

Global Benchmark Report

2025



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Foreword

A warm welcome to HireRight's 2025 Global Benchmark Report!

First, thank you to everyone who took the time to take part in our 18th annual Benchmark Survey earlier this year. We couldn't create this report and share the latest insights into hiring, screening, and talent management trends without our survey respondents' valuable input.

Each year, our Global Benchmark Report compares the findings from our annual survey's 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 help identify industry trends. This year, we've added a key global takeaways page to the start of each section to provide readers with an at-a-glance view of the most significant findings and explore new ground to home in on some topics we know are of interest to our customers.

In the opening section on **background screening**, we take a closer look at identity fraud, how often and where candidate discrepancies are found, and how companies are screening their contingent workforces.

Then, in the **talent acquisition and workforce management** section, we explore how organizations and their candidates are using artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the recruitment process, examine the expected impact of market and economic uncertainty on hiring in 2025, and determine if and how the balance of office-based, hybrid, and remote working is shifting.

I hope you find this report a valuable tool to compare your company's screening, recruitment, and workforce management activities to other companies, both within your region and globally.

Euan Menzies

President and CEO at HireRight



Background Screening



Key Global Takeaways



Accuracy is the top priority when choosing a background screening provider.

Accuracy of results has held its position as the most frequently cited priority for employers when choosing their employment screening provider.

Compared with our 2023 and 2024 survey findings, fewer respondents said that cost is a major consideration this year, suggesting that more businesses have accepted that accuracy may come at a higher cost.



Criminal record checks are the most common checks included in pre-employment screening programs.

Almost nine out of 10 respondents globally conduct criminal record checks on their new hires.

Employment and education checks round out the top three in EMEA and APAC, but in North America, these checks are notably less common.



Many businesses are still not conducting identity checks despite rising levels of ID fraud.

Only three in five respondents said their company conducts identity checks as part of its pre-employment screening program.

Worryingly, one in six respondents said their business had experienced ID fraud as part of their hiring process, and an additional three out of 10 were unsure.



More than three-quarters of businesses have found candidate discrepancies during the screening process in the last 12 months.

Globally, 13% said they found on average at least one discrepancy per every five candidates.

Undisclosed criminal convictions, education, and employment discrepancies were the most common types of candidate inconsistency identified.



Most businesses that have a contingent workforce do screen these workers, but the most common process varies from region to region.

Companies in North America are most likely to screen their contingent workers via their vendor's chosen screening provider.

In EMEA and APAC, they are more likely to screen them via their company's screening provider.



Risk Mitigation

While workplace safety and security is once again the most common risk that respondents from North America want to mitigate through employment screening, in EMEA and APAC, non-compliance with regulations is a more widespread concern.



What are the main risks your business aims to mitigate with employment screening?	NORTH AMERICA			EMEA			APAC		
		2025	2024		2025	2024		2025	2024
	Workplace safety and security	60%	60%	Non-compliance with regulations	72%	54%	Non-compliance with regulations	52%	56%
	Cost of a bad hire	47%	56%	Cost of a bad hire	46%	37%	Cost of a bad hire	39%	56%
	Non-compliance with regulations	42%	39%	Financial loss through criminal activity	44%	41%	Financial loss through criminal activity	39%	32%
	Financial loss through criminal activity	35%	38%	Brand reputation	33%	48%	Brand reputation	38%	21%
	Brand reputation	21%	17%	Protection of IP/company information	36%	17%	Workplace safety and security	36%	50%

Three in five respondents from North America cited workplace safety and security as one of the key risks they aim to mitigate through their employment screening program. This is the same figure as our 2024 survey, suggesting that this risk has remained top of mind for many U.S. and Canadian employers. However, it seems to be less of a concern elsewhere.

Just 36% of APAC respondents and 23% of EMEA respondents listed workplace safety and security as one of their top three concerns.

Instead, non-compliance with regulations held the top spot in both regions, with 72% of EMEA respondents and 52% of APAC respondents citing it as a key risk they aim to mitigate with their employment screening program.

Unsurprisingly, the cost of a bad hire remains a top risk—but while this is the second-most common risk in each region, fewer respondents than last year from North America and APAC cited it this year.

Other top risks include financial loss through criminal activity (such as fraud or theft) and brand reputation, which can easily be damaged by a few rogue comments on social media from a prominent figure within the company.

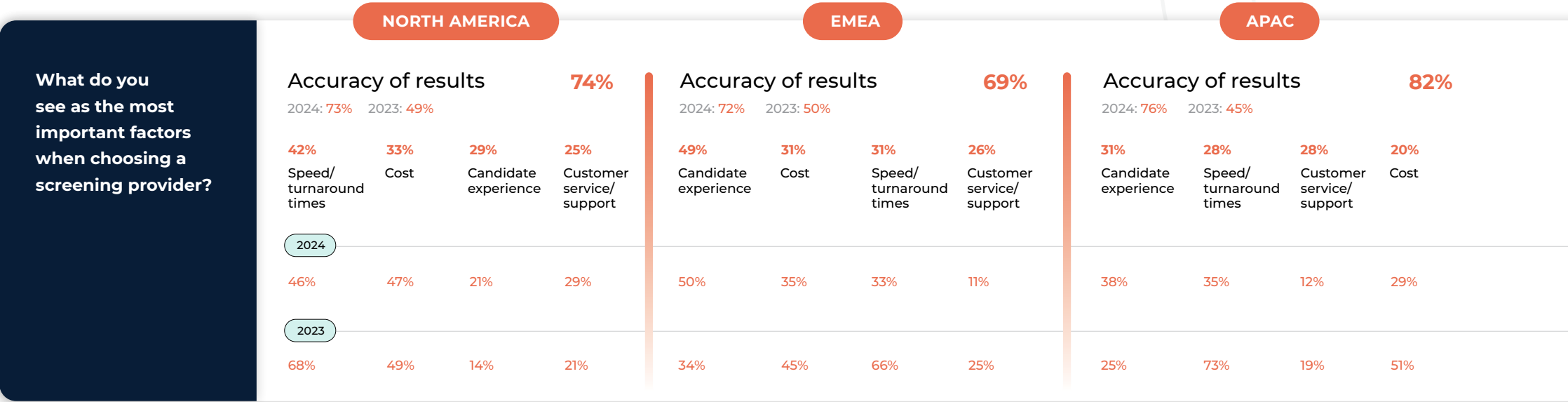


Find out how HireRight's [Social Media Search](#) can help your business mitigate threats to its brand reputation.

Choosing a Screening Provider

Accuracy of results has held its position as the most cited priority for employers globally when choosing their employment screening provider.

Compared with our 2023 and 2024 survey findings, fewer respondents this year said that cost is a major consideration. Additionally, fewer respondents in each region said that speed is one of their top considerations, dropping from between 66%–73% in each region in our 2023 survey to between 28%–42% this year.



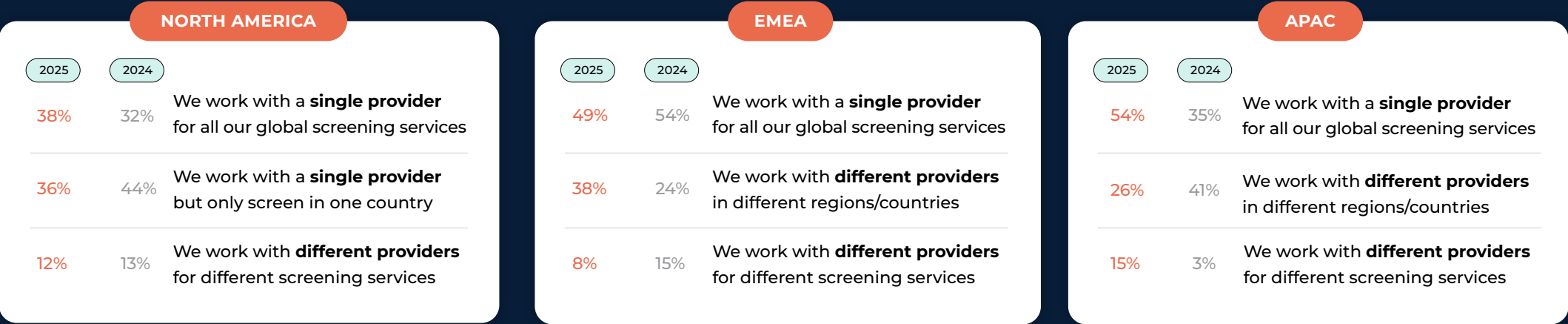
While having an efficient onboarding process for new employees is likely still a priority for most companies, when it comes to the background screening process, it seems that many are willing to spend a little more time and/or money on their background checks if it improves the accuracy of their findings.

