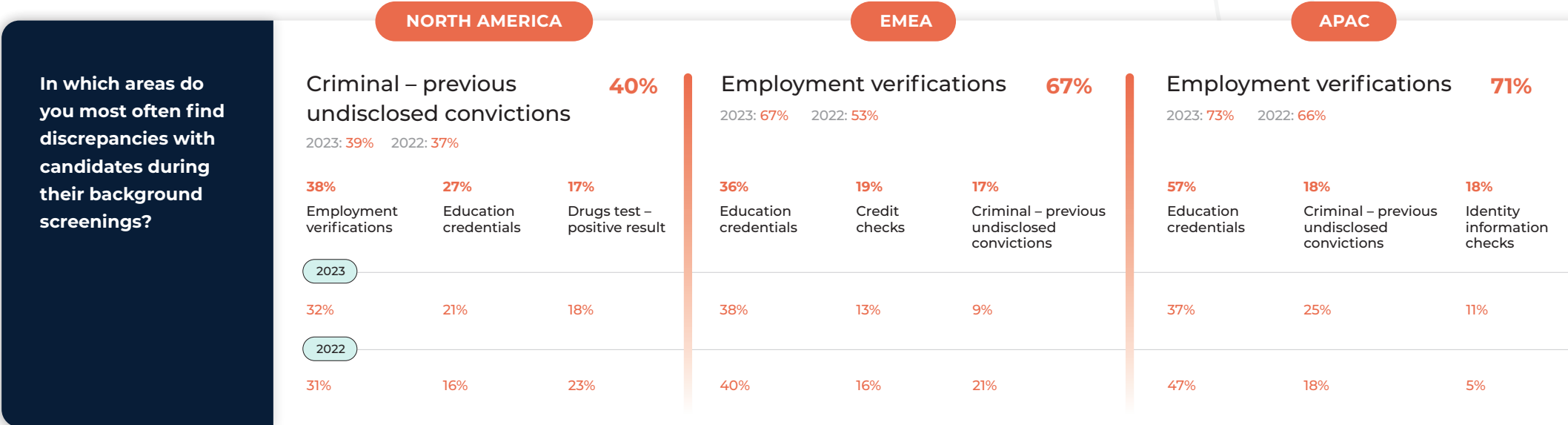
Rob Harwood-Reid

Senior Director of Account
Management at HireRight

Find out more about [HireRight's Social Media Search](#).⁶

Candidate Discrepancies

There has been little change in the past three years to the types of checks that respondents reported most often returned candidate discrepancies.



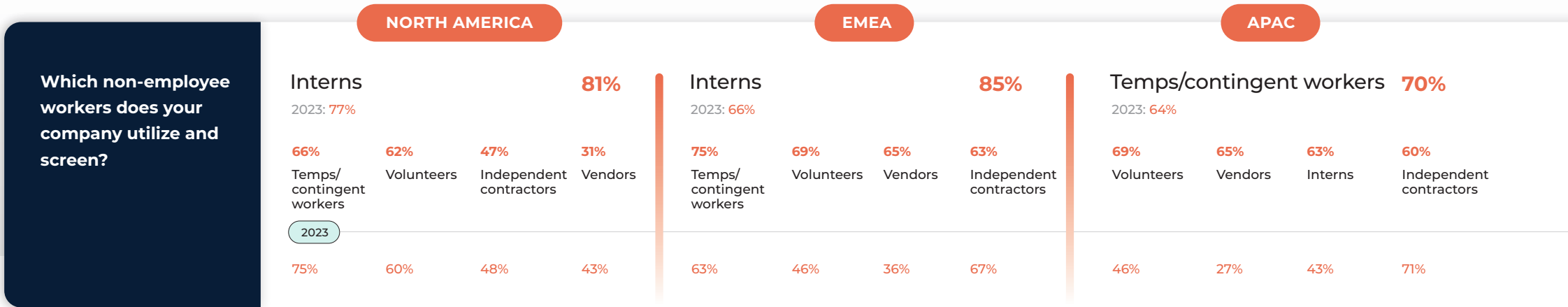
Employment verifications and education credential checks remain the areas where employers from EMEA and APAC report most often finding candidate discrepancies while conducting their background checks.

In North America, previously undisclosed convictions are cited as the most frequently found type of candidate discrepancy, with two-fifths of respondents saying it is among the areas they most often find discrepancies—over twice the percentage of respondents from APAC (18%) and EMEA (17%) who said the same.

For employers that are new to background screening or are looking to implement their screening program to cover their operations in different regions, this may prove to be a helpful list of checks to consider—subject to any legal restrictions that may apply to performing specific checks in certain locations.

Extended Workforce Screening

There has been an uptick in screening many types of non-employee workers in EMEA and APAC—but figures from North America respondents remain consistent, or slightly down, on last year’s findings.



**The responses in the above table show the respondents who utilize and screen each type of worker as a percentage of the total number of respondents who utilize that type of worker. Businesses that do not utilize each type of worker are not included in this data.*

All three regions reported an increase in screening interns—with increases of around 20 percentage points in EMEA and APAC.

Interestingly, only three in 10 (31%) North America respondents that utilize vendors said they also screen them—less than half the percentages from EMEA and APAC.

“Where businesses outsource certain projects or functions to vendors, or use contingent workers via an agency, they may want to consider extending their screening program to cover both those contingent workers and the employees of the vendors they may use, as both could have access to the same types of information as their full-time employees and pose similar risks to their organization. Screening vendor employees where such outsourcing is deemed “critical” under relevant guidelines, such as in the financial services sector, can be a good way to ensure proper oversight and compliance with those guidelines.”

