


# NAVIGATING NEW TERRITORY

HireRight's 2023 Global Benchmark Report

HIRE RIGHT<sup>®</sup>



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# Table of Contents



# Table of Contents

## Background Screening

Benefits of Pre-employment Screening	20
Choosing A Screening Provider	22
Background Screening Around the World	24
Drug Screening	26
Social Media Screening	29
Candidate Discrepancies	34
Extended Workforce Screening	37
Post-Hire Screening	39

## Talent Acquisition

Foreword	43
Adoption of Applicant Tracking Systems	44
ATS Integrations	45
Recruitment in 2022	47
Recruitment Challenges in 2022	49
Recruitment Tactics in 2022	50
Recruitment Channels in 2022/2023	52
Social Media Recruitment in 2023	54
Talent Acquisition Challenges in 2023 and Beyond	56

## Workforce Management

Changes in Workforce Size	61
Retention Activities	64
Remote Working by Numbers	67
Is the Future of Work Still Hybrid?	69

**Conclusion** 71

**Methodology  
/About Us** 72

**References** 73

**Additional  
Resources** 74

**Contact Us** 75



## Foreword – Guy Abramo

# Welcome to HireRight's 2023 Global Benchmark Report!

**With macro-economic conditions changing recruitment strategies worldwide**, in this year's Global Benchmark Survey – HireRight's 16th annual survey of human resource, risk, and talent acquisition professionals worldwide – we asked respondents how their companies are navigating new territory to find, screen, and retain talent. This report provides a summary of their responses.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Guy Abramo'.

**Guy Abramo**  
President and CEO  
of HireRight

# Foreword – Guy Abramo

Our journey begins with a global overview of this year's survey results before we embark on a world tour led by HireRight's regional business leaders, guiding you through key insights from our respondents in **North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), Asia-Pacific (APAC), India, and Latin America.**

**“In times of uncertainty, market insights can be invaluable to help businesses to adapt to not just survive but thrive, and I sincerely hope that this year's report, Navigating New Territory, will help you to do just that.”**

– **Guy Abramo**, President and CEO of HireRight

We then return to familiar shores: **Background Screening.** This year we've taken a deeper dive into the waters of drug screening, social media screening, and post-hire screening. We are also exploring what businesses value most when choosing a screening provider, which background checks are most common in each region, and which checks most often uncover candidate discrepancies.

Next, we focus on exploring the **Talent Acquisition** landscape. Are more businesses using applicant tracking systems to streamline recruitment processes in 2023? How did businesses overcome their recruitment challenges last year? What major talent acquisition challenges are expected this year and beyond?

Our final stop is **Workforce Management.** Are businesses optimistic in their outlook for 2023? Which activities were most utilized in 2022, and which are planned to be introduced in 2023, to help drive retention and minimize attrition? Is the future of work still likely to be hybrid?

Thank you to all who took part in our 2023 Global Benchmark Survey and shared their experiences of screening, recruitment, and talent management with us. In times of uncertainty, market insights can be invaluable to help businesses to adapt to not just survive but thrive, and I sincerely hope that this year's report, **Navigating New Territory**, will help you to do just that.

# Global Executive Summary

For many multi-national businesses, both global support and local expertise are required from their background screening provider. While some companies may choose to manage their screening and recruitment services locally or in-region, working with a host of local recruitment agencies and screening providers in different locations, this approach is not without its downside. **Consistency is important for global background screening programs, and it can be very difficult to create a consistent screening program across a company's footprint when services vary between screening providers and local regulations may impact availability of some checks in certain locations.**

By partnering with a single global screening provider that also has local and regional expertise around the world, organizations can craft a unified global screening program – one that considers local nuances, customs, and laws, offers alternative screening services to mitigate

the businesses' key risks where there are local limitations, and has around-the-globe support from operations, customer service, and account management.

The following summary provides some high-level trends we have observed from this year's Benchmark Survey responses from each region – showing that there are some global commonalities around background screening and recruitment activity this year. Afterwards, you'll hear from our regional leaders, sharing some key findings from their territories to help you better understand the local landscapes, before the rest of the report compares our survey responses from North America, EMEA, and APAC.

I hope you find these global and regional highlights helpful and that this report will provide you with a more informed outlook of the screening and talent terrains for your business for the rest of 2023 and beyond.

**“By partnering with a single global screening provider that also has local and regional expertise around the world, organizations can craft a unified global screening program...”**

## Steve Girdler

Global Managing  
Director at  
HireRight



# Key Global Takeaways

## Speed matters most when choosing a screening provider.

Speed has jumped to the top of the priorities list for employers in each region when choosing a background screening provider.

Accuracy of results and cost are also widely considered as important by respondents globally.

## More companies are utilizing criminal record checks in 2023.

Criminal record checks continue to be utilized by more employers globally as part of their background screening program, with four-year high rates of adoption reported by this year's respondents in each region.

Previously undisclosed criminal convictions are the candidate discrepancy most often discovered by two-fifths of respondents from North America.

## More businesses are using applicant tracking systems.

Half of global survey respondents said they currently use an applicant tracking system (ATS), up from two-fifths who said they used an ATS in last year's Benchmark Survey.

Businesses from North America are most likely to have their background screening provider integrated with their ATS – around half of respondents from the region said they have an integration, compared with three in 10 APAC respondents and under a quarter of EMEA respondents.

## It was recruitment as usual for half of participating companies last year.

Globally, over half of respondents said that recruitment carried on roughly as expected in 2022, despite the media often focusing on job cuts in sectors such as technology.

In fact, two-fifths of respondents said they hired more workers to meet increased demands on their business last year.

## There is little change in remote working expected this year.

The number of employees working remotely is expected to remain stable in North America and EMEA, but a slight decline is expected in APAC by the start of 2024.

Remote working is the most widely utilized by EMEA respondents, with over half (55%) saying at least half their workforce will be working remotely in some capacity by January 2024, a slight increase from 51% of respondents who said this was the case in January 2023.



# North America Executive Summary

The path of background screening is a well-travelled one in North America, with most workers accustomed to participating in a background check as part of the onboarding process. However, while adoption rates of pre-employment background screening vary from country to country across the rest of the world, surprisingly, education and employment verifications are still far more common among businesses conducting background screening outside of North America.

Interestingly, in North America, EMEA, and APAC, education and employment verifications are two of the three most common areas where candidate discrepancies are found during pre-employment background screening, despite these checks being far from universal across North America. Just over half of respondents from North America said they conduct employment verifications, compared with 84% in APAC and 90% in EMEA. Similarly, just 46% of North

American employers verify their candidates' education history, compared with 71% in EMEA and 87% in APAC.

Perhaps some North American employers are foregoing checks like these, which can take longer than database or public record checks, to help reduce their overall background check turnaround times and get new talent in the door faster. Almost seven in 10 (68%) respondents from North America said that speed was one of the most important factors when choosing a screening provider, up from 53% in last year's survey – however, rates of adoption of education and employment checks in North America in 2023 are consistent with those reported in recent years.

To drive recruitment in their companies in 2022, almost three-fifths (58%) of respondents from North America said they increased their salaries or offered better/additional benefits.

If this continues throughout 2023, employers could end up paying increasingly more to attract new talent, making it even more essential to have a robust background screening program in place to verify that their candidates have the experience they claim and that they don't make a costly bad hire.

To help guide employers down the right path, here is a summary of some key screening and recruitment trends from our survey respondents from North America, mapping out the talent landscape at the start of 2023.



## Mary O'Loughlin

Managing Director  
of the Americas at  
HireRight



# Key North America Takeaways

**Half of respondents said their company utilizes an applicant tracking system (ATS) – and half of those companies integrate their background screening provider with their ATS.**

Nearly a fifth of respondents said their screening provider does not integrate with their ATS.

**Almost three-fifths of respondents increased salaries or offered better/additional benefits to drive recruitment in 2022.**

Also, over half advertised on new channels to support their hiring efforts and a quarter increased their recruitment budget last year.

**Around three-fifths of respondents from North America conduct drug and/or health screening as part of their company's screening program.**

Most businesses that conduct screening do so for all roles, but for those who only screen certain roles for drugs/alcohol, board members and C-suite executives are the least likely to be screened.

**Two-fifths of respondents said that their company hired more workers to meet increased demands on their business in 2022.**

Additionally, over half said that recruitment carried on roughly as expected last year.

**Finding qualified job candidates is expected to be a significant talent acquisition challenge for over three-quarters of employers in 2023, and around three-fifths of employers for the following three years.**

Just under half of respondents from North America believe that meeting candidates' benefits/perks expectations will be a major talent acquisition challenge in 2023 and between 2024-2026.

# EMEA Executive Summary

2022 was a year like no other. In the UK alone, we witnessed the death of our longest reigning monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, the pound sterling fell to a 37-year low, and we experienced a 41-year high rate of inflation (11.1% in October 2022),<sup>1</sup> while being led by three different prime ministers in quick succession.

However, despite a choppy year, it seems that it was smooth sailing for many EMEA employers, with over half of survey respondents from the region saying their workforce grew in 2022, and two-fifths saying they had to hire additional workers to meet the needs of their business. Looking ahead, over two-fifths of respondents expect to grow their employee numbers in 2023.

While our survey found that remote working appears to be in decline in other parts of the world, with more employees being asked to return to the office, over half of EMEA employers

said that between fifty and one hundred percent of their employees worked remotely in some capacity in January 2023. Additionally, if the UK's Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Bill passes this year, remote and hybrid working will likely become even more common in the UK by the start of next year.

Against this backdrop of widespread remote working, I am confident that HireRight's new digital identity verification services for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) criminal record checks and UK Right to Work checks will prove useful. These services were introduced last year and can help employers to streamline their screening processes – while also providing, where applicable, an easy way for candidates to verify their identity documentation remotely without ever having to hand over their identity documents.

If you are currently a customer hiring in the UK, or with candidates from the UK, and you're not yet using these new digital services, please get in touch with your HireRight contact to find out more.

I wish all our customers in the region a prosperous remainder of 2023 – and if you're reading this and you've yet to engage with HireRight, I hope this is the year you join us!



**Peter Cleverton**

Managing Director  
of EMEA at  
HireRight



# Key EMEA Takeaways

**Speed is considered an important factor for over two-thirds of respondents from the region when choosing a screening provider – rising from under half of respondents in 2022.**

Accuracy of results and cost make up the top three drivers for businesses that are evaluating screening providers.

**Two-thirds of respondents from EMEA have found discrepancies when verifying their candidates' employment history – up from around half of respondents in 2022.**

Just under two-fifths of respondents had uncovered candidate discrepancies while checking their education credentials.

**Over half of respondents think that meeting candidates' benefits/perks expectations, creating an employer brand that attracts talent, and finding job candidates will be significant recruitment challenges in 2023.**

Looking ahead, around three-fifths expect that finding qualified job candidates and increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in their workforce will be challenges between 2024-2026.

**Employment verifications remain the most common background check conducted by businesses in EMEA, with nine in 10 respondents including them in their pre-employment screening program.**

Criminal and education checks are the next most common checks, followed by identity information and credit checks.

**Around three-fifths of respondents believe that referrals and internal recruitment will be among their company's most effective recruitment channels in 2023.**

Almost half of respondents expect their corporate website and online job boards will be effective channels this year.



# Asia-Pacific Executive Summary

Throughout the APAC region, 2022 saw the introduction of several new privacy laws, as well as updates to existing laws coming into effect – including Thailand’s Personal Data Protection Act 2019 (PDPA), Australia’s Privacy Act Review, the Indonesian Personal Data Protection Law (PDPL), and amendments to Singapore’s Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA). Also, in Singapore in August 2022, the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) issued new guidelines on operational risk management for financial institutions in Singapore – something which could be supported by implementing a robust background screening program.<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of the year, some colleagues and I attended the 2022 Professional Background Screening Association (PBSA) APAC Annual General Meeting to discuss background screening in the region with other screening industry professionals.

I was also fortunate enough to be a panellist for a session there titled “Opportunities, Challenges, and Threats to the Background Screening Industry,” which sparked an interesting conversation about evolving regulatory and screening requirements faced by businesses in the region, the impact of remote working and hiring on onboarding and screening processes, and the screening outlook for 2023 and beyond.

Insights from industry events, as well as responses from HireRight’s Benchmark Survey, are important to help us effectively serve our customers across APAC by understanding the latest local nuances that could affect organizations screening their workforces in the region. As your business prepares for whatever lies ahead, I hope you find the information shared in this regional overview helpful to compare your business with others in the region.

**Ko Hui Yen**

Managing Director  
of APAC and India  
at HireRight



# Key APAC Takeaways

**Education, employment, and criminal record checks are the most common services utilized by APAC employers in their pre-hire screening.**

Globally, our survey found that education checks are the most common in APAC (87%), followed by EMEA (71%) and then North America (46%).

**There is a three-year high in the number of respondents from APAC that are utilizing an applicant tracking system (ATS) – perhaps due to an increased need for a quick and easy candidate application process.**

Over half of APAC businesses use an ATS, and of those over half have integrated their ATS with their screening provider or are in the integration process.

**Over four-fifths of respondents from the APAC region said their company experiences a better quality of hires because of their pre-employment screening program.**

Almost three-quarters said that speed is a top consideration when choosing a screening provider, up from just three in 10 respondents last year.

**Almost three-quarters of APAC employers have uncovered discrepancies while conducting employment verifications on their candidates.**

Checking education credentials remains the second most common area where candidate discrepancies are found – however, there has been a drop in the number of businesses that said they often find these kinds of discrepancies year-over-year since 2021.

**Finding qualified job candidates and creating an employer brand that attracts talent are expected to be the most common talent acquisition challenges for businesses in the region in 2023.**

Looking ahead, respondents believe that these will continue to remain top challenges, however, meeting candidates' benefits/perks expectations is predicted to be the most common challenge in the following three years (2024-2026).

