employer brand research 2026

finance professionals sector report.

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shaping the future workforce in the finance sector.

As global workforce dynamics continue to shift, talent in the finance 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 finance 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 finance 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.

executive summary.

talent satisfaction is high in the finance sector, indicating generally positive experiences with current employers.

In the finance sector, salary and benefits stand out as the most valued attribute of the ideal employer profile across all regions. It is not only the most important driver, but also the top priority, reinforcing that pay acts as a primary decision trigger rather than a baseline expectation. Beyond pay, work–life balance, career progression, equal opportunities, and job security follow closely.

Looking at the top three drivers across regions, some notable differences emerge. LATAM deviates from the overall pattern: work–life balance is less of a priority, with a stronger focus on career progression, followed by a pleasant work atmosphere. In Europe job security ranks third. This suggests that while pay is universally important, LATAM places greater emphasis on growth and day-to-day work environment, whereas Europe leans more towards stability.

Overall satisfaction with current employers remains relatively high, but declines with age. Regionally, APAC records the highest satisfaction levels, while Europe scores lowest, consistent with a broader tendency for more critical evaluations. Employers perform strongest on job security, where satisfaction is highest, even though it is a secondary priority in most regions and only ranks among the top three drivers in Europe.

There are no clear areas of underperformance, as even the lowest-rated attributes receive majority-positive evaluations. However, gaps remain between what finance talent values in an ideal employer and what they experience in reality. The largest gaps are seen in salary and benefits and career progression, both highly valued attributes where delivery lags behind expectations.

72%

of European talent rate their current employer highly on providing long-term job security, making it the highest-rated driver in the region.

on average 83%

of talent in APAC rate their current employer positively.

job security and work–life balance are shaped differently across regions and generations

Among professionals in the finance sector, job security is primarily anchored in reliable pay and benefits. However, this varies across regions and generations. For mid-career talent, recognition and development play a growing role, while older talent places greater trust in fair and consistent employment practices. Europe and APAC closely follow the global pattern.

In contrast, LATAM links job security more strongly to future-oriented signals such as performance recognition and learning opportunities, indicating that talent feels secure when they see a clear path forward. North America places greater weight on organisational and financial stability, reflecting a more institution-led view of job security.

A good day-to-day work environment is the strongest contributor to work–life balance across generations. Gen Z complements this with wellbeing and flexibility, while Boomers define balance through manageable workload and personal fulfilment.

Europe stands out, with flexible work arrangements emerging as the most important driver, followed by work environment and workload. In Latin America, work–life balance is framed differently, with stronger emphasis on fulfilment, growth, and wellbeing rather than flexibility.

49%

of european talent associates a good work-life balance with flexible work arrangements, compared to only 25% of LATAM talent.

51%

of finance talent in North America cite organisational and financial stability is a key factor in strengthening their sense of job security.

reasons for leaving closely align with the areas talent values most and where current employers show the largest delivery gaps.

42%

of North American talent would leave their current employer to improve work-life balance.

42%

of LATAM and 35% of APAC talent cite a lack of career growth as a primary reason to leave their current employer.

In the finance sector, labour market dynamics and mobility patterns point to clear differences across regions. North America stands out as the most fluid market, with high levels of both recent job switching and intention to move. This combination suggests strong external demand and high confidence among finance professionals that changing roles is both feasible and attractive. Europe and Latin America broadly align with average global mobility levels, while APAC's lower switching activity indicates a more stable employment environment.

Across regions, the drivers shaping employer choice are consistent: salary and benefits, work–life balance, and career growth sit at the core of what finance talent values. Importantly, these priorities closely mirror the areas where employers struggle most to fully meet expectations. Mobility is therefore less about broad dissatisfaction and more about specific gaps. These gaps vary by region and generation. Younger talent are more likely to leave to improve work–life balance, while older are more likely to exit due to insufficient pay and leadership quality. Regionally, career growth emerges as the key pressure point in LATAM and APAC, while work–life balance is most prominent in North America. In Europe, dissatisfaction with pay is particularly pronounced, reinforcing compensation as a critical vulnerability.

Finance talent is confident and selective rather than disengaged. Retention risk increases where pay and progression fall short of local and generational expectations, highlighting the limits of one-size-fits-all strategies.

key drivers.

top five reasons finance talent choose an employer.

Salary and benefits is the primary driver for employer choice in the finance sector. The remaining top drivers cluster closely with minimal gaps, indicating near-equal importance and suggesting that finance talent seeks a balanced employer offer of competitive pay and non-material benefits rather than trading them off. Furthermore, women consistently rate all top drivers higher overall, whereas Gen Z assigns lower importance on average.

salary & benefits

58%

Salary & benefits plays a more decisive role in shaping employer choice in LATAM (66%), while in APAC (56%) it is least influential. Salary & benefits is the top driver across all generations, but its importance increases with age, rising from 51% among Gen Z to a peak of 73% among Baby Boomers, where it clearly dominates employer choice.

work-life balance

53%

Work–life balance is a key driver overall, though its importance varies across generations and regions. It resonates most with Millennials and Gen X, while it plays a somewhat smaller role for Gen Z (ranking third, alongside equal opportunities) and Baby Boomers (ranking fourth). Geographically, it is less important in LATAM, where it comes in fifth overall.

career progression

51%

While Gen X (55%) values career progression most in absolute terms and Baby Boomers (37%) least, its relative priority is highest among Gen Z, where it ranks second compared to fourth for Gen X.
In LATAM it is both highly valued (62%) and also in relative terms ranked second overall.

equal opportunities

48%

Across generations, equal opportunities is most valued by Baby Boomers (57%) and Millennials (51%), while it holds less importance for Gen Z (42%).
Regionally, it is most important in LATAM and North America, while it is less of a top of mind driver in Europe (43%), where it does not feature among the top five drivers.

