



# Flex the Mould

*Reshaping talent strategies to  
overcome workforce disruption*



## FOREWORD

# There was a time when work moved in straight lines.

Neat boxes. Efficiency. Order. Predictability.  
For a long time, it *worked*.

But the world kept turning. And then, it started spinning faster.  
One day, it was a technology leap. The next, a global shock.  
A supply chain broken by tariffs. A new market unlocked by an app on the other side of the planet.

*Those straight lines started to twist.*

We tried to hold the shape. We added more rules, more processes, more planning. But it wasn't enough. Because the truth is, we are facing a reality where disruption is the baseline, not the exception.

**This is the new shape of work.**



## FOREWORD

The workforce  
should be  
a living system.

It moves.  
It breathes.  
It learns.





# It is built not for permanence, but for purpose.

When we stop asking businesses to stretch into outdated strategies and start shaping the rules around what work needs, we build space for growth, for ways of thinking that challenge what we thought we knew, and for skills that didn't fit before. *And that shift is already underway.*

Across industries, 92% of employers say they will have to create a more flexible workforce that can adapt to rapid shifts in the labour market within the next two years.

We don't get to choose the pace of change, but we do get to choose how we meet it.

**We can keep trying to hold things still, or we can flex the mould and craft something better.**



“ Planning for the future means **asking better questions**. Who do we want to **become**? What kind of work do we want to **create**? That’s where real transformation begins. Every employment decision is an opportunity to **advance social justice** rather than reinforcing existing inequalities. The organisations that consistently choose advancement will build the **diverse, capable workforces** that have the creativity and determination to **solve tomorrow's most complex challenges**. ”

**ANTONIO BONARDO**

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SENIOR DIRECTOR  
GI GROUP HOLDING

VICE PRESIDENT  
WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFEDERATION EUROPE



# Methodology

This report asks a central question:  
How can mixed workforce strategies help solve today's most pressing challenges, for business, workers, and society?

To explore that, we draw on over 25 years of frontline experience in the labour market, supported by two core research efforts.

The first is our *Gi Group Holding 2025 Global Candidate Survey*, conducted in collaboration with Excellera Advisory Group, which captures insights from 10,000 workers across 20 countries. It reveals what today's workforce wants, what's blocking them, and what they expect next.

The second is [The Work We Want](#), a WEC study co-sponsored by Gi Group Holding and other major workforce solutions companies.

This research draws on the perspectives of 715 senior executives worldwide. It examines how companies are addressing talent shortages, evolving expectations, and the demand for more inclusive and sustainable work models.

Together, these perspectives highlight the critical role the HR and staffing services industry can play in shaping better-functioning labour markets and societies.

To ensure accuracy and depth, this report was created exclusively by human experts. No generative AI was used in its development.



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# Chapter 1

The Rules of Workforce Planning are Shifting





“ The pressure to **respond faster, scale smarter, and stay resilient** isn't going away. It's becoming the baseline. The question facing every leadership team is simple: is your operating model helping you **stay ahead**, or **holding you back**? Because in this environment, **standing still means falling behind.** ”

**LUIS DEL OLMO CASALDERREY**

CHIEF PRACTICE OFFICER – OUTSOURCING  
GI GROUP HOLDING



# The Rules of Workforce Planning are Shifting

A logistics team flexes up 200 roles in 72 hours.  
A biotech firm taps into global AI talent for a project that can't wait.  
An organisation weaves full-time staff with freelancers, contingent workers, and outsourced specialists (and delivers faster than anyone expected).

The labour market is in flux, and workforce planning must follow. Demand changes rapidly, skills evolve, and relying on permanent headcount no longer guarantees performance or long-term results.





## THE RULES OF WORKFORCE PLANNING ARE SHIFTING

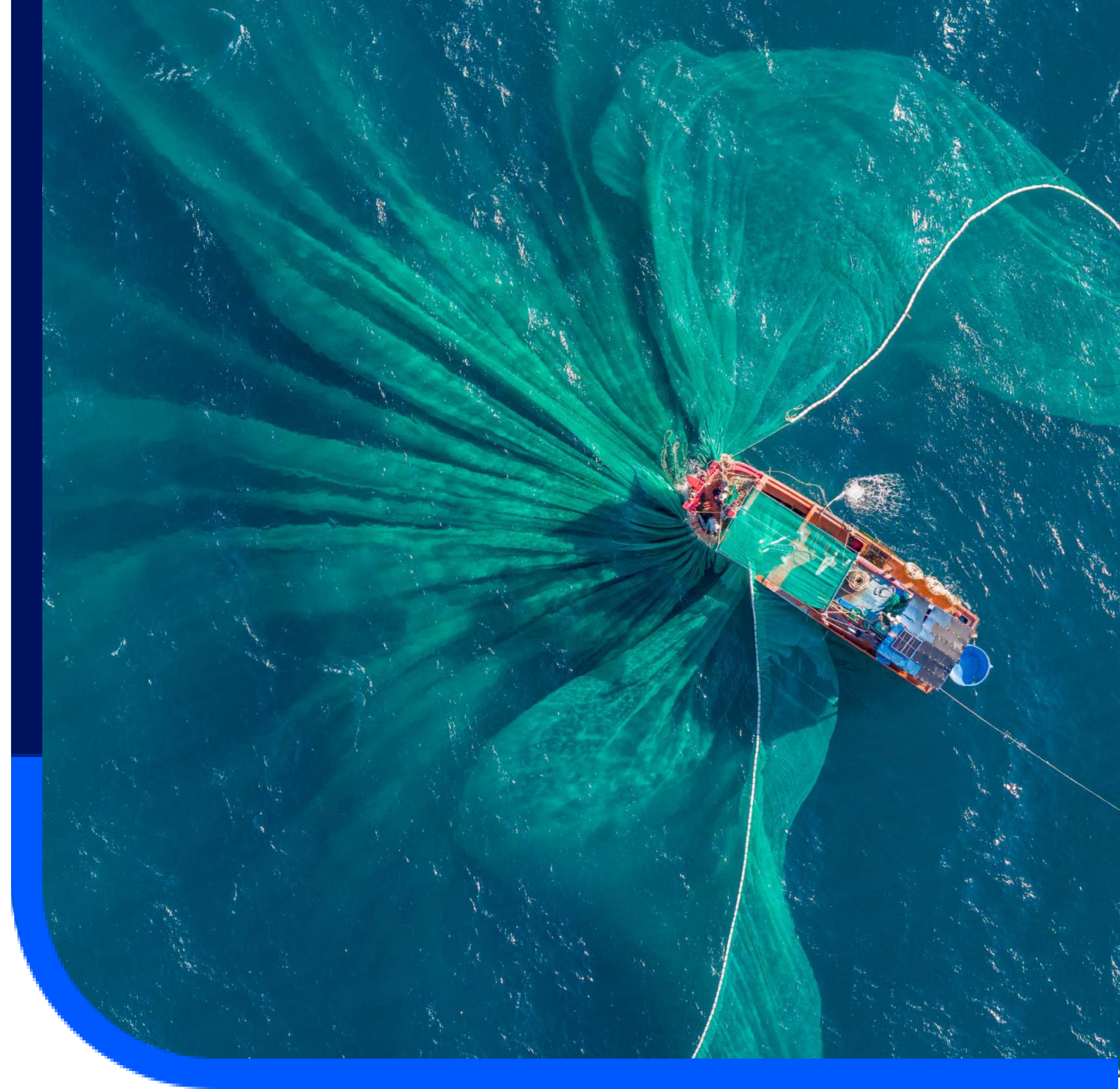
With labour costs outpacing revenue, permanent hiring locks organisations into fixed costs in a volatile environment.

This has led to widespread layoffs, public sector cutbacks, and a wave of tech redundancies continuing into 2025.

Across the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2025), wage pressures are driving labour costs higher than inflation, as economic uncertainty deepens.

While job postings are flattening in regions like Western Europe and North America, sectors such as logistics, healthcare, and green energy still face labour shortages. Meanwhile, core skills are evolving at unprecedented speed, with 40% expected to change within a few years (World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs 2025).

Even software engineers, once considered future-proof, are now exposed to AI-driven redundancy. Generative tools are automating routine coding tasks, shrinking entry-level roles, and reshaping career paths. Jobs are splintering into tasks, blending automation with specialised roles. Organisations can no longer reliably predict which skills they'll need next quarter, let alone next year.







# Chapter 2

Facing an Unpredictable World



“ We have a fundamental responsibility to **build workforce models that honour the whole person**: their need for continuous growth, their desire for **meaningful contribution**, and their **right to choose** how, when, and where they deploy their talents. This is **not** idealism: we stand at a moment where business leaders **can choose** to build workforce models that serve purpose or profit. The wisest will discover they can achieve **both**. ”

