SmartRecruiters

Recruiting
Benchmarks

2025

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CHAPTER **ONE**

Executive Summary

Executive *Summary*

This report provides an overview of global hiring benchmarks, analyzing *12 months of data* from *89 million applications* for *1.5 million jobs* across *95 countries*. Here are some key highlights:

01 — Applicant *volume and conversion*

On average, there are *73 applicants per role, 3 applicants interviewed, and only 1 offer made.* Global variations take into account the labor market and regulatory environment of different countries, underscoring the necessity of system and process flexibility for global hiring teams.

02 — *Time* to hire

The *global median time to hire is 38 days.* Global and industry variations can be explained by the variances in hiring requirements across industries and countries. However, companies using AI in their recruiting processes hire *26% faster*, making the case for additional technology investment to bring better hiring outcomes.

03

Internal mobility and referrals

On average, *15% of hires* come from *referrals and internal candidates.* Countries and industries that lag in these lower-cost sources of hire have the opportunity to learn from the practices of the Healthcare industry, which leads in internal sources of hire, and Technology, which excels in referrals.

04

Recruiter productivity

With the *recruiter workload averaging 30 hiries per month*, Australian and U.S.-based recruiters manage 78% and 85% more hires than the global average, respectively. U.S. and Australian companies also lead in time to hire, suggesting that the focus on innovation in these countries by applying *automation and AI* is having an impact on hiring outcomes.

CHAPTER **TWO**

Foreword

In partnership with *Lighthouse Research & Advisory*

Foreword

By **Ben Eubanks**
Chief Research Officer at Lighthouse Research & Advisory

Hiring has gone through a **challenging cycle** in recent years. Opportunities were plentiful—and then they weren't. Industries like technology and software were booming—and then things slowed down. Employers have **struggled to adapt** to the ever-changing landscape by adopting smarter strategies and AI-driven technologies, but they also lean on their people to do more with less.

At the center of it all, hiring teams are working tirelessly to make sure that key positions, projects, and teams are staffed and ready. But the reality is that **talent acquisition is often seen as a larger process.**

Within this report you will see helpful, **actionable insights** by stage of the hiring process, industry, and country. You'll get a glimpse of where your company fits into the bigger picture and whether your own metrics are leading or lagging.

LIGHTHOUSE
research & advisory

The impact of research

Based on our ongoing research with thousands of employers each year at Lighthouse Research & Advisory, we consistently hear that ***hiring is no longer just a talent acquisition priority***—according to seven out of 10 talent leaders, it's ***now a business priority.*** And with any business process, it's useful to know what benchmarks look like, what is competitive, and how to create a more predictable set of outcomes. That's true in sales and finance, so why wouldn't it be true of talent acquisition as well?

When I worked as a recruiter and as a leader of a recruiting function, I saw the importance of this firsthand. But now as a researcher I see the ***broader implications*** as well. This report's insights across ***five key industries and five countries*** give employers a chance to dig deeper into ***what hiring looks like globally*** and see relevant data through a variety of lenses.

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The business impact of hiring

A recent conversation revealed the following insight.

> **People are the company's biggest asset, and I think the talent acquisition function is not only critical, but it's the lifeblood of any organization. Seeing the impact the talent acquisition has on your EBITDA, your revenue, your culture, your quality of hire… In my mind, hiring can either wreak havoc on your engagement or create a business that people want to be a part of.**
>
> — *Kelly Burlage*, VP of Talent Acquisition for a logistics company with 20,000+ global employees

Ultimately, that's what talent acquisition all about. It isn't just hiring metrics in a vacuum. It's about **what kind of success hiring can unlock** for the organization. And if Kelly's comments are indicative of what other employers are seeing, there's a tremendous opportunity for positive impact. This report offers a **starting place for companies** to see where they're performing well, and where they can improve.

CHAPTER **THREE**

Methodology

The *inner workings* of this report.

Research *Methodology*

✦ SmartRecruiters analyzed 12 months of **aggregated, anonymized** application data processed through our applicant tracking system from September 2023 through August 2024.

✦ The data represented **89 million applications** for **1.5 million jobs** created in **95 countries.**

✦ Our customers range across more than **100 industries,** from small companies to those with hundreds of thousands of employees.

PRODUCT ANALYTICS & CONTENT
TEAM EFFORT

Definitions

01 Median

The median is *the midpoint in a range of numbers.* For example, a midpoint of 38 indicates that half of the numbers are below 38, and half are above 38. The median is *used instead of the average when the range of numbers has outliers that skew the average*.

02 Average

The average is the *sum of a range of numbers divided by the number of items in the range.* The global averages presented in this report indicate the results across all applications and jobs posted within the *SmartRecruiters system in a 12-month time period* regardless of country, industry, or other qualifier.

Data Caveats

✦ The analysis is based on workflow steps completed by users within the SmartRecruiters system. While the numbers provide valuable insights, they may vary depending on user interaction with key features.

✦ For example, offers are often initiated outside of SmartRecruiters, particularly in businesses with decentralized hiring models that hire on-site, with local managers skipping steps within the applicant tracking system.

✦ Additionally, not all open jobs counted resulted in offers due to duplicate job postings, unfilled jobs, and jobs that were still open at the end of the data period.

CHAPTER **FOUR**

Global Overview

This section explores benchmarks *through an aggregate, global lens,* across all countries and industries.

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Applicant *conversion*

In a world where recruiting teams are asked to do more with less, the average of 73 applicants per role means *recruiters either rely on automation technology or they simply can't examine and respond to the majority of candidates* that come in for each job posting.