# India Executive Summary

Outside of the U.S., India is one of the countries where background screening is most widely adopted – despite its general lack of digitized public records.<sup>3</sup> In fact, it is the country that we received the second largest number of survey responses from this year – after the U.S.

HireRight continues to support its customers in India – both Indian businesses and multi-national companies operating in India – with its local presence in account management, customer service, and operations, which can help to reduce background check turnaround times. Just under three-quarters of this year's Benchmark Survey respondents from India said that speed was an important factor when choosing a screening provider, and it remains a priority for us to help our customers to hire their talent faster.

Our survey findings also suggest that background screening practices in India remain well established, with a high percentage of respondents from India saying they conduct education, employment, criminal, and identity checks. Around three-fifths of respondents from India also said their background screening provider is either integrated with their applicant tracking system or an integration is currently being set up.

Additionally, our survey found that certain candidate discrepancies are most commonly found by businesses in India – 86% of respondents from India said they often found employment discrepancies and 43% commonly found education discrepancies. If your business has a footprint in India and you're not currently conducting background checks in the region, there is a chance these types of discrepancies are going unnoticed.


Here are some of this year's survey findings from our respondents in India:

**Ko Hui Yen**

Managing Director  
of APAC and India  
at HireRight



# Key India Takeaways



**Almost three-quarters of respondents from India said that speed is one of the most important factors when choosing a background screening provider.**

Around half said that accuracy of results and cost are key considerations when evaluating screening providers' services.

**Nine in 10 employers from India that utilize background screening are conducting education and employment checks as part of their screening programs.**

Over three-quarters of respondents said their company conducts criminal record checks and half conduct identity information checks.

**Just under half of respondents from India said their company hired more workers to meet increased demands in 2022 – the highest rate reported in any region in this year's survey.**

Seven in 10 respondents from India said their company increased its workforce by more than five percent in 2022 – and six in 10 respondents expect their workforce size to increase in 2023.

**Over half of businesses in India introduced new wellbeing initiatives and enhanced their healthcare insurance offering in 2022 to help support employee retention.**

Providing additional training and professional development opportunities and introducing employee share programs are among the activities most likely to be introduced for this purpose in 2023.

**Around two in five respondents from India said their company allows hybrid working – either with the employee choosing their days in the office or the employer choosing which days people work in the office.**

However, around a quarter of businesses from India said they while they allowed remote working in some capacity before January 2023, they have now brought everybody back to the office.



# Latin America Executive Summary


The landscape of employment screening in Latin America has shifted significantly in the last decade. Not long ago, employers may have conducted some form of candidate vetting in-house – rather than through a background screening provider – without the participation or consent of the individual. Today, with the introduction of local data privacy and protection legislation, such as the Brazilian General Data Protection Law (LGPD), employers in the region must operate in a more transparent manner and seek input and cooperation from their candidates.

The Latin America region comprises dozens of countries and territories, each with their own cultural nuances and methods to access information depending on the available infrastructure. Due to this, it is important to be able to support local customers, and global customers with a presence in Latin America, from within the region and in the local languages.

In 2021, HireRight expanded its footprint in Latin America by launching a legally incorporated subsidiary in Mexico, headquartered in a new office in Mexico City.<sup>4</sup> We also established a new local verifications and research team in Mexico, in addition to the account management and sales teams that were already in the region. Our growth and investment in Latin America continues into 2023 with the acquisition of Inquiro Vitae, a local screening provider based in Argentina, to help improve our service offering in the region – and allow us to invoice in the Argentine peso, which is important to help us service local businesses there.<sup>5</sup>

While the modest number of Benchmark Survey respondents from Latin America is growing year-over-year, we hope to secure even more responses next year to help us provide a more in-depth analysis of the data from businesses in the region within this global report.

However, based on the responses we received from the region this year, here are some high-level insights into the screening and recruitment habits of businesses in Latin America that I hope you will find insightful.



**Ryan Christensen**  
General Manager  
of Latin America  
at HireRight

# Key Latin America Takeaways

**Half of Latin America survey respondents said they experienced a higher-than-normal time to hire and had positions remaining unfilled for three to six months in 2022.**

To help drive recruitment last year, half of respondents said they increased salaries and/or offered better or additional benefits.

**Corporate websites and referrals were rated among the most effective recruitment channels in Latin America last year.**

Respondents from the region expect that social media, corporate websites, and internal recruitment will be the most effective channels for recruitment in 2023.

**Most survey respondents from Latin America said their company experiences a better quality of hire because of their pre-employment screening program.**

Speed, cost, and accuracy of results are the most commonly cited factors that respondents said they consider when choosing a screening provider.

**Criminal record checks, employment verifications, and education checks are the most common checks utilized by respondents from Latin America.**

Candidate discrepancies were most commonly found when conducting employment verifications and criminal record checks.

**Improving the candidate experience from application through onboarding and meeting candidates' benefits and perks expectations are predicted to be the most significant talent acquisition challenges in the region in 2023.**

Creating an employer brand that attracts talent and finding qualified job candidates are expected to be the most common talent acquisition challenges in Latin America between 2024-2026.

# Background Screening

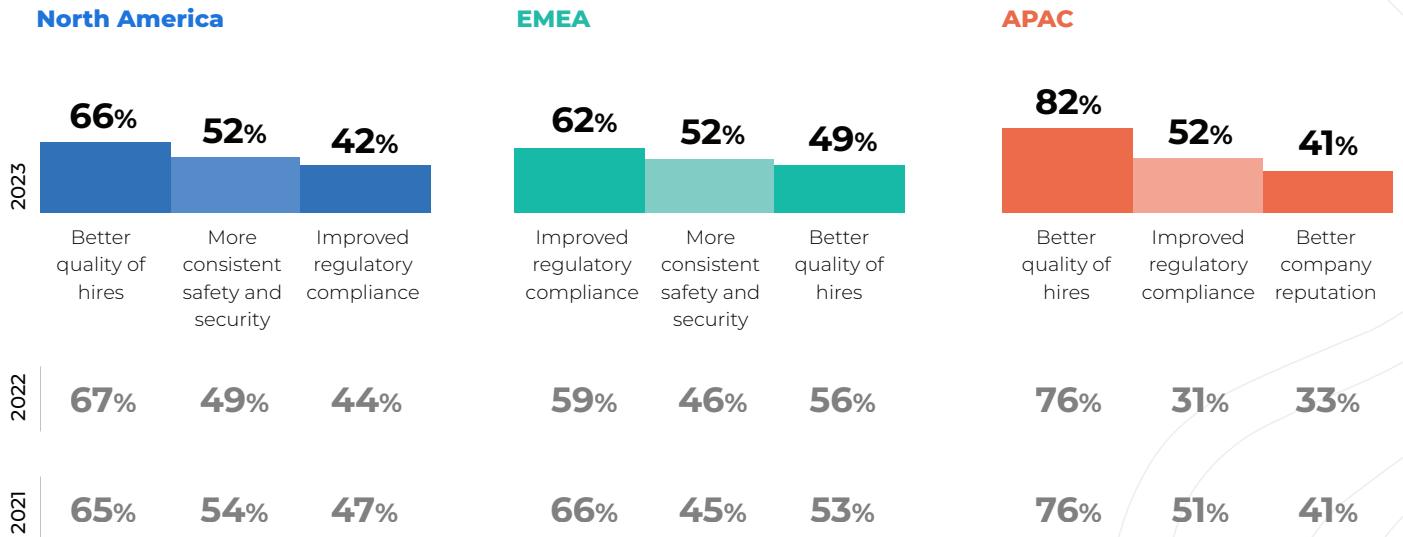


# Benefits of Pre-employment Screening

A better quality of hires remains the benefit that most employers in North America and Asia-Pacific (APAC) associate with their candidate pre-employment screening program.

In Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), improved regulatory compliance held its position as the most common benefit seen by employers in the region – with more consistent safety and security and a better quality of hires making up the top three.

## What are the main benefits your company gains from pre-employment screening?





There has been little change in the responses from North American employers in the past three years – around two-thirds cite a better quality of hires, and around half say their company has more consistent safety and security because of their pre-employment screening program.

In APAC, this year more respondents have experienced improved regulatory compliance (52%, up from 31% in 2022) and better company reputation (41%, up from 33% in 2022) as key benefits.

**“The primary benefits that companies attribute to their pre-employment screening program may vary depending on the organization’s motivations for conducting background checks. But whether a company is screening their candidates because it is a legal requirement in their industry, to help weed out underqualified individuals in the recruitment process, or to protect their company’s reputation and brand name from the potential impact of a bad hire, background screening ultimately helps employers to reduce the risk of each new hire through a tried-and-tested due diligence process.”**



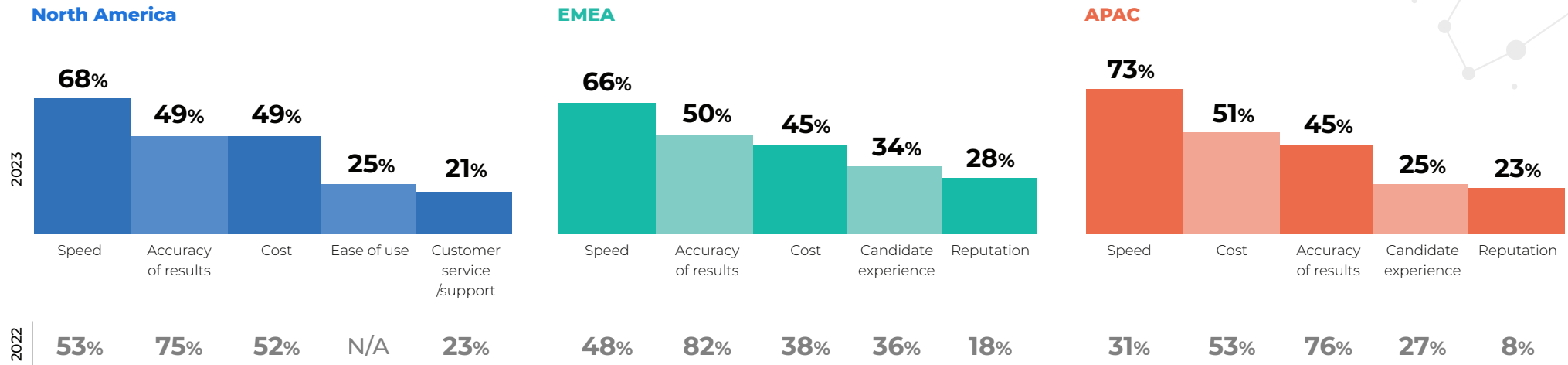
**Caroline Smith**  
VP Deputy  
General Counsel  
at HireRight



# Choosing A Screening Provider

Speed/turnaround time has risen to the top of the priorities list for employers in all regions when choosing a background screening provider to work with.

What do you see as the most important factors when choosing a screening provider?



Most notably, in APAC, 73% of respondents cited speed as a top consideration when choosing a background screening provider, rising significantly from 31% in 2022.

The top three priorities globally remain speed, cost, and accuracy of results. However, accuracy of results has seen a clear drop in this year's survey responses, with between 26 and 32 percentage points fewer in each region.

“With many employers globally having difficulty finding and onboarding the talent their organization was looking for in 2022, it is not surprising that speed was the most cited consideration by survey respondents in each region this year.

“However, what is perhaps unexpected is a clear deprioritization of accuracy of results compared with last year’s survey findings. At HireRight, we believe that speed, precision, and innovation are all needed to build a successful employment screening program. Without trust in the accuracy of your candidate’s background checks, how can employers make confident hiring decisions?”

**Mary O’Loughlin**

Managing  
Director of the  
Americas at  
HireRight



Outside of North America, a screening provider’s reputation appears to be a greater consideration – perhaps because there are fewer screening companies operating in the market, or businesses may be newer to conducting background checks on their workforces. Almost a quarter (23%) of APAC respondents and nearly three in 10 (28%) EMEA respondents cited the screening provider’s reputation as a key consideration when choosing a partner. In contrast, only around one in six (16%) employers from North America rated this as one of the most important factors when comparing screening vendors.

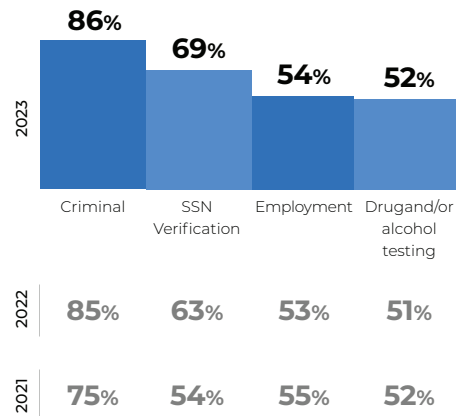
# Background Screening Around the World

**Criminal record checks are at four-year high rates in each region, remaining the most commonly conducted pre-employment checks by respondents from North America.**

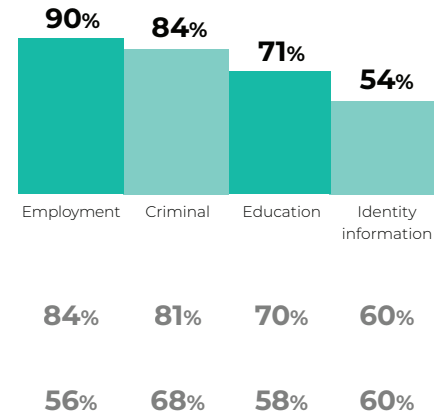
Meanwhile, employment and education checks take the top spots for the most widely conducted checks in EMEA and APAC respectively.