Caroline Smith

VP, Deputy General Counsel at HireRight

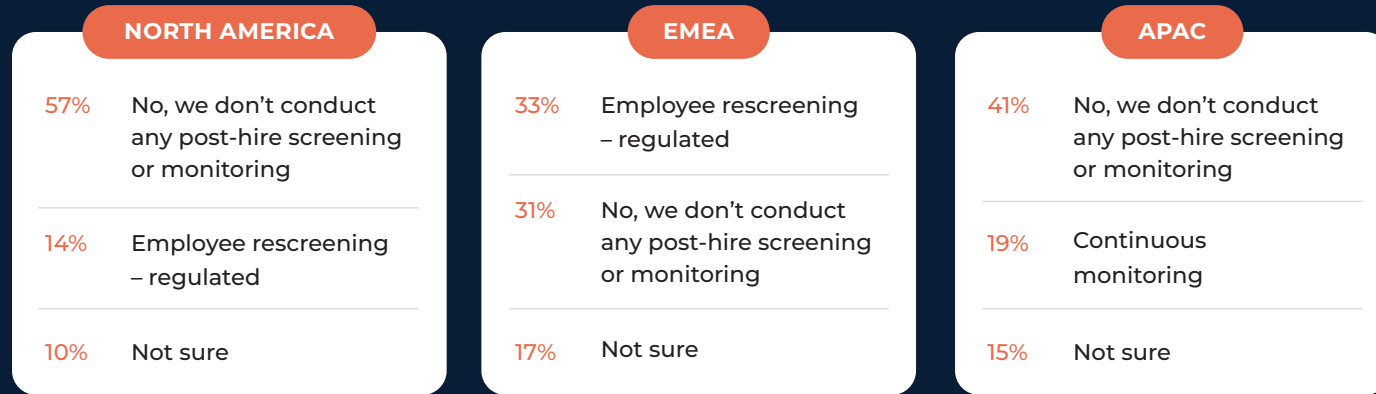


Find out more about extended workforce screening on HireRight's [blog](#) or [website](#).⁸

Post-Hire Screening

Nearly three-fifths (57%) of respondents from North America said their company did not conduct any post-hire screening or monitoring. Two-fifths (41%) of APAC respondents and three in 10 (31%) EMEA respondents also said this was the case.

Does your company have a periodic employee rescreening or continuous monitoring program in place?



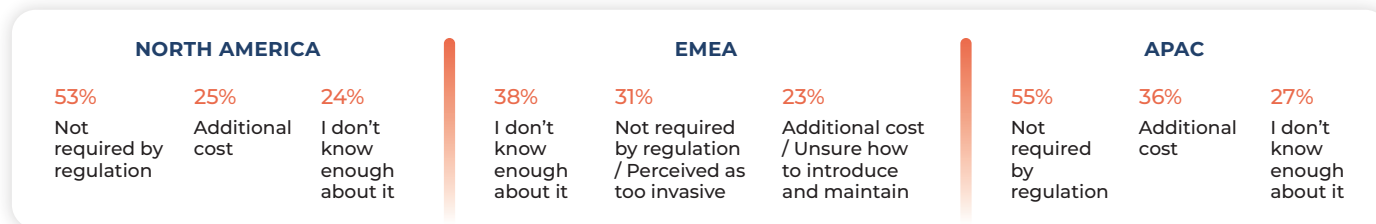
Where adopted, regulated employee rescreening was the most common in North America and EMEA, and continuous monitoring was the most popular in APAC.

The absence of regulations requiring rescreening and monitoring was the most cited reason why employers in North America and APAC don't conduct any post-hire screening in their organizations.

Additionally, a lack of knowledge around post-hire screening is among the top reasons cited by employers for not conducting post-employment checks on their current workforce, with between a quarter (24%) and nearly two-fifths (38%) of respondents in each region saying this was a contributing factor.

Other considerations listed include additional cost, a perception that it is too invasive, and uncertainty around how to introduce and maintain a post-hire screening program. Find out more about post-hire screening in our article: [Why Post-Hire Screening Could Reduce Talent Headaches](#).⁹

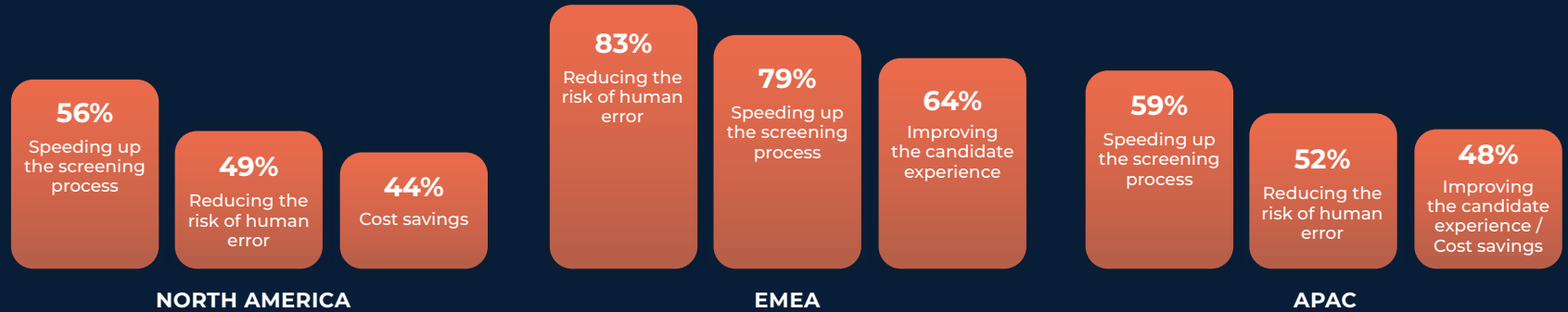
Why does your company not conduct any post-hire screening (e.g., rescreening or monitoring)?



Utilizing AI/Automation in the Screening Process

The majority of employers would be comfortable with artificial intelligence (AI) or automation being used by background screening providers for researching or compiling a screening report.

For which of the following reasons would you be comfortable with your background screening provider utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) or automation for researching or compiling a screening report?



Across all regions, most respondents said they would be comfortable with AI or automation being used to speed up the screening process or to reduce the risk of human error. Improving the candidate experience and cost savings were among the other top benefits of utilizing AI or automation that respondents said would warrant their usage.

However, a quarter (25%) of respondents from North America and a fifth (19%) of APAC respondents said they would prefer their screening provider to not utilize AI or automation. In contrast, just 5% of respondents from EMEA responded this way, suggesting perhaps that EMEA businesses are more open to the use of AI and automation for the benefits listed above.

“Given the sensitivity of the data HireRight handles, none of our planned workflows can be considered a standalone AI system that automates employment decisions. Instead, we use a hybrid, and well-known, *Human in the Loop* type system.

“The data from this survey appears to show that employers in each region have an appreciation for the coupled human-machine hybrid handling of the security and efficiency of our internal workflows, while maintaining the necessary human-only control.”

Marc Sharma

Director of Engineering, Applied Machine Learning at HireRight



Talent Acquisition



Foreword

In this year's survey, respondents from every region cited economic uncertainty as one of the three most significant talent acquisition challenges businesses expect to face in 2024 and the following three years. This reminds us all that in HR, we must often prepare for the unexpected—especially things that may be beyond our control—and have go-to plans ready for a wide range of possible scenarios that could turn your company's talent strategy on its head.

