

employer brand research 2026

engineering sector report.



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AI IMAGE



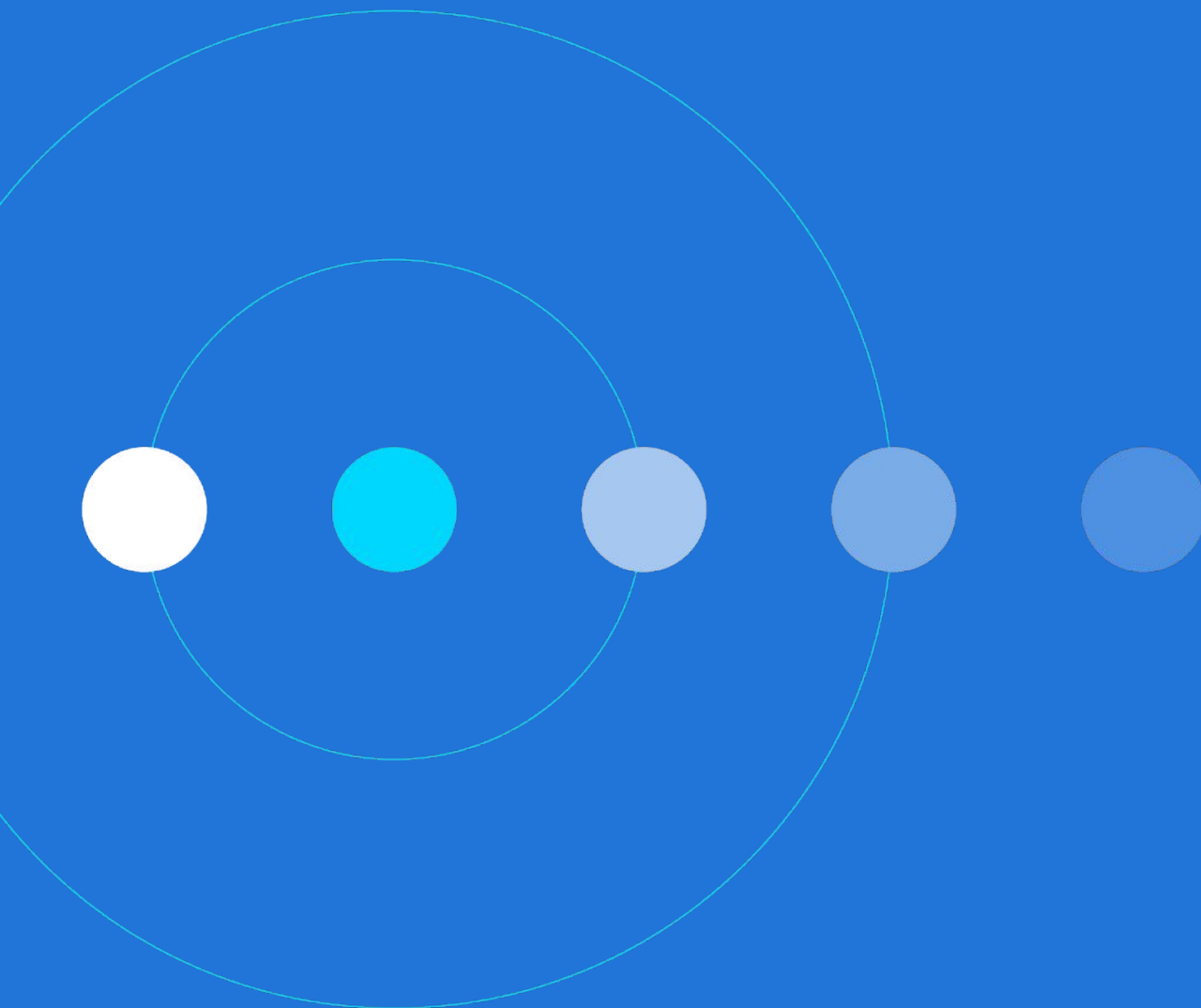
partner for talent.

shaping the future workforce in the engineering sector.

As global workforce dynamics continue to shift, talent in the engineering sector is adapting to new realities. From the growing integration of AI and automation - reshaping daily work and perceptions of job security - to rising living costs driven by geopolitical tensions, professionals are navigating an increasingly complex world of work. At the same time, the entry of new generations is reshaping expectations around flexibility, purpose, and work-life balance.

In this evolving context, the engineering sector faces a distinct set of challenges and opportunities. Regional differences shape what workers value most, while generational and role-based perspectives reveal diverging expectations around compensation, work-life balance, job security, and career growth.

This report highlights the key trends influencing talent attraction and retention in the engineering sector and offers actionable insights to help organisations refine their employer brand and strengthen their employee value proposition (EVP). By aligning more closely with the evolving priorities of today's workforce, employers can position themselves as employers of choice in an increasingly competitive, skills-driven labour market.



04 executive summary

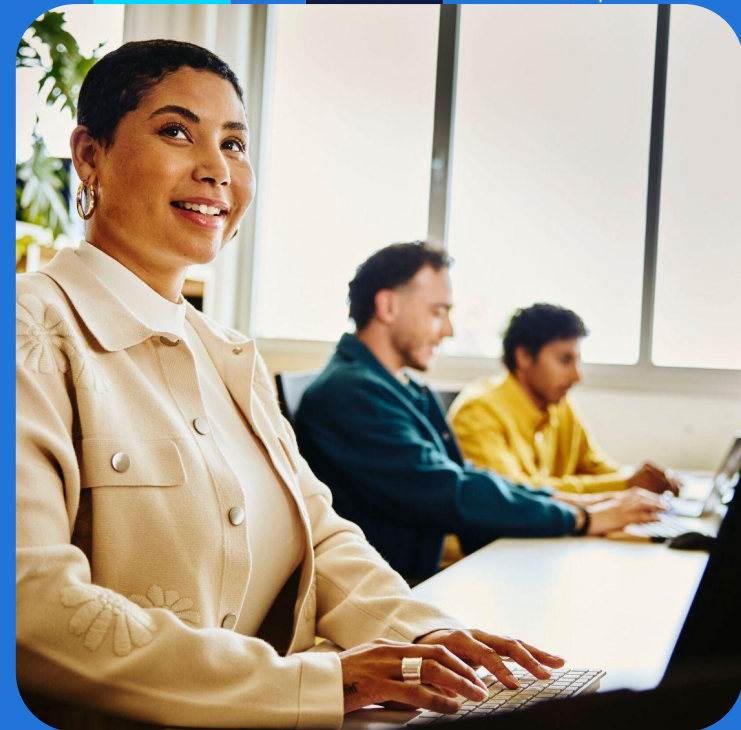
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executive summary.



strong employer evaluations show employers broadly meet talent expectations.