73 Applicants **per role**

3 Applicants **interviewed**

1 Applicant **receives offer**
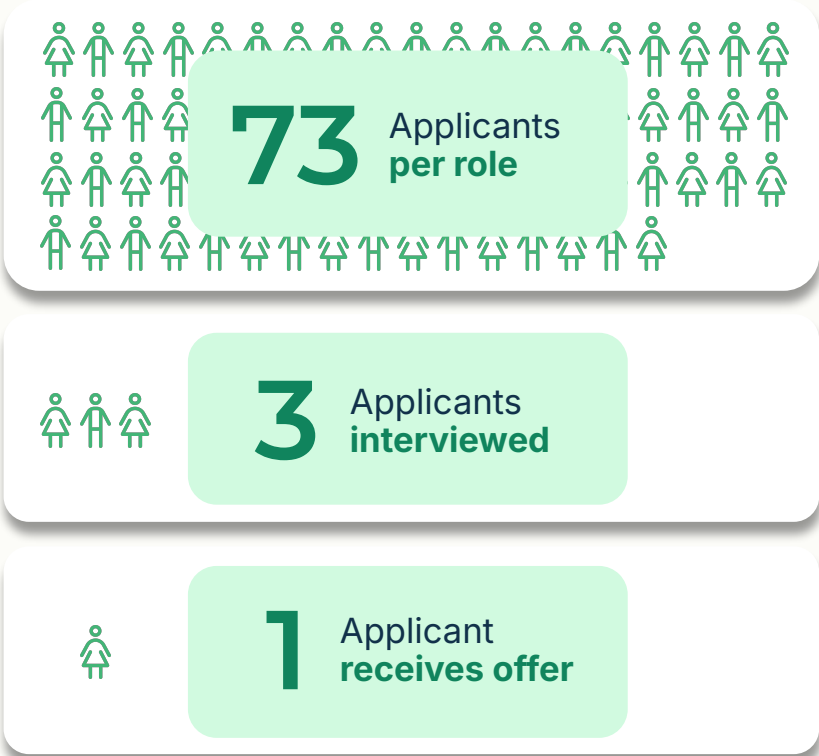
Time to Hire

Global median time to hire

- ✦ Hiring teams across the globe *review applications* in *less than one week,* and progress the most promising applicants to the interview stage by the second week.

- ✦ Completing the hire still takes nearly six weeks, with a *global median hiring* time of *38 days.*

- ✦ Data from *Lighthouse Research & Advisory* shows that two of the top three reasons for candidate ghosting come down to speed. Companies that can't or won't *innovate* here will fall behind.

6 days to *review*

14 days to *interview*

38 days to *hire*

Internal mobility and *referrals*

✦ Companies around the world look to internal mobility to *increase employee retention*, *reduce time to productivity*, and *hold onto internal knowledge*.

✦ On average, *15% of hires* come from a combination of *referrals* and *internal hires*.

✦ With reams of historical evidence showing that these two sources deliver high quality hires, this benchmark gives employers an idea of *how they stack up* with regard to these *hiring channels*.

7% of hires from **referrals**

8% of hires from **internal candidates**

* Note that not all referrals and internal hires are marked within SmartRecruiters; *some customers use external platforms for these functions* that enable candidates to apply outside of SmartRecruiters.

Interview scorecard adoption

- ✦ **Interview scorecards** are a productivity tool that brings *clarity and consistency to the hiring process*.

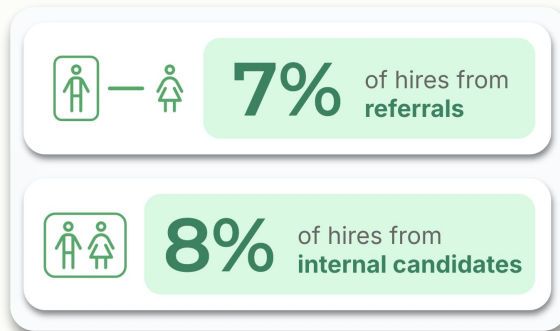- ✦ Scorecard adoption is nearly universal **among teams that use them**, at 99%.

99% of the hiring team fill out **scorecards**

Global Recruitment Benchmarks *2025*

SmartRecruiters

73 Applicants **per role**

3 Applicants **interviewed**

1 Applicant **receives offer**

6 days to *review*

14 days to *interview*

38 days to *hire*
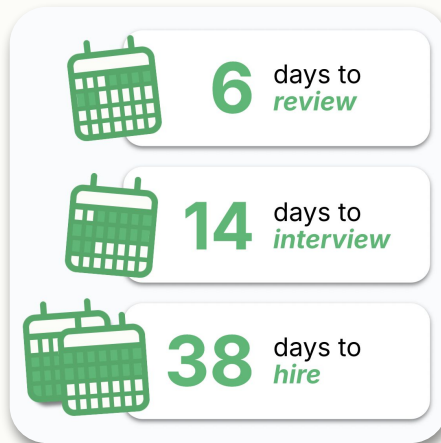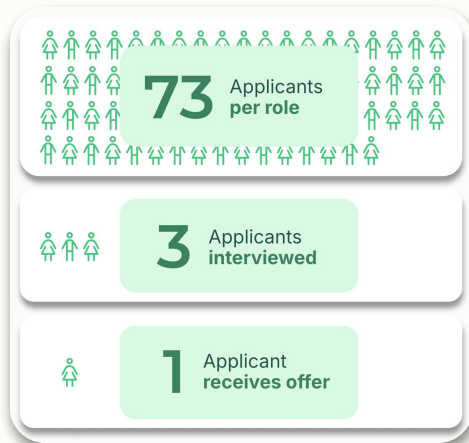
= Hire **11 days** faster using AI