Outside of North America, compared with last year’s survey findings, more than double the percentage of respondents cited customer service/support as a top consideration this year.

How Screening is Conducted

This year, most respondents from each region said they work with a single provider for all of their screening services—either for hiring globally or just in the one country that they operate in.

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



APAC saw the greatest change compared with last year’s Benchmark Survey findings, with 54% of respondents saying they work with a single provider globally (up 19 percentage points) and 26% saying they work with different providers in different locations (down 15 percentage points). There was also a notable drop in the number of respondents saying they conducted some or all their screening in-house—from 31% in 2024 to just 10% this year.

Could recent regulation changes, such as [India’s DPDPA](#), be prompting more businesses to outsource their screening programs to experienced third-party providers with the expertise to navigate a shifting compliance landscape?

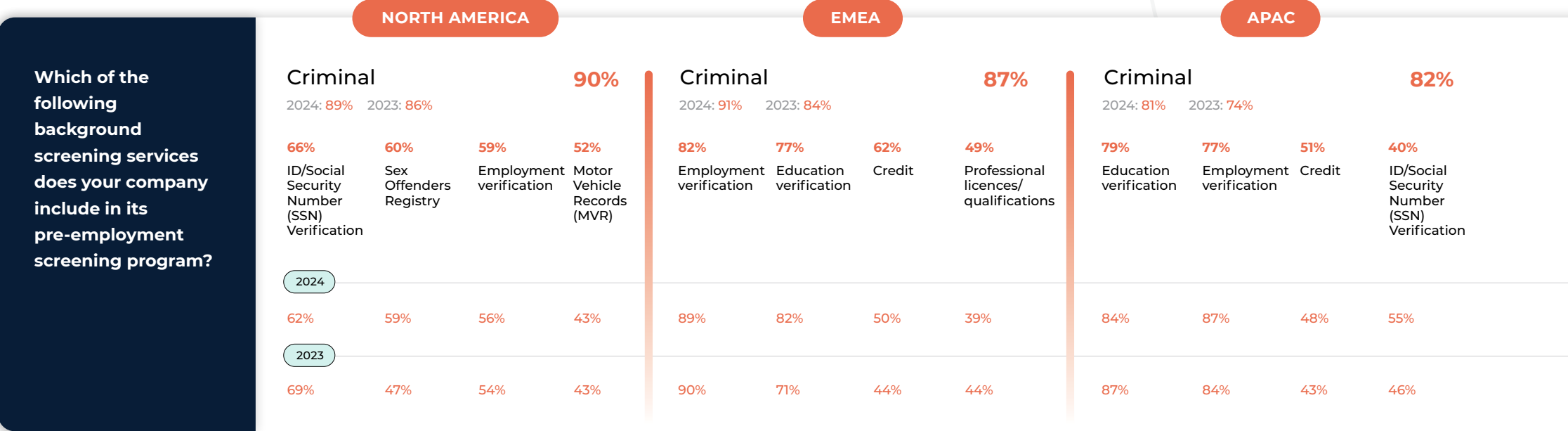
In EMEA, while working with a single provider remained the most common approach, there was an increase in the number of respondents working with multiple providers to screen in different locations. This could be due to various reasons, but it is worth noting that utilizing multiple providers is not without its challenges, such as product parity, providing a consistent candidate experience, and training your team to use multiple systems. Working with a single global provider and where possible integrating them with your applicant tracking system (ATS), is often the most efficient and effective way to conduct your global screening program.



Find out more about HireRight's global screening capabilities by downloading our [Global Guide to Services](#).

Background Screening Around the World

Almost nine out of 10 respondents globally said they conduct criminal record checks as part of their pre-employment screening program.



In North America, the adoption of the most common screening services shows little change from our 2024 survey results—except for motor vehicle record checks, which are up from 43% last year to 52% in 2025.

In EMEA and APAC, while there has been a slight decline in the number of respondents conducting employment and education verifications, they remain the second and third-most widely conducted pre-employment checks in these regions.

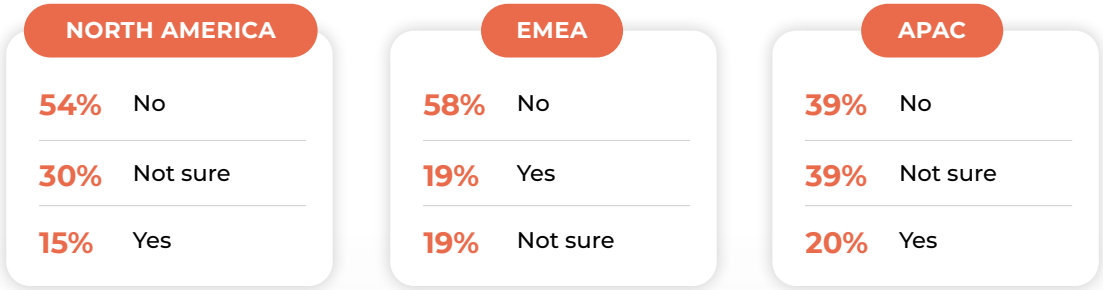
Identity Fraud



Despite identity (ID) fraud reportedly being on the rise, only three in five respondents globally said their company conducts identity checks as part of their pre-employment screening

Worryingly, one in six respondents said their business has experienced ID fraud as part of their hiring process, and another three in 10 were unsure.

Has your organization experienced identity fraud during the hiring process?



Of those verifying the identity of their workers pre-hire, the majority said they do so via a third-party background screening/identity verification provider. However, one in six respondents globally said they verify their candidates’ identities in-house. The adoption rates for these processes are almost identical for remote, hybrid, and office-based employees, suggesting that most companies have a one-size-fits-all approach to identity verification.

For the minority of companies that conduct candidate identity checking in-house, most provide their staff with in-house training. In EMEA and APAC, this is more likely to be annual or periodic, but in North America, one-off training was more common, possibly allowing new identity fraud techniques to go undetected. External training, such as informational webinars, is also used by around two in 10 North America respondents and one in 10 EMEA and APAC respondents.



Read more about ID fraud in our recent article, [Combatting Identity Fraud](#).

Where Are Candidate Discrepancies Found?

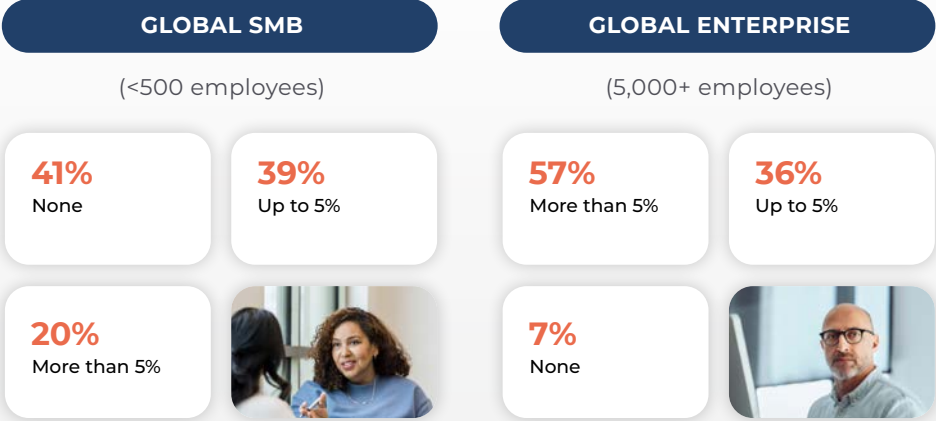
More than three-quarters of respondents globally said that they have uncovered discrepancies during their candidates' background screenings in the last 12 months.

Approximately what percentage of your candidates' background screenings have uncovered discrepancies/inconsistencies in the past 12 months?

