

employer brand research 2026

IT sector report.



randstad

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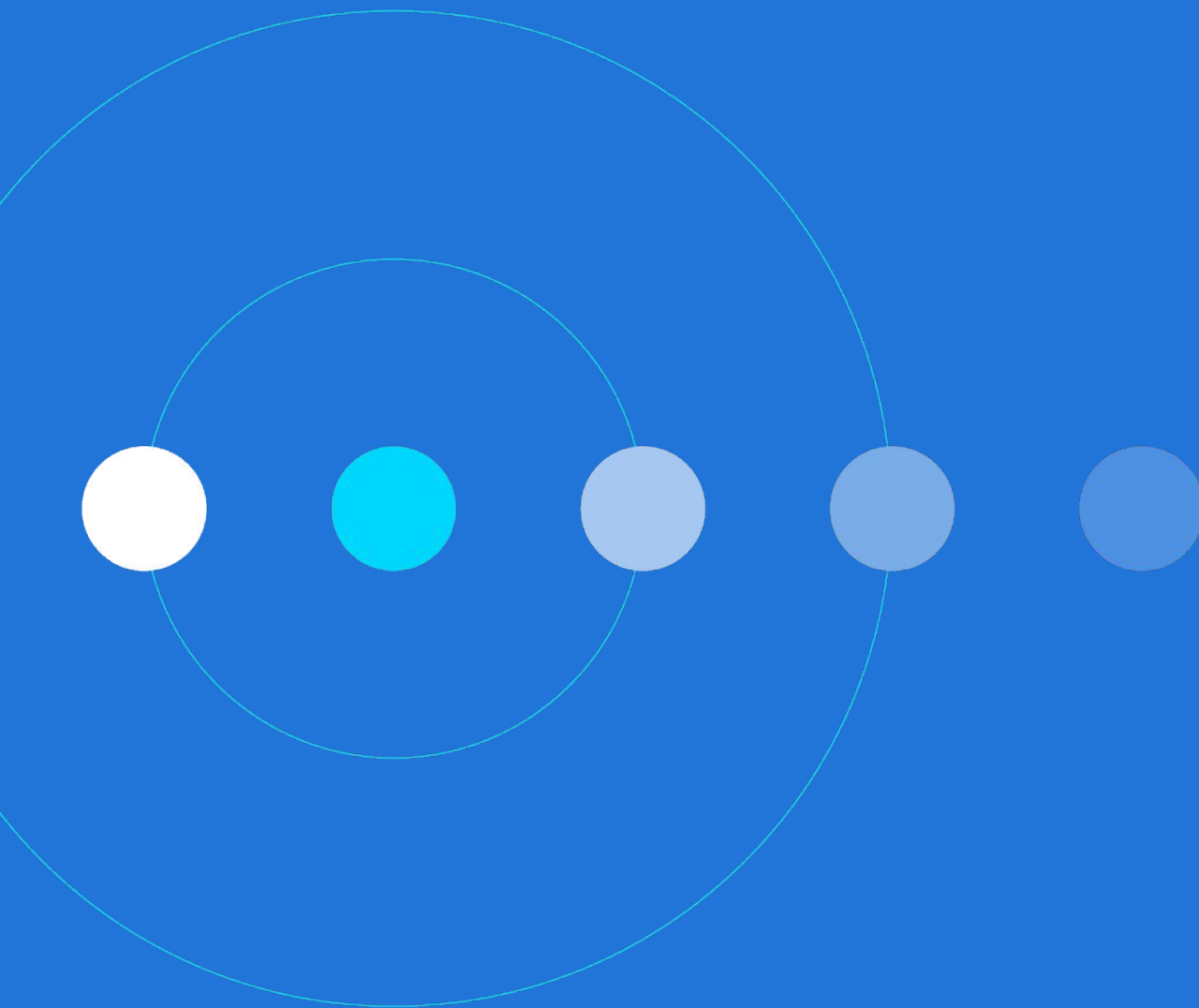


shaping the future workforce in the IT sector.

As global workforce dynamics continue to shift, talent in the IT 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 IT 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 IT sector and offers actionable insights to help organizations 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

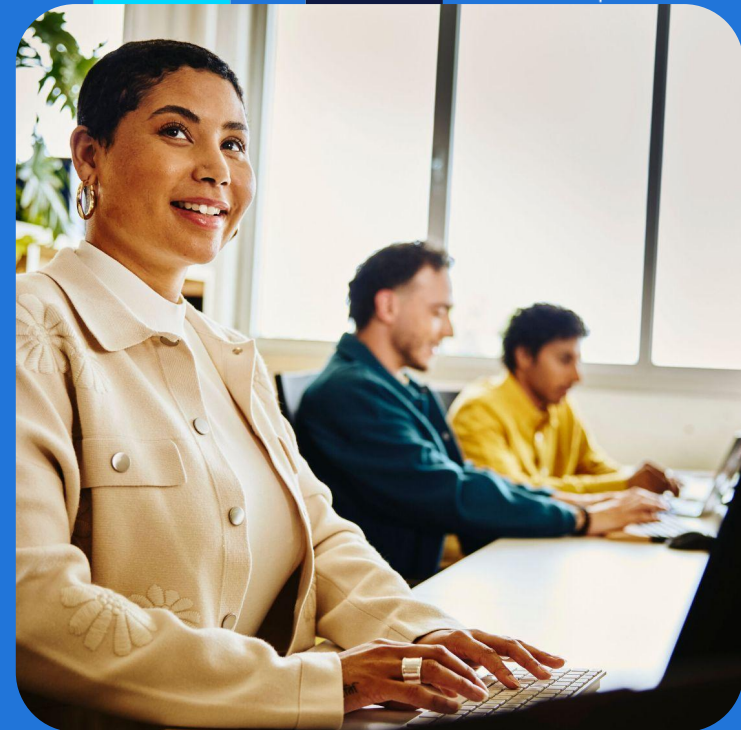
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executive summary.