## Which background screening services does your company include in its pre-employment screening program?

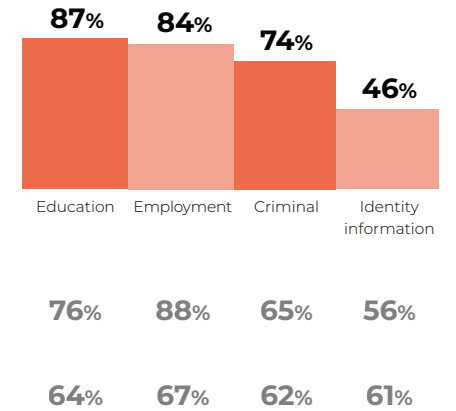
### North America



### EMEA



### APAC



**This year's survey showed little change in the most conducted candidate background checks in North America, EMEA, and APAC, with a few minor areas of note:**



### Employment checks

Employment checks in EMEA have continued rising year over year, with 90% of respondents from the region saying they verify their candidates' past work history (up from 56% in HireRight's 2021 Global Benchmark Survey and 84% in 2022).



### Identity information checks

Identity information checks, which can help validate a candidate's provided identity information or document, have dropped slightly in EMEA and APAC this year – however, Social Security number (SSN) checks in North America, which help companies meet a variety of screening needs, are up on the previous years' figures.



### Education checks

The gap in education checks between North America and EMEA is closing, but they are still much more common in APAC, with 87% of respondents from the region saying they conduct education checks, compared with under half (46%) in North America and seven in 10 (71%) in EMEA.



# Drug Screening

**Drug and health screening remains the most common in North America, with around three-fifths (61%) of respondents in the region utilizing this as part of their company's screening program.**

Outside of North America, only a third (33%) of respondents from APAC and a fifth (20%) of respondents from EMEA said they conduct drug testing.

*To find out more about what goes on during a drug test, you can read [HireRight's two-part blog series on the life cycle of a drugs test](#).<sup>6</sup>*

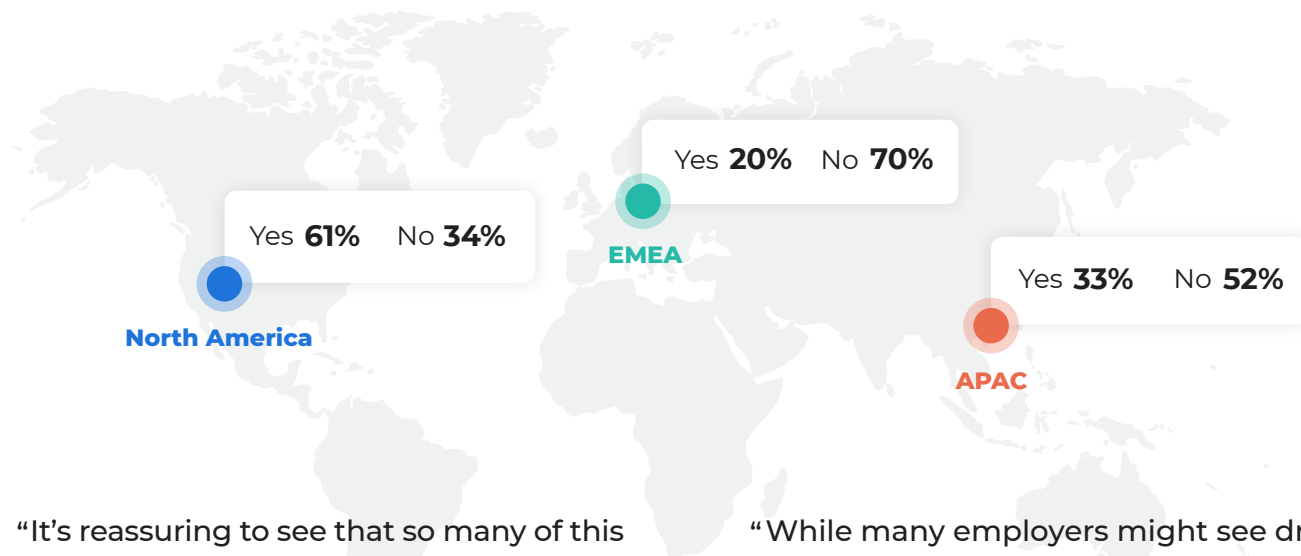
## Dr. Todd Simo

Chief Medical  
Officer at  
HireRight



## Is drug and/or health screening part of your company's screening program?

*"Not sure" responses not shown below*



“It’s reassuring to see that so many of this year’s survey respondents from the U.S. are including drug testing as part of their company’s screening program. Drug abuse at work can be detrimental to a company’s day-to-day operations, as well as their revenue. The side effects of drug abuse, even if not used in the workplace, can harm a company and put other employees at risk.

“While many employers might see drug testing as an expense, rather than an investment, creating a solid drug testing program can help organizations provide a safe workspace, and maintain productivity levels across the board. These programs can provide employers with a solid return on investment, which will likely far outweigh the upfront costs associated with drug testing.”

**The most common reason that respondents are not conducting drug screening in each region is due to it not being required by regulations in their industry.**

**What are your company's main reasons for not conducting drug testing?**

**North America**

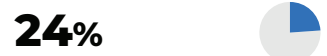
It is not required by regulations in my industry



Decriminalization of marijuana in certain locations



Drug testing does not predict performance



**EMEA**

It is not required by regulations in my industry



Lack of adoption in my location or industry



Don't see the value in drug testing



**APAC**

It is not required by regulations in my industry



Complexities involved in testing process



Additional cost



In the U.S., the decriminalization of marijuana in several jurisdictions may be stopping many companies from conducting drug screening on their workforce. While this can be a difficult area to navigate, there are materials available, such as HireRight's Employers Guide to Legalized (Medical and Recreational) Marijuana eBook,<sup>7</sup> which can help employers to better understand the marijuana landscape throughout the U.S. and possible ways to incorporate local requirements from these laws into their drug screening programs.

In EMEA, a fifth (21%) of respondents cited a lack of adoption in their location or industry as a reason for not conducting drug testing. Some employers in the region also felt that drug screening offered little value.

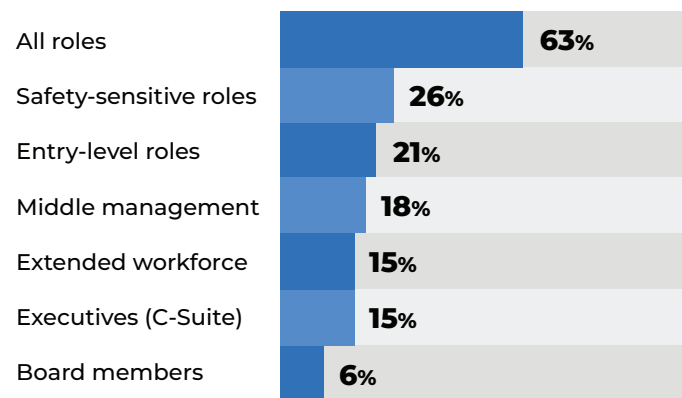
Complexities involved in the testing process (e.g., coordination, extra time, etc.) are a main concern for over a fifth (21%) of companies who don't conduct drug tests in APAC. Additionally, one in six cited the extra cost as being a factor in their decision to not conduct drug screening.



**Almost two-thirds (63%) of respondents from North America whose company conducts drug testing said they screen all positions, regardless of seniority or perceived risk.**

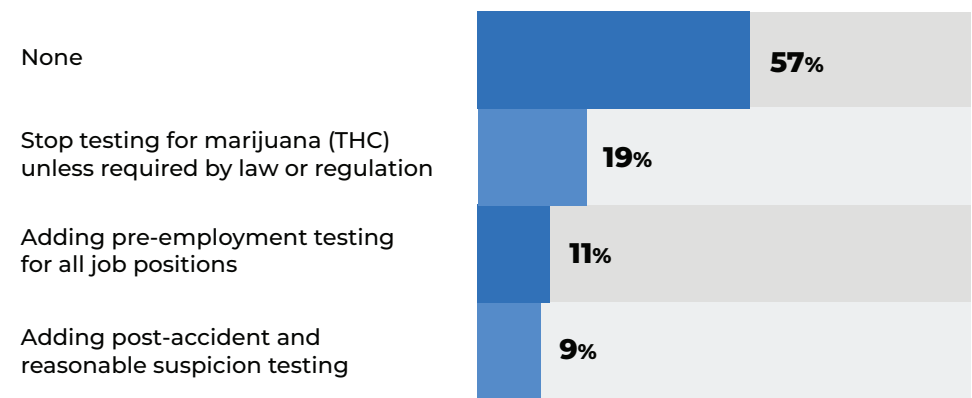
However, executives (C-suite), the extended workforce, and board members are the least likely to be asked to take a drug test.

**Which positions are screened for drugs/alcohol?**



Looking ahead, a fifth (19%) of employers in North America are planning/considering stopping testing for marijuana (THC) unless required by law or regulation, and one in 10 are planning/considering introducing pre-employment testing for all job positions.

**What changes to your drug testing program are you considering/planning for 2023?**



For more information about drug testing in the U.S., you can watch HireRight's recent webinars: ['Drug Testing State of the Union 2023'](#)<sup>8</sup> and ['What You Need to Know About Reasonable Suspicion Testing'](#).<sup>9</sup>

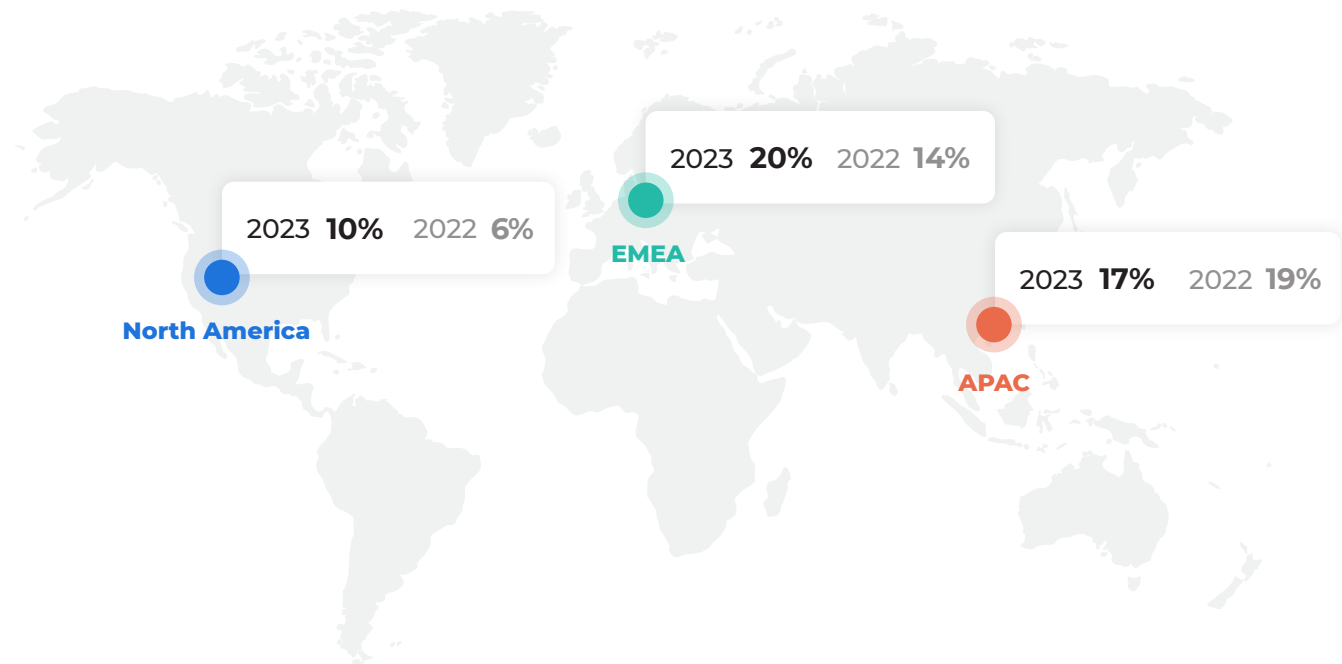
# Social Media Screening

**Social media screening was a hot topic in the world of background screening in 2022 – and it continues to be at the start of 2023. This year’s survey responses show that globally there has been year-over-year growth in the number of organizations conducting social media checks.**

Respondents in EMEA are the most likely to be utilizing social media screening, with a fifth (20%) of respondents from the region saying they include it as part of their candidate screening program, an increase from 14% in 2022.

**Which background screening services does your company include in its pre-employment screening program?**

**Answer:** Social media



As with drug testing, the reason most commonly given for not conducting social media checks was it not being required by regulation. Additionally, around three in 10 respondents globally said they don't know enough about social media screening to utilize it.

### Why does your company not currently conduct social media checks?

#### North America

Not required by regulation



I don't know enough about it



Legal concerns



#### EMEA

Not required by regulation



I don't know enough about it



Social media activity is not a concern from a hiring perspective



#### APAC

Not required by regulation



I don't know enough about it



Social media activity is not a concern from a hiring perspective



Other reservations included legal concerns, being unsure how to interpret the results, and the perception that social media checks are too invasive.



“For employers that conduct social media screening in-house, complying with the myriad of laws addressing privacy should be a concern. In the U.S., numerous states have passed laws restricting an employer’s access to the social media accounts held by a prospective candidate or worker. Several states have also passed comprehensive privacy laws. Notable is the California Privacy Rights Act, which provides individuals with specific rights to their personal data collected and reviewed directly by the employer as part of the employment process outside of a background check from a screening provider.

*For more information about the legal concerns around social media screening, you can read HireRight’s recent [blog post](#), which includes a short video from Alonzo Martinez on this topic.<sup>10</sup>*

“Additionally, employers must be wary of imparting bias into employment decisions. When employers comb an individual’s social media profiles to assess a candidate’s fit within an organization and identify potential risks, employers can’t unsee what they’ve seen. This could lead to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) concerns, as it is crucial only to consider non-discriminatory and job-relevant information throughout the hiring process.

“A social media screening solution such as that provided by HireRight in partnership with Fama Technologies may help employers address concerns of perceived bias, depth of screening, and cost while still reporting relevant data from their candidates’ public social media profiles to help provide a more holistic picture of their candidate or employee as part of their background screening program.”