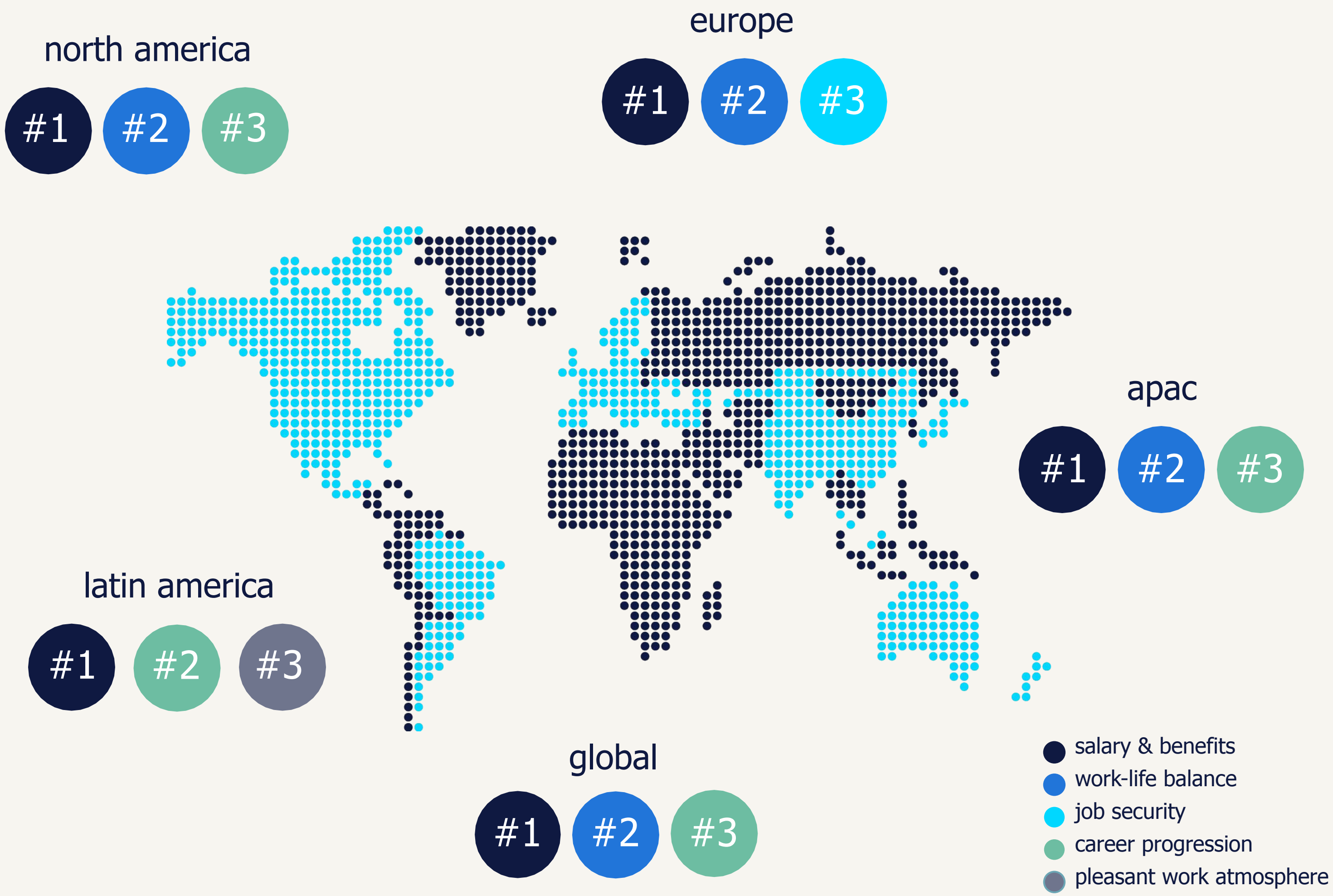
job security

47%

Job security is most important for Gen X and Baby Boomers (both 56%), while Gen Z places the least emphasis on it (41%). Within generations, it plays a particularly strong role for Gen X, where it sits on par with work-life balance as a key priority.
Regionally, job security carries the most weight in Europe (54%) and LATAM (55%), while it is less prominent in APAC (42%).

Q. Thinking about your ideal employer, please pick those elements that this organization should most definitely have?

the ideal employer profile differs across regions



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

Attractive salary & benefits is the top employer driver across regions in the finance sector.

Work-life balance ranks second overall, but is a notable exception in LATAM, where it falls outside the top three and even outside the top five.

Globally, career progression is the third most important driver, a pattern mirrored in North America and APAC, while in Europe job security takes its place. Latin America stands apart, with a pleasant work atmosphere emerging as a uniquely high priority.