Over 8 in 10 IT talent rate their current employer positively, highlighting consistently high levels of satisfaction across the sector.

Salary and benefits stand out as the most important and most prioritized driver in the IT sector, with career progression and work-life balance following closely, indicating that while pay anchors choice, talent still weigh multiple factors.

While salary and benefits remain central across all regions, what strengthens the employer proposition differs. North America places stronger emphasis on career progression, pointing to a more advancement-driven mindset, while Europe prioritises work-life balance and a positive atmosphere, reflecting greater focus on day-to-day experience. In APAC, the proposition is reinforced by work environment alongside pay and progression, whereas in LATAM equal opportunities play a more defining role, highlighting a stronger emphasis on fairness as part of the overall employer offering.

Current employer evaluations are consistently strong, with job security performing highest (85%), followed by work atmosphere and work-life balance. Overall satisfaction is high and broadly aligned across generations, with limited variation between drivers. Regionally, North America reports the highest satisfaction (90%), while Europe scores somewhat lower (73%), reflecting a more critical evaluation rather than weaker performance.

Delivery strengths vary by audience, stronger on experience and growth for younger talent, and on stability and credibility for older groups, while regionally, Europe leans towards lifestyle factors, North America towards engagement, and APAC towards structural drivers such as pay and leadership.



81%

of European talent rate their current employer highly on easy access to work, making it the best-rated driver in this region.

55%

of North American talent value career progression in their ideal employer, highlighting its strong role as a key driver in this region.

job security and work-life balance are built on financial stability and daily wellbeing.

In the IT sector, a strong sense of job security is mostly driven by reliable pay and benefits, consistent across regions and generations. Reliable pay is especially important for Gen X (61%) and LATAM (66%), followed by organisational stability and performance recognition. Beyond this core set, differences emerge in how security is defined. For Gen Z, transparent and trustworthy communication plays a more decisive role, ranking second (42%). For Millennials, performance and recognition carry relatively more weight, linking security more closely to feeling valued, while Gen X rely more strongly on the traditional pillars of pay and stability. Regionally, Europe places relatively more emphasis on transparent communication as part of job security, whereas in other regions security remains more firmly anchored in financial reliability and organisational strength.

A healthy work-life balance is mainly shaped by a good work environment, supported by flexibility, recovery time and manageable workloads. While this foundation is consistent, differences emerge in how balance is achieved. Gen Z place relatively more emphasis on social and family support, suggesting a broader view of balance beyond work. Millennials rely more on flexible work arrangements, while Gen X place greater importance on time off and reasonable workload, reflecting a stronger focus on sustainability and recovery.

Regionally, the same pattern holds but with different levers: Europe places the greatest emphasis on flexibility, North America combines flexibility with social support, and in APAC balance is more closely linked to time off and recovery.



47%

of Millennials link job security to performance recognition and career continuity.

35%

of North American talent link social and family support to work-life balance, highlighting its relatively stronger role in shaping balance in this region.

talent mobility remains contained, but intent to move highlights growing retention pressure.

41%

of European talent consider leaving their current employer due to low compensation, making it the leading trigger in this region.

Job switching in the IT sector remains moderate: while switching intent exceeds actual movement, this gap varies by region. North America stands out, with intentions more likely to translate into actual job moves, pointing to a more fluid labour market. In Europe and especially LATAM show a clear drop-off, pointing to constraints despite strong intent. In contrast, APAC remains more stable, with switching levels below average and intentions and behaviour closely aligned.

Reasons to leave closely reflect what talent want - work-life balance, pay and career growth. However, the key tension lies in delivery: while work-life balance is generally well met, it quickly becomes a trigger to leave when expectations fall short, whereas clearer gaps on pay, career growth and job interest drive more structural dissatisfaction. Despite these tensions, current employer ratings remain strong across all drivers, indicating no major performance gaps but rather a misalignment on what matters most.

The job search market is highly efficient, with job boards acting as the primary gateway and showing near one-to-one conversion. Differences emerge by audience and region, but overall, IT talent are relatively successful in turning search into employment.

33%

of Gen Z use job fairs to look for a job and 30% find a job that way, making it the second strongest channel for them.

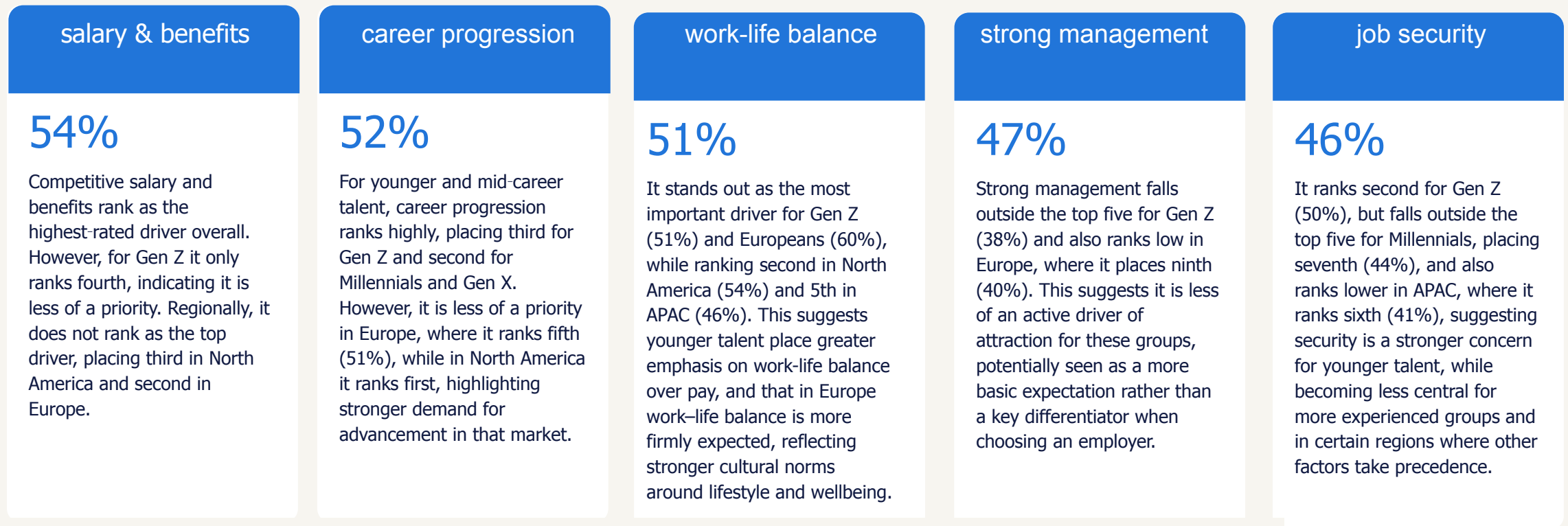
Gen Z rely more on job fairs, which are both widely used and effective. Millennials favour LinkedIn for search but rely more on job portals and recruiters to secure roles, while Gen X take a more direct approach, with company career websites standing out as key and effective channels. Regionally, LinkedIn plays the strongest role in Europe, North America uses a broader mix including Google and personal networks, and in APAC company career websites drive conversions while job fairs are more relevant in the search phase.