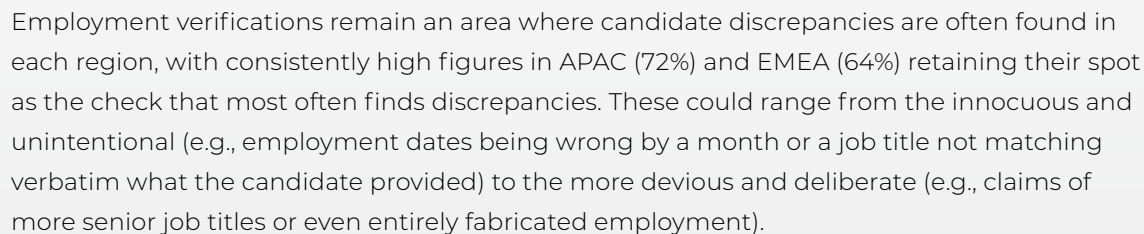


Globally, almost two in five respondents said they found on average at least one discrepancy per 20 candidates screened—with 13% saying they typically find at least one discrepancy per five candidates.

Looking at candidate discrepancies by company size, enterprise-sized businesses (5,000+ employees) were almost six times as likely to have discovered candidate discrepancies than small to medium-sized enterprises (<500 employees). Just 7% of enterprise respondents globally said they had uncovered no discrepancies in the past 12 months, compared with 41% of small to medium-sized enterprises, suggesting that the likely lower hiring volumes of smaller companies could account for the absence of inconsistencies.



However, this year's survey found that more respondents from EMEA have seen discrepancies in their candidates' education credentials in the past 12 months, with almost half (47%) saying this is one of the areas discrepancies are most commonly found. In contrast, fewer respondents in North America and APAC identified education discrepancies as one of the most common types.



Find out more about [CV Analysis](#), a HireRight service that compares information on your candidate's CV or resume against information they provided during the screening process, and identifies any differences.

Utilizing Post-Hire Screening and Monitoring

Post-hire employee screening programs have been more widely adopted in North America than in previous years.

Does your company
conduct any post-hire
screening or monitoring?

NORTH AMERICA

38% No, we don't conduct
any post-hire screening
or monitoring

23% Driver monitoring

17% Employee rescreening
– regulated

EMEA

37% No, we don't conduct
any post-hire screening
or monitoring

26% Employee rescreening
– regulated

20% Employment
rescreening

APAC

35% No, we don't conduct
any post-hire screening
or monitoring

27% Employee rescreening
– regulated

12% Employment
rescreening

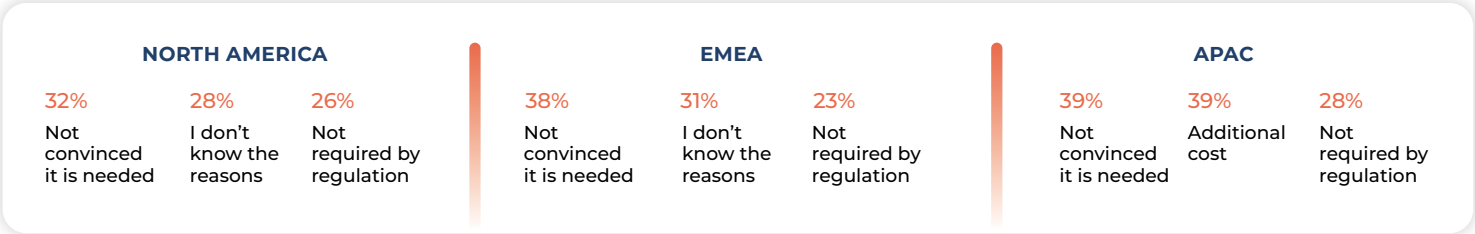
This year, only 38% of respondents from North America said their company doesn't conduct any form of post-hire screening or monitoring; last year it was 57%.

Of those conducting some form of post-hire screening, driver monitoring, and employee rescreening for regulated roles are among the most common types utilized by respondents from North America. Employee rescreening for regulated roles is also the top post-hire screening activity conducted by respondents from EMEA and APAC.

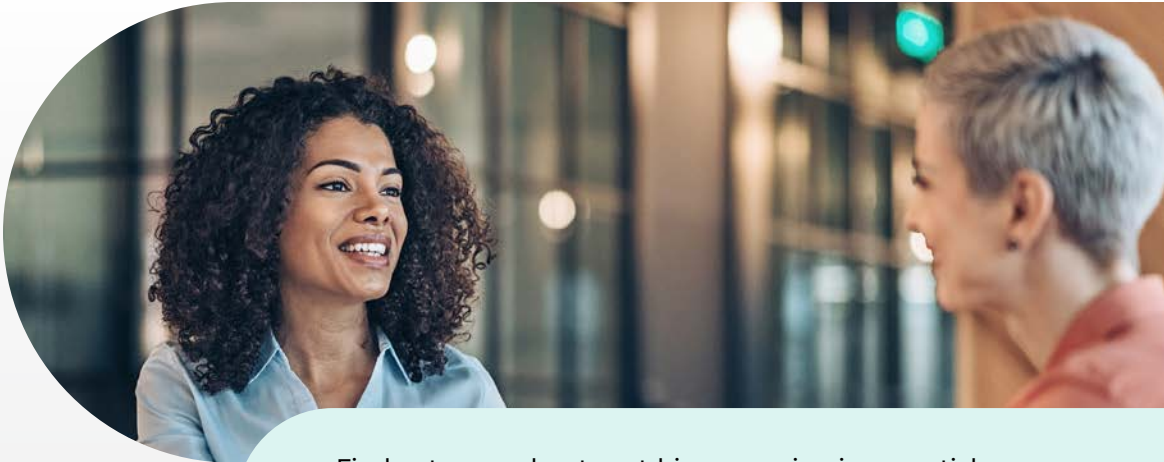


Among those not conducting any form of post-hire screening, the most common reasons given in each region include being unconvinced of the need for it and post-hire screening not being required by regulations. In APAC, its additional cost was flagged as a major concern by 39% of respondents; this reason was only provided by 19% of North America respondents and just 8% of EMEA respondents.

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



While pre-employment screening is essential at an individual's point of entry into a business, people can change over time. Rescreening or monitoring is often used to help companies mitigate their ongoing people risk after their employees' initial background screenings. Businesses may also conduct post-hire screening to help protect against inside threats (such as data theft and physical theft), screen employees who may have never been screened pre-hire (or whose roles have changed to take on additional responsibilities), or following a merger or acquisition (to ensure the same screening standards have been adhered to across both businesses).



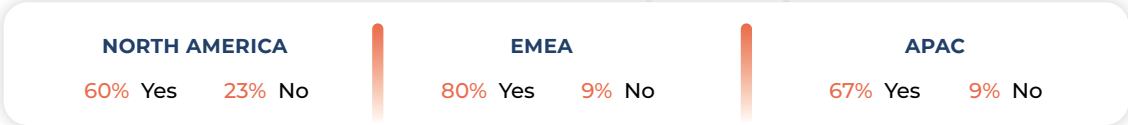
Find out more about post-hire screening in our article [Why Post-Hire Screening Could Reduce Talent Headaches](#) and in our [Global Guide to Rescreening](#).

Screening Your Contingent Workforce

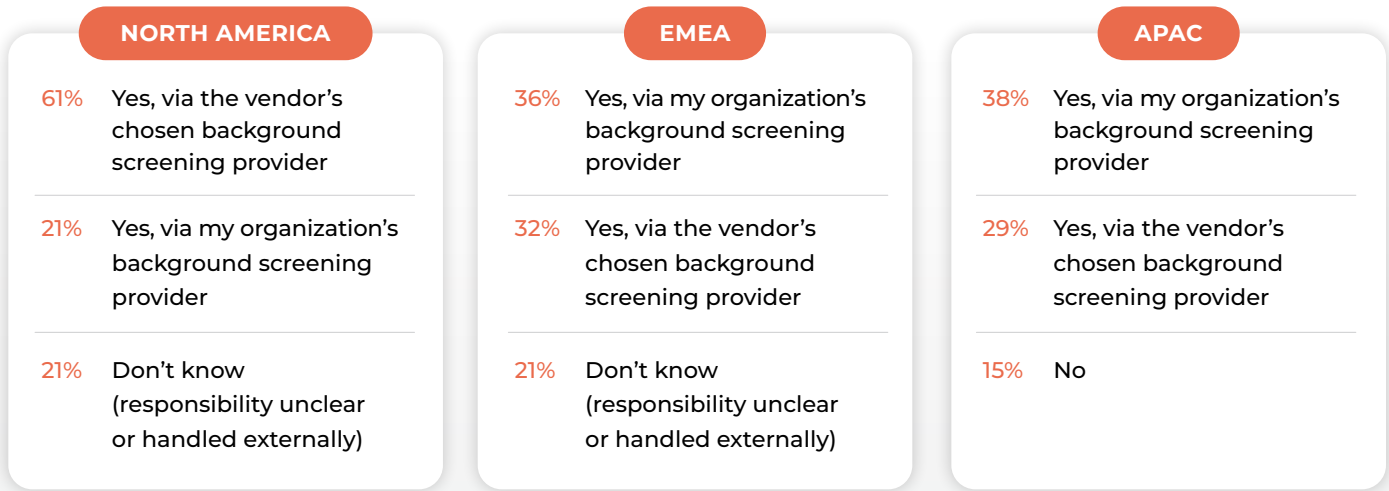
Most respondents said their company has a contingent workforce (made up of workers including contractors, freelancers, and consultants) and that they do undergo background screening.