This shows that while pay is universally important, LATAM differs in prioritising growth and day-to-day work environment over balance, whereas Europe leans towards stability.

explanation key drivers' relative priority.

explore not highly important overall but rank high in relative priority. Explore why they resonate - could signal a shift in expectations or niche needs	**focus** the key drivers that matter most and are top priorities. Concentrate resources here - these define the employer brand
monitor these drivers have low impact and low priority. Avoid major investment - monitor occasionally for changes	**sustain** these drivers are important but not currently prioritized. Keep them strong and monitor trends - they could become critical later

priority

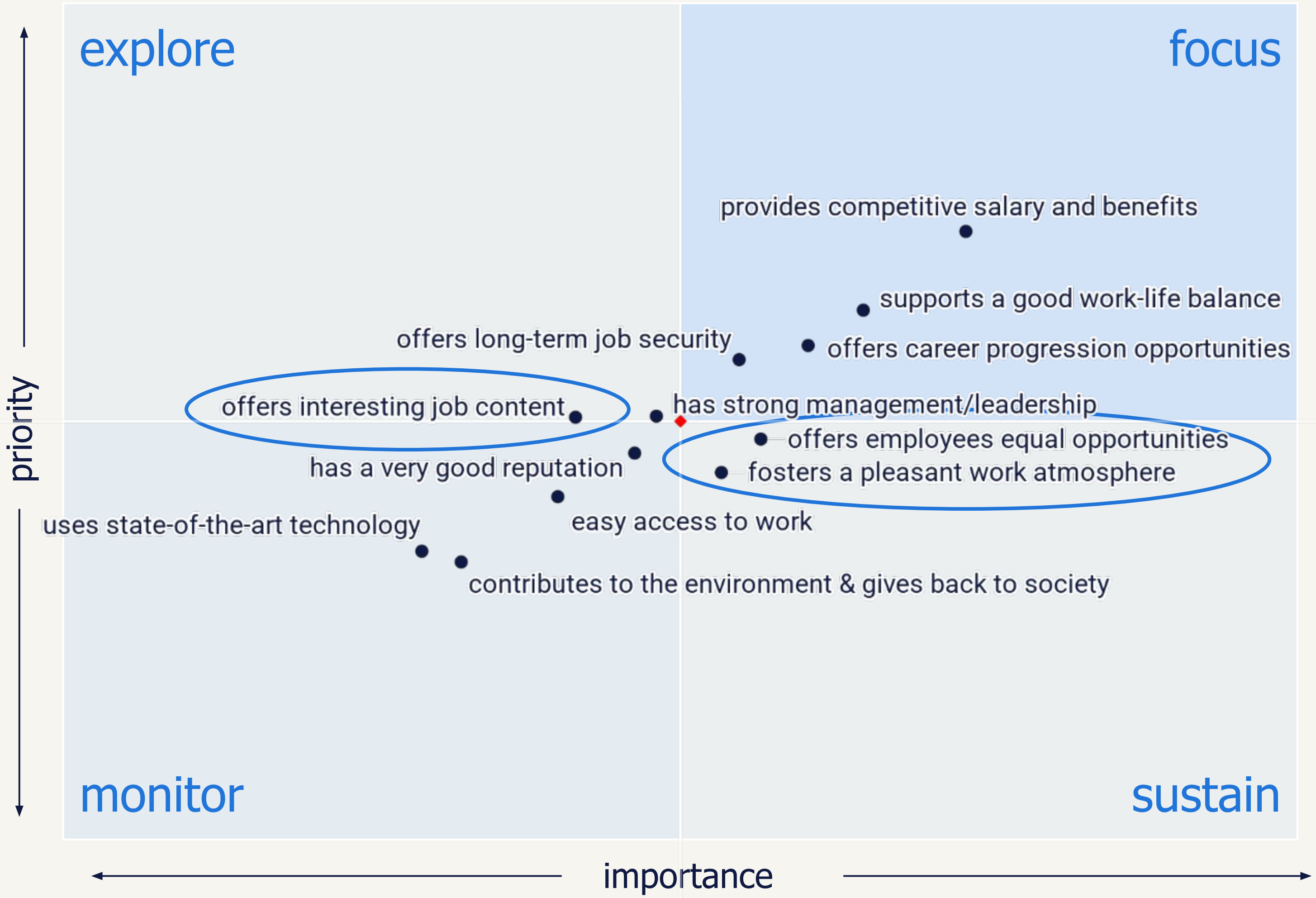
importance

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

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.

key drivers' relative priority.



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

Competitive salary & benefits clearly anchors employer choice in the finance sector. It is not only the most important driver, but also the highest in priority, reinforcing pay as the primary decision trigger rather than a baseline expectation.

Beyond pay, the remaining top-five drivers largely cluster in the Focus quadrant. Work-life balance, career progression and job security sit close together in both importance and priority, forming a core package of expectations. Equal opportunities is the exception: while part of the top five, it ranks lower in priority and aligns with a pleasant work atmosphere in the Sustain quadrant. This suggests these factors are widely expected, but mainly influence employer choice when they are absent rather than actively differentiating employers.

In contrast, interesting job content and strong management & leadership sit in the Explore quadrant. Despite lower importance, their relatively higher priority signals appeal, these drivers can tip decisions for specific talent segments or moments of choice, pointing to emerging or niche expectations rather than universal needs.

how finance talent rate their current employer.

perceptions of current employers in the finance sector are broadly positive.

The five highest-rated drivers among employees in the finance sector are long-term job security, which is rated most favourably, followed closely by company reputation, equal opportunities, easy access to work, and work-life balance. The small differences between these factors suggest they are experienced as a closely connected set of employer strengths rather than clearly differentiated attributes.

Gen Z rates their current employer most positively, with satisfaction declining gradually with age.