key drivers.



top five reasons IT talent choose an employer.

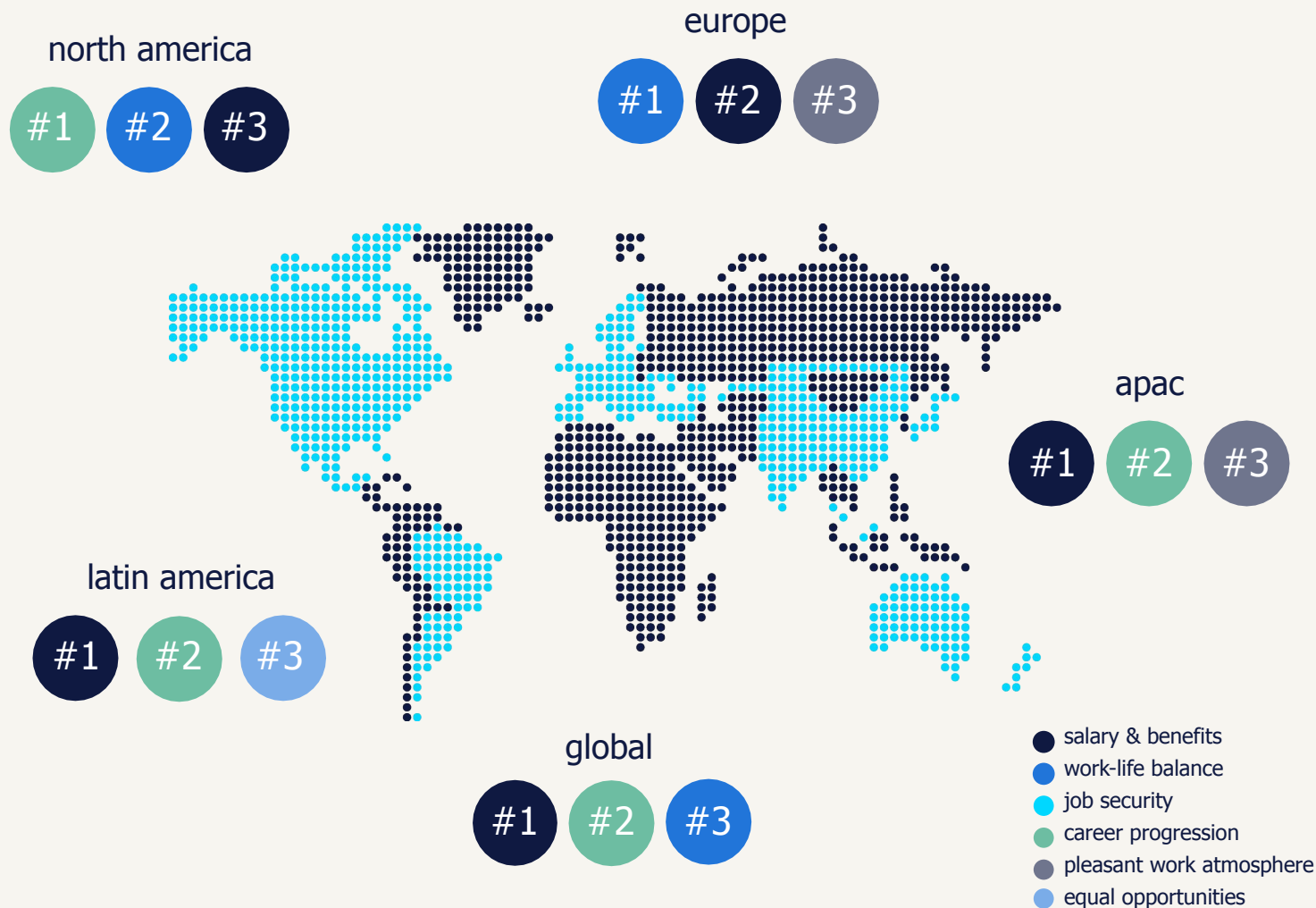
Salary and benefits is the most important factor in the IT sector, followed by career progression, work-life balance, strong management and job security. The differences between the top three drivers are small, indicating that priorities are closely aligned and talent are weighing multiple factors rather than being driven by a single dominant need.



*Given the low sample sizes for LATAM and Baby Boomers, these groups are not reported here.



the ideal employer profile differs across regions



Across the IT sector, the ideal employer profile shows some regional variation, although the same three drivers dominate globally: salary and benefits, followed by career progression and work-life balance.