Does your company source contingent workers through external vendors such as staffing agencies and consultancy firms?

"Not sure" responses not shown



Are contingent workers background screened before working with your company?



However, the method by which these workers have their backgrounds vetted varies from region to region. In North America, most respondents said their contingent workforce is screened by the vendor's chosen screening provider, with just 21% saying they are screened by their organization's background screening provider. But in EMEA and APAC, there is a more even split between these two approaches to contingent workforce screening, though screening via the company's preferred screening provider was the most common.

For companies relying on their vendors to screen their contingent workforce, it can be hard to ensure uniformity with your own employee screening program. Utilizing a service, such as HireRight's [Extended Workforce Screening](#), can help support a globally consistent background screening process.

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

Talent Acquisition and Workforce Management



Key Global Takeaways



Candidates dropping out if remote working wasn't offered was the top recruitment challenge in 2024.

More than twice as many EMEA respondents said this was an issue compared with last year's survey findings—47% vs. 23%.

The next most common challenges last year were positions remaining unfilled for three to six months (North America and APAC) and understaffing in HR/recruitment teams (EMEA).



Most companies are unsure how to respond to candidates using generative AI in the hiring process.

Seven out of 10 respondents globally said their company was undecided on their views on candidates using generative AI tools to assist with their job applications or resumes.

However, of the minority that expressed a view, slightly more saw it as a positive than a negative.



Finding qualified job candidates is the most common talent acquisition challenge expected for 2025.

More than half of respondents foresee sourcing candidates with the skills their company needs as one of their big talent acquisition challenges this year.

Other top concerns include candidates ghosting their potential employers (being non-responsive), fielding multiple job offers at the same time, and not having their pay/benefits expectations met.



More employers are expecting an increase in office-based work this year.

Almost half of respondents expect no significant change in their employees' ways of working by January 2026, but one in six respondents expect an increase in office-based working.

This follows on from one in six respondents reporting an increase in office-based working since January 2024.



More businesses are integrating their background screening provider with their applicant tracking system (ATS).

More than two-thirds of North America and APAC respondents and almost half of EMEA respondents said their screening provider and ATS are integrated.

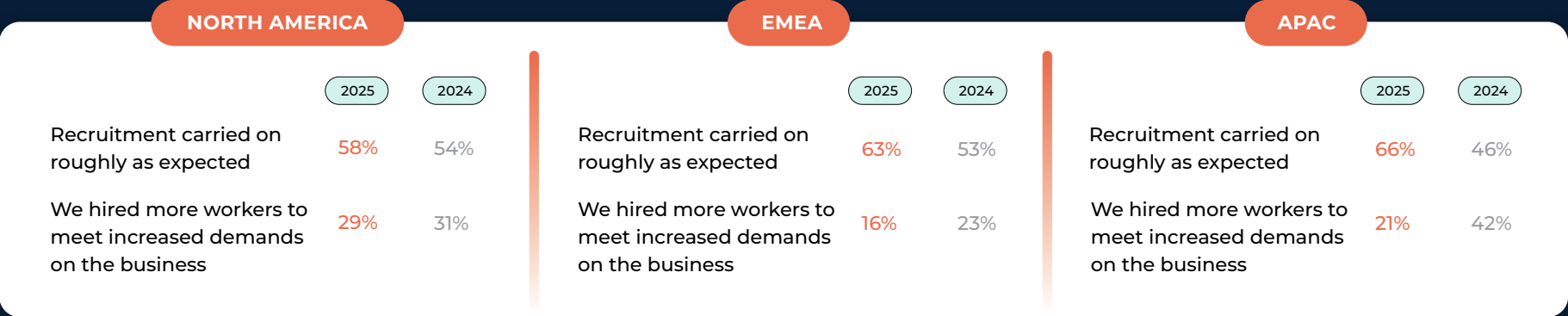
A lack of functionality key to business requirements, cost savings, and support challenges are the key reasons businesses may consider switching ATS providers.



Recruitment in 2024

Despite what may have seemed like a year of great change, for most respondents, recruitment carried on roughly as expected in 2024.

Which of the following best describes your company's recruitment in 2024?



Compared with last year's survey data, which asked about recruitment in 2023, more respondents from each region said recruitment was as expected in 2024. However, the number of businesses that said they hired more workers to meet increased demands on their businesses dropped slightly in North America and EMEA and dropped to half the previous figure in APAC.

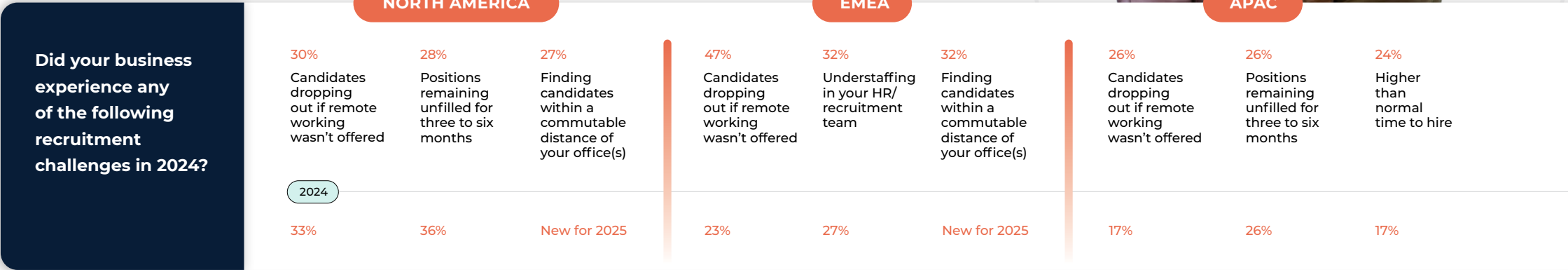
It seems that for many, 2024 was a year of level-setting and being more circumspect about hiring decisions. That said, only 14% of respondents globally stopped recruitment for all or part of the year. Even where aggressive growth plans weren't being executed, most businesses needed to continue hiring in 2024 to keep the wheels turning and support business as usual.



Recruitment Challenges in 2024

Candidates dropping out of the recruitment process if remote working wasn't offered became more prevalent in 2024, making it the top recruitment challenge experienced by our respondents last year.

While this issue continued to affect around three in 10 employers in North America, a notable increase was seen among EMEA and APAC respondents—especially in EMEA, where reports of this challenge doubled compared to last year's survey. This suggests that companies that are not (or are no longer) embracing remote working may be missing out on some of the best available talent—and could be contributing to other challenges listed below within their organizations.



In North America, the number of respondents with long-term issues filling roles (positions remaining unfilled for three to six months) continues to drop, from 43% in 2022 to 28% in 2024. However, some new challenges have been identified—such as businesses finding candidates within a commutable distance of their office(s). This impacted over a quarter of North American respondents and was one of the top three concerns for EMEA respondents too.

In APAC, difficulty finding local candidates seemed to be less common, with just 16% of APAC respondents saying they experienced this challenge last year. However, more respondents than in last year's survey cited higher than normal hiring costs and longer hiring times, suggesting that while the talent businesses are looking for may be out there, it is often taking more time and costing more money to recruit for certain positions.

Respondents from EMEA were the most likely to have reported understaffing in their HR/recruiting team and reductions in their recruitment budget, both of which were up on the past two years' figures. EMEA businesses experiencing these challenges in tandem may have had quite a difficult year meeting their company's recruitment needs—but is the outlook for 2025 any brighter?



Who Are You Hiring in 2025?