Regionally, APAC shows the highest satisfaction (83%) with their current employer, while Europe is the most critical, with the lowest satisfaction levels (65%), consistent with the broader pattern of European talent being more critical of their employers.

the largest expectation gap is around career progression and pay.

Despite generally high ratings of current employers in the finance sector, gaps emerge when comparing what talent prioritises with what employers deliver.

Career progression ranks third in the ideal employer profile, yet falls to 10th out of 12 in employer delivery. Overall, 74% of finance talent feel their employer delivers adequately on progression, but satisfaction is lower among Baby Boomers (64%) and in LATAM (64%), where expectations around advancement are particularly high. A similar pattern is visible for competitive salary & benefits. Satisfaction stands at 76%, driven by younger generations (81%). In contrast, Baby Boomers report significantly lower satisfaction (62%).

Regionally, satisfaction with pay is strongest in APAC and weakest in Europe, reinforcing persistent generational and regional gaps on this attribute.

81%

of Gen Z rate their current employer favourably, with consistently higher evaluations across nearly all drivers.

8 in 10

talent rate their current employer positvely in terms of job security.

Q. How would you rate your own employer on each of the attributes below, on a scale from 1 (not at all true) to 5 (completely true)?

key driver deepdive.

elements that reinforce a strong sense of job security.

in the finance sector, a strong sense of job security is most strongly driven by reliable pay and benefits.

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

Across generations, reliable pay remains the most important contributor to job security. However, secondary drivers vary: Millennials place greater importance on performance recognition (44%), while Baby Boomers prioritise fair and consistent employment practices (48%), with transparent and trustworthy communication (32%) becoming less relevant. Gen Z and Gen X largely align with the overall average pattern.

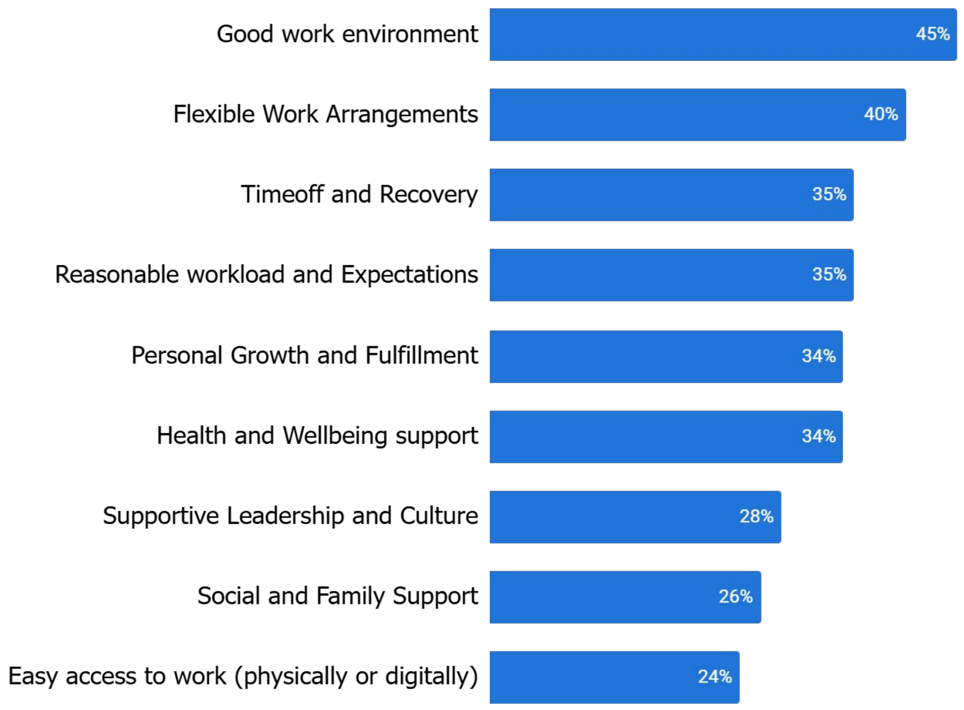
Europe and APAC closely follow the global model. Latin America deviates from this: while reliable pay and benefits (50%) and organisational stability remain the two most important drivers, performance recognition (50%) and learning & development (40%) play a more prominent role, while trustworthy communication is less central (38%). This suggests that in LATAM, job security is more closely associated with growth opportunities and recognition. In North America organisational and financial stability (51%) overtakes reliable pay (50%) as the strongest contributor to job security, followed closely by fair and consistent employment practices (45%). This points to a more institution-led view of job security, grounded in confidence in the organisation itself rather than day-to-day financial reliability.

Q. What are the top three factors that most significantly contribute to a strong sense of job security?

elements that strengthen work-life balance.

a good work environment is the strongest enabler of work-life balance, closely followed by flexible work arrangements.