87% offer acceptance rate

7% of hires from **referrals**

8% of hires from **internal candidates**

99% of the hiring team fill out **scorecards**

CHAPTER **FIVE**

Global Comparisons

This section explores *benchmarks through the lens of five countries:* Australia, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Data is tracked by the location of the job, regardless of where the company is headquartered.
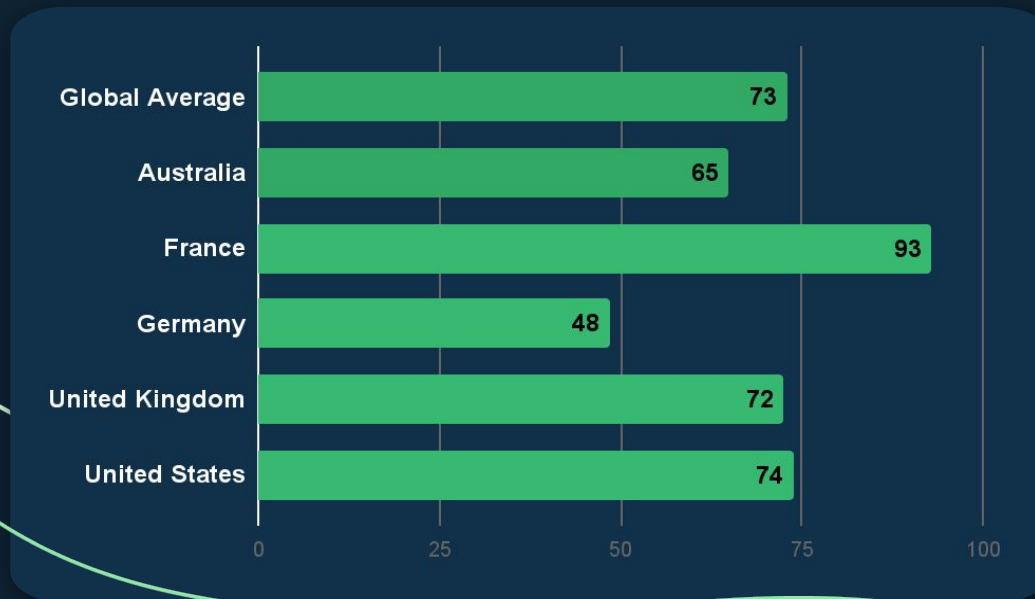
Offer *Acceptance Rate*

From interview to offer

Offer Acceptance Rate — From interview to offer

Country	Rate
Global Average	87%
Australia	83%
France	92%
Germany	91%
United Kingdom	84%
United States	79%
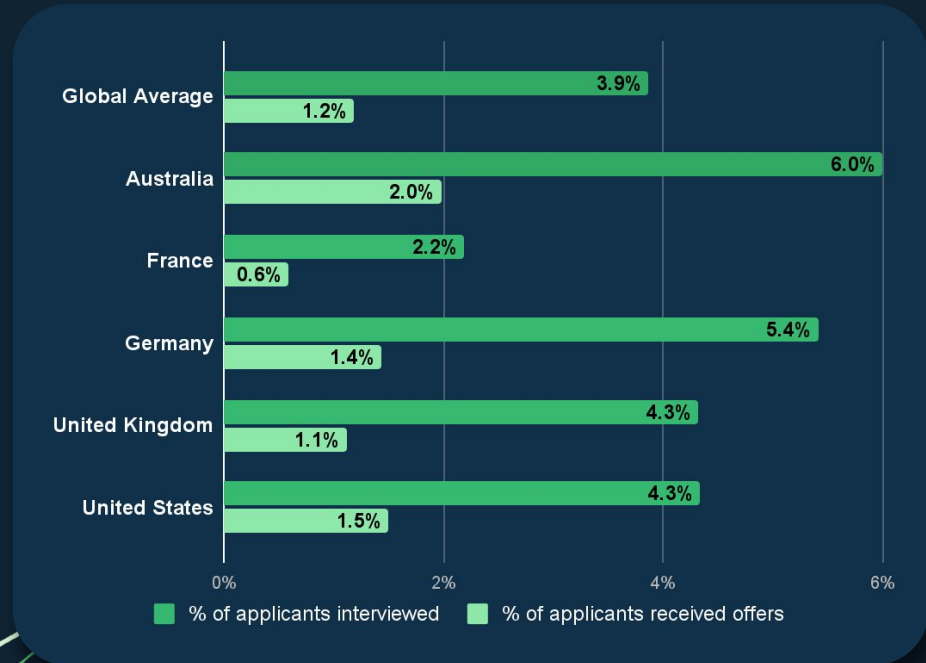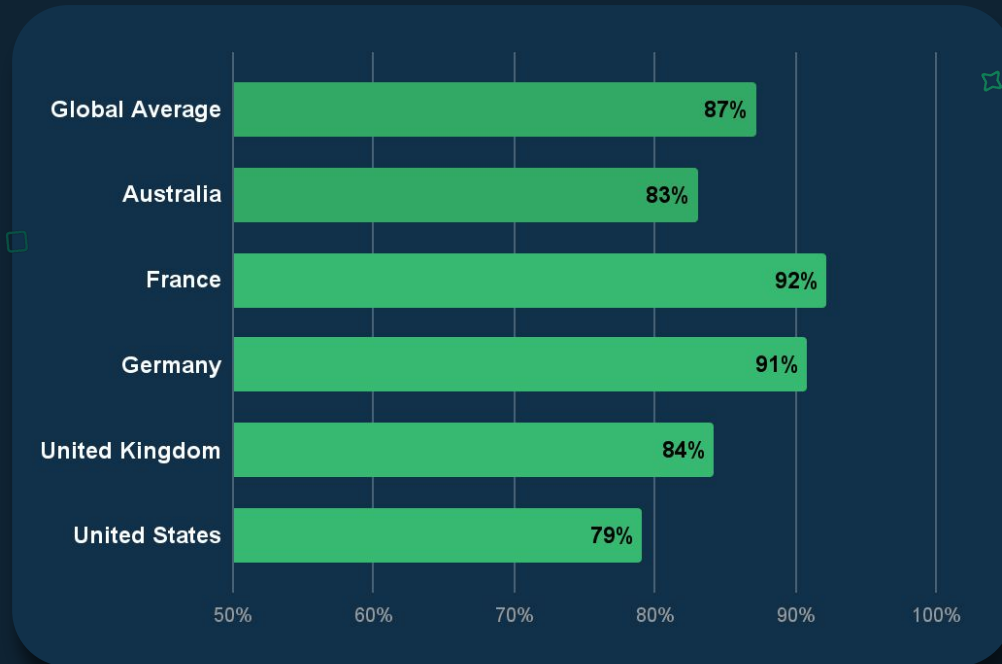
🇫🇷
🇩🇪
Residents of **France** and **Germany** are the most likely to *take the offers* they receive.