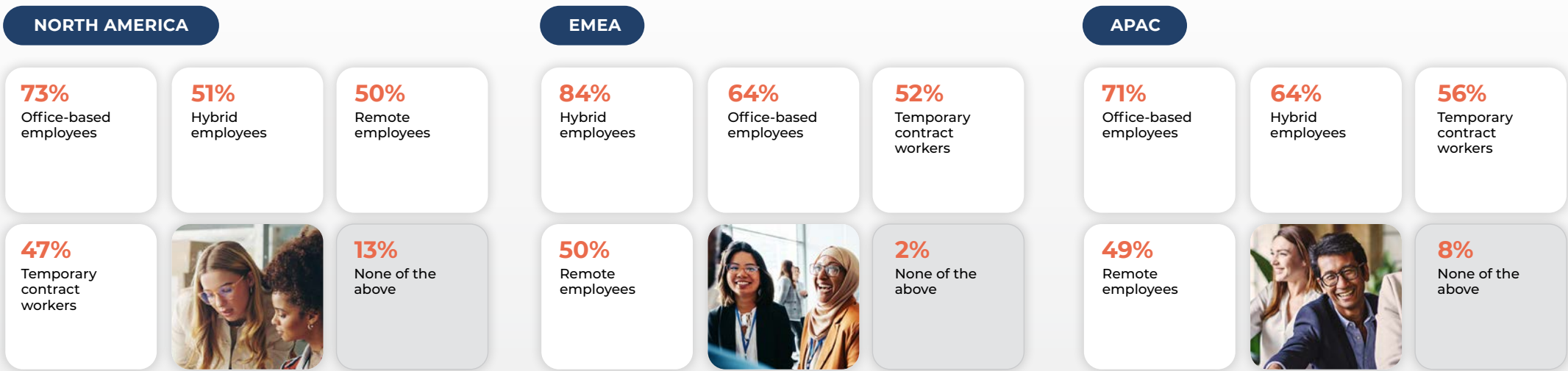
Most respondents expect their company will be hiring office-based workers this year—but in EMEA, more are expected to hire hybrid workers.

As more companies are rolling out return-to-office programs, it's unsurprising that so many businesses are expecting to hire more office-based workers in 2025.

However, the high percentages of respondents expecting to hire remote workers, particularly those in EMEA and APAC, suggest that most businesses are still utilizing hybrid working in some capacity and are not requiring all new hires to be full-time office-based (or on-site) workers. This data shows that, despite the common media narrative of big corporations ordering all their workforce back to their offices, in reality, in many instances it is a lot more nuanced than that.

This is further supported by around half of respondents from each region saying they expect their company will hire fully remote workers this year.

Does your company expect to hire any of the following in 2025?



Talent Acquisition Challenges in 2025

Finding qualified job candidates is expected to be the most common talent acquisition challenge in 2025 for businesses globally.

While the percentages of businesses in North America and APAC that are expecting this challenge remain consistent with our 2024 survey findings, in EMEA more than twice as many respondents this year said they expect this to be among their most significant talent acquisition challenges in 2025..

Additionally, candidates ghosting (being non-responsive with) prospective employers and fielding multiple job offers are also expected to be widespread challenges, making it even harder for many employers to hire the talent they need to grow (or maintain) their workforces this year.

What do you see as being the most significant talent acquisition challenges this year (2025)?

NORTH AMERICA				EMEA				APAC			
	2025	2024	2023		2025	2024	2023		2025	2024	2023
Finding qualified job candidates	57%	55%	77%	Finding qualified job candidates	47%	21%	51%	Finding qualified job candidates	43%	42%	74%
Candidate ghosting	41%	New for 2025		Candidates fielding multiple job offers	37%	New for 2025		Candidate ghosting	24%	New for 2025	
Meeting candidates' pay/benefit expectations	28%	31%	47%	Candidate ghosting	32%	New for 2025		Meeting candidates' pay/benefit expectations	24%	21%	64%
Candidates fielding multiple job offers	24%	New for 2025		Meeting candidates' pay/benefits expectations	32%	13%	52%	Candidates fielding multiple job offers	22%	New for 2025	
Making recruitment processes more efficient (reducing time to hire)	22%	20%	46%	Increased competition for talent	26%	New for 2025		Increased competition for talent	22%	New for 2025	

Meeting candidates' pay/benefit expectations is also one of the most common talent acquisition challenges expected for the year ahead, especially in EMEA, which saw an increase from 13% in 2024 to 32% of respondents foreseeing this as a major challenge in 2025.

Applicant Tracking System (ATS) Integrations

Across all regions, more respondents who use both an ATS and a background screening provider have integrated the two.

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

	NORTH AMERICA			EMEA			APAC	
	2025	2024		2025	2024		2025	2024
My screening provider is integrated with my ATS	68%	55%	My screening provider is integrated with my ATS	48%	33%	My screening provider is integrated with my ATS	67%	35%
I have no plans to integrate my ATS with my screening provider	16%	20%	My screening provider does not integrate with my ATS	24%	36%	My screening provider does not integrate with my ATS	15%	24%
My screening provider does not integrate with my ATS	11%	17%	I have no plans to integrate my ATS with my screening provider	24%	14%	I have no plans to integrate my ATS with my screening provider	6%	41%

In North America and APAC, more than two-thirds of respondents said their screening provider integrates with their ATS. In EMEA, almost half (48%) of respondents said the same.

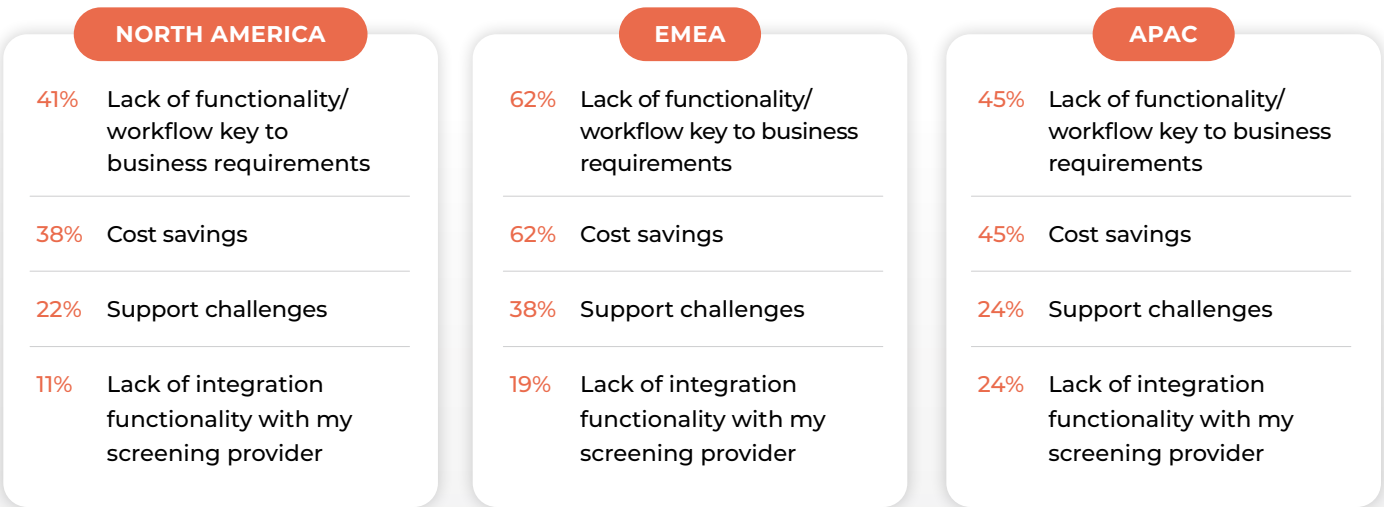
This increase from last year corresponds with a decrease in respondents from each region saying their screening provider does not integrate with their ATS. This could be due to:

- a company switching background screening providers to one that integrates with its ATS.
- a company's existing screening provider introducing a new ATS integration.
- a company switching their ATS to one that their screening provider can integrate with.

A lack of functionality/workflow key to business requirements and cost savings are the top reasons businesses would consider switching ATS providers.

However, only around one in 10 respondents globally said that they were currently evaluating ATS providers and plan to switch before the end of the year. This suggests that, for the most part, employers are happy with their current ATS and believe that they have the features they need to support an efficient hiring process for their business.

If you were to switch ATS providers, what would be your key motivations for switching?