**BARBARA BRUNO**

CHIEF PRACTICE OFFICER - STAFFING  
GI GROUP HOLDING



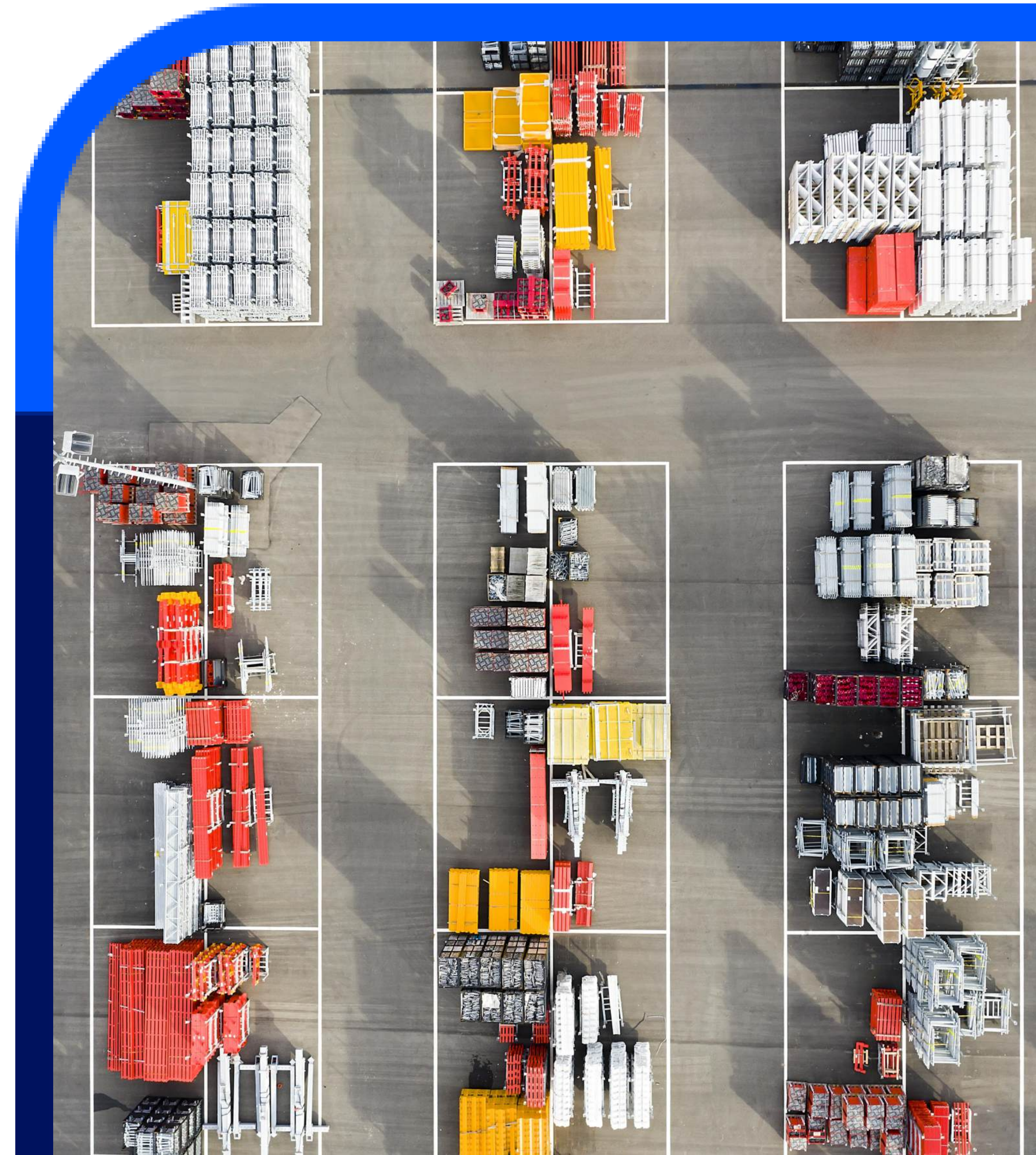
# Facing an Unpredictable World

Productivity has plateaued across much of the developed world, because workforce models haven't kept pace with uncertainty.

We've automated processes, scaled systems, and digitised tasks. However, many organisations still plan and resource work as if nothing has changed.

Too often, underperformance gets pinned on individuals, not the rigid structures and outdated assumptions that shape how work gets done: that temporary workers are just stopgaps. That older workers want out, not reinvention. That everyone wants a single, permanent job. That productivity means being visible, full-time, on-site.

And it's these assumptions that are holding businesses back.



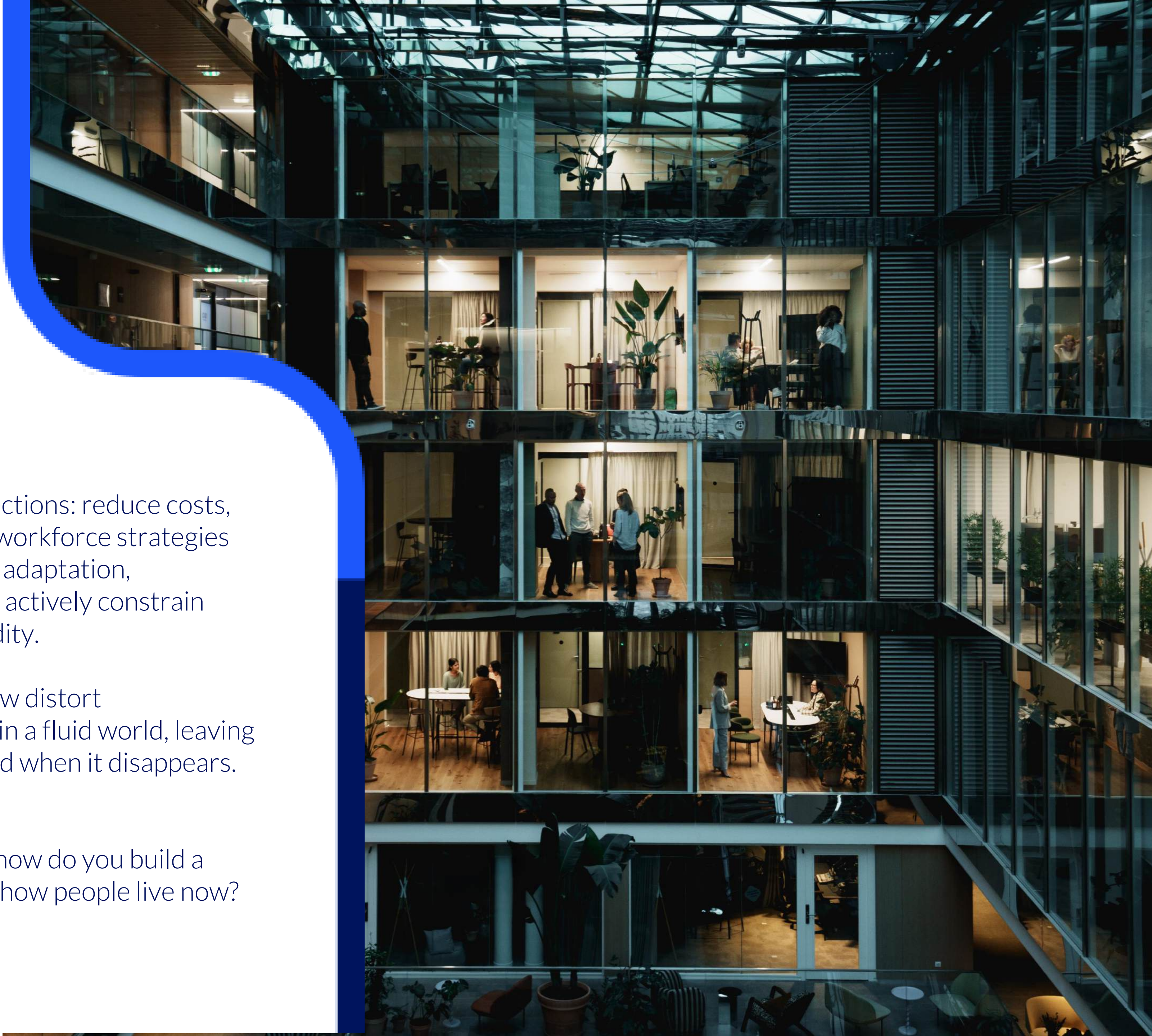


## FACING AN UNPREDICTABLE WORLD

Business leaders are being pulled in competing directions: reduce costs, retain talent, stay agile, build inclusion. Traditional workforce strategies can't deliver on all fronts. They leave little room for adaptation, experimentation, or speed. And in many cases, they actively constrain productivity through misalignment, waste, and rigidity.

Traditional staffing structures, built for stability, now distort performance. They lock companies into fixed costs in a fluid world, leaving teams stretched when demand surges, and stranded when it disappears. That friction is dragging on growth.

Today's unpredictability forces a deeper question: how do you build a workforce optimised for how the world works, and how people live now?





# The flexible workforce in action

## Flexing the tried-and-tested structures.

These strategies break down static roles, allowing organisations to match skills to needs in real-time, and giving workers more ways to contribute, adapt, and stay engaged.

### Core teams still matter: they are the anchor.

But without flexibility around them, performance gets stuck. What's needed is the nimbleness to access specialist skills without long-term overhead, respond to pressure without getting locked in, and tap into wider talent pools.

Agency talent gives companies options: scale up swiftly. Cover gaps during a freeze. Build capacity for a product launch or a trade shock. It can also offer a low-risk way to test skills and fit, sometimes leading to longer-term roles when it's a match on both sides.

### Why are employers turning to staffing agencies?

Source: WEC

Reduce overall recruitment costs

25%

Cover staffing demands during a recruitment freeze

29%

29%

Scale up at peak times

38%

Bridge unexpected resourcing gaps

38%

Increase the agility of their workforce



# Meeting the Shift

As businesses face increasing complexity and uncertainty, a blended workforce has become a strategic advantage.

Contingent professionals bring a wealth of expertise, and their ability to step in and deliver results is transforming how businesses approach talent strategies. What's more, they bring fresh perspectives and diverse experiences, fostering creativity and innovation.

Their ability to hit the ground running not only accelerates project timelines but also enhances overall team performance.

For employers, the advantages are clear.

Whether it's a short-term project or navigating unpredictable market conditions, this approach offers the agility and precision that traditional hiring models often lack.

## Is it Time to Bend?

Here's a quick decision lens to stress-test your current workforce model:

1. Where in your organisation do workflows stall due to rigid headcount or delayed hiring?
2. Do you have roles or functions with unpredictable peaks and no scalable solution in place?
3. Are your talent pipelines diverse and fast or mostly familiar and fixed?
4. Does your performance model account for results across permanent, freelance, and agency teams or is it still built around presence and permanence?

If you're hesitating on more than one, your current model might be working despite the system, not in its favour.



# From Fixed Costs to Fast Response

A growing number of employers see agency staffing as a proactive workforce architecture, a way to build elasticity into their systems.

For some, that means supporting core teams, scaling up ahead of demand peaks, or staying agile through uncertain planning cycles.

For others, it's a critical tool for filling urgent roles without delay and supporting HR teams under pressure to do more with less. In all cases, it's about designing a workforce that can respond, not just react.

Source: WEC

Say that talent planning has never been more difficult than it is today

80%  
of employers

Declare their organisation has a well-established strategy to adopt flexible work solutions

81%  
of employers

Share that the approaches used to find and retain talent in the past are no longer fit for purpose

82%  
of employers

Are planning to increase the employment of agency workers

88%  
of employers

Are expecting to create a more flexible workforce within the next two years

92%  
of employers



# Chapter 3

AI, Automation and Tech Disruptions



“ The traditional hiring playbook is **obsolete**.  
We're seeing leaders that **still think** in terms of  
'permanent vs. temporary' whilst their competitors are  
**building living workforce ecosystems**.  
Most organisations will need **flexible talent infrastructure**  
to deploy strategically when their business pivots  
overnight. ”

**AGNIESZKA KACZMARCZYK**

GLOBAL PRACTICE DIRECTOR – SEARCH & SELECTION  
GI GROUP HOLDING



# AI, Automation and Tech Disruptions

Skills' shelf life is shrinking.

Tools evolve, tasks shift, and roles that once stayed stable for years are being disassembled and reassembled in new ways.

Much of this is driven by AI and automation, but not all of it. Changing customer expectations, new compliance demands, and cross-functional working models are all reshaping what teams need to know and how fast they need to learn it.

No surprise that so many employers are worried they won't be able to train people quickly enough to keep up with new technologies over the next three years. The scale of disruption is forcing companies to radically rethink how they approach skills, resources, and workforce planning.