🇺🇸
Because **one in five U.S.** applicants *decline offers*, U.S. employers need to ensure a smooth hiring process so that silver medalist candidates are kept warm.
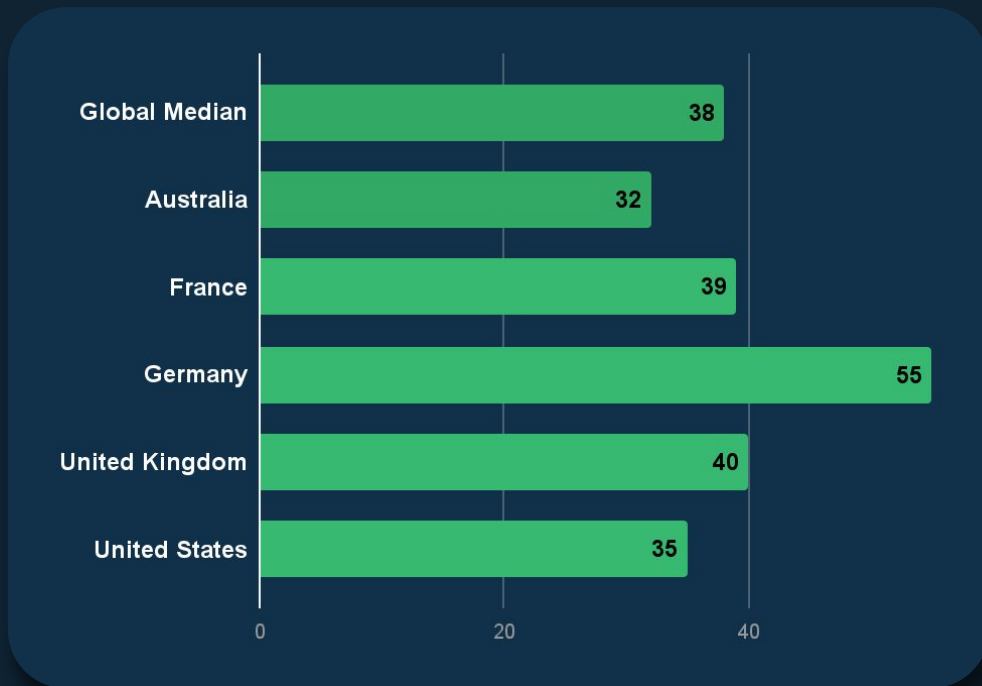
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Recruiter *Productivity*

Number of hires per recruiter per month

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Chart: Number of hires per recruiter per month
- Global Average: 30
- Australia: 53
- France: 20
- Germany: 25
- United Kingdom: 28
- United States: 54
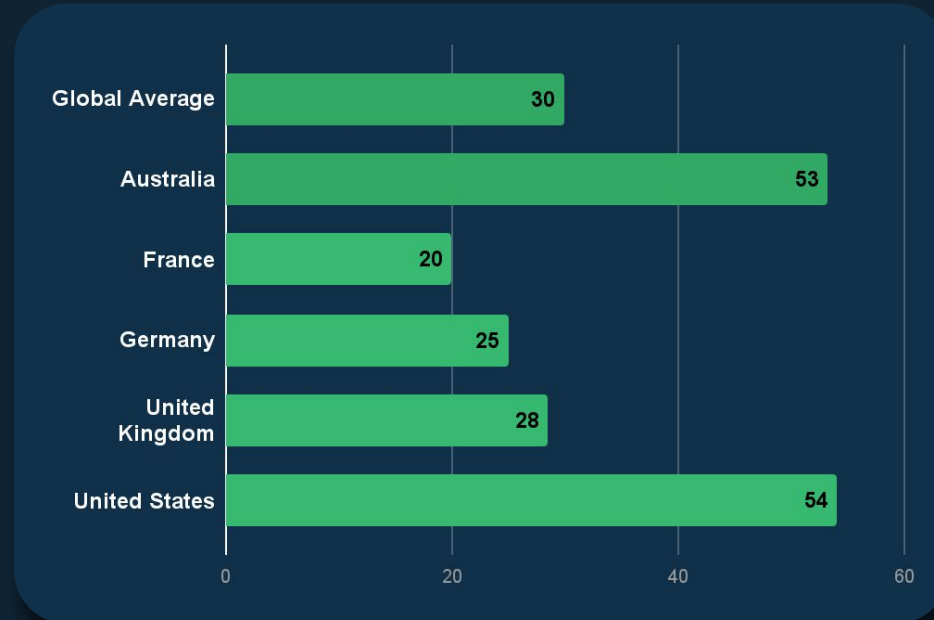
🇦🇺 🇺🇸 **Australian and American** recruiters are the picture of efficiency, not only bringing on hires faster, but managing *78% and 85% more hires* than the global average, respectively.

🇩🇪 🇫🇷 Recruiters in **France** and **Germany** typically manage *fewer hires* than the global average most likely due to labor protections in those countries.