Salary and benefits anchor the ideal employer profile in the engineering and technology sector, but are closely followed by a cluster of drivers, indicating that employer choice is shaped by a combination of factors rather than a single dominant trigger.

Regionally, salary and benefits also lead employer choice across all markets, reinforcing pay as the core foundation of the employer proposition. APAC and Latin America broadly align with the global pattern, with work-life balance and career progression strengthening appeal, although LATAM places relatively greater emphasis on career progression. Europe prioritises stability, with job security more prominent, suggesting a more risk-averse talent profile. In contrast, North America stands out for its stronger focus on equal opportunities and employer reputation, indicating that perceptions of fairness and brand play a more decisive role in employer choice.

Current employer evaluations are consistently strong, with three in four talent rating their employer highly. Job security and equal opportunities lead the employer profile, and overall satisfaction remains high across markets, with younger talent and North American talent showing more favourable perceptions.

Despite strong performance, relative weaknesses emerge when comparing expectations with delivery. Salary and benefits, work-life balance and career progression lag slightly behind their importance in the ideal employer profile. While not major gaps, this suggests that even well-performing employers risk falling short on the drivers that matter most to talent.



70%

of LATAM talent rate their current employer highly on career progression, compared to 62% who consider it important in the ideal employer, indicating strong delivery against expectations.

80%

of North American talent rate their current employer favourably, compared to only 60% of European talent.

job security and work–life balance are rooted in financial stability and daily wellbeing.

In the engineering and technology sector, job security is primarily anchored in reliable pay, which remains the strongest foundation across all groups. Younger talent associate job security more with learning and development, while older generations rely more on financial reliability and organisational stability, highlighting a shift from growth-oriented to security-driven expectations over the career lifecycle.

Regionally, European talent place greater emphasis on organisational and financial stability, reflecting a more risk-averse mindset. North America stands out with a stronger focus on transparent and trustworthy communication and company culture, highlighting the importance of internal trust and engagement. In contrast, LATAM and APAC largely align with the global pattern, placing more emphasis on performance recognition and career continuity.

A supportive work environment is the primary enabler of work–life balance across all markets and generations, with workload, flexibility, and recovery playing a secondary role. While expectations are broadly aligned, priorities shift by career stage. Millennials place relatively more emphasis on personal growth and development, whereas older generations increasingly prioritise time off and recovery. Regionally, European talent places greater emphasis on flexibility and recovery, while in North America more weight is given to easy access to work. Latin America stands out by linking work–life balance more closely to personal growth, while in APAC there is stronger emphasis on health and wellbeing support.



39%

of North American talent link a strong company culture to job security.

40%

of older talent link time off and recovery to a healthy work–life balance, compared to 32% among younger generations.

job-switching intent in the engineering sector remains relatively high, indicating underlying mobility potential.

18%

of younger talent report having changed jobs in the past six months, compared to 8% among older generations.

52%

of European talent use LinkedIn to search for jobs, while 32% successfully find a job through this platform.

In North America, intentions to switch jobs translate more directly into job moves, pointing to a more fluid labour market. Europe and LATAM, by contrast, show both lower intent and lower switching, indicating more restrained mobility, while APAC shows higher intent that does not fully translate into action, suggesting potential constraints to mobility.

Across regions and generations, insufficient compensation remains the primary trigger for leaving, followed by improving work–life balance and lack of career progression, reinforcing the central role of these drivers in employer choice. The main triggers for leaving align with areas that are comparatively weaker in delivery, particularly salary and benefits, work–life balance, and career progression, indicating relative misalignment rather than structural underperformance. However, it is important to note that overall evaluations of current employers remain highly positive, with scores consistently high across all drivers. As differences between drivers are relatively minimal, the ranking should be interpreted with caution, reflecting relative positioning rather than substantial gaps in delivery.

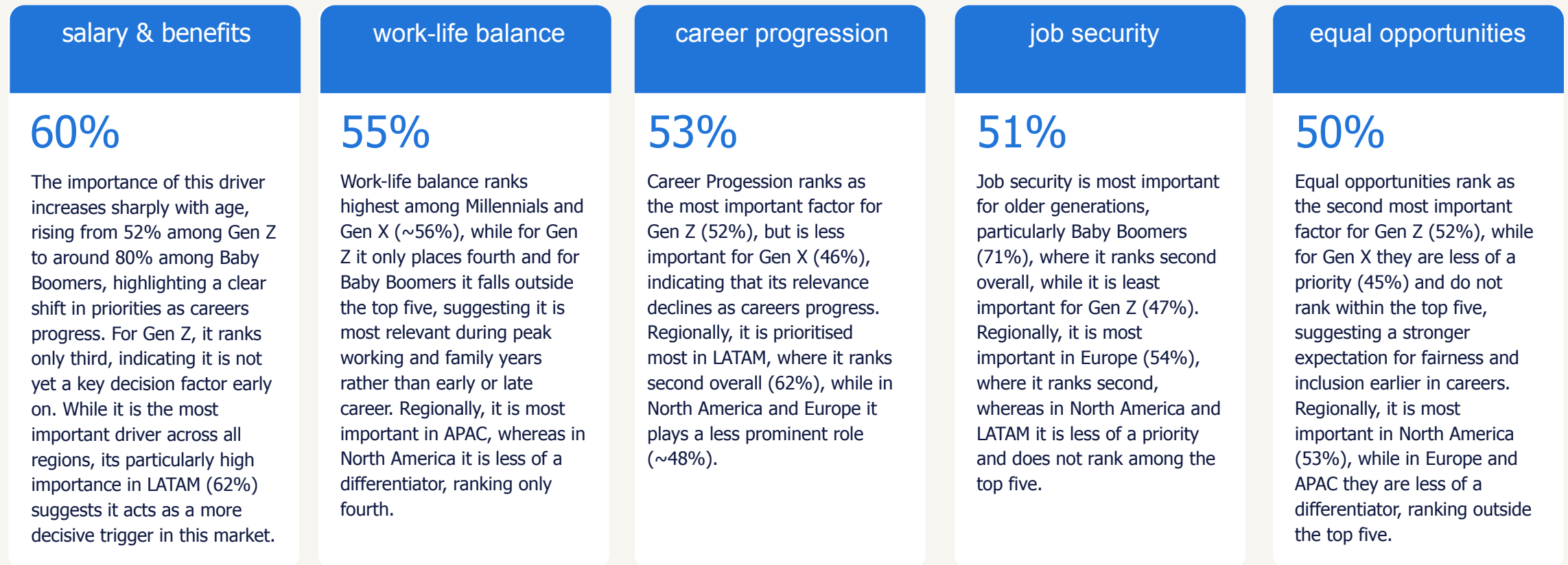
Job boards remain the primary entry point in the job search journey, offering the broadest reach, with LinkedIn closely following as both a widely used and effective channel. Older talent rely more on staffing agencies and personal connections, whereas younger talent favour more accessible, digital channels such as Google for Jobs and their networks when searching for a job. Regionally, differences are more pronounced beyond the core channels. North America places greater emphasis on social media for both search and successful job moves, while Europe relies more on LinkedIn and Google for Jobs across the journey. In contrast, APAC stands out for its broader use of channels overall, suggesting a more active and exploratory job search approach.