Hiring tactics now often need to attract new employees from a broader, global talent pool, with not just local businesses vying for the best talent. Interestingly, the most common recruitment tactics utilized by our survey respondents in each region were consistent, and all regions showed a sizeable drop in the number of businesses adopting the approach of offering more money and/or better benefits. This may be due to cuts in recruitment budgets, which many businesses may have faced this year, or it may have come from experience, learning that while this approach may solve an immediate problem, it could cause pay parity issues or not be sustainable for the business in the long term.

Retention is an essential component of most, if not all, workforce management strategies, and this year's survey found that introducing additional training and professional development opportunities was the most popular tactic planned by respondents globally for supporting employee retention in 2024. Introducing new wellbeing initiatives and enhancing healthcare offerings made up the top three in each region—so it seems that no matter a company's location, its retention plans this year may be similar to that of other businesses worldwide.

Lastly, in many industries across the world, the fundamentals of how and where people work have changed—maybe forever—in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The door to remote and hybrid work was opened to the masses in 2020,

and for many employers this may have impacted the demand for their company's products and services, driven the creation of innovative solutions to meet new needs of their customers, or radically changed what their geographic footprint looks like. Most survey respondents from each region agreed that remote working is likely to remain at a similar level until the end of the year, with fewer than one in 10 expecting it to decrease over that time frame, suggesting that the benefits seen by many from remote working often outweigh the challenges it can bring.

However your business is approaching talent acquisition and management in 2024 and beyond, I hope you will find the insights in the remainder of the report covering these areas valuable, and that they will help inform your forward planning.



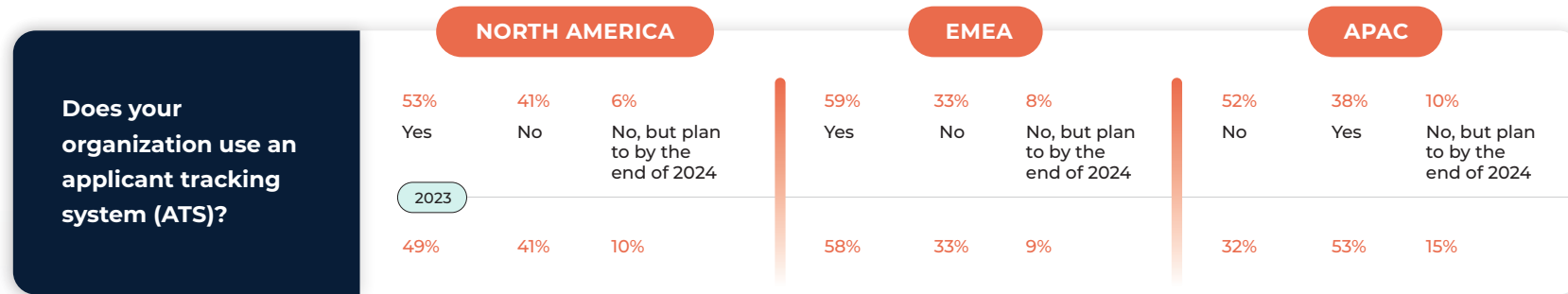
Julie Romero

Chief Human Resources
Officer at HireRight

Applicant Tracking System Integrations

The use of applicant tracking systems (ATSs) appears consistent with previous years in North America and EMEA—but has dwindled slightly in APAC according to our survey respondents.

Around three-fifths (59%) of EMEA respondents, half (53%) of North America respondents, and two-fifths (38%) of APAC respondents are currently using an ATS.



“Integrated solutions help our customers all around the world to streamline their screening processes, improve their candidate experience, and support a quicker time to hire. HireRight offers more than 70 integrated solutions with more than 50 Human Capital Management (HCM) and ATS providers. Pre-developed solutions do not require any customer development and HireRight will support you through the process to implement a tool to assist with efficiencies in hiring. For those ATS solutions HireRight does not offer a pre-developed integration with, there may be an option to support custom integration development.”

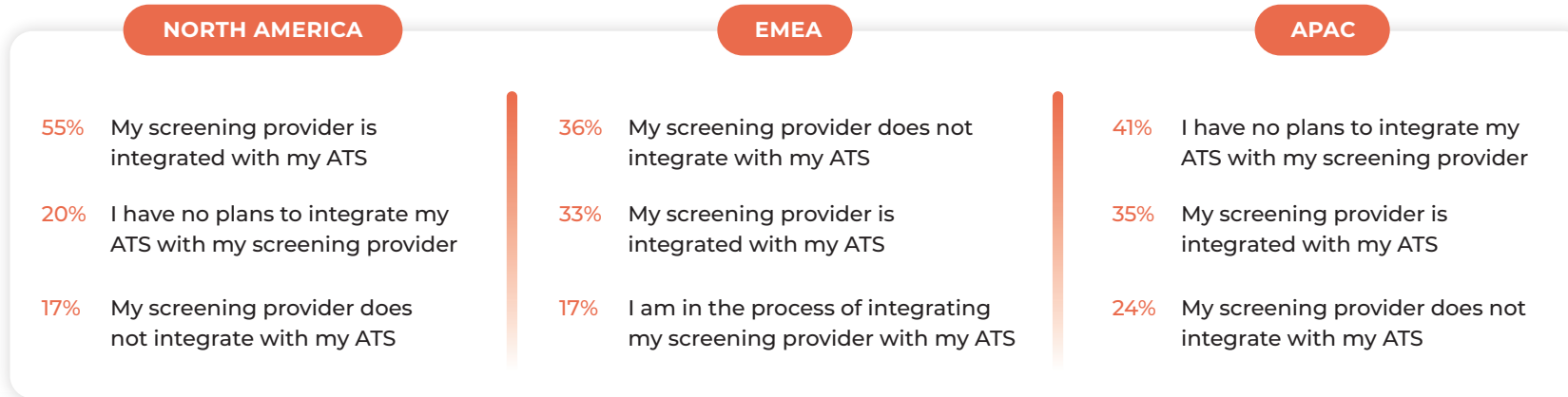


Tyra Malone

Global Head of Strategic Alliances at HireRight

To find out more about HireRight’s integrations, visit our website’s [Partners page](#).¹⁰

Which of the following best describes the integration status of your background screening provider and your ATS?



Over half of North America respondents that use an ATS said their screening provider is integrated with it—however only around a third of respondents from APAC (35%) and EMEA (33%) said the same.

The lack of integration between their current background screening provider and their ATS provider is an issue impacting a sixth (17%) of North America respondents, a quarter (24%) of APAC respondents, and more than a third (36%) of EMEA respondents. This could either be due to businesses partnering with smaller ATS providers that do not offer integrations with background screening providers, or partnering with screening providers that have a limited number of ATS integrations.