Internal Sources of Hire
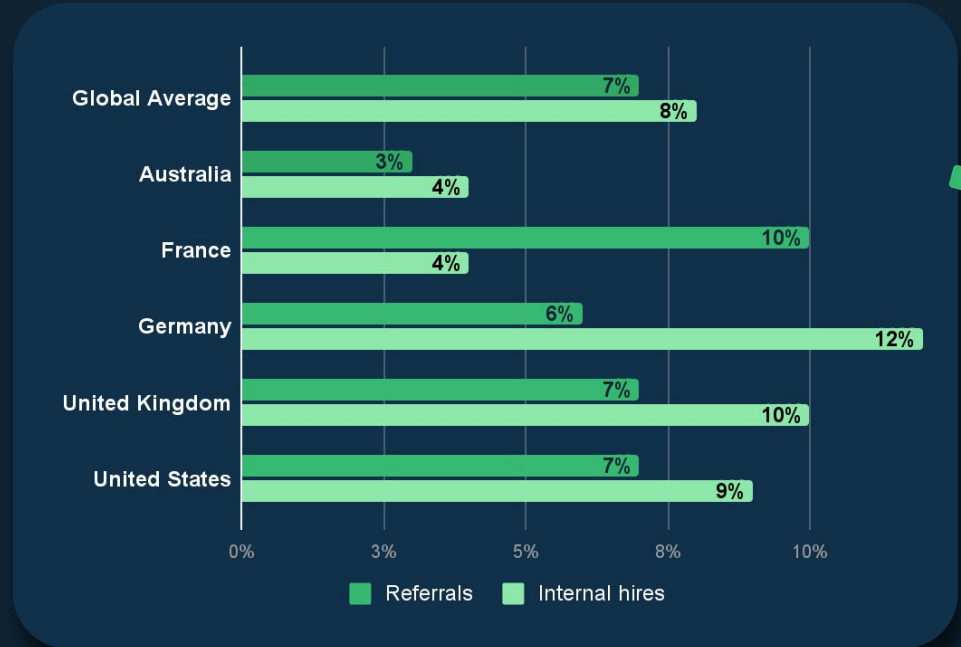
Referrals and internal mobility

🇩🇪 **Germany** wins the race for *internal mobility,* with one in nine hires coming from an internal source.

🇬🇧 The **United Kingdom** is close behind, making *10%* of hires from the *employee base.*
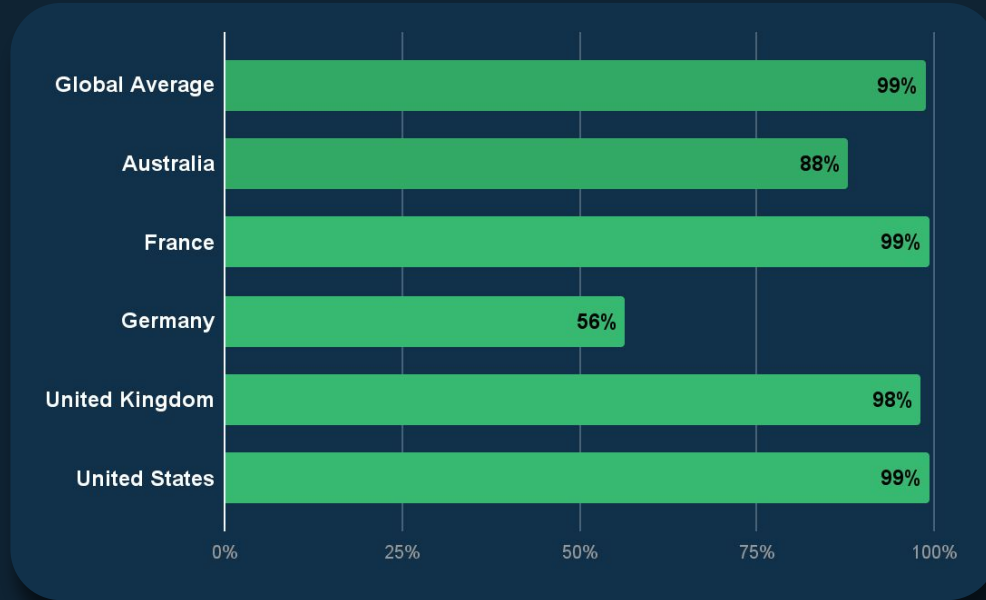
🇫🇷 **France** wins the race for *referrals as a source hire,* with referred applicants cutting through the noise of France's higher-than-average application volume.

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Global Average — Referrals 7%, Internal hires 8%
Australia — Referrals 3%, Internal hires 4%
France — Referrals 10%, Internal hires 4%
Germany — Referrals 6%, Internal hires 12%
United Kingdom — Referrals 7%, Internal hires 10%
United States — Referrals 7%, Internal hires 9%

■ Referrals ■ Internal hires

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Scorecard *Adoption*

Among teams that use scorecards

Region	Adoption
Global Average	99%
Australia	88%
France	99%
Germany	56%
United Kingdom	98%
United States	99%

🇩🇪 For teams that use scorecards, adoption is high with the exception of **Germany**, potentially due to *more people involved in the scorecard process* (Betriebsrat).

Lighthouse *Global Commentary*

Ben Eubanks

Spotlight on the *United States*

Hiring in the United States has changed in recent years. More locations are requiring pay transparency on job postings, the shift to hybrid and remote work (then the call back to the office, in some industries), and other changes have created *challenges and opportunities for employers* looking to hire their next great team member.

The US has the *lowest offer acceptance rate in the world at 79%*, even though applicants per hire is slightly above the global average and the days to hire figures are better than the global benchmark as well.