As a result, teams are being asked to adapt mid-project, pick up new tools on the fly, and deliver transformation while learning as they go.

78%

of employers

Source: WEC

Are concerned that their organisation will not be able to train employees fast enough to keep up with technology developments in the next three years.

87%

of employers

Source: WEC

Think that AI and other tech disruptions will require companies to radically rethink skills and resources across large areas of the workforce.



AI, AUTOMATION AND TECH DISRUPTIONS

Workers are acutely aware of the changes ahead. Many anticipate that AI and automation will transform their roles over the next few years, yet few feel equipped to navigate this shift.

Workers expect increased adoption of AI and automation to have a significant impact on their career in the next three years

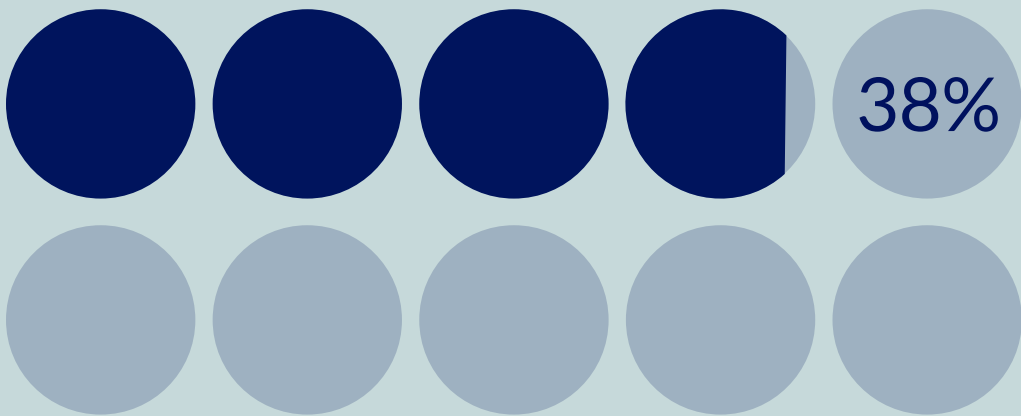


33%  
of candidates

Source: Gi Group Holding Global Candidate Survey, 2025

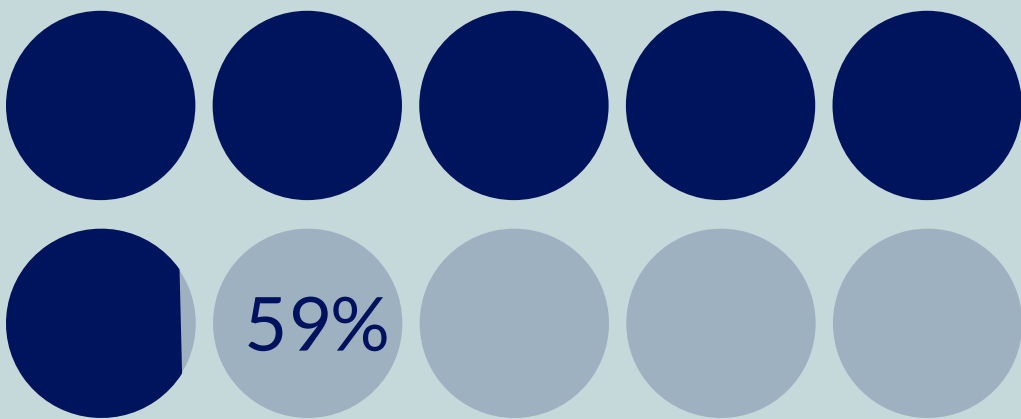
A need felt across different generations

Younger workers (18 to 35) feel high pressure to adapt quickly and upskill



Source: Gi Group Holding Global Candidate Survey, 2025

Older workers (55 to 64) find it challenging to adapt to new technologies



Source: Gi Group Holding Global Candidate Survey, 2025

To prepare, employees are increasingly seeking opportunities to upskill and learn how to work alongside AI technologies, mastering new tools that enhance collaboration between human expertise and machine efficiency. For some, the focus is on soft skills (areas where AI cannot easily replicate human ingenuity), while others are adopting AI-driven tools to boost productivity and improve accuracy in their work.

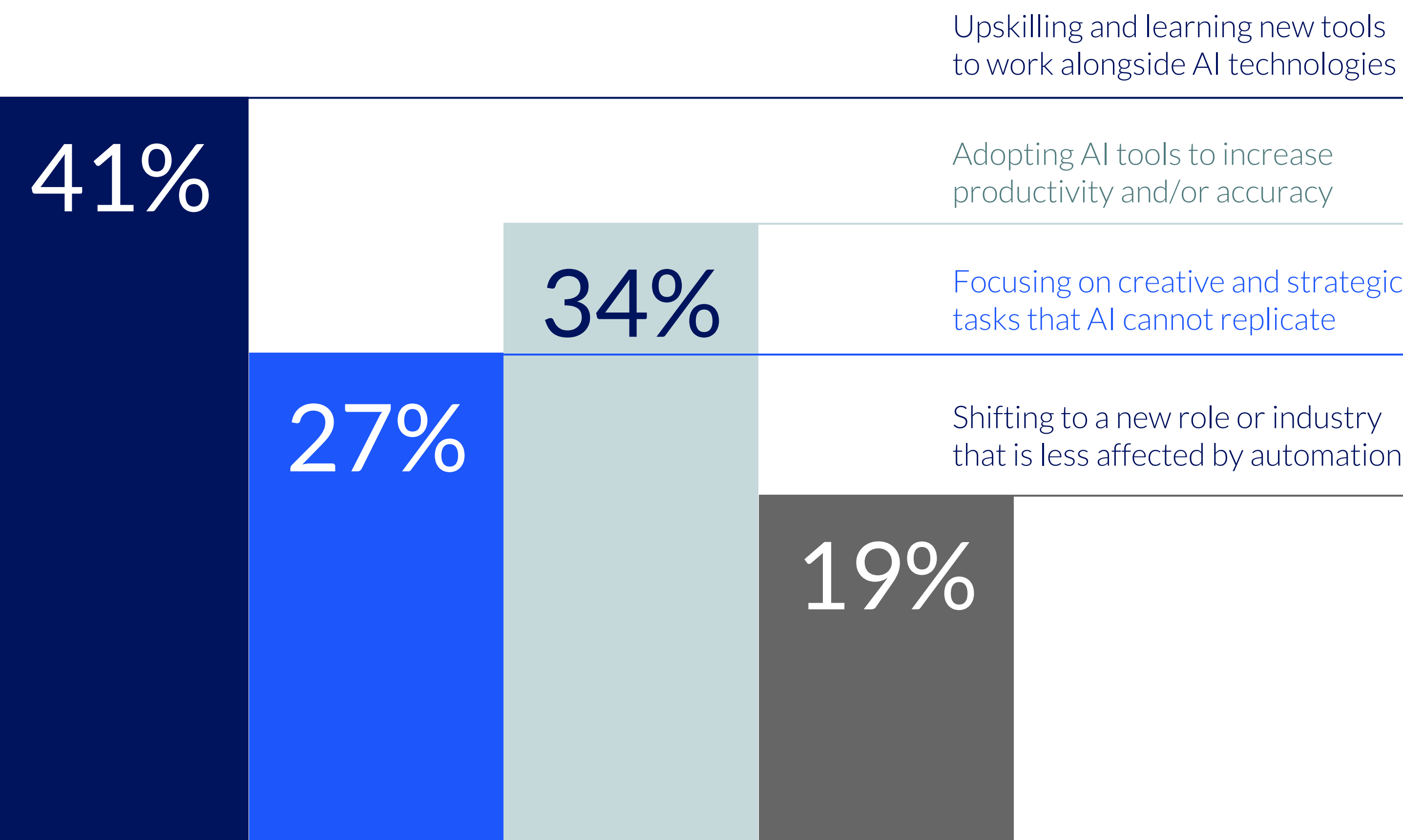


AI, AUTOMATION AND TECH DISRUPTIONS

We asked candidates:

"What strategies do you use or plan to use to adapt to AI-related changes in your workplace?"

Source: Gi Group Holding Global Candidate Survey, 2025



When businesses bring in agency talent or project-based specialists, they're often bringing in the exact skills their teams are currently lacking.

Not just more hands, but new knowledge, current practice, and applied experience.

It won't replace long-term workforce development, but it can ease pressure and buy time while permanent teams upskill.



# Chapter 4

Skills on Demand: Learn, Adapt, and Thrive





“ Job security used to mean having a permanent position.  
Now it means having **portable skills**.  
Someone who can solve **problems that haven't been  
thought of yet** is more valuable than someone who's  
expert at problems that were solved last year.  
Adaptability is **the ultimate insurance policy**. ”

**CETTI GALANTE**

CHIEF PRACTICE OFFICER - OUTPLACEMENT & EMPLOYABILITY  
GI GROUP HOLDING



# Skills on Demand: Learn, Adapt, and Thrive

People can feel it: the work they were hired to do is changing. Quietly, yet all at once.

A logistics worker starts their shift by analysing a dashboard instead of unloading trucks. A finance lead is asked to present ESG data with storytelling tools no one has been trained to use. Bricklayers are handed digital plans, expected to coordinate with semi-automated equipment while mentoring someone half their age and wondering where the next apprentice will come from.

These shifts go beyond new tools and processes. They require people to adapt quickly, collaborate effectively, and stay steady in the face of constant change.





# Keeping Pace and Staying in Play

Across age groups, there’s growing awareness that continuous learning is the key to career stability.

Younger workers feel the pressure to sprint just to stay relevant. Older workers are expected to master new and evolving tools, often without support.

Some are learning to prompt AI. Others are figuring out automation logic in their own time. Many are just trying to keep up, one platform, one deadline, one shift at a time. Everyone is being asked to adapt. To reinvent their value mid-job, mid-career, sometimes mid-shift.

FOBO - fear of becoming obsolete - is subtly reshaping how people evaluate employers. Salary still matters. But now, many are asking: what will this role teach me? Will it take me forward?