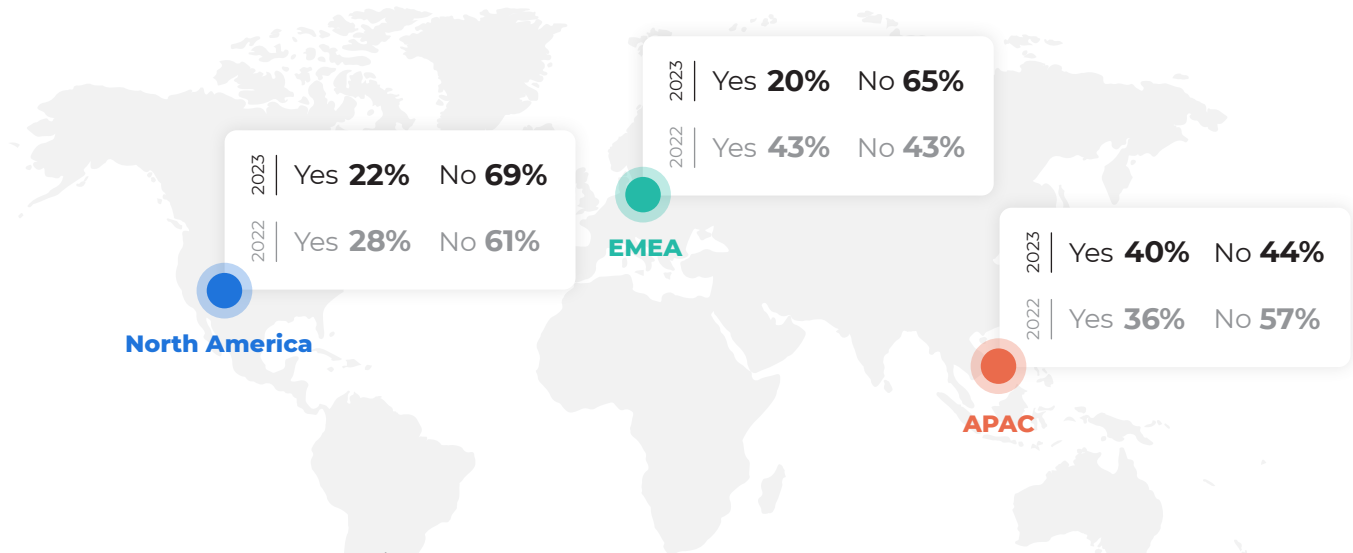
**Alonzo Martinez**  
Associate General  
Counsel at  
HireRight



Around a fifth of respondents from North America and EMEA said they review their candidates' public social media profiles ahead of conducting job interviews, showing a decline in pre-interview in-house social media reviews since last year's survey.

## Do you review candidates' public social media profiles in-house prior to interview as part of your recruitment process?

(Other "not sure" responses not shown below)



Compared with HireRight's 2022 Survey findings,<sup>1</sup> fewer than half the number of EMEA respondents said they investigate their candidates' social media presence themselves before the interview stage of their recruitment process. With a fifth (20%) of EMEA respondents saying they currently include social media screening in their pre-employment screening program, perhaps some of the companies that previously reviewed their candidates' social

media footprints in-house are now utilizing a third-party background screening provider to review this information in an effort to improve compliance and transparency.

This year, respondents from APAC are the most likely to review their candidates' social media profiles pre-interview, with two-fifths (40%) saying this is something they practice in-house – a slight increase year-over-year.

**Our survey found that over a quarter (28%) of APAC respondents feel they don't know enough about social media screening to utilize it, and 24% consider it too invasive – perhaps this is why an “under-the-radar” in-house approach is being utilized by some employers in the region.**

Reviewing an applicant's social media presence and activity in-house is not without its risks and challenges. Reviewing a candidate's public social media profiles can be a time-consuming activity, and without their consent and cooperation, even finding a candidate's profiles and confirming they belong to that individual can be difficult.

Additionally, it can be challenging to know what to look for, and harder still to ensure that the person reviewing the social media profiles is not being influenced and biased by the candidate's protected characteristics, such as their age, race, sexual orientation, or political beliefs.

By outsourcing your candidate's social media screening to a third-party provider and including it within your company's formal background screening program, employers can help remove this bias from their social media screening activity by limiting their exposure to the candidate's protected characteristics. Employers can typically select from pre-configured keywords, targeted to specific risks a business may be looking to mitigate, or define custom keywords for a more tailored approach.

Working with a third party can also help to facilitate transparency in the process with your candidates, explaining that only their public social media posts are reviewed – which could help to alleviate concerns they may have around the scope of the checks.

*To learn more about the ongoing discussion around social media screening, you can read media articles written by HireRight on this subject in [HR Director magazine](#)<sup>12</sup> and [HR Zone](#).<sup>13</sup>*

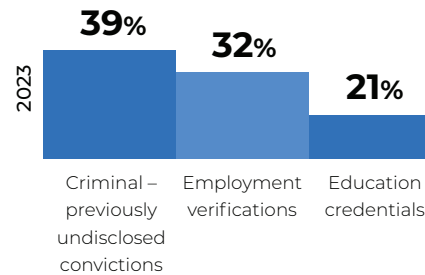
# Candidate Discrepancies

Employment verifications remain the area where most respondents from EMEA and APAC find candidate discrepancies – with year-over-year increases in the number of companies finding these kinds of discrepancies in all regions.

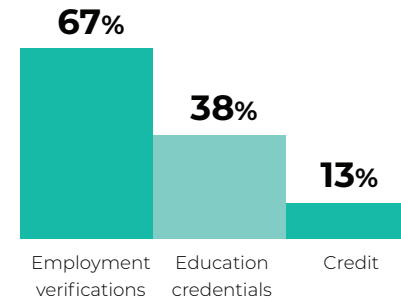
In North America, previously undisclosed criminal convictions are the most common type of candidate discrepancy, with almost two-fifths (39%) of respondents saying they often discover these kinds of discrepancies. In comparison, criminal record discrepancies were among the most commonly found by a quarter (25%) of APAC respondents – a notable rise from 18% in 2022 – and just 9% of EMEA respondents.

**In which areas do you most often find candidate discrepancies during their background screenings?**

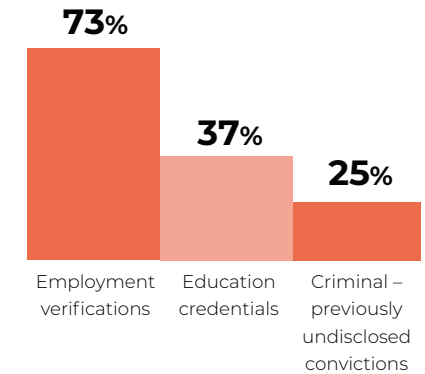
## North America



## EMEA



## APAC



Year	Criminal – previously undisclosed convictions	Employment verifications	Education credentials	Credit
2023	39%	32%	21%	-
2022	37%	31%	16%	16%
2021	53%	28%	23%	29%



“One explanation for the high criminal discrepancy rate in North America could be the number of different criminal record checks that are available in the U.S. Most countries around the world have a federal or national database that is checked when a criminal record screening is performed on a candidate.

“However, in the U.S., there are a wider range of services available to employers – including federal criminal record checks, county criminal, statewide criminal records search, and sex offender registry searches. If employers are conducting multiple different criminal record checks on each candidate due to availability of records, there is an increased likelihood that discrepancies may be found simply because more data is being checked per candidate.”

Interestingly, there has been a significant decline in criminal discrepancies in EMEA over the past three years. In HireRight's 2021 Global Benchmark Survey, 41% of EMEA respondents said they found previously undisclosed convictions. In HireRight's 2022 survey, this figure had almost halved – dropping to 21% – and in 2023, it has halved again, down to just 10%. Additionally, credit discrepancies were one of the most identified candidate discrepancies for only 13% of EMEA respondents this year, compared with 29% two years ago.

● **Conal Thompson**

Chief Technology  
Officer at  
HireRight



**Education credentials remains one of the three most common areas that candidate discrepancies are discovered by employers in each region, despite slight declines in the number of businesses in EMEA and APAC that reported finding these discrepancies in this year's survey.**

Considering the number of respondents from each region who reported conducting education verifications (87% in APAC, 71% in EMEA and 46% in North America), over half 54% of EMEA respondents who conduct pre-employment education checks said they often identified candidate discrepancies in this area. In North America, 46% of those conducting education checks commonly found discrepancies, and in APAC, 43% said the same.

With discrepancy rates reportedly so high, it is surprising that more businesses are not including education verifications as part of their candidate vetting programs. In recent months there have been several high-profile cases in the media where individuals were found to have not had the education they claimed.

In the UK, a psychiatrist who worked for the National Health Service (NHS) for over 20 years was found to have forged her medical degree certificate, and, in February 2023, was sentenced to seven years in prison after being convicted of 13 counts of fraud, two of forgery, and two of using a false instrument.<sup>14</sup>

In the U.S., it was revealed that the U.S. representative for New York's 3rd congressional district, George Santos, had fabricated education credentials and part of his employment history on his resume.<sup>15</sup>

*Find out more about the perils of resume fraud, and the role education checks can play in mitigating this risk in this article by Peter Cleverton, Managing Director for EMEA at HireRight, for People Management: [How to identify fraudulent job applications](#).<sup>16</sup>*

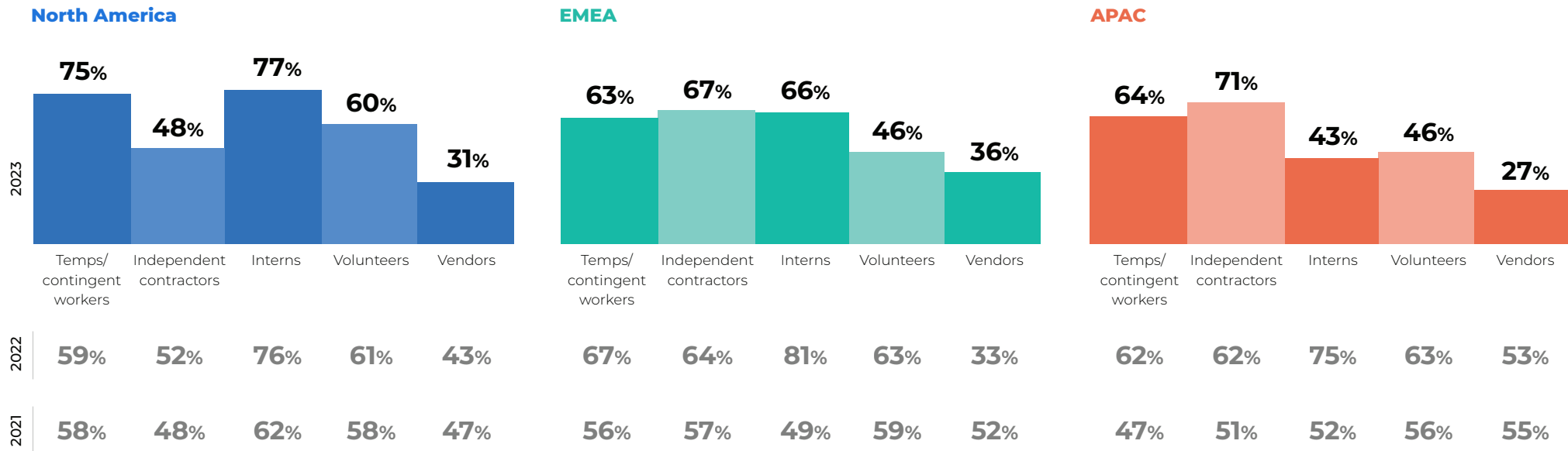


# Extended Workforce Screening

**Three-quarters (75%) of respondents from North America that utilize temporary/contingent workers said they screen them – an increase from around three-fifths (59%) that said this was the case for the past two years.**

Most businesses in the region also screen their interns (77%) and volunteers (60%), but only around half (48%) vet their independent contractors, possibly leaving themselves open to risks of inside threats from these workers.

## Which non-employee workers does your company utilize and screen?



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

Around two-fifths of respondents from EMEA screen their independent contractors (67%), interns (66%), and temporary/contingent workers (63%), however, screening volunteers and vendors is reportedly less common. In fact, the workforce provided by vendors is the least likely to be screened by respondents in each region.

Respondents from APAC are the most likely to screen their independent contractors, with seven in 10 (71%) businesses in the region that utilized this type of worker saying they verify their backgrounds. Just under two-thirds (64%) of respondents from the region said they screen their temporary/contingent workforce but screening for interns, volunteers, and vendors appears to have declined in the region this year.

**Whether a worker is a permanent full-time employee or a contractor, vendor, or intern, they could potentially pose the same risk to an organization if they have access to sensitive materials or are customer-facing.**

The high rates of screening temporary or contingent workers and interns in North America suggests that many businesses understand these risks and are taking appropriate steps to mitigate them. However, this makes it even more surprising that over half of respondents from North America that work with independent contractors do not feel the need to screen them in the same way that they are screening their other non-employee workers.