Are candidates becoming *transactional?*

It's possible that hiring in the US has become *less relational and more process-oriented.* The data seem to reflect that, at least in part. When asked about the relationship with the recruiter who brought them into the company, candidates in Europe and Asia Pacific were more likely to say that person makes them feel more connected with the company (66%) compared to those candidates in the *US (60%)*. Or maybe it's just that US candidates have higher expectations: they are nearly *10% more likely* than other global candidates to say they *want to know the status of their application* instantly on demand, whenever they want it.
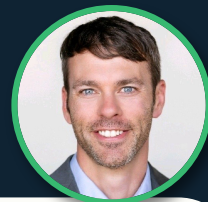
Spotlight on *time to hire*

Lighthouse Research shows that **U.S. companies are 50% more likely to be say that AI adds value and streamlines recruiting activities.** Perhaps most importantly, we also see that U.S. companies have been testing and **using** automation in hiring for a **longer period of time**—and it shows up in the SmartRecruiters data on time to hire and recruiter productivity.

Those longer-term users of automation almost always cite **greater benefits, adoption, and value** than those in the early stages of use, according to our research. Companies worldwide from **intelligent, capable AI technology** to support their hiring activities because it has **already been proven in the U.S..**

The paradox of *productivity*

In our research, we see candidates heavily desire authenticity and connection in the hiring process. But **how do companies balance speed, efficiency, and connection?** The **right technology** can extend the power of the human touch by proactively sharing information, answering questions, and keeping candidates informed.

While it may sound like a paradox, **properly applied technology** can make **hiring experiences more human.** Successful talent acquisition is about managing the recruitment process while creating a thriving pipeline of talent and a more business-aligned talent function.

Spotlight on *France*

France has a highly competitive hiring market. Companies receive about **27% more applications** than other countries, and **offer acceptance rates are at 92%,** the highest in the world. Hires **from employee referrals** in France are about **40% higher** than the global average and three times higher than they are in Australia, for comparison purposes.

One of the world's largest luxury retail brands based in France pointed out that while they knew the unique customer preferences, expectations, and sales cues across their 75 different brands, they **didn't know nearly as much about their candidates and employees** across the organization. Their renewed focus on knowing their talent is a key strategy for them in the coming year.

Candidates want the *human touch* 🤝

The research shows that **talent wants to both know and be known**—in our 2024 survey we saw that the number one way candidates say employers can demonstrate **authenticity in the hiring process** is by providing transparency on pay, benefits, and other similar priorities.

In addition, more than half of candidates wish the employer would **learn about their skills and career goals** so they can match them up with organizational needs.

→

Opportunities for employers

Leverage *low-cost sources of hire*

On average, *15% of hires* come from a combination of *referrals and internal hires*.

With reams of historical evidence showing that these two sources deliver high quality hires in terms of performance and retention, this benchmark gives employers an idea of *how they stack up* with regard to these hiring channels.

AI is needed to meet the current needs

Companies *using AI recruiting tools* like SmartRecruiters' Winston are hiring *26% faster* than those who don't.

Also of note: those teams using AI are *more elastic* when hiring goes through a boom or bust, meaning *less need to scale teams up and down* in response to demand. In a world of "do more with less," it can be a *critical differentiator.*

CHAPTER **FIVE**

Industry Comparisons

This section explores benchmarks through the lens of *five industries: Healthcare, Hospitality, Manufacturing, Retail, and Technology*. Industry categories refer to the industry at the company level, not the role level. For example, Retail covers all hires made for a retail company, from home office to shop floor.
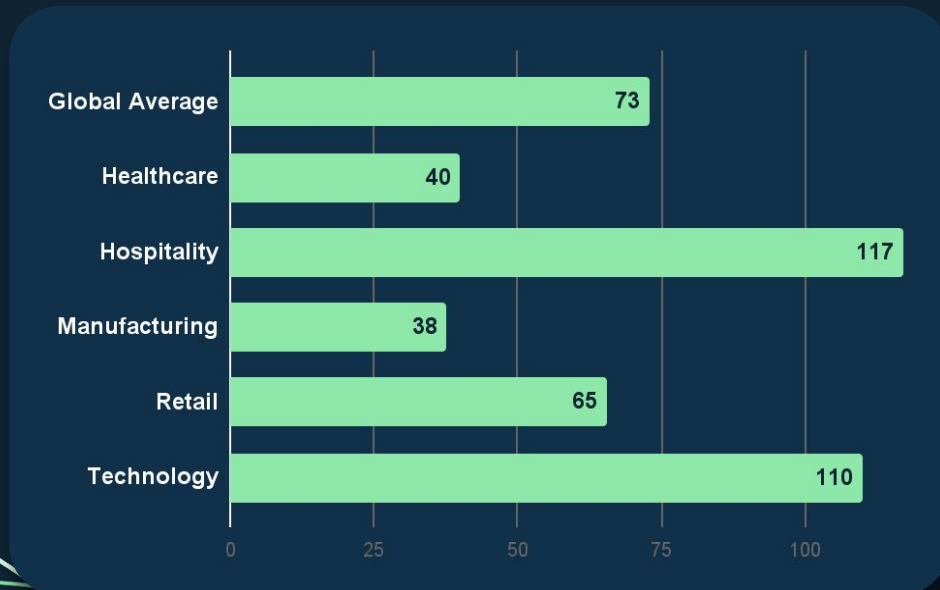
Applicant *Conversion*

From interview to offer

Due to the sheer volume of applications per role, workers in **Technology** and **Hospitality** have the least chance of receiving offers.