Source: Gi Group Holding Global Candidate Survey, 2025

Value opportunities for growth and skills development when evaluating a job offer

33%  
of candidates

Appreciate the availability of training funds when evaluating a job offer

27%  
of candidates

Think that continuous learning should be a shared responsibility between employer and employee

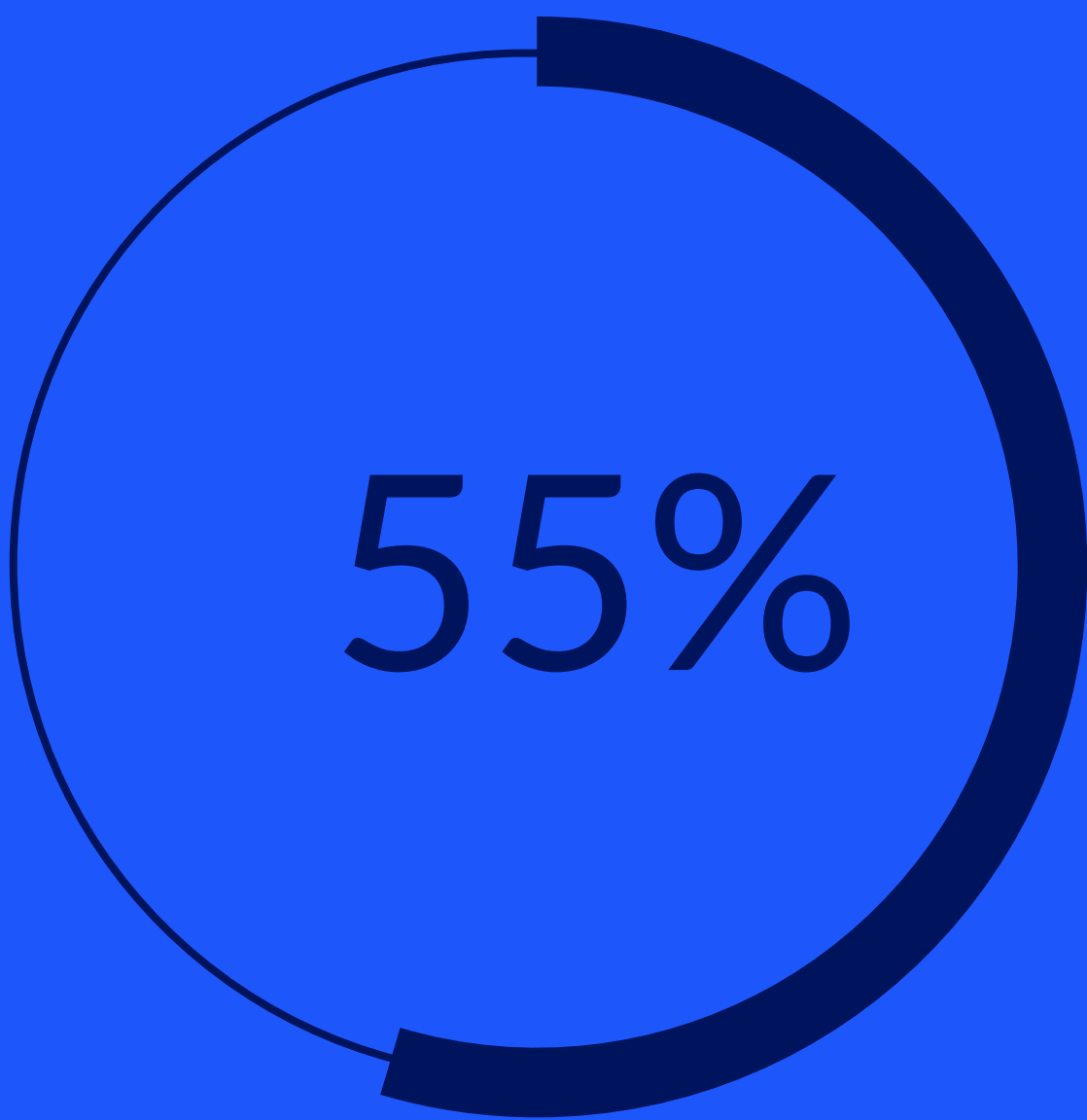
67%  
of candidates



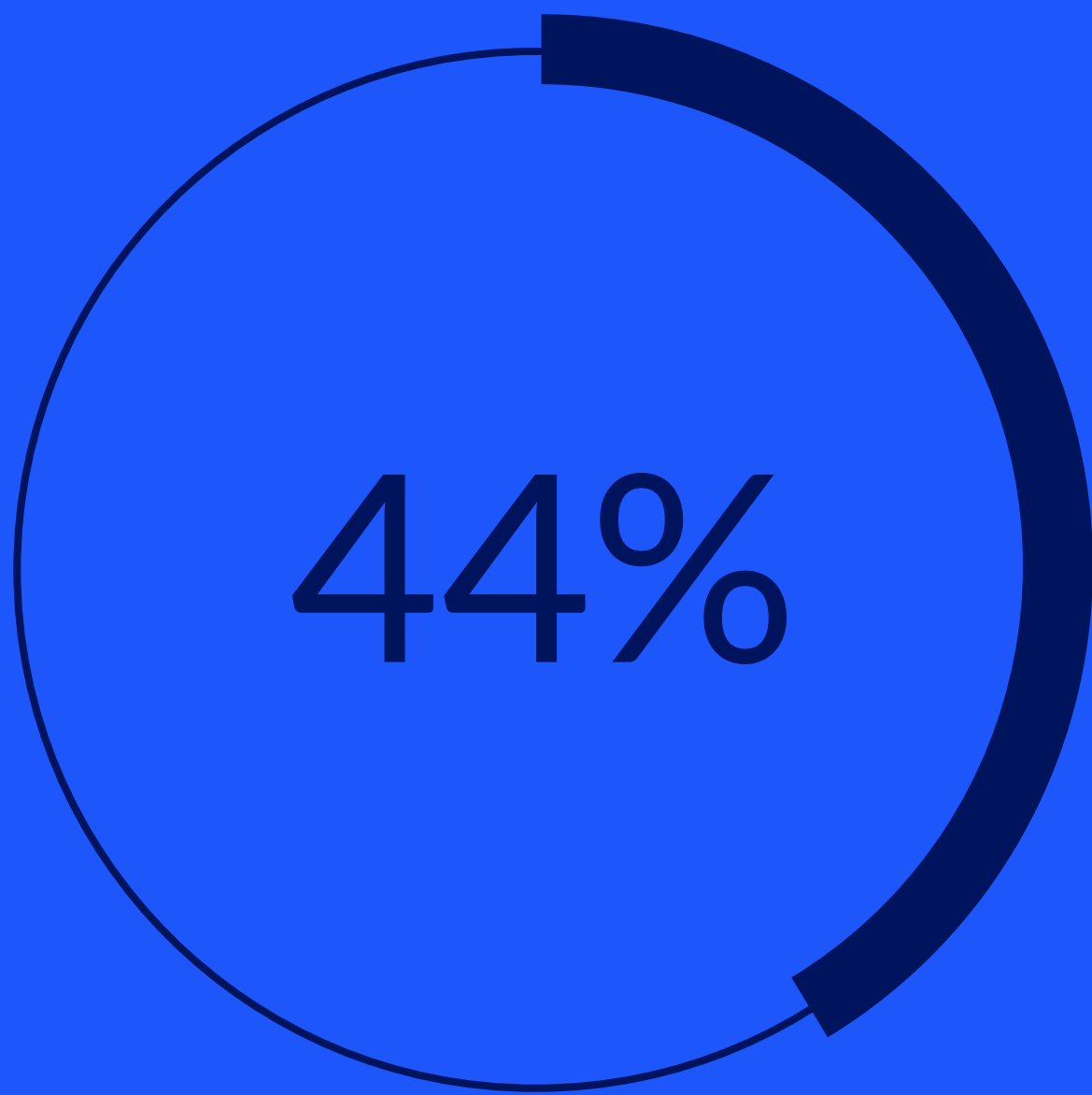
SKILLS ON DEMAND: LEARN, ADAPT, AND THRIVE

Rather than seeing this as a threat, though, more and more workers are embracing upskilling as a chance to future-proof their careers.

Source: Gi Group Holding Global Candidate Survey, 2025



Workers think continuous learning is very important to their career success



Workers think continuous learning can provide more career stability and employment security



# Training as a Frontline Strategy

It seems employers are getting the message: 82% say they plan to increase investment in learning over the next two years.

But even in well-resourced organisations, L&D can't carry the load alone. Permanent teams are under pressure to deliver transformation while trying to stay relevant, up to date, and operational.

At the same time, training itself is shifting.

The old model – top-down, occasional, siloed – no longer works.

Now, learning must be embedded and responsive.

## 82%

Employers plan to invest more in training in the next two years

Source: WEC



# Plug In & Level Up.

## How can contingent workers support the need for learning and innovation?

By bringing in external talent with current skills, organisations ease the strain on core teams. They create space to grow, not necessarily by adding more training, but by reducing the workloads that leave no time for it. They introduce knowledge that spreads and bring skills that are tested and ready to apply.

Source: WEC



Say that agency workers bring valuable new perspectives to their organisation and help drive innovation.



Say that when introducing new technology, employing agency workers with existing knowledge is an effective way to train in-house employees.



Say they are able to access specific digital skills that they struggle to find permanent hires for.



# Learning by Doing. Together.

Contingent workers can train in-house teams in real time.

Not through a slide deck, but through shared experience and by doing the work side by side.

That matters because, increasingly, workers don't want to sit through formal sessions.

Nearly half say they learn best on the job, and 42% still prefer in-person formats over self-paced digital modules.

Agency talent makes that possible, embedding knowledge through action, not abstraction.

It's learning that's live, contextual, and always in motion.

## Workers' preferred learning methods

Source: Gi Group Holding Global Candidate Survey, 2025

42%

of workers prefer face-to-face learning

48%

of workers prefer on-the-job training





## Designing a Learning Ecosystem

### 1. Map your capability gaps

Identify the skills your team lacks now or will need soon.

### 2. Bring in live expertise

Use external professionals to deliver and transfer knowledge while working.

### 3. Pair with internal talent

Build cross-functional teams where learning happens through doing.

### 4. Capture & codify learning

Document insights and best practices gained from blended team experiences.

### 5. Reinforce through mobility

Spread learning by rotating talent across teams or replicating blended pods.