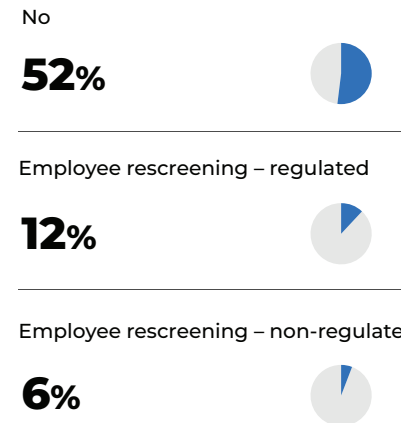
# Post-Hire Screening

**Around half (49%) of employers globally do not have a post-hire screening program. This might comprise of periodic employee rescreening and/or continuous monitoring.**

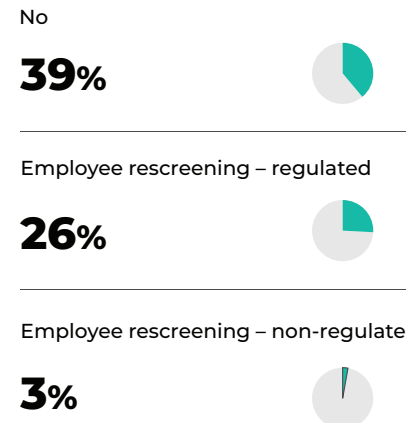
Companies in EMEA are the most likely to be conducting employee rescreening for regulated roles – such as those covered by the Senior Managers and Certification Regime (SMCR) – with over a quarter (26%) of respondents from the region saying this takes place in their organization. EMEA respondents are also the least likely to rescreen non-regulated employees, with just 3% of respondents saying non-regulated roles are subject to rescreening.

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

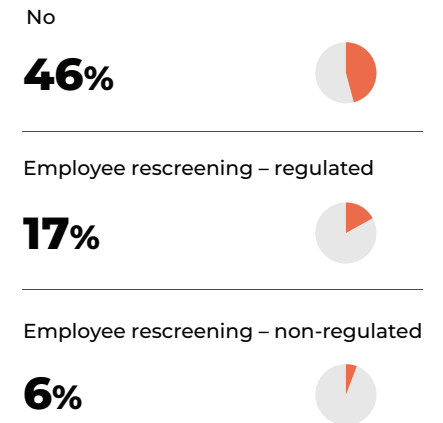
## North America



## EMEA



## APAC



**In addition to complying with screening regulations, which is an important motivation behind many companies' employee rescreening programs, protecting their company's reputation and creating a safe work environment were cited among the top three benefits of post-hire screening by respondents in each region.**

Additionally, around two-fifths (38%) of respondents from APAC said that rescreening helps to detect inside threats such as theft, embezzlement, or selling company or customer data.

**What do you see as the main benefits of conducting rescreening/monitoring?**



**North America**

Creating a safe working environment



Complying with screening regulations



Protecting your company reputation



**EMEA**

Complying with screening regulations



Protecting your company reputation

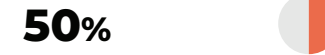


Creating a safe working environment



**APAC**

Protecting your company reputation



Creating a safe working environment

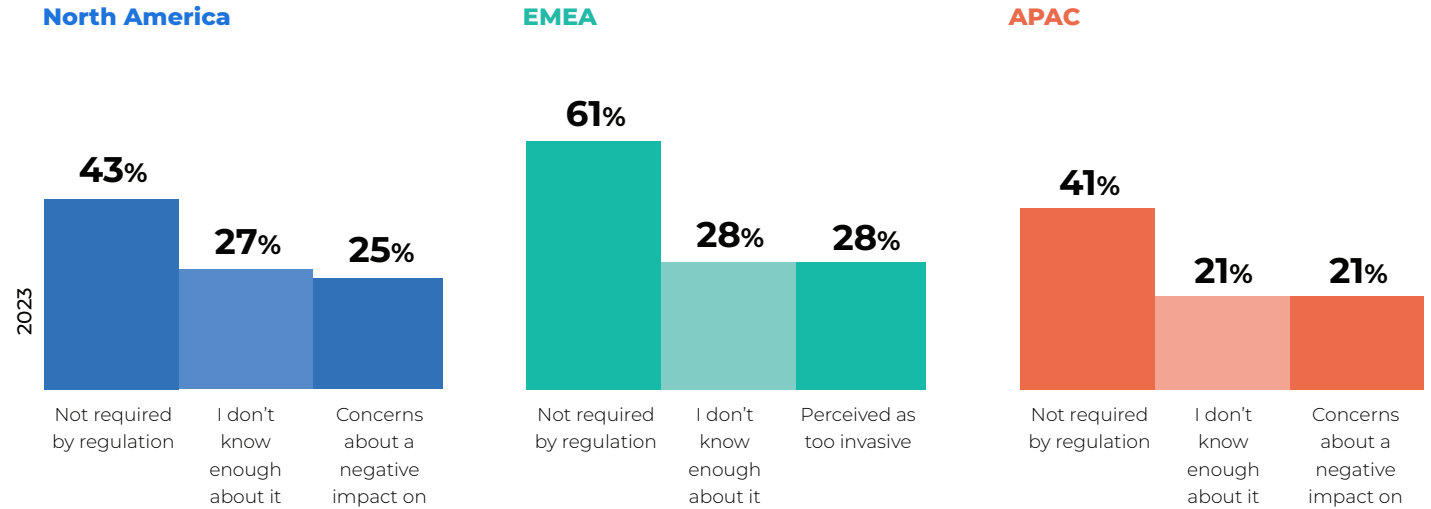


Helping to detect inside threats



For businesses who aren't currently conducting any form of post-hire screening, the lack of regulation requiring it was the top reason given in each region – around two-fifths of respondents from North America (43%) and APAC (41%) and three-fifths (61%) of respondents from EMEA said this was the case.

### Why do you not currently conduct any post-hire screening? (e.g., rescreening or monitoring)



Furthermore, over a quarter of respondents from EMEA (28%) and North America (27%) and a fifth (21%) of respondents from APAC said they don't know enough about post-hire screening to conduct it.

*If you fall into this category, you can read more about the benefits of employee rescreening in [HireRight's Global Guide to Rescreening](#).*



# Talent Acquisition



# Foreword

In our ever-changing world, we must understand the course we've followed in order to help us navigate the uncharted waters ahead. For many organizations, last year was a balancing act of managing conflicting priorities while having understaffed human resources or talent acquisition teams, as over a quarter of respondents to this year's Benchmark Survey claimed.

Perhaps you had to map out a plan for attracting the best new talent to replenish or grow your workforce, despite cuts to your recruitment budget. Globally, half of respondents said they advertised on additional channels to drive recruitment last year and half increased their salaries and offered better or additional benefits. Despite this, nearly two-fifths of global respondents had job roles vacant for between three and six months in 2022.

Maybe you had to explore new ways to engage and retain employees while morphing your company culture to accommodate remote, hybrid, and office-based workers.

A third of respondents worldwide brought in new wellbeing initiatives last year, and a third introduced additional training and professional development opportunities to engage their current workforce – yet two-fifths of respondents still had higher than expected resignation rates/churn in 2022.

It's also possible you revisited one of your organization's most important elements in attracting and retaining employees: increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in your workforce. DEI has long been an area that needs to be better addressed by most companies, and our survey responses suggest that it will remain a significant talent acquisition challenge this year and in the years that follow for over two-fifth of global respondents.

The remainder of this report focuses on talent acquisition and workforce management – including the use of applicant tracking systems and their integration with background screening providers, recruitment challenges, tactics,

and the most effective channels utilized in 2022, and workforce growth projections, retention activity plans, and the future of remote and hybrid working in 2023 and beyond.

**I hope you will find this information useful to benchmark your company's activities to peers regionally and globally and that it will help you to navigate your company through the uncertain waters that lie ahead.**

**Julie Romero**

Chief Human Resources Officer at HireRight





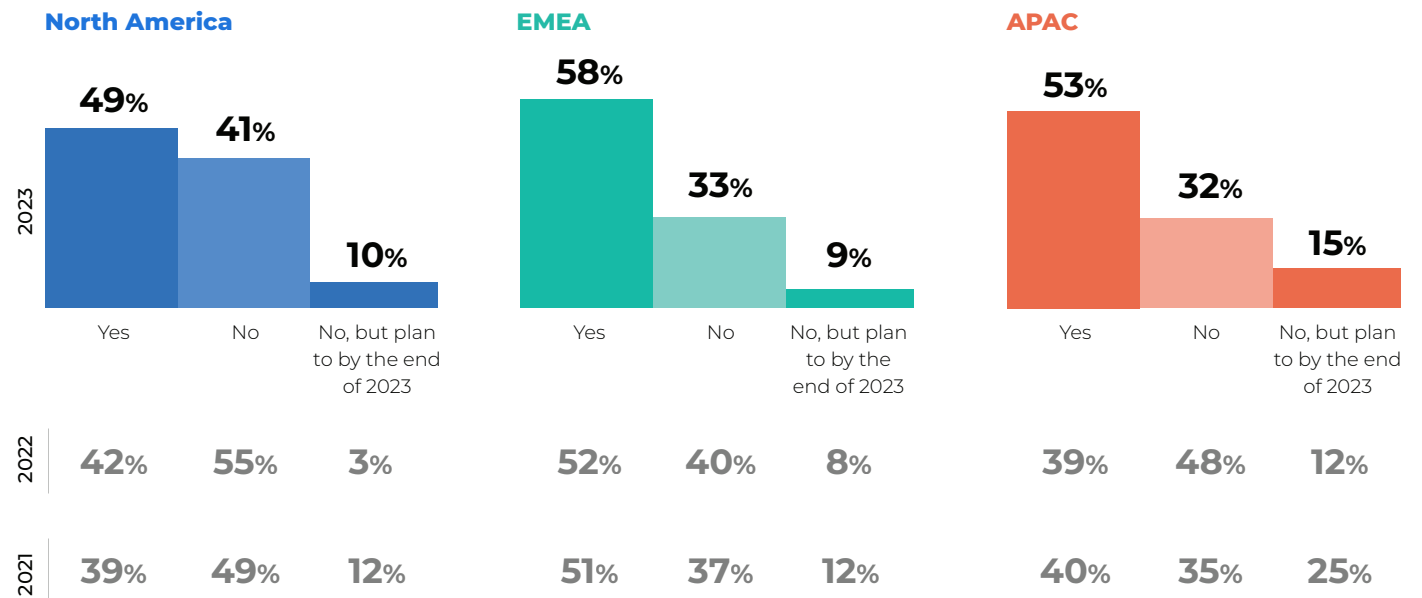
# Adoption of Applicant Tracking Systems

**Employment verifications remain the area where most respondents from EMEA and APAC find candidate discrepancies – with year-over-year increases in the number of companies finding these kinds of discrepancies in all regions.**

Globally, around one in 10 organizations plan to start using an ATS this year. Additionally, a similar number of respondents globally said their company is planning to switch ATS providers before the end of 2023. The top motivations for changing ATS providers are a lack of ATS functionality/workflow key to business requirements, support challenges with their current provider, and cost.

Looking at the data by company size, globally, organizations with more than 5,000 employees are the most likely to use an applicant tracking system, with over two-thirds (68%) of respondents from companies of this size saying they use an ATS. Year-over-year, more businesses with fewer than 500 employees said they are using an ATS in 2023 (up from 31% in 2022 to 38% this year).

## Does your organization use an Applicant Tracking/Recruiting Software System (ATS)?



This suggests that companies of all sizes are now seeing the need for an applicant tracking system and believe that the cost and time to set up the system are outweighed by the benefits it can offer, such as reducing the amount of time needed to manually carry out administrative tasks.

# ATS Integrations

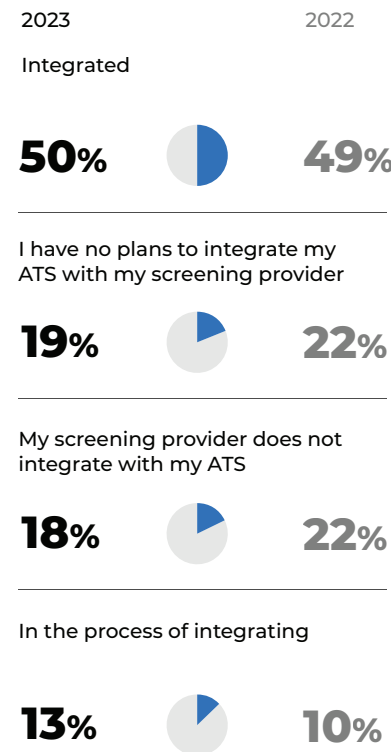
**Half of employers from North America that utilize an applicant tracking system (ATS) say that it is integrated with their background screening provider.**

However, outside of North America, far fewer respondents said they had integrated their screening provider with their ATS. In EMEA, under a quarter (23%) of respondents said their company has an ATS/background screening integration, but surprisingly over a third (36%) said that their screening provider doesn't integrate with their ATS.

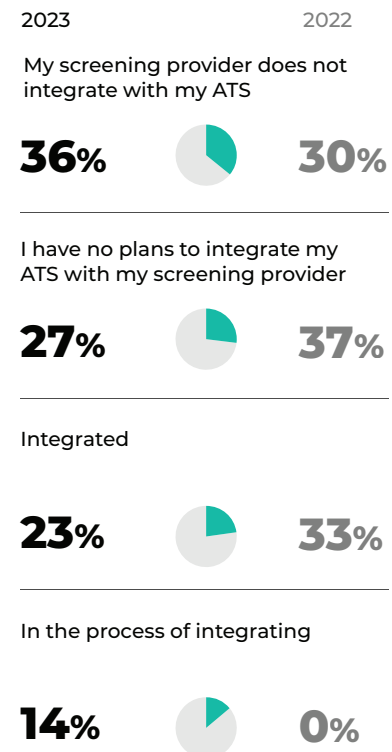
This could be due to smaller businesses partnering with newer applicant tracking systems, which screening providers may not yet have had the chance to integrate with. Alternatively, this could be due to a lack of integration from their current screening provider, while other screening providers may integrate with their ATS.