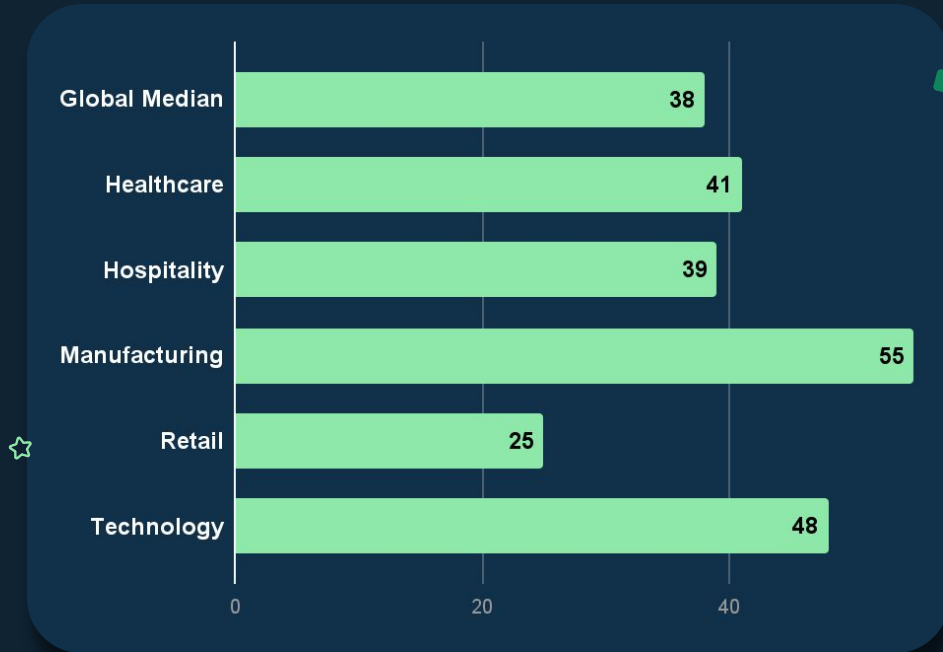Workers in other industries have a much better chance of making it to the interview stage.

Healthcare workers are most likely among these industries to receive interviews and offers.

The fact that healthcare job requirements are often verifiable by certifications could result in fewer unqualified candidates, who ultimately have a better chance of getting the job they applied for than applicants in other industries.

Chart data:

Industry	applicants interviewed	applicants received offers
Global Average	3.9%	1.2%
Healthcare	5.3%	2.0%
Hospitality	1.8%	0.6%
Manufacturing	4.8%	1.4%
Retail	5.3%	1.5%
Technology	3.4%	0.7%

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Scorecard *Adoption*

Among teams that use scorecards

For those using interview scorecards, there is strong adoption across industries.

Manufacturing is the only sector that lags, with 12% of hirers opting out.

Global Average	98%
Healthcare	98%
Hospitality	99%
Manufacturing	88%
Retail	98%
Technology	98%

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%
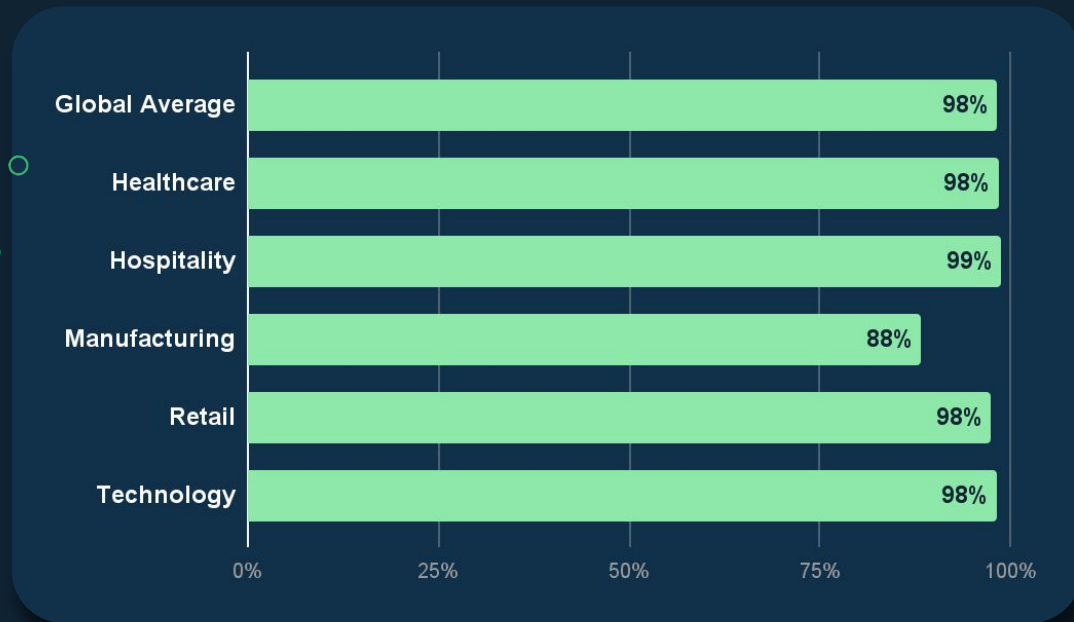
Lighthouse *Industry Commentary*

Ben Eubanks

Spotlight on *Healthcare*

Healthcare receives the **lowest applicants per hire** of almost any industry (40), but the **offer rate is the highest** of any industry (2%). For comparison purposes, the offer rate in the technology industry is 0.66%.

With a talent shortage and an offer acceptance rate of just **77%**, healthcare is **highly competitive hiring environment.** In our 2024 Talent Acquisition Trends survey, we asked candidates what makes them seriously consider a job offer. Healthcare candidates across the globe said their **number one priority is an attractive salary (76%) followed** by an **interesting career opportunity (68%).**

Healthcare *Case Study*

Based in Australia, **KinCare** adopted the **SmartRecruiters** platform to reduce their time to fill from 40 (the healthcare global average is 41 days) to 18 days. Not only is it **faster**, but it's much more pleasing for the participants! In surveys, the hiring process receives **90+% approval ratings.**

KinCare — <u>Read the case study</u>

Spotlight on *Retail*

While retail sees some of the **lowest internal hires and referrals** (3% and 2%, respectively), days to hire in retail are the lowest of any industry measured: 25. That's more than **50% less than the time** it takes to hire in the **manufacturing sector.**

There's room to improve internal hiring in the retail space to get them closer to the global average of 8%. In our research on candidates, **72%** in the retail industry say they **would like to learn about career growth** opportunities during the hiring process. In addition, those same candidates say that **work-life balance** is the number one factor that motivates them to apply for a job. A key factor to success is enabling and empowering hiring managers.