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

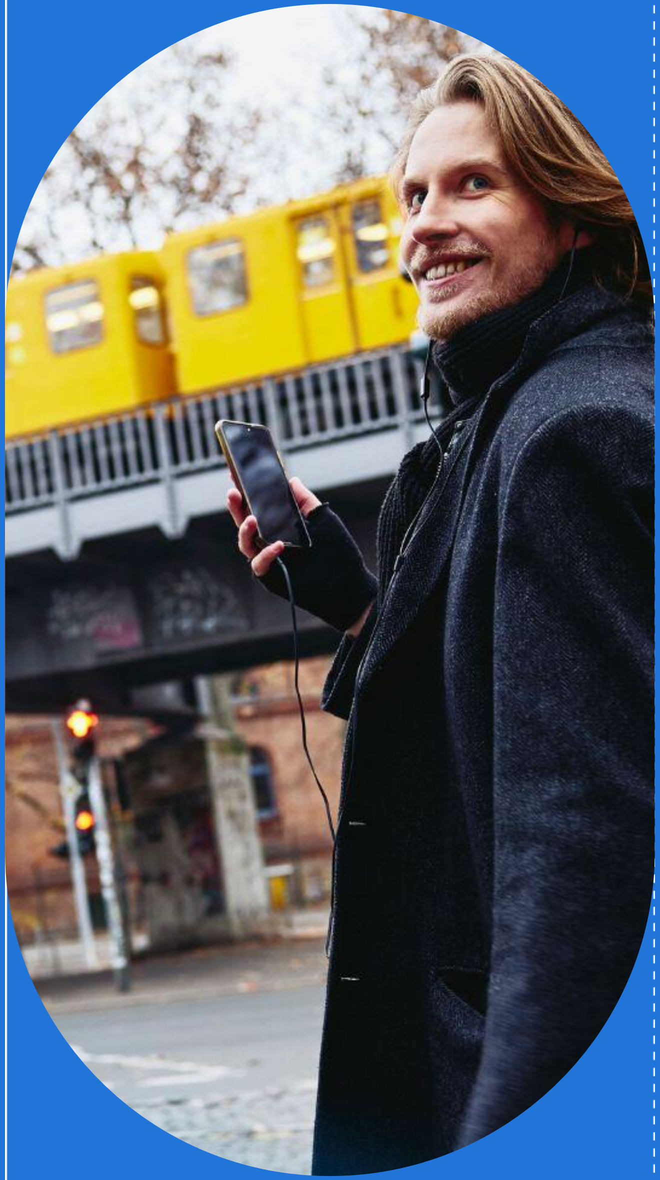


While a good work environment remains the top driver across generations, what changes by life stage is how overall balance is achieved: Gen Z complements this with wellbeing and flexibility, while Baby Boomers define balance through manageability of workload and personal fulfilment. This suggests a shift from support-led balance early in career to sustainability-led balance later on.

Regionally, Europe stands out. Flexible work arrangements emerge as the most important driver uniquely in Europe (49%), unlike other regions where a good work environment remains the primary factor. Europe's top three also includes a reasonable workload and expectations (39%), reinforcing a more structure- and control-oriented definition of balance. By contrast, in Latin America, work-life balance is defined very differently: personal growth and fulfilment plays a decisive role (45%), ranking second, followed by health and wellbeing support (36%). Easy access to work also carries more weight here (29%), sitting mid-ranking, while flexible work arrangements are of comparatively low importance (25%).

Q. What are the top three elements that most significantly enhance a healthy work-life balance?

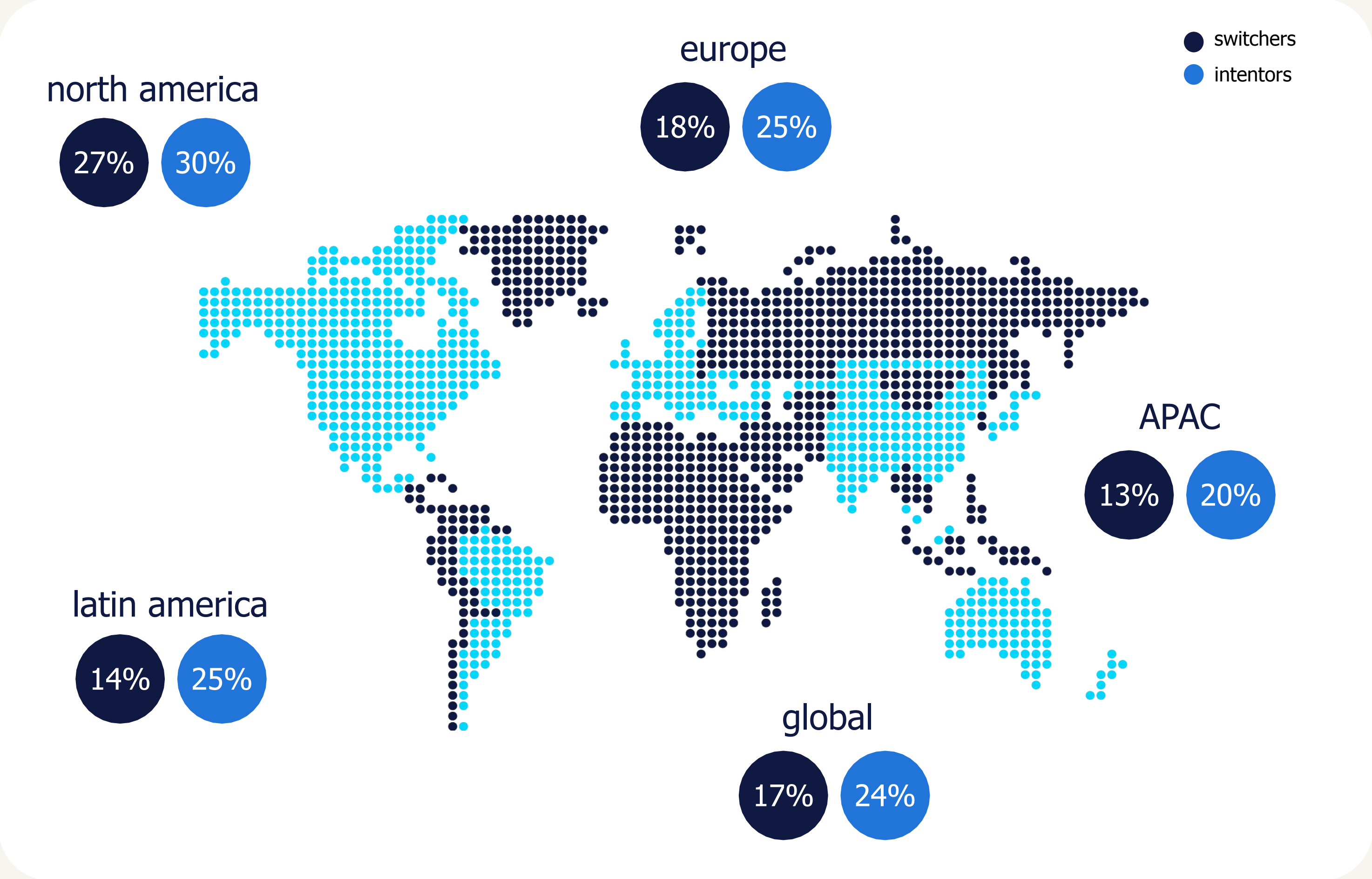
job-switching behaviour in focus.