key drivers.

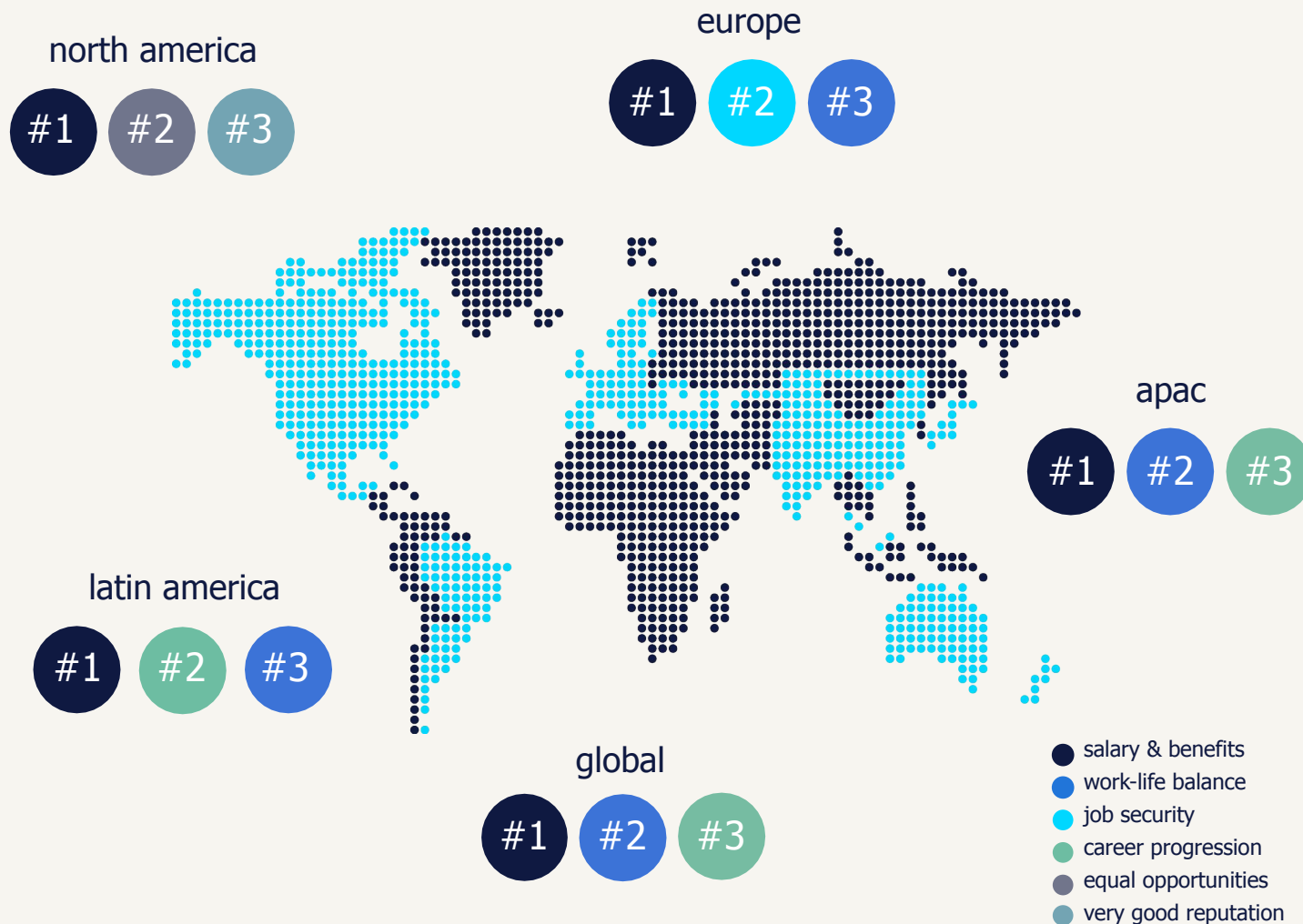


top five reasons engineering talent choose an employer.

In the engineering sector, salary and benefits emerge as the most important driver of employer choice, followed by work-life balance, career progression, job security and equal opportunities. These drivers are clustered relatively closely together, indicating that multiple factors carry similar weight and that employer choice is driven by a combination of benefits rather than one clear differentiator.



the ideal employer profile differs across regions



Beyond the universal importance of salary and benefits, clear regional differences emerge in how employer choice is shaped within the engineering sector. APAC and Latin America align closely with the global pattern, with work-life balance and career progression also playing a key role, although in LATAM, career progression stands out as a stronger driver.

Europe shows a similar overall structure, but with career progression replaced by job security. North America, by contrast, stands out as an outlier: while salary and benefits remain the most important driver, equal opportunities and a strong reputation take on greater importance, reflecting a more values- and perception-driven decision-making process.



Q. Based on your previous selections, please rank the most important factors that an ideal employer should have, in order of importance.

explanation key drivers' relative priority.