North America is the only region where all three drivers align within the top priorities globally, with a particularly strong emphasis on career progression. Europe places focus on work-life balance over salary and benefits, and stands out for also prioritising a pleasant work atmosphere, pointing to a stronger emphasis on the quality of working life over purely transactional rewards.

APAC and LATAM show a similar pattern, both prioritising salary and benefits and career progression, but differ in their third driver, pleasant work atmosphere in APAC, aligning more closely with Europe, and equal opportunities in LATAM.

explanation key drivers' relative priority.



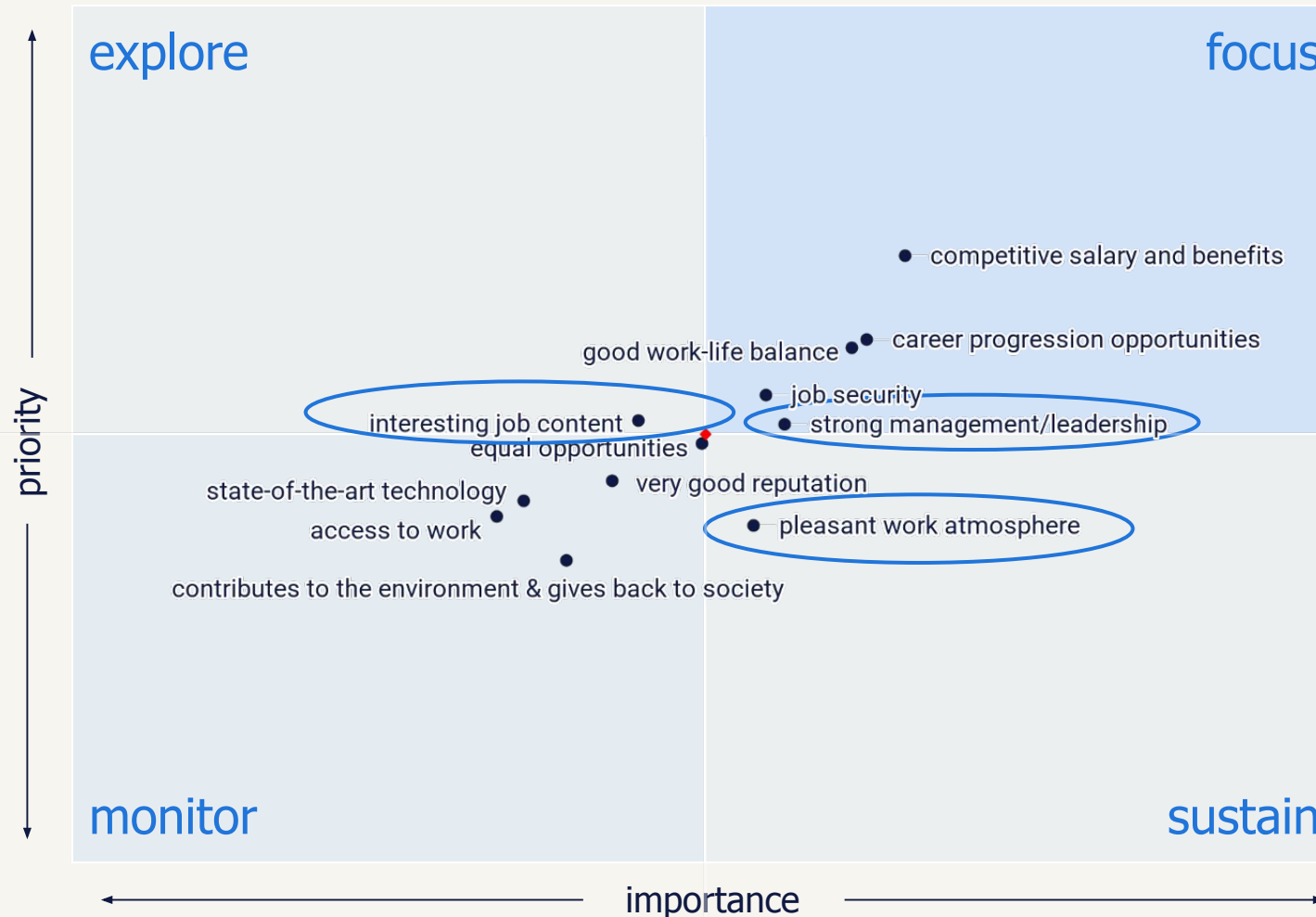
Higher-ranked drivers indicate greater importance or preference compared to those lower down, showing relative priorities.

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 anchors employer choice in the IT sector. It is not only the most important driver, but also the highest in priority when trade-offs are made.

Career progression and work-life balance follow, while a tension appears beyond the top three: strong management scores higher on importance, whereas job security ranks higher in priority, indicating that stability becomes more decisive when talent are forced to choose between factors.

Interesting job content, despite sitting outside the top five, moves into the “explore” quadrant and aligns in priority with strong management, suggesting it is an emerging differentiator that could gain importance as expectations evolve, particularly in a sector driven by innovation.

Pleasant work atmosphere sits in the “sustain” quadrant, reflecting high importance but lower urgency, highlighting it as a baseline expectation in IT, where a good environment is assumed rather than actively driving employer choice.

how IT talent rate their current employer.

8 in 10 employees rate their current employer highly across all 12 key drivers.

Job security records the highest performance, with 85% of talent saying their current employer delivers well on this factor. This is followed by pleasant work atmosphere, support for work-life balance, ease of access to work, and having a good reputation.

Overall, satisfaction with current employers is high, with minimal variation across drivers, indicating that most are being delivered at a consistently strong level rather than one standing out as underperforming. This consistency is also reflected across generations, where satisfaction levels are broadly aligned.

Regionally, North America reports the highest satisfaction (90%), while Europe is somewhat lower (73%), likely reflecting a more critical evaluation rather than fundamentally weaker performance.

priorities vary, with regional, and structural differences shaping preferences.