1 in 4 talent in the finance sector intend to switch employers in the upcoming 6 months.

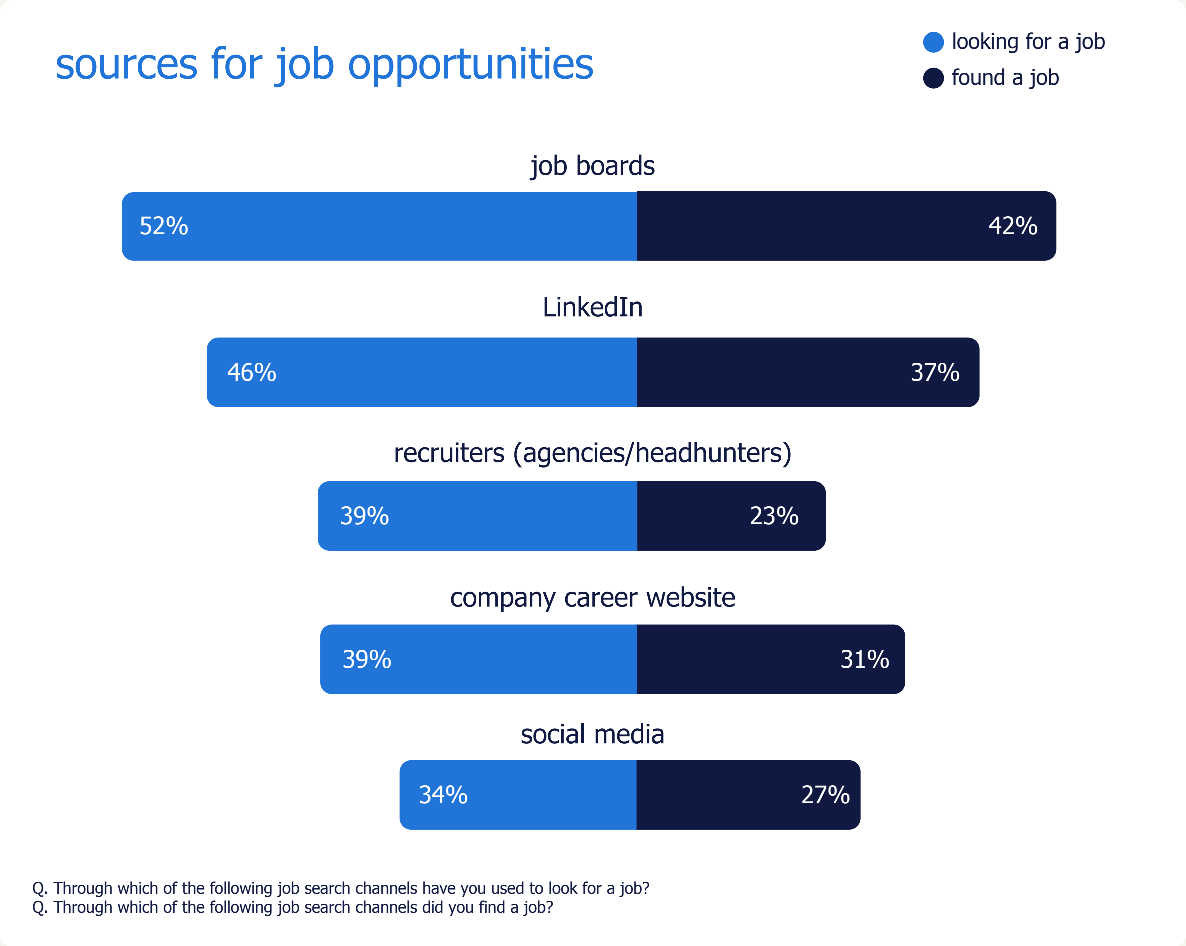
North America stands out with the highest levels of job switching and job-search success within the finance sector. Around a third of the workforce plans to look for a new role within the near furture, and a similar share has recently switched, well above the global average. This combination signals a highly fluid labour market with strong demand enabling frequent and successful job moves.

Europe and Latin America remain broadly in line with the global average in both switching and intended mobility, pointing to more balanced labour markets. APAC shows the lowest levels of switching and intention to switch, suggesting a more stable employment environment with weaker external pull factors.