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

Using AI Tools to Support HR Functions

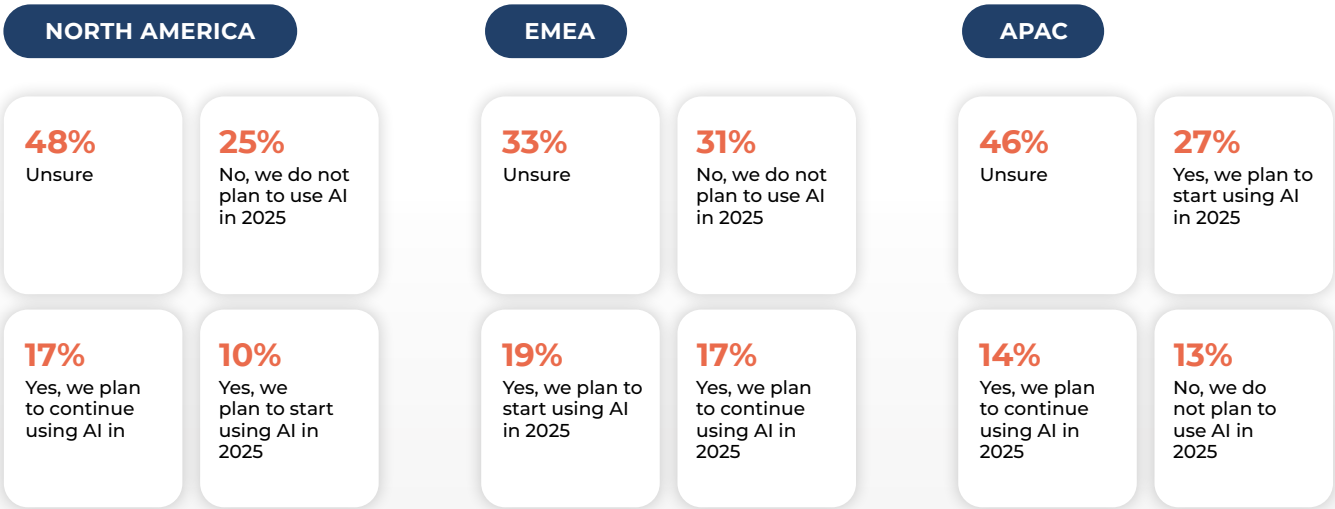


Almost half of respondents globally said they were unsure if they would be using AI tools to support core Human Resource functions in 2025.

With a broad menu of potential applications of AI within HR, it is surprising that so many businesses are uncertain about whether such AI tools will be utilized this year. In North America, just 27% of respondents said they plan to either start or continue using AI in 2025—the lowest figure across the three regions.

Businesses in APAC are the most likely to embrace AI tools this year to support their talent acquisition or workforce management efforts. More than a quarter of respondents from the region plan to start using AI tools for these purposes in 2025, and just 13% do not plan to use AI in 2025. In contrast, 31% of EMEA respondents and 25% of North American respondents said they are not planning to use AI this year.

Does your company plan to use (or continue using) AI, either directly or through third-party tools, to support talent acquisition or workforce management in 2025?



Respondents already using AI tools to support their company's HR activities are mostly doing so to assist with candidate selection/resume filtering as part of their talent acquisition process. Employee onboarding and training/development are the next most common HR functions that businesses are supporting with AI tools. These three areas are also the ones most cited by respondents who plan to start using AI in 2025.

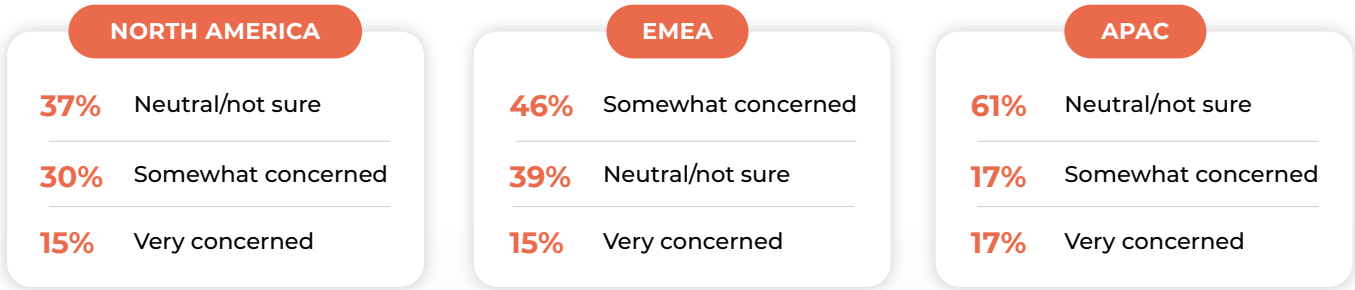
Emerging AI Regulations



Emerging AI regulations in various jurisdictions, such as the EU AI Act in Europe, are raising concerns about how these technologies can be used for many businesses globally.

In North America, 45% of respondents are somewhat concerned or very concerned that regulations will stifle how they can use AI to support their talent acquisition or workforce management functions. These concerns are even more widespread in EMEA, with 61% expressing these same levels of concern. However, in APAC, businesses seem to be more undecided than concerned, with 61% of APAC respondents saying they're not sure or feel neutral about the impact of emerging AI regulations.

How concerned are you about emerging AI regulations, such as addressing bias or transparency, impacting your use of AI in talent acquisition or workforce management?



AI is likely to have a significant impact on the employment process in the coming years—for businesses and candidates—so it is important to keep up to speed with the latest developments from both a regulatory and technological perspective.

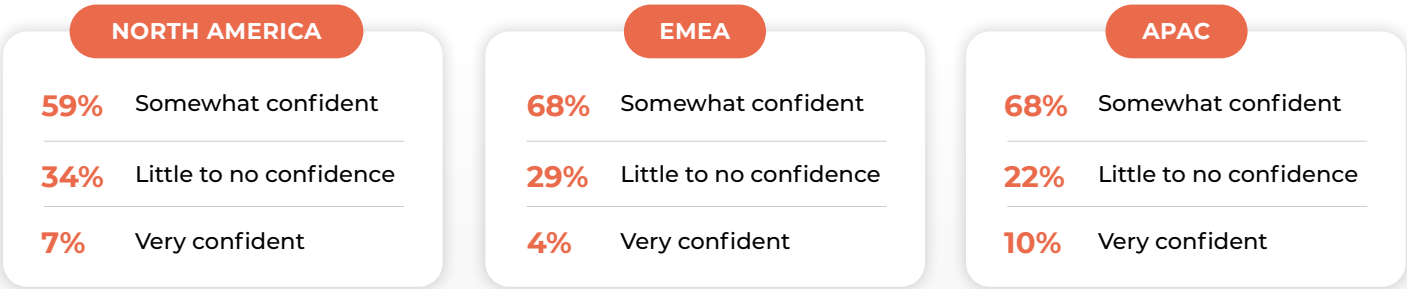
Find out more about the EU AI Act and how future regulation of AI in the UK could affect your business by downloading HireRight's latest EMEA eBook, [The Impact of AI on the Employment Process](#).

Candidates Using AI in the Recruitment Process

Most respondents globally have limited confidence in their ability to identify when candidates have used AI tools on their job applications/resumes.

While the majority of respondents said they are somewhat confident they could identify if tools such as ChatGPT or Gemini have been used by a candidate (for example, to enhance, edit, or rewrite their job application or cover letter), fewer than one in 10 globally said they are very confident.

How confident are you that you could identify when candidates have used generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) to assist with their job applications or resumes?



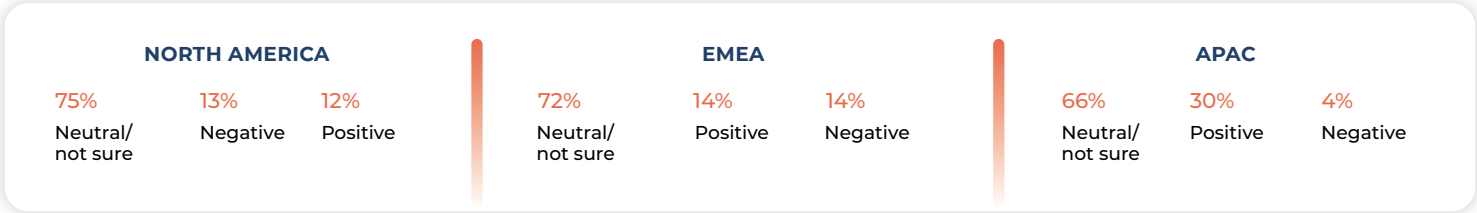
But, regardless of whether respondents can detect its use or not, how do their companies feel about generative AI (GenAI) being used by candidates in the recruitment process?



Most respondents are unsure or have an impartial view of candidates using generative AI tools to assist with their job applications or resumes.