Recruitment in 2023

Globally, over half of respondents said their company carried on recruitment as expected last year with little change on the previous year's figures. Additionally, many respondents from each region said they had to hire more workers to meet the increased demands on their business in 2023.



“Businesses in EMEA were the least likely to have conducted more hiring than expected last year, with just under a quarter of EMEA respondents saying this was the case—compared with more than two-fifths of APAC respondents and three in 10 North America respondents. This could suggest that for many EMEA-based businesses, 2023 may have been a more modest year, rather than one for expanding their workforce. This theory is supported by the notable drop in the number of EMEA participants who said this compared with our 2023 survey findings.”

However, even if 2023 was a more restrained year for hiring than 2022 for many respondents' companies, fewer than one in 10 respondents globally said they stopped recruitment for more than three months.



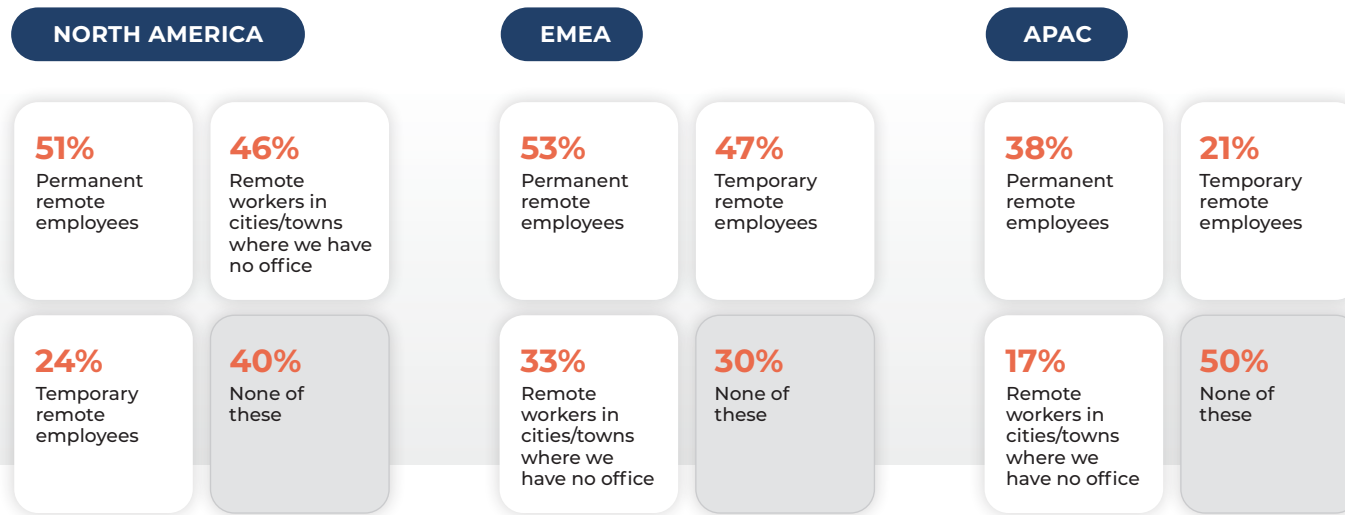
Greg Shuler

VP of HR Business Partners at HireRight

Remote Hiring in 2023

More respondents from each region said they hired permanent remote employees in 2023 than in 2022. Over half of respondents from North America and EMEA and around two-fifths of respondents from APAC said they hired permanent remote employees in 2023.

Did your company hire any of the following in 2023?



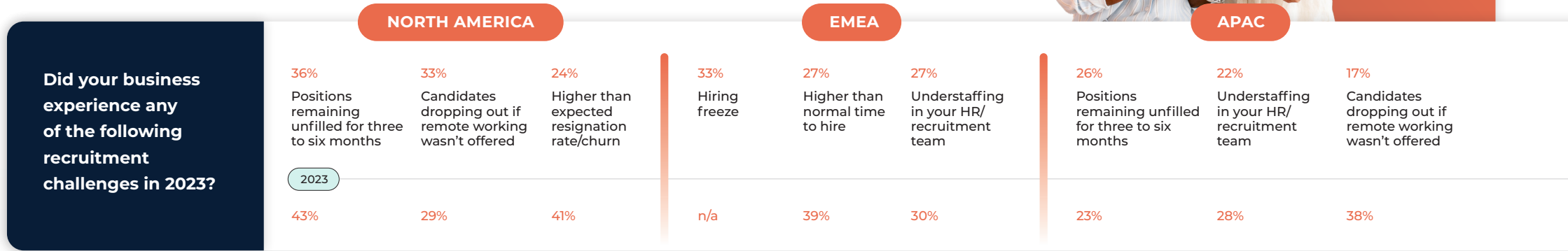
Respondents from North America are the most likely to have hired remote workers in cities/towns where they have no office, with almost half (46%) saying this was the case in 2023. This practice was far less common in APAC (17%), suggesting that truly remote working, where employees are not expected to regularly come into an office to work, was not as widely utilized by APAC respondents as it is in other regions.

This is supported by the fact that half of APAC respondents said they did not hire any kind of remote workers in 2023, compared with two-fifths (40%) of North America respondents and three in 10 (30%) EMEA respondents.

Additional remote working trends are discussed in the [Workforce Management section of this report](#).

Recruitment Challenges in 2023

Many of the recruitment challenges employers faced in 2022 appear to have lessened last year. However, the problem of positions remaining unfilled for a long time (three to six months) has persisted, particularly in North America and APAC where it was the most common recruitment challenge experienced in 2023.



Some of the key areas that saw improvement last year include:

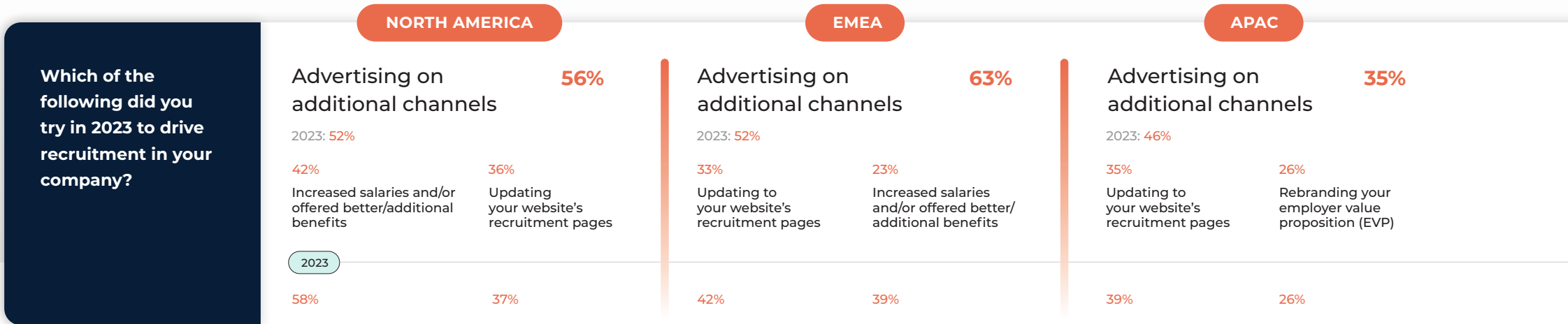
- Fewer respondents from APAC reported candidates dropping out if remote working wasn't offered, falling from almost two-fifths (38%) in 2022 to a sixth (17%) in 2023.
- Fewer respondents from North America reported a higher-than-expected resignation rate, down from two-fifths (41%) in 2022 to under a quarter (24%) last year.
- In EMEA, the number of respondents reporting higher than normal time to hire decreased from two-fifths (39%) in 2022 to just over a quarter (27%) in 2023.

However, it wasn't good news across the board:

- In EMEA, a third (33%) of respondents said they had hiring freezes in 2023, compared with 15% in North America and just 4% in APAC.
- A third (33%) of North America respondents said they saw candidates dropping out of the recruitment process if remote working wasn't offered.
- Globally, the challenge of understaffing in HR/recruitment teams persists, with a fifth (20%) of respondents saying they're having to manage with smaller teams.

Recruitment Tactics in 2023

Advertising on additional channels was the tactic most widely used by employers in each region to drive recruitment in 2023. However, while this practice appears to be on the rise in North America and EMEA compared with 2022, in APAC there was a decline in usage from 46% in 2022 to 35% last year.



Our survey found that fewer employers increased their salaries and/or offered better/additional benefits to drive recruitment in 2023, with significant drops in the use of this tactic in each region. This could indicate that many employers no longer have the budgets to offer higher salaries to attract new talent, the job market has shifted, or that businesses are more confident in their ability to attract talent without having to pay above the market rate for it.

“Updating their website’s recruitment pages remains one of the top ways businesses globally attempted to drive recruitment—perhaps because this often requires little to no budget. Regardless of where your candidates see your job vacancies, there is a good chance they may visit your website and its recruitment pages to find out more about your company during the application process. It is important to regularly review this content to ensure it is an accurate reflection of your business and your brand’s values and shows why candidates should want to work for your company.”

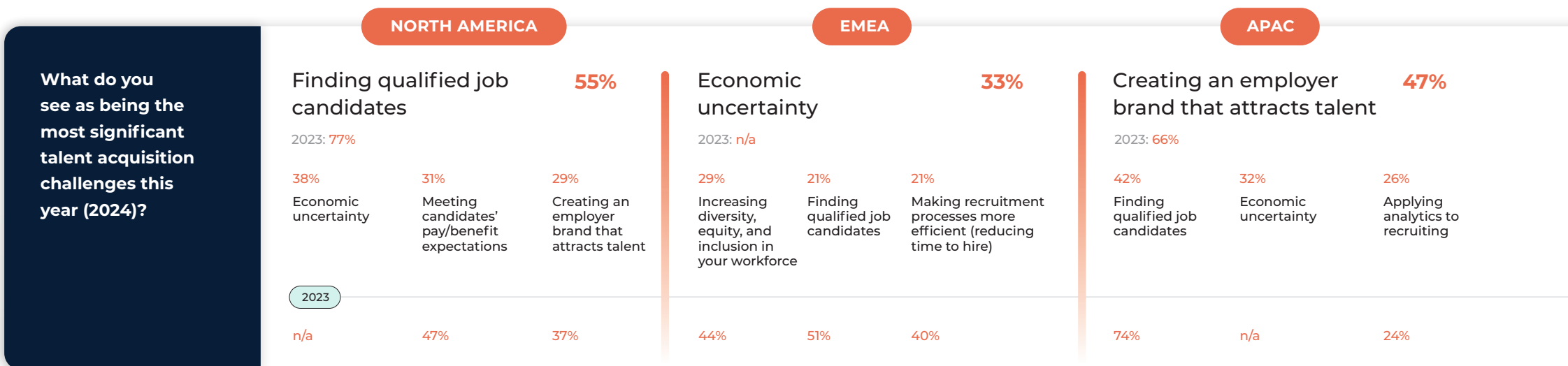
Nathan Levoit

VP of Human Resources at HireRight



Talent Acquisition Challenges in 2024 and Beyond

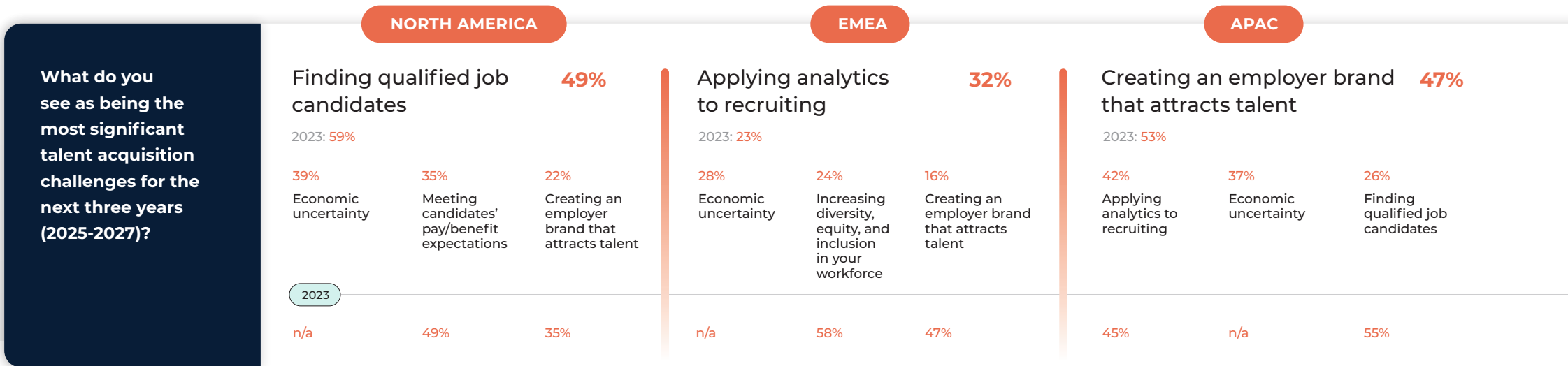
Fewer businesses are concerned about finding qualified job candidates this year than they were in 2023. This is somewhat surprising, as in our survey last year this was the most common concern predicted for 2024-2026 in North America and EMEA, and the second-most common challenge predicted by respondents from APAC.