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

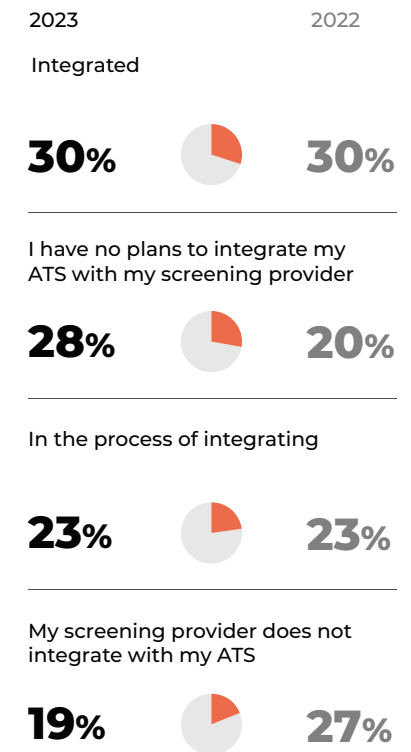
## North America



## EMEA



## APAC



Globally, three-fifths (60%) of respondents whose background screening provider is integrated with their ATS rated the integration as highly valuable/mission critical, with a further third (35%) saying it is moderately valuable.

However, over a fifth of respondents without an integration between their ATS and their background screening provider identified integration costs, time to integrate, and a lack of internal resources as barriers preventing their business from integrating their systems.

*You can find a full list of HireRight's ATS partners on <https://www.hireright.com/partners>.*

**“HireRight integrations require minimal setup resources for a solution with benefits that could have a long-lasting impact on a business for years to come.**

**“From a reduction in data entry duplication, which can improve the candidate experience, to additional functionality within the ATS, such as creating new screening orders, tracking the status of candidate checks, and viewing screening results, an integration could help to drive efficiency in the recruitment process. This is something 45% of global survey respondents this year expected to be one of their top talent acquisition challenges in 2023 and 36% predict will be a major challenge for the following three years (2024-2026).”**

**Tyra Malone**

Senior Director of Strategic Alliances at HireRight



# Recruitment in 2022

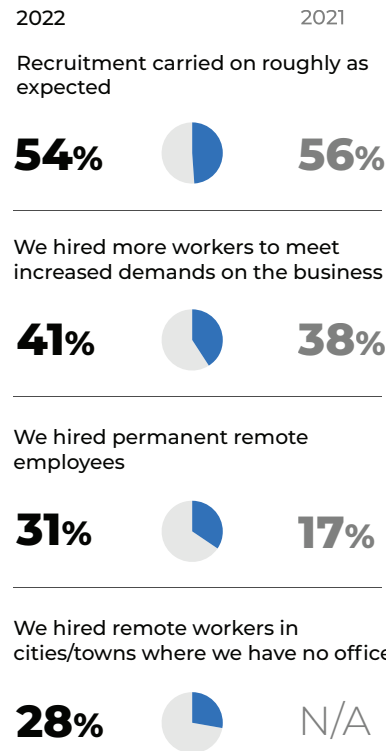
The recruitment landscape last year appears to have not been as challenging as many reports in the media have suggested, with around half of respondents globally saying their company's recruitment carried on as expected in 2022.

In fact, over two-fifths of respondents from each region said that they had to hire more workers to cope with increased demands on their businesses last year – which was an increase year-over-year in North America and EMEA but a decline from our 2022 survey's figures in APAC.

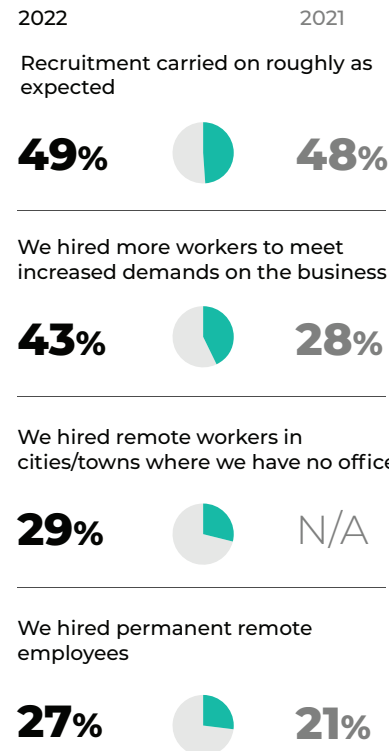
## Which of the following applied to your company's recruitment in 2022?

*\*New options were introduced for 2023. N/A indicates that no year-over-year data is available.*

### North America



### EMEA



### APAC







Additionally, the number of EMEA and APAC respondents that said they stopped recruitment for more than three months last year has dropped from our 2022 Survey findings – from 24% to 12% in EMEA and from 20% to 13% in APAC.

Almost three in 10 respondents from North America (28%) and EMEA (29%) said their company hired remote workers in cities or towns where they have no office. Additionally, nearly a fifth (18%) of respondents from EMEA said they had hired individuals to work remotely in countries where they have no office.

**These findings could suggest that many employers have not only embraced hybrid working for their existing workforce – they have also actively recruited employees from outside commutable distances from their offices, onboarding new talent to work remotely for their organizations.**

We look more closely at rates of adoption of remote and hybrid working in the Workforce Management section of this report.

# Recruitment Challenges in 2022

An increased time to hire was identified as the top recruitment challenge for businesses in EMEA and APAC in 2022, with a notable year-over-year increase in APAC from 30% to 44%.

However, the time it took to fill job vacancies affected more employers in North America last year, with over two-fifths (43%) saying they had positions in their organization that took between three and six months to fill.

Globally, around three in 10 respondents said they had experienced issues with understaffing in their recruitment or human resource teams last year. Whether this was due to the rising workloads, recruitment challenges in finding HR talent, or other reasons is unclear, but it seems to have affected similar percentages of businesses in each region.

## Did your business experience any of the following recruitment challenges in 2022?

### North America

2022 2021

Positions remaining unfilled for three to six months



Higher than expected resignation rate/churn



Higher than normal time to hire



Candidates dropping out if remote working wasn't offered



Understaffing in your HR/recruitment team



### EMEA

2022 2021

Higher than normal time to hire



Higher than expected resignation rate/churn



Understaffing in your HR/recruitment team



Positions remaining unfilled for three to six months



Candidates dropping out if remote working wasn't offered



### APAC

2022 2021

Higher than normal time to hire



Higher than expected resignation rate/churn



Candidates dropping out if remote working wasn't offered



Higher than normal "new hire" turnover rate



Understaffing in your HR/recruitment team



# Recruitment Tactics in 2022

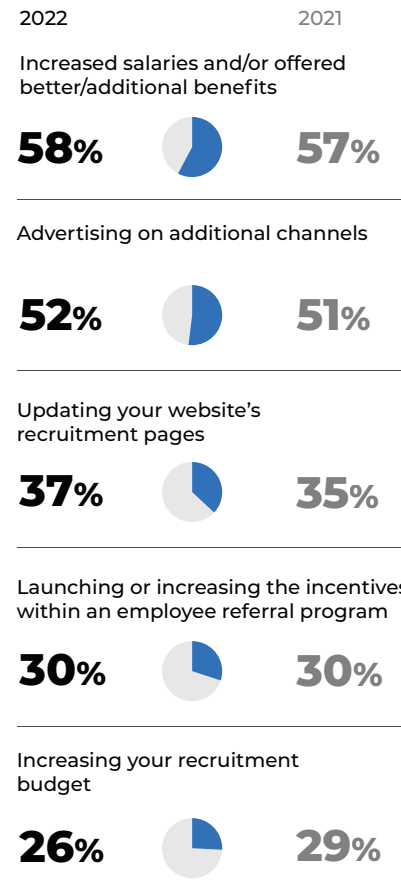
**Almost three-fifths (58%) of employers in North America increased their salary offerings or incorporated new or additional benefits to help support their recruitment efforts last year.**

This tactic was also utilized by around two-fifths of respondents from APAC (43%) and EMEA (39%).

With many countries worldwide experiencing high rates of inflation in 2022, in part due to the rising costs of utilities and food, and relatively low unemployment rates after pandemic peak unemployment in early 2020, it is unsurprising that many companies felt the need to boost their salary and benefits packages.

## Which of the following did you try in 2022 to drive recruitment in your company?

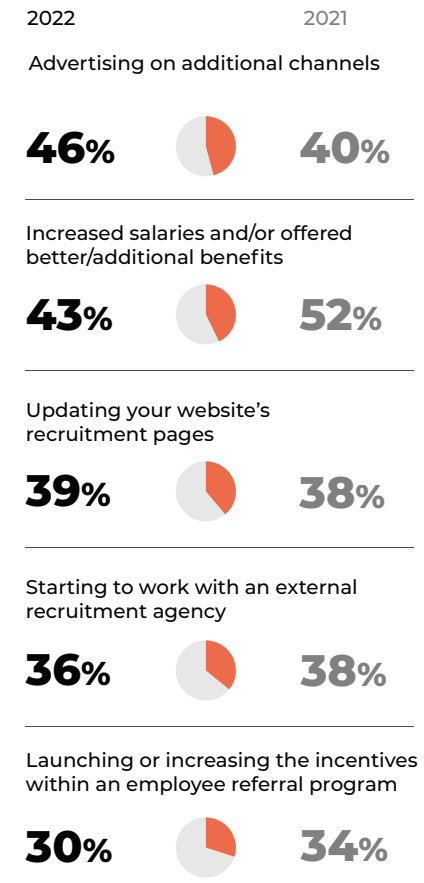
### North America



### EMEA



### APAC



Globally, half (51%) of respondents said their company advertised on additional channels in 2022 to help support their hiring efforts. Additionally, around two-fifths (38%) made updates to their website's recruitment pages last year to drive recruitment efforts for their company – perhaps highlighting new or updated benefits, updating imagery or videos to reflect their company culture, or making text edits for search engine optimization (SEO) to improve their visibility online.

**Increasing recruitment budgets and launching or increasing incentives within an employee referral program were also among the tactics widely used, being utilized by between a fifth and two-fifths of employers in each region.**

Around a third of respondents from APAC (36%) and EMEA (30%) said they began working with an external recruitment agency in 2022 to help manage their company's recruitment. Companies may work with external recruiters for a variety of reasons, including to help manage high volumes of applications, to source candidates for hard-to-fill positions, or to outsource the whole recruitment process to reduce a company's staff overhead costs. But did our survey respondents list external recruiters among their most effective recruitment channels in 2022, and do they expect them to be one of their top ways to acquire talent in 2023?



# Recruitment Channels in 2022/2023

**Online job boards were the most effective recruitment channel for employers in North America in 2022 and are expected to remain the most effective channel in the region this year.**

Respondents from North America anticipate little change in their most effective talent acquisition channels this year, however, social media is expected to be more effective in 2023 than it was last year, rising from fifth to the third most cited top recruitment channel this year.

**Which of the following have been the most effective in recruiting and attracting new employees to your company in 2022, and which do you think will be the most effective in 2023?**

## North America

2023		2022	
Online job boards	<b>60%</b>	Online job boards	<b>69%</b>
Referrals	<b>58%</b>	Referrals	<b>63%</b>
Social media	<b>40%</b>	Internal recruitment	<b>40%</b>

## EMEA

2023		2022	
Referrals	<b>61%</b>	Internal recruitment	<b>63%</b>
Internal recruitment	<b>58%</b>	Online job boards	<b>58%</b>
Corporate website/ Online job boards	<b>47%</b>	Referrals	<b>53%</b>

## APAC

2023		2022	
Referrals	<b>68%</b>	Online job boards	<b>60%</b>
Social media	<b>60%</b>	Internal recruitment	<b>54%</b>
Online job boards	<b>53%</b>	External recruiters/ Referrals	<b>52%</b>





In EMEA, internal recruitment was cited most often as one of the most effective hiring channels in 2022. It is expected to remain a top method of attracting candidates this year too – surpassed only by referrals, which is expected to be the top recruitment channel in EMEA in 2023. However, fewer respondents from EMEA believe that online job boards will be among their most effective recruitment channels this year than in 2022, dropping from 58% in 2022 to 47% in 2023.

In APAC, external recruiters – such as third-party recruitment agencies that source talent on behalf of their clients – were one of the most effective channels for attracting new talent last year, with over half (52%) citing external recruiters among their top channels. Over a third (36%) of respondents from the region said they started working with an external recruitment agency in 2022.

**Looking ahead to this year, as in EMEA, referrals are expected to be the top talent acquisition channel in APAC. Social media is also expected to become a more effective recruitment channel in APAC this year, rising from sixth in 2022 to second for 2023. But which social media platforms are businesses most likely to be using?**

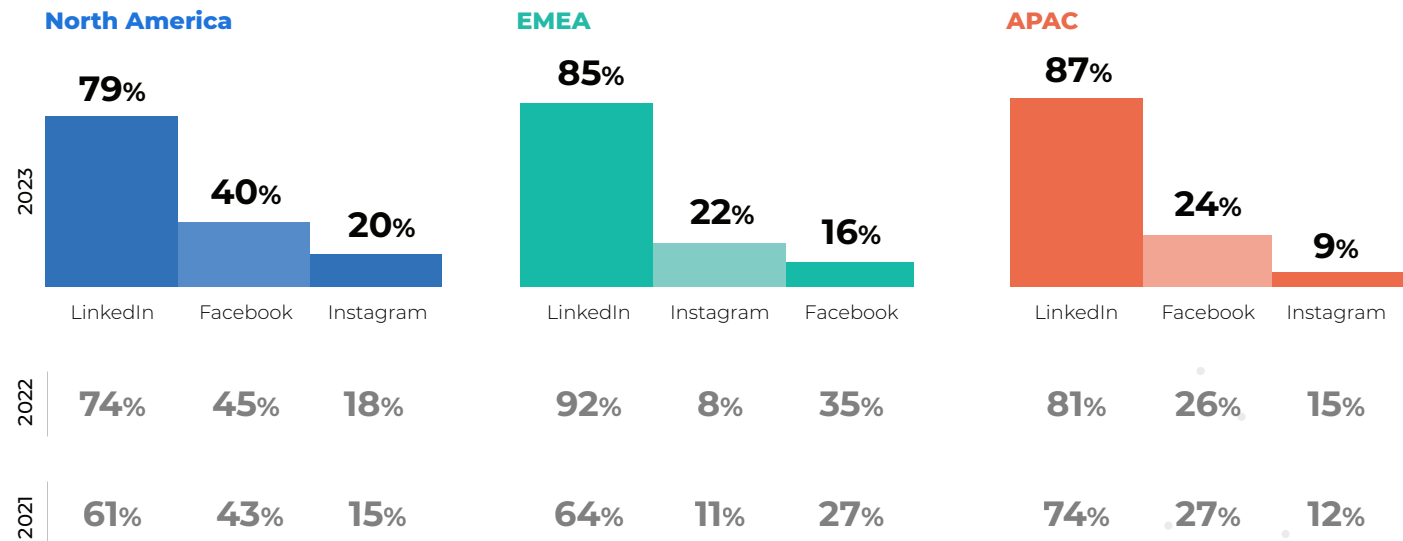


# Social Media Recruitment in 2023

Once again, this year LinkedIn is expected to be the most widely used social media channel for recruitment. Given its reputation as a professional social network – with its integrated job board and the tools and support it provides for jobseekers – this will likely come as no shock.