Stronger performance areas vary by audience. For younger talent, current employers deliver most on a pleasant work atmosphere, equal opportunities and career progression ranking highest. Millennials see stronger delivery on practical and lifestyle factors, particularly job security, ease of access and work-life balance, while Gen X report the strongest performance on stability and employer credibility, with job security, work atmosphere and reputation leading. Regionally, highest performance in Europe centres on lifestyle and accessibility factors such as work-life balance and ease of access, while North America shows stronger delivery on engagement-related factors, including interesting job content and workplace environment. In APAC, employers perform best on job security, pay and leadership, while in LATAM stronger performance is seen on reputation, technology and interesting job content.

on average **83%**

of APAC talent rate their current employer positively, indicating a generally high level of satisfaction in this region.

86%

of Gen Z rate their current employer highly for providing a pleasant work atmosphere, making it the highest-scoring driver for this group.



key driver
deepdive.



elements that reinforce a strong sense of job security.

in the IT sector, a strong sense of job security is mostly driven by reliable pay and benefits, consistent across regions and generations.

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



Reliable pay is especially important for Gen X (61%) and in LATAM (66%), reinforcing its role as a core foundation of security, followed by organizational and financial stability and performance recognition.

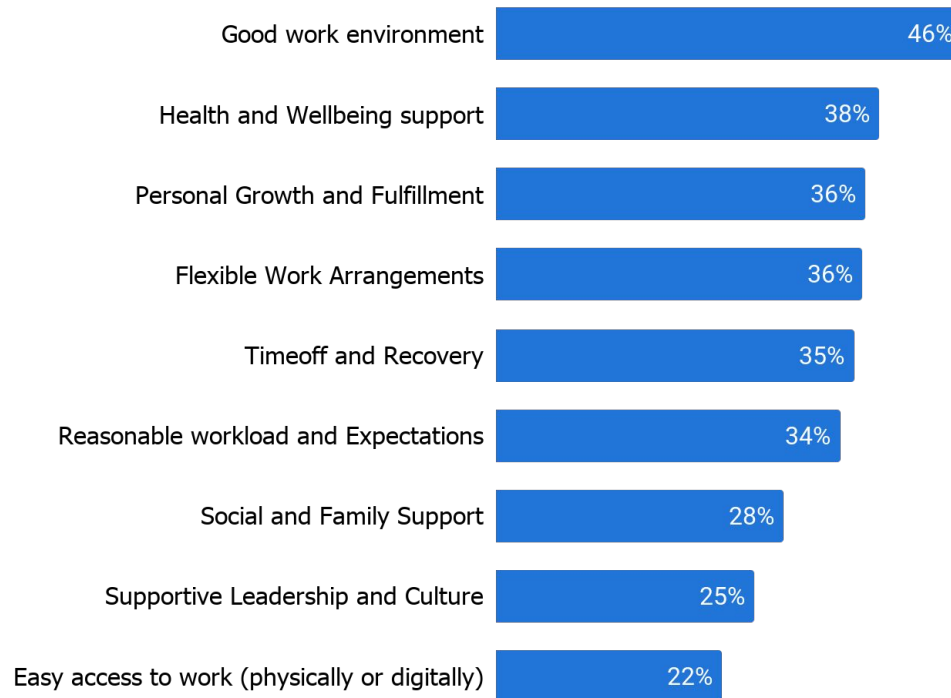
For Gen Z, transparent and trustworthy communication plays a more decisive role, ranking second (42%), while Millennials and Gen X align more closely with the overall pattern. Notably, for Millennials, performance and recognition carry relatively more weight than for Gen X, suggesting a stronger link between security and being valued at work.

Regionally, transparent and trustworthy communication is also more important in Europe, where it ranks as the second priority, while other drivers broadly follow the global pattern.

elements that strengthen work-life balance.

a healthy work-life balance is mainly achieved by a good work environment.

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

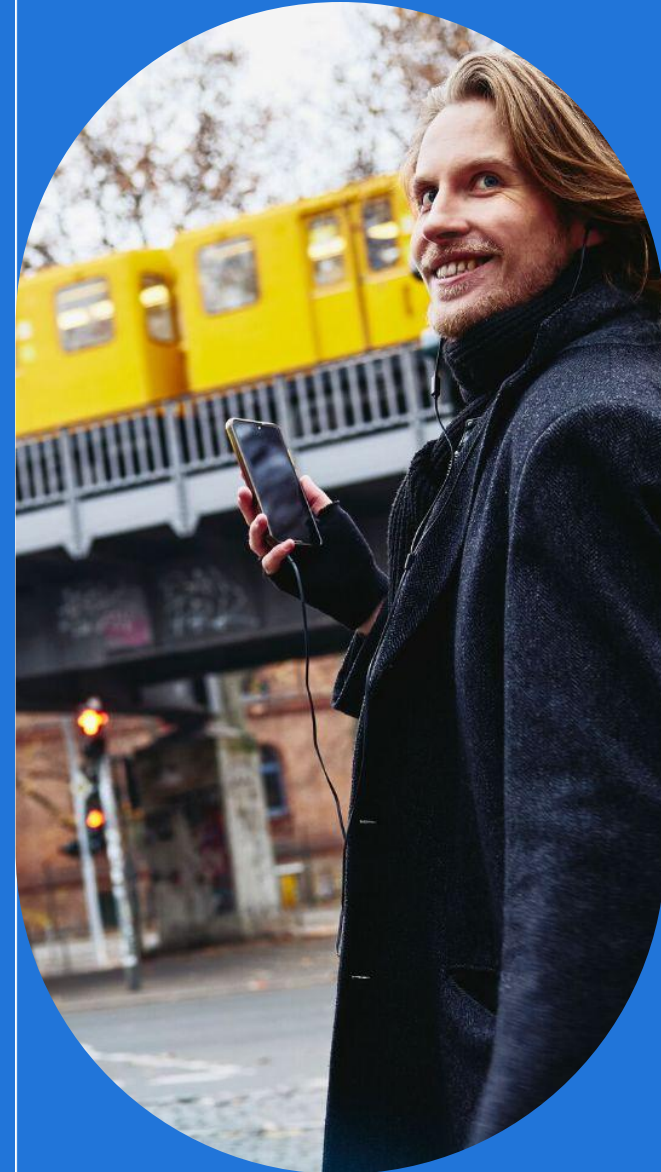


For Gen Z, the top drivers largely mirror the average, though social and family support plays a more decisive role (34%), pointing to a broader definition of balance beyond work itself. Millennials place more emphasis on flexibility, with flexible work arrangements ranking second (39%), suggesting greater need to actively manage competing demands. In contrast, Gen X rely more on recovery and workload, with time off (40%) and reasonable workload (40%) standing out, highlighting a focus on sustainability rather than flexibility.