# Chapter 5

A Boundless Workforce



“ The conversation has shifted from '*How do we reduce costs?*' to '*How do we **build the right mix of competences** athwart multiple generations?*'. ”

Smart leaders are selecting **partners who can help them** navigate compliance complexity, access diverse talent, and scale across multiple markets whilst maintaining **quality and ethical standards.** ”

**DOMIZIANO PONTONE**

CHIEF CORPORATE SALES OFFICER  
GI GROUP HOLDING



# A Boundless Workforce

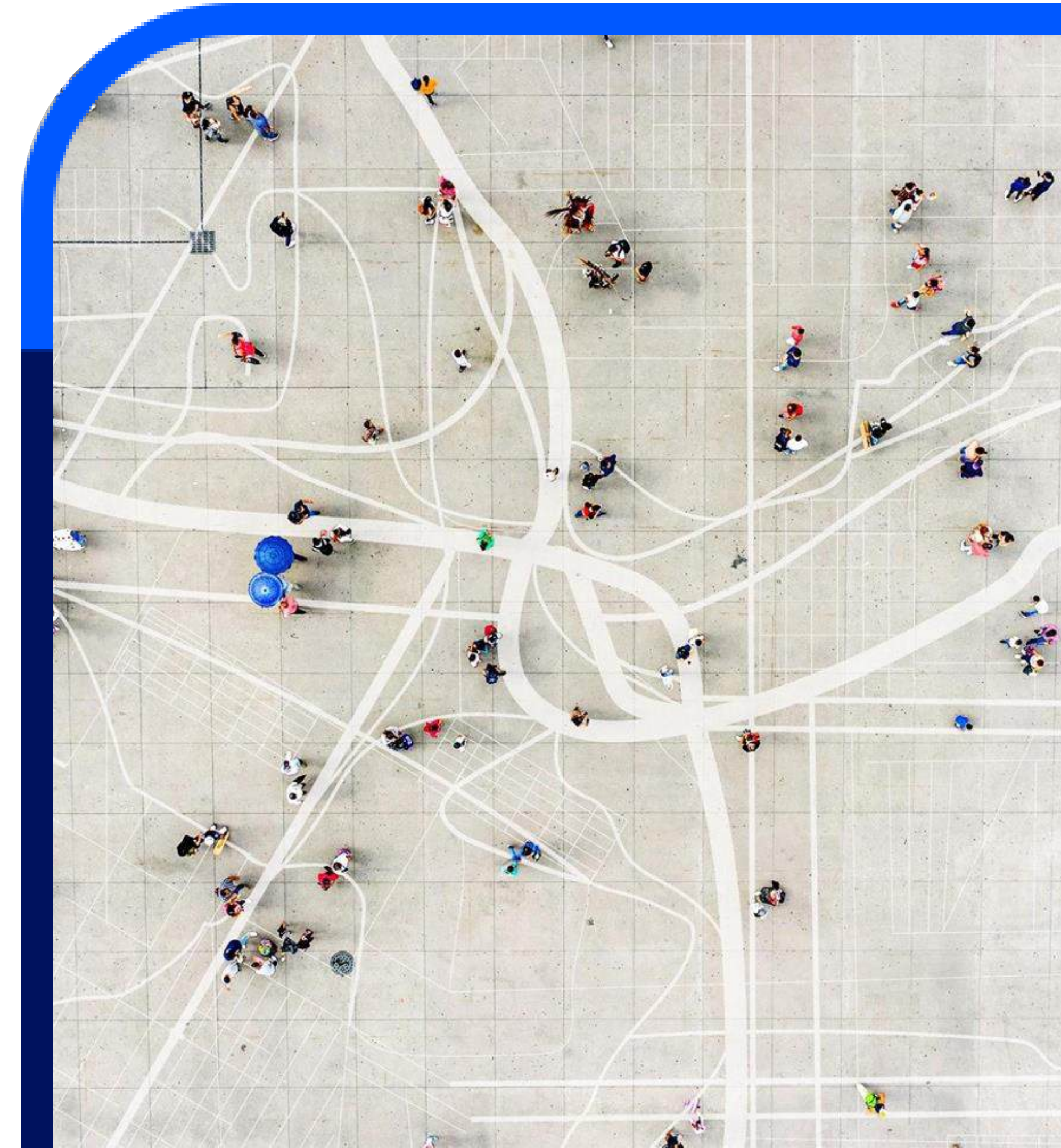
Most employers can list the usual demographic suspects: ageing populations, shifting gender balance, and candidates' changing expectations.

But there's a deeper shift at play. One that's quietly reshaping who's available, where they are, and how fast you can reach them: global mobility.

*Are we treating it like the opportunity it really is?*

The World Bank found that 184 million people, or 2.3% of the global population, now live outside their country of origin. And that number is rising. Income gaps, population imbalances, and climate disruption are redrawing the talent map.

Hiring from abroad opens access to a wider talent pool, but it's a balancing act that needs careful design and deep expertise in global and local talent systems.





# Solving Shortages at Source

In critical sectors around the world, persistently tight labour markets are pushing employers to look beyond national borders. While economic pressures often play a role, the story is bigger than cost.

From specialised professionals to niche experts, many markets are struggling to source the talent they need to fuel innovation. At the same time, it's no coincidence that high-income, highly educated economies often struggle to attract local workers into essential operational roles, which are critical to everyday functioning but are usually less attractive locally due to lower pay or perceived status.

## 88%

of employers are  
planning to hire  
workers from abroad

Source: WEC

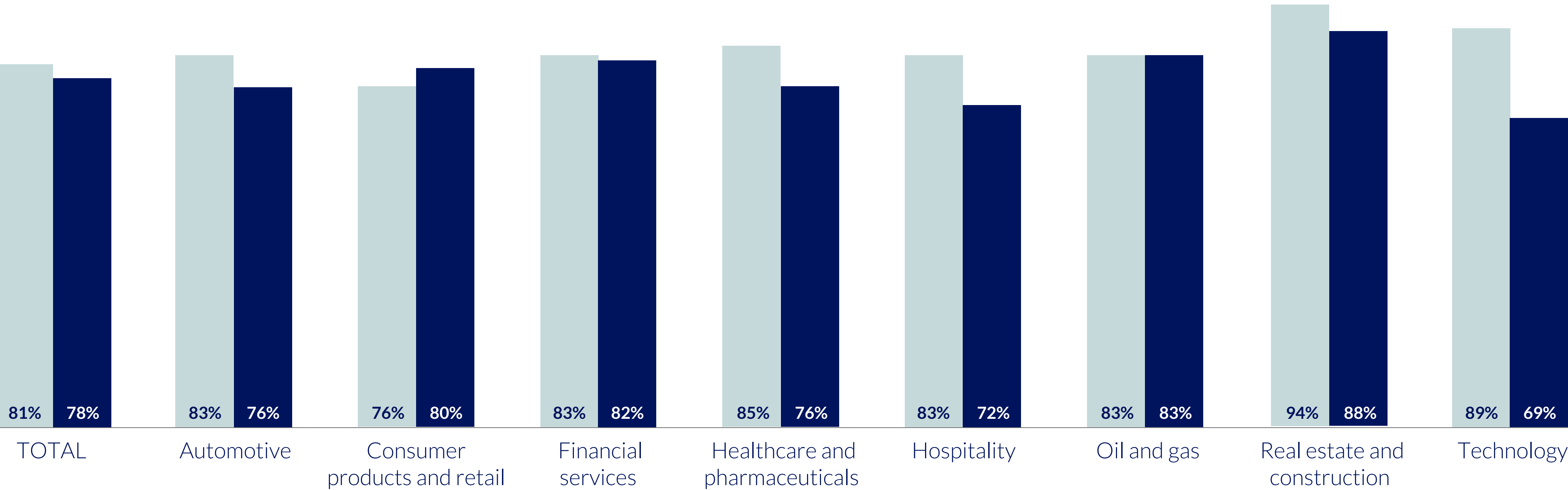


# How Employers See Global Mobility

Source: WEC

«Increased labour migration has allowed my organisation to access talent with different and/or higher levels of skills»

«If we did not hire workers from abroad we would not be able to fill vital skills gaps at our organisation»







## Who's getting borderless hiring right?

### Healthcare & Pharma

Sourcing specialised clinicians and technicians from global talent pools to offset domestic shortages.

### Technology

Building distributed engineering and product teams across time zones to accelerate development cycles.

### Logistics & Manufacturing

Filling operational gaps by integrating mobile and migrant labour into critical supply chain roles.

### Construction & Infrastructure

Using international mobility schemes to meet project surges and hard-to-find skilled trades.



# The Frictionless Flow

International hiring is helping organisations address near-term pressures and scale up their ambitions.

When local talent runs dry, borderless workforce strategies help organisations remain competitive through access to deeper skill sets and the ability to build teams that reflect the future, not the past. Done right, global hiring builds teams that flex, think differently, and set higher standards.

It's a more innovative, more human way to rethink organisational foundations.





# Making Mobility Work

In theory, the labour market is rich with skills. In practice, it lacks the infrastructure to move people smoothly, ethically, and at scale.

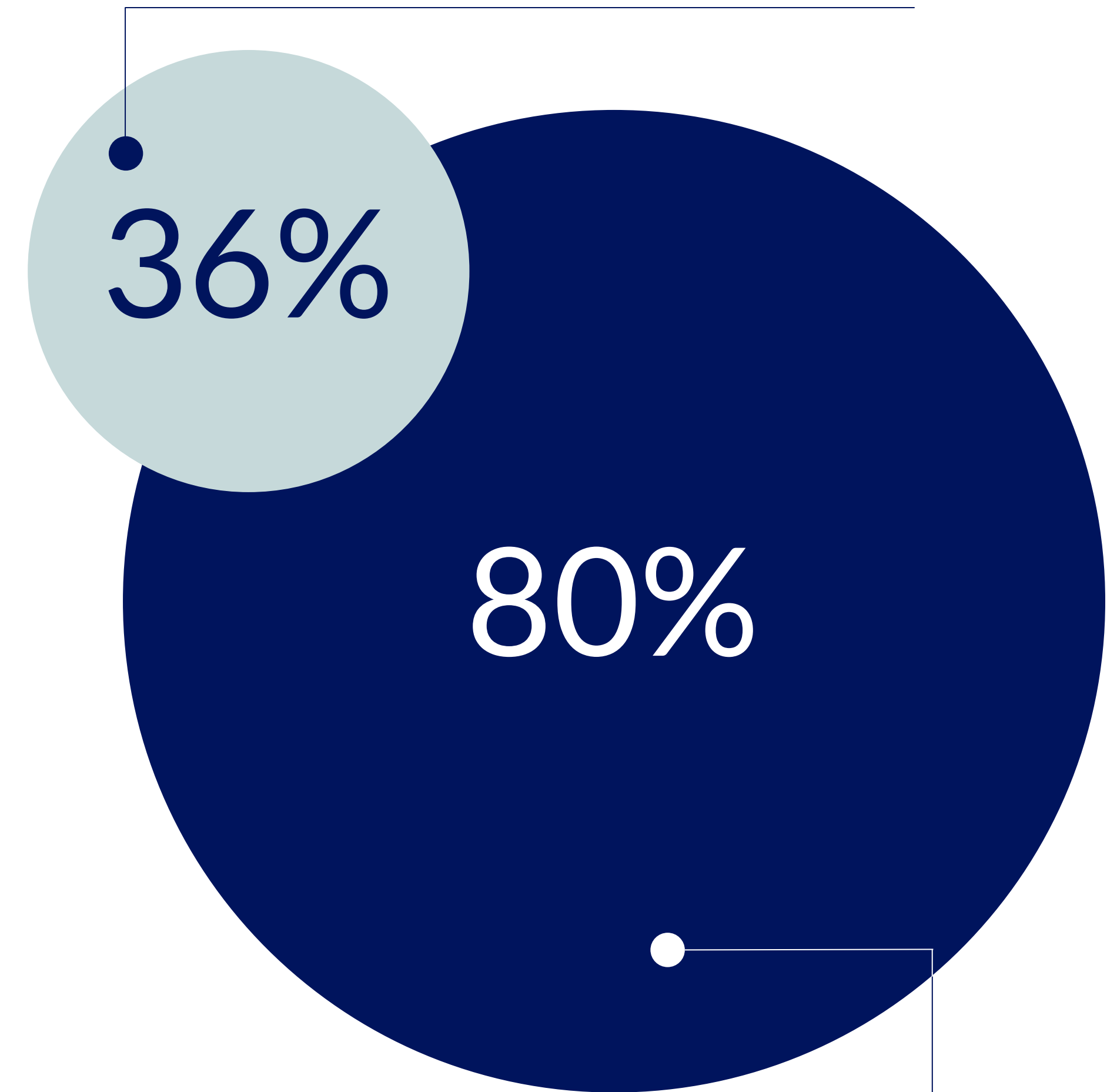
Too often, international hiring is slowed by red tape, mismatched systems, and logistical complexity.