Q. Did you change jobs in the last 6 months?
Q. Do you plan to change jobs within the next 6 months?

job boards are the most widely used tool among job seekers in the finance sector.



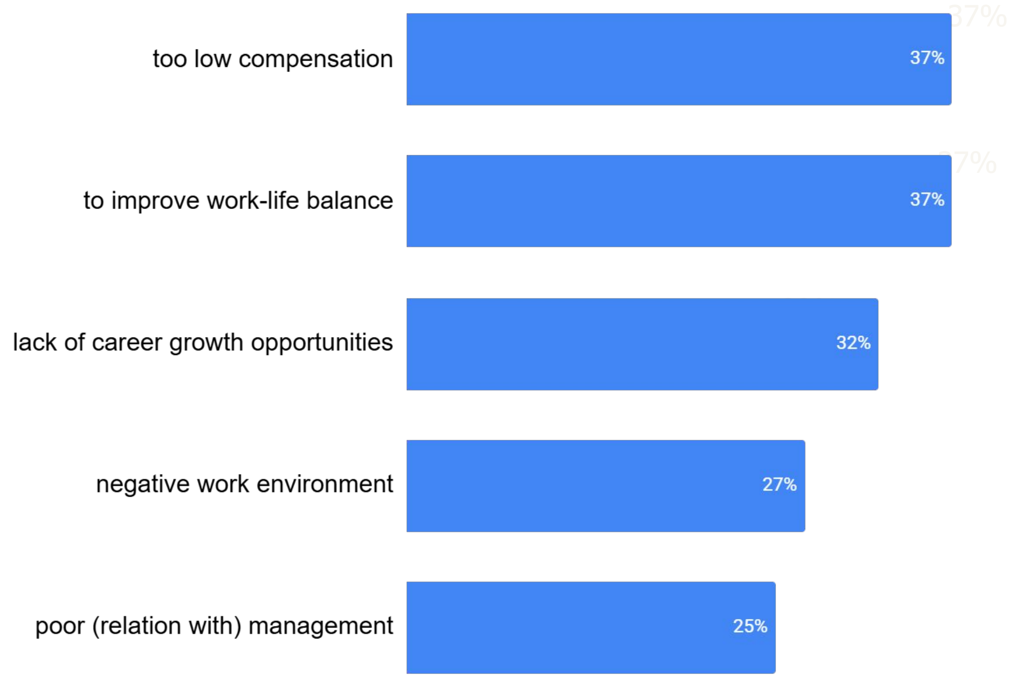
Generational differences in channel use are limited, suggesting broadly similar job-search behaviour across age groups.

Clear regional patterns do emerge. APAC finance talent tends to use a wider mix of channels when looking for a job, with relatively strong reliance on company career websites and LinkedIn alongside job boards. Compared to Europe, LATAM and North America, job-search success rates are also higher in APAC, suggesting that finance talent not only uses more channels, but is also more effective in leveraging them. In contrast, Europeans concentrate their search on fewer channels, most notably job boards, LinkedIn and recruitment agencies.

Among finance talent using social media, North America stands out for its passive discovery pattern, with candidates more often encountering job opportunities than actively searching for them across channels.

insufficient compensation and work–life balance concerns are the leading reasons finance talent consider leaving their current employer.

reasons for leaving



Completing the top 3 reasons to leave is a lack of career growth opportunities. These drivers closely mirror the most valued elements of the ideal employer profile, highlighting a strong alignment between talent expectations and the key triggers of turnover.

Generationally, improving work–life balance is the primary concern for younger generations (37%), followed by too low pay (36%). While older generations place greater emphasis on adequate pay (40%), followed by improving work-life balance (36%). Poor leadership also plays a larger role for older talent, who cite it more often as a reason to leave (29% vs. 24%). Overall, this suggests that younger talent is more likely to leave when work-life balance expectations are not met, while older talent disengages when pay falls short.

Regionally, lack of career growth opportunities emerges as the main trigger for switching in both Latin America (42%) and APAC (36%), while too low compensation ranks only third in both regions. In contrast, in North America, improving work-life balance is the strongest driver of attrition (42%).

Q. For what reasons did you or would you decide to leave your employer?

how does it relate to current situation?

talent is most likely to leave when gaps persist around pay and career growth.