Regionally, Europe stands out for prioritising flexible work arrangements (46%) as the key enabler of balance, followed by a good work environment (45%) and reasonable workload (37%). In North America, flexibility (3rd) and social support (4th) both gain importance, while in APAC, work-life balance is more closely linked to time off and recovery.



job-switching behaviour in focus.

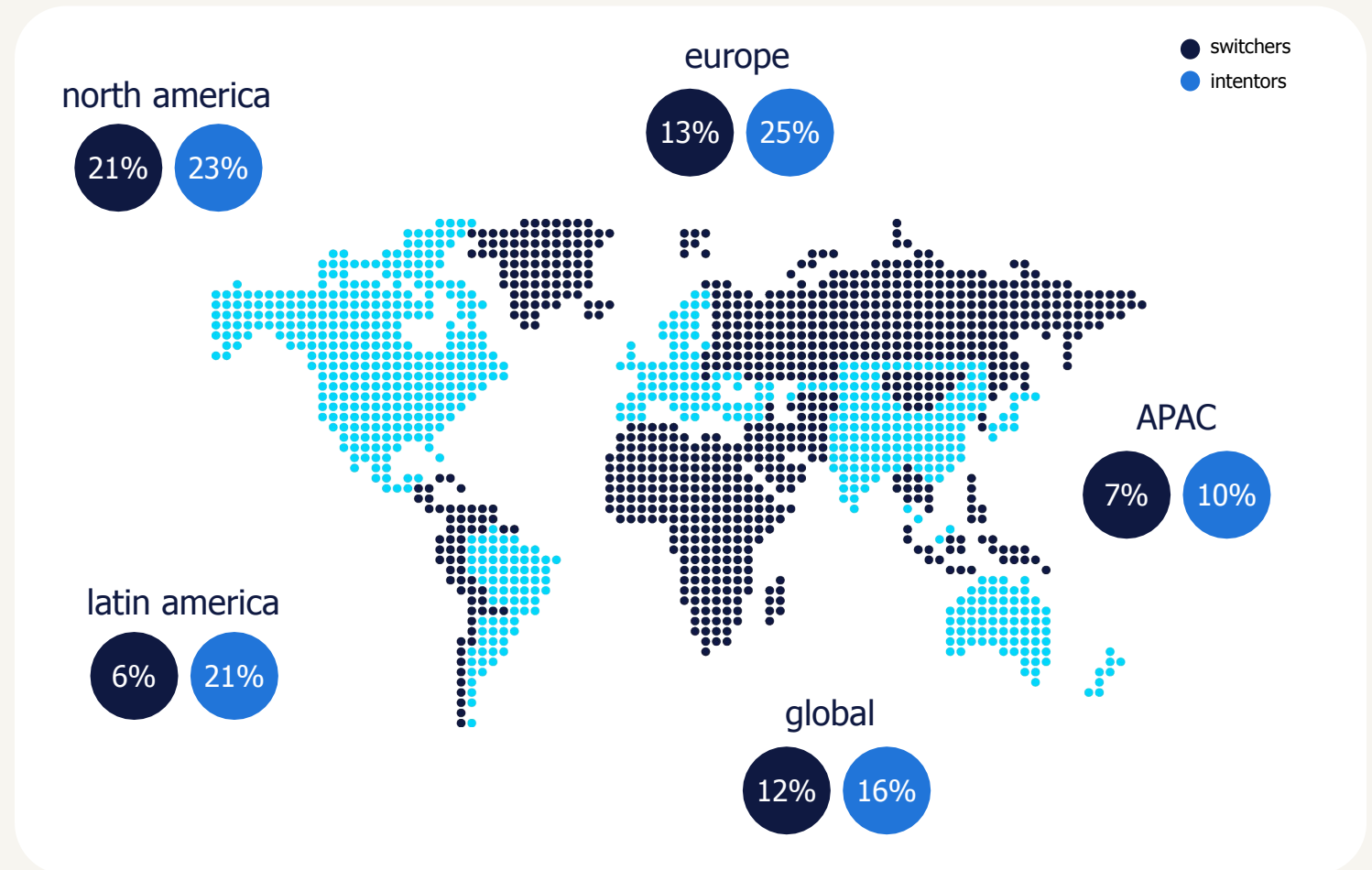


switching intentions slightly exceed actual job moves, indicating limited but not accelerating mobility in the IT sector.

In North America, switching intentions are more closely reflected in actual job moves and sit well above the global average, suggesting lower barriers to mobility and a more fluid labour market.