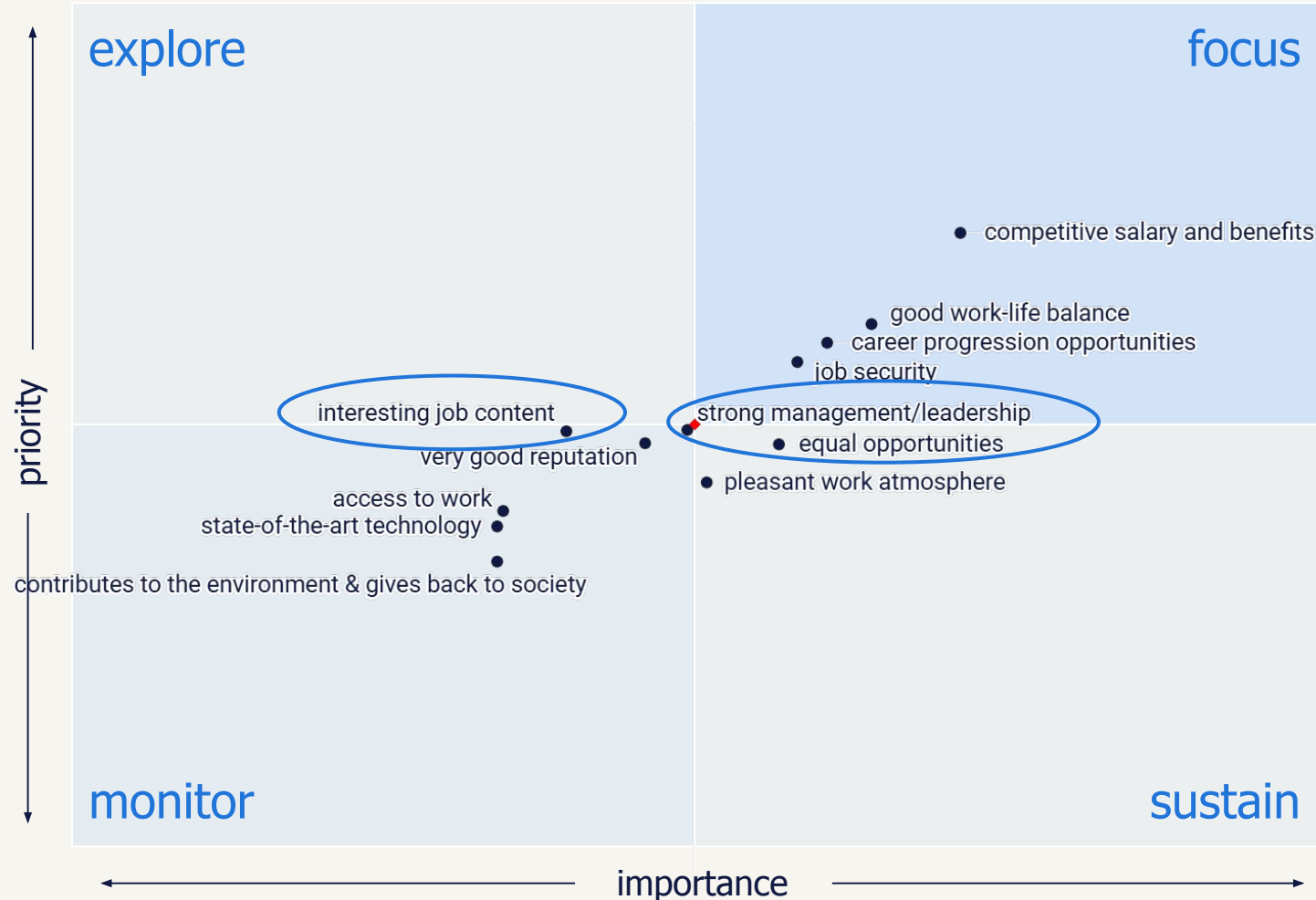
Higher-ranked drivers indicate greater importance or preference compared to those lower down, showing relative priorities.

This table illustrates both the absolute importance and the relative priority of the EVP drivers. Depending on their relationships, each driver falls into a different quadrant, and each quadrant provides distinct actionable insights.



Q. Based on your previous selections, please rank the most important factors that an ideal employer should have, in order of importance.

key drivers' relative priority.



Competitive salary and benefits is not only the most important driver, but also the most prioritised, reinforcing pay as the primary decision trigger.

Beyond pay, the remaining top-five drivers largely cluster in the Focus quadrant, forming a core set of expectations that employers need to deliver on. Equal opportunities stands out as the exception: while still part of the top five, it sits in the Sustain quadrant, indicating it is widely expected but less of a differentiator unless absent.

In contrast, strong management and leadership shows relatively higher priority despite lower importance, signalling a growing expectation that can increasingly influence employer choice. Similarly, interesting job content, while less universally important, carries strong priority among those who value it. Together, these drivers point to more targeted, segment-specific levers, acting as key differentiators rather than broad-based needs.



Q. Based on your previous selections, please rank the most important factors that an ideal employer should have, in order of importance.

how engineering talent rate their current employer.

perceptions of current employers in the engineering sector are generally positive.

Job security and equal opportunities jointly rank first in the current employer profile, with over three in four talent rating their employer highly on these drivers. This is closely followed by easy access to work, strong reputation, and interesting job content, indicating that employers are consistently delivering well across a broad set of core drivers.

Younger generations tend to rate their current employer more positively (around 76%) than older generations (~66%), reinforcing the broader pattern of more favourable perceptions among younger talent. A similar regional trend is observed, with North America showing the most positive evaluations (80%), while Europe remains more critical (~66%), in line with global patterns.

the largest expectation gap is centered around career progression and pay.

Overall, the ranking shows very limited differentiation, with all drivers scoring highly and closely together, suggesting that talent in this sector are broadly satisfied with their current employers. However, looking more closely at the alignment between the ideal employer profile and current delivery reveals relative gaps rather than absolute weaknesses. Salary and benefits, while the most important driver, rank only 10th in current employer delivery, highlighting a clear gap versus expectations. This underdelivery is most pronounced among older generations (~62%), while satisfaction is somewhat higher in APAC, where it ranks 7th. A similar, though less pronounced, pattern is seen for career progression. Conversely, areas such as equal opportunities and job security slightly exceed expectations, ranking at the top of current employer delivery, suggesting that employers are meeting, or even marginally over delivering, on more foundational needs.

75%

of LATAM talent rate their current employer positively, highlighting strong overall satisfaction in the region.

76%

of APAC talent rate their current employer positively on work-life balance, ranking third in the current employer evaluation.

key driver deepdive.



elements that reinforce a strong sense of job security.

reliable pay is the primary driver of a strong sense of job security, followed by performance recognition and organizational and financial stability.

which elements most significantly contribute to a strong sense of job security?