Across all regions, nearly all the major talent acquisition challenges that are expected to impact respondents' businesses this year were reported less frequently than in 2023, suggesting perhaps that employers are more confident in their talent acquisition strategies this year—or they do not need to hire as many new workers as in previous years, lessening the strain on their recruitment teams.

However, respondents globally ranked economic uncertainty (a new option added into the survey this year) among the three most common major talent acquisition challenges this year. But is this just a short-term concern or one that employers are thinking about for the coming years too?

Globally, around two-fifths (38%) of respondents expect that economic uncertainty will be a long-term talent acquisition challenge. Respondents from North America and APAC seem the most concerned, with a slightly lower number of EMEA respondents listing this as a significant challenge for the following three years.



What do you see as being the most significant talent acquisition challenges for the next three years (2025-2027)?

Around half (47%) of respondents from APAC predict that creating an employer brand that attracts talent is going to be their major talent acquisition challenge for their businesses over the next three years. In comparison, this is only expected to be a significant challenge for a fifth (22%) of North America respondents and a sixth (16%) of EMEA respondents, both with drops on the figures from last year’s survey, which were 35% in North America and 47% in EMEA.

“Applying analytics to recruiting is expected to be the most common talent acquisition challenge among EMEA respondents—and also ranked second in APAC. It seems that employers, particularly in these regions, will be looking for ways to utilize technology to better understand their hiring and onboarding data—perhaps using tools such as [HireRight Insights](#)¹¹ to help identify patterns and trends in their background screening program that may be able to drive efficiencies.”

Jeff Mullins
Chief Technology Officer at HireRight



Workforce Management



Retention in 2023

Nearly a third of global respondents introduced additional training and professional development opportunities in 2023 to support workforce retention. This was the most common activity introduced by respondents from North America and EMEA—and the second most common in APAC.

Which of the following activities did you introduce in 2023 to support retention?



New wellbeing initiatives were also popular among responding companies globally, particularly in APAC, where two-fifths (39%) of respondents said they introduced these initiatives last year. This retention tactic also ranked second in EMEA and third in North America.

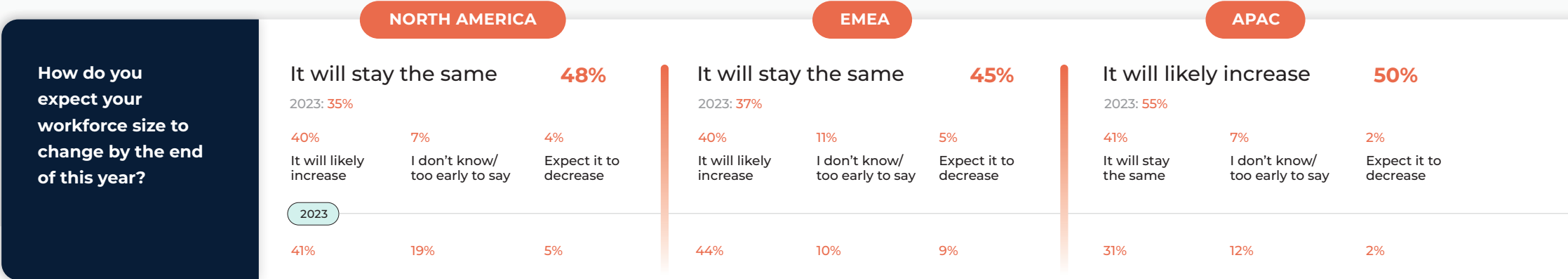
However, while the top retention tactics used appear to be similar across the regions, there was a notable gap in the regions when it came to whether

respondents adopted any of the above tactics at all. More than a third (35%) of North America respondents said they didn't introduce any of the above tactics, compared with under a quarter (23%) of EMEA respondents and a fifth (20%) of APAC respondents. This could suggest that either employers in North America were less concerned about employee retention than their EMEA and APAC counterparts, had no budget to support additional retention activities, or they simply already had sufficient measures in place prior to 2023 to keep their workforce.

Changes in Workforce Size

Most respondents globally expect that their company's workforce size will remain the same or increase by the end of 2024. As we found in last year's survey, APAC respondents are still the most likely to predict growth in their workforce size this year, with half (50%) expecting growth by the end of 2024.

However, with many companies needing to find ways to reduce their overheads this year, some may be reviewing their location strategies and exploring more cost-effective markets where they can hire or redistribute their workforces. This is an area we will be exploring in next year's survey.



“In each region, more employers than last year said they expected their workforce to remain the same size, suggesting that perhaps some of the uncertainty in the market has lifted and these companies are more confident of their business outlooks for 2024 than they were last year.

“These figures seem to tell a different story to those often seen in the media describing mass layoffs, particularly in large organizations across sectors including finance, technology, and retail. Or perhaps they simply show that when organizations are having to make reductions to their workforces, these decisions are made rapidly based on necessity under current circumstances rather than longer-term plans to streamline their workforces out of preference.”

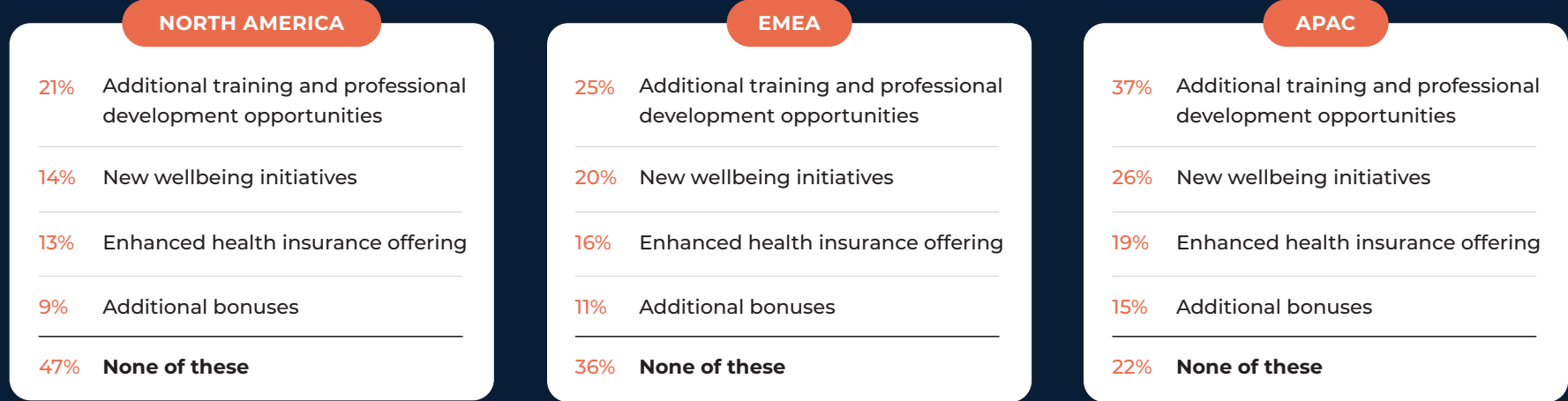


Ann Losiewski
SVP and Managing Director
of North America at HireRight

Retention Planning for 2024

Globally, respondents are aligned in their plans for introducing new measures to support retention in 2024. In fact, the top four responses in each region are the same.