Retail *Case Study*

JYSK, a retailer with operations across EMEA, learned the importance of creating a hiring process that met hiring managers where they were. The **organization merged** with another retailer, dramatically changing the hiring process. The newly combined population of 3,500 hiring managers were able to use **mobile hiring tools to speed up candidate reviews** and quickly hire candidates for their stores, dropping time to fill by over **60%.**

Read the case study

Spotlight on *Technology*

Companies in the software/tech industry have long been known to be **early adopters of technology** and approaches that lead to **faster and more predictable hiring**. Google's hiring practices, for example, are well-documented online. In our research, we see more technology companies scoring at the most mature level of talent acquisition (Leading) compared to industries like financial services, manufacturing, or retail. One of the problems with that early adopter mindset is a **proliferation of tools,** which can make it **difficult to get a true picture** of what is happening in the hiring process.

Technology *Case Study*

Xplor, a **Smartrecruiters client,** *faced that exact problem. Due to rapid growth, Xplor had multiple systems supporting its global talent practices, meaning leadership did not have an understanding of talent acquisition at a global level. By implementing Smartrecruiters, Xplor was able to* **streamline its practices,** *create a* **single source of truth***, and finally* **take action on the data.**

xplor   **Read the case study**

Opportunities for employers

Using scorecards for *consistency*

Interview scorecards are an excellent tool for helping to **mitigate bias in interviews, identify key candidate capabilities,** and ultimately **select the best person for the role.** In our research, we see that companies using interview scorecards not only get candidate f**eedback faster,** they also make **better hiring decisions** overall. In addition, **86%** of employers believe that structured questions and scorecards help to reduce hiring bias.

Speeding up the hiring process

Data on **candidate ghosting** indicates that they typically skip out on the hiring process when it **takes too long** or when they accept a different offer first. The benchmark shows that it takes **six days to review candidates and 14 days to interview on average.** In some industries, this could be incredibly fast, but in high volume industries hiring frontline workers, that needs to be faster.

CHAPTER **SEVEN**

Country Scorecards

This section provides *benchmark data for individual countries:* Australia, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Australia Scorecard 🇦🇺

Applicants per hire	**65**
Candidates interviewed	**6.0%**
Candidates received offers	**2.0%**
Offer acceptance rate	**83%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**53**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**88%**

Days to review	**6**
Days to interview	**13**
Days to hire	**32**

Referrals	**7%**
Internal hires	**8%**

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France Scorecard 🇫🇷

Applicants per hire	**93**
Candidates interviewed	**2.2%**
Candidates received offers	**0.6%**
Offer acceptance rate	**92%**

Days to review	**6**
Days to interview	**14**
Days to hire	**39**

Referrals	**10%**
Internal hires	**4%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**20**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**99%**

Germany Scorecard 🇩🇪

Applicants per hire	**48**
Candidates interviewed	**5.4%**
Candidates received offers	**1.4%**
Offer acceptance rate	**91%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**25**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**56%**

Days to review	**8**
Days to interview	**20**
Days to hire	**55**

Referrals	**6%**
Internal hires	**12%**

United Kingdom Scorecard 🇬🇧

Applicants per hire	**72**
Candidates interviewed	**4.3%**
Candidates received offers	**1.1%**
Offer acceptance rate	**84%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**28**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**98%**

Days to review	**7**
Days to interview	**15**
Days to hire	**40**

Referrals	**7%**
Internal hires	**10%**

United States Scorecard 🇺🇸

Applicants per hire	**74**
Candidates interviewed	**4.3%**
Candidates received offers	**1.5%**
Offer acceptance rate	**79%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**54**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**99%**

Days to review	**6**
Days to interview	**14**
Days to hire	**35**

Referrals	**7%**
Internal hires	**9%**

CHAPTER **EIGHT**

Industry Scorecards

This section provides benchmark data for individual industries:
Healthcare, Hospitality, Manufacturing, Retail, and Technology.

Hospitality Scorecard

Applicants per hire	**117**
Candidates interviewed	**1.8%**
Candidates received offers	**0.6%**
Offer acceptance rate	**84%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**21**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**98%**

Days to review	**6**
Days to interview	**13**
Days to hire	**39**

Referrals	**2%**
Internal hires	**3%**

Manufacturing Scorecard

Applicants per hire	**38**
Candidates interviewed	**4.8%**
Candidates received offers	**1.4%**
Offer acceptance rate	**92%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**28**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**88%**

Days to review	**8**
Days to interview	**22**
Days to hire	**55**

Referrals	**5%**
Internal hires	**14%**

Retail Scorecard

Applicants per hire	**65**
Candidates interviewed	**5.3%**
Candidates received offers	**1.5%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**26**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**98%**

Days to review	**4**
Days to interview	**11**
Days to hire	**25**

Referrals	**2%**
Internal hires	**3%**

Technology Scorecard

Applicants per hire	**110**
Candidates interviewed	**3.4%**
Candidates received offers	**0.7%**
Offer acceptance rate	**77%**

Average monthly hires per recruiter	**26**
% of interview team to fill out scorecard	**98%**

Days to review	**7**
Days to interview	**13**
Days to hire	**48**

Referrals	**16%**
Internal hires	**10%**