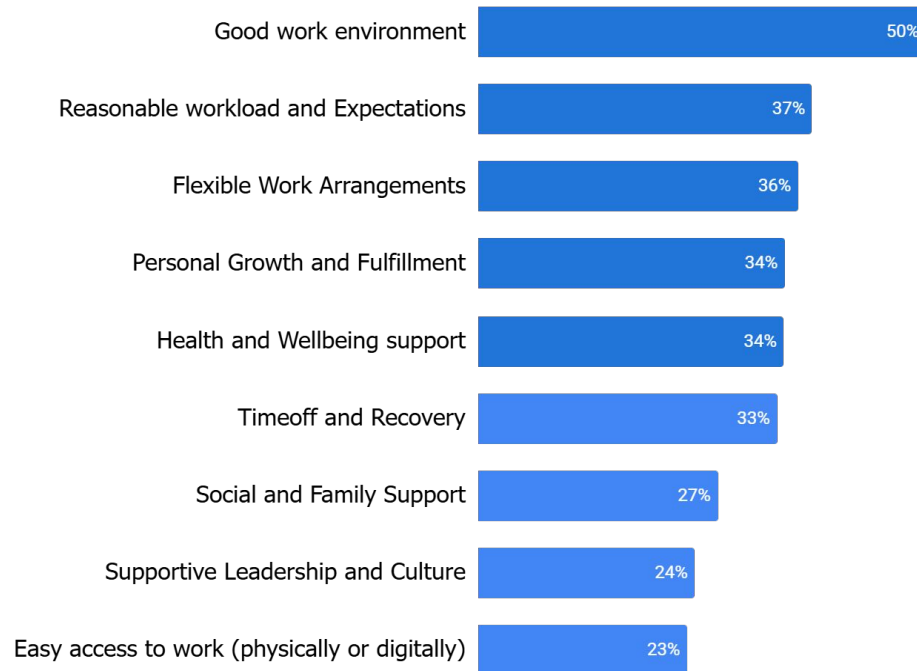
Compared to older generations, Gen Z places the greatest emphasis on learning and development (48%), ranking it as the most important contributor to job security and reflecting a more future-oriented mindset. In contrast, reliable pay plays a relatively smaller role for Gen Z (46%), but becomes increasingly important with age, particularly among Gen X (61%). Gen X also place greater emphasis on organizational and financial stability (54%), reinforcing a stronger focus on long-term security.

Across regions, reliable pay remains the main contributor to job security, though some regional nuances emerge. In Europe, organizational and financial stability are more prominent (49%), while learning and development is less emphasized (35%). In North America, transparent and trustworthy communication plays a more central role (45%), alongside a relatively stronger focus on company culture (40%). LATAM and APAC largely align with the global pattern.

elements that strengthen work-life balance.

work environment remains the most important enabler of work-life balance across both generations and regions.

which elements most significantly enhance a healthy work-life balance?



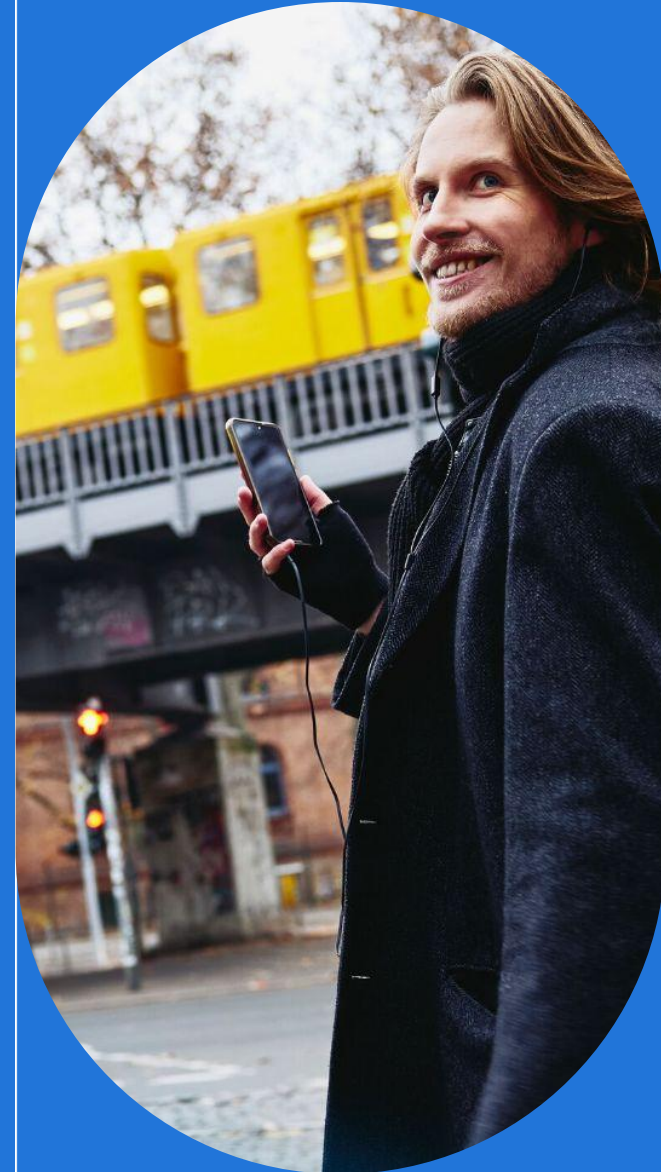
Followed at some distance by a second tier of drivers: reasonable workload, flexible work arrangements, personal growth, health and wellbeing support, and time off for recovery, which all contribute at a relatively similar level.

Gen Z places relatively more emphasis on health and wellbeing support (37%), while Millennials prioritize personal growth and fulfilment (36%). In contrast, older generations place greater weight on time off and recovery (40%), reflecting a shift from development as careers progress.

In Europe, reasonable workload is slightly less decisive, only ranking 4th, while time off (41%) and flexible work arrangements (45%) carry greater weight. North America places more emphasis on easy access to work (31%) while LATAM stands out for its stronger focus on personal growth and fulfilment (44%), while reasonable workload remains less prominent (33%), APAC, meanwhile, shows a higher emphasis on health and wellbeing support, ranking second (40%), reinforcing the importance of support systems alongside work demands.