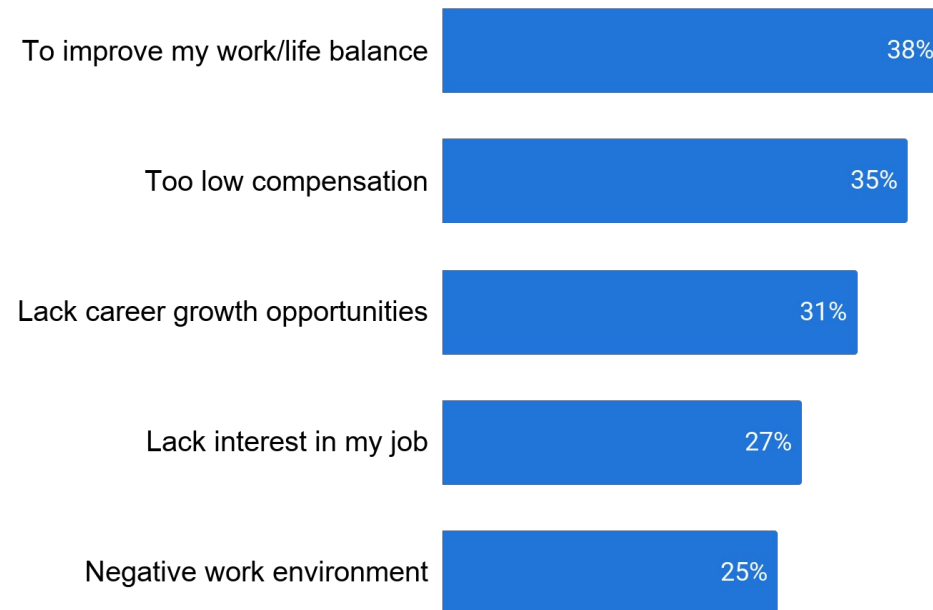
In Europe, switching intentions are higher, but actual switching remains much lower, indicating a gap between consideration and action. This pattern is even more pronounced in LATAM, where around one in five consider switching, but only 6% actually do, highlighting a significant drop-off between intent and behaviour.

In contrast, APAC shows lower overall switching behaviour, with intentions and actual switching more closely aligned but at a lower level, suggesting a more stable and less mobile workforce overall.



the desire to improve work-life balance is the leading reason IT talent consider leaving their current employer.

reasons for leaving



low compensation, lack of career growth, interest in the job and a negative work environment follows, with the top three reasons to leave closely aligning with what talent seek in an ideal employer.

Younger generations largely follow this pattern, while Gen X stands out by placing greater emphasis on a negative work environment as the second key reason to leave.

Regionally, low compensation ranks first in Europe (41%), whereas lack of career growth is the leading trigger in LATAM (42%). North America and APAC broadly align with the global pattern, although North American talent are more likely to cite poor organisational reputation (22%) as a reason to leave. In addition, poor leadership emerges as a more prominent trigger in both Europe (29%) and North America (28%), as well as among Gen Z (25%).



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

evaluation of current employer

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

Improving work–life balance is the leading trigger for leaving, despite being relatively well delivered in the current employer profile - highlighting how quickly it becomes a reason to exit when expectations are not met. A negative work environment shows a similar pattern, reinforcing the importance of the day-to-day experience as a retention factor.

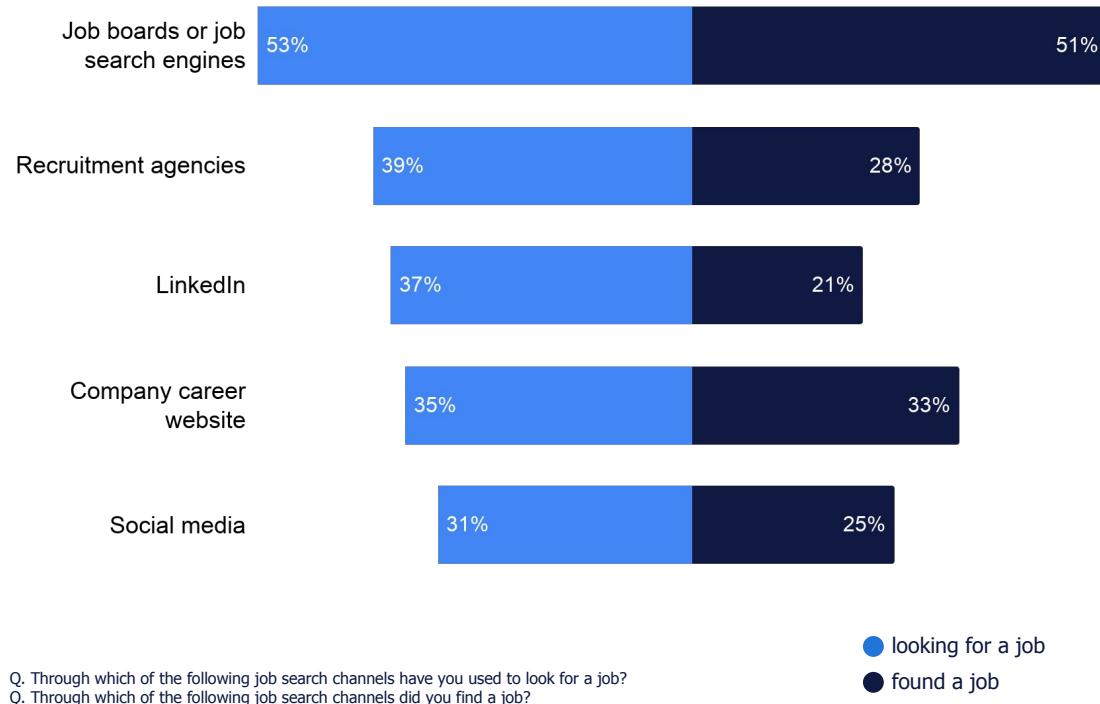
Where clearer gaps appear, these translate into key reasons to leave: low compensation (ranking 9th in current delivery), lack of career growth (11th) and lack of job interest (8th). Together, this highlights a misalignment between what talent value most and where employers underdeliver.