This challenge is particularly evident when it comes to hiring refugees or asylum seekers. While 36% of employers recognise the importance of offering specialist support to help these individuals integrate into their organisations, the process remains daunting for many. A substantial 80% agree that complex legal barriers must be reduced to make hiring simpler and more accessible.

Without reform to these systems, businesses will continue to miss out on highly skilled individuals who are ready to contribute, while talent remains stuck in bureaucracy instead of flourishing in meaningful roles.

Source: WEC

of companies are planning to offer specialist support to refugees or asylum seekers to help them work for their organisation



of companies agree that complex legal barriers to hiring refugees or asylum seekers must be reduced



## A BOUNDLESS WORKFORCE

As Gi Group's "[Shift in EU Markets](#)" whitepaper highlights, employers need practical support in navigating compliance, smoothing relocation, and ensuring people arrive ready to succeed. And it doesn't end at placement.

Success depends on what happens next: retention, integration, and, when the time comes, return. That's where being supported by the right expertise makes all the difference.

When workers return home, whether seasonally or permanently, they bring more than wages: that flow strengthens local labour markets and contributes to long-term growth in countries of origin.

For destination countries, the benefits are equally impactful: access to skills, faster fill rates, stronger pipelines, and in many cases, greater workforce diversity.





# Chapter 6

Flex or Fade

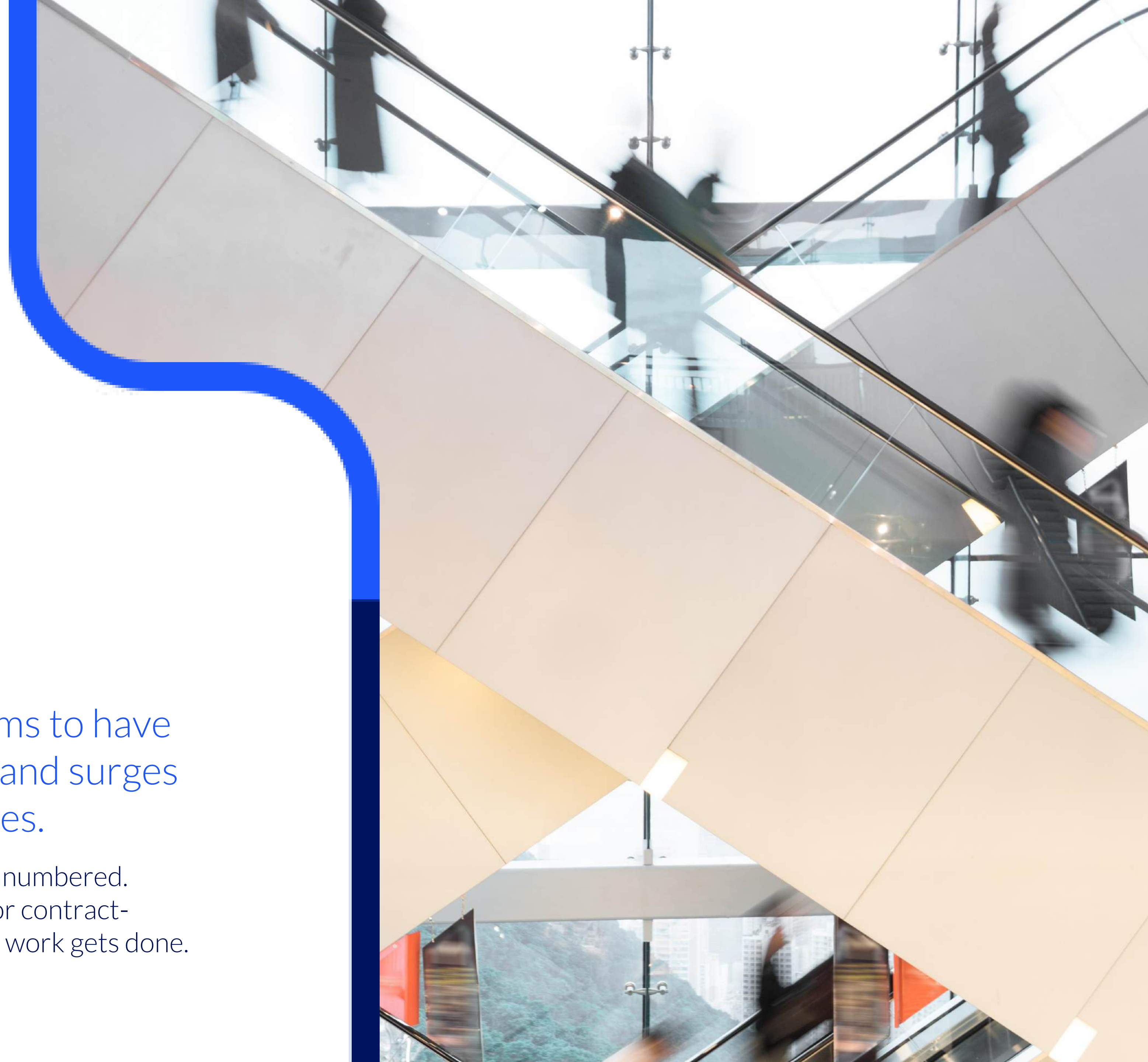




# Flex or Fade

For business leaders, uncertainty seems to have become the default setting, from demand surges and cost spikes to sudden hiring freezes.

This is why the days of static workforce strategies are numbered. Whether roles are permanent, temporary, freelance, or contract-based, adaptability has become the foundation of how work gets done.





A blended workforce stands on three pillars:  
**resilience, reach, and retention.**

## ● Resilience

Organisations that can reallocate talent dynamically respond faster and perform better.

As McKinsey puts it, *“Future organisations will need to move away from rigid roles and hierarchies [...] with people flowing to the work as priorities shift.”*

*“The Work We Want” report reinforces this: “Adopting a more flexible approach to staffing will be the only way to keep up with developments and shield permanent employees from volatile workload shifts.”*

## ● Reach

## ● Retention



A blended workforce stands on three pillars:  
**resilience, reach, and retention.**

- Resilience

- Reach

Agile working models are opening new opportunities for employers to access a broader and more diverse talent pool. Offering temporary contracts, part-time roles, hybrid working, or remote options makes it easier to connect with individuals who are often overlooked, such as those with prior convictions, people who have faced long-term unemployment, or individuals with disabilities. Providing the right support ensures workers can succeed and contribute meaningfully to the workplace, while organisations improve their ability to attract top talent, accelerate hiring, and build stronger, more inclusive teams.

- Retention



A blended workforce stands on three pillars:  
**resilience, reach, and retention.**

- Resilience

- Reach

- Retention

By integrating flexibility into workforce planning, businesses can ensure continuity and protect their long-term health. In this increasingly demanding environment, employees are expected to upskill, adapt, and perform under pressure, which can lead to burnout and a loss of expertise if not managed effectively.

Blended workforce strategies provide the breathing space needed for growth and recovery. They reduce employee turnover, safeguarding institutional knowledge, and cutting the high costs of replacing talent.



# Aligning Policy and Expertise

While the labour market evolves faster than ever, outdated laws leave organisations vulnerable - and talent overlooked.

What’s needed is a framework that supports agility, safeguards compliance, and expands meaningful choice for workers and employers alike. According to the WEC, 83% of employers agree: simplifying these barriers is essential to unlock real flexibility and empower workers with genuine choice. When contract terms don’t match the realities of today’s workforce and fast-changing markets, everyone pays the price: lost agility, frustrated workers, and legal exposure.

The most forward-looking employers are setting the pace, designing contract strategies that combine agility, equity, and long-term workforce sustainability. And they’re partnering with experts who can help them stay compliant, simplify onboarding, and build contract models that work for the business and for the people behind it.

83%  
of employers

Source: WEC

- Recognise the need to build awareness of all the contract types available to workers today and promote free choice for everyone to choose what suits them best.
- Say that with job roles set to shift more than ever before, we must simplify legislative barriers which can deter workers from choosing short-term contracts.