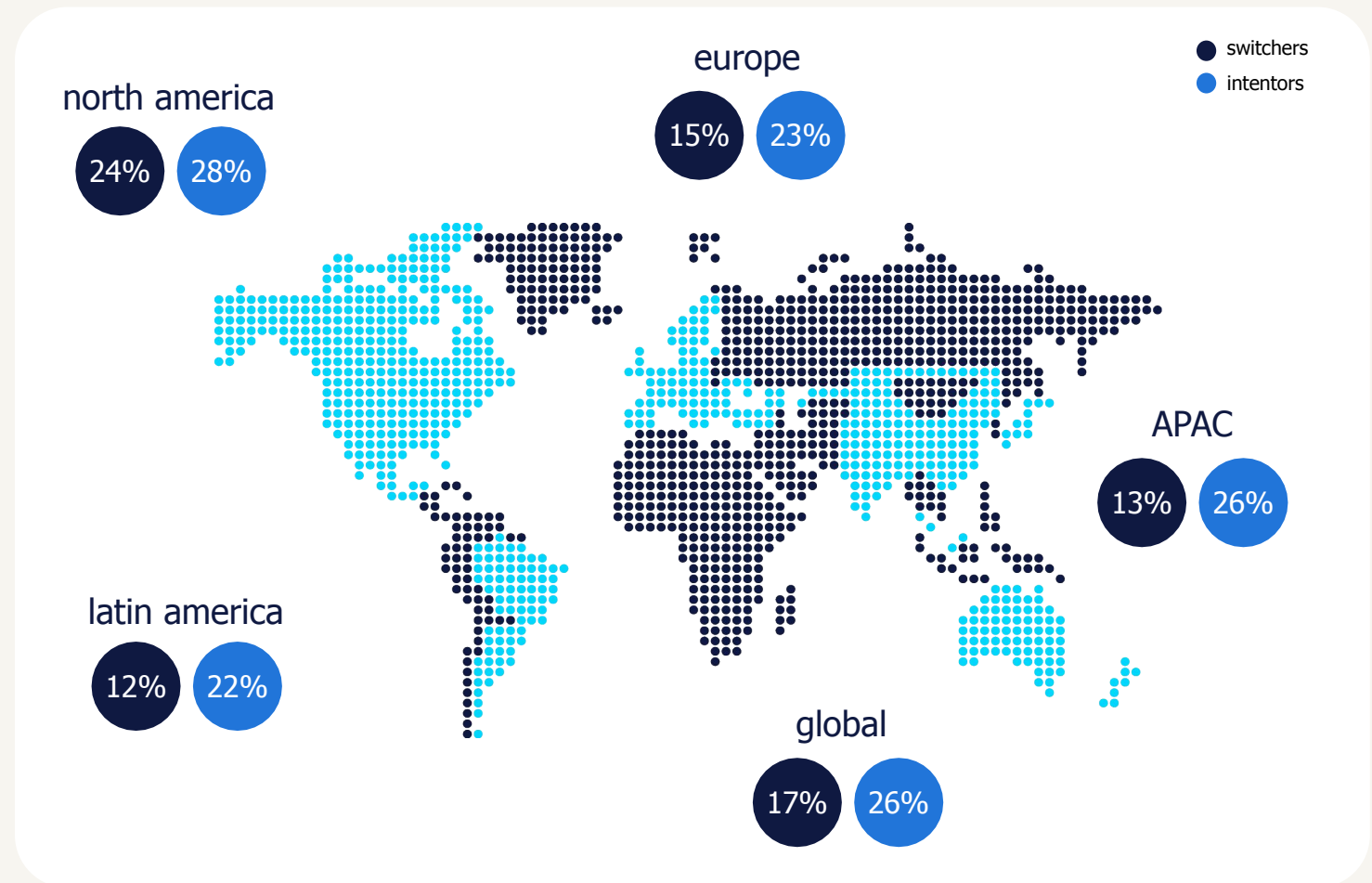
job-switching behaviour in focus.



in the engineering and technology sector, around one in four talent are looking to change employers in the upcoming 6 months.

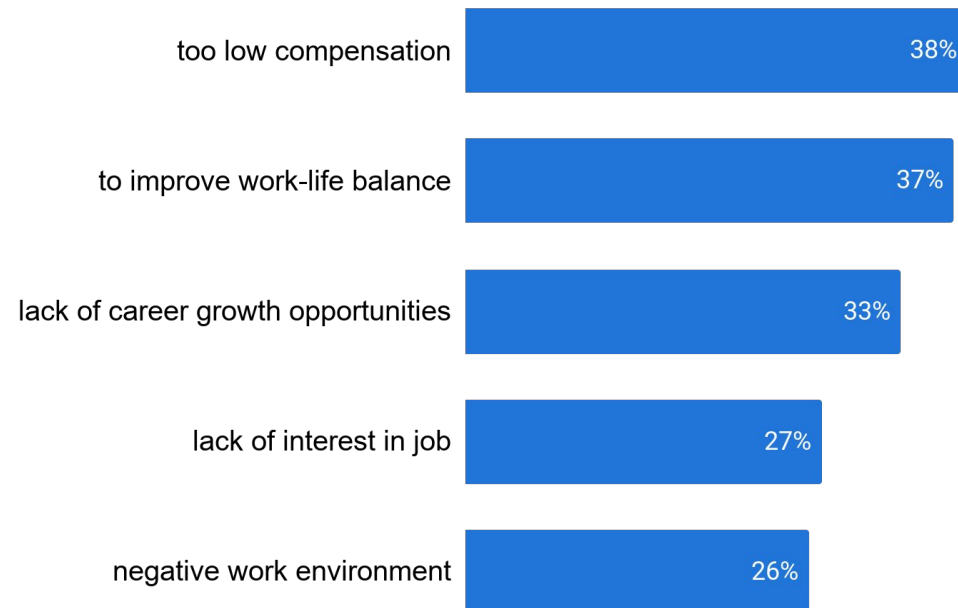
In North America, switching intentions translate more directly into actual job moves, suggesting lower barriers to mobility and a more fluid labour market. Europe, by contrast, shows both lower switching intentions and lower actual mobility, pointing to a more restrained labour market where fewer talent act on their intent to switch. LATAM follows a similar pattern, with both intentions and actual switching below global levels.

APAC presents a different dynamic: while actual switching remains relatively low, intentions to switch are higher and more in line with global levels. This gap suggests underlying dissatisfaction or a greater openness to change that is not fully translating into action, potentially due to structural or market constraints limiting mobility.



the main reasons for switching employers centre on low compensation and the desire for improved work–life balance, closely aligning with what talent value most in the ideal employer profile.

reasons for leaving



A similar pattern is seen with career progression: lack of growth opportunities ranks among the top reasons for leaving, mirroring its importance as a key driver of employer choice.