However, what might be surprising is the drop in the number of employers using Facebook for recruitment in EMEA – from 35% in 2022 to just 16% this year – and the uplift in Instagram for recruitment purposes in the region – from just 8% last year to 22% in 2023. Perhaps Facebook shutting down its “Jobs” product in February this year may have had an impact on its recruitment potential and could lead to fewer employers using the platform for recruitment in all regions next year. We’ll find out in our 2024 Benchmark Survey!

Which social media channels does your company plan to use for recruitment in 2023?





Despite the expected decline in the use of Facebook by employers in EMEA, it is still expected to be a popular channel for recruitment activity elsewhere, with two-fifths (40%) of respondents from North America and a quarter (24%) of APAC respondents planning to use the channel for recruitment this year.

Globally, around one in 10 respondents (12%) said their company plans to use Twitter for recruitment purposes in 2023, which is consistent with the findings of last year's HireRight Benchmark Survey.

“A brand’s presence on social media can play a big part in attracting new talent to their organization. At HireRight, our marketing team works closely with HR to support the company’s talent acquisition efforts by sharing activity on our corporate social media channels. This includes interviews with team members talking about their experience working at HireRight, organic and paid job adverts to promote specific vacancies, and pictures from team events to help highlight our company culture.

“While LinkedIn remains the social media channel most of our survey respondents said they rely on for recruitment, at HireRight we have experienced good results from our job adverts on our other social media channels.

“It may be wise to not place all your eggs in one basket and utilize a multi-channel approach to social media recruitment to help attract more job applications from a wider range of individuals.”

**Karen Sanders**

Director of Talent Acquisition at HireRight



# Talent Acquisition Challenges in 2023 and Beyond

Finding qualified job candidates is still expected to be the most common talent acquisition challenge for employers in North America – both in 2023 and for the following three years. This matches the findings from HireRight’s previous Benchmark Survey in 2022.

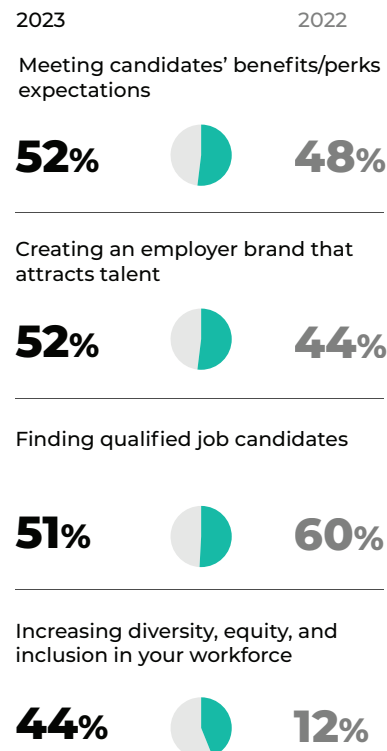
This is also expected to be the most common recruitment challenge for APAC employers, and the third most common recruitment challenge for EMEA employers, this year.

## What do you see as being the most significant talent acquisition challenges this year?

### North America



### EMEA



### APAC



Meeting candidates' benefits and perks expectations is also expected to be a widespread recruitment challenge in all regions, for both 2023 and the years that follow. Compared with last year's survey findings, more respondents this year anticipate this being a significant talent acquisition challenge – especially in APAC where double the percentage of respondents believed this would be a challenge this year.



**Tom Spaeth**

Chief Financial  
Officer at HireRight

**“Considering the macro-economic climate and rising costs impacting workers worldwide, ensuring that your company is offering a competitive salary and benefits package is likely seen by many as table stakes, essential to attract new talent to your organization and to help retain your existing workforce. However, economic headwinds are affecting businesses’ outgoings as well as their employees’ cost of living, so for many companies it may not be a viable option to simply adjust their compensation packages and benefits to meet what their candidates are asking for. At the end of the day, a business still needs to be profitable and financial decisions like these must be justified.”**

Making recruitment processes more efficient, to help reduce time to hire, is also expected to be one of the most significant talent acquisition challenges for employers in North America. This could be achieved through several methods such as integrating your background screening provider with your applicant tracking system – or starting to utilize an applicant tracking system if your business doesn't yet use one – or consolidating local screening services to work with a single background screening provider, for simpler account management, unified reporting, and a globally-consistent screening program.

Increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workforce is seen as a major talent acquisition challenge for the coming years, particularly within EMEA and North America.

**What do you see as being the most significant talent acquisition challenges for the next three years (2024-2026)?**



**North America**

Finding qualified job candidates



Meeting candidates' benefits/perks expectations



Increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in your workforce



Creating an employer brand that attracts talent



**EMEA**

Finding qualified job candidates



Increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in your workforce



Meeting candidates' benefits/perks expectations



Creating an employer brand that attracts talent



**APAC**

Meeting candidates' benefits/perks expectations



Finding qualified job candidates



Creating an employer brand that attracts talent



Applying analytics to recruiting



The need to focus on DEI is supported by a recent report published by eFinancialCareers, The Diversity Equity and Inclusion Report 2023, which found that over half (57%) of poll respondents believed their company had made no progress or not much progress in the past year to attract candidates from underrepresented backgrounds.<sup>17</sup> It seems that there is still a way to go for many organizations to create more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces. Taking active steps to address representation in employer's brands and mitigate bias in recruitment processes are likely to become more commonly used tactics, as businesses need to do more to attract the best talent from all backgrounds.

**“At HireRight, we are committed to investing in increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion within our workforce. We have made changes to the way that we run our talent acquisition programs and how we find individuals applying to join HireRight to foster a more inclusive talent pool. We continue to build a more inclusive organization by assessing what we are doing well and where we can improve, so that we can prioritize those changes throughout the rest of the year.”**

**Steve Girdler**

Global Managing  
Director and  
Head of Corporate  
Responsibility at  
HireRight



Other top recruitment challenges expected for the coming years include creating an employer brand that attracts talent (North America and EMEA) and applying analytics to recruiting (APAC).



# Workforce Management



# Changes in Workforce Size

Despite “The Great Resignation” and several big-name organizations announcing mass lay-offs in 2022 and at the start of 2023,<sup>18</sup> our survey found that globally most participants said their company had increased or maintained their workforce size last year.

Globally, just over one in 10 respondents (12%) said that their company had reduced its workforce size by more than five percent last year.

## How did your workforce size change in 2022?

*“Don't know” responses not shown below*

### North America

Increased

**35%**



Stayed around the same

**33%**



Decreased

**12%**



### EMEA

Increased

**54%**



Stayed around the same

**26%**



Decreased

**11%**



### APAC

Increased

**56%**



Stayed around the same

**22%**



Decreased

**10%**





The outlook this year seems mostly positive too – almost nine in 10 (86%) APAC respondents, four-fifths (81%) of EMEA respondents, and three-quarters (76%) of North America respondents anticipate retaining or growing their workforce in 2023.

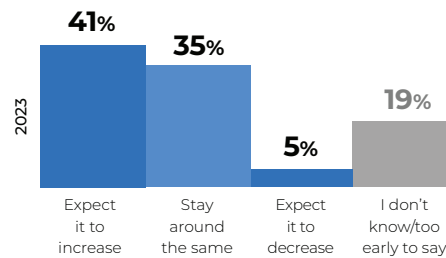
However, with relatively low unemployment rates in many countries at the start of this year (January 2023) – 7.14% in India,<sup>19</sup> 3.7% in the UK,<sup>20</sup> 3.4% in the U.S.,<sup>21</sup> 2.9% in Mexico,<sup>22</sup> and 2% in Singapore<sup>23</sup> – organizations looking to secure the new talent they need to grow in 2023 are likely to face fierce competition, making their talent acquisition strategy even more essential.



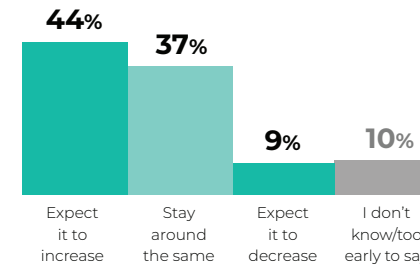
**Nathan Levoit**  
VP of HR  
at HireRight

**How much, if at all, do you anticipate your workforce size will change by the end of 2023?**

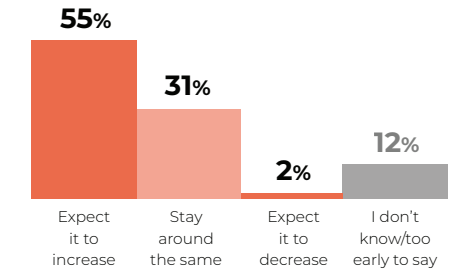
**North America**



**EMEA**



**APAC**



“It’s great to see widespread business optimism with so many organizations believing that their workforce will grow or at least maintain its size this year. While we are still hearing in the media that many companies, particularly those in the technology industry, are making sizeable cuts to their workforces, it seems that most survey respondents’ companies are thankfully not in this position.

“On the contrary, most respondents are likely to be actively looking for new talent this year to replenish workers leaving and hiring for new roles to support their expected business growth. To achieve this, I believe that each organization’s talent acquisition strategy and retention activity will be paramount to its success in 2023.”

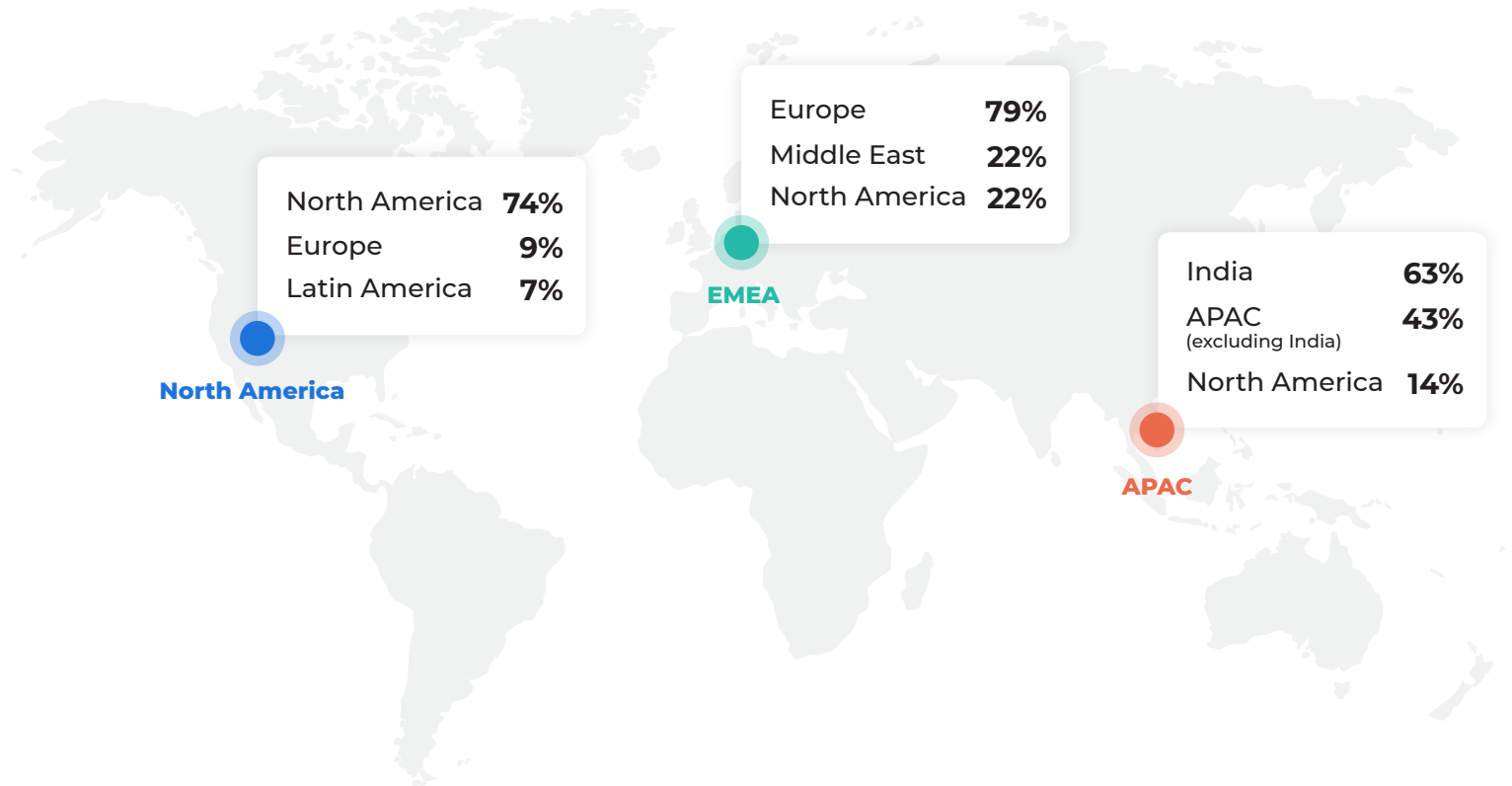
**Most companies looking to expand their employee numbers this year will be doing so within their own regions.**

Over three-fifths (63%) of APAC businesses who plan to expand in 2023 expect to grow their presence in India. Additionally, over two-fifths (43%) plan to grow in the rest of the APAC region.