# What Workers Expect Next

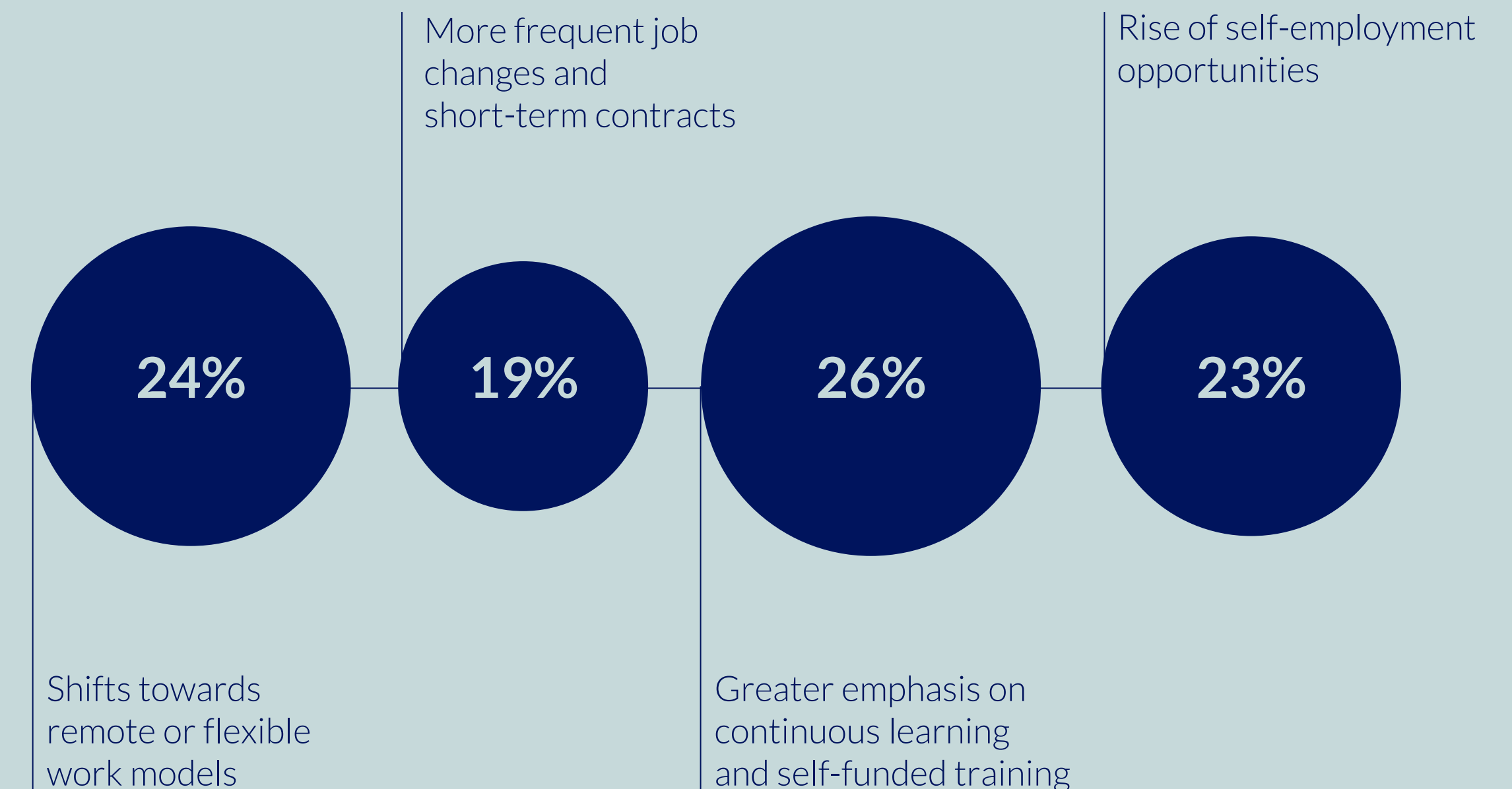
For employers, workforce planning has always been about predicting demand.

But for workers, the forecast looks different, and it's deeply personal. When asked what will shape their careers most in the next three years, they point to four clear trends:

- More flexibility in how and where they work
- More frequent job changes
- A stronger push toward continuous learning
- And a rise in freelance and self-employment opportunities

## What changes do workers see shaping their careers by 2028?

Source: Gi Group Holding Global Candidate Survey, 2025



This is more than a shift in preferences.

Workers are increasingly expecting non-linear paths, project-based roles, and portfolio-style employment. And many are preparing to fund their own development to stay competitive in a market that no longer promises permanence.

Fixed roles and static skill sets no longer accurately reflect how people want to work or how the market evolves. Organisations that build in this kind of fluidity will be far better placed to attract, retain, and develop the talent they'll need next.



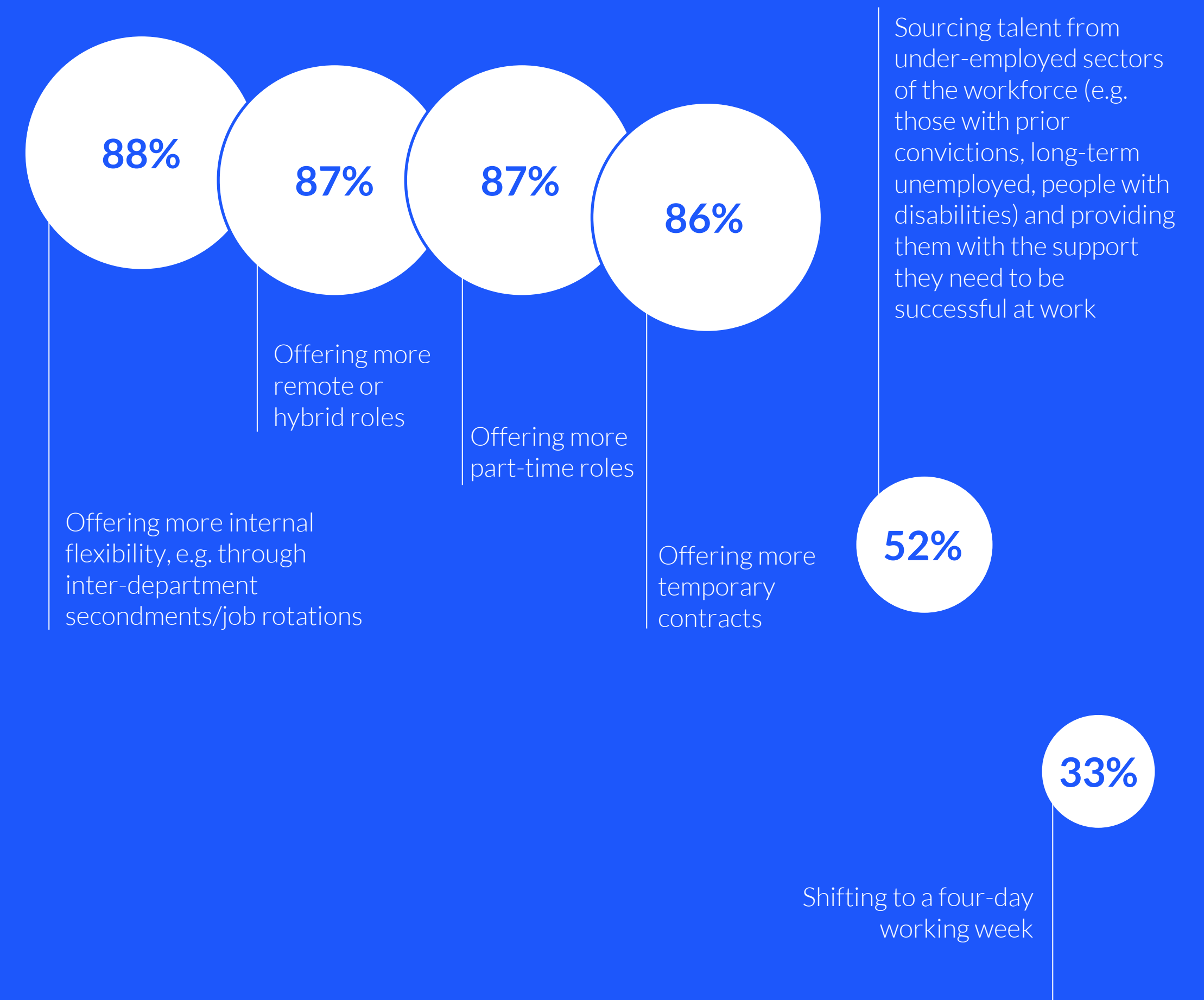
# Workforce strategies in motion

Flexibility extends beyond contracts.

In the next two years, employers expect to take a more deliberate, structural approach to flexible strategy. That includes internal flexibility, enabling movement across departments, secondments, and job rotations to retain talent and redeploy skills more efficiently.

## Which strategies will employers consider crucial in the next two years?

Source: WEC





# Chapter 7

## Recommendations



“ With market conditions where uncertainty prevails, most companies are **lacking the visibility to commit** fully and solely on permanent recruitment contracts for specialised professionals. **They need flexibility.** Temporary recruitment is **no longer** a way to fix a temporary need but to new way of building **flexible and agile organisations** able to **react faster** to market risks and opportunities. ”

**JEROME LAFUITE**

CHIEF PRACTICE OFFICER – SEARCH & SELECTION  
GI GROUP HOLDING



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Our findings revealed that blending permanent employees with flexible talent, from contractors to contingent workers and outsourced teams, can deliver long-term gains when built into the organisation's structure, not just applied in moments of pressure.

A fluid workforce is a strategic model that enables organisations to scale intelligently, access specialised skills, respond faster to disruption, and widen the talent pool, all while keeping core teams focused and protected.





# Based on our analysis, we recommend five strategic priorities:

## Flexibility should be built in, not switched on in a crisis.

Too many organisations only activate flexible models in times of crisis. This report has shown that those who treat flexibility as a core design principle, integrated across contracts, skills, and systems, adapt faster and recover stronger.

Trusted staffing partners can help embed that capability from day one, providing the infrastructure and insight to scale up, down, and pivot, whichever way the market lunges next.

## Align workforce strategy with business continuity.

Flexible workforce planning should be part of the same strategic playbook as supply chain resilience, operational risk, and scenario-based planning.

Staffing providers can play a critical role in operationalising that connection, offering market intelligence, rapid redeployment strategies, and risk-sharing models that align talent agility with enterprise continuity.

## Simplify execution through the right partners.

A blended workforce can introduce operational complexity: more contract types, compliance layers, and moving parts.

The right staffing partners bring the right processes, infrastructure, and mindset to help you reduce friction, enabling you to function effectively and deliver scalable models, tech-enabled compliance, local labour knowledge, and seamless onboarding.



# Based on our analysis, we recommend five strategic priorities:

## Make your strategies work for everyone.

Blended models break down when they create inequality, opacity, or exclusion. To build trust and cohesion across permanent and non-permanent teams, organisations need to communicate clearly about contract terms, provide role-appropriate onboarding, and ensure all workers feel valued and supported.

Specialist staffing partners can enable this, by designing inclusive access pathways, managing transitions smoothly, and supporting candidates often left out of traditional hiring: from career returners and caregivers to workers with disabilities or atypical CVs.

## Stay ahead of regulation - and win public trust.

Contingent and non-permanent workforce models are, as explained above, under increasing scrutiny. Legislators worldwide are tightening employment laws to reflect the new realities of work, while public concern about job security, fairness, and responsible employment practices is growing louder.

These shifts bring both compliance and reputational risks. Employers need to stay alert, not just to what has been regulated, but to what is being questioned.

Experienced staffing partners can help organisations anticipate change, interpret evolving standards, and design workforce strategies that are legally and socially sound.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

*What role should in-house and external talent play in your organisation's future?*

*How confident are you in the systems and partnerships you rely on to deliver them?*

*Are your current models helping you stay ahead, or holding you back?*

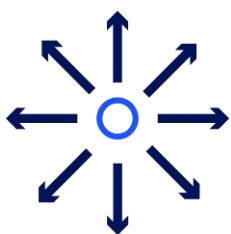
The organisations that engage seriously with these questions, now, rather than later, will be best positioned to navigate uncertainty, attract exceptional talent, and build workforces that truly reflect the complexity and ambition of their business.