Work–life balance emerges as the most prominent trigger for younger generations to change employers (38%). In contrast, Baby Boomers place relatively greater emphasis on security, with fear of job loss ranking as the second most important reason to leave (48%), while Gen X broadly aligns with the overall average.

In North America, improving work–life balance ranks as the top reason for leaving (39%), despite not being among the top three drivers in the ideal employer profile. In LATAM, lack of career growth opportunities is the main reason to leave, closely aligned with its high importance in the ideal employer profile. APAC and Europe broadly follow the global pattern, with low compensation remaining the primary driver of switching.



how does it relate to current situation?

the main triggers for leaving appear to align with areas where employers may be relatively under delivering.

reasons to leave

1. too low compensation
2. to improve work-life balance
3. lack of career growth opportunities
4. lack of interest in job
5. negative work environment
6. poor (relation with) management
7. fear of losing my job
8. lack of investment in technology and innovation
9. not equally rewarded
10. work is not easily accessible
11. poor reputation
12. no environmental or social contribution

evaluation of current employer

1. equal opportunities
2. job security
3. easy access to work
4. very good reputation
5. interesting job content
6. pleasant work-atmosphere
7. good work-life balance
8. strong management/leadership
9. state-of-the-art technology
10. salary & benefits
11. career progression
12. contributes to the environment

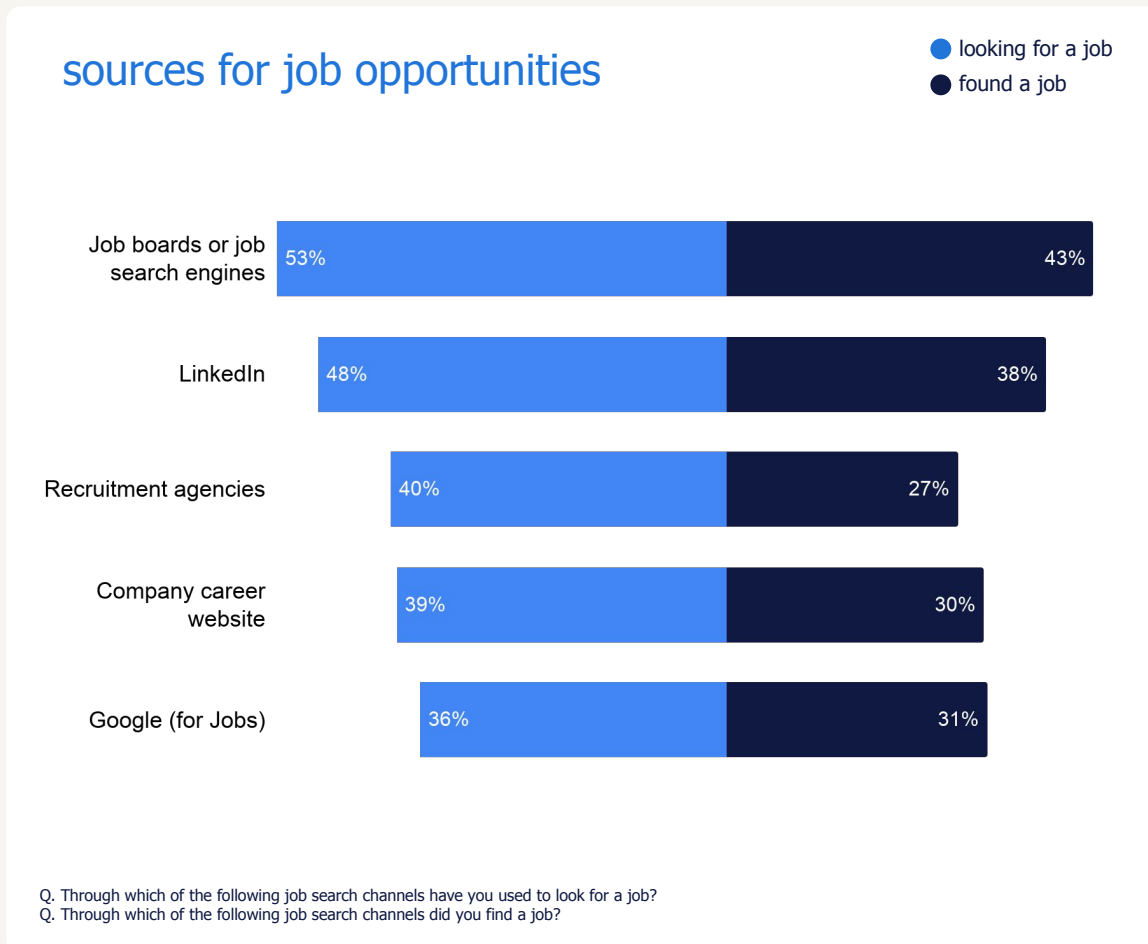
Low compensation emerges as the primary trigger for switching and represents the biggest relative risk area. Work-life balance follows a similar pattern, ranking second as a reason to leave but only 7th in current employer delivery. A comparable dynamic is seen for career progression, which ranks third as a reason to leave but only 11th in the current profile. Together, this suggests a misalignment between what talent value most and where employers are under delivering.

By contrast, areas such as equal opportunities, job security, ease of access to work and strong reputation appear to exceed expectations, ranking highly in the current employer profile despite being less prominent as drivers of attrition.

It is important to note that overall evaluations of current employers remain highly positive, with scores consistently high across all drivers. As differences between drivers are minimal, the ranking should be interpreted with caution.



job boards are the most widely used tool among job seekers in the engineering sector, offering the broadest reach.