Between two-thirds and three-quarters of respondents in each region have neither a positive nor negative view on this matter. With many of these AI tools having not been widely available for long, it makes sense that many employers haven’t given them much thought yet—but if these technologies become more prevalent, it may soon become something employers need to pick their stance on.

How does your company feel about candidates using generative AI tools to assist with their job applications or resumes?



Those in favor of candidates using AI tools may believe that their use could help employers quickly find the best-matched talent for their roles, saving them time and money in the recruitment process. Those against it could be concerned that it has been used to embellish and/or mislead a prospective employer.

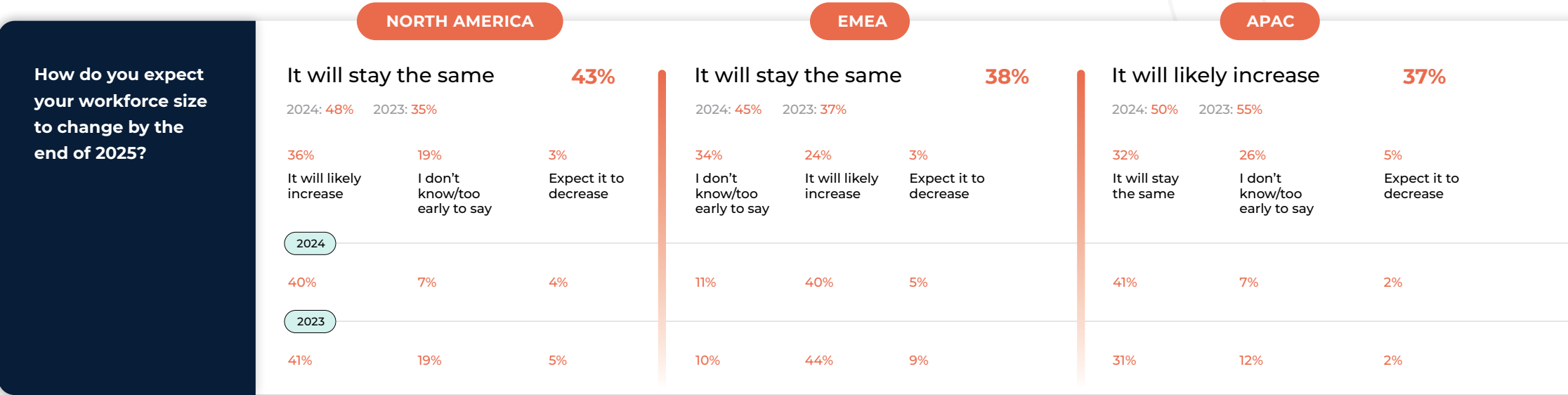
Interestingly, of the North America and EMEA respondents whose companies did have a view on candidates using AI tools to assist with their job applications or resumes, it is very closely balanced between positive and negative. However, in APAC, far more respondents believe that candidates using AI is a positive than a negative. Whichever side, if any, your business takes, a robust background screening program can help to confirm the accuracy of a candidate's information provided on their resume or application form. While a background check may not yet be able to explicitly determine if a candidate has been using AI to stretch the truth, it could detect if the information provided as a result of this is not accurate, especially if the areas embellished can be verified at source (e.g., education qualifications and previous employment).



How is Workforce Size Expected to Change in 2025?

Three-quarters of respondents globally said they expect their company’s workforce size to stay the same or grow by the end of 2025.

As has been the case for the past two years, respondents from APAC are most likely to expect their workforce size to increase this year—though this has dropped from 55% in 2023 to 37% in 2025. The number of EMEA respondents expecting their headcount to grow this year has dropped to almost half the 2023 figure, but in North America, the drop is much less significant— 41% in 2023 to 36% this year.



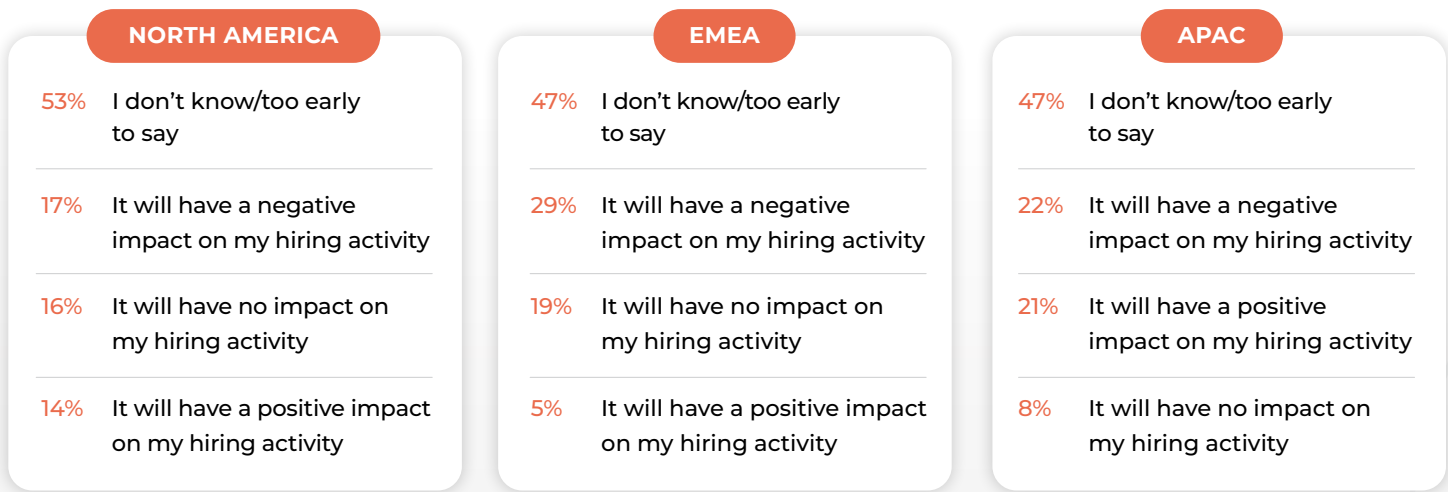
However, there has been a notable rise in the number of respondents from each region saying they are unsure or, at the time of asking in March 2025, it was too early to say. Could global or local market/economic uncertainty be raising doubts among our respondents about their companies’ expected hiring needs this year?

The Impact of Market/Economic Uncertainty

Around half of global respondents said they were either unsure or it was too early to say how market/economic uncertainty would impact their company’s hiring this year.

Additionally, the second-most common response from respondents in each region was that they expected a negative impact on their hiring activity. Only three in 10 global respondents expected no impact or a negative impact on hiring because of turbulent market/economic conditions.

What impact do you expect market/economic uncertainty—such as inflation, geopolitical tensions, or regulatory changes—to have on your hiring activity in 2025?



When looking at the survey responses by company size, there was no significant difference between those provided by small to medium-sized enterprises and large enterprises, suggesting that any instability is something that could be keeping HR professionals awake at night, regardless of their company’s size.



Office-Based, Hybrid, or Remote?

More North America respondents said their businesses are working in offices/on-site than in the other regions.

Which of the following most accurately describes the current working location of your workforce within your primary region?

NORTH AMERICA

- 34% Most of our workforce is office-based/works on-site
- 21% Our entire workforce is office-based/works on-site
- 19% Roughly even split of hybrid/remote and office-based

EMEA

- 52% Most of our workforce is hybrid
- 23% Roughly even split of hybrid/remote and office-based
- 10% Most of our workforce is remote

APAC

- 25% Most of our workforce is hybrid
- 17% Roughly even split of hybrid/remote and office-based
- 16% Most of our workforce is office-based/works on-site

Almost three-quarters of respondents from North America said at least half their company's workforce is currently office-based/works on-site. In contrast, more than four-fifths (83%) of EMEA respondents said that at least half their workforce is hybrid. Respondents from APAC seem to be fairly evenly divided, with 48% saying at least half their workforce is hybrid and 44% saying at least half are office-based.



There are many factors that can impact where a company’s workforce is located—and company size seems to be an important one.

Global responses from small to medium-sized businesses (SMBs) were more than four times as likely to say that their workforce is entirely office-based than enterprise-sized ones. While the percentage of respondents saying most of their workforce is office based/works on-site were similar (30% for SMBs and 32% for enterprises), the adoption of hybrid working is far more common for enterprises—perhaps because they are more likely to be spread across multiple locations, either within one country, across a region, or globally.

Which of the following most accurately describes the current working location of your workforce within your primary region?