Four-fifths (79%) of EMEA respondents that said their company is looking to grow this year plan to expand within Europe. Over a fifth (22%) said they have growth plans in the Middle East and the same amount plan to grow in North America.

Three-quarters (74%) of organizations from North America that intend to increase their headcount plan to grow within North America, with only a small number of organizations based in North America planning to expand their presence overseas this year.

**In which of the following regions are you looking to grow your workforce in 2023?**



# Retention Activities

**Globally, new wellbeing initiatives were the most common activity introduced to support workforce retention in 2022.**

Additionally, many businesses from each region provided additional training and professional development opportunities and enhanced the healthcare insurance offering for their workforce to help reduce attrition last year. Based on the relatively low number of respondents globally that said their company reduced its workforce size in 2022, these measures might have had some level of success.

**Which of the following activities did your company introduce in 2022?**

## North America

New wellbeing initiatives



Additional training and professional development opportunities



Enhanced healthcare insurance offering



Fully remote working

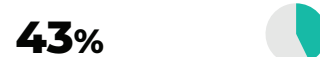


## EMEA

New wellbeing initiatives



Additional training and professional development opportunities



Enhanced healthcare insurance offering



Fully remote working



## APAC

New wellbeing initiatives



Additional training and professional development opportunities



Enhanced healthcare insurance offering



Funding for professional qualifications/tuition



Looking ahead to the rest of this year, respondents from each region believe that new wellbeing initiatives and additional training and professional development opportunities will continue to be introduced to support staff retention.

However, many businesses are also expecting to have to pay to keep their current workforces by conducting more frequent salary reviews, increasing annual bonuses, and considering or introducing additional bonuses this year.

Which of the following activities is your company considering/planning to introduce in 2023?

North America

Additional training and professional development opportunities

30%



New wellbeing initiatives

23%



More frequent salary reviews

21%



Enhanced health insurance offering

20%



Increased annual bonuses (percentages or amounts)

19%



EMEA

New wellbeing initiatives

23%



Additional training and professional development opportunities

20%



Funding for professional qualifications/tuition

14%



Additional bonuses

12%



Enhanced health insurance offering

12%



APAC

Additional training and professional development opportunities

40%



New wellbeing initiatives

27%



More frequent salary reviews

27%



Employee share program

25%



Additional bonuses

24%



Additionally, around a fifth (18%) of respondents from North America said their company is considering adopting a four-day working week in 2023. With many successful trials reported globally, including a recent trial of 61 companies in the UK,<sup>24</sup> perhaps this is something more employers could consider to differentiate from their competitors and help attract new talent.

According to Monster's 2023 Work Watch Report, which is based on survey responses of U.S. employers and workers, 51% of workers said that work wellbeing is more important than a salary increase.<sup>25</sup>

**“For businesses looking to retain and attract top talent without the lure of lucrative salaries, it may be worth considering alternative benefits, such as flexible working hours, enhanced annual leave entitlements, or four-day working weeks, which do not require significant initial financial support to establish.**

**“Additionally, wellbeing initiatives such as running employee assistance programs, offering a subscription to a wellbeing mobile app, or organizing online wellness courses can be relatively inexpensive ways for your business to show your workforce that you care about their mental health and are taking steps to prevent staff burnout.”**

**Kate Perez**

Senior Director of  
Talent Management  
at HireRight



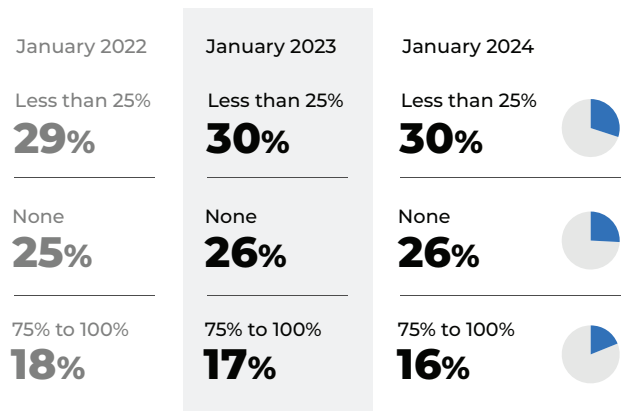
Some businesses are even going a step further to look for unique or innovative ways to help support their employees' mental health. For example, Paws in Work is a UK-based wellbeing company that brings puppies into an office for 'puppy therapy' sessions to help its employees to relax and destress.<sup>26</sup>

# Remote Working by Numbers

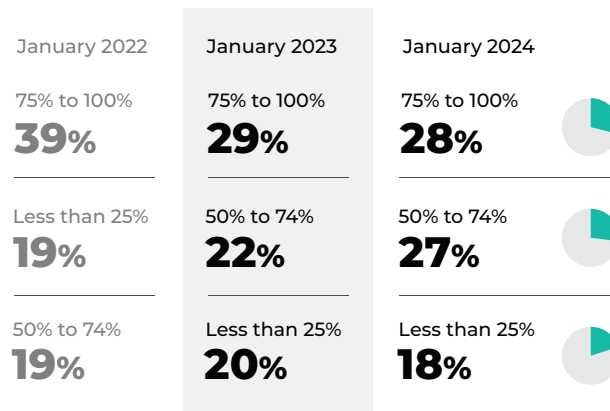
Remote working numbers in 2024 are expected to remain consistent in North America and EMEA – but a decline in remote working is expected in APAC.

Approximately what percentage of your company worked remotely in any capacity within your region in January 2022, in January 2023, and what percentage do you expect will be working remotely in January 2024?

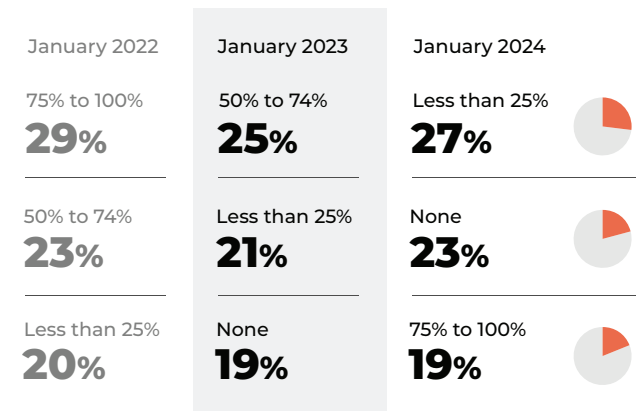
## North America



## EMEA



## APAC



**In North America, the state of remote working appears to be very stable. In January 2022 and January 2023, over half of U.S. respondents said their companies had no remote workforce or that less than a quarter of their workforce is remote in any capacity.** The expectation for January 2024 shows almost no change in these figures. Conversely, around one-sixth of respondents said that between 75% and 100% of their workforce operated remotely in some capacity in January 2022, January 2023, and are expected to be working remotely in January 2024.

**In EMEA, there is also very little change expected in remote working patterns by the end of this year.** Compared with the other regions, remote working is expected to be most common among respondents in EMEA by January 2024, with over half (55%) saying that between 50% and 100% of their workforce will be operating remotely in some capacity by then, a slight increase from 51% who said this was the case in January 2023.

**In APAC, remote working appears to be in decline, and respondents expect this decline to continue into January 2024,** with fewer respondents saying their workforces are largely remote – 29% said that between 75% and 100% of their workforce operated remotely in some capacity in January 2022; by January 2024, just 19% of respondents think this will be the case.





# Is the Future of Work Still Hybrid?

**Businesses in EMEA are the most likely to accommodate hybrid or remote working in 2023.**

Hybrid working is most common among our EMEA respondents: almost two-thirds (64%) said their company allows hybrid working, either choosing which days their employees work in the office or allowing their employees to choose when to come into the office. Additionally, 15% of respondents from the region said their company offers fully remote working for all new hires as well as their existing workforce.

**Which of these statements most accurately describes your company's position on remote working within your region?**

## North America

Remote working is not possible for my business

**21%**



We allow hybrid working – employees choose which days to work in the office

**20%**



We allow hybrid working – our company chooses which days people work in the office

**14%**



## EMEA

We allow hybrid working – employees choose which days to work in the office

**46%**



We allow hybrid working – our company chooses which days people work in the office

**18%**



We offer fully remote working to existing employees and new hires

**15%**



## APAC

We allow hybrid working – employees choose which days to work in the office

**32%**



We allowed remote working in some capacity before January 2023 but have now brought everybody back to the office

**18%**



We allow hybrid working – our company chooses which days people work in the office

**16%**



In APAC, just under half (48%) of respondents said their company facilitates hybrid working. However, almost a fifth (18%) of respondents said that their company allowed remote working before January 2023 but has since brought everybody back to the office.

In North America, just a third (34%) of respondents said their company allows hybrid working. A fifth (21%) of respondents said that remote working is not possible for their business.

For many businesses, especially those in EMEA, it seems that at least in the short-term, remote and hybrid working look likely to remain a part of how they operate, and this is something that employers may need to adapt to in order keep their workforce engaged and retained.

**“At HireRight, we have embraced a global hybrid working approach, and this has been received positively by team members throughout the company. In fact, recent employee surveys have shown that many team members prefer to work from home exclusively, and this is something we have taken steps to facilitate wherever possible. The use of communications technology supports global collaboration between team members in different locations and time zones, making it less important where people are located if they are connected online.**

**“From a company culture perspective, it is undeniably a challenge to try to replicate an office environment when team members are working remotely from their own homes most of the time.**

**“HireRight utilizes several company-wide employee affinity groups – including Black Lives Matter, Mental Harmony, Pride, and WorldWideWomen – which have regular coffee breaks and online social events to provide our people the opportunity to meet with likeminded colleagues from around the world. Additionally, each office has a Culture Club, which arranges in-person and online events throughout the year.”**

**Greg Shuler**

VP HR Business  
Partner at HireRight



# Conclusion

**No matter what your business does or what its plans are for 2024 and beyond, having the right people in your organization is essential.**

Our Benchmark Survey's global respondents have cited year after year that there are several key benefits commonly associated with conducting pre-employment background checks that help support building great teams. These range from improving the overall quality of hires – by revealing candidate discrepancies during the screening process – to helping protect a company's reputation and financial wellbeing from the potential damage a bad hire could have.

In a rapidly changing job market, our survey found that most businesses globally are relying on a host of recruitment tactics and channels to attract new workers. All the while, many companies are facing common talent acquisition challenges – finding the right candidates, meeting their candidates' benefits expectations, and building their employer brand – while potentially operating with an understaffed HR team and a restrictive recruitment budget.

Lastly, retention remains a challenge to many businesses, especially those that are unable – or unwilling – to match the compensation and flexible working conditions that other companies are offering to solve their recruitment problems. Our survey respondents expect little change in this area by the start of 2024, so employers who are not considered competitive in the market may soon find it harder to retain their best staff.

We hope this report has provided you with some considerations and benchmarks for your company's talent acquisition and management strategies and helps to prepare you for however you navigate the new territory that lies ahead.

# Methodology/About Us

## Response

HireRight's 2023 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 February 15 and March 12, 2022, receiving a total of 2,017 complete and partial responses globally. The regional splits of this are 1) North America: 1,465, 2) EMEA: 281, 3) APAC: 226, and 4) Latin America: 45.

## Format

Survey questions included multiple choice, multiple selection, 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 38,000 customers across the globe. We offer our services via a unified global software and data platform that tightly integrates into our customers' human capital management systems enabling highly effective and efficient workflows for workforce hiring, onboarding, and monitoring. In 2022, we screened over 24 million job applicants, employees and contractors for our customers and processed over 107 million screens. For more information, visit [www.HireRight.com](http://www.HireRight.com).

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25. <https://learnmore.monster.com/monster-work-watch-report>
26. <https://www.pawsinwork.com>

# Additional Resources

## Webinars

[Drug Testing State of the Union 2023](#)

[HireRight's 2022 Year in Review Compliance Update](#)

[2023 "Ban the Box" and Fair Chance Hiring Laws](#)

[The Race to Regulate Virtual Reality and AI In the Employment Lifecycle](#)

[Back to the Basics: Screening Requirements for Commercial Drivers](#)

[Improving Healthcare Background Turnaround Times](#)

[Digital Identity Verification Service for UK Right to Work](#)

## eBooks, Tip Sheets, and Brochures

[Building a Global Screening Program](#)

[A Global Guide to Rescreening](#)

[Behind the Screens: 2022 Guide to Background Screening in Asia Pacific](#)

[Employment Screening in Canada](#)

[Employment Screening in Latin America](#)

[Latin America Professional Services Case Study](#)

[Employers Guide to Legalized \(Medical and Recreational\) Marijuana](#)

[15th Annual Benchmark Report](#)

[2021 Global Benchmark Report](#)

## Blogs

[The Life Cycle of a U.S. Drug Test Part 1](#)

[The Life Cycle of a U.S. Drug Test Part 2](#)

[Social Media Screening: What Are Some Legal Concerns for Employers?](#)

[Three Recruitment Trends That Could Affect Hiring in 2023](#)

[How UK Financial Services Companies Manage High-Volume Seasonal Hiring](#)

[Healthcare Perspectives: Improving Screening Turnaround Times](#)

[U.S. Legislation That May Impact Background Screening in 2023: Part One](#)

[HireRight Blog Homepage](#)

## PR/News

[How to Identify Fraudulent Job Applications](#)

[Could Rescreening Employees Help to Fight 'Digital Assassins'?](#)

[The Digital Dilemma of Candidate and Employee Screening](#)

[HireRight Newsroom](#)



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You can [submit your feedback here](#).

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Global Benchmark Report

**2023**