# Who We Are



Gi Group Holding is a global leader in services for the **evolution of the Labour Market**. We are committed to creating a **sustainable and enjoyable work environment** that benefits both people and businesses.



**€4.7** BLN  
REVENUES IN 2024



**+27K**  
CLIENTS

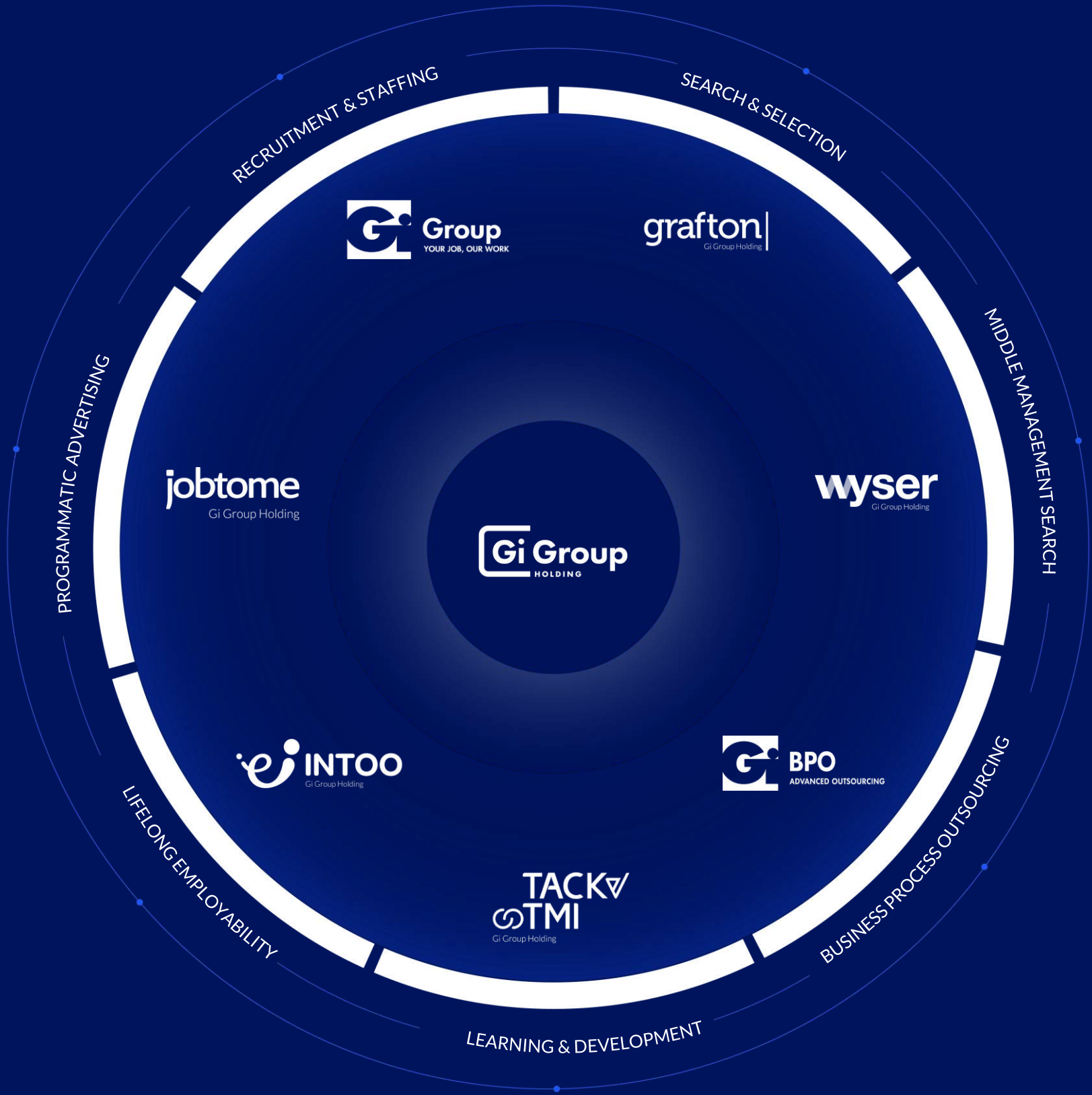


RANKED  
**15<sup>TH</sup>**  
WORLDWIDE  
6<sup>TH</sup> PRIVATELY HELD



**+180K**  
WORKERS PLACED  
ANNUALLY

Our **HR ecosystem** offers a comprehensive suite of solutions that generate impactful results.

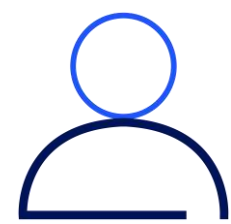


- Recruitment & Staffing
- Search & Selection
- Middle Management Search
- Business Process Outsourcing
- Learning & Development
- Lifelong Employability – Outplacement
- Programmatic Job Advertising



WHO WE ARE

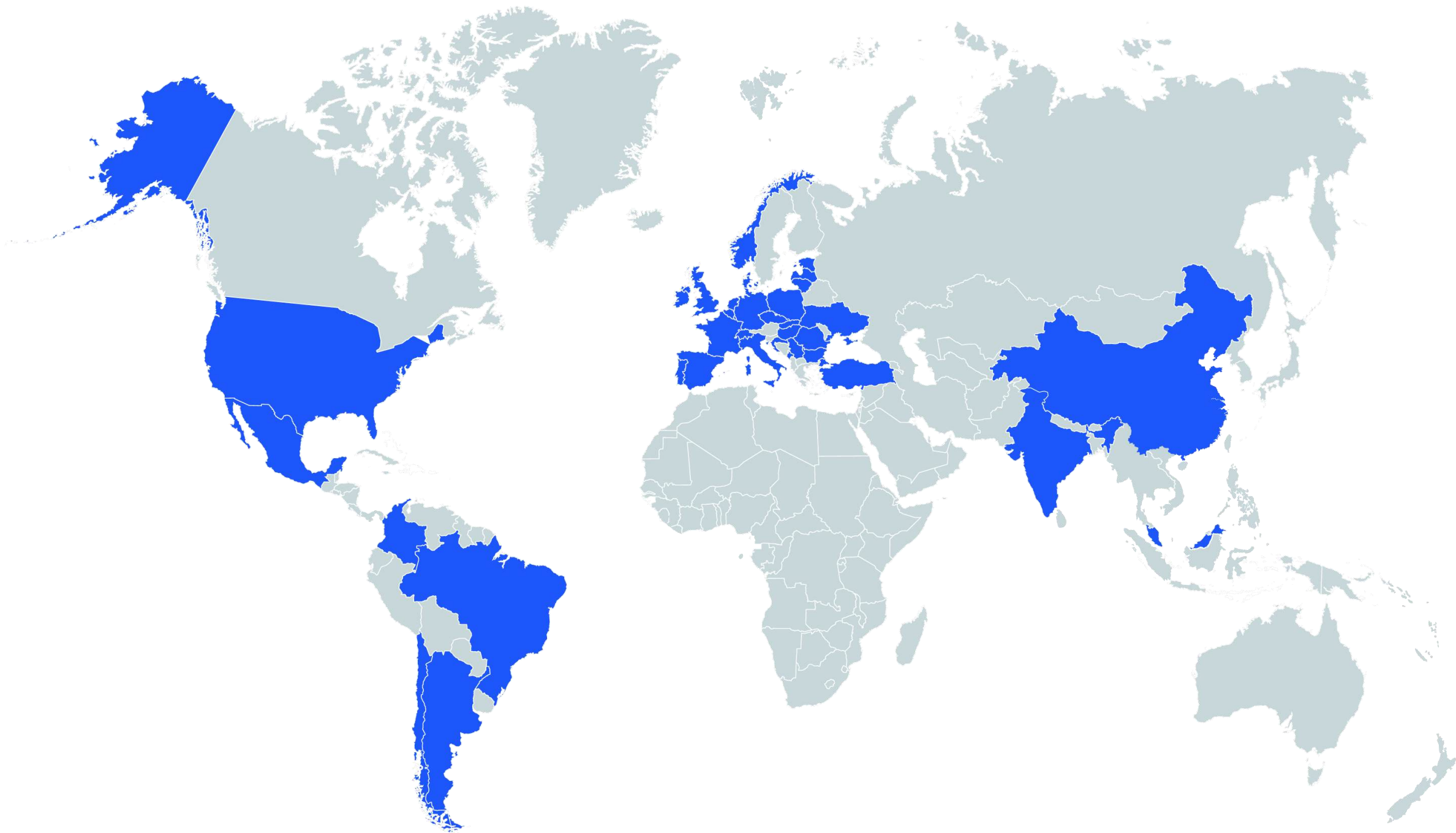
With a presence in **Europe, APAC, and the Americas**, we address the needs of today’s global market.



**+8K**  
EMPLOYEES



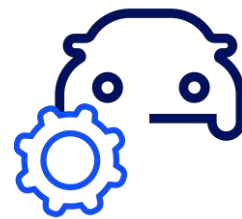
**37**  
COUNTRIES WITH  
DIRECT PRESENCE



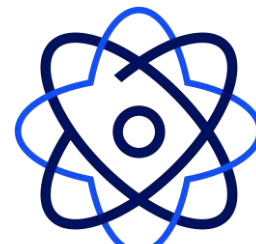
We use a **consultancy approach** across all our businesses to fully understand the dynamics of each sector and workplace.



Manufacturing



Automotive



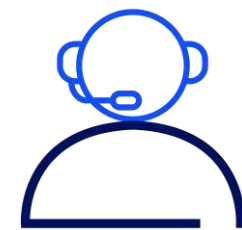
Logistics



Retail



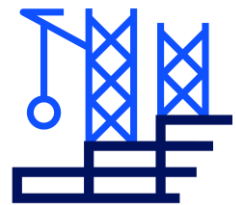
Engineering



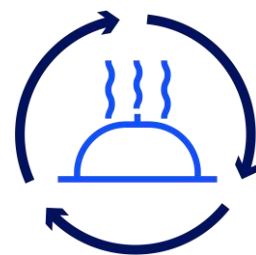
Contact Centre



Energy



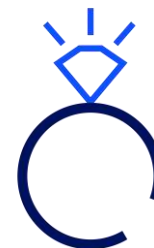
Building &  
Construction



Fast Moving  
Consumer Goods



Life Sciences



Fashion &  
Luxury



IT &  
Consultancy



Facility Management  
& HORECA



Banking &  
Insurance





More Than Work