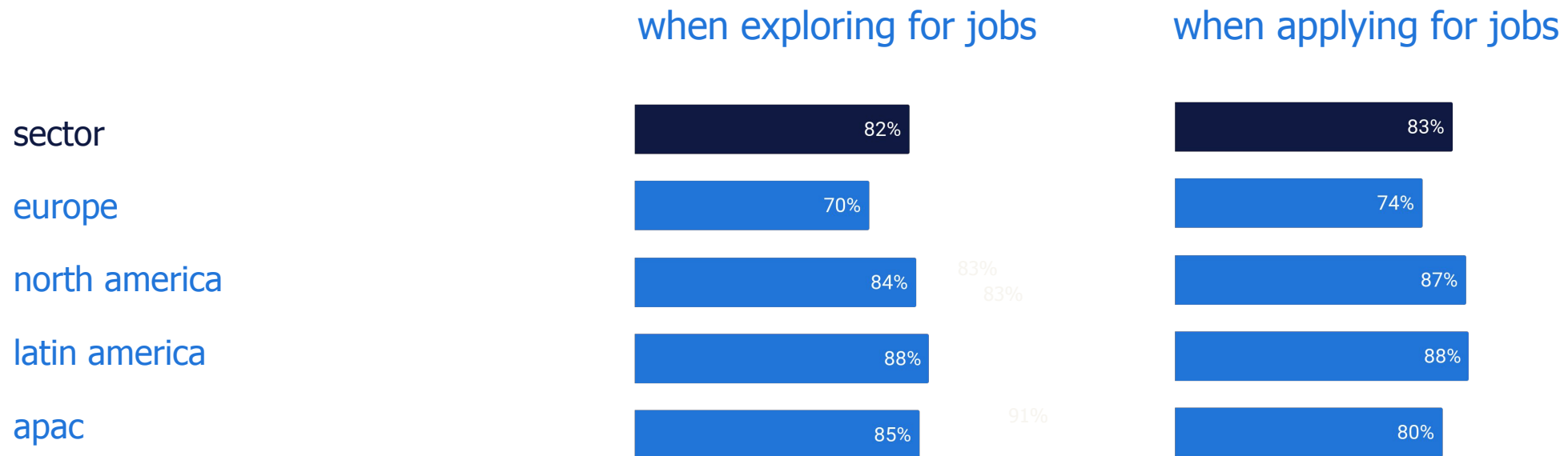
LinkedIn follows closely, with nearly half of talent using it during their job search. Recruitment agencies, company career websites, and Google for Jobs also play a role, showing similar levels of conversion.

Older talent place greater emphasis on staffing agencies (33%), ranking them fourth when searching for a job compared to ninth overall. Among older generations, personal connections rank third (31%), followed by company career websites (26%). For younger generations, Google for Jobs ranks third (32%), alongside personal connections (32%), highlighting a stronger reliance on accessible and network-driven channels.

In North America, social media plays a stronger role in the job search (37%) and is also highly effective in securing a job (34%), followed by personal connections (28%), while LinkedIn plays a comparatively smaller role in conversion. In Europe, Google for Jobs is more prominent in the search phase (33%), while LinkedIn stands out as a key channel for both reach and conversion. In LATAM and APAC, patterns broadly align, with company career websites also ranking strongly among the most effective channels. APAC stands out for its broader use of channels overall, with talent engaging across multiple platforms rather than relying on a few dominant ones.

importance of in person contact.

In-person contact remains highly valued in this sector, with around four in five talent preferring it throughout both the exploration and application stages. While it plays a slightly less central role in Europe, it is significantly more important in North America and especially in LATAM, highlighting stronger expectations for personal interaction in these markets.





closing remarks.

The report has shown the ongoing dynamism within the priorities and perspectives of the global workforce in the engineering sector, while also pinpointing key areas where employers can enhance their strategies or focus their efforts.

It provides just a glimpse into the wealth of insights available through our Employer Brand Research, both globally and locally, and underscores the enduring importance of cultivating a strong employer brand in today's competitive landscape.

Detailed data and deeper insights into sub-group analysis and the specializations are available in our local market reports, designed to help organizations stay informed and remain ahead in an ever-evolving marketplace.



appendix.

background
information.



34 markets surveyed.

covering more than 75% of the global economy



argentina	chile	hungary	the netherlands	spain
australia	china	india	new zealand	sweden
austria	czech republic	italy	norway	switzerland
belgium	france	japan	poland	united kingdom
brazil	germany	luxembourg	portugal	united states
canada	greece	malaysia	romania	uruguay
denmark	hong kong SAR	mexico	singapore	

a representative employer brand research based on perceptions of the general audience. Optimizing more than 25 years of successful employer branding insights.

an independent survey with more than 160,000 respondents and 6,400 companies surveyed worldwide.

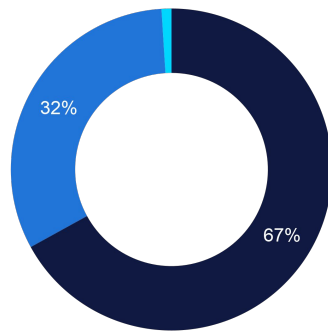
sample

- a total of 10,716 interviews among engineering talent worldwide
- aged 18 to retirement age
- representative on gender
- overrepresentation of age 25– 44
- comprised of students, employed and unemployed workforce

sample composition in engineering sector report.

socio-demographics, education, region

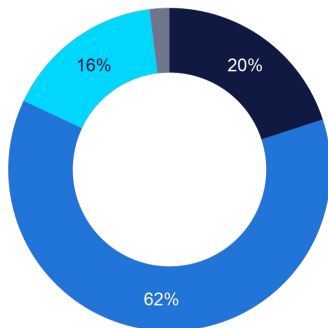
gender



- male
- female
- other*

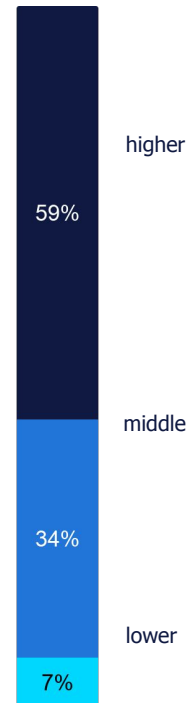
* other is comprised of all other gender identities and people who prefer not to answer the question

age



- Gen Z (1997-2012)
- Millennials (1981-1996)
- Gen X (1965-1980)
- Baby boomers (1946-1964)

education

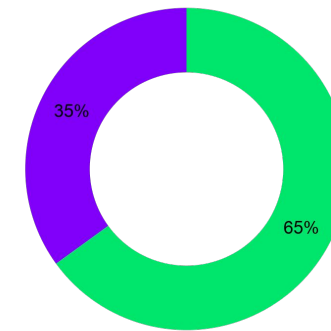


higher

middle

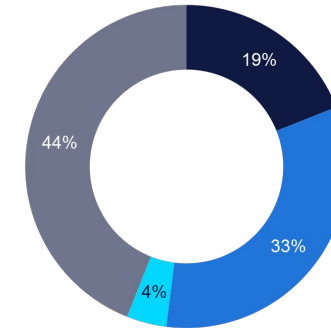
lower

specializations



- operational
- professional
- digital

region



- Europe
- North America
- Latin America
- APAC

thank
you.



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