Which of the following activities are you planning to introduce in 2024 to support retention?



However, mirroring what we saw with our question about retention activities introduced in 2023, the likelihood of companies introducing these measures does vary from region to region. Almost half (47%) of respondents from North America said they had no plans to introduce new measures to support retention, compared with around a third (36%) in EMEA and a fifth (22%) in APAC. Once again, this could suggest that employers in North America have more confidence in workforce retention, or, conversely, that they were less likely to have budget to fund these activities in 2024 than respondents from the other regions.

“At HireRight, we are continuing to invest in our people by providing additional training and professional development opportunities in 2024. We have purchased additional licences for an online learning resource that we have been using since last year, so that more team members can benefit from the wide range of professional development training courses it provides. Additionally, earlier this year we completed the first intake of our Leadership Excellence Program, and in May our first class completed our Emerging Leaders Program. These programs help us to foster and develop our talent, exploring leadership through assessments, course reading, interactive sessions with our executives, and group projects.”

Kate Perez

Senior Director of Talent Management at HireRight



Remote and Hybrid Working

For companies where remote working is possible and offered, most respondents in each region said they primarily offer remote working based on job roles or the needs of the business.

Does your company offer remote working within your region?



Additionally, a fifth (19%) of APAC respondents and a sixth (16%) of EMEA respondents said they offer fully remote working to all workers, regardless of their role. In contrast, just 7% of respondents from North America said they offer remote working to all workers.

However, around two-fifths (41%) of respondents from EMEA said they do not offer fully remote working, compared with 28% in North America and 22% in APAC.

Like our remote working figures, the majority of respondents in each region said they offer hybrid working based on job role or the needs of the business.

However, a third (33%) of respondents from EMEA said they offer hybrid working to all workers, compared with 20% in APAC and just 12% in North America. Curiously, EMEA businesses are both the most likely to offer hybrid working to all employees and the least likely to offer fully remote working.



Around a fifth of respondents from APAC (20%) and North America (18%) said they do not offer hybrid working. This could be for a number of reasons, such as remote work not being possible for their business, the company already offering fully remote work, or not having available office space to accommodate hybrid workers.

“While we have seen some of our customers making plans to bring their employees back to the office, or have already done so, employers globally are having to make tough decisions. Many must calculate if the benefits of doing so are worth the risk of their employees seeking remote or hybrid employment elsewhere. For companies that are bringing their employees back to the office, it will be interesting to see how the move away from remote and hybrid working will impact them, and their employees, in both the short- and long-term.”

Peter Cleverton

SVP and Managing Director of EMEA and Latin America at HireRight



The Pros and Cons of Remote/Hybrid Working

Better employee wellbeing through improved work-life balance was cited by most respondents in each region as a key benefit experienced last year due to hybrid/remote working.

Other top benefits cited in each region include more flexible working hours (e.g. for parents/carers with other responsibilities) and a bigger talent pool for recruitment.

Which of the following advantages did your company experience in 2023 because of hybrid/remote working?

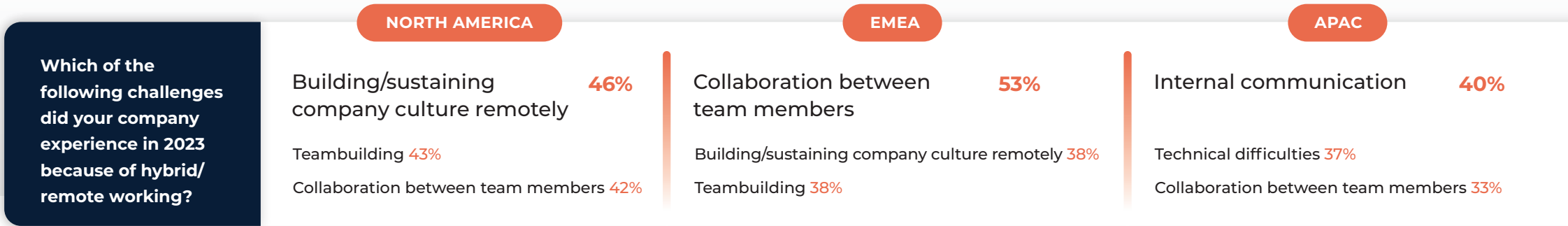


Three-fifths (60%) of APAC respondents whose companies offered hybrid/remote working in 2023 cited improved employee productivity as a key benefit. This was also observed by a quarter (28%) of North America respondents and a sixth (16%) of EMEA respondents. Additionally, cost savings, either through reduction in recruitment costs or operational costs (such as by closing an office) were also widely seen as a benefit of remote/hybrid work, particularly in APAC.

These findings show that for many businesses, the benefits of allowing hybrid or fully remote working were clear and numerous. But what about the challenges that this type of working can bring to an organization and its employees?

Building or sustaining company culture remotely, collaboration, and teambuilding are among the top challenges respondents said their organization’s experienced last year due to remote/hybrid working.

Additionally, nearly two-fifths (37%) of respondents from APAC said that technical difficulties, such as lag on video calls, was a challenge.



Which of the following challenges did your company experience in 2023 because of hybrid/remote working?

However, compared with the volume of companies seeing the benefits of remote and hybrid working, it seems the trade-off for many is worth it, and the above challenges are just that—challenges, not insurmountable barriers to adopting this alternative way of working.

“At HireRight, we have adopted a remote-first approach to work, with the vast majority of our global team members working from home. This has had a positive impact on reducing our company’s carbon footprint, which is something we continue to look for ways to reduce as part of our ESG strategy.