reasons to leave

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

evaluation of current employer

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

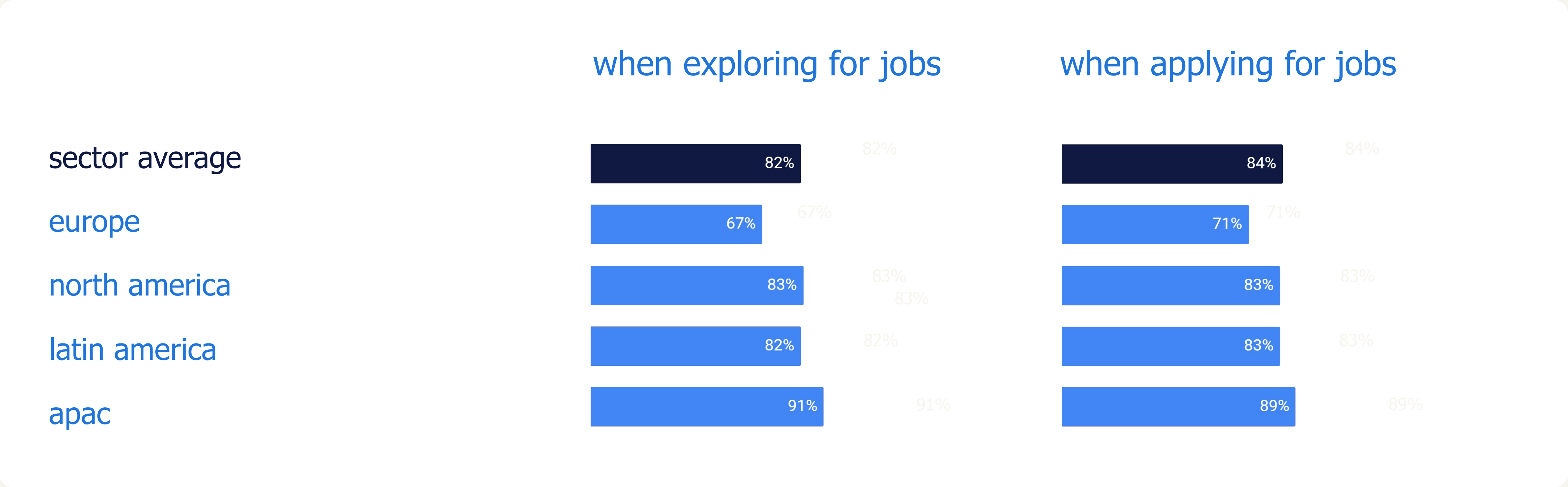
Notably, the top six reasons for leaving all align with areas where current employers are perceived to be falling short, highlighting that attrition is closely linked to unmet expectations. The largest delivery gaps relate to career growth opportunities and compensation, both of which also rank among the top three reasons talent consider leaving.

Too low compensation is particularly salient for Europeans, who report the highest dissatisfaction with their current employer on this dimension (63%) and cite it as their primary reason for leaving. Career progression, meanwhile, represents a more immediate pressure point in both Europe and LATAM. Employers score relatively poorly on this driver in both regions, ranking ninth overall, and it is cited as the leading reason to leave in LATAM and the second-most common reason among European talent.

Q. How would you rate your own employer on each of the attributes below, on a scale from 1 (not at all true) to 5 (completely true)?
Q. Thinking about your ideal employer, please pick those elements that this organization should most definitely have?

importance of in person contact.

Overall, the importance of human contact remains high, with around 8 in 10 talent preferring personal interaction when exploring jobs and during the application process. Europe places relatively less emphasis on human contact, particularly at the exploration stage, while APAC stands out with very strong preference, where around 9 in 10 value personal contact. This suggests that while digital journeys are broadly accepted, expectations around human interaction remain especially strong.



Q. How important is it to connect with a person during your job search? - when exploring new jobs & when applying for jobs

closing remarks.

The report has shown the ongoing dynamism within the priorities and perspectives of the global workforce in the finance 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.

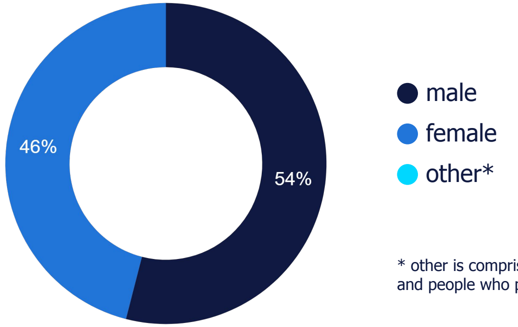
sample

- a total of 8,127 interviews among finance 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 finance sector report.

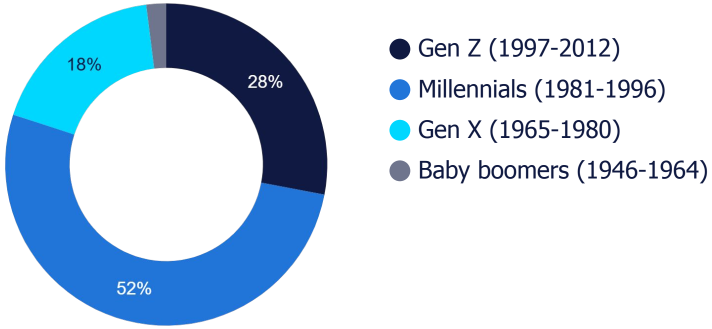
socio-demographics, education, region

gender



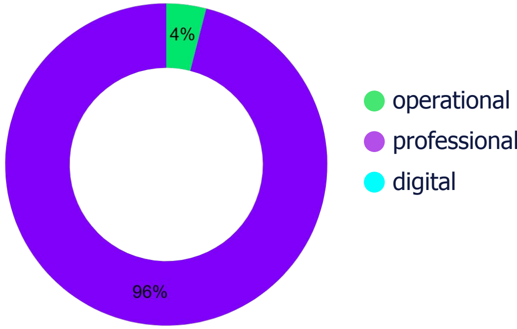
* other is comprised of all other gender identities
and people who prefer not to answer the question

age

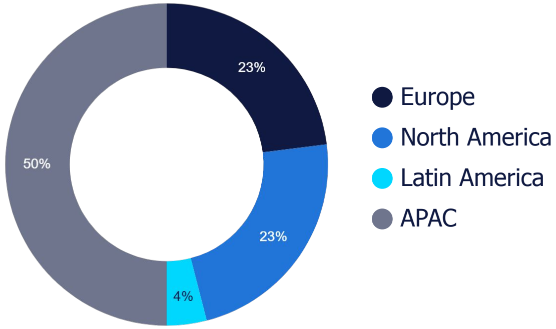


education

specializations



region



thank you.

randstad

partner for talent.