At the same time, overall evaluations remain highly positive across all drivers, with minimal variation, meaning rankings should be interpreted with caution, as differences are relatively small rather than indicative of major performance gaps.



job boards are the most widely used tool among job seekers in the IT sector, showing an almost one-to-one conversion from looking for a job to actively finding one.

sources for job opportunities



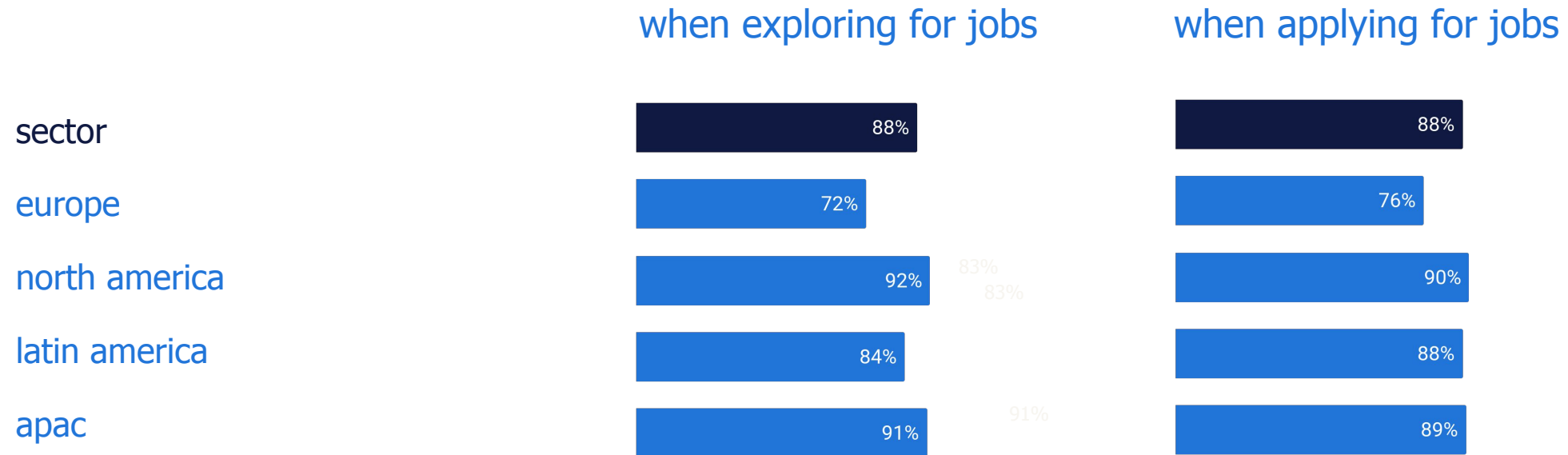
This is followed by recruitment agencies, LinkedIn, social media and company career websites which show similarly strong success rates to job boards.

For Gen Z, job fairs play a more prominent role in searching (33%) and in successfully securing jobs. Among Millennials, LinkedIn is more widely used for job search (40%), overtaking recruitment agencies, but is the least effective channel in converting into actual job outcomes, which are more often driven by job portals and recruiters. For Gen X, company career websites stand out, both as a key search channel (42%) and one of the most successful in securing a job (44%), overtaking recruitment agencies.

Regionally, LinkedIn is the most important channel for job search in Europe and is among the most successful in converting to job outcomes (34%). In North America, Google for jobs and personal connections play a more prominent role, while job portals remain the most effective for actually securing a job, with 50% finding roles this way. In APAC, company career websites stand out as the second most successful route to employment, while job fairs play a more prominent role in the search phase.

importance of in person contact.

The importance of personal contact within the IT sector is high overall, with nearly nine in ten valuing it equally when exploring and applying for jobs. However, its role varies by region, being less important in Europe, while in North America it is most valued, highlighting a stronger reliance on direct interaction and relationships throughout the recruitment process.





closing remarks.

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

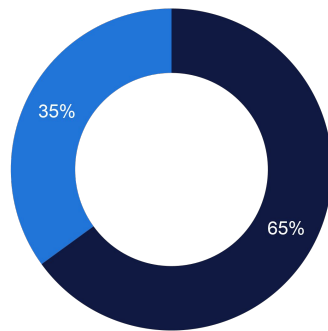
sample

- a total of 9,429 interviews among IT 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 IT sector report.

socio-demographics, education, region

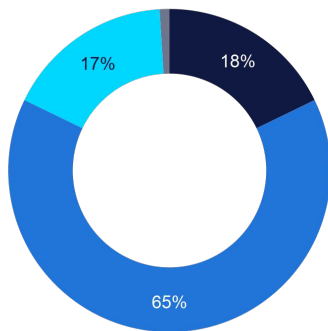
gender



- male
- female
- other*

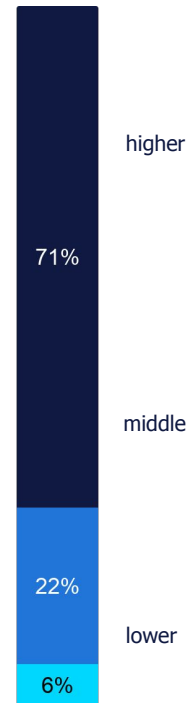
* other is comprised of all other gender identities and people who prefer not to answer the question

age

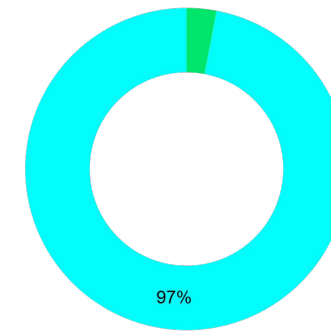


- Gen Z (1997-2012)
- Millennials (1981-1996)
- Gen X (1965-1980)
- Baby boomers (1946-1964)

education

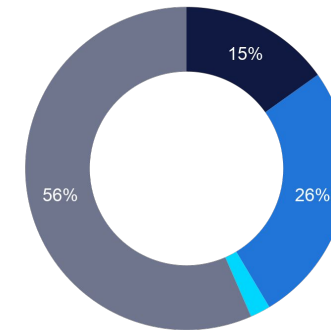


specializations



- operational
- professional
- digital

region



- Europe
- North America
- Latin America
- APAC

thank
you.



partner for talent.