“Of course, nothing beats when our teams can get together in person, and for our employees that live within a commutable distance of one of our offices, we encourage them to coordinate their days in the office with their colleagues, to ensure they will get the most out of their time together to collaborate, connect, and foster teambuilding. Additionally, we provide our employees with opportunities to get together outside the workplace to help support local initiatives and charities through our Spark volunteering and philanthropy program.”



Suzanne Bryant

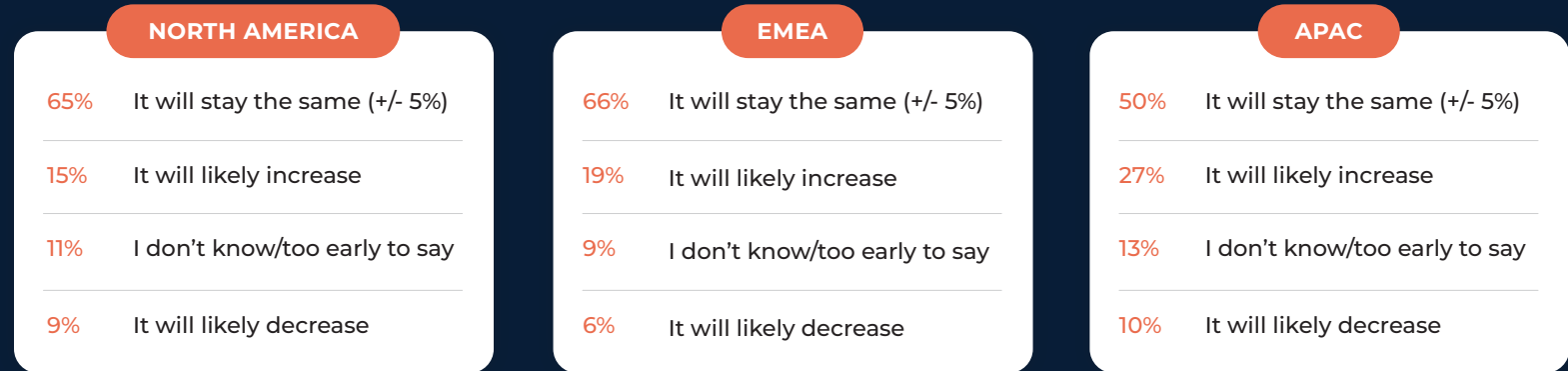
Director of ESG and Facilities Management at HireRight

Read more about [HireRight’s ESG activities](#).¹²

Is the Future of Work Still Hybrid?

Globally, most respondents expect the uptake of remote and hybrid working to remain roughly the same by the end of 2024. Half (50%) of APAC respondents and around two-thirds of respondents from North America (65%) and EMEA (66%) said this was the case.

How do you expect the uptake of remote/hybrid working in your company within your region will change by the end of this year?



Additionally, more than a quarter (27%) of APAC respondents and a fifth (19%) of EMEA respondents said they expect remote working to increase this year. Conversely, fewer than one in 10 businesses globally said that remote and hybrid working was expected to decrease by the end of the year.

Ultimately, the decision to adopt remote or hybrid work models is complex. Regardless of your company's current stance, it's wise to consider how you can address either the benefits you'd miss out on by staying fully office-based or the challenges that you could encounter by allowing remote or hybrid work.

“There are many factors influencing a company's decisions around the workplace locations of their employees. By embracing a remote working model, many businesses could utilize a global talent pool, offering high-quality candidates from potentially cheaper labour markets, which can help to reduce your overhead costs.

“Additionally, the importance of having a local presence with knowledge of local customs and legislation cannot be overstated. While it may not be yet viable to open an office in a location that your business is planning to expand into, by utilizing remote working you could hire the local talent you need to build your presence in new markets without the financial commitment of building a physical base or establishing a legal entity there until the time is right to do so.”

Tom Spaeth

Chief Financial Officer at HireRight



Conclusion

The findings from this year's Global Benchmark Survey reiterate that many things in the world of talent—from recruitment through background screening to workforce management—have changed in the last couple of years.

The desperation to hire and onboard new talent as quickly as possible due to the war for talent seems for the most part to have been replaced by a steadier approach of carefully planned moves that are more surgical and selective. Looking ahead, our survey found that fewer businesses are as concerned with finding qualified job candidates as they were in previous years. However, economic uncertainty is perceived by businesses in each region as one of the big talent acquisition challenges they must overcome—both throughout the remainder of 2024 and for the following few years.

When choosing a background screening provider, accuracy of results has returned to its position as the most common consideration in each region, following a significant drop in this metric last year when speed was the top priority and cost was more widely a concern. This is an important shift for background screening providers like HireRight that are striving to meet the evolving needs of their customers. For us, this renewed focus on accuracy perfectly aligns with our mission to get it right every time, everywhere, for everyone, and mirrors the feedback we receive from our customers on why they continue to work with us.

Finally, while stories in the media about big brand name companies moving back to their offices are not uncommon, for most of our survey respondents, there is little change expected in the uptake of hybrid and remote working this year. In fact, globally almost twice the number of businesses said they were expecting there to be more remote or hybrid working by the end of 2024 than those who expected the practice to reduce.

Thank you for reading HireRight's 2024 Global Benchmark Report. I hope you have found it a useful snapshot of the talent landscape in 2024, and I hope you will participate in our next survey to help map out 2025 and beyond.

References

- 1 <https://www.internationalsanctuary.com/>
- 2 <https://www.bankingdive.com/news/first-occ-fintech-chief-had-phony-resume-prashant-bhardwaj-fifth-third-Huntington-Citi/700736/>
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- 10 <https://www.hireright.com/partners>
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Methodology/About Us

Response

HireRight's 2024 Global Benchmark Report explores trends and attitudes from people professionals around the world. It is based on our online global survey, with participants anonymously sharing their experience and knowledge of their company's employment screening and recruitment practices with us. The survey was available between March 7 and March 28, 2024, receiving a total of 1,275 complete and partial responses globally.

Format

Survey questions included multiple choice, multiple selections, and open text. Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding or multiple-selection questions.

About HireRight

HireRight is a leading global provider of technology-driven workforce risk management and compliance solutions. We provide comprehensive background screening, verification, identification, monitoring, and drug and health screening services for approximately 37,000 customers worldwide. We offer our services via a unified global platform that tightly integrates into our customers' human capital management systems enabling highly effective and efficient workflows for workforce hiring, onboarding, and monitoring. In 2023, we screened over 26 million job applicants, employees and contractors for our customers and processed over 95 million screens. For more information, visit www.HireRight.com.



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Global Benchmark Report

2024