SMB

(<500 employees)

32%
Our entire workforce is office-based/works on-site

30%
Most of our workforce is office-based/works on-site

13%
Roughly even split of hybrid/remote and office-based



MID-MARKET

(500-4,999 employees)

30%
Most of our workforce is office-based/works on-site

20%
Roughly even split of hybrid/remote and office-based

16%
Most of our workforce is hybrid



ENTERPRISE

(5,000+ employees)

32%
Most of our workforce is office-based/works on-site

26%
Roughly even split of hybrid/remote and office-based

23%
Most of our workforce is hybrid



The Evolution of Workplace Location

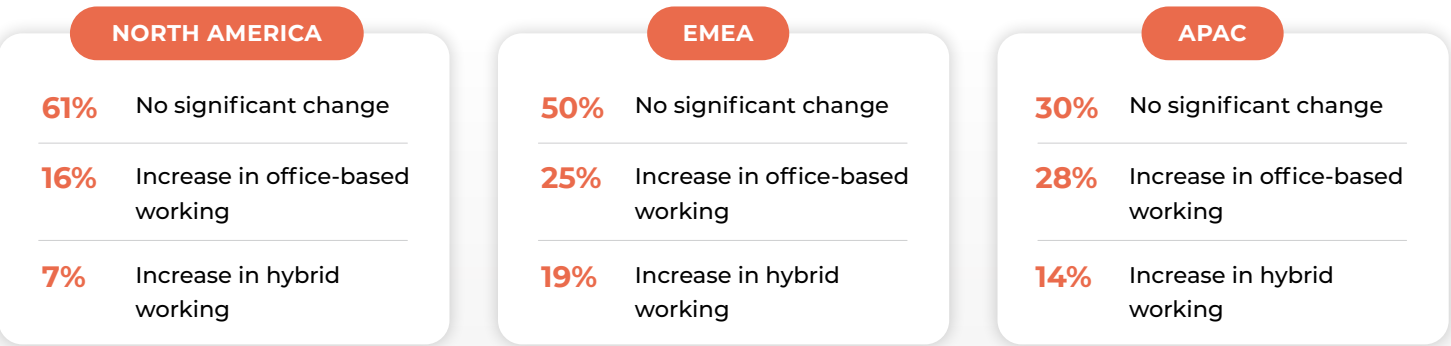


Most respondents from North America and EMEA reported no significant change in the workplace location of the workforce within their region since the start of 2024.

More than six in 10 North America respondents and half of EMEA respondents said there was no significant change in whether their workers were remote, office-based, or hybrid since January 2024.

In contrast, just three in 10 respondents from APAC said the same, with almost as many (28%) reporting an increase in office-based working.

How has this changed since January 2024?



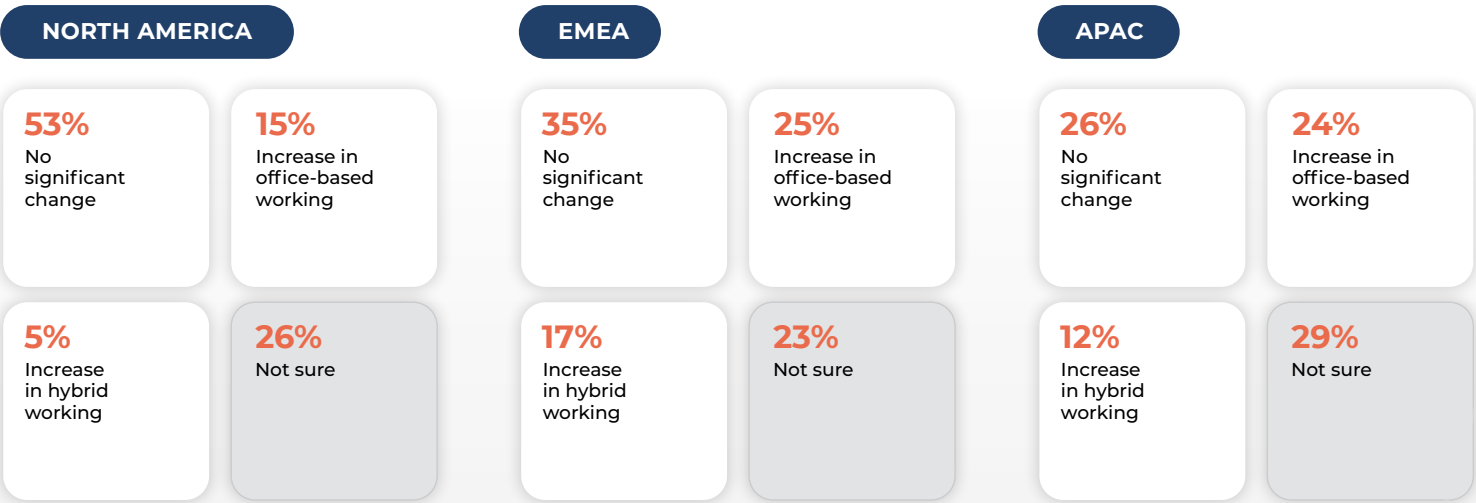
While an increase in office-based working was also reported by a quarter of EMEA respondents, a similar amount (19%) expected an increase in hybrid working—the most across the three regions—showing that companies were almost as likely to have ramped up hybrid working as returning their workforce to the office. But how are things expected to change by next January?

Companies are more likely to be increasing office-based working than hybrid working in 2025.

While almost half of respondents globally reported no significant change expected in the workplace location of their staff, similar numbers of respondents to those who said there was an increase in office-based working last year expect this to be the case by January 2026.

With many large organizations reverting to in-person working after long dalliances with remote-first mantras, it will be interesting to see how this impacts their retention and recruitment—particularly given our survey finding that candidates dropping out of the recruitment process when remote work was not available was the top talent acquisition challenge in each region last year.

How do you expect this will change by January 2026?



Around a quarter of global respondents were unsure how their workforce makeup may change by the start of 2026. Perhaps they are waiting to be led by what they're seeing in the market and what their competitors are doing, as well as the needs of the business.



Conclusion

Our 2025 Global Benchmark Survey found that, despite a busy year of change, many of its global respondents' core tenets, practices, and predictions around background screening, talent acquisition, and workforce management appear to have remained steadfast.

Accuracy is still paramount for most businesses when choosing a background screening provider. Criminal record checks remain the most widely used background checks globally. There has been little change in the specific checks in each region that most often uncover candidate discrepancies. Finding qualified candidates is still expected to be the top talent acquisition challenge for the coming year.

However, this year's survey also probed several previously unexplored areas, uncovering some potential threats that employers may wish to consider.

Despite reported rises in cases of identity theft and fraud, many businesses are not mitigating this with digital ID verification checks. Candidates dropping out if remote working wasn't offered was the top recruitment challenge last year, yet more businesses seem to be ramping up their office-based working, which could be making it harder to hire new talent. Most businesses don't yet know how they feel about candidates using generative AI tools in the recruitment process—and most respondents have only middling levels of confidence in identifying if AI has been used by candidates on their CVs or application forms.

As generative AI tools continue to develop and become more widely utilized by HR teams, they have the potential to change the ways businesses source, interview, screen, onboard, and manage talent. However, our survey findings show that, at least for the short term, the majority are uncertain about how to use AI technology to drive efficiency and solve their common HR challenges. Perhaps as more companies explore the many applications of AI tools in the talent lifecycle—and can demonstrate that the benefits outweigh the cost of complying with any regulatory complexities—the use of GenAI to support HR functions will become something as commonplace as applicant tracking system integrations, video candidate interviews, or remote onboarding programs.

Thank you for reading this year's report. We hope you will participate in our next annual survey to help us better understand how the changing talent landscape is impacting businesses worldwide—and see what has stood the test of time throughout 2025.

Methodology/About Us

Response

HireRight's 2025 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 Feb. 11 and March 9, 2025, receiving a total of 1,114 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 34,000 customers around the globe. We offer our services via a 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 2024, we screened more than 60 million job applicants, employees, and contractors for our customers and processed more than 120 million screens. For more information, visit www.HireRight.com.



Previous Reports

For a deeper dive into HireRight's past survey findings, you can download our 2023 and 2024 reports below:

[2024 Global Benchmark Report](#)

[2024 U.S. Transportation Spotlight Report](#)

[2023 Global Benchmark Report](#)

[2023 U.S. Transportation Spotlight Report](#)

[2023 U.S. Healthcare Spotlight Report](#)

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Global Benchmark Report

2025